

# CHECAA

## Craigweil House and its Environs Conservation Area Association

'Preserving our Regal, Historic and Architectural Heritage for Future Generations'

AW-308-13-TC 57 Kingsway – Felling of Golden Leylandii and Eucalyptus trees – 1-1-2014.

Head of Planning Services  
Arun District Council  
Maltravers Road  
Littlehampton  
BN17 5LF

1 January 2014

Dear Sir

### AW/308/13/TC– 57 Kingsway – Objection Felling of Golden Leylandii within the Craigweil House Conservation Area and Area of Special Character - OBJECTION

The dual designation of the Craigweil area reflects that in Law, as has been stressed in recent Appeal Inspectors Decisions, and the Local Planning Authority has an inescapable duty to pay *'special attention'* to protecting the area. Appeal Inspector Catherine Hughes, in her Appeal Decision of the 19 November 2013 (against the refusal of AW/91/13), said: *'I have had regard to the statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.'* She went on to say *'These trees are attractive mature specimens which make a positive contribution to the amenity of the area. A number appear to be mature enough to be covered by the Tree Preservation Order for the area.'*

Thus, the Inspector recognised and respected the original design concept of the area and the objectives of the dual designation – an accolade unique within Arun District – and we ask that LPA Case Officers act similarly in considering this and all applications in 2014.

**CHECAA considers that the Golden Leylandii tree is a beautiful specimen and contends that the attached photograph substantiates our considered and subjective view that this tree IS of significant public amenity value, and an asset to the conservation area and should be retained. It may be that it has overgrown shrubs – this happens – but they should not have been planted AFTER the Golden Leylandii.**

**We say that felling is unnecessary and that thinning out the shrubs to the east and west of the tree and gently crown lifting the Golden Leylandii will enable the tree to prosper, the amenity to be preserved and the alleged overgrowing of the footpath to be eliminated. The shrubs need trimming – the tree can be lifted and retained.**

CHECAA comprises over 200 members committed to the principles of conservation, as quoted from the Appeal Inspector above, and is well versed in the history of the area where recuperated King George the Fifth, with Queen Mary, in 1929. **We are always mindful of the fact that the existing estate was carved out from forest land and that the concept of the owner, Sir Arthur Du Cros and his architects, Joshua Auty, was to have trees maintained on all verges. The Drive, right now, is the best example of preserving and enhancing the CA, with trees in abundance on all the verges and in all the gardens from Queensway to the white gate. That area is privately owned roadway but far less respect is paid to these conservation principles on the estate owned roads of Kingsway and Wychwood. The CA Statement and report from Graham Steaggles, the Historic Areas expert of English Heritage laud this issue.**

By some erroneous process, not explained but excused by the LPA, the felling of this tree was allocated to two Officers within two applications by two applicants – the owners of the tree and ground (Craigweil Private Estate Limited – the residents) and the owner of the adjacent house at 57 Kingsway, who has no claim over either – just a complaint.

**The result of that perverse process is that consent to fell has already been granted under application AW/284/13/T and that this application is pure farce. It will either be refused by Mr. Damian Sullivan or deleted from the application as dealt with. But the result of the episode brings no credit to the Local Planning Authority.**

CHECAA, however, continues to object for we live here every day of the year and we are better placed to judge than any anonymous ‘Consultant Arboriculturist’ who writes, we note ‘Neither tree has any **‘REAL AMENITY VALUE’**! What form of expert opinion is that? If CHECAA is reduced to using such meaningless terminology then we say that this tree does have **VERY REAL AND IMPORTANT AMENITY VALUE** and we enjoy it throughout the year. The anonymous arboriculturist visits on a ‘drive past’ basis and condemns an amenity cherished by so many for so long. We say that such treatment of our heritage assets does not display Arun seriously and conscientiously accepting and undertaking its **LEGAL DUTY**, as quoted in the recent Appeal Decision in The Drive when Inspector Catherine Hughes said, we repeat for avoidance of doubt, **‘I have regard to the statutory duty to pay SPECIAL ATTENTION to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area’.** **FELLING THIS TREE SERVES ONLY TO DAMAGE THE CRAIGWEIL HOUSE CONSERVATION AREA.**

Yours faithfully

Richard D. Ostler  
**Chairman**

**cc Joe Russell-Wells and for attention of the temporary arboriculturalist, please.**

**Established 20 January 2001**

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