

**79 Ashdown Road, Chandlers' Ford,
Eastleigh SO53 5QX**

Arboricultural report

**Carried out on 27th December 2026
by David White,
LANTRA-approved Professional Tree Inspector
on behalf of Oakfall Tree Surgery**

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1. Instruction

This arboricultural survey and report has been commissioned by Mr Jon Crook. The site in question is located at 79 Ashdown Road, Chandlers' Ford, Eastleigh SO53 5QX and consists of a two-storey residential dwelling with attached garden.

The aim was to identify any health and safety-related risks and to recommend remedial work where necessary. The trees were inspected using VTA (visual tree assessment), the industry standard, non-invasive technique for assessing the health and condition of trees.

The inspection was carried out on 27th December 2026 by David White, ABC Level 4 Diploma in Arboriculture, LANTRA approved professional tree inspector, of White Knight Services Ltd (company number 12694619, registered address 5 Cressingham Road, Reading RG2 7RS, trading as White Knight Tree Care & Consultancy).

2. Site and survey conditions

The weather conditions were still and sunny, with good visibility.

The recommendations contained in this report are based on the findings on the days of the survey. If the site usage changes, this site may need to be reassessed.

3. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

A check for protected trees has not been carried out as part of this survey, thus permission may need to be sought from the Local Planning Authority to carry out the recommended works if the trees are protected.

4. Limitations

The trees have been inspected from ground level and, where deemed necessary, non-invasive equipment has been used to identify the presence and assess the extent of decay and therefore the structural integrity of individual trees. If a further climbing inspection is required, this will be specified in the report.

Although every effort has been made to accurately assess and predict the risks posed, trees are living, dynamic systems that can be influenced by many biotic or abiotic factors. As such, events such as extreme or unpredictable weather conditions, vandalism, accidents, chemical or fire damage render the findings of this report unreliable and reinspection will be required. Even the healthiest tree in ideal conditions is not risk-free as there are always complex forces and stresses at play. Ivy, although it has significant ecological value, severely hinders the effectiveness of VTA and makes accurate assessment of the entire tree impossible as the areas beneath the ivy cannot be seen. Where necessary, it is advised that the ivy should be severed to make a fuller reinspection possible; the severance of ivy should be

conducted using hand tools only (NEVER using a chainsaw), paying careful attention not to cut into or damage the tree's bark. The ivy should be severed at ground level and again higher up at approximately 1.5m to allow the base of the stem to be cleared once the ivy has died off.

5. Recommended works

Any of the remedial works carried out should be done so in accordance with BS:3998 wherever possible. Adding organic mulch to a thickness of 100mm, making sure not to pile it up around the stem as this can cause rot, and up to the drip line of trees, is considered good practice and is always recommended where practicable as it helps slowly release nutrients into the soil as it decomposes whilst improving water retention and reducing evaporation. It reduces soil erosion by slowing heavy rains that can then percolate into the soil rather than washing it away. It encourages mycorrhizal fungi and worms, which further aid with nutrient uptake and soil decompaction and aeration.

The recommended work should be carried out within the time frame specified in order for the findings to remain valid.

6. Ecological considerations

There are many species of invertebrates that live, breed or grow exclusively in deadwood making it of critical importance in the ecosystem as many of these species are predated on by birds and animals. This means that various forms of deadwood, including a range of vertical and horizontal, high and low level, standing and fallen deadwood needs to be retained in order to support biodiversity (not just a pile of logs on the ground). The aim should never be to totally sterilise the environment by removing the deadwood. With this in mind, if the site conditions and occupancy allow for it, wherever possible deadwood should be retained. This is reflected in the survey report.

Trees, both living and dead, are extremely important keystone species in the environment/ecosystem. They provide innumerable benefits such as carbon sequestration, reducing urban heat island effect, reducing stress and improving people's mental health, reducing soil erosion, adding aesthetic interest and amenity in the landscape, reducing flooding through transpiration and precipitation interception, providing food and shelter for many species of birds, mammals, insects and invertebrates. Whenever possible, I have recommended remedial work that would allow for the retention of trees.

7. Insurance

Works covered by White Knight Services Ltd Public Liability Insurance to the value of £10,000,000.00

Professional indemnity insurance to the value of £2,000,000.00

8. Survey findings

Designation: T1

Species: Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)

Location: Rear garden of residential property

Targets: 2 homes, pavement and road

Height: 20+ metres

Life Stage: Over mature

Crown spread: approximately 10m radius

Condition: fair to poor

- East side of base, area of necrotic bark approximately 30cm wide by 60cm tall exposing slightly weathered/softened wood, no significant penetration with probe. (see figure 1)
- Further hollow sound at base just to left of bark delamination for 30cm.
- South side of base, vague audible defects around base, no penetration but dull sound when struck. (see figure 4)
- Buttress on North side sounds normal, the rest of the base sounds slightly off/dull. (see figure 2)
- Potential audible defects up main stem but not in usual vertical strips, more like multiple small isolated pockets.
- Main union is a compression fork. (see figures 5 & 6)
- Gap in canopies between 2 main stems. (see figure 7)

North stem:

- First major limb on South West side significantly extended with large hazard beam, possible fibre buckling. (see figures 8 & 9)
- 2nd major limb, on North west side, start of branch shedding collar forming. (see figure 10)
- 3rd major limb has suffered a significant failure. (see figure 10)
- Major deadwood in crown.
- Normal vitality.
- Significantly weighted north west towards neighbour's property. (see figure 11)
- Several beginnings of shedding collars

South stem:

- Similar shedding collars, potentially typical of species.
- First limb on North east side has pronounced rib beneath it with recent rapid expansion growth, possibly suggesting mechanical stress, fibre buckling. (see figure 12)
- Significantly overhanging the roof
- Major deadwood throughout.
- Normal vitality
- Upright form.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

This tree has multiple features of concern, the visible decay on the east side of the base along with inconsistent sounding with a mallet around the majority of rest of

base suggest the beginnings of dysfunction/decay, although there was not yet significant penetration when tested.

The main union is a compression fork and there is a noticeable gap between the canopies of the north and south main stems, even when not in leaf, suggesting significant load/stress on the main union; however, there is not much evidence of adaptive growth around the union. This could potentially mean that there is not much stress at union (unlikely due to the gap in canopies) or more worryingly, either that the tree does not have the energy/resources required to reinforce this union, or that the decay visible on the east side of the base (directly in line with the main union) has weakened the union sufficiently to result in movement of the stems and the tree has not had time to respond. Given the sheer size of the tree and its target rich environment, if this main union were to fail the results would be catastrophic. The north stem in particular is heavily weighted towards the neighbouring property.

There are several very large, significantly extended limbs with concerning features such as the first major limb on the northern main stem showing fibre buckling at the union, once again due to the significant size, highly likely to damage property or worse in the event of even a partial failure.

The tree appears to have good vitality with decent bud density and I would assume a very full canopy, anecdotally confirmed by the resident. Normally a good thing, when considered in relation to the other defects, the significant weight and large sail area further exacerbate the risk of significant failures. As has recently happened to a limb on the north side of the tree, smashing the fence/wall running adjacent to the pavement.

Due to these concerns and in relation the target rich environment, I am sadly **recommending the tree be removed within 6 months.**

10. Photographs



Figure 1: East side of base, area of decay



Figure 2: North side of base



Figure 3: West side of base



Figure 4: South side of base



Figure 5: main union, east side

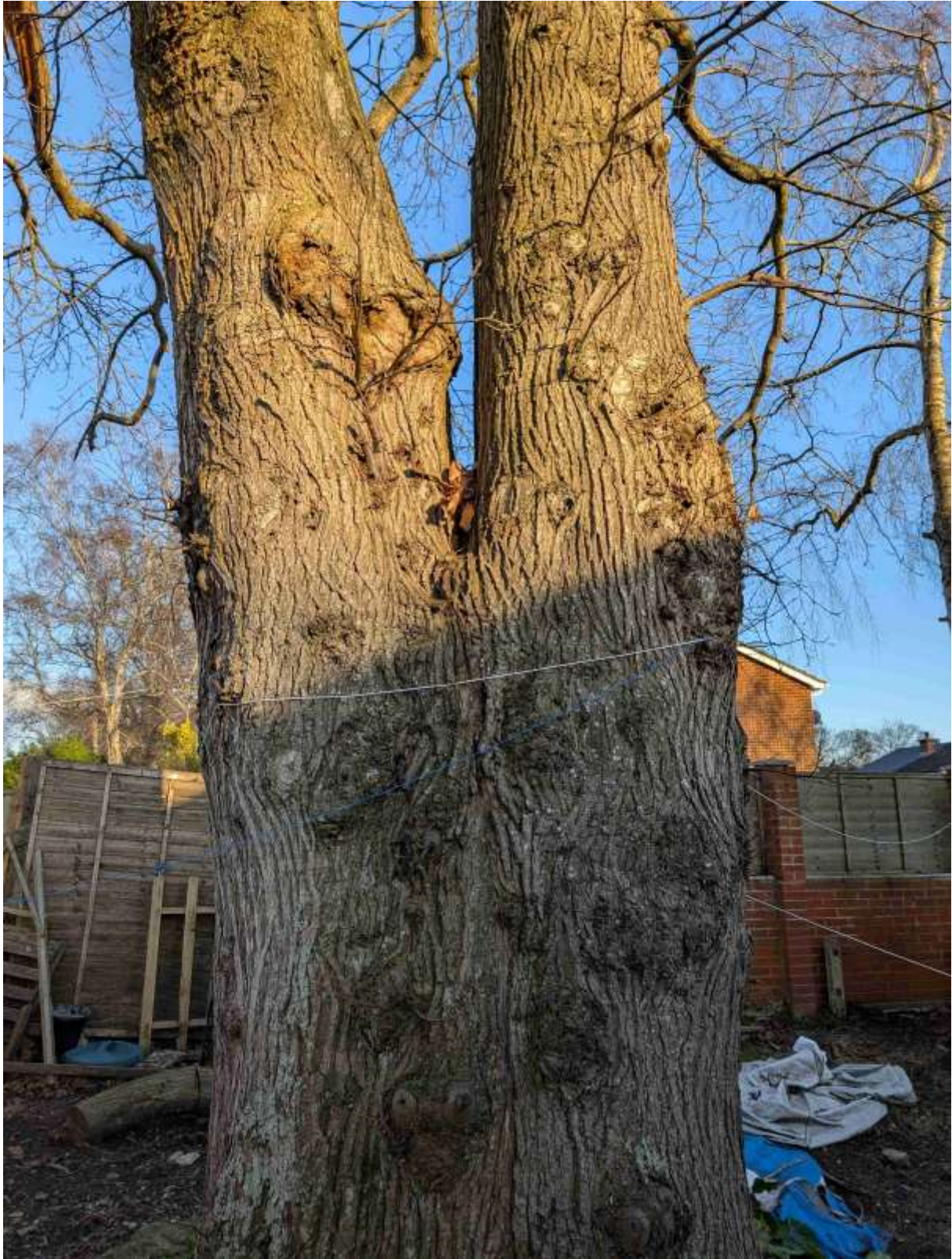


Figure 6: main union, west side

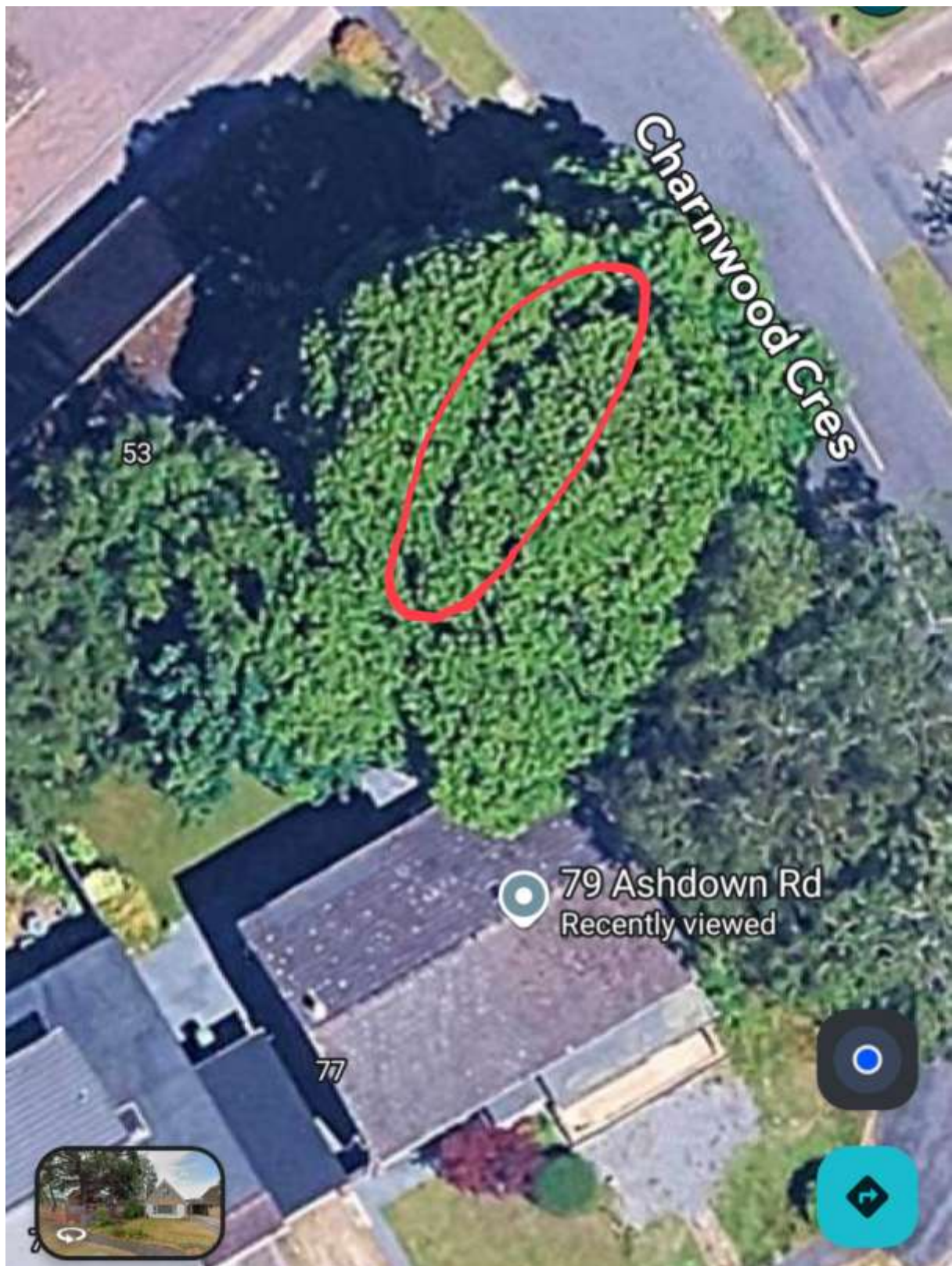


Figure 7: Gap in canopies between main stems evident in historic aerial photo



Figure 8: significantly extended major limb with red arrows pointing at fibre buckling, hazard beam and gap between canopies from left to right



Figure 9: close up of fibre buckling at base of first major limb on northern main stem

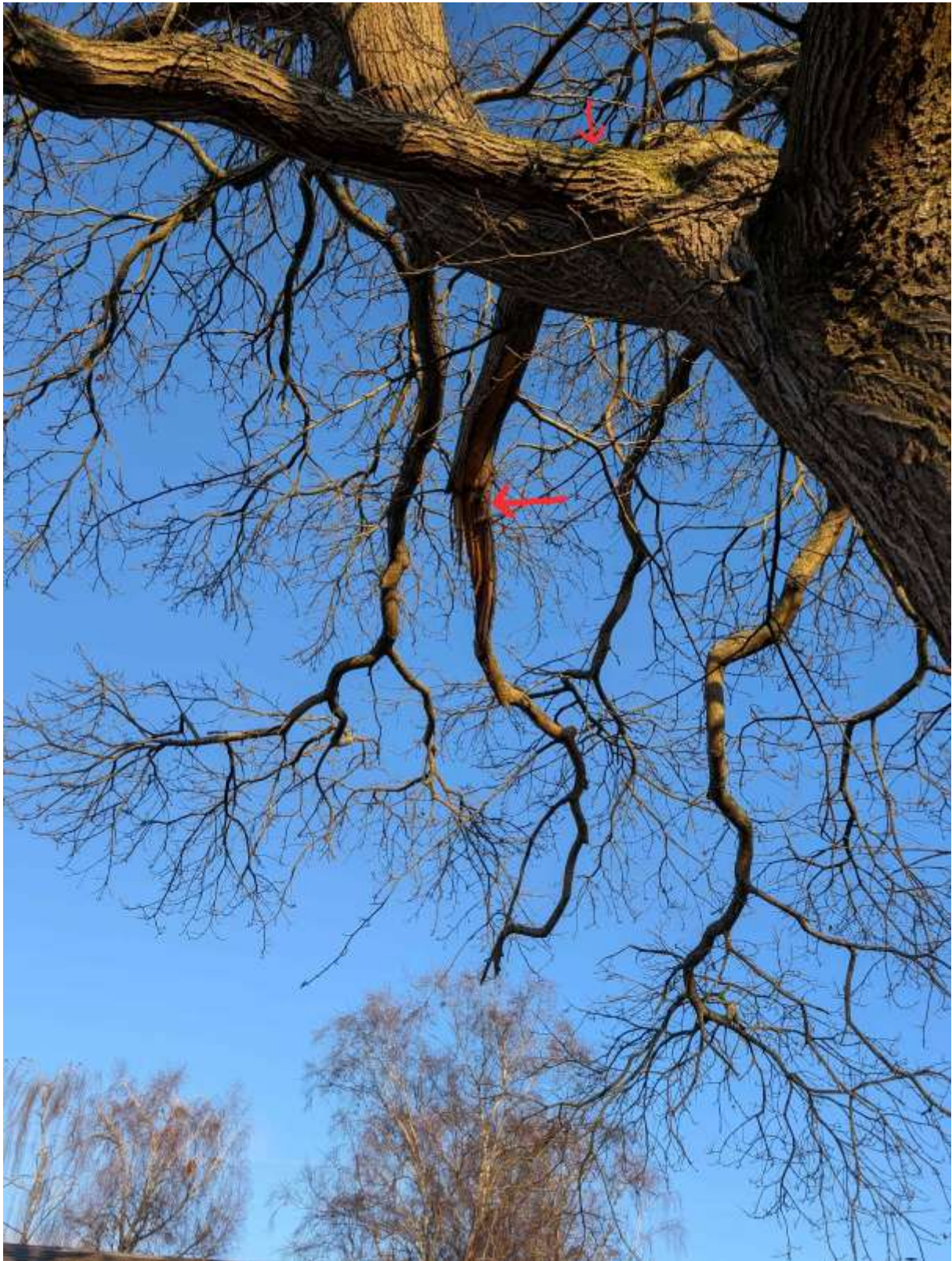


Figure 10: red arrows pointing out significant recent limb failure and start of branch shedding collar



Figure 11: showing northern main stem significantly weighted/leaning towards neighbouring property

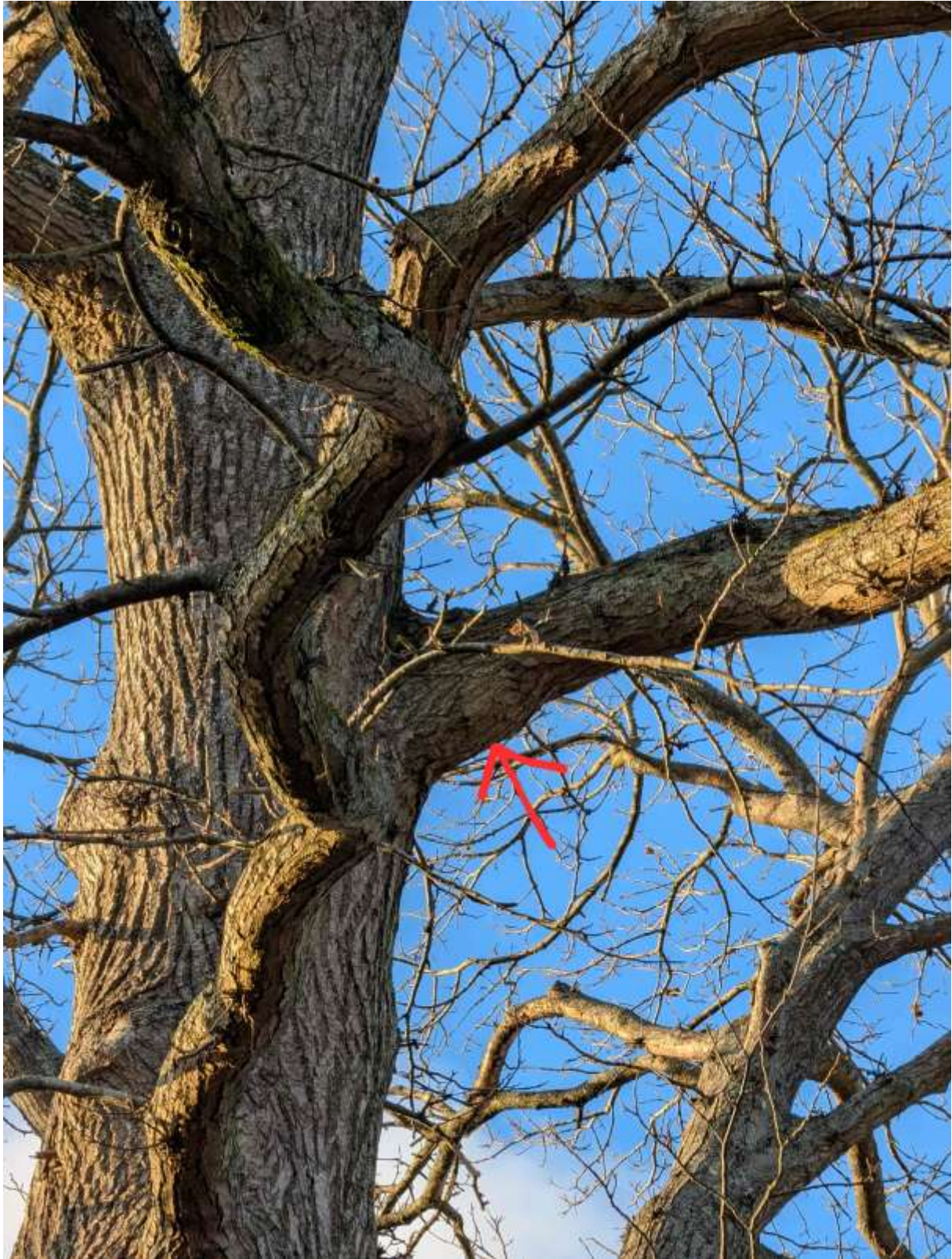


Figure 12: pronounced rib beneath first major limb on North east side

11.Map



12.Addendum

The wall constructed in the rear garden is well within the root protection area of the sweet chestnut meaning that almost inevitably some roots will have been damaged, however the vitality of the canopy appeared largely unaffected.