

ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT OF KINGS
COURT MASONIC CENTRE, 81
WINCHESTER ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD,
SO53 2GG

Carried out by Matthew Rowden for Richard
Piatkiewicz, applicant.

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TREESCAPES

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3. INSTRUCTION

This report is to survey the trees on the site for the potential to cause damage and/or harm for insurance and liability. I refer to the current guidance set out within NTSG Common sense risk management of trees 2011 to enable the duty holder to have discharged their duty of care.

The risks that I have assessed are: Likelihood of damage to property (indirect or contact), tree failure through structures, and personal harm or injury. I have been instructed by Richard Piatkiewicz, applicant.

4. LIMITATIONS

This survey is valid for 3 - 5 years (adhering to the guidance set out in NTSG 2011). I must be kept in direct supervision of the site at all times in regards to all arboricultural matters in order for the findings in this report to remain valid.

The site was inspected using the VTA method as outlined in Mattheck and Breloer 1994. No detailed decay detection has been carried out.

No soil analysis has been carried out: assumptions have been made based on data from the BGS, and the species that grow in that area. Trees have been grouped where the recommendation is the same, or where there is very little to differentiate between them: those trees that present a foreseeable threat have been surveyed individually and mapped.

5. SITE DETAILS

The site is King's Court Masonic Centre, 81 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, SO53 2GG, comprising a substantial established building with associated access, parking and landscaped grounds. The subject tree is a mature to over-mature Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), approximately 16 m in

height with a stem diameter of approximately 1,450 mm, situated immediately to the south of the principal building. The nearest elevation lies within approximately 9 m of the tree, with exposed lateral roots extending towards the structure.

British Geological Survey mapping identifies the underlying bedrock as the Wittering Formation, comprising sand, silt and clay, deposited in a shallow-marine environment and occurring as interbedded sequences of coarse- to fine-grained sedimentary material. The presence of a clay fraction is relevant when considering potential seasonal volumetric change and tree-related moisture abstraction. Given the size and maturity of the tree, its proximity to the building and the apparent 1960s age of the adjacent extension, the potential for indirect influence upon foundations should therefore be considered alongside the tree's above-ground structural condition.

6. LEGAL RESTRICTIONS

The tree is covered by a group TPO, ref: 4E.

7. PROPOSALS

This report aims to establish a long term management strategy for the trees on the site, and to ensure that they are maintained to keep any risk posed to level that is as low as reasonably practicable. It will also instil a cyclical inspection schedule to ensure that the duty holders are fulfilling their duties and responsibilities under the Occupier's liability acts 1957 and 1984.

8. DRAWINGS AND DOCUMENTS

The client has not provided any drawings or documents for the assessment. I have obtained a plan from the Ordnance Survey and have annotated the trees on the map.

9. SUMMARY

Tree 1 remains physiologically vigorous, with good canopy vitality; however, this should not be confused with structural integrity. The tree has reached the latter part of its useful life expectancy and is structurally poor, with multiple significant included unions occurring within its principal structural framework. Its estimated remaining contribution is less than ten years.

The principal concern is the foreseeable failure of one or more co-dominant stems or substantial lateral limbs arising from these defective unions. Smiley (2003) demonstrated experimentally that co-dominant attachments containing included bark are significantly weaker than normally formed attachments, while Kane et al. (2008) further identified attachment morphology, diameter ratio and included bark as material factors affecting breaking stress. Slater and Harbinson (2010) subsequently developed the anatomical understanding of branch attachment, emphasising the importance of correctly formed interconnected xylem in mechanically competent junctions.

Given the dimensions of the tree and the occupation of the surrounding grounds and building, failure of a major component has credible potential to cause significant harm. The combination of declining useful life expectancy, poor structural architecture and identifiable targets therefore represents a foreseeable risk to residents, visitors and other stakeholders.

10. FINDINGS (PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS)

1. **Rooting environment and proximity to the building.** Exposed lateral roots are evident on the northern aspect extending towards the near face of the structure. The building lies within approximately 9 m of the stem. The 16 m tree therefore stands substantially closer to the building than its theoretical 20 m zone of influence when applying the $1.25 \times$ height criterion used for high-water-demand trees. NHBC guidance applies a lateral zone of influence of $1.25 \times$ mature height to high-water-demand species.
2. **Potential indirect damage.** The combination of a high-water-demand cypress, soil containing a clay fraction, close proximity to the building and the age of the 1960s extension establishes a credible foreseeability of moisture-related soil movement and consequent indirect foundation damage. The survey schedule itself identifies this as a foreseeable structural consideration. This does not establish that subsidence is presently occurring, but it does mean that continued retention cannot reasonably be regarded as entirely benign in relation to the structure.
3. **Principal basal/lower-stem union.** Between approximately 2-4 m the tree divides into three substantial co-dominant stems around a pronounced included union. This is considered a defect of high significance. Smiley (2003) demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in the strength of co-dominant unions containing included bark. The consequence of failure at this position would be particularly significant because it could involve the loss of a very substantial proportion of the tree.
4. **Secondary included union.** A further included union occurs on the southern aspect at approximately 5 m and is similarly considered to be of high significance. Kane et al. (2008) demonstrated that attachment strength varies materially with attachment morphology and included bark, reinforcing the significance of defective attachments when assessing foreseeable branch or stem failure.
5. **Lateral limb attachments.** Lateral limbs at approximately 4 m on the southern aspect exhibit pronounced "ball-and-socket" style attachment morphology, assessed as being of moderate structural significance. These occur in addition to, rather than instead of, the more significant co-dominant unions and contribute to an overall pattern of structurally compromised architecture.
6. **Structural architecture.** Slater and Harbinson (2010) highlight that branch attachment strength is dependent upon the anatomical arrangement and development of the woody tissues forming the junction. In this instance, the number, position and scale of the defective unions are more significant than the presence of any single anomalous branch attachment. The defects occur within the primary structural framework and cannot therefore be removed without fundamentally altering the tree.
7. **Physiological condition.** Current canopy vitality remains good. This provides some physiological value but does not negate the structural defects described above. A vigorous crown may, conversely, continue to increase the dimensions, mass and lever arms associated with the already defective structural framework.
8. **Pruning as mitigation.** Crown reduction could temporarily decrease wind loading and bending moments acting upon the defective unions, but it would neither remove nor repair them. To achieve a meaningful and enduring reduction in loading would require substantial intervention followed by repeated cyclical pruning. For a 16 m, approximately 1.45 m diameter tree already approaching over-maturity and assessed as having less than ten years' remaining contribution, this would amount to disproportionate management of a tree with limited remaining useful life. It would also generate additional pruning wounds and a progressively artificial crown form. On balance, repeated pruning merely defers rather than resolves the underlying structural problem.
9. **Amenity value.** The amenity cost of removal is comparatively limited. The tree is set internally within densely wooded grounds and does not appear to make a significant contribution to the public street scene. The location plan confirms its enclosed position adjacent to the building rather than prominently on the Winchester Road frontage. Its loss would consequently be substantially absorbed by the surrounding mature vegetation.
10. **Adverse amenity effects of retention.** Conversely, the tree's considerable crown volume and proximity to the building cause severe shading of the dining-room area and materially compromise solar gain to the roof-mounted photovoltaic panels, as recorded within the survey schedule. These

impacts add weight to removal where the tree's structural condition and limited remaining contribution already make indefinite retention undesirable.

11.CONCLUSION:

Tree 1 is a very large, mature to over-mature Lawson cypress which remains physiologically vigorous but is structurally poor. Its principal framework contains several significant defective unions, including the low division into three co-dominant stems. There is consequently a foreseeable mechanism for substantial structural failure in an area occupied by residents, visitors and other stakeholders. In addition, its close relationship with the 1960s extension and overlap between the building and the tree's theoretical zone of influence provide a further foreseeable mechanism for indirect structural damage.

When balanced against these liabilities, the amenity case for retention is limited. The tree is substantially screened by the surrounding woodland, makes little meaningful contribution to the wider public landscape and causes significant shading to both the dining room and photovoltaic installation. Repeated heavy pruning would retain the underlying structural defects whilst committing the owner to continuing management of a tree already approaching the end of its useful life.

Felling and replacement therefore represents the most proportionate long-term management option. Replacement should comprise a smaller-growing, high-quality specimen appropriate to the wooded setting, such as yew (*Taxus baccata*), Japanese Stewartia (*Stewartia pseudocamellia*) or Tibetan cherry (*Prunus serrula*). This would maintain long-term canopy and landscape continuity without recreating the present conflict between tree size, building proximity and occupation of the site.

12.RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reduce trees 1- 4 to leave a finished height of 17m.
2. Re-inspection date for August 2029.



Matthew Rowden *ABC ProfDipArb L6, BTEC NatDipArb L3*

13.REFERENCES

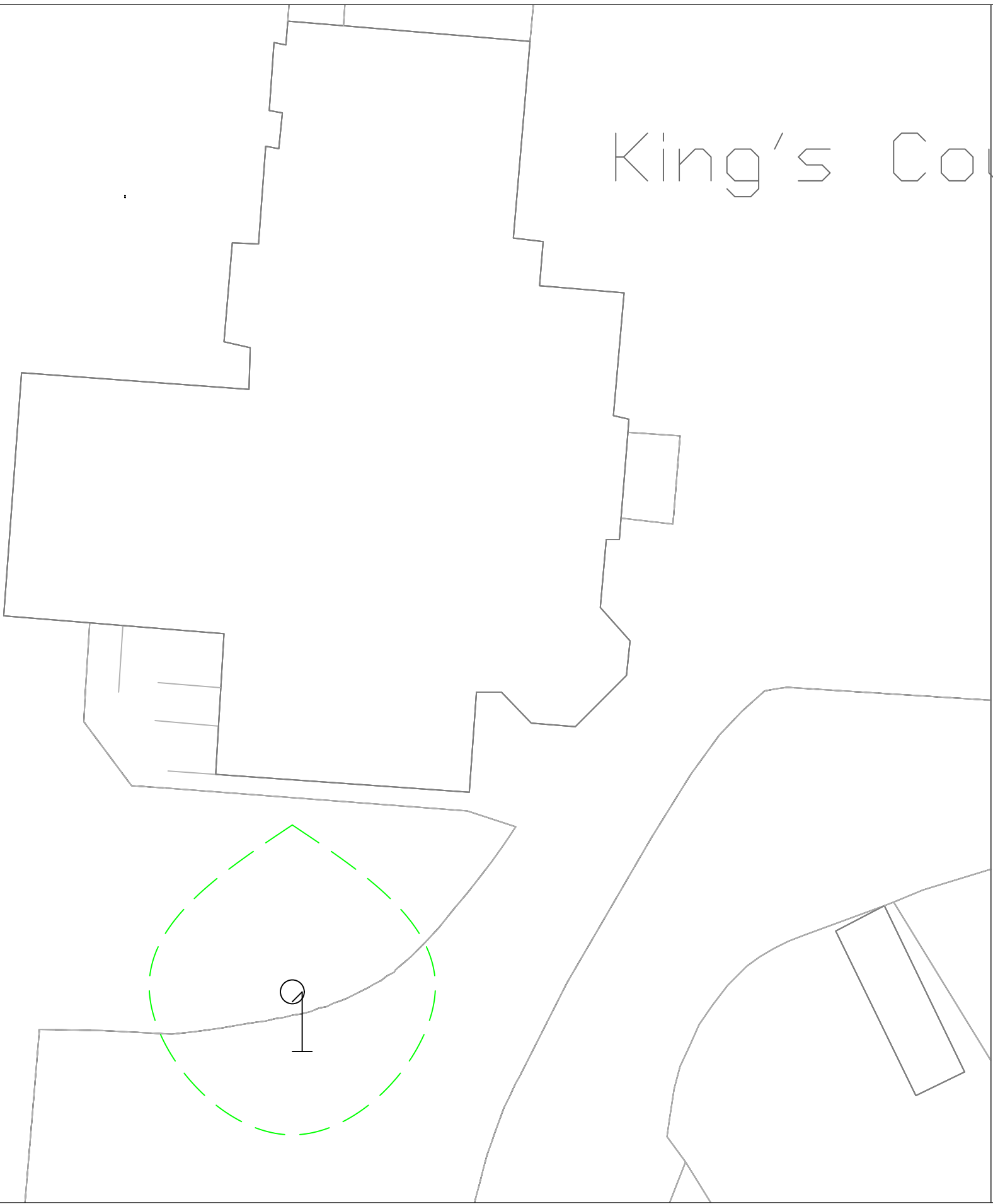
1. Kane, B., Farrell, R., Zedaker, S.M., Loferski, J.R. and Smith, D.W. (2008) 'Failure mode and prediction of the strength of branch attachments', *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry*, 34(5), pp. 308-316.
2. NHBC (2025) NHBC Standards, Chapter 4.2: Building near trees. National House Building Council.
3. Slater, D. and Harbinson, C. (2010) 'Towards a new model of branch attachment', *Arboricultural Journal*, 33(2), pp. 95-105.
4. Smiley, E.T. (2003) 'Does included bark reduce the strength of codominant stems?', *Journal of Arboriculture*, 29(2), pp. 104-106.

TREE NO. ON PLAN	SPECIES	HT (M)	CROWN SPREAD (M) N E S W	STEM DIA. @1.5M (MM)	LIFE STAGE	ESTIMATED REMAINING CONTRIBUTION IN YEARS	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITION - P STRUCTURAL CONDITION - S	PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY
1	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsonia</i>	16	7 6 6 6	1450	M-OM	<10	P- Good S- Poor Exposed lateral roots N aspect up to nearer face of structure. Structure sits within 9m of tree and well within zone of influence of tree (high water demand cypress). Included union at 2 - 4m of high sig. where tree splits into three co-dominant stems. Included union S aspect at 5m of high sig. Lateral limbs at 4m S aspect exhibit "ball & socket" style unions of moderate sig. Excessive shading caused to dining room area of lodge, resulting in poor solar yield for panels. Canopy vitality = Good Overall, there is a foreseeability of eventual limb failure from the included unions at 2 and 4m. With soil conditions of "Wittering Formation-Sand, silt and clay. These sedimentary rocks are shallow-marine in origin. They are detrital, ranging from coarse to fine-grained (locally with some carbonate content) forming interbedded sequences.", there is also a foreseeability of structural indirect damage due to the age of the extension (1960s)	Fell	Low

SURVEY SCHEDULE KEY

1. Tree ID: Refers to numbers as shown in the tree location plan.
2. Species: scientific name
3. Height (measured in meters)
4. Crown spread (measured in meters at the points of North, South, East and West). Where “#” is used as a suffix, the measurements are approximate.
5. Stem diameter measured at 1.5m height in mm.
6. Life stage: Young (Y) (small trees at a very early stage of their growth), young mature (YM)(larger trees at an early life stage with the potential to still grow considerably larger), Mature (MA)(trees which have reached their maximum size and are self sustaining at the point), Over mature (OM)(trees that are beginning to decline and starting to die back from the tips), Veteran (V)(trees that are rapidly in decline and steadily losing canopy spread), Dead (D)
7. Estimated remaining contribution in years: Until such a time as any residual amenity is lost.
8. General observations - a visual assessment of the physiological and structural condition of the tree, classed as :Poor, fair, good, dead, decline. Physiologically refers to the vitality and vigour of the tree; Structural refers to the presence of physical defects within the tree's structural makeup. For example, a multi stemmed tree from a lapsed pollard with multiple defects in those unions, but with good vitality and good leaf cover would be classed as physiologically good, but structurally poor.
9. Preliminary management recommendations - recommendations to maintain the tree as part of the proposals, or assessing whether its retention is viable, whether it be the suggestion of aerial inspections, remedial pruning, or detailed decay inspections.
10. Likelihood of causing damage/ harm: None, low, moderate, high and critical. These mean that respectively, the recommendations are to be actioned with no time scale and within 5 years (green canopy spread), 1 year (blue canopy spread), 6 months (red canopy spread). Trees to be felled with have the canopy spread denoted in a red dotted line.

King's Court



General Notes

Key

Low risk trees	
Moderate risk trees	
High risk trees	

No.	Revision/Issue	Date

Firm Name and Address

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Project Name and Address

Kings Court
Masonic Centre, 81
Winchester Road,
Chandler's Ford,
SUS3 2GG

Project
RTC/RP/KCCF/VTA/V1

Date
14/09/2025

Scale
1:500 @ A3

Sheet

Appendix B
Tree
Location
Plan

TREE CONDITION ASSESSMENT - PHOTOGRAPHIC APPENDIX

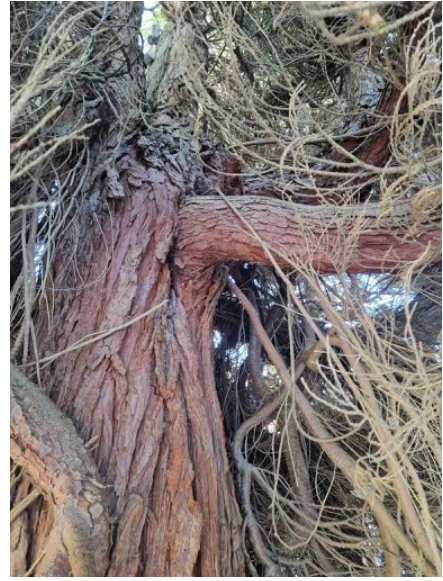
Kings Court Masonic Centre, 81 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, SO53 2GG

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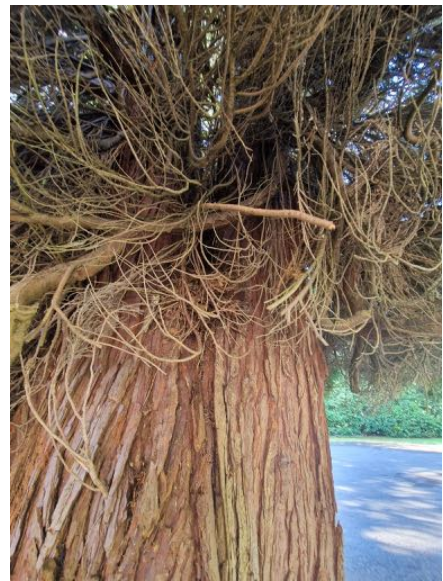
Photograph 1 - Included union and congested multi-stemmed structure within the lower crown.



Photograph 2 - Major lateral attachment showing acute union morphology and locally disrupted adaptive growth.



Photograph 3 - Detail of the principal union and associated bark morphology.



Photograph 4 - Dense internal crown structure and dead/shaded secondary branchwood.

TREE CONDITION ASSESSMENT - PHOTOGRAPHIC APPENDIX

Kings Court Masonic Centre, 81 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, SO53 2GG

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Photograph 5 - Foliage detail confirming good current canopy vitality.



Photograph 6 - Basal stem and rooting environment adjacent to hard surfacing.



Photograph 7 - Context view showing the tree within the densely wooded grounds and its relationship with the building.