Certhia
consulting ltd

11 Ermin Close, Baydon,
Marlborough, Wiltshire. SN8 2JQ
01672 540833
www.certhia.co.uk

FAO: William Brown
Aldbourne PC
By e-mail only: [redacted]

21 April 2023

Dear William

Red Horse Chestnut, Aldbourne Pond.

I refer to your phone call asking me to take a look at the above tree as an historic cable brace has come apart in the tree.

The tree is typical of species and is of moderate size. It is unlikely to gain any great further height but could spread further, especially the limb that was previously braced. This section is growing out from the regular crown dimensions and is beginning to gain some apical dominance. This is where the terminal buds of a section revert to grow skywards and demand resources via hormone transfer. It inevitably leads to increased load on a section.

This main limb, which grows out towards the bus shelter, has an historic wound at the union adjacent the trunk. This appears from its shape to have been a branch tear out.



It has responded reasonably well with the production of suitable woundwood (a stronger, less porous wood derived from the cambium layer) which produces new cells when it is exposed to oxygen.

The cavity that has formed in this tear out is not significant. It is likely that this is what prompted the insertion of the brace. It appears that, prior to the cable, there was a metal collar and brace system in the tree.

The cable is a typical steel braided cable attached to lag bolts that were screwed into the wood to support the section. Even when it was installed it probably did little to manage the load on that section as the location of the system would not have been ideal, despite the fact that the tree would have been smaller on installation.



Horse Chestnut, in any form, does not produce a durable wood. It is no surprise that, after time, the wound that has been caused by the insertion of the bolt has degraded to allow the bolt to work free.

I would suggest that it would not be necessary or appropriate to re-cable this tree. Instead a sympathetic reduction of that lowest limb to reduce it back to more general crown line is more appropriate. Thereby breaking the start of dominance and returning this section back to being simply part of the crown (rather than it becoming a dominant leader).

The lateral reduction of this limb only would be in the region of 2.5m and is illustrated below:





All works should be carried out in accordance with BS3998:2010 Tree Work and be subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

Further, any reduction should aim to leave suitable growing points, which is a growing point approximately 1/3rd of the cut size to ensure continuity of growth and prevent dysfunction occurring.

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Guy Watson
Director
MICFor, CEnv, ND Arb (RFS), F. Arbor. A