

Part 1: Amenity Assessment

a) Condition

This is expressed by five terms, which are defined as follows:

GOOD Trees that are generally free of defects, showing good health and likely to reach normal longevity and size for species, or they may already have done so

FAIR Trees which have defects that are likely to adversely affect their prospects; their health is satisfactory, though intervention is likely to be required. It is not expected that such trees will reach their full age and size potential or, if they have already done so, their condition is likely to decline shortly, or may already have done so. However, they can be retained for the time being without disproportionate expenditure of resources or foreseeable risk of collapse

POOR Trees in obvious decline, or with significant structural defects requiring major intervention to allow their retention, though with the outcome of this uncertain. Health and/or structural integrity are significantly impaired, and are likely to deteriorate. Life expectancy is curtailed and retention is difficult

DEAD Tree with no indication of life

DYING Trees showing very little signs of life or remaining vitality, or with severe,

DANGEROUS irremediable structural defects, including advanced decay and insecure roothold.

For trees in good or fair condition that have poor form deduct one point.

A note on the pro forma emphasizes that 'dangerous' should only be selected in relation to the tree's existing context: a future danger arising, for example, as a result of development, would not apply. Thus, a tree can be in a state of collapse but not be dangerous due to the absence of targets at risk.

b) Retention span

It has long been established good practice that trees incapable of retention for more than ten years are not worthy of a TPO (hence the zero score for this category); this also ties in with the R category criteria set out in Table 1 of BS5837:2005

TEMPO considers 'retention span', which is a more practical assessment based on the tree's current age, health and context as found on inspection.

It is important to note that this assessment should be made based on the assumption that the tree or trees concerned will be maintained in accordance with good practice, and will not, for example, be subjected to construction damage or inappropriate pruning. This is because if the subject tree is 'successful' under TEMPO, it will shortly enjoy TPO protection (assuming that it doesn't already).

c) Relative public visibility

The first thing to note in this section is the prompt, which reminds the surveyor to consider the 'realistic potential for future visibility with changed land use'. This is designed to address the commonplace circumstance where trees that are currently difficult to see are located on sites for future development, with this likely to result in enhanced visibility. The common situation of backland development is one such example.

The categories each contain two considerations: size of tree and degree of visibility. TEMPO is supposed to function as a guide and not as a substitute for the surveyor's judgement. In general, it is important to note that, when choosing the appropriate category, the assessment in each case should be based on the minimum criterion.

Whilst the scores are obviously weighted towards greater visibility, we take the view that it is reasonable to give some credit to trees that are not visible (and/or whose visibility is not expected to change: it is accepted that, in exceptional circumstances, such trees may justify TPO protection.

Sub-total 1

The prompt under 'other factors' states, trees only qualify for consideration within that section providing that they have accrued at least seven points. Additionally, they must not have collected any zero scores.

The scores from the first three sections should be added together, before proceeding to section d, or to part 3 as appropriate (i.e. depending on the accrued score). Under the latter scenario, there are two possible outcomes: Any 0 equating to do not apply TPO - 1-6 equating to TPO indefensible

d) Other factors

Only one score should be applied per tree (or group):

- 'Principle components of arboricultural features, or veteran trees' – The latter is hopefully self-explanatory (if not, refer to Read 20006). The former is designed to refer to trees within parklands, avenues, collections, and formal screens, and may equally apply to individuals and groups

- 'Members of groups of trees that are important for their cohesion' – This should also be self-explanatory, though it is stressed that 'cohesion' may equally refer either to visual or to aerodynamic contribution. Included within this definition are informal screens. In all relevant cases, trees may be assessed either as individuals or as groups
 - 'Trees with significant historical or commemorative importance' – The term 'significant' has been added to weed out trivia, but we would stress that significance may apply to even one person's perspective. For example, the author knows of one tree placed under a TPO for little other reason than it was planted to commemorate the life of the tree planter's dead child. Thus whilst it is likely that this category will be used infrequently, its inclusion is nevertheless important. Once again, individual or group assessment may apply
 - 'Trees of particularly good form, especially if rare or unusual' – 'Good form' is designed to identify trees that are fine examples of their kind and should not be used unless this description can be justified. However, trees which do not merit this description should not, by implication, be assumed to have poor form (see below). The wording of the second part of this has been kept deliberately vague: 'rare or unusual' may apply equally to the form of the tree or to its species. This recognises that certain trees may merit protection precisely because they have 'poor' form, where this gives the tree an interesting and perhaps unique character. Clearly, rare species merit additional points, hence the inclusion of this criterion. As with the other categories in this section, either individual or group assessment may apply. With groups, however, it should be the case either that the group has a good overall form, or that the principle individuals are good examples of their species
- Where none of the above apply, the tree still scores one point, in order to avoid a zero-score disqualification (under part 3).

Sub-total 2

The threshold for this is nine points, arrived at via a minimum qualification calculated simply from the seven-point threshold under sections a-c, plus at least two extra points under section d. Thus trees that only just scrape through to qualify for the 'other factor' score, need to genuinely improve in this section in order to rate an expediency assessment. This recognises two important functions of TPOs:

- TPOs can serve as a useful control on overall tree losses by securing and protecting replacement planting
- Where trees of minimal (though, it must be stressed, adequate) amenity are under threat, typically on development sites, it may be appropriate to protect them allowing the widest range of options for negotiated tree retention

Part 2: Expediency assessment

This section is designed to award points based on three levels of identified threat to the trees concerned. Examples and notes for each category are:

- 'Immediate threat to tree' – for example, Tree Officer receives Conservation Area notification to fell
- 'Foreseeable threat to tree' – for example, planning department receives application for outline planning consent on the site where the tree stands
- 'Perceived threat to tree' – for example, survey identifies tree standing on a potential infill plot

However, central government advice is clear that, even where there is no expedient reason to make a TPO, this is still an option. Accordingly, and in order to avoid a disqualifying zero score, 'precautionary only' still scores one point. This latter category might apply, rarely for example, to a garden tree under good management.

As a final note on this point, it should be stressed that the method is not prescriptive except in relation to zero scores: TEMPO merely recommends a course of action. Thus a tree scoring, say, 16, and so 'definitely meriting' a TPO, might not be included for protection for reasons unconnected with its attributes.

Part 3: Decision Guide

This section is based on the accumulated scores derived in Parts 1 & 2, and identifies four outcomes, as follows:

- Any 0 Do not apply TPO Where a tree has attracted a zero score, there is a clearly identifiable reason not to protect it, and indeed to seek to do so is simply bad practice
- 1-6 TPO indefensible This covers trees that have failed to score enough points in sections 1a-c to qualify for an 'other factors' score under 1d. Such trees have little to offer their locality and should not be protected
- 7-11 Does not merit TPO This covers trees which have qualified for a 1d score, though they may not have qualified for Part 2. However, even if they have made it to Part 2, they have failed to pick up significant additional points. This would apply, for example, to a borderline tree in amenity terms that also lacked the protection imperative of a clear threat to its retention
- 12-15 Possibly merits TPO This applies to trees that have qualified under all sections, but have failed to do so convincingly. For these trees, the issue of applying a TPO is likely to devolve to other considerations, such as public pressure, resources and 'gut feeling'
- 16+ Definitely merits TPO Trees scoring 16 or more are those that have passed both the amenity and expediency assessments, where the application of a TPO is fully justified based on the field assessment exercise

TREE EVALUATION METHOD FOR PRESERVATION ORDERS - TEMPO

SURVEY DATA SHEET & DECISION GUIDE

Postal Address/Location		97 Main Street Little Downham Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 2SX	
Date:	06/04/2025	Surveyor:	Kevin Drane

DESCRIPTION OF TREE(S) – Please continue on separate sheet if needed		
Category	Description (incl. species)	Situation
T1	Lime – twin stemmed from 2.5m, crown weighted to southeast due to large Poplar nearby, good health/vigour, no significant defects visible when visited	In rear garden approx. 6m from boundary as per plan

REFER TO GUIDANCE NOTE FOR ALL DEFINITIONS

Part 1: Amenity assessment

a) Condition & suitability for TPO

- 5) Good Highly suitable
- 3) Fair/satisfactory Suitable
- 1) Poor Unlikely to be suitable
- 0) Dead/dying/dangerous* Unsuitable

Score & Notes
T1 = 3 due to being crown suppressed on northern aspect by neighbouring Poplar that is due for removal

** Relates to existing context and is intended to apply to severe irremediable defects only*

b) Retention span (in years) & suitability for TPO

- 5) 100+ Highly suitable
- 4) 40-100 Very suitable
- 2) 20-40 Suitable
- 1) 10-20 Just suitable
- 0) <10* Unsuitable

Score & Notes
T1 = 4 approximately 30-40 years old, max possible life expectancy 400years

**Includes trees which are an existing or near future nuisance, including those clearly outgrowing their context, or which are significantly negating the potential of other trees of better quality*

c) Relative public visibility & suitability for TPO

Consider realistic potential for future visibility with changed land use

- 5) Very large trees with some visibility, or prominent large trees Highly suitable
- 4) Large trees, or medium trees clearly visible to the public Suitable
- 3) Medium trees, or large trees with limited view only Suitable
- 2) Young, small, or medium/large trees visible only with difficulty Barely suitable
- 1) Trees not visible to the public, regardless of size Probably unsuitable

Score & Notes
T1 = 3 currently screened by large Poplar that is due for removal

d) Other factors

Trees must have accrued 7 or more points (with no zero score) to qualify

- 5) Principal components of formal arboricultural features, or veteran trees
- 4) Tree groups, or principal members of groups important for their cohesion
- 3) Trees with identifiable historic, commemorative or habitat importance
- 2) Trees of particularly good form, especially if rare or unusual
- 1) Trees with none of the above additional redeeming features (inc. those of indifferent form)
- 1) Trees with poor form or which are generally unsuitable for their location

Score & Notes
T1 = 1 though it will have some habitat importance within the garden due to scale and being native species

Part 2: Expediency assessment

Trees must have accrued 10 or more points to qualify

- 5) Immediate threat to tree inc. S.211 Notice
- 3) Foreseeable threat to tree
- 2) Perceived threat to tree
- 1) Precautionary only

Score & Notes

T1 = 5 S211 notice expired and identified for removal via subsidence report though not directly linked to the damage.

Part 3: Decision guide

- Any 0 Do not apply TPO
- 1-6 TPO indefensible
- 7-11 Does not merit TPO
- 12-15 TPO defensible just
- 16+ Definitely merits TPO

Add Scores for Total:

T1 = 16 Merits TPO

Decision:

Request subsidence company reconsider action but serve TPO if they refuse.