

Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders

Prior to seeking consent to raise a Tree Preservation Order the Council's Arboricultural Officer visits the site and completes a Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders assessment (TEMPO). The method, developed by an Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association, is a systematised assessment tool and has been widely used across the arboricultural profession since its introduction in 2009 (see www.flac.uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TEMPO-GN.pdf).

The TEMPO methodology is open, to a degree, to the interpretation and judgement of the assessor but invites consideration of amenity and expediency; each criterion is given a score of between 0 and 5 and there are guidance notes for the assessor to help provide a consistent level of assessment. A copy of the assessment sheet is given overleaf.

The four broad headings that are considered under amenity are:

- Tree condition and suitability
- Retention span in years
- Relative public visibility
- Other factors, subdivided as follows:
 - Principal components of arboricultural features, or veteran trees
 - Tree groups, or members of groups important for their cohesion
 - Trees with identifiable historic, commemorative or habitat importance
 - Trees of particularly good form, especially if rare or unusual
 - Trees with none of the above additional redeeming features

The second consideration is an assessment of expediency, and identifies four levels of threat to the tree;

- An immediate threat to the tree
- A foreseeable threat
- A perceived threat
- No obvious threat at all

Each criterion is given a score and the aggregate score that the tree achieves is used as a guide to suggest whether the tree would merit inclusion in a TPO or not. The decision guide suggests four outcomes based upon the aggregate score, provided that no zero scores were awarded. If a tree scores 6 or less it is felt likely that a decision to serve a TPO would be indefensible, if the range was between 7 and 11 a TPO would not be merited; if the tree scored between 12 and 15 a TPO might be merited and if the tree scored 16 or more the serving of a new TPO would be merited.

The guidance reminds the assessor that the method is not prescriptive (except in relation to zero scores): TEMPO merely recommends a course of action. Arboriculture is the practice of balancing the interests of trees, people and structures (which are sometimes competing and conflicting) and it should be noted that TEMPO does not make any allowance for the relationship that an owner or neighbour may have with a tree, issues that might be grouped together under the heading of "liveability", or the relationship between a tree and a structure. It is possible therefore that a tree scoring 16, and so 'definitely meriting' a TPO, might not be included for protection for reasons unconnected with its attributes.

TREE EVALUATION METHOD FOR PRESERVATION ORDERS - TEMPO

Date:

App:

Part 1: Amenity assessment

a) Condition & suitability for TPO; where trees in good or fair condition have poor form, deduct 1 point

5 Good	Highly suitable
3 Fair	Fairly Suitable
1 Poor	Unlikely to be suitable
0 Dead or dangerous*	Unsuitable

Notes:

**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

Notes:

**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

Notes:

d) Other factors

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

0

5	Principal components of arboricultural features, or veteran trees
4	Tree groups, or 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)

Part 2: Expediency assessment

Trees must have accrued 9 or more points to qualify

0

5	Immediate threat to tree
3	Foreseeable threat to tree
2	Perceived threat to tree
1	Precautionary only

Notes:

Part 3: Decision guide

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

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