

ARBORICULTURAL REPORT

Summary Report for Cumberland Council

Prepared by Alistair Hearn

Reference: 4/25/2375/TPO

Location: TALL TREES, VICTORIA ROAD, WHITEHAVEN.

Officer: Demi Crawford

Date: 19 December 2025

CONSULTANTS REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

APPLICATION TREE NO.	SPECIES	PROPOSED WORKS
Nos.1-5	5x Sycamore tree	Crown reduction of 5 Sycamore trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order
APPLICANT'S REASON		
'Sycamore trees. Trees 1 to 5 are Sycamore trees. I want Crown Reduction on trees 1-5 which are on Mr O'Prays property. Trees 1-5 on the diagram (section 7) belong to Mr Simon O'Pray. They are too tall and I request Crown Reduction to reduce the height on trees 1-5. The trees should be the height of no more than the roof of my house.'		

DISCUSSION

The Sycamore trees are in the mature age class and exhibit normal vitality, with no obvious significant defects. They form a cohesive group on neighbouring land and make a strong collective contribution to the character and visual amenity of the area. Given their current condition and growing environment, it is reasonable to expect that these trees have a remaining life expectancy in excess of 40 years.

The My Neighbourhood website shows these trees are protected by Tree Preservation Order No. 1 (1978) and therefore benefit from statutory protection. The TEMPO assessment confirms that they clearly merit this protection due to their size, good health, longevity, and the level of public amenity they provide to both the local and wider landscape.

The proposed works, as described in the application, are insufficiently defined and open to interpretation. As such, they do not comply with current arboricultural best practice or with the requirements of British Standard BS 3998:2010 (Tree Work – Recommendations), which emphasises the need for precise, proportionate, and justified pruning specifications.

Excessive or poorly specified pruning would be likely to result in an unacceptable level of harm to the trees. The removal of a significant proportion of the crown would reduce the trees' ability to photosynthesise and produce carbohydrates, thereby adversely affecting their health and long-term viability. Furthermore, such

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intervention would increase the risk of decay, as decay fungi are able to colonise dysfunctional or stressed wood.

Given the trees' protected status, good condition, high amenity value, and the ambiguous work specification, I consider the proposed works are not justified and would risk causing unnecessary and irreversible harm to the trees.

The current Government guidance for TPO applications ([tposguide.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trees-and-planning/trees-and-trees-in-the-planning-process)) states: *'It is vitally important that the application sets out clearly what work is proposed.'* And goes on to say *'if the proposal is to prune a tree the application should clarify exactly what work is envisaged. A proposal simply to 'top' the tree or to 'lop' or 'cut back' some branches is too vague because it fails to describe the extent of the work.'* The following section states *'If the LPA receive a vague application they are advised to refer back to the applicant and seek clarification. If they grant consent to an application which is open to several interpretations the LPA may find it difficult to take enforcement action in cases where the work falls within one of those interpretations, even though the LPA believe the work exceeds that for which they intended to grant consent. Any clarification of an application should be confirmed in writing, either by modifying the original application or withdrawing it and submitting a new one.'*

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the applicant provides a detailed work specification and adequate justification for the proposed work. The current description is ambiguous and open to interpretation. A clear and precise specification will ensure compliance with best practice and allow proper assessment of the potential impacts on the protected trees.

The applicant should obtain the tree owner's consent prior to carrying out any works.

Alternatively, the applicant may seek advice from a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant or an experienced tree-work contractor, who can provide appropriate pruning recommendations in accordance with British Standard BS 3998 and ensure that any proposed works are justified, proportionate, and clearly defined.

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TEMPO Assessment				
Part 1: Amenity Assessment				
a) Condition & Suitability: 5-Good = <i>Highly Suitable</i> 3-Fair/Satisfactory = <i>Suitable</i> 1-Poor = Unlikely to be <i>suitable</i> 0-Dead/dying/dangerous = <i>Unsuitable</i>	3	b) Retention span (in years) & suitability for TPO: 5-100+ = <i>Highly Suitable</i> 4-40-100 = <i>Very suitable</i> 2-20-40 = <i>Suitable</i> 1-10-20 = <i>Just suitable</i> 0-10 = <i>Unsuitable</i>		4
c) Relative public visibility & suitability for TPO: 5-Very large with some visibility, or prominent large trees = <i>Highly Suitable</i> 4-Large trees, or medium trees clearly visible to the public = <i>Suitable</i> 3-Medium trees, or large trees with limited view only = <i>Suitable</i> 2-Young, small, or medium/large trees visible only with difficulty = <i>Barely suitable</i> 1-Trees not visible to the public, regardless of size = <i>Unsuitable</i>	4	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	4
Part 2: Expediency Assessment trees must have accrued 10 or more points to qualify:			Part 3: Decision guide	
5-Immediate threat to tree inc. s.211 Notice 3-Foreseeable threat to tree 2- Perceived threat to tree 1-Precautionary only	2	Any 0 = <i>Do not apply TPO</i> 1-6 = <i>TPO indefensible</i> 7-11 = <i>Does not merit TPO</i> 12-15 = <i>TPO defensible</i> 16+ = <i>Definitely merits TPO</i>		17