

Guidance Notes for Submission of Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP) to Tree Work Vetting Panels (TWVPs) in CEDD

ABOUT THE GUIDANCE NOTES

The Guidance Notes aim to provide a general reference for project teams to consider all technical aspects pertinent to the preparation of a TPRP. They are advisory in nature and are by no means a set of rules to be followed in a prescriptive manner, since each submission will be considered on individual case merits.

The Guidance Notes are applicable to Situation [S1] to [S6] under CEDD TC No. 03/2025 – Tree Works Vetting Panels.

Reference to government circulars, practice notes, guidelines, manual etc. listed in the Guidance Notes may be updated by relevant departments/policy bureaux from time to time. Submissions shall be prepared with reference made with the updated version to ensure that all the latest requirements have been fully considered.

Important Notes to Project Teams

1. TWVPs in CEDD will not handle or vet any of the following cases/submissions:
 - i. types of tree removal where a TPRP is not necessary in accordance with paragraphs 25(a) to 25(c) of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020;
 - ii. slope improvement works under PWP Item 5101CX that are administered by LandsD;
 - iii. any TPRP being considered by respective government department(s) according to DEVB TC(W) No. 7/2015 (which shall be continued until completion of the corresponding government projects or tree removals arising from arboricultural maintenance);
 - iv. any TPRP that is or will be examined and/or vetted by any TWVP formed in another government department or in Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of DEVB, in accordance with paragraphs 16 to 20 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020; and
 - v. trees require emergency removal, i.e. trees with imminent danger or trees leading to a justified emergency situation. Project teams shall follow requirements set out in paragraphs 27 to 29 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020 and DEVB TC(W) No. 6/2011.
2. Prior to formal TPRP submissions¹ to respective TWVPs, project teams shall identify maintenance/management department(s) for existing/newly planted/compensatory/transplanted vegetation (including trees) and obtain their written consent/agreement to take over upon completion of the project works². In the case of large-scale development proposals, where written consent/agreement from the future maintenance department(s) may not be practicable (e.g. the tree maintenance department(s) is not yet determined at the time of application) follow-up submissions of TPRPs at the design stage shall be required for these cases.
3. Irrespective of types/nature of TPRPs involving trees of particular interest (TPI), including OVTs and stonewall trees, project teams shall follow the requirements and procedures stipulated in the “Management Guidelines for Stonewall Trees” and the “Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement” (TRAM Guidelines). In the TPRP submissions, the project team shall provide a summary of documentary evidence on compliance with DEVB’s requirements and/or incorporating GLTMS’s case-specific recommendations/advice.
4. According to paragraph 12 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020, “If removal of a tree or tree(s) is absolutely necessary, whether in government projects or arboricultural maintenance, a Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP) shall be prepared to justify the need for tree removal.” In government projects, project teams shall preserve and protect trees throughout all stages, in accordance with requirements set out in paragraphs 31 to 45 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020. In this

¹ TPRP submissions include new/initial submissions, resubmissions, follow-up submissions, amendment/revision submissions as well as completion reports, whichever is applicable. Except for Situations [S4], [S5] and [S6] where written notification is required.

² See DEVB TC(W) No. 6/2015 for details. In addition, project teams are reminded to make adequate provisions under the works tenders/contracts to incorporate those specific requirements from Highways Department (HyD) for hand-over of the existing/preserved and/or newly planted vegetation (including trees). See the latest version of "Requirements for Handover of Vegetation to Highways Department and "Input Guideline - HyD Slope Vegetation Inventory (SVI) Records", available at HyD's homepage.

regard, project teams are reminded that the TPRPs shall be properly considered, planned and implemented to ensure a balanced approach.

5. When preparing the TPRPs, project teams shall also make reference to Appendix C – Guidelines on Preparation of Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020.

6. Tree survey shall be conducted by a Registered Landscape Architect (RLA)³ or a Registered Arborist under the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel managed by the GLTMS or personnel of equivalent qualification. The full name and the registration number / relevant qualification of the personnel who conducted the tree survey and prepared the tree assessment schedule (TAS) shall be stated in the TAS.

7. In any case involving extensive vegetation removal (including tree pruning and/or removal), the project teams shall proactively devise and make provisions under the works contracts for appropriate yard waste treatment during the implementation stage⁴ of respective TPRPs.

8. For proposed planting recommended by the TPRPs that will form the mitigation measures⁵ under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) and/or Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131), project teams should seek written consent or approval on the proposed planting (including any subsequent revision, amendments, or deviations implemented on site) from the relevant authorities (for example, EPD, TPB and PlanD).

Submissions to Panel A (for Situation [S1])

9. Submissions under Situation [S1] shall follow Integrated Management Systems (IMS) Operation Procedures OP-11.

Simplified submission to Panel B (for Situation [S2])

10. Submissions under Situation [S2] not involving TPI shall be in the form of a simplified proforma as provided in **Appendix B** of CEDD TC No. 03/2025.

Written Notification to Panel B (for Situations [S4], [S5] and [S6])

11. Instead of a full submission, for non-sensitive Situations⁶ [S4], [S5] and [S6], project teams shall submit a written notification to the Secretary of Panel B **within 21 calendar days** after

³ Registered Landscape Architect (RLA) means a professionally qualified landscape architect, who has registered under the Landscape Architects Registration Ordinance (Cap. 516), and is engaged to be responsible for the TPRPs concerned.

⁴ Including maintenance period/defect correction period, or establishment period, if any, is involved under respective works contracts, term contracts or maintenance contracts.

⁵ Any of those already implemented or recommended in any Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and/or Ecological Impact Assessment under Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) and/or Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131).

⁶ Non-sensitive situations generally refers to cases/sites: (i) where none of the existing trees are TPIs as defined in paragraph 3.3.1 of DEVB's TRAM Guidelines; and/or (ii) tree(s) concerned is/are not found within or abutting any sensitive sites.

execution/completion of the tree works concerned on site.⁷ The purpose is to facilitate auditing by the GLTMS of DEVB. It is the responsibility of project teams to keep full records including any subsequent updates to tree data⁸ (as well as the compensatory planting proposal, if any) in respective project files that are kept and maintained in individual registries in their offices.

12. In case the tree(s) concerned is/are within or abutting sensitive sites⁹, project teams shall inform and obtain written consent/approval directly from the relevant government departments or respective authorities. Subsequently, the project teams shall copy such documentary evidence to the respective Secretary of Panel B within 21 calendar days upon receipt of consent/approval notified or granted by the authority/ies concerned.

13. If the required tree works is arising from TRA Form 1 or Form 2, project teams shall take note of and follow other specific requirements regarding action, monitoring, inspection and reporting as per the Triage System for Trees in Category 1 Zones as well as meeting the latest requirements stipulated in DEVB's TRAM Guidelines.

Full Submissions to Panel C or Panel D (for Situation [S3])

14. For Situation [S3] where full submission (to TWVP Panel C or Panel D) is necessary, project teams shall prepare a full submission of TPRP in accordance with the format and requirements in Appendix C of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020.

15. In the case of large-scale development proposals with different implementation phases and/or by various works contract packages, the government officers in the project team are advised to consult the Landscape Division (LD) prior to any formal submission to respective Panels.

14. TPRP for submission under Situation [S3] should be prepared by a RLA¹⁰ with his/her signature accompanying the RLA registration number. Project teams should duly consider such requirement in respective consultancy agreement for new projects to ensure competent personnel are engaged in the contract provision.

15. The subject government officer in the project team will be notified via a memo from the Secretary regarding the TWVP's decision, i.e. TPRP submission is approved with/without conditions¹¹ or is rejected with reason(s). Upon approval of the TPRP, the project team shall provide a full set of the approved submission in an electronic format.

16. When a *tree group survey* as outlined in Appendix C1 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020 is

⁷ In the case of the Triage System for Trees in Category 1 Zones under DEVB's TRAM Guidelines, project teams shall also take note of other specific requirements in the Guidelines for their separate action, including but not limited to monitoring, inspections and reporting, etc.

⁸ Including but not limited to botanical name, Chinese common name, tree sizes (overall height, crown spread or diameter at breast height (DBH)), actual location, site photos, site diary, etc.

⁹ In the context of this TC, examples of sensitive sites include but not limited to the project area and/or impacted trees within Country Parks or Special Areas under the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208), Marine Parks and Marine Reserve under the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476), Wetland Conservation Area (WCA) or Wetland Buffer Area (WBA) designated under Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the Register of SSSI kept by Planning Department, Ecologically Important Streams (EIS) identified by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, etc.

¹⁰ For detailed arrangement, see item VIII (ii) for Situation [S3] in Checklists for Submissions under Situation [S2] to [S6].

¹¹ Including but not limited to any follow-up submissions for approval/acceptance.

adopted, due to genuine practical difficulties (e.g. difficult site accessibility), the TPRP shall include but not limited to the following information :

- i. A brief textual description on the methodology of tree group survey being adopted;
- ii. full record/illustration to substantiate that reasonable efforts have been explored to access the site;
- iii. documents to demonstrate that the site is restricted to access;
- iv. aerial photos in high resolution (min. 300 ppi) with clear demarcation of each tree group (TG) and a key plan indicating the respective location of each TG;
- v. site photos taken at least from two representative angles for a tree group;
- vi. tree group survey schedule with information of tree species (main composition/mix of species and dominant species), number, size range, health condition, recommendation, etc.;
- vii. identification of TPI, if any;
- viii. description of each tree group; and
- ix. drone equipment or other advance technologies that help to demonstrate the size of tree group and to identify any potential TPIs with large tree crown sizes, should be considered where applicable.

17. For large-scale projects, such as site formation works and advance infrastructure works, tree group survey can be adopted subject to the justification(s) provided. Tree group survey will only be considered with valid reasons e.g. for those sites/areas with restricted access. TWVP may consider granting acceptable in principle, provided that all sufficient information mentioned above are submitted, and full justifications of the proposed tree removal are provided. Prior to any activities 12 on site within the tree group surveyed area(s), the applicant (project team) shall be required to submit follow-up submission(s) of a TPRP¹³, with an individual tree survey carried out once possession of or access to the area(s) concerned is granted by respective DLOs of LandsD. The submission of TPRP can be made in phases to suit the works programme.

18. Subsequent to any approval granted by the TWVP, amendment submissions to the approved TPRP would be required in the event of:

- i. any additional tree removal; or any amendment to the tree treatment; or
- ii. any revision to the compensatory planting proposal implemented or to be implemented on site.

19. Project teams should keep full records on any submission packages, including as-built records, and any amendment on the figures in the corresponding TPRP.

20. After the completion of the project/tree works, the applicant (project team) shall report to TWVP with full records including but not limited to as-built drawings, tree failure reports and all approval records. In Situation [S3], the report¹⁴ shall be prepared, checked and signed by a RLA, and submitted by a professional/senior professional grade government officer in the project team

¹² Irrespective of the scale involved, site activities in the context of this Guidance Notes include but not limited to site formations, demolition, excavation, backfilling, road widening works, formation of temporary access, stockpiling, tree pruning/removal/transplanting.

¹³ A tree survey plan, a tree assessment schedule (TAS) as per Appendix C1 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020, a tree protection plan (showing TPZs of each TPI to be preserved, if any) and compensatory planting proposal.

¹⁴ Except for in-house project, the report shall be checked and/or reviewed by the project landscape architect.

with a covering memo, to the respective Secretary of TWVP. The completion report shall also serve as retrievable records kept in the individual registries in the respective project teams' offices. Tree works and/or planting works should be conducted and recorded in compliance with the approved TPRPs.

21. In case of any practically unavoidable deviation(s) in any parts/portion of the completed tree works from an approved TPRP, full justifications shall be submitted by project teams, together with records/documentary evidence on acceptance/approval as well as records of taking over by respective vegetation maintenance department(s), to the TWVP concerned for acceptance. Separately, the project team shall carry out and record appropriate rectification/remedial work on site and/or resubmit the completion report to the TWVP concerned. If the contractor/consultant is found responsible for the discrepancy, the project team should appropriately reflect it in the contractor/consultant performance report and maintain all relevant records/supporting documents accordingly. Similarly, if there is any obvious inadequacy observed in the completion report, project team should appropriately reflect it in the contractor/consultant performance report accordingly¹⁵. In a serious event involving mis-conduct of the RLA engaged by the contractor/consultant, project teams should also consider informing the Landscape Architects Registration Board (LARAB) for its attention accordingly.

22. To facilitate consideration by the TWVPs, the project team shall appropriately provide textual description accompanying graphical illustrations by relevant plans/sections/elevations to show overall landscape design, boundary landscape treatment and planting proposal. Any positive provisions and/or potential enhancement to improve the general/surrounding environment may also be included in the full TPRP submissions as supplementary information. For example:

- i. projects or proposed developments at visually sensitive locations or in areas of special landscape character where appropriate landscape treatments are considered and allowed in the design and contract provisions to ameliorate visual impacts and/or conserve landscape resources;
- ii. project teams are recommended to adopt a holistic approach, with consideration of best practices to enhance biodiversity and urban forestry in different stages of the works/developments concerned;
- iii. project teams are encouraged to devise and implement innovative applications of blue-green infrastructures, with potential scope identified and allowed for creation of new landscape features, in development projects such as Development at Anderson Road (DAR), Kai Tak Development (KTD), Harbourfront Areas, Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong Action Areas (KBKTAA), New Development Areas (NDAs) or Tung Chung New Town Extension (TCNTE), etc.

Other Relevant Technical Aspects to be Addressed by the Project Teams:

23. Particular attention should be paid to the following situations: -

- i. for protection of rare/endangered plant species¹⁶, the Forestry Regulations (Cap. 96, section 3) and the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) shall be complied with. In case of doubt, AFCD should be consulted in advance and at early planning stage as appropriate;

¹⁵ Paragraphs 46 and 50 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020 also refer.

¹⁶ Rare/endangered plant species shall make reference with “*Rare and Precious Plants of Hong Kong*” (AFCD, 2003), IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and China Plant Red Data Book, the Forestry Regulations (Cap.96A) and the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap.586).

- ii. in the case for trees infected (or suspected being infected) with Brown Root Rot Disease, the project office should follow the latest procedures and meet those requirements according to the Manual on the Management of Brown Root Rot Disease, promulgated by the GLTMS of DEVB; and
- iii. in case of any extensive or blanket removal of undesirable tree species¹⁷ causing significant loss of greenery, landscape advice from LD/HQ should be sought. Replanting should be favorably considered if space and site conditions permits. Sensitivity should be taken with tree removal proposals and the consultation with the stakeholders should be made in advance.

Advisory Remarks to Project Teams during Implementation/Works Stage:

24. Throughout different stages of government projects, project teams (including all site personnel) shall take note of other related regulations and/or ordinances (e.g. Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) and the Forests and Countryside Ordinance (Cap. 96)) with provisions for protection of vegetation, flora or fauna species, especially when mobilizing to commence general site clearance, vegetation/tree removal or pruning works¹⁸ in association with any temporary or permanent works, stockpiling or access.

25. When any part of the project sites, venues¹⁹, works areas or access is taken into possession of, the project team should arrange to carry out annual tree risk assessment (TRA) and to ensure that appropriate risk mitigation measures will be implemented (such as cordon off the potential fall zone of the trees concerned, removal of defective parts or the entire hazardous trees posing imminent risk of failure and etc.) in a timely manner.

25. Project teams including site supervision personnel shall also take note of the prevailing requirements and timeframe for reporting to the GLTMS for preparation during wet season and handling tree failure incident(s).

27. In the event of any unauthorised tree removal or damage of trees within the works site, the subject government officer shall take due action as well as informing the GLTMS in accordance with paragraphs 50, 51 and 53 of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020 when applicable.

Useful References

28. Related government circulars, guidelines, practice notes or other relevant references are:

Government Circulars

- i. DEVB TC(W) No. 5/2020 – Registration and Preservation of Old and Valuable Trees
- ii. DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020 – Tree Preservation
- iii. DEVB TC(W) No. 1/2019 – Railway Protection
- iv. DEVB TC(W) No. 1/2018 – Soft Landscape Provisions for Highway Structures

¹⁷ In the context of TPRP, an undesirable tree species implies an invasive, exotic and aggressive self-seeding tree, e.g. *Leucaena leucocephala*.

¹⁸ Correct pruning practices shall be adopted with reference to (i) Guidelines on Tree Pruning, (ii) Tree Management Practice Note No. 3 : Tree Pruning, and (iii) paragraph 43 (c) of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020

¹⁹ Under a Permanent Government Land Allocation (PGLA) or a Temporary Government Land Allocation (TGLA) including Simplified Temporary Land Allocation (STLA) procedures.

- v. DEVB TC(W) No. 6/2015 – Maintenance of Vegetation and Hard Landscape Features
- vi. DEVB TC(W) No. 3/2012 – Site Coverage of Greenery for Government Building Projects
- vii. DEVB TC(W) No. 3/2024 – Allocation of Space for Quality Greening along Roads
- viii. ETWB TC(W) No. 5/2005 – Protection of Natural Streams/rivers from the Impacts of Construction Works.

Government Practice Notes, Guidelines, Manual etc.

- ix. Guidelines and Practice Notes promulgated by the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS), DEVB (for latest versions and other relevant guidelines, see <https://www.greening.gov.hk/en/home/index.html>)
 - Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement
 - Guidelines on Tree Preservation during Development
 - Guidelines on Tree Pruning
 - Guidelines on Soil Volume for Urban Trees
 - Management Guidelines for Stonewall Trees
 - Tree Management Practice Note No. 1 – Tree Preservation during Construction
 - Tree Management Practice Note No. 3 – Tree Pruning
 - Tree Management Practice Note No. 4 – Management of Brown Root Rot Disease Infected Tree
 - Proper Planting Practices
 - Right Plant Right Place
 - Street Tree Selection Guide
 - Manual on the Management of Brown Root Rot Disease (BRR Manual)
 - Guidelines on Yard Waste Reduction and Treatment
 - Guidelines on Greening of Noise Barriers
- x. Geotechnical Engineering Office Publication No. 1/2011 – Technical Guidelines on Landscape Treatment for Slopes
- xi. Chapter 4 of the Project Administration Handbook (PAH):
 - paragraph 1.7 - Tree Preservation
 - paragraph 2.2 - Project Design and Estimates (regarding Selection of basic scheme and life-cycle costing consideration)
 - paragraph 4.7 - Landscape and Greening Works
- xii. Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) issued by Planning Department:

- Chapter 4 - Recreation, Open Space and Greening,
 - Chapter 10 - Conservation
 - Chapter 11 - Urban Design Guidelines
- xiii. Planning Department Practice Note for Professional Persons (PNPP) No. 1/2019 - Processing and Compliance Checking of Landscape Submissions related to Planning Applications.
- xiv. Requirements for Handover of Vegetation to Highways Department
(see https://www.hyd.gov.hk/en/technical_references/technical_document/)
- xv. Guidelines on Handling Yard Waste for Recycling and Disposal, promulgated by Environmental Planning Department (EPD)
- xvi. General Standards and Maintenance Requirements for Landscape Works to be Handed Over to LCSD for Horticultural Maintenance, issued by Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
- xvii. Nature Conservation Practice Note (NCPN) promulgated by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
- NCPN No. 02 – Measurement of Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
 - NCPN No. 03 – The Use of Plant Names
 - NCPN No. 06 - Guidelines on Clearing Refuse in Mangroves

Other Relevant Material

- xviii. Guidelines for Planning and Carrying out Construction Works at Egrettries, issued by Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, 2nd edition, November 2018 (<https://www.hkbws.org.hk/cms/index.php/reports>).