

Old and Valuable Tree in Victoria Park removed by LCSD

To ensure public safety, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (August 23) removed one Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) with a potential risk of collapse in Victoria Park.

The tree being removed was an *Erythrina variegata* L. listed on the Register of OVTs (registration number LCSD WCH/36) with a height of about 14 metres.

The LCSD had been closely monitoring the tree's health and structural condition, and the tree was found to be infested by *Erythrina* Gall Wasp (EGW) and affected by fungal infection since 2005 and 2019 respectively. Maintenance works and inspections were then strengthened. The department had taken immediate corresponding follow-up actions to preserve this tree, including applying organic mulching inside the dripline area, applying fertiliser, conducting soil aeration and crown reduction, cabling, and using pesticide and fungicide as appropriate. Although the damage caused by EGW was under control, the fungal infection kept spreading upward from the roots through the trunk. As a result, the infected roots and trunk were found to have advanced wood decay with cracks. The damages seriously affected the structural integrity of the tree and posed a risk of collapse.

Having consulted and being supported by the Wan Chai District Council, the Urban Forestry Advisory Panel and the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section of the Development Bureau, the LCSD removed the tree today and will replant one *Pterocarpus indicus* Willd. at the location.

A spokesman for the LCSD reiterated that the department would continue to adopt a prudent approach in inspecting and managing trees under its care. Removal of problematic trees will be undertaken only when no other viable risk mitigation measure is available.