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TOP STORIES



MRT stop shifts to save these trees...

But these will probably be axed

By Teh Jen Lee

THREE Government agencies have worked together to save 11 trees in a Holland Village carpark.

These towering sentries at the junction of Holland Road and Holland Avenue were in danger of being cut down to make way for the Circle Line's Holland Station, which was to have been built underground there.



But the Land Transport Authority (LTA) took the trees into consideration when planning the station's location.

An LTA spokesman said: 'We consulted the Urban Redevelopment Authority and the National Parks Board on how we can conserve as many trees as possible in the area

as well as minimise inconvenience and disruption to the neighbourhood.'

STATION MOVED

They decided to shift the station east towards Farrer Road in order to conserve the 'signature trees' in the triangular carpark fronting Holland Village.

Shopkeeper Henry Ng, 48, who runs a family business nearby, estimates that the 11 trees saved are all at least 50 years old.

'When my father ran the shop 50 years ago, the trees were already there. The residents here all know these trees, they should be kept,' he said.

Madam Angie Ng, a retired teacher in her 60s, was glad to hear that the trees will stay.

As a regular visitor to Holland Village, she had been worried about the old rain trees since construction work started.

She said: 'Without the trees, there'll be no Holland Village - it will be like any other place in Singapore. The trees are so old that all kinds of plants grow on them, giving the place a distinctive ambience.'

The trees also give much needed shade when the day is hot, giving rise to the popularity of al fresco dining and the cafe culture there.

National University of Singapore student Andrew Wang, 23, goes to Holland Village several times a week, both alone and with his friends.

He said: 'I think the trees give Holland Village its character and charm. You go there to indulge in the bohemian culture and the cuisine. That won't be the same without the lush greenery.'

'I can't imagine Holland Village without those trees. They provide that cool comfort that you can escape into.'

In early April, a letter from LTA was sent to owners and tenants in the area about the Circle Line construction project.

It said the triangular carpark, and another rectangular carpark (above, right) along Holland Avenue, would



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be used as temporary work sites in August this year. No mention was made about the trees in the carparks.



LTA declined to confirm the fate of the trees in the other carpark.

But The New Paper understands that these will probably have to go because their deep roots will affect the safety of the tunnel below.

But these trees are younger and can be more easily replaced.

And of course, getting the MRT is important.

Nurse Geraldine Mendosa, 33, who lives in the apartment next to the second carpark said: 'We really need the MRT, these trees can be replanted.'

However Mrs Kate Flint, 39, a sub-editor, thinks it's a shame that the second carpark's trees can't be saved as well.

She said: 'The trees are just a bit younger compared with the triangular carpark. The trees are a big reason I come here twice a week, they form a lovely green canopy. I suppose the authorities know what they are doing and there is no other way.'

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