

# U-turn: End of the road for 80-year-old tree in Braddell

BY T. RAJAN

AN 80-YEAR-OLD Angsana tree standing in the middle of Braddell Road will be cut down this month, reversing a decision two years ago to save it.

Citing safety concerns, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the National Parks Board (NParks) said they have decided to cut the tree down after receiving feedback from motorists involved in "near-accident situations" along the stretch of road.

So far, no accidents have been reported along the stretch of road opposite Braddell Hill. This is where the road splits into two skirting the tree and rejoins a few metres ahead.

The split lanes were created two years ago when construction of the Lornie-Braddell flyover began.

In a joint statement, the LTA and NParks said they had opted to keep the tree in 2005 because LTA studies had shown that a bifurcated road would be safe if motorists observed the 40kmh speed limit.

As an added precautionary measure, the LTA painted a double white line ahead of the fork in the road and extended the chevron markings in front of the tree.

However, the LTA found that motorists have not been observing the speed limit along the stretch.

"The LTA's ongoing monitoring has revealed that many motorists do not drive within the 40kmh speed limit and consequently run the risk of colliding with the tree," the statement said.

An NParks spokesman said that because of its size, the tree would not be transplanted.

The removal of the tree will begin on Sunday, and lane closures will be in place along Braddell Road from then to Aug 7.

The Lornie-Braddell flyover, costing nearly \$35 million, is part of an extensive project to ease traffic flow along the corridor spanning Braddell Road, Farrer Road and Queensway. It is expected to be completed early next year.



ST FILE PHOTO

**ROAD HAZARD?:** LTA found many motorists do not observe the 40kmh speed limit, running the risk of colliding with the tree.