

APPENDIX 5 - Examples of Common Tree Defects

APPENDIX 5 - COMMON TREE DEFECTS

1.0 Recognising Tree Defects

Trees are living organisms that undergo their normal lifecycles. No tree is absolutely “safe”. Trees may exhibit defects in their health and structural conditions as they grow and age. Recognising the nature and severity of the defects and their implications in tree stability contributes an important part to any tree inspection and risk assessment. Proper mitigation measures to reduce tree hazards can only be made with proper diagnosis of tree problems.

2.0 Common Tree Defects

Healthy trees are exemplified by full crowns, vigorous branches, and healthy, full-sized leaves. However, green foliage in the crown does not ensure that the tree is safe. Trees in good health condition may exhibit structural defects such as hollow trunks, etc. Dead trees should be removed as soon as they are identified.

Common tree defects include wood decay, cracks, weak branch unions, cankers, root problems, poor tree structure, and dead wood. The same type of problems can be seen at different parts of a tree which may constitute different degrees of tree hazards. Therefore it is important to understand signs and symptoms associated with different types of defects during tree inspection.

The ‘Pictorial Guide for Tree Maintenance to Reduce Tree Risks’ ([www.greening.gov.hk/filemanager/content/pdf/tree_care/PictorialGuideForTreeMaintenanceToReduceTreeRisk\(eng\).pdf](http://www.greening.gov.hk/filemanager/content/pdf/tree_care/PictorialGuideForTreeMaintenanceToReduceTreeRisk(eng).pdf)) issued by the GLTMS provides illustrated examples to the identification and proposed mitigation of the various tree defects. Examples of common tree defects are illustrated in Photo 2.1 to 2.10.



Photo 2.1 - Severe leaning



Photo 2.2 - Extensive dieback twigs



Photo 2.3 - Codominant stems with crack/decay



Photo 2.4 - V-shaped Crotch with cracks/split



Photo 2.5 - Severely cut/damaged roots



Photo 2.6 - Fungal fruiting bodies at root





Photo 2.7 - Brown root rot disease

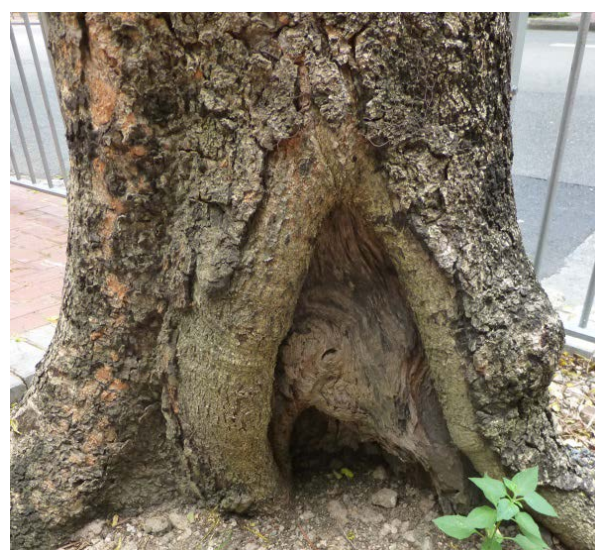


Photo 2.8 - Wood decay/cavity at basal area/root flare

Photo 2.9 - Root-plate movement

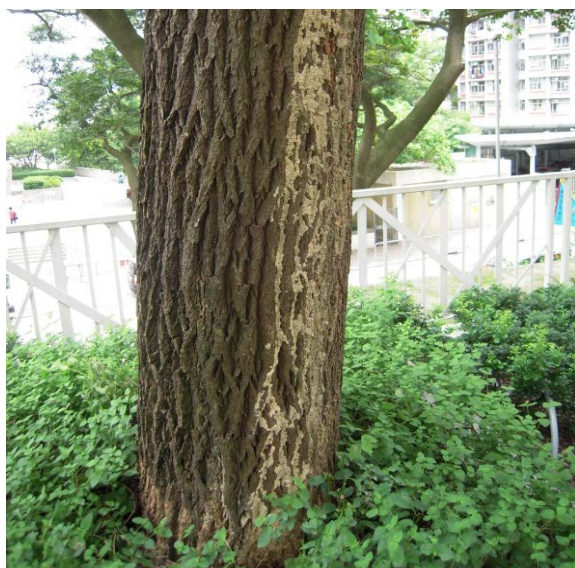


Photo 2.10 – Sign of termites

