

Circular No: URA/PB/2017/08 - PCUDG
Our Ref: DC/ADMIN/CIRCULAR/PB_17
Date: 15 Dec 2017

CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Who should know

Qualified Persons, building owners, developers and tenants

Effective Date

With effect from 15 Dec 2017

Revised Conservation Guidelines, Technical Handbooks and Strategic Sale Sites

1. Since the gazette of the first conservation areas in 1989, URA has continuously aimed to guide and improve the standards of works carried out to conserved buildings.
2. Through conservation guidelines, works carried out to conserved shophouses and bungalows retain the essential architectural features and spatial characteristics of the buildings while allowing flexibility for adaptive reuse.
3. Technical handbooks and best practice guides are available to foster greater appreciation and increase the level of technical competency within the industry.
- A. Revised Conservation Guidelines
4. URA has carried out its latest review of the conservation guidelines in consultation with practicing architects and conservation specialists from both Singapore and abroad. The revised guidelines aim to better protect unique original architecture features and spatial features. New interventions in the historic streetscape will be guided more closely so that overall scale, urban grain and historic character is retained. More details on the key revisions to the conservation guidelines are provided in [Appendix 1](#).
5. For your information, the complete set of revised [conservation guidelines](#) is now available online.
- B. Conservation Technical Handbooks
6. To complement the online URA Conservation Guidelines, URA has collaborated with the local chapter of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS SG) to produce a series of Conservation Technical Handbooks.
7. This is an 8-volume series covering different aspects of technical restoration, architectural elements and material usage. The series will share best practices and technical expertise on restoration works and promote greater

understanding of locally used materials, construction methods and restoration techniques for heritage buildings.

8. The series aims to promote better quality restoration projects, enhance the level of competency within the heritage building industry, and increase appreciation for our built heritage. Through quality technical restoration, our heritage buildings can be better sustained into the future.
9. The first volume in the series, “Conservation Technical Handbook – A Guide For Best Practices / Volume 1 – Introduction”, provides a brief overview of key historic building types and materials found in Singapore, common causes of deterioration and useful information to assist building owners and practitioners in the restoration and care of heritage buildings.
10. This is now available [online](#) for free download.

C. Strategic Sale Sites

11. For strategic sale sites involving conserved buildings, developers may be required to engage a heritage consultant to ensure that the heritage aspects of such sites are adequately addressed upfront and well integrated in the planning and design of the development. The heritage consultant will be requested to carry out thorough investigation, documentation, and assessment of the building’s history, significance and existing condition and present the proposed restoration and maintenance approach before any works commence. Such a requirement will be made known in the sales conditions of tender.
12. I would appreciate it if you could convey the contents of this circular to the relevant members of your organisation.
13. For other information on the master plan, urban design guidelines, private property use and approval, car park locations and availability, private residential property transactions, and conservation areas and buildings, use [URA SPACE](#) (Service Portal and Community e-Services). For feedback or enquiries, please [email](#) us.

Thank you.

CHOU MEI (MS)
GROUP DIRECTOR (CONSERVATION & URBAN DESIGN)
for CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REVISIONS TO CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

1) First Storey Residential Front

Existing Guidelines:

Residential fronts in shophouses are characterised by timber casement windows flanking a double-leafed timber door. The main door often has a pair of half-doors, known as 'pintu pagar', which are often intricately carved. The timber-framed windows usually have timber-panelled shutters, which open inwards and vertical iron security bars. The residential front is a key traditional feature of the shophouse typology and contributes to the character of the historic streetscape. [Fig 1.1]



Fig 1.1: Features of the original Residential Front

Under existing guidelines, selected street blocks are protected under “Residential Front Control” and the original residential front is to be retained. The original residential front cannot be removed and replaced by an open shopfront. Where non-residential use is allowed, some flexibility is granted to change one of the windows to a door for direct access to the upper storey, and to replace plain infill panels with glass for greater transparency.

Revised Guidelines:

To better protect this special feature, all shophouses with residential front which is existing and/or identified in the specific façade restoration guidelines, regardless of land use zoning, shall be retained and restored.

Where non-residential use is allowed the original residential front cannot be changed to 2 doors and 1 window if there are ornamental features e.g. dado tiles below the windows. In such cases, the original 1 door 2 window residential front has to be retained and restored.

2) Rear Extensions for Residential Historic Districts

Existing Guidelines:

In the Residential Historic Districts such as Emerald Hill, Cairnhill and Blair Plain, a new extension can be added at the rear of the main conserved building to provide more living space. The form and height of the new rear extension is guided to maintain the scale and character of the historic roofscape. The rear extension is to be lower than the main roof and is not to exceed the allowable number of storeys for landed housing development.

If a flat roof is proposed at the new rear extension, it can be of any material and is to be lower than the eaves of the main conserved building. If a pitched tile roof is proposed, it can no higher than the ridge of the main roof. The material and pitch are to be the same as those of the main roof. [Fig 2.1]

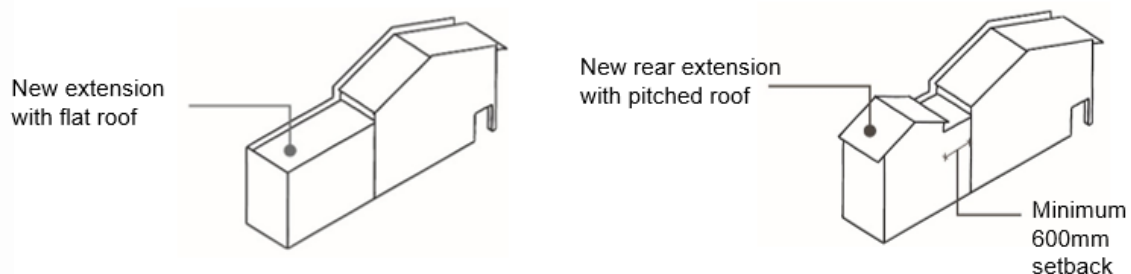


Fig 2.1: Allowable form of new rear extension in Residential Historic Districts

Revised Guidelines:

Revisions have been made to facilitate the use of the roof top on the new extensions:

- a. For new extensions with flat roof, access structures to house staircase and lift with flat or pitched tile roofs can be added. These structures can be higher than the eaves of the main conserved building but lower than the ridge of the main roof. Their size and form should not have excessive visual impact on the historic roofscape. [Fig 2.2]

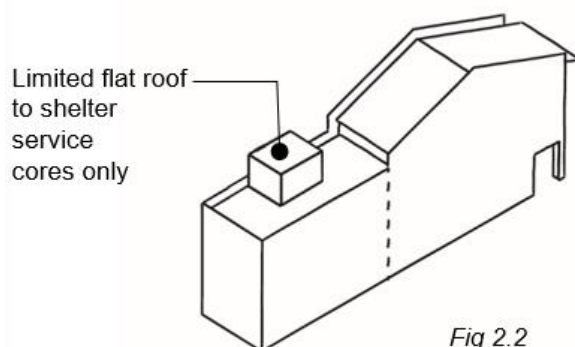
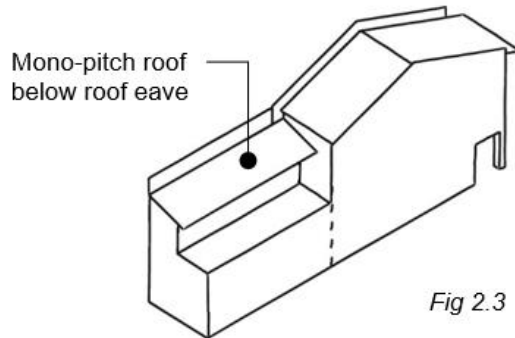
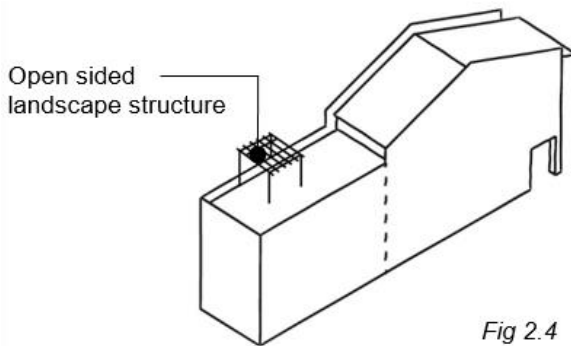


Fig 2.2

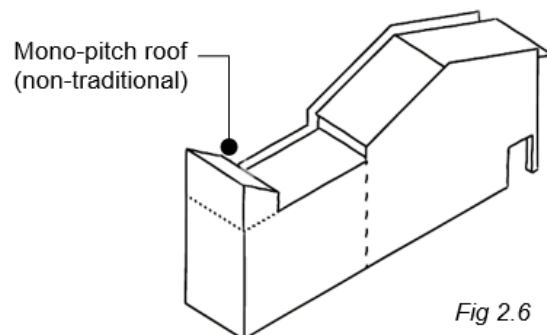
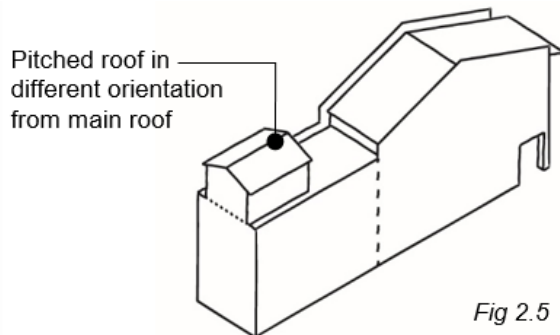
- b. Mono pitched roofs on the new extension similar to the rear service block typology can also be allowed [Fig 2.3]



- c. Open-sided landscape structures to allow greening of the flat roof can be considered. [Fig 2.4]



- d. However, non-traditional roof forms or the use of non-traditional materials on pitched roofs will not be allowed [Fig 2.5 & 2.6]



3) New Rear Extensions for Corner Units In Secondary Settlements

Existing Guidelines:

In Secondary Settlements, a new extension is allowed at the rear of the main conserved shophouse building. The new rear extension can be built up to the allowable storey height for the respective areas.

- a. For corner units with side facades, the pitched roof ridge of the side facade is to be retained and restored. Rear extensions are to be set back behind the roof ridge on the side façade to allow continuity of the corner façade.
- b. For corner units with end gable walls, the new rear extension can be built up to align with the end gable wall.

The allowable rear extension at the corner units may appear visually imposing when the corner shophouse is located next to other low rise conserved shophouses.

[Fig 3.1& 3.2]

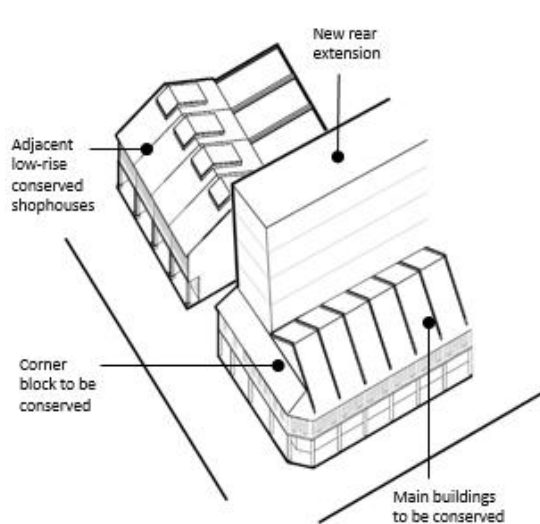


Fig 3.1

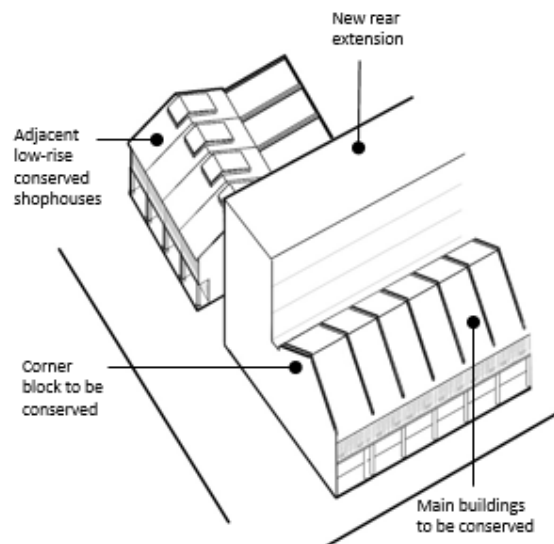


Fig 3.2

Revised Guidelines:

To guide the form of new rear extensions at corner units to be more sensitive to the historic streetscape, the allowable form and height for new rear extensions at corner units adjacent to other low-rise conserved streetblocks have been revised.

- a. For corner units with side facades and pitched roof, the new rear extension is to be no higher than the height of the pitched roof ridge at the side façade [Fig 3.3]

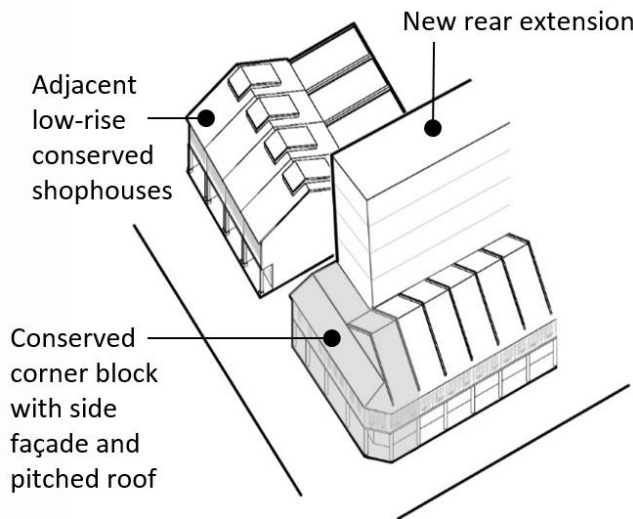


Fig 3.3: Revised allowable envelope for corner units with side façade and pitched roof

- b. For corner units with end gable walls, the new rear extension is to be no higher than the eave of the main pitched roof. [Fig 3.4]

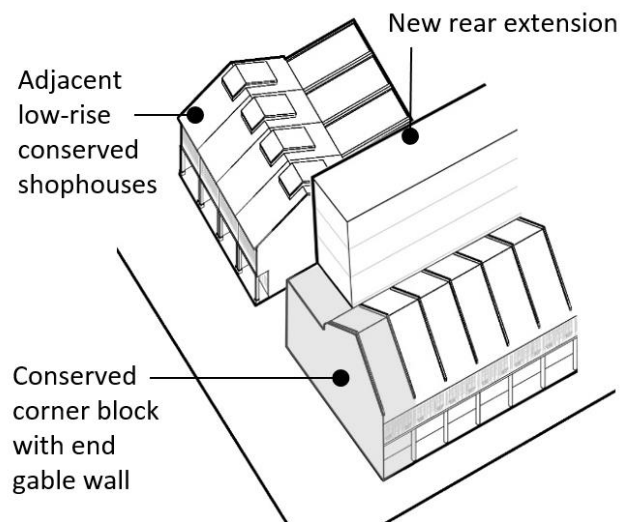


Fig 3.4: Revised allowable envelope for corner units with end gable wall

The changes will not apply to corner units located adjacent to high rise blocks.

4) Type 2 Infill Sites In Secondary Settlements

Existing Guidelines:

Envelope control sites are vacant lands and buildings located within Conservation Areas but not designated for conservation. Type 2 Infill sites in Secondary Settlements are sites located between or adjacent to conserved buildings where the total width of the envelop control sites (could be one unit or multiple units), exceed the width of two typical shophouse units.

Type 2 Infill sites currently can be redeveloped up to the maximum number of storeys allowable within the respective areas. The front façade of the new development is to be set back to road reserve lines. [Fig 4.1]

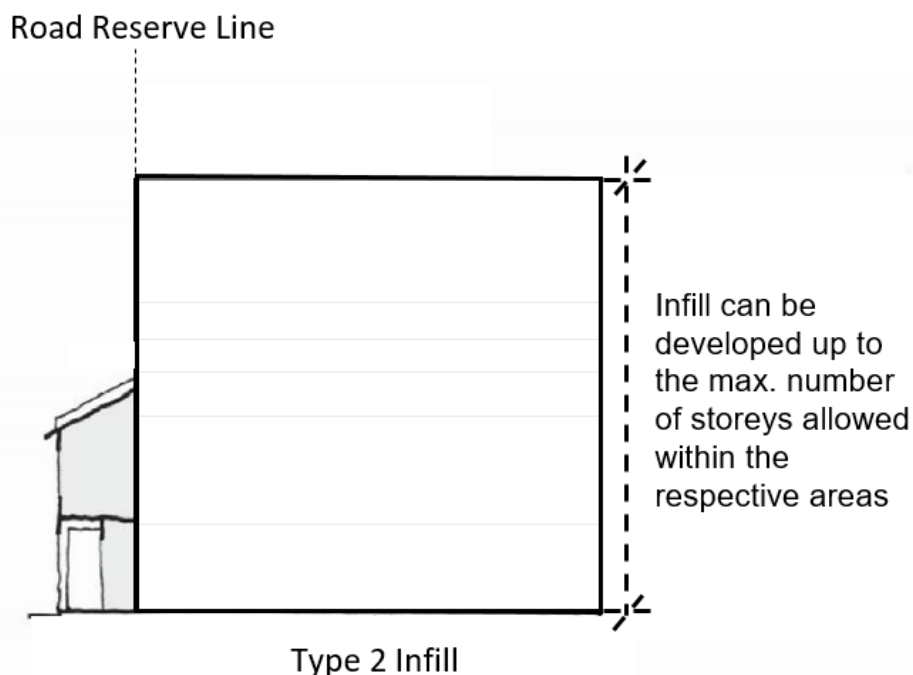


Fig 4.1: Allowable envelope of Type 2 Infill Development in Secondary Settlements

Revised Guidelines:

The guidelines for Type 2 Infill Sites have been revised so that the new developments are more compatible in scale and character with the conserved streetscape:

- a. The front portion of the building shall not exceed the roof ridge height of the adjacent conserved buildings. The front façade of the new development is to line up with the road reserve line (Fig 4.2) or the front façade of the adjacent conserved buildings (Fig 4.3), where possible.
- b. The rear portion of the building can be built up to the maximum number of storeys allowable within the respective area.

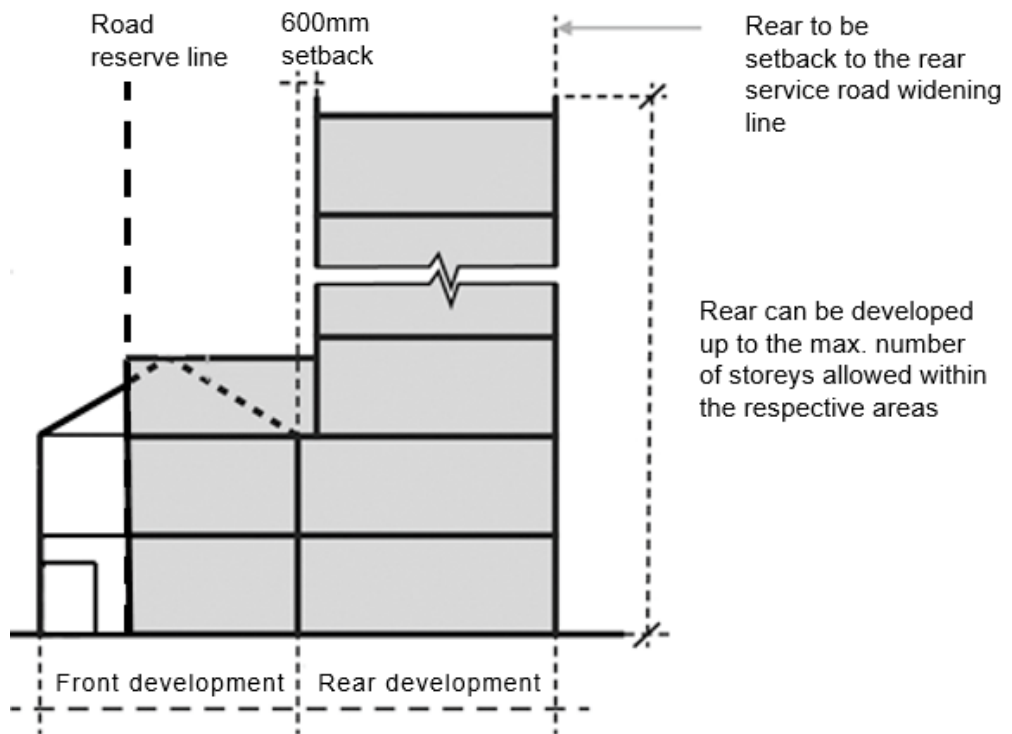


Fig 4.2: Type 2 Infill Site built up to Road Reserve Line

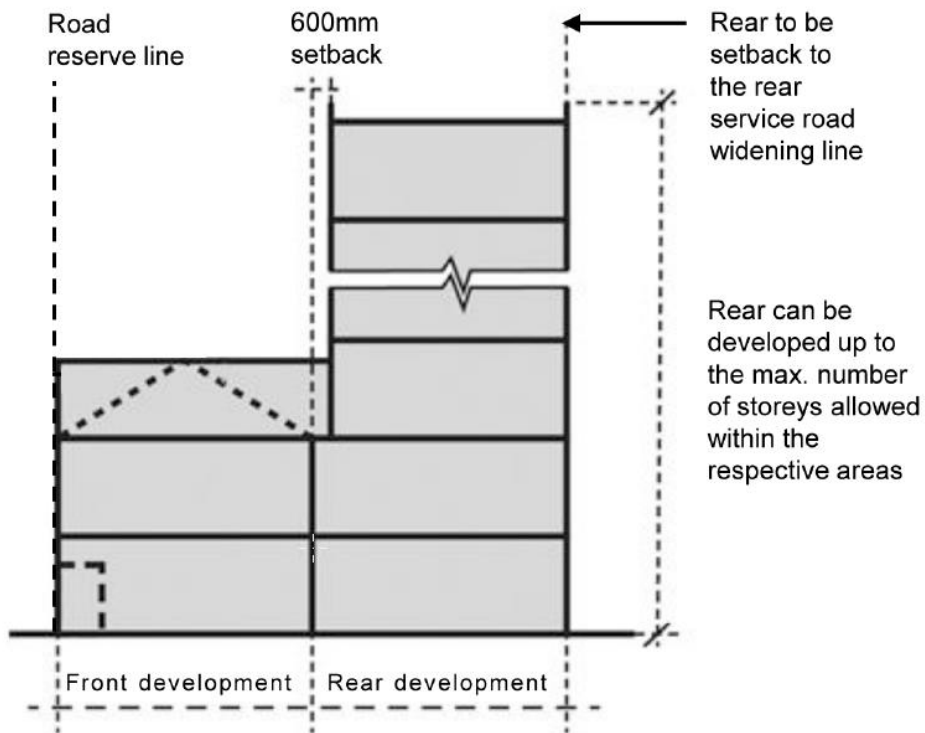


Fig 4.3: Type 2 Infill Site to align with front façade of adjacent conserved buildings

- c. The design of the front façade should take reference from the scale and rhythm of the adjacent conserved buildings and a colonnaded covered walkway is to be provided to maintain the character of the streetscape. [Fig 4.4]

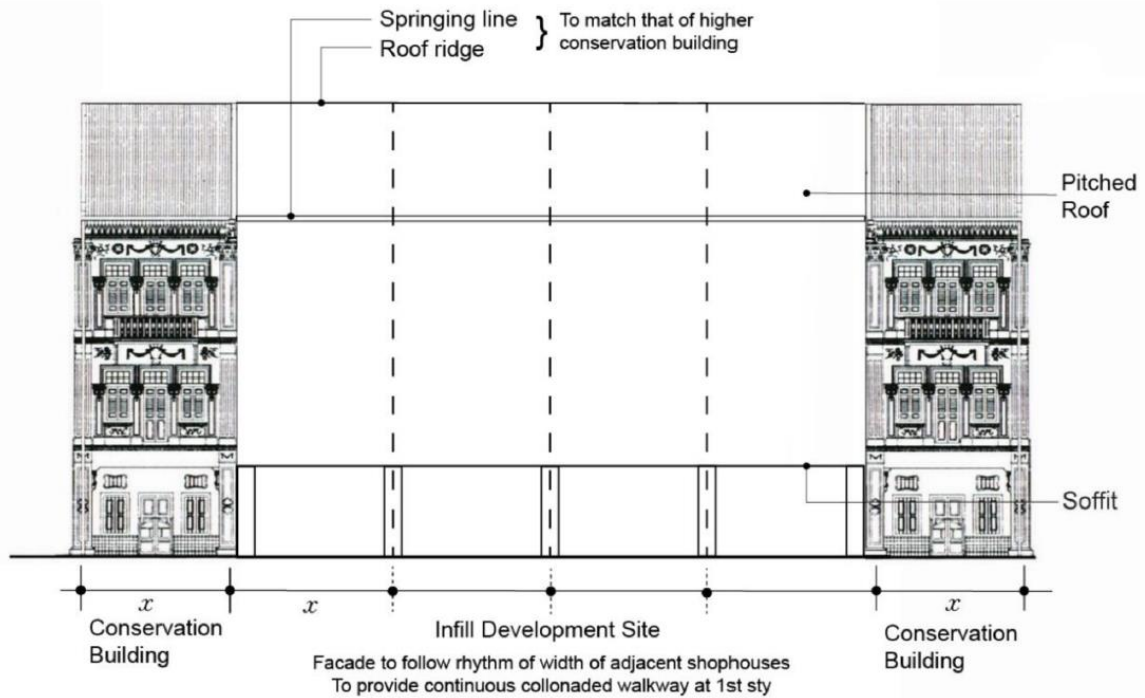


Fig 4.4: Revised guidelines for façade articulation of Type 2 Infill Site