

Circular No : URA/PB/2023/09-CUDG
Our Ref : DC/ADMIN/CIRCULAR/PB_23
Date : 01 Dec 2023

CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Who should know

Qualified Persons, Conservation Specialists, Developers, Contractors, Interior Designers, Building owners and Tenants

Effective Date

With effect from 1 Dec 2023

REVISED CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

1. This circular is to inform the industry of the:
 - a) Revised conservation guidelines which are available [online](#).
 - b) Completion of the last 3 volumes of the Conservation Technical Handbooks, in addition to the 5 already available.
 - c) Latest Do-It-Right guide for Heritage Interpretation.

A. Revised Conservation Guidelines

2. URA has carried out its latest review of the conservation and envelope control guidelines in consultation with practicing architects and engineers, contractors, conservation specialists and owners. The revised guidelines aim to enhance the character of conservation areas while giving due consideration to functional and technical requirements. Identified historic extensions which reflect the evolution of the streetscape and contribute to the identity of conservation areas will be recognized. The design of infill sites, as well as new interventions at key and prominent junctions will be guided more closely so that the historic character is not affected. In addition, to promote sustainability efforts, greater flexibility can be considered for addition of solar panels.
3. More details on the key revisions to the conservation guidelines are provided in [Appendix 1](#).
4. The revised guidelines are now available [online](#).

B. Conservation Technical Handbooks

5. The eight-volume Conservation Technical Handbooks series was produced in collaboration with the local chapter of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS SG).
6. They cover different aspects of technical restoration, architectural elements and material usage for heritage buildings. The series contains best practices and technical expertise on restoration works, and detailed information on locally used materials, construction methods and restoration techniques. Through

quality technical restoration and maintenance, our heritage buildings can be better sustained into the future.

7. The series is available for free download [online](#).

C. Do-It-Right Guide: Heritage Interpretation

8. URA has a series of “Do-It-Right Guides” to provide guidance on common issues faced by building owners, tenants and Qualified Persons. They are available [online](#) for free download and include:

- Your Shophouse: Do-It-Right
- Signages: Do-It-Right
- Tiong Bahru: Do-It-Right

9. The latest Do-It-Right guide on Heritage Interpretation features selected projects which showcase ways to present the historical, architectural, cultural and social meanings and heritage values of buildings and sites. These include site installations, design intervention, education, publications, multimedia platforms and other outreach initiatives and programmes.

10. Heritage interpretation is as important as technical achievements in conservation projects. They create long-term value for the community. As such, the Architectural Heritage Awards (AHA) criteria has been revised since 2021 (Circular No: [URA/PB/2021/03-CUDG](#)), to include this aspect as part of the assessment. This Do-It-Right guide on Heritage Interpretation will be a useful reference.

11. I would appreciate it if you could convey the contents of this circular to the relevant members of your organisation.

12. For other information on conservation areas and buildings, use [Conservation Portal](#). For feedback or enquiries, please use our [feedback form](#).

13. Thank you.

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

REVISIONS TO CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

1) Upper Storey Extensions built prior to conservation gazette, in Historic Districts and Secondary Settlements

Existing Guidelines:

When major works are carried out, the original building profile is to be retained. If the building has undergone unauthorized alterations, the original building profile is to be reinstated.

Revised Guidelines:

For alterations carried out before the building was designated for conservation, restoration with retention of the existing profile may be considered if:

- a. The design is compatible with the historic building;
- b. The structure is built with permanent materials such as masonry and with clay tile roof;
- c. The extension has acquired significance and contributes to the streetscape.

Buildings which may be favourably considered are indicated for the sites as shown on [URA Space](#), and works will be subject to the Specific Restoration Guidelines (SRG). As the original roof has already been raised for such buildings, additional jack roof is not allowed.

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 generally 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. [Fig 2.1] Design and material of the rear extension's façade can vary.

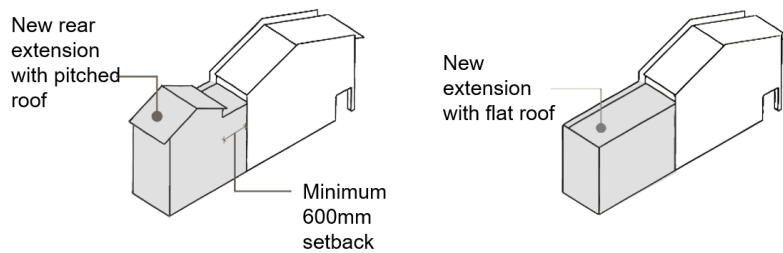


Fig. 2.1: Allowable form of new rear extension in Residential Historic Districts.

Revised Guidelines:

Additional diagrams on new rear extensions have been made to provide further clarity on what constitutes non-traditional roof forms that are not supported. [Fig 2.2]

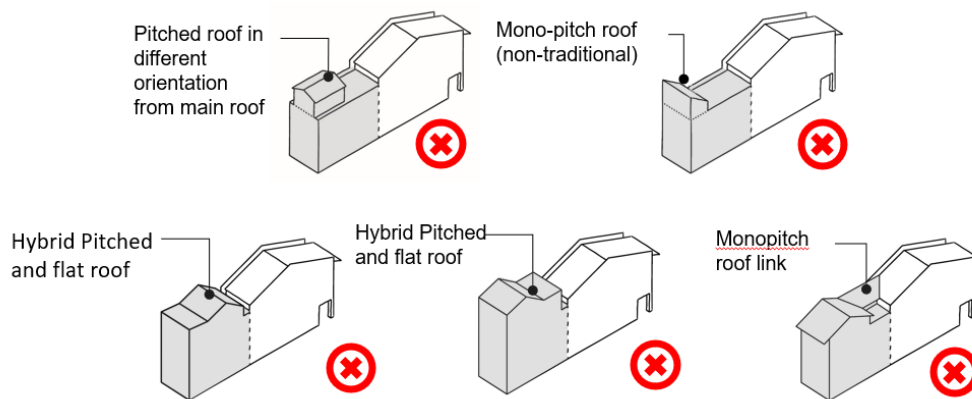


Fig. 2.2: Non-traditional roof forms which will not be allowed.

For units with rear extensions in highly prominent locations, e.g. where side and rear elevations face main roads, key vistas and public spaces, the design will be guided more closely so that the architecture as well as the overall scale, urban grain and relationship to the historic buildings are sensitive. The buildings are as indicated on [URA Space](#). Any submission of planning applications involving a rear extension to these units shall be accompanied by a Design Statement of Intent (DSI). A template of the DSI can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

3) Envelope Control Sites in Historic Districts, Residential Historic Districts and Secondary Settlements

Existing Guidelines:

Envelope control sites are vacant lands, and buildings located within Conservation Areas but not designated for conservation. For infill developments located within existing street blocks containing conserved buildings, the form and scale is guided

to respect the characteristics of the existing street, so that there is continuity of the streetscape, and the overall scale and character of the area is maintained. The specific design and material of the façade can vary.

Revised Guidelines:

The design of all infill sites will be guided more closely so that new buildings are more sensitive to the historic streetscapes:

- a. Any submission of planning applications involving new erection and/ or new façade design shall be accompanied by a Design Statement of Intent (DSI). More details and a template of the DSI can be found in A template of the DSI can be found in [Appendix 2](#).
- b. Following international best practices for new design in heritage contexts, new buildings should be distinguishable from the historic so that there is no false sense of history created. Exact copies of adjacent conserved buildings will not be allowed.

4) Solar panels

Existing Guidelines:

For conserved shophouses with pitched roofs, solar panels can be added following guidelines for skylights, i.e. not exceeding 30% coverage of the rear slope of the main pitched roof or any slope of the secondary pitched roof.

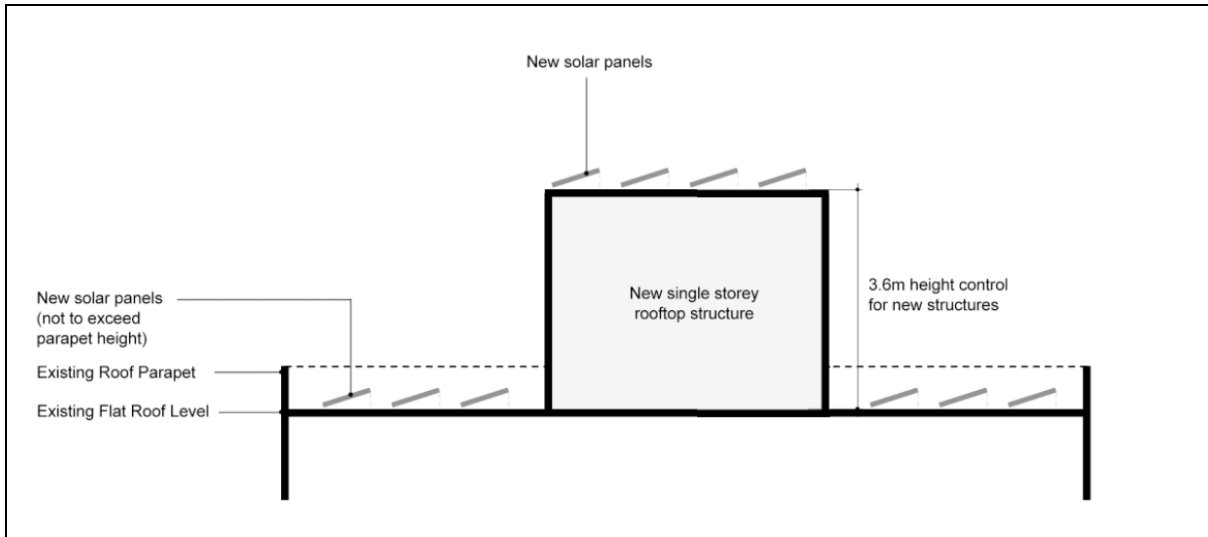
For conserved buildings with flat roofs, solar panels are computed as part of the control of 35% maximum coverage allowable for any new structures.

Revised Guidelines:

A section on solar panels has been added for clarity on addition of solar panels to conserved shophouses. For conserved shophouses with pitched roofs, the existing guideline remains, as above.

To support the move towards sustainable buildings, greater flexibility can be considered for addition of solar panels on conserved buildings with flat roofs:

- a. Solar panels installed on existing flat roofs will be excluded from coverage control of new structures added on existing flat roofs. Such panels can be elevated to not exceeding the existing roof parapet height.
- b. Solar panels can also be installed on top of new structures added on existing flat roofs and concession can be given for the installations to exceed the 3.6m height control for new structures.



5) Safety Railings

Existing Guidelines:

Five-foot way levels are to match adjacent units and open walkways where possible.

Revised Guidelines:

Revisions have also been made to the guidelines to allow safety railings to be installed along the edges of five-foot ways where there is a safety concern due to significant level difference. Simple railings of porous and lightweight design is to be used to minimize the visual impact on the streetscape.

DESIGN STATEMENT OF INTENT

Site Address:	
Please select the category that is applicable for your site:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope Control (Historic District) – Type: Infill / Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope Control (Residential Historic District) – Type: Infill/ Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope Control (Secondary Settlement) – Type: Infill Type 1 / Infill Type 2 / Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Rear Extension (Residential Historic District) of Unit at Key Junction 	
OVERALL PROPOSAL	
1.	Describe the proposal and how the new intervention sensitively relates to the historic character of the area. You may also wish to provide photos of the existing site and its immediate vicinity to support your statement.
CONTRIBUTION TO STREETScape	
2.	Please explain the contribution and impact of your proposal to the creation of an attractive streetscape with respect to the proposed façade treatment and pedestrian connectivity, etc.
ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT	
3.	<p>Please describe the design concept and the physical attributes of the building design in terms of its form, height, scale, grain, siting, materials and colour which contribute to the character of the historic area.</p> <p>Note: Exact copy of the neighbouring building is not allowed.</p>
HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS	
4.	<p>Explain if any heritage aspects of the surrounding conserved sites are enhanced by the new development. You may wish to include an explanation any historical research of the site which has been undertaken.</p> <p>Note: The structural stability of the adjacent conserved buildings should not be adversely affected by the new building. For more information, please refer to the circular URA/PB/2023/04-CUDG on A&A works to or near conserved buildings and maintenance of conserved buildings.</p>