

MEDIA FACTSHEET A – Enhancement works at Bukit Timah Railway Station and 8 Mile Platform

The Rail Corridor is envisioned as a green, connected, inclusive and endearing community space that is rich in heritage. URA and NParks are working to improve access to allow users of all abilities to enjoy this unique green space, while conserving its built heritage for future generations to enjoy. As part of these improvements, enhancement works will be carried out at the former Bukit Timah Railway Station and near the Rail Mall.

Over the last few years, the plans for the 4.3 ha area where Bukit Timah Railway Station is sited have been refined together with the community:

- The comments gathered from further consultations with the community and the Friends of Rail Corridor were taken into consideration in reviewing the plans.
- A heritage workshop was held whereby participants brainstormed ideas on enhancing the heritage of the Rail Corridor, including at the Railway Station. For example, regarding what information should be on the interpretive signs.
- Students from the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) documented and studied the conserved Bukit Timah Railway Station and Staff Quarters, as well as their environment, along with important heritage elements like the tracks and key token.

The area will be enhanced as a community node with quiet charm and a variety of public spaces. The two existing heritage buildings will be restored and sensitively adapted for reuse, while public events can be held at the open spaces.

The 0.7 ha site near the Rail Mall will house the 8 Mile Platform, which is one of the access points to the Rail Corridor. This Platform will have amenities such as a toilet and shelter, and will serve as a rest stop for Rail Corridor users. It will also act as a gathering point from which visitors can begin exploring the Rail Corridor, as well as the nearby Dairy Farm Nature Park.

Works at the two areas, which are slated to complete in 2021, aim to:

- a) improve connectivity and access,
- b) create inclusive public spaces that encourage discovery and exploration,
- c) retain and enhance historic features, biodiversity and greenery, and
- d) retain and recapture the Rail Corridor's sense of place and memory.

Bukit Timah Railway Station community node

Entrance Garden



At the Entrance Garden, visitors will be welcomed by an orchard inspired by a 1960s kampung, with fruit trees such as cempedak, binjai and belimbing. (Artist's impression courtesy of URA)

The Entrance Garden is about 200 m away from King Albert Park MRT Station and will welcome visitors into the community node. A key feature will be a large *acacia* tree at the current site that will be kept as part of the garden. To create a rustic and green heritage setting for the station, species commonly found in kampungs back in the 1960s will be planted. Visitors will take a step back in time as they enter a lush orchard with edible plants and fruit trees such as mango, *belimbing* (starfruit) and *cempedak*.

Adaptive reuse of the former Bukit Timah Railway Station



The key historical features of the conserved Bukit Timah Railway Station will be restored to highlight the Station's unique charm and rich heritage. (Artist's impression courtesy of URA)

The former station is a modest and charming single-storey building. It has a distinctive fair-faced brick facade and clay roof tiles, including a number of special ventilator tiles. Other than the main station at Tanjong Pagar, the Bukit Timah station is the only remaining 1930s-era station along the Rail Corridor route, and was gazetted for conservation in 2011.

The building will be repurposed as a heritage gallery for visitors to discover and learn about the history of the railway station and the Rail Corridor. All original architectural elements will be kept and restored to their original condition where possible. For example, the Equipment Room's track switching levers and associated gear will be retained. The former waiting area will also be reinstated and will showcase the ticket booth. The former office can potentially serve as a gathering space for community activities.

The 200 m-long brick-paved platform and its artefacts, including the historic station signage, key token post, electrical pylons, and lamp posts, will be retained and repaired for the public to appreciate and learn about railway heritage. "Service wagons" in the style of those of the old railway can potentially be placed among three sets of 78 m-long railway tracks as play features. The main route will be extended using salvaged railway tracks to link Bukit Timah Railway Station and the nearby Bukit Timah truss bridge.

Adaptive reuse of the Railway Station Staff Quarters



The Railway Station Staff Quarters will have two curated gardens to showcase plants that were commonly used for decoration and food in the 1960s. (Artist's impression courtesy of URA)

The former Railway Station Staff Quarters, which is designated for conservation under URA's Draft Master Plan 2019, is a single-storey semi-detached house with a fair-faced brick facade.

The East unit will be kept as it was with all rooms retained, and its architectural features will be showcased. The West unit will be adapted for new functions. For example, a new pantry will be added so that the space can support uses such as gatherings and seminars. The two kitchens at the rear will also be combined and the existing toilet at the West unit will be upgraded to provide barrier-free access. This will allow the house and its compound to potentially support a small food and beverage establishment in the future.

As it was originally a secondary building, the Staff Quarters is tucked away at a corner and oriented away from the Railway Station. To make it more visible and connected to the station, as well as more accessible, its western boundary wall will be lowered and a gate will be added. This will allow views into the Quarters' enclosed service yard, which will be repurposed as an intimate courtyard.

At the front of the building, the Heritage Garden will surround visitors with the colours and fragrance of flowering shrubs like the Mussaenda and Hibiscus, harking back to the time when such shrubs were planted to decorate the station and railway line. At its rear, the Herb Garden will be planted with herbs and spices. For example, herbs that were commonly used for cooking in the 1960s, such as chilli and ginger.

Public spaces and gardens



An amenities block will be located at the former maintenance yard. Linear strips reminiscent of a passing train's lights and sounds will draw visitors into the site. (Artist's impression courtesy of URA)

Various community spaces will be created around the node to support gatherings and events.

To the south of the existing tracks, the ground will be improved to provide an event lawn for larger events such as the Green Corridor Run. In front of the existing tracks and opposite the Bukit Timah Railway Station, a terraced seating area will allow visitors to rest and appreciate the railway station. A footpath along the seating area will bring visitors to an elevated platform for a better view of the surroundings and the conserved station. In the future, the platform will provide another direct pedestrian connection to King Albert Park MRT Station.

Located between the Entrance Garden and the Railway Station Staff Quarters, a community lawn will serve as a more intimate gathering place for families and friends. A new amenities block housing a shelter, toilets and bicycle racks will be located where the maintenance yard was formerly located. Native trees will be planted around the block to provide shade.

Next to the amenities block, the existing service roads and trails will be improved and paved in a linear pattern that evokes the still motion of a passing train's lights and sounds.

To ensure the area is kept rustic, the architectural features of the two heritage buildings will be showcased with mood lighting only between 7 pm and 10 pm. After 10 pm, there will only be functional lighting for safety and security at the Entrance Garden, amenities block, and paths connecting the heritage buildings.

8 Mile Platform



The 8 Mile Platform will be a sheltered rest stop and gathering point for visitors to the Rail Corridor and Dairy Farm Nature Park. (Artist's impression courtesy of URA)

Located next to the Upper Bukit Timah truss bridge, the 8 Mile Platform will be an access point to the Rail Corridor from the nearby Rail Mall. The location of the Platform marks the 8-mile point along the old railway line, hence its name.

The Platform will include amenities such as a toilet and shelter, and will be sensitively sited to bridge the levels of the Rail Corridor and Fuyong Interim Park. It will serve as a rest stop for Rail Corridor users, as well as a gathering point from which visitors can start exploring the Rail Corridor or the adjacent Dairy Farm Nature Park.

The path to the Platform will lead through tall elephant grasses and slowly transit to bigger trees such as the Red-flowered Malayan Spindle tree (*Bhesa robusta*) and Yang Bong tree (*Nothaphoebe umbelliflora*). In line with the planting palette for Rail Corridor (Central), native primary forest species will be planted around the Platform.