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## **CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES**

### **URBAN DESIGN (UD) PLANS AND GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN ORCHARD PLANNING AREA**

#### **Who should know**

Architects, building owners and developers

#### **Effective date**

With effect from 20 November 2013

#### **Objectives**

- 1 To guide the development of sites within the Orchard Planning Area (Appendix 1).
- 2 All new developments and existing buildings undergoing major or minor refurbishment, are required to comply with the following set of guidelines.

#### **Details of Guidelines**

- 3 Urban Design Guidelines for Orchard Road were first published in 4 Feb 2002 following a joint STB / URA exhibition, "Making Orchard Road More Happening!", which was held in April 2001 to gather public and stakeholder feedback on proposals to enhance Orchard Road. Subsequently, some of the guidelines, e.g. Urban Verandahs, 2<sup>nd</sup> storey links and Underground Links, have been updated and revised to ensure that they remain relevant and pro-business.
- 4 Our latest review has focused on updating the pedestrian network plans and building form guidelines, taking into consideration recent new developments in Orchard Road as well as the upcoming Thomson Line MRT stations.
- 5 Planning parameters and urban design guidelines covered by this circular include land use, building height, building form, building edge, pedestrian network and vehicular access requirements. This document serves as a guide to provide an overview of the general requirements for development in the area. For specific sites, where necessary, additional guidelines may be issued. The guidelines below do not supersede the detailed guidelines issued, or the approved plans for developments for specific sites. The guidelines are attached in Annex A.

- 6 External circulars referenced to in this circular, are updated regularly. Please check the relevant circulars on URA's website for the prevailing version. This circular supersedes the Urban Design (UD) Plans and Guidelines for the Orchard Planning Area released on 4 Feb 2002.

**Submission and Evaluation Process**

- 7 All development proposals are to be submitted formally to URA's Development Control Group (DCG) for approval as part of the Development Application process.
- 8 I would appreciate it if you could convey the contents of this Circular to the relevant members of your organisation. If you or your members have any queries concerning this circular, please do not hesitate to contact our Urban Planning & Design Department (email: [ura\\_upd\\_da\\_team@ura.gov.sg](mailto:ura_upd_da_team@ura.gov.sg)) or our Development Control Group (DCG) Enquiry Line at Tel: 6223 4811 (email: [ura\\_dcd@ura.gov.sg](mailto:ura_dcd@ura.gov.sg)). We will be pleased to answer queries on this, and any other development control matter. For your information, the past circulars to the professional institutes are available from our website <http://www.ura.gov.sg>.

Thank you.

FUN SIEW LENG (MS)  
GROUP DIRECTOR (URBAN PLANNING & DESIGN)  
for CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN ORCHARD PLANNING AREA

As Singapore's premier shopping belt, Orchard Road is a vibrant and exciting street lined with shopping malls, hotels, and food and beverage offerings. The grand tropical boulevard running through the district has long been a people magnet, always bustling with vibrant street life.


This set of guidelines aims to guide the physical development of the area to ensure that individual buildings contribute to, and strengthen the planning vision for the area and create an attractive and pedestrian friendly physical environment.

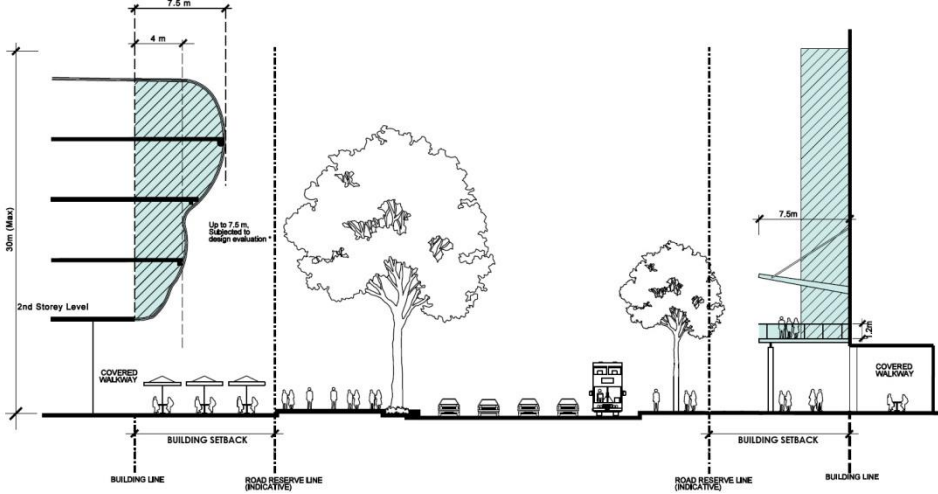
Gazetted monuments and conserved buildings are subject to specific conservation guidelines, which will take precedence over the guidelines below.

The planning parameters and urban design guidelines are:


Parameters	Requirements
<b>Broad Positioning</b>  <a href="#">Master Plan</a>  <a href="#">Appendix 1: Boundary Plan</a>	<p>Orchard Road is predominantly a retail belt and is mainly zoned Commercial to support a mix of shops, offices and hotels. There are also several sites zoned for Hotel use to enhance the attractiveness of Orchard Road as one of Singapore's key tourist destinations.</p> <p>This is supplemented by a number of Residential and mixed Commercial &amp; Residential sites that inject a live-in population to the area to ensure round-the-clock vibrancy.</p> <p>A generous tree-lined pedestrian mall runs through the district, connecting major developments, public open spaces and MRT stations. The Urban Design guidelines for Orchard Planning Area aim to achieve:</p> <p>a) <u>A Walkable and Pedestrian-Friendly District</u> By ensuring seamless, all-weather connectivity and accessibility between developments and the MRT stations; and</p> <p>b) <u>An Attractive and Vibrant Streetscape</u> By encouraging innovative design, varied building forms, public spaces and various active uses along the Orchard Road pedestrian mall.</p> <p>Innovative projects of high quality that do not fully conform to the prevailing guidelines and planning parameters can be considered by the Strategic Development Incentive (SDI) Scheme.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Strategic Development Incentive (SDI) Scheme</a></li> </ul>


Parameters	Requirements
<b>Building Form and Massing</b>	<p>The overall building form and massing of individual buildings is to consider how the building will be viewed as well as impact views from major approaches, key open spaces, and the pedestrian mall.</p> <p>The design of the building form and massing, together with the architectural treatment, is to consider the scale, form and architectural expression of the surrounding buildings, and be designed to create engaging and varied shopfronts along the pedestrian mall.</p>
<b>Building Height</b>	<p>In general, the overall building height is higher around Orchard MRT station, marking the gateway to Orchard Road. The building heights step down towards the Somerset and Tanglin Road areas.</p> <p>The maximum allowable building height is subject to the prevailing Master Plan controls and technical height controls imposed by the technical agencies. Storey height controls will take precedence over technical height controls, whichever is lower.</p> <p>For Residential developments within Orchard Planning area, an equivalent building height to the maximum allowable height for a commercial building can be considered to give greater design flexibility.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><i>Relaxation of Residential Building Heights in the Downtown Core, Orchard and Rochor (Part) Planning Areas within Central Area.</i></a></li> </ul>

Parameters	Requirements
<p><b>Building Setback and Building Edge</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 2: Building Form Plan</i></p>	 <p>Fig 1. The grand boulevard effect of Orchard Road is reinforced by a consistent building edge on both sides of the street. (Image courtesy of DP Architects Pte Ltd).</p> <p>Orchard Road has a signature image of a wide tropical boulevard flanked by trees and buildings that reinforce and define the street by relating to a common building set-back line.</p> <p>Developments along Orchard Road and Scotts Road are to be set back up to 7.6m or 11.6m from the line of Road Reserve. This is to safeguard the generous pedestrian malls on both sides of the street, which have become vibrant staging grounds for outdoor refreshment areas, activities and events.</p> <p>In order to maintain the well-defined urban streetscape, these buildings are also to be built up to the 7.6m /11.6 m building setback line.</p> <p>Up to 40% of the building façade length can be set back further from the building setback line for articulation of the building form, so that a variety of spaces, as well as interesting building fronts can be created.</p> <p>Up to 50% of the podium facade area can also be projected within the building setback, in the form of Urban Verandahs or Façade Articulations, to create more interesting and varied building frontages.</p>


Parameters	Requirements
	 <p>Fig 2. Façade Articulations and Urban Verandahs are allowed to project into the building setback area.</p> <p>Buildings featuring multi-storied shop fronts with a high level of transparency and attractive lighting are highly encouraged to add vibrancy and variety to the streetscape.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Urban Design (UD) Plans and Guidelines for Orchard Planning Area - (A) Revision to Urban Verandah Guidelines (B) Revision to Façade Articulation Guidelines.</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Party-Wall Developments</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 2: Building Form Plan</i></p>	<p>Selected developments are to be built up to abut the common boundary of the development to create party wall developments. This allows developments to maximise the building footprint and creates a continuous pedestrian walkway between developments.</p> <p>Window openings are not permitted along the party-wall. Above the party-wall, developments are to be set back by a minimum of 3.0m from the common boundary.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Urban Design (UD) Plans and Guidelines for Orchard Planning Area - (A) Party Wall Guidelines (B) Elevated Link Guidelines.</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Roofscape</b></p>	<p>The roof areas of both the high-rise and low-rise parts of developments are to be considered as the “fifth” elevations and designed to complement the overall form, massing and architectural treatment of each development and articulated to contribute to the skyline profile. The roofs can be designed to be usable outdoor spaces. All service areas, car parks, Mechanical &amp; Electrical (M&amp;E) equipment, water tanks, etc, are to be fully integrated within the overall building envelope and visually well-screened from the top and on all sides.</p>




Parameters	Requirements
	<p><b>Relevant Circulars:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Gross Floor Area Incentives for Outdoor Refreshment Area on Roof Tops of Existing Buildings in Orchard and Downtown Core Planning Areas to Encourage the Provision of Landscaping on the Roof Top.</i></li> <li>• <i>Guidelines to Encourage More Innovative and Better Design of Rooftops. A. Relaxation of the Gross Floor Area (GFA) Exemption Guidelines for Rooftop Covers. B. Screening of Mechanical &amp; Electrical Services and Car Parks, on Roofs and Building Facades Within the Central Area.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Night Lighting</b>	<p>All developments are strongly encouraged to include night lighting that expresses the architectural design and building form to contribute to the vibrancy and variety of the streetscape.</p>
<b>Signage</b>	<p>All signs are required to be neatly detailed and appropriately placed on the building facade such that they are in keeping with the overall architectural design of the building facade. All structural supports, frames, etc, where provided, are to be well-detailed and visually screened from view from the top, below and on all sides.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Guidelines for Outdoor Signs in the Central Area.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Space</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Storey UD Guide Plan (Pedestrian Network) &amp; Activity-Generating Use Plan</i></p>	 <p>Fig 3. An example of a sheltered public space with direct access to the MRT and Underground Pedestrian Network.</p> <p>Selected sites along Orchard Road are to incorporate public spaces within the private developments to provide space to support activities that can contribute to the vibrancy of the street.</p> <p>These public spaces are to be designed to be conducive for the staging of events, be well-integrated with adjacent open and covered walkways, and are to be publicly accessible at all times.</p> <p>Where required, vertical pedestrian circulation points to the underground and elevated pedestrian networks are to be designed to be well-integrated with and easily accessible from these public spaces.</p>

Parameters	Requirements
<p><b>Uses at the Basement, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Storey Levels</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Storey UD Guide Plan (Pedestrian Network) &amp; Activity-Generating Use Plan</i></p>	<p>To create an attractive and pedestrian-friendly street, activity-generating uses (AGU), such as retail, food &amp; beverage, entertainment, sports and recreation (such as gymnasiums and fitness centres, etc) and other similar uses are to be provided at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 1<sup>st</sup> storey of developments fronting key streets pedestrian malls and public spaces; and</li> <li>• Alongside the underground pedestrian walkways at the basement levels of the developments.</li> </ul> <p>AGUs are also encouraged alongside 2<sup>nd</sup> storey pedestrian links.</p>  <p>Fig 4. AGUs provided along Discovery Walk.</p>
<p><b>Outdoor Refreshment Areas</b></p>	<p>Outdoor Refreshment Areas and Kiosks are encouraged at the first storey directly fronting onto the pedestrian mall, as well as within courtyards and open plazas within developments that are adjacent to the public pedestrian network.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Revisions to the Outdoor Kiosks and Outdoor Refreshment Areas (ORA) Guidelines for Orchard Planning Area.</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Pedestrian Network</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Storey UD Guide Plan (Pedestrian Network) &amp; Activity-Generating Use Plan</i></p>	<p>Orchard Planning Area is planned as a pedestrian-friendly area via a comprehensive pedestrian network at the 1<sup>st</sup> storey, basement, and 2<sup>nd</sup> storey. This network provides convenient, comfortable, and seamless connections between developments, transport facilities, and key spaces and attractions, and ensures all-weather comfort.</p> <p><u><b>At-Grade Pedestrian Network</b></u></p> <p>The at-grade pedestrian network is augmented by covered walkways that provide all-weather protected pedestrian routes. All developments are required to provide covered walkways at the 1<sup>st</sup> storey along the site boundaries / lines of Road Reserves or the designated setback lines. The covered walkways function as public amenities. They are to be kept free of obstruction at all</p>



Parameters	Requirements
	<p>times. In exchange, the area is exempted from GFA computation.</p> <p>The minimum width of the covered walkways is to be 5m or 3.6m, as shown on Appendix 3. Where colonnades are provided, the internal clear width of the covered walkways is to be minimum 4.4m and 3.0m respectively. To provide adequate protection for pedestrians during inclement weather, the external soffit heights are to minimally match the width of the covered walkway.</p> <p>To maintain a distinct precinct character, all covered and open walkways are to be predominantly paved in flamed-finish heavy duty grey granite tiles, to match the paving along the Pedestrian Mall.</p> <p><u>Through-Block Links</u></p> <p>Selected developments are required to provide through-block links to break down the scale and improve permeability of the streetblock.</p> <p>Covered walkways and linkways, as well as through-block links may be exempted from GFA computation if they form part of the larger pedestrian network. Specific design requirements have been imposed on some key sites, depending on the locations of these through-block links.</p> <p>The minimum width of through-block links is 4.0m to 7.0m, unless otherwise specified. The minimum height of through-block links is 10.0m.</p> 

Parameters	Requirements
<p><a href="#">Appendix 4 – Underground Pedestrian Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Appendix 5 – Elevated Pedestrian Network</a></p>	<div>  </div> <p>Fig 5. Through-block link at 313@Somerset, connecting the Somerset MRT station to Orchard Road.</p> <p><u>Underground Pedestrian Links (UPL)</u></p> <p>The Underground Pedestrian Network (UPN) complements the 1<sup>st</sup> storey pedestrian network and provides direct connection to Rapid Transit System (RTS) stations. As a guide, the UPLs are to be at least 6.0m wide (with AGUs on one side) or 7.0m (with AGUs on both sides) with a minimum 4.0m (clear) internal ceiling height of the walkway, unless otherwise specified.</p> <p>UPLs are to include vertical pedestrian circulation points within the building envelope to connect to the covered walkway at the 1<sup>st</sup> storey. Each vertical circulation point is to include a pair of two-way escalators, staircases, and a passenger lift. The entire UPL and the associated vertical circulation points are to be kept open for public access during the opening hours of the RTS, unless otherwise specified.</p> <p>Selected UPLs are eligible for a Cash Grant Incentive Scheme that reimburses the developer for the costs of constructing these underground links.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circulars:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Central Area Underground Master Plan: Revisions to the Cash Grant Incentive Scheme for Underground Pedestrian Links.</a></li> </ul> <p><u>Elevated Pedestrian Links (EPL)</u></p> <p>The Elevated Pedestrian Network complements the at-grade and underground pedestrian network to provide seamless connectivity between developments. Building owners and developers are encouraged to provide elevated links to connect between buildings.</p>

Parameters	Requirements
	<p>EPLs are to include vertical pedestrian circulation points within the building envelope to link to the covered walkways at the 1<sup>st</sup> storey. The entire EPL and the associated vertical circulation points are to remain open for the duration of the mall's operating hours.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Urban Design (UD) Plans and Guidelines for Orchard Planning Area - (A) Party Wall Guidelines (B) Elevated Link Guidelines.</a></li> </ul> <p><u>General Conditions</u></p> <p>The pedestrian network on all levels is to be designed for universal access. GFA exemption is applicable for public spaces, covered walkways, through block links and elevated walkways, subject to the prevailing Development Control Guidelines.</p>
<p><b>Servicing, Vehicular Access &amp; Car Parks</b></p>	<p>All existing driveways and vehicular accesses fronting Orchard Road and Scotts Road are to be relocated away to the side or rear of the buildings, when the development undergoes redevelopment or undertakes major addition and alternation works. This is to create a seamless and pedestrian-friendly mall that is uninterrupted by vehicles.</p> <div> </div> <div> </div> <p>Fig 6. Before and After: Transformation of driveway in front of Mandarin Hotel into Pedestrian Mall.</p> <p>To maintain an attractive streetscape, any above-grade car park and service areas, including refuse bin centre(s), loading /</p>

Parameters	Requirements
	<p>unloading bays and vehicle ingress/ egress, storage lane(s), and vehicular drop-offs/ lay-bys, etc are to be fully integrated within the overall building form, and visually well-screened from above and on all sides. Electrical substation(s), where required, can be located at-grade but are not to front onto the main roads, pedestrian malls, or public spaces.</p> <p>Sufficient holding bays for the vehicular access points to the car parks and service areas are to be provided within the development to ensure the smooth flow of vehicles along adjacent roads.</p> <p><b>Relevant Circular:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><i>Guidelines to Encourage More Innovative and Better Design of Rooftops. A. Relaxation of the Gross Floor Area (GFA) Exemption Guidelines for Rooftop Covers. B. Screening of Mechanical &amp; Electrical Services and Car Parks, on Roofs and Building Facades Within the Central Area.</i></a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Works within the Road Reserves</b></p>	<p><u>Open Walkway</u></p> <p>As a guide, the open walkway within the Road Reserve is safeguarded for pedestrian use. Any proposed new paving within the Road Reserve is to be paved in flamed -finish heavy duty grey granite, laid perpendicular to the Road Reserve line and coordinated with the existing paving pattern along the Pedestrian Mall. The detailed design, paving pattern and choice of materials will be subject to URA and LTA's requirements and approval.</p> <p><u>Tree and Shrub Planting Specifications</u></p> <p>Any new tree or shrub planting specifications for the planting verge within the adjacent Road Reserves will be subject to URA and NParks' requirements and approval.</p> <p><u>Connection to Commuter Facilities</u></p> <p>For developments with commuter facilities (e.g. bus stops and taxi stands) located in front of their buildings, sheltered linkways are to be provided between the covered walkways at the 1<sup>st</sup> storey to these facilities to provide direct continuous sheltered connections.</p>

Appendix 1	Boundary Plan	
Appendix 2	Building Form	
	Appendix 2-1	Tanglin Road Area
	Appendix 2-2	Orchard Road Area
	Appendix 2-3	Somerset Area
Appendix 3	1 <sup>st</sup> Storey Pedestrian Network & Activity Generating Uses	
	Appendix 3-1	Tanglin Road Area
	Appendix 3-2	Orchard Road Area
	Appendix 3-3	Somerset Area
Appendix 4	Underground Pedestrian Network	
	Appendix 4-1	Tanglin Road Area
	Appendix 4-2	Orchard Road Area
	Appendix 4-3	Somerset Area
Appendix 5	2 <sup>nd</sup> storey Pedestrian Network	
	Appendix 5-1	Tanglin Road Area
	Appendix 5-2	Orchard Road Area
	Appendix 5-3	Somerset Area