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CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Who Should Know:

Building Owners, Developers, Architects, Engineers, Contractors, Interior Designers, Building Specialists, Real Estate Salespersons, Managing Agents

Effective Date:

2 June 2026

UPDATED AND NEW DO-IT-RIGHT GUIDES FOR CONSERVED BUILDINGS

1. This circular introduces an updated Do-It-Right Guide for conserved shophouses and terraces and a new Do-It-Right Guide for providing installation services under the EASE (Private) programme in a conserved building. It also outlines the responsibilities of all stakeholders in protecting Singapore's built heritage.

Enhanced Do-It-Right Guide for Shophouses and Terraces

2. There are over 6,500 conserved shophouses and terraces in Singapore. Built between the early-1800s and mid-1900s, these heritage buildings continue to be an important part of our cityscape and serve as a link to our nation's past.
3. Owners, developers, operators, as well as industry professionals including architects, engineers, building specialists, real estate / managing agents etc. all have a duty of care for conserved buildings and must ensure that proper approvals are obtained before any additions and alterations works and / or operations of new use can begin.
4. However, it has been observed that an uneven spread of knowledge and know-how in the industry has on occasion resulted in:
 - i. Unauthorised and misinformed alterations such as the removal of walls and replacement of structural elements that result in the irreversible loss of original conserved fabric;
 - ii. The use of inappropriate materials such as modern paints or finishes that are incompatible with historic substrates, leading to accelerated deterioration and thus increased frequency of maintenance.

5. A Do-It-Right Guide for Shophouses and Terraces was first published in 2017 as a quick guide to common works carried out on shophouses. It aims to inform building owners and tenants of good conservation practices and in doing so, help them avoid some of the more common pitfalls associated with such works.
6. In response to industry feedback, the updated Do-It-Right Guide features improved visual examples and diagrams to help stakeholders better understand requirements and processes behind obtaining approval for works. Users can refer to it to understand what allowable works are, the submission requirements for different categories of works, as well as good practices that owners should adopt for long-term maintenance.

Introduction of EASE Do-It-Right Guide for Conserved Properties

7. The Enhancement for Active Seniors (EASE) (Private Housing), or EASE (Private) programme, which supports the Age Well SG initiative, is a national programme designed to improve the physical living environment and support active ageing. The programme provides subsidies for installing senior-friendly fittings in private properties, including conserved properties, for eligible households with Singaporean Citizen seniors. Such installations enhance mobility and safety of seniors within their homes, enabling seniors to age-in-place comfortably. More information on the programme can be found at <https://go.gov.sg/ease-private>.
8. While safety and comfort in the home are paramount, owners and contractors providing installation services under the EASE (Private) programme have a responsibility to ensure that the heritage character of the conserved homes are protected. Works which proceed without proper consideration of heritage requirements can potentially compromise the architectural and historic integrity of these significant buildings. To support good implementation practices, URA has developed a “EASE Do-It-Right Guide” specifically for conserved properties. This resource helps owners and contractors navigate the installation of accessibility features while respecting heritage considerations. The guide provides clear visual examples of how senior-friendly features can be integrated sensitively within historic buildings, ensuring both accessibility goals and conservation principles can be achieved.
9. All owners and contractors undertaking works on conserved properties under the EASE (Private) programme are strongly encouraged to consult this guide before commencing any installations to avoid unauthorised alterations to their historic homes.

Other Resources

10. In addition to the updated Do-It-Right Guide for Shophouses and Terraces and the EASE (Do-It-Right) Guide for Conserved Properties, other key resources are available to support conservation projects.
- a. **URA's Conservation Guidelines** establishes conservation principles, planning parameters and restoration requirements for conserved buildings, as well as envelope controls for new buildings within Conservation Areas. All works carried out to conserved buildings or development within Conservation Areas must comply with these guidelines.
 - b. **The Conservation Portal** on URA's website enables users to determine their building's conservation status, identify applicable guidelines, and ascertain allowable uses for shophouses.
 - c. A series of **Conservation Technical Handbooks** provides best practices and technical expertise for restoration works.
11. Together, these resources provide comprehensive guidance from initial planning through to project completion and ongoing building maintenance.

Resource	Link
Do-It-Right Guides	go.gov.sg/conservationbestpractices
Conservation Guidelines	go.gov.sg/conservationguidelines
Conservation Portal	go.gov.sg/uraconsportal
Conservation Technical Handbooks	go.gov.sg/conservationbestpractices

12. For enquiries regarding conservation matters, please contact URA at ura_cu@ura.gov.sg.

13. Thank you.

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