E-Learning

Developing Nursery Land

Version 1 – 27 Oct 2026

Learning Objectives

This course is designed to equip prospective tenderers of NParks' nursery land with a better understanding of the end-to-end land development process. By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the TOP/CSC process and plan approval timeframes.

2. Prepare an initial site layout that complies with land use controls and considers the requirements of relevant agencies.

3. Develop preliminary cost estimates for their nursery development.

4. Navigate the key milestones and approval processes following tender award, from appointing a Qualified Person (QP) to obtaining TOP/CSC.

Disclaimer

These e-learning materials are intended to provide general guidance on nursery land development. The information and examples provided do not constitute endorsement or approval by NParks or any regulatory agency of a tenderer's proposed development. Tenderers are responsible for appointing QPs and/or consultants to advise on their specific proposals and for obtaining all necessary approvals from the relevant authorities before commencing development works.

Modules

1. Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

2. Preparing Initial Site Layout for Tender Submission

3. Preliminary Costing of Development

4. After Tender Award

1. Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 1: Plan Approval Workflow

What is the correct sequence for obtaining TOP/CSC for a nursery development?

A. BCA Building Plan → URA DC → NParks Endorsement → BCA TOP/CSC

B. URA Written Permission → BCA TOP/CSC → NParks CSC → SCDF FSC

C. Engage Contractor → Construction → Submit to BCA → Obtain URA WP → Apply for TOP

D. NParks/CUGE Endorsement → DC Submissions (URA, PUB, NEA, NParks, LTA) → BCA Building Plan → Construction → TOP/CSC Clearances → BCA TOP/CSC

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 1: Plan Approval Workflow

What is the correct sequence for obtaining TOP/CSC for a nursery development? The correct answer is D

D. NParks/CUGE Endorsement → DC Submissions (URA, PUB, NEA, NParks, LTA) → BCA Building Plan → Construction → TOP/CSC Clearances → BCA TOP/CSC

*The process begins with **NParks/CUGE endorsement** of development plans, followed by **submissions** to URA[1], PUB, NEA, NParks, and LTA. BCA structural and building plan submissions run in parallel. Once construction is complete, **TOP/CSC clearances** are obtained from each agency, and only then does **BCA issue the final TOP/CSC**.*

Note 1: Development control submission to URA will not be required if the development meets the qualifying criteria for authorisation, see slide 26.

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 2: Commencing Construction / Operating on the Land

A tenderer commences construction works and/or starts operating on the land before obtaining authority approvals in order to save time. What is the most likely consequence?

A. The authorities will issue a warning letter but allow works to continue

B. The tenderer will only need to pay a small administrative fine

C. The BCA will automatically grant retrospective approval if the works are compliant

D. The tenderer may face enforcement actions, be required to rectify works, and incur abortive costs

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 2: Commencing Construction / Operating on the Land

A tenderer commences construction works and/or starts operating on the land before obtaining authority approvals in order to save time. What is the most likely consequence? The correct answer is D

D. The tenderer may face enforcement actions, be required to rectify works, and incur abortive costs

BCA has enforcement powers and can require demolition or rectification of unauthorised works. This is a costly error, as the time saved by starting early is far outweighed by the risk of having to undo completed works. Unauthorised works may also put workers' safety at risk.

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 3: Development Timeline

According to the guidebook's recommended timeline, by approximately which month should a tenderer aim to complete all site works and submit record plans to authorities?

A. 12th month

B. 15th month

C. 21st month

D. 24th month

Nursery TOP/CSC Guidebook

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process, and test your understanding by answering the following questions.

Question 3: Development Timeline

According to the guidebook's recommended timeline, by approximately which month should a tenderer aim to complete all site works and submit record plans to authorities? The correct answer is C

C. 21st month

*The tenderer should have completed all site works, submitted record plans (e.g. BCA structural as-built plans), and made TOP/CSC applications to all relevant authorities. The **24th month** is the target for obtaining CSC from all authorities, and is also the Project Completion Period stipulated in NParks' tenancy/lease agreements. This 24-month timeline underscores why early QP appointment (Month 1) and prompt authority submissions (Months 3 - 4) are so critical; delays at any stage cascade through the entire programme.*

2. Preparing Initial Site Layout for Tender Submission

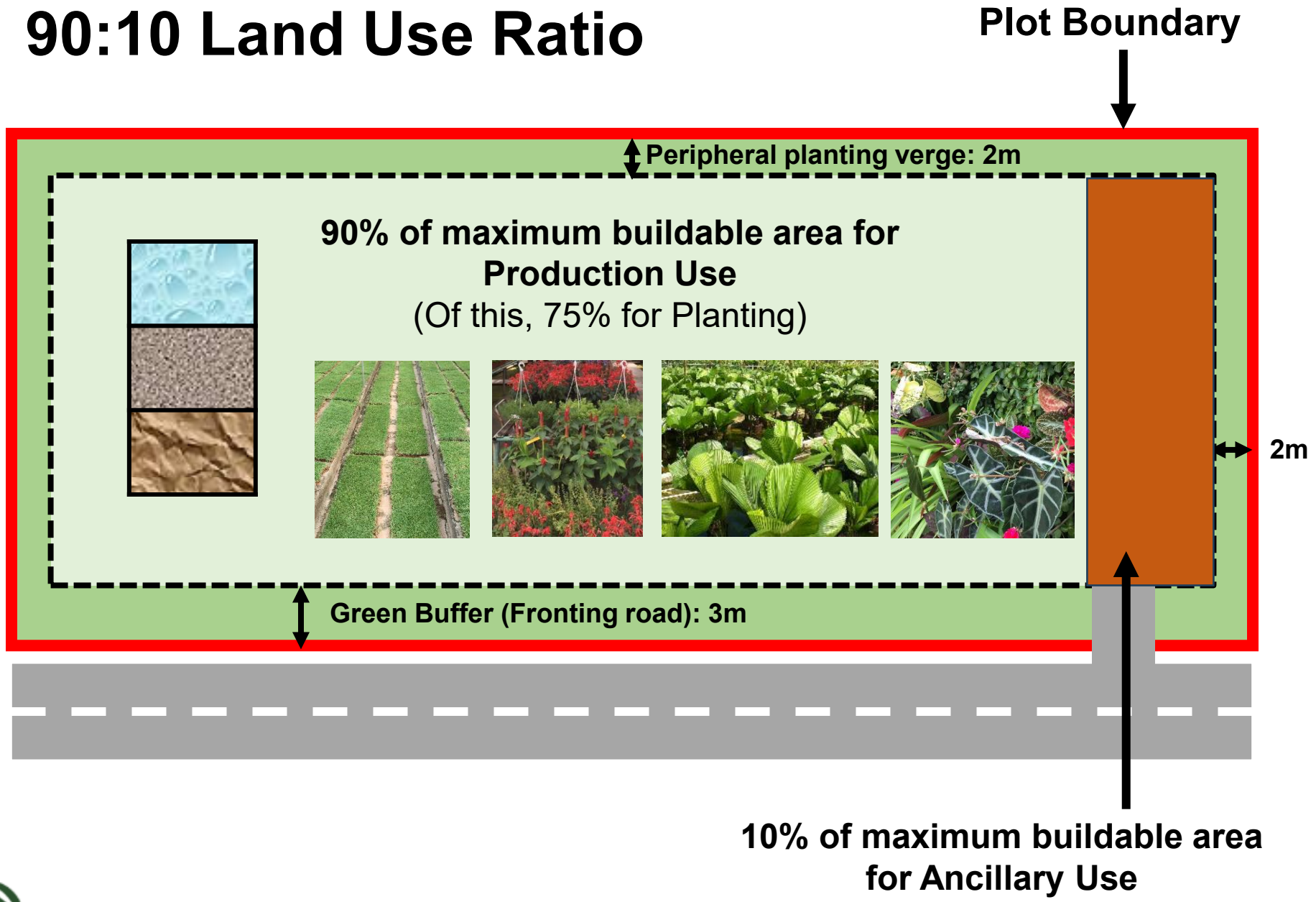
Site Layout

1. For tender submissions, tenderers are required to submit a site layout which complies with the **90:10 land use ratio** & **allowable production / ancillary uses**, and indicate the floor areas for production and ancillary uses in the tender submission forms. Refer to the tender briefing slides and tender documents for full details on land use ratio and allowable production/ancillary uses.

2. Aside from land use planning, tenderers should also consider **key agency and operational requirements**, e.g. stormwater detention tanks / water storage ponds, internal drainage, sewer connection, fire engine access and fire hydrant / fire safety provisions, soil mix areas (need to be sheltered according to PUB requirements), etc, as well as the terrain of the land, e.g. sloped areas that have less utility.

3. Tenderers are advised to consult QPs or building contractors on the practicality of the site layout and its compliance with key agency requirements.

90:10 Land Use Ratio



Production Uses

S/N	90% of maximum buildable area for Production Use
1	**Planting areas** (Holding & Production) (Minimum 75% of the Production Area) • Shade house / Open planting area
2	**Pond / Waterbody** • Treatment / Retention ponds • Irrigation System (incl. Pump house) • Drainage network
3	**Soil Works** • Soil storage / mixing (own company's use) • Composting (own company's use)
4	**Circulation Space** • Ingress / Egress (vehicle & pedestrian) • Vehicle, machinery & equipment circulation space
5	**Workers' Quarters** • Area where workers sleep & store their personal belongings, capped at 50.4sqm (refer to MOM's FEDA requirements for the allowable number of bed spaces)

Ancillary Uses

S/N	10% of maximum buildable area for Ancillary Use[1]		
1	**Office** (max 80 sqm) • Main work area • Staff welfare facilities	5	**Loading / Unloading Bays** **Parking Bays** (subject to additional rent and authority approval) • Cars, Lorries • Heavy Vehicle Parking
2	**Sanitary Requirements** • Toilet facilities	6	**Chemical Storage** (own company's use) • Pesticides & Fertilizers • Other Chemicals
3	**Warehouse** (Retail P.O.S. only) • Landscaping tools & equipment • Fertilizers & Chemicals • Hardscape / Soil media	7	**F&B and retail outlet including outdoor refreshment areas** (max 200 sqm)
4	**Workshop / Warehouse** • Hardscape • Landscaping equipment (use / storage / repair)		

Note 1: This list of ancillary uses is not exhaustive. Tenderers should consult NParks if there are other proposed ancillary uses relevant to nursery operations.

Tips on Design Site Layout

1. Under BCA's Building Control Regulations, a single storey building on land used for agriculture, including a greenhouse or a building used to house fixed plant or machinery can be **classified as insignificant building works** if it meets the stipulated criteria (see criteria in slide 17).

2. Insignificant buildings do not require plan submissions to BCA, which would enable faster operationalisation. However, as submissions to other agencies (e.g. SCDF) might still be required, tenderers should consult QPs / building contractors for detailed advice.

3. PUB requires **soil mix activities to be sheltered**, and the leachate shall not be discharged into public drains. A sample layout of a sheltered soil mix building is shown in slide 18.

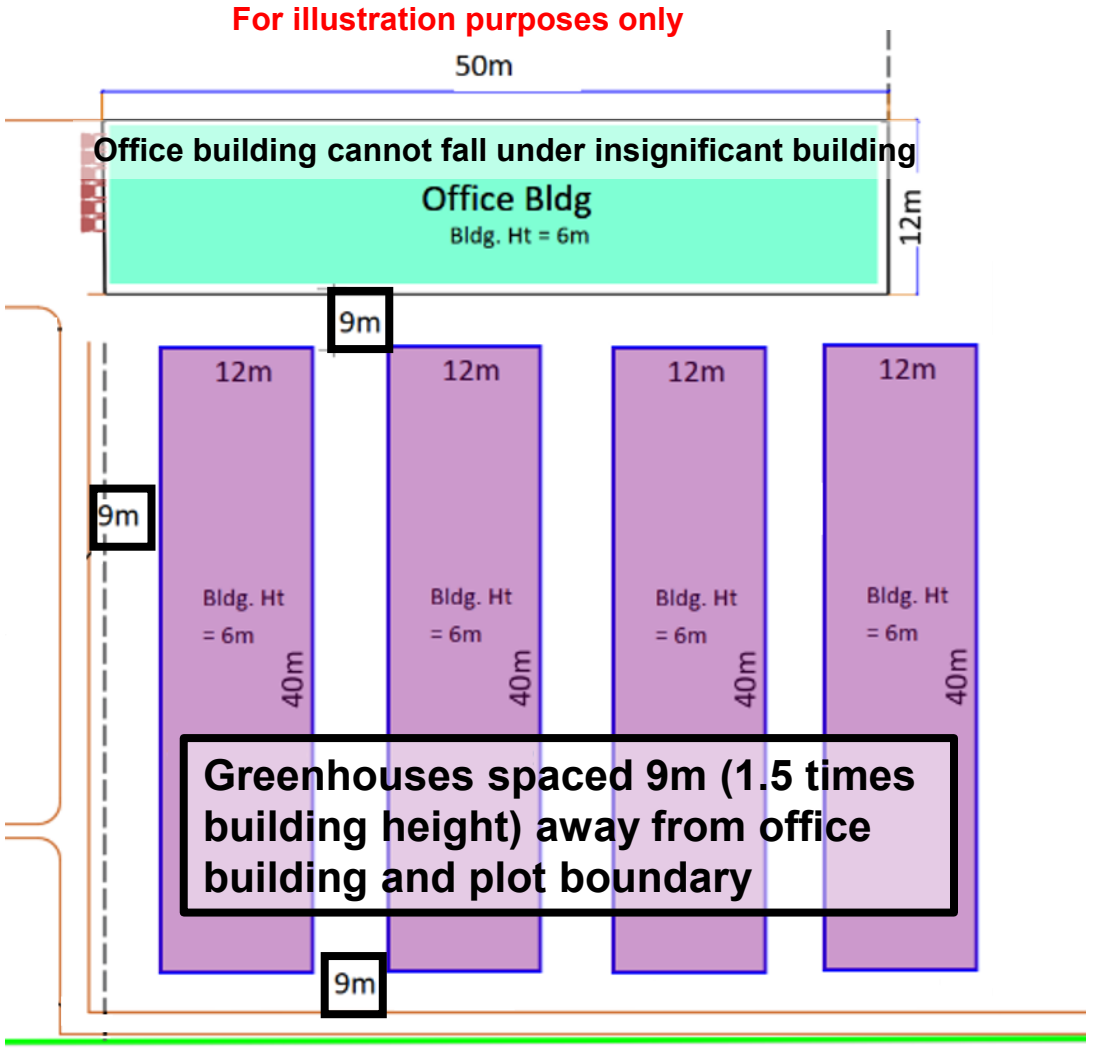
Example: Spacing greenhouses to qualify as insignificant building works

Building Control Regulations 2023 (First Schedule - Insignificant Building Works), Clause (t):

any **single storey building** on land **used for agriculture** or to house livestock, including a **greenhouse or a building used to house fixed plant or machinery**, if

(i) **no part of the building is (A) used as a dwelling or for the purposes of packing; or (B) made accessible to the public for any purpose**; and

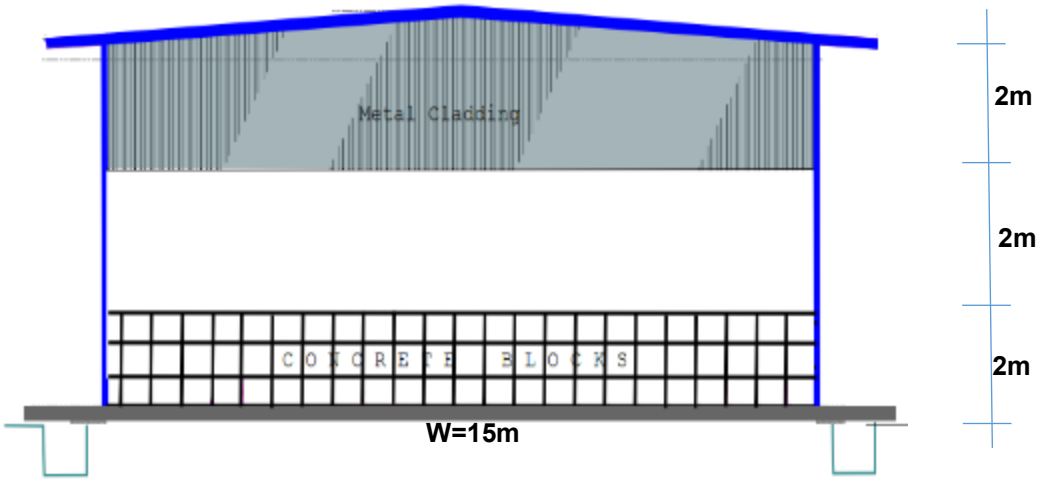
(ii) **each point of the building is situated not less than 1.5 times its height away from (A) any adjacent building**, except where the adjacent building is another single storey building described in this sub-paragraph; or (B) **any route of public access**.



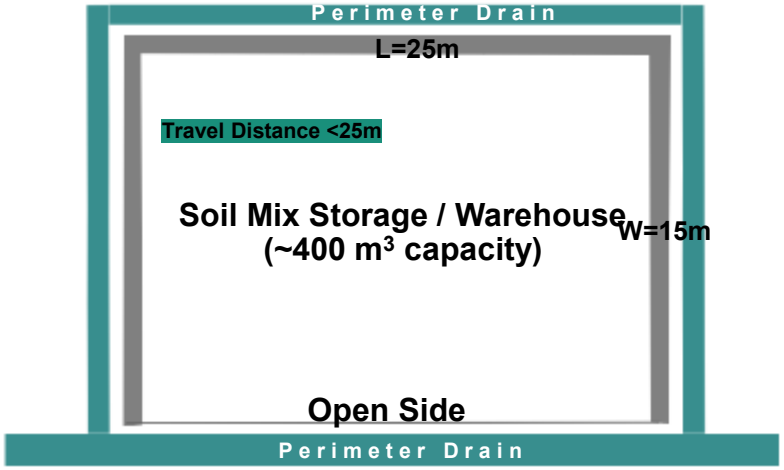
Example: Sheltered soil mix building to comply with PUB requirements for soil mix activities

1. Raw animal waste is not allowed.
2. Materials shall be stored under roofed and curbed areas with impervious flooring.
3. Leachate shall not be discharged into public drains.
4. There shall be sufficient cover to prevent rainwater from entering from the top or sides during any storm event.

SIDE



PLAN



3. Preliminary Costing of Development

Preliminary Costing of Development

1. For tender submissions, tenderers are required to provide their estimated project cost for land development based on the site layout submitted.

2. The following are generic cost estimates (per sqm) for outdoor, indoor, irrigation pond, detention tank and M&E for general reference purposes. The costs are indicative only and will vary depending on site conditions, design requirements and prevailing market conditions. Tenderers are advised to ascertain the project cost based on their proposed design and requirements.

3. To develop a more accurate project cost estimate, tenderers may consider the following:
   a) Obtain quotations from a building contractor
   b) Engage a quantity surveyor to prepare a cost report
   c) Seek cost advice from a QP

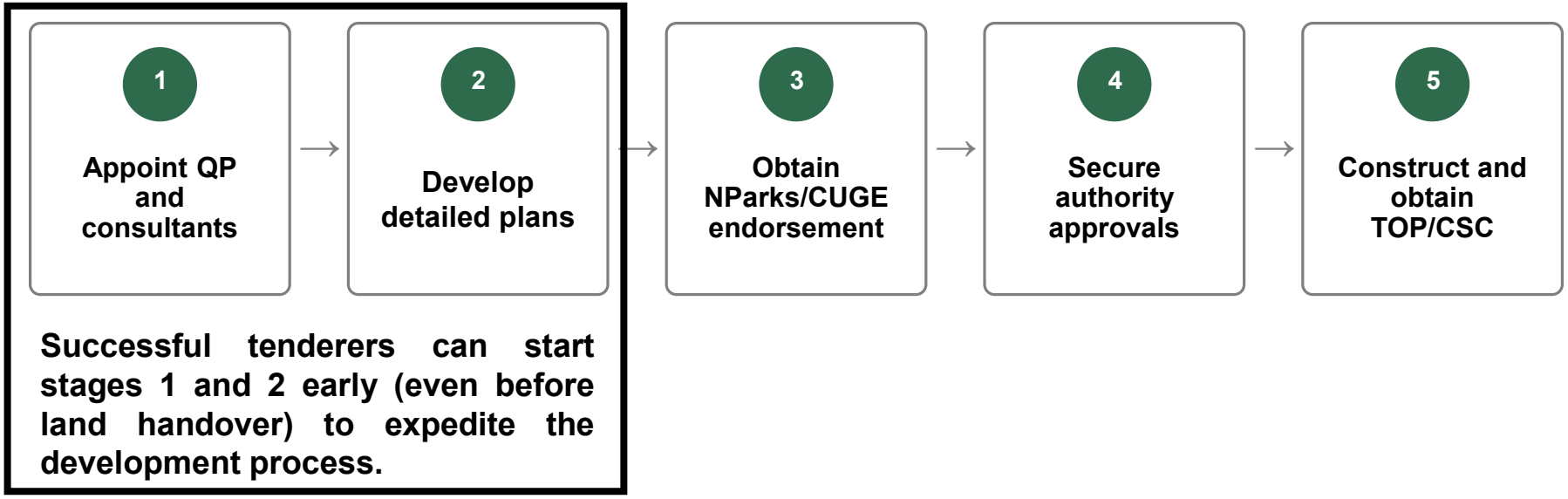
Category	**S$/m^2 (For general reference purposes only)**
Outdoor area	70
Indoor area	780
Irrigation pond	740
Detention tank	1,040
M&E	25% of cost of indoor area + S$100,000 (utility and sewer connections)

4. After Tender Award

Tender award is the start of the detailed development and approval process.

1. The land will be handed over to successful tenderers ~1-3 months after tender award (for vacant plots) and ~6 months after tender award (for plots with existing buildings).

2. Tender award and land handover do not constitute approval to commence construction works or operate from the site. Construction may begin only after the necessary plans and authority approvals have been obtained.



Start Early: First Actions After Tender Award

1. **Confirm contractual requirements** - Review the tender, tenancy or lease documents for the Project Completion Period, approved use, specific agency requirements, submission requirements, etc.

2. **Appoint the project team** - Appoint a QP and the required Professional Engineers or specialists.

3. **Undertake site due diligence** - Confirm the site boundaries, topography, drainage, platform levels, access, sewer connection points, utilities, trees and other physical constraints.

Do not proceed directly from the tender layout to construction. The layout must be developed and checked by the appointed professionals.

Overview of project team

1. The appointments depend on the proposed works, with the QP as the lead coordinator.

2. Successful tenderers can consider engaging a project manager to monitor submissions and progress (QP may also take on the project manager role).

Architect / Professional Engineer as QP

Development layout, building layout and coordination of submissions.

Structural Professional Engineer

Structures, greenhouses, drains, retaining walls, slopes and entrance culverts.

Mechanical Professional Engineer

Water supply, sanitary connection, pumping systems and relevant fire-protection systems.

Electrical Professional Engineer

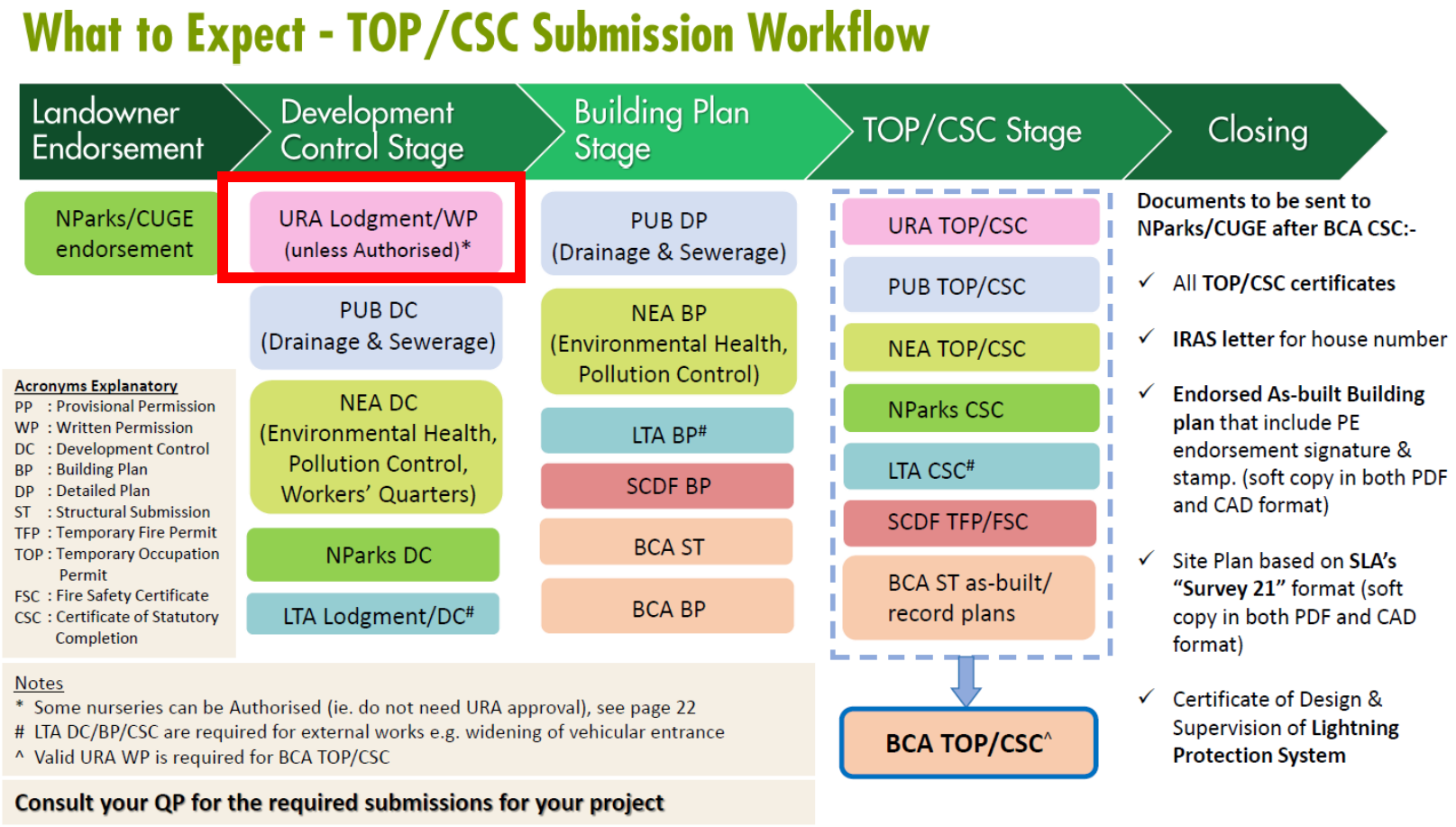
Electrical systems and lightning protection.

Registered Inspector

Inspection of relevant fire-safety works for TFP/FSC compliance.

Plan submission workflow

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process



URA Planning Application at Development Control Stage

1. URA has streamlined the planning application process and allows authorisation (no submission required) or lodgment (instant approval) for proposals that meet its qualifying criteria (refer to URA website).
2. Successful tenderers are advised to work with the QP to confirm the applicable route before detailed design and authority submissions.

Authorisation

No URA planning application is required when all applicable authorisation conditions are met. Lessor consent (i.e. NParks/CUGE endorsement) is still required.

Key check

Check that the proposal stays within the applicable tenancy or lease parameters and qualifying criteria.

Plan Lodgment

The QP lodges the compliant plans with URA - instant authorisation.

Key check

All lodgment criteria must be met, including lessor endorsement, access, planning controls and no unauthorised works.

Development Application

The QP submits the proposal to URA for evaluation and Written Permission.

Key check

Required when the proposal does not qualify for Authorisation or Plan Lodgment.

The planning route must be confirmed for the actual site and proposal. Other agencies' approvals may still be required.

Recommended timeline

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process

Recommended Timeline

1st Month

- Appoint **QP** & **PEs** required for your development
- Discuss development design with QP & PEs
- Conduct topo survey, purchase plans of public services if necessary
- QP/PE **pre-consultation** with Authorities etc. SCDF (fire safety), PUB (detention system, rainwater collection system)

2nd Month

- **Pre-consultation** with Authorities
- Finalise development **design concept** with QP/PE
- Estimate total development **budget** for developer's acceptance



3rd Month

- **Submit development plans** to NParks/CUGE for Landowner's endorsement
- **Prepare plans** for DC submissions and BCA ST submission



4th Month

- Obtain **Landowner's endorsement** from NParks/CUGE (subject to completeness of submission)
- Make plan lodgment application or planning submission to URA (if not exempted under Authorisation, see page 22)
- Make **DC submissions** to NParks, PUB, NEA, LTA
- Make **structural submission** to BCA
- **Engage Contractor(s)** to build development works

Recommended timeline

Review the guidebook developed by NParks which provides an overview of the TOP/CSC process

Recommended Timeline

6th Month	9th Month	12th Month	21st Month	24th Month
• Obtain **URA planning approval** (not applicable for lodgment)	• Obtain **DC approvals** from NParks, PUB, NEA, LTA	• Obtain all **BP approvals** from PUB, NEA, LTA, BCA, where applicable	• **Complete all site works**	• Obtain **CSC** from all authorities (URA, NParks, LTA, PUB, NEA, SCDF, BCA, where applicable)
• Obtain **BCA ST approval** and permit to commence work	• Obtain **BP approval** from SCDF		• Submit **record plans** to relevant Authorities e.g. BCA structural as-built	
• Submit **building plans to SCDF**	• **Make BP submissions** to PUB, NEA, LTA, BCA where applicable		• Make **TOP/CSC applications** to URA, NParks, LTA, PUB, NEA, SCDF, BCA where applicable	



Work with your QP to develop the entire submission timeline

Prepare for TOP/CSC During Construction

TOP/CSC preparation should not be left until construction is complete.

During construction

1. Retain approved plans and authority correspondence.
2. Record approved changes and obtain further approval where required.
3. Arrange progressive inspections and testing.
4. Maintain construction and maintenance records.
5. Prepare as-built and record plans.
6. Track outstanding authority conditions.

After completion

1. Agency inspections
2. Testing and certification
3. Submission of as-built or record plans
4. Rectification of inspection comments
5. TFP/FSC, where applicable
6. Agency TOP/CSC clearances
7. Final BCA TOP/CSC

Prepare completion records and arrange inspections and certifications progressively to avoid project close-out delays.