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CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Who should know

Developers, building owners, architects, engineers, Qualified Persons (QPs) and real estate agents

Effective date

3 October 2016

REVISED GUIDELINES FOR NEW LANDED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTED BY MINIMUM PLATFORM LEVEL (MPL) REQUIREMENTS

1. URA and PUB have carried out a review of the development guidelines for new landed housing developments to better safeguard the overall character of the landed housing estates by:
 - a. Providing greater clarity on how PUB's Minimum Platform Level (MPL) requirements for flood protection apply to landed houses; and
 - b. Revising URA's guidelines on allowable earth-fill within landed housing developments.
2. Under PUB's Code of Practice (COP) on Surface Water Drainage, new developments and redevelopment sites are required to comply with the stipulated Minimum Platform Level (MPL)¹ for flood protection purposes. Based on existing provisions under Clause 2.1.4 of PUB's COP on Surface Water Drainage, QPs for developments located in low-lying areas may apply to PUB for approval to construct ancillary areas below the required MPL, so as to tie-in with the adjacent low-lying road/ground levels. PUB has already been facilitating and approving such applications on a case-by-case basis, while at the same time guiding QPs and house owners on the design and treatment of the spaces located below the MPL for flood protection.
3. To provide greater clarity for the industry and homeowners, this circular formalises the approach for the new landed housing developments/redevelopments within low-lying areas. Examples of these include the Tanjong Katong, Mountbatten, Bedok, Siglap, West Coast and Pasir Panjang areas, where the road levels can be lower than 102.5m RL.

PUB's MPL Requirements for new landed houses

4. Only the building structures or internal living areas need to be raised to meet the stipulated MPL. Any building structures or internal living areas that are proposed below the MPL have to be fully sealed with no external openings. If external openings are proposed, additional requirements from PUB have to be complied with, as follows:

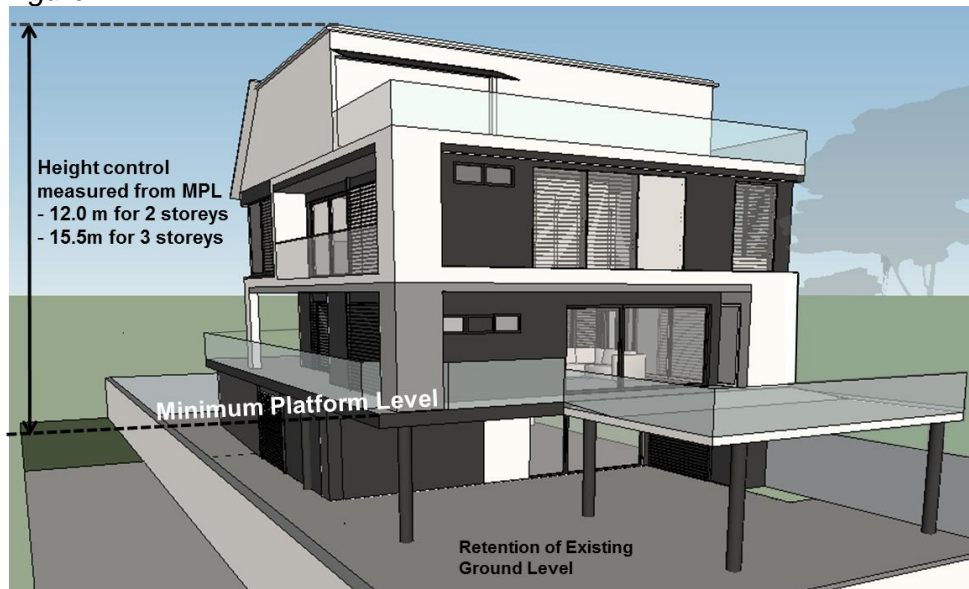
¹ Under PUB's prevailing Code of Practice (COP) on Surface Water Drainage, the minimum platform level is 104.5 m RL for the Northern Coast and 104.0m RL for the Southern Coast.

- i. The internal finished floor level must be at least 300mm above the adjacent road level; and
- ii. Only ancillary areas, such as entrance driveways, bin centres, turfed compound area, car porches or any other areas as may be approved by PUB are permitted below the MPL. Only bedrooms and any strategic M&E installations must be located above the MPL.

Revised earthworks guidelines for new landed houses (See Figure 1)

5. QPs for landed houses will no longer need to propose excessive earthworks to meet PUB's stipulated MPL. Hence, for future landed housing proposals in low-lying areas, the existing platform level of the entire development site is to be generally retained. Any proposed earth-fill within the setback area to mitigate level differences within the site will be individually assessed based on the site context and impact on the surrounding developments. If earthworks are allowed, they should not exceed one metre.
6. Internal areas that are proposed below the MPL will be treated as a basement level and will not be counted as an additional storey for the purpose of storey height control. The rest of the existing envelope control guidelines for landed houses will still apply. The overall allowable height will be measured from the MPL imposed on the site.

Figure 1



Provisions to meet future road levels

7. Low-lying roads have higher susceptibility to flood risks in the face of potential climate change effects, such as rise in sea level and increased rainfall intensity. As such, low-lying roads have to be raised in future to increase their flood protection levels. Such raising of roads usually takes place when all the adjacent developments have undergone redevelopment (i.e. no remnant low-lying lands along the entire stretch) so that the raised road levels will not pose challenges to the accessibility of existing houses.

8. In such areas where the roads may be raised in future, PUB will provide the indicative future road level to QPs. This will facilitate the design of any future works required within the private property, which may include modifications to the vehicular driveways, car porch areas, boundary walls, etc. As home owners are responsible for carrying out and bearing the costs for such future retrofitting works within their private properties, making such design provisions upfront would ensure that downstream modifications, when required, can be carried out easily to suit the owners' needs.
9. QPs are required to include a schematic plan in their respective submission drawings to technical agencies for reference, demonstrating that the design provisions have been put in place to meet the future road level. These design provisions should comply with the current guidelines of the relevant technical agencies at the point of the development application. Further details of the technical agencies' requirements are in Appendix A. In the event such retrofitting works are needed to be carried out in the future, separate approval has to be obtained from URA and all relevant technical agencies to ensure that the works comply with prevailing regulatory requirements at that point in time.

Implementation

10. The revised guidelines will apply with immediate effect to all new applications submitted on or after 3 October 2016. Only formal development applications (excluding Outline Applications) submitted before the effective date of 3 October 2016, which have already been granted Provisional Permission, will not be subject to the revised guidelines².
11. 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 Email us. For your information, past circulars are also available on our website <http://www.ura.gov.sg>. For queries related to PUB's Code of Practices, please email PUB at PUB_BPU@pub.gov.sg.

Thank you.

HAN YONG HOE
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for CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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² Development applications submitted before the effective date of 3 October 2016 resulting in an Advice or Refusal of Written Permission (RWP) will be evaluated based on the revised guidelines upon resubmission after the Advice or RWP.

Appendix A

Schematic plans to be submitted to technical agencies

PUB	Plan submission to show space provisions of future pump sump/ ejector pump, where required by PUB at PUB's Development Control (DC) clearance stage.
LTA	Plan submission to show alignment and gradient of future vehicular driveway to meet the raised road level at LTA's DC clearance stage.
BCA	<p><i>Strata landed housing developments</i></p> <p>Plan submission to show the alignment and gradient (maximum gradient of 1:12) of future barrier-free accessibility route to meet the raised road level at BCA's Building Plan clearance stage. Sufficient area should be set aside to accommodate barrier-free ramps and the main access to common areas and facilities.</p> <p><i>Advisory for all landed housing developments</i></p> <p>If landed house owners have the intention to raise the internal platform level in future to tie in with any future road raising, the Qualified Persons should take into account such future plans and make provisions to ensure there is sufficient structural loading of the proposed walls and foundation to withstand any internal backfilling or retrofitting works. Should any window or door openings be removed or reduced through future retrofitting works, the internal areas may need to be mechanically ventilated and the qualified persons should ensure that there is sufficient headroom and space for the installation of M&E installations in the future.</p>

Note:

For plan submissions to the agencies listed above, the QPs is required to provide declarations that they have designed the future works in full compliance with the respective prevailing codes of practices, standards and guidelines of the relevant technical agencies.