

### **CELEBRATING OUR BUILT HERITAGE WHILE MEETING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

1. As a city-state with limited land, URA takes a highly selective approach towards conserving built heritage that balances with development.

#### **Heritage & Identity Plan: Guiding efforts to protect Singapore's heritage assets**

2. The Heritage & Identity Plan guides efforts in identifying, retaining and enhancing heritage assets, such as identity nodes as well as areas and buildings that are rich in character. This complements our efforts in assessing the feasibility of adapting these buildings for new uses to meet our development needs.

#### **Thematic narratives: Illustrating the stories and significance of different buildings in Singapore's nation-building journey**

3. Building on the Heritage & Identity Plan, URA has engaged stakeholders<sup>1</sup> to develop a series of thematic narratives covering four themes – Economy, Housing, Social and Defence – which represent important building blocks in Singapore's development as an independent nation.

4. Beyond our existing stock of conserved buildings and structures, this thematic framework will support the identification of selected sites that represent Singapore's history and development over the past 60 years. We will continue to find ways to recall our built heritage meaningfully – whether through adaptive reuse of selected buildings or enhancing the characters of areas, through sensitive urban design and placemaking initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> The wide range of stakeholders engaged included members of URA's Heritage and Identity Partnership, academics, historians, architects, heritage advocacy groups, former agency heads and planners as well as youth groups.

Theme	Description
<b>Economy</b>	Commercial, industrial, transport and utility infrastructure developments supported our growing economy over the decades, contributing to Singapore’s transformation into a global business hub. Many of such buildings also reflect key phases of the nation’s past, such as Singapore’s industrialisation journey.
<b>Housing</b>	Singapore’s housing landscape has undergone significant changes over decades – from shophouses of earlier years to high-rise public housing and integrated mixed-use developments in more recent years.
<b>Social</b>	Singapore’s infrastructure for social institutions has evolved from basic healthcare facilities and modest schools in rural settings, to well-equipped developments in the country’s post-independence years. Apart from modern medical facilities and schools, various amenities, places of worship, event venues and sports facilities have been constructed to meet the different needs and aspirations of the community that have also transformed as the country progressed.
<b>Defence</b>	Defence has been a priority to safeguard the sovereignty and security of our nation and people, from Singapore’s pre-independence and post-independence years till present day. The military, law enforcement, fire security and civic services have been housed in various facilities of different nature and forms, from fire stations to army camps and airbases.

## **Buildings of more recent history proposed for conservation**

5. In line with the thematic framework, the NatSteel Steel Pavilion under the 'Economy' theme as well as the former Pasir Panjang English School and 20 buildings at Bukit Timah Turf City under the 'Social' theme are proposed for conservation as part of the DMP2025. They add to the five previously-announced sites proposed for conservation – The North and South Grandstands at Bukit Timah Turf City, Jurong Hill Tower, former SIT blocks at Dakota Crescent, Singapore Badminton Stadium and the former Royal Malayan Navy Admin Block.

### **NatSteel Steel Pavilion**

6. Located at the former Jalan Besi Baja, now known as Tanjong Kling Road, the former National Iron and Steel Mills Ltd., later renamed NatSteel, was officially opened on 31 January 1964.

7. NatSteel was the first heavy industry factory to be established in Jurong Industrial Estate and has played a fundamental role in Singapore's formative years. As the sole supplier of steel to the Housing & Development Board (HDB), the mills contributed to the construction of HDB's earliest public housing projects, in response to the pressing need for accessible public housing from the 1960s to 1980s. The mills have also supplied material for the construction of infrastructure for the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system and trains, as well as the building of Changi Airport.

### Significance

8. The main two-storey office building, including the Steel Pavilion, was designed by Malayan Architects Co-partnership, consisting of architects Lim Chong Keat, William Lim and Chen Voon Fee.

9. Topped with a curved umbrella-shaped steel roof structure, the Steel Pavilion also features steel-framed glass windows and exposed fair-faced brick walls. The roof design

was seen as an engineering feat at the time, demonstrating the capabilities of steel as a building material.

10. Notably, the original foundation stone for the mills, which was laid by then-Finance Minister Dr Goh Keng Swee on 16 September 1962, is currently integrated near the entrance of the Steel Pavilion.



*The National Iron and Steel Mills Ltd.'s steel pavilion in 1964*

*Credit: National Iron & Steel Mills*



*Guest-of-Honour Dr Goh Keng Swee at the opening of the National Iron & Steel Mills in 1963*

*Credit: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore*

## **Former Pasir Panjang English School**

11. Located at 24 Yew Siang Road, the former Pasir Panjang English School is an example of the standardised school design built using timber in the 1920s and 1930s.

12. The school was built on a site acquired from a merchant and philanthropist named Chia Yew Siang. Upon its opening in January 1933, it was one of the earliest schools in Pasir Panjang, a rural area with a growing population.

13. As a Government English School, Pasir Panjang English School was initially established as an all-boys school, and was later selected along with two other Government English Schools to pilot co-educational classes for both boys and girls in 1936.

14. Before the outbreak of World War II (WWII) in December 1941, the school was used as a registration centre for emergency evacuees. The school buildings were damaged during WWII and reconstruction efforts commenced in November 1947. The school was closed in 1986, with students transferring to the new Jagoh Primary School.

15. From 1999 to 2024, the former school building was used as a drug rehabilitation centre operated by Breakthrough Missions. Today, the school continues to serve as a key identity marker for residents in the Pasir Panjang area.

16. The proposed conservation of the school's two-storey U-shaped main building under the 'Social' narrative would capture a key milestone for the development of schools and education in Singapore.

17. Retaining the building with its storied history and integrating it with new uses as part of an upcoming residential development would give the building a new lease of life amidst efforts to introduce more housing options in central locations.



*An artist's impression of a new lease of life for the former Pasir Panjang English School*

*Credit: URA*

### Significance

18. The main building features a largely intact U-shaped classroom block with a pitched tile roof and overhanging eaves, which wraps around a courtyard that adds to the site's distinctive character.

19. The masonry and concrete used to construct the building's first-storey structure, with timber posts, partition, roof trusses and floors on the second storey, can be seen as an adaptation from colonial military buildings of the early 20th century. These timber structural elements within the building have remained largely intact, which makes the building an exceptionally rare and distinctive example of timber used for institutional buildings, such as schools in Singapore.

20. The building is also a good representation of tropical architecture which allows for good cross ventilation, abundance of light and air, as well as protection against a warm equatorial climate.



*View of the main classroom block with its timber frame structure from the entrance off Yew Siang Road*  
*Credit: URA*



*Internal courtyard encircled by classroom block and greenery*  
*Credit: URA*

## Bukit Timah Turf City

21. Formerly home to the horseracing venue Singapore Turf Club (STC), the site at Bukit Timah Turf City will undergo transformation into a new housing estate with public and private homes, where future amenities and housing options will be sensitively integrated with the area's buildings and greenery.

22. In addition to the proposal of conserving the North and South Grandstands, 20 other buildings from the former STC across different clusters, building types, age and architectural style, will be proposed for conservation under the 'Social' narrative.

23. Taken together, these buildings represent key yet different facets of the former racecourse's history and functional ecosystem. Repurposing these selected buildings as part of the future housing estate will create a distinctive environment for future residents and communities.



*An artist's impression of how the former Fairways Quarters could be integrated as part of a well-connected and accessible housing estate*

*Credit: URA*



*An artist's impression of how the former Bukit Timah Saddle Club Clubhouse can be repurposed to form a new amenity node for future residents*

*Credit: URA*

### Significance

24. Following further consideration of the extensive Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for the former racecourse which was carried out in close consultation with stakeholders and heritage groups, selected buildings have been identified as the physical markers that reflect the site's 66 years of recreational and equestrian history and are also suitable to be repurposed for the future housing estate. The details of these buildings are as follows:

- Fairways Quarters and Community Centre

The Fairways Quarters at 53 Fairways Drive was a *kampong*-like courtyard compound that was the focal point of Turf Club workers who lived on the premises. The buildings proposed for conservation — Blocks 9-16 and Blocks 25-27 — are single-storey terrace blocks, constructed in the 1950s in masonry with terracotta tiled roofs, that were used to house general labourers. Additionally, amenities including a *mamak* shop, school, and spaces for community interaction such as a community centre and badminton court were located within the same area.



*The terrace blocks on undulating terrain housed several units each*

*Credit: URA*

The former Community Centre was a hexagonal building used as a community gathering place and recreational venue by the residents.



*The former Community Centre with its unique hexagonal design*

*Credit: URA*

- Former Turf Club Secretary's, Assistant Secretary's and Executives' Bungalows  
Located at 192, 198 and 232 Turf Club Road, the buildings housed Turf Club management and their families.

Built in 1933, the Secretary's Bungalow and Assistant Secretary's Bungalow were built with local vernacular and tropical plantation house influences. Both buildings feature symmetrical colonial-style architecture, adapted for the tropical climate with wide verandas, high-pitched roofs and broad eaves.



*The Secretary's Bungalow located at 192 Turf Club Road*

*Credit: URA*

The former Turf Club Executives' Bungalow was built between 1933-1947. The two-storey building showcases the influence of contemporary modernism with its horizontal design, unique curved forms and bands of windows.



*The property at 232 Turf Club Road was located close to the entrance of the racecourse*

*Credit: URA*

- Former Bukit Timah Saddle Club Clubhouse and Fairways Bungalow

This cluster comprises a clubhouse at 51 Fairways Drive, as well as a former jockey training school cum accommodation at the nearby Fairways Bungalow situated at 55 Fairways Drive.

Built in 1962, the two-storey clubhouse carries influence from plantation houses, with its second floor elevated on slender columns.



*The Bukit Timah Saddle Club Clubhouse housed a popular café in its later years*

*Credit: URA*

Built in the 1960s-1970s, the nearby two-storey Fairways Bungalow features a Modern architecture design. It was located near to the stables and other facilities, so that apprentice jockeys could train more efficiently and practice their skills.



*The former jockey school building*

*Credit: URA*

- Former Turf Club Stables

Built in 1933, the single-storey horse stables located at 100 Turf Club Road were utilitarian in both function and design, forming part of the network of equine facilities within the site. These buildings are particularly notable for their tiled jack roofs, which were designed to facilitate the housing of horses in a tropical climate by encouraging ventilation and heat dissipation through the roof.



*Four blocks of the horse stables can be retained and adapted for new uses*

*Credit: URA*

- Syces Quarters

A two-storey building at 106 Turf Club Road housed the Syces Quarters. Featuring pitched clay tiled roof on timber trusses, the quarters were built in 1933 to provide lodging for horse groomers who cared for the racehorses on site.



*The two-storey building features chimneys on both the front and rear of the building, with wide roof eaves providing shade for the walkways along the side facades*

*Credit: URA*

- Former Dunearn Water Depot

The Dunearn Water Depot, located at 752 Dunearn Road, is a supporting facility that contributed to the critical water supply infrastructure in Singapore's early days. Designed by the Municipal Architectural Department for the Water Department, it is a three-storey Art Deco building with Modern style features, with fair-faced bricks used to accentuate the building entrances and central stair core. The first storey housed a district office for the Water Department, while the upper floors comprised 16 flats for the depot's officers.



*The building's exposed masonry brick walls were constructed using a variation of the basic Flemish bond technique which enhanced the structural performance of the wall*

*Credit: URA*