

PRESS RELEASE**MinLaw to Restore Heritage of 28 Maxwell Road**

1. The Ministry of Law (MinLaw) will restore the heritage of 28 Maxwell Road and share its storied past with Singaporeans and foreign visitors. MinLaw announced this today when it unveiled its refurbishment plan for the conserved building.
2. MinLaw is refurbishing 28 Maxwell Road to support the expansion of Maxwell Chambers. This will help meet growing demand and boost Singapore's position as an international dispute resolution centre.
3. 28 Maxwell Road will add 120,000 square feet of space to Maxwell Chambers and triple its current size. When completed in 2019, the new building will house, over four floors, about 50 new offices for international dispute resolution institutions, arbitration chambers, law firms and ancillary legal services.

Restoring the Heritage of 28 Maxwell Road

4. Heritage restoration will feature strongly in the refurbishment plan:
 - a) Timbre louver windows, inner-leaf façade elements and cast-iron rainwater downpipes, which had been removed or fallen into disrepair in the last two decades, will be restored and repaired to working condition. The cast-iron rainwater downpipes were from Walter MacFarlane & Co. Ltd of Glasgow, Scotland, a key exporter of cast-ironwork to the colonies at the time.
 - b) Five lush courtyards within the 161 metre long building will be landscaped and opened for public use. Ad-hoc awnings and roofs which were not part of the original building but added later will be removed, to restore the courtyards to their original open-to-sky design.
 - c) The walls of the façade will be restored to an off-white colour, reinstating the neutral tones used on the building in the past.
 - d) The building will be beautifully lit at night to highlight its unique architectural features and historical value.

5. Constructed in 1928, 28 Maxwell Road was designed by Frank Dorrington Ward, the Government Architect of the Straits Settlements Public Works Department, when Singapore was a British colony. The building was first used as barracks for the Police Force, with the Traffic Police occupying a small office on the ground floor. From the 1930s to 1999, it was used solely as the Traffic Police Headquarters. At one time, the building also housed Singapore's first Driving Test Centre, before the Queenstown Driving Centre opened in 1968. The building was gazetted as a Conserved Building by the Urban Redevelopment Authority in 2007.
6. Besides restoring historical elements, the refurbishment will also introduce new architectural features to better serve the building's new function as modern premium offices for an international dispute resolution complex. These include:
 - a) a new annex block that will add 3,230 square feet of office space to meet growing demand from international dispute resolution institutions, arbitration chambers and law firms;
 - b) a new corridor block to widen the currently narrow corridor;
 - c) works to the floor levels and washrooms to allow handicap access; and
 - d) a new link-bridge to provide seamless connection between 28 Maxwell Road and Maxwell Chambers' current premises.

These new features will be stylistically distinguished from the historic building, to allow the heritage significance of the building to take precedence.

7. The refurbishment works will be directed by award-winning architect Mok Wei Wei and heritage conservation expert Ho Weng Hin. The building is currently on lease to The Traffic Pte Ltd. The tenancy will expire on 30 April 2017. Works are expected to start in May 2017 and complete by 2019. MinLaw will be calling a tender for construction services in February 2017.

Sharing the Heritage with Singaporeans

8. MinLaw will not only restore the heritage of the building through refurbishments, but will also share the building's storied past with Singaporeans and foreign visitors. It launched today Heritage@Maxwell. Under this heritage programme,
 - a) MinLaw is working with the Singapore Traffic Police to bring together retired Traffic Policemen to help identify previous uses of the different rooms and to share their experiences. Their inputs will help the architect and heritage conservation expert restore and showcase the building's heritage.

- b) Students from Singapore University of Technology and Design's (SUTD) Architecture and Sustainable Design Faculty and Engineering Product Development Faculty will help develop platforms to share the building's heritage with young Singaporeans.
- c) MinLaw invites all Singaporeans who had been to the old Traffic Police Headquarters, for example to take driving tests, to share old photographs and experiences. They can send them to heritage@maxwell-chambers.com. Selected photographs and stories will line the walls of the new building when it is completed.
9. Han Kok Juan, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Law, who chairs the Project Steering Committee, said, "28 Maxwell Road was where our pioneer generation of traffic policemen worked, and where older Singaporeans took their driving tests and got their licenses. We want to capture these memories before they are lost, and share them with younger Singaporeans. Heritage is what gives the place character. It will help distinguish Maxwell Chambers from other dispute resolution facilities in the world."
10. Tan Huey Jiun, Director (Conservation Planning), Urban Redevelopment Authority, said, "We are heartened by the process MinLaw undertakes to bring the building's history to the centre-stage, based on thorough research, on-site technical investigations and expert advice. We also commend the inclusive approach they have adopted to involve university students and past users of the building."
11. Alvin Tan, Assistant Chief Executive, National Heritage Board, added: "It is important to retain a heritage building and restore its key features. It is equally important to showcase and transmit the collective social memories associated with that building. On this note, NHB is glad to work with MinLaw on the project and we hope that other organisations will adopt a similar approach in the reuse and rejuvenation of heritage buildings."
12. Senior Assistant Commissioner Sam Tee, Commander Traffic Police, said, "We are excited to be part of the process to remember 28 Maxwell Road and its role in the history of Singapore's Traffic Police. Our former Traffic Policemen are brimming with stories to tell and share with Singaporeans at large."
13. Dicle Uzunyayla, faculty member, Architecture and Sustainable Design, SUTD, said, "This is a great opportunity for SUTD students to apply their multi-disciplinary skills to a real-world project, and to help raise awareness of heritage amongst the young. They are excited to be part of this programme and look

forward to telling the story of 28 Maxwell Road through their final year Capstone project.”

Refurbishing 28 Maxwell Road to support Expansion of Maxwell Chambers

14. Maxwell Chambers is the world’s first integrated dispute resolution complex housing both best-in-class hearing facilities and top international dispute resolution institutions. Since its establishment in 2010, Maxwell Chambers has quickly become one of the most preferred hearing facilities in the world. In 2016, 212 arbitration cases were heard at Maxwell Chambers, an 18% increase over the 179 cases in 2015.
15. The expansion of Maxwell Chambers into 28 Maxwell Road is part of MinLaw’s plans to support the growth of dispute resolution institutions in Singapore, which have seen significant increases in caseload. It will also attract more international institutions, arbitration chambers and law firms to Singapore.
16. The expansion will help Singapore capture new opportunities in Asia, as regional demand for dispute resolution services continues to grow. It is one of a number of initiatives Singapore will roll out in 2017 to raise its position as an international dispute resolution centre to the next level.

**MINISTRY OF LAW
03 FEBRUARY 2017**

Annexes

Annex A: Artist impressions of the restored 28 Maxwell Road

Annex B: CVs of Mr Mok Wei Wei and Mr Ho Weng Hin

Annex C: History of 28 Maxwell Road

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Artist Impressions of restored 28 Maxwell Road



Front External Facade



Courtyard



Mr Mok Wei Wei
Managing Director
W Architects

Mok Wei Wei is presently Managing Director of W Architects Pte Ltd.

Mok's numerous architectural projects have received critical acclaim both locally and internationally and have been featured in many regional and international publications.

In recognition of his contributions to Singapore's architectural scene, he was conferred the President's Design Award in 2007, the nation's highest honour for design.

Mok is a board member of the Preservation of Sites and Monuments from 1999 and subsequently the Deputy Chairman of the Board until December 2016.

He is a board member of the Urban Redevelopment Authority since 2006, and is a board member of the Singapore Land Authority from 2015.

In recognition of his contribution to public service, he was conferred the Public Service Medal (PBM) in 2014.

National Archives of Singapore



Mr Ho Weng Hin
Partner, Studio Lapis
Director, Studio Lapis Conservation Pte Ltd

Ho Weng Hin graduated from National University of Singapore, Department of Architecture, and obtained his specialist postgraduate degree in conservation from the University of Genoa, Italy. With an abiding interest in the study and conservation of Singapore's built heritage, his early projects include research on the works of the colonial Public Works Department as a Research Assistant with the Centre of Advanced Studies in Architecture, NUS. From 2005-2007, he co-edited Singapore Architect, the journal of the Singapore Institute of Architects, with Tan Kar Lin.

He is currently partner and conservation specialist consultant of Studio Lapis, an architectural restoration and research-editorial consultancy, and Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the NUS Department of Architecture. Working alongside international multidisciplinary consultant teams, Weng Hin is involved in major conservation projects in Singapore and the region such as the restoration of Cathedral of Good Shepherd, a National Monument, the adaptive re-use of former Beach Road Camp and Britannia Club, former Capitol Theatre, and the former Burma Railways Headquarters in Yangon, Myanmar. He is a founding director of the International Council of Monuments and Sites, Singapore National Committee.

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History of 28 Maxwell Road Building



The building at 28 Maxwell Road was built towards the end of the 1920s. Designed by the former Public Works Department's chief architect, Mr Frank Dorrington Ward, the building shares a distinctive colonial architecture alongside other heritage buildings designed by Mr Ward, including the former Supreme Court, and the former Hill Street Police Station.

The building was first used as a Police barracks until the Traffic Police Headquarters moved in in end January 1930. The Traffic Police Headquarters remained there for almost 70 years until 1999, after which it moved to its current premise at Ubi. The building also used to house Singapore's first driving test centre, before the Queenstown Driving Centre was opened in 1968.

In November 2005, the Red Dot Design Museum Singapore moved into the building. Accordingly, the building was renamed 'Red Dot Traffic,' incorporating the identities of its former and current tenants. In 2007, the building was given conservation status by the Urban Redevelopment Authority.