### Earthworks

Earthworks are defined as any operations or works in, on, or over land which result in substantial modification to the existing ground terrain, land form, or slope. These include excavation, formation of a new slope or embankment, and cut and fill operations.

Earthworks involving earthcut or earthfill shall be minimised to avoid excessive changes to the existing terrain. The scale of earthworks allowed depends on the location and purpose of the proposed earthworks. All proposed earthworks shall be evaluated to ensure they are sensitive to the wider site context and its impact to the surrounding developments.

<https://ura.gov.sg/-/media/Corporate/Guidelines/Development-control/Landed-Housing/LHD08_Earthworks_Allowable_Earth_Cut.jpg?h=100%25&w=100%25>

*Allowable Earthworks*

Earthworks for the entire development site

Earthworks to raise the existing platform level of the entire development site are generally not allowed. This is to avoid creating new retaining walls.

Earthworks within the building setback area

Earthworks are generally not allowed within the road buffer/building setbacks. Any proposed earthworks shall be assessed based on site context. Where allowed, they shall not exceed 1m.

Earthworks of more than 1m to meet PUB minimum platform level (MPL)1 shall be assessed on the merits of the proposal. Refer to earthworks in low-lying areas sub-section.

Earthworks may also be considered to:

* Create a vehicular access of maximum **4m** wide;
* Match the existing platform levels of the neighbouring sites.
* Create a workable platform level to mitigate level differences within an undulating or sloping site, or between the site and road.
* Facilitate building of a fully submerged basement. The area within the building setback distances shall be reinstated to the original platform level upon the completion of the basement.

1 **Minimum Platform Level (MPL)**: The minimum 1st storey level to be provided within the site. The MPL is determined by the Public Utilities Board (PUB).

Earthworks within the buildable area (ie outside the building setback areas)

The proposed works shall be evaluated in relation to the permissible building envelope under the [Envelope Control guidelines](/Corporate/Guidelines/Development-Control/Residential/Semi-Detached-Houses/EC).

Earthworks in low-lying areas

For low-lying sites that need to meet PUB’s minimum platform level (MPL):

* Only the building structures or internal living areas and setback areas from common boundaries shall be raised to meet the stipulated MPL.
* The road buffer area of the development site need not be raised to the required MPL. For flood protection purposes, the road buffer area has to be 300mm above the adjacent road level, or not lower than the existing ground level, whichever is higher.
* Any common retaining-cum-boundary walls or fences shall be designed sensitively, as these may be higher than the existing levels of adjacent houses or land parcels.
* The following condition shall be annotated on plans: "*The Developer/Owner is fully aware that he shall raise the structures/areas built to lower platform levels, to or above the recommended Minimum Platform Level as and when the adjacent grounds/roads are raised in future and comply with any other conditions deemed necessary by PUB*.”.

Refer to [Basements](/Corporate/Guidelines/Development-Control/Residential/Semi-Detached-Houses/EC) for more information on the treatment of internal areas below the MPL.

*Last updated on 5 July 2019*