



TECHNICAL GUIDELINES  
FOR NATIONAL MONUMENTS

# SIGNAGE FOR NATIONAL MONUMENTS

2022 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION

Preservation of Sites and Monuments  
*a division of the National Heritage Board*



BY PRESERVATION OF SITES AND MONUMENTS, NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD



## Signage for National Monuments

Prepared by  
Preservation of Sites and Monuments, a division of  
National Heritage Board.

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## INTRODUCTION

These technical guidelines are written for monument owners and occupiers who have intention to install signage within, on and/or around their respective National Monuments.

Different types of signage are used by different National Monuments for different purposes. Most signage are used to promote programmes and/or services, as well as to provide directions. As every National Monument and their signage needs are unique, all signage applications will be reviewed individually and independently.

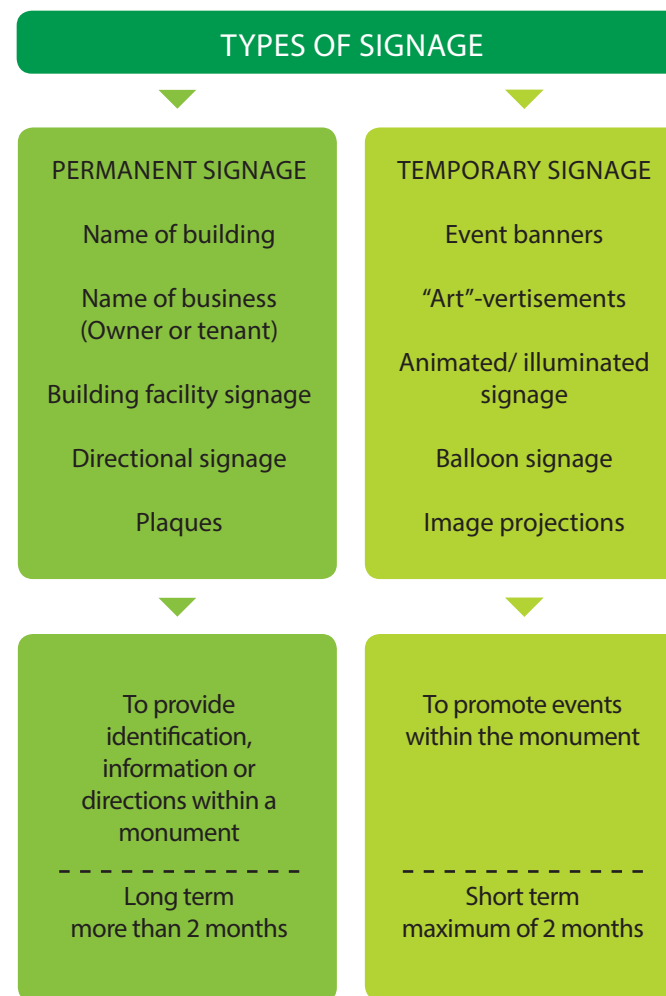
The guidelines contained in this guide do not exempt monument owners and occupiers from compliance with relevant authorities such as Building and Construction Authority (BCA) for building signage licensing, Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) for signage within conservation areas and for conserved buildings etc.

For more information on BCA's building signage licensing scheme, please visit [www.bca.gov.sg](http://www.bca.gov.sg) and for information on URA's signage guidelines for conservation areas, please visit [www.ura.gov.sg](http://www.ura.gov.sg).

For further queries, please contact the Preservation of Sites and Monuments (PSM), a division under the National Heritage Board, at [nhb\\_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg](mailto:nhb_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg).

## TYPES OF SIGNAGE

The different types of signage commonly displayed within, on and/or around National Monuments are as follow:





## PERMANENT SIGNAGE

Permanent signage plays an important role in identifying National Monuments; promoting programmes and services offered by the owner and/or occupier of the monument; as well as providing general information and directions.

Permanent signage for National Monuments are usually installed on the monuments themselves, and are on display for the long term. Some examples of permanent signage on the exteriors and within the interiors of National Monuments are as provided below.

### Name of the Business



Examples of permanent signage of building name and name of business: (from top) Goodwood Park Hotel, and MacDonald House

### Name of the Building



## Building Facility Signage



Building facility signage identify function(s) of a space: (from left) a gallery signage and lecture room signage at the Peranakan Museum.

## Directional Signage



Directional signage guide visitors within and outside a monument: (from left) the floor plan signage inside National Gallery of Singapore; and the facility directional signage inside Singapore Art Museum.

## Plaques



From left: The National Monument plaque for Bowyer Block, and the historic site marker. The placement of any plaque and marker must be approved by PSM.



## TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

Temporary signage refers to all signage that are used for promotional purposes to market programmes and/ or services. These temporary signage have a maximum display period of two months. All monument owners and occupiers are required to re-apply for approval if the two months period is exceeded.

The different types of temporary signage that can be found on National Monuments are as provided below.

### Event Banners



### Animated/ Illuminated Signage



Temporary signage refer to banners which are used for highlighting special events within a monument such as (from top) temporary signage for an exhibition on the front facade of National Museum of Singapore, and temporary signage on free standing banner poles or fixed banner locations at the side of Singapore Art Museum. It could also refer to lighting projections on the façades of monuments during special festivals such as the Singapore Night Festival.

## "Art"-vertisements / Art installations



Examples of non-regular temporary signage include (from top) inflated play equipment, 3D art installations and balloon signage.



### Balloon Signage



## SIGNAGE PARAMETERS

With regards to the design and placement of signage at/on National Monuments, PSM will evaluate all applications from monument owners and occupiers based on the following six parameters:

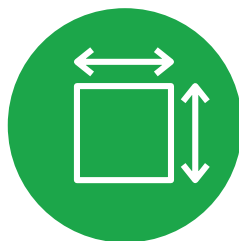
### PARAMETERS



Placement



Design



Proportion and Dimension



Sensitive Installation



Illumination



Reinstatement



### Placement

When proposing and/or determining the placement of signage, the National Monument and especially its key architectural features must be preserved and not obscured. More importantly, the placement of signage should never damage the monument.

It is therefore recommended that signage should preferably be placed/installed away from the building facade and that it does not obscure key architectural features as highlighted in the Preservation Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for the respective monuments. New signage should preferably be placed on new extension(s)/addition(s) to the National Monument (where available), instead of historic structures.

<sup>1</sup>PSM prepares a set of Preservation Guidelines which are unique and specific to each and every monument. These guidelines highlight a list of architectural features that must be preserved and not be obscured.



From left: Asian Civilisation Museum and National Museum of Singapore have their museum signage installed some distance from their buildings;



From left: Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall has banner poles installed along its side boundary, thus keeping its front facade (right) clear from any signage.





## Controlled placement for signage on main facades

In the event that signage is/are required to be placed on the main façade (or parts of the main façade) of a National Monument to lend visual prominence and for a short period of time, PSM must be consulted and its advice and approval obtained for the exact location(s) of the signage.



TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

In cases where signage is to be placed on the National Monument's main façade, it is preferable for the signage to be placed in an area (or areas) where it is least intrusive visually and where the overall view of the main facade is not compromised.

For example, (from top) National Gallery Singapore has banners installed between repetitive colonnades and National Museum of Singapore has a banner installed between designated window bays.



## Design

As a general guideline, the design for signage on National Monuments should not overwhelm the monuments nor obscure their architectural features. All signage on National Monuments must be tasteful, respectful and commensurate with the dignity and integrity of the monuments.

Where possible, signage for National Monuments should be compatible with the historical context of the monuments in terms of materials used, colour and style (e.g. use of motifs or imagery).



PERMANENT SIGNAGE



TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

From top: A small yet visible pictorial bicycle signage clearly denotes the function of a space on the monument facade; the careful selection of font type and size when installing building signage complements the appearance of a monument; and subtle detailing such as adopting existing building motifs, such as motifs from floor tile, for signage design helps the signage blend in with the building's architectural style.





## Proportion and Dimension

All signage to be placed and/or installed on National Monuments must respect the size and scale of the monuments. In other words, its size must be proportionate to the monument and does not obscure the public's viewing of the monument and/or overwhelm the monument.



PERMANENT SIGNAGE



TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

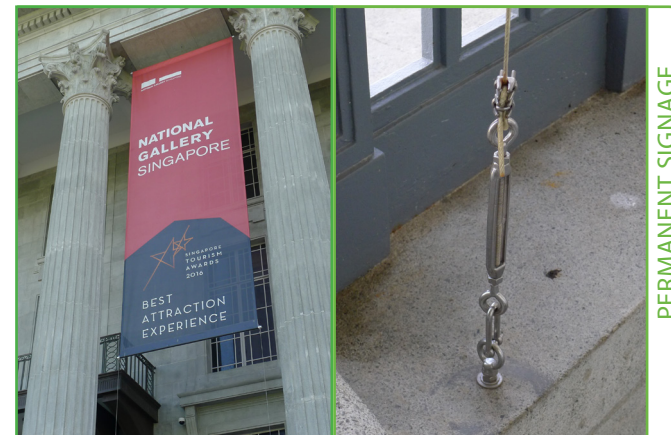
Signage are carefully designed to fit where they can be read by viewers and are still respectful to the overall view of the monument. For example: (from top left) National Gallery Singapore has signage at the rear facade of the gallery where its readability caters for commuters from City Hall MRT (Coleman St); Asian Civilisation Museum has a tenant's signage, "Prive", carefully crafted to fit in between grooved lines; and Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall has a minimal number of banners to facilitate the public's appreciation of the monument's grand facade.



## Sensitive Installation

The installation of signage on National Monuments must be carried out carefully and sensitively in order to minimise impact (and damage) to the building structures. In the case of temporary signage, free-standing signage are preferred as they do not require direct mounting onto the monuments' building facades.

Where possible, the owners and occupiers of National Monuments should reuse existing signage fixtures rather than install new fixtures so as to avoid unnecessary and further damage to the monuments' historic structures.



PERMANENT SIGNAGE

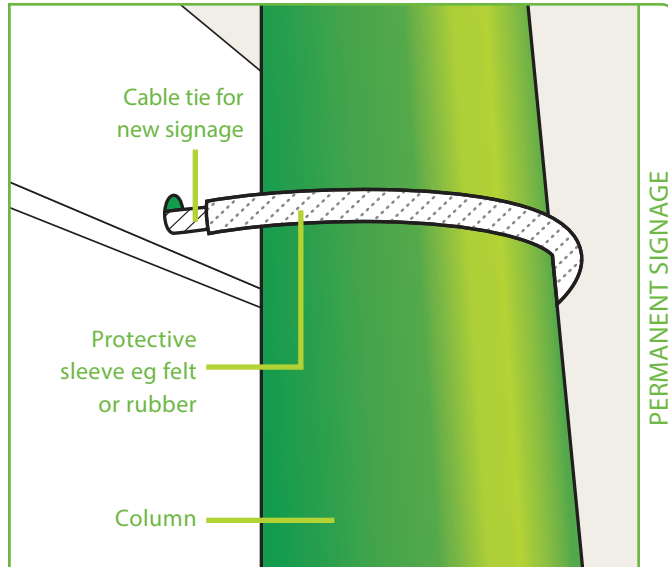


TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

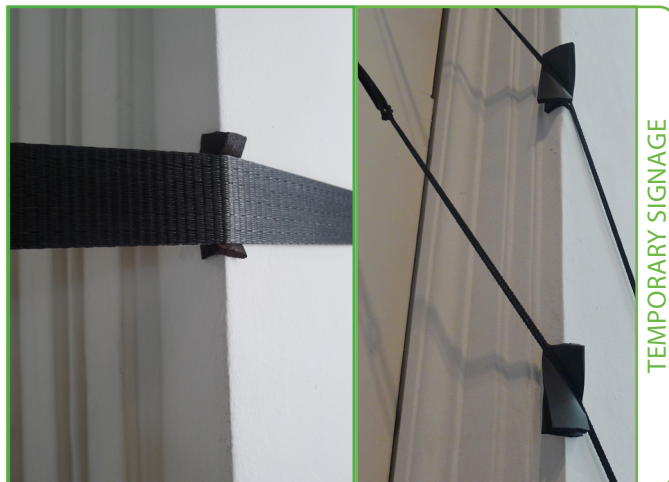
From top left: National Gallery Singapore has fixed banner hanging locations and reuses signage fixtures (e.g. stainless steel forged eye-bolt, to hang banners for various exhibitions) while Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall has free-standing signage placed at the entrance of the monument to eliminate direct impact on the building structure.



When securing a signage around part of a monument's building structure, cable tie with protective sleeve made of felt or rubber should be used. This is because the protective sleeves act as a buffer to prevent damage to the monument's building structure.



From top: A sketch showing how wrapping the cable tie with felt, rubber or thick fabric can prevent scratches or cracks to the historical column of a monument, and examples of good practice in protecting wall edges with thick rubberpieces where heavy-duty ropes and bands wrap the wall to support a temporary art installation.



## Illumination

All National Monuments should be illuminated and/or lighted in a respectful manner and compatible to their historical contexts where possible. The signage on and/or near National Monuments should preferably be illuminated from an external source (e.g. ground-mounted spotlight).

When choosing and installing lighting for signage, all lighting devices and associated ducting works must be installed in a discreet manner. The lighting of signage should be coordinated with the overall lighting for the monument to create a balanced composition and present a pleasant night view of the monument.



Examples of concealed lighting strips in signage: (from top) the building signage for National Museum of Singapore and the signage of a tenant at Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall.





While facade illuminations for special occasions are allowed, owners and occupiers of National Monuments must always ensure that these illuminations are relevant to the historical contexts of the monuments and/or are not disrespectful to the dignity and integrity of the monuments.



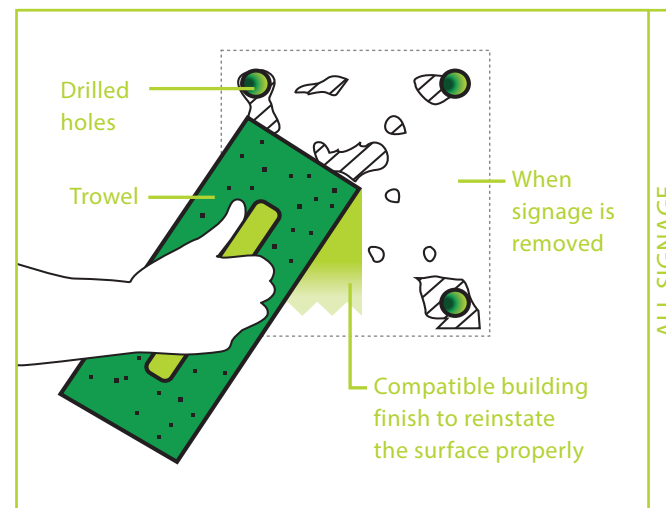
TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

From top: Facade illuminations at National Museum of Singapore during the Singapore Night Festival 2015 and 2016 respectively.



## Reinstatement

When a signage is removed, all affected areas must be reinstated to match the existing building finish. Reinstatement works must be carried out when surface is clean and dry. When completed, the reinstated area must blend in with the surrounding surface as much as possible.



When signage is removed, all drilled holes must be sealed and finished with a like-for-like finish or a compatible material of equivalent or lower compressive strength (e.g. conservation plaster). This is because a material with a higher compressive strength (e.g. modern cement) will contract and expand at higher rate and may exert pressure on its surrounding surfaces and cause cracks to appear.



## GETTING CONSENT FOR SIGNAGE INSTALLATION

### 01 Why permission from PSM is required?

PSM's consent for signage installation on National Monuments is required to prevent the over-cluttering of monument facades with excessive signage and to ensure that the proposed installation method is appropriate and, more importantly, does not damage any part of the monument.

### 02 Types of signage that require permission from PSM

PSM's consent must be sought and secured for all permanent and temporary signage that meet any one of the following criteria prior to the installation of the signage on a monument:

- All exterior signage;
- All interior signage that have any length of more than 1.8m; and/or
- All tenant signage, free-standing or installed directly on the interior or the exterior walls of a monument.



ALL SIGNAGE

Examples of signage that require permission from PSM include (from left) interior signage in the new atrium of National Gallery Singapore that exceed 1.8m length; and a free-standing tenant signage installed outside Old Parliament House.

### 03 Types of signage that can be exempted

The following types of signage are exempt from PSM's consent:

- Interior signage that are free standing and of a length less than 1.8m;
- Interior building facilities signage and directional signage that are mounted on walls and of a length less than 1.8m; and
- Signage that comply with the Banner Guidelines written specifically for a selected group of National Monuments. For example, National Museum of Singapore, the Peranakan Museum and the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall have banner guidelines written specifically for them.



ALL SIGNAGE

Examples of signage exempted from seeking PSM's consent: (from top left) special exhibition signage on movable stand; the Peranakan Museum has a set of banner guidelines which identifies fixed locations for banner hanging; and interior directional signage in a museum.

## 04 Prohibited signage on National Monuments

The following types of signage are strictly prohibited for National Monuments:

- Advertising / branding signage that are not related or at odds with the main use / main occupier of the National Monument;
- Signage that hold little relevance or appropriateness to the core function(s) of the National Monument;
- Signage that risk damaging parts of the National Monument when installed;
- Signage, such as 'Art'-vertisments, that are inappropriate or may compromise public safety; or
- Signage that are not approved by other technical agencies such as BCA, URA and etc.



ALL SIGNAGE

Inappropriate signage installation method that risk damaging a column capital in a National Monument and inappropriate signage advertisement of a construction company at Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall.



ALL PROJECTION

Advertising / branding signage / image projections that are not related or at odds with the main use / main occupier of the National Monument.

## 05 Signage submission

To seek PSM's consent for signage installation on or within a National Monument, monument owners and occupiers are required to submit ALL information listed below, to [nhb\\_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg](mailto:nhb_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg):

- Plan or elevation drawing indicating signage location;
- Size of signage and signage material(s);
- Purpose of signage;
- Display period; and
- Method of installation.

Please note that PSM's processing time upon receiving ALL required information is an estimated three (3) weeks and it is therefore important to plan early and ensure timely submission of all signage applications.

The installation of signage prior to receiving PSM's consent is strictly prohibited. Monument owners and occupiers may be instructed to remove unauthorized signage at their own cost.



ALL SIGNAGE

### Note:

PSM may, at its absolute discretion, reject or refuse any application for the display of signage if it deems that the signage parameters listed in this guide are not met or if the application contravenes the Preservation of Monuments Act and/or the Preservation Guidelines of the monument.

From left: Approved tenant signage at the side facade of MacDonald House and a facade signage that identifies with Cathay building.

## GLOSSARY

### 1. "Art"-vertisement

A sculptural three-dimensional element, two-dimensional cut-out which is artistic in nature, with no commercial advertisement messages or logos.

### 2. Animated/ Illuminated signage

A form of display consisting of visual moving pictures created with the use of electrical, mechanical and/or other sources of power.

### 3. Event banner

A visual representation that promotes an event or events within the building by means of painted or printed artwork on cloth, vinyl sheet or other materials that is fastened to and/or suspended from any building or structure.

### 4. Building facilities and directional signage

A visual representation for the purpose of directing vehicular or pedestrian traffic to or advising the public of:

- The place of business or any person, firm, corporation or organisation; and/ or
- Any facility for special needs persons, car park, taxi stand or other public facilities.

### 5. Balloon signage

A signage that is inflated, tied to and/ or suspended above any building or premises, or placed on an open ground.

### 6. Name of building, business, owner or tenant signage

A visual representation that displays:

- an identity or a description of the place or premise;
- an identity or a description of any person residing or carrying on an occupation at the place or premises; and/ or
- particulars of any business or occupation carried on at the place or premises, including any logo or symbol that identifies the business or occupation.

### 7. Plaque

A tablet that is fixed to a wall or other surfaces in commemoration of a person or event, or to provide specific information related to the building, such as Historic Site Marker.





## CONTACT PSM

Please contact us at:

Preservation of Sites and Monuments  
National Heritage Board  
Stamford Road, #03-08  
Stamford Court, Singapore 178892

Telephone: (65) 6982 1250  
Email: [nhb\\_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg](mailto:nhb_nationalmonuments@nhb.gov.sg)

## RESOURCES

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