

## **MEDIA FACTSHEET**

### **Enhancements to Fort Canning Park and surroundings**

The National Parks Board will embark on enhancement works to the 18-hectare Fort Canning Park and its surroundings. The total area of the enhancement works will span approximately 8 hectares.

#### **1. Bringing to life rich history of Fort Canning Park**

To uncover parts of Fort Canning Hill's past that are still unknown and to allow visitors to appreciate these aspects of the park, NParks will revisit some of the hill's historical features.

##### **a) Three new gardens**

There will be three new gardens restored as part of the heritage landscapes within and around Fort Canning Park, namely Royal Garden, First Botanic Garden and Jubilee Park.

- The Royal Garden will showcase fruit trees like rambutans, jackfruits, bael fruit, lontar palms, as well as fragrant plants such as different species of gardenias, jasmines, and magnolias.
- The First Botanic Garden will be landscaped with plants introduced to Singapore in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that were integral to the Spice Trade.
- Jubilee Park will avail more family-friendly venues for arts and culture activities in a garden setting.

##### **b) Heritage Trails**

- Existing heritage trails will be re-curated to interpret the rich history of Fort Canning Park. The 14<sup>th</sup> century trail will feature the Forbidden Spring or *Pancur Larangan* which is believed to be the bathing site of the royals. The 19<sup>th</sup> century trail will feature the new Raffles Garden and Farquhar Garden in which native flora, economic crops and ornamental plants collected and documented by Sir Stamford Raffles and Singapore's First Resident William Farquhar through their botanical explorations will be displayed. In addition, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Trail will extend to encompass historical relics from the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as the Battlebox museum which used to be a World War II underground command centre, Hotel Fort Canning building, which was the former British Far East Command Headquarters as well as Fort Canning Centre that was formerly a military barracks.

**c) Enhancements to Armenian Street**

Part of Armenian Street will be pedestrianised and turned into a park as part of a re-creation of the First Botanic Garden. This is part of a multi-agency effort by URA, NParks, PUB, LTA, NHB and NAC in close collaboration with stakeholders within the vicinity to improve the pedestrian connectivity by enabling visitors to walk comfortably from Armenian Street to Civic District. This garden will extend from Fort Canning Park onto the streetscapes of roads bounded by Hill Street, Victoria Street, Bras Basah Road, Handy Road and Canning Rise, creating new spaces that the public can enjoy and injecting greater vibrancy into the area. It will showcase a plant collection that was integral to Singapore's presence in the spice trade in the 1800s. This collection in the first botanic garden will feature plants introduced to Singapore in the 1820s to 1840s, some of which were listed in Raffles' and Farquhar's records. Examples include spices like clove and nutmeg, and fruit trees like custard apple and chiku.

**d) Fort Canning Centre to be repurposed**

Fort Canning Centre will be re-purposed as a gallery to tell the rich history of the hill and the beginnings of Singapore through the 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There will be flexible spaces for programmes, as well as dining and lifestyle offerings. The Singapore Bicentennial exhibition will be held at Fort Canning Centre in 2019.

**2. More spaces at Fort Canning Park and surroundings**

Fort Canning Park has hosted arts events such as "Ballet Under the Stars", "Shakespeare at the Park" and a stable of international acts. Building on the park's popularity as a venue for arts events, existing open spaces in the vicinity of Fort Canning Park will be enhanced to create more green spaces hosting a wide range of arts programmes.

Jubilee Park will be restored at the former location of the King George V Jubilee Park as an arts and play space. Among the variety of park amenities at this new 2-hectare park are retro-inspired play features, a landscaped theatre and an event lawn for hosting art installations, artist markets and performances. Adjacent buildings of the former River Valley Swimming Pool will also be renovated to hold art exhibitions and dining options.

### **3. Curating events and trails, outreach programmes and education**

Apart from key arts events, park visitors can look forward to a wider range of programmes throughout the year to suit varied interests. These may include interactive history trails, handicrafts, cultural workshops and nature and archaeology appreciation activities.

For a more hands-on experience, visitors can also sign up as volunteers to participate in gardening activities, archaeological research, conduct guided walks, give talks or demonstrations and more. To volunteer, one can enquire at the Fort Canning Park office directly, or go to [www.nparks.gov.sg/fortcanning](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/fortcanning).

### **4. Enhancing accessibility to and within the hill**

Fort Canning Park is accessible via the Dhoby Ghaut, Fort Canning, Clarke Quay, Bras Basah and City Hall MRT stations. Covered escalators will soon allow visitors to reach Fort Canning Centre via Jubilee Park, and Fort Canning Park from Stamford Green. The connections will also provide easier access from Fort Canning MRT station to Fort Canning Centre to all. Porosity of the park will be increased with the partial removal of fences and hedges. Park lightings will also be improved for a more visitor-friendly environment.