

Housing ministry cancelling 15 years deadline for structural modification!

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Housing beneficiaries in the Kingdom are to get more freedom on their units for making modifications and additions.

Up for change are laws requiring a 15 year waiting period for structural modifications and the need for signing a pledge accepting responsibility for damages, amongst others.

Al-Ayam, citing unnamed sources, reports that the discussions are between the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning and various municipal councils.

The move aims at amending the building permit regulations to allow housing beneficiaries to make physical changes without compromising the structural integrity of the building.

The report says that the ministry is cancelling a 15-year waiting period for structural modifications after signing an agreement or issuing an ownership certificate.

Besides, housing beneficiaries could now add external structures without exceeding 10% of the total plot area to their units.

They are free to build on the front border of the land, given the length of the facade and the roofed car parking together not exceed 40% of the property's frontage.

The height of the new construction also should not go above the first floor and should

Key takeaways

- Ministry cancelling 15 years waiting period for structural modification after signing an agreement or the issuance of ownership certificate.

- Allows construction of external majlis without exceeding 10% area of the total size of the land plot.

- To cancel the signing of a pledge accepting responsibility for damages to the house.

- Blueprints from an accredited engineering agency are essential for modifying the main structure.

- Beneficiaries are allowed to create a door overlooking car parks.

- Construction of new structures is allowed after leaving a 1.5m setback.

- To allow adding balconies or overhead extension up to a maximum of 1.20 metres.



match the facades of other units.

No more damage responsibility pledge

Al-Ayam report also says that the Ministry of Housing is cancelling the requirement for a beneficiary to sign a pledge of responsibility for damages that might occur to a house during a construction process.

Instead, the ministry agreed to accept a proposal by the municipalities to commit to engineering drawing from an accredited engineering firm for constructions that affect the facades and load-bearing walls and columns inside rooms.

External doors overlooking car parks

The ministry also reportedly agreed to a proposal allowing housing beneficiaries to create an external door overlooking the car parks while rejecting a proposal allowing doors to open directly into corridors.

A setback of 1.5 m

The ministry, the report says, agreed to a proposal regarding side and rear setbacks. The new decision allows adding facilities to the original unit from the side or rear after leaving at least 1.50 metres, but through an accredited engineering firm.

3-meter space in front

The ministry also agreed to preserve the original front setback of housing units. However, it is now permissible to reduce

the setback to 3 meters if the existing area is more than 3 meters from the land border of the front overlooking the street or road. The ministry also clarified that upper projections above the ground floor are permissible up to a maximum of 1.20 meters, which requires necessary engineering approvals.

Take permits for constructions

The ministry called on beneficiaries of housing units to adhere to the construction requirements, stressing the need to obtain permits for expansion without harming the structural integrity of the housing units and the safety of the residents.

The ministry said that it is keen to include all requirements necessary to ensure the quality of housing for citizens, which takes care of the possibility of expanding the units without violating their integrity or the general view of the projects.

The constructions, the ministry said, should follow the latest building techniques and components while warning that unplanned and random changes will harm the quality of the cities and their general view.

Expansion models ready for beneficiaries to choose from

The ministry said that it had taken steps to ensure the right of the beneficiaries to expand them in a manner that guarantees the safety and quality of the units by providing them with several models of expansion at the time

of handing over itself.

"This will provide the beneficiaries several options to expand their units by using the model that safely suits their needs, and not exceeding 30% of the housing unit area," said the *Al Ayam* report.

The housing ministry also said it had worked with the Works Ministry to amend regulatory requirements for reconstructions.

The ministry said it has worked in coordination with the Works Ministry to amend requirements for reconstruction in housing areas, including cancelling the prohibition of construction.

"These amendments amid at giving beneficiaries the necessary flexibility to expand their units according to their needs, without violating construction requirements," the ministry said.

Avoid wrong engineering practices

The ministry also shed light on the wrong engineering practices in housing units that led to developing cracks in the walls, creating water leaks, fires sparked by illegal electrical connections, and blockages in sewage and rainwater drainage networks.

The ministry has earlier launched an awareness campaign calling on beneficiaries of housing units to obtain necessary permits before starting expansion and additions work on housing units, after considering architectural requirements, setback, height and building area.

Spectacular structures of the Pearling Path project

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Muharraq, the third-largest city of Bahrain and well known for its legacy, is getting its legend updated by world-renowned architects with several new structures designed.

The latest in this line and gained the attention of foreign press are the four spectacular car parks designed by Christian Kerez.

The structures, part of a project reviving the past glory of Muharraq, are nearing their completion.

The structures, according to ArchDaily, is not envisioned as just a car storage space but as a public space featuring curved slabs forming a continuous transition from one level to the other, creating a constantly changing spatial experience.



A rendering of car parks designed by Christian Kerez

company the preservation and restoration of the built heritage of Muharraq. Christian Kerez, in collaboration

with Arsenals Engineering, is materialising the project, which, according to Bahrain Authority

ing each other and creating a continuous spatial transition.

The driving sequence beings with "a sculptural tube-like extension of the lowest point of the slab, followed by an opening in the corner of the following floor, and this spatial gesture is repeated on the subsequent floors."

A visitor centre, a pedestrian bridge, public spaces, a gateway to the path and redevelopment of the oldest market are also part of the Pearl Path project.

Studio Anne Holtrop handles the restorations north of the pearling path and Studio Gionata Rize that on the south.

Holtrop's project is ongoing in collaboration with Mario Monotti, Restora SRL, Gaetano Arcobini, SGM, Ismail Khonji Engineering Consultants, and Madison Cox Landscape Architecture.

Siyadi and Murad complexes are the essential components of the northern section of the pearling path. Murad's House will be rehabilitated into a guest

house open to visitors to the city while preserving Murad's Majlis as a family council. The facade of the Siyadi House will be developed to highlight the traditional architecture and will remain inhabited by members of the Siyadi family.

Anne Holtrop is also handling the construction of Kayseri Market.

Public squares of the path and pedestrian bridge are taken care of by Kirsten Gers Dabid and Severn Office. The 3.5-kilometre trail connects many urban components of the pearling path that winds through the narrow allies of the ancient Muharraq, private lighting elements, and 16 public spaces designed by Kirsten Gers.

Valerio Olgiati is the architect of the visitor centre of the pearling path, which includes the ruins of the Yusef Ali Fakhro architecture, a historic building from the 1930s. The centre targets a wide segment of the public and will serve as a community centre.



Pearling Path visitor centre by Valerio Olgiati



Sovereign complex by Anne Holtrop Studio



Bu Maher Castle visitor centre



Pearling Path Public Squares