



**Principles on Allocation of Building Numbers and  
Guidelines for Displaying Building Numbers, Unit Designations, Signages and  
Names of Streets, Arcades and Buildings  
(For All Areas except Rural Properties in New Territories Villages)**

**1. Objective**

This practice note sets out the principles on allocation of building numbers and guidelines for displaying building numbers, unit designations, signages, and names of streets, arcades and buildings for new developments<sup>Note 1</sup>. The objective is to regularize the building numbering practices in Hong Kong for the convenience of visiting public, tourists, postal delivery, emergency services as well as rates and Government rent assessment and collection.

**2. Background**

2.1 Under Buildings Ordinance (Chapter 123), the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (CRV) is empowered to serve an order requiring the owner of a building to mark the building with the allocated building number. A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the display order issued by CRV under Section 32(2) of the Buildings Ordinance, commits an offence under Section 40(1C) of the Buildings Ordinance, the maximum penalty being a fine of \$2,000 and imprisonment of 6 months.

2.2 Over the past years, there has been considerable public concern on the difficulties in locating buildings mainly due to improper or non-display of building numbers allocated by the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD). To improve the situation, RVD considers it necessary to issue this practice note for :

<sup>Note 1</sup> 'New developments' means developments completed on or after the issue date of this practice note.

- 2.2.1 developers and Authorized Persons (i.e. architects, engineers or surveyors whose names are on the “Authorized Persons’ Register” kept under the Buildings Ordinance), during the design stage, to take into account Government’s building numbering principles; and
  - 2.2.2 developers, property managers, shop owners/occupiers and alike to follow the guidelines for the proper display of building numbers, unit designations, signages and names of streets, arcades and buildings.
- 2.3 RVD will adhere to the building numbering principles in paragraph 3 for allocating provisional/official building numbers for new developments. To help identify new developments at an early stage, provisional building numbers will be allocated upon the applications of developers or Authorized Persons in writing to RVD after the consents to commence building works have been given. For straightforward cases, the provisional building numbers can be allocated within one month of application.

### **3. Principles of Allocation of Building Numbers for New Developments**

#### **3.1 General Rule for Numbering of Buildings**

The general rule for numbering of buildings along a street is odd numbers on the left, even numbers on the right from a starting point with running direction as defined in the notices of gazetting street names issued by the Lands Department and “Index of Streets, House Numbers and Lots” published by the Land Registry. There should be a reasonable balance between the odd numbers on one side and the even numbers on the other side of a street.

#### **3.2 Allocation of Single Building Number**

- 3.2.1 For new developments to be held under single ownership, new public or private housing estates, or new commercial complexes to be managed by the developer or its management company, upon request, a single building number for the whole development based on any street that the development abuts may be acceptable. Please see Examples 1 and 2 in the Appendix.
- 3.2.2 The developer/owner should take reasonable steps to ensure the proper display of the designations of ground floor units in the development. Upon amalgamation and sub-division of the ground floor units, the developer/owner has the flexibility to change the designations.

### 3.3 Allocation of Separate Building Number

#### 3.3.1 Buildings with Street-fronting Units

For cases other than those mentioned in para. 3.2.1, particularly small developments with ground floor units to be sold separately, a separate building number for each unit fronting a street and another building number for the upper floor units would be allocated. Please see Example 3 in the Appendix.

#### 3.3.2 Buildings Fronting More Than One Street

(e.g. corner buildings, buildings with street frontage at the front and rear)

##### Ground Floor Units

- a. The separate building number for each ground floor unit will be based on the street it fronts. (Please see Example 4.)
- b. A corner unit will be allotted a building number of the better known street. (Please see Example 4.)
- c. A ground floor unit fronting streets at the front and rear will be allotted a building number of the street at the front. (Please see Example 6.)

##### Upper Floor Units

- d. The building number for the upper floor units should be based on the street the main entrance abuts. (Please see Example 4.) If the developer/owner prefers to have a building number of another street (Please see Example 5.) , presumably a better known street, his request may be entertained if :
  - i. there is an entrance from the preferred street providing access to the main lobby for going to the upper floors ; (Please see Example 5.) or
  - ii. the developer/owner agrees to display a signage, bearing the building name, if any, building number and street name, clearly indicating the location of the entrance to the upper floors on the side of the building fronting the street on which the building number is based. (Please also see para. 4.1.)

### 3.3.3 Insufficient Building Numbers for Allocation

In the event of insufficient building numbers available for allocation, a number together with an alphabet will be allocated to each ground floor unit or to upper floor units, for example, 15A, 15B, etc.

3.4 Requests that deviate from the situations mentioned in paragraph 3.2 and 3.3 will require strong justifications.

### 3.5 Allocation of Official Building Number

After an official building number is allocated to a development / ground floor unit, RVD will not alter the number unless under very exceptional circumstances. Likewise, requests for re-allocation of official building number will not be entertained without very strong justifications.

### 3.6 Deletion of Building Numbers upon Demolition of Existing Buildings

The building number(s) of existing buildings will be deleted automatically once the buildings have been demolished. Whether or not the same number(s) can be re-allocated to the new development on the same lot will depend on the appropriateness of the circumstances.

#### 4. Guidelines for Displaying Building Numbers, Unit Designations, Signages and Names of Streets, Arcades and Buildings for New Developments

Under Section 32(2) of the Buildings Ordinance (Chapter 123), CRV is empowered to serve an order requiring the owner of a building to mark the building with the allocated building number. In addition to building numbers, for the convenience of the public, parties concerned are advised to display unit designations, signages and names of arcades, buildings and streets in both English and Chinese versions as set out in the table below.

##### 4.1 The following display guidelines apply to new developments :

<b>Guidelines for Display</b>				
Display Details	Building Number	Street Name	Unit Designation	Name of Development, Building or Arcade
<b>Premises showing Display</b>				
(A) <u>Single Building Number for Whole Development (Examples 1 &amp; 2 in the Appendix)</u>				
(i) Main Entrance to development, upper floors or shopping arcade abutting the street with the allotted building number <sup>Note 2</sup>	Strongly recommended to display <sup>Note 3</sup>	Advisable to display	N/A	Advisable to display
(ii) Entrance(s) to development, upper floors or shopping arcade other than (A)(i)	N/A	Advisable to display name of street the side entrance abuts	N/A	Advisable to display
(iii) Ground floor or arcade units	N/A	N/A	Advisable to display	N/A
(B) <u>Separate building number for individual ground floor units and upper floors (Examples 3 to 6 in the Appendix)</u>				
(i) Main Entrance to upper floors abutting the street with the allotted building number <sup>Note 4</sup>	Strongly recommended to display <sup>Note 3</sup>	Advisable to display	N/A	Advisable to display
(ii) Entrance(s) to upper floors other than (B)(i)	N/A	Advisable to display name of street the side entrance abuts	N/A	Advisable to display
(iii) Individual ground floor unit abutting the street with the allotted building number	Strongly recommended to display <sup>Note 3</sup>	Advisable to display	N/A	N/A

<sup>Note 2</sup> For a large development, it is advisable to display the allotted building number, street name & building name, if any, at other suitable positions on the building. (See Examples 1 & 2 in the Appendix.)

<sup>Note 3</sup> The display of building number is strongly recommended. Display order may be served on the owner for non-display of such building number under Section 32(2) of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), after which the display of building number will become mandatory.

<sup>Note 4</sup> Where the upper floors are allotted a building number of a street other than the one which provides the main access, it is strongly recommended to display the building number at the access as explained in para. 3.3.2d(i), if available, or it is advisable to display a signage as explained in para. 3.3.2d(ii).

#### 4.2 Manner of Displaying Building Number

In respect of the manner of displaying the building number, it is recommended that the building number should be clearly displayed above or at the side of the entrance to the premises. The minimum height and width for each digit of the number are 50mm and 40mm respectively. The colour of the number or number plate should contrast clearly with its background.

#### 4.3 Non-Compliance with Display Order

Under Section 32(2) of the Buildings Ordinance (Chapter 123), display orders may be served on owners for failure to display the building numbers. Non-compliance with the display order without reasonable excuse is an offence under Section 40(1C) of the Buildings Ordinance, the maximum penalty being a fine of \$2,000 and imprisonment of 6 months upon prosecution and conviction.

### 5. Enquiries

Enquiries on this practice note may be made to the following contact points :

e-mail address : [enquiries@rvd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiries@rvd.gov.hk)  
Tel. No. : 2150 8986 2150 8902  
Fax No. : 2152 0138

### 6. This practice note can also be viewed and downloaded from RVD's webpage at :

English Version :<http://www.rvd.gov.hk/en/issues/index.htm>  
Chinese Version :<http://www.rvd.gov.hk/tc/issues/index.htm>

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Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

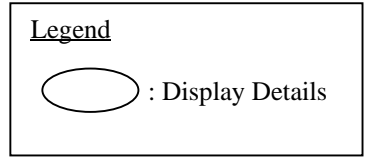
Issue Date : 2 January 2007

Rating and Valuation Department

15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices

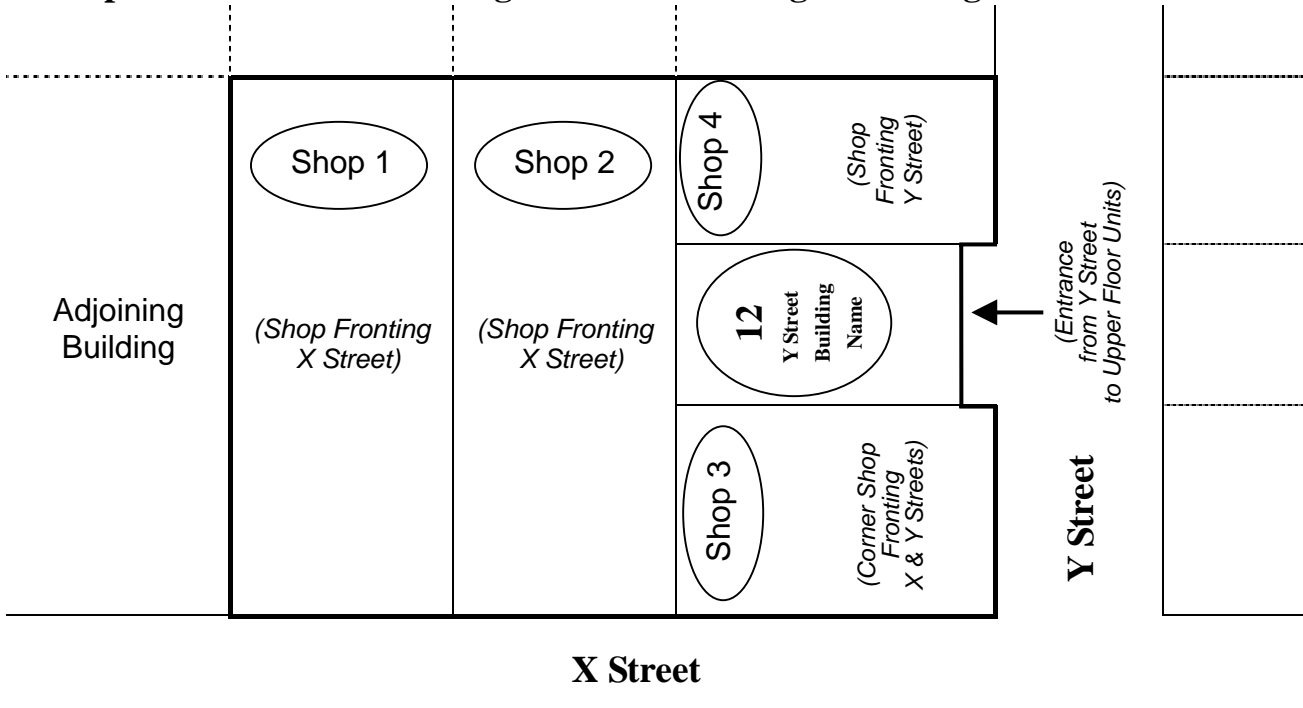
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon.

**Examples of Allocation and Display**



**Single Building Number Allocated to the Entire Development**

**Example 1 Corner Building Allotted with Single Building Number**



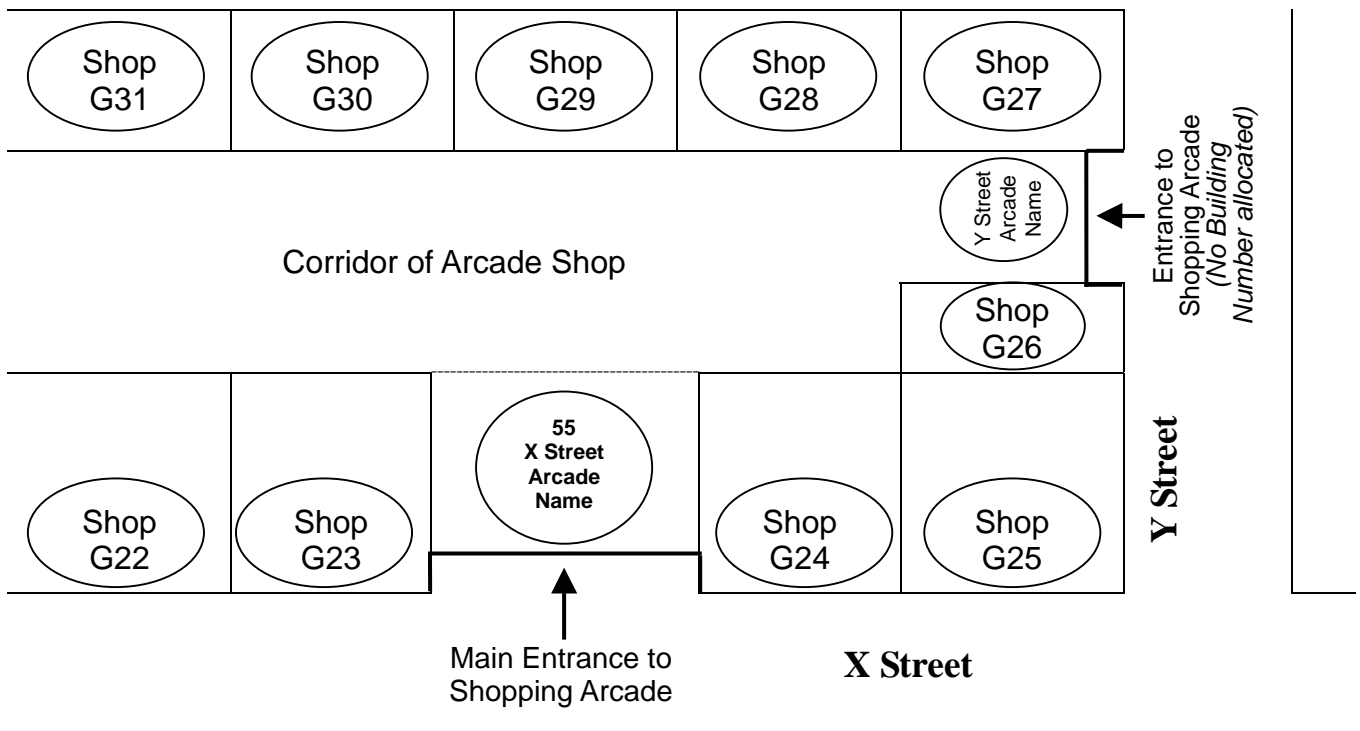
Allocation

1. Single Building Number : '12 Y Street' for the entire development with entrance to upper floors fronting 'Y Street'
2. Shop Designations : Shop 1, Shop 2, Shop 3 and Shop 4 at the developer/owner's discretion

Display

3. Strongly recommended to display : Building number '12' at the entrance to upper floors fronting 'Y Street' (Note 3 in para. 4.1)
4. Advisable to display :
  - a. 'Y Street' & building name, if any, at the entrance to upper floors
  - b. For a large development, display '12 Y Street' & building name, if any, at other suitable positions on the building fronting 'Y Street', and building name, if any, at other suitable positions on the building fronting other streets.
  - c. Shop designation at each ground floor shop

**Example 2      Shopping Arcade**



Allocation

- 1. Single Building Number :      '55 X Street' for the entire development with entrance to shopping arcade fronting 'X Street'
- 2. Shop designations :              Shop designations at the developer/owner's discretion.

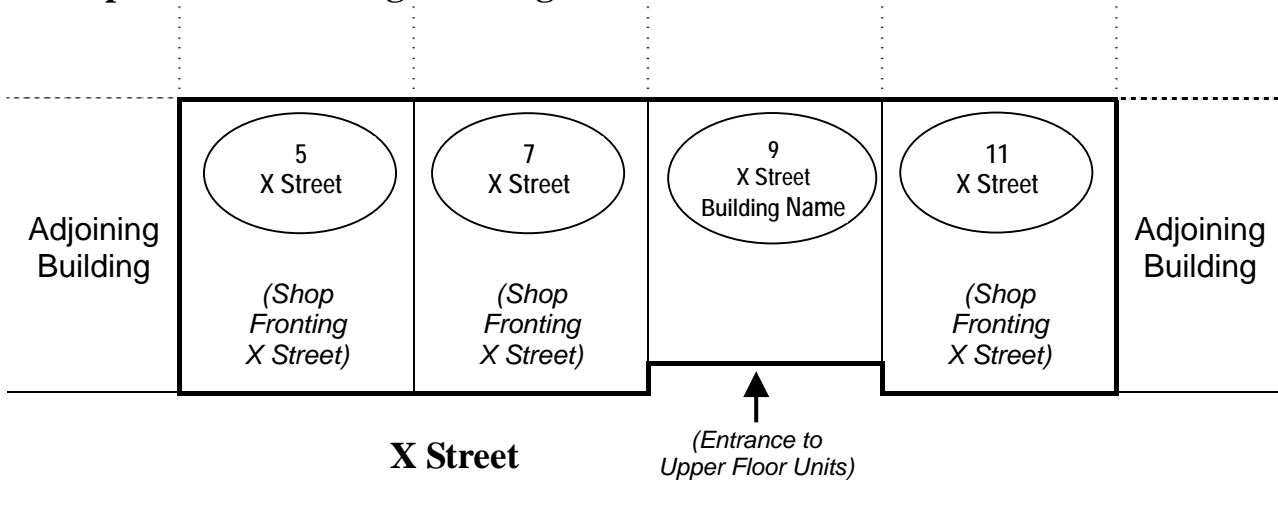
Display

- 3. Strongly recommended to display :      Building number '55' at the entrance to shopping arcade fronting 'X Street'  
(Note 3 in para. 4.1)
- 4. Advisable to display :
  - a. 'X Street' & arcade name at the entrance to the shopping arcade fronting 'X Street'
  - b. For a large development, display '55 X Street' & building/arcade name at other suitable positions on the building fronting 'X Street', and building/arcade name at other suitable positions fronting other streets.
  - c. 'Y Street' & arcade name at the entrance to shopping arcade fronting 'Y Street'
  - d. Shop designation at each ground floor shop



## Developments with Ground Floor Units to be Sold Separately

### Example 3 Building Fronting One Street



Separate Building Numbers will be allocated to each street-fronting shop and another building number to the upper floor units with ground floor entrance from 'X Street'.

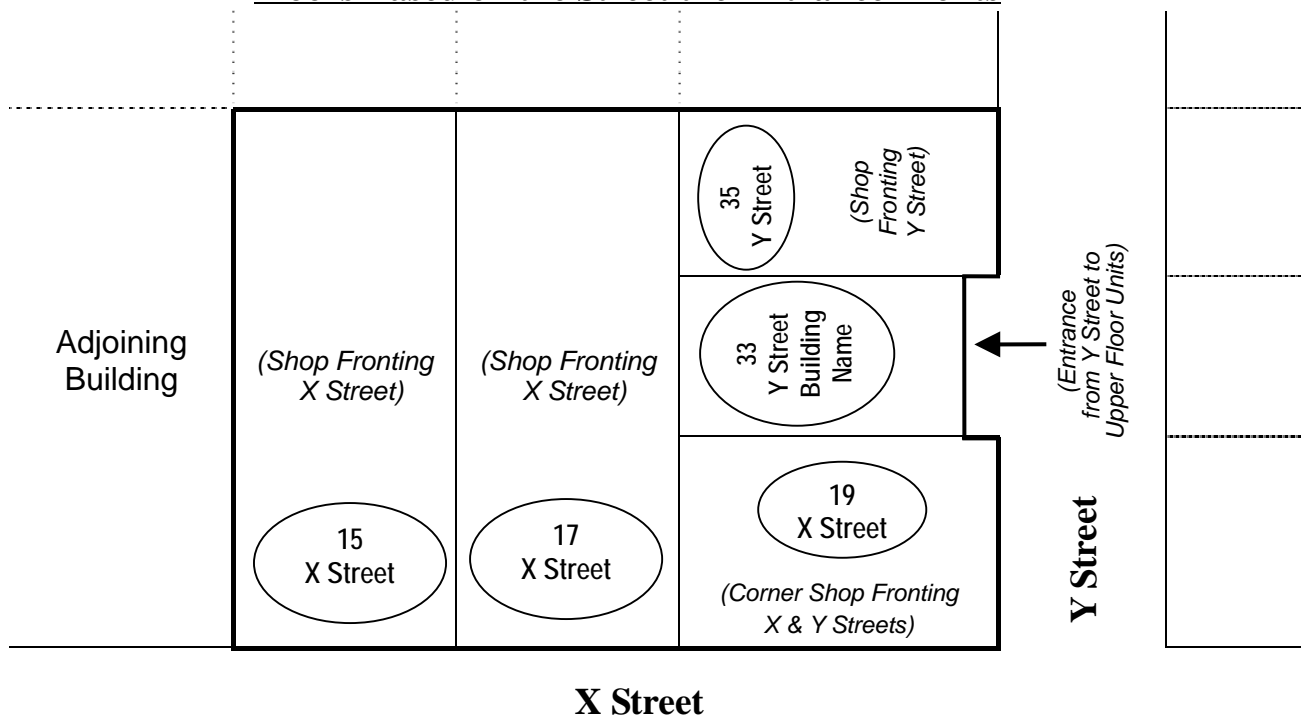
#### Allocation

1. Separate Building Number : '5, 7 and 11 X Street' for the three ground floor shops and '9 X Street' for upper floors with the ground floor entrance fronting 'X Street'

#### Display

2. Strongly recommended to display :  
(Note 3 in para. 4.1)
  - a. Each of the building numbers '5', '7' and '11' at the corresponding entrance to shops
  - b. Building number '9' at the entrance to upper floors
3. Advisable to display :
  - a. 'X Street' together with the building numbers '5', '7', '9' & '11'
  - b. Building name, if any, at the entrance to upper floors

**Example 4 Corner Building Allotted with a Building Number for the Upper Floors Based on the Street the Entrance Fronts**



Separate Building Numbers will be allocated to each street-fronting shop and another building number to the upper floor units with ground floor entrance from ‘Y Street’.

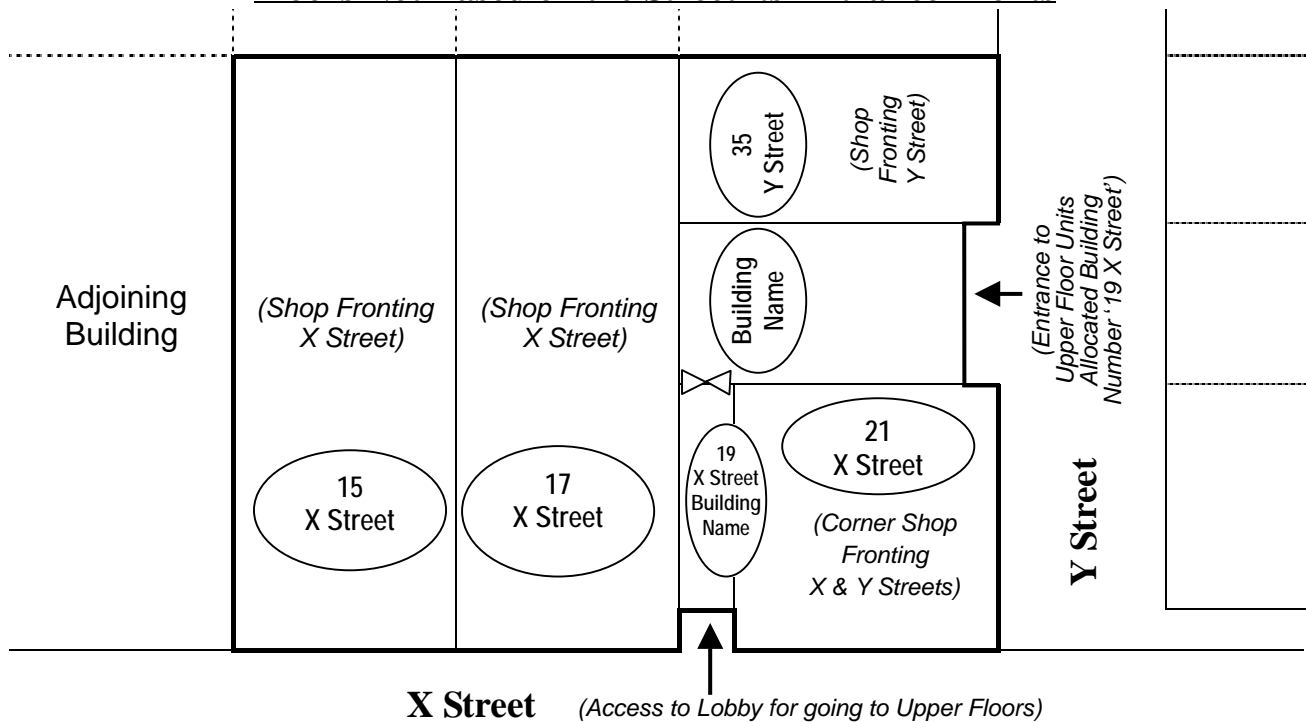
Allocation

1. Separate Building Number :
  - a. ‘15, 17 and 19 X Street’ for the three ground floor shops fronting ‘X Street’
  - b. ‘33 & 35 Y Street’ respectively for upper floors and ground floor shop fronting ‘Y Street’

Display

2. Strongly recommended to display : (Note 3 in para. 4.1)
  - a. Each of the building numbers ‘15’, ‘17’, ‘19’ and ‘35’ at the corresponding entrance to shops
  - b. Building number ‘33’ at the entrance to upper floors
3. Advisable to display :
  - a. ‘X Street’ together with the building numbers ‘15’, ‘17’ & ‘19’, and ‘Y Street’ together with the building numbers ‘33’ & ‘35’
  - b. Building name, if any, at the entrance to upper floors

**Example 5 Corner Building Allotted with a Building Number for the Upper Floors Not Based on the Street its Entrance Fronts**



Separate Building Numbers will be allocated to each street-fronting shop and another building number based on 'X Street' to the upper floor units with ground floor entrance from 'Y Street' provided that the conditions set out in 1(c) below are complied with.

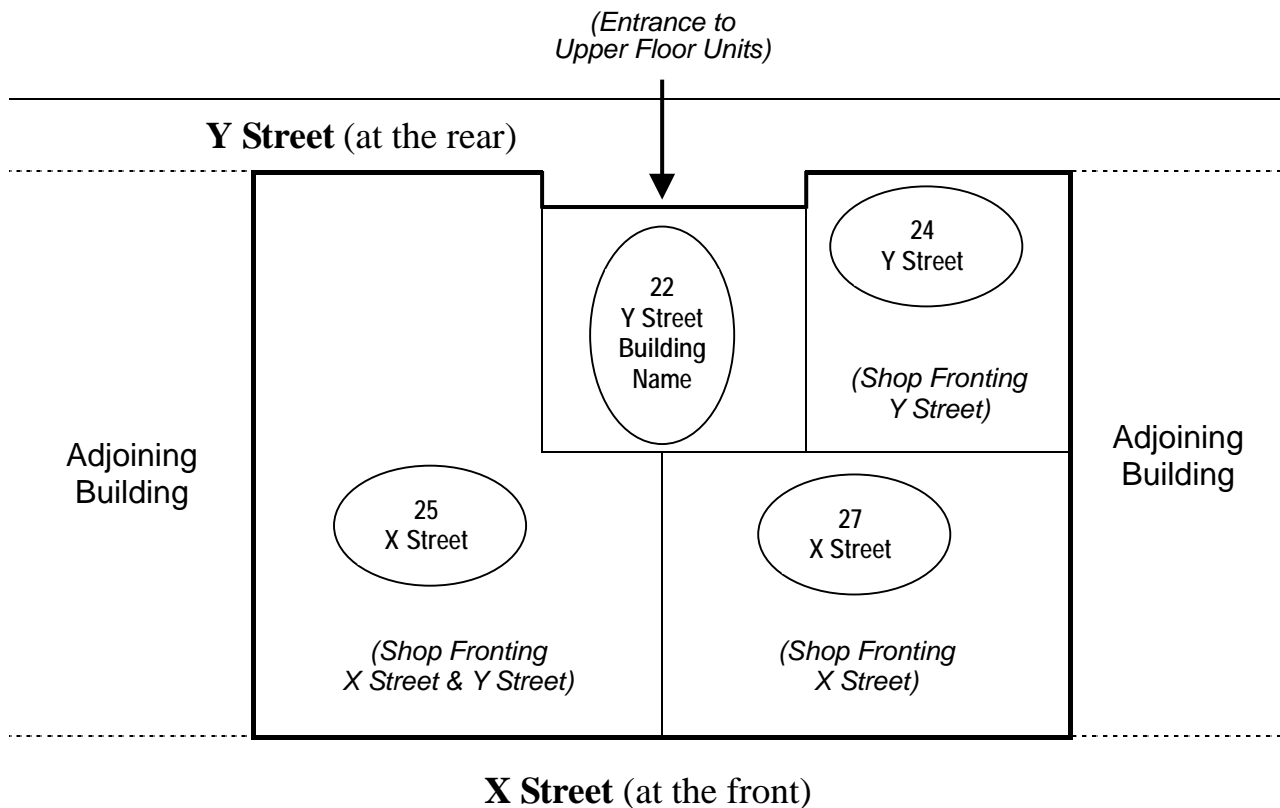
Allocation

1. Separate Building Number :
  - a. '15, 17 and 21 X Street' for the three ground floor shops fronting 'X Street'
  - b. '35 Y Street' for the ground floor shop fronting 'Y Street'
  - c. '19 X Street' can be allotted to the upper floors if :
    - i. an access is available from 'X Street' to the lobby for going to the upper floors, or
    - ii. a signage bearing the building name, if any, and '19 X Street' clearly indicating the location of the entrance to the upper floors will be affixed on the side of the building facing 'X Street'.

Display

2. Strongly recommended to display : (Note 3 in para. 4.1)
  - a. Building number '15', '17', '21' & '35' at the entrance to the corresponding shops
  - b. Building number '19' at the access of 1(c)(i) above, if available
3. Advisable to display :
  - a. 'X Street' together with the building numbers '15', '17', '19' & '21' and 'Y Street' together with the building number '35' (Note : '19 X Street' should not be displayed at the entrance fronting 'Y Street'.)
  - b. Building name, if any, at the entrance to upper floors fronting 'X Street', if available and 'Y Street'
  - c. A signage of 1(c)(ii) above

## Example 6 Building Fronting Streets at Front and Rear



Separate Building Numbers will be allocated to each street-fronting shop and another building number based on 'Y Street' to the upper floor units with ground floor entrance from 'Y Street'.

### Allocation

1. Separate Building Number :
  - a. '25 X Street' for the shop with frontage at the front and rear
  - b. '27 X Street' for the shop fronting 'X Street' only
  - c. '22 Y Street' for upper floors with the ground floor entrance fronting 'Y Street'
  - d. '24 Y Street' for the shop fronting 'Y Street'

### Display

2. Strongly recommended to display : (Note 3 in para. 4.1)
  - a. Each of the building numbers '24' '25' and '27' at the corresponding entrance to shops
  - b. Building number '22' at the entrance to upper floors
3. Advisable to display :
  - a. 'X Street' together with the building numbers '25' & '27', and 'Y Street' together with the building numbers '22' & '24'
  - b. Building name, if any, at the entrance to upper floors

\*\*\*\*\* End \*\*\*\*\*