

Walk into a modern B2 industrial space and you quickly notice something practical: the building is engineered for real operations, not just for show. In Singapore, B2 is a zoning category designed for general and special industries, and the planning rules are specific about what can occupy the site, how much of it must be industrial, and what kinds of “support” uses can sit alongside factory activity.

If you are planning M&E services for B2 general industrial sites, the best way to think about it is simple. M&E does not exist in a vacuum. It needs to fit inside the B2 zoning intent, it must live comfortably within the required industrial portion of the site, and it has to align with the development’s rules for ancillary or “white component” space. Get those basics right, and projects move with fewer surprises. Get them wrong, and you can end up doing expensive rework at the tail end, when approvals or fit-out constraints start to bite.

Below is a grounded look at what B2 means, how M&E services typically slot into B2, and what to watch when you are comparing B2 industrial factory options, newer B2 general industrial developments, or “upcoming new B2 industrial space” scenarios.

What is B2 industrial space, and why it shapes M&E decisions

B2 (“Business 2”) is an industrial zoning category with planning guidance that general and special industries are to be located in B2 zones. In practical terms, that means the site is expected to carry industrial activity as its core function.

One rule that heavily influences building design and tenancy fit-out is the use quantum. B2 sites must use at least 60% of the total industrial gross floor area for industrial or predominant uses. Up to 40% may be ancillary or support uses. For anyone planning M&E services, this matters because M&E is often required by the operational areas, but the client may also need M&E-related spaces that blur into “support” territory depending on how the tenancy is configured.

So the question is not only “Can M&E be done in B2?” The sharper question is “Where in the development will the M&E services physically operate, and what is the intended zoning category of those spaces?”

URA’s planning guidance also lists allowable predominant uses and allowable ancillary uses within B2. On the predominant side, “manufacturing (general industry)” is included, along with repair & servicing, production, and several other operational categories. On the ancillary side, office and meeting rooms are explicitly allowed, along with sick rooms, diesel or pump points, and M&E services. It is those ancillary allowances that make M&E services a realistic and recognised use type within B2, as long as the overall development still meets the industrial GFA requirement.

This is why you see M&E services often planned as supporting functions inside industrial premises, rather than as the dominant commercial activity.

B2 general industry factory vs other B2 flavours you might encounter

People often say “B2 factory” the way they might say “industrial unit”, but B2 can feel different depending on the specific development layout and how it’s classified. Some B2 sites include industrial buildings plus separate “white” buildings, and some industrial developments can have white components that are strata-subdivided. At the same time, planning rules require that there be no land subdivision, so the site’s overall framework still governs how the pieces fit together.

For leasing or tenancy planning, that can translate into a real operational difference. An M&E-related fit-out that works smoothly in an industrial-predominant environment may run into planning constraints if it is being treated as part of a white component use category. URA also notes a planning mechanism tied to ground plot ratio (GPR). In certain B2 sites, a minimum GPR of 2.0 must be achieved for industrial purposes before remaining GPR 0.5 may be unlocked for white uses. Even if you are not the one engineering the massing, this affects what the developer was allowed to provide as support or white component space, which then affects what is available to tenants.

If you are shopping around and asking questions like “Should I buy B2 general industry factory, or should I take the next lease cycle?” the answer cannot be a generic one. Public guidance here explains allowable uses and planning controls, but it does not state a blanket rule that buying is better than renting. Your investment case, if you are evaluating it, depends on the specific development, what it offers in terms of industrial space versus support space, and how your operations and M&E requirements line up with those constraints.

Still, from an M&E planning perspective, newer B2 general industrial and “upcoming new B2 industrial space” sites can sometimes feel more straightforward because the building systems are being installed with current operational thinking. That is not a promise of approvals or “ease”, but it can reduce the number of old compromises you inherit.

Where M&E services typically sit in B2 planning

URA’s B2 guidance explicitly includes M&E services as an allowable ancillary use. That sentence sounds small, but it matters because it gives you a planning basis to design and position M&E functions within B2 developments, provided the development’s overall balance between industrial and ancillary uses stays within the 60% industrial / 40% ancillary quantum.

An M&E scope can include mechanical and electrical systems supporting industrial operations, and it can also include the facilities needed to run those systems safely and efficiently. When a development has clear industrial-predominant zones, M&E often clusters around operational needs like power distribution, cooling or ventilation systems where applicable, and safety-related infrastructure. When there is an ancillary office or meeting room allowance, you can also plan for day-to-day coordination and [click here](#) .. oversight without treating the “support” layer as something that replaces the industrial core.

In other words, the B2 planning logic is designed to protect industrial function. M&E services are accepted, but they should serve the industrial purpose, not compete with it.

The hidden constraint: “white component” space and what it permits

Some B2 developments may have white component space. URA notes that white component space in B2 developments may allow shop, restaurant, showroom, association/C and CI uses, office, commercial school, and sports or recreation or fitness uses, subject to planning evaluation.

For M&E planning teams, the practical takeaway is caution. If the space you want is inside a white component area, you are no longer only negotiating “is this compatible with M&E services?” You are also dealing with the evaluation of the white component use.

Showrooms are a good example of where boundaries tighten. URA guidance indicates B2 showrooms are mainly for display of bulky or non-over-the-counter products, or products delivered or installed off-site. They are not intended for on-site sale and generally need agency endorsement. That tells you something about how carefully authorities distinguish display and retail-like activity from operational industrial function.

So if a tenant's M&E business model includes a showroom, or if the building's planned white component layout is being repurposed, your planning conversations need to map each function to its permissible use character, not just to the general "industrial" vibe of the building.

B2 factories in Singapore: how typical tenant mixes affect M&E scope

In real tenancy life, B2 industrial space often hosts a mix of general manufacturing, repair and servicing, assembly, industrial training, and related activities. URA's allowable predominant uses also include categories like media production, e-business, and core media, alongside more conventional industrial activity. These categories have different system needs, and that is where M&E scope becomes very operational.

If you design M&E for a general manufacturing line, you might plan around power loads and serviceability for equipment. If you design for repair and servicing, access and utility readiness can matter as much as the utilities themselves. If you design for industrial training, you often need reliable systems that allow safe demonstration without frequent, disruptive shutdowns.

Even when you stay within the rules, you still have to make judgment calls. In one project, we once saw an operational team push for extra electrical capacity because their equipment schedule changed after the first month of operations. The earlier assumption was "we will know everything at design stage." In reality, the industrial site behaved like an evolving machine. The build met the baseline requirements, but the M&E system plan needed flexibility for incremental upgrades. That experience taught me to ask about near-term growth and equipment change cycles, not only the current production plan.

That same lesson applies in B2 general industrial and "new b2 general industrial" units. The zoning tells you what is allowed, but the operational tenant behaviour tells you what is needed.

Key planning checks for M&E services in B2 developments

When you are working around B2 industrial factory constraints, it helps to reduce uncertainty early. The goal is not to "tick boxes" but to confirm that your intended use fits the development's planning logic.

Here are the practical checks I would insist on in the first round of scoping:

1. Confirm the development meets the B2 industrial GFA requirement, with at least 60% industrial or predominant uses, and that ancillary uses are within the allowed quantum.
2. Identify whether your M&E services are planned as part of the industrial predominant area or within ancillary space that is compatible with the B2 ancillary use allowance for M&E services.
3. If the site includes white component space, clarify whether your functional needs are being mapped to permitted white uses and whether any showroom-style elements trigger additional endorsement expectations.
4. Check unit configuration realities, because B2 "unit size" guidance is meant to align with meaningful operational needs rather than paper assumptions, and the actual space you get affects how services can be distributed.
5. Where relevant, confirm the development's planning mechanism that unlocks white uses is satisfied as intended, since some sites involve a GPR condition before white use is enabled for the remaining GPR.

This is the layer most people skip when they focus only on the M&E technical design. In B2, you cannot treat planning fit and engineering fit as separate tracks.

Unit planning, practical space, and “meaningful space” for operations

URA’s minimum unit-size guidance is intended as a meaningful space to meet operational needs of industrial uses. That matters for M&E because systems need physical room for installation, access for maintenance, and enough clearance for safe operation. If you end up with a unit that technically works but is tight for the service routing you need, the fix is rarely elegant. It turns into reconfiguration, redesign, or temporary coping strategies during fit-out.

B2 buildings also vary. Some setups allow leasing and sub-leasing of space, and in multi-user B2 developments, some strata units can have private car parking lots subject to conditions. That may not sound like M&E, but it affects day-to-day access for deliveries of parts, equipment installation schedules, and the way service teams reach the premises. M&E serviceability is not only about cables and ducts, it is also about whether you can get a team in there when something needs attention.

Comparing M&E needs across common B2 industrial use-cases

It is tempting to treat M&E as one standard scope, but in B2 industrial space, the underlying activity dictates the shape of the systems. Even within general industry manufacturing and repair and servicing categories, the operational rhythm can be totally different.

For example, assembly-oriented operations tend to care deeply about reliable utilities and practical maintenance access. Repair and servicing can introduce variability, because you may be switching between different equipment types or processing flows. Industrial training or media production, even if it is still an allowable predominant use, can have different operational constraints, especially around safe demonstration, equipment handling, and consistent power quality.

So when you hear phrases like “B2 industrial factory” or “B2 factories in Singapore,” it helps to translate them into your expected operational pattern. “What runs daily?” “What needs intermittent power?” “How often do you change equipment?” “Do you expect upgrades in the first year?” Those answers influence how you plan distribution points, routing space, and the serviceability strategy.

If you are considering “buy B2 general industry factory” versus moving into a rented unit, you also need to think about how long your planned M&E configuration will remain suitable. Zoning compatibility does not automatically mean your M&E design will last ten years without changes. But a well-mapped utility strategy can absorb changes more gracefully, which reduces downtime and fit-out costs.

A realistic look at B2 leasing, sub-leasing, and tenancy planning

B2 leasing and sub-leasing of space is generally allowed, and that is common in multi-user industrial developments. From an M&E perspective, that affects how much of the building’s infrastructure you inherit and how the tenancy coordinates with common systems.

In practical terms, you typically want to clarify what is included in the baseline infrastructure for the tenancy, what is the landlord’s responsibility, and what sits within your scope as a tenant. Those boundaries are not described in the zoning guidance itself, but the planning framework still shapes how the infrastructure is organised.

If an M&E service area is meant to support industrial operations, it is usually easier to keep it aligned with that purpose inside the ancillary allowance. If you start carving out functions that look like retail or consumer sale, especially in white component contexts, you risk stepping outside the intended use character and triggering endorsement or evaluation requirements.

Trade-offs when you target a “new B2 factory” or an established site

Newer options can be appealing. An “upcoming new B2 industrial space” may offer a more modern baseline, and you may find fewer layers of legacy compromises. But new does not always mean easier. It can mean approvals are still evolving for tenant fit-outs, and the developer may have more rigid standards for how ancillary uses and services are configured.

Established sites can feel more flexible in day-to-day operations, but they can also carry older building services that require more work during upgrades. The zoning fit is still the zoning fit, but the engineering condition can shift project risk.

So the trade-off is not “new versus old” as a pure rule. It is whether the site’s physical layout and the development’s planned industrial and ancillary allocation match the way you need to run your operations. If your M&E strategy depends on specific locations or routing pathways, an established site with a different arrangement of industrial and support spaces can force more complex changes.

Where B2 factories and M&E intersect in Singapore: the everyday operational reality

In Singapore industrial environments, reliability is not a luxury. It is part of the commercial offer. Tenants choose spaces that let them keep production lines stable, keep repair workflows moving, and keep training or production activities running without constant disruptions.

M&E services in B2 industrial developments is really about ensuring that the building can function as a partner to industrial operations. The zoning guidance supports that by allowing M&E services as an ancillary use, while also protecting the core industrial intent by requiring industrial or predominant uses to take up at least 60% of industrial GFA.

That combination is why you can see M&E planned as a recognised support function in B2 general industry factories, B2 industrial factory units, and multi-user industrial developments. It is not meant to replace the factory. It is meant to keep it running.

Common questions people ask when planning M&E in B2

A lot of the questions I hear are variations of the same theme: “Will this be acceptable in B2?” Often, the person asking has a technical design, but they do not yet have the mapping between that design and the planning logic.

To help you frame the questions, here are a few you can ask early with minimal drama:

1. What part of the layout is treated as industrial or predominant use, and what part is treated as ancillary or support use?
2. Is any of the space in a white component context, and if so, what is being evaluated as the allowed white use?
3. If we include a showroom or display function, does the plan align with the idea of bulky or non-over-the-counter display or off-site delivery or installation, and is agency endorsement expected?
4. Does the actual unit size and configuration allow the M&E service routing and maintenance access we need for safe operations?
5. Does the development’s planning mechanism for white uses apply as intended, especially where GPR conditions are involved?

These questions are not about being difficult. They are about avoiding the kind of redesign that happens when M&E fit-out assumptions and zoning allocations do not match.

Bringing it together: making M&E fit B2 industrial space without surprises

M&E services belong naturally in B2 industrial developments when they are planned as support for industrial operations. URA's B2 guidance makes that possible by including M&E services as an allowable ancillary use, while still requiring B2 sites to dedicate at least 60% of industrial gross floor area to industrial or predominant uses.

So if you are evaluating B2 industrial space, you should look beyond the label. Ask how the development allocates industrial versus ancillary uses, how any white component is intended to function, and what endorsement or evaluation might be required for specific elements like showrooms. Then translate those answers into engineering assumptions, unit layout choices, and maintenance access plans.

That is how you protect both sides of the project, the planning side and the operational side. And for tenants and developers in Singapore, that is usually the difference between a fit-out that works on paper and a facility that performs once production starts.