



**Owner:**  
Dankin Investment Pte Ltd

**Architect:**  
Kng Architects & Urbanists

**Engineer:**  
SCE Consultants (Pte)

**Contractor:**  
Tak Lee Huat Construction Co

**1995 AWARD**

## 11 KIM YAM ROAD

This is a two-storey building with an attic floor. The building is located within the River Valley Secondary Settlement where a 10-storey rear extension is allowed. However, the owner chose the full conservation approach and kept the rear extension to two-storey up to the existing eave level. It has been painstakingly restored with its architectural and spatial quality and charm retained whilst adapted to its new use as an art gallery.



*Tripartite facade with recessed residential front*



*Beautifully carved pintu pagar flanked by colourful ceramic tiles*



Interesting details at roof eaves



Coping at gable wall brings out the beauty of the shophouse



Panelled brickwork secondary pilasters kept intact



Double volume airwell space to provide' natural lighting



Fluted brickwork pilaster sensitively restored



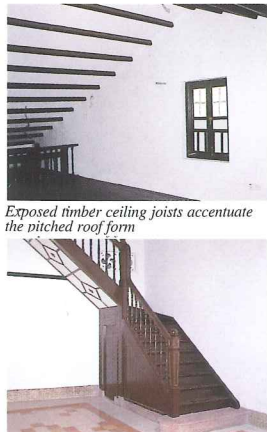
Newly created meeting space in original timber setting



Passageway at second storey capitalises on the alternating naturally-lit space created by the airwell



Elegant simplicity of the door and window

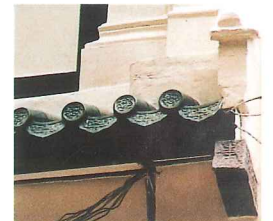


Exposed timber ceiling joists accentuate the pitched roof form

Owner chooses to retain original timber staircase and terrazzo flooring



Spacious first storey interior retains the fountain feature and the spatial quality of the shophouse



Granite corbel with Chinese motif and glazed tile canopy at first storey

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

TOWARDS A TROPICAL CITY OF EXCELLENCE



Situated on the narrow winding Kim Yam Road off the busy River Valley Road, the house no. 11 is the end unit of a row of 2-storey historic terrace houses. It is within the River Valley Conservation Area gazetted by the Urban Redevelopment Authority.

The area was known as a living area of wealthy Straits Chinese developed since late 1800s. However, the subject building was quite likely built in 1935 or later, as shown in a archive plan titled “Plan of Alterations & Additions To M.C. No. 11 Kim Yam Road For Mdm Soh Ong Suat” dated 19 February 1935 of a scale of 8’ to 1”. The house was purchased by Mr. Daniel Teo in 1989, and subsequently restored in 1992. It is used as a private art gallery now.

### **The Building - Its Architectural Characteristics, Spatial Quality and Construction System**

The building is situated on a hilly ground about 1.2m above road level. The existing building is a 2-storey structure with an attic floor. It was identified by URA as having a Late Shophouse architectural style, typified by a tripartite facade arrangement of three windows at the upper floor, and a recessed residential front of one centre main door and two side windows at the ground floor.

The two square columns at first storey are of simple unfluted brickwork on moulded base, but the pilasters at second storey are fluted and decorated with Corinthian capitals and moulded base. Remaining wall areas on the facade are decorated with floriated mouldings, i.e. dentils, arabesque, bas-reliefs, etc.

Other important architectural features include a 5.8 X 5.76m forecourt with steps leading to the street, enclosed by perforated low boundary walls with a intricately patterned m.s. gate; an airwell with a granolithic faced semi-circular fountain basin and a carved lion head water spout; and a central staircase with beautifully carved timber newel posts, handrails and balusters.

There are obvious influences of traditional Chinese architectural design in this building, which can be detected in the following areas:

- The glazed tile canopy above five-footway which is completed with four types of typical Chinese tiles, i.e. Gou Tou (勾头), Di Sui (滴水), Pan Wa (板瓦, plain tile) and Tong Wa (筒瓦, half round tile).
- The rounded apexes of the gable wall which is completed with a traditional Chinese tiled coping.
- The carved granite corbels and brackets; and granite threshold at doorways.
- The ceramic decorative vents of Chinese motifs.

The body of the main building is basically a rectangular block measuring 23 X 5.78m. The total length of the site is about 39.5m. It is interesting to note that all the cross walls are constructed to be parallel to the street and thus not perpendicular to the party walls.

The first storey of the original building consists of a series of spaces including a forecourt, a five-footway, a main hall, an ancestral hall with an airwell, a dining room, a kitchen with an airwell and a rear service yard with toilets; the second storey consists of three bedrooms, a sitting room, a rear deck and a bathroom; the attic floor consists of a bedroom and two loft spaces.

With high ceilings (4.4m for 1st storey and 3.7m for 2nd storey) and the introduction of airwells and side windows, the existing interior spaces are bright and have good ventilation. The ancestral hall is particularly charming by the changing natural lighting effects from the airwell and the semi-outdoor spatial experiences of this 13.4 X 5m grand room.

The basic structural system consists of a load bearing brick party wall (380mm thick) and a gable wall (380mm thick) on brickwork footings. They carry the timber floor joists (75 X 175mm at 600mm c/c) and roof purlins (100 X 150mm at 600mm c/c) for laying of timber floor boards and roof timber battens and natural v-profile clay tiles respectively. Timber beams of 9" X 11.5" (22.9 X 29.2cm) are used to support partitions enclosing the upper part of airwell. The ground floor is finished with 200 X 200 X 12mm terrazzo tiles laid on concrete base. The brickworks are finished with lime mortar of 20-25mm thick. Granolithic finishes are applied to more important

architectural features such as fountain basin, curtail step of central staircase, external column base and seat.

All doors and windows are constructed of timber. Where glazing is used, they are of rough cast glass for airwell windows, clear coloured glazing for transoms on the front facade, and clear glazing for the rest of windows.

Brass ironmongery are widely used for the doors and windows. These include lock sets hinges, hooks and eyes, bolts, barrel bolts, window bolts and window chains. Other metal works found include the flat iron security bar for the main door, iron bars for windows, mild steel grille for vents and the main gate.

Except the kitchen and rear service yard which were rather rundown, the building when the owner took over for restoration was in a fair condition.

As a whole, the building also retained much of the original architectural characteristics and materials used. These provided a sound framework for a good conservation job to begin with.