

124 & 126/126A ST PATRICK'S ROAD

Contemporary Victorians



Owner:
UIC Investment Pte Ltd

Architect:
ADDP Architects

Engineer:
DE Consultants (S) Pte Ltd

Contractor:
Lian Beng Construction (1988) Pte Ltd

Two Victorian-style architectural jewels are set amidst a modern condominium of glass-cladded medium-rise apartments. These masterfully rescued British colonial era single-storey and double-storey bungalows hold their own, giving the new development a link to the past and inspiration for the future.

A Royal Restoration

No. 124, presumably the namesake of the Grand Duchess condominium development, has been especially well-restored and adapted for use as the clubhouse. Its intricate façade, adorned with elaborate motifs, iconic columns and intricate cast iron railings have been skillfully repaired and reinstated. Within its interior, more of the same superb quality and skill in restoration is evident. From a single piece of salvaged metal ceiling panel, a mould was cast to produce new glass fibre reinforced concrete ceiling panels that replicated and replaced the corroded originals.

The project team has also done well in salvaging the existing patterned floor tiles and reinstating them prominently within the revitalised premises. Authentic fittings such as the *Peranakan* Arabesque glass on the windows and original hardware like the vintage brass turn bolt knobs and latches were also given a new lease of life.

Historic Address

Adjacent to the clubhouse, the double-storey bungalow at No. 126/126A, built in 1925, has also undergone an impressive restoration, adhering



Victorian-style bungalow at No.124 masterfully restored

to the top-down approach. The repair and retention of ornate mouldings on the cornices and exterior of the bungalow and the ornate balustrades on the upper storey verandah are just some of the architectural gems that add to the charm of the venerated property.

Blending The Amenities

The site planning of the whole development sensitively integrates the new blocks around the beautifully

restored bungalows which incorporated modern amenities. For the clubhouse, free-standing air conditioning units were used rather than the more modern ceiling-ducted concealed systems which the architects felt would have detracted from the authentic ceiling design. These free-standing air-condensing units were cleverly hidden within timber enclosures that blend seamlessly with the house's charming interior décor. Condensing units and meters were also discretely tucked away in a detached compartment at the rear of the building.

The mandatory new handicap ramp was adeptly incorporated. Its stainless steel handrails are clearly new while the choice of tiles echoes the patterned effect of the old.

Few luxury residential developments in Singapore enjoy the privilege of having their very own architectural heirloom, much less two. Thanks to the owner's positive response to the URA's call for conservation, these two antiquated jewels shine again for a new generation of families.



Caption caption caption

No.126/126A carefully and sensitively restored



Close-up external architectural features



Cast iron railing



Ironmongery kept



Old lamp reused



Original balusters



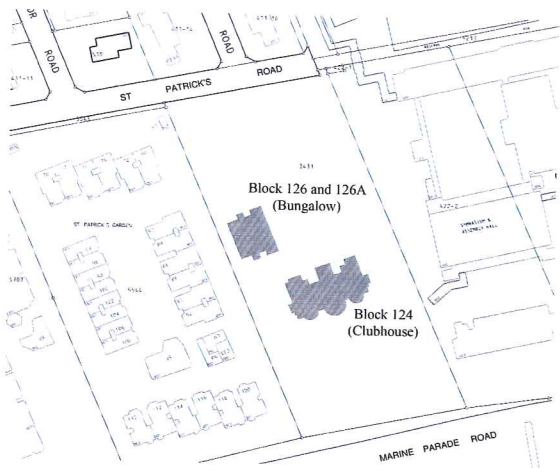
Turret kept



No.124 beautifully lit at night



Interior of No.124 restored



Prior to reclamation works, the site was a seafront estate along Marina parade road belonging to Tan Soon Guan who was part of a philanthropic family that included his grandfather Tan Beng Gum and father Tan Jiak Chuan.

There are two bungalows situated within the compound. Since they were constructed during the British colonial era, there is a distinct archi-form that is present in the architecture.

No. 124 was built in 1914 and is situated in the centre of the site. This single storey house has dual frontages that are facing St Patrick's road and Marine Parade road. Aside from its orientation, No. 124 draws from numerous classical influences; this is evident in the use of columns and spatial proportions.



The other bungalow was built in 1925. This taller house has a more compact floor plan. What makes this house stand out aside from its height is the pitched roof that results in a distinct silhouette. Furthermore, the repetition of windows and other forms of ornamentation on the front elevation suggests a weight that is usually associated with classical orders.



Although the fundamental language and aesthetic of both houses is Victorian, as with most other buildings during the colonial era, there is usually an assimilation of native architectural devices with western forms.

This eclectic melding of forms reveals the genius loci of the place; hence the preservation of these two buildings became an important driver in the design process.

