

12, 13 & 17 ROCHESTER PARK

Verdant Roots



CATEGORY A

Owner:
BASF South East Asia Pte Ltd

Architect:
Forum Architects Pte Ltd

Engineer:
Ronnie & Koh Consultants Pte Ltd

Contractor:
Towner Construction Pte Ltd

Originally built as residences for British military officers, this set of three colonial black and white beauties, circa 1950s, have been awakened to its new purpose as a modern corporate training retreat. The holistic approach taken has recaptured the nostalgic charm of colonial homestead living, restoring not just the bungalows but also their terrain of landscaped gardens with vistas to discover, and the natural wooded surrounding.



Three colonial bungalows have found new meaning as a training centre

Return To Nature

The success of this comprehensive design approach was founded on careful research to understand the origin of the site, the houses and their construction, as well as their relationship with their historic terrain.

Adhering to the 3R principles, the team did well to retain the original fabric of the building especially the original roof structure with its concrete beams and timber rafters. Damaged elements were repaired; rafters were reinforced and given anti-termite treatment.

Key period features such as the chimney, cast iron access door of one of the bungalows, ventilation panels and original ceiling designs at the verandahs and eaves were repaired and reinstated. Missing elements such as windows, doors and ventilation screens which could not be salvaged were fastidiously refabricated to their original design.

At Home With The New

New elements such as brass window and door fittings, and period tiles were well selected and strengthened the development's sense of history. The bungalows were sensitively fitted to be functional with natural ventilation. All verandahs were kept open, true to their original intent. In the interiors of the bungalows, materials chosen for the surfaces are representative of those used in the same period as the houses' construction.

In form and choice of palette, new additions, pavilions and linkways have been designed to be unobtrusive, quietly exalting the development's vintage assets. Great effort has also been placed in reviving the property's tropical landscaping to reinstate and capitalise on views to and from the gardens, which had been blocked due to overgrowth over the years. The team is commended for saving the historic trees that came with the property, even though it was not mandatory to do so. Retaining and reusing the bungalows' outhouses is also an admirable decision.

Sanctuary In The City

The property's transformation has been gentle, rather than radical. Both the fabric of the buildings and their original surrounding landscape have been recovered and set on a new path to its future. The result is a shining example of how buildings and landscapes can be restored as an organic whole, recapturing the history, aesthetics and atmosphere of a bygone era with renewed verve.



Sensitive integration of the buildings and landscape



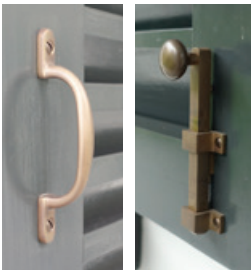
Open verandah typical of a tropical bungalow



Sensitive selection of finishes



Damaged timber doors and windows reinstated



Brass ironmongery used to recreate original look



Original chute retained



Careful treatment of details at second storey verandah