

Annex A: Detailed write-ups of AHA 2008 winners

SRI TEMASEK HERITAGE ON A HILL 2008 Awards Category A

Owner	:	Prime Minister's Office
Architect	:	CPG Consultants Pte Ltd
Engineer	:	CPG Consultants Pte Ltd
Contractor	:	Evan Lim & Co Pte Ltd

Built in 1869, Sri Temasek, located within the Istana grounds, is a stately 19th century country house with an architectural legacy as diverse as Singapore's heritage. Now lovingly restored, its Malay-influence timber fascia roof and a mysterious Chinese moon-gate are just two among the many architectural gems that have been brought back to life.

Full Of Surprises

Formerly the residence of the Colonial Secretary, Sri Temasek is a unique blend of European and Asian architectural elements. The main bungalow is linked by a covered walkway at the rear to single-storey outhouses which were once used as stores and servants' quarters.

The house, designed by Major J.F.A McNair, a civil engineer, has a typically colonial, symmetric layout with deep verandahs surrounding the central living spaces. On approach, its striking roof with timber fascia of Malay origin hints at the many more surprises the house has in store. Among them are several arch features at both the first and second storeys hidden under thick plaster, generous verandah spaces overtaken by insensitively added timber partitions for makeshift amenities, and, at the outhouses, plastered-over under-floor vents and floors of patterned paver stone embedded in cement. There is also the unusual but intriguing Chinese moon-gate on the second storey lounge.

On Solid Ground

Today, Sri Temasek sits on its original foundation of granite slabs built almost 140 years ago. While the foundation remains strong, much of its physical structures and finishes had been badly ravaged by time, weather and termites. The project team rose to the challenge taking great care to reinstate most of the house's distinctive elements.

First, the original symmetry of the house was restored. A makeshift kitchen and toilets on the second storey verandah were removed to bring back the original layout which allows for free-access all around the building. The grand front entrance of the bungalow was carefully reinstated, right down to the brick pit along the driveway originally used by horse carriages and the stone slabs on the front porch for mounting and dismounting the carriages. Internally, detailing on railings, doors and windows including the Chinese moon-gate and several *pintu pagar*, ceramic breeze blocks and all manner of original floorings were intricately restored. Evidently, what was irreparable was fastidiously replicated.

On the first storey verandah, the timber structure and the arches framing the verandah were replicated in look-alike steelwork. This controversial choice was thought by the project team to be the practical solution to the incessant termite problem.

A New Chapter Begins

The project team did a good job integrating the new facilities and creating a new niche that pays homage to the bungalow's heritage. The former servants' quarters were retained and reused as a heritage gallery. The 8 types of bricks uncovered during the restoration process are displayed here among many other artifacts. A new kitchen and bathrooms were caringly integrated without changing the symmetric façade of the building and its original layout.

Sitting serenely on a verdant hillock upon the immaculately manicured Istana grounds, it is not difficult at all to imagine that this restored bungalow was once a breezy country home filled with life.

**NO. 12 ANN SIANG ROAD (THE SCREENING ROOM)
STAR ATTRACTION
2008 Awards Category A**

Owner : Club Street Holdings Pte Ltd
A Division of Bigfoot Ventures Ltd, Hong Kong
Architect : Ong&Ong Pte Ltd
Engineer : Engineering 2000
Contractor : L.Cube Pte Ltd

Previously the historical two-star Damenlou Hotel within the Chinatown Historic District, this Art Deco marvel has been reborn as an eclectic film and foodie haven complete with a screening theatre and a rekindled rooftop under the stars.

A Familiar Face

Great care was taken in restoring the façade of three 1930s' intermediate shophouses which were first restored in 1993. Along with a meticulous facelift, these shophouses had their five-footway reinstated to detail. The main entrance *pintu pagar* with their elegant designs were artfully restored as were the door frames and windows. The real genius of this project, however, lies beyond its revitalized façade.

Out-of-the-box Flair

The brief was to redesign the existing four-level structure described as 'a mess of dark and cluttered spaces' into a series of dynamic spaces for various uses united by the theme of 'film cuisine'. The project team faced two major challenges which they overcame with breathtaking results.

The first was a substation located at the basement level. Careful planning was done to ensure that the basement was maximised as the main kitchen and new service areas were worked in. The roof of the substation on the second storey was cleverly converted into an alfresco garden terrace, a new and unique focal point for the property.

The second big challenge was in meeting fire safety regulations. One of the existing staircases had to be demolished and replaced with a new steel version while another was masterfully rerouted from the second storey upwards. Full height, fire insulated glass panels - a first of its kind in Singapore - were installed as walls that separate the film theatre at the third storey and the new staircase. The rerouted staircase not only provided a unique modern twist within this heritage setting, it also gave direct access and new life to the previously abandoned rooftop.

Top Of The World

Formerly in a serious state of disrepair, the roof is now the property's star attraction. Offering spectacular views of Chinatown by night, dilapidated tiles and flooring have made way for wooden panels that exude an easy tropical feel. Original bottle balustrades have been restored into beautiful conservation starters for the hip set.

Despite the challenges, the architects managed to deliver outstanding solutions that set new benchmarks for the way old buildings can be modified for new uses.

**NO. 43 AMBER ROAD (THE SEA VIEW CLUBHOUSE)
SHANGHAI GLAMOUR
2008 Awards Category A**

Owner : Mer Vue Developments Pte Ltd
Architect : RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd
Engineer : RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd
Contractor : Tiong Aik Construction Pte Ltd

At its present position anchoring a towering collection of six modern condominium blocks, it is hard to imagine that this two-storey clubhouse was once an all-but-forgotten bungalow.

Diamond In The Rough

Built in the early 1900s, this Neo Classical building, now the Sea View Clubhouse, was once a seaside bungalow annexed to a mansion owned by the well-known Elias family. In the 1990s, the bungalow was relegated for use as a storeroom by the Seaview Hotel. Thankfully in 2002, it was acquired by its new owners who have had the foresight to voluntarily conserve the building with the Urban Redevelopment Authority's support and guidance.

Adding A New Shine

In danger of being tucked away in a corner, good site planning lifted the bungalow out of obscurity and into the very heart of its modern day condominium setting. The architects followed through with careful identification and removal of insensitive additions made to the house in its later years. The 3R principles and the top-down approach were observed. Great care was taken to ensure that the structure of the bungalow was not compromised as surrounding constructions began. Sheet piles were provided between the clubhouse and basement car park to stabilise the soil around the clubhouse while the basement car park was being built. Found to be inadequate in bearing the additional load of a clubhouse, the existing foundation of the bungalow had to be underpinned and the first storey reinforced concrete floor strengthened.

Internally, the grand timber staircase and the timber-clad walls throughout the inner top storey lounge were retained. On the second storey, the original timber flooring was also kept. Where possible, existing timber doors were retained and damaged ones replaced in matching design and detail.

On the exterior walls, special care was clearly taken to repair and reinstate the unique Shanghai finish that gives the building its rare distinction. New Shanghai plastered walls were closely matched to the original weather-worn plaster of old.

A Glass Act

One of the most outstanding reminders of the bungalow's previous life as a seaside home are the colourful nautical-themed stained glass panels wrapping its first storey verandahs. An experienced stained glass expert was called in for its restoration. Each panel was painstaking removed, repaired and reinstated and missing pieces were matched and replaced. Ornate cast-iron balustrades at the first and second storey verandahs were also given a new shine with new frameless, clear tempered glass balustrades added to comply with building safety requirements.

In all, an outstanding effort in resurrecting a time-worn house and putting it into centrestage within its swanky new development grounds and amidst the built heritage landscape of Singapore.

**No. 42 CAIRNHILL ROAD (TAN CHIN TUAN MANSION)
HONOURABLE MANSION
2008 Awards Category B**

Owner : Cairnhill Rock Pte Ltd
Architect : Architects 61 Pte Ltd
Engineer : HCE Engineers Partnership
Contractor : Greatearth Construction Pte Ltd

Built in the early 1930s, the two-storey Tan Chin Tuan Mansion stands tall as an outstanding conservation effort and a modern day engineering marvel. Sitting in the middle of a small triangular piece of prime real estate, it now faces the future as a beautifully restored mansion with a startling new 20-storey residential tower cantilevered over it.

A Tall Order

How do you turn a treasured near 80-year old bungalow on a sliver of highly-prized land into a commercially viable entity? You build a 20-storey residential tower over it, of course. And that's what the engineers and architects did, while gingerly restoring Tan Chin Tuan Mansion to its former glory.

Bought over in 1939 by prominent banker and philanthropist, the late Tan Chin Tuan, the white house in Cairnhill is an eclectic blend of *peranakan* and colonial architectural styles. Used as a private residence by the Tan family for decades, massive renovation works was undertaken in 1969.

Good As Old

Before this project began, detailed research was done to uncover the true design of the mansion. It was discovered that a mansard roof that was in the archive plans of the building had not actually been built. Major renovation works done in 1969 brought about some changes. New rooms were added on the top floor and a wall had been knocked down to extend the first storey living area. Through old photographs and archive plans, additions and alterations made to the original mansion were reversed. The true flat roof of the building was retained and the wall that had been removed was reconstructed to detail. Badly damaged *peranakan* tiles of the interior flooring were replaced by similar ones sourced from Vietnam and Malaysia. Original solid timber strips on the second floor were also reused.

Externally, most of the original detailing and ornaments were repaired and sensitively reconstructed.

Breathing New Life

Great care was also taken to ensure that the foundation and the structure of the mansion remained uncompromised during the construction of the new tower and the reconfiguration of the mansion's interior for its new use. The timber staircase originally located at the centre of the mansion was removed. In its place, a new double-volume space now channels natural light from an added skylight. A new light, spiral staircase in the turret now serves access to the second storey.

The centre of the original mansion was reconfigured to fit in the lift core of the 20-storey tower. Two links were also created to provide direct access from the mansion to the new tower.

This project is outstanding in two key aspects. Firstly, the Tan Chin Tuan Mansion has been resplendently restored and adapted to its new use as a memorial to its late owner. Secondly, its success has set a new benchmark in site planning for integration of the old and the new.

**NO. 14 CABLE ROAD
BLACK & WHITE BEAUTY
2008 Awards Category B**

Owner : Mr Khoo Ken Hee
Architect : Chan Sau Yan Associates
Engineer : Web Structures Pte Ltd
Contractor : Milliard Pte Ltd

Once a mess hall used by staff of European trading company, McAlister & Co, this classic mock Tudor-style Black & White has reinvented itself as a contemporary family home, complete with a masterfully designed new annex.

Rekindling The Old

Built in 1920, this bungalow was in its original form when the present owner bought it. However, it was in a state of disrepair. The project team retained and strengthened the entire first storey load bearing brick walls. The second storey timber structure, however, was badly rotted and deemed unsalvageable. Each timber element including the roof beams were replaced one by one, in top-down fashion.

Grey cement roof tiles of the colour and profile matching the originals were air-flown from Thailand. Windows and door panels were reinstated where possible or replicated. Key original features such as exposed timber joist ceilings, and ornamental doorways were kept. The original Palladian layout was retained for the family rooms.

The former drive-way leading to the *porte cochere* was reoriented to the new main entrance by the new annex block. This made way for more garden space and the *porte cochere* was reinterpreted as an open sitting area complete with nostalgic black and white tiles. Perfect for breezy weekend afternoons.

A Masterful Blend

The *pièce de résistance* of this project is the masterful integration of the new double-storey annex to the existing structure. Of scale and proportion echoing the conserved bungalow, the new extension houses the new master bedroom. It is connected to the main house by a one-sided open linkway and kitchen on the first storey, and an enclosed bridge with roof terrace on the second storey.

Adjustable louvred windows, inspired by the conserved house, are used in the linkway bridge. Instead of timber, the updated version which adopted a seamless colour tone, was recreated in aluminium.

New Levels Of Thoughtfulness

The top levels of the new and the old can be accessed by one cleverly positioned folded plate steel staircase with a fitting timber finish. Another naturally-ventilated staircase near the entrance now leads to a newly created basement area. A sunken courtyard covered by metal gratings brings some natural illumination into the basement which is used as a pool room.

Overall, the black & white colour scheme and careful choice of materials in the new extension further demonstrate outstanding commitment and sensitivity to the spirit of conservation.

**NO. 120 CAIRNHILL ROAD
HEIRLOOM HOME
2008 Awards Category B**

Owner : Mr Patrick Lim Kwe Tai
Architect : Ong&Ong Pte Ltd
Engineer : Eureka Consultants
Contractor : Sinwah Timber Builders

First restored in 1995, this double-storey transitional shophouse, circa 1930s, was updated with a new three-storey rear extension and a to-die-for tropical rooftop pool terrace.

Let There Be Light

One of the first challenges the architects faced with this deep, linear planned home was to bring the feeling of more natural illumination and space into its inner sanctums. To achieve this, the architects came up with some smart and sleek solutions. First, most of the original wall separating the entrance lounge and the inner living area was removed. The front courtyard which was initially open was enclosed and turned into a skylight, creating an uninterrupted volume of naturally illuminated space for a cosy family lounge.

The second courtyard was kept open-to-sky, with a bamboo landscape feature and modern aluminium windows that bring more natural light and ventilation into the heart of the house. The master bedroom previously on the first storey was migrated to the second level and given a balcony and an en suite with skylight. Once again, clever re-planning ushered in more natural illumination to the otherwise dark spaces.

Old Rush

Some of the best things that came with the original house included a rare sheltered car park space. This is apparently one of only six conserved properties in Singapore with such an indulgence. The car porch has been lovingly restored along with other architectural heirlooms such as the original staircases in the front and the rear of the house.

A mezzanine level created to house the service areas was a clever way to improve the flow to the rooms and etch out more quality space for family living.

Most Desirable Rooftop

The crown jewel of this home is above it all – an added roof terrace at the rear extension which provides an opportune private sanctuary that takes full advantage of the lush surrounds. The project team went to great depths and lengths to reinterpret this historical house for today's family lifestyle.

**NO. 82 JELICOE ROAD (CITYLIGHTS)
THE REVITALISED ROW
2008 Awards Category B**

Owner : Capitaland Residential Singapore
Architect : DP Architects Pte Ltd
Engineer : Tham & Wong LLP
Contractor : Dragages Singapore Pte Ltd

Once a row of 16 motor workshops, the reconfigured ten units of double and triple storey pre-war shophouses have been transformed into high-end townhouses anchoring a modern high-rise residential development, Citylights.

A New Shine

Built at a time when engineers commonly doubled up as architects, this row of 1920s Art Deco shophouses by the Swiss engineer, Hendrich Rudolf Arbenz, are of the typical elongated, single-stacked layout. Flanked by 2 three-storey units, the intermediary units are double-storeyed. Unlike most shophouses of their time, these have individual gabled roofs that together lend the building façade a rare zig-zag roof profile. This uniqueness was sensitively retained as were other original elements such as intricate woodwork, concrete motifs and clay tiled roofs (on the 2 side units). New materials introduced were carefully integrated to maintain the simple and clean look, true to the original.

Interlocking Magic

Inside is where the magic happens. The typical deep linear plan of each unit has been cleverly re-organised into 2 types of interlocking L- and I-shape layouts. The result is a choice of 2 layouts, a wide top storey or a wide lower storey. This ingenious solution has dramatically improved the interior spatial quality and it affords the residents a choice of spaces to match their taste and lifestyle preferences.

To introduce more light and circulation into the otherwise dark and poorly ventilated spaces, a series of open-air terraces, 'secret gardens' and 'sky windows' were created. Modern elements, such as steel staircases, further lighten the interior spaces, replacing the original dark and narrow stairways.

Memory Lane

At the entrance of each unit, the original narrow footway arcades have been converted into delightful private green patios that lead into the verdant surrounds. This detail has recaptured the invaluable shophouse 'street' experience of old in a new context. The roof of the new car park fronting these units is also transformed into a landscaped deck with attractive communal facilities, enhancing the overall setting of the integrated development.

Contrasted with sleek and modern residential towers within the same development, the revitalised row now holds its own again, this time as premium modern homes with a rich architectural heritage.