

2, 4, 6, 8 & 10 TOWNSHEND ROAD

Checking In To A New Era



Owner:
Octojet Holdings Pte Ltd

Architect:
SZ Architects

Engineer:
CASE Consultants

Contractor:
LBD Engineering Pte Ltd

This boutique hotel project has enhanced the qualities of five conserved two-storey shophouses and added a new six-storey tower to the neighbourhood skyline. The outcome is understated yet tasteful, and makes a considered and positive contribution to the surrounding streetscape.

Refreshing The Old

Adhering to the “Top-Down” approach, the project team started work by replacing the original roofs of the Transitional-Style shophouses which was

found to be unsalvageable. The pitch roof structure was retained while damaged elements like the timber rafters and battens and original clay tiles were appropriately replaced. To update the building to suit its new purpose as a hotel, insulation was added at the roof and jackroofs were incorporated to allow light into the attic spaces.

While the main structures including the front columns and party walls were in good conditions, the team did well in sensitively repairing damaged and replacing missing elements and features like windows, balustrades and pre-cast vents of the shophouses. At the first storey, the wall is recessed for a “mama store” to recall the past.



Integration of five Transitional-Style shophouses with new six-storey tower to form a strong streetblock

Accommodating Past And Present

Through good design integration, the rear modern extension complements the linework and colour scheme of the conserved portion to give a unified development on the prominent site at a road junction. The minimalist-style straight lines introduced via the hotel tower’s windows and grilles clearly reflect the horizontal and vertical features of the conserved building’s façade. The full glass windows on the new block also echo the original French windows.

Great care was also demonstrated in fitting the hotel rooms fronting the main road neatly into the existing grid of the shophouses. Potentially unsightly mechanical and electrical amenities were carefully screened away from view to preserve the aesthetics of the development and neighbourhood. Design and planning for the hotel, including meeting the requirement for barrier-free accessibility and carpark lots for hotel guests, also demonstrated careful thinking and good use of materials.

Interacting With The Locals

Besides breathing new life into the pre-war buildings, the project has a positive transformative effect on the mixed use neighbourhood which has since attracted more visitors, tourists and new businesses.



Rear extension complement front conserved building



Hotel room within conserved shophouse



Aerial view of old and new development



Hotel lobby cum cafe



Traditional convenience store

HISTORY OF SITE

The conserved site is located within the Syed Alwi Conservation Area which is part of the larger Little India Conservation Area. The place is rich with culture, history and architectural heritage from the different migrant communities. The Syed Alwi Road area is characterised by rows of two to four storey shophouses from the mid-1800s to 1960s along a network of streets.

The area has always been vibrant with different and unique traditional trades and activities that have constantly change with time. The diversity of activities and evolution of the architectural styles in the streets represents the different eras in the history of the nation and contribute to its built heritage.



BUILDING TYPOLOGY

The architectural style of the conserved buildings within the subject site is that of the Transitional Shophouse Style that was designed and built in the early 1900s, mainly for the merchant and trading community living and working in urban areas.

The premises were occupied by traders and shop owners selling construction and industrial materials, household items and traditional Indian provisional stores selling snacks and drinks to serve the business community and residents of the area. The 2nd storey above the shop units were mainly used as residential and workers' quarters.



EXISTING PICTURES



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