



Night view of the newly completed bungalow at 6 Jalan Harum, which has a built-up area of 19,000 sq ft and sits on a freehold site of 8,633 sq ft

PICTURES: SAMUEL ISAAC, CHUA/EDGEPROP SINGAPORE

Inside the \$39 mil, 19,000 sq ft Oei Tiong Ham bungalow crafted by its owner-builder

BY CECILIA CHOW
cecilia.chow@edgeprop.sg

Singaporean Ben Chan can now add “homebuilder” to his resume. The medical devices specialist, who also provides litigation support in cases involving substance use and addiction, recently completed a bungalow he spent nearly two years planning down to the smallest detail.

Located at 6 Jalan Harum, the bungalow sits within the Oei Tiong Ham Good Class Bungalow (GCB) Area, off Holland Road in prime District 10.

“Attention to detail lays the foundation of what I do in my own businesses and in constructing a house,” says the 37-year-old.

The property sits on a regular-shaped freehold plot of 8,633 sq ft. On the site now stands a 3½-storey bungalow with a built-up area of about 19,000 sq ft. The basement carpark accommodates five cars and includes a chauffeur’s room with an en suite bathroom.

Focus on ‘quality, style and timelessness’

The home is anchored by an entrance lobby featuring a sculptural spiral staircase. “You can save a lot by getting it pre-made, but we had it cast onsite entirely in concrete, so it’s sturdy,” says Chan.

The staircase features a balustrade crafted from a single curved metal sheet. “It may not sound incredibly expensive, but if it’s bent wrongly, it would have to be completely redone because it’s one thick curved piece,” he adds.

Even the lift selection took extensive research. Chan says he tested multiple lifts, including renowned German brands, before choosing Australian brand Eastern Elevators.

“I found this to be so smooth, I couldn’t



The sculptural spiral staircase of concrete that was cast onsite and features a balustrade crafted from a single curved metal sheet

even feel the lift moving,” he says. “That’s why I chose it.”

On how much he spent on the property, Chan quips: “Too much.”

Still, cost was never the priority. “Quality, style and timelessness mattered far more,” he says.

‘Shaping a hearth’

Having purchased the property in 2022, Chan spent nearly two years planning the redevelopment before construction began about 2½ years ago. He appointed aKTArchitects to design the home, but remained deeply involved throughout the process.

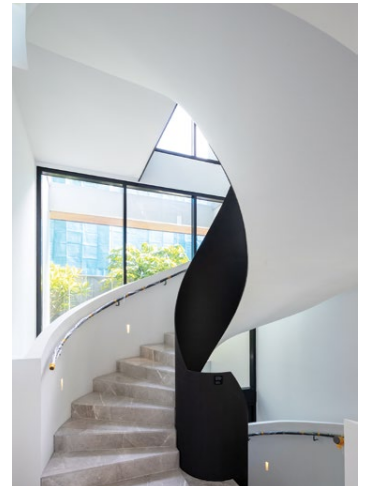
During construction, he visited the site every two weeks, often donning a hard hat to witness the works. “You must be willing to put in the time,” he says.

Every space, texture and material was carefully considered, says Chan. The home features Burmese teak doors and eaves, with the driveway door made of Indonesian ironwood. The upper levels feature engineered natural American oak flooring, while the first and basement levels have marble flooring.

The wet and dry kitchens are fitted with SieMatic kitchen systems, Liebherr double-door refrigerators and V-Zug appliances, while the countertops are finished in Cosentino Dekton.

The bathrooms feature Hansgrohe and Axor by Hansgrohe fixtures, Villeroy & Boch sinks, natural marble stone finishes, and Florim Italian floor and wall tiles.

Even the swimming pool deck uses the Belgian-made Buzon pedestal system, more commonly featured in land-



mark developments such as Marina Bay Sands, Burj Khalifa and Tokyo Skytree.

In the master bathroom, a motorised skylight sits directly above the bathtub, allowing views of the clouds by day and stars at night. The skylight can also be opened for natural ventilation and automatically closes when rain is detected.

Chan says he undertook the project with the goal of “shaping a hearth where my family could cherish memories for generations”. Building the house had been “a joy”, he adds.

A decade earlier, Chan had similarly rebuilt a walk-up apartment from scratch after purchasing it.

“It was an incredibly tedious process — from selecting architects, engineers, builders and materials, to attending weekly meetings at the architect’s office and



The lawn and swimming pool are on the first level, sitting above the basement carpark that can fit five cars



The living room with glass doors opening out to the pool and lawn

construction site to ensure everything progressed smoothly," he recalls.

Evolving plans

Building a bungalow with more than 19,000 sq ft of floor area, however, was on an entirely different scale and required "an immense amount of focus and energy". "As a business owner, dedicating myself to a personal project inevitably meant diverting time and attention away from my companies, even as they continued to grow exponentially during the same period," says Chan.

However, as his family and businesses expanded, his plans evolved too. "Now I hope to find a buyer who can appreciate the effort invested in this project, and I wish them the best in creating loving memories with their family in this home," he says.

Chan has appointed Steve Tay, executive director and co-founder of Steve Tay Real Estate (STRE), as the exclusive marketing agent for the property.

The bungalow is being offered at \$39 million, which translates to a land rate of \$4,518 psf based on the site area.

The house comes with five en suite bedrooms: one on the first level, three on the second level (including the master bedroom), and a junior master bedroom on the attic level. The master bedroom comes with a separate his-and-hers walk-in wardrobe, each with its own entrance to the spacious master bathroom.

Move-in-ready bungalow

"It's rare to find a brand-new bungalow below \$40 million," says Tay. "It presents a good opportunity for a family looking to upgrade to a GCB-equivalent property without crossing the \$40 million threshold."

To replicate the bungalow today with similar finishes and fittings would cost "\$10

Bungalow transactions in GCB areas in 2026 (year to date)*					
	Address	Transacted price (\$)	Land area (sq ft)	Unit price (\$ psf)	Sale date (2026)
1	WOOLLERTON PARK	31,500,000	15,257	2,065	Jan 16
2	WILBY ROAD	26,600,000	14,491	1,836	Jan 20
3	CHESTNUT CRESCENT	11,500,000	7,645	1,504	Jan 28
4	KINGSMEAD ROAD	21,998,000	12,168	1,808	Mar 30
5	NASSIM ROAD	64,900,000	14,264	4,550	Apr 9
6	MORLEY ROAD	38,600,000	15,896	2,428	Apr 16
7	GRANGE ROAD	26,000,000	12,781	2,034	Apr 21
8	BIN TONG PARK	20,500,000	9,172	2,235	Apr 27
1Q2026		91,598,000	49,560	1,848	4
2Q2026		150,000,000	52,114	2,878	4
2026 (Jan-May)		241,598,000	101,674	2,376	8

*Source: List SIR Research, URA Realls, based on caveats lodged as at May 20

million, if not more", particularly given rising construction costs, he adds.

"If Ben [Chan] had not intended to move in with his family, he wouldn't have invested this much into the property," says Tay. "Most ultra-high-net-worth individuals are not willing to spend two to three years over-seeing a construction project. They would rather focus on their businesses."

Tay says demand for newly completed high-specification bungalows has increased

as wealthy buyers place greater value on convenience and time savings.

"There is strong demand for modern homes in GCB areas, as buyers appreciate the convenience of seeing the completed product, actual materials and finishes," he says. "Moving into a completed home also avoids the complications of managing contractors and construction."

The house at Jalan Harum is also designed for those who like to entertain at

home. The living and dining areas open onto the lawn for big parties. On the attic level is a covered roof terrace that is also ideal for entertaining.

GCB market remains resilient

This year to date, based on caveats lodged, there have been eight GCB transactions with a combined value of \$241.6 million or an average price of \$2,376 psf, notes Han Huan Mei, director of research, List Sotheby's International Realty.

"For now, the war in the Middle East does not seem to have any impact on the GCB market, since only locals can buy," says Han. "We observe that viewings are still going on, a sign that there is still interest in buying."

Over the same period last year, there were also eight GCB transactions, with a total sales value of \$288.68 million, or \$2,046 psf on average.

"However, the mood in 2025 was more optimistic compared to the current period. Sales momentum picked up from May 2025 and continued till November 2025, before it slowed down in December," Han notes.

She reckons the more positive sentiment last year came from the realisation that the impact of US President Donald Trump's tariffs was not as bad as feared. It resulted in 10 deals done in 2Q2025, followed by eight in 3Q2025, and nine in 4Q2025.

The latest recorded transaction was for a property in Bin Tong Park that changed hands for \$20.5 million in April. Based on the land area of 9,172 sq ft, the price translates to \$2,235 psf.

The largest GCB deal to date this year was a Nassim Road transaction involving a freehold site of 23,922 sq ft that fetched \$92 million, or \$3,846 psf, in late March, although no caveat was lodged.

In early April, another GCB on Nassim

CONTINUES ON PAGE EP14



“There is strong demand for modern homes in GCB areas, as buyers appreciate the convenience of seeing the completed product, actual materials and finishes.”

— Steve Tay, STRE



Japanese garden in the basement entertainment room



The lobby from the entrance of the basement carpark

COVER STORY

SAMUEL ISAAC CHUA/EDGEPROP SINGAPORE



Dining room and dry kitchen, with Cosentino countertop



The wet kitchen, with SieMatic kitchen system, V-Zug kitchen appliances and Liebherr refrigerator

FROM PAGE EP13

Road changed hands for \$64.9 million. The property, built in 1988, sits on a freehold site of 14,264 sq ft, translating to a land rate of \$4,550 psf.

'Prices remain relatively stable'

"Prices of bungalows in GCB areas have remained relatively stable since last year," notes List Sotheby's Han. However, bungalows in favoured locations like Nassim Road are still fetching above \$4,000 psf, and newer bungalows in other GCB areas are fetching above \$3,000 psf, she adds.

Including transactions without caveats, STRE's Tay estimates that about 13 GCB deals worth nearly \$600 million have been concluded so far this year. Over the same period in 2025, there were 14 GCB transactions with a combined value of about \$459 million.

"This shows that higher-quantum properties are being transacted in 2026 compared with last year, reflecting more positive sentiment," says Tay.

Premium for new

Many recent transactions have involved older homes earmarked for redevelopment or extensive refurbishment, which Tay attributes to the scarcity of quality plots in prime GCB areas.

Still, he notes that buyers are increasingly willing to pay a premium for newly completed homes that save them years of planning and construction. He points to the sale of a newly built GCB on Chee Hoon Avenue that fetched \$55 million (\$3,955 psf) in August 2025. The property sits on a freehold site of 13,905 sq ft.

The rise in fuel and construction costs resulting from the war in the Middle East has also led buyers to prefer new or rela-

tively new bungalows in the GCB areas to avoid the high costs of extensive renovations and redevelopment, notes List Sotheby's Han.

Tay, however, notes that there are very few newly completed GCBs currently on the market with regular-shaped plots and pricing below \$4,500 psf.

On the other hand, buyers with development and construction experience continue to seek out older GCBs with strong redevelopment potential. As a result, Tay expects demand for older homes with good land attributes and fair pricing to remain resilient.

"Based on the current pace of sales and in view of the uncertainty of how long the war will last, the global economy is likely to slow down," says List Sotheby's Han. "We expect the local ultra-high-net-worth investors to monitor the situation closely."

They are still likely to purchase a bungalow that ticks all the boxes, and if they feel the price is right, she adds. However, the decision-making time frame is likely to be longer. "Hence, it's possible that the number of GCBs sold this year would be lower than the 30 deals done in 2025."

New generation of GCB buyers

Currently, there is a misconception that the primary buyers of GCBs are the newly naturalised citizens, notes STRE's Tay. "The truth of the matter is that at least 70% of GCB buyers are Singaporeans."

He also observes that buyers are becoming younger, with many now in their 30s and 40s, and have achieved significant success in their careers, such as Ben Chan, the owner of the bungalow on Jalan Harum.

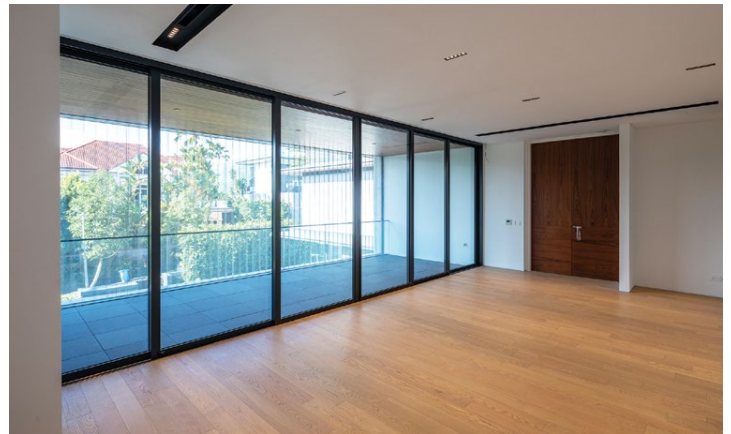
"They are mostly from the financial markets, natural resources, manufacturing, technology and biomedical sectors," says Tay. ■

SAMUEL ISAAC CHUA/EDGEPROP SINGAPORE



Master bathroom with motorised skylight and rain sensor

SAMUEL ISAAC CHUA/EDGEPROP SINGAPORE



Master bedroom with a balcony fitted with privacy screen

SAMUEL ISAAC CHUA/EDGEPROP SINGAPORE



View of the Oei Tong Ham Park and Astrid Hill Good Class Bungalow areas

AKTA-RHCTECTS



Artist's impression of the entertainment area at the roof terrace