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**Penthouse view for former banker Tan Chin Tuan
He's building 20-storey block behind his landmark Cairnhill bungalow**

By KALPANA RASHIWALA

(SINGAPORE) Former OCBC chairman Tan Chin Tuan is developing a 20-storey block of apartments behind his bungalow in Cairnhill Road. And he plans to occupy the 8,435 sq ft penthouse when work is completed in about 18 months.

A piece of local history: Mr Tan (next) and his Cairnhill bungalow. He had bought the 36,568 sq ft freehold site in the 1930s

Mr Tan, 95, now lives with his family in Grange Court. He bought the eight-unit apartment block in Grange Road in 2001 because he wanted to move out from his Cairnhill bungalow to escape construction activity nearby.

Property Enterprises Development's Cairnhill Crest condo, which is almost completed, is next door to Mr Tan's bungalow.

A property analyst estimated yesterday that it will cost Mr Tan \$20-odd million to conserve his Cairnhill bungalow and develop the adjacent apartment block. Work is slated to finish around March 2006.

Construction of the apartments began six months ago.

Besides the double-storey penthouse, there will be 15 apartments in the block averaging about 4,590 sq ft each. The plan is to have one unit per floor.

There will be a sky terrace garden on the 12th floor, a lap pool on the ground floor, a gym and a steam-bath/sauna.

BT understands that that neither the 16-unit apartment block nor the bungalow are for sale, as the land has been with the family for decades.

Mr Tan bought the 36,568 sq ft freehold site on elevated ground in Cairnhill Road in the 1930s. 'Interestingly, the broker who handled the transaction was David Marshall's father,' said a source. The late David Marshall was Singapore's first chief minister.

The current plan is for Mr Tan's family to occupy some of the units and lease out the rest.

But not just anyone will be able to rent an apartment from Mr Tan, who also used to be chairman of bluechip retailer Robinson.

'The building is special to the family and they would like to find like-minded people who appreciate the history and sentiment behind the land and enjoy the neighbourliness of living with an extended family,' said the source. The two-storey bungalow, with a strata area of 7,371 sq ft, will be used for entertaining and special functions.

'It will be suitably refurbished to retain its history and the charm of a bygone era,' the source added.

The family has no immediate plans for its present home, Grange Court.

It will depend on market conditions, investment and familial considerations, the source said.