







KEY POINTS IN THIS ISSUE

Our Singapore Report for the first quarter of 2020 highlights trends in the Singapore construction sector within the present unprecedented economic crisis experienced both locally and globally from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Singapore's economy contracted by 2.2 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2020, according to flash estimates;
- The Singapore construction sector shrank 4.3 per cent year-on-year and 22.9 per cent on a quarter-on-quarter seasonally adjusted annualised basis, due to lockdowns, physical distancing and travel restrictions implemented by other countries in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Announcements in Singapore Budget 2020 pertaining to the construction industry include cuts to the S
 Pass Dependency Ratio Ceiling for the construction industry from 1 January 2021;
- Prices of basic construction materials continue to increase from the last quarter while global oil prices slump;
- Construction tender prices are projected to increase for 2020, in the order of 2 per cent to 5 per cent escalation as currently forecast by RLB;

Our key Singapore commissions include the LASALLE campus extension, Bay East Garden/ Founders' Memorial, New Science Centre, Mandai Park, Changi Airport Terminal 2 A&A, The M Condominium and other projects of interest.

We look forward to be of service to you and your organisations in Singapore and regionally in Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia.

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RIDER LEVETT BUCKNALL
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BOTANIQUE AT BARTLEY

SINGAPORE

CLIENT: UOL Development (Bartley) Pte Ltd

ARCHITECT: ADDP Architects LLP

SERVICE: Quantity Surveying Services by Rider Levett Bucknall LLP

COMPLETION: 2019

Situated on the city fringe and within the Bidadari Estate, the Botanique at Bartley is a 797-unit high-rise condominium by UOL Group.

MARKET TRENDS



SINGAPORE ECONOMY

Singapore's economy contracted by 2.2 per cent year-onyear (y-o-y) in the first quarter of 2020, according to flash estimates from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). On a seasonally adjusted annualised basis, Singapore's gross domestic product (GDP) shrank by 10.6 per cent quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q), a sharp contraction from the 0.6 per cent growth in the previous quarter.

The projected 2.2 per cent contraction marks the worst GDP y-o-y in over a decade since the first quarter of 2009, the aftermath of the global financial crisis, and the largest q-o-q fall since the third quarter of 2010. MTI has also downgraded Singapore's GDP growth forecast for 2020 to between -4 per cent and -1 per cent. Analysts described the latest figures as indicating that a recession for 2020 was inevitable.

The government has, to date, announced three budget support packages to help workers, businesses and households amid the dire economic outlook, totalling \$\$59.9 billion. The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) also eased its exchange rate-based monetary policy, setting the Singapore dollar on a weaker path.

Whilst prevailing political uncertainties appeared to have eased in the first quarter, the pandemic and economic headwinds have escalated, including the oil price war that brought the energy industry to its knees.

The global spread of the coronavirus COVID-19 has caused governments worldwide to put in place travel restrictions and implement varying degrees of economic lockdowns to contain the pandemic. The end of January and Lunar New Year holidays saw the lockdown of the Wuhan City and the beginning of prolonged supply chain disruptions worldwide as workplace activities were suspended for months in staggered fashion.

Economists opined that Singapore was likely to be one of the most impacted countries in the South-East Asia region due to the significant volume of export trade from China. Internally, the sharp decline in tourist arrivals and a fall in domestic consumption saw sectors such as air transport, accommodation, food services and retail trade sectors shrink.

MAS Core Inflation for February fell into the negative territory for the first time since January 2010. Headline inflation registered lower at 0.3 per cent y-o-y, compared to 0.8 per cent in the preceding month on the back of lower core inflation and private transport inflation.

The first quarter figures for total employment in Singapore reflected the early impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, recording its sharpest drop since the SARS outbreak in 2003. Singapore's labour market conditions are expected to worsen in the second quarter with the implementation of the "circuit breaker" lockdown which begun in April 2020.



MARKET TRENDS



SINGAPORE CONSTRUCTION MARKET

The Singapore construction sector took the largest hit in the first quarter of 2020, shrinking 4.3 per cent y-o-y. This is a reversal from the 4.3 per cent of growth of the previous quarter. On a q-o-q seasonally adjusted annualised basis, the sector contracted 22.9 per cent, compared to a 5.3 per cent expansion in the preceding quarter.

The MTI has attributed the sharp contraction to the lockdowns, physical distancing and travel restrictions implemented by Singapore and regional countries in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had disrupted the supply chain and delayed the return of foreign workers, thereby adversely affecting the progress of construction projects. Construction growth was also weighed down by a decline in private sector construction activities.

It is anticipated that projects will face significant delays arising from the cumulative impact of a series of chain events starting from the delayed return of foreign workers to the implementation of movement control order in Malaysia. This has seriously disrupted the supply and delivery of pre-fabricated components and construction materials to project sites.

Following the tightening of the Dependency Ratio Ceiling (DRC) in services industry announced in last year's Budget, cuts to the S Pass DRC for the construction industry was announced in Budget 2020. The first phase will tighten the S Pass workers from 20 per cent to 18 per cent on 1 January 2021 and further to 15 per cent on 1 January 2023. It was also announced that there will be no changes to the foreign worker levy rates for 2020.

Private sector construction demand will continue to be supported by existing mega projects. These include recreational developments at Mandai Park, the Changi Airport new taxiway and berth facilities at Jurong Port and Tanjong Pagar Terminal. Many other projects that were slated for the year have yet to commence as developers take a more prudent wait-and-see approach in light of the current economic uncertainty. Construction demand in the private sector is therefore expected to be adversely affected in the near term.

The overall price index for private homes shrank 1.0 per cent q-o-q in the first quarter of 2020, as compared with the 0.5 per cent increase in the previous quarter, based on data released by the Urban Redevelopment Authority. Developers launched 2,093 uncompleted private residential units (excluding executive condominiums) for sales in the first quarter, registering a drop of 6.0 per cent from the previous

quarter. This was prior to the suspension of all show flat galleries in early April.

Property investment sales in Singapore fell 37 per cent in the first quarter of this year as the COVID-19 outbreak took its toll on investor sentiment. Big ticket commercial transactions were absent and sales were dominated by the residential sector, mainly from the award of previously bid government land sale sites.

Metal prices remain reasonably stable within a small range. However, crude oil prices rose by 1 per cent q-o-q for the fourth quarter of 2019 but dropped to its lowest in nearly two decades in April 2020. Oil prices slumped following the oil price war between Russia and Saudi Arabia and the sharp contraction in global oil demand due to the current travel restrictions imposed by governments worldwide.

Prices of basic construction materials have continued to increase q-o-q in the fourth quarter of 2019, with concreting sand increasing the most at 4.8 per cent. Granite, cement, and ready mixed concrete increased by 4.7 per cent, 1.9 per cent and 0.9 per cent respectively in the same quarter. By comparison, labour prices are expected to rise by 15 to 20 per cent this year, in the light of current circumstances.

Volatile currency exchange rates in the first quarter of 2020 are likely to impact the cost of imported plant and equipment in the near term. While the Singapore Dollar appeared to have largely stabilised against the greenback in April 2020 compared with the preceding months, it still presents a 4.5 per cent depreciation from the fourth quarter of 2019.

Given the present COVID-19 measures implemented, the suspension of construction site works, and resource issues arising from the widespread foreign worker dormitory infections, it is anticipated that contractors are likely to adopt a more conservative approach to tendering to mitigate their risks. This will result in an escalation of tender prices in 2020. Based on the aforesaid implications of the pandemic, present cost and price trends, RLB estimates that Singapore construction tender prices are projected to see an increase in the order of 2 per cent to 5 per cent for the year of 2020.

■ SMU CONNEXION
SINGAPORE

TENDER PRICE TRENDS



BUILDING TENDER PRICE INDICES



99.8

104.6

106.8

104.0

98.0

96.7

98.6

99.9

Data Sources: BCA and RLB P: Preliminary

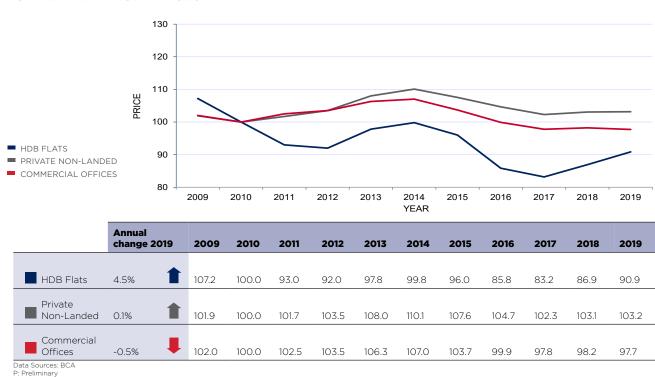
BCA TENDER PRICE INDICES

1.2%

101.3

100.0

99.7



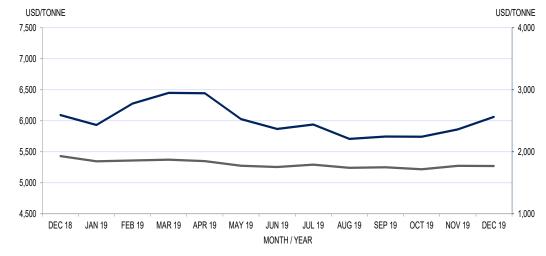
NOTE: Variances between the RLB and the BCA Tender Price index arise from differences in the index derivation methodology, the basket of items and weightages used for each index and the variety of building projects utilised. The index basket here excludes piling works and Mechanical & Electrical services. Base Year 2010 = 100

COMMODITY PRICE TRENDS





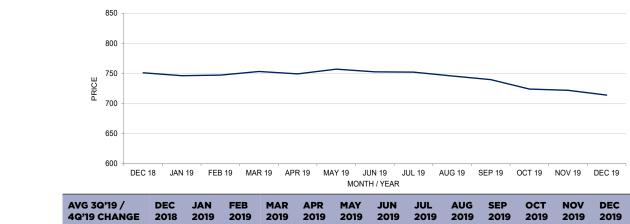
COPPER (LHS)ALUMINIUM (RHS)



	AVG 3Q'19/ 4Q'19 CHANGE	DEC 2018	JAN 2019	FEB 2019	MAR 2019	APR 2019	MAY 2019	JUN 2019	JUL 2019	AUG 2019	SEP 2019	OCT 2019	NOV 2019	DEC 2019
Copper	1.6%	6093	5931	6277	6450	6444	6027	5868	5939	5707	5745	5742	5860	6062
Aluminium	-0.4%	1931	1845	1859	1872	1848	1775	1753	1792	1740	1749	1718	1772	1770

Data Sources: London Metal Exchange (LME)

STEEL REINFORCEMENT (16 - 32MM HIGH TENSILE) SUPPLY PRICES



752 Steel -3.5% 751 746 747 753 749 757 753 746 740 724 714 722 Data Sources: BCA

CRUDE OIL PRICES

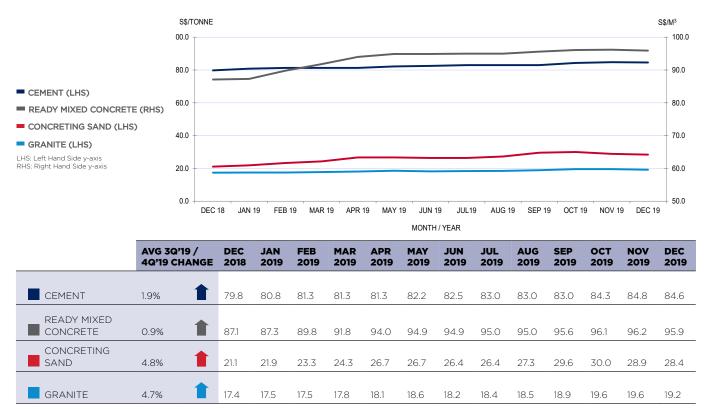


	AVG 3Q'19 / 4Q'19 CHANGE							JUN 2019						
Crude Oil	1.0%	54	57	61	64	69	67	60	61	58	60	57	60	63

MATERIAL PRICE TRENDS



BASIC CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS



Data Sources: BCA

Note:

- Prices of rebar other than 16-32mm dimensions may be subject to surcharge.
- Prices of granite and concreting sand exclude local delivery charges to concrete batching plants.
- The market prices of rebar (without cut & bend) are based on fixed price supply contracts with contract period 6 months or less.
- The market prices of ready mixed concrete are based on contracts with non-fixed price, fixed price and market retail price for Grade 40 Pump.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES

			UNITS PER USD									
CURRENCY			UNIT	JUL 19	AUG 19	SEP 19	OCT 19	NOV 19	DEC 19			
Singapore Dollar	\$	SGD	1	1.36	1.39	1.38	1.37	1.36	1.36			
Euro	€	EUR	1	0.89	0.90	0.91	0.91	0.90	0.90			
U.K. Pound Sterling	£	GBP	1	0.80	0.82	0.81	0.79	0.78	0.76			
Australian Dollar	\$	AUD	1	1.43	1.48	1.47	1.47	1.46	1.45			
Chinese Yuan	¥	CNY	1	6.88	7.06	7.12	7.08	7.02	7.02			
Malaysian Ringgit	RM	MYR	1	4.12	4.19	4.19	4.19	4.16	4.15			
Japanese Yen	¥	JPY	100	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.08	1.09	1.09			
Myanmar Kyat	K	MMK	1000	1.49	1.49	1.51	1.51	1.50	1.48			
Indonesian Rupiah	Rp	IDR	1000	14.03	14.23	14.09	14.12	14.06	14.01			
Vietnamese Dong	đ	VND	1000	23.11	23.13	23.13	23.10	23.11	23.09			
Data Sources: IMF, Oanda												

Note: Exchange rates above are expressed in terms of currency units per US Dollar; averaged monthly from daily unit rates.

SINGAPORE CONSTRUCTION PRICES



	COST PER CFA	COST PER GFA
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	S\$/m²	S\$/m²
OFFICE		
Standard (outside CBD)	2,000 - 3,200	2,500 - 4,100
Standard (within CBD)	2,050 - 3,300	2,950 - 4,350
Prestige (within CBD)	2,950 - 4,150	4,100 - 5,400
HOTEL (INCLUDING FF&E)		
Serviced Apartment	3,050 - 3,550	4,050 - 4,650
Three Star	3,250 - 3,650	4,050 - 4,750
Four Star	3,550 - 4,400	4,650 - 5,800
Five Star	4,250 - 5,500	5,400 - 7,300
RETAIL		
Medium Quality	2,000 - 2,850	3,000 - 3,600
Good Quality	2,950 - 3,350	3,700 - 4,400
CONDOMINIUM		
Medium Quality Condominium	1,950 - 2,600	2,600 - 3,350
Good Quality Condominium	2,500 - 3,150	3,350 - 4,300
Luxury Quality Condominium	3,200 - 4,350	4,350 - 5,900

DEVELOPMENT TYPE	COST PER CFA
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	S\$/m²
LANDED RESIDENTIAL	
Terrace House	2,300 - 2,700
Semi-detached House	2,400 - 3,250
Detached House	3,400 - 5,600
Cluster Housing	2,400 - 2,950
INSTITUTIONAL	
Institution of Higher Learning	2,750 - 3,450
Medical Institution	4,000 - 5,450
INDUSTRIAL	
Single Storey Warehouse	1,100 - 1,600
Light Industrial Building	1,200 - 1,700
Heavy Industrial Building	1,450 - 2,000
CAR PARK	
Above Grade Car Park	700 - 1,400
Basement Car Park	1,500 - 2,250
HEALTHCARE	
Nursing Home	1,700 - 3,150
Medical Centre	2,900 - 3,300
Hospital	3,500 - 4,000

All Singapore construction prices stated herein are as at 4th Quarter 2019, and include a general allowance for foundation, car-park and external works. The price ranges herein are indicative and due consideration should be given to the impact of varying design, specifications, size, location and nature of each project when utilising this information. Prices described here may not fully reflect the extent of current market forces and tendering conditions on any specific project.

Note:

CFA: Construction Floor Area is the area of all building enclosed covered spaces measured to the outside face of the external walls including covered basement and above ground car park areas.

GFA: Gross Floor Area is the area of building enclosed covered spaces excluding car park and driveway areas calculated for purposes of planning submissions.

Exclusions: • Land cost • Legal and professional fees • Development charges • Authority fees • Finance costs • Loose furniture, fittings and works of art (unless otherwise stated) • Tenancy work • Site infrastructure work • Diversion of existing services • Green Mark cost premiums • Resident site staff cost • Models and prototypes • Future cost escalation • Goods and Services Tax

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Life Cycle Costing

Green Building Costing

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Construction Management

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