If you have spent any time hunting for industrial premises, you have probably run into the B2 label and then immediately wondered how it differs from other industrial zones. “B2 industrial space” can sound like a broad bucket, but in Singapore it is a specific zoning category with real operating implications for what you can do on site, how much of the building has to be used for industrial activity, and what kinds of “white component” or support spaces are allowed.

I have seen this confusion create expensive missteps. A business owner finds a unit that looks good on paper, assumes the layout supports their workflow, and then hits constraints when they try to register activities, fit out, or add client-facing functions. Understanding what B2 actually is, and how it compares to other industrial zones at the practical level, helps you avoid that scramble.

What “B2 industrial space” means in practice

B2, short for “Business 2”, is an industrial zoning category in Singapore intended for general and special industries. In planning terms, B2 is designed to host industrial activities that need to be located in industrial zones. Within B2, the core idea is straightforward: a meaningful portion of the site must be used for industrial or predominantly industrial purposes.

The planning control that most directly affects landlords, tenants, and even the economics of a “B2 general industry factory” is the use quantum rule. B2 sites must use at least 60% of the total industrial gross floor area (GFA) for industrial or predominant uses. Up to 40% may be ancillary or support uses. This matters because it sets the ceiling on how much of the development can shift away from industrial use into office-like or customer-facing functions.

That leads to the second practical question: what counts as industrial, and what counts as ancillary?

In B2, the predominant uses include manufacturing (general industry), repair and servicing, production, storage of chemicals or oils, assembly, knitting mills, core media, e-business, and industrial training. Put differently, a “B2 general industrial factory” is not just for traditional heavy manufacturing. It can also cover a range of operational industrial and production-type activities, including certain media and e-business uses, plus industrial training.

Ancillary uses are allowed too, but they are meant to support the core industrial activity. They can include office, meeting room, sick room, diesel or pump points, M&E services, showroom, industrial canteen, and selected commercial uses.

In some B2 developments, you may also see a “white component” concept. The allowance for white component space is more nuanced: white component space in B2 developments may allow uses such as shop, restaurant, showroom, association or C&CI uses, office, commercial school, and sports or recreation or fitness uses, subject to planning evaluation. For a tenant, the takeaway is that client-facing or service-oriented uses can sometimes be possible, but they are not automatically granted. They depend on how the development is structured and what the planning authorities evaluate for the site.

B2 general industry vs the “feel” of other industrial zones

People often compare industrial zones using a gut-feel, like “this one is more suitable for factories” or “that one allows more office.” The more reliable approach is to think in terms of controls that affect operations. In Singapore, industrial zoning differences show up in what uses are allowable, the permitted mix of industrial versus support space, and whether specific client-facing functions are tightly controlled.

Here is the practical framing I use when advising operators considering B2 factories in Singapore:

1. **Your daily activity determines the zone fit.** If your process is manufacturing, repair/service, assembly, or regulated storage like chemicals or oils, you need a zoning category that supports those predominant uses.
2. **Your floor plan is not enough, the use quantum is.** Even if a unit looks workable, you still have to satisfy the requirement that at least 60% of industrial GFA is for industrial or predominant uses, with the remaining up to 40% for ancillary or support uses.
3. **Client-facing plans can be constrained even if the unit is large.** Showrooms are a good example. B2 showrooms are tightly controlled mainly for display of bulky, non-over-the-counter products or products delivered and installed off-site. They are not for on-site sale and generally need agency endorsement.

So when someone says, “B2 is less strict,” I push back. The controls may be different across zones, but B2 has its own clear structure. If anything, the zoning is strict in the right places, because it protects the industrial intent of the site.

Without overgeneralizing, the best way to distinguish B2 from other industrial zones is to check allowable uses and the mechanics of industrial versus support space for that particular zone. Even within B2 itself, there are variations in how developments are set up, such as whether there are separate industrial and white buildings, and whether the white component can be strata-subdivided within an industrial development while still having no land subdivision.

The “use quantum” rule and why it affects your business case

When people talk about buying B2 industrial space or choosing among new B2 general industrial options, they often focus on the tenancy mix and the unit size. Those are important, but the use quantum rule changes what the development can realistically support.

Because B2 sites must use at least 60% of total industrial GFA for industrial or predominant uses, the development’s value and tenant mix tend to be anchored around operational space. That means:

- If your plan requires a high ratio of office space, frequent walk-in customer traffic, or retail-like sales activity on site, B2 may feel “tight” compared to what you assumed.
- If your plan revolves around industrial production or repair/service with supporting functions, B2 can align well.

Also, some B2 sites can unlock additional white uses only after meeting certain conditions related to gross plot ratio (GPR). URA guidance notes that a minimum GPR of 2.0 must be achieved and used for industrial purposes before the remaining GPR 0.5 may be unlocked for white uses on certain B2 sites. This is one of those details that rarely matters to a casual buyer but becomes critical when you are trying to understand how a development can evolve or how much “non-industrial” component it may eventually support.

If you are evaluating a potential lease or a buy B2 general industry factory purchase, ask yourself a blunt question: “Does my operation need to be industrial-led, or am I mostly service-led?” For B2, the zoning math strongly favors industrial-led operations.

What counts as a “B2 industrial factory” activity

It helps to separate “industrial” from “industrial in a legal planning sense.” In B2, the predominant uses that are allowable include manufacturing (general industry), repair and servicing, production, storage of chemicals or oils, assembly, knitting mills, core media, e-business, and industrial training.

Those categories include activities that may sound different on a shop floor, but they share the common theme of operational production, processing, repair, training, and certain types of content or e-business operations linked to industrial planning intent.

So when you hear someone say “B2 industrial factory,” it might refer to a classic manufacturing setup, but it could also mean a facility where assembly, production, or industrial training is the main event.

There is also a practical implication here for compliance and tenant fit. If your business is more like admin-heavy back office work with limited operational footprint, you may find the premises less suitable even if you can physically move into the unit. Zoning fit is about what the premises is meant to host.

Ancillary uses: support is allowed, but it is not unlimited

Ancillary uses in B2 are explicitly listed, including office, meeting room, sick room, diesel/pump point, M&E services, showroom, industrial canteen, and selected commercial uses.

In day-to-day terms, this is why you can often do things like maintain office functions for supervisors, run meeting spaces for coordination, provide a canteen for operational staff, and include M&E services to keep the facility running.

But the “ancillary” label is a planning signal. It is meant to support industrial operations, not replace them. If you plan to convert most of the floor into client retail, frequent open-house sales, or a heavy retail experience, you may be overreaching for B2’s intended mix.

This is where showrooms become a common sticking point. B2 showrooms are mainly for display of bulky, non-over-the-counter products, or for products delivered and installed off-site. They are not for on-site sale and generally require agency endorsement. If you are thinking of a showroom model that relies on customers buying on-site, you will want to sanity-check that assumption early.

A practical example: I once saw a tenant plan a “browse and buy” setup using showroom language because the unit had the visual potential for display. The operational model depended on on-site sales, and that became the friction point later. The zoning logic around showroom use is one of those details that can derail a fit-out plan if you do it late.

White component space and the reality of mixed developments

Some B2 developments include separate industrial and white buildings, and white components in industrial developments may be strata-subdivided, but there must be no land subdivision. That detail matters if you are exploring buying or leasing a specific component of a mixed development.

For tenants, “white component” can be a way to incorporate certain uses like offices or other permitted customer-related functions, subject to planning evaluation. But it also means the development could be designed to operate differently by zone inside the same site.

If you are looking at a “new B2 industrial space” that advertises a more modern, mixed environment, spend time understanding how your targeted use maps to the permitted categories. White component allowances can offer flexibility, but they are not carte blanche.

In other words, do not just ask, “Can I have an office?” Instead ask, “Is this office part of the ancillary support allowance, and does it fit the overall industrial-led planning intent for the site?”

B2 “new” vs existing: what changes, and what does not

“New B2 general industrial” tends to attract buyers because the units can feel cleaner and more flexible. You might hear talk about upcoming new B2 industrial space, or you might be tempted by a new B2 factory that appears to combine good frontage with industrial depth.

But zoning does not change simply because a building is newer. The use quantum rule, allowable predominant uses, ancillary list, and controls around things like showrooms and unlocking additional white uses still apply within B2’s planning framework.

What can change with newer developments is practical occupancy and the way the building layout supports workflows. For example, a tenant that needs efficient loading, clear industrial areas, and straightforward access to operational space may prefer a newer build even if the legal use set is similar.

When I evaluate options, I separate “legal zoning suitability” from “asset suitability.” Legal suitability is about what you can operate. Asset suitability is about whether the building, ceiling heights, utilities, and logistics match your day-to-day needs. Both matter, but zoning suitability sets the ceiling on what is even possible.

Buying vs renting B2 industrial space: a careful mindset

There is a temptation to treat buying as the default strategy because ownership can stabilize costs. But the planning allowances and constraints do not care whether you own or rent. Your flexibility comes from how the building is permitted to be used, and how approvals are handled for your intended activity.

Public guidance about allowable uses and planning controls does not establish a universal rule that buying is better than renting. The investment case depends on your operational plan, how long you expect to stay, whether you need flexibility to relocate, and how the specific development’s structure affects your usage.

If you are buying, you also take on the responsibility of understanding the property’s permitted industrial-led configuration, including how the development manages the industrial and white components, and whether any of the site unlocking logic related to GPR is relevant to the component you want to use.

A tenant who rents might focus more on near-term operational fit. A buyer must think in longer horizons: how your business evolves, and whether your evolving use stays within the zoning intent of the site.

In short, “buy B2 general industry factory” can be a great move if your operation fits the industrial predominant uses and your support functions remain within allowable ancillary or white component possibilities. It can also become costly if you buy with a plan that pushes beyond what the premises is planned to support.

Where B2 factories in Singapore can make the most sense

B2 space can be found in industrial developments and selected JTC properties. JTC examples indicate units are suitable for General Manufacturing and Generic Industrial Uses, which aligns with the general industrial intent of B2.

If your business sits in the band of manufacturing, repair and servicing, production, assembly, storage of chemicals or oils, or industrial training, B2 can be a strong match because its predominant uses explicitly include those categories.

B2 can also fit operations that are not purely traditional factory manufacturing, such as certain core media and e-business uses, as long as the activity aligns with the allowable uses and how the premises is intended to be used.

There is also a useful mental model here. B2 is often better described as "general and special industries within an industrial zoning framework," rather than as a zone specifically for one type of production. If your operation is adaptable and you plan to keep industrial uses as the main event, B2 tends to be forgiving within that planning structure.

How to evaluate a specific unit without guessing

You can read zoning guidance, but the real test is how it applies to the exact property you are considering. The most reliable way I have seen operators de-risk B2 searches is to treat the paperwork and planning categories as part of the operational due diligence, not as a formality.

Here is a short checklist I recommend before you commit to a viewing, lease signing, or purchase discussion. It is deliberately practical and focused on the B2-specific controls that tend to matter most:

- Confirm that your intended activity aligns with B2 predominant uses like manufacturing, repair and servicing, production, assembly, or other listed industrial categories.
- Check whether your proposed support functions fall under ancillary uses, and do not assume office or showroom plans automatically fit your business model.
- If you plan a showroom concept, validate that it matches B2's tight controls, especially whether it is for display of bulky/non-over-the-counter products and whether on-site sale is involved.
- For mixed developments, clarify how the industrial and white components are structured and whether your intended use sits within the permitted planning categories for that component.
- Ask about any site-specific development conditions tied to industrial usage and potential unlocking of white uses on certain sites.

This approach is less about "spotting loopholes" and more about aligning your plan with the categories that are actually intended for B2.

Common edge cases that cause trouble

Even with the zoning framework in hand, edge cases happen. They usually involve a mismatch between how a tenant describes its business and how the business is operationally carried out.

One frequent *Sengkang West industrial property* edge case is when a business markets itself as "industrial with some client-facing showroom," but then runs frequent on-site retail sales. Since B2 showrooms are not for on-site sale and generally need agency endorsement, that model can become a late-stage problem.

Another edge case is when a tenant designs a layout that visually looks like an office-heavy service center, but their actual work is periodic and the "industrial" part is smaller than expected. Remember the use quantum: at least 60% of total industrial GFA must be used for industrial or predominant uses in B2. If your operation depends on being predominantly support-led, you may find the premises less suitable than you assumed.

The final edge case is misunderstanding the role of white component space. White component approvals can allow certain uses, but they are subject to planning evaluation. A tenant may assume that because a development has white buildings or office areas, any commercial activity is automatically possible. That is not how the planning logic works.

So, which industrial zone should you choose?

Rather than thinking of B2 as “better” or “worse,” think of it as “purpose-built for general and special industries in an industrial zoning framework.” B2 industrial space is designed around industrial predominant uses, supported by a controlled amount of ancillary uses.

If your operation fits those predominant use categories and your support needs are aligned with ancillary allowances and any relevant constraints, B2 can be a smooth fit. If your plan leans heavily into on-site sales, office-led operations that replace industrial use, or showroom concepts that depend on retail-style sales, you may need to look harder at how other industrial zones fit your specific use mix.

The fastest path to clarity is to align your operational plan to allowable predominant and ancillary categories and then test your concept against the structural controls that apply to the property you are considering.

If you are actively searching, you may also be comparing listings that mention “B2 industrial factory,” “B2 general industrial factory,” “new b2 general industrial” or “upcoming new B2 industrial space,” or using terms like “B2 industrial space” and “new B2 factory” interchangeably. Those labels are useful for discovery, but the real decision comes down to whether your intended operation and business model are compatible with the planning framework for B2, particularly the industrial-led use quantum and the restrictions around showroom and on-site sale.

Quick recap for decision-makers

B2 is an industrial zoning category in Singapore intended for general and special industries, and it is structured around the requirement that B2 sites use at least 60% of total industrial GFA for industrial or predominantly industrial purposes, with up to 40% for ancillary or support uses. The allowable predominant uses cover a wide range of industrial activities, including manufacturing (general industry), repair and servicing, production, storage of chemicals or oils, assembly, knitting mills, core media, e-business, and industrial training. Ancillary uses can include office, meeting rooms, sick rooms, diesel or pump points, M&E services, showroom, industrial canteen, and selected commercial uses.

Showrooms are tightly controlled, mainly for display of bulky, non-over-the-counter products or products delivered and installed off-site, with no on-site sale and generally needing agency endorsement. White component space may allow certain additional uses subject to planning evaluation, and some sites have conditions tied to achieving minimum GPR for unlocking white uses.

That is the core reality behind B2 industrial space. Once you treat those rules as part of your planning, it becomes much easier to compare B2 against other industrial zones logically, instead of emotionally or based on how a listing looks in photos.