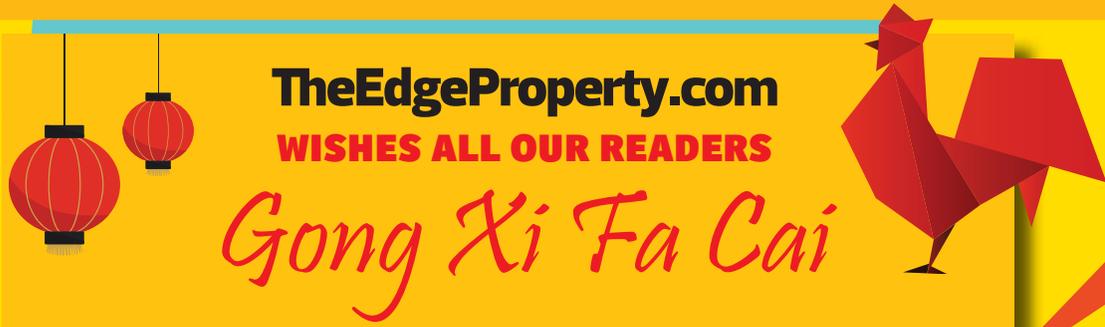


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ONLINE + OFFLINE



TEP6 LEGAL
What's the worst that could happen to you as a property investor?



TEP7 FEATURE
Of beautiful landscapes and living with nature



TEP8 FEATURE
Home invasions and measures to prevent them

DAMANSARA UTAMA'S *a hit!*

Terraced houses in Damansara Utama have breached the RM1 million mark. See Page 4.



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS from TheEdgeProperty.com



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Malaysia



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Ho Kay Tat

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Aset Kayamas' Hamilton project sold out in less than four hours

Aset Kayamas Sdn Bhd's Hamilton condominium project in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur was fully taken up in "three hours and 45 minutes" during its recent preview. "Priced RM498,000 onwards, all 435 units were taken up in less than four hours.

"We're really happy about that, it is a good start for us for 2017," said Aset Kayamas managing director Tan Sri Chai Kin Kong at a

press conference held before the company's annual dinner in KL on Jan 20.

Chai added that the pricing of Hamilton is very "attractive and affordable", hence the overwhelming response.

The built-up sizes at Hamilton range from 1,000 sq ft to 2,200 sq ft, while the leasehold project's gross development value is RM250 million.

New year joy for 'Setia Back to No 1' contest winners

Winners of the "Setia Back to No 1" contest were announced on Jan 21 during S P Setia's Perfect Reunion CNY 2017 celebration at Setia City Convention Centre, Shah Alam.

S P Setia launched the "Setia Back to No 1" contest in conjunction with the developer returning to the top spot last year in The Edge Malaysia Top Property Developers' Awards.

All S P Setia property purchasers who signed sale and purchase agreements in 2016 were allowed to take part in the contest to win luxury cruise trips to Asia and Europe, re-



turn trips to London's Annual Chelsea Flower Show and a grand prize of a London Battersea Power Station Apartment worth £400,000 (RM2.2 million). Louis Tan Xin Wei won the grand prize.

The Perfect Reunion CNY 2017

Sime Darby Property ushers in Year of Fire Rooster with rebate for homebuyers

Sime Darby Property is ushering in the Year of the Fire Rooster with a special promotion for homebuyers who purchase selected properties. They are entitled to receive a rebate of RM8,888 on the initial 10% down payment. They will also get a family dinner for 10 at China Treasures at the Sime Darby Convention Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

The special promotion begins on Jan 28 and ends on Feb 28.

Participating projects of the promotion include ALYA Kuala Lumpur, Bukit Jelutong, City of Elmina, Ara Damansara, KL East, Bandar Bukit Raja, USJ Heights, Putra Heights, Saujana Impian and Serenia City.

Projects that are located beyond the Klang Valley such as Bandar Ainsdale, Chemara Hills, Nilai Impiana and Planters' Haven are also eligible for the promotion.

The special promotion covers over 1,500 residential units.



EcoWorld, EPF to jointly develop 375-acre township in Batu Kawan

Eco World Development Group Bhd (EcoWorld) has entered into a joint venture with the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) to develop a 375-acre tract in Batu Kawan, Penang.

EcoWorld said in a statement that the land will be developed by Eco Horizon Sdn Bhd (EHSB), formerly a wholly-owned subsidiary of EcoWorld, into two complementary townships — Eco Horizon and Eco Sun.

The 300-acre Eco Horizon is situated just off the primary interchange linking the Second Penang Bridge to the North-South Highway opposite the upcoming IKEA store.

Eco Sun, which measures about 75 acres, is located along Lebuh raya Bandar Cassia close to the Penang State Stadium.

The combined gross development value of the two projects is about RM7.76 billion.

Both Eco Horizon and Eco Sun will be marketed as Signature EcoWorld developments.



LAUNCHES + EVENTS



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If you have any real estate-related events, email us at propertyeditor@bizedge.com. Events listed here will also appear on **TheEdgeProperty.com**.

Guang Ming Property Fair

Date: Jan 30 to Feb 5 (Mon to Sun)
Time: 10am to 9pm
Venue: Gurney Paragon Mall, Persiaran Gurney, Penang
Contact: (012) 443 8888
Organised by Penang's *Guang Ming Daily* and Zeon Properties Group, the seven-day property exhibition is said to be the first ever carnival-style property fair and will present projects from 10 developers this Chinese New Year. Admission is free.

Chinese New Year celebration by UEM Sunrise

Date: Jan 28 and 29 (Sat and Sun)
Time: 2pm to 8pm
Venue: Publika Shopping Gallery, No 1, Jalan Dutamas 1, Solaris Dutamas, KL
Contact: (03) 6211 7877
UEM Sunrise Bhd is having its Chinese New Year celebration from Jan 9 to Feb 11 at Publika. Visitors get to meet the

God of Prosperity and enjoy performances such as a lion dance, Five Majestic Drums, Eight-piece Sound of China Orchestra and Five Oriental Fusion Instrumental Ensemble.

Sunway's Chinese New Year celebration

Date: Jan 30 (Mon)
Time: 10am to 5pm
Venue: Sunway Wellesley, Jalan Muthu Palaniappan, Bukit Mertajam, Penang
Contact: (04) 643 9898
Sunway Property invites all to its Chinese New Year celebration at Sunway Wellesley. Visitors get to enjoy a buggy-ride



tour amid the serene Garden Villas, a drumming lion dance performance and a special appearance by the God of Prosperity on this one-day celebration.



Matrix Concepts' Chinese New Year celebration

Date: Jan 28 and 29 (Sat and Sun)
Time: 2pm to 9pm
Venue: d'Tempat Country Club, Bandar Sri Sendayan, PT 12653, Jalan Pusat Dagangan Sendayan 1, Bandar Sri Sendayan, Negeri Sembilan
Contact: (06) 792 2868

Matrix Concepts Holdings Bhd is organising a two-day Chinese New Year celebration at its township project. Activities include a CNY greeting card workshop, rainbow calligraphy, clay art demo and workshop, as well as tanglung decoration. Admission is free.

WCT Holdings' Chinese New Year celebration

Date: Jan 28 to Feb 1 (Sat to Wed)
Time: 1pm to 7:30pm
Venue: Paradigm Mall, Jalan Damansara, SS7, Petaling Jaya
Contact: (03) 7801 1188
WCT Holdings Bhd is celebrating Chinese New Year with all at Paradigm Mall this weekend. Besides meeting and greeting the Pocotee mascot and the God of Prosperity, there will also be an acrobatic lion dance, traditional lion dance, majestic drum performances, as well as a three-piece and five-piece Chinese Orchestra.

GAMUDA GARDENS



In a Garden where Happiness lives

Rediscover the rejuvenating beauty of nature. Gamuda Gardens, an 810-acre integrated township nestled in nature, is designed by masterplanners and architects to balance our need for a quality lifestyle and living in nature. Our well-designed homes go beyond your front door to embrace natural undulating terrain with master-crafted facilities and amenities.

Strategically located in the northern end of Kuala Lumpur, Gamuda Gardens sits at the confluence of the Guthrie, LATAR and North-South expressways.



Gamuda Land Sdn Bhd (573380-D)
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No. 8, Jalan PJU 8/8A, Bandar Damansara Perdana
47820 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
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BY NATALIE KHOO

WHAT MAKES Damansara Utama special?

Petaling Jaya folks would probably know Damansara Utama (DU) as a busy commercial area with banks, cafés, restaurants and offices. It is bustling with office workers during the day while the numerous cafés and food haunts are patronised by those looking to chill out after work.

DU is divided into two sections — SS21 on the west side made up of the commercial centre known as Damansara Uptown (Uptown) and landed homes; and SS20 on the east side (also known as Damansara Kim) made up of mainly residential homes.

See Hoy Chan Sdn Bhd Group is the developer of DU which comprises almost 3,000 terraced houses, semi-detached houses and bungalows and over 300 shophouses. Uptown also features a mix of office buildings and shopoffices. The latest additions in Uptown are the 5-storey neighbourhood mall called The Starling with a net lettable area of about 450,000 sq ft; Uptown 8 which is a 38-storey MSC status, green, grade A office building; and a serviced residence managed by The Ascott Ltd known as the Somerset Damansara

Uptown. These new projects and the constant upgrading of infrastructure there have given the area a facelift and new landmarks.

Housing price rise

Terraced houses here, mainly double-storey houses with a land size of 22ft by 75ft and a built-up of 1,650 sq ft, were priced somewhere between a mere (by today's standards) RM40,000 to RM50,000 when DU was first developed in the mid 1970's, says Laurelcap Sdn Bhd's director Stanley Toh.

"The current asking price for a 22ft by 75ft double-storey terraced house is RM990,000 to RM1.1 million. On average it's about 2,300% capital appreciation since it was first developed!" Toh exclaims.

According to Nawawi Tie Leung Property Consultants Sdn Bhd managing director, Eddy Wong, the land parcel for intermediate lots is typically 22ft by 70ft, 22ft by 75ft and 23ft by 70ft.

Meanwhile, GMAC Realtor's negotiator, Adrian Tan, notes that if the house is renovated, it can command a higher price of more than a million ringgit.

"Renovated units can fetch prices from RM1.1 to RM1.3 million," says Tan.

According to data from TheEdgeProperty.com, the highest average transacted price psf of terraced homes in DU was in 4Q2015 at RM671 psf based on land size. On the absolute price basis, 4Q2015 saw an average transacted price of RM1.1 million.

The terraced houses first reached the one million mark in 1Q2015 with an average transacted price of RM1.18 million. Meanwhile, the latest data in 2Q2016 saw terraced houses in DU being transacted at RM649 psf, up 4% y-o-y. As at 2Q2016, the terraced houses in DU were transacted at an average of RM1.08 million.

Currently, the only high-rise residence in DU is Uptown Residences, which was launched in April 2012.

Nawawi Tie Leung's Wong says Uptown Residences was launched around the RM850 psf level.

"Currently, the resale price is around RM1,100 psf," he says.

Meanwhile, among the amenities located in DU include schools such as SK and SMK Damansara Utama, hospitals such as the KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital and banks such as RHB Bank, AmBank and Public Bank.

NAWAWI TIE LEUNG



Wong: Terraced houses in DU have enjoyed steady price appreciation because of DU's centralised location.

PATRICK GOH | TheEdgeProperty.com



Tan: Traffic jams and parking issues are posing problems here.

MOHD SHAHRIN YAHYA | TheEdgeProperty.com



Toh: Investors should look out for shophots/serviced apartments while homebuyers should look at buying old houses.



Market slowing?

According to Laurelcap's Toh, the slow market has affected the sale and rental of terraced homes in DU in terms of the longer time it takes to close a deal but prices have not dropped.

"This is mainly due to the strict lending regime. Rents have also experienced a slight dip which is expected," says Toh.

"Rental yields for terraced houses are between 2.5% to 3% while the serviced apart-

ments/condos are between 4% to 4.5%," says Toh.

Meanwhile, Tan thinks that during a slow market, rents and prices of homes in mature and more established developments/neighbourhoods are more "inelastic" than those in newer neighbourhoods due to their "branding".

"It is easier to justify the values in a more mature/established area than a new unproven neighbourhood. DU house prices

have largely been unaffected by the current downturn although transactions have been slow," Tan explains.

"Secondary housing prices in good locations will continue to grow in future but they will stagnate in the meantime. Currently, the subsale market is being heavily contested by the primary market with developers giving good packages and making it easier for purchasers to commit to new developments.

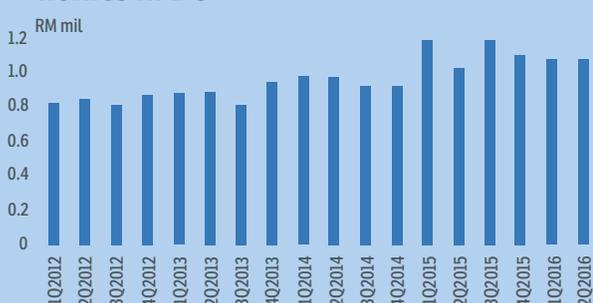
"Besides, the cooling measures imple-

mented over the past few years have resulted in fewer flippers/speculative purchasers in the market so prices will generally be more stable," Tan adds.

The good and the bad

According to Toh, most of the people living in DU are families who have lived there for many years while the more recent serviced apartments have attracted young adults and young families.

Average transacted price of terraced homes in DU



Average transacted price psf of terraced homes in DU



Transaction volume of terraced homes in DU



SOURCE: TheEdgeProperty.com



SOURCE + GRAPHICS: TheEdgeProperty.com

Pros + cons of living in Damansara Utama



- 1 Plenty of amenities
- 2 Strategically located
- 3 Good connectivity



- 1 Traffic congestion
- 2 Lack of street parking bays
- 3 Narrow roads
- 4 Those who mind, there is a cemetery near SS20

“It has good public infrastructure and amenities and an abundance of food and beverage [outlets], banks, convenience stores and shopping malls close by,” says Toh.

However, with the good comes the bad as well.

“Traffic jams and parking issues are posing problems here. This is observed throughout the neighbour-

hood and the commercial area. Although more underground parking has been allocated at the Uptown commercial area, we still experience the same congestion and double parking,” says GMAC Realtor’s Tan.

“This suggests that people want convenience when it comes to street parking.

“What is needed is probably

Why DU?

Nawawi Tie Leung Property Consultants Sdn Bhd managing director, Eddy Wong notes that the terraced houses in DU have enjoyed steady price appreciation because of the area’s centralised location with good connectivity to various parts of the Klang Valley and easy access to amenities.

“People still prefer landed properties over high rises and are willing to pay a premium for it especially when they are located in mature areas with good connectivity and amenities.

“There are very few vacant land parcels for new terraced house developments in DU or even in other areas in Petaling Jaya. As such, prices

will continue to appreciate in line with household income growth due to the forces of demand and supply,” says Wong.

Meanwhile, GMAC Realtor’s negotiator Adrian Tan explains that DU has very strong location factors. For one, it is located at the heart of Damansara where business and job opportunities are ample, while a lot of good public and private schools are situated within easy driving distance to the homes here.

“In addition, there is also good access to health care (KPJ Damansara) and entertainment/leisure (1 Utama Shopping Centre in neighbouring Bandar Utama and the Curve located

at Mutiara Damansara).

“DU also has good connectivity to major highways such as Lebuhraya Damansara-Puchong, the SPRINT highway and the New Klang Valley Expressway. Connectivity has and will be boosted by the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line 1 and the future Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 3. With such strong fundamentals, the potential for long-term growth is constantly strong,” says Tan.

There is currently no more vacant land in the area for further development. “The only redevelopment opportunities would be the kampung/squatter areas behind Jalan SS21/13,” says Tan.

a better system for street-level parking such as the availability of drop off/pick-up points, or a 30-minute street parking only for customers looking to use the bank’s ATM, or pick up a pack of cigarettes from 7-Eleven. After 30 minutes, a timed barricade would rise to prevent the parked car from leaving unless a RM50 fee is paid,” Tan suggests.

Tan adds that shuttle bus services around Uptown and the surrounding residential areas would also help.

Outlook

According to Laurelcap’s Toh, the short-term outlook for DU is that prices will be maintained for the

next one or two years while in the long term, property prices will continue to appreciate due to the freehold nature of the area coupled with the shortage of new landed housing.

Wong concurs, considering the fact that DU is a mature neighbourhood.

“The longer-term outlook is positive as DU is well-located with good connectivity and with easy access to amenities. Potential homebuyers should take a longer-term view. If they find something that meets their needs, they should just proceed with their purchase and not wait for the market to dip further. It is not easy to find a prop-

erty that you like and which meets your requirements,” he adds.

Meanwhile, Toh suggests that investors look out for shoplots and serviced apartments while homebuyers should look at buying old houses and then refurbishing them.

“With the newly completed refurbishment of the public walkways and car parks as well as the new Starling Mall, the Uptown commercial square has seen many new tenants entering the area. Occupancy for the ground floor of the mall is at least about 90% to 95%. Hence, investors should seize the opportunity and invest in the area for the long run,” says Toh.

TheEdgeProperty.com

wishes all readers

Happy
Chinese
New Year

恭喜发财





What's the worst that could happen to you as a property investor?

Property investment is arguably one of the most secure investments, especially in the current volatile market. After all, as the world's population continues to increase, it will become harder to obtain land, which is a limited commodity. Real estate prices might depreciate briefly at times due to some foreseen or unforeseen circumstances, but prices can only appreciate in value over time due to the ever-growing demand for living spaces.

History can testify that property investment is a marathon that investors often emerge as winner in. One can gain from the value appreciation the longer they endure holding the property while the rental yield can help sustain the endurance.

However, risks are part and parcel of any business venture or investment. There is the possibility that an investment's actual returns might be different from what is expected. This is usually expressed in terms of volatility of return.

One could end up with a windfall when the risk taken pays off, or one could end up with scraps when it does not. Generally, the greater the risks, the greater the rate of returns an investor will expect.

Here are the five "L's" of property investment risks:

1. Legal risk

- (i) One must ensure that their title deed is genuine, as there have been the odd cases of fraudulent title dealings in the past. You must be certain of the identity of the person whom you are dealing with.
- (ii) As we are living in a developing economy, town planning and zoning are constantly evolving in response to new circumstances. What was built for a residential purpose could be zoned for commercial and retail purposes later.
- (iii) The status of the entities involved in a transaction is also critical. When a person is pronounced a bankrupt, his or her assets will be liquidated to pay off

BY CHRIS TAN



the creditors and this includes his or her properties. More importantly, the bankrupt person can no longer make decisions on the property. The same goes for a company undergoing winding-up proceedings or when a receiver is appointed to take over the conduct of the company. In dealing with a company, it is also crucial that the person making the representation has the right authority to do so.

- (iv) Occupants of the property are a risk themselves. Property owners cannot take the law upon themselves when dealing with tenants and squatters who do not pay rent or damage or trespass on a property. Malaysian law generally favours those who are in possession of the property.

2. Liquidity risk

- (i) The nature of a property investment is such that one cannot withdraw his or her investments quickly. One will not be able to buy or sell an investment as and when one likes. There are inherent liquidity risks to property investments. This is precisely why property investment is favoured over others as high liquidity enables speculation.
- (ii) Funds obtained from the disposal of properties will not be instantaneous. Tenants to fill a vacant property cannot be conjured from thin air. During that period the property owner will have to contend with the necessary holding costs. Property transactions also take time to conclude.

3. Leverage risk

- (i) The beauty in property investment is one can leverage on other people's capital so the risk is shared as well. However, there

are inherent risks in leveraging on various financial instruments or borrowed capital.

- (ii) These leverage risks come not just from banks, but also from the borrower's own profile. Loan callback as a result of the borrower's default in servicing the loan is very detrimental as it would be difficult to raise the repayment of the whole outstanding loan sum beyond the default monthly payments in a brief period of time.
- (iii) Monies raised from foreclosure proceedings might be insufficient due to market conditions that may require the borrower to top up the difference although the substantial part of the outstanding loan would have been covered by the proceeds of the court-sanctioned forced sale.
- (iv) Revaluation of properties (although not common in Malaysia) might also result in a borrower having to top up his or her loan in compliance with the terms of the lending institution.

4. Large sum risk

- (i) Investment returns are proportional to the amount invested. With larger investments come the potential for larger returns thus larger risks as well.
- (ii) The discerning investor should always aim to make as much money as his or her risk profile can tolerate. Some stress test can be simulated before hand on one's ability to hold in the worst case scenario of no income for a period of time.
- (iii) Large investments will almost certainly demand the investor's full attention due to the high stakes involved.

5. Long-term risk

- (i) It is fair to say that property values appreciate over time, therefore investors must never ignore the importance of investing in time as well to ensure a reasonable return.

- (ii) Events of the world are unpredictable. There could be acts of God or natural disasters that may cause havoc, including to the property market.
- (iii) Accumulated values over time may come to nothing during a market downturn. It is up to the investor to maintain his or her holding power and this can be very challenging.
- (iv) To minimise this risk, a discerning investor has to understand his or her risk profile. Take time to examine one's risk requirements, capacity and tolerance.
- (v) Identify the issues concerned based on the risk profile as well as the external circumstances. One must also understand and communicate with all the stakeholders who are assisting him or her with the transaction.
- (vi) Decisions should always be based on accurate information from a credible source. A property portfolio should also be insured and common packages include asset protection, income protection, legal liability, terrorism protection, etc.
- (vii) Thus, it is wise to always increase and diversify your options. You should never put all your eggs in one basket.

If you have any property-related legal questions for Tan, please go to the Tips section of TheEdgeProperty.com.

Chris Tan is a lawyer, author, speaker and keen observer of real estate locally and abroad. Mainly, he is the founder and now managing partner of Chur Associates.

Disclaimer: The information here does not constitute legal advice. Please seek professional legal advice for your specific needs.



Final block of Sunsuria's The Olive opens for sale

BY LUM KA KAY

PETALING JAYA: Sunsuria Bhd has opened Block B, the final block at The Olive condominium project at Sunsuria City in Salak Tinggi, Selangor, for sale following good response to the earlier blocks.

"Our Block A is fully booked and Block C is 85% sold. Block B is now open for sale," Sunsuria sales and marketing director Simon Kwan told TheEdgeProperty.com.

Kwan said the developer targets the project to be fully taken up by end-2017 but the current demand indicates that The Olive will most likely be sold out by September this year.

The Olive is a 15-acre freehold condo-

minium project with a gross development value of RM283.84 million. It is part of the 525-acre Sunsuria City.

The project offers 663 units in three blocks with prices starting from RM420,000. The 21-storey Block A has 240 units while the 19-storey Block B has 216 units and the 18-storey Block C has 207 units.

Each 3-bedroom unit has a built-up of 818 sq ft and comes with two car park bays.

Facilities at The Olive include a wading pool, multi-purpose hall, BBQ pit, children's playground and gymnasium.

The Olive in Sunsuria City is accessible via the North-South Central Link Expressway (ELITE), Maju Expressway and the upcoming ELITE Highway interchange. It will take about 28 minutes to reach KL Sentral, and 7 minutes and 11 minutes to

SUNSURIA BHD



The Olive is part of the 525-acre Sunsuria City, offering 663 units.

KLIA (Kuala Lumpur International Airport) and KLIA 2, respectively, via the Express Rail Link.

"Sunsuria City offers diverse opportunities and a unique township concept, coupled with great accessibility and amenities such as the Xiamen University Malaysia, which will be located at the heart of the township, and the Korean-French Provence Village.

"With all these, the response and general perception of Sunsuria City have been really good and positive. Our main focus for the new launches in 2017 is on medium-range residential properties," said Kwan.



Of beautiful landscapes and living with nature

PICTURES BY GAMUDA LAND

BY NATALIE KHOO

Nothing feels more refreshing than when one is outdoors, relaxing under a shade as a gentle breeze flows, breathing in the fresh air and listening to the hum of nature. There is no denying that a nice and green landscaped environment can bring life to a living space and take residential living up a notch.

“If landscapes are designed properly, then you will give an enduring environment for the residents to live in. It can be your companion throughout the time that you live in that development,” says landscape architect and the managing director of Walrus Designs Sdn Bhd, Julien Thomas Hodson-Walker.

As time passes, the landscape matures and becomes more lush and beautiful.

“Time is a great companion to a landscape. Buildings look best when they are first developed but they deteriorate over time. But, it is the opposite for landscapes. They look [their] worst when they are completed but they look better and better as the development such as a township matures, so residents can definitely look forward to that,” Hodson-Walker tells TheEdgeProperty.com.

Hodson-Walker started off as a landscape architect in Derek Lovejoy Partnership in the UK in 1993 before he made his move to Asia and the Middle East. Since then, he has worked with Aspinwall Clouston before moving to Walrus Design (formerly known as ICN Design International Sdn Bhd). Hodson-Walker has worked on many projects locally including Desa ParkCity, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur and the Putrajaya Urban Design Guidelines for Precincts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 18.

Overseas, he has worked on projects such as the York Science Park in the UK, Sharm El Sheikh hotel and resort complex in Egypt, the Orchard Road Experience District 9 in Singapore and office complex Raheja Towers



There will be a cascading waterfall and five lakes at Gamuda Gardens' Central Park.

in India. He holds a post graduate diploma in landscape architecture with distinction as well as a Bachelor of Arts in landscape architecture from Manchester Polytechnic. He is an associate member of the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia, the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects and the Chartered Landscape Architect of The Landscape Institute, UK.

His latest project is Gamuda Gardens, a township development by Gamuda Land, the property arm of Gamuda Bhd.

“Over the years of my work in landscaping, I feel it is important to design a landscape that ultimately suits its end-users,” says Hodson-Walker.

Having worked on previous Gamuda Land projects, Hodson-Walker clearly knows that one of the key features of successful townships in Malaysia is the green component and well-planned landscapes that bring value to the township as well as the community as a whole.

At Gamuda Gardens, the 810-acre township in Kuang, Selangor will have a 50-acre central park with a cascading waterfall of 18m in height.

The park will be located at the centre of the township and is inspired by traditional English coun-

MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM | TheEdgeProperty.com



try parks. There will also be five lakes within the park, which will be an integral part of the township's storm-water retention system.

“Previously, this site was a rubber plantation. We are committed to environmental restitution for the site as what you have seen in past Gamuda projects such as the Kota Kemuning Wetland or the indigenous forest planted around the golf course in Valencia,” says Hodson-Walker, who was also involved in the landscaping of these two projects.

Trees such as the jelutong, meranti and jati will be planted in the central park, he says. The developer intends to commission an independent baseline audit of flora

Safety plays a crucial part in our landscape planning and the water margins are designed to be safe and accessible.

— Hodson-Walker

and fauna within the site for the next 10 years to measure the rate and level of success in their goal of increasing bio-diversity through environmental restitution.

“There will also be marginal wetland fringes around the lakes to provide spawning grounds for fish and amphibians which in turn encourage waterfowl and small mammals to inhabit the lake edges.”

Another important aspect in designing the outdoor environment is safety. “Safety plays a crucial part in our landscape planning and the water margins are designed to be safe and accessible to provide children with the opportunities to interact with the water,” Hodson-Walker explains.

Initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of developing the site include sustainable drainage systems that protect the groundwater; recycling and reusing of felled rubber trees for medium density fibreboard and timber products through third party processors; and mulching and composting of organic debris from the site clearance for re-use as soil conditioner in future landscape work.

Hodson-Walker will also be incorporating a viewing tower to provide visitors with a vantage 360° view of the entire valley.

“We will also have a 4km mixed terrain cycling trail that will navigate through the lakes and wood-

lands. The whole terrain is designed to be walkable and accessible, whereby it will be on a flat surface so that those who are skating or scooting, or even those on a wheelchair will be able to do so freely,” he offers.

One interesting feature of the park is that it will be located on a slope.

“The slopes give way to an integrated area with designated zones for different ages of play. Activities for toddlers and younger children are close to public facilities. For instance, the car park will be located next to the playground. The play equipment for older children takes advantage of the naturally sloping terrain and includes canopy walkways, zip lines and obstacle courses with stainless steel slides bedded into the slopes,” says Hodson-Walker, adding that there will also be a fully-equipped camp ground with camping platforms.

Its developer also plans to create a vibrant commercial village within Gamuda Gardens which offers retail outlets, restaurants and modern amenities to cater to the needs of the residents as well as to the visitors of the park.

“After a few years, the park will be handed over to the local authorities, so we have designed the park in a way that it can be easily maintained. We don't have a lot of ornamental shrubs and flowering plants [in the park], but more woodlands and flowing paths and lakes. In that way, the character of the park can be maintained,” says Hodson-Walker.

Gamuda Gardens will be developed over 15 years and has an estimated gross development value of over RM10.1 billion. The first phase of the project will consist of 300 units of double-storey terraced houses with built-up sizes of 20ft by 75ft and 22ft by 75ft. Selling price for the units starts from RM700,000.



Artist's impression of Gamuda Gardens.



Home invasions and measures to prevent them

BY SHAWN NG

We hear of break-ins, burglaries and various types of home invasions constantly and the fact is, it could happen to anyone of us. As such, it is crucial for homeowners to equip their homes to avoid being a victim.

Low Sew Mooi, 53, lives in a 2-storey terraced house in Ampang, Kuala Lumpur on her own. Last October, the house was broken into while she was at work.

"My neighbour told me that someone was ringing my door bell and looking for me that afternoon but the guy left after a while.

"I believe the guy was a burglar and he was making sure that nobody was home before climbing up the telephone pole at the back of my house and breaking in through my ceiling," Low recalls.

Her losses amounted to about RM9,000 and things stolen included cash, a laptop and a camera.

"This incident had taught me a lesson, I spent RM2,700 to change all the locks, install an alarm system and a grille on the ceiling. Now I feel that my home is finally secure," she says.

With the emergence of social media and the efforts carried out by the police and non-governmental organisations such as local residents' associations and the Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF) to promote crime prevention, the public is

KENNY YAP | TheEdgeProperty.com



Chen: A home in an area with multiple access points can become an easy target for burglary.

MOHD SHAHRIN YAHYA | TheEdgeProperty.com



Lee: Developers are paying more attention to security features in their projects.

now more aware about ways they can protect themselves and their homes, says security services and solutions provider SECOM (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd general manager Lee Keang Hong.

Property developers too are aware that one of the main requirements for new homeowners is for a secure home where they can sleep soundly at night. Developers are paying more attention to security features in their projects from building gated-and-guarded housing estates, to installing electrical fencing and CCTVs, to providing alarm systems, Lee tells TheEdgeProperty.com.

Although the newer property projects come with better security, there are still some things that one can do to reduce the risk of break-ins. This is especially true for

those who live in older housing areas where there are no guards and where houses are old and flimsy against break-ins.

With the right measures in place, break-ins can be prevented, says MCPF honorary treasurer and MKH Bhd group managing director Tan Sri Eddy Chen.

He notes that most burglars take advantage of the carelessness of house owners who could have left a spare key hidden outside the house, who have an untidy and unkempt garden where they could easily hide, etc.

"You can't stop the hardcore criminals from breaking into your house if they really want to but at least you can deter them if you have some security measures in place," he says.

Limit access to your house

Chen says that a home in an area with multiple access points can become an easy target for burglary, so he suggests that residents in such housing estates close down some access points for better security and traffic management.

"The back lane of a house is a vulnerable area as it is the most common entry point for burglars to break into the house. So we should make sure the back of our house is well-secured," he offers.

Meanwhile, SECOM's Lee feels that strangers to the community such as contractors or service workers should not be allowed to stay overnight in a housing estate, as there is no telling if there could be a rotten apple among them.

Secure every possible entry

Lee notes that the roof and ceiling of a house are also vulnerable to break-ins as these parts of the house are difficult to secure.

"The most you can do is install a sensor or a grille above the ceiling to hold back intruders," he offers.

Install an alarm system

House owners can also install an alarm system that is linked to the nearest police station or the cellphone of a person who could help the owner respond immediately if something happens to their home, notes Chen.

"However, not every person can afford an alarm system, so I suggest that we start with the simple things such as securing all locks, doors and windows," he says.

Ensure a clear vision of the surroundings

Besides ensuring all doors and windows are closed, Chen reminds one to always have a clear vision of their surroundings.

"If the garden and foliage in your house are not properly kept, criminals may take advantage of it to sneak into your house without anyone noticing," he says, adding that one should always switch on the porch lights at night and inform the local city council of non-functioning street lights.

Do not leave any tools outside your home

Lee warns that leaving tools and a ladder outside the house can be dangerous as criminals would make use of these to get into the house.

"Meanwhile, allowing letters and newspapers to pile up while you are away on vacation is also something you should never do as it is a sign telling people that 'nobody is home,'" he says.

Do not show-off your wealth

Chen also warns that social media postings are becoming popular channels for those looking for potential victims.

"Hence, do not show off your wealth and disclose your vacation schedule as robbers will find out these important information through social media," he says.

Preventive measures

Methods of house break-ins

- Entering or forcing through doors, windows or other entrances.
- Gaining entry through the roof via neighbour's house, shop or lamp post
- Cutting padlocks and grilles.
- Impersonating a public servant or door-to-door salesman.
- Gaining entry through the refuse chute, false ceiling or ventilation openings.
- Entering the premises on the pretext of delivering goods or hampers, using the toilet or telephone, or viewing the premises in response to a newspaper advertisement for rental or sale.
- Waiting for victim to enter or exit the premises and then forcing their way in together with the victim.

- Always lock all doors, windows and grille gates when leaving home unattended, even for a short while.
- Verify the identity of anyone who claims to be a public servant, door-to-door salesman or representative from a company or organisation. Call the organisation through the number obtained from your telephone directory. Do not rely on the number that is given to you.
- Ensure a clear vision of the surroundings.
- Keep large sums of cash in banks and expensive jewellery in safe deposit boxes.
- Cancel all deliveries such as newspapers, magazines, etc, when you are away from home for long periods.
- Do not leave notes outside the house announcing your absence.
- Leave a light and radio on at night.
- Install a security alarm system. Ensure that it is tested periodically and in working condition. Activate the system when no one is in the house and before retiring to bed. This applies also to unoccupied rooms.
- Ask your immediate neighbours to keep an eye on your house while you are away.
- Keep your mobile phone within easy reach and be contactable.

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