

Beyond Housing

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Every architect, at least once in his professional life, would be required to design a house. To an even greater extent, a successful architect strives to build his or her ultimate dream house as a showcase of his or her beliefs, thoughts, ideologies and design ethos.

Traditionally, when it comes to master planning a township, the task is commonly delegated to the town planner consultant. Nevertheless, without prejudice to the town planners, architects can be creative designers whom are capable of designing master plans that should provide better contextual relationship to the designed houses within the master plan.

Property developers are known for being concerned about profitability regarding their housing projects. Therefore, architects are expected to be well versed in creative and environmentally sensitive design and will be competitive if armed with knowledge on cost and financial implications.

THE PROJECT

The projects which the eleven students participated tested their ability to initially work as a team and later as an individual within a team. The design placed great emphasis on developing novel architectural design concepts, sustainable and environmentally sensitive design ideologies, town planning strategies, cost analysis and socio-cultural agendas.

The students were tasked to design an approximately 250 acres land at the Pandamaran peninsular in South Klang by the Sungai Langat. The site is ideal as a test-bed for an integrated mini township that validates the student's ideas of an ideal way of living in a conducive living, playing and working environment.

The first stage of design demonstrated eleven master plan strategies and concepts by the individual students. There were some similarities and common directions in the master planning strategies. The next stage saw eleven master plan concepts being reduced to six that eventually become two distinctive master plan concepts with vastly different design approaches and agendas.

Upon achieving a firm master plan layout with all public, commercial and social amenities in placed, the students would carve individual precincts sizing approximately 12 to 15 acres per student in pursuit of designing their novel individual housing schemes. Most students produced a range of 150 to 280 units of homes with a variety housing typologies based on commercial and environmental viability. The exercise proved to be successful in testing various strategies in housing design, master planning a novel township concept, working in a team environment and adopting green design strategies to embrace the current environmental sensitive design agendas.