Tanarimba Janda Baik

(ARCHITECT'S STATEMENT)

Located in the Janda Baik area, the natural topography consists of hilly terrain from 1,500 to 4,400 feet above sea level with intervening valleys and six cascading fast flowing mountain streams. Seven thousand two hundred acres were approved for development. Several waterfalls, 40 to 60-feet in height have so far been identified. Secondary growth now covers these areas. Three hundred acres of pine forest planted 30 years ago by the Forestry Department skirts the Bentong Road. This area called 'The Pines' has the atmosphere of a temperate pine forest with 60-feet pine trees shooting straight up to the sky with little undergrowth.

The site also features three peaks, which are Bukit Repin (4,401 feet), Gunung Sempah (3,954 feet) and Bukit Bankong (3,416 feet), as well as Genting Bedai otherwise known as the 'Gap'. Genting Bedai, at 2,200 feet, is the lowest point in the main range and forms part of the original pony trail linking Kuala Lumpur to the East Coast. Sections of this trail, as well as remnants of old tea plantations can still be seen.

Materials, structure and construction. The challenge was to create a living environment for residents and visitors to enjoy the unique features of the site while preserving its natural ambience with as little disturbance to the existing forests, flora and fauna as possible. The development would also have to be economically viable.

Development criteria. Given the above philosophy, the following criteria became obvious:

- To retain the natural characteristics of the area – low density, with low-rise buildings
- A large area of primary rain forest at the summit would remain untouched to prevent pollution of the streams which are presently clear and free from E.coli contamination (a sign of human activity upstream)
- Access roads would follow the natural contours of the land to minimise cutting of slopes. Tree-felling would be kept to a minimum, not only at roadsides but also on building lots
- Design of buildings should blend with the natural environment and utilise local materials as much as possible

Research and planning. Since Tanarimba Janda Baik was intended


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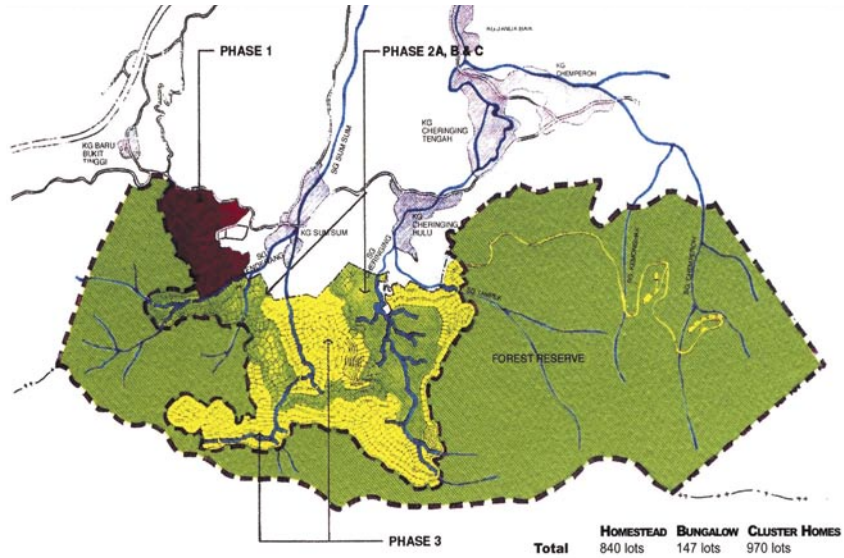
LOCATION
Pahang
CLIENT
Sitrac Corporation Sdn Bhd
ARCHITECT
CWN Architects
PROJECT ARCHITECT
Ar Choo Gim Wah
DESIGN ARCHITECT
Lisa Ngan
C&S
Juantara Konsultant Sdn Bhd
BUILDER
Adil Jati Sdn Bhd
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR
Reliance Electric (M) Sdn Bhd



1 Nursery established to provide plants for reforestation and landscaping

2&3 Panoramic landscape with view of pool and pond in Enderong Valley, showing how nature and built environment complement each other Development. The buildings and access roads are designed to fit in with the natural terrain

4,5&6 Completed buildings in Tanarimba Sustainable Development. The buildings and access roads are designed to fit in with the natural terrain

to be environmentally sustainable, a two-year research and planning was carried out before the groundbreaking took place in December 1995. This included aerial as well as detailed ground and geological surveys, studies of the watercourse, rainfall and temperature variations as well as types of vegetation, flora and fauna in order to gain insight into the whole ecosystem of the area.

A rain forest lodged with conference facilities would be constructed in the final phase. This would be situated in the midst of the forest and accessible only by vehicles provided by the management. Almost 80% of Tanarimba would remain as a permanent forest reserve. Sightings so far include gibbons and other species of monkeys, honey bear, wild boar, hornbills, the rare white crested eagles, owls, and a variety of smaller birds. Fungi that are 80 inches in circumference cling to giant tree trunks.

Strategy. In order to minimise the impact of development on the environment, the plan is to have the project implemented in three phases. Each of these phases is self-contained so that any adverse effect or damage can be contained and rectified thus obviating any major environmental disaster.

Phase 1. Phase 1, 'The Pines', on 142 one-to-two acre lots, situated in the forest is completed. Cut surfaces are hydroseeded straightaway, and drains are laid immediately to prevent erosion and to channel runoff water safely to lower drainage areas after heavy rains. Few are used to doing things in this way, as the more conventional practice would see the whole site bulldozed, leaving large tracts exposed to the elements without any protection. All infrastructure i.e. roads, drains, electricity, water and telephone lines are placed in underground conduits.

Phase 2. In April 1997, Phase 2 'The Ridge', was launched. This is situated on higher ground, at approximately 2,000 feet with Sungai Sum Sum and several small rivulets tumbling along a rock-strewn path beneath overhanging vegetation. This area has been previously logged and heavily cultivated, thus some places are covered with secondary growth only, without much tall tree cover. Magnificent views of the surrounding hills and the sound of rushing water are a delight at any time of the day.

Phase 3. The final phase, like phases 1 and 2 will consist of one-to-two acre lots with some bungalow lots and cluster homes. A rain forest lodge and convention centre will be built in the jungle 'away from it all'. It will contain approximately 100 rooms with conference facilities to cater not only for nature lovers but also for corporate clients who wish to hold meetings and seminars in a relaxed and conducive atmosphere, away from interference.

Project significance and impact. Tanarimba Janda Baik aims to illustrate that a development can be both economically viable and at the same time environmentally sound. Development does not have to be destructive; man and nature can and must live in harmony in order for both to survive. Tanarimba Janda Baik is a development that subscribes to this philosophy. am