

The green city of the future

The test case for the Green Building Index Township Tool, Setia City is a shining example of a future-proof master development that promotes sustainability at every turn.

words by Ong Xin Ying



Part of the strategically-located township of Setia Alam, Setia City was conceived as a 240-acre integrated green city. In the brief given to Architecte Sdn Bhd by the client, the goal was to make the development "future proof" in every possible way. Every single one of its components would by design continue "growing and connecting" its population. This would ensure that the city would remain an ideal place to "live, learn, work and play" as per S P Setia Berhad's motto for decades to come.

When they began conceptualising the master plan, the architects led by Dr Tan Loke Mun first had to determine the ideal location for the city's core components. This included Setia Corporate Headquarters, Setia City Park, Setia City Convention Centre, Setia City Mall, Terminal Setia Alam and the bus terminal. There were also third-party entities to consider such as the National Health Institute and EduSentral as well as the offices of corporations like Audi Malaysia, Top Glove Corporation Berhad and Khind Holdings Bhd.

As they were working on the master plan, the team was also in the midst of establishing the Green Building Index (GBI) Township Tool. The logical next step in regard to the Malaysian GBI, it is meant to promote sustainability in a built environment by being a guide for the creation of sustainable townships. Many of the criteria that were eventually incorporated into it were tested and used in the master plan of Setia City. Naturally, this meant that every single building had to be GBI-rated and meet the tool's Triple Bottom Line model with the three components being Environment, Business and Community.

Taking the dedication to honouring nature in Setia City's planning to the next level is Setia City Convention Centre 2, the new expansive hall of the existing convention centre. Designed to be functional and flexible as well as facilitate free-flowing traffic in order to cater to all kinds of events, it draws its visual inspiration from a caterpillar. White, green, black and yellow geometric shapes decorate its walls and roof, easily capturing the attention of anyone who looks at it regardless of the angle.

However, the GBI Township Tool criterion most evidently implemented in Setia City is the elevated pedestrian Sky-Link network which connects all the buildings in the city. On the ground level, wide paved walking boulevards would link everything to the many parks and green spaces located throughout the development. This concept was presented to the local authorities, the Shah Alam Municipal Council, and approved after much deliberation and work focused on resolving issues such as ownership air rights, security and safety. The successful application of this system in the city eventually served as the precedent case when it was later proposed to other local authorities throughout the country such as Kuala Lumpur City Hall. ■

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SETIA CITY

Location
Setia Alam, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Architects
Archicentre Sdn Bhd

"The city is an elaborate ecosystem that grows a community through connectivity."

By Dr Tan Loke Mun
Founding Director of Archicentre Sdn Bhd

