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KORANDE VISUSTRY ONLINE

Tan: The safety of the residents is not an issue we take lightly

Sanctuary Ridge to continue development

BY Wong Mei Kay

Developer Gasing Meridian Sdn Bhd must have heaved a sigh of relief when the Kuala Lumpur High Court decided in September last year to quash a judicial review application by a group of residents in Bukit Gasing.

The residents had in January 2008 filed for a judicial review to challenge a development order for the developer's proposed hill-slope project in Bukit Gasing, citing concerns over soil erosion and other dangers associated with hill-slope developments. After a delay of more than three years as a result of the legal wrangle, the developer has finally begun earthworks and infrastructure works on the project site known as Sanctuary Ridge.

"The safety of the residents is not an issue we take lightly. We have taken and are still taking all the necessary measures to ensure that all measures which are required of us are adhered to," says Gasing Meridian director Leo Tan. The residents have continued to protest against the hill-slope development despite the developer's assurances.

"The reputation of the company [as a whole] is not tarnished. But I think it [the legal action] has affected our ability to conduct our business," notes Leo. Gasing Meridian has applied for damages from the residents who took the legal action. However, Tan declines to comment on the case.

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Garden in the sky

Vogue, the third tower of Bukit Kiara Properties' Verve Suites, features a unique garden in the sky. Named The Concentrico, the 6,240 sq ft space is filled with lush foliage and trees, offering residents a number of facilities and a relaxing ambience. **Wong King Wai** has the story on Page 6.



'Bungalows to follow natural topography'

FROM PAGE 1

Located on the Kuala Lumpur side of Bukit Gasing, Sanctuary Ridge is a low-density freehold luxury bungalow development that spans 15.5ha with a gross development value of RM500 million. The development site has been subdivided into 71 plots, of which 68 will be sold. Leo elaborates "The rest of the lots will be allocated for infrastructure, jogging paths, an entrance and a public park. We aim to add value to the development with landscaping and softscaping. In addition, we will also provide added security features in the neighbourhood such as CCTV, security on call and smart home systems."

The bungalows come in 14 designs with built-ups from 10,000 sq ft. Prices start from RM7 million, or RM269 to RM370 per sq ft, depending on the size and location of the lots. They are designed to follow the natural topography of each individual plot to ensure the development will have minimal impact on the environment.

"The lowest point of Bukit Gasing is 38m and it peaks at 132m while the natural incline of the hill ranges from 15 to 25 degrees [in steepness]. There are no standard designs for the lots. We are building according to the topography of the site. Some of the more challenging and steeper lots will go to 3-storey units with an average built-up of 10,000 sq ft," says Stevie Tan, marketing manager of Gasing Meridian.

"For buyers who are keen to use their own design, we can tie them up with the architect who has worked on the site, so they will be able to start on an easier footing," he offers.

Buyers also have a choice of buying the bungalow lots to build their own bungalows provided they adhere to guidelines set by the developer and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL). Buyers are required to sign a deed of mutual covenant upon purchasing the lots to ensure that all the bungalows built follow the contemporary tropical vernacular set by the developer.

Prices for the bungalow plots ranging from 9,408 to 30,484 sq ft start from RM3.5 million. "The top ridge of Bukit Gasing, which has 270-degree views of KL and PJ, will earn a premium of RM370 per sq ft," says Leo.

So what is the time frame for buyers to construct their homes? "Once we have delivered and they [the buyers] have taken possession of their lots, we expect them to construct their houses within 24 months," says Stevie.

Leo admits that there has not been much promotional effort on the project but reveals that 20 lots have already been snapped up by buyers since the beginning of this year, mostly through word of mouth.

"The official launch will be when we have our showroom ready on site in 2012Q2. We are targeting 18 months for completion," he says.

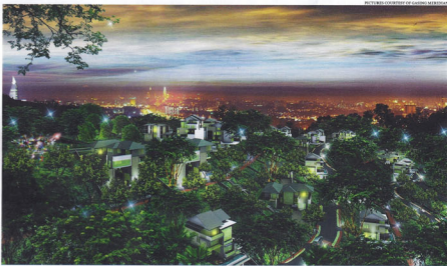
Leo describes those who have bought the lots as a "matured crowd of sophisticated local property investors, who are also looking to buy for their own stay."

"The feedback has been relatively good with an average eight or so people calling up to enquire about the lots on a weekly basis," he offers.

The developer plans to complete all the earthworks, infrastructure work and landscaping within the next 24 months and expects the project to be fully completed in five years.

Extensive studies have been conducted and vetted by authorities such as the Special Committee on Environmentally Sensitive Areas — comprising experts from Ikram (Institute Kerjasama Malaysia), Slope Engineering Branch and Department of Environment, amongst others.

In addition, procedures conducted to date include the standard penetration test, the cone recovery ratio and rock quality designation. Results of these tests match the approving criteria expressed by the relevant authori-



Above: All the bungalows are designed to follow the natural topography of each plot to ensure minimal impact on the environment

Right: Gasing Meridian director Leo Tan (right) and marketing manager Stevie Tan

Below: There are 14 designs for the bungalows, with built-ups starting from 10,000 sq ft



ties, including DBKL, Minerals and Geoscience Department, Pejabat Tanah dan Galian, Public Works Department and the National Soil Erosion Research Centre," says Leo.

Gasing Meridian is a member of Sanctuary Gasing Group, which was founded by Michael Tan, who had served as a director on the boards of several public-listed companies and a former CEO of Tongkah Holdings Bhd. He has since retired but still acts as the group's advisor. His sons Leo and Kenneth are now responsible for the development of Sanctuary Ridge



The group has been involved in residential property development since the early 1990s and has managed and overseen projects with an aggregate GDV exceeding RM2 billion both locally and overseas — spanning over 2,000 acres in Malaysia, 800 acres in the US and 1,050 acres in Australia.

Its ongoing and completed projects overseas include Morgan Hill, a 387-acre business park located between the Silicon Valley and San Francisco in North America; the Tirana Hotel ship project Sanctuary Lakes Golf Resort near the Point Cook Coastal Park and adjacent to the Skeleton Creek Wetlands in Melbourne, Australia. The development spans over 1,000 acres and houses 2,500 bungalows. In Sichuan, China, the Sanctuary Xian Hai Villas is also one of its ongoing developments.

Projects in the pipeline include residential development Huanglongxi Botanicity in Chengdu, China, which has an indicative price of RM600 to RM700 psf, and large estate vil-

las at Murray Ranch, a 500-acre former ranch site located in California's growth corridors adjacent to Silicon Valley.

In Malaysia, Sanctuary Gasing has developed Kesuma Lakes, a 1157-acre industrial and residential township in Semenyih; Kasuma Resort, a joint-venture residential project with the Sarawak Government's Land Custody and Development Authority in Kuching; and Gasing Heights Condominiums, its first project in Bukit Gasing, which is located on a 30-acre site comprising 800 units housed in three blocks.

The group is planning to embark on what it calls the Silver Fox programme within two years. It involves developing assisted-living condominiums for independent retirees in the city, where medical services are on hand for the residents and are available within a short time. Structured after a popular trend in Australia, the group plans to make on-call nursing and emergency help accessible with a touch of a button.

The group is also in negotiations to acquire more land to develop condominiums in the south of Selangor. "The federal government has done a lot of strategic planning surrounding Putrajaya and we believe that as that area develops, more people will begin to appreciate the value of a well-planned community and the benefits that entails," says Leo.