



# Recipe for success

By THERESA BELLE

THE trend of moving away from the city and into the suburbs breathes new life into previously less developed areas.

In South East Kuala Lumpur, located less than an hour's drive from the city centre, districts such as Kajang, Semenyih and Bangi are seeing increased attention from developers and property seekers.

*Property Focus: South East KL* weighs the factors contributing to the facelift of Kajang, Semenyih, Bangi and surrounding townships.

## Attractive to developers

The growing presence of major property developers plays a key role in the transformation of South East KL districts from sleepy suburbs to sustainable living hubs.

S P Setia, Tropicana Corporation, IOI Corporation, UEM Sunrise, Naza TTDI Group, Sime Darby Property, Gamuda Land, Ireka Corporation and Lum Chang Group are among the developers that build this driving force.

When asked what makes this area attractive to developers, Setia EcoHill's general manager Koh Sooi Meng explains that it is a simple matter of land

availability and housing demand.

"Not only are there ample land banks in these areas, there are actually no more big chunks of land in the city suitable for township development. At least 1,000 acres (404.7ha) are needed for a township, which can hardly be found within Kuala Lumpur or surrounding developed areas," he says.

Improved infrastructure and highway connectivity means that these areas are opened up to city dwellers, allowing them to find all necessary living amenities close to the city centre and the Klang Valley, where most business activities are centred.

"Amenities in and around the area such as malls, educational institutions and natural recreational attractions make Kajang/Semenyih townships self-contained," says Anwar Syahrin Abdul Ajib, managing director and chief executive officer of UEM Sunrise Berhad.

These residential projects will support the spillover from mass housing developments in southern Klang Valley, which includes Cheras, Ampang, Seri Kembangan, Kajang and Puchong – mature areas fast reaching full capacity.

Potential buyers come from congested areas seeking better-planned townships and this creates a great market for developers in less known suburbs.

"We believe that rapid population growth in the area is spurring the growth of Semenyih, with the current Ulu Langat district population representing about 21.2% of Selangor's total population.

"Semenyih alone has a population of 68,000 and large retail shops have opened up, adding to the area's attractiveness and boosting further growth," says Anwar.

He adds that the recurring pull for developers choosing to build here is the availability of land for development at competitive and attractive prices.

"This provides opportunities for developers to plan and develop new comprehensive and integrated townships that will cater to the growing demand for affordable and mass housing. This demand follows the recent spike in prices for landed properties in selected locations within the Klang Valley," he explains.

## All in the concept

With property development activities growing in the suburbs, future property buyers can rest assured that they will be privy to a variety of options in choosing a house, whether for dwelling or investment.

Developers do not simply sell homes, they sell concepts. The big

players have latched on to the ideals of modern homebuyers and, to many in these markets, self-contained townships offer the most bang for their buck.

"The younger generation may not have big funds to acquire property in major towns or cities. Instead, developing areas such as Semenyih provide better options within their budget.

"There is also the home upgrader who currently lives in an apartment and would like to move to a landed property to expand his family," says Koh.

Setia EcoHill, for example, attempts to provide the perfect balance between work and natural leisure with 10% of the total development reserved for green pockets and recreational parks to encourage greener community living.

## Personal haven

Buying early into new, promising townships is a common trend among new families, but the appeal is not limited to any particular demographic – in fact, Koh explains that even businessmen or retirees have displayed increasing interest in such residential developments as they enjoy the natural, serene environment where they can get away from the hustle and bustle of city life while still having access to

good infrastructure.

Anwar adds, "A township development acts as an iconic symbol for the company, as it is proof that the developer is diligent in its commitment to not just provide property, but build communities.

"Integrated developments are preferred as prospective buyers seek affordable quality developments in view of the shrinking purchasing power, but at the same time, facilities and infrastructure built within the township could boost prices given the convenience provided."

Thanks to the growth of these concept-driven township residential projects, potential owner-occupiers are able to choose their haven in Kajang, Semenyih, Bangi or the surrounding areas.

If you are wondering how to begin making this decision, remember that it all starts with research into the area of choice.

"Do some homework – study the master plan and potential development of amenities that could improve the future value of the property such as public transportation upgrades, schools, security and commercial developments.

"Also, check the developer's portfolio for successful similar projects handled by them – empirical evidence is very telling," advises Koh.

|  | Kajang   | Semenyih  | Bangi   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Approximate distance from Kuala Lumpur | 26km   | 37km  | 29km  |
| Connected via                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lebuhraya Kajang-Seremban (Lekas)</li> <li>✓ Sistem Lingkaran-Lebuhraya Kajang Sdn Bhd (SILK Highway)</li> <li>✓ Cheras-Kajang Expressway (Grandsaga)</li> <li>✓ South Klang Valley Expressway (SKVE)</li> <li>✓ North-South Expressway (PLUS)</li> </ul> |   |   |
| Educational institutions               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rafflesia International School</li> <li>✓ Eaton International School</li> <li>✓ Tanarata International School</li> <li>✓ Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur (IUKL)</li> <li>✓ Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten)</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Tenby International School</li> <li>✓ The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Greenview Islamic School</li> <li>✓ Sri Ayesha Islamic School</li> <li>✓ National University of Malaysia (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia)</li> <li>✓ German-Malaysian Institute (GMI)</li> </ul> |
| Projects                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Jade Hills</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Albury @ Mahkota Hills</li> <li>✓ Setia EcoHill &amp; Setia EcoHill 2</li> <li>✓ Serene Heights</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bandar Baru Bangi</li> <li>✓ Southville City</li> <li>✓ Bandar Seri Putra</li> </ul>   |
| Upcoming developments                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sungai Buloh-Kajang MRT Line – Expected completion: July 2017</li> <li>✓ East Klang Valley Expressway (EKVE) – Expected completion: 2019</li> </ul>   |   |   |

