

# Plan to rent out Bandar M'sia land

NGOs want former Sungai Besi airbase to benefit B40, M40 communities

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OWNERS of Bandar Malaysia are seeking to rent part of the former TUDM airbase land in Sungai Besi temporarily to a theme park operator to avoid leaving the site vacant, says Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

A senior officer, who declined to be named, said Bandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd was seeking to lease the land for 15 years, but added that this was a temporary solution to ensure the land remained in use.

"The owners want to avoid leaving the land idle, which is why they have opted to rent it temporarily to a theme park operator," said DBKL.

However, this has met with criticism from nearby residents who expressed concern about increased congestion and potential environmental issues arising from the theme park's presence.

Some residents had purchased properties nearby with the understanding that Bandar Malaysia's urban development was imminent.

On Nov 1, DBKL put out a notice in print media inviting views from registered landowners after it received an application for planning permission for a mixed development proposal by Sim Leisure Escape Sdn Bhd at the former airbase.

Stakeholders have until Nov 15



Sim: It is all about adventure and outdoor education.

to voice their objections, said the notice issued under Federal Territory (Planning) Act 1982.

According to the notice, the theme park will feature adventure rides, related facilities and accommodation like bungalows, terrace houses and apartments.

Anthony Tan, a 1Razak Mansion resident, has mixed feelings about the project.

"While it will create a new tourism destination for Kuala Lumpur, I am concerned about the traffic build-up," he said.

He pointed out that past events held at the former airbase, such as concerts and races, had caused severe traffic jam on the North-South Highway.

"Noise from these events can be heard at our residences, sometimes past 1am," he said.

Save Kuala Lumpur chairman Datuk M. Ali said the project seemed likely to exacerbate existing issues including traffic congestion.

"Why not use this prime location to create a public park?



Aerial view of Bandar Malaysia site, with Razak City Residence to the left of the airstrip and 1Razak Mansion next to it. — GLENN GUAN/The Star

"A central green lung with plenty of trees and foliage would benefit everyone, from the B40 to M40 communities.

"It should be made accessible with an MRT station so everyone could enjoy it.

"We missed an opportunity to create a 'Hyde Park' at the old race course on Jalan Ampang; now it is just concrete.

"Let us not make that mistake again. This (Sungai Besi) land could be turned into a valuable green space," he said.

Kuala Lumpur Residents Action for Sustainable Development Association chairman Tan Boo Charn said, "This deserves a comprehensive study by all stakeholders to ensure it becomes a liveable space.

"We hope DBKL can share more information on the Master Development Plan, especially regarding public facilities, infrastructure, transport links, road access and traffic management.

"How wonderful it would be if

this space were turned into a Central Park like New York's – full of nature, trees, lakes and a balanced ecosystem for KL."

Sim Leisure Group Ltd founder and executive chairman Datuk Sim Choo Kheng clarified that the project was not a theme park but an adventure park, similar to the one it runs in Penang.

"There are no roller coasters. It is all about adventure and outdoor education.

"The park is located on a hill near the jungle, far from any residential areas.

"It will occupy the disused grounds of the old airbase, so we won't have any neighbours close by," he said.

Sim said the company wouldn't be demolishing anything but would repurpose old buildings and plant trees.

On traffic concerns, he said, "We are next to the highway, avoiding residential areas altogether, so traffic won't be an issue."

Former Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) engineer Balachandran Naicker voiced concerns about the site's ability to support development.

"This is a natural floodplain. Any change to its character must be carefully engineered.

"A thorough drainage plan is crucial, given that any development will increase rainwater runoff.

"DBKL should require a mix of green and grey infrastructure – green solutions like detention ponds allow water to seep into the ground, while grey infrastructure such as concrete drains simply channels water away quickly without the same sustainability benefits," he said.

Last year, during Budget 2024 announcement, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government wished to ensure that the strategically located land was optimally used for community-focused projects.