

URBAN REGENERATION ISSUES OF SECTION 13 PETALING JAYA

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URBAN REGENERATION ISSUES OF SECTION 13, PETALING JAYA

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For my beloved family especially my late father, Prof Ir. Haron b. Ismail
and my one true love...

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Verily, along with every hardship is relief (Verse 6: Surah Ash-Sharh)

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ABSTRACT

The evolvement of urban regeneration dates back to the 1950s when the idea of urban reconstruction surfaced, strategizing for the reconstruction and extension of older areas of towns and cities..In the perspective of town planners, urban regeneration is a land redevelopment activity meant to enhance areas of less economic use lacking in infrastructure and amenities which are often dilapidated or abandoned. In pursuant to that, this study aims to **study the issues on urban regeneration in Section 13 Petaling Jaya** by studying the current mechanism practiced for urban regeneration and the key issues pertaining to urban regeneration which will aid in formulating suggestions to improve the present practice of urban regeneration towards a more sustainable future. The study analyzed data collected through research, observation and small focus group interviews of 12 respondents comprising of land owners/tenants of Section 13, government personnels, planning professionals and community representatives forming a comparative analysis between the changes that have taken place in Section 13 before and after the urban regeneration activity in addition to statistical analysis on the opinions and perceptions on those changes and method used. Although it has been analyzed that the mechanism for urban regeneration of Section 13 Petaling Jaya using *Rancangan Kawasan Khas Seksyen 13* is in place and effective, it is costly and time consuming to prepare, difficult in getting collective responds and faced coordination issues within the working group. Suitable suggestions focusing to address these issues to further improve the current practice of urban regeneration shall include grant schemes and project bidding, local emphasis focused towards equal benefits, social sustainability and effective consultation.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan Penjanaaan Semula Bandar pada 1950-an apabila timbulnya idea pembangunan semula bandar melalui pembentukan strategi bagi pembangunan semula kawasan lama bandar. Dalam perspektif perancang bandar, penjanaaan semula bandar merupakan aktiviti pembangunan semula kawasan-kawasan yang kurang berekonomi, kekurangan infrastruktur dan kemudahan atau kawasan-kawasan usang atau yang ditinggalkan. Selaras dengan itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk **mengkaji isu-isu berkaitan dengan penjanaaan semula bandar bagi kawasan Seksyen 13, Petaling Jaya** dengan mengkaji mekanisma yang diamalkan serta isu-isu utama berkaitan penjanaaan semula bandar bagi merumuskan cadangan untuk memperbaiki amalan semasa penjanaaan semula bandar ke arah pembangunan mapan. Kajian mengambilkira analisa maklumat melalui penyelidikan, pemerhatian serta temuramah kumpulan fokus sebanyak 12 responden; terdiri daripada pemilik/penyewa tanah Seksyen 13, kakitangan kerajaan, profesional perancang bandar dan wakil-wakil penduduk bagi membentuk analisa perbandingan antara perubahan yang berlaku sebelum dan selepas aktiviti penjanaaan semula bandar termasuk analisa statistik berkaitan pendapat dan persepsi responden terhadap perubahan-perubahan dan kaedah yang telah digunapakai. Walaupun Rancangan Kawasan Khas Seksyen 13 merupakan mekanisma yang efektif dan lengkap, ia memerlukan sumber kewangan dan masa yang banyak, sukar mendapatkan maklumbalas yang sepakat daripada tanah pemilik / penyewa serta mempunyai isu-isu penyelarasan dalam kumpulan kerja. Sehubungan dengan itu, cadangan yang diberikan akan tertumpu kepada menangani isu-isu tersebut yang merangkumi skim geran dan bidaan projek, penekanan terhadap keperluan tempatan ke arah manfaat sejagat, kemampanan sosial dan kaedah rundingan yang berkesan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GBI	Green Building Index
GFA	Gross Floor Area
ISF	Infrastructure and Services Fund
JPBD	<i>Jabatan Perancang Bandar dan Desa</i>
JPPH	<i>Jabatan Penilaian dan Perkhidmatan Harta</i>
PROTEM	Pro tempore (for the time being)
MBPJ	Majlis Bandaraya Petaling Jaya
MPPJ	Majlis Perbandaran Petaling Jaya
MIP	Malaysian Institute of Planners
NFA	Nett Floor Area
RKK	<i>Rancangan Kawasan Khas</i>
RTPJ 1	<i>Rancangan Tempatan Petaling Jaya 1</i>
RTPJ 2	<i>Rancangan Tempatan Petaling Jaya 2</i>
sqft	Squarefeet

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The terms ‘Urban Redevelopment’, ‘Urban Revitalization’, ‘Urban Renewal’ and ‘Urban Regeneration’ are becoming synonymous with town planning in Malaysia; putting great emphasis on urban areas. In 2007, a report published by the United Nations revealed that Africa and Asia is expected to have an average increase of 1 million people per week in urban areas. This population increase demands for careful and comprehensive planning especially city centres in order to cater for the needs and demand towards sustainable development.

Unsurprisingly, the focal in realizing sustainable development is urban areas as they are more resource-efficient compared to rural areas (Bennett & Patel, 1995). In a recent report, ‘The State of The World’s Cities 2012/2013’ by UN Habitat, Malaysia’s level of urbanization in 2010 was at 72.2% with a projected increase to 78.5% by the year 2020 and subsequently 82.2% in the year 2030. With each passing day that Malaysia becomes more urbanized, urban issues becomes inevitable; flood, solid waste management, traffic congestion and affordable housing are common headlines pertaining to urban areas in Klang Valley.

In parallel with the surface of urban issues, 'planning doctrines' have been introduced as remedy from time to time such as 'Urban Renewal', 'Smart Growth', 'Transit Oriented Development' and so on. In summary though, all these examples orientate towards achieving a common objective; to achieve sustainable development. As a rapidly developing country with almost 80% urbanization level, the management of resources for development particularly land should be emphasized through an integrated physical and land use planning and management. This in turn, may aid in minimizing conflicts while ensuring more efficient trade-offs which integrates social and economic development with environmental protection.

As greenfields are becoming scarce and old developed areas become unviable, more emphasis are being put in redeveloping brownfield areas. Selangor for example, has identified 2,375 hectares of land for regeneration and redevelopment purposes with 1,672 hectares being within Petaling Jaya particularly old industrial areas (Petaling Jaya, Klang, Ampang Jaya and Kajang have been earmarked for redevelopment: The Star, 1st December 2009). Although urban regeneration has been mentioned over the years with notable examples of River Thames, Langham Place and False Creek, there still seems to be no single definite terminology or method for by Roberts & Sykes (2000) mentioned, "Urban regeneration is widely experienced but little understood phenomenon". Some may define urban regeneration as the process of reversing the economic, social and physical decay in cities which can no longer depend on market forces alone (Adair *et al.*, 1998) and others may define it as a 'concept' involving comprehensive land development programmes encompassing the economic, physical, management and social aspects. Roberts & Sykes (2000) however, defines urban regeneration as follows:

“Comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change”

The term 'vision and action' however, is very broad. Past practices have shown that urban regeneration takes various forms amongst are; Special Area Plan, Masterplan and so on. Although Malaysia has practised urban regeneration for example KL Sentral, Sentul East, Section 13 and so on, urban regeneration in Malaysia is still considered to be in it's infant stage (Nilaiharta, 2013). This aside, urban regeneration is still considered a necessity in the promotion of sustainable development particularly for the fact that it may aid many deprived areas suffering environmental problems regain it's value and be self-sustaining by promoting economic activities and preventing business outflow in inner cities by making the areas more attractive to live in (Bennett & Patel, 1995).

The enactment of Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172) emphasized the use of development plans as medium of development control and promote good land use management within the Peninsular. Although indirectly associated, development plan particularly special area plan is also one of the tools for urban regeneration given its' detailed nature of policies and plan which fulfills the strategic and spatial needs for an urban regeneration activity. However, conformity between land use development with planning documents has been constantly emphasized through a complex mix of legislative and institutional conditions and processes and 'dominant planning ideology of the day' (Shamsudin, 2003). As such, study on the Urban Regeneration in Section 13, Petaling Jaya may provide understanding on how urban regeneration involving landuse and density changes may be done through the use of Special Area Plan as well as issues involved in the process.

1.2 Problem Statement

As land becomes scarce particularly urban land, there is an increase in redevelopment activities being engaged throughout the world, targeting to optimize the urban land in order to cater for the growing demand for a better lifestyle quality, better infrastructures and job opportunities. Although the practice of urban regeneration has

surfaced since the 1990s (Peter & Hugh, 2000), there's still lack in understanding the basic fundamentals of urban regeneration (Roberts & Sykes, 2000). Since local issues varies from place to place, thus issues addressed through urban regeneration too varies as can be seen through different studies of urban regeneration with different urban regeneration 'definitions' often based on issues such as economic land value and optimizing land use for urban areas. The basics of urban regeneration however should remain towards providing a sustainable development as has been the commitment given during the World Summit in 1992.

In an article by Bennett & Patel (1995), 'Sustainable Regeneration Strategies', it has been identified that despite the outlined sustainable development framework, urban regeneration and sustainable development aspects are often not integrated with one another where the practice of urban regeneration has been formerly emphasized in the provision of infrastructures and job creation. In addition, the lack of government funding is also a major constraint in integrating urban regeneration initiatives with sustainable development aspects particularly in intergenerational equity, public consultation and carrying capacity.

The comprehensiveness of an urban regeneration initiative is also in question with environmental considerations often being treated as trade-offs between objectives to pursue economic development and employment opportunities for the local community instead. Furthermore, the current urban regeneration policies often face 5 major issues depicting it's loosely sewn policies and programmes which includes; the definition of problems and scale of response, the fragmentation of policy and lack of coordination, the lack of long-term strategic approach, the over-reliance on property led regeneration and finally managerialism and the burden of bureaucracy.

In the case of Malaysia, most urban regeneration takes place through master planning as per projects such as KL Sentral and Sentul City in Kuala Lumpur. However, Petaling Jaya has utilized *Rancangan Kawasan Khas* (RKK) or Special Area Plan as per provision under Clause 16b of Town and Country Planning Act (Act 172) as means to

carry out urban regeneration in Section 13, Petaling Jaya. This gazetted development plan different in nature, process and implementation as a master plan is the sole example of urban regeneration activity in Petaling Jaya that utilizes a gazette document. As such, there is a need to understand the impact, process and issues in urban regeneration activity through the use of a Special Area Plan.

The study of urban regeneration implementation in Section 13 Petaling Jaya through the use of Special Area Plan for Section 13, Petaling Jaya (Rancangan Kawasan Khas Seksyen 13, Petaling Jaya) may provide better understanding on the professional aims which should be aspired as well as the multitude of constraints which are faced in urban regeneration through RKK which includes getting responds, resource implications and strategic policies in addressing urban issues pertaining to Section 13 including outmigration, environmental quality, demand for other types of landuses and viability of an industrial area within a city centre.

1.3 Study Goal

To Study the Urban Regeneration Activity for an Old Industrial Area in Section 13, Petaling Jaya

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the current practice of Urban Regeneration in Petaling Jaya?
- ii. What are the issues pertaining to Urban Regeneration in Petaling Jaya?
- iii. What are the possible improvements to the current practice of Urban Regeneration in Petaling Jaya?

1.5 Scope of Study

The study will focus on the current practice of Urban Regeneration in Section 13, Petaling Jaya which is an old industrial estate as it is the only area to undergo urban regeneration through Special Area Plan. Two major items shall be given emphasis for this study; the issues pertaining to the current practice of Urban Regeneration and the opportunities/potentials for improvement.

In doing so, understanding of the Urban Regeneration shall be the key item which shall include definition, brief evolution and the current local practice in Malaysia. In addition, the aspect of sustainability in context of Urban Regeneration shall also be digested to provide a brief assessment on the sustainability of the current practice. Finally, strategies to further improve the current practice shall be formulated based on the issues identified and literature study on Urban Regeneration.

As in any other study, study limitations or constraints is unavoidable. Due to time constraints, limited issues shall be discussed which mainly shall intend to address the most prominent issues pertaining to the current practice of urban regeneration in Section 13 Petaling Jaya which includes lack of responds, resource implications and strategic policies to address urban issues such as outmigration, environmental quality and demands for other types of landuses. In addition to that, interviews shall be done to collect information pertaining to the issues instead of questionnaire survey which will take longer to be tabulated and analyzed given the fact that the study area is 195.9 acres in size with more than 90 lots at present.

1.6 Rationale of Study

The study encompasses urban regeneration implemented through the use of Special Area Plan (RKK Seksyen 13) as per provision 16B of Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172) particularly for Section 13, Petaling Jaya which is an old industrial area. The RKK Seksyen 13 is formed with the aim to revitalize the existing industrial development which is seen to be no longer 'viable' within the city.

The process of formulation to gazettelement of RKK Seksyen 13 took approximately 13 years to complete (gazetted on 27th May 2010). As such there's a need to identify issues and problems not only related to the delay but also the extent of success of the RKK Seksyen 13 to the present site condition and the sustainability of the urban regeneration implied as well as the viability of RKK Seksyen 13 as a tool for urban regeneration. These findings will not only provide better understanding to the local practice of urban regeneration but also aid in formulating strategies for improvement and viability of use for future urban regeneration activities.

1.7 Flow of Study

Prior to any study, a structured methodology shall be formulated to organize the study which is to be undertaken. In doing such, the use of flowchart is essential to illustrate the tiers involved and relationship between those tiers and as a summary to the study methodology (as shown in Figure 1.1). For this study, six tiers have been identified for the study methodology as will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.7.1 Preliminary Understanding

Preliminary understanding is the first tier preceding any kind of study. References to articles, books and journals shall provide facts and figures leading to theories. It is through the preliminary understanding that the research problem may be identified. Thus, the study goal, objectives and scope may be determined.

After determining the basis for the study, the relevant case study can be selected. Justification of the selected case study is also being elaborated to further support its' relevance to the study. This is embedded in Chapter 1: Introduction.

1.7.2 Theoretical Study & Understanding

The next tier is the literature review which is included in Chapter 2. The purpose of literature review is to provide firm understanding of the necessary aspects involved in the study undertaken; in this case; Urban Regeneration. This shall be followed by the current practice of Urban Regeneration in Malaysia with much emphasize in Section 13, Petaling Jaya; an old industrial area which has gone thru the process of Urban Regeneration. The given elaboration in turn will be related to the research problem. As will be seen throughout this study, the literature review is also used to generate the suitable general criteria of assessment and provide supportive information for the following analysis and suggestions. Chapter 3 shall then provide information to the case study area including general information, landuse and activities.

1.7.3 Study Methodology

Study methodology will discuss on the selected method used in the study which shall be a part of Chapter 3. The study methodology will elaborate on means of achieving the study goal and study objectives while simultaneously keeping within the study scope. Clarification and the rationale of the method used are also discussed. This basically includes the structure of research design and the method of analysis. The criteria used for the purpose of study analysis shall also be discussed pertaining to the aspect of urban regeneration for the particular study site.

1.7.4 Data Collection

Data collection for analysis relates closely to the study methodology used. For this study, data collection is gained via 3 main methods namely; interviews, observation and comparative study. The primary data shall be from interviews and the secondary data for the analysis will be taken from the comparative study.

i) Interviews (primary data)

Data was collected by visiting and interviewing individuals in 4 main sectors which is the local government as the implementer/initiator, the private sector as the planning consultants, the land owners/tenants in the case study area and the community representatives.

In the government sector, materials such as pamphlets and reports were acquired from the Planning Department for the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ). As for the private sector an interview session with AJC Planning Consultant as the main consultant involved in the formulation of Special Area Plan Section 13 was done and representing the Section 13 study area is representative of the PROTEM for

Section 13 from major land owners in Section 13. Finally the community representatives shall be from the adjacent residential community and Councilor (Ahli Majlis) in charge of Section 13.

ii) Observation

Observation is done on the study area of Section 13, Petaling Jaya to understand the current condition of the study area and the visible issues present on study area and its' immediate surrounding areas.

iii) Comparative Research (secondary data)

Research shall be based on comparing the current documents, plans used as the implementation medium in urban regeneration of Section 13 Petaling Jaya with resources on best practices and principles of urban regeneration. The cross reference shall provide ideal solution and suggestions on issues which is presently overlooked or ill addressed within the current urban regeneration framework.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis shall be done by cross referencing between the current practice of urban regeneration method, the issues that hampers the current implementation of urban regeneration as well as issues that arise from the current urban regeneration practiced with the core and principles as well as best practices of urban regeneration which have been studied throughout the years. The method of analysis will be discussed in detail within the study methodology in Chapter 3.



Figure 1.1: Flowchart of study methodology

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