



## Strata Development in Sarawak

Reported by Ar. Chai Si Yong

During the meeting with MUDeNR in November 2020, PAMSC was tasked to work together with MIP Sarawak to come out with a proposal on strata development in Sarawak. PAMSC took this opportunity to have a dialogue session with members on 17 November 2020 to collect feedback & issues faced by members on strata development in Sarawak.

The topics discussed during the dialogue covers:

- Minimum land size for a strata development
- Maximum density control
- Height control
- Typology of strata development (Apartments, serviced apartments, SOHO, offices, commercial & etc.)
- Service road requirements
- Building length
- Public amenities/facilities
- Parking requirements
- Open space/sustom requirements
- Strata management regulations
- Determination of parcel's boundaries

It was a fruitful dialogue. PAMSC is attending the coming seminar organised by RISM Sarawak on 9 Dec 2020 to further understand the implementation on Strata (Subsidiary Titles) Ordinance, 2019 & Strata Management Ordinance 2019.

Please stay tuned with us for updates on this matter. If you have any queries or suggestions, please write to us at [info@pamsc.org.my](mailto:info@pamsc.org.my).

## PAM Practice Bureau Launched!

Reported by Ar. Chai Si Yong

PAM Practice Bureau is a digital platform for PAM members to submit any practice related queries to the PAM Professional Practice Committee (PPC). These queries will be forwarded to the dedicated panel of PPC to assist in responding to members. With these collected data, PPC will be able to compile and categorised it into useful Practice Notes & FAQs for the dissemination to all PAM members.

PAM Sarawak Chapter is represented in the panel of PPC. We hope to embrace the synergy of Practice Bureau to benefit our professional practices in Sarawak.

For more info, please log in to PAM website at:

<http://www.pam.org.my/practice/practice/pam-practice-bureau.html>

Or access the e-Inquiry Form here:

<https://form.jotform.com/202678553456060>

For more info about PAM Practice Notes:

<http://www.pam.org.my/practice/practice/practice-notes.html>



# ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION 1.4 (CHALLENGING THE BRIEF)

This is the fourth instalment in our series of articles based on our observations as industry assessors at design crits to discuss:

1. What we observe at the review sessions
2. What we would like to see the students do differently
3. What the school/ profession can do to enhance the learning experience

We divided the articles into various categories based on the marking criteria commonly found in architecture schools. We have covered the first category, which is RESEARCH and are now at DESIGN, divided into the following sub-headings:

- critical response
- innovation
- context
- development
- compliance with regulations

In this article, we will discuss Critical Response and Innovation, and contrast it with Compliance with regulations, which is a subject that requires its own careful response. Tip the scales too heavily towards Compliance with Regulations.

## CRITICAL RESPONSE

When the student is given a project brief, he should understand that this is a catalogue of requirements (usually physical) and wish-list items (usually emotive), which he can (and should) challenge. More teachers can encourage this type of critical response; to dissect and re-construct the brief.

An example:

In April 2016, the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) announced that it was seeking an architect for an 'innovative and exciting' (emotive requirements) temporary visitor centre at Hill House in Helensburgh. The project which was scheduled for completion in 2017 will boost visitor numbers and overhaul 'outdated' facilities at the Charles Rennie Mackintosh-designed landmark. The building also suffers from water ingress and a significant restoration programme is expected to see the entire landmark surrounded by scaffolding in the future.

According to the brief: 'We wish to appoint an architect to design a statement temporary building which complements the Hill House and which is so exciting in itself that it significantly raises the profile of the property and increases visitor numbers to the site.' The new building will include an admissions area, shop, kitchen, toilets, offices and interpretation displays. (physical requirements).

\*1

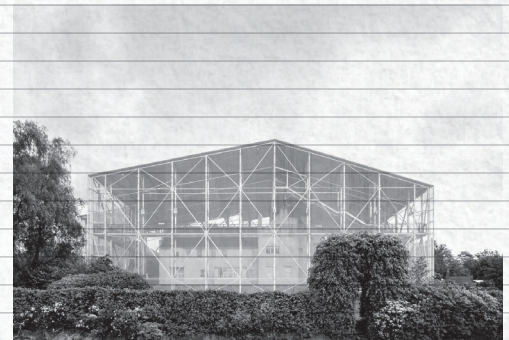
Applicants must submit a single-page narrative confirming their interest in the project and detailing their design approach and previous experience. Selected applicants will then be invited to tender before a shortlist is drawn up for interviews. \*2

Note to students:

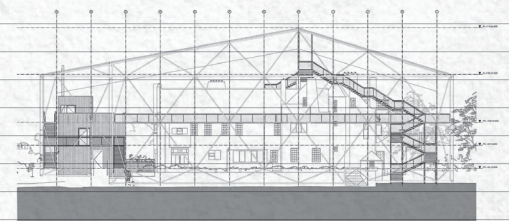
1. Briefs ought to be challenged and questioned; otherwise, you will end with a studio of similar design schemes like obedient children afraid to speak out.
2. See how concise the entry criteria are for such a key project; strong design ideas are often easy to explain and understand. Often the scheme is given a name, which aptly sums up its intent, or outlook.



*The Hill House in Helensburgh by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.*



*The winning entry was from Carmody Groarke treated the restoration process and the Hill House as a museum artefact.*



*A huge, abstracted garden pavilion whose walls are covered entirely with a stainless-steel chain-mail mesh.*



*An elevated walkway which loops around and over the Hill House provides a remarkable visitor experience.*



## CRITICAL RESPONSE + INNOVATION

The winning entry was from **Carmody Groarke**; a London-based architectural practice founded in 2006 by Kevin Carmody and Andy Groarke. Instead of designing a visitors' centre as the brief called for, they opted instead to design a huge, abstracted garden pavilion whose walls are covered entirely with a stainless-steel chain-mail mesh. This semi-permanent enclosure provides a basic 'drying-room' shelter to the original house whilst its rain-soaked existing construction is slowly repaired. This delicate enclosure also allows uninterrupted views, night-and-day, to-and-from the landscape to Mackintosh's architectural icon.

The Hill Box (as the scheme was called), would provide a safe, sheltered construction working territory, the "museum" will provide a remarkable public visitor experience of the conservation in progress, achieved by an elevated walkway which loops around and over the Hill House at high level.

### *Note to students*

*Despite seemingly going against the brief, the winning scheme nonetheless fulfilled many of the requirements of the brief, by the introduction of a 'game-changer' - which was to treat the restoration process and the Hill House as a museum artefact.*

Imagine if we had carried out a similar exercise with the recent Sarawak Museum restoration, and be able to look up-close at different levels of this local landmark, and continue to visit the exhibits by peering through the windows. Moreover, if we charge the visitors, this means that the museum is already earning its keep with undergoing restorations.

## CRITICAL RESPONSE + INNOVATION + COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

Another example:

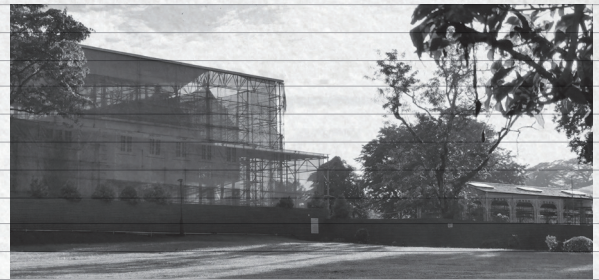
**MVRDV's Wozoco** (1994 - 1997) is located in a garden city west of Amsterdam. It is a building of 100 homes for the elderly; its extravagant profile was a result of a zoning regulation, which limited the number of apartments per block to 87 units. This was to ensure that each tenant was promised good natural lighting.

When the client requested for 100 units per block, it was clear that the additional 13 units would have to occupy another floor - yet another constraint the client wanted to fight. A half-joking solution, presented at the first meeting suggested that the additional units were 'glued' to the outer side of the main building volume drew surprising attention. The client saw the potential and MVRDV rose to the challenge... and the 13 additional units were cantilevered from the side of the main structure. WoZoCo continues to be a favorite amongst architectural enthusiasts (including members of our PAMSC study tour group) who travel to the Western Garden Cities to see the 'hanging houses of Amsterdam'.

### *Note to students*

*Obstacles and constraints sometimes work to the design's advantage, for us to come up with solutions that surprise our clients, the end-users and even ourselves.*

by Min



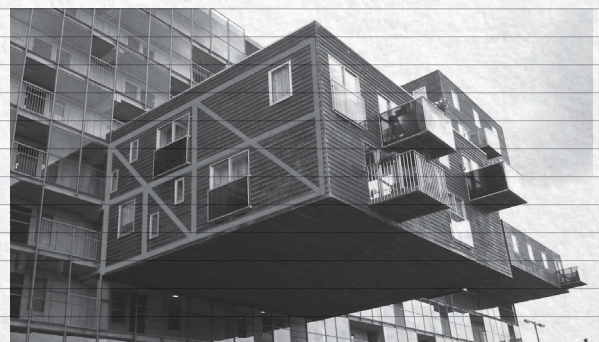
*Sarawak Museum Restoration - under wraps.*



*MVRDV's Wozoco - its extravagant profile was a result of a zoning regulation.*



*A half-joking solution suggested that the additional units were 'glued' to the outer side of the main building.*



*Structure is hidden inside the main block, found under the wood sheathing.*

### *Reference:*

<https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/competitions>  
<https://www.carmodygroarke.com>  
<https://www.mvrdv.nl/projects/>



# Introducing Brendan Tong

## - our new Co-Chair of Education, Graduate & BIM 2020-2021

*In an attempt to introduce our hardworking PAMSC committee members, - we will be conducting a series of interviews with them and sharing them with our readers over the next few issues.*

I: Tell us a bit about yourself.

A: Call me Brendan. Seriously, if you see me on the street, call me. I'm terrible at remembering faces.

I was born and bred in Sibu, and I studied architecture at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Fresh out of uni, I worked at a heritage consultancy in Melbourne before coming back to Sibu to work at a local firm. Two years later, I was offered a job at JKR Sarawak, and there I remained for the past five years.

I: Why did you study architecture?

A: I got hooked on architecture because I liked to doodle. Don't judge me, I was only twelve.

That said, as I progressed through architectural school and onwards to my career, I found that being an architect is more than just putting dreams to paper. It's a multi-faceted job, and it requires one to be an artist, a planner, a manager, an auditor and most importantly, a psychic.

Once I got the knack of it, I realised that I love being an architect, and I have never regretted becoming one.

I: Was university or work life tougher?

A: In university, we were conditioned to work crazy hours, deliver impossible targets and face unreasonable judgments. So I guess it's just like a typical day in the office now.

Tough is such a subjective term. I find that in a positive environment, with the right amount of passion and determination, and to an extent great company of classmates or colleagues, I don't find the going that tough. Sure I had my bad days both in school and at work, but overall I enjoyed them all just the same.

I: Tell us a bit more about your current work.

A: Whenever I tell people that I work in JKR, they will say "oh must be nice because you do not need to work so hard, and you get to go home on time". That may be true a long time ago, but these days we hardly have time to catch our breath. On my own I handled fifteen consultancy based projects and five in-house projects at the same time.

That said, we do get to go home on time, 95% of the time.

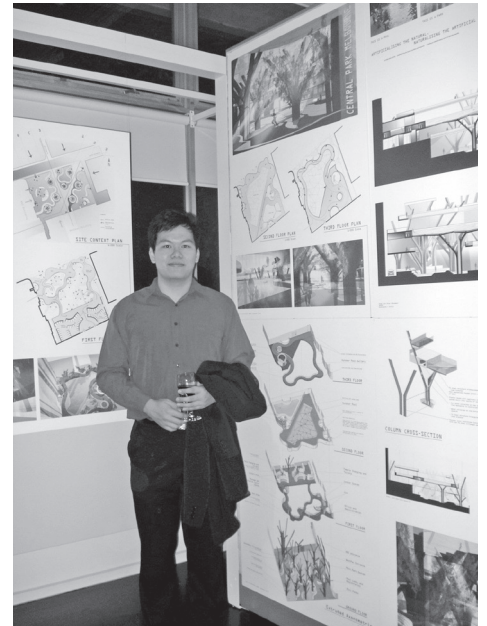
I will never hesitate to recommend young architects to join the service. Working in JKR allowed me to have a go at a rich variety of typologies, and presented opportunities to both learn and explore grandiose ideas that actually impact lives and welfares of the community at large.

After five (5) years in JKR Headquarters, I have now been given an opportunity to head the Regional Design Team in Sibu.

I: What made you join PAM, and follow up to that, what made you join the PAM Committee?

A: I joined PAM in 2015 when I moved from Sibu to Kuching, initially just to make new friends.

When I was ready to take my Part 3 examinations, PAMSC provided invaluable resources and access to West Malaysian sourced trainings. Small wonder then, upon passing my examinations on first try, I felt inclined to pay it forward to the new generation of like-minded graduates. So here I am.



*My work on display at the Hon Evan Walker Exhibition in Melbourne, 2010.*



*Presenting my Exam Answers to PAM Graduates, PAMSC Centre, 2018.*



One of my works, the new Dalat Waterfront in Mukah, due completion in October 2020.

I: What do you aspire to achieve as a PAM Committee member?

A: Our Chairman expressed interest in developing an Outreach Initiative to all corners of our vast state. Since I have now been posted to Sibul, I intend to build on that idea. Whilst working in Sibul years back, I felt disenfranchised by the lack of accessibility to PAM events, and I'm sure many architects in Sibul still feel the same. Interestingly, when I settled in Kuching, I found out to my amusement that our peers in Kuching feel the same of events in KL.

Since then, PAMSC has made great strides in bridging the gap in the latter, and introduced many exciting staple CPD events that were once unique only to KL.

I hope to see the same thing happen in Sibul. With the rapid adoption of online based events, I see it as a very achievable goal. I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to fellow architects in Sibul, Sarikei, Mukah and Bintulu. I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to fellow like minded architects, graduates and enthusiasts in Sibul, Sarikei, Mukah and Bintulu. Do drop me a line or two at [tongbrendan.bina@gmail.com](mailto:tongbrendan.bina@gmail.com) and let's get the party rolling.

I: Tell us a bit about your life outside of work and PAMSC.

A: After work, I dabble in catering. I cater to the whims and fancies of my year-old daughter.

That aside, I am an avid car enthusiast and a casual sportsman. I enjoy the occasional jog, hike, swim, golf, badminton, and food hunting.

I: Do you have pets?

A: No, but now that I have a child, I'm pretty sure I will be contractually bound to get one eventually.

I: Do you think you have a good work-life balance?

A: Yes, I guess that's an advantage to working in the government: your boss may ask the world of you but it's the security guard who decides when the door should be locked.

That said, I never tire in reminding my friends that life starts after five. The work will always be there, the treasured moments with family and friends are a lot more fleeting.

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