



When Resilience Meets Brilliance: Exploring Weathering Steel Performance and Architectural Finesse through Sarawak Case Studies

Reported by Ar. Lau Chun Leong



Date : 27th January 2024 (Saturday)

Time : 8.30am-1.00pm

Venue : Sheraton Hotel Kuching

NS Bluescope Malaysia had organized their Technical & Design Talk in Kuching on the 27th January 2024 at the new landmark Sheraton Hotel Kuching.

The talk started with a welcoming speech by their Vice President of Marketing, Mr. Ken Wong where he introduced the company briefly.

The floor was then passed to the first speaker of the day, Mr Jack Chum, the technical marketing manager of NS Bluescope Malaysia. He introduced the type of coating and the strength of their products compared to other similar products.

The 2nd speaker is Ms Christy Tan, the Associate Director of Aki Media. She is the project architect for the new Kuching landmark, Sheraton Hotel Kuching. She explained about the design progress of this hotel and some of the challenges they faced during the construction period.

The talk was attended by 99 participants. 4 CPD Points have been approved for the event.



4 Nations Live Design Discourse Workshop 2023

Chapter 3 : The Workshop

Contributed by Ar. Brendan Tong, with the assistance of Ar. Goh Tze Hui

The Live Design Discourse (LDD) Workshop was initiated by Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM) and endorsed during the 2017 Tri - Nations meeting in Bangkok. The LDD aims to bring together the architectural students and young practitioners of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, and foster an exchange of ideas in a bid to strengthen the ties of the four South East Asian architectural communities. The workshop venue is rotated between the countries, and for every session, the students are separately assigned to one of four groups, and the practitioners assigned to each group as mentors. They are then given a short timeframe to develop a design response to a project brief and a site.

For Malaysia's turn at the workshop for the year 2023, Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM), being the organizer, requested for its Sarawak Chapter (PAMSC) to co - organize the event, with Kuching nominated as the venue. The convenors of the event, Ar. Goh Tze Hui and Ar. Brendan Tong, proceeded to put together a brief that designated Kenyalang Park as a backdrop to the design proposals.



Kenyalang Park was initially envisaged by Borneo Development Corporation of the late 1960s as a pioneer model for an affordable housing development module positioned at the fringe of Kuching city. The approximately 130 acres development hosted low cost housing developments primarily in the terraced typology, interwoven with an efficient footpaths connecting the houses to commercial arenas, offices, markets, green spaces, and unique public facilities like a Dinosaur themed public park and an educational traffic garden.

There were a few notable features unique to the development, with some bearing positive testaments to time, while others being less successful in their ageing progress. The development celebrated the challenging topography and terraneous surfaces by sensitively carving intrinsic public spaces into the opportunistic geography, resulting in naturally beautiful landscaped parks, gardens and even storm drains. These spaces remain opportunistic to modern interventions, with local consultant Arkitek JFN Sdn Bhd interjecting new urban and social installations such as the Entrance Pavilion and the Rainbow Bridge to further celebrate the topography.

On the flipside, the 3m wide lanes connecting some of the house frontages is now an inconvenience to the vehicular adaptability of the houses. The designers of old had never envisaged that the economically oriented residences will eventually need to host more cars than bedrooms. The rapid growth surrounding the development, effectively enveloping the area into the inner city fabric of Metropolitan Kuching, further complicated the issues through its integration with densely accessed trunk roads. With more cars come more people, and vice activities crept into the previously quaint neighborhood. This subsequently led to knee-jerk solutions to resolve the issue, such as the gating of public spaces, the segregation of a previously contiguous pedestrian network, and ultimately, the disintegration of the socially oriented urban fabric.



Perhaps the most unfortunate to befall the development was a consequence common to many developments initiated in the 60s and 70s. The commercial spaces enjoyed sounding popularity well into the 80s. It was the quintessential mall of Kuching before the shopping malls as we know today existed. It had a cinema and it had markets. Some may even argue it had the vibe of an English High Street. But it has stagnated. The old shops survive on the steadily dwindling long term customers. The arena has become out of place in the modern market, and it is rapidly outpaced by modern means of commerce. As it descended into a less desirable locality, illegal extensions sprouted out in almost inconceivable ways and manners. The brutalist shops were allowed to deform, decay or be left derelict. And like the infrastructure, the population ages in stride with no sustainable means of replenishment or rejuvenation.



All matters aside, the potential of Kenyalang Park is hard to be overlooked. For a start, the strategic position of Kenyalang Park as part of the inner layer of Kuching City allows it to retain the infinite potential to be rejuvenated as a high traffic commercial hotspot. Adding to this is a resurgence in enthusiasm for curbside commercial spaces, made all the more popular since the Covid times. Nostalgia further fuels the evergreen interest to return the spaces to its much glorified heydays. Much of the landscape treatments have also remained intact, and it has become a positive anomaly in the overtly urbanized fabric of greater Kuching. This is further accentuated by the conscious attempts of the local residents to cultivate lush gardens around their houses, and the adoption of micro public spaces as orchards.

PROJECT BRIEF

The participants are allowed to design an intervention in any and all areas within Kenyalang Park. They are invited to understand the area through interactions with the local community, identifying opportunities and constraints through explorations, observations and site analysis, and developing new narratives that seek to rejuvenate and reinvigorate the development without losing sight of its past. They are also encouraged to

ensure their designs benefit the local community, positively impact the greater Kuching city, and embrace a sustainable approach to urban planning. Their initiatives are required to be aligned to either one of three streams:

- i. **Better place to LIVE** - improve housing quality, access to open spaces, embracing nature, fostering community bonds, efficient waste management, inclusive space for vulnerable groups.
- ii. **Better place to WORK** - promote innovative industries that complement the local business, sustaining traditional industries, collaborative space for start-ups and creative industries, enhance connectivity.
- iii. **Better place to PLAY** - celebrate diverse culture, integrate art into the public domain, vibrant recreational space, encourage intergenerational engagement.

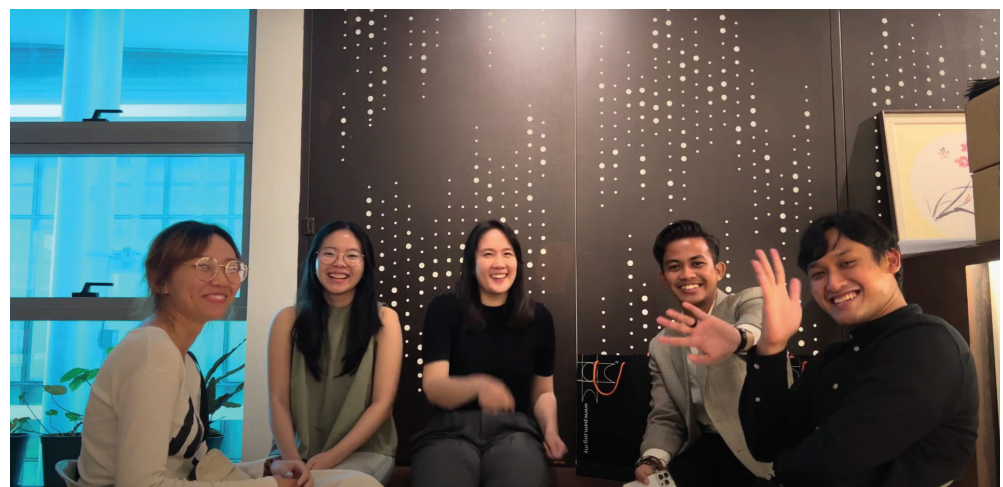
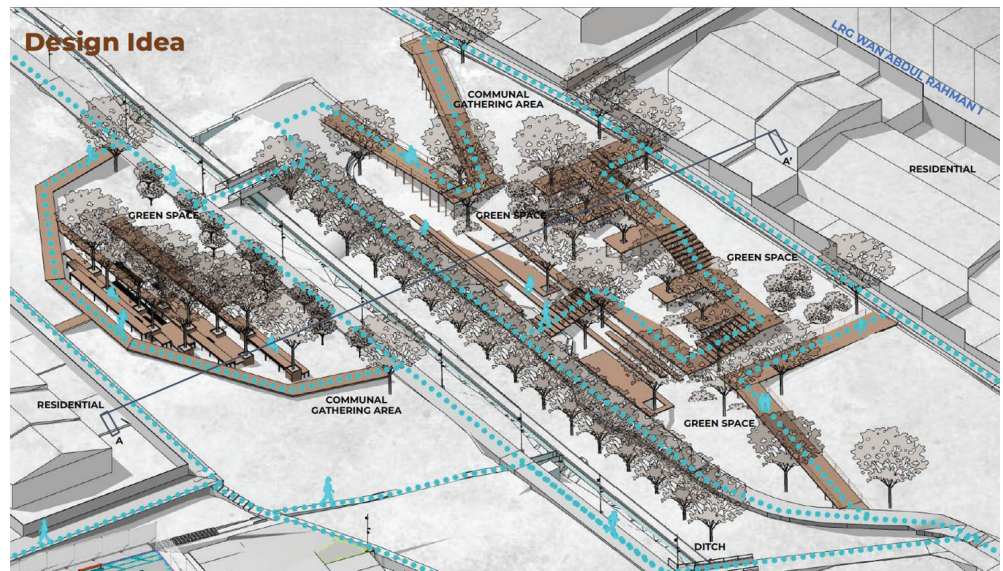
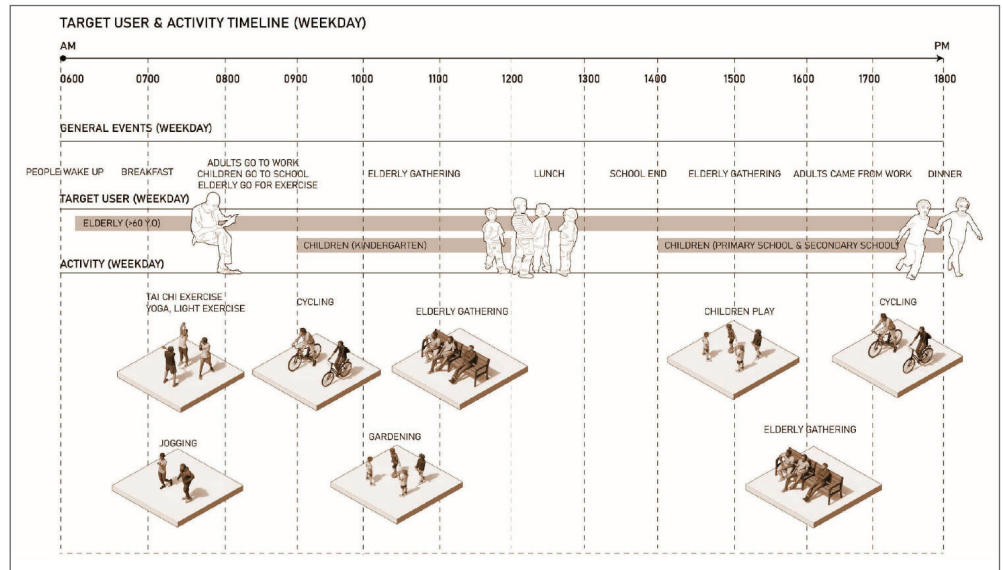
Chapter 4 : The Proposals

Contributed by Ar. Brendan Tong, with the assistance of Ar. Goh Tze Hui

KENYALANG STAGE - BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

From the get go, we were drawn to the activities that were carried out in the Traffic and Recreational Gardens. From a combination of observation and interviews, we noted that that the spaces were well occupied throughout the day, with the community carrying out activities such as Tai Chi, cycling, jogging, playing and communal gathering. However, there was a notable hiatus in the day's usage, which was during noon time. This was in spite of a high amount of pedestrian traffic through the ravine areas in between the two gardens during this time, as children and parents cross the area under the bearing hot sun to access a school north of the site. We also observed the pedestrians struggling to move comfortably through the steep topography.

Thus, our design strategy was to create a pocket gathering space that is comfortable enough to be used under a hot afternoon sun, and in sync with the greenery and challenging topography. Our space ideally encourages the parents and children to stop and rest, gather and play, or to continue the activities that is already active in the earlier part of the day, thereby bridging similar activities with the evening crowd. The infrastructure we proposed facilitates natural shading, which enhances the green characteristics already prevalent in the space. The furniture were designed to be durable, weather and landscape resilient, and universal in their usability so that people of all ages find it comfortable and relatable. We envisioned the space to be as iconic as the traffic garden and the Dinosaur Park, without it being out of lockstep with those established spaces in promoting Kenyalang Park as a place for Kuchingnites to gather.



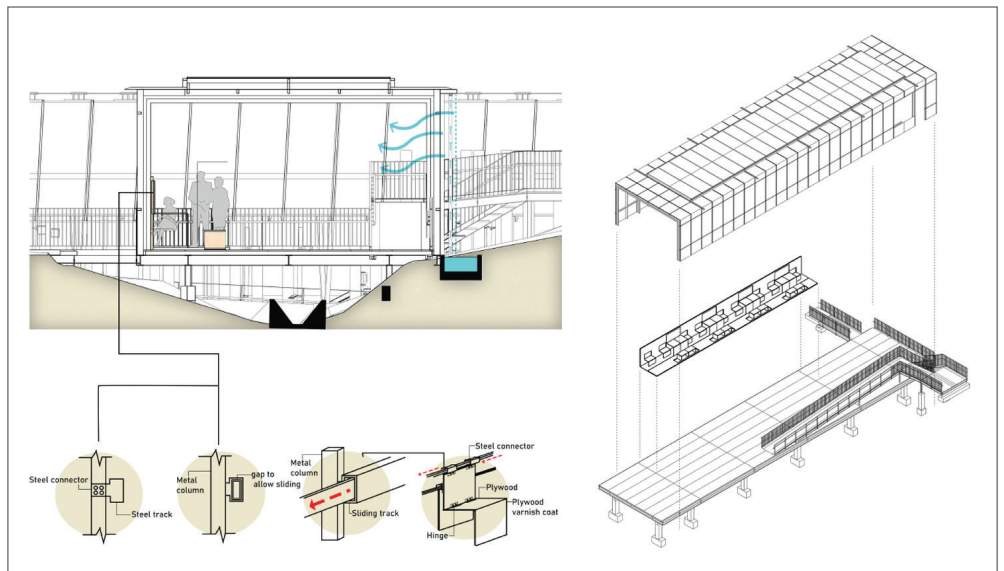
Group 1

From left to right : Nutsuda "Dutchmill" Lekdee (Thailand), Melinda Kumala (Singapore), Ar. Ng Shi Qi (Malaysian Mentor), Alif Firdaus (Malaysia), Musa Ilham Ardiansyah (Indonesia)

PLAY TO - GATHER

Nestled across the embankments of the natural storm drain in the Recreational Park, the newly installed Entrance Pavilion piqued our interest. It served as a connector between the gardens and a main thoroughfare that connects to the commercial area. It had parallel qualities to some of the shading infrastructure we observed at Kuching Waterfront, which performed as enablers to host public furniture, as if they were inviting the public to use them as a form of living area. So our strategy was to improve the Pavilion, and transform it into an extension to the personalized spaces of neighboring houses.

The Pavilion was already well shaded for all weather purposes, so our plan largely involved the infill of modular furniture that folds, slides and combines into a huge variety of configuration. The modularity invites the community to determine the narrative and activities that can be held in the spaces, thus adapting to various forms of social play and lifestyles. This was achieved by crafting the furniture with lightweight material like plywood and aluminum, and mounting it on a mild steel slider spanning the entire side of the Pavilion structure. To further improve the climate comfort of the Pavilion, we introduced water misting feature on the opposite side of the space, which serves to lower the temperature and make it more comfortable and inviting.



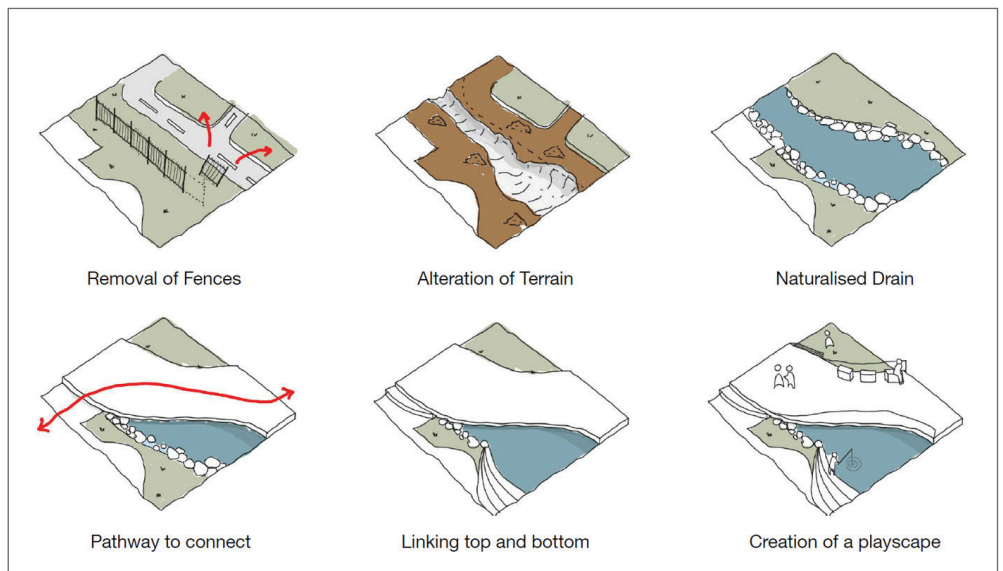
Group 2

From Left to Right : Irifan "Fan" Tochi (Thailand), Erin Kek Si Wen (Singapore), Linda Octavia (Indonesian Mentor), Thifal Nadya Thary (Indonesia), Rio Ferdinand Anak Paul Natu (Malaysia)

BOUNDARIES TO CONNECT

While on an observational tour of the gardens, we noticed that the Traffic Garden and the Recreational Garden, which were next to each other, were actually separated by a hard fence and some drainage systems. This felt like a juxtaposition to the similar function and ambience of both spaces. Further emphasizing the contrast was a series of pathways along both sides of the fences, which connected the North and south end of the spaces. This was a busy connector used by parents and children to cross the gardens, as there is a school immediately north of the area.

So we were inspired to convert the separators literally into connectors, and bring back some relevance and relationship between the two garden spaces. This was an opportunistic strategy, as the fences and drains, which were designed as boundaries of the gardens, can now be directly transformed into the intermediary connections. The drainage was redesigned to become a water feature under the new space. To further enhance the interactivity of the transformative connector, we designed the space for play oriented activities. We integrated water play zones, obstacle courses and interactive greenery in between the diverse elevations, and the spaces were interwoven between a pedestal connector oriented to bridge the north and the south, while opening up on both east and west to ensure the play activities spill into and in between both gardens.



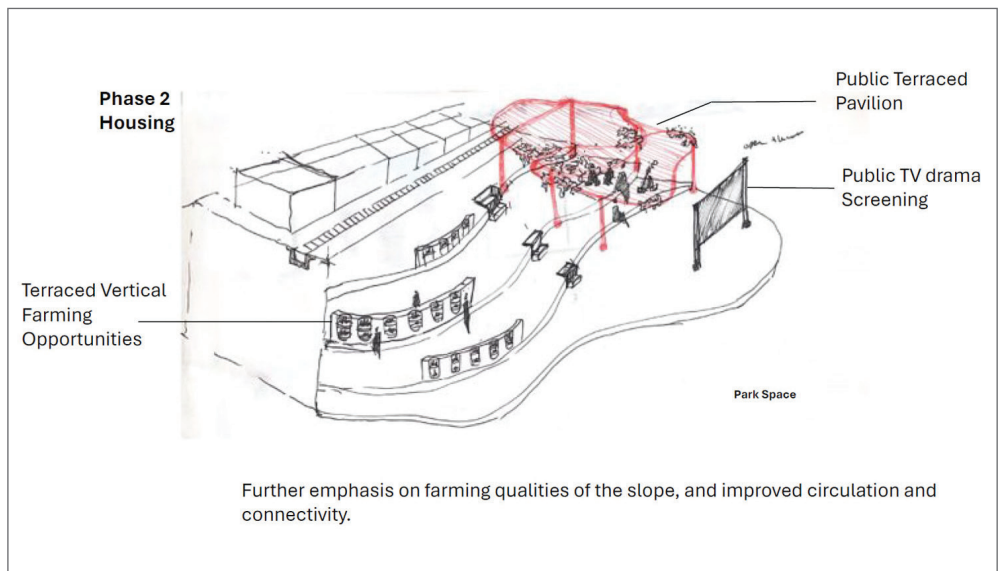
Group 3

From left to right : Vina Aurellia Artanti (Indonesia), Kritha "Euro" Kengton (Thailand), Loo Wan Hong (Singapore), Song Yu Chuan (Singaporean Mentor), Bernice Brain (Malaysia)

BRINGING THE INSIDE OUT

The people of Kenyalang Park whom we conversed with spoke fondly of three things: Firstly, the biggest commonality among the community was the passion for micro farming and common gardening. Second to that was their fond recollection of the heydays of going to the cinema with neighbors, as Kenyalang Park used to host a very prominent and large cinema in the commercial area. Lastly, and perhaps fondly for the wrong reasons, the community laments at the loss of their habit to spend time together outdoors prior to the arrival of Covid related lockdowns.

So our plan was to merge all three of these nostalgias. We were keen not to design space, but to design habits, by giving the community a purpose to embrace the traditionalized social cohesion once more. To facilitate a resurgence of common gardening, we decided that our structure should be designed with hydroponic based infrastructure. We saw an opportunity to convert the steep terrain between the gardens and the residences into a terraced farming space. The public spaces will be equipped with hydroponic facilities to encourage the residents to adopt and cultivate their extended farming activities. To bring back the cinema going habit, we proposed an outdoor cinema that uses the same farming terrace and seating area to view a movie on the screen at night. We envisioned that the nostalgia of the community to bring part of their own houses to the outside will fuel the return of social cohesiveness prevalent in old Kenyalang Park, and spend time outdoors together once more.



Group 4

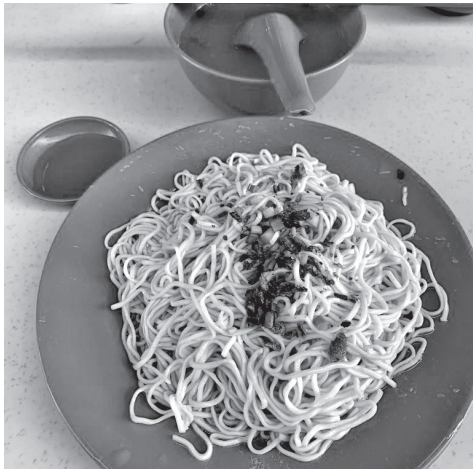
From left to right : Akhmad Faza Amaanullah (Indonesia), Orathai "Mew" Srirungsin (Thailand), Merrylove Glory Albert (Malaysia), Isaac Lee Wei - En (Singapore), Ar. Dr. Nillapat "Gig" Srisorparb (Thai Mentor)

Our next NEWS! will feature Chapter 5 - The Sharing. Stay tuned!

WHAT DO ARCHITECTS DO ALL DAY?

This section attempts to sum up the architects' busy day in a series of snapshots - this is Ar. IDr. Sim Shau Jiunn's contribution this issue.

Our readers are invited to submit their 'day's experiences' as well - email to intersection.editorial@gmail.com



7.00am - A simple plate of Kampua to start the day.



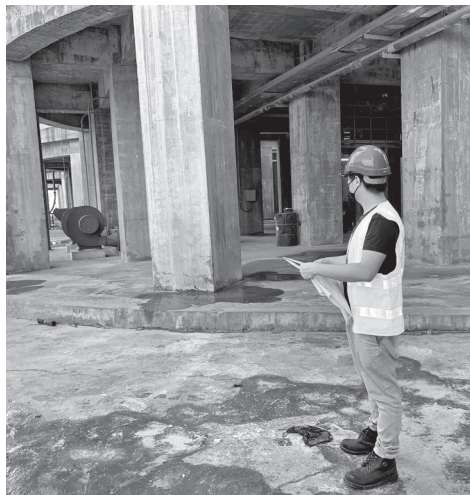
8.30am - site coordination and 1:1 scale mock up.



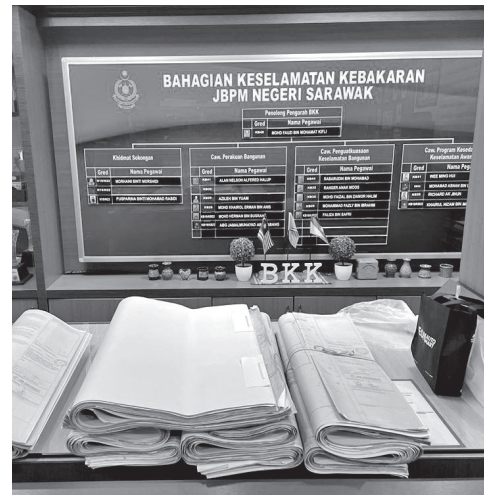
10.00am - Another good day for site walk.



12.30pm - Lunch as per usual with partner in crime.



1.30pm - More site checking...



4.00pm - Last min Consultation and Submissions before the end of the day.



6.00pm - Return home to our super "Domesticated Fur-babies".



7.30pm - Dinner with family and friends.



9.00pm - Time for bed.

PAM BIM Buzz @ Sarawak Chapter: Technology Moving BIM

Date: 2nd March 2024 (Saturday)
Time: 8.30am - 12.30pm
Venue: Raia Hotel & Convention Centre, Kuching Sarawak.
Fee: PAM Members - F.O.C;
Non-Member - RM25

Building Information Modelling (BIM) impacts the construction industry in more ways than one, transforming it to become interconnected, efficient as the team members collaborates and integrate workflows resulting in reduce project errors, reduced communication time, higher quality projects and increased clients' satisfaction. Adopting BIM is no longer a matter of IF but WHEN. Change to BIM now, persevere and reap the success in the future.

PAM BIM BUZZ @ SARAWAK CHAPTER

TECHNOLOGY MOVING BIM

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**2ND MARCH 2024
SATURDAY
8.30AM - 12.30PM**
AIRPORT WING LEVEL 1
RAIA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE
NO. 1 LOT 1586, BLOCK 17
JALAN LAPANGAN TERBANG
93250 KUCHING, SARAWAK
LAM CPD POINTS APPLIED

PROGRAM

8.30 am	Registration
9.00 am	Welcoming Speech by Ar. Hj. Noraini binti Narodden Chairman of PAM Sarawak Chapter
9.10 am	Presentation by Ar. Husam Abdul Fatah Harom
10.10 am	Coffee Break / Networking
10.50 am	Revolutionizing Architectural Design: Optimizing Ironmongery BIM Parameters with Openings Studio from Concept to Construction by Ms. Norimah Othman, Assa Abloy
12.00 pm	Q & A Session
12.30 pm	End of Program Lunch

Disclaimer: The Organizer reserves the right to change the contents, dates, time and programme if necessary. In any case, the Organizer's liability shall be limited to a refund of the session fee paid only. For any enquiry, please contact Mr. Assa / Ms. Norimah Othman at 010-2202 2202 or email to pam@assabloy.com.my

Note: Closing date for registration is on
Wednesday, 28 February 2024 before 5.00 pm

Scan the QR Code or go to URL Link:
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Ar. Husam Abdul Fatah Harom

Ms. Norimah Othman

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PAM MEMBER: F.O.C
NON-MEMBER: RM25

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