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Marina Island Pangkor takes shape

Freehold waterfront township a boost for tourism in Perak

BY DIANA CHIN

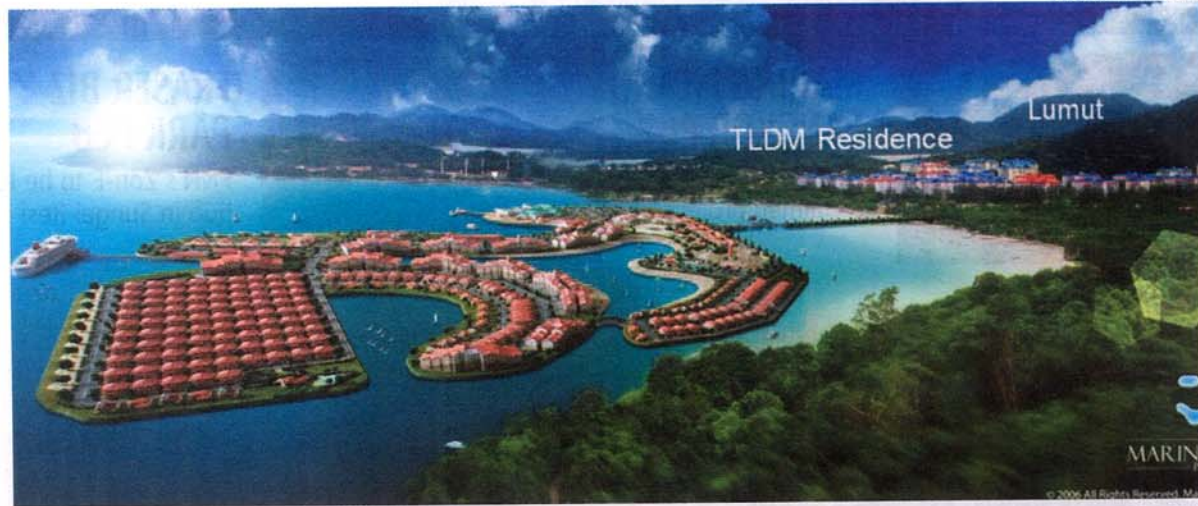
Perak will soon see a new island emerge along its coastline near Pulau Pangkor. In fact, visitors to the popular tourist spot may have already noticed reclamation works along the coast of Teluk Muruh and the construction of a causeway from the mainland.

Marina Island Pangkor is made up of two man-made islands reclaimed from the sea with a total area of 316.9 acres and which lie 400m from the mainland's shoreline. Developed by Marina Island Development Sdn Bhd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Marina Sanctuary Resort Sdn Bhd), it is touted to be the first freehold waterfront township and is expected to boost the tourism industry in the state when completed.

The idea of Marina Island Pangkor, the gross development value of which is RM750 million, was announced in May 2000 with the concept of creating two man-made islands with a lagoon that would also act as a coral research centre. According to the developer, it took five years of methodical planning and feasibility studies to ensure the project would not adversely affect the environment.

"The first stage of development includes the construction of the land foundations, which involves sand transfer and rock placement. The next stage will involve the building of infrastructure and services, as well as the construction of the bridge. The development will be in five phases over a period of 10 to 15 years," says Datuk Ali Bagas Abdullah, director of Marina Sanctuary Resort.

The developer is marketing Marina Island Pangkor as an affordable luxury. Its prospective buyers are middle-income earners and those looking for beachfront properties with yacht berthing facilities. Foreigners are also on its list.



"We are targeting at least 500 foreigners to take up residence in Marina Island Pangkor through the Malaysia My Second Home programme," says Ali Bagas. Countries the developer is looking at include the Middle East, China, Thailand and Singapore.

Reclamation work on the first island encompassing some 200 acres is almost complete, adds Ali Bagas. This will house mainly commercial developments like shopoffices and a shopping complex. The second island comprising some 116.9 acres will be solely for residential development. It is yet to be reclaimed.

At the moment, the developer has already soft-launched its shopoffices called Marina Avenue. Made up of 2- and 3-storey units, they are tagged from RM350,000 to RM650,000 and designed with a Dutch theme. Built-ups are between 684 and 1,707 sq ft. About 60% has been sold and the developer is looking at an official launch by year-end.

Next on the cards are the Laguna Apartments priced from RM177,800 to RM303,800. These come

fully furnished with a net guaranteed return option of 6.5% for three years. Purchasers who take up this option

An artist's impression of the new island being reclaimed along the coast of Teluk Muruh (top) and Marina Avenue shopoffices (right)



get seven days' free stay a year. Other benefits include the use of a yacht from Marina Island Yacht Club and free recreational club membership.

Ali Bagas says these serviced apartments offer a luxury lifestyle at an affordable price. "You can now own a waterfront holiday home with a monthly repayment that's as low as RM120."

A total of 4,000 residential units have been planned for Marina Island Pangkor, all with waterfront views, says the developer. Prices for residential units range from RM220,000 for a 2-storey link to RM1 million for an exclusive waterfront villa with private docking facilities or private beach.

As for the 3-storey shopping complex, the developer says it will be completed by 2008.

Other components include a hotel, yacht club, recreational club, retreat

centre housing spa facilities, educational centre, science theme park, beach bazaar and an international jetty. The jetty will be the gateway to Pulau Pangkor as well as Pangkor Laut. "We also hope to make this [the jetty] a legal landing point for international cruise docking," says Ali Bagas.

Currently, it takes about 30 minutes by ferry to Pulau Pangkor from Lumut. With the construction of the jetty, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year and in use by March 2007, it will only take six minutes.

Marina Pangkor Island is connected to the mainland by a 400m causeway. In addition, the proposed international and domestic jetties will serve as alternative gateways to the island. By land, it is accessible via the North-South Expressway. There are also flights to Pangkor Island.



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HARIS HASSAN/THE EDGE

MARINA ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

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