



**Too close:** (From left) Sering Ukay Residents' Association chairman Mok T.C. Hasni and Mohd Arshad at the proposed project's site on the hill. Sering Ukay can be seen at the bottom of the hill.

**Left:** A slight erosion can be seen at the top of the hill within the proposed development site.

# Nightmare for residents

## Proposed hillslope project causes concern among Sering Ukay folk

By **CHOONG MEK ZHIN**  
mekzhin@thestar.com.my

**R**ESIDENTS of two residential areas bordering a proposed hillslope development site in Sering Ukay, Ampang are worried for their safety as the project's site is a hilly area.

In addition, some areas are classified as Class III and IV slopes with gradients of 25 degrees and more.

"When I bought my home early last year, I was told that there would be no more development in this area, particularly the hill in front of my house, because of the steep gradient," Brig Gen Datuk Mohd Arshad Raji said.

The 67-year-old retiree has been living in Sering Ukay Phase 2, one row of houses away from the hill in question, since October last year.

In fact, Mohd Arshad would not have known of the development plans if his neighbour had not shown him a letter from the local council allowing residents of neighbouring lots to object.

"The notice was only given to home owners with units bordering the hill on Oct 19. I believe only 10 owners from Phase 2 and five from Phase 1 received the letter," he added.

When they enquired with Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) about the notice, he was shown a letter from the Minerals and Geoscience Department Malaysia (JMG) that showed no objection to the plans except for a few conditions.

"I called the person who signed the letter to get confirmation on this but he denied knowledge of the letter, saying the study was outsourced," Mohd Arshad said, adding that he will go all out to protest against the development.

Sri Melor Apartments Joint Management Body (JMB) secretary Hasni Kamaludin said the same developer who was trying to apply for planning permission now had already tried in 2007.

"Back then, we received a registered letter addressed to our JMB about the plan. We objected vehemently for various reasons but at the core of it, it is our safety that we are most worried about," Hasni said.

This time around, Hasni said the notice was only sent to the individual owners of three of the eight apartment blocks closest to the development site on Oct 18.

He said the apartment residents would be sending a petition to MPAJ soon.

Neighbouring resident from Bukit Antarabangsa, Dr Mohamed Rafick Khan Abdul Rahman, is also concerned that others may be subjected to the landslide that occurred in his area in 2008.

"There cannot be any structure below the hill at a distance twice the height of the hill in question. This hill is about 180 metres high at one point and if we were to follow the guidelines, there should not be any development at all in the vicinity as all the adjacent lands are less than 360m away," Mohamed Rafick said.

According to the state housing development guidelines, a cul de sac road should end in a 20m by 20m square rather than the dead ends indicated in the project proposal plans.

"Lastly, according to the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172), notices for objections should be sent to landowners within a 200m radius from the boundary of the plot of land where the proposed development is to take place due to the cul de sac," claimed Mohamed Rafick.

He said that residents should not be subjected to unnecessary stress.

MPAJ town planning department director Nizam Sahari said that it was standard procedure to send such notices out once they received an application for development.

"According to the Town and Country Planning Law Monograph book, that interprets Act 172, only landowners within 200m along the length of the road of the road that ends in the cul de sac are to be notified and given a period to protest the development," Nizam explained.

He added that other landowners who needed to be notified were those with land sharing the same border as the development site including those separated by road, drain or other types of reserved land within less than 20m from the development land boundary.

Nizam added that 408 letters were sent to landowners that fit the abovementioned criteria.

"If a unit has two owners, we will send a letter to each owner. If the registered address of the owner is in Ampang we will hand deliver it or if there is no one home to receive the letter we will leave it at the owner's registered address," Nizam said, adding that those living out of Ampang would receive their notices via registered mail.

"All this is done concurrently with getting comment, not support, letters from the various technical departments including the JMG, Public Works Institute (Ikram), Department of Drainage and Irrigation (JPS) and others," Nizam said.

He also said that as per the Selangor Highland and Hillslope Planning and Development Guideline, no matter which of the three methods was used by the developer to gain development planning approval, the plans needed to be presented to the state Environmentally Sensitive Areas Development Technical Committee (JKTPKSAS) in the end.

"All the departments and committee will provide comments on the plans. The approval can only be gained via the council's One-Stop Centre (OSC) committee meeting that will consider all the comments and residents' feedback," Nizam said.

"We have to follow the given procedure including sending out notices to neighbouring

landowners when we receive applications for development or else we may find ourselves on the losing end of a lawsuit," he said.

The hill in question has 16.7% Class I slopes (less than 15 degrees), 28.1% Class II slopes (15 to 25 degrees), 49.7% Class III slopes (25 to 35 degrees) and 5.5% Class IV slopes (more than 35 degrees).

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