

GATED COMMUNITY, THEORY AND IMPLEMENTATION IN LANDSCAPE AND HOUSING AREA OF MALAYSIA



Image: Desa Park City, 2007

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Chapter 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Housing developments in Malaysia has been seen to flourish rapidly for the past 40 years. People are now more concern about safety of their property as well as their life more than ever before. Designers and urban planners in Malaysia has been very creative in developing more of today's Malaysian housing needs might it be in the city centre or in a more rural part of Malaysia, Gated Community concept never fails to attract the common understanding and needs of a Malaysian housing neighbourhood. The interpretation of gated community in Malaysia often been regarded as a residential community area equipped with human or electronic security surveillance. However, the true meaning is a community area enclosed by walls and fences, most of the time having controlled over the entrances especially for automobiles and pedestrians. It is an issue where the concept was only used for profit gaining and not looking at the holistic approach towards overall community planning in the current Malaysian landscape environment.

While gated community is seen to be a perfect solution for safety as well as to ensure the profit gaining of property development in Malaysia, the term 'gated community' has seen to become too overused by some property developer or other related agencies. The term was coined to attract house buyer and to boost the property market value especially for housing areas in the city centre part of Malaysia. House buyer in the other hand too, do not seem to mind the 'fortress' that this term created but feels overly prestigious to be able to have property within the over-booming housing concept. This research project will review the current practice of community planning in Malaysia and seek to establish any significant developments pertaining to planning implication and community landscape in the approaches used. This

research will appraise international and local case studies to compare the true meaning, theory and implementation of the term gated community.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The main objectives of this research are:

- a) To understand the true meaning of the term 'Gated Community'
- b) To explore the theory, characteristics and elements involve in relation to the concept of 'Gated Community' housing area.
- c) To highlights several international and local case studies to compare with what Malaysia have.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The expected findings from this research will be beneficial not only for the development of knowledge during teaching and learning in all related field of the Built Environment but also for the Malaysian community and nation's experience in applying the true meaning of 'Gated Community' in future housing neighbourhood designs. Therefore, it is the researcher's biggest hope that this research will contribute to the body of knowledge and to ensure that the public or the private sector will take design concepts as well as theme for their development projects seriously as it might trigger a different meaning.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Method used in this research is case study approach, where several sites has been used as the case study to portray different ideas of property that uses gated community concept in their development. It is also to see the relevancy from the international and local perspectives pertaining to gated community theory and approaches.

International case study site will be access through library and internet searches using publications, paper cuttings, conferences and seminar papers. Local case study site was done by visiting several housing development areas available in Klang valley through fieldwork such as observation and taking photographs. Interview with relevant personnel from the private (developer) and public (local authority) sectors were also done.

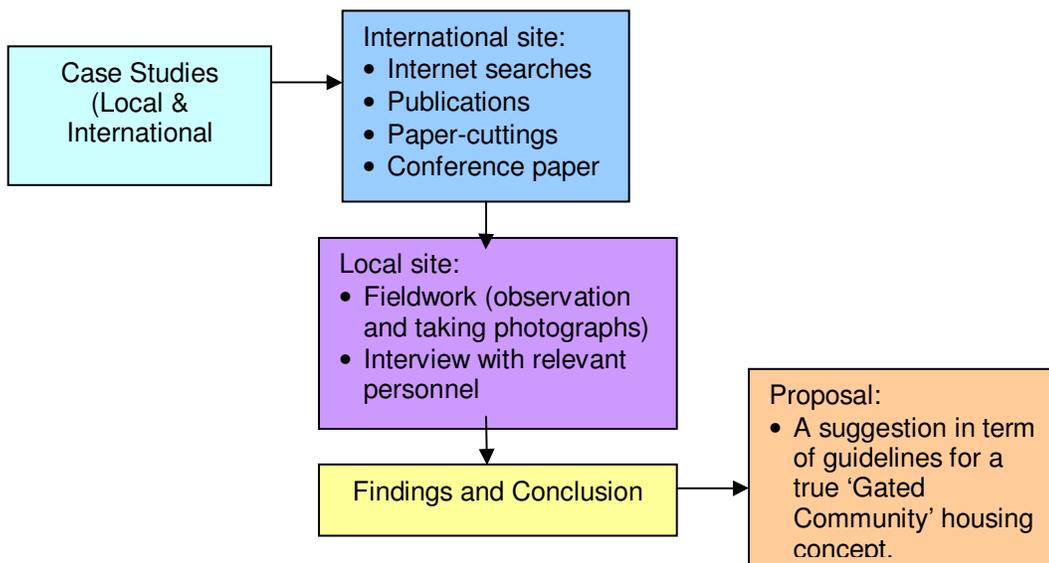


Figure 1.0: Diagram showing the conceptual framework of the research.

Chapter 2

2.1 BACKGROUND STUDY

2.1.1 What is Gated Community

Gated community according to Blakely and Snyder (1997) is a residential area that has restricted access and normally is a privatized area. These areas are also usually within designated security development equipped with walls or fences and entrances that are controlled to prevent penetration by non-residents. Whilst, Burke (2001) mentioned in his paper that gated communities can be define into several characteristics which are residential estates, rarely featuring much in the way of either commercial or retail functions. It is also separated from the surrounding community by a barrier in the form of a wall or fence, and at the entry and exit of residents and visitors is only made possible through security-controlled access-points usually a gatehouse that are equipped with numerous electronic and surveillance devices used to ensure those without invitation are not allowed to enter. Burke's definition here relates quite closely to the Malaysian context in the general ideas of gated communities. In Malaysia too gated communities are usually considered as private entities, with private streets, private parks and private facilities. Management of these assets is usually undertaken either directly by developer, or more commonly, through a residents or community association.

2.1.2 The theories of Gated Communities

Burke (2001) in his writing mentioned that there are different types of gated communities that are presented in the US, British and Australian

context. The scheme is based on the physical and social characteristics of the differing communities, as well as their geographic location. However, in this paper, the researcher will also incorporate the Malaysian context to the basic theories presented by Burke. The categories are listed as follows:

The first category is the **Urban Security Zones** where in the existing communities, efforts are made towards hindering social problems from streets and small urban neighbourhood areas. They include a retrofitting of gates in the existing urban setting to hinder any pedestrian movement and vehicular traffic.

The second category is **Secure Apartment Complexes** where gated communities are presented in the form of units or apartments in several storey heights. Public outdoor areas and facilities are the only things that are offered to the residents. The whole complex is generally gated, with no vehicular and pedestrian access for non-residents.

The third category is called the **Secure Middle-cost Housing Areas** which are a common housing developments in Malaysia where housing or residential development are usually separated into several categories according to the selling price of the property which again differentiates by its location and facilities provided. Here, it is categorized as a middle-cost housing development where most of the facilities are semi-public (which can sometimes be used by non-residents as well) and the entrance and exit to this area are commonly facilitates by barricades using human as the guardian to the area. Most vehicles are allowed to enter at any times but heavier vehicle like van or lorries are often stopped for questioning before entering the property.

The fourth category commonly seen in Malaysia is also the ***Secure High-cost Housing Areas*** where this kind of development is more contained in the manner that the barricading is often stricter and heavy with electronic surveillance devices at the access point. Only residents are given electronic access card at the main gate to enter while visitors are often called in to register at the guardhouse to get a visitors entrance card. This kind of housing development is usually equipped with numerous facilities for the residents and all facilities are not allowed for non-residents it is also often seen as a total separation from the other surrounding housing neighbourhood.

The fifth category is called the ***Secure Suburban Estates*** which are developments that are usually located in the middle or outer part of the major cities. This type usually is defined by a low-rise housing villas or townhouses that are developed using the same building material in its designs and layouts. No public facilities are provided except probably for a small communal pool or gymnasium. The number of dwellings in this type of category is usually smaller than the *Secure Resort Communities* and the *Secure Apartment Complexes*.

The sixth category is the ***Secure Resort Communities*** which was designed with more lifestyle features such as lake, lagoon or golf course within their own walls. It contain more 'resort-style living' elements such as gardens, pathways and lighting suitable for the upper class residents.

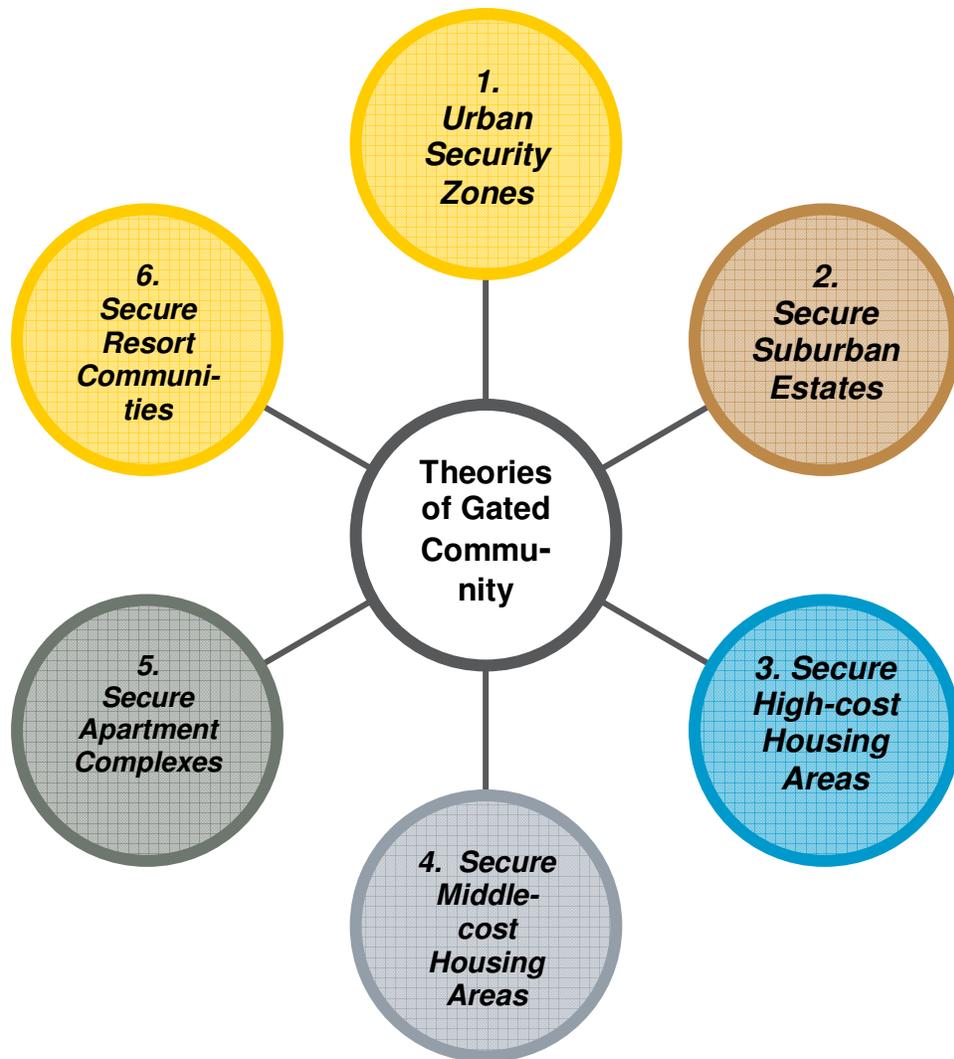


Figure 2.0: Diagram indicating the six theories in Gated Communities that can be identified in the Malaysian context. Source: Burke, 2001.

2.1.3 Gated Community in Malaysia

Gated and guarded communities are gaining popularity in the housing sector especially in the Klang Valley. The concept, initially derived out of concern for safety and security, has today grown into an attractive marketing tool for housing developers, adding a premium to the price of properties (Perumal, et. al., 2007). Gated community concept seems to be an attractive value added feature for housing developers in Malaysia. According to Perumal, et. al. (2007), there are differences

between guarded and gated community, which includes in a gated community, every resident must pay a certain management cost. However, in a guarded community housing development, not all resident will pay but they still enjoy the benefit of security.

Guidelines for Guarded/Gated Community for residential areas	
Guarded	Gated
Application by residence association only	Application by landowner or developer
Approval from at least 55% of residents	100% approval from property owners
An agreement is signed between residents association and local authority	A set of house rules prepared by landowner/developer to prevent untoward incidents.
Free access to local authority and utility companies in carrying out maintenance work in the area.	A special agreement made between landowner and local authority for maintenance of roads, street lights, drains etc.
Cannot prohibit public vehicles from entering the area.	The roads within the area must not be linked with neighbouring residential areas.
Guardhouse without barrier allowed and must be located on road shoulders	Parameter fencing allowed for street or passage closed at one end.

Figure 2.1: Table indicating the differences between guarded and gates communities housing developments in Malaysia. Source: Starmetro, 2007.

In other references regarding gated community in Malaysia, Mak (2006) mentioned that in the highlights to keeping guard in most housing developments in Malaysia, gated community with guards are becoming increasingly popular and residents of many older neighbourhood for example in Petaling Jaya and Damansara area are now turning their neighbourhood into one. Despite the barricades being illegal, local authority take no action, as long as there is no traffic obstruction. After all, the barriers help to reduce crime and to prevent strangers from wondering around. The concept is especially appealing judging from the sold out in recent properties around Klang Valley.



Figure 2.2: Sierramas, one of Malaysia's finest residential estates in Sungai Buloh, Kuala Lumpur. It was one of Malaysia's first gated communities and features extensive landscaping, cycle ways, a community centre which includes numerous sporting facilities, and a range of residential styles. Source: BURCHILL VDM PTY LIMITED, July 2006.

2.1.4 Gated Communities in other Countries

A gated community in other countries around the world too varies among another, it is a form of residential community sometimes characterized by a closed perimeter of walls and fences, but always containing controlled entrances for pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles. Gated communities usually consist of small residential streets and include various amenities. For smaller communities this may be only a park or other common area. For larger communities, it may be possible for residents to stay within the community for most day-to-day activities.

Gated communities are a type of Common Interest Community (CIC) or Common Interest Development (CID), but are distinct from intentional communities. Most gated communities, usually called guard-gated communities, are staffed by private security guards, often with CCTV and other electronic aids. These communities are often home to high-value properties. Some gated communities are set up as retirement villages.



Figure 2.3: Entrance to a guard-gated community (Paradise Village Grand Marina Villas, Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico). Source: Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., November 2006



Figure 2.4: Entrance to a guard-gated community (The Estates: Heritage Green, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada). Source: Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., November 2006.

In 2000, eight million U.S. residents lived in gated communities. In many parts of the world, buyers are expressing a preference for gated communities. While many see living in a gated community as offering increased security, they are not impenetrable. Walls are frequently low enough for someone to climb over them. Gates can be bypassed by tailgating cars and, for those willing, access through the sewer system. Pedestrians can enter by means of pedestrian gates, which are generally unlocked.

In Canada many towns forbid the features which are typical of gated communities in other countries (often invoking the need to offer absolutely no hindrances to the easy and speedy movement of emergency vehicles) and the term "gated community" is normally used by developers to refer to developments which have decorative gates only, and no guards.

In Saudi Arabia according to Glasze (2002), gated compounds of linked houses provide family groups with a sense of privacy and identity. The recent phenomenon appears to be a reaction against villa-style development imported during the kingdom's modernizing years (an evolutionary adaptation of elements from the global real estate repertoire to meet local requirements). There are also large master-planned enclave developments in Saudi Arabia, developed to house the large community of expatriate workers. These are broadly accepted as a means of containing expatriate culture to the benefit of those inside and out.

Real estate developers design and build gated communities because buyers want them; the existence of walls and gates around a community enhances the value of the homes located there. Many homeowners prefer to live in gated communities, just as many

apartment dwellers prefer secured buildings, not only as a deterrent to crime, but also to enjoy privacy and peace of mind.

Physical walls, in some cases give the inhabitants a sense of security. Some sociologists have criticized the creation of these types of walls as *fortressing* and have compared them to historical fortifications. Opponents of gated communities argue that physical segregation is not always necessary to create *defensible space*, that is, to establish control over a particular space. They claim symbolic barriers can be sufficient. Another criticism is that gated communities reduce crime for their residents by increasing it in the surrounding areas: crime is not eliminated, it is simply shifted elsewhere. In addition, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity are often greatly impaired by gated communities.

2.1.5 Planning aspect of Gated Community Concept

In a paper presented by Tan (2003) from the Kumpulan Sierramas Sdn. Bhd. mentioned that if one were to make a study of residential housing schemes in Malaysia, one common feature in many of the middle-class housing estates today is the resident's own need for a sense of security. In many cases, this has led to the formation of an informal Resident's Association to pool funds for the hire of guards to screen traffic, as well as to patrol the relevant areas at night.

According to Tan (2003) again, such loose associations unfortunately, have traditionally been fraught with failure, usually as a result of a minority of residents refusing to contribute towards the shared costs of security. Perhaps in this respect, a managed approach is better where a purchaser buys into a development scheme in which security is

provided, all purchasers are like-minded individuals and mechanisms are built-in to provide for the service.

Stemming from this basic demand to improve security, the concept of Gated Communities in Malaysia is in many ways an evolution of the success of high-rise condominium developments, where the provision of security as a basic minimum feature, has led to the introduction of lifestyle elements in the common facilities as standard features. Up until today, the roots of Gated Community developments in Malaysia can be traced to a pioneer landed residential schemes such as Country Heights in Kajang, and Sierramas in Sungai Buloh (Tan, 2003).

With the introduction of the Strata Titles Act 1985 legislation, urban Malaysians dwelling were introduced to lifestyle features such as Private Security; privately managed and maintained common areas, commonly at standards higher than that available from public services as provided by the local government; and, common private recreational facilities, such as a Clubhouse with private sports facilities, and well tended, landscaped parks and gardens. The introduction of these private residential facilities and services is what defines the concept of a Gated Community.

Hence the facilities and services in Gated Communities may be similar to those in condominiums, there are some other *qualitative benefits* accruing to a Gated Community that extend beyond that experienced in condominiums (Tan, 2003):

- **Streetscape**

The introduction of superior security allows for the dispensation of fences to the front of the house, allowing for better aesthetic treatment of the streetscape by way of landscaping:

- **Safety**

Restricted access to traffic and improved security provides for a safer environment for children

- **Architecture**

Housing architecture in Malaysia has tended towards heavily walled and grilled structures, borne out perhaps by the need for a sense of security. With this need eliminated, architects have been able to expand in new directions creatively, and towards more “open” houses in tune with our tropical climate

- **Consistency in Architectural and Landscaping Standards**

Consistent standards in Architectural and Landscape Architectural introduced through by-laws and guidelines of the Management Corporation will help to preserve the theme of the environment created, for the betterment and continued enjoyment of the community.

Residents of a Gated Community need not fear that their existing homes will dwarfed by a house or house renovation that will be in size and mass, too large for the land lot upon which it is built.

By the same token, they will have the comfort of knowing that the overall ambience of their estate will be preserved, i.e. not spoilt visually by a house without a garden.

- **Land Efficiency**

With a properly planned concept, the land sizes for housing may also be reduced without affecting the sense of openness and overall landscaped ambience and aesthetics

- **Enhancement to Public Services**

Gated Communities may be seen as complementary to the Local Municipal Councils' operations. The maintenance services undertaken by the Management Corporation will relieve the local council of the responsibilities attached with the said estate allowing for better allocation of its resources towards the betterment of public services. All these factors contribute towards a better and more harmonious living environment for Residents.

However, according to Tan (2003), there are some barriers to development of Gated Communities and that of the existing legislation relating to land, subdivision, registration of titles, and dealings therewith, are largely regulated by the **National Land Code 1965**. Tan added that this legislation does not provide for common areas. Roads and open spaces are automatically surrendered as public spaces. By default, no provision is also made for the creation of Management Corporation. Pioneer gated community developments in Malaysia that have subdivided land via this approach have attempted to fill these voids in legislature by contractual means.

Hence, the **Strata Titles Act 1985** was enacted for the purposes of subdividing buildings using structural elements of a building to define the boundaries for titling of a parcel. By default, common areas are created and this legislature provides for its titling and subdivision, and a Management Corporation to own and maintain these areas. Amendments to the Strata Titles Act in 1996, has been interpreted as allowing for the creation of a “landed strata” development, fulfilling the legislative needs of a Gated Community. Many developers have in fact, adopted this route towards developing gated communities (Tan, 2003).

The subdivision procedures provided under this legislation however, still involves the subdivision of a building and not land, as contemplated in the case of Gated Communities. Land, in this instance becomes an accessory parcel to the strata title, which is derived from the building that has been subdivided. Accordingly, application of the 1996 amendment to the Strata Titles Act for the purposes of developing Gated Communities will not address or contemplate the following issues (Tan, 2003).

The basis operation of strata subdivision has still not been properly defined with clearly codified guidelines and despite having been in effect for 18 years, the issuance of strata titles is still problematic within the Malaysian context. With both developers and the relevant authorities sharing the fault over delays as a result of technical issues that have impeded the issuance of strata titles, the widening of the scope of strata titles to include “landed strata” may only serve to compound this problem further.

Under the operation of strata subdivision, external walls and roofs of a building are defined as common areas. Within the context of a house

subdivided under the Strata Titles Act, issues over the ownership of these areas and the responsibility for its maintenance arise. The subdivision under the Strata Titles Act also sets the boundaries as defined by the building, and this forms the strata title. Accordingly, the legal form sets the building as the constant, which is hence define as the Restriction to Basic Land Rights under Common Law

According to Tan (2003), however, the end product will be in the form of landed property, commonly defined by a house with land. This conflict in legal form over substance may potentially give rise to issues related to basic land rights, which amongst other things confer the owner the right to improve his property. The experience with housing, specifically those coming with land as contemplated by the National Land Code and the Gated Community concept has been that improvements and modifications by way of extensions and renovations to the house will take place over time.

Based on the factors above, Gated Communities developed under either of these legislations are fraught with legal risks and pitfalls that may undo the benefits that can be derived from such a scheme. To many developers, such risks are not worth the taking and this has limited the development of Gated Communities. Less scrupulous developers, lured by higher profits from the marketing of a Gated Community, have instead resorted to halfway measures. This has been in the form of common areas that are created without the commitment and mechanisms put into place to ensure its long-term operation and maintenance.

2.1.6 Landscape Architecture Approach towards Gated Community Concept

There is a growing body of literature discussing about gated communities, not only abroad but also locally in Malaysia. In an article on Property Times, Salleh Buang (2005) this issue has been focused on several times in the past, from the perspectives of both the law which is still significantly missing and practice until the implementation and adoption of this concept. The rationale for such projects from the perspective of a developer was that the gated and guarded development was in high demand despite of the missing governing law about the whole concept. But does the house buyer in such development really understand the risk?. According to Gurjit Singh (2005) in his article titled "Up close and personal with gated and guarded communities" he mentioned that purchasers will be fully protected if and when a specific "Gated Community Act" is passed by the Parliament. A good case in point is the Housing Developers (Control & licensing) Act 1966, which was recently overhauled. Despite its stated legislative intent to protect house buyers, there are many victimized purchasers throughout the country. And judging from the media reports, the number of cases of abandoned housing projects and cheated purchasers continue to grow.

According to Salleh Buang (2005), Gated communities have different names in different jurisdictions. In certain places, they are called "Common Interest Communities", elsewhere they are called "Common Interest Developments". Despite the slight difference in names, they share the same conceptual approach where each community has to rely on a pre-determined set of covenants, conditions and restrictions. In essence, each community will own, operate and manage the residential property within its walled and gated boundary, including open space, parking, recreational facilities and streets. Hence, it

wants to create its own world, separate and distinct from the rest of the country beyond the walls of the community. This phenomenon is called "the privatisation of public space" or "private utopia" or "privatopia" (Salleh Buang, 2005).

In the United States, local governments welcome the emergence of gated communities because these projects privatize infrastructure and reduce public costs. Residents of such communities welcome these projects because they are now able to control their neighbourhood through compliance and enforcement mechanisms of the covenants, conditions and restrictions. As a whole, there are also better infrastructure options, recreational amenities and community services. Financially strapped local authorities in Malaysia might find this double feature of "privatised infrastructure and reduction of public costs" enough reason to approve the development of more gated communities. They can reduce their annual expenses on such things as street building and maintenance, garbage collection and other services.

However according to Salleh Buang (2005), these benefits to the local authorities come at a heavy price and loss of governance. The emergence of gated communities brings about "the re-engineering of the public realm". The traditionally bipolar "private-public realm", has to be re-interpreted and seen afresh because of the rise of a third category, called "the club realm". Residents of a gated community are akin to members of an elite club. A gated community is essentially a "proprietary community". It is a privately owned and privately governed estate in which the residents or owners share certain communal facilities for which they have to continuously pay various amounts of charges and fees.

There are three kinds of such proprietary communities among us today which includes commercial, retail and residential. Commercial properties and shopping malls have been around for decades while private residential estates appeared recently. Local authorities in Malaysia have long accepted "the Mall private high street". Within these malls, communal infrastructure is supplied and regulated by private companies on the basis of payments made by retailers and recaptured ultimately from customers. The mall is the prototype of a remarkable example of urban design and urban re-engineering.

Similarly Salleh Buang (2005), added that this concept is now replicated, with modifications, in privatised residential estates. The growing interest in such lifestyle communities clearly shows that they are here to stay. That being so, lawmakers, private enterprises, town planners and local authorities need to sit together and think beyond their traditional parameters, so that when the law is in place, everybody benefits and nobody becomes a victim.

According to Goh (2005), gated communities offers an additional alternative in the housing market from the point of view of house buyers. However, from the point of view of some social scientists, they are the vehicles of elitism and social exclusion among society. If they are seen as obstructions to a healthy development of the Malaysian Nation, then planning permission for such housing projects should be denied.

In any society Goh (2005) added that, there is always the dilemma to balance the need for privacy and the bonds of the society. For those who see a cohesive society as crucial in nation building, gated communities are anathema to a robust national development, as they

isolate individual neighbourhoods from each other and, more seriously, the rest of the urban dwellers. It is useful to note that human families first came together to live in villages and towns basically for security against wild animals and other tribes. Gated communities are basically manifestations of the failures of the local authorities, despite the millions spent every year on town planning and urban management in other developed countries, to make the towns and cities not only safe, but also conducive for work, bringing up families and having a life.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF GATED COMMUNITY IN MALAYSIA



Figure 2.5: Entrance to a guard-gated community in Malaysia (November, 2006).

2.2.1 Malaysian Case Studies

A definition of Gated Community by the Director of Strata Title Management Section is listed below:

“ A cluster of houses or building that are surrounded by a wall or fence with the entry or exit to these houses or buildings in the area controlled by certain measures or restrictions like ‘Guardhouses’ or ‘Boom Gates’ or ‘Chains’ which normally includes 24-hour security, guard patrols, central monitoring systems and CCTVs”.

Dr. Azimuddin Bahari (2007)

Any new development for Gated or Guarded Community Concept in Malaysia can be approach by several guidelines prepared by the Selangor Housing and Property Board (before the amendments of Strata Title Act) which includes:

- ✓ Application is made only by the land owner/developer;
- ✓ The maximum area allowed for each ‘parcel’ for gated community should not exceed 20 acres.
- ✓ Roads in the housing scheme are not connected with the adjoining areas at the time the application is made or in the future.
- ✓ ‘Gated Community’ development scheme standard should be as follows:
 - Building setback must follow development standard determined by the Local Authority.
 - Road Hierarchy must follow the standard minimum of 50 feet reserved road.

- Development of terrace houses are as follows: (front road=min. 50 feet, Side lane=20 feet & Back lane=10 feet)
- ✓ Road Hierarchy to follow standard determined by the Local Authority.
 - Road designs are as follows (public road=100 feet, secondary road=66 feet, front road=50 feet & side lane between rows of houses=50 feet)
 - Road entrance to each Block Parcel (width of reserved road=66 feet, set back for Guard House from public road=more than 66 feet & to provide visitor's parking within the parcel area)
 - Local Road=50 feet (40 feet including road, landscape and 'walk area' + 10 feet including services (5 feet for each section))
 - Facilities that need to be provided within the gated community area are children playground, vacant area, club house & community shop)
 - Facilities that need to be provided beyond the gated community area are facilities by government e.g school, community halls, football fields & Stalls).
- ✓ Construction of guard house without barrier is permitted. The location should not obstruct the traffic (situated at road shoulder only).
- ✓ The location and design of the Guard House must be shown in the plan during the Planning Approval is being made.

- ✓ Consent from Local Authority must first be obtained before the construction of the Guard House on the reserved road/vacant area can be made.
- ✓ The size of the Guard House should not exceed 6 ft x 8 ft or other sizes that the Local Authority thinks fit and suitable.
- ✓ Appointed security guards must be registered with Ministry of Home Affairs or with other relevant agencies.
- ✓ Developer can build 5 feet wall or fence along the border (closed) with additional 2 feet (open) to make it visible from outside the community area.
- ✓ Road reserve, street lights, drains, rivers, pavements, playground and vacant area remain as public reserved area. Developer can maintain the facilities based on agreement entered with the Local Authority.
- ✓ Local Authority and other utility companies are free to conduct their maintenance work in the guarded area.
- ✓ Developer to propose detailed information with regards to the concept of 'Gated Community' development in Disclosure Statement and Deed of Mutual Covenant.

- **The state of Malaysian Gated Community Development**

Some Examples of the Local Gated Community Concept in Klang Valley Area.			
Landed Property & High-rise Developments			
Categories	Recreational Oriented Group	Upper-income Group	Barricaded
Theme of Development	“Lifestyle Community”	“Elite community”	“Security zone community”
Name of Development (Landed Property)	<p><u>Desa Park City</u> Criteria: Only residential areas are completely gated. Equipped with public park, Commercial centre and other recreational facilities.</p>	<p><u>Sierramas Resort Homes</u> Criteria: Strictly restricted to visitor unless invited. Surrounded by gated all around.</p>	<p><u>Seri Utama – Kota Damansara</u> Criteria: A housing area which only a part of the whole Kota D’sara township. This area is barricaded and the security measures were provided by the developer & the residents.</p>
	<p><u>Valencia</u> Criteria: 'Lifestyle and Community' in a unique concept of Valencia Club and the Village Square which is the 'heart and soul' of Valencia, as it is the main focal point and the centre of activity for residents.</p>	<p><u>Kemuning Permai</u> Criteria: Strictly restricted to visitor unless invited. Surrounded by gated all around. Owner must notify the security house in front if they are expecting visitors.</p>	<p><u>Bandar Sri Damansara</u> Criteria: Also a mixed development area with several housing area equipped with barricaded security measures. They also have their own Residence Association set up among residents themselves.</p>
Name of Development (High-rise Development)	<p><u>Changkat View Condominium</u> Criteria: A very unique condominium concept – ‘Semi-D in the Air’. The condominiums have a comprehensive range of special amenities and facilities to suit a luxurious and affluent lifestyle</p>	<p><u>Armanee Terrace</u> Criteria: A very expensive high-rise property you can get. It is a Duplex Condo with various facilities. Entering the area would only be allowed when the owner acknowledge the visitor to the Guard House.</p>	<p><u>Ixora Apartment, Bandar Sri Damansara</u> Criteria: All residents have their own access card to enter the barricaded area. At the moment, this is an example of a middle-cost Apartment widely available in Malaysia</p>

Figure 2.6: A comparison between landed and high-rise categories of gated community development that we have in Malaysia, (Author, 2008).

- **Gated Community in Petaling Jaya**

Gated communities terms are not new to the Malaysian development. Although, today's gated or guarded community scheme are largely landed in nature, condominium and apartment development sometimes falls within this notion with individual titles issued to each unit that is essentially an evolution of the condominium-type development.

To foster community spirit, residents need to volunteer their time and services to the community. In the case of the two areas, this is largely due to the fact that a segment of the residents are students and rent payers who do not feel they are a part of the community, making it difficult to mobilise a large section of the residents.

While this can be difficult with working adults, there are success examples of communities coming together, like in Section 6, Kota Damansara, where it is a mixed development with low-cost apartments, middle-cost housing and bungalows are located side by side. Together, they have turned vacant plots into fruit orchards and organised *kenduri* events where most of the residents contributed in both cash and manpower.

Other areas also include Damansara Jaya (SS21), Section 4A and Bandar Sri Damansara where residents have formed their own RA and RT, respectively, to serve the community and be the voice of the residents when dealing with the local council.



Figure 2.7: The security post guarding the entrance and exit of a gated community in PJU 3/26 in Petaling Jaya. (November, 2006).

- **Sierramas**

Sierramas is a master planned community that offers superior standard of living. The location of Sierramas in Sungai Buloh is convenient, and is within easy reach of the city and the major suburban areas. Sierramas is desired for its security, extensive and lush landscaping and streetscaping. The security measures include a central monitoring system with perimeter fencing with 24 hour patrols. The success of Sierramas has created greatly increased value to real estate in the area. Properties in Sierramas include SierraHomes, courtyard homes and semi-detached homes constructed by the developer and vacant lots where homeowners can build their own houses, some of which have been featured in prestigious journals and design books. The Community Centre located in Sierramas

provides recreational facilities with its Olympic-sized swimming pool, tennis and basketball courts and café. Sierramas is managed and maintained by Sierramas Homeowners Berhad.



Figure 2.8: The open residential concept where all houses were built fenceless to one another to help create the lively neighbourhood surrounding among neighbours.

Drains are covered and all power cables and other utilities are kept underground for better aesthetics. All streets have curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Walking, jogging and cycle-paths have been carefully planned into this private residential estate. These paths meander between precincts and are interconnected so that the residents can move about freely without actually using the streets, and they are lit at night. Equally impressive are the landscaping and planting programmes.



Figure 2.9: Another one of the residential types available in Sierramas West, Sungai Buloh



Figure 2.10: Landscape features and all streetscape were carefully designed to create a connection between good architecture and its surroundings.

- **Valencia**

The only residential development with its own private golf course for its residents in the country, the 9-hole residents-only golf course provides homeowners a spectacular view of undulating greens and the luxury of golfing practically at their own doorstep.

'Lifestyle and Community' in a unique lifestyle environment was the driving force behind the concept of Valencia Club and the Village Square. The Club and the Village Square is dubbed the 'heart and soul' of Valencia, as it is the main focal point and the centre of activity for residents.

- **Kota Kemuning**

Kota Kemuning is today recognised as a township that highlights quality lifestyle living with strong quality design concept, amenities and infrastructure. Due to its strategic planning and creative design concepts, Kota Kemuning has become one of the most sought after township in the Klang

Fully committed to deliver an up-market township, Gamuda Land had, envisioned the success of Kota Kemuning as a lifestyle township when it first invested on a 1,820-acre land in Shah Alam. Self contained integrated township centred on resort-golf-course living complete with township facilities and amenities for quality lifestyle.



Figure 2.11: Exclusiveness of a residential dwellings and living in a gated community development.

2.2.2 Overseas Case Studies

- **Gated Community in United States of America**

Gated community in American urban development has become a mass trend for the past fifteen years. It is estimated that there are more than eight million people in the US living in gated communities today (Frantz, 1999). In the United States, these communities are settlements which are mostly privately built and maintained. The residents shield themselves from the outside world using several defensive measures which include guarded or remote-controlled gated, walls or fences, privately-organized neighbourhood watch or professional security personnel. Similarly according to Van Lenten (2004), gated communities in America house an estimated of 16 million Americans, about 6 percent of all households; homeowner associations number over 250,000. In major metropolitan areas, 50 percent of new housing units take this form; in cities like San Antonio, Texas, and Tampa, Florida, gated communities

dominate the new-housing market. Gated communities have become the element in the American cities that reflect the progressive trend towards privatization of urban services and fragmentation within urban society.



Figure 2.12: Gated Community area in Canyon Lake in Riverside County, California, United States

- **Gated Community in United Kingdom**

Gated developments are not just an American phenomenon. According to Blandy et. al. (2003), this form of housing has also seen huge growth in South America, South Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. In addition, their research suggested that gated communities are becoming more established as a new form of housing in the UK but the nature and location of such 'communities' is lacking in the British context.

According to MacLeod (2004), there are several emerging forms of gated community development in England and UK which

includes upgraded social housing estates transformed by gates, concierges, and local management institutions; secondly, small gated suburban developments; thirdly, smart city-centre condominium-style developments. Many newly formed gated communities in England are shying away from the fully ‘fortified’ US model. A notable trend is the gating of upgraded social housing estates, which markets close communities without overtly deterrent security measures. A similar initiative was a renovation project of two council-owned tower blocks, turned into gated communities with high fences, an intercom system and a concierge service. It was believed that this kind of projects has given security and status to people.



Figure 2.13: The former Bryant and May match factory in Bow, London, England, one of East London's first urban renewal projects. Is now a residential development known as the Bow Quarter.

- **Gated Community in Australia**

The first gated community in Australia was founded in 1987 on the Gold Coast and since then it was said that the concept was a new trend for the future. It was suggested that about 80,000

to 100,000 people lived in gated communities in Australia (Montefiore and Atkins, 2006). Gated community in Australia was said to have these several features, which include a residential address, do not have any commercial or retail element in the area, tend to be body corporate estates, secured and often fortified from the external public realm by barriers to entry for pedestrians and vehicles which is definitely suitable not only for the high-income earners but also for the lower-middle and middle-class Australians.



Figure 2.14: Sanctuary Cove is one of Australasia's leading leisure and lifestyle choices as it evolves into one of the most sought after addresses in the nation. Source: Mulpha Sanctuary Cove (2006).

Today, a lot of the rental communities and townhouses estates are using the same walls, access gates, the sort of procedures and body corporate measures that the big resort communities are using. Therefore, now gating is not just accessible to the rich. However in the recent survey, many people in Australia suggested that gated communities can be the reverse of that where a large wealthy gated community in Campbelltown was rated one of the most depressed areas in Western Sydney, New South Wales. The fear of gated communities is the possible selfishness that could develop among residents.



Figure 2.15: View of the gated-residential development in Sanctuary Cove, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. Source: Mulpha Sanctuary Cove (2006).

- **Gated Community in Muslim Countries (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt)**

According to Schliephake (1999), gated communities in Saudi Arabia were generally called “compounds” as where it appear as a common feature during the massive influx of foreign manpower during the 1970s. Upon demand of the 20 million inhabitants, Saudi companies land-owners constructed and rented out housing areas with villas or multi-story buildings with are equipped with all amenities. Even though privacy in living quarters is a part of Arab and Islamic culture, the different communities and quarters of the modern Arabian town were not physically separated or secluded. Al Soliman (1989), have defined several types of compounds according to Arabs culture which includes firstly a planned communities which are built for the purpose of private companies as a work camps with plywood or metal containers generally removed at the end of the

contract (for workers without families) and a specially-built living quarters for expatriate families employed by the same company, but now seen as a commercial venture and open to various groups; secondly, a planned communities built by the government for housing purposes and only open to government employees; and finally, the planned communities for industrial, administrative or military purposes where they are mainly secluded for security reasons.



Figure 2.16: View of Dhahran, a fenced-in company compound, and only Saudi Aramco employees and their dependents may live inside. Dhahran is admired throughout the area as one of the most diverse, established and city-like compounds. Source: [http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/Saudi Aramco](http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/Saudi_Aramco)

Similarly in Istanbul, Urban development and the emerging of gated community concept started in early 1990s. It was due to the changes from the global and national liberalization of the country's economy which effected the politics, economy and the social aspect of Turkey's development. Gated community concept was tested and constructed in the outskirts of Istanbul where the main elements of architecture, infrastructure and socio-economic factor was taken into consideration. According

to Dundar and Ozcan (2003), the roots of gated communities in Turkey went back from the mid-1970s with the development of the second-housing in coastal areas specially in Western and Southern Anatolia. The basic reason to wall-off from their surroundings was security as the houses have to be left abandoned for approximately ten months a year. A well-controlled zone was also introduced as a new living area into the housing experience of Turkey.



Figure 2.17: View of Kemer Golf and Country Club, Istanbul, Turkey offers various activities from a scenic 18-hole golf course and world-class equestrian club to a tennis club and other luxurious facilities within the residential development.

Likewise in Egypt, gated communities expended during early 1980s when the government of Egypt started to sell land for the construction of villages along the coast of the Red Sea and along the beaches of Sinai. Since then, more than 200 gated communities development has been established (Meyer, 1999). Among facilities equipped with this kind of development is the controlled access through massive gates with uniformed guards stop at the entrance. A Marina is an example of a gated community in Egypt created by two groups: the group inside whose members secluded themselves from those outside, and the group outside who are the excluded and who could not enter this world and who had to content themselves by looking at it from far away. However, nowadays the excluded have started

to penetrate the fences of Marina. Whoever wants to enter no longer needs a connection to one of the residents who would fetch them from the entrance



Figure 2.18: La Siesta Property is an exclusive gated community mountain resort 25 KM south of Soukhna on the Red Sea, Egypt. Source: The Saad El Aguizy Group (2007).

Chapter 3

3.1 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Throughout two earlier chapters, it was widely understood that gated community concept in Malaysia was developed simply because of the safety reasons while in other countries like United States, United Kingdom and Australia, gated communities was coined out off the intended lifestyle of the residence living there. In other Muslim countries, gated community was founded because of job opportunities. The research found that gated community concept was relatively different in their idea, approach and implementation throughout the world. Malaysians tend to perceive safety being the most important reason for having gated community development while only a few of the development was genuinely intended to increase the quality of living among residence.

Among examples of cases that happened in Malaysia that involves break-ins in the gated community was the case where a Datuk was awarded nearly half a million Ringgit over break-in in his bungalow gated community home. This was clear when the High Court held that the terms lay down in the developer's brochures and sale-and-purchase (S&P) agreement had been breached. Kumpulan Sierramas (M) Sdn Bhd, and its management corporation were liable for the special damages suffered by Datuk Soo Lai Sing due to the lack of security at the Sierramas Resort Homes in Sungai Buloh, contrary to the promises made in the brochure and the S&P agreement (Goh Ban Lee, 2005).

In most article found, all residents interviewed through the news paper cuttings mentioned that they are willing to pay extra simple because the idea of a good security concept. However, 90% of the condominium and landed property in Malaysia which the facilities are not well maintained at all. The remaining 10% is the super expensive properties where most people could not afford (Goh Ban Lee, 2005).

In the Malaysian context, there is existing legislation governing the development of landed residential estates and, its titling and subdivision. In recognition of this, the proposed new legislation should complement existing legislation whilst filling the needs for the creation of Gated Communities. For example, the processes provided by the National Land Code are perhaps the cleanest and best-established method for the titling and subdivision of landed property. Other legislation, such as the Town Planning Act 1969, governing the town planning issues related with the development of landed residential estates should still remain effective for the purposes of Gated Communities.

The concept of common ownership of property and the pooling of resources towards its operation and maintenance is not new. Clubs are formed regularly to bring together like-minded individuals to participate, share and enjoy their common interests, with the benefit of being able to defray the costs of this interest over the many members. Abstracting this to landed residential development, the myriad interests of security and safety, recreational facilities and environment may be included to residential homes, contributing towards a better living standard for Malaysians.

Gated Communities are hence the way forward, where the benefits usually reserved for the exclusive few, such as private security, a

swimming pool and/or tennis courts at your doorstep, can be enjoyed by the average Malaysian. To this end, let us recognize that Gated Communities are here to stay, and move forward towards new legislation that can validate and regulate its creation for the enjoyment and benefit of all Malaysians.

However, according to Tanveer (2004), inside gated communities, the bigger problems of security do not result from the malfunction of its security system. The threat emerges from its isolation. By choosing to live in 'exclusive' communities, residents make themselves vulnerable. The outside world is perfectly aware that there is a large accumulation of wealth inside these communities, as they are overwhelmingly populated by people from the upper and middle classes. Thus, in the long run, gated communities are more susceptible to crime. Hence, social interaction mentioned by S.C. Cheah (2004) takes a backseat and people become concerned about security. Developers saw this need for security and that is why the gated community concept is flourishing these days.

Safety is an important aspect when people chose to buy houses. Safe city programme should therefore be highlighted to help raise awareness among various parties such as contractors, developers, local authorities and residents themselves on the importance of proper environmental design of housing areas in curbing crime and creating safe living environments. People don't just buy houses today, they buy homes.

In the other hand, according to Low (2004) in her study, she explored why more and more people are choosing to live in gated communities and how their choices are affecting not only their lives, but the larger

community as well. Among key points that emerged from her study on American lifestyles on gated community are these:

- Gated communities are spreading rapidly, attracting a broad spectrum of residents.
- A mix of desires is in play: a search for "niceness," including amenities; low maintenance; neighbours like oneself; secure property values. More obscure and complex factors figure, too, including longing for an idealized past and a desire to assuage corrosive middle class anxiety.
- People should be helped to understand the downside of "gating": reality may not meet expectations; safety and a sense of community may prove illusory; children raised behind gates may become more fearful; community codes can severely constrain conduct, free speech, and legal rights; open space is diminished; gated architecture creates a "landscape of fear."
- The eventual annexation of gated communities raises tax equity issues.
- Privatizing functions otherwise performed by local governments or mediated by social interactions erodes the American ideal of an open society, tolerance of diversity, and the health of democracy itself.



Figure 3.0: Gated Communities cartoons. Copyright in this image may be obtained from

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3.2 Guidelines for Gated Community Concept

No.	Categories/Theme of Development	Guidelines for Gated Community Development (comments from the public)
1.	<p>Recreational Oriented Group (Lifestyle Community)</p> <p>And</p> <p>Upper-Income Group (Elite Community)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outsiders should not be allowed access to amenities in the development, while they have amenities closer to their own residences. ○ Streetscapes in gated community remain visually attractive as there is no need for front boundary walls (Gated villages developed by Garden Cities are good examples). ○ Gated and exclusive development should not be discouraged, as they are a proven means to make areas safer. Although various criteria should be considered in new developments of this nature, they should not be prohibited. ○ Gated communities are safer places, as police are unable to keep us safe, prevent theft, property damage or bodily harm. Community should be able to decide what they want. ○ 20 min walking to anywhere inside gated development should be amended to increase pedestrian movement. ○ It is unclear why large setback distances for buildings abutting public roads and spaces are an issue. If appropriately landscaped and coupled with visually permeable fencing, it could have a positive impact.
2.	<p>Barricaded (Security Zone Community)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concerned that proposed legislation would force existing gated communities to open gates and allow access to all and gated communities should not limit right to freedom of access and movement. ○ The Idea of gated communities is strongly supported as people want to protect themselves and their property from criminals. Although many will oppose it due to traffic problems, freedom of movement etc, human life and health should not be last on officials' agendas, but come first. ○ 20 min walking to anywhere inside gated development should be amended to increase pedestrian movement. ○ It is unclear why large setback distances for buildings abutting public roads and spaces are an issue. If appropriately landscaped and coupled with visually permeable fencing, it could have a positive impact.

Figure 3.1: Table indicating the proposed guideline for a gated community concept looking into the Landscape approach. Source: Author, 2007.

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