

Occupy Redhill Close :

Revitalizing Ageing Estates by Activating the Community

By

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ABSTRACT

The thesis critiques the method of land renewal and upgrading carried out by the HDB, in which residents are evicted and moved so that land can be erased and intensified again. HDB calls this method the Selective En-bloc Redevelopment Scheme (SERS).

Within the context of the chosen site, Redhill Close, SERS results in a few questionable outcomes, 1) heritage is lost, 2) community ties are lost and 3) the residents' voice are suppressed. Can the renewal of the estate come from incremental means instead of an attempted tabula rasa? Can the estate become valuable and sustainable in lieu of monetary means and enhance its reasons for standing? Can the community be rallied and strengthened to prevent demolition of their estate?

The thesis then proposes a situation where different stakeholders around the estate come together to feed off from the estate and let the estate feed off from their activities. NGOs carry out their activities in the estate while schools are roped in to provide extra manpower for voluntary work. The estate then becomes a dispatch to care giving for elderly around Bt Merah, being valuable in itself. These activities in turn creates secondary commercial activities that allow estate residents to partake in allowing them to form attachments to the estate.

The masterplan is manifested as a spine through the estate and secondary ribs spreading out from the estate, collecting people and dispersing them within the community activities, linking the immediate context together.

The architecture is a series of three nodes which are clusters of programs, which are organized within the masterplan. In order to respect the human and intimate scale of the estate and to create intimate spaces for community to gather, the scale in relation to the residential blocks is explored, carried on through materiality, structure and paving. Circulation and visual and sensorial linkages between different stakeholders on the site are also designed to integrate these different demographics to enmesh them together within the site.

Ultimately, come 2017, it is proposed that the estate incurs so much life and value to the different stakeholders that it can resist demolition.

Keywords:

Adaptive re-use; Community Living; Stakeholders; Attachment; Ageing in Place; Homecare; Activation, Revitalization

Thesis Supervisor: Lilian Chee

Title: Assistant Professor

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1. THESIS OBJECTIVE

The thesis critiques the HDB's method of revitalization and ageing in estates via the SERS by proposing an alternative method of revitalization. The thesis then aims to prevent the SERS demolition of the estate, Redhill Close, by activating the community and its already inherent resources to create a symbiotic synergy between the surrounding neighbourhood and the estate itself. Ultimately, it is projected that the estate be made an anchor to the surrounding neighbourhood again, insidiously rendering it too valuable to be torn down.

The thesis aims to propose an alternative ideal of 'value' on the land of an ageing estate. A perception of 'value' which is not solely monetary but a 'value' that is even perceived in the eyes of its inhabitants due to their reliance on the estate and its community.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Issue – The Selective En-Bloc Redevelopment Scheme



Illustration 1 – Shows the diminishing topography of Bt Merah as the hills were mined for its red soil for brick making (left). At the same time, the kampong houses were cleared and slab blocks were built and subsequently demolished in favour of the taller point blocks (right).

Singapore is a land of erasure, consuming itself to grow. One manifestation of this characteristic occurs within the program of the Selective En-bloc Redevelopment Scheme (SERS). The SERS evicts an estate full of residents from a particular plot of land and allocates them to another plot of land. The empty estate is torn down and the empty plot is then intensified. Thus, within a lifetime, a plot of land can undergo 3 demolitions and constructions.

The SERS falls under the HDB's category of upgrading, in which ageing estates are deemed to be 1) no longer relevant and attractive to younger demographics and their living habits or family structures and are thus slated for a renewal. 2) Old estates in which building structures are deteriorating and can no longer be refurbished are also considered in the SERS. 3) Finally, estates which are deemed to be lower than the required plot ratio will also be demolished and land use optimised¹.

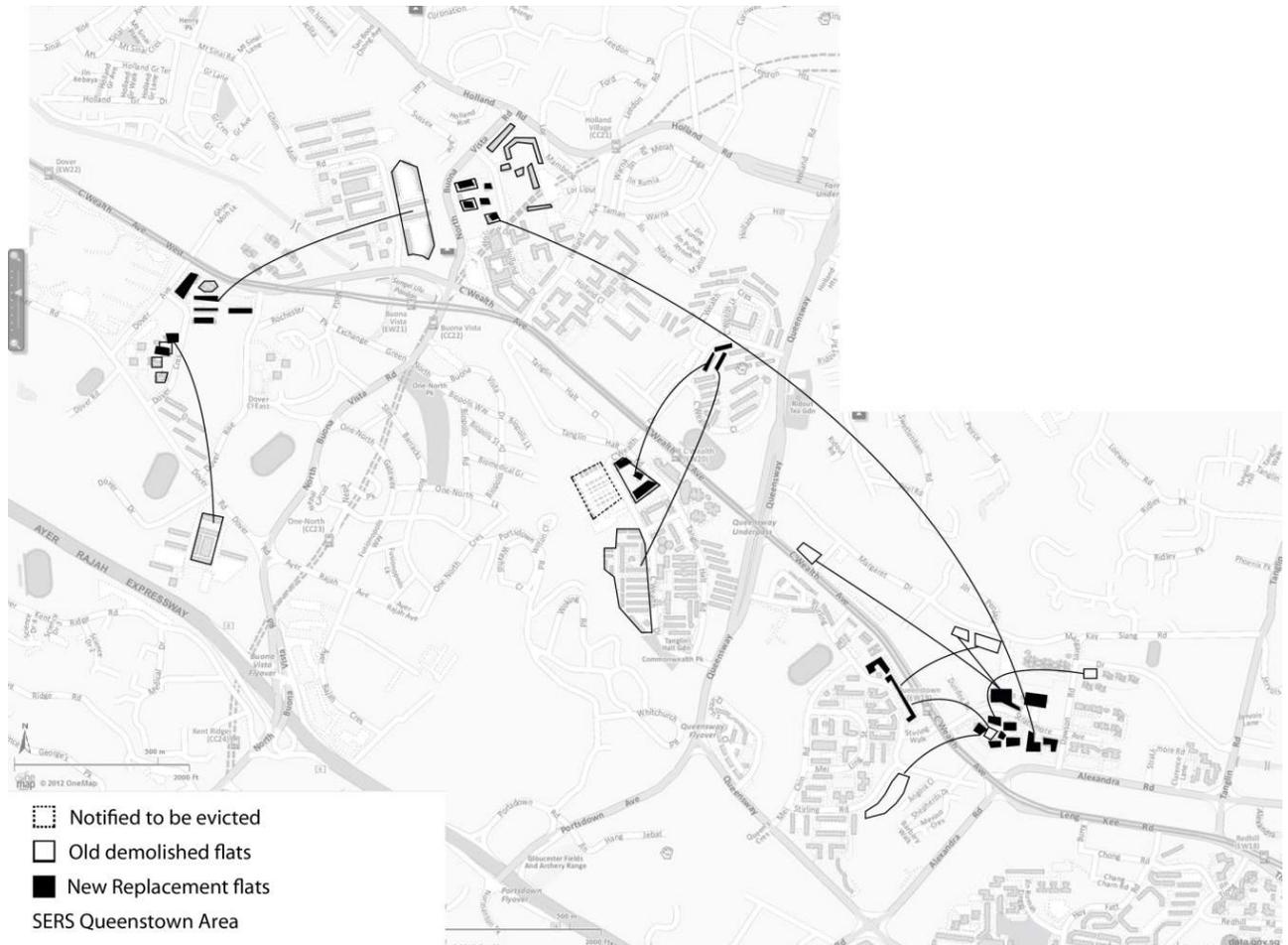


Illustration 2 – History of SERS sites in Queenstown

¹ HDB Speaks. Why was HDB leasing vacated SERS flats in Toa Payoh to private operators for profit when these could have been used to meet the rental requirements of needy families?. 21 Nov 2012. <http://www.hdbspeaks.sg/fi10/fi10336p.nsf/cw/InterimRentalHousing?OpenDocument> (accessed 3 May 2013)

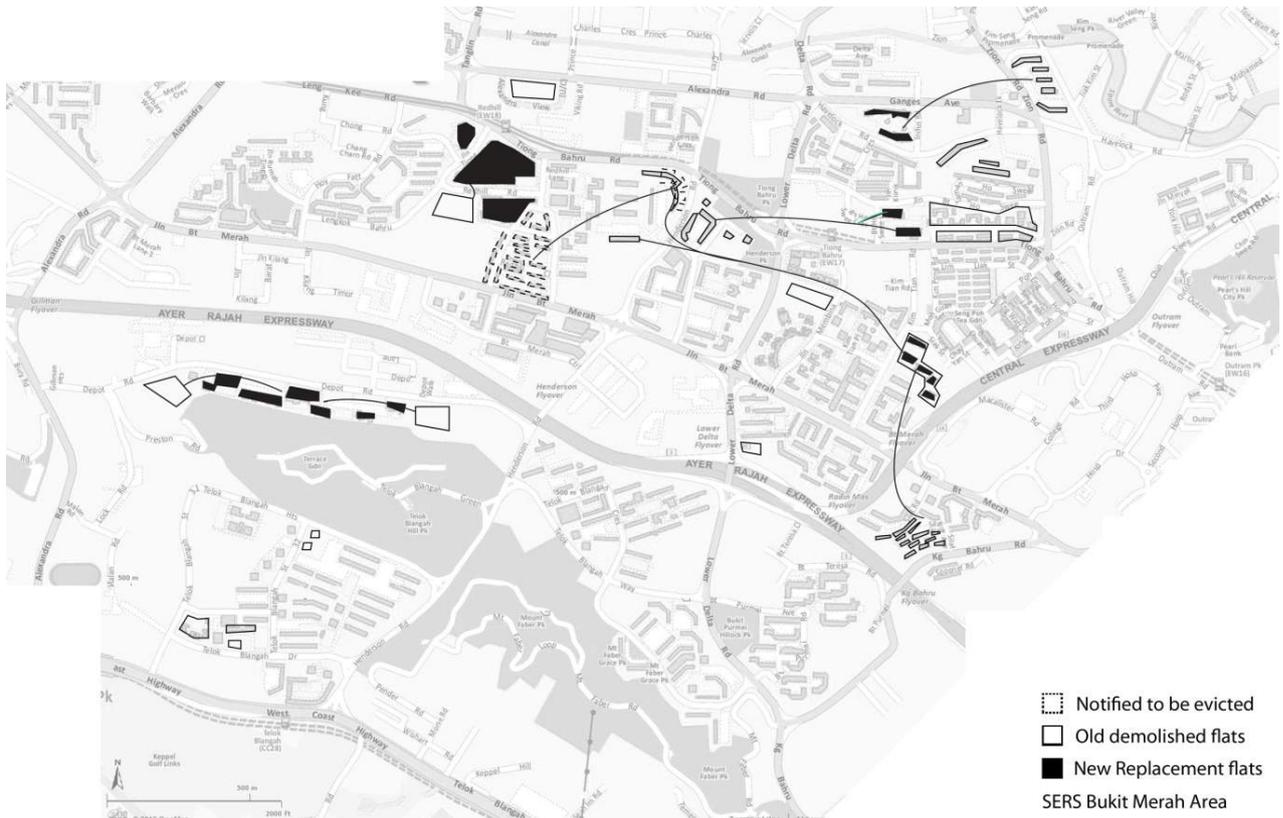


Illustration 3 – History of SERS sites in Bt Merah

SERS commonly occurs in Queenstown and Bt Merah neighbourhoods as these are ageing neighbourhoods with several residential housing blocks built during the 1950s. Redhill Close is one of the newly announced SERS sites and is the chosen site for this thesis.

2.2. SITE

2.2.1. History of Site

Blocks 1 to 22 of Redhill Close were built as an estate by the Singapore Improvement Trust Board (SIT) during 1955 in the hilly region of Bukit Merah. The blocks are 7 storied blocks with lift access to the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th floors and contain six 3-room flats per floor.

The blocks were built by the SIT, post-WWII to mark a new stage of development for Bt Merah, a symbol of modernization for Bt Merah².



Existing blocks, front and back, 2010



Aerial view of existing estate, 2013

Illustration 4 – Photos of existing blocks and site

² Bukit Merah, From a Hilly Kampong to a Modern Town. Singapore: Federal Publications (S) Pte Ltd. 1996

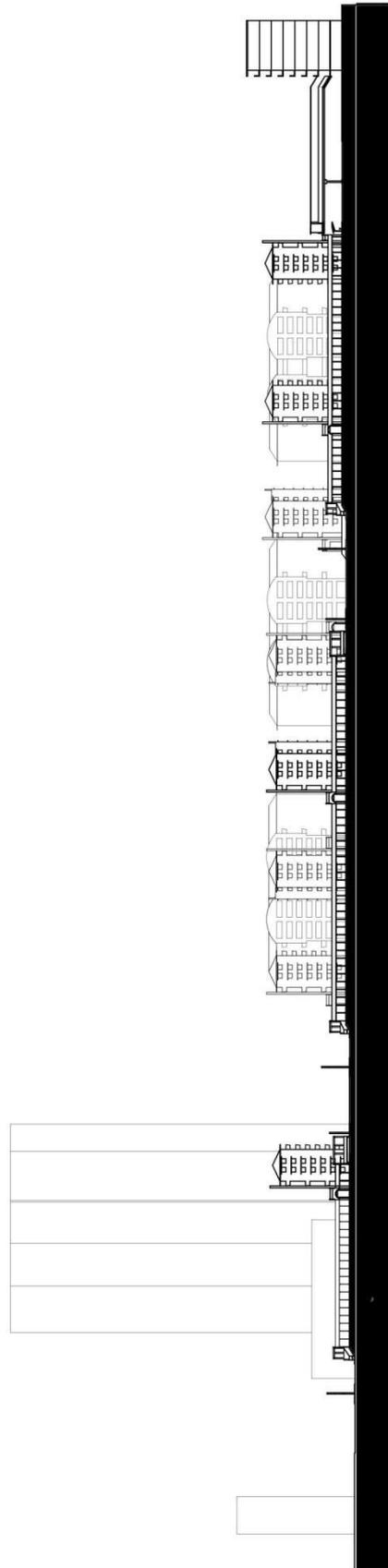


Illustration 5 – Long section of existing site showing the changes in terrain

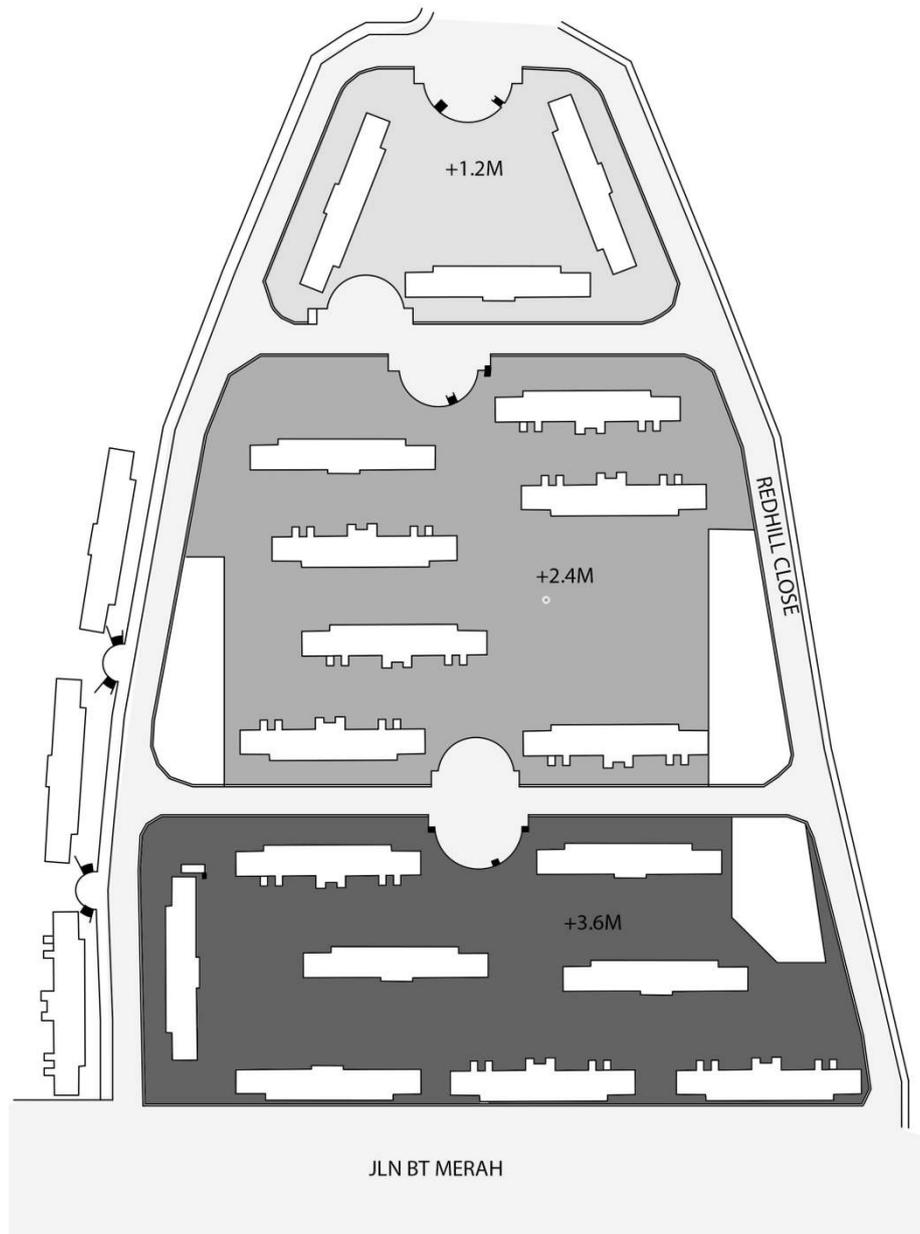


Illustration 6 – Site plan showing changes in terrain

The 21 blocks are divided across 3 different terrain levels, and hence have many flights of stairs to mitigate these level differences.

2.2.2. Current Site – The problem of SERS

a) The elderly residents living in this estate have been living there their whole lives and there is a quiet but scattered displeasure against the en-bloc. However, they feel they do not have a say in the matter due to the Land Acquisition Act³. The perpetuation of the act by the state decreases the sense of ownership and attachment to the land as the land is then viewed by the state, and subsequently its people, in monetary terms. This constant eviction and erasure of memories, habits and people from the land makes a sense of belonging almost impossible.

b) Furthermore, as a group of people living together for 60 years, they have invariably formed a community amongst themselves. Despite the HDB's best attempts at preserving the community by ensuring neighbours get to pick out their new units together, it is often difficult to ensure old habits can be moulded into a new location. Habitual creatures that the elderly are often makes it difficult for them to adjust to relocations⁴. Hence, how can the elderly 'age in place'⁵ when they are expected to uproot themselves from familiar and comfortable habitats?

c) The 21 blocks of flats were the first formally built residential housing in Bt Merah and have watched the neighbourhood transform slowly around it, amenities being built around it. The buildings are still in a habitable condition and still have 30 more years to their lease. There is heritage value in these flats and in the people living in these flats.

³ The Land Acquisition Act was implemented to mitigate land scarcity in Singapore. This Act ensures that most land belongs to the state, which enables the state to acquire the land when the land lease has run out or when there is a need for land for the construction of public infrastructure. The act is thus seen as an effective method in ensuring equity of the small island's land.

⁴ Tan, Kee Lian. "Impact of Relocation on HDB Tenants: A case study of Bukit Merah." Honours diss., National University of Singapore, 1972.

⁵ 'Ageing in place' is a concept put forth by gerontologists who maintain that the elderly who grow old in familiar environments supported by family and friends and comfortable surroundings age healthily and with less reliance on nursing homes, remaining independent for as long as possible
Ministry of Health. More Facilities to help seniors age in place.
http://www.moh.gov.sg/content/moh_web/home/pressRoom/pressRoomItemRelease/2012/more-facilities-to-help-seniors-age-in-place.html. (accessed 3 May 2013)

2. 3. THESIS QUESTIONS



Illustration 7 – Diagram of thesis issue and aim

Consequently, with the issue of the problems caused by the SERS within the context/site of Blocks 1-22 of Redhill Close, 3 main thesis questions are raised:

- a) Firstly, can the residents of Redhill Close be collected to form a community strong enough to resist the demolition and eviction? The Singapore Land Authority will grant lease extensions on certain conditions, including the presence of a strong community⁶.
- b) How can the existing community and its physical spaces be preserved and improved to cater to the elderly, and yet sustainable enough to attract and include new residents to move in? Can there be cohesive relationships formed?
- c) How can the estate become productive and valuable in the eyes of the government and the surrounding neighbourhood? Can it become an anchor to Bt Merah again?
- d) Most importantly, can the renewal of the estate come from incremental means instead of an attempted tabula rasa⁷?

⁶ This phenomena of resisting SERS has been manifested in another SIT estate, Tiong Bahru, where the community played a part in resisting demolition.
60% of lease top-up bids approved since 2007, Wed, Jun 23, 2010, The Business Times, By KALPANA RASHIWALA

⁷ Lim, William S.W. "Architecture, Art, Identity in Singapore." Asian Urban Lab 2004 pp111

3. PROPOSAL

Rooting a community to a place requires stake holds and relationships to be formed in a place. To form stake holds in the estate, these people must have 1) a livelihood or recreational stake or need from the land, as well as 2) relationships with other people⁸.

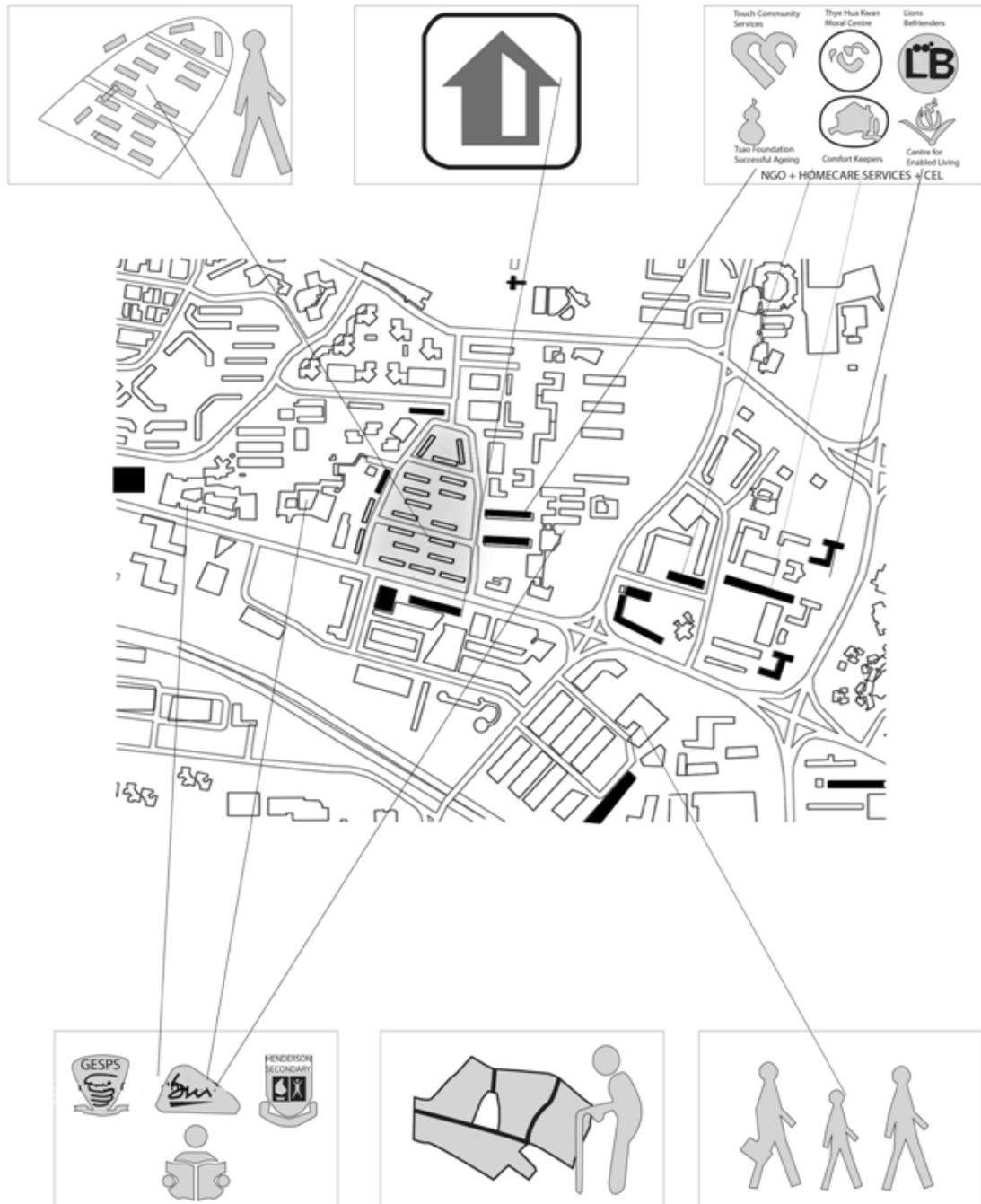
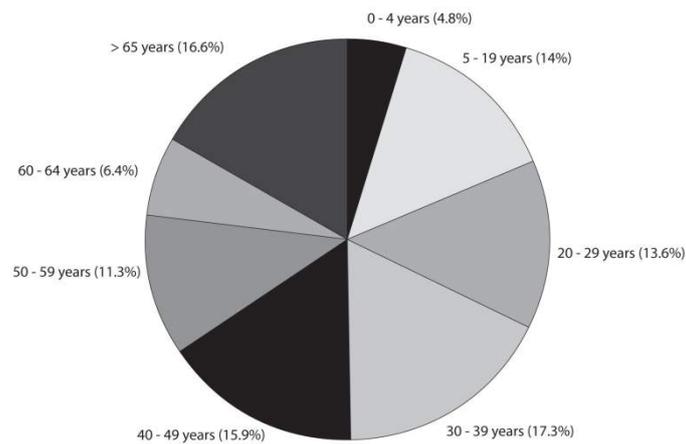


Illustration 8 – Mapping showing stakeholders around the estate, Redhill Close residents, HDB, NGOs and Homecare Services, Office workers/public, aged residents of Bt Merah, schools (Clockwise from the top left)

⁸ Project for Public Spaces. 11 Principles for Creating Great Community Spaces. <http://www.pps.org/reference/11steps> (accessed 3 May 2013)

Location-wise, Redhill Close is the central nucleus historically and presently to Bt Merah. It is located between the MRT station and the bus interchange, 3 schools, nursing homes, 1-room rental flats for elderly and NGO services catering to homecare aid for the elderly. There are thus opportunities to marry the needs and resources of these different entities within the central location of the site, making them symbiotically reliant on one another.

1) The Residents



Age distribution in Redhill Close

Illustration 9 – Age Distribution in Redhill Close shows 35% elderly and 25% children/teenager distribution



Community life and its traces. A concoction of activities and objects, collectively coming together.

Illustration 10 – Community Life

The current residents of Redhill Close want to remain in the estate and they should be allowed a sense of ownership of the estate. Thus the estate and spaces should be improved, providing amenities for everyday living for the residents and especially the elderly.

2) HDB/Government

As the population of Singapore starts to age, the government has proposed different methods to take care of the elderly with the least impact on the country's economic reserves.

Thus ageing in place has been an important concept, involving the community to support the aged. Hence, community creation, creating a sense of belonging, multi-generational living and family friend spaces and estates are one of the key focuses in HDB's framework.

Paired with the notion of ageing in place is a need for professionally trained caregivers in the future to allow the elderly to age in their homes with external visiting aid.

3) Non-Government-Organisations (NGOs)

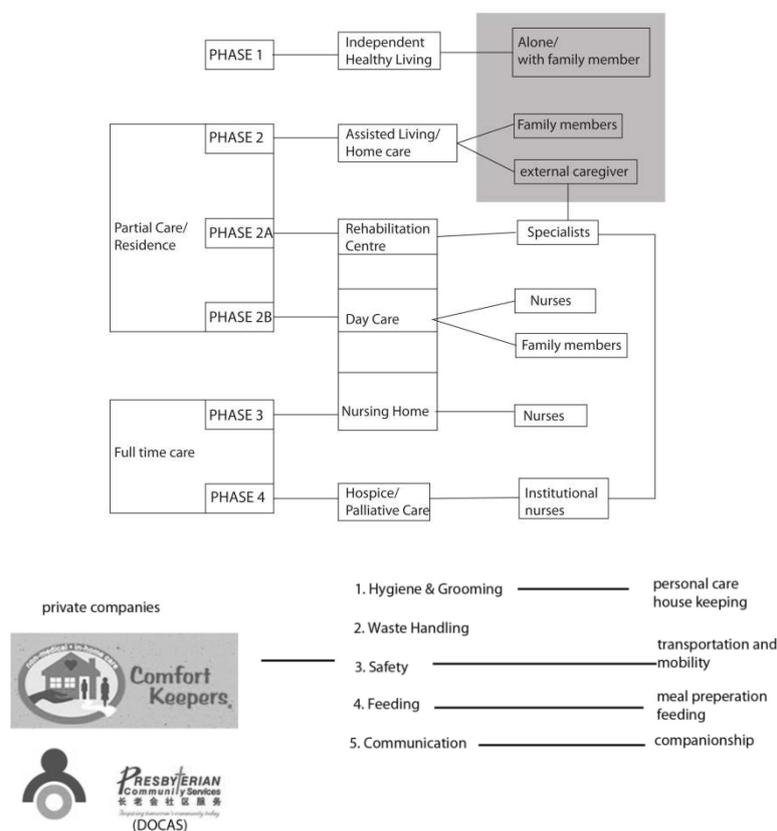


Illustration 11 – Where homecare services come into play in an ageing-in-place society (top) and the types of services provided (bottom)

The NGOs around Redhill Close consists of Touch Community Service, RESERVE, RSVP, Lions Befrienders, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Centre, Tsao Foundation for Successful Ageing, Centre for Enabled Ageing etc.

These NGOs commonly require space to carry out their activities of keeping stock, cooking free meals, caregiver training and collaborative office spaces.

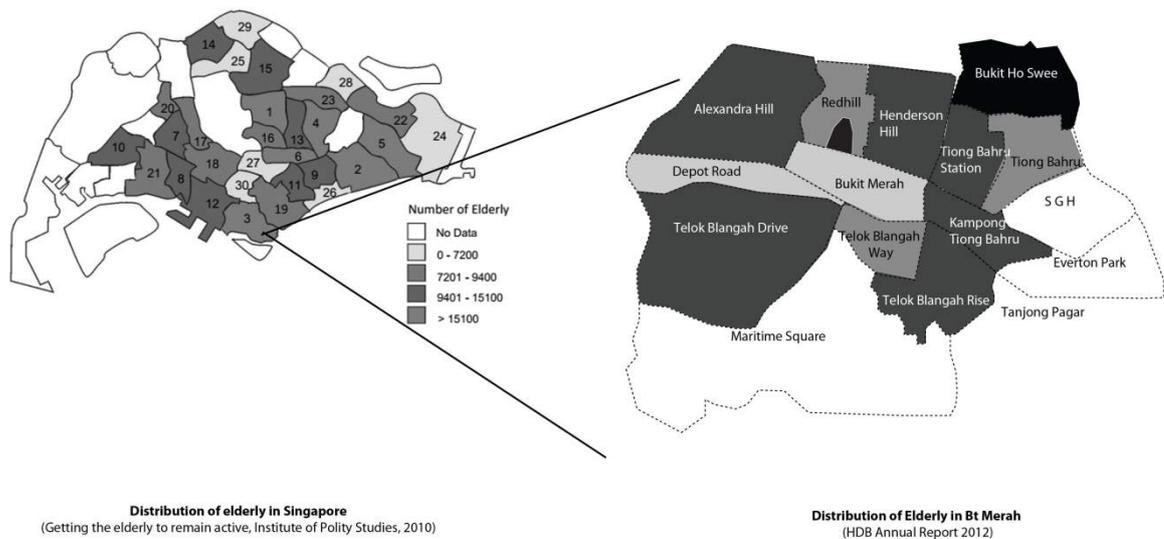
4) The Surrounding Users

The surrounding neighbourhood and its users also contribute to the value of the estate

a) Schools

The children in the schools can be roped in to provide extra manpower for voluntary work for the NGOs. This could be part of the afterschool care services to give the children spaces and activities around the school to grow up in safely in.

b) Other inhabitants in Bt Merah



Bt Merah : 25 000 elderly

No. of elderly **requiring homecare**
 in Bt Merah (living alone, 2012) : ~2000

Illustration 12 – Distribution of elderly in Singapore and in Bt Merah⁹

The other elderly in this ageing neighbourhood and their caregiver families require the help of the NGOs and can also have access to the amenities in the estate.

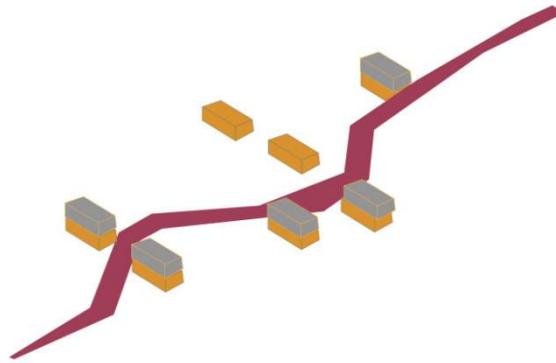
c) Office workers

Currently, the office workers around the estate require a pleasant and convenient walk between the Redhill MRT station and the Bt Merah bus interchange. There boundary roads that define the site are presently heavily used by these office workers.

⁹ 'Getting the elderly to remain active'. Institute of Policy Studies, 2010. HDB Annual Report 2012

Illustration 14 – Spaces in the existing site

NGO - HOMECARE	RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES	PUBLIC COMEMRCIAL AMMENITIES
-Health & wellness caregiver training -Physical handling -Grooming and hygiene	-Exercise areas	-Spa -Hairdresser -Laundry service
-Soup Kitchen -Nutritionist	- Tiffin services -Business opportunity -Gardening	- Cafe -TCM Clinic
-admin -Lectures	-childcare centre -leisure spaces	-after school care -tuition centre -voluntary services

**Illustration 15 – Pri program and sec program and their relations**Homecare Service

- A) Health and Wellness
 - Caregiver training classrooms
- B) Nutrition
 - Cooking Class
 - Nutritionist Office
 - Soup kitchen handouts
- C) Administrative
 - Collaborative offices/meeting rooms
 - Lectures and lessons

Estate community activities (Secondary commercial activities)

- A) Health and Wellness
 - Exercise corner
 - Playground
 - Laundromat
 - Gym
- B) Nutrition

- Cafe/business opportunities
- Traditional Chinese Medicine free clinic
- Tiffin service
- C) Administrative
 - Childcare
 - Computer facilities
 - Residents Committee
 - Bird watching/chess playing/recreational area

Public activities(Secondary commercial activities)

- A) Health and wellness
 - Spa
 - Hairdresser
 - Laundry services
- B) Nutrition
 - Cafe
- C) Administrative
 - Tuition centres
 - Afterschool care
 - Homecare dispatch services
 - Voluntary services
 - Public lectures

3.2. MASTERPLAN



Illustration 16 – Masterplan showing relation of pri nodes, secondary commercial activities and main circulation paths

A central spine is created through the estate which collects and disperses people at 3 different nodes that also sweep out in secondary ribs to connect the schools, bus interchange and MRT, residential blocks, Redhill Market and 1 room rental flats for the elderly.

3.2.1 Masterplan - Circulation

The small access roads separating the site is pedestraintized to aid mobility for seniors and to provide continuity to users. Surface parking is sunk partially underground at those roads (see Section CC') and ramps built above to mitigate terrain.

Circulation between different stakeholders is designed to achieve integration. The central spine is a bridge which brings the public and office workers from the third level of Bt Merah Central to the first level of the edge of the estate, mitigating the terrain of Redhill Close. The central spine then dips down at the 3 nodes to sweep the public into community activities, enticing them through visibility of voids and screens (will be elaborated in chapter 3.3.3). The homecare service serves as the public administrative front on the second level of the bridge.

The circulation pathways snake through the activities, with small spaces for different entities to pause and chitchat or to watch a game of chess etc. This is denoted by paving (will be elaborated in chapter 3.3.4)



Illustration 17 – Short Sections showing changing spatial volumes (top), long section (bottom)

At different points in the bridge, undulations and voids are created by steps and ramps that dip down and roofs that rise upwards to connect and entice the public down into the community space below. These changes in volumes also help to accentuate explosions of activity and intensifies the community activities along the length of the bridge.

3.3. ARCHITECTURE

Introducing an array of community services into an already existing low lying residential estate requires a breaking down of scale of the programs, surfaces and spaces. This not only allows the spaces to respect the scale of the existing blocks and its spaces, but also allows smaller intimate alcoves for community to gather and form. Thus, within the masterplan, the scale of the programs, spaces, material and structure plays an important part in latching onto the site and fostering community and relationships. The language chosen is purposefully subtle and underwhelming, insidiously continuing from and into the original blocks.

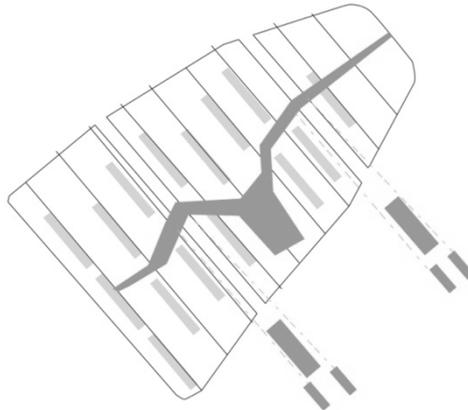


Illustration 18 – breaking down the scale of the site

3.3.1. Program and Space

As mentioned, the programs are broken up into small units and clustered linearly along the site, swelling into nodes. A rectangular strip denotes a gardening patch, a larger strip denotes a pavilion, a larger strip denotes a module and a larger strip indicates office space. They are all separated but connected via various shelters. The spaces in between the strips of functions then become opportunities for community to occur or for linkages between different user groups.

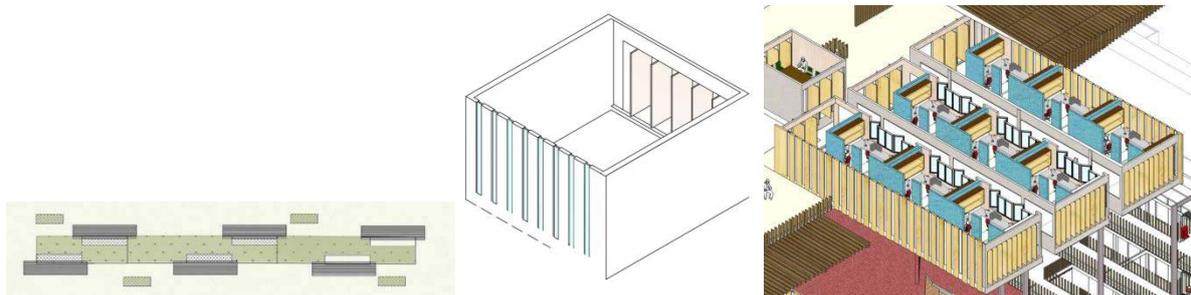


Illustration 19 – Types of strips broken down in scale

3.3.2. Community Spaces

Scale 1: Veranda space between two units

The current lift is proposed to be calibrated to stop on every floor. A new common corridor then has to be inserted on alternate levels. This creates an opportunity for a semi-public veranda space between 2 units for playing mah-jong, chitchatting, storage etc. The extended corridor also helps to stagger the corridors and brings light to the other alternate floors.

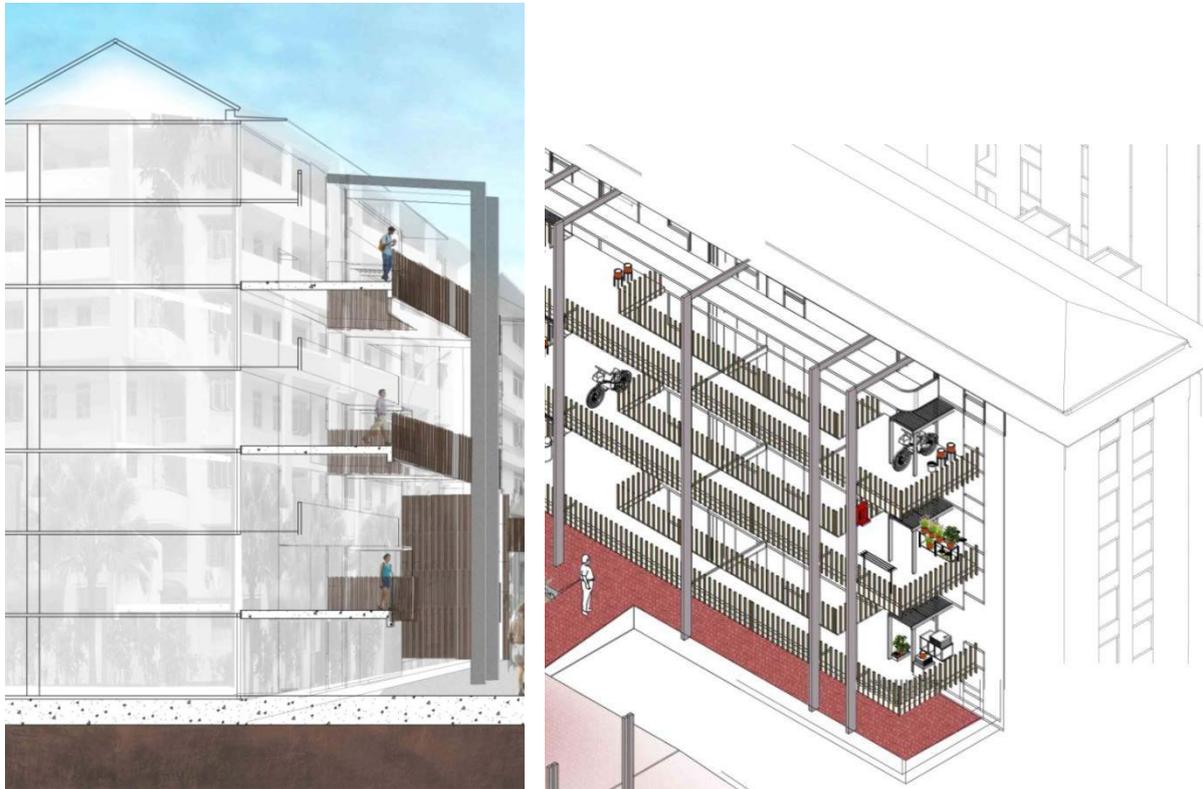


Illustration 20 – Sectional perspective showing extended common corridor and existing common corridor (left). Axonometric showing extended corridor and usage (right)

Scale 2: Ground floor spaces between two blocks

The ground floor was originally the unsheltered void deck of the estate, where children played, the elderly gardened and laundry was hung. The space has now been landscaped to mitigate the terrain by creating stepped surfaces that also act as seats and planter boxes. An intimate alcove is created between the back of the block.



Illustration 21 – Sectional perspective showing usage of steps (left). Plans showing spatial relationship (right)

Scale 3: Nutritive Nodes and Health & Wellness Nodes

The third scale of community gathering spaces are the two smaller nodes, nutritive and health & wellness. The programs are broken down into the homecare service portion and the community/commercial portion via the second and first level respectively. Both spaces are connected through a double volume space and stack ventilation voids, filtering the smells upwards. The cafe becomes a space for business, soup kitchen handouts, waiting areas for the TCM clinic and the loosely demarcated space allows activity to spill out.

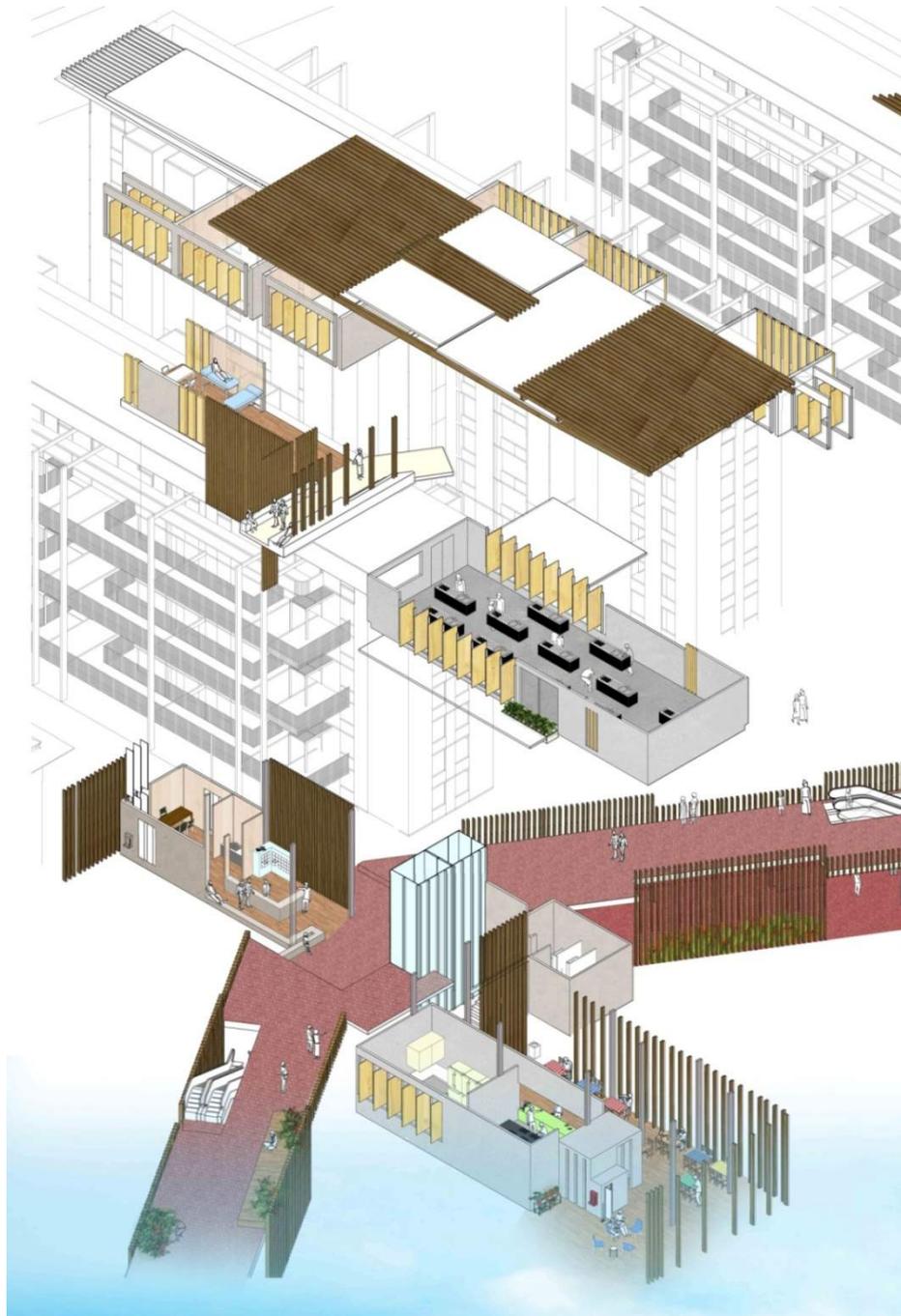


Illustration 22 – Exploded axonometric of nutritive node showing spatial relationship between homecare services and community services



Illustration 23 – Sectional perspective showing nutritive node

The health and wellness node has a quiet garden, for the elderly men from the pavilion near the Redhill Market to read the papers and chitchat amidst the smell of laundry hanging. The laundry from the laundromat, placed beside the intimate backyards of the blocks help to amplify the domestic quality of the backyard spaces. The main circulation path then leads out to a more active and noisy space of the playground and exercise corner/gym.

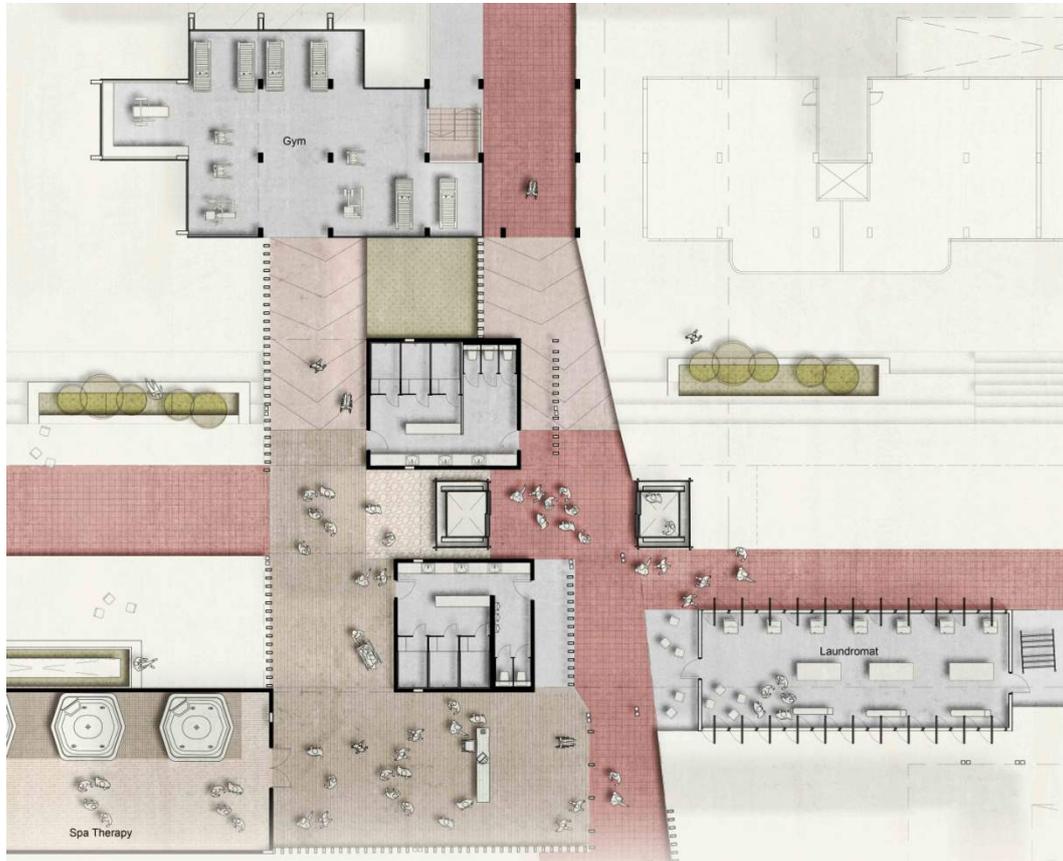


Illustration 24 – First floor plan of health and wellness node



Illustration 25 – sectional perspective of health and wellness node

Scale 4: Central Node, a condensation of all user groups

The central node is the largest node between the 3 nodes, where the main drop off point in the estate is. The central node also engages the terrain by building up several platforms from road level to the original level of the estate. It faces the 1-room rental flats for the elderly and the Moral Centre, pulling in the elderly to partake in activities.

The verandas overlook the activity in the central space which contains chess/birdwatching areas and a stage which invites performances from the Zheng Ren Gong Temple, the childcare centre and large scale lectures. The children's laughter and birdsong filters up through the gaps between the blocks, airwells that break up the scale of the office/administrative block above, allowing light to filter down.

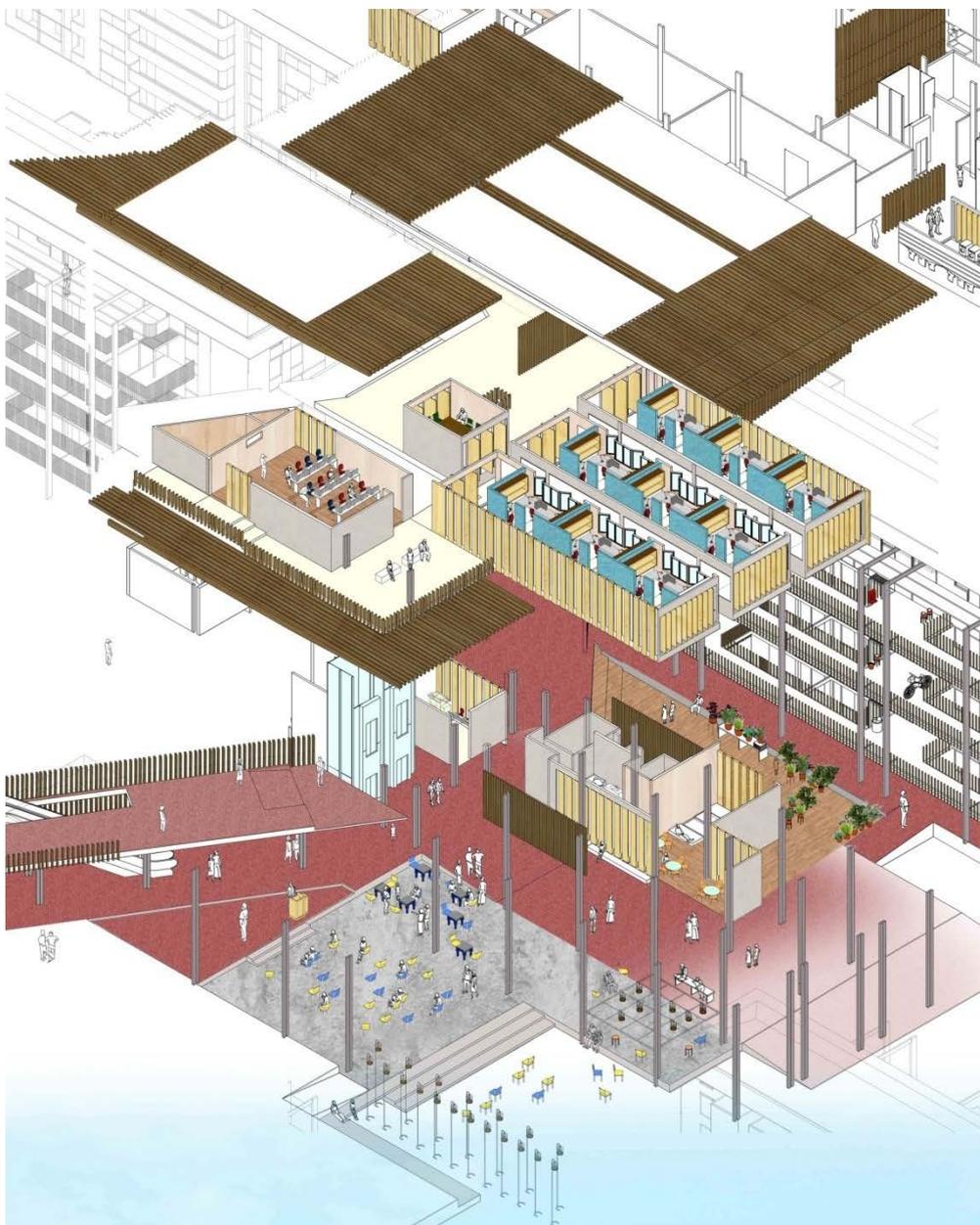


Illustration 26 – exploded axonometric of central node showing activity and spatial relationships



Illustration 27 – sectional perspective of central node showing atmosphere

3.3.3. Structure

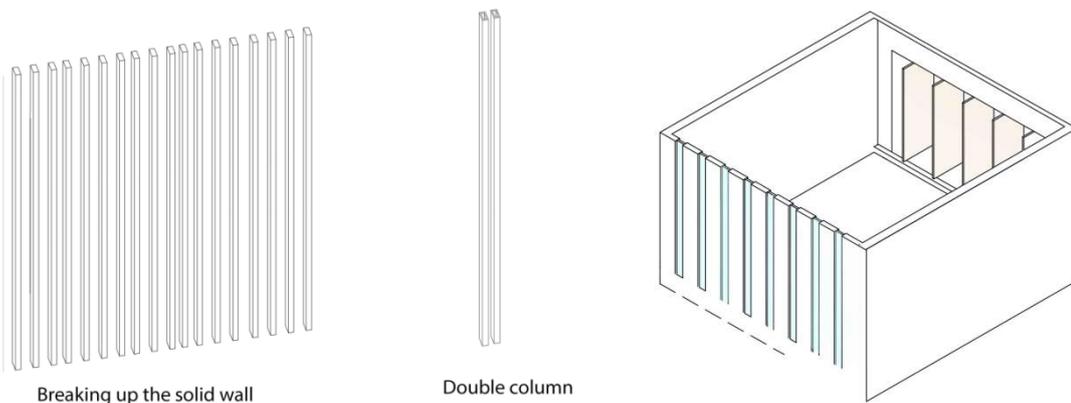


Illustration 28 – Porosity of wall, column and modules

Breaking down of the scale is further manifested through the porosity of the structure. Walls are broken up to allow ventilation and visibility, yet openings are controlled to allow a semblance of privacy. These timber strips also contribute to the atmosphere for shadow and light, creating filtered light in the tropical weather.

Pivoting panels allow certain walls to become porous while fixed strip-like fenestrations allow a higher degree of privacy.

3.3.4. Material and paving

The main circulation is indicated and continued from the original paving by red paver tiles. Timber is used to create a slower ambience in the gathering areas. The structural grid of 7.5m is carried on from the existing blocks, again an act of subtle blending.

4. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, this thesis hopes to establish an attachment between Redhill Close as an estate and the residents who live there as well as the surrounding neighbourhood by creating stake holds. The thesis then hopes to humanize the process of revitalization of this ageing estate by activating the community to take back their estate and by creating explosions of communal activity by appealing to the senses. Finally, the thesis proposes to integrate these different stakeholders and enmesh them into the fabric of the site, making it too valuable to be demolished.

5. FINAL PANELS & MODELS

Occupy Redhill Close!

Revitalization of an ageing residential estate by activation of the community

Engagement is a part of process, connecting staff to users. The Redhill Close Development Scheme (RCDS) at Redhill Close is a major renovation & reuse strategy of the housing estate, essentially allowing RCDS to start from a clean slate. The scheme involves the renovation of existing blocks, and the provision of new units, and the provision of new public spaces and shared facilities to meet the needs of the community. The scheme also includes the provision of new public spaces and shared facilities to meet the needs of the community. The scheme also includes the provision of new public spaces and shared facilities to meet the needs of the community.



WELL-BEING	HEALTHCARE SERVICES	Public Amenities
Health & welfare	Community spaces	Public Amenities
Health & welfare	Community spaces	Public Amenities
Health & welfare	Community spaces	Public Amenities
Health & welfare	Community spaces	Public Amenities

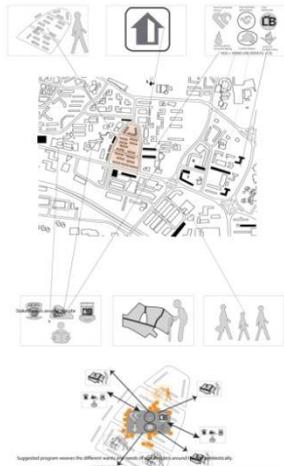
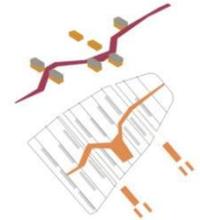


Illustration 29 – Panel 1



Illustration 30 – Panel 2

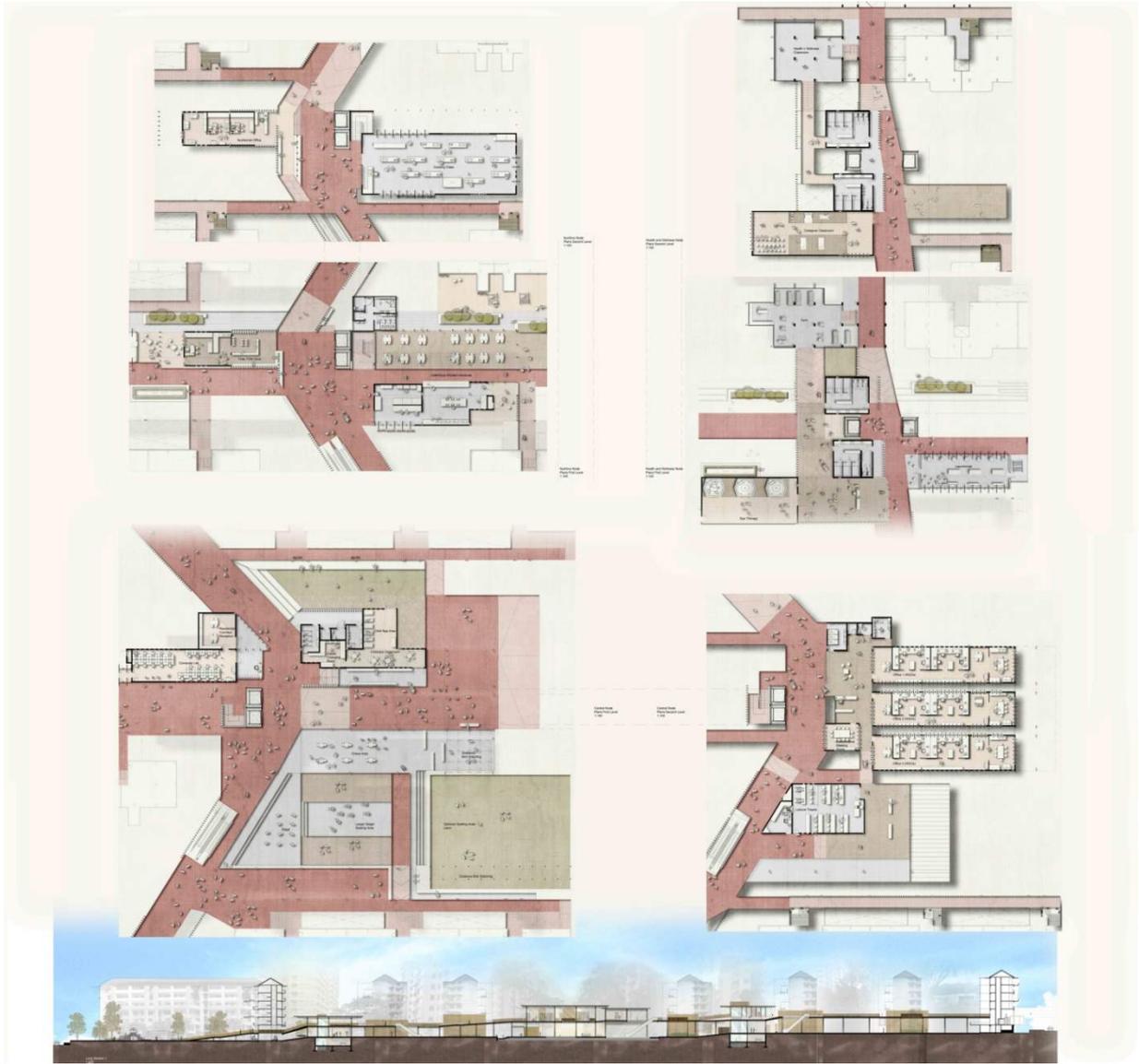


Illustration 31- Panel 3

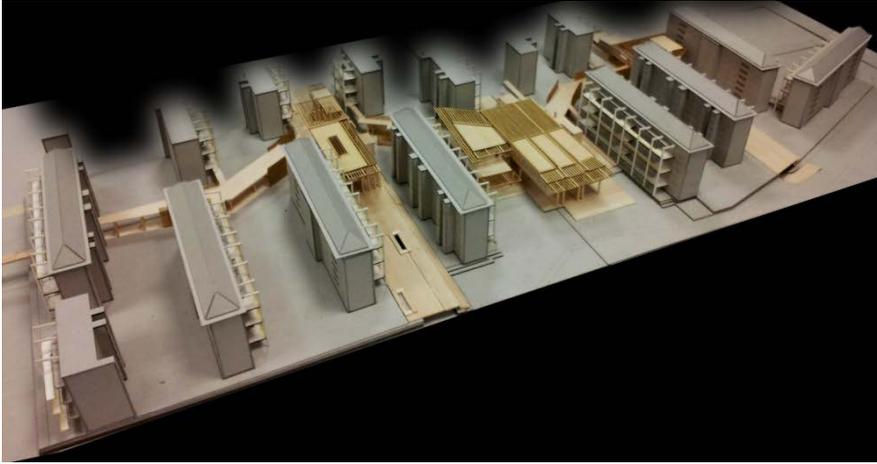


Illustration 32 - Model



Illustration 33 - Model

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7. APPENDIX

The criteria

Government's considerations when allowing lease extensions

For all categories of leases

Lease extension will be considered only if the proposed use and tenure are aligned with the government's planning intention and have the support of the relevant agencies.

Commercial use

Government may allow lease extension if it helps to achieve planning intention – such as substantial intensification in land use – significantly earlier.

Residential use

Government may allow lease extension if it results in land use intensification, mitigation of property decay and preservation of community.

Industrial use

Government may allow lease extension if there is substantial investment on the land or property and the use is in line with the prevailing economic priorities.

Conservation properties

Government may allow lease extension to provide incentive for lessees to carry out major conservation works.

Agricultural use

Government may allow lease extension if there is substantial investment on the land or property, and the proposed agricultural use remains relevant to strategic national needs.

Institutional use

Government may allow lease extension if the institution continues to serve the needs of the community.

Source: MinLaw/SLA

60% of lease top-up bids approved since 2007, Wed, Jun 23, 2010, The Business Times, By KALPANA RASHIWALA

INTERVIEWS

CLEMENT TEH

1) How long have you been living at Redhill Close?

AT LEAST 10 YEARS...so i am a "new " resident

2) What do you think about the SERS as a means of 'upgrading' and 'intensification of land'? (do you have a rough idea of what several residents feel about the SERS scheme in relation to Redhill?)

SERS now is just the authorities exploiting their old estate top make money. i think it is very shameful that they did this with disregard to the oldest community just because they are usually quiet in speaking up on these matters.

3) What made you choose to live in Redhill Close? Or if you have been living here your whole life, is there something you like in particular? (e.g convenience, character of the place, familiarity etc)

I am an architect, My work is all over singapore. It make sense to live somewhere more central without paying a large bomb. What cost me a 5 room flat in the past garner me to buy this three room flat to aid transport problem. When you live in redhill, you are oblivious of the MRT problems. (Really)5 Do you think there is an informal community present in Redhill Close (with the neighbors)?

5) Are there activities spontaneously organized among the neighbors?

Yes all neighborhoods has this especially an old one. It may not make sense to you because Singapore neighborhood community seldom gel. There is usually at least 2 event at the redhill market every month. This are mostly either Chinese religious or a market fair. There is a temple nearby that host some of these events. You have a strong Cantonese , Hokkien and teochew community here.(NO

big deal? the entire demographics of singapore has changed, so you are looking at the old singapore community style). There was also high crime rate from 1955 to 1995.This shows the residents were truly simple people making ends meet. So we see low income people mixed with other people today. I still see resident hoarding cardboard boxes and cans back home. You cant but help them carry them back. There are also a few mediums living here. There used to be an Chinese orchestra open air karaoke.....that seems to have died.

6) Are there any commonly seen scenes in the estate that you think is unique to Redhill Close? Or what do you think is unique about the estate and worth saving?

You need to read the facebook page for these answers there are many. If you want to talk about the architecture, make an appointment and i will speak to you in detail.

This estate is worth saving because it has a few key points involved:

- a. senior citizen help is alive here and was first pioneered here
- b. a wide spread of generation lives here which is comparable to GEYLANG BALESTIER & KOVAN & STENNETTE ESTATE unlike HDB you see them in groups of baby boomers, genx (mostly sengkang and punggol) and genY in BTO flats.

c. the flats were developed in relation to the Colonial show of strength after an embarrassing surrender from the Japanese. This was built along side with paya lebar airport and queenstown. The colonial Secretary (the man in charge of everything outside Britain) personally came to visit (see the old photos)

d. many were demolished, but this is one of the earliest mass housing after the war. The first president was seen visiting it. It was a stark contrast to the kampung that was alive nearby. Estates like tong bahru were not for people from squatters or kampung, they were for middle class people in 1930's before a post war population boom (evidently because of CAR GARAGES found in Tiong Bahru)

e. previous mass housing was done in the form of the shop house. This wasn't and it is probably the only one left.

Edmund Chua

Sorry Late reply,
din realised you sent me the questions

1) How long have you been living at Redhill Close?
3 years, but in Redhill estate since 1985

2) You said you have been affected by SERS twice! Where did you live previously?
Former blk 77, Redhill Rd, been torn down for SERS, and the built the few blks of 30 Storeys, Oppo Redhill MRT now

3) What do you think about the SERS as a means of 'upgrading' and 'intensification of land'? (do you have a rough idea of what several residents feel about the SERS scheme in relation to Redhill?)
I had asked HDB before, when they propangate "Thumbs up for SERS" was that a indicator or full survey?
How did they conducted the survey? simple yes/no answer?
did the residents 100% happy when you have to move from a fully paid up unit to one that is in debt now? Did they move happily or had no choice but to move and make the best of the situation.
Wat about making people use up the "1st timer chance" and forced the residents to use up the CPF loan chances?

Upgrading, yes, but frankly, at same time, families lost somethings too. either location or monetary, ur good neighbours for many years are now separated and you need make new friends, nothing against that tho, more against on the location selection issues.

HDB tells the truth, but not the whole truth.

an example, when KBW said HDB designs did not shrink for last 15 years..... he was not wrong, It was meant as a statement to pacify the general public. And as a housing agent, I totally agree and immediately saw what he had meant. Then HDB give all sorts of examples to explain family members had shrink and it is actually more living spaces per person.

BUT if you compare against HDB designs for last 20/25 years?

Finally HDB gave a explanation that if vs those >15 yrs, size had shrink. Go and search for that HDB clarification article.

Not sure how this story relates to your thesis, but it may give you some insights to look at it as a full picture.

For our SERS, worst thing is when everything is put on waiting, eg, waited 8 months for the compensation to be finalised, and even now, we are only given the banding of prices for next unit and not the exact price, yet they expect us to make selection of 2/3/4/5rm. Ask HDB to confirm if my parents can reuse the CPF refund from existitng unit and HDB replys can only do the appeal in 2016....

Nevertheless, after this plot is cleared, whatever gains from the land is of no issue since the Land acquisition act had stated once compensation is paid out, the "evicted" owners / lessee has n further claims.

You go n do the research, If SERS is such a good programme, why was there a blank of 3 years from 2008 till 2010? was there a "critical factor" that had caused it to stall? go and check out the article that MBT had said regarding SERS, few years ago.

and what was the critical factor that resurrected this programme? Why was there a U turn in policy all of sudden?

2011 had an intensification of 4 SERS projects announce. why?

and this year 2012, no SERS announced site?

Overload?

not popular?

As HDB said it is such a good thing, then why make a blast in 2011 with 4 SERS n then nothing in 2012?

Why did a good "THUMPS UP Programme" kept silent for 3 years from 2008 to 2010?

Go and check out how many SERS announced sites they used to have per year and see where the trend dwindle n stopped.

Try to see if you can match the timeline with other Govt policies

you do your research 1st and maybe you have some conclusion.

I have my views and opinions, but I would prefer you draw your own conclusions from your own research. I do not want to cloud your mind with my opinions now.

4) What made you choose to live in Redhill Close? Is there something you like in particular? (e.g convenience, character of the place, familiarity etc)

Been here since 1985

Blk 77 (former)

Blk 63B

Blk 21

Blk 5

Moved few times since I had came into Redhill.

Initially was the convinence, then while scouting the SK/Pung/JW new towns in early 2000s, really not to my taste. so stay put here even tho I moved few times

5) If you can make a cursory estimate, what kind of people live within the estate? Families with children? Elderly? Young families? Or is there a diverse mix?

Clement said can be found in his web, "Last chance to stay in Redhill"

6) Do you think there is an informal community present in Redhill Close (with the neighbours)? Are there activities spontaneously organized among the neighbours?

I believe the RCs n CC do line up prog from time to time.

There are definitely neighbours who plays MJ or go KaraOK, how big the groups I am not sure.

7) Are there any commonly seen scenes in the estate that you think is unique to Redhill Close? Or what do you think is unique about the estate and worth saving?

One of the 1st SIT flats to have lift.

The original Hock Lee Bus terminal is aly gone.

And frankly, I personally think the beauty of the architecture of the building had been marred by the addition of facade in 1983.

but as for surroundings, I think it will be a waste to see the mature trees gone.

(there is now only 2 mature trees left oppo redhill MRT, behind bus stop, there used to be rows n rows. I suspect the Henderson replacement sites mature trees will be gone too.)

with the trend now, I foresee this plot going for another residential project after we are cleared and SLA raises the Plot ratio so it can build higher. I doubt they will keep any of the buildings, the buidings are old, but not that old, and you cant make 1 whole block as a town house of the new condo. LOL

On entirely different note, Check out this web on other olden days of SG,<http://remembersingapore.wordpress.com/> Cheers