



RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF BACK LANES IN  
TERRACE HOUSING IN PRECINCT 9, PUTRAJAYA  
TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD

BY

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for  
the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning

Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design  
International Islamic University Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

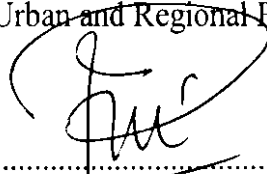
A back lane can be defined as a narrow street behind buildings which plays various functions and is the basic feature in terrace housing development. A study on the effectiveness of utilization and provision of back lanes in sustainable neighbourhood planning is initiated based on the issues regarding back lanes in terrace housing planning. The research focuses on residents' perception towards the existing condition and functions of backlanes, the impact to the homeowners' privacy, community development and social interaction in the study area as well as safety and security of the back lane. Precinct 9, Putrajaya was selected due to its new approach to housing development as Putrajaya has introduced the fenceless neighbourhood concept which gives impact on the utilization of back lanes. To do so, a random sampling of 65 sets of questionnaire was distributed to the residents in Precinct 9 who have been using back lanes. The data were further analysed using Relative Important Index (RII) and Spearman rho. The result indicates that there is significant relationship between respondents and the impact of different back lane designs. Further, result also shows that the residents were not satisfied with the safety and security within the neighbourhood area as property crimes always occur, often affected their privacy and there is lack of social interaction due to the shortage of gazebos and benches. Therefore, some suggestions were given such as upgrading placement of lamp posts, enhancing landscape elements by providing softscape and hardscape and maintaining the back lane areas with cooperation between the residents and local authority.

## ملخص البحث

الزقاق الخلفي يمكن تعريفها بأنها شارع ضيق وراء المبنى يحتوي على العديد من الوظائف وسمّة من سمات تطور شرفة السكن. الدراسات عن فعالية وشرع في توفير الزقاق الخلفي في تخطيط الجوار استنادا إلى قضايا الزقاق وراء خطة الإسكان المدرجات. وسيركز هذا الاستعراض على تصور الشعب للدولة ووظيفة القائمة، تأثير على خصوصية أصحاب المنزل، وتنمية المجتمع والتفاعل الاجتماعي في منطقة الدراسة وكذلك سلامة وأمن وراء الأخدود. بريست 9، بوتراجايا وقد تم اختيار بوتراجايا نظرا لاقتراب جديد للتنمية الإسكان بوتراجايا كما قدم مفهوم حي دون سياج أي أنه يعطي تأثيرات على استخدام الزقاق الخلفي. للقيام بذلك، وزعت على 65 الاستبيانات إلى السكان في بريست 9 الذين استخدموا ولديهم خبرة في زقاق خلفهم. البيانات باستخدام مؤشر هام النسبية (RII)، وارتباط سبيرمان (spearman). ويلاحظ القرار أن هناك علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المستطلعين وتأثير مختلف تصميم الظهر حارات. وإضافة على ذلك، فقد بينت النتائج أيضا أن السكان غير راض عن السلامة في الأحياء التي جرائم الملكية يحدث دائما، بالانزعاج خصوصياتهم وعدم التفاعل الاجتماعي نظرا لعدم وجود مواضع شرفة المراقبة ومقاعد. وبالتالي، عدة مقترحات مثل رفع مستوى الإضاءة الأعمدة، وزيادة عناصر المشهد لتوفير سوفتسكابي وهاردسكابي والاحتفاظ الزقاق والتعاون بين السكان والسلطات المحلية..

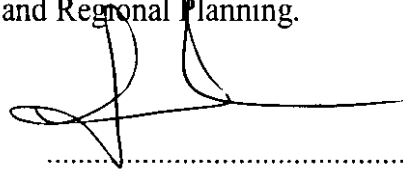
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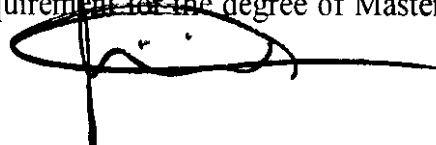
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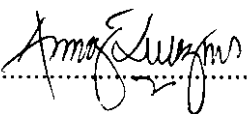


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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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**RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF BACK LANES IN TERRACE HOUSING  
IN PRECINCT 9, PUTRAJAYA TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD**

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*This thesis is dedicated to my beloved **parents and siblings**;  
Strong and gentle souls,  
Who taught me to trust in Allah,  
Who instil the interest of reading,  
and  
Believe in hardwork.*

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Completed this work, from the start until the end, no word I can say except Alhamdulillah, praise to Him, Allah the Almighty for His grace and blessing for giving me strength and opportunity to complete this dissertation.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Back lane is one of the design features of terrace housing planning in Malaysia. In general, back lanes are used for services and sanitary purposes behind the houses. Historically, back lanes in the new towns were wide enough for vehicles access, but nowadays the used of back lanes changed (Seo et al., 2011). There are issues and problems rose lately because of back lane is known as a dirty street, dull and crime cases happened at the areas.

The research focused on the condition and function of back lane, the impact to the homeowner's privacy, community development in the study area as well as safety and security at the back lanes areas.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Year to years, the new development emerged parallel to the urban and cities planning around the world. This is due to the increasing demand in job opportunities and people migrating from rural to urban settlement. Thus, market demand on the housing and residential area is also increased in order to fulfil the need. According to Syafiee (2004), urbanization can be defined as the cities developed and the growth of the population living in the urban areas which will affect the economic, social and political transformations as stated by Reynolds (1989) and Drakakis (1987).

The rapid construction of the terraced housing in Malaysia occurred over past four decades as initiative developed by the government and private developers to meet the increasing number of demand in the housing market. Besides, terrace housing also continues to become most popular type of houses among Malaysian until today. Terrace houses also known as “row house” in certain countries, and it was adopted from the British terrace house design (Ahmad Hariza et al., 2006). Generally, terrace houses are repetitive and monotonous design whereby the boundaries of the houses are determined by the chain-linked fences or brick wall. However, nowadays the design of terrace housing planning has changed with new design of fenceless terrace houses is introduced as part of sustainable residential planning which focus on social neighbourhood interaction between the residents.

A sustainable neighbourhood can be defined as an area that provides mixed use of amenities and services to its residents with a feeling of community as well as a place where they want to live and work not only now but in the future too (Vikneswaran, Mohd. Said, & Zakaria, 2010). The design of sustainable neighbourhood will focus on the community development that reflects to environmental, social and economic perspectives which can contribute to a high quality of life. Community development is a part of elements in neighbourhood planning.

Neighbourhood planning consists of facilities and services to the residents. People will choose their place to stay which meet their preferences such as adequate facilities and amenities in order to increase their quality of life. Generally, the residents tend to spend their leisure time in the neighbourhood area with various activities within the area. According to Lovejoy (2006) as cited in Campbell et al. (1976), the environments of residents basically consist of three different realms that

contribute to residential satisfaction; the housing unit, the community and the larger community.

Meanwhile, Norainah et al. (2012) highlighted there are three factors that contribute to quality of neighbourhood namely physical, social and economics aspects. There are four categories under physical factors that are dwelling units, facilities, services, accesibility and surrounding environment. Other than that, physical elements also relates to architectural, urban planning spaces and environment condition such as crime, security control and community relations.

The function of back lane in neighbourhood planning is essential as for the fire breaks and passageways behind the houses. Thus, in neighbourhood planning there are guidelines and acts on the provision of back lanes as part of pyhsical elements in neighbourhood planning. For instance, in Universal Building by Laws (UBBL) it was stated that back lane for residential area is an open space between boundary.

However, back lanes in Malaysia were treated as neglected spaces behind the houses as the residents often used the back lane for garbage bins and it is dirty. Besides, it is also a place where crimes always occured because the area is lack of visual appreance. The design of the back lanes are currently change to meet the quality of neighbourhood planning in terms of a high quality of life in the urban area. One of the physical factors of neighbourhood planning is accesibility around the area such as padestrian walkways and roads. Hence, with the provision of back lanes and regarded as walkways, it can create liveable living condition and social interaction between the community. Redesinging the back lanes connected to open backyard for people to pass by the area somehow can distract the homeowner's privacy. The backyard is an open space without fence, and it can expose the owner to the crime.

Hence, this study will focus on the effectiveness of planning and utilisation of back lanes with the new concept of fenceless neighbourhood planning in Precinct 9, Putrajaya. The study also will focus on how residents utilize the back lane, functions, conditions, maintenance and finally suggest solutions and recommendations in order to make it functional and conducive.

### **1.3 CASE STUDY**

The study area has been chosen is Precinct 9 located in Federal Administrative Government in Putrajaya, located 25km from Kuala Lumpur. In 1998, Precinct is 9 is the earliest housing development in Putrajaya. Thus, with new concept, planning and design, government quarters developments also were focused at Precinct 9. Other than that, fenceless concept in Putrajaya was introduced and made it one of the pioneers of the new approaches in neighbourhood development in Malaysia. As the fenceless concept was applied there, it also will affect the design of the back lane area.

### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In terrace housing planning and design and utilities, back lane is important for the accessibility behind the houses especially for fire safety. Back lane also can create better living environments as one of the physical elements in residential planning for social and community interaction. However, in today's scenario, the functions of back lane are neglected and misused by some residents.

As reported in Taman Bakariah, Johor, the back lane of the residential area replaced with the open dumping site at the densely populated area (Sinar Harian July, 2012). On top of that, issues of back lanes also related with the waste of land in urban neighbourhood area because back lane is treated as the place for garbage collection only.

In addition, residents in Taman Len Seng and Alam Damai were faced the problem at their back lanes especially in term of cleanliness and health. This is because some of owner neglected and mistreated the back lane as a place for garbage. Besides, flood also happened because of the drain was clogged by the rubbish (Utusan Malaysia, 2010). Thus, the residents are very concerned about the safety of the environment surrounds them.

Furthermore, some of the residents mistreat the original purpose of back lane space. For instance, they make alteration to their home whereby they modified the back lane area into a storage area. However, house modification was done in order to meet ones' desire toward comfort and achieve the functionality of the house (Erdayu et al., 2010). As the result, the neighbours will feel dissatisfaction and discomfort with this housing condition as the houses become closer to each other. The visual appearance of the area can be distracted and ventilation and lighting cannot penetrate into the houses. Consequently, if the lighting and ventilation in the houses are not enough, it will affect health condition and quality of life in the neighbourhood area.

Back lane in the residential area is dull, narrow and dirty. Besides, it is a place where crime frequently occurred. As the result, most of the windows and doors of houses are fitted with security grilles, to prevent theft; the back lane is seen by the some population as negative features in terms of security (Nurdalila Saji, 2012).

However, according to Planning Guideline, installation of grill at the back lane area is prohibited because it can distract fire safety route.

For this research, there are some issues and problems related as listed below;

1. Back lanes are not serving their actual function to the residents due to residents' behaviour.
2. The utilization as well as location of backyard and kitchen of the houses area currently facing the back lane which can distract the privacy of the owner.
3. Back lane resulted in property crime within the neighbourhood area.
4. Provision of back lane discourages residents' social interaction between neighbours.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION**

The following research questions are putted forward as referred to problem statements:

1. What is the existing function and condition of the back lane area?
2. How the design of back lane will affect the homeowner's privacy?
3. What is the degree of safety and security to the owner as the fenceless houses were surrounded by the open back lane?
4. How the design of the back lane can improve social interaction among the residents?

## **1.6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims of this study are to identify the effectiveness of terraced houses back lane in sustainable neighbourhood planning from the residents' perception towards back lane design as to improve the condition, fiction and quality of neighbourhood area as liveable community development.

There are 4 objectives have been formulated in order to achieve the goal;

1. To identify the existing function and condition of the back lane behind the houses.
2. To examine the design of terrace house back lane which affects the privacy to the owner
3. To investigate the degree of safety and security in the back lane area and to the owner.
4. To evaluate the design of the back lane can contribute to the social interaction within the community.

## **1.7 SCOPE OF STUDY**

The provision of back lanes is needed and can be found in other land uses not only in residential but commercial and industrial area. This study will focus on the effectiveness of the utilization and the design of back lanes in neighbourhood area. In order to manage the research, the scope of study covered on the condition and utilization of back lanes area.