

RM1,000 PER SQ FT

KG BARU FOLK WANT MORE DETAILS

Govt should go to the ground and explain new offer, say landowners

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KAMPUNG Baru folk have chosen to exercise caution with regard to the government's increased offer of RM1,000 per sq ft to secure ownership and develop what has become among the most sought-after pieces of real estate here.

The landowners, who reside in what is widely deemed to be the last surviving Malay enclaves in the city, while encouraged by the improved offer, want the authorities to give more details about the offer.

A longtime resident, Shahrom Mohd Harun, said he was grateful that the offer had been improved from the previous price of RM850 per sq ft.

"I am thankful for the offer because it means that we can start moving on with regard to development. I hope other landowners would consider the offer.

"However, I think the government should go to the ground and explain the new offer to the landowners to avoid miscommunication and confusion," he said.

Shahrom said most of the landowners had previously declined to sell their land because they were sceptical of the direction of the development and the nature of the offer.

The 74-year-old said he, like



Federal Territories Minister Khalid Abdul Samad says the RM150 share scheme allows landowners a 15 per cent stake in the Kampung Baru redevelopment project. FILE PIC

other landowners, had waited decades for Kampung Baru's redevelopment to begin, and even longer for a tangible offer to be made.

"The government needs to be clear in informing us about the direction of the development. Some landowners are sceptical about the direction it is taking.

"In one of my notes to the government, I had suggested a development area of 10 per cent for starters. If they could build 4,000

residential units in that space, it would boost the level of confidence of residents," he said.

Shahrom also voiced his concern over the proposed RM150 per sq ft rate distribution by way of shares, which would reportedly give buyers a 15 per cent stake in a special purpose vehicle that would be set up for the project.

He said the government needed to be clear in explaining this. "They must be clear about the

shares, whether it is transferable or not, because the temptation is there and there may be repercussions.

"They need to clarify this to the landowners," he said.

Another landowner, Nur Dzulfafian Idris, 45, said he was not in favour of the share option and would rather secure a sale price of RM1,000 per sq ft in full.

"I'm concerned about the SPV shares and possibility that the share value might drop. What

would happen to the shareholders then?

"If the share value goes down, then this offer is pretty much the same as the previous offer," he said.

Dzulfafian also wondered about the fate of the landowners in the event there was a change in government.

"What happens to the landowners then? All these need to be spelt out in detail before we say yes or no to the offer."

Landowners told to submit feedback on offer by Nov 30

» From Page 2

He said banks had written to offer packages.

The gross development value of the area was around RM30 billion, he added.

He urged landowners to submit feedback forms to the Kampung Baru Development Corporation (PKB).

"We urge Kampung Baru landowners to send their feed-

back on the redevelopment plans, including those who previously expressed objections."

He said those who had agreed were not required to resubmit the forms.

The deadline is Nov 30.

He said PKB officers would meet landowners and explain the government's offer.

"If possible, we expect to get a decision and finalise everything

by June next year, including landowners' agreement."

He declined to comment on the referendum in respect of a certain percentage of 5,000-odd lot owners whose consent were needed to kickstart the redevelopment.

"To the best of our ability, we will go for 100 per cent consent."

He said land ownership remained a problem, but the gov-

ernment could keep the funds and shares in a trust until legitimate owners came forth bearing proof.

He hoped the shares would not be sold to others.

"If possible, we don't want the shares to be sold. It is for landowners to get benefits and returns."

The 120-year-old Kampung Baru covers a 120ha area in the middle of the city and 80ha has

been earmarked for redevelopment.

Of the 80ha, 62ha is privately owned.

The issue of redeveloping the enclave has been bandied about for the past few decades.

However, the sheer number of landowners and the fact that some are unregistered, have died or are embroiled in small estate disputes, have complicated matters.