

## PROPERTY TAKE

# Subang Parade plans renewable energy initiatives

➤ More green measures are in the pipeline for the energy-efficient mall

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**PETALING JAYA:** Hektar Real Estate Investment Trust (Hektar REIT), which was recently recognised for energy efficiency initiatives for its flagship shopping centre Subang Parade, will next focus on renewable energy at the mall, such as installing solar panels, bio-gas co-generation and exploring other green initiatives like rainwater harvesting.

Datuk Hisham Othman (*pix*), the CEO and executive director of Hektar Asset Management Sdn Bhd, the manager of Hektar REIT, said there are numerous different technologies that can be installed, such as an intelligent building energy management system and a building-monitoring solution.

"If the technology is available, this will enable us to fine-tune control of all systems to reduce energy consumption and operational costs, enhance the comfort of building users, and refine aesthetic features to create optimal retail and leisure environments," he told *Property Take*.

Hektar REIT's Subang Parade was selected as the first runner-up winner under the Asean Energy Efficient Building category and *Retrofitted Building* sub-category at the Asean Energy Awards & Gala Dinner in Bangkok last month. In August, Subang Parade emerged as the sole recipient at the National Energy Awards in Kuala Lumpur under the Energy Efficiency Building - *Retrofitted Building* sub-category.

"We have spent about RM7 million to change our entire air conditioning and mechanical ventilation (ACMV) system and about RM800,000 to change all our lightings at Subang

Parade but we are now enjoying about 32% savings on our electricity consumption. We implemented the (energy efficiency) measures in 2017 and we have RM1.4 million savings on electricity bills every year since 2017 for Subang Parade," said Hisham.

He said Hektar REIT plans to introduce a "green lease" by providing new and existing retailers of Subang Parade "green" guidelines for store fit-out design, and educating tenants on the various awareness activities to encourage them to become "green" and sustainable.

"We have house rules and regulations that our existing and new tenants must comply to operate in our centre and they will need to design their shop concepts based on environmentally sustainable objectives.

"They are also required to maintain their stores according to the green work environment. The requirements differ according to the type of stores, as the energy use will also differ. For example, department stores, supermarkets, restaurants, cinema and other leisure entertainment centres will have higher requirements. We will also carry out more educational campaigns for shoppers and the public to help us reduce the mall's carbon footprint," he added.

Hisham said Hektar REIT is focused on long-term sustainability and Subang Parade marked its first step into energy-efficiency initiatives. It retrofitted the ACMV system at the mall, which involved the replacement of the less efficient chillers, pumps and cooling towers as well as installation of automated/dynamic building management system in 2017 with Intellisense Sdn Bhd as its technical partner.

These resulted in a 34% average reduction in

electric consumption, translating to a 34% reduction in carbon emission to 7.0 million kgCO<sub>2</sub> in 2018 from 10.6 million kgCO<sub>2</sub> in 2016. This meant savings of up to 36% in the mall's average monthly electricity bill in 2018.

"Why we decided to do it was because our business' biggest impact to the environment is energy consumption and generally, more than 65% of our malls' energy consumption is contributed by the ACMV."

Among the measures that Hektar REIT had taken were to review and readjust the loading of all chillers and control the temperature, reset all operation times of major equipment, which included chillers, exhaust system, smoke spill, pumps, lifts and escalators, on top of being more strict on the servicing of air-handling unit (AHU) and fan coil unit (FCU) systems.

"We have also carried out the application for off-peak tariff rider for all our shopping centres and reduced maximum demand, which also meant coordinating with tenants' equipment operation time. Our team is also considering solar panels, heat reflection sheets, tinting windows, heat repellent roofing and air management system (permeability and tightness)."

In addition to energy performance, these buildings' indoor environmental qualities such as air quality, ventilation, thermal comfort and lighting performance are set at suitable levels and evaluated to ensure compliance to avoid compromise in functional performance, and health and comfort in the pursuit for energy efficiency.

Other initiatives include changing all the lightings (high bay lights and down lights) to LED lightings, managing the operation time of major equipment (energy management), preventing air leaks and installing air-curtains and reflective sheets to windows and glass doors, monitoring the temperature of the mall to be constantly at 24°C (not too cold or too hot) and adjusting the loading of the chillers, regular servicing and maintenance of AHUs and FCUs, as well as installing motion sensors to escalators.

Shopping centres consume high energy volume compared with other types of buildings, owing to their huge lighting load, large and



fluctuating number of shoppers and long operating hours. This leads to significant demand for air-conditioning and lighting which is related since lighting affects the internal heat load and surplus heat that must be removed from the building. Hence, energy efficiency improvement is necessary for shopping centres.

Other green initiatives that Hektar REIT embarked on include cashless parking (Touch n Go and Visa Paywave), electric cars charging stations, recycle bins, electronic & electrical wastes collection, Go Green campaigns, no plastics and no straws joint campaign with tenants as well as green lungs & landscape throughout the mall compounds.

Hisham said it intends to implement similar energy efficiency initiatives at its other properties.

Besides Subang Parade, Hektar REIT's portfolio of commercial properties includes Mahkota Parade (Malacca), Wetex Parade & Classic Hotel (Johor), Central Square (Kedah), Kulim Central (Kedah) and Segamat Central (Johor).

"A study will be carried out for each shopping centre to analyse its separate requirements. Following the success at Subang Parade, we definitely want to extend our best practices to all our properties."

Hisham said every building requires different upgrading works and it depends on factors such as type of building, layout, equipment and system.