TOURISM, COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT: SITING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE THE TOURISTS’ EXPERIENCE IN COASTAL RESORTS OF THE WEST MALAYSIAN PENINSULA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of siting to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts of three case study sites in the West Malaysian Peninsula namely, the Langkawi Island, Pangkor Island and Port Dickson. It analyses the siting policies and practices of coastal resorts and attributes of the tourists’ experience based on their verbal expressions that might unfold more comprehensive siting strategies not only to enhance the tourists’ experience but also cater the demand for sustainable coastal resorts as well. The methodological approaches selected are in-depth interviews with the regulators and designers, coastal resorts morphologies and in-depth interviews with the tourists. The regulators are senior government officers in tourism, environmental agencies and local building authorities, whereas the designers are the architects and planners who were involved in the design and development of coastal resorts in the three case study sites. Meanwhile, the morphological analysis involves eighteen case study resorts where the interviews with tourists, both domestic and international were also conducted.

The finding demonstrates that the siting of the facilities through the policies and guidelines is essential in enhancing the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts. However, the fragmented nature of the resorts’ designs indicates that despite the specific policies or guidelines, the current practice of siting has originally emerged as a natural process in the surrounding environment or from designer’s creativity, which can be either positive or negative. It is uncertain that this has been the main intention of the regulators that the siting of the coastal resorts facilities to enhance the tourists’ experience should be in the way it is presently being practiced. The study demonstrates that the current strategies in the policies and guidelines lacked the integration of ideologies from the tourists. Here, the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts is multi dimensional and vivid in meaning that place particular emphasis on the activities, in which they physically engage in the resorts, the natural environment and their interactions with the host and other tourists. Consequently, incorporating these attributes into the strategies will give more meaning to the way siting should be practiced to enhance the tourists’ experience.

The study demonstrates that integration of tourists’ reflections and ideologies into the policies however, is lacking due to the lack of awareness and education on sustainable principles among the tourism stakeholders, ineffective collaboration among intergovernmental agencies, poor policies implementations in the decentralized and top-down approach and also from the influence of disruptive political interference. Despite the study limitations in terms of diversity in research methodologies, biasness and complexity in interpreting the data, the study provides a new theoretical perspective in the process of formulating more comprehensive siting strategies in the government initiated policies and regulations to control the actual practice. It can be concluded that the siting strategies are imperative not only to enhance the tourists’ experience but also as a long term solution to mitigate the predicted negative global climate change impact through a more sustainable design approach.
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis comprises of my original work, in which the appropriate acknowledgement has been made in the text of the thesis in relation to all other materials and work used, and that the thesis is less than 100,000 words, exclusive of tables, figures, reference, appendices and footnotes.

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Yours sincerely,

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DEDICATION

To my late father:

MAT RASCHID JASIN

Who taught his children the value of education in life and instilled me with the strength and perseverance to reach this far,

To my mother:

YANG MEOR ABDUL MAJID

Who in serenity, with all her motherly instincts, has supported me to be the best in everything I do and constantly reminding me of God,

To my dearest wife, my soul mate:

ROSLINA SHARIF

Who with all her love, has never stopped believing in me through this emotional roller coaster ride in my quest for PhD and in her trust, I will be an excellent PhD candidate,

And to all my children:

RINA, SARA, HAKIMI, FARAH AND ADIB

Who give me the strength and reasons to be the best in everything that I do.

To them, I dedicate this work.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While the main objective of PhD is the result, it is the process of learning that I learn to appreciate in my undertakings. It has been an emotional roller coaster ride from day one. At the end, I learned that taking the problems step by steps, enduring all the comments and to remain positive and persevere without procrastinating on the schedule are the virtues required in the process. This process will not be possible without the guidance of many who I would like to express my gratitude to.

I would begin with my supervisory panel committees. Firstly, I would like to personally thank my supervisor, Dr Scott Drake who has supported me from my confirmation of candidature to the completion of my study. His comments and critical suggestion has shaped the direction of this study. His words of encouragement to stick firm to the schedule has assured me to complete the study within the required time frame. Secondly is Dr David O Brien, who enthusiastically assisted my research structure and my writing. He constantly reminds me to shun away from over complexity in the way I think and write and this has became the key in completing my thesis. Dr David has also inspired me with his creative comments for further refinement in the research undertakings. Third is Dr Dominique Hes, who has acted tirelessly as my supervisor in the first year. As a member of the committee panel, she has always been there for me at every step of discussing my direction and updating my understanding on tourism and sustainable issues. Her motivation will be an inspiration in my future endeavour.

Along the journey there are a number of faculty members who have played an important part in my study. My sincere gratitude to Associate Professor Dr Paolo Tombesi, who in his extremely busy schedule, has managed to listen and guide me within a short period of time to pass through the PhD Candidature Confirmation. His sharp thoughts and eyes for details in addition to his analytical suggestions have helped me tremendously in understanding what I actually want to achieve in my study. To Associate Professor Dr Ray Green, who with his vast experience in the Malaysian research culture, education, design and field of landscape, has provided me several positive remarks in the process of upgrading my earlier proposals. To Mrs. Jane Trewin, the faculty post graduate student advisor, for looking after me by making sure all the paper works are up to date and constantly encouraging me to never give up whenever I was feeling down. My sincere gratitude is to all.
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Lastly and most importantly, this thesis has been supported by the International Post Graduate Research Grant from 2008 – 2009 which includes the travelling grant for my fieldworks. The grant has significantly assisted me in completing all the data collection process and the thesis as scheduled. For that, I thank the faculty for giving me the opportunity to pursue my PhD in this fantastic research environment.
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<td>AIT</td>
<td>Alliance International De Allen Tourisme</td>
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<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Alternative Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIMEAGA</td>
<td>Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines East Asian Growth Triangle</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Circumstantial Alternative Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDSE</td>
<td>Construct Domains of Service Experience Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>Deliberate Alternative Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOE</td>
<td>Department of Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOST</td>
<td>Domains of Service Experience Theory</td>
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<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>EPU</td>
<td>The Economic Planning Unit</td>
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<td>ESCA</td>
<td>Environmentally Sensitive Coastal Area</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>Global Climate Change</td>
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<td>GCD</td>
<td>Guidelines for Coastal Development</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Productivity</td>
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<td>GOM</td>
<td>Government of Malaysia</td>
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<td>IMT-GT</td>
<td>Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle</td>
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<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<td>IT [1]</td>
<td>Interview [with] Tourist [Respondent]</td>
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<tr>
<td>KLIA</td>
<td>Kuala Lumpur International Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBA</td>
<td>Local Building Authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCC</td>
<td>Langkawi City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCTD</td>
<td>Lifecycle Concept of Tourists Destinations</td>
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<td>LEED</td>
<td>Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTPC</td>
<td>Langkawi Tourism Planning Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHA</td>
<td>Malaysian Hotels Association</td>
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<td>MHLG</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing and Local Government</td>
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<td>MNRE</td>
<td>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</td>
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<td>MNS</td>
<td>Malaysian Nature Society</td>
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<td>MOCAT</td>
<td>Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism</td>
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<td>MoF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance Malaysia</td>
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<td>MPC</td>
<td>Manjung Municipal Council</td>
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<td>MSC</td>
<td>Multimedia Super Corridor</td>
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<td>NCER</td>
<td>Northern Corridor Economic Region</td>
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<td>NEP</td>
<td>National Ecotourism Plan</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>National Physical Plan</td>
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<td>NTPS</td>
<td>National Tourism Policy Study</td>
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<td>PLST</td>
<td>Plain Language Statement</td>
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<td>RAIA</td>
<td>Royal Australian Architecture Institute</td>
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<td>RTMP</td>
<td>Rural Tourism Master Plan</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Sustainable Indicators</td>
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<td>SIJORI</td>
<td>Singapore, Johore and Riau Growth Triangle</td>
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<td>SMT</td>
<td>Sustainable Mass Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSTIP</td>
<td>Samoa Sustainable Indicator Project</td>
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<td>STD</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Principles</td>
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<td>STI</td>
<td>Sonke Tourism Indicator</td>
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<td>STNP</td>
<td>The Second National Tourism Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIES</td>
<td>Tourism International Ecotourism Society</td>
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<td>TOMM</td>
<td>Tourism Optimisation Management Model (TOMM)</td>
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<td>TPMS</td>
<td>Tripartite 'Place Model' System</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAO</td>
<td>United Nation Atlas of the Oceans</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTC</td>
<td>World Tourism Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTTC</td>
<td>World Travel and Tourism Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation</td>
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<td>WWF</td>
<td>Malaysian World Wildlife Funds for Nature</td>
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<td>6MP</td>
<td>Sixth Malaysia Plan</td>
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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background: Why Am I Doing This Research?

As a lecturer in the Department of Architecture in University Putra Malaysia, I had the opportunity to bring my students for site visits as part of the design studio’s requirement. For resort projects, we managed to visit the local tourist destinations that include Langkawi and Pangkor Island, Port Dickson, Penang\(^1\) and the worth mentioning, the beautiful resorts in the East Coast primarily in Kelantan and Terengganu\(^2\). This is when my interest in the architecture and planning of tourism comes into play.

The visits were either for site investigations or precedence studies for the projects assigned in the studios. The students were always looking forward to these types of trips and so were we, the lecturers. For tourism projects, the visits usually incorporate resorts or tourism destinations that can be judged as either good or bad examples. Naturally, the design issues such as the siting of the facilities, aesthetic expression and construction technology are the typical subject matters that the students need to analyse and conclude in their findings. Later in the evenings, during the brainstorming session, each of the students shares his findings that are to be commented and discussed together by other students and the participating lecturers.

Indisputably, there are many resorts with exciting natural surroundings, attractive cultural experience and better equipped facilities in Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2009) where Huffadine (2000) defines as a place to make social contacts, attend social occasions and improve health and fitness. In a way, resorts make the environment more beautiful and add amenities to attract customers. In terms of planning, resorts should offer proximity and easy access to significant, natural, scenic, recreational and

\(^1\) It is one of the main tourism hub located in the Northern West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula.

\(^2\) Both are the North Eastern states in the Malaysian Peninsula where many beach resorts are located and their occupancies are affected of the monsoon season from November to January.
cultural amenities (Shwanke, 1997). While these are the key characteristics of good resorts, my personal view about the resorts is that there are several deficiencies in the planning and the design of the resorts. Excessive and badly planned tourism development affects the physical environment of the destinations (Archer et al., 2004). First, it is about the environmental issues concerning the location in relation to its coastal setback. In Port Dickson, for instance, I noticed that many of the resorts are constructed either very close to or beyond the shoreline. In investigating the accommodations structure above water, I had discovered that the spaces underneath them are filled with both sedimentary deposit and rubbish. Furthermore, the selection of conventional concrete and brick wall post and beam construction is not profiting the cause either. For this type of heavy construction technique, it requires a major piling work that can negatively affects the water and beach qualities of the coastal zone. In this case, the construction debris is improperly maintained and is being thrown onto the sea (Refer to Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1:** The construction of the accommodation units in Port Dickson which encroached beyond the shoreline using the conventional concrete post and beam construction on concrete piles. Source: Author

**Figure 1.2:** Improper sewage system in a resort in Port Dickson, where sewage is discharged directly towards the sea as indicated by the exposed manhole and outflow piping. Source: Author

Consequently, the unbearable conditions resulted in the spaces being left idle by the tourists who are staying in the resort. The small strip of coastal zone in the resort premise is no longer an attractive place for the tourist to indulge themselves. The spaces underneath the structures are dark and the water is murky with traces of sedimentation as they are not exposed to the sun. Beside this, the other problem caused by the construction is the obstruction of local access along the beach frontage.
By building the chalets offshore, it also prevents the continuous access not only for the tourist staying in the resorts but also for the locals who have the rights to use the beach as much as the tourists in the resort. The situation is also exacerbated by the inefficient discharge of sewage system to the sea. The main outflow piping from the sewage manhole can be seen jutting out towards the sea (Refer to Figure 1.2). While the system might be perceived to be properly maintained by the management, at a certain extent, the appearance of these pipes might have caused uneasiness to tourists who wished to swim in the sea or to simply enjoy the sun and scenery.

Physically, as far as I can remember from my early days, the urban-scape of Port Dickson has changed enormously from a serene to a congested town filled with many high-rise hotels to cater for the tourists. The resorts are now crowded with local and foreign travellers during the peak seasons. While this situation is good for the economy, it has also brought stress to the aesthetic and the maintenance aspects of the resorts. The lack of spaces for development has driven many hotels to extend their buildings towards the sea beyond the allowed coastal setback requirement. In many areas, the coastal zones are reclaimed to make provision for the development of new resorts. These have initiated some stress to the visual appearance of the surroundings and sense of uneasiness by the locals in addition to the negative consequences of this practice that were discussed earlier. In many areas, the uncontrolled commercial exploitation of tourism has produced unsightly hotels of alien design that intrude into the surrounding cultural and scenic environment (Archer et al., 2004). In terms of the view, it is safe to say that most hotel rooms are being planned and constructed to directly face the sea but at the same time, they also impose a disadvantage in terms of the view towards the building from the main roads as well (Refer to Figure 1.3).

![Figure 1.3: The view of the hotel corridors from the main road in Port Dickson. The elevation from the main road is not only unattractive compared to the elevation facing the sea but also obstructing the view towards the sea. Source: Author](image)

From the main roads, all I could see is the corridors that looked like a big chunk of concrete wall layers blocking my view towards the sea. I would then ask myself – do we really need the high-rise resorts in such a small beach strips? What is the rational to
reclaim the land beyond the existing coastline? How do the locals feel about it? And what do the tourists have to say about this? Here, the negative impact of one resort to the coastal environment can be very significant (Mc Namara and Gibson, 2008). It has been argued that sustainability in hotels is pivotal to produce cumulative improvement towards sustainable destinations, whilst making the whole [resort area] complete and thus stronger (Marin and Jafari, 2002). Thus, the economic integration of tourism between firms can be seen as a way to respond to competitions (Bramwell and Lane, 2000) and also maintenance as they began to degrade due to tourists excessive population resulting in undesirable aesthetics and uncomfortable experience (Burke and Kura et al., 2001). Furthermore, the deteriorating physical appearance of the resorts can also be regarded as an economic indicator by the virtue of not properly maintaining them. For example, several resorts appear to be in urgent need for major repainting job as reflected by the unsightly defective walls appearance. Meanwhile, the improperly maintained landscape also reflects to a certain extent the dire financial crisis faced by the coastal resorts in the area.

My second experience is in Pantai Cenang³, Langkawi. My students and I stayed in one of the low budget resorts, which is located amongst the upmarket resorts in the area. What I had observed is the existence of clusters of small resorts filled with the accommodation units and main doors facing each other while the back windows are facing the other resorts in the adjacent boundaries instead of towards the sea. As a result, the only thing that I could see from the inside my chalet is the other unit’s wall rather than having the luxury to enjoy the natural panorama of the beach and its surroundings. In response to this phenomenon, Urry (1992) stresses the increase importance of visual consumption or more generally aesthetic judgement in promoting positive tourists’ experience in resorts. A resort can be described as a system where the relation between the facilities is an important subset for tourists’ comfort (Dietvorst, 1995), in which the view and noise can be major factors. Meanwhile, in the resort case, the chalets are also built so close to each other that one can hear the noise originated from the next door units. Moreover, the sizes of the open spaces created in between the units are too small and insufficient for tourists to feel the sense of openness and to be comfortable in the resort.

Another major issue is the manner in which the landscape is being provided in the resort. The lack of landscaping near the beach frontage and the resort’s open space is apparent. Combined with the congested resort’s layouts, these create

³ One of the popular beaches and resorts in the Langkawi Island
inhospitable situations to the tourists and locals who want to enjoy the resort or the beach. In a way, the manner in which the accommodations are arranged in the layout also denies the continuous accessibility of tourists and the locals to the beach frontage. The resort is also observed to bar the public from entering the resorts to access the beach frontage (Refer to Figure 1.4). While the physical barricade was intended to block the traffic into the resort premise, it is also a clear indication of not permitting the public to access the resort. In this case, the resorts which have direct access to the beach (where there is no main road separating the hotels and the beach) have the advantages of providing the tourists the privacy as they limit access to locals and the hotels own guests.

Figure 1.4: The public are barred from accessing the Malibest Resort (the resort stayed during the site visit) premise in Langkawi Island to reach the beach frontage. This scenario can also be observed in many other adjacent resorts. Source: Author

In addition, there is also increased sedimentation observed occurring along the coastal zone of several resorts in the island. The lack of infrastructure, human resources, knowledge and political have contributed to the increased sedimentation owing to infrastructural development, improper sewerage and solid disposal, chemical pollution (pesticides and oil spillage) and over development (Wong, 1996; and Musa, 2000). The resorts are also being threatened by the coastal erosion because of their locations that are too close to the shoreline. Meanwhile, the use of hard and conventional man-made coastal protection methods such as rubble wall to counter the erosion has caused the loss of beach for swimming, which is both physically and aesthetically unpleasing (Refer to Figure 1.5 and 1.6).

There are also a few resorts constructed with insufficient setback; a situation which puts the buildings into risk (Refer to Figure 1.7). While in other cases, there are

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4 The “hard” measure is the generic name given to several types of structures that have been used to stabilise an eroding beach such as seawalls, bulkheads, revetments and groins which are found expensive, not eco-friendly and usually massive in size (Hegde, 2010). Most commonly used types are groins (Bartoletti et al., 1995).
traces of several resorts that were swept away by the erosion. This situation also results in the loss of public spaces where tourists can interact with the locals.

**Figure 1.5:** Sedimentation along the shoreline in the Porto Malai Langkawi due to the land reclamation and construction of coastal erosion protection. Source: Author

**Figure 1.6:** The Sheraton Langkawi is threatened by coastal erosions and protected by the hard protection measures which result in the loss of quality beach frontage. Source: Author

**Figure 1.7:** Insufficient coastal building setback in Pangkor Island which is less than the 15 meters from the high tide line requirement by the Local Authority. Source: Author

**Figure 1.8:** Improper siting of the accommodations facilities at the environmentally hazardous slopes in Pangkor Island. Source: Author
In addition, I also observed several resorts that are constructed on steep slopes due to the lack of spaces for extension within the resort's premise, which are environmentally hazardous (Refer to Figure 1.8). Consequently, these observations point to the need to avoid the negative impacts of tourism through longer term thinking and planning. Here the exploitation of places and people is not only unethical but also unprofitable in the long run as well (Theobald, 2004). Simultaneously, the practice of locating the facilities further from the main road has also resulted in insufficient view towards the sea.

Meanwhile, my third experience in Pantai Dalam\(^5\), Pangkor Island reaffirmed my belief that the coastal resorts in Malaysia need a paradigm shift in design. In many ways, I have discovered that the negative consequences to the particular resort's environment may originate from the external factors other than the location of the facilities itself. The condition is reflected by the ill-planned location of stalls along the road frontage (Refer to Figure 1.9).

![Figure 1.9: Improperly planned resort development fronting the commercial area in Pangkor Island. Source: Author](image)

The economic advantages of tourism have been extensively recorded (Tisdell, 2000) and it is more effective than other industries in generating employment and income in the less developed or country where alternative opportunities for development are more limited (Archer et al., 2004). For Archer, the growth of tourism may encourage many local craft, whereas hotels may create a market for local produce which call for realistic planning and effective enforcement of planning regulations to reduce possible conflict of interest and to conserve unique features of the particular resort destination. In relation to this, Hall and Page (2000) argue that the emerging tourists destinations in Southeast Asia is more complex where the addition of hawker stalls, souvenir sellers and the informal economy combined to create a distinct

\(^5\) A well known popular beach and resort area in the Pangkor Island.
entertainment district. However, the addition of the stalls can bring negative impact to the tourists’ destinations without proper planning.

As a Malaysian, I am embarrassed to see the resort’s beach frontage filled with food and souvenir stalls which are improperly located and designed that eventually disrupt the tourists’ views from the resorts. In addition, the sewerage effluent from the stalls is directed into the sea without a proper drainage system, a situation made worst with the overflowing gasoline used by boats. The smell of the dirty effluents is just unbearable. My initial response to this condition is that there must be a way the local business can be integrated into the design of the resort which can prevent this situation in a manner that the resorts can be sustainably operated by or supporting the locals through the properly designed commercial space. These spaces can either be integrated into the resort or outside the resorts vicinities with certain connectivity in the planning, which in turn will provide a conducive and comfortable environment for the locals to conduct business as well as interacting with the tourists.

Later in the evening, the students, during their findings’ presentations and brainstorming sessions could not hide their disappointments towards the condition of the coastal resorts in the areas. They did share my opinion that the resorts’ facilities have not been properly located and designed, which resulted in negative consequences to the coastal zones natural environment. In this case, they observed that the key in improving the coastal resorts is through having the appropriate siting strategies that emphasises on the environmental conservation whilst benefiting the local community and the socio-cultural factors.

All the personal experience during the site visits has opened up my eyes on the dire condition of the coastal tourism in Malaysia, specifically in the West Malaysian Peninsula and the need to improve the design quality. They have led me trying to understand the fundamental planning issues of the resorts – why are the resorts being planned haphazardly? Why do these problems emerge even though the tourists’ operators are required to submit their development plan to the local authority? If so, are the resorts being built according to the approved plan? And if not, what are the barriers to the development and to the authority in implementing their tasks? What are the regulations that are used to control the development? How can the local authority improve the situation? It can be concluded from my site observation that the problems are rampant in the small scale resorts. I could also sense that any design defects in the small resorts has also to a certain extent affected the other resorts in terms of tourists’ perception on the environmental quality of the particular tourism destination. The negative impact has triggered a negative domino effect to the surrounding resorts and
also towards the local community as the aesthetic value of the surroundings had
suddenly deteriorated. However, despite the problems facing Malaysia's predicament
of increasing development while conserving coastal resources, there is evidence that
Malaysia has shown some commitment to protecting its coastal resources in both the
local and international arena (Lee, 2010). The intention of ensuring environmental
protection whilst increasing economic development and a commitment to sustainable
development has been stated in the government policy objectives.

Meanwhile, the feedbacks from the tourists are also significant in leading me to
this foray. While most tourists agree that Malaysia has so many attractions to offer
such as the nice beaches, beautiful surroundings, friendly locals and nice cuisines as
the main attractions, they however, expressed their disappointments towards the
design and maintenance aspects of these resorts. Based on their experience, most feel
that our resorts can learn so much from other developed nations in terms of the
physical planning and design. In a way, the tourists feedbacks indicates that the
positive experience in a resort has much to do with the way the resort is designed
within the surrounding environment and the quality of facilities provided. Thoughtful
policy making and planning can do much to minimize the negative effects (Archer, et al.
2004) while Butler (2001) also stresses the importance of strategic planning and
economic factors in determining the environmental impact. The environment is an
important asset to the resort which needs a careful intervention with the built facilities.
In this case, tourists want the facilities to be carefully engaged with the environment
rather than destroying their natural value. One of the tourists was so disappointed and
expressed it by stating:

“Malaysians are very lucky...they have first class facilities [resorts] but with
the third class mentality… if this keeps going on then one day you might
not get any more beautiful beaches left.” (Personal communication with a
Tourist in Langkawi Island, 2008).

The above statement summarises the current condition of the coastal tourism
industry in Malaysia. On the brighter side, the quantity of resorts available to cater for
the local and international tourists is nevertheless sufficient. However, while the resorts
are well equipped with the amenities and trained personnel, the site experience on the
design of the resorts reveals that they obviously lack the intention not only to preserve
the environment but also the consideration of local socio-economic benefits.
Meanwhile, Hiew and Yaman (1996) identify the lack of environmental conservation
awareness and unintegrated management of natural resources as two main problems
in marine park management in Malaysia. Even though, tourism in Malaysia has grown
in a distinctive manner which reflects wider economic, political and socio-cultural conditions in the country, coastal resorts have been negatively affected by the speed of development, lack of controls and wrangling between federal and state authorities (Agarwal and Shaw, 2007). In regards to the social concern, there are reports in which tourism disturbs residents’ lifestyle in Penang (Hong, 1985) and sense of anxiety about declining moral standard in both Penang and Langkawi (Din, 1997).

Despite the negative apprehensions, most tourists believed that there are a lot of improvements that can be made to the design quality of the resorts. The industry has so much potential to be more sustainable as the infrastructures for its growth initiated by the government are well coordinated and already in place. This includes the availability of reliable means of transportation, travel agencies network and aggressive promotion internationally and locally to promote Malaysia as a premier tourists destination. Yet, many tourists interviewed felt that their visits were still below their expectations. My immediate perception from the tourists’ feedbacks is that the planning and design has not actually considered the tourists’ reflections and ideologies based on their experience in the process of developing the resorts. Coastal resorts development in Malaysia has been largely unplanned and spontaneous in order to meet tourists demand (Wong, 1998). For Wong, the design is encouraged by the developers’ pursuit for profit, the slow response by governments and the lack of enforcement although the relevant legislations maybe present. This is reflected by the individualistic and fragmented nature of the coastal resorts designs observed in the resorts’ site visits.

My visits to several coastal resorts in Southeast Asia have consolidated my belief that there is so much to do to improve the quality of the coastal resorts in Malaysia. There are few good examples of environmentally sensitive resorts in Malaysia but as a whole, I believe that many resorts are not yet successful in integrating the environment compared to the resorts in the neighbouring countries. There are many things that can be learned from the resorts in Bali, Indonesia and Phuket Island in Thailand especially the integration of the local culture in their planning as an attempt to integrate the local interest into the tourism industry. I could sense that the whole tourism stakeholders from the federal and the state government, resorts operators and the local community are working together to ensure that the tourists will be amazed by the authenticity of the tourists destinations and the environment. Now, collaboration and co-ordination seems to be occurring both as a consequence of planned and unplanned developments (Henderson, 2001). They have focussed on cultural and ethnic tourism

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6 Both are the premier coastal tourists’ destinations in the Southeast Asia region.
particularly issues to do with whether or not tourism is having positive or negative developmental effects on the sustainability or otherwise tourism activities (Hitchcock et al., 2009). As a result, ecotourism is becoming more important component as recognition of traveller taste that is encouraging such development (Dowling, 2000).

In summary, all of the above experiences and feedbacks transpired have encouraged me towards undertaking this study which sought to address the appropriate siting strategies to enhance the tourists experience in the West Malaysian peninsula coastal resorts. The challenge for me as a researcher here will be to explore and understand how the policies and guidelines initiated by the government and tourists' reflection and ideologies can be synergized into more comprehensive siting strategies that can improve the planning and design of the coastal resorts and further enhance the tourists’ experience.

1.2 Key Literature

This study investigates the planning and design aspects of coastal resorts, specifically the siting of resort facilities that include the accommodations, amenities, recreational facilities and the open spaces and their relationship with the environment and community in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula within the context of sustainable development. It explores the role of the regulators and designers in the way that the policies are being implemented, the strategies used in current practice and attributes of the tourists' experience that shape the design of coastal resorts. Consequently, the key literature on this subject supports my initial observation of the coastal resorts in Malaysia. It focuses on two important issues – the planning and design aspects and tourists’ on-site experiences.

Many countries consider tourism to be the vital ingredient in their overall regional development plans and policies and have long been seen as the symbol of progress and modernisation (Dieke, 1989). Tourism, combined with the natural attractions that a country possesses such as the sea, beaches and climates (Jenkins, 1991) can be developed as an industry with high economic value. Consequently, tourism development must be guided by a carefully planned policy and comprehensive planning approach to protect the natural and cultural resources (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2003). Thus, tourism planning and design have increasingly focused on two key development issues. The first is the environmental and social impacts caused by uncontrolled or ill-planned development of the coastal resorts. The second issue revolves around the need to integrate sustainable tourism development principles with existing environment and tourism activities through the appropriate planning measures.
in both the policies and practice to enhance the tourists’ positive experience and meet the demand for more environmentally friendly tourism options.

For many years the positive impacts of tourism have been well endorsed. However, in recent years, environmentalists, developers and managers of tourism and even tourists have raised important questions concerning the negative impact to the environment and the local communities (Gunn, 1998). The environmental impact is thus a major concern in tourism development. As reported in a United Nation’s study:

‘The environmentally erosive quality of tourism is now a subject of worldwide concern. It emphasises the damage being done to coastlines, aquatic ecosystem, islands…’ (Planning and Development…Region, 1976: 36)

Meanwhile, Williams (1987) observes that the ecosystem is the most sensitive to all development which includes the coastal systems, in which the environmental settings that become attractive to tourists are especially vulnerable. The environmental impact includes land degradation and land-use change, as well as the habitat and biodiversity loss resulted directly from the construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure through the clearing of mangroves, wetlands and beaches and the extraction of building materials (Hall, 1996). The more severe impacts of tourism however stem from the infrastructure and construction activities that entailed rather than the recreational activities themselves (Craig-Smith et al., 2006).

Uncontrolled and ill-planned tourism development in constructing the facilities has caused damages to the coastal environment, which include the destruction of natural barriers and changes to the sediment flow patterns and coastal erosion (Gossling, 2002). It also caused the loss of the physical beauty of the coastal area, especially where construction is moving closer to the water mark as a more appealing option for tourists. Tourism development becomes even more damaging as tourists prefer to visit the natural and cultural areas which are exceptionally delicate (Briguglio and Briguglio, 2000; and Kline, 2001). For example, the wetlands have been drained or reclaimed and the coastline has significantly been altered to make way for other facilities. Hotels have been built too close to the beach necessitating the construction of prohibitively costly erosion management structures that often lead to habitat destruction, whilst increase of sediment mobilisation and deterioration in water quality during construction can also be equally significant. Meanwhile, the invasions of tourists to a tourist’s destination can also bring negative impacts to the local communities. The negative social impacts ranged from the irritation to residents, cultural dislocation, introduction of conflicting
ideologies, promise of unattainable goals and increase community divisiveness (Mathieson and Walls, 1982).

The impacts were observed in the coastal tourism development in Malaysia, which is already aggravated by the impact of unplanned development of coastal resorts and impacts from the coastal environment such as the monsoon effects and coastal erosion (Wong, 1998). Consequently, the negative impact towards the environment and socio-cultural factors has emphasised the need for the sustainable tourism development.

The Brundtland Report defines sustainable tourism as:

‘Development which meets the needs of present tourists and host region while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future.’ (WCED, 1987: 43)

The concept of sustainable development has achieved virtual global endorsement as the new tourism industry paradigm since the late 1980’s (Gedfrey, 1996). It has been described as a positive approach intended to reduce the tensions and frictions created by the complex interactions between the tourism industry, visitors, environment and the communities which are the host to the holidaymakers (Bramwell and Lane, 1993). The discourse on the sustainable tourism development revolves around a central issue of how to manage the natural, built, and socio-cultural resources of the host communities. The objective is to meet the fundamental criteria of promoting the communities economic well being, preserving their natural and socio-cultural capital. The concept of sustainability not only provides good example of how alternative strategies can challenge the dominant assumptions of development (Sneddon, 2000) but also assists in understanding the complex socio-environmental conditions influenced by tourism.

The concept has also created the alternative tourism in opposition to the traditional mass tourism as the focus shift to striving for developing tourism within the broader principles of sustainable development. This is in line with the increasing demand by tourists for better environmentally sensitive resorts which can be achieved through the appropriate planning strategy. Recent trend indicates that the resorts are beginning to specialise and reinforce niche marketing with the emergence of  

7 A historic milestone in international environmental law because it represented the first attempt to integrate economic development and environmental conservation through the concept of sustainable development (WCED, 1987)
environmentally sensitive and specialised resorts, which focus on unique recreational activities and natural attraction. These special interest market segments are likely to flourish in the future as tourists are becoming more sophisticated in their level of environmental consciousness and are increasingly seeking for new opportunities to learn about other cultures and demanding high quality and well planned tourist destinations (Schwarniger, 1984). All the concerns above signify the need for a better planning, specifically the siting process for coastal resorts. In relation to the sustainable development, integrating stakeholders, such as chief regulators, designers and tourists views is also paramount in the siting process as well.

The siting or physical setting of the facilities therefore, is an attempt to synergise all the facilities with the tourism activities and the environmental resources. To attract the tourists, resorts should be designed to be as original as possible by adapting the development plan, scale and design of buildings to reflect the character of the surrounding and climate using techniques wherever possible. The techniques called for environmental integration that includes establishing a good relationship between the resort as a whole and its natural environment (Inskeep, 1991). For Inskeep, the environmental interaction, the institutional practice and tourists’ experience, the relationship between the arrangement of the facilities and circulations and use of open spaces in the tourism destination play significant role over the place authenticity.

Tourists transform the physical structure of the area visited by them through their distinctive interpretation of the product offered. This means that the siting determine the way they interpret the product. For Dietvorst (1989), this group’s specific combinations of spatially related attractions and facilities are called ‘complexes’, which is a spatially differentiated whole and in different spatial scale and can be conceptualised as a system where different product elements and the relations between these elements are established by the tourists’ movements. Dietvorst further asserts that the amenities appear to be related with each other where the whole is more attractive than each separate amenity that influences the tourists’ spatial experience.

The emphasis on sustainable development, tourists demand for specialised resort niche and the way the tourists interpret the positive experience through the siting of the facilities have also raised the importance of integrating the tourists’ reflections and ideologies based on their on-site experience in the particular coastal resort. Tourists’ experiences are a complex combination of factors which shape the feelings and attitude of tourists towards their visits (Page and Dowling, 2002). In this vein, the tourist’s perspective has also been advocated as essential in achieving a symbiotic relationship between the visitors and resources (Mc Arthur and Hall, 1996). Thus, the
tourists’ experience is regarded as an important element in influencing satisfaction in the tourists’ consumptions of the resorts, whereas satisfaction results from the experiential nature of consumptions and contains both perceptions and experiences (Otto and Ritchie, 1996). It can be emphasised at this point that understanding the dimensions which contribute to the tourists’ experience is therefore paramount to quality planning and design as well as contributing to the sustainable resource management in preserving the coastal resorts’ environment.

From the above key literature, it is imperative to understand how the siting process could enhance the tourists experience and demand for environmentally friendly resorts whilst mitigating the negative impacts to the environment and local community. While the key literature supports the observations that I had made in my preliminary research undertaken when I took groups of students on site visits to various coastal developments, I believe that the issue is quite complex and will involve many stakeholders. There appears to be no easy solution to the problem.

1.3 Problem Statement

The conjunction of the two key design issues within the precept of the sustainable development; the environmental and social impact; and the enhancement of tourists’ experiences imposes a challenge to the sensitivity and creativity of the tourism planners or architects in the process of designing well planned coastal resorts. The potential for mitigating the negative environmental and social impacts from ill planned development through the sustainable development fuelled by the tourists’ demand for more responsible and environmental friendly options has resulted in the emphasis on the proper siting strategies that can enhance their experience in the coastal resorts. This can be achieved through the provision of the appropriate zoning and physical design features in the spaces created by the siting process and manifested in the strategies which are outlined by the relevant policies and regulations.

In terms of planning, the improper siting process at both the macro and micro planning stages has affected the profitability of the business. Thus, the efficiencies of the facilities siting and their impact to the operations of other regional resorts is being questioned at the macro level:

‘...the facilities are freely developed in a haphazard way and this does not result in highly efficient overall structure; secondly, competitive investment ventures are made and are unprofitable because each one ignores what
the other one is doing and plans his investment accordingly…” (AIT, 1974: 57)

In developing resorts, the focus on tourists’ numbers and receipts seems to contradict the aspects of preventing ecological degradation and social dimensions of sustainability (Barke and Towner, 2003). The planning for tourism development requires the understanding and acceptance of the public, private sectors as well as the communities (Theobald, 2004) which failure has resulted in extensive damage to the coastal zones:

‘Hundred miles of coastline has been ruined irremediably and virtually by uncontrolled buildings of hotels, restaurants, bars and houses. Beaches have been divided into unsightly allotments, and noise from the jukebox, fumes from the traffic and sheer human population pay witness to the chaos made of the organisation of his leisure.’ (Young, 1973: 157)

The negative environmental impacts in to tourism development include coral change, beach sand loss and contamination of coastal waters (Wilkinson, 1989) and impact from hotels that has caused increased demand for building sites, waste productions, more air conditioning units and water treatment plants (Dyer et al. 2007). The stresses are particularly apparent along the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula (Wong, 1998) where tourism development is heavily reliant on the beach, island estuary and fluvial environments to provide it with the popular attractions. This scenario has led to negative impacts to these environments (Hall, 2001). In this instance, the siting of the facilities need to mitigate the impact. It also relates to the concept of ‘Destination’s Lifecycle’ (Butler, 1980) which declares that the unpredictable growth cycles of tourist destinations, which can be positive or negative, calls for developing resorts beyond its maturity stage to remain competitive.

In relation to the tourists’ experience, a good tourist site that promotes positive experience consists of settings that are distinctive and aesthetically pleasing (Pearce et al., 1998), in which many tourism advocates fail to grasp the number of the socio-cultural and ecological factors that negatively affected by tourists (Ryan, 2003). Ryan further argues that this is closely linked to the role of resorts in accommodating the tourists. In terms of design, the resort or tourist destination zone changes both temporally and spatially as the place of interaction between the tourists and the host. It is not simply a geographical entity but also psychological and social zones that exist within a geographical space.
In this case, the idea of the tourists being temporal in the consumption of resorts is firmly embedded in the tourist’s social world and the ways in which the users’ experiences are manifested in different ways in the place making concept. For example, some may seek for spiritual refreshment of solitary, natural places (Urry, 1990) and for others may be reflected in the collective experience of sites and destinations (Sharpley, 2002). According to Holt (1995), consuming as ‘integration’ is instrumental in the coastal resorts, where they are able to integrate the self and object, thereby allowing themselves the access to the objects symbolic properties. In reality, tourists or consumers must integrate into the object of consumption or the facilities and the activities to experience the sites. Thus the authenticity of displayed culture (Theobald, 2004) and the notion of tourists as transnationals community (Duval, 2004) are important considerations in analysing their experience in the coastal resorts.

From the tourists’ perspectives, there is a further increasing differentiation of demand and emergence of the new specialised market in tourism trends that are both apparent and long term. The demand arises from the advanced level of travel experience in the population that leads to a more critical and quality oriented approach, as well as the growing sophistication and rationality of choice. It is also instigated by several factors: an increasing desire to relate to nature and higher levels of environmental consciousness; sensitivity to the quality of life in general; and the increasing effort to learn about different cultures (Schawinger, 1989). The demand is also fuelled by the emphasis in sustainable development and planning. Here, Inskeep (1991) argues that an integrated and sustainable approach to tourism planning can result in substantial economic and social benefits while minimising the environment, socioeconomic and marketing problems which accompanied the uncontrolled tourism developments.

Thus, the alternative tourism can be regarded as the product of the sustainable approach. In stressing the importance of planning for alternative tourism, Holden (2000) asserts that in neo-liberal economy, regulation of environmental resources will be critical in determining the success of any alternative tourism policy. However, it seemed that there is a big gap in the design of the coastal resorts as demonstrated by the array of resorts that are fragmentally designed resulted from the way the policies and regulations regarding the siting initiated by the government are being implemented and the manner in which the siting is actually being practiced. While the policies are used to regulate the design to meet the goals of development, it is unclear if the existing practice has considered the users’ ideologies and reflected the clear intention of the government on the way the resorts should be designed as sustainable resorts.
Consequently, the challenge is to achieve a design output that enhances the tourists’ experience through maximising the siting of tourism facilities and is considered as a very important process in the design and planning of coastal resorts. The contention is that the physical setting or siting of tourism facilities and open spaces will reduce the environmental impacts and in social relation enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts. The Coastal resorts in West Malaysian Peninsula can be sustainably designed to enhance the tourists’ experience if the appropriate siting strategies are being considered and implemented in the development process. The statement can be supported by proving that specific siting strategies are inappropriately considered in the siting of the facilities. Thus, a renewed approach in formulating the siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience is imperative for the planning and design coastal resorts.

The study will look at the opportunities in the siting of the facilities that enhance the tourists experience as well as attempting to assist in reducing the impact to the environment and local community in the coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula. It will analyse areas of the development that allows for the process to facilitate and on how the siting practiced in the existing coastal resorts might unfold to contribute to this study and in the process provide the important insights towards developing the appropriate siting strategies for the coastal tourism development.

1.4 Research Aim

The main aim of the research is:

To establish the more comprehensive siting strategies that can enhance the tourists’ experience and demand for sustainable coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula.

The siting strategies can be formulated through the combination of the government initiated policies and regulations with the tourists’ reflections and ideologies. Subsequently, the secondary objective is to explore the attributes of the tourists’ experience that can assist in formulating more comprehensive siting strategies. The strategies are in the form of policies or guidelines initiated by the relevant governmental agencies. Accordingly, the way policies are being implemented by the regulators, the strategies used in the design practice and tourists’ reflections and ideologies based on their experience are investigated in this study to achieve the above aim. Consequently, the role of the siting in the process of developing coastal resorts will be explored through the multiple case studies approach in this study.
Meanwhile, the three case studies selected are located in the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula namely the Langkawi Island, Pangkor Island, and Port Dickson, on which the emphasis of the coastal resort development of these areas is on the conservation of natural environment and local communities socio-cultural benefits. The manner in which the siting of facilities has shaped the design and the development of the case studies resorts will be investigated. While the tactics used in this research include the Interviews with Regulators and Designers, Coastal Resorts Morphologies and Interviews with Tourists.

The regulators are the senior officers in the Government organizations namely, Ministry of Culture, Art and Tourism (MOCAT), Department of Environment (DOE) and Local Building Authorities (LBA), while the designers are the Planners or Architects who were involved with resorts development. The tourists are local and international visitors of the case study resorts. Meanwhile, the coastal resorts morphologies include the spatial and physical characteristics of the three main resorts: the Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resort in Langkawi Island; Pangkor Laut Resort in Pangkor Island; and The Avillion Beach Resort in Port Dickson, in correlation with fifteen other 3, 4 and 5 stars coastal resorts in the case study sites. Consequently, the investigations on the policies, practice and the attributes of the tourists’ experience pertain to the siting process are crucial in addressing the aim of this study.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

Figure 1.10 is a flow chart that summarises the overall structure of the study and serves as a general reference and guide to this thesis. Because the subject is broad, it only highlights the key components of the literature. Thus, the literature review which are conducted at the macro levels provides the overall scenario of this research and important insight to the policy, practice and physical design features pertaining to the siting issues.

This thesis consists of Chapter One to Nine. This chapter briefly introduces the main intention of the researcher, the key literature, problem statement and aims of this study. It also describes the structure of this thesis.

Chapter Two

This chapter reviews the general state of available literatures on the general concept and aspects of tourism that include the followings:
1. Global tourism;
2. The functioning of tourism system;
3. Sustainable tourism paradigm and demand;
4. Integration of tourism stakeholders needs;
5. Tourism planning and siting;
6. Tourist experience;
7. Spatial experience in resorts; and,
8. Global climate change.

Figure 1.10: Summary of thesis structure

It first highlights the significance of global tourism to the world’s economy and development including the impacts of globalisation towards the tourism industry. It further describes the main components of tourism industry and the relationship of
tourism with the environment, community and sustainable tourism development principles. It also identifies the key industry players and the importance of integrating their ideologies in developing coastal resorts and sustainable tourism development principles in tourism planning process. The discussion also revolves on the importance of the siting in the planning process.

This chapter discusses the basic theories of the tourists’ experience and the importance of integrating their positive experience attributes in designing the coastal resorts. Here, the concept of place-making in resorts is explored through several important theories, namely: the ‘Staged Authenticity’ (Gunn, 1972); and ‘Transnationals’ (Duval, 2004). Meanwhile, the final section of this chapter also reviews the impacts of the Global Climate Change (GCC) to the coastal zone and discusses the importance of siting process as a long term adaptation measure in mitigating the negative GCC’s impacts.

Chapter Three

This chapter describes the macro-level development of coastal tourism in Malaysia. The first section discusses the demographic profile of Malaysia where it touches on the growth of tourism industry and outlines its significance to the local economy based on the key tourism indicators. This is followed with the description on the progress of coastal tourism development in Malaysia from the early nineteen sixties onwards in terms of its distributions and development stages and the importance of having a more responsible approach in designing the coastal resorts and improving the industry to cater the current coastal tourism growth and demand.

Meanwhile the second section of this chapter reviews the key players in the Malaysian tourism industry and the structure of government organization which adopted the ‘top-down’ and ‘decentralised’ approach in regulating the policies concerning tourism developments. It outlines and summarises the relevant government policies that have shaped and influenced the industry’s development and highlights the current siting guidelines in the National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) policy, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Local Building Regulations and Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools and Indicators. The association between siting and political ideologies in Malaysia is also highlighted in this chapter as well.

Chapter Four

The chapter reviews the research design structure that includes the research framework and methodological approach that incorporate the strategies and tactics
adopted in the study. The strategies employed are to explore: the regulators and designers’ experiences on the manner the policies were implemented and shaped the design of coastal resorts; current practice of the siting of the resorts; and tourists’ on-site experiences. Meanwhile, the three key research tactics comprises of: the in-depth interviews with regulators and designers; coastal resorts morphologies and in-depth interviews with tourists in the three case study sites.

It initially highlights the appropriate research questions and basic assumptions of this study. This is followed with the discussion on the qualitative approach through the multiple case studies strategy and on the details of each methodology used for the data collection and analysis in this study. It portrays the general approach adopted in the strategies in association with the way each methodology is conducted and their significance to the overall study in addressing the final recommendations. Finally, it also discusses the manner in which the data from each different methodology is triangulated to prevent biasness and improve the validity of the research findings.

Chapter Five

This chapter discusses the details of the case study sites and resorts and the justification for their selections. The case study sites are in Langkawi Island, Pangkor Island, and Port Dickson, the three premier coastal resort areas in the West Malaysian Peninsula. The resorts include the three main resorts; Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resort in Langkawi Island, Pangkor Laut Resort in Pangkor Island and The Avillion Beach Resort in Port Dickson in correlation with fifteen other 3, 4 and 5 star resorts in the case study sites. Finally, it highlights the ethnographically recorded local communities’ concerns towards the coastal tourism development in the case study sites. It also touches on the relevance of the case study sites to the research strategies implemented in the study.

Chapter Six

This chapter outlines the qualitative data collection and analysis obtained in the interviews with the Regulators and Designers. It initially reflects on the two important factors pertaining to the methodology – the regulators’ aspirations and research role in supporting the siting strategies formulation. This is followed with the discussion on the findings that were presented case by case in this study beginning with this chapter. It discusses the findings based on: the way the regulators and designers define the siting and its importance in preserving the environment and social relations; identification of the spatial and physical design features in assisting the appropriate siting; the
integration of the sustainable development; and its importance in meeting their
demands of alternative tourism. Meanwhile, this chapter also review their insights on
the barriers and the way forward in improving the siting strategies that led to several
important findings which are also discussed in this chapter. The integration of the
findings in this chapter with other incorporated methodologies will lead to further
recommendations of the siting strategies in the final chapter.

Chapter Seven

This chapter discusses the findings in the coastal resorts morphological analysis
and physical observations of the resorts in the case study sites. The approach is
adopted to examine the actual siting practice in the resorts. This chapter concisely
reviews the importance of this approach, justification of selecting the resorts and
summarises the basic assumptions in conducting the morphological approach in the
study. It reflects on several important concerns on the methodology: the visualisation
technique; complexity in dealing with sustainable principles and design process; site
planning characteristics; and spatial and physical design features as well.

It highlights and discusses the findings based on: the cross referencing of the
individual resort’s physical data sets; the importance of zoning in controlling tourists
movements; conservation of natural environment setting; accommodating building and
coastal setback; maximising view factors; allocation of open spaces; transportation;
and integrating the forms of the resorts. This is followed by the findings on the physical
design features in the spaces created by the siting process involving: the
environmental features in accommodations; integration of passive design features;
cultural features; landscapes; local material expressions; construction technique;
building services; and renewable energy. The findings in coastal resorts morphological
analysis were later summarized to conclude this chapter.

Chapter Eight

This chapter discusses the findings in the Interviews with the tourists in
three case study sites in the West Malaysian Peninsula. It explores the attributes of the
tourists’ reflections and ideologies based on their on-site experience. First, it reflects
two important factors associated with the methodology – the association between the
tourists and economic factors and tourists’ environmental experience and knowledge
acquisitions. In addition, it discusses the findings on the manner tourists define the
quality of their positive experience through verbal expressive dimensions proposed in
the ‘Constructs Domains of Service Experience’ (Otto and Ritchie, 1996). This chapter
also reviews the findings on: tourists’ expectations of positive experience; their understandings on the role of siting; spatial and physical design features; the importance of social interactions in the siting process; and tourists mapping of the environmental and social spaces as well. The summary of the findings in the interviews concludes this chapter.

Chapter Nine

The final chapter discusses the main finding based on the integration of three methodological approaches utilized in the study. It initially highlights the main finding by reflecting on the findings in each methodological approach and subsequently proposes several recommendations on how the appropriate strategies can be adopted to enhance the tourists experience in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula. The recommendations include the improvement that can be introduced into the policies; the constraints and the positive aspects of the siting practice and attributes of the positive tourists’ experience that can be integrated in the strategies. The recommendations can be made for future reference by answering the research questions that were inquired at the beginning of this study. This is followed with the discussion on the research implications, significance, limitations and future directions. In concluding this study, it will also touches on the importance of the siting process as a long term solution in mitigating the negative global climate change impact apart from enhancing the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts.
Chapter Two

Global Tourism Issues

2.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the global tourism issues and reflects the contributions to this study made by each area of literature. The research in its aim of investigating the siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts, involves the physical and physiological, and social and environmental planning dimensions that interact in complex ways. The reviewed literatures is organised around several intersecting bodies of knowledge in the following categories: Global Tourism; Tourism System and Tourists Destinations; Sustainable Tourism Paradigm and Demand; Integration of Tourism Stakeholders Needs; Tourism Planning and Siting; Tourist Experience; Spatial Experience in Resorts; and Global Climate Change.

1. Global Tourism – this category reviews the tourism significance to the global economy and development and the impacts of globalisation towards the tourism industry. It stresses on the importance of planning in creating alternative tourism and ensuring the proper growth of the industry as delineated in several important theories – ‘Destination’s Lifecycle’ (Butler, 1980) and ‘Broad Context Model of Destination Scenario’ (Weaver, 2000);

2. Tourism System and Tourists Destinations – it describes the tourism industry’s main components and their relationships from the demand and supply perspectives in stressing the role of resorts as the product of tourists consumptions proposed in the ‘Tourism System’ (Ryan, 2003);

3. Sustainable Tourism Paradigm and Demand – the literature outlines the relationship between tourism, environment and the community by discussing the impacts of tourism to a particular tourist destination and the importance of the sustainable development principle in meeting the tourists and demand;

4. Integration of Tourism Stakeholders Needs – it identifies the key players in tourism industry at both the macro and micro levels and the importance of integrating their ideologies in the policies and practices of the siting in coastal resorts;
5. **Tourism Planning and Siting** – it discusses the intricacies of tourism planning and the importance of integrating sustainable development principles in the design of coastal resorts. It also depicts the siting, spatial and physical design requirements in the spaces created by the siting process;

6. **Tourist Experience** – the literature defines who the tourists are and explains the basic theory of tourists’ behaviours and experience and the importance of integrating their reflections and ideologies based on their actual experience in the siting strategies. The emphasis will be on the two dominant theories – the ‘*Tripartite Place Model System*’ (Pearce, 2005) and ‘*Constructs and Domains of Service Experience*’ (Otto and Ritchie, 1996);

7. **Spatial Experience in Resorts** – it reviews the place-making concept in the tourists’ spatial experience of the coastal resorts which focus on the ‘*Staged Authenticity*’ (Gunn, 1972) and ‘*Transnationals*’ (Duval, 2004) framework of analysis; and,

8. **Global Climate Change** – this is mainly on the impact of global climate change to the coastal zone and understanding the importance of the siting as a long term adaptation measure in mitigating the impacts other than enhancing the tourists’ experience.

The eight categories of the literature reviews above contribute the theoretical support for the research to address the objective of this study.

### 2.2 Global Tourism

The literature review begins with the overall review of the tourism industry and its role in a development process. Tourism is a major environmental and social phenomenon of the modern times. A few examples of the tourism definitions are listed as follow:

“*Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs.*”
(Mathieson and Walls, 1982: 1)

“*…a study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts that both he and the industry have on the host socio-cultural, economic, and physical development.*”
(Jafari, 1977: 585)
Both definitions reflect the importance of the resorts facilities and environment to accommodate the activities engaged by the tourists. While the environment is an important consideration, the policies\textsuperscript{8} initiated by the government, traditions, customs of the host communities and the tourists’ ideologies are the integral parts of tourism as well. In this context, the government initiated policies and political decisions are very critical to tourism. Within the policies framework, there are relevant regulations\textsuperscript{9} and standards that are utilised to ensure the design quality and to satisfy the travel experience for the tourists in the coastal resorts.

Meanwhile, the tourism phenomenon is characterized by the constant change that contributes to the human growth and development in society revealed by tourists’ movements. In terms of growth, the tourism industry accounts for the largest single peaceful movement of people across cultural boundaries in the history of the world (Lett, 1989). Concurrently, with the growth, the level of participation has expanded the so-called ‘Pleasure of Periphery’ (Turner and Ash, 1975), where more distant and exotic places attract numbers of international tourists. In supporting this, Hawkins (1989) asserts that the demand is steadily increasing for the environmentally and respectful tourism products which is labelled as aspects of postmodern tourism (Uriely, 1997). The growth is indicated in the global ecotourism market that has been growing by 20 to 34\% per year in the 1990s and growing by 10 to 12\% annually and will keep growing (TIES, 2006). It was also the fastest growing segment of tourism in Malaysia in 2002, growing at 35\% per year and constituting 10\% of tourism in Malaysia (WTTC, 2002). The increasing interest in nature an environment is fuelled by changes in environmental attitudes, the development of environmental education and mass media (Eagles and Higgins, 1998).

Tourism development heavily relies on the natural resources base. Attractive coastal landscapes such as the sandy beaches, dune areas, estuaries and coastal lakes are the preferred sites for tourism development. Burke and Kura et al. (2001) argue that about forty percent of the world’s population lives on or near the coast where the tourism will continue to expand at an expected rate of one hundred percent over the next ten years. The population growth also benefits the economy of the coastal area. In this case, the coastal tourism industry makes significant contributions to the economies of many developing nations particularly to the foreign exchange earnings, employment and the World Gross Domestic Productivity (GDP) (WTTC, 1996). This

\textsuperscript{8} It is defined as principles or rules to guide decisions and rational outcomes (Thomas, 1976).

\textsuperscript{9} It is defined as controlling human or society’s behaviours by rules and restrictions (Investorword, 2010).
indicates the high demand for tourism related activities and the need for higher quality tourism products in the coastal area.

2.3 Tourism System and Tourists Destinations

Tourism is a dynamic industry that assimilates various components in its development that compose a complex tourism system. In terms of development, one of the major problems in the industry that has hidden or obscured its economic impacts is the diversity and fragmentation of the industry itself. On this issue, Franklin and Crang (2001) classify tourism as series of discrete, localised events, where destination are subject to the external forces producing impacts where those impacts are themselves simply a series of discrete, enumerated occurrences of travel, arrival, activity, purchase, and departure.

Meanwhile, Choy et al. (1984) asserts that the term ‘travel industry’ is broadly used to exhibit the complexity of the tourism industry as a composite of organizations, both public and private that are involved in the development, production and marketing of products and services to serve the needs of travellers. Choy further argues that the inter relationships of the industry affect tourists in three categories; the organizations that provide direct service to the travellers (hotels and other type of accommodation), tourism supplier (food services, transportation and a large number of business enterprise) and the planning and development (Planners and Government Agencies). Subsequently, the last category is the focus of this study.

The fragmented component of the siting practice in the form of the government initiated policies, tourists and the locals’ views, and the design practice control the functioning components of the tourism system. Here, Meis (1992) verifies that the tourism industry involves a concept that has remained amorphous to both the analysts and decision makers and is widely regarded as having extensive influence to other business sectors. For example, a governmental agency or planning board create a land use planning for the coastal zone which would allow the development to support services and retail activities. The decision would affect the travellers, tourism suppliers and the local communities. In terms of the socio-economic benefits, Theobald (2004) points out that because this business also serves the local residents, the impact of spending by the visitors can easily be overlooked and underestimated. Both Meis’s and Theobald’s arguments indicate that the tourism system are closely interrelated with each other. Thus, it is essential to recognise that one small part of tourism, such as changes in the market reference or an occurrence of natural disaster can upset the rest of the system.
In discussing the interrelationship of the tourism components, the following three models of tourism systems are referred to and discussed in this chapter:

1. The earlier model in the functioning of tourism system primarily consists of a demand and supply sides. Gunn (1972) describes the four components of the supply or plant side in the earlier model of the tourism system as transportations, attractions, services and information or promotion;
2. Mills and Morrison (1985) in adapting the above components, combines the attraction and services as additional components to Gunn’s model above; and,
3. In further refinement to the earlier model of destinations model, Ryan (2003) argues that the tourists’ experience of a location and its people is one of the essential components in the tourism system.

Meanwhile, there is a clear distinction between the tourists’ destination and attraction. Tourist destination is defined as follows:

“First, it consists of physical and psychological characteristics…a number of physical attributes – attractions and amenities, buildings, landscapes and so on together with the perceptions allied to the destinations. ….Secondly, it has different appeals to different market…allowing opportunities for tourism to be developed in almost any country, and any region.” (Halloway, 2006: 187)

While attraction is categorized as below:

“It can be either site or event attractions where site attractions are permanent by nature while event attractions are temporary….It can be either nodal [where the attractions of the areas are closely grouped geographically] or linear [in which the attraction is spread over a wide geographical area without any specific focus] in character.” (Halloway, 2006: 15)

Attractions are features within the natural environment that include the purpose built structures and sites designed for purposes other than attracting visitors or to attract visitors and as special events (Swarbrooke,1995). Both the tourist destination and attraction coexist as the main components in the tourism systems which are consumed by both the tourists and local communities. This also implies that tourists’ destinations with the scenic natural attractions in the coastal zones become an important asset to attract more tourists.
In Figure 2.1, Ryan demonstrates that the tourists generating zone is a key component in the source of demand whilst the host zone creates a set of resources and attitudes on the part of the residents in the tourists’ destination. Ryan (2003) argues that there are strong interdependencies between the components and reinforces the primacy of the zone of interaction and interpretation in the coastal resorts as the essence of the tourism product. Coastal resorts therefore are essential components in the system that is consumed by the tourists in which the relationship between the supply and demand is reinforced by the function of coastal resorts as catalyst that balances both factors. Meanwhile, Gunn (1972) points out that from the consumer markets perspective, for tourism, the demand and supply sides are different.
from the manufactured goods that are distributed to the markets. Instead, the markets for tourism are distributed to the coastal resort that produces the product. Therefore, the attention to its planning is important as a tourist destination is fixed geographically.

### 2.3.1 Tourism Development and Globalisation

The mixture of politics, culture and social identity factors raises important issues for the present tourism industry and its concern with the rapidly changing world. Tourism is a set of cultural, economic and political phenomena where its meanings and applications are loaded with ambiguities and uncertainties (Franklin and Crang, 2001). While tourism has become the development sector of choice for many governments, as they strive for economic growth and prosperity (Reid, 1995), there have been many problems associated with the tourism developments and impacts of globalisation. Dwyer (2004) argues that the global economic trend also resulted in competition between destinations worldwide (from established markets and from new markets), domestic destinations and firms within a destination.

Besides the competition, over-reliance on the foreign investment can cause negative environmental and social impacts and was identified as one of the root causes of the Asian Economic Crisis in 1997 (Hall and Page, 2000). Furthermore, in many less developed nation, the tourism has been developed and controlled by large, multinational tour companies who have little regard for the local socio-cultural and economic conditions (Timothy and Ioannides, 2002). Both also argue that most developing nations lack the significant amounts of wealth and political power, which makes them prone to decision makings that are beyond their control and do not have the resorts’ best interest in mind. Consequently, the emphasis has shifted from regionalised to the need to decentralised the tourism development and integrate it into the overall community-defined development goals¹⁰ (Murphy, 1985).

Essentially, the literature review on the impacts of globalisation on tourism calls for better policy and planning approach in coastal resorts developments that could consolidate their operation in the decentralised government structural organization in sustaining the operation lifecycle amidst of the local and international competition in the tourism industry.

¹⁰ This has been similarly practiced in Malaysia.
2.3.2 The Concept of Destination’s Lifecycle

The siting process must be observed in the context of the resorts development lifecycles as what the other products do. All tourism activities result in changes within the coastal resorts. It can either be a negative or positive impact depending on a variety of factors including the destination’s level of economic development and diversity; its’ socio-cultural and physical carrying capacity; and the amount, rate and type of tourism development in relation to the internal factors (Weaver & Lawton, 2002). In this case, the internal factors can be referred to as the decision making by the developers that will affect the way the resorts are managed.

Consequently, the factors above emphasised on the need to understand the Butler’s (1980) concept of ‘Destination Life Cycle’ in Figure 2.2. In this concept, Butler proposes that the tourists’ destinations tend to experience five distinct stages of growth under the free market and sustained development condition, which are termed as Exploration, Involvement, Development, Consolidation and Stagnant (Butler, 1980).

The summary of the growth stages as suggested by Butler is as follows:

1. In the Exploration Stage, Butler suggests that the presence of the tourist market provides potential supply of visitors to any particular destination. In this stage the sector is still small and has little visual and environmental impact to the landscape as there is a limited amount of specialised service and facilities. The exploration stage is characterised by the small numbers of visitors who are dispersed throughout the destination and remained for an extended period of time. The tourists who are adventurous are drawn by what they perceived as the authentic and natural attractions;

[Figure 2.2: The Butler Sequence (Butler, 1980). Source: Weaver and Lawton (2002: 309)]
2. In the **Involvement Stage**, the visitor intake begins to increase slowly and local entrepreneurs begin to provide a limited amount of specialised services and facilities to the tourists. The development stage is characterised by the rapid growth and dramatic changes in all aspects of the tourism sector over a relatively short duration. The rapid growth and increased scale of tourism development also resulted in degradation of the local control. The sense of place or uniqueness of the destination that was associated to the earlier stages gives way to the generic, international style landscape. At this stage the impacts on the environment and socio-cultural factors may be apparent;

3. The **Consolidation Stage** is a period of decline in the growth rate of the tourist arrivals and other tourism related activity. The level of tourism development begins to exceed the environmental, social and economic carrying capacities indicating the overall deterioration of the tourist destination; and,

4. The **Stagnation or Saturation Stage** allows the peak numbers and levels of associated facilities, such as the available accommodation units to be obtained. At this stage the resort is incapable of attracting new visitors and depends on the regular tourists to survive. The resort can either enter the decline or the rejuvenation stage in its fortunes. As tourists’ numbers decline, more hotels and other specialised tourism facilities are abandoned or converted to serve other lifestyles. The alternative is rejuvenation where it can be accompanied by the entirely new tourism product or re-imaging the product as a way to recapture the destination’s competitive edge and sense of uniqueness.

So far, the above demonstrates the need to protect tourism vulnerability towards the disruptive external factors. The need to embrace Butler’s *Destinations Lifecycles* (Butler, 1980) is due to tourism vulnerability to economic crisis and outbreak disease and political unrest such as Bali Bombing (Taylor et al., 2004) that resulted a dip in domestic demand for travel and tourism. This scenario implies that the resorts need to be developed as quality product beyond its maturity stage in its development due to the increasing competition between the established and the new markets of tourist’s destinations (Dwyer, 2004). Tourism is different from the industrialized industry where products or resorts that reach the decline stage can be discontinued or completely redesigned (Morgan, 2004). This is also where the siting practice can play an important role in designing a resort where it can break the cycle in the early planning stage and keep the coastal resorts from self destructing (Halloway, 2006).
2.3.3 The Concept of Alternative Tourism

While the ‘Butler Sequence’ suggests the need for small and highly decentralized resorts to accommodate the changes in their life cycles, it also implies the need for some form of alternative tourism to be adopted by all resorts regardless of scale in countering the influential disruptive factors. In this case, Weaver (2002) suggests that the broad context of the model of development scenarios to consist of four basic tourism ideal types, based on the scale of the sector and the amount of sustainability regulation that is present.

![Figure 2.3](image)

**Figure 2.3**: Broad Context Model of Destination Scenario (Weaver, 2000). Source: Weaver and Lawton (2002: 370)

In Weaver’s Figure 2.3 model, the small-scale tourists’ destinations fall into either the Circumstantial Alternative Tourism (CAT) or the Deliberate Alternative Tourism (DAT) categories, while the large scale destinations in the theory falls into the Sustainable Mass Tourism (SMT) and the Unsustainable Mass Tourism (UST). While the Butler’s Sequence shows only the movement from CAT to UST there is also the possibility to move to DAT. In addition to this, the implementation of the regulatory environment is required to maintain the characteristics of alternative tourism that emphasises on learning about the natural environment cannot overlap with the mass tourism if it is appropriately managed (Weaver, 2000). Meanwhile, Cohen (1987) argues that the concept of alternative tourism is composed of two principal conceptions; as reaction to the modern consumerism or counter-cultural response to mass tourism and second; and as a reaction to the exploitation of the third world in which the notion of a responsible tourism arises. Both Weaver and Cohen imply that the industry has no other alternatives but to plan the coastal resorts in more responsible manner.
Consequently, both the Butler’s and Weaver’s models also reveal the need for research to examine the environmental impacts of tourism. Holden (2000) argues that research on the environmental impact is still relatively immature and a true multidisciplinary approach to the investigations has yet to be developed. In supporting this, Butler (2000) stresses the need to a better understanding of the elements comprising of the environmental attractiveness and quality, integration of research in physical sciences into tourism planning including the level of sustainability in the coastal resorts.

2.4 Sustainable Tourism Paradigm and Demand

More environmental modifications to improve the design of tourism development come from the highly trained, talented and experienced teams that include the design profession of landscape, architecture, planning and engineering (Gunn, 1988). However, it must be admitted that despite this, the tourism has already imposed negative environmental impacts on the physical coastal and marine environment (Archer, 1985) due to the poorly planned tourism development. Undoubtedly, the unplanned and poorly managed tourism development can harm the natural environment, but the overall understanding of the interaction between the tourism and the environment is indeed, quite poor (Hall, 2001), for examples:

1. Dekadt (1979) argues that the earlier development plans varied from those that were remedial, attempting to cover the earlier mistakes;
2. Gunn (1998) asserts that the early examples of tourism planning identified several concerns that had not been fully addressed that include among others, the lack of local involvement and concern over only the gross return; and,
3. Wong (1998) describes that the coastal resort development in Malaysia has largely been unplanned and spontaneous in order to meet the tourists demand.

All the above factors significantly address the need to embrace the sustainable tourism principles. This can be traced from their role in mitigating the negative environmental and social impacts.

2.4.1 Tourism, Environment and Impact

The environmental consequence of tourism can be both positive and negative. The impacts can be classified as environmental, economic and socio-cultural, positive or negative, direct or indirect, immediate or cumulative, and short term or long term
The positive impacts may include the protection of environmental resources (Archer et al., 2004) and improvement in the infrastructure (Gunn, 1972). Meanwhile, Inskeep (1991) stresses that tourism, if well planned and controlled, can help maintain or improve the environment in various ways; it can assist in the preservation of important natural areas and development of parks and reserves because they are an attraction for the tourists.

However, it is the negative impacts that have raised much concern in tourism developments as the coastal tourism industry largely depends on the environment and natural resource, which makes it capable of disrupting the coastal ecosystem and has significant impacts on the tourist destinations (Collins, 1999; Williams, 1987; and Mathieson and Walls, 1982). The scenario is especially true in ecologically fragile areas such as the coastal zones where beach front hotels can contribute to beach erosion, deterioration of water quality, flooding and disappearance of the natural wetlands (Mastny, 2002) and conflict between the tourism development and other sectors (Garrod and Wilson, 2003).

In the context of resort’s lifecycle, Briassoulis (2001) summarises that the problem of the ‘use’ faced by the tourism facilities ranges from two factors – very low use occupancy or extreme congestion. Low use occupancy, on one hand, represents the idea that the investment is not fully exploited or economically insufficient as the result of unavoidable implications of the seasonality in tourism. This indicates the inappropriate choice of location for a tourism destination and planning of the development to sustain its growth and compete with the other tourism development. The extreme congestion, on the other hand, causes faster deterioration to the environment, implying higher maintenance cost, physiological stress on users, and aesthetic pollution to the landscape (Gossling, 2002). The negative impact from coastal tourism occurs when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment’s ability to cope with the use within the tourism development limits of acceptable change or carrying capacity (Hardin, 1997) in both spatially and temporally, the nature of the environment in question and the planning and management practices adopted before and after the development take place (Archer et al., 2004).

An unregulated tourism industry can continue to expand and prosper until such time as the tourist population exploits the local natural resources, coastal ecosystem and infrastructure so much that they begin to degrade, resulting in an undesirable aesthetic and uncomfortable experience (Briassoulis, 2001). As a result, many of the coastal resorts are in the state of deterioration. Philips et al. (2006) observes that many of the older resorts have been described as in decline and are either actively
restructuring or their tourism business sector, or are in need of planning policies to arrest further declines. The scenarios will lead to a fall in tourism arrival which leads to a descending economy and increased the social tensions (Burke and Kura et al., 2001). This negative outlook is difficult to recover from and can result in immediate economic hardship to the tourism industry which eventually leads to an increasing tendency towards the integrated tourism planning within the wider concerns of social and economic development (Inskeep, 1991).

2.4.2 Tourism, Community and Impact

As discussed earlier, it is difficult to disentangle the social and cultural effects of tourism. Originally, the tourists’ destination creates a set of resources and attitudes on the part of the local communities. Once a tourism destination is in operation, it allows the cross-cultural boundaries to occur through the influx of tourists and the local communities into the tourist destinations (Gunn, 1998) which became the focus of the tourism industry in developing countries11 (Butler and Hinch, 1996). The importance of socio-cultural factors in the experiential process of tourists will be discussed in the paragraph 2.9, while, the next paragraph discusses the importance of community participation in the tourism development.

Tourism impacts, both the positive and negative can be observed at the level of the destination community. Researchers in recent years have emphasised the need to decentralise the tourism development and integrate it into the overall community-defined development goals (Murphy, 1988; and Prentice, 1993). In order for a tourism development to benefit the local communities, there must be a form of interaction between both the above factors that can foster the development goals. This can be viewed from the two perspectives; the public participation in decision-making and the residents’ involvement for the benefit of tourism.

On one hand, the participation in decision making entails the community members in determining their own goal for the development and having a meaningful voice in the organisation of tourism (Timothy, 2002). Meanwhile Gunn (1994) argues that any tourism development will bear little fruit unless those most affected are involved from the start and have better attitudes towards tourism. Consequently, several techniques have been designed to involve the local people in the decision making, For example, Fitton (1996) highlights the ‘planning for real method’ (a form of town meeting that involves bringing the community together before the planning

11 Malaysia is considered as a major developing country.
process begins) and the ‘living room meetings’ (informal gatherings of small groups of community members in a relaxed situation in homes) to increase the local participation in a tourism development.

On the other hand, opportunities for the community members to own business, to work in the various industry related jobs, to receive appropriate training and to be educated about the roles and effects of tourism in their community are the few forms of participation which the locals may benefit from the development (Timothy, 1999). This is in line with Scheyven’s (1999) concept of economic, social and physiological empowerment, which assumes that the residents will gain personally from tourism. In this case the use of small scale and locally owned business can increase the local participation in tourism development. According to Cater (1996), the use of this type of services results in a much higher degree of local participation than the traditional mass tourism because they place less stress on the cultural environments (Long and Wall, 1995). The community awareness building efforts are necessary in teaching the residents how they can both support tourism and benefit from it (Inskeep, 1994). Actions by the destinations’ residents in tourism initiatives require them to be informed and knowledgeable about the industry and its potential effects (Din, 1993). It also ensures that the local people can be placed in better positions to determine their own needs and direct the tourism development in their own communities (Hall, 1988).

2.5 Sustainable Tourism Development (STD) Principles

Once the environment is recognised as an asset to the industry, there is a need for its conservation through proper development. Sustainability in the tourism development clearly means achieving the above goals. The emphasis on the need to promote and enact sustainable tourism is as indicated by the following definitions of sustainable tourism development.

‘Sustainable tourism depends on meeting the needs of host populations in terms of improved standards of living in the short and long term, satisfying the demands of increasing tourists numbers and continuing attracting them to achieve this and safeguarding the environment to achieve the two foregoing aims.’ (Cater And Goodall, 1992: 318)

‘Tourism which is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment and the social fabric of the host community.’ (Swarbrooke, 1999: 36)
Other definitions in tourism literature have also emphasised the need for a balance between the environmental, socio-cultural interest and economic pressure (Inskeep, 1991; Jafari, 2000 and Wall, 1997). The definition however, is complex and ambiguous. As a strategic goal, sustainability is famously difficult to translate into an operational definition and meaningful course of action (Manderson, 2006), which is reflected in over 300 attempts to define sustainability as a standalone concept (Dobson, 2000). The sustainability term has been used wantonly to legitimize calls for the economic growth, industrial expansion, globalisation, social justice (Krysiak and Krysiak, 2002) and the elimination of poverty (Cocklin et al. 2002). Sustainability in architecture in relation to the green design has been used freely to describe broad range of interest and performance that make it a meaningless term and from the resources standpoint sustainability can be argued to require zero net use of non-renewable resources which occurrence is highly unlikely (Grondzik et al., 2009).

Meanwhile the term agricultural sustainability is often used loosely and in a general manner as a label, brand or icon to make unacceptable to all types interest groups and under various agricultural scenarios (Raman, 2006). From the sustainable development standpoint, Page and Dowling (2002) claim that both the word ‘sustainable’ and ‘development’ are mutually exclusive due to complex concepts and various interpretations and must be supplemented by deeper analysis (Tisdell and Wen, 1997). Meanwhile, Faulkner (2001) asserts that investigation of sustainable tourism development requires interdisciplinary approach, involving the examination and evaluation of the social, economic and environmental impact of tourism. Furthermore, the mismatch between theory and practice of sustainable development has produced variants of sustainability in terms of which component of sustainability should be applied to tourism (Murphy and Price, 2004).

Tourism interest in sustainability is logical given that it is one industry that sells the environment, both physical and human as its product (Murphy and Price, 2002). Initiative for sustainable development strategies is important as the facilities and the changing nature of tourism can alter the nature of the resort and quality may decline through the problem of overuse and deterioration of the facilities (Wahab and Pigram, 1997). Tourist destinations or resorts will face contemporary environmental problems identified among others as degradation of beaches, lost of tropical forest, pollution (Dwyer, 2004) and sea level rise as a result of climate change (Lohmann, 2001). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that while the resorts provide the basic needs of tourist escape, relaxation and fun in areas with high scenic beauty (Archer et al. 2004), there is a need to refocus on the quality planning and development (through sustainable principles) to counter the problems (Sharpley, 2002).
2.5.1 Concept and Measurements of STD

A sustainable coastal tourism management plan is necessary for mitigating the coastal community degradation and must consider the physical environment, economy and culture of the local community (Burke and Kura et al, 2001). Two examples of the STD versions are listed here: Simplified Sustainable Development (STD) and Sustainable Coastal Ecotourism versions.

The Simplified Sustainable Tourism Development (STD) Version (Mowforth & Munt, 2003) (Figure 2.4)

![Figure 2.4: Simplified STD Version. Source: Mowforth and Munt (2003: 297)](image)

The first concept simplifies the general goal of sustainable tourism development in the globalisation era. In the concept, the general assessment criteria for sustainable development fall into the three main categories: Activities; Environmental; and Socio-cultural objectives. The Activities goals are developed through the business strategies and their contributions will lead to the increase in both employment and income (Jamieson, 2001) while the Environmental goals include strategies regarding the conservation and carrying capacity to maintain the ecological integrity and preservation of biodiversity. Meanwhile, the Socio-cultural objectives represent the social and cultural values as manifested by the destination communities (Wahab & Pigram, 1997).
Sustainable Coastal Ecotourism (Garrod and Wilson, 2003) (Figure 2.5)

The second version delineates the importance of environmental protection on the economic sustainability of coastal tourism. According to Garrod and Wilson (2003), the successful yet delicate balance of these factors supporting the environmental protection issue and monitoring key variables will result in the long term sustainability of coastal resorts. The key for their survival is the environmental protection for continuous revenue and profit.

![Figure 2.5: Relationships in Sustainable Coastal Ecotourism. Source: Garrod And Wilson (2003)](image)

Both definitions have also identified the way on how tourism should be marketed to attract tourists. As for the case of tourists destinations, Lindberg and Johnson (1993) suggested the term integrated destination marketing as the overall effort to identify what a destination has to offer, what groups of people would have the time, money and desire to travel and enjoy the destination, and the best solution in reaching and convincing people to visit the destination.

### 2.5.2 Tourism Demand and Ecotourism

The growth of tourism is based on demand, whereas, the term demand is used to describe the amount of products or services that people are willing to buy, and for companies or government to plan and use their resources effectively (Hawkins, 1989). Hawkins further argues that people in newly industrialized countries will be increasingly more able and eager to travel due to the change of attitudes in the travel industry, labour force, population shift and urbanization that will assist in the tourism growth. The trends call for new type of tourism.

In line with this, Miecszkowski (1995) points out that a number of new terms have emerged to designate the new and desirable type of tourism, identified among others
as the alternative, green, nature, environmentally sound and responsible. Meanwhile, Brouse (1992) defines ecotourism as a responsible travel in which the visitor is aware of and takes into accounts the effects of his or her actions on both the host culture and the environment. For tourists, they search for authentic and complex learning activities as part of their leisure experience. Eagles (1992) and Fennell (1999) conclude that the ecotourists want to see and experience as much as possible in the time available and desire high quality guide and interpretation services.

Meanwhile, globally, it has recorded the rapid growth which illustrates an increasing interest in nature and the environment (Eagles and Higgins, 1988). This implies that making an effort to understand the dimensions that contribute to the tourists’ experience is paramount to improving the planning aspects, specifically in the siting of the coastal resort facilities.

### 2.6 Integration of Tourism Stakeholders Needs

In the context of sustainable planning and development, ‘integration’ has been an important concept in tourism (Inskeep, 1991). The concept of sustainable development implies the linkage or integration of elements of the environment (Wahab and Piagram, 1997). Parallel to the concept of integration, the role of regulators, practitioners and tourists in developing the appropriate planning policies and criteria for coastal tourism are imperative in this study. The link between development activities and the role of stakeholders towards the conservation of environment and biodiversity were strengthened through the Berlin Declaration\textsuperscript{12}, 1997.

Successful integration can avert crisis that otherwise materialise later in the operational phase development. As stressed by Butler (1999), at a time where conflict resolution is an increasingly common process in the development, the achievement of harmony and the avoidance of conflict through appropriate and acceptable situation are desired by both the developers and planners. It must also meet the tourists’ expectations for environmentally friendly resorts. However, Butler (1999) argues that despite the support for the concept of integration in tourism planning in the last decade, in reality it is hard to find good examples where significant gaps between the concept as has been described in many plans and what actually appears and realized in

\[\text{footnote}{\text{12 As issued by the International Conference of Ministers of Biological Diversity and Tourism in Germany (1997), which recommended the respective responsibility of the governments, international organisations, the private sector and environmental organisations in the field of tourism towards the objective of sustainability.}}\]
specific tourist destinations due to the implementation of sustainable development. The gaps leave significant challenge to tourism planners in integrating the sustainable tourism principles in the design to meet the tourists’ demands.

2.6.1 Tourism Stakeholders

The concept of stakeholders in the strategic management and organisational contact is to include any individual or group who can affect the firm’s performance or who is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives (Freeman, 1984). The stakeholders are voluntary or involuntary risk bearers (Clarkson, 1995) who can affect or is affected by the actions, decisions, policies, practices or goals of the organisation (Carrol, 1993). In this case, Ryan (2002) argues that the concept of stakeholders is regarded to be similar to the destinations, while Pavlovich (2003) proposes that the structure of a destination could be more complex than that of an organisation, with different types of competing and complimentary organisations, multiple sectors and multiple actors. With this in mind, according to Garrod and Wilson (2003), the coastal tourism industry biggest challenge is integrating the needs of the coastal zone stakeholders in a sustainable management plan that takes into account the environment, socio-economic and cultural dimensions.

The coastal tourism stakeholders includes the tourists, coastal tourism labour force, local and foreign investors and developers, local population, government and the non-governmental organisations, and those involved in the non-coastal tourism sectors such as the fishing and aquaculture sectors (Bjork, 2000). Meanwhile, WTO (1993) defines the stakeholders for the STD as the industry, environment supporters and the community (composed of the residents, local government, local business organisation and other local institutions and associations or the local authority). As an important tourism stakeholder, the government is concerned with the economic benefit from the tourism development. The economic reasons for developing tourism are to generate new employment, diversify the economy, increase the levels of income and increase revenue from taxes (Holden, 2000). Thus, the industry desires for long term growth, profitability and new business opportunities which goals need to be supported by the government. Furthermore, the government is concerned with the optimum use of the resources where jobs are created (Timur and Getz, 2004), while the public sectors too have important roles in developing tourism at all levels due to the economic and ecological responsibilities (Page, 1995).

The key stakeholders also include the tourism planners and architects who are working in the development team. The development team in designing coastal resorts
consists of many professionals and depends on the size of the resort, complexity of work and level of capital involved (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997). The architect or planner will propose the possible layout and the programming of the development which includes the strategies for the physical setting of the facilities within the development boundary. Meanwhile, Inskeep (1991) asserts that to planners, developers and managers, efficiency is a goal to be achieved, and steps and process which speed the process of completion and acceptability of the development are essential. Another important stakeholder of the tourism development, the tourists, will be discussed in length in the paragraph 2.8.

2.7 Tourism Planning

There are many views towards planning. It is intricate as it embraces the social, economic, political, psychological, anthropological and technological factors and is also concerned with the past, present and future. The environmentalist view planning as the means of alleviating resource degradations while the developers believes that it is a business transaction where profit is the goal and to architects and planners, it can be seen as the external and internal design (Gunn, 1988). Ross and Iso-Ahola (1984) propose that it is a multi-dimensional activity that seeks to be integrative as well. Meanwhile, Gunn (1988) points out that a practical planning now is frequently called as the strategic planning; implying action rather than a static state when a plan has been accomplished. Planning is critical in having sustainable development and closely connected to the siting process.

2.7.1 Siting in Tourism Planning

The word ‘site’ is derived from the Latin word ‘situs’, which translates as ‘local position’ and is connected to the word ‘sinere’, which means ‘to leave’ or ‘to remain’ (Thomas and Granham, 2007). At the macro level, Rubenstein (1987) defined site planning as the art and science of arranging the uses of portions of land. The site design is also considered as a process of intervention involving the location of circulation, structures and utilities, and making natural and cultural values available to its visitors (Inskeep, 1991). Billings (1993) summarises that the task of master planning of building requires the positioning of each building as part of a plan on site. For Billings, It involves a theory of design composition that includes the hierarchy of ideas and elements that can be used to create concepts representing the development frameworks, which in return illustrates a particular set of functions and attitudes of the society habits and culture.
Meanwhile, Williams (2007) asserts that the focus on the siting strategies can be analysed from three different perspectives: the relationship of a specific site to the region; specific site and its neighbouring sites; and building to site. The focus of this research however, is on the third strategy involving the physical setting of the tourism facilities within the tourism destinations boundary. It is a process that Williams defined as the synergistic relationships between the site’s climate, human needs and comfort, and building layout.

2.7.2 Siting Strategy Defined

Site planning consisting of the physical setting of facilities is a detailed strategy for the development of coastal resorts. ‘Strategy’ is a long-term and careful plan of action or the art of devising or employing plans to achieve a particular goal (Merriam and Webster Dictionary, 2008). Meanwhile, Karen (1998) explains that the nature of strategy are adopted and implemented emerges from a confirmation of structure of organisation, the type of resources available and the nature of the coupling it has with the environment and the strategic objective being pursued. Thus, this implies that in designing the coastal resorts, the overall aim or strategies of the siting is to develop the harmonious relationships between the building and the surrounding environment of the immediate context (Thomas and Granham, 2007).

In relation to planning of the coastal resorts, WTTC (1993) points that tourism development assigns the natural resources to a determinate use and ensures that more harmful and polluting industrial development does not occur. As a result, a number of administrative and planning controls are initiated for this purpose. This includes control of air, water and noise pollution, littering and other environmental problem and for improving the building aesthetics through appropriate building design, which includes the proper siting of facilities in the coastal tourism development (Inskeep, 1991). Pearce (1989) proposes that careful planning in the actual design practice of coastal resorts is required to determine the optimum level of tourism that will not result in the environmental degradation and to utilise tourism as the mean to achieve environmental conservation objectives.

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13 The harmonious relationship with the site is essential as tourism is largely dependent upon the physical, social and cultural attributes of the destinations where it is not only requires an attractive, different environment but also interacts and impact with the environment (Sharpley, 2002). Meanwhile proper siting of the facilities minimizes physical alterations and destruction of habitats from tourism related activities include construction (landfills, clearing of sites completely of vegetation cover, changing pattern of upland and near shore area), operation of facilities as well as recreational activities (UNEP 1997).
2.7.3 Siting Practice

The main components of coastal tourism encompass the full range of tourism, leisure, and recreationally oriented activities that take place in the coastal zone and offshore coastal waters. The coastal zone development includes the accommodation, restaurants, food industry and second homes while the infrastructure supporting the coastal development consists among others, the retail businesses, marinas and activity suppliers (Craig-Smith et al., 2006; and Hall, 2001). The components also include tourism activities such as recreational boating, coast and marine based tourism, ecotourism, cruises, swimming, recreational fishing, snorkelling and diving (Miller, 1993). This implies that resorts are places to make social contacts while enjoying the activities in the particular environment.

The site planning in coastal zone includes the identification of environmental features, landscape, recreation and coastal resources values and demand for type, location and access to recreation facilities (Kay and Alder, 2005). The siting is represented by the site planning which usually starts at the national and regional levels that incorporate broad political considerations. As highlighted by Inskeep (1991), the elaboration of national and regional plans should precede planning at the local level. Meanwhile, the micro-level planning of tourism development at the local stage is dominated by the more technical and managerial aspects of planning, including the physical planning which focused on visual appearance, architectural design and land-use control (Mieczkowski, 1995).

In supporting the local level’s role of the government institutions, Philipsen (1993) points out that there is a growing desire of the regional and local authorities to make tourism places consistent with contemporary images of environment and place. In terms of professionalism, Rubenstein (1987) asserts that the site level coastal planning commonly adopts approaches developed by the professional landscape architects and planners. Meanwhile, Inskeep (1991) points out that the importance of siting in project planning can be traced in the early development stages of step 1, 2 and 3 as illustrated in Figure 2.6. The figure indicates that the siting strategies of the facilities implemented during this early stage are critical in assisting the overall development process. In the early stage, the site selection and feasibility analysis determine the general character and scale of development and it is likely that the viability is carried out. Subsequent to this is the detailed land use planning and feasibility analysis to determine the specific type and extent of development and to confirm that it is feasible with an acceptable rate of return.
Inskeep (1991) also mentioned that during this phase of study, the planning and the feasibility factor are optimised through the economic benefits of the area in order to achieve acceptable financial return and does not generate serious environmental and socio cultural problems. At this stage, based on the land use plan, site planning, architectural, landscaping and engineering design can be undertaken with application of suitable standards set by the local building authorities. At this point also, specific environmental impact assessment should be carried out with the necessary modification based on the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).\textsuperscript{14}

### 2.7.4 Sustainable Design

The differentiation of the resort products is essential with the increase competition from other resorts and greater sophistication of the tourists. According to Parasuraman et al. (1992), the fit between tourist’s expectations and experience had fallen due to the lack of refurbishment, growing environmental awareness and problems with bad behaviours in the resorts. As such, new resorts could save the expense and problems in the long term by balancing the economic benefit of tourism and also to control the environmental consequences from the start. In return, this has resulted in the emphasis on sustainable design approaches. Sustainable design is simply a different term for designing with nature and designing in an environmentally responsive way (Yeang, 2002).

\textsuperscript{14} The EIA approval is a major requirement in the coastal tourism development in Malaysia but its effectiveness in controlling the negative environmental impact is being questioned due to its nature of implementation. This will be discussed in Chapter Five.
For Yeang, many designers tend to wrongly conceive the environment and it is stated simply as a physical and spatial zone in which the design system is erected. In most building projects, the architects or the designer has completely omitted any considerations of the project involving the ecosystem. As claimed by Vale and Vale (1991), many of the current design approaches that claim to be green or sustainable do not show a thorough understanding of the earth ecosystems and their functions.

In the context of environmentally friendly tourism, the strategies for physical siting of facilities should incorporate sustainable tourism development principles (Inskeep, 1991). The traditional view of architecture will have to be revised in an ecological approach to design (Yeang, 1995). For Yeang, the ecological design is a design process that comprehensively takes into account the adverse effects which the product of design has on the ecosystems, and gives priority to the minimisation of these adverse effects. Meanwhile, Salama (2007), in referring to the ecological design, suggests that any eco-lodge project requires the adoption of a different approach to architecture. Salama also clarifies that the design solutions should grow from the physical surroundings of a place and its interaction with the surrounding cultural setting and is based on the environmental criteria and constraints as well. It also requires local communities’ involvement in the design and implementation processes as they have acquired knowledge and expertise in design and building over the years and design should be integrated harmoniously with nature.

### 2.7.5 Spatial and Physical Design Aspects

The main physical design aspects of coastal resorts can be categorized into: Zoning; Avoiding Environmental Hazard; Spatial limits and Size; Open Spaces and Provision of Landscape; General Infrastructure; Tourists’ Infra-Structure; Coastal Building Setback; and Environmentally and Socially Responsible Access.

#### Zoning

The spatial planning in tourism development involves the grouping and spatial relationship of the facilities provided called zoning which depends on the density and character of the development desired as related to the natural environment. Different approaches of site planning ranging from clustering, courtyard grouping and linear arrangement are used in the development (Inskeep, 1991). In the low scale development, small clusters constructions may provide better solutions, particularly where site configurations and infrastructure allows flexibility in the layout and have better physical connection with nature (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997). It represents
the environmentally optimal scenario where tourists remain confined within the limits of self contained cluster and this allows development of environmentally friendly infrastructure by mitigating ecological deterioration (Mieczkowski, 1995).

**Avoiding Environmental Hazard**

Inskeep (1991) asserts that the first step in coastal resort development is to physically avoid environmental hazard in locating the facilities. This includes avoiding the environmentally hazardous areas such as steep hillsides with unstable soil conditions or low lying places subject to flooding. Improper cut and fill and building on steep slopes can lead to land slippage and property damage. In reverse, minimising cut and fill using the appropriate building design can create a safer environmental situation. For coastal resort development near the shoreline in low lying areas, a common environmental situation in beach resort development, considerations must be given to whether the buildings will be threatened by the high waves coming ashore during a storm (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997). It will be necessary to set the building well back from the shoreline or construct them on raised landfill or platform.

**Spatial limits and Size**

The important task in resort planning is to establish the spatial limits and its size. Resorts should be spatially well defined to protect their spread and to leave the landscape free of construction as much as possible. According to Gunn (1988), a resort should be modest in size with low rise architecture and no gigantic structure to blend with the natural site features. For Gunn, strict enforcement of growth will limit and oppose the economics of scale in design, planning and management of the tourism development. These strategies are also aimed to prevent the urbanization of resorts, in which the element of recreations, rest and human dimension and cosiness may be lost.

**Open Spaces and Provision of Landscape**

The open spaces are one of the main recreational assets by which the majority of tourist will identify in a resort and also to control the movement of tourist. As recommended by Philipsen (1993), it is necessary to create large natural areas with proper landscaping in order to keep the human influence at a distance. Parallel to this, Zube (1991) conclude that the landscapes are humanised environments that are endowed with meaning and values. As such, natural features such as rocks, mature trees and running water should be retained even in the most densely built-up area and contact between the buildings and the environments may be emphasised by allowing natural features to penetrate or extend into the resorts through the open spaces.
General Infrastructure

General infrastructure includes the supply of fresh water electricity, garbage disposal, recycling and waste management that should be designed according to the highest possible standard (Mieczkowski, 1995). These need to be properly maintained as the improper water quality, sewage and waste management can cause the coastal water pollution, coral reef damage and beach erosion (Mycoo, 2006). Another very important part of the general infrastructure is transportation. Problems of traffic congestion and visual pollution are especially acute in traditional beach resorts (Stansfield, 1969). Consequently using the appropriate public transportation rather than the private forms in the resort’s premise, must be encouraged in all the tourism developments.

Tourists’ Infra-Structure

The tourism infra-structure includes the spatial distribution and design of tourist facilities including the accommodations. The design of the facilities should adhere to wide range of environmental objectives. The room units in resort complexes usually vary in style to create individuality and character (Lawson, 1995) and their densities are disguised by landscapes (Smith, 1978) to allow the visual and physical contact for tourists. Meanwhile, Baud-Bovy and Lawson (1997) asserts that the physical contact, which is more important than the visual, is almost impossible to achieve in high rise buildings. In both cases, the positioning of buildings should maximise not only view but also be based on climatic considerations as well.

Coastal Building Setback

The setbacks, or minimum distances required, of main buildings from the amenity features, shorelines, roads, the site and lot boundaries and other buildings are important to maintain a sense of openness and sufficient space for landscaping, privacy of building occupants and safety reasons (Inskeep, 1991). Coastal setback distance, defined as the prescribed distance to a coastal feature within which all or certain types of development are prohibited, is used to provide the buffer zones between the ocean and coastal infrastructure (Mycoo, 2006). According to Sorensen et al. (1984), the distances are set in meters from the high tide mark, but in certain cases a less precise limit of the permanent vegetation line is preferred. The planning of beach resorts should ensure the facilities comply with the required set back from the beach to protect them from shore erosion (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997).
Environmentally and Socially Responsible Access

The issue of access can be investigated from two different perspectives, which are the access for tourists from one facility to another and access by the local community. Resorts service and facility clusters which may develop into groups of nodes connected with access corridors that are used by tourists to travel between them. Principal facilities and services are located at each node, while others, together with the local attractions are located along the corridors (Beeton, 1989). In providing the access, the environments which are difficult to understand do not allow people to become involved and social interaction to materialize (Kaplan, 1992). For Kaplan, the local communities are not being in control of one’s own daily life and lack of control over who enters one territory. Resorts hotels are often set within larger resort communities’ integrations allowing them with access to the waterfront activities (Lawson, 1995) where overcrowding must be limited to reduce the tensions between tourists and the host populations (Mycoo, 2006).

2.8 Tourists Experience

The account of the tourists' behaviour is useful to generate new ideas on the siting strategies for environmental and social planning of a tourist’s destinations. For instance, what the tourists think, how they feel, and what influences their thoughts during the visits are important factors in determining their behaviours. The deeply personal reactions and the environmental consequences of the tourist’s on site behaviour are distinctive and are described as:

“The magic that some places hold, that special feeling that embraces landscape and history and our personal associations, but somehow goes beyond the sum of them. Energy, spirit…call it what you like. It’s just words to describe the real experience we can’t explain when we get the shiver or the hairs stands up.” Mc Carthy (2000: 370)

The reflection of the tourists’ experience is often long lasting (Pearce, 2005). In this sense, the experienced product does not decay or wear out and may be reinforced by updated information about the site or repeated visits. Thus, the information on the experience provided by the tourists is important in improving the resorts especially after a certain period of operations where certain modifications to the resorts need to be done specifically to meet the tourists demand and to remain competitive. In supporting the above argument, Butler (1980) in his ‘Destination's Lifecycles’ theory argues that even though the new resorts will be filled by tourists through an aggressive promotion,
the resilience of the business will only be seen in several years of the operation. There is a chance that it will survive economically if the tourists return to the resort because of the improvement in accommodating the tourists’ experience.

2.8.1 Tourists Defined

Most tourists are city and town dwellers, for whom their holidays essentially means to escape from the urban conditions, high densities, pollutions and organised routine lives (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997). Tourists usually seek refreshing experience in a normal development. A normal tourist development usually offers such features among others as quietness, change of pace and opportunities for relaxation and contact with the nature, sun, sea and other natural features. However, not all visitors of a specific venue or destinations are tourists.

For tourism studies, visitors are divided into the tourist or resident categories. A tourist is any person travelling to a place other than their usual environment for less than 12 months and whose purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (WTO, 2006). WTO also asserts that the tourists may be either international or domestic. Domestic tourists are persons visiting within their country of citizenship, but whose usual environment lies more than eighty kilometres of the place of visitation. Increasingly, places become the arenas of competition in the regional and international marketplace for attracting visitors (Jenkins, 1999).

2.8.2 Understanding Tourists Behaviour

The conclusion derived from the earlier literature is that the tourists’ experience is an important component in tourism development (Ryan, 2003). Tourist behaviour is seen as distinct from the consumer behaviour partly because tourism has the distinctive phase of experience and because tourists have the power to transform their ongoing product differences (Pearce, 2005). In Figure 2.7, Pearce (2005a) plots a pathway to understand some of the main destinations in analysing the tourist behaviour, beginning with the consideration of the characteristics of the individual tourist. According to Pearce, the tourism industry combines the primaries and intermediates inputs to produce intermediate outputs, such as the accommodation, meals or performance.
Pearce (2005a) also clarifies that in the final stage, the tourists utilise the final output as intangible but highly valued experiences such as recreation, business and social contact. It has been suggested that the final output of the tourism production process which is the personal experience of the tourist is dependent upon the involvement of the tourists themselves (Smith, 1984). Thus, the outcomes of the tourists’ on site experiences on social, cultural and environmental factors are important determinants in formulating the siting strategies. Pearce also asserts that the tourists interact with their destination and this mutual process sometimes assisted interpretation, which itself is a process of presenting places for the tourists use. While the attractions are being experienced in the tourists’ destinations, tourists, both with assistance and by themselves can transform their ongoing product experience. In this case, the ability of tourists to reshape their experience as they are participating in them is the distinctively tourists behaviour dimension.

The process of social change induced by tourism is illustrated by Ryan (2003) in Figure 2.8. Ryan points out that within the tourists’ zone, the nature of interaction between the resident and visitor is determined by the nature of the tourists, the belief and cultural systems of the host and the physical carrying capacities of the area. In the process of interaction, sets of behaviour on both the tourists and hosts have demonstration of effects which can be both the positive and negative.
2.8.3 Tourists’ On-site Environmental and Social Experience

The tourist perspective has been advocated as essential in achieving a symbiotic relationship between the visitor and resources (Mc Arthur and Hall, 1996). The fundamental characteristic of tourism is that the product is consumed on site (Sharpley and Tefler, 2002) and tourists are the consumer. Both clarify that from the consumptions perspectives, focussing upon the subjective or emotional reactions of consumers to a particular consumption objects draws attention to the ways in which the consumers make sense of the different objects. Holt (1995) stresses that how consumers’ experience the consumption objects is structured by the interpretative frameworks that they apply to engage the object. Meanwhile, Smith (2002) has suggested that the final output of tourism process, the personal experience is dependent on the involvement of the tourists themselves. Therefore, the account of the tourists’ on-site experience with the sites and the settings they visit provide the essential information on means to improve the tourist destination. Once the importance of the tourists on site experience is identified then a number of mechanisms to enhance the tourists destination can then be outlined (Ryan, 2003).

On the site environment, a travel experience through which the visitors come to a better comprehension of the unique natural and cultural environment is being preferred to around the world. In the context of the ecotourists, they are distinct visitors who consume the ecotourism related tourism products and experiences (Page and Dowling, 2002). Meanwhile, Wight (1977) asserts that the ecotourists seek for the uncrowded, remote, wilderness, learning about wildlife, nature and the local culture. Ecotourists are interested in the wilderness of settings, pristine area and look for experience that
provides a sense of closeness to natural attraction and the local communities. They search for an authentic and complex learning experience as well as diverse natural and cultural resources (Ayala, 1996). Meanwhile, Eagles (1992) and Fennel (1999) suggest that ecotourists want to see and experience as much as possible in the time available as well as desiring high quality guide services.

On the social experiences, the linkage between the tourists and social experiences can be observed in two different perspectives: tourist to tourist and tourist to the host community. It can be suggested that the tourists can have multiple perspective on the other tourists (Glasson et al., 1995). The kind of tourists’ responds will depend on both the setting and the number of visitors present. At the broadest level of the wilderness of setting and natural environment is just one kind of a tourist to tourist context even there are many variations (Pearce, 2005). In this vein, Urry (1990) used the term ‘tourist gaze’ to provide an integrative view of how the tourist approach social and environmental encounters. Urry further distinguished those whose goals are largely to appreciate the settings alone or with a small number of the like-minded companions from those who seek for social experience. However, in certain cases the tourists themselves are often guilty of helping to destroy the surrounding environment; the more attractive the site, then the more popular it becomes and the more likely it is that it will be degraded by heavy visitation (Hillery et al., 2001).

2.8.4 Tourist Destinations and Sustainability

Pearce (2005b) specifically apply the tripartite system called the ‘Place Model’ to the tourists attractions and locations summarising the three interlocking components required for visitors or other users to gain a sense of place (Refer to Figure 2.9). The diagram demonstrates that a good tourist site offers the public clear conceptions of what the place is all about, the activities available are understood and accessible, and the physical elements that constitute the setting are distinctive and aesthetically pleasing. In the case of coastal tourism, the activities revolve around the sun, sand and sea. The combination of these activities and the physical features in the resorts are used to satisfy the tourists needs; environmental and social. Meanwhile, the physical features and facilities of the resorts, its transportation link and the multi-national network of tour operators and travel agents through which it is sold are all simply the means of delivering the desired satisfactions for tourists (Kotler, 1988).

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These tangible features are developed from its core attractions where hotels or resorts within the walking distance of the sea, with a sea view can be attractive. Since businesses are developed and can be seasonal to support the resorts, Lavery (1971) argues that it is inevitable that the land-use of resorts follows the predictable patterns distinct from the normal residential and commercial developments. According to Stansfield and Rickert (1970), the development is usually continued with a recreational business district, a seasonally oriented grouping of restaurants, novelty and souvenir shops. This argument opens up a window of opportunity in the siting of the facilities which is the probability of integrating these activities into the resort as one of the attraction.
2.8.5 Summary of Constructs Domains of Service Experience Theory
(Otto and Ritchie, 1966)

According to Iso-Ahola (1983), tourism is widely acknowledged as a socio-psychological experience. The individual’s cognition and feelings about the experience are of greatest importance in determining the quality of experience in a tourist destination (Ross and Iso-Ahola, 1991). In this case, the tourists’ experiences are a complex combination of factors which shape the feelings and attitudes of the tourists towards their visits (Page and Dowling, 2002). Thus, it is essential to understand the psychological dimensions in the ecotourism experience which can contribute in improving the quality of spaces created by the siting process of the coastal resort’s facilities. The nature of the product or services in coastal tourism means that it involves the consumption of experience with the attractions at the tourist destination in terms of interaction and interpretation of the product.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Hedonic</td>
<td>Excitement, enjoyment, memorability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>Meeting people, being part of the process,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>having choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>Escape, doing something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>Physical comfort, relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Personal safety, security of belongings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>Educational and informative, challenging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.1: The Construct Domains of Service Experience. Source: Otto and Ritchie (1996:169)*

Parallel to the above, the coastal tourism sites can be seen as experiential product facilitating feelings, emotions and knowledge for tourist (Arnould and Price, 1993). The experiential phenomena can be analysed from the construct domains of service experience theory (Refer to Table 2.1) as proposed by Otto and Ritchie (1966). Tourism experiences can be defined as experiential products to facilitate feelings, emotions and knowledge for tourists; and defined as the subjective mental state felt by participants during a service encounter (Otto and Ritchie, 1996). Meanwhile, a coastal tourism experience can be regarded as a phenomenon or part of the experience of life. In this instance, Wakefield and Blogett (1994) emphasise that understanding the experiential phenomena is crucial, as emotional reactions and decisions often prevailed among the consumers. The quality of experience can be conceptualised as eco-tourists affective responses to their desired social-psychological
benefits. The quality of the experience involves both the attributes provided by the producer and the attributes brought to the opportunity by the visitor. This is further supported by Baum (1997) who points that contact with people who contribute to the actual experience provide a linkage between both the producers and visitors. Consequently, the visitor experiences have elements of core needs fulfilment and emotional or hedonic content, whilst the core delivery and performance are related to the provider’s processes (Johns, 1999).

Leisure and tourism have emphasised on the expressive factors as a central feature of the satisfaction evaluation (Otto and Ritchie, 1996) whereby satisfaction contains both the perceptions and experiences results from the experiential nature of the product consumption. In this case, experience can be regarded as an important element in influencing satisfaction. Tourist experiences are considered as individualistic, subjective and emotional in nature, whereas the service experiences are individualistic, subjective and affective (McCallum and Harrison, 1985). With regards to the psychological environment, the subjective personal reactions and feelings experienced by tourists, when consuming a service have been found to be an integral part of the consumer evaluation and satisfaction with the service (Otto and Ritchie, 1996).

In the case of this study, the experience and the satisfaction of tourists in the case studies resorts will be tested to extract relevant information on the siting process of coastal tourism development. The observation that human behaviour is influenced by the image as well as the objective reality is relevant to the questions on why people travel to particular tourist destination, which is the same case in the approach of this study. By identifying the images which are verbally expressed by tourists based on their past experience and future expectations of positive experiences, their ideologies in turn can be used to enrich the strategies outlined in the policies and guidelines.

2.9 Tourists Spatial Cross-cultural Experience

Pearce (2005a) argues that the developmental pressure of facility construction, the seasonality of tourism in some locations and the larger affect of the tourism industry are the indirect consequences of the tourists’ behaviours. This implies the need to mitigate the negative impact caused by the tourists’ behaviours. Thus, preservation and conservation of culture can contribute to the strengthening of these forms of the social and cultural identities but also to the simulation of the economic activities. The magnitude of the socio-cultural change is in part, determined by the differences between the host and guests.
In supporting the above, Inskeep (1991) suggests that these differences include: basic values and logic systems; religious belief; traditions; customs; lifestyles; behavioural patterns; dress codes; sense of time budgeting; and attitudes towards strangers. Meanwhile, Mathieson and Walls (1982) identified the three major types of culture, which are susceptible to change as well as attractive to tourists; inanimate forms of culture (historical buildings, monuments, traditional arts and crafts); reflection of normal day to day life and activities of the host communities; and animated forms of culture (religious events, carnivals and traditional festivals). Consequently, the understanding of the place making concepts of place making in the coastal resorts is crucial to understand the tourists’ socio-cultural experience.

2.9.1 Place-making in Coastal Resorts

The understanding of the place making concept is paramount to the siting process of coastal resorts from the architecture and planning perspective. In this regard, architecture is strongly connected to the conception of space and place-making where a good design can only come from a balanced consideration of the full range of factors involved in building for people and not only from a few environmental determinants (Thomas and Graham, 2007). According to Thomas and Graham, the humans need a sense of place of the site and environment, both physically and culturally, to form the basis of place making. This implies the importance of human roles in the conception of place. This is supported by the following literatures:

1. Lefebvre (1991) explores the role played by both the human experience and social structure in the production of space. According to Lefebvre, space was produced through the dialectical relationship between three dimensions of space; perceived, conceived and lived\[15\].

\[15\] Perceived space is made up of the routine spatial practices that produce and reproduce societal spaces, while, conceived space is the space that which has been intellectualised, conceptualised by technocrats; for whom this space corresponds with, what is lived and perceived. Lived space relates to the sensual space lived through the direct experience of its associated symbols and image. The experiential quality of spaces is both a social product and a mean of social production. Meanwhile, Lefebvre (1991), in summarising the field theory of spaces, states that the creation of space is mainly concerned with the mental [logical and formal abstraction], epistemological space, the space of social practice and the space occupied by the sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projection, symbols and utopias. In the field of tourism, the knowledge of the users; tourists and the local communities and stakeholders are expected to reproduce and explain the process of the space production.
2. Giddens (1991) points out that social actions are best analysed as the relations between the sets of rules and resources. Rules are defined as the methodological procedures of social interaction and resources referring to the power of facilities available to an actor\textsuperscript{16}; and,

3. Harvey (1996) uses the dialectic of everyday life to explain the processes by which places are formed. For Harvey, what goes on in a place cannot be understood from outside the spatial relations, which supports that place more than the space relations can be understood independently and what goes on in the particular place.

The central issues in the physical setting of facilities in coastal tourism developments are the creation and the quality of built and open spaces as the result of siting of the facilities. Parallel to these issues, the concept of place has emerged as a prominent focus for exploring the relationship between humans and the environment in the tourism field (Patterson and William, 2006). In theorizing tourism and tourist’s space, the linkages between tourism as temporary form of mobility and the issues of production and consumption of tourists needs to be conceptualized from the global perspective (Coles et al. 2005). Here, tourists tends to combine several attractions and facilities during their holidays according to their own preferences which indicates that functional association and the positioning [siting] of the facilities (Dietvorst, 1989) can be described as reinforcing the place. In addition, the siting strategies must also involves the interpretation and understanding of tourists’ behaviours in the actual place (resort) setting on how they perceive the facilities and their relationship within their temporary stays in the particular resort (Pearce, 2005).

However, the research in place study is complex has been as fragmented as the industry itself where it affects the study of both supply and demand side of the industry including the resorts\textsuperscript{17}. Cooper (2002) describes the complexity as the constant tension between academic and industry based researchers and is observed to utilise a complex multi layered framework for analysing and characterizing the structure underlying the epistemological framework (Patterson and William, 2006). In referring to the complexity, the place studies are linked to paradigms that transcend the disciplinary boundaries where it is difficult to find both specific and general discussion of

\textsuperscript{16} Rules and resources can be seen as variably constraining the human actions in space, with space accordingly becoming the zoned in relation to the routines spatial practices. Giddens expresses that, it is the range of potential actions of the space determined through the relation between rules and resources that is crucial to an understanding of a place.

\textsuperscript{17} The complexity of tourism industry is due to the fragmented nature of tourism system.
phenomenology (Seamon, 2000) and are typically organized within a discipline according to different conceptual schools of thought (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001) and is based on the environmental preference (Kaplan, 1992). Finally, Laili (1992) suggests that the lack of empirical operationalisation is a major factor while Stedman (2002) states that the inconsistent measurement has resulted in few attempts to build a systematic theory in place research.

2.9.2 Staged Authenticity

The authenticity of the displayed culture is an important issue in the relationship between tourists and the community. Theobald (2004) defines ‘authenticity’ as ‘genuine, ‘unadulterated’ or ‘the real thing’, while Reisinger and Steiner (2006) argue that although tourists might think they have encountered authentic things, the object of their experience may be false or being staged, an imitation or simulation. The experiences involve the construction, evaluation and modification of destination image through time and space. It is sequential and descriptive in nature; describing a process a tourist progresses through cognitive and affective responses to a destination are accumulated over time and is referred to ‘Staged Authenticity’ theory (Gunn, 1972). Gunn further clarifies that a modified induced image results from the personal experience of the destination and includes all the information following the actual visit. In this case, the staged authenticity theory implies that the images held by returned visitors and potential visitors will differ (Jenkins, 1999) where images held by returned visitors tend to be more realistic, complex and differentiated (Pearce, 1998).

The main reason is that while tourists are seeking for different experience in different places, the host communities have different approaches in their own effort of displaying their culture (Pearce, 2005). According to Pearce, for the host populations, it is not a bad idea to maintain and preserve culture not only for the tourists but also for

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18 In further interrogating the meaning of authenticity, Wang (2000) argues that tourism is a kind of social action which distances the paramount reality both in time and geography and in terms of culture. Within these realms, tourists transform the physical structure of the area visited by them through their distinctive interpretation of the product offered [authenticity] (Ashworth and Dietvorst, 1995). Their interpretations are influenced by advertisement in the newspaper or recommendations from friends and former personal experience and can be staged as constructed tourists’ attractions (Mac Cannel, 1989). The process of symbolic and material production through the tourists’ interpretation and creation of local and regional identity in combination with global features is important in tourism development (Ashworth and Dietvorst, 1995).

19 Defined as: “…a convenient integrating expression for two groups of locals with whom visitors come in contact: service personnel and local citizens.” (Pearce, 2005)
their future generations. However, the host population will probably not understand the true value of their culture. This is where, the difference in the cultural behaviour or physical appearance might occur in the process. In line with this, Archer et al. (2004) declares that when the cultural distinctions between the local community and the tourists are strongly identified, local culture and customs may be exploited to satisfy the visitors at the expense of the local pride and dignity. Meanwhile Hashimoto (2002) argues that ‘Staged authenticity’ is commonly observed through the forms of shortened and abbreviated versions of the cultural performance and crafts which suits the tourists’ taste, recreation of the stage in a more westernised and modern environment and changing some parts of the host’s culture so that it make sense or is acceptable to tourists. This is an indication that tourists often demand authentic exhibition of culture and lifestyles which are considerably different from their own (Graburn, 1989; and Bauman 1996).

By accommodating both the tourists’ and the hosts’ views, the display of authentic culture becomes merely a performance, or staged authenticity. The issue is an important one when the host destination is able to convince the tourists that the festivals or activities in the resort areas such as public areas, hotel lobbies and restaurants are authentic whilst protecting the local residents culture (Ingles, 2002). Thus, the question remains in the need to minimise the imbalance between the cross cultural impacts through appropriate physical planning in a tourism development. Suggestion to counter this is stated as follows:

“By introducing the notion of sincerity, experiences in culture may be stripped of the temporal connotations implied by the concept of authenticity. Instead they become tied to selves in the present, both local and tourists.”
Taylor (2001: 7)

In this case, Kuhn (1970) proposes that a basic concept within any discipline is an idea accepted once and for all by all members of the community. However, Wang (1999) points out that Kuhn’s term is not yet a basic concept in tourism where he suggests that tourism fosters existential authenticity because people feel they themselves are more authentic and more freely self-expressed than in everyday life. This implies that the siting is an important element in balancing the authenticity through the promotion of environmental and social spaces that enhances tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts.
2.9.3 Tourists as Transnationals Communities

Another important concept in tourism and planning is the notion of space and time in articulating the spaces. According to Ashworth and Dievorst (1995), space and time are the basic attributes of tourism and recreation, because tourism presupposes movement in the modern world. Meanwhile, Lash and Urry (1994) demonstrate how modernity have radical effects on how people actually experience the modern world, changing both their forms of subjectivity and sociability and their aesthetic appreciation of nature and landscapes. In this instance, Harvey (1989) argues that the less important is the social barrier, the greater sensitivity of capital to the variations of places within space and the greater the incentive for places to be differentiated in ways attractive to the capital. This explains why tourism regions seek to promote a distinctive image and to create an atmosphere of uniqueness that may prove the attractiveness to the visitors (Ashworth, 1995) apart of reducing the impact towards the environment.

Consequently, the concept of transformation, changing of shapes, appearance, quality or nature of something, are used to express the importance of 'time' and 'space' in considering tourism and recreation (Ashworth, 1995). According to Ashworth, the concept of transformation can be understood from the time-space analysis of tourist behaviour which depends on their motives, preferences and experiences, their images and estimations of opportunities; and material resources. In this vein, the concept of transformation is closely linked to the notion of tourists as 'Transnationals', in which the tourists' identities as migrants are viewed (Duval, 2004). Layton-Henry (2002) argues that the idea of 'Transnationalism' entails for evidence of people leading dual lives, living in two cultures and making a living through the continuous regular contact across the national borders.

A transnationals framework of analysis within the tourism context will allow for the recognition of interconnected social networks and result to the movement between and among the local communities (Hall and Mueller, 2004). In other words, interconnected transnationals network means that the movement, or temporary mobility, by tourists is another mean by which tourism can be viewed from. Thus, the architecture or design of the resorts provides the evidence that different cultures co-exists in the physical spatial nature composed by the siting process which can outlast the original culture which produced them; similar to the concept of staged authenticity. It also provides tangible meeting points between the new and old cultures and lifestyle that goes with them (Abel. 2004) in a particular environment. In the process, the emergence of new cultures and lifestyles does not indicate that we should put aside the traditional way of living but
it should re-emerged as new forms by combining them with the modern architectural features.

2.10 Global Climate Change (GCC) and Siting

Unquestionably, the global climate change is an issue that the tourism industry has to pay more attention to in the future. The scenario was supported by Burton (1996) in stating that climate change cannot be totally avoided where anticipatory and precautionary adaptation is more effective and less costly than forced or last minute adaptation or retrofitting. Burton also emphasised on the immediate benefits resulted from better adaptation to climate variability and extreme atmospheric events and removing maladaptive policies and practices. In this case, climate change brings opportunities as well as threats. The GCC is reflected in the ocean climate change, which will subsequently lead to sea-rise phenomena. According to Leatherman (2001), the relationship of sea level rise, known as “Bruun Rule”, does not suggest that sea level rise actually caused the erosion; rather, increase sea level enables high energy, short period storm waves to attack further up the beach and transport sand offshore.

The melting of the polar iceberg also contributes to the rise of the sea level. Oppenheimer et al. (2004) stressed that the current state of the West Arctic’s ice sheet is of great concern because if it melts completely, it could raise global sea levels by approximately seven meters. There is still potential for a marked increase in the rate of sea level rise due to the accelerated ice loss (Payne et al., 2004). In another extreme case, (IPCC, 2001) summarised that sea-level rise poses the greatest threat and challenge for sustainable adaptation within the South and Southeast Asia. Titus et al. (1985) summarises that one of the major physical impact of sea level rise is the erosion of beaches, particularly along the open coast and this would leave the coastal infrastructure more vulnerable to storm waves.

2.10.1 GCC Impact on Coastal Tourism

An increasing population living within 60 km from the shorelines, as predicted by Povh (2000), leads to the increasing demand of coastal leisure and tourism facilities. Thus, the impact of climate change will pose severe problems to the tourism industry. WTO predicted that the seaside tourism seems likely to suffer damage from most of the effects of GCC, notably beach erosion, higher sea levels, greater damage from sea surges and storms, and reduced water supply (WTO, 2003). This is further supported by Nicholls et al. (1998), who projected that the sea-level rise would disrupt the sector
through the loss of beaches, inundation, and degradation of the coastal ecosystems, saline intrusion, and damage to critical infrastructure.

In relation to the coastal erosion, the facilities common concern relates to the bearing capacity of the soil foundation for the structures. For instance, the increased water table resulting from the sea-level rise decreases the bearing capacity of the soil foundation and increases the possibility of liquefaction, which results in higher instability of the coastal infrastructures (Shaw et al., 1998). According to Ragoonaden (1997), beach erosion threatens the coastal roads and tourists hotels and many coastal protection schemes have resulted in the loss of the recreational beach (Weerakkody, 1997). Designed as fixed features, tourist infrastructure and facilities, particularly hotels, which are frequently in the hundred meters of coastline, are most at risk of becoming increasingly threatened by the extreme weather and associated events such as storm surges, tropical cyclones and sea level rises. As for infrastructure, the vulnerability of waste facilities, septic systems, water quality and supply, and roads are the particular concerns in many places (Solomon et al., 1999).

2.10.2 Adaptation Measures

Adaptation, therefore, is a method to mitigate the impact of climate change to the coastal area. Some researchers regard the adaptive capacity of a system as a function of availability of and access to resources by the decision makers, as well as vulnerable sub-sectors of a population (Kelly et al., 1999). Adaptation is also considered as an important response option or strategy, along with mitigation (Kane and Shogren, 2000). In adapting to the global climate change, Biljsma et al. (1996) identified the followings three possible coastal response options: Protect; Accommodate; and Retreat.

1. **Protect** – it aims to protect the land from the sea so that existing land uses can continue, by constructing hard structures (for example, seawalls) as well as using soft measures (for example, beach nourishment);
2. **Accommodate** – it implies that people continue to occupy the land but make some adjustments (for example, elevating buildings on piles, growing flood or salt tolerant crops); and
3. **Retreat** – it involves no attempt to protect the land from the sea; in an extreme case, the coastal area is abandoned.

Given that many potential climate change impacts on the coastal zones (tourism related) feature irreversible effects, surprise outcomes, and unpredictable changes, the appropriate policy response should be maximising the flexibility and enhancing the
resilience and adaptation potential of these areas (Pritchard et al., 1998). It is obvious that nearly all resorts in the disaster area, even the most luxurious ones, suffered in some way from bad planning and design in terms of safety in relation to the GCC. The policy and implementation will be influenced by the available techniques for defending the coastline with due consideration being given to their cost and sustainability. In terms of the planning, Garcia et al. (2006) summarized that good planning and design of buildings can protect lives and foster a real sense of security for travelers and the host communities. Success in the planning and development of tourism destinations will therefore be determined by responses to climate change issues relating to the land use zoning, infrastructure standards and more importantly the location and design of the facilities (Hall and Higham, 2005). Hence, the importance of the siting process in mitigating the impact of GCC whilst enhancing the tourists experience could not been understated in this study.

2.11 Conclusion

The reviewed literatures and supporting researches in this chapter provide the necessary theoretical support for this study. The review of the global tourism demonstrates its significance to the world’s economy and development and the importance of cushioning the negative impacts of globalisation to the tourism industry. Coastal resorts developments however, are exposed to many challenges and modifications on the environment and social factors in their lifecycles. In this case, the review on the tourists destinations’ development stages and the need for alternative tourism through the concept of ‘Destination’s Lifecycle’ (Butler, 1980) and ‘Broad Context Model of Destination Scenario’ (Weaver, 2000) calls for a more integrated planning approach in developing the coastal resorts. They imply that the resorts need to be designed beyond the product maturity stage or to respond to the unpredictable changes in their operations. The identification of the tourism industry main components and their interrelationship from the demand and supply perspectives in ‘Tourism System’ (Ryan, 2003) stresses the importance of tourist destination as the main tourism product for the tourists’ consumptions. As consumers, tourists experience the natural setting and environment through the activities conducted in the spaces and the facilities provided in the resort. All the components are observed to be interrelated and have major influence towards the resorts sustainability.

Meanwhile, the review on the sustainable tourism development’s principles demonstrates the need to embrace them in developing coastal resorts to protect the environment whilst benefiting the local community fuelled by the tourists’ demand for the more environmentally and socially responsible coastal resorts. In both cases, the
sustainable tourism principles need to include the broader aspects of planning in integrating the needs and ideologies of key stakeholders into the tourism industry both at the macro and micro level. At the micro level, the planning should emphasis on the siting of the resorts facilities to develop harmonious relationships between the building and surrounding environment of the immediate context. It will ensure the optimum level of tourism that will not degrade the environment and can be utilized as tools to conserve the environment. Subsequently, the reviews on both the spatial and physical sustainable design characteristics required in the resorts provide the basic understanding on the manner how the siting can be utilized to enhance the tourists’ experience.

The literature on tourists’ experience encompassing the definitions of important terminologies and theoretical backgrounds of the tourists’ behaviour and experiences demonstrates that they are important consideration in improving the coastal resorts through the siting process. This is despite the difficulties in interpreting their meanings by the virtue of being individualistic, subjective and affective in nature. Meanwhile the spatial experience of tourists is investigated through the review on concept of place making involving the 'Staged Authenticity' (Gunn, 1972) and 'Transnationalism' (Duval, 2004) where the notion of tourists as transnationals communities and meeting of two different cultures should re-emerge as a meaningful form manifested in the siting to create tourists sense of belonging in the particular resort.

Finally, the review on the GCC’s impact to coastal zone and means of mitigating the impact highlights the importance of siting as a long term adaptation measures in mitigating the impacts whilst enhancing the tourists’ experience. In summary, the theoretical support provided by the literature reviews essentially provides a clear direction of this study. The strategies for the siting of facilities of the coastal resorts will integrate these bodies of knowledge and contribute to this study made by each area of literature. This will lay the foundation for the overall design approach and direction of this study.
Chapter Three

Coastal Resorts in Malaysia

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the coastal tourism development in Malaysia. First, at the macro level, it highlights the tourism growth in terms of the tourists’ arrivals and receipts and its significance to the Malaysian economy. It discusses the importance of inter-regional cooperation, ecotourism and the transportation industry in assisting the tourism growth. Subsequently, it provides the overview of the coastal tourism developments in Malaysia by outlining their distributions and recent progress. Secondly, this chapter highlights the structure of the tourism organisation; Federal, State and Local level in the government sector by identifying the key players involved in the policy making and practice pertains to the tourism planning and development. The way the policies are being channelled from top to the lower level agencies in a top-down and decentralised approach and the extent of their impact to the coastal resort development in Malaysia are discussed in this chapter.

Thirdly, it outlines and summarises the various tourism policies implemented by the government; the way they are formulated, their objectives and the manner they have shaped the coastal resorts developments in Malaysia. The policies are the National Tourism Policy, National Ecotourism Policy, Rural Tourism Master Plan and The Second National Tourism Policy. The way the policies were formulated in supporting the economic growth and sustainable tourism development provide an important insight on the gaps that exist between the policies and the actual siting practice of the coastal resorts facilities.

Finally, it elaborates on the existing siting guidelines stated namely in the National Ecotourism Policy, Environmental Impact Assessment, Local Building Regulations and Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools and Indicators. The weaknesses in the guidelines in the context of enhancing tourists’ experience are identified to provide insights on the way forward in improving the current siting strategies. It also touches on the relationship between the siting and political ideologies.
on the manner it can be a barrier to the formulation and implementation of comprehensive siting strategies for resorts in the West coast of Malaysian Peninsula.

### 3.2 Tourism Development in Malaysia

Malaysia is located centrally within the Southeast Asia. It is divided into the Malaysian Peninsula and East Malaysia. The two parts are separated from each other by the South China Sea. The Malaysian Peninsula lies at the south of Thailand and separated from Indonesia by the Straits of Malacca and Singapore by the Straits of Johore (Refer to Figure 3.1).

![Figure 3.1: Location Map of Malaysia. Source: USCIA (2008)](image)

It covers a total area of 329,758 km square. Both parts of Malaysia share a largely similar landscape featuring the coastal plains and densely forested hills and mountains. The highest of which is the Mount Kinabalu at 4,095.2 meters on the island of Borneo. The local climate is tropical characterized by the high humidity and incidents of rainfall which are influenced by the annual Southwest (April to October) and Northeast (October to February) monsoons\(^{20}\) (Department of Statistic Malaysia, 2009). Meanwhile, the Malaysian Peninsula is more developed than the East Malaysia. The developed area containing the cities and largest towns and the major agricultural and industrial sections are found primarily in the western side of the Malaysian Peninsula. The area has emerged as the most densely populated and industrialized area in

\(^{20}\) The monsoons are important factors in selection of case studies as it coincides with the timing of fieldworks in this research. During the Northeast monsoon seasons, the resorts are virtually empty which makes it impossible for data collection.
Malaysia, well supported by efficient transport network through the North-South Highway\textsuperscript{21} and major international airports and ports in this area. The majority of areas in the West coast consist of predominantly the mangrove swamps and tidal flats while the East coast is characterized by the sandy beaches and river estuaries.

Malaysia is a multi racial country. The population of Malaysia is 28.31 million consisting of 62% Bumiputeras (Malays including Indigenous people), 24% Chinese, 8% Indians, with other minorities along with foreigners who are mostly semi-skilled workers (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2009). Malay is the national language of the country, while English is also widely spoken in major towns and cities across the country. In summary, the multi-cultural background combined with the natural attractions, economic and political stabilities has assisted the growth of the tourism industry in Malaysia. For example, the emphasis of its multiculturalism and cultural diversity representing the major civilizations in Asia as its tourism image is currently projected by the promotion tag line, ‘Malaysia, Truly Asia’ (Tourism Malaysia, 2009).

3.2.1 Tourism Growth in Malaysia

Tourism is a major industry in Malaysia due to its climate, geographical state, multi racial, cultural and multilingual social status (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). In this regard, the tourism sector in Malaysia is important generator of foreign exchange apart from the palm oil, crude oil and gas production. The key indicators of the current tourism industry in Malaysia are summarised in the Table 3.1. It illustrates that the industry has also been growing rapidly in the country over the past few years as reflected in the growth in tourists’ arrivals to Malaysia. For example, Malaysia has shown a significant increase of the tourist arrivals in the year 2008. The MOCAT has announced that the cumulative tourist arrival figures to Malaysia in 2008 have reached 22,052,448 million, which represents an increase of 5.1\% as compared to 20,972,822 million in the similar year 2007 timeframe.

The total tourist receipts for 2008 was RM 50.2 billion, which has surpassed the targeted figure of RM 44.5 billion (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). The tourism receipt has also increased from RM 47.5 billion in 2007 to RM 50.2 billion in the following year, which contributed to the overall national economic growth. This illustrates the

\textsuperscript{21} The most important highway in West Coast Malaysian Peninsula running through all the states in western corridor connecting all major cities and airports and neighbouring countries Singapore and Thailand.
substantial number of the visitor arrivals and tourist receipts that contributes to the Malaysian economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Arrivals</td>
<td>(A) 22,052,448 million</td>
<td>20,972,822 million</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursionist Arrivals</td>
<td>(B) 3,268,817 million</td>
<td>7,352,742 million</td>
<td>(55.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Arrivals</td>
<td>(A)+(B) 25,321,305 million</td>
<td>28,325,564 million</td>
<td>(10.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Receipts</td>
<td>(C) RM 49.5 billion</td>
<td>RM 46.1 billion</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursionist Receipts</td>
<td>(D) RM 610.6 million</td>
<td>RM 1.4 billion</td>
<td>(56.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Receipts</td>
<td>(C)+(D) RM 50.2 billion</td>
<td>RM 47.5 billion</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Per Capita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>RM 2,247.40</td>
<td>RM 2,196.70</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Per Diem</td>
<td>RM 351.20</td>
<td>RM 348.70</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Hotels</td>
<td>2,403</td>
<td>2,360</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Rooms</td>
<td>162,666</td>
<td>160,327</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Occupancy Rate</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>(3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Length of Stay</td>
<td>6.4 nights</td>
<td>6.3 nights</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Key tourism Indicators (2008). Source: Tourism Malaysia (2009)

The Table 3.1 also illustrates the significant increase in the total number of hotels from 2,360 in the year 2007 to 2,403 in the year 2008 with an increase of 1.5% to cater for the increasing growth in tourists’ arrival in Malaysia. However, there is a significant decrease in the average occupancy rate of tourists stay from 66.3% to 70.0% in the same duration. This is due to the economic downturn in 2007 which has affected the industry adversely in terms of the tourist arrivals as reflected in the year 2007 and 2008. However the increasing number of hotels in 2008 demonstrates that sustaining the tourism growth is essential in supporting Malaysia’s economy.

In terms of tourism expenditure, the accommodation sector stands as the foremost tourists’ attractions as compared to other tourism activities (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). In terms of the growth of coastal tourism, it is reflected in the increasing number of rooms from 160, 327 in 2007 to 162,666 number of rooms representing an increase of 1.5% in the following year (Refer to Table 3.1). Shopping and food are also activities
preferred by tourists and emerged as the major expenditure feature. The trend significantly emphasizes on the need for providing quality accommodations in the tourism sector to support the tourism growth in Malaysia. Meanwhile, the interval between October and December recorded the substantial arrival of tourists in Malaysia. This is significant to this study where the fieldwork involving the tourists were conducted within this period. The month of December 2008 recorded an increase number of tourist to Malaysia with tourist arrival totalling 1,886,022, indicating an increase of 22.5% as compared to 2007 (Refer to Table 3.2 and 3.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Tourist Arrivals 2007</th>
<th>Tourist Arrivals 2008</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1,886,022 millions</td>
<td>2,058,684 millions</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.2: Comparison of Tourist Arrivals to Malaysia (December 2007 and 2008)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Tourist Arrivals 2006</th>
<th>Tourist Arrivals 2007</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1,539,329 millions</td>
<td>1,886,022 millions</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.3: Comparisons of Tourist Arrivals to Malaysia (December 2006 and 2008). Source: Tourism Malaysia (2009)*

The growth in tourists' arrivals and accommodation sectors are also due to the assistance by the government as reflected in the total allocation for tourism expenditure. For example, the allocation for the national tourism industry in the Ninth Malaysian Plan (9MP) amounted to RM 1.8 Billion (GOM 9MP, 2008). The plan identified the three following major plans to improve the tourism industry in Malaysia.

1. The focus will be on the provision of adequate infrastructure largely for the purpose of upgrading and the maintenance of the tourism related facilities and amenities.
2. Sustainable tourism development will be given the priority as the preservation and protection of natural habitats and environmental concerns become increasingly important.
3. A close collaboration among the federal and state governments as well as the public and private sectors will continue to be strengthened in the formulation and implementation of the tourism strategy and programs.

It is expected that under the 9MP, tourism will continue to be a major source of new growth and a key driver in the development of the service sector (GOM 9MP, 2008).
3.2.2 Recent Tourism Progress

While the government through its policies and machinery, the Ministry of Culture and Art (MOCAT) has aggressively promote Malaysia as a major regional tourist destination, Malaysia is still lagging in terms of becoming a central regional tourism hub at the equivalent level with Singapore and Bangkok (Hamzah, 2004). This implies the need to ensure sustainable tourists arrival into the country. However, it has managed to capture specific niche markets due to a long term marketing strategy initiated by the government and the private sectors as reflected by the steady influx of tourists throughout the year in Table 3.4.

Lately, however, the government and industry has reverted their focus on niche European markets such as the ‘soft ecotourists’ from Europe, ‘medical tourists’ and the emerging markets such as China, the Middle East and India (Tourism Malaysia, 2009).

3.2.3 Tourist Arrival and Receipts

From Table 3.5, it can be summarised that Tourism Malaysia has recorded a significant number of tourists arrivals from the Asia and South East Asia region compared to those from the western countries. The neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia make up most of the international tourists arrival. The growth is also due to the tourist arrivals from China as well as Hong Kong and Macao, which can be contributed to the aggressive promotional efforts by the Federal government and certain State governments such as Malacca\(^{22}\) (Hamzah, 2004). From 2007 to 2008, for instance, the tourist arrivals from China in 2008 has increased from

\(^{22}\) It is one of the states in the West Coast of Malaysian Peninsula which is also regarded as a major historical tourist’s attraction in Malaysia.
789,568 in the year 2007 to 949,864 in the following year, exceeding the tourists arrivals from India which is recorded at 550,738 in 2008. The Indian tourist market has been a specific target market for some time now with aggressive promotion by the Federal government over the past few years (Tourism Malaysia, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Residence</th>
<th>Tourist Arrivals</th>
<th>Tourist Receipts (Rm Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>10,492,692</td>
<td>11,003,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1,804,535</td>
<td>2,428,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1,625,689</td>
<td>1,493,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>1,172,154</td>
<td>1,085,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (incl. Hong Kong &amp; Macao)</td>
<td>789,568</td>
<td>949,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>422,452</td>
<td>550,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>367,567</td>
<td>433,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>320,363</td>
<td>427,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>276,213</td>
<td>370,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3,374,440</td>
<td>2,911,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.5: Tourists Arrival According to Countries, Source: Tourism Malaysia (2009).*

The tourist arrival from India has increased from 442,452 in year 2007 to 550,738 in the following year. Meanwhile, the West Asian market predominantly from the Middle East (indicated as others in Table 3.5) is a lucrative and much sought-after market as they are reportedly high spenders. However, their arrival is only limited to the months between June to September, during the extreme heat and physical condition in the summer (Tourism Malaysia, 2009).

### 3.2.4 Inter-Regional Cooperation

The growth of tourism industry is also spurred by the inter regional cooperation in tourism within the region exists in the form of economic development growth triangles namely the Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand Golden Triangle (IMT-GT), Singapore,
Johore\textsuperscript{23} and Riau Growth Triangle (SIJORI) and the Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines East Asian Growth Triangle (BIM-EAGA) (Grundy-Warr and Perry, 2001). These growth triangles are the government-led initiatives that involve the cooperation of the private sectors to stimulate the economic growth between neighbouring countries.

\subsection*{3.2.5 Ecotourism and Branding}

As explained in Chapter Two previously, ecotourism is the fastest growing subsector of tourism in Malaysia. Although ecotourism is still a niche market, its growth rate in the Asia-Pacific region is phenomenal, averaging between 10 to 25\% annually (Hall and Lew, 1998). It has enormous potential to encourage multi-destination visitation in the country. Lately, there has been a clear shift towards the development of trans-border tourism, notably involving the nature-based tourism (Hamzah, 2004). This trend is also evident in the Federal government and the United Nation’s nomination of Langkawi as the World Heritage Site, (Langkawi Strategic Planning, 2008). For example, the nomination has boosted the development of tourism in Langkawi Island status as ‘Geo-park Island’ where it is governed by the international development guidelines and visitor management programmes that is incorporated into their management plans. In this way, the potential negative impacts of uncontrolled tourism development to the environment and socio-cultural factors are lessened through adapting the principles of sustainable tourism through the planning and site management.

Meanwhile, the ‘Heritage trails\textsuperscript{24}’ have been developed notably in the historic cities such as Malacca, Penang and Kuala Lumpur. Recent developments in the design of heritage trails appeal mainly to a niche market and have the potential to be a good tourism product and assisting in the development of other alternative forms of tourism including coastal tourism. As argued by Hall and Piggin (2003), World Heritage Listing is a form of branding that draw more tourists to the area upon the listing, especially if the sites are already considered as tourism attractions. It is also the focus of the government in the National Tourism Policy Study (MOCAT, 1992).

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{23} The last Southern state in the Malaysian Peninsula that is located near to Singapore.}  
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{24} A form of tourism which promote the historical and cultural attractions of the particular area (Tourism Malaysia, 2009)}
3.2.6 Transportation Industry

The growth of transportation industry has also assisted in the growth of tourism industry. Hamzah (2004) summarises that the growth of transportation industry can be observed in the followings:

1. The progression of budget airlines operating within the region, which is spearheaded by the Malaysian-based Air Asia budget airline; and,
2. The growth in cruise tourism is also essential to attracting tourist to Malaysia. The cruise industry is also enjoying a healthy growth within the region which is monopolised by the Star Cruises ship operation.

The emergence of the budget airlines and cruise tourism should be considered as an opportunity to plan, organise and manage the cross-region and multi-destination travel within the region within the capacity of hubs and gateways created by the liberalisation in air and sea travel which also helps magnetizing tourists to Malaysia. In addition to this, the ongoing Trans-Asia Rail Link project between Singapore to Kunming in China is a long-term project that is predicted to have significant impact on the inter-regional travel within the Asia region (NST, 2003) which will benefit the industry in the long run.

3.3 Overview of Coastal Tourism in Malaysia

The concept of coastal tourism embraces the full range of tourism facilities, leisure and recreationally oriented activities that take place in the coastal zone and offshore coastal waters (Hall, 2001). These facilities comprise of the accommodation, restaurants, food industry and second homes and the infrastructure supporting the coastal developments for example: retail businesses, marina and activity suppliers. The tourism activities include recreational boating, coast and marine based ecotourism, cruises, swimming, recreational fishing, snorkelling and diving (Miller et al., 1991).

Coastal tourism is synonymous with Malaysia as it possesses the basic resources for coastal tourism which includes the sandy beaches which runs approximately 4,800 km along the coast (DOE, 2007), coral reefs, islands and a rich cultural heritage to complement the coastal development. According to WTO (2008), the sun and beach tourism continues to attract an increasing number of tourists from abroad and is experiencing rapid development due to the Malaysian government’s policy to promote the tourism and economic development (DOE, 2007).
The above factors contribute to the growth of coastal tourism and its status as an important component of the tourism industries in Malaysia. The industry receives constant support from the government and private sectors. The tourists to coastal resorts are offered with terrific facilities and main attractions such as golf and spa package apart from visiting the natural attractions within or around the regional area. In terms of the growth of coastal tourism, it is reflected in the increasing number of rooms that is specified in Table 3.1 of Paragraph 3.2.1. Consequently, the significant growth in coastal tourism in Malaysia signals the need for better design and planning approach to cater for the tourists needs and demands for environmentally sensitive coastal resorts. The already available natural attractions and the growth of the tourists’ arrivals also calls for better planning approach that includes the appropriate siting strategies that can enhance the tourists experience in coastal resorts in Malaysia.

3.3.1 Distribution of Coastal Resort in Malaysia

Coastal resorts are constantly in a process of evolution to cater for the tourist’s demand. In the case of Malaysia, the historical development of the coastal resorts can be traced from as early the 1960’s. Resort may be simply defined as an accommodation facility that is related to the recreational activities (Huffadine, 1999). According to Wong (1998), initially, the coastal resort in Malaysia is basically a post war phenomenon which ranges from the basic ‘A-frame’ huts to integrated resorts. For Wong, the development of coastal tourism in the immediate post war years was slow to grow and constrained by the additional factors of political unrest and economic instability where only some isolated beach bungalows take place, for example, in Batu Feringhi25, Penang. Meanwhile, the period of 1960’s and 1970’s saw a combination of the rising affluence in the developed countries, and falling cost of travelling to this region which creates a boom period for the coastal tourism (Wood, 1980). This was assisted by the increased infrastructural support provided by the public sector and active participation by private sectors giving rise to apartment-like blocks resorts26 located near the beach that are well equipped with recreational amenities and facilities including swimming pool to attract tourists (Wong, 1998).

From the 1980’s, the move to cater for the specific market segments saw a diversity of resorts; some are classified as exclusive, upmarket with distinctive architecture (Tan, 1994). The trend was towards more integrated resorts that could provide a wider range of facilities and recreational activities. In 1990’s, there is a shift to

25 A popular beach area in the Penang Island.
26 Refer to the Mass Coastal Tourism industry.
more beach holidays at the expense of both business and holiday travel in the region due to the strong demand for tourism industry from Europe, East Asia, Oceania and Southeast Asia itself. During this era, the private sector plays an increasing role in resort development, in contrast to the early 1970’s and 1980’s when the government had a predominant role (Edwards, 1995). The trend has become the central figure in the coming tourism era of Malaysia supported by the need to fast track the coastal resort development through the privatization or joint venture projects involving both the government and private sectors.

3.3.2 Current Resorts Development

The period from 1990’s to present meanwhile, witness the development of exclusive resorts with unique architecture, which focus on the niche market. A recent trend indicates that resorts are beginning to specialise and reinforce the niche market. Two broad trends in the industry are one which involves the establishment of the increasingly large integrated resorts with theme park and another is the emergence of environmentally sensitive and small specialised resorts which centred on unique recreational activities and natural attraction (Tan, 1994). For Tan, these special interest market, which segments represented more sophisticated and demanding travellers are likely to flourish in the future as tourist are becoming more sophisticated and are increasingly seeking for new opportunities and demanding high quality and well planned destinations as shown in the increasing interest in forms of the nature-based or ecotourism development.

The demand is later manifested through the design where most of the developments in Malaysia are focussed on the traditional resorts (Mohamed, 2002). Resorts hotel are usually designed in vernacular style, which is the appropriate architectural expression to cater for tourists particularly during holidays (Emalgalfta et al., 2006). In terms of the siting, the random layout of a Malay Kampong is used as the blueprint in creating unique resorts. The Malay house in traditional village or kampong which is raised on stilts made of local material such as hardwoods and bamboo with dominant roof features or porch in front, high ceilings and large openings for ventilation purposes (Lim, 1984). It also features verandas offering exceptional view of the natural surrounding (Emalgalfta, 2006) and elevated views to waterfront activities (Lawson, 1995) to offer tourists with traditional and cultural attraction presenting the experience of the past (Tan, 1994). These features are common in the design of coastal resorts. Meanwhile, in terms of planning, the hotel sites may front beaches directly with waterfront activities (Lawson, 1995) or easy access to natural, scenic or recreational amenities (Schwanke, 1997). In relation to the social and cultural context, traditionally,
the lack of physical barriers gives the kampong an informal and open atmosphere which is conducive to communal activities such as weddings or sharing work with others in the community (Fee, 2008). In this vein, the siting of the facilities are implemented to respect the existing site conditions by minimal intrusions and raising building on stilts to restrict damage to the surrounding environment.

The above approach can be observed in several coastal resorts in Malaysia, for example, The Pelangi Beach Resort in Langkawi, which comprises of single and double storey chalets, raised half a meter above the ground and located in random fashions around a lake with no chalet directly facing each other (Fee, 2008) depicting the traditional village scenario (Refer to Figure 3.2).

Another resort, The Datai Langkawi was constructed along the axial routes and vistas, creating experiences out of incidences, heightened by the compositions of architectural form. The resort clings to the hillside and is only just visible from sea or land with the top of structure barely exceeds the height of the surrounding trees (Refer to Figure 3.3). Meanwhile, the Pangkor Laut, another premier resort, features clusters of the Malay style timber houses raised on stilts above the sea (Refer to Figure 3.4). They are linked by timber pathways and closely resemble the traditional raised fishing village or ‘kampong’ of the Peninsula Malaysia (Fee, 2008).
In this vein, the general preference for community’s privacy over personal privacy are also encouraged by the design of the Malay house where wide open veranda, large windows, minimal partitions and open spaces below the house foster neighbourliness and satisfy the communal needs of the residents (Fee, 2008). In addition, the high pitch roof with large overhangs, retractable louvers that allows natural ventilation while screening the view from the outside, provision of large balconies as transitional space, the use of timber and local materials are the several universal vernacular architecture features which are transcended into the modern resort design with proper siting practice. (Refer to Figure 3.5).

The vernacular style architecture has become the popular models for resorts hotels, where the past culture has an empowering effect on design as a symbol of cultural heritage (Hassan, 2000). It is also considered as traditional values in considering ecological architecture (Steele, 2005). In retrospective, the above examples represent the designers’ effort and creativity to enhance tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts through the siting process, although it is uncertain that this is how the policies intended the practice need to be in enhancing the tourists’ experience in the resorts. While the promotion of environmental and social relations have already been adopted in the design, it is imperative for the practice to be supported by the more comprehensive and unified strategies in the government initiated policies and
building guidelines to ensure a more holistic approach towards sustainable growth of the coastal resorts in Malaysia specifically in the West Malaysian Peninsula, regardless of their scales and sizes.

3.4 Tourism Organisations and Planning

Any effort toward the tourism planning must be adapted to and compatible with the political structure and ideologies of the nation. Parallel to this, De Kadt (1979) asserts that a review of the tourism policies suggests that the dimensions and result of the tourism planning will be influenced most by the nation’s ideology and its interpretation for the overall social, political and economic goals. The tourism planning organisation in Malaysia, however, is complex and influenced by the three-tiered form of government; Federal, State and Local Authorities (Hamzah, 2004).

The planning is highly ‘decentralised’

27, ‘top-down’ and done primarily at the local level. The decentralization means transferring the fiscal, political and administrative functions from the higher to lower levels government (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986) while, the top down approach is described as a situation where the goals at each level of organisation are determined on the basis of the goals at the next higher level (Heath and Wall, 1992). In this vein, Carley and Christie (2000) argue that the top-down policies imposed by the central or regional government can achieve the effective global economic implementation and international collaboration. In Malaysia, while the policies pertains to the siting is initiated at the federal level, Municipality exercise the greatest amount of planning through the development of plans and supports through the legal tools of zoning, subdivision regulations and building codes.

3.4.1 The Federal Government Organisations

Tourism is a Federal commitment and in the case of Malaysia, the overall policy planning is carried out by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism (MOCAT). It undertakes the task to plan, implement and coordinate strategic policy decisions. It also manages the funds to provide the basic infrastructure facilities and performs the regulatory role in the industry (Daud, 2001). Meanwhile, Tourism Malaysia, a subsidiary of MOCAT is involved in the marketing and promotional aspects of tourism. In addition, there are other specified Federal governmental agencies related to the rural

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27 Can take place in a number of ways; Devolution, delegation, deconcentration and divestment (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986)
development that are also involved directly in the tourism development listed as follows:

1. Department of Agriculture (Agro-tourism);
2. Department of Forestry (Ecotourism);
3. Department of Fisheries (Coastal tourism);
4. Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Ecotourism);
5. Department of Aborigines’ Affairs (Ethnic tourism); and,
6. Department of Museums and Antiquities (Heritage and cultural tourism).

According to Hamzah (2004), the involvement of many departments in the governmental organisation signals that the overlapping of jurisdiction does occur between these Federal government agencies. For instance, jurisdiction over the agro tourism or home stay programme is problematic given to the active involvement of both MOCAT and the Department of Agriculture. Similarly, in terms of planning, the land office has more jurisdiction than the Department of Fisheries in determining the type of development to be proposed on a specific land area near the coast.

Apart from the liaisons with the various governmental departments, the Federal government is also responsible in collecting all the revenues from tourism through sales and service tax, which will be further distributed to all the states for tourism promotion activities. While Tourism Malaysia supplies the budget for the tourism marketing purposes, the State governments are also proactive in carrying out their own promotion efforts through participating directly in travel fares and distributing their own promotional materials.

### 3.4.2 The State Organisation

The state has a major role in the tourism development in Malaysia. The State governments are directly involved in developing and promoting the land based tourism activities in their respective state. In this case, land use is under the purview of the State government and the constitutional law where any approval on the development of coastal tourism comes from the state authority (Daud, 2001). The overlapping jurisdiction between MOCAT (Federal government) and the State government on land issues raises several contradictions concerning the feasibility and selection of tourism forms, project location, land control and ownership in coastal tourism development.

Meanwhile, the mechanism varies from state to state and the state ministries where a tourism committee leads. The State authority decides on the tourism policies under the Federal government initiative and grants funding to implement the relevant
State agencies such as Parks, Forestry and Wildlife. The State authority also monitors the tourism development at the local levels. Coastal tourism management in Malaysia is also categorised under the Marine Parks within the State Authority’s jurisdiction.

3.4.3 Local Tourism Organisation

The locals derived their planning powers from the state where the state government authorised the locals to engage in specific planning and related activities and directly operate in land-use programs in planning and urban development. The Local government comprises of City Hall, Municipalities and Town Councils are mainly involved in the stage of implementation of the tourism lifecycle. It is also responsible in providing the maintenance service to resorts under their jurisdictions. The Local government also commences small scale projects under its belt in the form of street improvement and beautification programmes. However, Hamzah (2004) argues that the local authorities should be more proactive in the planning, management and promotion of tourism and further identifies several major barriers in developing tourism at the Local authorities’ levels:

1. The Local authorities do not regard tourism as their core business since their establishment are under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and for the purpose of providing and maintaining the public facilities such as recreational areas, landscaping and garbage disposal;
2. The lack of funding and need for qualified personnel; and,
3. The lack of mechanism for direct revenue captured in the industries which are channelled back to the Federal government coffers.28

Reflecting on the jurisdictions, Hamzah (2004) also suggests that the MOCAT’s real task is not merely to provide the overall framework and direction for the tourism product development but to integrate the fragmented programmes formulated by the related agencies which could slow down the development process. This implies the need for improved collaborations among all the governmental organisations to realise the development goal. In addition to the governmental organisations, there are also other key players in the tourism industries that includes the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO’s) such as the Malaysian World Wildlife Funds for Nature (WWF) and Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) who worked with the management aspects of tourism with the Malaysian Government (Daud, 2001).

28 It is regarded as a major constraint for the local government to be actively involved in tourism.
3.5 Tourism Policies

This section elaborates on the development and implications of tourism policies towards coastal tourism development in Malaysia. The planning policies covering tourism developments in relation to the other economic sectors are reflected in the Malaysia’s Five-year Economic Plans. Several important developments are identified in the Plans:

1. Tourism only came into prominence in the Sixth Malaysia Plan (1991 to 1995) which recognised the country’s problem in the tourism image and subsequently recommended that the tourism industry to emphasise on developing a more distinct Malaysian image and identity (GOM 6MP, 1991);
2. The Seventh Malaysia Plan also recommended that the ‘nature-based tourism which includes ‘Eco’ and ‘Agro-based’ tourism that projects the country’s tropical climate and terrain is also developed (GOM 7MP, 1996); and,
3. The Eighth Malaysia Plan (2000 to 2005) proposed the development of the cruise tourism, yachting and leisure boat activities to tap the expected growth of Asia as a vacation and cruise destination (GOM 8MP, 2001). The 8MP reflects Malaysia’s growing maturity as a top draw coastal tourism destination; and
4. The ‘Distinctive Malaysian Image and Identity’ recommended was identified as the integration of the Malaysian lifestyle in tourism in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2005 to 2010). The rural tourism, community-based tourism and nature-based tourism were identified as new tourism products (GOM 6MP, 1991).

There are several important tourism policies concurrent to the five-year economic plans that have significantly shaped the direction of coastal tourism development in Malaysia. They will be further elaborated in the next paragraph.

3.5.1 National Tourism Policy (NTP) (1992)

The policy objectives in the NTP study is intended among others: to generate foreign policies; encourage equitable economic and social development; encourage participation in the tourism sector by all ethnic communities; create an improved image of Malaysia internationally; and for the national unity. The result of this recommendation is that the various tourism products offered in Malaysia over the past ten years have now focused on the exploitation of its diverse nature and culture based attractions. Under the NTP, new areas for tourism product development namely, Riverine tourism, Ecotourism, Agro-tourism, Cultural and Heritage based tourism; and
special interest tourism are recommended for growth. It is a significant departure from the traditional sea, sand and sun market segment (MOCAT, 1992). The other major addition to the policies recommended by the NTP exemplified by heavy investment by the government is in promoting Malaysia as a shopping heaven. This has led to many states developing commercial areas near the coastal resort areas. Meanwhile, the recognition of Langkawi Island as a ‘Free Duty Island’ is intended to support the policy as well.

3.5.2 National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) (1996)

The NEP was prepared in 1996 by the Worldwide Fund for Nature Malaysia (WWF Malaysia) for MOCAT. It encloses strategies and guidelines for the development and management of ecotourism in Malaysia, based on the principles of sustainability (MOCAT, 1996). It is divided into five sections, where the first three describe the relevant siting issues namely on: Issues; Strategies and Actions plans; Site listing; and Development guidelines. A description of the strategies for tourism development in the three sections is summarised in Appendix 1.

Regardless of the integration of siting in the policies, the NEP can be considered as more of a blueprint rather than a strategic policy document. According to Hamzah (2004) the National Ecotourism Plan has never been officially endorsed by MOCAT but the lack of official recognition has not stopped the document from being the source of guiding principles for the development and management of ecotourism in this country until now. However, the policy is not made available or moulded as the standard guideline to be used by the designer, planners and developers which makes the implementation is difficult to materialise.

3.5.3 Rural Tourism Master Plan (RTMP) (2001)

The RTMP was prepared for MOCAT, which defined rural tourism as a form of tourism that provides opportunities to visitors to visit rural areas and rural attractions, and to experience the culture and heritage of Malaysia, thereby providing socio-economic benefits for local communities. Hence, the proximity of many of these rural areas to the hinterland of jungle and rainforest also offers visitors an opportunity to extend their holiday and enjoy those unique natural resources (MOCAT, 2001: 22). The RTMP objectives are among others: to create a new brand of tourist experience for visitors, particularly the long stay and high spending visitors; featuring the attractive scenery of lush tropical landscape; and presenting activities and amenities to participate in; enjoy in safety; providing new and improved ranges of accommodation;
and friendly customer care approach (MOCAT, 2001). RTMP recommended on transforming the rural tourism in Malaysia in an incremental and regional approach based on a number of selected destinations at one time. While the policy signals the importance of improving the socio-economic of the rural areas communities, the definition reflects the difficulty in segmenting the various components of the tourism product in Malaysia as there is a major overlapping of jurisdiction between the rural tourism, ecotourism and even coastal or island tourism given that most are situated in rural areas.

### 3.5.4 Second National Tourism Policy (SNTP) (2003)

The SNTP is currently used to provide the mechanism for transforming the Malaysia’s ‘low’ to ‘high yield’ tourism. The focus on intra-region cooperation is seen as a major course of action in boosting the tourism receipts. In tandem with the Ninth Malaysia Plan, the strategy focuses on realising the tourism potential as an important source of growth in terms of the foreign exchange earnings, entrepreneurship development and employment generation. It is used to strengthen Malaysia’s position as the preferred global tourist destination (MOCAT, 2003). Besides this, the SNTP policy calls for a more integrated approach to tourism planning to ensure sustainable development of the industry where emphasis will be given to preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural assets that are susceptible to environmental damage (GOM 9MP, 2009).

The policy encourages the local authorities and communities involvement in the tourism project development and implementation and maintenance to mitigate the negative impact towards them. It also stated that the state tourism council will be strengthened and to reinforce the environmental impact assessment and other guidelines as important considerations in developing the tourism projects. Under the policy, It is necessary for the tourist destinations to take into account the specific criteria and guidelines in carrying capacity of the environmentally sensitive tourist area such as the islands and coastal areas as well. It also encouraged the private sector to provide better recreational facilities as well as accommodation ranging from high end to the more affordable to cater for the different groups of tourists. The stress on providing the relevant training will also be emphasised to the students at the vocational and higher institutions.
3.5.5 Summary of Tourism Policies in Malaysia.

It can be concluded that the policy planning of tourism development in Malaysia is both ‘decentralized’ and ‘top-down’ in nature. As tourism is a Federal matter, MOCAT has provided the overall framework and direction for the tourism product development since 1992. From then onwards, the major selling points in the national tourism policy were built upon the nature and culture base. The NEP for instance, provided a blueprint for the development of nature-based tourism based on the principles of sustainability, with a strong emphasis on local participation. Meanwhile, the strategies and policies contained in the RTMP call for the commoditisation of rural resources notably the rural ambience and warm rural hosts. Lastly, the SNTP’s emphasis is on the Malaysia’s unique multi-cultural nation as its major selling point.

The policies undertaken are focused on transforming Malaysia’s ‘low yield’ to ‘high yield’ tourism (Discussion with the Director of Tourism Malaysia Melbourne, 2009). The focus is on the multi-destinations visitations as a catalyst for achieving the high yield tourism. However, the basis for supporting the regional tourism cooperation has been profit-motivated even though there are various establishments of joint committees to tackle the economic issues. In this case, they are lacking in the tangible measures in stimulating regional cooperation between the industry players who are operating in a very competitive environment (Hamzah, 2004).

Moreover, the social benefits of cross-border tourism, such as the cultural exchange and social integration are rarely mentioned in these policy documents. Respectively, it can be concluded that the policy is not in line with the concept of sustainable tourism development. While the attention of conserving the environment and the local community socio cultural livelihood are hardly ever mentioned, it is essential to understand that many of the principles and ideologies pertaining to the development must be incorporated through the direct participation of both the tourists and local communities.

3.6 Siting Guidelines

The siting strategies can also be observed in the tourism policies, building guidelines and sustainable assessment tools which are used to determine the sustainability of tourism destinations. The next paragraph outlines and summarises the analysis on the guidelines and their importance to this study.
3.6.1 Siting Guidelines in National Ecotourism Plan (NEP)

For coastal tourism development in Malaysia, the general siting guidelines can be observed in the Section Three of NEP (Refer to Appendix 2) and Guidelines for Coastal Development (GCD) under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The GCD guidelines technically, are derived and applied from the NEP and is widely used as reference for the coastal resort development. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, the NEP is a comprehensive plan for the country that has been formally adopted by the Government of Malaysia to assist them at the Federal and State levels for the development of Malaysia’s ecotourism potential (MOCAT, 1996). The MOCAT coordinates the planning, promotion and regulation of the NEP that is intended to serve both as an appropriate instrument within the Malaysian overall sustainable development targets and as an effective tool for conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the country. It consists of the general guidelines of site planning and also guidelines pertaining to the governing activities in marine parks, in which the siting of the Coastal Tourism Development is categorised.

Observing the criteria used for the siting in the guideline, it can be concluded that the different categories and the existing structures of guidelines consisting of the general siting and operation of facilities in the NEP can be considered as a barrier in having comprehensive siting strategies for the coastal tourism development in Malaysia. The overlapping jurisdiction under both guidelines serves as the loophole for developers in their interpretations of the siting guidelines to be manifested into the actual design. It can also be implied that the NPP only provides the general information on the strategies to achieve sustainable development through the siting practice. While this is the case, the guidelines do not specifically discuss the relationship between the spatial arrangement and quality of spaces resulted from the arrangement that will assist in mitigating the impact towards the environment. The generic nature of the guidelines specifications in both the NEP and Guidelines for Coastal Development, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government has also raised a problem in transferring the principles into built environment by the tourism planners. Consequently, the existing NEP plan needs to be reviewed for current industry application. As stressed by former Tourism Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Azalina Othman, in one of the local newspaper in Malaysia:

“The development of eco-tourism products will be given a priority as it will help in improving the welfare of the local people. The National Ecotourism Plan adopted by the government since 1997 will be restudied and implemented accordingly to convert the potential ecotourism areas into
This day tourist friendly areas without destroying the environment.” (Sunday Star, 2008: 26)

3.6.2 Siting Guideline in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The NEP guidelines governing activities in a marine park clearly stated that the EIA are necessary for prescribed activities as stated in the Environmental Quality (Prescribed Activities) Order 1987. This includes several guidelines on the land-use and types of construction allowed in the coastal area. The siting criteria are generally listed in Appendix 3. It is observed from the guidelines that the construction of hotels, resorts and chalets, regardless of the size and number of rooms need to undergo the EIA approval. The approval can be acquired from the Department of Environment (DOE), which is directly managed by the state’s development authority. The EIA assessment includes the siting of facilities in the environmentally sensitive coastal areas.

On the positive side, with the EIA, developers were forced to understand the coastal environment, although the results still vary (Daud, 2001). However, the EIA has been increasingly being reviewed to improve its effectiveness in assessing the impact of development towards the environment. The weaknesses in the implementation of the EIA is summarised by Sadler (1996) among others as: inconsistently applied to development proposals with many sectors and classes of activity omitted; operates a “stand alone” process and poorly related to the project cycle and approval process; inefficient and time consuming and costly in relation to the benefits delivered; and understates and insufficiently mitigates the environmental impacts and loses credibility. Based on these considerations, the siting criterion in the EIA Checklist demonstrates that the categories are not interconnected to each other and understates the environmental and social impacts of a particular coastal resort development. However, the checklist can be regarded as real evidence in the case of any impact imposed on a particular tourist destination. More importantly, the criterion set has not integrated the users’ ideologies but merely as a process of indicating whether a public hearing has been conducted or not.

Despite of its weaknesses, the emphasis on the EIA assessment approval indicates the government’s seriousness in implementing the coastal resort design that can reduce the negative impacts to the environment in ensuring its sustainable growth. It also emerges as a challenge for the tourism planners to plan and design the facilities revolving around the activities created for tourists without damaging the environment.
As clarified by Inskeep (1991), the siting strategies should be comprehensive and easily accessible to the designers and planners to assist them in the design process.

### 3.6.3 Siting Guideline in Local Building Regulations

There are standard building guidelines that are used to regulate various types of buildings typologies including the coastal resorts. The guidelines are considered formal methods of controlling a particular development to be sustainable in which they optimise the land use and preserve the social, environment and socio-cultural aspects of the particular surrounding. In relation to this, the Uniform Building By-laws (UBBL) (1984) is used by the building and the construction industry in Malaysia as standard Building Guidelines, in which many of the guidelines are gazetted under the Local Building Regulations. The guidelines provide information on the type of development allowed that include the Development Density, Building Plot Ratio, Height and the type of facilities required in certain development (UBBL, 2003).

It also regulates the siting requirement for resorts development. One of the important regulations is the land use requirement in the resort development where the optimisation of land is reflected in terms of the Plot ratio allowed in the building. For example, for a hotel development larger than 3,000 square meters, the allowed plot ratio is 6: 1. Meanwhile, the other important considerations in the coastal resorts designs are the Building Coastal Setback, Front Building Setback Control, and Public Access to the beach, Public Health and Cleanliness Requirement, Building Appearance and Beautification and Pollution control. As for hotels in coastal zones, the required coastal building setback is fifteen meters while the height depends on the local interpretation to suit the current surrounding (UBBL, 2003).

Meanwhile, for the main building frontage facing the main road, developers are required to beautify and maintain the area. Beside this, the responsible social access also needs to be provided within the resort premise which must be separated by proper fencing. In terms of health, all resorts are required to ensure proper provision and maintenance of the sewerage system. Developers are also required to properly landscape the resort area based on the approved drawing submission as well. Most importantly; all tourism developments need to abide to the DOE's requirement on matters pertaining to the quality of the environment.

The requirements stated in the building regulations guideline are very formal but not specific enough to be interpreted into design that reflects the users’ ideologies. Beside this, the guidelines are subject to further interpretation of the local authorities if
any conflicting issues arise which may result in bias decisions. Furthermore, there is also confusion caused by the overlapping jurisdiction by the policies of the building regulations which difficulties are also added by the different jurisdictions of different departmental agencies at the Federal ministry level as discussed in the Chapter Three.

3.6.4 Siting Guidelines in Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools

Currently, there is no specific tool to measure the sustainability of the coastal resort developments in Malaysia. While this is the case, it is also important to observe the siting guideline in several existing sustainable indicators (S.I.) which are summarised in the Appendix 4. They are namely, the International Ecotourism Association (TIES)\(^ {29} \), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System\(^ {30} \) and Green Globe Rating System\(^ {31} \). The availability of the siting guidelines in the tools indicates that it is an important process in the planning, in which their implementations need to be constantly monitored. However, their appropriateness towards the resorts development is in doubt. According to Schianetz (2007), a good siting strategy for one coastal tourism destination is not necessarily appropriate for another, resulting in different degrees of actual sustainability being achieved through many different concepts and assessment tools. Furthermore, tourism destinations can range in scale from the whole country and states to resorts and small tourism sites due to the following three main peculiarities of the tourism destinations:

1. First, tourism destinations are often located in or close to the ecologically fragile or culturally sensitive areas, which have low resilience to human impacts (Mieckowski, 1995);
2. Tourism is characterised by Butler (1980), as very dynamic where many tourism destinations experience the unexpectedly rapid evolution and declining patterns, which may endanger the social, economic as well as the environmental resources; and,
3. Tourism has also been described as a complex activity or sets of activities (Nelson, 1999). Tourism destinations are not centrally organised and they are also more complex than other urban settlement.

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\(^ {29} \) TIES is leading environmental organization generating and disseminating information about ecotourism.

\(^ {30} \) A self-certified compliance created by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) a nonprofit organization that certifies sustainable businesses, homes, hospitals, schools, and neighborhoods.

\(^ {31} \) Green Globes is an online building assessment tool that evaluates and rates the environmental performance of new and existing buildings, and interior fit-ups. It is used by the federal government and private sector.
Parallel to this view, WTO (1998) acknowledges that the tourism destinations differ considerably from each other and that a good indicator set for one tourism destination is not necessarily appropriate for another. The Sustainable Tools and Indicators has the provision of the siting in their respective guidelines, however, it was observed that they are utilised for specific projects and not for the assessment for the whole tourism destinations. The scientific quality of the conducted assessment was generally low and the impact predictions are not quantified as well. Furthermore, it examines the project before it begins and therefore lacking adequate monitoring and feedback loops for re-evaluation and remedial procedure (Schianetz, 2007).

3.6.5 Siting Guideline in Sustainable Indicators (SI)

Indicators first become a subject for the attention from the tourism sectors, as response to the global focus on sustainability stimulated by the Brundtland Commission (1986) and the Rio Earth Summit (1992) (WTO, 2004). Indicators are seen as specific tools to provide the framework for the broader process of planning for tourism in understanding sustainable issues. Few examples of Sustainable tourism Indicators include the Tourism Optimisation Management Model (TOMM) used in Kangaroo Island Australia, Samoa Sustainable Indicator Project (SSTIP) and Sonke Tourism Indicator List (STIL) (WTO, 2004).

The inclusion of the tourists experience in sustainable indicators demonstrates the importance of the role of tourists in validating the use of indicators by all levels of government and all stakeholders. However, the utilization of the indicators has several disadvantages which are summarised by (WTO, 2004) among others as follows:

1) The indicators are essential to assist destinations in understanding the sustainable issues but are difficult to implement due to its stand alone nature in terms of its implementation;

2) The measurement in the SI does not specifically explain the design aspects that need to be transformed into real practice; and,

3) Sustainable indicators conducted at the local level can be the stumbling block for indicators application at the national levels. It has to be made accessible for all stakeholders in the decision process.

3.6.6 Summary of Siting Guidelines

It can be summarized from the reviews that the guidelines pertaining the siting in the NEP, EIA, Local Building Regulation and the Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools and Indicators are considered as very generic or rather too formal in influencing
the planning and design of the resorts. It lacks the perceptual input from the users – both the tourists and locals. The NEP for example, only provides the general siting strategies without specifically describing the relationship between the spatial arrangement and how it can affect the tourists. Moreover, its jurisdiction under both MOCAT and MHLG also produce overlapping decision-making in the siting process.

The EIA is considered to understate the environmental and social impact due to its 'stand alone' status which poorly related to the project cycle and have less influence in the particular development. While the Local Building Regulations is also observed to be lacking of the users ideologies and subject to biasness due to different interpretation by the local authorities. Meanwhile, the Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools and Indicators are conceived as only compatible for a particular project which raises concern on its feasibility for the usage on determining the sustainability of the resorts. All these factors eventually, point to the need for more comprehensive siting strategies that integrate the user’s reflection and ideologies in the manner the positive experience can be promoted in the coastal resorts.

3.7 Siting and Political Ideologies

Planning and development are political. It is naive to expect that tourism does not have political dimensions, and researchers have argued effectively that tourism and politics cannot be separated (Hall, 1994 and Richter, 1989). According to Hall (1997), an appreciation of the political context of tourism is critical to the understanding of the complex nature of tourism particularly in the Southeast Asia where the governments have substantial influence on the location of tourist facilities through the national, regional and local tourism plans which designate the areas that can be developed. The development of tourism will follow the overall policies and practices of the nation as a whole. This is reflected in the relative roles of the government and private enterprise, how profits are divided, the sectors most likely to benefit, domestic versus foreign travel influence and relative dependence on tourism (Gunn, 1988).

As discussed earlier, the way the policies and regulation are implemented in Malaysia is top-down and decentralised in nature. On one hand, the centralised tourism planning system is effective in controlling the competition of the tourism resources through appropriate policies; investment, employment and economic development, which significantly affect the policy and planning of the coastal resort development. The government is now more motivated to serve an integral and collaborative role in tourism planning and management in which the private sector requires the government’s assistance to ensure the sustainability of tourism. On the other hand, the
centralised system is also facing an increasing rebuttal by the local groups who often feel that they are neglected by the tourism planning process and are not adequately compensated for the loss of their land, which is compulsorily purchased. Furthermore, according to Hall and Page (2000), the development-specific report, such as the environmental and social statements, may provide extremely brief overviews or have little impact on the planning process. Due to this, the relationship between the political processes and the EIA processes also need to be understood.

In clarifying the issue, Caldwell (1989) suggests that the EIA not only forces environmental knowledge into the policy process, but also reveals the inadequacy of the information upon which society and government propose to act. He added that the EIA can be seen as a threat to those who avoid changes. In this vein, the decentralisation of tourism development requires the appropriate policies through the government intervention. This is the time where the political aspirations of certain parties are utilised to expedite tourism projects that can bring negative consequences to the particular environment and society. By selecting certain tourism policies, the government also chooses between the different sets of values and these decisions are made within a complex policy arena (Telfer, 2002). For Telfer, in terms of the development policies, those who are in control of the industry can dictate what happens to the benefits of the industry. The scale, type of tourism selected and speed of the development will also have an impact to the degree to which tourism can be the agent of the development.

The elements of political corruption and nepotism may exist despite having a set of national planning laws that govern the process of coastal tourism development which case is similarly shared in Malaysia. However, interestingly, it should be noted that the coastal resources conservation are more often restrained by political uncertainty and bureaucratic practice than by the shortage of scientific information. This situation is gradually improving as the government began to realise the importance of the resources to the coastal zone (FAO, 2008).

3.8 Conclusion

The review demonstrates that coastal tourism is an important industry which significantly contributes to the Malaysian economy as demonstrated in terms of the tourists’ arrivals and receipts in the latest key tourism indicators provided by MOCAT. The distribution and development of the coastal resorts from the early 1960’s indicates the transition from the integrated tourism that cater for the mass tourism to special niche tourism which are more inclined to environmental preservation and socio cultural
enhancement. This market niche serves for more sophisticated tourists and signals the need for higher quality resorts which combined the traditional and new design technology within the sustainable context. These factors have resulted in a need for more comprehensive siting strategies to support the development goal.

The concept of coastal tourism includes the various ranges of tourism, leisure and recreational activities with provision of facilities and infrastructure to support the industry. The intricacies in integrating and controlling all the coastal tourism components require proper policies initiated by the government. The review on the policies demonstrates that the government are diligently trying to promote Malaysia as a major tourist destination in Southeast Asia with emphasis on the sustainable development principles. The principal emphasis is on transforming Malaysia’s ‘low yield’ to ‘high yield’ tourism industry. This have also been supported by the growth of inter-regional cooperation with neighbouring countries, nature based tourism and transportation industry in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, the policies initiated by the government for tourism development in Malaysia is decentralized and top-down in nature as indicated by the structure of tourism organization at the governmental level. While all the policies were formulated as the overall framework and direction for the coastal tourism development, there are still many issues or weaknesses in the policies that need to be resolved to ensure that the policies can be more comprehensive in its implementation. The overlapping jurisdictions among the federal governmental agencies in matters pertaining to the tourism development and insufficient management of tourism development at the local level are identified as the weaknesses in implementing the policies. This has affected the decision making in the development and design process, specifically in the siting of the coastal resorts. Nevertheless, the manner in which the siting were integrated and individually specified in the policies signals its importance in the process of developing the coastal resorts in Malaysia.

The gaps in the policy and guidelines and implementation of the actual designs have resulted in some difficulties in achieving the sustainable goal in coastal resort development. While the focus has been in preserving the environment, it should also be pointed out that the other social benefits such as the cultural exchange and social integration are rarely mentioned in these policy documents despite attempts by the designers to promote the environment and social relations in the design of coastal resorts. Thus the policies can be regarded merely as stand-alone directives from the government at the federal level to the agencies and tourism players without proper reimbursement of their real contents and objectives.
Parallel to this, the different categories and overlapping jurisdiction in the existing guidelines structure in NEP is a main concern when they are to be interpreted and manifested into a design. The EIA is regarded as inefficient in mitigating the environmental impact while the Local Building regulations are considered too generic and formal. Moreover, the appropriateness of Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools and Indicators in terms of their applications to the whole country and the different degrees of actual sustainability measured in various resorts is being questioned. Most importantly the review also indicates that both the policies and guidelines lack the integration of user’s reflections. It also implies that it is imperative that the study on siting strategies to include the investigation on the government initiated policies to provide the overall appreciation on the issue.
Chapter Four

Research Design

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the structure of research design implemented in this study. It significantly summarises and justifies the qualitative approach that are utilised in data collection and analysis to address the main objective of this study which is to establish the more comprehensive siting strategies that can enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula.

It first highlights the relevant research questions that revolve around the policies and practice of siting in the three case study sites’ resorts selected in the multiple case studies approach. It subsequently describes the overall research framework in the way this study is implemented in a sequential and progressive manner from its inception to the final conclusion. This is followed by the basic assumptions that have guided this study and led the pathway in selecting the appropriate methodological approaches. Subsequently, this chapter highlights the general approaches of the strategies, namely in incorporating all resorts typologies, other disciplines and adopting the geographical approach. This is followed by the discussion on the research tactics that justifies the methodological and theoretical framework proposed in this study. It also describe the multiple case study approach and highlights the triangulation of data gathered from the three methodological approaches or tactics to prevent biasness, improve the validity and to further support the findings in this study.

Finally, it highlights the details of each methodological approach and method of data analysis. The methodological approaches are the in-depth interviews with the regulators and designers, coastal resorts morphological analysis and interviews with the tourists in three case study sites. It describes the respondents, methods and the underlying issues in conducting the interviews. It also highlights the visualization techniques in morphological analysis and briefly outlines the importance of integrating the three strategies in concluding the findings and recommendations of this study.
4.2 Research Questions

The opening question for this research is – How the siting or way of locating facilities can enhance the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula? The conjunction of two key design issues; the integration of sustainable development in mitigating environmental and social impact, and the need to enhance tourists experience and demand for more environmentally sensitive resorts imposes a challenge to the sensitivity and creativity of the tourism planners or architects in the process of designing well planned coastal resorts.

Thus, the challenge is to achieve the design or planning that promotes environmental and social experience through the siting process which will subsequently assists in enhancing the tourists experience in coastal resorts in Malaysia. In this respect, the scale, type of coastal tourism and speed of development will have an impact on the degree to which tourism can be a successful agent of development. However, what forms and scale of tourism development are more suitable for the different destinations and development objectives is not the focus of the study. Rather, how the resort is physically planned specifically through the siting of the facilities and how it can enhance or exploit the above key design issues are being tested in this study.

The siting of the facilities is not only a physical phenomena but it also incorporates the environmental, socio-cultural and economical factors. Coastal tourism planning or design must not be viewed in isolation but need to be integrated into the wider development plans encompassing the three paramount issues above in the industry. It is through the proper planning process, which revolves around the three issues above that the essential components of coastal resort as a tourism product; natural attractions and the activities can be well integrated into the development. The more environmentally deterministic approach to the design of resort facilities is to build and organise the setting so that it can motivate tourists to have a sense of belonging in the resorts and to create an atmosphere where the negative tourists’ behaviours are difficult to conduct. Meanwhile, the social approach in the design is to ensure that the interaction between the hosts and guests occur are initiated and provided in the planning process.

The resorts therefore, should be developed without affecting the necessary economic aspects of both the locals and the tourist destinations through integrating sustainable tourism development principles in the planning process. The integration of coastal tourism components can be achieved through an appropriate siting of the
tourism facilities. The contention is that the physical setting of tourism facilities, which includes the provision and positioning of built and open spaces, will not only reduce the environmental impact but also in social relations as it enhances the tourists’ positive experience and demand for more environmentally friendly coastal resorts.

In meeting the tourist’s positive experience and expectations, an appropriate siting of the facilities will integrate the tourist’s visual and physical experience with the natural environment in the built and open spaces. The concept of spatial interactions through zoning of spaces and the physical design features created by the siting process with environmental and socio-cultural factors of the immediate surrounding will influence tourists to have positive and memorable experience in the coastal resorts. There is a complex inter-relationship between spatial and social aspects in terms of power to capture visitor attention and evoke strong emotional experience (De Botton, 2002). Here, Murphy (2001) highlights the importance of environmental setting and the facilities (accommodations) and how this either enhanced or inhibited group conversation and mixing. According to Murphy, the interaction of tourists in the open spaces which are properly zoned and equipped with the appropriate physical feature can inculcate sense of learning and appreciating the natural environment. Similarly, designing better zones or meeting places between groups of people; improving infrastructures including the construction of barriers, railings, and walkways can inhibit undesirable behaviours, work well in congested area and restructure the [positive] experience (Pearce, 2005). In restructuring the experience, tourists who are satisfied with the experience will return or have positive influence on other tourists to also indulge themselves with the similar experience. Beside this, the appropriate siting of the resort facilities will also assist in creating more sustainable resorts that are currently high in demand as well.

The impact of the global climate change towards the coastal zone development through sea rise phenomena has also affecting the manner the siting can be conceived in designing resorts. Even though the phenomenon is only a prediction, it has opened a renewed perspective in looking at the siting issues as a long term solution to counter the impact. Success in the planning and development of the tourism destinations in future will therefore be determined to an increasing degree, on issues regarding the land-use, zoning and design of the facilities.

Meanwhile, to answer the main question, the following sub-questions are essential in reflecting on the methodological approaches and to the overall aim of this study:
**Question 1:** What role do the regulations play in locating the tourist facilities in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula?

**Question 2:** What are the existing siting strategies that are used to locate the coastal resorts facilities in West Malaysian Peninsula?

**Question 3:** What are the typical ‘tourists’ experience’ in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula?

**Question 4:** How can the siting of tourists facilities in coastal resorts development in the West Malaysian Peninsula be improved to enhance the tourists’ experience?

**Question 1** is set out to discover the role of regulations in the siting of coastal resorts facilities in the West Malaysian Peninsula. It seeks to understand the manner the policies and regulations have shaped and guided the practice of siting in the resorts through the regulators and designers’ experience. In a way it also seeks to verify if the resorts have been designed according to the relevant policy requirements. In this case, the way designers define the siting and determine its importance in preserving the environment and promoting the social relations is crucial in understanding the extent in which the policies have shaped the design. The manner they identify the spatial and physical design features, the importance of integrating sustainable development principles and meeting tourists demand will address this question. While their insights on the persistent barriers and ways to improve the siting strategies in the policies or regulations will assist in formulating the recommendations for more comprehensive siting strategies.

**Question 2** is aimed towards understanding the siting strategies that are used in designing the resorts. It investigates the spatial and physical design features in the spaces created by siting process that can enhance the tourists’ experience. In a way, this question also seeks clarification on to what extent the resorts have utilized the siting strategies in the policies or regulations during the design process. The siting strategies can be explored in terms of the quality of zoning and physical design features allocated in the spaces. Thus, the zoning needs to be analysed in terms of their physical distributions, spatial inter-relationship, circulations, forms and shapes, while the physical design features includes the environmental design, construction, services, material and landscape features that can assist the siting in enhancing tourists’ experience. In this case, the gap analysis on the quality of zoning and the physical design in the existing resorts will provide the clue if the policies have assisted
in producing sustainable resorts in the West coast of Malaysian Peninsula or to what extent has the siting practice depends on the creativity of designers.

**Question 3** is primarily to determine the attributes of tourists’ experience and their expectations of the positive experience in coastal resorts that can assist in formulating the siting strategies. It seeks to understand the linkages between the siting and tourists’ positive experience through their verbal expressions. The manner the tourists define their positive experience provide meanings to the spaces created by the siting process and important insights on how the coastal resorts can be better planned or design if their reflections and ideologies are integrated in the strategies and later be manifested into a design. It also seeks the tourists’ views on their expectations of the positive experience; spatial and physical design features requirements and the importance of social interactions in promoting the positive experience.

Finally, **Question 4**, will summarise and recommend the appropriate siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts based on the integration of three research methodologies findings employed in this study. The recommendation deals with various siting issues relating to the policy, architectural and urban design framework in the coastal resorts. It seeks to clarify the limitations of this study and investigates if the strategies can be utilised for future research or expanded to a broader setting: national or global. In retrospective, all the four research questions concerning the siting strategies for the coastal resort development are essential in addressing the objective of this study. They nonetheless, serve as the important references or guidelines in the research framework to overcome the complexity of interlinking all the relevant field of knowledge and to reach the final recommendation and conclusion of this study.

### 4.3 Research Framework

The general research framework is summarised in Figure 4.1. It commenced with extensive literature reviews on various field of knowledge as discussed in the Chapter Two earlier. Meanwhile, the three case study sites are selected as representatives of similar policies and design approaches towards the tourism development. The investigation on the policy and design practice of coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula has led to the multiple case studies approach in this study.
The approach is selected to suit the strategies of this research which are to investigate the experience of the key stakeholders – the regulators, designers, and tourists, on the policies and design practice of the resorts. Various methods including the interviews and coastal resort morphological analysis were used to collect the relevant data to address the objective of this study. In this case, qualitative method was used to collect and analyse the data in the forms of direct quotes, transcribed data or visual forms.

**Step 1 (February, 2007 to July, 2008)**

The first phase involved the literature reviews of relevant fields of knowledge significant to the study. It involves the global tourism, tourism system, sustainable tourism paradigm and demand, integration of tourism stakeholders needs; tourism planning and siting, tourist experience; spatial experience in resorts and global climate change which were discussed in Chapter Two earlier. The second phase includes the investigation on the current and past tourism policies from various government organizations. In this case, the focus of this stage is to understand the way policies and regulations regarding the siting are implemented. It also includes identifying the key shareholders and their roles in the industry. Thus, the use of archives is important in
achieving the aim of this study as it allows researchers to reuse data adaptively, which imply that some archives can be used with less adaptation, while others required more (Ziesel, 2006). The archives allow considerable investigation on the policies and practice concerning the siting of coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula. The details and location of archives are listed in Appendix 5. It involves a collection of archives or documents ranging from the institutional records as well as the architectural plans. This includes the planning and policy documents, construction documents, maps and images of the coastal resort developments and newspapers archives that can provide available data from the past and current state of coastal resort development in Malaysia. The planning submission reports for the three main resorts in the case study sites were also acquired from the designers during this stage. The texts and images from different case studies were analysed as well in terms of the various discourses of places which they were drew upon and articulated. Other archives include reports from the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) such as the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) and Malaysian World Wild Life Fund (WWF).

At this stage, a preliminary fieldwork was also conducted from December, 2007 to March 2008 on the existing coastal resorts in the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula to explore the current issues relevant to Question 1 and 2 regarding the policies and design practice of the coastal resorts. Data on the government policies at the macro and micro levels; and photographic evidence on the coastal resort development were collected together with records of the local community concerns which are ethnographically recorded. These preliminary observations were helpful to the researcher to ascertain the actual problem faced by the coastal resorts and some important particulars in Question 2. Beside the locals, several informal interviews were also conducted with top policy makers from the ministry of tourism at the federal and state levels on the issues surrounding the coastal tourism planning. These preliminary discussions also provide important information on the selection of case study sites where data on the case studies sites were collected and compared in order to finalise the selection. This stage is also important in determining the extent of impact of the coastal resorts development towards the environment and the local communities; a main factor in understanding the way resorts are designed to enhance the tourists’ experience.

**Step 2 (July 2008 to October, 2008)**

The purpose of this stage of study was to compare the tourism policy approaches and the design practice of coastal resorts in the different geographical case study sites in the West Malaysian Peninsula. The West coast was selected as a study area
because of its status as the major tourism and economic growth area and also the location of many coastal resorts in the natural conservation area. Specifically, the three case study sites, Port Dickson, Pangkor Island and Langkawi Island, each representing the Southern, Central and Northern region were selected due to their status as the premier tourists’ destinations and as the representative of the whole geographical study area. Furthermore, these areas have also been identified as the primary tourism development zones that are planned to concentrate on the different package tourist product to maximise their resources and locations advantage as well. The identification of the case study sites also allow a more focus exploration on the siting policies and guidelines affecting the sites to understand the manner it has shaped the design of the resorts in the area. This stage was completed in October, 2008.

Step 3: Interviews with Regulators, Designers and Tourists (November, 2008 to March 2009) and Coastal Resorts Morphologies (April to July, 2009)

The process of data collection was conducted in all three case study sites using in-depth structured interviews with key regulators in the government organisation and designers of three main case study resorts; coastal resorts morphologies; and in-depth structured interviews with the tourists. In relation to this, the Ethics Approval for Fieldwork Data Collection from University of Melbourne was acquired before proceeding with the actual interviews. This stage involved investigating the experience of the regulators and designers on the policy’s issues concerning the siting of coastal resorts in the three case study sites. The government agencies where the regulators are associated with and designers involved are listed in Appendix 6, while the tourists are the visitors staying in the three case study sites resorts.

Most of the interviews with the regulators, designers and tourists were held both at the same time due to fieldwork budget and time considerations. In both interview sessions, open-ended question were used to explore the regulators and designers and the tourists experience on the environmental and socio-cultural issues in coastal resort development. The concerns at this stage are associated with the views of the regulators and designers on the role of policies in locating the resort’s facilities to enhance tourists’ experience. In similar case, the interviews are implemented to investigate the typical characteristics of tourists’ experience that can be integrated into the siting strategies.

Meanwhile, in the next stage of step 3, the coastal resorts morphologies is utilised to investigate the strategies used in locating the resort facilities in the current practice. This subsequently led to unveiling the opportunities in the practice that are used to
enhance the tourists’ experience. It involves the investigations on the zoning and physical design features of eighteen resorts selected in the three case study sites. This step was completed in July, 2009. The difficulties in obtaining the drawings documents from the respective local building authority have considerably slowed down the drawing preparations needed for the analysis. The overall data collection fieldwork in this stage is crucial in bridging the aims and the findings of this study.

**Step 4 (Analysis: July to November 2009)**

The analysis in its completion, made available the recommendations for appropriate siting strategies based on the analysis of data accumulated from three designated methodologies. The recommendations include the constraints and the positive aspects of the design that can be made for future reference by answering the research questions which have emerged at the beginning of this study. Content analysis that includes conversational and pictorial analysis and were used in this research for analysing the secondary and primary data collected in various research techniques due to the followings:

1. Content analysis helps to uncover the underlying or latent meanings as well as the manifest meanings in documents (Schapper, 1994);
2. It can take a variety of forms used for identifying the pattern meaning in content rich data such as the spoken, written, and pictorial and other visual materials (Finn et al., 2000) to quantitatively transform the content of communication to allow the different data sets to be systematically compared (Weber, 1985); and,
3. As data making, which must be representative of real phenomena or durable records, data reduction which maybe statistical, or simply omitting what turns out to be irrelevant details; inference. Pattern of meaning in content analysis are descriptive in nature as it can only describe the content and the structure of the communication (Krippendorff, 1980).

Meanwhile the data on the tourists’ verbal expression on the quality of their experience, based on the ‘*Construct Domains of Service Experience Theory*’ (Otto and Ritchie, 1996) are transcribed and analysed. The model has been utilised in studying the ecotourists perception of ecotourism experience in Kinabatangan, Sabah, Malaysia (Chan and Baum, 2007), which suits the nature and aim of this study.

In summary, the combinations of various data collection methods introduced are essential to address the research questions and meet the objective of this study. The
findings in each method were analysed and further synergized to formulate recommendations for the siting strategies that can enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula.

4.4 Basic Assumptions

Table 4.1 summarises the key research design elements and components that include the: key statements of problems, research questions, method of analysis, research techniques and basic assumptions in undertaking each research questions. It also highlights the necessary fieldwork implemented in each of the methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Assumptions</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Method of Analysis</th>
<th>Research Method</th>
<th>Fieldwork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The existing government initiated policies with siting guidelines have in certain extent affected the planning and design quality of the coastal resorts in West Malaysian Peninsula.</td>
<td>What role do the regulations play in locating the tourist facilities in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula?</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>Policy and guideline reviews</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are strategies used to locate tourists facilities that can be observed an unveiled in the current design of the resorts in West Coast Malaysian Peninsular.</td>
<td>What are the existing siting strategies that are used to locate the coastal resorts facilities in West Malaysian Peninsula?</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>Morphology analysis</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The manner tourists define and explain their experience in the coastal resorts will collectively identifies the common attributes of tourists’ experience that can assist the design process.</td>
<td>What are the typical ‘tourists’ experience’ in the coastal resorts in West Malaysian Peninsula?</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>In-depth interviews</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The outcome of the investigations on the existing coastal resort development in Malaysia through systematic assessment of the interviews, archival and morphological analysis can provide important insights that allow identification of the major opportunities and problem constraints pertaining to the siting.

| The outcome of the investigations on the existing coastal resort development in Malaysia through systematic assessment of the interviews, archival and morphological analysis can provide important insights that allow identification of the major opportunities and problem constraints pertaining to the siting. | How can the siting of tourists facilities in coastal resorts development in the West Malaysian Peninsula be improved to enhance the tourists’ experience? | Comparativ e analysis of factors in the three case studies |

| Table 4.1: Research Design Elements |

As demonstrated in the table, qualitative technique in both the data collection and analysis is used to address all the research questions to suit a research such as this, which incorporates both planning and social sciences issues. The fieldwork conducted for data collection indicates the complexity and extensive nature of this research. However, data collection in the three approaches is incorporated in this study to extract as much information concerning the policies and practices of siting in coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula. In general, the assumptions not only guide the manner this study is conducted but also assist in reducing the complexity of the study that integrates many fields of knowledge. It is also important to note that the general assumptions will be discussed in a great detail in the discussion of each specific methodology in the imminent chapters.

4.5 Research Strategies: The General Approach

This research encompasses multi-disciplinary fields of knowledge including tourism, architecture and planning, environmental and human behavioural studies in investigating the siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience. The complexity in integrating the variety of disciplines calls for proper research strategies. This is achieved through employing appropriate research methodologies consists of strategy [how the overall research is conducted] and tactics [how the data are collected] (Groat and Wang, 2002). The general approaches of the strategies are structured based on the following issues:
1. The experiences of the regulators and designers on policy issues concerning the siting practice. The focus will be on three case study sites;

2. The spatial and physical design characteristics of the three main case study resorts; Berjaya Langkawi Beach & Spa Resort, Langkawi Island, (Northern Region), Pangkor Laut Resort, Pangkor Island, Perak (Central Region) and The Avillion Village Resort, Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan (Southern Region) in correlation with fifteen other resorts in the three case study sites. This is due to the fieldwork timeframe and budget consideration; and,

3. The study is based on the experience of tourists visiting the selected three case study resorts through their verbal expressions.

This study also employed three main important strategies that will be elaborated in the next paragraph.

4.5.1 Strategy 1: Incorporating All Coastal Resorts Typologies

First, this study considers all forms of coastal resorts including the ecotourism and mass tourism development. This is associated with the demand for the more nature-based tourism in Malaysia. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the ecotourism has been endorsed as the mechanism for sustainable development and for providing financial incentives to protect natural areas from the alternative economic transformation (Lindberg and Johnson, 1993) and is the fastest growth segment of the nature-based tourism in Malaysia (WTC, 2002). The coastal zones of West Malaysian Peninsula appealed as the basis for this study due to its extensive range of land use activities suited for the nature-based tourism and its popularity as the tourist destinations for both the local and international visitors and tourists.

This study recognises ecotourism as the closest link to sustainable development and its integration is crucial for the sustainability of tourism industry. The main concern is with the environmental dimension of sustainability specifically the siting of coastal resorts. In a way, it does not seek to assess the sustainability of the tourism accommodation sector or one component of the facilities in coastal resorts. It seeks the way the practice of the siting enhances the tourists’ experience through the promotion of environmental and social spaces to improve the sustainability of the whole resorts. Adequately, this proposal will not only focus on the ecotourism projects as such focus would do little to gauge the implementation rate of the environmental initiative of the non ecotourism projects (for studies of ecotourism and the term itself) (Carter et al., 2004 and Stem et al., 2003). Furthermore, ecotourism can have the similar harmful effects as that of the mass tourism if tour operators, resorts managers, marine parks
officers and other stakeholders, as the main promoters, do not strictly adhere to the precepts of ecotourism (Pamela, 1995). Increased promotion for ecotourism development may result in the increased numbers’ of visitors to generate economic revenue, which impose stress to the coastal zones. When demand rises, further development implemented in the areas that were previously untouched could cause extensive damage. Once destinations become popular, often, there is no way to control the development activities.

Besides the issues in controlling the tourism development, the decision to include all types of coastal resorts is also due to the lack of data on the coastal ecotourism projects in Malaysia. While it is stated in the NEP for the industry to regard ecotourism as the model for tourism development, the policy has not made available the strategies in ecotourism development as the standard guideline to be used by the designer, planners and developers. These will add to the difficulties in acquiring the relevant data on ecotourism projects and method of measuring it (MOCAT, 1996).

4.5.2 Strategy 2: Applying Other Disciplines

The strategies used in attaining the data are also related to the difficulties in defining sustainable development. Mc Namara and Gibson (2008) and Cotrell et al. (2004) argue that there has also been a lack of consensus in the literature on whether tourism can be sustainable at all, and how sustainability can be implemented, monitored or evaluated and measured. This is despite the ongoing research on sustainable tourism, for instance, Becken and Simmons (2002) studied tourism industry activities in terms of the energy use while Cock and Pfueller (2000) summarises the details of ecotourism contribution to the ecological and community stability.

In reflecting the contribution from other fields in tourism research, Ko (2001) points out that given the significant complexity and diversity of the concept of sustainable development, tourism sector needs to utilise and apply the contributions from other disciplines to solve its current problems. The variety of the research scopes denotes the integration of different field of disciplines in the tourism research. The integration is imperative not only due to the difficulty in defining sustainability but also the complexity and extensive nature of this study. The complexity of tourism and place making research were discussed in the Chapter Two. Consequently the methodologies selected need to integrate different fields of knowledge associated with the sustainability of resorts development.
4.5.3 Strategy 3: Adopting Geographical Approach

This study, conducted at the macro level, involves the investigation of the siting policies and practice of resorts in three case studies sites in the Malaysian Peninsula. In terms of scale, studies on macro-scale adoption of sustainability are still relatively new. While the study of small-scale focus on the frameworks for measuring sustainability at a micro scale have emerged (Cummings, 1997; Firth and Hing, 1999), the study in macro-scale approach is still not very extensive. In supporting this, McNamara and Gibson (2008) argue that despite the contribution of the studies in providing assessment of tourism projects or destinations, tourism scholars has rarely assessed the level of implementation of environmental initiative by the tourism accommodation sector at the macro scale.

In the context of measuring the environmental sustainability, a geographical approach suggests the need to profile the coastal resorts in the case study sites based on the research methods undertaken at the macro scale. For example, at the level of the individual resorts, the result will allow generalization and comparisons to be made at a larger geographical scale. In assessing the operation of sustainable tourism in New Zealand, Dymond (1997) investigated the extent to which the core sustainability indicators were incorporated into the practice and attitudes of the local authority. The study conducted at the macro level, assessed authorities and tourism bodies across the whole New Zealand, rather than the individual tourism operators, who might be in a better place to comment on the day to day operation of their facility. In another research, Mc Namara and Gibson (2008) examine the integration of environment sustainability into the existing built environment, particularly, across the micro-scale on accommodation facilities in Australia. Thus, the geographical approach adopted in this study therefore can be considered as a solution to represent all coastal resorts in Malaysia and also stress the importance of the triangulation in data analysis to prevent biasness.

4.6 Research Tactics and Theoretical Framework

The strategies employed in this research determined the tactics and theoretical framework employed in this study which is influenced by several complex factors. First, this study is based on the notion that the experience of the regulators in regulating policies on the tourism development provides important information on the way the policies are being implemented. While the designers, through their experience in designing the resorts via the regulations will provide the insight on the effectiveness of the policies in shaping the resort’s design.
Second, the tourists’ spatial experiences in the resorts are used to understand the way the siting can be enhanced. The rationale of the tourism research is the search for a difference of the place activity and experience (Dann, 2000) where the realities cannot be predicted, but is found to be an integral part of tourists’ evaluation and satisfactions with the service (Otto and Ritchie, 1996). Resorts can be defined as experiential products to facilitate feelings, emotions and knowledge for tourist, and their experience can be analysed from their verbal expressions using the ‘Construct Domains of Service Experience’ proposed by Otto and Ritchie (1996). Thus, the way tourists perceived the positive experience in resorts is crucial in unveiling the siting strategies. In all the above occasions, the experience of regulators, designers and tourists are considered as important features in providing an in-depth understanding of a contemporary siting phenomenon in its real life context, using multiple source of evidence and justify the selection of methodology.

Third, the complexity of this research in relating to the notion of tourists as transnationals community (Duval, 2004) and the integration of different cultures through ‘Staged Authenticity’ (Gunn, 1972) in the place making of resort’s spaces also requires this study to be conducted in their natural setting. The meaning of the spaces are manifested in the quality of zoning and physical design features resulted from the siting process which imply the need to investigate the actual siting strategies implemented in the practice apart from understanding the regulators and designers’ experiences. This is achieved through the morphological analysis.

Within the above theoretical framework, the Researcher plays an important role in extracting the essential information and determining if the samples are representative and the results derived are applicable to others due to the interchanging nature of tourism. This is closely connected to Butler’s concept of ‘Destination Lifecycle’s’ (Butler, 1980) which suggested that tourist’s destinations rise in popularity, change in their nature and spatial pattern, and are used differently over time by different group of tourists. It will subsequently enter the periods of stagnation or decline unless certain forms of corrective action are engaged upon. This scenario reflects the complexity of tourism.

The Researcher is also concerned with the tools used to deal with the complexities, where concern emerges about the reliability of datasets and the ability to generalize from what is learnt about the specifics (Ryan, 2002). Using visual evidence in the forms of mapping, drawings and photographing physical design features could explain more about the multiplicity of meanings, messages and motivations inherent in the tourism phenomena than the more traditional data collection or quantitative method.
(Ryan, 2002). Furthermore, the validity of data and findings should be tested and produced through triangulation of range of methodologies and also multi case studies to overcome biasness in the study.

4.7 Methodological Framework

The methodological framework proposed for this study is the ‘naturalistic’ and ‘inductive’. The contention of this study as naturalistic is based on its attempt to use a holistic empirical inquiry to gain an in-depth understanding of the tourism phenomenon, in its real life context, using multiple source of evidence (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Meanwhile, Riley and Love (2000) argues that the context and the associated interactions of the natural surroundings are crucial because they shape the entities that are being studied.

The contention that this study is inductive is that the inductive analysis is employed to grasp the multiple realities that are known through tacit understanding (Riley and Love, 2000). A set of research question is composed to achieve the research objective that reflects a constructivist approach in this study. From the words of Lincoln and Guba (1985), the constructivist approach in the treatment of issues referred to the epistemological, ontological and methodological perspective relating to the previous research questions formulated for this study. The knowledge is socially constructed and created by the researcher and subject and in formulating the strategies requires the process of reconstructing multiple realities through the informed consensus (Riley and Love, 2000; and Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Qualitative research method is employed in this study as the basis to analyse the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline the characteristics that distinguish the naturalistic inquiry from other methods that include the natural setting, human instrument, and utilisation of tacit knowledge\textsuperscript{32}, qualitative method and inductive data analysis. While Denzin and Lincoln (1994) argue that it involves among others the studied use, collection of a variety of empirical materials, case studies, personal experience, interviews, observational and visual texts. For tourism, Cohen (1972) suggests much of the seminal work in tourism was initiated through the qualitative research. This includes among others; determining the tourism economic impacts (Loeb, 1982), assessing the tourists’ flows (Uysal and Crompton, 1985) and the tourists’ experience (Lipscombe, 1999). Meanwhile, Patton (1980) argues that to elicit

\textsuperscript{32} Is defined as knowledge in the forms of skills, abilities and experience...and cannot be easily transmitted through writing.
research findings from the respondents’ experience, it requires methods that are not easily derived from the quantitative method. In this case, the qualitative method gives important insights to the multiplicity of views and recognises the complex nature of our lives and will add in-depth understanding to the socially, culturally, temporally geographically and contextually situated tourism phenomena (Ryan, 2002).

4.8 The Multiple Case Studies Strategies

The multiple case studies approaches are used extensively in the tourism research (Rappaport, and Rappaport, 1975; Murphy, 1991; and Singh and Singh, 1999). Several characteristics of case studies that support its uses as a valid methodological tool in the research are identified as follow:

1. They often have sub-cases embedded in them providing a further richness and complexity of data (Miles and Huberman, 1994) that has been adopted in this study to achieve this aim;
2. Its advantage in inductive research where Jennings (2001) describes the case studies methods as having the advantage of being suitable for both the more quantitative hypothetical-deductive and holistic inductive paradigms of research, demonstrating flexibilities that are not evident in many other alternatives research modes;
3. It can be advantageous in complex researches. According to Ryan (2002), for a broad ranging and psychologically complex field such as tourism there is no single approach where in order to achieve the desired outcomes, alternative methods must be considered and used conjointly, from experiments and surveys through the participant observation, histories and ethnographies as well as the case study; and,
4. Finally, it allows triangulation of data that could prevent biasness\(^{33}\) in the findings. Here, Yin (1994) argues that a research case study is the empirical inquiries that investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and relies on the multiple source of evidence with the data need to be converged in a triangle fashion.

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\(^{33}\) Yin (1994) also contended that bias can also be a concern in a case study such as the design of questionnaires and experiments. However, while the possibility of bias in any case study must be recognised and dealt with, this issue is not restricted to this method only.
4.9 Triangulation of Data

Triangulation of methodologies in a case study will minimise the researcher’s biasness. Creswell (1994) argues that by combining (or triangulating) a range of methodologies, it is postulated that the inherent bias will be neutralised and the convergence of results is achieved while Pizam (1994) cautions that there is a need to be cautious when implementing the case study as he reveals that many case studies to be singular instances that may provide misleading evidences when generalised, even with multiple cases.

![Multiple Case Studies in the West Coast Malaysia Peninsular](image)

**Figure 4.2:** The linkage between the Multiple Case Studies approach and Triangulation

In this case, a combination of theoretical approach is often required, which may range from the descriptive observation to the use of media reports and survey work that can be incorporated into the case study. The use of case study as triangulated, multi method approach instead of the singular method that provides a richness of the detail and explanatory power in tourism research is supported by both Hall and Jenkins (1995) and Jennings (2001). There is no statistical analysis involved in this study. As proposed by Yin (1994), statistical generalisation will not be created in a case study because the notion of using the case study is to expand and generalise theories. As summarised in **Figure 4.2**, the triangulation in this study is implemented through the following approaches:
1) Multiple case studies sites are selected instead of singular case study to represent the Malaysian Peninsula geographical area;
2) Series of interviews with regulators and designers and tourists will be conducted in the three case study sites;
3) In-depth interviews with the regulators and designers, tourists, morphological analysis and secondary data such as media and government reports and drawings are utilized in the data collection process; and,
4) A clear boundary was defined at the onset where correlation of 3, 4 and 5 star resorts in the three case study sites are made in the morphological study.

4.10 Interviews with Regulators and Designers

Total number of 20 respondents participated in the interview as listed in Appendix 6. In general, the participants are mainly the top senior officers or regulators in various governmental agencies associated with the tourism development and designers who are engaged in the three case study sites resorts. The importance of regulators can be seen in their role in ensuring the economic and resource sustainability goal defined as sustainable resource use and protection (Timur and Getz, 2004) is shared between the tourism industry and the government body (Moisey and Mc Cool, 2001) to generate new employment and increase the income levels (Pearce, 1989). For Pearce, the regulators which mainly comprise of the government agencies are concerned with the optimum use of the resources where jobs are created and resources are protected.

Meanwhile, the designers are responsible to develop the visual and aesthetic values of the development where Gunn (1988) describes that more environmental modifications of landscape and structures for tourists are being influenced by professional designers. According to Gunn, the designers are responsible in coordinating the broad scale of development needs ranging from the location analysis, financial feasibility; compliance with codes and other development issues in the planning and design process.

4.10.1 Interview Method

In the interviews with regulators and designers, one on one, in-depth, structured interviews was used to obtain specific and general qualitative information from the respondents. Open-ended questions were outlined and used during the interviews. The questions are flexible as it allows new questions to be brought up during the interviews as a result of the respondent’s responses. Appointments were scheduled first with the
respondents through letters; either mailed or faxed and phone calls before the interview take place. This took three days or weeks for the appointment to materialise. The interviews were conducted at convenient places such as the respondents’ personal office or in a meeting room.

Initially, the Researcher introduces himself and explained to the respondents the purpose of the interview and how the information will be used. The respondents were then asked if he allows the use of the tape recorder. Most respondents agreed, however, there are a few respondents who are reluctant for the interview session to be taped and requested for the Researcher to write down important points of the interview. The Researcher handed out a copy of the ‘Plain Language Statement and ‘Consent Form’ (Refer to Appendix 7 and 8) which were presented to the respondents before commencing the interviews. The Researcher then conducted the interview with the guide of a prepared face sheet consisting of details of the interview, actual questions and post interview comment sheet that are prepared prior to the interviews (Refer to Appendix 9).

The details of the interviews include the specific time, date, place and special conditions requirements. It also includes the demographic details of the respondents; role (occupation and task), ethnicity, gender and age. The Researcher commenced with the general questions followed by the specific topic – a procedure used to test the respondents’ knowledge and belief on policies and strategies concerning the siting of facilities in coastal resort development. The interviews lasted approximately in one hour. During the session the Researcher reminded the purposes of the interview to ensure that the respondents were still focus on the ongoing discussion. Once the interview was completed, the Researcher questioned the respondent if there is anything else he would like to say or if there are any questions. The Researcher personally thanked the person for his time and interest at the end of the interview session.

In summary, the Researcher examined the regulators and designers experiences in providing several important insights to answer the following relevant questions pertaining to the policies and practice of the siting:

1. What are the views of the regulators on the current policies of siting concerning the environmental and social integration and its importance in coastal resorts design?
2. What are the common features of siting in the regulation that can enhance the environmental and social experience in the coastal resorts?
3. To what extent has the formal policy assist in creating sustainable coastal resorts with distinctions in Malaysia?
4. What are the barriers for the policy to be implemented efficiently?
5. How important are tourists and locals views in the policy decision making process?

The detailed basic assumptions on each research questions above pertain to this methodology will be discussed in Chapter Six. Nonetheless, the selection of this methodology can be acknowledged as an important step in identifying the siting strategies that can enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts.

4.11 Morphological Studies

There are various researches on design that use morphological approach (Koncellik, 1998). Hanson (2001) argues that morphology, the study of pattern and form is crucial in design because it constitutes an essential part of its corpus of the coherent knowledge. For Hanson, the understanding of how buildings and places work socially must be based on: careful studies of how the urban or building morphology is linked; the architect's claim about how their designs are intended to be used; and the detailed studies of how they are actually being used. It is through the understanding of mismatch between claims and practices that architectural knowledge is able to advance. The outcome of the morphological studies is a general set of design criteria that is applicable universally. Hanson (2001) further argues that the added value of a morphological approach is in its general applicability and relevance to design particularly to the practitioners. The typologies of building designs have been investigated for some time (Martin and March, 1972), in order to provide knowledge to the designers.

The morphological analysis will be based on the compilation of three main resorts and fifteen other coastal resorts plans in the Malaysia Peninsula. The three main resorts are: Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resorts, Langkawi Island; Pangkor Laut Resort, Pangkor Island; and The Avillion Village Beach Resort, Port Dickson while the remaining fifteen resorts are the 3, 4 and 5 stars resorts in the case study sites. Meanwhile, the justification in selecting the above resorts will be discussed in Chapter Five. In the analysis, the detailed comparative analysis on the planning of resorts allows the identifications of key morphological perimeters that describe the physical spatial characteristics and patterns of both the individual tourism developments and across the selected resorts. The data from each resort will be cross referenced to determine whether if the site constrained and building typology will likely define trends
in the spatial and physical characteristic of building that can promote the environmental and social experience in coastal resorts.

Hence, the layout of the facilities; movement pattern and circulation, location and shape of the buildings, topography and social and cultural reasons for the siting will be thoroughly investigated. This will be aided by the compilation of drawings consisting of site plans, building footprint, circulation and form analysis where visualisation has been a significant aid in understanding the complex processes in design (Koutamanis, 2000) where our knowledge of architecture stems more from the published drawings than from the personal experience (Evans, 1989). In the study, the footprint maps and three dimensional forms were traced and redrawn by the Researcher using the 3D ‘Sketchup’ and ‘Adobe Photoshop’ software.

In summary, the morphological studies are intended to answer the following fundamental issues regarding the siting practice in the coastal resorts:

1. What are the physical characteristics of properties that are shared by the resorts in terms of their sizes and proportion that provide the linkage to the environment and social experience?
2. How can the siting promote the environmental and social interaction in the coastal resorts?
3. What are the design characteristics of the zoning created by the siting process which are utilised to promote environmental and social interaction in the resorts?
4. What are the physical elements in the spaces that are created by the siting process that can promote the environment and social relationship in coastal resorts?
5. How important is the process of identifying the physical design elements to the siting of coastal resorts in creating the tourists positive experience?

4.12 Interviews with Tourists

The third methodology involves the interviews with tourists in the selected three case studies sites. The respondents are both the local and international tourists who stayed mainly in the three main resorts apart from fifteen other resorts selected in the morphological study. The breakdown of the number of interviews held in the case studies resorts is presented in Appendix 10.
4.12.1 Interview Method

The target population for this study is the adult tourists (individuals 18 years of age and above) who were picked at random and at a voluntary basis\(^\text{34}\). They include both the local and international English spoken tourists who are willing to participate in the interviews. Such convenience sampling technique is a key feature in this qualitative research (Kuzel, 1992). English speaking tourists are chosen in order to maintain the authenticity of the data by avoiding mistranslation that can possibly result in bias and loss of meaning. Furthermore, English is spoken by not only most foreign tourists but also the locals, which make it more meaningful to conduct research in this main market segments.

Meanwhile, only one participant was sought in groups of individuals who identified themselves as travelling together. Sample sizes of the interviews with tourists varied between the resorts that are selected as the case studies as they depend on the availability and willingness of the participant to participate. A total number of seventy five respondents were interviewed on which the numbers of participants are equally distributed in the three case study areas. However, the number of participants in each resorts depended on the information gathered from the interview reach the saturation point. In this vein, Walker (1985) suggests that 20 to 40 in-depth interviews are necessary for the qualitative research of this nature. In investigating the tourists’ perceptions, the in-depth interviewing is considered as a relevant research technique for data collection in this inductive approach. An interview guide with open-ended questions in semi structured protocol was used in the interviews. This is to ensure that all the respondents were asked with the same questions. The qualitative method employing the open ended questions started with the easier questions and proceeds with the more complex and sensitive ones. The placement is important in order to reduce biasness on the terminology and concept that are used in the questions.

The aim of the interviews is to determine the typical tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts of Malaysia. Unlike the first interview session with the regulators, they were conducted less formally, answered verbally by the respondents and recorded upon the tourists’ agreement. The interviews were held at places where tourists feel comfortable such as at the hotel lobby, cafeteria or near the beach area. Due to a certain restriction by the resort operators, the interviews with tourists who stayed in Pangkor Laut Resort were held at the jetty point in Lumut. The Researcher handed out the Copy of Plain Language Statement and Consent in addition to a face sheet

\(^{34}\) A convenience sample of participants was selected on the next available basis.
consisting of details of the interview, actual questions and post interview comment sheet were handed to the respondents before commencing with the interview. In addition to the questions, the tourists will also be required to conduct a mapping exercise to mark which area of the resorts identified in the resorts case studies that is considered to have high environmental quality value. Here, Zeisel (1975) points out that providing respondent with the simple based maps to fill in answers can be the efficient way to find out how they use or feel about a place: paths they take and things they do in the settings.

In relation to the mapping and as discussed in Chapter Two, Dietvorst (1994) uses the ‘Time-Space Behaviour Analysis’ of tourists that can explore the patterns to reveal the preference spaces in tourist destinations. Flow of tourists can be analysed in order to understand the hierarchical structures within the tourists’ recreation complexes. As such, the area selected for the mapping exercise will be based on the visual incident, mixture of landscape form, range of flora and fauna, sense of intimacy and enclosure and absence of development. Each interview was completed in approximately one hour with the aid of the tape recorder. This technique allows the respondents the considerable freedom to select the specific events that tourists wish to report where the researcher was able to determine the quality of their positive and negative experiences.

In general, the interviews with tourists investigate the attributes of tourist’s experience that can assist in improving the design of coastal resorts. Thus, several important inquiries are formulated in this methodology as follows:

1. What do tourists mean with positive experience in coastal resorts?
2. Why creating tourists’ positive experience is important in the design of coastal resorts?
3. How can the siting process enhance tourists experience in coastal resorts?
4. What are the physical agents – places and features in the coastal resorts that permit or assist in the positive on site experience?
5. What are the relationships between tourists experience and siting in creating sustainable resorts with distinction?

4.13 Conclusion

The outlined research design which includes the research questions, basic assumptions, strategies, tactics, methodological framework and associated methodologies in collecting and analysing data are appropriately formulated to address
the aim of this study which is to formulate more comprehensive siting strategies for the coastal resort development in West Malaysian Peninsula. The initially formulated research questions and the basic assumptions provide general guiding platform in addressing the main aim of this research while the strategies and tactics were employed to ensure a comprehensive investigation and understanding on both the macro and micro issues pertaining to the siting and the attributes of the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts.

Meanwhile, the strategies entail understanding the regulators and designers’ experiences on policies concerning the siting process, unveiling the actual siting practice and identifying the main characteristics of the tourists’ perception on their experience in the coastal resorts in the three case study sites. The general strategy approach are to ensure the participation of all types of coastal resort development in the three case study sites including the ecotourism, combining other disciplines and in adapting the geographical approaches to reduce the complexity of the study and to make it more conclusive in representing other coastal resorts in Malaysia.

The methodological and theoretical frameworks require the selection of qualitative approach in data collection and analysis in this study involving the multiple case studies approach combining interviews and coastal resorts morphological analyses of the three case study sites. The tactics are based on the notion that the experience of both the respondents and researchers are important in providing important insights on the policies and practice of the siting. In the interviews, the stakeholders’ on-site experiences provide an in-depth understanding of a contemporary phenomenon in its real life context, using multiple source of evidence. The interviews with the regulators and designers provide the important information on the way the policies are being implemented and the competencies surrounding the policies, while the coastal resorts morphologies provides important insights on the siting strategies that has been utilised in designing the resorts.

The morphological studies of eighteen coastal resorts in the three case study sites will investigate the spatial quality of zoning followed by identifying the physical design features in the spaces created by the siting process that assist in enhancing the tourists’ experience. This is conducted with the aid of visual evidence in the forms of mapping, drawings and photographing the resort’s physical design features to provide more explanations on the resorts. Meanwhile, the last tactic involving interview with tourists will investigate the way they reflect on their perception and experience in relation to spaces created by the siting process that promote the environmental and social interactions.
It can be concluded that the methodological framework and approaches have been carefully selected to investigate the policies and design practice pertains to the siting of coastal resorts in a more comprehensive and systematic manner. Here, qualitative analysis is used in this inductive research where the Researcher plays an important role in extracting essential information regarding the siting and the validity of findings. They are not only tested through the multi case studies but also through the triangulation of range of methodological approaches to avert biasness in the study.
Chapter Five

Case Study Sites

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the case study sites selected for this research. The first phase of this chapter describes the historical, geographical and demographic profiles of the case study sites that include Langkawi Island, Pangkor Island and Port Dickson. The three premier resort areas each represent the northern, central and southern region of the West coast of Malaysian Peninsula. This chapter outlines the strategies brought forward for tourism developments at the regional level of each case study sites. It highlights the selection criteria and justification in selecting the case study sites.

It also justifies the selection of the eighteen case study sites coastal resorts in the morphological study. The main case study resorts are The Berjaya Langkawi Beach Resort in Langkawi Island, Pangkor Laut Resort in Pangkor Island and The Avillion Beach Resort in Port Dickson. It also involves the correlation of fifteen 3, 4 and 5 star resorts located in the three case study sites. Finally, it highlights several views of the local community towards coastal resort developments in the three case study sites. In concluding this chapter, it also reflects the importance of the case study sites to the overall research design and structure and the importance of formulating more comprehensive siting strategies to improve the coastal tourism industries in Malaysia.

5.2 Selection of Case Study Sites

In general, three case study sites representing premier resort zones in the West Coast Malaysian Peninsula were selected (Refer to Figure 5.1), which consist of the followings:

1. Langkawi Island (Northern Region);
2. Pangkor Island (Central Region); and,
3. Port Dickson (Southern Region).
Many of the coastal zones in the area have been developed into major tourist areas not only due to its tropical climates, beautiful beaches and tropical setting but also to the provision of good infrastructure supported by the government.

Figure 5.1: The location map of three Case Study Sites in the West coast of Malaysian Peninsula (Not to scale). Source: Travelmalaysiaguide (2008)
Langkawi is a group of tropical islands located at the Northern West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula (Refer to Figure 5.2). It is an island of natural beauty featuring predominantly a diversity of natural tropical setting, wildlife and fauna. Aside from its natural beauty, Langkawi is renowned for its folklore and legends. It forms part of the state of Kedah and could be accessed by airplanes as it is equipped with an international airport facility. It is also accessible by ferry from main entry points from the mainland of Kuala Perlis and Kuala Kedah respectively. Cruise ships are also able to dock at the Awana Porto Malai harbour in the West coast of the island. It has well developed road network that surrounds the island. The total population is 73,091 consisting of the Malays, Chinese and Indians.

Langkawi Island is the largest among the cluster of island in the area that comprises of Pulau Dayang Bunting dan Pulau Tuba, Pulau Singa Besar, Pulau Beras Basah and Pulau Rebak Besar. However, tourism and resort development are limited to the Langkawi Island where all surrounding islands are left undeveloped and reserved for the daily use activities and explorations. Hotels and tourism facilities which are low rise and low density are constructed to maintain the idyllic setting of the islands. Meanwhile the topography of the land is relatively flat and hilly at the central area of the island and most areas are gazetted as forest reserved. Many of the forest reserves include attractive isolated beaches, mountain scenery and other natural resources. Langkawi is also designated as the ‘Geopark Island’ by UNESCO in the year 2006 due
to its major undeveloped areas and natural resources, which boosted its emphasis on the environmental protection under strict regulations of the local authority.

The role of Langkawi in the national economic growth is important in terms of the increase in foreign investment into this area and numbers of international development projects. The location of the island is very strategic for its economic growth sector where Langkawi is located in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth triangle (IMT-GT). The cooperation among these three countries assist in improving Langkawi as a ‘Duty Free Island’ and international tourism destination. The development of Langkawi is also given a priority by the government under the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) (Malay: Wilayah Ekonomi Koridor Utara), a new economic development corridor in Malaysia (GOM 9MP, 2009). It is part of the government’s initiative to accelerate the economic growth and elevate income levels in the north of the Malaysian Peninsula.

The above factors are the core consideration in its development and towards developing domestic tourism destination that preserves the local identity and beautiful natural surrounding and the environment besides improving the life quality of the local community (Langkawi Municipal Council, 1992). The local planning development has supported the tourism industry by encouraging the development of the tourists accommodation in the allocated area for tourism development and main tourism area only. One of the measures stated that the development of chalets will be encouraged in islands, which have high tourism quality with proper development measures. These tourism developments will be supported by excellent infrastructure and the rental rate of accommodation to be controlled to ensure balance in the type and standard of the place provided (Langkawi Municipal Council, 2002).

5.2.2 Pangkor Island (Central Region)

Pangkor Island is located just off the central West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula (Refer to Figure 5.3). It is strategically located at the North of Kuala Lumpur and southwest of Ipoh, the capital of Perak. It consists of a cluster of small islands mainly, Pulau Pangkor, Pulau Pangkor Laut, Pulau Mentagor and Pulau Giam. The island is accessible by ferry from Lumut. The island is hilly with a total population of 20,000. The main economic activities are fisheries and tourism related activities. The fishing sector dominates the economy with 53% of commercially based sea products and souvenirs for tourist made up 17% of the economic based activities. The emphasis of development is on providing employment opportunities to the locals with the increase growth of tourist.
Pangkor Island is designated as an international and domestic tourist destination based on its natural resources. The prime resources of the coastal zones in Pangkor Island are natural resources that include the beaches, forests and wildlife of the seas and lands (Pangkor Tourism Development Study, 1994). The strategy in developing tourism in the island are related to the overall themes of the resources and development plan and to ensure that the proposed attractions reinforces each other to create a multi faceted destination structured around central tourism development themes of beach resort, nature and cultural tourism. In fact, the study area with excellent natural beaches, which has generally been remained unspoiled, is a major benefit for the tourism development. In terms of tourism activities, there are many recreational and activities that support the tourism sector in the island as shown by the number of existing hotels, motels and chalet.

The strategy implemented by the state government is to restructure the basic economy of the fisherman village into a tourist island that not only preserves village identity, but also the cultural heritage and natural environment conservation. The traditional character of the island reflecting the river kampongs and coastal fishing villages settlements are combined with the Perak architecture style. Other interesting settlements are found in the unique form of clusters of fishing dwellings built over the sea in Pangkor Town. Meanwhile, special events which operate for a limited period of time such as festivals and carnivals are held to promote tourism activities in Pangkor Island and also bring the national and international attention to the area. The tourism infrastructure planned and supervised by the state and the local authority has assisted
in promoting the area. This includes the provision of efficient transportation system and the availability of water and electrical supply system. The availability of accommodation as a specialised form of the tourism infrastructure is also a major factor in attracting tourists to this area. This was assisted by the provision of commercial areas that serve the needs of visitors.

5.2.3 Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan (Southern Region)

Port Dickson lies on the South West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula along the Straits of Malacca and the coastlines of Negeri Sembilan (Refer to Figure 5.4). Its strategic location and safe beaches sheltered by the Strait of Malacca make it an ideal destination for the large regional tourism and recreational market. Its strategic location near Kuala Lumpur has also made Port Dickson a famous tourist destination in the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula. In terms of topography, much of the study area is comprised of the hilly to undulating land with generally gentle slopes. The beach stretch of Port Dickson is a modern holiday beach destination whilst the rural part of Port Dickson makes up a combination of agricultural, commerce and industrial activities. It is a coastal urban resort combining the commercial, industrial and farming activities. The growth and development of the tourism sector has increased job opportunities, thus contributing towards the increment of the population.

The existing Local Development Plan is designed to strengthen the development structure of the city as a premier tourist destination and local aspiration. This is implemented without disturbing the natural environment and also integration of
traditional villages with tourism corridor planning and development in Port Dickson (Port Dickson City Council, 2008). Port Dickson is a fine example of an older style of the Malaysian towns. It represents an attractive unified appearance of shophouses, old bungalows and mansions which have rich traditional architecture features in addition to its good beaches. Planning for the tourism development brings in the complexities and constraints of the existing urban conditions, but also includes the opportunities presented by the attractive and dominant coastal landscape centered upon the fine beaches. Port Dickson provides a unique opportunity in studying the siting practice of coastal resorts in a more urban setting with the intention of preserving the natural coastal environment and the cultural heritage that are also reflected in its surrounding buildings.

5.3 Significance of Case Study Sites

The selection of case study sites is made on the following basis:

1. Recognition as Premier Coastal Tourism Area in Malaysia;
2. Recognition as ‘Environmentally Sensitive’ Coastal Area;
3. Strategy for Geographical Approach; and,
4. The availability of High End Resorts for Morphological Studies.

5.3.1 Recognition as Premier Coastal Tourism Area

There are three main factors that assist in the government’s recognition of the selected case study sites as the premier coastal tourism destinations in Malaysia: the availability of natural resources; good transportation system; and socio-cultural context. The West coast of Malaysian Peninsula which includes the Kuala Lumpur-Malacca Corridor, the Penang-Langkawi and the North Western States in this area are identified as primary tourism development zone in the National Physical Plan (NPP) (MHLG, 2005). Under the NPP, the different tourism development zones will be planned to concentrate on the different package tourist product to maximise their resources and location advantage. This includes the development of the environmentally sensitive integrated coastal resorts suitable for high yield international and domestic tourists that can enhance Malaysia’s global competitiveness in the tourism industry.

The strength of the case study sites is in their natural and cultural resources where the tourism products the strength are built on. Pangkor Island was promoted as a tourists’ destination which is unexplored and natural, while the Langkawi Island with its beautiful island archipelagos, history and culture has many undeveloped land primed for tourism development. Meanwhile, Port Dickson is endowed with beautiful
beach resources and rich cultural heritage but being located in a more urban setting certainly provides a good alternative to the selection of the case studies in understanding how the environmental and social spaces can be designed in coastal resorts. In terms of transportation, the three case study sites are accessible to the key markets of the major cities in Malaysia – Kuala Lumpur and Penang and the neighbouring countries; Singapore and Thailand. Langkawi Island has an International Airport whereas the other two case study sites are located near the KLIA. This calls for a sound tourism product development plan in the area which uses the existing resources to their advantage and incorporates conservation as a component for sustainable tourism growth that will attract both the investors and tourists.

Eventually, the case study sites represent an attempt to accept and reinforce the Malaysian social values and cultural heritage in tourism development program. Meanwhile, the rich traditional fabric of the Malaysian society in the study sites provides a useful resource for the tourism development, economic and social improvement. Such development should not produce negative consequences to the existing community cultural values and traditions as Smith (1992) argues that some tourism development in Malaysia did bring unwanted social impacts which necessitated the government intervention. It becomes clear that the tourism development should improve the prevailing economic circumstances while complementing the existing social values and structures of the case study sites along as well as the socio-cultural conservations.

5.3.2 Recognition as Environmentally Sensitive Coastal Area (ESCA)

Tropical coastal ecosystem functioning, value and productivity and the ability to sustainably support the human population are threatened by the overuse and misuses of the natural resources (Cicin-Sain et al., 1998) in environmentally sensitive areas. The West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula is also recognized by the NPP as an Environmentally Sensitive Coastal Areas (ESCA) (MHLG, 1996). The NPP also states that the sensitive coastal ecosystem area in the West coast of Peninsula Malaysia, where many of the operating coastal resorts are available shall be protected and used in sustainable manner. Under the NPP, the environmentally sensitive areas shall be integrated in the planning and management of land use and natural resources to ensure sustainable development.

The recognition also called for the sites to incorporate sustainable development principles in designing the resorts. The coastal zones in the West Malaysian Peninsula have generally been experiencing a rapid development including large scale
reclamation for the tourism and urban purposes. Thus, the appropriate design and planning measures are needed to control and guide the industry so that potential threats to the marine and coastal system such as the loss of habitat, coastal pollution, over-exploitation and coastal erosion and deposition can be minimised. The threat can be seen in some of the tourism development as observed in the site visits discussed in Chapter One earlier. Thus the selection of case study sites is also to provide a better understanding on the solution to reduce the environmental impacts through the siting process in the case study sites.

5.3.3 Opportunity for Geographical Approach

This context provides an ideal opportunity to analyse the coastal development in one setting, given the context in which current environmental design debates are concerned with the preservation of the coastline ecosystem. The sites are the main coastal tourist attractions where most domestic and international coastal tourist destinations are located. This approach gathers data of the coastal development at the macro local levels, but what is more important is to map out the result to reveal the trend uptake in locating the resort’s facilities in Malaysia. In studying the siting, a geographical approach will be used based on studies at the micro scale with results that will allow generalisation and comparisons to be made at larger geographical scale.

5.3.4 Vulnerability of Coastal Tourism to Political and Economic Pressure

Political conflicts have emerged in the coastal resorts development in the West Malaysian Peninsula reflecting these demographic and economic trends. Tourism, property and construction industries have regularly benefited from the political control of the local council or pressure from top political level especially in terms of land issues where emphasis of development is given to the zone closest to the shoreline. Meanwhile, McNamara and Gibson (2008) argue that the emergence of the connected suburban and tourists developments in the zone closest to the shoreline has pointed to research emphasising the vulnerability of coastal ecosystems and threats from overdevelopment (Thom, 2004). Some of the threat to the coastal development has been discussed with the support of photographic evidence in the opening paragraph of Chapter One, while further evidence can be found in the next Chapter Six dealing with the interviews with regulators.
5.3.5 Availability of Resorts for Morphological Studies

The case study sites are selected due to the availability of 3, 4 and 5 star resorts that caters for both international and domestic tourists. In terms of the number of hotels, these areas has bigger number of hotels compared to other states with Perak (including Pangkor Island) leading with 185 total number of hotels, Kedah (including Langkawi Island) (144), Pulau Pinang (132), Negeri Sembilan (including Port Dickson (71) respectively (Tourism Malaysia, 2003). A total number of eighteen resorts were included in the interviews and morphological analysis for the data collection of this study. The site observations of the coastal resorts will also be conducted to identify the zoning and physical design features that can be considered as important in designing resorts.

5.4 Justifying the Selection of Resorts

The details of the case study resorts are summarised in Appendix 10. In summary, the criteria for the resorts selection in the morphological studies are due to the Hotel star rating, the construction period, size of resorts and the availability of high end resorts.

5.4.1 Hotel Star Rating35:

The resorts are comprised of 3, 4 or 5 stars resorts which are equipped with more facilities compared to the lower rating resorts. The three main resorts; Berjaya Langkawi Resorts and Spa, Pangkor Laut and the Avillion Resort are premier resorts which represent each of the three case study sites. The three main resorts are selected due to the vernacular architecture styles they adopted in which buildings are designed to fit the tropical surroundings. They also feature buildings which are constructed beyond the shorelines and have won numerous design awards.

5.4.2 Construction Period

The resorts that were constructed and completed in the 1990’s were required to conduct proper submission to the authorities and acquire approval before commencing the construction. Thus, it is more realistic to choose these resorts due to the availability

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35 Hotel star rating classification system (1 to 6 stars) was implemented since 1995 for hotels with 10 rooms and above. The classification was based on International standard Criterion by World tourism Organization (WTO) offered according to local socio-culture. It is based on comfort safety and facilities. Star Rating is approved by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Malaysia.
of documents and drawings from the authority that are needed to process the morphological study. While the drawings are found unavailable in the local authority, many resorts are reluctant to release their drawings for research purposes. It is also important to note here that the unavailability of the documents resulted in the omission for resorts that are earlier planned and the final proposal of eighteen resorts for case studies.

5.4.3 Availability of Large Scale and High End Resorts

The larger resorts in the context of this study are more complex in their planning due to their number of facilities, amenities and activities provided thus will provide more detail information on the design process; the theory and practice that created the resort. Unlike the larger resorts, the smaller sizes are usually the backpackers or budget motels which are built to serve the different tourist market segment. The backpackers units are considered less environmentally sensitive and has limited design feature as compared to the luxury or high end resorts. It is widely regarded as the temporary transit spaces for tourists who are always on the move and prefer to stay for a short duration. In supporting the above argument, Plog (2005), in the ‘American Traveller Studies, 2003’\(^{36}\), argues that the budget market and boomers\(^{37}\) lack distinctive profiles and measures at the average levels on most dimensions, while the luxury lodge market segment is with settings in places of the scenic beauty, combined with privacy, discretion, safety and high level of service and outdoor and sporting activities offer an active and less stressful vacation experience (Ryan and Trauer, 2005). Both are high in the list of motivation preference among the luxury and adventure seekers in particular, select more motivations as important for them than do other groups (Plog, 2005).

The selection of larger resorts is in tandem with the concern of this study which is specifically on the quality of the spaces within the particular site premise and not on the relationship between the particular resorts within specific regions. There are many construction and design features that can be investigated in these resorts. According to Marin and Jafari (2002), the features mark and distinguish the destinations, which make the whole (design) complete and thus stronger. Meanwhile, Mc Namara and Gibson (2008) both argue that sustainability in hotels (resorts) is pivotal to produce

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\(^{36}\) American Traveller Studies (ATS) (2003) is a large annual survey conducted by NFO/Plog research to observe travel trends and characteristics of American traveller of more than 10,000 completed surveys since 1995. (Plog, 2005)

\(^{37}\) Is defined as ‘couples with children’ in family market segment in ATS (Plog, 2005).
cumulative improvement towards sustainable destinations. These design features not only differentiate a good quality resort from the others but also support the availability of having quality resorts for investigations in this study.

5.5 Local Communities' Concerns on the Siting of Coastal Resorts Facilities

While the interviews provide important insights to the study, an exit survey was also conducted with local communities in the case studies areas to understand their views on the consequences of coastal resort development on their lifestyle and also the socio-economic values. The community is described as important stakeholder in tourism development:

“A mutually supportive, geographically specific, social unit such as village or tribe where people identify themselves as community members and where there is usually some form of communal decision making.” (Mann, 2000: 18)

Communities are dynamic, complex and generally do not have clear boundaries (Richard and Hall, 2000) where process of change not only physical but also attitudinal or cultural and it is territorially fixed (Lash and Urry, 1994). It is the relationship between the community, place and power that is relevant to the tourism development. Hence, an action ethnography approach in understanding the local views in this study is to produce ethnography of tourism and to make it useful to the respondents in the belief that the subject population have the rights to the social power that comes from the knowledge (May, 1980; and Cole, 2005).

At times, the conducted survey relies on memory and notes covering the spontaneous investigations of the locals in the three case study areas. The data is then analysed and translated. Most of the time during the surveys, in order to avoid provocations, the Researcher was a complete participant as a local while keeping his research concealed. The Researcher also observed that the locals are attracted to have a conversation with him as well as to gather knowledge about the tourist development. Most of the dialogues occur spontaneously at coffee shops nearby the fisherman boat stations and stall areas. Here, the Researcher attempted to have a clear understanding on the benefit or disadvantages of coastal tourism development to the local communities other than their participations in the development.

As discussed in the literature review chapter, the community involvement in the tourism development can be implemented through both the public participation in decision-making process. However, concerns regarding the feasibility and
effectiveness of the pre-development hearing conducted by the authority were voiced out by the local community.

The locals conceded the existence of public hearing through the newspaper advertisement but were immensely hesitant with the effectiveness of the function. While the locals in Langkawi Island acknowledged the effort of the Local Planning Authority and the Department of Environment in conducting the public hearing, they also questioned the effectiveness of the advertisement – on the timing on which such event is held and its relevance in getting the views of the locals which is done after the whole design of the resort is completed. On the effectiveness of the advertisement, one of the local argues:

“I seldom read the public advertisement page in the local paper. They are very small and I always missed the article.” (Personal communication with a Local, Langkawi Island, 2007)

The ineffectiveness of conducting the public hearing on resort developments on which most of the designs have been completed prior to the discussion is expressed by one of the locals:

“Even if there is any hearing on a development prior to the construction, it is not effective for us to give views on the development. They have already completed the design and what is the use of talking about it then. They [the authorities] should at least inform us earlier, that is before any planning is submitted to hear our opinion first.” (Personal communication with a Local, Langkawi Island, 2007)

The locals also point out their anxieties towards the emergence of the foreign major resort players in their areas that includes developers or top levels hotel personnel and those involved in the business servicing the tourism industry such as tourist operators and suppliers. While they expressed their interest in becoming the tourists' operators and developers, they cited the lack of funds and support from the authority as main barriers in initiating or participating in a resort development. One of the local tourist operators in Kuah, Langkawi Island describes:

“We want more locals to operate the resorts. We wanted more incentive from the government in terms of budget allocations and planning assistance from not only the authority and the specialist from different background. The small resorts are suffering as they are being neglected compared to the big resorts. That is why you see the development of
resorts has become very fragmented or too individualistic.” (Personal communication with a Local Resort Operator, Langkawi Island, 2007)

Figure 5.5: Local business stalls adjacent to a resort in Pangkor Island emphasising the need to integrate them into broader context of tourism development. Source: Author

On participating in the business surrounding the tourism industry, many of the locals feel that there should be more opportunities for them to participate in the small and medium scale business which is currently very low (Figure 5.5). They cited the lack of facilities and also promotional activities through various tourism agencies as the principal barriers for their participation in tourism related business activities.

“What we want is the opportunity to do business all year round rather than seasonally in this area. We want the authority and even the tour agents to encourage our local products to the tourists through promotion or by facilitating them to come directly to us without any third party participation.” (Personal communication with a Local stall owner, Langkawi Island, 2008)

There are concerns about the extent of mass tourism and its seasonal effects to the local livelihood and lifestyles around the case study areas. When asked on how the resort has benefited the community in terms of their locations, a Local in port Dickson explains:

38 The image in Fig. 5.5 demonstrates the need to integrate [local business stalls] into the broader context of tourism development’. As tourism creates jobs and generates income, it also promotes economic development that increase social well being and stability (Weaver and Opperman, 2000). Integrating local business in the resort planning may exacerbate the sense of displacement felt by local people (Harrison, 2001) through the commoditization of culture that can contribute to the protection and enhancement of traditions, customs and heritage (Sharpley and Tefler, 2002). Hence, the inanimate forms of culture (traditional arts and craft, type of culture that reflect day to life and activities of the host communities and animated forms (carnivals and traditional festivals can be attractive to tourists (Mathieson and Walls, 1982) and can be integrated into the facilities (King et al. 2000).
“Without a doubt, tourism has improved our livelihood in terms of providing job opportunities and also beautifying the surroundings. Many of the locals work in the resorts and many are doing business to serve the resorts. But there are just too many hotels in the area, where it will be dirty, and the roads getting congested during the school holidays which caused massive traffic jams. I think we should not build any more hotels around here.” (Personal communication with a Local, Port Dickson, 2008)

The locals are also aware of the importance of siting of the resort facilities in enhancing the environmental and social experiences in the areas. They singled out the environment as the main asset of a resort that needs to be maintained not only to attract tourists but also as a tool to preserve their lifestyle, as what one of the locals in Pangkor Island clarifies:

“It is good that there are still many areas that still not being developed in the island. The island is still green and there are plenty of beach areas for the tourist to enjoy around here. The siting of the resort must facilitate the environmental conservation because without these natural attractions tourist will not come here anymore. More importantly, we will lose our economic benefit from the tourism activities here.” (Personal communication with a Local, Pangkor Island, 2008)

In terms of siting, the primary concerns addressed by the local communities are issues pertaining to the socially responsible accessibility and privacy through or within the resort development. They questioned the decisions of the authority in allowing some of the major resorts to obstruct the locals’ from accessing the beach from the main roads and to use the resort’s beach frontage. The respondents regarded the coastal zones as their distinctive belongings which should be freely accessed. A Local in Langkawi Island expresses his disappointment on the lack of the socially responsible accessibility in the resort development by stating:

“I used to walk along the shore freely without having to go through all the resorts. Some of the resorts are very private and do not allow the public to enter or trespass their areas. I feel that we have lost many parts of our beaches. They do not belong to us anymore. Even the beautiful views towards the sea are no longer experienced along the seaside.” (Personal communication with a Local, Langkawi Island, 2008)
The above local community’s concerns on the environmental and social consequences through the planning and siting of the resorts impose a paramount need of appropriate siting strategies that will ensure that they are not being left out from the mainstream of a resort development. The exit surveys above indicate that despite the positive consequences of tourism development, there are many negative areas of the socio-cultural issues that need to be addressed and integrated in formulating the siting strategies.

5.6 Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the three case study sites proposed in this research will unveil the importance of having comprehensive and effective strategies in the government initiated policies to regulate the design of the coastal resorts to enhance the tourists’ experience in the resorts. The case study sites are in Langkawi Island, Pangkor Island and Port Dickson, the three premier coastal resort areas representing the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula. The case site studies are selected not only due to their recognition as the premier tourists’ destinations but also as the environmentally sensitive areas and the availability of quality resorts that suit this study. They are rich with natural resources such as the beach, natural settings or attractions and socio-cultural factors and have good infrastructures in supporting the coastal resorts development.

The case study sites also provide an opportunity to analyse the coastal resorts development at a macro scale which results can represent the trend of other resorts in Malaysia. Furthermore, the selections of the three main resorts; The Berjaya Langkawi Beach Resort, Pangkor Laut and The Avillion Beach Resort and fifteen other 3, 4 and 5 stars coastal resorts in the case study sites for the morphological analysis are also significant in providing important insights on the current siting practice. The three main resorts are Malaysia’s premier resorts, in which the planning has emphasised on natural environmental and socio cultural conservations through the integration of vernacular style architecture. Meanwhile, the remaining thirteen are also considered as the high end resorts with adequate facilities and constructed from 1990’s onwards.

The impacts of the coastal resorts development towards the local community were also investigated through several dialogues. The locals have voiced out their concerns on several important issues such as the ineffectiveness of public hearing and their low level of participation in the particular development where many were searching for more opportunities and incentives from the government sectors. They also raised the issue of negative environmental and social impacts from tourism.
development. Most are worried about the loss of public beach areas due to the lack of responsible access provided in the developments which are mainly developed by foreign developers. Subsequently, the survey implies the need for a sound tourism product development plan in the case study sites which relies on the existing assets to their advantage and incorporates conservation as a component for coherent strategy for sustainable tourism growth.

The rich traditional and socio cultural fabrics in the study sites also provide a useful resource for a study on the coastal tourism development and physical impact towards economic and social improvement of the surroundings. These factors justify their significance for the research design and strategies involving interviews and resorts morphological studies implemented in this study. Consequently, all the concerns above demonstrate an imperative need for more comprehensive siting strategies beyond the formal approach by the government initiated policies and the existing guidelines.
Chapter Six

Discussion on the Findings in the Interviews with Regulators and Designers

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in the interviews with regulators and designers who are associated with the process of locating the coastal resorts development in the three case study sites. It is one of the data collection processes in addition to the coastal resorts morphological analysis and interviews with the tourists to address the aims and recommendations for this study. With regards to the findings, the way the government implemented and imposed the policies through the formal regulation has significant impacts towards the siting of coastal resorts. The siting strategies are stated in the form of guidelines or checklists in the relevant policies. In this case, the regulators are administrators of the policies that are formulated to guide the designers in undertaking the planning and design of the resorts.

This chapter seeks the views of the regulators and designers on the role of policies in locating the coastal resorts’ facilities to enhance the tourists’ experience. In a way, it explores the manner the policies controlled and shaped the design of resorts through the siting practice in association with the integration of sustainable design principles in the development. In this regard, this chapter first reviews the research question and basic assumption for this approach. This if followed by the reflections on the approach that include the experience of regulators and designers, their aspirations and role of research in supporting the siting policies in Malaysian context.

Secondly, this chapter discusses the findings in the interviews beginning with regulators and designers’ definitions of siting; their views on the importance of the policies pertaining to the siting in promoting environmental protection and social relationship; spatial and physical design characteristics in the spaces created by siting; and integration of sustainable principles in meeting the demand for more environmentally sensitive resorts through the siting strategies. It also identifies the persisting barriers that impede appropriate siting process that include the lack of
awareness on sustainable issues among the tourism stakeholders and disruptive political influences. The view of both the regulators and designers on the way to improve the siting is also discussed in this chapter.

Recalling all the above, the experience of both the regulators and designers on the roles of the policies in locating the coastal resorts facilities are imperative in understanding the key issues and problems of the current practice. Consequently, the findings from this methodological approach will provide an alternative framework for new strategies in the policies and regulations that can contribute to new proposal for fresh approach in the form and design of coastal resort development in Malaysia.

6.2 Revisiting the Methodology

As summarised in the previous chapter, the findings from the data collection in the three methodological approaches are compared and analysed to address the formulated research questions. For this interview with the regulators and designers, the main research question is – *what role does the regulation play in the siting of coastal resorts’ facilities in the West Malaysian Peninsula?* Formulating a tourism policy establishes the basis for the development and maintenance of tourism at both the national and regional levels. Policies are developed primarily for the environmental and social concerns other than to ensure the economic benefits in all form of tourism. In retrospective, the general approach of this study is that all forms of tourism should be aiming towards sustainable development. The contention is that the term sustainable is ambiguous and should cover all forms of tourism other than the alternative, responsible and appropriate (Nash and Butler, 1990). The principles of sustainable tourism development includes the proper siting of the facilities that suit the particular environment and ensuring the benefit of the local community. In this instance, the policies at the national and regional planning levels must consider the alternative forms of tourism with emphasis on the above aim, especially in the areas with traditional cultures and ecologically sensitive environment represented by the three case study sites.

The first considerations to be made by any planning body should be where the resorts facilities that include the accommodations and other infrastructures will be located both at the macro and micro levels. As mentioned in the Chapter three, the macro level planning’s in Malaysia involves the participation of the Federal, State and Local Governmental Agencies in the ‘decentralised’ and ‘top-down’ organisational structure to realise the developments objectives. While the macro level planning is not the major concern of this study, it is important to note that it has major impacts to the
planning stages at the micro level. For example, at the micro level where the coastal resorts are being constructed, the policies and guidelines are used to control not only the types and numbers but also method of constructions and maintenance aspects of the resorts.

While the policy controls maintains the scale and type of development, it does not mean that the final product will be as intended by the policies. This is due to the nature of policies which are highly technical and regarded as a formal approach in regulating a design. Certain aspects of design are perceptual which are based on the user’s experience rather than the technical which is not specified by the policies and regulations. Both aspects however, need to be integrated into the more comprehensive siting strategies in the policies and regulations. In this case, the policies and design practice of the resorts could not be regarded as stand-alone components in the tourism development. They need to be synergised into the policies and regulation with proper control and mechanism by the regulators at each level of the governmental organisations. The policies must not only reflect the national interest but also the goals of the tourism development.

6.2.1 Basic Assumptions on the Methodology

Several assumptions on the regulators and designers experience to address the research question in the methodology are listed as follow:

1. The views of regulators and designers on the policies and on integration of environmental and social factors in the design of resorts are important in understanding the role of the regulations in developing sustainable resorts;
2. There are common strategies in the existing policies and regulations that are used by both regulators and designers to protect the environment and local community that can be regarded as basic strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience;
3. The experience of the regulators and designers provide important insights on how the policies has shaped and guided the siting of coastal resorts in a sustainable manner and meeting the new demand;
4. The experience of the regulators and designers are important in identifying the existing barriers to the implementation of appropriate siting policies; and,
5. The views of regulators and designers on policies roles in the design of coastal resorts in the Malaysian Peninsula will unveil the importance of integrating tourists experience in coastal resorts as part of comprehensive siting strategies.
The above assumptions created the framework for the way this methodological approach is conducted, analysed and integrated with the findings in other approaches to address the research aims of this study.

6.3 Reflection on the Interviews

The massive dimensions of tourism have always remained vulnerable to the effects of policies imposed by the regulators who are directly concerned with its operations and existence. The policies give important overview on the current states and demands of the coastal tourism industry and also role of siting in meeting the development objectives. In this context, the regulation is a crucial function of the government that has both positive and negative implications on tourism. On one hand, too much regulation can disallow the realization of many tourism activities, but on the other hand, more and better regulation may be needed for health, safety and resource protection of the tourism development (Gunn, 1988). In line with this, the government also reflects the value system of the constituencies that must be incorporated into all planning in tourism development. This subsequently led to the need for tourism development policies at all levels.

6.3.1 The Experience of Regulators and Designers

The role of regulators in the planning and development of coastal resorts is vital to the tourism development. Their first hand experience in dealing with the policies – in formulating or regulating the siting guidelines during planning, construction and maintenance of post development era provides valuable information on the state of tourism industry. Meanwhile, the role of the designers in coastal resort development is closely associated with the policy and regulations imposed by the regulators. Here, the designers use both the theory and practice that are directly influenced by concurrent policies regulated by the relevant authorities.

In many aspects, the creativity of designers is based on their prior experience and knowledge acquisitions in previous development that they were involved with. However, their decision makings in the design process are also influenced by the policies imposed on the physical design requirements of the particular development. In return, the way the resorts are created by the designers, specifically in locating the resorts facilities will influence the users. Thus, the designers can be considered as the linkage between the government, developers and tourists in a complex and multi facets design process.
6.3.2 The Aspirations

The aspiration of the regulators and designers in embracing and improving the industry can be observed in the way they addressed the questions during interviews. A great deal of thought was put into the type and wording of the questions which are in English. Despite that, one important observation during the interview is that the answer to the questions actually depends on the way the Researcher conducts the interviews. In this case, the respondent provides more information if the researcher repeats the question in different manner to ensure that the respondents understand the main issue well. Thus, the Researcher chose not to include sensitive information that may jeopardise the outcomes of the study. Being open with the respondents and reminding them the objectives of the interviews intermittently has also assisted in easing the ethical issues to obtain great deals of revealed information.

It can be concluded that the underlying aspirations of regulators to improve the tourism industries can be observed through their eyes. The Researcher has discovered during the interviews that the regulators are very passionate about their involvement in the industry. Most of the respondents agreed that the government has been proactive in supporting the coastal resorts development in Malaysia through their policies and regulations. In numerous occasions, they stated that the government has succeeded in promoting Malaysia as a unique tourist destination in the Southeast Asia region. The initiative has resulted in an influx of foreign investment in the property sectors that has also assisted the tourism growth in Malaysia. In this instance, they cited that the latest government-sponsored ‘Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H)’ program is one of the country’s main drawcards to attract tourists to Malaysia. The program is open to anyone in the world to enter and stay in Malaysia on a long term Social Visit Pass (MOCAT, 2009). The most common reasons for choosing Malaysia are the all year round hot weather, the fact that English is widely spoken, and that the cost of living is substantially lower including the price of properties as in the currency exchange.

While the regulators agree that the aggressive promotion by the government has supported the tourism industry, they are also concerned with the manner coastal resorts are actually being developed at the local level. The concern on coastal tourism

39 The Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) program is an international residency scheme enacted by the Government to allow foreigners to live in the country on a long-stay visa of up to 10 years. Applicants must meet certain financial and medical criteria. To qualify for the program, successful applicants are then entitled to enter and leave the country on a largely unrestricted basis, and also benefit from other incentives aimed at making their stay in Malaysia more convenient. This is concurrent with the tourism policies in attracting foreign arrivals to Malaysia (MOCAT, 2009)
is on the speed of the development. Several regulators shared the view that tourism industry in Malaysia has been experiencing a commendable growth for the past twenty years during Mahathir’s era. On the other hand, they have also admitted that the growth also brought some disadvantages to the tourism industry. Most, however felt that many coastal resort developments has been developed too fast without proper long term planning that resulted in the coastal tourism industry being fragmented into arrays of mass tourism which lack the identity required to strengthen the industry as compared to other countries in the Southeast Asia. This is reflected by the improper siting of the coastal resorts facilities, which they perceived as have been arranged haphazardly with less sensitivity to the local environment and socio-cultural factors.

They also suggested that the speed of the resort development is associated with the way the policies are being implemented and the disruptive political influence to the coastal resorts’ development. In many cases, the disruptive political influence overrides the policies in decision making aspects of the development, which they felt has emerged as a major obstacle in tackling the many problems besieging the development and maintenance of coastal resorts. While the infrastructure initiated by the government is already in place to support tourism development, they also acknowledged the need to overcome the bureaucratic and political barriers that has undermined the industries competitive edge. At the macro level, most respondents believed that there is a need for a better cooperation between the Federal, State Government and Local Authority to ensure the policies regarding the planning of resorts can be implemented more effectively. They also voiced their disappointments with the frequent change of leadership at both the federal and state levels, which resulted in the introduction of new tourism policies that also brought along adverse impacts to the current development irrespective of their good intentions.

At the micro level, the regulators also felt that there must be sufficient support from the local authorities in terms of monitoring the project from early design stage, during and post construction era. Most importantly, they have unanimously agreed that the siting is an important process to determine if each of the three stages can be

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40 Datuk Seri Tun Dr Mahathir Muhammad is the former 4th prime minister of Malaysia. He held the post for 22 years from 1981 to 2003, making him Malaysia’s longest-serving Prime Minister. Under his premiership, Malaysia has developed into an industrialised country with major mega developments such as the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang, The PETRONAS Twin Tower and Putrajaya Governmental Administrative Town Centre. These projects are later considered as major tourists’ attractions to help promote Malaysia as major tourist’s destination in Asia. Dr Mahathir also was strongly involved in the development of Langkawi tourism through the establishment of Langkawi development Agency (LADA) to oversee the progress.
formalized. They have observed that while the siting strategies are generally stated in the guidelines, their implementation needs further refinement in terms of interpretations and on creating the awareness among the designers and developers on the issue and problems that prohibited their actual implementations.

Apart from the stakeholders’ awareness, another main issue is the level of understanding among the regulators on sustainable principles. In many of the interviews the Researcher discovered that while the regulators are familiar with the word ‘sustainable’, most however, were having difficulties in clarifying the meaning and the means to achieve it. They are observed to be more inclined in linking the term sustainable to the preservation of environmental factors per se rather than local community factors whereas, both are closely interrelated. When asked to clarify, many have indicated that the lack of training and exposure on the issues are the main reasons. Consequently, it can be summarized that the major concern of the regulators in the interviews is that ‘can politicians, planners and developers and populations rise to the challenge and create a truly responsible industry that brings benefits to residents and tourists without compromising the physical and socio-cultural environment of the destinations?’

6.3.3 Research Role in Supporting Siting Policies and Regulations

There is also dissatisfaction among the regulators on current quantity and quality of tourism research on the coastal resorts development. While there are many researches available on the environmental impacts on the resorts, many regulators are disappointed with the current lack of research on physical design and planning aspects to support the policies. They argue that many of the existing strategies currently stated in the guidelines under their jurisdiction were formulated without adequate supporting research. The regulators suggested several ways for both the public and private agencies to support the research environment in tourism. For example, in data collections, there are vast room for improvement in the method of storing important archives namely; the resorts’ submissions documents and drawings at the Local Building Councils to make them more accessible to researchers.

Only just recently, the soft copy of planning and drawing files were made compulsory for the new planning and building submission. While the submission were complied by the developers for approvals, it was observed that many of the documents are not properly being stored or made available to the public. In several cases, most of the drawings could not be traced at the Local Building Councils. Instead they are located at the regional state office farther from the particular sites. In an extreme case,
even the local Fire Department has no proper Drawing Records for the particular coastal resort development, which can be hazardous in the case of emergencies.

It was also observed that the ‘culture of research’ is also lacking among resort operators. Many are more concerned about the privacy and the ‘authenticity’ of their resorts rather than looking at the long term benefits that a research in social science or physical planning can contribute to the industry. This scenario has resulted in difficulties for the Researcher to acquire several important documents which had subsequently slowed down the data collection process. Furthermore, several resorts have strict policies of not allowing any photographs or interviews to be taken in their premises. The Researcher was even escorted out of the hotel premise by the security guards during a fieldwork exercise in Langkawi Island. In this case, the policies initiated by the hotel operators is detrimental for the tourists safety, however, the Researcher believes that certain leverages in accommodating the research environment must also be considered to support long term sustainability of the industry.

6.4 The Findings in the Interviews with Regulators and Designers

The findings in the interviews were discussed in the following categories:

1. The way the designers and regulators defined the siting;
2. Role of the policies in integrating the environmental protection;
3. Promotion of social relationship through the siting;
4. Spatial and physical design features required in the siting process;
5. Emphasis on the sustainable tourism development;
6. Meeting the tourists demand;
7. Identification of barriers towards the appropriate siting strategies;
8. Relationship between the siting and political ideologies; and,
9. Regulators and designers’ recommendations on improving the policies.

6.4.1 The Regulators and Designers Definition of Siting

The way the regulators and designers reflect the importance of policies in enhancing the tourists’ experience is crucial in demonstrating both the levels of understanding and competencies on the siting issues and their importance in a coastal resort development. As discussed in Chapter Three, the National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) (1996) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) have included the siting

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41 A term used by the Researcher to reflect the manner in which a research is being conducted within the Malaysian’s socio-cultural environment.
guidelines for sustainable tourism development in Malaysia. Accordingly, the interviews reveal that the regulators are aware of the current strategies and importance of integrating the sustainable development principles in designing coastal resorts. This finding is similar across the individual case study sites.

In the interviews, many respondents agree that the siting of the resort facilities is closely linked with the concept of environmental integration. They believed that resorts should be developed in such a manner that the natural resources of the resorts could be preserved through proper integration with the facilities. Thus, strategising a design based on proper siting is important in creating a coastal resort. This emphasis can be summarised from several definitions of siting strategies by the regulators. The first relates to the idea of preserving the environment to cater tourists' activities as described by a Senior Planner in Port Dickson:

"Any strategies relating to a resort development must be closely connected to preserving the environment. First it must not disturb the environment, Second, it has to blend with the environment, the siting and the construction of the resort must ensure that the environment are not damaged by the location and third, the siting should allow interaction of tourists and the environment either spontaneously or through the leisure activities in the resort." (IR INS2)

Second is to evade the environmentally sensitive areas in locating the facilities. It is considered as the last alternative in a development. In this regard, the selection of construction method and technique must demonstrate sensitivities to the site resources and context. The facilities must be constructed as part of the eco-system as described by a Regulator in Langkawi Island:

"Tourism is very sensitive to the environment and that is why the setting of the facilities is very important. First the facility should not destroy the environment and this means to keep the trees, the terrain or the natural stream as they are. Second, find a way how to construct it on the sensitive area if there is no other alternatives and lastly how to make the facilities integrate themselves with the environment." (IR INS11)

Meanwhile, the importance of the siting in coastal resort development is also shared by the designers. While acknowledging that it is an important process, they warned that the siting must be learnt in theory and transformed in the design with certain level of creativities. The strategies in designing coastal resort should begin with
the notion to limit negative impact to the environment. While this is the case, it is most likely impossible that the environment cannot be fully tampered with especially during construction. Thus, the site considerations are still major design requirements to conserve the environment as described by one of the designers:

“It is a very important process in designing any buildings…not only a resort. In fact this is the first design skill that we teach the architectural students. Environment and tourism are very closely connected and that is why when we locate the buildings, the first thing that comes to mind is to reduce the negative impact the environment as much as we can. It is quite impossible not to touch the environment but the strategy is to limit the impact as much as possible.” (IR INS10)

Most respondents agree that the appropriate planning and development policies or regulations can adequately assist in reducing the environmental impacts. However, even with the appropriate strategies, there are external factors which go beyond the issues of the siting that can adversely impact the surrounding environment. This is closely linked to the building location and maintenance aspects rather than the siting itself. A Senior Officer in the DOE shared his own experience on the phenomena by stressing on the importance of maintaining resorts:

“The strategies are important. But there are other external factors that these strategies could not be fully functional, for example when the electrical system break down there will also be a problem to the resort’s sewage system and as a result there will be spill over on the beach. We can take all the necessary precaution but we cannot prevent it from happening one hundred percent. For structural above the sea it is good that we avoid it at all. There are cases where the sewage pipe leaked and the waste spilled into the sea. When it comes to the maintenance of the facilities, most of the resorts are not very good at it.” (IR INS9)

The view refers to the siting of facilities above the shore where concern on the direct impact of poor maintenance towards the sea is more apparent than the conventional structure on land. The view affirms the idea that the maintenance aspect is an important factor in designing coastal resorts besides the initial siting process in mitigating negative impact on the environment. Eventually, it also exhibits that both the regulators and designers possessed common awareness on the importance of siting strategies in preserving the coastal environment as well.
6.4.2 Promoting Environmental Protection through Siting

Recalling on the interviews, the regulators also agree that the policies and regulations are intended to preserve the environment and local community. Tourism has the power to enhance the environment and protect natural attractions (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2003). Ideally, these positive impacts are what we should aim for in a coastal resort development. As mentioned in Chapter Two earlier, the argument is that clean and scenic settings are the desirable assets in attracting tourists for most coastal resorts. These resorts therefore have the responsibilities to protect and enhance their natural resource assets that include the climates, vegetations, wildlife, water and topographic changes that are considered as the basic foundations for many attractions. In addition to this, coastal resort development unspoiled environment and its associated wildlife not only constitutes a tourist attraction but also providing an added value to the experience in the tourist destinations.

Parallel to this, the regulators argue that the policies have already incorporated the specific measures in protecting the natural environment. It recognises the importance of the natural resources as the main attraction in resorts as assets which needs to be preserved to attract tourists and protected through the proper siting. A Senior Tourism Officer recalls:

“The strategies can be observed in terms of minimising any damage to the natural environment and also for the benefit of the locals. In general the facilities must be well planned and blend with the natural surroundings. Our rainforest is our asset and so is the beach. Once we temper with them it will be difficult to get the original environment. Tourists come here to see and experience the nature. It will also be good if they can interact with the locals to learn about our environment.” (IR INS5)

In a way, the regulators are fully aware of the natural resources' importance to the coastal resorts sustainability and the need for proper siting of the facilities to preserve the environment to attract tourists who want to experience and learn about their environment.

6.4.3 Promoting Social Relationship through Siting

The regulators agree that the proper siting of coastal resort facilities will not only preserve the environment but also enhances tourists' social experiences. They have observed that uncontrolled commercial exploitation of tourism has produced hotels which are unfamiliarly designed and indirectly intrude the surrounding cultural and
scenic environment. Eventually, protecting the environment will also bring positive consequences to the local community in terms of their awareness towards preserving the environment as described by the same respondent:

‘...The proper siting of the resorts in the coastal development is important. Most importantly is to ensure that the natural environment is preserved. The construction of resorts should minimise cutting of topography, the quality of beach is maintained and livelihood of the locals are not affected by the development. I do think that proper siting of the resorts and their facilities can lead to increasing awareness of the locals in preserving the environment’ (IR INS5)

The environmental awareness association is closely linked with the tourists’ socio cultural lifestyle, where “…modernity’s characteristics pride in dominating nature has caused us to forget that we are living in a culture that are more or less unconsciously ‘forces’ us into a self-destructive relationship with nature” (Eder, 1996). Eder further argues that we need to rediscover the symbolic dimensions of the human relationship with nature and adopt more communicative form that permit a progressive environmentally and social and cultural order. Thus, the understanding of culture on how they enflame and manipulate nature can be used to reinforce the modes of socio-economic organizations dominant in those societies (Soper, 2010; and Haraway, 1997). In line with this, the affluent public need to rethink the good life and to consume in less damaging way, if there is a real commitment to environmental care even it affected the economic growth (Soper, 2010).

While in practice, the respondents agree that the building by-laws and regulation have assisted in controlling the ill-planned coastal development through the siting practice, they are also aware of the importance of incorporating local architectural features in the design as part of an effort to preserve the local identity. This factor combined with the coastal zone attractions can be considered as a strategy to produce attractive coastal resorts. With regards to the place-making concept discussed in Chapter Two, the tourists as temporary and transnationals agents in the resorts should have both a sense of place and authenticity in the resort. Harries (1997) inquiries – ‘how can a building place the tourists in time?’ summarises the importance of creating the senses in the resorts, where they can have a memorable experience without feeling alienated in a foreign place. This implies that a resort is also a place in which significant events can occur. It can be considered as a place of festivals or celebrations of culture and closely associated with the statement that resorts are the meeting points of two distinct cultures (Abel, 2004). In placing tourists in resorts, a process of social and
cultural change is initiated which involves transforming not only the physical environment of the toured communities and the intimate practice of the everyday life, but also the series of relations by which cultural identity is constituted for both the tourists and the toured in any given context (Morris, 1995). In this instance, the development of a heightened sense of the pleasures, both sensual and spiritual, to be gained from the cultural experience will restrain tourists more environmental damaging forms of consumption (Soper, 1993). This implies the importance of encouraging cultural experience in the resorts through cultural spaces in resorts.

In the context of aforementioned idea, it is imperative that the siting process ensures that appropriate spaces for culture to be provided and celebrated both by the tourists and locals. Here, the regulators observed that the provision of spaces for socio and cultural interaction results from the siting process that are currently lacking in the coastal resorts. What has transpired in the guidelines is identification of formal physical requirement for other spaces but not specifically the need for the establishment of the socio-cultural spaces in the resorts. For example, while the provision of open spaces created by the siting process are considered as the agent for socio-cultural relation to take place and is in compliance with the Local Building Regulations’ requirement, the specific cultural spaces demarcated in the actual planning are however to be found lacking in the coastal resorts. The area provision is not conducive to allow participation of both the tourists and locals. A Local Planner in Port Dickson issued the following view:

“The strategies in the local plan specified the minimum setback, the building plot ratio and the percentage of open space that need to be provided in a development. The strategies also required the design to have local features for example traditional roof and vista to be incorporated. For the open spaces it will be good if it can be left as natural as possible but also the size provided are adequate for cultural showcases where the locals can also participate.” (IR INS1)

The above view reflects that while the existing building regulations provide the formal physical building requirements, it must also ensure the protection of local community socio cultural factors through the integration of local culture in the spatial planning.
They cited the features of Home Stays tourism\(^\text{42}\) (Refer to Figure 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) as a good concept that allows the above integration to commence with lesser impacts to the environment.

**Figure 6.1:** A traditional wedding in a Home Stays resort demonstrating the need for integration of traditional celebrations in the form of cultural spaces in the siting of tourism facilities. Source: Tourism Malaysia (2009)

**Figure 6.2:** A traditional activity participated by tourists in Home Stays resort indicating the importance of social interactions in creating tourists’ positive experience in the planning of the facilities. Source: Tourism Malaysia (2009)

The relationship of Home stays tourism and the siting practice can be observed through the concept of commoditization and social identity in tourism where cultural reproductions at a local level for global market are emphasized allowing tourists to become part of the ongoing symbolic meaning and appropriation (Franklin, 2003). In the case of Home stays tourism, the traditional value of the vernacular house layout and physical features can be integrated into the siting process, where tourists can consume culture in the form of podium performances or merely continuing with the residents everyday activities (Ashworth, 1995). Here, the concept demonstrates that the cultural identity and environmental adaptation (Lawson, 1995; Tan, 1994) can be significant factors for future success of the resort architecture (Hassan et al., 2010).

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\(^{42}\) The Home stays Programme was introduced by the Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia in 1988 as an effort to diversify the tourism products through the provision of an alternative accommodation for tourists. Home stay is a form of accommodation where the tourist can live with the chosen host family and has the opportunity to interact as well as experience the daily way of life of the family and culture directly. The Home stay Programme is an alternative tourism product that has the potential to attract tourists since there is a marked increase in the demand by the international tourists for tourism that has the characteristics of increasing knowledge, including observing, experiencing, and learning the way of life of the local residents at the destinations that they visit. (Source is from Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia, 2009).
In terms of spatiality: awareness and employment of local and regional specialization, location and initial advantage, rural spatial and social interphasing and ensuring protection of fragile physical resources are essential (Simpson, 2001). For Simpson, tourism development must closely reflect the traditional economic growth based modernization process where tourism development in rural areas is primarily manifested in the creation of new jobs and activity. This is where sustainable development not only oversimplifies the complexities of effectively managing the multipurpose rural resource but also bring out the issue of how the countryside (where Home stays tourism are located) should be developed or protected (Sharpley, 2001).

Several regulators proposed the Home stays tourism as a good alternative to the mass tourism. Home stays program is an alternative of accommodation services that involves having tourists stay with selected families where they can interact and experience the daily life of these families as well as experiencing the Malaysian culture (MOCAT, 2009). The international tourists who visited Malaysia particularly desire to experience the resorts environment in its natural setting and understand the local culture as offered in Home Stays program. This also implies how the siting can be better implemented in coastal resorts where the Home Stays siting characteristics can be physically integrated as part of the resort facilities or as new environment created to support the resorts activities and facilities.

In integrating the siting characteristics, it also recognised the fact that certain local ideologies and lifestyle need to remain in their current states to create both the unique and memorable experiences for the tourists. The integration however, needs to be well planned to ensure that both the locals and tourists' benefit from the venture without sacrificing the privacy, security and safety of both users. However, the economic return and low yield nature of this tourism type is a major concern, even though it is feasible in the rural areas. An Officer in MOCAT compares the conventional tourism with the home stay in relation to profit:
“Tourists want to experience something unique, something different from what we have now. Mass tourism is a major concern especially the solid waste and its impact on the environment. Maybe, something like home stays. Tourist gets to enjoy the environment and the local culture and lifestyle at the same time. From the economic perspective, home stays will not yield much as the purchasing power is not strong. But for national interest, it is good for the development of the rural area. If we want improve our tourism industry, we must change the way tourism is managed from the top level down.” (IR INS5)

The regulators are in the opinion that the Home Stays tourism are more suitable in rural areas where the initial cost is not as high as the mass tourism’s in urban areas. Despite the concern on its economic return, the concept provides important insights on the siting process in terms of creating sustainable coastal resorts with reference to the particular surrounding. In the siting of the resort’s facilities, it is important to conserve the existing physical and cultural attractions that allow maximum interactions with the hosts to facilitate to enhance the tourists’ experience.

6.4.4 Spatial and Physical Design Features

The regulators and designers also view the spatial and physical features requirements to the spaces created by the siting process as crucial in enhancing the tourists’ experience. This is related to the tourists ‘sense of place’ and ‘comfort’ in consuming the resorts complex. The respondents identify several ways of how the siting could provide assistance in enhancing the tourists’ experience. On the spatial quality, the designers addressed their concerns on the programming of tourism complex to control the tourists’ activities without affecting others’ privacies. In controlling the movement of tourists within the complex, they felt that the siting should allow proper demarcation of different zones for different activities to guarantee the safety and comfort to the tourists and staffs.

The regulators also voiced their concerns on the issue of accessibility throughout the facilities. In the spatial arrangements of resource elements, the connection between every facility (corridor) must be simultaneously processing creativity and leisure (Taylor, 1975). The arrangement should allow the exploratory focus of the consumer to radiate towards a complex organized environment (Boerwinkel, 1995) while the accessibility to the chalet should be carefully positioned with an attractive setting (Schwanke, 1997). Thus, the designated corridor design that link the different zone of facilities emerged as the best means for achieving behavioural goals; increase in alert
purposive behaviour, social interaction and appropriate regulation of privacy in residential units (Cherulnik, 1993). Thus, the linkage between the zoning and siting that take place in the design of resort is described by the designer of the Avillion Resort:

“If you notice, there is a six storey buildings and six or seven clusters of villa in the resort. The facilities have been zoned according to their functions. This is very important so that not only we can control the traffic but also to ensure that the tourists can be closer and comfortable to the natural surroundings. The parking is located far away from the room. Even the lobby is located far away from the pool area to reduce the noise. So zoning is an important process in the siting because it can bring out the best of the surrounding environment.” (IR INS11)

Apart from controlling the tourists’ movements, the transportation system that includes the road and transportation system of the trafficking tourists within the premise are important in linking all zones of activities. The design of the transportation system is closely associated with the site context (topography and vegetation) and the way the facilities are located. The regulators lauded several resorts use of alternative transportation system such as buggy and shuttle bus to transport the tourists but also to protect the environment. The measure requires less internal roadwork system and restricted the incoming heavy traffic into the resort premise. A Planner emphasized the need for proper transportation system in connecting the zones:

“With all these facilities, zoning is important to control the tourists’ movements and traffic, the villas are located on the west and northern part of the island and we use buggy to transport the tourists. The internal road is used by the buggy and for services only. This way it provides more protection to the environment. The pool and the beach area are located further apart, also to create more privacy for tourists. And this allows tourists to experience the nature better.” (IR INS10)

The view demonstrates that not all the guidelines can be applied directly into the design of coastal resorts. While the car park requirement is stated in the local building regulation, the selection of the transportation system also depends on the tourists’ need and designers’ creativity in connecting each zone with minimum interfering with the natural surroundings. This also indicates that enhancing the tourists’ experience in the natural environment is a main factor considered in the design; a process which can occur with or without the formal policies initiated by the government.
In several interviews, the respondents emphasised that the way the facilities are arranged to maximise attractive views can enhance the tourists’ experience. The regulators acknowledged this by suggesting that the siting of the resorts must maximise the view towards the sea or the natural attractions in the resort. This includes the arrangement of the facilities and the way the corridors link all the facilities together in different zones to assist in promoting the environmental and social experience of the resorts in totality. The location or the proximity of the corridor to natural attractions is important for the positive experience. A Planner in Langkawi describes:

“The interaction is basically through the view of the surroundings …therefore the location of the corridor is important in a resort, for example, near the highest point or near the natural attraction and the beach.” (IR INS 12)

As for social relations, the corridors can be designed not only to conserve the environment but also creating different types of experiences through the provisions of enclosed, semi-enclosed and open spaces along the spaces created by the siting process. It can be elevated to allow the vegetation underneath or using natural visual or noise screen barriers. While these recommendations are not specifically stated in the guidelines, the regulators stated that they should be incorporated in the design strategy as it does not incur high cost but only requires certain creativity in the design process. In reflecting the strategies in designing the corridor, the designers quote:

“Other than that, we can raise the corridor from the ground to protect the shrubs and faunas. There are few good examples of resort which did that. I don’t even mind if you have hanging corridors to walk through the jungle. I think it will be great.” (IR INS10)

“It can be open, closed or semi closed to provide some drama to the tourist’s experience. Open means without any roof so that they can enjoy the sun and closed for full closure from the rain and sun to access other facilities or semi closed by screen walls or boundaries that give a sense of direction to the tourists. It should provide some element of surprise but safe at the same time.” (IR INS11)

The regulators and designers have emphasised the need for a policy that encourages small scale coastal resorts development. In this vein, the regulators believed that the small scale resorts (low rise development) can be arranged harmoniously with the site context compared to the big scales. The smaller scale
resorts can be more environmentally sensitive as they provide flexibility in terms of the layout and design form that maximise the open spaces to interact with nature. This is stressed by a Planner in Port Dickson:

“High rise resort is closely related to mass tourism and offer cheaper rates. The low rise resorts adapt well to the natural environment compared to the high rise ones. I think it is not only the appearance but it also have to do with the atmosphere. Low rise means the rooms can be more flexible in terms of their arrangement. It can further create many open spaces in between the rooms and definitely better for interaction with nature.” (IR INS10)

The regulators and designers shared the views that the high rise development is more suitable for mass tourism and difficult to design as sustainable resorts. In comparison to the high rises, the one and two storey resorts provide a sense of scale to the natural tropical surroundings of the coastal resorts. The emphasis on low rises as compatible development is reflected by a Designer who states:

“It is very difficult to design a high-rise resort that has a close connection with the environment compared to the low rise. Some tried to introduce landscape on the roof and alternative floors, or use so-called climatic features but for me it is difficult. I think the high rise, because of the number of rooms built to cater for the mass, unlike the low rise. The low rise building gives a sense of scale to the surrounding as it does not over empower or alienate the natural elements. It can also create exciting outdoor spaces for leisure activities in the resort. So I would say definitely, the low rise can adapt to the surrounding better than the high rise.” (IR INS11)

Meanwhile, the regulators' emphasis on views is also associated with the scale of development. In maximising the views towards the sea, the siting of the accommodation units in large scale development comprising of high rises also imposes a problem in terms of the aesthetic appearance on the back elevations of the high rise resorts. A Planner in Port Dickson brought up the issue of poor building aesthetic as the result of providing vista towards the sea in the process of the siting:

“There are cases that the view from the corridor is blocked by the buildings. If you design a single loaded corridor the chances are that the corridors will be facing the main road because emphasis on the view is given to the
rooms themselves. So it is not only the beach front that we need to consider but also what is in front of the building. Usually we use the landscape to beautify the area. The downside is that the front elevations of the buildings will not be as nice as those facing the sea.” (IR INS1)

While the aesthetic appearance is important in the design, the functional aspect is closely related to the way the features accommodate the tourists’ activities in the resorts in the spaces that are also heavily concentrated by tourists. The concentration of usage both spatially and temporally by the tourists points to the need for an architectural design that are not only well planned to blend into the local environment but also to enhance the tourists’ experience with ease of maintenance. True to the Butler’s (1980) concept of Destination Lifecycle’s, which emphasized the need for resorts to sustain their operation beyond their maturities, the siting process must ensure that the zoning of high concentrated area with proper material procurement is properly considered in the design.

The planners and regulators vastly regarded appropriate landscape as the key design element in enhancing the tourists’ experience. In this case, a Planner proposed that the landscape can be a combination of existing and new elements to attract tourists however, providing excessive landscape is also not conducive to the surrounding in terms of the view and health concerns. A Planner addresses the concern:

“I am in the opinion that it is not wrong to have both. In fact it is good if the landscape designer can create a fusion of the old and new to create unique atmosphere in the resort’s open space. The thing is our natural vegetation is very green yet they are not colourful or flowery as much of other trees. We should worry about the mosquitoes too.” (IR INS10)

In referring to the need to use local landscapes, it is essential to note that all the landscape plans has to be submitted for approvals from the Local Building Authority. While this is necessary, proper steps in ensuring the type of landscape which can be easily maintained and appropriately provided without obstructing the tourists’ views must be taken into consideration in the design.

One of the main features in the high end resorts is the construction of accommodation above the sea as a major tourist’s attraction apart from the other facilities. Interestingly, it is one special topic that attracts most of the respondents where both regulators and designers provide contradicting ideologies on this issue.
one hand, several planners regard this as a way of promoting an alternative unique type of tourism development to reflect the traditional village setting along the water line. It is regarded as a measure to improve the less attracted beach area that has low water quality and settings. On the other hand, the concerns on this type of construction are the negative consequences to the coastal environment. In this case, the concern on the environmental impact caused by this type of construction was addressed by a Department of Environment's Senior Officer:

“Once we decide to construct a building above the sea we will need to construct sea barriers to control erosion or sedimentation. The existing strategy therefore is important to conserve the environment. The Legend chalet is also constructed with less than the required setback. During construction they use hammer pile and work continuously during the weekend which resulted in many complaints. They have a lot of problems during the construction because it is constructed close to the sea. The construction also divides the public beach area into private space.” (IR INS7)

Due to the above, the regulators suggested for further reviews on the policies regarding the onshore construction as this type of development is still new and the research on its impact is still deficient. Eventually, their impacts require alternative solutions that can benefit both the developers and tourists. A Senior Planner in Port Dickson describes the negative impacts and an alternative to this type of construction:

“We do allow construction of the chalet above the sea level. There are concerns about sedimentation but there are areas which at existing are the silted beach. For the entire project which are not yet to be constructed we required the developers to use the island concept rather than constructing it above the sea as it is found to be better in controlling the sedimentation.” (IR INS1)

The view of regulators and designers on the spatial and physical design features demonstrates that the emphasis on the environmental and social integration has already taken place in the design. In the case of creating authentic resorts, the process of enhancing tourists experience must be equipped with the full understanding on the environmental issues and not based solely on the aesthetic factors. It also implies that the existing siting strategies must be formulated in tandem with current scenario.
6.4.5 Siting Process in Sustainable Development Framework

The interviews demonstrate that the regulators are aware that the existing strategies used in the siting of the facilities should be within the framework of Sustainable Tourism Development. The concept of sustainable development embraces certain principles that cannot be achieved through tourism given the fragmented, multi-sectoral, private sector dominated and profit motivated tourism production system (Sharpley, 2000). Sharpley further reiterates that the tourism industry has traditionally catered to market demand, attempting to foster, maintain and expand the market, rather than focusing on maintaining the product or experience. As stated by a Senior Officer in Langkawi Tourism Planning Council, the move towards sustainable development has already been stated in the policies as a benchmark:

“It has been the practice of our country to promote sustainable tourism. It must involve the local participation in the industry, directly or indirectly. The sustainable tourism approach is very important for the industry to survive. There will be no compromise on that.” (IR INS4)

The siting practice is important in sustaining the environment and sustainable resort’s growth. The addition of facilities and infrastructure and other 'attractions' often occurs in order to keep the tourists coming, resulting in a tourist experience more divorced from the original attraction’ (Butler 1993). This requires proper siting strategies in developing sustainable resorts and is also further highlighted by a Planner:

“The siting strategies can ensure more sustainable growth of our tourism industry...It is the first step in planning stage. If we get it right at the first time, there is a better chance to sustain the environment.” (IR INS4)

The regulators argue that in designing the resorts, sustainable development principles are crucial in controlling the extent and nature of the environmental and ecological damage done by tourists. The impacts are closely related to the magnitude of the development, volume of visitors and concentrations of usage spatially and temporarily. It also depends on the nature of the environment in question and the planning and management practice before and after the developments take place. As stated previously in the Butler’s concept of ‘Destination Life Cycle (Butler, 1980) tourism degrades destinations and ultimately destroys it if the developers do not have a proper planning method. The concerns about the sustainable planning issues in terms of collaborations of all sectors to strive for the goal were raised by a Senior Tourism Officer:
“I think it is very important to first identify the tourists’ area and develop within the limits of the local environment, people and culture of those areas. Second is to strengthen the supporting infrastructure that can assist in the growth and third is to ensure that the resorts whether old and new are properly planned and are somehow interconnected with each other. This is what we are lacking, because there are just too many varieties within one tourism area and this makes the planning so difficult.” (IR INS5)

As mentioned in chapter two, the sustainable guidelines are stated in the National Ecotourism Plan that was formulated in 1997. It has been the main emphasis of the plan to ensure sustainable tourism development in Malaysia. Regretfully, the shift towards sustainable development has not been very encouraging as the implementation has been blogged down by poor implementation and lack of promotion by the government agency. A senior officer in Tourism Malaysia describes the situation as detrimental in developing sustainable resorts:

“…This trend [new] calls for smaller scale developments and more interaction with nature and the locals. The only way for our tourism to remain competitive is through developing unique resorts that make full use of the abundant of natural reserve that we have and to create an identity for our tourism. Unfortunately the progress has been slow.” (IR INS4)

The siting strategies is important in ensuring sustainable tourism development yet it’s has not been properly integrated into the overall development framework. A senior officer in Tourism Planning Council in Langkawi clarified this issue by stating that the main problem in achieving sustainable tourism development is the absence of mechanism used to measure the sustainability of a specific tourism development in Malaysia. To quote:

“Sustainable development has been the basic of any tourism developments in our country but to determine if they are sustainable or not then that is another issue. It is just too big for an issue. We do not have the mechanism to determine it although I am sure that there must be a way. We do not have the proper guidelines to measure it. Even with the guidelines, not everybody knows about it. It is just a written document but it is not being practiced by the industry.” (IR INS 5)

While it is clear that the policies have included certain provisions of sustainable development issues, the implementation has been incompetent and resulted in
fragmentally designed resorts that can be regarded as positive or negative with less emphasis on the environmental and socio-cultural issues. Most importantly, it has also brought along the need for alternative coastal tourism niche.

6.4.6 Meeting Tourists Demand

The interview with regulators also verifies that the emphasis on sustainable development has resulted in a new paradigm shift towards more environmentally sensitive resorts development. This is demonstrated by the changing trend from mass to alternative tourism. However, the tendencies of developers in emphasising on the economic benefit rather than embracing the sustainable principles have become the main concern in the development. A senior Tourism Malaysia’s Officer describes the new trend and its linkage to the short term profit:

“Previously we have mass tourism and the aim was to cater for the locals and foreign tourist who want to enjoy the wonderful beaches that we have. But now there are trends to develop smaller scale tourism development which emphasises on the natural assets which does not destroy the natural environment. Slowly this awareness can be seen among the developers. The main issue is the cost factor that comes with a sustainable development. Malaysian developers usually look at short term profit rather than the long term benefit.” (IR INS6)

In the interviews, the regulators understood the needs for developing better quality resorts that come in line with the current tourism trend to attract international tourists amidst the competition from the resorts in countries they originated from, as quoted by a Planner:

“Now, tourist doesn’t want to see concrete or high hotels at the sea side... Tourists want satisfactions and also to experience something different. That is why international tourists are very few nowadays. It's very difficult to find them in PD [Port Dickson]. Now what are currently offered to the ‘Mat Salleh’ are 4 and 5 star hotels. They don’t want to see this type of development. Their resorts are much better than us. For me, we need to sell high class hotel which offer something unique ...” (IR INS1)

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43 It refers to European or Westerners in comparing them with locals in older day.
A comparison in the way the coastal resorts are being developed in neighbouring countries to meet the new trend was also expressed by the regulators. They acknowledged that the tourism industry is currently exposed to the stiff competition not from better quality but the cheaper resorts in other Southeast Asian countries. With these in mind, the preservation and integration of the local socio-cultural elements through the siting process can also be used as a strategy to create an identity for the coastal resorts in Malaysia. The distinct experience differs from what were offered in other countries as the siting protects the local environment and local community. This is emphasised by one of the regulators:

“There is a shift in tourism trend from mass tourism to the nature and local based tourism, where the locals participate in its natural settings, like what is being offered in home stay tourism. The ministry of tourism is currently encouraging these forms of tourism because they offer something different from other regions. We just cannot compete with other countries such as Indonesia or Thailand because they are also offering the same tourism brand, at a lower cost but better in quality. The only way for tourism to be sustainable is to ensure that they experience our environment together with the locals and introduce the cultural elements in its original way. We will advise the State planning agencies on the impending government policies and assist them in identifying the tourism market niche and trends that can be developed.” (IR INS4)

Tourists are always attracted to the natural environment which is different from the place they came from. The way they consume the resorts depends on how the resorts are designed with nature. The emphasis on the conservation of natural environment as the main foreign tourists’ attraction in the coastal resort other than providing the attractive amenities is addressed by a local planner:

“But for foreign tourists, they prefer something close to nature. They like the originality of the place they visit because they are willing to pay good money to come here. They are also very particular about privacy. Most of them prefer to stay within the resort relaxing, reading or resting at the beach and pool area. That is why the environment needs to be well kept.” (IR INS4)

The regulators and designers views on the importance of integrating environment in catering for the new demand of international tourism addresses the concern in integrating the tourists’ ideologies based on their experience in the siting strategies.
The manner in which they reflect their experience on how the tourists conduct their activities in resorts facilities can lead the way for better design approach.

### 6.4.7 Barriers to Siting Practice

The sustainable aim is also influenced by several external factors. Just like globalisation, tourism is a set of cultural, economic and political phenomena, where its meanings and applications are loaded with ambiguities and uncertainties (Franklin and Crang, 2001). Despite the intention of the designers to achieve sustainable resorts design, there are also internal factors that prevent the idea to be fully addressed. It relates to the sensitivities and awareness on the sustainable issues and collaborations among the stakeholders. Recalling on the literature reviews in Chapter Two, the partnerships of interdependent stakeholders which cooperate closely to manage the development, transfer and application of both knowledge and competencies in order to realise sustainable, high quality tourism at the lowest possible costs (Go, 2004). In this manner, the planning exercise in sustainable development framework consists of a hierarchy of elements and subsystems that must be combined in certain ways if the attributes that make an effective plan are to be present in the development (Billings, 1993). Given that not all resorts are not specifically well planed and designed, the unplanned or badly conceived resort complex will reflect the designer and developers’ lack of competencies on the sustainable issues – a view suggested by a Designer:

“As I mentioned earlier, the strategies are only simple guidelines we use to design but it really depends on the creativity and experience of the designer to come up with good proposals. It also has to do with our awareness on sustainable design issues because it will not only benefit the tourists but also the resorts in a long term.” (IR INS10)

The awareness to preserve the environment must be cultivated among stakeholders at all the personnel levels. It is futile if only the top management is being exposed to the idea whilst the lower level staffs are not. The need to integrate environmental expertise in a coastal resort development is important as described by a Planner:

“The main barrier is the awareness among the developers, designers or even the local authorities on the importance of preserving the environment in developing a resort. They must have the expertise, the right people when it comes to matters concerning the environment. Even for us in the tourism ministry, there are no environmental specialists that can give an expert
view on a specific tourism development. Even if the top management are aware of the environmental issue it failed to be implemented because the lower management staffs are not properly trained. As the result many of the strategies are not implemented.” (IR INS6)

Other than reviewing the existing strategies, there is a strong consensus among the respondents that most developers always find the easy way out on issues pertaining to the environmental protection in designing the resorts. Many respondents have observed that the awareness on environmental protection is still very low among the developers which reduce the chances of integrating the principles – a situation described by a Planner as having negative influence in creating sustainable resorts:

“The lack of awareness on the importance of preserving natural environment among the developers and those involved in the construction side is a major barrier. The top management might be aware of the strategies but when it comes to implementation stage the staffs usually will seek for the easy way out and this sometimes may affect the environment.” (IR INS8)

The education background of stakeholders is also important in terms of determining the level of awareness on sustainable development principles. In this case, a developer with an architectural background will have a clearer objective in shaping the resorts in a sustainable manner although in many cases the lack of staffs who are technically trained in this issue serve as a stumbling block in meeting the design goal. This view is supported by a Designer during the interview:

“I would say that it really depends on the developers themselves...we are fortunate to be able to do this project as we are both the developer and designer so we were very clear on the objective and the vision. Unlike us, I think there is a lack of awareness among developers to preserve the environment and that is why the strategies are not implemented. Even if they have the awareness there is still a problem when it comes to realising the idea. The reason may be because the staffs do not understand the objective or are not properly trained to do so. I have come across with many inexperienced architects who were simply unable to convey the design intention. This is a major problem.” (IR INS12)

Tourism planning today must have a regional planning perspective. It demands a larger scale of concern as the tourism geography is far more extensive than most
social and economic activities. In this case, Gunn (1988) argues that tourism are interfaces of many parts that many problems arise, requiring a more complex but a more broad scale planning horizon that has been practiced in the past. There is a need to understand that the modernisation process through industrialisation requires cooperation among all sizes of the tourist resorts to minimise the impact towards the environment and locals. This is emphasized by a Senior Tourism Officer:

“We have witnessed how industrialisation of our country has destroyed our environment as many of the green areas are replaced by the high-rises and industrial buildings which stretched the natural resources to the limits. There is no concentrated effort to make tourism better despite millions spent by the government through the promotion. But promotions should come along with improvement in our environment. It is not only the individual resort but all the resorts in the area that must be conscious of the need to conserve the environment because each has a large impact to the other.” (IR INS 11)

The regulators also question the level of awareness among locals to directly participate in new developments. While many have failed, there are several that have succeeded in improving the level of awareness among the locals towards the environment. A Senior Planner in Manjung Municipal Council cited Pangkor Island as an example of how the local community can benefit from the development of resorts. To quote:

“Pangkor is basically a fishermen island, where the livelihood of the locals depend heavily on the sea. The resorts are basically located separately from the villagers. The tourism development has improved the livelihood of the locals in terms of providing jobs relating to the tourism industry and that includes ferry, taxis and local tour agencies. Although their awareness about the environment is not good, the siting of these resorts in this area has been instrumental in raising their level of awareness on the needs to maintain and preserve the environment. Their participation in new projects has also increased and this is a good sign.” (IR INS 4)

Creating and ensuring socially responsible access for the local community to access into or through the development through the siting process is important to enhance the locals’ participation. The planners insist that the local authorities are always monitoring this important aspect of resort development in ensuring that the public is not affected by other pollution caused by the coastal resorts developments.
Recalling the inadequate sewage system as main pollution contributor, A Planner in Port Dickson (PD) describes the situation as very contagious to the regional development and the locals:

“In PD we manage to ensure that the locals have access to the beach even though many developments are being constructed near the beach. The public beaches are accessible by all even though there are many resorts along the beach. In a way, we try to ensure that the locals can enjoy and appreciate the environment. We also hope that we can solve the sewerage problem as soon as possible for the benefit of local.” (IR INS 1)

While tourism development has been identified as a tool in preserving the environment and local community, tourists are also responsible for the negative consequence to local cultural lifestyles. The way tourists’ experience the resorts should reflects certain sensitivities to the community. A Planner in Langkawi City Council in explaining the activities that does not augur well with locals by stating:

“This is a difficult question. On one hand it has benefited the state tourism in terms of providing a unique resort to support the tourism industry and also provide jobs to the locals. On the other hand there are some who voiced out their dissatisfaction because of its status as a private resort. There is also complaint about the tourist’s behaviour in the resort. Some of them were found naked on the beach and the locals did not like this because it is just not our culture.” (IR INS 12)

Besides tourists’ responsibilities, the overall resort design in Malaysia needs to consider the sensitivity of locals whilst providing a comfortable environment for foreign tourists where the Islamic codes and customs are being practiced by the majority of the population. Thus, proper siting can ensure that the local customs can be controlled whilst an activity that involves other international tourists which are considered unfamiliar can proceed without affecting the locals. For example, the provision of swimming pool where the locally accepted dress codes are required can be assisted by the proper siting of the amenities that are more private and suit the tourists without affecting the locals. Provisions of prayer room near the amenities or high activity areas will assist in more conducive environment for social interaction to materialize in the resort. Accordingly, the views on the barriers to appropriate siting practice through the regulators experience essentially demonstrates that the siting is an integral part in creating the sustainable resorts. However, the external or internal barriers within the structure of governmental and private organizations can diminished its role in creating
better quality resorts. There is no easy way out but to stress on the education and awareness on sustainable issues among all the stakeholders.

### 6.4.8 Political Ideologies and Siting

It may be concluded that no matter what the political ideology are in any areas, planning will take place. Planning is political because in order for plans to be implemented, some governance is required to control the way the development is conducted to achieve the desired goal. According to Cherry (1984), planning is the interplay between the value systems of professionals, bureaucracy, community and politicians which can be disruptive. The disruptive political interference can be traced in the way the resorts comply to regulations especially in terms of speed and the mechanism required to process the submission for planning approval. A Designer voiced out his dissatisfaction on this situation by issuing the following statement.

> “It is the speed of the submission for planning approval which takes a very long time to implement. There are a lot of misinterpretation from the authority side on our design intentions, because frankly I feel they do not have the proper staff to deal with tourism planning and not easy to convince them new ideas in design. And I also find that the strategies that the authority uses are very generic and have many loopholes which also caused the confusion.” (IR INS11)

While the strategies are stated in the planning guidelines at the state and local level, many Planners and Regulators are aware that not all resorts are strictly following the specified guidelines. They observed that many developers have resorted to paying the penalty rather than complying with the regulation to save cost and expedite the development as described by a senior Officer in DOE:

> “Political interference is another issue where there are certain development constructed before the submission. The errant developers would rather pay the penalty rather than spend money on implementing the strategies.” (IR INS6)

The regulators also voiced out their frustrations on the Environmental Impact Assessment requirement. In terms of planning submission the requirement should cover all resorts rather than restricting it to a certain group of organizations. Here, certain EIA requirements can be considered as an escape clause for certain developers to implement proper submission; a Planner describes:
“It needs to be improvised especially for the resorts below 80 rooms. There are many loopholes to the existing strategy for example, EIA requirements for 50 hectares and above to submit for EIA, but the developer are smart and they will submit for 49 hectares of land and less requirement for EIA. This needs to be reviewed. The building setback can pose a problem due to different interpretation.” (IR INS9)

There are several inconsistencies in the policies regarding the way planning is being implemented. For example, in Langkawi, there are cases where the government owned resorts were given some leniencies from abiding to the Building Height Requirement in the Local Building Guidelines as compared to private resort owners. In this case, the government owned buildings are allowed to be constructed higher than two storeys whilst the requirement clearly does not permit this. The situation is aggravated by improper monitoring of tourism development in the area where any of the resorts that are constructed prior to the 1990’s were not required to submit for planning and building approval. In this instance, many of the government projects were allowed to proceed with their constructions prior to the Building Approval. The respondents generally believed that it must be made compulsory to all as it will have a grave impact to the other resorts if any cases of environmental disaster should occur in the area. A Regulator commented on this issue and stresses the importance of having a stricter control on the regulation:

“One example of the strategy is that the height control where all buildings are not allowed to be constructed higher than the coconut tree…basically not more than 4-storey high. But the government project can be built higher but so far the entire private project follows the requirements.” (IR INS 1)

It can be summarized that the inconsistencies in interpreting the guidelines in addition to the disruptive political influence are considered by the regulators as the main barriers for the proper siting to materialise.

6.4.9 The Way Forward in Improvising the Policies on Siting

The regulators also concluded that the current siting guideline in government initiated policies are not comprehensive enough or having too much concentration on the macro functional aspects rather than being design specific.

“The existing strategies need to be more comprehensive as it does not spell out in detail the design aspects of the building. It is a general guideline which has many loopholes. There are also many overlapping guidelines
from various agencies which need to be reviewed and make it more concise. The strategies are mainly for macro planning and I feel that it lacks the details required for specific coastal resort development.” (IR INS3)

The above statement also demonstrates that the regulators acknowledged that the guidelines did not incorporate view of users in which their rich perceptual experiences are important in giving more meaning to the siting process. However, the issue is complex, where tourism meaning and applications are loaded with ambiguities and uncertainties (Franklin and Crang, 2001). The central issues are about the complex way tourism enters and becomes part of an already on-going process of symbolic meaning and appropriation (Burns, 2004). According to Burns, the aims is for the tourism industry to weave the social fabric that allows culture to be mediated for commercial purpose, whereas at the same time reinforcing mutual respect and beneficial relationships. To allow this, the social carrying capacity of destinations must be closely linked with community based models of planning, the limits of acceptable change (Severiades, 2000) and the mechanism of community integration in the planning process (Mitchel and Reid, 2001). In many cases the concerns of local communities on the development has not been considered. As the result, the coastal resorts are perceived by the regulators as very fragmented and individualistic due to the political barriers and failure in implementing the government initiated polices. This is fuelled by the segmentation of power at both the Federal and Regional levels in the development process.

“What is really happening in Malaysia is that the resorts are very individualistic in terms of their design and also their effort to conserve the environment. The designs of the resorts are very diverse and lacked of cultural identity and they show the lack of desire to preserve the environment. The infrastructure or the mechanism to support the growth is still weak even though the efforts are still there. Changing the top management frequently has slowed down the effort. The ministry should listen more what the locals say about any tourism development to protect their interest and to come up with better proposals. Sometimes a beautiful design does not mean it is functional to locals, I also think that there should be less interference from the politics. What should have not been built were not supposed to be built at all. It just makes things worse.” (IR INS 5)

The way the policy and regulations are being administered and implemented in the top-down approach needs to be improved in terms of its competency in monitoring tourism development which is described by the regulators:
“They need to sit down together improve the requirement for the planning and building approval. It should be stricter. There are certain regulations that should be put under the relevant agencies for easier monitoring. For example, regarding the collection of garbage along the sea... The local authority and the Drainage department both have say on the tasks. This will slow down the process. The planners should also be more sensitive to the natural environment using proper material and construction technology in the design.” (IR INS1)

“The jurisdiction in the tourism development is much segmented. It is a bit chaotic at the moment. For example, the land matter is under the land office, while the marine environment is under different act and this will have an impact towards the compliance with the various department requirements. Somebody from the ministry needs to sit down and address this issue at the top level. It will not only slow down the process but also have negative impact to the environment.” (IR INS5)

In referring to all the barriers, the regulators also emphasized the need to review existing strategies to reduce all confusion caused by the overlapping of jurisdiction among the relevant government agencies that are involved in the development process. The review is also essential to suit the current scenario of dynamic tourism industry.

“The confusion caused in interpreting the strategies does point to the need to review the existing strategies. The situation has changed where tourists are more concern about the quality of the environment. Their taste is also different. They see our natural environment as a unique experience. We need better designed resort which maintains the environment and that is why new strategy that can improve the current situation is essential.” (IR INS4)

In reviewing the existing strategies, it is important to ensure that the tourism growth has been ably supported by the proper infrastructure and comprehensive policies and strategies that integrate all the new and old developments. This can assist in the planning approach of the particular region. Meanwhile, the review of existing strategies is imperative. While admitting to the potential of tourism industry to grow and emerge in a stronger fashion, the regulators also identified that difficulties in implementing the siting strategy holistically are due to making big profit with little consideration on the sustainable factors besides the disruptive political barrier.
“Many of the sensitive areas are destroyed due to the constructions of the facilities in those areas. There are not enough open spaces provided for the tourists except a beach strip for sun bathing. The developers are more inclined in making big profit whilst the planners were sometimes influenced by the unseen hand to approve those sorts of projects. These are the main barriers in developing the resorts.” (IR INS 5)

According to the regulators, the barriers have produced large gaps between the bigger and smaller scale coastal resorts in terms of their awareness and compliance with the guidelines. However, with a concentrated effort in preserving the environment and local community by all resorts regardless of sizes and types will ensure that the sustainable goal can be achieved. The need to reduce the gap is emphasised by a Regulator who issued:

“Most of the big resorts have done good jobs in preserving the environment unlike the small ones. Personally, I think the awareness in preserving the environment is already there in the bigger resorts. They are well planned and the staffs are well trained about the environment. But it will not work if only the big resorts make the effort, because they are also affected by those small resorts. Anything bad happened towards the environment in the small resort will seriously affected the whole island. It has to be a holistic effort...the government, the operators and the developers.” (IR INS5)

One of the respondents highlighted the need for cooperation between the public and private sector to protect the environment in coastal resort development:

“I like to stress again that it’s not just a designer’s task to create such resort. It needs full cooperation from the ministry and also the local authority. In terms of the siting there should be intervention from the government to have stricter law and monitoring to protect the natural environment. There are not many beaches in the West Coast at the moment.” (IR INS12)

One of the respondents brought an important issue on creating an identity in the coastal resort development in Malaysia. Creating an identity in coastal tourism is closely connected to the concept of spatial diffusion which is applicable to countries that are small [similar to Malaysia] (Butler, 1980). It is a process whereby an innovation or ideas spread from a point of origin to other locations (Getis and Fellman, 1996). Essentially, a policy that could safeguard the cultural and environmental integrity can
also create an image of secluded exclusivity or identity that attracts the global tourists market. This also implies the importance of improved collaborations of all the agencies involved in the tourism development.

“Stop blaming each other for any bad thing about the environment and try to work together to find a long term solution to the environment. Most of us only find temporary solutions to the problem and failed to visualise the future tourism needs. Tourism and environment is closely interconnected and that is why cooperation from all the agencies involved must be streamlined under one agency which can monitor the planning of coastal resorts.” (IR INS2)

In terms of implementation, the reinforcement of policies needs to be reviewed to ensure better collaboration among all relevant government departmental agencies involved. The maintenance aspect of the resorts must also be considered in the policies and regulations as well.

“The planner [in local authority] should be more stringent in terms of enforcing the rule as early as in the planning stage. They should also pay more attention towards the maintenance part of the resorts after it has been constructed and fully operated. This is because it will be difficult to put additional requirements to the developments after the construction. Also, they should not pin point the fault to other agencies and must share the same responsibilities for all.” (IR INS7)

The regulators and planners also cited the lack of power in decision making at the local levels and proper research in the physical design of resorts in supporting the guidelines in the government initiated policies as the main reason the difficulties in implementing the strategies arises.

“From our side definitely we would like to have more says in the decision making of resort development. Yes we are not the expert in design but being the front runner in the tourism industry we could properly advised what is not and need to be done in the development. We know what the tourists’ expectations are. Also, more research on the resort development should be done before approving any development. We can engage environmental or Tourism consultants for advice. Collectively all the relevant authorities should sit together to discuss ways to expedite all
approval process and ensuring that the entire planning and construction approval requirement has been made.” (IR INS5)

Regardless of the scale of development, the regulators are committed in ensuring that the policies pertaining to planning development is closely monitored to attract more tourists to come to Malaysia.

“We will look closely into the report and the planning aspects of the resorts. We will comment and spell out our requirement through written notice to developers and architects to comply with our requirements. This notice together with the final submission drawings serves as approval to any developments and any discrepancies, which occur during and after construction, will be detected and closely monitored.” (IR INS8)

It can be summarized that the overall experience of the regulators and designers in the interviews provide valuable insights on the implementation and effectiveness of the regulation pertaining to siting in shaping the design of resorts and open the pathway on formulating several recommendations in the final chapter.

6.5 Summary of Findings in interviews with Regulators and Designers

The followings are general summary of the findings in the interview with regulators and designers:

Siting Policies

1. Failure to develop tourism slowly during the industrialization era which results in too much variety and individualistic design styles in the siting of coastal resorts;
2. Lack of research culture and facilities in supporting the formulation of appropriate siting strategies;
3. The regulators and designers are aware of the importance of the siting in creating sustainable resorts. They agree that the strategies have in certain extent control the coastal resorts development in terms of its impact towards the environmental conservation and ensuring the local community’s benefit;
4. Despite attempts to materialise the policy into action there are still several shortcomings in terms of the environmental preservations where traces of pollution on water quality and sewage system, the destruction of site resources and siting of facilities in hazardous areas which were observed by the regulators;
5. While the policies are intended for the above purpose, it is impossible to totally eradicate the environmental impact, which can also caused by the maintenance factor especially on the facilities constructed nearer to the shore; and,  
6. The siting practice is closely connected to the tourists’ environmental and social experience based on their activities in the resorts. While the facilities are intended to facilitate the activities, it must promote the environmental and social experience to tourists in the resort as well. In addition, the policies can be utilised as a tool in preserving the local culture and create an identity in resorts development as tourists are usually attracted to the cultural value of particular surrounding apart of the natural attractions. This includes integrating the Home stays’ resorts features into the siting process.

**Spatial and Design Features**

7. The spatial features in the zoning of spaces created by the siting process are based on controlling the tourists’ activities in the resorts. The circulation and the connecting corridors are perceived as places that can promote the environmental and social experience in the resorts through the viewing factors;  
8. The zoning must also allow proper traffic and transportation system in the resort. Concerns on the security and safety aspects must also be considered and integrated into the design as well;  
9. The zoning must also allow social responsible access to the resorts while allowing the public to interact with the resort;  
10. While environment is main consideration in designing resort spaces, there is also a need to provide adequate size of social spaces for cultural showcase within the resort premise itself that could also increase the participation of the local business, tourism related business and tourists;  
11. In comparison with larger and lower scale development, the latter is preferable as sustainable development. For example, lower scale and low rise development can interact with the environment better in the tropical setting;  
12. The construction of the resorts extending beyond the shoreline, while the main purpose offering a unique experience to tourist as a traditional sea village lifestyle also poised concern regarding its environmental and socio-cultural impact towards the coastal zones; and,  
13. Cultural and religious values need to be respected and transformed as the physical features that can enhance the environmental and social experience through the siting process.

**Barriers**
14. While the policies are intended to create sustainable coastal resort development, the process is slow due to poor implementation, lack of promotion by government, lack of proper guideline specified in the policies and the controlling and measuring mechanism;

15. The government initiative in formulating tourism policies concerning the preservation of environmental and socio-cultural to cater the increasing demand for nature based tourism development must be supported with a holistic design and planning approach to the development through the siting of the facilities;

16. The process of community participation in coastal tourism development is still weak due to the local inept attitudes and also their limited involvement in the course of development even if the policy requires that the local community views on the siting of the facilities are taken into consideration;

17. The lack of awareness and education of sustainable development among the stakeholders has been earmarked as the barrier in implementing the policy pertaining to the siting; and,

18. While the siting is considered as the foremost and critical strategy in sustainable tourism development its implementation its influence has been diminished due to the disruptive political interference.

**Improvement to the Policies from the Regulators Experience**

19. While the government initiated policies are conceived as a formal approach in designing coastal resorts, the lack of integration of the users perceptions namely the tourists and local community, on the environmental and social experience has resulted in the policies as being incomprehensive as design strategies. Here, the final product does not reflect the way the siting should be practiced to create sustainable design;

20. The lack of mechanism to measure and monitor sustainable development has disturbed the development of more environmentally sensitive resorts. The lack of sustainable tourism indicators to measure the sustainability of a development has also aggravated the situation;

21. The current siting strategies are stated in the policies guidelines need to be reviewed from time to time and supported by proper research and proper decision making at the local level to ensure better collaborations among governmental agencies and its effectiveness in its implementation to current scenario; and,

22. While, the government policy encompassed the national tourism interest, all tourism developments regardless of the sizes and types, should work together
to ease the negative environmental and socio cultural consequences as one tourist destination can also affected the regional tourism industry.

These preliminary findings are paramount to the formulation of the appropriate siting strategies integrating all the three methodological approaches used in this study.

6.6 Conclusion

The interviews reveal that the regulators and designers regard the siting strategies in the policies or guidelines as major factor in enhancing tourist experience in the coastal resorts. However, they acknowledged that the final product may not reflect the way policies intended the siting should be practiced to create sustainable resorts due to the persisting barriers identified by the regulators and designers. The way the designers define the siting and its importance in preserving the environment and promoting social relations, their identification of the spatial and physical design features in assisting the siting and its importance to the development of sustainable tourism development and meeting tourists demand support the statement. In addition, their insights on the barriers in terms of creating awareness on the sustainable issues, the disruptive political interferences and the way forward in improving the policies also delineate the needs of siting strategies to integrate users’ ideologies in creating the sustainable coastal resorts.

The findings demonstrate that both the regulators and designers agree that comprehensive siting strategies in the policies are important to improve the coastal resorts and are closely connected to the tourists’ environmental and social experience based on their activities in the resorts. While the facilities are intended to facilitate the activities, it must promote the environmental and social experience to tourists in the resort as well. The regulators are also aware that it is impossible to totally eradicate the environmental impact, which can also caused by the maintenance factor especially when the facilities constructed nearer to the shore. It also due to the way they were being implemented and external factors such as disruptive political interferences that are beyond the policy control despite the regulators’ aspirations to improve the industry.

The regulators and designers essentially do acknowledged that the final product may not reflect the way the policy intended to achieve in the development. As observed
by the regulators, the manner in which coastal resorts are developed at very fast pace in early eighties that coincided with the attempt to transform into an industrialised nation has resulted in a fragmented array of mass coastal resorts with individualistic design style\textsuperscript{44} that lacks identity. While the emphasis has been towards developing sustainable resorts, there are still several shortcomings where traces of negative environmental impacts can be observed in the resorts. In terms of enhancing the social relations in the resorts, the regulators also point out that the spaces provided for the social and cultural relation is still inadequate to allow both the locals and tourists to participate. The Home stays tourism concept was proposed by them as a form of tourism that is sited naturally to preserve the environment and the local community – a siting characteristic that can be incorporated into other resorts. Meanwhile, the construction of resorts above the sea is one example of the effort in reintroducing the traditional lifestyle\textsuperscript{45} but also raises several concerns on the environmental impacts on the coastal zone. In another example, the regulators cited the corridor linking the facilities and open spaces, with proper design techniques, as the place where tourists’ experience can be enhanced. In determining the location of the facilities, the overall design should consider the sensitivity of the local customs and religion whilst providing comfortable environment to tourists.

However, the fragmented and individually styled resorts implies that the final design of the resorts are not as what the regulator’s perceived the practice should be implemented through the policies. The main barriers on the proper implementation of the policies that have resulted in different resorts styles are identified by the regulators as the lack of awareness on the sustainable issues, the inept attitudes of the locals towards the development and disruptive political interference in decision making.

\textsuperscript{44} Many tourism resorts are fairly isolated, with limited public access, frequently incorporated spas and occasionally private villas (Henderson, 2007). The individual style can be a problem where discord can be engendered by exclusive and expensive properties that alienate residents and provoke xenophobia, especially where there are wide economic difference between them and tourists (Henderson, 2007). In other cases, the opportunities for entrepreneurship and informal hawking are restricted by the character of all inclusive resorts, limiting the monetary gains accruing to local inhabitants (Freitag, 1994). Despite the problems, within the wider discourse of postmodern tourism, examples of playfulness and fantasy (which are offered by different resort) are becoming increasingly visible (Urry, 1990).

\textsuperscript{45} In designing resorts, there appear to be little attention to developing good quality modern architecture instead we are conserving past buildings or copying traditional architecture styles such as kampong style chalets to offer as back to nature holiday concept with focus on the outdoor activities (Swarbrooke, 1999). Nevertheless, this option provides the tourists with unique experience. Resorts above the sea is similar to the kampong style Malay house which is raised on stilts and made of building materials such as local hardwood, softwood bamboo, tree roots and nypa leaves (Gibbs, 1987) presenting the unique experience of the past (Tan, 1994).
process concerning its implementation. It is a situation aggravated by frequent leadership changes and the ineffective collaboration among the inter-departmental government agencies in the ‘decentralised’ and ‘top-down’ approach. Meanwhile, the lack of awareness on the sustainable issues among the regulators, developers and the locals contributes to the policies incompetency in regulating the actual siting of the resorts facilities that are more ecologically and socially sensitive. Besides this, the local participation in the resort development is still far from satisfactory even though it is required by the local authority. There is also a need to improve the research environment to support the formulation of strategies and the physical planning of coastal resorts.

Eventually, the regulators proposed that the policies need to be reviewed continuously in the context of sustainable development principles to ensure its effectiveness in its implementation to current scenario. This is also fuelled by the demand for nature based tourism in Malaysia which faces stiff competition from neighbouring countries’ lower cost and better quality resorts. Furthermore, the government effort in preserving the environment and socio-cultural must be supported with a comprehensive design and planning approach to the development through the siting of the facilities. It is also important to recognize that the lack of integration of users’ ideologies has resulted in the policies as being incomprehensive as design strategies.
Chapter Seven

Discussion on the Findings
in the Coastal Resorts Morphologies

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in morphological analysis and on-site physical observations of eighteen coastal resorts in the three case study sites in the West Coast of Malaysian Peninsula. Reflecting on the first approach, the regulators’ and designers’ views depict their clear intention to improve the siting of coastal resorts facilities through the government initiated policies amidst of the barriers that exists in their implementations. This morphological analysis on the other hand, investigates the existing practice of the siting and to what extent it has been shaped by the relevant policies and regulations in enhancing the tourists’ experience.

This chapter initially reviews the fundamental research question and basic assumptions in conducting the morphological analysis in this study. It also reflects the visualisation technique, complexity of sustainable design principles and design process; characteristic of site planning; and spatial and physical features of zoning in this methodological approach. Consequently, it examines the two underlying factors in the siting process. First, it identifies the spatial characteristics of zoning and secondly, the physical design features that assist in promoting environmental and social experience in spaces created by the siting process. The discussion on the findings begins with the general patterns of resorts physical characteristics, followed by the zoning as well as building forms analysis.

Meanwhile, the discussion on physical design features include the accommodation’s environmental design characteristics, integration of passive design techniques, cultural features, landscapes, local material procurement, construction techniques, building services and renewable energy. In addition, this chapter also discusses the spatial and physical design features that give meaning to the spaces created by siting process in enhancing tourists’ experience. The discussion revolves around the integration of sustainable development principles in the design of coastal
resorts through siting practice. The findings on the zoning and physical features are also summarised in this chapter.

Consequently, unveiling the siting of current coastal resorts will provide the firsthand prospect to understand the associations and knowledge gaps that exist between the policies and practice in terms of the effectiveness in incorporating tourists’ ideologies in the strategies to enhance tourists’ experience. It will not only assist in identifying the positive attributes of the tourists’ experience but also support the other findings in the methodological approaches utilised in this study that can further assist in the recommendation of more comprehensive siting strategies.

7.2 Revisiting the Methodological Approach

As discussed in the research design chapter, the morphological approach provides the avenue in investigating, recognising and unfolding the spatial and physical features of built environment and open spaces created by the siting process that are utilised to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts. Essentially, this approach is to address the following research question – what are the existing siting strategies that are used to locate the coastal resorts facilities in West Malaysian Peninsula?

The spatial and physical design features may be intentionally (formally) or spontaneously (informally) designed through the creativity of designers and developers that are guided by the policies or building regulations under the Local, State or Federal Authorities purviews. In this instance, the government initiated policies can be regarded as a formal approach towards designing coastal resorts while the informal design could be developed through a learned experience or previous knowledge assistance of the designers and developers on sustainable principles in developing or designing coastal resorts.

It is observed in the previous approach in Chapter Six that the aims towards sustainable development are always regarded as the basis of all form of tourism development in Malaysia. This is as required in the submission of the Tourism Planning and Building Approval and as stated in the Development and Planning Guidelines in the Strategic Planning by various State Authorities in Malaysia. However, in many cases, the final design product does not necessarily reflect the sustainable principles, which may due to its improper siting. Consequently, this scenario portrays that the gaps between the policies and actual practice may exist in the design of coastal resorts. While the policies serve as a tool to control the tourism development, certain
events that have transpired in the process have influenced the outcome which can be either positive or negative. Therefore, it is essential to unveil and identify what has actually transpired in the actual practice of the siting when the guidelines in the policy are transformed and manifested into the physical design form. In the context of tourists’ experience, the findings can be in terms of spatial planning and physical design features as the final products of siting process. Parallel to this, the morphological analysis will reveal the design gaps in issues pertaining to siting process within the context of sustainable development as has been stressed throughout this thesis.

7.2.1 Basic Assumptions on the Methodology

The morphological study is initiated based on the following five important assumptions:

1. The physical data sets of individual resorts in the three case study sites need to be investigated and cross referenced to understand the relationship between the size and proportion of built and open spaces as initiated by the siting process and in totality to the development for further identification of spatial and physical characteristics of spaces that can enhance the tourists experience;

2. While the siting protects the environment, it also allows social interactions to occur in the spaces created by the process. The spaces with specific spatial and physical features allow tourists to participate in the activity specified for the spaces whilst interacting with the environment, host and the local community;

3. The spatial qualities, positive or negative are generated by the practice of zoning in siting process. Therefore, there are certain characteristics of zoning that promote the environment and social experience which need to be identified through the morphological analysis;

4. In addition to the spatial features, there are also physical design features in the spaces created by siting process that could assist in promoting the environment and social experience in the coastal resorts. The features include appropriate material procurement, landscapes, passive design features, integration of proper services utilities as well as construction techniques that are utilised in the design. There is also a need to identify the symbolic features that represents the cultural identity of locals that could enhance the tourists’ experience; and,

5. Unveiling the spatial and physical design features resulted from the siting practice will provide the insight on how the relevant policies have shaped and
guided the design of coastal resorts to enhance the tourists’ experience. This will lead to the formulation of new strategies in the siting of coastal resorts based on the integration of users’ reflections and ideologies.

With all the above in the framework, it is also important to reflect on a few key characteristics of the morphological studies in addressing the findings.

### 7.2.2 Overview of Visualisation Technique

In the morphological approach, the three dimensional [3D] Computer Aided Design (CAD) visualisation technique that incorporates the site plan, figure ground and form analysis demonstrates interesting methodology and verification criteria in relation to the siting. The site plan offers simple resolution to recognise several fundamental aspects pertaining to the zoning as an essential product of the siting. This includes the theoretical basis used in determining the zoning, interconnection between each zone, and their associations’ with tourists’ activities in enhancing the tourists experience in coastal resorts.

The site plans also allow the generalisation of forms, and when combined with the circulation pattern, both can provide essential information on the impact of the siting towards the surrounding environment. This is due to the fact that both forms and circulations are the dominant and controlling elements of the design. While the site plans provides important information on the physical data of the built environment and open spaces in two dimensional forms, the three dimensional forms has assisted in providing a better understanding on the relation of building forms with the surrounding environment and quality of open spaces created in the building layouts. Most importantly, the visualization provides certain information on how the siting of the facilities can be integrated into the surrounding environment through proper design of forms and shapes that integrates circulation corridors whilst simultaneously gauges the designers’ level of creativity in integrating sustainable issues in coastal resorts through the policies.

### 7.2.3 Reflection on the Sustainable Design Principles and Design Process

The idea of sustainable design as a conceptual and operative tool in designing coastal resorts makes it possible to carry out an investigation on sustainable spatial and physical design features in the resorts. As such, the data to be discovered are the sustainable design features that were incorporated in the siting practice of coastal
resorts. However, the search for the relevant data is not a simple process which is closely associated with the nature of sustainable tourism and design process as complex sets of knowledge. The complexity of tourism was discussed extensively in the Chapter Two, while the complexity of design is mainly due to its integration of many fields of knowledge. Design is a process of solving problems pertaining to many complex fields of knowledge such as planning, construction technology and the integration of building services and enclosure to the particular function and aesthetic of the built environment. It can be similar to a research process in which (Farbstein and Kantrowitz, 1988) argue that design decision research embeds the researcher into the actual process of being a researcher and designer who make decisions and assess the decisions from the perspective of research. The idea of programming in design is to maximize the amount information about a project where the purpose of scientific method is to create exact, reproducible results so that we might prove that a report or theory or fact is true or false (Groat and Wang, 2002) Here, Design as action research can uncover the embedded stages in the iterative design process (Duerk, 1993).

Meanwhile, Schon (1989) describes the phenomena of design as a ‘reflection in action’ in which a designer works simultaneously from a unit [initial appreciation of a situation] and from the total and then go in cycles. Each move [action] draws out the implication of earlier moves, where their consequences are interpreted from one or more design domains creating new problems to be described and solved. From the designers’ point of view, to understand something and being able to do something are the important attributes in combining theory and practice. Meanwhile, Snodgrass and Coyne (2006) identify atomistic language model [from natural science] and hermeneutical circle model [human science] as the understanding and interpretation of the design process. The first model is concerned with the knowledge with having clear and certain perception about something and on the other hand, the latter is

46 The term sustainable is vague and ambiguous as politically attractive principles in which aims can be variously interpreted and appropriated to suit the needs of different groups (Godfrey, 1996). Meanwhile, the lack of agreement on what it means has produced many interpretation of the concept. For example, Hunter (2002) summarizes the range of sustainable tourism options that can and have been used exposing the variety of interpretations used in this concept. In conceptualizing the idea, Pigram (1990) argues that sustainable tourism development runs the risk of remaining irrelevant without the development of effective means of translating idea into actions.

47 In design process, the combination of both atomistic and hermeneutical models is needed to comprehensively create a design. While the hermeneutical model is intellectually holistic, the atomistic model represents the logical process or design method that should be contained as intermittent. Thus ideology belongs to the humanistic way of thinking, whereas method belongs to the subservient scientific way of thinking aspect of the creative art (Billings, 1993)
concerned with knowing the meaning of something. However, both Snodgrass and Coyne (2006) argue that within the complex design process, certain translation of the sustainable design principles are diminished due to overemphasis on the practical and theoretical issues required to complete the design in the limited completion period timeframe.

7.2.4 Reflection on Site Planning

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the site planning is an integral part of the land use planning process. It mainly occurs after the strategic planning\footnote{The term ‘strategic planning’ is used to differentiate the continuous tourism planning. The strategic planning is tested and created by consensus of experts which generalized regional information and guidelines that can foster tourism growth to meet the main objective: visitor’s satisfactions, rewards to owners, environmental protection and integration into community life. The continuous planning on the other hand is modelled as an interactive system whereby each sector of tourism industry is not subjected to a superior level of planning. Instead each sector interacts with all others in its own decision making. (Gunn, 1988: 251-217)} has taken place and after the land use has been decided in relation to the environmental, social and economic needs. It is about working out all the details of what should happen on a given area of land, how it should happen on a given area and what will it cost to implement and manage the project on the land area (Beer, 1990). Beer also stresses that the process is difficult as there are many physical parameters that need to be considered. The land itself is complex in which it needs to be developed to the final product through the natural environmental change and through modification by man’s past and present action.

Meanwhile, the complexity of the relationship between the environment and tourists also projects the need to look at the interactions systematically. While the technical distinction is easier to comprehend in the site plans, it is the desire of the designers perceived as ‘perception’ or ‘awareness’ to design that is difficult to digest through interpreting and unfolding the site plans. This is due to the complexity of tourists in the way they utilize the site. In Chapter Two, tourists have been stereotyped as negative influence to the environment and the local communities. Tourists are seen as indulgent and exploitive, lacking civility and having a restricted appreciation of cultures and places (Crick, 1989). This stereotype of tourists and the social role they occupy implies that it is not easy to fulfil the tourists’ role. Parallel to this notion, the morphological analysis on the siting of coastal resorts is aimed at knowing and valuing the relationships between the environment, local community needs and tourists.
1.0 Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resorts

**Site plans**

1. Guard House
2. Horse Riding
3. Parking
4. Central Building Lobby, Restaurant, Lounge, Conference Room, Buggy drop off point, Services
5. Swimming Pool
6. Main Beach area
7. Beach Side Restaurant
8. Water Villa
9. Hill Side Villa (Individual)
10. Hill Side Villa (Attached)
11. Amphitheatre

**Zoning**

- High Activities Zone (HAZ)
- Low Activities Zone (LAZ)
- Centralized high activity zones.
- HAZ for common public and private access and LAZ for private access.
- No covered corridor linking each zone.
- Security concerns on farthest accommodation location.
- Separation of car park from accommodation.
- Buggy transportation system.

**Form and Shapes**

- Forms following radial circulation directions originated from central building/amenities area.
- Form sprawling to maximise site topography and area.
- Creates multi open spaces for environmental interaction.

**Forms**

- Low rise and big scale development which forms sprawling to maximise the site and view.

**Circulation**

1. Central Building Lobby, Restaurant, Lounge, Conference Room, Buggy drop off point, Services
2. Swimming Pool
3. Main Beach area
4. Beach Side Restaurant
5. Amphitheatre
6. Buggy Station
7. Corridors

- Tourist main gathering area are observed along the main circulation.
- All accommodation views directed towards the sea.

**Landscape**

- Buffer zone to create sense of privacy and enhance environmental interaction.
- New landscape integrated into existing to create fascination.

Fig 7.1: Morphological Study Of Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resorts, Langkawi Island
2.0 Pangkor Laut Resort, Pangkor Island

Site Plans

Zoning

Building Layouts And Shapes

High activity zones are located along the main circulation spine.

No provision of covered corridor.

Siting of facilities is based on the view towards sea.

Zoning creates multiple courtyards.

While the circulation are arranged linear and parallel to water edges, the facilities are arranged in radial organisation in reference to the centralised main building.

Overall site indicates many areas for future expansions.

Construction beyond the shoreline is not caused by space limitation but for creating unique experience.

Forms

Circulation

Landscape

Abundance of natural green areas that suit the concept of tropical resort.

Mixed exist and new landscape features to enhance users experience.

Fig 7.2: Morphological Study Of Pangkor Laut Resort, Pangkor Island
3.0 The Avillion Beach Resort, Port Dickson

Site Plans

- 29. Parking
- 30. Central Building Lobby, Restaurant, Lounge, Conference Room, Services
- 31. Petting Zoo
- 32. Swimming Pool
- 33. Tennis
- 34. Main Beach area
- 35. Club House
- 36. Water Villa (Attached)
- 37. Hill Side 4 Storey Units
- 38. Villa (Semi detached)

Zoning

- All amenities except club house are centralised to control activities and for service purposes.
- Zoning of accommodations beyond the building coastal setback line.
- Discontinuous public access along beach frontage.
- Zoning to control noise and privacy.

Building Layouts And Shapes

- Facilities are compacted in small site and accommodation facilities are forced outside of coastal zone.
- Radial organisation originate from the main building.
- Limited space for expansion.

Forms

- Medium scale, sprawling and cluster arrangement to fit the urban character of Port Dickson

Circulation

1. Central Building Lobby, Restaurant, Lounge, Conference Room, Services
2. Petting Zoo
3. Swimming Pool
4. Tennis
5. Main Beach area
6. Club House
7. Circulation intersection
8. Tourists Gathering Nodes

Landscape

- Resorts are hidden by existing landscape buffers
- Buffers to control noise from main road
- Interplay of new and exist landscape in the open space alleviate congestion

Fig 7.3: Morphological Study Of The Avillion Resort, Port Dickson
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Fig 7.4 (a): Morphological Study Of 3,4 and 5 stars Coastal Resorts
Fig 7.4 (b): Morphological Study Of 3,4 and 5 stars Coastal Resorts
Fig 7.4 (c): Morphological Study Of 3,4 and 5 stars Coastal Resorts
### 16.0 Corus Paradise Resort

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### 17.0 Glory Beach Resort

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### 18.0 Bayu Beach Resort

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### Figure Grounds And Typical Floor Plans

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**Fig 7.4 (d): Morphological Study Of 3,4 and 5 stars Coastal Resorts**
Meanwhile, the discussion on the findings will be based on the morphological analysis of three main resorts namely, the Berjaya Langkawi Beach and Spa Resorts (Langkawi Island), Pangkor Laut Resort (Pangkor Island) and the Avillion Beach Resorts (Port Dickson) in correlation with other fifteen resorts in the case study sites. Meanwhile, a compilation of site plans, mapping of built spaces in relation to the open spaces and forms studies in Figure 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 (a), (b), (c) and (d) will be used in analysing and concluding the practice of zoning in the coastal resorts.

7.2.5 Reflection on Zoning and Physical Features

As mentioned in Chapter Two, coastal resorts destinations are what is referred to as the ‘tourists zone of interaction and interpretation’ (Ryan, 2003), where such zones change both temporally and spatial experience of tourists. In this vein, the notion of facilities in the immediate setting and micro environment of the visitor completely define the coastal tourist destinations. Here, the zoning of spaces relies on the manner in which tourists’ action are constrained or limited by the physical environment and intention to create an environment satisfactory to the place (resort) temporarily in a fixed and short period of time. It has been stressed in the literature review in Chapter Two that the process requires conservation of environment and providing comfortable basic needs for tourists through proper siting process. It is also within the siting practice, the zoning and the interrelationship between each zone where the physical features are located and recognised as an integral part of coastal resorts that could enhance the environmental and social experience. As stressed by the regulators in the previous chapter, these features may be designed intentionally or spontaneously based on the creativity of designer while adhering to strict formal regulation given by the authority. Meanwhile, the physical expression of both kinds of goals [goals of specific activity and goals of divisive exploration] can be observed in the resorts, where several characteristics are shared (Heath, 1984). The first is the social significance of the place (Heath, 1984) and second the quality of material which influenced users more

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49 ‘Divisive exploration’ refers to the way to enhance tourist environmental experience in which the more senses an experience engages the more effective and memorable it can be (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). This is caused by the attraction of high spending, lifestyle influencing and environmentally aware clients (Wheeler, 1997). Thus, tourism can advance or reduce the welfare of the natural environment and bringing the enhance welfare of tourism stakeholders through environmental education and enlightenment (Hall and Brown, 2006). In terms of siting, both Hall and Brown argue that this implies the need for more natural behaviour of the human visitor, for example walking through wildlife areas rather than using mechanical means of motion. Apart from the natural setting, a greater engagement with animal related environment can help tourists to be more aware and more articulate about values underlying environmental care (Myers et al. 2003).
than the formal qualities or order and interests (Prak, 1977). Yang and Brown (1992) referred the physical design features as the ‘service scapes’, which relates to the physical comfort of visitors and landscape considered in a design that can be both introduced as aesthetic and functional purposes.

In relation to this, Heath (1984) summarises that the environmental aesthetic concerns with interactions or relations between people and the facilities. It is roughly the perceptual and cognitive abilities of their minds and physical features of things; shapes, textures, colours and patterns. It also depends on the previous experience of the people concerning their roles and expectation as well as their culture. Meanwhile, the way the features are provided is closely associated with the way designers think in the design process. Berlyne (1960) argues that the designers, in simplifying the tasks, classified the design aims into goals of specific activity and goals of divisive exploration. Recalling the concept, it is important to design coastal resorts through the environmental integration that can provoke not only a heightened sense of environmental appreciation but also inspires learning among tourists, host and local community. Here, the resort’s facilities role in facilitating the goals is essential. While places are evaluated in terms of their fitness to the activity, the users consider the built environment first of all as an instrument or tool in participating in the activities which are productive depending on the siting state of the facilities (Prak, 1977). Thus, it is through interpreting the siting roles in programming the activities that the attributes of tourists experience can be unearthed.

7.3 Cross Referencing Coastal Resorts Physical Data Sets

The first step in this analysis involves understanding the general physical characteristics of each individual resorts. The physical data sets of individual resorts were recorded and cross referenced to understand the relationship between the size and proportion of built and open spaces and the development in total in their goal of promoting environmental and social experience in the resorts. At the level of individual resort, each layout across the study set was examined with respect to the open and built spaces, amenities and accommodation criteria in relation to the overall building and site areas. Comparisons of resorts through cross referencing the individual resort physical parameters and the findings are summarised in Appendix 11.

7.3.1 Summary of Findings on Coastal Resorts Physical Data Sets

The cross reference of data sets across the individual resorts summarises the general patterns in physical planning of the resorts as follow:
1. The internal circulation and service spaces are being provided at the minimum in relation to other spaces. While the circulation\textsuperscript{50} is considered as an important space to enhance the tourists’ experience, it is inadequately provided in large scale development based on the comparison of the ratio of the total building area across the resorts. This implies that the circulation spaces are not thoroughly emphasized in promoting the environmental and social experience. Meanwhile, the services spaces is considered as the least attractive areas as indicated in terms of the space allocation in each resort;

2. Both the low and high rise resorts are contextually related to the size and shapes of the site boundaries. As for the low rise resorts in which the layouts of the accommodations typically sprawl throughout the site, larger area of public outdoor spaces are observed to be the main characteristic compared to the multi story resorts. The larger area outdoor spaces allows for more landscape options and activities for tourists that integrate them with nature that can foster learning. This support the findings in the previous chapter that the high rise resorts are more difficult to design as sustainable building due to its complexity to suit the scale of the surroundings\textsuperscript{51};

\textsuperscript{50} Lainer and Wagner (1998) suggest that it is possible to support and even trigger particular uses and behaviour within the space through its physical design. The interweaving of structural properties of the environment ensures people have a sense of place (Thrift, 2003). Meanwhile, Dovey (1999) argues that the corridors and lobby are spaces between functions where flows of information are as unpredictable as the flows of people, while Kim and Kaplan (2004) suggest that natural features and open space play an important role in resident’s feeling of attachment towards the community and their interactions with other residents during movement between two different points. The meaning to space were achieved through visual or perceptual clues on establishes landmarks (Tuan, 1971). This suggests that adequate circulation area need to be provided to generate the interactions.

\textsuperscript{51} Britton (1987) argues that smaller scale tourism can have greater impact on improving rural living standards, reducing rural urban migration, rejuvenating rural communities and countering structural inequalities of income distributions. Meanwhile Pearce (1989), in supporting this type of tourism development states that tourism developed gradually over time to allow for a longer period of social and environmental adjustment. However it does not mean it is more sustainable than mass tourism, regardless of the nature of the environment that takes place can be challenged (Swarbrooke, 1999). In several cases, small scale resorts which site is physically separated from the existing community do not directly benefit the local residents (Jenkins, 1982), while the domination of multinationals management creates income inequities (Freitag, 1994). On the other hand, it is often the large-scale magnitude of contemporary soft ecotourism that is cited as the great danger to destinations, with additional growth being equated with additional threat to the natural and cultural environment (Butler, 1980). To deter this, Wall (1993) suggests using quantities and types of accommodation to regulate the levels and types of use in different tourists’ areas to promote the sustainable development in large scale development.
3. The multi story resorts are arranged to follow the shape of site boundaries to maximise the area, whereas the low rise resorts are being set out to fully utilise the natural setting such as the natural topography, jungle and wildlife available in the premise. This clearly indicates that the natural resources of the resorts are an important factor in locating the facilities;

4. In terms of the circulation, uncovered pathways are used to connect the facilities in resort that adopt the sprawling arrangements. This is to minimise the usage of covered corridors that need to be calculated as usable spaces in the design. In this arrangement, the internal circulations of the resorts are mainly concentrated near the amenities and centralized courtyard areas rather than the accommodations;

5. The way the accommodation units are arranged along the circulations corridor can influence the tourists. As observed in the plans, the high rise resorts utilised either the single loaded or double loaded corridor access in the arrangement of the accommodations. The single loaded arrangement is suitable for linear site which is determined by maximising the view vistas towards the sea;

6. Meanwhile, the double loaded access corridor maximises the use of built spaces where access to the units are shared in which the entrance door faces each other. However, it is observed that in several layouts, the units are compacted along the corridor without provision of adequate opening to the external which can be utilised as the viewing points or social spaces and also to allow natural lighting and cross ventilation along the corridors;

7. The low rise resorts provide more combination of rooms of one and two bedroom unit and individual bungalow unit type as compared to the multi story resorts. This is due to the design of structure to control the modular unit sizes constructed vertically on the upper level, a factor which is not considered in the low rise resorts;

8. The low rise resorts have a larger ratio of amenities spaces in relation to the total building and site area compared to the multi story resorts. This is due to the structural design and also lack of spaces. It also resulted in less provision for amenities to cater the number of tourists during peak occupancies;

9. The accommodation facilities consume the largest portion of building floor area in the resorts. Their major presence emphasises the need to provide the appropriate design features in the accommodations and proper mixed units’ types that can further enhance the tourists’ environmental and social experience; and,
10. The space allocation for the accommodation should be adequately proportionate with the amenities allocation in relation to the overall building floor area which is observed as not the case in this analysis.

The patterns signifies the general description of resorts data sets in terms of building programming, circulations patterns, the accommodation and room mix provided in association with the overall site and building floor area. From the data, it can be concluded that the design of resorts are very fragmented and individualistic when comparisons of physical data characteristics are made across the case study resorts. The pattern denotes the following three main characteristics in the policies and practice concerning the siting of coastal resorts facilities:

1. There are gaps in the design intention between the government’s initiated policies an actual practice which reveal the incompetency in existing policies;
2. There are elements of disruptive political interference in implementing the policies in terms of building height and densities; and,
3. Limitations in design results from the developers’ intention to limit the construction cost rather than focussing on enhancing the tourists’ experience.

Most resorts are constructed in compliance with the building regulation that includes the proper building boundary setback and total amount of open spaces provided. The increase of building density should automatically require provision of more circulation, common and amenities spaces, which are not the case in many of the developments. The importance of these spaces were stressed by the regulators and designers in the previous chapter and the inappropriate provision of these spaces has resulted in less promotion of environmental and social interaction of tourists in the resorts. This indicates that while the government initiated policies...

52 There are average requirement of land and built spaces intended as a guide in preliminary evaluation for example, gross built area per bed for traditional resort is 15-30 m², while the additional public areas for tree planting and open recreational spaces for seaside resort is 20-40m² per bed (Bawd Bovy and Lawson, 1998). There is also zoning requirements which include sixty to eighty meters wide setbacks from the beach front and the restriction on building height and densities (Lawson, 1995). The examples reflect the need for having standard requirements in designing resorts facilities. Meanwhile, Priestly (1995) concludes that the presence of additional tourism facilities as a means of diversifying the product and attracting the visitors is of relatively little significance. Despite this, depending on motives, preferences and capabilities, tourists tend to combine several attractions and facilities during their leisure activities (Dietvorst, 1995). This implies the need to provide appropriate amenities in resort development. The cross referencing of the case study resorts morphological study indicates that the amenities area provided in several bigger scale resorts are less in ratio compared to the smaller one which has less site area which should not be the case.
regulations are formulated to control the coastal resorts design and development, the individualistic resorts style (reflected by the variation of the sizes of the amenities, circulation and common spaces) indicates that it is unclear that the final product is what the regulators intended the resorts should be shaped by the policies or guidelines in enhancing the tourists’ experience.

It also demonstrates to a certain extent that the policies are incomprehensive in regulating the resorts development. For example, the availability of resorts that is more than two stories high in the three case study sites, which is not permissible under the local authority building guideline, reflects the weakness of local authorities in imposing the existing guideline. In one of the sites, it is stated in the building regulation that the building height ‘should not be taller than the existing trees in the site’ which can be considered as a loop hole for the developers when translating it into the design. The confusion caused in interpreting the guideline resulted in resorts being higher than four storeys high were constructed in the area. In another perspective, the availability of multistorey resorts also reflects to a certain extent the disruptive political interference in administrating the policies where the constructions were still permitted regardless of the policies requirement. In terms of the costs cutting measure, this can be observed in the provision of circulation spaces in all the resorts. It is apparent in multi story resorts where the sizes of the circulations increase in maximising the building density to maximize the accommodations. Thus, this has resulted in less common spaces provided along the corridors. This preliminary analysis also provides important information on how the morphological framework should be implemented in this study.

While the provisions of areas through the siting process are formally regulated by the local authority guidelines, it does not mean that the space serves the purpose in the way the regulation intended which reflects the generic nature of the guidelines. For example, while the resorts do provide a minimum fifteen percents of open spaces as required by the local authority in a resort development, the provision of open spaces are useless if there are no proper zoning or physical features to support the environmental and social interactions that are based on the way tourists consume the resorts. This is a clear indication that certain tourists’ reflections and ideologies are not considered in the regulations.

It can be concluded from the resorts physical data cross referencing analysis that there is a need to investigate the two following main characteristics of siting:

53 As required for tourism development in Langkawi Municipal Council Building Regulations.
1. The spatial quality of the siting in terms of zoning\textsuperscript{54} created by the siting process; and,
2. The physical design features in the respective zones.

The investigation on the spatial quality is focussed on the way each zones is arranged and their relationships in accommodating the tourists' activities. The way the facilities is located in each zone is perceived as an attempt not only to integrate tourists with the site and its natural environment but also the local community. Meanwhile, the physical design features includes both the aesthetic and functional expressions of building material, construction and technology and incorporation of the local socio-cultural symbols. Both factors will be discussed in the remaining paragraphs.

### 7.4 Spatial Quality of Zoning

A preliminary investigation on the general biophysical aspects of zoning in the coastal resorts is summarised in Appendix 12. The summary of the preliminary findings of zoning above suggests that the process was carried out on technical and perceptual or based on creativity of the designers' basis. The attempt to preserve the environment and local community socio-cultural factors has materialised with or without the siting policies where the design outcomes can be positive or negative. There are certain strategies or techniques in locating the resorts facilities that have been commonly used in the programming of the spaces by the designers. These include providing easy access for tourists from one facility to another, providing multiple courtyards and separating the transportation further away from the accommodation units as well as maximising the view towards the main attractions.

\textsuperscript{54} There is a reason why the spatial quality is considered in relation to zoning. The relationship between physical planning and environmental policy is seen most clearly in environmental zoning where in the form of physical zone a spatial distinction is made between environmentally harmful activities and environmentally sensitive function (Leeflang, 1989). The zoning plan also determines what permitted and prohibited activities are indicated for each zone and subzone designated in order to create a balance between conservation and economic needs resource or describe the primary purpose for which the resources within a defined geographical area will be used (Watson, 2008). In analyzing the zoning, content analysis is used to evaluate the “message” being conveyed by plans (Singleton and Straits, 1999). The plan or zoning code have symbolic meaning thus reflecting the intentions of local policy decision-makers and can be characterized as a “communicative policy act” (Norton, 2007).
The emphasis on views has also forced several resorts to locate the accommodations in hazardous slope area, which indicates that the intention of designers’ to enhance the tourists experience despite the environmental risk. This demonstrates that in enhancing the tourists’ experience, the final design outcomes are affected by the designer’s decision in locating the facilities despite adhering to the government policies or regulations. In a way, it also stresses the importance of incorporating the users' reflections and ideologies in the process of designing coastal resorts.

7.5 The Practice of Zoning

This section will elaborate the general patterns of zoning that were summarised in the earlier analysis in the following categories:

1. Zoning in controlling tourists’ movements;
2. Zoning for conservation of natural environment;
3. Zoning to accommodate building and coastal setbacks and socially responsible access;
4. Zoning in maximising view factors;
5. Zoning of open area as transitional spaces.
6. Zoning for transportation; and,
7. Zoning and building form.

7.5.1 Zoning in Controlling Tourists Movement

The visual analysis on the circulation typologies of the resorts provides important information on the buildings ‘connectedness’ to site conditions and also spatial relationship between facilities made possible by the siting practice. The circulation pattern is the key controlling element of the design and overall development framework. Thus, the way external circulations link all the zones and facilities and control tourists’ movement is important considerations in the strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience.

As clearly indicated in the resorts’ basic forms, the resorts have incorporated single or double parallel line of rectangle, being matrixes (cell-like arrangement) or courtyard generated forms in the layouts. The forms are dictated by the circulations that connect all the zones. Generally, the planning layouts of the three main resorts are based on radial formations originated from the main building where the central lobby is located. This can be observed both internally and externally where the resort’s pattern of movement is closely connected to providing the ease of access for tourists to all
resort facilities and for security purposes. In promoting the environmental experience, the three main resorts have allowed for the provision of common spaces or observation areas along the main and secondary circulations – observed to be lacking in many of the other multi storey resorts where the circulation spaces need to be controlled to cut cost.

Externally, the pathways and corridors offer safe and comfortable means of access to other facilities. In tropical climate these features need to be provided with the proper roof to protect tourists from the sun and heavy rainfall which are lacking in the resorts. The security features such as balustrades and ramps for the handicaps are observed to be lacking as well. The analysis demonstrates that the covered circulation is mainly limited to the main building compared to other area such as the accommodation’s zone. While the accommodations are located sporadically to maximise the site and topography, they are not linked to the main building with covered pathway. Meanwhile, further discussion of zoning will be based on the following factors: High versus Low Usage Zone of Tourists Activities; Zoning for Directional Purposes; Zoning for Privacy, Security and Safety Purposes.

High versus Low Usage Zone of Tourists Activities

The zoning is clearly evident in the siting process (as indicated in the site plans) where it is being used as a tool to control tourists’ movements whilst providing comfortable environment. Here, the resorts have different zones of private and public areas to separate the high and low activity areas in locating the facilities. In this instance, the zoning of the facilities depends on the areal usage, where areas demarcated for heavy usage is usually located along the main circulation’s spine. The main circulations initiate from the entrance lobby that connects the internal amenities running through the central courtyards (connecting the external amenities) and towards

55 In a study of residential units Marsden (2005) observes that while the design of the pedestrian covered walkway affects the overall design, users tended to favour pedestrian covered walkway as means of access. In a courtyard design, the enclosure of the space can be further strengthened using either colonnades or as continuous feature linking the ground floor of individual buildings in a covered walkway (Moughtin, 2003). It is also a transitional space between the external and internal space where A wide covered walkway can be seen as interpretation of traditional veranda can opens up a lounge area in as a place to sit and read (Beaver, 2008). Similarly, the ease of access from one facility to another with proper covered walkway is considered as a way of providing positive experience that can influence tourist behaviour (Pearce, 2005).
the common beach areas. The high-used areas namely, the lobby and amenities, the swimming pool, conference room and restaurants are usually located in close proximity to each other. Meanwhile, the accommodations units are mostly separated from the high-used zone activity. They are also carefully located and planned with the intention of providing easy access for servicing without interrupting the tourists.

The clustering of the amenities along the main secondary circulation is more prominent in smaller sites that allow more controlled tourists’ movement. In multi-story resorts, the clustering is also addressed through the vertical arrangement of the amenities. In this case, the amenities are usually stacked above the other and located near to the lobby lift. The sizes of the amenities however are controlled by the structural grids which result in inadequate spacing of the amenities located at the ground floor. In the high rise resorts, the structural grid controlled the maximum height requirement needed in certain amenities such as the gymnasium or multi-purpose halls. Unlike the low rise resorts, the amenities provided externally are not controlled by the grid and can be featured as free standing structures. Here, the larger sites do allow some flexibility in locating the amenities further from the main building with lesser control on tourists’ movement.

**Zoning for Directional Purposes**

The zoning of the high and low activity areas also provide a sense of direction for the tourists in accessing other facilities. In the three main resorts, the flow from a high to low activity areas are meant for tourists to understand the zones where they are located and to ensure that the tourist could adapt faster to the resort’s environment. Tourists need to have a perception that the accommodation and the resort as a whole is their personal territories as well as for other tourists. Here the concept of tourists as ‘Transnationals’ community (Duval, 2004), as discussed in Chapter Two need to be facilitated by the proper siting process to diminish the clash of different cultures. It is also important to create the sense of direction among the tourists, as stressed by the concept of time and space (Ashworth, 1995) as discussed in Chapter Two, in enhancing the tourists’ experience. In this vein, the siting, through the zoning practice also allows tourists to experience the urban spaces they temporary left behind to be in the resort. Here, both the internal and external circulations in all of the three main resorts and other low rise resorts produce an urban-like pedestrian pathways represented by a network of open and covered corridors connecting each zones. The practice allows tourists to experience the open spaces; the beach, green and wildlife in unison as a total positive experience of a resort.
Research on tourism has focused on how tourist destination is being constructed and experienced (Selby, 2004) as tourists may be affected by individual, environmental, situational and degree of communication with other people (Hall, 2005). In Urry’s (1990) concept of the tourists gaze, tourists’ experience is based on taking in the scenery and being an outside observer. The production of goods to meet tourists demand and which are expressed in tourism consumption which comprises resources for tourists infrastructures, receptive facilities, entertainment, sports venues as well as tourism reception services (Sharpley, 2002). It is also called symbols (Berger and Luckmann, 1971) where tourists must integrate into their object of consumptions (Sharpley, 2002) by allowing themselves access to the objects of symbolic properties (Holt, 1995) The successful integration of tourism and symbolic integration depends on the planning approaches (Butler, 1999) where proper siting is needed to facilitate tourists’ movements within the tourists’ complex or system and foster relationship between the elements (Dietvorst, 1995).

Zoning for Privacy, Security and Safety Purposes

The observations on the three main resorts demonstrate that their designs allow the tourists to perceive that they have sufficient space to choose between the social and environmental interaction and privacy by diversifying the location of facilities and creating multiple courtyards. In coastal resorts, strong differences between cultures in a different environment require a space that can provide a sense of privacy other than place. This is apparent in the zone of accommodations. The accommodation units in the three main resorts are arranged to sprawl deeper into secluded area of the large site with the intent to maximise the site context with the exception of the Avillion Beach Resort in which the accommodations are constructed beyond the shoreline mainly due to the lack of space. This contrasting approach can similarly be found in the other two main resorts to provide tourists with the unique experience rather than as a solution to the problem in space limitation. The accommodations, inland or beyond the shoreline are individually separated or being clustered together at different locations. The clustering of accommodations creates pocket of courtyards that can be considered private courtyard to each individual cluster.

Interestingly to note, it is observed in the three main resorts, the farthest units are by far designated as the most exclusive and expensive units in the resorts. This is due to their higher sense of privacy even though they are regarded as less secured than other units located adjacent to the main building. In a way, this observation reflects the earlier finding that the siting need to convey a situation where tourist feel safe and adequately involved to what is happening in a place in the attempt to control who
enters it and what happens there. In another perspective, privacy also means controlling unwanted noise from the public and private spaces through proper siting of the facilities. Here, the clear separation of the accommodation units from the high activity areas such as the lobby and amenities also controls the noise. Even though it is totally impossible to eradicate all the noise, the possibility of controlling it through the siting will ensure that the tourists become more appreciative of the environment.

The zoning in most of the resorts is not only used as a planning tool to enhance the environmental and social experience but also to allow tourist to feel safe in the resort. Lynch (1960) points out that good environmental image create an impression of harmony and a sense of emotional security in the perceived physical elements including paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. One considers such familiar behavioural issues and form devices as territory, personal space and crowding, social interaction and withdrawal, segregation and clustering, compartment and edges, latent and manifests function (Lynch and Hack, 1984). Meanwhile Tuan (1974) states that it is the relations, perceptions, attitudes, values, and world view that affectively bond people and place and give a sense of place, environmental mastery, privacy and autonomy. Thus, if safety is the main concern of the resorts, then the siting must be used as a strategy to enhance it in all the physical areas before resorting to other conventional method such as providing twenty four hour security manned by the security guards. It was also observed that most resorts provide proper provision of street lighting features for security reasons. What is lacking is the environmentally sensitive fencing that comprised of material that blends with the surroundings that can be considered as physical features that could enhance the security initiated by the siting process.

In terms of public access, what is clearly lacking in the planning of the resorts is the provision of spaces accessible to local participation in the resort’s activities which can be adequately controlled and secured. There are places in the resorts where tourists can interact with the locals in semi-private areas such as restaurants or gymnasiums. As observed, many resorts have incorporated these features in their planning. However, most of these areas are considered mainly for private use which resulted in less interaction with the locals. Properly designed spaces for locals to participate in the commercial, socio-cultural activities in the forms of courtyards or cultural showcase areas in the resorts can enhance the tourists’ positive experience by promoting social relation. The spaces can be provided in semi private areas.

While it is easier to control the interaction in areas where the amenities including the restaurants are centralised in the layout, there are examples of resorts that separate the facilities into different zones of public accessible areas. This situation
exacerbates the safety and maintenance issues, and requires additional infrastructure such as the road and transportation system for servicing and maintenance. The siting of the resorts’ facilities must also ensure that the locals can access the resorts from the beach frontage through a controlled area where the locals’ behaviour can be monitored. The provision of public access corridors to the beach area and amenities should not be created in total separation with the public rather, the design should allow some interaction with the locals while ensuring the security and safety of the tourists as well. This is observed to be lacking in the resorts.

7.5.2 Zoning for Conservation of Natural Environment

The zoning is also programmed based on technical considerations to avoid hazardous environmental areas such as steep slopes; and flood and erosion prone areas which are specified as low use tourists’ zones. It was observed that the location of the facilities in the three main resorts match the whole resort area contextual shapes and boundaries to make most of the existing zones and path and considering the advantages of the sites natural condition. However, the planning pattern in several resorts also reveals that there are many instances where resorts accommodations primarily the individual chalets are constructed on ecologically fragile zone (Refer to Figure 7.5 and 7.6).

Meanwhile, the emphasis of orienting the facilities towards the scenic beach view and to imitate the traditional stilt house features are cited as the primary reasons for locating these facilities on the slopes. In other cases, it is also observed that some of the slopes were altered due to the large amount of building footprint constructed onto
the original slopes. This mainly involves the main building where the main amenities are located. Reflecting on the policies, which was also observed by the regulators in Chapter Six, these situations address the issue of competency in complying with the existing government policies and regulations which prohibits the construction of infrastructure in these hazardous areas. Many have resorted to be having this type of construction despite the requirement in the guideline prohibiting this. In this case, the views were considered as a more important determinant than the environmental considerations in the siting process. The higher rental imposed for these units denote that the tourists prefer to stay in accommodations which have direct view towards the sea despite the environmental risk.

Clearly, the above situation demonstrates the need of appropriate policies to integrate the tourists’ ideologies in the siting of resorts without compromising on the environmental issue. While the formal regulations are created to ensure the safety of tourists, the informal perception of tourists to live in natural environment manifested by constructing the villa on stilts prevailed over the regulation. Similarly in the earthworks, the cutting of slopes for larger building also demonstrates the lack of environmental awareness on the part of regulators and designers in providing the facilities required for the resorts activities. Despite this, the siting of the facilities in several resorts did demonstrated attempts to embrace the environment. To prevent from cutting the slopes, some of the resorts have taken much better approach in designing low rise building stepping down from the hillsides rather than building high-rise buildings on the slopes. This is more appropriate in terms of scale and also integration with the natural environment. The design, however, causes several problems to the resorts operation namely in servicing the facilities especially the accommodation units. It can be concluded that the above scenarios signify that appropriate design measures to compliment the tourists’ ideologies can be achieved without compromising on the environmental factors.

7.5.3 Zoning and Building Setbacks

The setback is important to maintain a sense of openness, privacy and safety to enhance the environmental and social experience in the resorts. It is also important in creating the sense of openness in the resorts, which is an important consideration in enhancing the tourists’ experience. The setback permits provision of certain allowance of open spaces in the siting process. Generally, most resorts are observed to comply with the six meters building setback requirement to the adjacent lots and also one building to another by the local building by-law. The discussion on this topic will be divided into Socially Responsible Access and Coastal Building Setback.
Socially Responsible Access

While providing the visual or noise barriers from adjacent development is important to offer comfortable environment to tourists, the building setback areas must also ensure proper provision of local access to the beach frontage. This is however, observed to be lacking in the resorts where the building setbacks area are either left to be vacant or filled with landscapes with fences around. In many resorts, traces of heavy vegetated area in the building setback areas between the units illustrates the effort to provide barriers to control noise and views from adjacent lots. In terms of accessibility, many resorts depend on the access provided by the local authority rather than providing the local access through their premises. Although the locals are allowed to access the beaches through designated public access maintained by the local authority, the readily available access for local via the resorts can be utilised as a more friendly approach in integrating the locals with the resort environment and the tourists and creating a sense of belonging to the community.

Meanwhile, in several resorts, one of the techniques used to separate the locals from resorts area is to ensure that the resorts are constructed higher than the beach front as a marker to the site boundaries. The higher elevation not only indicates clear separation between the resorts and the beach frontage but also have a psychological impact on both the tourists and locals. In this vein, the demarcation of resort boundaries in a subtle manner as this ensures that tourists feel more secured and locals to automatically identify the area as privately owned premises.

Coastal Building Setback

The coastal building setback is an important consideration in the siting of resorts’ facilities. Constructing the building closer to the setback can result in negative consequences to both the facilities and coastal environment. Several resorts are observed to be located very close to the shoreline. As for The Avillion and several other resorts, the facilities are located close to the water edges. As the result, the beach front spaces have also become too narrow for the public to access or for socio-cultural activities. While tourists prefer the resorts that are located nearer to the shore, the minimal allowance of space inland fronting the beach for tourists and the locals can be considered as not conducive in enhancing the environmental and social experiences (Refer to Figure 7.7 and 7.8).
The normal shoreline setback required by the Local Authority is approximately less than 6.1 meters from the buildings. In this case, the authority will eventually assume the setback as acceptable if there is no environmental hazard and vegetation planted near the beach. However, while the siting allows more opportunity for tourists to interact with the sea, it also requires certain type of protection from the beach erosion and high waves along the water edges. This also raises some concerns on the usage of hard coastal zones protection methods such as rubble retaining wall which are not only expensive to construct and maintain but has also resulted in the loss of natural appearance along the shorelines. Here, the siting of the resorts’ accommodation beyond the shoreline in many resorts raises major concerns on the environmental impact imposed by the structure and the accessibility of the locals to continuously access the beach frontage. While these types of construction are allowed in less attractive coastal zones where such construction are implemented to improve less desirable area through proper land use and design, it has also been singled out as the main cause of negative environmental consequences to the coastal zone. These include the silt sedimentation and deteriorating water quality.

The environmental impact can be very expensive and is a long term remedial process. The consequences of impacts by an individual resort will have far reaching consequences to the regional tourism industry. The construction of these features does not only prevent continuous local access along the beach frontage and but also public views towards the sea vista. Moreover, in terms of security, these units are more difficult to safeguard compared to those located inlands as they can be easily accessed or encroached from the seafront.
7.5.4 Zoning and ‘View Factors’

The maintenance of views towards the natural features such as the beach and its natural settings are the vital considerations in the siting process. The site planning emphasis on view is a perceptual process. In every resort the area closest to the beach area or has direct view towards the sea is preferred for accommodation facilities, while the service areas or the least attractive areas are the closest to the entrance road and sited to be visually screened off from the tourists. The study signals that most accommodation units are set out to maximise the view towards the sea. However, in maximising the number of accommodation units, there are also units that do not have the desirable view as generally intended in the design. Many of these units are arranged to face each other which is unattractive to the tourists.

![Figure 7.9: Roof 'landscapes' from upper level deck of The Swiss Garden Resort's main building obstructing the downward view towards the beach. Source: Author](image1)

![Figure 7.10: View towards the sea from the main lobby of The Avillion Resort. Source: Author](image2)

Meanwhile, in a situation where resorts are located in many attractive natural settings, too much emphasis on creating vistas towards the sea can also be a disadvantage. Over emphasising on a directional view will unlikely promote the other surrounding attractions of the resorts. For example, the accommodations in Berjaya Langkawi were arranged to face directly towards the sea and as the result, tourists in the accommodation do not have the luxury of seeing the majestic backdrop setting of the Gunung Merinchang. The staggered forms which are constructed to follow the natural topography also impose advantages. While the main reason of the siting of the facilities on the existing slopes and terrains is to take advantage of the view towards

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56 The tallest mountain and a famous attraction in Langkawi Island where cable car are used to overview the island.
the scenic beach area, it also causes disadvantages to the top most units which were forced to view the ‘roof landscape’ of the lower building units rather than directly towards the beach area\textsuperscript{57}. (Refer to Figure 7.9 and 7.10). In this case, although the high pitch roof is a prominent feature in vernacular architecture, it can also be proposed as roof gardens for observation deck or social spaces for the general public and tourists instead. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter One, while the resort appearance looks aesthetically pleasing as viewed from the beachfront, it simultaneously diminish the elevations from the main road when a single loaded corridor access is used to link the rooms in multi story resorts – a view shared by the regulator in the previous chapter. This approach is closely associated with the view factors where the view towards the sea vista is considered as determining factor in the accommodation layout. Nevertheless, the practice raises important issue in the design making process among designers concerning the siting of resorts’ facilities in association with view factors. Here, the basic considerations in designing a sustainable built environment by conforming to the site profiles for climatic considerations should be the utmost important consideration as compared to view. Whilst considering the climates, it is observed that the building orientation in most resorts have attempted to minimise the direct sunlight and maximise the natural cross ventilations in the resorts’ built and open spaces. However, the emphasis on view has also resulted in many resorts which orientations are arranged with disregard to the climatic consideration. It is interesting to note that many of the resorts facilities, especially the accommodation units are oriented to face the extreme Western afternoon sun as the result of emphasising the view when locating the facilities.

It can be summarized that, while the site context limits the siting of the facilities, the design must consider the climatic considerations as to create a comfortable environment to enhance the tourists’ experience. These observations address the importance of creating the awareness of sustainable principles among the designers.

\textsuperscript{57} Hotels may be stepped down slopes to maximize the view of the setting of the sea or lake (Lawson, 1995. The staggered form is adapted to maximize the environment, for example, (Young and Young, 2007) describe that the staggered arrangement of Katsura, Rikyu detached palace in Japan as a formation that maximizes fresh air and views of the garden. However, it also causes a problem of downward view where it can be contextually ill fitting to the overall landscape (Fox, 2010). It is also noted that the capacity of the built environment to sustain sociability in public spaces is more relevant to look at in the long run as compared to staggered building form (Gehl, 1996). The layout of the accommodations must also consider the aesthetic reason for maintaining the natural vistas of the shore are unimpeded by high rise building (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1997). Accordingly, the issue of bad elevation fronting the main road in single loaded corridor was brought up in a discussion with a Senior Planner in Port Dickson (2009) and was discussed in Chapter 6.
and developers. The lack of awareness about the sustainable principles is one reason why the orientation is inadequately considered in the design process. While there are certain improvement can be made to the building which are improperly oriented through the use of screens and shades, these features will incur higher construction cost in the development.

7.5.5 Open Spaces as the Product of Zoning

The designs of most resorts are mainly based on the creation of hierarchy among spaces (main, secondary) and in the process it will create open spaces or courtyard to resolve the articulation among the spaces. Several important characteristics of the open space are investigated and summarised in Appendix 13. The general design patterns of the open spaces based on the observations has led to the discussion on the role open spaces as transitional spaces of building interiors and in accommodating the environmental, social and cultural interactions for tourists. The amenities are basically located near to the open space that also serves as expansion spaces for tourists’ activities that overflows from the built spaces during peak usage. Certain amenities in the resorts are not only accessible to tourists but also to the public and the locals. For instance, the restaurants are not only for tourists but also welcome the locals and in a few resorts while the gyms are also open to the public. Many resorts are observed to centralize all the activities in a single common open spaces or courtyards in the site planning. While this type of layout permits better services control, locating the amenities near the open spaces could cause environmental concerns due to numerous concentrations of activities in the space through a gathering of a large group of tourists in a single session peak hours.

Figure 7.11: View towards the courtyard from the main lobby of Tanjung Rhu Beach Resort emphasising on the inter visibility quality of the spaces. Source: Author

Figure 7.12: Landscape and water feature in Pangkor Laut Spa area to enrich the tourists’ experience in the open spaces. Source: Author
Therefore, there is a need to provide a transitional space towards the open spaces to solve this problem. The transitional area can be in the form of corridors or courtyards where the overflowing of tourist congestion as the result of the activities can be supported (Refer to Figure 7.11, 7.12 and 7.13).

| Figure 7.13: Corridors as transitional space between the interior and exterior in promoting environmental and social interactions in coastal resorts. Source: Author |
| Figure 7.14: The wildlife area in one of the multiple courtyards in The Avilion Beach Resort to enhance tourists’ interaction with the environment in the open spaces. Source: Author |

The attempts to provide the transitional space are evidently clear in the resorts. In many cases, this intention is represented by corridors or common areas are directly connected to the open courtyards. The corridors were designed with minimal wall construction that can obstruct the views or natural ventilation. This enhances the sense of openness and transparencies in all the connected spaces. The environmental experience can be further enhanced through the provision of proper landscapes as natural sound and screen barriers to create a sense of privacy in the courtyards and transitional areas. Meanwhile, in one of the resort, a small courtyard is used as the mini wildlife area (Figure 7.14) as an activity to enrich the tourists’ knowledge about the local wildlife. The area is located near the corridors and can be easily accessed by tourists as part of the transitional space. In most resorts, the open space can be filled with natural or man-made landscape but more importantly, it also allows certain degree of transparencies from the interior spaces towards the surrounding environment of the open spaces or courtyards.

In many resorts, the open spaces preserve the original environment as observed by many tall trees and natural vegetations’ in the area. Interestingly, several resorts with natural landscaped areas are observed to be dangerous where they can be subjected to vandalism and criminal behaviour due to the low visibility. This is a
common pattern in most luxury resorts where the heavy landscapes are used to reflect and enhance the existing tropical setting. However, in the lower rated resorts, the courtyards are usually provided with minimum landscape that is also low in maintenance. Here, their association with the internal spaces are vague due to the lack of visibility and design quality that can attract tourists.

Meanwhile, in several resorts, while landscape is needed for the environmental experience, the spaces created are either too small or too congested for large social gatherings involving the locals. Another important observation in most resorts is that the process of the siting also allows for the identification of area for future resort’s expansions which is crucial in the physical enhancement of the resorts to remain competitive in the industry. Here, the undesirable changes in the resort portrayed in the ‘Destination’s Lifecycle’ (Butler, 1980) can be facilitated through the initial siting and demarcation of expansion spaces to sustain its operation lifespan.

7.5.6 Zoning and Social Spaces

Across the main resorts, attempt was made to ensure that the tourists’ interaction with the environment also facilitate social relation. The attempt includes spreading the facilities to encourage tourists to walk through the natural environment whilst interacting with each other. The location of the three main resorts in the tropical setting allows tourists to observe the abundant of wildlife in the resorts. This attraction could improve social relation among tourists and the locals either through group learning or appointed guide. This indicates the importance of preserving the natural environment of the coastal area as the main resorts attraction in addition to the facilities arrangement in promoting environmental and social experience among tourists.

The resorts figure grounds analyses identify the main nodes of tourists and locals gathering in the resorts. The open spaces such as central courtyard where the amenities such as swimming pool and landscape are located allow the social interactions to take place. Tourists’ recognition of the zones, the location and nature of the activities in the spaces and the cultural background or specific markings allow the interaction between the tourists, local community and the hosts. This is where the tourists reflections and ideologies plays important role in the design. While the zoning is a formal approach towards allowing the interactions, the tourists’ recognitions of the

58 The recreational facilities such as the main open air swimming pool (free formed or landscaped) is often centrally located in the back beach area and centralized to take advantage of the view from other amenities and accommodations (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1998).
spaces through their experience are crucial for the process to facilitate. However, there are several weaknesses identified in the way the open spaces manifest their roles as environmental spaces in the resorts. For example:

1. Many courtyard spaces fail to fully maximise the natural attraction to facilitate the social interactions. The location of the central courtyard is secluded from the natural attraction specifically the beach. In this context, the natural attraction will encourage tourists to spend longer time in the particular place and improve the social relation with other tourists;
2. The sizes of the open spaces are inadequate for large gathering group of tourists and locals;
3. The lack of both the passive design and street fitting features has resulted in the spaces as unsuitable for dual usage during day and night time. This limits the time spend for the social interactions in the spaces; and,
4. The places are lacking of the cultural features or symbols that create a sense of belonging to the locals and fascination for tourists.

The environmental experience in the open spaces is central to the idea of enhancing social relations in the resorts. The weakness identified in the design of the open spaces above demonstrates that the spaces have not fully maximised the environment and are improperly designed to facilitate social relation in the resorts.

7.5.7 Zoning and Cultural Integration

The power of the attraction to capture the visitor’s attention and evoke strong emotional response is coined by Pearce (2005a) as an “intrinsic impact” \( ^{59} \). De Botton (2002) uses the term as a ‘sense of sublime’ to indicate human responses towards the natural attraction such as ocean vistas where such places provoke an identifiable feeling that is both pleasurable and morally good. Beer (1990) argues that the spaces that provide an environmental experience are closest to the natural surrounding and attraction rather than the cultural form. However, both are important in the design where the impact of cultural symbols as physical design features can fast track tourist positive experience in the coastal resorts.

In this vein, there are certain cultural markings in spaces created by the siting process that integrate well with the environment and provoke the tourists’ positive experience.

\(^{59}\)The motivation to engage in an activity primarily for its own sake because the individual perceives the activity as interesting, involving, satisfying, or personally challenging; it is marked by a focus on the challenge and the enjoyment of the work itself” (Collins and Amabile, 1999: 299).
experience. Interestingly, the integration of cultural elements in the planning layout of the resorts has become the main theme of many resorts in the case study to promote authentic environment. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the intention to experience the past was interpreted through introduction of the traditional Malay village\textsuperscript{60} surrounding into the planning of chalets not only on land but also above the sea in the three main resorts. The forms\textsuperscript{61} are not only considered as unique and aesthetically pleasing but also as functional interpretation of traditional lifestyles. Meanwhile, in several resorts, the practice of putting a cultural figure in the landscapes or on only specific building areas without proper context to the surrounding has resulted in a pastiche design and unfit for the resort identity.

### 7.5.8 Zoning and Transportation

As mentioned earlier, zoning is used to control tourists’ movement, transportation and traffic in the resorts. Generally, as observed in the planning, the accommodations are separated from the main lobby and amenities area. As resorts located in the tropical settings, the accommodation are extended further into the jungle territory which demand suitable mode of transportations to transfer them back and forth from the drop off points near the main buildings. Most resorts parking areas are located near the main lobby and further away from the accommodations to avoid noise and visual disturbance to tourists. For sloping sites the parking is located on the higher plane as it is easier to construct.

\textsuperscript{60} The Malay house is seen not as single unit but as part of the kampong (village community) (Alexander, 2006), timeless in its development and perfectly suited to indigenous custom of doing everything on the house floor itself (Rasdi, 2005). Every house has both public and private spaces with large covered porch area for entertaining guests while the back portion is the private space for cooking, washing and sleeping. The five traditional sections are ‘anjung’ (covered porch), ‘serambi’ (veranda), ‘rumah ibu’ (the main living quarters) ‘selang’ (passageway between the communal porch and living quarters). It is largely an open plan layout with large open space for ventilation and uses available local materials with timber frame and thatch roof and screens to protect from rain and rose on post (Alexander, 2006). Those physical features are used to provide the experience of traditional living in modern day resorts. However, problem exists when transferring it into modern interpretations when trying to use the forms to other uses structurally as timber had to be joined in order to have longer beam and its suitability in urban areas where the free standing requirement for air flow to cool the building cannot be achieved due to the high cost of land (Ismail, 2006).

\textsuperscript{61} The forms indicates the plans and layouts, for example when looking at the pitch roof you get a sense of what happens behind the visible façade resulting from the height and shape of sloping roof (Lawson, 2001).
Technically, the location may be suitable for the parking area even though it is simultaneously being considered as a prime area that are more suitable for important facilities such as accommodation units or restaurants due to the commanding view from the top. For example, the lobby of the Avillion Resort is located on top of steep cliff near the main road. Here, the visitors are required to take the elevators or stairs to the lower levels amenities and the accommodation units. This is similar to other resorts where the lobby is located near the parking areas located at the upper levels for ease of earthwork levelling and also to prevent environmental impact during construction. While most resorts employ conventional transportation planning there are also several resorts that utilise buggies or shuttle bus as the means of transportation to control the level of congestion, air and noise pollution within the resort’s premises (Refer to Figure 7.15). The use of natural pathway for vehicles can also assist in conserving the environment (Refer to Figure 7.16).

7.5.9 Building Forms and Shapes

Forms and shapes are the two important design components that constitute the change of environment that tourists usually seek in their visits. The term ‘form’ here is used to describe the two dimensional figure in the site plans and defined as the geometric expression of an original idea which can be organic or inorganic (Billings, 1993). A building form shall be shaped on the basis of its intended function and is influenced by the material assigned to them for the public to appreciate its beauty and understand its usage (Holm, 2006). On the other hand, architectural shapes are distinctly real rather than an abstract and in cognizant with their own utilitarian purpose.
and materiality of their history and physical context in which they are to be built depending on the social, cultural and political influence (Nesbitt, 1996) and explains a three dimensional figure\textsuperscript{62}(Billings, 1993). For Billings, forms are derived from nature, and the basis of all building shapes\textsuperscript{63}. In this analysis, the meaning in which the forms and shapes are being used to enhance the tourists’ experience through the siting process was investigated. The building forms provide different experience that tourists seek in their vacation. While tourists’ desire environment from their urban homes, the local residents usually oppose to the idea of urbanizing their landscape.

Meanwhile, the idea of urbanization is closely connected to the building height, an important consideration in the design of resorts forms in association with the particular surrounding. The analysis of three dimensional forms indicates that the natural setting of the resorts plays crucial role in determining the overall forms in the three main resorts. Many resorts are designed as low rise buildings which are integrated into the natural landscape and setting. The lower resorts are basically less than four storeys and equipped with elevators for servicing and maintenance. One common feature of the low rise is that the hotel lobby stands out as the highest structure as a prominent architectural feature of the resort. Most of the resorts observed have large lobby spaces covered by pitch roof that are constructed higher to create a sense of openness and grandiosity. The large spaces allows for integrating the landscape into the lobby interior spaces. Typically, the highest location at the site is preferred for the lobbies.

Importantly, the analysis of the resorts’ forms demonstrates the marginal difference between mass tourism and the more environmentally sensitive resorts. The mass tourism resorts are represented by high rise buildings as opposed to the smaller scale resorts which are less than four storeys high. The high rise resorts have the advantages of having more urban character development which is suitable for tourists destination located near urban setting such as in Port Dickson. The resorts, combined

\textsuperscript{62} Billings differentiate the use of form and shape to explain the figures created in the siting of the resort facilities. He refers to Steadman’s view of design in the book ‘Architectural Morphology’ which states: ‘…design is, always been… at its central core with the manipulation of form with composition, understood as putting together of two or three dimensional components, either spaces or material elements, in arrangements or configuration …The architect’s choice of forms is made according to his artistic purpose and is directed towards the satisfaction of … his client tastes, desires, and utilitarian requirements, as well as being limited by technical and structural possibility… The choice of form in design is constrained above all by limits on what is geometrically and topologically possible’.
with ample open spaces and landscaping provides good resort environment. However, high rise resort development also has its disadvantages in terms of scale when they are located further from the urban area. Here, the form became too alien to the surrounding environment. The form of the resorts is also the result of the emphasis on view towards the sea. In some cases, the resorts accommodation units are rotated to maximise the view towards the sea. In several resorts the form are staggered to make full use of the views towards the sea allowing the creation of large balcony for viewing purposes and also as private spaces for tourists. In terms of form, the modular nature of the resort designs is introduced for two reasons; the complex forms are not easy to use in the design of buildings and also the need to provide a simple framework to integrate complex building functions which is difficult to achieve in complex shapes.

Besides the complex form, the possible combination of building shapes are infinite where the regular spaced and symmetrically placed combinations are often more amenable to changes compared to irregular, asymmetric arrangements. Thus for future expansion it is easier to use the simple form and shape due to the reduction in suitable directions for expansions, movement patterns and service grids from the original and changes in the internal and external appearance parts of the complex. The simple form is observed as the main characteristic of the resorts in the study.

In terms of geometry, many resorts harmoniously adapted to the natural site condition where certain climatic consideration is a determining factor in the built forms. It can be summarised from the site planning analysis that the luxury resorts facilities are set out to respect the scale and architecture of the surrounding by breaking the volume into clusters that adopt the contours of the topography. The clustering of open spaces provides alternative private spaces for tourist as compared to resorts that are arranged in a single centralised courtyard and courtyard grouping, which is also considered as the main feature in multi story resorts. The centralised courtyard is the focus of view and activities which is easier to achieve in formal planning arrangement. In area which does not have the natural attraction other than the beach front, typified

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64 Open spaces should be functional as well as it is significant part a function of population and land use pattern Kelly (2009) and the physical characteristics are fundamental where variable such as space, location and accessibility have a direct bearing on functional effectiveness and is resource-based to particular environmental setting (Pigram and Jenkins, 2006).
by the multi story resorts, the planning of the facilities are implemented to create a centralised courtyard surrounded by amenities while maximising the site\textsuperscript{65}.

The centralised courtyard is where the pool is located generally for the common tourist’s activities (Refer to Figure 7.17 and 7.18). Beside this, the centralised courtyard space is being shared not only by tourists immersed in the activities but also viewed by tourist from the balconies attached to the accommodations above. While this maximises the social interactions between tourists and the locals, it also minimises the environmental quality of the space where the congregation of tourists in one centralised courtyard also impose problems in terms of perceived overcrowding of tourists and impact caused by the tourists’ activities.

Meanwhile, in most resorts, the shapes\textsuperscript{66} of site boundaries determine the arrangement of resorts’ facilities. An odd shape site usually resulted in informal arrangement while the basically square shaped shows the resort inclination to have a formal clustering of strict parallel or u shaped formation to maximise the site. In the odd shape site, the building is arranged in linear, row or in small clusters, where emphasis is given to the view towards the sea. The formal arrangement in rectangular shaped site still allows all of the resort to have direct view towards the sea through the positioning of corridors or turning the units at an appropriate degree. The internal units which simultaneously facing the central courtyard consequently became the main feature of the resorts.

In the sprawling arrangement, the overall planning however is observed to be very compact and congested where some of the units are sandwiched haphazardly in between the two units which face the sea to maximise the site areas. While this is the main objective, these units are found to have lesser view towards the sea or facing the other units. In the case of the multi story resorts, they are forced to expand vertically

\textsuperscript{65} The market-driven land use patterns often lead to unsustainable use of land that result in land degradation and decreasing profit in the long term (Agarwal, 2001). This implies the need for maximizing the site. Friedmann (1987) asserts that the integrative environmental planning involves early and substantive consideration of environmental and social factors in the formulation of development plans and projects while proactive measures are taken to enhance environmental quality to preserve or protect certain areas. Thus, smart growth which emphasizes development in areas of existing infrastructure and de-emphasizes development in areas of less suitable for development and at the same time supports or enhances the existing communities and preserves natural and agricultural resources and the cost of new infrastructure (Randolph, 2000).

\textsuperscript{66} Shapes can be connected together before the diagram (boundary becomes impossible to view as functional realistic (Billings, 1993). This justifies the use of term ‘shape’ in describing a site boundary.
due to the site constraint and also the need for accommodating the maximum number of units. Meanwhile, the visual analysis on figure ground studies depicts that many of the resorts adopt the clustering of forms in the siting of the facilities.

On one hand, clustering is a planning method that helps to mitigate sprawling pattern of growth. Arendt (1997) asserts that clustering involves targeting development density in specific area to protect critical habitat and other natural areas. This is clearly visible in the figure ground studies where in most resorts, the clustering of the accommodation units is an effective tool in mitigating sprawling and in the process, create compact forms of development while protecting significant areas of natural habitat without negatively impacting the land values. On the other hand, concerns on the issue that the compact form of development through the process of clustering can actually exacerbate environmental impacts and run counter to the tourists’ preferences for low density development needs to be addressed. Clustering produce small clusters of open spaces which are beautiful in landscape but not being fully utilised by tourist due to its lack of size and also privacy. In several resorts, cluster zoning allows high density development in one area of the parcel while leaving the remaining land undeveloped. Meanwhile, the sprawling of the facilities beyond the shoreline is introduced as unique features of the resort and also brings concern on the management of coastal ecosystem. This includes the design decision making process where the quality of the plans is being questioned. Here, the levels of biodiversity within a jurisdiction are not related to the quality of plans, but instead, the degree of human disturbance (for
example, pavement and exotic species) significantly increases the quality of jurisdictions plan to effectively manage ecological system (Brody, 2003).

7.6 Physical Design Features

The remaining part of this chapter discusses the physical design features that are needed to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts. The investigation on the common physical design features across the resorts are identified and summarised in Appendix 14.

7.6.1 Environmental Design Features in Accommodations

The accommodation units are the place tourists will spend most of their time in the resorts. Thus, the physical design features in the accommodation are crucial to promote the environmental and social relations. As observed in the resorts, it can be in the form of providing private balconies as transitional spaces towards the outdoor. It also includes using appropriate construction technique in elevating the chalets above the ground and sea on stilts to conserve the environment whilst offering unique experience to the tourists. Other environmental setting observed in the accommodation includes open air bathroom, large window opening or screens with the intention to encourage tourists to feel closer to nature (Refer to Figure 7.19, 7.20, 7.21 and 7.22)

| Figure 7.19: Large window opening in the accommodation units to enhance interior and exterior inter-visibility. Source: Author | Figure 7.20: Watching the waves from the units above the sea in The Avillion Resort in providing a sense of location for tourists Source: Author |
Figure 7.21: The courtyard at the main toilets in The Pangkor Laut Resort in maintaining the environmental integration throughout the resort. Source: Author

Figure 7.22: Open air bath with cultural features in The Pangkor Laut Resort to promote the environmental experience. Source: Author

7.6.2 Passive Design Features

As has been mentioned earlier, the open spaces in most resorts are observed to be lacking of physical design features that would allow social interaction to materialize in comfortable and environmentally sensitive manner. This includes passive design features [shades, screens or water features] or streets fittings such as the seatings, table, lighting, rubbish bins or water taps that can prolong the tourists’ stay in the spaces. In a way, the way passive design features are integrated into the design also reflects the designers’ creativity in integrating the design with the environment.

Figure 7.23: The Avillion Resort’s Lobby; High and layered roof to allow natural cross ventilation and lighting into the interior lobby space. Source: Author

Figure 7.24: Screen wall partition to filter the extreme sunlight for comfortable experience in covered outdoor spaces of The Tanjung Rhu Resort’s. Source: Author

As tropical resorts, passive design techniques can be both functional and aesthetically pleasant if they are properly integrated into the design. In this instance,
the function of the passive designs taken from vernacular design features includes providing cross ventilation through multi layered roof and screen to filter the direct sunlight or view (Lim, 1987; and Tan, 1994) as described in Figure 7.23 and 7.24. In the process, the lack of these features limits the activities to be planned and performed in these areas. For example, in a resort in Langkawi, the space for social relationship is used as outdoor seating for restaurants during daytime and as a performing stage at night (Refer to Figure 7.25 and 7.26). While the dual usage of spaces is one way of maximising the use of resort’s space; this reflects the intention of the developer to emphasise on the economic benefits rather than towards enhancing the social interactions for tourists. Specific provision of a place for cultural showcase with the appropriate physical features will create a sense of belonging for the local community as their culture are being promoted in the siting of the facilities.

![Figure 7.25: A cultural showcase during the night time in The Mutiara Pelangi Beach Resort, Langkawi Island. Source: Author](image1)

![Figure 7.26: The area for cultural showcase is an outdoor restaurant patio during the day time. Source: Author](image2)

As described by Hashimoto (2002) in Chapter Two, shortened and abbreviated version of the cultural performance can bridge the cultural gap that exists between hosts and tourists for the positive experience to materialize. For tourists, the

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67 Tourism strategies can positively contribute to civic pride and positive social identities by helping to develop pride in their traditions and rightful attachment to their place, space and identity (Burns, 2004). In this vein, tourists and residents collaborate in forging identities, assembled from bits and pieces of real and imagined cultural heritage (Salamone, 1997). While the seaside resort has been an intriguing social and cultural space (Morgan and Pritchard, 2000), Daniel (1996) argues that dance as a medium of architectural expression is creative and mutually involving. In the case of Fiji, the performance of cultural spectacles by local residents by the packaging of public space within the boundaries, have helped to absorb tourism into the life of community (Brian and King, 1997). Thus, the process of defining and communicating identity is a creative act involving a cultural performance which takes place in areas which are markedly public in orientation (Miller, 1995).
identification of this place allow them to have a sense of place that indicates that they are not in their home environment but rather in a festive place which resorts should be reflecting in their surroundings (Refer to Figure 7.27). In terms of space, a resort in Port Dickson provides a small performing platform; separated by water features that limit the performance and interaction of tourists and the local performers (Refer to Figure 7.28). Here, tourists should be allowed to participate during the performance rather than interacting visually. The use of amphitheatre would be a better choice in this case as it suits for the multi-purpose tourists’ activities.

![Figure 7.27: Landscape and water features in the main courtyard of The Andaman Langkawi where it limits social function if they are provided excessively. Source: Author](image1)

![Figure 7.28: A cultural show held at a Gazebo in The Avillion Resort, Port Dickson where the location and size is inadequate for the social interaction. Source: Author](image2)

### 7.6.3 Cultural Features

The local architectural elements can be regarded as symbols that unite the 'transnationals' nature of tourists in the given spaces. It can be observed that the attempt to use culture to create authentic resorts that can enhance the tourists experience has been the main design theme in several resorts. The initial step is for the designer to define the aesthetic objective of culture if the designs are to be developed to fit with the locals and tourists needs. The cultural symbols provide meaning to these spaces by navigating both the local space (the resort) and global space (home country) by tourists. In this vein, Pearce (2005a) argues that the social interaction is a consequence of the role of tourists as an outsider, a stranger and as an observer of life. Thus, the conflicting roles of tourists are controlled by the experience in the resorts which are assisted and enhanced by specific design features in the spaces.

In general, the integration of local cultural features can be observed in the resorts in terms of the followings:
1. The utilisation of vernacular design features such as multilayered roof and longer and larger overhangs for natural cross ventilations and sunlight controls which also function as passive design features;
2. The integration of community landscapes in the social spaces in open spaces; and,
3. The use of local architecture features expressed in terms of material procurement and landscape to enhance the social experience through the sense of hearing, feel and touch. These include the use of local timber, natural stones for pavers and feature walls and incorporating water features as part of the landscape. This will be further elaborated in the Paragraph 7.5.5.

7.6.4 Landscape

The provision of landscaping in the open spaces created by siting process reveals the intention of resort operators to promote the environmental and social experience in the resorts. It is used for both the aesthetic and functional purposes. The techniques observed in the resorts include using landscape as microclimate controls for the maintenance of the air quality, as shades from extreme sun and as windbreaker to protect the resort from the monsoon. Beside this, the plants are also used as space delimiters and screens as an inexpensive solution to control the view and noise in the

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68 The acoustic effects in vegetation arise through three mechanism namely, sound absorption, sound diffusion and sound level reduction (Kang, 2007). Planting trees alone are ineffective where it should include dense shrubs (leaves) (Thomson and Sorvig, 2000) in which main factors affecting the sound absorption included biomass, size and orientation of leaves (Watanabe and Yamada, 1996). While the tree acts as a sound barrier, it is perceived as does not effectively prevent sound transmission (Kang, 2007) where the tree branches and leaves interfere with acoustic energy by scattering, refracting, reflecting the acoustic waves (Bucur, 2006) due to its permeability to air. Despite its limited value as an acoustic buffer the vegetation is still utilized to reduce sound and improve the environment. Parts of resorts that are sources of increased noise levels by the nature of their functions should use buffers created by dense vegetation planted around them (Bomberek, 2009). Plants absorb and dissipate sound energy and thus act as buffer zone (Sharma, 2020). While Bies and Hansen (2009) argue that a single row of trees along highway or near houses results in negligible attenuation of the noise, vegetated buffers with a minimum width of 30 meters and containing trees of a certain leaf shape and density are recommended as effective barriers to prevent spray drift and noise (Kozlowski and Peterson, 2005). Meanwhile, Walker (1991) asserts that vegetation not only can help reduce outdoor noise but also psychologically separate the source of sound from the viewer. The wind moving through trees also creates pleasant noise that masks unwanted noise (Rubenstein, 1992). Furthermore, the green areas and plants can be viewed as alternative habitats for insects and birds (Wong and Chen, 2008) that may enrich the ecological quality and health of the environment as well as providing emotional, intellectual, social and physical benefit to humans (Johnston and Newton, 1996).
open spaces. Meanwhile, in certain areas, the combination of soft landscaping and water feature provide a soothing and cooling environment. While landscape is an important feature in the open space, there are a few cases in several resorts where the landscape is improperly designed. For example, the existences of heavy vegetations along the beach frontage are obstructing the attractive view towards the beach**69** (Refer to Figure 7.29).

![Figure 7.29: Excessive landscape to depict the natural setting that can also block the attractive view towards the beach area. Source: Author](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 7.29: Excessive landscape to depict the natural setting that can also block the attractive view towards the beach area. Source: Author</th>
<th>Figure 7.30: Conserving the existing tropical vegetations in the pool area of The Datai Langkawi Resort. Source: Author</th>
</tr>
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In another example, in areas that are heavily landscaped to create a sound barrier among the units, the issue of visibility become the main concern in enhancing the tourists’ experience. ‘Inter-visibility’ where the different parts of a project area are visible in the surrounding landscape enriches the environmental and social experience of the tourists which are found lacking in some of the resorts. The siting of the facilities ensures to a certain extent that the hierarchy of views and visibility between spaces can be met which include the recognition of areas need to be screened and or which should be enhanced to excite tourists (Refer to Figure 7.30).

Apart from the inter-visibility issue, the concept of creating fascination is also closely connected to the function of landscape in the open spaces. Kaplan (1992) states that people like to be fascinated where it takes the form of becoming interested in and involved with what is potentially educational, dangerous or important to the

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69 In the consumption of place, the landscape becomes a function of the way which the facilities that are oriented to selling commodities are dispersed (Holmes, 2001). While landscape is arranged to encourage consumption and the appearance of the place, excessive landscape or tourism resources could not be left uncontrolled and deteriorate or prejudicial to the social and economic interest of the population in tourist area (Romeril, 1985).
individual in the same social way. The environment stimulates both the brain as well as the muscle. Thus fascination with the environment can be regarded as a basic requirement for survival. The attempt to create the sense of fascination can be traced from the planning of the resorts. One example includes framing a view by incorporating certain group of trees or introducing certain sequence of visual experience to add the aesthetic pleasure of tourists visiting a resort. Another example is locating the accommodation deeper in the jungle to enrich the memorable environmental experience when tourists first enter and leave the resorts. In the siting of the facilities, the integration of landscape is not only focussed in the courtyards but also in unattractive places such as the parking areas, alongside of the roadways and also used to screen the service areas from tourists. In relation to transitional spaces, the fascination on the landscape should be continued from the exterior to the interior spaces where there are concentrations of tourists (Refer to Figure 7.31).

![Figure 7.31: Extension of landscape into the interior lobby space in The Mutiara Beach Resort, Langkawi. Source: Author](image1)

![Figure 7.32: A manmade lagoon as passive cooling feature and ceating fascination in The Mutiara Pelangi Beach Resort, Langkawi. Source: Author](image2)

In another example, bringing the water edges closer to building also creates the sense of fascination towards the environment (Figure 7.32). In several resorts that face totally flat and featureless site, the development of plan is based on the tourists needs in terms of facilities and spaces with limited landscaping. The lack of open spaces that conserve the local vegetation in the resorts is a clear indication of the intention. This demonstrates the importance of resorts location in an attractive natural setting as an asset and also the importance of landscaping in enhancing tourists’ experience. The question remains however, on what type of landscape is suitable for a sustainable resort development. Should the landscape be local or foreign? It is necessary to use the local landscape in developing the appropriate types and forms of resort development as site planning is essentially about the right thing in the right place (Beer,
In this case, the coastal resorts can develop their own beauty when using local landscapes which relates to the appropriateness rather than aesthetics when the use fits the landscape. Furthermore, it was observed that the spaces intended to conserve nature in the main resorts are usually filled with native vegetations. In tropical resorts, the preservation of landscape is also crucial in protecting the wildlife; an important element in creating positive environmental experience. In addition, native landscape is more resistant than foreign species in terms of plant diseases, in which their utilisation can minimise the long-term maintenance cost of managing the landscape.

However, appropriate introduction of foreign vegetation is also necessary to break the monotonous appearance of the natural tropical setting. As observed in the resorts, colourful floras provide variations to stimulate learning environment in the resorts surroundings. In general, landscape is used as the unifying element in the design. Landscape is important in the site planning for the way they are arranged can help unify the appearance of the site which does not have attractive environmental setting. While it serves as a unifying element, it is also important that the maintenance of health and safety standards for both tourists and hosts is provided to control the environmentally derived diseases caused by poor maintenance of the landscape. The use of natural tropical plants also requires regular maintenance that can incur extra cost. In this vein, the proper selection of landscape that can be less maintained can improve the resource management in the long run.

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70 The acoustic effects in vegetation arise through three mechanism namely, sound absorption, sound diffusion and sound level reduction (Kang, 2007). Planting trees alone are ineffective where it should include dense shrubs (leaves) (Thomson and Sorvig, 2000) in which main factors affecting the sound absorption included biomass, size and orientation of leaves (Watanabe and Yamada, 1996). While the tree acts as a sound barrier, it is perceived as does not effectively prevent sound transmission (Kang, 2007) where the tree branches and leaves interfere with acoustic energy by scattering, refracting, reflecting the acoustic waves (Bucur, 2006) due to its permeability to air. Despite its limited value as an acoustic buffer the vegetation is still utilized to reduce sound and improve the environment. Here, Bies and Hansen (2009) argue that a single row of trees along highway or near houses results in negligible attenuation of the noise while Walker (1991) asserts that vegetation not only can help reduce outdoor noise but also psychologically separate the source of sound from the viewer. The wind moving through trees also creates pleasant noise that masks unwanted noise (Rubenstein, 1992). Furthermore, the green areas and plants can be viewed as alternative habitats for insects and birds (Wong and Chen, 2008) that may enrich the ecological quality and health of the environment as well as providing emotional, intellectual, social and physical benefit to humans (Johnston and Newton, 1996).
7.6.5 Local Material Expression

The positive environmental experience in coastal resorts is achieved through the siting strategies that successfully combined the activities and design of the facilities with existing resources. This includes the integration of proper local materials and specific construction system, the details of the design and the usage of the site. These approaches can be observed in many resorts both in the low rise and high end resorts. In many low rise resorts, the siting of the facilities were intended to blend into the environment through the use of carefully selected materials through the interplaying of colours, textures, proportions and specific organization principles. In addition to this, the use of both local workforce and craft skills and sensitivity towards the local landscape are also considered as an attempt to show respect to the place. The goal was to devise a small sized building that blend with the environment but at the same time reflects the socio-cultural identity that create comfortable environment for the tourists. This emerges in the resort’s design as an indication of the reality of the locals to represent cultural and environmental circumstances. The difficulties in expressing the local material can be observed in multi story resorts where the scales of buildings are difficult to match the surrounding environment. It was observed that the expression is merely provided at certain areas such as the centralised courtyard and swimming pool area. The designs of the facade uses less material expression and are basically plastered brick wall with paint finishes. In terms of labour, the conventional post and beam construction by foreign workers are considered typical in high rise resorts. While this is intended to save construction cost and also to expedite the project, it also brought up important issue on the sustainability in terms of improving local labour skills and a holistic approach in creating the resort’s identity.

7.6.6 Construction Techniques

The construction method can be selected based on the way the facilities are located in relation to the site context. While many resorts adopt conventional post and beam construction method which is considered typical in the building industry, it also requires a lot of modifications to the site profile to accommodate the built structures. To counter this problem, one of the resorts in Langkawi is observed using prefabricated steel structure with lightweight building skins with the intent to make the arrangement for the accommodation more flexible. It features a sprawling arrangement of accommodation using mild steel frame sections and lightweight materials which can be transported to other location (Refer to Figure 7.33, 7.34 and 7.35).
While this is the intention, several problems need to be addressed on the material procurement for this type of construction. The selection of materials must also suit the climatic conditions of the coastal zone. The use of mild steel is unsuitable for the facilities as they are susceptible to corrosions as observed in many structural parts of the chalets (Refer to Figure 7.36).

The chalets were previously constructed using canvas for its skins which has deteriorated and currently been replaced by lightweight cement board panel. This discovery has also open the path in long term approach of the siting not only in promoting the environmental and social experience but also mitigating the impact of the global climate change through the adaptation of modular prefabricated constructions. However, further research is necessary to improve the system to be applicable in the industry.
7.6.7 Building Services

The setting of the facilities through the practice of zoning requires proper integration of building service requirement as they are considered as the source of visual pollution that degrades the environmental experience in the resorts. Most resorts in the case studies are observed to use conventional utility system for their facilities. The electrical conduits are connected to the main connection by concrete pillars that are considered as an alien feature in the resorts. Instead, these features can be hidden in the underground utility service tunnel with service manholes for maintenance and careful screenings of utility stations from tourists. In relation to this, the main concern of the resorts is the sewerage treatment system. While sewerage treatment plant is hidden from the public, there are several cases where the manhole and piping outlet for waste water from the treatment plant are exposed along the beach zones.

It is observed that due to their relatively lower occupancy and budget, most resorts are currently using only simple forms of septic tank treatment system that produce deteriorating effluent quality due to poor maintenance, aging of systems and accumulations of sewerage sludge. The implication of improper design of services can be devastating. Tourist will have the impression that the resort has poor sewerage system if they discover the uncovered service piping. They will argue that the waste flows directly to the sea and degrades the water quality. While the incidents may happen to other nearby resorts, the impact will also be felt by the particular resort. The hotel operators are partially to be blamed for these incidents. In these areas the municipal centralised system is already in place but many of the resorts operators are reluctant to link their existing sewerage system to the direct mainline to minimise cost and also less concern towards the impact to other resorts due to maintenance breakdown. As mentioned earlier, the condition could worsen in the facilities constructed above the water as the leakages can pollute the water.

Meanwhile, there is also a need by all the resorts to review the system to include any expansions to the development. The practice of population projection for future needs and sizing has not been adopted here. Due to the modular nature of the plant, it can be expanded modularly in accordance with future requirements as and when so determined. In terms of the waste disposal system it is discovered that only one of the resort provides a self efficient waste disposal treatment plant in which the waste product is processed and converted into composed fertiliser or compacted in blocks to be transported to the garbage collection area.
7.6.8 Energy Efficient Building

The absence of resorts which relies on the renewable energy in their daily operations illustrates the low sustainability states of the coastal resort in terms of integrating new technology that can assist their operations. There are vast opportunities for these resorts to use renewable energy in the forms of solar panel for electricity, reprocessing waste water or rainwater recollection to be used in sanitary systems or using roof plant for cooling off the internal spaces. While using these elements are clear indications of the resorts to be regarded as sustainable, this can be an opportunity for the coastal resorts to create the identity of sustainable resorts as the main tourists’ attraction. The feature may require initial high construction cost but it is economical in the long term to cushion the impact of low resorts occupancy during off seasons. In this context, the environment is a financial resource and with the environmental resources that the tourism industry indirectly sells, it became increasingly important economic goods and important element of market economies (Mihalic, 2002). This is in line with the nature of tourism product which is influenced by the needs, motivations, expectations and consequent behaviour of tourists (Sharpley, 2002). Similarly, the spiritual refreshment of solitary, natural places which may be reflected in the collective experience of sites and destinations (Urry, 1990).

The siting of the facilities can maximise the usage of renewable energy in the resorts for example, through proper building orientation for maximum sun using solar panels and also storing rainwater in the water feature in the open spaces whilst being used to water the plants. In addition to this, bio mass technology can also be utilised to produce electricity in the resorts. Importantly, while the sustainable requirements are stated in the NEP guidelines initiated by the government, the implementation were stalled by the lack of awareness on the sustainable issues among all stakeholders and also insufficient support by the government in terms of providing tax benefits or rebates to encourage the use of renewable energy.

7.7 Summary of Finding from Morphological Studies

The morphological analysis of the resorts concludes that while the existing siting policies in general has assisted in the developing the resorts, there are still many gaps in the way the policies have influenced the design. Sustainable tourism policy is a positive approach that seeks to maintain quality of tourism products over a sustained period of time to meet growing domestic and international market for environmentally sound tourism (Edgell et al. 2007). Here, policy can be considered as a ‘standardization’ of the presentation and interpretation of tourism sites, whereby
characteristics of a site are reduced to a set of characteristics easily recognized by the visitors (Mac Cannel, 1989). In the standardization, the creative interpretation only occurs when it has been identified what it is about specific environments that make them attractive to tourists (Butler, 2000). However, increasing pluralism, democracy and social inclusion may also lead to narrow interpretation or representation of human cultures (Butcher, 2006). This is where practitioners need to be more alert to the more creative and experiential tourism, where not only one strategy can be applied to all contexts (Smith, 2009). In this case, creativity is important to create an attractive environment suitable for all of a person’s time away from home (Richard and Wilson, 2007).

Based on this study, it is not clear if the actual practice is what the policies intended to achieve as reflected by the fragmented nature of resorts across the case study sites. The gaps on the physical design and spatial features is summarised as follows:

**Spatial Characteristics of Zoning:**

1. Lack of common spaces along the main circulations that can be controlled and secured for the environmental and social interaction to materialize;
2. The space allocation for the accommodation in association with the supporting amenities in relation to the overall building floor area are not proportionately provided for most resorts;
3. Provision of amenities and mix choices of accommodation types are limited in the multi story buildings as compared to individual units in low rise resorts;
4. The allocation of future spaces for expansion is not indicated or provided for in the development plan;
5. There are many resorts facilities being constructed in hazardous slope areas.
6. Many resorts do not follow the proper coastal zone setback which resulted in the loss of natural appearance and social spaces for interactions for the tourists and the locals;
7. Overemphasis on view factors that result in design that is not climatically sustainable. Many units are exposed to the intense evening sun;
8. Many of the chalets are without exceptional view and access to the natural surrounding attractions;
9. The views in the staggered form have its disadvantages in which view towards the sea is obstructed by the lower roof scapes;
10. The qualities of transitional spaces for the overflowing tourists’ activities are still weak due to the lack of spatial and physical design features;
11. Provision of parking spaces at prime location is more suitable for other facilities in several resorts with hilly topography;
12. The location of the accommodation is too far away which raises the concerns of safety and the need of providing different mode of transportation. In most cases the road are bituminous finished which is unsuitable for the environment;
13. The construction of multi story buildings that does not confirm with the scale of the surrounding. It is more suitable for resorts in the urban setting;
14. Clear evidence of using formal arrangement of spaces to maximise the number of accommodation with poor emphasis on the environmental experience as revealed in the lack of common spaces along the circulation corridors in the multi-storey resorts; and,
15. Providing a single courtyard in more formal arrangements of the resort facilities lacks the sense of privacy as compared to the multiple courtyards. The clustering of courtyards apart of the main central courtyard provides alternative private spaces for tourists which may automatically enhance the tourists’ environmental and social experience.

**Physical Design Features:**

1. Many resorts do have proper environmental setting or features in the accommodation to facilitate the experience however, the integration of passive design technique is still lacking;
2. Lack of specifically demarcated cultural spaces which allow direct participation ob both the hosts and tourists. The spaces are inadequately sized and lacking the appropriate physical design features;
3. The corridor linkages have no adequate cover for protection from rain and sun which limits its usage;
4. In most of the open spaces areas, the heavy vegetation not only obstructs the view but also prevents social function in the spaces. Many open spaces in the resorts are either too heavily and lightly landscaped which address concerns on its feasibility in enhancing the tourists’ interaction through the activities in the resorts;
5. While landscapes are used to create a sense of localities through the use of local plant communities, it also provides the sense of scale to the resorts form and shapes that unite the resort. However, many resorts employ different species of vegetations;
6. Although the process of the siting can also serve as the source of fascination in the spaces to stimulate the environmental interaction, it is found lacking in most of the resorts;

7. Many of the resorts use unfamiliar material which does not reflect the sense of identity and belonging to the place. In several cases there is evidence of material degradation due to the wrong choice of material and technology in constructing the facilities;

8. Incorporating incompatible construction technique which does not suit the site context such as the use of fabricated mild steel system at coastal zone;

9. Improper integration of building services which are exposed and required higher maintenance; and,

10. Low level of integration of energy efficient techniques in the design.

7.8 Conclusion

The coastal resort morphologies and site’s observations implies that the resorts have to a certain extent utilized the siting process to promote the environment and social relations in enhancing the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts in West Malaysian Peninsular. However, the fragmentally designed and individually styled resorts in terms of zoning and the physical design features demonstrates that the practice has not only occurred with or without the formal government initiated policies or guidelines but also depends on the informal creativity of designers, in which the product can be both positive or negative. The analysis on the coastal resort’s physical data sets, the spatial quality of zoning and the physical design features in the spaces created by the siting process support the statement.

There are common strategies or techniques utilized by the designers in locating and programming of the resorts’ facilities to enhance the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts. It has been observed that the practice have occurred with or without the relevant policies and guidelines which concurrently supports the regulators and designers’ views in the Chapter Six. The fragmentally designed and individually styled resorts demonstrate that the practice has not only occurred with or without the formal government initiated policies or guidelines but also depend on the informal creativity of designers. The general patterns of physical data characteristics of the case study resorts indicates the variations across the resorts in terms of the provision of circulation spaces and the arrangement and provision of type of units, open spaces and
amenities. The morphological analysis also exposes few important gaps in the quality of the zoning in controlling the tourists’ movements, conservation of natural environment, in accommodating resorts coastal and building setbacks, maximising view, as quality transitional spaces, transportation and building forms and shapes.

The provisions of common spaces are found lacking along the circulation areas and in many cases the facilities are located in hazardous area without the provisions of socially responsible access along the coastal setback zone. The designs of several resorts are observed as not climatically sustainable due to the overemphasised on the view factors. Meanwhile, in several resorts, the transitional spaces provided are not conducive to tourists and improper size allocation of open spaces does not allow tourists to feel comfortable. Furthermore, the space for cultural showcase are not properly identified or sized which do not allow for proper interaction between tourists and hosts. Meanwhile, the lack of spaces for expansion indicate the resort’s incapability to adapt to any changes in future tourism demand or planned beyond its maturity as stressed by Butler (1980) in his ‘Destination’s Lifecycle’ Concept. While adequate transportation systems were planned in the resorts, there are several cases where parking spaces are located at the prime areas. In terms of forms, the use of multi storey buildings in the resort case study sites reflects the weakness in confirming to the scale of regional development.

The findings in the physical design features indicates that several resorts are improperly located as they face each other and subjected to the view and noise disturbances although the environmental setting are being provided in the resorts. Meanwhile, the improper landscaping obstructs visibility and its insufficient amount in the open spaces failed to create a sense of fascination. Furthermore, the use of local material is limited to several areas in the resorts rather than being fully integrated. There are also traces of improper selection of material and the poor integration of building service especially the sewage system. There are lost of opportunity by the resorts in integrating renewable energy in sustaining their operations. The emphasis in the design is more on the economic benefits rather than enhancing the tourists’ experience. These factors imply that there are gaps in the siting strategies between the governments’ initiated policies and the actual practice in the way the quality of resort’s design is controlled and manifested to enhance the tourists’ experience.

The negative design aspects may resulted from incompetency within the policies, disruptive political interference and developer’s emphasis on the economic factors rather than integrating the environmental and social relation elements as highlighted by the regulators earlier. While the basic characteristics such as sizes and building heights
is formally regulated by the authority through specific guidelines, they are insufficient to facilitate the experience without taking into consideration of the tourists and local views. The fact that the resorts are fragmentally designed calls for better approach to unite the resorts through the siting strategies and in more responsible manner which includes integrating user’s ideologies.
Chapter Eight

Discussion on the Findings

In the Interviews with Tourists

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in interviews with tourists in the three case study sites. It is one of the three strategies that are employed in the data collection and analysis that form the foundation for this study. In retrospective, the interviews with regulators investigated the roles of regulation in locating the facilities, while the coastal resort morphologies explored the way the siting is practiced within the relevant policies framework. The main concern of this chapter however, is to discuss the typical characteristics of tourists’ experience that can be incorporated in the policies or regulations.

The findings in the interviews with regulators indicate that the policies have to a certain extent been successful in managing the siting practice, but it is unclear that the final design product is the primary intention of the regulators. This is displayed by the fragmented nature of the resorts design in morphological analysis. Both findings demonstrate that while the existing designs are controlled by the policies, they are highly dependent on the designers’ creativity and lack of the integration of the users’ perception. Hence, it is detrimental to analyse the association between tourists’ experience with the regulations and practice and to understand how successful the ideologies have been incorporated.

In pursuing the above, this chapter initially reviews the research question and basic assumptions in this approach by reflecting the key issues of the tourists’ experience. This is followed by the results from the interviews. There are certain attributes of the tourists experience, which once identified can be integrated into more comprehensive and effective siting strategies. Thus, the association of the tourists’ experience with the particular resort’s environment, facilities and activities were investigated to unveil the attributes. The way the tourists define their positive and negative on-site experience and identify the assisting spatial and physical design
features through their verbal expressions provide the clue on the important attributes of their ideologies that can be integrated into the strategies. The contention is that the combination of the informal tourists' ideologies with formal policies initiated by the government will assist in creating more comprehensive siting strategies to promote environmental and social integration in the practice and further enhances the tourists' experience in coastal resorts. The findings in this interview will not only support other methodological approaches but also assist in addressing the recommendation for the appropriate siting strategies to create sustainable coastal resorts with distinctions.

8.2 Revisiting the Methodology

The focus of this chapter revolves around the research question – what is the typical tourist's experience in the coastal resorts of West Malaysian Peninsula? The question seeks to understand the positive experience that can be provided in coastal resort to attract tourists. As repeatedly mentioned in the previous chapters, a good resort promotes positive site experience offering tourists clear conceptions of what the place is, where the activities provided are accessible and assisted by the physical elements in the environment which are distinctively pleasing (Newsome et al., 2002).

Meanwhile, the account that tourists’ behaviours are the integral part of the experience has been discussed in Chapter Two. Ryan (1997) and Pearce et al. (1981) reveal the existence of stereotypes in determining the characteristics of tourists. Tourists are viewed as indulgent, exploitive, lacking civility and having a restricted appreciation of cultures and places (Crick, 1989). These stereotypes of tourists and the social role they occupy imply that it is not easy to fulfil the tourists' role. This implies that their roles are ambiguous and may be affected by other tourists in the resorts and

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71 Typical tourists here include domestic and international tourists. Domestic and international tourists refers to visitors from outside of the region of interest who stay for at least one night while the term visitor is used to embrace international tourists, domestic tourists and tourist facility users from the local region or home (Pearce, 2005) who comes to an area, spends money and leave (Theobald, 2004). Different tourists would have different gaze experience (way of seeing and interpreting the environment) (Urry, 1990). They have different motivations for vacationing that is shaped by the tourist industry geared towards, rest and relaxation (McLeod, 2004). The concepts and language required to express judgments are the products of sustained, intricate cultural learning from the typical tourists (Woodward, 2006). Here, the common discursive practice that are used by tourists in the enactment of their roles can be analysed to identify the bases on which the tourists evaluate their experiences (Kozak and Decrop, 2009). Tourists are after all the holiday makers where the performance of the tourists whilst they experience the product should be equal interest (Foster, 2009).
requires a physical influence from the resort as the tourism product. It also implies that the social interaction with the host is important in enhancing tourists’ experience.

As also discussed in Chapter Two, tourists’ activities may have negative and positive consequences to the environment and the local community. The environmental impacts include water pollution, energy abuse, erosion, litter and fuel consumption (Liddell, 1997) while the socio-cultural impact includes insensitive and culturally offensive behaviour, changes in lifestyle and the spread of disease (Pearce et al., 1999). The relationship between the facilities and activities and also the need for mitigating the environmental and socio-cultural impact call for proper siting practice through the relevant regulations. The impacts of the tourists’ behaviours have further resulted in a set of controls and influence the mechanism in the siting to shape negative tourists behaviour and alter the experience of other tourists.

Essentially, the main idea of the siting is to ensure the tourists’ experience in the resorts are less negative by adopting a more environmentally deterministic approach to the resort’s design by organizing the siting of the facilities appropriately. The proper zoning of meeting places between the tourist and group of tourists which are supported by the physical elements could enhance their experience. Thus, interpreting the tourists’ experience in the spaces created by the siting practice is the key process that influences the conception of tourist hold and negotiates with others as they experience the site (Pearce, 2005). It is also closely connected with the concept of authenticity where the quest for spontaneous, transparent and insightful views of a place is regarded as the driver of all tourists’ behaviour (Mc Cannell, 1976).

Meanwhile, the discussion of authenticity in this study has focused largely on the cultural setting, however its applicability also applies to other factors such as environmental experience and wildlife encounters which will also be highlighted in this chapter. The human-wildlife encounter would enable the tourists to choose the one most likely to facilitate their desired experiences and their local needs (Newsome et al. 2005). Meanwhile Floyd and Gramann (1997) stress that there is a link between setting and experience such that the type of setting in which the encounter take place can constrain or facilitate the attainment of such desired experience. In facilitating the experience the inter-linkage between planning and management is summarised as ‘taking place simultaneously in a given context (Mason, 2003), which implies the importance of understanding tourist’s on site experience as a way forward to improve the coastal resorts’ design.
8.2.1 Basic Assumptions on the Methodology

In attempting to answer the research question, several basic assumptions that will guide the discussion and outcome of the interviews are projected as follows:

1. The way tourists define their positive experience through verbal expressions will provide important information on the dimensions of experience required to create the experience;
2. Creating the tourists' positive experience is important in meeting the tourist expectation for better quality resorts. It can be determined in the way the coastal resorts promote the environmental and social experience to attract more tourists;
3. There are ways that the siting of the resorts could enhance the tourists' experience in coastal resorts by enhancing the spatial quality in promoting environmental and social relation through the zoning practice;
4. There are physical features in the spaces created by the siting that can be identified by tourists in enhancing the tourists experience in coastal resorts; and,
5. The attributes of the tourists experience based on their verbal expressions can be integrated into more comprehensive siting strategies in combination with the government initiated policies to create distinctive sustainable resorts.

8.3 Reflection on the Interviews

The participants comprise of the local and international tourists in the three case study sites resorts. While the questions are in English, the main issue is the level of the tourists' comprehension of the questions. The Researcher observed that the manner in which the tourists responded to the questions indicates the possibility that the questions asked during the interviews do not properly relate to the perception of the tourists. For example, when asked on how the siting has benefited the local community, the answers were more focussed on how it will benefit the resorts in general terms rather than on what has actually been observed and transpired in the particular resort. However, the use of in-depth interviews has increased the reliability of the results. In this particular situation, while the interviewer is meant to listen and encourage the respondent to talk and not to engage in debate (Ticehurst and Veal, 1999), the researcher needs to monitor the process and progress and content of the interview (Cavana et al. 2001). As a result, the question was repeated several times and the respondent was reminded on the objective of the question.
Surprisingly, it is more difficult to find English speaking tourists as many came from Asia and the Middle Eastern countries\textsuperscript{72} who speak less of the language. The situation is exacerbated by the Researcher failure to acquire the guest list from the reception offices and as a result, the interviews were held at random and spontaneously in the resorts. The in-depth study which is conducted in the natural environment of the resorts allows the researcher to observe other elements in the study. Interviews are participant observations, within which the researcher will be undertaking observations (Denzin, 1989) whilst Jenning (2004) stresses the need to listen with full attention to the participant, interacting and engaging with them, providing feedback regarding that engagement. With this in frame, how the respondents answer the questions could be included with other observational data as well as their response to the questions. For example, when asked about the physical agents that assist in enhancing their experience in the resorts, further observations to the features in the actual conditions and their hands-on experiences provide better information on the main issues.

8.3.1 Tourists and Economic Factors

A more complex account in the interviews is in exploring the relationships between the concept of positive environmental experience and their attitudes in the resorts. For a high percentage of tourists, cost has become among the principal factor in selecting the resorts to stay. Prior research has shown that the on-site activities provided have a great influence on resort's consumers' perceptions of quality and satisfactions from resort vacation experience (Costa et al., 2004). However, for many customers, price is an important factor which is almost always taken into considerations and influences their choices of a hotel (Lewis and Chamber, 1989). It is an image that is restructured in their minds (Pearce, 2005b).

The tourists often compared the rates with the quality of services and facilities provided in the resorts when they were asked about the features that assist in enhancing their experience. In relation to this, Chan and Wong (2005), in their research states that such intangible hotel attributes as security, dependability, service quality, reputation and staff behaviour and tangible attributes as price, the appearance of qualities, location and past experience were identified by many researchers as most desired by tourists. Surprisingly, this occurs more frequently in the high end resorts.

\textsuperscript{72} The month of November and December usually recorded high rate of tourists arrivals from Western countries and Australia where September and October tourists arrivals are mainly from the Middle Eastern countries, as described by a tourism officer in Tourism Action Council in Langkawi.
where comments on the cost and quality of foods and beverages are common among the respondents. Meanwhile, the comparisons with other resorts facilities were also made by the tourists during the interviews which reflect that most tourists possessed the knowledge to assess the hotel in terms of their rates and service qualities. As a product, hospitality is depicted from the main factors that affect the way this product is constructed and sold to consumers (Page, 2007) which include five important attributes that include hotel location, facilities, services, image and price (Melik, 1994). Thus, the ability to differentiate the product to different customers through brand development (Buhailis and Costa, 2006) is also a strategy to attract and retain customers.

Interestingly, while tourists are always commenting on the issue of the cost, they also acknowledged the difference between the budget motel and high end resorts in terms of integrating the environment in the resorts. They acknowledged that each serves different segment of tourism but they also support the idea that the low budget resorts can be environmentally sensitive if certain creativity are adopted in the design. While the luxury hotel client seeks a special experience, status and high level of personal services, the budget motel user is motivated by a desire for a functional experience, a convenient location and economy (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007). Even the budget travellers want the same sense that they have left town to do something special and recharge their physical batteries (Plog, 2004). For the tourists, the fine building appearance as portrayed by many resorts does not necessarily convey that they are environmentally sensitive the instead it is the way the building integrates with the environment and facilitates positive experience that counts.

8.3.2 Tourists Environmental Experience and Knowledge Acquisition

It is observed that tourists mapping of their experience is closely associated with the deepening sense of appreciation and concern for the environment rather than the relationship with the communities. An individual tourist's knowledge of the environment is created in their mind as they interact with the unfamiliar environment they are visiting or on a return visit (Sharma, 2004). The emphasis on environment as the key aspect for the positive experience reflects the tendencies of respondents to experience the different environment as a memorable experience without interfering with the local community's lifestyle. The tourists by not being expressively judgmental in answering the questions pertaining to the locals' livelihood, denotes their sense of apprehensiveness and sensitivity towards the local community.

The responds from the tourists on what they have experienced in the resorts is rather individualistic. Each person's image of particular place is unique comprising their
own memories, associations and imaginations of particular place (Jenkins and Mc Arthur, 1996). Furthermore, exposure to marketing effort, personal experience and public portrayal will merge and existing images will be transformed to form an individual understanding of the destinations (Font, 1997). It appears that how much the visitors have learnt from their experience in the resorts depends on how much they knew about the resorts and how they were asked to respond. The tourists who visited the particular resort more than once have provided more appraisals compared to the first timers. The way they respond to the questions mostly signalled their preferences to stay in the particular resorts they are staying compared to others due to the positive experience they have acquired in the previous visit. On the other hand, most of the tourists who visit the resort for the first time indicate the media influence as the main reason for choosing the resort. In their appraisals, comparisons between the images and information they have preconceived from the internet or media and the actual sites signify the two following important characteristics on their experience:

1. Tourists are very particular about the environment of resorts they intend to experience and expected certain forms of positive experience during their stay; and,
2. Tourists do actively seek to learn and enjoy the educational experience in coastal resorts through the activities and the design of the facilities.

The above characteristics suggest that the tourists’ expectations of positive experience and the acquisition of new knowledge pertaining to the environment and local community are nevertheless, important attributes in the strategies to enhance their experience in the coastal resorts through appropriate image. The destination image has direct impact on travel behaviour and the destination selection process (Bonn et al, 2005), because tourists usually choose the destination with the most favourable image (Leisen, 2001). Unique attributes of a destination should be identified in order to find a competitive advantage that will differentiate it from other competitors (Ibrahim and Gill, 2005). Thus, understanding the positive tourist experience will assist in unveiling the unique attributes.

8.4 Findings in the Interview with Tourists

The definitions provided by the seventy five respondents are crucial in associating the tourists experience and the features that enhance the experience in coastal resorts in the Malaysian Peninsula. Thus, the first step was to determine the positive experiences through the tourists’ verbal expressions that offer clues to identify the key attributes of their experiences and the design features that can enhance them.
8.4.1 Defining ‘Positive and Negative Experience’

Tourists’ definition of positive experience is analysed using Otto and Ritchie’s (1996) ‘Model of Expressive Domains’, which was earlier discussed in the Chapter Two. The model provides the opportunity to study the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts within the sustainable context, in which it proposes that the quality of positive environmental experience in a coastal resort can be identified from verbal expression by the tourists (Chan and Baum, 2007). It also provides the notation of the physical features or places that support the experience. The investigation of the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts is grounded on the realities that the tourists describe. Here, the qualitative inductive approach is used to analyse and interpret the data on the tourists’ site experiential behaviour. Accordingly, six ‘Expressive Dimensions’ as identified by Otto and Ritchie (1996) that describe the tourists’ positive experiences emerged from the response. The dimensions are categorised into ‘Hedonic’, ‘Interactive’, ‘Novelty’, ‘Stimulation’ and ‘Safety’ dimensions.

In this early stage, it is important to review the findings within the scope of each category to understand what each dimension represents in the tourists’ verbal expression. The hedonic expressive statement in the analysis includes excitement and enjoyment that are closely related to the natural attraction and both life. For example, one respondent notes:

“It s a resort in the jungle and I supposed that we are encouraged to appreciate the environment at every location in the area. I think it has been a learning experience to see the different fauna and wildlife in the resort. It does make me appreciate the nature gift to us.” (I T16)

The interactive expressive dimensions include being able to be part of the environment or integrating with the local community. In this sense, the opportunity to interact with the new environment in its natural setting is an important part of the positive experience as quoted by a tourist:

“The facilities are excellent and it is also nice to be in the outdoors doing all the leisure activities. We went for the jungle walk and went fishing and managed to catch a few. We saw a lot of animals around the resort… peacock, monkeys, hornbill among others.” (I T29)

While, novelty is associated with new and different experience such as seeing the wildlife for the first time as quoted above or element of surprise such as observing lush
tropical resort in the middle of the city or the construction of chalets beyond the shoreline depicting the traditional living lifestyle as observed by a tourist:

“The resort is in the middle of nowhere. I was surprised when I first enter the lobby on top, which I could not see where the sea is but it was amazing once I saw it from the restaurants below. It’s a little bit secluded from other resorts but it is very close to the sea. They even build some of the chalets on the water. I suspect it might be because there are not enough spaces here.” (I T11)

The natural attraction in the tourists’ destination is a valuable asset that assists in enhancing the positive novelty experiences in the resort, for example:

“We love the gardens surrounding the resort so was the rainforest as the main drop. The pool is disappointing because it is very small. It looks better in the pictures. But we just love the beach. The bay is beautiful and clean. We are glad that there is not much development in this area. It has been kept to be as natural to the surrounding environment.” (I T23)

The natural setting of the tropical jungle and the wildlife experience are also considered as the source of novelty in coastal resorts:

“The pool is very nice, the view and the walks in the woods are nice and the spa is very good and not so expensive compared with other hotel spas. But the real pleasure of this resort is the setting, it is outstanding. The grounds are extensive and the wildlife is simply spectacular. You will see the monkeys there, the giant Squirrel, Flying Lemurs, and even the Hornbills, which I found quite spectacular.” (I T18)

In addition to the natural setting, the siting of the facilities can create a sense of novelty as the focal attraction, as portrayed by a respondent in Pangkor Island:

“We are delighted to be here. It is secluded but it also very near to other attractive places. Even though it is far from the jetty point, the journey is worth it as there are many things to see. I am also very impressed by the way they locate the facilities deep into the jungle further from other resorts. We were caught by surprise to see the resort in the midst of nowhere. It gives me the first impression of how this resort is closely connected to the environment.” (I T15)
The findings also depict that the tourists comfort and relaxation are associated with the view and easy access to the facilities which commence from the main lobby (Refer to Figure 8.1). Tourists also feel comfortable in accommodations where physical features such as the balconies promote the positive feelings. The physical features and facilities of the resort are all simply the means of delivering the desired satisfaction for tourists (Kotler, 1988) where in beach tourism, the sun, sand and sea in terms of benefits means warmth, recreation, relaxation and an escape from routines of working life (Theobald, 2004). A respondent who stays in the Water Villa at Pangkor Laut describes:

“We spent a lot of our time in our [water] villa. It is just so beautiful that we wanted to make the most of it. We pay quite a sum of money to be in this resort. The balcony is great with open views of the sea and horizon. The window in the bathroom opened wide enough to feel like we are having a shower outdoor! But we are also scared if someone could see us from outside.” (I T26)

The open space in the resort is where the tourists enjoy the environment most other than in their accommodations as a Tourist in Port Dickson describes:

“This resort is a bit compact but I like the way they provide a lot of open spaces between the buildings to view the sea and the surrounding area. I think it is very important that the tourists feel close to the sea. There are many places in the resort where I can still view the sea. But the best is from my chalet. I love sitting at the balcony facing the sea in the evening.” (I T5)

On stimulation, the respondents asserted that interaction with the host can stimulate the tourists’ positive experience in the resorts. The importance of the local
communities in shaping the environmental experience was acknowledged by a Tourist who quoted:

“I think it will be great if we could learn about the locals, the culture and the way they live in their environment...to participate in their daily activities and to learn and understand their way of doing things. That is perhaps the better way to learn about the environment rather than walking and sleeping through the environment without anything to do.” (I T7)

Stimulation can be achieved from completing an activity in the resort. When asked about the type of environmental experience do the tourists really seek in their visit, a significant number of respondents relate their experience to the activities such as swimming and sunbathing at the beach, wildlife viewing, experiencing the rainforest, local culture and the natural environment. There is a need for the natural environment to support the activities in the resorts, for instance:

“...The environment is very important and to experience it in the most natural way is great. But it must also be supported with leisure activities such as the island hopping or fishing trip. I would also like to learn more about the culture and the people…” (I T14)

Respondents tend to define the unique experience with reference to the innovative design ideas that protect the environment and enhance the interaction with the natural environment. The ideas can be unique and functional as well. This is displayed in the design of the accommodations, as one of the tourists illustrates:

“Most of the buildings are constructed above the ground on stilts. It looks very light and nice to see the vegetation all around the villa. It also has large windows and balcony to enjoy the outdoors.” (I T23)

This includes the experience of living on the water villa which is considered as unique by the tourists:

“It is very peaceful and quiet. It feels nice to sleep with the sound of waves under you and the sound of jungle behind.” (I T28)

The safety factors were evident from the verbal response of the respondents especially the units which are located farther from the central lobby area. One respondent clarifies his anxiety:
“There are times I felt a little bit worried to stay at rooms that are further away from others. After all most tourists usually go the pool and lobby areas to enjoy and it became so quiet at our chalets. But they have many security guards walking around the resorts, so I am not worried anymore.” (I T24)

While the activities, the facilities and services are the physical elements support the environmental experience, the respondents also agreed that having a sense of security and privacy in the resort are equally important. Both are important features in the environment while allowing the interaction with the locals.

“We spent most of our time at the pool. It is quite small but the landscape is beautiful and not congested. I am a bit disappointed with the chalet because it has no privacy at all even though the scenery is great. We got so many onlookers from the fishermen boat and tourist arriving in the resort.” (I T27)

Recalling on the interviews, each of the tourist verbal expressive dimensions above portrays the multi dimensional characteristic of the tourists experience in coastal resorts. Each dimensions signal the need for an approach towards the design that reflects their experience in the coastal resorts. In the following section, the positive and negative verbal expressions by the tourists are transcribed in the summary presented in the following Table 8.1 and 8.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Verbal Expressive Dimensions</th>
<th>Functional Aspects/ Agent (Natural Attraction, Physical Design Community or Activities)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic (Excitement, Enjoyment, Memorable)</td>
<td>Tropical Rainforest (Natural Attraction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorable experience related to the activities in natural environment</td>
<td>Snorkelling at the beach (Natural Attraction and Activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunbathing and swimming at the beach</td>
<td>Pool area (Physical Design and Activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle walk</td>
<td>Balconies (Physical Design and Activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife adventure and</td>
<td>Outdoor patio (Physical Design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoying the outdoor amenities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching the sunset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive (Meeting People, Being Part of the Process, Having Alternatives)</td>
<td>Rainforest (Natural Attraction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of the process to see and spot the</td>
<td>Staff (Community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locals (Community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourists (Community)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Opportunity to meet with locals and other people
- Participate in the lifestyle

**Novelty (Escape, Doing Something New)**

- Something new, unique and different experiences
  - Living above the sea
  - Watching natural wildlife and
  - Enjoying the natural attraction
  - Fishing at the Sea Villa's balcony
  - Creative and different architecture
  - Element of surprise or the experience being transported into a different place.

- Tropical Rainforest (Natural Attraction)
- Sea Villa (Physical Design)
- Accommodation's Balcony (Physical design and Activities)
- Large Windows (Physical design)
- House on stilts (Physical Design)
- Clustering of courtyards (Physical Design and Activities)

**Comfort (Physical Comfort, Relaxation)**

- Physical relaxation in the open spaces
- Physical relaxation in the accommodation
- Ease of access to all the facilities
- View towards the sea.

- Open Spaces/Common Areas (Physical Design)
- Passive Design Features; Noise And View Screen (Physical Design)
- Balconies or Corridors (Physical Design and Activities)
- Natural Landscape And Water Features (Physical Design)

**Safety (Personal Safety, Security Of Belongings)**

- Location of accommodation and other facilities
- Public access to the beach
- Seclusion because of location

- Secured Open Spaces/Common Areas (Physical Design)
- Facilities locations (Physical Design)
- Site Selection (Physical Design)

**Stimulation (Educational And Informative, Guide (Community)**

- Jungle Walks (Activities)
Challenging)

- Information gained from jungle trekking
- Learning experience and understanding of natural environment as knowledge

Table 8.1: Positive Verbal Expressive Dimensions

While the positive experience reflects the approach needed in the design, the negative verbal expression also provides essential clues on the functionality of coastal resorts especially on the things that need to be evaded in the design process. The following table listed the negative verbal expression and the functional agents that assist the expression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Verbal Expressive Dimensions</th>
<th>Functional Aspects (Agent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don't like/hate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dirty beaches</td>
<td>• Rubbish at sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long walking distance</td>
<td>• Sewerage system (physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Noise from other rooms</td>
<td>• Inadequate screen via natural landscape or passive design features (physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of security around the resort</td>
<td>• Sea Villa (Physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable/unpleasant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wildlife invasion</td>
<td>• Fencing (Physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mosquitoes</td>
<td>• Too much landscaping (Physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Heat</td>
<td>• Inadequate covered pathway and patio (Physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of protection from the rain at walkways</td>
<td>• Lack of passive design features (physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor service</td>
<td>• Inadequate management by hosts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor privacy in rooms</td>
<td>• Improper landscaping (physical design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor view from the accommodation</td>
<td>• Poor building layout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.2: Negative Verbal Expressive Dimensions

The data transcribed in the Table 8.1 depicts the positive dimension of the tourists experience and the agent or physical entities that assist the experience through their verbal expressions in the interviews. The summary reveals that the interpretation of positive experience in coastal resorts is a product of integration of many factors where the objective in designing the resorts is to facilitate the satisfaction among the tourists through enjoyable activities such as swimming and snorkelling in the sea, walking along the beach, enjoying the pool and relaxing at balconies. In coastal resort development, the beach was essentially invented as part of the resort complex and developed as the activity space for recreation and tourism with distinct cultural and social forms emerging in relation to fashions, tastes and innovations in resort form (Hall and Page, 2006). While enjoying the activities, tourists are also looking for something new, unique and different experiences such as the experience of living above the sea, watching wildlife or conducting leisure activities such as fishing at the accommodation balcony. The unique experience can also be based on the design by creating elements of surprise or making tourists feel like being transported into a different environment.

The experience need to be enjoyed comfortably by the tourists. Being comfortable both physically and mentally in the resorts; in the accommodation unit, facilities and open spaces seemed to have a significant impact on the way they perceive the positive experience. To the average person, coastal tourism is associated with sun, sea, sand, and resort comfort (Wong, 2000). The experience of being comfortable in the facilities is due to the design features which are both aesthetically pleasing and functional. The utilization of the passive design technique such as natural ventilation and cutting down the direct sunlight through the use of louvers and screens
are few examples of the physical attempts. Meanwhile, an example of providing a comfortable environment to tourists in a non-physical manner is by maximising the view towards the sea or creating privacy through the appropriate siting of the facilities.

The positive experience also relates to the resorts learning environment. The experience of the resorts is positive if it can stimulate the tourists' intention in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the surroundings or the attractions that represent something very challenging for example, jungle trekking or involving in sport activities. Thus, the enjoyable, unique, comfortable and stimulating experience can be considered as the main supplement in strategies to enhance the tourists' positive experience. These findings correspond with the study of the tourists’ experience in eco resort (Chan and Baum, 2007). However, in the case of coastal resort’s, providing the positive experience seems to be more intricate as it involves several complex issues such as the coastal building setback requirements and complex socio-cultural issues surrounding the particular destination area. It also implies that the location of resorts in attractive natural setting plays a significant role in the siting of the facilities to enhance tourists’ experience. This finding also coincides with the regulator’s view in Chapter Six that the attraction of the natural environment, socio-cultural activities and lifestyle in their natural setting as portrayed in the Home stays tourism can be the integral part of siting process. The natural attractions and socio cultural activities reinforce the resort’s primacy as zone of interpretation and interaction (Ryan, 2003).

Meanwhile, Table 8.2 presents the responses of tourists that depict their negative experiences in the resorts. The negative expression of ‘don’t like’ was closely associated with the cleanliness, distance from one facility to the other, noise and the lack of security. The cleanliness issue is associated with the rubbish and the exposed sewerage system pipes along the sea. While on the issue of noise, the tourists cited the lack of proper landscaping as noise barrier as one of the main source of the problem. In addition, many respondents raised the issue of security in the resort especially for the villas above the sea where they can be accessed from the sea and land. The uncomfortable experience expression includes the wildlife invasion of wildlife and mosquitoes, heat and lack of protection from the rain at walkways. The issue of fencing around the resort area to prevent the wildlife from entering, too much landscaping that also breeding mosquitoes and the lack of proper roof coverage along walkways linking to other facilities and at the patio. Meanwhile, the response stated that ‘frustration’ was closely associated with poor service, privacy in rooms and view from the accommodation. The issue of poor services are closely related to the inadequate management by hosts while the poor building layout and improper landscaping contributes to poor privacy and views in the coastal resorts. As such, the
locations of the accommodations that are relatively too close to each other create a situation of less privacy and view which are also further fuelled by inadequate landscaping. This indicates the relationship between each facilities and the quality of the open spaces created by the siting process, in terms of views and landscaping are important considerations in enhancing the tourists experience in resorts.

Finally, the disappointment dimensions was also evident from the respondents verbal responses that cited poor maintenance of accommodation and preservation of natural environment. The poor maintenance aspect can be observed in the quality of the finished building material that can be caused by poor design and construction technique which allows the rain to damage the material used such as timber. In terms of environmental preservation the respondents cited examples of resorts invasion to natural topography and the location in sensitive area or the sea. Clearly this demonstrates that the coastal resort experience is a combination of several factors. In coastal resort development, the beach was essentially invented as part of the resort complex and is developed as the activity space for recreation and tourism with distinct cultural and social forms emerging in relation to fashions, tastes and innovations in resort form (Hall and Page, 2006).

From the analysis on the negative tourists’ verbal expression, it is evident that tourists’ verbal expressions are related to the functionality of the coastal resorts site which includes the beach, natural environment, activities, service staff, wildlife experience as well as interaction with other tourists.

8.4.2 Tourists Expectations of Positive Experience

Creating the tourists’ positive experience is important in meeting the tourists’ expectations for better quality resorts. This has to do with the way tourists perceived or expected how the positive experience should be. Most tourists agreed that the experience offered in the resorts is an important consideration in selecting the resorts. It is based on pre-conceived ideas on the quality of resorts as explained by a tourist:

“It is a normal for tourists to have a pre-conceived idea about the resort they planned to visit. Usually the expectations are very high. That includes the quality of the facilities, services and the environments. The most important thing is that these are being offered in the resort. Environmental wise, the natural beauty of the place including the scenery and its authenticity helps a lot in attracting more visitors to come.” (I T9)
The main reason for the tourists going on vacations is to escape from the normal routine at home. While authenticity is an important consideration in the selection of resorts for vacation, Urry (1990) neglects the concept of authenticity as the basis for the organization of tourism but just an escape from everyday life. Tourists’ satisfaction stems from the anticipation of intense pleasure, especially through daydreaming and fantasy (Campbell, 1987; and Decorp, 2006) which is constructed through collection of signs (Urry, 1995). Naturally, the tourists expect the resorts to be uniquely designed and comfortable. This indicates that the expectation of positive experience and quality resorts [facilities] has embedded in the tourist minds. Failure to accommodate both will result in the tourists not returning to the resorts, as described by a tourist in Langkawi Island:

“A vacation to me means to see different, beautiful and comfortable places to get away from the normal chores. As tourist we definitely expect the best from the money we spent. If the resort meets our expectations we will definitely return for our next holiday and definitely it is good for the industry.” (I T16)

The above also verifies that for tourists, the quality of the resorts comes first in their consideration which is then followed by the budget considerations. The positive experience in the resorts created by the appropriate siting will entice tourists to stay longer in the resort. Consumption changes are reducing the popularity of some mass tourism coastal resorts that intensifies the competitive conditions within which resorts operate, and production flexibility has created opportunities to customise products that appeal to a differentiated clientele (Butler, 2006). A tourist describes the relationship between the length of stay and the positive environment experience in the coastal resort:

“It is important to ensure that the tourists spend most of their time in the resort itself rather than other places. The longer they could keep the tourists in the resort the better will it be for the business. Nevertheless it’s not only the resort [facilities] itself but also the surroundings [attractions] need to influence the tourists too.” (I T7)

The respondents acknowledged that the environment is an asset to the resort that needs to be preserved and maintained to sustain its operation. It can be preserved through proper planning approach. A tourist’s enjoyment of a stay in a hotel during her holidays is affected not only by the specific characteristics of the product offered by the hotel finally chosen but also the characteristics of the site where that hotel is located.
which include cleanness of beaches and the swimming waters, public safety, approaches to the resort or the preservation of the environment as well (Rigall-I-Torrent et al., 2010). Meanwhile, Bull (1998) asserts the importance of location in terms of access to and distance from particular places, intrinsic site and neighbourhood characteristics for product differentiation in the hospitality and tourism sectors (which produce “place-sensitive products). This is a clear indication of the tourists' satisfaction of the environmental experience is the returning visitors for holidays in the resorts. A tourist provides an important description in regards to this:

“It is about sustaining the business for a long period of time. Resorts are not built for a short period of time but it should be for life. The resorts should be well planned to suit or should I say nurture its natural environment to be able to attract tourists for a long period of time. Tourists will have longer stay or come back for holiday and there will be more tourists coming to the place to see the resort if it keep maintaining the environment.” (I T7)

While the importance of creating the environment in coastal resorts was emphasised by the tourists, they also observed that there are still many resorts which are insensitive to the idea of preserving the environment which also contribute to the difficulty in creating sustainable resorts for the particular region, as described by a tourist in Langkawi:

“Look…the environment is the main reason for tourist to visit other than the quality facilities. Therefore, the natural environment should be nurtured rather than to be destroyed for the construction of facilities. If it’s gone, it will be gone forever. It is not just the resort but the whole surrounding and the local people and culture must also support the effort. The problem in Malaysia is that only certain resorts offer that type of experience.” (I T12)

The tourists’ expectations of positive experience in the resorts indicate that the industry has no choice but to ensure that all the resorts in Malaysia integrate the sustainable principles specifically in the siting to improve the design quality.

### 8.4.3 The Role of Siting In Enhancing Tourists Experience

The way the siting could enhance the tourists experience is strongly linked with the concept of integration. In the case of tourism, integration is automatic as tourists play an integral role in the production of tourism experiences which is achieved by either adapting the object to suit their self concept or by adapting their self concept to
align it with the socially or institutionally defined identity of the object (Font and Buckley, 2001). Similar to this situation, when asked about what do the tourists mean by resort integration with the environment, the tourists relates the integration of the facilities in the environment and service by the hosts as the main attributes in enhancing the positive environmental experience.

“The resort should offer the best possible experience to the tourists with clean environment, the surrounding and the beach so that they can enjoy their stay without wanting to leave the place. Environment is just an essential part of the tourism apart from the facilities and the service rendered to the tourists.” (I T3)

The tourists acknowledge the importance of siting in the process of integrating the facilities with the environment. They indicate that the privacy is important in the siting process. Cultural activities bring visitors from the coastal resorts into the inland villages and towns where most intrusion has led to a loss of privacy (Bramwell, 2004). The importance of the siting in preserving the environment was delineated by a tourist:

“I am impressed with the layout of this resort. It naturally sits on the slope but the facilities are closely located to each other and it is not very noisy. In fact I could not hear the cars along the main road.” (I T10)

In this vein, Dredge (1999) argued that the spatial elements need to be incorporated into a successful planning. It includes among others the internal circulation corridors, attractions and attractions corridors and service and facility locations. The planning should enhance the destination’s sense of place, promotes a sense of security and heightens the environmental legibility for tourists who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment.

“It is to experience the facilities in its original environment. The jungle setting is preserved with the natural landscape and water feature (stream) and the beach are well kept. It is very quiet in here but you can hear the sound of the many animals. It is not for those who like city life but it is an excellent place for a honeymoon or romantic holiday.” (I T3)

The respondents also addressed the importance of providing comfortable environment in accessing different zones or facilities. While the relationship between each zone is emphasised by the connecting circulation corridors, tourists are
somewhat disappointed in the way they are being designed in relation to the local climatic considerations, as one of the respondent notes:

“… The facilities are very close to each other and there are enough corridors and pathway that lead to the facilities. But for some part of the resort, I wish they put roof covering to protect us from the rain.” (I T2)

The statement specifies that the manner in which the facilities are located and connected to each other is important in defining their positive experience in the resorts. It corresponds with the Tripartite Place Model System (Pearce, 2005) in the Chapter Two that the combination of activities, physical setting and the meaning of the place invoked by the siting are used to satisfy the tourists' needs.

8.4.4 Physical Design Features for Positive Experience

As described in the previous chapter, there are physical design features that can assist the siting to enhance the tourists experience. The physical design features makes up the foundation upon which planning for tourism development need to consider, apart from the spatial quality of zoning. In terms of the design, the appreciation of the inter-visibility between the external environment and the internal spaces can enhance the tourist environmental experience in the resort. The facilities especially the accommodation units must be equipped with appropriate features for the interaction to facilitate as a tourist points out:

“We spent a lot of our time in our villa. It is just so beautiful that we wanted to make the most of it. We pay quite a sum of money to be in this resort. The balcony is great with open views of the sea and horizon. The window in the bathroom opened wide enough to feel like we are having a shower outdoor. But we are also scared if someone could see us from outside.” (I T26)

73 The Tripartite Place Model System (Pearce, 2005) is used to describe the three interlocking components required for visitors or other users to gain sense of place: the activities, physical and cultural resources and clear meaning of the place. Tourist activities have numerous consequences for biophysical environments and the species and human societies they support (Newsome et al., 2002). The developmental pressures of facility construction and the seasonality of tourism are arguably indirect consequence of tourist behaviour (Pearce, 2005). For Pearce, the environmental protection between the setting and associated tourists’ facilities are frequently considered as fit into the context of sustainable development.
The features allow tourists to perform their activities closed to the environment whilst providing protection from heat and rain. A Tourist provides the following example to address his opinion on this matter:

“The balcony allows us to see the surrounding even when it rains. It is properly shaded and I can open the window during rainy weather to listen to the rain. The chalet is quite large. It is a timber building constructed on stilt so that we can see what is underneath the building too.” (I T13)

The physical design features also include the local material expression in the open spaces created by the siting process. The tourists wanted to see more integration of local materials to accentuate the traditional feeling in the resorts as a Tourist in Pangkor Island expresses:

“I love the natural feeling walking through the pathway and the corridors. There are stones pathway and timber floorings and balustrades. It’s a good mix with the surrounding. They add some sense of traditional feeling to the surrounding and it goes well with the garden. There are also some beautiful water features that I enjoy watching.” (I T11)

The material procurement is important in the process of facilitating the positive experience. Meethan (2001) argues that the production of tourists’ space is concerned with material forms along with a symbolic order of meaning. For Meethan, the material order of space can be viewed as a social one and provide the industry with raw materials, out of which tourists space can be constructed. One of the respondents recommended the use of natural material as building finishes and landscape. Meanwhile the attention to the details in the material aesthetic expression can make the experience in the resort more authentic.

“The resort itself is fantastic. And what really blew us away was the attention to the details of the surroundings. Most places are kept as natural as possible and the material that they use clearly reflect their attention to make it more appreciative and stand out.” (I T30)

On the outdoor spaces, the respondents view them as important resources in enriching their positive experience in the resort. The open spaces are considered as the place to multi variates their experience either privately or interacting with other tourists. The concept of clustering the buildings in several arrangements creates multi spaces for different kinds of activities and attraction for tourists. In some areas, the attractive settings have influenced planning and building techniques, in the form of
typical clustering (Huffadine, 2000). Furthermore, clustering or centralized planning limits the environmental damage caused by tourism and makes the building of infrastructure and facilities more cost effective (Hazbun, 2008).

“…The outdoor space is just a nice place to be when I feel bored in my room where I spent most of my time. It’s a great contrast from watching the ceilings and to see the greens and the blue water in the open area. I think the open space is an important feature for tourists to appreciate the environment.” (I T19)

The importance of having multiple open courtyards with well planned landscaping can provide tourists with the sense of privacy as described by a Tourist:

“The common spaces are well preserved and maintained and the buildings are well laid out. There are many pockets of open area filled with nice landscapes for the tourists to enjoy privately.” (IT30).

The statements correspond with the earlier findings by other methodologies discussed in the previous chapters. The identification of the spaces and the design features used by the tourists in addition to the way they describe the activities and the environment suitable for them provides the way in which the spaces can be designed through the siting process to enhance their experience in the resorts.

8.4.5 Social Interactions in Resorts Spatial Arrangement

The respondents’ recognition of the importance of the siting in enhancing the integration with the locals socio-cultural values emerged clearly from the response. In terms of compatibility and accessibility of the development towards the locals74, a respondent argues:

“… It (tourism) is usually a sensitive issue to the locals especially if we introduce a totally different tourism environment than what they are used to, for example if you introduce a theme park in the middle of a jungle. It will not go well with the locals because it will change their lifestyle and culture.

74 ‘Local’ refers to the particular local community or social group of any sizes whose members reside in a specific locality, share government and have cultural and historical heritage defined in Macquarie Dictionary (Delbridge and Bernard, 1988). It is a self-defining term based on a sense of shared purpose and common goals and also reflects geographic features and spatial relationships (Joppe, 1996; and Murphy and Murphy (2004).
The resort should not alienate itself from the locals. They must ensure that proper access to the tourism area is provided for the locals to also enjoy the environment.” (I T5)

The tourists viewed that the environment as being belonged to the locals, which is intervened by the developers. Due to this, the locals should therefore be considered in the development and their reflections and ideologies must be reflected in the design.

“...The environment is always a sensitive issue with the locals before, during or after the resort is completed. The locals should be made aware of the planning issues and proposals so that they can voice their objections or even expressed their ideas. The last thing that we would want in any tourism development is a development that is not compatible or alien to the locals where the locals lost their sense of belonging to the place. It is their environment and we should not disturb it.” (I T20)

Placing the access road between the beach and the hotels will ensure that everyone has access to the beach, even though it posts a safety problem (Mill, 2008). For Mill, having the access road behind the hotels, in some cases limits access to locals and the hotels own guests which situation is described by a tourist as follows:

“...Proper siting can ensure that the locals can still enjoy the benefit of having the resort in their area if it can ensure that the public access to the beach are still there and they are not obstructing their view or there are no negative impact to the quality of the beach that can destroy the sea life which has been the source of their income.” (I T26)

The siting should make provision of adequate cultural spaces to celebrate the local culture and increase the local participation in the resort activities. This is closely connected to the idea of ‘Staged Authenticity’ (Gunn, 1972) and tourists as ‘Transnationals’ communities which were discussed in the Chapter Two. This also corresponds to the regulators view and the morphological analysis. Both require the locals’ social and cultural values to be preserved and integrated into the resort in forms of design or activities. Resorts as meeting place of different cultures should allow for the recognition of each social network by enhancing their interconnections in a temporal tourism environment. In this context, providing the adequate cultural spaces not only reduces the social barriers (Harvey, 1989) and but also allow the integration of cultures to take place. A statement from a Tourist supports this argument:
“In terms of the open spaces created by the siting process, they can be used by the locals to perform their traditional dance as part of the resort effort to introduce the local culture or to preserve it. I think if we can get more local participation in the development and operation of the resort, it will benefit the tourism industry better in the long run.” (I T28)

A tourist destination should be planned to cater the peak visiting period and also for future expansion. The needs for green spaces for future extension will allow the resort to remain competitive in the market by continuously upgrading without compromising the environmental values in the resort. In this context, the master plan must include phasing element that establish the logical sequences of development of built amenities and public service expansion in relationship to the construction of resort uses to accommodate specific environmental threshold carrying capacity (Bosselman et al. 1999). This is necessary as tourism is a dynamic industry that can be influenced by the negative economic or environmental impact that will affect the resorts’ healthy lifecycles as identified by a tourist:

“I think the buildings integrate well with the natural surroundings. It’s not very congested and there are a lot of trees everywhere I walked by. The chalets are all over the jungle. Some are located at the hill side and also near the sea. I am glad that the greens and the land are kept in their natural state even though there are many buildings over here.” (I T17)

The concept can be based on the tropical setting and identity. The concept must also prepare the resorts to be susceptible to the changes in the industry through provision of future spaces for extension as suggested by a Tourist:

“The location of this resort explains the whole concept of this resort. It’s a tropical rainforest beach resort and to tell you the truth that is really how I feel about this place. It’s the unique mix between the environment and the resort that creates a memorable experience to stay in the resort. There are still many open spaces left within the resort and the island.” (I T27)

In terms of identity, the integration of the environment and the local community can be used as a major concept and selling point. This is closely connected to the idea of Home-Stays resort which was discussed by the regulators in Chapter Six which

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75 It is defined as environmental standard necessary to maintain significant scenic, recreational… or natural value of the region to maintain public health and safety in the region (Bosselman et al. 1999).
emphasised on the integration of local socio-cultural factors in the siting of resorts facilities in the particular surrounding. The importance of the environment in conceptualising coastal resort’s development is emphasised by a tourist:

“No one wants to go to dirty places or polluted areas for a vacation. It is just a waste of time and money. Most resorts are located in good environment and they will use it as selling point to promote their destinations. But at the same time there are also several unique resorts which are not built based on the purpose of location but also use the experience of the environment as concepts.” (I T17)

8.4.6 Unified Approach Towards Sustainable Tourism Development

Interestingly, the tourists view on the need to engage the sustainable principles also implies that concerted effort by all types of resorts is imperative to achieve the desired goal. The tourists have contrasting views on which types of resort are designed to be more environmentally sustainable when comparisons are made between the high end resorts and backpacker accommodations. On one hand, many respondents agreed that the higher end resorts have the upper hand in placing themselves to be among the sustainable resorts:

“I believe that more thoughts are being put forth in the high end resorts...the design of the buildings; the layout and types of facilities they provide and the exterior are more exclusive compared to the small ones. They also invest a lot of money and expect a handsome return by providing an environmentally friendly environment. I am not sure about the backpacker accommodation.” (I T17)

In relating to the way the developers invest in the tourism developments, the setting of high end resorts in the more attractive natural setting due their superior financial abilities is an advantage in which many of the low budget resorts could not afford as described by a Tourist:

“The high end resorts are usually located at the highly sought after location which offers better scenery, privacy and better environment. They can be more sustainable because of these readily available resources. Unlike the backpackers’ accommodation, they served as transits point and usually located near the city or a more congested area. In other word the location may deprive their effort to be environmentally sustainable.” (I T18)
While budget is the main issue brought forward by the respondents as the main factor that many resort failed to afford, that does not mean that the lower end resort such as the backpackers’ motels could not be sustainably designed. To quote the tourist:

“I supposed it is all about the dollar and cents and how much do we want to make it environmentally friendly or not. There are resorts which claim that they are the tropical paradise but in reality they are not. It boils down to their awareness and knowledge about the ecology and techniques to get the best out of it. I think the backpackers’ accommodation can be more environmentally friendly if it is properly designed.” (I T20)

Despite the financial aspects, tourists acknowledged that what is needed is some creativity in the design also the awareness and willpower among the major stakeholders to design sustainable resorts. A Tourist recommended the following:

“I have seen beautiful small scale resorts compared to the high end. I think it is just how much effort you put into or how serious you are in preserving the environment. It is also about one’s awareness. Frankly, I don’t think it will cost much because you are not creating a new environment in fact you are using the environment as a development tool… But I also think that the smaller one (resort) can also preserve the environment if they are designed properly. It really depends on the designers’ creativity.” (I T3)

The designers have a role in sustainability, bringing in their professional skills to the task of improving physical conditions and reinforcing the sense of continuity and culture that the building of the areas represent within the discipline of architecture (Williamson et al. 2003). For Williamson, the designers provide the necessary physical conditions to happen and manifested in luxuriant setting for long term survival of life. The design process itself involves research, triggered by questions to be answered in the design situation and with the research results immediately pressed into action in design decisions (Schon 1987). This where the creativity of architects which is based on a store of knowledge or image bank; a repository images of buildings, places, events and experience including their past work comes into play in designing sustainable resorts(Beach, 1990). While the designer creativity is an integral part of the process, what clearly missing is the lack of awareness on the sustainable issues and the emphasis on the profit rather than the environmental preservations as a Tourist suggests:
“… I think it is more about the developers’ aspiration and awareness [on sustainable issue] rather than the money issue.” (I T20)

Tourists also acknowledged that different resorts are constructed to cater for the different needs and demographic tourists profile. While the high end resorts approaches in the environmental conservation are better than the lower end accommodations, not everybody can afford them. This is due to the fact that the high end resorts is charging extra for the resorts setting.

“… They (High end resorts) are mostly for the upmarket and more family oriented, whilst the backpackers’ accommodation is for young people and couples who don’t spend much time in the hotel. It is really about making as much profit as possible in a reasonably small area without a lot of emphasis on the environment.” (I T9)

Eventually, the tourists comparisons on both the higher and lower end resorts on their ability to be sustainable resorts indicates that tourists expects the positive experience in all resorts regardless of scales or sizes. It also denotes the importance of designer’s creativity and awareness on the sustainable issues in the design process.

8.4.7 Integrating Tourists Experience in Siting Strategies

Tourists are also concerned with the implication of existing policies and regulations on the resorts developments. While they are generally satisfied with the planning quality of the resorts as demonstrated by the abundant of undeveloped land to maintain the environment, they also acknowledged that the coastal resorts in the Malaysian Peninsula need to be improved in terms of the planning as observed by a tourist in Pangkor Island:

“The environment in this island is the main asset in attracting tourists to come here. Although we were not informed of any planning policies we are quite happy with the way the island conserve the natural environment. The beach and the rainforest are still in abundant in the island. I hope they will seriously maintain this.” (I T15)

The observation indicates that while there are policies to guide the way the facilities are located, the design of the resorts is observed by tourist as unsatisfactory where many practice of the siting have resulted in less environmentally sensitive resorts. Without proper policy, tourism development is left to continue at its own, often rapid and uncontrolled which frequently results in negative impact and overall damage
to the surrounding communities (Eagles et al., 2077). In many aspects they felt that many resorts designs are not successful in creating the positive experience due to the failure to integrate their reflections and ideologies based on their experience. Most tourists felt that they need to be exposed to the existing policy regarding the environmental conservation as stated by a Tourist:

“There are some brochures at the receptionist regarding the natural attractions in this island. That is more of the general information and nothing very serious. I think the information will increase the tourists’ awareness on preserving the environment.” (I T12)

8.4.8 Tourists Mapping of Environmental and Social Spaces

As mentioned earlier, transcribing the data from the tourists verbal expressions provide not only essential information on the dimensions of positive environmental experience but also recognises to a certain extent the spaces and physical design features that assist the function of siting to enhance the tourists’ experience. The mappings of environmental and social spaces in the resorts are illustrated in Figure 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4.

In a way, the mapping exercise in the interview supports the earlier findings on the identification of the environmental and social spaces and their physical design requirements. There is a need to identify the areas that the tourists considered as important for the environmental and interaction in the current resorts so that appropriate design measures can be integrated into the design. Son (2004) compared the sketched map to nominate the top attributes or cognitive dimension of Sydney. The destination image is best viewed in full with a cognitive map or orientation component organising the available information spatially (Pearce, 2005). The articulation of spaces is manifested through the spatial and physical design considerations based on the tourists’ reflections and ideologies of what the positive experience should be in coastal resorts. Once identified, the attributes of the tourists experience can be further integrated in the new siting strategies. While the mapping exercise is important in this interview, it was observed that not all tourists participate in the mapping citing the lack of time to think and identify the spaces as the main reasons. The Researcher initially needed to explain the map to the tourists indicating the place where the interview is conducted and the main entrance to resort for them to further identify the environmental and social spaces within the resort’s premises.
Figure 8.2: Mapping of environmental and social spaces in The Avillion Resort, Port Dickson. Source: Author
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Observation deck towards resort</th>
<th>2. Variety of Landscape</th>
<th>3. Landscape Courtyard</th>
<th>4. Large Balcony Viewing The Sea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Jungle treks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Spa’s Pool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Open air Bathrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Water Villa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 8.3**: Mapping of environmental and social spaces in The Pangkor Laut Resort.
Source: Author
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Entrance lobby</th>
<th>2. Lobby</th>
<th>3. Landscape</th>
<th>4. Natural setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Figure 8.4:** Mapping of environmental and social spaces in Berjaya Langkawi Beach Resort. Source: Author
The areas which are mapped by tourists are identified and photographic image of the spaces were captured by researcher to provide visual insights on the actual physical features that were identified by the tourists.

Interestingly, the result of the mapping in the three case studies demonstrates the strong association between the environmental and social relations within the individual space identified by the tourists across the three case study resorts. Both factors co-exist and energise the spatial quality in the spaces created by the siting process. The recognition of these environmental spaces proves to a certain extent that while the policies and the guidelines initiated by the government plays vital role in formally regulating the spaces, there are ideas that can be derived from the tourists' reflections and ideologies that can be integrated into the siting strategies. For example, while the height restrictions is not more than two storey building height to allow the whole facilities to integrate with the surrounding is stated in the policy, adapting tourists preferences on having easy access to all the facilities and maximising open view towards the natural setting will lead to better siting of the facilities with the provision of appropriate physical features. The way the tourists demonstrate their preferences in selecting the places that allows certain form of interactions with outdoor activities implies more interactions between the exteriors and interiors through the transitional spaces should be provided in the resort. Meanwhile, the manner they indicate their preference on the accommodations; in the way they are sited and allowing unique leisure activities to be conducted without leaving them, implies that certain environmental features must be incorporated into the accommodation to promote the environmental experience.

The places that allow them to participate in the leisure activities also allow the social interactions with other tourists and hosts and assist in giving more meaning to the spaces by providing the adequate physical design features that are comfortable and safe. Besides providing meaning, the mapping exercise also illustrates that the association of these spaces with the natural settings can only be discovered through the understanding of the informal tourists' perception and experience at the sites. Only the tourists have the clear conceptions on what the place is all about and in the process provide meaning to the place making in resorts facilities. Furthermore, the mapping exercise also corresponds with the previously described, six expressive verbal dimensions in the Construct Domains of Service Experience (Otto and Ritchie, 1996). The way the tourists identify their positive experience and the agents is closely associated with the environment, facilities and activities in the coastal resorts. In a way these inform us that their reflections and ideologies are important in formulating the comprehensive siting strategies.
8.5 Summary of Findings in Interview with Tourists

The findings in the interviews is summarised as follow:

**Multi Dimensional Experience**

1. An enjoyable and exciting experience through direct interaction with the environment;
2. An experience that allows learning and acquiring knowledge about the environment through the readily available and accessible leisure activities (such as walking and trekking in nature) within its natural setting. This includes the beach, wildlife, rainforest and the local culture;
3. Interaction with the hosts or the locals to learn about the environment in the places that allows the interaction to happen;
4. Unique experience through innovative design ideas that protect and enhance the interaction with the natural environment. It can be intentional, such as locating the villa above the land or sea on stilt or it can be an element of surprise such as secluding the facilities further away from the high-used zones;
5. Being comfortable, physically and mentally in the accommodation and the facilities which have the adequate physical design features (active and passive) allow the tourists to be close to the environment whilst providing protection from the heat and rain; and,
6. Having a sense of security and privacy in the environment while allowing the interaction with the locals.

**Design Practice and Policies**

1. The negative environmental and social consequences in the coastal resorts were observed by tourists in the interviews. This indicates that the design needs improvement in providing and enhancing both the environmental and social experience among the tourists;
2. The spaces for future expansion are not provided in many resorts to adapt to the dynamic tourism market and as a strategy to remain competitive;
3. Social interaction enhancement in resorts with the host and the locals which is an important aspect in enhancing the tourists’ experience, are not supported.
by adequate provision open spaces and amenities to accommodate the socio-cultural showcases\textsuperscript{76}. The feature is obviously lacking in the resorts;

4. Resorts are individualistic in terms of the design and approach in integrating sustainable principles. There must be a holistic effort by the industry regardless of sizes and types to engage sustainable development principles;

5. The level of awareness on sustainable issues among the developers, locals and tourists on the practice of appropriate siting process is imperative in supporting the development; and,

6. Tourists acknowledge the need to understand and learn about the relevant tourism policy on the siting and environmental conservation to increase their awareness. This can be implemented through the nature guide or brochures.

\textbf{8.6 Conclusion}

Tourists experience is multi-dimensional, rich in meaning that need to be integrated in the siting strategies. The manner tourists describe their positive experience based on the six verbal expressions in the ‘Model of Expressive Domains’ (Otto and Ritchie’s, 1996) demonstrates that they are closely associated with the environment, facilities and activities in the particular resort. In addition; tourist’s expectations of the positive experience in selecting the coastal resorts for their holidays; their understandings on the role of siting, the spatial and physical design features; the importance of social interactions through provision of adequate spaces; and the mapping

\textsuperscript{76} The resort development objectives are to provide a full range of facilities and amenities and to retain open space (Inskeep, 1991). Further to this, Gunn (1997) argues that open spaces dedications, amenities and required performances that mitigate the impacts of the resort must be developed at the same time and in the proper proportions to serve both visitors and residents. This indicates that a tourism site is not circumscribed by the site itself or the interpretations of its objects or the manner by which tourists are organized in and through the site (Franklin, 2003). On open spaces, the issue is how tourism can fit into the environment and become an integral part of existing place qualities and from the community perspective or a part of the opportunities for economic and social life for residence (Whitehand, 1992) while the amenities for residence must be shared by visitors (Gunn, 1997). In due course, consumer and broader societal pressure will compel such resorts to attend to their cultural values especially in terms of interaction between the natural and built environment (Holmes, 2001), where there is a tendency to merge public and private place in resorts through the commercialization of the public spaces (Spearritt, 2000) with other place of consumptions (Sack, 1992).
of both the environmental and social spaces support the idea of integrating their reflections and ideologies in the siting strategies.

The finding reinforces the earlier assumptions that the attributes of tourists experience based on their verbal expression can be integrated into the policy or guidelines to create more comprehensive siting strategies that will improve the design quality of the coastal resorts. Tourists’ reflections on their experience are rich in meaning. For examples, the excitement is closely related to the activities in natural environment, while the interactive experience is described as being part of the process being in the environment. The novelty experience can trigger element of surprise to enhance the positive experience. These include creating a resort in a secluded area or constructing the facilities beyond the shoreline. In terms of comfort, there is a need for the design to convey this experience through the use of passive design techniques especially in the open spaces. Meanwhile, in terms of stimulating the experience, it is important to ensure that the siting does allow learning and knowledge acquisition of the environment through interaction with the hosts and the locals in the resorts.

In terms of expectation, the ideas of having positive experience are embedded in tourists’ minds when selecting resorts for vacation. Tourists identified the siting as an important process to facilitate the positive experience through the promotion of environmental and social spaces. The experiences need to be supported by proper zoning and adequate physical design features in the spaces created by the siting process. The integration of local materials and the clustering of open spaces with proper landscape are several ways of enhancing the positive experience. While these factors are important, tourists also observed that provision of open spaces and amenities for cultural activities and the responsible access in the resorts are still inadequate.

As pointed by the tourists, it is important to ensure the spaces for future expansions are clearly demarcated in the planning as a strategy to remain competitive in the resorts’ lifecycles as resorts are susceptible to stiff competition from others and changes in demands. Tourists also suggested that the effort towards developing sustainable tourism development need to be adopted by all scales and types of resorts. While the design should emphasis on promoting both the environmental and social relations, tourists must also acquire certain knowledge on the policies for the environmental conservation to increase their awareness on this issue.

Meanwhile, the tourists mapping of environmental and social spaces indicates that in corresponding to the ‘Model of Expressive Domain’ (Otto and Ritchie, 1996),
only they can have the clear conceptions on what the place is all about in promoting the environmental and social relations that provide meaning to the place making of spaces created by the siting process in assisting the positive experience. The findings on the tourists’ experience provide a clear conception of the improvement that need to be addressed in the siting strategies to enhance tourists’ experience. That is to incorporate their reflections and ideologies based on their on-site experience in the resorts. In this way, it significantly demonstrates that the policy initiated by the government alone is insufficient in creating resorts with distinctions without integrating the tourists’ reflections and ideologies.
Chapter Nine

Conclusions and Recommendations: Integrating the Regulators and Designers Experience, Coastal Resorts Morphologies and Tourists’ Experience

9.1 Introduction

This final chapter concludes and proposes recommendations for the more comprehensive siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts of the West Malaysian Peninsula based on the integration of three research approaches conducted in this study; the Interviews with Regulators and Designers, Coastal Resorts Morphologies and Interviews with Tourists.

First, this chapter reflects the findings from each of the three methodologies above and highlights the major finding based on their integrations in terms of the policies and regulations, spatial and physical design features and tourists’ experience. Second, it recommends the siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experiences in the coastal resorts from each methodology’s perspective. Third, it discusses the implication of this study in creating a new theoretical knowledge on how the comprehensive siting strategies can be formulated to enhance the tourists experience through the government initiated policies and improved collaborations among the inter-governmental agencies to lead towards better design and planning of sustainable resorts. It also discusses the research significance in creating specific Sustainable Tourism Indicators, supporting tourism research and the growth tourism industry in Malaysia and in relation to the Researcher’s background.

Finally, it addresses recommendations for future research directions pertains to the siting issue, which includes the opportunity of siting not only in enhancing tourists experience but as a long term adaptation measures to mitigate the predicted impact of the global climate change. The recommendation includes improving the planning and sustainable awareness among the major stakeholders as well. This will subsequently
followed by the final conclusion of this study. It can be concluded that the siting strategies through the integration of tourists’ experience can be utilized by the tourism stakeholders namely the regulators, designers and developers as reference to design sustainable coastal resorts with greater global awareness on the environment and benefit to the local communities, and as the renewed perspective on the contemporary Malaysian architecture.

9.2 Reflections on Findings from the Three Approaches

The focus of this study has always been throughout the three important approaches; the regulators and designers’ experience, the siting practice in coastal resorts and tourists’ experiences to unveil the more comprehensive siting strategies that can enhance the tourists’ experience in coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula. Overall, there are three key features in the approaches, which are categorized as follows:

1. The recognition of the present and past experiences of important tourism stakeholders namely the regulators, designers and tourists on the siting policies and practice;
2. The process of investigating the siting phenomena in its natural state which involves the coastal resorts in the selected three case study sites; and,
3. The notion that tourists’ positive experience is based on the promotion of environmental and social experience by the siting practice in the coastal resorts where both are strongly inter-related.

Consequently, the key approaches and features were used to address the following main finding of this study:

The study demonstrates that the process of enhancing the tourists’ experience in the coastal resorts through the siting strategies has actually materialized in the actual practice, which results can be either negative or positive. While the policies or regulations are intended to enhance the tourists’ experience, the final product may not reflect the way the regulators or designers intended the siting should be practiced in enhancing tourists’ experience as demonstrated by the morphological analysis. In this case, the fragmentally designed and individually styled resorts exhibit that the practice has not only occurred with or without the formal government initiated policies or guidelines but also depends on the creativity of the designers. They
lack the integration of the tourists’ reflections and ideologies that are based on their actual site experience. Tourists’ experiences in the resorts are rich in meanings that are based on the interaction with the local environment, community, activities and facilities. Therefore, it is imperative to integrate the tourists’ reflections and ideologies in the siting strategies to enhance the tourists’ experience.

The discussion on the main finding will revolve around the three main issues on siting: Policies and Regulations; Spatial and Physical Design; and Tourists’ Experience.

Policies and Regulations

The way the regulators and designers define the siting and its importance in enhancing tourists’ experience, preserving the environment and the local community reveal that the siting strategies are essential in designing the coastal resorts. It also reflects that there are strong governmental inputs all the way from overall policies to building and managing the coastal resorts. However, they acknowledged that the final product may not reflect the way the policies intended the siting should be practiced to create sustainable resorts. The regulators acknowledged that the siting strategies has already been practiced and contributed to the development of sustainable resorts in Malaysia. However, there are several concerns in the practice in terms of the quality of zoning and physical design features of the resorts as identified by the regulators and tourists in the interviews and the morphological analysis. This includes the lack of site context where the resorts were sited and constructed with limited consideration to the environmental and social factors. Further to this, the opportunities for small-scaled development which can be sited better to adapt the environment and minimizes the social and cultural impact may have been overlooked.

The regulators have indicated that the failure to develop tourism gradually has resulted in too much variety in the resorts offered. The manner the development were fast tracked for political purposes has brought more negative than the positive impacts to the environment and the local communities. It has affected the locals to forfeit or abandon their land near the coastal zone to make way for development and caused abrupt changes in their lifestyle as they are not equipped with the knowledge to run the industry. Moreover, the influx of many international tourist operators has failed to address the need to protect the locals and also produced many types of mass coastal resorts which are less sensitive to the environment as well.
In terms of barriers, the ‘decentralized’ and ‘top down’ policy initiated by the federal government to the municipal level is originally projected to create the formal conditions to enhance the environmental and social experience and to increase the competencies in their implementations on the ground. However, the conflicting ideologies that occur within the policies, among the governmental agencies and local communities prevented the ideal siting to materialize. There are confusions in interpreting the policies due to their generic nature and the overlapping jurisdictions in the intergovernmental agencies. Meanwhile, the lack of awareness on the sustainable development issues among the stakeholders is identified as one of the main barrier as well. This has been observed in both the top managements and the lower personnel levels in both the government and private sectors. It is important to recognize that while such design of sustainable resorts may involve higher initial cost, it will be offset by the development long term viability where environmentally sensitive environment are valued highly, both in terms of the reputations and resale values.

The disruptive political interference is also identified by the regulators as a major factor that could bypass the decision making at each level of the governmental organisation to expedite the development which could override the existing policies outlined for the development. This situation is also exacerbated by the frequent change of leadership at the top governmental organisation that creates uncertainty in the direction of the tourism development. The above scenarios have also negatively influence the aspirations of the regulators where they also felt that their efforts were diminished by the disruptive political interference. While the policies were regarded by the regulators and tourists as important platform for coastal tourism growth in Malaysia, it is observed by both the regulators and tourists that they are lacking the tourists’ reflections and ideologies from their experience. This is also reflected in the way tourists’ expressed their concerns on how their ideologies can improve the siting and the importance of creating awareness on the policies in conserving the environment in coastal resorts.

Spatial and Physical Design

The coastal resort morphologies and site’s observations demonstrates that the resorts have to a certain extent utilized the siting process to promote the environmental and social relations in the resorts in enhancing the tourists’ experience. However, the fragmentally designed and individually styled resorts in terms of zoning and the provisions of physical design features, which can be both positive or negative, demonstrates that the practice has not only occurred with or without the formal government initiated policies or guidelines but also depends on the creativity of
designers. It essentially denotes that in referring to specific siting policies there are many ways of defining, interpreting and transferring them into design to enhance the tourists’ experience.

The analysis on the coastal resort’s physical data sets, zoning and the physical design features in the morphological analysis supports the regulators and tourists views on the gaps that exist in the practice and the policies. The gaps were traced in the zoning of spaces where many facilities were constructed in the environmentally hazardous area and improperly connected by corridor linkages. They are also lacking of socially responsible access and aesthetic due to the overemphasising of view factors. In this case, the design and planning of most resorts are regarded as static due to their low spatial and physical design qualities in the spaces created by the siting and could not accommodate the changes in the industry demand which is required in the concept of ‘Destination’s Life Cycle’ (Butler, 1980). The lack of expansion spaces in the planning has also contributed to this problem as well.

In the morphological analysis, most of the features are observed to be provided at the minimum or not being considered at all in the design; an indication that the emphasis is solely on the economic goal rather than the environmental and social values. This include among others, inappropriate landscape and material procurements, poor integration of renewable energy and construction technology in the coastal resorts. In referring to the physical design aspects, the process of environmental and social enhancement must also be assisted with the integration of local architectural features or symbols in combination with the new technology, which can be either aesthetic or functional. In achieving the aesthetic goal, the integration of old and new will not only offers a sense of pride to the locals but also creates a sense of belonging among tourists who come from different nationalities; a concept which is similar the notion of tourists as ‘Transnationals’ community (Duval, 2004) in the way they perceived the spaces. Here, the provision of cultural spaces [functional] also allows the social interactions between the tourists and hosts to materialize that are required in creating the positive experience as insinuated by the theory of ‘Staged Authenticity’ (Gunn, 1972). Both aspects however, are clearly lacking in the resorts.

The fragmentally designed resorts also reflect that there is a big gap between the tourism development goals desired by the regulators, designers and tourists in retrospective of the siting process. While all are in the agreement that government initiated policies are crucial to the establishment of sustainable resorts, the resorts morphological analysis demonstrated that their applications in the actual design has resulted in variety of design. It also reflects that to certain extent, the integration of the
siting into the national policies and priorities were not given sufficient attention even though the regulators acknowledged that this has been the tourism development goal in Malaysia since the inception of NEP in 1996. Due to this factor, the siting has been observed as not emphasising the preservation of the environment and local community socio-cultural benefits in the coastal resort of West Malaysian Peninsula. Most importantly, the gaps in the coastal resorts’ design also demonstrates that the strategies used are lacking in the integration of the users’ [tourists’] reflections and ideologies in giving meaning to the spaces created by the siting process.

Tourists’ Experience

Tourists experience is multi dimensional and rich in meaning, which attributes need to be integrated in the siting strategies. The manner tourists describe the positive and negative experience based on the six verbal expressions in the ‘Model of Expressive Domains’ (Otto and Ritchie’s, 1996) demonstrates that they are closely associated with the environment, facilities and activities in the particular resort. The meaning of the spaces resulted from the siting and dictated by the tourists need to be carefully integrated into the appropriate strategies and transformed into the physical design forms. These subsequently allow the tourists to experience the resort comfortably without feeling a sense of inferiority or being lost in a resort where two different cultures meet. While this intention is important, both the tourists and morphological analysis demonstrate that the spaces for the environmental and social cross cultural interaction are not carefully designed to accommodate large groups of tourist to congregate and not equipped with design features that can foster a sense of belonging and place in the spaces.

Beside the inadequate provision of cultural spaces, tourists have also observed the negative environmental and social consequences resulted from ill planned development in the case study sites as well. The tourists have expressed a unanimous desire of seeing more environmentally sensitive resorts with more locals’ participation in Malaysia. They have also argued the importance of having a more integrated approach towards sustainable development for all coastal resorts regardless of the sizes and types in the planning process. The views are shared by both the regulators and tourists in the interviews.

Meanwhile, the interviews with tourists demonstrate that the reflections and ideologies of the tourists based on their on-site experience can be an important component of the siting strategies in designing coastal resorts; it is observed that these factors had not been clearly specified in the guidelines in the policies initiated by the
government. The tourist’s expectations of the positive experience in selecting the coastal resorts for their holidays and the importance of social interactions through provision of adequate spaces also delineates the importance of integrating their ideologies in the strategies. The tourists mapping of both the environmental and social spaces indicates that only they can have clear conceptions on what the place is and in the process of giving meaning to the spaces created by the siting process. In this vein, the formal approaches represented by the government policies and regulations can be considered as ‘hard’ approach which lacks the sensitivity of ‘soft’ approach provided by the tourists’ experience in terms of their personal associations with the surrounding environment and the local community. Even though, the resorts comply with the requirements, it is not clear that the final product is what the regulators intended for at the first place.

It can be summarized that the integration of the three methodologies in this study imperatively call for the more comprehensive siting strategies in the policy and guidelines that are used in the practice to prevent the deterioration of natural environment and local communities in the development in the coastal resorts of the West Malaysian Peninsula.

9.3 Recommendations

The final recommendations will be discussed based on the findings in the three methodologies that have been discussed in the previous Chapter Six, Seven and Eight.

9.3.1 Recommendation of Siting Strategies from Interview with Regulators and Designers

In general, there are several improvements that can be made to the existing policy concerning the siting of coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula, which are specified as follow:

1. While it is impossible to totally eradicate the negative impact, there is a need for an improved government intervention through innovative siting strategies in the policies that emphasise on the site context and incorporating the local community needs;

77 The term ‘hard’ is used by the Researcher to describe the formal nature of government initiated policies and regulation on costal resorts development as opposed to the ‘soft’ approach which describe the informal experience of tourists.
2. Ensuring that the tourism development is being planned at a sustainable pace to protect the environment and the local communities rather than concentrating on the economic value by fast tracking the development;

3. Ensuring that the scale of the development is appropriately selected to stimulate the environmental and social experiences in the resorts. The measure should include encouragement towards small scale enterprises that are locally operated and more sensitive to the environment;

4. Emphasising the use of local architectural features with certain allowance for integration with foreign design features to create an authentic design.

5. Ensuring that the political interference is mitigated in the process of planning and developing the resorts to create trust and better collaborations among the intergovernmental agencies and the relevant stakeholders in implementing the policies;

6. Improve implementation efficiencies in decentralisation of power in the top down approach and in ensuring the policy is being implemented by all sectors of coastal development regardless of the size and types;

7. The need for incorporating the education of the stakeholders and increasing the locals and tourists’ awareness in terms of sustainable issues in formulating the strategies. The level of awareness on the environment among the locals and tourists should be improved through proper programs or the provision of brochures and information by tourist guides; and,

8. Continuously reviewing and identifying the siting strategies that enhance the tourists experience to suit the current scenario.

9.3.2 Recommendations from the Coastal Resorts Morphologies

The recommendation from the resort morphological analysis can be formulated in association with the demand for new tourism product. The change in trends is both apparent and long term due to the further increasing demand of new specialised market. It coincides with a paramount need to provide comfortable physical spaces with specific design features to facilitate tourists’ interactions with the environment and local communities. The recommendation to revitalise the design of coastal resorts is summarised into the two main categories – Zoning and Physical Design Features.

Zoning Features:

1. To ensure that the provision of amenities, corridors, open areas are proportionally appropriate in association to the total site and building floor
There is a need to provide adequate common spaces in the circulation
and corridor spaces to enhance the tourists’ experience;

2. In terms of zoning, there is a need to earmark the conservation planning zone
and future spaces for expansion which is crucial for improvement and
remaining competitive in meeting the tourists’ demands. The carrying capacity
levels should be considered and certain control mechanism to be provided to
maintain it;

3. Zoning of resorts should allow tourists to have a sense of direction and order
on how the spaces relate to each other in ensuring the tourist movement is
properly controlled and to provide a sense of privacy in the resorts. In terms of
the accessibility, consider all routes among the facilities provided, between
the facilities and the surrounding environment and those for the public to gain
access to the surrounding environments;

4. Evade constructing development in the environmentally sensitive areas. The
selection of structure and the activities are crucial in the conservation area. In
some cases, structure might not be needed; in fact the access to certain
areas for recreational activities is a better alternative;

5. Low rise resorts allows flexibility in setting out the facilities namely the
accommodation as they are not controlled by the strict structural grid found in
the multi story resorts, in which in terms of the scale blends well with the
natural environment, while the vertical height of the high rise resorts is more
suited for resorts in the urban setting;

6. While emphasising the view towards the sea, it is also important to ensure
that the climates, overall building appearance and viewing to the natural
attraction are taken into considerations;

7. While providing open spaces for tourists, it is important to preserve and
encourage the interactions between the exterior and transitional spaces,
provide originality in an interior spaces as well as the exterior shell through
the provision of appropriate construction materials;

8. Encourage clustering of courtyards apart from the main central courtyard to
provide alternative private spaces for tourists in enhancing the environmental
experience and social relations. The setting out allows tourists to perceive
that they have sufficient spaces to choose between the social interaction or
privacy; and,

9. There must be a clear separation of the facilities from the coastline. It’s better
to separate the coast by a buffer zone or foreshore reserved to protect the
site from wind and water erosion. On the building setback, it screens the
noise or visual from the other providing opportunities for public interaction and recreation in a comfortable environment.

**Physical Design Features:**

1. The environmental settings such as balconies, open bath area and also large window opening in the accommodation should be emphasised in the design of the resort as an effort to appreciate the environment and for social interaction to take place;

2. Use passive design technique to create a pollution free environment both physical and visual not only for tourists but also for the locals. While the features of the places such as terraces, decks and steps are important in promoting the environmental and social experience, the passive design technique to shelter from the sun and wind and gain simultaneous view of the land, from near, distant or elevated need to be integrated in the design;

3. Protecting the ecosystem by limiting the scale of the development in terms of proper choice of transportation system and the ability to deal with building services supply such as water and electricity;

4. Enhancing the tourists experience also means that upgrading of facilities, such as the sewerage, electrical and water supply system need to be implemented. In this context, use fewer resources for feasible operation such as incorporating design features that will minimise the energy use such as natural ventilation, natural lighting and passive solar heating;

5. The choice of local materials and technology can enhance the tourists’ experience. The need for a maintenance handbook that includes the definition of environmentally sensitive design, building materials and construction techniques to be used as well as the repairs and the technical problems such as the availability and price that will prevent structural destruction;

6. A space for social function that could accommodate large congregation groups of tourist which allows the participation of the locals should made a provision in the open spaces in the resorts for activities during the day and night. The environmental experience can also be heightened through providing the necessary infra structure for the tourists convenience such as street lightings and street furniture;

7. The utilisation of appropriate range of landscape in the open spaces created by the siting process will ensure more interesting and simulating setting and source of fascination in the spaces in which tourists can enjoy the experience outdoors while ensuring that the plants and wildlife can survive in this area;
8. Landscape can be used to create a sense of localities through the use of local plant communities, improve the air quality and used as micro-climatic control as shades or screens from the extreme sun, high wind velocity, control noises and act as the screen barriers in the resorts spaces; and,

9. Landscape can also provide a sense of scale to the resorts form and shapes and provides contrast to the building man made structure and unite the appearance of the resorts.

9.3.3 Recommendations from the Interviews with Tourists

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, tourists are increasingly searching for new environmental experience in tourist destinations. With this new trend, sustainable development has emerged as the mainstream concept in the tourism industry which largely depends on the tourist reflections and ideologies. It matters not only to the tourists themselves, but also to the people who makes decisions regarding the tourists, design and financial success of tourism products. Thus, making the appropriate decisions in the early planning stage will allow some future flexibility for improvement for the resorts to attract tourists.

Tourists have defined the positive environmental experience to include learning and acquiring knowledge about the environment through the activities within its natural setting and interaction with hosts or locals to the places that allows the interaction to happen. Consequently, there are several recommendations from the tourists’ interviews on the strategies to enhance tourists’ experience in association with the above positive experience dimensions:

1. The accounts of the tourists’ on site personal experience are distinctive, long lasting and useful to generate new ideas on the siting strategies for environmental and social planning of the tourist’s destinations. The ideas need to be incorporated in formulating policies and strategies in the siting process;

2. The goal of the overall positive environmental and social experience is to provide a unique experience and comfortable environment namely in the accommodation and the amenities and the open spaces using the appropriate physical design features (active and passive) to enhance the environmental and social experience;

3. The unique experience can be created through the intentional or an element of surprise provided in the spaces to create a sense of belonging and place
for tourists. While both senses are important, the setting of the facilities must also simultaneously provides a sense of security and privacy to the tourists;

4. In many aspects of the design the spaces provided for the environment and social cross cultural interaction should be properly sized to accommodate large groups of tourist to congregate for social activities and equipped with design features that can foster a sense of belonging and place in the spaces; and,

5. The process of social enhancement should not be done through the integration with the environment per se but must feature the local architectural elements, material and landscape but in a clearly defined combination with new technology to create a sense of belonging among the tourist who comes from different countries. This will also create a sense of security and safety during their stay.

9.4 Implications of Research Findings: New Theoretical Knowledge

The study provides a new theoretical perspective in the planning and design of coastal resorts.

It conjures a new theoretical knowledge in the way comprehensive siting strategies should be implemented in the government initiated policies and regulations to create sustainable coastal resorts. The establishment of the siting strategies must integrate the tourists’ reflections and ideologies based on their actual experience in the resorts. The tourists’ ideologies and reflections through their verbal expressions that are rich meaning can be utilized in the place making concepts of resorts spaces created by the siting process through the appropriate zoning and physical design features.

In justifying its contribution to the new technical knowledge, this study has integrated 3 main research approaches; interviews with regulators and designers, morphological analysis and interviews with tourists as an indicator for the breadth of this study. It has also included 18 resorts (including three main resorts) in West Coast of Malaysian Peninsula as case studies to indicate the depth of the study. Gretzel et al. (2007) introduces four case studies to illustrate the depth and breadth of applications of text analysis in tourism research. This research explores important questions on the ways in which tourism policy can integrate social, environmental, and cultural and heritage of coastal environment where governments are striving to establish more sustainable resorts. It also contributes to the formulation of tourism policy, which
cannot be fully understood without reference to its wider framework. Finally, these issues are also examined within the context of Malaysia, which is undergoing political change as it develops both as a nation and tourist destination (Henderson, 2009). A more comprehensive policy which takes accounts of the tourism stakeholders’ need is essential to meet the development goal.

9.4.1 Towards Comprehensive Siting Strategies for Coastal Resorts

As discussed in Chapter Three, the general siting guidelines can be observed in the relevant policies, Building Regulations and Sustainable Indicators and Assessment Tools. While the National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) is currently used both as an appropriate instrument within the Malaysian overall sustainable development aims and for conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the country, the different categories and the existing structures of guidelines consisting of the general siting and operation of facilities in the National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) is considered as a barrier in having comprehensive siting strategies for coastal tourism development in Malaysia.

As also mentioned in Chapter Three, the other guidelines were observed to be not formal enough to be applicable to all resorts due to its overlapping jurisdictions and inadequate information on the design characteristics that incorporate the tourist and the local communities’ views and reflections. The guidelines do not specifically discuss the relationship between the siting and the quality of spaces resulted from the process to enhance the tourists experience even though they were originally introduced to mitigate the impact towards the environment. This study clearly indicates the need for comprehensive siting strategies that incorporate all stakeholders needs to make it applicable as a single and common application.

9.4.2 Improving Sustainable factors in Coastal Resorts

An environmental oriented design of coastal resort can facilitate tourism interaction with the environment and inhibit broader sustainable objectives. This includes addressing the cumulative effects and adverse impacts to the coastal environment, economic and socio-cultural issues, which will be beneficial in the long run. This study has explored the policies and design practice of coastal resorts in Malaysia and identified the way forward for the design to improve. There is a need for continuous planning as a result of the inadequacies of coastal resorts design, which Hall (1975) described as giving a detailed picture of some desired future and state to be achieved in a certain numbers of years.
With this perspective in mind, this study can contribute to the design and planning of coastal resorts by improving the overall sustainability factors of a resort development through incorporating sustainable siting strategies in the site planning process. It will assist in minimising the risk of conflicts as all issues pertaining to the siting are identified early and all interest groups directly participate in the planning and decision making. It serves as an advanced notice to site managers of impending problems so that managers can avoid or minimize the problems before it becomes established or irreversible as well.

9.4.3 Improved Collaboration among Inter-governmental Organization

The emphasis on the EIA assessment approval and the existing NEP guidelines on one hand indicate the government seriousness in ensuring coastal resort design that can reduce the negative impact to the environment and local communities. On the other hand, there is a need for more collaboration not only among the government agencies but also with other stakeholders in the sustainable resorts development. Parallel to this, there is also a need to have a specific set of siting strategies that are easily accessible to the planners and policy makers to assist them in preparing the strategic planning and supervising the design. It can be concluded that the availability of a more comprehensive siting strategies will diminish the devastating impact from unnecessary political obstruction in the decision making process required in the collaborations.

9.5 Research Significance

While the implication of this research is focussed on the formulation and application of the strategies, the research is also significant to the development of tourism not only in Malaysia but to other countries which main industry is coastal tourism.

9.5.1 Significant in Creating Sustainable Tourism Indicators in Malaysia

The strategies can assist in formulating sustainable tourism assessment framework specifically for the siting of coastal resorts in Malaysia. Currently, the sustainable assessment tool available to gauge the sustainability of tourism destinations is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). While there are also several indicators that are used globally and mentioned earlier such as the ‘LEED’ and ‘Green Globe’ rating systems, an indicator is not necessarily appropriate for another, resulting in different degrees of the actual sustainability being achieved through many different concepts and assessment tools. This is due to the fact that tourism
destinations are often located in or close to the ecologically fragile or culturally sensitive areas, very dynamic and comprises of complex sets of activities. This calls for good indicator sets that are created based on the users integration which are more comprehensive in covering the siting aspects of the coastal resorts.

9.5.2 Significance for Research on Tourism Facilities in Malaysia

The NEP (1977) listed the main problems in the current state of sustainable tourism industry in Malaysia among others as, lack of effective and efficient sustainable management practice of the eco-tourism site and the difficulties to collect data from them as costly and time-consuming, which resulted in unreliable and incomplete eco-tourism database. Meanwhile, WWFNM (1996) highlights that many eco-tourism developments in Malaysia have focused towards advancing the economic objectives rather than protecting the resources that attract visitors. There is no blueprint for successful eco-tourism development as well, rather examples of different projects in which particular components are innovative or well implemented (Ziffer, 1989; and Boo, 1990) and weakens both the governments and industry’s ability to plan ahead to match the supply and demand (WTTC, 2002). Here, Ritchie (1993) proposed for a collaborative, international, cross-cultural, multidisciplinary and multi-methodological research in tourism. In this vein, it also implies that Malaysia needs to invest in developing a more sophisticated research capability, ensuring close collaboration between the industry and government agencies. Essentially, the study of place identity, notion of belonging and the physical design of the facilities from an architectural perspective will assist in the knowledge building in the tourism industry.

9.5.3 Significance to the Tourism Growth in Malaysia and Global Context

Coastal resorts in Malaysia continues to attract an increasing number of tourists from abroad and are experiencing rapid development due to the government policy to promote tourism and economic development (DOE, 2007). The economic growth will also fuel more demand for quality tourism development to attract tourists and signals the need for better design and planning approach to cater for the tourists’ needs and demands for environmentally sensitive coastal resorts. Appropriately controlling the scale, types and development through proper siting that emphasis on the environment and stressing the benefit to the community will not only benefit the stakeholders but also the nation as a whole. This raises the need for comprehensive siting strategies that could enhance the tourists experience in coastal resorts.
9.5.4 **Significance to the Researcher from Malaysia**

The study is also significant to the Researcher, who is currently attached as a lecturer in the Department of Architecture in University Putra Malaysia. The research area which focuses on the sustainable design of coastal resort development in Malaysian context is relevant to the Researcher and the university as well as the national interest in promoting sustainable growth. The study can also be used in promoting awareness on the sustainable design issues pertaining to the development of coastal resorts.

9.6 **Limitations of Research and Lesson Learned**

The limitations and lesson learned from this research can be scrutinized from several angles – selection of case studies, dealing with the political agenda, and diversity in research methodology, bias and complexity, and research culture.

9.6.1 **Selection of Case Studies**

The selection of resorts in the case study sites in the West coast of the Malaysian Peninsula are also subject to the limitation caused by the seasonality, allocated budget and research time frame. In this case, the resorts in the West coast are not subjected to the impact of monsoons that brings along heavy wind and rain to the East coast areas in the month of November to early January. The resorts are virtually empty during the season and the timing of this study does not permit the study to incorporate the East coast area. As such, the geographical approach in this study is limited to specific geographic areas which raised the concern in representing other tourists’ areas in Malaysia. Thus, there is a need for ongoing research on the policy making, the practice of the siting, the spatial and physical design aspects and the tourists experience in other coastal resorts areas in Malaysia as well.

Meanwhile, the researcher also opted for to include the new developments that are available in the case study sites so that there will be more response in the interviews. For the regulators, new development provides some enthusiasms regarding the policies being implemented as it is still fresh in their memory. The selection of high-end resorts is also instrumental in understanding the tourists’ positive experience in the development as they represent the best design practice while the correlation with all types of resorts in the case study sites in the morphological studies unveil more information on the design gaps.
9.6.2 Dealing with Political Issues: Hidden Agenda

During the interviews with the regulators, the Researcher observed that there is a tendency among the respondents not to debate on the sensitive political views and impacts to the tourism industry especially if the information might oppose the higher ranked personnel's views. While the accurate information is ethically required from the regulators, this has also resulted in difficulties in understanding several political issues that have influenced the implementation of the policies and strategies concerning the siting process. In many instances, the respondents requested personally that the sensitive information given to the researcher not to be recorded. The researcher was also reminded intermittently for several times by the respondents to ensure that their identities to remain unanimous whenever matters pertaining to the political issues being discussed during the interviews.

9.6.3 Dealing with Diversity in Research Methodology

As mentioned earlier in Chapter Two and Three, researches dealing with the physical planning of the tourists destinations are distinctive and complex. The complexity of tourism research is not only due to the integration of various fields of knowledge and dynamicity but also demands for an integrated research approach in the study. A variety of research methods are used in pursuing the opinions of various groups of tourism stakeholder. The researcher clarified that it is difficult to draw the conclusions from the synthesis of the results in the three methodological approaches. It should be noted that the methods used in the study can be incorporated in future research with certain modifications to suit the nature of study related to tourism planning.

9.6.4 Interpretation: Dealing With Bias and Complexity

In this study, biasness can occur during the process of data interpretation during and after conducting the field studies. Evidence of this can be found in the frequent repetition of the questions while interviewing in English. Questions pertaining to the sustainable issues, positive environmental experience or even the siting were repeated to ensure that the respondents do not astray from the context of the interview. As a result, the Researcher did not understand the intended meaning of some of the answers given. This can contribute to the researcher's biasness in processing the
data\textsuperscript{78}. Furthermore, the complexity in this research is also associated with the personal factors of the respondents. With regard to the interviews with tourists, it is difficult to find good responses from them as many are reluctant to be involved as they preferred not to be disturbed during their stay. This adds to complexity in extracting the relevant data\textsuperscript{79}.

9.6.5 Research Culture and Awareness

Difficulties in obtaining the relevant documents also reflect the research culture in Malaysia. As mentioned earlier, there are conflict of interest between the resorts’ operators, the designers and the researcher in perceiving the benefit of the research. The operators preferred privacy in protecting their design copyrights and opted to be very secretive about their operations. Some resorts do not allow for any photographs and interviews to be taken in their premises. In many instances, the documents or the required drawings were not released by the owners. Thus, it is essential for every stakeholder including the academician to collaborate in tourism research with the

\textsuperscript{78} The problem of researcher’s biasness in interpreting the data needs to be stressed in this study. The selection of data that fit the researcher’s existing theory and preconceptions of data that stands out to the researcher are two important threats to the validity of qualitative conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). However eliminating the actual influence is impossible (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). On one hand, the validity of respondents’ data is achieved by systematically soliciting feedback about the data and conclusions’ of the respondents to rule out the possibility of misinterpreting of what participants says (Maxwell, 2005). On the other hand, the reflexivity in which the researcher actively engages in critical self reflection about his or her potential biases and predisposition, researchers become aware and they monitor and attempt to control their bias (Johnson and Christensen, 2010) is also essential in the process.

\textsuperscript{79} There are several approaches that could foster a more participatory approach. Alternative approaches to qualitative inquiry have since continued to grow which concerns with moral discourse and the development of sacred textualities (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The interpretivism seems to underpin the credibility of its approach rather than in pursuit of the truth (Tribes, 2006). In relation to this, physiological research in the area of human judgment processes indicates that people’s judgment about causal relationships, such as the impact of environment behavior and knowledge on the quality of designs and planning decisions, may be influenced by more memorable details of specific spaces than by statistical evidence of relationship that might emerge from a review of the entire body of such cases (Hamill, Wilson and Nisbett, 1980). Thus, contextual inquiry, or an ethnographical based approach to the study of users in their context of interaction in which understanding the context a system is used by users is essential for good design (Holtzblatt and Jones, 1993). According to them, the collaboration between the designer and user in understanding practice and actively participate in the design process, and lastly to assign meaning to the results of observations capture relevant issues to the design problem. Another method involves actual informal physical walkthroughs through a space to be taken in the company of the users, as a participatory design sessions taking place throughout the spaces in which the conversation will highlight users’ connection and perception of an actual space (Gleber, 1999).
ethical principles of sincerity in conducting a research for mutual benefits. All the research data should be made accessible to researcher in an ethical manner whilst providing an environment which is conducive for any research undertakings. This is essential for the development of coastal resorts which significantly contributes to the nation’s socio-cultural and economic advancements.

9.7 Recommendations for Future Research Direction

There are several recommendations for future research direction as the result of this study pertaining to the global climate change and planning for sustainability awareness among tourism stakeholders.

9.7.1 Global Climate Change and Siting Opportunity

As elaborated in the literature review of Chapter Two, the global climate change represents an interesting linkage between the coastal environment and the siting process. The negative impacts to the coastal zones namely beach erosion, coupled with storm surges and high tides will pose severe problems to coastal resorts. These impacts will lead to the loss of resources, such as biodiversity, amenity landscapes and loss of coastal infrastructure that serve to attract visitors. Some of the impacts have already been observed in coastal tourism development in Malaysia. The damage is already aggravated by the impact of unplanned development of coastal resorts and impact from the coastal environment such as the monsoon effects and coastal erosions.

In the context of both building life-cycle and economic sustainability, initial inappropriate site choice for the coastal tourism building shows lack of understanding on the coastal environment and protection measures and locating the structure on the sea can be regarded as the main cause of the problem. On one hand, adaptation measures such as ‘retreat’ to higher ground and use of building setbacks appear to have little practical utility in most tiny islands where physical space is already very scarce. The same scenario is being confronted by the coastal tourism facilities, which are also conventionally designed as “fixed” buildings. In similar case, the coastal zone protection utilising hard protection methods such as sea wall, groynes, piers, and soft technique such as beach nourishment program are expensive and consistently ineffective. It may even result in future construction of additional hard structures (Cipriani et. al.1999).

A successful coastal adaptation, according to Klein et al. (2000), embraces more than just selecting one of the technical options to respond to sea level rise; it is a more
complex and iterative process, with a series of policy cycles. The concept of diversified lifetimes of a building was proposed by Fernandez (2002), who declared that buildings could be designed to constitute from a number of different parts with different design lives. Fernandez stresses that the modular design, described as: design for disassembly, separation technologies, material reclamation and recycling, loose fit detailing, lightly treading foundations will contribute to suite technologies necessary for the building volumes to change over time. Thus, modular design can be applied as the design solution to increase the long-term resilience and flexibility of a coastal tourism building with respect to the impact of the GCC. In terms of the siting, the modular components can be designed as transportable, which is a possible for long-term response towards the potential impact of the global climate change. The components can be arranged in various formations as an extreme measure in improving the siting process. While there is a reservation on the effectiveness of using the modular design as the adaptive design technique for the changing coastal environment due to its initial cost and technological awareness, it remains as one potent approach in saving the industry and as an alternative to enhance tourists experience and design the product beyond its maturity stage by the virtue of being transportable. However, there is a need for further research on the use of the modular components and its association with the siting approach to understand its impact on the particular environment and the local communities.

9.7.2 Planning and Sustainability Awareness

The study substantiates the Researcher’s assumption that the coastal resorts in Malaysia need improvements in terms of the siting. They can be designed to protect the environment and enhance the tourists’ experience which is crucial in sustaining the industry competitiveness. There is a need for better strategies to assist in the planning process to achieve the development goal. However, having appropriate strategies without certain degree of awareness on sustainable issues and holistic approach will diminish the importance of the strategies and hinders the development goals. Furthermore, the situation can be aggravated by political and ethical issues (Hall and Page, 2000). There is also a need for a shift in the siting policy from concentrating only on the short term benefit in terms of profit to the developers, regulators and the local livelihood to a long term sustainable planning that will protect the industry in more responsible manner.

The long term benefit can be created through proper education and awareness programs on the sustainable issues starting from the early years of education. The Researcher, based on his experience as a lecturer and interactions with students on
the design issues of built environments stresses the importance of creating the awareness from the early years of education. The students' works generally indicates their understanding on the importance of integrating the sustainable issues in the design even without proper exposures. However, when it comes to the process of designing many of the students are found to be struggling in integrating the sustainable principles. Many are more interested in expressing the forms rather than the functional aspects of the design. It seems that for the students, the sustainable aims are considered more as limiting factors rather than design idea generators. Subsequently, a research on how to improve the students' awareness on the sustainable issues in design school should be encouraged to assist in developing sustainable coastal resorts.

9.7 Conclusion

The complexity and dynamics of the coastal tourism industry and the demand for environmentally sensitive resorts requires comprehensive siting strategies to enhance the tourists experience in coastal resorts in the West Malaysian Peninsula. This study through the appropriate strategies and tactics denotes that the siting of the facilities is an important consideration in the place making of spaces that can enhance the tourists' experience in the coastal resorts. However, it must integrate the tourists' reflections and ideologies based on their actual experience in the coastal resorts. Tourists' reflections and ideologies are multi-dimensional based on the exciting, unique and stimulating experience that can be created by the siting process. They are rich in meaning and need to be manifested into the zoning or physical design forms in combination with the formal requirements in the policies and regulations.

Meanwhile, the spatial qualities through proper zoning are crucial to control the tourists' movement and activities whilst ensuring they can interact with the particular environment and the locals. The physical design features that include the passive design features, landscapes, building material and construction technique need to be carefully designed in the spaces which are subjected to heavy usage during peak season. The integration of local architectural features with new technologies allows tourists to feel a sense of belonging, comfortable and secured in the resorts. Meanwhile, the reviews on the existing siting strategies in the government initiated policies and regulations are essential to ensure proper integration of the tourists experience and implementation throughout the tourism industry through the top-down policy and decentralisation of power in the governmental organisation. There must be a clear jurisdiction on the decision making without any disruptive political influence,
improved collaboration among the stakeholders and strict compliance to the policies regardless of the sizes and types of coastal resorts development.

While the study was conducted with certain limitations, it essentially provides a new theoretical perspective in formulating and integrating comprehensive siting strategies in the government initiated policy and regulation, and the design of sustainable coastal resorts. It is also significant to the tourism industry in Malaysia and brought forward important considerations to future research undertaking pertaining to the design of the coastal resorts in terms of the design, adaptation to the global climate change and educating sustainable awareness among the tourism stakeholders. In proposing the transportable modular facilities as the long term solution to the GCC, it also leads the pathway for further research on this type of construction that can vary the tourists experience in the resorts beyond the product maturity stage. In conclusion, the comprehensive siting strategies in the government initiated guidelines that integrate the tourists’ reflections’ and ideologies are paramount to revitalize the design of coastal resorts and growth of tourism development in Malaysia.
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## Appendices

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Appendix 1: Summary of the National Ecotourism Plan. Source is from NEP (1997)

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<th>Section 1: Issues, Strategies and Action Plans</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section 1 recommends 21 action plans covering aspects such as planning, management and capacity building to make Malaysia an international ecotourism destination. The aims of the action plans are:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To protect and manage protected areas;</td>
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<td>• To integrate agency support and self-financing of ecotourism projects;</td>
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<td>• To involve local community participation;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To encourage pilot projects as models for best practices; and</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To focus on the joint marketing.</td>
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<th>Section 2: Site Listing</th>
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<td>Section 2 identifies 48 sites within the country of potential for ecotourism development and another for general project recommendations. It includes namely:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establishment of Visitor Information Centre on the islands of Johor and Terengganu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provision of institutional assistance to strengthen the growth of ecotourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improving the quality of interpretive and promotional materials on ecotourism; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishment of pilot ecotourism projects.</td>
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<th>Section 3: Development Guidelines</th>
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<tr>
<td>The development guidelines recommended in Section 3 are produced as manual-type booklets covering a wide range of aspects from site management to solid waste disposal. The guidelines are produced under 4 headings, namely:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• General Guidelines According to Site Category</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Carrying Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guidelines According to Ecological Systems</td>
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<td>• Specific Guidelines</td>
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Appendix 2: Comparison of Siting Guidelines in NEP. Source is from NEP (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Guidelines Of Site Planning For Sustainable Development In NEP</th>
<th>General Guideline For Siting Under NEP’s Marine Park Guidelines For Operation Of Facilities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All elements of the site plan must have a purpose (relation of park to surroundings, relation of facility to use area and zones, relation of facilities in the site, relation to overall objectives of park master plan)</td>
<td>1. Siting of facilities to avoid loading the marine environment with high levels of silt during the construction phase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Man-made structures should interfere as little as possible with the natural ecosystem. Site buildings and structures should avoid cutting significant trees and to minimize disruption of other natural features. Maintenance of ecosystem should take priority overview or dramatic “design statements”. Where feasible, locate facilities on perimeters.</td>
<td>2. Facilities must be limited to lowland areas, on very small islands and at water catchment areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Structures must be as unobtrusive as possible, not dominating their natural surroundings or detracting from the intrinsic natural values of the area. To attain this, use landscaping appropriately. Architecture should preferably be of local style. Buildings should be screened by natural buffs or groves of trees.</td>
<td>3. Buffer zones (building construction should not be allowed in this area) should be established at beach areas, with an ideal minimum setback of 100 metre from the high water mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Design for people. Recognize the optimal sociological use limits of the site, as well as safety and convenience factors. Suitable siting of buildings depends on functional considerations; it is enough to consider only their strategic aspects.</td>
<td>4. Vegetation at the beach strand should be maintained and replanted to prevent erosion and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Design within the constraints of the resources. Recognize the optimal environmental capacity of the site and potential impacts. Balance economic, human, technical and resource values.</td>
<td>5. Only low-density and low-rise tourist accommodation (such as single storey chalets and frame huts) should be developed, whilst providing adequate services and amenities for tourists.</td>
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Table 3.6: Comparison of Siting Guidelines in NEP
Appendix 3: Siting Criteria Checklist in EIA Assessment (DOE, 1994)

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<th>Criteria for siting and routing to accommodate landscape diversity:</th>
<th>Is sitting and routing completed? If not</th>
<th>Will the affected public be informed and consulted</th>
<th>Alternative layouts</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Aesthetic (Views)</td>
<td>• What has occurred to date?</td>
<td>• What are options for siting facilities and structures?</td>
<td>• Layout of landscape preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engineering (terrain, drainage, coastal geomorphology,</td>
<td>• What are options for routing access and utilities?</td>
<td>• Layout of least cost development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Biodiversity (fauna and in fauna habitat, Flora and heritage features)</td>
<td>• Can Routing use common corridors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Appendix 4: Siting Guidelines in Sustainable Assessment Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siting and Urban Issues</td>
<td>Operations are only undertaken in locations where tourism is appropriate.</td>
<td>Erosion and Sediment Control</td>
<td>Development area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site should be away from high conservation values</td>
<td>Site Selection</td>
<td>Site selection, development density, site remediation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoid culturally sensitive site.</td>
<td>Urban Redevelopment</td>
<td>Ecological impacts(native planting and vegetation, heat islands, night sky)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal site disturbance.</td>
<td>Alternative Transportation</td>
<td>Watershed features (site grading, storm water management, pervious cover, rainwater capture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brownfield Redevelopment</td>
<td>Site ecology enhancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced Site Disturbance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stormwater management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Landscape and Exterior Design to Reduce Heat Islands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Light Pollution Reduction</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 5: Summary of Archives and Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Location Of Archives</th>
<th>Types Of Archives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library And Archives</td>
<td>National Archives Of Malaysia</td>
<td>Tourism Policy Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Library Of Malaysia</td>
<td>Media Reports And Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry Of Tourism Library</td>
<td>Statements Photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism Malaysia Resource Centre</td>
<td>Tourism Statistical Data, Environmental Assessment Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Economic Planning Unit (EPU), in Ministry of Finance (MoF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper Archives Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designers</td>
<td>Architect A&amp;A</td>
<td>Planning Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YTL Design Group</td>
<td>Site Progress Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Berjaya Group</td>
<td>Construction Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Agencies</td>
<td>Manjung City Council</td>
<td>Recent Past And Current/ Future Planning Interventions Of The Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Langkawi Municipal Council, Langkawi Island.</td>
<td>Planning Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Langkawi Development Agencies (LADA)</td>
<td>Planning Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Port Dickson City Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Environment</td>
<td>Ministry Of Natural Resources And Environment</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department Of Environment (Kedah/Perlis)</td>
<td>Site Environmental Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department Of Environment (Negeri Sembilan)</td>
<td>Environmental Guidelines And Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department Of Environment (Perak)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>University Putra Malaysia</td>
<td>Student Design Works; Drawing And Text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix 6: Participants in Interviews with Regulators and Designers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Of Participants</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Local Planners In Various City Councils | 1) Langkawi City Council (LCC)  
2) Langkawi Development Agency (LADA)  
3) Lumut-Sitiawan City Council (LSCC)  
4) Penang City Council (PSC)  
5) Port Dickson City Council (PDCC) |
| B. Department of Environments | 1) Department of Environment Langkawi  
2) Department of Environment Perak  
3) Department of Environment Penang  
4) Department of Environment Negeri Sembilan. |
| C. Tourism Agencies: | 1) Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Art (MOCAT)  
2) Tourism Board Malaysia  
3) Langkawi Tourism Action Council  
4) Manjung Tourism Action Council |
| D. Non-Governmental Organisation: | 1) Malaysian Nature Society (MNS)  
2) World Wildlife Funds for Nature (WWF) |
| E. Designers Or Architects Involved In The Development Of Coastal Resorts: | 1) Berjaya Group  
2) YTL Design Group  
3) A&A Architects |
Appendix 7: Plain Language Statement

Dear Sir/Madam/Miss,

Project Title:

Siting Strategy for Coastal Tourism Development in Malaysia

You are invited to participate in the above research project, which is being conducted by Dr Scott Drake (Responsible Researcher) and Mr. Mohammad Yazah Mat Raschid (Student Researcher) of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne. This project will form part of Mr. Mohammad Yazah Mat Raschid PhD research thesis, and has been approved by the Architecture, Building and Planning Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG).

The aim of the project is to investigate the physical setting of coastal tourism development facilities in Malaysia consisting of the built spaces of accommodation, amenities and recreational facilities that can reduce the negative environmental impact and fulfill tourist demand for more environmentally sustainable tourist destinations. This will lead to establishing the appropriate siting strategies for the development.

Should you agree to participate, you should be asked in an interview at a time and place that is convenient to you. With your permission (through verbal agreement or signing a consent form) the interview would be tape-recorded and/or noted so that we can ensure that an accurate record is made of your responses. You may request a copy of the transcript once the tape has been transcribed to verify the information and/or request deletions.

Your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses will be protected to the fullest possible extent, within the limits of the law. Your name and contact details will be kept in a separate, password-protected computer file from any data that you supply. This will only be able to be linked to your responses by the researchers, for example, in order to know where to send your interview transcript for checking. In the final report, you will be not be referred to by a name. Any references to personal information that might allow someone to guess your identity will be removed. However, you should note that as the number of people we seek to interview is very small, it is possible that someone may still be able to identify you.

Once the thesis arising from this research has been completed, a brief summary of the findings will be available to you on application at the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne. It is also possible that the results will be presented at academic conferences. The data will be kept securely in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne for five years from the date of publication, before being destroyed.
Please be advised that your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any stage, or to withdraw any unprocessed data you have supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice. The researchers are not involved in the ethics application process. Your decision to participate or not, or to withdraw, will be completely independent of your dealings with the ethics committee, and we would like to assure you that it will have no effect on any applications for approval that you may submit. If you would like to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it in the envelope provided. The researchers will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for the interview.

Should you require any further information, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either of the researchers (as contact details provided as below). Should you have any concerns about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, The University of Melbourne, on ph: +61 (0)3 8344 2073, or fax:+61(0)3 9347 6739.

Yours sincerely,

____________________________________________

Dr Scott Drake
Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning
The University of Melbourne
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Email:sdrake@unimelb.edu.au

____________________________________________

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Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning
The University of Melbourne Victoria 3010 Australia
T: +61 3 8344 6417 F: +61 3 8344 5932
Appendix 8: Consent Form for Persons Participating In a Research Project.

Project title:

Siting Strategies for Coastal Tourism Development in Malaysia

Name of participant: ____________________________

Name of researcher(s): Dr Scott Drake and Mr Mohammad Yazah Mat Raschid

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.

2. I authorize the researchers to use for this purpose the interview and/or informal conversation referred to under (1) above.

3. I acknowledge that:
   (a) The possible effects of participating in the interview have been explained to my satisfaction;
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research;
   (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;

4. I consent this interview to be audio-taped and my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research.

Participant signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Contact (address/ phone number/e-mail/etc.): ____________________________

Note: Participant must be over 18 years of age.
Appendix 9: Interview Questions

A. Interviews with Institutions:

i. Actual Questions

1) What department/unit are you working with?

2) What involvement do you have with the resort?

3) Which resorts have you stayed in Langkawi Island/Pangkor Island and Port Dickson? Why do you choose to stay at the resort? How often do you stay in the resort?

4) What do you especially like or dislike about the resort?

5) Who do you think are the main tourists targeted for the resort?

6) How important do you think is the siting of tourism facilities in reducing the environmental impact when designing a resort?

7) In what ways do you think that the siting strategies can minimise the impact towards the environment?

8) In what ways do you feel the resort meets its objective in preserving the natural surrounding compared to other resorts? Does this attract more tourists to stay here?

9) What are the strategies used for the siting of coastal resort facilities?

Specific Questions:

(To Local Building Authority (LBA))

a) How are these strategies formulated? What are their long terms or short terms goal?

b) How do you think these strategies differ from other places in Southeast Asia?

c) How do you determine that the tourism development is sustainable or not?

d) How are these strategies enforced by your department?

e) What is your department policy on constructing the coastal resort facility above the sea? Why do you think the facility is constructed above the sea in certain development?

f) How do you compare the bigger scale resorts with the smaller resorts in terms of their impact towards the environment?

(To tourism planners and architects)

a) How do use the site topography to locate your building in the resort?
b) How do you compare the high rise and low rise building in terms of their adaptation to the natural surroundings?

c) How important is zoning of the facilities in the planning of coastal resorts? What are the strategies do you use in the zoning to reduce the negative impact to the environment?

d) How should the open spaces be designed in coastal resorts? What do you think is the suitable ratio of open spaces that should be provided in the development?

e) What type of landscape do you think are suited for the resort? Natural or cultivated landscape?

f) How can the general infrastructure; the availability and quality of sewage, water and electrical services be designed to minimise impact towards the natural environment?

g) How can you improve tourist’s interaction with nature in the design of the tourist accommodation?

h) How important is the location of building in terms of its distance (setback) from the sea and neighbouring lot? How do you feel about constructing the facilities above the sea?

i) How can you design the access corridor to enhance tourist interaction with the environment?

(To the Department of Environment)

a) How serious do you think is the threat of ill planned development to the environment?

b) Can you think of any ways in which the area has been negatively impacted by tourism development?

c) How do you inform the resort operators on an impending environmental disaster in the area?

d) Have any assessment made by your department to estimate the quality of the coastal environment in the area?

e) How important is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accessing the environmental impact caused by the siting in coastal resort development?

(To the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MOCAT))

a) How can the ministry assist in encouraging sustainable coastal tourism development in Malaysia?

b) How important is sustainable tourism development in Malaysia?

c) How important do you think the siting of the facilities in developing coastal resorts?
d) How do you compare our tourism industry in integrating the environment compares to other Southeast Asian countries?

e) What is the trend of coastal tourism in Malaysia?

f) What is the future trend in coastal tourism in Malaysia?

**General Question (Continue)**

10) What are the barriers do you think of in implementing the siting strategies?

11) How can your department assist in reducing the environmental impact in the tourism development?

12) In what ways do you think the siting of the facilities has benefited the local community?

13) In what ways does the local community involve in siting of the resorts?

14) How do your department respond to the environmental concerns affecting the community?

15) What is your view on the existing siting strategies used in planning the resort? How do they assist in conserving the environment?

16) How often do you think the strategies need to be reviewed?

17) What are the future threats to the environment caused by the tourism industries?

18) What do you think of planners/tourism agencies/local building authority can do to improve the siting of the coastal resort facilities?

**ii. Underlying Questions**

1) What do the institution means by siting strategies that can minimise the impact towards the environment?

2) What are the current practices or strategies used in siting of the facilities, which assist in reducing the impact towards the environment?

3) To what extent are the institutions committed in reducing the impact towards the environment?

4) To determine if the strategies in locating the facilities has helped the local community

5) What are the institutions views in improving the siting of the coastal resort facilities?

**B. Interviews with Tourist**

**i. Actual Questions**

1) Is this your first time in Malaysia?
2) How do you come here?

3) Have you been to other countries in South East Asia? If yes, which part of the countries did you visit?

4) Why do you like to come to Malaysia? How do you come to know about the resorts in Malaysia?

5) Why do you choose to stay in this part of the island? Why do you choose this resort?

6) What is your definition of environmentally sustainable experience in tourist resort?

7) Why do you think environmentally sustainable experience is important in your visit?

8) Do you think this high-end resort is more environmentally sustainable than the back packer accommodation because it is well designed?

9) Are you aware of any planning policies initiated by the local authority to conserve nature in the area? How do you feel about that?

10) Which area of the resort that you feel good or bad about the environment? (Use map to identify area)?

11) How do you feel about the resort integration with the natural environment?

12) How do you feel about the quality of the environment in the open spaces?

13) How do you think the accommodation allow you to interact with the natural environment?

14) How do you feel about the location of the building in relation to the sea and the neighbouring resorts?

15) How do you feel about your privacy in the resort? How do you feel about allowing the beach to the public affecting your privacy?

16) How do you feel walking along the access corridor? Does it help you to appreciate the natural environment?

17) How do you feel about the accessibility to the facilities?

18) Do you consider your visit to this resort as an example of a positive environmental experience?

19) Do you think this type of resort is environmentally sustainable? How so?

20) How important do you think is the environment towards having a positive holiday experience in coastal resorts?
ii. Underlying Questions

1) What does the environmental experience meant to the tourist?

2) What area of the resorts tourist feels good or bad about the environment?

3) What is the link between environment and positive holiday experience?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resorts</th>
<th>Room Types</th>
<th>Number of Rooms</th>
<th>Rating (stars)</th>
<th>Tourists Stayed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langkawi Island</td>
<td>1 Bedroom</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Andaman Langkawi</td>
<td>2 Bedroom</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berjaya Langkawi Beach Resort</td>
<td>3 Bedroom</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Villa Beach Resort &amp; Spa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langkawi Lagoon Beach Resort</td>
<td>4 Bedroom</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius Pelangi Beach Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebak Marina Resort</td>
<td>5 Bedroom</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanjong Rhu Resorts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Datal Langkawi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langka-suka Beach Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutia Burau Bay resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangkor Island</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Garden Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangkor Laut Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teluk Dalam Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Dickson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corus Paradise Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Avillian Village Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glory Beach Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seri Bayu Resort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Appendix 11: Key Indicators in Physical Parameters of the Resorts and the Case Studies Resorts Morphological Physical Parameters

a) Key Indicators in Physical Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key indicators</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Building Footprint as a percentage of Site Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>75-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>85-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Overall Floor Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;3000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>3000-10,000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&gt;10,000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Internal circulation area as a percentage of building area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&gt;15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Service area as percentage of resort area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&gt;15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Ratio of Accommodation to Building area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>75-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>85-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Proportion of varying bedroom numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>Studio and 1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>1 and 2 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Mixed 1, 2 bedroom and Bungalows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Public outdoor area as percentage of total building area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&gt;15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Floor to Area ratio (FAR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>75-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>85-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Within Building spaces as percentage of building area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>5 to 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Public outdoor area as percentage of total site area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>&gt;15%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### b) Case Studies Resorts Morphological Physical Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resorts</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
<th>P7</th>
<th>P8</th>
<th>P9</th>
<th>P10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Andaman Langkawi (AL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awana Porto Malai (APM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berjaya Langkawi Beach Resorts (BLBR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Villa Beach Resort (HVBR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langkawi lagoon Beach Resort (LLBR)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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### Appendix 12: Zoning Biophysical Checklists

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<th>Is it divided into high-used area or otherwise?</th>
<th>Is the zoning purely arranged based on view?</th>
<th>Are there any covered passageways as linkages to other zone?</th>
<th>Has the zoning created pockets of open spaces?</th>
<th>Are there any natural vegetation in the open spaces?</th>
<th>Is there availability of future expansion area?</th>
<th>Are there any climatic considerations in layout arrangement?</th>
<th>Are there limited intrusion to the natural topography?</th>
<th>Are the facilities constructed following proper building setback?</th>
<th>Are the facilities constructed following proper number of vehicles?</th>
<th>Location in ecological fragile zone (slopes and bedrocks)</th>
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### Appendix 13: The General Characteristic of Spatial Quality in the Open Spaces.

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<th>Are the amenities being provided near the open space?</th>
<th>Can the locals use or access the amenities? (Other than the restaurant)</th>
<th>Are the activities in the open space related to nature or wildlife?</th>
<th>Can the local participate in the activities within the confining spaces?</th>
<th>Are there any private places for the tourists in the open space?</th>
<th>Can the place cater for a large group session?</th>
<th>Are there any physical barriers used for privacy?</th>
<th>Provision of landscape features</th>
<th>Are there any provision for passive design features in internal area</th>
<th>Is there any usage of local material?</th>
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**Appendix 14: Environmental Features in Resorts Facilities**

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<th>Vistas towards the sea (View)</th>
<th>Building lower than 2 storey blend with surrounding</th>
<th>Noise screening</th>
<th>Design allow for cross ventilation control</th>
<th>Private Balconies</th>
<th>Allow integration with wild life</th>
<th>Design efficiency/Built on stilts or fabricated construction</th>
<th>Environmental setting in accommodation units</th>
<th>Setting above water</th>
<th>Allow public access</th>
<th>Building services hidden from tourists view</th>
<th>Allow for renewable technology</th>
<th>Efficient sewage system</th>
<th>Incorporation of local architecture feature</th>
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