

# Grant Associates harnesses the healing power of nature at Afiniti, Medini

24 MAY 2016, MEDINI, ISKANDAR, MALAYSIA

## SUMMARY

*A high-end, mixed-use development that forms part of a new urban township called Medini in Iskandar, Malaysia, is nearing completion. The flagship scheme for Medini features over 2.0 hectares of green space designed by UK and Singapore based Grant Associates and aims to promote residents' and visitors' wellbeing through therapeutic horticulture.*

**E**nvisaged by developer Pulau Indah Ventures to offer an oasis of urban wellness, Afiniti covers a total area of 1.9 hectares and comprises five zones; serviced apartments, residential units, a wellness centre, corporate training centre and wellness-themed retail.

Afiniti, with architecture designed by Kuala Lumpur based aQidea Architects, is a key project in the ongoing development of Medini, a township spanning 9.2 sq km that has been earmarked to become the Central Business District of Nusajaya in the southern economic zone of Iskandar, Malaysia.

## The Oasis

All of Afiniti's zones are distinct, with each converging on a shared green podium courtyard which sits upon the development's three storey basement car park. Designed and delivered by the Singapore office of Grant Associates, The Oasis is a three dimensional green space with landscape features on multiple levels including a central ravine, colonnade, water walls and overhead walkways.

The Oasis aims to provide a welcoming retreat where people with varying backgrounds can enhance their emotion and physical wellbeing by immersing themselves in nature.

## Landscape concept - 'The Healing Power of Nature'

Grant Associates took the structure and physiology of a fruiting tree as its inspiration for The Oasis. In this concept, the garden takes root and grows in harmony with the architecture. Shoots and stems (paths and linking walkways) create a three dimensional network across the space where fruits and pods (individual gardens) occur at key nodes. These nodes provide protective spaces for seeds and flowers (art, play and water features).

The key theme of multi-layered green space continues into the five zones in the form of sky-rise, rooftop gardens and vertical planting. The planting palette uses many indigenous species to Malaysia

and South East Asia that allow the gardens to be rooted in the ecological and local context. Plant species traditionally related to healing have been incorporated throughout the scheme.

The overall aim of the landscape concept is to interweave nature into the built environment, emphasise the interconnectedness of all life forms and enable people to experience the healing power of nature.

Afiniti's completion marks an important milestone in the development of Medini, which was created in 2008 with a focus on sustainability and 'future living'.

Carly Lamb, Senior Associate at Grant Associates, comments: "Afiniti's landscape concept is a fundamental part of the identity of this key scheme for Medini, which centres on the theme of wellbeing.

"Every aspect of the landscape aims to enhance residents and visitors' sense of wellness and, furthermore, inspire the imagination and excite the five senses.

"The scheme offers a range of experiences from adventure and discovery to therapeutic areas of reflection and calm. Social experiences are also provided for in the form of barbeque areas, play areas and places to sit together and enjoy the surrounding, natural lushness.

"This project is significant as it demonstrates the possibilities of creating unique and characterful spaces whilst dealing with the associated complexity of establishing a landscape upon a podium structure.

"More broadly, the completion of Afiniti helps to further establish this area's identity as a place that values corporate, personal and environmental wellbeing."

**Ends.**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **KEY FACTS**

50% of the development area is vegetated

550 trees are planted including 36 different species, 15 native species

55 different species of shrub and ground covers

30% of the proposed species have medicinal benefits.

## **GRANT ASSOCIATES' LANDSCAPE CONCEPT – IN DETAIL**

### **A SENSORY EXPERIENCE**

The planting scheme appeals to the five senses. Highly scented plants, textural leaves encourage touch, movement of the plants in the breeze, colourful flowers and edible herbs tell the story of multifunctional uses of plants and the delight of the natural world.

#### CREATING STRUCTURE, SHADE & SCREENING

The multi-layered forest approach provides a structure to give hierarchy to the sequence of spaces. The taller trees provide filtered shade canopy to key spaces and routes; smaller flowering and fruiting trees and shrubs provide colour and richness. Taller shrubs are used to provide enclosure and screening where privacy and seclusion are desired.

#### COLOUR AND DELIGHT

Within the layered structure of various greens of tropical planting, colour will be used as highlights in certain areas, as is found within a natural rainforest. Colour of planting responds to the use of the garden space, for example, the food and beverage areas have more richness with red and blue highlights, whilst the wellness centre garden uses cooler shades of white and pinks.

#### ENCOURAGING BIODIVERSITY

The planting approach provides a retreat for fauna within the urban environment. Birds, butter flies and insects all enhance the sensory experience of being immersed in the natural world and generally lifting the spirits.

#### MEDICINAL AND INDIGENOUS SPECIES

The species selection uses many indigenous species to Malaysia and South East Asia that allow the gardens to be more rooted in the ecological and local context. Species which have been traditionally related to healing will be incorporated throughout the scheme.

#### LEARNING THROUGH NATURE

The design of the gardens aims to engage the imagination through being in a beautiful garden. The garden oasis is structured to provide opportunity for kinaesthetic learning and the power of the whole person engagement to foster learning through the connection of planting to theme of wellness.

#### TROPICAL, INFORMAL SPACE

The aesthetics of the planting approach is informal, embracing the pattern and rhythms of nature rather than straight lines and rows. The layered and lush feel of the planting gives a more relaxed feel to the spaces which in turn adds to the restorative benefits.

#### THE GARDENS

Each 'forest clearing' or garden space is designed to respond to the function and users of the adjacent building:

The Wellness Centre garden is designed to create a healing and soothing retreat with more enclosed feel for privacy. Specific garden features include a yoga deck, reflective pool and reflexology path. The planting palette is focused on scented and medicinal plants that soothe the senses.

The Corporate Training Centre maximises opportunities for people to meet and gather and share ideas. An indoor/outdoor experience is created to provide shelter from the tropical heat whilst still benefiting from a lush garden setting.

Gardens related to retail and food and beverage include spaces for outdoor dining beneath feature tree planting, providing shade and maximising views through the wider landscape. The Residential gardens create a welcoming retreat for residents and include tropical flower gardens and a children's play area.

The central ravine provides a textural and multidimensional heart to the scheme. Level changes were maximised by creating a sheltered colonnade space, large central pool and water walls. The landscape character is inspired by a wet mountain ravine, large leaved shrubs and terracing infused with water features provides a unique cooling experience in the city.



#### RELEVANT LINKS

 **Afiniti**  
<http://afiniti.com.my/>

 **Grant Associates**  
<http://grant-associates.uk.com/>

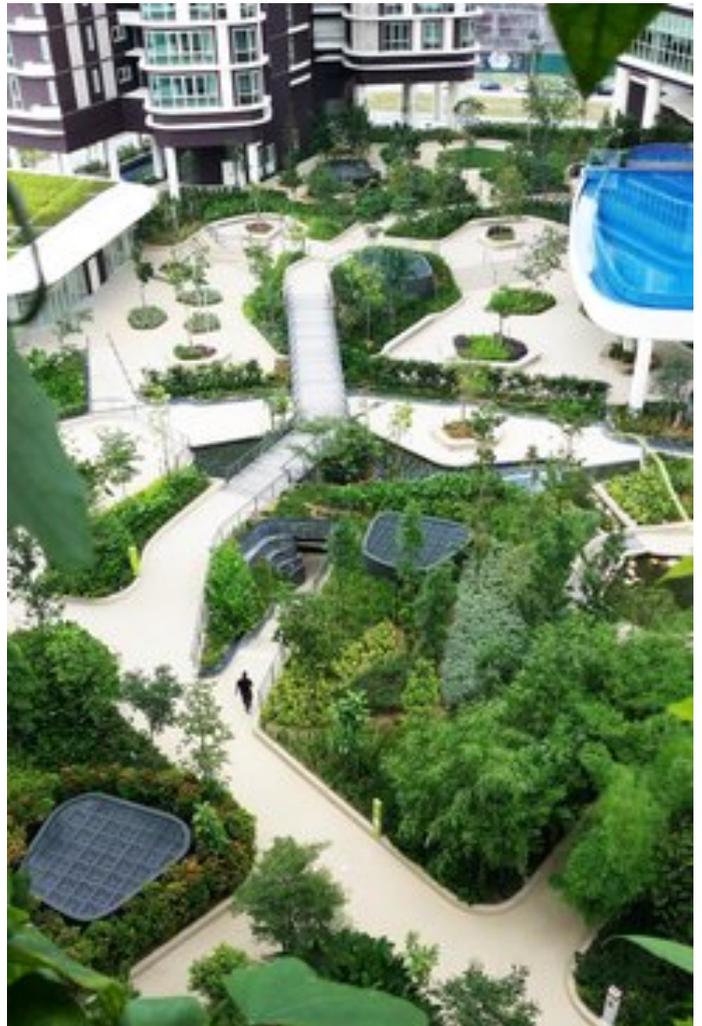
#### QUOTES

*"Afiniti's landscape concept is a fundamental part of the identity of this key scheme for Medini, which centres on the theme of wellbeing. Every aspect of the landscape aims to enhance residents and visitors' sense of wellness and, furthermore, inspire the imagination and excite the five senses. The scheme offers a range of experiences from adventure and discovery to therapeutic areas of reflection and calm. Social experiences are also provided for in the form of barbeque areas, play areas and places to sit together and enjoy the surrounding, natural*

*lushness. This project is significant as it demonstrates the possibilities of creating unique and characterful spaces whilst dealing with the associated complexity of establishing a landscape upon a podium structure. More broadly, the completion of Afiniti helps to further establish this area's identity as a place that values corporate, personal and environmental wellbeing."*

— Carly Lamb, Senior Associate at Grant Associates

#### IMAGES





## SPOKESPEOPLE



### Nick Vellacott

Highlight PR

+44 (0)1225 444268

+44 (0)7803 072368

[nick@highlightpr.co.uk](mailto:nick@highlightpr.co.uk)

highlightpr



### Tori Madine

Highlight PR

+44 (0)1225 444268

+44 (0)7969 676539

[Tori@highlightpr.co.uk](mailto:Tori@highlightpr.co.uk)

highlightpr

---

## ABOUT GRANT ASSOCIATES

Grant Associates is a British Landscape Architecture consultancy specialising in creative, visionary design of both urban and rural environments worldwide, working with some of the world's leading architects and designers.

Inspired by the connection between people and nature Grant Associates fuses nature and technology in imaginative ways to create cutting edge design built around a concern for the social and environmental quality of life.

Grant Associates has experience in all scales and types of ecological and landscape development including strategic landscape planning, master planning, urban design and regeneration and landscapes for housing, education, sport, recreation, visitor attractions and commerce.

For more information visit [www.grant-associates.uk.com](http://www.grant-associates.uk.com)

---

**grant associates**

Grant Associatesnewsroom

