

An artist's impression of one of the living and dining areas at the serviced apartments, with water and wood elements prominently featured



# KSK pushes the limits at Conlay project

Development comprises two serviced apartment towers, nine-storey retail podium and five-star Kempinski Hotel



by Laura Lee

AFTER a slight delay, KSK Land Sdn Bhd will soon market two serviced apartment blocks, now its development order (DO) application has been approved. The apartments are part of its 8 Conlay project along

Jalan Conlay, Kuala Lumpur.

Named Yoo 8 and serviced by Kempinski, the apartments are expected to be launched on Oct 8 to coincide with the opening of its purpose-built show gallery, being designed by Steve Leung & Yoo, together with its first residential tower (Tower A).

The developer had earlier anticipated it would be able to market its residential tower from March, with its gallery expected to open two months later.

As for Tower B, which will be designed by a different designer, KSK Group Bhd group CEO and executive director Joanne Kua Ying Fei explains the developer wants to provide buyers with more choice and to differentiate its product offerings.

"We want to always bring value for buyers and partners," says Kua, adding KSK Land likes to call itself a "niche developer" and this has nothing to do with the size of the project.

The 3.95-acre (1.6ha) 8 Conlay project, which has a gross development value (GDV) of RM4 bil and land cost of RM568 mil, comprises two serviced apartment towers, a nine-storey retail podium and the five-star Kempinski Hotel.

Speaking to local media invited to view some of the Hong Kong designs of Steve Leung and Yoo, an internationally-renowned design house, Kua, 30, says the name of the designer for Tower B will be revealed early next year.

To add value for buyers, she believes the project must be in a central location and uniquely marketed to stand out amid the many luxury condominium projects in the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC).

To elevate 8 Conlay above the rest, Kua, who is also KSK Land managing director, says the game is to "push the boundaries a bit".

However, she points out the company is not here to compete with the big boys in Malaysia but to "create stories" - each development becomes a story in its own right.

## Creating personal status

In her story about the journey of 8 Conlay, Kua shares that everything matters, from the exterior to the interior. "The quality and creativity that come with it have to do with creating personal status for the global consumer," she adds. The 8 Conlay tagline is "Your Place, Your Story".

Kua, who has referred to the 8 Conlay project as "branded residences" from the outset, sees them as having three important components, namely, architecture, design and service.

"Good architecture makes your building stand out, puts it on the map and starts your story from the outside," she says.

The architect of 8 Conlay, RSP Architects KL Sdn Bhd, has come up with the concept of *yin* and *yang* for the project. Among other things, Kua says: "We like the idea of liveable architecture."

When it comes to design, the second component of recognisable residences, she likes to think it is not just about furniture, but space planning.

As for the serviced component in residences like 8 Conlay, which Kua likes to view as "a vertical community," she says: "It's always thought out for you before you even think about what you really need."

Despite an increasing number of Malaysians opting for highrise condominium living, Kua laments many projects are not well thought out for residents to

enjoy the space, landscape and attendant lifestyle.

In 8 Conlay's latest factsheet dated July 13, based on the relevant DO approval, the height of the two serviced apartment towers has been revised to 62 and 58 floors respectively, from 60 and 55 floors in its previous factsheet of Nov 18 last year.

The number of units has also been revised to 1,062 from 1,092, to make way for additional carpark space.

## Revised carpark space

The developer initially allocated two storeys each of basement and elevated carpark space but has revised it to five storeys each for basement and elevated parking in the podium area.

The latest approved plans also indicate the podium will be nine instead of eight storeys. The four-storey retail space in the podium and the banquet hall remain unchanged.

The hotel tower remains the project's tallest tower: It will have 72 floors, including four mezzanine levels, instead of the 62-floor proposal previously submitted to Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur.

There is no change in the number of hotel rooms but revisions have been made to its other components on top of the hotel.

Instead of the earlier 403 serviced residences, the 260-room hotel will have 300 suites with stratia titles, aimed at long-stay guests.

There will be a rooftop bar and restaurant offering a 360-degree view on top of these suites, which Kua refers to as 'the Kempinski Residences.'

"This is not an afterthought," she says, adding a third of the rooftop space will be considered hotel space with the other two-thirds for retail.

There are fears some of the innovative ideas adopted by the developer may be outdated by the time the hotel opens

We want to always bring value for buyers and partners, says Kua



in 2020.

"We will try to keep things as minimalist as possible and think about it again three years down the road," Kua explains. The 8 Conlay project's retail component is expected to be ready by 2018. The Yoo 8 residences, with built-up sizes from 682 to 1,295 sq ft, are scheduled for completion by 2019.

On the price tag for its fully-furnished units, Kua says KSK Land is looking at an average of RM2,700 per sq ft (psf), not the highest figure in the KLCC area.

Despite the current softer demand for luxury condominiums, she believes timing does not matter if the location is right.

Likening the purchase of a property to buying a gem, she says the buyer can keep it for a long time. "While you are keeping it, there is capital appreciation."

KSK Land aims for 50% of its market to be foreign. So far, most enquiries have been from Malaysia as the developer has yet to market its products abroad.

## 11m high jogging track

Kua reveals the two residential towers are linked on the 26th and 44th floors via two skybridges. The 26th floor is considered the "wet floor" with facilities for the residences, such as infinity swimming pool and jacuzzi.

The 44th floor will be the "green floor", with an 11m high jogging track, providing views of the KLCC.

Kua says the developer's brief to the Bangkok-based renowned landscape design studio TROP is to put more trees, in particular those that are "sustainable and do not die on us".

Residents can also walk their pets, she adds. "We are talking about global consumers. Therefore, we have to ensure our service is of global standard."

In this respect, partner Kempinski Hotels, noted for its rich European heritage of luxury hospitality, will provide management services for the hotel and residential towers in terms of standard and a la carte services.

These include concierge, butler and maid services, 24-hour room service and private chef, housekeeping and laundry, limousine and arrival preparation as well as maintenance packages for residents, similar to those offered to hotel guests. [Photo](#)

# Timeless luxury mixed with functionality

**INTERNATIONALLY**-renowned Hong Kong interior-cum-product designer Steve Leung and his team for 8 Conlay headed by Paul Broadley gave a sneak preview in Hong Kong on what to expect at the two residential towers Yoo 8 serviced by Kempinski.



The Asian design style has become a 'thing', says Pang

Leung, also a leading architect and entrepreneur, says on the aesthetic side, the Steve Leung and Yoo brand partner will look at a timeless design for the project. In this respect, he is confident the design will "stand the test of time".

Citing Hong Kong's many years of property development Leung, 58, says in the 1960s, the industry did not have today's sophistication.

Many developers then built properties without proper, standard finishes and provided cheap sanitary fittings. Their properties sold well at the start – but not for long.

In an interview with **FocusM**, Leung cites Sun Hung Kai Properties (SHKP), a major Hong Kong developer and real estate leader, as one of a few visionary players.

As people became increasingly dissatisfied with poor-quality finishes, he says, SHKP put in quality, imported fixtures, fittings and furnishing.

They "made the statistics" when none of their buyers changed their kitchens or bathrooms on receiving their properties from the developer. Leung believes if one provides something good, customers don't change it.

"The eye of the customer is very sharp these days. For many, if you give them the works from the best designer, we are confident they will enhance property value."

The 8 Conlay project is Steve Leung & Yoo's first residential assignment in Malaysia. "We are interested in showcasing the Asian style of design, which has become a new thing," says Andrew Pang, Yoo's managing director for Asia-Pacific.

Leung concurs, saying they went back to the essence of Asia, looking at the five elements to help form the design.



Leung says the brand partner will look at timeless design for the 8 Conlay project



Broadley has worked with Leung for over a year

on the spatial aspect of the project – the serviced apartment layout took months to fine-tune.

At a sneak preview for the local media, he shows in one of the layouts how details such as where to put your keys and phones have all been thoughtfully planned.

There will also be a powder room, for a sense of opulence and lifestyle choice. Quality equipment such as from Bulthaup, one of Germany's high-end suppliers of kitchen storage, will be used for the serviced apartments.

Broadley, who considers Leung his "design hero", has been working with the man for over a year. One of Leung's projects he is working on involves a rooftop infinity pool at the edge of the building, which offers 360-degree views and where you can see the horizon. The setting is beautiful, he says.

This sounds similar to 8 Conlay's rooftop concept, which will offer stunning views of the city.

Joanne Kua, managing director of KSK Land Sdn Bhd, feels timeless luxury and function should go hand-in-hand. She sees fully-fitted-out bathrooms and kitchens as fundamental for residences like Yoo 8.

Kua says large mirrors and freestanding bathtubs will also be featured in the serviced apartments for a holiday feel.

The bathroom is more than 700 sq ft, with the bathtub area separate from shower and water closet.

"Every time I go into a luxury apartment in Kuala Lumpur, what I want is a cosy place to go home to. People often think luxury should be over-the-top and have a lot of things, if not everything. But the end game is luxury is your lifestyle," she says.

"Metal symbolises luxury. Wood is about harmony and warmth. It is very comforting. Water is about fluidity and calm. Fire is much more dynamic and vibrant, and earth is about stability and permanence."

Broadley says the Steve Leung design team for 8 Conlay has been working hard