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Energy costs and design detail are reshaping what buyers want in a home, say TEPEA partners

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Energy costs and design detail are reshaping what buyers want in a home, say TEPEA partners

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Solar power, battery storage and thoughtful design are becoming key considerations, rather than optional extras, for homebuyers and developers, say two partners of *The Edge Malaysia* Property Excellence Awards (TEPEA) 2026. According to GSPARX Sdn Bhd managing director Sansubari Che Mud and China Pottery (M) Sdn Bhd director Alex Toh, buyers are increasingly weighing energy costs and everyday liveability when choosing a development.

GSPARX — a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tenaga Nasional Bhd (KL:TENAGA) is the official solar partner of the award since 2021. ARTELIA — the lifestyle retail brand of China Pottery (M) — is partner of the award. ARTELIA is the official and exclusive distributor of Noritake products in Malaysia and Singapore.

Organised annually by *The Edge Malaysia*, TEPEA recognises developers and developments that make significant contributions to the property industry. It is anchored by the Top Property Developers Awards, audited by Deloitte Malaysia.

The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat says TEPEA recognises developers whose commitment to quality carries through from the drawing board to the everyday lives of the people who call their developments home.

"The best developments stand the test of time because of the care that goes into them, from how they are built to how well they serve their communities. These awards recognise that commitment and encourage the industry to keep raising its standards," he says.

"We are grateful to GSPARX and ARTELIA for their continued support. Each brings a different perspective on better living, from helping households manage their energy needs to bringing thoughtful design into the home. Their partnership helps us celebrate excellence and keep the conversation about quality moving forward."

Built in from the start

Sansubari says sustainability in property development is no longer just about environmental responsibility, but is now central to homebuyers' financial and practical considerations.

"We are witnessing growing demand for sustainable living solutions, particularly solar energy and green mobility, among residential consumers. This shift is driven not only by greater environmental awareness but also by economic factors. Rising global energy costs, supply chain uncertainties and changes in energy subsidy policies can directly affect household expenses, including electricity costs through mechanisms such as the Automatic Fuel Adjustment and transportation fuel costs," he says.

Sansubari believes sustainability should be considered at the design stage to ensure developers can optimise costs, streamline construction and ensure seamless systems integration.

"This approach enhances technical feasibility and commercial viability while providing homeowners with greater convenience, energy resilience and long-term financial benefits," he says.

Sansubari says GSPARX aims to help developers deliver solar-ready and solar-equipped homes by leveraging economies of scale to make high-quality solar solutions more accessible and competitively priced.

"We can optimise equipment costs without compromising quality," he says.

LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE



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CHINA POTTERY



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GSPARX



Sansubari: We are witnessing growing demand for sustainable living solutions, particularly solar energy and green mobility, among residential consumers

Bulk procurement of solar panels, inverters and other system components helps optimise equipment costs, while standardised system designs, similar roof layouts and coordinated project execution streamline installations across large residential developments. Multiple installations within the same development also improve logistical efficiency, installation productivity and subsequent operations and maintenance, delivering greater cost efficiency for developers and homeowners.

Early collaboration with developers allows solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and other sustainable technologies to be incorporated into a property's overall design, ensuring better integration with electrical infrastructure, improved installation aesthetics and minimal disruption to homeowners after they move in.

It's all in the details

The change in priorities extends beyond energy. China Pottery's Toh says homes are becoming a more personal expression of the people who live in them. He notes that dining and entertaining are no longer simply functional activities but part of the overall lifestyle and experience of the home.

"Customers today are much more conscious of how their tableware, glassware and serving pieces complement their interiors and personal style. There is also greater appreciation for design, craftsmanship, versatility and pieces that can transition between everyday use and entertaining," he adds.

Another observation is the growing interest in mixing different styles, materials and brands rather than sticking to a single design aesthetic.

"This gives us the opportunity to curate a broader range of products while helping customers create a dining environment that feels distinctly their own," says Toh.

He highlights a similar attention to detail in the home's interior design. "Noritake has a long heritage of craftsmanship and design, while ARTELIA brings together brands that share a similar appreciation for quality and thoughtful design. We believe that truly excellent products are those that not only look beautiful but also elevate the experience of everyday living."

Toh says that philosophy resonates with TEPEA, which recognises excellence in the built environment.

Broader definition of excellence

Over the past three years, Toh says, excellence has come to mean more than the scale of a development, its architecture or facilities. Developers are placing greater emphasis on the overall living experience, "from the choice of materials and finishes to landscaping, amenities, sustainability, community spaces and even the finer details that residents interact with every day".

Meanwhile, GSPARX's Sansubari expects residential electricity demand to rise as warmer weather, greater use of electrical appliances and growing adoption of electric vehicles drive consumption.

In tandem with the growing demand, he expects that battery energy storage systems will gain significant interest, especially after the Solar Accelerate Transition Action Programme was introduced early this year.

"By storing excess solar generation for use during evening hours or periods of higher consumption, homeowners can increase solar self-consumption and reduce reliance on electricity imported from the grid," he says.

Another benefit is that it provides backup power. "When equipped with suitable hybrid inverter technology and automatic transfer switching arrangements, these systems can maintain electricity supply to designated essential loads during grid outages, improving household energy resilience."

Meanwhile, Toh says increasingly discerning buyers are prompting developers to deliver projects with a stronger identity and a more considered sense of place. He sees this as an encouraging shift, reflecting a growing understanding that excellence comes from the many individual decisions and details that come together to shape a development.

From homes that generate energy sustainably and efficiently to the details residents interact with every day, TEPEA recognises the kind of excellence that both partners identify with.

LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE



TEPEA recognises developers and developments that raise industry standards through quality, innovation and a commitment to better living

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