

Concept proposals for the Paya Lebar Air Base

The Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA) and Singapore Institute of Planners (SIP) have proposed ideas and concepts for the Paya Lebar Air Base (PLAB) and its surrounding areas. They re-imagined the area as a new generation town with homes, jobs and lifestyle options that meets the needs of a community of the future. These ideas and concepts will be studied in greater detail and considered for the development of the PLAB's future master plan.

i) A major growth node for homes and jobs, with diverse, connected and creative spaces

The redevelopment of the PLAB and its surrounding areas presents an exciting opportunity to plan for a highly liveable and sustainable new town.

Besides providing new homes, the area can build on our polycentric strategy and become a distinctive job node that brings employment closer to residents. By strategically connecting the surrounding towns and extending existing networks into the site, we can tap on synergies to reinforce the PLAB as an important and vibrant job node in the East Region. Planned to be people-centric, moving around and across the PLAB will also be safe and efficient, and promote an active lifestyle for all.

Connecting surrounding communities

Commuters living and working in and around the area will be able to travel more conveniently when it is redeveloped in future. In addition to the future Cross Island Line running through the region, connectivity can be enhanced by extending comprehensive cycling and park connector networks from neighbouring estates into the site.

Ensuring efficient movement and healthy, active spaces for people

SIA and SIP have envisioned the PLAB as a town with people-centric mobility networks, where shared spaces facilitate ease of movement and contribute to a healthy and active lifestyle. For example, only Autonomous Vehicles and active mobility modes of transport are allowed in neighbourhoods. The runway also doubles up as a corridor for safe and efficient commutes, and a space with amenities and activities that bring people together.

Enabling smart, flexible and diverse workspaces

To enhance accessibility to amenities, jobs and recreational spaces, the redeveloped site will feature integrated live-work areas that bring together various uses within a single building. It could become a smart city that taps on technologies to improve residents' and visitors' access to related services and data.

ii) A new generation town anchored on heritage with liveable and inclusive environments

The PLAB will help Singapore meet its future housing demand and create districts with distinct identities based on the site's rich heritage and differentiated characteristics. Besides housing new developments to meet the increasingly diverse needs of the population, the town can contribute to building a strong sense of ownership and belonging among its residents too.

Developing distinctive districts anchored on PLAB's heritage

The PLAB's unique history as an international airport and an air base will be integral to its future development. Existing infrastructure, including the former passenger terminal buildings, control tower, airport hangars, runway, bunkers and other historic buildings, could form the foundation of its transformation through adaptive reuse. For example, new districts in the

redeveloped site could be centred around a key heritage feature such as the hangar or the runway.

Creating self-sustained and community-centric neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods in the redeveloped site are envisioned to be self-sufficient and walkable with a mix of high-, mid- and low-rise buildings. Each neighbourhood or cluster of buildings can have unique civic facilities or public spaces that become local destinations of interest that promote interaction amongst residents, as well as foster strong social bonds and resilience within and across neighbourhoods.

Planning for flexible community spaces

As the site's development will stretch over many years, adaptable spaces of different scales can be set aside as flexible zones. This will provide room for future developments and to meet unexpected needs. Within each neighbourhood, smaller flexible spaces can be used to pilot temporary community programmes such as pop-ups, which can be changed according to the needs of the local community. Bigger areas, such as the 3.8km-long runway, can be used as a community space with flexible programming.

iii) A signature green and blue heart of the East Region

The site can be developed sustainably and sensitively to bolster our climate resilience and resource efficiency. The existing green and blue spaces will also connect to the larger islandwide ecological network.

Stitching the town together with a green and blue network

A network of parks, nature corridors, and waterways can be woven into the new town, supporting biodiversity while offering residents recreational options close to nature. For instance, the riverbanks in the town can incorporate a variety of waterfront characteristics for different experiences.

Powering the town sustainably

The PLAB is envisioned to be a sustainable and energy-efficient town. At least half of its energy needs could be derived from renewable resources such as solar farms and waste-to-energy plants. Developments could also be sensitively planned with respect to the environment and climate, by adopting a circular economy of closed loop systems.