

2010 will be the proving ground for Wandeegroup

Mario says his claims for 2009 became a reality, and he's on the way to show it again

Is 2010 the year when Pattaya starts to grow up? After years of lateral growth during which the once fishing village graduated to city status and swallowed up the surrounding communities through its prolific building programme, developers could now be looking to the skies for future expansion.

In a town where eight-storey condo blocks have long been king of construction projects, could it be that the crown is about to be wrested by the tower block?

"It's certainly true that tower blocks will become more attractive to developers following recent changes to the law regarding construction," said architect Mario Kleff, managing director of the Tappraya Road-based Wandeegroup, "but my guess is that Pattaya will grow

upwards as well as outwards from now on."

The law change in question refers to the increase in the minimum size of land on which an eight-storey condo block can be built. Developers are now asking why restrict themselves to eight storeys when they can build 20 on the same plot.

No sudden change

"We are not going to see a sudden change in the building profile of the town simply because the new regulations are not retrospective," Mario added.

"A lot of eight-storey condo blocks were approved before the new laws came into effect and these are able to go ahead on the smaller plots of land. But there has been a definite upsurge in interest in tower blocks since the law was changed and we at

the Wandeegroup are looking at two new tower projects of between 18 and 22 storeys for new developers in addition to the 37-storey, Bt700m W Tower for Heights Holdings at Wong-Amat which I expect will begin construction later this year. I believe a minimum of five tower blocks above 15 storeys will be started this year."

Meanwhile the eight-storey condo block continues to rule the Pattaya construction roost and the Wandeegroup order book continues to be dominated by them. Latest is Laguna Bay, a two-block project for Heights Holdings consisting of 158 units on Pratumnak Hill (see page 38).

Design and construction permits have been completed and construction will start in the summer, according to Mario.

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Wandeegroup's exclusive cellular beams and concrete puring process of 900 cubic metres per day.

Typical room design in Heights Holdings' Park Royal 2.





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The design is pure minimalist – concrete and lots of glass on the outside and lots of white on the inside.

Mario sees 2010 as being the proving ground for many of the statements and claims he made in 2009, the first being the extreme engineering solution he provided for the 79-unit Park Royal No 2, the second of four eight-storey condo projects again for Heights Holdings and again on Pratamnak Hill.

This particular project features very large spans as a result of Mario's use of his exclusive 90-centimetre steel

columns and cellular steel beams, and will be constructed with glass and steel with virtually no concrete. Even the bedroom, bathroom and elevator walls will be glass with the exterior clad in shining green glass.

● **Unique foundations**

But what distinguishes Park Royal No 2 from all the rest is ultimately what the eye won't see – the unique foundations. These have been designed as one huge block with footings up to 2.5 metres deep which required almost 900 cubic metres of concrete in a single pouring – certainly the largest that Pattaya

has ever seen on a low-rise condominium project.

Well over 100 vehicle loads of concrete were required to be delivered during a single day in January to get the job done. More than 200 piles now cover the entire site and on top of these are many of Mario's exclusive cellular beams which enable him to construct the building as a single span with no internal beams. When steel erection is completed in early March, Mario believes it is theoretically possible to complete the building in the staggeringly quick time of just two weeks.

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Mario Kleff's latest architectural solution shown here 3D: Laguna Bay.



SPECIALFEATURE



Mario likes to engineer large span constructions of 23 metres and upwards

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“Traditionally, when you complete the steel work you build one internal floor at a time, obviously starting at ground level,” said Mario. “But I have designed Park Royal No 2 in such a way that it is possible to construct all the floors much quicker. To prevent movement of this skeleton, pouring on the first level takes place on one day, followed two or three days later by pouring on levels four and seven. After this work has been completed, the pouring process for all the remaining levels can be done simultaneously. Therefore, if required, we could in theory finish the

whole thing in two weeks.

This is possible because of the extreme engineering solution we employed on the footings, which took up two months of the building schedule. The steel structure accounts for a further four or five weeks and the internal floors just two weeks if required quickly. Like all our projects, Park Royal No 2 is on schedule and on budget.”

Enormous footings

Work on the second building of the two-block Park Royal No 3 project is now under way, again with enormous footings that cover 80 per cent of the entire site. “It will be an enormously

solid building requiring 440 piles for the two buildings which comprise Park Royal No 3,” said Mario.

More evidence of Wangeegroup’s engineering solutions is taking shape near Phoenix Golf Course where a villa under construction displays impressive construction methods and spans of over 23 metres. Wandeegroup’s cellular engineering methods have made this possible and the project owner is pleased to see the villa constructed on schedule and of such high quality.

“No less impressive is on progress on construction of Heights Holdings’ developments

Wongamat, Mario added.

“Laguna Heights is set for completion and Club Royal is taking shape nicely. These buildings are progressing on schedule and the skeleton work completed is of the highest construction quality in Pattaya.”

As to the future, Mario said he can see the seeds of a real estate boom germinating in Pattaya. “The construction industry here is going to change,” he said. “But I’m not entirely sure how it’s going to change. There are certainly big developers here with exciting visions for the future. The only question is whether they will be able to get the finance to build them.” Ω

Wandeegroup’s footing design for Heights Holdings’ Park Royal 3.



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