

CHAPTER 4: STUDY SITE DESCRIPTIONS

This chapter describes the selection of study sites and the factors that contributed to the site selection. The last section described the context of the study sites and the surrounding land uses.

4.1 Selection of Study Sites in Selangor

Recreational forests were established in Selangor in line with Malaysia's greening programme in the 1980s. The move was also to cater for the increasing needs of Kuala Lumpur's urbanites and the expanding tourism industry. Therefore, the state of Selangor had set aside 31% or 247, 243 hectares of Selangor's land as Permanent Forest Reserve (Muhammad, 1993).

There are nine recreational forests in Selangor: Sungai Sendat, Kanching Recreational Forest, Commonwealth, Sungai Tua, Templer, Sungai Congkak, Gunung Nuang, Ampang Recreational Forest and Sungai Tekala Recreational Forest (Refer to Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1).

Selangor was chosen because it "is the most developed State in Malaysia" (Abdullah & Nakagoshi, 2008b, p. 148). Its forest land use category was converted mainly to rubber plantations from 1966 to 1995 (Abdullah & Nakagoshi, 2008b). Nowadays, the natural forests in Selangor are decreasing in size because of urban development and they have therefore become a dwindling resource.

Recreational Forests are developed because of their unique characteristics, previously explained in Chapter One. Two recreational forests, Ampang and Kanching, were selected to represent the recreational forests in Selangor. As explained in Chapter 3, site selection was influenced by researcher constraints, namely, limited time and financial resources. Thus, the researcher selected the sites based on their accessibility, physical topography and location distance from Kuala Lumpur City, aspects which facilitated her research tasks. These two sites were also selected because of their similarities and differences in characteristics which will be explained in a later section.

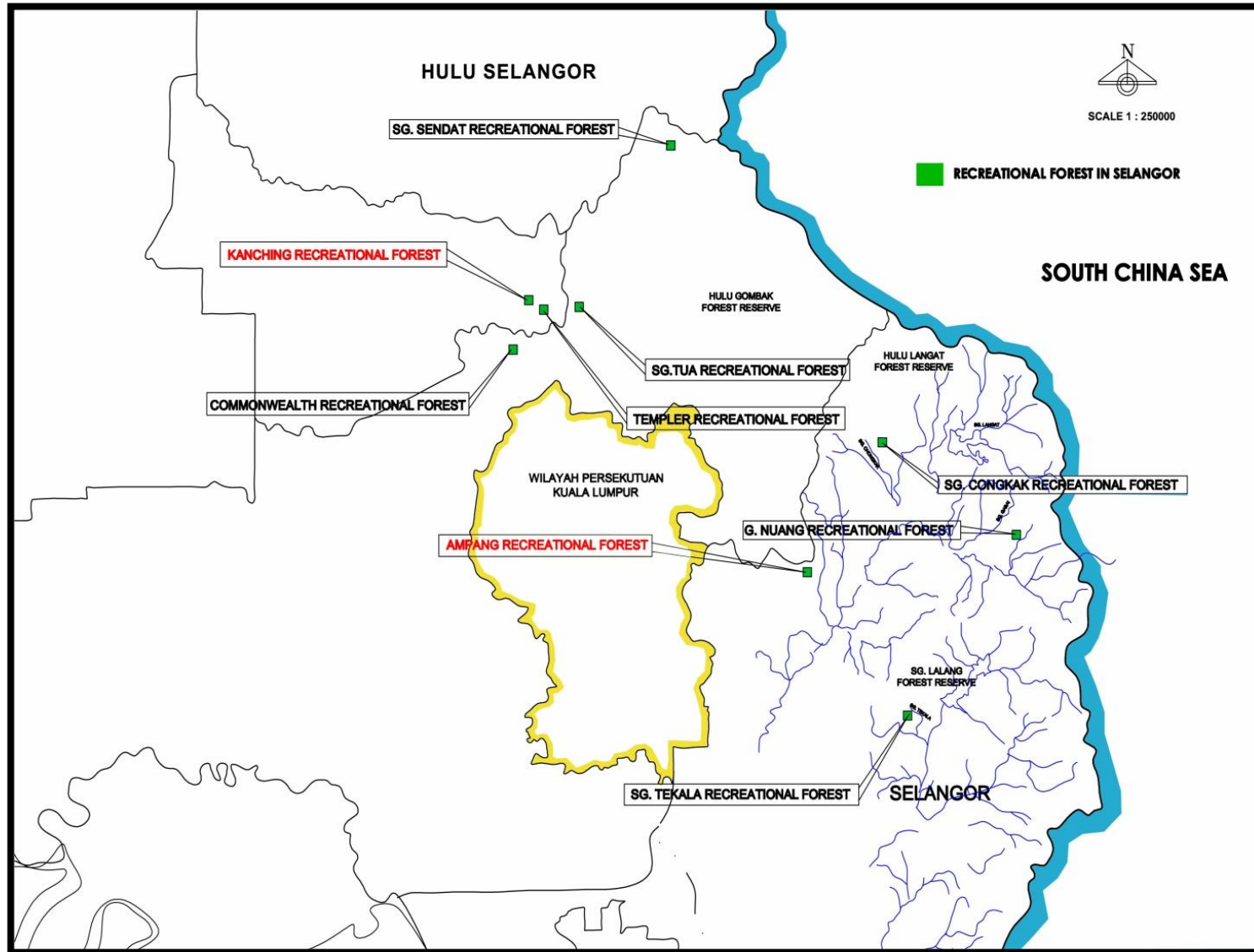


Figure 4.1 Locations of recreational forests in Selangor

Ampang Recreational Forest is located in Ampang Jaya District; managed by the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council. Ampang Jaya District consists of four planning blocks: Pandan Indah, Ampang, Taman Melawati and Conservation area. Ampang has 1,825.8 hectares and a population of 218, 246 in 2007 (Ludin et al., n.d.)

4.1.1 Factors that contributed to selection of sites

An overall aim of the site selections was to investigate if there were any similarities or differences in recreational forest use between the two forests. As this study aimed to survey and interview forests users, the two recreational forests were also selected as many people used them. Based on the literature in Chapter 2, people use green spaces that are proximate to their homes (less than 300m) and are easy to access either by walking or other means of transport. Proximity may also influence a person's familiarity with green spaces and the use of them. The researcher selected similar recreational forest characteristics to reduce bias. Therefore, the sites were selected according to distinguishing features such as proximity to urban areas, accessibility, facilities provided by the management, size of the sites, amenities provided, topography and flora and fauna.

There are some similarities and differences between the two sites (Ampang Recreational Forest and Kanching Recreational Forest). In general, the two recreational forests are located at the foothills, at periphery of urban areas, and easily accessed either by personal or public transport such as by bus or motorcycle. Some residential areas are located near the recreational forests. Both recreational forests have similar basic facilities provided by the management, such as parking areas, toilets, praying room, benches, camping ground and shelters. Both sites were opened to the public in the 1980s and are quite similar in size (Table 4.1). Both sites have clear water quality and there are rivers (Ampang and Kanching rivers) and waterfalls (in Kanching Recreational Forest). There are also many undisturbed flora and fauna such as forest plant species, wild insects, birds and animals. Despite the similarities,

there are a few differences: Kanching Recreational Forest has additional facilities such as an open field, changing rooms, and chalets. Accessible forested areas in the Kanching Recreational Forest are larger and steeper than in the Ampang Recreational Forest. In addition, there are seven levels of waterfalls in Kanching Recreational Forest and jungle treks that link them to each other.

Table 4.1 General information about the recreational forests in Selangor (Source: The researcher's preliminary site visits and annual report, 2003, Department of Forestry)

Item	Name of Recreational Forest	Location	Accessibility	Facilities	Special feature
1	Kanching Recreational Forest -easy to access, highway nearby -open to public, 1987 -size, 487 ha.	Rawang, 7 km from Rawang Town and 23 km from Kuala Lumpur City	Personal transport, taxi, bus	Parking area, toilets, shelters, picnic areas, praying room, open field, benches, children playground, camping ground, jungle tracking, chalets	Waterfall, 7 levels
2	Sungai Chongkak -surrounded by Malay villages -easy to access -open to public, 1992 -size, 2,868 ha.	Ulu Langat, 13 km from Cheras Town	Personal transport, taxi	Parking area, basic facilities, camping ground, picnic areas, chalet, open field, children playground, open stage, food stalls, shelters, benches, open hall, praying room	River
3	Sungai Tekala -located at rural and secluded area -open to public, 1982 -size, 2,062 ha.	Kajang, 13 km from Semenyih Town	Personal transport, taxi	Basic facilities (toilet, shelter, changing room, dustbin), parking area, picnic areas, jungle tracking, demonstration plots and camping ground.	River
4	Sungai Tua -located at old road from Genting Highlands to city centre -easy to access -open to public, 1993 -size, 969 ha.	Selayang, 10 km from Selayang Town	Personal transport, taxi	Basic facilities, parking area, picnic areas, tracking camping ground, jogging track, jungle	River
5	Gunung Nuang -located at rural area, secluded area, natural way of camping -open to public, 1996 -size, 601 ha.	Cheras, 17 km from Cheras Town	Personal transport	Basic facilities (toilet, shelter) praying room, hall, parking area, chalets, jungle tracking, camping ground	Flora and fauna
6	Ampang Recreational Forest - Malay village nearby -nearest to the city centre -open to public, 1983 -size, 637 ha.	Ampang Recreational Forest, 2 km from Ampang new town and 8 km from Kuala Lumpur City	Personal transport, taxi, bus	Parking area, basic facilities(toilets, benches, shelters), praying room, camping ground, open hall, children playground, jungle tracking	River

7	Commonwealth Forest Park -nearby highway, easy access -poor condition of road(many loop holes) -under upgrading facilities phase -open to public, 1992 -size, 628 ha.	Rawang, 6 km from Rawang Town	Personal transport, taxi	Basic facilities, parking area, camping ground, horse stable, chalet	Flora and fauna
8	Templer Forest Park -secluded and place for deviant behaviour such as pick pocket -narrow road -open to public, 1996 -size, 854 ha.	Rawang, 6 km from Rawang Town	Personal transport, taxi	Parking area, pool	River
9	Sungai Sendat -rural area, poor access road, nearby Chinese village -open to public, 2006 -size, 437 ha.	30 km from Rawang Town	Personal transport	Informal parking area, shelter, toilet	Waterfall

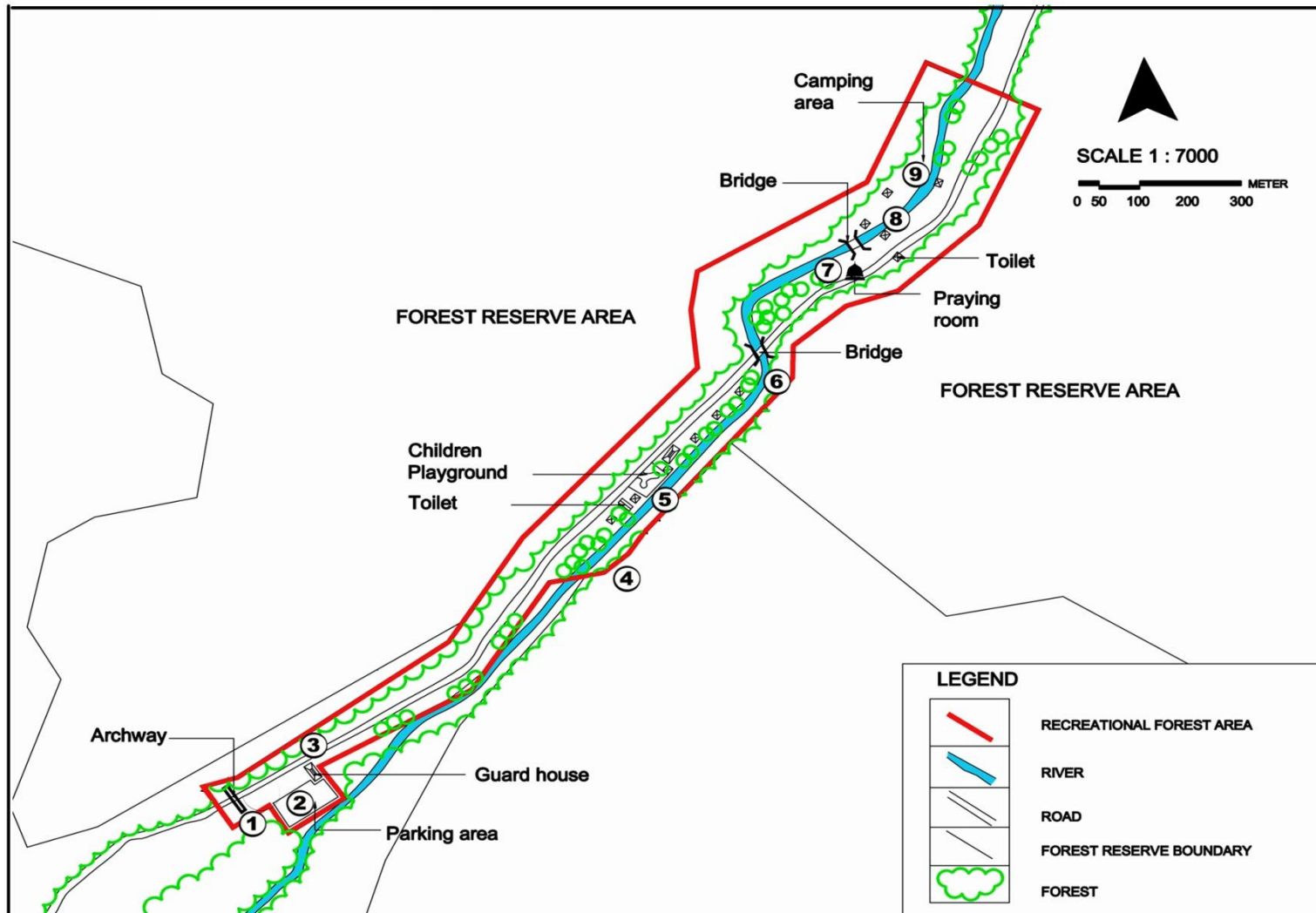


Figure 4.2 Ampang Recreational Forest site plan



1 Entrance of Ampang Forest



2 Parking area



3 A guard house



4 A fish pond near the forest



5 Children's playground



6 Ampang river



7 A road and pathway inside the forest



8 Sitting area



9 A shelter and camping ground area

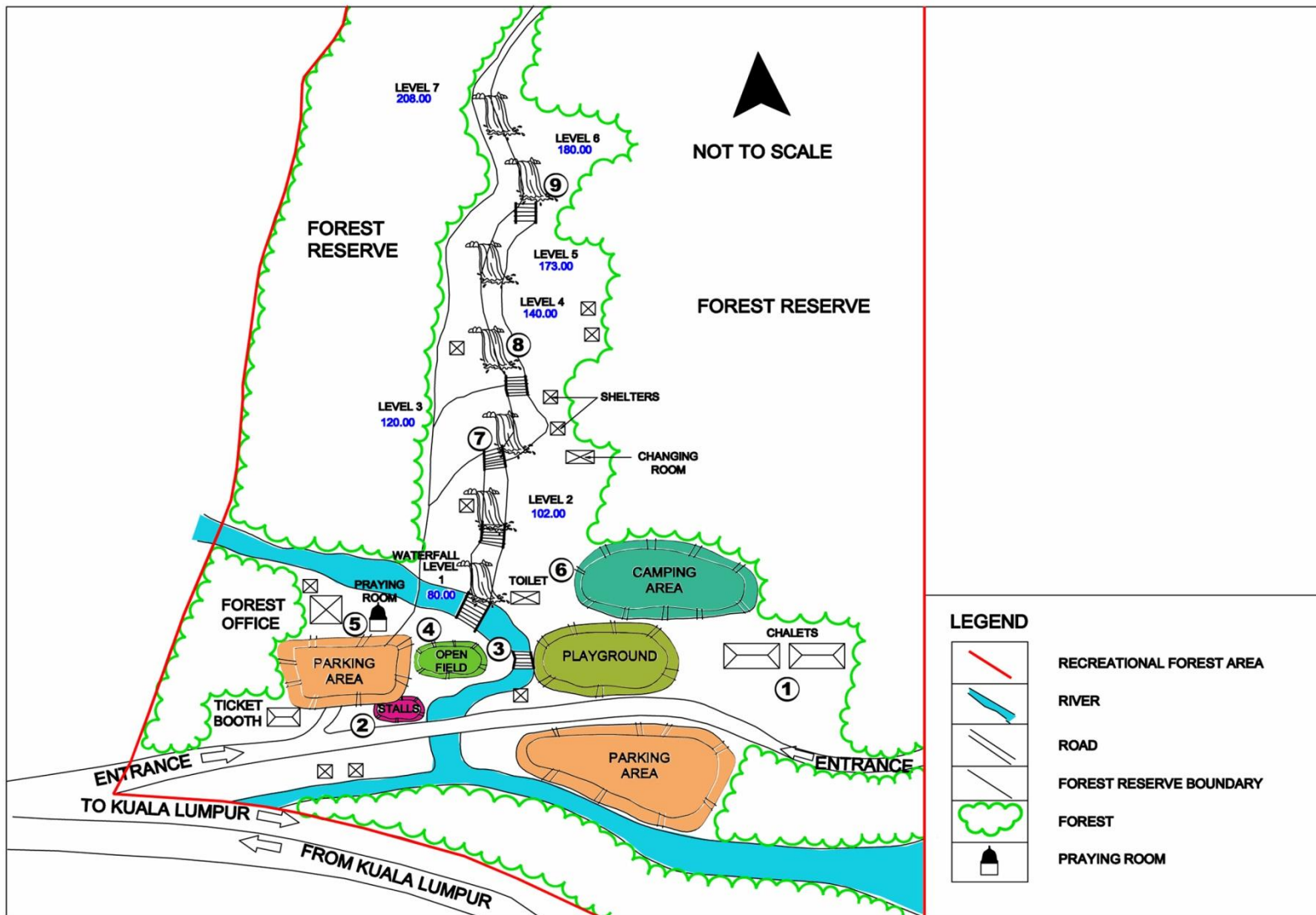


Figure 4.3 Kanching Recreational Forest site plan



1 A chalet at the Kanching Forest



2 Food stalls



3 A stream in the forest



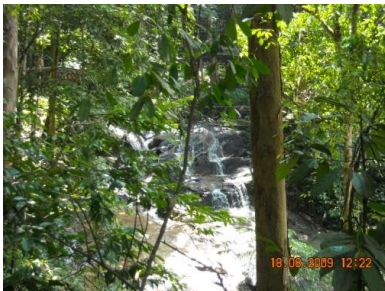
4 An open field



5 Front view of forestry office



6 View of camping grounds



7 View of waterfall at level 3



8 Aerial view of waterfall at level 4



9 Aerial view of waterfall at level 6

Study sites context and surrounding land uses

Ampang Recreational Forest is situated within a predominantly forested area to the east of Kuala Lumpur. This area consists of lowland and hill dipterocarp forests (the seeds of dipterocarp trees have two wings), and is thus a popular birding area. It can be accessed by road either from Kuala Lumpur or from Ampang New Town. Immediately surrounding the recreational forest, there are village settlements, flats, and shop lots, and Bukit Belachan (Belachan hill). There are some fish ponds outside the boundary of the recreational forest which are owned by an individual; the land is rented from the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (Figure 4.4).

Ampang Recreational Forest is linked to the Klang Gates quartz ridge, a world-class geological monument that has unique vegetation and houses the endangered wild goat (*serow*). The Klang Gates quartz ridge, situated outside the north-eastern part of the city of Kuala Lumpur, is over 14km long and reaches up to about 380m high (Wong et al., 2010). In addition, Ampang Recreational Forest is a part of a forest reserve, and also functions as the water catchment area for the Klang Gates Dam and Ampang Recreational Forest Intake (Ling, 2011).



Figure 4.4 Some examples of individual land uses near Ampang Recreational Forest (Clockwise from top left: a quarry area, low-cost flats, a scenery of Bukit Belachan, fish ponds)

Kanching Recreational Forest can be accessed either by road from Kuala Lumpur or from the town of Rawang. Both the access routes run through predominantly green and forested surroundings, past medium to high cost housing developments, and recreational and other facilities such as a school and a golf course. Similar to Ampang Recreational Forest, it also consists of lowland and hill dipterocarp forests. The surrounding landforms are hilly and one of the most dominant landmarks for the area is Bukit Takun (Takun Hill) (Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5 Some examples of individual land uses surrounding Kanching Recreational Forest (Clockwise from top left: a high school, the entrance to Templer Park’s golf course area with a view of Bukit Takun in the background, high-cost housing areas and high-cost housing constructions)

4.2 Conclusion

This section outlined the two selected study sites and their characteristics. It also briefly described the contextual surroundings and land uses near the recreational forests. Chapter 5 will describe the respondents’ characteristics and the observation results.