ABSTRACT

The project of a Regional Coach Station was conceived as a consolidated terminal for express coach services operating between Singapore and various parts of Malaysia and southern Thailand. It is a response to what is identified as an existing urban situation/problem, with fragmented, unregulated and ill-defined coach terminals being scattered at different parts of prime city-centre areas. The deplorable conditions of these existing terminals, with provisions of the barest minimum, fail to contribute towards the pre- and post- experiences of travel, significantly undermining the significance of the land terminal as a key gateway to Singapore.

The project further deals with the inherent potentials of the transport node as a generator of architectural expression and as an urban place-making tool, over and above its utilitarian and functional role. As a major node for regional travel, the station becomes an urban congregational point, and is primarily a venue of civic exchange, fostering the meeting of people, ideas and information. The nature of coach travel also differs from travel by plane or train in that there is a greatly reduced sense of urgency (to embark on the journey and get to the destination), thereby allowing for a greater sense repose on the part of the traveller. Hence, in contrast to the constant flux of movement man and machine in and out of the station, there exists the opportunity to create 'static' spaces of relief, which are utilised as places of potential exchanges, activities and events. In providing such spaces where information dissemination and interaction between travellers and urban dwellers occur spontaneously, the coach station becomes an integral part of the urban experience, and serves to better define and enhance the urban identity and genius loci of its chosen urban context.