



MEDIA SERVICES PHOTO/LE (LAXMAN EGODAWATTA)

FREEING SPACE

Enhanced home communities through human centric designs



Laxman Egodawatta
in conversation with
Lashani Ramanayake



Throughout time, the home has been a central place for developing communal relationships. And with a passion for creating enduring spaces, architect Laxman Egodawatta is an engineering graduate from the University of Peradeniya who derives great satisfaction from contributing to such a fundamental need through human focussed domicile designs.

Q: Could you describe the inspiration for your designs?

A: Human relationships are a primary source of inspiration for my designs. I'm also inspired by elements of traditional architecture such as the *meda midula* (inner garden) where space is designed to bring people together.

The hybridity of our contemporary lifestyle, catalysed by a fusion of modernity and tradition, is a source of inspiration for my human centric designs.

Q: What is unique about your architectural projects?

A: I enjoy designing for sloped land sites; and my forte is in split-level architectural design. Additionally, I'm a devotee of open spaces from which my design philosophy of 'freeing space' springs forth.

My designs utilise level separations that effectively reduce the need for walls. This creates structural spaciousness.

Q: And what are the key challenges in designing for sloped land sites?

A: Building on sloped land or hilly terrain poses a unique set of challenges. Excellent structural stability is a must. Also, as the cost of preparation for sloped lands is relatively high, innovative design planning is required to minimise these.

It is best to work with the land rather than against it. Designing in this way

enables the natural aesthetic of the land to speak for itself, preserving the existing scenery and creating harmonious spaces.

Q: Which elements should customers consider when buying sloped land to build on?

A: As an architect, sloped land and hilly terrain are personal favourites to design for. The aesthetic considerations when selecting a plot of land are many – including the elevation of road access and the layout of the land in relation to the gradient.

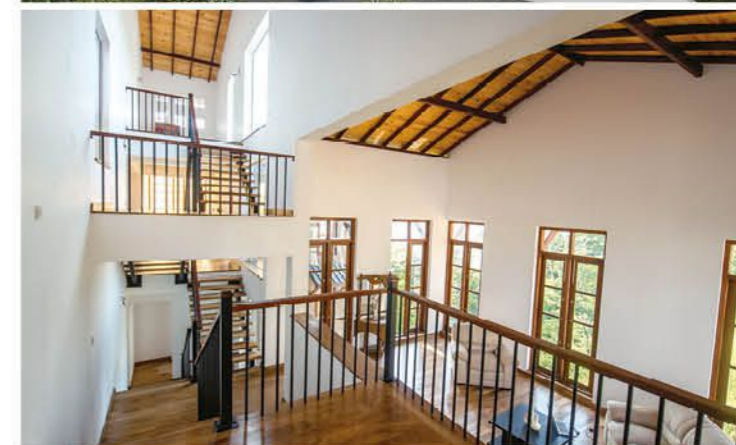
Factors such as parallel access elevation ensure convenience whereas a broader expanse of land can provide more flexibility in terms of design.

It's important to keep in mind that these are generalised considerations and that more often than not, the challenges of designing for a slope often result in unique design aesthetics.

Q: And finally, how do you incorporate engineering expertise and sustainable design into your projects?

A: Good design does not end once a drawing is complete. It's important to follow through on all stages of the construction process to ensure optimal efficiency. Minimising costs results in economic advantages for clients and so is more important for environmental considerations.

Having engineering expertise at this stage is vital to ensure that designs are translated into reality accurately. In addition, split-level designs and free spaces provide opportunities to innovate solutions for light and ventilation that take maximum advantage of the location. This facilitates environmentally harmonious and sustainable designs.



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