

Exploring Potential Heritage Tourism in Teluk Intan Perak

Norainah Abdul Rahman¹, Noor Azrin Mohamed Ismail², Salbiah Mokhtar³, Muhamad Asri Abdullah Kamar⁴ and Raja Norashekin Raja Othman⁵

^{1,3,4}Programme of Town and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch, Malaysia

⁵Center of Town and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor Branch, Malaysia

²Department of Town Planning and Development, Teluk Intan Municipal Council

*Corresponding Author: Norainah Abdul Rahman

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ABSTRACT

Heritage tourism involves travelling to experience the history, culture, traditions, and environment of a region, generating cultural, educational, social, and economic benefits. Teluk Intan, Perak, is a historically significant town and former trading centre along the Perak River, possessing diverse heritage resources, including the iconic Leaning Tower, colonial-era shophouses, traditional Malay settlements, crafts, historical buildings, and local gastronomic traditions. However, many of these resources remain underutilised and vulnerable to neglect due to limited conservation, documentation, promotion, and public awareness. This study aims to identify potential heritage tourism products in Teluk Intan. A qualitative approach was adopted through systematic observation surveys and field visits to identify, document, and assess tangible and intangible heritage resources based on their historical, cultural, physical, and tourism characteristics. Data were analysed thematically and categorised according to their heritage tourism potential. The findings provide an inventory of potential heritage tourism products that can support heritage trail development, digital mapping, conservation initiatives, and tourism promotion. The study also contributes to teaching and learning by providing students with experiential opportunities to develop skills in field observation, heritage documentation, GIS mapping, thematic analysis, and tourism planning. Future research should incorporate community and tourist perspectives, GIS-based heritage mapping, and heritage significance assessment to develop integrated and sustainable heritage tourism strategies for Teluk Intan and the wider Hilir Perak region.

Keywords: Exploring, Heritage Tourism, Heritage Zone, Potential Heritage, Teaching and Learning in Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Heritage tourism legacy is what gives societies all around the world their identity and continuity. It includes both material components, like historical landmarks and monuments, and immaterial components, such customs, dialects, and handicrafts that have been handed down through the ages. With tourists looking for genuine experiences that link them to the history and customs of places, cultural heritage tourism has become a major topic of interest (UNESCO, 2021). However, many culturally significant places around the world run the risk of being neglected, degraded, or replaced by new infrastructure as urbanisation picks up speed, which would result in the loss of priceless legacy. For example, Surat's fast urban growth has led to the city's cultural heritage being neglected, as old buildings are being replaced at a startling rate with common concrete structures. It is important for places with significant historical heritage to implement conservation. For instance, Indonesia's attempts to protect its traditional batik techniques have improved the livelihood of local craftspeople while also preserving an important aspect of its cultural legacy. These initiatives emphasize how crucial it is to strike a balance between sustainable socioeconomic development and historical conservation. (Patel & Shah, 2020).

Malaysia's varied past, which is characterized by influences from indigenous customs, colonial architecture, and multi-ethnic people, is closely linked to its cultural heritage. National heritage sites like George Town and Melaka, both of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites, are now prime examples of how cultural preservation can draw tourists from around the world (Tourism Malaysia, 2023). These locations show that, with careful planning, sufficient financing, and engaged community members, smaller towns may succeed just as well (National Heritage Department, 2020).

Smaller towns like Teluk Intan, Perak, are still underrepresented in Malaysia's heritage conservation narrative in spite of their accomplishments. The town of Teluk Intan is well-known for its historical features, its role as a major commerce hub along the Perak River, and its important cultural assets, which include the famous Leaning Tower, shophouses from the colonial era, and traditional Malay communities that are both a landmark and a cultural emblem (Institut Darul Ridzuan, 2023). The town also has a lot of untapped cultural resources, such as colonial-era buildings, traditional Malay crafts, and a variety of culinary traditions. However, many of these have been neglected or are in danger of deteriorating due to a lack of thorough conservation efforts. Other obstacles include a lack of funding, inadequate promotions, and a decline in community involvements, which further limit the town's ability to use its heritage for socioeconomic and cultural advantages (Ahmad et al., 2022 and Choo et al., 2024). Therefore, this paper will be concentrating on discovering the heritage tourism offerings in Teluk Intan. The outcomes can be utilized to plan heritage trails and to widely advertise Teluk Intan's heritage tourism offerings on social media platforms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Heritage is related to something passed down from one generation to another whether by an individual or a group of people from past generations. Therefore, preserving a region's heritage and culture helps highlight its identity and aesthetic value. The conservation and preservation of heritage assets in Malaysia falls under the responsibility of the National Heritage Department (JWN). The advancement and development of heritage building conservation becomes a national priority with the enactment of National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645).

Heritage assets are invaluable to a place in terms of culture, environment, and architecture. While they may not always be fully showcased, they are irreplaceable and their value can increase over time, even as their physical condition deteriorates. Some heritage assets offer future economic benefits or service potential beyond their historical value, for example, a historic building repurposed as an office building (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2012). As mentioned by Sullivan (2017) heritage is classified into three categories. Please refer Table 1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines intangible cultural heritage as "non-physical traditions and practices that are performed by a people". Celebrations, festivals, performances, oral traditions, music, and handicrafts are all examples of a nation's cultural legacy (UNESCO, 2024).

Table 1: Description Heritage and Categories

Description Heritage	Category
Tangible	Heritage Something that remains seen and held whether static or portable. It can be categorized as follows: Static Refers to a historic land site, monument, building or something that cannot be moved Historic land site Monument/Building

	Portable Are artifacts of cultural material that can be moved
Intangible	Heritage Intangible heritage is knowledge and expertise interpreted through oral tradition, customary and cultural values, language & literature. Example: Festive events, rituals & beliefs, performing arts, visual arts, traditional medicinal arts, traditional sports and games
Natural Heritage	Natural heritage is an ecosystem that offers beautiful scenery, in general, a place that can make many contributions to society from various aspects. Example: Centre for the Conservation of Wildlife, Rivers, Lakes and Seas.

Source: Sullivan (2016) & UNESCO (2024)

This study in the field of heritage and cultural preservation sector examines environmental, social, economic and comparative to conserving buildings or heritage areas within the study site. Additionally, the preliminary method for analysing the profiles of heritage buildings and assessing their condition follows two categories outlined in the planning guidelines for Area Conservation and Heritage Buildings (PeWARIS). Refer to Table 2 below (PlanMalaysia, 2023).

Table 2: Categories and Description pf Conservation and Heritage Buildings

Category	Grade	Descriptions
Category 1	Grade1	A Grade 1 Heritage Building is a building that has high historical and architectural value.
	Grade 2	Shophouse areas that have high or moderate historical value and heritage buildings.
Category 2	Grade 3	Shophouse areas that make a significant contribution to the overall environmental quality of the area

Source: PlanMalaysia, 2023

The literature review focuses on three aspects; the conservation methods for heritage buildings practiced by the National Heritage Department including the "Cultural Mapping" method, and the types of facades found in heritage and historic buildings (National Heritage Department, 2020).

i. Heritage Building Conservation Methods

According to the National Heritage Department, heritage building conservation is a broad term that encompasses various conservation activities related to buildings, monuments and sites which include several other processes such as preservation, restoration (repair and rehabilitation), reconstruction, adaptive reuse or any combination thereof. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) defines conservation as the process of preserving a place to maintain its cultural significance (Burra Charter Article 1.4, 1999). Similarly, the National

Heritage Act, 2005 (Act 645) states that "conservation" includes preservation, repair, reconstruction, restoration, adaptation, or any combination of these processes.

ii. Purpose of Conservation of Buildings, Monuments and Heritage Site

According to the explanation from the official JWN website, the purpose of building conservation is to preserve and maintain the heritage and historical value of buildings, monuments and sites. This process ensures that heritage buildings, monuments and sites remain safe and enduring for a period that extends beyond several generations to serve as a reference, education and memories for present and future generations. Buildings, monuments and heritage sites are part of the evidence of an important event or history. They become the physical backdrop to the historical story that will be passed on to future generations. Heritage is a valuable national asset, contributing to education, economic benefits through tourism, research and development, and enhancing the country's prestige in the eyes of the world. Significant heritage will be recognized and shared globally as a universal cultural heritage (National Heritage Department, 2020).

iii. Techniques or Methods for Conservation of Buildings, Monuments and Heritage Sites in Act 645

The National Heritage Act, 2005 (Act 645) states that "conservation" includes preservation, repair, reconstruction, restoration and adaptation or any combination of these processes. Under Act 645, "preservation" refers to actions taken to prevent further deterioration, decay or disrepair of buildings, monuments and sites. This includes techniques to halt or slow the deterioration, decay, or disrepair of structure or its component; enhancement of structural conditions to ensure a structure remains safe, habitable, and functional; and performing routine maintenance and minor repairs that do not alter or detract from the building's facade or the history of a structure.

iv. Cultural Mapping Method

Cultural mapping is a technique used to recognize culture as a strength in diverse societies. It is a systematic approach to identifying, recording, categorizing and evaluating community cultural resources to understand the historical, economic, social and geographical value of a location for sustainable community development (Pillai, 2013 & Rashid, 2015). The Radial Venn diagram below illustrates how cultural resources are broken down into several categories. The Cultural Mapping method focuses on cultural resources within the study area that have an impact on:

- a. Community Empowerment,
- b. Mapping Culture and Municipal Governance
 - To build a knowledge base and to mobilize community collaboration
 - To form strategies or decisions
- c. Cultural Policy
 - The existence and growth of the field of cultural arts
 - A more comprehensive study of local traditions and locations development



Figure 1: Radial Venn Diagram for various categories of cultural resources

Source: Baeker, 2010

v. Heritage Building Façade

The term facade originates from the Latin word ‘facies’, which means face and appearance (Krier, 1988). Facade is a key element in architecture that can convey the purpose and function of a building. The structure of the facade is closely related to every construction element such as building orientation, windows, door openings, lighting glare control and other design elements. The facade serves as the “face” of a building, highlighting its beauty and attracting attention of those who see it through its design features. Shophouses, in particular, have been a significant part of the urban architecture in Asian cities from the 18th to the 20th century because of their socioeconomic advantages (Ali et al, 2023 & Gurstein, 1990). Refer to Table 3 for the types of facades (PlanMalaysia, 2013).

Table 3: Types of Facades

					
Transitional (1880s –1900s)	Eclectic (1890s –1950s)	Neo-Classical (1900s –1920s)	Art Deco (1930s –1950s)	Early Modern (1940s – 1970s)	Modern (1970s Onwards)
• The design is simple. • The roof tiles are not laminated. • The wall decoration is minimal. • Usually, three full-length sash windows at the top of the facade	• Two or three stories with a five-foot-high walkway • The same height as the Southern Chinese Eclectic Style, a mixture of Chinese and European decoration	• According to the Greek and Roman style on the parapet at the top of the building. • The walls are painted with pastel or white finishes.	• Use of straight lines arranged in a horizontal pattern. • High pediment or parapet wall. • Flagpole. • Grained /Shanghai plaster.	• Simple and clean geometric facade design. • Use of Jack roof. • Reinforced concrete construction.	• Simple and clean geometric facade design. • Use of Jack roof. • Reinforced concrete construction.

(the upper part has louveres, the lower part is flat panel. • The keystones at the top of the arched windows. • The windows and doors are wooden.	• Lime plaster on structural brick walls and pillars • The rectangular pole ends with the Chinese pole and then the European pole	• Molded Swag plaster decorates your future. • Corniced parapet, upper story beams and pillars. • Decorated window frames. • Round carved wooden air vents on the ground floor facade.	• Highlighting the date • of construction on the facade. • Windows arranged in groups. • Concrete window shading devices. • Glass-filled windows and doors	• No decoration. • Usually used for door and window frames. • Simple geometric decoration. • Porthole or air vent slots on the facade.	• No decoration. • Usually used for door and window frames. • Simple geometric decoration. • Porthole or air vent slots on the facade.
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Source: PlanMalaysia, 2013

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study area is located in Teluk Intan, within the Hilir Perak District, and focuses on the heritage zone Teluk Intan Township. Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone covers an area of 75.50 hectares and is situated in the Hilir Perak District. According to the Perak State Structure Plan 2040 (PlanMalaysia, 2022), Teluk Intan Town functions as a semi-regional capital city based on the settlement hierarchy. It falls under the administration of the Teluk Intan Municipal Council, serving as the district's administrative centre, as well as the main business and service hub for Hilir Perak District. The primary transportation network connecting Teluk Intan is the North-South Highway (PLUS) via the Tapah, Bidor and Sungkai toll plazas. Additionally, other key routes are the West Coast Expressway (WCE), Federal roads and State roads. Please refer to Figures 1 and 2 for the location of the study area.



Figure 1: Location of Study Area

Source: Teluk Intan Municipal Council (2024)



Figure 2: Location of Heritage Zone in Teluk Intan Town

Source: Teluk Intan Municipal Council (2024)

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach, utilizing only qualitative data. Primary data was gathered through observation surveys and field surveys. An observation survey method was used to gather the primary data. This will support teaching and learning in tourism-related fields, heritage resource assessment, and tourism mapping as useful tools for fieldwork, experiential learning, and curriculum development in tourism and heritage management programs by showcasing the use of observational methods. The observation survey was conducted to identify and validate the potential for heritage tourism in the study area. Secondary data was obtained from reports and spatial data sourced from Google. This data included a listing of previously identified heritage tourism sites from relevant reports, as well as spatial data from Google to determine the locations and plot them on a map, which later guided the observation process. The primary data was analysed using thematic analysis, while the secondary data was analysed using content analysis and spatial analysis.

The secondary data provided an initial list of heritage assets, including both tangible and intangible elements within the study area. The data collected from the observation survey was then updated and validated by comparing it with the secondary data list. The secondary data was analysed using content analysis, while the data from the observation survey was analysed using thematic analysis. Both analyses aimed to identify the distribution of existing tangible and intangible heritage assets within and around the Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone. Additionally, this analysis helped identify potential heritage and cultural elements that could strengthen the character of the heritage zone at the proposal level.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Heritage Assets within and Adjacent to the Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone

The field observation identified 25 heritage assets within and adjacent to the Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone, comprising 18 tangible heritage assets, seven intangible heritage assets, and two natural heritage features, namely Sungai Perak and Sungai Bidor. The findings demonstrate that the heritage tourism potential of Teluk Intan extends beyond the Menara Condong and includes a combination of historical buildings, religious and institutional structures, traditional settlements, local food, performing arts, cultural practices, and river landscapes. This diversity provides an important basis for developing a more comprehensive heritage tourism experience rather than relying on a single landmark attraction. Referring to the analysis and heritage asset plan below, three main findings have been identified. These findings are categorized as follows:

i. Discovery of Tangible Heritage:

A traditional village, Kampung Terengganu, also known as Kampung Durian Sebatang, was established around the 1840s during the British colonial era. This village has the potential to be turned into a Malay Traditional village showcasing Terengganu community house architecture to preserve its cultural and historical significance.

ii. Discovery of Intangible Heritage:

Several traditional foods such as Bahulu Cik Mass and Cysy biscuits, are not widely introduced to visitors and tourists. Additionally, Silat Lincah activities and the Rebana music group, which remain active in Kampung Durian Sebatang, hold cultural value for the Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone. These traditions should be preserved and promoted as part of the region's heritage.

iii. Discovery of Natural Heritage:

The meeting point between the Perak River and the Bidor River in Kampung Durian Sebatang (Kampung Terengganu) occurs naturally and presents a new potential tourism attraction. These unique geographical features can enhance tourists' appreciation of the Traditional Village area and further highlight its heritage significance.

Table 1: List of Heritage Assets

Category	Num	Name
Tangible Heritage	1	Menara Condong
	2	Balai Polis Lama
	3	Pejabat Pos Lama
	4	Bangunan Rejimen 503 Askar Wataniah
	5	Gereja St. Luke
	6	Gereja Tamil Methodist
	7	House Of Muda
	8	Masjid Melayu Lama
	9	Kuil Sri Thandayuthapani
	10	Madrasah Al-Ihsaniah
	11	Hock Soon Temple
	12	SR Horley Methodist
	13	Kampung Tradisi Terengganu
	14	Church of St. Anthony
	15	St. Anthony's School
	16	Istana Raja Muda

	17	Masjid India Muslim
	18	Makam Sultan Abdullah Muhammad Shah 1
Intangible Heritage	1	Mee Mastan Ghani
	2	Biskut Cysy
	3	Restoren Hawaii
	4	Apam Balik Malindo
	5	Bahulu Cik Mass
	6	Silat Lincak
	7	Kumpulan Muzik Rebana
Natural Heritage	1	Sunagi Perak
	2	Sungai Bidor

Tangible, Intangible and Natural Heritage as Potential Tourism Products

Three important opportunities were identified through the field observation. First, Kampung Terengganu, also known as Kampung Durian Sebatang, represents an important traditional settlement with potential to be developed as a Malay heritage village. The village was established around the 1840s during the British colonial period and contains houses associated with Terengganu community architecture. Its significance is further strengthened by the presence of the Tomb of Sultan Abdullah Muhammad Shah I and active cultural practices such as Silat Lincak and Rebana music. The combination of historic buildings, traditional settlement patterns and living cultural practices provides the potential for an integrated heritage experience rather than a stand-alone attraction.

Second, the study identified several local food products and cultural activities, including Mee Mastan Ghani, Biskut Cysy, Restoren Hawaii, Apam Balik Malindo, Bahulu Cik Mass, Silat Lincak and the Rebana music group. These resources demonstrate that heritage tourism in Teluk Intan can potentially incorporate gastronomic and experiential components. Local food and performing arts can provide opportunities for visitors to engage with living heritage, while potentially creating economic opportunities for local communities. Nevertheless, the present study did not investigate the willingness of practitioners or food producers to participate in tourism activities, the commercial viability of these products, or visitor demand. These aspects therefore require further investigation before they can be formally developed as tourism products.

Third, the meeting point of Sungai Perak and Sungai Bidor at Kampung Durian Sebatang represents a potentially distinctive natural and geographical attraction. Its value is enhanced by its relationship with the traditional village landscape and the historical role of the river system in settlement development. This suggests an opportunity to connect natural, cultural and historical resources through a thematic heritage trail. However, such development would require further assessment of accessibility, visitor safety, environmental sensitivity and the capacity of the site to accommodate additional visitors.



Figure 3: Location of 3 of building potential to be preserved and repurposed. Location of Kg. Durian Sebatang

Heritage Buildings and Adaptive Reuse Potential

The study also identified three buildings with potential for preservation and adaptive reuse: the Old Police Station and Woo Mansion within the study area, and the Raja Muda Palace approximately 0.6 km from the study area. All three buildings were observed to be abandoned or in poor and deteriorating condition. Their present condition represents both a conservation challenge and an opportunity for heritage-led regeneration.

Adaptive reuse could potentially introduce new functions while retaining the historical character and significance of these buildings. The study proposes possible uses such as museums, cultural venues, music and performance spaces, and venues for activities associated with intangible heritage. However, adaptive reuse should not be interpreted as an immediate or low-cost tourism intervention. Decisions regarding reuse would need to consider structural condition, conservation requirements, ownership, rehabilitation costs, building regulations, accessibility, utilities, fire safety, maintenance responsibilities and long-term financial sustainability.

This issue is particularly important because the tourism value of a heritage building cannot be determined solely by its age or architectural appearance. A future assessment should establish the historical significance, architectural significance, physical condition, authenticity, accessibility, adaptive-reuse suitability and potential contribution to local tourism. Without such an assessment, prioritizing one building over another would remain largely dependent on researcher judgement. Therefore, the present findings should be regarded as identifying potential candidates for further assessment, rather than establishing a final priority list for conservation or tourism development.

Kampung Durian Sebatang similarly presents an opportunity for heritage-led community development because tangible and intangible heritage are concentrated within the same locality. The traditional houses, tomb, silat activities and Rebana music provide the basic components of a potential heritage village experience. However, developing the village for tourism requires careful consideration of residents' interests and community acceptance. Tourism development should not transform the village into a staged attraction that weakens its authenticity or disrupts residents' everyday lives. Community participation should therefore be incorporated into future planning to determine which heritage elements residents consider important and which tourism activities they are willing to support.

Analysis of Heritage Building Façades

Building façades are identified based on their design style, colour and height. Each building façade carries distinct design characteristics that symbolize the identity of a facade based on the year the building was built according to the passage of time until today. The focus area of this study is the Teluk Intan City Heritage Zone,

where a blend of old and new facades exists. This mixture presents an opportunity to enhance the image of the Teluk Intan City Heritage Zone and make it more visually attractive. Additionally, some of the architectural features of heritage building facades in the area can still be preserved. The building facades observed in the study area during the field study visits include Transitional Style, Eclectic Style, Neo-Classical Style, Art Deco Style, Early Modern and Modern Style. The façade survey identified 578 buildings within the study area, comprising Transitional, Neo-Classical, Eclectic, Art Deco, Early Modern and Modern styles. The Early Modern style accounted for 184 units (31.8%), while Modern-style buildings represented 225 units (38.9%). Transitional and Eclectic styles accounted for 71 units (12.3%) and 68 units (11.8%), respectively. Art Deco represented 28 units (4.8%), while Neo-Classical buildings were the least common, with only two units (0.3%).

The distribution demonstrates that the visual character of the heritage zone is not represented exclusively by the oldest buildings. Instead, the area contains a layered architectural landscape reflecting different periods of urban development. This historical layering can potentially contribute to heritage interpretation by demonstrating how Teluk Intan's built environment has changed over time. Nevertheless, the high proportion of Modern-style façades requires careful interpretation. The study observes that some older shophouses may have been renovated into modern façade styles. Consequently, the present façade classification may not necessarily represent the original historical character of all buildings. This indicates the importance of distinguishing between original architectural fabric, altered façades and later development when determining conservation priorities. Table 2 shows the findings from the site.

Table 2: Type of Façade

Num	Type	Range Era	Unit	Percentage
1	Transitional Style	(1880s – 1900s)	71	12.3
2	Neo-Classical Style	(1880s – 1920s)	2	0.3
3	Eclectic Style	(1890s – 1950s)	68	11.8
4	Art Deco Style	(1930s - 1950s)	28	4.8
5	Early Modern	(1940s – 1970s)	184	31.8
6	Modern Style.	(1970s and above)	225	38.9
		Total	578	100.0

i. Analysis of Transitional Style Building Facades (1880 – 1900s)

This type of facade has its own distinctive design features that distinguish it from other facades. The design is generally simple, featuring unglazed roof tiles, minimal wall decoration, and typically three full-length shuttered windows on the upper level. These windows often include top has louvres, flat bottom panels, and a keystone above the wooden window, along with arched door leaves. Overall, the condition and colour of buildings with this type of façade are observed to be poor and not well maintained. There are 71 units of this building type throughout the entire study area, representing only 11.7% of the total number of buildings. Below are examples of transitional-style shophouse buildings, which are identified by their wooden windows, arched door leaves, and minimal wall decoration.



Photo 1: Transitional Style Building Facades (1880 – 1900s)

ii. Analysis of Neo-Classical Style Building Facades (1880s – 1920s)

This facade features distinctive design elements adapted from the Greek and Roman architecture. These include parapets at the top of the building, walls finished in pastel or white tones, and plaster swags adorning the cornices, upper beams and columns. The façade also includes ornate window frames and simple carved wooden air vents on the lower level. Overall, buildings with this facade style are in good condition, although improvement could be made, especially in terms of colour restoration. At the study site, only two buildings with Neo-Classical facades were found, representing just 2 units (0.3%) of the total in the Teluk Intan City Heritage Zone.



Photo 2: Neo-Classical Style Building Facades (1880s – 1920s)

iii. Analysis of Eclectic Style Building Facades (1890s – 1950s)

This building facade is characterised by two- or three-storey designs with a five-foot walkway, similar to the Southern Chinese Eclectic Style, a mixture of Chinese and European decorative elements, typically features lime plaster on structural brick walls and columns. The square columns begin with Chinese capitals, followed by

European-style capitals. There are 68 shophouse units with this façade style, making up 11.0% of the buildings across the Teluk Intan City Heritage Zone. The overall condition of these Eclectic-style facade building is poor, and the colour schemes are generally unattractive. Additionally, most of the windows are in a deteriorated state. The Jalan Raja area, in particular, contains some of the most poorly maintained examples of Eclectic facades.



Photo 3: Eclectic Style Building Facades (1890s – 1950s)

iv. Analysis of Art Deco Style Building Facades (1930s - 1950s)

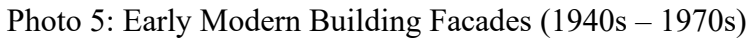
Art Deco facades are justifiably characterised by the prominent use of straight lines arranged either vertically or horizontally, forming parallel elements in the building structure, such as parallel columns, tall pediments or parapet walls. Most buildings feature flagpoles and textured Shanghai plaster finishes. Art Deco also often highlights the building's construction date on the facade. For window shading, concrete sunshades are used, while doors typically have metal frames with glass panels in the windows. Overall, the condition of the building facades is good condition, but improvements are needed in terms of wall paint and colour maintenance.



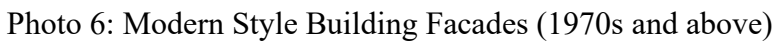
Photo 4: Art Deco Style Building Facades (1930s - 1950s)

v. Analysis of Early Modern Building Facades (1940s – 1970s)

This facade features a simple and clean geometric facade design, commonly incorporating Jack roofs and reinforced concrete construction. Unlike other styles, Early Modern Style facades lack decorative elements and often use steel frames for doors and windows. Some facades may include portholes or air vent slots. The overall condition of these buildings is moderately good, although improvements are needed in terms of paintwork, and some windows require maintenance. Within the Teluk Intan City Heritage Zone, there are 184 units of shophouses with Early Modern Style facades.



This facade is characterised by simple geometric shapes or cubist designs. It typically features a glass curtain wall and reinforced concrete construction. The windows are large steel-frame structures filled with glass, and the doors also consist of steel frames. This style is devoid of decorative elements, with a flat roof and a building height of more than two floors. There are 225 units of shophouses with Modern Style facades. The number of modern facades is high because many older shophouses have been renovated in this modern style. The condition of the shophouses with Modern Style facade is generally good and well-maintained.



The condition assessment also indicates varying levels of conservation concern. Transitional-style buildings were generally observed to be poorly maintained, while Eclectic-style buildings were also reported to have deteriorated façades, unattractive colour schemes and damaged windows. Art Deco and Early Modern buildings were generally in better condition but still require maintenance, particularly painting and window repairs. Modern-style buildings were generally better maintained.

These findings suggest that conservation priorities should not be based solely on the number of buildings within each architectural category. Instead, a systematic assessment should consider historical and architectural significance together with physical condition, authenticity, uniqueness, visibility, accessibility and potential contribution to a heritage tourism route. For example, a small number of highly significant Neo-Classical buildings may warrant greater conservation attention than a larger number of less significant buildings. This provides a stronger basis for prioritizing heritage tourism resources.

Although the study successfully identifies a range of potential heritage tourism resources, the findings also highlight the need for a more systematic heritage assessment framework. In the present study, resources were identified and categorized according to their tangible, intangible and natural characteristics and through field observation. However, the criteria for determining why particular resources have greater tourism potential than others were not formally weighted or scored.

A future assessment framework should therefore incorporate measurable criteria such as historical significance, architectural or cultural uniqueness, authenticity, accessibility, current preservation status, visitor appeal, community value, economic potential, interpretive potential and readiness for tourism development. Such a framework would enable heritage assets to be compared more transparently and would provide a defensible basis for prioritizing conservation and tourism interventions.

The framework could also distinguish between three levels of potential: (i) resources suitable for immediate interpretation and promotion; (ii) resources requiring conservation or infrastructure improvements before tourism use; and (iii) resources requiring further research because their heritage significance, ownership, condition or community acceptance has not yet been established. This approach would help prevent tourism promotion from occurring before adequate conservation and management measures are in place.

Implications for Heritage Tourism Management

The findings indicate that Teluk Intan has the basic resources required to develop a diversified heritage tourism offer, but resource identification alone does not guarantee successful heritage tourism development. Practical considerations such as conservation costs, infrastructure provision, accessibility, visitor management, carrying capacity, commercialization and community participation need to be addressed.

For heritage buildings, conservation and adaptive reuse may require substantial financial resources. The Old Police Station, Woo Mansion and Raja Muda Palace therefore require detailed technical and financial assessments before any tourism use is proposed. Similarly, the development of Kampung Durian Sebatang as a heritage village should be guided by community-based planning to ensure that tourism contributes to local livelihoods without compromising residents' quality of life or the authenticity of the settlement.

Visitor management is also important, particularly if heritage trails, cultural performances or natural attractions increase visitor numbers. Future planning should examine pedestrian movement, parking, public facilities, accessibility, waste management, safety and the capacity of heritage buildings and public spaces to accommodate visitors. Carrying capacity should be considered not only in terms of the physical capacity of a site but also in relation to social and cultural capacity, particularly within a living traditional village.

Commercialization presents another potential risk. Local food, crafts, cultural performances and traditional houses can generate economic benefits, but excessive commercialization may reduce cultural authenticity or shift control of heritage resources away from local communities. Tourism development should therefore seek an appropriate balance between economic use and cultural conservation. Community members should have opportunities to participate in decision-making, interpretation, tourism services and benefit-sharing.

Stakeholder and Spatial Considerations

The present study provides a useful baseline inventory but does not include direct perspectives from local residents, heritage organizations, tourism operators or visitors. This is an important limitation because different stakeholder groups may assign different values to the same heritage resource. Residents may prioritize cultural identity and everyday community needs, heritage organizations may emphasize authenticity and conservation significance, tourism operators may focus on accessibility and marketability, while visitors may value interpretation, experience and convenience.

Future research should therefore incorporate stakeholder and visitor studies through interviews, questionnaires, focus groups or participatory approaches. Such research would provide evidence on community acceptance, visitor expectations, willingness to participate, perceived authenticity, tourism demand and conservation priorities. The integration of these perspectives would allow heritage tourism products to be developed in a more inclusive and evidence-based manner.

In addition, GIS-based mapping and spatial analysis could strengthen the assessment by visualizing the distribution and relationship between heritage assets, transportation networks, public facilities, commercial areas

and visitor destinations. A spatial database could be developed to classify heritage assets according to their significance, condition, accessibility and tourism potential. This would support the identification of suitable heritage trail routes and help determine linkages between the Menara Condong, heritage buildings, traditional settlements, food destinations, cultural activities and river landscapes. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Teluk Intan possesses a diverse heritage resource base that extends considerably beyond the Menara Condong. However, the transformation of these resources into sustainable heritage tourism products requires a shift from simple resource identification towards systematic assessment, stakeholder participation, conservation planning and spatially informed tourism management. The present study therefore provides a useful baseline for subsequent research and planning, while recognizing that further evidence is required to establish tourism demand, community acceptance, conservation priorities and the feasibility of specific heritage tourism interventions.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Teluk Intan possesses a diverse and interconnected heritage resource base that extends beyond its well-known Menara Condong. The field assessment identified 25 heritage assets within and adjacent to the Teluk Intan Town Heritage Zone, comprising tangible, intangible and natural heritage resources. These include historic buildings, religious and institutional structures, Kampung Durian Sebatang, traditional food, Silat Lincah, Rebana music, and the Perak and Bidor Rivers. The study also identified six façade styles across 578 buildings, demonstrating the architectural diversity and historical layering of the town's-built environment. These findings provide useful baseline documentation for identifying and interpreting potential heritage tourism resources in Teluk Intan.

The study further indicates opportunities to diversify the town's heritage tourism offer through the integration of built heritage, living cultural practices, traditional food, traditional settlement landscapes and river heritage. In particular, Kampung Durian Sebatang has potential to support a heritage village experience because of its traditional architecture, historical associations and continuing cultural practices. The Old Police Station, Woo Mansion and Raja Muda Palace also represent potential adaptive-reuse opportunities. However, these resources should not be regarded as immediately ready for tourism development. Their future use requires further assessment of heritage significance, physical condition, conservation requirements, accessibility, ownership, financial feasibility and long-term management.

Importantly, the findings should be interpreted as a preliminary identification of heritage tourism potential rather than a comprehensive assessment of tourism feasibility. The study relied primarily on researcher-led observation and secondary information and did not obtain direct perspectives from local residents, heritage organizations, tourism operators or visitors. Consequently, community acceptance, visitor expectations, perceived authenticity, market demand and conservation priorities could not be fully established. The study also did not undertake detailed assessments of conservation costs, infrastructure requirements, carrying capacity or potential commercialization impacts. These limitations highlight the need for a more participatory and systematic approach to future heritage tourism planning.

Future research should develop a heritage assessment framework incorporating criteria such as historical significance, architectural and cultural uniqueness, authenticity, accessibility, preservation status, visitor appeal, community value and economic potential. Stakeholder and visitor perspectives should be incorporated through appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods to identify community priorities, tourism expectations and potential conflicts between conservation and tourism development. GIS-based heritage mapping and spatial analysis should also be integrated to visualize the distribution, condition and accessibility of heritage resources and to support the design of connected heritage trails.

Ultimately, sustainable heritage tourism development in Teluk Intan should balance tourism promotion with conservation and community interests. Rather than focusing solely on increasing visitor numbers, future management should emphasize the protection of heritage significance, community participation, appropriate adaptive reuse, responsible commercialization and effective visitor management. The present study therefore provides a foundation for more comprehensive heritage planning and tourism development in Teluk Intan, while

future research can build upon this inventory to establish evidence-based priorities and integrated management strategies for the wider Hilir Perak heritage landscape. By showcasing the use of observational techniques, heritage resource assessment, and tourism mapping as useful tools for fieldwork, experiential learning, and curriculum development in tourism and heritage management programs, this study advances teaching and learning in tourism-related fields.

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ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no need for a research ethics application because it does not involve humans as it only involves physical observation surveys.

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