‘George Town and Melaka, Malaysia - World Heritage Values at the Crossroads of Sustainability?’

David Logan, Director, GML Heritage, Australia
1907 - FMS Railway building

The low scale context around the clocktower shown in this historic view largely remains today. (Illustration taken from material provided by AGB).
Comparison of Proposals

The approved proposal consists of 6 towers. The middle 4 blocks of residence are on a podium. There is no provision for outdoor spaces. All activities are inside the building.

Approved Planning (22/11/2007)

Our revised proposal consists of 3 blocks, separated by 3 different types of urban spaces.

Revised - post UNESCO Listing

View from China Street Ghaut
CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND SPECIAL AREA PLAN

MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN,
HISTORIC CITIES OF THE STRAITS OF MALACCA

JANUARY, 2011
2.9 Urban Morphology of George Town

2.9.1 George Town was built on swampy land on the northeastern tip of the island. The 1798 Popham’s map shows the position of the early settlements in George Town, with administrative buildings scattered to the west of Fort Cornwallis and the town centre to its south. The town centre, bounded by Light, Beach, Chulia and RHT streets, continues to function as the main commercial district within the George Town WHS. The town then continues to expand inwards. A series of reclamation and canalisations ensues, with the ghauts extending towards Weld Quay as the new waterfront as well as the construction of the piers and jetties. The development of the Ferry Terminal, KOMTAR, and the Penang Bridge symbolise Penang as a rapidly developing and industrialised state. Today, the footprint of the George Town WHS has remained relatively intact despite the scarcity of land on the island and the intense pressure to redevelop.

2.9.2 The hills and the Straits remain strong topographical features that frame and identify George Town’s sense of place. Nonetheless, the surroundings of the city have since experienced rapid developments. The proliferation of skyscrapers and modern buildings now dominate the skyline, in particular the 232-metres tall KOMTAR which is the symbol of a modern, industrialised Penang.

Figure 2.30: Panorama of George Town, taken from the Penang Postcard Collection 1890s-1930s and 2010 (Nasution, Wede, 2003)
4.2 Protecting Landmarks and Vistas

Street level views also frame important vistas and focal points. For example, the minarets of Acheen Street and Kapitan Keling Mosques, the church towers of St. George’s and the Assumption’s, as well as the clock tower of the FMS Railway building (Figure 4.3), all define important landmarks and wayfinding elements for their corresponding streets.
**INTANGIBLE HERITAGE:**

- **SIGNBOARD ENGRAVER**

  41, Lebuh Queen (10am-5pm)
  
  Masterfully chiselled, these Chinese name plaques bore the signatures of gifted hands that is keeping this traditional art well into the 21st century.

- **COFFEE MAKER**

  Literally, home-brewed, the aromatic and rich-bodied local coffee is prepared over wood fire in a home factory setting. The final product can be found in most sundry shops in George Town, while the brew can be savoured at most local coffee shops within the historic city.

- **WOODED & BAMBOO BLIND MAKER**

  231, Lebuh Chulia
  
  At the narrow alley behind this shop comes the colourful wooden/bamboo blinds, hand-painted by Mr. Chen of Nga Sun that adorn many outlets in George Town. These multi-coloured blinds not only serve as shelters from the scorching sun, but as advertising modules as well.

- **CHOWRUSTA MARKET**

  Chowrasta Market (Opposite Police Headquarter)
  
  Chowrasta Market has served the people of George Town for more than a century; providing its dwellers with groceries of various kinds since 1890 by South Indian Muslims. Meaning 'Your Cross Road' in the Tamil tongue, the present Chowrasta, with the present-day sundries, was built in 1961, with the front facing Penang Road, built in 1920, serving as its facade.

- **CLAN JETTIES**

  Clan Jetties are unique Chinese settlements along Weld Quay, with homes built along wooden piers that extend to the Penang Channel. It has been in existence since the 18th century. The residents of each clan jetty are descendants of Chinese immigrants that reflect the distinct historical, geographical and lineage of its populace. There are eight clan jetties along Weld Quay (Chew Jetty, Kooi Jetty, Lee Jetty, Lim Jetty, Peng Aun Jetty, Tan Jetty, Yeoh Jetty, Mcked Clans Jetty).

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**Traditional Trades Trail**

This trail is designed as a 2-hour walk. On arrival at each destination, please request for a free brochure from the trader which details each trade.

- **Indian Goldsmith**

  No. 38, Lebuh Queen (9am-5pm)
  
  Bent over a work table under an incandescent lamp, the traditional goldsmith forges fine jewellery from 22-carat gold using traditional methods.

- **Fortune Teller**

  Corner of 'Eu Yong Song' bird's nest shop, No. 150, Chulia Street (12pm-6pm)
  
  Auntie Sim - one of the last sidewalk fortune tellers. For a few tieng, she will read your face, palms and cards.

- **Signboard Engraver**

  No. 41, Lebuh Queen (11am-5pm)
  
  One of the Penang's last wood engravers, Mr. Kok produces classic Chinese name plaques and signboards found over entrances of homes and shop-houses, a practice adopted from China.

- **Rattan Weaver**

  No. 102, Lebuh Acheh (8am-5pm)
  
  Mr. Yen, a master weaver carries on his father's trade, weaving the seats of the chairs from the skin of rattan (cane) and repairing cane furniture which is still favored by the older generation.

- **Ottu Kedai**

  Shop Against The Wall, opposite no. 75, Lebuh Market (8am-7pm)
  
  Box-like sundry store, attached to the side wall outside of a shophouse. It sells a wide array of items for the daily needs of local residents.

- **Songkok Maker**

  No. 157, Lebuh King (8am-5pm)
  
  'Songkok', a Muslim headgear which is usually worn by men for religious and ceremonial purposes. Learn how to make a 'Songkok' from Hajji Mohd. bin, whose shop is set in an alcove next to the Nagaore Shrine.

- **Tombstone Engraver**

  No. 11, Lebuh Acheh (10am-12pm)
  
  Tombstone engrave, known as 'phak cheok' in the Hokkien dialect, literally means 'the noisy street of tombstone makers'. Visit the last remaining tombstone engraving shop 'Tek Heng', in Lebuh Acheh, owned by Mr. Koay.