

Significance of Conserving Built Heritage on Commercial Property: A Case Study of Little India, Kuala Lumpur

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Abstract: The conservation of built heritage in the capital city is a herculean task due to the rise of new development projects that is significant over the years. The main problems that threaten the initiative of conserving built heritage are urbanisation process that happened surrounding the Little India. There were two objectives outline in this study namely, to identify the issues related to built heritage conservation and to study the benefits of conserving the built heritage of Little India for commercial property purposes. The respondents involved in this research are Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) officer and the communities of Little India, Kuala Lumpur comprises of shop owner and workers. Mix method approach are used where qualitative and quantitative method used to support the information obtained through interview and transaction price data. Based on the results, the researcher has found various issues arises namely the traffic congestion, limited parking spaces, lack of cooperation from building owners, lack of softscapes and blind walkway issues. From this investigation, Plaza Sentral and Boulevard has experienced increment in the commercial property value after the commencement of Little India project.

Keywords: Conservation, Built Heritage, Urbanisation Process, Commercial Property

1. Introduction

This research focuses on Brickfields, an area within Kuala Lumpur which has been identified as a heritage zone by the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL). Brickfields has been identified as a heritage zone contains in the Kuala Lumpur City Plan (KLCP) 2020. The majority of the Indian community has lived in Brickfields since the colonial administration and later turn it into their ethnic enclave. Brickfields is a strategic location that can provide more benefits to the real estate sector especially on the commercial property since it has been upgraded by the government in 2010 where has improved the image and landscape of Brickfields (Bachek, Zainudin, & Haron, 2014).

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Heritage is divided into two categories which are tangible and intangible heritage. Tangible heritage refers to physical artefacts produced, maintained and transmitted intergeneration in a society where it includes artistic creation, built heritage such as buildings and monuments, and other physical or tangible products of human creativity that are invested with cultural significance in a society (UNESCO, 2003). Meanwhile, intangible heritage indicates the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage' (UNESCO, 2003).

From the discussion above, it is significant to conserve and preserve heritage in Little India because of its potential being situated strategically to attract tourists. Kuala Lumpur Sentral is an exclusive urban centre for Malaysia's largest hub, offering global connectivity, excellent investment opportunities, business convenience and an international lifestyle. Due to the proximity to Kuala Lumpur Sentral, it will help a lot of tourists to explore the uniqueness of Indian culture. Therefore, it will encourage the growth of commercial businesses here such as hotels, restaurants, boutiques, convenience shops and many more.

1.1 Research Background

The influence of history can be seen in major city such as George Town, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka where landmark buildings are dominated by distinctive traditional Malay, Chinese, Indian and colonial architecture (Sodangi, Khamidi & Idrus, 2013). However, in the current scenario, the present-day real estate boom phase due to rapid development and urbanisation became a threat to the existence of built heritage in the country.

The conservation and preservation of the built heritage are essential to the growth of commercial businesses. However, there is the number of developer's perceived heritage as a hurdle to their development dream. This happens because the developers did not understand the importance and value of the heritage to the country's well-being. It has been known that the development of the new buildings in Kuala Lumpur will generate profit for the developers. Although it generate profit, the number of developments should be in the controlled condition to preserve built heritage in the study area since it became a cultural attraction centre and bring fame to the Kuala Lumpur.

1.2 Problem Statement

It has been known that Brickfields has been located in the city of Kuala Lumpur where the urbanisation process happened at a rapid pace. Urbanisation, in conventional terms, refers to the process through which society is transformed from one that is predominantly rural, in economy, culture and lifestyle, to one that is predominantly urban. It is also a process of territorial reorganization in that it shifts the locations, as well as the characteristics, of population and production activities. Typically, urbanization is defined by the simple proportion of a nation's population residing in areas that are classified, by national census authorities, as urban places (Brockerhoff & Nations, 2006). The urbanisation process that happens around the Brickfields area which is also situated at the edge of central Kuala Lumpur would cause the area to lose its authenticity as well as the natural attributes. This is because the demolition of the cultural building which also act as a symbol or identity of that place would create a situation where the existence of cultural habitat in Brickfields will disappear in a short period of time.

Apart from the urbanisation process, there is an issue of less priority given to the matter of conserving heritage. Conserving heritage such as Little India may seem less of a priority compared to the other issues which are more persistent such as poverty, alleviation, job creation or the infrastructure development for developing countries. However, effective preservation of heritage resources not only help in revitalising the local economy of cities but can also bring about a sense of identity and belonging

to the community. It is important to discuss and debate issues of heritage conservation and preservation within the whole process of urban development as well as integrate it with other related issues such as revitalisation of the local economy, tourism development and local governance. Apart from that, it is vital not only protect tourism resources but also encourage community development that focuses on the cultural landscape in response to the needs of our future generations, inherent in its development pressures, economic conditions and drives for modernization.

1.3 Research Questions

This research intends to study the significance of conserving the heritage for commercial property in Little India, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur. Two research questions were identified as below:

- (i) What are the issues associated in conserving built heritage in the study area?
- (ii) How was the commercial property value before and after the commencement of Little India redevelopment project?

1.4 Research Objectives

This research is conducted to achieve certain objectives. The specific objectives are stated as below:

- (i) To identify issues related to built heritage conservation in the study area.
- (ii) To study the benefits of conserving the built heritage of Little India for commercial property purposes.

1.5 Research Scope

The research scope for this research has been focused on heritage conservation area known as Little India that is located in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur (Figure 1). This research programme that has been carried out to conserve and preserve the heritage. The respondents targeted for this research are Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) official and shop staffs. The data is collected by interviewing with the targeted respondents and obtain the relevant data from the Valuation and Property Management Department of DBKL regarding the commercial property value before and after the commencement of the Little India project.



Figure 1: The arch of Little India in Kuala Lumpur

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will provide better understanding towards the questions that raised in this research on whether the preserving of built heritage giving benefits towards commercial property value in the study

area to the following parties such as academic researcher, real estate professionals and local government officials.

2. Literature Review

In this section, the discussion on Brickfields as an important heritage area and the issues related to the significance of the place will be discussed.

2.1 Brickfields and Its Heritage Significance

In order to safeguard the old buildings or built heritage which has its architectural and historical significance, the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) has made an effort in their local plan by taking into account heritage zones in line with the National Heritage Act 2005 (DBKL, 2008). National Heritage Act 2005 is an act that has enforced the provision of the Act for the conservation and preservation of the national heritage, cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, underwater cultural heritage and treasures as well as related matters.

Kuala Lumpur City Plan (KLCP) 2020 is a plan with an aim to bring many positive changes in the physical environment without compromising the local environment and its ecology. It is committed to creating a liveable and attractive environment for residents, businesses and tourists. In conjunction, the study area has been listed as a heritage site because the study area has an attractive and strong sense of identity that must be well maintained. For example, the old shophouses in the study area became the basis of the establishment of the city itself. The shophouses formed a unique streetscape pattern and it also acts as landmarks in the heart of the city.

(a) History of Brickfields

Brickfields is an area developed by combined forces of British colonial power, the capital and efforts Chinese entrepreneurs as well as the labour of emigrants from South India. The story of Brickfields is not simply that of an autonomous community, as the area has always been an integral part of larger processes, schemes and conflicts.

Brickfields came into being as a discrete zone within Kuala Lumpur due to a financial venture initiated by Yap Ah Loy. In the wake of the collapse of the tin market in 1876 Yap was seeking alternative employment for his miners. So, he has been undertaken some projects such as the completion of the unfinished Damansara road and another was the production of bricks which is originally intended for export to Singapore. As an export-oriented venture, this project was a failure due to the prohibitively high cost of shipping to Singapore at that time. However, the area came to be generally known as "Brickfields" and the presence of fifteen brick kilns in the area by 1886 made it possible for Swettenham to undertake his ambitious rebuilding of the entire town of Kuala Lumpur in the 1880s.

The majority of municipal labourers were Tamil immigrants was specifically brought to Malaya to work in the factory, the area quickly became the town's "Indian Quarter". The imagination of Brickfields as an "Indian" area was further solidified with the coming of the railroad to Kuala Lumpur in 1886. Most of the labourers working on the construction of this railway were Tamils. The creation of Brickfields as a primarily "Indian" space became a matter of policy in the 1890s Kuala Lumpur.

The officials' imagination of Brickfields as an "Indian reserve" was manifested in the creation of religious institutions for the various Indian communities in the town from 1895 with the formal recognition of the Sasanabhi Wurdhi Wardhana Society, followed in 1902 by the consecration of the Sri Kandaswamy Temple and in 1907 by the founding of the Sri Vivekananda Ashram. Each of these institutions was established by leading members of the Malayan Indian community and their ability to function was dependent on formal recognition from the colonial government.

Religious institutions continued to be established in the Brickfields including a Catholic Church in 1904 and the Vivekananda Reading Hall in 1907. The presence of these institutions, primarily serving

immigrants from Ceylon educated in English-medium colonial schools, indicates a rapid process by which Brickfields was constituted as a discrete site within the town. The appearance of a number of permanent two-story shop houses along Brickfields and Scott Roads, the areas designation as the “Indian Quarter” was now taken for granted.

(b) Little India Project in Brickfields

The original Little India was located along Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman in central Kuala Lumpur. In 2009, Malaysian Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced that the country’s official Little India would be moved to Brickfields which is one of the oldest Indian settlements in the country. This project is the two-phase project which is worth RM35 million, involves the construction of new business premises and a parking complex as well as road expansion. The work on the first phase covers the area from Jalan Travers to Jalan Tun Sambanthan developed by Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad (MRCB) began in May which costing RM17 million. The significance symbol of this project is the built of the tallest fountain in this country which the length was 7.62 metres or 35 foot. The Little India project was officially launched by Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh on 27th October 2010.

2.2 Built Heritage

Built heritage is an important cultural assets of town and cities. The built heritage represents the historical layers of our built environment that made of brick, plaster, wood, metal and stone. In many countries, these values are enshrined in legislation that defines what constitutes “built heritage.” However, the protection of individual buildings and monuments is rarely a problem, because they are addressed directly by existing legislation (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007). Similarly, an entire district or town can be designated a conservation area to prevent significant development. The most pressing problem is therefore how to address areas within towns and cities that are not considered worthy as conservation areas and yet form an essential part of the urban character. These ‘urban fragments’ often epitomise a unique population density, historic nature, street pattern or other urban morphological or cultural feature. They provide the context in which the more obvious heritage assets are located, but should not be treated as mere context, because it is often the ensemble of objects and their context that create value. Heritage by designation is the traditional process through which heritage is applied as an honorific label to sites, buildings and other cultural objects by experts. In most cases it follows a top-down strategy with little room for contributions from the general public, resulting in heritage designations that are mostly predictable and only rarely controversial. However, as often happens when expert opinions are imposed without consultation, charges of elitism are inevitable and it is difficult to gain recognition for anything other than conventional heritage (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007).

2.3 Benefits of Conserving and Preserving Built Heritage

Conservation and preservation of heritage buildings is an important tool in city development which can be seen in some cities in the world. Heritage is recognized as something that permeates daily life, bringing a sense of meaning and identity to an increasingly dislocated world. In regards, it is vital to safeguarding this precious asset to experience many benefits that useful to human beings and nation as whole.

(a) Historical and Cultural Value

Heritage buildings represent a place’s history and culture. The three centuries of colonial rule in Malaysia still apparent today by the presence of unique colonial architectural styles. The buildings become a medium that explains its origin or influence, creating an appreciation of the history of the nation (Azizi, Razak, Din, & Nasir, 2016). A heritage building also provides a representation of a

society's cultural identity at that particular time by uncovering aspects of daily life through the observation and assessment of heritage buildings.

(b) Social Value

Heritage building can tell a memory through tangible links to the past that allows the communities to understand people, events and values of the past. An emotional reaction arises when the communities see such a place of memorable significance that tells us our collective social roots (Nor Zalina Harun, 2007). Thus, heritage buildings help foster a sense of community and consolidate our nationhood.

(c) Economic Value

The economic benefit is a direct benefit of the conservation and preservation of heritage buildings. The heritage conservation circumvents the wasteful process of demolition and reconstruction because rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive reuse can convert a vacant and underused heritage building to fulfil a new purpose for the society.

2.4 Issues in Conserving and Preserving Built Heritage

Generally, the intention of conserving and preserving the built heritage will be difficult due to some issues related to the built heritage area because heritage conservation and preservation is seen as a new phenomenon in the local architectural scene. The issues in preserving built heritage as follows.

(a) Urban Development

Due to urban development, the land resource is limited in the city, thus, the government has to rapidly expand the cities to accommodate the growing population and sustain the development rate (Said, Aksah, & Ismail, 2013). Many heritage buildings in Malaysia are located in prime areas. The direct results is, therefore, the sacrifice of heritage buildings.

(b) Lack of Expertise

Heritage buildings conservation and preservation require specific expertise and skills because it involves special knowledge on the building material, appropriate choice of tools, conservation techniques and designing in old settings (Harun, 2011). The lack of experienced conservation experts in Malaysia exposes heritage building to the risk of damages if conservation projects fail to reach acceptable conservation standards.

(c) Lack of Funding

Heritage buildings have to receive regular maintenance. Therefore, adequate funding is necessary. Built heritage conservation has always been a low priority for the government of Malaysia. Thus, federal funding for conservation and preservation of buildings is very limited (Abdul Rashid & Ahmad, 2011). In spite of that, the duty of the government to protect heritage building has intensified over the years because the number of heritage buildings that require repairs is constantly increasing.

(d) Environmental Issue

Environmental issues refer to challenges caused by external factors such as economic pressure, building condition, building location, business opportunity, and third-party interference. Among the threats identified for the conservation of historic buildings was the continuous change in economy and development patterns that created development pressures in urban and rural areas (Fidler, 2005). Although there have been many studies on the conservation of historic buildings and sites, it was hampered by being perceived as a sphere where only novel developments and technologies were applied, rather than an arena where developments were generated.

Functional and physical obsolescence hinders building capacity to accommodate households and firms comfortably and efficiently. As a result, demands and value for these buildings are significantly reduced in the real estate markets of historic centres that will ultimately lead to economic obsolescence. Economic obsolescence occurs when it is no longer profitable to continue operating the building given its physical characteristics. The land on which the building is located that would have increased in value leads to economic pressures to give way for newer developments that better optimise the land’s potential.

(e) Human Issues

Many conservation problems are related to human errors. Among them, miscommunication brought about by different corporate structures and cultures is a common problem in conservation works due to the involvement of multiple organizations such as consultants, contractors, suppliers and sub-contractors assembled as a team. Poor communication between professionals, craftsmen and general laborers result in different framing of tasks caused by misinterpretations of instructions or difference in understanding of the scope of work. Differences in contingent power and blurred lines of demarcation cause disputes within the team. Additionally, stringent bylaw requirements and building code provide a challenge to comply with correct principles and guidelines of historic building conservation.

3. Research Methodology

This section covers the research flow and how the qualitative and quantitative method has been carried out in this study.

3.1 Flow of Research

The research flow can be summarised as in Figure 2 below.

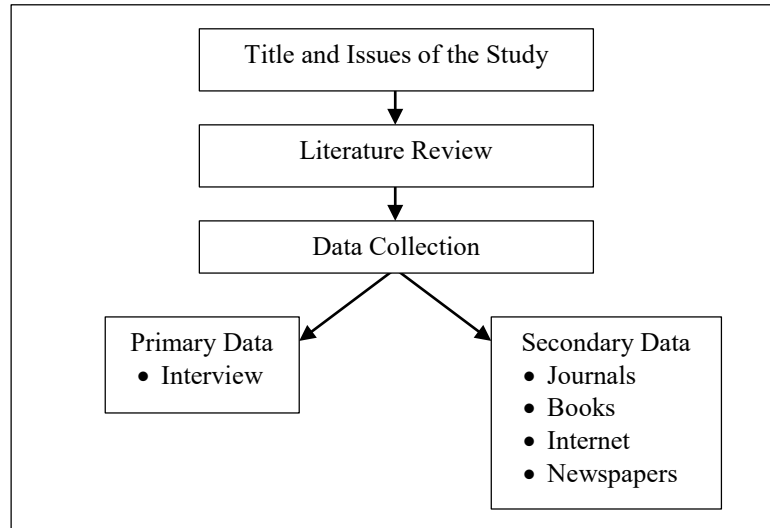
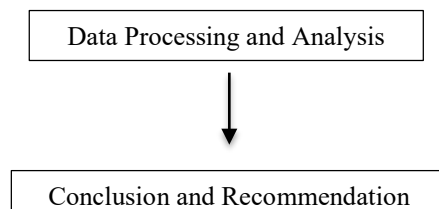


Figure 2: Flowchart of the research

3.2 Qualitative Method

Qualitative method are a type of scientific research that consist of an investigation that seeks answers to a question, systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the questions, collects evidence, produce findings that were not determined in advance and also produce findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study. There are many types of qualitative methods such as participant observation, in-depth interview and focus group (Astalin, 2013). In this research, the interview method will be used in order to achieve the first and second objective.



(a) Interview

An interview is a conversation that happened between an interviewer and interviewee for the purpose of gathering information. Interviews are an appropriate method when there is a need to collect in-depth information on people's opinions thoughts, experiences feelings (Easwaramoorthy & Fataneh, 2011). In this research, the researcher will be use semi-structure interviews. The interview session was conducted by the researcher with the targeted respondents such as cultural reference and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) officials. This method was conducted in order to achieve the first and second objective.

3.3 Quantitative Method

The quantitative method is the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational technique. Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical data and generalising it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon (Muijs, 2012). The researcher chooses quantitative method because there is a usage of secondary data by Jabatan Penilaian dan Pengurusan Harta (JPPH) of DBKL to compare the commercial property value before and after the commencement of the Little India redevelopment project.

(a) Comparison Method

A comparison method will be used in order to achieve the second objective of the study. Relevant information will be collected and categorized according to two-time frames which are 5 years before commencement of Little India redevelopment project (year 2005 to year 2009) and 5 years after the commencement of Little India redevelopment project (year 2014 to year 2018). The difference of transaction price indicates the positive changes that bring by the Little India redevelopment project to the commercial property value in the study area.

4. Data Analysis

This section discusses the data obtained by the researcher through interview sessions with the targeted respondents and also collection of commercial property transaction price data. The data analysis is conducted to achieve research objectives such as to identify issues related to built heritage conservation in the study area and also to study the benefits of conserving the built heritage of Little India for commercial property purposes.

4.1 Data Collection

The data collection process has been conducted through two approaches such as interview analysis of DBKL officer, shop owner and shop staffs in the research area. Apart from that, transaction data of commercial property in the research area also collected from the Valuation and Property Management Department of DBKL. The transcript of the interview has been translated and described in descriptive manner. Meanwhile, the secondary data will be presented in the form of table and explain based on the table.

4.2 Research Instrument

In this research, the researcher using interviews as a main research instrument. The information that obtained through interview sessions with the targeted respondents helped researcher to find an answer for the first research objective which is to identify issues related to built heritage conservation in the study area. Meanwhile, the data on transaction price of commercial property in research area help researcher to find answer for second research objective which is to study the benefits of conserving the built heritage of Little India, Kuala Lumpur for commercial property purposes.

4.3 Conservation Programme in Little India, Kuala Lumpur

This section describes the programmes that carried out by the Kuala Lumpur City Hall to conserve and preserve Little India, Kuala Lumpur. Apart from that, there are also details about the criteria that make the research area as a conservation area and also the funding resources that used to enrol those programmes.

(a) Criteria of Little India as a Conservation Area

According to the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020, the criteria that make DBKL to enlisted the research area as a conservation area fallen under the fourth goal. The fourth goal is to create a distinctive city identify and image. This is because DBKL not only focuses on the city centre but they also give importance to the area that placed outskirts of the city.

Next element, the strong sense of identity of the community. It has been stated that areas with an attractive character and strong sense of identity must be maintained and enhanced and, where practicable, other areas are upgraded to provide an improved sense of identity and place (Bachek et al., 2014). So, in the research area, the strong sense of Indian community as well as their unique characteristics has been identified and lead to the circumstances for conserve and preserve the area.

(b) Public Engagement Programme

Kuala Lumpur City Hall as a Local Authority has a responsibility to conserve and preserve the conservation area by carrying out programmes that related to that context. The main programme that carried out by the DBKL to conserve and preserve the research area is “Public Engagement”.

Public engagement is a program where the meeting will be arranged between DBKL officers, Parliament Member and the community of Little India, Kuala Lumpur. The purpose of this program is to obtain ideas and views of the communities to upgrade and maintain the area. It is a great platform for the communities of Little India to voice out of their needs directly to the Parliament Member.

During the public engagement program, the DBKL officers will ask permission from the public or community either the official help to upgrade their buildings or the public do by themselves. The reason for getting permission from the public because some of the public would prefer to do by themselves. After getting the consent from the public, the DBKL officials would start the activities related to conservation and preservation such as upgrading pedestrian walkway, painting the building, repaint archway, upgrade building facet and upgrade infrastructure namely fountain, fiddle pillar and lamp post.

(c) Financial Allocation Details

Financial is a vital aspect for every organization to operate their company in the best state and also carry out some programmes smoothly and successfully. For the case DBKL which is a public sector, the financial is essential to conduct programmes. The financial detail for DBKL focuses on:

(i) Cost of Programme

The cost of a program is about how much money spent by DBKL to conduct a programme successfully. Based on the interview session, the DBKL officer stated that the cost for conduct a “Public Engagement” were estimated RM50, 000. The cost is cover on activity that carries on towards upgrading landscape of the area as well as food session to the community who participate in the programme.

(ii) Funding Source

It can be noted here that DBKL is a public sector so some funding sources is generate by the local authority to conduct the programme. Local government's funding is usually given in the form of specific grants from the federal government or the state government. According to Star Online (2016), other than grants, the sources also came from internal sources of revenue such as rates, fees, licenses, levy and interest. The funding sources of DBKL used to conduct a programme is from their own money and no funding sources from outside.

(iii) Alternative Sources

It has been mention above that the funding sources of a program mainly derived from DBKL's own sources and no involvement of outside sources. According to R1, the alternative sources apart from government resources is not involved but to preserve and conserve the amenities in the research area, the Non- Governmental Organization (NGO) will willingly help to beautify the amenities. For example, DBKL will provide permission for NGOs mostly for beautifying the school area such as repaint the school area.

4.4 Issues and Challenges of Little India, Kuala Lumpur

Generally, the intention of conserving and preserving the built heritage will be difficult due to some issues related to the built heritage area. Similarly, there are many issues faced by the Little India Brickfields in Kuala Lumpur in terms of conserving and preserving even though it provides many benefits to the community as well as the country as a whole. According to Shuib K.B (2011), until the 1980s development and conservation were two phenomena that were mutually exclusive.

(a) Traffic Congestion

Congestion is a condition or situation when many vehicles are clogged in one place and there is very slow or no movement. According to R1, congestion happened due to the lack of interconnectivity in public transports and the increase in the number of visitors and daily commuters who pass through Brickfields. This fact is supported by R4 who are staff at the grocery shop stated that "In recent years, the number of visitors and vehicles increases so every day we would witness congested road".

(b) Limited Parking Spaces

Limited parking spaces are one of the problems faced by the visitors and the community in Little India, Kuala Lumpur. This issue happen every day as many peoples will come and purchase items and also pass by this route for working purposes. This issue directly involves in the problem of congestion in the study area. The customers often do prohibit things such as double-parking so it is slower the flow of the car movement. Other than that, these issues also affect the business performances of commercial property in Little India, Kuala Lumpur. It also mentioned by R8 that "*the customers that visited our premises often purchase the products in hurry because of limited parking spaces and also concern that DBKL officer would summon them due to inappropriate parking and it will affect our business performances*".

(c) Lack of Cooperation from Building Owners

There are many old shophouses have been founded in the study area which is an iconic symbol for the Brickfields area. So, to commence the beautification project towards those old shophouses, it will cost an excessive amount of money. According to R1, the fact of an excessive amount of money for upgrading their building in the economic recession, lead to the situation of lack of cooperation from the owners. This provides difficult circumstances for the Local Authority to beautify the landscape of research location.

(d) Lack of Softscape

According to the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020, it has been stated that the city must be functional, live and impart a sense of community and belongings. In conjunction, it must also provide a healthy, clean, safe and caring environment that caters to the needs of all. In general, there are two types of elements involved in the landscape context namely hardscape and softscape.

Based on the interview session, the DBKL officer stated there is a lack of softscape element in the research location. Softscape element is the element associated with the plants (Zakaria, Ahmad, & Rashid, 2016). In other words, softscape is related to the live elements such as plants, trees, grass, flower beds and other garden components.

(e) Blind Walkaway Issue

It must be noted here that, there are many visually impaired or blind community using the research location road for their daily activities. According to R1, the most complaint received by the DBKL regarding pedestrian walkway is some of the roads are uneven and full holes. Apart from that, there is too much of traffic in research location which difficult the blind pedestrian to crossing the road because sometimes the cars are not stopping even though the pedestrian light turns green. These circumstances lead to the accident situation. Moreover, the lack of tactile path also among the complaints received by the DBKL.

4.5 Conservation and Preservation Benefits for Commercial Property

From the perspective of DBKL officer, the conservation of built heritage or Little India as whole helps to achieve the DBKL objectives to make Kuala Lumpur as a World-Class City. This is because the conservation on buildings helps to maintain the beautiful landscape of the research area together with the newly built infrastructure according to cultural design. Based on R1 comments she, stated that “the conservation of building will attract a lot of visitors due to newly update facilities in the building will convince the customer to visit Little India, Kuala Lumpur. Then, the conservation building will maintain the beautiful landscape of Little India rather than the building that did not conserve look ugly in the eye of visitors”.

From the perspective of communities in Little India, the conservation of Little India help to increase the number of customers. Before the commencement of Little India project, the business performance of many shops are relatively low due to the less number of visitors. The business activities in the Brickfields began to blossom after the commencement of Little India project. This is because several aspects in Little India act as a pulling or attracting force of visitors such as landscape, choice of colour, upgraded infrastructure and many others. This fact is supported by R8 who working as manager at Pournami Jewellery stated that “the landscape and upgrading of the infrastructure like post lamp and archway has attracted more customers to the Little India”. So, it is directly increase the number of visitors to the commercial property that available in the Little India, Kuala Lumpur.

4.6 Commercial Property Transaction Price Data

This section focuses on commercial property transaction prices that happened around Little India, Kuala Lumpur. In order to obtained accurate data, the researcher collected the transaction price data of commercial property at JPPH of DBKL. The purpose of adding this data is to support the qualitative approach conducted by the researcher. This data divided into two parts namely five years before the Little India project and five years after the Little India project so it is easy for the researcher to show the influence of the Little India project on commercial property transaction price at Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur.

Based on the data provided by JPPH of DBKL, out of so many places, the researcher only able to choose 2 areas within the Little India, Kuala Lumpur. This is because only the 2 areas is nearer to the research area and also it have the complete data for the range of year that needed for this study. The areas are Plaza Sentral and Boulevard. Table 1 shows the difference of transacted price for Plaza Sentral while Table 2 shows the difference of transacted price for Boulevard.

According to Table 1, Plaza Sentral shows an increase trend in the price transaction before and after the commencement of Little India project. The average price per square metre before the commencement of the project is RM38, 854.61 while the average price per square metre after the commencement of the project is RM 57,193.50. So, it shows positive number for difference in price per square meter which is RM18, 338.89. According to R1 stated that *“the increase in the number of commercial property value in Plaza Sentral because it is nearer to the Little India so the tourists and local peoples easily can use public transport to reach the Plaza Sentral”*. Thus, the comment of R1 is supported by the result in the table above regarding to the increase in a value of Plaza Sentral.

Table 1: The difference of transacted price for Plaza Sentral (DBKL. 2019)

Distance from Little India, Brickfields	Area	Time		Difference in price per square meter (RM)
		2005-2009	2014-2018	
		Average Price per square meter (RM)		
800 m	Plaza Sentral, Jalan Stesen Sentral 5, Kuala Lumpur	38,854.61	57,193.50	18,338.89

The results from Table 2 indicated that the distance of the Boulevard are 2.8 km from Little India, Kuala Lumpur experienced a lower increment of transacted value. The average price per square before the commencement of Little India project is RM28, 763.35 while the average price per square after the commencement of Little India project is RM45, 327.31. The difference in price per square meter is RM16, 564.01.

Table 2: The difference of transacted price for Boulevard (DBKL. 2019)

Distance from Little India, Brickfields	Area	Time		Difference in price per square meter (RM)
		2005-2009	2014-2018	
		Average price per square meter (RM)		
2.8 km	Boulevard, Lingkaran Syed Putra, Kuala Lumpur	28,763.35	45,327.31	16,564.01

As a conclusion, the commercial property located near to the Little India, Kuala Lumpur experiencing increased in transaction price after the commencement of the Little India project. The results obtained from both of this table are shown that the Little India project bring benefits to the commercial property value around the research area. The commercial property that closer to the Little India, Kuala Lumpur which act as a landmark for Kuala Lumpur were affected its influence more as compared to the commercial properties that further away from the Little India, Kuala Lumpur.

5. Conclusion

The analysis and overall research have provided some insights regarding the conservation of built heritage in the Little India, Kuala Lumpur. The research discusses about the issues related to the built heritage conservation. In addition, it also discusses about the benefits of conserving built heritage for commercial property purpose by providing comparison table of before and after the commencement of Little India project on commercial property value around research area. The benefits of conserving built heritage in terms of commercial property value is proven by comparing the transaction price of commercial property in Little India, Kuala Lumpur. Both of the commercial property experienced

increment in property values after the commencement of Little India project. Thus, the researcher suggests that further study could be undertaken on new built commercial property.

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