World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism

Opportunities for Georgetown WHS

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Structure of the Presentation

World Heritage Towns in the Region

Primary Trends in Cultural Tourism within Asia

Challenges and Opportunities for Cultural Tourism Management

Practical Strategies and a New Direction
World Heritage

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.

www.unesco.org
World Heritage Listing for Melaka and Georgetown generates Obligations and Opportunities
Tourism Planning for Georgetown WHS

Prepare a Tourism Management and Impact Plan

Start out the way you want to finish

Identify the tourism *pressures*

Capture the tourism *benefits*

Reconcile the *needs* of residents

This cannot be done with traditional spatial planning
Georgetown – a collection of many places, peoples and histories
Melaka and Georgetown WHS
Outstanding Universal Value

Melaka and Georgetown are remarkable examples of historic colonial towns on the Straits of Melacca that demonstrate a succession of historical and cultural influences arising from their former function as trading ports linking East and West…

They reflect a coming together of cultural elements from the Malay Archipelago, India and China with those of Europe, to create a unique architecture, culture and townscape.
“A Tapestry of Cultures”

Derived from the Melaka and Georgetown World Heritage Nomination Dossier
Georgetown WHS
More than a Colonial Town?

Did Penang exist before Colonel Light “created it”

Chinese merchandise traded into Rome in 1\textsuperscript{st} century CE, probably via the Straits of Malacca, Indian merchants on the Coromandel Coast and Arab Traders into the Mediterranean.

Part of the 7\textsuperscript{th} century Buddhist-Hindu Kingdom of Kedah

Kedah, a Muslim Kingdom in the 12\textsuperscript{th} century

Captain James Lancaster visits Penang in 1591

Pre-British settlements on Penang date from mid 18\textsuperscript{th} century
“Georgetown
2000 years of Exchange
A Tapestry of Cultures”
World Heritage Convention
Article 4:

One of the main obligations in conserving World Heritage places is to present their significance to the public.
World Heritage Sites are among the most seductive and heavily marketed of tourism destinations.

They should become the best-practice models for tourism management.
ICOMOS
International Cultural Tourism Charter

Cultural Heritage: a dynamic reference for diversity and identity

Tourism: a major vehicle for cultural exchange and socio-economic benefit

Charter Ethos: Raise public awareness and generate public support for heritage places
UNESCO Lijiang Models for Cooperation among Stakeholders
Enhanced co-operation between conservation and tourism

Site Managers plan for tourism activities as well as conservation

Tourism sector accepts the need for protection of the place

Property owners gain long term investment outcomes

Visitors appreciate and enjoy historic Georgetown
World Heritage Listed Trading Towns in Asia

Competition for Georgetown in the Tourism Market Place

A rich and diverse collection – Tangible and Intangible Heritage

Many of them represent centuries of trade, commerce and cultural exchange

A major part of the region’s tourism assets
Macau SAR, China
Primary Tourism Trends in Asia

Tourism is growing at an exponential rate, especially to the region’s World Heritage Sites.

Domestic and inter-regional tourism is growing faster than international tourism.

Tourists are increasingly interested in the everyday life of local people.
International Tourist Arrivals, 1950-2020

Source: UN World Tourism Organisation
The Tourism Sector has recognised the market attraction of World Heritage and developed many tour products internationally.
World Heritage Sites have become a major attraction for domestic tourism throughout Asia.
The everyday life of local people is of increasing interest to tourists.
Some Sites are now almost permanently congested,
Angkor Temple Compounds

Sydney Morning Herald, March 2007
Tourism in World Heritage Towns: Challenges and Opportunities

Communicate Heritage Significance

Manage and Protect Heritage Significance

Benefit the Local Community
Communication of Heritage Significance

Raises community self-esteem and enable tourists to have a richer appreciation of the places they visit

Facilitates market access for new private sector and community based tourism enterprises

Promotes tourism products that are more sustainable because of their authenticity and relevance

Influences visitor behaviour based on a greater awareness of the sensitive nature of heritage places
Well-informed tourists are at the very centre of all sustainable tourism activity.

Heritage Communication adds value by building an understanding and emotional attachment.
Heritage information should be delivered throughout the tourism experience

Raise awareness and influence travel choices

During the Journey and Arrival

At the Destination

At the Heritage Site

Sharing Memories
Iconic images used to raise general public awareness
Georgetown WHS is almost invisible in the tourism promotion literature
Photos of Korean cultural heritage attractions displayed on arrivals concourse reinforce the identity of the destination

Incheon Airport, Seoul
Malaysia Travel Display, Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris
Informative highway signs encourage tourists to explore the destination in greater depth.

The Georgetown WHS is not signposted within Penang.
Thematic brochures promote specific aspects of Macau’s cultural heritage.

Georgetown has a series of heritage walks.
Models of the historic centre help visitors appreciate the nature of the destination

Hamburg, Germany
Heritage Day festivals are very popular annual events in many historic European towns and cities.

Czech Republic
Signs with both historic and contemporary street names and plaques enhance heritage awareness.
Interpretation on scaffolding during restoration work retains the visual presence of the historic building for visitors and local people.

Sicily and Rome
Historic hotel conversions enable tourists to appreciate another dimension of local culture and heritage.
Local forms of transport for visitors and residents provide both economic livelihood and a distinctive local character. Yogyakarta and Georgetown.
Sharing memories is a key part of the tourist experience.

It will also influence the travel choices of friends and family.
Why Communicate Heritage to Tourists?

“Ultimately, it will be the insistence and the passion of the traveller that will save the special places on earth”

Seth Lindblad, Galapagos Islands Cruise Operator
Manage Heritage Significance

World Heritage Listing for Georgetown will protect the overall historic urban centre.

Changing the property investment landscape from “redevelop” to “retain, upgrade and re-use”, means that all property values within the precinct will rise as people realise the advantage of a unified approach to the protection of the urban character.
Restored historic buildings and revitalised historic precincts protect the significance of an historic town.
Individual, privately owned terraced houses within a Conservation Area are now are regarded as very good, long term property investments.

In the 1960s, the area was regarded as a slum and the houses were scheduled for demolition.

Paddington, Sydney
The City of Evora, Portugal, has used World Heritage status to create a unifying imagery in the public mind, a unified town planning regime, and a very clear marketing message for tourism sector.
Protect Heritage Significance

Identify the tourism pressures

Capture the tourism benefits

Reconcile the needs of residents
This 2005 publication by the UN World Tourism Organisation provides guidance to tourism destinations and sites on how to minimise tourism congestion and protect the qualities of their historic town or site.
Some congestion fluctuates according to festivals and events, elsewhere the congestion has become a permanent feature, Bhaktapur and Prague
Guide visitors to less congested parts of an historic town or precinct

Xian, China and Kanazawa, Japan
Develop a public transportation system that is suitable for the historic town. Small-scale buses are a feature of many French and Italian towns.
Good traffic management will prevent cars from entering the crowded centre of historic towns. Sintra, Portugal
Coordinate tourism stakeholders to reduce congestion
Too many cruise ships arrive at the same time in Rhodes Harbour, Greece
Residents and Tourists

Who should benefit from tourism development?

- Competition for local resources
- Competition for local opportunities
- Equity of access to mediation
Local employment in the Tourism industry, Lijiang

Traditional skill used to produce modern products, Lijiang
Who should benefit from tourism development?

All those who live and work in historic Georgetown
Tourists and the tourism industry are only the “actors”

Tourism development and activity must also benefit the residents
Competition for Local Resources

Tourists often compete with local people for the use of special aspects of the historic city
Competition for Local Opportunities

Local people must be able to enjoy access to the opportunities provided by tourism
Equity of Access to Mediation

Mediation between tourism interests and local residents must be inclusive and equitable.
Life Cycles of the Tourism Experience

Tourism Growth and Development
Tolerance and Acceptance
Resentment, Opposition and Decline
Tourism Growth and Development

- Increased economic activity
- Increased wealth for residents
- Welcoming attitude to visitors
Tolerance and Acceptance

Residents in the historic town enjoy a comfortable relationship with the level of tourism activity
Resentment, Opposition and Decline

Tourism saturation impacts on the lifestyle of local residents

Opposition to tourism emerges among many local residents
This is not how we want the people of Georgetown to react to tourism
Practical Strategies for Tourism Management in World Heritage Towns
Use the World Heritage logo to celebrate the international status of Georgetown
Display the World Heritage Symbol throughout the town, Hoi An, Vietnam
Good directional signs and tourism information booths help visitors to find their way around town. Peubla, Mexico and Barcelona, Spain.
Open new sections of the historic town to expand tourism activity and benefit, Hoi An, Vietnam
Retain historic precincts and buildings as part of modern life
Re-activate historic places to provide new amenities for visitors and local people
Restore and revitalise important historic buildings
Heritage Trails guide visitors to important sites, Georgetown
Guide Training and Entry “Passports”
Control bus parking to ensure it does not detract from monuments, Nikko, Japan
San Francisco uses its historic trams and cable cars as a major form of public transport in the city.
Consultation should include gender equity rights in the community
Temple custodians must be consulted and given freedom to worship in peace, Sri Lanka
Everyone should enjoy the cultural investment from tourism
Don’t forget,
The visitor is only human
This should be the outcome of good tourism planning for Georgetown
Is there a unifying WHS identity for the Georgetown World Heritage Site?

“Malaysia Truly Asia”

“Penang Pearl of the Orient”

“Georgetown ?????”
The “Incredible India” campaign has enabled India to move beyond the iconic Taj Mahal image into a vast array of cultural traditions and expressions.
“Georgetown – 2000 years of Exchange - A Tapestry of Cultures”
Key Task for the field trip

Based on your observations

Identify a range of ideas and take photographs that capture and express the essence of:

“Georgetown – 2000 years of Exchange - A Tapestry of Cultures”