

READERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING IN MALAYSIA



■ MARIANA MOHAMED OSMAN ■
■ ALIAS ABDULLAH ■ M. ZAINORA ASMAWI ■



IIUM PRESS

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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CHAPTER 6

AN URBAN HERITAGE TRAIL OF ALOR SETAR, KEDAH, MALAYSIA

Mansor Ibrahim¹

INTRODUCTION

Historic urban sites and traditional structures are one of the most important evidence of the past civilization. The conservation of these values within the context of conservation of architectural heritage is always regarded as the preservation of heritage culture. The main objective of historic buildings documentation is to preserve cultural properties by understanding their architectural, historical, environmental, visual and aesthetic characteristics. The importance of this work is to recognize the relationship between architectural heritage buildings and the urban tourism lifestyle of the local inhabitants and tourists. The most challenging issues in planning are those, how to improve the city without neglecting these heritages, and how the local inhabitants and government could contribute and sustain urban heritage of Alor Setar city.

This research is to identify the most significant heritage resources within the boundaries of the District of Alor Setar and produce a model of "Urban Heritage Trail". The focus is to study heritage trail and documentations of heritage buildings in Alor Setar based on identity and cultural dimensions towards nationhood. Besides, it is also purposely to undertake architectural heritage building basic documentations in the case study areas of Alor Setar, namely the palaces of 'Istana Kuning', 'Istana Pelamin', 'Sepachendera', Great Audience Hall', Zahir Great mosque, and many others within the radius of 10 km of the city area.

Brief History of Alor Setar

With 250 years of established history, Alor Setar is located in the northern region of Malaysia that has developed since the early eighteen century during the influence of British colonialism. Alor Setar is the capital of Kedah state and provides easy and direct access to the Thai border and the rest of Kedah (The detail location can be referred in the Figure 1 below). The town has developed along Jalan Pekan Melayu. It retains the old buildings, and most of the places of interest are within walking distance.

The history of Alor Setar city started in the early settlement in Kedah which was built by the Sultan of Kedah, and was transformed continuously during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Jiwa who became the Sultan of Kedah in early 1700's. According to Muhammad Fauzi, (n.d) Alor Setar became the eighth capital of Kedah when it was declared as a centre of administration by Sultan Muhammad Jiwa Zainal Adilin Muadzam Shah II on Saturday, 31st

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