

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**WALKING THROUGH THE NEW OLD:
IMPROVING WALKABILITY OF CULTURAL
SIGNIFICANCE THROUGH CULTURAL MAPPING
APPROACH AT CHINATOWN KUALA LUMPUR.**

**SHARIFAH NURUL 'AISYAH BINTI SYED
KHASAIAN AL KADRI**

Dissertation/Topical Report submitted in partial
fulfilment of requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Hons)

Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying

February 2023

ABSTRACT

Cultural significance places enrich people's lives by providing a profound and inspiring sense of connection to community and landscape. Historic towns and cultural landscapes have shaped our societies and are regarded as priceless assets for current and future generations. To preserve such towns' cultural identities and historic characters in the face of globalization and urbanization, walkable historic places will amplify tourist magnets and focal aspects that may boost sense of place. The relation between urban history and walkability exists in most urban areas, and many Malaysian cities have heritage values that are being lost over time as a result of walkability issues throughout the places. One of them is the area of the site study in one of Kuala Lumpur's main areas, Chinatown, which has cultural significance in the city. Chinatown is one of the oldest parts of Kuala Lumpur and a popular tourist destination. However, due to the transformation of the human cultural landscape and a lack of walkability that connects to the heritage trails, Chinatown is losing its charm in terms of historical and cultural values, as is the city's rapid development. Visitors which include tourists have made extensive use of urban areas, facilities, and services. However, only few of these spaces were created with tourists in mind. Given the lack of concern for how to provide visitors with a quality and memorable walking experience. Furthermore, the new development of 118 towers located in a part of Chinatown does not provide continuous walkability, making it harder for people to experience the beauty and uniqueness of Chinatown as a whole. However, after acknowledging the loss of walking facilities in historically significant places, the *Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur* (DBKL) plans to revitalize Chinatown by sustaining traditional architecture and cultural value, enhancing the environment landscape, making it easily accessible by foot, also becoming a key cultural connectivity with the guidance of Think City Sdn Bhd. Using a cultural mapping approach, Chinatown can help raise identity and the city's economy in the future. The methodology for this study will begin with site inventory and interviews with local communities, local authorities, and daily workers. The information gathered from secondary data sources is then analyzed to form a solution in terms of synthesis and design strategies. Finally, the design details are derived from the concept of space planning, which is the master plan, perspective perception, and planting strategies. The end result is a concise design that meets both human needs and environmental concerns.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful Alhamdulillah, all praises to Allah for the strength and His blessing in completing this topical study. I am grateful for the blessing and giving me a great opportunity to complete this thesis, “Walking through The New Old Chinatown, Kuala Lumpur by Implementing Cultural Mapping Approach to Improve Cultural Significance through Walkability”. My gratitude and thanks go to my lecturer of the subject LAS620 Topical Study, Dr. Salina Binti Mohamed Ali for sharing expertise, sincere and valuable guidance and encouragement.

Aside from that, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, En. Mohamed Ikhwan Nasir Mohamed Anuar, for his exceptional guidance, monitoring, and constant encouragement throughout the course of this topical study. I would also like to thank all of the studio masters and lecturers, including Prof. Madya LAr. Ts. Dr Nurhayati Abdul Malek, Dr. Salina Mohamed Ali, En Zainuddin Abd Rahman, LAr. Diid Abdah Bin Mohd Isa, and En. Mohd Zahid Mohd Salleh, for their knowledge and advice on this topic of study.

My sincere gratefulness goes to my family for their unending love, prayers, and unwavering support during my studies. Utmost appreciation to all of my friends for their generosity and moral support as I worked to complete my studies. Thank you for the memories and the friendship. Lastly, to those who indirectly contributed in this research, your kindness means a lot to me. Thank you very much.

Finally, I am also more than thankful to all people who were willing to share their knowledge during the interviews in the field study. Thank you for always continuously supported me in every possible way from initial advice to encouragement till the end of this research.

TABLES OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii-ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi-xii
LIST OF PLATES	xiii-xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATION/NOMENCLATURE	xvi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC	1
1.1 Introduction	1-3
1.2 Background of Study	3-4
1.3 Issues and Problems	4
1.3.1 Malaysia Context	4-5
1.3.2 Local Context	5
1) Cultural Experience	5
2) Walkability	5
3) Safety Consideration	5
4) Visual Character	5
1.4 Aim and Objectives of Study	6
1.4.1 Aim	6
1.4.2 Objectives	6
1.5 Relevance of Study	6
1.5.1 Significant of Study	6
1.5.2 Rationale of Study in Landscape Architecture	6-7
1.6 Research Methodology	7
1.6.1 Primary Data	7
1.6.2 Secondary Data	7
I. Government Department	7-8

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC

1.1 Introduction

Generally, walking through the city is an essential part of city life. It allows us to interact with our surroundings, explore our neighborhoods, and connect with the cultural, historical, and social fabric of where we live. However, not all urban areas are equally walkable, and some areas may present obstacles that discourage people from venturing out on foot. In relation, urban heritage is very important in the context of modern cities because it reflects the distinct character and identity of a city and its people. The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, in particular, can play an important role in improving a city's livability and attractiveness.

Finding from María García (2019), urban heritage can refer to the city as heritage, a special type of cultural assets that is primarily associated with areas of the city, urban centers, and historic cities. The focus is on the urban space's heritage values, which are overall values resulting from the interaction of various components. In recent times, the term "urban heritage" has gained popularity. However, since the mid-twentieth century, it has been closely linked to conservation and restoration proposals for historic centers in European cities. Urban conservation spreads throughout the world, propelled by organizations such as UNESCO, which formed a special category of cultural properties known as "groups of buildings" in the World Heritage Convention in 1972, generally associated with towns. Since the turn of the century, UNESCO has advocated for a broader approach to urban heritage that includes social, economic, and functional dimensions in addition to the built environment.

For the last decade, the focus has shifted to the formation of New Urbanism (NU), where most historical relics are located in or near the city, and there is a seamless integration of urban heritage and walkability. Finding from Girling et al. (2019), a fundamental imperative of New Urbanism is to support an urban design capable of satisfying residents' demands in a way that is quick and easily accessible for a pedestrian, notably within a five-minute walking distance. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between New Urbanism and