warisan KL

Evolving City: An Insight into Downtown Kuala Lumpur's State of Transformation

WARISAN KL STUDY 2023

Formerly known as Kuala Lumpur Creative & Cultural District

thinkCITY

Kuala Lumpur: A City in Flux

While economic entity density has declined within KLCCD, the area has witnessed growth in residential developments and key sectors, including fashion/textiles, F&B and boutique hotels.

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Glossary

Adaptive Reuse
conservation methods used to preserve abandoned buildings, applying them according to contemporary needs, but their original functions may differ.

Building
a permanent enclosed construction over a plot of land, having walls, a roof and usually windows.

Entities
businesses, organisations, residences, or vacancies.

Greater KL
Malaysia's Global City, covering an area of 5,195 square kilometers, also known as the Klang Valley.
Source: KL Structure Plan 2040

Green Connector
land with natural vegetation, including grass, trees, and other plants, connecting places of activity and is accessible to the public.

Heritage Buildings
a building of historical or cultural value.

Infill Development
the construction of buildings or facilities on unused or underutilised land located within an existing urban/developed area.

Institutional Building
a building defined by its primary use, and that is inclusive of education institutes, hospitals, museums and galleries.

KLCCD Core Zone
Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District Core Zone, the 108-hectare of KLCCD's core zone area bound by Jalan Kuching to the west, Jalan Dang Wangi in the north, Jalan Kinabalu to the south and Bukit Nanas and Kota Raya Bus Station to the east.

KLCCD
Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District, the 1014-hectare area inclusive of the KLCCD Core Zone and the buffer zone including Chow Kit South, Bukit Nanas, Bukit Ceylon, M118 Precinct, Kampung Attap Enclave, Brickfields, Taman Tugu and other cultural institutions.

KL City Centre
the area including the KLCCD as well as the whole of Chow Kit, Titiwangsa, Kampung Baru, KLCC, Bukit Bintang, Imbi, Pudu, and the entire Kampung Attap.

Persons with Disabilities (PWD)
those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disabilities who, when interacting with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society.
Source: Disability Act 2008

Place-Based
interventions/approaches that consider the issues, interconnections and relationships in a place to improve the quality of life for the community.

Precinct 1
the Civic Precinct.

Precinct 2
the Traditional Shopping Precinct.

Precinct 3
the Heritage Triangle.

Precinct 4
the Education Precinct.

Precinct 5
the Petaling Street Precinct.

Public Realm
spaces that belong and are accessible by the public.

Traditional Trade
trades that involve skills which may require specific traditional tools or materials and are associated with traditional customs, observances, rituals or festivals.

Residential Entity
a place of residence inhabited by residents for long term stays; short term/temporary dwellings are not included.

Vacant spaces
spaces that are left empty and unused.

Abbreviations

BID
Business Improvement District.

CBD
Central Business District.

C&C
Creative & Cultural.

CCE
Creative & Cultural Economy.

DBKL
Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur otherwise known as the Kuala Lumpur City Hall.

DoSM
Department of Statistics Malaysia.

DTKL
Downtown Kuala Lumpur.

Jalan TAR
Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

JWN
Jabatan Warisan Negara.

LUCSA
the Land Use Census and Survey Attribute System.

SMP
Strategic Master Plan.

Background and Context

Chapter 1

Kota AR by Suzy Sulaiman, Festival Kreatif KL

Since 2014, Think City has worked alongside DBKL and various partners to implement impactful interventions to catalyse change in the KLCCD Core Zone.

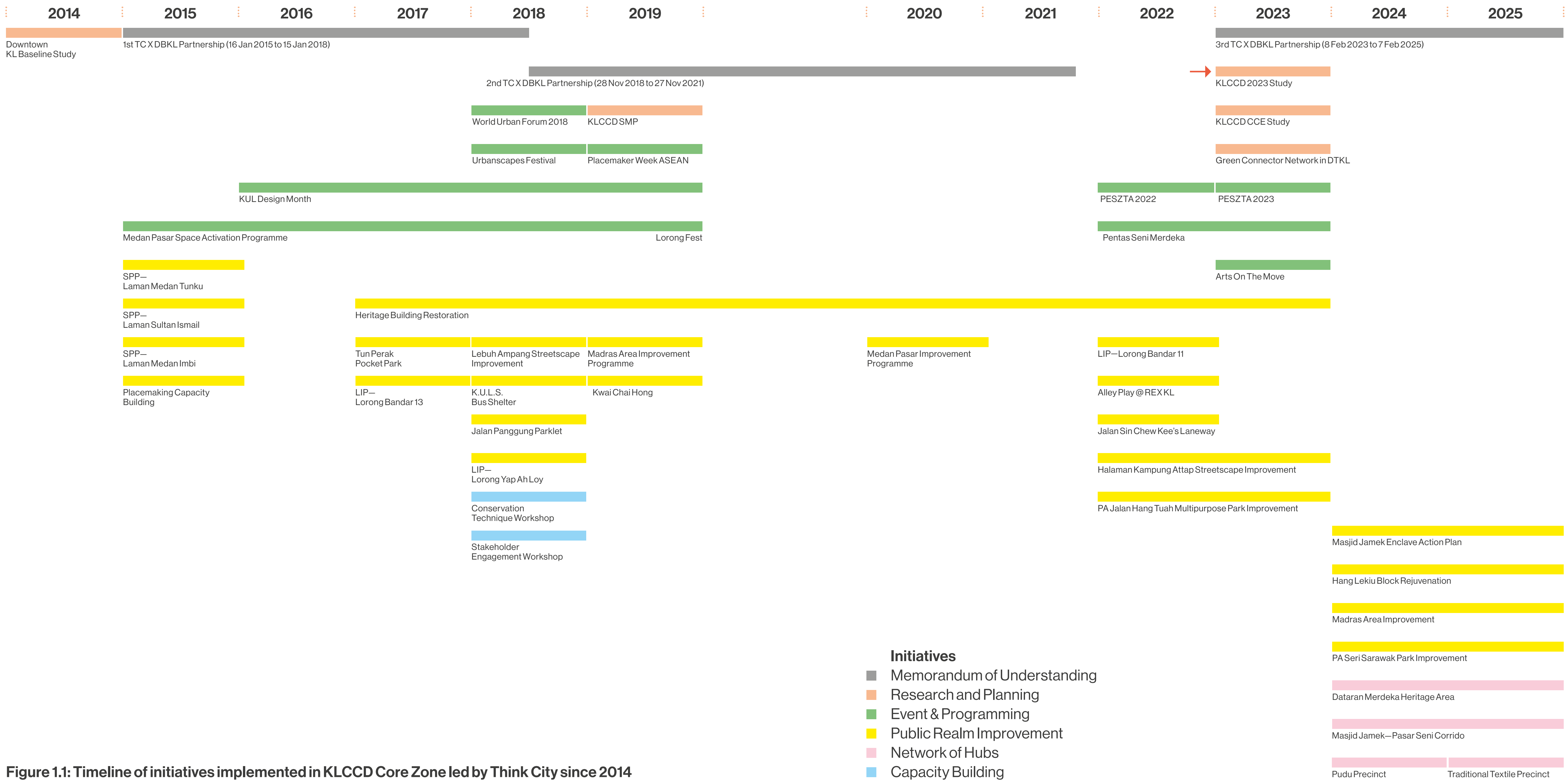


Figure 1.1: Timeline of initiatives implemented in KLCCD Core Zone led by Think City since 2014

In 2023, Think City with the support of Budget 2023 conducted the KLCCD 2023 Study, a baseline study to explore the state of the KLCCD Core Zone.

KLCCD 2023 Study

The KLCCD 2023 Study involved **collecting and analysing data** through a **building & entity survey**. Surveys were conducted with street vendors to understand the **infrastructure, working conditions and challenges** of street vendors at selected areas within the zone.

Surveys were also conducted to gather the **perception of the public** who live, work/study and visit the KL City Centre as well as the **business sentiment of establishments** within KL City Centre and Greater KL.

Study background

The **KLCCD 2023 Study** gathered detailed population data, comprehensive land use information, public perceptions, business sentiment and information on buildings within the KLCCD Core Zone.

The study aimed to support planning efforts for the KLCCD and the city's overall development and thereby contributing to the enhancement of the KLCCD Core Zone to become a better place to live and work.

Data Collection Tools

- Building & Entity Survey
- Perception Survey
- Street Vendor Survey
- Business Survey

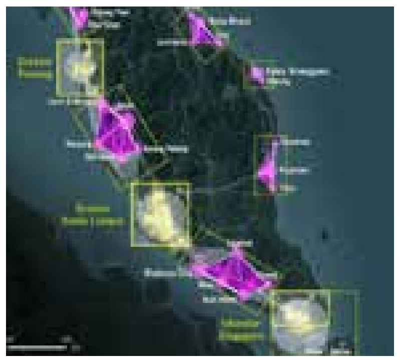
Aerial view of KLCCD Core Zone and its surrounding

Think City adopted a multidisciplinary approach that is both impact-driven and evidence-based, focusing on the use of analytics to generate insights into strategic action and informed decision-making.

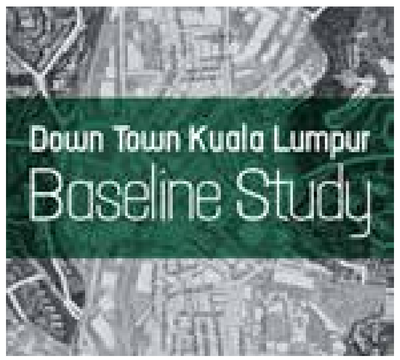
It is worth noting that prior to each intervention, a preliminary study or rapid assessment of the area was performed for both on-the-ground projects and policy level recommendations.

Snapshot studies were conducted to provide specific updates on changes and progress in the intervention areas.

Figure 1.2: Related reports published by Think City

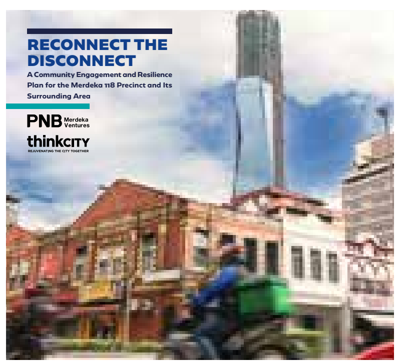


Melaka Straits Diagonal Territorial Planning



Downtown Kuala Lumpur Baseline Study 2015

Kuala Lumpur Creative & Cultural District Strategic Masterplan



Merdeka 118 Precinct Community Engagement & Resilience Plan

Stadium Merdeka Conservation Management Plan

Stadium Merdeka Enhancement Programme

Figure 1.2: cont'd

Business Community Pulse Check Report 2020

PowerUp KL Vision Document

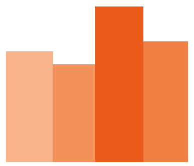
From Public Housing to Public Homes

Homelessness in Kuala Lumpur

The Study Process

Categories | **Methodology**

Data Collection



The study involved the use of comprehensive data collection, validation and analysis. The survey area focused on the 108-hectare of the KLCCD Core Zone bordered by Jalan Kuching to the west, Jalan Dang Wangi in the north, Jalan Kinabalu to the south and Bukit Nanas and Kota Raya Bus Station to the east.

- As a part of the study, detailed observation was made on each building in the KLCCD Core Zone to capture data on building use, typology and condition. This was supported by follow-up interview sessions with each premise (entity) to collect information on demographics and economic activities, including the size of their labour force, operating hours and tenancy type. The number of vacancies and residential entities were also recorded. The classification of entities is based on the Land Use Census and Survey Attributes (LUCSA) system.

- Questions were tailored for key building use categories such as businesses, hotels, residences and associations. Censuses were carried out by trained enumerators while quality control was maintained through close monitoring and input from supervisors. The Fulcrum application was used for data collection which was collected between 13 July 2023 and 14 September 2023.

Data Accuracy and Validation

- It is Note:worthy that the data collected by enumerators was monitored daily and subsequently verified by Think City through on-site surveys of the buildings and business entities.

- To overcome potential data collection issues, residential entity data was Source:d from the PLANMalaysia database. To validate this data, desktop research was conducted along with stakeholder interviews involving local business owners and community experts/members.

Categories | **Methodology**

Data Analysis

- In compiling data for analysis, geocoded survey data was cleaned and analysed using GIS software. Each building was assigned a unique ID which was then used to geocode each entity surveyed.

- Synthetic data was created for the labour force and residential density based on the 2023 average data and compared with the 2015 average data.

Supplementary Research

- Between 4th August and 13h August 2023, additional street vendor surveys were conducted in Jalan Benteng, Jalan Melayu, Madras Market, and Lorong Hang Lekiu.

- Online surveys using Survey Monkey were conducted on businesses in Kuala Lumpur between 14th November 2023 and 15h December 2023, while online surveys on public perception were conducted between 19th August 2023 and 4th December 2023. Survey participants were incentivised with e-vouchers.

- These surveys were carried out through Think City's social media platforms and events such as Pentas Seni Merdeka.

- If there was insufficient data, enumerators were rehired to gather additional business survey responses.

- To gain better insights into the KLCCD demographic, interviews were also conducted with business owners and community experts/members to better understand the KLCCD demographic.

Surveys were conducted to understand the state of buildings and entities in the KLCCD Core Zone. This was complemented with surveys on local business performance and public perception.

Building and Entity Survey

A detailed census survey of all businesses, organisations and residences within the KLCCD Core Zone

1,005
buildings surveyed

3,017
entities surveyed

Figure 1.3a: Map of precints and buildings surveyed within the KLCCD Core Zone

Street Vendor Survey

Understanding how street vendors in the KLCCD Core Zone operate and perform

106
street vendors interviewed

Figure 1.3b: Map of street vendors surveyed in this study

Public Perception Survey

Understanding how the public perceives KL City Centre and to suggest improvements for KL City Centre

473
responses

Figure 1.3c: Map of KL City Centre where the Public Perception Survey was conducted

Business Survey

Understanding and comparing how businesses in KL City Centre and Greater KL are performing and how they can be improved

333
responses

Figure 1.3d: Map of Greater KL where the Business Survey was conducted

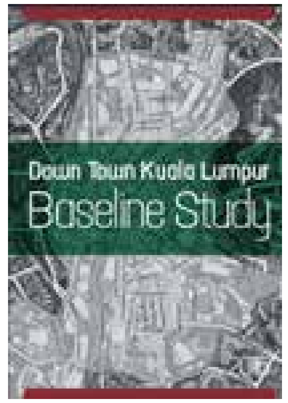
Learnings and caveats on the limitations of the study.

Survey	Learnings and Caveats
Building and Entities Survey	• The data on building use, typology, and condition was collected through qualitative assessments based on enumerators' observations and subsequently verified by Think City. However, limitations exist due to factors such as lack of visible signage and misalignment between survey timing and business operating hours, which may have led to misclassification of some entities as vacant. • The KLCCD 2023 Study builds upon the 2015 Baseline Study, incorporating key improvements in data collection methodologies. Notably, the study transitioned from written surveys to online surveys, enhancing data accuracy and efficiency. Additionally, geographical boundaries were refined to align with new planning documents and evolving urban development needs.
Additional Surveys	**General** • The reach of the surveys was expanded through Think City's existing network which may have influenced the findings to reflect the perspective of respondents already familiar with Kuala Lumpur's creative and cultural activities. • The data collection on street vendors, businesses and public perception was limited. As such, the data is a dipstick/ brief snapshot on current conditions. **Public Perception Survey** The categorisation of respondents and the variation in questions led to scattered responses. This resulted in a snapshot of current perceptions rather than providing conclusive findings. **Business Survey** Responses from the Business Survey were limited by the respondents' knowledge and level of candour. Some survey respondents were new/part time staff who may not have been fully aware of how the business was performing, the outlook for the business and challenges faced by the business. Business owners may not always be entirely truthful in their responses for fear of tax/legal repercussions. **Street Vendor Survey** Again, responses were limited by the respondents' knowledge and level or candour. Street vendors may not have been entirely honest in their responses on their labour force (who they hired) and licensing status for fear of tax and/or legal repercussions.

Survey	Learnings and Caveats
Supplemental Interviews	Apart from the above, information and validation were gathered from business owners and community experts/members through interviews based on their knowledge and experience.

Skyline view of Kuala Lumpur Tower and Petronas Twin Towers

The 2015 DTKL Baseline Study found that downtown KL functioned as a transaction space—servicing a transient population of hospitality and financial workers, visitors, and non-Malaysians.



Downtown Kuala Lumpur Baseline Study—Produced by Think City in 2015

Think City's 2015 DTKL Baseline Study provided a snapshot of the city at the time and set a baseline, against which we can capture the area's changes throughout the years.

There is a limited diversity in economic activities, employment opportunities, housing options, demographics, and land use. Additionally, many assets and spaces remain underutilised. Addressing these gaps presents a key policy opportunity—fostering a more diverse social, economic, and physical landscape to maximise growth and efficiency.

Residential Population
The area has a relatively low residential population, primarily consisting of low-cost and migrant housing for general workers and laborers.

Business and Employment Landscape
Business activities are predominantly concentrated in finance, banking, and hospitality, with limited opportunities in the knowledge and creative sectors. There are few businesses catering to office-related needs (e.g., graphic design, office supplies) or household services (e.g., furniture and bedding).

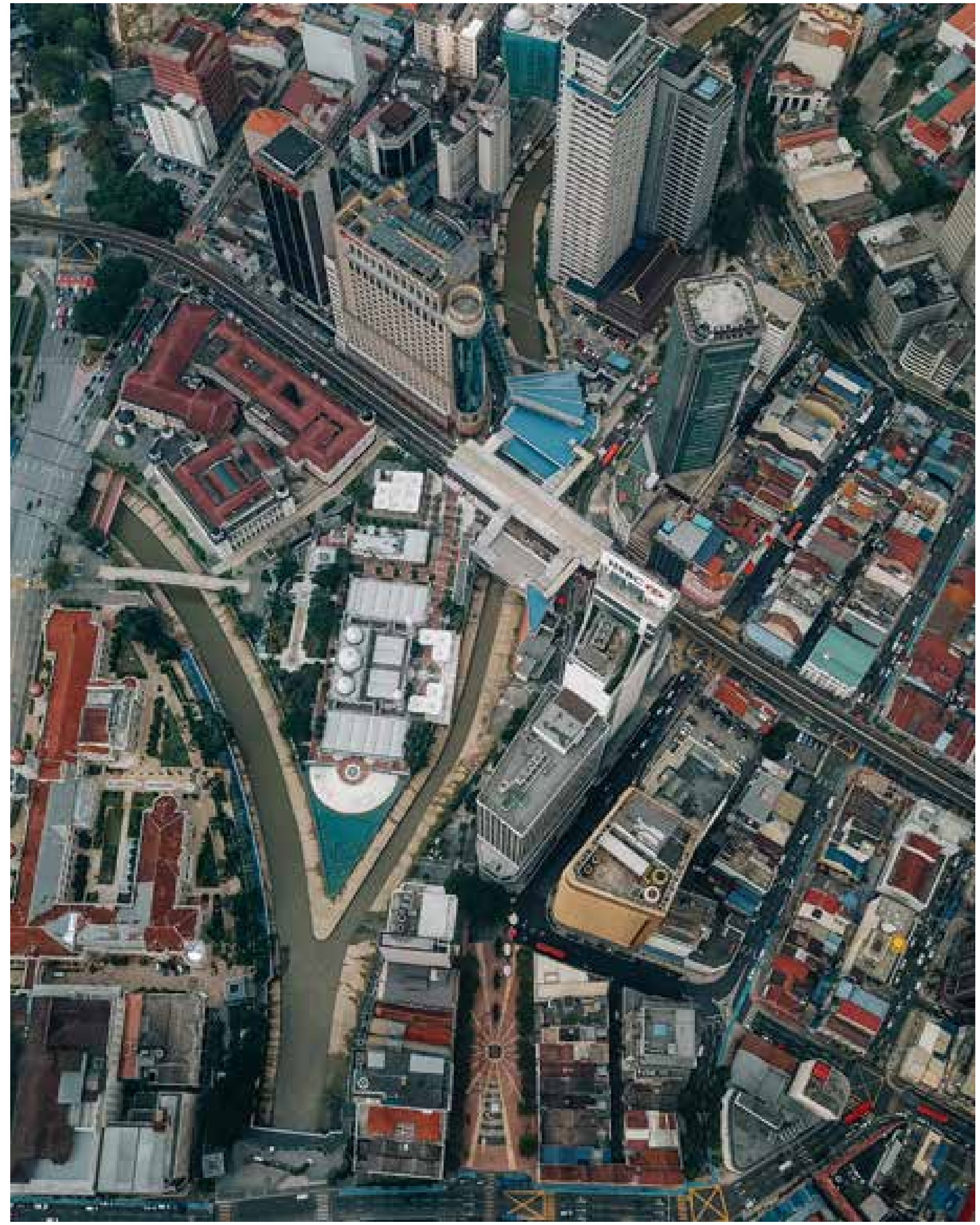
Workforce Composition
The area has a substantial workforce, with a significant proportion comprising non-Malaysian workers.

Education Sector
While there is a reasonable presence of educational institutions, the number of college and university students remains low.

Daytime vs. Night-time Population
The night-time population is less than 20% of the daytime population, indicating a significant imbalance between work and residential presence.

Transportation and Mobility
A high proportion of workers rely on public transport, and residents generally work within a 2km radius of their homes.

Land Use and Utilisation
A large portion of available space remains underutilised, with only one-third of the total land area designated for business, institutional, or residential purposes.



Aerial view of the confluence of Gombak and Klang Rivers

Downtown KL Headlines Statistics

Study Area 213ha	No. of Buildings 1,409	Building Footprint 71ha	Space Between Buildings 142ha
No. of Jobs 57,370	No. of Residents 3,792	Pop. Density 18/ha	Jobs Density 269/ha
Finance, Banking, Legal Jobs 40.5%	Workers Using Public Transport 49%	Av. Employees Per Business 11.4	Total Floor Space (m²) 5.3mil
Government Jobs 12,938	Creative and Knowledge Jobs 3,320	Vacancy Rate 10.3%	Av. No. of Years Businesses Established 10
Jobs For Non-Malaysian 13.5%	Non-Malaysian Households 1 in 2	No. of Students 7,577	Est. Day-time Population 54,000
Male Workers 54%	Male Residents 73%	Parkland/ Open Space 6.6%	Est. Night-time Population 11,000
Buildings in Need of Major Restoration 128	Buildings Recently Restored 146	Av. SQM. Per Job 96	Av. SQM. Per Business 1,363
No. of Hotels 142	Hotel Rooms 7,313	Residents Aged 25-39 Years 73%	Av. Distance Residents to Work 2km

Source: Downtown Kuala Lumpur Baseline Study (2015)

Aerial view of natural assets in the periphery of KLCCD

Following the Baseline Study, the KLCCD Strategic Master Plan (SMP) highlighted that many of the city's cultural assets were underutilised, despite large-scale government interventions.

Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District—Prepared by DBKL and Think City in 2019

Built Environment

Buildings and Physical Heritage
Apart from shophouses, most heritage buildings are in deteriorating condition and suffer from inadequate conservation efforts.

Public Realm
The combination of harsh weather, insufficient pedestrian-friendly amenities, a lack of mature trees for shade, and pollution contributes to an overall unpleasant walking experience in many areas.

Connectivity and Mobility
Limited connectivity between key spaces and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure hinder mobility and accessibility.

Economic Activity

- The economic significance of Kuala Lumpur's historic core has eroded due to the emergence of new commercial hubs on the city's outskirts.
- The rise of modern shopping complexes, the development of a new CBD in Bukit Bintang and KLCC, and the relocation of key government services have contirbuted to economic instability in the area.
- Retail remains the dominant economic activity, with a high concentration of restaurants and businesses selling textiles, household goods, and electronics.

Cultural Environment

Traditional Trades
There are 93 traditional trades and there is a tendency for ethnic concentration.

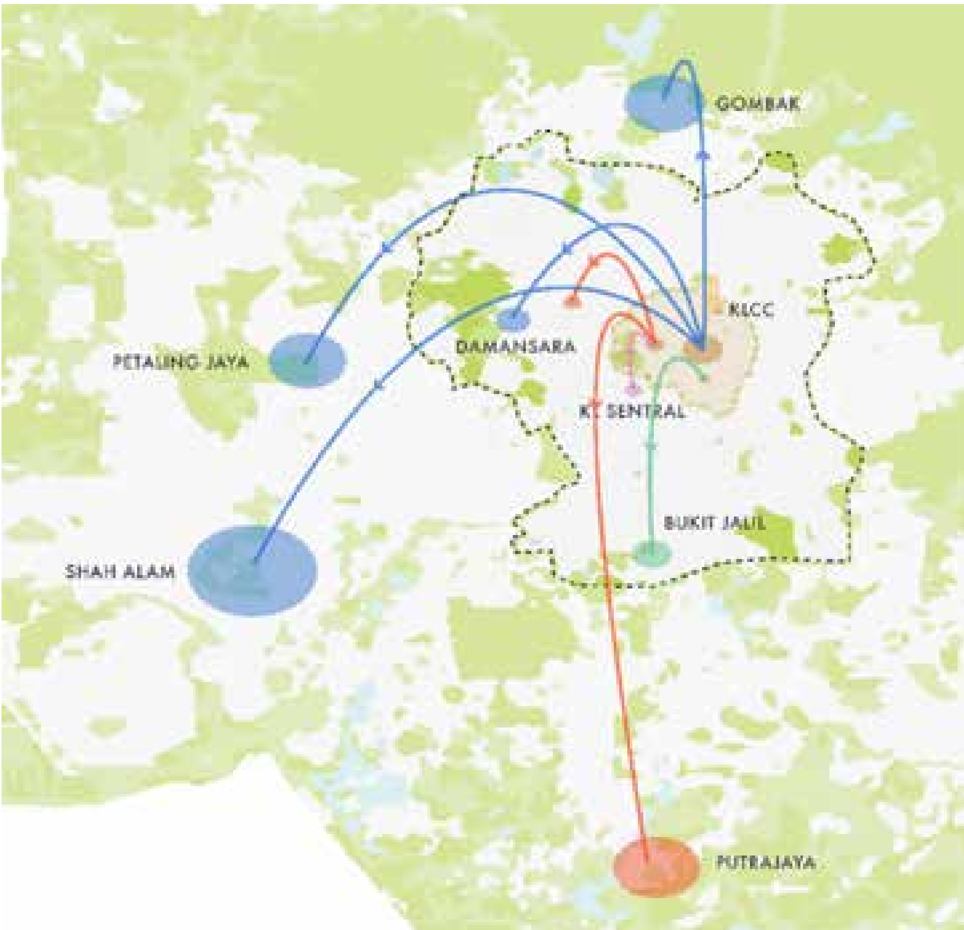
Creative and Cultural Activities
There are a significant number of private creative and cultural venues, museums and galleries in KLCCD.

Demographics
The residents in the area were estimated to be fewer than 1,000, half identified as non-Malaysians. The migrant population were primarily from Myanmar, Nepal and Bangladesh. Notably, there were a few families, and the male population was predominant.

Safety and Security
The perception of safety and security were of a concern, further exacerbated by pockets of poor connectivity and limited night-time activity.

The above situation was attributed to the growing trend of core functions shifting to new centralities. This then led to vacant properties and spaces or "hollowing out" in the area.

Figure 1.4: New centralities and the hollowing out of Downtown Kuala Lumpur



Movement of Function
- Residential
- Administration
- Recreation
- Finance
- Transportation
- Kuala Lumpur
- WPKL

Source: Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District Strategic Master Plan (2019)

Gombak Residential

Petaling Jaya Residential

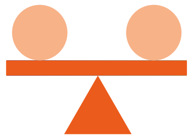
KLCC New Financial Centre

Shah Alam Residential

Putrajaya New Administration Centre

The KLCCD SMP highlighted four possible future scenarios for the KLCCD Core Zone, in line with the trend of core functions moving out.

Scenario 1
Stabilisation



- In this scenario, the trends observed over the past decade continued to accelerate before reaching a period of stabilisation. The downtown area evolves into a central hub for migrant workers and the disenfranchised groups. Over time, different ethnic communities begin to self-organise and address many of their challenges. This then leads to a stabilised rent, an increase in migrant resident population and greater use and appreciation for public spaces.

- Although Malaysians seldom frequent the area, this area plays a crucial role in supporting and housing migrant communities of Greater KL.

Scenario 2
Descent

- In this scenario, the trend of the past decade reaches a critical point. Tensions between various migrant communities intensifies leading to an increase in illegal activities, informal economy as well as a rise in petty and violent crimes.

- As the situation worsens, public health continues to decline, traditional trades all but disappear and the area's heritage values are severely compromised.

Scenario 3
Modernisation and Densification

- In this scenario, most traditional shoplots are demolished to make way for high-rise mixed-use developments. The area is rebranded as a "renewed" city centre, now competing with established areas like KLCC, Tun Razak Exchange and Bandar Malaysia. As the area undergoes transformation and the nature of businesses shifts significantly, there is a noticeable increase in the number of high-rise apartments.

- These changes then lead to both tangible and intangible heritage values being almost completely wiped out.

Scenario 4
Rejuvenation

- A fourth potential scenario envisions the creation of a new economic raison d'être around culture, arts, heritage and creativity. In this scenario, the existing assets in the area are secured, activated, rehabilitated and connected to a broader network of inner-city cultural assets. This gives rise to what becomes known as Kuala Lumpur's Creative and Cultural district.

- This sparks new economic activity which helps fill any gaps and co-exists with traditional, migrant and new economic enterprises. Public spaces then become the stage for a wide range of organised and impromptu social events including social gatherings, sporting activities and cultural performances.

- As the area becomes more livable, it attracts a new wave of Malaysian residents who are attracted by the diversity and dynamism of the environment and the communities who occupy it. Ultimately, the KL Creative and Cultural District evolves into an iconic attraction within Greater KL.

In view of these four possible future scenarios, the KLCCD SMP established specific precinct-based recommendations to drive the KLCCD initiative.

Precinct-based recommendations

1. Revitalising the Civic Precinct
2. Enhancing the Traditional Retail Street Precinct
3. Reinstating the Heritage Triangle
4. Reconnecting Historical Education Institutions to Nature
5. Enhancing Petaling Street Precinct as a Place of Commerce

Figure 1.5: The KLCCD Boundary and its five Precincts

Historic Core Boundary

1. Civic Precinct
2. Historic Triangle Precinct (previously known Heritage Triangle)
3. Petaling Street Precinct
4. Education Precinct
5. Traditional Shopping Precinct

Source: Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District Strategic Master Plan (2019)

Precinct 1—The Civic Precinct currently houses many of Malaysia's most iconic cultural heritage assets, which include numerous colonial buildings and places of significance.

Figure 1.6: The Civic Precinct and locations of selected entities

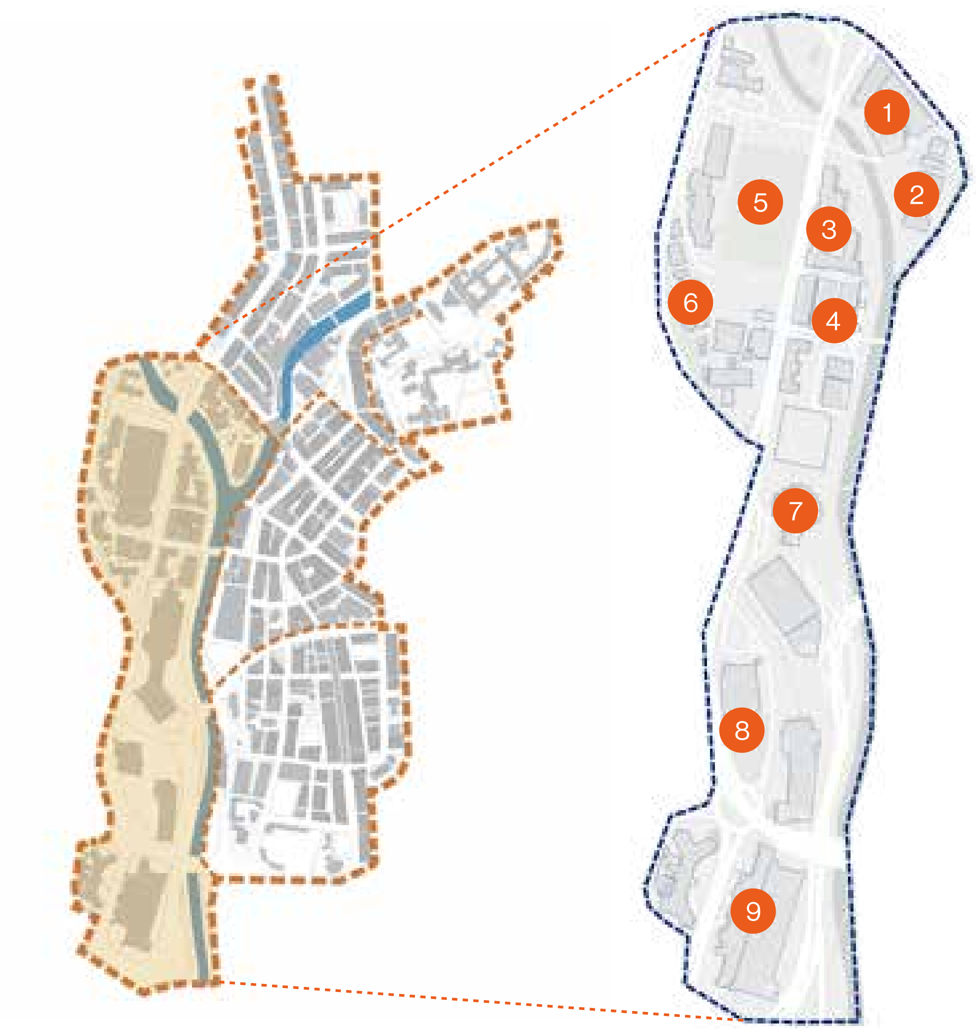


Figure 1.7: Images of selected entities in the Civic Precinct

1 Old Supreme Court Building

2 Masjid Jamek

3 Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad

4 Majlis Peguam

5 Padang Dataran Merdeka

6 Perpustakaan Kuala Lumpur

7 Dayabumi Complex Building

8 Taman Megalith Petronas

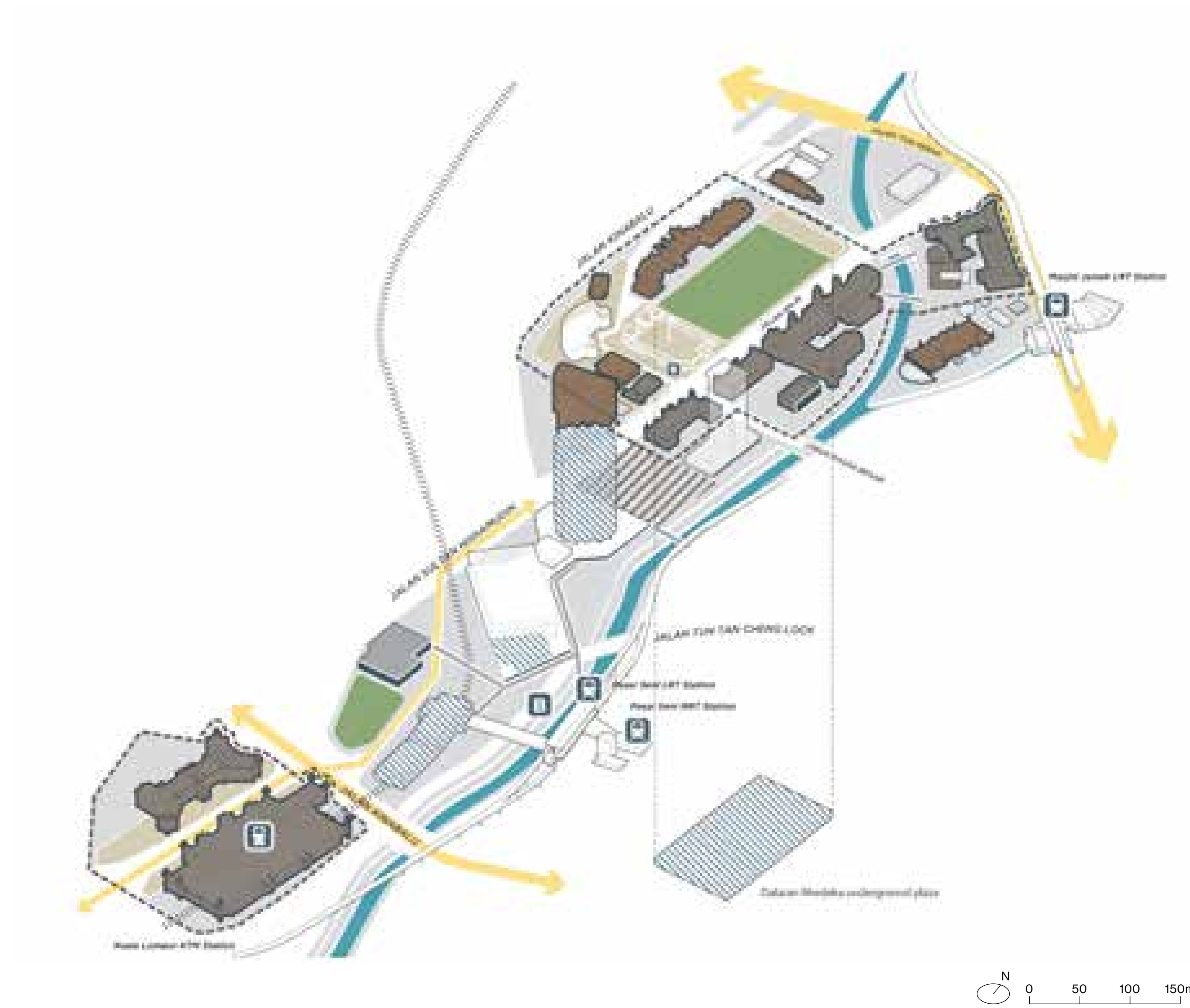
9 KL Old Railway Station

Recommendations for ‘Revitalising The Civic Precinct’ included leveraging the wealth of institutional assets in the area, such as the Old Court House, and the Old KL Railway Station

1. Dataran Merdeka Revitalisation
2. Conservation and Adaptive Re-use of Old Court House
3. Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad
4. Taman Megalith Petronas
5. Revitalisation of the Dayabumi Precinct
6. Old KL Railway Station
7. Masjid Jamek

Figure 1.8: Aerial view of the Civic Precinct, 2018

Figure 1.9: Potential interventions in the Civic Precinct



Potential Interventions

Heritage Buildings

- JWN listed & DBKL Category 1&2
- Priority conservation projects
- Infill developments to consider
- Improvement of existing public green spaces
- Improvement of public plazas
- Improvement of streetscapes
- Enhanced frontage interfaces
- Specific block subject to detailed planning
- Potential for adaptive reuse

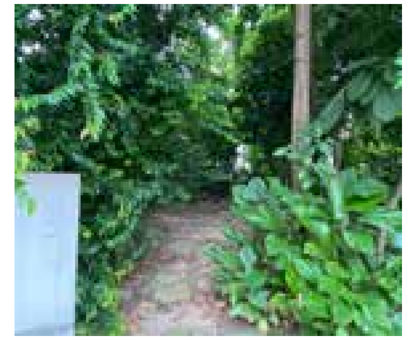
Precinct 2—The Traditional Shopping Street Precinct has a rich history of having one of the highest concentration of fashion, textile, and clothing entities in the area

Figure 1.10: The Traditional Shopping Street Precinct and locations of selected entities

Figure 1.11: Images of selected entities in the Traditional Shopping Street Precinct

1 Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman

2 Laman Tun Perak



3 Jalan Masjid India 'Gold hub'

4 Medan Bunus

5 Malayan & Selangor Mansion

6 Masjid India

7 Wisma Yakin

8 Jalan Melayu

9 Masjid Jamek Station

Recommendations for ‘Enhancing The Traditional Shopping Street Precinct’ included an area improvement plan focused on effective intervention and adaptive reuse of physical assets.

1. Jalan TAR BIDs
2. Masjid India Precinct Improvement Plan
3. Malayan and Selangor Mansion Improvements
4. Pocket Park Installations
5. Repurposing B-Grade Office Complexes
6. Old KL Railway Station
7. Jalan Bunus Area Improvement

Figure 1.12: Aerial view of the Traditional Shopping Street Precinct, 2018

Figure 1.13: Potential interventions in the Traditional Shopping Street Precinct

Potential Interventions

Heritage Buildings

- JWN listed & DBKL Category 1&2
- DBKL Category 3
- Priority conservation projects
- Infill developments to consider
- Improvement of laneways
- Improvement of residential buildings
- Improvement of streetscapes
- Enhanced frontage interfaces
- Reorganisation of street market's content
- Reorganisation of street vendors and bazaars
- Potential for adaptive reuse
- River of Life public realm improvement

Precinct 3—The Heritage Triangle Precinct, as the oldest area in Kuala Lumpur, has most of its historical street layout and heritage buildings intact.

Figure 1.14: The Heritage Triangle Precinct and locations of selected entities

Figure 1.15: Images of selected entities in the Heritage Triangle

1 Lebuh Ampang Shophouses

2 High Street Studios Rocket Park

3 SEGi College KL

4 Jalan Benteng

5 Medan Pasar

6 Jalan Tan Siew Sin

7 Segitiga Bersejarah

8 Pasar Seni

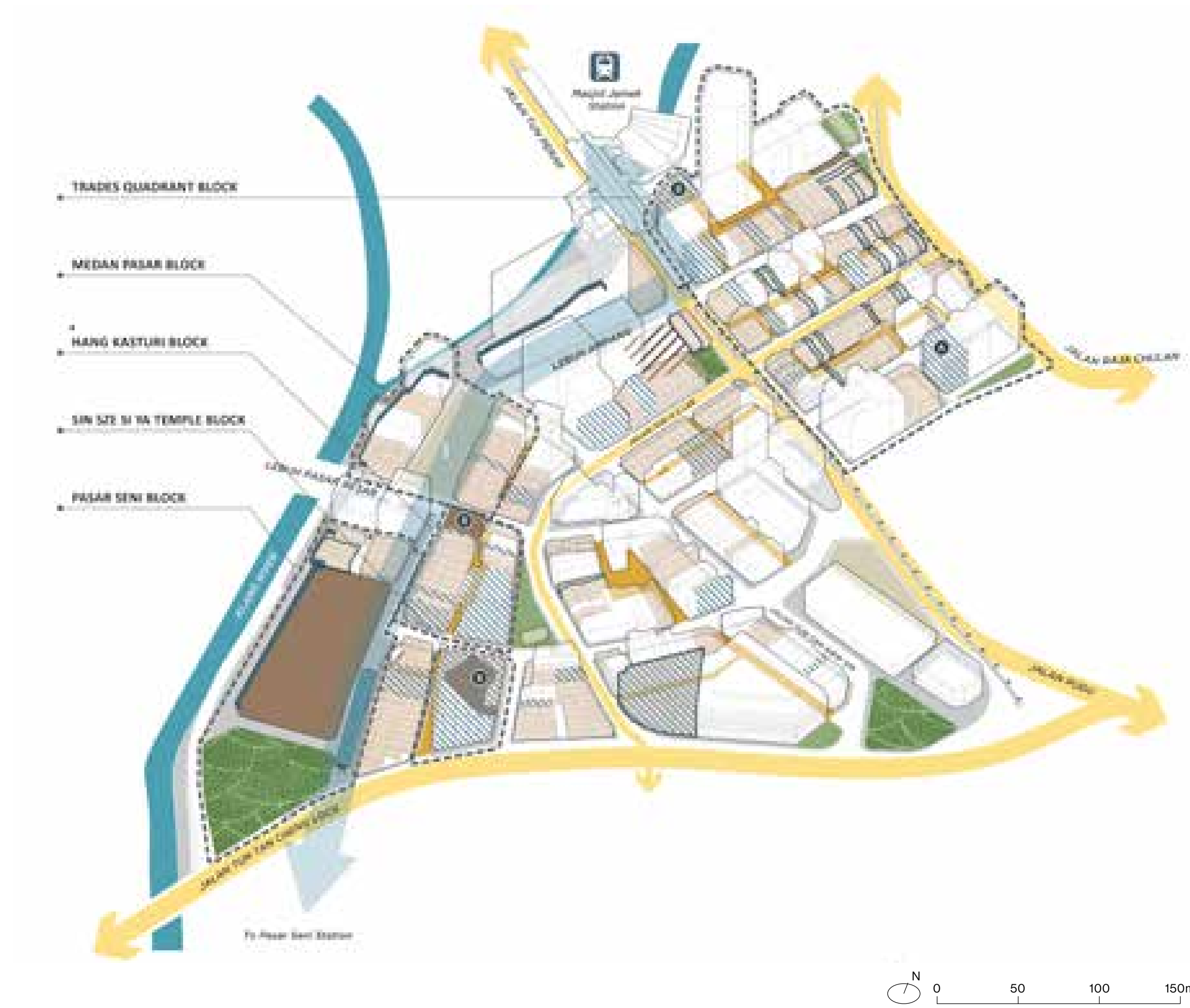
9 Kota Raya Shopping Complex

Recommendations for 'Reinstating The Heritage Triangle Precinct' included laneway improvements, building conservation interventions and establishing a station-to-station thoroughfare.

1. Dataran Merdeka Revitalisation
2. Conservation and Adaptive Re-use of Old Court House
3. Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad
4. Taman Megalith Petronas
5. Revitalisation of the Dayabumi Precinct
6. Old KL Railway Station
7. Masjid Jamek

Figure 1.16: Aerial view of the Heritage Triangle Precinct, 2018

Figure 1.17: Potential interventions in the Heritage Triangle Precinct



Potential Interventions

Heritage Buildings

- JWN listed & DBKL Category 1&2
- DBKL Category 3
- Priority conservation projects
- Improvement of streetscapes
- Improvement of laneways
- Improvement of existing plazas
- Improvement of existing pocket parks
- Underutilised spaces potential for pocket parks
- Enhanced frontage interfaces
- Reorganisation of street market's content
- Specific block subject to detailed planning
- Main pedestrian route between stations
- Potential for adaptive reuse
- A Micro-housing
- B New content

Precinct 4—The Education Precinct is home to heritage school sites such as St. John's Institution, St. John's International and Convent Bukit Nanas.

Figure 1.18: The Education Precinct and locations of selected entitiest

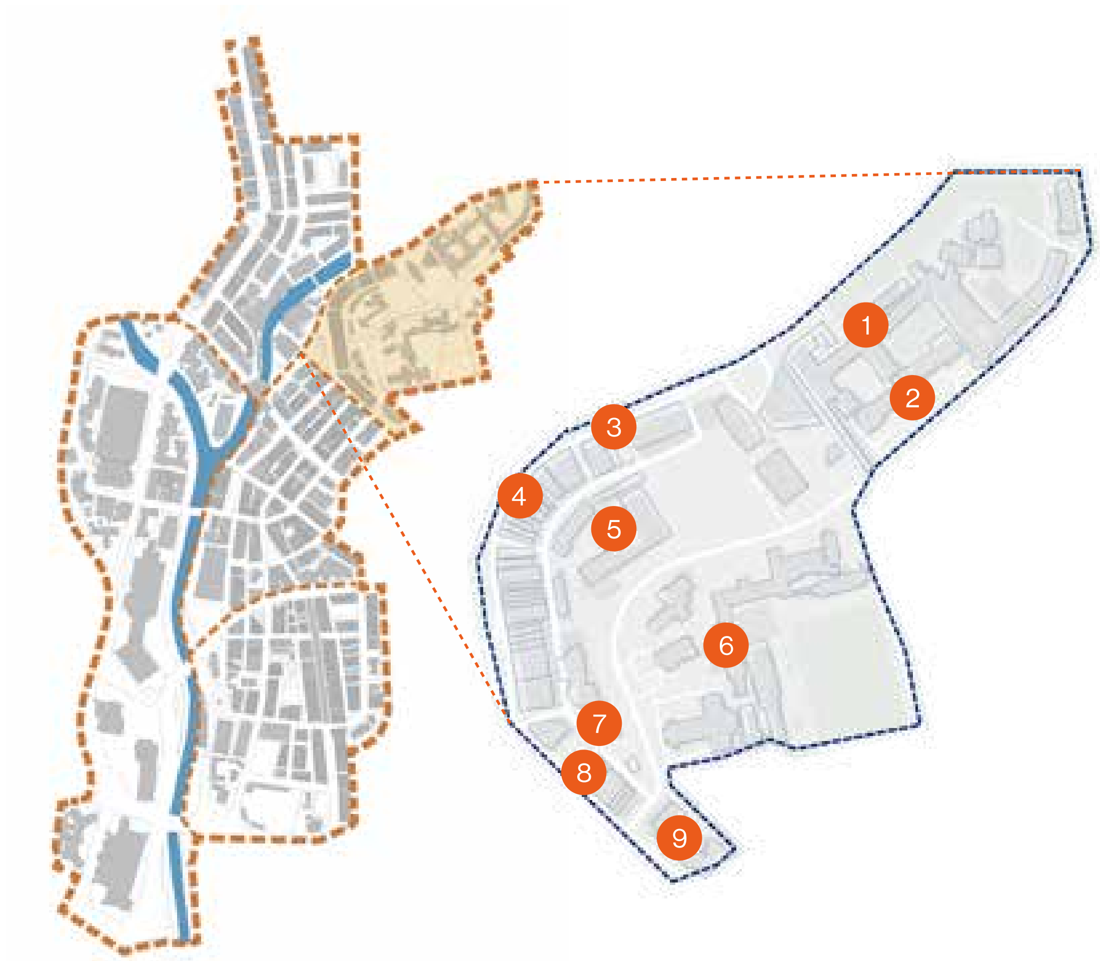
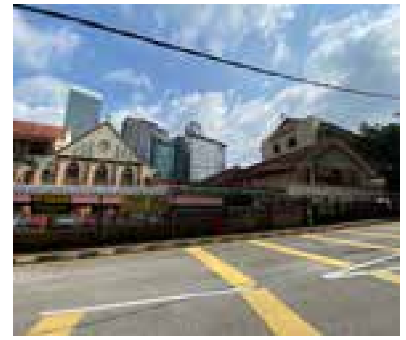


Figure 1.19: Images of selected entities in the Education Precinct

1 SMK Convent Bukit Nanas



2 Bukit Nanas Southern Gate

3 Jalan Ampang Shophouses

4 Embassy of Nepal

5 Sekolah Kebangsaan St. John

6 St. John's Institution

7 The Godown Arts Centre

8 Kolej KAGC

9 Muzium Telekom

Recommendations for ‘Reconnecting Historical Education Institutions to Nature’ included the conservation of cultural educational institutions and improving connectivity to Bukit Nanas.

1. Conservation of Education Institutions
2. Connections to Bukit Nanas
3. Integration of Muzium Telekom
4. Jalan Ampang Upgrade

Figure 1.20: Aerial view of the Education Precinct, 2018

Figure 1.21: Potential interventions in the Education Precinct

Potential Interventions

Heritage Buildings
- JWN listed & DBKL Category 1&2
- DBKL Category 3
- Priority conservation projects
- Infill developments to consider
- Improvement of streetscapes
- Improvement of existing pocket parks
- Underutilised spaces potential for pocket parks
- Potential for adaptive reuse
- A Micro-housing
- B New content

Precinct 5—The Petaling Street Precinct remains as one of the most active areas from morning till night, due to the presence of street stalls, a wet market and night market.

Figure 1.22: The Petaling Street Precinct and locations of selected entities

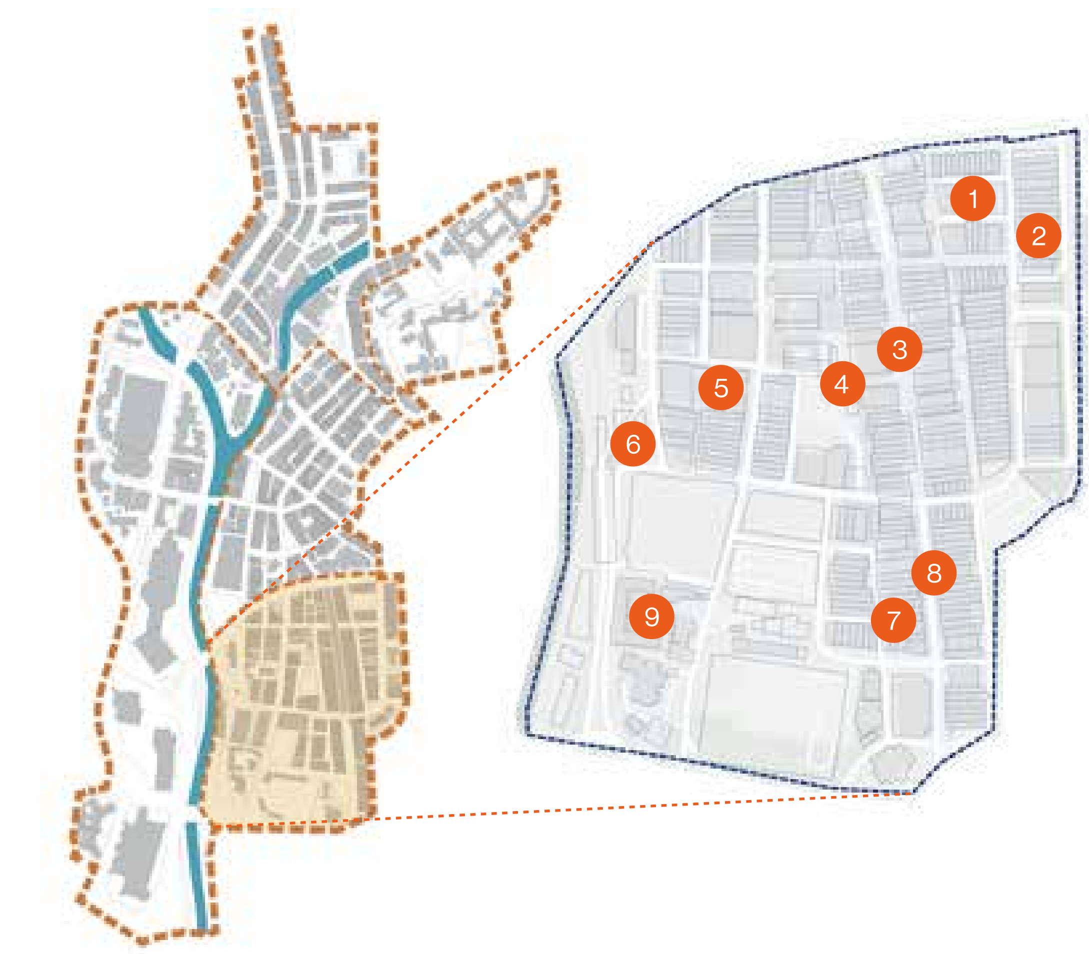
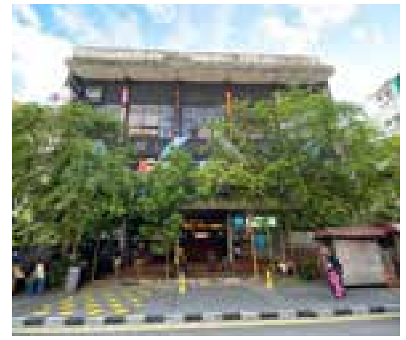


Figure 1.23: Images of selected entities in the Petaling Street Precinct

1 REX KL



2 Lai Foong Lala Noodles

3 Petaling Street

4 Madras Lane

5 Sri Maha Mariamman Temple

6 Pasar Seni Bus Hub

7 Kwai Chai Hong

8 Jalan Petaling Shophouses

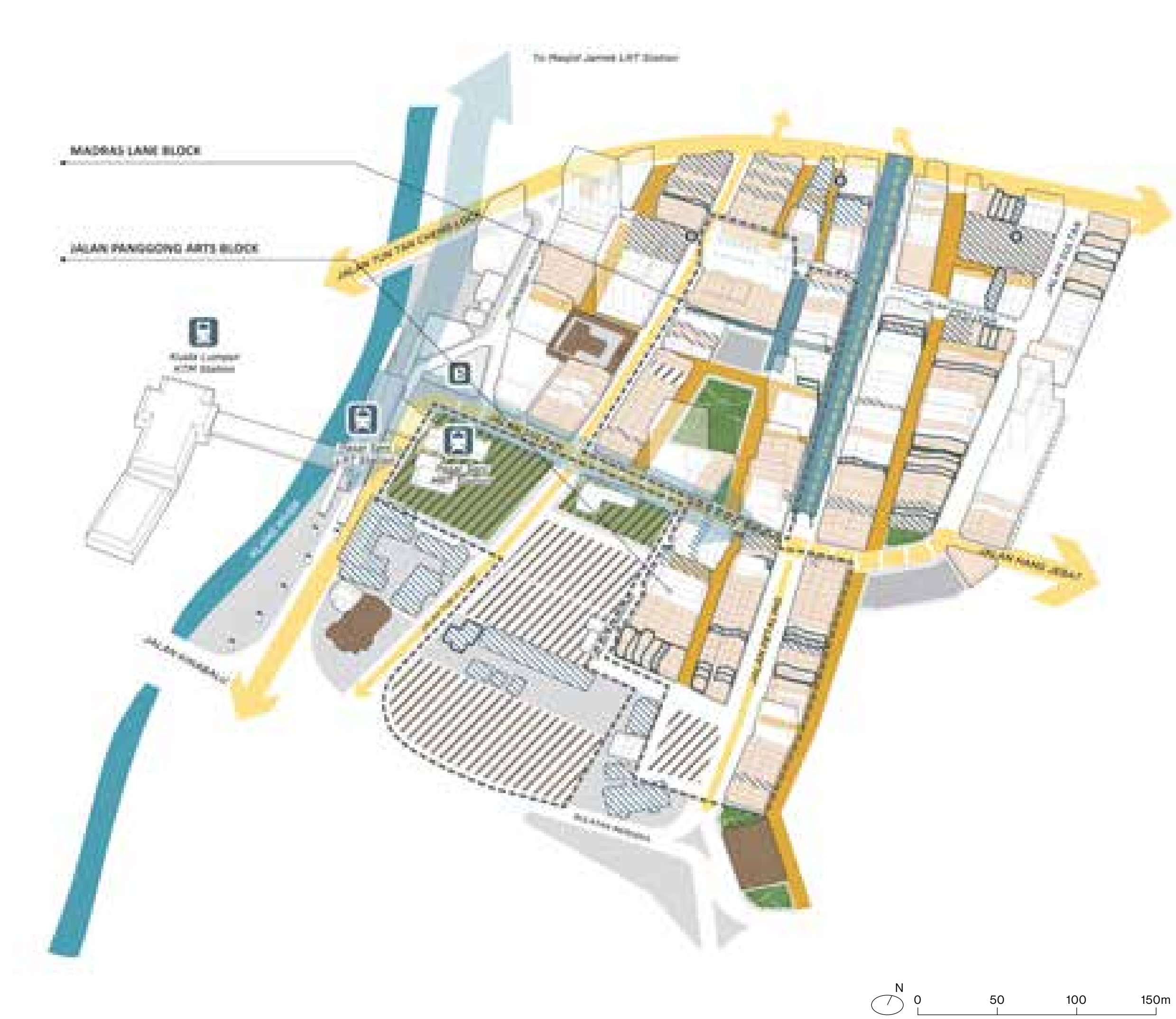
9 KL Traffic Police Station

Recommendations for ‘Enhancing Petaling Street Precinct as a Place Of Commerce’ included strategic infill developments, redevelopment opportunities and the reorganisation of Petaling Street.

1. Reorganising the Petaling Street Night Market
2. Madras Lane Area Improvement
3. Jalan Panggong Arts Hub
4. Laneway Improvement
5. Infill Development
6. Redevelopment of Former Police Station Site

Figure 1.24: Aerial view of the Petaling Street Precinct, 2018

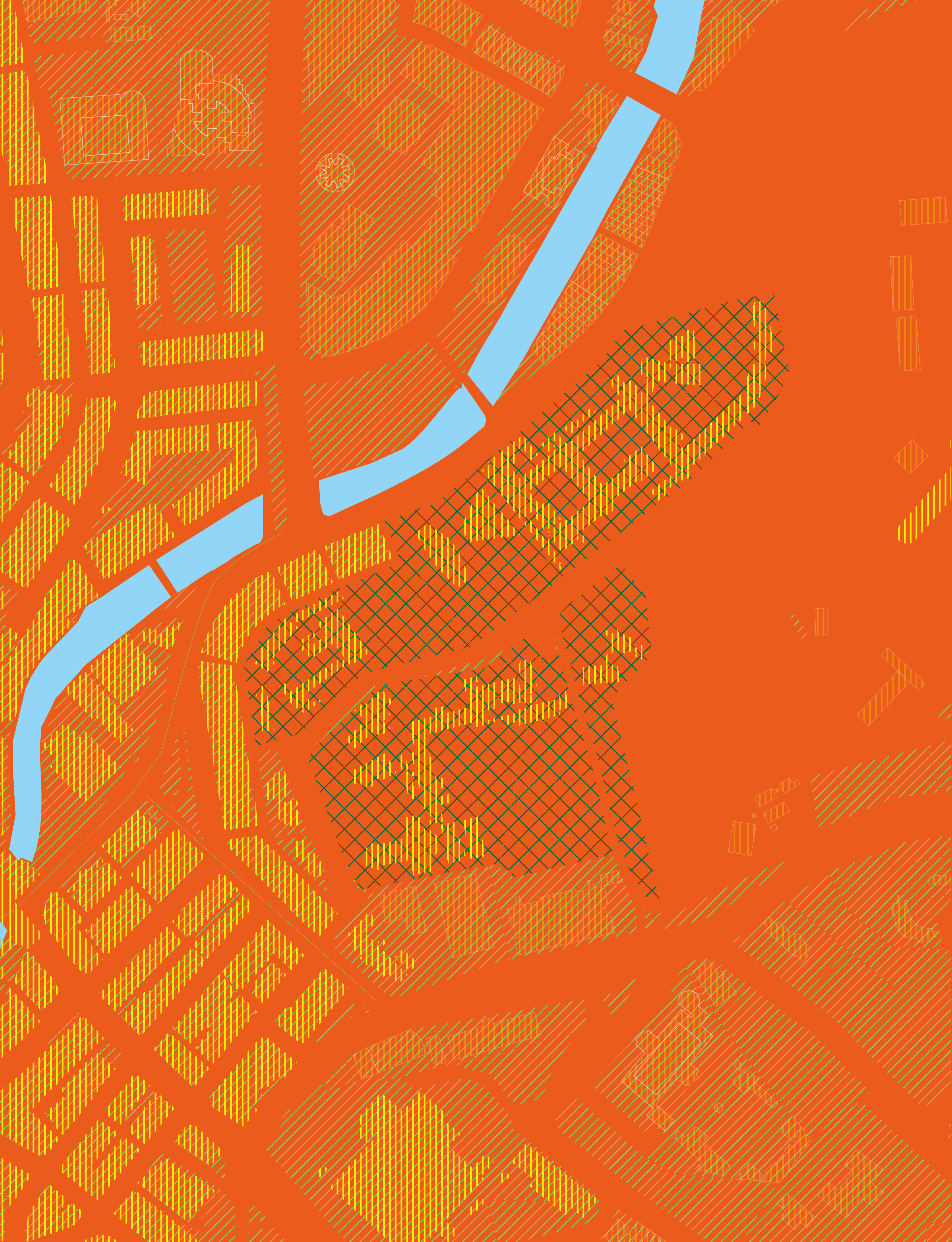
Figure 1.25: Potential interventions in the Petaling Street Precinct



Potential Interventions

Heritage Buildings

- JWN listed & DBKL Category 1&2
- DBKL Category 3
- Priority conservation projects
- Infill developments to consider
- Improvement of streetscapes
- Recent street improvement by DBKL
- Improvement of laneways
- Underutilised spaces potential for pocket parks
- Reorganisation of street market's content
- Reorganisation of street vendors/hawkers
- Specific block subject to detailed planning
- Main pedestrian route between stations
- Potential for adaptive reuse
- A Micro-housing
- B New content



Current Scenario: A City in Flux

Chapter 2

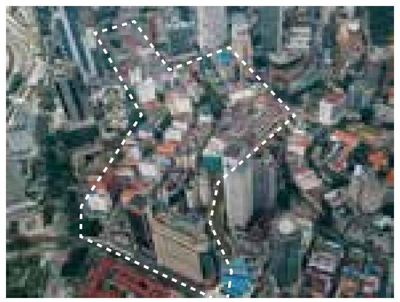
The KLCCD Core Zone is made up of multiple mini centralities, with each precinct having its unique history and identity, requiring place-based approaches and interventions.

Table 2.1: LUCSA description and number of entities for each Precinct

Civic Precinct

LUCSA description	Entity no.
Solicitors/Lawyers Office	11
Vacant entities	9
Government Office—Federal	4
Electricity	3
Restaurant—Other	3
Restaurant—Malay	3
Mosque	3

Traditional Shopping Street Precinct



LUCSA description	Entity no.
Residential entities	512
Vacant entities	110
Clothes & Fashion Accessories—Female	82
Fabrics & Textiles	47
Clothes & Fabrics—Cultural	33
Clothes & Fashion Accessories—Mixed Gender Modern	30
Solicitors/Lawyers Office	28
Religious/Cultural Product—Muslim	17
Restaurant—Malay	17

Heritage Triangle Precinct

LUCSA description	Entity no.
Residential/Worker Accommodation	164
Vacant entities	121
Mini-Mart/Convenience Store—Modern	39
Bags and Accessories	33
Handicraft, Artefacts and Souvenirs	31
Restaurant/Bar—Fusion/Mixed	29
Clothes & Fabrics—Cultural	21

Table 2.1: cont'd

Education Precinct

LUCSA description	Entity no.
Vacant entities	21
Residential entities	14
Agricultural Management	5
Primary School	4
Grocery/Convenience Store	3
Association/Society	3
High (Secondary) School	3
Business Management and Support Services	3

Petaling Street Precinct

LUCSA description	Entity no.
Vacant entities	128
Residential entities	125
Restaurant—Chinese	29
Hotel—Budget/Guest House	19
Restaurant—Western	12
Restaurant/Bar—Fusion/Mixed	12
Florist/Gift Shop	10
Bags and Accessories	10

Overall, according to the SMP's scenarios, the Civic Precinct has seen frequent efforts to activate the space and attract more people back into the area. However, footfall continues to be on a downward trend.

Figure 2.1: The Civic Precinct

Current Precinct Highlights

Economic Activity

- In 2023, there were **67 entities identified** within the area, down from 83 in 2015, which is incidentally the lowest number of entities among all five precincts. The top three entities are **solicitors/lawyer offices** (11), vacant entities (8) and federal government offices (4). This area also registered the **lowest density of entities** that were operating both during the day and night. Meanwhile, the **government offices** category experienced the highest **decline of 16 entities**.
- It is Note:worthy that there are **no hotels or tourism accommodation** identified within the area and only one new entity had been established between 2015 and 2023.

Social

- This precinct stood out as it emerged as the only one with no residential entities identified both in 2015 and 2023.

Spaces and buildings

- This precinct also has the **least number of buildings** among the five precincts, with only 36 buildings with four shophouses. In 2023, net vacancy of floorspace rose to **6,781m²** from 2015, bringing the total estimated vacant floorspace to **14,343m²**. **Bangunan Mahkamah Tinggi** which is currently vacant accounts for the highest increase in vacant floorspace at 6,571m², followed by Bangunan Jabatan Penerangan.
- Out of the **42 buildings** in the area, **34** have minor signs of deterioration. Another six buildings were observed as derelict, five of which fall under JWN's National Heritage classification.
- The most common building type in the area are **institutional buildings**, which total **12**, or 31% of all floorspace in the area.

Creative and Cultural

- The largest increase in entities was recorded in the **restaurant/bar—food and beverage, at +10 entities** category with an addition of 10 entities. However, there are **no remaining traditional trades identified** in the area.

The Traditional Shopping Street Precinct showed a stabilisation in past trends (as described in Scenario 1) related to vacancies and residences, with pockets of descent (as described in Scenario 2) and rejuvenation (Scenario 4).

Figure 2.2: The Traditional Shopping Street Precinct

Current Precinct Highlights

Economic Activity

- In 2023, a total of **1,205 entities were identified** within the area, representing a decrease of 717 entities from 1,922 in 2015. Despite this decline, this precinct has the highest number of entities among the five precincts.
- The top four entity categories are **residential entities (512)**, **vacant entities (110)**, female clothes & fashion accessories (82) and jewelers/goldsmiths/silversmiths (47). The largest decrease in entities was seen in the **cultural clothes and fabrics** segment, down **346 entities** while the largest increase was observed in the **female clothes and fashion accessories** sector, which grew by **71 entities**.

Social

- With 512 residential entities, this precinct has the **highest number of residential properties** among the five, accounting for 42% of all entities in the area.

Spaces and buildings

- **Eighty three percent of the buildings** in the area were identified as shophouses. Of this, more than half the number of all buildings in the area are low-rise shop-houses (three to five storeys) making up 13% of the total floorspace.
- On the other hand, there were 16 high-rise buildings (above 10 storeys) which accounted for **64% of the total floorspace** in the precinct.
- Meanwhile, the total estimated vacancy in the area is **38,400m²**, with 185 Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman and Wisma Melayu leading in vacancy levels. There was a **net decrease of 57,297m²** vacant floorspace, with Wisma Yakin, 185 Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman and 126 Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman contributing towards the largest increase in vacancy, totalling **12,735m²**.
- Out of the 242 buildings in the precinct, 214 buildings show signs of minor deterioration, with **10 buildings categorised as derelict**.

Creative and Cultural

- The **restaurant/bar—food and beverage** sector saw the addition of 13 new Malay restaurants. However, there were nine fewer Indian Muslim restaurants.
- As for the **traditional trades** in the area, **the numbers dropped to 12** in 2023 from 15 in 2019.

With a similar building typology, the Heritage Triangle Precinct is also moving towards the stabilisation of its past trends (Scenario 1), with mixed pockets of descent (Scenario 2) and rejuvenation (Scenario 4) identified.

Figure 2.3: The Heritage Triangle Precinct

Current Precinct Highlights

Economic Activity

- In 2023, 945 entities were identified in the precinct, a **decline of 349 entities** from 1,294 in 2015, making it the precinct with the second-highest number of entities. The top four categories include **worker accommodation (164)**, **vacant entities (121)**, minimarts/convenience stores (39), bags and accessories (33). The largest decrease in entities was observed in the **mixed gender modern clothes and fashion accessories** category, which saw a **reduction of 54 entities**. Conversely, the largest increase was in residential entities which grew by 164 entities.
- In terms of **hotels and tourism accommodation**, there were **25 fewer hotels** in 2023, down from 48 in 2015, with the largest reduction coming from the three- to five -star hotels (less than 70 rooms) (minus nine), budget guest houses (minus seven) and hostels (minus six). Over the past five years, a total **171 new entities** have opened in the area, with 49 of them being restaurants and bars focused on food and beverage.

Social

- The number of **residential entities rose by 113**, bringing the total to 164, up from 51 in 2015.

Spaces and buildings

- The precinct also has the **second largest number of buildings** among all five precincts, totalling 326 buildings. **90% of these buildings are shophouses (295)**, with 153 traditional shophouses (one to two storeys). In fact, shophouses represent **61% of the total building floorspace** in the area.
- The total estimated vacancy in the area is **149,420m²**, up by 70,524m² in 2019. Of this, the **former Menara HSBC, One Oriental Place and Wisma Hamzah Kwong Hing** were the key contributors to the vacancy making up 87,821m² space.
- Out of the 326 buildings in the precinct, 284 have minor deteriorating elements while **17 buildings were considered derelict**.

Creative and Cultural

- There were an **additional 13 restaurant/bar—food and beverage entities**, with the highest increase of 22 entities seen in the fusion/mixed restaurant, but the number of Malay restaurants declined by 20.
- The number of **traditional trades** in the area came in at **24** from 31 in 2019.

The Education Precinct is observed to be heading towards stabilisation of its past trends (Scenario 1) and has seen little rejuvenation initiatives. Pockets of descent (Scenario 2) are also spotted.

Figure 2.4: The Education Precinct

Current Precinct Highlights

Economic Activity

- A total of **111 entities** had been identified in 2023, a significant decrease from 186 in 2015. The top three categories of entities include **vacant entities (21)**, residential entities (14) and agricultural management firms (five). The largest decrease was seen in **residential entities (16)** followed by solicitors' and lawyers' offices (15). Meanwhile, the number of **vacant entities rose by 21.**
- The area has the **second-lowest number of entities** among all five precincts, with 112 entities in total. It also has the **second-lowest density of entities** operating either during day or at night.
- The number of **hotel and tourism accommodation declined to two** in 2023 from 3 in 2015 while a total of eight new entities—four of which were department or general stores—opened over the span of five years.

Social

- The area saw the number of **residential entities decline to 14** in 2023 from 30 in 2015.

Spaces and buildings

- This precinct has the **second-least number of buildings** among all five precincts, with only 51 buildings in total. **Shophouses make-up 61% of the buildings in the area,** a majority of which are low-rise shophouses (three to five storeys), accounting for 14 of the buildings. This was followed by traditional shophouses (one to two storeys) with 10 buildings.
- Even though shophouses represent a huge portion of the building count, they contribute only 14% towards the total building floorspace. In comparison, **institutional buildings account for 68%** of all building floorspace.
- The total estimated vacancy in the area stands at **10,793m²**, with the largest vacant space located at 1,3,35 and 51 Jalan Ampang. **No 1 and 3 Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman** alone contributed 4,600m² to the total vacancy. **Wisma Char Yong** saw the largest decrease in vacant floorspace at 11,366 sq m. Overall, there was a net decrease of 5,482m² in estimated vacant floorspace.

Creative and Cultural

- The **restaurant/bar—food and beverage** category, saw a **decline of 10 entities**, of which seven were Chinese restaurants. It is worth noting that there is **no traditional trade remaining** in the area.

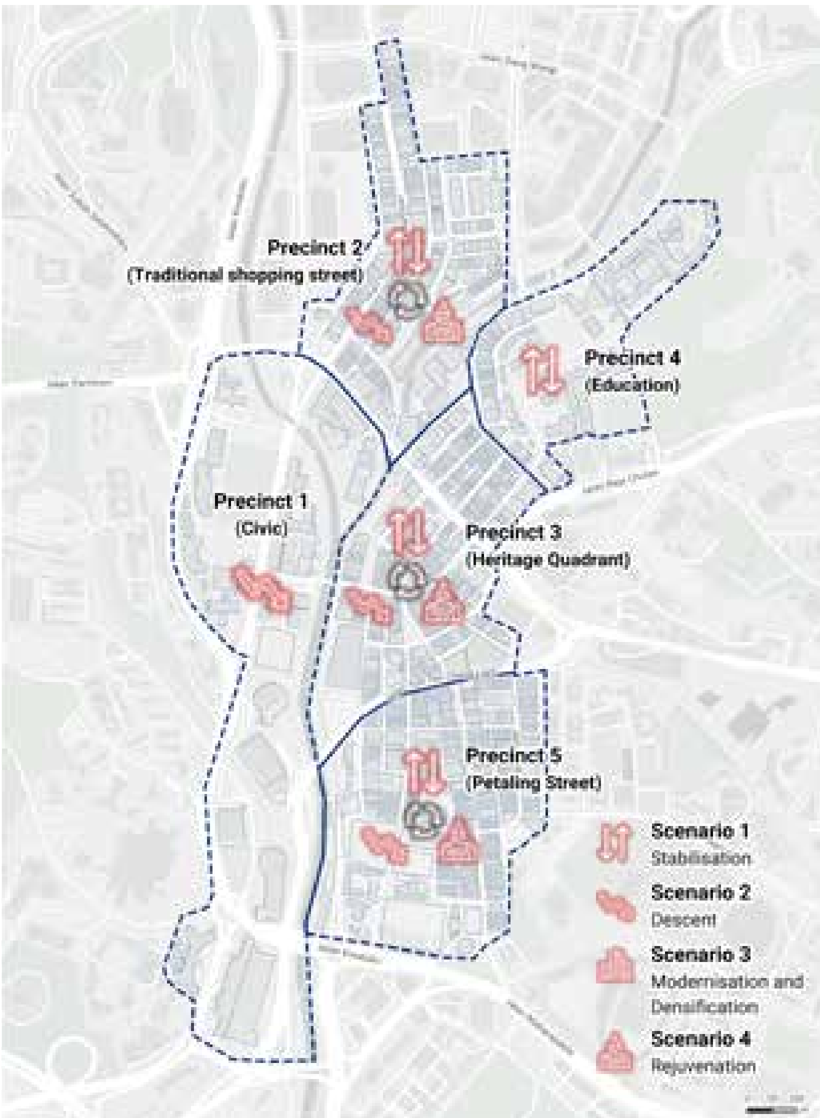
At the Petaling Street Precinct, a stabilisation of past trends (Scenario 1) relating to vacancies and residences was Note:d, with mixed pockets of descent (Scenario 2) and rejuvenation efforts (Scenario 4).

Figure 2.5: The Petaling Street Precinct

	Current Precinct Highlights
Economic Activity	• In 2023, there were **689 entities** identified in the area, down from 977 entities recorded in 2015, making it the third highest number of entities among all five precincts. The top four entity categories include **residential entities (128)**, **vacant entities (125)**, Chinese restaurants (29) and budget/guest house hotels (19). The largest decline in entities was observed in **general storage**, which **dropped by 39** while the most notable jump came from **residential entities, growing by 66**. • The area also saw the **hotel and tourism accommodation** entity numbers, **declining to 47** in 2023 from 86 in 2015. Over a five-year period, **104 new entities** opened, of which 48 are categorised as restaurant/bar—food & beverage.
Social	• This precinct experienced a significant increase in residential entities in 2023 compared to 2015 **rising to 128 from 62.**
Spaces and buildings	• At 344 buildings in total, this area boasts the **largest number of buildings** among all precincts. A staggering **82% of these buildings are shophouses** and account for **81% of the total building floorspace** in the area. A total of 172 buildings of the total are traditional shophouses (one to two storeys) while low-rise shophouses (three to five storeys) accounted for 86 buildings. • Floorspace vacancy was an estimated **58,407m²** in 2023, up by 5,365m² in 2015. The largest vacant space came from **Wisma Hangsam** and **Hotel Mandarin Pacific Kuala Lumpur**. These two buildings contributed an estimated 24,739m² to the vacant space. • As for the condition of the 344 buildings, 236 are showing minor signs of deterioration and **21 buildings have been observed as derelict**.
Creative and Cultural	• The **restaurant/bar—food and beverage** category has, in the meantime, **rose by 40 entities**, with the highest increase seen in Western restaurants (10). However, Malay restaurants numbers shrunk by six. As for the **traditional trades**, they account for **38, down from 44** in 2015.

Overall, the KLCCD Core Zone is experiencing a divergence in trajectories of its precincts, with each heading towards a blend of potential future scenarios.

Figure 2.6: Current scenario of each Precincts in the KLCCD Core Zone



Current precinct scenario takeaways

Precinct 1—Civic Precinct
Despite regular space activation efforts to attract footfall in the area, it continues to face a downward trend. Six institutional buildings in the Dataran Merdeka Heritage Area have been considered derelict, five of which fall under JWN's National Heritage classification. Accordingly, substantial conservation efforts are required to restore these national heritage buildings.

Precinct 2—Traditional Shopping Street Precinct
The Traditional Shopping Street, which has the highest concentration of residential entities, showed a stabilisation of its past trends in vacancies and residential properties, with pockets of descent and rejuvenation efforts along Jalan TAR and Medan Bunus.

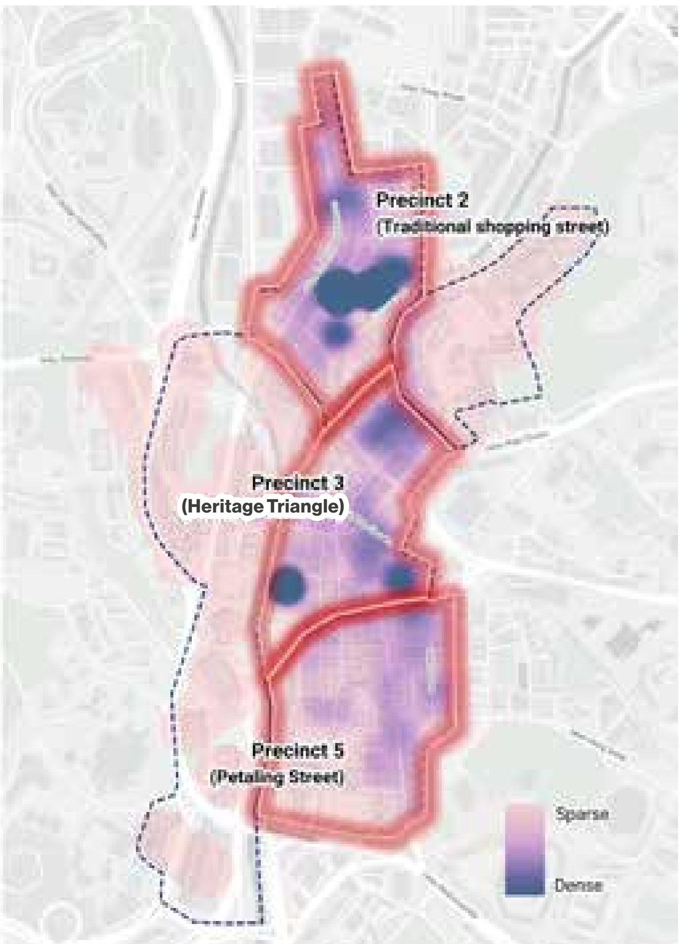
Precinct 3—Heritage Triangle Precinct
The Heritage Triangle, which shares a similar building typology with the Traditional Shopping Street Precinct, also showed a stabilisation of its past trends relating to vacancies and residences. There were pockets of both descent and rejuvenation spread throughout the precinct. This precinct leads in total estimated vacant floorspace, driven by three vacant high-rise buildings.

Precinct 4—Education Precinct
This precinct saw a recent initiative to rejuvenate an old derelict building into a creative and cultural activity space. The remainder of the precinct is experiencing a stablisation of its past trends relating to vacancies and activity. Pockets of descent are emerging, particularly along the shophouses on Jalan Ampang.

Precinct 5—Petaling Street Precinct
Much like the Traditional Shopping Stret and the Heritage Triangle Precincts, the Petaling Street Precinct is progressing towards stabilisation of past trends in vacancies and residences. While there are mixed areas of descent and rejuvenation, revitalisation efforts have gathered momentum in areas like Jalan Sultan, Jalan Petaling and Kwai Chai Hong.

The area is also experiencing the emergence of mini centralities, each with a distinct mix of entities and offerings aimed at different demographics.

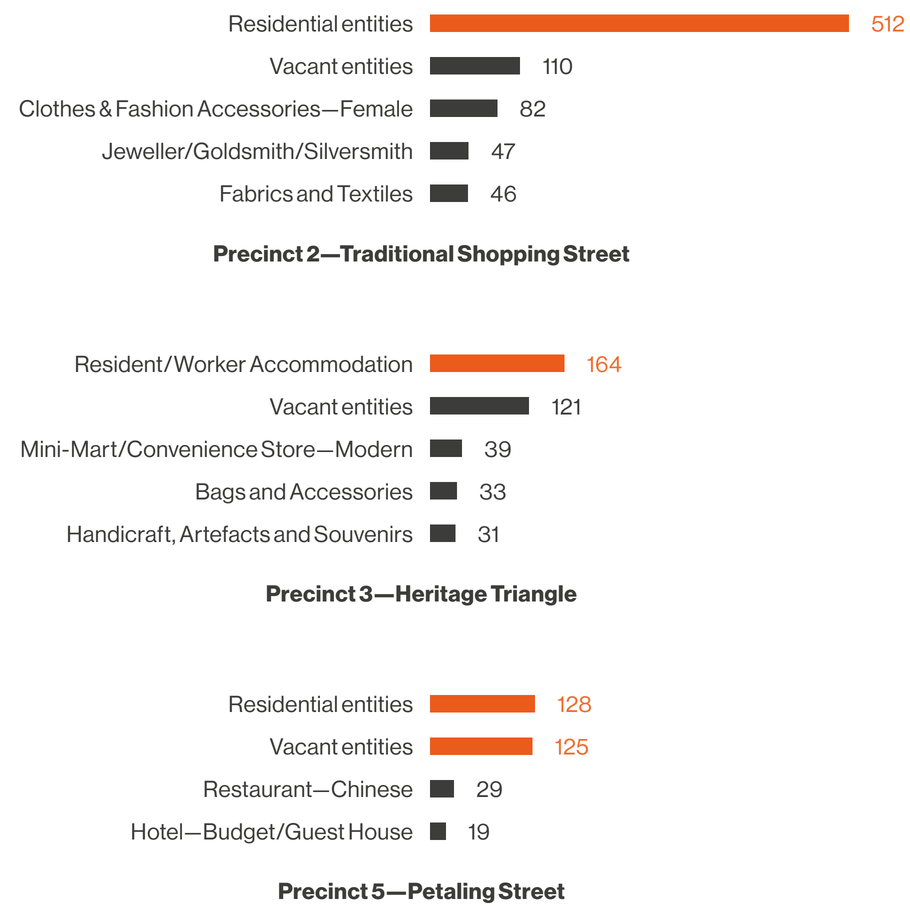
Figure 2.7: Density of activity of each Precinct in KLCCD Core Zone



New activity is re-clustering into concentrated areas

Figure 2.8: Example of entity in Precinct 2 (Butik Cosmic Wholesale Emporium), Precinct 3 (P.Risha Enterprise) and Precinct 5 (Restoran Nam Heong)

Figure 2.9: Top entities in Precinct 2, 3, and 5

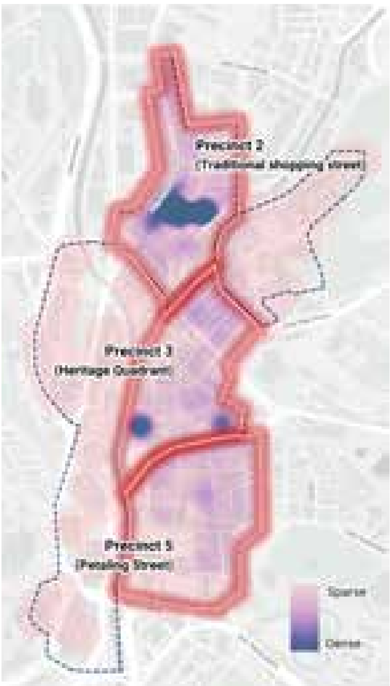


These new mini-centralities comprise of varying entity make-ups and identities, their offerings targeted to different socioeconomic classes and ethnicity groups

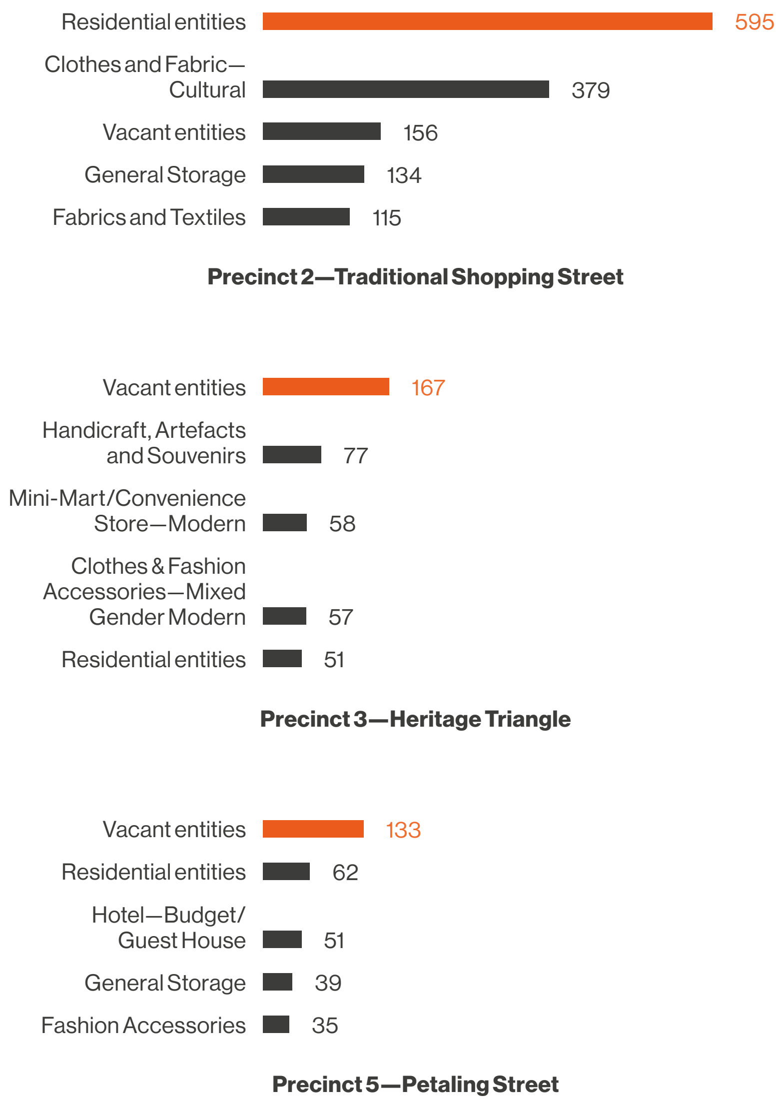
Note: Scenario positions on the map are purely illustrative to precinct-level and do not reflect the exact location of scenario taking place.

Business activity in 2023 is more spread out when compared to 2015, offering a significantly different mix of business entities.

Figure 2.10: Density of activity map and the list of top entities in Precinct 2, 3, and 5 in 2015

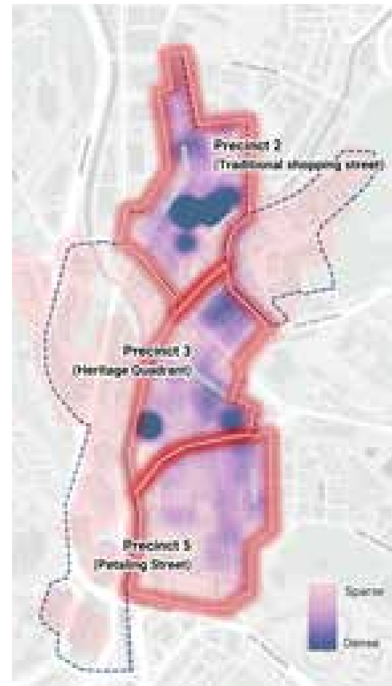


2015

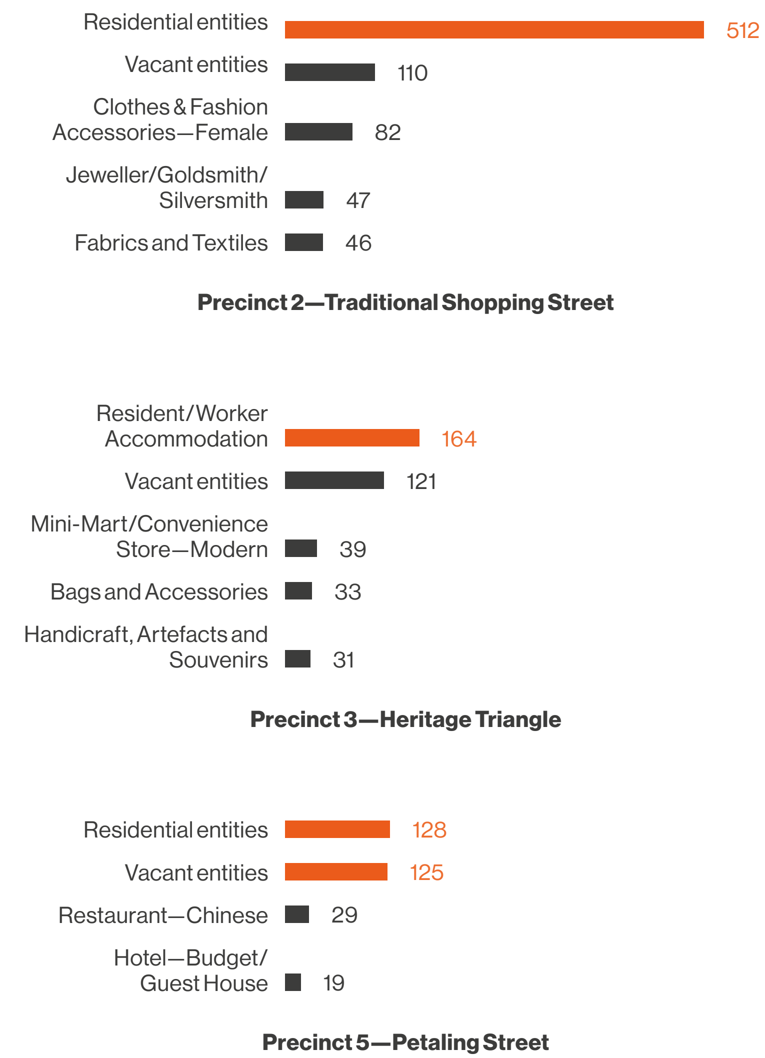


The top clusters of activity and demographic make-up in 2015 were fashion in the north and southeast, and law firms in the Masjid Jamek area.

Figure 2.11: Density of activity map and the list of top entities in Precinct 2, 3 and 5 in 2023



2023



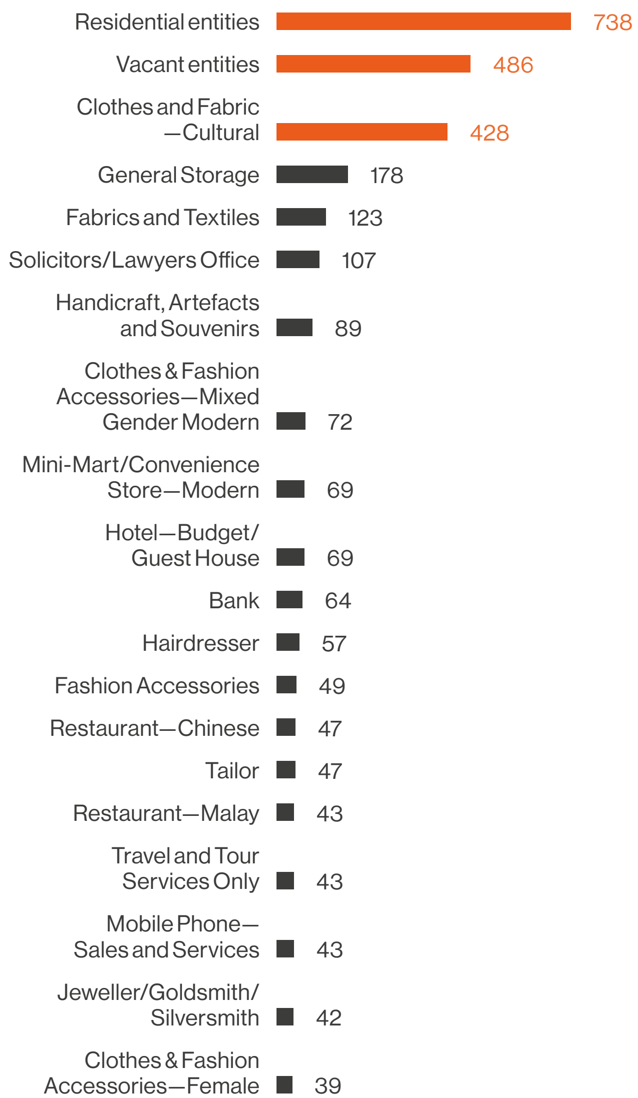
The top clusters of activity and demographic make-up in 2023 are fashion in the north, convenience stores near the confluence, and restaurants near the southeast

Residential and vacant entities continue to be the top two largest categories in the area. All other categories saw a significant reduction in entities in 2023 when compared to 2015.

Figure 2.12: Map of activity per building and the list of top 20 entities in the KLCCD Core Zone in 2015

2015

No. of activity
- 1
- 2–20
- 21–50
- 51–100
- 101–200
- 201–378



In 2015, only three buildings—Pasar Seni, Selangor Mansion, and Malayan Mansion accommodated over 201 entities

Figure 2.13: Map of activity per building and the list of top 20 entities in the KLCCD Core Zone in 2023

2023

No. of activity
- 1
- 2–20
- 21–50
- 51–100
- 101–200
- 201–378

Although the entity makeup has undergone significant changes, in 2023, the 3 core buildings that house over 201 entities remains to be Pasar Seni, Selangor Mansion, and Malayan Mansion

From a business perspective, the area saw 1,255 fewer entities, representing a 44% decline since 2015, with most of the reduction concentrated in a few key streets or large buildings.

Figure 2.14: Changes in overall business activity between 2015 and 2023

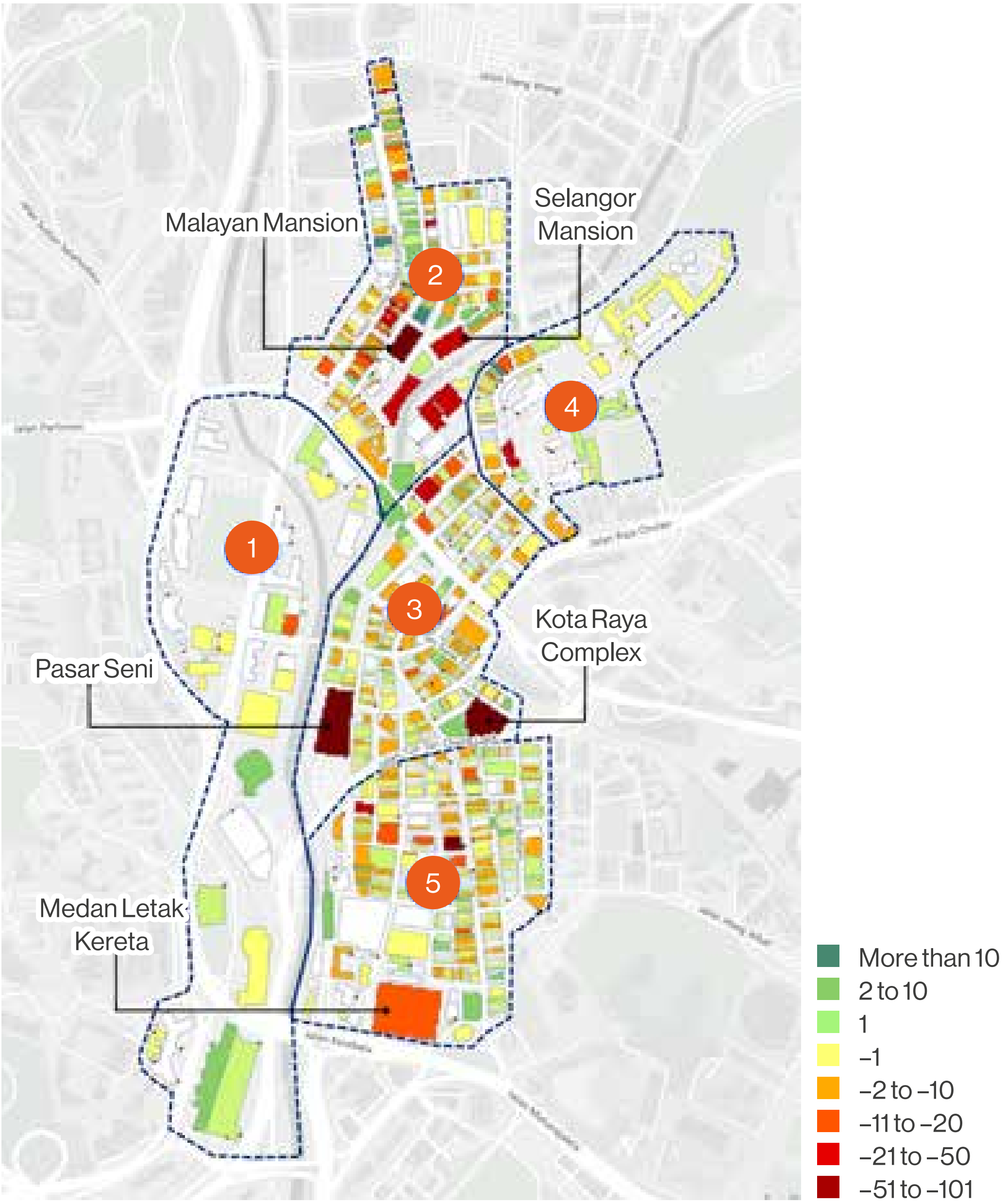
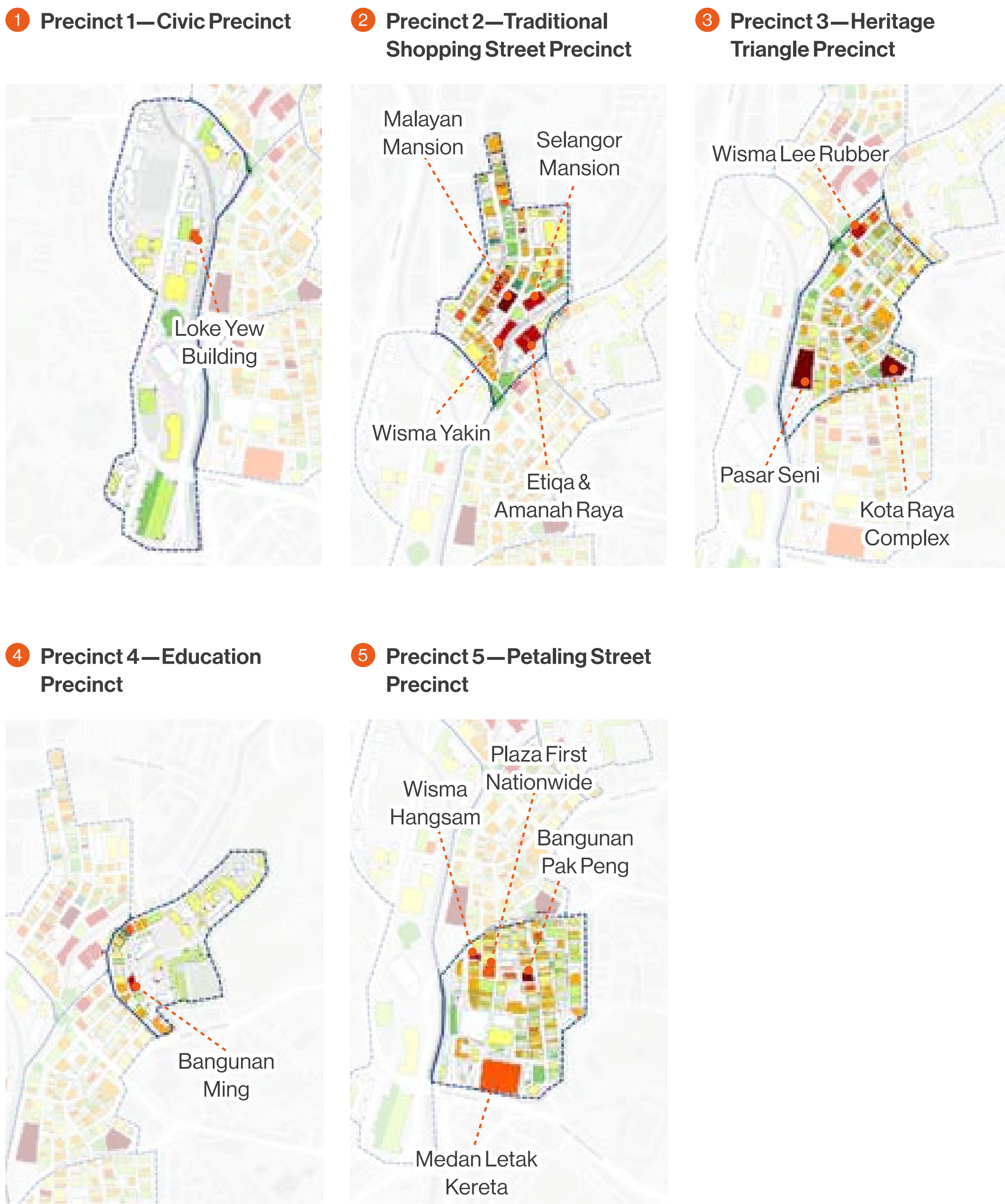
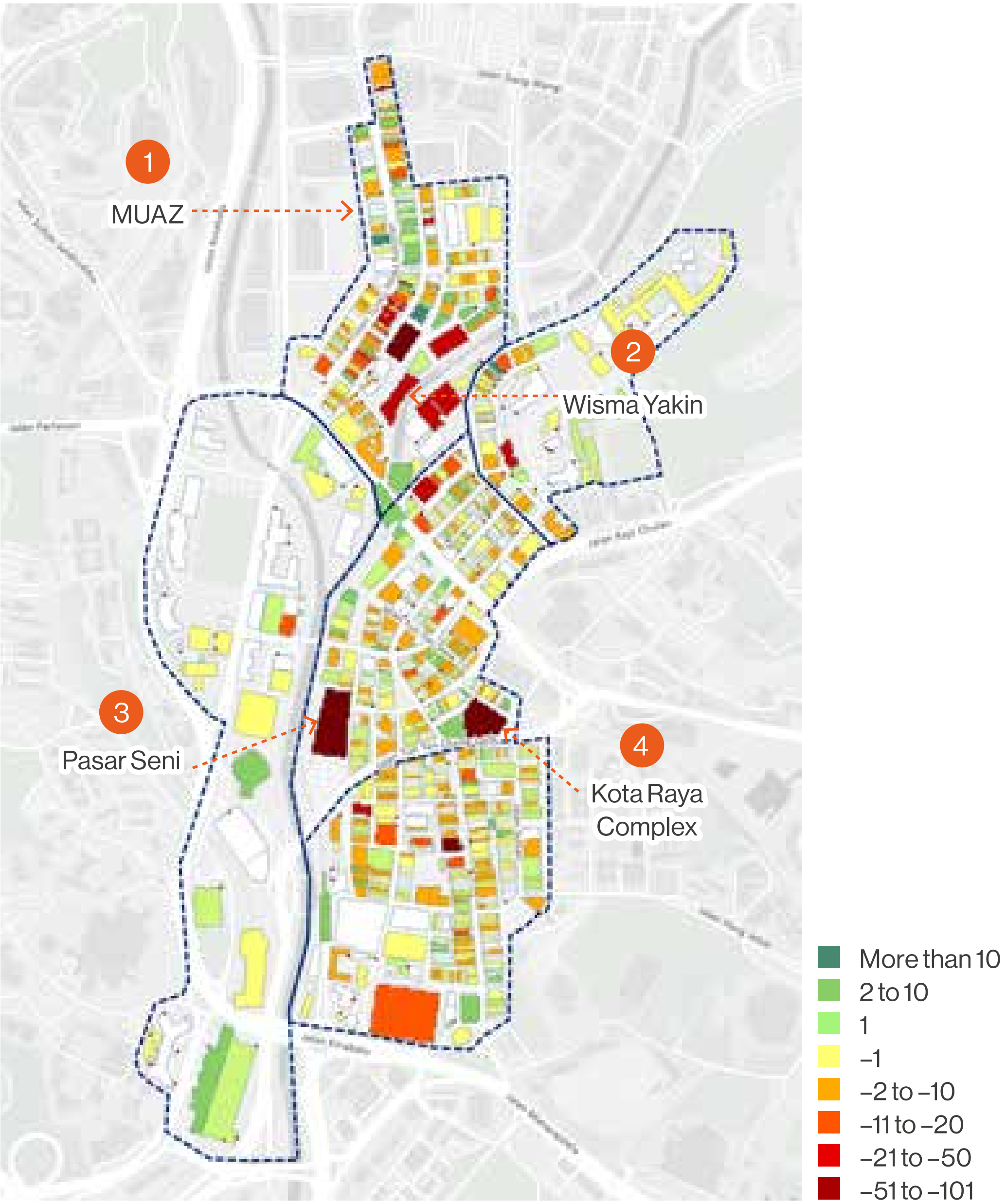


Figure 2.15: Changes in business activity by Precinct between 2015 and 2023



In some instances, the reduction in entities is a result of multiple businesses being merged into a single entity following a consolidation or an expansion. Examples include MUAZ Jalan TAR and Pasar Besar in Pasar Seni.

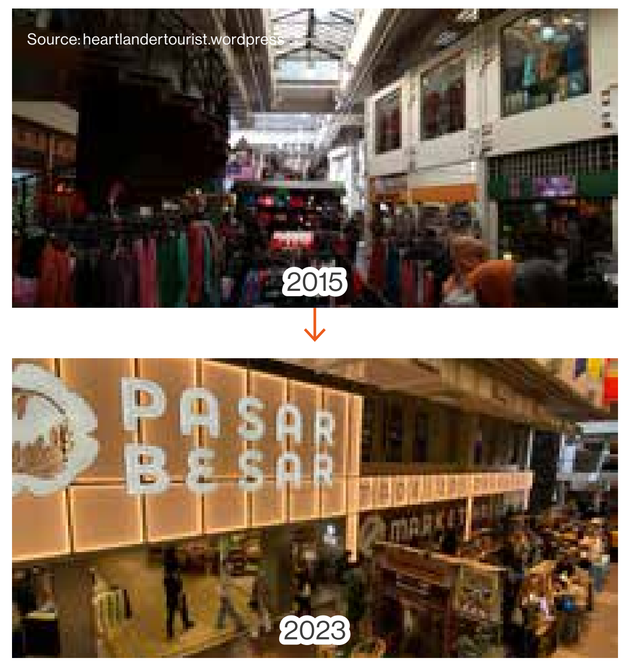
Figure 2.16: Buildings with high reduction of business activity between 2015 and 2023



1 **MUAZ at Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman:** Multiple individual entities consolidated under a single, larger entity.

2 **Wisma Yakin:** Closure of a once-thriving space for business activity, with most businesses having since relocated.

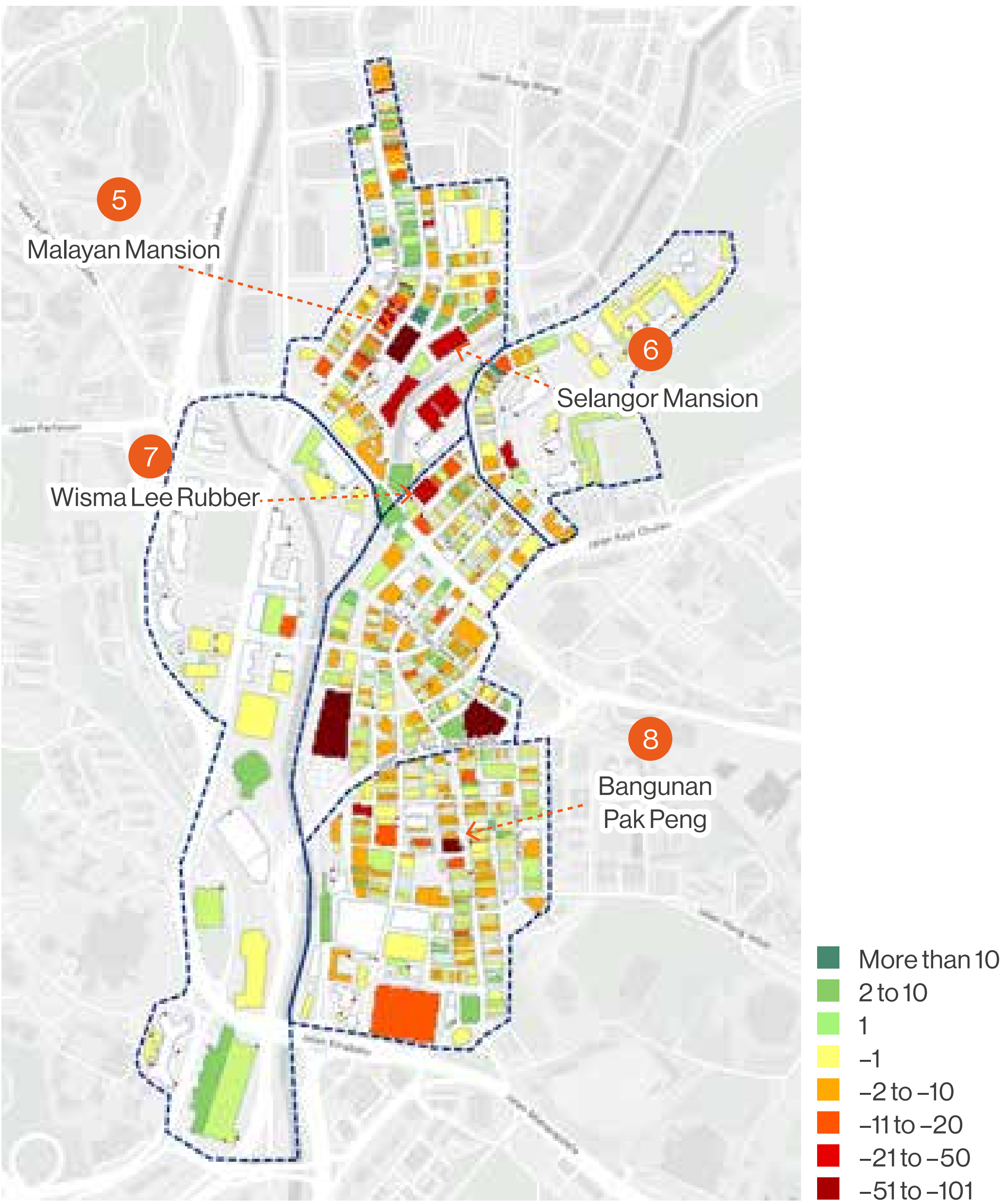
3 **Pasar Besar at Pasar Seni:** Multiple smaller business lots taken by a consolidated under a single, larger entity.



4 **Kota Raya Complex:** A shopping mall that is in transition to cater to a different demographic.

The movement of people and businesses have led to a change in the function and types of businesses in major buildings.

Figure 2.16: Cont'd



5 **Malayan Mansion:** Malayan Mansion saw a decrease of 58 entities, primarily driven by the closure of retail-related businesses.

6 **Selangor Mansion:** Selangor Mansion saw a decrease of 45 entities, driven by a mix of entity categories from retail to personal services.

7 **Wisma Lee Rubber:** Wisma Lee Rubber saw a decrease of 28 entities, mostly led by the relocation of professional services.

8 **Bangunan Pak Peng:** A half-century old shopping mall with a 50% vacancy rate due to the loss of 54 businesses. A few traditional businesses have remained.

The labour force within the KLCCD Core Zone saw a 32% drop in 2023 from 2015, primarily driven by a few key clusters and buildings.

Figure 2.17: Changes in overall labour force between 2015 and 2023

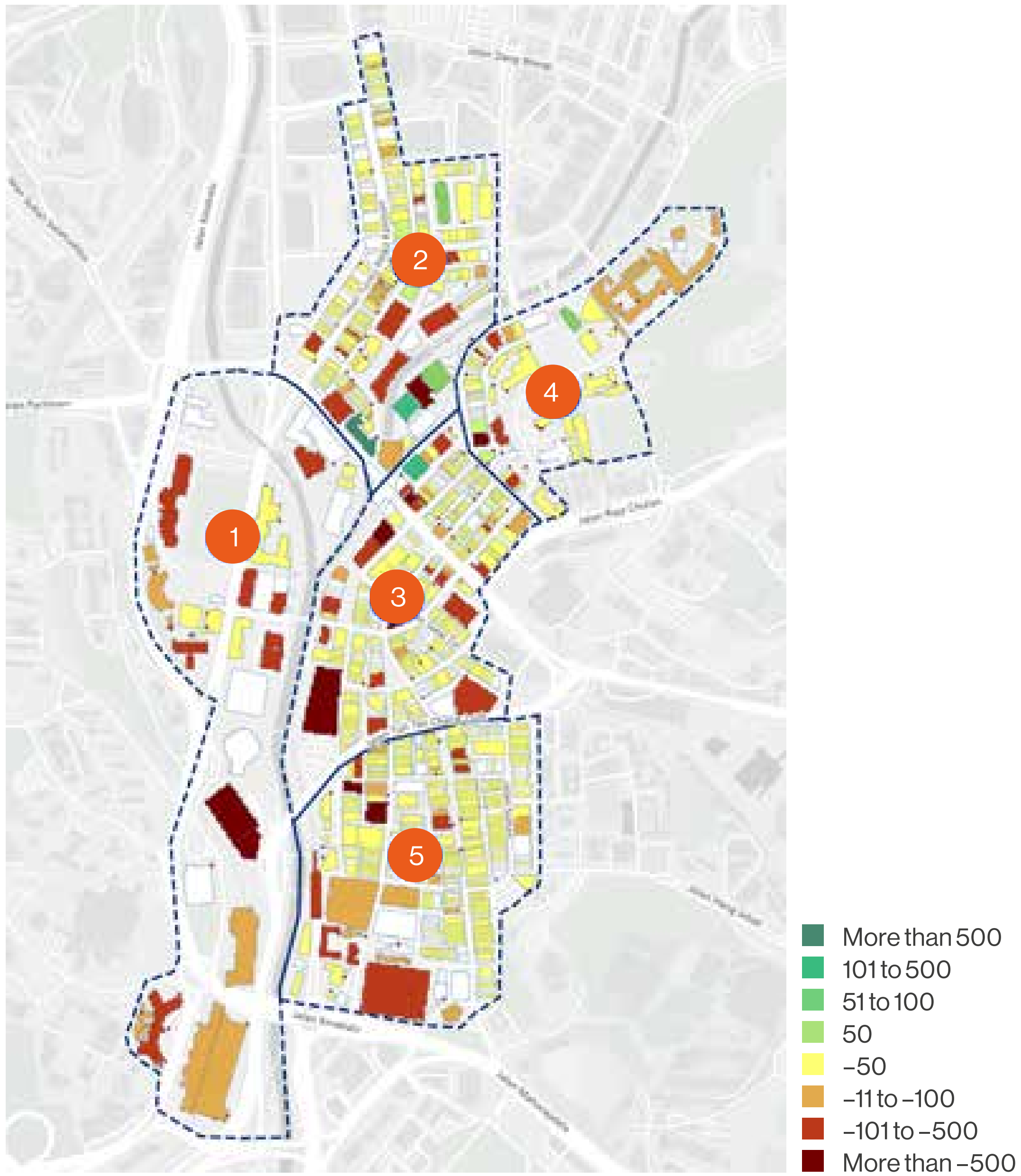
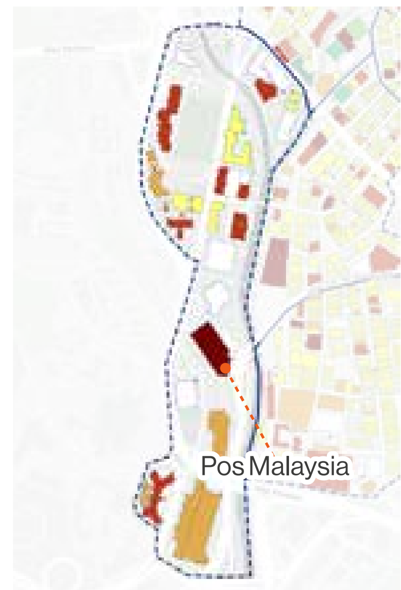
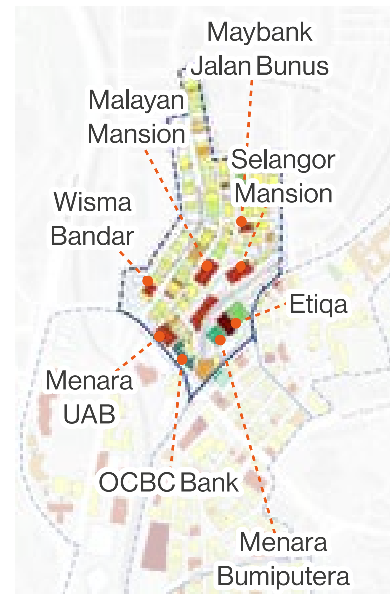


Figure 2.18: Changes in labour force by Precinct between 2015 and 2023

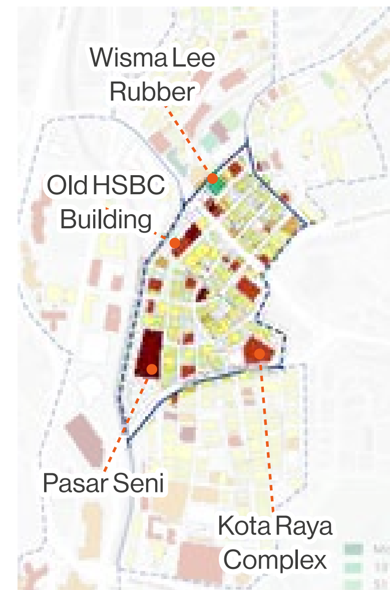
1 Precinct 1—Civic Precinct



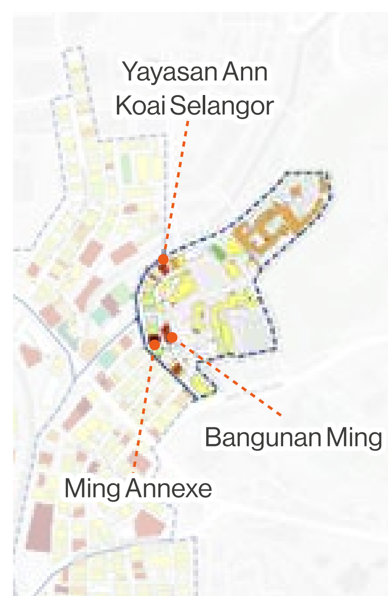
2 Precinct 2—Traditional Shopping Street Precinct



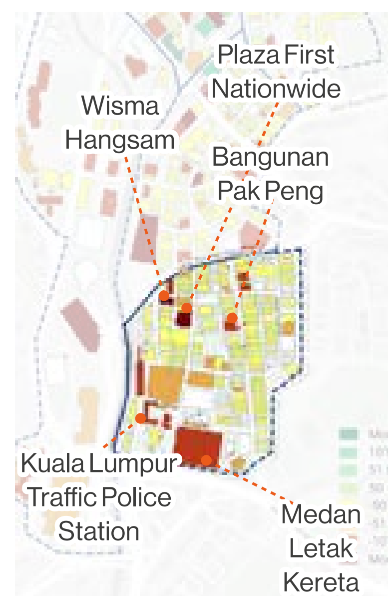
3 Precinct 3—Heritage Triangle Precinct



4 Precinct 4—Education Precinct



5 Precinct 5—Petaling Street Precinct



Changes in government policy, exodus of businesses and relocation leads to a change in the labour force within the KLCCD Core Zone.

Figure 2.19: Buildings with high reduction of labour force between 2015 and 2023

- More than 500
- 101 to 500
- 51 to 100
- 50
- –50
- –11 to –100
- –101 to –500
- More than –500

1 **Govt/ Institutional Changes Pos Malaysia:** Downsizing of labour force and relocation to other parts of KL.

Pos Laju released a statement in 2017 announcing its plan to downsize its labour force, which could potentially impact all branches nationwide. Additionally, government institutions have begun relocating to other parts of Kuala Lumpur, leaving only a few departments in downtown. This trend reflects the decreasing number of workers in the government sector in the KLCCD Core Zone areas.

2 **Outflux of Many Businesses in Pasar Seni:** COVID-19 impacts and business takeover.

The implementation of the MCO and the prolonged closure of international borders during COVID-19 caused tourist traffic to dwindle significantly. Consequently, many businesses struggled to remain open, even after rent reductions were offered, and ultimately had to close for good. Additionally, the Pasar Seni's restructuring saw a single entity take over many individual small businesses, significantly reducing the labor force in the area.

3 **Relocation of HSBC Bank:** Newer development with better surrounding amenities is more attractive for talent retainment.

In March 2022, HSBC officially opened its new headquarters, relocating its previous office from Lebuh Ampang to Menara IQ at TRX. This relocation was driven by multiple reasons such as alignment with ESG considerations and support of government led developments, with TRX being the new financial district of Malaysia. Moreover, the relocation aims to attract and retain talent by providing a fresh working environment with better amenities. This contributed to the decrease in overall labour activity in the KLCCD Core Zone areas.

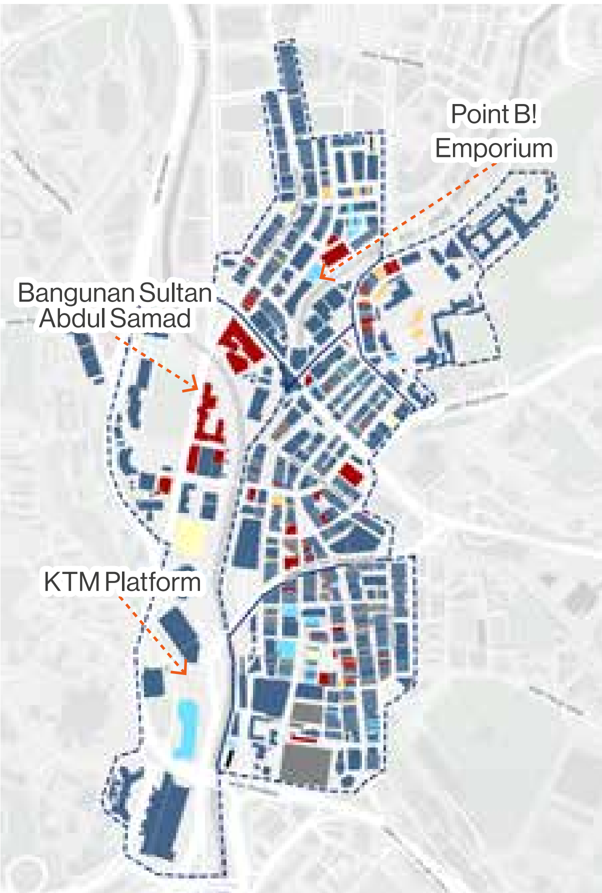
4 **Establishment of OCBC HQ:** Consolidation exercise by major institutions led to increased labour activity on site.

After the OCBC Building, located in Jalan Hang Kasturi, was sold in 2015, the bank moved its headquarters to Jalan Tun Perak. The closure of nearby branches and the opening of the new headquarters led to more concentrated use of workforce, boosting the overall labour force activity at the current location.

Note: The labour force of each entity was determined through door-to-door interviews, and calculated based on entities' responses on LUCSA and their number of employees. For entities with insufficient data, estimated data was developed based on the average labour force for each entity's particular LUCSA category and its business size.

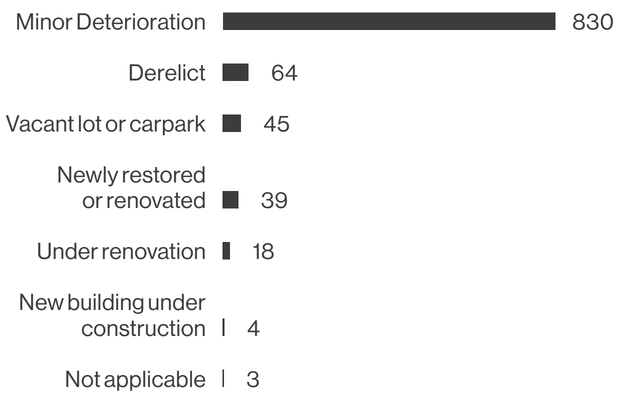
The study found that the condition of the buildings in the area varied. A majority or 830 buildings showed some minor deterioration, while 64 buildings were observed as derelict.

Figure 2.20: Condition of buildings within the KLCCD Core Zone



- Derelict/In need of major renovation
- New building under construction
- Newly restored or renovated
- Not applicable
- Minor deteriorating elements
- Under renovation
- Vacant lot or carpark

Breakdown in building conditions in the KLCCD Core Zone (no. of buildings)



Five national heritage buildings out of the six institutional buildings in the Civic Precinct are deemed derelict.

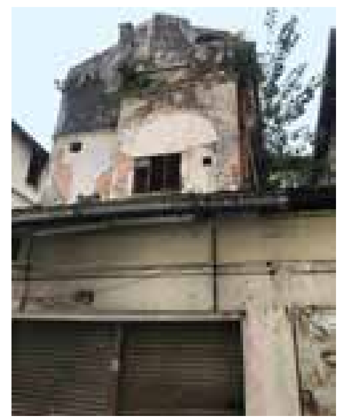
The study found that the condition of the buildings in the area varied. A majority or 830 buildings showed some minor deterioration, while 64 buildings were observed as derelict.

Minor deterioration

- Evidence of generally good conditions with signs of minor deterioration, including extensive peeling paint, mould, water damage, plaster chipping, and minor biological growth.

Minor deterioration

- Recently renovated
- Well-maintained
- Without any visible signs of decay



Derelict/In need of major renovation

- Missing essential building elements (windows, doors, roof, etc.)
- Fully standing/partially standing
- Damaged internal features (wood elements)
- Bio-growth (grasses, ferns or small shrubs)

Under renovation

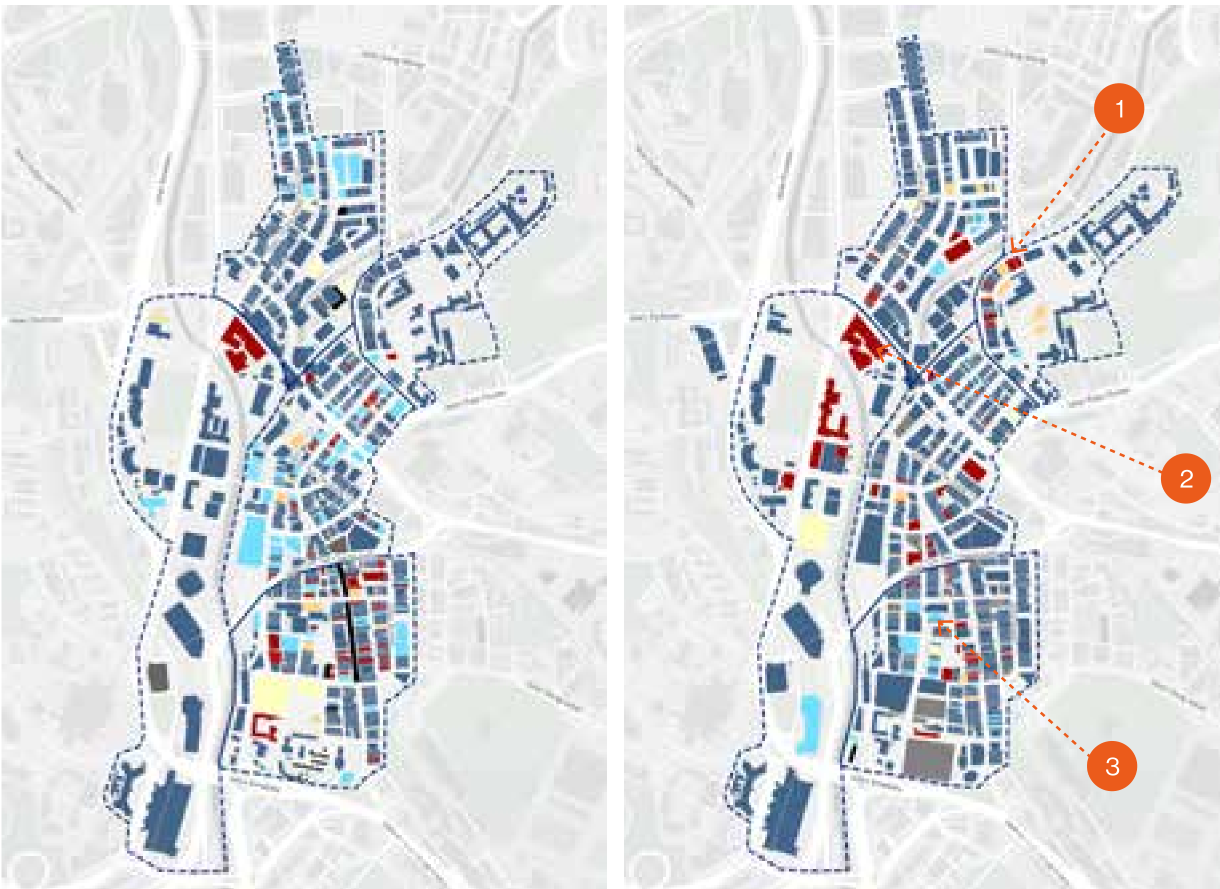
- Indications of on-going renovation works (cement, construction workers, paint, etc.)

Note: The classification of the building conditions were performed by visual observations from hired enumerators, guided by the definition provided above. Further studies need to be conducted to further assess the actual physical condition of these buildings.

When compared to 2015, the conditions of some major buildings (in 2023) had deteriorated to the point of derelict/needing major renovation.

Figure 2.21: Changes in condition of buildings between 2015 and 2023

2015 Building Condition | **2023 Building Condition**



In 2015, minimal buildings were in a derelict state.

In 2023, buildings in a derelict state or in need of major renovation have increased.

- Derelict/In need of major renovation
- New building under construction
- Newly restored or renovated
- Not applicable
- Minor deteriorating elements
- Under renovation
- Vacant lot or carpark

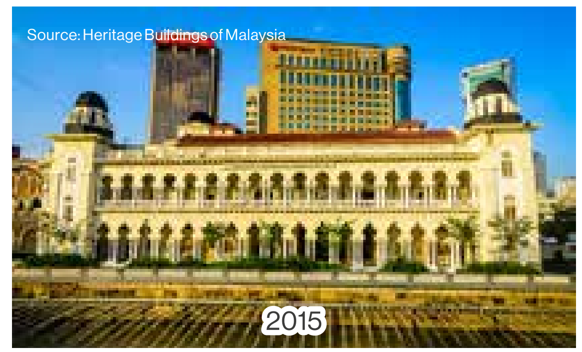
3 examples of trends/highlights/changes

1 69 Jalan Ampang Kuala Lumpur

Reasonable Condition →

In need of Renovation

2 Old High Court later the Supreme Court



In need of Renovation →

Derelict

3 Niko Neko Matcha 2.0

Newly restored shop lot on Jalan Tun HS Lee

In 2023, about 30% or 157 out of 534 heritage buildings (as classified by DBKL) remained vacant.

Table 2.2: Number of heritage buildings based on DBKL's and JWN's classification

Heritage Class	No. of buildings	% of total buildings	No. of vacant entities/ lots
DBKL	**534**	**54**	
Category 1	22	2	7
Category 2	29	3	9
Category 3	483	47	141
JWN	**38**	**4**	
National Heritage	15	1	4
Heritage	8	1	3
Inventory	15	1	7

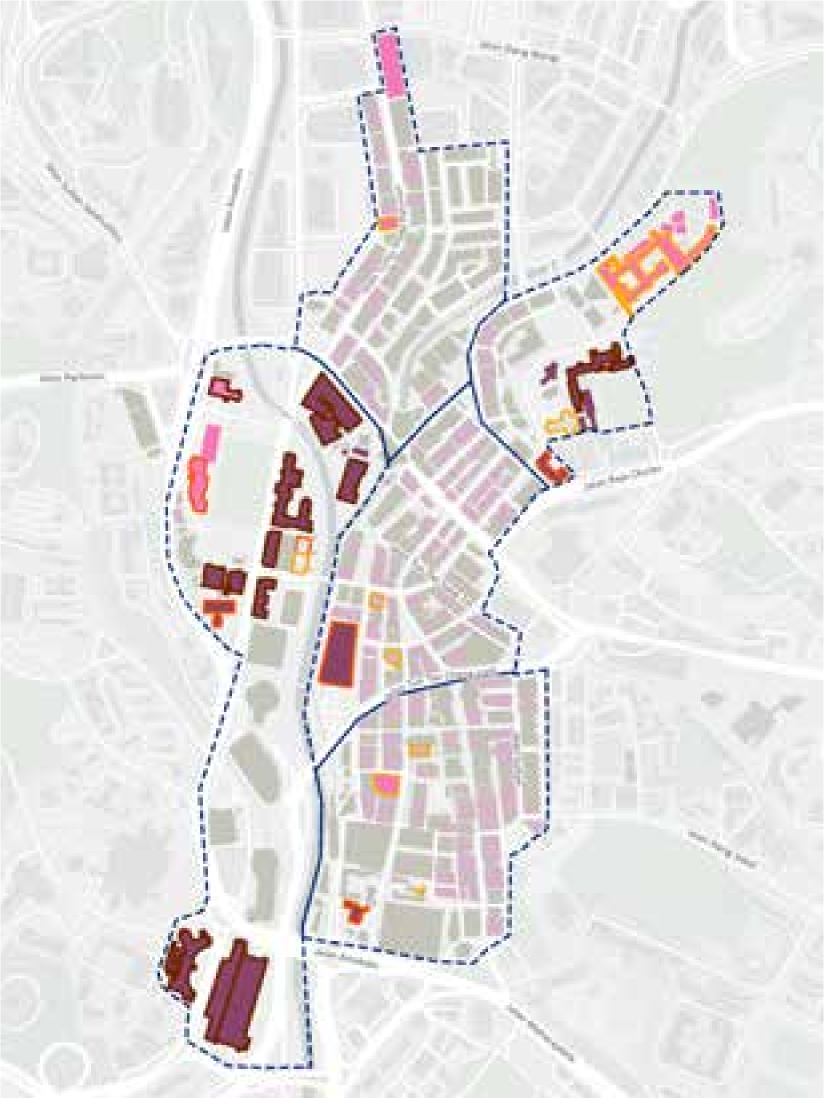
There are a total of 534 buildings classified as heritage buildings by DBKL—nearly 30% of those buildings are vacant.


Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad


Masjid Jamek


Old Chartered Bank Building

Figure 2.22: Distribution of heritage buildings in the KLCCD Core Zone



Jabatan Warisan Negara
- National Heritage
- Heritage
- Inventory

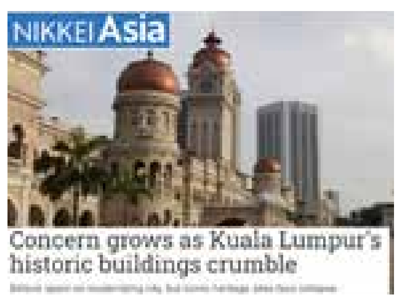
DBKL
- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 3

The condition of many of these heritage buildings is deteriorating. A total of 35 out of the 64 buildings observed as derelict, are heritage buildings.

Table 2.3: Number of heritage building by condition

Heritage Class	Derelict (unoccupiable)	Minor deteriorating elements	Newly restored or renovated	Under renovation	Vacant lot or carpark	Grand total
DBKL						
Category 1	3	18		1		22
Category 2		3	1			29
Category 3	32	406	22	7	21	483
JWN						
National Heritage	3	11				14
Heritage		7				8
Inventory		4	2	1	1	15

The collapsed dome of Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad



Visible dilapidation observed by the general public

There is an estimated 271,363m² of vacant floorspace, primarily involving high-rise buildings such as the former Menara HSBC, One Oriental Place and Wisma Hamzah Kwong Hing.

Figure 2.24: Estimated vacant floorspace of buildings

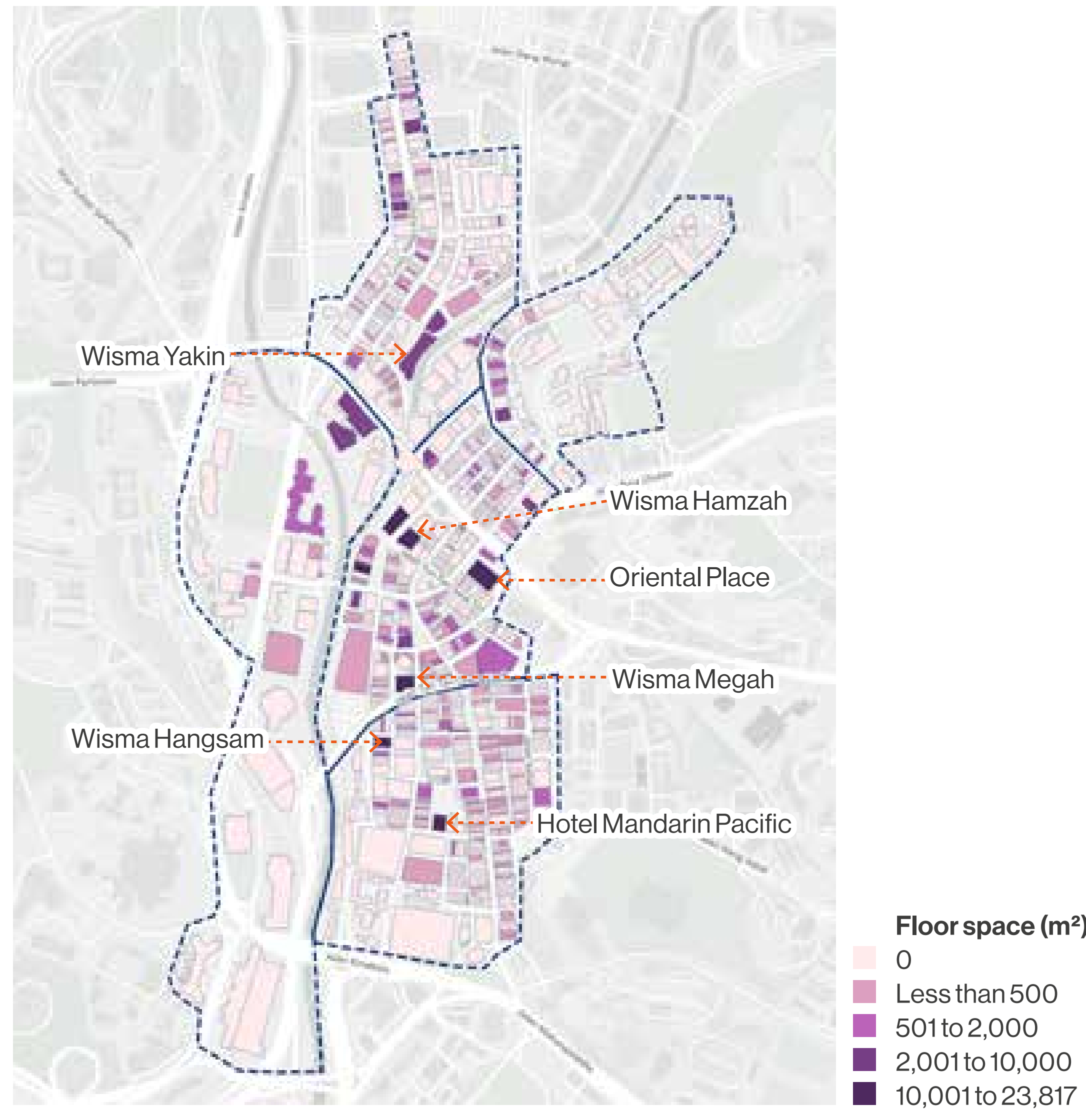
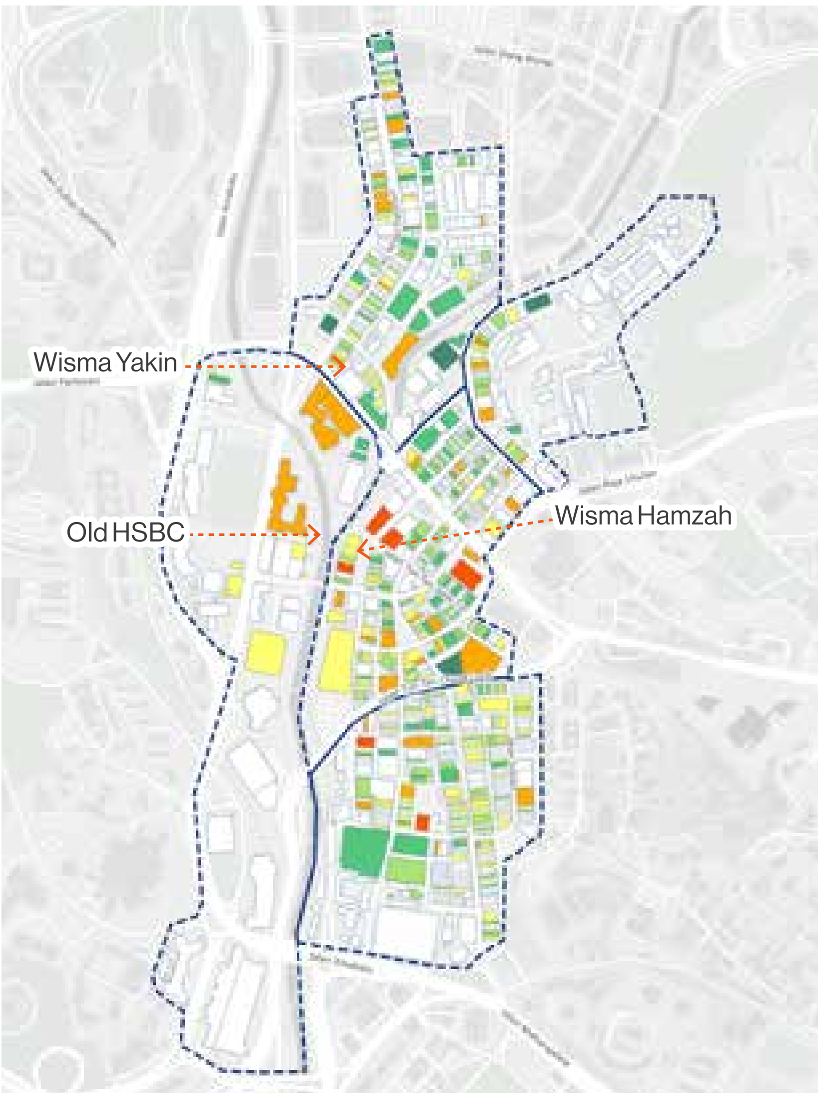


Figure 2.25: Changes in vacant floorspace



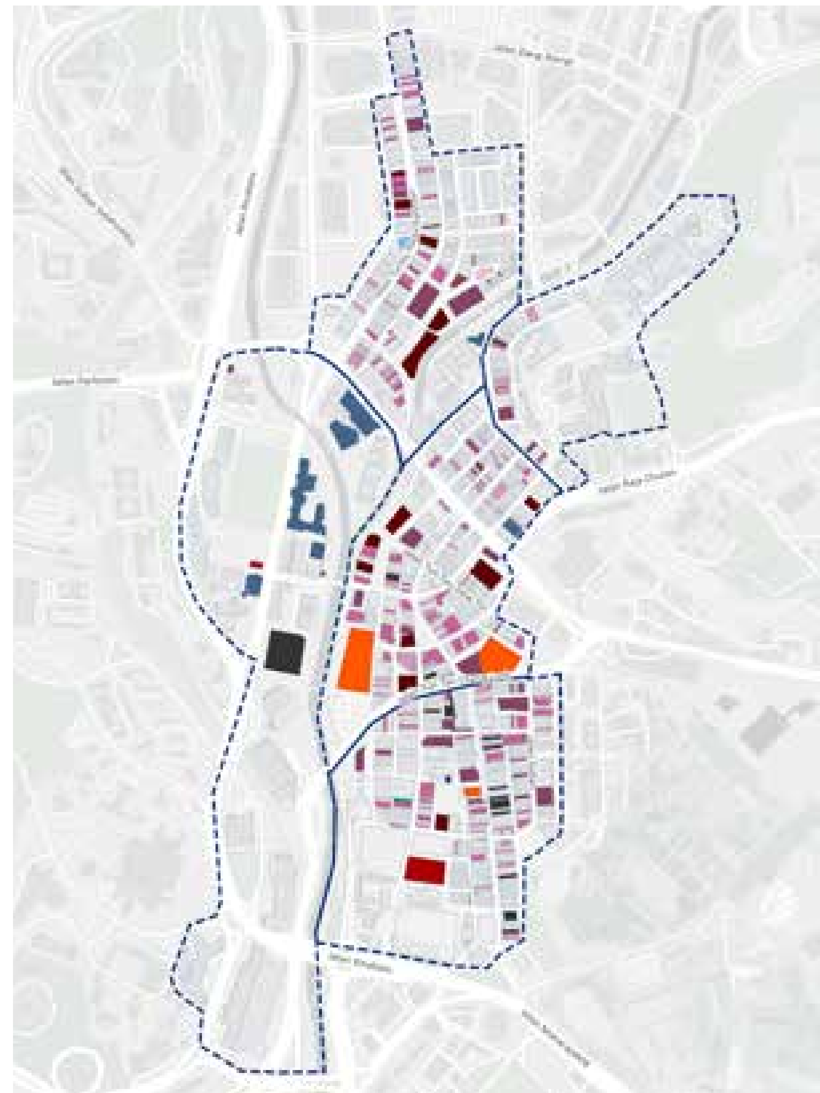
Decreasing in total vacant floor space (m²)

- 10,001 to 25,486
- 501 to 10,000
- 1 to 500

- 1 to 500
- 501 to 10,000
- 10,001 to 23,817

Increasing in total vacant floor space (m²)

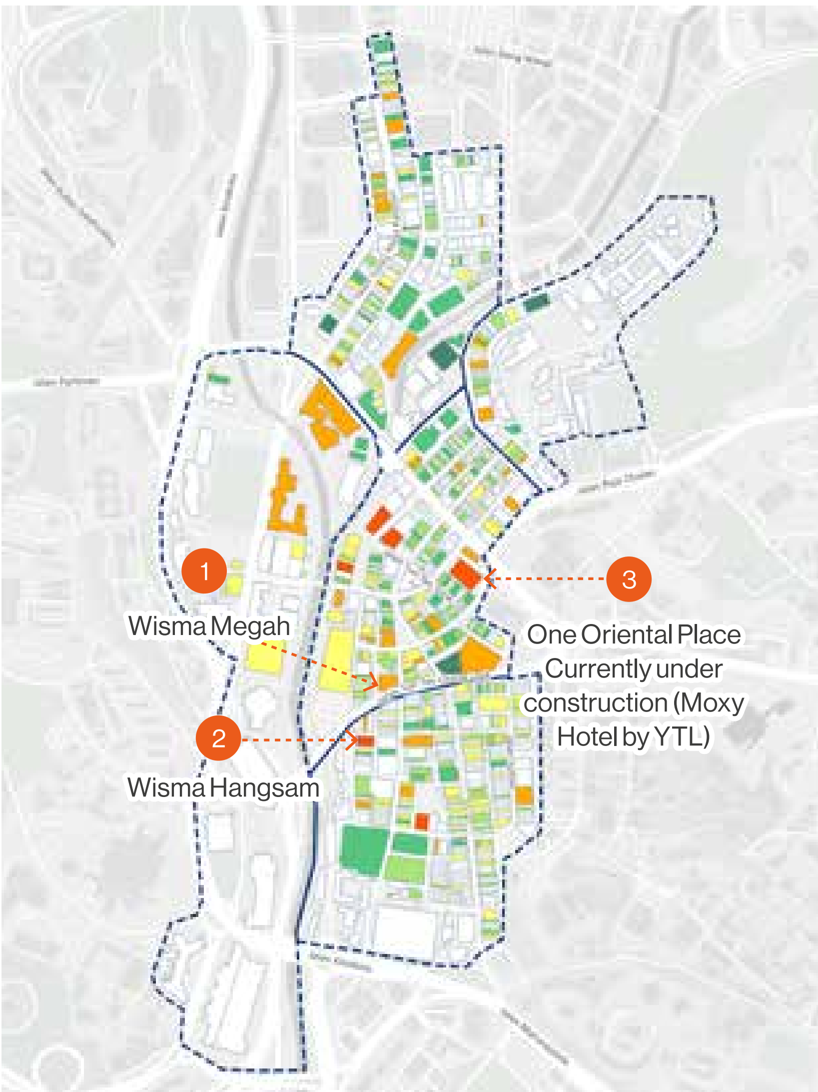
Figure 2.26: Vacancy of buildings by type



- Shophouses (1-2 stories)
- Low-rise shophouse (3-5 stories)
- Medium-rise shophouse (6-10 stories)
- High-rise (Above 10 stories)
- Institutional building
- Infrastructure/Facility
- Wood/Metal Shed
- Place of worship
- Bungalow/Landed house
- Special-purpose
- Shopping complex
- Warehouse/Workshop/Factory
- Vacant land

The total vacant floorspace is estimated to have increased by 19,891m² across the area, led by high-rise buildings such as Wisma Megah, Wisma Hangsam and One Oriental Place.

Figure 2.27: Buildings with high vacant floorspace



Decrease in total vacant floor space (m²)
- 10,001 to 25,486m²
- 501 to 10,000m²
- 1 to 500m²

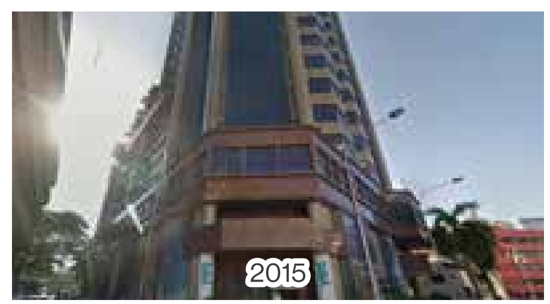
- 1 to 500m²
- 501 to 10,000m²
- 10,001 to 23,817m²

Increase in total vacant floor space (m²)

1 **Wisma Megah:** The building was sold in 2019 by Mammoth Empire and has remained vacant

2 **Wisma Hangsam:** The building was previously occupied by Maybank, which departed in 2015. The building has remained vacant since

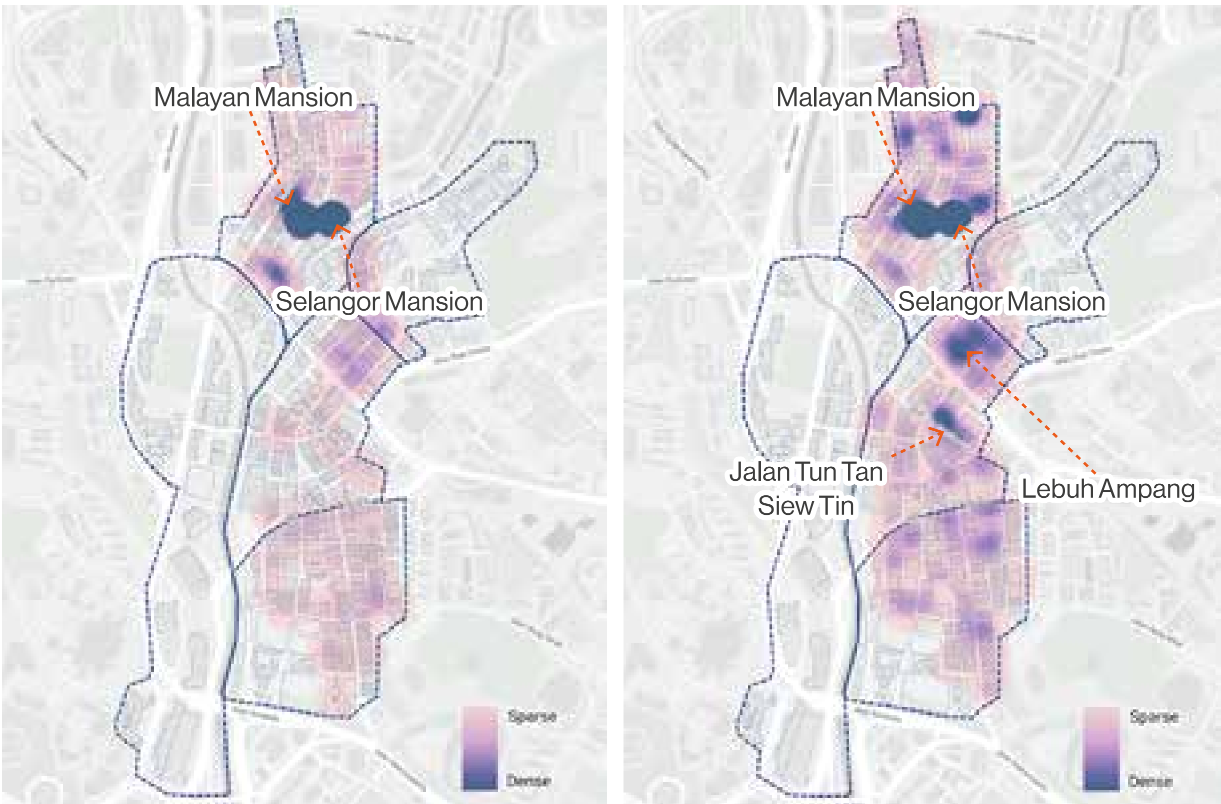
3 **One Oriental Place:** The vacant building has now been adaptively reused, and is currently being transformed to Moxy Hotel by YTL



Since 2015, although the number of business entities in the area has declined, residential entities have increased, filling some previously vacant spaces.

Figure 2.28: Changes in density of residential entities between 2015 and 2023

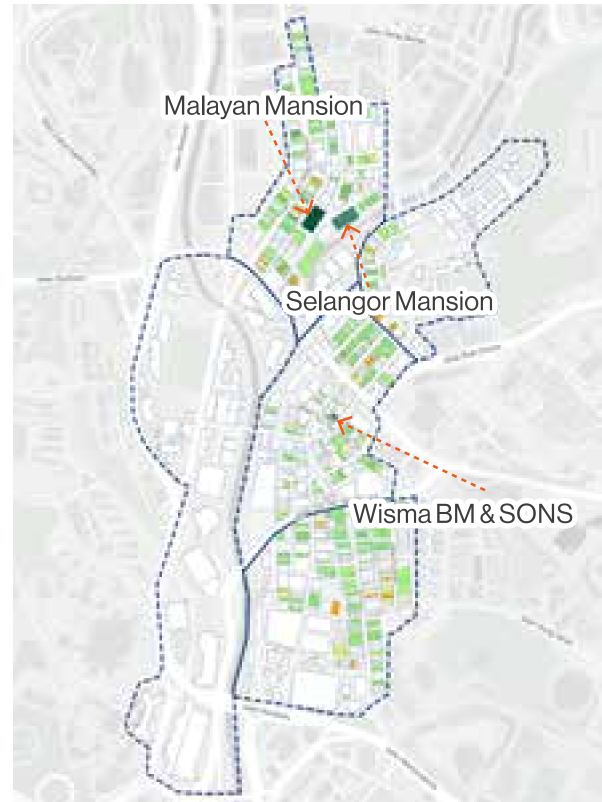
2015 **2023**



Since 2015, there has been an evident increase and densification of residential entities.

Note: Residential data was collected via observation, supplemented by community interviews, and door-to-door interviews

Figure 2.29: Changes in density in each residential entity between 2015 and 2023



Since 2015, there has been an evident increase and densification of residential entities.

- More than 20
- 11 to 20
- 2 to 10
- 1
- –1
- –2 to –9

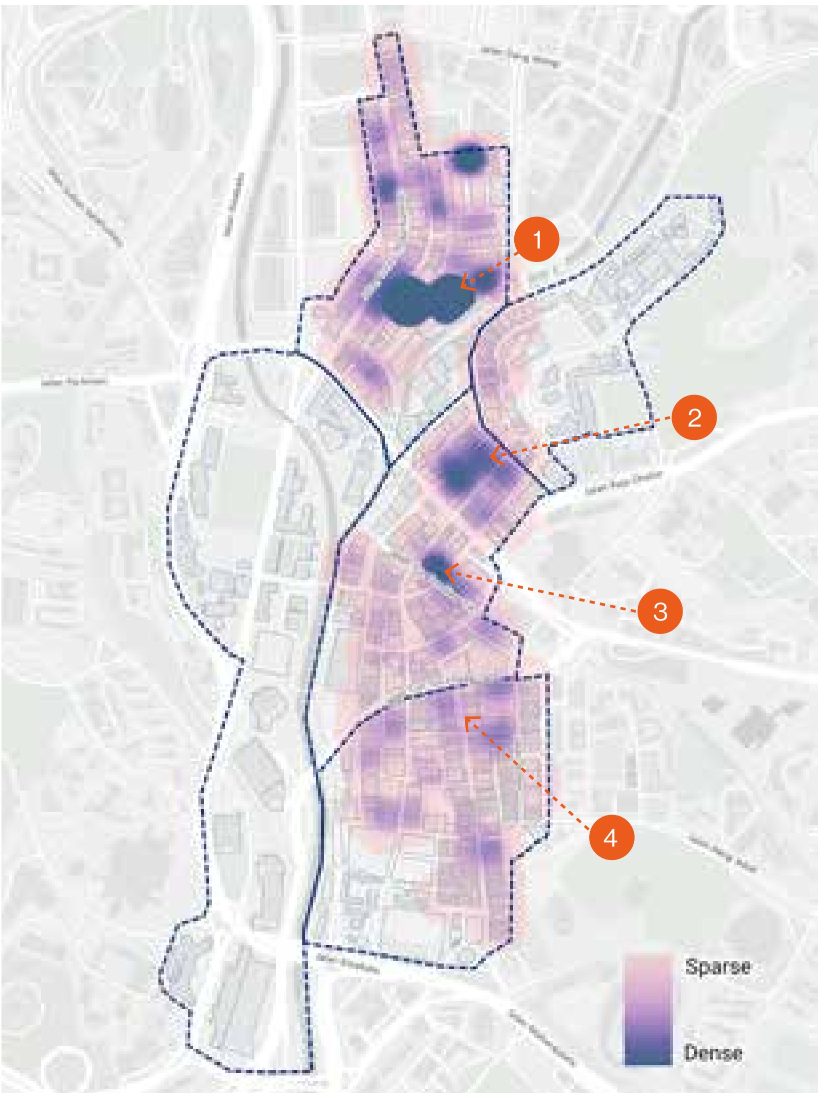
Figure 2.30: Distribution of residential entities by type

Worker accommodations are widespread in the KLCCD Core Zone

- Worker Accommodation residential entities
- Building Caretaker residential entities
- Apartment/Unit residential entities

Residential hot spots are found in existing flats and increasingly, in upper floors of shophouses that have been converted into rental units for workers' accommodation.

Figure 2.31: Density of residential entities with examples

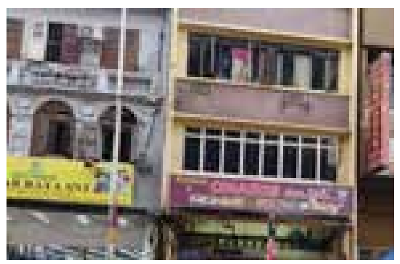


Key areas of residence are existing flats and the upper floors of shophouses

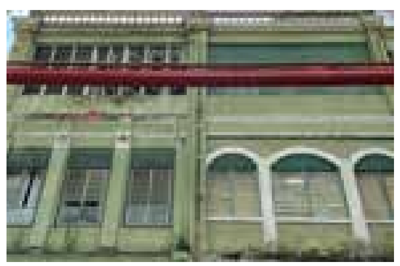
1 Malayan Mansion and Selangor Mansion

2 Shophouses at Lebuh Ampang

3 Shophouses at Jalan Tun Tan Siew Sin



4 Shophouses at Jalan Petaling



These spaces are rented by both employers (for workers) and individual residents

Upper floors of shophouses converted into residential units.

Organised workers' accommodation housing migrant workers and Malaysians from Sabah/Sarawak.

Rooms being advertised for rent.

The residents live in small spaces shared with others

Source: Sinar Harian

Source: Carousell

Residences at Selangor Mansion

Note: For enumeration purposes, a residential entity is recorded for the entire floor when household items (e.g.: clothes and cooking utensils) are observed.

Overall, among the various entity categories, only residential entities saw an increase by 11% (+80 entities)

Table 2.4: Changes in number of entities by category between 2015 and 2023

	2015		2023		2015—2023	
Entity Categories	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**Change**	**% Change**
Business entities	2,856	64	1,601	53	–1,255	–44
Residential entities	738	17	818	27	80	11
Vacant entities	487	11	386	13	–101	–21
Hotel or Tourism Accommodation	154	3	91	3	–63	–41
Clan, Not for Profit, Religious Association and/or Political Organisation	111	2	46	2	–65	–59
Education and Research	61	1	22	1	–39	–64
Government	55	1	23	1	–32	–58
Unable to determine		0	30	1	30	
Total	**4,462**	**1**	**3,017**	**1**	**–1,445**	**–32**

Significant increase

Highest drop

Figure 2.32: Example of entities by categories

Business

Residence

Vacant land/building

Hotel/tourist accommodation

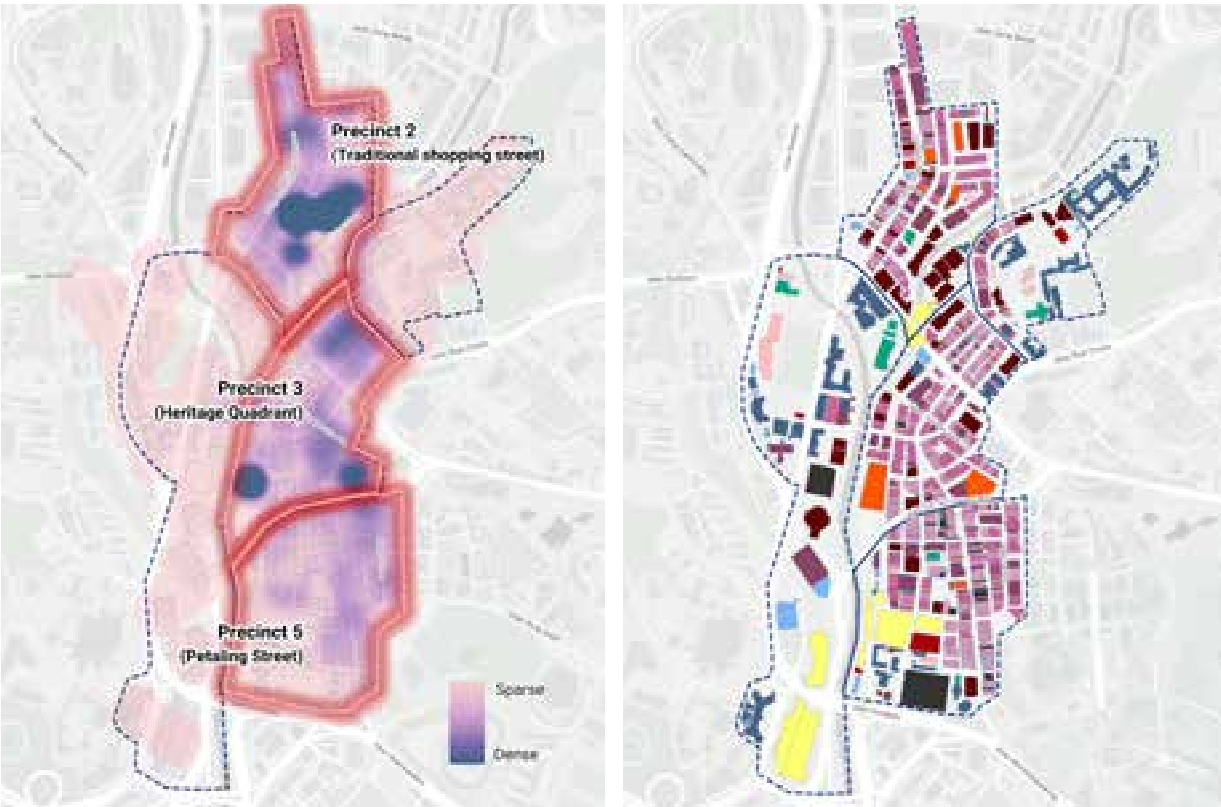
Government

Education

Community, Non-Government, Religious, NGO or Political Organisation

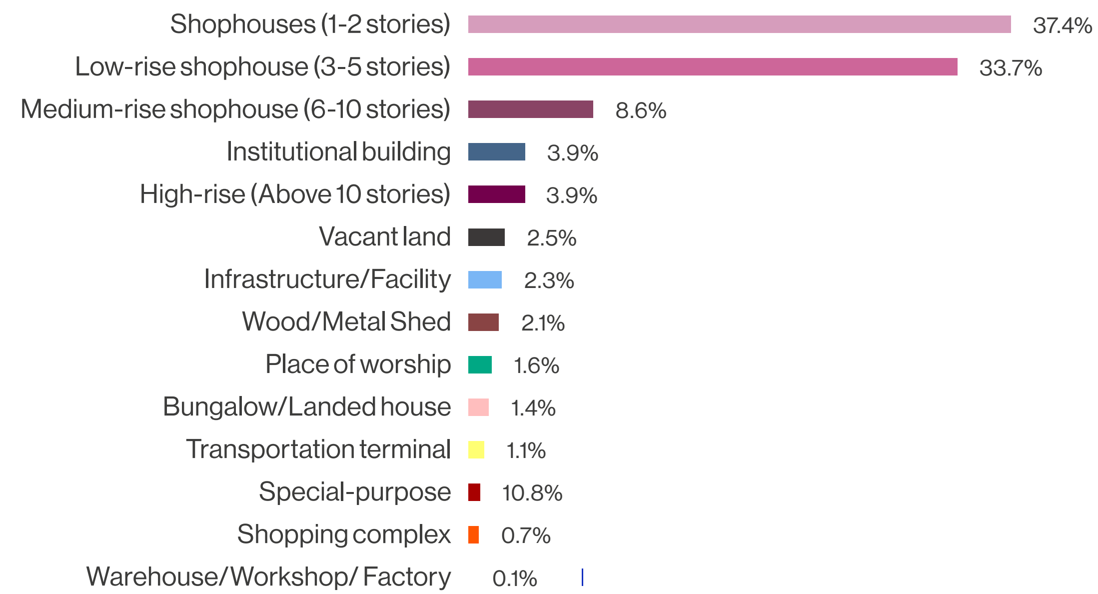
Most of the activity is concentrated within three precincts, with increased activity around shopping complexes and distributed across the nearby shophouse typologies.

Figure 2.33: Comparisons of density of activity and building type

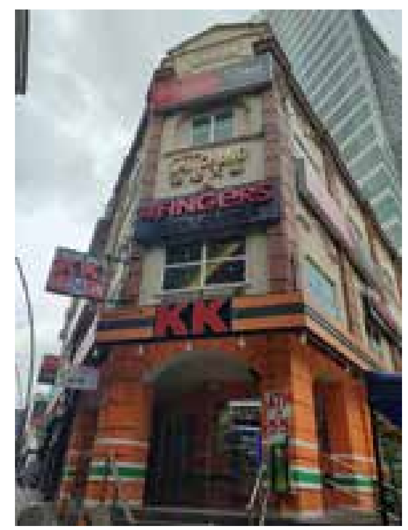


- Shophouses (1-2 stories)
- Low-rise shophouse (3-5 stories)
- Medium-rise shophouse (6-10 stories)
- High-rise (Above 10 stories)
- Institutional building
- Infrastructure/Facility
- Wood/Metal Shed
- Place of worship
- Bungalow/Landed house
- Special-purpose
- Shopping complex
- Warehouse/ Workshop/ Factory
- Vacant land
- Transportation terminal

Figure 2.34: Number of buildings by type



Shophouses of 1 to 2 stories dominate at **37.4%** of the KLCCD Core Zone building typology.

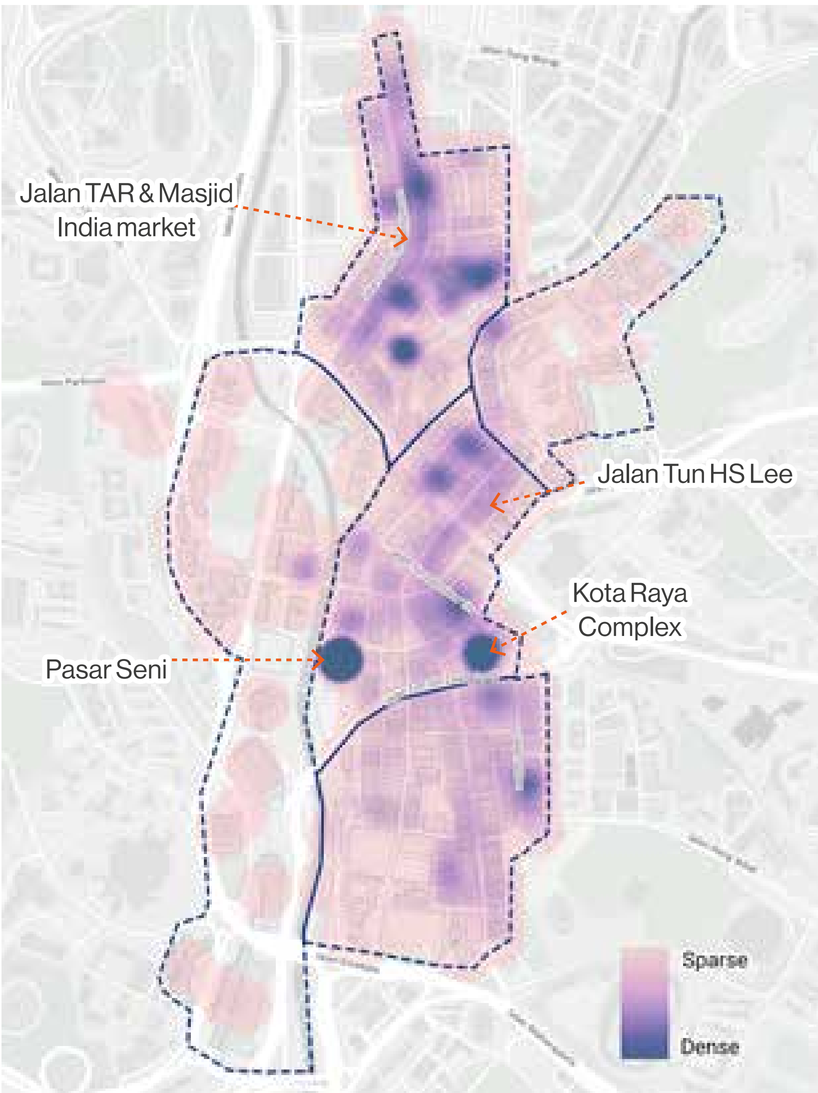


3 to 5 stories low-rise shophouses contribute significantly, comprising 33.7% of the building typology.

6-10 stories medium-rise shophouses hold an 8.6% share, adding a layer of variation to the urban fabric.

Business entities in the area primarily operate during the day and the KLCCD Core Zone becomes quieter at night. Night-time activity is only seen in pockets of the area.

Figure 2.35: Density of day-time business activity with examples



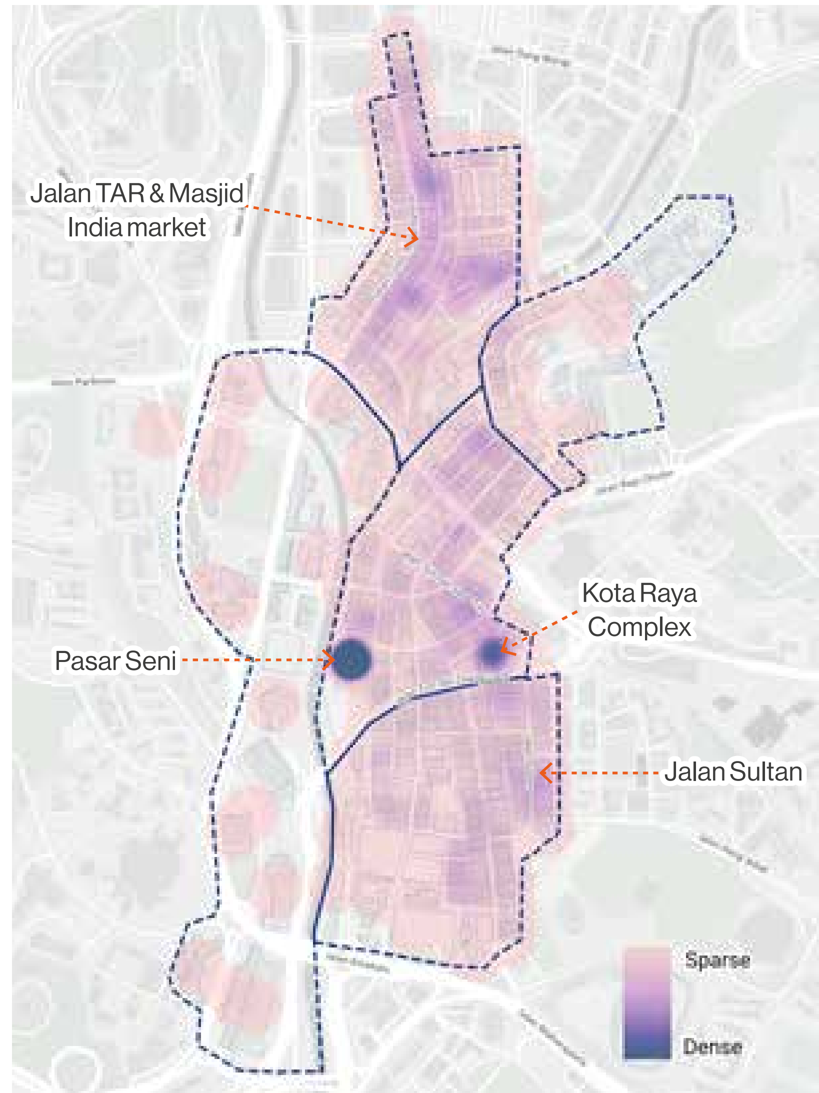
During the night, business activity decreases by about 20%. The food and beverage establishments are the most active after dark.

Madras Lane Stalls

Masjid India Market

Lai Foong Kopitiam on Jalan HS Lee

Figure 2.36: Density of night-time business activity with examples



During the night, business activity decreases by about 20%. The food and beverage establishments are the most active after dark.

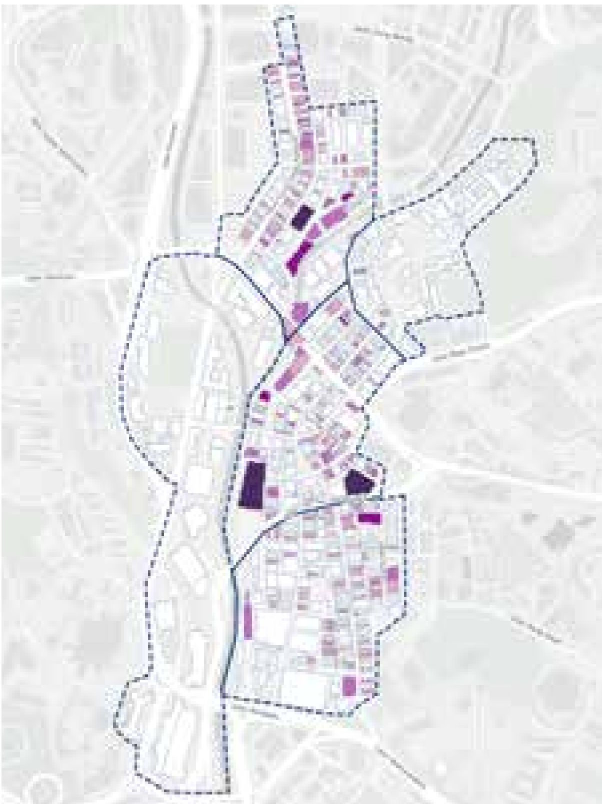
Petaling Street food stalls

Mee Tarik on Jalan Sultan

The Attic Bar located near the Pasar Seni LRT

Despite the decline in business entities, new businesses continue to emerge in the area. The entities are primarily in the food and beverage sector as well as fashion, clothing and textiles.

Figure 2.37: Density of businesses below 5 years old



A total of 404 new establishments around the age of 0–5 years were recorded, clustering in key areas across Precincts 2, 3, and 5 of the KLCCD Core Zone

- 1
- 2–5
- 6–10
- 11–28

Figure 2.38: List of top 10 business type for businesses below 5 years old

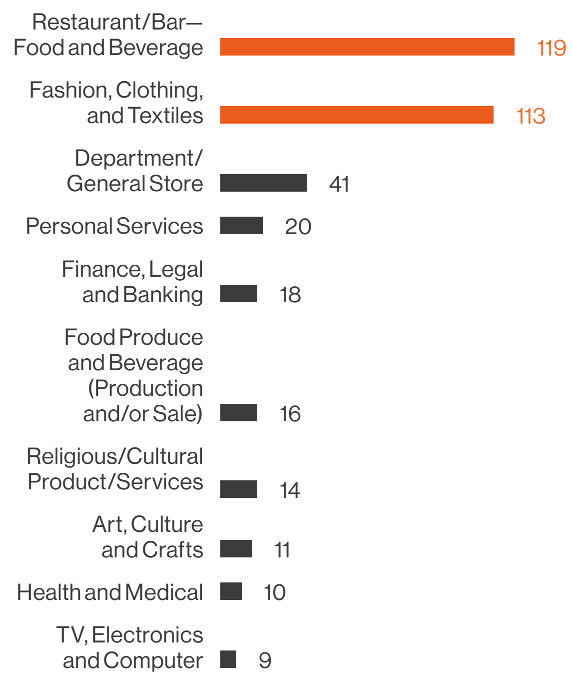
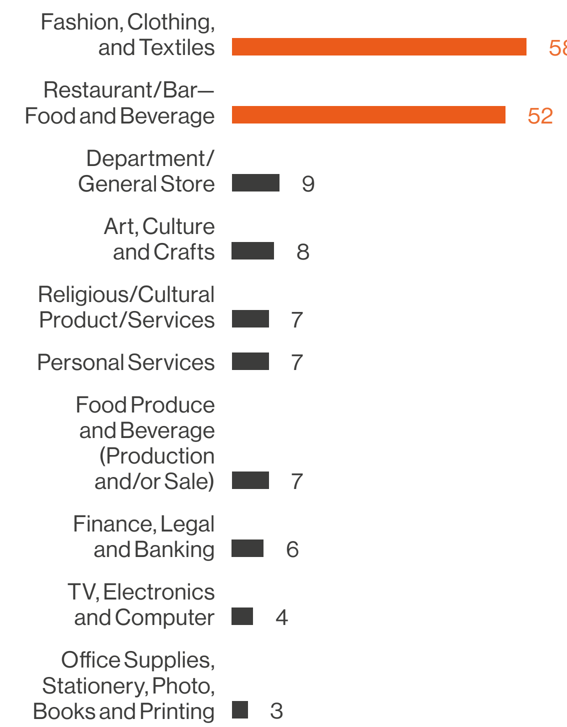


Figure 2.39: Density of businesses below 2 years old

43% (172) of these young businesses also opened during the post-pandemic recovery phase (< 2 years), mostly in Fashion, Clothing, and Textiles; and F&B Outlets, concentrated mostly in Pasar Seni

- 1
- 2–5
- 6–10
- 11–17

Figure 2.40: List of top 10 business type for businesses below 2 years old



Note: This question was optional and does not reflect the total sum of new businesses within the area.

In conclusion, the city is undergoing a transition. While some entities have declined, new businesses have emerged during the post-COVID recovery phase, reflecting a city in flux.

The KLCCD Core Zone is witnessing a divergence in precinct trajectories, each moving towards a mix of future scenarios.

Mini-centralities are forming within the precincts. This will decrease diversity in entity LUCSA types.

In 2023, entity density was more dispersed compared to the 2015 entity density. Entity make up has also changed significantly.

Residential and vacant entities remain the top 2 largest entity count, every other entity has reduced significantly.

Almost half the decline in entities since 2015 is not uniform, with decline observed along a few streets or large buildings.

Labour force witnessed similar trend, with large changes occurring in key clusters of buildings.

64 buildings visually observed as derelict, 35 of these are DBKL-recognised heritage buildings.

About 30% of all heritage buildings classified by DBKL are currently vacant.

Total estimated vacant floorspace increased by almost 20,000m², led by the emptying out of key high-rise buildings.

Currently, there is an estimated 271,363m² of vacant floorspace in the KLCCD Core Zone.

Residential entities have increased by 11% since 2015, increasingly in upper floors of shophouses.

Businesses mostly operate during the day and empty out at night. There are only pockets of night-time economic activity.

Majority of the activity is currently clustered within the 3 precincts which have the highest volume of shophouse buildings.

The city is in a transition: Whilst entities have declined, new businesses have emerged, a snapshot of a city in flux.

Possible Drivers

Chapter 3

The KLCCD Core Zone's current scenario is driven by four key factors: the aftereffects of core functions moving out, disruptions triggered by COVID-19, organic shifts and intentional interventions.

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → COVID-19 pandemic disruption → Organic shifts and evolution of spaces → Intentional intervention and regeneration

Aftereffects of core functions relocating

- Administrative and financial functions relocating from the Core Zone have both direct and indirect impacts on area demographics and entity composition.
- Entities relocating may leave behind vacant properties and spaces—especially larger ones. If not properly maintained or reused, this can negatively impact the surrounding areas and public perception.

Disruption triggered by the COVID-19 Pandemic

- The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure or relocation of many small businesses with low margins.
- Businesses that adapted by leveraging online and digital platforms tapped into an entirely new market: e-commerce.

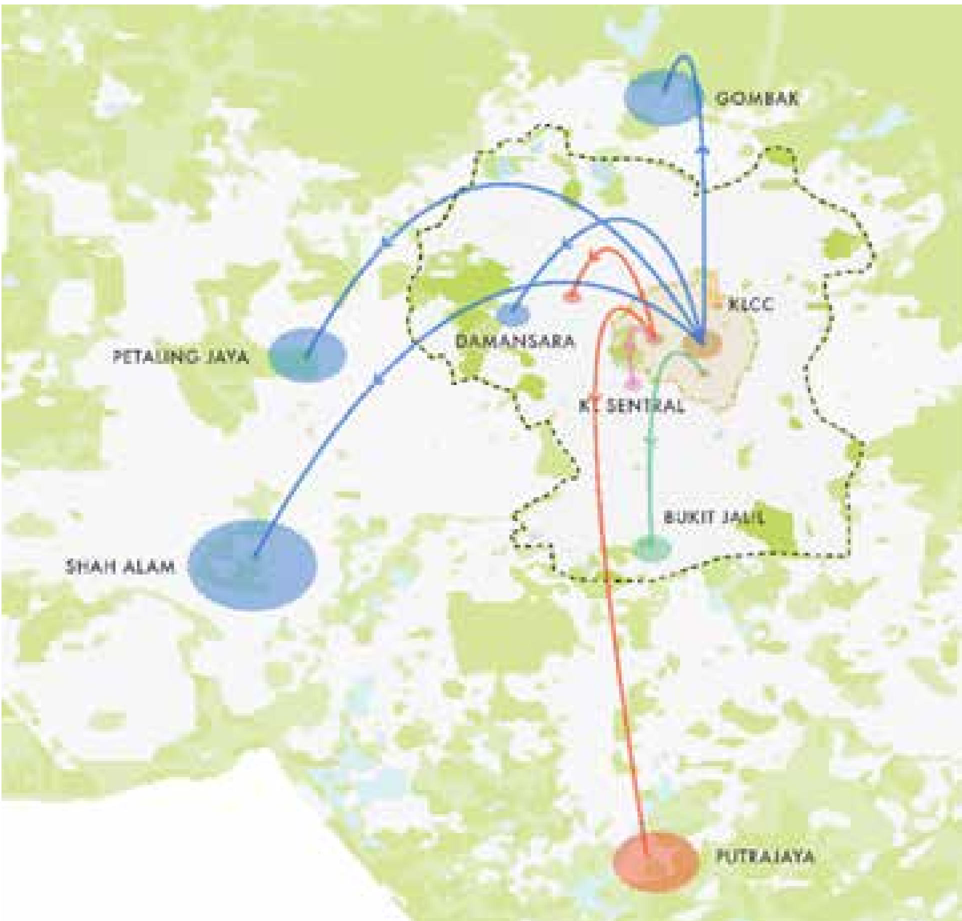
Organic shifts and evolution of spaces

- Over time, businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone have undergone organic shifts, adapting new models, targeting different audiences, and relocating to new areas.
- The adoption of technological innovations, such as digitalisation and fintech, has disrupted traditional business models and operational practices.
- These changes have had a notable impact on the business landscape within the Core Zone.

Intentional intervention and initiatives towards regeneration

- Socially driven anchor entities play a critical role in fostering connections between the local community, public agencies and the private sector. Their presence facilitates the implementation of interventions in areas experiencing decline. By attracting investments and assuming first-mover risks, these entities contribute to enhancing the overall attractiveness of a location.

Over the past 30 years, the KLCCD Core Zone has experienced several waves of core functions relocating to adjacent central areas, their departure leaving an economic impact on the zone.



Movement of Function
- Residential
- Administration
- Recreation
- Finance
- Transportation

Kuala Lumpur city centre
WPKL

Source: Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District Strategic Master Plan (2019)

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → **COVID-19 pandemic disruption** → **Organic shifts and evolution of spaces** → **Intentional intervention and regeneration**

Businesses relocate from the KLCCD Core Zone for various reasons, including expansion, proximity to target markets, and access to incentives and better opportunities.

E.g., Government mandated TRX as Malaysia's global financial hub

The government will mandate Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) as Malaysia's global financial hub. TRX needs to ***attract the global financial industry to become the main destination for high-value foreign direct investment (FDI)*** *that will strengthen our business ecosystem.*

— Minister of Finance Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim during the re-tabling of Budget 2023

Aside from targeting specific markets, many businesses also relocated due to operating costs and competition

A business survey conducted by Think City in 2023 revealed that most respondents had relocated from KL City Centre to Greater KL to expand their business or be closer to their target markets.

However, some respondents also cited lower operating costs and increased competition within the city as key factors influencing their decision to relocate.

New offices offer green branding, prime addresses, and digital infrastructure

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification

Malaysia Digital

Moving forward, the departure of two key anchor financial institutions, Menara HSBC (2022) and Menara Maybank (2025), will leave behind more vacant high-rise buildings in the area.

As new office spaces continue to be developed, businesses are increasingly relocating to newer buildings that offer better connectivity and infrastructure.

HSBC KL Main Branch

HSBC has relocated its KL Main Branch from Leboh Ampang to TRX, bringing approximately 5,000 employees and their associated customer footfall and spending power to the new financial hub.


Source:The Edge 31/10/2018

The Exchange TRX Development

TRX Exchange is a mixed-use integrated development complete with a retail mall, residential units, office spaces and direct connectivity to train stations.

Source:TRX Website 2022

Menara Maybank

Menara Maybank is located at the edge of the KLCCD Core Zone. The relocation of approximately 5,900 of its employees in 2025 is expected to impact the surrounding localities.

Source:New Straits Times 5/9/2023

Merdeka 118

Merdeka 118, a newly developed office tower, features a luxury mall and direct MRT connectivity.

Source: KL Foodie 24/12/2023

It is also more cost effective to relocate to new buildings with better facilities rather than renovate older buildings with fewer amenities.

"Many of the banks' current buildings were coming up to 20 to 30 years old. ***To convert such old buildings to incorporate the latest technology and ESG-specific [elements] into them would have been very challenging, not to mention costly****—it would require substantial capital expenditure—and disruptive to operations. They found it* ***more sensible to move into new buildings that already suit their requirements****".*

— Tan Ka Leong, group managing director, CBRE | WTW (The Edge)

Source: EdgeProp.my 20/10/2018

HSBC Malaysia headquarters on the market

Ahead of the completion of its new RM1 billion headquarters in the Tun Razak Exchange (TRX), HSBC Bank Malaysia Bhd listed Menara HSBC South Tower, which currently houses its main office, for sale.

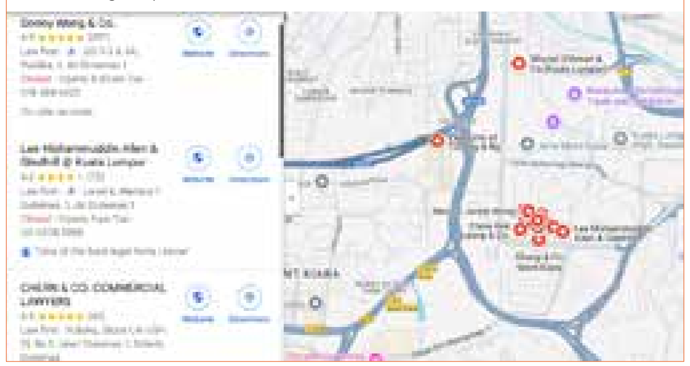
Aftereffects of core functions relocating → COVID-19 pandemic disruption → Organic shifts and evolution of spaces → Intentional intervention and regeneration

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic also disrupted the professional services industry— accelerating the digitalisation of banks and forcing smaller law firms to downsize.

Law firms prefer locations that offer greater convenience, such as being near the courts.

Many law firms are situated along Jalan Dutamas, in close proximity to the Kuala Lumpur Court Complex.

Source: Google Map 2024/2025

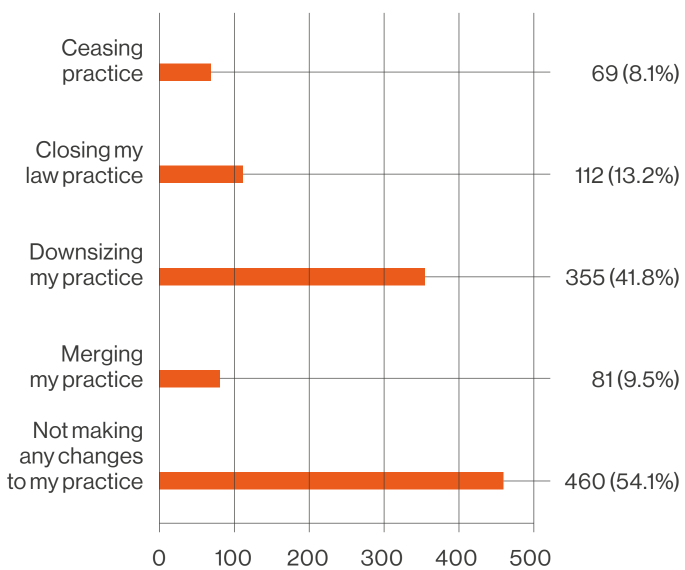


Many law firms contemplated downsizing or closure during the pandemic

A survey done by the Malaysian Bar in April 2020 found that about half of the law firms surveyed considered downsizing/closing their practice.

Source: FMT 18/04/2020
Lawyers worldwide lose jobs, pay and more because of Covid-19

Chart B9: Considerations of law firm owners



Source: Report of Bar Council Survey 5/6/2020

Note: Malaysian Bar 2020 Survey, Circular No.176/2020: Respondents were provided with pre-set answers to choose from that best suit their law practice/branch. More than one answer can be submitted per respondent.

The digitalisation of banking functions has led to a strategic shift in the location of bank headquarters and the closure of physical branches.

What's behind the recent trend of Malaysian banks moving their corporate HQs

Source: The Edge 1/11/2023
THE EDGE What's behind the recent trend of Malaysian banks moving their corporate HQs

Visibility and Branding

Self-owned buildings

ESG Buildings

Attracting Young Talents

Better connectivity and facilities

Fresh working environment with new amenities

Case Specific Factors

Lease Expiration

Due to the use of automation such as electronic banking, banks would not need to have a big manpower for their operations.

— Daily Express, 20 November 2016

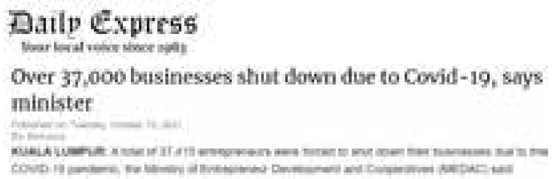
Source: The Star 1/5/2021 and The Star 19/1/2024
The Star Banks to cut down on branches, office space
The Star Digital banks log in to Malaysia

Aftereffects of core functions relocating | COVID-19 pandemic disruption | Organic shifts and evolution of spaces | Intentional intervention and regeneration

Beyond the professional services sector, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated shifts in consumer behaviour toward online shopping.

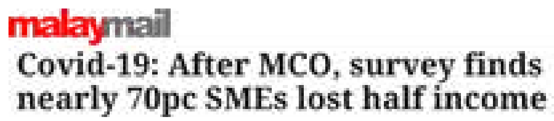
The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic triggered a worldwide disruption

Source: Daily Express 12/10/2021


Daily Express

Over 37,000 businesses shut down due to Covid-19, says minister

Source: MalayMail 27/5/2020


malaymail

Covid-19: After MCO, survey finds nearly 70pc SMEs lost half income

Many businesses moved online to keep businesses afloat

Source: New Straits Times 1/6/2020


NEW STRAITS TIMES

Businesses move online to survive

Source: The Malaysian Reserve 4/6/2020

MPH bookstores turn online for better customer's experience

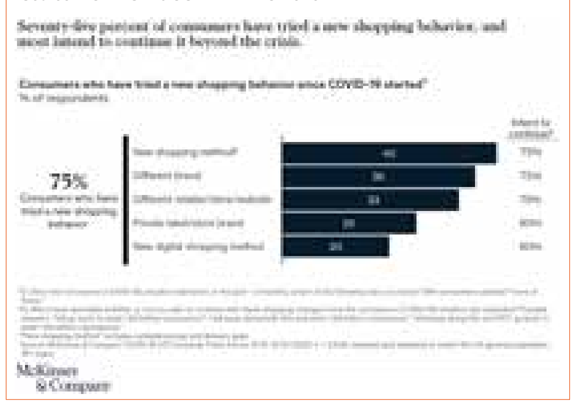
During the pandemic, shelves were completely emptied, forcing consumers to seek alternative products.

Many consumers had to switch brands and shopping methods due to stock shortages. A study found that most of them intend to continue with the new shopping method and new brands after the pandemic.

Source: The Star 30/5/2021

Source: Xinhuanet 17/3/2020

Source: MC KINSEY & COMPANY 4/8/2020



Although online shopping continues to be popular, physical retail is expected to remain relevant and experience an uptick of commercial activity in 2024.

Aftereffects of core functions relocating
COVID-19 pandemic disruption
Organic shifts and evolution of spaces
Intentional intervention and regeneration

Online retail became the new norm during the pandemic

According to DoSM, income generated from e-commerce surged 23.9% to RM1.037 trillion in 2021, up from RM675.4 billion in 2019.

2020

Source:The Star 11/6/2020


The Star
Malaysia's online retail sales up 28.9% in April

Source: Bernama 14/5/2020


Online shopping becoming new norm for Malaysians - Shopee

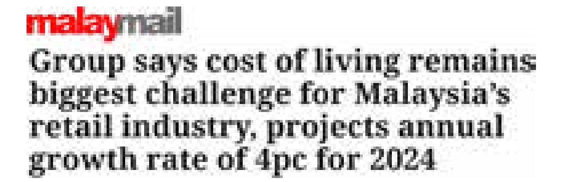
2021

Source: The Edge 20/10/2021


THE EDGE
Malaysia e-shopping king of the region, 9 out of 10 online by end-2021

Nonetheless, the growth predictions of physical stores are optimistic

Source: Malay Mail 11/3/2024

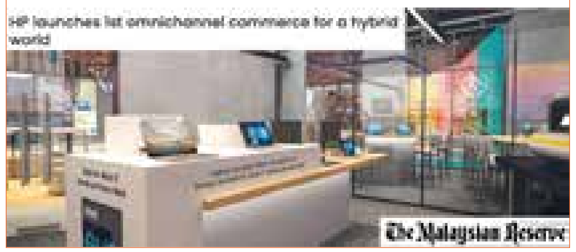

malaymail
Group says cost of living remains biggest challenge for Malaysia's retail industry, projects annual growth rate of 4pc for 2024

Physical retail remains a crucial component of omnichannel marketing, providing consumers with an integrated shopping experience that complements digital platforms.

Online and offline channels are no longer substitutes or competitors. *Instead, they are increasingly complementary; online channels provide convenience to consumers, but* ***offline channels offer important opportunities for consumer engagement, brand building, and pickup.***

— McKinsey, 24 December 2021

Source: The Malaysian Reserve 20/1/2022

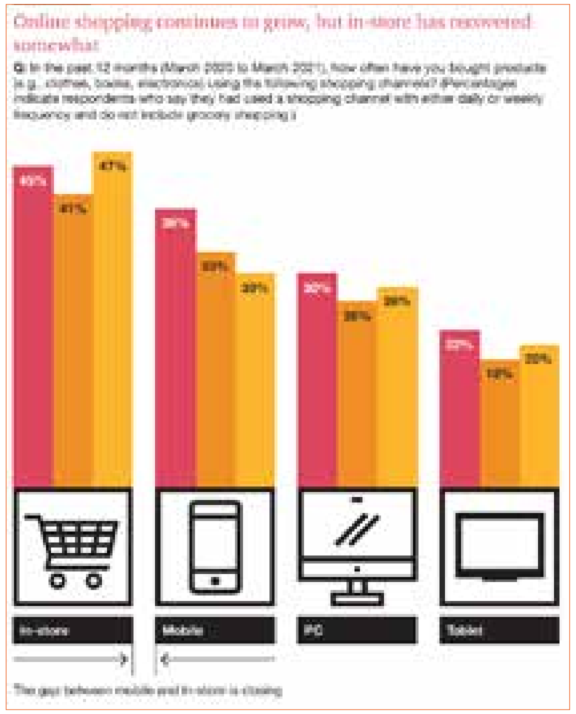


The hub is HP's first physical flagship store featuring an integrated online-to-offline experience, offering a seamless omnichannel, real-time, and immersive in-store experience.

Many consumers continue to prefer purchasing certain products, such as groceries and household appliances, through physical retail channels.

Findings from PwC's March 2021 Consumer Research indicate:

- Consumers favour **in-store shopping** for **clothing, electronics, and household items** to assess products before purchasing.
- **41% of those who shop daily or weekly** consider **physical stores** their preferred shopping channel.
- There is an **equal preference** between online and in-store purchases for groceries and household appliances.



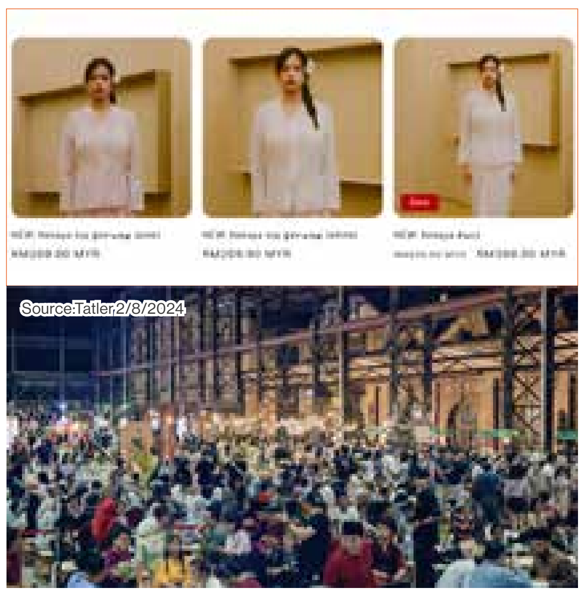
Sources: The Malaysian Reserve, PWC March 2021 Consumer Research; PWC June 2021 Consumer Research

The fashion industry continues to exhibit strong demand for physical retail stores, as customers prefer in-person shopping experiences for purchases.

Findings from the 2023 Think City business survey indicate that market trends and competition from online shopping are the two primary challenges faced by fashion businesses.

Larger retail brands tend to offer lower prices at physical stores, attracting cost-conscious consumers, while many small independent businesses primarily operate online, occasionally participating in weekend markets to reach niche customer segments.

Big retail brands such as Gio Fabrics (top left), Jasmina (top right), and Kamdar (bottom) maintain both online and physical stores.



Small independent stores such as SAA Studios (top) are fully online and occasionally participate in weekend pop-up markets.

Source:s: Gio Fabrics, Jasmina, SAA Studios, Kamdar (Facebook) and Tatler

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → COVID-19 pandemic disruption → Organic shifts and evolution of spaces → Intentional intervention and regeneration

Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (Jalan TAR) has long been a key destination for Raya shopping. However, sales in the area have been impacted by the rise of e-commerce platforms and road closures.

According to brooch and accessory trader Hakimi Mahadzir, 34, vendors and small traders have reported a substantial decline in revenue, with some experiencing losses of up to 80% compared to pre-pandemic levels. The growing popularity of online selling platforms such as TikTok has intensified competition, further affecting traditional retail businesses in the area.

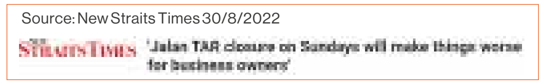
We estimate that the businesses, from department stores, carpet retailers and budget hotels to restaurants, are seeing a 50% loss.

— Barra's head of communications Datin Rohana Mohammad Nasir, The Star

Source: Bernama 5/4/2024


Sales Drop, Jalan Tar Traders Admit Challenges In Competing With E-commerce Platforms

Source: New Straits Times 30/8/2022


'Jalan TAR closure on Sundays will make things worse for business owners'

Source: The Star 15/4/2024


Traders plead with DBKL to rescind Jalan TAR closure on Sundays

Despite the rise of e-commerce, physical retail remains relevant, with Jalan TAR remaining a key destination for Raya shopping. Consumer preference for in-store shopping, particularly for festive purchases, sustains the area's popularity as a retail hub.

While online shopping is becoming increasingly popular, in-person shopping will not disappear, especially for Raya preparations, as ***people still crave the festive atmosphere.***

— Hanif Hashim, a Bulan Bintang clothing seller at Jalan TAR, (The Malaysian Reserve)

The average trader on Jalan TAR generates approximately RM7,000 in daily revenue during the Ramadhan period.

Source: Kosmo Digital 23/4/2022

It was reported that within 2 weeks, the crowd at Jalan TAR totaled up to 210,000.

The crowd at Jalan TAR during Ramadhan month captured in 2023

While many budget hotels were unable to sustain operations during the pandemic, the post-pandemic recovery phase has witnessed a significant increase in the establishment of boutique hotels.

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → **COVID-19 pandemic disruption** → Organic shifts and evolution of spaces → Intentional intervention and regeneration

The combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing popularity of short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb has led to the closure of numerous budget hotels in Malaysia.

Reduction in hotel staffs due to unstable business

Competitive forces (short-term rental i.e. Airbnb)

↓

Poor Services

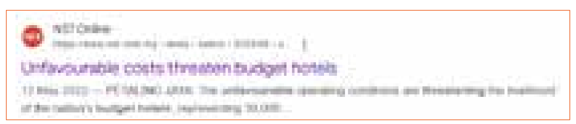
Poor Cleanliness

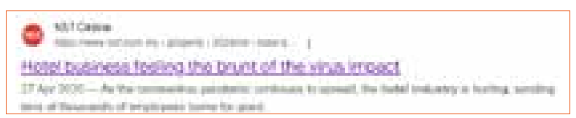
Poor Ratings

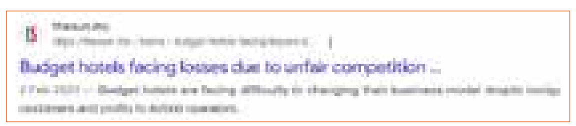
↓

Decline in Business

Closure



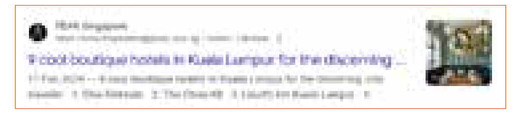


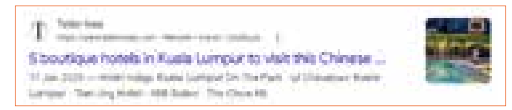


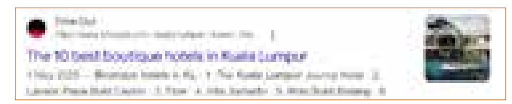
Conversely, the rise of remote working has contributed to the growth of boutique hotels, driven by increasing consumer demand for more customised experiences.

*Business travel + leisure travel = **bleisure travel**. It's a hybrid that's growing in popularity as work-life boundaries blur.*

— BBC Worklife







Forecasts indicate that consumer spending on travel will continue to increase in the coming years.

***Sixty-six percent of the travelers** we surveyed say they're **more interested in travel now than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.** Respondents also indicate that they're planning **more trips in 2024** than they did in 2023.*

— McKinsey, The State of Tourism and Hospitality 2024

Source:Forbes 26/10/2023

2024 Travel Trend: Consumers Plan To Spend More On Travel—Despite Rising Costs

Source:s: Malaysia Budget and Business Hotel Association (MyBHA) president Dr Sri Ganesh Michiel (The Sun 2022 interview)

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the service industry, leading to many businesses closing due to labour shortages and declining revenues.

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → **COVID-19 pandemic disruption** → Organic shifts and evolution of spaces → Intentional intervention and regeneration

The healthcare sector, in particular, has been significantly affected by labor shortages.

Private education institutions in Malaysia have historically struggled with financial sustainability, a challenge that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to an accelerated rate of closures.

*Malaysia grapples with doctor shortage as **housemen numbers fall by half since 2019.***

*According to data from the ministry's human reSource:s: division, seen by The Star, **there were 6,134 housemen in 2019, and 3,271 in 2023.***

— The Straits Times

Free Malaysia Today
Nursing shortage to hit 60% by 2030, says Dzulkefly

2020: The pandemic has caused a reduction in business

*Dr Koh Kar Chai, who runs a clinic in Kuala Lumpur, says "a large number" of GPs are reporting in various chat groups that **business has dropped 70-80% since the MCO came into effect on March 18.***

— Free Malaysia Today, 4 April 2020

The Malaysian Reserve
Health clinics not spared from pandemic impact

Survey: Half Of Private Clinics Mull Closure As Patient ...

2014: Clinics have been forced to close due to poor business

The Star
Clinics closed due to poor business

Private education institutions in Malaysia have historically struggled with financial sustainability, a challenge that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to an accelerated rate of closures.

Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and Universities (Mapcu) president Datuk Dr Parmjit Singh told the New Straits Times that up to 100, or one-fifth of the 440 private higher education institutions nationwide, were at risk of closure this year (2020).

Source:s: within the Education Ministry also corroborated this, saying 49 per cent of the institutions in the country had been making continuous losses over a three-year period from 2016.

— New Straits Times, 18 June 2020

Private universities, colleges risk permanent closure

Education Ministry: 21,316 students quit school during COVID-19 months of March 2020 to July 2021

Personal services struggled severely due to forced closures during the pandemic

NST Online
MCO 2.0: Barbers face bleak future

The Malaysian Reserve
Tough times for wedding, event planners

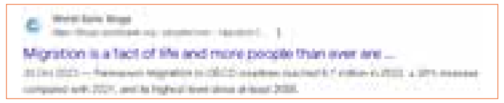
Source: New Straits Times 11/4/2020
Straits Times
Covid-19 destroys flower growers dream, no demand for the blooms

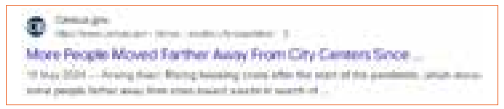
The natural evolution of spaces and people have altered the business environment in the KLCCD Core Zone.

Over time, population movement and economic opportunities lead to an organic shift in spaces.

Malaysians started moving out of this area (Selangor Mansion and Malayan Mansion) in the 1990s. Businesses in this area have since then changed with the shift in communities.

— Masjid India, Ustaz Nasrul





Intra-state migration by migration flow showed that migration from ***urban to urban remained the highest at 79.3%*** *followed by* ***urban to rural at 14.7%, rural to urban 2.4%*** *and* ***rural to rural 3.6%***.

— Chief Statistician Datuk Seri Mohd Uzir Mahidin, DOSM (Malay Mail, 17 August 2023)


Source: Malay Mail 17/8/2023

Aftereffects of core functions relocating → COVID-19 pandemic disruption → **Organic shifts and evolution of spaces** → Intentional intervention and regeneration

The absence of successors has led to the closure of many long-standing businesses.

According to the Heritage Trades and Traditional Businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone study conducted by IIUM and Think City, a significant number of traditional trade businesses are at risk of disappearing due to the lack of inheritors to continue their operations.

There are no inheritors. Descendants are not interested in tailoring, and there is no one with adequate skills.

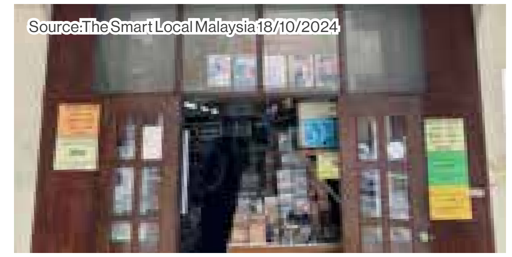
— Ibrahim, Tailor located at Wisma Yakin, 2016

Rather than pursuing job stability like the older generations, the younger generation are more driven by passion and work life balance.

Nearly 90% of Gen Zs and millennials want purposedriven work, and they are not afraid to turn down work that doesn't align with their values.

Work/life balance is the top consideration when Gen Zs and millennials are choosing an employer.

— Deloitte 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey


Source: The Smart Local Malaysia 18/10/2024

Junk Book Store is a second generation family business with no inheritors.


Source: Lunaticg 20/1/2009

Syarikat Tai Fatt Heng which does antiquarian trading is a third-generation business that has ceased to exist in 2017.

Source: NIKKEI Asia 9/10/2017

Japan's 1.2 million heirless businesses at risk of closure

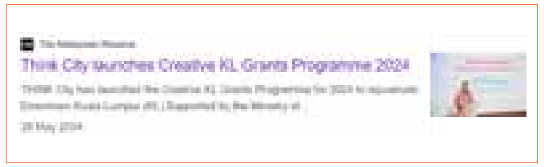
The transformation of spaces within the KLCCD Core Zone has been driven by targeted physical interventions, leading to the introduction of a more diverse range of businesses. This shift has resulted in a change in the function of these spaces, reflecting the evolving commercial landscape.

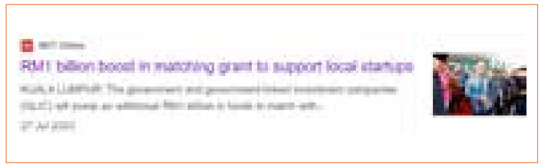
Business grants

Riwayat Bookstore offers a wide range of new and used books on historical, non-fiction and literary works; and often doubles as an event space.


Source:The Sun 15/3/2021

Sompo Welfare Foundation grants RM37,000 to Silent Teddies Bakery


Think City launches Creative KL Grants Programme 2024


RM1 billion boost in matching grant to support local startups

Facade restoration

Lebuh Ampang shophouse restored by Think City in collaboration with DBKL and CGB Consultants (Ar. Junn Ng, Conservation Architect).

Kwai Chai Hong, previously an abandoned row of shoplots, is now a thriving lane with local businesses after facade treatment with curated content.

The transformation of spaces within the KLCCD Core Zone has been driven by targeted physical interventions, leading to the introduction of a more diverse range of businesses. This shift has resulted in a change in the function of these spaces, reflecting the evolving commercial landscape. (continued)

Space activation and public realm improvements

Arts on the Move at the Pasar Seni MRT Station by Think City and RapidKL with the support of Yayasan Hasanah and Citi Foundation.

Semua House, a longstanding shopping centre, has undergone recent revitalisation and now serves as a hub for numerous independent homegrown brands.

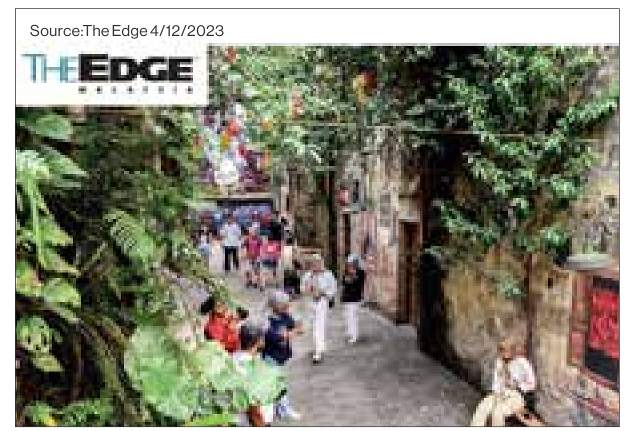
REX KL, restored from an old cinema—now offers a theatre, event space and retail. This project was executed by a group of creative entrepreneurs led by Shin Tseng and Shin Chang.

The Godown Arts Centre has been repurposed from an old warehouse into a dedicated arts and event space.

The beautification of Lorong Bandar 11 was carried out under the Our Lorong Campaign, a collaboration between Think City and DBKL.

Physical interventions have led to the functional transformation of spaces, adapting them to evolving urban and commercial needs.

Kwai Chai Hong in Jalan Panggung was restored from a neglected lane, and is now a famous tourist attraction.



A revitalised back alley attracts crowds back to KL's Chinatown

Catalysing Growth Through Creative & Cultural Industries

Chapter 4

Creative and cultural industries (CCI) such as Fashion, Textiles and Clothing; and Restaurant/ Bar—Food and Beverage are bringing visitors back to the KLCCD Core Zone.

Despite the growth of e-commerce, there remains a strong demand for the physical shopping experience, especially during festive seasons.

According to a survey, three out of four Malaysians perceive online shopping as merely convenient, while they associate physical stores with pleasurable shopping.*

— Survey commissioned by Ayden and sponsored by KPMG, as reported in The Star, 3 August 2022.

Source: New Straits Times 1/9/2023

Experts: Brick-and-mortar retail stores are here to stay

*For them, it is not just about purchasing Aidilfitri items; **it is about upholding traditions, supporting local businesses, and experiencing the vibrant atmosphere of the bazaars firsthand***

— Che Ku Zaiton Che Ku Hitam, homemade cookie seller at Jalan TAR (The Malaysian Reserve)

Source: New Straits Times 7/4/2024

Jalan TAR sees surge in last-minute shoppers

Sometimes, when we purchase online, the clothing doesn't fit our size perfectly and the fabric may not meet our expectations.

That's why I prefer browsing through bazaars or boutiques to ensure I find the right size and fabric material I desire.

— Salmiah Ahmad, 48, from Keramat (Malay Mail)

The myriad of up-and-coming eateries in the heart of Kuala Lumpur hold immense potential in boost-ing the local economy. Petaling Street is home to a wide range of restaurants and bars, each with a unique offering. Nearby, Jalan Tun HS Lee is also a hotspot for cafes and Malaysian-style kopitiams that pay tribute to the city's rich cultural history.

Petaling Street

Source: Lemon8 27/2/2023

Restoran Mee Tarik on Petaling St

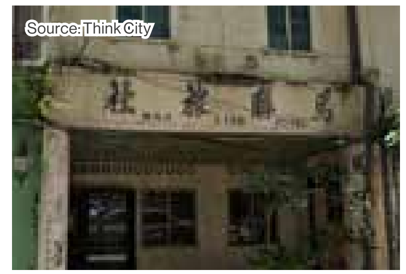
Source: Think City

Da Bao founded in 2020

Source: Think City

Wildflowers established in 2019

Source: Think City



Chocha Foodstore founded in 2016

Source: Think City

Merchant's Lane founded in 2015

Jalan Tun HS Lee

Source: The Edge 1/6/2023

Streetscapes: Busy historical street in the heart of the city

Source: Think City

Kafe Kleptokrat (left), Timothy Cafe (midddle), and LOKL Coffee (right) are cafes on Jalan Tun HS Lee

Along this stretch, there are many cafés and kopitiams offering a wide array of food, ranging from local delights to Western cuisine
— The Edge Malaysia

However, the area's current activities are mostly limited to Precincts 2 (Traditional Shopping Street), 3 (Heritage Triangle), and 5 (Petaling Street).

Fashion-related businesses are predominantly clustered in the northern core zone, whilst Arts and Crafts are more clustered in Pasar Seni.

Figure 4.1: Density of creative & cultural industries (CCI)

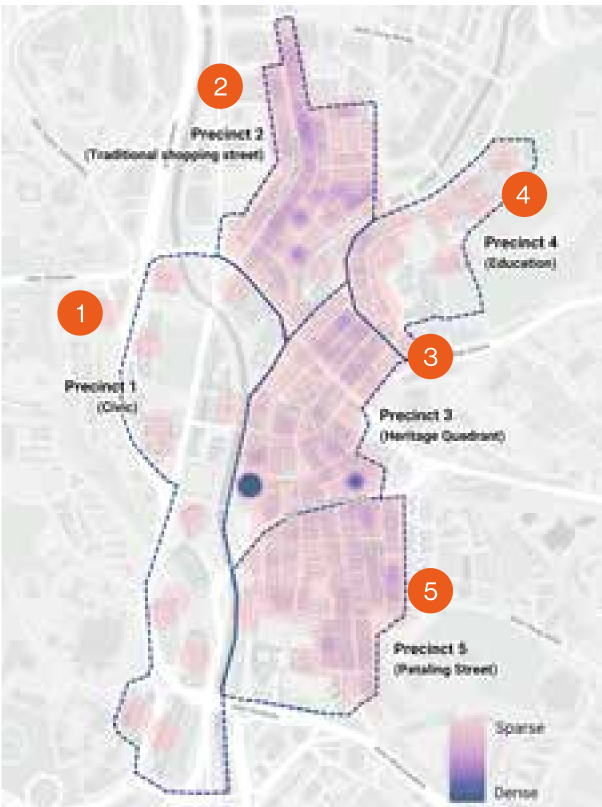
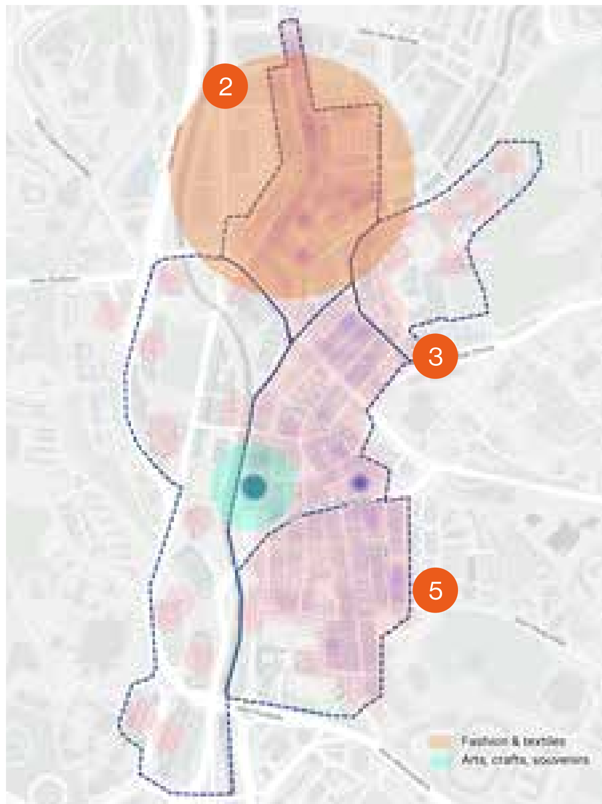


Figure 4.2: Sub-clusters of creative & cultural industries (CCI)



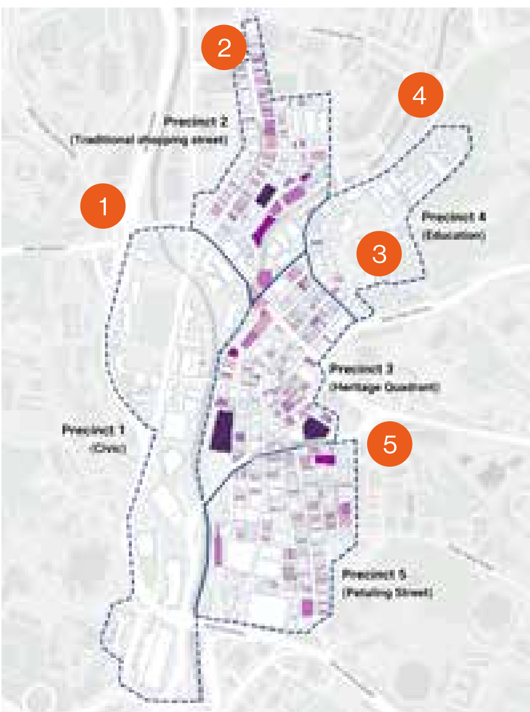
Fashion, clothing, and textiles and Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage lead the way in C&C businesses in the area.

Table 4.1: Breakdown of Creative and Culture businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone

Entity Categories	No.	%
Fashion, Clothing, and Textiles	429	32.9
Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage	322	24.7
Hotel or Tourism Accommodation	91	7.0
Art, Culture and Crafts	89	6.8
Personal Servies	74	5.7
Travel and Tourism Servies	73	5.6
Food Produce and Beverage (Production and/or Sale)	43	3.3
TV, Electronics and Computer	38	2.9
Office Supplies, Stationery, Photo, Books and Printing	35	2.7
Religious/Cultural Product/Services	32	2.5
Education and Research	22	1.7
Recreation, Hobby, Pets, Entertainment and Leisure	21	1.6
Household Goods and Services	15	1.2
Industry Supplies and Services	9	0.7
Motor Vehicle, Motorcycle, Machinery and Bicycle and Related Retail	7	0.5
Media, Marketing and Graphic Design Related Services	4	0.3

Precincts 2, 3, and 5 recorded the highest concentration of new business establishments, primarily driven by the Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage and Fashion, Clothing, and Textiles sectors. A total of 119 entities within the Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage category commenced operations within the 5 years leading up to 2023, followed closely by 113 entities in the Fashion, Textiles and Clothing sector.

Figure 4.3: Density of businesses 0–5 years old

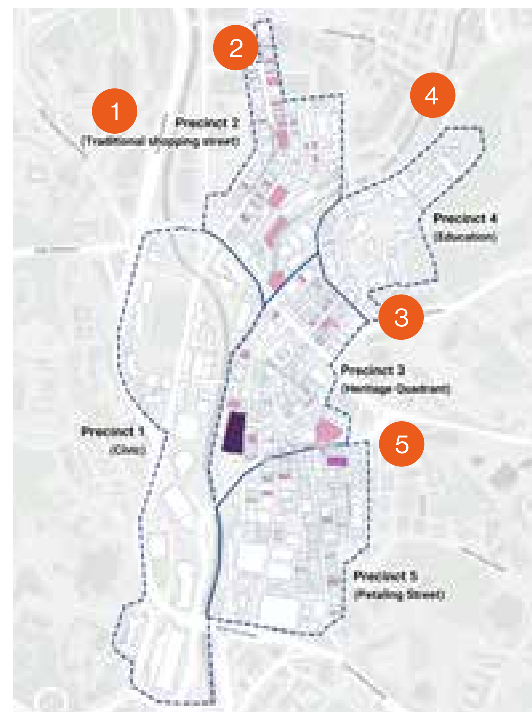


1
2–5
6–10
11–28

Figure 4.4: Top 10 Business type of businesses 0–5 years old

Of these new businesses, 56 Fashion, Textiles and Clothing businesses and 52 Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage businesses began operations post-pandemic.

Figure 4.5: Density of businesses < 2 years old



1
2–5
6–10
11–17

Figure 4.6: Top 5 Business types of businesses opened after COVID-19 pandemic (0–2 years old)

There is a great opportunity to boost growth for both new and long-standing CCI businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone.

Fung Wong Biscuits

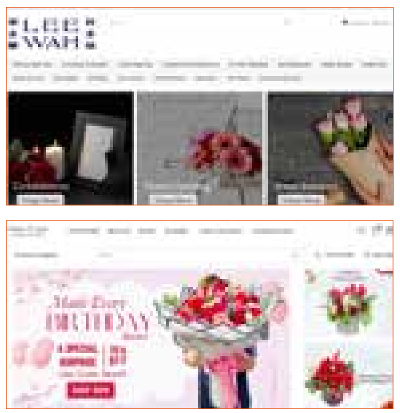
Fung Wong: The story of a 113-year-old Chinese pastry shop in Petaling Street and its new hip home

Fung Wong Biscuits pivoted to a contemporary direction, revitalising their brand to attract new customers.

Fung Wong Biscuits retained its traditional elements in their current box design.

Lee Wah and Weng Hoa

Lee Wah Florist and Weng Hoa Florist have long been established names in the KLCCD Core Zone, each with a distinct historical presence. Known for their fresh flowers and competitive pricing, both florists have built a strong and loyal customer base. Additionally, their online platforms have further expanded their reach, driving business growth.



Screenshots from Lee Wah and Weng Hoa websites.

A 2023 Think City survey of Kuala Lumpur-based businesses revealed several key insights. Notably, none of the surveyed businesses expressed plans to significantly reduce their investment expenditure. Furthermore, only a very small number indicated any intention to decrease their workforce, regardless of profit performance. Despite experiencing a dip in profits, the majority of business owners remain optimistic, predicting that their businesses will continue to operate.

Art House Gallery Museum Of Ethnic Arts

Art House Gallery Museum Of Ethnic Arts, located in Pasar Seni features native art from East Malaysia, opened its doors in 2009.

There is also potential for growth in the street vendor scene as the demographic shift within the KLCC Core Zone has led to a more diverse customer base and an expanded range of offerings.

The survey site covers the vibrant street vendor scene in the heart of KL

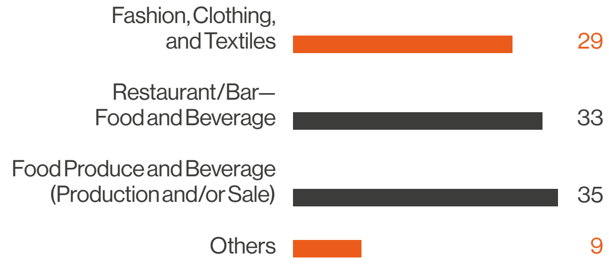
Figure 4.7: Street vendors surveyed in the study

- Business unable to categorise
- Fashion, Clothing, Textiles–Accessories
- Fashion, Clothing, Textiles–Clothing
- F&B–Production/Sale
- F&B–Stall
- General Storage
- Vacant
- Others

Note: Not all street vendors are covered in the survey due to varying business operating hours.

The street vendors primarily sell food and beverages, while others are from the fashion industry

Figure 4.8: Street Vendors Grouped by Sectors



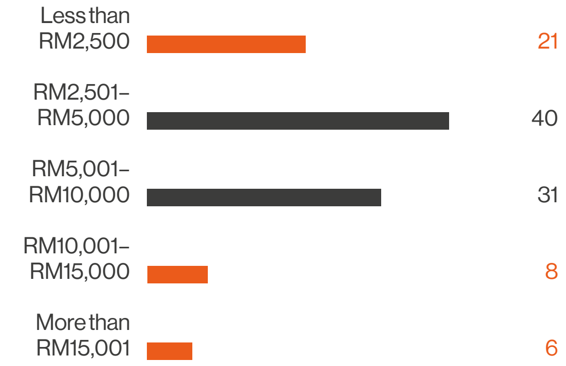
Respondents: 106

Madras Lane's famous curry laksa and yong tau foo

Street Vendor Survey

Street vendors surveyed predominantly make RM2,501–RM 10,000 a month

Figure 4.9: Street Vendors Grouped by Monthly Sales



Respondents: 106

Street vendors' ethnic flavours are diversified and frequented by Malaysians and non-Malaysians alike

Figure 4.10: Street Vendors Grouped by Customer Nationality

Respondents: 106

Figure 4.11: Street Vendors Grouped by Product Ethnic Background

Respondents: 106

Note: The street vendors were given the option to choose more than one option for the survey.

With the right support and intervention, street vendors can play a significant role in boosting night-time activity and tourism in the area.

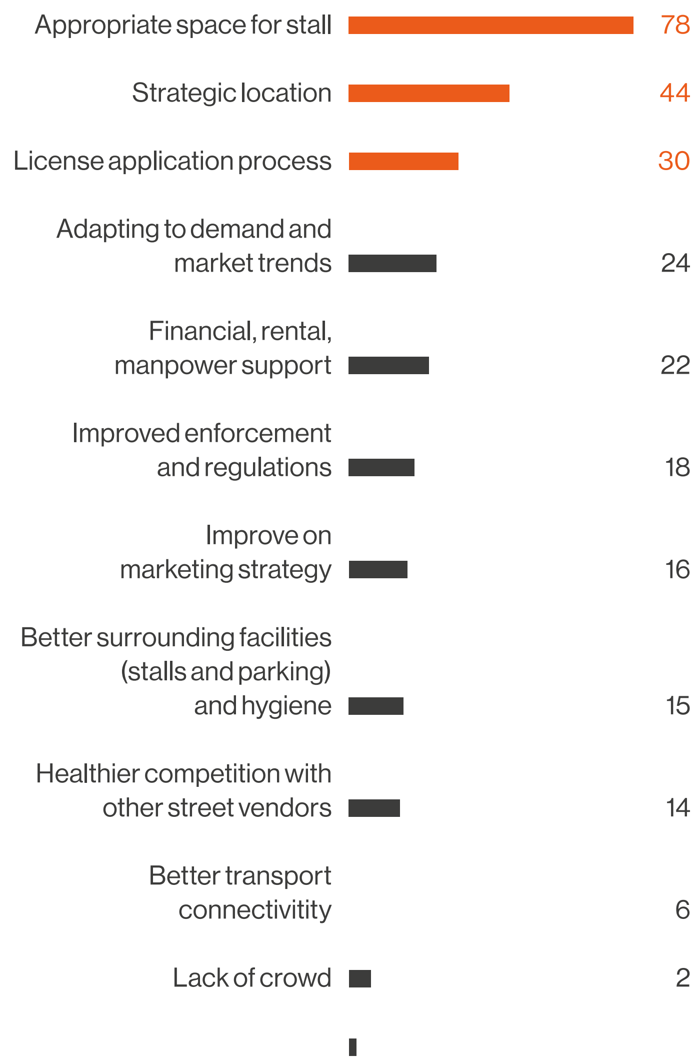
Street vendors are most affected by high operating costs, limited spaces and shifting market trends

Figure 4.12: Street Vendors Grouped by Challenges

Respondents: 106

Street vendors prioritised improvements on appropriate space for their stalls, strategic locations and the license application process

Figure 4.13: Street Vendors Grouped by Prioritised Improvements



Respondents: 106

Street vendors can contribute to the vibrant night-time activities and tourism

Humdrum by day, vibrant by night, Jalan Alor continues to pull crowds

In The Mood For Food: Celebrating the Best of Malaysian Street Food

Similarly, the traditional trades require sustainable forms of support and intervention, as they are key to the area's heritage and contribute significantly to the cultural economy of the area.

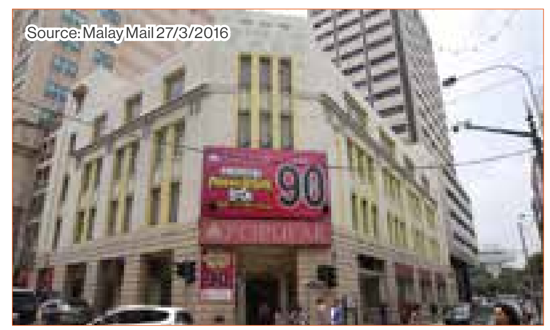
Figure 4.14: Location of 91 traditional trades recorded in SMP 2019.

Figure 4.15: Location of 74 traditional trades remaining in 2023

- Arts & Hobby
- Books & Printing
- Food & Beverages
- Fashion & Textiles
- Health & Medicine
- Mixed Service
- Personal Service
- Retail

Iconic traditional businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone have had to shut down due to emerging trends and the lull during the pandemic

Kopitiam Sin Hoy How on Jalan HS Lee shut its doors in 2021 after operating for 84 years.

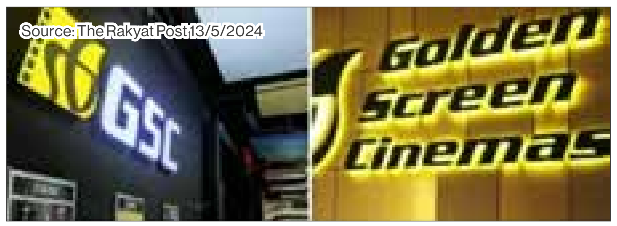


After serving a million customers, Popular to close bookstore in Petaling Street

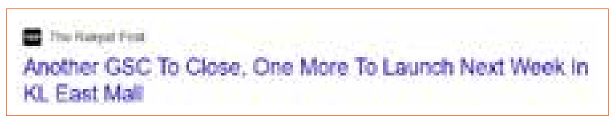
KL icon Coliseum Cafe on Jalan TAR shuts for good, a victim of pandemic

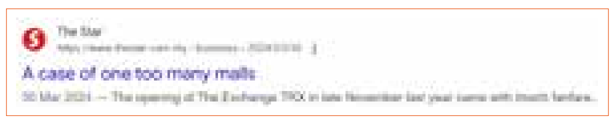
However, for place-based interventions to be truly sustainable, they must adopt a holistic approach that considers local dynamics. This ensures that efforts are not one-dimensional and that they generate meaningful, long-term value.

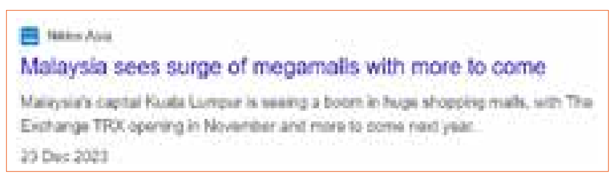
An excess of malls in KL result in businesses prioritising newer malls with higher footfall.



"Too Many Malls" – GSC To Close More Cinemas This Year


Another GSC To Close, One More To Launch Next Week In KL East Mall


The Star
A case of one too many malls


Nikkei Asia
Malaysia sees surge of megamalls with more to come
Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur is seeing a boom in huge shopping malls, with The Exchange TRX opening in November and more to come next year.
23 Dec 2023

Successful retail spaces are diversified—providing their visitors experiences that are irreplicable online.


Create Your Own Indigo Denim in Kojima, Okayama Prefecture—The Home of Japanese Denim

Laneige Korea offers personalised foundation shades through physical consultation at their MyeongDong flagship store, attracting consumers from all around the world to visit their store.

Camden Market in London is well known for its diverse community of creatives and independent stores as well as street food options.

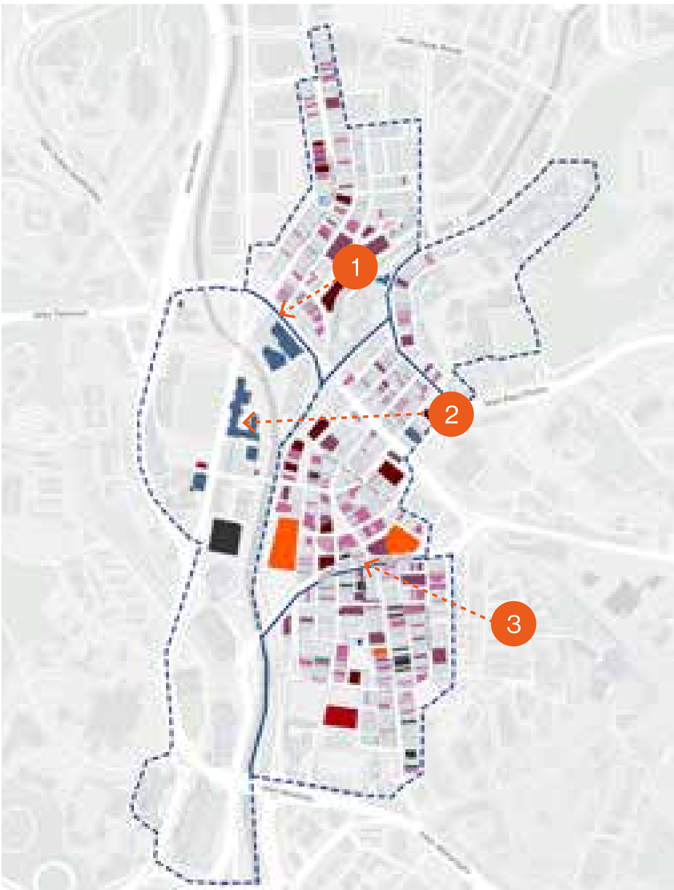
Zhongshan building situated at Kampung Attap, Kuala Lumpur houses many local brands ranging from eateries to stationeries, and it also doubles as a creative event space.

Hin Bus Depot in Penang houses eateries, bars, workshops. It also functions as an event space for weekend markets, weekly screening and even has a skate ramp.

Source:s: Laneige, Vecteezy, Arts Equator, TimeOut, Viator

Vacant buildings present valuable opportunities for adaptive reuse and with the right support and intervention, can significantly revitalise their surroundings, driving broader urban transformation.

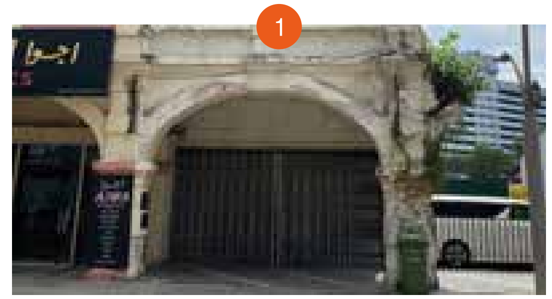
Figure 4.16: 2023 Buildings with vacancies by building type



- Shophouses (1-2 stories)
- Low-rise shophouse (3-5 stories)
- Medium-rise shophouse (6-10 stories)
- High-rise (Above 10 stories)
- Institutional building
- Infrastructure/Facility
- Wood/Metal Shed
- Place of worship
- Bungalow/Landed house
- Special-purpose
- Shopping complex
- Warehouse/Workshop/ Factory
- Vacant land

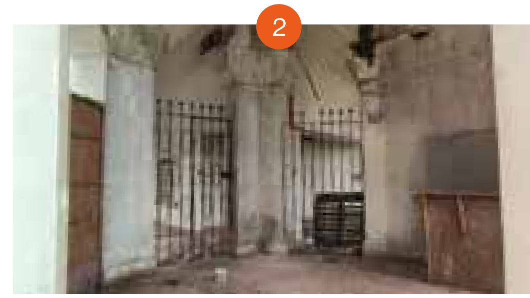
Many buildings in the area have been vacant for many years, and have immense potential to be adaptively reused for C&C.

1



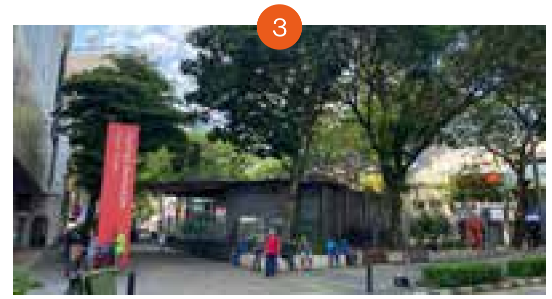
Shop lots at Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman

2



Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad

3



Empty building at Segitiga Bersejarah

Unique spaces in the heart of Kuala Lumpur have been repurposed into creative and cultural spaces.

REXKL, an old iconic cinema reborn into a unique arts and culture hub.

2017

2024

2024

Pucks Coffee, repurposed a vacant lot and transformed it into a cafe, and soon-to-be-opened event space with film development facilities.

Source: Eat Drink KL

Physical cultural assets, such as shophouses and institutional buildings play a crucial role in shaping the area's identity. As finite historical artefacts, they should be leveraged to maintain the unique character of the KLCCD Core Zone.

Heritage buildings, especially traditional shophouses are increasing in value

Owner of Perniagaan Zhang at Lebuh Armenian here, who only wanted to be known as Chong, said properties within the George Town heritage enclave were now going for millions of ringgit. ***One of the pre-war shophouses nearby was sold for about RM6 million.***

— New Straits Times, 6 February 2017


Bloomberg.com
Singapore's $20 Million Shophouses Are Blazing-Hot Properties
In the island nation's real estate market, the distinctive two- to three-story row buildings can fetch $4000 a square foot.
11 Oct 2023

Heritage buildings in foreign hands

The Integration of Global Brands into Heritage Buildings

Global brands increasingly establish their presence in heritage buildings, leveraging their unique architectural and historical significance to strengthen brand identity and enhance customer experience. The intersection of commercial viability, historical preservation, and architectural innovation plays a fundamental role in such developments.

Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli emphasise the importance of this approach, stating that the assessment of practical, commercial, and historical aspects of buildings has been integral to Prada's operations. This commitment is reflected in the brand's dedication to both contemporary architectural experimentation and the meticulous preservation of historic structure.

Similarly, Apple's Senior Vice President of Retail + People, Deirdre O'Brien, highlights the brand's investment in cultural heritage through its new store, which serves as a tribute to Roman history and art. Through initiatives such as the "Made in Rome" programme and Today at Apple sessions, the company aims to foster creativity and engage with the local community, further reinforcing the value of heritage spaces in modern retail strategies.

Prada Rong Zhai, a restored early 20th century mansion in central Shanghai.

Apple Via del Corso, originally home of Marquis Filippo Marignoli and housed Caffè Aragno.

Well-known homegrown coffee restaurant chain—Old Town White Coffee is leading the movement to occupy historical buildings or cultural buildings.

A beautifully restored colonial building on Ipoh's Jalan Panglima is now ready to welcome visitors and coffee enthusiasts. The three-storey building features a heritage gallery, which puts together the story of the "kopitiam" chain, OldTown White Coffee and also Perak's coffee history.

— The Star, 1 June 2024

Source:s: Dezeen, Prada (Facebook), Handout

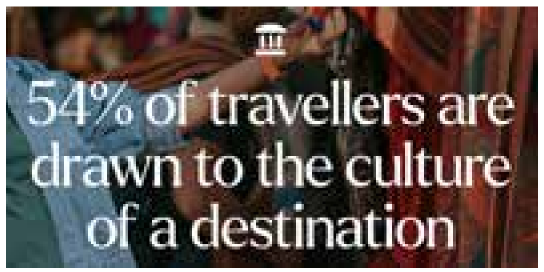
The Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Buildings in the Hospitality Sector

The transformation of heritage buildings into boutique hotels serves as a compelling example of successful adaptive reuse, aligning with the increasing demand for cultural and experiential travel. Tourists are actively seeking unique, immersive experiences that blend local heritage with modern hospitality offerings.

Industry data highlights this trend, with demand for boutique hotels increasing by 8% year-over-year in the first half of 2023, compared to a 6% rise for non-boutique hotels within the same category in the United States (The Highland Group). Furthermore, 89% of tourism service providers report heightened demand for experiential travel, which prioritises personalised and distinctive leisure experiences over conventional tourism (Flyware).

A notable case study is Else Hotel, a boutique establishment situated in Kuala Lumpur's historic Lee Rubber Building within Petaling Street. The hotel integrates contemporary interior design with elements of Malaysian culture, preserving the character of its heritage structure while catering to modern travelers. As highlighted by Vogue Singapore (30 July 2023), "Else [Hotel] tries to spotlight as much of Malaysian culture as possible... Occupying the historic Lee Rubber Building, once known for being the tallest building in Chinatown at seven stories, the hotel's blend of heritage and modernity is striking."

These developments underscore the role of heritage preservation in enhancing tourism offerings, demonstrating how architectural conservation and contemporary hospitality can coexist to meet evolving market demands.



The KLCCD Core Zone houses up-and-coming boutique hotels with unique cultural elements

Tian Jing Hotel is built based on traditional Chinese architecture, with furniture that reflects a rich Chinese heritage.

Sources: Vogue Singapore, Small Luxury Hotels, Tian Jing Hotel site, Agoda, Eat Drink KL

Leveraging Creative and Cultural Assets for Urban Revitalisation

The current state of the KLCCD Core Zone presents a strategic opportunity to optimise its underutilised creative and cultural assets, fostering positive urban transformation for both the city and its residents. By drawing on international and local precedents, the revitalisation of KLCCD can enhance economic activity, cultural vibrancy, and community engagement.

A relevant case study is Briggate Street, UK, which was historically characterised by urban decline but underwent a significant transformation into a thriving commercial and cultural hub. In 2014, the street was pedestrianised and enhanced with improved public spaces, facilitating greater accessibility to retail and business establishments. These interventions led to increased footfall and contributed to an improved urban atmosphere, reinforcing the area's attractiveness for both residents and visitors.

Similar successes have been documented within Kuala Lumpur, where heritage and creative spaces have been revitalised to stimulate economic and social benefits. By adopting a strategic approach to urban regeneration, KLCCD has the potential to establish itself as a dynamic center for cultural and creative industries, reinforcing its role in the city's broader economic and social development.

Briggate Streets in Leeds, United Kingdom—one of the oldest streets in Leeds, with a history since 13th century.

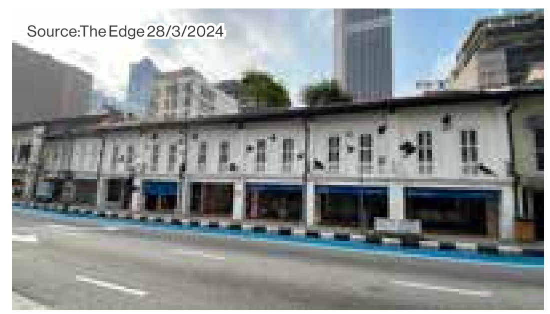
Lorong Bandar 11 is transformed into an engaging space with beautiful murals.

Article dated 13 October 2021, depicting the slum area between Briggate and Vicar Lane in the early 19th century.

Prior to its renovation, the Zhongshan building was a workers' hostel.

The art installation Oculus is located near the Pasar Seni MRT Station.

The Zhongshan building now houses independent bookstores, F&B outlets, a record store and a music-focused community space.



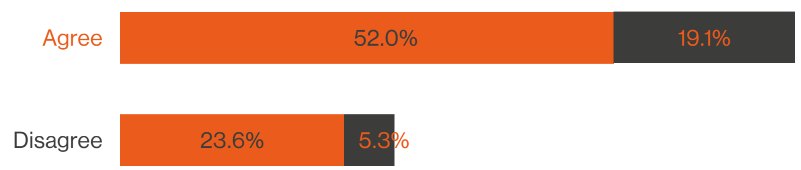
High Streets Studios on Jalan HS Lee was previously a backpacker hostel that shut down due to the pandemic. It now houses shop lots for creative businesses such as Riwayat—an independent bookstore selling local and international books that are new, old and rare.

REX KL, a refurbished old cinema, now provides space for community events, exhibitions, and music events.

Momentum is building for creative and cultural content in the city centre, driven by increasing demand. With the wealth of assets available within the KLCCD Core Zone, this potential can be fully realised, further enriching the city's cultural landscape.

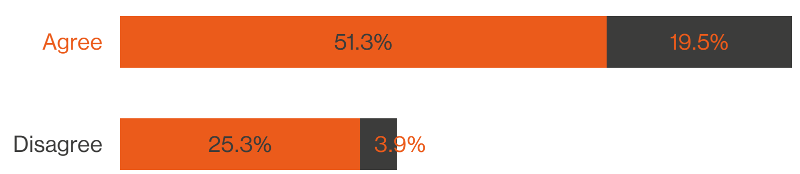
71% of public survey respondents were aware of creative and cultural events and programmes in the KL City Centre.

Figure 4.18: Respondents on their awareness of creative and cultural events and programmes in the KL City Centre



- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

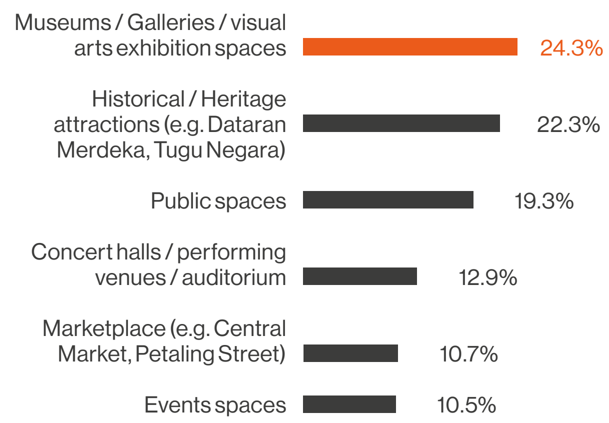
Figure 4.19: Respondents on their engagement and attendance to creative and cultural events / places in KL City Centre



- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

The top 3 activities on respondents' wishlist are visits to museums / galleries / visual arts exhibitions, historical / heritage attractions and public spaces—all available in the KLCCD Core Zone and have the potential to be destinations with the right intervention.

Figure 4.20: Respondents on which Creative and Cultural activities they wish to see in the near future



Museum / Galleries / Visual Arts Exhibitions

Muzium Telekom

National Textile Museum

Historical / Heritage attractions

Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad

Masjid Jamek

Public Spaces


Dataran Merdeka

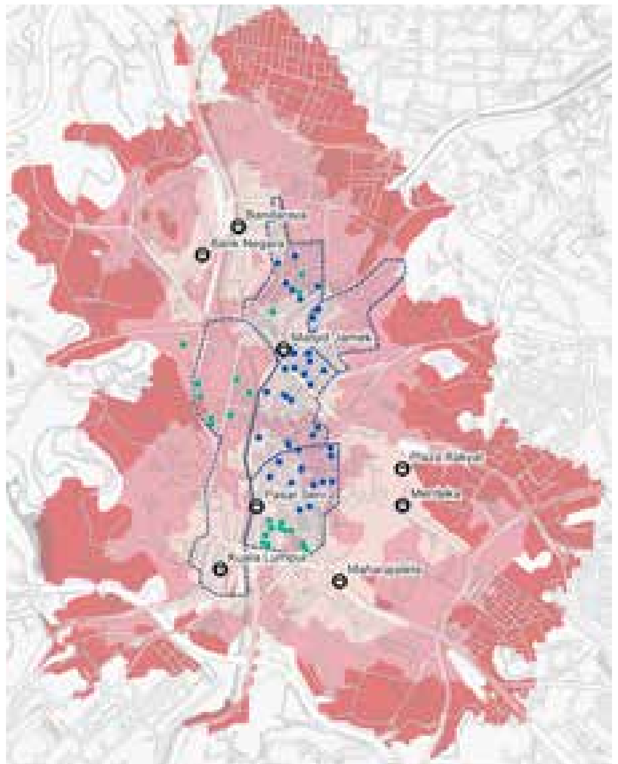

Segitiga Bersejarah

Total responses: 487
Male: 225 | Female: 254 | Not disclosed: 8
Live: 53 | Live + Work/Study: 169 | Work + Study: 12

The KLCCD Core Zone offers numerous attractive pull factors, including its central location and strong connectivity to surrounding areas. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in addressing congestion and pollution to enhance its overall liveability.

The KLCCD Core Zone is one of the most connected areas in Malaysia, as the entire area is within a 10-min walk of a public transit station.

Figure 4.21: Accessibility of the area, layered with Healthcare and Government services entities surveyed in Year 2023



Government service
Healthcare service
Train station

Walking catchment
5-minute
10-minute
15-minute

88.7% of respondents currently living in KL City Centre foresee continued living in the area in the next 3 years.

Figure 4.22: KL-ite respondents currently living in the KL City Centre foresee themselves continue living in the area in the next 3 years

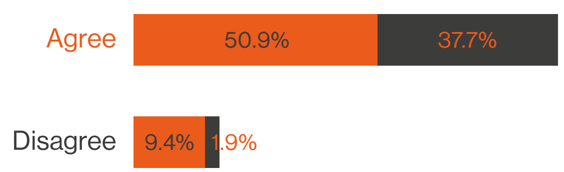
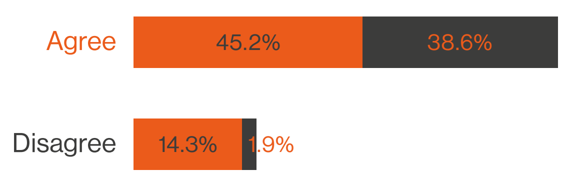


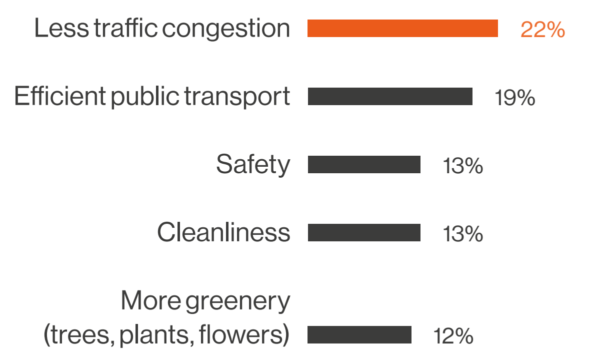
Figure 4.23: KL-ite respondents currently working / studying in the KL City foresee themselves living in the area in the next 3 years



Agree
Strongly agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

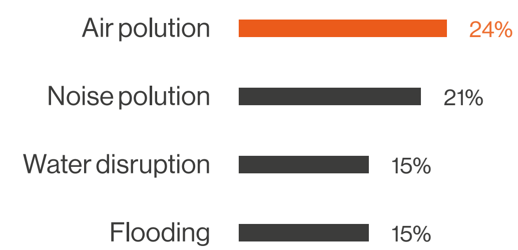
Less traffic congestion, more efficient public transport and cleanliness were the consistent top 3 most requested improvements.

Figure 4.24: Top 5 Important improvements KL-ites wish to see in the future for the KL City Centre area



Air pollution and noise pollution are the highest voted environment-related extremity affecting KL-ites when in the KL City Centre area.

Figure 4.25: Top 4 environment-related extremities affecting KL-ites when in the KL City Centre



Total responses: 487
Male: 225 | Female: 254 | Not disclosed: 8
Live: 53 | Live + Work/Study: 169 | Work + Study: 12

The area's cultural assets hold immense potential for activation, but ensuring universal access is essential. Championing inclusivity and accessibility for persons with disabilities will allow a broader audience to engage with and benefit from these cultural spaces.

In the context of this study, 'accessibility' specifically refers to the ability of persons with disabilities (PWD) to navigate from the entrance to and within the interior of a building. This includes the ease with which PWD can access and utilise facilities within the building premises. However, further efforts are required to ensure seamless accessibility from public transit hubs to the streets and ultimately to each destination in the area.

33% of all respondents agree the KL City Centre provide good access for family, elderly, and those with disabilities.

Figure 4.26: Breakdown of building accessibility for PWD within the KLCCD Core Zone

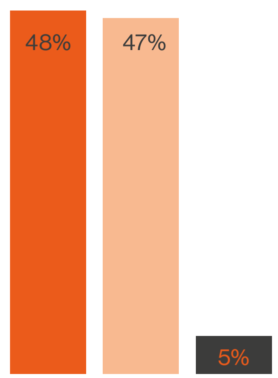
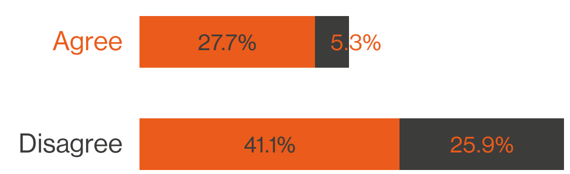


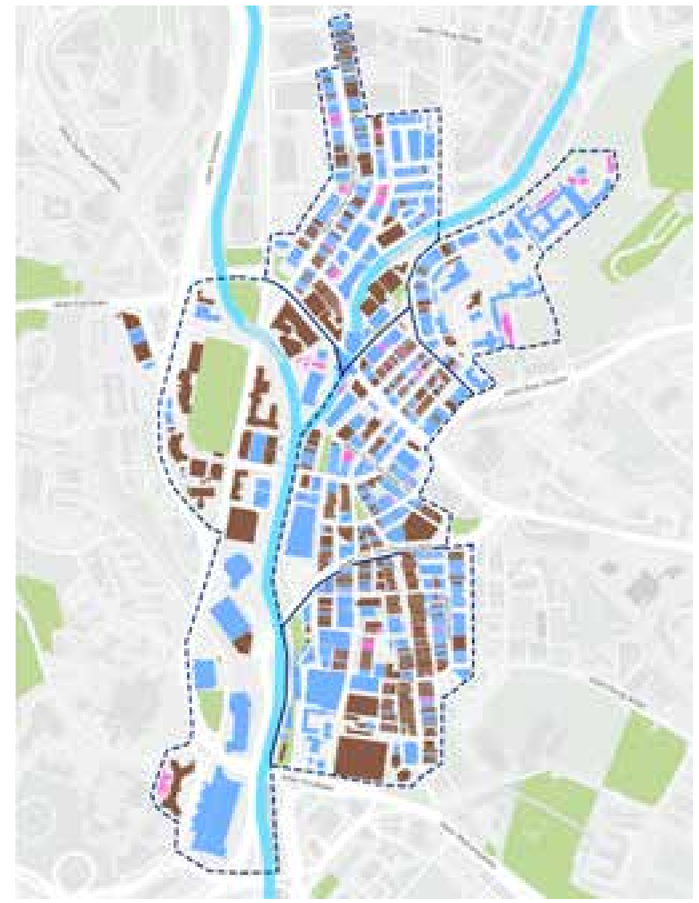
Figure 4.27: All responses for perceived accessibility of KL City Centre public spaces for families, elderly, and those with wide range of disabilities



Perception Survey

Figure 4.28: Lift (top) and accessibility ramp (bottom) at Masjid Jamek LRT station

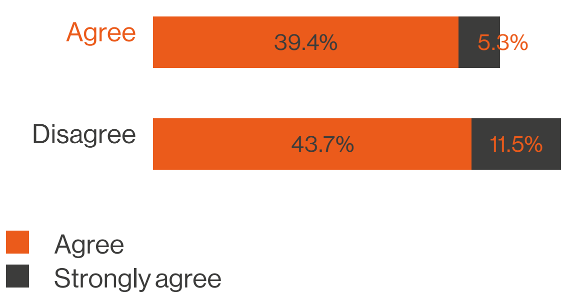
Figure 4.29: Building accessibility (interior) to PWD users



Additionally, improvement and activation of the public realm would complement the city's assets, enhancing accessibility and walking experience between these destination nodes.

44.7% of all respondents agree that KL City Centre areas are typically clean.

Figure 4.30: Responses for perceived cleanliness of the KL City Centre area



Litter is found in the public spaces of the KLCCD Core Zone (pictures taken in the Heritage Triangle Precinct)

Public perception on the adequacy of public and green spaces within KL City Centre is split.

Figure 4.31: Respondents' agreement on the quality and quantity of parks and green spaces in KL City Centre

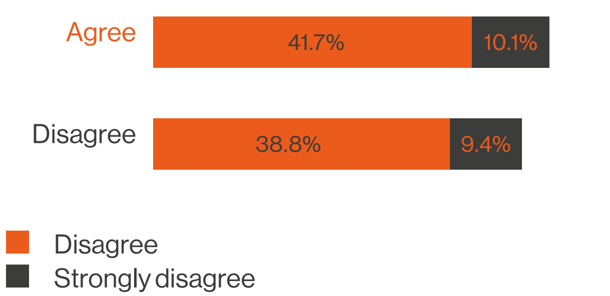
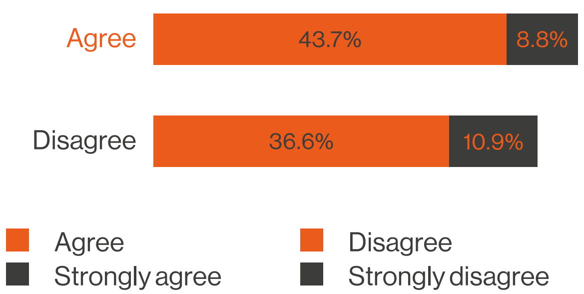
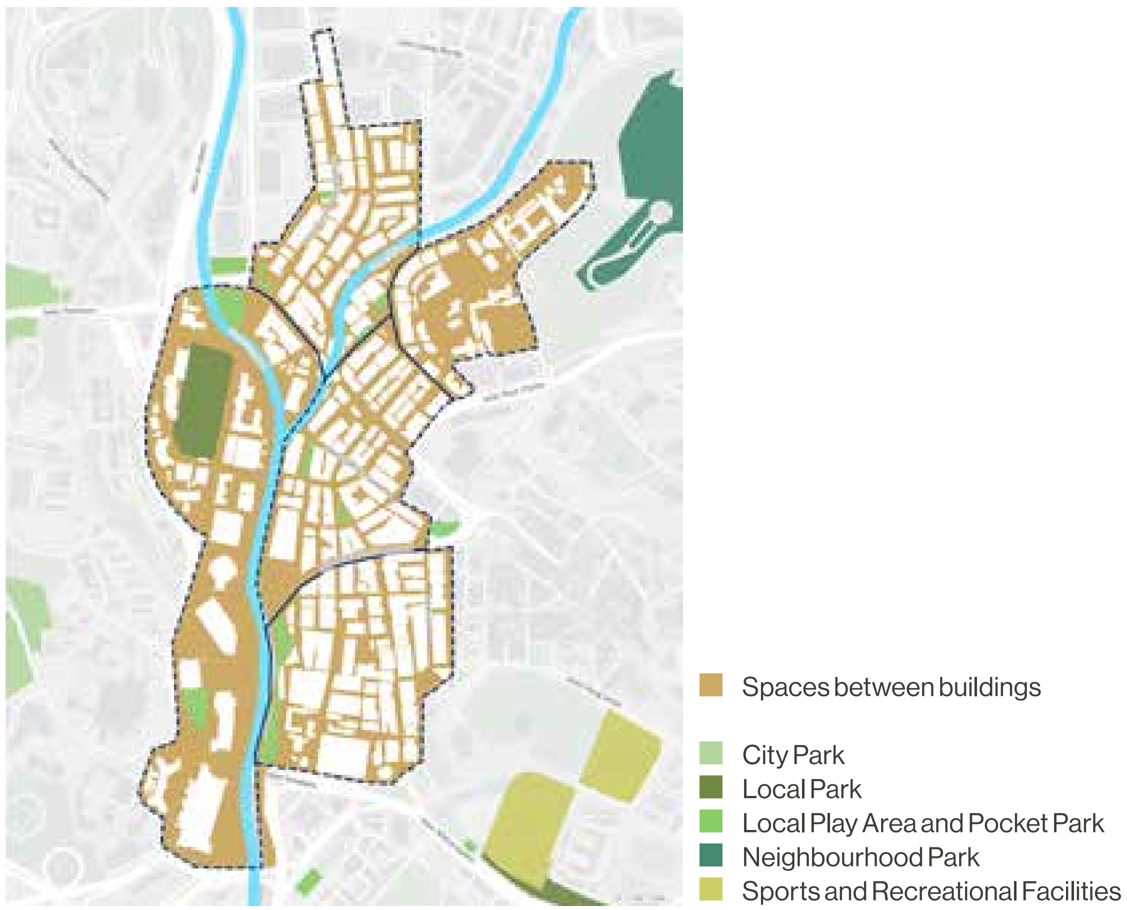


Figure 4.32: Breakdown of all responses for agreement on KL City Centre having adequate public spaces for enjoyment



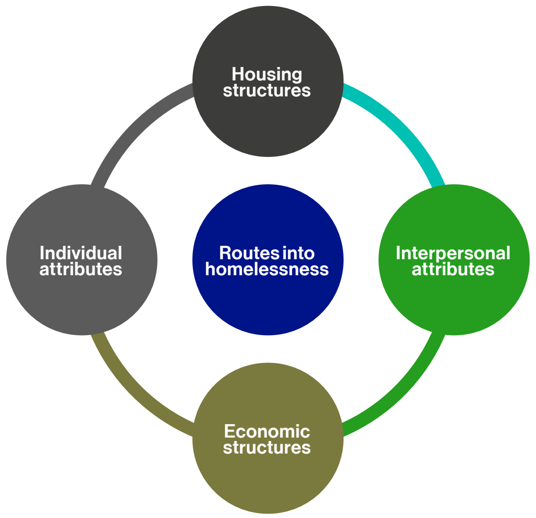
The KLCCD Core Zone is rich with interstitial spaces for public realm intervention and green space connections.

Figure 4.33: Spaces between buildings in the KLCCD core zone



Additionally, sensitive and well-planned interventions are needed to address homelessness, a key issue that affects both social well-being and the public perception of the area.

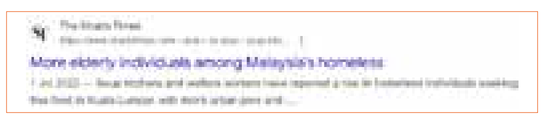
Homelessness is an intricate issue caused by the interplay of many factors



Many homeless people are aged 60 and above

*KSK operations director Justin Cheah said there were currently around **1,300 to 1,500 homeless people physically living on the streets of KL** and out of those, **40 per cent of them are aged 60 and above.***

— Malay Mail, 8 July 2022



Businesses in the area are challenged by the growing incidence of homelessness.

This is a good location with high foot traffic but everyone who comes here is in a hurry to leave because of the homeless..the homeless population has grown significantly as there is no enforcement from the authorities.

— The Star, 14 September 2023

Neglected structure in KL city draws concerns

Source: Homelessness in Kuala Lumpur: An Intractable Problem 2018; Ubuntu (Facebook)

Community engagement is crucial to understand the complexities of the homelessness issue

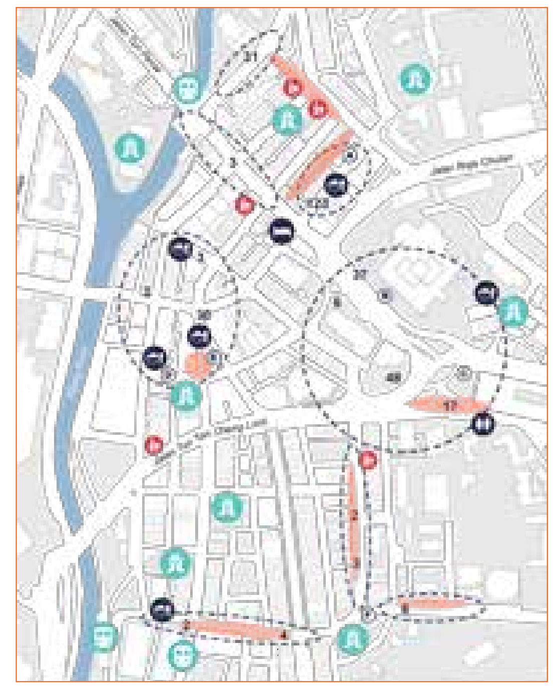
UBUNTU Malaysia is a new initiative creating awareness about homelessness through engagement and empowerment of the homeless.

An exploratory count of homeless conducted by Think City in the KLCCD Core Zone in July 2017 found just over **400 homeless people** in the KLCCD Core Zone.

It was found that there are sub population groups located at:

- Bangkok Bank & Pasar Seni
- China Town, Jalan Sultan, Jalan Panggung
- SEGi College, Hang Lekiu
- Chow Kit

Figure 4.34: Map of homeless people count in 2017 (extracted from Urban Solutions for Malaysian Cities, Think City, 2021)



Homeless areas
Feeding areas
Shelter facility
Public toilet
Religious centres
LRT/MRT stations
Alcohol stores
Addict areas

Overall, striking a balance and optimising the KLCCD Core Zone is essential. While the area boasts numerous attractive pull factors, there is still room for improvement to create a more well-rounded and sustainable urban environment.

The potential for catalytic transformation

Creative and Cultural businesses, especially, Fashion, Textiles, and Clothing; and Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage—are leading the way in attracting visitors back to the KLCCD Core Zone.

There is a healthy influx of new businesses in the KLCCD Core Zone—mostly led by Restaurant/ Bar—Food and Beverage; and Fashion, Textiles and Clothing.

There is great potential to boost and grow creative and cultural businesses in the area, evidenced by long-standing businesses that have continued to grow throughout the years.

There is growing momentum and demand for creative and cultural content in the KL City Centre, which is all achievable with the assets available within the KLCCD Core Zone.

The KLCCD Core Zone is one of the most connected areas in Malaysia, as the entire area is within a 10-min walk from a public transit station.

There is significant interest in living in the KL City Centre, with the majority of public perception survey respondents indicating that they foresee themselves residing here within the next three years.

Opportunities to address challenges

The area's current creative and cultural activities, and new businesses, are mostly limited to the Traditional Shopping Street (2), Heritage Triangle (3) and Petaling Street (5) Precincts. This leaves room for growth in other precincts.

The right interventions are needed to support street vendors as integral elements to boosting the night-time economy and tourism of the area; high operating costs are a key struggle.

Sustainable interventions and support are also needed for Traditional Trades, as they are key to the city's heritage and play a significant role towards the area's cultural economy.

While there is much potential for the area's cultural assets to be activated, universal access within most of these buildings remain a challenge and requires careful intervention.

Improvement and activation of the public realm is also needed to complement the city's assets, enhancing accessibility and walking experience.

From the public perception survey, traffic congestion and efficient public transport systems were the top improvements desired by the public

Recommendations and Next Steps

Chapter 5

The KLCCD Core Zone is undergoing significant transformation, representing a city in transition rather than an ongoing trend or an inevitable future. It serves as a snapshot of an evolving urban landscape, shaped by dynamic changes and emerging opportunities.

Figure 5.1: Map of all 1,005 surveyed buildings and 3,017 entities in the KLCCD Core Zone

Economic Activity

- The KLCCD Core Zone recorded **3,017 active entities in 2023**, reflecting a decrease of 1,445 entities from the 4,462 recorded in 2015.
- The four largest entity categories are:
  - **Residential entities (818)**
  - **Vacant entities (386)**
  - **Female clothing & fashion accessories (90)**
  - **Jewellers / Goldsmiths / Silversmiths (65)**
- The most significant decline was observed in the **Cultural Clothes & Fabrics category, with a reduction of 372 entities.**
- The largest increase was in **Residential Entities, which grew by 80 entities.**

  The hospitality sector experienced a **net decrease of 63 establishments**, reducing from 154 in 2015. The largest declines were observed in:
  - Budget Guest House hotels (-33)
  - Three- to five-star hotels with fewer than 70 rooms (-17)
  - Budget/Comfort service hotels (-17)

- Despite this overall decline, boutique hotels saw a notable increase, rising from three in 2015 to eleven in 2023. Additionally, **171 new entities** have commenced operations within the last five years, with 49 of these falling under the Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage category.

Social

The number of residential entities has increased by approximately 80 units, from 738 in 2015 to 818 in 2023.

Spaces and Buildings

The KLCCD Core Zone comprises **1,005 buildings**, of which:

- **Shophouses represent 81% (813 buildings)**, with:
  - Traditional shophouses (1-2 stories) making up 382 buildings.
  - Low-rise shophouses (3-5 stories) comprising 344 buildings.
- **High-rise buildings (above 10 stories) total 39 structures**, accounting for 30% of the total building floorspace in the KLCCD Core Zone.
- Shophouses collectively represent **45% of the total building floorspace.**

The estimated total vacant floorspace is **271,363m²**, with major contributions from:
- **Ex-Menara HSBC**
- **One Oriental Place**
- **Wisma Hamzah Kwong Hing**

These three buildings, located within the Heritage Triangle Precinct, have collectively contributed 87,821m² of vacant space.

- The overall estimated vacant floorspace has increased by **19,891m²**.

Building condition assessments indicate that 830 out of 1,005 buildings exhibit minor deterioration, while 64 buildings are classified as derelict.

Creative and Cultural

The Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage sector recorded a net increase of **36 entities**, including:

- Fusion/Mixed Restaurants (+31) — the highest increase
- Malay Restaurants (-14) — the most significant decline

Additionally, traditional trades have decreased, with only **75 remaining** in 2023, down from 92 in 2019.

The outcomes of this transition are not yet set in stone, making it crucial to take purposeful action today. Thoughtful decision-making will help shape Kuala Lumpur's sustainable growth, drive innovation, and ensure long-term economic prosperity.

Overall Takeaways from the KLCCD 2023 Study

The KLCCD Core Zone is witnessing **a divergence in precinct** trajectories, each moving towards a mix of future scenarios.

Mini-centralities are forming within the precincts; the area's entity make-up in 2023 has also changed significantly compared to 2015.

The large decline in entities and labour force is not uniform, mostly clustered in a few streets or large buildings.

Businesses mostly operate during the day; the area empties out at night, with only a few pockets of night-time economy.

Creative and Cultural businesses, especially, Fashion, Textiles, and Clothing; and Restaurant/Bar—Food and Beverage—**are leading the way to attract visitors back to the KLCCD Core Zone.**

There is **growing momentum and demand for creative and cultural content in the KL City Centre,** which is achievable with the assets available within the KLCCD Core Zone.

64 buildings have been visually observed as derelict; 35 of these are DBKL-recognised heritage buildings.

**Total estimated vacant floorspace increased by almost 20,000m², ** led by the emptying out of key high-rise buildings.

Residential entities have increased by 11% since 2015, increasingly in upper floors of shophouses.

The **KLCCD Core Zone is one of the most connected areas in Malaysia** as the entire area is within a 10-min walk from a public transit station/stop.

Sustainable interventions and support are needed for street vendors and traditional trades, as they are key to the city's heritage and play a significant cultural economy role.

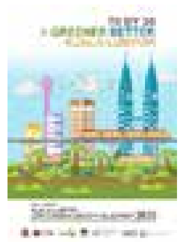
Improvement and activation of the public realm is needed to **complement the city's assets, enhancing accessibility and walking experience.**

The findings from the KLCCD 2023 Study are not meant to be viewed in isolation. Instead, they contribute to a broader understanding of the city's development, complementing and enriching insights from local plans and studies.

Local Studies on Kuala Lumpur

Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2040 (KLSP 2040)

The KLSP 2040 details the vision, goals, policies, and recommendations for the city's growth over the upcoming 20 years. The document serves as a framework for spatial development and planning.



Kuala Lumpur Low Carbon Society Blueprint 2030 (KLLCSBP 2030)

KLLCSBP 2030 integrates existing plans and projects in Kuala Lumpur that relate to climate change mitigation and low carbon measures into a framework. The document serves to steer implementation towards reducing the city's carbon emission by 70% by 2030 without comprising economic growth.

Kuala Lumpur Local Plan 2040 (KLLP 2040)

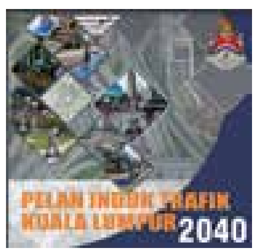
KLLP 2040 provides a comprehensive approach to urban planning and development—detailing the vision and development objectives, emphasising on sustainability, inclusivity and innovation

Kuala Lumpur Climate Action Plan 2050 (KLCAP 2050)

KLCAP2050 was designed to achieve the status of a carbon-neutral city by 2050 aligned with the vision as a world standard city that is liveable, sustainable and resilient.

Kuala Lumpur Smart City Master Plan 2021–2025

This plan is a cornerstone for advancing Kuala Lumpur's global reputation as one of the most thriving, liveable, and sustainable cities.



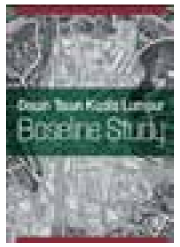
Traffic Master Plan (PITKL 2040)

PITKL 2040 aims to boost public transport use in Kuala Lumpur and will focus on connecting existing highways and upgrading roads.

Kuala Lumpur Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan 2019-2028 (KLPCMP 2019-2028)

KLPCMP 2019-2028 is developed to sustain the liveable city agenda— enhancing quality of life and the environment through smart mobility improvements.

Local Studies on Kuala Lumpur



Downtown Kuala Lumpur Baseline Study (2015)

As the starting point for a metropolis that now houses over 6 million people, the area has a rich and diverse history that can underpin a revitalisation effort. Recognising this, Think City kick started a regeneration programme in late 2014 via the launch of a grants programme and baseline study.

Cultural Mapping—Heritage Trades and Traditional Businesses in Downtown KL (2017)

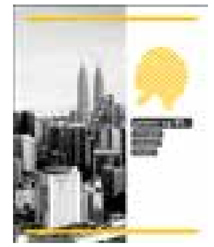
This project involved a detailed survey on mapping and documentation of the heritage trades and traditional businesses in the downtown area of Kuala Lumpur.

Homelessness in Kuala Lumpur (2018)

This paper provides an overview of homelessness in central Kuala Lumpur. It is informed by stakeholder interviews, site surveys and current policy and practice approaches internationally and in Malaysia. A roadmap forward identifies suggested action at street/neighbourhood; city; and state & national level.

Business Community Pulse Check Report (2020)

The report outlines the market conditions and business sentiments in the downtown areas of Malaysian cities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

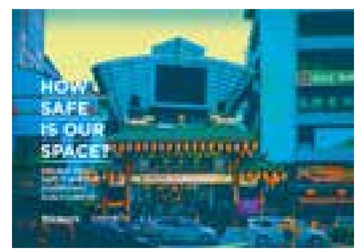


Power Up KL (2016)

Power Up KL was developed by Think City in collaboration with GDP Architects to complement existing government projects and plans via focused urban revitalisation efforts; enhanced physical connections and a more pedestrian friendly environment; and creating a highly networked cultural district with world-class facilities.

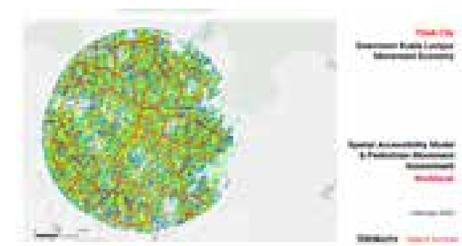
Kuala Lumpur Creative & Cultural District Strategic Masterplan (2019)

This Strategic Master Plan has been prepared using an evidenced-based approach to identify and articulate key issues, and to propose a set of recommendations to develop the KL Creative and Cultural District (KLCCD).



A Public Safety Audit of Downtown Kuala Lumpur (2022)

The report concludes with a summary of observations and recommendations for each category of the public space audited. City governments and other stakeholders can integrate Safetipin data with existing data sets for planning, designing and developing inclusive public spaces.



Downtown Kuala Lumpur Movement Economy (2023)

Together with Space Syntax, Think City completed the analysis to measure and evaluate Downtown Kuala Lumpur's movement economy. These include the spatial accessibility and urban performance model approaches.

When viewed alongside diagnostics from local plans and studies, the findings of the study highlight several recurring issues, providing deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities within the area.

Local Plans for KL

Local Studies on KL

KLCCD 2023 Study

- Perception Survey
- Business Survey
- Street Vendor Survey
- Building & Entity Survey

Identified Issues

- Decline in traditional trades
- Decline in business entities
- Lack of night-time activity
- Increase in vacancies
- Dilapidated shophouses
- Lack of heritage conservations
- Poor accessibility
- Limited knowledge-based content and incubation hubs
- Underutilised cultural heritage
- Lack of high value visitor experience and offerings
- Lack of thermal comfort
- Environmental extremities
- Traffic congestion
- Lack of sense of community
- Negative perception of safety
- High operating cost

These complex and multifaceted issues require comprehensive, whole-of-area solutions. The KLCCD presents a strong path forward by identifying catalytic, place-based opportunities across the five precincts within the Core Zone, fostering sustainable and strategic urban development.

Local Plans for KL

Studies on Kuala Lumpur

KLCCD 2023 Study

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- Business Survey
- Street Vendor Survey
- Building & Entity Survey

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- Decline in business entities
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- Environmental extremities
- Traffic congestion
- Lack of sense of community
- Negative perception of safety
- High operating cost

Main Themes

- Lack of Economic Diversity
- Dilapidating Space and Built Form
- Lack of Creative and Cultural Content Curation
- Climate Change and Environmental Phenomenon
- Diverging Communities and Social Challenges
- Poor Public Realm, Connectivity and Accessibility
- Lack of Cultural Branding and Identity

Opportunities with Precincts

Civic Precinct

Whilst the Civic Precinct has seen frequent space activation efforts to attract footfall, growth in the area is still on a decline.

Traditional Shopping Precinct

There is a stabilisation of past trends in the traditional shopping street relating to vacancies and residences, with mixed pockets of descent and rejuvenation efforts

Heritage Triangle Precinct

The Heritage Triangle is also angling towards a stabilisation of its past trends, with mixed pockets of descent and rejuvenation

Education Precinct

The Education Precinct has seen little area rejuvenation initiatives to combat the emerging pockets of descent, and is overall heading towards stabilisation

Petaling Street Precinct

The Petaling Street Precinct is also on the path towards a stabilisation of past trends relating to vacancies and residences, with mixed pockets of descent and rejuvenation efforts

Note: The studies and local plan included in the diagram are non-exhaustive.

Translating the recommendations into actionable, precinct-specific steps will be essential in tackling the complex challenges facing the area. A targeted approach ensures that each precinct's unique needs are addressed effectively, driving meaningful and sustainable progress.

Precinct 1—Civic Precinct

Reinstate Dataran Merdeka and its surrounding institutional buildings into a vibrant inclusive civic town square that showcases Malaysian culture and nature right in the heart of Kuala Lumpur.

- **Establish the Civic Precinct as the key entrance statement** into the KLCCD Core Zone through an area-wide approach by ensuring that the activation of institutional assets **complement each other's offerings and support the identity of the wider precinct**—assets such as institutional buildings, the Jalan Raja stretch, Dataran Merdeka as well as the Masjid Jamek and Pasar Seni train stations.
- **Arrest the decline and dilapidation of the nation's most iconic institutional landmarks** such as Dataran Merdeka, Old Supreme Court Building, Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, and Masjid Jamek and ensure conservation best practice and support its adaptive reuse.
- **Curate and support museology programmes within institutional buildings** to highlight the diverse historical context, architectural evolution, heritage elements, and cultural assets within the birthplace of Kuala Lumpur.
- **Rejuvenate underutilised and vacant public spaces,** e.g., Dataran Underground, Perpustakaan Kuala Lumpur and support the curation of its tenancy to showcase local businesses and content.
- **Explore the feasibility of pedestrianising roads,** e.g., Jalan Raja, for increased walkability and connectivity between the heritage physical assets and offerings within this precinct.
- **Celebrate and increase awareness** on the area's historical heritage through compelling storytelling and branding.

Aerial view of the Civic Precinct, 2018

Precinct 2—Traditional Shopping Street Precinct

Establish a stable fashion and textiles production chain ecosystem within the area, consisting of education, design, production, as well as retail to further drive its local economy and increase value creation for its offerings.

- **Perform cultural mapping analysis of area and industry dynamics**, e.g., Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Masjid India 'Gold hub', to better identify its offerings and transition strategies towards the possible establishment of a business improvement district.
- **Support more diversity in the area's fashion and textile offerings** to provide visitors with an enhanced shopping experience that encompasses the full breadth of the fashion and textiles value chain and its offerings.
- **Partner with education and Fashion and Textiles institutions** to incubate talent and stabilise the ecosystem and increase the capacity of the local industry workforce for potential agglomeration and knowledge spillover to adjacent regions.
- **Collaborate with high-rise building owners to improve shophouse conditions** for potential adaptive reuse, e.g., micro-housing opportunities **to increase residential diversity, tenancy curation to increase commercial and business diversity**
- **Promote active participation of local communities to improve the liveability considerations of the area,** e.g., supporting the participation and integration of Malayan and Selangor Mansion communities in **public decision-making and participation of local activities.**
- **Support the stabilisation of the business ecosystem and incubate micro and small businesses.**
- **Partner with building owners to uplift and enhance the building facades**
- **Facilitate the decluttering of public realm spaces and improve wayfinding experience** to enhance pedestrian usage, improve visual hygiene, and incentivise visitor exploration.

Aerial view of the Traditional Shopping Street Precinct, 2018

Precinct 3—Heritage Triangle Precinct

Highlight the precinct's diverse and dynamic commercial activities by celebrating its cultural heritage and establishing it as a destination that amalgamates the offerings of the KLCCD Core Zone as a whole.

- **Leverage the precinct's geographical positioning to act as connector** and enhance public realm areas to improve walkability and connectivity within and with adjacent precincts.
- **Establish the station-to-station thoroughfare between Masjid Jamek LRT and Pasar Seni LRT/MRT station** to offer a harmonious experience through many landmarks, e.g., Central Market, Kasturi Walk, Medan Pasar, Jalan Benteng.
- **Improve revitalisation of retail spaces for diverse offerings,** e.g., Central Market, Kota Raya.
- **Improve public realm, streetscapes, laneways and building facades** to reinstate Kuala Lumpur's old town with vibrant and sustainable visual appeal (heritage built environment, building facades).
- **Develop capacity building programmes to aid business owners of Traditional Trades and street vendors in transitioning towards new market demands and shifts.**

Aerial view of the Heritage Triangle Precinct, 2018

Precinct 4—Education Precinct

Roll out incentives and initiatives to attract institutions into the area, allowing the spillover effect to regenerate the businesses and activities within the area.

- **Enhance and connect the precinct's green** (Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve) **and education spaces** (SMK Convent Bukit Nanas, St. John's Institutions **to improve the KLCCD Core Zone's liveability considerations to attract residents back in the area.**
- Ensure measures are in **place to conserve and retain the remaining key heritage education institutions** through sustainable management plans.
- **Improve the shophouses and riverfront walkway along Jalan Ampang**
- **Facilitate the integration of existing** (Muzium Telekom) **and new creative and cultural spaces** (The Godown Arts Centre) **to the wider network and trail** of C&C offerings in the KLCCD area, whilst supporting their establishment as local hubs for economic spillover to benefit adjacent areas.
- **Explore the feasibility of a digital and multimedia hub** to incubate and invest in a futureproofed sector.

Aerial view of the Education Precinct, 2018

Precinct 5—Petaling Street District

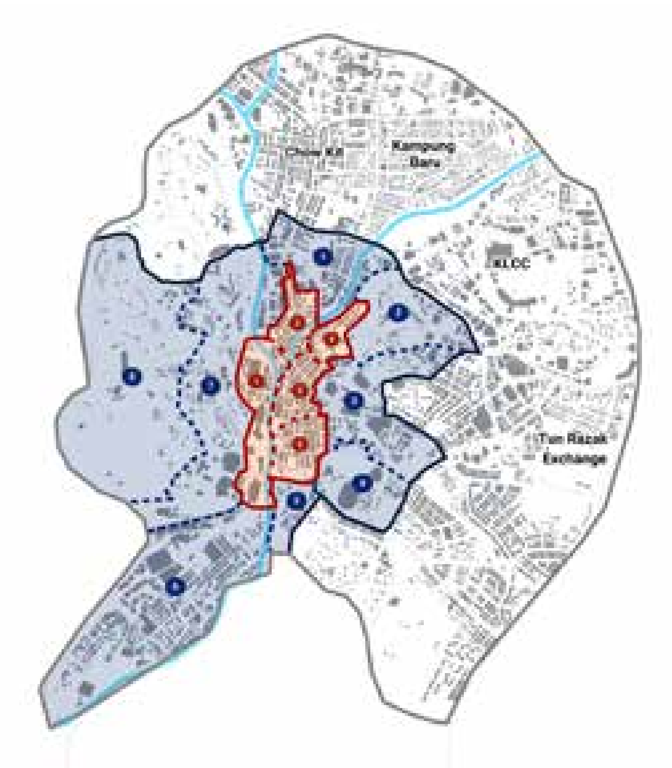
Petaling Street Precinct should complement the M118 Precinct by leveraging the precinct's rich concentration of traditional trades and street vendors and their unique charm.

- **Collaborate with PNB Merdeka Ventures** to ensure M118 projects not just complement and enhance the offerings of the Petaling Street precinct, but also **support the integration of existing local communities** into the wider area's offerings and masterplanning.
- **Improve the wayfinding, storytelling, branding, and connectivity between the Pasar Seni transit station and Petaling Street** by transforming the Madras area and its surrounding public realm and laneways into a thriving cultural hub that highlight the area's significance.
- **Establish a stable ecosystem and business-friendly environment**, ensuring continued and consistent interest, participation, and investment into the Petaling Street precinct from both the private and public sector.
- **Leverage on Kuala Lumpur unique characteristics of modern fusion in a historic context for creative and cultural offerings** that blend local interpretation of diverse cultural practices.
- **Support diverse activation and activities at all times of the day**, especially night-time, and ensure that the opportunities for activities are evenly distributed geographically across the precinct.
- **Explore the feasibility of pedestrianising additional streets in the precinct to complement Jalan Petaling**, e.g., Jalan Sultan, to provide a better environment for visitors and create a more seamless walking experience across the precinct.

Aerial view of the Petaling Street Precinct, 2018

Precinct-level interventions should not be executed in isolation but should enhance the features of neighbouring precincts and the broader KLCCD. By ensuring these interventions are interconnected, we can present a unified and comprehensive urban experience that showcases the city as a cohesive whole.

Figure 5.2: KLCCD significant areas with core zone and buffer zone highlighted



Core Area (1.08km²)
- KLCCD Core Area
- KLCCD Core Area Sub Precincts
- 1 Traditional Shopping Street Precinct
- 2 Education Precinct
- 3 Heritage Triangle Precinct
- 4 Petaling Street Precinct
- 5 Civic Precinct

Including other significant sites (8.96km²)
- KLCCD Other Significant Areas
- KLCCD Other Significant Areas Sub Precincts
- 1 Chow Kit South
- 2 Bukit Nanas
- 3 Bukit Ceylon
- 4 M118 Precinct
- 5 Kg. Attap Enclave
- 6 Brickfields
- 7 Cultural & Institutions
- 8 Taman Tugu

All precinct intervention recommendations

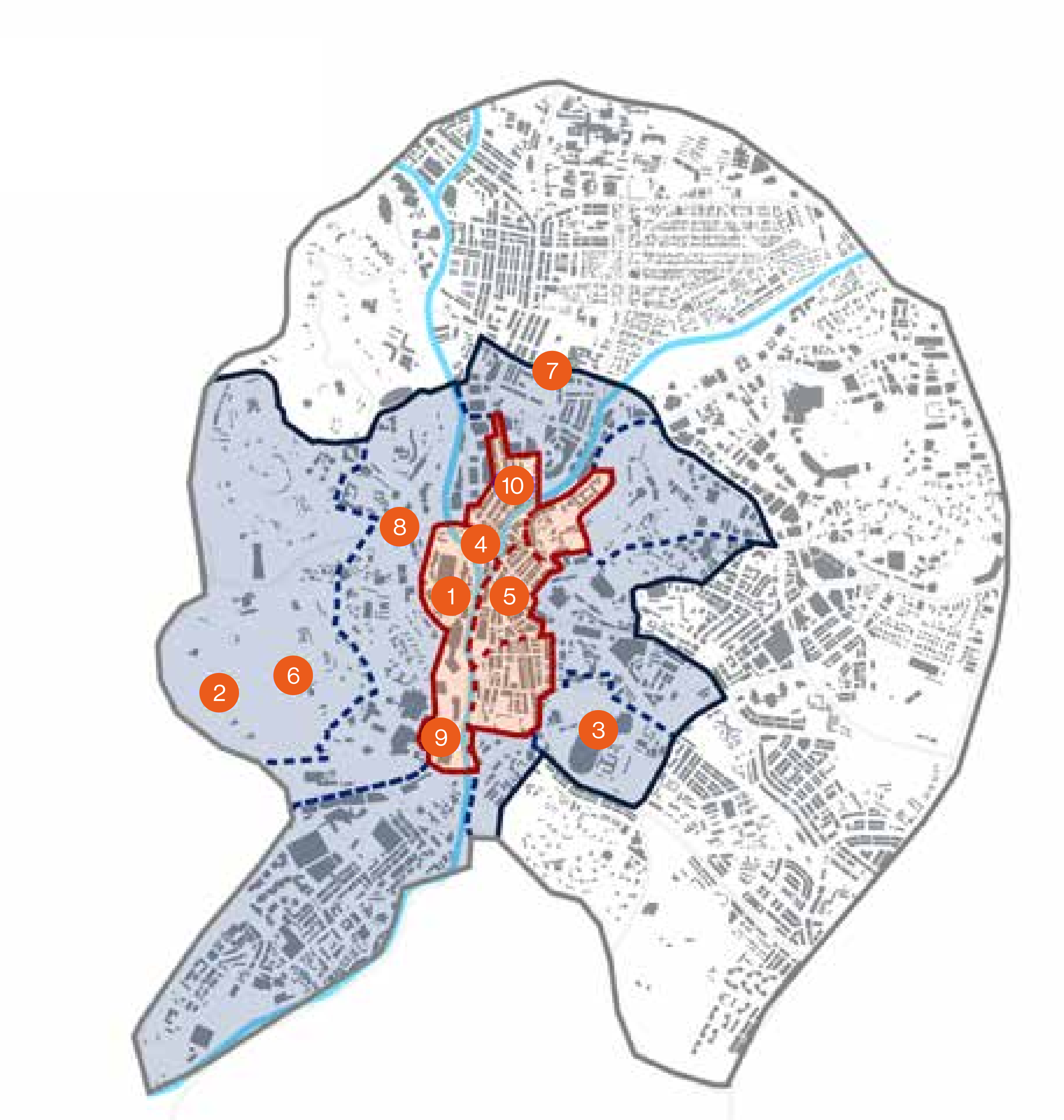
- **Enhance precinct identity and individuality** for **distinct area offerings and function**, whilst ensuring that precincts complement each other to create an overall experience that is larger than the sum of its parts.
- **Maintain and leverage on the key defining characteristics and story of origin for each of the precincts**, establishing an authentic branding of the area and its offerings through compelling storytelling and wayfinding experiences.
- **Raise awareness and advocacy on Kuala Lumpur's creative and cultural offerings** to the **international landscape** through global branding and networking (e.g., through partnering with other international cities.
- **Perform deeper analysis such as cultural mapping and area studies** into local dynamics and communities to solve specific issues effectively.
- **Adaptively reuse vacant buildings** and **regenerate public spaces** between activity nodes within the precincts as creative and cultural event spaces.
- **Establish dedicated taskforce and ensure robust governance processes are implemented.**
- **Establish conservation best practice guidelines to inform how individual building conditions are assessed** e.g., Carcosa Seri Negara.
- **Explore feasibility of the KLCCD Core Zone as a special incentive zone** to encourage influx of high value businesses and commercial activity in the area.
- **Improve the curation of programming and activation** in the area to attract local and international tourists, including festivals, local community programmes.
- **Encourage evening/night-time space activation activities**, e.g., festivals, bazaars, etc., to increase diversity and to draw footfall back to the city at night.
- **Leverage on grants to catalyse stakeholders and curate diversity** in economic activities within the area.
- **Maintain and leverage on the key defining characteristics and story of origin for each of the precincts**, establishing an authentic branding of the area and its offerings through compelling storytelling and wayfinding experiences.
- **Establishing a green corridor network throughout the city**, including Perdana Botanica Garden, Taman Tugu, River of Life.
- **Invest in public realm enhancement** by increasing walkability, connectivity—especially between precincts and thermal comfort.
- Develop **comprehensive mobility strategy** that includes improving pedestrian pathways/ spaces, public transit and first-and-last-mile mobility.
- **Introduce nature-based, inclusive, and innovative interventions** to address environment-related extremities, e.g., flooding risk, urban heat island effect, pollution, etc.
- Leverage on emerging innovative solutions such as digital and technology to increase and enhance visitor experience.
- Address the homelessness issue through targeted and customised intervention initiatives.

For Think City, this approach has materialised into 10 flagship focus areas, strategically selected as a foundation for efficient and effective place-based implementation across the precincts. These focus areas serve as a targeted starting point to drive meaningful urban transformation.

No.	Flagship Focus Areas
1	Dataran Merdeka Heritage Area (Civic Precinct)
2	Carcosa Seri Negara (Taman Tugu)
3	Presint 118 (Sports & Recreational)
4	Masid Jamek Enclave (Civic Precinct)
5	Trade Quadrant (Heritage Triangle Precinct)
6	Memorial Tun Abdul Razak (Taman Tugu)
7	Content & Programming
8	Green Connector Network
9	KL Railway Station (Civic Precinct)
10	Fashion and Textile Precinct (Traditional Shopping Street Precinct

A playbook that details the implementation plan for these 10 flagship focus areas is currently in development. It aims build on the findings from the KLCCD 2023 Study and recommendations from local plans and other relevant studies to form an integrated approach that realises the KLCCD vision. Notably, a governance structure has been established and a working committee for each flagship focus area appointed, who will both direct the projects and report all progress to the steering committee.

Figure 5.3: Flagship focus area in the KLCCD significant area



Conclusion

Kuala Lumpur was founded in 1857 as a tin mining settlement at the confluence of the Gombak and Klang rivers. Over time, it flourished into a vibrant hub for **commerce and government**, attracting people from around the world. However, as urban development expanded outward into the suburbs, the city centre experienced a gradual hollowing effect.

To address this, Think City, in collaboration with Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) and Jabatan Warisan Negara (JWN), developed **a strategy for the Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District (KLCCD)**. This initiative seeks to **revitalise the city's historic core by leveraging its rich heritage**, underutilised built assets, and untapped creative and cultural synergies.

A key step in this effort was the **KLCCD 2023 Study**, designed to provide a **comprehensive understanding of the area's current conditions, key drivers of change, and potential opportunities**. The study gathered extensive data on population, economic activity, land use, and public perception within the KLCCD Core Zone. This was achieved through four layers of primary data collection: a detailed building and entity survey, a street vendor survey, a public perception survey, and a business sentiment survey. Together, these insights offer an evidence-based foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

The findings reveal that the **KLCCD Core Zone is in a state of flux**, with different precincts moving along varying trajectories—some experiencing decline, others stabilisation, and some showing early signs of rejuvenation. Since 2015, the number of business entities in the Core Zone has declined, though many remain concentrated in key streets and larger buildings. At the same time, residential occupancy has increased, and new business activity has emerged, particularly in the food and beverage sector and heritage-inspired boutique hotels.

Four key drivers are believed to have influenced these shifts: the relocation of core business functions out of the area, disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, organic evolution of urban spaces, and targeted intervention efforts aimed at revitalisation.

The **KLCCD 2023 Study provides a snapshot of this transition**—not as a definitive trend or predetermined future, but as a **reflection of a city in transformation**. How this evolution unfolds will depend on the actions taken today. Without strategic and coordinated interventions, the area risks stagnation or further decline. However, with the right vision and collaboration, it has the potential to become a thriving centre of creativity and innovation.

To guide the KLCCD Core Zone toward its best possible future, alignment among all stakeholders is crucial during this transitional period. While the study outlines **high-level recommendations, translating these into tangible, precinct-specific action plans will be essential in the next phase**. Further detailed research could also help refine local strategies by validating the study's findings and exploring place-based dynamics more deeply.

Ultimately, achieving KLCCD's vision and unlocking its full potential will require a clear, strategic action plan that unites public and private stakeholders in a shared direction. This study marks the first step in that journey, laying the groundwork for a creative, sustainable, and dynamic Kuala Lumpur.