

## Press Statement

4 January 2023

### Draft Penang Island Local Plan (DRTPP) Heritage and Urban Identity pillar – A PHT Review

1. The Penang Heritage Trust acknowledges that the Penang Island Draft Local Plan (Draft Rancangan Tempatan Pulau Pinang, DRTPP), when gazetted, will be a major planning instrument guiding the city's development and allowing the State and City Council of Penang Island (MBPP) to safeguard our shared cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) beyond the gazetted George Town World Heritage Site Special Area Plan (GTSAP).
2. It is, therefore, encouraging that one of the seven pillars of the DRTPP is **Heritage and Urban Identity** of the Island as a whole, inextricably linked through history, to the value of the World Heritage Site. Thus, upholding the importance of the World Heritage Site, vistas and the skyline as critical to urban image and urban identity planning priorities.
3. Lack of a comprehensive inventory has led to the Penang state enabling the demolition of its own heritage buildings on Peel Avenue in 2017 and the very recent removal of the magnificent 'Taj Mahal' tomb in Tanjung Tokong belonging to Madam Foo Teng Nyong (the wife of Chung Keng Kwee). Now the former government quarters at Jalan Chow Thye rezoned have been designated high density commercial in the Draft Local Plan, meaning that the state government's own heritage properties are at risk.
4. The Draft Local Plan chapter on **Heritage and Urban Identity** contains a list of 52 heritage buildings/sites outside the George Town World Heritage Site. Although additional heritage streets/areas are shown in other illustrations (unnumbered, page 10-8 and 10-9), their status is unclear.
5. The Draft Local Plan apparently did not consult the Penang Hill Special Area Plan or MBPP's own gazetted Special Area Plans (2016) or other existing heritage inventories. The number of heritage buildings listed in the DRTPP which is 1,714 heritage buildings (56 category I and 1648 category II) does not tally with that in the updated George Town Special Area Plan 3,977 which lists heritage buildings (82 Category I and 3895 Category II).
6. Penang Heritage Trust urges a total review and renewal of the presented inventory before valuable assets are lost to ignorance and greed.

## APPENDIX

PHT would like to draw attention the following details in the Draf Rancangan Tempatan Pulau Pinang:

### **Misspelling of names, incorrect names and descriptions.**

- Dewan Mahatma Gandhi – misspelt as ‘Dewah Mahatma Ghani’
- Queen Victoria Jubilee Clock Tower - ‘Menara Jam Queen Elizabeth’.
- Masjid Maqbul is listed but missing from the map.
- No. 10 is marked twice.

### **Notable landmarks are not included in the current 52 sites, for example**

- Wadda Gurdwara Sahib, Sikh Gurdwara on Jalan Gurdwara.
- The College-General bungalow and chapel in Tanjung Bungah
- The ‘Judge’s Residence’ – Sepoy Lines, the Penang residence of the Straits Settlements Governor.
- The Penang Free School – recognised by Jabatan Warisan Negara as National Heritage.
- The Rex Cinema, Jalan Burma, an Art Deco cinema designed by the architect of Kedah house.
- An Art Deco suburb off Burmah Road, around and including Jalan Phuah Hin Leong, Jalan Irrawady, Jalan Loh Boon Siew.
- An Art Deco suburb around Jalan Nirvana and the Penang Buddhist Association.
- Bukit Bendera – sites missing from the inventory that are listed on the Penang Hill Special Area Plan.

### **Vague identification that needs clarification.**

- Three shophouse rows listed need clear identification to avoid potential loss to urban identity identity. These are listed only as :
- ‘Lot Kedai Seksyen &’, Georgetown’,
- ‘Lot Kedai Jalan Air Itam’ and
- ‘Lot Kedai Jalan Balik Pulau’
- 5 ‘Bangunan Warisan Bukit Bendera’

### **Heritage at Risk – development and tourism development pressure.**

- Pulau Jerejak – Medium density tourism development and high-density mixed development have been allocated for a part of Pulau Jerejak, which may put pressure on its rich heritage as a leprosy settlement and a quarantine station.
- Former government quarters at Jalan Chow Thye rezoned high density commercial
- Kampung Siam Jalan Burma rezoned to high density commercial.