

Designing for Memory: Heritage Conservation Strategies in Kota Bharu Islamic City

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ABSTRACT - As an Islamic city, Kota Bharu represents a symbolic icon of the urban growth of the Kelantan Islamic State, around Malaysia. This study aims to provide a strategies for new historical attributes planning methods that display greater reverence for the traditional vernacular landscape. In addition, this study also aims to discern the prospects for the future cultural environment of Kota Bharu Islamic city, drawing on the numerous historical factors using various methods in the evolution of the cultural aspects including observation, record analysis and evaluation of content, including literature review. In view of its distinctive contribution to the Malay heritage by defining the features, characteristics, history and their influences, the study of the Kelantan cultural attributes is especially significant. As a result, this study recognizes the value of integrating the current heritage alongside contemporary architecture, as well as further study on the cultural environment of Kota Bharu. Optimistically, in the future, there will be better practices of historical qualities to consider the history, present and prospects of the vernacular tradition and ensure that our practices of architecture, landscape and urbanism express their values. In addition, this research will investigate the approaches that have been used by Kota Bharu Municipal Council in creating new heritage sites, especially in the city centre. At the same time the process of creating regional identity will be considered. Kota Bharu, as an Islamic city, represents a symbolic trademark to the urban development of the Islamic state of Kelantan.

INTRODUCTION

The research explores the cultural and architectural identity of Kelantan, with a focus on Kota Bharu as a symbolic Islamic City. By revealing the key features and personalities that define Kelantan's unique heritage, the study enhances understanding and appreciation of the state's historical and cultural attributes. It seeks to examine how the rich historical character of Kelantan has evolved under the influence of modernization, particularly from the nineteenth century to the present day.

The study also emphasizes the significance of physical and architectural characteristics that embody local heritage values. For instance, the adaptation of the traditional vernacular roof form derived from the design of the *Istana Balai Besar* (Grand Hall Palace) in many contemporary public buildings represents a conscious effort to maintain continuity with the region's architectural past. Such design elements act as tangible expressions of memory, connecting present-day developments with their historical roots.

Through this exploration, the research highlights the richness and resilience of Kelantan's regional identity. By identifying and analyzing the comparable elements that constitute the Kelantan Malay cultural landscape, the study aims to formulate strategies for conserving heritage in ways that reinforce both memory and modernity. In doing so, it positions Kota Bharu as a living example of how Islamic values, local culture, and architectural tradition can coexist harmoniously within a dynamic urban context.

Problem Statement

Despite Kota Bharu's recognition as an Islamic City with deep historical and cultural roots, the intrinsic value of its heritage shophouses has increasingly been neglected amid rapid urban growth and modernization. The transformation of the cityscape has resulted in the physical and visual isolation of heritage buildings, disrupting the continuity of traditional streetscapes and diminishing their role within the urban fabric (Omar et al., 2022).

Many heritage facades have suffered from deterioration due to poor maintenance, inappropriate renovations, and unsympathetic architectural interventions, leading to the erosion of authenticity and character (Faudzi, 2024; Faudzi & Mohamad, 2014). The lack of consistent conservation practices and enforcement of heritage guidelines by local authorities further accelerates the demolition and alteration of historic assets (Faudzi, 2024).

Furthermore, insufficient awareness among property owners, tenants, and the wider community has weakened collective efforts to safeguard the cultural and architectural legacy of Kota Bharu. This limited sense of stewardship contributes to the gradual loss of the city's historical identity and collective memory (Faudzi et al., 2021). Without integrated strategies that align design, policy, and community engagement, Kota Bharu risks losing its distinctive architectural heritage an essential element of its Islamic and regional identity (Zainal Abidin & Hamzah, 2018).

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study adopts a mixed method approach, primarily qualitative method but supported by selected quantitative data, to provide a comprehensive understanding of heritage conservation practices in Kota Bharu Islamic City. Multiple data collection techniques were employed to explore the historical elements, architectural features, cultural factors, and current conservation practices associated with the city's heritage attributes. The research methodology is structured into four primary phases.

The first phase involved an extensive literature review, focusing on historical evolution, cultural environment, and conservation issues relevant to the study area. A systematic search was conducted through scholarly journals, books, newspapers, archival documents, online databases, and credible websites to identify key themes and gaps in the existing body of knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The second phase comprised a site assessment and field observation. This stage aimed to document the physical characteristics and social use of the heritage environment, with particular attention to architectural styles, building conditions, and spatial relationships. Fieldwork included on-site observations, photographic documentation, and mapping of the study area to evaluate the integrity and authenticity of heritage features (Groat & Wang, 2013).

The third phase employed surveys and interviews to collect both qualitative and quantitative information. Questionnaires and inventory forms were distributed to residents, business owners, and professionals involved in heritage management to assess perceptions, awareness, and attitudes toward heritage conservation. In-depth interviews with key stakeholders such as local authorities, conservation practitioners, and community representatives were conducted to gather expert insights on the challenges and opportunities in sustaining Kota Bharu's cultural identity (Silverman, 2020).

The final phase involved data interpretation and analysis. Qualitative data from interviews and field notes were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and meanings, while quantitative data from the survey were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to provide descriptive and correlational insights. Photographic evidence and site inventories supported the interpretation of results, helping to highlight key issues and formulate strategic recommendations for heritage conservation in Kota Bharu.

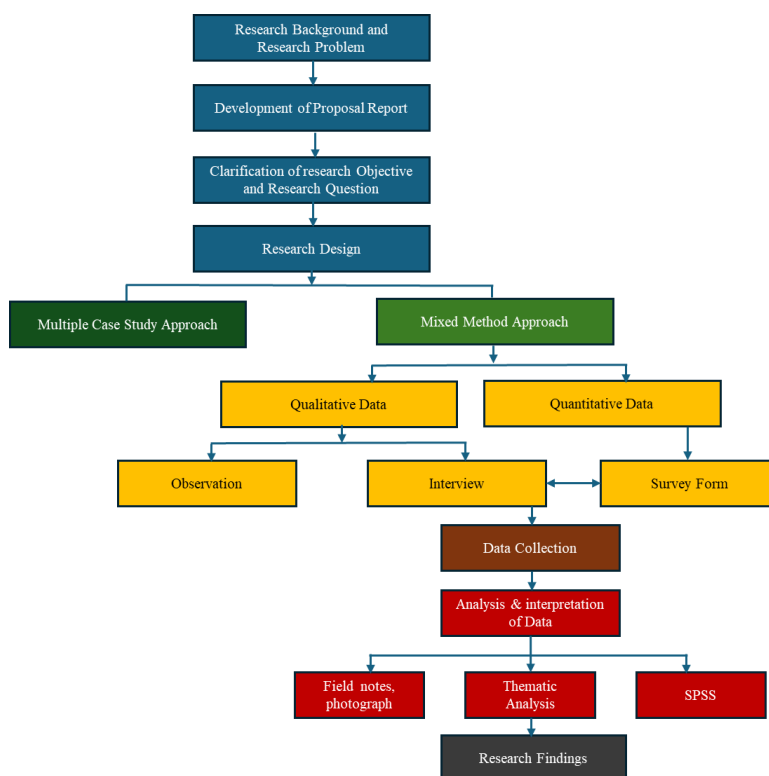


Figure 1.1 Methodology Chart

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review forms a crucial component of this research, as it establishes the conceptual and theoretical foundations upon which the study is built. It provides an overview of existing knowledge, theories, and case studies that inform heritage conservation practices, particularly in the context of Kota Bharu as an Islamic City. This section also ensures that the research aligns with recognized guidelines and frameworks established by local and international heritage authorities. By critically examining previous studies, the review identifies gaps and opportunities for developing effective heritage conservation strategies that balance tradition, identity, and modern development.

Heritage

The concept of heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible elements that represent the relationship between humans, culture, and the natural environment. According to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (2008), cultural environments are the combined outcomes of interactions between people and their surroundings, reflecting social, spiritual, and aesthetic values accumulated over time. These cultural landscapes may be categorized as *designed*, *organically evolved*, or *associative*, the latter being places that embody strong cultural, religious, or symbolic associations, even if physical attributes are less prominent. Such associative heritage sites often hold deep spiritual meaning and identity within a community, serving as a living expression of memory and continuity (UNESCO, 2008).

Heritage, therefore, represents not only the physical structures or artifacts of the past but also the collective identity, memory, and values of a society. In the Malaysian context, heritage is often understood as a dynamic system that reflects the nation's multicultural evolution and religious influences, particularly Islam, which shapes the moral and aesthetic framework of local architecture (Ahmad, 2006). The National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645) provides the legislative foundation for identifying, preserving, and managing both tangible and intangible heritage assets in Malaysia (Department of National Heritage, 2005).

In Kelantan, and specifically Kota Bharu, heritage extends beyond historical monuments to include traditional shophouses, mosques, markets, and urban patterns that collectively express the socio-religious identity of the Malay-Muslim community. Studies by Farkhan et al., (2024) and Omar et al. (2022) highlight how the architectural character of Kota Bharu reflects the blending of Islamic design

principles with local vernacular traditions. It reveals increasing challenges to heritage conservation due to urban modernization and economic development pressures. The insertion of new commercial buildings and the lack of consistent conservation enforcement have disrupted the historic integrity of heritage zones (Faudzi, 2024). Consequently, scholars argue that preserving heritage in Kota Bharu requires a holistic approach that integrates physical conservation with cultural interpretation and community participation (Zainal Abidin & Hamzah, 2018; Ahmad, 2006).

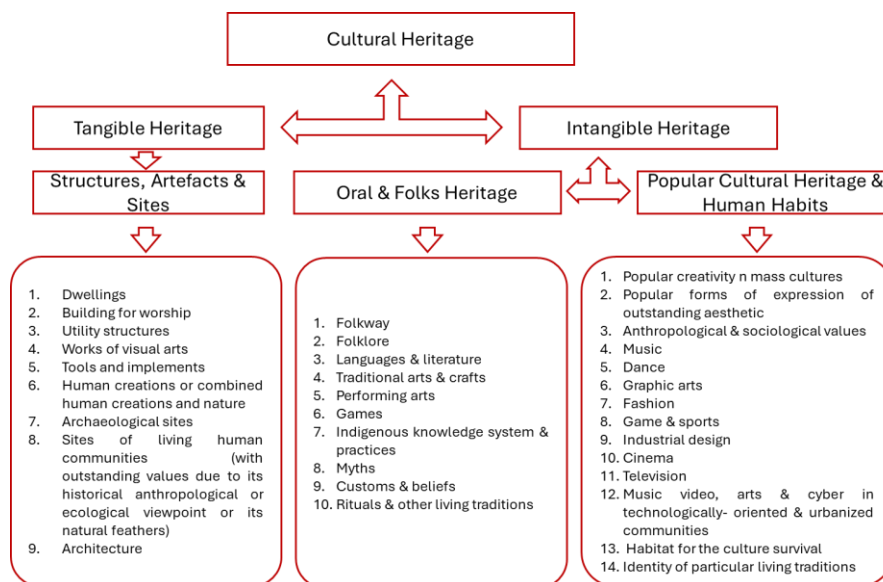


Figure 1.2 ASEAN Definition of Cultural
Source: Badruddin Mohamed, (2012)

Islamic City Concept

The concept of the Islamic City in the context of Kota Bharu is rooted in the adaptation of planning principles inspired by Islamic cities in the Middle East (Ismail et. al., 2018). According to Gulzar Haider's Ideal Islamic City framework, the planning approach emphasizes creating an environment that reflects Islamic values through architecture, landscape, and community structure. In the case of Kota Bharu, this vision has been localized by incorporating traditional Kelantan Malay elements arts, crafts, and cultural activities such as *batik*, *songket*, silverwork, *wayang kulit*, *wau*, and *gasing* into the urban fabric. These traditional features serve not only as cultural identifiers but also as tools for fostering interaction between the physical environment and cultural expression, where landscape design provides spaces for social and spiritual engagement (Ismail et. al., 2018).

In realizing the Islamic City vision, the Kota Bharu Municipal Council has sought to balance the physical environment with the moral and spiritual well-being of its residents. The city's goals include promoting cleanliness, orderliness, and a conducive environment for both residents and visitors. Furthermore, the integration of culture, environment, and faith is a central consideration in the city's planning policies. Prominent areas such as the Kelantan River, Independence Square, Sultan Ismail Petra Square, Siti Khadijah Central Market, and MPKB Square have been identified as nodal points for urban design interventions (MPKB-BI, 2006b). The design guidelines emphasize the use of Kelantan Malay vernacular architecture, incorporating timber and modern materials harmoniously, and maintaining traditional ornamentation to preserve the region's aesthetic and cultural continuity.

Allahham (2025) highlights that authenticity in Islamic urban design should not be mistaken for the mere replication of historical styles. Instead, authentic Islamic cities reflect the spirit of place (*genius loci*) by harmonizing modern functionality with cultural and spiritual symbolism. He argues that achieving authenticity at the urban scale is complex, as it involves protecting not only physical structures but also intangible social traditions and cultural values. In contrast, architectural authenticity may be achieved more readily through material and stylistic fidelity. For sustainable Islamic urban design, planners must balance between preserving historical integrity and accommodating contemporary needs.

According to Hasan et al., (2020), the Kota Bharu Islamic City serves as a case study in how political, cultural, and religious agendas can converge in urban planning. The adaptation of Haider's

model in Kelantan demonstrates the necessity of localizing Islamic urban design principles to fit regional culture and community sentiment. The success of this initiative depends on citizen acceptance, cultural continuity, and active participation in shaping urban identity. Moreover, the city's development should be evaluated not only by its immediate outcomes but also through long-term community engagement and cultural sustainability. Public involvement is therefore essential to ensure that the Islamic City concept remains relevant, inclusive, and reflective of both faith and local identity.

Cultural and Heritage Tourism

Cultural and heritage tourism serves as a key catalyst for sustainable economic and social development within heritage cities. According to Silberberg (1995), it refers to travel activities that attract visitors who are motivated by a region's history, artistic expression, scientific achievements, and way of life. This form of tourism emphasizes authentic engagement with local cultures, encompassing tangible aspects such as architecture and crafts, as well as intangible elements like traditions, beliefs, and performances. As highlighted by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2007), cultural and heritage tourism remains one of the world's leading sectors in generating foreign exchange, employment, and cultural exchange opportunities.

In the context of heritage cities such as Kota Bharu Islamic City, cultural and heritage tourism functions not only as an economic driver but also as a mechanism for safeguarding identity and memory. Studies have shown that revitalizing cultural assets such as traditional markets, mosques, and craft industries can foster community pride and continuity of heritage (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009; Abdullah, 2019). Programs centered on local arts and heritage contribute to place-making, transforming historic areas into vibrant public spaces that connect cultural identity with modern urban life. Newman and Smith (2000) observed that such programs enhance urban quality of life while supporting creative economies and tourism-led regeneration.

Recent scholars emphasize the importance of authenticity and local participation in sustaining cultural heritage tourism. Ishak and Kamaruddin (2021) argue that sustainable tourism in heritage zones requires balancing economic interests with cultural preservation and community engagement. Similarly, Musa et al., (2020) highlight that in Malaysia, particularly in Kelantan, integrating Islamic values and traditional Malay culture into tourism planning reinforces cultural resilience and enhances visitors' spiritual and aesthetic experience. Within Kota Bharu, initiatives under the Islamic City framework demonstrate how cultural tourism can promote not only economic growth but also the remembrance of Islamic and Malay cultural identity through architecture, crafts, and community interaction (Allahham, 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis focuses on understanding how the local community, practitioners, and visitors perceive the conservation of heritage elements and the city's Islamic identity. Since mixed method was adopted in this study to target respondents with relevant knowledge and experience in heritage conservation, a minimum sample size was selected to ensure meaningful insights into the preservation practices and cultural values of Kota Bharu Islamic City. A summary interpretation table on purposive sampling method (refer table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Interpretation by section for quantitative method

Section	Key Findings
A. Respondent Profile	Majority of respondents are female, aged 20–29, predominantly Malay, and residents of Kelantan.
B(a). Respondent Perceptions & Satisfaction	Respondents are mostly locals with moderate satisfaction regarding tourist attractions and facilities. They emphasized the need for better maintenance, enhanced recreational activities, and improved promotion.
B(b). Facilities and Safety	Respondents are satisfied with safety systems but highlighted the need for additional facilities and accessibility upgrades.

continued

C(a). Opinions & Suggestions (Tourism & Culture)	Suggestions include hosting <i>wau</i> festivals, busking contests, and food fairs to attract more visitors and promote cultural vibrancy.
C(b). Accessibility & Promotion	Requests for improved signage, public transportation, and regular maintenance.
C(c). Online Interview Findings	Interviewees stated that heritage areas are protected but underpromoted; facilities are well-managed but underused.
D. Educational and Future Aspirations	Respondents expressed hope that heritage education for youth will ensure continuity of cultural memory for future generations.

The data interpretation reveals that Kota Bharu Islamic City maintains a strong cultural identity but faces challenges in promoting, maintaining, and activating its heritage sites. The analysis underscores the importance of community involvement, facility improvement, accessibility enhancement, and education-driven conservation to ensure that the city's tangible and intangible heritage remain vibrant and meaningful. Table 1.2 shows interpretations on Heritage implications in Islamic Kota Bharu City.

Table 1.2 Interpretations on Heritage implications in Islamic Kota Bharu City

Interpretation	Implications for Heritage Conservation in Kota Bharu Islamic City
Younger Malay show high awareness and engagement with heritage-related issues. Their perspectives reflect local cultural identity and concern for the preservation of memory.	Indicates strong local ownership of cultural heritage. Future heritage programs should involve youth and women as key advocates for heritage conservation and education.
While heritage assets are appreciated, their potential is underutilized due to inadequate upkeep and limited activity diversity. Public awareness and tourism engagement remain moderate.	Calls for improved facility management, creative tourism programming, and enhanced marketing of heritage sites under the Islamic City identity.
Existing facilities contribute to visitor confidence, yet the limited inclusivity reduces full utilization of heritage areas.	Authorities should enhance universal accessibility (e.g., for OKU and elderly) and maintain infrastructure to support sustainable tourism flow.
Respondents recognize the role of cultural events in reviving public spaces and sustaining local identity.	Encourages cultural programming as a key strategy in "Designing for Memory," blending heritage conservation with community activities.
Accessibility and information gaps hinder heritage site visitation and engagement.	Enhancing mobility and wayfinding strengthens visitor experience and supports sustainable cultural tourism.
Heritage sites retain authenticity but need active public use to remain relevant.	Suggests that both promotion and adaptive reuse strategies are essential to keep heritage spaces "alive" and meaningful.
Indicates public desire to link conservation with education and intergenerational learning.	Highlights the need for heritage education initiatives within schools and local community programs to strengthen memory-based conservation.

The data analysis in this study aims to interpret the perceptions and feedback gathered from both residents and tourists regarding the heritage conservation strategies in Kota Bharu Islamic City. This analysis focuses on identifying existing challenges, public attitudes, and the potential improvements that could enhance the city's cultural and historical identity. The results were derived from a combination of quantitative and qualitative data obtained through online questionnaires and interviews. These findings were systematically analyzed to understand the degree of public awareness, satisfaction, and involvement in heritage conservation. By examining responses related to physical attributes, environmental quality, accessibility, and cultural engagement, the analysis provides insight into how the city's heritage assets are perceived and valued by the community.

The findings highlight that while Kota Bharu possesses significant cultural and architectural heritage, many respondents perceive the area as lacking vibrancy and integration with urban life. Issues such as inadequate maintenance, limited visitor engagement, and insufficient promotional efforts contribute to the decline in public interaction with heritage spaces. Respondents suggested that improvements in landscape design, recreational facilities, and event-based tourism could help revitalize the area's identity and economic vitality. The data further reveals a strong community desire for sustainable preservation practices that balance modernization with cultural authenticity. Hence, the analysis underscores the need for strategic urban conservation efforts led by local authorities and supported by community participation to strengthen Kota Bharu's position as a living Islamic heritage city that continues to reflect memory, identity, and tradition in its urban form.

Urban Heritage Challenges and Adaptive Conservation Strategies

The analysis indicates that heritage areas in Kota Bharu Islamic City are experiencing increased pressure from rapid urbanization, population growth, and economic development. These forces have contributed to the gradual isolation of heritage zones from the city's active urban fabric. The findings show that although Kota Bharu still retains significant historical and architectural assets, many of these have suffered from neglect, poor maintenance, and weak urban connectivity. Respondents expressed that conservation zones should be more effectively integrated with surrounding modern developments through urban design strategies that promote accessibility, public engagement, and cultural appreciation. Therefore, urban conservation is seen not merely as preservation of buildings, but as an active process to rejuvenate the city's cultural landscape and ensure its sustainability within the contemporary urban context.

To address these challenges, several strategic measures have been identified. First, the zoning of conservation and buffer areas is necessary to protect heritage cores from uncontrolled development and environmental degradation, while ensuring smooth transition between new and old urban fabrics. Second, promoting pedestrianization in heritage streets enhances walkability and visitor experience, allowing for more interactive appreciation of architectural and cultural elements. Third, diversification of tourism products such as cultural events, heritage trails, and artisanal markets can attract more visitors and generate economic incentives for preservation. Fourth, comprehensive heritage and tourism management strategies should be developed to coordinate conservation efforts across agencies, ensuring systematic monitoring, restoration, and promotion of heritage assets. Finally, local community involvement is crucial in sustaining conservation initiatives, as residents' participation in decision-making fosters a stronger sense of ownership and continuity of memory. Together, these strategies create a balanced and inclusive model for urban conservation, aligning with the broader vision of designing for memory and preserving the Islamic identity of Kota Bharu.

Landscaping improvement and Element

The analysis indicates that the landscape of Kota Bharu Islamic City plays a significant role in shaping the overall perception and experience of heritage spaces. Respondents emphasized that the enhancement of landscaped areas could substantially increase the attractiveness of heritage zones, making them more inviting and culturally meaningful. The inclusion of an Islamic cultural garden is proposed as a design approach to strengthen the city's identity as an Islamic heritage destination. Such gardens embody spiritual symbolism and environmental harmony key components in traditional Islamic design philosophy which combine geometric patterns, greenery, and water features to create spaces that promote reflection and tranquility. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that landscape improvements should not merely serve aesthetic purposes but also function as interactive and therapeutic public spaces. Introducing shaded walkways, resting zones, and water elements can improve visitor comfort while enhancing visual continuity between historical buildings and public realms.

Consequently, improved landscape planning contributes not only to tourism appeal but also to sustaining cultural identity and ecological balance within the heritage fabric of Kota Bharu.

Tourist Attractions are Well-Maintained

The analysis highlights that the preservation and regular maintenance of existing attractions such as historical façades, mosque replicas, and landscaped environments are essential to sustaining Kota Bharu's identity as an Islamic heritage city. Findings from the respondents reveal that neglect in maintenance often leads to physical deterioration, loss of aesthetic value, and reduced tourist interest. Regular upkeep is therefore seen as a proactive strategy not only to protect heritage integrity but also to enhance the overall visitor experience. Maintenance activities should extend beyond building preservation to include the cleanliness and functionality of supporting facilities such as restrooms, signage, seating areas, and waste management systems.

In ensuring sustainability, the Kota Bharu Municipal Council (MPKB-BRI) plays a pivotal role in implementing a structured inspection schedule ideally conducted monthly to monitor the condition of all attraction elements. This approach enables early identification of defects and ensures timely restoration efforts. Routine maintenance reinforces public confidence and demonstrates the city's commitment to safeguarding its cultural assets. Additionally, maintaining accessibility features and public amenities contributes to inclusivity, allowing tourists of all backgrounds, including the elderly and people with disabilities, to engage comfortably with the city's heritage spaces.

Marketing Strategy in Promoting the Town

The analysis reveals that effective marketing and promotional strategies play a crucial role in revitalizing Kota Bharu as a recognized Islamic heritage destination. Respondents emphasized the need for the Kota Bharu Municipal Council (MPKB-BRI) to adopt a more dynamic and modern approach to tourism promotion, integrating both digital and experiential marketing strategies. Online platforms such as social media, official tourism websites, and virtual tours can serve as powerful tools to showcase the city's unique architectural heritage, Islamic cultural identity, and historical attractions. Regularly updated online content featuring heritage landmarks, traditional markets, and cultural events can help increase visibility and attract a wider audience, especially among younger and international travelers.

Moreover, digital marketing should be complemented with on-ground initiatives such as cultural festivals, heritage trails, and collaborative events with local artisans to strengthen Kota Bharu's brand identity as a living Islamic heritage city. Learning from successful examples such as Taman Tamadun Islam in Kuala Terengganu, the city can position itself as a hub for Islamic cultural tourism in Malaysia. Strategic partnerships with tourism boards, universities, and private sectors can also enhance promotional outreach and resource sharing. Ultimately, a well-planned marketing strategy not only increases tourist arrivals but also contributes to sustaining local economic growth and preserving cultural authenticity in alignment with the "Designing for Memory" element.

Beautification of Heritage Building

The aesthetic enhancement of heritage buildings is a key factor in preserving the visual integrity and cultural identity of Kota Bharu Islamic City. Respondents and field observations suggest that appropriate color application can significantly influence public perception of historical areas while maintaining harmony between built forms and their surrounding environment. The use of soft and bright color tones on building façades is encouraged to reflect the warmth and vibrancy of Kelantan's cultural character, while ensuring that the color palette remains sympathetic to the architectural typology and historical context. When colors are chosen carefully, they not only rejuvenate old structures but also help reinforce a coherent streetscape that resonates with the spiritual and artistic essence of an Islamic heritage city.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To conclude that while Kota Bharu holds a rich cultural and architectural heritage, the city's traditional zones are gradually losing their historical essence due to weak integration between heritage preservation and modern urban development. The research findings reveal that many of the city's heritage areas have become isolated and inactive, largely because of inadequate maintenance, lack of awareness, and insufficient promotion. Nevertheless, there remains a strong appreciation among

residents and tourists for the city's unique Islamic identity and historical charm. The results emphasize the importance of reconnecting these cultural assets to everyday urban life through improved design, conservation awareness, and community participation, ensuring that Kota Bharu remains a living symbol of Islamic heritage and memory.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance heritage conservation and urban livability. Firstly, local authorities should strengthen heritage management policies by implementing stricter conservation guidelines and routine maintenance programs for historical buildings and facades. Secondly, the introduction of cultural-based tourism activities such as heritage trails, traditional art workshops, and local festivals can rejuvenate interest and participation among both residents and visitors. Thirdly, collaboration between government bodies, private sectors, and local communities is crucial in developing sustainable heritage strategies that balance modernization with cultural preservation. Finally, awareness campaigns and educational initiatives should be expanded to instill appreciation of heritage values among younger generations. Collectively, these recommendations aim to transform Kota Bharu Islamic City into a vibrant and sustainable heritage destination that preserves memory while embracing progress.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It should disclose any financial or non-financial interests such as political, personal, or professional relationships that may be interpreted as having influenced the manuscript. The phrase "The authors declare no conflicts of interest" should be included if there is no conflict of interest.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

1. Data available within the article or its supplementary materials.
2. Data is openly available in a public repository, with a permanent identifier (such as a DOI).

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

All authors contributed to the design of the research and the write-up. The data cleaning and tabulation were undertaken by University Teknologi MARA. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Credit author statement: **Noradzsyiah Adzhar**: Writing, Research Design and Findings. **Dr. Puteri Yuliana Samsudin**: Research Supervision.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used ChatGPT to enhance the clarity of the writing. After using the ChatGPT, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

ETHIC STATEMENTS

Ethical approval statements will usually include:

- 1) Whether or not the study included human or animal subjects. In all cases, the ethical approval status of the work should be stated in the ethical approval statement.
- 2) The committee which approved the study.
- 3) The compliance documents. What policies, declarations, acts, etc.
- 4) Persistent identifier: reference or approval number. Include the registration ID/reference number if applicable.

If not applicable, please write 'Not applicable' in this section.

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