

# **Meeting with**

# **YB Datuk Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah,**

# **Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth**

# **& Sports**

17 April 2019

# Sarawak Heritage Society (SHS)

- SHS was set up as a non-partisan, non-government and non-profit organisation in 2007
- The **mission** of SHS is to promote the conservation, permanent preservation and sustainable management of Sarawak's unique cultural heritage assets, both tangible (buildings, monuments, sites, cultural landscapes, objects) and intangible (traditional arts and crafts, customs and traditions, food).
- The **vision** of SHS is a Sarawak where all stakeholders value the rich and unique cultural heritage and diligently contribute, directly or indirectly, to its ongoing sensitive and sustainable protection, conservation and management.



# What SHS has done in 2018/2019

Talk by  
RAMSAY ONG

HERITAGE  
WALKS

ENGAGEMENT WITH  
GOVERNMENT

THE PLACES YOU LOVE ARE FAST  
DISAPPEARING OR IN DISREPAIR



What are you doing about it?

Do you have a favourite old building?  
A historic area? A monument that you treasure?  
Any other items of significant heritage interest?

Please help us to preserve the Sarawak you know and love.

Just snap a photo and tell us what and where it is.

Submit by 31st January 2019

"A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people"  
- Mahatma Gandhi

or SMS us at +6018-988 2343  
Sarawak Heritage Society SHS  
sarawakheritagesociety@gmail.com

A HERITAGE QUEST  
by Sarawak Heritage Society



E-NEWSLETTERS

Talk by Exec Dir / VP  
of Singapore Heritage  
Society



Heritage Speaker Series talk  
**GIVING A FUTURE TO OUR PAST**  
Don't miss this opportunity!

A special talk by guest speakers Dr Chua Ai Lin and Mr Fauzy Ismail, from the SINGAPORE HERITAGE SOCIETY this Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April starting at 6pm (doors open at 5:30pm) at the Old Court House. Admission is free for SHS members and invitees; a donation of RM10 is suggested for others.

Under the theme of "Giving a Future to Our Past", Dr Chua will discuss the role of placemaking, communities and civil society in sustainable heritage conservation, with examples from Singapore. Placemaking is the process through which we work together to shape our public spaces, using community participation to plan, design, manage and programme the shared use of spaces. Mr Fauzy Ismail will present an educational programme, "Heartland Explorers: intangible spaces of our neighbourhood".

The speakers will introduce the approach used by the Singapore Heritage Society which combines cultural mapping research, policy recommendations, community development and socially-engaged art to create a future conservation and management.

Dr Chua Ai Lin is a well known figure in the Singapore heritage protection scene. She is currently Executive Director and Vice President of Singapore Heritage Society, having served as its President (2013-2017). PhD in History from the University of Cambridge (UK), former Assistant Professor in the Department of History, National University of Singapore (NUS) and independent researcher and consultant on academia, public sector, private enterprise and civil society matters.

Mr Fauzy Ismail is an architect, tutor and researcher at NUS Department of Architecture, and in-residence at The Substation (a Singapore independent contemporary art centre) and author with the Singapore Heritage Society.



All are welcome. Do register early to help the organisers manage the logistics. Contact us by sending a whatsapp/sms to +6018 988 2343 or email to sarawakheritagesociety@gmail.com

6pm (doors open 5:30pm)

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> Apr 2019

Old Court House

Event Sponsor  
PANSAR

## An SHS Event Reviving the Magic of Chinese Opera

Sarawak Heritage Society invites you to an informal knowledge sharing session entitled "Reviving the Magic of Chinese Opera" on Wed, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at the Museum Cafe, 96 Main Bazaar (opposite the Chinese Museum). Registration at 5:30pm. Sharing begins 5:50pm. Free for SHS members. RM10 for non-members (you are expected to purchase your own drinks or snacks at the cafe). Session is in English.

A brief overview of Chinese Opera will be given by SHS Vice President James Yong and SHS member John Soo, followed by some short videos. We may be inviting a few opera performers to join us and talk about some of their costumes and techniques. The rest of the session will be open for free form dialogue. (This is planned to be part of a regular meet-and-share series)

Chinese Opera (whether Teochew, Hokkien, Hainanese, Cantonese, etc) is an artform and an intangible cultural heritage of Sarawak. Once so central to the life of Kuching's Chinese community, opera is declining in popularity as modern society turns to movies, TV dramas and the Internet. The number of performers are also dwindling and their average age increasing. As a unique tradition, art and entertainment, SHS believes it is important to keep this alive in some form. Or to have the process documented for posterity.

To help us manage the logistics, please let us know by 30 Mar if you plan to attend, by emailing Sarawak Heritage Society at [sarawakheritagesociety@gmail.com](mailto:sarawakheritagesociety@gmail.com) or by whatsapp or sms to +6018 988 2343.

Topic: "Reviving the Magic of Chinese Opera"  
Venue: Museum Cafe, 96 Main Bazaar  
Date & Time: 5:30pm, Wed 13<sup>th</sup> Mar 2019  
Entrance fee: RM10 non-member. Free for SHS members



Talk on CHINESE OPERA

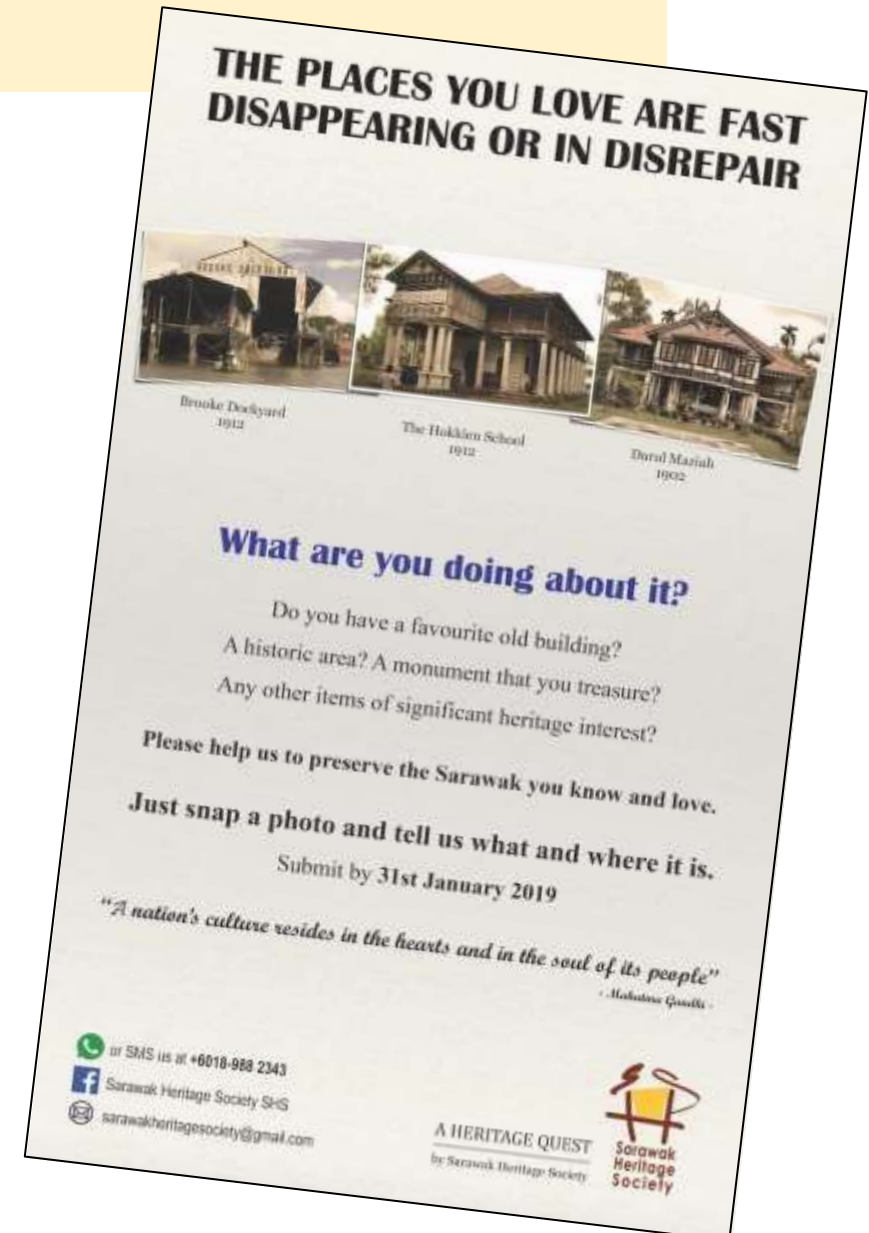
HERITAGE QUEST



# HERITAGE QUEST

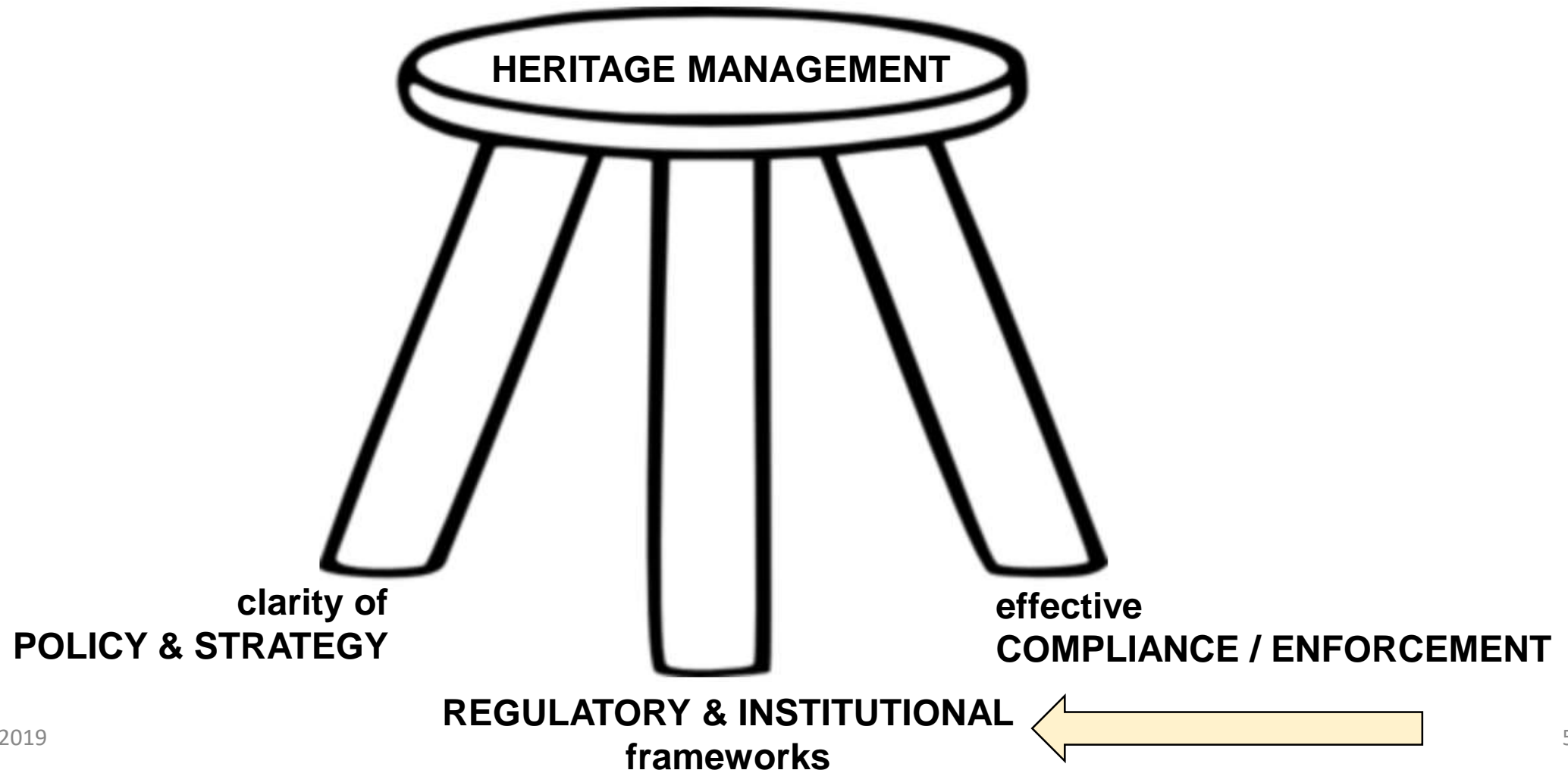
- Public engagement programme
- Identifying “items of significant heritage interest”
- Nov 2018 – Jan 2019

<< Link to presentation >>



# Bringing Management of Sarawak's Heritage to the Next Level

Observations by the Sarawak Heritage Society



# SHS View on Key Issues

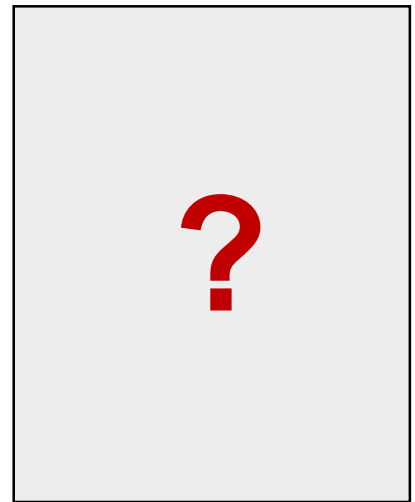
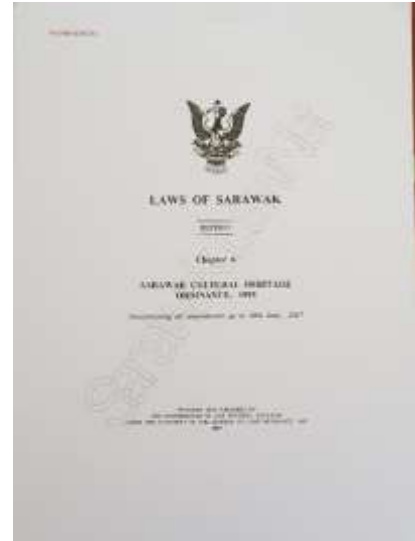
- SHS tries to complement Government's efforts in heritage management
- For many governments, Cultural Heritage (CH) management based more on ad hoc, often tourism-oriented initiatives, rather than on clear policy and strategy
- SCHO 1993: overall cultural heritage management entrusted to SMD
  - Museum activities have taken precedence; Heritage Register not updated in recent years
  - "Out-of-museum" heritage management requires skills other than those required for museum management
  - Inadequate resources (human, financial) allocated to "out-of-museum" cultural heritage conservation
- CH management not integrated in Govt-of-Sarawak (GoS) planning and development decision processes
- Lack of technical heritage conservation guidelines
- Time for a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) framework?
- Weak enforcement

# Institutional Set-up & Ordinance

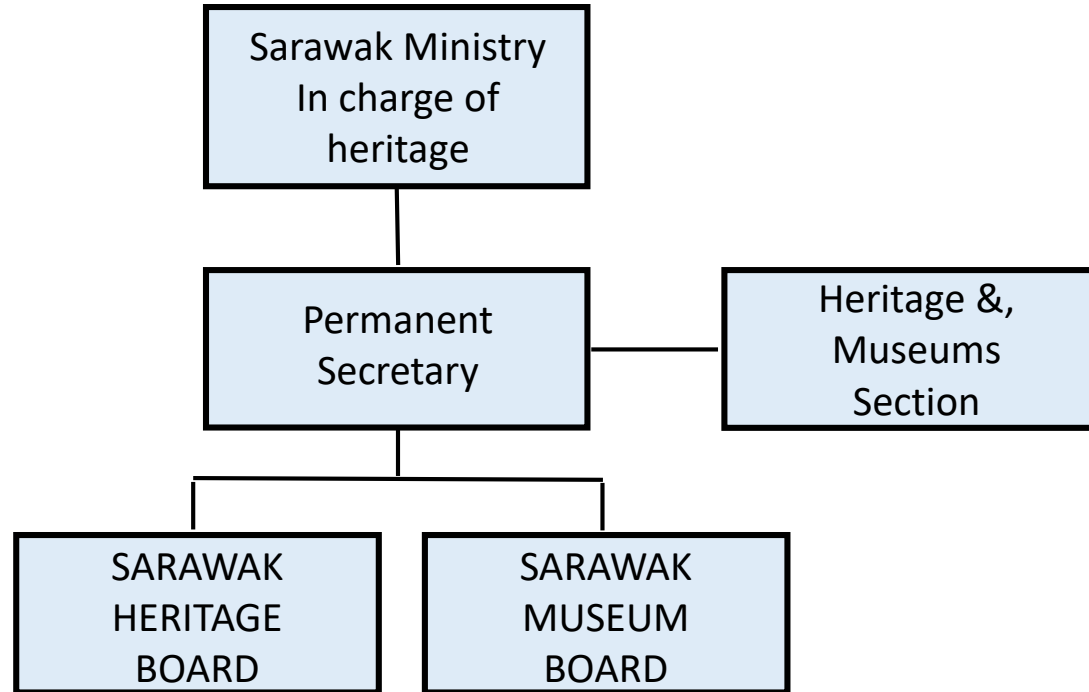
- SHS believes a dedicated, empowered coordination & management entity is most effective for CH management
- Preferred option: a **Heritage Board**
- Statutory body set-up → important and number of differences with current 'Jabatan' set-up
- Updated regulations should include modern heritage terminology and global best practices

## Amended SCHO (1993) or New Ordinance?

- preferable to craft **new ordinance** rather than 'patch' existing SCHO
- highly advisable to **mobilise global expertise in heritage law** [*consider all recommendations presented here as subject to more expert guidance*]



# Possible set-up: Heritage and Museums





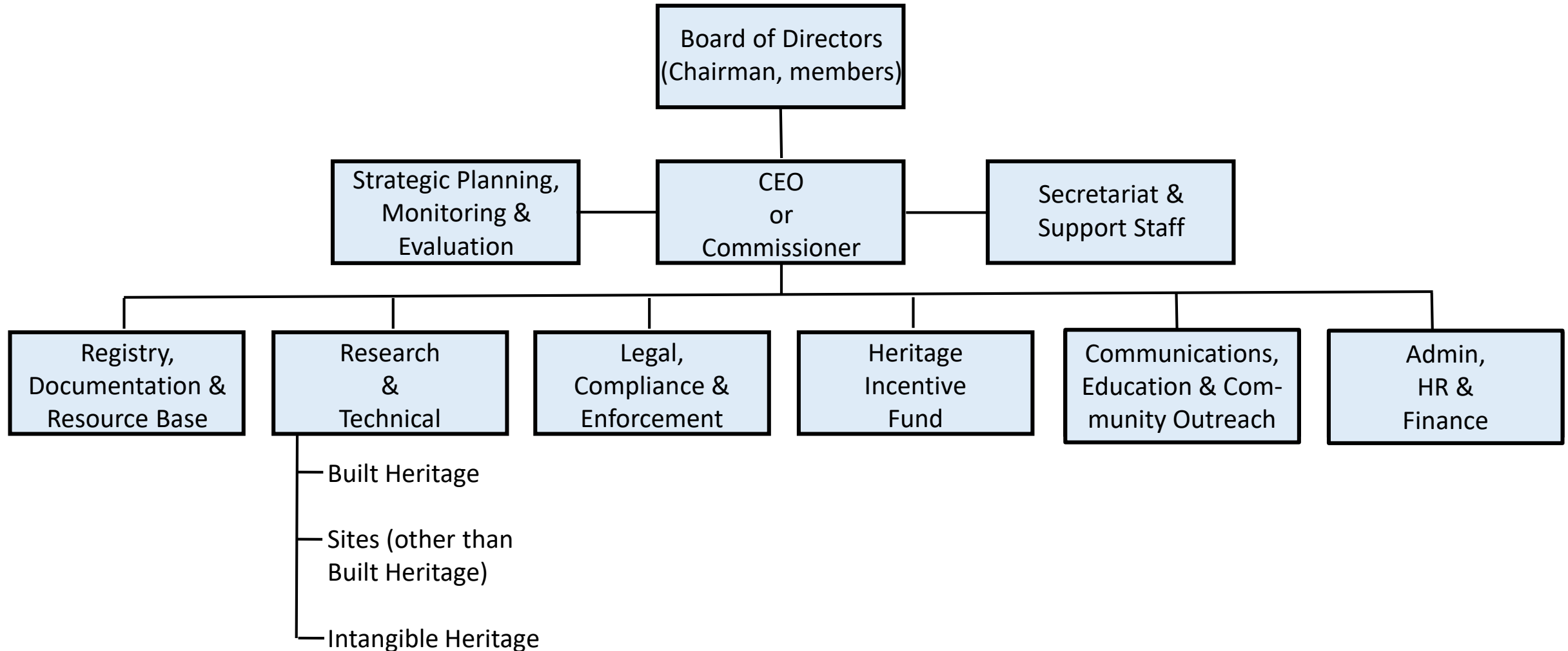
# Checklist of what the Heritage Board should cover

- Expression of **Policy and Strategy statements**
- **Tangible as well as intangible** cultural heritage
- Management of documented inventory and Register of heritage assets by categories (graduated levels of protection); safeguards to undue 'de-listing'.
- State of the art **technical conservation guidelines**
- State of the art **Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)** requirements and guidelines
- Strong **voice in approval process of development or renovations** of listed heritage buildings or buildings located in heritage zones (links with SPA/SPU & Local Govts) and of projects requiring HIA
- **Incentive schemes** for the conservation of privately held heritage assets
- **Export of heritage objects**: under Heritage Board or Museums entity?
- **Enforcement powers**
- **Time lines**
- **Clarification between Sarawak and Federal jurisdiction** on heritage management
- **Transparency and openness/inclusiveness** : involve communities, professional organisations (PAM, Planners...), NGOs; provide avenues for 'nomination' of heritage assets by the general public

# Heritage Board: Initial Agenda

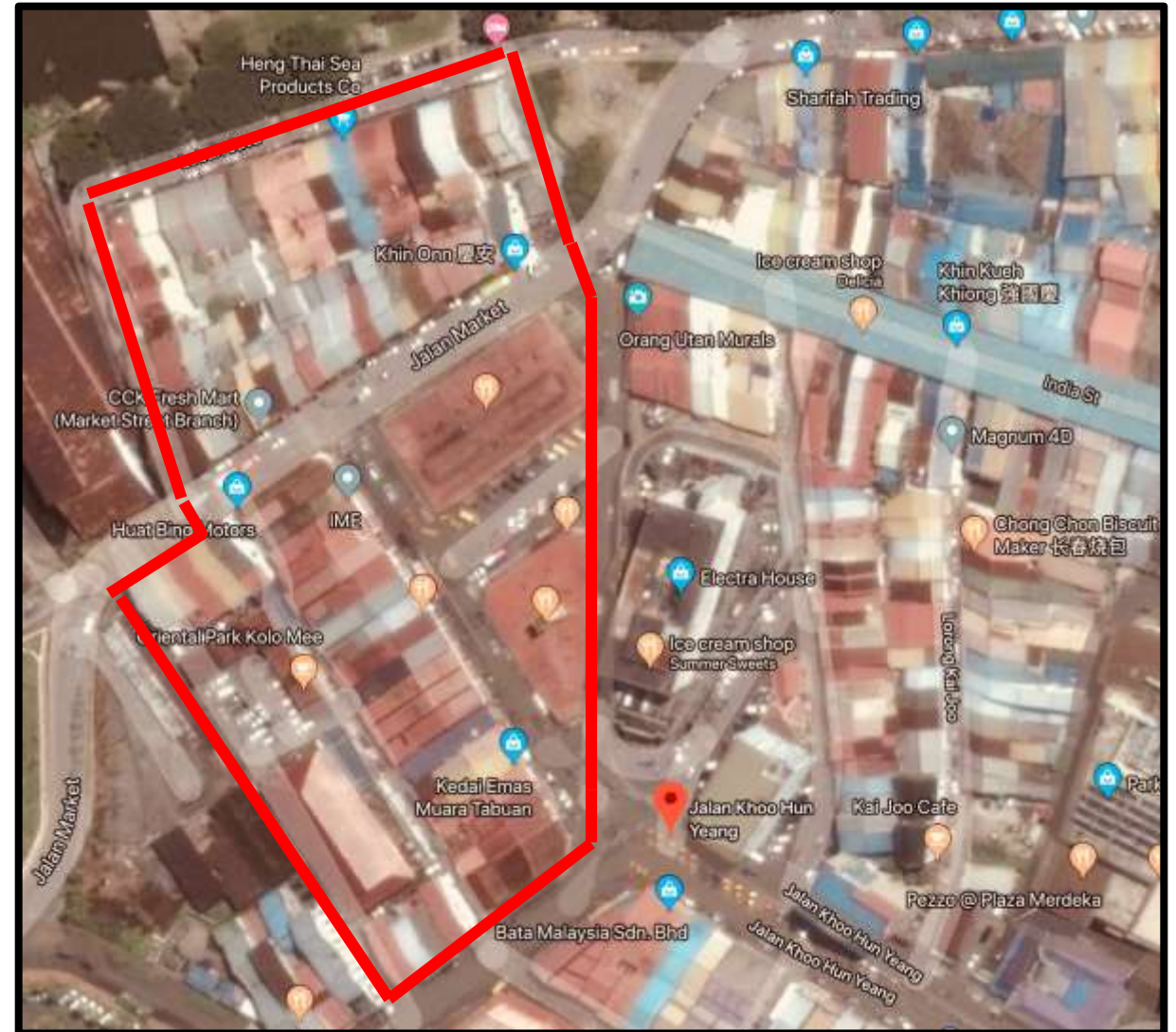
- Draft and propose **Heritage Policy and Strategy statements**
- Prepare **management plan** with outline of medium term GoS **budget allocations requirements**
- Process **backlog** of items proposed to be registered (SMD list)
- Commission a technical and socio-economic **baseline study of the heritage assets of Old Kuching**
- Draft **technical conservation guidelines** to be embodied in by-laws
- Identify and design operational **incentive schemes** for the conservation of privately held heritage assets (grants fund, tax incentives,...)

# Sarawak Heritage Board organisational architecture



# Baseline Study Pilot

- SHS firmly believes that a technical **Baseline Study** is required to get a foundational heritage understanding of the Old Kuching heritage zone
- A Baseline Study will capture such data as the dimensions of the spaces, the architectural facades and styles, use of the space (trades, crafts, services, residences, etc), historical significance, condition of the premises, cultural mapping etc.
- As a pilot or proof-of-concept, SHS hopes to carry out a baseline study of a small, clearly demarcated area in the centre of Old Kuching (shown in the enclosed **red area** on the map)
- We hope to get sponsorship so as to be able to engage consultants and work with local volunteers and university students to achieve this pilot Baseline Study



# Help SHS help Sarawak

- We wish to continue our mission – awareness (education), advocacy and advisory
- We will analyse the inputs we received from the public in **HERITAGE QUEST**. We will screen, flesh out, document, present to government, publish the results. Need resources to cover all the other divisions
- We hope some of our proposals to bring Heritage Management to the next level may be adopted, esp. amendments to the **HERITAGE ORDINANCE**, creation of a Sarawak Heritage Board. SHS is happy to continue working with those who are finalising the Ordinance
- We hope GoS will do a technical **BASELINE STUDY** for Old Kuching. But we intend to do a **pilot** study (a kind of “proof of concept” study) on a small, clearly demarcated area to show the benefits that a Baseline Study can bring to Government and other stakeholders

# Thank You for Your Consideration





# Scope of New Heritage Ordinance

Tangible CH (buildings, monuments, objects), intangible CH (arts, crafts, trades), natural heritage, archaeology, documents archive,...

What can be said :

- **Natural heritage** (protected flora and fauna, protected areas, geological/paleontological assets): management require strong sector-specific skills and mandates already allocated to SFC and SBC. → keep manages separately (SFC to evolve into natural heritage management agency?)
- **Arts:** has common dimensions with cultural heritage (intangible heritage). Already covered by Sarawak Arts Council (statutory body)
- Cultural heritage **documents archive** : may, optimally, be left with Pustaka ('Sarawakiana')
- **Museums** = component of cultural heritage conservation, requiring specific skills and, and for efficient management, a high degree of management flexibility.
- **Archaeology** = research activity which can be considered as best managed by Museum administration, as part of overall museum research activities.

# Preferred overall institutional architecture

- **Heritage Board** (body corporate, GoS statutory body), that could be named “***Sarawak Heritage Board***”
- **Separate corporate entity for Museums and archaeology**
  - **Govt statutory body or GoS linked company?** (in latter case, preferably fully GoS owned, non profit, limited by guarantee, such as for ex. Sarawak Convention Bureau).
  - **Parallel or under Heritage Board?**
- **Heritage Board representation in SPA**
- Provide for **cross-representations** in boards of heritage-related bodies (Heritage Board > < Museums, Arts Council, Craft Council, Pustaka, wildlife/protected areas management agency, SBC...)