Revitalization of the ex-Warenhuis of Medan through a historic urban landscape approach

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Abstract. Medan is one of the historical towns in Indonesia, where the plantation industry triggered its growth. Until today, most of the heritage buildings remain, but many of them tend to damaging and distinction, including the Warenhuis. The Warenhuis in which has a very high architectural significance is located in the historic district of Kesawan which as the historical core of the Medan city. Therefore, this study aims to explore the adaptive re-use strategy for the Warenhuis through the historic urban landscape approach by completing the literature review, field survey, and questionnaire. Based on the analysis, it was highlighted that one of the best strategies is the mix-use concept by utilizing the vacant lot next to the building and the Deli River as a center for art and culture which can accommodate art activities and culture of the town. Medan City has a diverse culture and society. Many arts and cultural activities need the right place to be an alternative attraction in the city of Medan. Therefore, it can attract more tourist coming to this area by implementing this strategy. Besides the revitalization of Warenhuis area can accommodate the problem of parking within this historic area, which often causes traffic congestion.

1. Introduction
The plantation industry heavily influences the growth and development of the city of Medan. Traces of the triumph of the plantation industry still survive in every corner of the city of Medan, including the Warenhuis which was previously used as the Educational and Culture office, and the Manpower Office of the North Sumatra Provincial Government. Then lastly we are better known as the AMPI Building. This building is located on the corner of Jalan Ahmad Yani VII with Jalan Hindu Medan. Warenhuis has initially been the first modern department store in Medan. In general, this building still shows the elegance and beauty of its architectural form even though the construction of this building looks poorly maintained. It gives the impression of being neglected by those who own or manage this building. Warenhuis is one of the landmarks of Medan city listed as a local heritage by Mayor Decree Number 188.342 /3017/SK/2000. Besides, it is situated within the Kesawan area, where is one of the cultural heritage areas stipulated in the Local Regulation Number 13 the Year 2011 concerning the Spatial town Planning of Medan City 2011-2031 [1].

The Deli River borders Kesawan area - Merdeka Square to the west. The Deli River is an element of the Medan city landscape which has a high value in the development of the town. However, currently, the role of the Deli River has decreased. Deli river today faces complex problem such as the low quality of water, highly populated urban residential area with low quality and poor condition so that the area around the river to become slum area. In 2019, North Sumatra Provincial Government issued an inner-
A city toll road program will be built over the Deli River planned to be completed in 2023. It will cost IDR 15 trillion and has a total length of 30.97 kilometres [2]. The Deli River borders the west side of the Warenhuis land, so this could be a potential and issue for the revitalization of Warenhuis.

Fitri et al. [3] discussed the development of the landscape of the Kesawan area, which was originally a village, then continued to develop into a commercial and service area. The characteristics of Kesawan are small two-story shophouses and offices for commercial services separated by a narrow road. Along the facade of the building, there is an arcade as the corridor for people walking. Most of the cultural heritage buildings in Medan City are in the Kesawan area, which is adjacent to Lapangan Merdeka. Although both areas have different characters, however, they are located next to each other so that it is difficult to separate them and are often considered to be one area so that they are called the Kesawan – Lapangan Merdeka Area. This area today is known as the zero points of Medan City, precisely at the location of the former fountain of Nienhuys in front of the Medan Post Office. This fountain was built around 1915 by the Dutch East Indies Government, which was dedicated to Jacobus Nienhuys as a tobacco plantation pioneer [4]. Even though the Nienhuys Fountain has now been renewed, it does not reduce the attractiveness of the Kesawan–Lapangan Merdeka area where many heritage buildings existed in this area. Unfortunately, most of the heritage buildings in this area, especially Kesawan, are not well maintained. In this area, there is Lapangan Merdeka which was served as an open space for the people of Medan [5]. Lapangan Merdeka has the character of the modern city center where essential facilities of the town with high architectural value surround this open space. In this area, we can find traces of the old building side by side with new with more modern style. Although the construction of this new building often creates conflict because it threatens the existence of the heritage buildings. However, until now this area still survives as the most popular heritage district in Medan. If this infill development continues without any guideline and regulation so that the heritage buildings within this area are gradually going to extinction as can be seen in the current condition of many heritage buildings that are lack of maintaining and abandon like Warenhuis. In 2007, Merdeka Walk was built on the west side of Lapangan Merdeka located across the former City Hall, as a place to eat while enjoying the atmosphere of the city center. Merdeka Walk was built with several massive buildings as a culinary center, which in fact, it is illegal.

Since its initial development as an industrial plantation town, Medan has been inhabited by various ethnic groups from the local and from abroad such as Asia and Europe. Until now, Medan city has grown into a multi-ethnic town with diverse cultures. It is one of the potentials that can be developed in the transfer of Warenhuis' function in the future. Currently, the city of Medan has an art center or cultural park and a museum as well as an area for cultural festivals and exhibitions known as the North Sumatra Fair (PRSU) which are all managed by the North Sumatra Provincial Government. Meanwhile, the Medan City Government does not yet have a cultural park and museum.

The concept of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach was initiated in October 2005 by the General Assembly of UNESCO Member States for the World Heritage Convention. The culmination of this process was in November 2011, when the UNESCO General Assembly adopted the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation. Many managers of the world's historic cities have taken this approach in conserving their cities. This approach sees and interprets the city as a series in time and space. This approach moves beyond the preservation of the physical environment and focuses on the entire human environment with all its material and intangible qualities. Apart from that, it conceptually seeks to increase the sustainability of planning and design interventions by taking into account the existing built environment, intangible cultural heritage, cultural diversity, socio-economic and environmental factors along with local community values [6]. Therefore, this study aims to examine Warenhuis' strategy of conversion by taking a holistic approach to the historic urban landscape, including the consideration of urban spatial structure and socio-culture in Medan. Adaptive reuse is defined as the process of extending the useful life of historic, old, obsolete, and derelict buildings. Adaptive reuse also considers new use requirements, socio-cultural demands, and environmental regulations [7].
2. Methods
Data collection are done by employing a mixed method. At first, qualitative methods were performed through literature studies and also the field observation of the site area that was conducted six times. Meanwhile, the research applied the quantitative approach by distributing the questionnaires containing a set of questions to the respondents focusing on the strategy and the new use of the Warenhuis. The questionnaire was distributed to 60 respondents that were residents with a ratio between men and women, namely 1:1. Specific criteria selected the respondents; firstly, they have understood the significance of the building in the historical development of Medan. Secondly, their professions are expected to be related to arts and culture, both as artists, art activists and thirdly, they are Civil Servants (PNS) who take care of parts of culture such as the Department of Culture and Medan City Tourism. Before collecting data in the field, this study was preceded by conducting a literature review of several sources, including books, journals and old sources such as building history, maps, photos which were accessed online.

3. Results and discussion
Architect G. Boss designed the building, and on 16 February 1919, the first stone was laid by the first Mayor of Medan city, Daniel Baron MacKay, and completed a year later. This building was called 'Medan Warenhuis', which was a shopping center for the Dutch in Medan city during the colonial era. The German firm, Hüttenbach & Co., is the first foreign trading company in Medan city and the oldest on the east coast of Sumatra. This company also operates this supermarket. A trading company, N.V. Medan's Warenhuis, established a prestige department store located at the corner of Huttenbachstraat and Hindoestraat, now Achmad Yani VII Street and Hindu Street, then called it in Dutch as "Warenhuis". At the time of construction of this building, N.V. Medan's Warenhuis are under the leadership of I. Cornfield. Architect G. Bos designed Medan's Warenhuis in 1918. The design of the building was approved by the City Beauty Commission (Schoonheidcommissie) on 15 July 1918. Initially, the shop building consisted of two floors totalling 2400 square meters: the ground floor was 1400 square meters, the first level covering an area of 1000 square meters. The construction of this building is estimated to cost as much as 200,000 fl. After independence and nationalization, this shop was closed, and then after that, this building changed a function. This building was once the office of PT Sipef (a plantation company that was founded in 1921), then in the 1970s, it functioned as the Medan Arts Building. Around the year 1980-1990 was the Office of Manpower North Sumatra Province, the office of the Education and Culture, lastly became the secretariat of various associations and youth organizations called as AMPI, SPSI, and others. Even some rooms functioned as houses. Currently, this building has been emptied and managed by Medan Municipal Government (See Figure 1).

The condition of Warenhuis nowadays is about 60% of damage after experiencing the fire in 2012 and neglect for a long time. At the beginning of its construction, Warenhuis had a roof with glass material to increase the use of sunlight during the day. However, due to not being cared for and due to a fire, the glass roof had finally destroyed.

The Historic Urban Landscape is the result of the layering and intertwining of cultural and natural values from time to time. It transcends the concept of a 'historic center,' which embraces the broader urban context and geographic setting. This broader context includes the topography, geomorphology, hydrology, and natural features of the site; the built environment, both historical and contemporary; infrastructure above and below ground; open spaces and gardens, land use patterns and spatial planning; perception and visual relationships; as well as all other elements of urban structures. It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes, and intangible cultural heritage related to diversity and identity. In short, the HUL approach is useful in six points: first, it can strengthen the character of a place or region; second, it can increase the number of high-end business and service sectors; third, this approach can also increase the price of land and buildings; and fourth, higher income for treatment, restoration and rehabilitation efforts. The fifth point is that it can improve the quality of building planning and design, then the last point is useful for increasing tourism. Seven steps should be done to achieve its goals. The first step is undertaking a complete study of the city's
resources - natural, cultural, and human. Next, the second step is using participatory planning and multi-stakeholder consultations to decide on conservation goals and actions. The third, assess the vulnerability of urban cultural heritage due to socio-economic pressures and impacts of climate change. Later, the fourth step is integrating urban cultural heritage values and vulnerability status into a broader urban development framework; followed by the fifth, prioritizing policies and actions for conservation and development, including good service. The next step is establishing appropriate partnerships (public and private) and local management frameworks, and the last step is developing coordination mechanisms in various activities among different actors. This approach suggests that historical contexts and new developments can interact with each other and strengthen roles and meanings. The HUL approach sees urban cultural heritage as social, cultural, and economic capital for urban development.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

**Figure 1.** Warenhuis building inscription and Warenhuis early exterior.

![Figure 2](image2.png)

**Figure 2.** Development of Warenhuis and Kesawan regions from 1906 to 2007.

From the Figure 2, it can be seen that previously the Kesawan area was a commercial area with its characteristic buildings as a narrow lot for shophouses. As time goes by, these buildings still exist, but their function and use are diminishing. So that the activity value of the Kesawan area decreases, because of this, it is necessary to take steps to revitalize Warenhuis by the problems and conditions that have been found and analyzed previously. The steps are as follows:

### 3.1. Managing of change

When a building is reused, the most important and meaningful factor in designing the new building is the relationship between the old and the new [11]. A building in the context of a city and the result of cultural creation is dynamic. Changes in cultural heritage cannot be avoided and cannot be stopped [12]. Adaptive preserved old buildings have the potential to generate income and profit, with the strategy taking into account physical, economic, functional, technological, social, and regulatory aspects in a comprehensive manner. It can assist in increasing the capacity of cities for sustainable energy and natural resources [13]. Similar to Langston's thoughts, Lehmann views that adaptive reuse of old buildings with sustainability will more or less have a significant positive environmental and social impact from the conversion of existing buildings, beyond mere inheritance value. He further outlined several things that need to be considered: the design that is maintained or reused must think about durability, including the
ability to meet user needs that change over time, economic factors and emerging complexity, and the "loose" ability to integrate new technologies [14]. Changes made to Warenhuis must be by existing regulations; they cannot make changes without seeing the conditions and regulations that already exist in the area. According to the Local Regulation Number 2 the Year 2015 concerning the Detailed Spatial Plan of Medan City that the land use of the Warenhuis site is for commercial K-1 meaning it has a primarily commercial function with several other functions [15]. By doing this, the conversion into a mix-use area can be used on the Warenhuis site to enhance uses and activities in the area.

3.2. Improving the surrounding area including Deli River revitalization
The surrounding urban environment contributes to the physical environment and improves viability and overall quality of life. The extent to which historic buildings can contribute to views of the surrounding city is often overlooked. As mentioned earlier, along with the development of the Kesawan area, its commercial function decreased. Thus, it is necessary to have factors that can improve the quality of this area. Because the Warenhuis site is directly adjacent to the Deli River, the problems faced will not be separated from the issues of the Deli River and also the area along the river bank which has many slum areas. It would be better if the environment around the Warenhuis is rearranged particularly for the one building block starting on the Hindu street towards the Deli River. It includes revitalizing the Deli River for example into an active waterfront area with its culinary delights; this will add to the quality of activities both during the day and at night so that it can become one of solution for relocating the existing Merdeka Walk at Lapangan Merdeka. With the use of culinary and retail functions, this will attract other tenants to start using other buildings around the Kesawan area. Thus finally, the quality of the Kesawan area can be increased back into a commercial area as it was initially formed.

3.3. Providing solution of parking issue within the historic Kesawan area
The most issues of Kesawan area is traffic congestion, due to the large number of vehicles passing the narrow roads, the large number of cars parked on the shoulder of the road, and poor circulation. This area needs a multi-story car park with an automated parking system (APS) located in the surrounding of Warenhuis to address the issue. Design of parking structures can add considerable cost and higher space efficiency for planning new developments.

3.4. Being part of cultural space and facilities of Medan City
Medan has a very diverse local culture; however, it is a lack of cultural facilities. Warenhuis is one of the city landmarks, and the city needs a cultural facility as the icon of the town. Therefore, the new uses are supposed to be a mix-use mainly as the cultural center and commercial space for cultural exhibition and gallery. Besides, it can consider setting the restaurants promoting local culinary along the river bank (See Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. The surrounded area of Warenhuis.  Figure 4. Illustration of re-arrangement of the landscape surrounding Warenhuis [8].
4. Conclusion
It concludes that the revitalization of Warenhuis buildings needs to consider the historical background and environment surrounding the building by using the HUL approach recommended by UNESCO since 2011. The new uses and strategy have to address the quality of building structures and design by applying the conservation principles. This design will also address the issue of the poor-quality Deli River and its slum area. It recommends the Warenhuis can be developed into mix-uses building concepts, such as a cultural center with commercial facilities for exhibition hall, rental meeting area and local culinary center. Besides, it can also overcome the problem of the lack of public open areas in the city of Medan, so that it becomes a solution for the relocation of the Merdeka Walk which violates the rules of open space at Merdeka Square. By using the four strategies described earlier, this concept is expected to create a new, continuous image with new buildings to be designed without forgetting the identity of the area itself. Thus, it will create a harmonious atmosphere between the old building and the new building in strengthening the character of the historic area.

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