

THINKING, ASSESSING AND DOING BUILT HERITAGE IN SINGAPORE

A Joint Seminar by Social Lab, Institute of Policy Studies; and
Social Science and Policy Cluster, NUS Faculty of Arts and
Social Sciences

27 February 2019, Wednesday

Seminar: 9.00am - 1.30pm
NUS AS7, #01-16/17/18 Seminar Room B
5 Arts Link, Singapore 117570

Optional guided tour: 1.30pm - 5.00pm
Dakota Crescent/Cassia Crescent



Synopsis

The issue of built heritage, especially the collective sales of post-independence landmarks such as Pearl Bank Apartments, has gained prominence in recent years. At the same time, activism and public engagement of various sites such as Bukit Brown Cemetery and Dakota Crescent SIT flats reflect growing interest in the issue. Even as more buildings and landmarks are being conserved and repurposed, questions surrounding the meaning, purpose and process of built heritage conservation have become more salient.

Beyond fostering a sense of national consciousness among Singaporeans, built landmarks and sites are considered an important tangible element of the Singaporean national identity. Conversely, the loss of old buildings can weaken one's sense of place and contribute to a sense of displacement.

This seminar will explore perceptions and practices pertaining to built heritage from the lenses of civic activism, policy planning, business undertakings and broader perspectives of Singaporeans. How can we be sensitive to diverse attitudes towards built heritage, and improve the processes of evaluation, planning, discussion and decision-making that go into heritage work? What factors and dynamics must be taken into consideration when exploring conservation, redevelopment and repurposing? These questions will be addressed through two panels and a guided tour.

The first panel focuses on heritage as a process of meaning-making. It introduces the factors that commonly guide the evaluation of heritage sites, examining how knowledge, lived experiences, memories and the discernment of the senses intertwine to constitute perceptions of built heritage. In turn, built heritage can influence the sense of national identity. The translation of perceptions into action requires proponents of conservation to consider the challenges that different types of land ownership pose.

The second panel explores the assessment of built heritage in conservation and redevelopment. It considers the imperatives of market forces, legal and bureaucratic systems, and the interests of diverse stakeholders that guide the management of heritage. Drawing on their experiences of heritage management, the speakers will offer insights on the value of assessment to policymakers, corporate organisations and civil society.

In partnership with *Dakota-Cassia Adventures*, we will end with a guided tour of Dakota Crescent and Cassia Crescent, which offers experiential insights to social impacts associated with conservation and resettlement. Participation in this tour is optional, and limited to 30 persons, on a first-come-first serve basis, at \$35 per person payable directly to the tour provider.

****IPS events and the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)***

IPS respects your privacy. For the purpose of processing, handling and managing your participation in this event, IPS will be collecting, using and/or disclosing your personal data to third parties (including any third party located outside Singapore). Please note that photography, audio and video recording may occur during this event. All photography, audio and video recording may be used by IPS for education, marketing, promotional and/or publication purposes. This event is open for media coverage. However, IPS will produce a report summarising the event, and publish it, with photos, on the IPS website. Event attendees will not be identified by name. By registering for this event, you have consented to the above. If you have any enquiries, please contact Ms Woo Yue Ting at 6601 5561 or email ips.soclab@nus.edu.sg.

Programme

9.00 am – 9.20 am

Registration

9.20 am – 9.30 am

Opening Remarks

Professor Lionel Wee
Provost's Chair Professor
and
Vice Dean of Research
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
National University of Singapore

9.30 am – 10.35 am

Panel 1 Thinking and Doing Heritage

Chairperson

Dr Leong Chan-Hoong
Head
IPS Social Lab

Speakers

1. Perceptions of Singapore's Built Heritage and Landmarks

Ms Paveena Seah
Senior Research Analyst
IPS Social Lab
and
Dr Natalie Pang
Senior Research Fellow
IPS Social Lab

2. Shopping Malls and Memories

Dr Liew Kai Khiun
Assistant Professor
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and
Information
Nanyang Technological University

3. Heritage and Civic Activism

Mr Jonathan Poh
Principal, Provolk Architects
Founder, Save Dakota Crescent Campaign

4. Panel Discussion

10.35 am – 10.50 am

Tea Break

10.50 am – 12 pm

Panel 2
Assessing Built Heritage

Chairperson

Associate Professor Tan Ern Ser
Department of Sociology
Chair, Social Science and Policy Cluster
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
National University of Singapore
Academic Adviser, IPS Social Lab

Speakers

1. Deciding the Fate of Old Buildings

Dr Yeo Kang Shua
Associate Professor of Architectural History,
Theory and Criticism
Architecture and Sustainable Design
Singapore University of Technology and
Design

2. Social Impact Assessment – A Case Study

Mr Cai Yinzhou
Founder of Dakota-Cassia Adventures
Co-Founder of Betweentwohomes.sg and
Cassia Resettlement Team

3. Planning and the Market

Dr Malone-Lee Lai Choo
Senior Lecturer
Director, Centre for Sustainable Asian Cities
(CSAC)
School of Design and Environment
National University of Singapore

4. Panel Discussion

12.00 pm – 12.10 pm

Closing Remarks

Ms Paveena Seah
Senior Research Analyst
IPS Social Lab

12.10 pm – 1.30 pm

Lunch Break

1.30 pm – 5.00 pm

Dakota-Cassia Adventures

On 25 July 2014, HDB announced that Dakota Crescent would be slated for redevelopment. By December 2016, residents have

moved out of this place they used to call 'home'. Consisting of a majority ageing population, some struggle with small things like taking the lift, remembering their way home, or making friends with new neighbours. Others struggle with bigger things like keeping their house clean, getting regular meals and staying healthy. The relocation of an entire estate calls into question Singaporean's idea of home. What are the impacts of demolishing a site relatable to the population? Do people make the place, or does the place make the people? With these questions, we hope to open the discussion about how we care for different populations, activation of the community, and what a ground up response can look like.

The three-hour tour consists of a walk in the estate of Dakota Crescent, following the story of relocation to Cassia Crescent with a stop at Old Airport Road Hawker Centre in between. In addition, participants will get to understand the efforts of ground up initiatives through Cassia Resettlement Team as well as possibly visit residents who have relocated to the new estate. The tour will also include a discussion with several panel speakers about the trade-offs between conservation and redevelopment.

Maximum number of participants: 30

Cost: \$35 per person (cash payment to tour provider)

Note: Travel light, bring a water bottle and umbrella. Tour continues rain or shine, with possible variation to the route in event of bad weather.

Tour provider

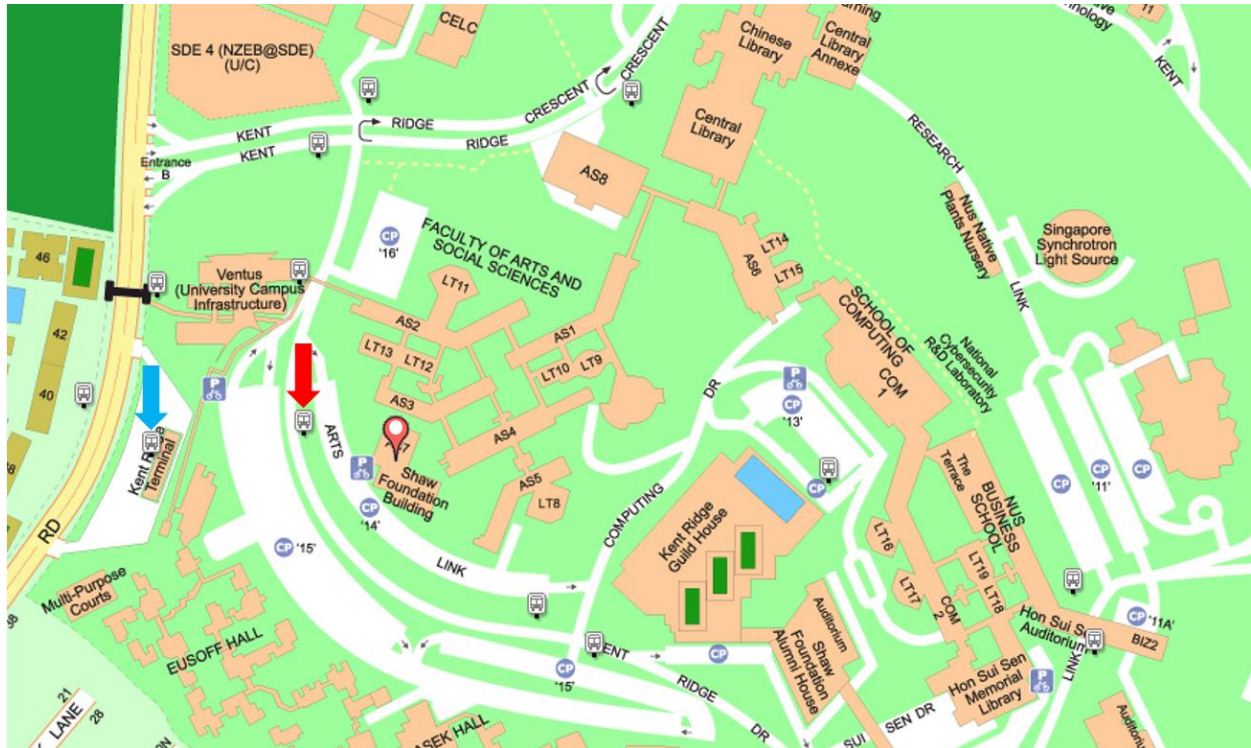
Dakota-Cassia Adventures

5.00 pm

End

Venue

NUS AS7 Seminar Room B (5 Arts Link #01-16/17/18, Singapore 117570)



How to get there:

1. Take NUS Shuttle A1 from Kent Ridge MRT station (CC24) Exit A/NUH
2. Alight 7 stops later at LT13 (indicated by red arrow)
3. Walk 103m to AS7

Alternatively, you may take SBS Bus 95 from Kent Ridge MRT station Exit A and walk to AS7 from Kent Ridge Terminal (indicated by blue arrow)

If you are driving, the nearest carpark is CP15. However, do note that normal parking fees apply.