CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

The Melaka State Development Plan of 1984 had identified three sectors - manufacturing, tourism and agriculture - to spearhead the economic development of the state. However, the importance of agriculture in the state economy has been declining since the mid-1980s. Thus, the manufacturing and tourism sectors will continue to form the twin pillars of the state's economy. In 1995, the manufacturing sector contributed 42.0 per cent of the state's income while 21.0 per cent was accounted for by the tourism sector (New Straits Times 29th April 1996). This development strategy based on developing the manufacturing and tourism sectors has been successful in transforming Melaka from a state of backwardness before the 1980s into one of the more developed states in the country. This is evidenced by the progress made under the Sixth Malaysia Plan (1991-95) when the state economy averaged an annual growth rate of 9.6 per cent, exceeding the national figure of 8.7 per cent. This average growth rate was exceeded by only four other states in the country, namely Johore, Kedah, Penang and Selangor. The state’s ratio of per capita GDP to the national average is now 0.94 and is projected to exceed the national average by the year 2000 (Koshy 1996).

RECAPITULATING TOURIST DEVELOPMENT IN MELAKA IN THE LIGHT OF EXISTING MODELS/STUDIES

It is interesting to see how international tourism, seen as the economic panacea to developing countries, has developed conceptually in Melaka before some recommendations are made in the final section of this chapter. Like other developing
countries which have responded enthusiastically, it is most interesting to note that although there is no real attempt at model application in the case of tourist development in Melaka, much of what have been discussed in the preceding chapters lend interesting support or variation to models or studies conducted elsewhere in the world.

Culpan's (1987) model of international tourism and its implications can be satisfactorily highlighted in Melaka as increasing the economic growth, raising the quality of life, creating employment, and improving the overall balance of payment by helping to offset deficits in the agricultural sector. Culpan's depiction of an open system consisting of four interdependent components of demand, marketing, transportation and accommodation (Figure 1.1) is aptly recognised in Melaka. For example, better accommodation facilities have created new demands and promotional opportunities in tourism. Recognition of the interrelationship between these components has moulded the tourist development processes, although indirectly in Melaka, to achieve a fairly integrated approach. The demand and marketing components which has been described as the principal pillars of the tourism system has been addressed through effective and appropriate marketing strategies, studies and project development. The availability of air and land transportation to and within Melaka has been relentlessly emphasised in order to ensure the successful growth of tourism.

Nonetheless, these components, however, have not been fully achieved nor, in some cases, to a satisfactory level and more needs to be done as shall be discussed in the next section. As pointed earlier, tourism in Melaka has been intensively encouraged not only because of its effects on the primary sectors but also because of its multiplier effects on the peripheral sector of a wide range of goods and services for tourist consumption. It
is relevant at this juncture to highlight some salient features of the primary and secondary sectors that has been suggested in Chapter 4.

It is obvious that the extent to which these sectors provide economic gains to the state economy, however, is measured not simply by the aggregate of tourist enterprises or work places but by their structural characteristics (Britton 1983). Britton (1983) and others have pointed out that the organisation and structure of the Third World tourist industry tend to reflect the capitalistic and often monopolistic nature of the international system, through the operations of transnational corporations. This leaves the smaller and less profitable part of the market to local entrepreneurs. Accordingly, Britton's (1983) model suggests a three-tiered hierarchy in developing countries (as discussed in Chapter 4) that will describe the tourism industry - the apex located in tourist generating countries where the headquarters of the transport, tour, and hotel companies are found; the intermediate level in the tourist destinations, comprising the branch offices and associated commercial interests of foreign firms operating in conjunction with their local tourism counterparts; and the base which is a collection of small scale tourism dependent upon the tourist companies of the intermediate level. Since the expansion of the tourist industry in Melaka from the mid-1980s, however, Melaka has not exemplified Britton's model. For instance, the study reveals that the structural weaknesses in the tourism industry that is evident in the island economies of Fiji and the Cook Islands, where foreign companies dominate and control the key tourism sectors, are not present in Melaka (though these may be more apparent in the major tourist destinations such as Kuala Lumpur). Local entrepreneurs in Melaka have seized the opportunities provided by tourism development by involving themselves in the accommodation, tour and other segments of the industry. Whereas the apex and the intermediate tiers are not
discernible, the base appears to be broad-based. This goes to show that with proper controls from the local authorities, the tourist industry need not be at the mercy of globalised functions. In the case of Melaka, the concern is not so much with foreign ownership of the tourism sector but about the lack of participation of bumiputeras in the higher return and capital-intensive tourism sectors. Presently, bumiputera involvement is concentrated in the budget accommodation and souvenir shopping sectors which require lower initial capital outlays but which also yield lower returns. The bumiputera share is relatively insignificant in the ownership and operation of larger hotels and the state government has been forced to step in to fill this vacuum by building and operating hotels in Ayer Keroh and Tanjong Bidara. From the observations in Melaka, it is, thus, possible to suggest that Third World tourism, if Malaysia may be considered to be a type, can have its own endemic structure. In this case, a single-tier of multi-functional local operations only varying in ethnic participation that have not reflected the objectives of the National Economic Policy. Perhaps, it is apt to suggest that whereas national entities may conform to Britton's model, tourist regions like Melaka, may manifest more local operators than transnationals.

Returning to the discussion of Culpan's model, it is also obvious that Culpan's model may be considered to be a more deterministic and altruistic model emphasising on the positive elements rather than the negative. In other words, Culpan's role is more to encourage the Third World countries to visualise the substantial benefits from developing the 'white industry'.

Critics of tourism expansion point to the various social strains that have developed in host countries. For example, the distortion of indigenous cultural
expressions, the conversion of farmers into wage labourers due to high land prices, the perpetuation of perceived racial inequalities and the resulting distortion of dignity and exploitation by 'imperialists' (Cheowtirakul 1980). There have also been fears raised about the effects on the physical environment. In Malaysia, some of these stresses have emerged in terms of the impacts on destination areas and their residents. As pointed out in Chapter 1, these have prompted some studies to focus on the negative impacts (Abdul Kadir Din 1988a and 1988b; Ahmad Shuib and Nazri Ahmad 1988; Bird 1989; Hoffmann 1979; Hong 1985; and Wong 1981). While these studies have directed impact studies to various target populations, objects or landscapes, the present study has moved away by attempting to review the impact of tourism through a perception study of various population subgroups. In fact, tourism research since the 1980s has increasingly stressed the necessity for a careful investigation of non-economic effects that would include the perceptions of the local community and their involvement in the tourism planning process.

Residents' perceptions are important because public attitudes can create a hospitable environment for tourists and the resultant satisfactory tourist experience (Allen 1988; Getz 1994; Madrigal 1993; Pearce 1994; and Travis 1980). This is particularly important in Melaka which is highly dependent upon day visitors and repeat visitations. This approach also assesses 'willing partners' as opposed to conflicts between residents and local governments. The rationale that effects of tourism have their most profound impact on host communities justifies an approach based on resident perception as a key component in the identification, measurement and analysis of tourism impacts (Hall and Page 1999). Such opinions are also important for the determination of local policy, planning and management responses to tourism.
development.

It is, thus, pertinent to highlight the perception study here in revealing or refuting some presumptions in tourism development. For instance, the study indicated irrevocably the strong support of the local population towards tourism development. Whenever tourism activity develops rapidly to dominate a local economy, it normally disrupts community life, endangers the environment, and ignores the community input, and the seeds of discontent are sown. This happens when the residents' thresholds of tolerance for tourism and tourists are exceeded, and host-encounters sour. It is, therefore comforting to note that this willingness of the residents in Melaka to continue to serve as gracious hosts is likely to ensure the success of tourism in Melaka as studies elsewhere, for example, by Cooke (1982) and Loukissas (1983) have pointed out. It also justifies the huge amount of investments poured in by the state to promote tourism.

However, the study in Melaka revealed that gaps in perception differences that result from demographic differences such as age, education, occupation, length of residence and distance from the tourism zone are statistically insignificant. The mean perception scores of the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism also indicate that the negative impacts are perceived as negligible or tolerated by local residents. This is interesting as it contrasts with other studies that have postulated that a number of factors, such as socio-demographic characteristics, have shaped residents' perceptions. For instance, Brougham and Butler's (1981) study in Scotland concludes that differences of opinions were related to length of residence, age, language and the nature and duration of contact with tourists. Sheldon and Var (1984) also found
evidence from Welsh residents that length of residence was a determinant of attitudes towards tourists. In the case of Hawaii, younger residents were more likely to report positive behaviours towards tourists (Community Resources Incorporated 1988). On the other hand, this study in Melaka has confirmed studies by Caneday and Zeiger (1991) and Pizam (1978a) that the most important variable influencing the favourable perception of tourism impacts is involvement in the tourism industry.

Perhaps in the case of Melaka, tourism may also not be solely responsible for any negative social effect especially in a situation where a strong undertow of change is already at work. Industrialisation, modernisation and even the mass media may have equal or greater influence on the social processes. For example, a decline in moral standards need not necessarily be a result of the demonstration effect of tourist behaviour but rather a consequence of exposure to the foreign way of life through the media. In the case of Melaka, certain factors have mitigated the negative effects of tourist behaviour. Firstly, the lack of beach resorts means that issues such as inappropriate dressing or nudity are not as rampant as in isolated island resorts. Foreign tourists are observed to adhere to local dress codes as their activities are concentrated in a populated urban area. Secondly, there is little social contact between tourists and residents except among those in the service industry. Most foreign tourists arrive on pre-arranged guided tours where contact with the local population is limited. The individual foreign budget tourists who have been cited as the source of bad moral influence, prefer to stay in guesthouses in Melaka Raya. The guesthouses are mostly located on the upper floors of shop-lots, employ one or two employees only, and are usually not patronised by local tourists. Guest-host interaction is thus limited to a few local individuals. Even when these tourists venture out of the guesthouses, their activities hardly extend beyond the tourism zone
and social contact is limited to operators of food businesses and souvenir shops.

The acceptance of possible negative effects of tourism on the hosts may be a consequence of the early development stage of the industry when the local population is more receptive of tourist activities. This suggests that there is a threshold beyond which tourism development may in fact be detrimental to the quality of life. The oft-quoted 'irridex' by Doxey (1975) suggests that with increased levels of tourism development, a community passes through a predictable four-stage sequence of reactions, namely euphoria, apathy, irritation and, finally, antagonism. In Melaka, while it may not be 'euphoria', they are certainly not perturbed by tourism numbers and behaviours. It can be said to have reached Butler's (1980) 'involvement and development' stage of the cycle (Figure 5.1) or Dogan's (1989) primary strategies of 'adoption' and 'boundary maintenance'. In a more contemporary setting it would be described by Aps and Crompton (1993) as having adopted 'embracement' (the state when residents eagerly welcomed tourists) and 'tolerance' (when residents exhibit a degree of ambivalence towards tourism). In other words, whatever unpleasant aspects were endured without resentment because of the recognition of tourism to the community's economic vitality. This somewhat supports the studies in Colorado by Long et al. (1990) and Arizona by Madrigal (1993).

Additionally, the local people in Melaka, due to the physical smallness of the state, were more aware of and familiar with tourist development proposals. This helps them to accept the negative impacts, if any. It is interesting to note that similar conclusions were reached by Dowling (1993), Keogh (1984), and Lankford and Howard (1994). This points to the importance for decision makers to educate residents about
both the rewards and costs of potential tourism development. Thus, it is proposed that a bigger portion of the state's tourism promotion efforts should be directed towards enlightening the residents regarding the positive multiplier effects of tourism. It must also be pointed out that the foreign tourist population constitutes less than 400,000 persons a year and more than half are neighbouring Singaporeans with an almost similar cultural background; thus, conflicts because of cultural differences have not been cited by residents.

Lastly, another factor that may have determined the perceived lack of social conflict is the short length of stay of foreign tourists and the concentration of foreign tourist activities within the historical zone. Foreign tourists, with the exception of Singaporeans, rarely visit other tourist sites in Ayer Keroh such as theme parks because of the poor transportation or because similar or better attractions can be visited in other countries in their itinerary.

However, the support of local residents as expressed through their perceptions of the various tourism impacts must not be taken for granted. Perceptions are dynamic and reflect situations in a particular time period. Butler (1980) and Doxey (1975) have theorised that this acceptance level will change with more intensive development of tourism particularly if the rate of development is too rapid. It is thus necessary to periodically assess the perceptions of the local residents while at the same time regulating the pace of tourist development. Although the impacts created by the physical presence of masses of tourists is as yet incipient, local residents anticipated many of the potential problems. The local planning authorities should take notice of those effects where the perception scores have been high. The local infrastructure has in some aspects
been overrun, particularly during weekends, while public transportation has been inadequate and the cost of living has increased. Residents also voiced concern about the effects on the environment and highlighted the need for proper long term planning.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

The study confirms that there is a need to revamp or re-emphasise some aspects of the tourism strategies adopted by Melaka if the industry is to continue to play its role in the state economy. Tourism planning, as is the case in Melaka, has been criticised for inadequate forecasting where many problems had not been foreseen or overlooked, sacrificing long-term benefits for short-term gains and for concentrating on large prestigious projects when greater returns may accrue from more modest developments.

In the drive to develop the tourism sector, the emphasis of state planners has been on the economic benefits. The planning and marketing of tourism have been primarily oriented towards the needs of tourists and the provision of interesting and high-quality tourist experiences. Key questions of the traditional planning approaches have been: how many tourists will desire or can be attracted to come to a destination and what services and facilities will they require? For example, as recently as in May 1998, it was stated that 10,000 rooms or three times the present room supply, will be needed in Melaka by the year 2000 to meet the projected tourist demand (New Straits Times 19th May 1998). Setting targets on tourist numbers or hotel room totals to be achieved in a specific period should not be the focus of a tourism policy (De Kadt 1979b). A greater number of tourists need not necessarily result in higher income to the state as tourists
may not increase their length of stay in Melaka and may choose to stay elsewhere such as in nearby Kuala Lumpur. On the contrary, a greater number of tourists in a situation where the infrastructure is still lacking will result in unsatisfactory travel experiences and negative consequences on future tourist arrivals. While Melaka has little choice but to strive for a bigger share of the increasing tourist traffic to Malaysia or lose these tourists to competing destinations, the state also needs to pay more attention to the possible negative effects that will arise if the rate of tourism development is too rapid. Experiences elsewhere have shown that it is the size and level of tourism development that are of particular importance in determining the effects of tourism. As early as in 1979, De Kadt stated that small countries with relatively underdeveloped production facilities and infrastructure and relatively low levels of skills are likely to experience more negative socio-cultural effects from tourism development than are larger, more developed countries. He adds that the negative socio-cultural effects are likely to be reduced if the growth of tourism facilities is neither rapid nor massive, and if there is time for the local populations to adjust to this activity and for tourism to fit itself into the local society.

It is inevitable that the development of tourism will induce some impacts. The very nature of tourism means that it is likely to bring about land use conflicts and modify the economic and social characteristics of destination areas. Some of these impacts cannot be avoided completely and it is important that planners of tourism development should bear these realities in mind. On other hand, discouraging tourism development would be undesirable in view of its economic benefits in a resource poor state. However, the continued expansion of tourism at its present rate and in its existing form is not desirable. The appropriate strategy that needs to be followed would be to plan towards
minimising the negative impacts of tourism development, while directing its growth in such a manner as to benefit the state as a whole rather than feed the greed of a few individuals with speculative interests (Hunter and Green 1995). For example, planning measures should be directed at redirecting tourism growth away from the city centre rather than encouraging it in view of the present traffic congestion. Vehicular traffic should be barred from the presently congested historical zone, particularly during weekends and walking tours encouraged instead. Alternatively, it has even been proposed that motorised trishaws be introduced. To promote such walking tours, an ecomuseum strategy may be more appropriate than the present proposal to build thematic museums. Ecomuseums are museums without walls that involve the whole community and are designed to interpret natural and cultural landscapes together (Murphy 1992). Areas of interest in and around the historical zone such as the antique shops or places of worship could be rehabilitated and social-cultural activities encouraged to turn Melaka into a ‘living museum’.

Instead of stressing growth in tourist arrivals, efforts should be intensified at encouraging a longer length of stay and thus increasing the expenditure of tourists. In fact, Melaka hosts 3.0 million visitors a year but two-thirds of this total are excursionists. It would be more prudent to encourage these day trippers to stay overnight with the attraction of a reasonably priced vacation such as through moderately priced accommodation. To prolong the length of stay of tourists, there must be enough attractions and activities to keep the tourists occupied. Tourist activities are now concentrated to a narrow range such as visiting museums and theme parks, and shopping. There are hardly any cultural entertainment or other activities for tourists to indulge in at night. Activities such as night tours or cultural performances to highlight the uniqueness
of state should be planned to enrich the travel experiences of tourists. In contrast, the weekly cultural performances at the Portuguese Settlement has been discontinued. Even tours to rubber and oil palm plantations as presently done by guesthouse operators could be included to give tourists a wider understanding of the country.

Efforts should thus be concentrated on improving the travel experiences of tourists to ensure that these tourists will return and that favourable comments are communicated to future tourists. These could take various forms. Besides the problem of traffic congestion and poor transportation which have been highlighted, there is an urgent need to upgrade and improve the present tourist infrastructure as noted in the perceptions of local residents. This includes the overall cleanliness of the area and the provision of public facilities such as public restrooms. For example, tourists taken on a boat ride up the Melaka river are subjected to sights of run-down buildings and litter on the river banks. Although a RM12 million Melaka River Rehabilitation Project was launched in January 1996, it is aimed primarily at improving the water quality (*New Straits Times* 5th May 1998). The fire which destroyed most of the dilapidated handicraft stalls in the tourist zone in April 1996 provides an opportunity to improve the overall physical appearance of the tourist zone. Instead of being concentrated into two continuous rows of small, crowded and haphazardly arranged wooden stalls as in the past, or along a narrow lane at the foot of Saint Paul’s Hill as at present, the handicraft stalls could be relocated into a proper complex with proper facilities. Residents have also noted the poor quality of service provided to tourists. On the one hand, operators of hotels and other tourist facilities need to upgrade their quality of service as it is to their own benefit. On the other hand, SEDC could do its share by providing suitable trained guides to provide informative tours on the historical zone as well as making available to tourists
adequate and accurate write-ups on the various tourist attractions. Presently, tourists are left to conduct their own tours with the aid of brochures and directional signs provided by a credit card company.

Research into the tourism industry needs to be intensified. While the Melaka Tengah and the Jasin Structure Plan of Melaka include tourism as a major component, there is the necessity to conduct continuous research to provide data for tourism planning. For example, the number of tourists, their origins and their expenditures at the state level are derived from the national figures produced by MTPB. Comprehensive tourist surveys to identify tourist characteristics, travel patterns and tourists’ evaluation of the facilities available have to be periodically undertaken to identify any shortcomings in the industry and to aid in planning marketing strategies. There is also the need to research and monitor key tourism impact indicators or warning signs of likely flashpoints in public dissatisfaction. Issues such as whether tourist-resident interactions have improved over time or whether these impacts continue to persist and affect the economic viability of tourism development will have to be addressed. This research need is all the more urgent considering that tourist-resident interaction is likely to be a critical tourism issue in the next decade and beyond (Pearce 1994).

Finally, tourism planning must incorporate mechanisms to involve local residents in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of tourist development activities intended for their benefit. The incorporation of public views in planning has been more a feature of environmental rather than tourism planning, especially through the environmental impact assessment process. With the exception of a small number of recent isolated examples, public involvement in tourism planning in other parts of the
world is negligible. As recently as in 1990 Husbands and Thompson stated that ‘resident populations have not really been canvassed to any considerable degree concerning tourism’s impact on their physical environment’.

Planning for tourism development is a complex process which should involve a consideration of diverse economic, environmental and social structures. For example, from a social standpoint, planners should understand the complex and contradictory feelings of tourists who seek change, novelty and new experiences but who also feel insecure and fearful in a strange environment. At the same time, planners should also consider the conflicting opinions of the host community. They should be less preoccupied with the visitor and devote more attention to the welfare of those being visited. Questions such as: ‘how many and what type of tourists does an area want and how can tourists contribute to the enhancement of the lifestyles of residents and destination areas?’ should also be asked.

It is proposed that those involved in tourism businesses and services and residents be involved in the decision-making process from the conceptualisation stage of any tourism project or policy (Figure 11.1). It must be recognised that the community or groups which represent community interests are not necessarily experts in tourism planning. Nevertheless, their right to comment on proposals should not be ignored since the very act of expressing opinions is often therapeutic and constructive. Their views are but one of a number of the necessary inputs to the planning process. In the case of a new tourism project, the views of the residents and tourism entrepreneurs within the affected community should be solicited regarding the impacts of the development of such a
Figure 11.1  Incorporating Local Residents' Perceptions in Tourism Planning
project and their feedback incorporated into the planning process where possible. Only then should the project or policy be implemented or enforced. The view of the community should be sought from time to time. While the original policy or project may have met with the approval of the community earlier, it may cause dissatisfaction or conflict at a later stage as tourist numbers increase and congestion takes place. Measures to ameliorate the impact as well as to educate the public may well have to be incorporated into the planning process. A community which receives more detailed education in the field of tourism will be better able to analyse the impacts that are specifically tourism-related with a rounded appreciation of both the negative and positive consequences of development (Pearce 1994). Non-trivial information campaigns about tourism, tourist habits and cultural differences offer one line of attack for improving tourist-resident relationships.

Failure to involve residents in tourism planning will only increase the fears and concerns of the segments of the society who see themselves as having to mortgage their future merely to prop up the lavish extravagant lifestyles of a few tourists (Kumarasuriyar 1992). Murphy stated way back in 1981 that if tourism is to develop within a community, the hosts of the ‘host industry’ must become willing partners. Residents are increasingly recognised as an essential ingredient in the hospitality atmosphere of a destination. A hospitable environment for tourists and tourism in general is essential to the success of the tourist industry. Expenditures by the state to promote tourism are wasted if the local residents are hostile towards tourists.

Community participation in planning is important in gaining attitudes and perceptions of residents' views on their environment, community aspirations, tourism
development and tourists themselves. Since the local people have much to lose or gain from policy decisions, tourism planning should always be carried out in close collaboration with the local inhabitants who are most likely to be affected. The positive and negative aspects of tourism have their most profound impact in and on host communities. Tourism impacts are created when change cannot be managed. If local residents begin to feel that they are not able to predict, participate in, and control the changes in their environment caused by tourism, that is, if they are unempowered, opposition to tourism development arises (Preister 1992).

Another reason to gain community views during the planning process is to gauge the perceptions of hosts to guests. Host cultures vary in their degree of robustness or resilience to the impact of tourists. Planners should consider the conflicting opinions of the local community. As evident in the study, those involved in the tourist industry may welcome tourists, whereas others may resent their presence and behaviour. Whenever tourism activity is concentrated in time and space, develops rapidly, dominates a local economy, and disrupts community life, the seeds of discontent are sown if community input is ignored. Where such anti-tourism and anti-growth segments of the community are present, it may be necessary for the state government to devote a portion of the tourism promotion budget towards community education on the benefits of tourism. Furthermore, if the underlying reasons for negative attitudes can be identified, active attempts can be made to rectify or at least minimise the negative effects of the tourism industry. The industry’s contribution to the economy and amenities must be demonstrated in such a way that residents will be more willing to accept the seasonal inconveniences and irritants. The more local people profit from tourism, the more they will benefit from a commitment to preserve the environment which attracts tourists.
In summary, public participation in the shaping of tourism planning provides a more balanced approach than traditionally oriented development planning, and recognises the needs and views of the local residents. Incorporation of public opinion ensures environmental conservation, minimisation of unacceptable impacts, community growth, and acceptance of tourism. Tourism planning must reduce any conflicts between visitors and the environment as well as between visitors and residents as each competes for the same amenities. Much of this potential conflict can be resolved if resident and even tourist opinions are sought and considered when planning is carried out. A proactive stance by tourism has greater opportunities than the present reactive position in most communities.

While tourists are generally welcomed and there is little evidence of host-guest conflict, there is already evidence of opposition to some massive tourism projects being implemented. The land reclamation projects along the coast fronting the historical zone has given rise to opposition as it affects the livelihood of the Portuguese fishermen. The 1,000 strong Portuguese community has been particularly vociferous in their opposition to the project as it will result in the change of character of their community with the loss of the sea and its replacement by commercial land use. While the state government has been sensitive to the needs of the local community in this case, it provides an instance of planning where local opinion was not taken into consideration in the initial stage and may give rise to host-guest conflicts.

An examination of the tourism development strategies of the state shows that the state government is aware of many of these constraints of the industry as well as
shortcomings in its tourism policy. A notable example is the plan to limit the historical zone to purely tourism use. With the relocation of banks, administrative offices and other non-tourist activities to other locations and the pedestrianisation of the area, the present congestion will ease. The tourism industry in Melaka will continue to prosper in Melaka if these shortcomings can be addressed. With rising disposable income in the Southeast Asian region, there will be an increasing number of regional and domestic tourists to sustain the industry even if there are shortfalls in tourist arrivals from other areas. The state has no other choice but to continue to emphasise tourist development. However, tourism must not be stressed from the economic standpoint as at present. It must be realised that it is a community industry and that the views of the local community must be continuously solicited. While the study has shown widespread support for tourism despite some negative impacts, this support has to be sustained through constant monitoring of public views, the involvement of the public in tourism planning and appropriate planning strategies. Without such considerations, tourism in Melaka will sow the seeds of its own destruction.