

Vexed by pocket park in Changkat Bkt Bintang

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BUSINESS owners in Changkat Bukit Bintang are crying foul over the delay in the construction of a pocket park, which they claim has severely impacted their business.

The project by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) is situated at the open space in front of two commercial buildings near the Bukit Bintang MRT station entrance.

Since the area was hoarded off in April 2023, tourists have been unable to use the pedestrian walkway and businesses in the vicinity have suffered as a result.

Bryan Lee, general manager of a hotel situated along Changkat Bukit Bintang said the hoarding for the project, in front of his workplace, restricted pedestrians' access to the open area and blocked the building's facade.

"Since the project began, we've lost all walk-in customers, resulting in a revenue loss of about RM1mil," he said.

Lee said the project site was once an open space where pedestrians could relax and businesses in the area beautified the place with potted plants.

Now, visitors can only access the hotel via a side lane that posed a safety risk as it was a blind spot for cars turning in from Changkat Bukit Bintang.

An initial notice at the project site indicated that the pocket park was expected to be completed by October 2023.

Project delay causing losses, endangering safety of pedestrians, say business owners



Pedestrians are dicing with danger as they are forced to walk on the road due to hoardings blocking the walkway in front of businesses.

However, the completion date was extended twice – first to December 2023 and then to February 2024 – without any recent updates.

In a meeting with DBKL in June last year, stakeholders learned of the project plans, which originally included a kiosk for *nasi lemak* and durian stalls.

However, it has been altered to add seven kiosks, which the affected businesses had opposed.

Accountant Yap Sin Mooi, who worked at a travel agency situated next to the hotel, voiced concerns about the kiosks obstructing storefronts.

Her firm had raised an objection with the DBKL which was ignored, she claimed.

"The pocket park should be for public recreation, not filled with food stalls that could cause hygiene issues," she said.

Bukit Bintang MP Fong Kui



Lee says businesses have been severely affected.

Lun, who held a press conference to address the matter, urged DBKL to remove the stalls and the hoarding.

"The ongoing construction forces pedestrians onto the road, jeopardising their safety.

"Businesses in the area are struggling with some paying over RM10,000 in rent because of the project delays.

"I will write to DBKL to ask that the kiosks be removed and to expedite the project," he said.

Fong added that if no action was taken, he would report the matter to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to investigate potential corruption in the project.