



(Above) Steel fencing has been erected at the rear of the building to prevent vandalism.

The structure in Lebu Pudu, which used to house a cafe, has fallen into disrepair. — Photos: YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

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AN ABANDONED structure, located close to popular tourist spots such as Chinatown and Central Market, sticks out like a sore thumb in the Lebu Pudu area of downtown Kuala Lumpur.

The building with faded signs reading “@Cafe Jalan Bandar” and “Premium Kopitiam” is in a sorry state.

It belongs to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) under its Management and Valuation Department.

The structure looks like it has been abandoned for some time and bears signs of vandalism.

Despite its prime location, the place is neglected.

Its vicinity is strewn with rubbish and the back portion of the building has been barricaded with steel fencing by DBKL, presumably to stop further vandalism.

Locals, however, remember that the spot was a bustling cafe four years ago.

“I used to stop here for coffee

Neglected structure in KL city draws concerns

City Hall says it will be cleaned up while it explores solutions

every day before work,” said Maimunah Asri, a 32-year-old law firm secretary.

“But the place closed down during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“It is such a shame. I loved the coffee here,” she added.

However, another passer-by, who wanted to be known only as Anu J, said the cafe’s popularity took a nose dive after the area became a magnet for the homeless.

“The cafe was doing well for a short while, until the homeless started gathering in the area.

“And then, there was the (Covid-19) pandemic,” he added.

An Alam Flora cleaner who

regularly sweeps the area, confirmed that the cafe went out of business after the pandemic struck.

“A security guard tasked with overseeing the property told me that each morning, he would find a mound of litter on the cafe’s doorstep.

“It is the homeless; they sleep here every night and leave behind a mess,” he claimed.

Several business owners in the area agree that the presence of homeless people at the location has had a negative impact on business.

“This is a good location with high foot traffic but everyone

who comes here is in a hurry to leave because of the homeless,” said a manager who operates a hotel nearby and did not wish to be named.

“The homeless population has grown significantly as there is no enforcement from the authorities.”

Another business owner, who wanted to be known only as Jay, said many of the shops were permanently shuttered.

“This place used to be so vibrant.

“DBKL did a lot of work here to make things pleasant but sadly during the pandemic, the homeless took over the area and made

it their home,” he said.

When contacted, DBKL’s corporate communications unit responded to *StarMetro* in a written statement, saying that the building at No.8, Lebu Pudu, was indeed a City Hall asset that was once leased out to a third party as a restaurant.

“However, this was before the pandemic. The tenants have since vacated the premises.

“We are currently exploring various solutions to address what can be done to the place.

“In the meantime, we will ensure that the premises and vicinity remain clean and orderly,” said DBKL.