

architecture  
malaysia

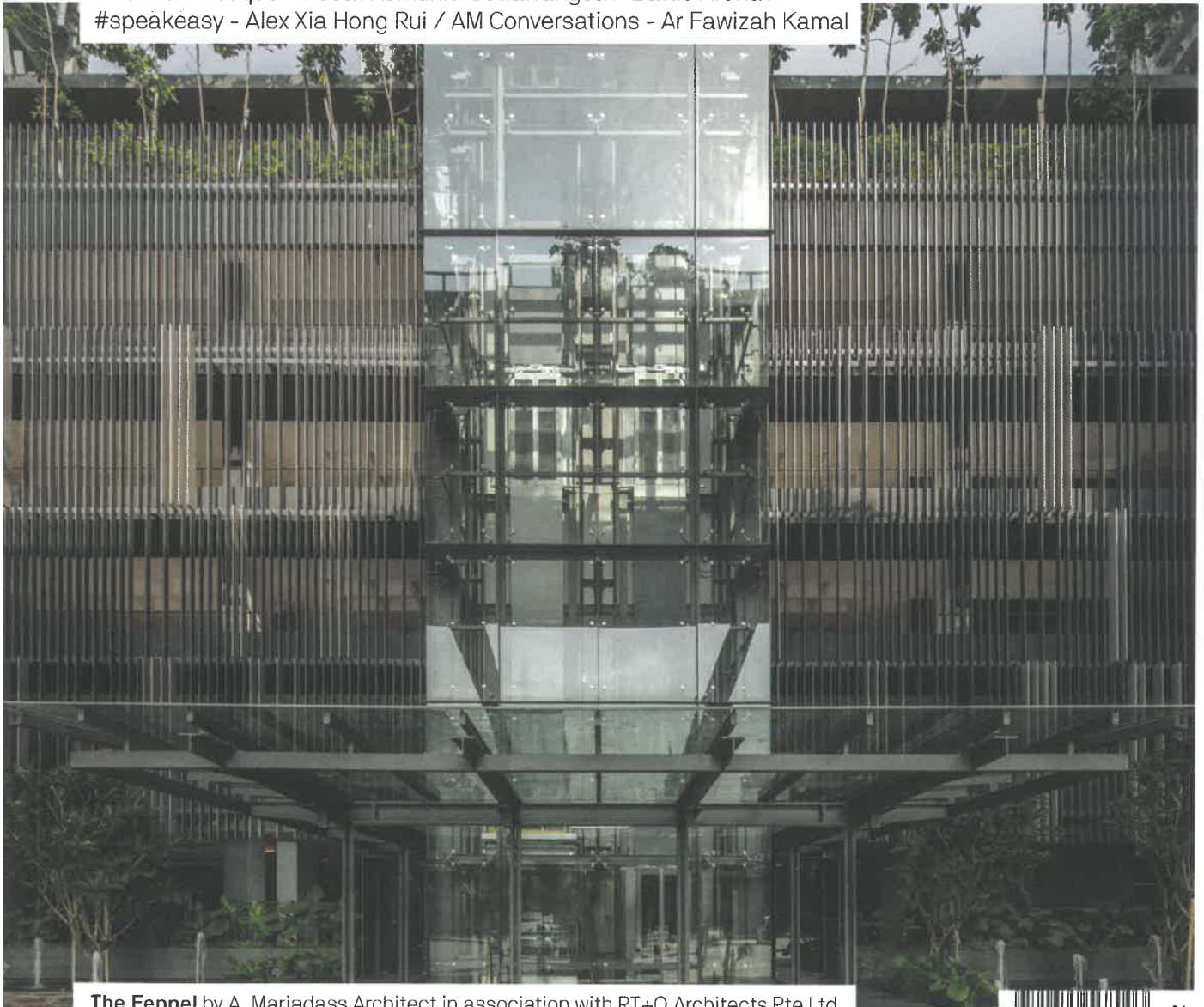
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BI-MONTHLY

AM

The Fennel / Red Hill Gallery / Heng House / The Granary / Raja Haji Fi  
Sabilillah Mosque / Pusat Komuniti Setiawangsa / Battle Arena /  
#speakeasy - Alex Xia Hong Rui / AM Conversations - Ar Fawizah Kamal



**The Fennel** by A. Mariadass Architect in association with RT+Q Architects Pte Ltd



projects

Kuching

IDC Architects Sdn Bhd

## The Granary

An old abandoned warehouse behind a row of old shophouses along Wayang Street has been re-fitted and refurbished into a restaurant and bar.









**The** site, an old abandoned warehouse, was little known despite its rich, time-worn character. When the architects were approached to work on it, they immediately saw that it was a unique opportunity. The client wanted to convert and re-furbish the building into a new bar, restaurant and event space, and its location right in the heart of the historic centre of Kuching made it a perfect choice for the intended purpose.

The existing building was still relatively intact after years of neglect – except for the roof which was starting to fall apart. A mezzanine floor which occupies around one quarter of the space was also fairly unstable. However, the thick masonry walls that surrounded the lower envelope of the building was in reasonable condition, and the old *Belian* columns which held up the building had withstood the ravages of time extremely well.

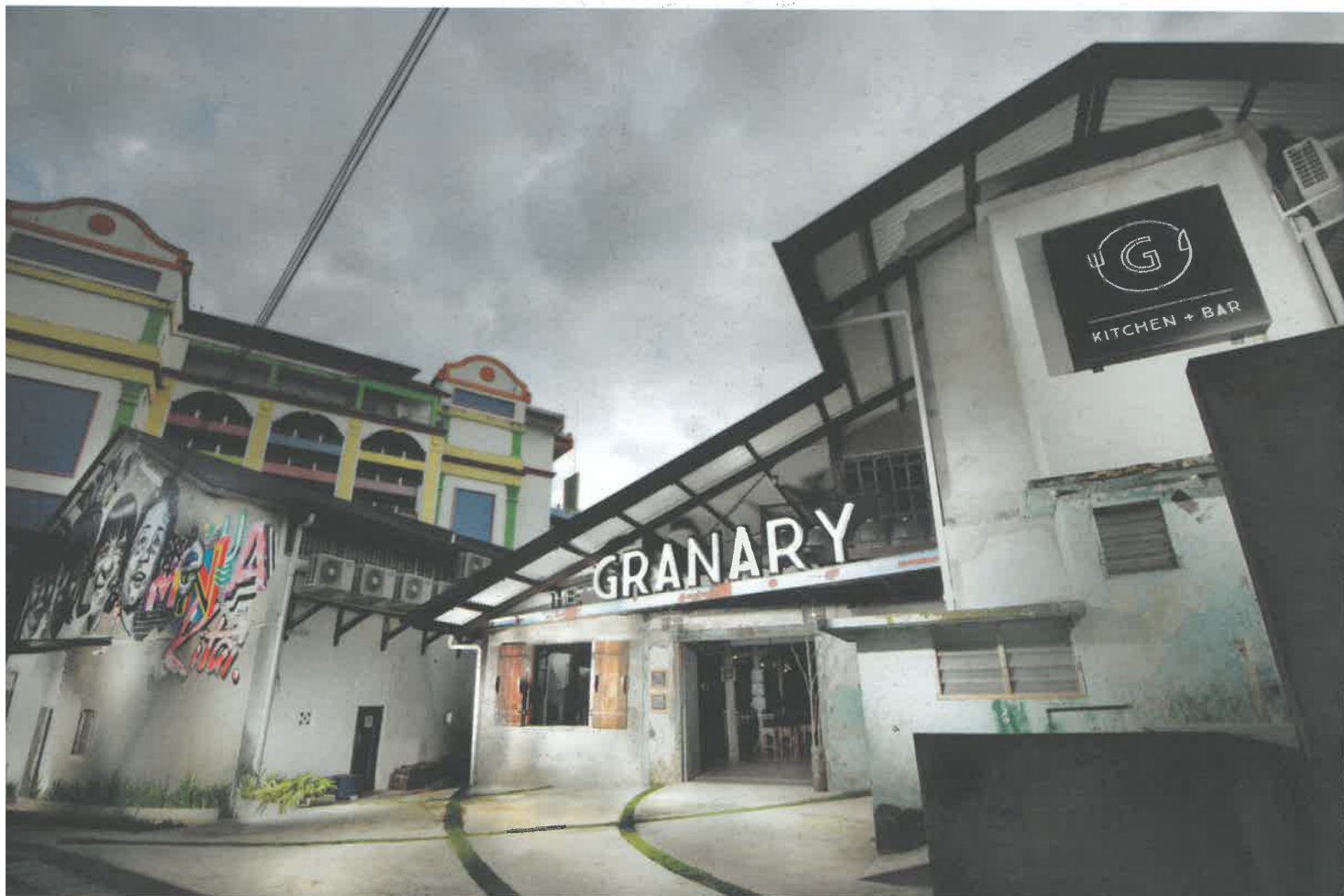
#### The Restoration Process

Right from the beginning, it was decided that the original character of the building should be preserved as much as possible. So, it was more of a process of restoration rather than radical intervention. The original roof was carefully dismantled, leaving behind the existing *Belian* columns which would still serve as the main supports. During the demolition process, it was discovered that a few of the *Belian* columns had rotted at the base. Instead of replacing these, the architects decided to instead dig out the rotten parts of the column and fill up the voids with concrete. This simple method effectively helped to strengthen the structure and allowed the preservation of the *Belian* columns instead of replacing them.

A complete 3D model of the existing building was created – including all the columns and roof structure, to enable a better understanding of the building. New

RIGHT Corner lounge

Front view of the entrance









ABOVE Entrance door and bar

BELOW Recycled stairs







ABOVE Exposed brick wall and timber furniture

BELOW Contrast of existing building and furniture



elements such as a bar, dining spaces and a kitchen were inserted into the model, with additional design features added to enhance the spaces. The model also proved very helpful for the engineers to study how to strengthen and preserve as much of the existing structures as possible.

A new steel roof structure was installed on top of the existing Belian columns, and the new steel structures were painted in a dark brown tone to harmonise with the timber supports. The colour and texture of the chosen roofing material is sympathetic to the old building. The roofing was a sandwich of Bluescope Capero on the top, with Sisalation and Rockwool for heat and sound insulation, and a white metal ceiling below to brighten up the internal spaces.

The high volume of the warehouse structure lends itself very well to the new intended function as an F&B and events venue. The existing masonry wall was only around 1.5m high, and the gap between the wall and the roof was originally filled with corrugated metal sheets which had rotted away. It was decided to leave this gap as open as possible to maximise natural ventilation and allow in ample natural light, as well as to provide a very open feel to the internal space. Recycled timber pieces and old top-hung windows salvaged from other projects were used to fill the gap. A HVLS fan was installed at the apex of the roof with smaller conventional fans in the lower areas – combined, these are sufficient to maintain a

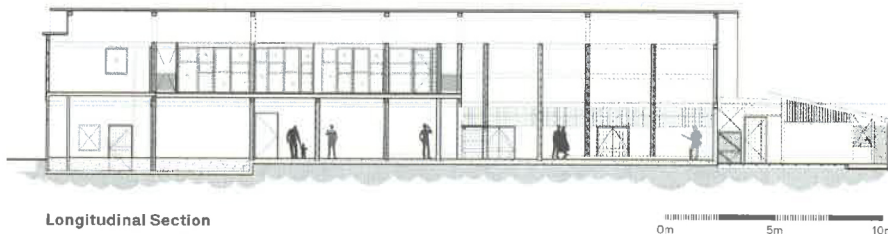
comfortable temperature in the venue even when fully occupied.

A new mezzanine floor was constructed following its original footprint. The area below the mezzanine is used as the kitchen and service area. On the upper level is a private event space with an open balcony. The private event space is enclosed with a recycled metal and glass sliding and folding screen – salvaged by the client from another project – and fitted in perfectly with the ambiance of the space.

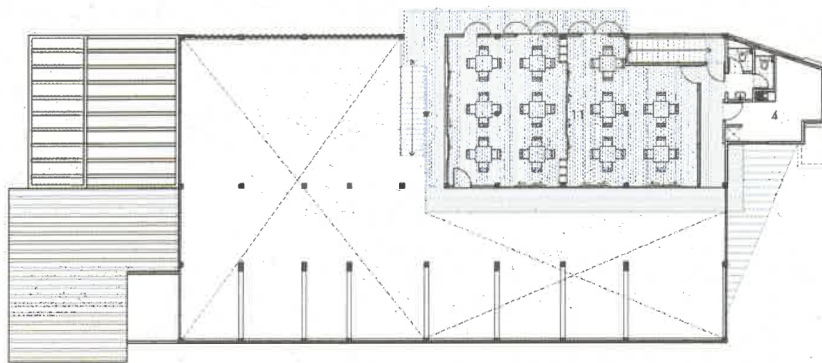
### The New Life of the Building

The Granary is actually part of a hospitality project which includes a reception area consisting of two converted shophouses, the F&B space and a heritage boutique hotel – The Marian. In the mornings, the Granary is used as a space to serve breakfast for guests who stay at The Marian. In the afternoons, it is a casual lunch venue, and at night, it transforms into a bar, bistro and event space. Since its opening, the venue has become quite popular as an F&B destination both with locals and visitors. There have also been many events organised at the venue – including arts & craft workshops, weekend flea markets, cheese-making sessions, cooking workshops, PechaKucha, etc. For the architect, this was a very satisfying and rewarding project – to transform a disused and forgotten building and to give it a new lease of life for new and exciting functions. **AM**

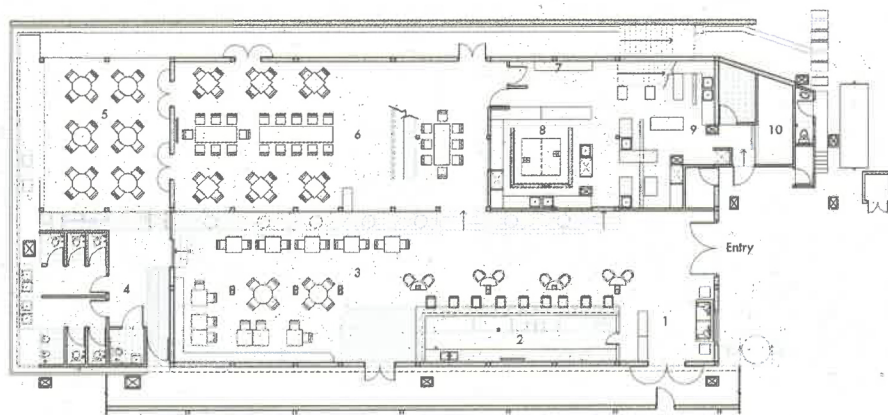
TEXT BY THE ARCHITECT







First floor



Ground floor

- |                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1: Entrance lobby | 7: Service                 |
| 2: Bar            | 8: Hot kitchen             |
| 3: Guest lounge   | 9: Cold kitchen            |
| 4: Toilets        | 10: Storage                |
| 5: Outdoor dining | 11: Air-conditioned dining |
| 6: Main dining    |                            |



Location  
**Kuching, Sarawak**

Client  
**Urban Village Sdn Bhd**

Principal Use  
**Cafe/ Restaurant/ Event Space**

Architect Firm  
**IDC Architects Sdn Bhd**

Project Principal  
**Ng Chee Wee**

Project Team  
**Zhann Bong, Joseph Chai**

Design Period  
**1 June 2014 - 31 December**

Construction Period  
**30 Jan 2015 - 15 Jan 2016**

Date of Completion:  
**15 Jan 2016**

Site Area  
**950 sqm**

Floor Area  
**570 sqm**

Contractors  
**Caldecott Sdn Bhd**

Civil Engineering  
**Perunding J.L. Maju**

M&E Engineer  
**Perunding Teknikal**

Photography  
**Shen Yeo - Shen Snaps**



FROM LEFT The roof of the existing building was falling apart / The existing brick walls and timber structure were preserved in the renovation process / Front view of the existing building