

MIKE SHARROCKS CONSULTANCY

Tourism Feasibility • Development Planning • Urban Design • Urban Regeneration • Environmental Appraisal

Indonesia

TOURISM FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE KARO REGENCY AREA, NORTH SUMATRA

For private interests, 2002

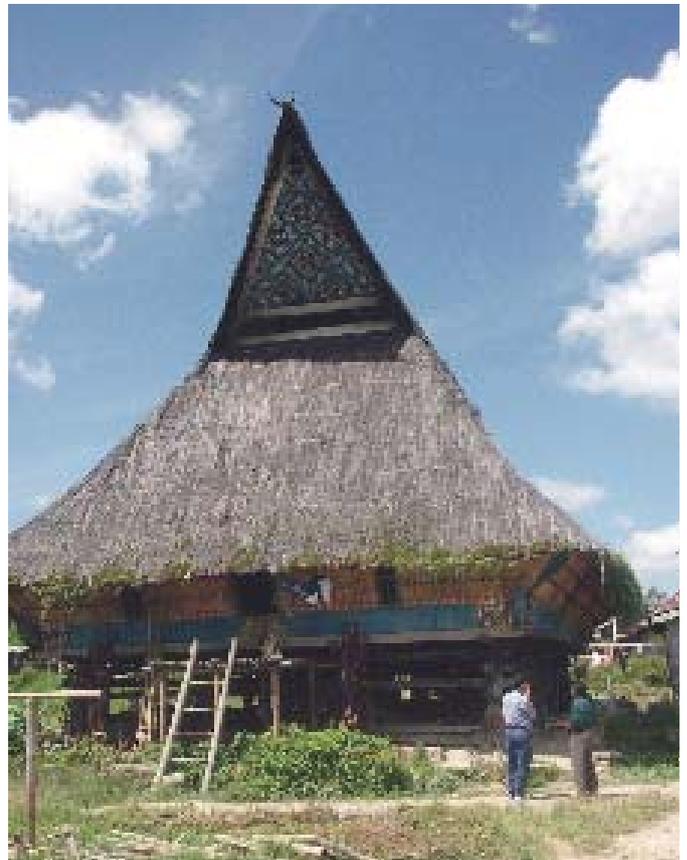
Mike Sharrocks undertook tourism planning work for Townland Consultants Ltd., who was commissioned by private interests to assess the prospects for improving conditions for tourism in the Karo Regency area of North Sumatra.



The principal attractions in the study area are the two dominant volcanic mountains, Sinabung and Sibayak; Lake Toba and its spectacular scenery, which is sited on the southern edge of the study area; traditional Karo villages and culture; and the Gunung Leuser National Park that includes the Bukit Lawang Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre. Brastagi, a former Dutch colonial hill resort, is the main accommodation base for the Karo Regency area.



The study area experienced a steady decline in visitor numbers since the 1997 economic crisis in Indonesia. Overall visitor numbers had also dropped because road improvements to the Trans-Sumatra highway meant that tourists to Lake Toba could take a quicker route that by-passed the study area. Whilst domestic visitors tended to fill up the hotels in Brastagi during the weekend, there was still the problem of low weekday occupancy and a declining level of investment into accommodation and tourism attractions.



Mike Sharrocks prepared the Preliminary Tourism Development Plan as a first stage of the project. This required an assessment of visitor patterns, tourism and planning policies, existing facilities and the tourism product. As part of this work, six sites were assessed for tourism development potential. The principal issues, problems and opportunities for tourism development in the study area were identified. Key actions for implementation were set out together with recommendations for the six potential tourism sites. Concept plans were subsequently drawn up, as part of the second stage of the study, for sites that had the most tourism development potential.

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