

Islamic Republic of Iran
Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization
ICHHTO

Nomination of
*Sassanid Archaeological Landscape
of Fars Region*

for Inscription on the World Heritage List

Executive Summary



UNESCO
World Heritage Convention

Tehran 2017



*In the Name of Allah; The Beneficent,
The Merciful...*

[illegible]

He built a city which was named Ardashir Khurreh, wherein a large tank was dug, from which water was conveyed by means of four canals; and near that tank an Atash-i Adaran was established.

(Further,) Ardashir excavated a high mountain, and turned the course of a river (into the city) through subterranean canals. He bestowed his patronage on many cities, made them very prosperous, and ordered that several Atash-i Warharans should also be enthroned.

(The Kârnâmag i Ardashîr i Babagân)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Preface

The Sassanian Empire (/səˈniən/ or /səseiniən/), also known as Sassanian, Sassanid, known to its inhabitants as *Eranshahr* in Middle Persian language, was the last Iranian empire before the rise of Islam, ruled by and named after the Sassanian dynasty from 224 to 651. The Sassanian Empire, which succeeded the Parthian Empire, was recognized as one of the leading world powers for a period of more than 400 years and is undoubtedly one of the most powerful Empires in ancient Iran which played a significant role in the history of southwestern Asia during the first millennium A.D.

In 224 A.D. *Ardashir Papagan* (Ardashir Papakan), the founder of Sassanian Empire, vanquished *Ardavan V*, the last king of Parthian, at the battle of *Hormzdagan*. Following the death of the Parthian ruler, Ardashir, turned his face to the western provinces of the now defunct Parthian Empire. In his last years, Ardashir had made Shapur, his eldest son, co-regent, and *Shapur* succeeded him as the sole ruler (240 A.D) and reigned until May 270. Several inscriptions, most notably one on the walls of the *Kaaba-ye Zardosht* records his victories over Roman and it provides a clear picture of the extent of his realm. At its peak, the Sassanian Empire stretched from western Anatolia to northwest India, but its influence was felt far beyond these political boundaries.

In contrast to Parthian society, the Sassanid renewed emphasis on charismatic and centralized government. In Sassanid theory, the ideal society could maintain stability and justice, and the necessary instrument for this was a strong monarch. Thus one of the things the Sassanian aimed for was to be an urban empire, and were quite successful; during the late Sassanian period, Mesopotamia had the largest population density in the medieval period. One of the reasons behind this, was the intensity of the founding and re-founding of cities by the Sassanian.

In order to revive the glories of the Achaemenid and Parthian past, the Sassanians were no mere imitators. The art of this period reveals an astonishing virility, in certain respects anticipating key features of Islamic art. Sassanian art combined elements of traditional Persian art with some Hellenistic and Roman elements and influences. Sassanian motifs found their way into the art of Central Asia and China, the Byzantine Empire, and even Merovingian France.

In order to identify the roots of these evolutions we are required to carry out a comprehensive research into the early stages of Sassanid activities in Fars region which is actually the origin and birth place of Sassanid. The natural and historical landscapes of Firuzabad, Bishapur and Sarvestan which is summarized and called here after as the Sassanid archaeological landscape, in which some of the authentic artistic and technical innovations and creations assigning to Sassanid civilization have been created. Among which we can list the followings: complicated irrigation systems, land use techniques, distinguishable settlement patterns, particular urban planning and architecture, monumental and royal iconography. The landscape contains a variegated set of urban structures, castles, palaces, outstanding monumental buildings, inscriptions, rock relief presentations and other relevant relics forming and evolving over a span of 400 years. Another outstanding characteristic of this landscape is the continuation of some innovated architectural and artistic traditions through the middle and late Sassanid era to early Islamic Iran and of course to later centuries. General principles of applying stone and gypsum construction materials, setting up barrel vaulted *ayvans* leading to domed chambers by creation of a unique Iranian/eastern style squinches appeared even more complicated than some monumental buildings of the first centuries of the Islamic rule and the remarkable example is the monument of Sarvestan and Jame' mosque of Isfahan dated back to 3rd to 5th A.D.

It can be claimed that the Sassanid architectural form and decoration debuting in Qaleh Dokhtar and Ardashir palace built with inexpensive and abundant indigenous construction materials have become richer and fuller in their evolutionary process and have been absorbed in the basics of the Islamic architecture of Iran and those lands under the influence of Persian cultural traditions. The continuance of some of the innovated architectural methods of Sassanian landscape were employed in buildings of the early Islamic era, such as Sarvestan monument and were used as a pattern in the Islamic mausoleums and mosques such as Amir Ismail mausoleum in Bokhara and the Jame Mosque of Esfahan. The stability and peace produced by the centralized power lasted for several centuries until the end of the empire in mid-seventh century which finally led to security and a management discipline which in its turn resulted in the formation and growth of urban planning as well as cultural elements particularly in the field of architecture and its affiliated arts. Following the arrival of Islam in Iran, the massive heritage was transmitted and continued in a way that its impact can still be felt today.

Country (and State Party if different)

Islamic Republic of Iran



Map 1. Iran (ICHHTO archive)

State, Province, or Region

Fars Province



Map 2. Location of the Fars province (ICHHTO archive)

Name of Property

Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars region



Photo 1. Ardashir Khurreh



Photo 2. Qaleh Dokhtar



Photo 3. The Victory Relief of Ardashir - Ardashir Palace - Ardashir investiture Relief



Photo 4. The city of Bishapur and its related components - Shapur cave



Photo 5. Sarvestan Monument

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

No	Site Name	Region/District	Components	Geographical Coordinates	Sum Area of Core Zone(ha)	Area of the Buffer Zone (ha)	Area of the Landscape (ha)
1	Firuzabad	Firuzabad	Qaleh Dokhtar	28°55'15.20"N 52°31'48.31"E	71.2	4694	36927
			Ardashir investiture Relief	28°54'59.60"N 52°32'14.62"E	0.7		
			The Victory Relief of Ardashir	28°54'35.54"N 52°32'27.30"E	0.5		
			Ardashir Khurreh	28°51'7.73"N 52°31'57.15"E	5.9		
			Ardashir Palace	28°53'52.73"N 52°32'21.17"E	316		
2	Bishapur	Kazerun	The city of Bishapur and its related components	29°46'38.93"N 51°34'13.62"E	194	7480	-
			Shapur cave	29°48'21.08"N 51°37'10.37"E	28		
3	Sarvestan	Sarvestan	Sarvestan palace	29°11'43.94"N 53°13'51.84"E	25	541	11820

Textual description of the boundaries of the nominated property**Firuzabad**

Firuzabad consists of 5 components which include the significant elements of the area.

Description of Core zone of Firuzabad**1- Qaleh Dokhtar**

The core zone line of Qaleh Dokhtar begins from the point C1 (X= 649575, Y= 3200597) in the northern end of the stone fortifications of Qaleh Dokhtar. Along the fortifications, to the south east and in a relatively straight line, the core zone reaches to the point C2 (X= 650029, Y= 3200011). From the point C2 (X= 650029, Y= 3200011) the line starts a loop south-eastwards where it meets the river's inner border. The rest of the core zone moves in line with the inner border of Firuzabad main road from C3 (X= 649999, Y= 3199871) to C11 (X= 648840, Y= 3200422). On C11 the line proceeds along the fortifications of the castle and the cliff's face until it reaches to the starting point of the line at C1 (X= 649575, Y= 3200597).

2- Investiture relief

At the point C13 (X= 649844, Y= 3199751), the line of the first relief start. This point is located somewhat close to C4 of the Qaleh Dokhtar and is defined as the starting point of the core zone for the investiture relief. From this point, the line turns to south-east to get to C14 (X= 649904, Y= 3199701). With a 90-degree turn, the line moves toward south, gets to C15 (X= 649861, Y= 3199634) and reverse its route towards north-west to approach to C16 (X= 649799, Y= 3199698). The line, afterwards, proceeds parallel to meets its starting point at C13 (X= 649844, Y= 3199751) and form a square shape core zone.

3- The victory relief of Ardashir

C 17 (X= 650247, Y= 3199022), the starting point of the core Zone line of the second relief, is moderately close to the river where the Victory Relief of Ardashir is located. By a downward move the line gets to C18 (X= 650243, Y= 3198982), proceeds southeastwards to reach C19 (X= 650274, Y= 3198935) and approaches towards C20 (X= 650234, Y= 3198916) with a westward move. Then it stir towards northwest and C21 (X= 650174, Y= 3198969), proceeds upward, gets to C22 (X= 650172, Y= 3199008) and retribute its movement to the east and reaches its starting point at C17 (X= 650247, Y= 3199022).

4- Ardashir palace

The core zone line which surrounds Ardashir palace, begins from the point 23 (X= 650185, Y= 3197863) in the northernmost side of this area, continues to the south east to the point

C24 (X= 650269, Y= 3197751), it then extends to C28 (X= 650104, Y= 3197413) to approach the southernmost point of this area adjacent to the river. The line continues eastwards to get to the point C29 (X= 649986, Y= 3197448) and proceeds upward to reach the point C30 (X= 649993, Y= 3197639). Finally, stretching to the north-east from the point C30 to C23 (X= 650185, Y= 3197863) the line rejoin its starting point at C23 (X= 650185, Y= 3197863).

5- Ardashir Khurreh

The core zone line surrounds the city of Ardashir Khurreh. The core zone of this city is a circle consisting the fortifications and moat which is defined by points C31 (X= 649491, Y= 3193631) to the north, C32 (X= 650460, Y= 3192622) to the east, C33 (X= 649491, Y= 3191659) to the south and C34 (X= 648502, Y= 3192623) to the west.

Description of buffer zone of Firuzabad

The buffer zone of Firuzabad includes, in the northern section, the natural features, in the southern section, a part of Firuzabad plain encompassing the whole core zone, the river and the surrounding natural features. The line of buffer zone begins from the point B1(X= 647841, Y= 3202311) in the northernmost point of the buffer zone, continues to the east, crossing the Tang-i Ab valley and river, and along the ridges of the Poudno mountain it reaches the point B4(X= 653015, Y= 3201621). The line then stretches from the point B4 (X= 653015, Y= 3201621) to the east, along the natural features and then it reaches the point B9(X= 653772, Y= 3198478) to the easternmost point of the zone. It then continues from the point B9 (X= 653772, Y= 3198478) to the southwest, parallel to the talweg (the bottom line) of the natural features, to the point B10(X= 651954, Y= 3197285) and then to the south to the point B11(X= 652169, Y= 3196492) and to the southwest it reaches the point B13(X= 651642, Y= 3195645), in the main road of Firuzabad adjacent to the police station. From the point B13(X= 651642, Y= 3195645), the line stretches to the southwest to the point B14(X= 650868, Y= 3194617) and then to the southeast, crossing the local routs, it reaches the point B16(X= 651868, Y= 3192551). The points B16(X= 651868, Y= 3192551) to B21(X= 651348, Y= 3191174) encompass the western area of the city of Firuzabad. From the point B16 (X= 651868, Y= 3192551), the line extends to the west to the point B18(X= 650625, Y= 3192936) and then to the south to the point B20 (X= 650689, Y= 3191467) and to the east it reaches the point B21(X= 651348, Y= 3191174). It then, from the point B21(X= 651348, Y= 3191174), crossing the incidental routs amongst the agricultural fields, continues to the west and reaches the point B27(X= 647693, Y= 3190718). The buffer zone line, in the very direction, after crossing Tang-i Ab river and stretching to the west bank of the river, continues to the west to the point B29(X= 646023, Y= 3190696), adjacent to Sahlabad village to the westernmost point of the buffer zone. Then it extends to the northeast, along the main road of Firuzabad, and passing Ahmadabad village, also crossing along the west bank of Tang-i Ab valley, it reaches the point B33(X= 649241, Y= 3195337). In the same route and

along the north, passing the west of Kai Zarrin village, the line stretches to the point B34(X= 648815, Y= 3196716). From this point on, which is the outset of the western height of Tang-i Ab valley, the buffer zone line passes from the point B34(X= 648815 , Y= 3196716) to the northwest, and crossing the point B36(X= 647794 , Y= 3197550) , it continues to the west. Then, passing the point B38(X= 646085, Y= 3200051), extending to the northeast, and parallel to natural features and ridges, it reaches the starting point B1(X= 647841, Y= 3202311).

Description of landscape zone of Firuzabad

The landscape zone of Firuzabad which encompasses a large part of the surrounding landscape of Tang-i Ab and Firuzabad plain, begins from the point L1(X= 651985 , Y= 3205739) in the northernmost point of the area, over Tang-i Ab River. The line continues to the east, and parallel to the ridges of Kard mountain, it enters the eastern bank of the river and Firuzabad Tang-e, then reaches the point L3 (X= 659859, Y= 3203048). It then, crossing the Deti Khoshk plain, and stretching to the south to the point L4 (X= 659944, Y= 3200673) and then to the southwest, passes the point B5(X= 658558, Y= 3197103) over the Pudno Mountain. It then extends to the southeast over the ridges of the mountain and reaches the point L8(X= 661522, Y= 3193501) to the easternmost point of the landscape buffer zone. The line stretches to the southwest, and crossing Qolveh sefid Tang-e, reaches the point L9(X= 658754, Y= 3190745) (the ending point of the mountains to the east of Firuzabad). Then, crossing a local road to the southwest, and passing Rouzbadan village, it reaches the point L10(X= 656503, Y= 3186447). The line then stretches to the west to the point L14 (X= 649917, Y= 3186891), nearby Lohrasb area, and continues to the southwest to the point L17(X= 644936, Y= 3184116) in Sineh por plain. Then, passing the point L18(X= 644616 , Y= 3183137) to the south, crossing over Tang-i Ab River , and parallel to the river to the west, it reaches the point L19(X= 642529 , Y= 3183478) in Anjirband valley. Along Anjirband valley and to the southwest, crossing the point L20(X= 641903, Y= 3182826) to the southernmost point of the landscape buffer zone, to the northwest and along the ridges of Goftari hill it reaches to the point L22(X= 638466, Y= 3185815). Then, continuing along the ridges to the northwest it reaches to the point L27(X= 633490, Y= 3196303) in the westernmost point of the landscape buffer zone. The line, after extending along the ridges of the poudno mountain and the region of Doutu tork Nomads to the northeast, reaches the point L32(X= 641979, Y= 3203818) and continuing to the east, connects to the point L1 (X= 651985, Y= 3205739), so is completed the landscape buffer zone of Firuzabad.

Bishapur

The core zone of Bishapur including significant and valuable elements of the city of Bishapur and its related components. The core zone line which encompasses the ancient city of Bishapur and some of its important elements, such as rock reliefs, initiates from the point C1 (X= 554186, Y= 3294254) at the western extremes of the core zone, at the intersection of the

southern and northern fortifications, then stretches to the northeast along Bishapur River. The line, after crossing the point C5 (X= 555250, Y= 3295007), turns to the southeast through a loop form movement passing the point C6 (X= 555612, Y= 3294741), the line reverse its route towards northeast to reach the point C7 (X= 555978, Y= 3294897). It goes downwards to get to C8, in the vicinity of the rock reliefs and retrieve its course upward on the mount foots to approach C9 (X= 556106, Y= 3294962). Proceeding north-eastwards on the mount foots it gets to C10 (X= 556490, Y= 3295130) reverse the route downward to the south-east and reaches C11 (X= 556730, Y= 3294927). Processing downward along the river, the line gets to C12 (X= 556768, Y= 3294722), and moves to reach to point C13 (X= 556675, Y= 3294577), continues eastwards along two rock reliefs crossing C14 (X= 556335, Y= 3294518) it approaches the southernmost extremes of the line at C17 (X= 554882, Y= 3293354). It then, moves north-westwards to meet its starting point at C1 (X= 554186, Y= 3294254).

Shapur cave

The core zone line of Shapur cave, surrounds Sassan cave within the heart of the mountain dominating Bishapr City which is defined by the points C18 (X= 558461, Y= 3298211) to C22 (X= 558977, Y= 3297547). The line initiates at the North-West side of the area at C18 (X= 558461, Y= 3298211) and moves north-eastwards to C19 (X= 558609, Y= 3298300). It then, continues to the south-east to reach to C20 (X= 559148, Y= 3297919) and later to C21 (X= 559260, Y= 3297592). Turning towards west the line gets to C22 (X= 558977, Y= 3297547) at the southern extremes of the Shapur cave. It finally meets its starting point at C18 (X= 558461, Y= 3298211) by wending a north-westward route.

Description of Buffer Zone

The buffer zone of Bishapur including the core zone and the surrounding landscape is defined, to the east, by natural features and heights and, to the west, with routs and the man-made objects. The line begins from the point B1(X=555092, Y=3300303) in the northernmost point of the buffer zone, then extending to the southeast, while encompassing the heights of Sibaki Mountain, reaches to the point B4(X=561491, Y=3296683). It then, crossing over the Shapur River, extend to the southern bank of the river, and reaches the point B5(X=562211, Y=3296026) which lies over Davan Mountain. The line continues to the point B5(X=562211, Y=3296026) to the south, then stretching to the point B6(X=562524, Y=3294036) and finally reaches to the point B7(X=562819, Y=3293624) which lies on the ridge of the Davan Mountain.

The line of the buffer zone turns to the south from the point B7(X=562819, Y=3293624). It continues along the natural features, then stretches to the point B10(X=558693, Y=3289333) to the lower parts of the mountain and again turning to the southwest, it reaches the point B12(X=557647, Y=3290540). From the point B12(X=557647, Y=3290540), it extends to the west, and crossing the local routs, it reaches to the point B20(X=553791, Y=3290313). Then

passing Anarestan and Toll-e Koosk villages, it stretches to the north. The line, passing the Rshanabad village, which is defined with the points B27(X=552652, Y=3294717) to B30(X=552951, Y=3295558).also Hakim bashi village, defined with the points B30(X=552951, Y=3295558) to B32(X=553206, Y= 3296126) reaches to the point B34(X=554081, Y=3299356). It then passing the village of hajiabad Ghouri, extends to the northeast and with connecting to the point B1(X=555092, Y=3300303), it completes the area of the buffer zone.

Sarvestan

Description of Core Zone

The core zone of Sarvestan, consisting of Sarvestan Monument, the area of excavated sites and the surrounding area, is defined with the points C1(X=716555, Y=3231729) to C4(X=716968, Y=3231442). The points C1(X=716555, Y=3231729), C2(X=716980, Y=232090) and C3(X=717392, Y=3231707) demonstrate the area of two orthogonal walls discovered in the archaeological excavations. The line of the core zone begins from the point C1(X=716555, Y=3231729) to the west of the area, extending directly to the northeast and along the remains of the mentioned wall, after turning approximately in a 90 degree angle at the point C2(X=716980, Y=3232090), continues along the wall to the southeast then reaches the point C3(X=717392, Y=3231707). From the point C3(X=717392, Y=3231707), along the remains of a watercourse, it stretches to the southwest, to the point C4(X=716968, Y=3231442). Then the line continues directly to the northwest, and with connecting to the point C1(X=716555, Y=3231729), so is defined the area of the core zone.

Description of Buffer Zone

Regarding the extent of the Sarvestan plain, the buffer zone of the area is defined with local routes, the remains of Qanats and other natural features and man-made elements. The line of the buffer zone begins from the point B1(X=715982, Y=3233025), and stretching to the east, while extending beyond and including Morad Beigi Qanat, it reaches to the point B4(X=718417, Y=3232706). It then continues to the south, and by the local routes it turns at the point B8(X=718614, Y=3231271), then extending to the southwest, the line reaches to the point B12(X=716942, Y=3230392). From the point B12(X=716942, Y=3230392), which is to the southernmost part of the buffer zone, it turns to the southwest, then reaches the point B15(X=715507, Y=3231588), which is the westernmost point of the buffer zone. Then the line continues to the north and connects to the starting point B1(X=715982, Y=3233025).

Description of Landscape Zone

With regard to the location of Sarvestan Monument in an extent plain, and the visual perspective of the Monument within the natural environs, and considering the fact that most part of the plain is the agricultural fields, an extent area is denied as the landscape zone. There have been used natural features as well as the man-made objects to define this area which extends to the slopes of the mountains and hills from the east and south, and to the traffic routes from the west. The landscape zone line begins from the point L1(X=714027, Y=3238124), in the intersection of the local routes, extending to the east, and passing the point L2(X=714672, Y=3237971), it continues to the north east. The line, in the vicinity of Sarvestan, turns to the east while perpendicular to Sarvestan-Dehnow road, then continues to the east by the local routes, it reaches to the point L7(X=717198, Y=3237813). It then along a watercourse, enters Sarvestan-Fasa road at the point L8(X=719758, Y=3237317) and continues to the southeast. The slopes of the Kamzard Mountain and Gahvareh hill to the northeast, and Momenabad village to the south lie along this way.

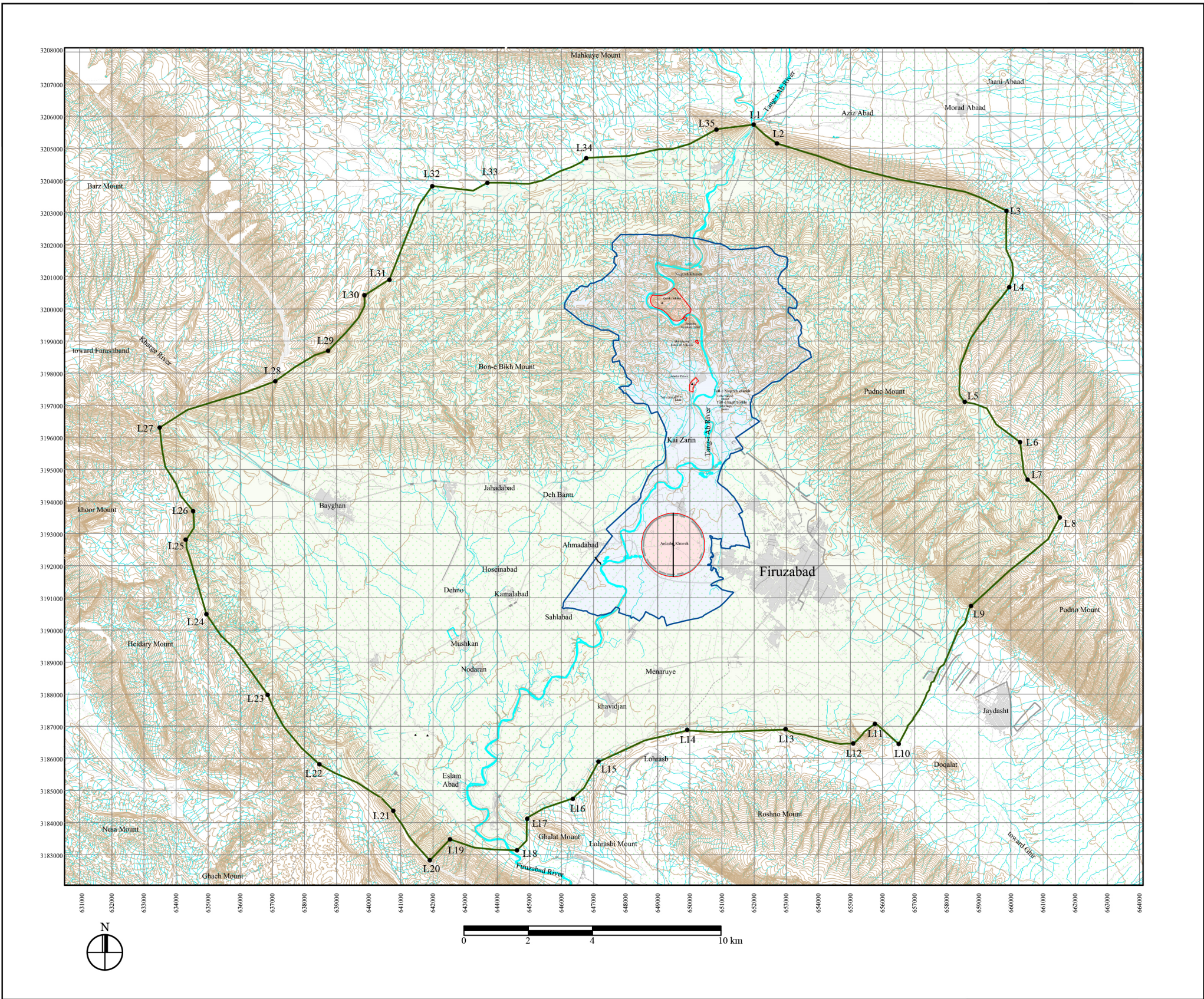
The line, from the point L11(X=725357, Y=3233284) and on, continues to the south, encompassing Tazang spring to the west, which was one of the water supply resources of Sarvestan Monument, then reaches to the point L14(X=723925, Y=3230435) which lie on the Malbarreh valley nearby Nazarabad mountain. The line at the point L15(X=724350, Y=3227556) turns to the southwest, continuing to the point L17(X=720309, Y=3224212), stretches to the west, and crossing over Chitgar hills, it enters traffic routes and then reaches the point L18(X=717879, Y=3224744). The landscape zone line, from the point L20(X=712680, Y=3226842), continues to the north along the local routes, and while turning to the west, it reaches the point L22(X=709607, Y=3230072) and then turning again to the north, passing the east of Roknabad village, it reaches the point L26(X=710866, Y=3236037).

The point L26(X=710866, Y=3236037) by the local traffic routes to the west of the plain connects to the starting point L1(X=714027, Y=3238124) and thus is completed the area of the landscape zone of Sarvestan Monument.

Firuzabad

Contains 5 Components:
Qaleh Dokhtar, Ardashir Palace, Ardashir Khurreh, The Victory Relief of Ardashir, Ardashir Investiture Relief

Landscape Zone



Regulation

- 1- Construction of any large-scale workshop and industrial facilities, polluting industries, exploration operations, mining, installing vibrating machinery, etc... which can harm or damage the functional, structural and visual integrity of the monument and its surrounding natural landscape is strictly forbidden;
- 2- Carrying out any developmental operations, construction and expansion of roads, urban and rural infrastructures, power transfer lines and installing pylons is prohibited without obtaining a permit from ICHHTO;
- 3- Physical expansion of cities and villages within the area must be done based on master, detail and pilot plans.
- 4- All ancient mounds, Reliefs and any cultural Relics existing within the landscape zone are subject to regulations concerning as the nominated property.

Geographical Coordinates of the Landscape zone

Point	X	Y	Point	X	Y
L1	651985	3205739	L19	642529	3183478
L2	652710	3205151	L20	641903	3182826
L3	659859	3203048	L21	640765	3184367
L4	659944	3200673	L22	638466	3185815
L5	658558	3197103	L23	636852	3187974
L6	660283	3195848	L24	634945	3190489
L7	660517	3194681	L25	634300	3192810
L8	661522	3193501	L26	634532	3193698
L9	658754	3190745	L27	633490	3196303
L10	656503	3186447	L28	637089	3197744
L11	655762	3187074	L29	638734	3198694
L12	655085	3186464	L30	639867	3200422
L13	652980	3186912	L31	640645	3200905
L14	649917	3186891	L32	641979	3203818
L15	647155	3185900	L33	643694	3203919
L16	646355	3184739	L34	646772	3204693
L17	644936	3184116	L35	650546	3205408
L18	644616	3183137			

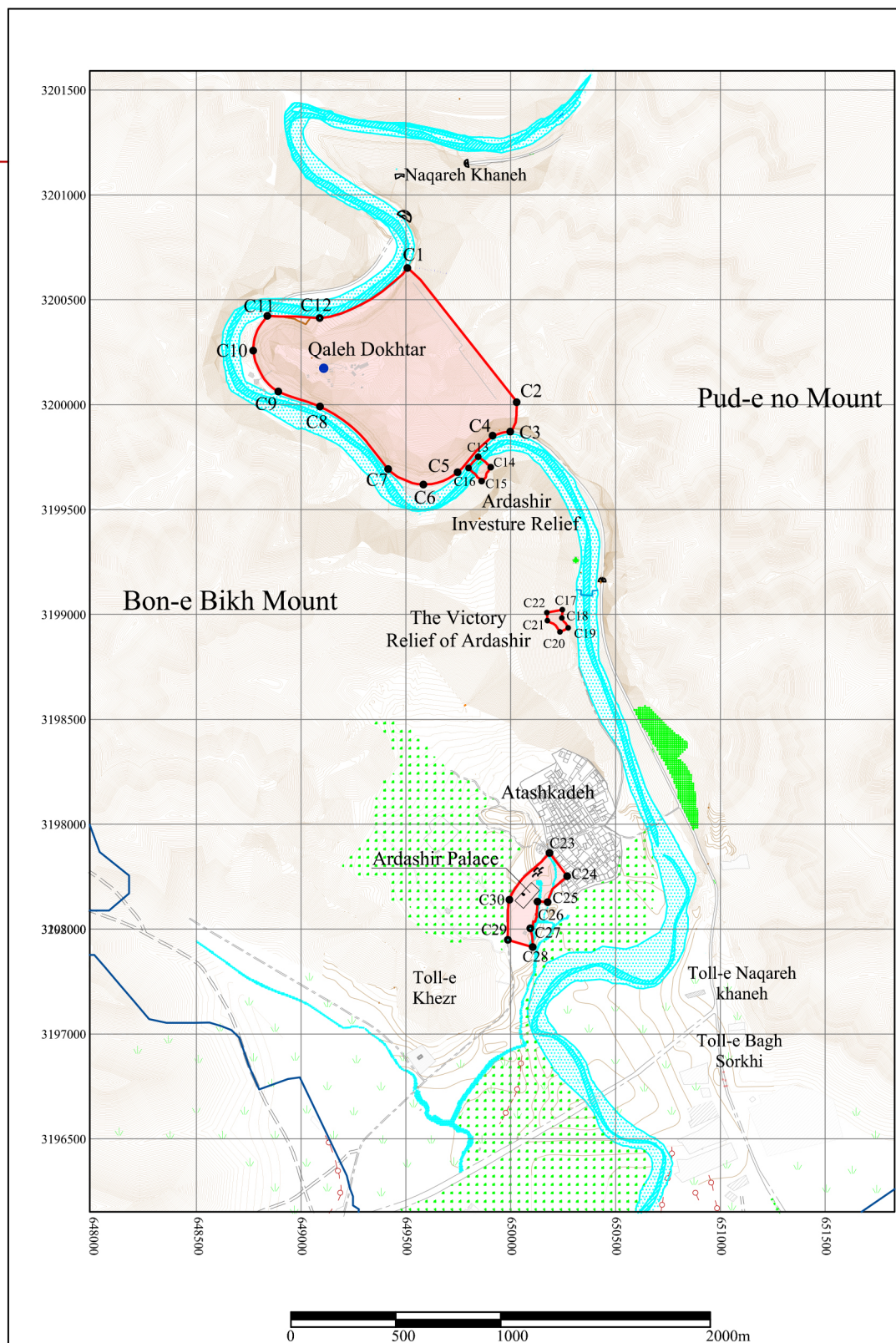
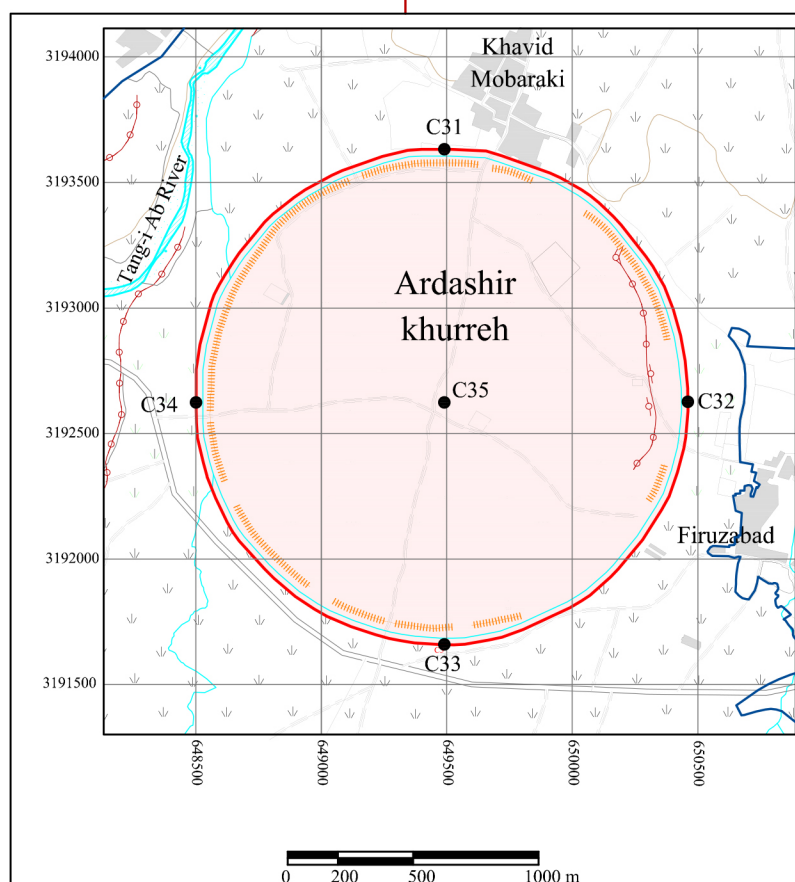
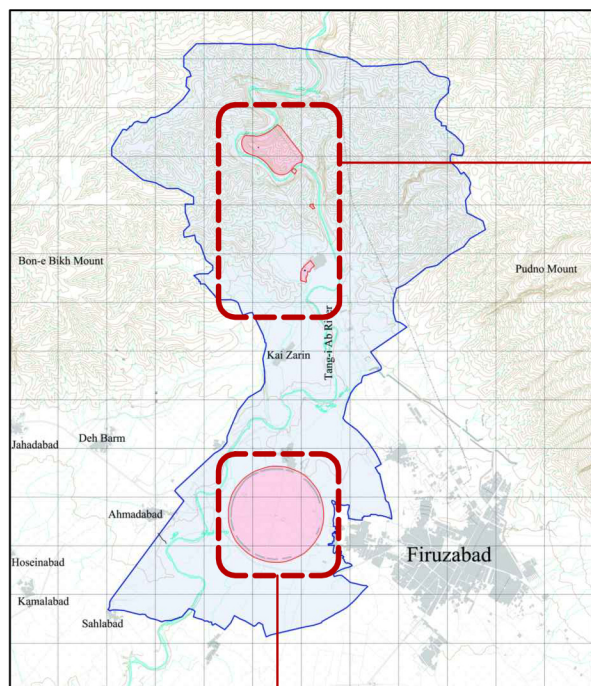
KEY PLAN

Zone	Area (ha)
Nominated Property	392.3
Buffer Zone	4694
Landscape Zone	36726

Firuzabad

Contains 5 Components:
Qaleh Dokhtar, Ardashir Palace, Ardashir Khurreh, The Victory Relief of Ardashir, Ardashir Investiture Relief

Nominated Property



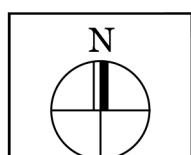
Regulation

- 1-Any development work, construction and expansion of roads and tunnels, erecting power transfer lines, installing poles, digging water-wells, leveling, excavating, piling up pollutant wastes, exploration activities, mining and logging, installing polluting and smoke-generating machinery and any other activity resulting in damage and harm to the authenticity and integrity of the monument is prohibited;
- 2-Any research activity including archaeological excavations as well as conservation, restoration, reorganization and revitalization operations is lawful but obtaining a permit from ICHHTO is required;
- 3-Any encroachment into natural topography, springs and historical irrigation system of the core zone of Ardashir Palace is forbidden;
- 4-Burial of the dead within the nominated property of Ardashir Palace is illegal;
Note: new lands for this purpose must be foreseen in the mid-term plan.
- 5- Expansion of farmlands in the nominated property of Ardashir khurreh is forbidden.
Note: agricultural activities in farmlands without any visible monuments as confirmed by ICHHTO is still permitted.

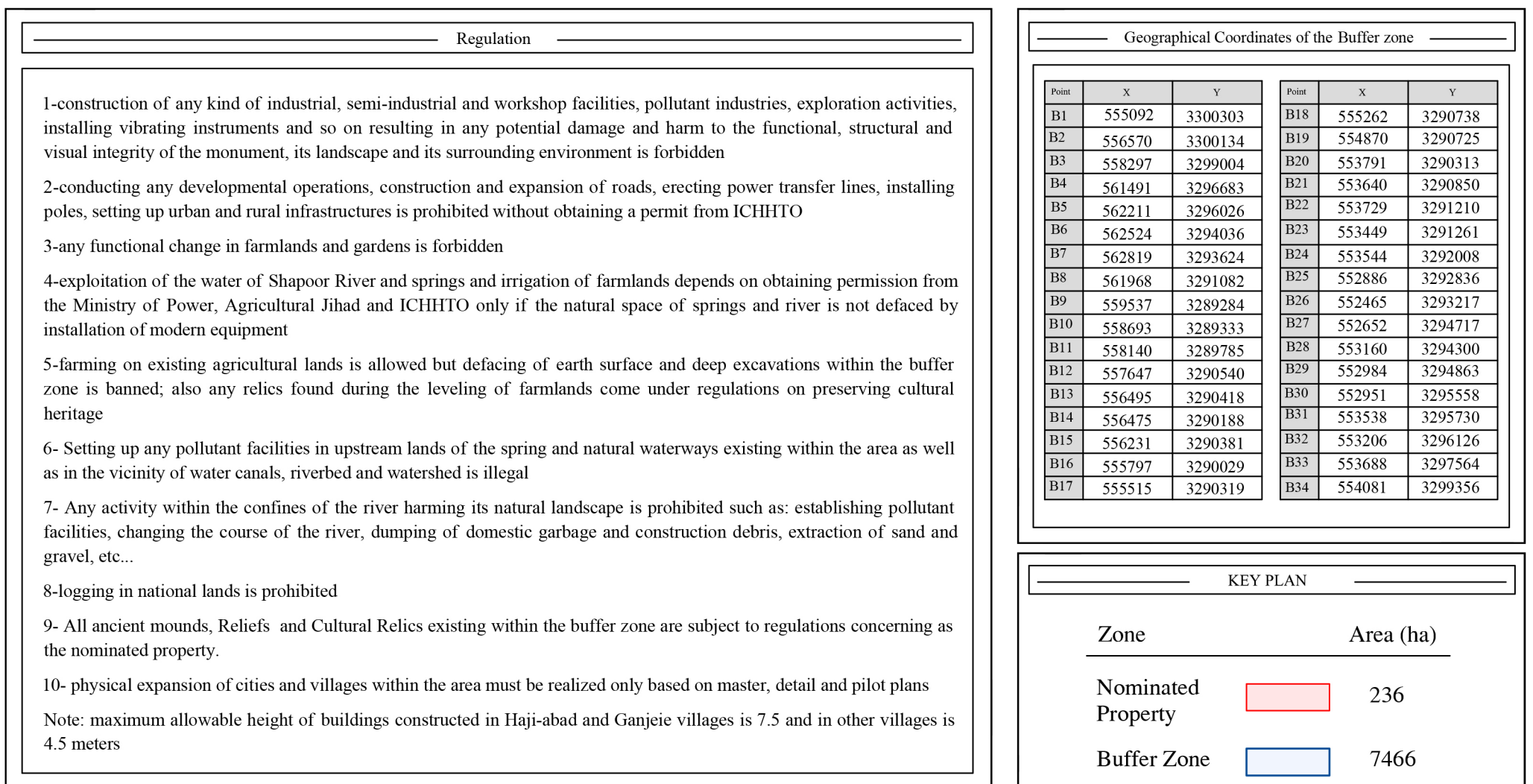
Geographical Coordinates of the Nominated Property

Point	X	Y	Point	X	Y
C1	649508	3200651	C19	650274	3198935
C2	650029	3200011	C20	650234	3198916
C3	649999	3199871	C21	650174	3198969
C4	649915	3199851	C22	650172	3199008
C5	649747	3199677	C23	650185	3197863
C6	649585	3199619	C24	650269	3197751
C7	649415	3199692	C25	650176	3197627
C8	649090	3199989	C26	650128	3197629
C9	648892	3200061	C27	650093	3197502
C10	648772	3200257	C28	650104	3197413
C11	648840	3200422	C29	649986	3197448
C12	649088	3200412	C30	649993	3197639
C13	649844	3199751	C31	649491	3193631
C14	649904	3199701	C32	650460	3192622
C15	649861	3199634	C33	649491	3191659
C16	649799	3199698	C34	648502	3192623
C17	650247	3199022	C35	649491	3192622
C18	650243	3198982			

LEGEND		
Zone		Area (ha)
Nominated Property		392.3
Buffer Zone		4694



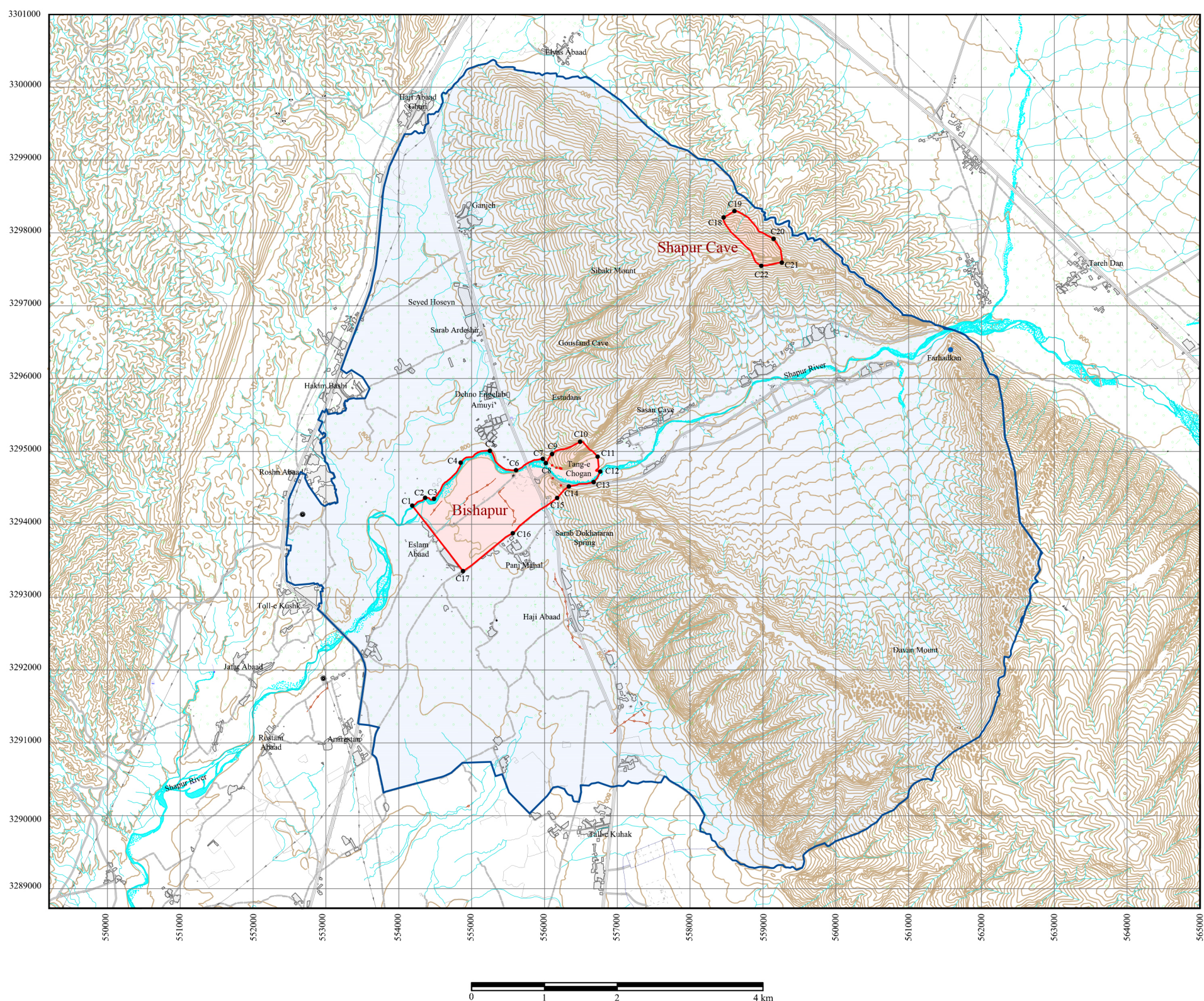
Buffer Zone



Bishapur

Contains 2 Components:
The City of Bishapur, Shapur Cave

Nominated Property



Regulation

1- Any developmental work, construction and expansion of roads, erecting power transfer lines, installing poles, digging water-wells, leveling, excavation, piling up pollutant wastes, cutting trees, setting up machinery which produce smoke and pollutants and any similar activity resulting in damage and harm to the authenticity and integrity of the nominated property of the monument, changing the natural look of the region as well as landscape of the historical city of Bishapur and its surrounding is prohibited;

2- Any research activity including archaeological excavations as well as operations pertaining to conservation, restoration, reorganization and revitalization is lawful but requires a permit from ICHHTO;

3- Burial of the dead within the nominated property of the historical city of Bishapur is illegal.

Note: allocating new lands for this purpose must be foreseen in the mid-term plan.

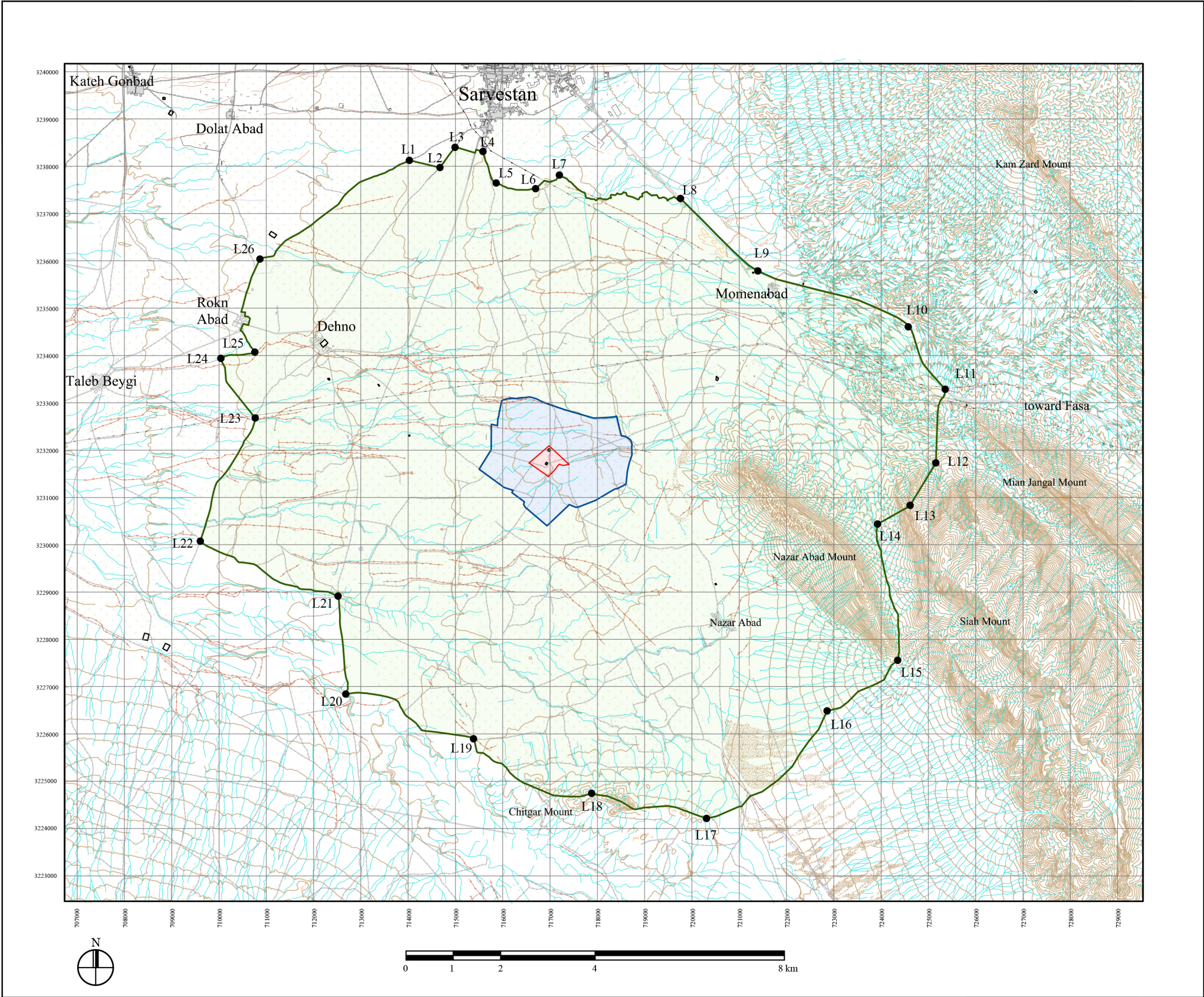
Geographical Coordinates of the Nominated Property

Point	X	Y	Point	X	Y
C1	554186	3294254	C12	556768	3294722
C2	554363	3294364	C13	556675	3294577
C3	554485	3294348	C14	556335	3294518
C4	554851	3294844	C15	556175	3294361
C5	555250	3295007	C16	555566	3293876
C6	555612	3294741	C17	554882	3293354
C7	555978	3294897	C18	558461	3298211
C8	556021	3294839	C19	558609	3298300
C9	556106	3294962	C20	559148	3297919
C10	556490	3295130	C21	559260	3297592
C11	556730	3294927	C22	558977	3297547

KEY PLAN

Zone	Area (ha)
Nominated Property	236
Buffer Zone	7466

Landscape Zone



Regulation

1-construction of any kind of large workshops and industrial facilities, pollutant industries, exploration operations, mining, etc... which harm or damage the functional, structural and visual integrity of the monument and its adjoining natural landscape is forbidden

2-doing any developmental operations, construction and expansion of roads, urban and rural infrastructures, power transfer lines as well as installing pylons is prohibited without obtaining a permit from ICHHTO

3-constructing any pollutant facilities in upstream lands of: Tazang Spring, water canals and natural waterways existing within the area is illegal

4-physical expansion of cities and villages within the area must be based on master, detail and pilot plans.

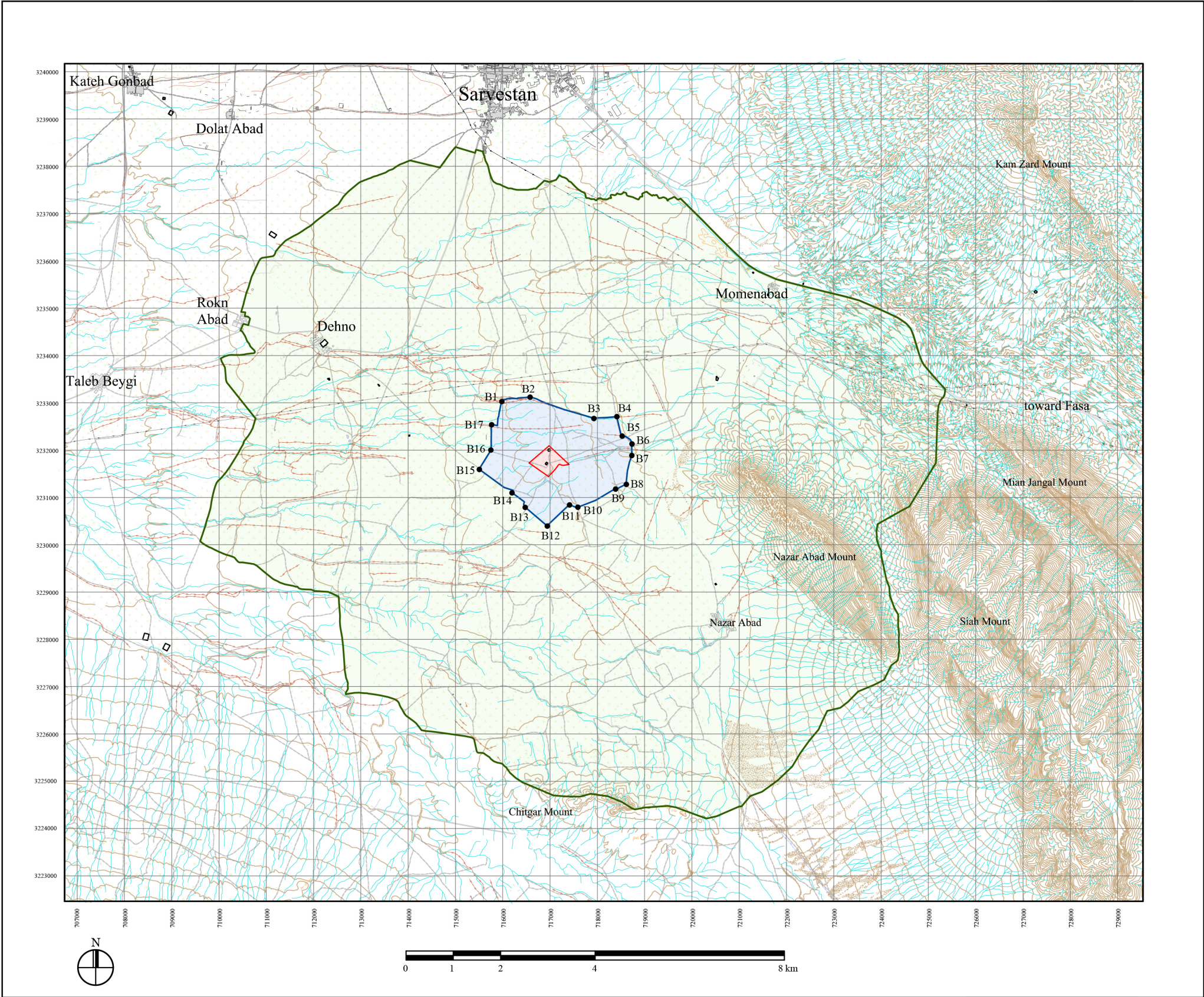
5-All ancient mounds, Reliefs and Cultural Relics existing within the buffer zone are subject to regulations concerning as the nominated property.

Geographical Coordinates of the Landscape zone

Point	X	Y	Point	X	Y
L1	714027	3238124	L14	723925	3230435
L2	714672	3237971	L15	724350	3227556
L3	714993	3238397	L16	722858	3226487
L4	715583	3238312	L17	720309	3224212
L5	715860	3237644	L18	717879	3224744
L6	716696	3237523	L19	715384	3225896
L7	717198	3237813	L20	712680	3226842
L8	719758	3237317	L21	712518	3230077
L9	721395	3235786	L22	709607	3230072
L10	724574	3234603	L23	710766	3232677
L11	725357	3233284	L24	710041	3233939
L12	725156	3231729	L25	710758	3234072
L13	724616	3230829	L26	710866	3236037

KEY PLAN

Zone	Area (ha)
Nominated Property	25
Buffer Zone	541
Landscape Zone	11820



Regulation

1- Construction of any kind of industrial, semi-industrial and workshop facilities, pollutant industries, power transfer lines, installing pylons, exploration activities and so on leading to any potential damage and harm to the functional, structural and visual integrity of the monument and its surroundings is forbidden.

2- Conducting any developmental operations, construction and expansion of roads, urban and rural infrastructures, digging semi-deep and deep water-wells is prohibited without obtaining a permit from ICHHTO.

3- Physical expansion of cities and villages within the core zone must take place based on master, detail and pilot plans.

4- Functional change of gardens and farmlands is forbidden.

5- All ancient mounds, Reliefs and Cultural Relics existing within the buffer zone are subject to regulations concerning as the nominated property.

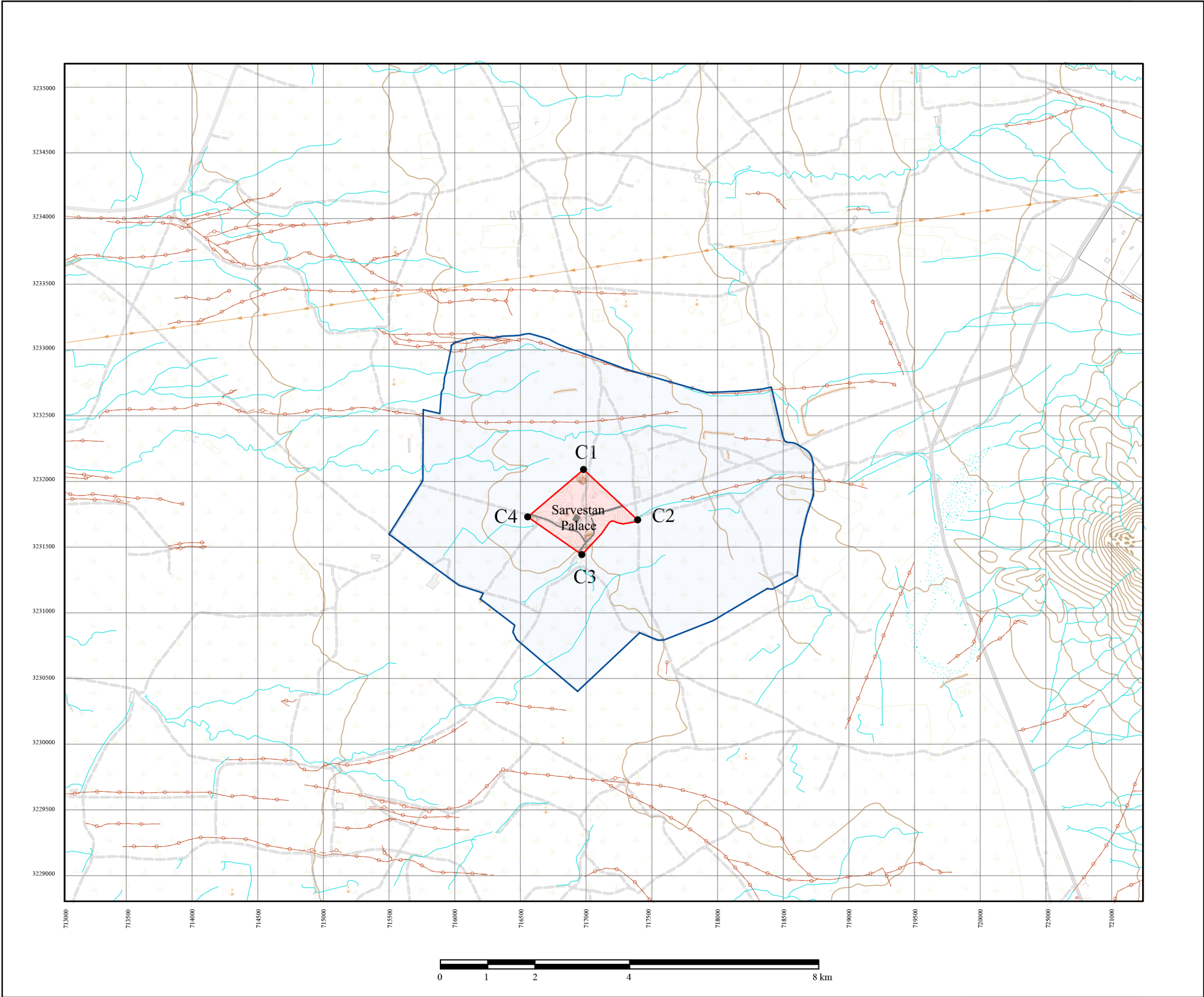
Geographical Coordinates of the Buffer zone

Point	X	Y
B1	715982	3233025
B2	716578	3233115
B3	717930	3232664
B4	718417	3232706
B5	718526	3232293
B6	718735	3232126
B7	718730	3231886
B8	718614	3231271
B9	718386	3231174
B10	717591	3230790
B11	717414	3230838
B12	716942	3230392
B13	716478	3230786
B14	716196	3231094
B15	715507	3231588
B16	715750	3231997
B17	715768	3232536

KEY PLAN

Zone	Area (ha)
Nominated Property	25
Buffer Zone	541
Landscape Zone	11820

Nominated Property



Regulation

1- Any construction activity as well as encroachment into the building and its environs, whether partial or complete; construction and expansion of roads for motor vehicles, erecting power transfer lines, installing poles, digging water-wells, leveling, excavation, piling up pollutant stuff and any activity resulting in damage and harm (physical, landscape, ...) to the authenticity and integrity of the monument is prohibited.

2- Any research activity including archaeological excavations as well as operations relating to conservation, restoration, reorganization and revitalization is lawful after obtaining a permit from ICHHTO.

Geographical Coordinates of the Nominated Property

Point	X	Y
C1	716851	3232100
C2	717393	3231716
C3	716960	3231451
C4	716547	3231738

KEY PLAN

Zone	Area (ha)
Nominated Property	25
Buffer Zone	541

Criteria under which property is nominated

The property is nominated under four criteria (i), (ii), (iii) (iv) & (v).

Criterion (i): Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

The architectural remains within the Sassanid archaeological landscape represent a masterpiece of human creativity in various forms of innovations that started during 3rd century A.D and continued afterward. The most significant of these innovations is the innovation of the *chahar-taq* architecture, the dome squinch, which makes it possible to build a dome on a square-shaped space, the combination of domed rooms with *ayvan*, the symbolic construction of the round city of Ardashir Khurreh, as well as constructing the first city with orthogonal grid in the eastern style.

The principal architecture and urban elements created by Sassanid in a harmonious composition with their natural context lead to creation of a magnificent landscape.



Aerial map1. Aerial view of Ardashir khurreh, Ref: Zakarya Valaei, (urban planning in ancient Persia, 2011)



Photo 6. The great tunnel vault of main *ayvan*/Ardashir Palace, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Photo 7. General view of Ardashir palace ayvan, 2015, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Photo 8. Ardashir palace, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Photo 9. The so called Anahita Temple, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Photo 10. Central domed Hall of Ardashir Palace, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Photo 11. Qaleh Dokhtar, Photo by: B.Sedighi

Criterion (ii): Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

The Sassanid archaeological landscape was influenced by the Achaemenid and Parthian cultural and ritual traditions, and their architectural and artistic approaches. It was also influenced by the cultural interchange with the Roman art and architecture, contemporaneous with it. Subsequently, it had a significant impact on urban planning, architecture and artistic approaches in the Islamic era.

The Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions affected the Sassanid archaeological landscape in the following ways: the continuance of the tradition of carving rock reliefs of the king and Ahura Mazda, developing stone buildings, palaces with three porticos, and three-part façades with decoration. Likewise, some influences of Roman art and urban planning are visible in Bishapur. The most important cases are the commemorative columns at the intersection of two principle streets of the city, the utilization of mosaic decoration in some of the structures and the execution-style of reliefs of *Tang-e Chogan*. Yet another characteristic quality of the landscape is the continuance of some of the innovative architectural methods during the middle and late Sassanid period, as well as in the Islamic era. General standards of using stone and gypsum construction materials, setting up eyvâns with barrel vaults, domed rooms, utilizing and enhancing squinches, and interior decoration of buildings were employed for the buildings, such as Sarvestan monument until the first centuries of the Islamic rule.



Photo 12. Rock relief of Bahram I's investiture by the god Ahura Mazda/ *Tang-e Chogan*, Photo by: B. Sedighi



Aerial map 2. Aerial view of Bishapur and its outstanding components, Ref:Georg Gerster,1975-1979



Photo 13. Reliefs of Tang-e Chogan, Photo by: B. Sedighi



Photo 14. Victory of Shapur over Roman Emperors on the right bank of Shapur River in Tang-e Chogan, Photo by: B. Sedighi

Criterion (iii): To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization that is living or which has disappeared;

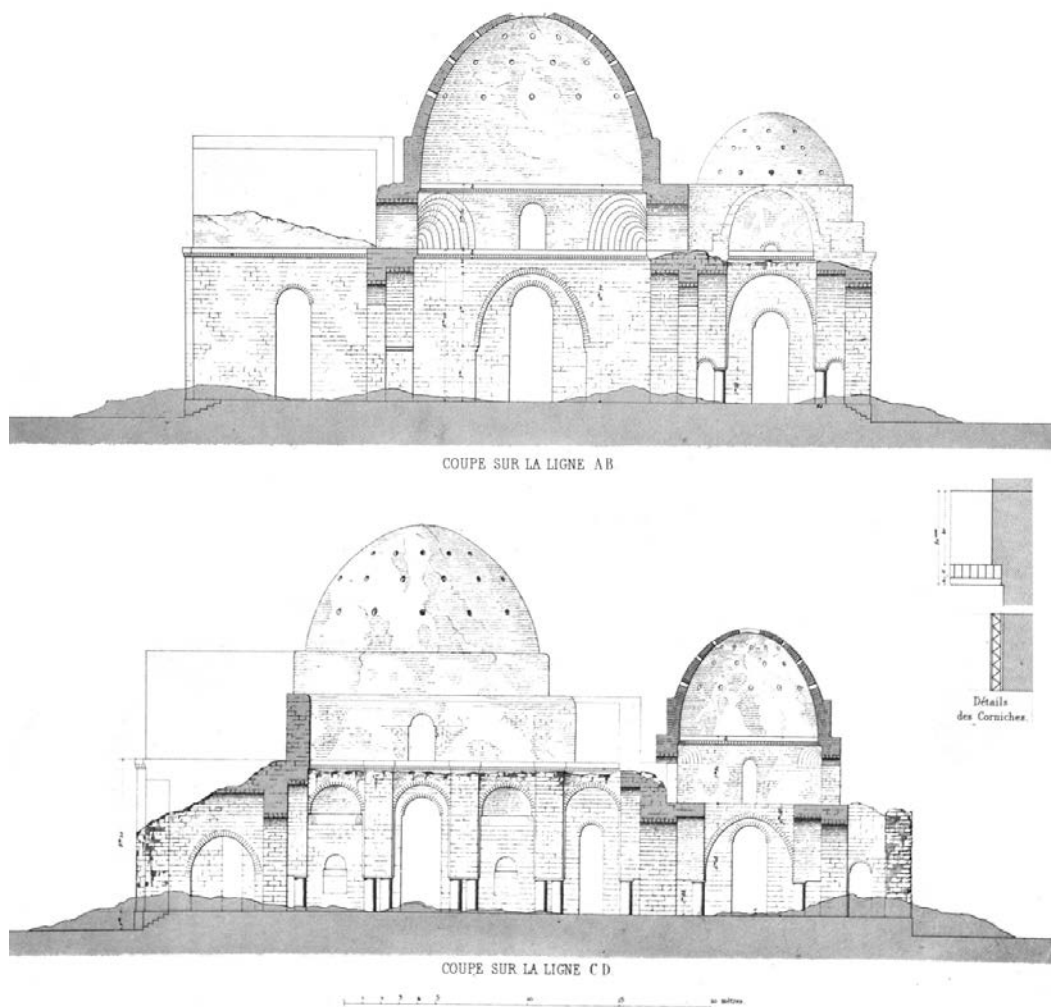
The Sassanid archaeological landscape bears exceptional testimony to creating and innovating architectural styles and techniques. These include investiture reliefs, religious and royal buildings, as well as the symbolic city of Ardashir Khurreh. Therefore, the Sassanid archaeological landscape provides evidence of cultural traditions in architectural and urban planning, the legitimization and hierarchy of power, and ritual ceremonies. Among these, the most important is the construction of religious *chahar-taqs*, literally “four arches,” an equilateral architectural unit consisting of four arches or short barrel vaults between four corner piers, which has a direct correlation with the expansion and stabilization of Zoroastrianism under the Sassanid rule. The religious value of this type of plan which reached its technical and architectural evolution in Bishapur continued during the Islamic era thanks to its usage in religious and holy buildings such as some mosques and tombs. Sassanids monuments and remains are indeed exceptional testimony to Sassanid culture and civilization that has disappeared.



Photo 15. Inside of the brick Dome of the South Eastern domed room/Sarvestan, Photo by: B. Sedighi



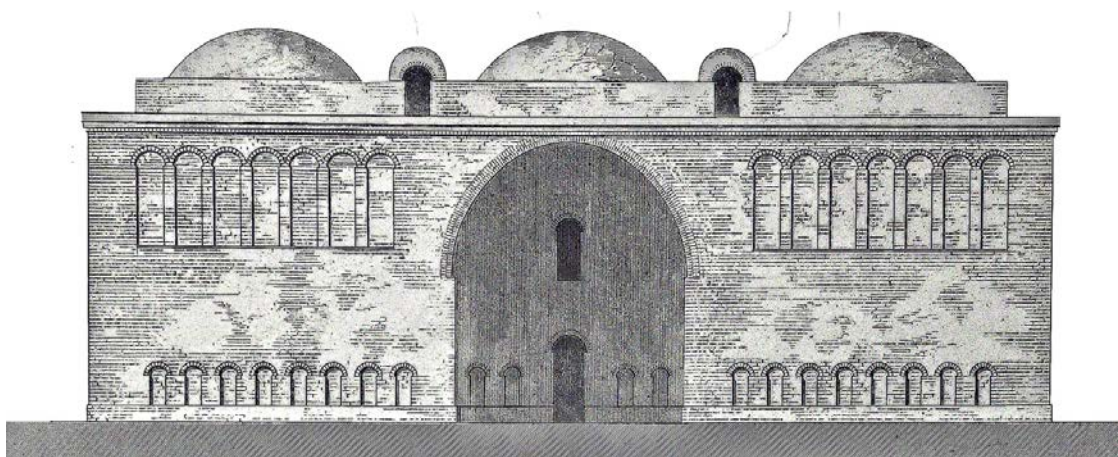
Photo 16. Sarvestan monument a general view of the building masonry, Photo by: B.Sedighi



Map3. Sarvestan monument, Flandin.1851



Photo 17. Ardashir Palace from above, Photo by:S.H.Rashedi



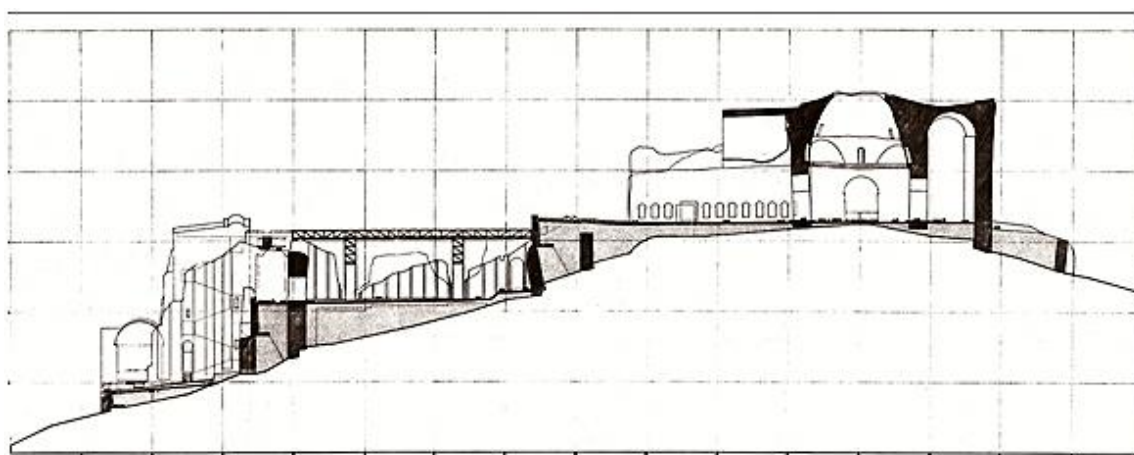
Map4. Ardashir Palace, Flandin.1851



Map5. Ardashir Palace, Flandin.1851



Photo 18. A general view of Qaleh Dokhtar. Photo by: Asadi, 2009



Map6. Section of Qaleh Dokhtar, Hans Hugi,1978

Criterion (iv): *Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; Ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; virtue*

The propagation of the dome on squinches above a square hall may be regarded as the most significant Sassanid contribution to Middle-Eastern architecture. Its tectonic disposition remained basically unchanged throughout the Sassanid period and had a decisive impact on Islamic architecture. Also according to the archaeological evidence it is clear that the invention and developments of Sassanid *chahar-taq*, took place in the ruins Takht-i Nishin (Taḡt-e Nešīn) in the city of Ardashir khurreh. Because of the structural and aesthetic properties of this monument, it became one of the most prominent elements in traditional Iranian architecture.



Photo 19. Remains of The so called Takht-i Neshin building and the central tower-like structure, Photo by: B. Sedighi

Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

The Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a perfect example of an efficient system of land use and utilization of natural topography as well as creation of a cultural landscape in the Sassanid civilization. Using indigenous construction materials and based on optimal exploitation of earth topography such as mountains, plains and rivers, a diverse set of urban structures, castles, buildings, bas reliefs and other relevant monuments took shape within the landscape. Among major cases attesting to the importance of landscape and land use from the Sassanid viewpoint are: launching a land use model on the outskirts of cities aimed at farming expansion, direct and vital linkage of these cities to nearby rivers in order to water supply for agricultural lands and trenches due to security concerns, construction of royal and protective castles in strategic positions of mountains, usage of natural potentials of valleys and caves to make statues and monumental stone inscriptions as well as paying attention to the beautiful natural landscape surrounding the structures.



Photo 20.Landscape Bishapur, Photo by:B.Sedighi



Photo 21.Sassanian Archeological Landscape in Firuzabad Plain/View of Qaleh Dokhtar, Photo by:B.Sedighi



Photo 22. So called Tirbal structure (central tower) of Ardashir Khurreh, Photo by:S.H.Rashedi

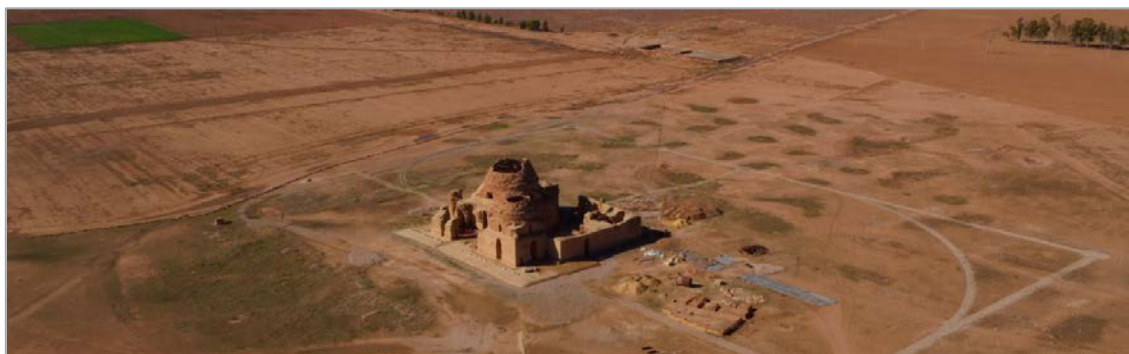


Photo 23. Aerial view of Sarvestan, Photo by:S.H.Rashedi



Photo 24. Aerial view of Fire temple in Bishapur, Photo by:S.H.Rashedi

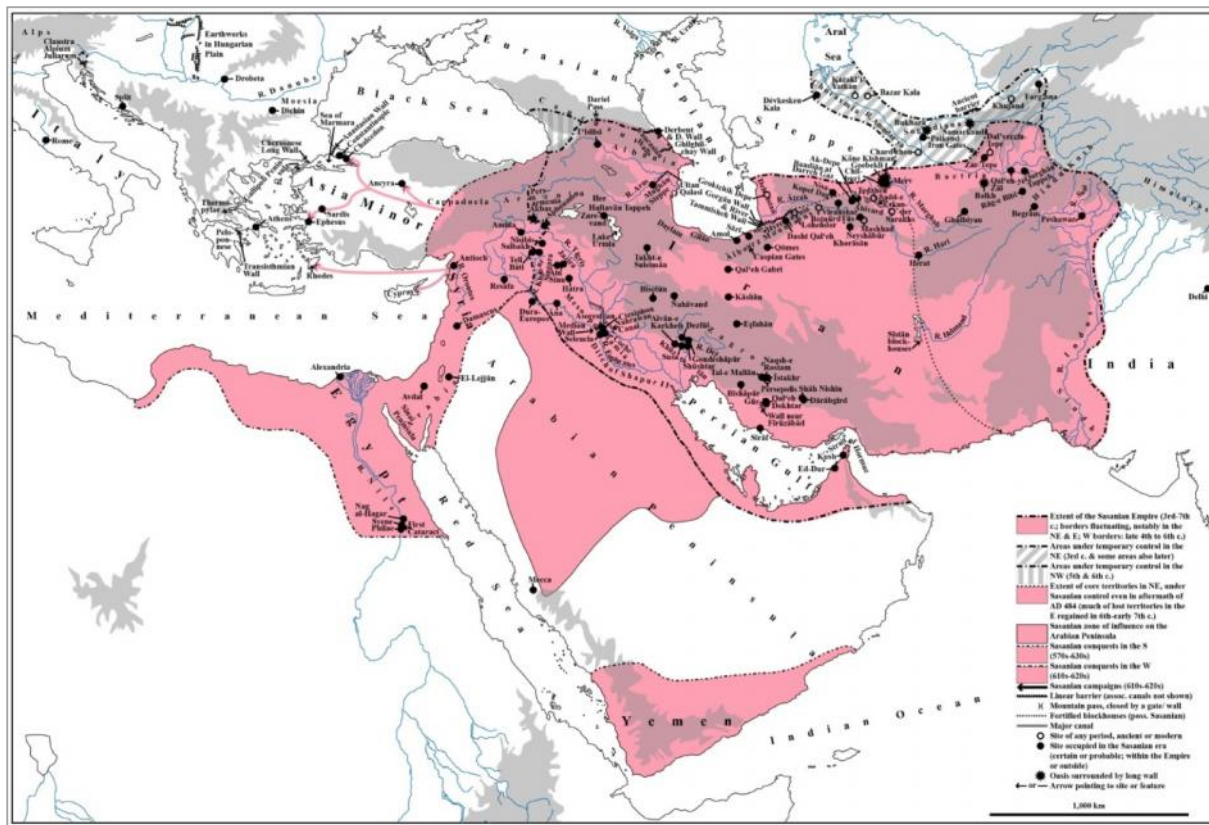
Statement of Outstanding Universal Value.**a) Brief synthesis**

The Sassanian Empire is undoubtedly one of the most powerful Empires in ancient Iran which played a significant role in the history of southwestern Asia during the first millennium A.D. According to historical resources and the numismatic studies, 36 king for 427 years, from 224 (the victory of Ardashir Papakan over the last Arsacid king) to 651 A.D. (the year when Yazdegerd III, the last Sassanid king, was killed) ruled over the Sassanian Empire.

Remarkable achievements of this vast, durable and strong Empire in adapting and making use of local nature and geographical potentials of the region represent a masterpiece of human creativity in various forms of innovations.

The Sassanid archaeological landscape was influenced by the Achaemenid and Parthian cultural and ritual traditions, and their architectural and artistic approaches. It was also influenced by the cultural interchange with the Roman art and architecture, contemporaneous with it. Its significant impact on urban planning, architecture and artistic approaches in the Islamic era is considerable. It bears exceptional testimony to creating and innovating architectural styles and techniques. The propagation of the dome on squinches above a square hall may be regarded as the most significant Sassanid contribution to Middle-Eastern architecture. This glorious archaeological landscape represents a perfect example of an efficient system of land use and utilization of natural topography as well as creation of a cultural landscape in the Sassanid civilization.

Within the evolutionary process of the south western region of Asia in general and Persian civilization in particular, the Sassanid era (224-654 AD) is deemed as a period causing great developments in various economic, cultural and social dimensions. A brief review of the process of some of these developments indicates major innovations in issues such as: settlement patterns, progress of arts, architecture and urban planning methods as well as other general transformations such as the reinforcement of social hierarchy, reestablishment of a centralized political system and economic developments. Identifying the roots of at least parts of these changes requires a research into the early stages of Sassanid activities in Fars region which is considered as the place of origin for Sassanid dynasty and state keeping its significance as the cradle of the Sassanid dynasty until its demise.



Map7. Sassanian Empire – a map of the cites and borders, Ref: J.Nokandeh archive

The area called as the Sassanid archaeological landscape including Firuzabad, Bishapur and Sarvestan districts in the centre of Fars Province of Iran, is actually the nucleus of lands where some of the most original innovations of the Sassanid civilization has materialized in the fields of: land use, special settlement pattern, urban planning, architecture and monumental iconography. The landscape contains a variegated set of urban structures, castles, palaces, outstanding monumental buildings, inscriptions and other relevant relics forming and evolving over a span of 400 years. Briefly, formation, evolution and continuation of some of the civilizational traditions of the cultural domain of Iran have occurred in this background and has albeit partially continued until present day.



Map8.location of Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars region, Ref:SALF base archive

From the beginning of the third century A.D., the domination of the Parthian dynasty over some districts of Fars area started to decline. As for the good relationship between Papak the Sassanid and the family ruling in Estakhr, his son Ardashir was appointed as the *argbod* of Darabgird. A little later Ardashir managed to take over some of the positions of local rulers of Fars, then revolting against the governor of Estakhr, Ardashir took his place. Later he succeeded in conquering other districts and towns adjoining Fars area and expanded his authority. Eventually he managed to defeat Ardavan the fifth who was the last Parthian king in Hormozdgan Plain and founded the Sassanid Empire in 224 A.D.

Seemingly the first innovations of Ardashir had already begun before subduing Ardavan while rising to power. Since after searching for an appropriate place, he tried to operationalize his innovative programs in Firuzabad Plain and its adjacent districts by founding the city of Ardashir khurreh and by building the castle of Qaleh Dokhtar. Actually this was the starting point for Sassanid architecture and urban planning developments. The most important effects of Ardashir's activities in the social life sphere of Iranian ethnic groups were the launching of a wide-scale process of urbanization and urban planning. Although cities such as Malyan, Susa, Ekbatana, etc. did exist under the rule of Achaemenid

and Parthian dynasties, they were not preplanned. As a matter of fact founding cities such as Ardashir khurreh and later Vah Ardashir, Bishapur, Jundi-shapur, Ivan-e Karkha and scores of other towns sped up the rate of urbanization in Iran; subsequently leading to other substantial advances in the development of Persian professions and arts. Ardashir khurreh was designed as a city in true sense of the word because it consisted of various urban sections such as administrative, residential and religious districts as well as streets. Within the system devised by Ardashir, the royal palace was located outside the city but near to it; a tradition that was pursued by other Sassanid kings as well.



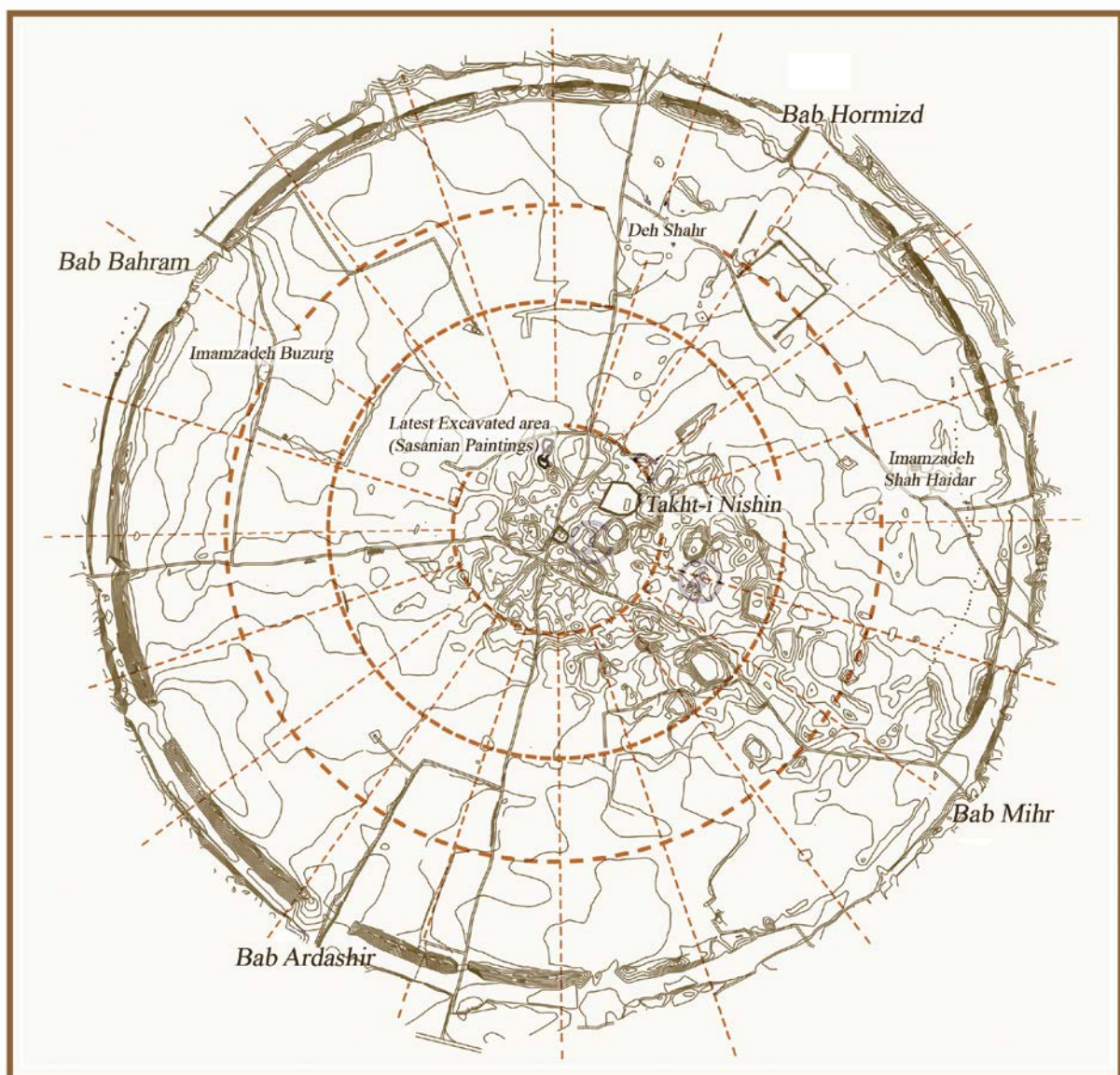
Aerial map3. Aerial view of Ardashir Khurreh, Ref: Zakarya Valaei,(urban planning in ancient Persia,2011)

Among the main characteristics of Iranian cities under the Sassanid reign is the preparation of a preplanned urban structure and form. This can be seen in only a few other episodes of Iranian history on a limited scale. But within the Sassanid landscape this resulted in the establishment of Ardashir Khurreh and Bishapur which were among the first Sassanid cities. These two cities and particularly the city of Ardashir Khurreh with its different plan show part of the ingenuity and intelligence of Sassanid urban planners.

Results obtained from archaeological investigations in Ardashir Khurreh indicate the astonishing precision of the circular plan of the city in which the intersection of its two main axis have a vertical angle of 90 degrees right in the middle of the city where a 30-meter tower called Tirbal stands.

At the ends of the two main axes of the city were located four gates called: Ardashir, Bahram, Hormoz and Mehrshahr gates (Huff, 1972:158). The city which has a diameter of two km is in

the shape of a wheel divided into twenty equally-sized zones by ten spokes which are street axes. In the dividing which had been done quite precisely, streets led into the margins of a city center circle which had a diameter of about 400 m. The city center was surrounded by an inner fence with the tall tower called Central Tower (*Tirbal*) standing at its focal point which was the center of the city map. Evidently the city center only housed religious, administrative, ceremonial and governmental buildings while ordinary people dwelled within the outer circle. Many of the concentric urban streets indirectly linked the central area with residential, administrative or commercial zones. A full review of all traces remaining from the circular fence of the city (city wall and ditch) and the intra-city circles showed that all of their focal points converged on the center of the tower-like structure.

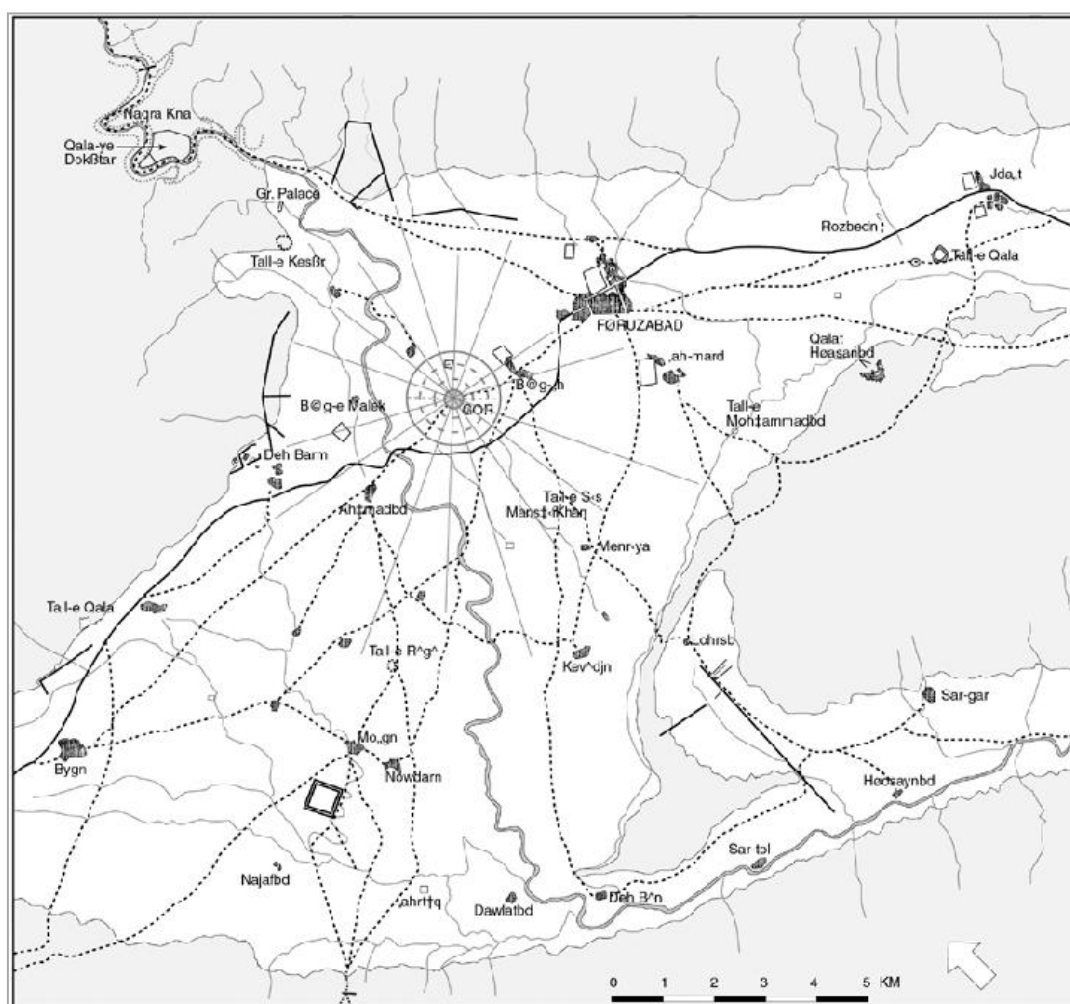


Map9. Plan of the circular city of Ardashir khurreh, Ref: SALF base archive

Also from a conceptual point of view, the circular plan of Ardashir khurreh had been calculated exactly on the basis of Ardashir's ideas about the running of his newly-established

government. The urban division system based on circles and radius branching out of a focal point symbolized a central government with the king at its center and other echelons of the society at various levels around it. As a matter of fact, Ardashir desired to embody his intention for establishing a powerful and centralized government (unlike the decentralized government of the Parthian dynasty) by founding a city and by its spatial dividing. It seems the circular shape of Ardashir khurreh later served as a prototype for other round cities at the time of the Sassanid and Islamic rule such as Vah-Ardashir, Baghdad and Darabgird.

In addition to the establishment of Ardashir khurreh city, a land use system was introduced in its vicinity fully harmonious with urban divisions and the geometrical pattern of the city. The system covered the entire plain like a spider web with Ardashir khurreh at its centre. In fact the circle was a polygonal with an approximate diameter of 7.5 km evidently some works attributed to Ardashir in the book titled: “the Deeds of Ardashir Pabagan” are actually his amazing operations in Firuzabad Plain. Later historians exaggerated the events and fabricated epical stories but in fact some of these tales are rooted in real actions.



Map10. The land division system near the city of Ardashir khurreh in Firuzabad Plain, Ref: <http://www.iranicaonline.org>

The urban planning process initiated by Ardashir was continued by his son and successor Shapur the first in Bishapur. But although Bishapur has a geometrical pattern similar to Ardashir khurreh, it is not circular. Seemingly after Ardashir, cities were constructed based on a grid plan which is rectangular instead of circular. Probably Bishapur was the first city of this kind during the Sassanid reign.



Photo 25. Coin of Ardashir I and Shapur I, Ref: SALF base archive

Studies reveal that Bishapur had an area of 155 acres with four gates in the middle of each one of its sides. From the four gates of the city, two main streets extend which cross each other at a right angle at the center of the city. There is no doubt that the grid plan of Bishapur indicates the influence of the extended relations between Iran and Rome in the early Sassanid era. However contrary to dense Greek and Roman cities in which homes were built near each other, they stood quite separate from each other in Bishapur and seemingly had gardens surrounding them (Grishman 1975).



Photo 26. Aerial view of Bishapur, Ref: SALF base archive



Photo 27. Commemorative columns of Bishapur, Ref: SALF base archive



Photo 28. Decorative mosaic from Bishapur, Ref: R.Grishman 1956



Photo 29. Mosaic *ayvan* of the Fire temple/Bishapur, Photo by: B. Sedighi

In addition to the general plan of the city, some other effects of the Roman urban planning and art are visible in Bishapur among which the most important cases are commemorative columns at the intersection of two main streets of the city, the use of mosaic decoration in some of buildings and the execution-style of reliefs of *Tang-e Chogan*.

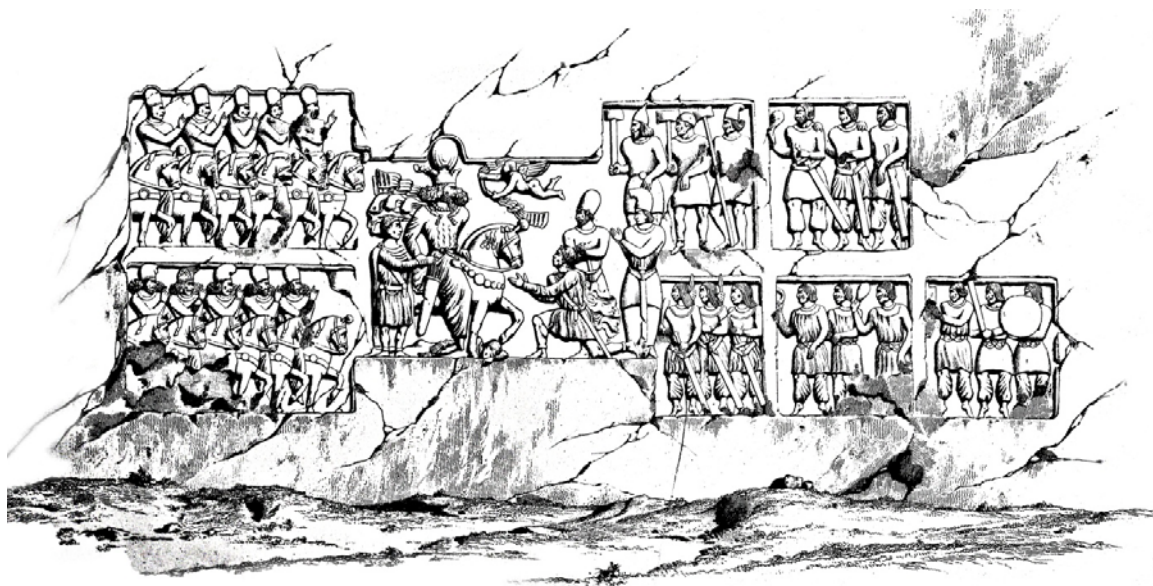


Photo 30. Sketch of Bishapur Relief by Flandin and Coste, 1854, Ref: SALF base archive



Photo 31. Victory of Shapur over Roman Emperors on the right bank of Shapur River in *Tang-e Chogan*, Photo by: B. Sedighi

The city was linked to the citadel from its eastern side with its entire structure built in three levels. New researches have revealed that the citadel has possibly been the seat of Shapur. Hence just like Ardashir khurreh, in Bishapur the royal residence was located outside the city and evidently the tradition continued throughout the Sassanid era. The system of a city with a nearby fortress became an indispensable part of the settlement and urban system of the Sassanid era at least in mountainous areas. In other words, recent archaeological investigations show that during the Sassanid era, next to each city and settlement built inside or on the edge of plains, a mountain castle has also been apparently constructed overlooking it.

In addition to urban planning and the major upheaval in land use, another thing contributing to the significance of Sassanid landscape from a civilizational point of view is the technical and architectural achievements of the early Sassanid era which mostly appeared in Firuzabad area. Innovations not only in architectural techniques and methods but also in the plan and composition of buildings initiated some of the architectural traditions of Iran lasting for several centuries.



Photo 32. Qaleh Dokhtar, a general view of the palace, Ref: base archive

Among the most novel architectural elements of Iran appeared for the first time within the Sassanid landscape and predominantly in Ardashir's palaces of Qaleh Dokhtar and Firuzabad and in his city Ardashir Khurreh are, dome-building upon a rectangular space in oriental style by innovating squinch, combination of the domed room with *ayvan*, innovation of *chahar-taqi* architecture (a square plan with four arches) as well as the final evolution of traditional lime and gypsum construction materials.

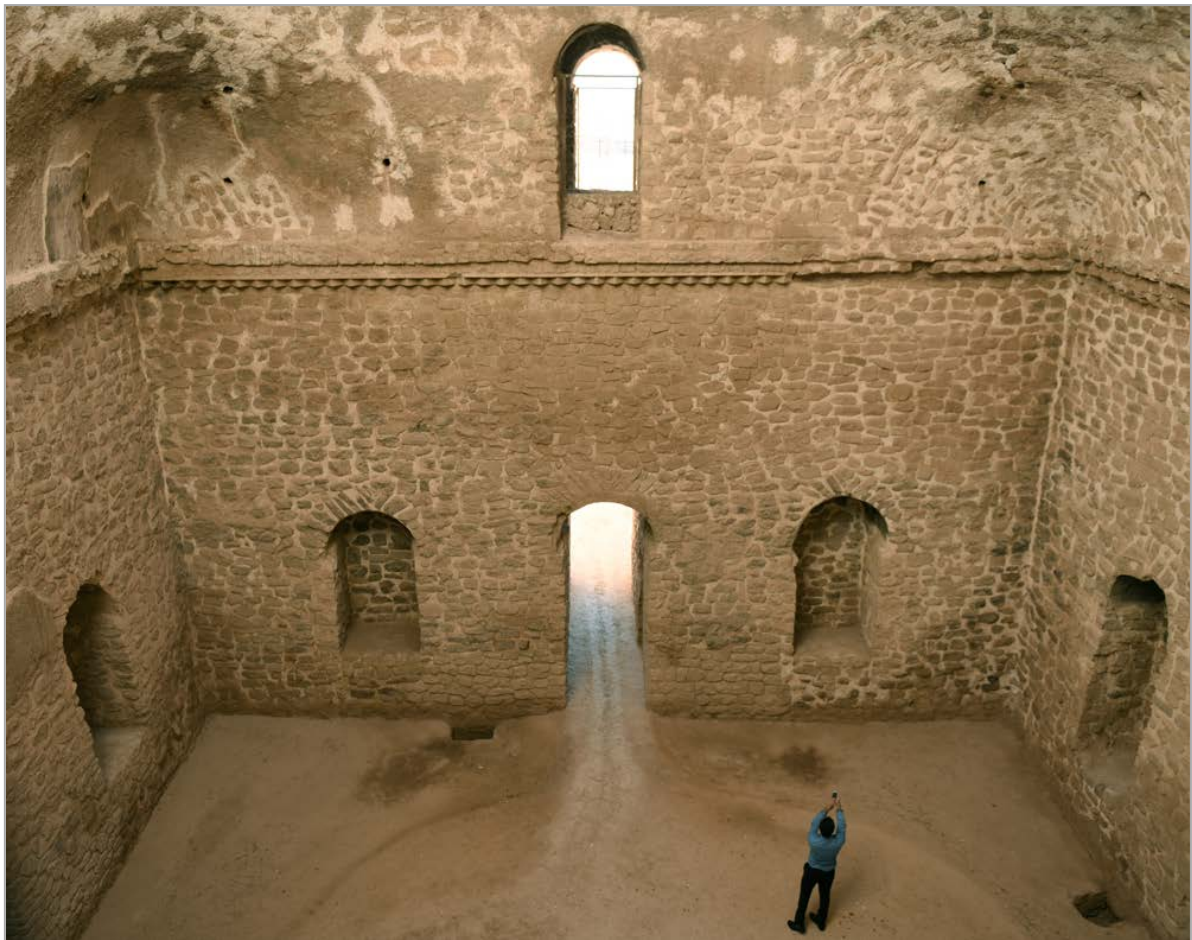


Photo 33. Usage of squinch in the central dome of Ardashir Palace, Ref: SALF base archive

Innovation of *chahar-taqi* architecture which has been used initially at a building called Takht-i Neshin in Ardashir khurreh later became the most outstanding architectural plan of the Sassanid era. Development of this specific form of buildings also known as *AtashKadeh* served as a pioneering work for the exclusively religious architecture of the Sassanid era. *chahar-taqi* has a direct link with the expansion and stabilization of Zoroastrianism under the Sassanid reign. The religious value of this type of plan which reaches its technical and architectural climax in Bisahpur was preserved during the Islamic era because of its usage in holy religious buildings such as some mosques and mausoleums. Furthermore, the main plan composition of Persian palaces and their outstanding characteristics appear for the first time at the so called *Atashkadeh* and Qaleh Dokhtar palaces. Among these characteristics the domed audience hall combined with an *ayvan*, symmetry on the vertical axis, a courtyard with *ayvan* as well as private and family chambers on upper floors of the palace can be stressed. Some artistic, architectural and ritual traditions of the Achaemenid and Parthian periods continued in the Sassanid landscape, the most significant of which are the tradition of making reliefs of king and Ahura Mazda such as rock-reliefs of coronation scene in Tang-i Ab and *Tang-e Chogan*, constructing the stone buildings, the continuation of some artistic elements of the Achaemenid era in monuments such as Takht-i Neshin, Ardashir's Palace and

the temple of *Anahita* in Bishapur as well as the continuance of building Palaces with three *ayvan* and the three-part façade with its decoration.



Photo 34. Monumental complex of Bishapur Fire temple, Photo by:S.H.Rashedi

Yet another characteristic quality of the landscape is the continuance of some innovated architectural traditions and methods during the middle and late Sassanid and also Islamic eras. General principles of using stone and gypsum construction materials, setting up *ayvans* with barrel vaults, domed rooms, utilizing and improving squinches and interior decoration of buildings went on in buildings such as Sarvestan monument until the first centuries of the Islamic rule. Plan and elements of Sarvestan building which is actually the continuum of architectural traditions of Sassanid landscape is similar to Ardashir Palace despite its seemingly different function.

As a matter of fact, plan division of Sarvestan building into various spaces has been imitated from Qaleh Dokhtar and Ardashir palaces although it is technically, structurally and architecturally more complicated than the other two.

Fundamental elements of Sarvestan monument architecture like division of the entrance facade into three *ayvans*, central domed room with utilizing and improving of squinch technique, interior decorations of the building, barrel-vaulted subsidiary halls, a courtyard with *ayvans* and peripheral rooms as well as using stone and gypsum construction materials, are similar to those of the above-mentioned palaces. But despite of all of these similar elements, the asymmetrical plan of Sarvestan monument is unique and in contrast with the fully symmetrical plan of Ardashir Palace. It can be claimed that the Sassanid architectural form and decoration debuting in Qaleh Dokhtar and Ardashir palaces built with inexpensive

and abundant indigenous construction materials have become richer and fuller in their evolutionary process and have been absorbed in the basics of the Islamic architecture of Iran and those lands under the influence of Persian cultural traditions. Therefore Sarvestan monument which shows a more sophisticated and more complete form than the Sassanid architecture can be considered as a link between the Sassanid architecture and different shapes of Islamic architecture of Iran.

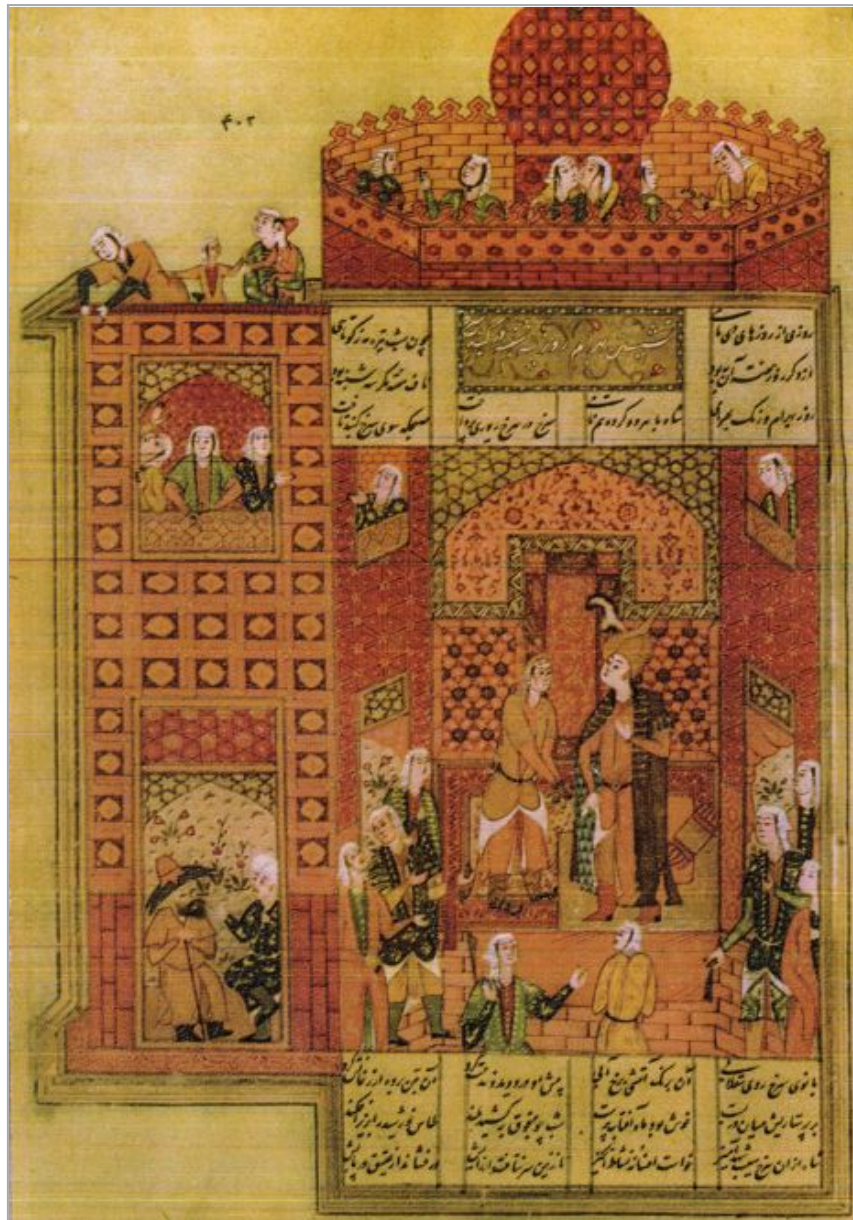


Photo 35. An Iranian miniature, showing a palace with privet rooms on top floor,
Ref: <http://www.bobforrestweb.co.uk>

Concerning the palaces, some main element of the Sassanid landscape palaces has served as a general model for palaces dating from the middle and late Sassanid periods as well as those belonging to the Islamic era. In some palaces belonging to the Abbasid period, for instance Jawsaq al-khaqani, the Balkowara, the Qasr al-Jass, and the Estabolat, there are evidence of

Chahar-taq appeared in the throne rooms. Additionally in Islamic miniatures, there exist images of the similar Sassanid palace architectural elements and their usage in palaces belonging to different governors and rulers of Iran in Islamic period. Among cases worth mentioning is the allocation of upper floors rooms of Ardashir Palace as living quarters for the king's family. In them iniatures of Islamic era, scenes illustrating the royal court as well as images of wives and family members of the king are seen who are watching the court secretly through special apertures which also exist in Ardashir Palace.



Photo 36. Aerial view of Ardashir Palace. Photo by:S.H.Rashedi

On the whole, developments occurring in Fars at the time of the Sassanid reign mostly began within the Sassanid landscape and their realization owes much to the presence of a centralized authority and an integrated management. Fars area had been divided into five

districts or *khurrehs* under the Sassanid rule including Ardashir khurreh and Bishapur district each with its own independent administrative organization. Data obtained from Sassanid seals present more evidence about the economic, financial and administrative system of these districts. The stability and peace produced by the centralized power lasted for several centuries until the end of the empire and led to security and a management discipline which in its turn resulted in the formation and growth of urban planning as well as cultural and civilizational elements particularly in the field of architecture and its affiliated arts. Following the arrival of Islam in Iran, the massive heritage was enriched by new ideas and continued in a way that its impact can still be felt today.



Map11.Internal division of Fars districts in Sassanian Period, Ref: SALF base archive

b) Justification for Criteria***Criterion (i): Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;***

The Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a masterpiece of human ingenuity due to its multiple innovations during the 3rd century of the first millennium AD. The most significant of these innovations includes the invention of the *chahar-taq* architecture, dome squinch which makes doming on a square-shaped space possible, combination of domed rooms with *ayvan* and symbolic construction of the round city of Ardashir khurreh as well as constructing the first grid city in the eastern style.

The principal architecture and urban elements created by Sassanian in a harmonious composition with their natural context made an outstanding example and magnificent landscape.

Criterion (ii): Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

The Sassanid archaeological landscape, in addition to being influenced by the Achaemenid and Parthian cultural and ritual traditions as well as their architectural and artistic approaches and cultural interchange with the Roman art, contemporaneous with it, had a significant impact on urban planning, architecture and artistic approaches of the Islamic era.

Criterion (iii): To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization that is living or which has disappeared;

By creating and keeping novel architectural styles and techniques, investiture reliefs, specific religious and royal buildings and symbolic city of Ardashir Khurreh, the Sassanid archaeological landscape provides evidence of some cultural traditions in architectural and urban planning knowledge, legitimization the power, ritual ceremonies and the hierarchy of power. Among these, the most important is the construction of religious *chahar-taqs*, which has a direct correlation with the expansion and stabilization of Zoroastrianism under the Sassanid rule. The religious value of this type of plan which reached its technical and architectural evolution in Bishapur continued during the Islamic era thanks to its usage in religious and holy buildings such as some mosques and tombs.

Criterion (iv): Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

The propagation of the dome on squinches above a square hall may be regarded as the most significant Sassanid landscape contribution to Middle-Eastern architecture. Its tectonic disposition remained basically unchanged throughout the Sassanid period and had a decisive impact on Islamic architecture. Also according to the archaeological evidence it is clear that the invention and developments of Sassanid *chahar-taq*, took place in the ruins Takht-i Nishin (TaKt-e Nešīn) in the city of Ardashir khurreh. Because of the structural and aesthetic properties of this monument, it became one of the most prominent elements in traditional Iranian architecture.

Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

The Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a perfect example of an efficient system of land use and exploitation of natural topography as well as creation of a cultural landscape in the Sassanid civilization. Using indigenous construction materials and based on optimal exploitation of earth topography such as mountains, plains and rivers, a diverse set of urban structures, castles, buildings, bas reliefs and other relevant monuments took shape within the landscape. Among major cases attesting to the importance of landscape and land use from the Sassanid viewpoint are: launching a land use model on the outskirts of cities aimed at farming expansion, direct and vital linkage of these cities to nearby rivers in order to water supply for agricultural lands and trenches due to security concerns, construction of royal and protective castles in strategic positions of mountains, usage of natural potentials of valleys and caves to make statues and monumental stone inscriptions as well as paying attention to the beautiful natural landscape surrounding the structures.

c) Statement of Integrity

The Sassanid landscape of Fars is among the first historical sites of Iran which has been given due consideration and legal protection by relevant institutions in particular: the Cultural Heritage Organization, the Environment Protection Organization, the Natural Resources Administration and the Agricultural ministry. In this regard, effective research, conservation, restoration and maintenance activities have been conducted whose value and significance has always been acknowledged by those living within the landscape. Despite the expansion of human settlements as well as the construction of access roads during the past decades which

were in proportion to requirements of these habitation centers, not only the historical environment but also its natural landscape remain relatively virgin because of the existence of a nomadic and rural population engaged in farming and animal husbandry activities that have optimal interaction with nature.

d) Statement of authenticity

The long previous experience of ICHHTO in scientific conservation and restoration of monuments, reliefs and historical cities of the Sassanid landscape of Fars has resulted in the prevention of any intervention in the plan or any change in historical construction materials and/or any relocation and transformation in the setting and natural environment surrounding the monuments in accordance with pertinent legal regulations. Participation of traditional master workers familiar with the workmanship of Sassanid buildings has led to the preservation of authenticity (SALF) thanks to the usage of traditional methods and production of indigenous construction materials.

e) Requirements for protection and management

At present the existence of Sassanid archaeological remnants, urban planning and historical architectural elements in their natural background has been the focal point of interdisciplinary researches and sciences. A brief review of the history of archaeological research, conservation and restoration in Iran shows that the Sassanid sites of Fars area were among the first research sites that went under conservation and restoration in Iran with the collaboration of international expeditions.

Due to the significance of preserving authenticity and integrity, all the necessary elements indicating the outstanding universal values (SALF) have been included in the nominated property. Beside the conservation laws and regulations of ICHHTO, the nominated property is under legal and popular tools for their protection including deployment of the Unit for Conservation of Cultural Heritage whose members are regarded as bailiffs as well as local associations of the cultural heritage which are consisted of representatives of the local community and the public. Aimed at raising the awareness of the indigenous community, regular periodical trainings are launched by ICHHTO. Also with the help of NGOs a public, legal and policing network has been organized for protection of the landscape. SALF Base which works under the auspices of ICHHTO is charged with the task of investigation, propagation, education, introduction, monitoring, management, planning, maintaining and coordinating with relevant organizations and local residents. SALF has been recognized and protected as a legal and scientific institution in the region. Scientific monitoring and reporting of the Base serves as a basis for decision-making and executive planning. Furthermore, forming a steering committee made of several stakeholders has guaranteed the integrated management of the region.

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