
Site of Xanadu (China) No 1389

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Site of Xanadu

Location

Zhenglan Qi and Duolun County, Xilingol Meng
Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region
The People's Republic of China

Brief description

The remains of Kublai Khan's legendary capital rise from broad grasslands at the south-eastern edge of the Mongolian Plateau. With hills to the north and river to the south, the Site of Xanadu follows *feng shui* principles and is at the same time surrounded by hilltop shrines of the Mongolian culture. As the place from which the Yuan empire (1271-1368) was extended across the whole of China and most of the known world, Xanadu witnessed a century's clashes and attempted assimilation between the nomadic and agrarian civilisations in northern Asia. The city hosted a major debate between Buddhism and Taoism in the 13th century, resulting in dissemination of Tibetan Buddhism over North-east Asia.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

28 March 2008

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

20 January 2011

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management and several independent experts.

Literature consulted (selection)

Chang, S., 'The morphology of walled capitals', in Skinner, G.W. (ed), *The City in Late Imperial China*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1977.

Dalrymple, W., *In Xanadu a Quest*, Flamingo, London, 1990.

Grousset, R., *Conqueror of the World*, translated by Denis Sinor and Marian MacKellar, Oliver & Boyd, London, 1967.

Ma, Y. (ed), *China's Minority Nationalities*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1994.

National Museum of Chinese History, *Exhibition of Chinese History*, Morning Glory Publishers, Beijing, 1998.

Shatzman Steinhardt, N., *Chinese Imperial City Planning*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1990.

Yule, H. (annotated translation), *The Travels of Marco Polo*, (1903) revised by Henri Cordier (1920), B & R Samizdat Express, Amazon Kindle edition.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 7 to 10 August 2011.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party

A letter was sent to the State Party on 9 September 2011 requesting clarification on boundaries of the nominated oboos, inventory, the extent of the protected area and day-to-day management. A response from the State Party was received on 22 October 2011 and the information has been incorporated in the relevant sections. A second letter was sent to the State Party on 5 December 2011 requesting clarification on the national protection procedures. A response to this dated 7 February 2012 was received from the State Party on 15 February 2012 and the information has been incorporated into relevant sections below.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

14 March 2012

2 The property

Description

The nominated property is located north of the Great Wall, about 260km north of Beijing. It covers a total of 25,131.27ha and comprises the cultural remains of Xanadu including the remains of the city, associated tombs, water control works in particular the Tiefan'gan Canal, as well as the city's cultural and natural setting. The cultural setting includes traditional oboo shrines of the Mongolian nomads located on surrounding hills. The natural setting includes grasslands (Xar Tala) and wetlands on either side of the Xandii Gool river to the south of the city site, high hills to the north (Luuii Dobqag) and the surrounding landscape of forest-grassland to the north-east and steppe to the north-west. The property is surrounded by a buffer zone of 150,721.96ha, determined

by the range of sight from the site of Xanadu City and the inclusion of environmental features demonstrating the typical landscape of the grassland south of the Mongolian Plateau.

Xanadu City

The City, located in accordance with *feng shui* principles with hills to the north and river to the south was designed by Kublai Khan's Chinese advisor, Liu Bingzhong in 1256 and comprises the Palace City, surrounded by the Imperial City laid out along a north-south axis, together with the Outer City to the west and north, the whole a square measuring 2,200 m along each side enclosing an area of about 484 ha. The remains of associated neighbourhoods are located outside the city gates on all four sides.

The Palace City was enclosed by defensive walls and moat and contains the remains of royal pavilions and palaces. The city walls are constructed of grey bricks facing both sides of a rammed loess (mud) core, with a base foundation of slate or schist 40 cm thick. The existing city wall is about 5 m high, 10 m wide at the base and 5 m at the top with round watchtowers at the four corners. The City was accessed by the main imperial gate (Yutian Gate) with its barbican in the centre of the south wall, and gates in the centre of the east and west walls, resulting in a 'T' shaped road system. At the crossing of the 'T' in the centre of the City are remains of a building identified as the Da'an Pavilion, the main palace containing the royal throne room where the emperor held court and received visitors. At the centre of the north wall there was no gate but remains of a large building identified as the Muqing Palace, the primary royal residence with banquet halls and many rooms. The remains of 40 other building complexes are scattered throughout the city. Relics of building materials including glazed tiles and carved marble figures unearthed during the archaeological program testify to the former splendour of the city.

The Imperial City encloses the Palace City, with its north (Furen) and south (Mingde) gates and barbicans on axis with the south gate of the Palace City and about four times the distance between their southern walls as between their north walls. The distances between the walls on east and west are about equal. There are two symmetrical gates in the east and west walls with barbicans outside each, turrets at the four corners and bastions at varied intervals, 6 on each wall. The walls are constructed of stone facings 0.5-0.6 m thick both sides of a rammed loess (mud) core. The existing wall is 6-7 m high, 12 m wide at the base and 5 m at the top. The existing bastions are about 5.8 m high and 12 m wide at the base, projecting outwards about 5.4 m from the city wall. The corner turrets have a diameter of 27 m at the base and 13.5 m at the top. The surrounding moat was for both defence and drainage. Along the eastern and southern walls the moat is 20-150 m wide; along the west and north it is 8-10 m wide. The width is related to drainage needs – the terrain being higher in the west and north. Historical documents record many temples and monasteries in the

Imperial City and remains of five major buildings have been investigated and identified. These include large temples in each of the four corners of the Imperial City in particular the Zen Buddhist Huayun Temple (1258) in the north-east and the Tibetan Buddhist lama temple Qianyuan Temple (1274) in the north-west. Marble stele, animal carvings, glazed tiles and stone column bases found during the archaeological investigations testify to the nature and quality of the former buildings here.

The Outer City extended 815-820 m to the west and north and was enclosed later than the imperial city. The wall is not defensive; its construction differs from that of the Imperial City being of unfaced rammed earth and the moat is only for drainage purposes and runs along outside the west and southern walls. The wall is 10 m wide at the base and 2 m at the top. There are two gates in the northern wall, one in the west and one in the south, each with a barbican. An east-west partition wall is built across the western part of the Outer City, starting 225 m north of the west gate and curving to the north and then across to meet the north-west corner of the Imperial City. The area south of this wall is known as Xinei; this is where the Mongolian people installed tents including the *ira ordo*, the tented palace (identified as the cane palace described by Marco Polo), where Kublai Khan held special feasts for the Mongolian tribes lasting three days (the *Jāma-yan*). Here also in the southern part the layout of streets and lanes indicates a high density area of numerous Han Chinese-style courtyard complexes. The northern area of the Outer City is Beiyuan, the garden where the Yuan Dynasty grew exotic and rare plants and cultivated unusual animals and birds. The large, stone courtyard investigated there is identified as the *terrarium* where rare animals and birds were kept.

Four neighbourhoods outside the Outer City extended about 2,000 m to the east, south, west and north, in total amounting to around 1,221 ha.

The East neighbourhood is identified as having accommodated Mongolian aristocrats, officials and pilgrims, with an irregular layout of building structures aligned east-west including government offices, large courtyards, warehouses and civilian houses. Two large granary/barns have been surveyed and identified as Guangji Barn and Taicang Barn. These stored grain brought from the farmlands of central China. The latter being close to Xanadu City has been identified as the special barn for the royal family and the court.

The South neighbourhood is on the bank of Xandii Gool river. It includes the main access road to the south (Mingde) gate of Xanadu City, along which the emperors and officials travelled from the southern capital Dadu, and is lined with the remains of Han style buildings. Relics unearthed include pottery and porcelain articles, wine jars and cups and indicate that these buildings were restaurants, inns, shops and other commercial establishments.

The West neighbourhood includes the main road west to Huanzhou Post house, Karakorum and Dadu across the Tiefan'gan Canal. This was the main arterial traffic and trade zone of Xanadu City, with remains of merchants' shops and stores. It includes the site of the large Wanying Barn on its northern side at the foot of Hadat Oboo hill, and remains of a strip of government offices along this northern side.

The North neighbourhood includes sites of barracks and small single buildings along the hillside to the north of Xanadu City, as well as the site of a large barn. Here (according to the historical record) were stationed 500 soldiers ready to escort the emperor. The eastern part of this neighbourhood subsequently became farmland and the remains are now indistinct.

Water control works

During the period of the Yuan Dynasty Xanadu suffered many floods, being located in a low-lying area which was essentially the drainage catchment for the north-western hills. The Tiefan'gan Canal was designed in 1298 by the Han Chinese engineer and hydraulics expert Guo Shoujing to collect the mountain torrents and channel them around the north-west of the North neighbourhood away from Xanadu City into the Xandii Gool river. Flood drainage channels and flood control dams were also built. The remains of the flood control dam run from the foot of Tiefan'gan Hill (also known as Hadat Oboo hill) to the foot of the mountain range north-east of Xanadu City. The existing part is 2-3.5 m high, 1,064 m long and 5.2-5.8 m wide at the base. It is faced with stone 0.6 m thick on both sides of a rammed loess core. The remains of a spillway 68 m wide have been identified 55 m north-east of the dam. A flood drainage channel running north-west to south-east connected to the dam 28 m north-east of the spillway, eventually discharging into Xandii Gool. A second dam was built north-east of and connecting with the first. A survey plan of the Tiefan'gan Canal was provided as part of the State Party's response to ICOMOS.

Tombs

Archaeological investigation around the site of Xanadu City has identified many tombs. These can be grouped in two categories: Han family tombs represented by the Tombs of Zhenzi Hill to the south-east of the city and tombs of Mongolian people represented by the Tombs of Modot, a group located 12 kilometres to the north-west of the City. The Zhenzi Hill group is the largest tomb group in the vicinity and comprises about 1,500 tombs distributed over an area of around 292 ha. The tombs are found in stone-built tomb shelters, 1-7 tombs to each shelter; most are rectangular vertical pit-tombs. Of the 198 tombs investigated, half contained burial objects including pottery identified as from known kilns, copper basins and mirrors, gold and silver ornaments, laquerwares, glass objects, wood and leather articles and coins.

The Tombs of Modot are distributed in two groups over an area of about 215 ha. Tombs here are not always found in

tomb shelters and most have been robbed out in the past. Some have poorly preserved wooden coffins, bound with iron hoops. Burial goods included livestock bones, mostly goat, and iron objects including swords, linchpins, stirrups and arrowheads, as well as copper mirrors, gold earrings, pearls, felt and silk.

Cultural setting

The Site of Xanadu is located in Zhenglan Qi (County), part of the Xilingol region where Mongolian nomadic traditions of Oboo worship, the Naadam Festival and other activities, are still maintained by the local population of herdsmen and stock breeders. Oboos are essentially stone cairns with a hollow space for offerings, usually marked with a tall pole and located on a hilltop. The poles originally held banners and marked the boundaries of nomadic tribal territories – hence 'Tiefan'gan' meaning 'iron banner pole'. Oboo worship is considered to be a form of Shamanism involving nature and ancestor worship, which was common to the grassland peoples of East Asia. Ceremonies are held once or twice a year in summer and/or autumn, when grass and water are plentiful. Rituals involve the sacrifice of an ox or lamb; fires of branches or manure, offerings of milk, fermented milk or cream or of precious objects such as jade, coins or beads.

Around the City of Xanadu are many oboos. Twelve representative oboos have been nominated as part of the cultural setting. These are named Baga Horhooi, Yulaantai, Ejen, Hadat, Modot, Yulaan, Eej, Qantu, Adatai, Uhrefin, Qagan and Holostai. Generally they are 35-45 m in diameter, cone shaped and 8-10 m high.

Natural setting

The topographical setting of Xanadu within the nominated property boundary comprises Luui Dobqag the main hill to the north, Big Oboo hill to the east, Holostai Oboo hill to the west and Xandii Gool river of the Luan River system flowing along the south with Nanping Hill south of the river. Xandii Gool is of great importance to the local herdsmen for its water, wetlands and the grassland flats either side known as Xar Tala (golden plain), named for the masses of golden Globeflower which cover it in July and August. The grassland includes sedge, dandelion, burnet and willow shrub. Other wild plants are peony, purple chrysanthemum, orchid, mushroom and wild leek, as well as over 200 kinds of medicinal herbs. Many species of wild animals and birds visit the river flats and the area is used for recreational purposes such as horse riding and hunting. The typical grassland species here and in the area north of the city site is represented by the *Stipa grandis* and Chinese *Aneurolepidium*. The grass is normally 30-50 cm high.

History and development

Following the unification of the Mongolian tribes under Genghis Khan as the Yeke Mongghol Ulus in 1206 and their subsequent military conquests and invasion of China, Kublai was appointed Khan in 1260 at the traditional Quriltai Assembly held in the city he had commissioned in 1256. Unlike his brother Ariq Böke, who unsuccessfully

challenged Kublai's election and wanted to preserve the Mongolian way of life without intermingling with other peoples, Kublai determined to establish a government in China administered and controlled from the cities and towns, following the Han Chinese feudal ruling system. Xanadu City, then known as Kaiping was strategically located near the borders of the Mongolian pastoral area with the residential agricultural area of the Han Chinese, on the route between the earlier Mongolian capital at Karakorum and Kublai's second capital, Dadu (Beijing), begun in 1267. In 1271 Kublai renamed the Yeke Mongghol Ulus as the Yuan Dynasty. From 1274, Xanadu became Kublai's summer capital, where he spent April to September each year with his civil and military officials, concubines and servants attending to political affairs and maintaining a presence in the Mongolian homelands. A detailed list of the dates of construction of various temples and palaces extracted from the historical records is included in the nomination dossier. Major ethnicities in Xanadu City included the Mongol, Han, Tibetan, Huihui and Uygur people. The primary religion of the Mongolian tribes at the time of Genghis Khan's conquests was Shamanism, with a couple of tribes following Nestorian Christianity. After entering central China, Mongolian leaders began to accept Buddhism and Taoism, and after their expedition to the west had contact with Islam. Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian Temples as well as mosques are recorded in Xanadu. Evidence of the many different cultures and ethnicities has been unearthed during archaeological excavations. This includes stone tablets, coffin covers, coins and other objects inscribed in Mongolian, Tibetan, Arabic, Sanskrit, and Chinese characters.

The city became an important stopping place on the silk route, receiving many foreign envoys and, among them Marco Polo in 1275-1292, who recorded his experiences in *The Travels of Marco Polo* and opened the eyes of the world to China and the marvels of Xanadu. Several emperors were enthroned there, and it hosted a major debate between Buddhism and Taoism in 1258, following which Tibetan Buddhism became the primary faith of the Chinese ruling class for six centuries. In 1358 the city suffered major damage during the peasant war at the end of the Yuan dynasty and in 1368 it was conquered by the Ming and destroyed. The city served the Ming as a military post; the military facilities were kept in repair but the palaces were not. By 1436 the city was abandoned and the surrounding meadowland was used by Mongolian nomads. In 1627 the area came under the control of Ligdan Khan and was used by the Chahar people until they were moved out by the Qing government in 1675.

Modern accounts of the site of Xanadu City begin with that of a Russian traveller who visited Mongolia in 1892-3 and gave a description of it in his journal *Mongolia and Mongolians*. Other travellers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries who recorded their descriptions of the site included Stephen Wootton Bushell, English envoy to China; Lawrence Impey, an American geographical scholar; and Kuwabara Jitsuzo, a Japanese traveller.

The Site of Xanadu has been protected since the People's Republic of China was established in 1949; in 1964 it was included as a key heritage site under the autonomous region protection, and archaeological work was begun. In 1988 the Site was declared a State Priority Protected Site, and was included on China's Tentative List for World Cultural Heritage nomination in 1996. Since the 1990s investigations have included mapping, aerial photography and archaeological excavations. Protective measures have included removal of the people inhabiting the site, recovering vegetation and repairing the enclosure.

3 Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

The nominated property is compared in the nomination dossier with the earlier Mongolian capital site of Karakorum (1235), inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004 as part of the Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape (criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv)); other Yuan city sites including Dadu City (1267), now absorbed into the 'Forbidden City' of Beijing inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004 as part of the Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in Beijing and Shenyang (criteria (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv)), and Zhongdu City (1307); as well as nomadic capital cities of earlier dynasties; Shangjing of the Liao (918); Zhongjing of the Liao (1007); Nanjing of the Liao (938); Shangjing of the Jin (12th C); Zhongdu of the Jin (1151); Heishui of the Western Xia (11thC); Tongwan of the Daxia (413) and Ancient Beiting of the Uygurs (701). The comparative analysis covers city roles and functions, planning, cultural and natural setting, time and scope of operation, cultural exchanges, archival records and state of preservation. The State Party argues that only Xanadu manifests two kinds of civilisation (Han Chinese agrarian and Mongolian nomadic) in a unique planning model in north Asia, and witnessed the transition from nomadic military life to the feudal ruling system of a grassland civilisation. It is also argued that the site in its natural and cultural setting is in a state of preservation such that this can easily be understood. The location of the city in accordance with *feng shui* principles can be perceived, as well as its unique identity as a Chinese style city located according to the Mongolian nomadic lifestyle of living where there is water and grass, accommodating the various activities of the Mongolian nobles such as hunting, oboo worship and festivals. As well it is argued that Xanadu had a profound and long-lasting influence on relations between east and west, and has inspired literary and other creative works through contemporary accounts of life in the City and subsequent 19th and early 20th Century reports of the abandoned site.

ICOMOS notes that the comparison between the plans of the Xanadu and Karakorum sites can be easily seen to demonstrate the first point. Whereas the layout of Xanadu of three cities one inside the other (Palace, Imperial and Outer City) is shown to be typical by the mid-13th Century of Chinese imperial urban plans, that of Karakorum has a walled palace area enclosed within the Mongolian quarter,

with a separate walled area joined to the Mongolian quarter in the south for Han artisans and craftsmen. It is noted that such double cities were predominant for Liao and Jin capital builders, where the specific purpose was to segregate the ruling dynasty and its race from non-native subjects. Excavations of the Xanadu site have indicated that Mongolians and Han Chinese occupied the Xinei area of the Outer City together, in addition to the neighbourhoods outside the four city gates, supporting the view that there was some assimilation of these two ethnicities at Xanadu. The City can be seen as an important centre of biculturalism, with a cross-fertilisation of ideas that enabled the Yuan Dynasty to unify the whole of China and make it part of an even broader empire that at its height stretched from the Qipchak Steppe to the East China Sea.

ICOMOS notes also that Xanadu had a role in the dissemination of Buddhism across North-east Asia through hosting the influential debate between Buddhism and Taoism in 1258.

The nominated property is also compared in the nomination dossier with other properties of nomadic nationalities worldwide, including Hortobágy National Park in Hungary, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999 (criteria (iv) and (v)), and grasslands in Slovenia and Argentina, and concludes that these differ in terms of age, geological location, type of grassland, mode of husbandry and religion. The nominated property also differs in terms of role and function from the Mongolian Sacred Mountains site, which is included in the Tentative List of Mongolia as a defined site of worship since the time of Genghis Khan.

ICOMOS notes that the comparative analysis with other capital cities of the Mongolian Empire could have been expanded to examine the uniqueness of the Mongolian-Chinese fusion versus other Mongolian fusions by comparison with Eurasian urban centres modified or rebuilt following conquest by the Mongols. The key example would be Samarkand (World Heritage listed 2001; criteria (i), (ii), (iv)), which was rebuilt as the capital of the Timurid state under Tamerlane (c 1336-1405). However ICOMOS considers that the Outstanding Universal Value of Samarkand does not diminish the case for Xanadu because Xanadu clearly stands out from the points of view of (a) clearly exhibiting the interaction between the Mongolian nomadic culture and the Chinese agrarian cultures, as well as having a profound impact on global cultural trends; (b) bearing holistic witness to Mongolian cultural traditions as they have evolved over time, in both material remains and living associated traditions; (c) demonstrating the characteristics and lifestyle of the Yuan dynasty, and (d) profoundly influencing the very nature and function of cities across Eurasia.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- Xanadu City site is the best preserved capital with the oldest, unique layout, and was the longest in use among Yuan capital cities;
- The Site bears witness to the unique fusion of Mongolian and Han cultures through its bicultural urban pattern and the unearthed cultural relics;
- It is the only intact evidence for the rise and fall of a special political system and social structure (the Yuan Dynasty);
- It is the place where Kublai Khan rose to power and from where he conquered China and extended the Mongolian empire across north Asia;
- Through contemporary accounts and the reports of later travellers, Xanadu inspired influential literary and other creative works;
- The religious debate that took place in Xanadu resulted in Tibetan Buddhism being favoured across north-east Asia.

ICOMOS considers that this justification is appropriate because the nominated property exhibits a remarkable and unique attempt to assimilate the nomadic Mongolian and Han Chinese cultures, and was the base from where Kublai Khan established the Yuan Dynasty. Over a century this dynasty unified China and extended its empire across Asia. ICOMOS considers that the religious debate between Buddhism and Taoism, which took place here, resulted in the dissemination of Tibetan Buddhism over North-east Asia, a cultural (religious) tradition still practised in many areas today.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The State Party states that the nominated property integrally preserves the overall urban plan and city site of Xanadu built and used in the 13th and 14th centuries including the Palace City, Imperial City and Outer City which together display the traditional urban planning of central China and arrangements for Mongolian tribal meetings and hunting; the neighbourhoods outside the gates, Tiefan'gan Canal and the Tombs, all within their natural and cultural environment. The latter preserves the natural elements crucial for the siting of the city – mountains to the north and water to the south, together with the four existing types of grassland landscape, especially the Xar Tala Globeflower plain.

In response to ICOMOS' query re inclusion of 9 oboos within the property boundary and 3 in the buffer zone, the State Party stated that while the oboos as a phenomenon make the setting of the property different from other ancient city sites, their date of origin has not been established. They themselves are not treated as part of the nominated World Heritage property but are protected at county level. Regarding other tomb areas mentioned in

the nomination dossier, the State Party responded that the Tombs of Woniushi located inside the western edge of the buffer zone and Tombs of Yangqun Temple located 70km north-west outside the buffer zone are not included in the nominated property because of their poor state of conservation and the absence of sufficient historical evidence. Woniushi tombs are protected at Qi (county) level and Yangqun Temple Tombs are protected at Autonomous Region level.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property adequately expresses the values of the site of Xanadu. The buffer zone is sufficiently large to protect the vulnerable grassland and its related mixed forest-grassland landscape. Visually the site of Xanadu and other property components are well integrated with their natural surroundings of mountain tops and grassland landscape.

Authenticity

The State Party states that the authenticity of the site of Xanadu has been proved by both archaeological excavation and historical records. The property is an authentic representation of the interchange between Mongolian and Han people in terms of capital design, historical layout and building materials. The Tombs authenticate the historical claims concerning the life of both Mongolian and Han people in Xanadu. Apart from repairs to the Mingde Gate and the east wall of the Imperial City, there has been minimal intervention in the structure. The geographical environment and grassland landscape are intact and still convey the environmental setting and spatial feeling of the grassland capital.

ICOMOS considers that materials and records held in the site museum and archive offices together with the visible features substantiate the claim to authenticity and convey the values of the property. The spatial layout of the city is marked by mounds along the alignment of walls and foundations of gates, temples and monasteries and the remains of walls display evidence of materials and construction methods. Minor repairs to the Mingde Gate site and a section of the eastern Imperial City wall have used bricks and stones from the original structure, but climate conditions are extreme and attention is required to consolidation rather than reconstruction, particularly following archaeological excavations. The State Party has adopted a minimal approach to excavation within the property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi).

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;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the Site of Xanadu has integrated the nomadic life style of northern grassland Mongolian people with the settlement-choosing custom of the agrarian Han ethnicity in Central China, which favours location with 'mountains in the north, water the south', demonstrating the mutual influence and integration of lifestyles and values of different civilisations in the process of conquest and assimilation. Ideas, institutions, religions, and economic policies born from such assimilation have deeply influenced the northern grasslands, the vast land of ancient China, and beyond.

ICOMOS considers that the site location and environment of the nominated property exhibit influence from both Mongolian and Han Chinese values and lifestyles. The city site exhibits an urban planning pattern indicative of integration of the two ethnicities. From the combination of Mongolian and Han ideas and institutions the Yuan Dynasty was able to extend its control over an extremely large part of the known world at that time. The comparative analysis shows that the Site of Xanadu is a unique example of an integrated city plan involving different ethnic communities. The fusion of belief systems resulted in changes to the form and function of cities from Xanadu to Dadu (Beijing) and across East Asia to Korea and Japan. Xanadu's location on the silk route was conducive to the exchange of human values.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

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

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Xanadu has witnessed the rise and fall of a colossal regime and a unique cultural phenomenon lasting for more than a century, fostered by three historic forces contradictive yet interactive to each other: namely the supreme rule of the proud conqueror, the assimilation and conversion to the culture and political system of the conquered, and the determination and effort of the conqueror in adhering and maintaining the original cultural traditions. Meanwhile, the site of Xanadu also presents the earliest, the longest in use, the most specially structured and the best preserved of all the capital cities of the Yuan dynasty. Being characteristically located in the transitional zone between the agricultural region of Central China and the northern area of the Asian pastoral regions, it reflects a unique biculturalism, which came into being during the clashes and fusion of nomadic and agrarian civilisations, and faded as the nomadic people reverted to their traditional life.

ICOMOS considers that the criterion is satisfied in terms of the Site of Xanadu being exceptional testimony to the civilisation of the Yuan Dynasty.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been demonstrated.

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;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Xanadu is an outstanding example which has incorporated the quintessence of agricultural civilisation and nomadic cultures, illustrating a significant stage during which Kublai Khan exercised dynastic administration, and ruled an agrarian ethnicity on behalf of a nomadic one. The ruling strategies have generated an urban pattern featuring the coexistence and fusion of nomadic and farming cultures, which makes it of unique significance in the history of the world civilisation and that of urban planning and design.

ICOMOS considers that the site location and environment of the nominated property together with its urban pattern demonstrates a coexistence and fusion of nomadic and farming cultures. The urban layout including the Beiyuan garden within the Outer City and the grasslands and wetlands surrounding the city combines Han city planning with features necessary to the lifestyle of the Yuan dynasty. In that sense the Site of Xanadu is an outstanding example of an urban layout that illustrates a significant stage in human history.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (vi): be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Xanadu is the place where Kublai Khan founded the Yuan Empire which marked the history of Eurasian civilisation in the 13th century; the city was directly connected with *The Travels of Marco Polo*, which heralded Europe's Age of Discovery. It witnessed the great debate between Buddhism and Taoism in the 13th century, an event that changed religious history in Asia. A living tradition of nomadic culture, 'Oboo Worship', is still present at the site of the nominated property. And as the subject of a classic poem, Xanadu the 'pleasure dome' had had an extensive influence on literature, music, architecture and other artistic fields of the world.

ICOMOS notes that the wonders of Xanadu became known to the West due to its location on the silk route and through the works of Marco Polo, which subsequently inspired many creative works including Coleridge's poem, but does not consider that this is an appropriate justification for this criterion. On the other hand ICOMOS considers that the hosting of the religious debate between Buddhism and Taoism is an appropriate justification. The remains of the Huayan Temple where

the religious debate took place can still be seen today in the north-east corner of the Imperial City.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been demonstrated.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi) and conditions of authenticity and integrity and that Outstanding Universal Value has been demonstrated.

Description of the attributes

The attributes carrying the Outstanding Universal Value of the property are:

- The geographical and natural setting demonstrating the traditional Chinese *feng shui* location of mountains to the north and river to the south, together with the grassland and wetland environment necessary for the Mongolian way of life;
- The city layout and excavated temples and other structural remains demonstrating the integration of Han and Mongolian settlement and the many religions accommodated in the city;
- The Tombs demonstrating Han and Mongolian culture;
- The remains of the Tiefertan Canal and other structural remnants demonstrating flood control measures to protect the city and neighbourhoods;
- The associated spiritual context of the site of Xanadu, expressed by the continuing traditions of shamanist worship and its reference to Tibetan Buddhism;
- The remains of the Huayan Temple documenting the religious debate held at Xanadu.

4 Factors affecting the property

Development pressures

The Site of Xanadu is 20 km from Shangdu Town and is not threatened by urbanisation. In May 2010 the estimated population within the property was 5,300 people. No-one lives within the city site or tombs area. The Wuyi Breeding Farm within the property boundary accommodates 1,150 people and is indicative of pressures on the grassland resources of the site. Negative effects are garbage and animal waste. Other pressures relate to mineral resources. Some parts of the Wuyi Breeding Farm have been relocated to better protect the natural setting of the property. The State authority has also undertaken vegetation restoration; reclamation of former agricultural land and fenced the State protected area of the property and the Tombs to secure them against animal incursions and tomb robbery.

ICOMOS considers that protection plans involving the local community of the Wuyi Breeding Farm need to be developed with a view to protecting the ecological system and ensuring sustainable development. Fencing needs to

be extended in order to protect the site and its environment from animal grazing.

Tourism pressures

The State Party considers that the property, as a large archaeological site, faces great pressure from visitors. Numbers have increased in recent years and totalled 250,000 in 2008; 70% arrived during the three months of June, July and August. Growth in terms of tourist service projects is anticipated and it is proposed to put controls on tourist activities.

ICOMOS considers that a tourism management strategy needs to be prepared by the State Party, which considers environmental protection as described below under Management.

Environmental pressures

Overuse of underground water and desertification are the primary threats to the property, in particular the wetland and grassland landscape. The People's government of Zhenglan Qi has instigated measures to limit extraction of underground water and overgrazing of the property and buffer zone. The condition of the grassland is monitored, including its botanical composition and for the presence of pests. Air and water quality is also monitored.

ICOMOS considers that maintenance of the wetland and grassland setting is key to retention of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The further installation of scientific research facilities to monitor overall environmental condition and desertification is considered necessary.

Natural disasters

The Site of Xanadu is in a stable geological situation without harmful earthquakes or floods in recent times. Grass fires, forest fires, rat and insect infestation are the primary threats. The local government fire-fighting command of Zhenglan Qi has instigated fire-prevention programmes including regular patrols, fire monitoring and institutionalising fire prevention with research on rescue and protection measures and training.

ICOMOS considers that given the vast size of the property, more efficient fire-fighting equipment is required.

Impact of climate change

The climate of the site in the 13th century was quite different from today. For instance, Tiefan'gan Canal has lost its function of flood control and waterway due to climate change. The annual rainfall now is less than 500mm.

ICOMOS considers that the reduction in rainfall is contributing to the reduction in underground water and desertification of the site.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are animal grazing, tourism and desertification.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The nominated property boundary covers all the cultural remains of Xanadu, as well as the natural environmental components closely related to the Site. The property boundary links natural terrain features including a number of hilltops marked with oboos running from Tumet oboo south of the city north-west to Yalaantai, Ejen, Holostai and Qagan, passing to the north of the Tombs of Modot, across to a hilltop east of Eej Oboo and then southwards to the dam of Xandii Gool, then Zhenzi Hill passing east of the Zhenzi Hill Tombs to the main peak of South Battery Hill.

ICOMOS notes that 3 of the 12 oboos named in the description of the nominated property are not included in the property boundary but are located in the buffer zone. The State Party advised in response to ICOMOS' request for clarification on the boundaries of oboos in the buffer zone that the oboos are not part of the attributes constituting the Outstanding Universal Value but constitute the cultural setting.

ICOMOS considers that the property boundary contains the significant elements expressing the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, and possibly includes additional tombs not yet discovered.

The buffer zone was designed to protect the geographical and environmental features demonstrating the typical landscape south-east of the Mongolian Plateau. The boundary of the buffer zone contains the visual scope from the Site of Xanadu and coincides with the extent of the water catchment of the surrounding landforms.

ICOMOS notes that Shangdu town is located in the south-west corner of the buffer zone and considers that it is important that adequate controls are in place over development of this town.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of its buffer zone are adequate.

Ownership

The area of Xanadu city and its neighbourhoods is part of a total of 16,556.30 ha State-owned land in Zhenglan Qi. The Tombs of Modot are on 3,667.69 ha of Collective-owned land in Zhenglan Qi. The Tombs of Zhenzi Hill are on 4,838.86 ha of Collective-owned land in Duolun County.

Zhenglan Qi and Duolun County are both part of Xilingol Meng, a province of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China.

Protection

Legal Protection

The nomination dossier lists the laws which protect cultural relics in China: Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics (promulgated in 1982, amended in 1991, 2002, 2007); Regulation for the Implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics (2003), and Regulations of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on Heritage Conservation (promulgated in 1990, amended in 1993 and 2005). The Site of Xanadu was declared a State Priority Protected Site in 1988; this comprises a limited area covering Xanadu city and its neighbourhoods and the Tiefan'gan Canal ('Convergence map of regional division and conservation Master Plan of the nominated property', Fig. 1.e.14). In response to ICOMOS' letter of 5 December 2011 requesting clarification of national protection of the whole nominated site, the State Party has advised in a letter dated 7 February 2012 that the boundaries of the Protection Area of the Site of Xanadu will be expanded to the boundaries of the nominated property and include the Tombs of Modot, Tombs of Zhenzi Hill and 12 Oboo sites, and will be formally submitted by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China (SACH) to the State Council of China in 2012 for approval as a National Priority Protected Cultural Heritage Site. Currently a designated area including the Tombs of Zhenzi Hill is protected at the level of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People's Government; a designated area including the Tombs of Modot and the 12 designated Oboo sites are protected at the level of Zhenglan Qi.

The grassland surrounding the protected site comes under the Grassland Law of the People's Republic of China (promulgated in 1995, amended in 2002), and Grassland Regulations of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (promulgated in 1984, amended in 2004). These cover stock levels, reclamation, quarrying, vegetation, hunting, use for tourism purposes, rat infestation and motor vehicle access.

The legal instruments at municipal and local level are designed to ensure effective preservation and scientific planning at the same time ensuring the economic development and amelioration of the living conditions of the people. They comprise administrative regulations which cover grassland, cultural relics, heritage conservation and pasture protection. A key instrument is the Regulations on the Protection and Management of the Site of Xanadu established by the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People's Government in 2010. These cover the whole nominated property area and buffer zone and refer to the Conservation and Management Plan for the Site of Xanadu (Article 7).

ICOMOS considers that all components of the nominated property will have cultural heritage protection at the highest level when the national heritage protection procedures described in the State Party's letter dated 7 February 2012 are complete.

Effectiveness of protection measures

ICOMOS considers that local herdsmen need to be made more aware through public education of the regulatory controls and the need for protection of the site and grassland.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that legal protection will be adequate when the national heritage protection procedures described in the State Party's letter dated 7 February 2012 are complete. This needs to be supplemented with public awareness programmes.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

Much scholarly research has been undertaken on the Site of Xanadu, including archaeological research and conservation reports as listed in the nomination dossier and provides a basis for the conservation, interpretation and presentation of the property. In the 1930s the site was surveyed by the Tokyo Archaeological Society of Japan and the report was published in 1941. The archive and information centre containing this and other reports and conservation plans is located with the Xanadu Museum at the offices of the People's Government of Zhenglan Qi in Shangdu town, 20km from the Site. In response to ICOMOS' request for clarification on the inventory of archaeological components, the State Party provided detailed information and examples of sections of it translated into English. The inventory covers the foundation sites of buildings in the Palace city, Imperial city, Outer city, neighbourhoods, tombs and water control structures. ICOMOS considers that the inventory is an excellent record of the Site as a basis for monitoring and any future conservation programs.

Present state of conservation

The underground remains of Xanadu city and its neighbourhoods are covered by grassland and in a stable condition. The Tombs of Modot and Zhenzi Hill are similarly protected by vegetative cover and are in good condition. Archaeological excavations have been backfilled and the unearthed artefacts have been removed to the site museum. The protected areas of the city site and the tombs sites have been fenced off and grazing is prohibited inside the enclosure. The sections of standing structure at the Mingde Gate and east wall of the Imperial City were exposed, repaired and reinforced in 2002. The natural setting is generally in good condition with restrictions on over-grazing and measures to alleviate desertification.

ICOMOS notes that maintenance of the grassland cover and vegetation is essential to the conservation of the site and prevention of soil erosion. Some further small scale archaeological excavation is required in order to expand understanding of the site. Preservation of all the historical information after archaeological excavation could be enhanced through co-operation with international experts on stabilisation techniques. It would be advantageous to digitise information archives and exhibitions about the Site for access via the web site.

Active Conservation measures

Apart from site monitoring in accordance with the Conservation and Management Plan, some small scale excavations are planned on critical sites within the Palace City and Imperial City. A surveillance centre and interpretation facility is in operation at the Zhenzi Tombs to protect against tomb robbery. A study of the oboos is planned with a view to their conservation.

Detailed measures for the conservation of the cultural relics were previously covered in the Master Plan for the Protection of the Site of Xanadu (2008) prepared for the Zhenglan Qi Administration of Cultural Heritage of the Site of Xanadu in association with addition of the site to the World Heritage Tentative List. This master plan has been updated to cover the period 2010-2029. The conservation of traditional cultural heritage and the ecological environment is covered by the Plan for the Protection of the Mongolian Cultural Heritage and Eco-system in Areas around the Site of Xanadu in Zhenglan Qi, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (2005) administered by the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Maintenance

Maintenance essentially comprises regular monitoring of the site from the surveillance centre at Zhenzi Tombs and the Site office located at Yulaantai Oboo near the southern entrance to Xanadu City.

Effectiveness of conservation measures

ICOMOS considers the conservation measures that have been implemented to date to be effective.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that protection and conservation measures are satisfactory, except that vulnerable grassland areas need to be fenced and greater efforts are required towards ensuring local awareness of the need to protect and conserve the property.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The State Party provided confirmation of the management structure described below in its response to ICOMOS' request for clarification.

Management of the property is co-ordinated by the Xilingol Meng Cultural Heritage Administration (Bureau/Office) of Xanadu, under the Xilingol Meng Conservation and Management Committee. The Director of the Committee is the Head of Xilingol Meng, and the Deputy Head (of Xilingol Meng) is responsible for cultural heritage conservation as the Deputy Director of the Committee. Members of the Committee include those in charge of relevant departments of Xilingol Meng (culture, finance, environmental protection, grassland monitoring, land resource, justice, forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry, water conservancy, traffic, construction, education, tourism) and governments of Zhenglan Qi and Duolun County. Usually they delegate their deputies to participate in meetings.

The Bureau is located in the Zhenglan Qi People's Government, and the Head of the Qi government is the Director of the Bureau.

The Committee and Bureau were set up in 2010 to provide guidelines and general co-ordination of the various institutions that are directly responsible for managing the property. The latter include the cultural heritage administrations of Zhenglan Qi and Duolun County, in whose administrative areas the property is jointly located, as well as the administrative bodies for grasslands, sports, agriculture and animal husbandry. The day-to-day management is done by staff in the local government administrations. Zhenglan Qi has internal departments and grassroots units; Duolun County has five internal departments. The work of site inspection, stability assessment, planning, examination and approval processes, supervision and site monitoring is shared by the staff of these administrations, with most of it being allocated to Zhenglan Qi, where the largest part of the property lies. Applications for works within the property must pass up through the Cultural Heritage Administration of the Autonomous Region to the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. If approved at the top level, the work/project is then implemented by the Cultural Heritage Administrations of Meng, Qi and County levels.

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

The Policy framework at Meng, Qi and County levels focuses largely on cultural tourism development involving the Site of Xanadu, the stories of Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan and Marco Polo, and traditional Mongolian activities in the grasslands area. The Master Plan for Mineral Resources in Xilingol Meng specifies restrictions in Zhenglan Qi-Duolun Mineral Economic Zone. The Master Plan for the Development of Shangdu Town (2002-2020) covers the protection and utilisation of Tourism Resources and includes road construction to the Site of Xanadu and Uhreqin Oboo and another road for the Huiwen River Chahar Folk-Custom Experience. The Plan for Tourism Development of Zhenglan Qi (2006-2010) focuses on the Site of Xanadu and involves a tourism resort of Beijing North Mongolian Yuan culture and grassland culture, and

tourism activities including the Xanadu City Cultural Tourism Festival; Xar Tala Flower Festival, Chahar Foods Festival and Naadam. The Site of Xanadu area is considered one of the 'Two Large Tourism Belts' of Zhenglan Qi.

The Conservation and Management Plan for the Site of Xanadu (2009-2015) was approved by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People's Government in December 2010 and is being implemented. It covers the scientific evidence for the systematic protection and management of the site. This covers the area of the nominated property and the buffer zone, including the archaeological, natural and cultural heritage. It examines the status quo, highlighting problems and issues and proposes mitigation and improvement measures. It also covers presentation, interpretation and visitor management, specifying tour routes around the site.

The Museum in Shangdu town presents exhibitions on themes related to the site, lectures and interpretative programmes for school children. There is also a Xanadu Site Museum located at Yulaantai Oboo near the southern entrance to Xanadu City. The property and associated information and events are featured on the local government's web site, and various books and brochures are available. The Site has hosted international research seminars and has also been featured in many television programmes.

The Site of Xanadu is remote from large cities and without regular public transport access. Construction of appropriate infrastructure is required. However ICOMOS considers that tourism numbers need to be strictly controlled in order to ensure that the vulnerable grassland environs and archaeological remains retain their integrity.

Transport around the site is by small solar battery buses, or hired bicycles. Tourist guides and other facilities including toilets are available at the Site.

ICOMOS considers that a broader presentation of the Site of Xanadu is required to both the domestic and international public, including expansion of the English speaking service and digitised exhibition programmes.

In view of the trend of increased tourism numbers from 2004-2010 a tourism management strategy is required which considers environmental protection, including a reservation system to control visitor numbers during the peak summer season. Any accommodation at the Site should be temporary, such as yurts and tents. Tourism may push an agenda for the reconstruction of ruined buildings which now exist only as foundations. Clear guidelines need to set limits to this.

Risk preparedness

Fire-protection measures have been instigated by Zhenglan Qi, however ICOMOS considers that more fire-fighting equipment is required.

Involvement of the local communities

Local community involvement is not specified in the Conservation and Management Plan; however stakeholders indicated positive interest in World Heritage inscription of the property and in being actively involved in its management.

ICOMOS considers that the Wuyi Breeding Farm community needs to be involved in protection and management of the property.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

Funding for the conservation of the Site of Xanadu is provided primarily by the central government, with special project funds being provided by local government and tourism income. Financial resources are considered adequate. Staffing levels, expertise and training were clarified by the State Party in response to ICOMOS' request.

The Zhenglan Qi Administration of Cultural Heritage has three units managing all aspects of the Site of Xanadu except the Zhenzi Hill tombs which come under Duolun County:

- The Site of Xanadu Working Station has 24 personnel. These have qualifications in relevant fields including archaeology, geography, history and heritage conservation and management. Staff benefit from on-the-job training and also participate in international seminars and courses.
- The Xanadu Law Enforcement Team has 4 personnel, 2 graduated from university and 2 from college.
- The Site of Xanadu Museum has 31 personnel with appropriate qualifications.

The Duolun County Administration of Cultural Heritage has 6 personnel with appropriate qualifications at the Duolun County Working Station for Protection and Management of the Tombs at Zhenzi Hill.

The State Party noted in the nomination dossier that there is room for improvement in team building and professional competencies, for which plans are being developed.

Effectiveness of current management

ICOMOS considers that the various institutions involved in the management of the property are well co-ordinated by the Xilingol Meng Committee and Bureau of Cultural Heritage Conservation for the Site of Xanadu.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the management system for the property is adequate. A specific Tourism Management Strategy is required to ensure environmental protection at the Site. Furthermore, ICOMOS recommends that the local community of the Wuyi Breeding Farm be involved in protection and management of the property.

6 Monitoring

Monitoring activities are divided between the local governments of Zhenglan Qi and Duolun County. The office for management and monitoring is housed in white, yurt style buildings at the site. Monitoring covers the authenticity and integrity of the cultural remains, protective measures and tourism as well as environmental quality, natural disasters, grassland ecology and landscape environment. Results are kept in the relevant departments.

ICOMOS considers that monitoring is adequate.

7 Conclusions

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List. Conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met for Xanadu city and tombs. The nominated property meets criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi), and Outstanding Universal Value has been demonstrated.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the Site of Xanadu, People's Republic of China, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The Site of Xanadu is the site of a grassland capital characteristic of cultural fusion, witnessing clashes and mutual assimilation between the nomadic and agrarian civilisations in northern Asia. Located on the southeast edge of the Mongolian plateau, it was the first capital (1263-1273) of Kublai Khan and later the summer capital (1274-1364) of the Yuan Dynasty. The city site and associated tombs are located on the grassland steppe with a north south axis determined by traditional Chinese *feng shui* principles, backed by mountains to the north and a river to the south.

From Xanadu, the mounted warriors of Kublai Khan unified the agrarian civilisations of China, and partly assimilated to the latter's culture, while extending the Yuan empire right across North Asia. The plan of Xanadu, with Palace and Imperial cities enclosed partly by the Outer City containing evidence of the nomadic encampments and royal hunting enclosure, comprises a unique example of this cultural fusion. Evidence of large water control works instigated to protect the city exists in the form of remains of the Tiefan'gan Canal. As the place where Kublai Khan rose to power, hosted religious debates and entertained foreign travellers whose writings gave inspiration down the centuries, it has achieved legendary status in the rest of the world and is the place from where Tibetan Buddhism expanded.

Criterion (ii): The location and environment of the Site of Xanadu exhibits influence from both Mongolian and Han Chinese values and lifestyles. The city site exhibits an urban planning pattern indicative of integration of the two ethnicities. From the combination of Mongolian and Han ideas and institutions the Yuan Dynasty was able to extend its control over an extremely large part of the known world at that time. The Site of Xanadu is a unique example of an integrated city plan involving different ethnic communities.

Criterion (iii): The Site of Xanadu is exceptional testimony to the supreme rule of the Yuan conqueror Kublai Khan, the assimilation and conversion to the culture and political system of the conquered, and the determination and effort of the conqueror in adhering to and maintaining the original cultural traditions.

Criterion (iv): The site location and environment of the Site of Xanadu together with its urban pattern demonstrates a coexistence and fusion of nomadic and farming cultures. The combination of a Han city plan with the gardens and landscape necessary to the Yuan dynasty's Mongolian lifestyle at Xanadu resulted in an outstanding example of urban layout that illustrates a significant stage in human history.

Criterion (vi): The city of Xanadu hosted the great debate between Buddhism and Taoism in the 13th century, an event that resulted in dissemination of Tibetan Buddhism over North-east Asia.

Integrity

The Site of Xanadu was abandoned in 1430. The large archaeological site now generally covered by grassland preserves the overall urban plan and city site of Xanadu as built and used in the 13th and 14th centuries. Wall lines of the Palace City, Imperial City and Outer City which together display the traditional urban planning of central China and arrangements for Mongolian tribal meetings and hunting can be clearly perceived, as can mounds indicating palace and temple buildings, some of which have been excavated, recorded and reburied. The remains of the neighbourhoods outside the gates, Tiefan'gan canal and the tomb areas, all within their natural and cultural environment. The latter preserves the natural elements crucial for the siting of the city – mountains to the north and water to the south, together with the four existing types of grassland landscape, especially the Xar Tala Globeflower plain associated with the river wetlands. The Site of Xanadu can be clearly read in the landscape.

Authenticity

Archaeological excavation and historical records bear witness to the authenticity of the property as representing the interchange between Mongolian and Han people in terms of capital design, historical layout and building materials. The Tombs authenticate the historical claims concerning the life of both Mongolian and Han people in Xanadu. Apart from repairs to the Mingde Gate and the

east wall of the Imperial City, there has been minimal intervention in the structure. The geographical environment and grassland landscape are intact and still convey the environmental setting and spatial feeling of the grassland capital.

Management and protection requirements

The property is protected variously by the laws of the State, the Region and the Municipality. A limited area covering Xanadu city and its neighbourhoods and the Tiefan'gan Canal is protected at State level under the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics. A designated area including the Tombs of Zhenzi Hill is protected at the level of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region People's Government; a designated area including the Tombs of Modot and the 12 designated Oboo sites are also protected at the level of Zhenglan Qi. The entire nominated property will be submitted to the State Council of China in 2012 for approval as a National Priority Protected Cultural Heritage Site.

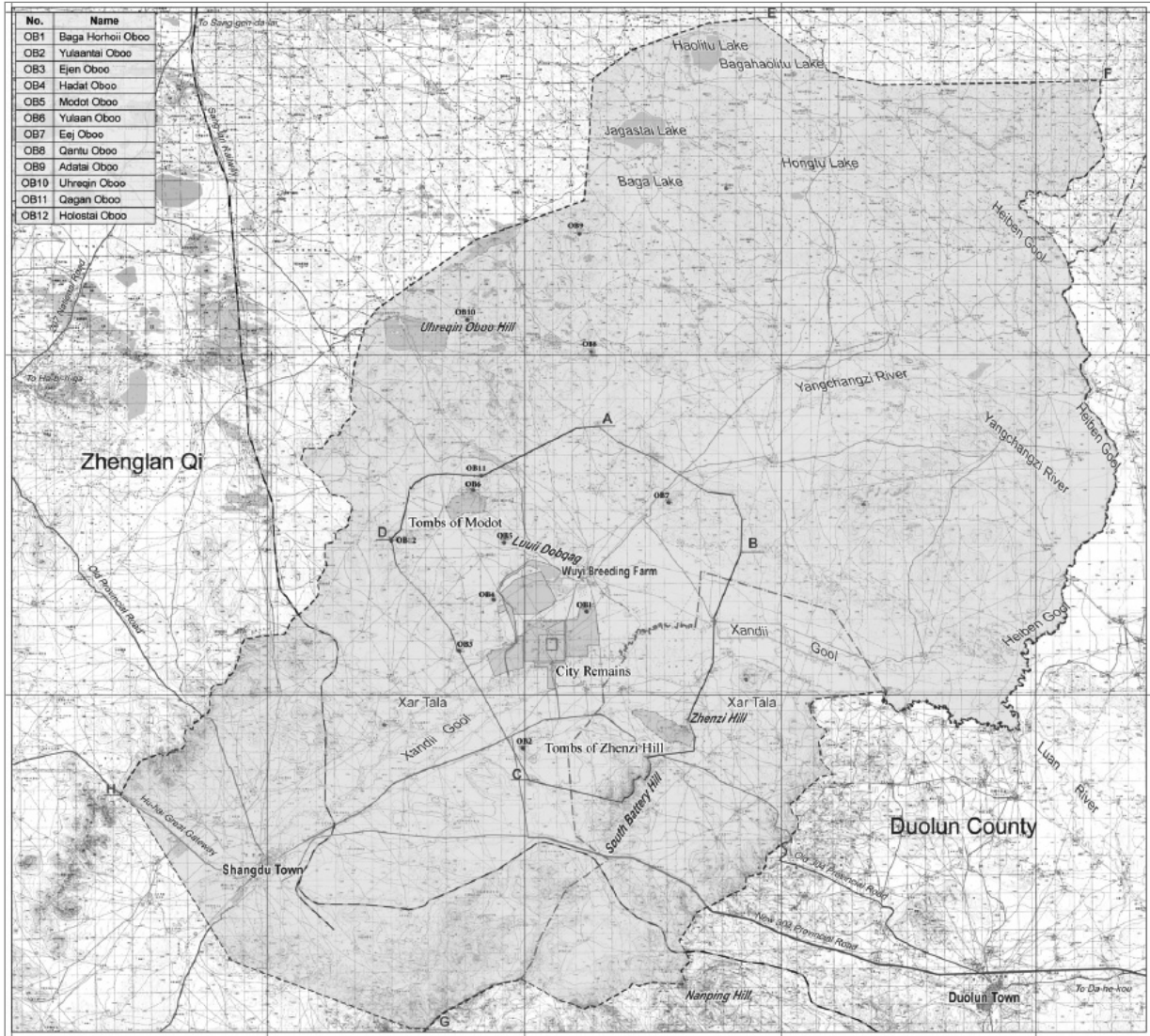
The grassland surrounding the protected site falls under the Grassland Law of the People's Republic of China (promulgated in 1995, amended in 2002), and Grassland Regulations of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (promulgated in 1984, amended in 2004). Overall protection is provided by the Regulations on the Protection and Management of the Site of Xanadu in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (2010), administered by Xilingol Meng. As a result of this legislation, farmland reclamation near the site has been controlled and the grassland eco-system and natural landscapes are conserved. The State protected area around the Xanadu city site and its neighbourhoods has been fenced, together with areas around the Tombs of Modot and Tombs of Zhenzi Hill.

Management of the property is co-ordinated by the Xilingol Meng Cultural Heritage Administration (Bureau/Office) of Xanadu, under the Xilingol Meng Conservation and Management Committee, guided by the Conservation and Management Plan for the Site of Xanadu (2009-2015). The aim is to achieve sustainable development of the local social economy while ensuring protection of the nominated property. This requires a balance between conservation of the grassland ecology including control of desertification, and the needs of stakeholders in relation to livestock capacity and the rising demands of tourism. To this end the efficiency of heritage management is constantly being strengthened and improved.

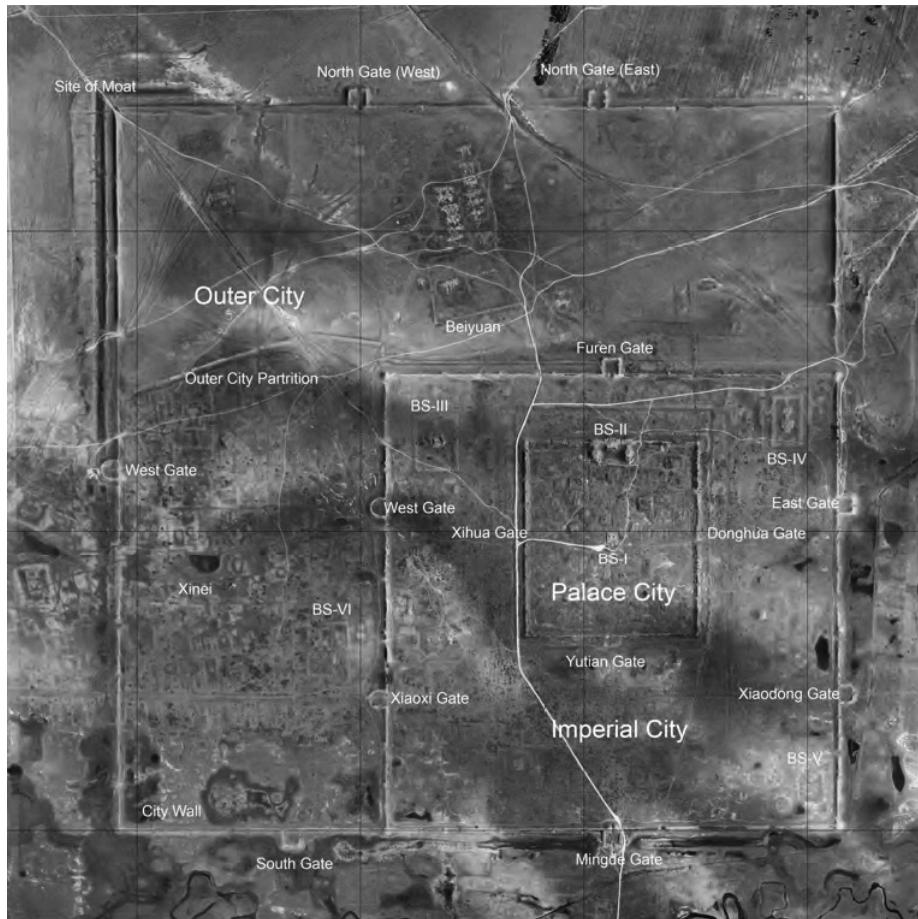
ICOMOS recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- Early completing of the procedures described in the State Party's letter dated 7 February 2012 which will provide cultural heritage protection to the entire property at the highest level;

- Developing a Tourism Management Strategy to ensure environmental protection at the property, including clear guidelines on the limits of reconstruction;
- Increasing fire protection equipment at the site;
- Engaging international co-operation on preservation technology and skills in relation to archaeological excavations;
- Further establishing scientific research facilities to monitor overall environmental conditions around the Site, particularly desertification;
- Involving the local community at the Wuyi Breeding Farm in the protection and management of the property.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Aerial view of the Palace City, Imperial City and Outer City of Xanadu



Northern Wall of the Palace City



Yutian (southern) Gate of the Palace City



Tombs of Zhenzi Hill