
Sambor Prei Kuk (Cambodia) No 1532

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Site of Ancient Ishanapura

Location

Commune of Sambor
District of Prasat Sambor
Province of Kampong Thom
Cambodia

Brief description

Sambor Prei Kuk is believed to be the site of Ishanapura, the ancient capital of the Chenla Empire that flourished in the 6th and 7th centuries CE, in present day Cambodia. The city is said to display complex planning on a monumental scale. It produced a unique iconography known as the 'Sambor Prei Kuk Style'. The city's cultural and political achievements, such as the introduction of the concept of a God-King and making Khmer a universal language, are seen to have resonated far beyond its own borders, and attracted important diplomatic missions. The combination of these features would eventually give birth to the more famous Angkor Empire.

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*.

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (8 July 2015), paragraph 47, it is also nominated as a *cultural landscape*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

1 September 1992

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

2014

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

26 January 2016

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

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

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 9 to 16 September 2016.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 8 August 2016 requesting additional information on the management plan of the property, in particular on SPKAG Tourism Strategic Development Plan, SPKAG Preservation Planning: Guidelines for Archaeological & Other Research Designs, SPK Risk Assessment Statistics, SPKAG-TSDP Worksheet, Directory Map, SPKAG Bird eye view.

The State Party responded on 26 August 2016 and the additional information provided has been integrated into the relevant sections of this report.

An Interim Report was sent by ICOMOS to the State Party on 19 December 2016 who responded on 23 February 2017 and the additional information provided has been integrated into the relevant sections of this report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2017

2 The property

Description

The archaeological site of Sambor Prei Kuk, which means in Khmer 'the temple in the richness of forest', is identified as Ishanapura, the capital city of the Chenla Empire that flourished in the late 6th and early 7th centuries CE. It was sited in a plain marked by the strong influence of water: the Steung Sen River, the O Krou Ke River, many channels, marshes, and natural levees. In particular, trade and exchange were stimulated by navigation through the Steung Sen River.

The remains of this large city are spread over 25 square kilometres within which there was a walled city core of some 4 square kilometres. Although work is ongoing at Sambor Prei Kuk, and recent LIDAR surveys have identified the key elements of the city, the nomination dossier acknowledges that 'further archaeological research' is needed to 'enlighten us in the structure, use and occupation of this vast city complex'.

Although the city is said to reflect complex city planning, currently there is insufficient evidence to be able to say with any certainty what form the city had, how water management was organised, and the extent of its boundaries. Further work is needed to supply some of this much needed information on the form of the city, its planning and its engineering systems.

Central Temples Zone

The most prominent upstanding remains on the slightly higher ground are parts of temples, some of which have been cleared of forest.

There are three main monument complexes, each having a central tower on a raised platform surrounded by smaller towers and other structures: Prasat Sambor (North Group), Prasat Tao (Central Group), and Prasat Yeay Poan (South Group). They contain a total of 79 monuments, and each group/complex is surrounded by two square brick and/or laterite walls. However, the Prasat Sambor complex has a third enclosure wall measuring 389m on each side. They are oriented east-west, and are linked to the river (perhaps to an ancient and long-gone harbour) with two causeways that start at the eastern gates of Prasat Sambor and Prasat Yeay Poan, and run some 600m and 700m. There are remains of another causeway that connects Prasat Tao temple complex with a pond called Boeng Kla Kramov, which runs for 250m east-west and 240m north-south.

Besides the three main complexes, there are 46 other temples within the central temples zone. To the north, outside the central temples zone, there is a satellite zone that is composed of two complexes totalling 16 temples: Prasat Srei Krup Leak and Prasat Robang Romeas.

A particular feature of the North and South Groups is the octagonal shaped temple. Ten such octagonal temples exist in Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Site, which are said to be the oldest and also unique specimens of their genre in Southeast Asia. There are five octagonal temples in the South Group (S7, S8, S9, S10 and S11), one in the North Group (N7), and two in the Z Group, Prasat Y, and Khnack Tol. These brick and sandstone buildings are designed according to the principles of the ancient Indian Manuals of Architecture, but there is no known Indian precedent that could have been used as a prototype. They are believed to represent the flying octagonal palace of Indra or Vimana Trivishtapa, the heaven of Indra and of 33 gods. Inside these temples, ornamentation carved on brick walls features a peculiar motif called 'reaching the heavens'.

The outside walls are decorated with Hindu iconography, and in the five structures of the South Group there are exquisite sculptural depictions of flying palaces. The origin of the flying palaces is the Indian flying vehicle originally designated in Sanskrit as 'Ratha', later referred to as Sanskrit 'vimana'. In Sanskrit epics, the original flying vimana is a flying wheeled chariot that transports Indra and other Vedic gods. It seems that references to these flying machines are commonplace in ancient Indian texts.

The wall surrounding Prasat Yeay Poan complex displays a series of brick carved bas-relief medallions depicting mythical scenes that are without parallel in other Khmer sites.

Decorated sandstone elements include lintels, statues, pedestals, colonnades and pediments. Among these, many are carved in the distinctive late 6th to early 7th century

'Sambor Prei Kuk Style', which is said to be the earliest consolidation of Khmer artistic style. Some of these elements are regarded as masterpieces of Khmer art. Later pieces such as the lintels, colonnades and lion statues of Prasat Tao, represent the 8th century transition between pre-Angkor and Angkor styles. Some of these sandstone pieces remain in situ, but many others have been removed for safekeeping, or are being exhibited in national museums and abroad.

Twenty-one inscriptions, which range from the 6th to the 11th century, have been found, mainly on door jambs. They record, mostly in Sanskrit and old Khmer, the history of the temple complex, and provide us with details about dates, temple activities, names of kings and other individuals, and religious and political life.

Water Management systems

The development of the city benefitted from the abundant water resources of its environment. The area went through intensive transformation with the concurrent construction of city moats, dykes, and water reservoirs to supply the city and its surroundings. The moats, originally 15m wide and 2 to 3m deep, were connected to a drainage canal at the mid-point of its western side. The canal was also connected, at the middle of its southern side, to the downstream part of the O Krou Ke River, and to the same river at its extreme south-eastern end. Thus, the moats served, at one and the same time, the city's water supply, defence, and agriculture.

In parallel, many dams were built upstream, and were used to create deviations and catch water for agricultural irrigation, and to supply a third hydraulic system of large reservoirs and smaller containers. The shape and emplacement of these reservoirs/containers would suggest they are the precursors of Angkor's very large water reservoirs called 'barays'. This is, supposedly, the first time in the history of Southeast Asia that such a sophisticated engineered hydraulic system was created. Only fragments of this system survive and these have not yet been fully documented. An inventory of individual water features is provided – this includes 18 ponds, now used as part of agricultural enterprises; part of the moats in the north, now used for growing rice; and remains of two causeways. More work is needed in order to understand how this water system functioned.

History and development

The site of Sambor Prei Kuk was compellingly identified, but only on the basis of archaeological evidence, as ancient Ishanapura (and by some scholars as Bhavapura, city of Bhavavarman and Ishanavarman I), the capital city of the first empire and first Khmer State in the late 6th and early 7th centuries CE. Sanskrit and Khmer inscriptions, and art and archaeological evidence, indicate that construction of this urban complex began at that time. The rise of Sambor Prei Kuk corresponded to the political decline of the coastal centres of the Funan Empire. More importantly, it is believed that the developments that took place in Sambor Prei Kuk laid the foundations for the later achievements of the Khmer Empire, which seems to have controlled most of

Southeast Asia until the beginning of the 14th century. It also seems to have influenced the later Siamese kingdoms.

The nominated property became an important provincial centre after political power moved north to Angkor. It retained its religious role as part of the Angkor road network; a fact indicated by inscriptions and ceramic finds. At the end of the 19th century, the city started attracting archaeologists. The site was then studied by researchers, in particular the École Française d'Extrême-Orient, and was considered as a Pre-Angkor civilisation site. However, archaeological work was interrupted by internal turmoil from the 1960's until the 1990's, after which the Cambodian government started restoration work. To date, it continues to be inhabited, and some of the ancient temple shrines are used for worship by local inhabitants and visitors. Agriculture too is still practiced using some of the remains of the traditional hydraulic systems. This continuing occupation of the site has assisted in maintaining it.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

The nomination dossier includes a comparative analysis of the nominated property with eleven sites, including properties from the World Heritage List, and the Tentative Lists, which are categorized into four geographic groups. At the national level, the nominated property is compared to other Khmer art and culture sites. At the sub-regional level, it is equally compared to other Khmer art and culture sites in Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Vietnam. At the regional level, it is compared to contemporaneous sites in East and Southeast Asia, namely in the People's Republic of China, India and Japan. At the international level, the nominated property is compared to sites from Guatemala, Jordan and Italy. This comparative analysis is based on different factors including historical period, external influences, religion, governance, city planning and architecture, construction materials, hydraulic system and agriculture. It concludes that the nominated property is the most important site for 6th-7th century Southeast Asia in terms of city planning, with a town designed on a monumental scale, art, with the development of the so-called 'Sambor Prei Kuk Style', history of State formation with the introduction of the concept of the God-King, administrative innovation, with the transferring of the universality of the Sanskrit language to the Khmer language, and religious tolerance, with a syncretism of Hinduism and Buddhism.

ICOMOS considers that relevant comparisons must be based on similarity of type of site. In this case, it should be with archaeological sites of ancient towns with similar cultural and historical characteristics and values. Based on this, amongst the comparisons proposed by the State Party, only the following sites are relevant.

Angkor Borei (Site d'Angkor Borei et Phnom Da (Tentative List)), is a capital of Funan that existed before Ishanapura that is comparable to the nominated property

for its historic place in State formation in Southeast Asia, early Khmer inscriptions, brick architecture and statuary. The State Party argues that the nominated property shows a more sophisticated urban complex with elaborate hydraulic engineering works, but does not mention the discovery of an important sculpture of Harihara at this site, which indicates that regional adoption of this religious cult existed before its embracing by the rulers of the nominated property.

Roluos is a part of the Angkor World Heritage property (1992, criteria (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv)), the capital of the early Angkor Empire founded on the Harihara cult. It is comparable to the nominated property for its religious role. The comparison demonstrates Sambor Prei Kuk's role as precursor for religious syncretism designed to support the State and its peace policies.

Oc Eo is the Vietnamese 1st – 7th century urban centre and port of Funan. It is the first evidence of Indian influence in the region dated before Sambor Prei Kuk. It is comparable to the nominated property in terms of hydraulic works and harbours in Southeast Asia's early cities, and as an earlier centre that shows the transitional role of the nominated property from early urban forms to later Khmer urban systems.

'My Son Sanctuary' in Vietnam is comparable to the nominated property because it is partly from the same period and both have religious roles with spiritual roots in India. But, whereas 'My Son Sanctuary' is a religious ensemble, the nominated property is a city with religious elements, and therefore represents more urban and social complexity.

The most obvious comparable site to the nominated property is 'Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape' (2001, criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi)), in Lao People's Democratic Republic, because it is the birthplace of the dynasty that ruled over the nominated property, and was part of the Pre-Angkor and Angkor Empires from the 7th to the 15th centuries. Vat Phou does not show the specific 7th-8th century characteristics of the nominated property, in particular the artistic development of the 'Sambor Prei Kuk Style'.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property appears to stand among all these comparable sites, as the only one that is, at one and the same time, a town that displays a complex city planning with elaborate hydraulic engineering works, religious roots in India, the development of an art style ('Sambor Prei Kuk Style') that was the basis for the later development of Angkor art, and that represents an important stage in the history of State formation in Southeast Asia.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis, despite some weaknesses, 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:

- Sambor Prei Kuk is the most important archaeological site for 6th-7th century Southeast Asia, which extends over 25 km², and boasts a very complex city planning with monumental buildings (harbour, causeways, hydraulic structures, religious complex temples and a moat-protected habitation zone) and a specific iconographic style.
- Historic evidence shows that Sambor Prei Kuk was the capital of a vast empire, with 20,000 resident families, and ruling over 30 cities, each with a few thousand families. Moreover, thanks to sea harbours located north and south, the Chenla Empire was open to neighbouring countries and cultures, and its political, administrative and spiritual importance resonated beyond its borders. Thus, it was a place of diplomatic and cultural exchange where a syncretism of Hinduism and Buddhism was first established.
- The nominated property was the place where octagonal temples were introduced for the first time in Southeast Asia. It also witnessed the dedication of temples to two deities, the Lord of Seriousness Gambiresvara Shiva, and the Lord of the Smile Prahasitesvara Shiva, with the latter paving the way for the Buddhist smile. Both of these would have a profound impact on Khmer iconography, architecture and civilization.
- The nominated property also witnessed the blending of Vishnu worship (from the South) and Shiva worship (from the North), which lent it political empowerment in the region and reflected its religious tolerance. It incidentally contributed to the universal value of peace.
- Sambor Prei Kuk is the place where the Khmer language was made universal and the language of the Khmer empire alongside Sanskrit. In addition, it is the place where the first local instance of a divine title was given to secular rulers, a concept borrowed from India, and which would underpin the Angkor Empire and last until the 20th century.

As noted above, the urban layout of the ancient city is currently largely not visible on the ground, while the upstanding ruins are dispersed in a forest setting. Only traces of the overall layout and planning of the city remain, and an understanding as to how the overall hydraulic system once functioned is not clear. There is thus insufficient evidence to be able to say with any certainty what form the city had and how water management was organized. On the basis of current knowledge, it is not possible to assess the importance or complexity of the city planning or to understand the position the city might have played in the development of state formation.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS noted that the use of the term 'Cultural Landscape' in the name of the property as originally proposed by the State Party could not be said to be entirely appropriate at the present time on the basis of the information provided. In its reply, the State Party agreed with that comment and revised the name of the property from "Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Sites Representing the Cultural Landscape of Ancient Ishanapura" to "Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Site of Ancient Ishanapura".

Whether or not Sambor Prei Kuk was the capital of a vast empire ruling over 30 cities, or whether there was a looser association of cities or city-states, also appears to be a subject of debate. The idea of Sambor Prei Kuk being seen as the place where the Khmer language was made universal does not seem to be reflected in the property in what could be seen as an exceptional way. Nor is evidence provided as to how the property reflects the idea of divine titles being given to secular rulers for the first time in this area, or how it manifests the way Vishnu worship lent political empowerment in the region and reflected its religious tolerance.

What is clear though is that Sambor Prei Kuk was ancient Ishanapura, a highly influential and prosperous trading city along the maritime trade routes, and the most prominent city of the Chenla Empire. By the 6th century AD at Ishanapura, Indian architectural and sculptural concepts had become fused with local ideas to produce a distinctive architectural style and iconography that came to be seen as the Khmer style, which in turn influenced Angkor Wat, the capital of the great Khmer Empire that emerged from the Chenla Empire, and became the high point of a fully developed Khmer cultural and architectural style.

Within Sambor Prei Kuk, this Khmer style can be seen in the octagonal temples, that reflect ancient Indian Manuals of Architecture, but with no known Indian prototype, and are believed to represent the flying octagonal palace of Indra or Vimana Trivishtapa.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The State Party argues that, despite the degradations caused by time and the 1960-1990 civil war, the nominated property retains its integrity. Indeed, according to the State Party, it includes all the relevant historical, cultural, religious, secular and archaeological features and artefacts of the ancient urban complex, manifested in its moated city, three main temple complexes, hydraulic features and numerous monumental remains within its original setting. It also includes, within its boundaries, its natural environment with the forested area that gave it its name.

Moreover, the major temples of the site retain their original form and materials, despite repairs and modifications carried out from the 7th to the 13th century. Therefore, a good number of decorative elements, statues, and

inscriptions remain in situ. Most of the masterpieces are in storage, or are exhibited in museums in Cambodia and abroad. Excavation surveys have indicated that many of the buried structures are in good condition. The system of dykes, canals, and hydraulic features are intact, with many still in use today.

ICOMOS considers that all the still-standing buildings, most of the known remains of the hydraulic elements, all causeways and the vast majority of currently known of ruins and archaeological elements and areas are contained within the nominated property and its buffer zone. However, the spatial layout of the nominated property is overlain by a low-impact 20th century road system. The buffer zone includes seven mounds (probably collapsed structures) pointing to the possibility that future work might reveal additional attributes that could contribute to and enhance the understanding of the property.

Despite the destruction of the site during the civil war, looting, and the fact that only some buildings in the temple complexes are in a moderate to good state of conservation, enough above-ground historic structures remain, to demonstrate the integrity of the temples zone.

The integrity of the below-ground remains and of the water management system is more problematic, as insufficient evidence has been gathered on their disposition and condition over the extent of the extremely large property to allow a judgement to be made.

Thus, the integrity of the temples zone is clear but the overall integrity of the wider city cannot be established on the basis of the knowledge available and can best be said to be vulnerable and needs to be strengthened on the basis of better documentation.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity of the property as a whole are difficult to evaluate on the basis of current knowledge and are vulnerable and need to be strengthened on the basis of better documentation, while the integrity of the temples zone is adequate.

Authenticity

The State Party considers that the nominated property retains its authenticity because it continues to be used for the purposes of human habitation, agricultural production, commerce and religious worship.

Indeed, many of the ancient shrines are still used for worship by local people as well as visitors. Local communities consider ancient Ishanapura as the dwelling place of 'Neak Ta', powerful ancestral spirits who are worshipped in everyday rituals and two unique annual festivals with practices peculiar to the place. Some 'Neak Ta' shrines are set in monuments, and many more dwell throughout the site.

In addition, the State Party has explained that the low density villages with traditional gardens and trees very likely

retain the ancient pattern of settlement. As in the past, today local villagers depend on agriculture (with rice production, and farm animals such as water buffaloes, cattle, pigs and chickens). Moreover, the harbour, which is probably sited in its ancient location, is a thriving trade centre that benefits from the Steung Sen River's traffic. All these manifestations of continued ancient practices allowed for the preservation and maintenance of the archaeological and cultural site.

ICOMOS cannot concur with the view that enough material and cultural features of the ancient city have been preserved to justify the authenticity of the site as a city that displays its former functions and structures. ICOMOS notes that it cannot be ascertained that the ancient pattern of settlement is largely retained because this is not definitely proven. Moreover, over time, forest growth has changed the visual setting of most of the structures.

Nevertheless, in spite of decay, the still-standing temples display authenticity in form and design and demonstrate Indian cultural and architectural influence during the Chenla period. In terms of materials, the remnant features retain their original substance because of sympathetic repairs, in particular of damaged brickwork that continues traditional techniques and uses old bricks. This helps maintain the authenticity of form, function and visual qualities. In addition, and by comparison with Angkor, there have been relatively fewer physical interventions and almost no hypothetical reconstruction. Minor reconstruction activity has occurred in some temples, but mainly to ensure structural stability. Many other temple remains are, however, highly vulnerable, awaiting consolidation and conservation.

However, for the majority of the very large property, little documentation is available to enable a judgment to be made on the authenticity of the surviving below-ground remains or of remains of the water management system.

In terms of function, although low-intensity agricultural production, local commerce, religious festivals and worship are still practiced within the property, these cannot be shown to be linked to ancient practices. It should also be noted that the question of how current religious practices relate to ancient ones remains unanswered.

Thus the overall authenticity of the whole city is difficult to ascertain on the basis of current knowledge and can best be said to be vulnerable and needs to be strengthened on the basis of better documentation. The authenticity of the temples zone is adequate but the remains are highly vulnerable.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of authenticity of the overall property are difficult to assess on the basis of current knowledge and are vulnerable and need to be strengthened on the basis of better documentation, while the authenticity of the temples zone is adequate although also vulnerable.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity of the property as a whole are difficult to

assess on the basis of current knowledge and are vulnerable and need to be strengthened on the basis of better documentation, while the integrity and authenticity of the temples zone are adequate although authenticity is vulnerable.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii), (iii) 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 of the uniqueness of the property's architecture and town planning and their Indian sources. It is supported, at the architectural level, by the introduction of the octagonal building, and new aesthetic forms such as the flying palaces and medallions carved on brick walls, stone lintels and sculptures known as 'Sambor Prei Kuk Style'. At the city planning level, the justification is based on the design of a landscape integrating three different water systems and engineered to supply the town and its agricultural needs. This hydraulic system made possible the control of water flow and catchment in a manner that allowed continuous water supply for the city even in periods of drought, as well as preventing flooding in the rainy season.

ICOMOS considers that there is indeed scholarly agreement on the Indian influence on Sambor Prei Kuk's art, although the available information has not been fully utilised in the proposed justification. As for the city planning and water management, the current level of knowledge of the property does not provide enough information and detailed explanations on their historical connections to previous and later practices to show how they might be considered to demonstrate an interchange of ideas

ICOMOS considers that the development of the "Sambor Prei Kuk Style" and the artistic argument alone could justify this criterion, for the way art and architecture were developed and became a prototype which was spread to other parts of the region and ultimately led to the crystallisation of the unique Khmer style of the Angkorian period. However, on the basis of current knowledge, this criterion could only apply to the temples zone rather than the city as a whole.

For it to apply to the whole city, it would need to be demonstrated how the Indian spiritual and technical influences were manifested, not just in the art and architecture of the temples zone, but more widely across the city through its buildings and planning.

ICOMOS considers that currently this criterion has not been justified for the whole city, but could be justified for the more limited temples zone if the justification is revised as proposed above.

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 Ancient Ishanapura had been deeply influenced by the Indian subcontinent at the level of the form of social institutions, religion and art, and that its religious complex was considered as the largest pilgrimage centre in Southeast Asia.

ICOMOS considers that these descriptions do not demonstrate that the property is a testimony of a unique or exceptional civilization over a span of time. The nomination dossier states that the property was a place of tolerance and syncretism of Hinduism and Buddhism, but the information provided is focussed on Hinduism and very little is said about Buddhism. More importantly, at the time, coexistence of the two religions was the norm in most Indian religious places. Buddhist and Hindu monuments coexist in Ellora Caves, India (World Heritage List, 1983, criteria (i), (iii) and (vi)), and Jain, for example. On the other hand, it is not definitely demonstrated that Ishanapura was the largest pilgrimage site. Moreover this justification only applies to a part of the property and not the whole city, on the basis of current knowledge.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that for this criterion to be justified for the whole city, more information would need to be provided to show how the evidence within the property might be seen to demonstrate in an exceptional way its importance as a major city of the Chenla Kingdom that reflects an important cultural tradition or civilisation related to the origin of Khmer civilization in the Angkorian period. The criterion could be justified for the temples zone alone.

ICOMOS considers that for this criterion to be justified for the whole city it would need a much more substantial justification as proposed above, but it could be demonstrated for the temples zone alone.

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 the connection of the nominated property with the universal values of tolerance and peace as introduced by the first official introduction of the Harihara, from India, and Sakabrahmana, from Persia, and being the place of the first inscription in Southeast Asia referring to the universal teachings of Buddhism. It also calls upon the importance of representations of musical instruments and orchestras found in the nominated property to the study of ancient music.

Additionally, it invokes inscriptions that are the first to use the Khmer language alongside Sanskrit, and the introduction of the concept of the God-King, a political notion that became central to Cambodia's governance system until the beginning of the 20th century.

ICOMOS considers that, concerning the first part of the argument related to the connection to universal values of peace and tolerance, it is worth noting that the sculpture of Harihara was not in the main sanctuary of the nominated property, which indicates a lower standing than one would expect for a supposedly very important figure. It should also be said that serious reservations can be made about the importance of the property's representations of musical instruments and orchestras to the study of ancient music. Representations of musical instruments are found in earlier periods, for example in Mesopotamia in the first millennium BCE. On the other hand, the inscriptions about administration and the God-King concept are interesting because they could be read in conjunction with the developments that originated, according to legends, in Vat Phou, and continued further in the Angkor period. The administrative system mentioned in the inscriptions also influenced Thailand's 4-Pillared Administrative System of Ayutthaya. It is also essential to emphasize that the God-King concept is still alive today in the political systems of Cambodia and Thailand.

More fundamentally, on the basis of the present evidence, justification of this criterion on the basis of the inscriptions about administration and the God-King concept alone, could be seen to apply to the temples zone but cannot be said to apply to the whole property unless physical aspects of the city can be seen to reflect the concept of the God-King as central to the Angkorian political system.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion could be justified for the temples zone rather than the whole property but the justification needs to be substantially revised, as proposed above.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property as a whole could meet criteria (ii), (iii), and (vi), for the temples zone alone on the basis of revised justifications. In order to apply to the whole property, justifications should be revised in a substantial way and better underpinned.

4 Factors affecting the property

The State Party considers that the number of inhabitants within the nominated property (886), and in the buffer zone (6,720) in 2014 is low. However, development pressures, especially in terms of planned road networks, do exist. To solve these problems, the planned roads were re-routed around the property. Trails, paths and small roads within the nominated property, in particular in the habitation zone, need careful monitoring. Development within the satellite zone, which is a zone that extends 1,500m beyond the

buffer zone, will be monitored by the Sambor Prei Kuk Authority.

ICOMOS concurs with these views, and notes that there has been no development in the nominated property in recent years, other than the Visitor Centre and associated facilities, whose architecture is sympathetic to the visual qualities of the site. Developments in the buffer zone have not affected adversely the values of the nominated property. However, ICOMOS notes that despite the re-routing of the planned roads, the existing road network overlies the ancient settlement layout, though with low impact. In its Interim Report, ICOMOS noted that the protection of the property and its enforcement mechanisms needed the adoption and implementation of a management plan, which was still not finalized. In its reply, the State Party informed ICOMOS that a Management Plan had been prepared, with a holistic approach for management, and officially adopted.

One of the main threats to the property is the lack of conservation of the built remains. As set out by the State Party (see below), 35.4% are at high risk of collapse.

The State Party states that the jungle environment involves many risks such as trees falling down on monuments, and weeds or/and water intruding into the structures and destabilizing the monuments. The risks are reduced by the regular clearing of hazardous trees, and weeds.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring of masonry structures and the conservation programs based on minor anastylosis, re-pointing, installation of non-intrusive ties and structural supports, and, when necessary, replacement of degraded bricks with recycled local historical bricks, are suitable.

Whilst ICOMOS considers that the maintenance programme, consisting of preventing and mitigating further deterioration of the fabric of the nominated property, is adequate in the short term, many of the remains are at serious risk from lack of conservation, the impact of heavy rains and water intrusion, and these threats need to be dealt with more adequately.

As pointed out in ICOMOS's Interim Report, a defined conservation programme is urgently needed to show how the conservation of both monuments and archaeological sites and water features will be organised in the long term, what parameters will guide the work, and how it will be documented.

The lack of detailed documentation of the monuments and sites is an issue that also needs to be addressed.

The State Party asserts that seismic risks are non-existent, as well as flooding risks in the nominated property because of its topography and ingenious hydraulic systems. A fire risk exists, but the education programs of the Forestry Department and the Royal Decree on Environmental Protecting and Resources (NS/RKM/1296/36, 24/12/1996)

have helped to address the risk. Intentional burning is also used to mitigate the risk.

ICOMOS considers that the fire risk remains important, but education programs can help address the risk and mitigate it. Intentional burning certainly also helps mitigate the risk. As a measure of fire protection, the newly finalized Management Plan includes a plan of 'Emergency Equipment' to be installed, over the course of a year, at critical locations within the property. This includes over-ground and underground water storage tanks and adequate fire extinguishers at the visitor centre. Smoke detectors and fire alarms will be installed in vulnerable areas.

ICOMOS also notes that during the wet season the surroundings of the buffer zone are typically flooded, which seems to indicate that flooding risks do exist. Other risks from lightning, wind, and falling trees need to be considered as well. Therefore, there is a need to prepare an appropriate risk management response plan, as recognised in the Management Plan. ICOMOS also notes that heavy rain is a serious threat as demonstrated by the collapse of S2 Tower (now covered by a shelter) in 2006.

The State Party considers that current, day-to-day and annual religious activities do not represent a risk for the nominated property; neither do foreign visitors. Based on parking capacity, the provisions for the future are about 1,400 visitors per day, or 504,000 per year. According to the State Party, this number would be handled easily. Annual religious activities may attract foreign visitors in the future, but planning for mitigation of potential risks connected to these activities should involve all interested parties.

ICOMOS considers that the issue of tourism is not adequately addressed because the features of the nominated property cannot possibly accommodate the 504,000 predicted visitors, especially given that, for climatic reasons, the tourism season is limited to November-February. Thus, the estimated total number on the basis of a regular daily number throughout the year is simply not feasible. Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that the nominated property itself, and particularly individual temples, have limited physical capacity and that access to the monuments and archaeological sites is not controlled or limited. There is thus considerable potential for visitors to damage individual sites. Carrying capacity must therefore be viewed as a dynamic process, which is responsive to site conditions, seasonality and tourism industry needs. As indicated in the Interim Report, a more appropriate management model that takes into account the condition of the property, the carrying capacities of each monument, and the dynamic and seasonal nature of site operations should be realized. And this model must take account of not only the monuments but also the much more extensive issue of the archaeological sites. Which parts of the property are to be accessible must be defined.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are the high vulnerability of the built remains to lack of

conservation, water infiltration and over-visiting. Overall, the property is vulnerable to heavy rains, fire, looting, and tourism pressure. The lack of documentation of the sites is also a serious constraint.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundaries of the nominated property (1,354.26 ha.) and those of the buffer zone (2,009.30 ha.) are delineated by straight lines. Both cover a total surface of 3,363.56 ha.

The State Party asserts that the boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zone are adequately delineated. It notes that the protected zone follows the boundaries formed by roads, canals, rivers, property demarcation lines or administrative arrangements. Furthermore, the State Party has created a 'Development Zone', which is a zone extending 1,500m beyond the buffer zone, and within which development will be monitored by the Sambor Prei Kuk Authority.

Thus, there are three different areas: the nominated property where sit the temples and other physical objects, as well as other unexcavated structures; the buffer zone, which contains traces of possible remains; and a Satellite Area designated for the preservation of traditional lifestyles.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and the buffer zone are clearly delineated by seemingly straight lines, presumably because the full extent of the city remains unknown. The nominated property incorporates the main secular and religious areas of the ancient city, and many surviving significant structures, archaeological areas and works of engineering, and their forest setting. However, it should be noted that some water features are not included in the nominated property. Some of them are included in the buffer zone, and others in the Satellite Area. The property area is clearly marked on-site through the use of painted concrete posts with simple informative signs. It also contains many areas that can potentially be fruitful for future research and to enrich the understanding of the site.

The boundaries of the buffer zone are also delineated by seemingly arbitrary lines. They comprise an area in which activities may directly affect the values of the nominated property and within which control is required in order to provide an appropriate visual and physical setting. It thus offers extra protection to the nominated property. However, ICOMOS notes that some water features in the southeast and northeast are not included in the property or the buffer zone, and that these features need protection, as future archaeological investigation may uncover in these areas remains of water works that could have some importance for the understanding of the water system of the nominated property.

Moreover, in its Interim Report, ICOMOS had noted that protection and management statutory measures remained incomplete unless and until the draft Sub Decree for the use of zones within the Sambor Prei Kuk Region is implemented. In its reply, the State Party informed ICOMOS that the Sub Decree was adopted on 4 January 2017 and provided a copy as part of the information.

Although the boundaries of the property and the buffer zone encompass large areas within which remains of the city have been found, their delineation is somewhat arbitrary and needs to be refined so that the boundaries relate to physical features and can be justified on the basis of surveys and research.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of its buffer zone are basically adequate, but recommends that water features in the southeast and northeast of the buffer zone be protected, and included in the buffer zone. It also recommends that the boundaries of the property are refined to relate to physical features related to the extent of the town.

Ownership

The State Party asserts that, under the provisions of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NS/RKM/0196/26 of 25/01/1996), the Land Law (NS/RKM/0801/14 of 30/08/2001) and the 2003 Royal Decree establishing Sambor Prei Kuk a protected site, the nominated property is the property of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

ICOMOS notes that the nomination dossier does not discuss the current status of land plots privately utilized by villagers within the nominated property.

Protection

The State Party states that the nominated property benefits from a series of national laws that protect natural, archaeological and cultural sites. The site of Prasat Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Site was established as a protected site by Royal decree on 03/11/ 2003.

The protection of the nominated area was extended to encompass all of the nominated property (1,354.26 hectares) by the Royal Decree on the Establishment of 'Sambor Prei Kuk Temple Site', dated 24 December 2014.

Lastly, it is worth noticing that Cambodia has a comprehensive Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (Law No.26, 25 January 1996) which states in art.19: 'Classified cultural property is imprescriptible.'

Parts of the nominated property fall within the Protected Forest for the Conservation of Plant and Animal Genetics.

Implementation of the protection of the nominated property relies mainly on the National Authority for Sambor Prei Kuk, (NASPK), under the authority of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, Department of Archaeology.

ICOMOS considers that the provisions of the protecting laws and the protective measures are promising, but that their effectiveness needs to be monitored in the future. ICOMOS also recommends that the protected zones be clearly delineated in maps for all protecting laws.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place is adequate. ICOMOS considers that the protective measures for the property are adequate but that future monitoring of their effectiveness is necessary. It also recommends that the protected zones be clearly delineated in maps for all protecting laws.

Conservation

The State Party presents, in a draft "Comprehensive Cultural Heritage Conservation Management Plan", a detailed description of the surveys and inventories conducted on the site. These include a Total Station Survey, whose survey maps have been integrated to produce one base map; a Historic Precinct Survey that formed the basic information to develop 'a concept plan' and identify the rural fabric and primary structures, and the Historic Building Information System, a database that contains for each building archival information, description of the building and the embellishments, its present state of conservation, analytical information, recommendations, and information on the current maintenance practices, date of survey, name of the surveyor and photographic documentation.

The State Party asserts that a survey conducted in the 1990's shows the poor state of the 291 buildings surveyed, which constitute a total of 133 monuments, and extensive looting. However, some monuments are in moderate to good condition. Additional information provided by the State Party gives more recent statistics of risk assessment indicating that, among 271 assessed buildings, 15.1% of the monuments are in a critical condition, 35.4% are at high risk of collapse, 44.3% are at medium risk, and only 5.2% present a low risk of collapse.

A summary of the Conservation Report is included in the nomination dossier. It indicates the group of buildings that compose each monument, and briefly describes the state of conservation of every building. A large number of these monuments are simple mounds, with a few bricks scattered around, and most of the standing structures are in a poor state of conservation.

The State Party indicates that preservation and restoration works started in the 1990s, after the end of the civil war. Works undertaken since 1990 are listed and described in broad lines in the Management Plan. This document also includes a Conservation Management Plan prepared on a values-based methodology.

ICOMOS considers that by comparison with Angkor, there have been relatively fewer physical interventions, and almost no hypothetical reconstruction. The few irreversible interventions made in the past did not significantly compromise the values of the nominated property.

Given the seriousness of the risk of collapse of the still partly-standing monuments identified in the risk assessment, ICOMOS considers that it is preferable to firstly invest most of the available resources in protection and conservation of all the standing structures. Excavation works can be delayed until safety is met in all standing structures. ICOMOS also recommends that conservation techniques, including day-to-day know-how, that currently rest within the individual knowledge of key personnel, be recorded in a readily-updated manual. Protection and conservation approaches and methods used should be systematically documented, so that they can be applied in the future.

Given the vulnerability of many of the structures, ICOMOS had requested the State Party to develop a conservation plan and identify the necessary resources for its implementation, and possibly develop a roadmap. In response to that request, the Management Plan that was finalized in February 2017 includes a Conservation Plan with a three-phase plan for implementation. The conservation planning identifies two distinct types of features based on the risk assessment surveys. The first type includes seventy-three temples and features of high- to medium-risk, which will be the primary focus of conservation. The second type includes 218 temples and features that are in a very poor state of conservation, or are simple rubble mounds. Planning for the second type of features aims at protection and conservation in their present state. A 15 years planning based on a long-term conservation strategy, divided into three five-year phases, is designed to ensure that all features do not undergo any unforeseen degradation. Conservation actions include regular monitoring, risk assessment, scientific surveys, and maintenance. Training programs and capacity building are included in the first and second phases (2017-2022 and 2022-2027) of the plan.

ICOMOS considers that the details provided are helpful but that the plan needs to be augmented with more details on the parameters that will guide conservation work, how choices will be made, and how monuments will be documented before and after conservation, all of which should be set out in a conservation manual.

ICOMOS considers that the conservation plan is adequate, but needs more refinement. It also considers that a conservation manual needs to be written and details of resources set out for priority conservation work.

Management

Management structures and processes,
Including traditional management processes

There is no ongoing tradition of building maintenance or conservation. For more than a century, conservation programs of the setting of the property have been undertaken by government agencies, with input from academic institutions.

The management arrangements for the nominated property, buffer zone and satellite zone are set out in the Sub Decree for the use of zones within the Sambor Prei Kuk Region, with the goal of preserving archaeological evidence and natural resources, and promoting sustainable development in the region.

The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is responsible for the implementation of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (Royal decision NS/RKM/0196/26 dated 25 January 1996). Within this framework, and under the Department of Archaeology, the National Authority for Sambor Prei Kuk (NASPK) is responsible for ongoing conservation, preservation, restoration, revitalization and general management. It is funded through a State budgetary allocation, and entry fees. In addition, it may seek more funding from national and regional authorities, international donations, and more revenues from tourist services.

NASPK is guided by the draft "Comprehensive Cultural Heritage Conservation Management Plan". In the future, it will be guided by the recently adopted Management Plan. The State Party asserts that it will be staffed adequately, and be able to provide training for guides and local people in the fields of conservation and maintenance. It will receive expertise and personnel support from the Royal University of Fine Arts. Different ministries (Tourism, Culture and Fine Arts, and Environment) will provide additional support to NASPK. The nominated property is also included in an ongoing research program of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts in cooperation with Waseda University (Japan).

NASPK currently employs a workforce of 37 people on-site, including the site manager and assistant, a project manager, 10 technical workers and 24 guardians, plus various security officers from the Heritage police, Tourism police and Cambodian police.

The senior staff of NASPK are well-qualified and experienced. The senior personnel in charge of community engagement, archaeology, maintenance and conservation works have many years of experience of the site, particularly through the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project. The Advisory Board, which is based on cross-departmental representation, facilitates communication and liaison between various National Government Agencies and the Provincial Government.

ICOMOS notes that the 23 staff members of NASPK have only recently been formally appointed, but considers that given the current status of the property, the level of senior staffing and the flexibility available for deployment of additional personnel on site are appropriate. When visitation increases, additions to the staffing will be required. The new office of NASPK is located in Kampong Thom, and it appears that the re-location of the majority of the staff has already taken place.

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

In the nomination dossier the State Party has produced a draft “Comprehensive Cultural Heritage Conservation Plan Proposal”, also called “Proposed Management Plan”, which is still in the process of refinement. A letter from the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO dated 26 August 2016 asserts that a final proposal would be made by December 2016. On 23 February 2017, the State Party informed ICOMOS that a Management Plan was finalized and adopted, and its implementation would start as soon as possible.

The recently completed facilities at the Visitor Centre, within the property, are suitable for the management needs and site operations. Senior staff are currently based in Phnom Penh, but will soon occupy the upper floor of a provincial government building that is suitable for current management purposes. With time, NASPK staff will increase, and more suitable facilities will be required.

Information about Sambor Prei Kuk is available in brochures, and on the web. Leaflets about the historical values of the nominated property are provided at the ‘Visitor Interpretation Centre’. Guides are also available.

The nominated property can also be visited as part of a tour to Cambodia’s other World Heritage properties, which is designed to offer a better understanding of the Pre-Angkor history and culture. Also, the nomination dossier asserts that visitors have the possibility of participating in excavations and restoration work.

ICOMOS considers that existing management arrangements are founded upon a clear understanding of the values of the nominated property and that there is a commitment to effectively manage it in a manner that conserves those values. The Management Plan is designed within the framework of the existing Royal Decrees, and the Sub Decree referred to in Section 5, subsection Protection. The policy framework of the Management Plan is thorough and embodies both high level statements of principle, and detailed guidance.

However, ICOMOS considers that, in order to protect the nominated property and its artefacts, visitor participation in excavations and conservation should be adequately and very closely supervised. On the other hand, it is advisable to improve the visitor display and interpretation information at the Sambor Prei Kuk Visitor Centre. Furthermore, looting remains a serious risk that ought to be a constant priority for management.

Involvement of the local communities

The nomination dossier states that a local Non-Governmental Organisation, the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation and Development Community, founded in 2004, supports the NASPK and contributes to the sustainable conservation and development of the site.

ICOMOS notes that the local community maintains religious practices in connection with the spiritual qualities attributed to the place. In spite of the absence of any tradition of building maintenance, these continued traditional cultural practices assist in maintaining and conserving the setting and some features that are important to the values of the nominated property.

However, ICOMOS considers that more proactive community participation ought to be sought, and that local inhabitants should be more actively engaged in the protection and conservation of the nominated property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that all actions of the Management Plan are adequate except the treatment of tourism and the projected visitor numbers. As shown in Section 4, the tourism management plan should be revised to efficiently take into account the weather conditions, seasonality of tourism activities, and the carrying capacities of individual monuments of the nominated property.

ICOMOS also notes that heavy rain is a serious threat as demonstrated by the collapse of S2 Tower (now covered by a shelter) in 2006. As mentioned above in Section 4, risks, such as flooding, lightning, wind, and falling trees do exist, and call for the preparation of an appropriate risk management response plan.

The State Party is also invited to refine and augment the Conservation Plan with a conservation manual and indicate the adequate resources for all planned actions.

ICOMOS considers that the management system should be perfected by addressing more effectively the need for an appropriate risk management response, and adopting an efficient approach to the tourism carrying capacity of the nominated property.

6 Monitoring

The State Party views monitoring as a way to adapt and improve the conservation and management, for which it is important to create a base line data for both environmental and cultural assets of the site, and to periodically assess their condition. It also plans a qualitative annual review that would be combined with a series of ‘objective indicators’.

ICOMOS considers that this combination should be complemented by regular reports on the progress of excavation, preservation, conservation and restoration works. Indeed, a large number of the standing monuments are at risk of collapse and need protection and conservation to avoid further deterioration and collapse. Therefore, the state of conservation of the monuments ought to be included in the monitoring system, which should also include risk data.

It also considers that these indicators must be extended to encompass all the attributes of potential Outstanding Universal Value. Regular monitoring of the state of conservation of the wider archaeological remains that reflect the ancient pattern of settlement is needed as well as of the remains of the ancient hydraulic structures that are still in use. In addition, consideration should be given to monitoring of broader environmental indicators, as well as non-physical attributes, such as local community involvement, or visitor satisfaction.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring program needs to be complemented by more indicators relating to the attributes of potential Outstanding Universal Value, such as archaeological sites and the ancient hydraulic structures, as well as by regular reports on the conservation and restoration works, and the monitoring of risk data, community involvement, visitor satisfaction, and broader environmental indicators.

7 Conclusions

The archaeological site of Sambor Prei Kuk, with its urban composition and what survives of its once sophisticated engineered hydraulic system, is believed to be ancient Ishanapura, the capital city of the Chenla Empire that flourished in the late 6th and early 7th centuries CE. The city is by no means yet fully documented, although three main zones have been identified: the central temples zone, the western habitation zone (a square area that is surrounded by moats on three sides and a river on the fourth side), and the eastern causeways zone.

The majority of the standing remains are concentrated in the central temples zone, and this is where most attention has been paid through research and conservation. The importance of the temples' architectural designs, and particularly the orthogonal-shaped temples, based on the principles of the ancient Indian Manuals of Architecture, and their associated stone carvings, are well set out.

By contrast, the remains of the overall city, and its planning and its water management arrangements, have been less well studied and only outline details have so far been compiled. As the State Party states, 'further archaeological research' is needed to 'enlighten us in the structure, use and occupation of this vast city complex'. Furthermore, more research is also needed to gain a clearer picture as to the processes of state formation associated with Sambor Prei Kuk and the influence it might have had in the region. As a result, articulating its value and the attributes that convey that value is not straightforward.

The property is being nominated as an overall city within which are temples, the remains of settlement areas and vestiges of a complex water management system. If the three criteria for which it is being nominated, cultural criteria (ii), (iii) and (vi), are to be justified for the whole city, ICOMOS considers that more work is needed to set

out how the city as a whole might meet one or more of these criteria, not just the temples zone. The assertion that the city demonstrates grand planning would need to be supported by more details of what remains of its layout and more details of what remains of its sophisticated water management system, and of how both might have functioned. If the city is seen to be influential in terms of state formation, more scholarly justifications would need to be provided as to the processes of interchange and influence. If this cannot be achieved until further research has been undertaken, then the State Party might wish to consider nominating only the temples zone in the first instance, as the temple zone alone could be seen to justify the criteria on its own, and to wait until the overall city is better studied before nominating the whole area.

The boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zone are delineated by seemingly straight lines, and this also reflects the lack of accurate data on the limits of the city. ICOMOS notes that some water features in the southeast and northeast of the buffer zone are not included in it. These water works could have some importance for the understanding of the overall water system. Like the other obvious archaeological features, these features should be included in the buffer zone.

The conservation of the overall large property is a major conservation challenge, given the extremely large number of identified sites and above-ground monuments, some of which are still deep in forest or within agricultural land. The condition of the standing temples is a particular challenge when 35.4% are said to be at imminent danger of collapse.

Although a conservation programme has been set out this needs to be augmented with a conservation manual that sets out the parameters within which conservation work is undertaken, and clear indications of both the human and financial resources that will be needed.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the nomination of Sambor Prei Kuk, Archaeological Site of Ancient Ishanapura, Cambodia, to the World Heritage List, be **deferred** in order to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, if requested, to:

- a) Undertake necessary research and augment documentation and scholarly support for more substantial proposed justifications for the Outstanding Universal Value of the whole city for one or more criteria that apply to the whole of the nominated property and not just the temples area,

Or,

Propose a nomination of the temples zone alone which could be seen to justify the proposed criteria on its own, and then consider extending the property

once the wider property has been better studied, documented and assessed,

satisfaction, community involvement, and relevant broader environmental indicators;

- b) Whichever is the option chosen, identify more clearly the attributes of potential Outstanding Universal Value in relation to the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone,
- c) Augment the Conservation Plan with a conservation manual to set out the parameters within which conservation is carried out, and develop details of necessary resources to address the urgent conservation of the temple buildings that are in danger of collapse,
- d) Refine the Management Plan by addressing more effectively the need for an appropriate risk management response and by identifying adequate resources for all planned actions,
- e) Revise the Tourism Accommodation Plan by using a more dynamic and efficient approach that includes weather conditions, seasonal industry variations and monument conditions and their carrying capacities;

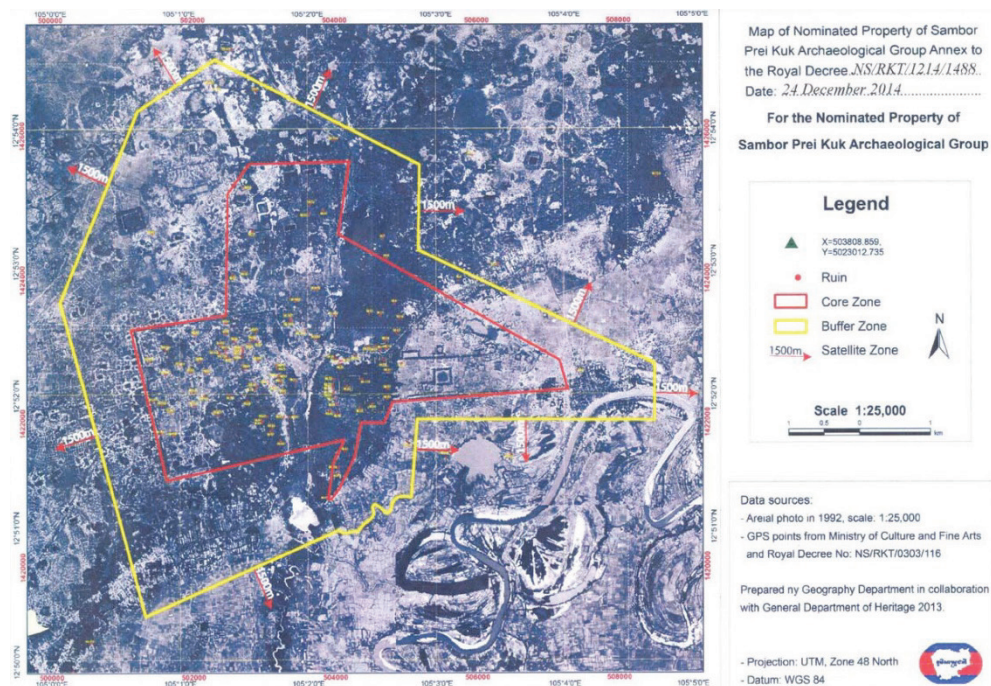
ICOMOS considers that any revised nomination would need to be considered by an expert mission to the site.

ICOMOS would be ready and willing to work along collaborative lines with the State Party to consider possible ways forward, if requested to do so.

Additional recommendations

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

- a) Preparing and implementing a visitor code of conduct,
- b) Funding research and preparing an interpretation and presentation plan for the Kampoon Thom Museum,
- c) Researching ways to avoid herbicides in fighting weeds and replace them by masonry- and environment-friendly methods,
- d) Designing and implementing better signage in the nominated property,
- e) Improving the visitor display and interpretation information at the Sambor Prei Kuk Visitor Centre,
- f) Continuing careful looting control, and implement the theft alarms plan mentioned in the Management Plan,
- g) Complementing the monitoring program by regular reports on the conservation and restoration works, and the monitoring of risks data, the settlement pattern, the ancient hydraulic structures, visitor



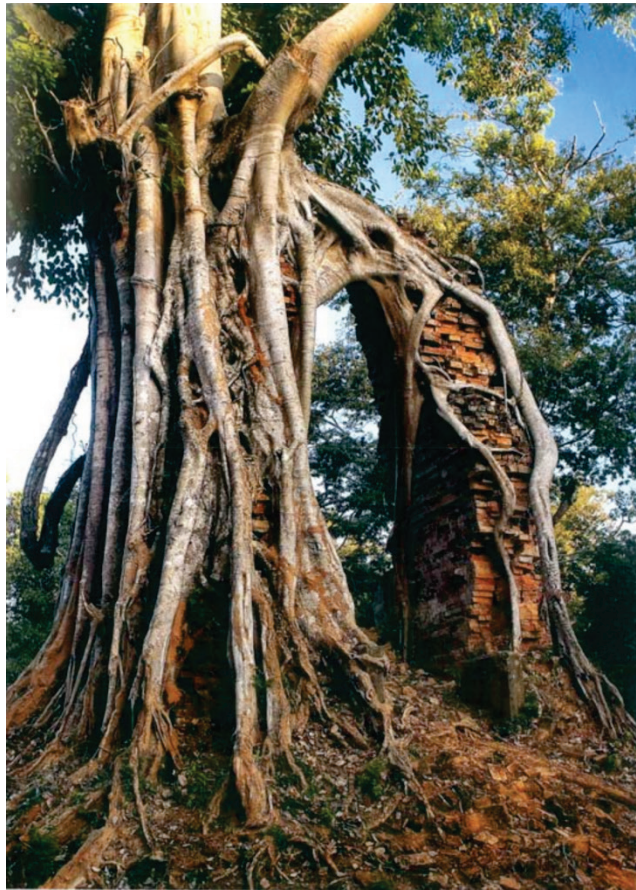
Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



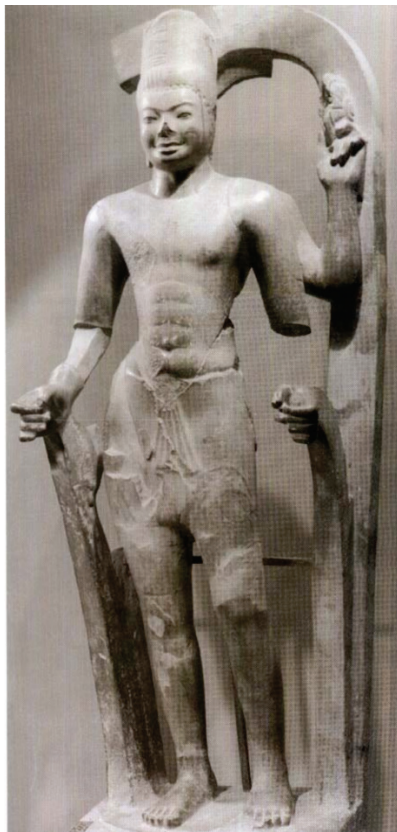
Octagonal Temple



North face of west side Prasat Tamon (T1)



Remains of tower S3



Harihara, 7th Century, Sambor Prei Kuk Prasat N 10
National Museum Phnom Penh