

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **State Party**

Turkey

### **State, Province or Region**

Şanlıurfa Province, District of Haliliye

### **Name of Property**

Göbekli Tepe

### **Geographical co-ordinates to the nearest second**

The centre of the nominated World Heritage Site, situated in south-eastern Anatolia, about 15 km north-east of Şanlıurfa and 2.5 km east of the village Örencik, is at:

Latitude: 37°13'23.6712" N    Longitude: 38° 55'20.5104" E

### **Textual Description of the boundaries of the Nominated Property**

The boundaries of the nominated site have been drawn to include all those areas and/or attributes that are a direct and tangible expression of its Outstanding Universal Value: the archaeological tell comprising stratified accumulations of archaeological deposits, including building remains, and its surrounding limestone plateau.

The archaeological mound (tell) and the adjoining limestone plateau make up the protected '1<sup>st</sup> degree Archaeological Conservation Area' which covers an area of approx. 126 ha.

The Buffer zone includes an extensive area covering the limestone plateau around the archaeological tell and its immediate surroundings. The boundary follows the natural topography of the site. In places where the local topography is less distinct, the Buffer Zone is drawn to incorporate all areas which contribute to the visual setting of the Site and features of related historic interest identified in the Section 2.a Description of the Property.

The Buffer Zone includes an area already designated as a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree archaeological conservation area by the Decision No.1940, 23/02/2016 of Şanlıurfa Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Properties. It covers an area of 461 ha.

The area of the Nominated Site is 126 ha. The area of the Site together with the Buffer Zone is 587 ha.

**A4 (or "letter") size map of the Nominated Property, showing boundaries and buffer zone** (see next page, Fig.1.1 Map showing the boundaries of the Nominated Site and Buffer Zone)

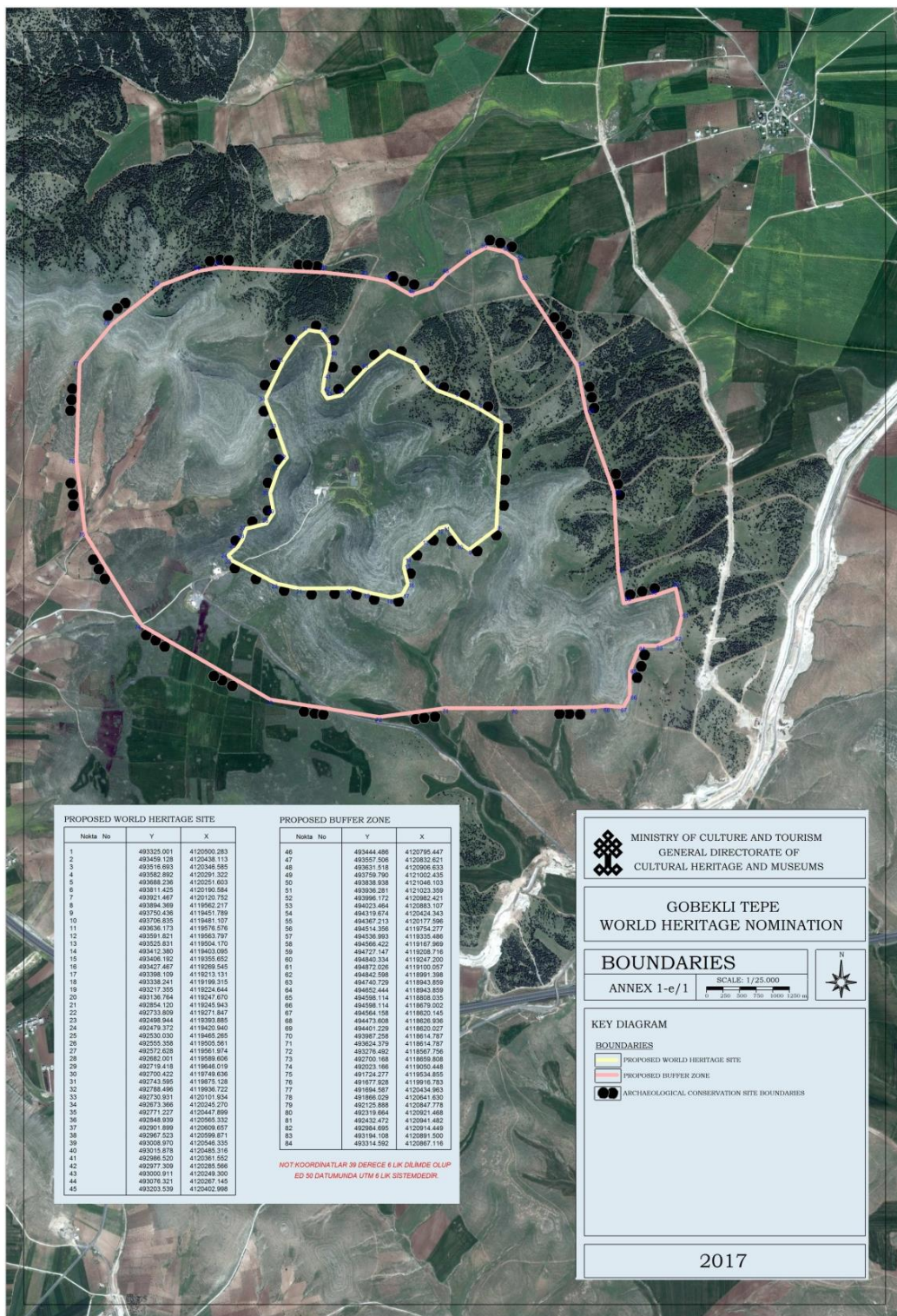


Figure 1.3 Map showing the boundaries of the Nominated Site and Buffer Zone (Map: General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums, MoCT)

## **Criteria under which property is nominated**

(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

### **Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value**

#### **a. Brief Synthesis**

Göbekli Tepe lies some 15 km east of Şanlıurfa in the Germuş mountains (c. 770 metres above sea level) from whence it has commanding views over the Harran plain to the south, and the modern city of Şanlıurfa to the west-south-west.

The property has produced earliest known monumental megalithic architecture, comprising large round-oval and rectangular buildings with large monolithic T-shaped pillars carved from locally quarried limestone. The structures are considered among earliest evidence worldwide for human-made megalithic buildings constructed specifically for the ritual requirements of their prehistoric population(s). These were erected at Göbekli Tepe in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A (PPNA) and in the subsequent Early Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (EPPNB), between approx. 9600 and 8200 BC. The characteristic and meanwhile well-known T-shaped (anthropomorphic) pillars from Göbekli Tepe were carved from quarries in the adjacent limestone plateau using stone and bone tools. Subsequently, they were dragged to the site where they were erected at their designated spots and/or slotted into walls also constructed from the locally ubiquitous limestone.

Göbekli Tepe is one of the most impressive prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world on account of its great antiquity (10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> millennia BC; making it some 6000 years older than Stonehenge), the number and

sophistication of its limestone megalithic buildings, the shaping of the stones, and the breath-taking imagery found carved and engraved on many of the stones and T-pillars found at the site. Further, the imagery from Göbekli Tepe provides unprecedented insights into the worldview and belief systems of prehistoric populations living in Upper Mesopotamia some 11,500 years ago, a time which corresponds with one of the most momentous transitions in human history, one which took us from hunter-gatherer subsistence to (modern) farming lifeways, also referred to as Neolithisation. For this reason, Göbekli Tepe stands out as one of the most exciting and significant prehistoric sites in the world.

#### **b. Justification for criteria**

##### **Criterion (i): to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.**

At the time of the Göbekli Tepe's discovery it was considered inconceivable that PPNA groups – often referred to as complex hunter-gatherers – could accomplish such architectural feats as now present themselves in the excavation trenches at Göbekli Tepe. These discoveries sent tremors through the Neolithic research community, raising many new questions about these early societies, including issues of social hierarchies, territoriality, division of labour, craft specialisation, and gender roles, to name but a few. The infrastructure required for creation of large scale sculptural and architectural monuments, the ability to act in large groups, and the ritual impulses and beliefs that would have incited all these activities show us that the people of the period lived in a complex social life and could organize for a specific purpose. Therefore,

it is held that the cults and related monumental architecture of Göbekli Tepe represent a masterpiece of human creative genius at a crucial time in world history.

**Criterion (ii): to 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.**

Many of the stones and T-pillars found at the property carry carved and engraved imagery. Depictions include many different species of wild animals, birds and insects, as well as human representations, all providing unique insights into the beliefs and worldview of the people in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> millennia BC. They appear to tell stories, perhaps relating ancient dramas that had previously been passed on verbally from generation to generation and at Göbekli Tepe for the first time perpetuated in stone. These stories might even include narratives of foundation myths, thus underlining origins and identities of communities at a time of increasing population sizes and growing social networks associated with progressive Neolithisation.

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

Göbekli Tepe is a key site for the study of socio-ritual components of transitional Neolithic communities living in Upper Mesopotamia, a core zone of Neolithisation, between the mid-10th and late 9th millennia BC. In addition to the construction of the large monumental buildings with their T-shaped monoliths, these groups can be credited with early

domestication activities (experimentation) involving wild plant and animal species, which from the mid-9<sup>th</sup> millennium BC began to show characteristic morphological changes associated with the emergence of identifiable domesticated forms. Carved and engraved imagery and acts of repetitive building at Göbekli Tepe could have been used to encourage group identity and to promote a sense of belonging to a common 'cultic community', also attested in finds from contemporaneous sites in adjacent regions. Therefore, archaeological remains at Göbekli Tepe testify to the social and cognitive mechanisms at work within prehistoric communities at a time of a major socio-economic transition (Neolithisation), which as we now know changed the world, making it and us what we are today.

**Criterion (iv): It is an outstanding example of a type of architectural ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in human history.**

Göbekli Tepe is home to the world's first human-built monumental (megalithic) buildings. In contrast to earlier periods of human history, when images (carvings, paintings etc.) were applied to surfaces in natural environments (caves, rock shelters etc.), for example at the famous Upper Palaeolithic decorated cave sites in France (32.000-30.000 BP), at Göbekli Tepe these images were applied to elements within a (planned) built environment, often referred to as the 'world's first temples'. The monolithic (up to 5 metre high) T-shaped pillars, significant components of these buildings, were carved from the adjacent limestone plateau and attest to new levels of architectural and engineering technology. As such, they testify to the presence of specialized

craftsmen, and possibly to the emergence of more hierarchical forms of human society which must have differed from preceding – more egalitarian – traditional (Palaeolithic) hunter-gatherer societies. The anthropomorphic T-shaped pillars are believed to be representations of ancestors, perhaps even incipient deities. Therefore, Göbekli Tepe is a unique site, it marking the very beginnings of our modern lifeways and still prevailing worldview.

### **c. Statement Integrity**

The Nominated Property fully includes all the attributes that reflect its Outstanding Universal Value and is large enough for the context of these to be properly appreciated and understood. State ownership and management measures ensure the maintenance of the Site and will continue to protect it and its wider setting from adverse development.

### **d. Statement of Authenticity**

Göbekli Tepe has a high degree of authenticity. Since their discovery, no changes have been made to the setting or material fabric of the monumental buildings, which are exceptionally well preserved. Although their original appearance, i.e. as they would have appeared some 11.000 years ago, is not completely clarified, they are, to all intents and purposes, totally authentic in all of their significant attributes.

### **e. Requirements for protection and management**

The property has the highest level of site designation, having been designated as a 1<sup>st</sup> degree Archaeological Conservation Area by the Decision No.422, 27/09/2005

of the Diyarbakır Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties. The area surrounding the 1st Degree Archaeological Conservation Area (Buffer Zone) is designated as 3rd Degree Archaeological Conservation Site by the Decision No.1940, 23/02/2016 of Şanlıurfa Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Properties. Its immediate surrounding is therefore protected and managed within the framework of the Protection of Cultural and Natural Properties Law (*Kültür ve Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma Kanunu*) No. 2863, 23/07/1983 as amended by the Law No. 5226, 14/07/2004.

Regular maintenance is planned ahead through DAI's conservation programme. Processes are in place for consenting change to the site that effects its special interest and for development affecting its setting.

The management and protection arrangements are therefore robust enough to sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

Specific long-term aims related to key issues include protection of the setting, increasing knowledge and understanding of the Site in its regional context through excavation and research, sustainable tourism and community involvement.

The first draft of this Management Plan has been prepared by the Department of Architectural Conservation, Brandenburg University of Technology (Germany, 2013). The present edition (incl. in Annex 7.b-8 Göbekli Tepe Management Plan, 2017) was prepared jointly by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the German Archaeological Institute

(Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, DAI) which has taken into consideration many new developments, advances and new insights that have occurred in the course of the last three years. The Management Plan was approved by the Coordination and Audit Board in January 2017.

**f. Name and contact information of official local institution/agency  
Organisation:**

Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
General Directorate of Cultural Properties and Museums (*Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü*)

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Figure 1.4 Aerial view of the Main Excavation Area (Southeast-Hollow), September 2011 (Image: DAI, Göbekli Tepe Project)