



Section 0

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nomination of

SANSA,
BUDDHIST MOUNTAIN
MONASTERIES
IN KOREA

for Inscription on the World Heritage List

Republic of Korea

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **State Party**

Republic of Korea

- **State, Province or Region**

Yangsang City, Gyeongsangnam-do Province
Yeongju City, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province
Andong City, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province
Boeun County, Chungcheongbuk-do Province
Gongju City, Chungcheongnam-do Province
Suncheon City, Jeollanam-do Province
Haenam County, Jeollanam-do Province

- **Name of Property**

Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea

- **Geographical coordinates to the nearest second**

Id No.	Name of the component	City/County	Coordinates to the central point
1	Tongdosa Temple	Yangsan	N 35° 29' 17", E 129° 03' 56"
2	Buseoksa Temple	Yeongju	N 36° 59' 56", E 128° 41' 15"
3	Bongjeongsa Temple	Andong	N 36° 39' 12", E 128° 39' 47"
4	Beopjusa Temple	Boeun	N 36° 32' 31", E 127° 50' 00"
5	Magoksa Temple	Gongju	N 36° 33' 32", E 127° 00' 43"
6	Seonamsa Temple	Suncheon	N 34° 59' 45", E 127° 19' 52"
7	Daeheungsa Temple	Haenam	N 34° 28' 32", E 126° 37' 01"

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

Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, is a serial property which contains all vital elements within the nominated property manifesting the outstanding universal value of seven component temples as monasteries. The boundaries of the nominated property have been defined based on the roads, valleys, streams, and mountain slopes adjoining the temple sites. The buffer zone, aimed at enhancing the prestige and inviolability of individual temples as cultural heritage of international significance, has been delineated in consideration of the range of visibility and natural boundaries such as mountain ridges. The nominated property and buffer zone are protected in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Protection Act.

- **A4 Size map of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone**

Id No.	Name of the component	City/County	Area of the nominated property (ha)	Area of the buffer zone (ha)	Total area (ha)	Figure No.
1	Tongdosa Temple	Yangsan	7.87	84.14	92.01	0-2
2	Buseoksa Temple	Yeongju	7.08	47.09	54.17	0-3
3	Bongjeongsa Temple	Andong	5.30	75.05	80.35	0-4
4	Beopjusa Temple	Boeun	11.22	190.03	201.25	0-5
5	Magoksa Temple	Gongju	3.91	62.66	66.57	0-6
6	Seonamsa Temple	Suncheon	9.67	246.16	255.83	0-7
7	Daeheungsa Temple	Haenam	10.38	617.98	628.36	0-8
Total area (ha)			55.43	1,323.11	1,378.54	-



Figure 0-1. Location of Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea

Tongdosa Temple

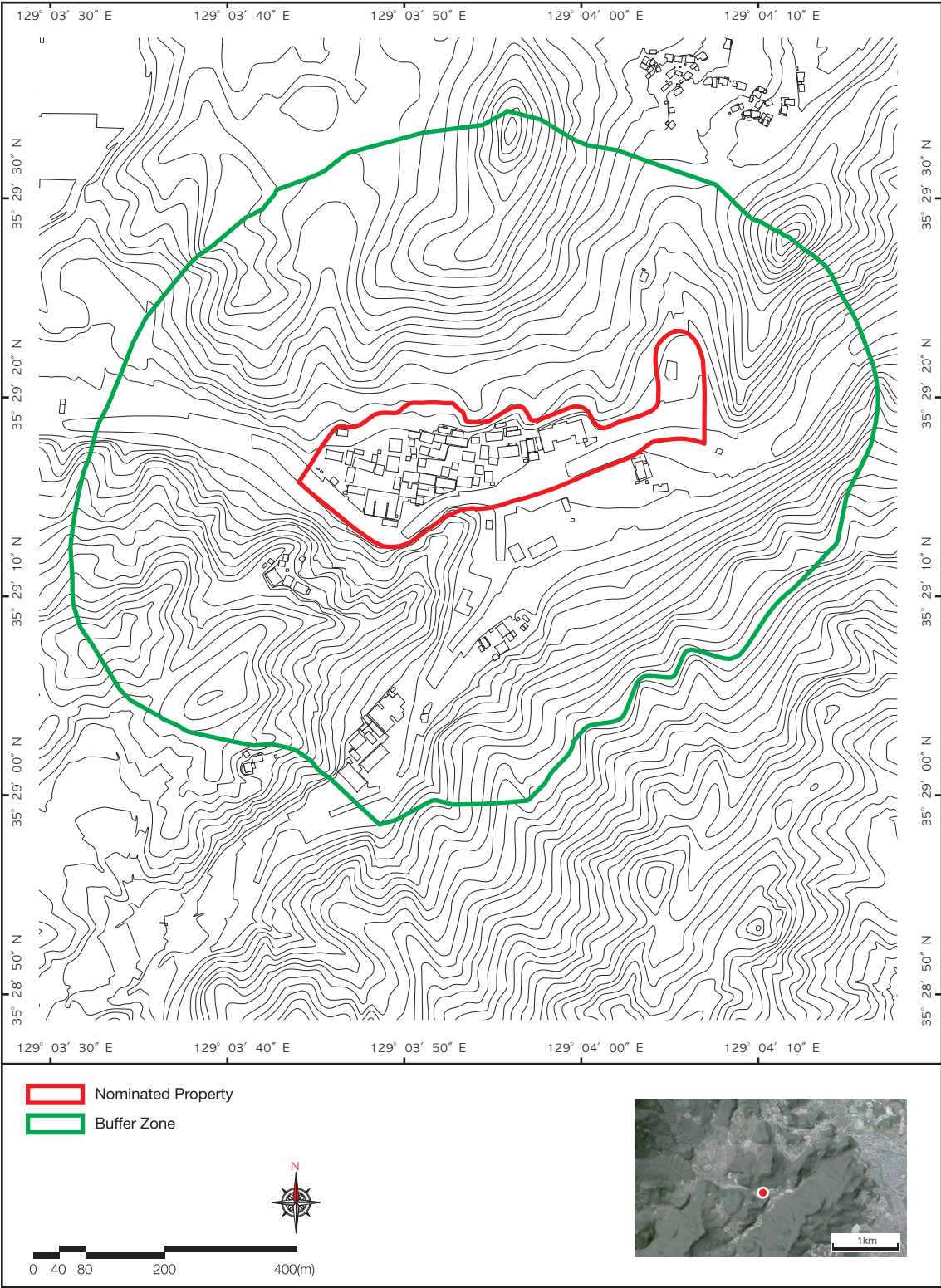


Figure 0-2. Nominated property and buffer zone of Tongdosa Temple

Buseoksa Temple

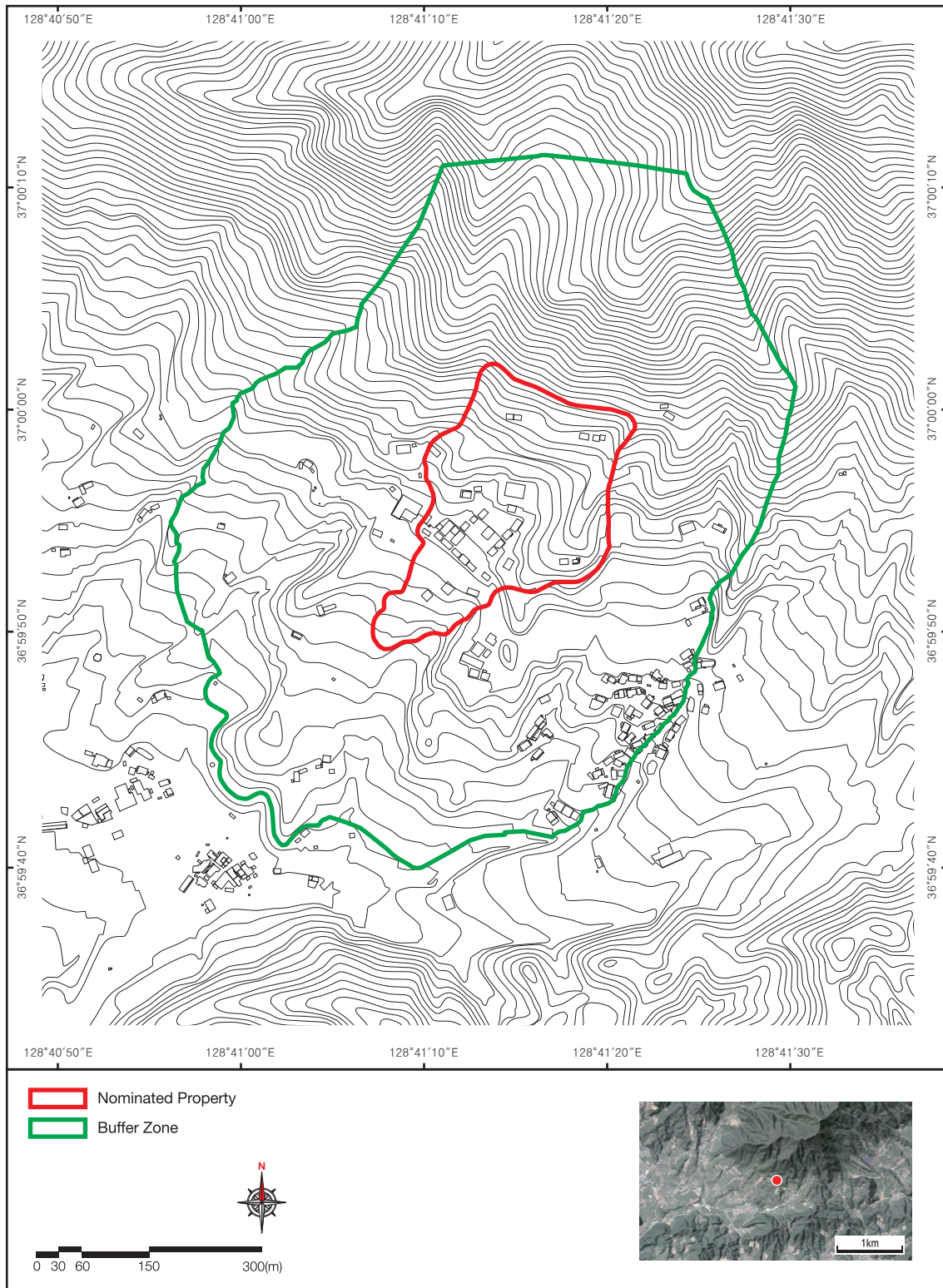


Figure 0-3. Nominated property and buffer zone of Buseoksa Temple

Bongjeongsa Temple

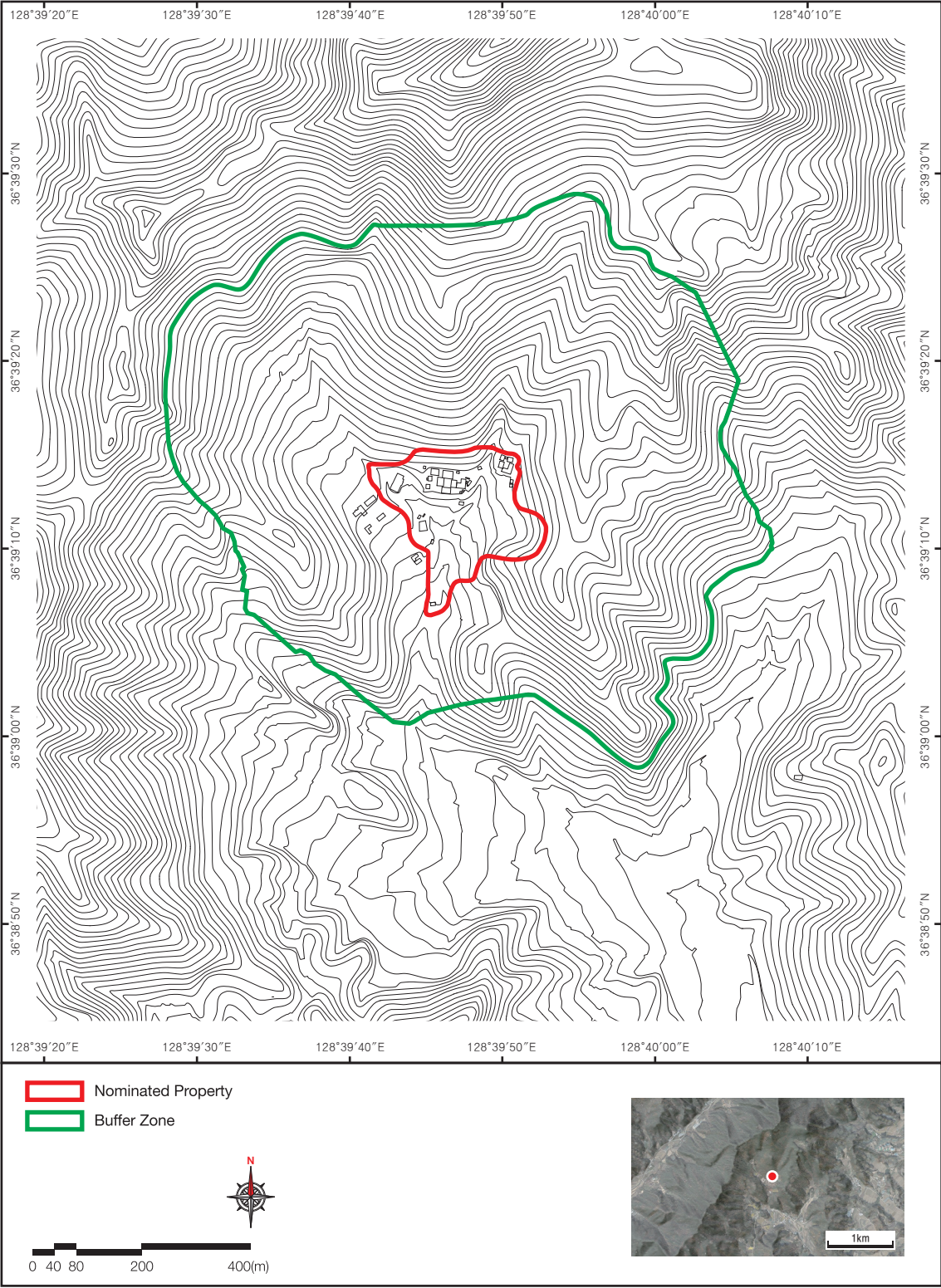


Figure 0-4. Nominated property and buffer zone of Bongjeongsa Temple

Beopjusa Temple

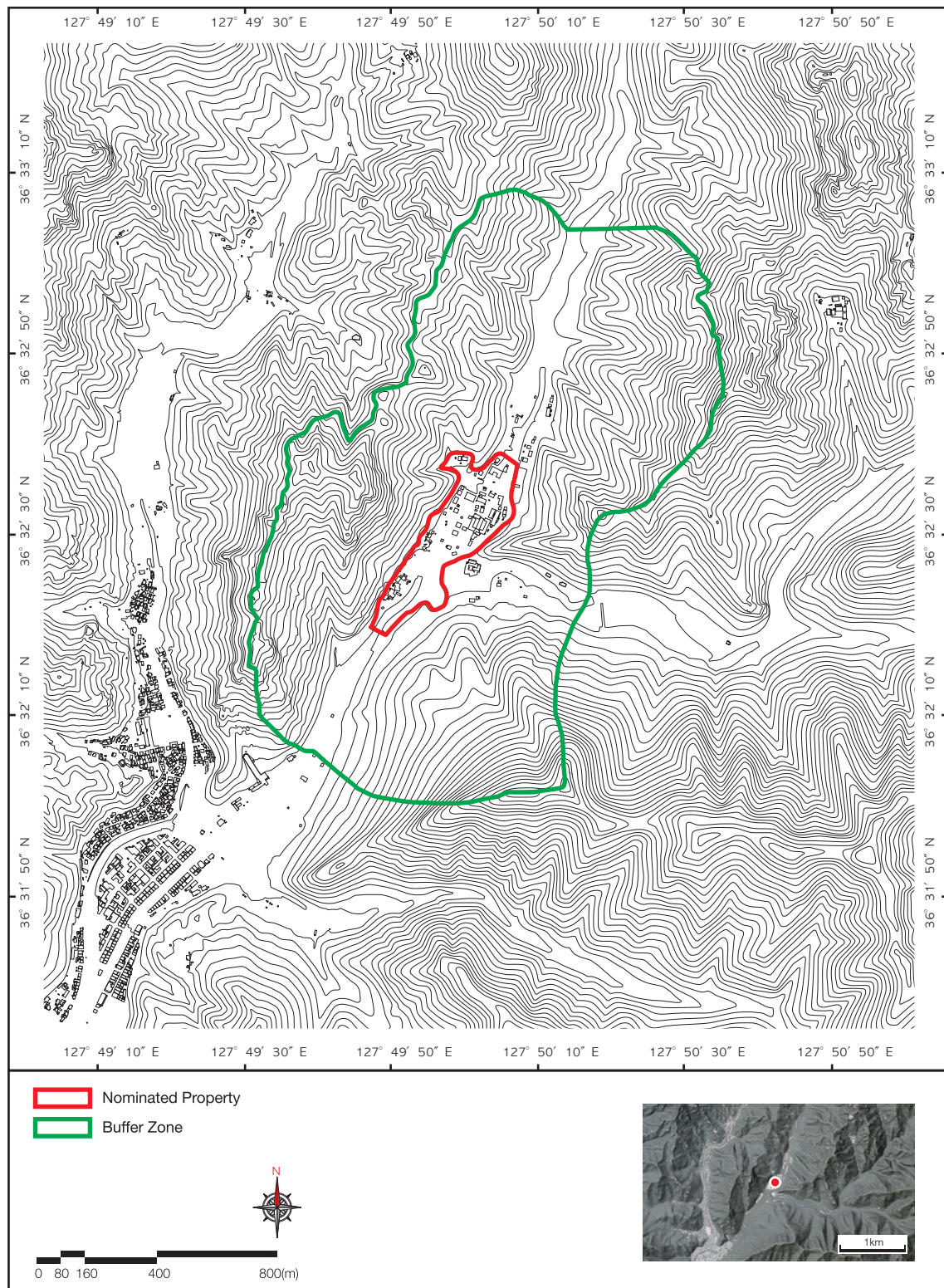


Figure 0-5. Nominated property and buffer zone of Beopjusa Temple

Magoksa Temple

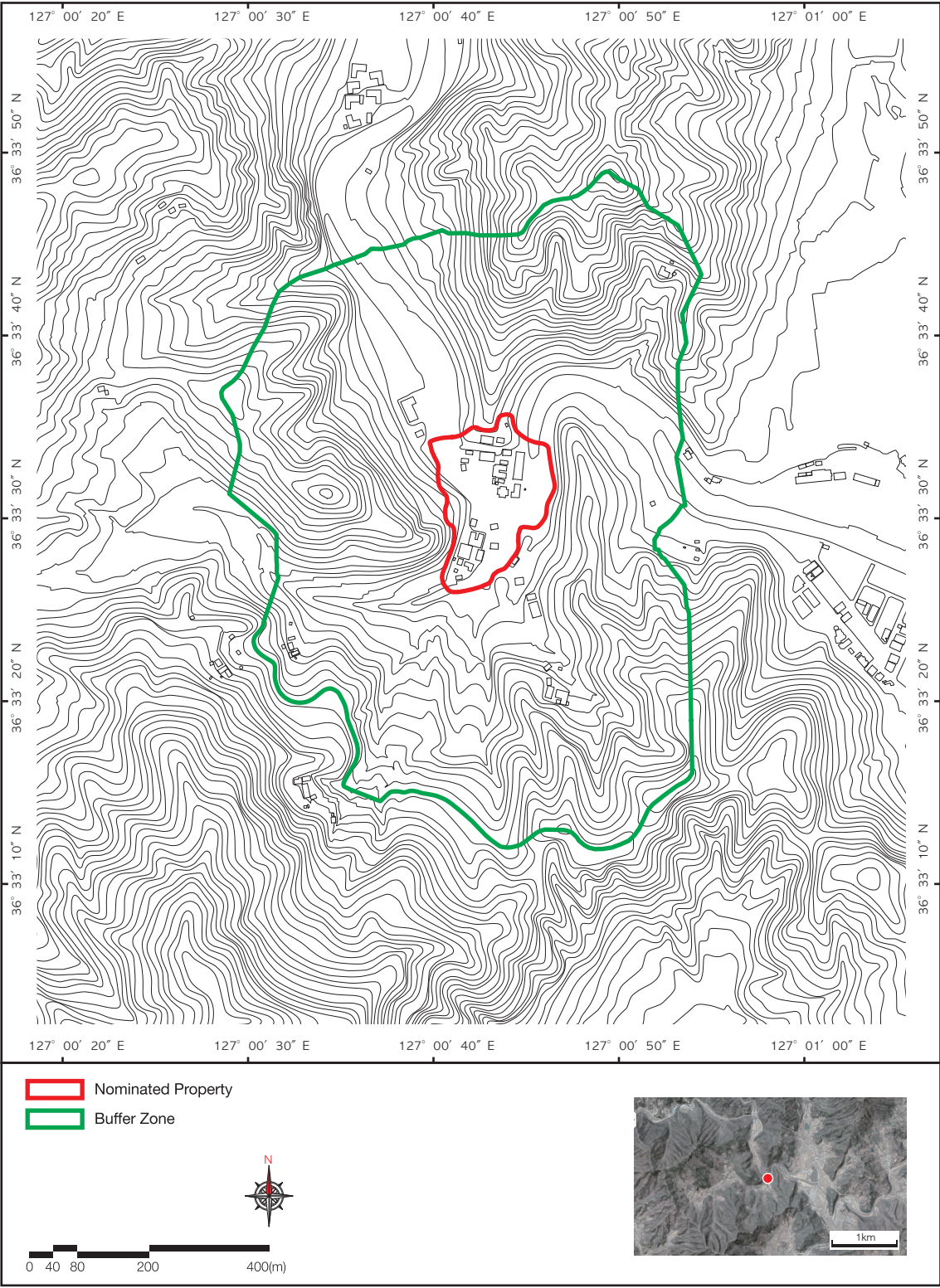


Figure 0-6. Nominated property and buffer zone of Magoksa Temple

Seonamsa Temple

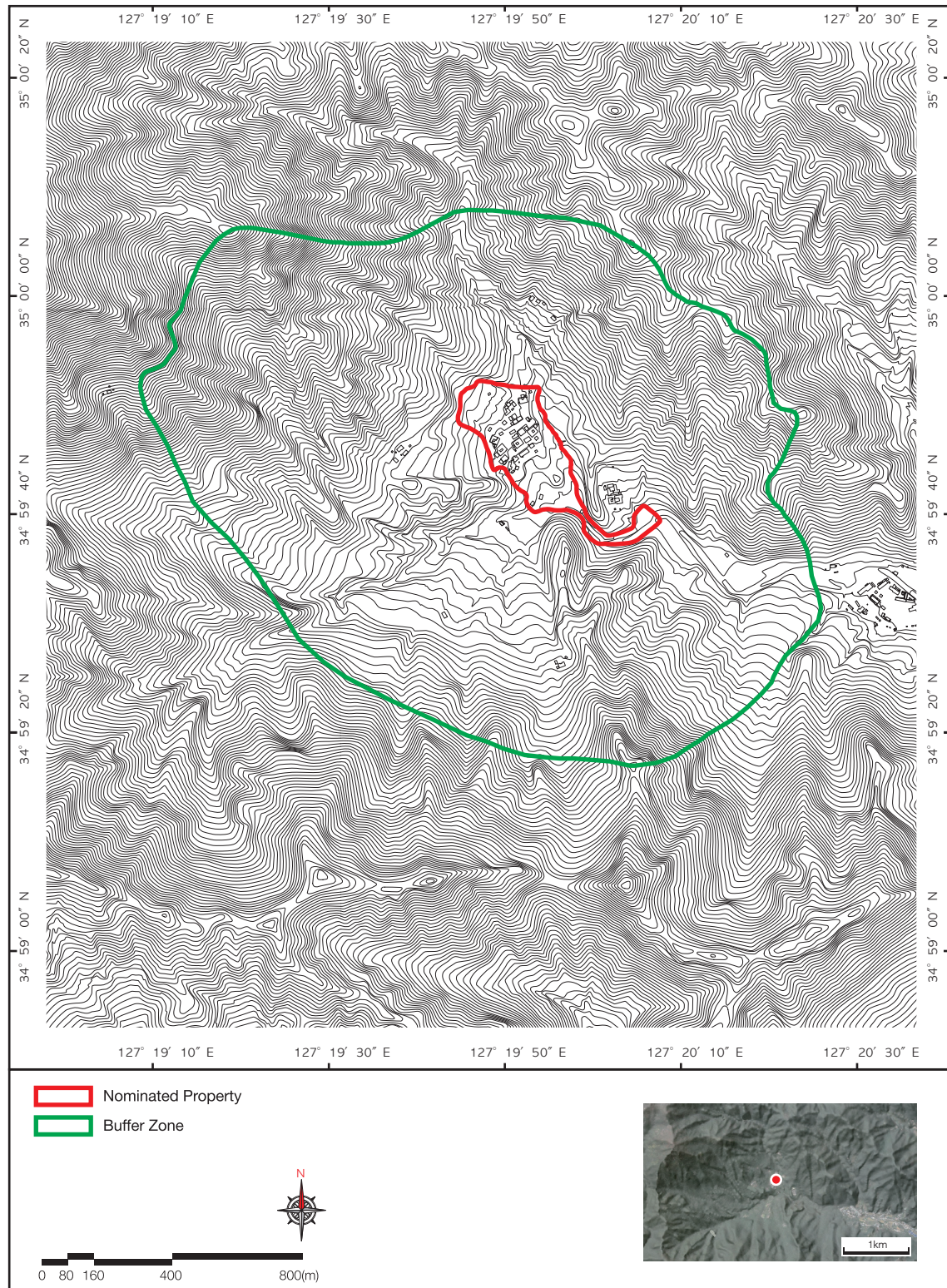


Figure 0-7. Nominated property and buffer zone of Seonamsa Temple

Daeheungsa Temple

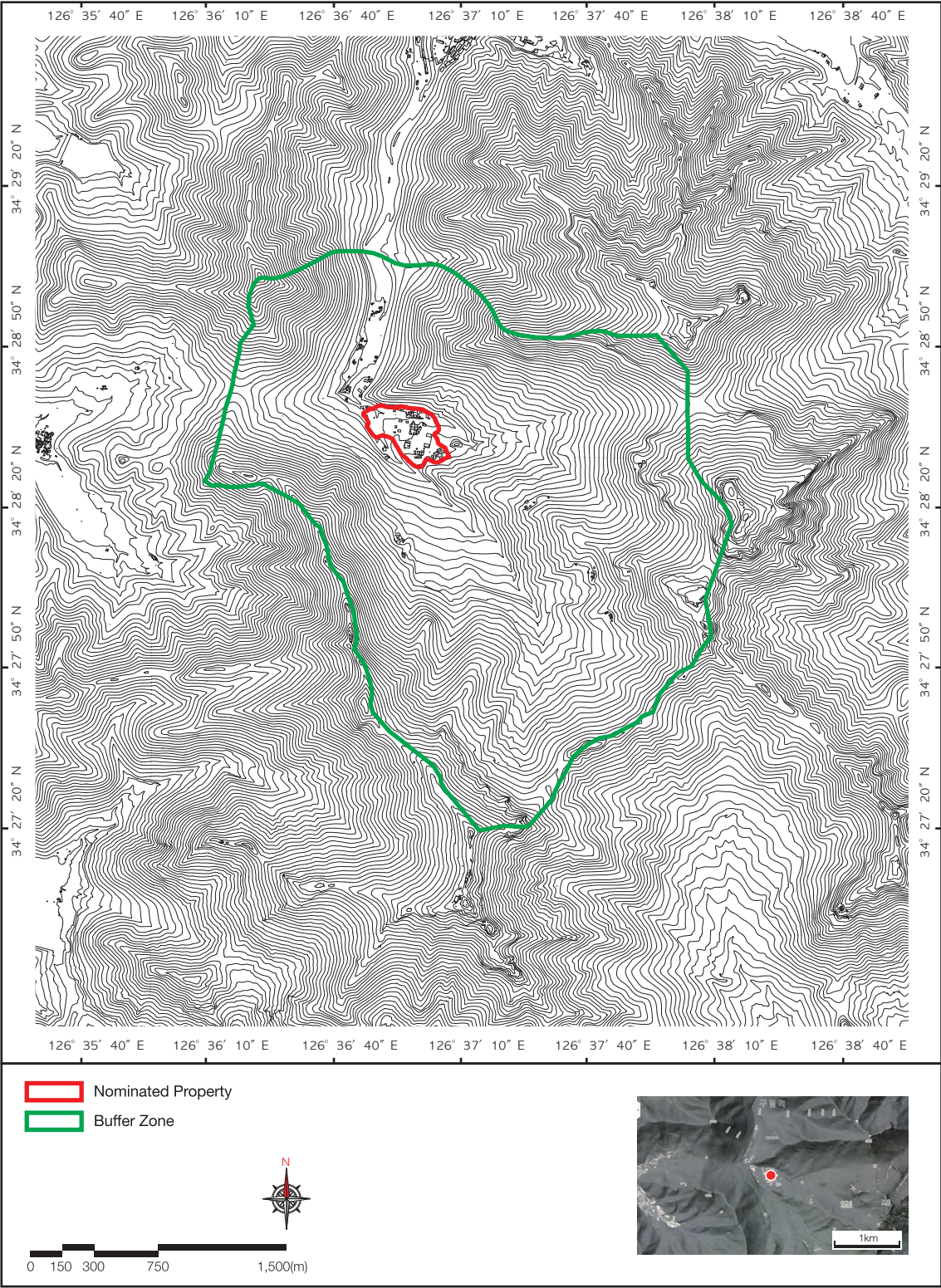


Figure 0-8. Nominated property and buffer zone of Daeheungsa Temple

• Criteria Under which property is nominated

Criterion (iii): Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, is a group of monasteries where communities of monastics and lay believers have carried out Buddhist traditions of spiritual practice, religious worship and daily living until the present day. The temples have preserved the authenticity of their spatial composition manifesting the values of Buddhism, an exceptional testimony to their lasting presence as sacred places.

Criterion (iv): Sansa includes outstanding examples of spatial layout types of Korean Buddhist Mountain Monasteries settled inside mountain forests adapting to natural features. They are categorized by the location but commonly accommodate buildings and open spaces for ritual services, spiritual practice, and daily living, which are closely interconnected around *madang*, an open yard.

• Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, is a serial property consisting of seven temples which typologically epitomize Korea's Buddhist mountain temples. They have functioned as monasteries and centers of religious belief, spiritual practice and daily living of monastic communities reflecting the openness of Korean Buddhism in the spatial layout. The nominated property consists of Tongdosa Temple, Buseoksa Temple, Bongjeongsa Temple, Beopjusa Temple, Magoksa Temple, Seonamsa Temple, and Daeheungsa Temple, which are distributed across the Republic of Korea.

Numerous temples were founded on the Korean peninsula from the 7th to the 9th centuries by accommodating various schools of Mahayana Buddhism introduced through China. While some temples were located in urban areas at the time, others were built in the mountains. Under the state policy of the Joseon Dynasty (1392~1910) based on Neo-Confucian ideology, most urban temples were forced to disappear. However, temples in mountain areas including the nominated temples could survive, maintaining their original characteristic as monasteries for religious and spiritual practice and their daily living of monks. With few temples remaining in cities, the mountain temples further extended their role to serve as places of religion for ordinary believers and started to accommodate spaces and facilities necessary for their practice.

Some of the nominated temples suffered enormous damage during Japanese invasions of Korea (1592~1598). Despite the anti-Buddhist policies, the social status of Buddhist monks was elevated after the war as a reward for their distinguished military contributions. Extensive post-war restoration of Buddhist monasteries was patronized by individuals at different social levels. Major buildings at the nominated temples restored at the time are treasured today as one of the most outstanding masterpieces of Buddhist architecture in Korea. It was also at this time that many temples began to conduct rites and ceremonies attended by large crowds of ordinary believers. Buddhist rituals to appease the souls of the dead became widespread and played a major part in the course of the recovery efforts after the war. Shrines assimilating native beliefs and commemorating victims of war were built in the temple premises to meet public demand.

The nominated property is a living Buddhist heritage sustaining tangible and intangible cultural traditions until the present day. All component temples have continuously conducted religious services, rites and ceremonies, teaching, and monastic practices based on Buddhist belief but also embracing diverse native beliefs. At the temples, monks faithfully carry on the tradition of meditation practice, including summer and winter retreats. Communal work for sustaining monastic communities is also a part of spiritual practice; the temples have managed kitchen garden or tea field.

The nominated property represents a spatial configuration of Korea's mountain monasteries: all component temples have been shaped by adapting to the natural topographic features in creating a site and arranging buildings and open spaces. A valley, ridge, and stream of mountain are taken as natural boundaries. At the heart of the spatial composition is *madang*, an open outdoor space in front of the main Buddha hall. The open space accentuates the dignity and beauty of the main Buddha hall. The yard, *madang*, is a venue for large-scale rites and ceremonies to accommodate a large crowd and also serves as a link to individual buildings with diverse functions. At Sansa, the main spatial configuration laid out around *madang* manifests the quintessential openness of Korean Buddhism.

Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, is historic heritage composed of seven temples that are the most outstanding examples of monasteries. All seven temples embody the diverse schools of Buddhism at the time of their foundation from the 7th to the 9th centuries and are composed of buildings for worship, meditation halls and dormitories for the monastic communities. All have maintained their original functions to the present. The nominated property presents Outstanding Universal Value with their entire temple premises shaped by the openness of Korean Buddhism and well-preserved Buddhist sanctuary.

The nominated property contains all elements required for outstanding universal value. The nominated property includes well-preserved buildings for religious practices and daily living, such as worship halls and shrines, meditation rooms, monastic academy, dormitories of monks, and various other auxiliary buildings. The different sites of the nominated property and their buffer zones abound with valley streams which are also important locational elements. There have so far been few factors that threaten the nominated property, such as development and environmental pressures, but all component temples are equipped with firefighting facilities and around-the-clock monitoring systems as precautions against disaster and accidents. All of the seven nominated temples have individual management and preservation plans and an integrated plan. Regular monitoring is conducted within appropriate geographical scale, respecting international principles of conservation and management.

The Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea maintains high levels of authenticity in terms of the sustainability of use and function; location and setting; traditions, techniques and management skills; and intangible heritage. Wooden architectural structures, which mainly constitute monasteries are evidence of the original form and development process of Korean architecture as they have been carefully maintained under strict principles of repair and restoration. For the restoration of hall or shrine or the construction of a new building, a comprehensive design plan carefully follows the style of existing buildings. When wooden structure members of a building need to be replaced, the original dovetailing method is applied, and original members are reused to protect authenticity. Until the mid-20th century, traditional construction methods and techniques were maintained by monks through generations, but currently repairs on buildings designated as cultural heritage are undertaken by licensed experts, Cultural Heritage Repair Engineers and Technicians under the supervision of the Cultural Heritage Administration. Each temple is systematically operated and maintained under the responsibility of the chief abbot.

The ownership of the seven temples constituting Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, a serial property, rests mostly with the temples concerned and the government. All seven nominated temples are protected and managed in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (enacted in 1962) and ordinances on cultural heritage protection enacted by the provincial governments where they are located. Therefore, development around the temples is strictly controlled, and there is little chance of the temples being exposed to potential threats or negative environmental factors due to activities by outsiders.

The monasteries have a variety of spaces which are still in use. However, modern construction to facilitate daily use is strictly controlled by the Cultural Heritage Protection Act to ensure that the planned facilities would not threaten the authenticity of the property.

The nominated property has seldom been affected seriously by natural disaster, but the central and local governments maintain emergency response operations and manuals for prevention and preparedness against possible natural threats and accidents. Because the temples are mostly composed of wooden buildings, special care is taken against damage from arson and forest fire. The temples are equipped with fire sensors, CCTV cameras and firefighting equipment and are in close contact systems with nearby fire stations. The temples also have cultural heritage managers who keep watch around the clock, in addition to regular monitoring against fires. The temples have so far faced little pressure from tourism due to visitors. As for anticipated pressures following their inscription on the World Heritage List, all the seven temples have sufficient capacity to accommodate increasing numbers of visitors. Therefore, it is believed that Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea, comprehensively satisfies the requirements for conservation and management as World Heritage site.

- **Name and contact information of official local institution/agency**

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