

PAKISTAN

Taxila

II.1 Introduction

Year of Inscription 1980

Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Sub Regional Office
Dept. of Archaeology & Museums (DOAM)
Government of Pakistan
Taxila
Pakistan

II.2 Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C iii, iv

Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows:
(...) Taxila is one of the oldest living cities in the sub-continent. Its origins lie in the Neolithic period (mid 4th millennium BC). The Taxila Valley came into focus when evidence of its Harappan phase (3100-2500 BC) was discovered at Sari Kala and then Jhang, Pind Nauseri, Khada and Hathial. These discoveries established that the Taxila Valley participated in the formation of Harappan civilisation. The cultural assemblages of the early Harappan phase in the Taxila Valley demonstrate a remarkable conformity in stone tool technology and ceramic art with those of contemporary sites distributed across the vast area from the Gomal Valley to Sindh Province.
(...) Most of the Buddhist stupas and monasteries date from the 1st to 5th century AD although the Dharmarajika Stupa was founded by Asoka in the 3rd century BC. The most important structures are Jaulian, Mohra Muradu, Pilan, Kalawan, Kunala and Mankiyala. The accounts of classical writers like Arian and Plutarch as well as the detailed surveys carried out by Alexander Coningham brought Taxila into limelight as a city of great historical importance. Sir John Marshall after making detailed researches placed Taxila in its true historical and cultural perspective. The excavated material has added valuable information to our knowledge of the arts, crafts, social and economic system, customs, creeds rituals and architecture of the area from the 6th century BC to the 5th century AD.

"A sports stadium was constructed on the protected area of Bhir Mound. The boundary wall and gate of this stadium has not been completely removed. This site is under increasing similar pressure from the local population."



Status of Site Boundaries

- The borders and buffer zone of the property are considered adequate.

II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- The World Heritage values of the property are considered to have been maintained.
- No changes to its authenticity/integrity are considered to have occurred or are foreseen.

II.4 Management

Administrative and Management Arrangements

- The Deputy Director, Sub Regional Office, DOAM, Taxila, is responsible for its management.
- The property's Management Plan describes the system of administration of the site.
- The property is protected under the Antiquities Act, 1975.
- Proposals are under consideration to amend and strengthen the Antiquities Act.

Present State of Conservation

- "Recently, a Master Plan for the Development and Restoration of Archaeological Sites from Taxila to the Swat Valley has been approved with a cost of 200 million Rupees. The work will be started and when the concerned authorities release the funds".
- A sports stadium was constructed on the protected area of Bhir Mound. The boundary wall and gate of this stadium has not been completely removed. The site is under increasing similar pressure from the local population.

Staffing and Training Needs

- The site is staffed by the Deputy Director, curators, archaeological conservators, conservation assistants, clerks, masons and attendants. Staffing levels are viewed as inadequate and the DOAM is seeking to obtain more staff.
- Training needs are identified in the fields of archaeology and museology for curators, and brick

and stone conservation, chemical treatment, and landscaping for conservators.

Financial Situation

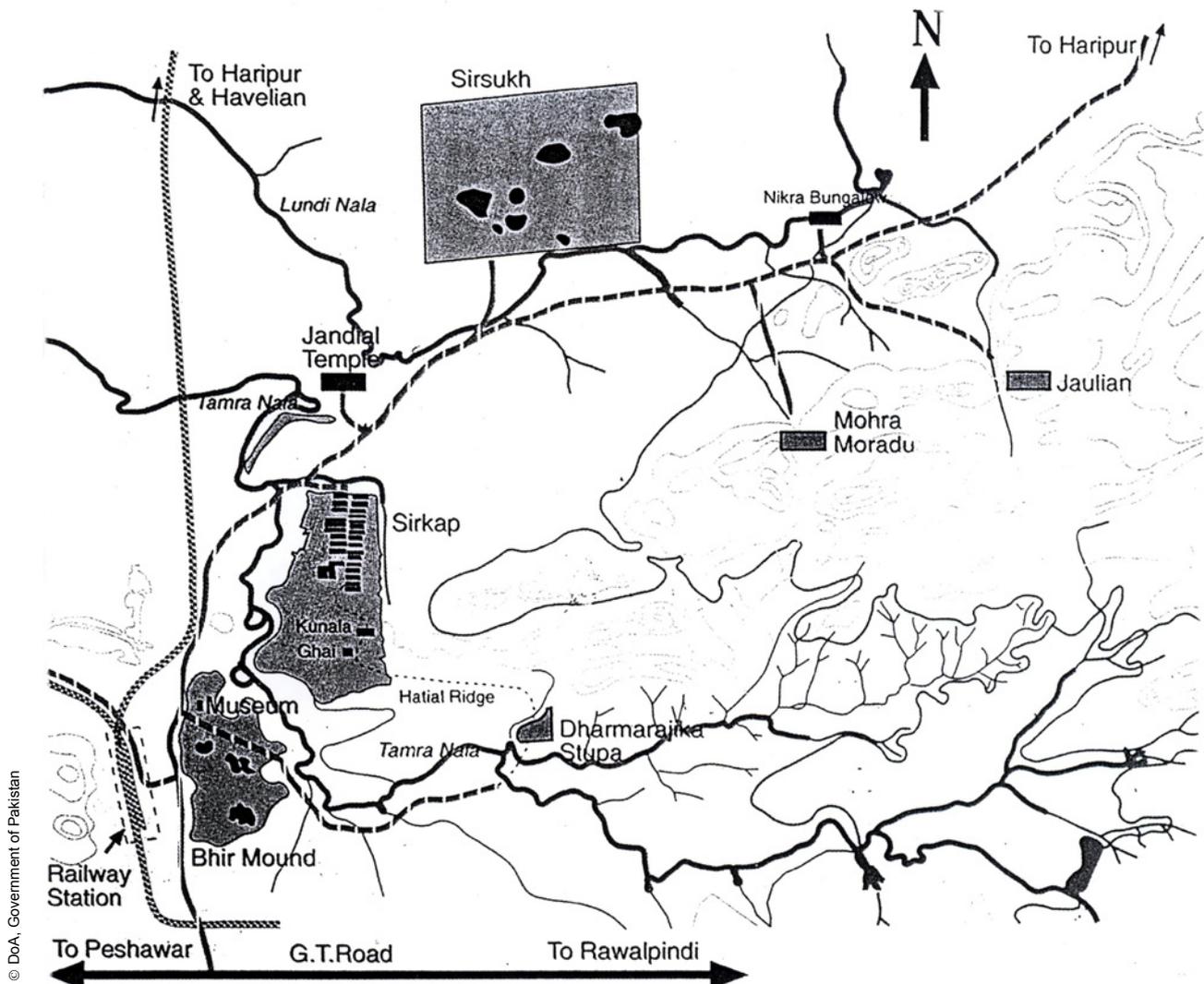
- Funding for the site comes from the annual Regular Budget of the Ministry of Culture and other Government programmes.
- Funding is recognised as inadequate.
- International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund has been approved as follows: (i) 1996, US\$28,000 Technical Assistance for the control of vegetation; (ii) 1999, US\$5,000 Promotional Assistance for improvements in on-site signage and literature.

Access to IT

- There is no access to IT at the property.

Visitor Management

- The site had 82,926 visitors in 2001 (66,809 Adults, Students, Children and Soldiers, and 16,117 Foreign Tourists).
- Basic shop, refreshment and toilet facilities are available on the site, but the need for improved visitor information facilities has been identified.
- The need for a Visitor Management Plan is recognised.
- An information booklet is available at the site, but there is no education programme.
- Inscription on the World Heritage List is seen as a major factor affecting the number of visitors to the site.



Map of the main Archaeological Sites in Taxila

II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

Threats and Risks

- Exposure of the archaeological remains to the extremes of a tropical climate.
- Uncontrolled growth of vegetation.
- Earthquakes.

Counteractive Plans

- There is an acknowledged need for an emergency or risk preparedness plan.
- Action is being taken to control vegetation, to reduce vandalism through improved security, and to improve access for visitors.
- The Master Plan for the Development and Restoration of Archaeological Sites addresses many factors affecting the property but awaits funding for its implementation.

II.6 Monitoring

Monitoring Arrangements

- The Ministry of Culture's Planning Section monitors projects.
- The Science and Technological Universities of Pakistan, Soil Investigation Laboratory Lahore, the Geological Survey of Pakistan, Environmental Department and others have been involved in monitoring exercises.
- The DOAM provides regular site monitoring according to Sir John Marshall's Conservation Manual.

Monitoring Indicators

- Acquisition of monitoring equipment, computers and site vehicles is identified as the key to developing monitoring indicators.

II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- "The present management plan is not sufficient to look after the entire Taxila complex. It needs to be strengthened on international standards as well as scientific approaches. The major problems of conservation are wild growth of vegetation, lichen fungus, termites etc."
- "The Government of Pakistan has established a protected zone in the valley, which covers all important areas of archaeological interest."
- A number of programmes for the conservation of Taxila have been prepared for implementation in 2003-2005.
- Both financial and technical assistance is required from the World Heritage Fund.

* State of Conservation Reports

1995 SC95/CONF.203/5. The DOAM, in co-operation with the World Heritage Centre, was requested to (i) carry out scientific studies on vegetation control to minimize damage, and (ii) appraise the impact of heavy industry and stone quarrying in the Taxila Valley, identified during the systematic monitoring mission carried out in March-April 1995. The Government of Pakistan had submitted a technical co-operation request to carry out the vegetation control study. The Centre was assisting the DOAM to prepare a project proposal to address the issues referred to under (ii) above, and to redefine, if necessary, the boundaries of the Taxila World Heritage Site, including a thorough study of the legal regimes protecting the Taxila Valley.

1995 SC95/CONF.201/4. The Bureau requested the DOAM, to carry out scientific studies on vegetation control and to appraise the impact of heavy industry and stone quarrying in the Taxila Valley. The World Heritage Centre's mission in March 1995 observed that the nomination file, on the basis of which the property was inscribed, did not clearly indicate the number of sites it contained. The mission noted concern over the expansion of the industrial estates located within the Valley which, despite their location outside the very limited buffer zone, risk, nonetheless, to impact upon the overall integrity of this World Heritage Site. The limestone blasting and quarrying activities in the Valley also need to be monitored in view of the alleged impact on the structural stability of the Jaulian site, Dharmajika Temple and the Bhir Stupa. International and national funding to establish a site conservation laboratory must be sought. Specific recommendations on stucco preservation, roofing, drainage and other conservation measures were to be presented in a monitoring report under preparation with the Sub-regional Office of the DOAM. The mission noted the Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism's positive attitude concerning the establishment of a national monitoring mechanism as a management tool for the conservation of World Heritage sites in Pakistan.

(continued on page 90)

* State of Conservation Reports (continued)

1999 SC99/CONF.204/5. It was reported that a stone quarry was closed to reduce its negative impact on the remains of the Jaulian site, Dharmajika Temple and Bhir Mound. However, a report on the impact of heavy industry has not been submitted by the authorities. During a mission in February 1999, the construction of a football stadium on an unexcavated area of the Bhir Mound was observed. The construction was on an archaeological area, which the Government of Pakistan had purchased in 1954. In March 1999 the Director of the World Heritage Centre wrote to the Minister of Culture requesting that urgent measures be taken to ensure the preservation of Bhir Mound. Another concern of the 1999 mission was evidence of illegal excavations at two of the archaeological sites in Taxila. The Government of Pakistan confirmed that excavation by looters in the Buddhist monastery sites had increased in the past two years. The mission also reported the construction of a second heavy industry complex and military base within Taxila Valley.

2000 SC2000/CONF.204/10. The Bureau heard that a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission had visited Taxila in September 2000 and would report at the next session.

2000 SC2000/CONF.204/4. The Committee noted the report of the joint UNESCO/ICOMOS mission. The construction of the football stadium had ceased and demolition would soon be underway. The authorities were urged to concentrate on conserving already exposed remains before excavating undisturbed sites. The national programme to prevent illegal excavation and trafficking in artefacts should be applied to Taxila. Existing boundaries and buffer zones need to be managed to protect the setting. An impact assessment is necessary for heavy industry and military compounds in the area. Co-operation between planning, development and cultural heritage agencies needs to be strengthened. The authorities may wish to consider proposing the site for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee requested the Government to implement these recommendations.