

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### State Party

Lao People's Democratic Republic

### State, Province or Region

The property is located in Xiengkhuang Province.

### Name of Property

Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhuang – Plain of Jars

### Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

The serial property comprises 15 components. The geographical coordinates of the property central point to the nearest second are 19°27'21" North and 103°17'39" East, and the components lie between 19°16'26" and 19°38'14" North and 102°53'06" and 103°41'60" East.

ID No.	Name of the Component Part	Region(s)/District(s)	Coordinates of the Central Point	Area of Nominated Component of the Property (ha)	Area of the Buffer Zone (ha)	Map No.
1	Site 1	Paek District/Na O & Ban Ang Villages	N 19°25'48" E 103°9'18"	33.97	89.61	Figure 3
2	Site 2	Phaxay District/Ban Na Kho Village	N 19°19'12" E 103°9'15"	13.19	133.00	Figure 4
3-1-3	Site 3 – Groups 1 & 3	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'46" E 103°9'33"	12.31	352.75	Figure 5
3-2	Site 3 – Group 2	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'24" E 103°8'35"	0.38		
3-4	Site 3 – Group 4	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'32" E 103°9'8"	0.53		
3-5	Site 3 – Group 5	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'28" E 103°8'57"	1.32		
3-7	Site 3 – Group 7	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'35" E 103°9'15"	5.60		
8	Site 8	Phaxay District/Ban Xiengdi Village	N 19°17'3" E 103°9'11"	8.39		
12	Site 12	Paek District/Ban Phakeo Village	N 19°28'59" E 103°25'59"	1.25	1.76	Figure 6
21	Site 21	Paek District/ Khangnongluang Village	N 19°28'41" E 103°5'14"	32.34	146.89	Figure 7
23	Site 23	Kham District/Ban Namhom Village	N 19°32'43" E 103°41'42"	24.44	33.41	Figure 8
25	Site 25	Phoukood District/ Ban Songhak Village	N 19°37'48" E 103°5'46"	8.03	6.14	Figure 9

**Table 1. Geographical coordinates of component parts to the nearest second**

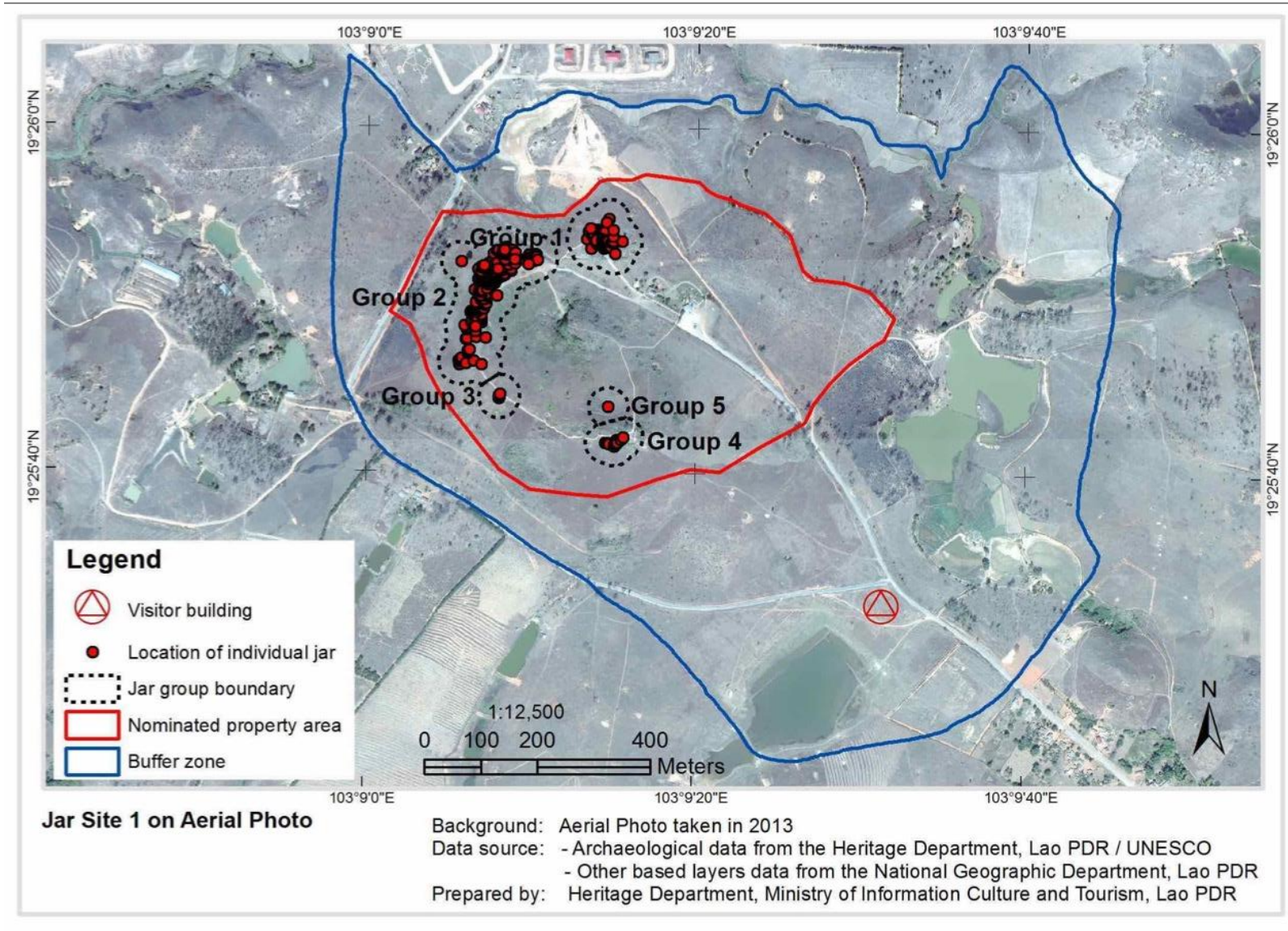
ID No.	Name of the Component Part	Region(s)/District(s)	Coordinates of the Central Point	Area of Nominated Component of the Property (ha)	Area of the Buffer Zone (ha)	Map No.
28	Site 28	Phoukood District/ Ban Nakhuan Village	N 19°34'16" E 102°53'14"	0.38	6.73	Figure 10
42	Site 42	Kham District/Phou Xang Village	N 19°35'21" E 103°34'5"	22.66	114.88	Figure 11
52	Site 52	Paek District/Ban Phakeo Village	N 19°29'42" E 103°25'56"	9.77	127.77	Figure 6
Total area (ha)				173.56	1,012.94	

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

The nominated property is a serial nomination of 15 components.

The boundaries of each component have been determined on the basis of ensuring the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value have been included, and in an area of adequate size. This has also been influenced by the protective designation of the property under the *Law on National Heritage 2013* and under a provincial decree, and by the available effective management for the property. As such, the boundaries include all of the jars and other attributes necessary to convey the significance and characteristics of each component as it contributes to the complete expression of the Outstanding Universal Value, including its integrity and authenticity.

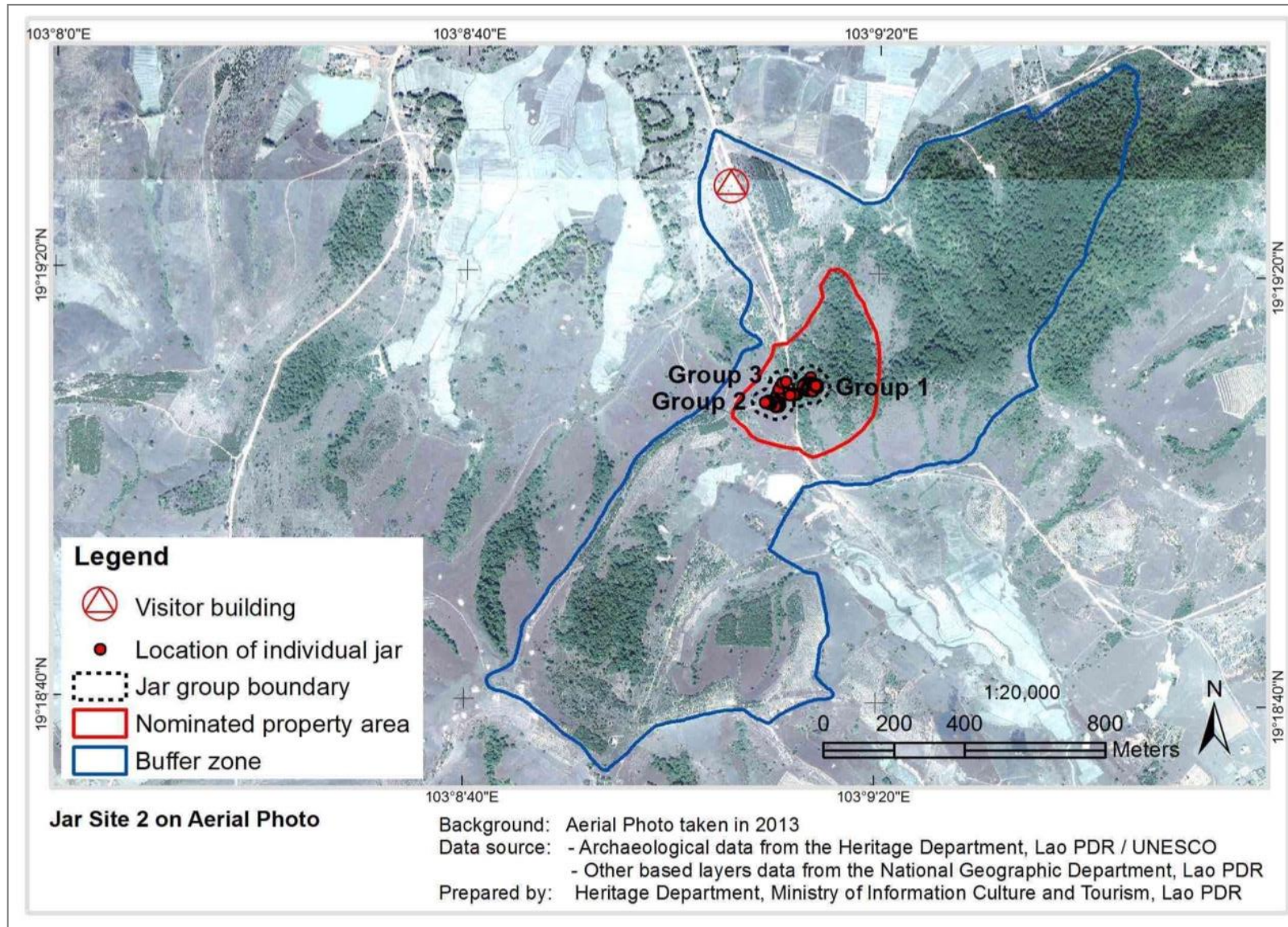
The buffer zone boundaries have been determined in order to provide a sufficient area within which to control development or other factors that might have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. These boundaries have also been influenced by the protective designation existing for the buffer zones under the *Law on National Heritage 2013* and a provincial decree.



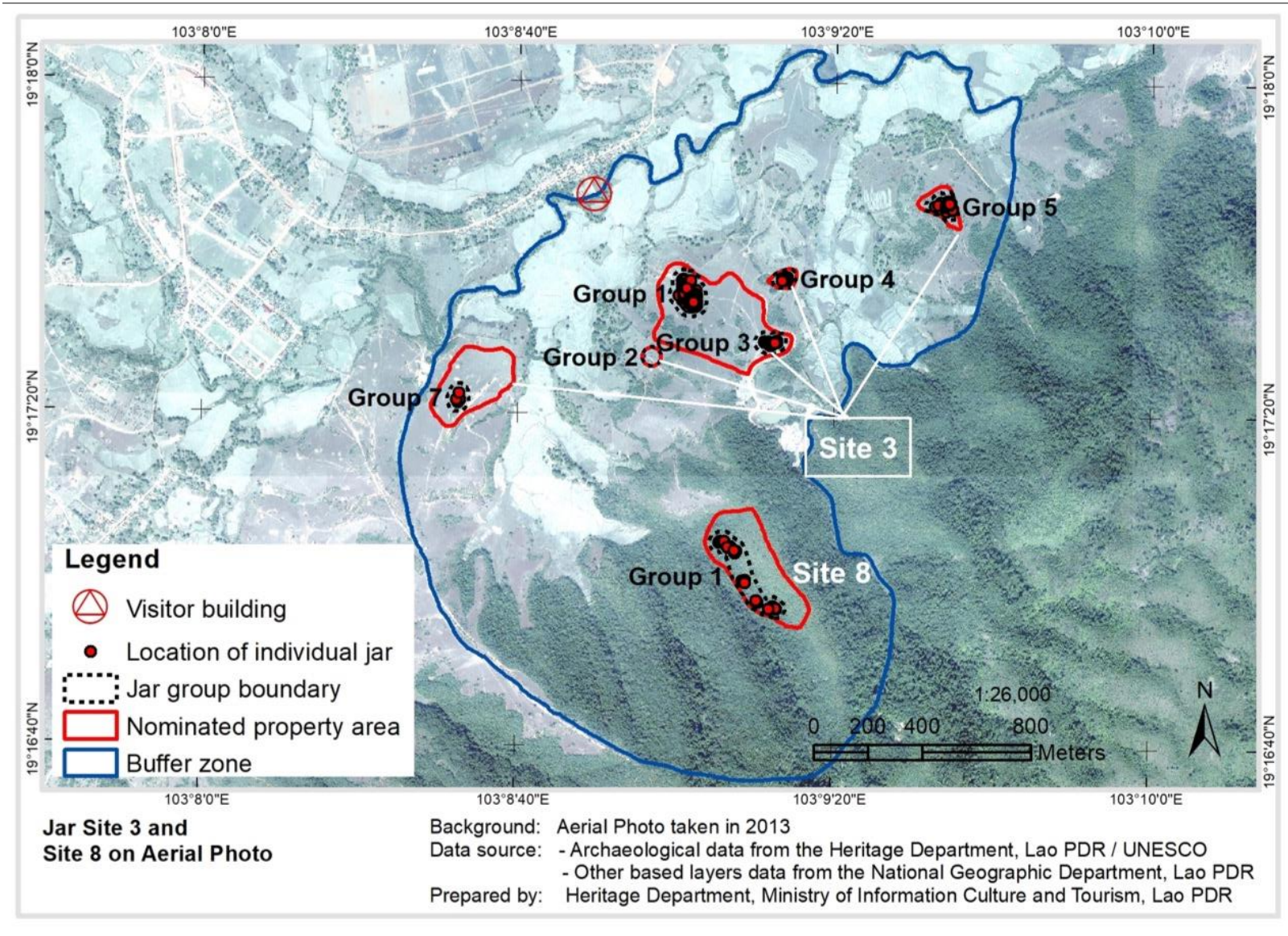
Site 1 plan  
Source: Department of Heritage

**A4 maps of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone**

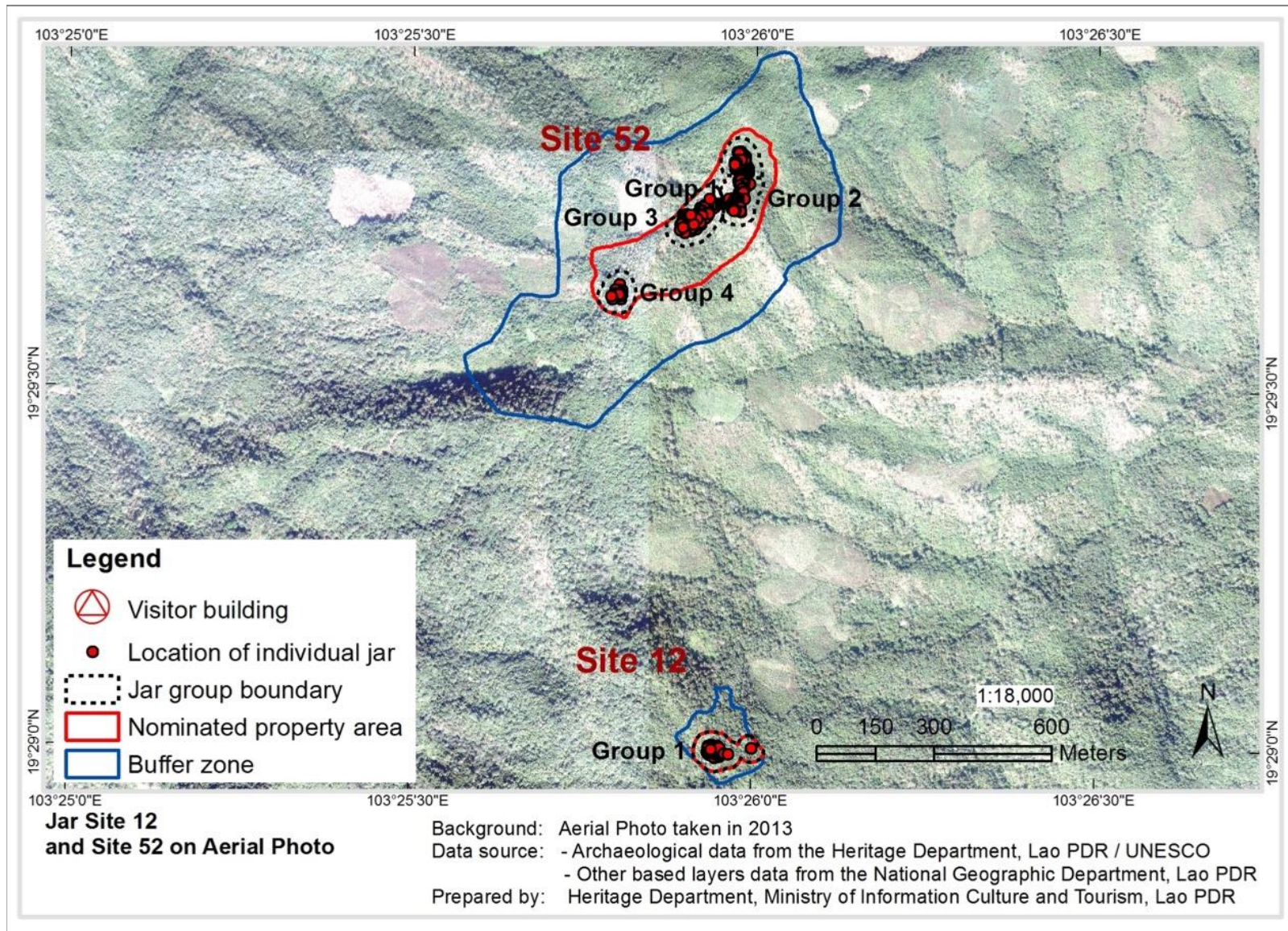




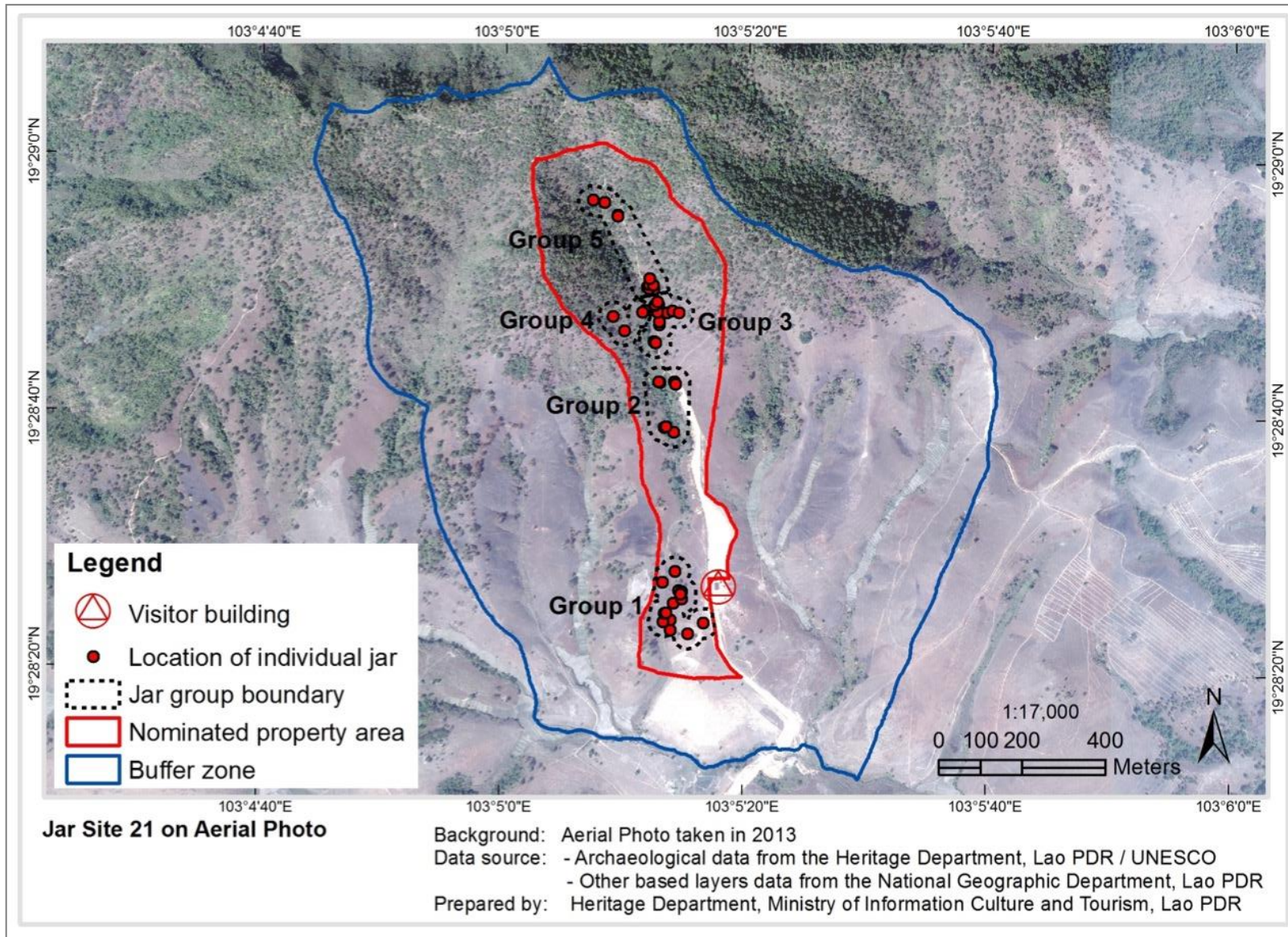




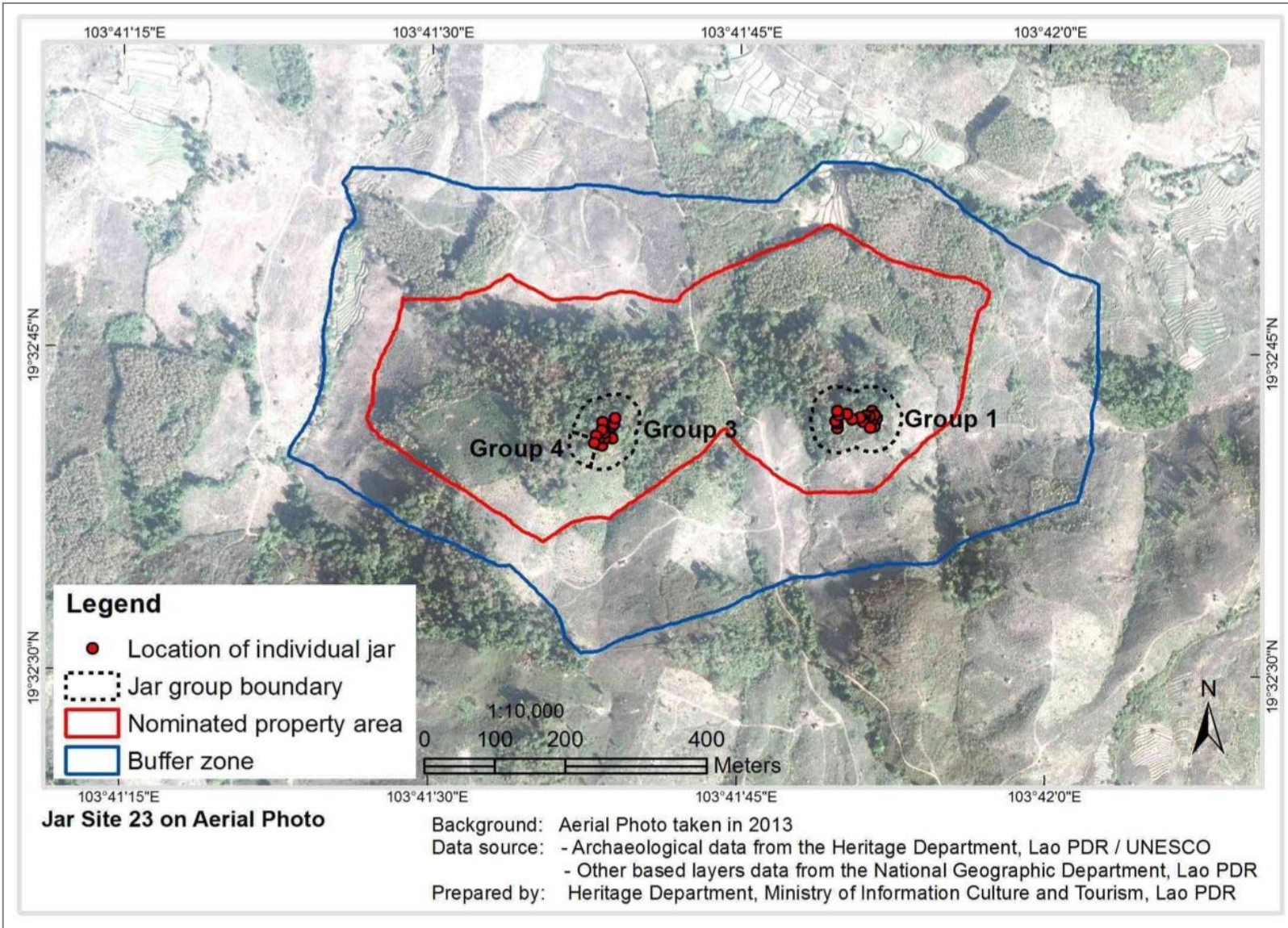




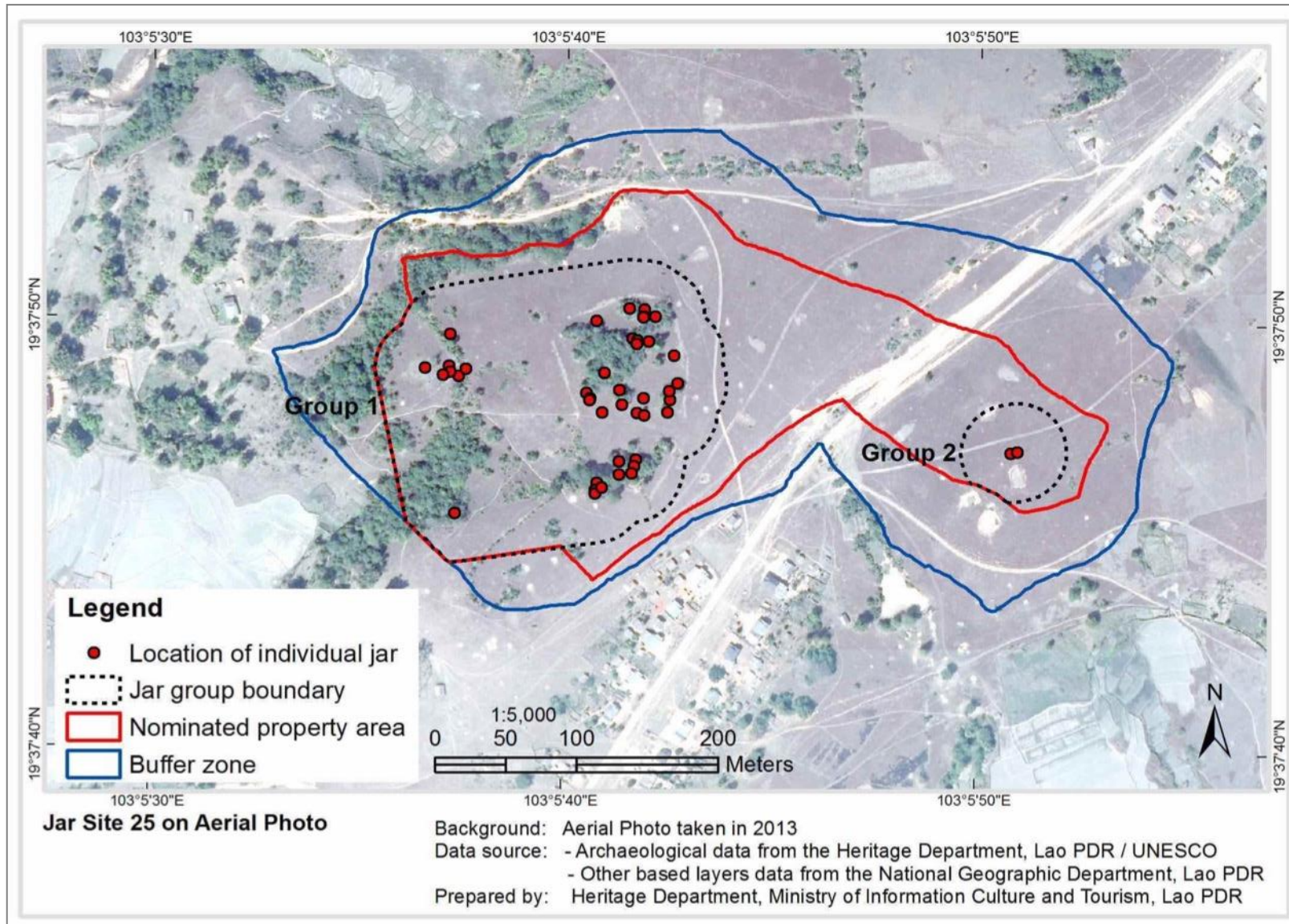




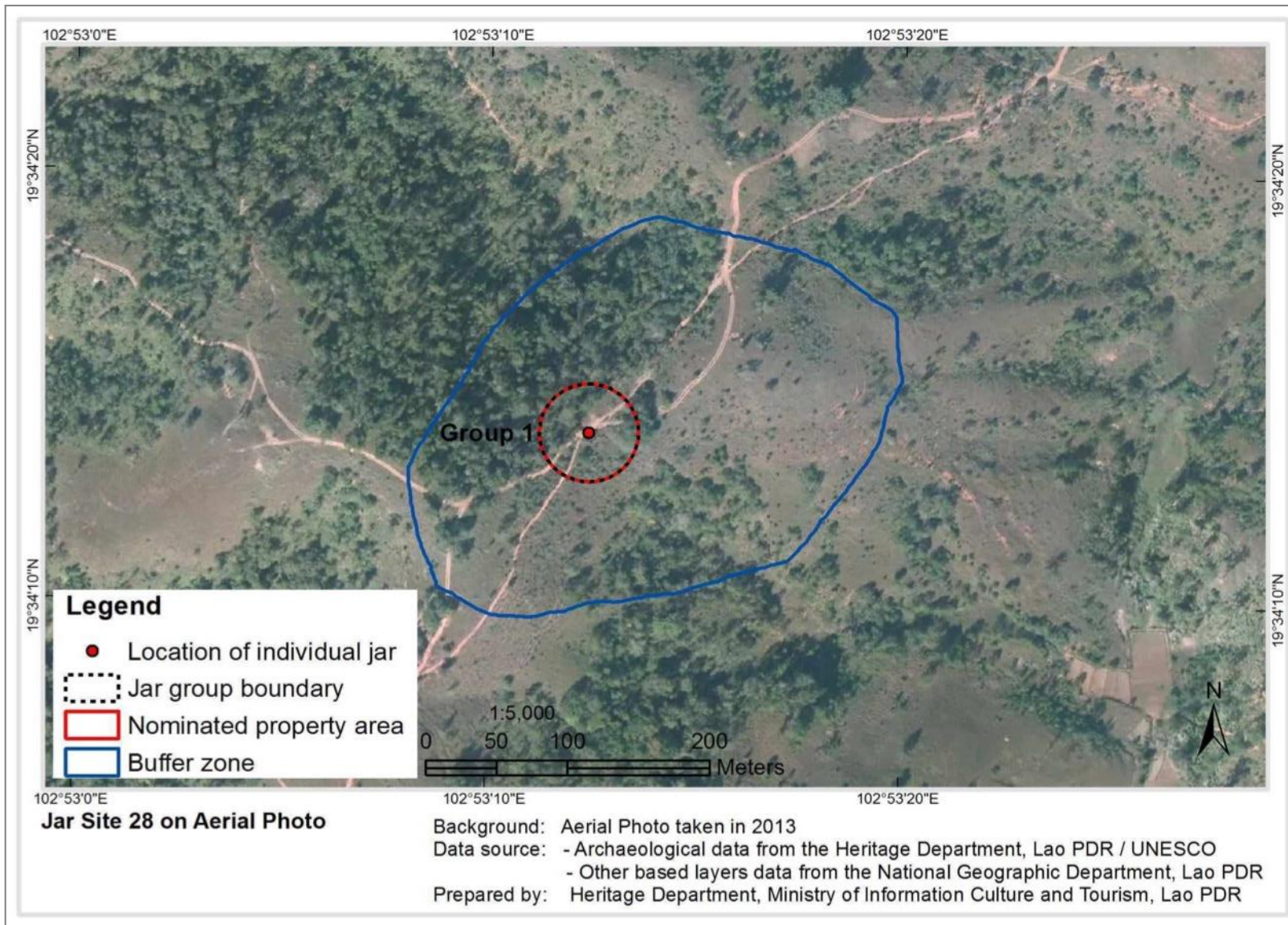




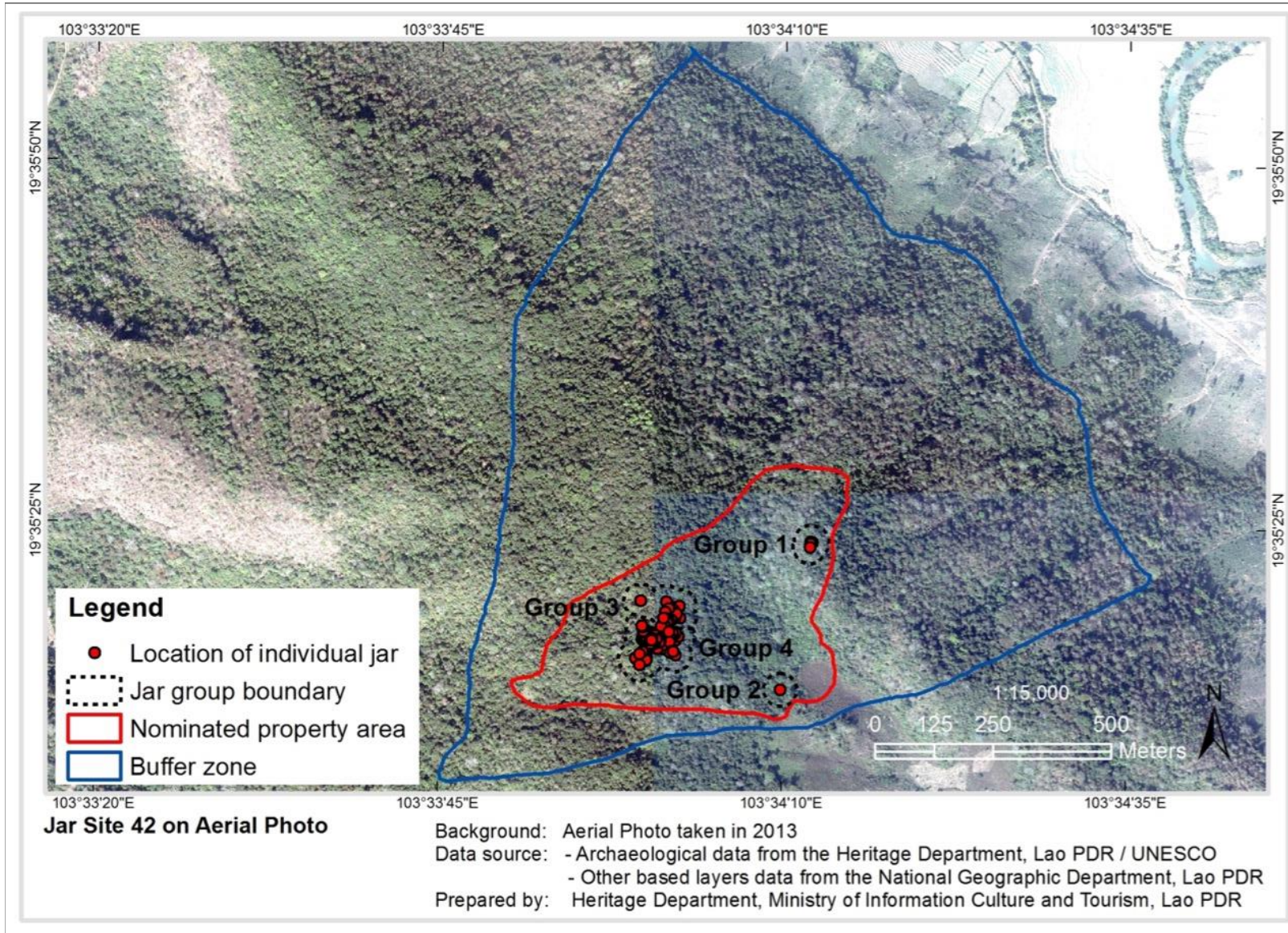












## **Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)**

The property is nominated under Criterion (iii).

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

#### ***Brief synthesis***

The Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhuang province of central Laos is a serial property of 15 components. The ancient jar sites contain extensive and remarkable evidence of funerary practices, and are the outstanding evidence of the Iron Age civilization which created the sites.

Most of the funerary sites are located in elevated positions on hills or ridges, although one major site is located on the low hills of a central plain. The sites include 1,325 ancient stone jars as well as numerous associated stone discs, secondary burials and other features. The jars are the dominant and impressive feature of the sites being large in size and carved mostly from sandstone. Some of the jars are massive. In addition, the property includes exceptional sites with the largest concentration of jars, over 400 in one case, representing a very large proportion of the known evidence, as well as a range of smaller sites representing quarry sites or the geographic extent of sites.

The stone jars and disks have been carefully crafted and in some cases, especially disks, they exhibit decorative carving with animal or anthropomorphic figures, concentric circles, circular mouldings or a central knob or loop.

The funerary sites are believed to date from before the Iron Age (between about 500 BCE and 500 CE) into historic times, and are evidence of a substantial and widespread culture which existed in the region. Many details of this culture remain a mystery but the jar sites are its pre-eminent testimony.

Following this initial period, the jar sites were used by other cultures until the 18<sup>th</sup> century CE, as reflected in the complex archaeological evidence.

Criterion (iii): The sites are exceptional testimony to the cultural traditions associated with funerary practices, and to the civilization which created the sites but which disappeared sometime after 500 CE. The megalithic jar sites are impressive because of the size of jars and the technological skill to produce and move the jars from quarry sites to funerary sites, as well as because of the large number of surviving jars, disks and other features spread in groups across a large area of the current province. The sites include important archaeological evidence related to funerary practices, possibly of different eras and cultures, as well as of the material culture of the ancient civilisation which created the jars, and the locations of the funerary sites are highly suggestive of cultural meaning. The funerary sites are the outstanding surviving evidence of this civilisation. While the use of jars in funerary sites is known in other parts of Laos, northeast India and Southeast Asia, the density of sites in Xiengkhuang is remarkable.

#### ***Integrity***

The Megalithic Jar Sites include the attributes necessary to express the Outstanding Universal Value. The 15 components include 1,325 ancient stone jars as well as numerous associated discs, secondary burials and other features. These include nine components of



the five major sites (Sites 1, 2, 3 – Groups 1 & 3, 3 – Group 2, 3 – Group 4, 3 – Group 5, 3 – Group 7, 42 and 52) which have the largest number of attributes of all the known jar sites in the province (1,186 jars and 198 discs), as well as six smaller components (Sites 8, 12, 21, 23, 25 and 28). The property is of an adequate size to include the sites and their attributes.

There are a number of factors in the past and currently which have or may result in adverse effects. These include looting, bomb and other war damage, unexploded ordnance, vegetation growth, inappropriate tourist activities including graffiti, as well as inappropriate development in the property or buffer zones, and a lack of active management.

### ***Authenticity***

The property displays a high level of authenticity. The form, design, materials and location of the jars and discs are all original, noting the effects of age and the damage to some attributes. In most cases, the setting remains as an agricultural or forest landscape, which is believed to be consistent with or at least sympathetic to the original. The archaeological deposits are believed to be little disturbed, with very limited excavation having been undertaken, although war-time bomb damage has had an impact at some sites, and some looting and disturbance by animals or agricultural practices has occurred.

### ***Management and protection requirements***

The property is protected under the *Law on National Heritage 2013*, a provincial decree and provincial guidelines regarding provincial and village-level protection, management, conservation and support for heritage. The property has a management system which operates at three levels – national, provincial and district/village. At each level, there are key instruments which identify roles and responsibilities, and in some cases specific management activities.

The management system operates through a range of agencies at the various levels, especially the provincial Plain of Jars Heritage Technical Division, with day to day management of most sites being the responsibility of villages in the vicinity of sites, supported by the Division. The national Department of Heritage plays a key technical role in research, conservation, heritage impact assessment and overall monitoring. Coordination is achieved through national and provincial committees.

Long-term management expectations include: enhanced conservation of the sites; ongoing research into the sites; avoidance or mitigation of adverse developments; harmonious tourism development; strengthened community understanding and support; and increased conservation capacity.

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

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