
Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan (Japan)

No 1593

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan

Location

Osaka Prefecture, Japan

Brief description

Located on a plateau above the Osaka Plain, this serial property of 45 components contains 49 kofun ('old mound'), a large and distinctive type of burial mound. The selected kofun are found in two major clusters, and are the richest tangible representation of the culture of the Kofun period in Japan from the 3rd to 6th centuries. This was a period before Japanese society entered into a new phase with an established centralised state under the influence of the Chinese system of law. The kofun are found in different scales, and in four shapes, the most distinctive of which is the 'keyhole' type (but there are also scallop, round and square plan forms). The kofun contain a range of grave goods (weapons, armour, ornaments); and the mounds were decorated by clay figures known as *haniwa*. Cylinder-shaped *haniwa* arranged in rows were extensively used, and there are also representations of objects, houses, animals and people. Understood as tombs for kings' clans and affiliates during this period, some of the kofun are designated as *Ryobo* (imperial mausolea) and managed today by Japan's Imperial Household. The nominated kofun have been selected from a total of 160,000 from around Japan, and represent the 'middle kofun' period (late 4th to late 5th centuries).

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of 45 *sites*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

22 November 2010

'Mozu-Furuichi Kofun, Ancient Tumulus Clusters'

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations and Technical Evaluation Mission

Desk reviews have been provided by ICOMOS International Scientific Committees, members and independent experts.

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 11 to 17 September 2018.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

A letter was sent to the State Party on 1 October 2018 requesting further information about disaster risk management/typhoon impacts, legal protection issues, community awareness and involvement, 'basic improvement plans', and Heritage Impact Assessment.

The State Party provided some corrections to the nomination dossier on 13 September 2018. Additional information was received from the State Party on 13 September and 31 October 2018.

An Interim Report was provided to the State Party on 21 December 2018 summarising the issues identified by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel. Further information was requested in the Interim Report including: importance of the Kofun period in the wider geocultural context; the Japanese concept of *seibi*; contemporary intangible heritage and rituals; the buffer zone for component 44; and the general history of tree cover on the kofun. A follow-up meeting was held to clarify some of these questions on 9 January 2019 which was followed by further written advice from ICOMOS on 16 January 2019.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 27 February 2019 and has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this evaluation report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

13 March 2019

2 Description of the property

Note: The nomination dossier and additional information contain detailed descriptions of this property, its history and its state of conservation. Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, this report only provides a short summary of the most relevant aspects.

Description and history

The Kofun period of Japanese history (from the middle of the 3rd century to the second half of the 6th century) was one of transition in the East Asian region. Changes in regional power relations occurred as a consequence of political shifts in China, resulting in the emergence of Yamato kingly power in Japan. Following the Kofun period, Japan entered the Asuka period, characterised by an established centralised state in the 7th century, influenced by the Chinese system of law. Written records for this period are few, and are based on Korean and Chinese records of a Japanese power known as the Wa Kingdom which was able to conduct diplomatic relations with other powers in China and the Korean Peninsula.

The Kofun period is tangibly expressed by the distinctive burial mounds called kofun (or 'old mounds' in Japanese language). There are approximately 160,000 kofun found throughout Japan across a distance of 1200 km. The kofun

are understood to be the burials of kings and their associates, demonstrating the social hierarchy of the period through the variations of size and scale of the kofun, and in their spatial clustering. Despite many archaeological surveys, no other significant archaeological sites have been identified from this period, underscoring the central importance of the kofun.

The nominated series comprises 45 components occurring in two clusters that are separated by approximately 10 km – the Mozu group (in the northwestern part of Sakai City) and the Furuichi group (Habikino City and Fujiidera City) - situated on a plateau overlooking the Osaka Plain, an important political centre of the period. There are 21 components in the Mozu area, and 24 components in the Furuichi area. The 45 components contain 49 kofun which date to the Middle Kofun period (late 4th to late 5th centuries), the peak of the Kofun period.

The kofun are found according to four standardised geometric plan forms. The largest and most distinctive is the 'keyhole' type; and the smaller kofun are found in scallop, round and square shapes. The kofun vary in size - the largest of the kofun within the nominated series are close to 500 metres in length, and are significant accomplishments of earthen architecture and engineering (eg. the Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun (component 2-1) and the Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun (component 33-1)). Others are in the range of 70-90 metres in length, and the smallest is approximately 26 metres in length. The design of the kofun incorporates a stage for funerary rituals, decorated with clay figures known as *haniwa*. These take various shapes – including cylinders, and a wide range of representational shapes such as houses, tools, weapons and armour, human figures and animals.

The methods and materials of construction of the mounds, and their contents are described in detail in the nomination dossier. The steep sloping sides of these complex earthen structures are paved with stones. Some of the larger keyhole-shaped kofun have one or more stage-like projections called *tsukuridashi*, interpreted as a space for ritual due to the presence of *haniwa*. Each mound was surrounded by a moat (filled with water or dry), and some of the larger and more complex kofun had double or triple moats. Rows of *haniwa* were arranged on the top of the mounds, on the terraces and around the ritual spaces. Other grave goods include bronze mirrors, bracelet-like stone objects, iron weapons and armour. Originally the earthen mounds and *haniwa* would have been exposed, unlike today's typically tree-covered appearance. Following the ICOMOS Interim Report, the State Party has advised in its additional information received in February 2019 that the history of the tree cover varies amongst the components, but in general, the original appearance of the kofun was maintained for a relatively short period and that they have long been covered by trees. Research at some kofun has revealed that black pine forests formed on the mounds from the late 5th century, and evergreen broad-leaved forests became prevalent between the 9th and 12th centuries. These areas were accessed for firewood collection, particularly from the Edo Period.

Inside the kofun are coffins containing the remains of the deceased, located within burial compartments. The nomination dossier provides an overview of the types of coffins found in the nominated components.

A number of the nominated kofun are designated as *Ryobo* (graves of the ancestors of the Imperial Family) and are managed by the Imperial Household. The other kofun are understood to be the burial places for elite members of the society, and the kofun as a whole are seen as demonstrating social and political hierarchies of the period.

All kofun are considered to be sacred places, particularly the *Ryobo*, placing importance on a respectful ambience and setting. Since the Meiji Period, access to the *Ryobo* has been restricted to the Imperial family and the Imperial Household Agency. The rituals conducted by the Imperial Family include the 'Shoshin-sai' (that marks the date of the death of the deceased emperor) and 'Shikinen-sai' (conducted every 100 years). Many of the *Ryobo* have facilities for worship (including *torii* gates, lanterns, stone fences and wash basins). There is community volunteer involvement in the care of the kofun, and local community festivals, such as an autumn festival for Emperor Ojin associated with the Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun (component 33). The historical origins of these festivals vary in their time depth.

Field survey and repair of Imperial tombs was carried out by the Shogunate and Utsunomiya Domain in the mid-19th century. At that time places of worship were established at the *Ryobo*, giving them their current appearance. In the Meiji Period, the Ministry of Imperial Household was established and took responsibility for the management of the Imperial tombs, an arrangement that continues today through the Imperial Household Agency.

Boundaries

The area of the 45 components totals 166.6 ha, with buffer zones totaling 890 ha.

ICOMOS considers that all components are clearly delineated, aided by the boundary marking provided by the National Land Office. Boundaries of components accord with the boundaries of the designated *Ryobo* or Historic Sites.

The buffer zones are based on various factors, including topography, land use patterns and features such as roads and railways. The buffer zones are divided into two zones. The areas closest to the kofun are the 'Prioritized Zone' to which stricter provisions for building heights/designs, and advertising apply in order to protect the visual settings and sightlines. The establishment of the buffer zones has been constrained in by the proximity of the modern urban environments.

Based on a request by ICOMOS, the State Party, in its additional information received in February 2019, has agreed to enlarge the buffer zone for the Minegazuka Kofun (component 44). Although the area to be added is modest in size, it will assist in the protection of the

immediate setting of the kofun. The State Party has advised that the process of legal designation of the revised buffer zone boundary should be completed by August 2020.

State of conservation

The selected kofun are of considerable antiquity and there have been changes to the sites and their settings over this time. The kofun are vulnerable to processes of soil erosion, several have been consolidated (eg. components 20, 21), and there are plans for consolidation work at others (notably component 2-1).

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation is reasonable/good.

Factors affecting the property

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the property are those associated with the close proximity of urban development, creating significant potential pressures on the buffer zones. The State Party advises that intrusive elements are proposed for removal to improve the setting in a number of components.

Housing developments from the 1960s have occurred very close to the boundaries of a number of components (such as components 29 and 30), and have impacted on the settings, views and inter-relationships between the kofun. There are more than 80,000 residents living within the buffer zones. Since the 1950s, many areas in private ownership (including residential properties) have been sold to public authorities in order to strengthen the conservation and interpretation. The State Party estimates that the conversion of private land to public ownership has now occurred for 99% of the Mozu area and 85% of the Furuichi area.

A number of alterations to the kofun can be observed, some moats have been filled in, embankments have been changed, and soil has been added or removed for various reasons. A number of the components are now used as parks or playgrounds, as well as a cemetery, viewing deck and so on. These alterations and uses were established prior to the application of the current legal protection for the property.

Despite the evident pressures of urbanisation, development pressure is managed by the legal restrictions applied to the components and their buffer zones (particularly within the 'Prioritized Zone' nearest to the component boundaries). No development or public access is permitted to the *Ryobo* (other than for the officials of the Imperial Household Agency and occasionally for researchers for specific purposes). The uses of some of the nominated components as public parkland creates ongoing maintenance and management pressures, and care needs to be taken to ensure that

further parkland developments are restricted and will be subject to Heritage Impact Assessment.

There are a number of identified park development proposals including: new park pathways; re-development proposals near the station; the planned World Heritage Interpretation Centre; Bicycle Museum; Daisen Park Improvement Plan; and the Railroad Elevation Project. While ICOMOS understands that some of these have been halted to allow for the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and consideration by the World Heritage Mozu-Furuichi Council, the impacts on the potential Outstanding Universal Value need to be rigorously assessed. There are also other new development proposals (such as medium and high-rise apartment projects) located beyond the boundaries of the buffer zones which have potential impacts on the wider settings.

Significant pressures on the conservation of the kofun are erosion of the earthen mounds, poorly managed vegetation growth, and the need to maintain water quality of the moats (17 components have water-filled moats). Many of the kofun are covered with trees, and these require careful management to ensure the conservation of the archaeological materials. Control and removal of decaying trees is therefore an ongoing management task; and extra soil has been added to some of the components to arrest erosion and introduce grass.

Tourism is not a major factor affecting the property at present, although there are expectations that visitor numbers will grow if the kofun are inscribed in the World Heritage List.

3 Proposed justification for inscription

Proposed justification

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The selected kofun demonstrate in an outstanding way the Kofun period in Japan, a period of political turmoil in East Asia;
- The forms, scales, sizes and contents of the kofun the Kofun period in Japan express political and social hierarchies;
- The kofun of the Mozu-Furuichi group are exceptional technical achievements of earthen construction;
- The kofun of the Mozu-Furuichi group are closely clustered and demonstrate the characteristics of the kofun, including examples of the four standardised plan types, and evidence of distinctive funerary rituals (demonstrated by the form and contents of the kofun, including grave goods and *haniwa*).

Comparative analysis

The Comparative Analysis is presented in two parts: firstly, the establishment of a comparative analysis with relevant sites within the world and the geo-cultural context, including World Heritage and Tentative List properties; and secondly, the comparative analysis of kofun sites within Japan to demonstrate the rationale for the selection of the components of the series.

The State Party established its comparative analysis according to various dimensions of the kofun, namely, the range of types of mounded tombs, the standardised plan types, and evidence of elaborate and distinctive funerary rituals. These aspects are compared by the State Party with World Heritage properties in all regions and historical periods in the world, but in this case, the most relevant geo-cultural context is East Asia.

Within the context of East Asia, there are a number of World Heritage properties with significant burial mounds and tombs including from as early as the 3rd century BC (Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, China) and extending through to the 20th century (Imperial Tombs of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, China; Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, Republic of Korea). The examples most useful for comparative purposes are those from a similar timeframe of history in East Asia (4th-7th centuries), namely: Capital cities and Tombs of the Ancient Koguryo Kingdom, China; Complex of Koguryo Tombs, Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Gyeongju Historic Areas, Republic of Korea; and the Baekje Historic Areas, Republic of Korea. In Japan, the recently inscribed Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region (4th-10th centuries) is also relevant. There are also several relevant comparators in the Tentative List of the Republic of Korea (Goryeong Jisandong Daegaya Tumuli and the Gaya Tumuli of Gimhae – Haman).

It can be readily appreciated that while burial mounds are not uncommon in the world or the geocultural region, there are also important differences in relation to the historical periods, cultural contexts, and tangible characteristics between these. A detailed analysis is provided by the State Party to demonstrate that the kofun are the primary tangible records available for the Kofun period in Japan, and have distinctive characteristics, including their forms (particularly the elaborate and complex 'keyhole' form), contents (including the *haniwa*), and ritual purposes.

As the comparative analysis was also required to justify the selection of the series, the kofun of the Osaka Prefecture were compared with the other areas in Japan where kofun are found (extending from Kyushu to the Tohoku region and containing 160,000 kofun); and the selected 45 components have been compared within the context of the 89 surviving kofun in the Mozu-Furuichi area. The selection of the serial components was based on the ability of the kofun to represent the historical period and the characteristics of the kofun, as well as the state of conservation and current setting. The selected

components demonstrate all forms of kofun and a range of sizes and other attributes. The Mozu-Furuichi group is the largest extant grouping of kofun in Japan in terms of size range, complexity, and concentration. For this reason, the State Party has advised that there are no intentions to further extend the series.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (iii) and (iv).

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

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the selected kofun represent and provide exceptional testimony to the culture of the Kofun period of Japan's ancient history. While 160,000 kofun are found throughout Japan, the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun group demonstrates the period's socio-political structures, social class differences and highly sophisticated funerary system.

ICOMOS considers that the selected kofun form a coherent and well-conserved representation of the construction and use of burial mounds in the Kofun period of Japan. These burial mounds are the richest source of insight into this important stage of the human histories of the Japanese archipelago.

Criterion (iv): *be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the selected kofun demonstrate in an outstanding way a specific type of burial mound original to the Japanese archipelago. In addition, these distinctive burial mounds are the primary tangible evidence of the historical period which was turbulent and contributed to the formation of ancient kingly power. In this way, the tombs are able to represent the structures of power during this historical period. Following the ICOMOS Interim Report, the State Party has argued for the importance of the Kofun period, in the additional information submitted in February 2019, based on the political and social situation in East Asia, and the complex relationships that emerged; and the significance of the Kofun construction in Japan as a response to the political situation in East Asia.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated kofun demonstrate an outstanding type of ancient East Asian burial mound construction. The role of the kofun in the establishment of social hierarchies within this particular and significant historical period, as well as the tangible attributes such as the clay sculptures, moats and geometric terraced mounds reinforced by stone, are outstanding.

ICOMOS considers that the serial approach is justified and that the nominated property meets criteria (iii) and (iv).

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The integrity of the nominated serial property is based on the rationale for the selection of the components and their ability to convey the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the kofun; and the material evidence of the burial mounds and their contents. The intactness of the individual components and the series as a whole (including consideration of the adequacy of their boundaries), the state of conservation and the way major pressures are managed are also determinants of integrity.

The selection of the components of the series is justified by the State Party on the basis that the Middle Kofun period is best able to represent its historical significance; that the clustering of well-preserved kofun in the Mozu and Furuichi areas enable the significance of the kofun to be conveyed; and that the 45 components and their tangible and intangible attributes comprise the most coherent example of this period and the characteristic burial mound traditions.

ICOMOS notes that there are some issues that impact on the integrity of the serial property. Urban development has occurred in the vicinity of the nominated areas, particularly since the second half of the 20th century. Most of the significant pressures on the kofun are derived from this context, which has resulted in various historical and contemporary layers including residential areas, parks, playgrounds, orchards, farms, shrines and cemetery. Urbanisation has also inevitably resulted in the loss of some elements (such as the filling of moats), and has reduced the ability of the historically important physical and visual links between the groups to be perceived. ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the kofun also requires continuing attention to the settings of the kofuns, and the sacred nature of their role in society.

The two areas – Mozu and Furuichi - are approximately 10 kilometres apart, but ICOMOS considers that they provide a cohesive narrative of the kingly power expressed through the clustering of the 49 kofun, the range of types and sizes, the grave goods and *haniwa*, and the continuing ritual uses and high esteem that these sites hold within Japanese society.

ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the individual components is generally satisfactory, although there are issues requiring careful management. For the most part, the state of conservation, management of pressures and boundaries and buffer zones are adequate.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the property is based on the locations and settings of the selected kofun, the archaeological studies of their antiquity, construction and contents, and

the esteem these places hold in contemporary Japanese society. Through time, the kofun have been subject to various changes in use, including fortification, housing, forestry, irrigation and parklands. The *Ryobo* components are treated as sacred sites, and rituals of the Imperial family occur at these each year.

ICOMOS notes that some kofun have been the subject of archaeological studies. The authenticity of the selected components is variable, primarily due to the changes in their surrounding environments over time (including the introduction of trees and other vegetation that now cover the earthen mounds). Many of the selected kofun exhibit high levels of authenticity in relation to their form, design, construction, and their spirit and feeling. Other components located in residential areas have a reduced sense of sacredness due to a variety of uses, including: a Buddhist cemetery (component 38), viewing deck with stairway (component 27), playground or park (components 14, 15, 27, 28, 31, 32) and building/housing developments (components 28 and 30 where the houses are very close to the boundary, but also components 16 and 22). Other impacts include new or reconstructed moats (components 7, 8 and 13), alteration of the mound profile by added soil (components 13 and 17), and planting (component 17 and also 31, which features an orchard). However, the selected components are clearly readable in their landscape settings, and their authenticity is supported by archaeological research.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that given the antiquity of the kofun and their present state of conservation, the requirements of integrity and authenticity have been met, particularly for the *Ryobo* components. However, the authenticity and integrity varies amongst the 45 components.

Evaluation of the proposed justification for inscription

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies the consideration of this nominated serial property for the World Heritage List. The nominated serial property demonstrates Outstanding Universal Value, in relation to criteria (iii) and (iv). The nominated serial property meets the requirements of authenticity and integrity, although various vulnerabilities have been identified which will need to be addressed through the systems of management and legal protection.

Attributes

The attributes of the property are the 49 burial mounds, their geometric forms, methods and materials of construction, moats, archaeological materials and contents (including grave goods, burial facilities and the *haniwa*). The settings of the kofun, including their visual presence in the Osaka region, and the remaining physical and visual links between the kofun are also important attributes. The evidence of the distinctive funerary practices, historical and contemporary ritual uses, and sacredness of the kofun are attributes of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated serial property is supported by a relevant comparative analysis, demonstrates criteria (iii) and (iv), and meets the requirements for authenticity and integrity.

4 Conservation measures and monitoring

Conservation measures

The State Party has provided a detailed schedule of past conservation works undertaken at each of the nominated components. These include ongoing archaeological research/surveys, protection of archaeological features, maintenance of worship facilities at the *Ryobo*, and conservation treatment of archaeological materials and objects. At some components, works to improve the functioning of moats, and the repair and rebuilding of retaining walls have been carried out, as well as vegetation management and felling of trees.

Monitoring

A monitoring system is set out in the nomination dossier covering indicators, frequency of monitoring and location of records for all property components and the buffer zones. This includes monitoring of the condition of the kofun and associated vegetation, development pressures, environmental pressures (climate change, vegetation, etc), impact of natural disasters and visitor levels and impacts. Monitoring activities are allocated to owners of the component properties, the Imperial Household Agency, Osaka Prefectural Government, and the City Governments of Sakai, Habikino and Fujiidera. The Agency of Cultural Affairs oversees the implementation of the monitoring arrangements.

ICOMOS considers that the monitoring system is generally adequate, although some enhancements are encouraged. It could be necessary to introduce non-invasive techniques of periodically assessing the structural stability of the mounds, given that there is evidence of past collapse and/or subsidence. In addition, the monitoring system could better incorporate the interests of the nearby residential communities.

ICOMOS considers that the conservation measures are appropriate and well-resourced, although actions by the various governments, private owners and communities must continue to be well-coordinated. The monitoring arrangements are adequate, although ICOMOS considers that they could be further enhanced through further development of non-invasive techniques for periodically monitoring the structural condition of the mounds, and indicators for monitoring the interests and support of local residential communities.

5 Protection and management

Documentation

From the 1970s, research-oriented archaeological investigations of the kofun occurred. The outcomes of these studies have been published and utilised for interpretation and museum exhibitions. The baseline documentation needed for monitoring seems to be adequate. The use of airborne LIDAR surveys to develop the relief maps of the kofun demonstrates a good application of this technology to the needs of heritage documentation and conservation management.

ICOMOS notes that records of the locations of the imperial tombs date back to the Asuka and Nara periods, and there are texts containing provisions for their protection and management from these very early times. The 10th century text *Engi-shiki* contains records of some of the Mozu-Furuichi kofun, and sets out procedures for their maintenance. The nomination dossier outlines the history of recording and management since that time. Today the Imperial Household Agency archives the historical and administrative records of the management of the *Ryobo*.

ICOMOS is aware of debate within Japanese society regarding the naming of some of the kofun as the resting places of specific individuals, since this cannot be determined with certainty. However, it is also acknowledged that these names were applied long ago, in early records and documentation, and the names have a lengthy history. This issue can be addressed through interpretation strategies, where needed.

Legal protection

Legal protection of the nominated components is provided by national and local government laws. Two different national laws are applied, and in some instances, both laws apply to the same kofun site. The State Party has provided a summary specifying that 20 kofun are 'entirely *Ryobo*' (protected by the Imperial House Law and the National Property Act); 20 kofun are 'entirely national historic site' (managed by local governments and/or private owners and protected by the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties). Others have a degree of shared or overlapping designation and protection: where the mound is *Ryobo* but the moat or other surrounding bank is a National Historic Site (2 kofun); the mound is *Ryobo* but the moat is a municipal Historic Site (4 kofun); or there are overlapping National Historic Site and *Ryobo* designations (3 kofun). In these cases, both systems of management and protection are applied. National level legal protection is in progress for component 20.

The Imperial House Law defines the *Ryobo* as 'graves of the Emperor, the Empress, the Grand Empress Dowager and the Empress Dowager'. The legal requirements are oriented to maintaining their serenity and dignity, and no development is permitted.

The Municipal Historic Sites are designated on the basis of the City Ordinance for the Protection of Cultural Properties, established in accordance with the Law for the

Protection of Cultural Properties. City Planning is the subject of the Southern Osaka City Planning Area Master Plan (revised 2016), the Sakai City Planning Master Plan (2012), the Habikino City Planning Master Plan (revised 2016), and the Fujiidera City Planning Master Plan (revised 2017).

Buffer zone protection includes regulations that control the height and design of new buildings, as well as outdoor advertisements. These are established through a number of local laws for city planning, building, landscape, scenic districts, and outdoor advertising. In the Prioritized Zones, building heights are restricted to under 10m or 15m, and outdoor advertising is prohibited. The other parts of the buffer zone allow new building heights to 31m, and place restrictions on building designs/colours, and limit the size of advertisements.

Management system

The Osaka Prefectural Government has established the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Council to coordinate the management of the nominated serial property. It is comprised of representatives of the Imperial Household Agency, Osaka Prefectural Government, Sakai City, Habikino City and Fujiidera City Government. The Agency for Cultural Affairs participates as an Observer. The Council discusses matters related to the monitoring, management, utilisation and conservation of the property. Advice is provided by the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Scientific Committee which is comprised of relevant academic experts.

The *Ryobo* are managed by the staff stationed at the Furuichi Regional Office for the Imperial Mausolea and Tombs, one of the five regional offices of the Imperial Household Agency. The Imperial Mausolea and Tomb Management Committee is comprised of experts that advise on repair and other works to the *Ryobo*.

The Cultural Property Protection and Promotion Committee of the Osaka Prefectural Board of Education monitors the Historic Sites.

Privately owned land included in the nominated components is managed by the owners in collaboration with the relevant local governments. There are options available for owners to turn over the management to the municipality (while still retaining ownership).

Management staff with professional and technical expertise in relevant fields are provided by the Imperial Household Agency, the Osaka Prefecture, and the City Governments of Sakai, Habikino and Fujiidera. Management of the *Ryobo* components is funded through national expenditure; and the management of the Historic Sites is funded by local governments and private owners with the help of national government subsidies where necessary. There are also funding arrangements in place through the National Property Act to support the transfer of land from private to public ownership.

The Comprehensive Management Plan outlines the implementation of the protection and management of the nominated property and the buffer zones. It establishes the responses to development pressures, environmental changes and natural disaster risks; and makes provisions for visitor management and local community involvement. An Action Plan is provided, with identified responsibilities and short, medium, and long term actions. The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Council has overall responsibility for implementing the Action Plan and ensuring coordination between different organisations.

The overarching policy for management of the components of the nominated property are to protect the attributes that convey the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. The principles for the buffer zone are to enhance the appreciation of the landscape containing kofun, and to conserve the views of the burial mounds/tombs. The *Ryobo* are managed to preserve their dignity.

In addition, the 'Historic Site' elements of each of the Mozu and Furuichi groups have 'Preservation and Management Plans' and 'Basic Improvement Plans' (*seibi*) which describe the approach to repairs, improvements and utilisation.

The State Party has explained in the additional information received in February 2019 the concept of *seibi*, which has both general and specific meanings. General meanings for *seibi* include processes such as maintenance, upkeep, improvement and development; however, in the context of the laws for cultural heritage, *seibi* is associated with requirements to enhance the environment for people to appreciate the value of cultural heritage sites, including support for local community connection and experience. Within Japanese heritage protection frameworks, *seibi* is guided by a published manual (*Shiseki-to Seibi no Tebiki*) oriented at providing basic facilities, preventing damage, environmental improvements and providing for uses by the community (such as visitor centres, interpretation, parking, rest rooms and signs). The State Party has explained that the *seibi* processes to be applied to the nominated components will be: preservation (maintenance, hazard mitigation, works associated with drainage and deterioration), and utilisation (measures to transmit value, including management and administration facilities). Basic *Seibi* Plans have been developed for some components, but are not yet finalised.

The State Party has indicated that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) will be conducted for all future developments within the property components and buffer zones. However, the system for HIA does not yet seem fully established and linked with the management system and the frameworks for legal protection.

The Osaka Prefecture and each of the relevant City governments have Disaster Prevention Plans. Super typhoon Jebi hit the Osaka Region of Japan in September 2018, just before the visit of the ICOMOS Evaluation

Mission. Detailed information was provided by the State Party, showing damage to trees within the nominated serial property. This event provided an opportunity for the ICOMOS Mission to observe the effective implementation of the risk preparedness arrangements.

Visitor management

Current visitor levels vary, due in part to the different present-day uses of the kofun. Overall visitor numbers were not provided by the State Party, but the Comprehensive Management Plan provides data on visitors to various public display facilities. It is important to note that 'visitors' to this serial property are diverse, including local residents and tourists. The traditional practice and management by the Imperial Household Agency do not allow for public visitation to the *Ryobo*, which are generally only accessed by the members of the Imperial family and their staff (as well as heritage experts and officials when needed).

The State Party anticipates growth in visitor numbers if the property is inscribed in the World Heritage List. The existing visitor facilities at the Historic Sites, site interpretation and public access provisions are detailed for each component in the Comprehensive Management Plan.

The relevant Prefectural and municipal governments have established a 'Vision for Regional Activation Utilizing the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group' (2015) to guide further actions for visitor management. Some measures have been identified and implemented, including the creation of a recommended visiting route.

There are museums and interpretation facilities in the cities of Sakai, Habikino and Fujiidera; and the Osaka Prefectural Chikatsu Asuka Museum specialises in the kofun. The Sakai City Government is planning a new interpretation facility in the Mozu area, within the buffer zone of the Nintoku-tenno-ryo kofun (component 2-1). In Additional Information, the State Party provided a brief Heritage Impact Assessment for this proposal which concluded that the impacts would be minimal. ICOMOS considers that this could be usefully reviewed in more detail following World Heritage inscription.

Community involvement

The nominated serial property occurs within a highly urbanised area, and there are a number of residential communities living very close to the nominated components. This is a source of both pressure and support for the conservation of the nominated kofun. Local residents, schools and businesses are involved in the protection of the kofun, guiding/interpretation, site cleaning, and the conservation of the settings of the kofun. This context, and the need to protect the living environment of local residents is recognised by the State Party. However, the nomination dossier and Comprehensive Management Plan do not provide extensive details on the provisions for community involvement in the management system; and there are a

range of community interests and concerns about the future management of the kofun.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the protection and management of nominated property

The strengths of the protection and management of the nominated property are the strict legal protection of the property components and buffer zones. Management activities and protection (including both government and non-government organisations and individuals) seems well coordinated. The management system seems well considered and effective, although the integration of *seibi* processes and conservation objectives needs to be more rigorously defined to ensure that the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value is prioritised. The weaknesses derive from the pressures of the surrounding urban environment. Heritage Impact Assessment processes need to be further established in relation to the management system and the frameworks for legal protection. The formal inclusion of residential communities could be further enhanced.

ICOMOS considers that the protection and management of the nominated serial property is adequate to sustain the Outstanding Universal Value. The Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed new interpretation centre (Sakai City) should be deepened in light of the outcomes of the World Heritage nomination (and adopted Statement of Outstanding Universal Value). The State Party is encouraged to extend the formal involvement of local residents in the management system.

6 Conclusion

Through the nomination of 45 components, the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group in Japan's Osaka Prefecture demonstrate in an outstanding way the burial traditions and socio-political structures of the Kofun period (3rd to 6th centuries). More than 160,000 such mounds are found throughout a large area of Japan, and remain the primary means of understanding this period of geo-political transition in East Asia that saw the emergence of kingly powers.

The justification for selecting the 49 kofun that comprise the Mozu and Furuichi clusters is based on their ability to represent the historical period and the characteristics of the kofun, as well as their state of conservation. Despite the growth of urbanisation in the immediate settings, the two major clusters kofun form a coherent grouping. The selected components demonstrate the forms, scales and contents of kofun, and exhibit a reasonable/good state of conservation. The largest 'keyhole' shaped kofun are impressive achievements of earthen construction. A number of the nominated kofun are designated as *Ryobo* (mausolea of kings) and are managed by the Imperial Household Agency. These are highly revered within contemporary Japanese society, and are the focus of rituals of worship and festivals.

ICOMOS considers that comparative analysis of other World Heritage properties in East Asia supports the potential for the kofun to be included in the World Heritage List; and that the authenticity of the individual kofun that comprise the series has been demonstrated. Although there have been changes to the kofun through the centuries, the series meets the requirements of integrity. The boundaries and buffer zones are adequate, and all the elements needed to express the Outstanding Universal Value of the kofun are present. ICOMOS considers that criteria (iii) and (iv) have been demonstrated for the nominated serial property.

Although a relatively complex and layered framework of legal protection is utilised, ICOMOS considers that the protection and management of the nominated property is well-coordinated and is implemented effectively. The works of maintenance and enhancement known as *seibi* need to be more specifically and carefully defined, and aligned with the objectives of conservation management and the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value. Further improvements should be made to Heritage Impact Assessment processes, including more direct links to the legal and management systems. The monitoring arrangements are sufficient, although some improvements could be made in relation to the structural stability of the mounds; and to better incorporate the interests of the nearby residential communities.

ICOMOS considers that the Outstanding Universal Value is demonstrated for the nominated serial property.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property arise from the close proximity of urban areas, the high residential population within the buffer zones, and the processes of erosion caused by various natural and other processes. Tourism does not pose a pressure at present, but is expected to grow following inscription in the World Heritage List.

ICOMOS considers that all new development projects within the components and buffer zones (including interpretation facilities, parkland elements, infrastructure improvements and other planned constructions) should be subject to Heritage Impact Assessment and communicated to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraph 172 of *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

7 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan, Japan, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria (iii) and (iv)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Located on a plateau above the Osaka Plain, the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group is a serial property of 45 components which contains 49 kofun ('old mound'), a large and distinctive type of burial mound. The selected kofun are found in two major clusters, and are the richest tangible representation of the culture of the Kofun period in Japan from the 3rd to 6th centuries, a period before Japanese society became an established centralised state under the influence of the Chinese system of law. The kofun have a range of contents, such as grave goods (weapons, armour, ornaments); and clay figures used to decorated the mounds, known as *haniwa* (in the form of cylinders arranged in rows, or representations of objects, houses, animals and people). Understood as tombs for kings' clans and affiliates during this period, some of the kofun are *Ryobo* (imperial mausolea) and are managed by Japan's Imperial Household. The serial components have been selected from a total of 160,000 kofun from around Japan and represent the 'middle kofun' period (late 4th to late 5th centuries) which is considered to be the peak of the Kofun period. The attributes of the property are the 49 burial mounds, their geometric forms, methods and materials of construction, moats, archaeological materials and contents (including grave goods, burial facilities and the *haniwa*). The settings of the kofun, their visual presence in the Osaka region, and the remaining physical and visual links between the kofun are important attributes; as is the evidence of the distinctive funerary practices and ritual uses.

Criterion (iii): While 160,000 kofun are found throughout Japan, the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group represent and provide exceptional testimony to the culture of the Kofun period of Japan's ancient history. The 45 components demonstrate the period's socio-political structures, social class differences and highly sophisticated funerary system.

Criterion (iv): The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group demonstrates an outstanding type of ancient East Asian burial mound construction. The role of the kofun in the establishment of social hierarchies within this particular and significant historical period, as well as the tangible attributes such as the clay sculptures, moats and geometric terraced mounds reinforced by stone, are outstanding.

Integrity

The Mozu and Furuichi groups of kofun provide a cohesive narrative of the kingly power expressed through the clustering of the 49 kofun, the range of types and sizes, the grave goods and *haniwa*, and the continuing ritual uses and high esteem that these sites hold within Japanese society. The integrity of the serial property is based on the rationale for the selection of the components and their ability to convey the Outstanding Universal Value of the kofun. The intactness of the individual

components, the material evidence of the mounds and their context, and the state of conservation are also determinants of integrity. Issues that impact on the integrity of the serial property include loss of some features (such as moats), and changes to the uses and settings of the components due to the close proximity of urban development.

Authenticity

Despite changed uses and landscape treatments, and the high degree of 20th century urbanisation of the Osaka region, the kofun are a significant visible and historical presence within the present-day landscape. The authenticity of the selected kofun is demonstrated by their forms, materials and extensive archaeological contents, as well as the esteem which they engender in Japanese society. While the *Ryobo* generally demonstrate a high degree of authenticity, there are variations within the series. There is a need to ensure that *seibi* works are subject to impact assessment and reviewed in order to sustain the authenticity of the kofun.

Management and protection requirements

Legal protection of the components is provided by national and local government laws. *Ryobo* components are protected by the Imperial House Law and the National Property Act; and the 'Historic Site' components are protected by the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Some components have both designations. The Municipal Historic Sites are designated on the basis of the City Ordinance for the Protection of Cultural Properties, established in accordance with the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. National legal protection is in progress for component 20, and expansion of the buffer zone for component 44. Buffer zone protection includes regulations that control the height and design of new buildings, as well as outdoor advertisements, based on a number of local laws.

The management system is based on the establishment of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Council (comprised of representatives of the Imperial Household Agency, and the relevant Prefectural and City Governments, with the Agency for Cultural as an Observer). The Council is advised by the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Scientific Committee. The Comprehensive Management Plan outlines the implementation of the protection and management of the property and the buffer zones. The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group World Heritage Council has overall responsibility for implementing the Action Plan and ensuring coordination between different organisations. The Osaka Prefecture and each of the relevant City governments has a Disaster Prevention Plan; and there are museums and interpretation facilities in the cities of Osaka, Sakai, Habikino and Fujiidera. The Sakai City Government is planning a new interpretation facility in the Mozu area, which should be subject to Heritage Impact Assessment.

Factors affecting this property are those associated with the close proximity of urban development, creating significant potential pressures on the buffer zones. Pressures on the conservation of the kofun occur through the erosion of the earthen mounds, poorly managed vegetation growth, and the need to maintain water quality of the moats. These are actively managed. The conservation measures are appropriate and well-resourced, although actions by the various governments, private owners and communities must continue to be well-coordinated. The monitoring arrangements are adequate, although they could be further enhanced through further development of non-invasive techniques for periodically monitoring the structural condition of the mounds, and indicators for monitoring the interests and support of local residential communities.

Additional recommendations

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

- a) Continuing to document the intangible dimensions of the serial property,
- b) Completing the required legal designations for the national level protection of Component 20, and the agreed adjustment to the buffer zone for Component 44,
- c) Completing the preparation of Basic *Seibi* Plans for the components designated as 'Historic Sites', ensuring their coherence with conservation objectives and the protection of Outstanding Universal Value,
- d) Considering the future use of non-invasive techniques of assessing the structural stability of the mounds,
- e) Considering providing for greater formal involvement of local residents in the management system,
- f) Further exploring how the buffer zones relate to the broader setting and what, if anything, needs protecting in the broader setting; and implement the subsequent measures,
- g) Reviewing and deepening the Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed new interpretation centre (Sakai City) in light of the World Heritage inscription and adopted Statement of Outstanding Universal Value,
- h) Developing and implementing Heritage Impact Assessment for all future development proposals, including: plans for park development/improvements, Bicycle Museum, Daisen Park Improvement Plan, new/improved viewing platforms and the Nankai Railway Koya Line Railroad Elevation Project; Continuing to develop processes for Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), including more direct linkages with the management system and the framework for legal protection of the property,

- i) Ensuring that all major projects that could impact on the series should be communicated to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraph 172 of Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention;

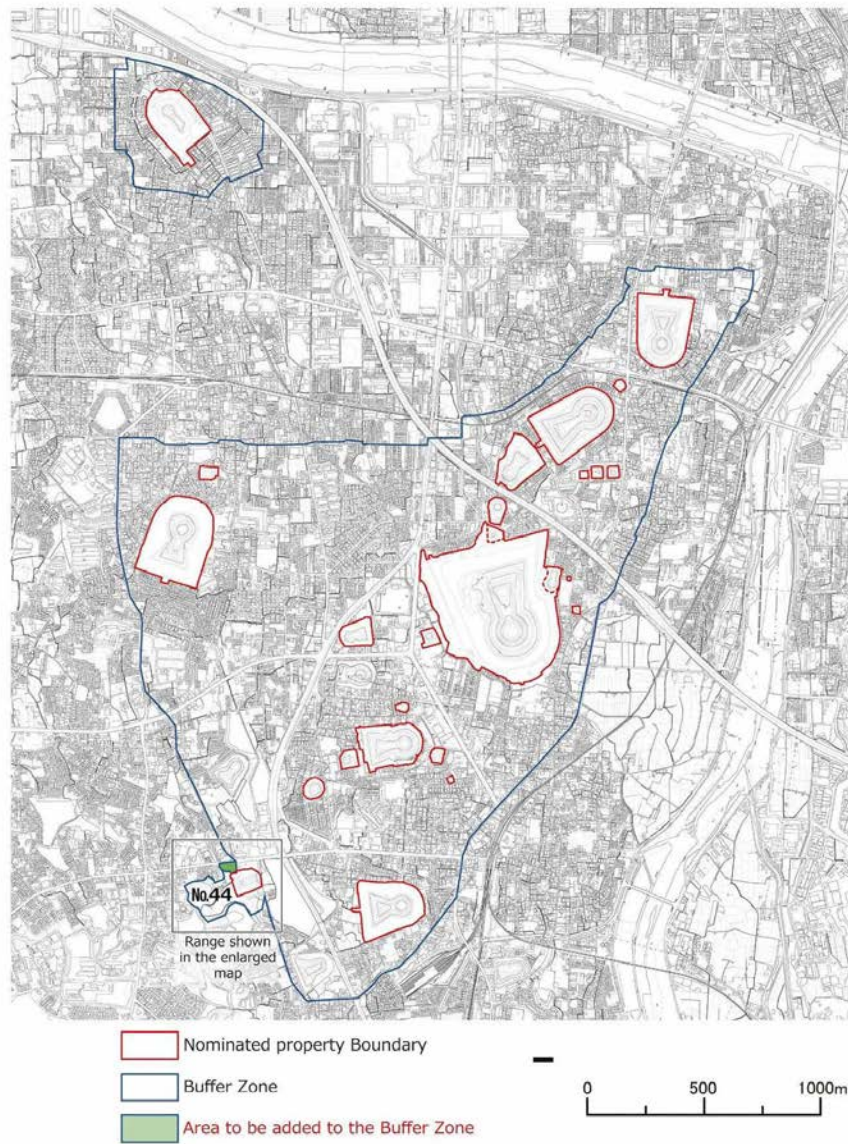


Figure 4-1 Location map of the Buffer Zone extension range
around Component No. 44, Minegazuka Kofun

Revised map showing the boundaries of the nominated property (February 2019)



Aerial photo of Mozu area (from northwest)



Aerial photo of Furuichi area (from southwest)



Gobyoyama kofun



Cylindrical *haniwa* excavated from Gobyoyama kofun