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State Party | INDIA
State, Province or Region | GUJARAT
Name of Property | Dholavira: A Harappan City

Textual description of the boundaries of the nominated property

The proposed Nominated Property (103 ha) Dholavira: a Harappan city is located to the northwest of the Khadir island of Bhachau Taluka. The Khadir island is located within the Great Rann of Kachchh, in district Kachchh. The archaeological excavated remains of the city are protected by Archaeological Survey of India under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act 1958, and AMASR Rules 1959 amended therein in the year 2010.

The proposed Buffer Zone (148 ha) encompasses the 100 m Prohibited Area and further 200 m Regulated Area from the protected site of Dholavira, and includes partially the Rivers Manhar and Mansar in the south and north respectively. The proposed Buffer Zone is fully governed by the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 (further amended in 2010) and Rules 1959. Parcels of land falling under Buffer Zone is also governed under the Environment Protection Act 1972.

Criteria under which property is nominated

Cultural Criteria (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...
Fig. 1: Location of Dholavira on Khadir island, Rann of Kachchh, Gujarat
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LOCATION OF NOMINATED PROPERTY AND BUFFER ZONE OF DHOLAVIRA: A HARAPPAN CITY ON SURVEY OF INDIA TOPO SHEET

Fig. 2: Location of Nominated Property and Buffer Zone of Dholavira: A Harappan City on Survey of India Topo Sheet
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<td>DHOLOVIRA: A HARAPPAN CITY</td>
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Fig. 3: Nominated Property and Buffer Zone, Dholavira
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Fig. 4: Delineation of boundaries of Nominated Property and Buffer Zone on Google Earth image along with geo-coordinates of prominent points.

Nominated Property and Buffer Zone
Dholavira: A Harappan City

23° 53’ 25.14” N
70° 12’ 9.29” E

23° 53’ 24.54” N
70° 12’ 19.41” E

23° 53’ 9.13” N
70° 12’ 18.80” E

23° 53’ 5.90” N
70° 12’ 9.80” E

23° 53’ 34.73” N
70° 12’ 33.22” E

23° 53’ 43.71” N
70° 12’ 31.00” E
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Fig. 5: Delineation of boundaries of Nominated Property on Site
Plan of Dholavira along with geo-coordinates of prominent points

SCALE: 1 : 1500
Fig. 6: Contour of 0.5 m interval of the Harappan site of Dholavira showing the Nominated Property
Fig. 7: Orthomosaic RBG image of the Harappan site of Dholavira showing the Nominated Property.
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technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.

The city of Dholavira, represents all elements of Harappan Civilization, the city was founded possibly due to the influences from Sindh region, and notable for attaining a high degree of sophistication, standardization and utilitarianism in all spheres of life such as settlement planning, monumental buildings, impressive architecture, stamp seals, the script, weights and measures, pottery art, jewellery, implements and many other minor artefacts. Furthermore, Dholavira is notable for its phenomenal growth and prosperity, close cultural uniformity with the contemporary Harappan culture, mass production of crafts, complex trade mechanism, maritime trade and intercultural contacts, besides a long life and controlling a vast hinterland to achieve the various objectives of sustaining the city for well over 700 years during its peak. The concepts of town planning seems to have been introduced due to the interchanges with the Sindh region, which further possibly influenced other settlements like Surkotada, and Juni Kuran in Gujarat which closely follows the layout plan of Castle and Bailey of Dholavira.

Cultural Criterion (iii)

To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization this is living or which has disappeared.

Dholavira is an exceptional example of a proto-historic Bronze Age urban settlement pertaining to the Harappan civilization (early, mature and late Harappan phases) and bears evidences of a multi-cultural and stratified society during the third and second millennium BCE. The excavated remains clearly indicate the origin of the settlement, its growth, zenith and the subsequent decline in the form of continuous changes in the configuration of the city, architectural elements and various other attributes.

The evidence from Dholavira not only exhibits remarkable testament to the Harappan culture, with its unique regional manifestations and variations of Gujarat region, representing this bygone civilization in all aspects, but also preserves evidence for the continuity, particularly in the areas of vernacular architecture. The attributes of town planning, architecture and technology, water management systems, art and trade are an exceptional testimony to the Harappan civilization during its early, mature and late Harappan phases.

Cultural Criterion (iv)

To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The city of Dholavira, located in the island of Khadir of the Rann of Kachchh, is an important landmark and settlement, the earliest evidences of which can be traced back to 3000 BCE during the early Harappan phase of the Harappan civilization. This city flourished for nearly 1500 years, representing a long continual habitation
and witnessed the origin, growth and ultimate decline recording several phases of occupational history labelled as Stages I to VII. The entire architectural ensemble at Dholavira together with the landscape represents a unique and masterpiece ingenuity of the Harappans during the third millennium BCE.

The architectural embellishments, together with their configuration, orientation, proper placement of various elements in a suitably planned layout clearly indicates the pre-conceived plan, all as resultant of a long drawn process of accomplishments and innovations aided through the understanding of local geography and landscape. This is reflected in the uniqueness in the various ratios and proportions, location of different units of the settlement. In addition, the evidence of various technological ensemble in the areas of copper metallurgy, bead drilling technology, production of limestone pillar elements, water management systems, all reflects the unique position Dholavira holds in the entire gamut of Harappan civilization. Such a complete and planned city from other comparable settlements of Harappan civilization is rare, as the settlements at Harappan and Mohenjo-daro grew along with the modifications in the configurations of fortifications.

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The excavated remains at Dholavira, a Harappan city, are one of the very few best preserved and in situ urban settlements in South Asia dating from the 3rd to mid-2nd millennium BCE. Dholavira is one of the very few large Harappan settlements where an entire sequence spanning the history of Harappan cities, from early Harappan town / pre-urban phase to the height of the Harappan expansion and the late Harappan is observed. The city demonstrates a meticulous urban planning system and execution in response to the local geography, geological settings, topography, climate and socio-economic systems of the early and mature Harappan phases and the layout at the settlements like Surkotada, Juni Kuran in Gujarat indicates considerable inspiration drawn from Dholavira. Dholavira, in turn possibly borrowed the concept of city planning from other settlements from Sindh region and even beyond, as the planning of Castle and Bailey at Dholavira is very similar to the Harappan settlement at Kalibangan.

The configuration of the city of Dholavira, during its heydays, is an outstanding example responding to a stratified society having the principle qualities of planned and segregated urban residential areas based on possibly differential occupational activities. Technological advancements in water harnessing systems, water drainage systems as well architecturally and technologically developed features is reflected in terms of design, execution, harnessing of local materials in an effective manner. Unlike other Harappan antecedent towns, normally located nearby rivers and perennial sources of water, the location of Dholavira in the island of Khadir, was strategic to harness the different mineral and raw material sources (copper, shell, agate-carnelian, steatite, lead, banded limestone, among others) to facilitate internal as well as external trade to the Magan (modern Oman penin-
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In comparison to its national and international counterparts, the archaeological site of Dholavira stands apart owing to its unique amalgamation of Harappan influences in architecture and further improvisation and development over multiple occupations through its efflorescent periods. Dholavira’s outstanding universal value is based on its unique city planning and in situ finds of ingenious technology as well as art and architecture contributing to the large narrative and discourse of Harappan civilization.

Justification for Criteria

Cultural Criteria (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.

The city of Dholavira, represents all elements of Harappan Civilization, the city was founded possibly due to the influences from Sindh region, and notable for attaining a high degree of sophistication, standardization and utilitarianism in all spheres of life such as settlement planning, monumental buildings, impressive architecture, stamp seals, the script, weights and measures, pottery art, jewellery, implements and many other minor artefacts. Furthermore, Dholavira is notable for its phenomenal growth and prosperity, close cultural uniformity with the contemporary Harappan culture, mass production of crafts, complex trade mechanism, maritime trade and intercultural contacts, besides a long life and controlling a vast hinterland to achieve the various objectives of sustaining the city for well over 700 years during its peak. The concepts of town planning seems to have been introduced due to the interchanges with the Sindh region, which further possibly influenced other settlements like Surkotada, and Juni Kuran in Gujarat which closely follows the layout plan of Castle and Bailey of Dholavira.

Cultural Criteria (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

Dholavira is an exceptional example of a proto-historic Bronze Age urban settlement pertaining to the Harappan civilization (early, mature and late Harappan phases) and bears evidences of a multi-cultural and stratified society during the third and second millennium BCE. The excavated remains clearly indicate the origin of the settlement, its growth, zenith and the subsequent decline in the form of continuous changes in the configuration of the city, architectural elements and various other attributes.

The evidence from Dholavira not only exhibits remarkable testament to the Harappan culture, with its unique regional manifestations and variations of
Gujarat region, representing this bygone civilization in all aspects, but also preserves evidence for the continuity, particularly in the areas of vernacular architecture. The attributes of town planning, architecture and technology, water management systems, art and trade are an exceptional testimony to the Harappan civilization during its early, mature and late Harappan phases.

Cultural Criteria (iv)

To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The city of Dholavira, located in the island of Khadir of the Rann of Kachchh, is an important landmark and settlement, the earliest evidences of which can be traced back to 3000 BCE during the early Harappan phase of the Harappan civilization. This city flourished for nearly 1500 years, representing a long continual habitation and witnessed the origin, growth and ultimate decline recording several phases of occupational history labelled as Stages I to VII. The entire architectural ensemble at Dholavira together with the landscape represents a unique and masterpiece ingenuity of the Harappans during the third millennium BCE.

The architectural embellishments, together with their configuration, orientation, proper placement of various elements in a suitably planned layout clearly indicates the pre-conceived plan, all as resultant of a long drawn process of accomplishments and innovations aided through the understanding of local geography and landscape. This is reflected in the uniqueness in the various ratios and proportions, location of different units of the settlement. In addition, the evidence of various technological ensemble in the areas of copper metallurgy, bead drilling technology, production of limestone pillar elements, water management systems, all reflects the unique position Dholavira holds in the entire gamut of Harappan civilization. Such a complete and planned city from other comparable settlements of Harappan civilization is rare, as the settlements at Harappan and Mohenjo-daro grew along with the modifications in the configurations of fortifications.

Statement of Integrity (for all properties)

The ancient Harappan city of Dholavira was discovered in 1968 and excavated for thirteen field seasons between 1989 and 2005. The unearthed excavations were simultaneously preserved and conserved, and demonstrate all physical attributes contributing to the Outstanding Universal Value, viz., proto-historic systems of urban planning, water management systems, architectural elements and design, traditional knowledge of art and technology preserved in situ. All the components and elements that contribute to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property are within the nominated area and are intact in all respects. The excavations carried out for thirteen field seasons have brought to light all important components of architectural, artistic and technological features of the site that define the various attributes associated to the nomination. The nominated area
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of the fortified Harappan city of Dholavira conforms to integrity of all the attributes (ancient systems of urban planning, water management systems, architectural elements and design, traditional knowledge of art and technology) identified for its nomination as a World Heritage Site. The excavated remains at Dholavira, to a large extent, adequately demonstrate attributes associated with town planning, water management system, industrial activities (e.g. bead manufacturing) and are indicative of the sophisticated life and exploitation of natural resources for nearly 1500 years, trade, interregional relations and exchanges, the physical manifestations of these are largely found in situ. Conservation measures and consolidation of few areas have been carried out to prevent deterioration and have also been stabilised for ensuring preservation of its physical attributes.

Statement of authenticity for properties nominated under criteria (i) to (vi)

The excavated remains along with the sub-surface remains (which are partly visible on the surface) of the city of Dholavira have enriched and enabled in understanding the complete configuration and planning of Harappan cities. The excavated remains include fortifications, gateways, water reservoirs, ceremonial ground, residential units, workshop areas, and cemetery complex, all clearly representing the Harappan culture and its various manifestations. The urban planning is evident from the in situ remains of the city demonstrate systematic planning which is unique from other contemporary period Harappan cities. The authenticity of the archaeological site is preserved through minimum interventions and scientific conservation principles and methods and in maintaining the exposed structures in their original configurations and in situ conditions and no additions or alterations have been made to the structural remains. The excavated remains fully bear testimony to the style of construction, contextual evidences for architectural members, and layout of a bead manufacturing workshop, that have been retained in situ to preserve their authenticity. The evidences of full configuration of the city, which are well documented and preserved during excavation works, also bear testimony of the extensive planning, understanding of ratios and proportions and principles, alignment of the entire city in relation to cardinal directions, water harvesting, storm water drains, craftsmanship. These features are preserved extensively due to construction in stone masonry with mud brick cores, and architectural features, which is unique to Dholavira and have also stood the test of time and is a good state of conservation. All the attributes within the nominated property exhibit the authenticity of the setting and location of Dholavira and its contribution towards the building of this city and are present in its full configuration. Thus, the excavated remains and artefacts unearthed at Dholavira, both preserved at the site and in collections of antiquities with ASI clearly demonstrate the uniqueness of Dholavira and its major role in the transformation of urban processes during third millennium BCE.

Requirements for protection and management

The archaeological site of Dholavira is owned, protected, maintained and managed by the Archaeological Survey of India, an attached office and organisation...
under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The property is protected by national level laws viz. Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASR), 1958, amended therein in 2010; Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules of 1959; Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules of 2011 and The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 and Rules 1973. Decisions pertaining to its conservation, maintenance and management are governed by the National Conservation Policy for Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Remains 2014. Further, the other wings of ASI including the Science and Horticulture Divisions assist the Archaeology wing in undertaking investigatory and landscape related activities at the site for maintaining its integrity. Being designated as an ‘ancient monument’ of national importance, the ancient site of Dholavira is protected by a Prohibited Area measuring 100 meters in all directions from the limits of the protected monument, and further beyond it, a Regulated Area of 200 meters in all directions, from the limits of the Prohibited Area. All activities in the areas adjacent to the ancient site of Dholavira remain subject to prohibition and regulation in the respect prohibited and regulated areas as per provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 2011. Besides this, a small land parcel within the buffer zone is included in the notified areas as the Wildlife Sanctuary for Wild Ass under the Environment Protection Act 1972.

Name and contact information of official local institution / agency

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