

Executive Summary

State Party

Turkey

State, Province or Region

Polatlı, Ankara

Name of Property

Gordion

Geographical co-ordinates to the nearest second

The centre of the nominated World Heritage Site, located 90 km south-west of Ankara in central Turkey, is at:

Latitude: 39°38'36 N Longitude: 31° 59' 10 E

Textual Description of the boundaries of the Nominated Property

In accordance with the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention Parag. 99-102, the boundary of the Nominated Property has been drawn to include all those areas and/or attributes that are a direct and tangible expression of its Outstanding Universal Value: as the outstanding example of an archaeological type-site for Phrygian civilization from the ca. 950- 550 B.C.

The property includes the central Citadel Mound of Gordion (an entirely man-made feature, which is the product of eight successive settlements built one on top of the other from ca.2500BC – to AD. 1400); the Lower Town (with prominent remains of two large 8th– 6th century B.C. forts / strongpoints at Küçükhöyük and Kuştepe, both also associated with Persian siege ramps dated ca. 540 B.C.); the Outer Town; and the surrounding landscape consisting of 73 tumuli including Tumulus MM (=T25, “Midas Mound”, ca.740 B.C.) which is the largest of these with a height of 53 m and a diameter of 300 m.

The Nominated WH Site boundary encompasses the full extent of the Citadel Mound and its major features together with areas of land relating to important views of and from the key structures.

It corresponds to the boundaries of the 1st - 3rd degree archaeological conservation ‘site’ (Decision No.1096, 06/02/1990 of the Ankara Regional Council for the Protection of Cultural Properties) and thus is subject to the Protection of Cultural and Natural Properties Law (*Kültür ve Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma Kanunu*) No. 2863, 23/07/1983 as amended by the Law No. 5226, 14/07/2004 and its supplementary regulations.

The Buffer Zone (see Fig. 1.4, p.9) is an extensive area incorporating the parts of Sakarya (anc. ‘Sangarios’) River valley, and the adjacent uplands, and includes the north part of Yassıhöyük Distr., as well as Distr. of Kıranharmanı, Beylikköprü,

Şabanözü, Sazılar and Çekirdeksiz. Its perimeter follows various prominent topographic features (i.e Sakarya and Porsuk River at the north), land-use patterns, modern infrastructure such as roads, railway line and also incorporates all those areas that contribute to the visual setting of the Site and features of related archaeological interest as identified in section 2.a – Description of the Property.

The area of the Nominated Site is 985 ha. The area of the Site together with the Buffer Zone is 5.134 ha.

Map(s) of the Nominated Property, showing boundaries and buffer zone

See 1.e.

The map showing the location and the boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zone is provided at the end of this section and listed below.

Fig. 1.4: Map at 1:25.000 scale showing the boundaries of the Nominated Site (= core zone) and Buffer Zone; p.9

Criteria under which property is nominated

(iii), (iv), and (vi)

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a. Brief Synthesis

The archaeological site of Gordion ranks as one of the most important historical centres in the ancient Near East. Gordion lies approximately 90 km southwest of Ankara in central Turkey, at the intersection of the great empires to the east (Assyrians, Babylonians, Hittites) and the west (Greeks, Romans); consequently, it occupied a strategic position on nearly all trade routes that linked the Aegean and Mediterranean with the Near East. Gordion's historical significance derives from its very long and complex sequence of occupation that spans nearly 4,500 years, from the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2,500 B.C.) to the Medieval period (ca. 1400 A.D.) and thereafter to the present day. The Phrygian kingdom was ruled by King Midas, whose wealth was expressed by the stories of his Golden Touch, and long after the demise of his kingdom, the Phrygian citadel became closely associated with the triumphs of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century B.C.

Gordion is the outstanding archaeological type-site for understanding Phrygian civilization. The buildings of its Early Phrygian citadel, and the burial mounds of the city's rulers, constitute the premier exemplars of monumental architecture in Iron Age Central Anatolia.

The entrance to the Phrygian citadel features the best-preserved Iron Age (10th-8th centuries B.C.) fortified gate complex that has ever been discovered, with stone masonry still rising to a height of 10 m. The elite buildings within the citadel feature the earliest coloured floor mosaics that have ever been found. The citadel's industrial quarter, or Terrace Complex, was dedicated to large-scale food preparation and the production of textiles. With a length of over 100 m, the complex was among the largest in Anatolia, and is without parallel in the ancient world. The roofing systems of the citadel's buildings featured beams over 10 m in length with no internal supports, which is, as far as we know, a more daring feat of engineering than one would have found in roughly contemporary Assyrian palaces.

The large concentration of monumental tumuli in the vicinity of Gordion creates a unique landscape of power, different from any other site in the Near East. The largest of the tumuli, the “Midas Mound” (Tumulus MM), rises to a height of 53 meters, and is the third largest burial mound in the world. The tomb chamber within it is the oldest standing wooden building in the world (ca. 740 B.C.), and inside it was found the best-preserved wooden furniture known from antiquity.

b. Justification for Criteria

Criterion (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.

Just as Gordion was the political and cultural centre of ancient Phrygia, the site is today by far the best testimony we have for assessing Phrygian civilization. Although some Phrygians were literate, the inscriptional evidence is limited, and consequently, for the most part, not well understood. Other ancient sources tell us relatively little about Phrygian civilization. It is, therefore, primarily through archaeological evidence that we gain a picture of the Phrygians, and Gordion is the key site for this purpose.

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 fortifications and monumental buildings of the 9th century B.C. Early Phrygian citadel are unequalled in Anatolia (in terms of their excellent state of preservation). The surrounding landscape is distinguished by the large concentration of royal burial mounds, or tumuli, which was intended to define the landscape as a royal Phrygian power centre. One of these, the “Midas Mound” (Tumulus MM), rises to a height of 53 meters, and is the third largest burial mound in the world. The intact tomb chamber within it is the oldest standing wooden structure known (ca. 740 B.C.) and has no parallel, nor do the furniture and textiles found inside it.

Criterion (vi): to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria)

The site is directly associated with the episode of the Gordian Knot described by ancient historians such as Arrian (*Anabasis Alexandri* – considered one of the most complete sources on the campaigns of Alexander the Great), Quintus Curtius, Justin’s epitome of Pompeius Trogus and Aelian’s *De Natura Animalium*. As a result of the profound and widespread influence of the legend being used as a metaphor for Gordion, the name of the site and the people who ruled it continue to appear in literary and artistic works.

c. Statement of Integrity

The Nominated Property fully includes all the attributes that reflect its Outstanding Universal Value and is large enough for the context of these to be properly appreciated and understood. Strict regimes of maintenance and control, derived from extensive statutory protection and management measures ensure the maintenance of the Site, and will continue to protect it and its wider setting from adverse development.

d. Statement of Authenticity

The level of authenticity of all the component parts included in the property is high.

70 years of excavation and research have revealed a remarkable quality, quantity, and variety of archaeological remains, with high levels of preservation. There has been in situ consolidation work on parts of the structures on the Citadel Mound.

The substantial amount of data recovered from the archaeological excavations has ensured that the stabilization/ consolidation work has a high level of authenticity in terms of material and design.

All stabilization work has been based on complete and detailed documentation.

e. Requirements for protection and management

The property has the highest level of site designation, having been designated as a 1st and 3rd degree archaeological conservation area (= 'site') by the Decision No.1096, 16/02/1990 of the Ankara Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties.

3 mounds and 110 tumuli (incl. within and/or the wider setting of the designated archaeological conservation areas) were also registered separately as 'cultural properties' incl. their min. 20 m. protection zone by the Decision No.1096, 16/02/1990 of the Ankara Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties.

A further 13 individual tumuli within the surrounding landscape were designated by the Decision No.2436, 10/06/2015 by the Ankara Regional Council for the Conservation of Cultural Properties. 1 tumulus (=T120 incl. within the buffer zone) and a late Roman period structure (= DY10) was designated by the Decision No.2808, 12/11/2015. And 1 other tumulus (= T125; incl. within the buffer zone) was designated by the Decision No.3371, 26/05/2016.

In addition, the status of 3rd degree archaeological conservation area (= 'site') designation (Decision No.1096, 06/02/1990 of the Ankara Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Properties) ensures that the immediate setting of the Citadel Mound at the west and north peripheries is protected from adverse development.

Its immediate setting is therefore also protected and managed within the framework of the Protection of Cultural and Natural Properties Law (*Kültür ve Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma Kanunu*) No. 2863, 23/07/1983 as amended by the Law No. 5226, 14/07/2004.

Regular maintenance is planned ahead, implemented and monitored through the Penn Museum Gordion Project's conservation programme.

Processes are in place for consenting change and/or development (through the Ankara Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Properties) within the boundaries of the proposed WH Site that effects its special interest, and also for development affecting its setting.

The management and protection arrangements are therefore sufficiently robust to sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

The first draft of the management plan (*2013 TÜBİTAK Gordion and its Environs Management Plan Project*) has been prepared jointly by the University of Pennsylvania and the Middle East Technical University (Dept. of Architecture), with the support of the *Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (TÜBİTAK)* / The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey.

The present edition (incl. in Annex 3.g) was prepared jointly by the Turkish Ministry of

Culture and Tourism (General Directorate of Cultural Properties and Museums), the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and the Polatlı Municipality, and has taken into consideration many new developments, advances, and insights that have occurred over the last seven years.

Specific long-term objectives related to key issues include: protection of the setting; increasing knowledge and understanding of the Site in its regional context through excavation and research; sustainable tourism; and community involvement.

The Management Plan was approved by the Coordination and Audit Board in January 2021 in accordance with the Regulation on the Substance and Procedures of the Establishment and Duties of the Site Management and the Monument Council and Identification of Management Sites (Regulation No.26006, 27/11/2005).

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

Organisation:

Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Cultural Properties and Museums (*Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü*)

Address:

Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü
II. Meclis Binası
06110 Ulus Ankara
Turkey

Tel: 90 (312) 470 8000

Fax: 90 (312) 470 6532

e-mail: kulturvarlikmuze@kultur.gov.tr

website: <https://kvmgm.ktb.gov.tr/>

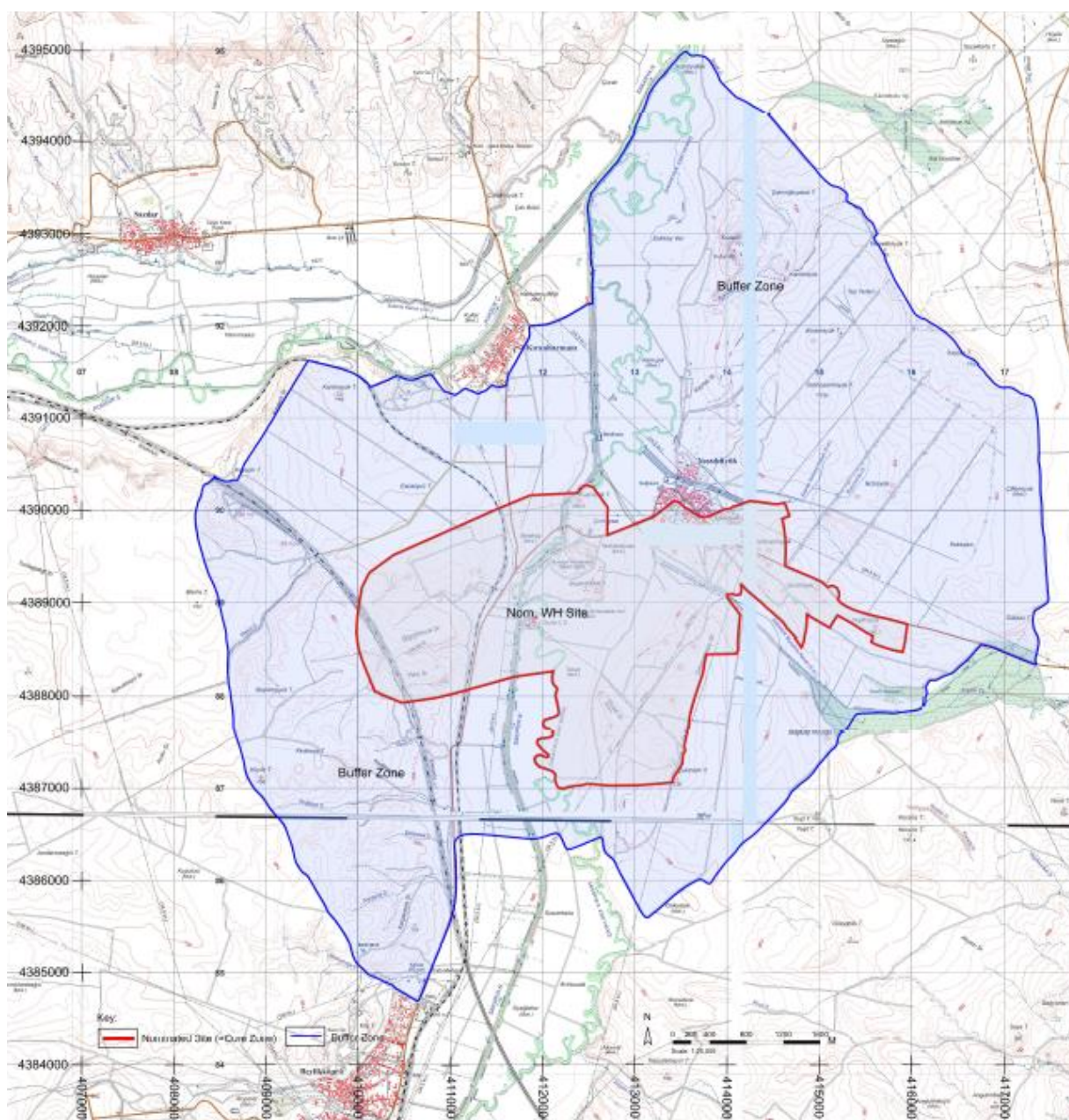


Fig. 1.4: Map at 1:25.000 scale showing the boundaries of the Nominated Site (=core zone) and Buffer Zone (reduced size version of the original copy of 1:25.000 scale map incl. in Annex 1)