

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

State Party: India

State, Province or Region: Karnataka, India

Name of Nominated Property: Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas

Geographical Coordinates to the nearest second:

Sl No	Name of the Component Part	Region(s)/District(s)	Coordinates of the central point	Area of Nominated component part (ha)	Area of the Buffer Zone (ha)	Map No
1	Channakeshava Temple	Belur, Hassan	13° 9'46.25"N 75°51'37.46"E	1.59	41.96	Map 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 5.1, 5.4
2	Hoysalesvara Temple	Halebidu, Hassan	13°12'44.83"N 75°59'38.66"E	7.00	110.38	Map 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 5.2, 5.5
3	Keshava Temple	Somanathapura, Mysuru	12°16'33.49"N 76°52'54.45"E	1.88	42.23	Map 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 5.3, 5.6
Total Area (in hectares)				10.47 ha	194.57 ha	

Table 0.1 Geographical coordinates and Area statements of the Nominated Properties

Textual description of the boundary (ies) of the nominated property

Sacred Ensembles of Hoysala is a serial nomination of three temples belonging to the Hoysala era from 12th to 13th century, located in the state of Karnataka in India. The three temples and the boundaries are described below:

Channakeshava Temple is the main temple in the temple complex at Belur. It is a living temple. The complex is located at the center of the traditional settlement which is surrounded by the remnants of a mud fort and a moat. On the southern side, outside the fort area, is a large tank which is culturally linked with the temple, even today. The area of the temple complex is 1.59 hectares. The area of the buffer zone which is defined by the 300m ASI Prohibited Buffer Zone is 41.96 hectares.

Hoysalesvara Temple is located on the banks of Dorasamudra tank, in Halebidu. The town has many protected and unprotected temples, archaeological ruins and mounds. There are remnants of the fort and gateways that once protected the town. The area of the temple complex is 7 hectares. The buffer zone, which includes some of the protected monuments, ruins and part of the Dorasamudra tank, has an area of 110.38 hectares.

Keshava Temple is in the centre of the village of Somanathapura. The temple is enclosed by a multi-celled prakara. A number of artefacts are displayed in the open ground. The area of the temple complex is 1.88 hectares. The buffer zone area is 42.23 hectares.



Maps of the Nominated Property showing Boundaries and Buffer Zone



Map 0.1 Regional map showing overall Nominated Properties. Source: Political Map, Survey of India, 2020.



CHANNAKESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Belur, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:1,000



Legend

 Nominated Property Boundary

0 25 50 Mtrs
 Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17; Open Source Imagery
 (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982

Map 0.2 Nominated Property Boundary of Channakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka



CHANNAKESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Belur, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:5,000

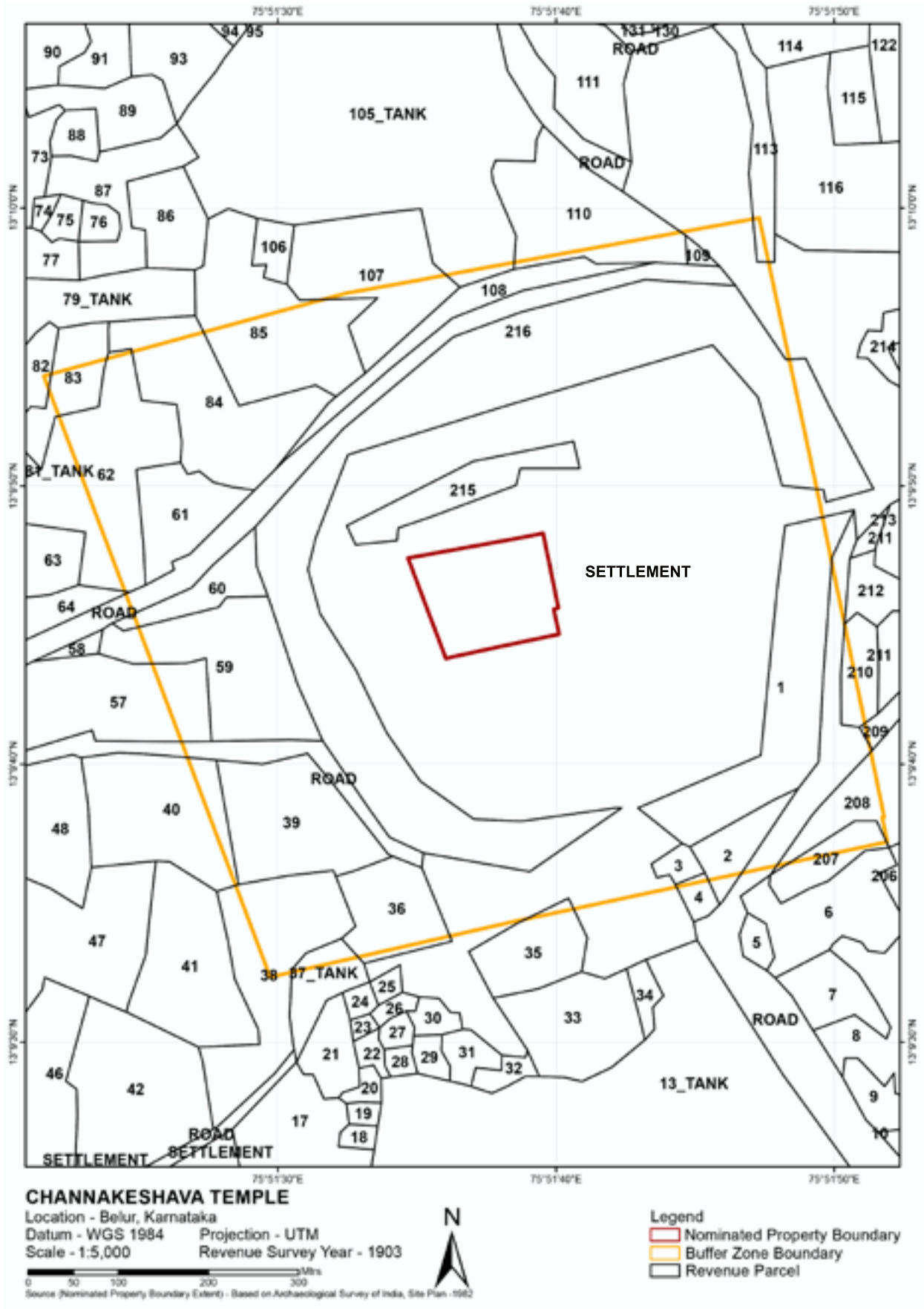


0 50 100 200 300 Mtrs
 Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17; Open Source Imagery
 (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982

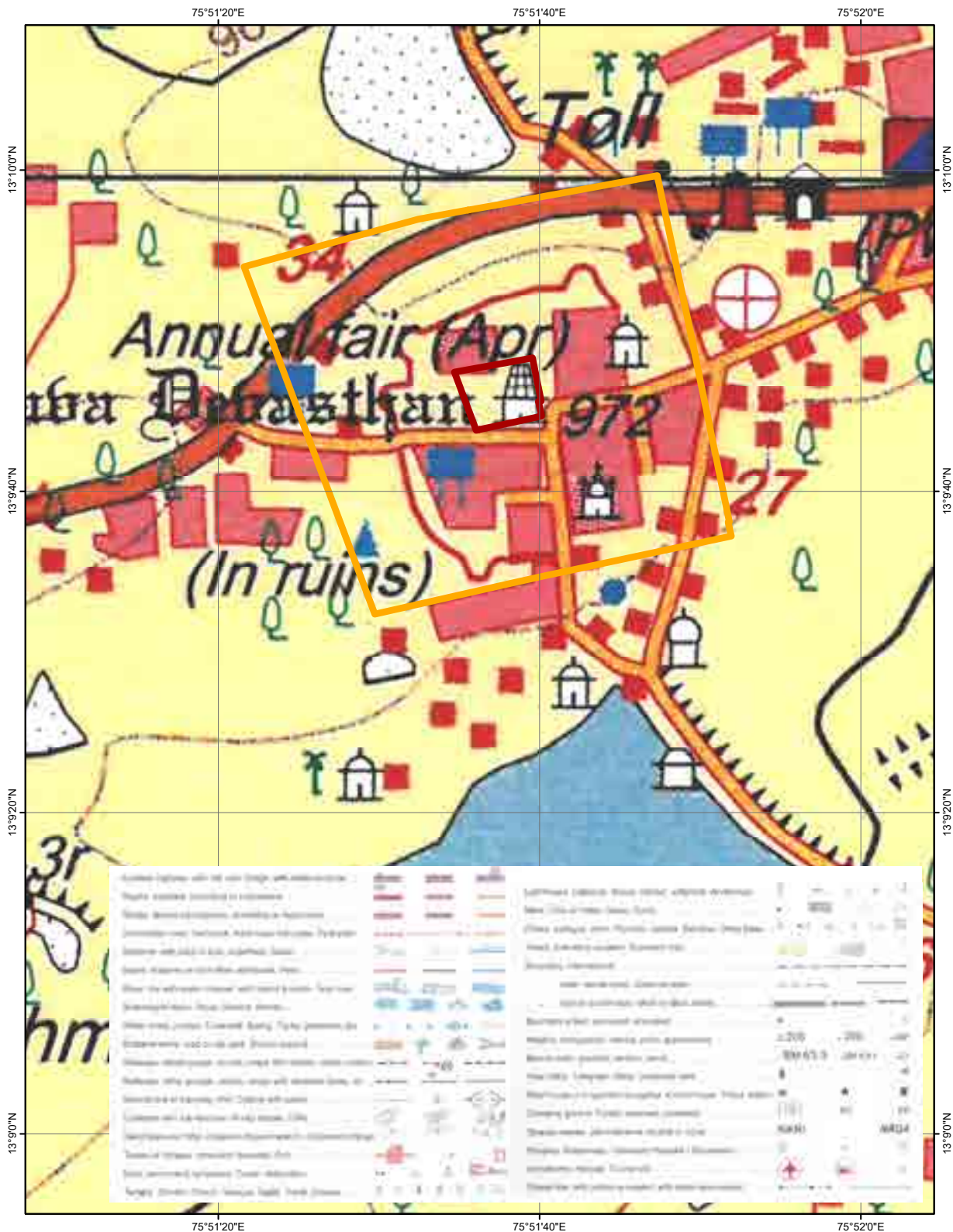
Legend

- Nominated Property Boundary
- Buffer Zone Boundary

Map 0.3 Proposed Nominated Property Boundary and Buffer Zone of Channakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka

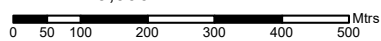


Map 0.4 Revenue Survey Map of Channakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka



CHANNAKESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Belur, Karnataka
Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
Scale - 1:9,000



Legend
 Nominated Property Boundary
 Buffer Zone Boundary

Map 0.5 Topo Survey Map of Channakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka.
Source: Survey of India, surveyed during 1987-88, updated in 2006-07.




HOYSALESVARA TEMPLE

Location - Halebidu, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:1,750



Legend

 Nominated Property Boundary

0 25 50 100 Mtrs
 Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17
 (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982

Map 0.6 Nominated Property Boundary of Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka



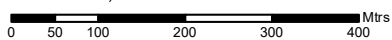
HOYSALESVARA TEMPLE

Location - Halebidu, Karnataka

Datum - WGS 1984

Projection - UTM

Scale - 1:7,000

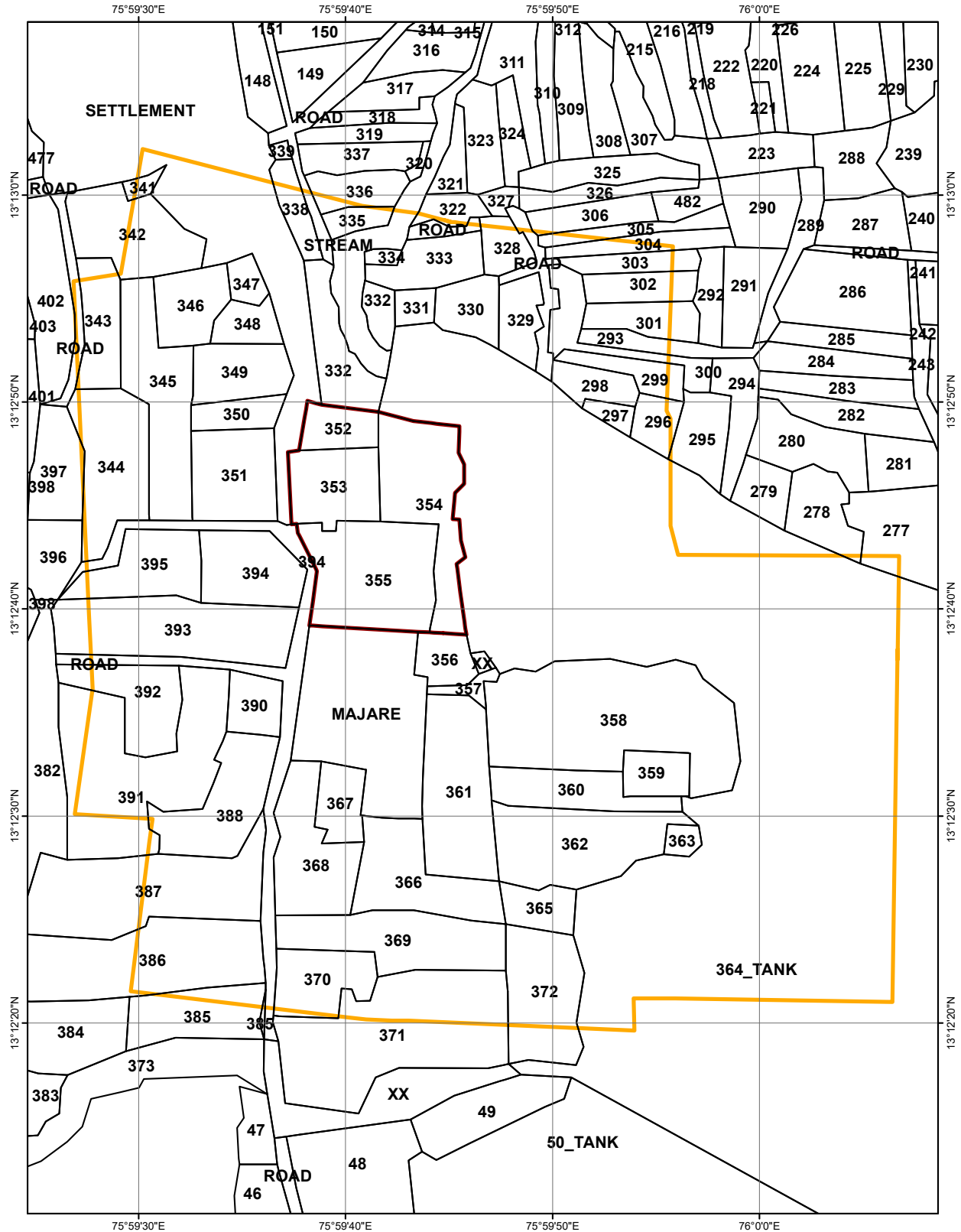


Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17
(Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982

Legend

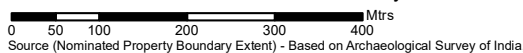
- Nominated Property Boundary
- Buffer Zone Boundary

Map 0.7 Proposed Nominated Property Boundary and Buffer Zone of Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka



HOYSALASVARA TEMPLE

Location - Halebidu, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:7,000 Revenue Survey Year - 1907

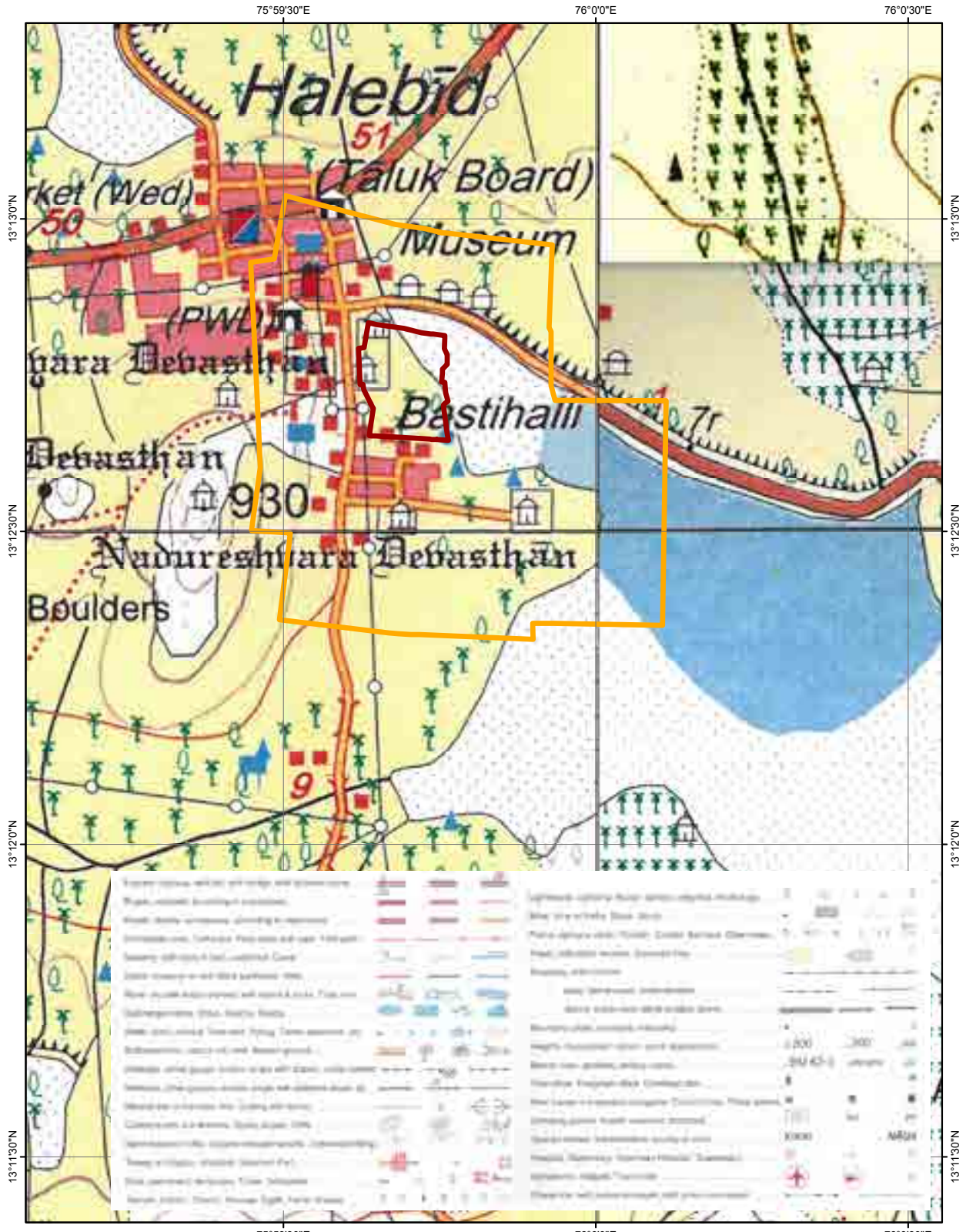


Source (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982



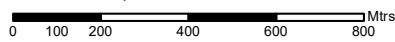
- Legend**
- Nominated Property Boundary
 - Buffer Zone Boundary
 - Revenue Parcel

Map 0.8 Revenue Survey Map of Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka



HOYSALESVARA TEMPLE

Location - Halebidu, Karnataka
Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
Scale - 1:14,000



Legend

- Nominated Property Boundary
- Buffer Zone Boundary

Map 0.9 Topo Survey Map of Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka.
Source: Survey of India, surveyed during 1987-88, updated in 2006-07.



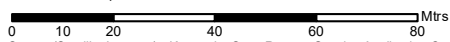
KESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Somanathapura, Karnataka
Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
Scale - 1:1,200



Legend

 Nominated Property Boundary



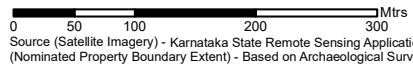
Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17
(Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982



Map 0.10 Nominated Property Boundary of Keshava Temple, Somanathapura, Mysuru, Karnataka



KESHAVA TEMPLE

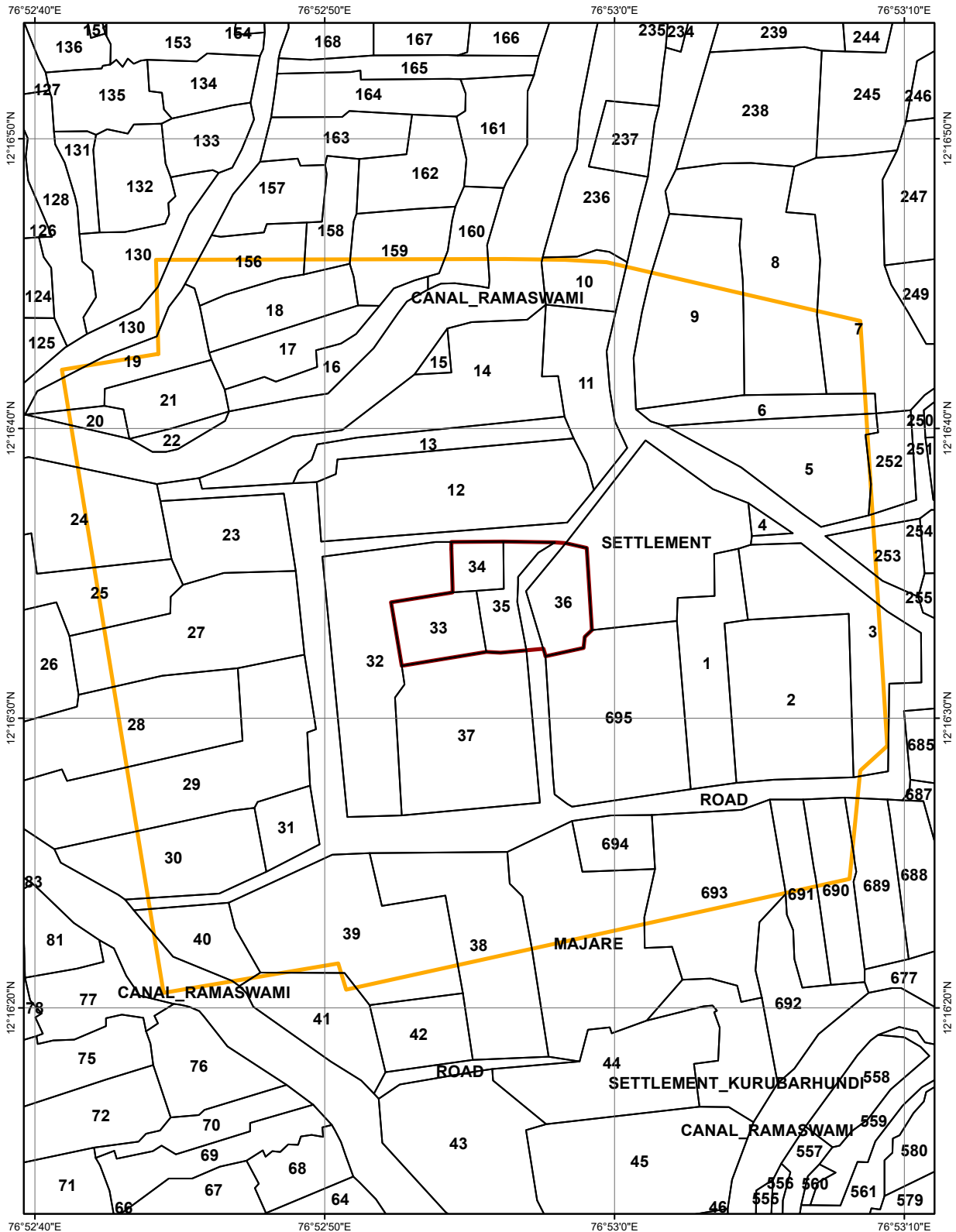
Location - Somanathapura, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:5,000



Legend
 Nominated Property Boundary
 Buffer Zone Boundary

Source (Satellite Imagery) - Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Center, 2016-17
 (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982

Map 0.11 Proposed Nominated Property Boundary and Buffer Zone of Keshava Temple, Somanathapura, Mysuru, Karnataka



KESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Somanathapura, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:5,000 Revenue Survey Year - 1904



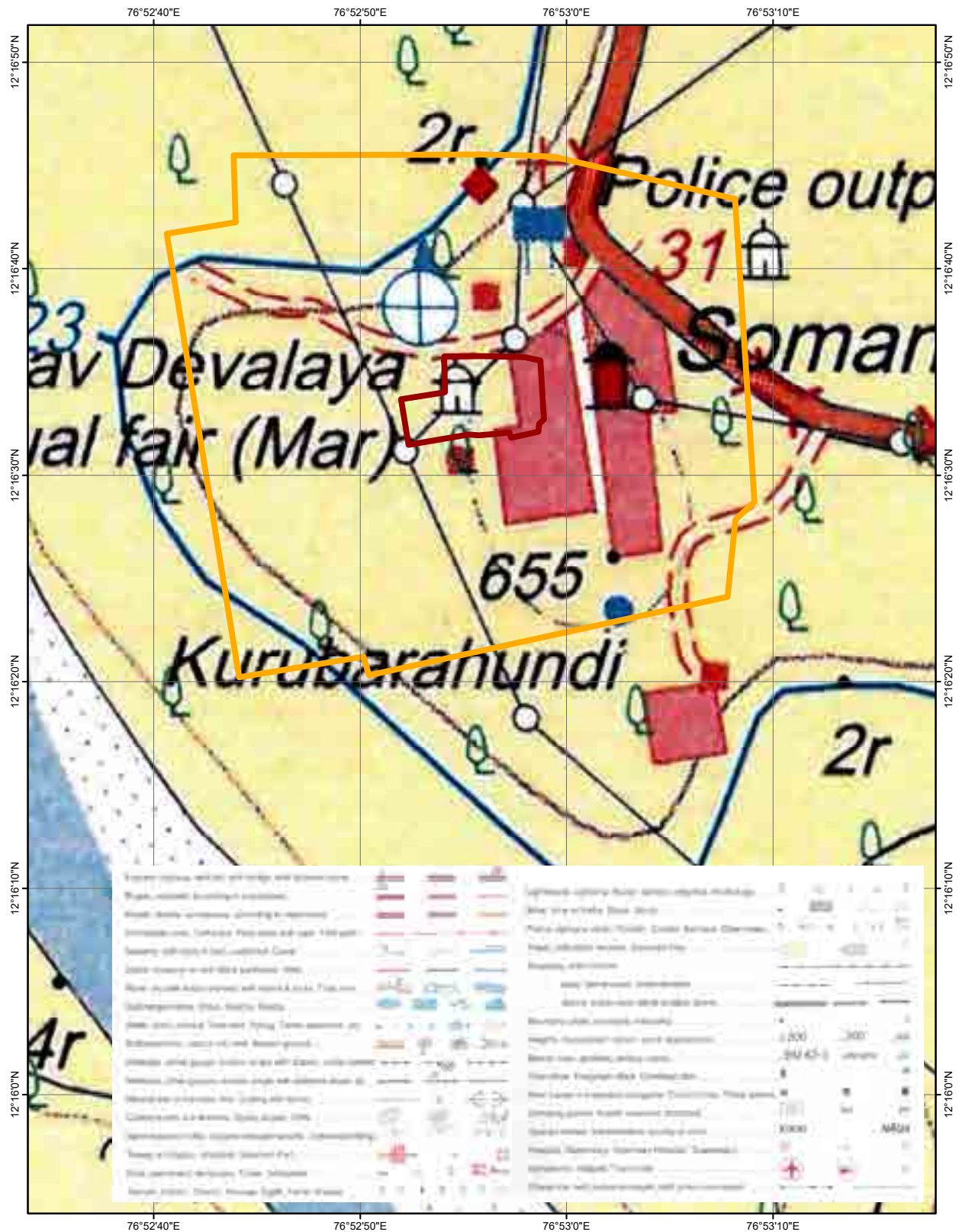
Source (Nominated Property Boundary Extent) - Based on Archaeological Survey of India, Site Plan -1982



Legend

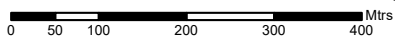
- Nominated Property Boundary
- Buffer Zone Boundary
- Revenue Parcel

Map 0.12 Revenue Survey Map of Keshava Temple, Somanathapura, Mysuru, Karnataka



KESHAVA TEMPLE

Location - Somanathapura, Karnataka
 Datum - WGS 1984 Projection - UTM
 Scale - 1:7,000 Revenue Survey Year - 1904



Legend

- Nominated Property Boundary
- Buffer Zone Boundary

Map 0.13 Topo Survey Map of Keshava Temple, Somanathapura, Mysuru, Karnataka. Source: Survey of India, surveyed in 2005-06.

Criteria under which property is nominated

Cultural Criteria (i) and (ii)

Criteria (i): represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

Criteria (ii): 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;

Cultural landscape

No; not nominated as cultural landscape.

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief Synthesis

The Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas is a serial property comprising three component sites in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. The three components of the serial nomination, viz., the Channakeshava temple in Belur, the Hoysalesvara temple in Halebidu and the Keshava temple in Somanathapura, are the three best representatives of the 12th-13th century Hoysala oeuvre of sacred architecture.

The early Hoysala rulers who established their new kingdom and state fashioned a distinct and novel sacred architecture that set their temples apart from those of contemporary kingdoms and dynasties, even as it drew inspiration from them.

Hoysala temple plans and forms were the result of adaptations, modifications, and experimentation with features drawn from different temple-building traditions including the Nagara tradition predominant in north India, the Dravida tradition prevalent in south India, the Bhumija tradition of central India and the Karnata Dravida tradition of the Kalyani Chalukyan territories. The multi-pointed stellate ground plan common in Karnata Dravida and Bhumija temples inspired the extremely complex, stellate plans of the Hoysalas, with rhythmically indented walls of a kind not seen before. Horizontal sculptural bands of elephants and people first featured in temples in western India in the 11th century. The Hoysalas built on this germ of an idea to create the stunning multi-tier friezes that are unique to their temples. Similarly, ceilings featuring corbelled domes, also inspired by temples of western India, have been used and embellished here very differently, thereby making them quite emphatically local.

Hoysala temples are characterised by profuse embellishment and an exuberant *horror vacui*. The temples' external walls are animated with a continuous parade of life-sized or larger sumptuous images of gods, goddess, musicians, dancers, ascetics and attendant figures. Along the temple plinths, a teeming multi-tier frieze comprising vigorous elephants, horses, crocodiles, plants, humans and birds—a microcosm of the living worlds—twists around the whole temple. The interiors showcase finely carved, highly polished pillars in myriad profiles, along with exquisite bracket figures of dancers and musicians, their sensuality and dynamism expertly rendered in stone. Ceilings are adorned with figurative sculptures and with floral, geometric and botanical motifs, the stone resembling wood in its ornateness.

The Hoysala aesthetic emphasised intricacy and hyperreal detail across all levels of sculpture, whether it is pillars, ceilings or wall sculptures. Carvings are in high relief with deep undercutting, and artists have delighted in minutiae, detailing each bead, fingernail or leaf blade with great attention. This extravagant ornamentation and relentless pursuit of detail was made possible by fully exploring and exploiting the qualities of schist, the fine-grained, relatively soft mineral that the Hoysalas chose for their temples.

This technical mastery over their material complemented a creative genius in translating beliefs, stories and abstract ideas into the medium of stone. In their narrative scenes and figural sculptures, artists varied perspective, composition and points of view to best convey the drama or essence of a scene.

The creative interventions and innovations of the Hoysala artists and architects created visually stunning masterpieces that also served to emphasise sacral meanings. Thus, the large sculptures of deities on the temple's outer walls invited greater interaction with the divine as devotees performed the ritual circumambulation of the temple. The practice of having stories from the Hindu epics and puranas unspool in sequence along the walls similarly deepened the religious experience of the circumambulation. The idea of an unfolding narrative along the circumambulation path, first introduced by the Hoysalas, is carried forward in some 15th century temples in the World Heritage Site of Hampi and elsewhere around Karnataka.

This coming together of creative genius, architectural eclecticism and symbolism led to outstanding and unequalled sacred architecture and the birth of the novel 'Hoysala temple'.

Such creativity was accompanied by an unprecedented degree of artistic agency as evidenced by the hundreds of artists' 'signatures' in Hoysala temples. While many are only names or initials chiselled just below a carving, several epigraphs also include details such as the artist's lineage and his titles, in language reminiscent of royal epithets. Such artistic agency was unusual in the precolonial Indian subcontinent and points to the high standing that artists enjoyed in Hoysala society.

b) Justification for Criteria

The inscription is proposed under Cultural Criteria (i) and (ii). The justifications for the Criteria are as below:

Criterion (i): to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.

The sacred ensembles of the Hoysalas, represented by the three components chosen here, testify to the creative genius of the Hoysala architects and artists. In their profuse embellishment, high relief and joyous *horror vacui*, the temples are testimony to the artists' technical expertise over stone carving, a skill that remains matchless. The richly experiential and visually astounding temples they built demonstrate their creativity in translating religious beliefs and stories into sculpture. This coming together of technical mastery and symbolism to create novel masterpieces of architecture is an outstanding achievement of the Hoysala artists.

Criterion (ii): 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 three components of the sacred ensembles of the Hoysalas chosen here are examples of the new forms of temple architecture developed by them. These novel temple forms were a result of creative modifications of the plans and elements of temple architecture as prevalent elsewhere, complemented with indigenous innovations. Although some elements of this new and distinct language of temple architecture were carried forward in other regions, the masterpieces of sacred architecture built by the Hoysalas remain unequalled.

The 'Hoysala' temple form emerged from considered and informed choices of elements and features that were used in very self-conscious ways, with a clear understanding of the overall outcome that was desired. This deliberate and reflexive architectural eclecticism on the part of the temple builders is a unique Hoysala aesthetic.

c) Statement of Integrity (for all properties)

The three components of the serial nomination with all their elements represent the significant style that developed in this region in the 12th - 13th century. These representative temples demonstrate one hundred and fifty years of building activity where the Hoysalas have adopted elements of temple building from different regions and creatively developed it into a novel style of their own.

The temples collectively bring out a holistic understanding of the context, society, culture, religion, politics and economy of the Hoysalas, expressed through their art and architecture. All the three temples are built in chloritic

schist. The typologies of these temples in number of cells, the elements of planform such as stellate plans and their complex variations, the elements such as *adhithana*, the sculptural panels, many with artists' signatures, the intricate carvings in the interior and exteriors, all form an integral part of the temple expressing the outstanding universal values. The artistic excellence became the hallmark of the temples as demonstrated in the elements of the three components.

The integrity of each of these components in its architecture, sculptures and carvings continue to define the experience of the characteristic style of this region in this period. Though there have been weathering of some sculptures, nonetheless, the features of the sculptures are clear enough to convey the sacral meanings of the iconography in these components and to show the creative skills in the intricacies of the carvings which became the hallmark of this dynasty.

Each of these components are nationally protected monuments and thus have defined boundaries for nominated property and the buffer zone. The buffer zones adopted for the management of the components are based on the law and therefore are regulated. The three components along with their buffer zones are the best representative sites of the cultural era of the Hoysala temple style of the 12th and 13th century.

d) Statement of authenticity for properties

The three components of the serial nomination constitute the most significant temples of the Hoysala cultural era, representing a significant level of authenticity of the attributes which give the OUV to the serial nomination collectively as well as for each individual component. All these three components are built with chloritic schist and reflect the features such as stellate plans, horizontal friezes of the *adhithana*, artists' signatures, sculptural panels and carvings that became the hallmark of this period.

At Channakeshava Temple at Belur, there is a continuity of worship, rituals and all festivals since its inception in 1117 CE. At Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebidu, worship has long been discontinued. The other two temples, Hoysaleshwara Temple at Halebidu and Keshava Temple at Somanathapura, is a non-worshipping temple.

In form and design, Somanathapura represents a complete example with all elements of Hoysala temple architecture including the *shikhara* or tower over all the three sanctums. The main temple which carries all the attributes of OUV is surrounded by a prakara which was completely dismantled and reconstructed in the last decade. The reconstruction was carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India in a scientific manner. The attributes which express the outstanding universal values are part of the main temple and have not been impacted.

The *shikhara* or temple towers are absent at Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebidu. There is no clear evidence of its existence in any epigraphical collection. The external nandi mantapas (pillared halls built to enshrine the sacred bulls) have been reconstructed in the past, however they do not affect the authenticity of the architectural form of the temple. The temple still retains all the attributes which express its OUV. The setting of the temple on the banks of the large tank is still maintained.

At Channakeshava Temple, the main temple expresses all the attributes which convey the OUV. There are other shrines in the temple complex which were built over a period of time since the inception of the temple. The stylistic features of these temple structures reflect the time period in which they were built. They were built around the main temple and hence have not disturbed the setting of the Channakeshava Temple itself, the main temple in the complex. The shikhara or the tower over the main temple was dismantled in the late 19th century and was thereafter never rebuilt. This has not affected the living temple which continues to be an important place of worship. All the features which define the attributes are still very evident in the temple.

Thus, the three components retain authenticity in form and design, materials of the attributes which clearly express the OUV of the components.

e) Requirements for protection and management

The three components which demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value are all declared as nationally protected monuments by the Archaeological Survey of India. They are protected under the AMASR Act of 1958. The nominated properties and the buffer zones are regulated by the provisions made in the 2010 amendment of AMASR Act of 1958.

An Apex committee at Regional level will oversee the entire management of the nominated and the buffer zone. The nominated properties will be managed by Archaeological Survey of India and the buffer zones by the Site level Committee which will have representatives of the local stakeholders for the management of their respective buffer zone. The Site level committees are the District level Heritage Committees, hence there will be one committee for Belur and Halebidu, which are part of the Hassan District and another committee for Somanathapura which will be managed by Mysuru District. The Deputy Director, Heritage, from Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage, Govt of Karnataka will be the nodal officer to look at all issues of world heritage sites. The Integrated Conservation Plan, proposed in the Site Management Plan includes guidelines for preparation of a conservation plan for each component, detailed regulations for each buffer zone and guidelines for preparation of sectoral plans such as Tourism plan, Mobility plan and others. These guidelines need to be included in the regulatory plans developed by the authorities. This plan will be further guided by the institutional and legal frameworks, resourcing, coordination and monitoring as provided in the Site management Plan.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency/organisation

Position: Director General

Organisation (State Party for India): Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi

Address: Dharohar Bhawan, 24 Tilak Marg, New Delhi -110001,

Tel: 011-23075357

Fax: 011-23019487

Email: dg.asi@gov.in

Web address: www.asi.nic.in

Position: Superintending Archaeologist

Organisation: Archaeological Survey of India, Bengaluru circle

Address: 5th floor, 'F' Kendriya Sadan, 17th Main Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru- 560034

Tel: 25537734,

Fax: 25522531

Email: circlebangalore.asi@gov.in

Web address: www.asibengalurucircle.in

Position: Heritage Commissioner

Organisation: Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage, Karnataka

Address: Karnataka Exhibition Authority Premises, Mysuru, India -570010

Tel: 0091-821-2424673

Fax: 0091-821-2424665

Email: commrr_amh@yahoo.in

Web address: www.karnatakaarchaeology.gov.in