

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **State Party:** Thailand
- **State, Province or Region:** Phetchabun Province, Thailand, South East Asia
- **Name of Property:** The Ancient Town of Si Thep
- **Geographical coordinates to the nearest second:** This serial nominated property consists of three cultural heritage sites as outlined in the table below:

Id n°	Name of the component part	Region(s) / District(s)	Coordinates of the Central Point		Area of Nominated Component of the Property (ha)	Area of the Buffer Zone (ha)	Map N°
			Latitude	Longitude			
001	The Ancient Town of Si Thep	Si Thep District	N 15°27'56.94"	E 101°09'04.01"	474.008	2,775.452	Figure 1-4
002	Khao Klang Nok ancient monument		N 15°29'12.63"	E 101°08'40.10"	10.144		
003	Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument		N 15°29'38.63"	E 100°59'20.73"	382.319	1,048.696	Figure 1-6
Total area (in hectares)					866.451 ha	3,824.148 ha	

Notes

The Ancient Town of Si Thep and Khao Klang Nok ancient monument are located close to each other and, therefore, share the buffer zone of 2,775.452 hectares in total.

Textual description of the boundaries of the nominated property

The Ancient Town of Si Thep is the serial property nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List, and is located in Si Thep District, Phetchabun Province in the upper Central Region of Thailand. It consists of three cultural sites, namely: the Ancient Town of Si Thep; Khao Klang Nok ancient monument; and Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument, with a total area of 866,475 hectares.

Geographically, the nominated property is found surrounded by undulating valleys, a river and a mountain range, at a height of 60 – 70 metres above the mean sea level. It is surrounded by agricultural land, national reserved forest and residential areas. The Ancient Town of Si Thep is situated 1.5 kilometres east of the Heang Tributary, one of the Pa Sak River's watercourses, and three kilometres west of Phang Hei Mountain. Khao Klang Nok ancient monument is located outside the Ancient Town of Si Thep in the northern direction but in close proximity, within one kilometre. Both cultural sites are in the Si Thep Sub-district. Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument is located in Khok Sa-ard Sub-district, 15 kilometres west of the Ancient Town of Si Thep and on the same axis as Khao Klang Nok ancient monument.

In recognition of the Outstanding Universal Values that the Ancient Town of Si Thep's boundaries have distinguishably presented, the three cultural sites have been registered as ancient monuments, in accordance with the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museum, B.E.2504 (1961) and the Amended Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museum (No.2), B.E.2535 (1992). This registration under the national legislations continues to help the Ancient Town of Si Thep retain its integrity and authenticity as well as preserve cultural connections and the interrelation of all three cultural sites.

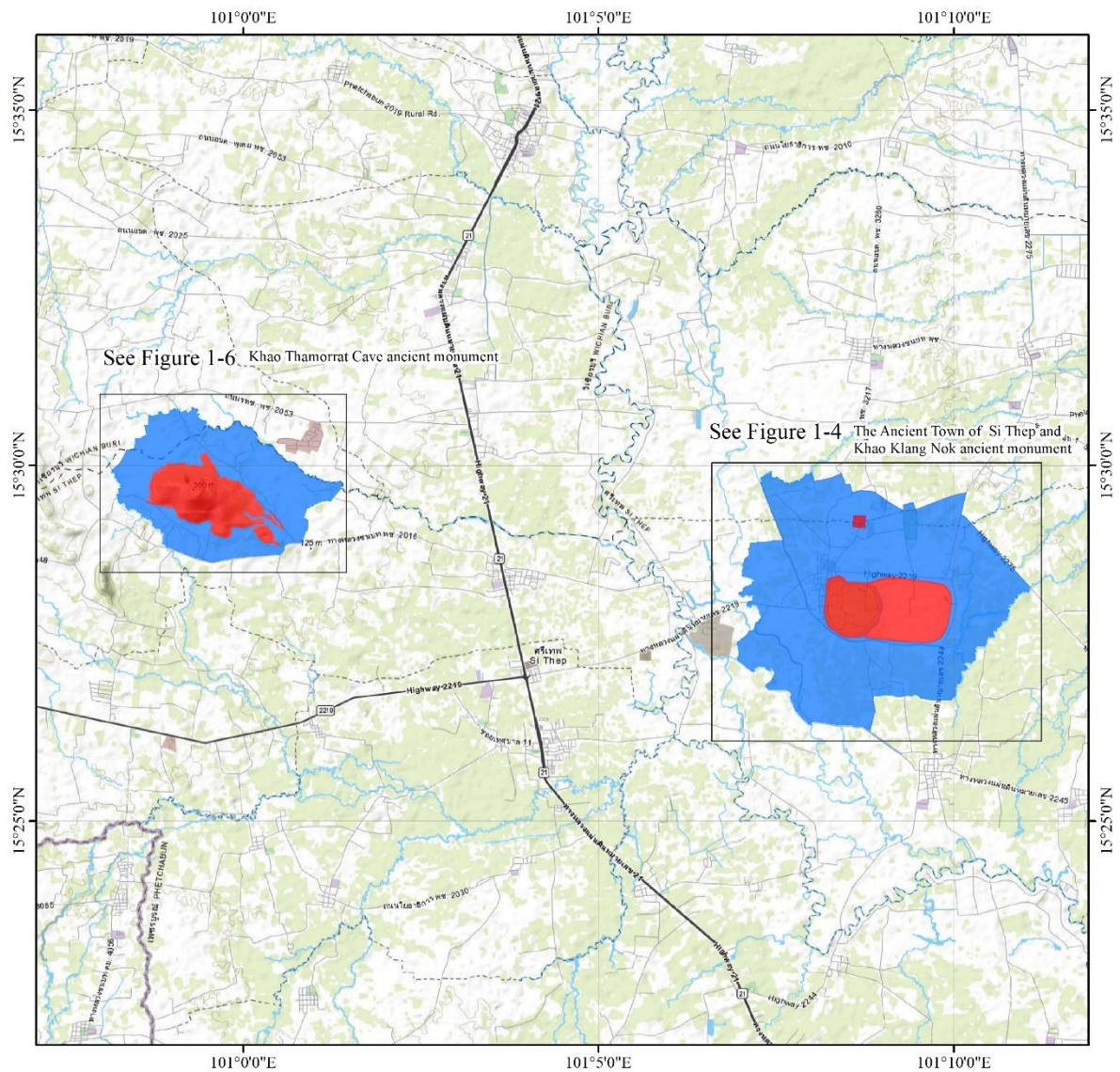
Natural boundaries (such as the banks of streams, canals and brooks) and horizontal construction structures (such as existing roads and highways) have been utilised as boundaries for the Ancient Town of Si Thep's buffer zone. To ensure the Outstanding Universal Values of the Ancient Town of Si Thep have been retained, the area within the buffer zone is also protected under several legislations, including the National Reserved Forest Act, B.E.2507 (1964), the Agricultural Land Reform Act, B.E.2518 (1975) and the Ministerial Regulation regarding the Enforcement of Unitary Town Plan of Phetchabun Province, B.E.2560 (2017).

A4 or A3 size maps of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)

Figure 1-1 Map of Thailand indicating Phetchabun Province in which the nominated property is located



Figure 1-2 Map showing location of the nominated property, and the positional relation between The Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument and Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument



Legends

- Nominated property
- Buffer zone



Scale 1:100,000

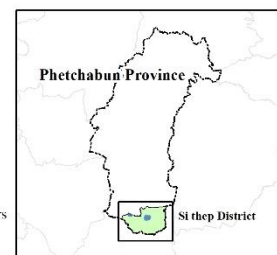


Figure 1-3 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (The Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument); (Topography) (Map in scale 1:10,000 is available at Annex IV, page 470,472)

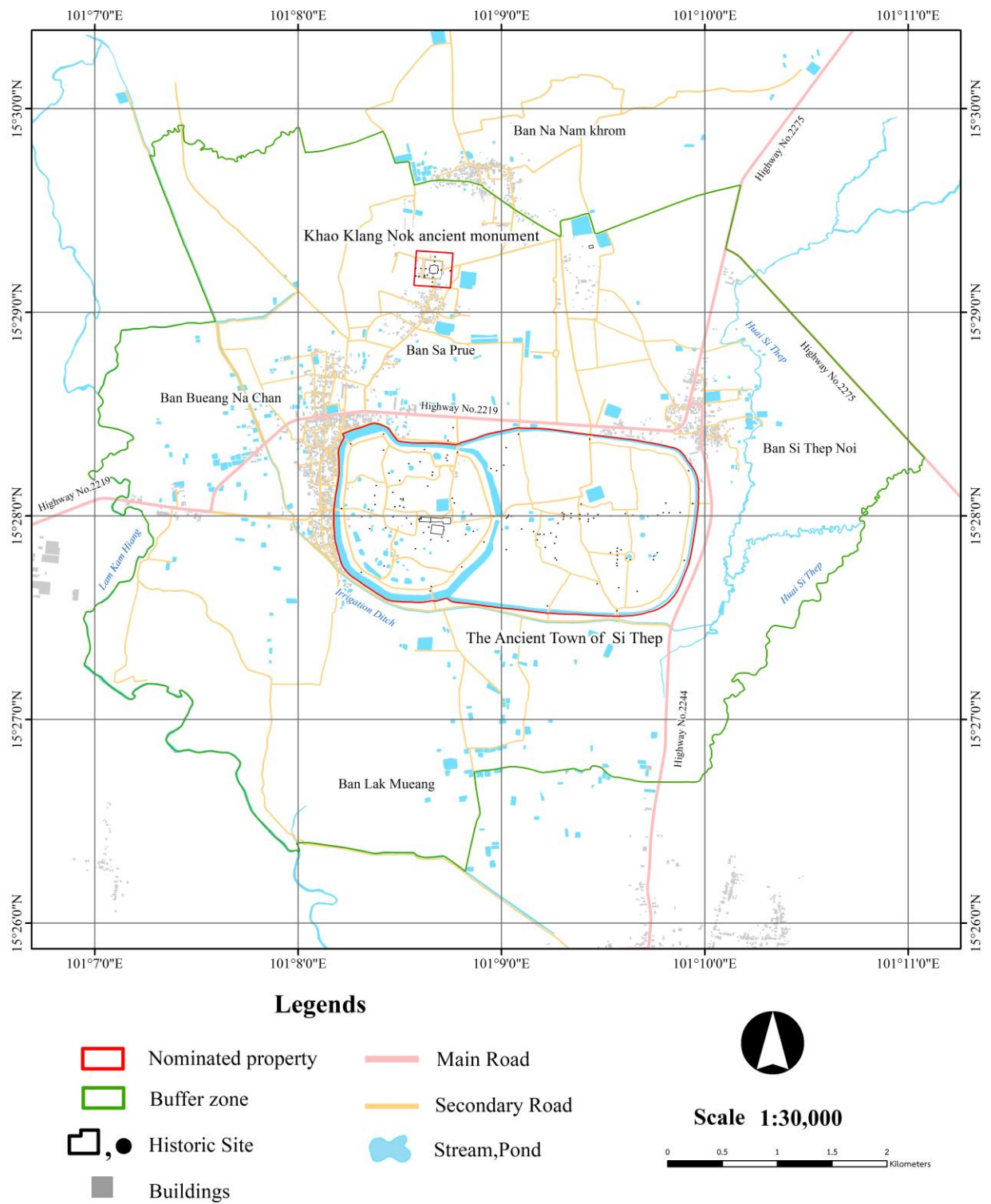


Figure 1-3 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (The Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument); (Topography)

Figure 1-4 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (The Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument); (Orthophoto) (Map in scale 1:10,000 is available at Annex IV, page 471,473)

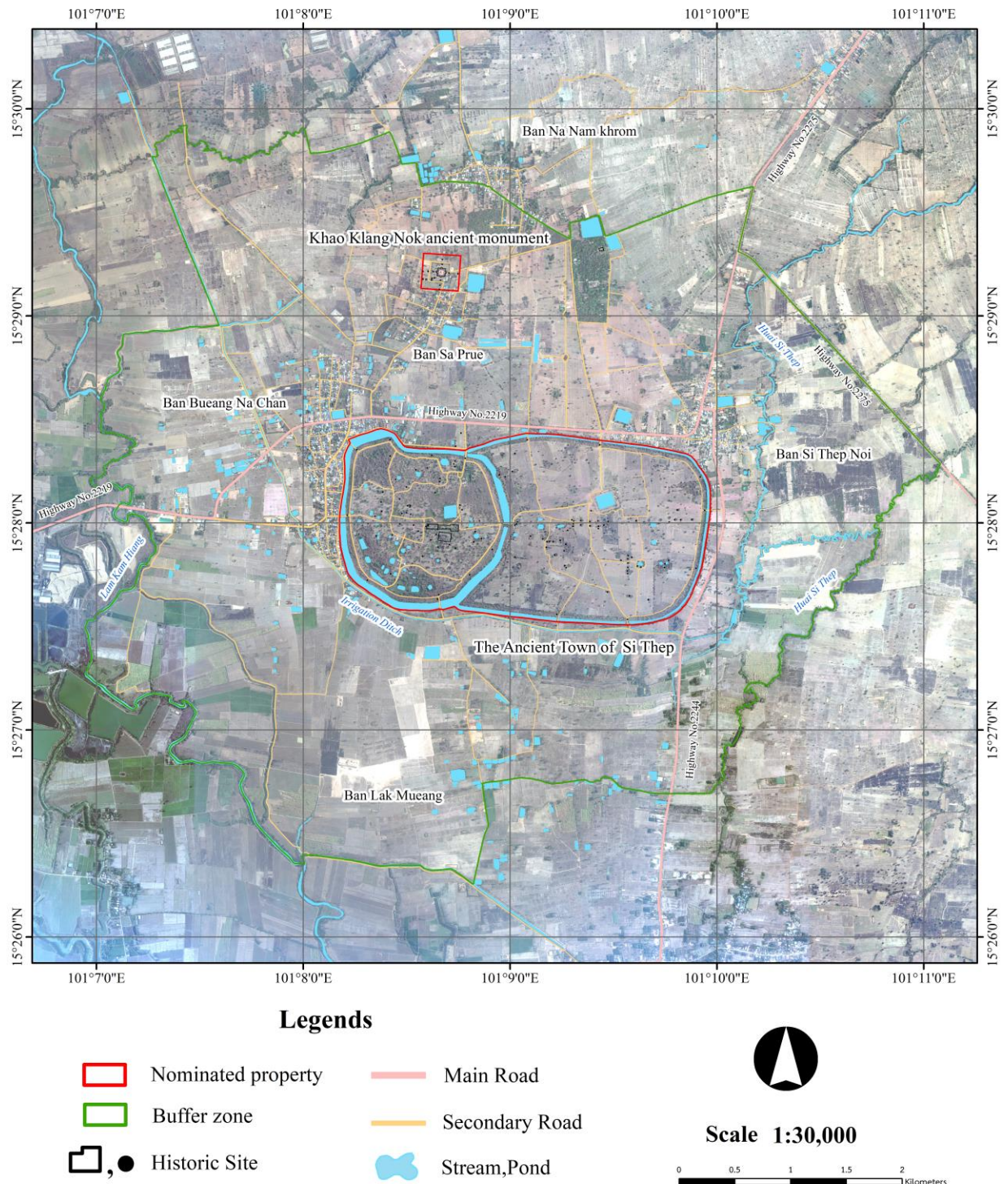


Figure 1-4 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (The Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument); (Orthophoto)

Figure 1-5 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument); (Topography) (Map in scale 1:10,000 is available at Annex IV, page 474)

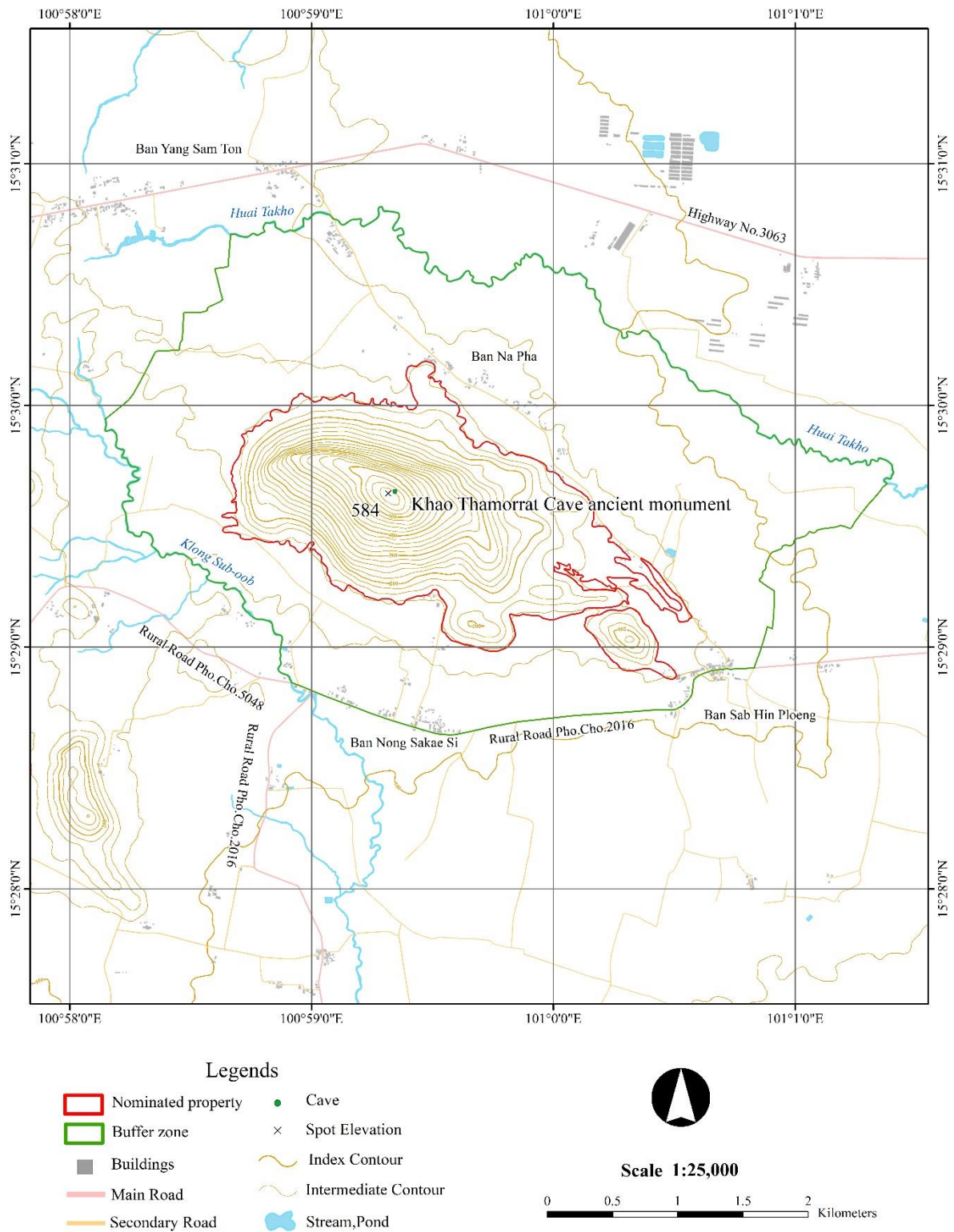


Figure 1-5 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument); (Topography)

Figure 1-6 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument); (Orthophoto) (Map in scale 1:10,000 is available at Annex IV, page 475)

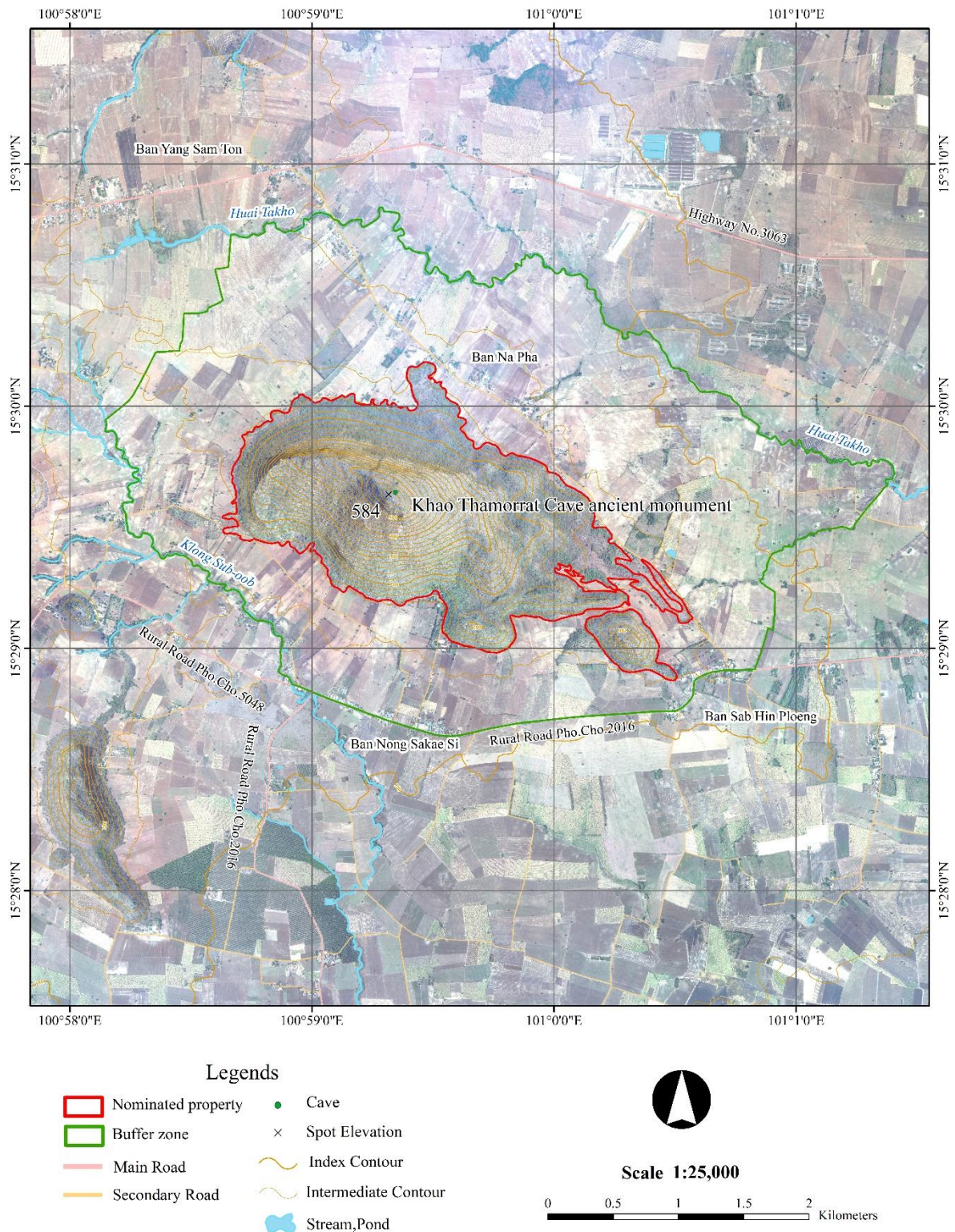


Figure 1-6 Map showing the nominated property and the buffer zone (Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument); (Orthophoto)

Criteria under which property is nominated

The Ancient Town of Si Thep is nominated under Criteria (ii) and (iii) for inclusion in the World Heritage List:

- 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
- Criteria (iii) to bear a unique exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared.

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief synthesis

The Ancient Town of Si Thep is the serial nominated property consisting of three interconnected and related cultural heritage sites representing Dvaravati culture, namely the Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument and Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument. The nominated property has adequate size to be suitable for World Heritage inscription.

The Ancient Town of Si Thep is the only Dvaravati ancient town that highly demonstrates the important attributes of Dvaravati ancient town, art, architecture and culture. It has well retained its completeness and integrity to date. Its physical appearance and other significant features remain intact and in good condition, and are not impacted by development.

Being an excellent representation of ancient towns of the Dvaravati culture in Central Thailand, the Ancient Town of Si Thep demonstrates a high level of authenticity and integrity of the ancient town's layout. Its town layout remains intact, and also presents its own identity, which is totally different from other ancient towns and empires from the same period. Most Dvaravati ancient towns usually have a layout in a non-geometrical shape. The Ancient Town of Si Thep, however, is the only Dvaravati ancient town in Thailand and Southeast Asia that has a distinctive double-layered or twin town layout indicating town expansion with the two towns connecting to each other. Its original town, known as the Inner Town or Muang Nai, has a layout in an almost circle shape. Later, the Outer Town or Muang Nok was expanded to another layer in a rectangular shape with rounded corners.

Within the Ancient Town of Si Thep, there are more than 112 significant monasteries that have been discovered such as Khao Klang Nai ancient monument, Prang Si Thep and Prang Song Phi Nong. Another significant archaeological discovery at the Ancient Town of Si Thep is Hindu sculptures from the 6th – 8th Century AD. The sculptures have been widely complimented by well-known scholars of the craftsmanship techniques used to create a truly round-relief sculpture without a back support arch in the standing Tribhanga posture depicting body movement. These are unique to the Ancient Town of Si Thep and not found from sculptures of other sites and empires that existed in the same period (e.g. the Ishanapura Kingdom). This unique artistic style is defined as “the Si Thep School of Art.” (See Annex I.3)

Outside the Ancient Town of Si Thep in a northerly direction is a gigantic monastery called Khao Klang Nok ancient monument. It is the largest ancient monument in the Dvaravati art in Thailand that exhibits several outstanding features of the Dvaravati architecture that are not found elsewhere (e.g. the base structure in the indented corner system, the Bua Valai Base and decorative replica Prasats). Its remarkable layout is also unique to the Ancient Town of Si Thep. It symbolises the local belief in cosmology and Mahayana Buddhism, hence, is recognised as the centre of universe. This cosmological belief, however, could be adapted from the Southern Indian and Central Java arts and further developed to have its own identity, which is completely different from other cosmological beliefs in Southeast Asia. At the upper level of Khao Klang Nok ancient monument, there is a ruin assuming to be a bell-shaped pagoda from the 7th – 8th Century AD. (See Annex I.3)

Khao Thamorrat Cave is an important monastery with sculptures holding great archaeological value from the Dvaravati period. It is the only cave monastery in Thailand and Southeast Asia that demonstrates shared beliefs in Mahayana Buddhism and a sacred natural mountain. It is located at the

top of undisturbed Khao Thamorrat, about 15 kilometres west of the Ancient Town of Si Thep on the same axis as Khao Klang Nok ancient monument. On the walls in the centre of the cave chamber are seven low-relief sculptures in the Dvaravati art form from the 7th – 8th Century AD that are influenced by Mahayana Buddhism, for example the Buddha, Dhammachakra and Bodhisattva statues. (See Annex I.3)

b) Justification for Criteria

Criteria (ii)

The Ancient Town of Si Thep strongly exhibits key attributes as a result of interactions between Dvaravati and Indian cultures during the 6th – 10th Century AD. Through significant cultural interchange events, it created and continued to develop its own identity, culture and art, which later significantly influenced the art and architecture of other cultures in Thailand. Its three heritage sites are culturally interconnected and related, and are an excellent representation of communities in Dvaravati culture with different beliefs, Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism and Hinduism, all co-habiting harmoniously and simultaneously.

Its unique layout characterises a twin town or expanded town, which is totally different from other Dvaravati ancient towns. Its original town is in an almost circular shape, and was later expanded on the eastern direction in a rectangular shape with rounded corners. There are 12 town gates located between the moats and town walls for storing water. In front of each town gate are dykes at various heights with a layout from east to west. To date, water stored in the moats have been used for consumption and utilisation.

Another significant archaeological discovery is Hindu sculptures from the 6th – 8th Century AD in the standing Tribhanga posture depicting body movement. These sculptures have been complimented because of their exceptional craftsmanship in creating true round-relief sculptures without a back support band. This specific artistic style is defined as “the Si Thep School of Art” and only exhibits in Hindu sculptures found at the Ancient Town of Si Thep. The Si Thep School of Art is an outstanding demonstration of art development in Dvaravati culture that later, after the 8th Century AD, had an influence in other art in Thailand, particularly Lopburi and Ayutthaya.

Khao Klang Nok ancient monument is an outstanding pagoda with a unique architectural form of the Dvaravati art. It was influenced by a combination of South Indian and Indonesian art and architecture but has its own artistic features created that are distinctive from other cultures from the same period. Built with laterite and bricks, it has a very complex design that incorporates several Dvaravati architectural features e.g. the Bua Valai base, the indented corners system and decorative replica Prasats.

Located west of the Ancient Town of Si Thep on the same axis as Khao Klang Nok ancient monument is the Khao Thamorrat Cave, which was modified to be utilised as a monastery. It is the only known cave monastery in Mahayana Buddhism in Thailand and Southeast Asia. Found inside the cave chamber are seven low-relief sculptures in the Dvaravati art from the 7th – 8th Century AD, including the Buddha, Dhammachakra and Bodhisattava statues.

Criteria (iii)

The Ancient Town of Si Thep exhibits a completeness and integrity at the highest level, and is an excellent testimony of the extinct Dvaravati culture and civilisation from the early historic period to the 10th Century AD. Its outstanding architectural and artistic forms are unique and not found elsewhere.

The Ancient Town of Si Thep was known as the Dvaravati Empire. Its name and location first appeared in the travel accounts of a Chinese monk who pilgrimaged over land from China to India in 629AD. It was located between the Ishanapura Kingdom (in Cambodia) and the Sri Ksetra Kingdom (in Myanmar). During the 3rd – 4th Century AD, it served as a trading hub. Hence, trade played an important role in

cultural exchanges, societal change and developments there. From a late pre-historical community with a simple structure, it developed with the influence of Indian culture and became an empire governed by an absolute monarchical system.

One inscription indicates that the Ancient Town of Si Thep accepted Dvaravati culture around the 6th Century AD – the same period when Dvaravati culture was flourishing at other ancient towns in Central Thailand. Most Dvaravati ancient towns are moated and located along river banks, and have a simple layout in either a circular or rectangular shape with rounded corners except a few that are in an irregular shape. However, the Ancient Town of Si Thep is the only Dvaravati ancient town that has a twin town or expanded town layout that is still intact.

Co-habitation of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu religions at the Ancient Town of Si Thep is exhibited in architectural forms and religious sculptures. The building bases are in a square, rectangular or octagonal layout in the indented corners system. The Bua Valai base, a unique Dvaravati architectural feature, is included in the base system. Si Thep sculptures were influenced by the Indian art but further developed to have their own characteristics that are totally different from those of the Indian art. The Buddha sculptures found at the Ancient Town of Si Thep have a relatively round face, large hair knots, joining bulging eyes like the wings of a crow, a flat nose and a broad mouth. These sculptural characteristics are not found in sculptures from other Dvaravati ancient towns.

Dvaravati culture at the Ancient Town of Si Thep eventually deteriorated around the 10th Century AD but continued to influence other art in Thailand in later periods e.g. the Lopburi art in the 12th – 13th Century AD and the Ayutthaya art in the 14th Century AD.

c) Statement of Integrity

The Ancient Town of Si Thep presents the Outstanding Universal Value and important attributes of Dvaravati culture, art and cultural connections between its three heritage sites – the Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument and Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument. It has been protected under a range of legislations and is not impacted by development. Therefore, it has successfully retained its completeness and a high level of integrity. Its physical appearance and other significant features remain intact and in good condition. It is of an adequate size as to be suitable for World Heritage inscription, including over 112 monasteries in Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu religions.

The Ancient Town of Si Thep is the only Dvaravati ancient town that has a unique double-layered or twin town layout with shared moats. Its layout indicates town expansion that features one town overlapping another. Its original town, known as the Inner Town or Muang Nai, is in an almost rounded shape. The Outer town or Muang Nok was further expanded on the eastern direction of the Inner Town to another layer in a rectangular shape with rounded corners. Unlike other Dvaravati ancient towns in Thailand, the Ancient Town of Si Thep's moats, town walls and gates appear to be intact and in a complete state.

Another significant archaeological discovery is Hindu idols in the standing Tribhanga posture depicting body movement. Using the techniques unique to Si Thep craftsmanship, these sculptures are an outstanding example of a true round-relief sculptural form having no back support band. This specific artistic style is defined as “the Si Thep School of Art.”

Khao Klang Nok ancient monument is the only Dvaravati monastery with a unique layout displaying the local belief in cosmology and Mahayana Buddhism. It is in the most complete state in comparison with other Mahayana Buddhist monasteries in Dvaravati culture. As the largest monastery, it was built on a very large square base that applies the indented corners system for decoration. Its base system consists of the Bua Valai base, a unique Dvaravati architectural component, that is specifically decorated

with replica Prasats. This building decorative style is unique to Khao Klang Nok and not found elsewhere.

Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument is located at the top of undisturbed Khao Thamorrat standalone mountain, west of the Ancient Town of Si Thep on the same axis of Khao Klang Nok ancient monument. It is the only cave monastery in Thailand and Southeast Asia that presents shared beliefs in Mahayana Buddhism and a sacred natural mountain. It is accessed via the original natural walking tracks used for decades. The cave and the walking tracks are relatively intact. The cave chamber was transformed to a large stone pillar where seven low-relief sculptures in the Mahayana Buddhist style are found along with trace of damages to sculptural parts due to looting activities.

d) Statement of authenticity for properties nominated under criteria (ii) to (iii)

The Ancient Town of Si Thep, the serial nominated property, has maintained its authenticity at a very high level. Its three cultural sites, namely the Ancient Town of Si Thep, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument and Khao Thamorrat Cave ancient monument, are relatively intact regardless of their location which is surrounded by residential areas, agricultural land and national reserved forest. The area where the cultural sites are located has clear boundaries established. As a result, it has been protected from development, land utilisation and agricultural activities. Only minimal disturbance has been affected the Ancient Town of Si Thep to date.

All three cultural sites exhibit genuine characteristics of an ancient town with moats, town walls, gates and monasteries, from the Dvaravati culture in the 6th – 12th Century AD, and continue to be utilised up to the present time in accordance with their original purpose. Their cultural connections and relations are substantially recognised through their locations and positions related to religious beliefs.

A focus on archaeological conservation at the nominated property over decades has helped the Ancient Town of Si Thep retains its authenticity of a unique double-layered town layout. Other remaining construction structures in the Ancient Town of Si Thep, such as moats, town walls, gates and ancient monuments, also show an exceptionally high level of authenticity in, and originality of, the Dvaravati culture. Some structures are still used by locals to date. The moats, for example, have been used to collect water for daily consumption and utilisation. Local people from a nearby Ban Bueng Na Chan community (west of the Ancient Town of Si Thep) still perform a worship ceremony at the sacred Si Thep Shrine within the Ancient Town of Si Thep on the third day of the third lunar month each year.

As a gigantic pagoda, Khao Klang Nok ancient monument holds a very high level of authenticity in relation to its layout based on the cosmology in Mahayana Buddhism. Khao Klang Nok is the only remaining cultural site displaying a cosmological belief in the Dvaravati culture. It also manifests unique Dvaravati architectural forms of the indented corners system, the Bua Valai base and replica Prasats for the building base decoration. Its main and subordinating pagodas are in their original positions. Remaining materials found are the original laterite and bricks that were used for constructing Khao Klang Nok. Locals from Ban Nong Sa Prue community near Khao Klang Nok have performed Buddhist worshipping at Khao Klang Nok every year on key Buddhist days, such as the triple circumambulation ceremony on Visakabucha Day.

Khao Thamorrat Cave is the only Dvaravati cave monastery in Mahayana Buddhism in Thailand and Southeast Asia that is still intact and undisturbed by development and land utilisation. Although it has been impacted by previous looting incidents or natural deterioration, sculptures on the wall displaying the Buddha and Bodhisattava statues and other Buddhist symbols are still visibly in evidence. In March each year, local residents carry on a tradition to walk to Khao Thamorrat Cave and worship the statues inside this sacred cave.

e) Requirements for the protection and management

Effective protection and management of the Ancient Town of Si Thep and its buffer zone requires implementation of several mechanisms to ensure that its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) will be sustainably maintained over time. These mechanisms include consistent and proportionate enforcement of legislations and collaboration from all parties involved, including local residents and communities.

The Ancient Town of Si Thep, The three cultural sites of the nominated property has been protected under the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museum, B.E.2504 (1961) and its Amended Act (No.2), B.E.2535 (1992). The buffer zone has been protected under the National Reserved Forest Act, B.E.2507 (1964), the Agricultural Land Reform Act, B.E.2518 (1975), and the Ministerial Regulation regarding the Enforcement of Unitary Town Plan of Phetchabun Province, B.E.2560 (2017).

At present, protection activities have been implemented by government agencies at all levels, with the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Culture overseeing overall protection and management of the Ancient Town of Si Thep and enforcing the relevant legislations. To strengthen synergies between all relevant government agencies, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been established to determine the provision of a strong collaborative plan that sets out a broad range of protection and conservation practices and proactive measures as well as mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, review and outcome assessment for various timeframes (Tables 5.2 and 5.3 refers). Outcomes of the review and assessment will be used to support the development of future protection and management plans to sustainably safeguard, protect and conserve the Ancient Town of Si Thep in the long term.

Holistic strategies and actions will be implemented at the community level as outlined in the co-designed Master Plan (Table 5.2 refers). Focus will be on conservation, improvement of surrounding environment, tourism management, environmental management and approaches on how to effectively enforce local government legislations to sustainably drive protection and conservation of the Ancient Town of Si Thep. Local residents and communities will also be engaged in accordance with the community involvement plan (Table 5.3 refers) in order to maximise protection and conservation efforts. The community involvement plan is another mechanism to be used to increase efforts and build capacity, capability and awareness of local residents in the protection and conservation of the Ancient Town of Si Thep.

Long-term goal and expectation is that local residents and communities will be up skilled and be capable of constructive involvement in the sustainable protection and management of the Ancient Town of Si Thep., it is anticipated that local residents and communities will be upskilled and be capable of constructive involvement in the sustainable protection and management of the Ancient Town of Si Thep.

NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION OF OFFICIAL LOCAL INSTITUTION/AGENCY

Organization: The Fine Arts Department

Address: Na Phra That Road, Phranakorn, Bangkok 10200 Thailand

Tel: +66 2221 7811, +66 2623-6450

Fax: +66 2221-1812

E-mail: fad_whc@finearts.go.th, manager-finearts@hotmail.com

Web address: www.virtualhistoricalpark.finearts.go.th/sithep