

## PAKISTAN

# Buddhist Ruins at Takht-I-Bahi and Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-I-Bahlol

### II.1 Introduction

**Year of Inscription** 1980

#### Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Sub Regional Office  
Dept. of Archaeology & Museums (DOAM)  
Government of Pakistan  
Peshawar  
Pakistan

### II.2 Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** C iv

#### Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows:  
The Buddhist ruins of Takht-i-Bahi lies on the crest and northern slope of an isolated spur near the village of Takht-i-Bahi 15 km from the District of Mardan on the main road to Swat. The remains of Takht-i-Bahi are one of the most astounding, exciting and imposing relics of Buddhism in Pakistan dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. The remains comprise the main stupa court, votive stupas court, a group of three stupas, the monastic quadrangle, meditation cells, conference hall, covered stepped passageways and many other single and double storey secular buildings. All the structures are stone built in Gandhara patterns (diaper style) using local dressed and semi-dressed stone blocks set in lime and mud mortar.  
On the basis of study of the structures the construction phases have been divided into four distinct periods from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. It has associations with Gondophares, the Parthian ruler, Kanishka the Kushan ruler, Kanishka III, Vasudeva II, the kings of the later Kushan dynasty, the Kidara Kushans and the Huns. The Court of Many Stupas, the monastery, kitchen and refectory are of the 1<sup>st</sup> Period, 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD

*"A revision of the property boundaries is being actively considered."*

(Parthian and Kushanas).

The Main Stupa Court and Assembly Hall belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Period, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Kushan). The Court of Three Stupas is from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Period, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century AD (Kushan and Kidara Kushan).



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And the meditation cells and open court are attributed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Period, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries (post Hun). The White Huns from Central Asia, who were mainly responsible for extensive devastation of Buddhist religious complexes, swept through major parts of the ancient Gandhara country in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD,

#### Status of Site Boundaries

- "The borders of the property and its buffer zone are not adequate due to urbanisation. As such a buffer zone is required to be created for the safeguarding of the site from further urbanisation. In this regard a master plan has been prepared to acquire the land around the protected site and to create/declare a buffer zone."
- A revision of the property boundaries is being actively considered.

### II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

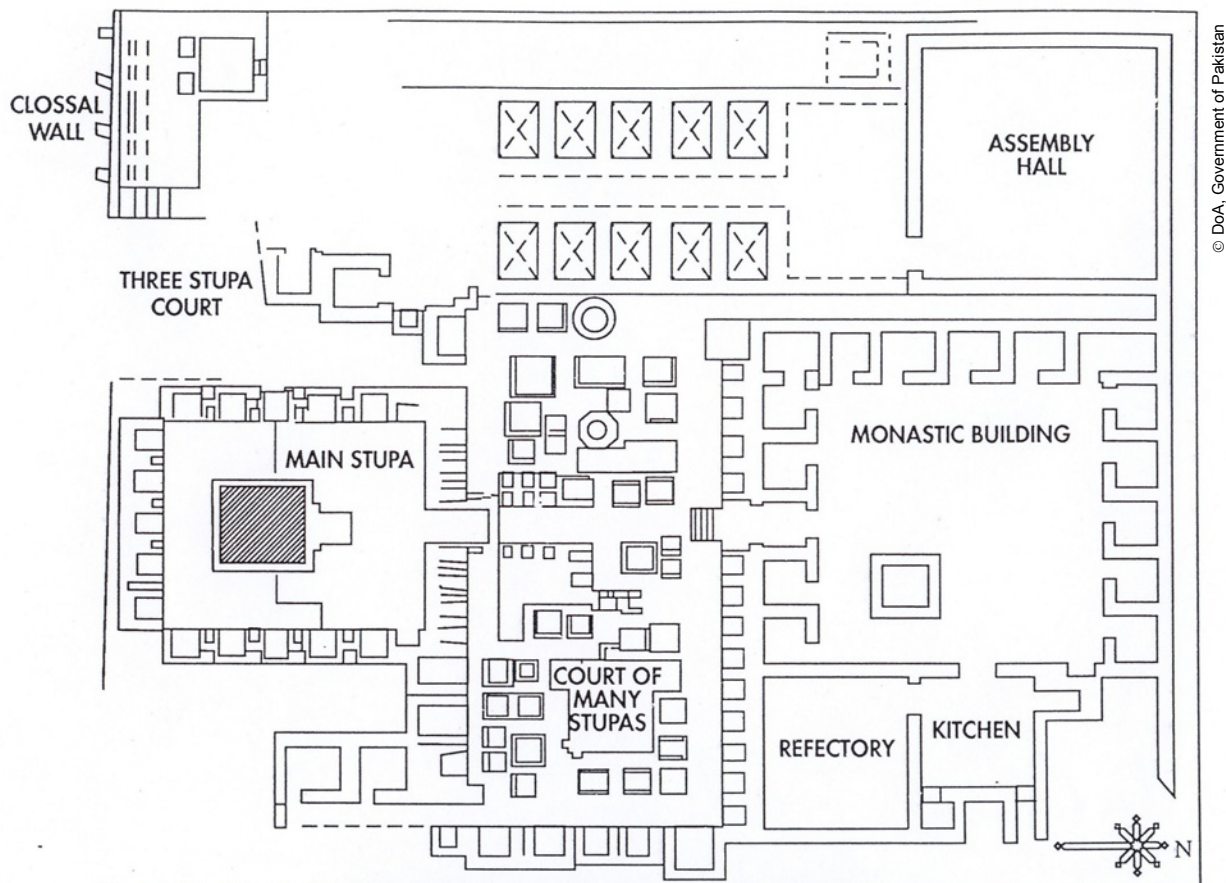
#### Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- The World Heritage values of the property are considered to have been maintained.
- No changes to its authenticity/integrity are considered to have occurred or are foreseen.

### II.4 Management

#### Administrative and Management Arrangements

- The Deputy Director, Sub Regional Office, DOAM, Peshawar, is responsible for its management.
- The property's Management Plan describes the system of administration of the site.
- The property is protected under the Antiquities Act, 1975.
- Proposals are under consideration to amend and strengthen the Antiquities Act.



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*Plan of the Monastic Complex of Takht-i-Bahi*

### Present State of Conservation

- In 1992 a plan was prepared and approved to undertake the most urgent and important stabilisation work. The approved plan was implemented in the period 1992-96.
- "Recently, a Master Plan for the Development and Restoration of Archaeological Sites from Taxila to the Swat Valley has been approved which includes the site of Takht-i-Bahi at a total cost of 100 million Rupees".

### Staffing and Training Needs

- The site is staffed by the Deputy Director, Assistant Directors, assistant archaeological engineer, Field Officer, archaeological conservator, technical assistant, supporting staff and attendants. Staffing levels are viewed as inadequate and the Dept is seeking to obtain more staff.
- Training needs are identified in the fields of archaeology for curators, and brick, stone and frescoes conservation chemical treatment, and landscaping for conservators.

### Financial Situation

- Funding for the site comes from the annual Regular Budget of the Ministry of Culture and other Government programmes.
- Funding is recognised as inadequate.

### Access to IT

- There is no access to IT at the property.

### Visitor Management

- The site had 26,918 visitors in 2001 (24,836 Adults, 1,632 Students, Children and Soldiers, and 450 Foreign Tourists).
- There are no visitor facilities on the site.
- The need for a Visitor Management Plan is recognised.
- An information booklet is available at the site, but there is no education programme.
- Inscription on the World Heritage List is seen as a major factor affecting the number of visitors to the site.

### II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

#### Threats and Risks

- Uncontrolled growth of vegetation is one of the main causes of decay.
- Blockage in the drainage system need to be cleared and natural water escapes from the site should be improved.
- Debris should be removed to enhance the site's appearance and records of conservation, showing condition before, during and after work, should be maintained.
- A planting programme will reduce dust & pollution on the site and provide shade in the summer.
- Barbed wire fencing and a steel gate are identified as measures to protect the site from encroachment, to improve security, and to prevent animal damage to the site.
- Recognised need to check urbanisation, illegal digging, encroachments & mine blasting around the site.

#### Counteractive Plans

- There is an acknowledged need for an emergency or risk preparedness plan.
- The Master Plan for the Development and Restoration of Archaeological Sites addresses many factors affecting the property.

### II.6 Monitoring

#### Monitoring Arrangements

- The Ministry of Culture's Planning Section monitors projects.
- The Science and Technological Universities of Pakistan, Soil Investigation Laboratory Lahore, the Geological Survey of Pakistan, Environmental Dept. and others have been involved in monitoring exercises.
- The Dept. provides regular site monitoring according to Sir John Marshall's Conservation Manual.

#### Monitoring Indicators

- An Environmental Monitoring System is proposed as the key to developing site monitoring indicators.
- Records of conservation, showing condition before, during and after work, should be maintained.

### II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

#### Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- The present management plan is recognised as not sufficient to care for the site. The principal threats are identified under four headings:
- Vegetation,

- Drainage,
- Clearance and Documentation,
- Planting and Fencing.
- Programmes for the implementation of the above actions have been prepared for implementation in 2003-2004.
- Both financial and technical assistance is required from the World Heritage Fund.

#### \* No State of Conservation Reports