

SRI LANKA

Sacred City of Anuradhapura



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II.1 Introduction

Year of Inscription 1982

Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Archaeological Survey Department (ASD)
Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha
Colombo
Sri Lanka, and
- Central Cultural Fund (CCF)
212/1 Baudhaloka Mawatha
Colombo,
Sri Lanka

II.2 Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C ii, iii, vi

Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows:
"Anuradhapura, founded during the 4th century B.C. quickly became, on the island, both the capital of Ceylon and the sacred city of Buddhism. [...] Its apogee was reached under the reign Dutthagamani who, in 161 B.C., expelled the Tamil invaders, re-established Buddhism in the place of Brahminism and endowed the site with extraordinary monuments: Dagaba Mirisawati, Dagaba Ruwanwelisaya, the "Brazen palace", etc. Anuradhapura was sacked and taken by the Pandyan kings during the 9th century and then return against payment of a ransom. The majority of the monuments were restored but the city never recovered from the final siege (993 B.C.), during which the king the Chola Rajaraja I destroyed it."

"A revision of the property boundaries is being actively considered. Residents are being relocated out of the demarcated area."

Status of Site Boundaries

- The borders and buffer zone of the property are not considered adequate.
- All structures and archaeology are to be gazetted under the Antiquities Ordinance provision for a 400 yd (370m) inner zone and a revised outer buffer zone.
- A revision of the boundaries is actively being considered. Residents are being re-located out of the demarcated area.

II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage values are considered to have been maintained.
- Authenticity has been enhanced by the re-location of families living on the site, and archaeological work, which has revealed additional structures and evidence of pre-historic occupation.
- Authenticity is threatened by pressure from temple authorities and the municipal council to provide facilities for pilgrims.

II.4 Management

Administrative and Management Arrangements

- The World Heritage Site is jointly managed by ASD and CCF. The Urban Development Authority and municipal council control development activities. A Development Committee including all stakeholders, and chaired by the District Secretary, meets once a month.
- A separate Heritage Foundation is proposed that would bring all the stakeholders into one management body.
- A master plan for development of the property, buffer zones and development zones is in preparation.

Present State of Conservation

- The ASD and CCF have undertaken research excavations and conservation works on the principal monuments.
- Action has been taken to establish car parks, museums, signage and information centres.

Staffing and Training Needs

- ASD has a Regional Assistant Director and technical team on site.
- CCF has a Project Manager and technical team as well as artefact conservators, draughtsmen, photographers, security officers and labourers.
- The Urban Development Authority, Municipal Council and various religious institutions are

involved in infrastructure and maintenance activities.

- Staffing levels are considered inadequate, a separate care and maintenance section is proposed.
- Professional training needs include: materials conservation, field archaeology, museology, GIS, IT and non-destructive investigation.

Financial Situation

- ASD receives funds directly from central government. CCF is funded through admission charges. No figures supplied.
- Funding is considered adequate for routine management, but not for improvements such as site fencing and improving visitor facilities.
- The property has benefited from support of the UNESCO International Safeguarding Campaign, WFP and UNDP, and the Governments of the UK, China, Japan, Russia, France and Norway.
- * International Assistance from WHF has been approved as follows: (i) 1985, US\$33,342 Technical Assistance, equipment for archaeology laboratory; (ii) 1989, US\$33,500 Training Assistance, Cultural Triangle; (iii) 1989, US\$25,500 Technical Assistance, Cultural Triangle.

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Restoration works at one of the stupas

Access to IT

- 7 PCs in use.
- There is no Internet and e-mail access.
- GIS is in use via the University of Peradeniya.

Visitor Management

- Foreign visitor statistics are available but were not provided. Before 2001, nationals were not charged admission and since they do not systematically visit the museum but concentrate on the religious areas of the site, the number of tickets sold is not a reliable indicator of the number of visitors.
- Visitor facilities include: museum and information centre, bookstands, car parks, toilets, restaurants,

pilgrims' rest houses, and floodlighting. Most of these facilities would benefit from upgrading.

- The visitor management plan needs to be revised to cover: visitor behaviour in places of worship, photography policy, visitor trails, waste management and monument protection.
- World Heritage status is seen to have boosted the number of foreign visitors, and the income from admission charges has increased awareness of the need to protect the site.

II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

Threats and Risks

- Increasing numbers of pilgrims.
- Private housing encroachments.
- Pollution of water bodies a problem during peak visiting periods.
- Environmental & conservation problems in identifying locations for car parks & industries,
- Political influence has been used to authorise damaging extensions to private property.
- Pressures are seen to be decreasing inside the boundaries & increasing outside the boundaries.

Counteractive Plans

- Emergency planning focuses principally on site security and is seen as needing strengthening.
- Acquisition of land in the re-defined boundaries is planned, and areas for the residents' resettlement have been identified.

II.6 Monitoring

Monitoring Arrangements

- ASD and CCF officials make monthly site inspections to monitor progress.
- It is proposed to boost this process through independent annual technical audits and periodic peer-reviews.

Monitoring Indicators

- No indicators have been identified.
- Indicators are proposed based on the identified threats: (i) numbers of visitors and vehicles on site;

(ii) water quality in historic water features, and effective waste disposal; (iii) pre-construction assessments of the impact of new buildings on archaeology and historic settings; (iv) maintenance of the sacred nature of the site, measured by graffiti, lighting, appropriateness of souvenirs, noise pollution, and available information about the site's spiritual significance.

II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- The following actions are proposed for implementation within two years: (i) Strengthen legislation to prevent damage by residents; (ii) Provide GIS, and improve IT, visitor management and site interpretation; (iii) Introduce a public awareness programme and formulate a development plan; (iv) Increase the management capacity of ASD and CCF.
- Assistance from the WHF may be needed for equipment and training for GIS, improving the conservation and research laboratory, and professional training for field staff.

*** State of Conservation Reports**

1998 WHC-98/CONF.203/8 The Committee received the report of the December 1994 ICOMOS mission to Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Sigiriya. It was recommended that the authorities submit a map of the property indicating the core and buffer zones, supplemented by information concerning levels of protection, and an inventory of monuments, buildings and landscape elements. Copies of legislation and management plans were also requested. A report by the Government on actions taken to address ICOMOS concerns and recommendations was requested for submission by September 1999.