

INDIA

Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram

II.1 Introduction

Year of Inscription 1984

Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Archaeological Survey of India, Janpath
Person in charge: Director General
New Delhi – 110011
India
Telephone: 9111-23013574
Fax: 9111-23019487
E-mail: dgasi@vsnl.net

II.2 Statement of Significance

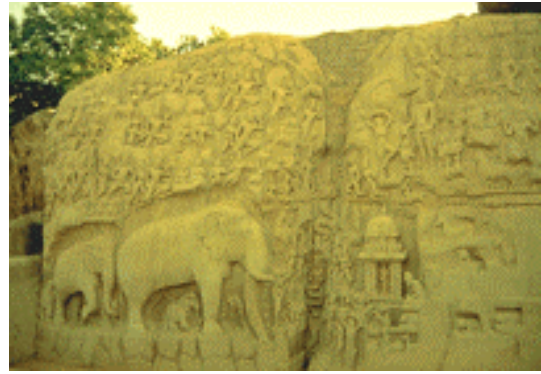
Inscription Criteria C i, ii, iii, vi

Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows (new):
The “Group of Monuments, Mahabalipuram are unique creations of the great Pallava Dynasty at their port town. For the first time in the history of Tamil Nadu, an attempt was made to deviate from the traditional way of construction of monuments i.e. use of wood, brick etc. The imperishable monument in rock medium was created. It is a veritable experimental laboratory depicting the various phases and development of South Indian architecture - Cave temples, monoliths, bas-relief and structural temples. The natural landscape was utilised in carving out these structures thereby making universally known the ability of the Pallava craftsman.”

Status of Site Boundaries

- The demarcation line and buffer zone are adequate.
- The report proposes an extension: archaeological excavations pushed the significance of the property and added an additional criteria due to unearthing imperishable evidence as a port city datable to 1st -2nd Century A.D.



- The inclusion of Adivaraha Cave as extension will give more weight to monuments since it contains life size cultural representation of the ruler who created all these monuments. Besides it contains invaluable Pallava inscriptions also.
- The site boundaries should be revised. The master plan will make the buffer zone more prominent in order to provide facilities and safeguard the property from environmental hazards.

II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- Values and authenticity/integrity are well preserved.
- Changes to the authenticity/integrity: new major archaeological discoveries justify the inclusion of new criteria to the inscription dossier.
- In the future: no changes.

"The report proposes an extension: archaeological excavations pushed the significance of the property and added an additional criteria due to unearthing imperishable evidence as a port city datable to 1st -2nd Century A.D."

II.4 Management

Administrative and Management Arrangements

- Overall management made at the local, regional and national levels by three agencies. The above arrangements are considered sufficient.
- The actual legal and traditional protection is sufficient. A.M.A.S.R Act and 2 environment act and rules.
- Management plan: property managed at 3 levels, through management co-operation and agreements, but not through a real Management plan.
- To preserve the values in the future: the existing arrangements will continue.

Present State of Conservation

- Plantation of casuarinas trees in the vicinity of the groin wall prevents the salt laden sea breeze from affecting monuments.
- The exposed joints of the Shore temple filled with epoxy mortar to avoid further structural damage.

- All age cracks on surface of the bedrock of Five Rathas, Arjuna's Penance and Krishna Mandapa have been thoroughly probed and filled with araldite mortar.
- Present state of conservation: good.

Staffing and Training Needs

- Staff total number: 31. Staff not sufficient to monitor the site. It needs 30 attendants and more staff for visitor management.
- The staff need training in latest conservation scientific techniques. There is also a need for equipment and computers for booking clerks.

Financial Situation

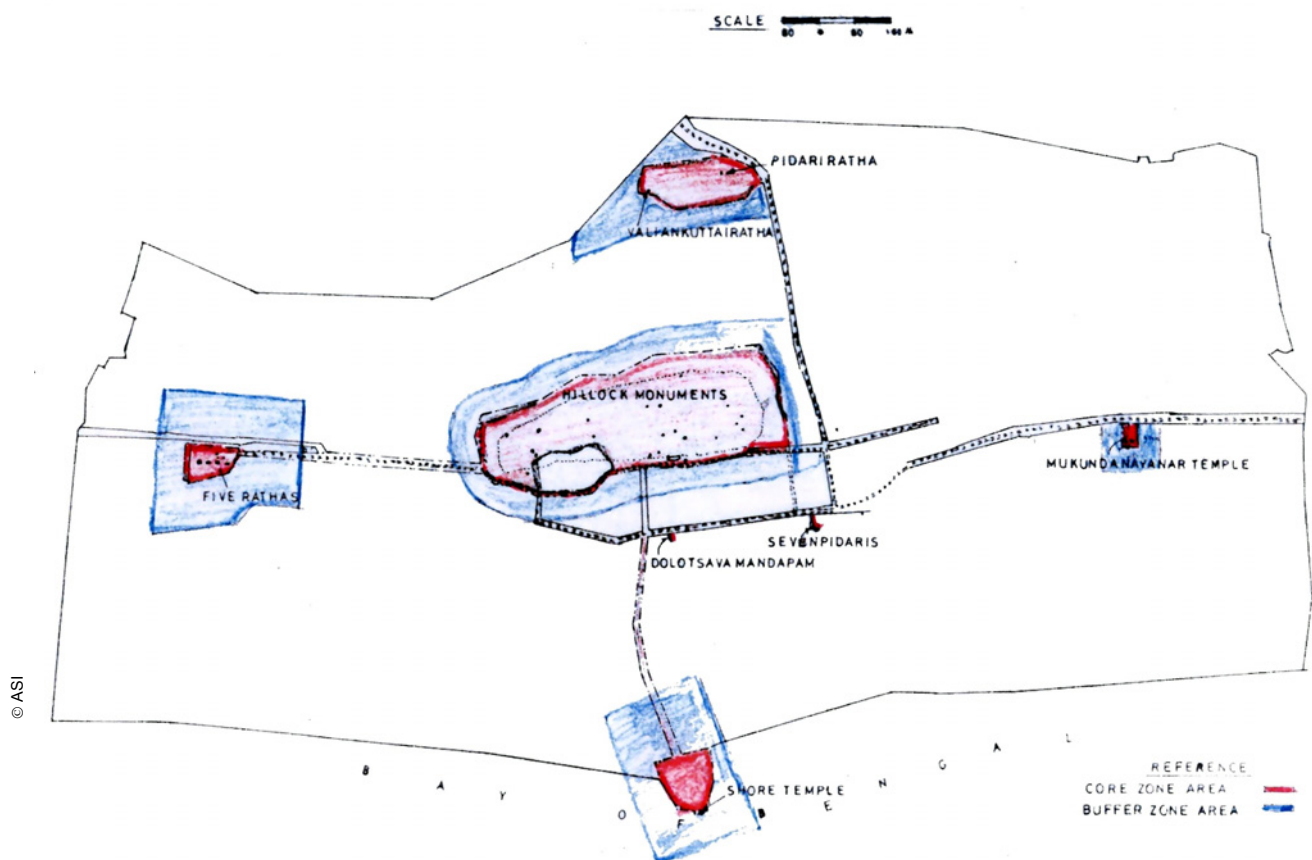
- Sources of funds from Central Government.
- Funding is considered not sufficient: need of allocation of Rs.10 lakhs (US\$ 21,120) for conservation and Rs.15 lakhs (US\$ 31,680) for day-to-day maintenance.
- * International Assistance from WHF: none.

Access to IT

- No computers, no email or Internet access.
- No use of GIS.

Visitor Management

- Visitors number in 2002: 500,624.
- Various facilities: all basic facilities amenities.
- Needed facilities: visitor benches, additional drinking water facilities, additional toilet facilities, additional signage, audio-visual, landscaping of monumental area, battery run mini-buses, cement approach roads, coffee shops, interaction centre, illumination of all monuments.
- Plan for public use: no real plan, but a committee exists.
- Communication WH values through: photos exhibitions, competitions, printing matters, etc.
- Educational programmes: no education framework for school children, they are involved in celebrations and other awareness raising programmes. Lectures delivered in schools/universities on request.
- Role of the inscription into the List of World Heritage: during WH day/week celebrations, NSS camps for school students, month long dance festival programme every year.



Map showing Core (red) and Buffer (blue) zones of the Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram

II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

Threats and Risks

- Development pressures: Tourist pressure and building activities increased, vehicles allowed in property leading to pollution. Dwelling areas in the property due to population increase. No effective waste/drainage.
- Natural pressures: salt laden breeze and abrasion resulting from sand particles “beating” the monument.
- Tourism pressures: tourism flow high and becoming increasingly difficult to manage.
- Environmental pressures: possible threat of radioactive leakage from an atomic plant.

Counteractive Plans

- No emergency plan.
- Master plan on preparation: prohibition of heavy-duty vehicles, pedestrian paths to all monuments exist, restrictions on new constructions.
- Improvements needed: environmental pollution from vehicles is very high and if traffic is suspended in the buffer zone, distinctive improvements are foreseeable.
- Impact of factors is increasing and may affect the property.
- Measures adopted or planned: master plan prepared and to be shortly implemented. No new approval of constructions close to monuments within the prohibited area.

II.6 Monitoring

Monitoring Arrangements

- No monitoring system.
- Planned: N.A.
- Partners: no partners involved.
- Foreseen improvements: a communication system connecting all scattered monuments with central monitoring facilities. A co-ordination committee, the ASI and local authorities could strengthen the monitoring system.

Monitoring Indicators

- No indicators for monitoring.

II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- Values: significant changes due to recent archaeological excavations.
- Management and factors affecting property: property managed at national and local levels. The main factors are deterioration and weathering of rock surfaces by salt laden winds, increase of tourist inflow and new constructions.

- Future actions: under preparation, Perspective plan for conservation works (2002-07) prepared and approved. Management plan preparation to curb new construction activities, minimise environmental pollution and tourism pressure. More staff training and scientific equipment needed.
- Timetable for the implementation of the Plans: 5 years.

* No State of Conservation Reports