My Son’s Master Plan Goals

October 2004

prof. Maurizio Boriani
arch. Susanna Bortolotto
arch. Maria Cristina Palo
MY SON'S MASTER PLAN GOALS

Report on the visit to My Son from the 1st to the 8th of June 2004

1. Premise
The My Son Master Plan establishes how the resources available for the archaeological area are to be managed. The remit of this document is to contextually augment the potential of the site, identifying themes which take into consideration not only the archaeology and the architecture but also the natural environment, and the recent historical events as well as local identity and culture.

2. General project criteria
My Son is an Unesco site which national and international tourist tour operators include in their itineraries. From the Master Plan analysis it can be seen that on average tourists limit now their visit to the archaeological site to three hours. Yet the area is full of resources and could offer the visitor “quality experience”, on the basis of “alternative” itineraries, organized around interdisciplinary themes. The tourists would be culturally and emotionally involved and feel various kinds of sensations: the desire to explore new places; amazement in discovering different kinds of climate, culture and traditions together with the spirit of adventure, experiencing perceptions from a variety of visual, taste and smell stimuli. The multi-functionality of the site, together with a new complex approach to site visits, could stimulate visitors to prolong their stay to one day or more. Accommodation is already available in situ and there are facilities for tourists. Until now, few of the economic benefits deriving from tourist development have gone to the local population. By contrast, the project foresees the employment of traditional resources and culture, furthering the development of the local economy in such a way as to involve the local population. The new structures and services created would have a low environmental impact, tightly controlled costs and rely on technology as little as possible, to minimize the impact on the identity and specific characteristics of the area. Given the above premise the project goal, especially the trail and area setting needs to be presented in a scientific way, using clear concepts, even if the purpose is to publicize the project widely. Since to date the scientific publications on the Unesco site do not aim to reach as many people as possible, a catalogue/guide of the area is required. The restoration methodology which is appropriate for My Son is conservation rather than reconstruction. It is not easy to understand this kind of approach as against “tourist restoration”, which aims more at emotional response rather than historical and scientific truth. Nevertheless, it should be possible to get the interest of wide sections of the public with ad hoc communication, using models and drawings to show how the temple might once have been. This would also clarify the nature of the work being carried out at the digs and during the subsequent conservation phase (illustrating the various procedures and methodologies adopted), enriching the visit with additional, suggestive experiences. To achieve these aims a “shared project” will be necessary for the site management and for the ordinary and extraordinary maintenance, taking into consideration the available human resources and existing environmental conditions. To better understand the site and how it relates to it’s geographical contest, it would be important to develop complementary links with other monumental areas of interest and with landscape-environmental sites. For example: the historical centre Hoi An and Harbour, the Cham museum of sculpture in Danang, Bach Ma National Park, China Beach and the Marble Mountain caves), but also the nearby places only seemingly of minor interest (River Thu Bon, the natural reserves, the traditional villages, vegetable gardens, orchards, etc).

3. Possible themes for My Son
(Attachment 1: Visiting trails)
The working group which evaluated the site and the current situation for Unesco at the beginning of June in 2004, with regard to the project’s general goals and with a view to valorise the site, identified four possible thematic trails for an interdisciplinary visit to the My Son area:

- natural environment
- rural landscape
- archaeological and architectural resources
- recent historical events (the Vietnam War).
3.1 – Natural environment

The plan of the trail, including all that is involved in its creation, was prepared taking into consideration the natural and geo-morphological resources of the area, so that the visitor can get to know and appreciate it’s environmental characteristics and to facilitate understanding of the historical settlement reasons. The trail would permit the visitor to become acquainted with a certain kind of approach towards and knowledge of:

- Local flora and fauna:
  look at the vegetation in the archaeological area, (different kinds of forest, fruit trees, bushes with seasonal flowering, “exotic” (from the visitor’s point of view) tree species), and information about local fauna and its natural habitat (reptiles, amphibians, birds, insects, etc).

- Pharmacology and traditional alimentation:
  understanding the pharmacological potentiality of herbs and medicinal plants used in traditional medicine and the “natural ingredients” used in the region’s cooking.

- Climactic factors:
  Vietnam is located in the East Asian monsoon zone. The climate depends very much on the monsoons and there is a dry winter season (from October – March) and a wet summer season (April/May-October). It is important to transmit knowledge of the climactic factors. These factors shape the Vietnamese life style, especially in the rural areas, and influence the country’s hydro-geological equilibrium, hence agricultural productivity.

- The impact of environmental conditions on the monuments:
  Lastly it is considered important to show how the atmospheric agents and environmental conditions have an impact on the monuments. The original construction techniques and decay/ruin of the monuments can both be explained in terms of these conditions.

Trails and museographic setting (Attachment 4: My Son archaeological park communication)

The information panels for the trails will be mostly located in the future Visitors Centre. Each of the themes (flora and fauna, pharmacology and traditional alimentation, climactic factors and the impact of environmental conditions on the monuments) will have one or more information panels. The text needs to be concise and accompanied by good quality maps, drawings, photos, etc. Only a small number (one or two) of basic concepts are required to communicate the information. More detailed information can be made available in appropriate publications and/or specialized visits. Some panels should be placed in significant points along the trails to mark important items (botanical species, paleo-river beds, stratigraphical sections which identify geo-morphological phases, etc). The trails regarding the “natural environment” would use already existing paths, augmented to include new ad hoc paths or traces. This would permit the visitor to discover important, but now underestimated, environmental areas. For example, it is not possible at the moment to visit some...
temple areas, as they are overgrown with vegetation. These areas are of particular interest to know the flora and the fauna and also to show the impact of the environment on the monuments.

Ruins of temples not easily accessible now, hence often excluded from visit tours in the archaeological area.

It is hoped that the existing paths will be extended to include signed trekking trails. Now an easy and possible excursion is, for example, a trip to the top of the mountain called Cat’s Tooth (about a four hours walk). The trail leading to the top of Cat’s Tooth (Hon Quap), on the western slope, crosses three distinct categories of vegetation on the way, before reaching the magnificent view of the valley and the archaeological site.

Thu Bon River: the characteristic bridges, fishing and the cultivation of canes cultivation (used to make mats) along the banks.

Thanks to the use of boats it may well be advantageous to start the tour to My Son from the nearby small town Hoi An, creating a virtual link between two Unesco sites which are not far away. To this end, stop-areas would have to be identified along the riverside and, if necessary created, for example in orchards, in natural or rural areas, or in places with handcraft activities, to increase the potential interest of the visitors.

**Possible economic advantage**

Packaging of natural products to be sold to tourists using medicinal and non-medicinal herbs, (herbal tea and infusions etc) could increase the local economy. These products should be made...
available designing not invasive structures. Such products would provide valid alternatives to traditional gifts and souvenirs, particularly as they are small and easy to carry out.

In addition, apart from the people involved in packaging and selling natural products, new kinds of professional occupations would be created (naturalistic guides, ferryboat operators, etc), thanks to new trekking trails or arrival points using river-boats.

3.2 Rural landscape (Attachment 2: Rural landscape: Rehabilitation or new settlement)

The trail goal is to show the local agricultural practice and provide knowledge about it. At one time this was a rice field area, coffee plantations, orchards and vegetable gardens. Most of these groves have now either abandoned or been replaced (for example by banana plantations). At times there are still some remaining historical agricultural areas, in some cases more evident than in others. Land falls show the presence of now abandoned rice fields; some fruit trees are still conserved.

A feasibility analysis carried out in the area recommends a return to traditional forms of agriculture, with the exception of coffee plantation, as the coffee quality able to compete on the market requires higher altitudes.

The project includes the creation of a “botanical garden” for demonstration purposes. This would enable the visitors to become familiar with the agricultural practices carried out by local people (techniques, settings and methods) in this rural landscape and also, thanks to the botanical garden, to discover local fruit and vegetables. Next to the vegetable area a garden can be created to grow those species of flowers which are to be found in the religious iconography of the My Son temple. These flowers are used in Brahmin rites.

Examples of sculptures with floral motifs: they could be a reverence to plant the “flower garden”

Trails and museographic setting (Attachment 4: My Son archaeological park communication)

Some information panels will be located principally in the future Visitors Centre to better explain the rural landscape trails. Other panels with the above mentioned textual and iconographic characteristics will be placed in particularly significant parts of the trail.

Together with the information about the visiting area, it would be useful to make reference to interesting Vietnamese agricultural situations, so that the country’s traditions can be better understood.

The trails need to be planned to show various kinds of agricultural techniques and activities. The main groves, now abandoned but that could be rehabilitated, are, for example rice fields, orchards, vegetable gardens and the flower garden.

An ancient rice field, now abandoned, but with some historical features still recognizable. Right: examples of traditional fruit groves: a banana plantation and a jackfruit tree

In some parts of the trails information panels are required to give specific informations about agricultural features, techniques and methods.

Traditional farming activities and tools can be exhibited to increase the panels information, while there will be possible to look at local people at work.

Possible economic advantage

Besides going back to abandoned agricultural activities, the local economy could be stimulated by giving samples of local agricultural products and by selling the products to visitors, in such a way as not to be intrusive. The products could proudly bear the high quality brand name: My Son.
3.3 Archaeological and architectural resources

Thousands of tourists visit the My Son area, the most important archaeological site in Vietnam. The archaeological/architectural features to be emphasized relate to the Champa civilization and regard their temples. This religious settlement developed around the building, in different periods, of monumental nuclei dedicated to the Hindu/Shiva cult – indicated using the letters K, F, E, G, A, A’, D, B, C, L and H.

Terracotta bricks were used to build the temples together with construction and decorative elements in stone. A specific building characteristic is the technique with which the bricks are joined, using a resin extracted from a local plant.

The area, discovered by the French at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, was restored in different periods. There are evident traces of the restoration carried out on groups B C and D in the nineteen eighty. Access is given to the digs where the new conservation methods which are currently being used in groups E and G can be seen.

It is important that the visitors can understand these themes:

- Hindu/Shiva cults from the Champa civilization, by reference to the rites, the liturgies, the itineraries taken by pilgrims, the Brahmin function, the object of the cult and representations linked to the cult, the Indian influence and reference to other Hindu sites.
- Archaeology and Architecture:
  the history of the site settlements; dating the construction phases; functions, orientation and typology of the buildings which make up the temple nucleus; construction techniques and methodologies; and archaeological finds.
- Epigraphy, iconography:
  the acceptance of Sanskrit, the ancient Indian language, by the Champa civilization: the inscriptions and the stele; the iconography of the Hindu period with reference also to the influence of other civilizations (Khmer, Thai, Lao, etc).
- My Son Restoration:
  the history of the restoration carried out (French at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century – linked in particular to Henri Parmentier’s research and survey; reconstruction, consolidation and the filling in of gaps carried out in the nineteen eighty; the Italian contribution in recent years); indications regarding methodologies and techniques used in restoration in various periods; identification of the historical periods of previous restoration; and critical evaluation of the treatments, taking into consideration the historical context in which the restoration was carried out.
- Philosophy and procedure adopted by this plan:
  foundations of the conservation theory as applied to archaeological restoration, practices used at My Son, particularly research and experimental work carried out by Italians in the G and E nuclei.
Restoration treatments carried out in the past: consolidation with cement mortar and new small columns with simpler forms inserted

**Trails and museographic setting** (Attachment 4: My Son archaeological park communication)

At the moment there are two mandapa at My Son, D1 and D2, used to store archaeological material. These two areas were partially restructured in the nineteen sixties, and re-roofed. Architectural material and sculptures discovered in the area are located in the mandapa The most important finds were transferred to Danang museum at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century.

It is hoped that the future Visitors Centre will house information panels with a mediating role regarding the exhibited materials, (citing the other national and international museums where Cham finds are exhibited for researchers and visitors) which contribute to the above mentioned subjects using a three dimensional “model”. The panels should also illustrate the various themes which inform the trail, using the previously mentioned textual and iconographic characteristics.

**Possible economic advantage**

It is clear that the main attraction at My Son, the reason why people go there, is to visit the archaeological complex. A group of multilingual local guides, well prepared and “certified” by the top level staff which manage the area, is therefore essential. Written material is also required: a good map of the area with indications and notes about the main points of interest, whit brief notes, a scientific catalogue and other relevant publications.

It is hoped that a bookshop is created, managed by the site organization, for the sale of high quality merchandising products (reproductions of Cham sculptures, postcards, gadget, CD’s of ca hue music, typical of Central Vietnam, etc).

**3.4 Recent historical events (the Vietnam War)**

The conflict which involved Vietnam about fifty years ago left a profound scar on the country. The population has not forgotten the events which took place during the war and the devastating effects of the war are still visible in the territory. The old DMZ battlefields in central Vietnam have been preserved. My Son, which was used by the Vietcong, was bombed on numerous occasions. To this day the results of the bombing are still evident.

The part of the trail dedicated to this theme will show and remember these recent historical events. Besides reference to the main events which took place during the armed conflict, the visitor can become aware of:

- life conditions of the population at the time of the hostilities;
- the effects of: the bombing; the use of chemical arms (orange agent, napalm) and the consequences/problems of the use of these defence instruments up to the present time (territories with mines, babies born with malformations and pollution caused by the use of defoliant, etc);
- the DMZ battlefields, the role of the well-known Ho Chi Minh (Duong Truong Son) Path;
- and finally, the role and destiny of My Son during the War.

**Trails and museography setting** (Attachment 4: My Son archaeological park communication)

The information panels, for the future Visitors Centre and for key places of interest on the trail, will briefly outline the above mentioned concepts. In particular, in the My Son area, attention will be drawn to the following points, supported by an iconographic and cartographic repertoire:

- the areas, not accessible to visitors, in which there are still mines (consciousness and awareness of the problem);
- the effects of bombing on the territory (the “craters” provoked by the bombs) which will be preserved, using naturalistic engineering and appropriate continuous maintenance, as traces of historical memory. Appropriate indications will be given along the trail;
- before and after the group A temples were bombed: comparison with the surveys made by H. Parmentier at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century and the current status.

![Temple A: comparison between the actual condition and Henry Parmentier’s survey](image)

Finally, having the possibility to exhibit war items means being able to increase the understanding of this theme.

**Possible Economic Advantage**

Besides an understanding of the tragic events in Vietnam’s recent past, illustrating this part of the country’s history contributes to increasing the amount of time spent by visitors in the site and to show to the public the consequences of the war, still felt by the country today. It would obviously be distasteful to take advantage of these events by selling products (with the exception of the numerous publications which have come out on the subject over the years). Nevertheless this subject can make a visit to the area more interesting, adding to the multi-functionality of My Son site.
One of the existing trails in My Son site, paved with sketched stones and underlined with local trees. Also the new trails - or the rehabilitation of existing ones - might be underlined by tree rows, whenever appropriate.

Thu Bon river. Navigation of this water course to access the My Son archeological area represents an alternative way to the traditional access.

Reeds along the Thu Bon River. New trails include excursions planned to acquaint visitors with important environmental resources or traditional agricultural activities.

In contrast, a trace plunged into vegetation maintained in natural conditions, in order to upkeep the “jungle effect” typical of the zone.

Bamboo bridge to be rehabilitated as a pedestrian access to the site, a substitute to the actual metal footbridge. The management and reuse of some existing features reveals itself useful in order to increase the knowledge of local building techniques and materials.

Example of an existing path in My Son site, paved with sketched stones laid without mortar. This existing path can be a good reference to trace new trails or to restore the decayed ones about historical constructive techniques and materials.

Example of typical tree: it is important to mark it in the thematic trails to show and explain the local flora.

Local covering weeds. The existence on the spot of local covering weeds to be employed in walkable surfaces next to the temple complexes, capable of suitably contrasting the development of invasive vegetation, is still to be verified.

New visiting trails have been planned in the My Son area, in order to increase the potentials of the area itself in the light of its context. The new trails have been traced keeping in mind different themes besides archaeology and architecture, including rural landscape, natural environment, the recent historical events, and, of course, local culture and identity.

Visitors may thus be involved in a “high profile experience”, increasing their own knowledge about local flora and fauna, traditional growing techniques, local agricultural products, the devastating effects caused by the last conflict that involved the country, etc... as well as learning about architecture and archaeology of the temple complex (primary interest in the visit of My Son).

Some of the trails shall use the already existing ones, while new trails have been explicitly planned to allow the visit of existing or newly settle agricultural areas, passing through prominent environmental places of interest, almost unconsidered at the moment. The new site’s visiting itinerary, compared to the existing one, has been planned to allow increased functionality in the survey of the area, starting from the temple K, the ancient “access door” to the temple complex, and touching some actually hard-to-reach monuments, often excluded from the visit.

Moreover, a trail of access to the area by Thu Bon River - an alternative to the traditional way - as well as the possibility to extend the existing trails with a trip to “Cat’s Tooth” mountain have been taken in account.

The new trails should be realized considering the landscape context and being suitably signed, this way offering an easy recognizability of the visit itinerary.

The management and reuse of some existing features reveals itself useful to better show the local building techniques and materials. For example, the rehabilitation of the bamboo bridge as a mean to access the archeological site suits more the environmental context than the iron footbridge now existing.

Vegetation aspects
The archaeological site’s contextual vegetation, defining local landscape, is one of its fundamental aspects. Along the trail dedicated to natural environment, the area’s particular botanical species should be signed in order to improve the knowledge of the local flora, of the pharmacological potential of healing plants and herbs employed by traditional medicine, and of the “natural ingredients” employed in regional cooking.

Whenever possible, it’s better to maintain the vegetation in natural conditions, in order to upkeep the “exotic an savage” look of the place, thus allowing the visitors a taste of the site’s typical “jungle effect”. As a contrast, some trails shall be underlined by tree rows, as at present happens.

Regarding those areas close to the archaeological complex, the presence of local covering plants fitted to contrast invasive weeds is still to be verified.
The rural landscape trail is focused to show and transmit the knowledge of local growing and farming activities. Once, in the area, there were active rice-fields, coffee plantations, orchards and vegetable gardens, activities mainly abandoned now, or substituted by new grows. In some instances, “traces” of the historical rural landscape are still more or less readable (i.e. rice-fields, single fruit-trees, etc…).

The rehabilitation of traditional agricultural and rural activities in the My Son area is important, once considered its achievability. The project includes the settlement of a botanical garden, to show the local horticultural activities. Thus on one side, the visitor gets more and more acquainted with the rural landscape features and farming techniques through thematic trails of access to and within the area, while on the other side, is introduced to local fruits and vegetables by means of the botanical garden. The possibility is suggested to settle - close to the newly established garden - a flower garden with species directly referring to the religious iconography of the My Son temples and with flowers used in Brahminic rituals.

Furthermore, the production of agricultural product could be organized as “tasting points”, as an offer to the visitor and as a small trading facility, an incentive to local microeconomy.

The area selected as a candidate for the establishment of the orchard and the botanical garden.
ATTACHMENT 3: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTONIC RESOURCES

The planned trail to My Son archaeological area should provide a visiting tour to all the monumental complex of the Champa civilization. For a better valorization and understanding of the site's potentials, some information panels – subdivided into thematic areas developed by the different temple groups – have been planned.

Groups B-C-D

Archaeological and Architectonic components:
- History of the site settlement; historic functions, orientation and typologies of the buildings constituting this temple complex. Construction techniques and methodologies; dating of the building phases.
- Iconography and epigraphy: Sanscrit and Champa’s civilization reception of the ancient Indian language: inscriptions and stele; iconography of Hindu periods, also referring to contacts and influences with other civilizations (Khmer, Thai, Lao, etc…).
- Restoration history: History of the carried out restorations; indications about employed methodologies and techniques; critic evaluation of the treatments.

Groups E-F

The Hindu/Shivait cult of Champa Civilization:
- Rites; liturgies; the Brahmin’s functions; the object of worship and its representations; Indian influences and references to other Hindu sites.

Group G

Today’s preservation philosophy and practice:
- Basis of conservation theory applied to archaeological restoration; current methodologies, particularly Italian studies and treatments.

Group A

Recent historical events (the Vietnam war):
- People’s conditions during wartime. Effects of bombing and chemical weapons: today’s consequences/problems (mine fields, birth malformations, pollution caused by defoliants, etc…); DMZ’s battlefields, the role of the famous Ho Chi Minh trail (Duong Truong Son); My Son’s role and destiny during the war; effects of bombing upon the temple complex (comparison between today’s conditions and Parmentier’s survey).
- Marking the bomb-caused craters, opportunely showed with naturalistic engineering works and constantly maintained.

Whenever appropriate, the effects of infesting vegetation may be employed and adequately marked as an additional element of interest.

Regarding the temples of group G, actually under restoration, the kerbs settlement at the religious buildings’ base has been planned. The employed materials shall be recovered from the archaeological yard; the bricks should be laid without mortar in an irregular way, like the ones realized during the ‘80s in groups B and C. Also referring to temple G, the realization of a drainage system in order to get rid of rainwater is suggested.

Removal of the false-wood furniture next to the temple complex (judged poorly consonant to the context), and its substitution with another, more adequate, furniture.

False-wood furniture to be removed because invasive and unrelated to the context.

“Craters” caused by bombing to be preserved and opportunistically marked.

Effects of infesting vegetation upon the monuments: vegetation’s invasivity may be sowthed and used as an additional element of interest.

Kerbs of the temples’ bases realized during the ‘80 interventions. The use of bricks recovered from the archaeological yard, laid without mortar, constitutes a model for the realization of analogous kerbs in temple group G.

Temple A1 ruin, where panels about the effects of bombing upon the monumental complexes shall be placed. It is important to confront the actual conditions with Parmentier’s survey.

Temple G3, actually under restoration, where panels regarding last years’ Italian preservation philosophy and practice shall be exposed.

A religious building of group F, restored during the ‘80, where information panels about the Hindu/Shivait cult of the Champa civilization shall be placed.

In temple group G3, as well as in temple group E, the realisation of a drainages system in order to get rid of rainwater is suggested. Whenever appropriate, the effects of infesting vegetation may be employed and adequately marked as an additional element of interest.

Regarding the temples of group G, actually under restoration, the kerbs settlement at the religious buildings’ base has been planned. The employed materials shall be recovered from the archaeological yard; the bricks should be laid without mortar in an irregular way, like the ones realized during the ‘80s in groups B and C. Also referring to temple G, the realization of a drainage system in order to get rid of rainwater is suggested.

Removal of the false-wood furniture next to the temple complex (judged poorly consonant to the context), and its substitution with another, more adequate, furniture.

Temple groups B, C, D; partially restored. Information panels on temple architecture and history of the subsequent restorations (French, dating to the first years of the 20th century) shall be placed, along with indications of the restorative, consolidating and lack-integrative interventions carried out during the ‘80s.
Replacement of the false-wood furniture with context-suiting ones.

Marking the effects of particular climate and infesting vegetation upon the monuments.

Marking the bomb-caused craters, opportunely showed with naturalistic engineering works and constantly maintained.

Indications about the area’s unique botanical species (i.e. the Jackfruit tree).

New museum out-fitting of the foundlings of Temples D1 and D2. Location, next to or within the temples, of information panels on the restorations carried out during early 20th century by the French; Henri Parmentier’s surveys; reconstructive works; consolidations and inserts carried out in the ’80s. Special attention shall be placed to show the various methodologies and techniques employed during subsequent restorations and to their critical evaluation (i.e. consolidation with mortar cement; inserts of new, shape-simplified columns; various wall-inserts).

Placement of information panels about the site’s archaeology and architecture: history of the site settlement; historic functions, orientation and typologies of the buildings constituting this temple complex. Construction techniques and methodologies; dating of the building phases.

GROUPS B-C-D (Archaeology and architecture; Iconography and epigraphy; History of the carried out restorations)
The exposition of informative panels concerning the Hindu/Shivait cult of the Champa civilization could be placed near the remains of the "sacred fence", next to temple F1. The panel shall include short and simple indications (supported by an extensive iconographic inventory) about rites, liturgies, pilgrim's trails, Brahmin's functions, cult’s object and representations, Indian influences, references to other Hindu sites, etc… Next to temple F1 is also suggested the placement of another panel concerning the restorations carried out during the ’80s.

Replacement of the false-wood furniture with more adequate ones.

Marking the bomb-caused craters, opportunely showed with naturalistic engineering works and constantly maintained.

Search for an adequate location of a gathering area for the archaeological foundlings that cannot be placed back to their original position (sculptures, stèle, altars, etc…).

Placement of information panels relative to building E7, so-called 'Library', including information on the building's architecture, its purpose and ancient function.

Rehabilitation of the treading areas next to the archaeological complex.

Maintenance of natural-condition vegetation, thus conserve the typical exotic look of the area.

GROUPS E-F
(Hindu/Shivait cult of the Champa civilization)
GROUP G (Actual preservation philosophy and practice)

GROUPS A-A' (Recent historical happenings)

Realization at the buildings’ bases of a brick kerb laid without mortar in an irregular way, employing materials recovered from the archaeological yard.

Realization of a drainage system.

Placement of information panels concerning treatments, studies and experiences developed by Italian team.

Whenever appropriate, the effects of infesting vegetation on the monuments may be employed and adequately marked as an another important element of interest.

The information panels concerning the philosophy and practice of today’s preservation treatments, to be placed next to temple G3, should synthetically provide indications about the basis of conservation theory applied to archaeological restoration, as well as the methodologies at present employed in My Son treatments, particularly focusing on the lately studies and experiments carried out by Italian team. Texts shall be supported by iconographic materials showing the preservation work (diggings, tests to look for a suitable wall-binder, etc…).

Next to temple group A information panels concerning recent history shall be exposed. Besides signaling the craters caused by the bombs, panels will document the war in which the country was involved about 50 years ago, hold information about the effects of bombing and chemical weapons and the role and destiny of My Son during the war. Next to temple A1, badly damaged by bombing, a panel will report Parmentier’s survey, thus allowing a direct confrontation with today conservation conditions.
**NOTES**

* Formation of calcestre (calcareous grit) pavement, compressed Macadam 10cm thick. The amount of limestone must be more than 85%. The procedure must include the excavation and foundation shaping to drain meteoric waters, and the laying of subsequent layers; the lower layer (8 cm thick), composed by stones crushed into three opportunely mixed sizes (6/12 mm; 3/6 mm; 1/3 mm) should be adequately soaked and tamped by at least six rollings.

** Laying of geotextiles, possibly substituted by Jute canvas or similar, to prevent the mixing between ground and calcareous grit.

*** The kerb at the building bases shall be realized with bricks recovered from the archaeological yard, laid without mortar in an irregular way.

Scale 1 : 50
ATTACHMENT 4: MY SON ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK COMMUNICATION

The My Son archaeological park management includes a tourist use plan to better understand and enjoy the site. The visit cannot be only a brief looking to the temple complex and environmental/natural resources, but also an opportunity to have a culture-improving experience. The park’s different forms of communication must be clear and simple to understand; moreover, through image coordination, they must share an unitary visual message.

Communication will be spread by:
- Visitor Centre Setting
- Publishing, booklets, audiovisuals, etc...
- Information panels

Visitor Centre Setting

My Son’s future visitor center shall welcome the tourists and supply introductive information for the visit. It should provide geographical and logistic indications, as well as specific information suited to fulfill the visitor’s needs for knowledge and interpretation.

The interpretive aspects shall be absolved by the exposition of three-dimensional models and information panels, possibly supported by the employment of audiovisual tools. Panels must be easy to read and understand, should transmit basic, aimed contents, expressed by clear and synthetic texts supported by an iconographic inventory, maps, drawings and pictures (see the attachment on the information panels).

Publishing, booklets, audiovisuals, etc...

An useful archeological site divulgation is represented by publishing: books, catalogues, booklets and audiovisuals contribute in a fundamental way in knowing and understanding the site. So, the search for publications relative to the park’s regional precinct, its history, geography and social instances is strongly suggested. The promotion of a catalogue of the site is fundamental, since at present are not existing any related publications. Besides the informative aspects, the gathering and selling of such material represents a chance for a money income. The realization of an informative booklet, distributed at the Visitor Centre and by tourist agencies, is another effective tool of knowledge that supports the visit (see attachment about the informative brochure).

Information panels

Information panels have a very important role in information communicating. Besides the Visitor Centre setting, a series of panels will be located along the thematic trails within the site, in order to mark particular emergencies and providing information support. Panels must be integrated to the context and don’t be invasive, employing local/traditional materials that are proof against the peculiar climate of the area. Different typologies and sizes have been planned, employing, as needed, vertical or horizontal supports, fitting to the informative content (small size panels for simple signaling –i.e. a particular tree - differently sized panels for specific information –i.e. description of temple architecture). Informative contents must be clear and synthetic, in order to be easily understood by the visitor. Graphic will have to conform to homogeneous standards in order to provide the site with an unitary visual message (see attachment on informative panels).
The leaflet will be found at the Visitors’ Centre and distributed by tour operators and agencies. It will, during the visit, act as an informative support, fulfilling the visitor’s needs for site knowledge and understanding. Concerning the thematic trails, it will hold more accurate and detailed information than the informatic panels placed along the various visiting itineraries. It will also be joined a map of the area, a useful tool for the visitor.

The leaflet (dimensions 42 x 29.7 cm) shall be structured in:

Front:
- Heading: Title, logos, logistic information (addresses, telephone numbers, visiting hours, admission and prices, accessibilities), etc.;
- A text containing general information about the site;
- A map of the area showing the four thematic trails visualized in different colors; localization of the temple complex and of particular sites (naturalistic, rural, agricultural areas, etc.), marked with an appropriate symbol and colored recalling the four thematic trails; facilities indication (visitor centre, resting areas, restaurant, bookshop, etc.).

Back:
- Subdivision in four distinct sections referring to the four thematic trails, marked out by a titled band recalling the different trails colors;
- Texts containing specific information about the four themes;
- Iconographic inventory supporting textual description.

Map of the site reporting thematic trails, monumental complex, rural landscape and natural environmental area and facilities (visitor centre, bookshop, resting areas, accessibilities, etc.).

Space for a brief text reporting the site history and features.

Heading (title, logo, etc.).

Band reserved for the thematic sections’ title relative to the four different trails (archaeological complex, natural environment, rural landscape, recent historical events).

Descriptive text with indications on the four thematic areas.

Pictures supporting descriptive texts.
The archaeological park setting should include information panels in order to allow a better understanding of the site. Several services should be offered to satisfy the visitor’s needs and his personal visiting approach, from simple information regarding the site access and facilities to detailed description of the cultural, naturalistic and trekking trails. Panels must be integrated to the context and don’t be invasive, employing vertical or horizontal supports, according to localization and available space.

**MATERIALS**

- Enameled aluminium support.
- Enameled porcelain panel.

**Porcelain employment benefits:**
- Possibility of high-resolution, full color pictures and detailed maps reproduction;
- Climate/weather proof (foreseen term: 25 years);
- Excellent scratches proof;

**Porcelain employment disadvantages:**
- It might splinter and rust.
- Relatively high initial and replacement costs.

*The employability of the suggested materials is to be verified in site, agreeing to local materials and techniques.*

**PANELS REQUISITES**

**Communication**
- Providing logistic information (trails, facilities, rest areas, accessibility, etc...);
- Providing basic knowledge and explanations (historical, architectural, archeological, naturalistic areas and sites, etc...);
- Providing image coordination, in order to provide the site with an unitary visual message;

**Context integration**
- Moderate visual impact;
- Non-invasive local material employment;

**Location**
- Favorable angles and height should be chosen for the placement, allowing the visitors optimal points of view;
- Types forms and dimensions should be easy-to-read;

**Understanding**
- Clearness of contents, employing brief and simple texts, avoiding technical and specialized terminology;
- Pictures employment, increasing comprehensibility;

**SIZES**

**Vertical panels**
- L: 94 cm
- H: 125 cm
- Z: 75 cm

**Horizontal panels**
- L: 94 cm/110 cm
- H: 62 cm
- Z: 85 cm angle: 30/45 degrees

**Small sized vertical and horizontal panels**
- L: 30 cm
- H: 42 cm
- Z: 85 cm

**GRAPHIC**

Need for homogeneity in expositive graphic, respecting the following parameters:
- Information order articulated in the following textual hierarchy: title, brief text composed by 3 or 4 sentences not exceeding 150 words, contingent short legends to the pictures;
- Employment of pictures (photos, drawings, maps, etc...) to support and integrate texts;
- Employment of symbols, letters and numbers for immediate comprehension;
- Optimal relation between text and pictures has been fixed around 25% writing and 75% images;
- Simple types allowing fluent reading;
- Appropriate type dimensions conferring good visibility (title’s minimal dimensions: 60-72 points; subtitles’ 40-48 points; textual body 24 points; legends 18 points);
- Employment of different colours (background, texts, symbols, etc...) underlining different kinds of messages in different thematic areas (naturalistic aspects, archaeology, etc...);
- Contrast between background and text colours.
- Text abstracts printed in Braille.

**INFORMATION PANELS**

**VERTICAL PANELS**

Vertical panels have been designed in two different sizes: the larger will hold detailed and specific information, the smaller will be employed to mark particular features (unique vegetal specie, monumental trees, archaeological components, etc...).

Vertical panels might be assembled in two or more elements. The connection, reflecting space availability and informative necessities, can be made putting the panels side by side or composing irregular or regular geometrical shapes.

**HORIZONTAL PANELS**

Horizontal panels have been designed in the same sizes of their vertical counterpart. As in the previous issue, the larger shall be employed where detailed and specific information are being provided, while the smaller shall be employed to mark particular features.

Horizontal panels may feature unique design solutions, including the employment of different materials for the basement (brick /stone masonry, steel, wood, etc...) to optimize their site placement.