VAT PHOU
AND
ASSOCIATED ANCIENT
SETTLEMENTS
WITHIN
THE CHAMPASAK CULTURAL
LANDSCAPE

ACTION PLAN
2005 – 2010

January 2005
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 3
2. Vat Phou and the Champasak Cultural Landscape in the wider UNESCO context 4
3. Review of the achievements of the current Management Plan 6

Annexes

Annex A People consulted/ contributing to this Action Plan 23
Annex B Champasak Heritage Management Plan: Chapter 4: Status, Scope and Objectives 24
Annex C Champasak Heritage Management Plan: Actions and Policies: proposed regulations for control of new construction 30

This report has been prepared by Dr Christopher Young, UNESCO Consultant. I am grateful to all those listed in Annex A who have contributed to the work.
1 Introduction

1.1 The author was commissioned to:

- Review the accomplishments at the World Heritage Site over the last five years (1999 – 2004)
- Update the Action Plan for the sustained conservation of the World Heritage Site for the next five years

1.2 This document fulfills those requirements. It is based on visits to significant parts of the site with members of the site staff and international experts, particularly the Chief Technical Advisor, Patrizia Zolese, on meetings with the same people, and on the outcome of a meeting in Pakse on 20 January with the Minister of Information and Culture, the Deputy Governor of Champasak Province, the Secretary of the Lao UNESCO National Commission, Mr Bounlap Keokangna, Secretary-General of the Champasak Provincial Heritage Committee, other officials of the Lao PDR from national government, provincial and district levels, and international experts from the Italian Archaeological Mission, the LNTA – ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project and the project for The Development of the Interpretive Dimensions of Vat Phu and Champasak Landscape, Lao PDR

1.3 The outcome of those meetings is this document. Part 2 is a review of developments in the wider UNESCO context since the Plan was agreed in 1998. Part 3 reviews the achievements of that Management Plan, while Part 4 discusses the framework in which the Action Plan has to be created. Part 5 is the draft Action Plan

1.4 Part 5, in particular, will need to be reviewed by the relevant Lao authorities, particularly the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Champasak Provincial Heritage Committee, amended by them as necessary, and then adopted as the Action Plan for the period 2005 – 2010.
2 Vat Phou and the Champasak Cultural Landscape in the wider UNESCO context

2.1 Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001 as a cultural landscape of 400 square kilometres, not as an individual monument. Cultural landscapes represent the interaction of humanity and nature on one another. In their assessment of the site for the World Heritage Committee, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) placed much emphasis on the fact that the site is a whole planned landscape. They said that it is the only known early cultural landscape in south-east Asia, preserving both good and relatively undamaged evidence for the ways in which [ancient peoples] engineered their landscape to meet both their practical and spiritual needs. While most of the individual features of the site can be matched elsewhere, they said that it is the only known landscape of its sort to survive in all its essential parts. The cultural landscape has of course continued until the present day within the Lao culture with features such as Buddhist temples and art, and in the traditional houses.

2.2 In their recommendations for future action, ICOMOS said urgent attention must be given to the stabilization of ancient standing buildings and other structures, and a particular effort made to bring the hydrological situation under control. They recognized the Management Plan as an integral part of the nomination and expected the practical implementation of that Plan should inscription occur.

2.3 In 2003, the World Heritage Committee received a report concerning four issues:

- The planned construction, with funding from JICA, of a new major north-south highway which would cross the entire site including the Ancient City
- The construction of the new visitor centre which was thought to have degraded the cultural landscape because it is on the main axis of the site at Vat Phou
- Lack of sufficient qualified staff at the site
- Lack of any means of coordinating the activities of different government departments because the NIMCC was no longer meeting

2.4 The Committee’s decision asked the Lao government to deal with these issues, and in particular,

- To adhere to the Management Plan
• Ensure that the impact of any new road was properly minimized
• Relocate the visitor centre
• Provide sufficient staff for the site
• Reactivate the NIMCC
• Monitor the effectiveness of the new drainage arrangements at Vat Phou
• Submit a report to the Committee for 2004

2.5 The Committee is clearly concerned about the cultural landscape as a whole and not just about Vat Phou. If the Committee’s concerns are not dealt with, they could in the future put the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger or even think about deleting the site from the World Heritage List altogether if they thought that its outstanding universal value had been lost. That outstanding universal value comes from the whole site as a landscape, not just from the Vat Phou temple which on its own might not make it as a World Heritage Site.

2.6 In the development of the Action Plan for 2005 – 2010, the concerns of the World Heritage Committee and its professional advisor, ICOMOS, must be borne in mind. It will be important to include Actions that address those concerns
3 Review of the achievements of the current Management Plan

3.1 The Management Plan was completed in 1998 and adopted by the government of the Lao PDR by Note No. 2692 / PMC under the terms of the 1997 Decree of the President of the Lao PDR on the Preservation of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage No. 03/PR. In 1999 and 2000 Action Plans for those years were produced. The Management Plan is a comprehensive and detailed document dealing with all aspects of the World Heritage Site and its management. As well as describing the site and assessing its significance, it includes sections on data and research, boundaries and zonings, conservation and enhancement of the site, access and tourism, community awareness and involvement and finally on making things happen. It was published in both Lao and English.

3.2 The Plan described the site and analysed its significance. It discussed the issues affecting the site which it identified as:

- Pressures on standing structures
- Pressures on buried archaeology
- Environmental pressures
- Future development pressures
- Tourism and Site Development
- Public Awareness and Understanding
- Funding, Resources and Capacity Development

3.3 The Plan also divided the site into four zones with separate requirements for each (see Management Plan, Chapter 6). The purpose of the zoning was:

- to protect the special character of the cultural landscape around Vat Phou,
- to guide economic development so that it is compatible with the protection of the landscape,
- to assist the local population to develop their prosperity in ways which enhance the cultural value of the site,
- to protect the above ground monuments and buried archaeological sites.

3.4 Zone 1 is the Champasak Cultural Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone. It includes the whole World Heritage Site, and its primary purpose is to protect the landscape of the site and to preserve as much as possible of the symbolic landscape created by the builders of Vat Phou. Zone 2 is the Sacred Environment Conservation Zone
and comprises Phou Kao Mountain as the natural feature on which the whole landscape was focused. Zone 3 is the Archaeological Research Zone. This covers areas of known archaeology of high importance and requires special protection in order to protect these sites. It includes three areas around Vat Phou and Lingapura, the Ancient City, and Tomo respectively. Zone 4 is the Monument Management Zone and includes the areas which should be under the direct control of the site manager.

3.5 The Management Plan set out regulations for the control of development in all these areas. In each case the regulations were appropriate to the significance and purpose of the zone.

3.6 The Plan set out 19 long-term aims and 33 policies for the first five years. Following on from all this, it identified 53 separate actions or groups of actions which were intended to implement the policies and aims.

3.7 Many of these specific actions have not been achieved. It is not helpful to review these one by one since they were intended to implement the Plan in the circumstances of those times. Those circumstances have now changed not least as a result of the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List.

3.8 It is better to look overall at achievements and failures over the last five years and to review these against the long-term aims and policies. This is done below, grouping assessment of achievements and failures under the major issues affecting the site identified in the Management Plan.

3.9 **Pressures on standing structures**: this is an area where there have been major achievements. The overall standard of site records has been greatly improved by the surveys carried out by the Italian Archaeological Mission. This has been coupled with major clearing of vegetation and other rubbish from Vat Phou, Tomo and Hong Nang Sida. At Vat Phou, the construction of a high level drainage channel by the Japanese has begun the task of hydrological management to remove surplus water from the site during the rainy season. The problem of erosion by the river running along the north side of the site remains.

3.10 The site staff have created a new fenced perimeter at Vat Phou which has greatly increased the protected area and increased the site’s security. More work is needed on matters such as the Vat Phou Festival to reduce the accidental damage which visitors can cause to the structures there.

3.11 The Italian project has now begun to work with the site staff on the clearance, planning and conservation of the ceremonial road at Vat
Phou. This includes the repair and reinstatement of fallen marker stones.

3.12 The building of the new exhibition hall at Vat Phou by the Japanese has provided the opportunity for the Italian mission to bring into safe storage in one place many of the architectural and sculptural fragments which were previously scattered in many places in the whole World Heritage Site.

3.13 **Pressures on buried archaeology:** within the protected site at Vat Phou buried archaeology is protected adequately. Elsewhere in Zone 4, this is not always the case. There is a new intrusive building at Hong Nang Sida. There is also still rice cultivation within the Zone 4 area at Hong Nang Sida.

3.14 Within Zone 3, particularly in the Ancient City, there are numerous examples of new buildings built without consultation with the World Heritage Site staff. It is unclear who is empowered to take such decisions. Most of the new buildings are of concrete and will have damaged any buried archaeology under them. They have been sited without regard to the zoning and buffer areas identified in the Management Plan or recommendations on maximum heights. These sites were not recorded by archaeologists in advance of building work. There are also new irrigation channels in, for example, Vat Lungkao while erosion along the Mekong bank continues. Such channels must be planned to avoid damage to the archaeological features or should be replaced by a proper water supply such as wells.

3.15 The effect of individual constructions is quite small. Cumulatively, however, the result is the slow bit-by-bit destruction of the earliest city known in south-east Asia without any control by archaeologists.

3.16 **Environmental pressures:** the impact of river erosion has been mentioned already. While this cannot be prevented, measures need to be taken to record in advance what is being destroyed.

3.17 The environment of Phou Kao Mountain, the Sacred Environment Conservation Zone, seems to have been well protected.

3.18 **Future development pressures:** the effect of development on buried archaeology has already been mentioned. Future development of this type, particularly but not exclusively within the Ancient City, will continue to erode the significance and outstanding universal value of the site.

3.19 Little attention has been paid to Champasak town itself. As the gateway to the World Heritage Site and the place where most visitors stay, its historic character is a significant factor in the future success of the site. The town needs a detailed urban plan to protect and improve its general character and, in particular, to preserve and rehabilitate the
six or seven surviving historic buildings of the 19th and early 20th centuries. At present a number of these buildings are in a bad state and are derelict.

3.20 The character of the landscape is also an important feature of the site since it is important to be able to appreciate the underlying design concepts of those who structured around 400 square kms between Phou Kao Mountain and the Mekong to reflect their cosmological and spiritual development. Development within Zone 1 outside existing villages will damage the landscape as will tall structures such as radio masts. A particular risk is ribbon development along the road south from Champasak.

3.21 There have also been reports, as noted above, of major development proposals such as roads. These, if built without due attention to the character of the World Heritage Site, could have a catastrophic effect both on buried archaeology and on the visual setting of the site.

3.22 Over the last five years, the impacts of development are very noticeable. If continued, the damage to the World Heritage Site could be considerable. Clearly not all future development can be prevented and nor should it be. Champasak is in economic terms well-sited while local people wish to improve their living standards. Some development should and must happen but it needs to be done in ways which minimize the impact on the World Heritage Site while using the Site to support sustainable development, for example through sustainable tourism projects. Where development is agreed, there needs to be a system which allows for archaeological work in advance of it to record any features of interest.

3.23 A crucial need, therefore, is to develop a system which involves the World Heritage site authorities in the taking of decisions on development proposals while the government authorities need to have the interests of the World Heritage Site at heart in considering such proposals.

3.24 **Tourism and Site Development:** over the last five years, the number of tourists visiting Vat Phou has increased. This is reflected in the number of businesses (guest houses, restaurants etc) which have been started to meet the needs of tourists. At Vat Phou, the cleaning of many structures there has greatly improved the site’s appearance and made the buildings much clearer to understand.

3.25 The new exhibition building, despite the concerns of UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee over its siting, has provided a better entry to Vat Phou while the work of the Italian expedition has created within it a site museum in which it is possible for the first time to see many architectural and sculptural fragments of high quality and great importance.
3.26 Two projects – the Mekong Tourism Development Project and that producing an overall interpretive strategy for the Champasak Cultural Landscape – are working on integrated approaches to tourism in the area. The latter is due to be finalized in February. It will be important that these projects are fully integrated with other work at the site which is also likely to include interpretation.

3.27 Public Awareness and Understanding: the original Management Plan placed great emphasis on the need to raise public awareness of the World Heritage Site and to involve local communities in its protection and sustainable use through economic projects using their existing skills. There have been some meetings with the local community and the two tourism-based projects should also contribute in this area.

3.28 Coordination, Funding, Resources and Capacity Development: The funding of the World Heritage Site has been varied and has come from different sources. Funding has been available for two major capital projects – the new exhibition hall/visitor centre and the drainage channel at Vat Phou - for the continuing Italian archaeological project which includes conservation, restoration and interpretation as well as research and recording, and also for the two tourism projects discussed above. The World Heritage Site also now receives a share of the site admission income (currently 50%). As noted above this funding has enabled a great deal to take place and the World Heritage Site now has 38 staff.

3.29 However resources have not been sufficient to create the Centre of Excellence envisaged in the Management Plan, while the Lao/UNESCO Project Office has been taken over for other functions and not replaced. The National Inter–Ministerial Coordinating Committee (NIMCC) was foreseen as the body which would coordinate all activities in the World Heritage Site. It has ceased to exist. The Provincial Heritage Protection Committee is now operational and there is also a National Heritage Protection Committee.

3.30 A number of functions foreseen in the Plan, particularly to do with development control including rescue archaeology, are not yet covered. Funds are lacking to carry out major conservation or restoration projects some of which are urgent.

3.31 Capacity development, particularly training of staff on the World Heritage Site, is another area where success has been patchy. Regular programmes of training have not been possible though a number of staff have been trained in particular techniques as part of other projects. The Italian project has integrated training into all its activities.

3.32 Conclusion: it would be fair to say that achievement of Management Plan objectives over the last five years has been partial. The most
major achievement has of course been to secure the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List. Other substantial successes have been the improvements in the standards of maintenance at Vat Phou, the establishment of the site office in permanent quarters there, the building of the exhibition hall, and the creation within it of a site museum and secure archaeological store, and the construction of the drainage relief channel above the Vat Phou temple. The continuing archaeological programme, involving elements of interpretation and conservation as well as straight recording and research, is also a notable achievement.

3.33 Less successful has been the failure to integrate consideration of the World Heritage Site into any system of development control and thus to cope with the wider needs and protection of the World Heritage Site. There is also a need to improve resourcing and funding for the running and maintenance of the World Heritage Site, to seek resources for specific projects meeting the agreed priorities for the site, to develop the capacity and size of the site staff and to integrate initiatives concerning the World Heritage Site better. There is also a need to provide more economic benefits for the local population through the tourism-related projects which are being planned.

3.34 It would be very unusual for all the objectives of a World Heritage Site Management Plan to be achieved in the first five years anywhere in the world. It is reasonably normal for some not to be achieved for a number of reasons. It is noticeable here, though, that success is focused very much on the Zone 4 sites directly managed by the World Heritage Site Office and on the archaeological research programme. Here much has been done, but much remains to be done. The two tourism-related projects will provide solid foundations for the future.

3.35 If the overall character of the World Heritage Site is to be maintained, there will need to be more effective protection of the landscape as a whole over the next five years. It will also be necessary, in order to achieve this, to ensure that the World Heritage Site Office is sufficiently resourced, that its staff are adequately trained, that its views are listened to by other agency and that there is a supervising committee or steering group which can effectively coordinate activity over the whole World Heritage Site. Along with the need to provide an integrated experience for tourists and to use the World Heritage Site for sustainable economic development in local communities, these conclusions provide the basis for developing the Action Plan for 2005 – 2010.

4.1 The Management Plan has been endorsed by the government of the Lao PDR, and by the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee and its professional advisor, ICOMOS, as the primary guidance document for the conservation, enhancement and management of the World Heritage Site. The purpose and principal policies of the Management Plan were summarized in Chapter 4: Status Scope and Objectives of the Plan. This is reproduced as Annex B of this Action Plan.

4.2 Section 4.2, Long Term Aims, of the Management Plan was intended to be valid for around 30 years. Review of this section suggests that these aims do not need to be changed and that they should continue to guide the overall implementation of the Plan.

4.3 Section 4.3 of the Management Plan was intended to provide objectives for the first five years of the Plan only. These too have been reviewed. While some have been largely fulfilled, many have not. Even of those that have been largely achieved, further work remains to be done. All remain valid within the overall purpose of the Plan. These Objectives, too, should therefore be retained as guidance for the period 2005 – 2010.

4.4 The Action Plan needs also to be guided by the concerns and recommendations of the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee and its professional advisor, ICOMOS. These are summarized in 2.2 and 2.4 above.

4.5 Finally, the Action Plan needs to implement the policies of the Lao government and the recommendations of those expert advisors, both national and international who were consulted during its preparation. In particular, the Action Plan should incorporate the views of the Minister of Information and Culture and of the Governor and the Chief of Provincial Information Cultural Services of Champasak Province as set out in their contributions to the meeting held at Pakse on 20 January 2005.

4.6 It will not be possible to achieve everything in the Management Plan over the next five years. What can be done will depend to some extent on the resources available to the site management authorities and others. It will also depend on cooperation between government departments and agencies at all levels and on the integration of external projects into the overall management process. Failure to achieve such an integrated approach could undermine the safeguarding of the World Heritage Site as a whole and put its future at risk. To avoid this risk, it is necessary to have regard to the priorities discussed in 3.33 – 34 above. It will be vital for all concerned to act in the knowledge that the Site was inscribed as a landscape and that the World Heritage Committee will expect the integrity of that landscape as a whole to be maintained.
5 Priorities for Action

Introduction

5.1 Following on from the last section, this one sets out the objectives and tasks for 2005 – 2010 together with the priority assigned to each task, who is responsible for carrying it out, and whether funding has been secured. At present, this is in draft since much of the information on timing, priority and funding is not available.

5.2 The objectives are deliberately broad and set broad targets to be achieved between now and 2010, though some of them will need to be completed much more quickly if the Action Plan as a whole is to be completed. They should mostly be current for the whole period of the Action Plan and should be reviewed overall in 2010 to see which of them should be continued into the next five year period. The tasks are more specific and are the things which need to be done to achieve each objective. Some of them are ongoing and will continue every year. Others are more specific and will need to be finished by a particular date.

5.3 It has not been possible in the time available to programme the carrying out and completion of each task though priorities have been suggested. Responsibilities for particular projects have been suggested in some instances.

5.4 It will be necessary for the government and authorities of the Lao PDR, at national, provincial and district level, in consultation with their expert advisors, national and international, and with those providing funds, to confirm priorities and assign responsibilities for each task. It will also be necessary to identify sources of funding as these are identified.
5.5 One vital role for the WHS Officer, once appointed, will be each year to review the work carried out in the previous year and produce an annual Action Plan itemizing the work to be carried out in the coming year. This review and programme should be formally approved by the Provincial Heritage Committee and they should monitor how effectively the work is being carried out.

5.6 The following priorities are proposed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>High priority, should be carried out in 2005</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Medium – term priority, should be carried out by 2008</td>
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<td>L</td>
<td>Long - term priority, should be carried out by 2010</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>Ongoing, should be carried out every year from 2005 onwards</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Neutral, it does not need to be finished by a specific date</td>
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</table>

Tasks marked as having High and Ongoing priority should be dealt with during 2005 and should form the basis for the annual action plan for 2005. Tasks with an Ongoing priority should be included in the annual action plan for every year.

5.7 Other abbreviations used in the following tables are:

- **IIP** Integrated Interpretation Project for The Development of the Interpretive Dimensions of *Vat Phou and Champasak Landscape*
- **MTDP** Mekong Tourism Development Project
- **WHS** World Heritage Site
- **WHSO** World Heritage Site Officer
5.8 This section deals with the Objectives and Tasks needed to create the overall framework in which the specific actions necessary to manage and use the World Heritage Site sustainably will need to be carried out.

### Table 1: Coordination, Management, Capacity Development and Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Priority/Timing</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Establish appropriate coordination arrangements based on National Heritage Protection Committee and Champasak Provincial Heritage Protection Committee | 1. Incorporate international regulations on World Heritage into the law of the Lao PDR  
2. Designate responsibilities and clarify roles at government, provincial and local levels  
3. Ensure that Provincial Heritage Committee has adequate professional and technical participation  
4. Enforce the different laws, regulations and ordinances relating to the WHS | H               | H               | H     |
| B. Establish an effective World Heritage Site Office around the present site office | 1. Appoint qualified WHS Officer to head the WHS Office as soon as possible  
2. Agree appropriate staff structure for WHS Office to cover all its roles, and appoint suitable staff to these jobs  
3. Create an effective record system for the World Heritage Site as a basis for its effective future management  
4. Define clear job descriptions and roles for all staff of WHS Office (see Management Plan, Chapter 10, as possible guidance) | H               | H               | M     |
| C. Ensure that staff of the WHS Office and others involved with the WHS have appropriate training | 1. provide appropriate training courses for all staff  
2. ensure that all external projects include appropriate training for the staff of the WHS Office as an integral part of their plans | O | O |
| D. Review the international links of the WHS | 1. Consider forming a committee to coordinate international inputs to the WHS  
2. Review and improve dialogue with UNESCO  
3. Develop proposals to create, subject to funding, an institute based on the WHS Office as a national/international training facility | M | H M |
| E. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the WHS Office and the overall state of conservation of the WHS | 1. Draw up measures for monitoring the site’s condition and effectiveness of the WHS Office  
2. Review the site’s condition and effectiveness of the WHS Office annually for consideration by the National and Provincial Heritage Protection Committees | H | O |
| F. Secure adequate resources for the conservation, restoration, maintenance, interpretation and ongoing management of the WHS | 1. Maximise funding from Province, site income and the Vat Phou fund for the management of the WHS  
2. Seek international funding for specific projects within agreed priorities for WHS  
3. Provide an office for international projects working within the WHS | O | O M |
5.9 This section identifies the objectives and tasks needed to protect and conserve the Monument Protection Zone.

### Table 2: Actions in Zone 4 The Monument Protection Zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Priority/Timing</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Make all parts of Zone 4 secure and free of encroachment | 1. Complete fencing of all parts of Zone 4  
2. Staff and patrol all parts of Zone 4  
3. Remove modern building (rice-field hut at Hong Nang Sida)  
4. Stop rice cultivation in Zone 4 | M | O | M | L |
| B. Improve understanding of Zone 4 | 1. Continue recording and investigation of structures  
2. Ensure that copies of all records are held by WHS Office | O | O | |
| C. Conserve/restore major structures through work of WHS Office or external projects | 1. When necessary carry out emergency measures to support structures  
2. Clear and clean all major structures  
3. Monitor effectiveness of new drainage system at Vat Phou and identify any further necessary work on drainage systems  
4. Examine need for works to control river on north side of Vat Phou (threat of erosion to northern terraces and northern courtyard building)  
5. Make proposals for conservation/restoration of courtyard building, Nandi Hall, Hong Nang Sida | 0 | M | L | H | N |
6. If necessary, provide temporary roof over the parts of the Vat Phou sanctuary which are at risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Maintain Zone 4</th>
<th>1. clear vegetation 3 times each year</th>
<th>M</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. clean site on daily basis, including museum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. remove vegetation regularly from buildings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. make better arrangements for disposal of garbage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. reduce amount of rubbish from Vat Phou festival</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Secure artefacts</th>
<th>1. collect, catalogue and store safely remaining carved stones at Vat Phou</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. provide racks in museum store at Vat Phou</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. build extension to museum store</td>
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Protection of the wider landscape from development and environmental pressures (Zones 1& 3)

5.10 This section defines the work needed to protect the landscape of the World Heritage Site outside the area directly managed and controlled by the World Heritage Site Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Priority/Timing</th>
<th>Responsible Body</th>
<th>Funded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Establish effective involvement of the World Heritage Site Office in all decisions concerning new construction within the World Heritage Site</td>
<td>1. agree system for District urban planners to consult WHS Office on all proposed new constructions in Zones 1 and 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. review regulations in Mgt Plan Actions and Policies 13 – 14, 16 as basis for agreeing rules for what new construction is permitted (see Annex C)</td>
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<td>3. Produce guidance on appropriate types of development within villages in Zone 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Produce guidance on the height and scale of new construction in the remainder of Zone 3 and in Zone 1</td>
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<td>B. Ensure that all new construction in Zone 3 is preceded, if necessary, by rescue excavation, and that an archaeologist observes all new construction while it is in progress</td>
<td>1. identify staff and resources in WHS Office to carry out rescue excavations</td>
<td>H</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Ensure that all rescue excavations are fully recorded and that the records are placed in the WHS Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Carry out rescue excavation in advance of unavoidable erosion along the bank of the River Mekong within the Ancient City</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Identify areas requiring excavation over next 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Identify staff and resources in WHS Office for carrying out work and carry out necessary work</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ensure that excavations are fully recorded and that the records are placed in WHS Office</td>
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<td>D. Conserve Champasak Town and improve its appearance as main gateway to site</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Develop urban plan to protect character of town</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Restore and rehabilitate historic buildings in town</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Improve character and appearance of streets</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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</table>
Access, Tourism, Economic Development and Local Community Involvement

5.11 This section describes the objectives and tasks needed to provide access and interpretation and help the local community to benefit from the site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Priority/Timing</th>
<th>Responsible Body</th>
<th>Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Raise awareness of site</td>
<td>1. design website for international audience</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>IIP</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. develop website</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Develop and implement an integrated and coordinated interpretation plan for the whole World Heritage Site</td>
<td>1. produce integrated interpretation plan, including plans and designs for different forms of interpretation</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>IIP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. develop introductory visitor centre in Champasak</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. publish introductory orientation brochure</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. provide site signage to all accessible parts of site</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. develop heritage trail Phase 1 (Champasak – Ancient City – Vat Phou)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. carry out necessary physical works to sites in Phase 1 Heritage Trail to make access safe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. develop heritage trail Phase 2 (phase 1 + more ruins, Tomo and Don Deng Island)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. carry out necessary physical works to sites in Phase 2 Heritage Trail to make access safe</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Ensure that services for visitors are of the highest possible standard</td>
<td>1. develop community-based tourism proposals of Mekong Tourism Development Project</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MTDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Integrate Vat Phou into wider provincial and regional tourism circuits</td>
<td>2. develop community-based tourism proposals of Mekong Tourism Development Project</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MTDP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Ensure that the maximum amount possible earned from sustainable tourism remains within the local community</td>
<td>1. develop community-based tourism proposals of Mekong Tourism Development Project 2. develop local guide services</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MTDP  MTDP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase educational role of site</td>
<td>1. produce educational material for schools 2. Develop a centre for public education</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex A  People consulted/ contributing to this Action Plan

H.E. Dr Phandouangchith VONGSA, Minister of Information and Culture

Mr Sengkham PHOMKE, Deputy Governor of Champasak Province

Mr Sonxay SIPHANDUNE, Chief of Cabinet of the Governor’s Office

Mr Sengalune PHONCHITH, Director of Information and Culture, Champasak Province

Mr Heng DAOVANNARY, General Secretary of Lao National Commission for UNESCO

Ms Chanphone XAYARATH, Deputy Director, Department of Museums and Archaeology

Mr Bounlap KEOKANGNA, Secretary General, Champasak Province Heritage Protection Committee

Mr Siphan PHOUSADY, Deputy Director, Department of Information and Culture, Champsak Province

Mr Thongkhoun BORIBOUNE, Director of Vat Phou Monument Office

Dr Patrizia Zolese, UNESCO Chief Technical Advisor, Lao UNESCO Project

Mr Steven Schipani. NLTA – ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project

Ms Pawinee Sunalai, UNESCO Consultant, Integrated Interpretation Project for The Development of the Interpretive Dimensions of Vat Phou and Champasak Landscape
Annex B  Champasak Heritage Management Plan: Chapter 4: Status, Scope and Objectives

4.1 SCOPE AND STATUS OF THE PLAN

4.1.1 This Management Plan has been produced because of the importance of preserving the archaeological and cultural landscape of the Champasak area and in response to the pressures and complex management issues that face it. The Plan is intended to promote both the conservation of the cultural landscape described in Part I, and also the sustainable socio-economic development of the local communities. It does so by setting out policies for the safeguarding and sympathetic development of the cultural landscape of the Champasak Plain, its environmental setting, and the distinctive settlement character of the area. These policies are intended to work within the context of sustainable economic development of the Champasak Province and District and within national development plans of the Lao PDR.

4.1.2 Because of the extent of the cultural landscape described in Part I, the Plan will affect large numbers of people and will need to reflect the interests of many groups, including the local villages and the district and provincial authorities, as well as central departments. All these are stakeholders who must be involved in the development and implementation of the Plan, since they have the power to enforce decisions which will influence the conservation and use of the area. Other stakeholders include landowners, potential beneficiaries of new economic activities based on heritage conservation and related activities, professional experts, representatives of the religious communities, and potential investors. These individuals and groups must be involved in the appropriate implementation of the Plan.

4.1.3 The Plan recognises that policies need to address short-, medium- and long-term objectives in order to be measurable and achievable. Therefore, the Plan sets out long-term aims to be attained over a 30 year period (Section 4.2) and aims to be met within the first five years (Section 4.3). The Actions and Policies section of the Management Plan summarises achieve these objectives.

4.1.4 Thorough knowledge and understanding of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone, both in the past, and as it is used now are essential to effective management and the achievement of the Plan’s objectives. Chapter Five describes the needs of data management and establishes a research policy for the Protection Zone, as well as regulating the involvement of external teams in the area.

4.1.5 Chapter Six of the Plan defines the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone (Zone 1) which protects the cultural landscape as a whole, and also the regulations for the other zones located within Zone 1. These zones are the Environmental Conservation (Zone 2), the Archaeological Research Zone (Zone 3), and the
4.1.6 Beyond protection of the archaeological sites and the cultural landscape from damage, there is a need for positive intervention to conserve and maintain the standing ruins and other parts of the Monument Management Zone (Zone 4). These measures are described in Chapter 7, while Chapter 8 deals with the sustainable development of the sites for cultural tourism.

4.1.7 Within the overall needs of conservation, the Plan introduces policies for the raising of public awareness and understanding which is essential to its successful implementation, and the sustainable development of tourism and public access, education and enjoyment within a context of sustainable economic development of the local communities. A most important element of the Plan is the positive involvement of the local communities with both the conservation of the area, and with sustainable economic development for their benefit. This element is covered in Chapter 9.

4.1.8 The Management Plan has been officially approved by the Government of the Lao PDR as regulations for implementing the 1997 Decree of the President of the Lao PDR on the Preservation of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage No. 03/PR (Article 10.1). The Plan also pays due regards to international conventions and recommendations such as the 1972 UNESCO Convention for the Preservation of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the relevant Recommendations of the UNESCO General Assembly, and the 1964 ICOMOS International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (the Venice Charter). Chapter 10 describes how the Plan will be implemented by the National Heritage Management Agencies at national, provincial, district and village levels in accordance with the 1997 Decree of the President of the Lao PDR on the Preservation of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage No. 03/PR (Articles 9, 10) under the guidance of the National Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee for Vat Phou (NIMCC). It also describes the structure and role of the Site Management and Training Centre, led by the Site Manager, which is necessary for the practical implementation of its policies and actions. Finally, it makes provision for the monitoring and revision of the Plan at the end of its first five-year period.
4.2 LONG-TERM AIMS

4.2.1 Based on the principles established above, the long-term aims for the conservation and management of the site are set out below. These aims will guide those implementing the Plan over the long term, approximately 30 years, in achieving the appropriate balance between conservation, access and the interests, economic and otherwise, of the local community.

4.2.2 The long-term aims are:

1. Management of the cultural landscape in a manner which is accountable and transparent to the national authorities

2. Developing partnership and consensus among all those, public and private, who are in any way stakeholders in the cultural landscape

3. Establishing effective operational linkages between the site managers and all other bodies working in the area

4. Identification and promotion of changes beneficial to the cultural landscape and its protection and safeguarding for future generations

5. Maximizing the benefits of long-term management of the cultural landscape

6. Development and transfer of the necessary skills to the local and national community, and development of appropriate employment opportunities

7. Maximizing public and private resources, national and international, for the initial conservation and enhancement of the cultural landscape while developing economically and locally sustainable management systems for the future

8. Stabilizing the environmental pressures on the cultural landscape

9. Retaining, protecting and enhancing the vitality of the living culture and landscape

10. Maintaining and reinforcing the special character of the cultural landscape, and enhancing understanding of all aspects of the site, including the sacred aspects

11. Conserving the material remains of the site

12. Seizing available opportunities for freeing the most sensitive parts of the site from inappropriate development
13. Developing understanding of the archaeological and historical significance of the cultural landscape

14. Improving public understanding of the value and importance of the cultural landscape and engaging the support and positive intervention of the local communities for the Plan’s objectives

15. Developing the educational value of the site

16. Developing appropriate uses of the site, including traditional festivals and other community activities

17. Continuing improvement of the visual, cultural, educational and aesthetic experience of visitors

18. Improving access to and within the cultural landscape

19. Using the site for the sustainable economic development of the local communities

4.3 OBJECTIVES FOR THE FIRST FIVE YEARS (1999-2004)

4.3.1 Within the overall long-term aims, those responsible for the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone have set the following objectives for the first five years:

4.3.2 Regulatory Work on Protected Zones

1. Clear definition of the zones to be protected, and of their boundaries

2. Integration of the policies for the protection, enhancement and sustainable development of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone within national and provincial development plans so that major and potentially damaging developments are located elsewhere

3. Revision of laws and regulations to provide adequate protection for the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone and its sub-zones

4. Application by local authorities and other agencies of agreed policies to protect the cultural landscape, standing monuments and archaeological sites, and inclusion of zonal boundaries in all official maps and plans

5. Production of guidelines for the protection of archaeological sites in other landuses or in private ownership

6. Completion of baseline survey and record of all archaeological sites as a basis for future monitoring
7. Regular inspection of to monitor the condition of all archaeological sites, including earthworks and those sites that are buried

8. Preparation of an inventory of all movable antiquities within the site with a record of their original sites and current location

9. Relocation of all movable antiquities at risk of theft or damage into secure areas

10. Assessment of likely future damage by fluvial erosion, and taking of appropriate action to minimise that damage

11. Development of management database and GIS

12. Evaluation of archaeological sites of uncertain potential, such as pottery scatters

13. Extension of surveyed areas, and adjustment of zone boundaries as necessary

14. Implementation of strategy for archaeological research, excavation and publication

15. Development of an appropriate regulatory system for archaeological work

16. Establishment of appropriate monitoring arrangements to measure the successful implementation of the Plan

17. Obtaining the necessary human, financial, international, and other resources to implement the Plan

4.3.3 Direct Management of Sites which are Open to Public Access

1. Assessment of conservation needs of all standing structures and initiation of work necessary for prevention of collapse

2. Completion of adequate records of all standing structures

3. Establishment of a system of regular structural survey of all standing structures, leading to identification, prioritisation and programming of necessary work

4. Establishment of effective maintenance programmes for all aspects of all Zone 4 sites

5. Establishment of adequate site security

6. Development of capacity of the staff of the Site Management and Training Centre
7  Identification and exploitation of opportunities for sustainable economic
development within the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape
Protection Zone (Zone 1) for the benefit of the local community

8  Identification and development of appropriate provision for tourism at
sites managed for public access

9  Production of appropriate interpretative and educational material, and of
publications about the site

4.3.4 Coordination

1  Establishment of effective management systems and protocols for
implementation of the Management Plan for the protection and
management of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape
Protection Zone

2  Development of systems for coordination and regular exchange of
information with all agencies, bodies and stakeholders involved in the
Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone

3  Development of training opportunities for the local population to enable
them to take advantage of local employment and other economic
opportunities provided by the Champasak Heritage and Cultural
Landscape Protection Zone

4.3.5 Information and Outreach

1  Establishment of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape
Protection Zone as an exemplar of site management so that it becomes a
model training centre for heritage site management

2  Fostering community awareness of the significance of the Champasak
Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone, and community
acceptance of the Plan objectives

3  Development of tourism infrastructure appropriate to the likely level of
tourism over the Plan period

4  Development of training and certification of guides for the sites accessible
to the public
Annex C  Champasak Heritage Management Plan: Actions and Policies: proposed regulations for control of new construction

These regulations were included in the 1998 Champasak Heritage Management Plan. They have not been fully enforced and some provisions will require re-consideration and review in current conditions. For example, the structure of committees foreseen in the regulations does not fully exist and new regulations will need to be adapted to the current situation. Similarly, it is probably unreasonable to ban totally some forms of construction in Zone 3 as was proposed here and an alternative approach may need to be developed.

The regulations were nonetheless part of the Management Plan adopted by the government of the Lao PDR in 1998. They provide a basis for drafting regulations appropriate to the current conditions.

Extract from the Champasak Heritage Management Plan Actions and Policies:

BOUNDARIES, ZONES AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

13. **Zone 1: The Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone** (Figure 13) shall be the area within which this Management Plan will apply (Section 6.2).

14. The following controls will therefore apply through the whole area of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone (Section 6.2.6):

(14.1) The Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone is the area to which the Actions and Policies set out in the Management Plan apply

(14.2) (a) Consent is required for any works which may affect the character and integrity of the Champasak Heritage and Cultural Landscape Protection Zone. Consent must be obtained from

- the District Committee for minor developments including the construction of individual houses and the alteration of buildings

or

- the Provincial Heritage Committee for government works and other major developments (except national irrigation and road schemes)

or

- the NIMCC for national irrigation and road schemes

(b) in each case the application for consent shall be submitted to the Site Manager at least three months in advance of the planned date of the start of work for consideration by the appropriate body

(c) the Site Manager shall advise the appropriate body on whether consent should be granted unconditionally, with conditions, or refused.
(d) if, in the view of the body considering the application and according to the advice of the Site Manager, the works proposed will damage the heritage quality of Zone 1, consent must be refused

(e) consent is required under this regulation for

- Any enlargement of fields for cultivation
- Construction of any new building
- Undertaking any schemes of irrigation, road construction, electrification or similar public works
- Any alteration or addition to, or demolition of buildings included on the National Inventory (5.2.5)
- mines, quarries, fish ponds,
- Any excavation of a depth greater than 0.5m (to allow normal ploughing to take place) on any land within Zone 1 whether public or private

(14.3) If consent is granted for any scheme under Section 6.2.6, 2 above, the Site Manager and his staff must be allowed access, if requested by him/her, if requested

(a) before construction to carry out necessary archaeological survey, including excavation, for a period of up to three months.

(b) during construction to carry out necessary archaeological recording

(14.4) If consent is refused, the applicant shall be entitled to request assistance from the Site Manager to alter his designs, if this is possible, so that they do not have an adverse effect on the landscape.

(14.5) Anybody making any discovery of archaeological or historical artifacts, or archaeological sites or monuments must report them to the Site Manager as soon as possible and not more than three days after discovery (as set out in Article 18 of the 1997 Presidential Decree No. 03/PR)

(14.6) All persons proposing to carry out archaeological work must first obtain the consent, in writing, of the NIMCC, having submitted to the Site Manager a written proposal for consideration by NIMCC, providing all the information requested in Section 5.5. The Site Manager shall advise NIMCC on every application on whether or not consent should be granted unconditionally, with conditions, or refused

(14.7) In consideration of any applications for works along the banks of the Mekong, the appropriate Committee must pay special regard to the need to protect the wooded character of the eastern bank of the river, including Don Deng Island, as an essential part of the symbolic landscape and of the present view from Vat Phou
(14.8) The maximum height of any new building permitted under this regulation shall be 12 metres

(14.9) In the event of any breach of these regulations, the person responsible will be required to repair the damage and restore the site to its former condition as far as possible

15. The Phou Kao mountain massif is designated as **Zone 2: Sacred Environment Zone** (Figure 14). The following controls apply in Zone 2 (Section 6.3.3):

(15.1) All tree-felling within Zone 2 is prohibited. This is not intended to prevent the traditional collection of branches and small bushes as firewood.

(15.2) All construction of buildings or public works within Zone 2 is prohibited

(15.3) All cultivation within Zone 2 is prohibited

(15.4) Anybody making any discovery of archaeological or historical artifacts, or archaeological sites or monuments must report them to the Site Manager as soon as possible and not more than three days after discovery (as set out in Article 18 of the 1997 Presidential Decree No. 03/PR)

(15.5) All persons proposing to carry out archaeological work must first obtain the consent, in writing, of the NIMCC, having submitted to the Site Manager a written proposal for consideration by NIMCC, providing all the information requested in Section 5.5. The Site Manager shall advise NIMCC on every application on whether or not consent should be granted unconditionally, with conditions, or refused

(15.6) In the event of any breach of these regulations, the person responsible will be required to repair the damage and restore the site to its former condition as far as possible

16. Areas of particular archaeological importance are designated as **Zone 3: Archaeological Research Zone**. The following controls apply in Zone 3:

(16.1) (a) Any proposal for any change in land use, including changes in agricultural practice, for tree planting, for the felling of trees more than 12m high, for construction of traditional wooden houses built on poles, or for any excavation into the ground must be approved by the Provincial Heritage Committee before any work commences.

(b) Details of the proposal should be submitted by its proposer in writing to the Site Manager not less than three months before the work is intended to begin.
(c) The Site Manager will assess the potential impact of the proposal on the historic landscape and on the archaeological remains, and will advise the Provincial Heritage Committee on whether consent should be granted unconditionally, with conditions or refused.

(d) Before advising the Provincial Heritage Committee, the Site Manager may, with the approval of the Committee, carry out archaeological survey, including excavation, to support the evaluation.

(e) Consent may be granted, with or without conditions, only if the Provincial Heritage Committee, on the advice of the Site Manager, is satisfied that the proposal will cause no damage to the archaeological potential. If the proposal will cause damage to the archaeological potential of the area concerned, permission must be refused or granted only after appropriate archaeological work has been carried out.

(f) After receiving the advice of the Site Manager, following his evaluation, the Provincial Heritage Committee will either:

- refuse consent if the assessment is that the proposal will damage the heritage value of the site
- grant consent either without conditions or with conditions intended to protect the heritage value of the site
- agree that the Site Manager shall within a further twelve month period carry out further archaeological work, including excavation, before the Committee grants consent to proceed with the proposal

(16.2) If consent is refused, the applicant shall be entitled to request assistance from the Site Manager to alter the designs, if this is possible, so that the proposal does not have an adverse effect on the heritage value of the site

(16.3) Consent will not at any time be granted for any houses except for wooden ones built in traditional style on wooden posts. No concrete floors on grade, or brick or concrete walls may be constructed at any time

(16.4) NIMCC may, at any time, on the advice of the Site Manager redesignate part of Zone 3 as part of Zone 4 if the Committee is satisfied that there is evidence that the site in question is now of high rather than medium importance. The Site Manager must notify the owner and occupier of the land that the Committee has done so. Compensation may be payable to the owner or occupier.

(16.5) NIMCC may at any time, on the advice of the Site Manager, classify as part of Zone 3 sites which are new discoveries, or sites which have been re-assessed if the Committee is satisfied
that there is evidence showing that they should be classified as of medium importance. If there is reason to believe that the site in question will be damaged or destroyed before the next meeting of the NIMCC, the Provincial Heritage Committee may make the designation, subject to confirmation by NIMCC within six months. The Site Manager must notify the owner and occupier of the land that the designation has been made.

(16.6) Anybody making any discovery of archaeological or historical artifacts, or archaeological sites or monuments must report them to the Site Manager as soon as possible and not more than three days after discovery (as set out in Article 18 of the 1997 Presidential Decree No. 03/PR)

(16.7) All persons proposing to carry out archaeological work must first obtain the consent, in writing, of the NIMCC, having submitted to the Site Manager a written proposal for consideration by NIMCC, providing all the information requested in Section 5.5. The Site Manager shall advise NIMCC on every application on whether or not consent should be granted unconditionally, with conditions, or refused

(16.8) In the event of any breach of these regulations, the person responsible will be required to repair the damage and restore the site to its former condition as far as possible