

**ICOMOS Heritage Alert****Archaeological Remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex  
Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Archaeological remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex in Japan are currently facing imminent danger of destruction for public facilities to be constructed by the municipal government of Kitakyushu. Japan ICOMOS seeks international support for our endeavor to protect this heritage of national and international importance.



**Figure 1.** The excavated area of the first Moji Railway Station complex as seen from the north. The brick building in the centre of the photo is the former headquarter of Kyushu Railway Company built in 1891 (Photo provided by Kitakyushu City Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture).



**Figure 2.** Excavated area of the first Moji Railway Station Complex (Photo provided by Kitakyushu City Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture).

This site is situated adjacent to the Moji Port, within the Moji Ward of Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan (fig. 1 and 2).

In early 2023, the archaeological remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex were unearthed during a rescue excavation by the City of Kitakyushu, conducted prior to the construction of public facilities.

Since November 2023, numerous petitions for the conservation and review of the building project have been submitted by concerned local communities and fourteen academic associations, including Japan ICOMOS. In June 2024, the President of ICOMOS also sent a letter expressing grave concern. In total, seventeen petitions were submitted as of July 2024. Despite these efforts, it is understood that the City of Kitakyushu does not engage in open and sincere dialogue with local communities and academics.

The desirable outcome is for the City of Kitakyushu to suspend the construction project, properly assess the heritage value by conducting a thorough archaeological investigation of the entire development site, establish a committee comprising municipal government staff, citizens, professionals, and academics, and explore options for providing public facilities and heritage conservation.

### **Summary of Statement of Significance**

Moji Railway Station Complex was built and opened in 1891. It continued to be developed and expanded until the 1930s. In 1914, the terminus station building was relocated to the current location to be directly connected with the pier. This second Moji Station Building still stands today (fig. 7 and 9). In 1942, it was renamed Mojiko Station. The excavated remains are the structures associated with the Moji Railway Station Complex constructed between 1891 and the 1930s (fig. 3). The engine

shed's foundation, confirmed to have been built in 1891 as part of the original facilities of Moji Station, is among them (fig. 4 and 5).

**Historic Value:**

- Significance in Japanese railway history: Japan established its first railway in 1872 and quickly expanded its network across the mainland and surrounding islands. Moji, located on the northeastern edge of Kyushu island, became the terminus station for the region's first railway. Construction of the Moji Railway Station Complex began in 1889 and opened in 1891 (fig. 3). The remains of the Moji Railway Station Complex serve as physical evidence of Japan's early modern railway network, holding national importance in railway history.

- Model of a modern city: The integrated and simultaneous planning and construction of the Moji port and the Moji Railway Station marked a significant achievement. This led to the national designation of the Moji port as the Official Trading Port in 1889 and to the development of the port into a major trading hub in Asia, particularly in relation to coal exports. Subsequently Moji became a model of a modern city in Japan. The remains of the first Moji Railway Station symbolize the rapid economic growth of a pre-modern small village of Moji into a model modern port city. Remains of Moji Railway Station Complex also serves as a witness of the dark side of the history. For example, a number of soldiers and horses were transported through railway and port of Moji to Asian countries.

**Integrity Demonstrated by Existing Structures:**

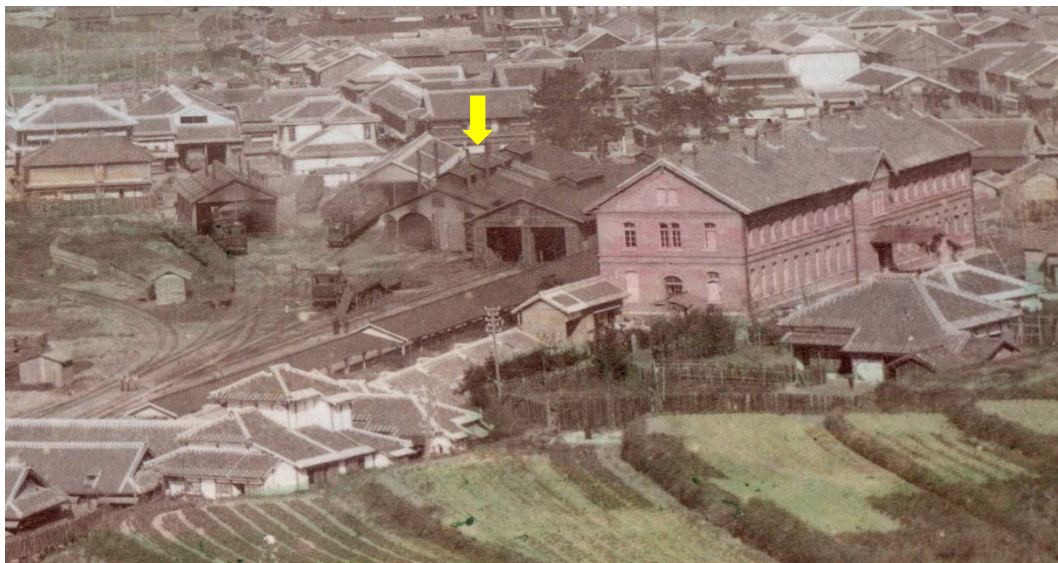
- A few of the original structures of the Moji Railway Station Complex still stand around the excavated site. The former headquarters of Kyushu Railway, built in 1891, stands intact and is currently reused as the Kyushu Railway Heritage Museum. The second Moji Station Building, built in 1914 (currently called Mojiko Station), has been nationally protected and still serves as a terminus station building, retaining its original structure and design (fig. 3, 7, and 9). The spatial relation among these structures, along with port facilities such as two moorages and street layouts, illustrates the original and evolved master plan of the old city of Moji, demonstrating high integrity in wholeness.

**Architectural/Engineering Value:**

- In the construction of the port and railways, both Western and Japanese engineers and builders played pivotal roles through collaboration. This is evidenced by the remaining structures, such as the well-preserved foundation of the engine shed (fig. 4 and 5). The construction techniques employed a blend of modern Western and traditional Japanese methods, highlighting the transition from pre-modern to modern engineering and building techniques during the construction period of 1889-1891.

**Scientific Value:**

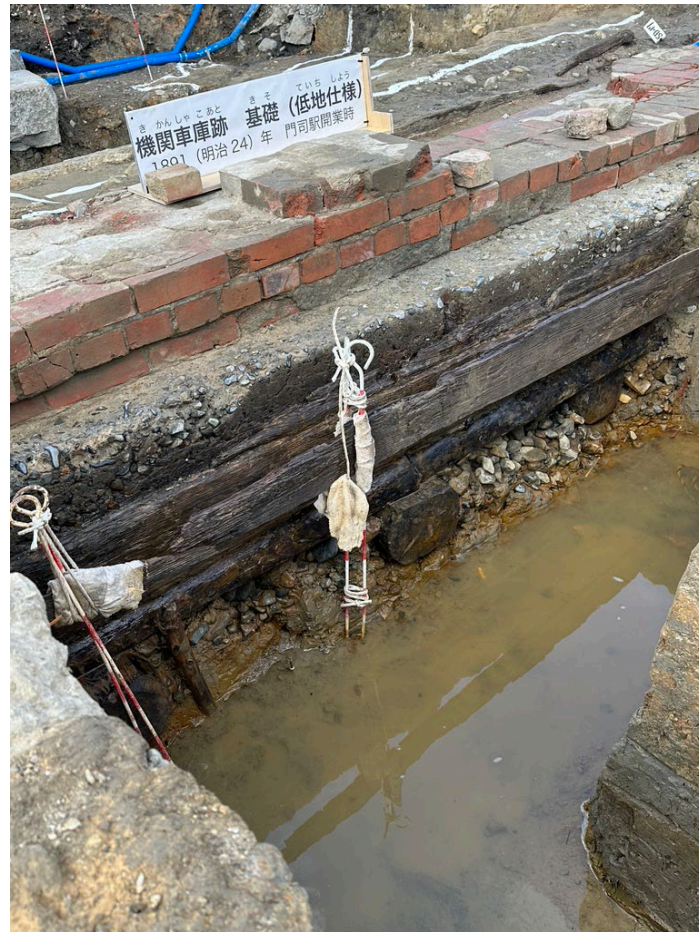
- Only a small portion of the entire first Moji Railway Station Complex has been excavated thus far. It is anticipated that remains of other facilities will be discovered in the future. Therefore, the site and its surrounding area hold scientific value.



**Figure 3.** Photo of the first Moji Railway Station Complex, captured from the north, taken sometime between 1891-1920s. The engine shed excavated is indicated by a yellow arrow (Photo provided by Kazuki ABE).



**Figure 4.** The excavated section of the foundation of the engine shed (1891), which displays the construction method used on solid natural soil. The concrete foundation was formed without employing concrete forms but utilizing the solid natural ground as forms. Over the concrete foundation, a brick footing was constructed (Photo by Koji MIZOGUCHI).



**Figure 5.** The excavated section of the foundation of the engine shed (1891) reveals the construction method utilized on reclaimed land. The method involved filling aggregates in the reclaimed land, over which logs were placed to consolidate the ground. This was followed by the installation of dual-layer wood forms to establish a concrete foundation, upon which a brick footing was constructed (Photo by Koji MIZOGUCHI).

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*1-0 Identity of Place*

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**1-1 Current name and original name**

Current name: **Archaeological Remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex**

Original name: **Moji Station**

**1-2 Location Town, Country, Street**

Nishikaigan, Moji Ward, Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka, Japan

**1-3 Classification/ Type of place**

Archaeological site

**1-4 Current Heritage Protection Status**

**Undesignated/registered and Unprotected.** The archaeological remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex do not have officially recognized local, prefectural or national registration or designation for cultural significance.

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## 2-0 Statement of Significance and History

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### 2-1 Statement of Significance

The significance of the first Moji Railway Station Complex is stated below:

#### 2-1-1 Importance in International and National Railway History

Japan's railway was first established in 1872, connecting Shinbashi and Yokohama within the capital region of Tokyo and its suburban environs.

Due to the policy of isolationism, commonly known as *sakoku*, Japan maintained a closed-door approach to foreign exchange and trade from 1639 to 1854. It wasn't until 1868 that Japan officially opened its doors and embarked on the country's modernization journey.

The Japanese government invited engineers from Western countries to aid in the construction of modern infrastructure. One of the earliest projects undertaken with their technical support was the development of railways.

Following the advent of the railway in 1872, Japan swiftly embarked on an extensive expansion of its railway network across the mainland and surrounding islands. This marked the onset of a transformative era in transportation and infrastructure development throughout the country.

Located on the northern edge of Kyushu Island in Japan, the town of Moji had humble beginnings as a small village characterized by its salt pans until the late-19th century. However, with the advent of modernization and industrialization, a consortium of local politicians spearheaded a transformative initiative: the construction of the region's inaugural railway network. This pioneering endeavor aimed to interconnect major coal production sites across the north-eastern region of Kyushu.

In 1887, Kyushu Railway was formally established as a privately held company, laying the groundwork for the region's burgeoning transportation infrastructure. Simultaneously, in 1889, construction commenced on the pivotal Moji Port—an ambitious undertaking signalling the dawn of a new era in maritime commerce. Notably, the development of Moji Port necessitated extensive land reclamation efforts to accommodate its modern facilities and burgeoning trade demands.

This concerted effort culminated in the completion and inauguration of both the Moji Railway Station Complex and Moji Port in 1891. These landmark achievements not only facilitated the efficient transportation of coal to Moji but also served as vital hubs for domestic and international trade, positioning Moji as a pivotal nexus in the regional economy. By 1896, Moji Port had become the largest coal exporter in Japan.

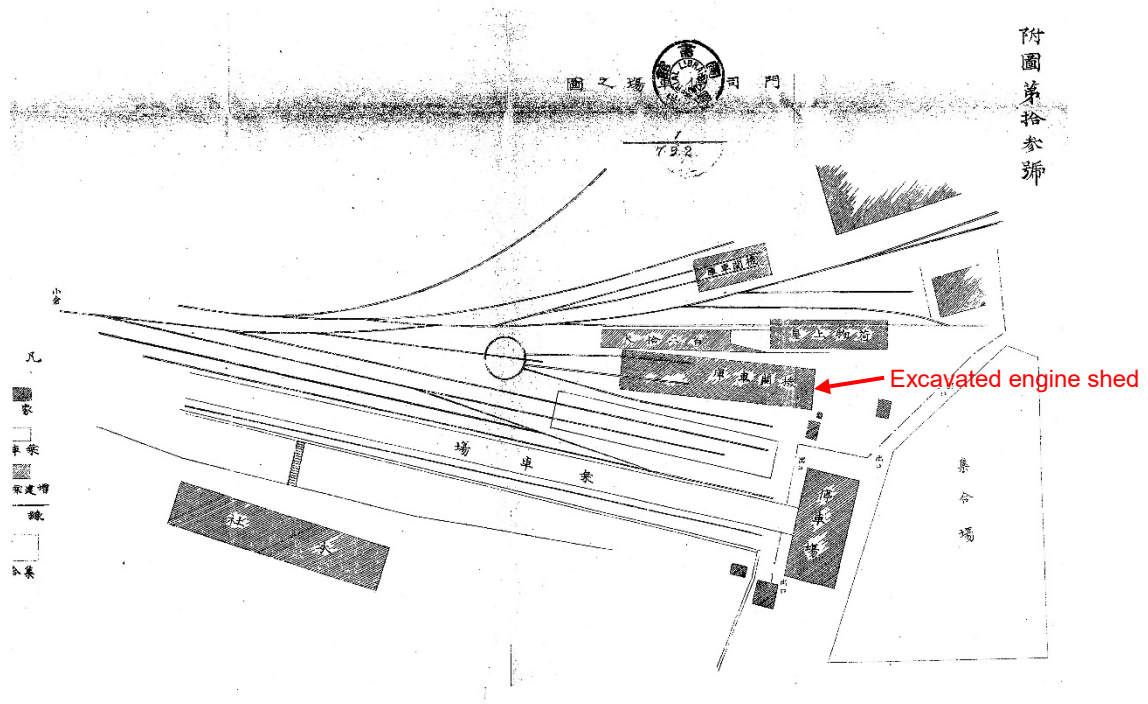
In 1899, Moji Port was officially designated as a port open for foreign trade along with 21 others. Moji Port quickly emerged as a key trading hub facilitating commerce with destinations such as China, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Britain, Australia, Canada, and the U.S. Railways played an indispensable role in transporting coal and other goods domestically.

The remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex is an integral component of Japan's early modern railway network, alongside renowned sites such as Shinbashi Station (designated as a National Historic Site), Takanawa Chikutei (also a National Historic Site), Tokyo Station (recognized as a National Important Cultural Property), Otaru Temiya Railway Complex (likewise a National Important Cultural Property), the second Moji Railway Station Building (also designated as a National Important Cultural Property), and others.

Given the scarcity of physical evidence from this era, conservation of Moji's remains is paramount, serving as a pivotal reference point in the history of western Japan's railway development.

The authenticity of the archaeological remains has been confirmed through literature, maps and photographs: the site plan produced in 1897 is the oldest remaining map of the Moji Railway Station Complex (fig. 6). In 1897, Emperor visited Moji to observe a military exercise. In anticipation of this significant event, meticulous preparations were undertaken to ensure the safety and security of the Emperor. Among these preparations, a comprehensive site plan of the Moji Railway Station Complex

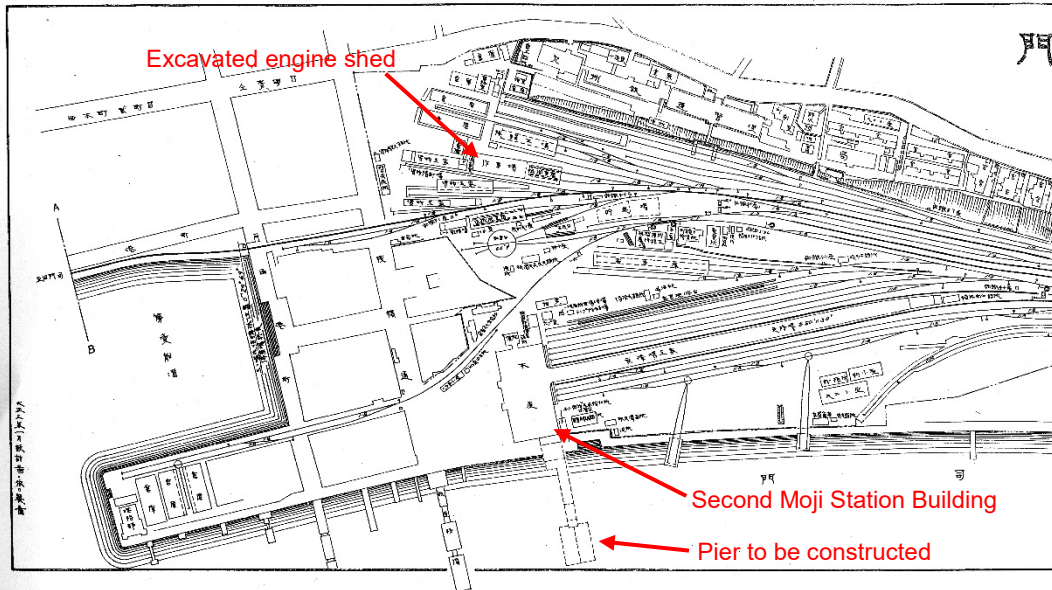
was produced, detailing the layout of the complex. Remarkably, the layout of structures unearthed during excavations in 2023 closely mirrored those depicted on this historic site plan. This alignment serves as a testament to the outstanding integrity and authenticity of the Moji Railway Station Complex and its enduring importance in Japan's history of industrialization.



**Figure 6.** Site plan of the first Moji Railway Station Complex produced in 1897 (“Meiji 30 nen 11 gatsu shidan taikou enshu kiji,” National Diet Library Digital Collections, <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/843609>).

In 1914, the terminus station building of Moji was relocated to the current location, situated approximately 190m northwest of the original station building, and newly built in the neo-classical style (fig. 7 and 9). As depicted in the 1914 site plan, the new station building was planned to be directly connected with the pier to further enhance transportation efficiency.





**Figure 7.** Site plan of the Moji Railway Station Complex produced in 1914, illustrating the second Moji Station Building built in 1914 and a new pier (source: “Taishouki tetsudoushi shiryō dai II ki” Vol.5, Nihon Keizai Hyouronsha, 1992)

The original station building was demolished to make way for other facilities. Despite it, many of the structures linked to the initial Moji Station remained intact following the relocation. An engine shed, built in 1891, was continued to be used. Some of the buildings were repurposed for similar or different functions. Despite numerous modifications over time, the Moji Railway Station Complex remained in operation, serving as the northern terminus station of Kyushu Island.

Considering the facts outlined above, the historic significance of the remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex extends beyond national borders, holding both international and national importance.

**2-1-2 Early Modern Collaboration between Western and Japanese Engineers and Builders**

As Japan opened its doors to the world and embarked on modernization in the 1870s, it sought expertise from engineers and architects hailing from Western nations such as Britain, France, the U.S., and Prussia to glean insights into constructing modern infrastructure. Notably, for Japan's inaugural railway project, British engineers played a pivotal role in its planning and execution.

By the 1880s, a cadre of Japanese professionals had already assimilated knowledge of civil engineering from their Western counterparts. Consequently, when the Moji Reclamation Company initiated plans for the Moji reclamation project in 1887, it was predominantly Japanese engineers at the helm. Upon presenting their detailed scheme to the central government in Tokyo, it was decided to enlist the expertise of Dutch water engineer Anthonie Thomas Lubertus Rouwenhorst Mulder, employed by the Japanese Ministry of Interior, to assess the plan alongside two Japanese engineers and offer recommendations for the development of Moji port. Mulder's visit to Moji in 1887 prompted suggestions to construct a second moorage near the railway station for enhanced ship-train connectivity, a departure from the original plan of a solitary moorage situated farther from the station. Additionally, Mulder advocated for a pier directly linked to the railway to accommodate anticipated larger vessels. This was realised later in 1914 when the terminus station building of Moji was relocated towards the port and directly connected with the pier.

The construction of Moji port and railways was entrusted to Nippon Doboku Company (Japan Civil Engineering Company), established in 1887 by prominent financiers Okura Kihachirou, Fujita Denzaburo, and Eiichi Shibusawa amid Japan's modernization drive. This marked the inception of Japan's modern construction industry, paving the way for Taisei Corporation, a major player in today's construction sector. Nippon Doboku spearheaded civil engineering tasks including land reclamation and railway construction.

For the strategic planning and design of the railway network, the Kyushu Railway Company enlisted the expertise of Prussian railway engineer Hermann Rumschottel as a technical supervisor. Rumschottel's tenure from 1887 to 1892 saw the introduction of Prussian railway technology, including locomotives, coaches, rails, and bridges, aligning Kyushu Railway with the advancements in Prussian railway practices. Under Rumschottel's guidance, the first railway section between Hakata and Chitosegawa was completed in 1889, followed by the Hakata-Moji section in 1891.

In addition to Rumschottel, Japanese engineers like Mukasa Seitarou and Tomonaga Seizou played significant roles in the early stages of Kyushu Railway. Mukata Seitarou, a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University's Civil Engineering Department, contributed to the railway's development before assuming academic positions. Tomonaga Seizou, another Imperial University alum, later became instrumental in establishing the mechanical engineering department at Kyoto Imperial University. It is presumed that they were tasked with aiding in the implementation of mechanical operations for the Kyushu Railway and also absorbing Prussian railway engineering insights from Rumschottel.

The construction of Moji Railway Station Complex was delegated to Ogawa Gumi, led by master builder Ogawa Katsugorou, who acquired expertise in railway construction from his involvement in Tokyo's inaugural railway project in the 1870s. Notably, Hazama Gumi, specializing in railway construction, played a crucial role as a subcontractor for various facilities at Moji Station. Established in 1889, Hazama Gumi, founded by Hazama Takema with support from Ogawa Katsugorou, collaborated with Japanese railway engineers and experienced builders on numerous railway projects. Their inaugural contract in 1889 marked the beginning of their contributions to Moji's infrastructure, constructing an engine shed, a coach shed, a turntable, ash pits, and temporary bridges along the railway.

The Moji port and railway project exemplifies collaborative efforts between Western and Japanese engineers and builders, underscoring the transitional period from reliance on Western expertise to the burgeoning independence of Japanese engineering prowess by the late 1880s. The remains of the Moji Railway Station Complex encapsulate the historical significance of the interchange among western and Japanese engineers and builders.

### **2-1-3 Engineering and building technologies bearing witness to the transition from the pre-modern to the early modern era**

The excavated remains encompass the foundations of various structures, including the engine shed, coach shed, storage facilities, and other amenities, as well as segments of the exterior of the terminus station building. Of particular note is the discovery of the foundation of the engine shed, constructed in 1891, which revealed a remarkably unique construction method (fig. 4 and 5). Two distinct construction techniques were identified: one involved directly installing the concrete foundation into the natural ground (fig. 4), while the other entailed building it on reclaimed land with low bearing capacity (fig. 5).

In the former approach, the concrete foundation was formed without the use of concrete forms, instead utilizing the solid natural ground as a mold (fig. 4). Brick footing was then constructed over

the concrete foundation. This technique represents a genuinely modern and Western method, and it was found to be one of the earliest instances of concrete usage in Japan.

Conversely, the latter method involved filling aggregates into reclaimed land, over which logs were placed to consolidate the ground (fig. 5). This was followed by the installation of dual-layer wooden forms to establish a concrete foundation, upon which brick footing was constructed. This indicates the fusion of modern Western techniques with traditional Japanese construction methods used during the pre-modern Edo period, particularly for the erection of large buildings or masonry walls, such as the large stone walls of castles, on soggy, unstable soils to prevent sinking.

These two different construction methods were selectively employed based on prevailing soil conditions, distinguishing between reclaimed land and naturally stable ground.

The surviving building foundation of the Moji engine shed attests to the transition in building and engineering technology around 1891 from pre-modern Japanese techniques to modern ones, holding profound significance in the history of civil engineering and building techniques. Therefore, the remains embody architectural and engineering values.

The actual designer of each facility of the first Moji Railway Station Complex remains uncertain. Rumschottel, the Prussian technical supervisor of Kyushu Railway Company, might have played an important role in planning and designing all the facilities. Additionally, based on the utilization of Japanese pre-modern engineering techniques for the engine shed foundation, it is believed that Japanese contractors Ogawa Gumi and Hazama Gumi, with experience in railway construction in other parts of Japan, also played significant roles in determining which techniques and materials to employ in civil engineering and architectural works.

Furthermore, the Moji site serves as an important source of information regarding the production and distribution of building materials such as bricks and cement. Eight types of brick marks have been identified, suggesting bricks were produced in different factories. Two of these factories were located in Osaka on the mainland, while another was from Sasebo in Kyushu. Five other marks are yet to be identified.

Since the remains were only discovered in late 2023, further information is expected to be revealed through academic research. Hence, scientific value also exists.

#### **2-1-4 As a model of modern city in Japan**

As a model of a modern city in Japan, the historical significance of Moji lies in the integrated and simultaneous construction of two modern infrastructures—the port and the railway—in 1891.

Initially, Moji lacked port functions, unlike other towns with pre-modern ports. The Moji Reclamation Company, formally established in 1889, spearheaded the reclamation efforts, leading to the development of a modern port in 1891.

In parallel with the port construction, the first Moji Station was established in 1891, marking Moji's emergence as a major junction for both land and sea transportation.

Beneath the engine shed, remnants of stone retaining walls, constructed before 1891, were discovered. With this discovery, the original coastline was confirmed.

As mentioned earlier, two different foundation construction techniques were selectively employed for natural ground and reclaimed land, providing evidence that land reclamation and the construction of railway complex buildings were simultaneously underway.

Following these developments, the Kanmon Strait encompassing Moji and Shimonoseki ports became the gateway to overseas trade (fig. 8). While Shimonoseki Port, located at the southern edge of the mainland, served as dockyards, Moji primarily functioned as an exporting port for coal from the northern Kyushu coalfields. Moji was designated as a special export port in 1889 before its official opening.



**Figure 8.** the location of Moji and Shimonoseki across the Kanmon Strait (Google Earth)

The railways transported coal directly from the producing areas to Moji, from where it was exported to the western region of Japan and other Asian countries. When the Sanyo Railway reached Shimonoseki in 1901, Moji's importance as a hub for the national railway network further increased.

In the newly developed urban area of Moji, branches and office buildings of leading Japanese companies such as Mitsui & Co., Mitsubishi Corporation, Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co., and Nippon Yusen were constructed, solidifying Moji's status as a model modern city in Japan.

The remains of the first Moji Railway Station Complex serve as physical evidence that Moji was a modern city established through the combination of modern infrastructures—port and railways—in an area devoid of a preceding large settlement. Additionally, its development was influenced by its geographical location along the strait, transforming Moji into an international trading port. Therefore, the discovered archaeological remains not only hold significance for Kitakyushu City but also possess international value in terms of the world's modernization history.

#### **2-1-5 Integrity demonstrated through physical remains**

The former headquarters of the Kyushu Railway Company, constructed in 1891, stands to the south of the excavated area (fig. 1). Designated as a nationally registered cultural property, it is now adaptively used as the Kyushu Railway Heritage Museum. The headquarters was built on solid natural ground, considering its weight, and sits atop a higher elevation overlooking the Railway Station Complex.

At the base of the headquarters, facilities of the first Moji station complex, including the station building, platform, storage areas, and sheds for engines, coaches, and cargo, were constructed partially on natural ground and partially on reclaimed land. Remnants of these structures are anticipated to remain underground.

To the northwest stands the second Moji Station Building, built in 1914 (fig. 9). Designated as a nationally important cultural property, it was restored to its original style in 2019. The second station was newly built in 1914 at its current position approximately 190 meters northwest of the first station building to provide a more direct and efficient connection between the railway and the port.

Other physical evidence, such as two moorages and street layouts constructed in the 1890s, remains visible, although further reclamation and canal filling have altered the original landscape of Moji.

The spatial relationship of these infrastructural, architectural, and archaeological remains visually and physically depicts the masterplan of modern Moji as conceived in 1889 and its continued development into the early 20th century. The physical and visual integrity demonstrated by these existing components is of utmost importance as a testament to the urban planning history of Moji as a prototype of a modern city.



**Figure 9.** Second Moji Station (1914) stands on the northwest of the first Moji Station Complex (Photo provided by Kitakyushu City Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture).

**2-2 History of place**

See section 2-1.

**2-3 Date of project/ Date of construction/ Finishing of work**

Constructed between 1891- the 1930s

**2-4 Architect/Designers**

See section 2-1-2.

Architect/Designer is unidentified. Japanese builder Hazama Gumi was responsible for construction of the engine shed and coach shed, excavated in the area. The Japanese builder might have designed. Prussian railway engineer, Hermann Rumschottel, might have been involved in designing.

#### **2-5 Architect/Designers still living: Residence, country of birth, contact details**

N/A

#### **2-6 Original and current use of building/place**

Original use of the place was the Moji Railway Station Complex.  
The original use of the archaeological remains of the structures was a locomotive engine shed, coach shed, cargo shed, station building, platform, storages and other facilities.  
The site is currently reserved by the City of Kitakyushu to be developed as the public facility complex.

#### **2-7 Changes, additions**

- Engine Shed

Sometime between 1911 and 1914, it appears that a brick footing was added to the engine shed to facilitate the construction of a new interior wall, as indicated by the 1914 site plan. The front half of the building served as an engine shed, while the rear half was designated as a workshop.

By 1919, the superstructure of the engine shed was apparently demolished, as evidenced by the 1919 site plan. A cargo shed was subsequently built on this site.

When the engine shed fell into disuse, the foundation was buried and remained intact. Due to the high underground water levels, the logs used for timber footing are remarkably well-preserved.

In the post-war period, a large portion of the site of the first Moji Railway Station Complex remained under the ownership of the Kyushu Railway Company, with several structures erected on the premises. Most of the area was utilized as car parks until 2023.

#### **2-8 Current condition and use**

The site is presently earmarked by the City of Kitakyushu for development into a public facility complex. Designated as a Well-Known Land of Treasure Trove by the City of Kitakyushu, it mandates comprehensive archaeological investigation and documentation.

Approximately 11% of the total site has been excavated as of May 2024.

In March 2024, the Kitakyushu City Council made a resolution to demand the municipal government to conduct a through investigation of the entire site. Following this, the City plans to conduct an excavation of only a small part of the site but not the entire site. Many of the archaeological remains are expected to be destroyed without thorough investigation.

#### **2-9 Original design intent and use**

The excavated archaeological remains provide clear evidence of the original design intent and use as an engine shed, as the materials and structure have been remarkably well-preserved.

Additionally, foundations of other buildings similarly indicate their original design intent and use.

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### 3-0 *Description (history and technology)*

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#### 3-1 **Physical description**

The area designated by the local government for the public facility complex covers approximately 8,000m<sup>2</sup>, with 900m<sup>2</sup> already excavated. The following structures have been identified:

- **Engine Shed (Building No. 1):** Constructed in 1891, the engine shed measures 11.7m in width. While the exact length remains unknown, a portion of 32.2m, approximately half or one-third of its total length, has been excavated. The bricks are laid in an English bond pattern, with the width of the bricks at the bottom of the footing being three bricks. The footing is set back to the width of 2.5 bricks.
- **Storage (Building No. 2):** A foundation of a structure made of stones, concrete, and bricks has been uncovered, presumed to be a storage facility.
- **Extension of Station Building (Building No. 3):** The stone foundation of an extension to the first Moji Station Building, likely built around 1910, has been identified.
- **Coach Shed (Building No. 4):** A stone foundation believed to be that of a coach shed has been identified. The stones are finished in a square shape with the corners cut, indicating possible repurposing.
- **Stone Foundation of an Unknown Structure (Building No. 5):** Likely constructed around 1891.
- **Stone Wall of an Unknown Structure (Stone Wall No. 1):** Likely built in 1914.
- **Foundation of a Cargo Shed (Stone Wall No. 2):** The stone foundation of a cargo shed, likely constructed around 1914.
- **Exterior Walls of the First Moji Station Building (Stone Wall No. 3):** Stone walls have been identified, with stones at the corners laid in a rounded fashion.
- **Pre-modern Stone Walls Along the Coastline (Stone Wall No. 4):** A retaining wall of stone along the coastline predating reclamation, likely built during pre-modern times.
- Additionally, iron and cast-iron ducts have been identified, presumably serving as water pipes for the engine shed.

#### 3-2 **Construction system used**

See section 2-1-3.

#### 3-3 **Physical context/setting**

See section 2-1-5.

#### 3-4 **Social and cultural context and value**

The archaeological discovery of the first Moji Railway Station Complex in late 2023 has yet to fully penetrate local awareness of its heritage value. This lack of awareness is partly due to the reluctance of the Kitakyushu local government, responsible for the excavation, to publicize the site's significance, as it plans to demolish it expeditiously.

In contrast, the second Moji Station Building, designated as a national heritage building, holds significant social value. Serving as a town landmark, it evokes strong attachment among local residents, cultivated through its long history of use and its historical and aesthetic appeal.

Considering the historical significance of the first Moji Railway Station Complex as the birthplace of Moji, it is reasonable to expect that increased awareness among local residents will foster greater pride and attachment to the site over time.

**3-5 Materials/fabric/form/function**

See section 2-1-3.



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*4-0 Source of Alert*

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**4-1 Proposer(s) of Heritage Alert, contact details****ICOMOS JAPAN**

c/o ICOMOS Japan secretariat  
Japan Cultural Heritage Consultancy  
Hitotsubashi 2-5-5-13F, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0003 JAPAN  
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**4-2 Groups supporting Heritage Alert and/or nomination, with contact details**

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Japan 113-8656

#### **4-3 Groups potentially against Heritage Alert action**

The City of Kitakyushu owns the site and plans to demolish it entirely to construct buildings for public facilities. Hence, it would be against the Alert. The City claims that some local residents desperately want to have a new public facility building as soon as possible and conservation of archaeological remains should be given up.

#### **4-4 Local, Regional, International significance citations about the place**

The archaeological site of the first Moji Railway Station Complex was discovered only in the late 2023, hence, heritage significance citations about the site is still limited but local and national attentions have been increasing.

- TICCIIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage) has sent a letter to the Japanese Minister of Education, the Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, the Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture, the Superintendent of Education of Fukuoka Prefecture, the Mayor of Kitakyushu City, the Speaker of the Kitakyushu Municipal Assembly, and the Superintendent of Education of Kitakyushu City to express its support for the conservation of the archaeological remains of the Moji Railway Station Complex (Annex 1).
- As of July 2024, fourteen professional associations sent the petition for conservation of the remains to the Mayor of Kitakyushu individually. They are:
  - Japan ICOMOS
  - Architectural Institute of Japan
  - Society of Architectural Historians of Japan
  - Japanese Archaeological Association
  - Japan Industrial Archaeology Society
  - Society of Urban and Territorial History
  - Railway History Society of Japan
  - Japan Society for Industrial Heritage
  - Kyushu Industrial heritage Research Group

- Archaeological Society of Kyushu
  - Kyushu Modern and Contemporary Archaeology Society
  - Bunkazai Hozon Zenkoku Kyougikai (National association for conservation of cultural property)
  - Society of Archaeological Studies
- Eleven academic associations (Japan ICOMOS, Society of Architectural Historians of Japan, Japanese Archaeological Association, Japan Industrial Archaeology Society, Society of Urban and Territorial History, Railway History Society of Japan, Japan Society for Industrial Heritage, Kyushu Industrial heritage Research Group, Archaeological Society of Kyushu, Kyushu Modern and Contemporary Archaeology Society, Bunkazai Hozon Zenkoku Kyougikai [National Association for conservation of cultural property], Society of Archaeological Studies) submitted a petition for conservation together on May 21, 2024.
  - A symposium was organized by the academicians on February 24, 2024, to discuss heritage value of the first Moji Railway Station Complex, during which 17 academicians made presentations or gave comments.
  - There have been a numerous and continuous media coverage of the site since October 2023 until July 2024.

#### 4-5 Letters of support for Heritage Alert action, newspaper articles, etc.

- Multiple articles by local, regional and national newspapers
- Multiple local, regional and national TV coverages

#### 4-6 Publications that describe the work/place, bibliography, etc.

- Abe, K. 2023a. *Kyu-Moji-ekisha ato hakkutsu-chosa genchi setusmeikai shiryō (Handout for the Site Open Day of the First Moji Station Complex excavation)*. Kitakyushu: Kitakyushu Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture. (in Japanese)
- Abe, K. 2023b. *Kyu-Moji-ekisha ato no hakkutsu-chosa shoken (Naibu-shiryō) (Internal report of the excavation of the first Moji station complex)*. Kitakyushu: Kitakyushu Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture. (in Japanese)
- Abe, K. 2024a. *Kyu-Moji-ekisha ato no chosa-seika: Hakkutsu-chosa to bunken-chosa kara wakaru koto (The Outcomes of the Excavation of the First Moji Station Complex: As Seen from the Excavated Features and the Relevant Documents)*. Kitakyushu: The Kyushu Railway Company First Moji Station Study Group. (in Japanese) (Presentation PPT can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8xyehZcTM>)
- Abe, K. 2024b. *Kyu-Moji-ekisha ato (The Excavated Feature of the First Moji Station Complex)*. In *Dai-18-kai hakkutsu report saizensen: Reiwa 5-nendo Kitakyushu-shi iseki hakkutsu-chosa hokoku-kai (The 18<sup>th</sup> Kitakyushu City Annual Excavation Briefing Day: Sites Excavated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Year of the Era of Reiwa)*. Kitakyushu: Kitakyushu Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture. (in Japanese)
- Abe, K. 2024c. *Kyu Moji-ekisha ato no chosa-seika nit suite (The Outcomes of the Excavation of the First Moji Station Complex)*. In *Reiwa 5-nendo Shimin Kokogaku Koza Shiryō (Archaeological Lectures for the Citizens of Kitakyushu in the 5<sup>th</sup> Year of the Era of Reiwa)*. Kitakyushu: Kitakyushu Foundation for Promoting Arts and Culture. (in Japanese)
- Fujiwara, K. 2024. *Kyushu Tetsudo Shodai Moji-eki wo meguru nazo (Riddles Concerning the First Moji Station Complex)*. Kitakyushu: The Kyushu Railway Company First Moji Station Study Group. (in Japanese) (Presentation PPT can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8xyehZcTM>)

- Fukushima, A. 2024. Shodai Moji-eki kanren kenchiku-iko no bunkazai-kachi (The Heritage Value of the Excavated Features of the First Moji Station Complex). In *Shodai Moji-ko eki no shutsugen: Hakkustu-chosa de akirakani natta Kyushu testudo no genten ni semaru (Approaching to the Genesis of Railways in Kyushu revealed by the Excavation)*. Kitakyushu: Society for the Preservation of the First Moji-ko Station (in Japanese)
- Fukushima A. 2024. Preservation of the First Moji Station Complex, Japan ICOMOS web information, <https://icomosjapan-information.org/20241/20241/%E5%88%9D%E4%BB%A3%E9%96%80%E5%8F%B8%E9%A7%85%E9%81%BA%E6%A7%8B%E3%81%AE%E4%BF%9D%E5%AD%98/>
- Mizoguchi, K. 2024. *Shodai Moji-eki kanren iko-gun no imi to juyosei to mirai (The Meaning, Significance and the Future of the Excavated Features of the First Moji Station Complex)*. Kitakyushu: The Kyushu Railway Company First Moji Station Study Group. (in Japanese) (Presentation PPT can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C8xyehZcTM>)
- Tanigawa, A. 2024. Kokogaku kara mita shodai Moji-ko-eki (The First Moji Station Complex From Archaeological Perspectives). In *Shodai Moji-ko eki no shutsugen: Hakkustu-chosa de akirakani natta Kyushu testudo no genten ni semaru (Approaching to the Genesis of Railways in Kyushu revealed by the Excavation)*. Kitakyushu: Society for the Preservation of the First Moji-ko Station (in Japanese)

## Annex 1

The International Committee for the  
Conservation of the Industrial Heritage**To whom it may concern, but specifically:**

The Hon Masahito Moriyama, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology  
Mr Shun'ichi Tokura, Commissioner for Cultural Affairs  
The Hon Seitaro Hattori, Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture  
Mr Masami Terasaki, Superintendent of Education, Fukuoka Prefecture  
The Hon Kazuhisa Takeuchi, Mayor of Kitakyushu City  
Mr Tsuneo Tanaka, Speaker of the Kitakyushu Municipal Assembly  
Ms Hiromi Tajima, Superintendent of Education, Kitakyushu City

12<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**The First Moji Railway Station Complex**

I write today as the President of *The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage* (TICCIH), the primary international organisation concerned with industrial heritage. Among our many activities, we support UNESCO's advisors, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and its work for the World Heritage Committee, especially in relation to World Heritage nominations of sites with industrial components, and for international industrial heritage in general. The need for this letter has arisen because TICCIH has been alerted to proposals to destroy the recently discovered remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex.

I am happy to be able to confirm that TICCIH agrees with ICOMOS Japan that this extraordinary site not only encompasses sections of the second-oldest engine shed in Japan but also serves as a tangible testament to Japan's infrastructural modernization, which is one of the most extraordinary transformations the world has witnessed. It exemplifies the assimilation of Western techniques and technology into Japan's indigenous practices, marking a pivotal era in the nation's history. Furthermore, the remains at this site must be contextualized within the strategic foundation of the Shimonoseki-Moji port-railway complex, a crucial nexus for international trade and communication. The resulting attributes of the site indicate that they have significant national and international importance.

We have been informed that the Kitakyushu Municipal Government is currently persisting in its plans to construct a multipurpose municipal office complex on the site, disregarding the importance of thorough excavation, investigation, and preservation. We believe this approach is very disappointing, especially because the remains represent the birthplace of Moji Ward and the City of Kitakyushu as one of Japan's most important industrial and trading centres.

**PRESIDENT:** Dr Miles Oglethorpe, Email: [TICCIH.President@gmail.com](mailto:TICCIH.President@gmail.com)

**SECRETARY GENERAL:** Dr Marion Steiner, Email: [secretary@ticcih.org](mailto:secretary@ticcih.org)

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We understand that there is an opportunity to integrate the archaeological remains into the core of nationally and internationally renowned Mojiko-retro complex, capturing the two components as a single site representing modernization heritage, building on the recognition afforded the industrial achievements of the Meiji era that was represented by the successful World Heritage inscription of 2015.

I therefore believe an ambitious project to preserve the remains of the first Moji station complex would generate more support and interest than the Kitakyushu Municipal Government anticipates and would create a major heritage asset for the future. TICCIH is therefore delighted to be lend its support to ICOMOS Japan in its campaign to preserve the entirety of the excavated remains of the first Moji station complex.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Miles Oglethorpe**  
**TICCIH President**  
**6 Summerside Street**  
**Edinburgh, EH6 4NU**  
**SCOTLAND, UK**  
**E: [mkoglethorpe@icloud.com](mailto:mkoglethorpe@icloud.com) [TICCIH.President@gmail.com](mailto:TICCIH.President@gmail.com) W: <http://ticcih.org/>**

## Annex 2

Japan ICOMOS statement for the conservation of the first Moji Railway Station Complex (translated from the original Japanese statement)

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February 22, 2024

Hon. Kazuhisa Takeuchi, Mayor of Kitakyushu City  
Mr. Tsuneo Tanaka, Chairman of the Kitakyushu City Assembly  
Mr. Yasuyuki Inoue, Director General, Bureau of Citizens, Culture and Sports, City of Kitakyushu  
Mr. Hiromi Tashima, Superintendent of Education, Kitakyushu Board of Education  
Mr. Masao Taninobu, Mayor of Moji Ward, Kitakyushu City

### **Request for Conservation of the Remains Related to the First Moji Station Complex**

Yasuyoshi Okada,  
President, Japan ICOMOS

In light of the national and international significance of the remains associated with the First Moji Station complex, the Japan ICOMOS National Committee (hereafter referred to as "Japan ICOMOS") strongly advocates for the preservation of these remains. They were uncovered during an excavation conducted prior to the planned construction of a municipal multi-functional facility complex. It is imperative that these remains be preserved in situ and exhibited appropriately.

As a nation that avoided colonial rule, Japan stood out as one of the earliest countries in East Asia to independently develop its railroad infrastructure. This initiative played a pivotal role in disseminating modernization and what was then termed *Bunmei-kaika* (the 'flowering of civilization') throughout the country. The recently uncovered remains have been identified as integral parts of the first Moji Station complex, which commenced operations in 1891. This station was constructed simultaneously and in conjunction with Moji-ko Port, facilitating vital connections between Japan and the Chinese continent as well as East Asia via both land and sea transportation routes. In this context, the discovered remains serve as tangible evidence of Japan's and East Asia's modernization efforts.

In particular, the foundations of the engine shed that have been excavated exhibit remarkably well-preserved conditions. Through analysis of old maps, photographs, construction methods, and materials utilized, it has been ascertained that their construction was finalized around 1891-92. Additionally, excavation beneath the engine shed foundations has revealed shoreline remnants predating the reclamation activities of 1889. These remnants hold immense value not only as architectural and civil engineering vestiges from the early stages of railroad development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century but also as pivotal elements in the history of Moji as a modern city, which played a role of a key overland and maritime transportation hub in the Kyushu region. Integration of these newly discovered structures with the extant Kyushu Railway

Headquarters building (designated as a National Registered Cultural Property) and the second Moji Station (now Mojiko Station, recognized as a National Important Cultural Property), situated in close proximity to the uncovered remains, will enable a comprehensive examination of the historical evolution of the Moji Station complex. This endeavor will facilitate the unraveling of historical strata spanning the relocation and modifications of the station complex from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, thereby affording a deeper understanding of the interplay between facilities and the transformative process of modernization.

Given the surrounding areas' historical context, it is believed that the vicinity of the excavation site may harbor remnants of the first Moji Station Building and associated facilities. However, the recently unearthed remains have been identified as components of a cluster of structures serving as supplementary facilities to a significant station-related edifice. Notably, the condition of these discovered remnants is exceptionally well-preserved. Based on these findings, ICOMOS Japan asserts that the site warrants immediate consideration for designation as a nationally designated historic site.

In eastern Japan, the former Shinbashi Station has been honored with the designation of a National Historic Site. Its foundation remains and platform masonry have been meticulously preserved in situ, providing an accessible site for visitors to explore. Furthermore, in 2021, the Takanawa Chikutei maritime railway embankment received recognition as a National Historic Site, alongside the former Shinbashi Station. It is anticipated that this site will emerge as a fresh haven for relaxation within the bustling office district, while also serving as an enticing new tourist destination.

The site where the first Moji Station-related remains were unearthed coincides with the proposed location for a public multi-functional facility complex in the Mojiko area. The city of Kitakyushu has announced intentions to relocate only minimal sections of the remnants, with the remainder slated for destruction after documentation through excavation archives.

In response, ICOMOS Japan strongly advocates for the following actions:

- 1) The entirety of the site containing the remains should be diligently preserved in situ with the ultimate goal of obtaining designation as a National Historic Site.
- 2) Should immediate preservation of the entire site prove unattainable for the city, a committee of experts must be promptly established to thoroughly examine preservation strategies and methodologies.

ICOMOS Japan pledges its full cooperation and support towards the realization of these recommendations.

We would be most grateful if you could send your response to this request to the following address of the Japan ICOMOS Secretariat by March 4, 2012.

For inquiries, please contact  
General Incorporated Foundation Japan Icomos National Committee  
Secretariat  
Iwanami Shoten Hitotsubashi Bldg. 13F, 2-5-5 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0003, Japan  
Phone/Fax: 03-3261-5303 e-mail: [jpicomos@japan-icomos.org](mailto:jpicomos@japan-icomos.org)



## Attachment

### **Japan ICOMOS's Perspective on the Value and Significance of the Excavated Remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex**

The first Moji Station commenced operations in 1891 and underwent relocation to its current site in February 1914. Following this relocation, the newly constructed second station building, now known as Mojiko Station, was completed in December of the same year. Notably, Mojiko Station has been designated as a National Important Cultural Property, holding significance on par with Tokyo Station. The recent discovery of the remains of the first station building, particularly the well-preserved foundations of the engine shed, underscores the historical and cultural significance of this site.

The railway line originating from Moji Station of Kyushu Railway, which was completed in 1891, was laid out under the guidance and design of German railroad engineer Hermann Rumschüttel. Rumschüttel provided technical expertise for extending the line to Chitosegawa Station (Chikugo River), which had been connected two years earlier. This endeavor represents an international exchange of technology that leveraged the civil engineering traditions showcased in the construction of Japanese castles and harbors throughout history. Viewed from a global historical standpoint, this railway marks the first strategic deployment of such infrastructure throughout Japan in East Asia. Unlike colonial railroads constructed by suzerain states, this railway stands as an autonomous project initiated by Japan during the Meiji period, aimed at modernizing the nation and enhancing its military capabilities. The profound impact of railroad development on Japan's modernization has garnered worldwide attention and significantly influenced subsequent East Asian countries as well.

The construction method employed in laying the foundations of the locomotive depot, as identified through this excavation, warrants particular attention. Experts who have surveyed the site have already observed the presence of materials, techniques, and traces reminiscent of early modern castle construction methods, contemporary civil engineering practices, or traditional German marshland foundation construction techniques. They have highlighted the likelihood of a layered amalgamation of these techniques, indicative of the transitional phase from the preceding early modern period to the modern era. Simultaneously, this amalgamation serves as evidence of Japan's modernization efforts. Japan autonomously embraced technological guidance from Europe and the United States, endeavoring to establish and propagate technology independently. This archaeological discovery underscores Japan's proactive engagement in modernization, embodying a convergence of global influences and indigenous initiatives.

The remains of the first Moji Station represent a rare and invaluable legacy from the nascent stages of modern Japanese railroads. Furthermore, they serve as a significant reference point for the extensive network of railroad architectural and archaeological heritage across Japan, encompassing iconic landmarks such as Tokyo Station, Shinbashi Railroad Station, Takanawa Chikutei maritime railway embankment, Otaru Temiya Locomotive Depot, and the present Mojiko Station. As tangible evidence of autonomous railroad modernization within non-Western societies, these remnants merit designation as a National Historic Site. Established during the Meiji era, the first Moji Station was situated on a site overlooking the coast of a reclaimed harbor, which emerged from a landslide at the base of Mount Kazashi. The preservation of such a remarkable structure in its original form, showcasing the interplay between complex

facilities at the time of its construction, is a revelation. The following recapitulates the recognized value of the first Moji Station remains as acknowledged by Japan ICOMOS.

### **Significance and Value as an Integral Element of Japan's Railway Heritage**

Railways hold profound significance as they connect various points into a cohesive network, rather than existing in isolation. Moji Station and Moji Port ('Mojiko') stand as pivotal hubs of modernization in western Japan, with the remains of the first Moji Station serving as the genesis of this transformation. They constitute an indispensable component of Japan's railway history, and their discovery carries profound implications for Japan's modern historical narrative. In eastern Japan, the significance of former Shimbashi Station has been elucidated, highlighting the importance of understanding railway hubs across the country. Now, with the unveiling of physical evidence, the first Moji Station, emblematic of the railway hub in western Japan, emerges into focus. This revelation adds depth to our understanding of Japan's railroad heritage and its role in shaping the nation's modernization journey.

The number of surviving railroad remnants from the Meiji Period, the nascent stage of the railroad industry, is exceedingly scarce across Japan. This scarcity is particularly pronounced in western Japan, where few extant remnants remain. In this context, the remnants of the first Moji Station are exceptionally rare, and they hold indispensable value as representative assets in western Japan within the context of Japan's railroad heritage. Given these circumstances, the most fitting course of action is to preserve the entire assemblage of remnants integrally and comprehensively at the site. This approach should be predicated on the premise of designating the site as a national historic site, affirming the significance and importance of this railroad heritage site for generations to come.

### **Significance and Value as Physical Evidence of Architectural and Civil Engineering Technology in the Meiji Period**

The recent discovery of the locomotive depot attached to the first Moji Station has shed light on its distinctive foundation construction method, as detailed in the site briefing. Two distinct construction methods were identified: one involves installing the foundation directly on the ground, while the other entails embedding it in weak-bearing-capacity soil. In the former method, the foundation is constructed directly atop the ground by blending lime, bittern, and aggregate without the use of formwork. Alternatively, bricks may be piled atop a concrete base using railroad civil engineering techniques, or a double layer of formwork may be employed over fragile reclaimed soil following the laying of timbers. The latter method involves laying a timber frame on the fragile reclaimed land and subsequently installing a double layer of formwork to create the foundation, or constructing a concrete and brick foundation. Moreover, it is evident that the construction techniques for both methods undergo clear transitions at the boundary between the ground and the reclaimed land. This suggests the possibility of shared knowledge and experiences between Japanese and foreign engineers during the modernization process, particularly in the planning, design, and construction of these structures. It is conceivable that the adjacent former Kyushu Railway Headquarters may have been influenced by German engineer Hermann Rumschüttel, who provided guidance on the building's planning. Further insights into the detailed construction methods, their origins, the involvement of Japanese engineers, the identities of the builders, the sources of various materials, and the origins of certain bricks are anticipated to be clarified in the future. The remains serve as primary historical artifacts for this purpose and represent the most crucial source of information. Should the remnants be relocated and dismantled, the opportunity to glean new

insights would be irretrievably lost. Therefore, it is imperative to preserve them in their entirety on-site.

### **Urban Historical Significance and Value of Moji as the Birthplace of the Modern City**

Moji adopted a bold approach to start off as a modern city of Kyushu's key importance, by closely integrating the greatest infrastructure of the modern era, the railroad and port, at the same time. This is evidenced by the different land conditions of the mountains and reclaimed land mentioned above, and the building foundations designed and constructed to accommodate these conditions. Therefore, it can be said that the locomotive depot remains are not only railroad architectural remains but also urban remains, and this site is the birthplace of the modern city of Moji. This site is the birthplace of the modern city of Moji, and this remains is an irreplaceable historical site that tells the story of Moji's urban history. Urban remains cannot be moved to an unrelated location as a relocation, for to do so would obliterate the origin of the city. Therefore, it is essential to preserve the entire structure on site, rather than relocate it, to ensure its significance and value in urban history.

### **As a Heritage to be Passed Down to Future Generations**

It is gradually becoming clear that the remains of the first Moji Station, along with the current Mojiko Station, the former headquarters of Kyushu Railway Company, and the architectural complexes that symbolize the modern era in the Mojiko Retro district, are multilayered historical heritage that can be traced back a thousand years through traces of ancient and medieval times that have been excavated from the coastal area. We can think of this as an opportunity for civil society to develop a strong interest in such heritage and ruins.

In particular, the remains of the first Moji Station are a powerful testimony to the accelerated growth and development of Moji from a small village 130 years ago to Moji in the pioneering period of the modern era, and a benchmark of modernization mediated by the railroad. There is no doubt that the remains of the first Moji Station, a treasure house that encapsulates the footsteps of a history that has continued since ancient times and achieved rapid modernization, is a treasure of Kitakyushu and of Japan, and will be appreciated in world history as well.

**Annex 3**

Japanese Archaeological Association's statement for the conservation of the first Moji Railway Station Complex (translated from the original Japanese statement)

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21 February 2024

Mr Shun'ichi Tokura  
Commissioner for Cultural Affairs

Mr Honen Yoshida  
Superintendent of Education, Fukuoka Prefectural Board of Education

Hon. Kazuhisa Takeuchi  
Mayor of Kitakyushu City

Yasuhiro Yamada  
Chair  
Committee for the Protection of Buried Cultural Properties  
Japanese Archaeological Association

**Request for the conservation of the remains of the former Moji Station-related facilities**

The site where excavations were carried out for the Mojiko District Public Facility Complex Improvement Project is a valuable place where the remains of the early Moji Station building and locomotive depot built during the Meiji and Taisho periods and the changes in land use in the surrounding area can be traced. The site is also close to the Mojiko Station (former Moji Station) building, a designated important cultural property built on the north side of the aforementioned early Moji Station complex in 1914, and the two are considered to be part of a whole historical complex when considering the history of the Mojiko area and the history of modern transportation in Japan.

I would like to pay tribute to the fact that in such an important area, the modern remains were treated as a known buried cultural property deposit, and that the remains were detected and part of the engine depot was excavated through a step-by-step process of the trial excavation and the full excavation stages. Kitakyushu is an important city in the history of modern Japan and its narrative, and the fact that the remains discovered this time were found to be part of the first Moji Station, which was the departure and arrival point of the

entire railway system in Kyushu, is truly the result of your steady excavation research. It is no exaggeration to say that the series of remains discovered this time are part of the archaeological sites that demonstrate the aspirational ideal of Kitakyushu as a city that is open to Asia.

However, at his regular press conference on Thursday 25 January 2024, the Mayor announced a policy of salvage-excavating the site for recording purposes and partially relocating the remains. We have very strong concerns with this decision.

The parts designated for "relocation and conservation" are only small parts of the entire building remains complex spread over the entire research area, and does not fully embody the importance and significance of the site and bequeath it to future generations, and it must be said that it deviates greatly from the concept of "relocation and conservation". The policy of destroying most of the remains without considering the possibility of preserving the remains within the planned civic facility by changing the design is extremely problematic from the perspective of Kitakyushu City's administration for the protection of cultural heritage.

Furthermore, there is a possibility that important remains such as pre-medieval port facilities may survive in the lower layers of the remains of the former Moji Station-related facilities, and it is necessary to conduct sufficient excavation investigation in the lower levels of the current survey area and around the current survey area, which may be affected by the construction work. From the above-mentioned perspective, it is desirable to preserve the the remains of the former Moji Station-related facilities on site and to conduct long-term surveys and research.

In view of the above, the Committee for the Protection of Buried Cultural Property of the Japanese Archaeological Association requests the following:

1. Give priority to on-site conservation of the building remains of the former Moji Station-related facilities, and consider changes to the design of the public facilities complex planned to be built on the site.
2. The lower levels of the current study area, as well as surrounding unsurveyed areas that may be affected, should be fully surveyed and examined.
3. The City of Kitakyushu should continue to actively include modern remains in its conservation and public utilization of buried cultural properties, clarify local history and utilise them for the improvement of amenity in urban development.

Annex 4

Letter from the President of ICOMOS

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ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES  
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref.: TP/GJ/74

Paris, 25 June 2024

For the attention of:  
The Hon Masahito Moriyama,  
Minister of Education, Culture, Sports,  
Science and Technology

Mr Shun'ichi Tokura,  
Commissioner for Cultural Affairs

The Hon Seitaro Hattori,  
Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture

Mr Masami Terasaki,  
Superintendent of Education,  
Fukuoka Prefecture

The Hon Kazuhisa Takeuchi,  
Mayor of Kitakyushu City

Mr Tsuneko Tanaka,  
Speaker of the  
Kitakyushu Municipal Assembly

Ms Yumi Tashima,  
Superintendent of Education,  
Kitakyushu City

**Subject: Expressing grave concern regarding the conservation of Archaeological Remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex, Kitakyushu City, Japan**

Dear Madam, Sir, Your Excellency,

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is the leading global organization representing professionals dedicated to cultural heritage conservation. With almost 11 000 members across 130 countries, ICOMOS fervently advocates for the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, serving as an advisory body to the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

In solidarity with the concerns voiced by ICOMOS Japan and in response to the urgent need for action, I express my grave concern as President of ICOMOS, about the imminent and irreversible threats facing the archaeological remains of the First Moji Railway Station Complex. Should the concerns of ICOMOS Japan and the Japanese cultural heritage community not be sufficiently taken into consideration - ICOMOS will have to take the step in the near future to issue an internationally publicized Heritage Alert.

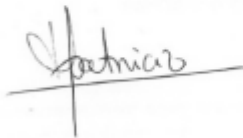
The city of Moji rose to prominence as one of Asia's pivotal cities in the late 19th century, following extensive development, including the establishment of a modern port and terminus railway station to facilitate the export of coal and other commodities. Recently uncovered remnants of the original Moji Railway Station Complex, constructed in 1891, have been assessed by numerous scholars as bearing witness to the city's origins. Notably, the remarkably well-preserved foundations of the engine shed serve as compelling physical evidence of the integration of modern Western architectural and engineering techniques with traditional Japanese pre-modern methods.

ICOMOS contends that the destruction of such nationally and internationally significant remnants, even following salvage excavation and documentation, runs counter to Japan's cultural heritage protection policies. Such actions set a regrettable precedent and jeopardize both national and international heritage preservation endeavours.

ICOMOS urgently calls upon the Kitakyushu City Government and Kitakyushu City Council to immediately suspend the decision to destruct the remains of the First Moji Station complex, reassess the development plan and prioritize the comprehensive conservation of the remaining sections of the First Moji Station Complex. In addition, we urge the relevant Japanese ministries to spare no effort in ensuring the conservation of this exceptionally important national and international heritage.

ICOMOS stands ready to offer its full expertise and support to the Kitakyushu municipal authorities and relevant ministries in their efforts to conserve this irreplaceable cultural heritage.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Patricio', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Teresa Patricio  
President of ICOMOS