
Historic centre of Naples (Italy)

No 726

1. Basic data

State Party

Italy

Name of property

Historic centre of Naples

Location

Campania, City of Naples

Inscription

1995

Brief description

Much of the significance of the Historic Centre of Naples stems from its urban fabric, which represents twenty-five centuries of growth, from the Greek town until Italian unification in 1860. One of the most ancient cities in Europe, Naples retains in its street pattern the many facets of its long history. The original centre contains Greek and Roman remains, testimony to the religious and military edifices of the Norman period, and heritage from the Renaissance and classical periods, while the steady growth of the suburbs has led to the addition of other secular and religious buildings. The current plan of the city perfectly illustrates the relationships between the different zones, and the existence of quarters specifically occupied by people of a given nationality, social level or activity. The port and the city, nestling along the Bay of Naples, have a value which is reinforced by their influence on many parts of Europe and beyond.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2011

2. Issues raised

Background

The Historic Centre of Naples was inscribed in 1995 as a group of buildings, and a serial property consisting of five elements, with no buffer zone. A buffer zone was created at national level after the inscription, but has never been officially submitted to the World Heritage Committee.

In 2005 and 2006, reports on the state of conservation of the property were sent to the World Heritage Centre. A map was submitted, but it was considered to be insufficiently detailed.

In September 2007, in the framework of the retrospective inventory, the State Party was requested to provide a detailed map, and information to enable the delineation of

clear boundaries for the property, an indication of the area of each part in hectares, and an official presentation of the buffer zone.

No reply was received either to the original request, or to the reiterations of the request made in March and October 2008.

In December 2008, an UNESCO/ICOMOS advisory mission was invited by the State Party. The mission issued a report which was examined at the 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee (Seville, 2009).

The advisory mission of December 2008 set out recommendations in thirteen points. In particular, in point 5, the mission urged "*the delivery of formal clarifications to the World Heritage Committee, concerning the delimitation of the property, a correct map, an indication of the surface area of each component of the inscribed property in hectares and an official presentation of the recently approved buffer zone as a minor boundary modification.*"

In its decision 33 COM 7B.110 (Seville, 2009), the World Heritage Committee, after examining the report, requested the State Party "*to consider the conclusions of the advisory mission and to take into account the detailed recommendations.*"

Modification

In response to decision 33COM 7B.110, in February 2011, the State Party submitted to the World Heritage Centre a report including a request for a minor modification to the property boundaries, and a buffer zone proposal.

The request complies with the directives set out for this type of contact, and contains the answers required.

The minor modification requested results in a 20% increase in area, with an increase from 810 hectares to 1021 hectares.

The modification consists of two groupings, either of elements which were previously separate, or of new elements which were not included in the original boundaries of the property. The first grouping concerns the main element "*Historic centre of Naples*" (numbered 726-001). The "*Villa Emma*" element (formerly numbered 721-006) is integrated into it. To it have been added five other zones (marked a, b, c, e, f) containing outstanding built structures which were not taken into consideration when the property was inscribed in 1995.

The second grouping concerns the elements formerly numbered 726-004 and 726-005, and which now form a single element numbered 726-004.

As a result, the new composition proposed is organised around four elements, and reflects the clear objective of making the property's boundaries more coherent, ensuring better boundary continuity, and strengthening boundary protection. The example of the historic villages of the Casale and Santo Strato districts, which have strong

environmental, social and archaeological characteristics, is particularly significant from this viewpoint.

The modification request stresses the grounds for the insertion of new elements, emphasising their cultural integration with the property as a whole, and their specific value as a key element of the life of the city, in between the hill and the coastline. They are an integral part both of the urban network and the functional complexity of the space.

Each of the additions is described both in historic and heritage terms, with photographs, plans, detail maps, positioning and area (in hectares).

The minor modification request is linked to the sending in February 2011 of the overall property management plan submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval.

The buffer zone concerns an area of 1350 hectares in contact with the boundaries of the property (termed zone A) and includes, from west to east, eight adjacent urban sectors. It surrounds and unites the inscribed property. It includes green zones such as the regional metropolitan park of the Hills of Naples, areas of archaeological interest, and green spaces.

It guarantees the territorial continuity of protection of the property, and regulates recent construction zones (marked Bb). It takes into account geomorphological aspects and distant perspectives, such as the skyline concept, which is important for such a celebrated bay, with the outline of Mount Vesuvius in the background.

3. ICOMOS recommendations

ICOMOS considers that the additions proposed for the Historic Centre of Naples give rise to rational boundaries, and are in line with the recommendations made by the advisory mission of December 2008.

ICOMOS welcomes the fact that clear answers have been provided by the State Party to the Committee's repeated requests, particularly with regard to detailed plans, areas and general plans.

ICOMOS wishes to stress the attention paid by the State Party to taking into account the coastline, inside and outside the port, the underwater archaeological remains, and the landscape and urban dimensions which are inseparable from the property.

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of the Historic Centre of Naples, Italy, be **approved**.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Historic Centre of Naples, Italy, be **approved**.

ICOMOS wishes to draw the attention of the State Party to the recurrent danger, despite its considerable efforts, of giving priority to prestigious built structures and areas to the detriment of modest and fragile urban fabric, the intangible heritage, and traditional economic activities and recommends that the State Party should allocate part of the funding collected to restoring the balance.



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property and the proposed buffer zone