

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Kizhi Pogost

Brief description

The *pogost* of Kizhi (i.e. the Kizhi enclosure) is located on one of the many islands in Lake Onega, in Karelia. Two 18th-century wooden churches, and an octagonal clock tower, also in wood and built in 1862, can be seen there. These unusual constructions, in which carpenters created a bold visionary architecture, perpetuate an ancient model of parish space and are in harmony with the surrounding landscape.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription

1990

Agency responsible for site management

- Kizhi State Open-Air Museum of History, Architecture and Ethnography
23, Neglinskaya Nab., 185610 Petropavlovsk, Republic of Karelia, Russian Federation
E-mail: olga@kizhikarelia.ru
Website: <http://kizhi.karelia.ru>

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria

C (i), (iv), (v)

Justification provided by the State Party

The outstanding universal value of Kizhi Pogost is defined by the following:

1. The architectural ensemble is a unique artistic achievement, one of the most prominent masterpieces of world architecture. It's distinguished by harmony of architectural forms, integrity, proportionality of its volumes, subordination of all its parts to one common architectural idea. The monuments are closely connected with surrounding landscape being a perfect sample of harmony between nature and architecture.

2. The ensemble is one of five survived pogost ensembles, typical of the Russian North in the Middle Ages and the 17-19 centuries. Traditionally these ensembles consist of three structures characterized by integrity of their architectural aspect. The peculiarity of the Kizhi Pogost is that both churches of the ensemble are similar to the

constructive type of multicupolated churches rare in Russian wooden architecture. The combination of two multi-cupolated churches in the same pogost makes it unique.

3. The Kizhi Pogost includes the 22-cupolated church of the Transfiguration, unique in its structural composition and decorative values. It has no analogues in the world.

4. The monuments of the ensemble are the samples of highly developed building culture, characteristic of Russian wooden architecture. The most traditional methods of building, constructive and decorative elements, having been applied in Russian architecture during many centuries, are incarnated in the structures of the ensemble. Nowadays only few monuments of such kind not subjected to fundamental reconstruction are preserved. That makes the Kizhi structures to be an unique object of research and of great scientific value.

5. The structures of the Kizhi Pogost have never been subjected to fundamental reconstructions, their material and constructions are authentic.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of the Kizhi Pogost ensemble on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criteria I, IV and V.

- Criterion I. Considered by Karelians as "the true eighth wonder of the world", Kizhi Pogost is indeed a unique artistic achievement. Not only does it combine two multi-cupola churches and a bell tower within the same enclosure, but these unusually designed, perfectly proportioned wooden structures are in perfect harmony with the surrounding landscape.

- Criterion IV. Among the five surviving pogosts in the extreme northwestern Soviet territory, Kizhi Pogost offers an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble typical of medieval and post-medieval orthodox settlements in sparsely populated regions where evangelists had to cope with far-flung Christian communities and a harsh climate. Accessible by land or sea, the pogost grouped together religious buildings which could also be used for other occasional purposes; for example the narthex or nave served also as refectory and meeting hall. Another similar structure inspired by the same principles is the Scandinavian stavkirke.

- Criterion V. The pogost and the buildings that had been grouped together to form the site museum on the southern part of Kizhi are exceptional examples

of the traditional wooden architecture of Karelia and more generally of that of northern Russia and the Finnish-Scandinavian region.

Russian carpenters, whose fame goes back to the Middle Ages to Novgorod, had carried the art of joinery to its apogee. Irreversible changes have caused this traditional skill to disappear. Hence, it is absolutely essential that ensembles like that of Kizhi Pogost be preserved for their illustrative value in the history of ancient techniques and for what they teach us of former ways of life.

Committee Decision

Bureau (1990): The Bureau recommended that this property be included in the List and that the responsible authorities maintain the present balance between the natural and built environment. Adding homes or wooden churches to the southern end of the island of Kizhi would alter the historical and visual characteristics of the site.

Session (1990): The Committee recommended that the authorities concerned maintain the present balance between the natural and built environment, since the introduction of new homes or wooden churches south of Kizhi Island alters the historical and visual characteristics of the site. The Committee congratulated the authorities concerned on the recent adoption of a conservation policy that is more in harmony with local traditions and expertise.

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- No change required by State Party

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: adequate
- No change to buffer zone has been proposed by State Party

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have not been maintained; there have not been any significant changes to the authenticity/integrity of the site since inscription

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Law: no details provided
- Other: Presidential Decree on the inclusion of the Kizhi Museum into the State Code of Landmark Valuable Objects of Culture and

Heritage of the Peoples of the Russian Federation (1993); Specific protection/use regime for the buffer zone and relevant Decree of the Supreme Soviet of Karelia (1993)

- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

Actions taken/proposed:

- International workshop on the preservation and conservation of wooden structures of the Kizhi Transfiguration Church
- Timeframe: 2002
- State Party with the support of international organisations to increase funding for the conservation of the Kizhi Pogost

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, national park, religious use, museum

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group has been legally set up
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: not provided
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: January 1999
- Current management Plan (revised in 2003) is considered to be adequate
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Kizhi Museum

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- State Budget: Earmarking of budgetary revenues
- Own revenues
- WHF: International Workshop on the preservation and conservation of wooden structures on the example of the restoration project of the Church of the Transfiguration of the Kizhi Pogost
- State Party considers funding is sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: not provided

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Good: conservation, management, promotion, interpretation, education, visitor management

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Following Departments of the Kizhi Museum: Dept of Records and Protection of Immovable monuments, Dept of Design and restoration Works on Monuments and Landscapes, Dept of Records and Protection of Objects of Cultural and Natural Heritage; Dept of the Restoration of Kizhi Architectural Ensemble; Museum Complex "Restoration of the Church of Transfiguration"; The Carpenter Centre
- Training courses, workshops and seminars organised by the UNESCO Chair in Urban and Architectural Conservation

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 176,531 visitors in 2004
- Visitor facilities: souvenir shops and kiosks, cafeteria, exhibitions, guides, excursions

10. Scientific Studies

- Study of wooden structures, study of deformations

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem has not been used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities
- Web site available: <http://kizhi.karela.ru>
- Local participation: not provided

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- World Heritage Bureau sessions: 18th (1994); 25th (2001)

- World Heritage Committee sessions: 25th (2001); 27th (2003); 28th (2004); 29th (2005); 30th (2006)

Conservation interventions

- Conservation/restoration works: Project of the Restoration of the Church of Transfiguration
- Present state of conservation: State Party appraised the state of conservation as adequate, while Committee stressed serious conservation issues at its previous sessions

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure, environmental pressure, natural disaster, tourism pressure
- Specific issues if mentioned: structural problems of the Church of the Transfiguration; biological damage of wood; lack of funding; lack of overall capacities and policies for the conservation and management; problem of procurement of high-quality wood for restoration works

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme exists
- Measures taken/planned: not provided
- Key indicators: condition of the wood, development of the structural destabilisation process

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic, management
- Strengths of management: awareness and interest among stakeholders about conservation issues increased
- Weaknesses of management: lack of funding and capacities to address existing conservation issues; need of clarification of boundaries, management strategies and buffer zones; need of the improvement of the legal base for the protection and funding of the property; very complicated and tangled structure of existing legislation in the fields of financing, restoration and conservation of cultural monuments