Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage properties

Presentation by ICOMOS

HIA Meeting
General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention 2015
The Committee inscribes properties on the World Heritage List that are considered to have Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)

The Committee also considers the State of Conservation of inscribed properties
  - in particular for properties where there are threats to OUV
Over the past few years:

• The number of WH properties has increased:
  – there are now 1031 properties on the World Heritage List
  – 802 Cultural, 197 Natural, 32 Mixed

• The number of State of Conservation Reports that the Committee considers has also increased

• The range of potential threats has widened

• Number of major development threats has multiplied
State of Conservation

Seville
State of Conservation

Istanbul

Liverpool

ICOMOS
UNESCO World Heritage Committee

• If the Committee is to be consistent in its approach to these potential threats
  – to 1031 World Heritage sites across 163 States Parties

• It needs the sharpest possible tools to allow it to

• Define the potential impacts of threats on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)
• Two key tools for the World Heritage Committee
  • And for national and local authorities
    – Have now been put in place
    – Statements of OUV for all properties
    – Agreed approach to Heritage Impact Assessments
SoOUV

• The Statement of OUV overarches the whole subsequent management and conservation of the property

• For the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Bodies, the SoOUV has become essential reference point for:
  – Monitoring
  – Periodic Reporting
  – Potential reactive monitoring (SOC)
  – Possible Danger listing
  – Deletion
SoOUVs

• Now we have SoOUVs which set out
  – What World Heritage property is
  – Why it has OUV
  – What attributes convey OUV

• SoOUVs can be used as basis for:
  – Protection
  – Management
  – Impact assessments
ICOMOS Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance

- In response to the need for more systematic assessments of the impact of threats on OUV

- ICOMOS developed HIA Guidance to
  - Provide methodology for assessing the potential impact of change or development

- **On the attributes of OUV**
  - As part of broader Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process
ICOMOS

Guidance on
Heritage Impact Assessments
for Cultural World Heritage Properties

A publication of the International Council on Monuments and Sites
January 2011
ICOMOS Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance

- Guidance developed following international workshop in Paris, September 2009
  - Finalised January 2011
    - Applicable to cultural World Heritage properties worldwide

- Provides guidance on Impact Assessment processes
- To evaluate impacts of change/development on OUV of cultural World Heritage properties
  - As part of statutory EIA process
World Heritage properties are *single entities* that convey OUV
- OUV is fixed at the time of inscription and is non-negotiable

Statements of OUV set out the *attributes* that convey OUV and the links between them

Heritage Impact Assessment process needs to consider impact of development
- on *attributes of OUV* both individually and collectively
Heritage Impact Assessments and OUV

- HIA differs from a typical EIA approach
  - EIAs tend to consider impacts on individual heritage assets
  - HIA focuses on impacts on OUV, attributes of OUV

- HIA approach should form part of the EIA where required for development affecting a WH property
  - Not additional to normal EIA requirements
  - Different methodology focuses on OUV and attributes that convey OUV
Heritage Impact Assessments– Objectives

HIAs should evaluate impact on attributes that convey OUV:

- Which of the attribute at risk
- How do they contribute to OUV?
- How will change/development impact on OUV?
- How can these impacts be avoided, reduced, rehabilitated or compensated (mitigation)?
- What is the overall threat to OUV and thus to World Heritage status?
Summary

• Not everything within a World Heritage property contributes to OUV

• We need to be clear what does, how it contributes

• Assessments of how any change might impact on the attributes of OUV needs to be rigorous
  – but rational and proportionate to the potential threats
  – and use a clear methodology
Integrity and Authenticity

- Changes due to development must also be assessed for their impact on the *integrity* and *authenticity* of the property

- **Authenticity** – the way attributes convey evidence of OUV
- **Integrity** – whether all attributes of OUV are extant within property and not eroded or under threat
Mitigation

- Conservation is about managing sustainable change

- Every effort must be made to avoid, eliminate or minimise adverse impacts on attributes that convey OUV

- HIA should include principles and methods to mitigate or offset the effects of development or other change
ICOMOS Guidance on **Heritage Impact Assessments** has now been in use for 4 years

Positive take up by many States Parties
But its use is still not part of normal requirements in all countries

ICOMOS now working with UNESCO WH Centre to
  - Undertake a quantitative and qualitative assessments the current use of HIAs
    - As acknowledged by the WH Committee
Updating HIA Guidance

• This HIA analysis is now underway and will be completed by the end of December 2015

• The outcomes will:
  – Inform the way the current HIA Guidance is updated to make it more useful to States Parties
  – Allow understanding of the most effective use of HIAs and how they could become mainstreamed
  – Suggest ways to integrate HIAs into EIAs within differing regional approaches
Thank you