
Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey) No 356 Bis

1 Basic data

State Party

Turkey

Name of property

Historic Areas of Istanbul

Location

City and Province of Istanbul
Turkey

Inscription

1985

Brief description

With its strategic location on the Bosphorus peninsula between the Balkans and Anatolia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, Istanbul has been associated with major political, religious and artistic events for more than 2,000 years. Its masterpieces include the ancient Hippodrome of Constantine, the 6th-century Hagia Sophia and the 16th-century Süleymaniye Mosque, all now under threat from population pressure, industrial pollution and uncontrolled urbanization.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2017

2 Issues raised

Background

At the time of inscription of the property, in 1985, the boundaries of the four component sites: *Sultanahmet Archaeological Parc*, *Süleymaniye Mosque and its associated Conservation Area*, *Zeyrek Mosque (Pantocrator Church) and its associated Conservation Area* and *Land Walls of Istanbul* were not clearly defined.

Clarifications of the boundaries were approved at the 34th session of the World Heritage Committee (Brasilia, 2010), in decision 34 COM 8D.

An updated Management Plan, containing new maps, was submitted in 2011 and examined by the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee, Saint Petersburg, 2012 (Decision 36 COM.7B.892). The World Heritage Committee:

[...]

6. *Requests the State Party to invite an urgent joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to*

assess progress in mitigating the visual impacts of the proposed Golden Horn Bridge, to consider proposed renewal and conservation projects, as well as progress with the overall strategic management of the property, and to assess the overall state of conservation of the property;

7. *Acknowledges the detailed information provided by the State Party on the revision of the Management Plan and on proposed renewal and conservation projects and other conservation initiatives;*

8. *Further acknowledges the efforts made by the State Party to address the need for conservation plans, an effective management system, development strategies for traffic and tourism, and a buffer zone;*

9. *Also considers that the revised Management Plan is a significant improvement, commends the State Party for its scope in relation to the overall Historic Peninsula, and also requests it to address, at the first annual review of the Management Plan, the recommendations that ICOMOS has provided;*

These clarifications were not considered satisfactory by the 2012 joint UNESCO/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission as it considered the plans to be lacking in detail. The mission report urged *'the authorities to submit to the World Heritage Committee for approval without delay plans clearly defining the World Heritage property'*.

At its 37th session (Decision 37 COM 7B.85, Phnom Penh, 2013), the World Heritage Committee:

[...]

3. *Take notes of the results of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission and requests the State Party to implement its recommendations and to duly proceed with the annual review of the Management Plan;*

These proposals of boundary modifications is intended to eliminate differences of boundaries between World Heritage Committee decision 34.COM.8D, and indicated in the Management Plan approved in 2011, and boundaries contained in the nomination dossier submitted in 1985.

Modification

The current proposals of boundary modifications include clear, cadastral plans, based on a detailed study of archival records, including the nomination dossier. They are accompanied by comprehensive description and a full justification.

The proposals offer the opportunity both to correct the inadequate plans and anomalies endorsed by decision 34 COM.8D (Brasilia, 2010), and to make minor adjustments reflecting current understanding and management objectives. The following sets out the adjustments for three of the four component sites.

The modification request submitted by the State Party as a minor boundary modification according to the procedure outlined in the Operational Guidelines proposes to expand the area by 96,2 hectares. The new proposed area would total 765,5 hectares.

Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area of World Heritage Site (proposed area: 54 ha; 920 listed buildings)

The boundaries have been slightly extended to include the:

- Marmara Sea Walls;
- Historic grounds of the Topkapi Palace;
- Remains of the Boukoleon Palace.

Süleymaniye Mosque and its Associated Component Area of World Heritage site (proposed area: 140 ha; 992 listed buildings)

The boundaries include the addition of:

- The Süleymaniye Hamam which is an integral part of the Süleymaniye social complex;
- City blocks 468, 489, 548, and 550 which are all part of the tight-knit grain of this part of the historic city;
- Blocks 2394 and 960 flanking the Valens Aqueduct;
- Blocks 960, 962, 967 and 2384 that close a gap.

Istanbul Land Walls Component Area of World Heritage site (proposed area: 562 ha; 701 listed buildings)

The boundaries have been extended to include:

- The Marble Tower;
- Fragmentary surviving sea walls extending north-eastwards from the Marble Tower;
- One street block inside the walls to the east;
- Small areas of substantially open space, including cemeteries, outside the walls to the west but not already included in the boundaries.

ICOMOS welcomes the proposals put forward on the basis of a thorough and detailed assessments of the three component sites, their immediate settings and the archival records.

The proposed boundary delineations are set out at high resolution allowing an understanding of them in relation to individual buildings and streets. Such details will be valuable as a management tool.

On the issue of names for each of the component sites, while ICOMOS acknowledges the need to clarify that the serial property consists of four areas in order to avoid the misunderstanding that there are four World Heritage properties on the Historic Peninsula, it nevertheless considers that the names could be simplified as follows:

Süleymaniye Mosque Historic Area of Istanbul
Zekrek Mosque (Pantocrator Church) Historic Area of Istanbul
Sultanahmet Historic Area of Istanbul
Land Walls Historic Area of Istanbul

and, that where necessary, these could be followed by:
Component site of the Historic Areas of Istanbul World Heritage property.

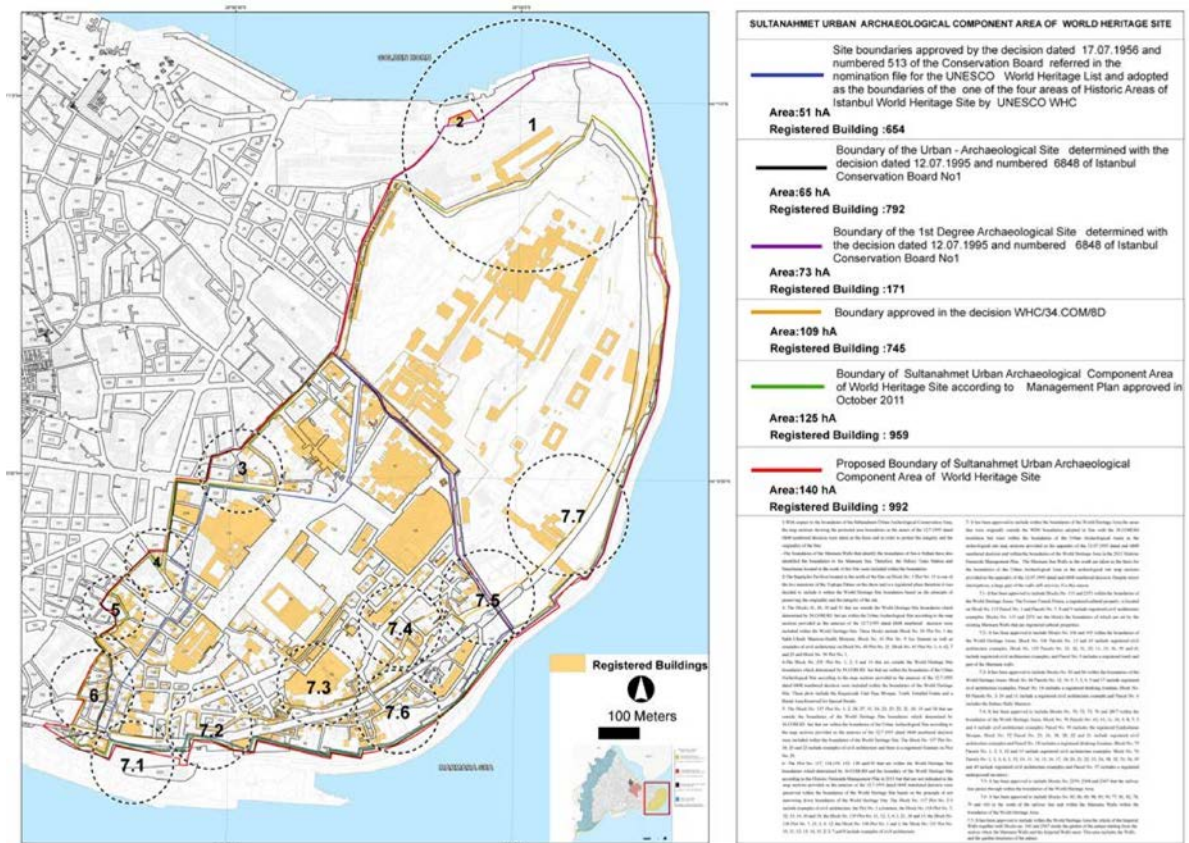
3 ICOMOS Recommendations

Recommendation with respect to inscription

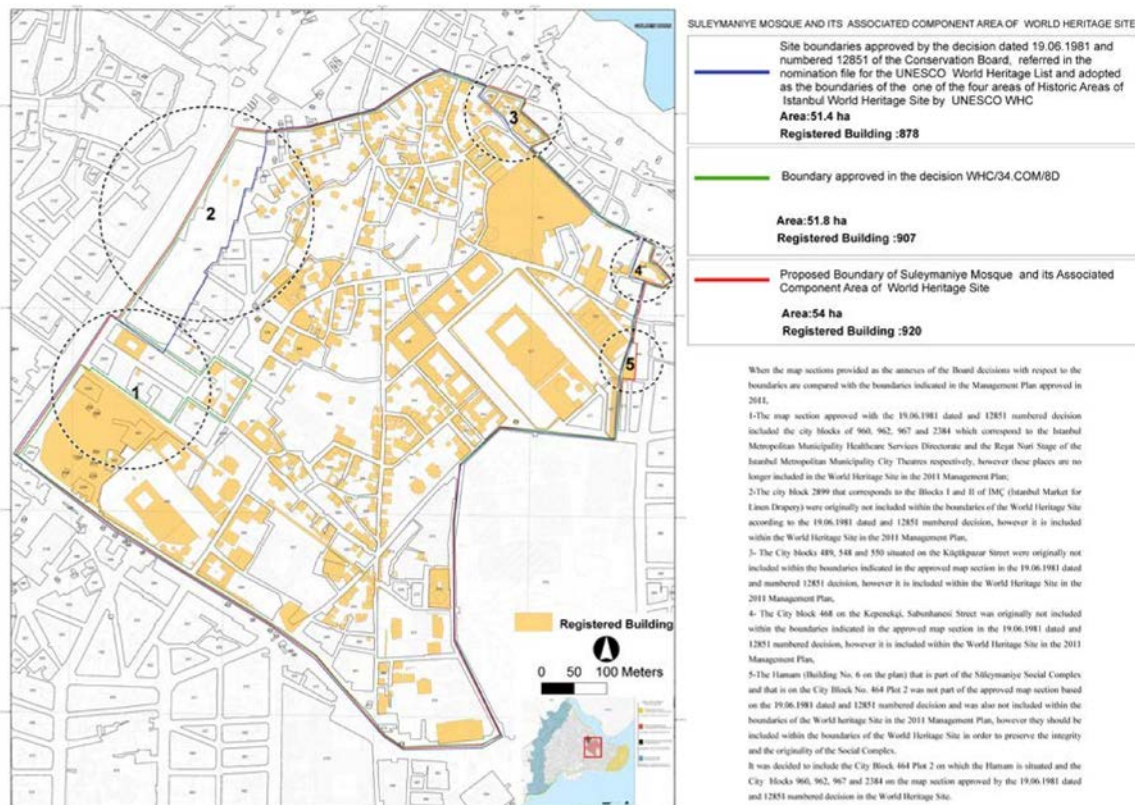
ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of the Historic Areas of Istanbul, Turkey, **be approved**.

Additional recommendations

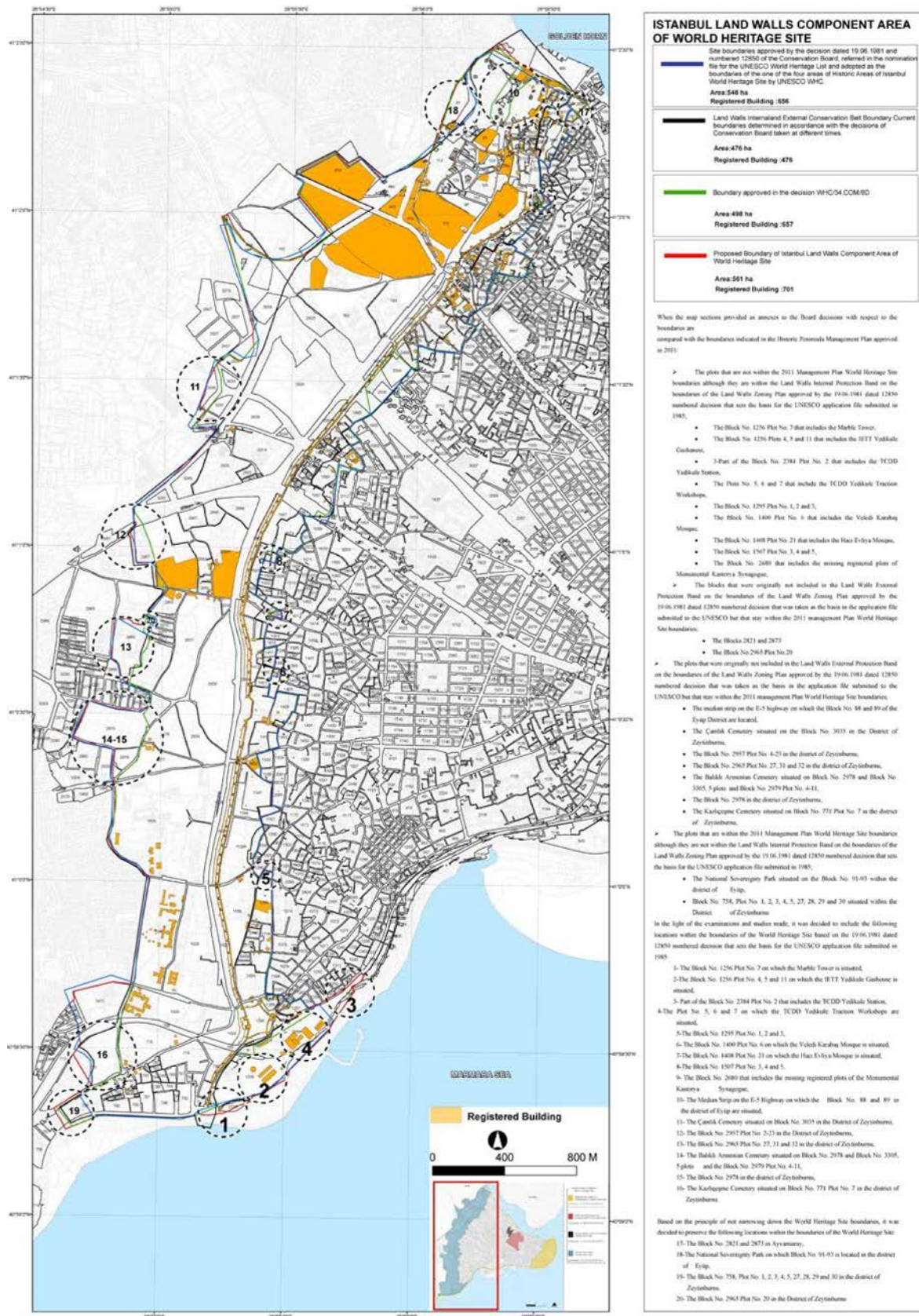
ICOMOS recommends that the State Party consider the change of the names of the four component parts of the property.



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property - Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property - Süleymaniye Mosque and its Associated Component Area



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property - Istanbul Land Walls Component Area