

FINLAND

Old Rauma

Brief description

Situated on the Gulf of Botnia, Rauma is one of the oldest harbours in Finland. Built around a Franciscan monastery, where the mid-15th-century Holy Cross Church still stands, it is an outstanding example of an old Nordic city constructed in wood. Although ravaged by fire in the late 17th century, it has preserved its ancient vernacular architectural heritage.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1991

Agency responsible for site management

- City of Rauma
Rauma Museum, Kauppakatu 24
26100 Rauma
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website: www.oldrauma.fi

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (iv), (v)

Justification by the State Party

Old Rauma fulfils the World Heritage Committee's criteria IV and V.

Nordic wooden towns constitute a clearly definable phenomenon in terms of building materials and planning principles. Timber-house towns have played a decisive role in European urbanisation, but they have not been preserved to our days outside the Nordic countries. Old Rauma represents one of the 150 wooden towns left in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Old Rauma comprises exactly the same area as had developed inside the toll fence up to the 18th century.

Old Rauma is an architecturally unified entity, and its authenticity is due to the well-preserved historical building stock, the street network that can be traced back to the Middle Ages, and a lively community with various services, residential buildings and shops.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criteria V and IV.

- **Criterion V.** Rauma is an outstanding example of an old Nordic city constructed in wood, a veritable conservatory of traditional settlements in this part of Europe.
- **Criterion IV.** Consequently, this city is typical of the architecture and urbanism of old North-European cities and is one of the most beautiful and extensive of all those preserved thus far.

Committee Decision

The Committee made no statement.

- Statement of significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site;
- State Party has not stated if the ICOMOS text is considered to be the official statement of significance

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: a buffer zone has been defined

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained
- Old Rauma was seen as a living town centre, where living, working and trade are combined. Today the forms of trade are changing and that will have some effects to the city centre, maybe not only positive

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- The protection plan for Old Rauma from 1981 and Master plan from 2002
- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Urban centre

Management/Administrative Body

- Steering group: follow up the preservation plan
- Formally constituted
- Management under protective legislation; Consensual management
- Site manager with responsibilities added to an existing job

- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national; local
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

5. Management Plan

- No management plan
- A management plan will be completed and adopted: December 2005
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: City of Rauma

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- As the city of Rauma has many private house owners it is impossible to provide information on their annual budgets for repairs
- Extra funding has been drawn from World Heritage status
- The state financing has been increasing. Private house owners have been able to acquire some contribution through the Board of Antiquities for reparations of their buildings; Assistance through EU Raphael program and Culture 2000-program
- Funding available for the adequate management of the site: insufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 0

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

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

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

- Renovation Centre for Old Rauma

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: not provided - tendency increasing
- Visitor facilities: cafés and restaurants, museums, a visitor centre, public toilets and several shops
- No tourism/visitor management plan

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk Assessment, studies related to the value of the site, condition surveys, impact of World Heritage designation, archaeological surveys, visitor management, transportation studies, trade
- The results have been a tool for future planning of restorations and other activities

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors; local communities; businesses; local authorities
- Old Rauma participates in the annual Finnish Travel Fair together with other Finnish WH Sites
- Web site available
- No local participation

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- The technical standard of the houses has been better. Not only houses used for living have been conserved but also houses used as shops or workshops
- Present state of conservation: adequate

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure; environmental pressure
- Specific issues if mentioned: an increased number of tourists may cause problems in summertime. It is bound to cause extra pressure to the landscape as well as to the facilities

Actions taken

- More facilities e.g. public toilets have been built. Special efforts have been made to encourage tourists to visit the site in the winter instead of the high season

13. Monitoring

- No monitoring programme
- Measures taken/planned: not provided

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation; social; the public awareness of the historical and architectural value of the site has increased
- Strength: conservation and maintenance of private houses have been more active. About 100 houses have been conserved; renovation Centre for Old Rauma; project for the City area of Rauma, planning for traffic, maintenance of streets, parks and squares; new preservation plan under preparation
- Weaknesses of management: as a living city centre the Old Rauma always is an area for many differing needs and ideas

Future actions

- The revision of the existing conservation and preservation plan
- Timeframe: 2006
- Activity does not require funding from World Heritage Fund