

SPAIN

Historic Centre of Cordoba

Brief description

Cordoba's period of greatest glory began in the 8th century after the Moorish conquest, when some 300 mosques and innumerable palaces and public buildings were built to rival the splendours of Constantinople, Damascus and Baghdad. In the 13th century, under Ferdinand III, the Saint, Cordoba's Great Mosque was turned into a cathedral and new defensive structures, particularly the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos and the Torre Fortaleza de la Calahorra, were erected.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1984, 1994

Agency responsible for site management

- Córdoba Municipa Corporation (Urban Management, the Historic Centre Office; Tourism and World Heritage Unit

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

Justification provided by the State Party

[1984]

(i) The Mosque is a remarkable example of man's inventiveness in the field of artistic creation.

(ii) It has exerted considerable influence on Arabs and Christians alike, ever since the eighth century.

(iii) It constitutes a unique or extremely rare example of architecture.

(iv) It represents an extremely rare example of Mosque.

(v) It may be regarded as evidence of the influence of Islamic culture on the Western world.

[1993] Il s'agit d'élargir ce qui est déjà inscrit (Mosquée-Cathédrale) à son entourage, selon la proposition de la Mémoire (pag. 15-19): « el que forman las calles que rodean al monumento y todas las parcelas catastrales que a ellas abren huecos, así como las manzanas que rodean la Mezquita-Catedral. Por el sur se pronlonga hasta el otro lado

del rio Guadalquivir (...); por el este, hasta la calle San Fernando; por el norte, hasta los limites con el centra comercial; y por el oeste, incorporando el Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos y el Barrio de San Basilio. »

L'enceinte historique de Cordoue, par son étendue et tracé, sa signification historique - en tant qu'expression vivante des diverses cultures qui s'y sont établies - sa richesse monumentale, son indiscutable lien avec le fleuve..., est, en soi, un ensemble historique d'une valeur extraordinaire, bien comparable à celles qui sont déjà inscrites dans la liste du patrimoine mondial - voir Mémoire, chap. 1 et Annexe 1). La demande adressée se formule en raison de ce que la zone proposée, c.à.d. l'entourage de la Mosquée-Cathédrale, serait une garantie pour la meilleure protection, conservation et sauvegarde du bien déjà inscrit, la Mosquée-Cathédrale, compte tenue que l'idée de monument historique correspond non seulement à la création historique isolée, sinon aussi au milieu urbain et paysagiste où il se trouve et qui constituent le témoignage d'une civilisation.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

(1984): Unique and exemplary monument, the great mosque of Cordoba should be included on the World Heritage List based on criteria (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv).

- criterion (i): its dimensions and the boldness of its interior elevation, which were never imitated, make at a unique artistic creation.

- criterion (ii): despite its uniqueness, the mosque of Cordoba has exercised a considerable influence on western Muslim art from the 8th century. It influenced as well the development of "Neo-Moresque" styles of the 19th century.

- criterion (iii): it is the highly relevant testimony to the Caliphates of Cordoba (929-1031): this city - which, it is said, enclosed 300 mosques and innumerable palaces - the rival of Constantinople and Baghdad.

-criterion (iv): it is an outstanding example of the religious architecture of Islam.

(1994): *Authenticity* Córdoba has grown organically and continuously over two millennia. As a result many of its buildings, among them the most important, bear witness to successive changes in taste, reconstruction following destruction, and changes in use. However, the townscape, which is the essence of this proposed extension, has an authenticity of its own.

Recommendation: That this proposal for extension of World Heritage monument No 313 be approved and inscribed on the basis of the existing criteria (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv).

Committee Decision

Bureau (July 1994): The Bureau recommended that the nomination of the surroundings of the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba be considered as an extension of the existing World Heritage site of the Mosque of Cordoba. The Bureau endorsed the suggestion made by the Delegate of Spain to adopt the name "The Historic Centre of Cordoba".

Session (1994): The Committee approved the extension of the existing World Heritage site of the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba to include its surroundings and endorsed the suggestion made by the Delegate of Spain to adopt the name "The Historic Centre of Cordoba".

- Statement of Significance: no information provided

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate. Proposal of enlargement made by State Party in order to include the Azahara Medina, despite its lack of geographical continuity with the property protected
- No buffer zone has been defined; buffer zone needed
- Other measures include legal protection under heritage legislation and the Special Plan for the Protection of the Historic Ensemble of Córdoba

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Special plan for the protection of the historic ensemble; Córdoba General Urban Development Plan, the 2003 special Plan for the Protection of Córdoba's Historic Centre, the Tourism Excellence Plan, the Urban Plan for the riverbank to improve routes, and the social promotion of a deteriorated urban sector, the special Corredera Plan, the special River Plan, The Second Strategic Córdoba Plan, Agenda 21, the Risk Charter and the Convention for the protection of the Archaeological Heritage with the Culture council

- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Urban centre, museum

Management /Administrative Body

- No formal steering group. Work has begun to constitute the Management trust to run the site. Creation of a Historic Centre Office with an urban remit, to direct, coordinate and promote public and private urban activities connected with the Córdoba Historic Centre (resolution of the Municipal Urban Management, 22/12/2004).
- Coordinator needed, plans to appoint a coordinator
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: regional; local
- The current management system is highly effective

5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: 05/2003
- Very effective
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: The Culture Board in the Regional Government of Andalusia. Córdoba Municipal Corporation

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- Not quantified because of the scale of the property and the diversity of agents
- Sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 2

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

- Good: conservation, management, promotion, education, visitor management
- Other professional staff: University of Córdoba

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

- No information provided

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 1,122,599 (Statistical sources and prepared by the Córdoba Tourism Observatory)
- Visitor facilities: information office, tourist information points, tourist bus parking, public parking facilities on the periphery of the Historic Centre, ticket offices, a cafeteria, shop, disabled toilets, first aid facilities
- Visitor needs: visitor reception centre planned
- Visitor management plan: www.turismodecordoba.org

10. Scientific Studies

- Archaeological surveys, studies used for management of site, visitor management
- Historic centre accessibility plan Córdoba Tourism Observatory. The Municipal archaeological risk charter

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities
- Heritage days; Public awareness activities and in schools on the Tenth Anniversary of inscription; Inscription Anniversaries World Heritage City Day; the “Córdoba, World Heritage” Plastic Arts Competition, publications targeting school pupils. Radio Ham Competition; the Internet Competition “Surfing World Heritage Cities”. Information Panels and plaques entrances to the Historic Centre
- Active part of the Spanish Group of World Heritage Cities and in the World Heritage Cities Organisation participating in all its programs, notably “Youth on the Heritage Track”
- Web sites available: www.ayuncordoba.es; www.ovpm-resm.org The Internet Youth Forum on Heritage: www.ayuncordoba.es; www.ovpm.resm.org; www.arqueocordoba.es ; www.cordobaenlahistoria.es)

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- Conservation, restoration works including Archaeological Heritage Protection Standards, restoration and rehabilitation of monuments, urban development improvements, rehabilitation of public and private buildings
- Present state of conservation: Good

Threats and Risks to site

- Visitor/tourism pressure
- Specific issues if mentioned: A certain tertiary development of the area around the mosque-cathedral
- Emergency measures taken: tourism management by system of uses in the Special Plan for the Protection of the Historic Ensemble, protection of public spaces specified in the Protected Properties Catalogue, upgrading public spaces and traffic restrictions through Accessibility Plan

13. Monitoring

- No monitoring programme

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic
- Strengths of management: public awareness campaigns, promotion of the conservation and protection of the Historic Centre
- Weaknesses of management: tourism pressure and vehicle traffic

Future actions:

- Emergency measures taken: tourism management by system of uses in the Special Plan for the Protection of the Historic Ensemble, protection of public spaces specified in the Protected Properties Catalogue, upgrading public spaces and traffic restrictions through Accessibility Plan