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## Hiraizumi (Japan) No 1277rev

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### Official name as proposed by the State Party

Hiraizumi – Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land

### Location

Iwate Prefecture  
Japan

### Brief description

Hiraizumi was the political and administrative centre of the northern realm of Japan in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century and rivalled Kyoto, politically and commercially. Built by the Ôshû Fujiwara family, the northern branch of the ruling clan, its layout is seen as reflecting the cosmology of Pure Land Buddhism. This had been introduced to Japan from China and Korea in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and by the 12<sup>th</sup> century had developed into a strong, local distinctive doctrine. Much of the area was destroyed in 1189 when the city lost its political and administrative status. There were further fires in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and the city never recovered its former glory. Six sites display elements of the once great centre: four temple complexes with Pure Land gardens, Mount Kinkeisan, and the archaeological remains of administrative buildings.

### Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of 6 *sites*.

## 1 Basic data

### Included in the Tentative List

6 April 2001

### International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

### Date received by the World Heritage Centre

26 December 2006

27 January 2010

### Background

This is a deferred nomination (32 COM, Quebec, 2008).

The World Heritage Committee adopted the following decision (Decision: 32 COM 8B.24):

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-08/32.COM/8B and WHC-08/32.COM/INF.8B1,
2. Defers the examination of the nomination of Hiraizumi – Cultural Landscape Associated with Pure Land Buddhist Cosmology, Japan, to the World Heritage List in order to allow the State Party to:
  - a) provide further comparative analysis, particularly for the gardens, including comparators in China and Korea;
  - b) consider revising the boundary of the nominated property to include the elements of the landscape value;
3. Recommends that any further nomination would need to be accompanied by a fully functioning management plan and an adequate suite of indicators, including those to monitor visual connections and knowledge of associations with the property;
4. Considers that any revised nomination with revised boundaries, would need to be considered by a mission to the site.
5. Recommends that the World Heritage Centre assist by all means possible the State Party in the revision of the nominated property.

On 10 January 2010 the State Party submitted a revised nomination.

### Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committees on Cultural Landscapes, on Archaeological Heritage Management and several independent experts.

### Literature consulted (selection)

Yiengpruksawan, M., *Hiraizumi*, Harvard, 1998.

### Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 7 to 10 September 2010.

### Additional information requested and received from the State Party

ICOMOS has sent a letter to the State Party on 18 December 2007 on the following issues:

- How the nominated area as a whole specifically and tangibly reflects the precepts of Pure Land Buddhism;
- Details of the cultural traditions and philosophy that underpin and justify the recreation of gardens from archaeological evidence;
- How the Pure Land Gardens can meet the conditions of authenticity within their specific cultural context;
- How the layout of Kyoto, Nara and Kamakura differs from Hiraizumi in order to justify the specificity and thus the outstanding universal value of the Hiraizumi nominated areas.

The State Party responded on 28 February 2008 with supplementary information. This is included in this evaluation report.

#### **Date of ICOMOS approval of this report**

10 March 2011

## **2 The property**

### **Description**

The revised nomination submitted by the State Party has changed the name of the property from "Hiraizumi - Cultural Landscape Associated with Pure Land Buddhist Cosmology" to "Hiraizumi – Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land" and has reduced the serial nomination from 9 sites to 6, by excluding rural estates to the west of Hiraizumi and two archaeological sites in Hiraizumi.

Hiraizumi, the site of the political and administrative centre of the northern realm of Japan in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, is in the north-east of Japan's largest island Honshu. The Kitakamigawa River curves north-south through the site as do major trunk roads and a railway. The present town, on a terrace to the east of the river, covers around one square kilometre of the narrow basin between Mount Tabashineyama to the east and the undulating hills which rise to the Ōu Mountains in the west. To the north and south are further rivers, the Koromokawa and the Ōtagawa. Much of the higher slopes of the mountains are clothed in plantations of oak, cedar and red pine, while individually planted cedar trees punctuate the more open landscape within temple complexes, near houses and along streams.

Ancient Hiraizumi was mostly destroyed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and there were fires in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. What remains are a few standing temples, the most important of which is the 12<sup>th</sup> century Chûson-ji Konjikidô, (Golden Hall). Further sites have been revealed by excavation over the past fifty years.

The nominated property consists of six separate sites spread across the semi-urban landscape. They are surrounded by a buffer zone.

A combination of the standing buildings together with the excavated sites, some of which have been re-buried, and reconstructed gardens, are said to reflect aspects of Hiraizumi at the height of its power and influence in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries.

A group of four 'Pure Land gardens' have been revealed by excavations - Chûson-ji Ōikegaran Ato, Môtsû-ji Teien, Kanjizaiô-in Teien and Muryôkô-in Ato. Their layout is seen to reflect the cosmology of Pure Land Buddhism – a vision of paradise translated into reality through the careful disposition of built structures in relation to natural land-forms.

The four gardens exhibit different stages in the development of Pure Land gardens during the 12<sup>th</sup> century and also include what is seen as the most highly developed example, Muryôkô-in Ato.

The plans of the gardens are characterized by the alignment of three elements on the same axis: the mountain symbolic of the Pure Land in the background, the site of a Buddha hall as a physical embodiment of the Pure Land, and a garden pond constructed in front of it in imitation of the celestial pond of the Pure Land. Sometimes there is also a river or a wetland in the foreground which symbolically separated this world from the other Pure Land world.

Môtsû-ji Teien (garden) and Kanjizaiô-in Teien have been restored as gardens with trees and water. The other two gardens remain buried.

The nominated sites in total extend to 187.0ha; the buffer zone cover 5,998.0ha.

The property consists of the following:

- Chûson-ji - temple and buried garden remains
- Môtsû-ji – temple remains and reconstructed garden
- Kanjizaiô-in Ato – remains of temples and reconstructed garden
- Muryôkô-in Ato – site of temple and buried garden
- Mount Kinkeisan – sacred mountain
- Yanaginogosho Iseki – site of government offices

These are considered in turn:

- Chûson-ji - temple and buried garden remains
- The first Buddhist temple, built in the first quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the founder of the Ōshû Fujiwara family, was the spiritual heart of the city as well as a control point for its northern entry. In its heyday, the temple had as many as 40 pagodas and 300 priests' residences. Most of the buildings were lost in a fire in 1337 except for two Buddha Halls (Chûson-ji Konjikidô and part of the Chûson-ji Kyôzô), and two stone pagodas. In the early modern period 15 temples were reconstructed and the temple approaches laid out.

Sixty-nine excavations carried out since 1953 have revealed the remains of Buddha Halls and a pond garden called Ōikegaran Ato, which is likely to be the "*Chingo-kokka-daigaran-ikku*" (literally, a great temple complex for the pacification and protection of the nation) which is mentioned in *Chûson-ji Kuyôgammon*. The garden, now covered over, had a pond with a pebbled shore and central island to the east of the Buddha halls.

The main surviving 12<sup>th</sup> century building is the Chûson-ji Konjikidô (Golden Hall), a square wooden building with a one-storey pyramidal roof, the year 1124 engraved on the ridge pole. Within, the black lacquer structure is elaborately decorated with gold leaf and

mother of pearl and rosewood inlay, all combined in a floral Chinese arabesque style with forty-eight images of bodhisattvas. Originally built as a Pure Land Buddhist Amida hall, with a statue of the Amida Buddha in the centre of the altar, the building later became a mausoleum in which are the mummified remains of four lords of the Ōshū Fujiwara family in a gold-foiled coffin at the central altar. The mausoleum played a key religious role triggering and attracting worship in the process of the development of Hiraizumi as the political and administrative centre.

There are no records of other halls so completely covered in gold in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, making Konjikidō unique. However underneath the gold, its construction of a square building with pyramidal roof was unremarkable.

Chūson-ji Konjikidō is now encased within a concrete building for protection. Constructed in 1968 this replaced a 15<sup>th</sup> century protective 'sheath', Konjikidō Ōidō, which had a copper roof and open sides and is now reassembled nearby.

Nearby, Chūson-ji Kyōzō was constructed in 1122 with the lower storey reconstructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It has a roof of copper shingles and inside is fitted with shelves for the storage of sutras.

Ganjōju-in Hōtō, and Shakuson-in Gorintō are two small stone pagodas, the latter with a date of 1169 inscribed on one side and the former believed to be of similar date.

- Mōtsū-ji - temple remains and reconstructed garden

This temple was originally constructed in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century in a style similar to Hosshō-ji in Higashiyama, Kyoto, the Imperial family's temple. Mōtsū-ji temple controlled the southern entrance to the city and like the Chūson-ji temple was extensive with 40 halls, gardens and residential quarters for as many as 500 priests. The temple's splendour was reputed to be unmatched in Japan. The whole temple complex was orientated north-south, with Mount Tōyama forming the final backdrop to the north. The eastern end of the land divisions of Mōtsū-ji corresponds to an axis extending from the peak of Mt Kinkeisan toward the south.

The layout of the temple was apparently highly unusual with the primary object of worship the Lotus Sutra and Yakushi in multiple representations.

In the 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries all the buildings were lost to fires.

Subsequently some new temple buildings have been added. At the north-eastern shore of the garden pond is the Jōgyōdō temple, a small-scale Buddha hall reconstructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century where religious rituals and folk performing arts directly associated with the

Buddhist Pure Land in the 12<sup>th</sup> century are still carried out today.

Excavations between 1930 and 1990 have revealed foundations of major buildings, a street, guardian shrines that protected Hiraizumi in its four orientations, and particularly the layout of two Pure Land gardens, Mōtsū-ji Teien and Kanjizaiō-in Teien (see below).

Mōtsū-ji Teien and Kanjizaiō-in Teien have been restored as gardens with trees and water.

Mōtsū-ji Teien has as a central feature a pond called Ōizumigaike, which extends to 190 metres by 60 metres. The pebbled shoreline has been restored as a result of excavations between 1980 and 1990. The whole layout contains a variety of elements such as an island, cove beach (*suhama*), cape (*dejima*), vertical stone (*tateishi*) and a 4 metre high artificial hill (*tsukiyama*). On the northeast shore a garden stream flows in. Measuring approximately 80 metre in length and 1.5 metre in width, it is the longest example in Japan of a garden stream revealed through archaeology almost in its original condition; it was restored in 1988.

The way the layout of the garden respects and imitates nature follows closely the precepts of *Sakuteiki*, a late 11<sup>th</sup> century technical treatise on garden making.

- Kanjizaiō-in Ato – remains of temples and reconstructed garden

To the east of Mōtsū-ji temple, excavations revealed the layout of Kanjizaiō-in Ato Temples and its Pure Land Garden.

There are the foundations of the main temple buildings such as the Dai-amidadō (Larger Amida Hall) and the Shō-amidadō (Smaller Amida Hall) in the northern quarters of the compound and the garden to the south. The garden consists of a simple large pond some 100 metres across with a central island, and around the west of the shore large stones assembled as a waterfall. To the north are the foundations of the two Amida halls and beyond in the background Mount Kinkeisan. The garden has been restored.

The pond is called Maizurugaike (literally, the pond of the dancing crane) and its shape is consistent with guidelines in the *Sakuteiki*, which state that "*Ponds should be constructed in the shape of a tortoise or a crane.*" In addition, the shape of the white shore along the shoreline of the pond, the arrangement of garden stones and the structure of the waterfall stonework near the centre of the west shore also correspond to the teachings of the *Sakuteiki*.

The garden originally started out as a private garden and was later converted into a garden for a temple. It is not aligned towards the east as other gardens are.

- Muryōkō-in Ato – site of temple and buried garden  
This is the archaeological remains of a temple constructed in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century by the 3<sup>rd</sup> lord of the Ōshū Fujiwara family and burned down in the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. The whole site was rectangular in shape and protected in part by earth mounds and moat. Within, was a highly developed Pure Land garden with a pond and two islands.

Currently the remains of the temple and garden are covered over by rice fields.

- Mount Kinkeisan – sacred mountain  
This small mountain, some 100 metres high, was a central reference point for the development of the city – being directly to the north of Mōtsū-ji and west of Muryōkō-in Ato. The Ōshū Fujiwara family were said to have buried sutras on its summit – and nine such mounds have been identified.

- Yanaginogosho Iseki – site of government offices  
The Yanaginogosho Iseki is the archaeological site of a residence-government office of the Ōshū Fujiwara clan constructed at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Seventy excavations have been carried out on the site which is seen as the political and administrative centre of Hiraizumi. Part of the site was enclosed by a moat and within has been found remains of 12<sup>th</sup> century road-like structures, fences, building posts and a pond. Outside the moated area are remains of a road leading west to Chūson-ji Konjikidō with evidence for vassals' houses along each side.

All the excavations are to be preserved underground. The pond has been reconstructed on the surface of a protective mound to represent its original form. An overall presentation plan has been developed to be implemented over the next seven years.

A new bypass, bridges and various other development projects have recently been carried out near the site (see below).

Spatial layout of Pure Land gardens that reflects the cosmology of Pure Land Buddhism

Buddhism was born in India and introduced into Japan from China and Korea around the mid 6<sup>th</sup> century. It underwent fusion with traditional Shinto beliefs associated with nature and ancestor worship, particularly manifest in the Tendai sect of Buddhism. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century the Pure Land Buddhism spread to Japan, and by the 12<sup>th</sup> century had become a separate sect. The Pure Land was both Amida Buddha's Pure Land which people aspired to after death and peace of mind in this life. Faith in Amida Buddha's Pure Land in the west in particular, combined with the idea of the built landscape being in harmony with the environment and thus reflecting the Pure Land, spread rapidly in the capital city Kyoto and then throughout Japan.

Today Pure Land is, together with Chan (Zen), the dominant form of Buddhism in China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan of China, and Vietnam.

In the history of Japanese architecture, the period from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the 12<sup>th</sup> century is characterized by the construction of many Amidadō (Amida halls) throughout Japan as these were seen as 'good deeds' that would help rebirth in the Pure Land in the West. In Hiraizumi, Chūson-ji Konjikidō is an Amida hall of particularly elaborate character.

Gardens were also developed and they in particular are seen to reflect the fusion between Pure Land Buddhism and Shintoism in respecting naturally occurring rocks, trees and mountains. Pure Land Gardens had ponds with curved rocky shores in contrast to the formal rectangular ponds of Buddhist temples in India, or those depicted in sutras or in the mural paintings of the Mogao grottoes, China.

In Hiraizumi the three main temples and gardens are positioned at key points of the city, and were linked to the sacred mountain, Mt Kinkeisan, and Yanaginogosho, the government offices, by axial planning in which directions and orientations had special significance.

There appears to be no contemporary documentary evidence for linking the gardens with Pure Land Buddhism; rather the design and layout of the gardens seems to mirror images in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century sutras from Hiraizumi, which depict the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Hiraizumi's temples and gardens served as a model for temples and gardens built elsewhere in Japan, including Yōfuku-ji in Kamakura (1189-1405), Ganjō-ji in Shiramizu (built in 1160 and still extant, in Iwaki city, Fukushima Prefecture), and more.

### History and development

Fujiwara no Kiyohira, the founder of the Ōshū Fujiwara family, transferred his residence to Hiraizumi in the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and set about constructing a country based on Buddhism. The remains of the city reflect the idea of building in harmony with nature, while the gardens make more specific reference to the focal mountains around the plain and the alignment of water, buildings and the mountain peaks.

The city developed over a period of around 100 years, its prosperity based on wealth accumulated from gold production. A grid pattern system of streets was laid out, aligned north-south and east-west. A port was constructed on the river and guardian shrines placed at the four compass points around the city. In the centre the administration, the main temple and the main residential space were aligned east to west, with the backdrop of Mount Tabashineyama in the east enhanced with the planting of cheery trees –

presumably under the influence of Kyoto aristocrats. This 'spiritual axis' is said to be based on Pure Land Buddhism.

In 1189 the city was destroyed by the Kamakura Shogunate: the buildings were torched and the role of Hiraizumi as a political and economic centre came to an end. However temples that survived were revered and cared for. On the centenary of the passing of the Ôshû Fujiwara family, the Kamakura Shogunate constructed a shelter building for the Chûson-ji Konjikidô as a memorial to the souls of the family. Of those temples that remained, more were burnt in fires in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, only two of the 12<sup>th</sup> century temples remained: Chûson-ji Konjikidô and part of the Chûson-ji Kyôzô, both of which still survive today.

Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries with the advent of the Nambokucho Period and the Muromachi Shogunate, the upkeep of the temples depended on feudal lords such as the Kasai family and the generosity of pilgrims, who by that time were attracted in large numbers.

From 1603 when the Edo Shogunate was set up in Edo (now Tokyo) until 1869, Hiraizumi was put under the control of the Sendai governor (Han). In 1689 a prohibition was placed by the governor on removing stones from Buddhist temples and cedar trees planted in and around archaeological sites to aid their protection. Following a visit by the Meiji Emperor in 1876 preservation projects were started on Chûson-ji and Môtsû-ji.

Such was the spectacular rise and conspicuous wealth of Hiraizumi and its equally rapid and dramatic fall, that it became the source of inspiration for many poets. In 1689, Matsuo Basho, perhaps the most famous Haiku poet, wrote: '*Three generations of glory vanished in the space of a dream...*'

Today the centre of Hiraizumi still attracts many pilgrims as well as tourists.

### **3 Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity**

#### **Comparative analysis**

The revised comparative analysis provided by the State Party, as requested by point 2.a of Decision 32 COM 8B.24, explores properties inscribed on the World Heritage List or on Tentative lists in Asia and the Pacific Region associated with:

- 1) Buddhist properties where the component parts include architecture that enshrines Amida Buddha.
- 2) Buddhist properties where the component parts include gardens made for the purpose of representing a Buddhist Pure Land.

The property is compared with the following already inscribed properties in Japan: Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area (1993, criteria (i), (ii), (iv) and (vi)), Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (1994, criteria (ii) and (iv)), Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara (1998, criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi)), Shrines and Temples of Nikko (1999, criteria (i), (iv) and (vi)), Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range (2004, criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi)) and with 3 sites on the Tentative List. From this analysis ICOMOS considers that it is clear that apart from some similarities with Horyu-ji Area, there are no inscribed properties that have a similar combination of value and attributes, and there are none on the Tentative List.

The property is further compared with other sites in Japan that are not on the Tentative List. This comparison is made first with buildings and then with gardens – even though the nominated property is a combination of both, that reflect Pure Land Buddhism. Of these the most relevant comparisons are with the Pure Land Gardens of Ganjô-ji, Jôruri-ji and Enjô-ji. It is said that the difference between these and those of Hiraizumi is in the direction of the framing mountains and the fact that there are not examples that can be linked in detail with the teachings of the *Sakuteiki*, the 11<sup>th</sup> century technical treatise on garden-making, as is the case with the gardens of Môtsû-ji and Kanjizai-in. However the gardens described are ones that have survived rather than being reconstructed and the gardens of Hiraizumi cannot be linked directly to *Sakuteiki* but only through stylistic similarities.

The analysis also includes comparisons with 28 properties either inscribed or on Tentative Lists outside Japan. Some of these are not relevant as they do not have gardens or are not associated with Buddhism such as Taj Mahal, Preah Vihear, and Lhasa. The closest comparator is Bulguksa Temple, Korea. Kyongbok, Korea is also mentioned – but this is erroneously said to be associated with Buddhism whereas it is part of a Royal palace of the Joseon Dynasty and has nothing to do with Buddhism.

Overall the analysis shows that for Hiraizumi to be considered as the exemplar of Pure Land Gardens, it needs to be accepted that the Pure Land Gardens are the only surviving examples of gardens oriented towards the west – rather than to the north as is the case for some of the other surviving gardens – and that they are associated with Halls that house statues of the Amida Buddha (although this is only true for one of the Hiraizumi gardens).

ICOMOS considers that there are other Pure Land Gardens that do convey the ideals to which the gardens were aspiring. However, ICOMOS further considers that what differentiates the Pure Land Gardens of Hiraizumi is their close association with the seat of political power and its wealth, and the fact that a group of four have survived as archaeological sites, one with a notable temple, Chûson-ji with its statue of

the Amida Buddha, and that three gardens aligned to Mount Kinkeisan.

The comparative analysis has justified the selection of the four Pure Land gardens and Mount Kinkeisan but not the relevance of Yanaginogosho Iseki, the administrative area, as an attribute related to the pure land gardens.

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ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for inscription on the World Heritage List.

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#### **Justification of Outstanding Universal Value**

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- Hiraizumi is the political and administrative centre of the northern realm of Japan that was established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the Ōshū Fujiwara family based upon Pure Land Buddhist cosmology.
- The temples that served as its spiritual cornerstone and the residence-government office that formed its political and administrative nexus, demonstrate a unique pattern of regional rule with a religious core.
- The vestiges of the major political and administrative facilities are preserved underground in perfect condition, whereas the existing temple architecture and gardens exhibit themselves as outstanding works of space design embodying the Pure Land world.
- The temples and gardens illustrate the process by which concepts, design, and techniques of temple construction adopted along with Buddhism fused with Japanese indigenous concepts, styles, and techniques, to give rise to unique concepts, design, and techniques of temple architecture and Pure Land garden construction that incorporated the surrounding natural landscape and topography into a spatial representation of the Buddhist Pure Land.
- The temples, gardens and archaeological sites of Hiraizumi are indicative of an interchange of human values attendant upon the transmission and spread of Buddhism and Buddhist Pure Land thought, which had a decisive impact on temple architecture and gardens. Not only the surviving above-ground elements, but also the archaeological remains are outstanding examples of an important stage of human history in the fields of design and techniques of architecture and gardens.
- Religious rituals and rites have been inherited up to the present, carrying on with them the quintessence of Pure Land cosmology.

ICOMOS considers that the four Pure Land Gardens do demonstrate the fusion between Buddhist and indigenous Japanese concepts relating to the relationship between gardens, water and the surrounding landscape. ICOMOS also considers that these are not the only gardens that reflect this fusion.

As the comparative analysis has shown, the four Hiraizumi gardens can be considered exceptional if they are seen as a group of four, with one having a surviving notable temple, three aligned on Mount Kinkeisan, and all reflecting the wealth that characterised Hiraizumi as the seat of power in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Hiraizumi influenced other cities, notably Kamakura where one of the temples was based on Chûson-ji.

ICOMOS also acknowledges that the resulting concept of planning and garden design was unique to Japan, and influenced gardens and temples in other cities, notably Kamakura where one of the temples was based on Chûson-ji.

ICOMOS does however not consider that the Yanaginogosho Iseki administrative area can be considered as an attribute of outstanding universal value.

#### **Integrity and authenticity**

##### **Integrity**

The nominated areas of Chûson-ji, Môtsû-ji, Kanjizaiô-in Ato, Muryôko-in Ato, Mt Kinkeisan and Yanaginogosho Iseki encompass all the buildings, structures, archaeological sites and restored gardens.

In the original nomination the layout of Hiraizumi as a whole was also said to be influenced by Pure Land Buddhism. This link has not been stressed in the revised nomination where it is the links between the individual temple complexes, Mount Kinkeisan and Pure Land Buddhism that are stressed.

Although the sites of Chûson-ji, Môtsû-ji, Kanjizaiô-in Ato and Mt Kinkeisan conserve their visual links in a complete manner, at the Muryôko-in site, more than 20 houses, wire poles and other structures are sited along the east side of Sakashita Lane that runs cross the site while on the west part of the Yanaginogosho Iseki site, over 40 houses constitute a negative influence on the visual integrity of the site.

In terms of the visual links between Kanjizaiô-in Ato, Muryoko-in, Yanaginogosho Iseki and Mt Kinkeisan, wire poles and an iron tower between Yanaginogosho Iseki and Mt Kinkeisan have a negative influence on the visual integrity, although the visual links between the other two component parts, Kanjizaiô-in Ato and Muryoko-in, and Mt Kinkeisan are intact. The visual relationships of Chûson-ji Temple and Môtsû-ji Temple within their respective surrounding mountains and forests are also intact.

In the more narrow sense of the individual sites (apart from Yanaginogosho Iseki) and their links to Mount Kinkeisan reflecting ideas of Pure Land Buddhism rather than the way the links between sites across the city reflect spatial and visual links related to Pure Land

Buddhism, ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the property can be seen to be satisfactory, although the visual links between the temples and Mount Kinkeisan span areas outside the nominated property.

None of the individual sites is under threat.

#### Authenticity

The nominated property contains excavated sites, surviving buildings, and reconstructed gardens. These are considered separately.

There is no doubt of the authenticity of the excavated remains. Two of the gardens have been reconstructed and this work has been underpinned by rigorous analysis of the built and botanical evidence.

For the surviving structures, the main building Chûson-ji Konjikidô is a remarkable survival and has been conserved with great skill in a way that ensures its authenticity of materials and construction. It is however now surrounded by a concrete sheath building whose construction bears little relationship to the craftsmanship that characterized Hiraizumi. There is a tradition of protecting valued buildings with outer or sheath buildings, as Chûson-ji Konjikidô was in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and its sheath was repaired and reconstructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The concrete building put up in 1968 serves well to protect the original structure but takes away from the relationship between the temple and its surroundings and tends to turn it into a museum object. The authenticity of the temple in its landscape has therefore to a certain extent been compromised.

A few houses still remain on some of the underground archaeological sites, and deliver a negative influence on the landscape of the property. For example, there are houses, roads and wire poles on the Muryôko-in and Yanaginogosho Iseki sites.

In order to mitigate the negative influence of a new raised National Route on the landscape and setting of the Yanaginogosho Iseki site, a protection embankment has been built between the road and the site.

Authenticity relates to the ability of the property to convey its value. In the case of these four temple complexes (excluding Yanaginogosho Iseki), it is essential that they are able to convey in an inspiring way their association with the profound ideals of Pure Land Buddhism. Retaining authenticity means more than protecting just the built and architectural remains.

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the built, archaeological and reconstructed remains is satisfactory; that overall spatial integrity is slightly limited as the integrity of the spatial landscape relating to Pure Land cosmology extends beyond the nominated sites and some the visual links between

sites are compromised. Various houses and other constructions impact on the ability of Muryôko-in and Yanaginogosho Iseki to convey their value.

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ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met although various structures impact adversely on the ability of the property to fully convey its value.

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#### Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii), (iv), and (vi).

*Criterion (ii): exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;*

This is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the group of temples, Pure Land gardens, and archaeological sites is an outstanding example of an attempt to give spatial representation to an ideal Buddhist Pure Land on this earth. They reflect the way Buddhism, after its transmission to Japan from China and Korea beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> century developed certain uniquely Japanese characteristics as it fused with an indigenous Japanese ethos of nature worship. They also reflect fusion of Chinese and Korean concepts of garden design with Japanese indigenous concepts, styles, and techniques developed in association with sacred sites located near bodies of water. These fusions occurred in Hiraizumi and were then transmitted in Japan. Thus, the nominated property exhibits an important interchange of human values in East Asia with regard to the conceptions, design and techniques of architecture and gardens.

ICOMOS considers that the layout of the temples and Pure Land gardens do demonstrate in a remarkable way how the concepts of garden construction introduced from Asia along with Buddhism evolved on the basis of Japan's ancient nature worship, Shintoism, and eventually developed into a concept of planning and garden design that was unique to Japan. The gardens and temples of Hiraizumi influenced those in other cities, notably Kamakura where one of the temples was based on Chûson-ji.

ICOMOS however considers that what has not been demonstrated is how the archaeological site of Yanaginogosho Iseki, contribute towards the justification.

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ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified for the temple complexes with their Pure Land Gardens but not for the administrative site of Yanaginogosho Iseki.

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*Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that 12<sup>th</sup> century Japan was a unique era in which it was believed, on the basis of Buddhist Pure Land thought, that it was possible to create a Buddhist Pure Land on this earth. Numerous artistic works of unified complexes of temples and gardens were constructed to achieve that goal. The complex of temples and gardens in Hiraizumi are a group of superb artistic works designed as symbolic manifestations of the Buddhist Pure Land on this earth. Along with their archaeological remains and associated artefacts, these serve as outstanding examples of architecture and garden design in 12<sup>th</sup> century Japan not seen elsewhere in the world, illustrating significant developments within these disciplines. Thus, the nominated property is an outstanding example of a type of architecture and garden design which illustrates a significant stage in human history in this field.

ICOMOS considers that the groups of Pure Land Gardens with their temples in Hiraizumi do reflect the idea of creating a pure land on earth but that this was also prevalent in Korea at around the same time. What is outstanding about the Pure Land Gardens in Japan is the way they demonstrate how Buddhist ideas were fused with local traditions and this cannot be considered as a significant period of human history.

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ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been justified.

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*Criterion (vi): be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that one of the most significant processes in constructing Hiraizumi was the unique development of Japanese Buddhism through its fusion with Japan's indigenous ethos of nature worship. This is especially true of the emergence of Japanese Buddhist Pure Land thought, centred on the worship of Amida's Pure Land of Utmost Bliss, and which arose in the context of the spread of the belief in the imminent arrival of mappô, "the latter period of the dharma," a degenerate age in which the Buddhist teachings themselves would be imperilled. These developments played a major role in shaping Japanese views of life and death in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. They were also directly reflected to the conceptual, stylistic, and formal properties of temples and gardens - seen nowhere else in the world - that gave spatial representation to Buddhist Pure Land, and have been reliably passed down to the present in some of the intangible aspects of the property such as religious rites and folk performing arts. Thus, the religious, philosophical, and other traditions tangibly

associated with aspects of Hiraizumi's temples, Pure Land gardens and archaeological sites can be said to possess outstanding universal significance.

ICOMOS considers that the Pure Land Gardens clearly reflect a specific fusion of Buddhism with Japanese nature worship. However to justify this criterion the gardens need to be seen as a reflection of a belief of outstanding universal significance. They thus need to be seen to be part of the diffusion of Buddhism over south-east Asia and thus reflections of a belief that is of wider importance than just in Japan – that of Buddhist Pure Land thought.

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ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

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ICOMOS considers that the serial approach is justified but the selection of sites should be reduced to exclude Yanaginogosho Iseki.

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ICOMOS considers that the property meets criteria (ii) and (vi) and conditions of authenticity and integrity with the exclusion of Yanaginogosho Iseki and that Outstanding Universal Value has been demonstrated.

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#### **Description of the attributes**

The attributes of outstanding universal value are the standing and archaeological remains of temples and pure land gardens, Mount Kinkeisan, the visual links between three of the gardens and Mount Kinkeisan and the setting of the pure land gardens that allows them to convey in an inspiring way their association with the profound ideals of Pure Land Buddhism.

## **4 Factors affecting the property**

### **Development pressures**

The main sites are within the urban area of Hiraizumi through which run main roads and railways.

The following proposed road projects are mentioned in the nomination dossier:

- A road improvement is planned for the prefectural road "Hiraizumi Teishajô-Chûsonji Line", which runs through Muryôkô-in Ato. No details are provided but it is stated that the project aims to conserve the nominated component part of the property.
- A project to improve the crossroads of National Route 4 and the Sakashita Line (town road) that run on the eastern edge of the Chûson-ji's temple compound. No details are provided but it is stated that due consideration will be given to the visual integrity of the entrance area of Chûson-ji.
- In the buffer zone there are plans for expanding the width of the "Town Road Yanaginogosho Line" (provisional name) and the "National Route 4



Hiraizumi Bypass", installing a connection road between the Tôhoku Expressway and the existing roads, and newly constructing a part of a main local road, the Hanamaki - Koromogawa Line, and a part of a town road, the Chûgakkô Line.

Overall it is stated that the design of these construction will harmonize the design and structure of these roads with the surrounding landscape.

Other aspects of development relate to smaller scale intrusions such as poles and pylons that impact on visual links between some of the properties and to houses near the temple complexes. It is understood that there are two houses planned for relocation within the Kanjizaiô-in Ato site, and that some residential houses, wire poles and an iron tower occupying the site within the Muryôko-in and Yanaginogosho Iseki sites will be removed. According to the provisions of the Management Plan, the buildings/structures that negatively influence property value will be relocated.

ICOMOS considers that there is a need to ensure that the visual links between the separate sites are respected and particularly the links between the gardens and Mount Kinkeisan.

Large commercial advertising boards impact adversely on the setting of the sites. Although there is also commitment to move these, there is no agreed timetable.

#### Tourism pressures

Visitors within the sites are subject to varying degrees of management but there is no overall management strategy that includes local authorities in the buffer zone. Hiraizumi city currently receives around one million visitors a year and an increase in visitors could impact adversely on the property unless stronger measures are put in place. ICOMOS considers that there is a need for research to identify the carrying capacity of the various sites and for a visitor management strategy to be developed and adopted to ensure capacities are respected.

#### Environmental pressures

There are no immediate environmental threats such as acid rain but there is a need to ensure that traffic that might impact on the property in terms of emissions or noise is minimised.

#### Natural disasters

Natural disasters that could impact on the nominated property include typhoons, heavy rain, earthquakes, floods and fires. As a fire prevention measure for buildings, automatic fire alarm systems, drenchers, fire extinguishers and water jets are installed and voluntary fire-fighting organizations are organized. For other threats, prompt response arrangements have been put in place.

#### Impact of climate change

Climate change could make the area more prone to floods. River banks are being strengthened as a flood protection measure.

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ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are from urban development and particularly infrastructural development; current planned road projects will have an impact on the property and there will be a need to ensure that all projects are undertaken only after a satisfactory heritage impact assessment has been undertaken to consider the potential impact on the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value, including the visual links between properties and Mount Kinkeisan and the setting of the sites.

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## 5 Protection, conservation and management

### Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

Given that part of the justification of Outstanding Universal Value that is suggested for the property relates to the link between the temple complexes and their Pure Land Gardens and Mount Kinkeisan, ICOMOS considers that it would have been logical for the boundaries of the nominated property to have incorporated the spatial links between the temples and the mountain. What have been nominated are the individual sites and not the links with the mountain.

The large buffer zone encloses the six component sites. The whole property lies in the valley of the Kitagamikawa River, flanked by mountains on the west and east sides and the boundaries of the buffer zone follow the ridge lines on the west and east sides. The northern boundary is about 5km away from the sites, while the southern boundary is some 3km away from the property area. The buffer zone covers the visual setting of the property and it is thus crucial that controls are in place within the buffer zone to protect the visual integrity of the property in terms of the visual links between the temples, gardens and Mount Kinkeisan and the setting of individual sites.

Within the Hiraizumi Town Landscape Plan, the buffer zone comprises three types: Historic Landscape Area, Vernacular Landscape Area and Ordinary Landscape Area, within which building heights are restricted to 10m, 13m and 15m respectively. ICOMOS considers that there is a need to ensure that the height control is related to the strong visual links between the individual sites.

If Yanaginogosho Iseki is excluded from the property, its site should be included in the buffer zone.

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ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the individual sites are adequate and the buffer zone provides protection for the whole visual setting, but it is essential that this protection is enforced in relation to the visual links between sites within the property.

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### **Ownership**

The nominated sites are owned variously by national and local governments, religious organizations and private owners.

### **Protection**

#### Legal Protection

The nominated sites and the buffer zone are well protected through a range of designations - Historic Sites, Special Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty or Special Places of Scenic Beauty. These are protected under 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties in which is embedded earlier laws such as the Ancient Shrines and Temples Preservation Law (1929), the Law for the Preservation of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty and Natural Monuments (1919) and the National Treasures Preservation Law (1929). Since first nomination further protection has been afforded to three of the sites: Mount Kinkeisan, Muryôko-in and Yanaginogosho Iseki.

Broadly the temples and standing buildings are protected as monuments, the restored gardens and archaeological sites as sites.

The buffer zone is protected through a range of landscape designations which protect the values of the area and restrict development. What are not protected are houses within the nominated area such as those for the 134 people living in Chûson-ji and smaller numbers elsewhere.

#### Traditional Protection

The routine management and conservation of Chûson-ji Temple and Môtsû-ji Temple are the responsibility of the religious organizations, with the assistance of Hiraizumi Town. Religious rites, folk performing arts and other intangible heritage representing Japan's Pure Land Buddhist thought – are also inherited and protected by traditional religious organizations.

#### Effectiveness of protection measures

The property is under the highest-level legal protection.

According to relevant provisions, the protective measures implemented within the property area can guarantee that the value of the nominated property will not be subject to the negative influences from development.

The construction control measures in the buffer zone of the property have achieved a relatively good effect. In line with the Landscape Plan, large advertisement

boards affecting the landscape will be adjusted within three years. Currently negotiations with the owners of these advertisement boards are ongoing.

The construction licensing in the buffer zone is supervised by the government, so it is said that the management mechanism can guarantee that the value of the nominated property will not suffer negative influences from development.

The current laws and traditional protective measures are all compulsory.

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ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place is adequate to protect fabric. There are difficulties in protecting views and setting arising from the nature of the dispersed sites in a city and it will be crucial to ensure that the sites have the ability to demonstrate their relationship with the landscape in a meaningful way though allowing them to be oases of contemplation.

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### **Conservation**

Inventories, recording, research

The nominated areas are all extraordinarily well researched. The main temple and garden areas have been researched and excavated over the past 70 years, in total 198 excavations have been undertaken.

#### Present state of conservation

The revised nomination dossier presents in detail the conservation history of the standing structures and precisely what interventions have been made. This has included total dismantlement and rebuilding for some structures. All work has been meticulously documented and carried out by skilled craftsmen.

The evidence provided of the approach taken for reconstruction of the two Pure Land gardens and the way their forms have been created demonstrates that this work has been carried out with exceptional thoroughness.

ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation of all the temples and archaeological sites is good.

#### Active Conservation measures

The main temples, gardens and archaeological sites are all conserved or protected by either national or regional authorities and are all under good active management.

There are proposals to re-instate and restore the other two buried gardens. According to the Management Plan, the conservation and restoration of the Ôikegaran Ato pond will start in 2012, and that of Muryôko-in Ato pond will start in 2013 and complete in 2016. No details of these projects have been provided. However the

nomination dossier includes an image for one of the gardens that includes a reconstructed temple.

ICOMOS considers that any proposal for further re-excavating and re-instating will need to be set out in the form of a reconstruction strategy, the evidence on which the proposals are based, and the reconstruction philosophy, and be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by ICOMOS, and consideration by the World Heritage Committee, in line with paragraph 172 of *Operational Guidelines*.

ICOMOS also stresses the need to ensure that all buried archaeological resources are actively protected to ensure the protection of mineral and plant evidence.

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ICOMOS considers that conservation is adequate, but that any further reconstruction proposals must be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by ICOMOS, and consideration by the World Heritage Committee, in line with paragraph 172 of *Operational Guidelines*.

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## Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

Iwate Prefecture and the relevant municipal government have set up the Iwate Prefecture World Heritage Preservation and Utilization Promotion Council to facilitate communication and coordination with regard to the projects that are planned by the national government, Iwate Prefecture, relevant municipal governments, private companies, etc. within the nominated property or its vicinity. This provides the overall management framework for the property.

An advisory committee, the Instructing Committee for Research and Conservation of the Group of Archaeological Sites of Hiraizumi, has also been set up to allow university researchers and members of the ICOMOS National Committee of Japan to provide advice to the Council. It consists of researchers and experts from domestic universities and members of ICOMOS, and provides academic advice to the Promotion Council.

There are also specific prefectural, city and towns council committees which provide advice on the protection of cultural properties to their respective councils.

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

In 2006, Iwate Prefecture prepared a comprehensive preservation and management plan for the nominated property's components designated as National Treasures, Important Cultural Properties, Historic Sites, Special Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty or

Special Places of Scenic Beauty in coordination with the Agency for Cultural Affairs, owners and municipal governments that are custodial bodies of Historic Sites, etc.

The Comprehensive Preservation and Management Plan for Hiraizumi Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land was completed and implemented in January 2007, and revised in January 2010. The monitoring indicators have been improved, thus making the plan more operable, as requested by point 3 of Decision 32 COM 8B.24.

It is acknowledged that although some visitor facilities and information boards are in place, the presentation of the site to visitor could be improved and will be addressed.

## Risk preparedness

The key threats are fire, storms, floods and earthquakes. As a for fire prevention, automatic fire detection and sprinkler systems have been installed in the buildings and voluntary fire-fighters have been organized. Drainage systems and lightning conductors have been installed and forest conservation measures aim to minimize landslides that may result from heavy rain or earthquakes.

## Involvement of the local communities

Local communities and many local groups have been fully involved in the preparation of the nomination.

The local government has signed an agreement with the local institutions in the site where the property is located, and invited the local community to patrol the nominated property regularly and irregularly and come up with opinions and suggestions regarding the protection, management and presentation of the property. Schools and local organizations in the property voluntarily participate in routine maintenance.

## Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

For all designated monuments the government contributes 50-80% of the cost of repair except for minor repairs or special cases. Excavation work carried out by regional authorities is also subsidised up to 50%. Likewise research, repair or 'visual harmonisation' work on cultural landscapes is supported by national funding up to 50%. On top of national subsidies, Iwate Prefecture further subsidises up to 50% of the remaining cost. The Prefecture has also established a fund for the protection of historic sites which collects support from local businesses in Iwate Prefecture.

The Iwate Prefectural Board of Education has created an organisation in charge of Cultural Properties and World Heritage, employing 11 officers. Hiraizumi

Town's Board of Education has created the World Heritage Promotion Section, in which 4 dedicated officers are working for the preservation and management of component parts; in addition, 5 officers are stationed at the Hiraizumi Cultural Heritage Centre to conduct on-site archaeological excavation. These organisations and systems are to be strengthened further in the future.

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ICOMOS considers that the management arrangements are adequate.

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## 6 Monitoring

Four main indicators have been identified for visual integrity, collaborations between component sites protection of buildings, gardens and archaeological sites, and the protection of the buffer zone, as requested by point 3 of Decision 32 COM 8B.24. Responsibilities for their implementation are clearly set out.

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ICOMOS considers that indicators in place and arrangements for their monitoring are adequate.

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## 7 Conclusions

The revised nomination which considers the relationship between Pure Land Buddhism, the four temple complexes of Hiraizumi, of which many details have been recovered from excavations, and the sacred Mount Kinkeisan, now makes a strong case for why this ensemble can be seen as an exemplar of the ways the ideals of Pure Land Buddhism were made manifest. The ensemble demonstrates a fusion between the Pure Land Buddhism that was transmitted from Korea and Japanese nature worship and traditions of garden design. And the only surviving temple, Chûson-ji with its highly flamboyant gold decoration, makes a strong statement about the wealth of the Ôshû Fujiwara clan, their espousal of Pure Land Buddhism and the way this was linked with political power in the short lived city of Hiraizumi.

The one element of the nomination that does not contribute to this theme is *Yanaginogosho Iseki*, the site of government offices. This site does not have any attributes that contribute to an understanding of Pure Land Buddhism or its development and adoption in Hiraizumi. ICOMOS considers that this site should not be part of the serial nomination.

The remains of the four temple complexes and Mount Kinkeisan are intertwined with the modern city of Hiraizumi and particularly with the road and rail network.

Given that these ensembles aimed to manifest an ideal world and one that invites contemplation, it is essential that the sites are kept as far as possible as oases within the city, sheltered from noise and diversion. Currently there is visual intrusion from wires, pylons and houses and potential threats from road development. ICOMOS considers that every effort should be made to ensure that the visual links between the properties and Mount Kinkeisan are unobstructed, that the surroundings of the complexes are restored and that any road development is subjected to a Heritage Impact Assessment that considers impact on the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and on the authenticity of the property that includes its ability to convey the ideals of Pure Land Buddhism.

There are proposals to restore Chûson-ji and Muryôkô-in Ato, the two Pure Land Gardens currently buried. ICOMOS considers that justification for any such proposals, including all the evidence on which they are based, would be need to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by ICOMOS and consideration by the World Heritage Committee in line with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

### Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that Hiraizumi – Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land, Japan, with the exception of Yanaginogosho Iseki, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria (ii) and (vi)**.

### Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

#### Brief synthesis

The four Pure Land gardens of Hiraizumi, three focused on the sacred mountain Mount Kinkeisan, exemplify a fusion between the ideals of Pure Land Buddhism and indigenous Japanese concepts relating to the relationship between gardens, water and the surrounding landscape.

Two gardens are reconstructed, with many details recovered from excavations, and two remain buried.

The short-lived city of Hiraizumi was the political and administrative centre of the northern realm of Japan in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century and rivalled Kyoto, politically and commercially.

The four gardens were built by the Ôshû Fujiwara family, the northern branch of the ruling clan, as symbolic manifestations of the Buddhist Pure Land on this earth, a vision of paradise translated into reality through the careful disposition of temples in relation to ponds, trees and the peaks of Mount Kinkeisan. The heavily gilded temple of Chûson-ji – the only one remaining from the 12<sup>th</sup> century -, reflects the great wealth of the ruling clan.

Much of the area was destroyed in 1189 when the city lost its political and administrative status. Such was the spectacular rise and conspicuous wealth of Hiraizumi and its equally rapid and dramatic fall, that it became the source of inspiration for many poets. In 1689, Matsuo Basho, the Haiku poet, wrote: '*Three generations of glory vanished in the space of a dream...*'

The four temple complexes of this once great centre with their Pure Land gardens, a notable surviving 12<sup>th</sup> century temple, and their relationship with the sacred Mount Kinkeisan are an exceptional group that reflect the wealth and power of Hiraizumi, and a unique concept of planning and garden design that influenced gardens and temples in other cities in Japan.

**Criterion (ii):** The temples and Pure Land gardens of Hiraizumi demonstrate in a remarkable way how the concepts of garden construction introduced from Asia along with Buddhism evolved on the basis of Japan's ancient nature worship, Shintoism, and eventually developed into a concept of planning and garden design that was unique to Japan. The gardens and temples of Hiraizumi influenced those in other cities, notably Kamakura where one of the temples was based on Chûson-ji.

**Criterion (vi):** The Pure Land Gardens of Hiraizumi clearly reflect the diffusion of Buddhism over south-east Asia and the specific and unique fusion of Buddhism with Japan's indigenous ethos of nature worship and ideas of Amida's Pure Land of Utmost Bliss. The remains of the complex of temples and gardens in Hiraizumi are symbolic manifestations of the Buddhist Pure Land on this earth.

#### Integrity

The property encompasses the remains of the temple complexes with their Pure Land Gardens and the sacred mountain of Mount Kinkeisan to which they are visually aligned.

Although the sites of Chûson-ji, Môtsû-ji, Kanjizaiô-in Ato and Mt Kinkeisan conserve their visual links in a complete manner, at the Muryôko-in site, houses and other structures have a negative influence.

The visual links between the temples and Mount Kinkeisan span areas outside the nominated property in the buffer zone. To protect the spatial landscape relating to Pure Land cosmology, the spatial integrity of these links need to be sustained.

#### Authenticity

There is no doubt of the authenticity of the excavated remains. Two of the gardens have been reconstructed and this work has been underpinned by rigorous analysis of the built and botanical evidence.

For the surviving structures, the main building Chûson-ji Konjikidô is a remarkable survival and has been conserved with great skill in a way that ensures its authenticity of materials and construction. The authenticity of the temple in its landscape has to a certain extent been compromised by the concrete sheath building that now surrounds it.

To sustain the ability of the property to convey its value, it is essential that the four temples are able to convey in an inspiring way their association with the profound ideals of Pure Land Buddhism.

#### Management and protection requirements

The property and its buffer zone are well protected through a range of designations - Historic Sites, Special Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty or Special Places of Scenic Beauty.

Protecting views between sites and protecting their setting will be crucial to ensure that the sites have the ability to demonstrate their relationship with the landscape in a meaningful way though allowing them to be oases of contemplation.

Iwate Prefecture and the relevant municipal government have set up the Iwate Prefecture World Heritage Preservation and Utilization Promotion Council to provide the overall management framework for the property. This Council receives expert advice from the Instructing Committee for Research and Conservation of the Group of Archaeological Sites of Hiraizumi.

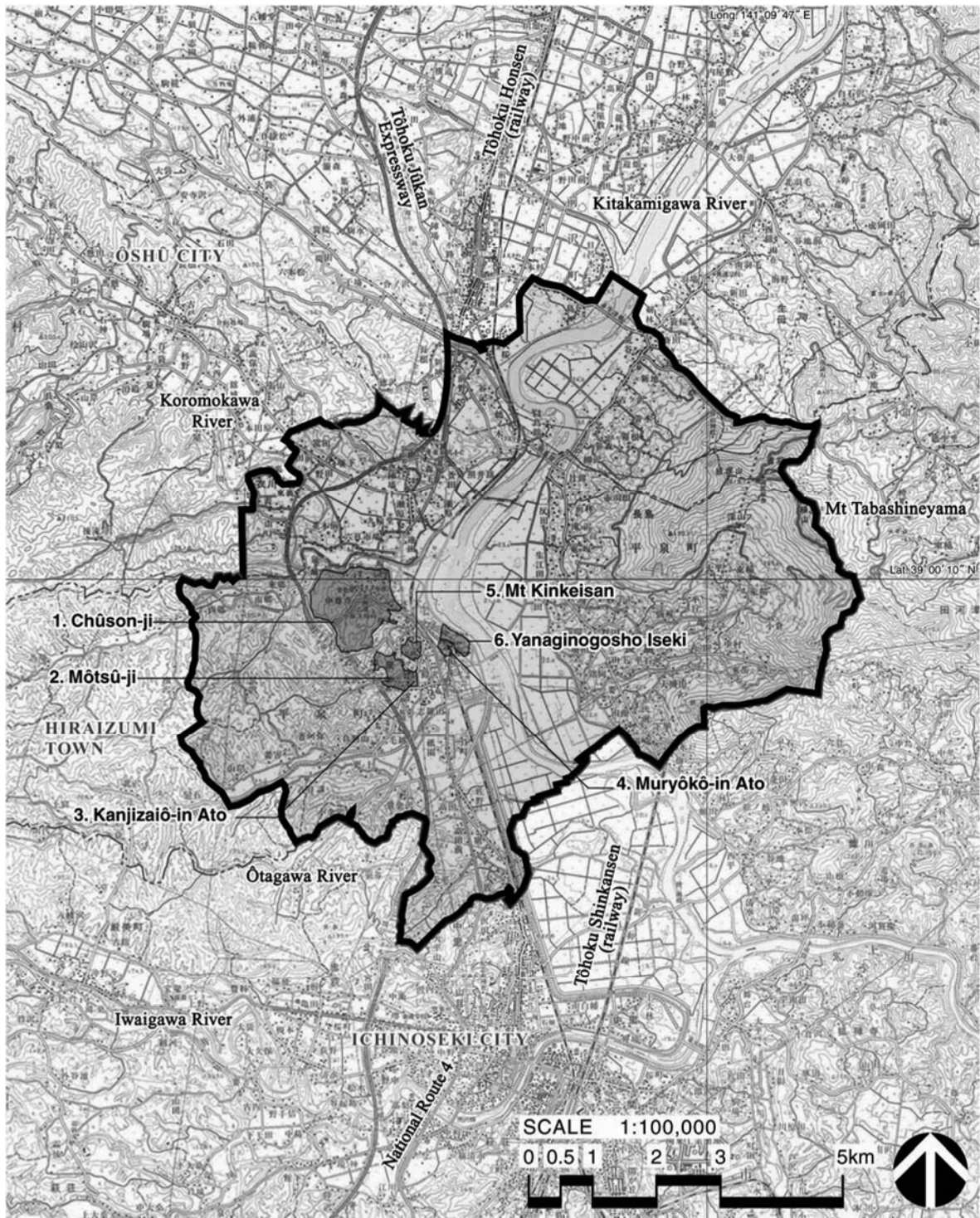
The Comprehensive Preservation and Management Plan was completed and implemented in January 2007, and revised in January 2010. Any projects to implement proposals in the plan to re-instate and restore the other two buried gardens will need to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by ICOMOS, and consideration by the World Heritage Committee, in line with paragraph 172 of *Operational Guidelines*.

The local government has signed an agreement with the local institutions and invited the local community to patrol the property and offer suggestions on protection, management and presentation.

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- Change the name of the property to "Hiraizumi – Temples and Gardens Representing the Buddhist Pure Land";
- Keep unobstructed the visual links between Mount Kinkeisan and the four ensembles;

- Subject any proposals for major road improvements to Heritage Impact Assessments for their impact on the attributes of outstanding universal value, including the visual surroundings of the individual sites;
- Submit any proposals for re-excavating and re-instating the two buried gardens at Chûson-ji and Muryôkô-in Ato to the World Heritage Centre for assessment by ICOMOS and consideration by the World Heritage Committee in line with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*;
- Protect actively the buried archaeological resources;
- Put in place a visitor management strategy based on a detailed study of the carrying capacity of the various sites.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Distant view of Chûson-ji (Kanzankyûryô) from the north part of Koromokawa River



View of Môtsu-ji from the southeast





Kanjizaiô-in Ato from the south



Yanaginogoshi Iseki, aerial view of the archaeological remains