
Levuka Historical Port Town (Fiji) No 1399

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Levuka Historical Port Town

Location

Island of Ovalau, Province of Lomaiviti
Republic of Fiji

Brief description

The historical port town of Levuka comprising the low line of buildings amongst coconut and mango trees along the beach front was the first colonial capital of Fiji, peacefully ceded to the British in 1874. Set against the forested slopes of the extinct Ovalau volcano, it developed from the early 19th century as a centre of commercial activity by American and European colonisers in the South Pacific. Warehouses, bond stores, port facilities, residences, religious, educational and social institutions grew up around the villages of the indigenous population.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *group of buildings*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

26 October 1999

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

2003 and 2008

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

30 January 2012

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its Regional Committee Pasifika, and its International Scientific Committees on Historic Towns and Villages and Shared Built Heritage as well as several independent experts.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 21 to 30 August 2012.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party

A letter was sent to the State Party on 21 September 2012 requesting clarification in particular on boundaries, and why they did not include all the key evidence in relation to the justification of criteria, and why the nominated property and buffer zone boundaries were not the same as those specified in the Management Plan, as well as on legal protection and management. A response was received from the State Party on 26 October 2012 and the information has been incorporated in the relevant sections below. A second letter was sent to the State Party on 20 December 2012 requesting additional information on boundaries and protection. ICOMOS considered that the boundaries proposed did not include sufficient attributes to justify the nomination as argued by the State Party, and the proposed buffer zone was inadequate, whereas the boundaries proposed for Levuka Town and its buffer zone in the Management Plan would be adequate. A response was received on 28 February 2013 which accepted ICOMOS' suggestion and the evaluation below now assesses the nomination on the basis of the revised boundaries provided by the State Party in its additional information.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

6 March 2013

2 The property

Description

The nominated property comprises the area within the Levuka Town boundary and a 100m coastal margin extending eastward to a total area of 69.6 ha. The surrounding buffer zone covers a land area of 363 ha extending westward to the main crater rim of the island of Ovalau and a sea area of 246.4 ha extending eastward from the northern and southern boundaries of Levuka Town to the edge of the outer reefs, giving a combined area of 609.4.

Behind the nominated property, forested land rises steeply to the ridge of the extinct volcano's crater, curving round to Gun Rock marking the indigenous village beyond the northern edge of the buffer zone and to a smaller headland in the south, forming an amphitheatre enclosing the beach and town. A stone and concrete sea wall runs the length of Beach Street, from which other streets and lanes branch inland in a radial pattern following the contours of the land. Inland are the sites of two former indigenous villages Totoga (Vitoga) and Nasau located on one of the three creeks draining the slopes above the coastal plain. The site of Nasau village north of Totoga Creek is now occupied by the Nasau Park sports field. The site of Totoga is south of Totoga Creek in the oval area now occupied by the Police Station Compound and the former Lomaiviti Provincial Council Office. Behind these, at the base of the foothills is the Baba settlement associated with the Pacific Island labour trade for the sugar, cotton and palm oil industries, occupied since the

1890s by the descendants of Melanesian plantation labourers.

Within the nominated property, the copra sheds, warehouses, Port Authority, Post and Customs house buildings together with their remnant tram tracks to the wharf define the port area to the south. These are mostly single storey corrugated iron or weatherboard clad timber buildings with hipped or gable roofs. The commercial buildings in the central part of Beach Street are generally single storey buildings constructed of similar materials but fronted with verandas below parapets bearing the business name. They line the landward side of the street, while on the seaward side trees and green turf fringe the foreshore and seawall.

Residential buildings are bungalow-style constructed in timber and corrugated iron, with gabled roofs and verandas. Religious institutions include the timber Gothic Revival style Sacred Heart Cathedral and Presbytery dating from the 1860s. The Cathedral's detached concrete tower is a distinguishing landmark in the centre of the town and serves as a navigation beacon for the harbour. The Royal Hotel founded in the late 1860s is located to its north. A two-storey, timber building with hipped roof, verandas and a look-out for shipping, this is now the last surviving hotel in Levuka and one of the oldest surviving in the South Pacific.

Other important buildings which together with the warehouses and residences testify to the four stages of Levuka's development as a historical port town include Levuka Village Methodist Church, Navoka Methodist Church, Delana Methodist Complex, Levuka Public School, the Marist Convent School, Levuka Town Hall, the Masonic Hall, and the Baba Settlement. Important sites include the Deed of Cession and Cakobau's Parliament House (current European memorial) sites and the former Governor's House, which testify to colonial relations between the indigenous people and the British.

Running along the seaward side of Beach Street is the sea wall constructed by the British Royal Engineers in the 1870s following cession of Fiji by the Cakobau Government to Britain as a Crown Colony in 1874. Canalised creeks, bridges and drainage systems also date from this time.

History and development

The nomination dossier sets out the history of Levuka in four stages. As part of the overall European expansion in the Pacific islands during the 19th century focused largely on the exploitation of resources, Fiji became the centre of the *bêche-de-mer* trade after 1820. Coinciding with a general breakdown of previous indigenous stability and transition from a loose network of local chiefdoms to larger geographical units, this was enabled by co-operation from the indigenous political hierarchy as mediated by 'beachcombers', Europeans who lived for various periods with the indigenous communities and adopted their lifestyles. This first stage at Levuka (1820s-1850) occurred with the encouragement of the chief of Levuka, when the

safe harbour provided by its reef became a transshipment and information centre for the *bêche-de-mer* trade, and a handful of Europeans settled there. They are recorded as living in Fijian style houses in or near the village of Levuka. Tangible evidence of this period within the nominated property includes the trace of the site of Vitoga village in Levuka's street plan, and archaeological deposits which reflect early indigenous and European contact and the introduction of European technologies and materials. Trouble between the leading indigenous families of the Island of Bau, to which Levuka was subject, led to a coup in 1837 by the son of the deposed high chief of Bau. Cakobau later became Tui Viti (King of Fiji) and set up the first administration of the Kingdom of Fiji in Levuka in 1852. The site of his Parliament House, which was later used as a court house, is now marked by the European War Memorial located on a promontory to the north of the nominated property.

The second stage (1850-1874) was the transition from beachcomber settlement to colonial port, marked by the arrival of settlers associated with the cotton trade and the consequent indentured labourers for which Levuka acted as a clearing house. The Wesleyan and Roman Catholic missions were established in the early 1850s. By 1870 the non-indigenous population numbered over 2,000. The first European buildings appeared along the beachfront and land reclamation allowed the formation of Beach Street. Three Methodist institutions (Levuka Village Methodist Church, Navoka Methodist Church and the Delana Methodist School Complex and Old Mission House) survive together with the Roman Catholic Marist Convent School built in coral stone in 1890. The Baba settlement at the base of the foothills to the west accommodated the migrant labourers imported to and exported from Levuka as forced labour for the plantation economies.

The third stage (1874-1887) covers the period of Levuka as the colonial capital of Fiji following cession to Britain in 1874 until 1882 when the capital was moved to Suva. The British governor took over a previous Cakobau government building at Nasova, south of the port area. The site of this, together with the associated landing area is known as the cession site, where Cakobau signed the deed of cession to Britain and the Union Jack was raised. The Queen's Wharf and Customs House were built, the sea wall and drainage canals were constructed and stores expanded as the first large Pacific trading companies were established. The Royal Hotel was built in 1874 and the Levuka Public School opened in 1879.

The fourth stage (1882-1930s) covers the later period of Levuka as a colonial port, no longer Fiji's capital. The decision to move the capital was taken primarily because of the restriction the topography placed on development. The Copra trade continued to use Levuka port however and several companies established bases at Levuka to take advantage of the port facilities. These included Morris Hedstrom Ltd and Hennings whose bond store and residence respectively survive within the nominated property. Copra was brought from plantations all over eastern Fiji and then dried and loaded for export. Copra

sheds were built and a network of rail lines to carry the dried copra to and from the ships. Commercial fishing was important in the 20th century and the PAFCO fish cannery adjacent to the port remains Ovalau's major employer. A cyclone in 1895 destroyed large parts of the town and many bungalows were subsequently rebuilt. The Queen's Wharf was also destroyed and rebuilt as King's Wharf. The proclamation of Levuka as Fiji's first municipality in 1877 was followed by the building of Queen Victoria Hall (Town Hall) in 1898. The Ovalau Club and Levuka Bowling Club were British institutions of leisure constructed in the early 20th century.

In 1973 a proposed tourism development program for Fiji aroused interest in the cultural heritage of the historic town of Levuka and elsewhere on Ovalau. Following the recommendations of a Pacific Travel Association Task Force Study of Levuka in 1984/85, a new town planning scheme for Levuka was approved and Levuka was declared a historic town in 1989.

ICOMOS notes that at the time of early European settlement the Nasau and Totoga villages were occupied by the Lovoni people, whose power base was well inland. The Totoga village community dispersed in the face of European settlement and subsequently during the 1840s tried to reclaim their lands. However the Tui Levuka overcame them in 1871 and confiscated their lands. The grievance has never been settled and surfaced as civil unrest in 2000, resulting in the burning of Lodge Polynesia/Masonic Hall near the site of the former Totoga village. The land dispute is currently the subject of negotiation between the Lovoni leaders and the Government of Fiji.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

An extensive comparative analysis is included in the nomination dossier. It has been undertaken with properties bearing similar values to those of Levuka Historical Port Town, inscribed or not on the World Heritage List and at national, regional and international level. It is shown that of all the typologically relevant properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List, none represent 19th century British colonisation (ICOMOS notes that the same applies to the South American examples on the World Heritage List and Likiep Village which is on the Tentative List for the Marshall Islands, which were not considered in the nomination dossier), and do not reflect initial European negotiation and interaction with indigenous peoples during the process of colonisation. Extensive comparison is also made with a number of other 19th century colonial port towns within the Pacific including Suva (which replaced Levuka as the British capital of Fiji in the 1880s); other ports in the Fiji islands including Lautoka, Savusavu and Lomaloma; Apia, Samoa; Kororareka, New Zealand; Papeete, Tahiti; and Honolulu and Lahaina, Hawaii - all of which began as beachcomber settlements in the early 19th or late 18th

century; Honiara, Solomon Islands, built by the British after World War II; Port Moresby and Rabaul, Papua New Guinea, established by Australia and Germany respectively in the late 1880s; Port Vila, Vanuatu, established by the French and British in 1906; Noumea, New Caledonia, established as a penal settlement by France in the 1850s and Norfolk Island Australia, established as a penal colony by Britain in the 1770s, as well as numerous other ports listed in Table 16. It is concluded that only Apia, Savusavu, Lomaloma and Lahaina are comparable with Levuka in terms of representing all aspects of 19th century maritime colonisation in the Pacific, and of these only Apia became a colonial capital. However in remaining the capital of Samoa, it has undergone subsequent development obscuring some stages of its history, unlike Levuka which has retained evidence of all stages. It is therefore concluded in the nomination dossier that Levuka, in retaining evidence of all stages of its development as a historical port town and of the interchange of human values in terms of European-Indigenous relations over the period of its settlement, stands out as an example of a colonial port town in the Pacific region.

ICOMOS considers that the criteria addressed in the comparative analysis are narrower in some ways than the type of place Levuka Historical Port Town represents, being an urban landscape within a land and sea setting that very much represent its story and meaning. Of the Pacific colonial port towns considered in the nomination dossier, ICOMOS considers that Lahaina, Hawaii most closely resembles the combination of seafront development and dramatic volcanic mountain backdrop found at Levuka, but Lahaina has a much deeper hinterland between the ocean front and the mountains, creating a far less dramatic contrast between buildings and backdrop. Rabaul was a comparable combination before it was destroyed by volcanic eruptions in 1994. ICOMOS considers that the narrow flat and linear layout of Levuka's Beach Street facing east towards the deep sea port, the backdrop of massive dark basalt volcanic cliffs, the encirclement of volcanic rim as sea reefs, brilliant green tropical palms, flowers & vegetation, series of streams, bridges, stairs and gardens make Levuka stand out in the Pacific region as a visually dramatic combination of buildings and landscape.

ICOMOS notes that this nomination accords with the World Heritage Committee's strategy in relation to achieving a balanced and credible World Heritage List through filling gaps in the Pacific region.

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

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:

- It is one of only a handful of sites where tangible heritage reflects early stages in European colonisation in the Pacific and elsewhere.
- Levuka reflects the specific form of cultural interaction associated with the history of European civilisation in the Pacific.
- Levuka is representative of global patterns in infrastructure development, urban and social change associated with the British Empire following formal annexation of new territory but in a unique vernacular form due to the moving of the capital to Suva in 1882.

ICOMOS considers that this justification is appropriate for Levuka Town, because as an example of a colonial port town in the Pacific region Levuka stands out in retaining evidence testifying to all stages of its development from initial port use and early European settlement, development as a port town, a regional centre of British colonial administration while capital of Fiji, to an early 20th century colonial port.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

ICOMOS considers that all of the elements necessary to express the full range of relevant themes and values in terms of the justification provided in the nomination dossier are included in the nominated area.

There are adverse effects due to development within the nominated property in the form of the PAFCO fish processing factory constructed on reclaimed land south of Levuka Wharf 40 years ago, which is prominent in all perspective views from the sea and along the coastline; the telecommunications tower erected recently in the port area without a planning permit; and the Fiji Electricity Authority generating station.

There are also adverse effects due to neglect of a number of buildings within the nominated property. Conversely the lack of funds resulting in the lack of repairs and maintenance has also resulted in the absence of inappropriate alterations, additions and redevelopment.

ICOMOS notes that the management plan provides excellent guidelines for good practice in the form of the Levuka Code, the general maintenance guidelines, and the development guidelines for existing and new buildings. In the additional information the State Party has said that the integrity of the town and the important views to and from thereof is protected from development by the iTaukei Lands Act (Cap.133); iTaukei Affairs Act (Cap. 120); Forest Act (Cap. 150); Land Conservation and Improvement Act (Cap. 141); Rivers and Streams Act (Cap. 136); Crown (state) Lands Act (Cap. 132); Environment Management Act (2005).

Authenticity

ICOMOS considers that the material cultural evidence as a whole demonstrates the evolution of Levuka Historical

Port Town in its setting, expresses the interchange between the indigenous Fijian and the European cultures, and illustrates the wide range of functions and institutions of European colonisation. The ensemble of heritage elements illustrative of these stages, themes, and functions possesses an inherently high authenticity as a primary source of information, supported by documentary and photographic data in Fijian and overseas archives. The main street and the lanes, bridges, footpaths, and steps follow the topography, and have remained substantially unchanged since they were first laid out. Established building uses generally persist.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

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

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 criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Levuka Historical Port Town is representative of an important interchange of human values and cultural contact that took place as part of the process of European maritime expansion over the 19th century in the geo-cultural region of the Pacific Islands. In all regions of the world initial European settlement in locations of safe harbour was characterized by the negotiation of social and cultural differences between Indigenous and European systems of authority. Levuka Beach Street is a rare and authentic example of a site in the Pacific Islands that continues to reflect initial European negotiation and interaction with Indigenous Fijians, during the process of colonization.

ICOMOS considers that Levuka is indeed a rare example of a late colonial port town, which in an exemplary manner illustrates the cultural hybridity of non-settler communities in the Pacific, in which the local indigenous community decisively influenced the city planning and style and continuously outnumbered the European settlers. The town exhibits the processes of the late, industrialized stage of colonization, which was based on Maritime extraction and export processes facilitated through protected port settlements.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

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 Levuka Town reflects the global characteristics and institutions of European colonization in

the 19th century - an important stage of human history - especially that of the British Maritime Empire, but in a unique form that is a response to the cultures and geography of the Pacific Islands. The archaeological, built and maritime heritage and landscape features of Levuka Town make it the outstanding example of port towns established throughout the Pacific Islands during the colonial period of the 19th and early 20th century.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property is an outstanding example of Pacific port settlement typology which reflects the late 19th century stages of maritime colonization. The urban typology reflects the integration of a supreme naval power into a specific oceanic environment, which in combination with the local building tradition created a unique type of Pacific port town landscape.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets criteria (ii) and (iv) and conditions of authenticity and integrity.

4 Factors affecting the property

Development and tourism pressure have been stagnant apart from the matters mentioned under Integrity above, due largely to the lack of infrastructure needed to support it, particularly wharfing and sewerage, as well as to the general economic situation in Fiji and worldwide. However it is expected that World Heritage listing would create tourism development pressures in Levuka before too long, which would be welcomed by the Levuka Town Council as assisting in developing a sustainable economy. At present visitors are accommodated locally in private accommodation and a small number of hotels. Hotel/marina/resort development would need to be carefully controlled in order to prevent adverse effects on the nominated property. ICOMOS notes that speculative ideas include the possibility of hotel construction on the hills above the town, and a chair lift or cable car to provide access up the steep slope. ICOMOS therefore considers that it is necessary to identify suitable locations for hotel development elsewhere at an early stage, in order to avoid what could be extremely detrimental impacts on the nominated property.

Environmental pressure stems from Levuka being built in part on flood deposits and landslide fans. It is necessary to keep drainage channels clear, and to reduce burning or felling of trees in the creek catchments. Levuka has suffered previously from hurricanes and cyclones and is vulnerable to coastal storm surge, erosion and inundation. ICOMOS notes that this vulnerability is likely to increase with climate change. Earthquake risk is considered medium. A number of buildings have been destroyed or affected by fire in recent years, mostly due to electrical faults, and fire is considered to be a serious risk to the heritage buildings. There is a fire station with

appropriate staff and equipment and 33 fire hydrants within the property boundary, but no building in Levuka is fitted with a sprinkler system.

A National Disaster Management Office is established under the Ministry of Provincial Development and covers training for government departments, schools and other organisations as well as awareness promotion. All local authorities are required to have an emergency management plan in 2013.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are fire, flooding, natural disasters and possible tourism-related development.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The revised boundary of the nominated property follows the Levuka Town municipal boundary and extends 100m east on the seaward side to the mean high water mark to capture existing port features.

The revised buffer zone extends from the western boundary of Levuka Town, and from the northern and southern limits of the Levuka Town boundary westwards upslope to the main crater rim of Ovalau, and from the 100 m coastal margin and from the northern and southern limits of the Levuka Town boundary eastwards to the outside of the outer reef to about 20 metres in depth. The buffer zone thus follows the complete visual ridgeline enclosing the town and watershed catchment on the north, west and south, and to the east encloses Levuka harbour and port which is known to contain a number of shipwrecks.

ICOMOS considers that the revised boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zone are adequate.

Ownership

Within the nominated property 52ha is privately owned freehold land and 21.18ha is State-owned land in civic, community and general industrial use. Freehold land is mostly held by business people who have occupied the same property for generations. Other owners include the Catholic Church and the Royal Hotel. A total area of 3.2ha is Native Land. The last is mostly developed for civic uses such as government offices and civil servant accommodation.

Protection

There is currently no national heritage legislation and it is proposed that any World Heritage properties in Fiji will be protected under the proposed Fiji World Heritage Decree, which according to the time schedule provided by the State Party in response to ICOMOS's request will be submitted to Cabinet in April 2013 and implemented in May 2013. According to the draft decree, the nominated

property as a whole will be registered under the provisions of this Decree. The buffer zone will also be protected by the provisions of this decree. The Decree will be administered by the Fiji World Heritage Council in conjunction with the Town Council (in the case of Levuka) and the Director of Town and Country Planning. The National Trust of Fiji has no regulatory power but under the National Trust of Fiji Act is responsible for creating a National Heritage Register and is required to be consulted by town councils, the Department of Town and Country Planning, and the Department of Environment in the administration of their regulatory responsibilities.

The Levuka Town Planning Scheme under the Fijian Town Planning Act is the primary mechanism for regulating the development of new buildings and the alteration of existing buildings within the Levuka town boundary. However, while Levuka is declared a historic town for the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and places, and the Scheme requires that any exterior changes, demolition, or new construction shall be considered by a review body comprising the Levuka Town Council, the Levuka Historical and Cultural Society, the Director of Town and Country Planning, and the National Trust of Fiji, and approval of a development proposal may be subject to conditions based on recommendations from the National Trust of Fiji or the Fiji Museum, such as requiring an archaeological management plan or a prior archaeological investigation, no heritage buildings or sites have been formally listed in the Levuka Town Planning Scheme. ICOMOS notes that development has occurred without permits as mentioned above.

It is stated in the nomination dossier that the Levuka Town Planning Scheme will be reviewed 2011-13, with the draft to be released for public consultation later in 2012 and finalised in 2013. ICOMOS considers that the draft maximum building height and maximum building density specified for hotel developments in the draft revised Levuka Town Planning Scheme should be reduced.

The Environment Act regulates activities which would be likely to alter the land or water in Levuka Historical Port Town or in the surrounding marine or terrestrial areas, including those which may harm cultural or historic resources. The only recent development applications under the Environment Act from the Island of Ovalau are a proposal to relocate the Fiji Electricity Authority generating station in Levuka Town (because of noise issues), and proposals for the extraction of gravel and road metal in rural areas.

The Preservation of Objects of Archaeological and Palaeontological Interest Act empowers the Fiji Museum to declare any area of land in which any objects of archaeological interest are believed to exist as a monument. None have been declared in Levuka. The Act requires that if any person discovers any object of archaeological interest, whether in the course of operations permitted by the Fiji Museum or not, notice of the site and the circumstances of the discovery must be given to the Fiji Museum without undue delay. In the

additional information provided to ICOMOS, the State Party has stated that revision of the Act is now being considered to also encompass Maritime Heritage and provide the necessary protection mechanism.

Customary protection by the Tui Levuka operates over the shipwrecks in Levuka Harbour. There is a division within the Levuka Town area between two territories of customary traditional authority, with that of the Tui Levuka extending northwards from the north side of Totoga Creek, and that of the Lovoni Chief extending southwards from the south side. This line extends out across Levuka Harbour to the reef, from the mouth of Totoga Creek eastwards to the Natubari entrance to the harbour, separating traditional fishing rights.

In conclusion, ICOMOS welcomes the State Party's commitment that the property as a whole will be included in the National Heritage Register; that the Fiji World Heritage Decree will be approved and implemented in the second quarter of 2013, and will include protection of World Heritage buffer zones. ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place will be adequate when this process is complete, and further recommends that the Levuka Town Planning Scheme should be finalised.

Conservation

According to the nomination dossier there is no complete inventory of heritage structures and features but a non-statutory Levuka and Ovalau Heritage Register and Database is currently being developed by the National Trust of Fiji. The State Party's additional information states that the inventory of buildings within the nominated property is now complete and buildings named on the maps included in the nomination dossier have now been included on the Levuka Heritage Register. The inventory of buildings in the proposed buffer zone is still underway.

The present state of conservation varies from very good to poor, with no buildings threatened with collapse. ICOMOS recommends that a medium and long-term plan for the conservation of buildings in poor condition be established. A comprehensive survey of the state of conservation of the tangible heritage is currently underway. Active conservation projects underway include repairs to Queen Victoria Hall/Town Hall and Nasova House. ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation of buildings and bridges ranges from excellent to poor, and notes that one building (Lodge Polynesia /Masonic Hall) is derelict and ruined by fire. ICOMOS also considers that the conservation and maintenance work being carried out is in accordance with conservation practice appropriate to the significance of the buildings, but that the proposed firewall work needs to ensure that authentic material is retained.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the inventory should include archaeological sites and be completed as soon as possible as a basis for active conservation and monitoring, and that a plan for the conservation of structures in poor condition be established.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

Levuka is currently managed by the Levuka Town Council in accordance with its Strategic Plan 2009-2014 and Levuka Town Scheme in consultation with the Department of National Heritage, Culture and the Arts and a number of other agencies, overseen by the Fiji National World Heritage Committee. As part of the implementation of the proposed Fiji World Heritage Decree, a World Heritage Council comprising 13 members representing relevant government, statutory, and non-governmental organisations, and chaired by the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Education, National Heritage, and Culture & Arts will replace the current committee. This will oversee a Core Group of the Levuka and Ovalau Management Forum (see below re local communities). The role of the Core Group will be to implement the Management Plan, and report to the Fiji World Heritage Council. At present the Core Group's role is fulfilled by an Interagency Levuka Heritage Working Group chaired by the Commissioner Eastern (Provincial Governor) comprising representatives from government departments, statutory bodies and non-government organisations who have a part to play in the management of the town of Levuka.

Risk management is covered in the Management Plan and includes obtaining reports on the adequacy of the present flood and landscape protection measures and remedial work that may be required; commission of a structural engineering report on Levuka's building types in order to assess earthquake vulnerability; and design of an electric fire alarm system to be connected to the fire station and the design of fire walls between shop houses to reduce the spread of fire. The Levuka Town Council employs 5 administrative staff and a labour force of 7. A town planner for Levuka is under training. The Council is assisted by the Heritage Officer and another staff member appointed by the Department of National Heritage, Culture and the Arts, and three staff members employed by the National Trust of Fiji. The latter have access to a conservation architect and engineering firm based in Suva.

ICOMOS considers that the current level of conservation expertise is insufficient and the lack of archaeological expertise is an issue. According to the nomination dossier Government funding allocation commitments have been increased from 2012. ICOMOS considers that progress can be achieved at these levels but notes that these funds will be withdrawn if not spent in the allocated time frame, and this is not conducive to careful conservation work. It is proposed in the nomination dossier to establish a trust fund for incentive funds; to develop a sponsorship and donation program; to apply to the World Heritage Committee for international assistance and to explore opportunities for overseas development assistance.

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

The Management Plan was prepared for the historic town of Levuka and the island of Ovalau between November 2009 and July 2010 with the involvement of stakeholders and was approved by the Minister for Education, National Heritage, Culture and Arts on 25 November 2012. According to the additional information provided by the State party it has subsequently been amended to comply with the boundaries of the property and buffer zone as now nominated. The Management Plan includes the Levuka Conservation Code, a new Fijian charter drawing on ICOMOS charters, tailored to fit the needs and cultural context of Levuka, and intended to apply to heritage places and also to other structures which make up the general fabric of the town and contribute to its character; building maintenance guidelines; development guidelines for existing and new buildings, and criteria for action plans. The Management Plan includes a tourism strategy which refers to the goal for regional prosperity under Fiji's Tourism Development Plan 2007-2016 as being to grow tourism that supports the prosperity of the local area, and supports the development of small local cruise ships, including visits to Levuka. The Levuka Cultural Code has been developed to protect the cultures of Fiji and Ovalau in their relationship with visitors. The section on visitor management and presentation covers plans for development of guiding skills, the web site, improving signage, maps and brochures and developing the present Community Centre in the former Morris Hedstrom Store into the Levuka Visitor Centre. ICOMOS considers that the tourism strategy for Levuka underestimates the possible future demand for tourist and resort accommodation should Levuka be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Such development needs to be anticipated in zoning plans.

Involvement of the local communities

According to the nomination dossier, stakeholders including property owners, indigenous Fijian villagers, townspeople, businesses and government agencies are currently co-ordinated through the Levuka Heritage Committee. As part of the implementation of the proposed Fiji World Heritage Decree, this will be replaced by the Levuka and Ovalau Management Forum which will comprise representatives of the National Trust of Fiji; Department of National Heritage, Culture and the Arts; Fiji Museum; Levuka Town Council; Lomaiviti Provincial Council; Levuka Heritage Society; Levuka and Ovalau Tourism Association and other groups as required.

ICOMOS considers that there is a strong and co-ordinated approach within government to the protection and management of the heritage value of Levuka Town, and promoting the objective of World Heritage listing. However it is apparent and stated by the State Party in its response to ICOMOS that further consultation with local stakeholders and the indigenous communities through their Paramount Chiefs is required.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the proposed management system for the property is adequate. In addition, ICOMOS considers that expertise in archaeology and conservation needs to be urgently built among the local authorities.

6 Monitoring

The nomination dossier sets out key indicators for monitoring, which process it expects be substantially enhanced following the full survey of the tangible heritage of the town and its state of conservation planned for 2012. ICOMOS notes that the inventory will also need to be completed and should include archaeological sites. A list of previous relevant studies is given in Table 32 of the nomination dossier. Among these in particular is a previous study of Levuka's heritage and its state of conservation prepared in 1993-4 covering over 100 buildings of Levuka and related sites on Ovalau, which has had a positive influence on the protection and management of the town and continues to be relevant.

ICOMOS considers that completion of the inventory and survey is crucial to the success of the monitoring regime.

7 Conclusions

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List. The condition of integrity is met. The condition of authenticity is met. ICOMOS considers that criteria (ii) and (iv) are justified.

ICOMOS considers that the property boundary coinciding with the Levuka Town municipal boundary plus a 100 m coastal margin along its eastern side as submitted in the State Party's additional information is adequate and that the buffer zone extending from the western boundary of Levuka Town, and from the northern and southern limits of the Levuka Town boundary westwards upslope to the main crater rim of Ovalau and extending from the 100 m coastal margin, and from the northern and southern limits of the Levuka Town boundary eastwards to the outside of the outer reef, as submitted in the State Party's additional information, is adequate.

The main threats to the property are fire, flooding, natural disasters and possible tourism-related development. The latter requires careful attention and restrictive planning policies. In particular, ICOMOS considers that the tourism strategy for Levuka underestimates the possible future demand for tourist and resort accommodation should Levuka be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Such development needs to be anticipated in zoning plans and the visual setting of Levuka needs to be protected through controls on development in the buffer zone and surrounding terrain. ICOMOS considers that the legal protection will be adequate when the Fiji World Heritage Decree is approved by Cabinet and promulgated, which is

expected in April 2013, following which the property will be included in the National Heritage Register. ICOMOS considers that the current level of archaeological and conservation expertise is insufficient. The inventory should be completed as soon as possible as a basis for active conservation and monitoring, and should include archaeological sites, and conservation measures. Completion of the inventory and survey is crucial to the success of the monitoring regime. ICOMOS considers that the proposed management system for the property is adequate.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that Levuka Historical Port Town, Republic of Fiji, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria (ii) and (iv)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Levuka Historical Port Town is set amongst coconut and mango trees along the beach front of Ovalau Island against the forested slopes of the island's extinct volcano. From the 1820s onwards the port was developed as a centre of commercial activity by American and European colonisers and the town became the first colonial capital of Fiji, peacefully ceded to the British by Tui (King) Cakobau in 1874. A stone and concrete sea wall runs the length of Beach Street, from which other streets and lanes branch inland in a radial pattern following the contours of the land. Inland are the sites of two former indigenous villages Totoga (Vitoga) and Nasau located on one of the three creeks draining the slopes above the coastal plain. Copra sheds, warehouses, bond stores, port facilities and commercial buildings developed along Beach Street, and residences, religious, educational and social institutions grew up around the villages of the indigenous population. These are generally single or two storied corrugated iron or weatherboard clad timber buildings with hipped or gable roofs. Development continued beyond removal of the capital to Suva in 1882 as companies continued to establish bases at Levuka, reflecting all stages of colonial development in the South Pacific. Key elements include the former Totoga and Nasau village sites, the former Cakobau Parliament House site (now the European Memorial), Morris Hedstrom bond store, the Baba indentured labour settlement, the Hennings residence, Captain Robbie's bungalow, Sacred Heart Cathedral and Presbytery dating from the 1860s, the Royal Hotel founded in the late 1860s, Deed of Cession site, former Government (Nasova) House site, Port Authority, Post and Customs buildings together with their remnant tram tracks to the wharf, former Methodist Church and mission, Levuka Public School, Town Hall, Masonic Lodge, Ovalau Club, Bowling Club, workers cottages and the shell button factory site.

Criterion (ii): Levuka Historical Port Town exhibits the important interchange of human values and cultural contact that took place as part of the process of European maritime expansion over the 19th century in the geo-cultural region of the Pacific Islands. It is a rare example of a late colonial port town, which illustrates the cultural hybridity of non-settler communities in the Pacific, with an urban plan that merges local settlement traditions with colonial standards. As such, the town exhibits the processes of the late, industrialized stage of colonization, which was based on maritime extraction and export processes.

Criterion (iv): The urban typology of Levuka Historical Port Town reflects the global characteristics and institutions of European colonization in the 19th century. As a specific type of Pacific port settlement, which reflects the late 19th century stages of maritime colonization, Levuka provides insights to the adaptation of European naval powers to a specific oceanic social, cultural and topographic environment. The combination of colonial settlement typologies with the local building tradition has created a special type of Pacific port town landscape.

Integrity

All of the elements necessary to express the full range of relevant themes and values in terms of Levuka's Outstanding Universal Value are included in the property. The buildings are remarkably intact, largely due to the attention paid to the town's historic values since these were first recognised in 1973. Some commercial buildings are vulnerable to underuse, lack of maintenance and lack of fire protection. The setting of the property depends on strict protection of the cliff terrain behind the town, which is vulnerable to storm damage and tourism development.

Authenticity

The ensemble of heritage elements of Levuka Historical Port Town in its setting possesses an inherently high authenticity as a primary source of information in terms of materials, form, layout and function. This is supported by documentary and photographic data in Fijian and overseas archives. The main street and the lanes, bridges, footpaths, and steps follow the topography, and have remained substantially unchanged since they were first laid out. Established building uses generally persist.

Management and protection requirements

Levuka Historical Port Town will be protected under the Fiji World Heritage Decree 2013, approved by Cabinet in April 2013 and subsequently implemented. The Decree will be administered by the Fiji World Heritage Council in conjunction with the Town Council and the Director of Town and Country Planning. The National Trust of Fiji has no regulatory power but is compiling the National Heritage Register, which includes Levuka Historical Port Town and is required to be consulted by the Town Councils, the Department of Town and Country Planning, and the Department of Environment in the administration of their regulatory responsibilities. The Levuka Town Planning

Scheme under the Fijian Town Planning Act is the primary mechanism for regulating the development of new buildings and the alteration of existing buildings within the Levuka town boundary and requires that any exterior changes, demolition, or new construction shall be considered by a review body comprising the Levuka Town Council, the Levuka Historical and Cultural Society, the Director of Town and Country Planning, and the National Trust of Fiji, and approval of a development proposal may be subject to conditions based on recommendations from the National Trust of Fiji or the Fiji Museum, such as requiring an archaeological management plan or a prior archaeological investigation. Tourism developments constitute a major risk for potential negative impact on the property and have to be strictly regulated, and where approved carefully designed and evaluated by Heritage Impact Assessments following the ICOMOS Guidance for world cultural heritage properties (2011). The Environment Act regulates activities which would be likely to alter the land or water in Levuka Historical Port Town or in the surrounding marine or terrestrial areas, including those which may harm cultural or historic resources. The Preservation of Objects of Archaeological and Palaeontological Interest Act empowers the Fiji Museum to declare any area of land in which any objects of archaeological interest are believed to exist as a monument. Revision of the Act is now being considered to also encompass Maritime Heritage and provide the necessary protection mechanism.

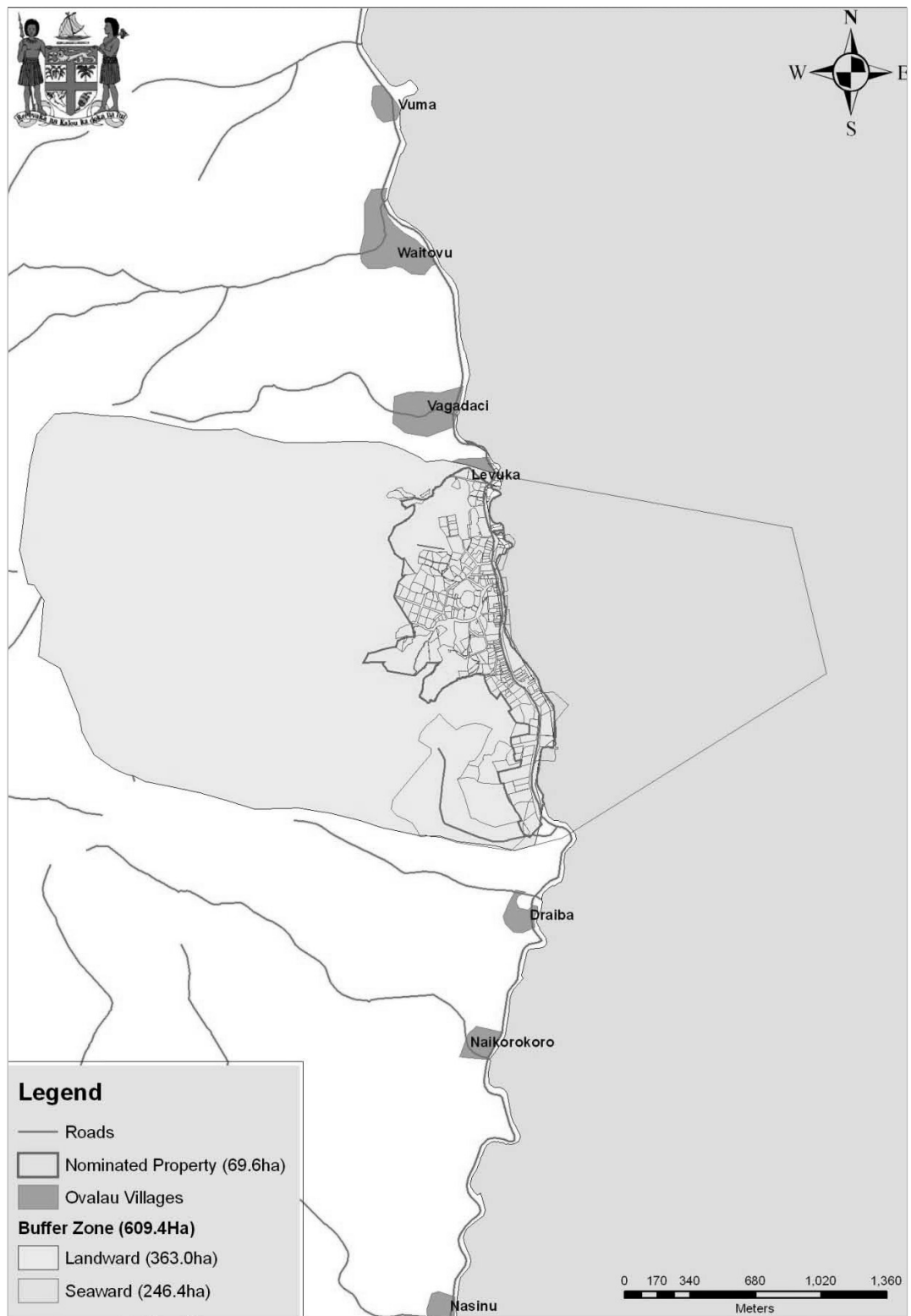
Under the Fiji World Heritage Decree, a World Heritage Council comprising 13 members representing relevant government, statutory, and non-governmental organisations, and chaired by the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Education, National Heritage, and Culture & Arts oversees a Core Group of the Levuka and Ovalau Management Forum which comprises representatives of the National Trust of Fiji; Department of National Heritage, Culture and the Arts; Fiji Museum; Levuka Town Council; Lomaiviti Provincial Council; Levuka Heritage Society; Levuka and Ovalau Tourism Association and other groups as required. The role of the Core Group is to implement the Management Plan, and report to the Fiji World Heritage Council. A Management Plan was prepared for the historic town of Levuka and the island of Ovalau between November 2009 and July 2010, amended in February 2013 with the involvement of stakeholders and has been approved by the Minister for Education, National Heritage, Culture and Arts.

Additional recommendations

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

- Approving, promulgating and implementing the Fiji World Heritage Decree which provides for legal protection of the property and the buffer zone;
- Developing a medium-term plan for the conservation of structures in poor condition and for the professional development of expertise in conservation;

- Including archaeological sites in the inventory and completing it as soon as possible;
- Keeping the maximum building height and building density specified for hotel development to the prevalent level of existing buildings and integrating the requirement of Heritage Impact Assessments for any type of tourism developments in the property, buffer zone and wider setting;
- Finalising the Levuka town planning scheme.



Map showing the revised boundaries of the nominated property



View of the Levuka Wharf



Views of Beach Street



Former Morris Hedstrom Ltd. Store, Beach Street



Sacred Heart Cathedral and Presbytery