

## Hildesheim (Germany)

No 187 rev

### 1. BASIC DATA

*State Party:* Germany

*Name of property:* St Mary's Cathedral and St Michael's Church at Hildesheim

*Location:* State of Lower Saxony

*Inscription:* 1985

#### *Brief description:*

St Michael's Church was built between 1010 and 1020 on a symmetrical plan with two apses that was characteristic of Ottonian Romanesque art in Old Saxony. Its interior, in particular the wooden ceiling and painted stucco-work, its famous bronze doors and the Bernward bronze column, are – together with the treasures of St Mary's Cathedral – of exceptional interest as examples of the Romanesque churches of the Holy Roman Empire.

### 2. ISSUES RAISED

#### *Background*

At the time of inscription on the World Heritage List (1985), reference was primarily made to the outstanding universal value of the Ottonian Romanesque architecture and the interior artistic elements and furnishings of the two churches (bronze doors and column, painted ceiling). Similar but separate, they were considered together because of the proximity of their periods of construction, their artistic complementarity, and the fact that some features of great value are common to them, such as the famous bronze doors of St. Mary's Cathedral, which were originally hung at St. Michael's Church.

The boundaries were strictly defined as the buildings of the church and cathedral. No buffer zone had yet been proposed.

A substantial part of the old town was demolished by bombardments, and has been rebuilt with rectangular buildings of up to five storeys. However, these buildings are not overpowering, and do not greatly disturb the view of the churches in the urban landscape, the churches themselves being built in raised zones. Furthermore, the medieval plan of the town is quite well conserved, and corresponds to the period of construction of the property (11th and 12th centuries).

#### *Modification*

The State Party has identified a buffer zone which aims to achieve several complementary objectives:

- The first is to control the development of the urban centre for new or reconstructed buildings. Architectural choices must be in keeping firstly with the expression of the outstanding universal value of the property inscribed on the List, and secondly with the immediate urban environment.

- The second objective of the buffer zone is to ensure the visual integrity of the two churches viewed from the main districts of the town, and from the slopes of the Moritzberg.

- The third objective of the buffer zone is to strengthen the expression of the outstanding universal value of St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Michael's Church by the complementary contribution of the plan of the medieval town and the identification of buildings contemporaneous with the property.

For the northern, eastern and southern districts, the buffer zone corresponds to the medieval town. The boundary is placed at the level of the remains of the fortifications of the old town when they have been identified, or if not at the limits of its modern extension. It includes important medieval buildings which are in some cases contemporaneous with the listed property, such as St. Gotthard's Church and the Church of the Holy Cross.

To the west, the buffer zone is extended to ensure a panoramic view of the property and the historic town as a whole, from the park on the slopes of the Moritzberg.

The surface area of the buffer zone is 157.68 ha.

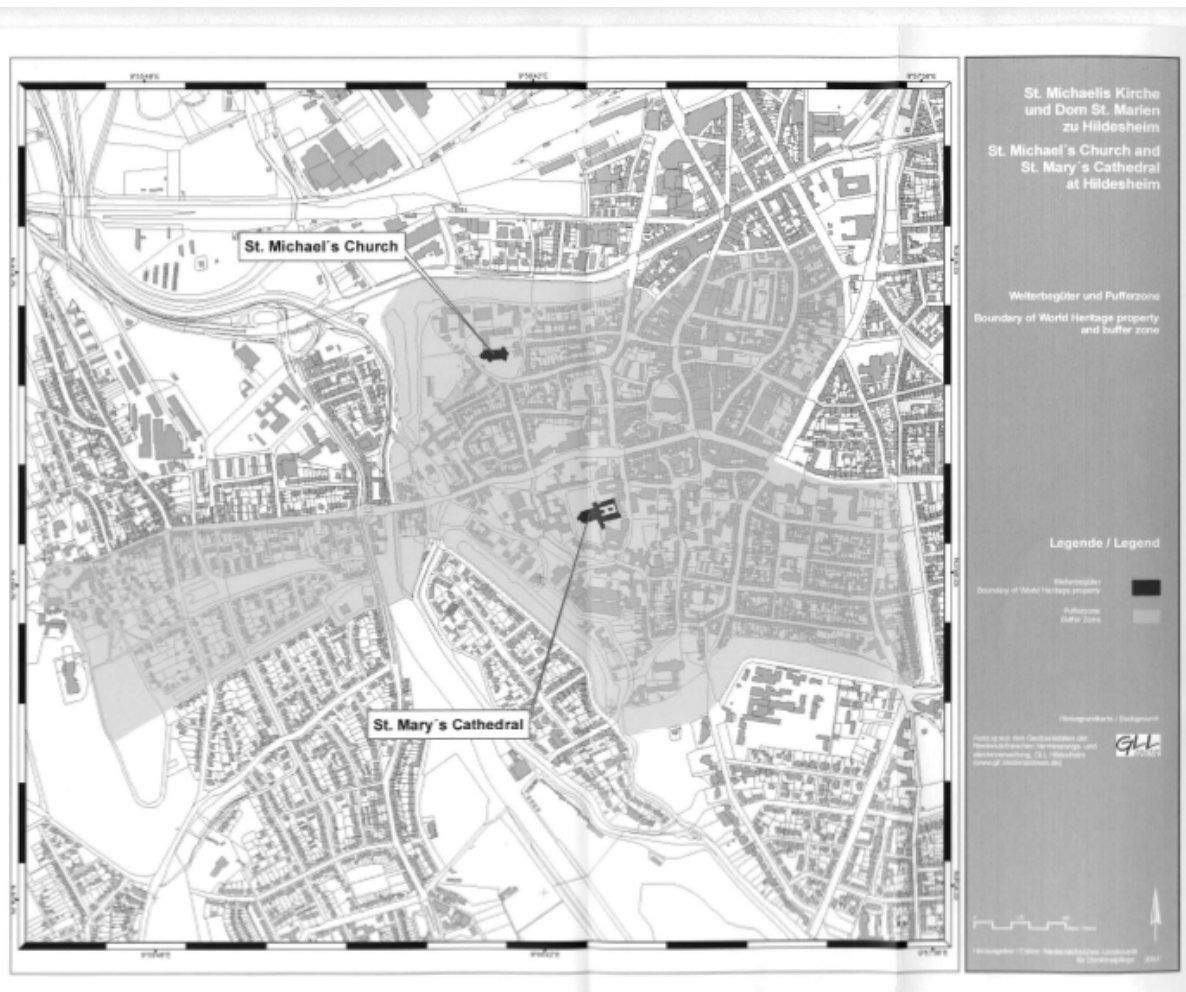
ICOMOS expresses its satisfaction with, and approval of, the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone, based on a historic approach to the town and the desire to preserve the property's visual integrity. However, the protection space defined to the west primarily favours conservation of the view of St. Mary's Cathedral, and conserves the view of St. Michael's Church to a slightly lesser extent. An extended angle of vision to the south could also be considered at a later stage.

ICOMOS notes that the detailed administrative and legal aspects of the protection are currently being prepared.

### 3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

ICOMOS recommends that the minor modification to the boundaries of establishment of St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Michael's Church in Hildesheim, Germany, be *approved*.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party should be asked to specify all the administrative and legal measures which will apply to the buffer zone, as a complementary item to the management plan, and that as soon as they have been completed, they should be sent to the World Heritage Centre .



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property