
Cracow's Historic Centre (Poland) No 29

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Poland

Name of property:

Cracow's Historic Centre

Location:

City and County of Cracow, Lesser Poland

Inscription: 1978

Brief Description:

The historic centre of Cracow, the former capital of Poland, is situated at the foot of the Royal Wawel Castle. The 13th century merchants' town has Europe's largest market square and numerous historical houses, palaces and churches with their magnificent interiors. Further evidence of the town's fascinating history is provided by the remnants of the 14th century fortifications and the medieval site of Kazimierz with its ancient synagogues in the southern part of town, Jagellonian University and the Gothic cathedral where the kings of Poland were buried.

Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report: 17 March 2010

2. ISSUES RAISED

Background:

2006 Periodic Reporting, Cycle 1, Section II, point 2, states that no buffer zone has been defined for the property and that the establishment of a buffer zone is needed.

During its 32nd session (Quebec city, 2008) the World Heritage Committee adopted the Decision 32COM 8D and took note of the clarification of Cracow's Historic Centre boundaries and size, provided in response to the Retrospective Inventory.

On 19 January 2010 the State Party provided the World Heritage Centre a map showing the limits of the inscribed property and the proposed buffer zone along with a written description of the buffer zone and the legislation and planning instruments that apply to it.

Modification:

Description of the proposed buffer zone

The listed property area covers 149.65 ha. The proposed buffer zone covers 1 057 ha (including the listed property area). It is an irregular polygon that extends approximately 500 m to 1 500 m from the inscribed property limits. It respects the urban tissue and is aligned to cadastral or property lines.

The proposed buffer zone overlaps with the urban layout of 19th century Cracow when concentric ring roads and a network of radiantly dispersing streets were formed. The buildings and spaces within this area share distinct common architectural features.

Protection and management

The buffer zone is created chiefly to protect the silhouette of the property listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The proposed buffer zone is entered into the register of monuments, which, according to Polish law, offers the best guarantee for its protection because of the obligation to ensure that all development operations are in accordance with conservation practices. Historical and conservation documentation with guidelines covering urban design and public spaces is available for the proposed buffer zone.

The proposed buffer zone is subject to valid local area development plans regarding: Zabłocie, Lubicz Brewery and Wilga Estuary. Local area development plans are being prepared for the following areas: Old City, Dębniki, Krasickiego – Orawska, Vistula Boulevards and Żabiniec Południe. The buffer zone will be taken into account in the new version of the Study of *Conditions and Directions of the Area Development Plan for the City of Kraków*, currently under preparation, and then during the preparation of local area development plans and their modifications. The protection regulations for this zone are also included in the communal monument protection and preservation plan, which have been completed in 2009.

ICOMOS considers that the proposed buffer zone, the management system and the existing legislation will offer adequate and effective protection for the inscribed property.

3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Cracow's Historic Centre, Poland, be **approved**.



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone