

**Identification**

<u>Nomination</u>	Vlkolínec Reservation of Folk Architecture
<u>Location</u>	Central Slovakia
<u>State Party</u>	Slovak Republic
<u>Date</u>	26 September 1991

**Justification by State Party**

Vlkolínec is a remarkably intact unitary settlement of a characteristic central European type with log-built architecture, which is often found in mountainous areas. The layout of the town has remained virtually unchanged and the architectural style has been fully retained. It is the best preserved and most comprehensive unit of its kind in the whole region (criterion iv).

There are 45 unaltered buildings in the ensemble, retaining many early constructional features (criterion v).

**History and Description**History

There was an Early Slav settlement on the site from the Burgwall (walled settlement) period (10th to 12th centuries AD). The first documentary record dates from 1376, and in a document of 1469 reference is made to five named streets. In 1675 there were only four homesteads and five residences of servants of the nearby Likava manor, of which Vlkolínec always seems to have been a fief. A decree of 1630 suggests that the name derives from the important charge laid upon the villagers to maintain the wolf-pits (vlk = wolf) in good order. The present settlement consists almost entirely of buildings from the 19th century.

Description

The characteristic houses of Vlkolínec are situated on the street frontages of narrow holdings, with stables, smaller outbuildings, and barns ranged behind them. The main street, which is on a comparatively steep slope, forks in the centre of the village. Parts of the northern end of the village were destroyed by fire in World War II and have not been rebuilt. A canalized stream flows through the village.

The houses are of the traditional central Slovak timber-built (Blockbau) type. This consists of log walls on stone footings, the walls being coated with clay and whitewashed or

painted blue. Over 50% of them have three rooms; some are smaller and others double. The roofs are pitched and semi-hipped, and were originally covered with wooden shingles. They are entered from elongated yards shared with several other houses.

There are 47 traditional farmhouses of this type and a shop and schoolhouse from the end of the 19th century. The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary dates from 1875, but the belfry was built in 1770.

One especially interesting feature of the settlement is the fact that the parcels of land that surround it retain the elongated strip shape characteristic of medieval land allotment over most of feudal Europe. Outside these lie the areas of common land and forest which are also essential elements of the feudal landscape (although these have been substantially altered in later centuries through forestry and pasturage).

## **Management and Protection**

### Legal status

Of the total of 50 properties in the village, 44 are owned by private individuals, five are in public ownership (Ružomberok Municipality), and the church belongs to the Roman Catholic Church.

Vlkolínec was declared a Reservation of Folk Architecture by Decree of the Slovak Government in 1977. In addition, 37 houses, ten outbuildings, one stable, twelve barns, two cowsheds, two granaries, the belfry, and one fence and gate are on the Central List of Protected Cultural Monuments.

Being situated within the Velká Fatra Mountains Protected Landscape Area, Vlkolínec obviously benefits from the legislation relating to landscape protection. Any proposed building activities are subjected to scrutiny, whilst no construction is permitted within the Reservation.

Overall responsibility for the village and for the surrounding area is vested in the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Ecology of the Slovak Republic respectively.

### Management

Principles of Care for Historic Monuments in the Vlkolínec Folk Architecture Reserve were prepared in 1981 by the Slovak Institute for the Care of Historic Monuments (SUPS), Bratislava, and updated in 1990. Restoration methods applicable in the Reservation and its protective zone are defined; no work may be carried out without approval and must comply with the concept of restoration set out in the Principles. Change of use of buildings is only permitted if there are no material changes and must be approved by the Ružomberok District Environmental Office.

## **Conservation and Authenticity**

### Conservation history

So far as the houses are concerned, they are in good condition, having been maintained by their permanent inhabitants or, in some cases, by city dwellers occupying them as "second homes" (a use that is likely to become more important as the original owners die out). However, the roofs of many of the houses are in poor condition, and the restoration and renovation plan provides for their progressive renewal with new wooden shingles. A number of the outbuildings are also in a poor state of repair.

Owners are responsible for the upkeep of their own houses, and are subject to penal sanctions if they fail to maintain them adequately. State subsidies are, however, available for larger operations.

### Authenticity

There is no doubt that the traditional buildings are authentic in overall external appearance. Traditional materials and techniques have been used for the inevitable maintenance work carried out by the inhabitants of the village since the houses were built in the 19th century. Current regulations are ensuring that this tradition is maintained, and that minimum alterations consistent with a relatively low level of comfort by modern standards will be permitted in the future.

## **Evaluation**

### Qualities

This is the best preserved and most comprehensive set of traditional vernacular buildings in the Slovak Republic. It has preserved its ancient appearance (now in its 19th century guise, but essentially the same as it has been for a much longer period) with remarkable fidelity. The policies currently being operated and further developed by the competent authorities will assure that this will continue.

### Comparative analysis

At its 16th Meeting in Paris in 1992 the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee requested ICOMOS to carry out a comparative study among similar properties in central Europe. This study is under way and the results will be presented to the Meeting of the World Heritage Committee in December 1993.

### Additional comments

The plan under preparation for Vlkolínec is realistic in recognizing that the economic basis for an agricultural settlement of this kind no longer exists and that the future well-being of the houses most probably rests with their re-use as "second homes" for town dwellers or for other functions. Whilst it is

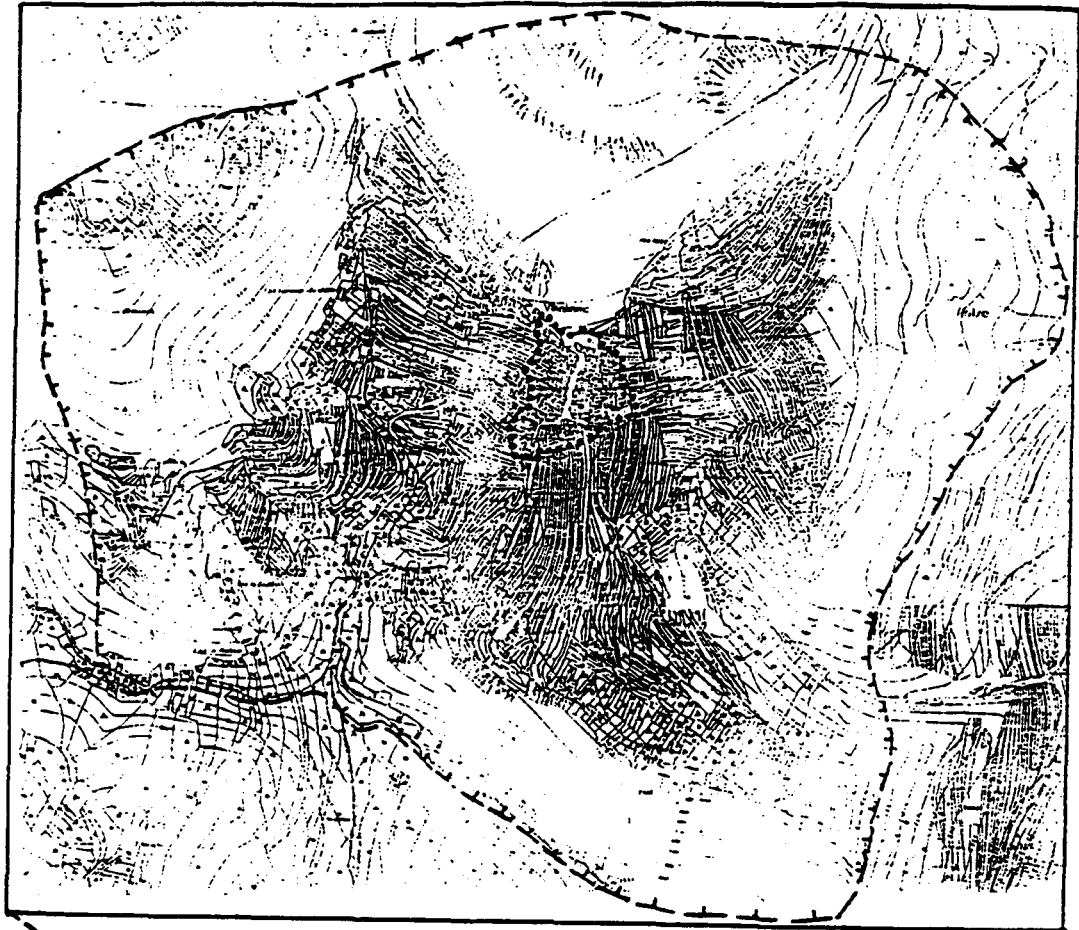
recognized by ICOMOS that this is unavoidable, it is to be hoped that it will not entirely lose its community character and become nothing more than a tourist attraction.

**Recommendation**

That the consideration of this nomination be further deferred, to enable the comparative study to be completed.

ICOMOS, October 1993

**PROTECTION PLAN OF THE RESERVATION  
OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE**



..... Limit of the Reservation  
- - - - - Protective zone



Vlkolínec : carte indiquant le périmètre du site  
et la zone tampon /  
map showing the perimeter of the site  
and the buffer zone



Vlkolinec : vue aérienne / aerial view