
Bourges Cathedral (France)

No 635bis

1 Basic data

State Party

France

Name of property

Bourges Cathedral

Location

Central Region, Department of Cher

Municipality of Bourges

Inscription

1992

Brief description

The Cathedral of St. Etienne of Bourges, built between the late 12th and late 13th centuries, is one of the great masterpieces of Gothic art, and is admired for its proportions and the unity of its design. The tympanum, sculptures and stained-glass windows are particularly striking. Apart from the beauty of the architecture, it attests to the power of Christianity in medieval France.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

6 March 2013

2 Issues raised

Background

The property was inscribed in 1992 without any buffer zone, but it is protected by the 500 metre protective perimeter stipulated in the French Law on Historic Monuments, and, since 1994, by a complementary "safeguarded sector" of 58ha.

In its decision of 2011 (35COM 8D), the World Heritage Committee asked the State Party to clarify the boundaries and areas of the property, in response to the retrospective inventory. The State Party responded by sending a map, specifying the boundaries of the inscribed monument and its area (0.85ha).

Modification

On 1st February 2012 the State Party sent a series of maps setting out the situation of the property and its environs. The State Party is proposing a buffer zone with a total area of 105 ha, duly mapped out, which incorporates and merges the two existing legal protection zones.

The proposed buffer zone is provided with two protection mechanisms:

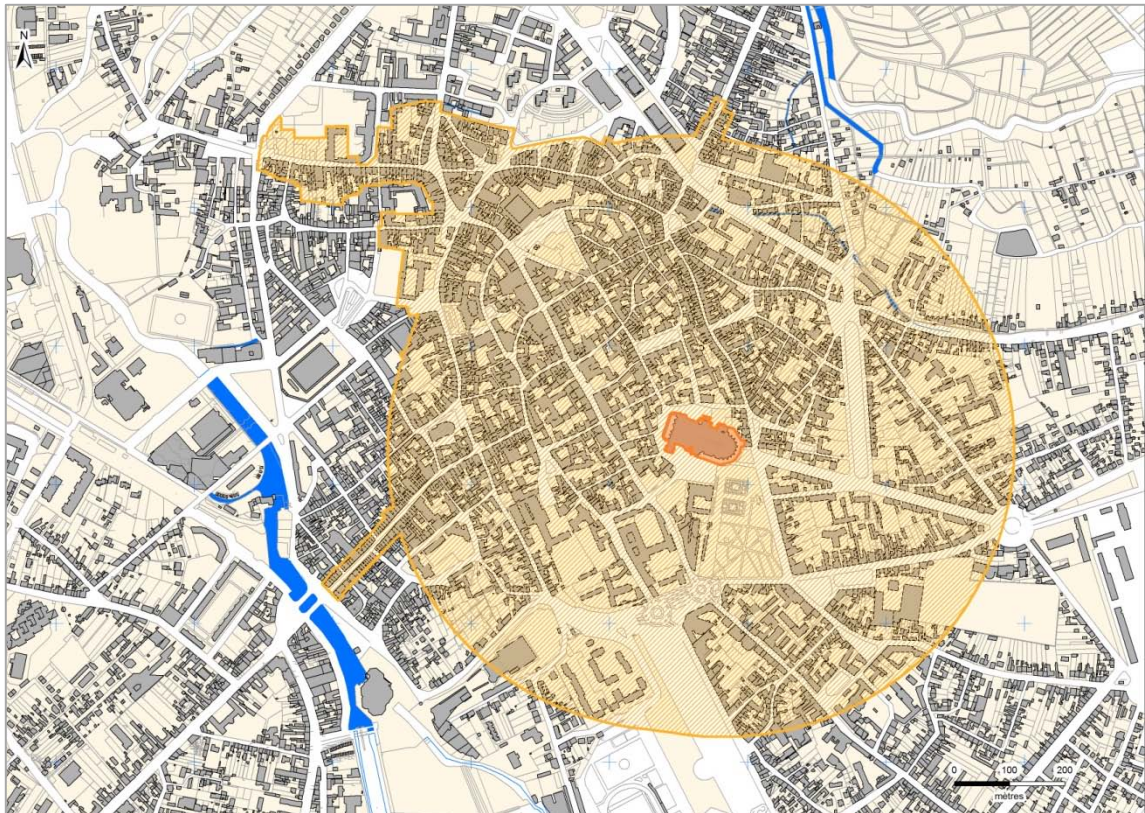
- The safeguarded sector with its safeguarding and enhancement plan, approved in 1994. All work in this sector is subject to the assent of the Architect of the Buildings of France, and is thus under the control of the French state;
- The protection perimeter, a public utility easement appended to the local town development plan, in the vicinity of the cathedral, in the part not covered by the safeguarded sector. Inside this perimeter, works located within the field of visibility of the monument are also subject to the approval of the Architect of the Buildings of France. However, outside the field of visibility, an application for authorisation of works is sent to the administrative authority, which makes its decision after obtaining the advice of the Architect of the Buildings of France.

ICOMOS considers that the buffer zone proposed by the State Party constitutes a coherent and unified whole around the property.

3 ICOMOS Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Bourges Cathedral, France, be **approved**.



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone