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## Baroque Churches (Philippines) No 677bis

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### 1 Basic data

#### State Party

Philippines

#### Name of property

Baroque Churches of the Philippines

#### Location

Immaculate Conception: District of Intramuros, City of Manila; Nuestra Señora: Municipality of Santa Maria, Province of Ilocos Sur; San Agustin: Municipality of Paoay, Province of Ilocos Norte; Santo Tomas: Municipality of Miag-ao, Province of Iloilo

#### Inscription

1993

#### Brief description

These four churches, the first of which was built by the Spanish in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, are located in Manila, Santa Maria, Paoay and Miagao. Their unique architectural style is a reinterpretation of European Baroque by Chinese and Philippine craftsmen.

#### Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

6 March 2013

### 2 Issues raised

#### Background

The four churches were inscribed in 1993 on the basis of maps provided which outlined the area of the zones proposed for inscription. It was assumed that these zones described the boundaries of the property, while no further protection in the form of buffer zones had been defined. Some of the zones were indicated on schematised and somewhat out-of-scale maps and therefore required precise specification. The exact definition of the boundaries was requested in the Retrospective Inventory Exercise (2010) and the State Party indicated during the 2003 Periodic Reporting that it was looking at boundary expansions, in particular for Santa Maria.

#### Modification

The boundary modification proposes buffer zones for all four property components as well as boundary expansions of the inscribed area at two of the four components. These shall be considered separately for each serial component:

The boundaries of the Church of the Immaculate Conception of San Agustin remain at 2.43 hectares, which corresponds to the property boundaries inscribed in 1993. The newly established buffer zone of 106.13 hectares covers the entire surrounding fortified section of the historic Intramuros. It provides excellent protection to the property components both from potential physical and also visual impacts

In the Municipality of Santa Maria the boundaries of the serial component of the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción have been both extended and slightly reduced, and now include the key elements of the Church, the convent and the sight lines between key access routes and the church. Previously slightly larger parts of the historic cemetery and the surrounding green slopes have been excluded from the boundaries. The expanded area extends to the south but no justification was provided for the new inclusions. The area covered by the newly proposed boundaries amounts to 2.36 hectares while the exact size of the previously inscribed area is unclear due to its schematic delimitation on an out-of-scale map sketched in 1993.

The State Party also proposes boundaries for a buffer zone which has been established and which includes significant parts of the surrounding historic city including the new and old central markets. Whilst this buffer zone seems to offer adequate protection towards the east and west, no buffer zone surrounds the property boundaries towards the north and south and the rationale for this unbalanced buffer zone distribution has not been given in the documentation provided. ICOMOS recommends that a buffer zone should provide protection from all directions and should accordingly be expanded north- and southwards for the property component.

For the Church of San Agustin in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, the proposed property boundaries have been expanded to cover a second – and for the overall series fifth – property component, integrating the Convent Ruins of St. Agustin. While the first site component corresponds to the original boundaries of 2.10 hectares, the additional component adds 0.66 hectare. The extension is justified on the basis that the convent was an integral component of the development of the Church and therefore its ruins need to be included; however the convent was not mentioned in the initial nomination dossier. ICOMOS considers that further information needs to be provided by the State Party as to how the convent contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value of the series. On the basis of a clear rationale for inclusion of the convent, it could also be considered whether an expansion of the existing component would not be a more suitable option than the addition of a fifth component, divided merely by a street from the existing one.

The shared buffer zone surrounding both components covers an area of 13.86 hectares. Its delimitation appears sufficient to provide adequate protection for the existing property of this serial component.

The boundaries of the serial component of the Church of Santo Tomas de Villanueva in Miagao, Iloilo, remain unchanged at 0.92 hectare. The buffer zone surrounding the site provides adequate protection in three directions within an area of 29.94 hectares. However, no buffer zone is proposed towards the south-west of the property and the rationale for the lack of buffer zone in this area has not been given in the documentation provided by the State Party. ICOMOS considers that it would be desirable to establish a buffer zone which surrounds the property in all directions and thereby can offer adequate protection from all potential negative – including visual – impacts.

For each of the four component sites, relevant legislation which considers development restrictions in both the property and buffer zones has been drafted and submitted, in most cases based on review processes of so-called Heritage Review Boards. Several land-use functions have been categorically prohibited in the buffer zones, and inappropriate architectural developments, “eyesores”, are considered to be non-allowable.

### 3 ICOMOS Recommendations

#### Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary and buffer zone of the component of the Church of the Immaculate Conception of San Agustin (Manila), Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Philippines, be **approved**.

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the proposed minor modification to the boundary and the buffer zone of the component of the Church of San Agustin (Paoay) Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Philippines, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

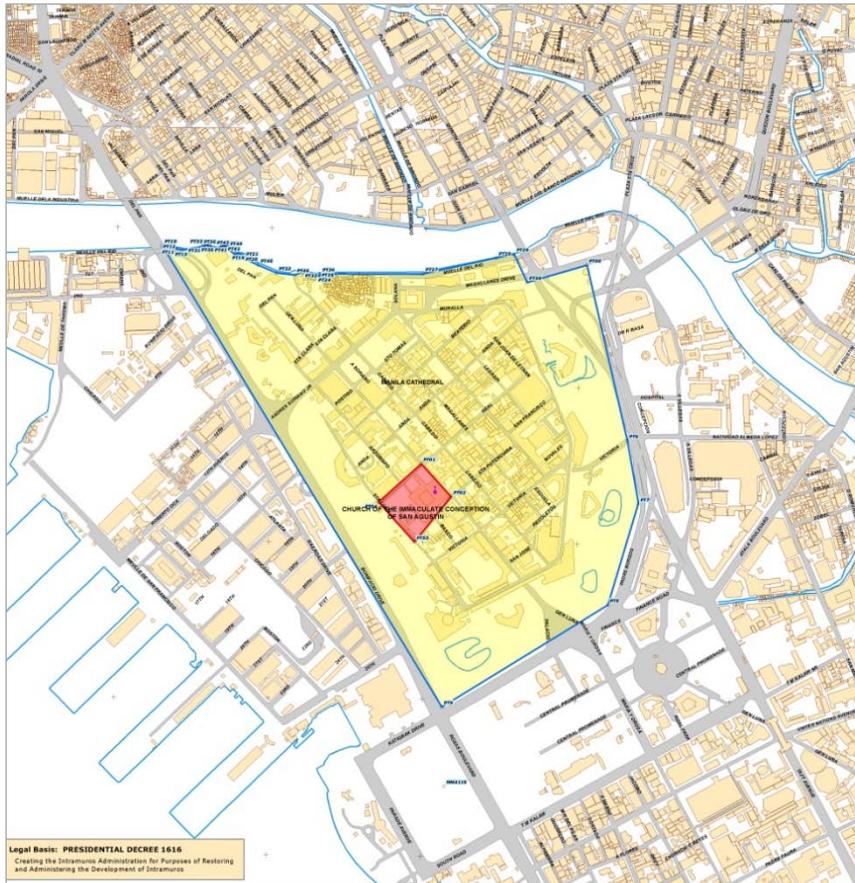
- Justify the specific contribution of the convent ruins to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- Extend the nominated area of the church to include the convent in order to form one single component;
- Expand the buffer zones towards the directions in which the property component is not yet surrounded by a protective buffer zone or to provide justification for the rationale of not establishing buffer zones in these areas.

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the proposed buffer zone for the component of the Church of Santo Tomas de Villanueva (Miagao), Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Philippines, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

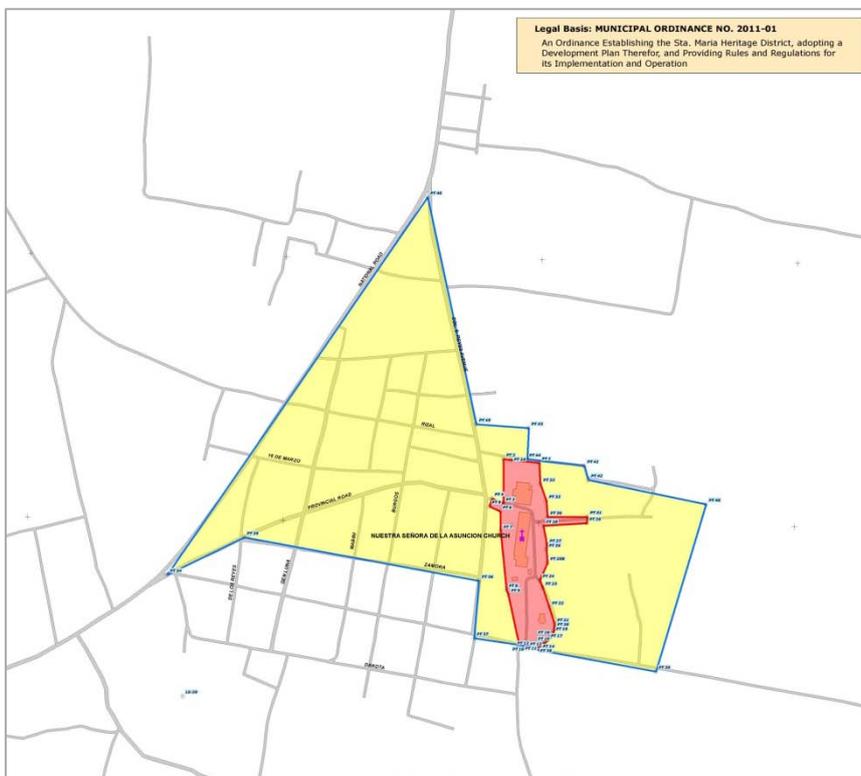
- Expand the buffer zones towards the directions in which the property component is not yet surrounded by a protective buffer zone or to provide justification for the rationale of not establishing buffer zones in these areas.

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the proposed minor modification to the boundary and buffer zone of the component of the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (Santa Maria), Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Philippines, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

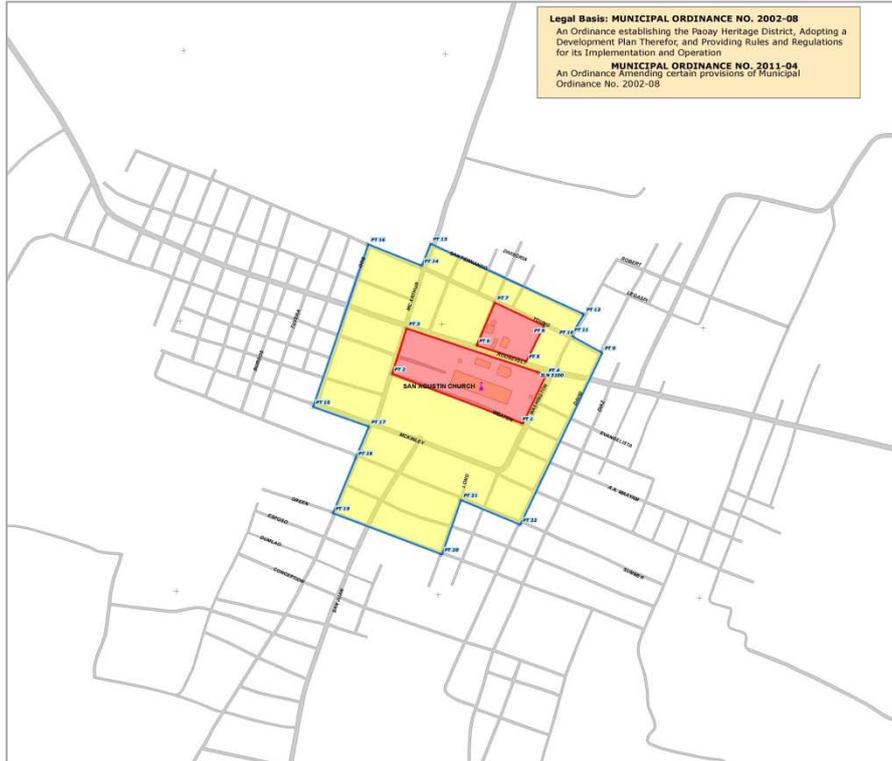
- Justify the reduction of the property along the eastern slopes towards the old Spanish cemetery and provide the rationale for expansion of the boundaries towards the south;
- Expand the buffer zones towards the directions in which the property component is not yet surrounded by a protective buffer zone or to provide justification for the rationale of not establishing buffer zones in the respective areas.



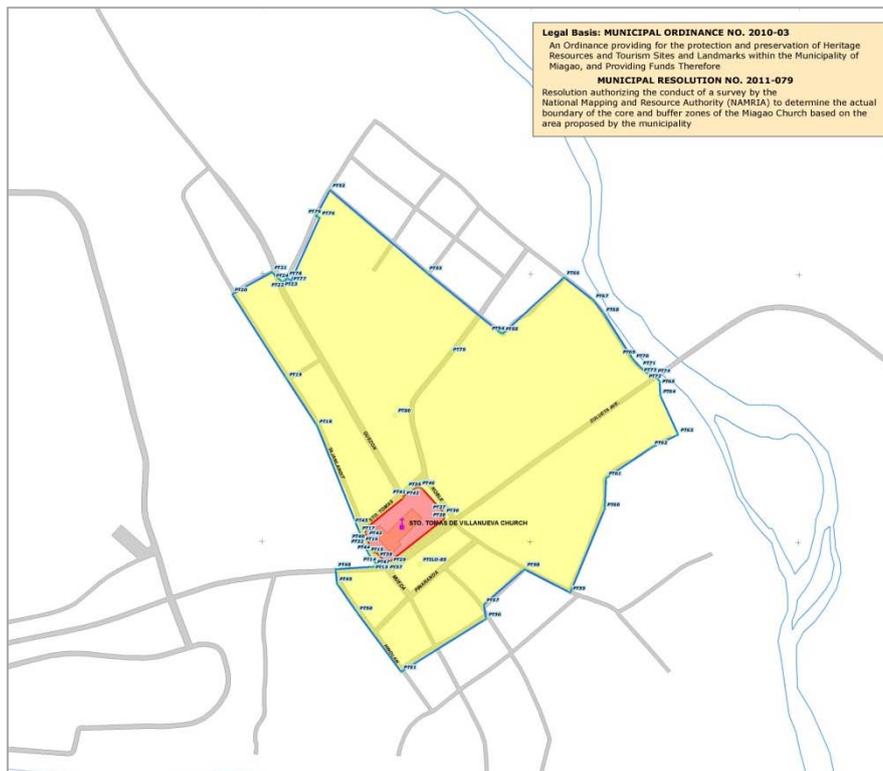
Church of Immaculate Conception of San Agustín, Manila - Map showing the proposed buffer zone



Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Santa María - Map showing the revised boundaries of the property and the proposed buffer zone



Church of San Agustín, Paoay - Map showing the revised boundaries of the property and the proposed buffer zone



Church of Santo Tomás de Villanueva, Miagao – Map showing the proposed buffer zone