EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State Party
The People’s Republic of China

State, Province or Region
Fujian Province

Name of the Property
Kulangsu: A historic international settlement

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second
Coordinates to the center of the property:
North latitude: N 24°26’51”; East longitude: E 118°3’43”

Textual Description of the Boundaries of the Nominated Property
The boundary of the nominated property contains the entire Kulangsu Island and coastal waters demarcated by the surrounding reefs, including all heritage attributes reflecting the Outstanding Universal Values of Kulangsu. The total property area is 316.2 hectares. The boundary can be identified through clear terrain boundaries.

The buffer zone is defined as follows: the north-east border to the red line on the east side of Lujiang Road of Xiamen; the respective borders in the south, south-west, north-west and north to the No.1 Xiamen Ferry Pier, the outer boundary of Monkey Islet and Dayu Islet and others on the north side of KULANGSU Island; the west border to Songyu Islet Ferry Pier; the south border is the polyline along with 1,000 meters outset of the coast of KULANGSU Island. The buffer zone covers about 886 hectares. It includes the surrounding areas, which may exert direct impact on the property area. Development and construction in the buffer zone is under strict control.

Boundaries of property area and buffer zone of the nominated property are identical with the management areas announced in the Conservation Management Plan for KULANGSU Cultural Heritage Site (published in 2014).
Maps of the Nominated Property
See Figure 1-4 and drawings in Appendix A.

Figure 1  Topographic Map Showing the Boundaries of the Nominated Property and Buffer zone
Figure 2  Topographic Map Showing the Property Area and Heritage Properties
Figure 3 Satellite Images Showing the Boundaries of the Nominated Property and Buffer zone

Figure 4 Satellite Images Showing the Property Area and Heritage Properties
Criteria under which property is nominated

“Kulangsu: a historic international settlement”, the nominated property, meets the criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

a) Brief synthesis

Kulangsu, located at the estuary of Chiu-lung River, is a tiny island with an area of only 1.88 square kilometers and faces the city of Xiamen across the 600-meter-wide Lujiang Strait. With the opening as a commercial port at Xiamen in 1843 and the establishment of Kulangsu as an international settlement in 1903, the island in the southern coastal areas of Chinese empire suddenly became an important window for Sino-foreign exchanges, and also witnessed China’s twists and turns to modernization in the early pinching globalization waves. Under the special Sino-foreign joint management mode, through the concerted construction of local Chinese, returned overseas Chinese, and foreign residents from many other countries, Kulangsu developed into an international settlement with outstanding cultural diversities and modern living quality, also became an ideal dwelling place for the overseas Chinese and elites who were active in East Asia and Southeastern Asia as well as a unique demonstration that embodies modern habitat concepts of the period between mid-19th century and mid-20th century.

The development and construction achievements of Kulangsu are the tangible evidence for the extensive and profound exchanges of diverse Chinese and foreign cultures in all aspects including social management, habitat cultivation, architecture and garden art, material and cultural life. Through a period less than a century, Kulangsu had experienced a leap development from a traditional settlement, through a colonial settlement, to a modern community with international and local characteristics. The well-preserved historical remains in Kulangsu offer an authentic and integral record of its tortuous development process and vivid style changes, a crystallized reflection of the history of an era with intense reforms and a unique witness to the different characteristics of the leading force at various stages in its renovation and evolution. The development process of Kulangsu not only demonstrates clearly the spread of foreign cultures but also the shaping of the basic characteristics of early modernization by the southern Fujian people who returned from their overseas adventures. Their inclusiveness of foreign cultures and the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture reveal the local community’s rich and exceptional cultural genes and its critical role in the development of Kulangsu. Thus, Kulangsu not only becomes a model for exchanges of diverse cultures at the early globalization stage but also offers us today valuable historical experience for mutual understanding and joint development among different cultures and values across the world.

b) Justification for Criteria

Criteria (ii)

Kulangsu had been an outstanding international cultural exchange window with unique characteristic in East Asia and South-east Asia from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. Various architectural styles including traditional southern Fujian style, veranda colonial style, western classical revival style, modern style and Art Deco met together here and formed the unique Amoy Deco Style integrating vernacular architectural features in the multicultural island, and exerting influence to other coastal areas. With its intact island environment, natural and organic road network, urban fabric of distinctive features, historic buildings and gardens of various styles, Kulangsu exhibits the extensive and in-depth exchanges between the traditional Chinese culture, local culture of southern Fujian, and diverse foreign cultures in all dimensions including social life, architectural and landscape design and construction, artistic styles and
modern technologies. It is a testimony of the encounter, interactions and fusion of humankind’s values at the early globalization stage in East Asia and South-east Asia coastal areas.

Criteria (iii)

During the early waves of globalization, the development track of Kulangsu from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century is an epitome of China’s stepped in the contemporary times, and an outstanding evidence of the pioneering and inclusive migration culture of southern Fujian. The migration culture of southern Fujian, originating from the ancient Chinese culture in the central plains and absorbing the local maritime spirit, has featured the adherence to the core values of the ancient Chinese culture and the openness to heterogeneous cultures. Since the 19th century, a great number of people from southern Fujian emigrated, became an important bridge for the communications of cultures, capital and information during the globalization wave and built the immigration culture with the characteristics of the epoch. The profound national characteristics, great cultural inclusiveness and powerful self-upgrading capability have been fully exhibited in the modern reforms at multiple aspects such as the community governance, public facility construction, economic activities and cultural innovations boosted by the returned Chinese in Kulangsu after the 20th century, and in its far-reaching influence to the later generations.

Criteria (iv)

Kulangsu is a unique example of an international settlement with high living quality and initial modernization characteristics in East Asia and Southeast Asia in modern times. Within a limited island, Kulangsu has developed organic urban spatial structure with complete functions, erected fashionable architectures and gardens of various styles, and introduced the most advanced public facilities at that time. Thus it constitutes an integrated and well-preserved historical island landscape, presenting distinctively the modernity that took the lead in those days and the modern habitat concept integrating Chinese and foreign cultures.

c) Statement of Integrity

Kulangsu has kept intact all the heritage attributes that express the Outstanding Universal Values, including the well-preserved natural landscape elements, urban spatial pattern comprising historic roads and typical urban block fabrics, administrative offices, institutions, various public service facilities, residential buildings, and private gardens. All heritage attributes are selected based on their representativeness in the similar heritages in terms of cultural characteristics, physical forms and historic periods. All heritage elements on Kulangsu in terms of chronological distribution and heritage features, bear full testimony to the construction accomplishment during the 100 years since mid-19th century, and a reflection of the exchanges and fusion among diverse cultures in relation to social life, architecture and garden art, and construction techniques; and embody the integrity of heritage value in terms of time and space. Over the past 50 years, the small-scale organic renewal methods undertaken have greatly contributed to the integrity of the historic urban landscape by effective control on the height, volume and form of new buildings and by restoring historic buildings in the island. The location of Kulangsu as an independent island contributes to the effective implementation of the protection and management requirements of the property area and the buffer zone, and the effective limitation and management of activities in the sea waters of the buffer zone. On the other hand, the government’s promulgation of regulatory plans and protection regulations propose control requirements on the construction of the coastal cities along the Luijiang River in the Xiamen Island to protect the visual integrity of the nominated property as much as possible.

d) Statement of Authenticity

Kulangsu, as a historic settlement, possesses an integrated historical urban landscape consisting of natural landscape elements, historic roads, typical block fabrics, historic buildings, gardens and
other heritage components. The authenticity of the entire property is obviously embodied through the continuous residential function and nature, well-preserved urban spatial layout and road network, featured forms of urban blocks and historic buildings and gardens continuously used till today.

The authenticity of the above-mentioned carriers of heritage values have been under good protection and inheritance, in terms of form, design, material, function, building technique, location and setting. First, in terms of function, Kulangsu has continued its urban functions as an ideal residential area through defining and regulating this in urban planning, and kept its historic development features in culture, education and other aspects. Second, in terms of the integrated maintenance of the overall urban structure and texture, a small-scale urban renewal strategy, based on detailed regulatory plans, has been adopted to effectively preserve the historic outlook of natural landscapes, the locations, forms and materials of related cultural heritage sites; the layout, spatial dimensions, original materials and image of historical roads; as well as the original functions, building density, and spatial dimensions of typical districts. It enables the historical clues to be clearly read and understood in the overall context today and used as reference for contemporary sustainable urban development. Third, in terms of the conservation of historic buildings and gardens, all historic buildings carrying the value attributes of the nominated property have been included in the registered heritage list at national, provincial and county level under strict protection by Chinese laws and regulations. Historic information contained in the location, architectural form, design, indoor and outdoor building materials, decoration details, and courtyard landscape have been well protected during the course of maintenance, repair and restoration of the historic buildings. Meanwhile, most public and residential buildings still carry their original functions. Local management authorities have strengthened management and monitoring on the reuse of historic buildings so as to make sure that the utilization will not cause adverse impact on their physical elements.

e) Requirements for protection and management

A multi-level conservation and management system from the state to the local level has been set up since the 1980s. Kulangsu was recognized by the State Council as a National Scenic Area in 1988. The entire island and the surrounding sea areas are protected under national laws. Representative historic buildings, yards and structures, cultural sites on Kulangsu have all been included in the Heritage List at the national, provincial and county levels; other historic buildings, roads and natural landscapes also enjoy good protection and management under the National Scenic Area framework. The Conservation and Management Plan for Kulangsu Cultural Heritage Site approved in 2014, the Detailed Regulatory Plan for Kulangsu approved in 2011, and the Regulations of Xiamen Special Economic Zone for the Protection of Kulangsu Cultural Heritage approved in 2012, based on the understanding on the potential Outstanding Universal Values of Kulangsu, provide the effective legal guarantee, and long term systematic and scientific planning guidance. Today, the Administrative Committee of Kulangsu Scenic and Historic Area is responsible for the conservation of all heritage attributes on the island and the coordination between heritage conservation on one hand and urban construction and community development on the other hand.

The long-term expectations for the conservation and management of Kulangsu heritage site:

-- Guarantee the continuation of the residential function and authenticity of Kulangsu by means of the implementation of the master plan and regulatory plans of the scenic and historic area, the management plan of heritage site and other guiding principles for business modes.

-- Strictly execute the Conservation and Management Plan for Kulangsu Cultural Heritage Site in order to develop well-designed strategies for the identification and protection of important natural and cultural heritage resources including historical roads, urban districts and historic buildings.
-- Standardize intervention measures on heritage attributes and establish scientific decision-making and implementation mechanisms in order to remove threats on the safety of heritage attributes and to make the historic setting under effective improvement and strict control.

-- During the implementation process of heritage conservation projects, special emphasis shall be given to guaranteeing the participation of original residents, respecting private ownership, in order to protect the legitimate interests of local inhabitants and sustain the social structure of local communities.

-- In terms of heritage presentation, interpretation and tourist management, the heritage values of Kulangsu, as the principal subject to be presented in the sightseeing system, should be fully explored and thoroughly studied in order to convey the rich historical information. More efforts should be made to improve existing presentation and interpretation tools so that the local residents and visitors could gain a comprehensive understanding of the heritage values.

-- In terms of heritage monitoring, Kulangsu Heritage Monitoring Center – a special body for carrying out heritage monitoring work has been established, and, according to the relevant national standards and regulations, it has structured a monitoring indicator system responding to Kulangsu’s characteristics.

-- In terms of community cooperation and development, establish effective channels to encourage community participation and enhance the recognition and understanding of all stakeholders on heritage values and principles for conservation in order to ensure the community residents become active supporters and participants for the heritage conservation.

-- Improve the physical and cultural environment of Kulangsu and promote the community development through heritage conservation, making the island a cultured and highly livable place with well-improved public facilities, beautiful environment and harmonious atmosphere, serving as a model for the sustainable development of Xiamen city.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

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