

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments

Brief description

The 'Venice of the North', with its numerous canals and more than 400 bridges, is the result of a vast urban project begun in 1703 under Peter the Great. Later known as Leningrad (in the former USSR), the city is closely associated with the October Revolution. Its architectural heritage reconciles the very different Baroque and pure neoclassical styles, as can be seen in the Admiralty, the Winter Palace, the Marble Palace and the Hermitage.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1990

Agency responsible for site management

- The Committee of State Control, Use and Protection of Historic and Cultural Monuments of the St-Petersburg Government
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2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (i), (ii), (iv), (vi)

Justification provided by the State Party

St' Petersburg with its suburbs is a historical monument and a cultural one of the town-planning and landscape art of 18th-19th centuries, it is an object of mixed type, including unique natural and culture elements.

The monument is the part of Leningrad. Leningrad, being one of the most beautiful cities of the world, has peculiarities, characterizing it as a unique phenomenon in the history of culture.

The uniqueness of the object lies in originality of its foundation and development and also in the extent of it's contribution into Russian and world culture.

St' Petersburg, founded by Peter the Great on having unique strategic significance muddy estuary

of the Neva River, in some 10 years after its creation was declared as the capital of the Russian Empire, all resources of which were send into its soonest development. The majority of the large cities of the world was formed and developed by natural way, step by step, spending centuries and centuries to form the nucleus around the first-made historical body like the annual tree rings.

Petersburg - "artificial city" - didn't have that nucleus.

Mastering of the landscape started immediately and went simultaneously in different points of the huge natural amphitheatre, formed by the terraces of the ancient sea and being the natural receptacle of the future gigantic city.

There appeared palaces, state offices, apartment blocks, suburban residences, ship-yards, industrial enterprises, fortresses. But Peter the Great wouldn't stop. He had built a lot of roads and forwaters, having connected all these elements together and having formed planning framework of the future agglomeration.

Composition basis of the city layout, created during the life of Peter the Great, didn't undergo significant changes in further city development and reached a great degree of completeness with the help of efforts of some generations of architects.

Succession of development and consistency of the first idea realization during the whole period of St' Petersburg existence as a capital from 1713 up to 1918 was provided for by strict limitation of urban construction, limiting the elements of market relations and not permitting their destructive influence on the artistic wholeness of the city surroundings.

Petersburg appeared to be the only vivid example of the western European and Russian culture. Those Russians, who was not ever in the Western Europe considered it to be quite a European city. The Europeans saw in the city young Russian city, which was not like other ancient European cities, but this city embodied the European idea of regular city construction.

Landscape geography with its vast water area, flat islands and ramified estuary system predetermined unique properties of the city Landscape.

The area of the Neva water basin was naturally continued by the system of city squares. Variety of water ways of the Neva estuary characterized by different width and twisting has multi-level hierarchy.

Regular network of city layout streets, superimposed on that natural background gave specific

artistic contrast and wealth of perception. St' Petersburg for its "strict and slender look" is obliged to its ensemble's composition and tectonic unity of building - properties, which appeared simultaneously with the birth of the city.

Strictness and restraint which are also basic peculiarities of Petersburg architecture accompanying it at all the stages of its development in spite of the style changes.

City texture of Petersburg is rich in ensembles. These ensembles, merging into each other and grouping into more significant ensemble formation, create complicated multilevel system.

While walking around the city, coming from one organized space into another, the man and having great strength of artistic influence.

There are a lot of beautiful buildings in Leningrad - architecture masterpieces, but not a single one exists by itself, isolated from environment.

That's why value of all Leningrad monuments is conditioned by their including in the harmonious whole which is substituted by them.

St' Petersburg for its founder Peter the Great was a symbol of new reorganizing by him Russia, antipode of hated Middle Ages. And Petersburg justified hopes of its creator. It was Russia capital right in the very 200 years of its history, which were characterized by a mighty development of the Russian culture. The Russian and world culture is indebted to Petersburg for such names as Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Musorgsky, Blok, Achmatova.

City image, Petersburg city surroundings produced significant influence on the creative activity of these masters, helped to the development of their talent. At the same time it is impossible to understand their creative work without getting know Petersburg.

That's why Petersburg with the surroundings is not only the monument of town-planning and landscape art, but also historical and cultural monument.

Impetuous development of capitalism in Russia, weakening of monarchy power, strictly limiting city-building led in the beginning of the 20th century to the Petersburg getting out of the control.

Threat of skyscrapers appearance, impudent invasion of technical architecture into historical environment and other melodies hanged over the city. But even here Petersburg fate appeared to be unique.

In 1913 the development of its historical center practically stopped. World war I, coming after the war revolution and the Civil War were the reasons

of stopping any building in the city. And in 1918 the country's capital had been moved to Moscow. After the revolution the new construction started mainly in the outskirts of the city, and historical center didn't suffer any significant changes, having secured for us inviolable two centuries of Russian history in the stone chronicle.

Historical center of the city of Leningrad, taken in the boundaries of low-restricted protection zones and the system of suburb reservations, palace-park ensembles and fortresses is the greatest historical and cultural monument, a monument of city-building and landscape art of 18th-19th centuries. It deserves international protection and including into the list of World Heritage.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of this cultural property on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criteria I, II, IV and VI.

- Criterion I. In the field of urban design, Leningrad represents a unique artistic achievement in the ambition of the program, the coherency of the plan and the speed of execution. From 1703 to 1725, Peter the Great lifted from a landscape of marshes, peat bogs and rocks, architectural styles in stone and marble for a capital, St. Petersburg, which he wished to be the most beautiful city in all of Europe.

- Criterion II. The ensembles designed in St. Petersburg and the surrounding area by Rastrelli., Vallin de la Mothe, Cameron, Rinaldi, Zakharov, Voronikhine, Rossi, Montferrand, and others, exerted great influence in the 18th and 19th centuries on the development of architecture and monumental arts in Russia and Finland. The normative value of the capital was increased from the beginning by the establishment of the Academy of Sciences, followed by that of the Academy of Fine Arts. The urban model of St. Petersburg, made explicit by future work completed under Catherine II, Alexander I and Nicholas I, was used during the reconstruction of Moscow following the fire of 1812, and as new cities, such as Odessa or Sebastopol, spread in the southern part of the Empire.

- Criterion IV. The nominated cultural property links outstanding examples of baroque imperial residences with the architectural ensemble of St. Petersburg - the baroque and neoclassical capital par excellence. The palaces of Petrodvorets and Tsarskoie Selo (Pushkin), which were restored following destruction during the Second World War, are some of the most significant constructions.

- Criterion VI. Leningrad was twice directly and tangibly associated with events of universal

significance. From 1703 to 1725, the construction of St. Petersburg (recalled by the equestrian statue of Peter the Great by Falconet, located in Gorki Square) symbolizes the opening of Russia to the western world and the emergence of the empire of the czars on the international scene. The Bolshevik Revolution triumphed in Petrograd in 1917 (the city had been renamed in 1914). The Aurora cruiser and the town house of Mathilde Kchesinskaia, later the museum of the Great Socialist Revolution of October, are, in the heart of Leningrad, symbols of the formation of the U.S.S.R.

Committee Decision

Bureau (1990): The Bureau recommended that this property be included in the List and that the Soviet authorities reinforce control over the development of polluting industries and ensure a better balance between industrial and listed areas.

Session (1990): The Committee recommended strongly that the responsible authorities reinforce control over the development of polluting industries and ensure a better balance between industrial areas and listed areas. It also recommended that particular care be exercised as to the possible establishment of new tourism infrastructures, especially hotel facilities.

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- No change has been required by State Party

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate. State Party launched the project of the revision of boundaries
- Buffer zone: adequate
- No change to buffer zone proposed by State Party

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have not been maintained. State Party reported that the urban development might have a negative impact on the authenticity of the property, namely, as far as the protection of vistas is concerned

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Federal Law "On Objects of Cultural Heritage" of the Russian Federation Peoples", The Law of St-Petersburg "On Regulation of Urban Building Activity in Saint Petersburg" (2003)
- The St-Petersburg Heritage Protection Strategy (2005)

- The Federal Venture Management Programme "Protection and Development of the Historical Centre of Saint Petersburg"
- The protection arrangements are considered by State Party as sufficiently effective

Actions taken/proposed:

- Development of "The St-Petersburg Heritage Protection Strategy"
- Timeframe: 2005

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Urban centre, national park, rural landscape

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group has been set up legally in 1997
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: regional, local
- The current management system is considered by State Party as sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- Subsequent improvement of the legal base for the protection, conservation and use of the property

5. Management Plan

- There is no specific management plan for the site
- Responsibility for preparation, over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: N/A

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- State Budget: it is difficult to isolate expenditure for St Peterburg's Centre from the global budget for the city
- Other funding sources: Fund of St-Petersburg Development, World Monuments Fund
- Funding is insufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: N/A

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Very good: interpretation
- Good: conservation, management, education

- Average: promotion
- Bad: visitor management

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Scientific institutions: Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (Academy of Fine Arts), St-Petersburg Architectural-Construction University, Institute *Spetsproektrestavratsia*
- Workshops, training courses and seminars organised by the UNESCO Chair in Urban and Architectural Conservation

9. Visitor Management

- No visitor statistics
- Visitor facilities: Excursion bureaus, museums, museum/souvenir shops, hotels, restaurants, transport infrastructure, parking lots

10. Scientific Studies

- Project *Identification of Components of the Site and St-Petersburg Historic Centre Limits and Vicinities as the World Heritage Property*

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- No signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: local communities, local authorities
- Need for awareness raising: publication of books, tourist maps, multimedia materials dedicated to the St-Petersburg as the World Heritage property
- No web site available
- There have not been taken any steps to involve local people in the management of the site

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- World Heritage Committee sessions: 30th (2006)

Conservation interventions

- Conservation, restoration works: N/A
- Present state of conservation: patchy

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure, environmental pressure, natural disasters, number of inhabitants
- Lowering of the groundwater level, acts of vandalism, fires, inappropriate restoration interventions
- Emergency measures taken: basements maintenance, hydro-isolation works, reconsideration of the protective regimes within the buffer zone

13. Monitoring

- No monitoring programme
- Measures taken/planned: N/A
- Development of key indicators is in progress

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic
- Strengths of management: the scale of restoration works raised, private funding for heritage conservation increased
- Weaknesses of management: inadequate boundaries, no management plan exists, no monitoring programme, lack of funding

Future actions:

- Subsequent legal reforms in the field of heritage preservation. A set of normative documents will be developed to address the weaknesses of management