

SPAIN

Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzin, Granada

Brief description

Rising above the modern lower town, the Alhambra and the Albaycín, situated on two adjacent hills, form the medieval part of Granada. To the east of the Alhambra fortress and residence are the magnificent gardens of the Generalife, the former rural residence of the emirs who ruled this part of Spain in the 13th and 14th centuries. The residential district of the Albaycín is a rich repository of Moorish vernacular architecture, into which the traditional Andalusia architecture blends harmoniously.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1984, 1994

Agency responsible for site management

- Board of Trustees of the Alhambra and Generalife
- Department of Culture
- Regional Government of Andalusia
- Albayzin Board of Trustees

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (i), (iii), (iv)

Justification provided by the State Party

(1984):

- (i) The Alhambra and the gardens of the Generalife represent a unique artistic achievement;
- (ii) Throughout history the Alhambra has had an exceptional influence on Spanish art and culture;
- (iii) The Alhambra is undoubtedly a unique architectural complex;
- (iv) It is a characteristic example of the Nasrid style in Spanish culture;
- (v) It is associated with the history of the Islamic faith in the West.

(1993): Le quartier de l'Albayzín est un complément indispensable au site : l'Alhambra et le Generalife. Il s'agit, en réalité, de deux phases du développement de la ville, de deux aspects de la ville arabe de Grenade. D'ailleurs, lors de l'inscription de cette partie de la ville sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, dans son évaluation, l'ICOMOS avait recommandé que :

(. . .) *Le gouvernement espagnol définit un large périmètre de protection en contrebas de la zone monumentale de l'Alhambra ou du Generalife, afin de stopper la progression des constructions et les parkings.*

Le quartier de l'Albayzín, qui est la partie la plus ancienne de l'ensemble, ne peut être considéré comme une zone tampon du site de l'Alhambra et le Generalife, car il s'agit d'une valeur universelle complémentaire et chronologiquement antérieure au site déjà inscrit. Le quartier de l'Albayzín répond aux critères d'inscription (iv) et (v).

Critère (iv) Malgré le développement consécutif à la conquête chrétienne, l'Albayzín témoigne encore de l'agglomération médiévale mauresque, car le tissu urbain, l'architecture ou ses principales caractéristiques (forme, matériaux, couleur), ainsi que sa physionomie n'ont jamais été altérés par l'adaptation du quartier au mode de vie chrétien.

Cette intégration s'est faite essentiellement par le remplacement des mosquées d'origine par des églises et des bâtiments conventuels. Les nouveaux commanditaires et leurs maîtres d'œuvre ont du être suffisamment éblouis par la beauté et la cohérence de cet ensemble urbain, pour ne pas le défigurer. Aujourd'hui, cinq cents ans après la Reconquista, l'Albayzín reste un exemple remarquable d'agglomération hispano-mauresque.

Critère (v) Bien que des monuments de l'Albayzín témoignent encore de la ville résidentielle, ce quartier est aussi un riche conservatoire de l'architecture vernaculaire mauresque, harmonieusement complétée par l'architecture traditionnelle andalouse, à peine plus récente. L'ensemble de l'architecture laïque est soumise à la trame urbaine d'origine, témoignage de l'agglomération mauresque médiévale.

Les aménagements en cours s'efforcent d'effacer, autant que possible, les manifestations extérieures de la vie moderne (installations électriques, capteurs de télévision, etc.) qui peuvent dégrader l'image parfaite de l'habitat hispano-mauresque traditionnel, qui a pu survivre à travers les siècles, mais qui est en permanence exposé aux mutations irréversibles que risque de causer la vie moderne.

L'architecture et l'urbanisme hispano-mauresque et un phénomène unique en Europe. La seule comparaison possible pour le quartier de l'Albayzín serait celle avec d'autres agglomérations médiévales d'Andalousie. Bien que la trame urbaine de Cordoue et de Séville n'y soit peut-être pas aussi bien conservée.

La ville de Ronda est un bel exemple de ville mauresque, mais ne peut être comparée à l'Albayzín. En effet, le quartier de Grenade témoigne d'une grande ville, centre politique et culturel de premier ordre, tandis que Ronda est représentative des petites agglomérations mauresques. De plus, l'Albayzín n'est effectivement qu'une partie d'un ensemble cohérent déjà reconnu et inscrit en partie sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

(1984): ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of this cultural property based on criteria I, II and IV: unique artistic creations, the Alhambra and the Generalife of Granada bear exceptional testimony to Muslim Spain of the 16th century. They are, as well, an inestimable example of royal Arab residences of the medieval period: neither destroyed (as the majority of the ensembles of the Maghreb and the Machrek) nor changed by the alterations of radical restorations had the Alhambra and the Generalife appeared to have escaped the vicissitudes of time.

It would be desirable, as well, for the Spanish government to define a large area of protection below the monumental zone of the Alhambra and the Generalife in order to prevent the construction of future buildings and parking lots.

Committee Decision

Bureau (1984): The Bureau wished to draw the Spanish authorities' attention to the importance of a perimeter of protection which was wide enough to prevent the surrounding area from being degraded, particularly by an increase in the number of parking lots.

Session (1984): The Committee expressed the wish that, as indicated by the Spanish authorities, a large protection zone will ensure that the visual environment of this property will not be harmed by modern constructions.

Bureau (July 1994): The Bureau endorsed the suggestion made by the Delegate of Spain to adopt the following name: Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, Granada.

Session (1994): Extensions approved by the Committee

The Committee approved the proposed extension and endorsed the suggestion made by the Delegate of Spain to adopt the following name: "Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, Granada".

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- UNESCO's official description not satisfactory. Proposal for change by State Party

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: adequate
- Change to buffer zone proposed by State Party to include the city of Granada

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- The Spanish Historical Heritage Act
- The 1981 Organic Law on the Statutes of Autonomy of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, The 1984 Decree transferring powers regarding matters of historical, artistic, monumental, archaeological and scientific heritage to the Autonomous Community
- The July 1991 Historical Heritage Act of Andalusia. General cultural asset plans dating back to 1989
- The 1986 General Urban Planning Scheme of the city of Granada; The 1986 Special Protection and Interior Reform Plan of the Alhambra and Alijares
- The 2002 Andalusia Urban Planning Act. The 1991 Special Protection and Interior Reform Plan of the Albaicín (Spanish acronym PEPRI Albaicín), currently under review
- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

Improvements proposed:

- The Albayzín PEPRI (the Special Protection and Interior Reform Plan) is currently under review

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, urban centre, rural landscape, other (not specified)

Management /Administrative Body

- Legally constituted steering group, The Albayzín-Granada Municipal Foundation Trust is an Autonomous Municipal Body for the conservation and integrated revitalisation of the city's historic districts with particular attention to WH. It also works closely with the University of Granada, the Senior Scientific Research Council (the Arabic Studies Centre) and the Culture Council in the Regional Government of Andalusia. The Albayzín Technical Unit maintains a database of all applications processed in respect of building licenses, planning, sanctions, ruins and urban planning information for the Management, protection, recovery and valuation of the Site
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: regional; local; University of Granada
- The current management system is sufficiently effective
- Actions proposed: Greater coordination with the Andalusia Regional Government Culture Council

5. Management Plan

- Management plan implemented since 1989
- Title: The Special Plan for Alhambra and Alijares
- Adequately effective
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: The governing bodies of the Alhambra and Generalife Board of Trustees. The Granada Town Hall exercises authority concerning certain facets of urban planning in accordance to the Law
- Other management systems include the management of special programs aimed at the conservation and protection of the site being done by the Albayzin-Granada Foundation

6. Financial Resources**Financial situation**

- State Funds, Granada Municipal, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Regional Government of Andalusia
- European Union FEDER Funds, EU Culture ERDF Funds (Albayzin), The European Investment Bank
- Private foundations, specific sponsorships
- Sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: not provided

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

- Good: conservation, management, promotion, visitor management
- Average: interpretation, education
- Support from regular volunteers

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

- Scientific institutions; The Andalusian Public Administration Institute
- Specific courses through the University of Granada professional organisations, trade unions
- "Albayzín Centre" for training in crafts

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 1,987,686 visitors in 2004
- Trend: - 2.5%
- Visitor facilities: Tourist pass, self-guided tours in several languages, official tourist guides, brochures, monument presentation hall, alternative visit itineraries, access for the disabled, guided visit programme, monthly focus programme, educational programme "the Alhambra and children", temporary exhibits, specialty museums, historical archive and specialised library, conference and meeting hall, international music and dance festival, specialised bookstore, information and visitors' service, full time Red Cross service, cloak room
- The tourist information points, the Centre for the Interpretation of the Sacromonte, the city's public transport service, and a tertiary sector sufficiently developed and scaled to the characteristics of the Site. The Albayzin-Granada Foundation regularly offers a program of guided heritage visits and, at present, a project is under way as part of the URBAN program for the creation of a Water Interpretation Centre located in the Albayzín, and the creation of a Centre for the Documentation of the Historic City accessible to visitors and researchers on the Internet
- Tourism management plan re: www.alhambra-patronato.es; www.albaicin-granada.com

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment; monitoring exercises; condition surveys, archaeological surveys; visitor management; studies related to the values of the site
- Annual Action Programme including Study of the “Baño de Comares” – adaptation of the wooded slope of San Pedro – conservation and control of local fauna – inventory and cartography of the water network – feasibility study on garden plant cultivation facilities – Refurbishing of the Carlos V Chapel for use as an exhibit hall – archaeological research at Carmen de Peñapartida – conservation project at the Palacio de Abencerrajes archaeological site – Rehabilitation of bulwarks – studies on Carmen de Peñapartida – study of epigraphic material – assessment of the Alhambra museum’s library, archive and storeroom project – technical process involving the computerisation and digitalisation of the Historical Archive’s photograph section – Cataloguing and computerisation of the Historical Archive’s engraving, sketch and blueprint section – topographic catalogue of the Historical Archive – Blueprint digitalisation programme – conservation and restoration of photographs from the Historical Archive’s photograph section
- The most important works and a summary of the rest are published by the board in a specialised annual publication known as the “Cuadernos de la Alhambra” (Annals of the Alhambra)

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities, etc.
- Education strategy for schools, university graduates, Master degree in architecture and historical heritage together with the Andalusian Historical Heritage Institute and the University of Seville and with the Master degree in Museology in collaboration with the Directorate-General of Historical Heritage Institutions and the University of Granada. Internship, scholarships

- Municipal programs to publicise the heritage among pupils and the general public, and others run by the Albayzín–Granada Foundation as part of European programs it manages (URBAN and the Urban Pilot Project), and by the Municipal Rehabilitation Institute as part of the program for the Elvira-Gomez Urban Renewal Project (EFTA). There is also a dissemination programme targeting the public at large regarding heritage itineraries
- Need for awareness raising
- Special events: numerous exhibits and published catalogues
- The Albayzín has a number of different centres: the Max Moreau Museum, the School of Arab Studies, the Albayzín Centre, Santa Isabel la Real, the Albayzín Community Activities Centre.
- Web site available, www.albaicin-granada.com; www.granada.org; www.rehabilitacion.org
- Local participation: a Friends of the Alhambra Association, urban community programs

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- World Heritage Bureau sessions: 21st (1997); 22nd (1998); 23rd (1999)
- World Heritage Bureau sessions: 21st^t (1997); 23rd (1999)

Conservation interventions

- An extensive list of conservation, restoration works
- Present state of conservation: Good

Threats and Risks to site

- Environmental, development pressures, natural disasters, number of inhabitants, visitor tourism pressure
- Specific issues if mentioned : Threats due to the age of the construction and the seismic risk
- Emergency measures taken: solutions for diversifying the visit itinerary, traffic control

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic

- Strengths of management: international acknowledgement of the value, recognised prestige, visitor awareness
- Weaknesses of management: tourist pressure factors related to urban planning, the environment; ageing of the heritage site: rehabilitation and restoration; buildings and public areas: rehabilitation plans targeting homes, refurbishing of public areas, provision of public facilities; traffic and parking: environmental pressure; public awareness-heightening campaigns; depopulation: public use of buildings; delinquency; land speculation; earthquakes; need to bury overhead cables; need to properly deal with numerous underground archaeological finds

Future actions:

- In addition to the permanent updating of control mechanisms guaranteeing proper harmony between conservation and the surroundings deriving from the former, the different competent bodies hold awareness-heightening conferences
- For the Albayzín work is under way to enhance home, habitability and rental policy