

ICOMOS

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МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

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Charenton-le-Pont, 20 December 2019

H. E. Mr Juan Andrés Perello Rodriguez
Permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of Spain
to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 PARIS Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2020

Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences (Spain) – Interim report and additional information request

Dear Ambassador,

As prescribed by the revised *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies have been requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2020. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation process.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to “Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences” was carried out by Bernhard Furrer (Switzerland) in October 2019. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organization and implementation of the mission.

On 24 September 2019, a letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding the proposed justification of the criteria, comparative analysis, attributes, conservation of public roads, over-exploitation in some areas, tree issues, state of conservation, protection, management, sources and levels of finance, presentation of the property, and staffing levels and expertise. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 4 November 2019 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

In mid-November 2019, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2020. The additional information provided by the State Party, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2020.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation to the meeting held on Thursday 21 November 2019 with representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. The exchange during this meeting was of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting.

While the ICOMOS Panel considered that the "Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences" might have the potential to meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value, this has not yet been demonstrated.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

Proposed justification for inscription

The nominated property has a complex physical form and related history. Based on the information provided by the State Party, the overarching theme appears to be of urban and social reform with the greening of cities and public access to these areas, and the related development and socialisation of the arts and sciences.

Given this complexity, could the State Party please briefly re-state its view on the overall proposed justification for inscription for the whole property?

Justification of criterion (ii)

From the information provided in the nomination dossier, ICOMOS noted that emphasis was put on the influence of some component parts, but not of the property as a whole. The additional information provided by the State Party stresses that it is the influence of the property as a whole, not its individual parts, which is the basis of the justification for this criterion.

Could the State Party briefly summarise and augment its justification of the influence of the property as a whole, in terms of what were the major themes of the influence and what are the specific major examples of properties which were influenced?

Justification of criterion (iv)

The justification of this criterion relies partly on the idea that the property is a town development model of the enlightened absolutist period. It also refers to the property as an evolving designed cultural landscape. But it is also noted that the multi-era context of development of the whole property, and also some destruction within parts, is very long.

ICOMOS considers that the justification of this criterion remains unclear, as it gathers many different elements from this long history without a clear and convincing connection linking them together as a type of property. It would be necessary that the State Party undertake some refinement and better articulation of the relationship with the park and natural elements introduced into the city.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis is partly framed in terms of the property being a new type – a designed cultural landscape in evolution which is integrated into an urban environment. As a result of this, and the six main attributes highlighted in the additional information, it is argued there are no real comparators with the nominated property. ICOMOS is not yet convinced by this analysis. The values and attributes presented and used in the analysis and highlighted in the additional information are the result of a complex construction that leads to a situation where no comparators could be found because of this construction and aggregation of elements.

In the light of these comments and questions raised above regarding the justification, and those about the overall Outstanding Universal Value narrative, could the State Party consider augmenting the comparative analysis to reflect any revised or enhanced understanding of the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property? In particular, the issues of the influence of and typology applicable to the whole property are key issues in the justification.

Given the suggested augmentation of the justification of criterion (ii) and refinement and clarification of the justification of criterion (iv), could the State Party consider whether the comparative analysis also requires adjustment to better reflect any revised justification.

According to the nomination dossier, there was an influence from the Paseo del Prado for the tree-lined avenues in the Latin-American cities during the Spanish colonial period. The inclusion of 'Alamedas' in some Latin-American cities is quite well-known, but it should be noted that the biggest transformation of those urban spaces were done after the Independence with a clear influence from France. Could the State Party complete the comparative analysis by demonstrating how Madrid, and more specifically the Paseo del Prado, could be said to have been the model for the tree-lined avenue in the Latin American cities?

During the meeting with the ICOMOS Panel, it was indicated that additional references were available which would inform the analysis related to alamedas. ICOMOS would be pleased to receive these references, and where these are lengthy, then a summary of the important conclusions as well.

In addition, it is noted that major changes occurred to the avenue in the 1770s. Could further explanation be provided on the specific influence of the avenue after the 1770s, as it seems possible that there may have been a more general trend to develop such avenues in this later period?

Boundaries

In some instances, the proposed boundaries accord with the precise boundary of an attribute, for example, the fence of the Buen Retiro, but does not include the urban space adjacent such as the street and building facades opposite. In another instance, the boundary cuts through the Plaza de Emperador Carlos V, again excluding the full urban space.

ICOMOS considers that it would be important for the State Party to redefine the boundaries of the property by taking into account the urban space perception, so that the park, avenue and adjoining facades could form a unity, which is put forward by this nomination. This would allow a clearer and a better understanding of the delineation of the nominated area.

With the submission of the new map showing the delineation of the revised boundaries, could the State Party also indicate the revised surface area in hectares?

Buffer Zone

ICOMOS notes the choice of the State Party to nominate this property without a buffer zone, which is possible according to § 106 of the *Operational Guidelines*. The reasons are detailed in the nomination dossier by the State Party, explaining that the existing protections are sufficient to ensure the protection of the area surrounding the nominated property. ICOMOS understands that this situation is the result of a careful reflection after having considered different options of having a buffer zone.

Buffer zones are effective when a predictable impact from outside the property can be identified, and a suitable zone of sensitivity can be defined which can afford protection from such impacts. Buffer zones also help trigger the involvement of the World Heritage Committee which can reinforce the protection efforts of the State Party.

The nomination dossier also notes that "The property cannot be understood without its urban context" (page 42). Can the State Party clarify whether the relationships to this urban context have been analysed and documented, including in a spatial form?

In this context, ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could provide information on the different options that were considered for a buffer zone.

Management Plan

Could the State Party clarify whether there is a management plan for the Buen Retiro, and especially if such a plan provides guidance, consistent with any potential Outstanding Universal Value, regarding new developments within the gardens?

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation process.

We would be grateful if you could provide **ICOMOS** and the **World Heritage Centre** with the above information **by 28 February 2020 at the latest**, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the *Operational Guidelines* for supplementary information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So we would be grateful if the State Party could keep its response concise and respond only to the above requests.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation process.

Yours faithfully,



Gwenaëlle Bourdin
Director
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

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 Histórico Ministerio de Cultura
 UNESCO World Heritage Centre