
Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro (Spain) No 1618

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences

Location

Municipality of Madrid
Autonomous Community of Madrid
Spain

Brief description

Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences is located at the urban heart of Madrid. Evolved over centuries, the nominated property reflects a number of important historical influences. It was the prototype of a Hispanic *alameda* (tree-lined avenue) from the 16th century, as well as an example of a new idea of urban space and of an urban development model from the enlightened absolutist period of the 18th century. Buildings dedicated to the arts and the sciences join others devoted to industry, healthcare and research in a 200-hectare cultural landscape. All collectively illustrate the aspiration for a utopian society during the height of the Spanish Empire.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *group of buildings*.

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (July 2019) paragraph 47, it has also been nominated as a *cultural landscape*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

27 January 2015

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations and Technical Evaluation Mission

Desk reviews have been provided by ICOMOS International Scientific Committees, members and independent experts.

Comments on the natural attributes of this property, and their conservation and management were received from IUCN on 19 November 2019 and have been incorporated into relevant sections of this report.

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 6 to 11 October 2019.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

A letter was sent to the State Party on 24 September 2019 requesting further information about the justification of Outstanding Universal Value, comparative analysis, attributes, state of conservation, protection and management.

An Interim Report was provided to the State Party on 20 December 2019 summarising the issues identified by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel. Further information was requested in the Interim Report, including: the overall justification for inscription, criteria, comparative analysis, boundaries, buffer zone and management plan.

At its own initiative, on 23 October 2019 the State Party provided updated mapping and boundary information to correct an error.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 4 November 2019 and 28 February 2020 and has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this evaluation report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

12 March 2020

2 Description of the property

Note: The nomination dossier and additional information contain detailed descriptions of this property, its history and its state of conservation. Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, this report only provides a short summary of the most relevant aspects.

Description and history

The Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences is located in the centre of Madrid. Combining culture and nature, it is a designed cultural landscape in an urban environment that has evolved over centuries. The nominated property has an irregular form but is roughly a square, sloping from a high point in the northeast corner to the southwest. It has four contiguous parts: the Jardines del Buen Retiro; the Real Jardín Botánico; the Paseo del Prado and its associated streetscape; and the Barrio Jerónimos.

Jardines del Buen Retiro

The 120-hectare Pleasant Retreat Gardens is the largest part of the property. Now a public park, it is an extensive remnant of the 17th-century Buen Retiro palace (which no longer survives), along with a number of other buildings. It comprises a series of different landscaped spaces as a result of the influence of different gardening styles from the 19th century to the present day.

In addition to extensive gardens in the French, Italian and English styles are landscape elements such as the monumental 17th-century Retiro pond, the Rose Garden and the Paseo de la Argentina, also known as the Statue Walk. In the Reservado ("reserved" section) are follies such as the Casita del Pescador (Fisher's Cottage) and Montaña Artificial (Artificial Mountain). There is a small valley or depression where the 19th-century Cristal and Velázquez exhibition palaces stand.

Real Jardín Botánico

The 8-hectare Royal Botanical Garden is located near the southwest corner of the nominated property. It is organised into three levels of terraces, the lower two of which resemble parterres but are planted with a wide range of plants. A taxonomic collection of plants is ordered phylogenetically. The garden's large herbarium conserves about one million specimens of dried plants, and botanical drawings.

Paseo del Prado

This broad avenue and its associated streetscape runs approximately north-south, forming the western edge of the nominated property. The Paseo del Prado is the prototype of an *alameda* (tree-lined avenue), and its flanking buildings are major cultural, scientific, political, economic and civic institutions.

The heart of the Paseo del Prado lies between two major fountains, the Fuente de Cibeles at the northern end and the Fuente de Neptuno. The Plaza de Cibeles, perhaps the most iconic visual symbol of the city, is surrounded by prestigious buildings such as the Palacio de Comunicaciones (now Madrid City Council). The tree-lined Paseo runs south to the Fuente de Neptuno by way of two complementary monuments, the Fuente de Apolo (Apollo Fountain) and the Monumento a los Caídos (Monument to the Fallen).

The southern section of the Paseo continues with its tree-lined walk from the Fuente de Neptuno to the Glorieta de Carlos V (Carlos V Roundabout), with an extension to the Atocha railway station. The monumental landmark at the midpoint of this section is the Cuatro Fuentes (Four Fountains). This area includes important art museums such as the Museo Nacional del Prado and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Also on the southern side of the nominated property is a small area known as the Colina de las Ciencias (Hill of Sciences), with the Museo Nacional de Antropología and Real Observatorio Astronómico.

Barrio Jerónimos

The Saint Jerome neighbourhood is an urban enclave between the Paseo del Prado to the west and the Buen Retiro park to the east. Largely residential, it has a rich variety of 19th- and 20th-century buildings that also include cultural venues such as the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas (National Museum of Decorative Arts) and Casón del Buen Retiro.

Historically and according to the nomination dossier, two of the major parts of the property, the Paseo del Prado and the Jardines del Buen Retiro, have links from at least 1540 to the first tree-lined walk, the Prado Viejo (Old Prado), which was close to two important religious sites, the Monasterio de los Jerónimos (Jerónimos or Hieronymite Monastery, 1505) and the Ermita de la Virgen de Atocha (Virgin of Atocha Hermitage). The walk was embraced by Madrid's citizens of the time as means to enjoy leisure and recreation in a natural environment.

In the 1630s, Felipe IV, undoubtedly attracted by the qualities of the tree-lined walk, ordered that his new Buen Retiro palace and its extensive gardens be constructed nearby. Linking the walk and the palace benefitted from the conjunction of nature with the highest achievements of the artistic and literary virtuosi who populated the Spanish Golden Age (1580-1680). The Buen Retiro palace became the epicentre of Golden Age culture, the setting for its most remarkable artistic and literary expressions and collections.

Carlos III opened part of the gardens to the public in 1767, integrating the Buen Retiro into a general improvement plan for the city. More of the gardens were opened progressively over time until it was fully open in 1848. The Paseo del Prado was remodelled in the 1760s-1770s based on Enlightenment ideals regarding urban development, generally taking on its current form.

About 1770 a great transformation of Madrid began under Carlos III. The enlightened monarch led a major initiative to bring the sciences, healthcare and industry closer to Madrid society by locating major scientific institutions in the vicinity. This project included establishing the Real Jardín Botánico (1778), Academia de Ciencias (Academy of Sciences), Gabinete de Historia Natural (Natural History Cabinet) and Real Observatorio Astronómico (Royal Astronomical Observatory, 1790), which crowned the Colina de las Ciencias (Hill of Sciences).

A new concept of urban space thus emerged, a complex project with a clear social element that included the establishment of an innovative group of buildings and facilities dedicated to science and to educating the public, and which would also embellish the city. This urban renewal became a model that exercised special influence in Latin America.

Although the War of Independence against the French (1808-1814) led to the interruption of the mass reforms that had been planned, the nominated property maintained its artistic, scientific and leisure traditions.

The Buen Retiro palace was damaged in 1808 and later demolished. The gardens were retained, however, and from 1868 to 1876 they were transferred to the city of Madrid with the intention of maintaining a natural space for leisure activities in the dense urban environment. Development of the largely residential Jerónimos

neighbourhood on the former palace site began in the 1860s-1870s, about the same time the Buen Retiro became a public park.

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries the entire area benefited from the major cultural, political, social, scientific, and economic institutions that were located here, representing a dynamic society and manifesting social participation. This association of nature, arts and sciences, leisure and representation has continued to the present, with part of the nominated property being known as the Paseo de las Artes (Art Walk) due to the convergence of numerous museums devoted to the arts. The sciences are also present in the Real Jardín Botánico, the Real Observatorio Astronómico and other like institutions.

The nominated property also has a close relationship with literature. This includes the early works of the dramatist Pedro Calderón de la Barca and playwright Lope de Vega, which were performed in the Buen Retiro palace's theatre, and the work of the Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy). Leading political and economic institutions were also attracted here, such as the Congreso (Congress, 1850), Banco de España (Bank of Spain, 1881) and Bolsa de Madrid (Madrid Stock Exchange, 1893).

Boundaries

The nominated property has a revised area of 218.91 ha. No buffer zone is proposed.

The State Party provided updated mapping and boundary information on 23 October 2019 to correct an error and replace the maps provided in the nomination dossier.

While the nominated property boundaries incorporate many of the identified attributes that support the proposed Outstanding Universal Value, in a number of instances they do not satisfactorily address the associated urban space and associated facades. In parts, the proposed boundaries also cut through building complexes, sometimes including streets, and sometimes bisecting public spaces.

In response to the Interim Report, the State Party has revised the boundaries of the nominated property to address these issues. The revised area of the nominated area is of 218.91 ha. In relation to these new property delineation, ICOMOS considers that clarifications should be provided as regards the extent to which the buildings and facades of buildings at the edge of the nominated property are included within the revised boundaries.

The State Party does not propose a buffer zone on the grounds that existing legislation offers sufficient legal protection to the immediate environment of the nominated property, and that an additional protective zone would therefore be superfluous and even confusing. The *Operational Guidelines* accept the

possibility that some properties may not need a buffer zone.

ICOMOS notes that the nomination dossier explains that urban context allows the understanding of the property. In its Interim Report, ICOMOS sought further information about the relationship with the urban context, if it was analysed by the State Party and documented, and also about options considered for the potential establishment of a buffer zone. The State Party advised that the relationship to the urban context has been carefully studied. It also provided details of three buffer zone options, noting the option based on the Historical Centre in the Madrid General Urban Development Plan (PGOUM) is the most reasonable, being based on historical, visual and functional protection criteria. The State Party also advised it would have no objection to adopting such an option if necessary.

While existing protection may largely be effective, ICOMOS considers that given the pressures that often arise in such urban contexts, the establishment of a buffer zone that explicitly addresses the proposed Outstanding Universal Value would be necessary. ICOMOS recommends that the delineation of an adequate buffer zone be undertaken, based on the Historical Centre in the Madrid General Urban Development Plan (PGOUM).

State of conservation

The overall current state of conservation of the nominated property is reasonably good.

The Paseo del Prado, Jardines del Buen Retiro, Real Jardín Botánico and the historic buildings in public ownership are generally in an excellent state of conservation. Less information is provided on the landscape features.

Only 18 percent of the historic buildings within the boundaries of the nominated property are privately owned. Private owners seem to be interested mainly in the conservation of their building's facades, entrance and staircase. Typically, the private rooms of apartments have been renewed and transformed. ICOMOS requested in its first letter further information on the state of conservation of privately-owned buildings. The State Party explained that owners are addressing the conservation of their buildings under municipal supervision and that the results are considered adequate

Information was also sought regarding whether a more recent survey of trees had been undertaken, and the State Party indicated the last survey dates from 2015/16.

Factors affecting the property

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the property are intensity of use, air pollution and climate change.

More than 10 million visitors to the nominated property's main museums were recorded in 2017. The very intensive use of the Paseo del Prado and the Buen Retiro park is concentrated on Sundays.

Air pollution, caused mainly by private motor vehicles, is a major factor affecting the nominated property. This is concentrated in the area around Atocha railway station and the Paseo del Prado. The city is trying to improve the public transport system. In addition, the Paseo del Prado is closed to traffic for some hours on Sundays.

Climate change is affecting the nominated property. Trees are suffering and water consumption for the Jardines del Buen Retiro and Real Jardín Botánico is increasing. A solution to this problem will need to be found soon.

In the nomination dossier, ICOMOS noted that there is overexploitation of some areas, and requested in its first letter the State Party to provide information on the nature and extent of this exploitation. The State Party replied providing information about short-term but intensive uses which could potentially affect the nominated property, but that achieving a balance with conservation when these intensive uses are undertaken, is a management priority.

3 Proposed justification for inscription

Proposed justification

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The Buen Retiro was witness to the influence of European landscape design that left traces of French classicism, English landscaping and the early 20th-century historicist style that spread throughout Europe.
- The Paseo del Prado has exercised unquestionable influence in Spanish America since it was first established, especially on the Spanish American vicerealties where similar *alameda* projects were based on the Madrid prototype.
- The close links with Latin America included shared cultural or scientific projects, such as Real Jardín Botánico's global botanical expeditions. These close relationships are still alive in shared scientific and cultural projects and institutions.
- It became an innovative town development model of the enlightened absolutist period, and is a prototype of a new idea of improvement of the urban space with a strong social content guided by rational

criteria to enhance ornamentation, hygiene and functionality.

- The Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro park are a powerful and unique expression of enlightened ideals applied to town development projects with the unique and innovative addition of the sciences as an essential component, with a view to socialising knowledge and making it available to all citizens.
- The nominated property represents a utopian society, a melting pot of human aspirations at the height of the Spanish Empire when the democratisation of knowledge was introduced as the basis of a new world society, an idea that extended beyond Spain to the other side of the ocean.
- Its connection with the arts and sciences makes it an extraordinary receptacle within an exceptional historical context. The arts, sciences, healthcare, industry and research are all part of an exchange of human and scientific values that promotes the dissemination of knowledge and whose public and social roles have been preserved with outstanding vitality.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS raised the complex physical form of the nominated property and its related history, and asked the State Party to briefly re-state the justification for inscription for the property as a whole. In response, a re-statement of the justification for the property was provided which reflects some re-framing or focusing of the justification, and the provision of some additional information. The key concept expressed is the introduction of nature into the urban environment.

The nomination dossier explains that the two main areas of the property: Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro were both developed simultaneously, influencing the successive transformations of each one, whereby they cannot be separated in history. However, ICOMOS considers that this argument is difficult to sustain in the light of historical facts. When the *alamedas* were planted they were in the public realm, whilst the palace gardens were private. Even when permission was granted to the public to enter the gardens (something that most European rulers were doing at the time), no special provision was made for access. It was not until the changes to convert the Buen Retiro into a public park carried out in the 1870s, that major routes connecting the gardens to the Paseo were opened up. The property had little coherence as a whole until that point: the Paseo del Prado and the Jardines del Buen Retiro may have been proximate geographically, but they were developed for different reasons and in different ways, and over time they grew apart in function and character. ICOMOS considers that the justification for the property as a whole is not convincing from the historic synthesis.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis is structured into four parts, based on typologies linked to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value: designed evolving cultural landscapes in an urban environment; properties containing three different types of designed cultural landscapes (urban

park, tree-lined avenue and scientific garden); properties manifesting actions typical of the Enlightenment; and properties with a special relationship to the arts and sciences as part of their evolution. The analysis includes properties on the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists, and sites not on either list.

The State Party presents the nominated property as a new type of property that would fill a gap in the World Heritage List: a designed cultural landscape in evolution which is integrated into an urban environment. Further, the analysis notes that there are no other listed properties with similar key attributes, nor is there a thematic study which would inform the analysis.

In the case of designed evolved cultural landscapes, a preliminary review of 42 parks and gardens was reduced to 15 European palaces with gardens located in urban areas. The analysis argues that these properties were created at specific historical moments and represent outstanding styles of gardens, but are unlike the Buen Retiro, which has evolved and transformed through history. They are therefore not considered appropriate for comparison.

In other cases, examples are dismissed because of their different geo-cultural region or their very different character.

One designed urban cultural landscape on the World Heritage List is compared to the nominated property, Rio de Janeiro: Carioca Landscapes between the Mountain and the Sea (Brazil, 2012, criteria (v) and (vi)). The analysis concludes that this property is not entirely comparable because of the importance of its interaction with the city's natural surroundings, rather than with the designed landscape.

No comparable designed landscapes were ultimately identified which contain the different types of designed landscapes.

The analysis also considers tree-lined avenues in Europe. None are found to be comparable. One non-European treed avenue, the Paseo del Prado in Havana (Cuba), has significant similarities to the nominated property but is slightly later in date, was actually influenced by the nominated property, and lacks the urban, institutional and cultural developments in a key period, according to the analysis.

A number of urban parks are also analysed, such as Hyde Park in London (United Kingdom), as well as prototypes of urban renewal from the 18th-century Enlightenment, such as Unter den Linden boulevard in Berlin (Germany). Again, none are found comparable.

The last section of the analysis addresses designed cultural landscapes that have a special connection to the arts and sciences. Some potentially comparable properties are identified but rejected because they are

not in an urban context or part of a town planning process. More detailed analyses are presented for some examples but these are also found not to be comparable.

The analysis concludes that the nominated property has unique qualities not found in any other properties, which according to the State Party supports a claim of Outstanding Universal Value and fills a gap in the World Heritage List.

ICOMOS notes that the comparative analysis is framed, in part, in terms of the nominated property being a new typology – a designed cultural landscape which has evolved to a particular point in time, and which is integrated into an urban environment. As a result, and reiterated in six main attributes highlighted in additional information provided by the State Party in November 2019, it is asserted that there are no comparable properties.

Clearly, most of the property is designed landscape which is set within and integrated with the surrounding urban fabric. However, the argument that it is a new type of designed cultural landscape in World Heritage terms is weak.

ICOMOS is not convinced by this new type or category of cultural landscape, and therefore considers that the nominated property cannot be said to fill a gap on the World Heritage List based on this new typology.

ICOMOS is also not yet convinced by the methodology used for the comparative analysis. The values and attributes chosen for the analysis are the result of a complex construct that leads to a situation where comparisons can be made only with parts of the nominated property, but not with the whole property.

The difficulty with the initial analysis arises because of the complexity of the values which, as noted below, do not yet present a satisfactory justification of Outstanding Universal Value. The clearly articulated influence of the whole property would have helped to frame a more satisfactory comparative analysis. ICOMOS also notes that uniqueness is not, on its own, sufficient to justify inscription.

It seems that the Prado's *alamedas*, were always on common land, and there is evidence of the city authorities and the owners paying for their upkeep, whilst improvements were aided on occasions by Royal largesse. They were thus a very early provision of green public space.

In considering the Buen Retiro, ICOMOS notes that by the 18th century another common form of public walk was the Royal, noble or episcopal gardens of the capital cities, when thrown open to the public. The Jardines del Buen Retiro were very much part of this trend, and the nomination dossier mentions that they were thrown open to the public by Carlos III in 1767, re-opened after

the Napoleonic War in the late 1810s, and finally transferred to the city authorities in 1848. The major wave of public park creation in Europe and America was in the late 19th century. The improvements to the Jardines del Buen Retiro from the 1870s for the sake of the public were thus part of the widespread public park movement at that time.

ICOMOS requested in its Interim Report that the State Party augment the comparative analysis section in order to reflect any revised or enhanced understanding of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value, especially in terms of influence of the nominated property on other sites, and as being a model for the tree-lined avenue in Latin American cities.

The State Party provided an augmented comparative analysis, with a focus on the *alamedas*. The influence represented by Paseo del Prado, in different contexts is now better expressed, especially in Latin America for the different moments of the history. The State Party offered a historic presentation that reinforce the values of Paseo del Prado and also the two moments that determined the current urban configuration and social vocation of the property: 16th and 18th century. However, in those instances where examples are provided of green urban spaces, it is not clear whether the State Party has adequately portrayed their values, for example by relying on existing statements of value which might focus on architecture and planning rather than on landscaping. Such statements might not fully capture the values of the potentially comparable properties.

ICOMOS considers that the overall analysis is more convincing regarding the *alamedas*. The re-statement of the justification, focused on the introduction of nature into the urban environment, is also helpful to simplifying and strengthening the context for the analysis for the whole property. However, this focus on the *alamedas* for the comparative analysis would benefit further exploration in Latin America and beyond and support by archival and literary evidence.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List at this stage.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi).

Criterion (ii): *exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;*

The State Party considers that the Paseo del Prado influenced the Spanish American vicerealties, where similar *alameda* projects based on the Madrid model were implemented in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Close links with Latin America also arose

regarding shared cultural or scientific projects, especially the Real Jardín Botánico's botanical expeditions there and around the world. Such shared projects continue. And finally, the State Party considers that the Buen Retiro gardens reflect the influence of European landscape design, with traces of French classicism, English landscaping and the historicist style of the early 20th century.

ICOMOS asked the State Party in its first letter to further explain the influence of the nominated property as a whole or of some of its components, and how this influence could be said to reflect an interchange of values. The State Party replied by emphasising that it is the influence of the nominated property as a whole that is important, not the separate influence of its parts.

ICOMOS considers that while the strength of the influence of parts of the property is substantial, especially the tree-lined avenue, the influence of the whole property is much less apparent. The nomination dossier does not clearly articulate how the physical assets of the whole nominated property influenced the tangible dissemination of ideas important in the history of landscape design, town planning or architecture over a span of time or within a cultural area, as demonstrated by specific major examples of that dissemination.

The Paseo del Prado tree-lined avenue, originating in the 16th century though substantially modified in the 18th century, had a strong influence in the Spanish colonies as a town development model. It was an early and important example of an *alameda*; an obvious example of the influence it had is the eponymous Paseo del Prado in Havana, Cuba.

ICOMOS requested clarification on the type of influence and links related to scientific research and project connections that are presented in the nomination dossier as justification of this criterion. The State Party replied that influence and links exist regarding enlightened concepts in science and culture, connected to institutions located within the nominated property, which relate to landscape design and technology.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS also requested the State Party to augment the justification of this criterion on the basis of the identification of the major themes of the influence of the property, and specifying what are the main sites influenced by the nominated property. The State Party augmented this justification and provided a convincing argument for the influence of the *alameda*. However, the justification would still appear to be weak regarding the influence of the whole property, especially including the Buen Retiro.

In the case of the influence of the Paseo del Prado after the 1770s, the State Party has provided additional information about specific influences which appears convincing.

ICOMOS considers that the criterion could have potential to be justified on the basis of the influence the *alameda* had in the development of cities, and especially in Latin America. However, the influence of the whole property is not justified, in part because of the weakness in the comparative analysis.

ICOMOS considers that the State Party might further explore the theme of the *alameda* with the Paseo del Prado and its influence of being a pattern for the development of cities elsewhere in the world, and especially in Latin America.

Criterion (iv): *be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;*

The State Party considers the Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro designed cultural landscape to be a prototype of a Hispanic *alameda* and of a *paseo*. It is also a town development model of the enlightened absolutist period, a prototype of a new idea of improvement of urban space with a strong social content guided by rational criteria to enhance ornamentation, hygiene and functionality. The State Party concludes that the Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro are a powerful and unique expression of enlightened ideals applied to town development projects with the unique addition of the sciences as an essential component, all with a view to the democratisation of knowledge and making it available to all citizens.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is meant to relate to the outstanding nature of the typology of a property, nominated in the context of that defined typology illustrating one or more significant stages in history. The criterion should be used in relation to significant prototypes or strongly representative examples of a defined type of property. However, different typologies have been proposed for different parts of the nominated property, rather than conceiving it as a single property with an overarching Outstanding Universal Value.

ICOMOS therefore considers that the typology of the overall nominated property is not clear. The nomination gathers many different features from a long history without a clear and convincing connection linking them together as a specific typology of property. The multi-era context of the nominated property's development involved both the creation and destruction of features over time.

The *alameda* prototype from the 16th century was a significant point in the history of the development of urban landscapes. Its later development during the Enlightenment embellished the city with impressive buildings.

ICOMOS requested in its first letter further information as regards the State Party's view of the relevant significant stage in human history. The State Party replied that the significant period is the evolution of the Spanish empire, within which there are distinct periods such as the Spanish Golden Age and the Enlightenment.

ICOMOS requested in its Interim Report additional information as regards the connection linking the many different elements together as a specific type of property. The State Party has reinforced its argument regarding the type of property, by explaining the unifying idea of creating green urban spaces in two different stages of history – from the end of the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, and the Enlightenment itself.

This simpler overarching connection has potentially greater strength, but ICOMOS has doubts that the overall nominated property can be justified as an outstanding example in this context. In particular, the Buen Retiro is a major part of the nominated property but its justification or contribution to the overall justification is weak. In addition, its justification is not supported by a robust comparative analysis.

Criterion (vi): *be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;*

The State Party considers that the nominated property represents a utopian society created at the height of the Spanish Empire, when the democratisation of knowledge was introduced as the basis of colonial societies in Spanish America. Patronage of the arts by the Habsburg monarchs fostered the expansion of important art collections and the construction of numerous museums and cultural institutions over the years. Simultaneously in the 18th century, the sciences took on an extraordinary and unique level of importance, together with healthcare and industry. Thus, the arts, sciences, healthcare, industry and research form a complete cultural unit, rooted in the awareness and conscience of citizens. This was part of an exchange of human and scientific values that promotes the dissemination of knowledge, and whose public and social roles have been preserved.

ICOMOS considers that, in combining leisure, recreation, arts and sciences, the nominated property reflects the Enlightenment spirit associated with the wider dissemination of knowledge. However, the justification is not convincing that the nominated property could be considered outstanding for these associations. In addition, this might be seen as a recapitulation of some of the arguments provided under criterion (iv).

ICOMOS considers that criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi) have not been demonstrated for the entire nominated property. ICOMOS considers that the Paseo del Prado could have the potential to meet criteria (ii) and maybe (iv) as a prototypical tree-lined avenue, and that further exploration should be undertaken towards this direction, and would need to be confirmed by a strong comparative analysis.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

A substantial integrity issue relates to a series of interventions in the immediate surroundings of the Paseo del Prado. Over the last two decades, the cultural offerings within the nominated property have increased considerably, especially art museums. Several museum buildings have been restored, historical buildings have been transformed into museums, and ambitious enlargements have been realised. While these projects have strengthened aspects of the nominated property's cultural infrastructure, some of the changes also challenge its integrity.

There are also three smaller issues regarding the integrity of the Paseo del Prado regarding trees, bushes and there are breaks in the tree plantings, obtrusively high bushes in the Plaza de Cánovas del Castillo, and a lack of coherence in some of the urban fabric, including pavements.

A substantial issue with the Buen Retiro park is the presence of a large sports field with buildings and high fencing.

Other issues include one residential building in the Barrio Jerónimos which is not sympathetic to the scale of the historic area, bus parking and underground carpark access.

All the important identified attributes related to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value are adequately maintained and are in good condition, and no significant neglect has been identified.

However, as the justification for inscription has not been adequately justified at this stage, it is difficult to assess the extent to which potential attributes are all included into the property's boundaries. In addition, on principle property boundaries should include the buildings.

Authenticity

ICOMOS considers the nominated property overall has a high degree of authenticity.

ICOMOS requested in its first letter further information on the replacement of trees using different species to the existing. The State Party advised that while existing historical species must be used, experience has shown that certain species do not live well under changed

climatic conditions. Historical species are used, although these may be selected on the basis of adaptation. The study undertaken by the State Party on the trees in the Buen Retiro Gardens in 2015-2016 provides data and recommendations for the use of certain species in different situation and location. The State Party is mindful of the balance of species in the Buen Retiro Gardens.

In general, the form and design of the existing buildings are authentic.

However, in many cases the handling of the interior structure of historical buildings is much less careful and respectful of historical elements, leading to a significant loss of authenticity.

Regarding their use and function, many of the historic buildings still preserve their original uses. Good examples along the Paseo del Prado are the Atocha railway station and the Prado museum, and many of the buildings on the Hill of Sciences are used as originally intended.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage and that the conditions of authenticity have been met.

Evaluation of the proposed justification for inscription

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List at this stage. The justification for inscription for the nominated property not work for the nomination as a whole does. The new type of category supported by the State Party does not appear convincing, as it gathers too many different types of elements, creating an artificial construction of arguments which do not justify consideration for inscription for the property as a whole. ICOMOS considers that there might be potential for the tree-lined avenue, for which the property could be considered as a precursor, which would have had influence throughout Latin America. The comparative analysis would therefore need to be further developed in that aspect, by exploring and researching in Latin America and beyond for other potential comparable sites, supported by archival, historic and literary evidence.

ICOMOS considers that criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi) for the entire nominated property have not been demonstrated. ICOMOS considers that the Paseo del Prado has the potential to meet criteria (ii) and maybe (iv) as a prototypical tree-lined avenue.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage and that the conditions of authenticity have been met.

Features

The identified attributes of the nominated property are all related to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. Further information was provided by the State Party in November 2019 at the request of ICOMOS, especially on their relationship with the proposed criteria. These include, *inter alia*: the landscape of the Paseo del Prado; Buen Retiro park with the various elements that reflect its long evolution; the landscape and built elements of the Real Jardín Botánico; architectural elements such as the Prado and Antropología museums; monumental elements such as the fountains; and the tree-lined streets of the Jerónimos neighbourhood together with its urban form and grid.

ICOMOS considers that it is not yet possible to conclusively identify the attributes of this property without an adequate justification of Outstanding Universal Value.

4 Conservation measures and monitoring

Conservation measures

The scope of conservation measures is broad, given the size and complexity of the nominated property, with a large number of governmental and private sector owners and managers being responsible for green areas such as the Buen Retiro park as well as other parts of the public spaces, buildings and monuments. As a result, these measures are not being undertaken within a single, all-inclusive conservation program.

ICOMOS noted that there are projects for conservation of public roads, and requested the State Party in its first letter to provide information on these projects. The State Party provided a summary of these projects, noting the purpose includes the recovery of authenticity and integrity.

The state of conservation reflects efforts made to maintain and conserve the identified attributes through ongoing maintenance activities as well as individual periodic conservation projects. Substantial maintenance and conservation efforts were noted during the technical evaluation mission.

In the case of privately owned buildings, maintenance and conservation activities tend to focus on the façades and other generally accessible elements.

Monitoring

The monitoring process and indicators are closely linked to the property management system. However, there is not yet a comprehensive and integrated assessment and indicator system to support monitoring.

Each of the management administrations or entities for the nominated property carries out regular assessments of its own programs and actions, and sets corresponding indicators in cases where deemed necessary. In the

case of conservation, there is extensive experience with programs for monitoring and assessing, with actions by the different stakeholders of the nominated property, and with the administrations which have jurisdiction over it.

The nomination process has promoted and reinforced coordination and cooperation between stakeholders, which will eventually extend to monitoring. This will also allow a specific regular assessment and a key indicator system to be considered. Special care will need to be given to achieving an integrated approach.

A sample set of indicators was provided in the nomination dossier.

ICOMOS considers the conservation measures are adequate. While the outline monitoring structure and approach are satisfactory, the full monitoring system needs to be developed and implemented.

5 Protection and management

Documentation

Knowledge about the historical development and the current state of the identified attributes of the nominated property is very good. Archives preserve a very rich heritage and are well organised.

The three large green areas that make up the majority of the nominated property are well documented in their listings as Properties of Cultural Interest (*Bien de Interés Cultural*). Furthermore, some 300 individual trees are included in an inventory.

Most of the significant historic buildings within the property are also documented in their listings as Properties of Cultural Interest, although there are some gaps.

Legal protection

In Spain, responsibility for heritage property is largely decentralised. Three different institutional levels are involved in the protection of the nominated property. National level legislation provides the general framework. Regional level provisions, however, are the most important. The Autonomous Community of Madrid has the lead for listings, specific protection measures and assessments of all kinds of interventions. At the municipal level, Madrid City Council influences the development of the area.

Legislative protection has two different categories of protected areas or buildings. The higher category is composed of Properties of Cultural Interest, the lower category Properties of Heritage Interest (*Bienes de Interés Patrimonial*).

Every property declared of Cultural Interest or Heritage Interest has a protective buffer zone that consists of the area surrounding it, defined in the corresponding listing form.

The heritage register also contains several levels. The high level demands integral conservation of the property. The middle level limits the compulsory conservation to the structural elements of a building. The lower level is either restricted to partial elements or some specified part.

Within the nominated property, 35 buildings, parks or zones have been listed, including the major areas of the Paseo del Prado, Jardines del Buen Retiro and Real Jardín Botánico, as well as most major and important historic buildings.

There are some gaps, however, such as the headquarters of the Ministerio de Marina (Ministry of the Navy). ICOMOS requested information on that aspect in its first letter, as in a number of instances, it is said that the listing has been initiated but not completed. The State Party advised that the listings have not been expedited/finalised because the properties affected are legally protected and there is no perceived urgency. None the less, the authorities wish to make progress, and administratively the documentation is close to completion. No timeframe for finalisation has been provided.

The State Party did not propose a buffer zone for the nominated property at first, on the basis of the existing legislation offering sufficient legal protection to the immediate environment of the property. None the less, ICOMOS requested the State Party to consider the addition of the buffer zone due to the high and dynamic urban environment around the property. In February 2020, the State Party proposed three options for the establishment of a buffer zone, and ICOMOS considers that the third option related to the Historical Centre in the Madrid General Urban Development Plan (PGOUM) is the most appropriate.

ICOMOS considers the legal protection of the nominated property to be sufficient, but that the addition of a buffer zone is required.

Management system

18% of the area of the nominated property is in private ownership and the rest is public property.

No management system for the property existed prior to its nomination. However, the three administrative bodies involved in the property's management — the State, the Autonomous Community of Madrid and Madrid City Council — have long experience with conservation, which reflects well on their future capacity. A new World Heritage office has been created within the municipality to disseminate information about the values of the property, coordinate the three levels of government, provide for management of the World Heritage

Commission, Council and Board related to the property and participate in national and international meetings.

Some parts of the new management system (2018) have been implemented and tested. The system is designed to function at three different levels. At the first or strategic level it promotes engagement with the property by citizens and stakeholders. The second level involves programs and actions to be coordinated between different departments. The third level addresses implementation by three different groups: an interdepartmental World Heritage Commission (sometimes referred to as the World Heritage Committee in the nomination dossier), which is the decision-making authority (it has not yet been created); a Scientific Council formed of independent experts to advise the Commission; and an advisory Civic and Social Board formed of the representatives of relevant associations and cultural and scientific institutions.

Continued close collaboration between the three administrative levels involved will be essential. The system is not orientated towards reactive management, but encourages specific actions. The list of proposed actions is impressive, and local communities are well integrated within the management. The attempt to draw in all interested associations and institutions is an important initiative to involve the public in management actions.

ICOMOS requested in its first letter an update on the development of the tree management plan for the Real Jardín Botánico. The State Party advised that the plan has been completed, and provided an overview of the plan.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS sought advice about whether a management plan existed for the Buen Retiro, especially to provide guidance regarding new development. The State Party advised that a master plan exists for the gardens and this includes such guidance. New construction within the park has not been allowed since 2004.

Visitor management

Many of the features within the nominated property are major visitor and tourist attractions in their own right. Accordingly, visitor management is currently addressed individually at these places. Overall visitor management for the entire nominated property, including the holistic treatment of its presentation and promotion, has not been an objective until relatively recently. Some initiatives are being undertaken, such as a visitor reception centre and videos, and further efforts are intended. However, an interpretation strategy does not exist for the overall nominated property.

Within the nominated property, the main green areas are used mostly by the city's inhabitants.

Tourism is an important factor in Madrid in general, and in the nominated property in particular.

There are only few information panels that explain the different areas or buildings and their significance within the whole complex. The responsible authorities plan to reinforce this information if the nominated property is inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The possibility of increasing of the number of hotels within the city centre is limited.

The nomination dossier provides information on the installation of reception and information centres in a number of spaces within the nominated property. ICOMOS requested further information to the State Party in its first letter on the timetable for the implementation of such centres, and especially on the visitor reception centre at CentroCentro. The State Party replied that the centre will be opened in 2020.

Community involvement

Local communities are well integrated into management of the nominated property. This is achieved primarily through the Civic and Social Board. It is an important instrument for involving the public in management actions. Nonetheless, it is noted that the Board is seeking more trust and independence.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the protection and management of nominated property

The documentation available regarding the property is generally good, although there are some gaps.

The legal protection of historic gardens and buildings is considered sufficient. None the less, initiated listings for some buildings should be finalised. The delineation of an adequate buffer zone that includes protection of important views and vistas should be undertaken.

A recently developed management system reflects the complexity of the nominated property and the range of stakeholders. A municipal World Heritage office has been created to coordinate between the three administrative bodies involved with the property's management. Overall, the system appears satisfactory, though the system's full effectiveness will only become clear through a longer period of implementation.

Visitor management is generally satisfactory, although the holistic treatment of the presentation and promotion of the nominated property is still developing. An interpretation strategy for the overall property should be developed within the management system.

Community involvement is well integrated within the nominated property management, although there may be scope to enhance the role of the Civic and Social Board.

ICOMOS considers that the documentation is generally good, the legal protection is sufficient, though the initiated listing of some buildings should be finalised and the delineation of a buffer zone should be undertaken, the management system appears satisfactory, visitor management is generally satisfactory although an interpretation strategy for the overall property should be developed, and community involvement is adequate, though there may be scope for enhancement.

6 Conclusion

Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, which combines nature and culture in a 200-hectare park-like cultural landscape, includes the prototype of a Hispanic *alameda* (tree-lined avenue) as well as an example of a new idea of urban space and of an urban development model in the enlightened absolutist period of the 18th century.

However, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property as a whole does not demonstrate a strong and consistent unifying theme that elevates it historically or in visual or design terms to Outstanding Universal Value. The nomination dossier attempts to find such a theme, but it artificially brings together distinct areas, although close geographically, whose common history diverged 500 years ago.

The nomination dossier argues that because nowhere else could be found a property quite comparable, the property is unique and potentially the first of a 'new type' of designed cultural landscape. ICOMOS considers that the justification for that argument is weak.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not justify consideration of this property for the World Heritage List at this stage. The analysis needs to be more robust in its consideration of green urban spaces in the period. ICOMOS considers that some potential would lay in the *alamedas*, which would need to be further explored and substantiated by comparisons with other properties located in Latin America and elsewhere.

ICOMOS considers that criteria (ii), (iv) and (vi) for the entire nominated property have not been demonstrated. ICOMOS considers that the Paseo del Prado might have the potential to meet criteria (ii) and maybe (iv) as a prototypical tree-lined avenue. However, further exploration should be undertaken towards this direction, and would need to be confirmed by a strong comparative analysis.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage and that the conditions of authenticity have been met.

Conservation measures are adequate. The outlined structure and approach for the proposed monitoring system are satisfactory, but the full monitoring system needs to be developed and implemented, taking special care to achieve an integrated approach, given the complexity of the property.

ICOMOS considers the documentation available regarding the property is generally good, although there are some gaps. Legal protection of the property is generally sufficient, however, initiated listings for some buildings should be finalised and the delineation of an adequate buffer zone should be undertaken. Overall, the management system appears satisfactory, though its full effectiveness will only become clear through a longer period of implementation.

Visitor management appears generally satisfactory, although the holistic treatment of the presentation and promotion of the nominated property is still in development. An interpretation strategy for the overall property should be developed within the management system.

Community involvement is well integrated with property management, although there may be scope to enhance the role of the Civic and Social Board.

7 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the nomination of Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences, Spain, to the World Heritage List be **deferred** in order to allow the State Party, with the advice of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, if requested, to:

- Reconsider the nomination strategy for the property, on the basis of an expanded and augmented exploration of the concept of Hispanic alameda (tree-lined avenue) and its influence in Latin America and beyond;
- Revise the comparative analysis, the justification for inscription, the criteria, focusing on the most appropriate ones, and the boundaries, accordingly to the revised focus of the nomination;
- Ensure that the revised boundaries of the property include the buildings facing urban spaces;
- Delineate a buffer zone for the property based on the Historical Centre in the Madrid General Urban Development Plan (PGOUM).

Any revised nomination should be visited by a mission to the site.

Additional recommendations

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Further developing and implementing the full monitoring system, with special care to achieve an integrated approach,
- b) Completing the documentation of the historic buildings within the property, such as the headquarters of the Ministerio de Marina,
- c) Finalising the listing process for all buildings,
- d) Developing an interpretation strategy for the overall property within the management system,
- e) Enhancing the role and independence of the Civic and Social Board as a means of ensuring community involvement;



Revised map showing the boundaries of the nominated property (October 2019)