
The Porticoes of Bologna (Italy) No 1650

Official name as proposed by the State Party

The Porticoes of Bologna

Location

City of Bologna
Emilia-Romagna Region
Italy

Brief description

The serial nominated property comprises twelve component parts consisting of ensembles of porticoes and their surrounding built areas, located within the Municipality of Bologna. These portico ensembles are considered to be the most representative among a total length of 62 km of porticoes within the city. Together, the selected porticoes reflect different typologies, urban and social functions and chronological phases. Defined as private property for public use, the porticoes have become an expression and element of Bologna's urban identity.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of twelve *sites*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

1 June 2006

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.

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 23 to 25 September 2020.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

A letter was sent to the State Party on 28 September 2020 requesting further information about the description of the nominated property, the overall justification for inscription, the justification for the criteria, the proposed boundaries and the comparative analysis.

An Interim Report was provided to the State Party on 17 December 2020 summarising the issues identified by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel. Further information

was requested in the Interim Report including: scope of the nomination and selection of the component parts; reconstruction after the Second World War; and the Municipal Statutes of 1288.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 13 November 2020 and 17 February 2021 and has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this evaluation report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

18 March 2021

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 twelve component parts that comprise the serial nominated property epitomise the most representative portico ensembles among a much larger assemblage of porticoes within the city of Bologna, spanning a period from the 12th century to the present day.

The selected components reflect different portico typologies: porticoed roads; porticoed squares; porticoed paths and porticoed buildings. Porticoed roads reflect covered walkways, either on one or both sides of a street, formed by the juxtaposition of buildings with porticoes – components exemplifying this typology include the *Portici residenziali di Santa Caterina*, the *Strada porticata di Galliera*, the *Portico del Baraccano*, the *Portici accademici di via Zamboni* and the *Portici trionfali di Strada Maggiore*. Porticoed squares reflect wide open urban spaces flanked by porticoes (*Piazza porticata di Santo Stefano*, *Portici commerciali del Pavaglione e dei Banchi* and *Portici di piazza Cavour e via Farini*). Porticoed paths are structurally independent; the two component parts exemplifying this typology – *Portico della Certosa* and *Portico devozionale di San Luca* – reflect covered passages leading from the city centre to places of worship or with ceremonial and devotional functions located outside the area of the city that was in the past surrounded by walls. The components defined as porticoed buildings as a typology – *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca* and *Edificio porticato del MAMbo* – reflect buildings that do not form a structural continuum with other buildings and therefore are not part of a comprehensive covered walkway or passage.

The timeframe of the component parts spans several centuries, reflecting the evolutionary process of the development of the porticoes in Bologna. As such, the series includes three main categories of porticoes in terms of building materials: wooden porticoes; stone and brick porticoes; and reinforced concrete porticoes. Through the centuries, the porticoes became a distinct urban feature of the city.

Wooden porticoes are the earliest form of sheltered passage which emerged in Bologna. The first evidence of a house with a portico on its façade dates back to 1041; this is a small house overlooking *Strada Maggiore*. Unlike the use of porticoes in the Roman-Hellenistic traditions, the porticoes of Bologna developed from the practical need to respond to growing housing needs. The extension of the houses on their upper floors, and the need to support these extensions, encroached on the roadways. This raised questions as to the ownership of the land on which the portico stood, leading to difficulties with how to deal with illegal porticoes. While other cities made it mandatory to eliminate the porticoes in order to regain the urban spaces, in Bologna the porticoes were regularized and, through the Municipal Statutes of 1288, made obligatory. These Statutes determined that all buildings located within the *civitas* and the *burgi*, corresponding to the area enclosed by the *Circla* walls, needed to have porticoes and that the owner of the plot should be responsible in perpetuity for its maintenance at their own expense.

In the 15th century, wooden supports gradually started being replaced by stone porticoes including the construction of a wall separating the covered walkway and the road. This continuous wall often extended deep into the ground and corresponded to the retaining wall of the cellars below. Consequently, while the portico was intended for public use, it was considered private property, like the spaces above and below the floor of the portico, and as determined by the 1288 Municipal Statutes, which was transposed into later legislation. In 1567, regulations compelled owners to replace wooden columns with stone ones, contributing to the development of long stretches of porticoes, built with durable and resistant materials. Hence, the portico became a structural element of the building but also assumed the function of protecting the commercial activities carried out at ground level.

Initially opposed for narrowing the streets, obstructing traffic and contributing to hygiene concerns, over time they were appreciated as shelters against the weather, as prime locations for merchant activities and as sheltered walkways. In the 20th century, the use of concrete allowed the replacement of the traditional vaulted arcades of the porticoes. This new material offered new construction possibilities and a new architectural language for the porticoes, as exemplified by the portico building in the Barca district (i.e. *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca*) with a curvilinear shape and extending for about 600 meters. Throughout the centuries, the porticoes of Bologna became an expression and element of the city's identity.

Boundaries

As presented in the nomination dossier, the area of the nominated property comprising the twelve components totals 7.67ha, with two buffer zones totalling 1123.81ha. The boundaries of the component parts were drawn mainly in relation to the space defined by the porticoes at ground level, without including much of the built fabric around and above it, since in some cases, the boundaries do not include the entirety of the buildings of which the

porticoes are part, or the urban spaces associated with them.

Concerned by this approach, in its request for supplementary information sent to the State Party on 28 September 2020, ICOMOS requested clarification as to the rationale used for defining the boundaries of the component parts. The State Party replied that the boundaries were the result of the integrated application, case by case, of the typological, chronological and functional criteria. In the case of porticoed roads, and the question as to why the boundaries sometimes included only one side of the road, the State Party clarified that this was dependent on the presence or absence of porticoes on each side of the road as well as the relevance of each side of the road, considering their functional or chronological characteristics. A similar approach was used to delineate the boundaries of the component parts defined as porticoed squares; that is, buildings without porticoes were largely excluded from the boundaries, regardless of their contribution in defining the urban space of the square.

In the Interim Report sent to the State Party on 17 December 2020, ICOMOS noted that the approach of selecting only porticoes without their built and urban context was inappropriate because they were disassociated from their context. The nominated serial components did not provide the full picture of their creation, use and place in the urban context. Consequently, in the supplementary information sent in February 2021, the State Party submitted revised boundaries for each component part, including a larger portion of the built fabric associated with and surrounding the porticoes.

Whilst ICOMOS acknowledges the State Party's efforts to revise the boundaries within such a short period of time, it notes that some of the fundamental problems remain for a few component parts. For instance, the component of the *Portici residenziali di Santa Caterina* was extended to include the entire medieval block said to be associated with it but still only includes one side of the street of *Via Santa Caterina*. A similar situation occurs for the component of the *Portico del Baraccano*, which does not include the other side of the street of *Via Santo Stefano*. In the case of the *Portico of San Luca*, the boundary was expanded to include the exact space occupied by the *Basilica di San Luca* but not the place itself nor part of the landscape surrounding the porticoed path. ICOMOS recalls that this component represents the connection between the city centre and the *extra moenia* religious sites (that is, sites located outside of the walls of the city) and therefore the connection between the city and the rural space surrounding it. As such, it considers that the immediate landscape setting of the porticoed path is integral to its significance and should be included within the boundaries of the component part.

ICOMOS also notes that the areas of some component parts were considerably expanded (such as in the case of the component of *Strada Maggiore*, the length of which is almost doubled following the State Party modifications). Since these areas were not visited during the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, it is not possible to adequately evaluate the integrity and authenticity of those areas and whether they include attributes that would justify their inclusion within the boundaries of the nominated property or not. For these reasons, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property are not adequate at this stage.

Two buffer zones are proposed: one surrounding eleven of the twelve component parts (buffer zone A), which includes the historic centre of the city and part of the neighbouring areas; and a second one surrounding the *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca*, located in a suburban district of the city (buffer zone B). The perimeters of the buffer zones have been defined in relation to existing legal and planning instruments as well as in view of maintaining the visual integrity of some of the component parts. Whilst ICOMOS recognises the validity of this approach, it however appears that the function of the buffer zone in providing a coherent context to the nominated property and its potential Outstanding Universal Value, which is not fully expressed by the selection of the component parts as it currently stands, has been privileged on the function of the buffer zone as an added layer of protection to the nominated property, as advised by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. As such, this issue needs to be considered also in relation to the proposed justification for inscription and the conditions of integrity of the nominated property.

State of conservation

The conservation history of the component parts is to a large extent determined by the timeframe when the porticoes that constitute them were built. This is especially the case with the *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca*, which was built between 1957 and the mid-1980s, and therefore would not have suffered the effects of the bombardments of the city during the Second World War.

The nomination dossier states that the city was strongly hit by the Allied bombings of 1943 and 1945, so much so that 43.2% of the available housing needed reconstructive intervention. It adds that during this period, part of the *Portico della Certosa*, adjacent to the stadium, was transformed into accommodation for those who had lost their homes; each arch became a small apartment.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS noted that the nomination did not include clear information on the areas that were damaged or destroyed, nor on the extent of post-war reconstructions and asked the State Party to provide further details in this regard. It also asked if such information had influenced the selection of the component parts.

According to the State Party's reply, mainly the areas surrounding the train station were hit by the bombing and that the damage to the twelve nominated portico ensembles was minimal. The information provided includes some details on the elements that were affected in each component but notes that the porticoes themselves were largely unaffected. The State Party added that the selection of the component parts took into account porticoes that were authentic and well-preserved over the course of the centuries.

The *MAMbo* building was built in 1915-1917 as a municipal bakery. An extension project in 1928-1929 led to the creation of the portico, added against the pre-existing façade. Partially damaged during the Second World War, it remained unused until the mid-1990s, when its transformation into a museum began. The project involved 12 years of demolitions, recovery and reframing of the overall structure.

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation of the nominated property is overall satisfactory. Given the different typologies, construction materials, and use and function of the porticoes as public spaces, ICOMOS considers that there may be slight variations in the state of conservation of the different components, partly dependent on the factors affecting the property such as traffic pressures and graphic vandalism (graffiti).

Factors affecting the property

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the property are development pressures, in particular heavy traffic and resulting pollution, graffiti and potential natural disasters.

The effect of traffic on the state of conservation of the nominated property is twofold: firstly, because vibrations impact the stability of the structures; and secondly, because pollution contributes to material degradation. To address these issues, the municipality has developed an Urban Sustainable Mobility Plan (PUMS) towards reducing the use of cars and motorcycles and promoting the use of public transport and bicycles, within the next decade.

Many of the porticoes included in the nominated property are linked to commercial activities. Therefore, changes from traditional shops to new businesses, such as money changing, money transfers or phone centres, also raise concerns. The main consequences deriving from such changes are the potentially negative visual impacts of the signage, shop décor and advertisements associated with some of the new commercial activities. ICOMOS also notes the visual impact of past interventions in the Stadium Renato Dall'Ara on the *Portico della Certosa*. The nomination provides some details about a new project, expected to have started in 2020, in which the stadium will be partly covered, with a roof terrace. In a

report on planning and projects sent in July 2020, the State Party affirms that the restyling of the stadium does not raise any concerns regarding the conservation of this component and that the interventions of the 1990s will be removed. ICOMOS acknowledges the assurances provided by the State Party and considers it important that the project should be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment.

Graphic vandalism, in particular tagging can also have negative visual effects and, in some cases, can lead to material deterioration. Further potential deterioration deriving from the removal of graffiti and tags – which normally includes surface cleaning, painting and sometimes the application a protective product to ensure that, in the case of further graphic vandalism, only a superficial cleaning is needed – also needs to be carefully considered. A number of measures have already been put in place by the Municipality of Bologna and other relevant authorities to deal with these issues, mainly to try to prevent the problem from the outset.

In terms of seismic risk, Bologna is classified as an area that can be subject to strong earthquakes, although these are rare. Floods are also increasingly considered as a risk factor since more and more episodes of extreme weather phenomena are occurring due to climate change.

Other factors affecting the nominated property include tourism pressures, population density and accumulated and uncollected waste.

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:

- Bologna's porticoes are a representative example of an architectural typology of global interest; the portico is an architectural element adopted for centuries throughout the world, but finds its most complete representation in Bologna.
- The nominated property illustrates the architectural and historical evolution of the porticoes from the 12th century to the present. Over time, the porticoes have become an expression of the identity of the city.
- The series of porticoes that compose the nominated property represent the most complete and varied catalogue of porticoed elements in the world. Collectively, the twelve components represent an extraordinary range of porticoed elements that differ both in their architectural language and in their period of origin, as well as in their function, urban role and in their relationship with the surrounding spaces.

In the request for supplementary information sent to the State Party on 28 September 2020, ICOMOS noted that it considered that the nomination was ambiguous as to the nature of what was being nominated: a series of porticoes or the historic city of Bologna? Therefore, ICOMOS requested the State Party to explain in more detail what was the rationale for the focus of the nomination. The State Party's reply confirmed that the focus of the nomination was on the porticoes, as architectural and urban elements that convey universal cultural, social and functional values, as testified by their diffusion all over the world and by their permanence and recurrence through the centuries.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS noted that in the supplementary information submitted in November 2020, the State Party referred to the porticoes as a system, which make up a full-scale urban infrastructure. However, ICOMOS considered that the idea of the porticoes as an urban system was not reflected through the twelve component parts as had been presented. Therefore, the approach of selecting only porticoes was seen as inappropriate since it did not provide the full picture of their creation, use and place in the urban context. ICOMOS added that the focus on the porticoes as individual elements made it difficult to comprehend the urban system that the State Party had referred to. Consequently, ICOMOS asked the State Party whether a different approach, focused on a broader urban context – the wider city or key parts of it – has been considered in order to explicitly contextualize the distinctive urban character of Bologna, as a city of porticoes.

In response to ICOMOS's concerns, the State Party enlarged the areas of the component parts, as previously explained, and provided further clarifications on the scope and selection of the component parts.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis is presented in two parts: firstly, it focuses on comparisons with properties included on the World Heritage List and with properties included on Tentative Lists as well as other areas throughout the world with a comparable combination of values and attributes; and secondly, it provides information related to the choice of the component parts.

Because there are porticoes and porticoed cities all over the world, the comparative analysis as presented has a global scope. Therefore, it starts by analysing historic centres inscribed on the World Heritage List, that include porticoes, to assess whether they have been highlighted as elements that characterise the urban formation of those centres. The properties identified include several historic centres and urban areas in Italy (e.g. Florence, Venice, Rome, Naples and Turin) as well as in other European countries (e.g. Berne in Switzerland, Lübeck in Germany, Prague and Telč in Czechia, and Vienna in Austria). Comparisons are also made with historic centres in other regions, namely Old Havana in Cuba, Cuzco in Peru, Puebla in Mexico and Brasilia in Brazil, among others. Other sites included on Tentative Lists are then

considered (e.g. Padova and Pavia in Italy, Brussels in Belgium, Lisbon in Portugal, Sibiu in Romania and Izamal in Mexico). Bologna is also briefly compared with a number of other historic centres, mostly from Europe, not yet included on the World Heritage List or on Tentative Lists. The comparisons are structured according to five parameters: chronology, extent, function, sociality and typology.

ICOMOS notes that the basic premise for the selection of potential comparisons is the typology of the sites as historic centres or cities. However, what is reflected in the nominated property is a group of portico ensembles, not an urban settlement. For this reason, in its first request for supplementary information, sent in September 2020, ICOMOS asked the State Party to refocus the comparisons on the qualities of the porticoes of the sites identified as comparators and in particular on the values that the porticoes embody. ICOMOS also requested the State Party to expand the comparative analysis in relation to the justification proposed under criterion (ii); that is, on how the selected porticoes may have prompted the interchange of human values through inspiring ideas that influenced other areas.

The response of the State Party stated that the comparative analysis focused on historic city centres, because it is where the urban and architectural character of the portico in different periods of urban history is fully visible. In relation to ICOMOS's request to expand the comparative analysis with regard to the values of the nominated property underlying the justification given for criterion (ii), the State Party added that the nominated components represent the paradigm of how the portico, as a private covered space for public use, open to citizens and visitors, favours meetings and promotes relationships between people. The supplementary information also includes additional references on how their porticoes are an element of identity of other cities in Italy, namely Padua, Turin and Mantua.

ICOMOS notes that the portico as an architectural and urban element is a common element in many buildings and that porticoed walkways are also found in many historic cities, as presented in the comparative analysis. Despite the additional information received, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis mainly focuses on the portico as a typology, which is widespread, and on secondary and mostly measurable aspects of the nominated components (e.g. number, variety of style, period of construction and materials of porticoes) rather than the values that the porticoes convey. ICOMOS considers that it remains difficult to understand if some of the cities selected as comparisons would present a similar catalogue of porticoes, particularly if larger areas of those cities would be considered and not just their historic centres.

Regarding the additional information in relation to the justification proposed under criterion (ii), ICOMOS considers that some comparisons deserve to have been further explored, as in the case of Turin. The State Party

argues that the porticoes of this city were mainly built between the 17th and 20th centuries, and are the expression of an urban design aimed at turning Turin into the capital city of a Kingdom. The State Party also claims that the porticoes in Turin did not foster social life, as a meeting place of people of all social classes, nor do they have an international reputation. ICOMOS notes that the State Party did not provide any evidence or details to support these claims.

Overall, the comparisons offered are not conclusive as to why the twelve component parts being nominated, should be considered to stand out in relation both to the influences they exerted over other places or as a type of architectural ensemble.

The second part of the comparative analysis focuses on the choice of components, among a stated total linear length of 62 km of porticoes located both inside and outside the city centre of Bologna. This part of the analysis briefly explains why the porticoes selected are considered the most representative according to their chronological phases, social and functional contexts and architectural types. However, there is little information as to why other porticoes were not considered or were excluded from the series. In its Interim Report, ICOMOS noted that the term 'catalogue' is used several times throughout the nomination dossier. ICOMOS recalls that the conclusions and recommendations of the International World Heritage expert meeting on serial properties and nominations, held in 2010, in Ittingen, Switzerland, warned against this type of approach and that an adequate definition of the functional links between the component parts should be provided.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis does not include a robust justification for the selection of the component parts included in the nominated property, particularly when it comes to more recent porticoes, from a chronological perspective.

ICOMOS does not consider that the comparative analysis justifies 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) and (iv).

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;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Bologna and its porticoes have long represented a diffusionary centre of models emulated at international level, aided by the role of its University in the dissemination of knowledge. Numerous architects, painters, sculptors and artists in general who visited Bologna to study or for pleasure, worked on the porticoes and lived in them, experiencing their liveliness and social

activity, and thereafter they took this model elsewhere in Italy and the world, in every historical period.

ICOMOS considers that the arguments presented for the justification of this criterion relate mainly to the porticoes of Bologna in general and not the series of porticoes that constitute the nominated property. Therefore, ICOMOS requested the State Party to provide further evidence of how this selection of twelve components exhibits an important interchange of human values and influenced the diffusion of the architectural portico model all over the world. The response of the State Party emphasises mainly the social value of the porticoes, as public spaces open to visitors and citizens that facilitate social relations.

ICOMOS considers that the response of the State Party does not provide sufficient information as to what areas were influenced by the nominated property or how. ICOMOS also notes that the justification refers to the role the University played in this regard but that this claim relates to the dissemination of knowledge in general, and not to any particular aspects related to the nominated property.

The nomination refers to the testimonies of artists such as Leon Battista Alberti, Sebastiano Serlio and Jacopo Barozzi, known as “Vignola”, who recommended the construction of porticoes in architectural treatises they wrote. ICOMOS considers that these treatises refer mostly to the qualities of the porticoes of Bologna in general, not the selection of porticoes that are included in the nominated property. Even if that argument could be considered, such references would only apply to the component parts that existed at the time those architectural treatises were written, whereas many of the porticoes were built afterwards, given that the timeframe of the series as a whole extends to the 20th century. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that criterion (ii) has not been justified.

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;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the nominated property represents in an exemplary manner an architectural typology – the portico – of ancient origin and wide diffusion, never abandoned even today, but in continuous transformation through precise historical periods of the town’s transformation. The series represents, in the various chronological, typological, technological and functional characteristics, a variety of porticoed building typologies, developed from the 12th century to the modern era.

In its request for supplementary information sent on 28 September 2020, ICOMOS noted that there are ambiguities as to what characteristics are essential to distinguish some typologies from others but also how certain component parts fit the definitions of those typologies. In its response, the State Party asserted that

the typology of porticoed buildings is used for isolated buildings in the suburbs (that is, the *Edificio Porticato del quartiere Barca* and the *Edificio Porticato del MAMbo*), which are not part of a comprehensive system of covered walkways as in other parts of the city. However, ICOMOS questions why the location of the building should be so determinant for the definition of that typology, assuming that there are other isolated buildings that are not part of a continuous covered walkway, within the historic centre of Bologna.

ICOMOS considers that it is unclear what is the exact nature of the typology of the nominated property: the portico as an architectural element of a building; the four typologies defined by the State Party in the nomination (e.g. porticoed roads, porticoed squares, porticoed paths and porticoed buildings); or the porticoes as urban elements with the function of walkways, which could form the basis of a system.

ICOMOS notes that the portico as an architectural element and the covered walkway as an urban element exist in many other cities and that this criterion relates to the outstanding nature of the typology of a nominated property. While the series presents an extensive variety of porticoes, from a chronological, typological and material perspective, ICOMOS considers that the nomination does not demonstrate how they could be considered of an outstanding nature.

As explained in the nomination, the porticoes originated as a response to growing housing needs, by expanding the living areas on the upper floors and simultaneously providing a space for people to carry out activities, while being protected from bad weather and heat and with the possibility of exploiting as many hours of natural light as possible. The obligation of building porticoes introduced by the Municipal Statutes of 1288 led over time to the juxtaposition of buildings with porticoes and their gradual evolution into walkways.

In its Interim Report, ICOMOS asked the State Party for further information as to how the porticoes came to assume more of the function of a walkway over time, in order to better understand how these porticoes could be seen to constitute a system, as is argued especially in the supplementary information submitted in September 2020. The State Party provided a short reply stating that the citizens of Bologna immediately understood the many advantages of covered walkways separate from the street busy with traffic, allowing them to move more safely and protected from the elements in all seasons. ICOMOS considers that it would be important to further explain and especially to document the evolution of the portico from an architectural element of a building, which when multiplied assumes a different identity and contributes to forming a different typology, that of the walkway providing an urban function.

ICOMOS also notes that the essence of this criterion requires that the property must illustrate a significant stage in human history, in an outstanding way. However, the span of time considered in the series is mainly defined by the time since porticoes started being built in Bologna and cannot be considered to reflect a significant stage in human history, be it from a political, economic history, artistic or scientific viewpoint. Hence, ICOMOS considers that criterion (iv) has not been justified.

ICOMOS does not consider that any of the cultural criteria have been demonstrated at this stage.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

ICOMOS has already noted that the boundaries of the component parts as initially presented in the nomination dossier did not include the totality of the buildings they are an integral part of. The revised boundaries submitted with the additional information provided in February 2021 only partly addresses this problem, since some component parts do not include the totality of some streets and the component of the *Portico of San Luca* was expanded to include the exact space occupied by the *Basilica di San Luca* but not the place itself nor part of the landscape surrounding the porticoed path. In addition, the areas of some component parts were considerably expanded and now include buildings and urban spaces that were not visited during the technical evaluation mission. Therefore, it is not possible for ICOMOS to adequately evaluate if they include important attributes or not.

As a serial nomination, integrity is also a measure of how each component part contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property as a whole in a substantial and discernible way. ICOMOS has already expressed its concerns regarding the selection of the component parts and how they are functionally linked in such a way that they could express an urban system. In its Interim Report, ICOMOS asked the State Party why another approach, focused on a broader urban context – the wider city or key parts of it – was not proposed in order to explicitly contextualize the distinctive urban character of Bologna as a city of porticoes; it added that it also considered it necessary that the links between the porticoes themselves be explained and expressed.

The State Party replied that a serial approach was adopted because it was considered to be the most suitable for recognizing and highlighting those parts of the city that best represent the various architectural typologies and historical phases of the Bolognese portico, thus providing an effective overview of the whole. It added that the series is a synthesis of the totality of the system and that with the enlargement of the component parts, key areas of the city were now included in the nominated property. According to the State Party these larger areas are supposed to also explain better the links between the porticoes and that the redefined component parts correspond to specific areas of the city that represent

different phases of Bologna's urban development: the oldest nucleus of the city of Bologna until the construction of the Torresotti Walls in the 13th century; the area between those walls and the *Circla* Walls, the line of which corresponds to the modern ring road, and marks the expansion of the city during the 15th century; and the urban area beyond the perimeter of the modern ring road, into which the city grew after the 17th century.

Whilst ICOMOS appreciates the additional information and the State Party's efforts in expanding the areas of the component parts, it considers that the fundamental nature of the series remains a catalogue of porticoes, that the functional links between them have not been sufficiently and comprehensibly justified, and that it remains unclear how the nominated property would reflect an urban system; that is, an identity that would be apparent beyond the sum of its constituent parts but show the connections between them as well. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that the wholeness of the nominated property has not been sufficiently demonstrated.

Furthermore, for the nominated property to meet the conditions of integrity it is necessary to consider the extent to which it is affected by adverse effects of development and neglect as well as how other pressures are managed. Based on the observations of the ICOMOS technical mission, the majority of the component parts are not currently threatened by development, deterioration or neglect. The exception is the *Portico della Certosa*, already affected by the visual impact of previous interventions in the Stadium Renato Dall'Ara, which could be exacerbated by a new project, expected to have started in 2020. The State Party has informed ICOMOS that it does not consider that the project will affect negatively this component part; however ICOMOS considers it important that a Heritage Impact Assessment should be undertaken to assess potential impacts.

For the various reasons expressed above, ICOMOS considers that the necessary conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage.

Authenticity

ICOMOS considers that the porticoes have retained their use and function as public spaces over time. However, as Bologna was bombed during the Second World War, and the nomination stated that 43.2% of the available housing needed reconstructive intervention, ICOMOS in its Interim Report asked for further information in this regard since it could raise potential concerns regarding form, design and materials. The State Party replied that the nominated porticoes were largely unaffected by the destruction during the war. The information provided includes some details on which buildings and sections of the component parts were damaged during the war, and in a few cases provides minimal information on the works carried out afterwards.

In the nomination, it is stated that it was only in the early 1950s that architects, engineers and highly skilled artisans were involved in restoring the original features of the monuments. The original appearance was deduced from surveys, photographs and studies on recovered materials, so that the rebuilds might adhere to and respect the original architectural and artistic typology. Whilst ICOMOS acknowledges the challenging context in which the reconstruction and conservation works were carried out after the Second World War, it considers that further research and documentation would have been helpful. For instance, ICOMOS notes that the nomination mentions that at least some sections of the *Portico della Certosa* were turned into accommodation but there is no information as to what was done to revert it to its previous function later, nor when.

Regarding the setting, ICOMOS noted that despite the changes proposed to the perimeter of the component parts some issues remain. The immediate setting of the *Portico della Certosa*, which is one of the examples of the relationship with *extra moenia* sites, has been significantly altered over time. ICOMOS has already noted the impact that past interventions in the Stadium Renato Dall'Ara have had on this component part, which could potentially be aggravated by the project scheduled in 2020.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conditions of authenticity are acceptable but could be enhanced, whereas the conditions of integrity have not been met at this stage.

Evaluation of the proposed justification for inscription

ICOMOS expressed its concerns about the scope of the nomination, the proposed justification for inscription, the rationale for the selection of the component parts and their delimitations, at different points of the evaluation process. The information provided by the State Party was very helpful in clarifying some of these concerns; however, ICOMOS considers that certain underlying issues remain.

The comparative analysis has not convincingly demonstrated the reasons that make the nominated property stand out in relation to how it prompted the interchange of human values in other heritage places nor as an example of an architectural ensemble illustrating a significant stage in human history. ICOMOS notes that the portico as an architectural element is a common element of many buildings and that porticoed walkways are also found in many historic cities. The parameters used to compare the nominated property with World Heritage properties and other heritage places mainly relate to measurable characteristics rather than to the heritage values conveyed by the porticoes, their functioning as an urban system, and the role they play in contributing to the urban identity of Bologna.

ICOMOS also expressed its doubts about the ambiguity of the essence of the nominated property: a series of porticoes or a city of porticoes? This ambiguity is reflected in a mismatch between the perimeter of the component

parts, how the nominated property is described as a whole as a system, and the references to the whole city as the subjacent entity in the justification for inscription, in different sections of the nomination and the supplementary information provided. Despite the revisions to the boundaries sent by the State Party in February 2021, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property still mainly reflects a catalogue of porticoes and not an urban system of covered walkways, emerging from the interconnections between the porticoes, the urban spaces they are associated with, and the social dynamics that those porticoes enable.

For these reasons, ICOMOS does not consider that criteria (ii) and (iv) have been justified at this stage nor that the conditions of integrity have been met. The nominated property meets the conditions of authenticity.

Attributes/Features

The proposed attributes of the nominated property need to be identified taking into account the historical periods reflected by the different porticoes. As such, materials, construction techniques and associated decoration vary according to the period when the porticoes were built, ranging from wood to reinforced concrete elements. Many of the porticoes in the nominated property also function as structural elements of the buildings they are part of, therefore their relationship with the upper floors and the ground level (where sometimes they are part of the retaining wall of the cellars below) needs also to be considered. The buildings themselves, of which the porticoes are part, and the urban spaces associated with them (streets and squares) should be recognised as important potential attributes; the same applies to the immediate landscape setting around the *Portico di San Luca*.

The design of the porticoes and the characteristics associated with that (such as proportions, type of structural elements, colours, total length, height in general as well as height of the pavement in relation to the street) are also important proposed attributes.

The relationships and functional links between the porticoes, the urban system they form, should also be mapped and identified as important potential attributes, and are not currently reflected in the way the nominated property has been delineated.

ICOMOS considers that further work as regards the identification and mapping of important potential attributes is needed, in particular with regards to the buildings themselves, of which the porticoes are part, and the urban spaces associated with them (streets and squares) and with regards to the relationships and functional links between the porticoes and the urban system they form. These potential attributes are not currently reflected in the way the nominated property has been delineated.

4 Conservation measures and monitoring

Conservation measures

Since the different porticoes that form the nominated property date to different periods and are built using different construction techniques and materials, appropriate conservation measures will vary according to their characteristics. As private property for public use, the conservation and maintenance of the porticoes is dependent both on actions and interventions carried out by private and public actors. In addition, since the component parts result from the juxtaposition and combination of different buildings and structures, conservation work in the past has been carried out mostly on an *ad hoc* basis rather than centred around a comprehensive and systematic conservation programme.

Because of their use and function as public spaces, the floor surfaces of the porticoes are subject to heavy wear and tear, contributing over time to their deterioration. The porticoes are mainly paved with cobblestones or brick but there are several pavements made from marble slabs. Overall, the floor surfaces are quite durable and resistant, therefore regular maintenance is the simplest and most effective approach for their conservation. Municipal regulations establish that original porticoes and pavements belonging to buildings of historical and architectural interest have to be preserved and restored, cleanliness must be observed and all causes of structural and visual alteration must be removed. The Municipality has published the manual "*Portici. Istruzioni per la cura e l'uso*" (Porticoes. Instructions for care and use), which provides instructions according to issues such as how porticoes are to be used based on the needs of commercial activities, the setup of construction sites and scaffolding, and how to carry out cleaning and hygiene operations.

Since graphic vandalism (graffiti) is one of the main factors affecting the nominated property, the Municipality of Bologna in collaboration with *Direzione regionale per i beni culturali e paesaggistici del Emilia Romagna* (Regional Direction for Cultural and Landscape Heritage) and the *Soprintendenza Archeologica, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la città metropolitana di Bologna e le provincie di Modena, Ferrara e Reggio Emilia* (Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for Bologna, Modena and Reggio Emilia Provinces, and the Municipality of Bologna) have issued Guidelines for Cleaning Surfaces Affected by Graphic Vandalism.

Monitoring

The nomination dossier includes information on the development of a monitoring programme for the serial nominated property, taking into consideration the list of "Factors affecting the property" used for the Periodic Reporting exercises. Based on this list, the State Party has identified a number of "phenomena to be monitored" accompanied by a set of indicators. The nomination also states that the Management Plan for the nominated property will also include a monitoring programme for the implementation of the plan itself to help evaluate individual projects.

ICOMOS notes that the information related to the monitoring of the state of conservation of the nominated property included in the management plan, offers little additional information to what is included in the nomination. ICOMOS considers that a comprehensive monitoring programme is yet to be developed by the State Party.

ICOMOS considers that present conservation measures are appropriate but that a comprehensive monitoring programme for the serial nominated property has not yet been developed. Further research and documentation on the evolution of the porticoes into walkways and the role of the Municipal Statutes of 1288 in shaping the urban system of walkways is also needed.

5 Protection and management

Documentation

Bologna and its porticoes have been the subject of many studies and publications, resulting in extensive bibliographic records. Documentary materials are kept by the Municipality and the State Archives of Bologna; the *Cineteca di Bologna* possesses an extensive filmographic, graphic and sound archive.

Building inventories are kept by the Municipality and other relevant authorities. Much of this information is available on Geographic Information Systems, allowing quick access to data. The nomination dossier includes many historical records, namely architectural drawings and photographs.

ICOMOS notes that the justification for inscription builds on the importance of the Municipal Statutes of 1288 and how the provisions of those Statutes were incorporated later on into other legal, planning and regulatory instruments. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that additional documentation on this should be compiled to better understand how those provisions were implemented, changed and adapted over time and how they influenced the construction, conservation and evolution of porticoes throughout the centuries.

Legal protection

The Municipal Statutes of 1288, which established that new houses should have porticoes, paved the way for the diffusion and the definitive recognition of the portico as an emblematic element of the city of Bologna. In the information provided in February 2021, the State Party asserted that the provisions included in those Statutes were incorporated in subsequent statutes and in urban planning regulations: however, no further documentation was provided to support this claim.

Regarding the legal designation of the porticoes at present, the nomination does not include precise information on whether the porticoes are listed as cultural heritage at the national level, with the exception of graphical information included in some of the maps. Based on the information gathered by the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission,

only the *Portico della Certosa* and *Portico devozionale di San Luca* are designated in their entirety as listed buildings. A number of listed buildings that include porticoes that are part of the nominated property are protected under the Legislative Decree no. 42 of 22/01/2004 "Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape". All changes to these buildings and related construction works need to be approved by the competent Superintendency. None of the buildings included in the component parts of *Portici residenziali di Santa Caterina* and the *Edificio porticato del MAMbo* are the object of any protective designation as cultural heritage, either at the national or regional levels.

The protection of cultural heritage at the regional level is dictated by the Regional Law no. 24/2017 "General regulations on the protection and use of the territory", which also establishes the regional regulations on territorial governance, and the protection of the environment, in compliance with the fundamental principles of state legislation and with European laws.

At the municipal level, there is long-standing experience with the protection of the historic centre of Bologna, particularly since the approval of the "Plan of the Historic Centre" in 1973. According to the nomination, this was the first detailed urban plan that provided for the integrated protection of a large historic centre in its entirety, composed both of its monumental parts and its popular buildings of lesser architectural value.

The protection of the buffer zone surrounding most of the component parts and covering the historic centre of Bologna is ensured by multiple instruments and in particular the Municipal Structural Plan, which came into force in 2008, and the Urban Planning Regulation, dating from 2009. This buffer zone also covers the protected natural area of the hill up which the *Portico devozionale di San Luca* climbs. The Municipal Structural Plan establishes it as a rural area with the aim of integrating policies to safeguard the natural, environmental and landscape value with the development policies for sustainable farming.

The buffer zone surrounding the *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca* includes the perimeter of the agglomeration of modern documentary interest, according to the Urban Building Regulations. Building interventions in this area require the favourable evaluation of the Commission for the Architectural Quality and the Landscape.

Management system

No specific management system has been developed for the serial nominated property, given that the majority of the porticoes are located within the historic centre of Bologna, which is already managed in its entirety at the municipal level from a heritage perspective. Hence, the Municipality of Bologna is the responsible authority for managing the nominated property in collaboration with the *Direzione regionale per i beni culturali e paesaggistici del Emilia Romagna* and the *Soprintendenza Archeologica, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la città metropolitana di Bologna e le provincie di Modena, Ferrara e Reggio Emilia*, when legal provisions so require.

A Steering Committee is made up of the public bodies responsible for governing the territory and cultural heritage protection, local representatives of national institutions, economic stakeholders and the most important local institutions in both religious and social spheres. This Committee will meet at least twice a year and will supervise the plan and implementation of the Management Plan for the nominated property.

The Management Plan is intended mainly as a coordination instrument and extends also to the buffer zones of the property. This plan includes a table with a list of projects to be achieved and the funding allocated for it. These projects are then detailed individually, adding more information as to when they are to be implemented and by whom. There is no indication of the overall timeframe or duration of the plan.

ICOMOS considers that the plan is of a theoretical nature rather than an operational one; the defined projects and actions are a compilation of existing and planned projects. In view of the changes proposed to the boundaries of the nominated property, and the enlargement of the component parts, ICOMOS considers that the State Party should revise the Management Plan to encompass those changes and the needs of managing these larger areas and the elements they include.

ICOMOS acknowledges that the Management Plan complements existing planning tools that already guide the protection of the heritage resources within the city of Bologna. The main planning instrument is the Municipal Structural Plan, which establishes the general provisions to guide urban development and protection measures by means of two more operational instruments: the Municipal Operational Plan and the Urban Planning Regulations. The Municipality has also issued a series of guidelines that contribute to the protection of the nominated property.

Because of the nature of the porticoes as private property for public use, sources of funding are varied, deriving from both private and public sources. Levels of staffing and expertise are considered adequate.

Visitor management

There is no specific tourism strategy for the nominated property but there are a number of legislative instruments and programs for tourism management at city and metropolitan level. Based on the information included in the Management Plan, in 2019 the Metropolitan Council approved two important instruments: the Local Promotion Tourist Plan; and the Annual Operational Programme for the promotion and marketing of tourism.

A number of digital projects related to the presentation and interpretation of the porticoes of Bologna are being developed, in line with a communication strategy presenting the nominated property as a whole.

Community involvement

Based on the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, there was strong interest and involvement of the population of Bologna in the nomination process. In the past year, the municipality of Bologna has developed a number of public policies to engage citizens in the governance of the city. In 2017, it launched a participatory budgeting process and created a series of city labs to encourage engagement at the community level. The Management Plan for the nominated property includes concrete measures to involve the local communities in the presentation and management of the nominated property, such as developing a guide about the porticoes specifically for children, an education programme on legal issues and respect for the urban environment, and activities for fighting graffiti vandalism.

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

ICOMOS considers that further documentation on how the provisions of the Municipal Statutes of 1288 were incorporated into other legal, planning and regulatory instruments throughout the centuries should be compiled. Such documentation should help to create better understanding of how those provisions were implemented, changed and adapted over time and how they influenced the construction, conservation and evolution of porticoes throughout the centuries.

The current legal protection for the property is considered inadequate since only two of the components (*Portico della Certosa* and *Portico devozionale di San Luca*) are designated at the national level. ICOMOS considers that all components should have the highest level of protection available.

The State Party has put in place adequate management responses to the main threats affecting the property and the state of conservation of the nominated property is overall satisfactory. Only a few adverse effects of development are observed in relation to the *Portico della Certosa* because of past interventions in the Stadium Renato Dall'Ara.

ICOMOS considers that the Management Plan serves mainly as a coordination instrument and complements existing planning tools that already guide the protection of the heritage resources within the city of Bologna. Because of the changes to the boundaries of the nominated property, ICOMOS considers that the State Party should revise the Management Plan to adapt it to the needs of managing these larger areas and the elements they include. ICOMOS also notes that the timeframe or duration of the Management Plan is unclear and that the nominated property should have a precise cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback, as required by paragraph 111 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The planning and decision-making planning processes are considered adequate and inclusive. ICOMOS also considers that the financial and human resources available are adequate.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection is inadequate and that some aspects of the monitoring system need to be reinforced.

6 Conclusion

The serial nomination of the Porticoes of Bologna has been presented by the State Party as a catalogue of porticoes constituting the identity of the city of Bologna. Despite the additional information and revisions provided by the State Party following ICOMOS's concerns about the use of the word "catalogue" throughout the nomination dossier in relation to the sites, ICOMOS considers that the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property as an example of an urban system of covered walkways, that is essential to Bologna's identity, has not yet been demonstrated.

ICOMOS also considers that the series, and particularly the delimitation of the component parts, should not be seen merely as a synthesis of a system but rather as reflecting the functional links between the porticoes. In this sense, it would reflect how collectively, through the articulation of the elements and interconnections between them, they generate a different entity, which is more than the sum of the component parts. These interconnections between the porticoes which define the city's identity and the sense of place would need to be tangibly expressed in the boundaries of the nominated property.

In ICOMOS's view, the identity of this system is dependent on the role that the Municipal Statutes of 1288 played in laying the foundation for its development over time. ICOMOS considers that this has not been sufficiently explained and documented. Based on ICOMOS's own research, through the Municipal Statutes of 1288, Bologna seems to have played a fundamental role in shaping the relationship between public and private space in the medieval city, marking one of the decisive moments in the history of the capacity of the public authorities to assert their power and political control over the administration of a city.

Therefore, understanding and documenting how the provisions included in the Municipal Statutes of 1288 were incorporated into other legal instruments throughout the centuries, and how that influenced the evolution of the porticoes, from architectural elements of buildings built as a response to growing housing needs, to becoming full covered walkways with an urban function, is fundamental.

Based on the information received from the State Party, the area of influence of those Statutes referred to the *civitas* and the *burgi*, that is, the area enclosed by the *Circla* Walls, the line of which corresponds to the modern ring road. ICOMOS considers that this area should be the focus for the delimitation of the so-called urban system of porticoes with the exceptions of the *Portici della Certosa* and *San Luca*, since these *extra moenia* religious sites existed already in the medieval period. As such, ICOMOS

also considers that the *Edificio porticato del quartiere Barca* and *Edificio porticato del MAMbo* should be excluded from the nominated property as they were created at a much later stage and shaped by different influences. In addition, the nomination explains that these two components were defined as belonging to a typology called “porticoed buildings”, used for isolated buildings in the suburbs and which are not part of a comprehensive system of covered walkways as in other parts of the city.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that further work is needed: to document and articulate in more detail the role that the Municipal Statutes of 1288 played in setting the foundations for the urban system of porticoes and walkways as well as its influence over time; to refocus the proposed justification for Outstanding Universal Value on this urban system and how it evolved over time; and to revise the boundaries to reflect the elements as well as the interconnections of that system.

ICOMOS recalls that the revised boundaries, proposed by the State Party in February 2021, include areas that were not assessed during its technical evaluation mission and that its suggestions on how to refocus the nomination would require another mission. ICOMOS also considers that the legal protection for the nominated property is not appropriate at this stage and that the monitoring and other aspects of the management system should be strengthened.

7 Recommendations

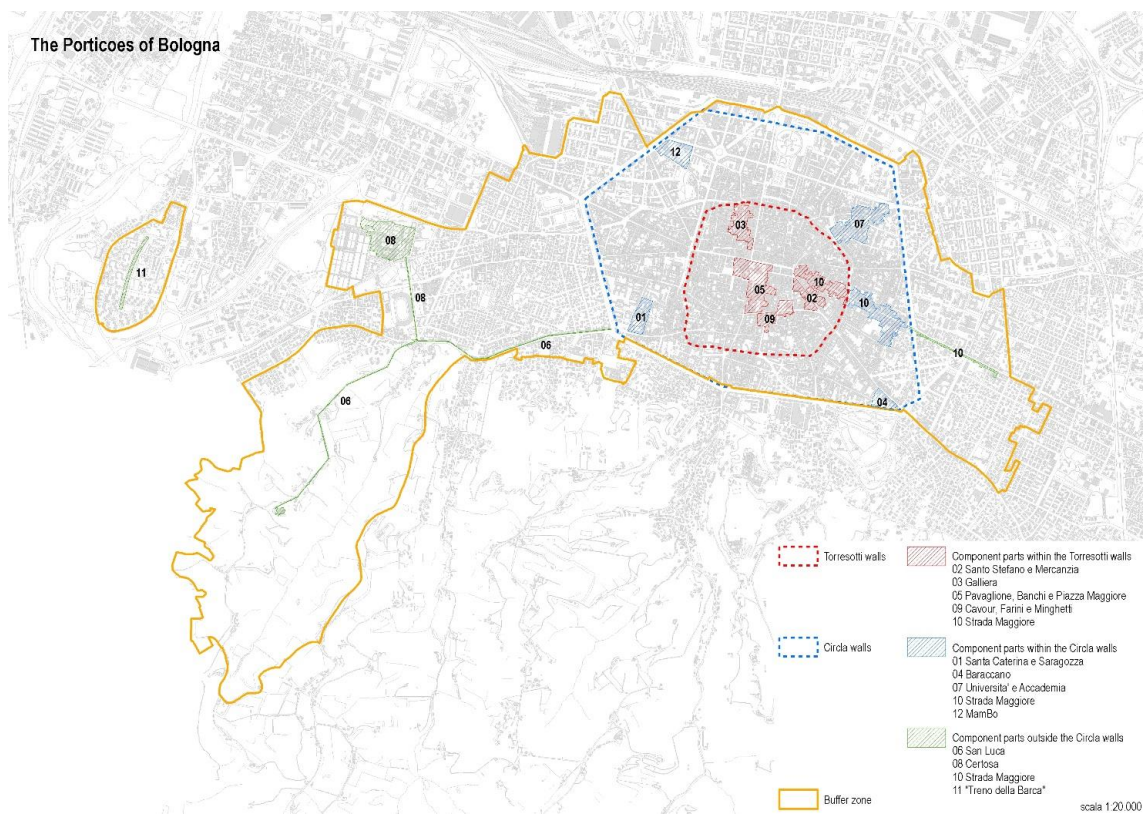
Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the nomination of The Porticoes of Bologna, Italy, 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:

- Further research, document and explain the role that the Municipal Statutes of 1288 had on the relationship between public and private spaces in the medieval city, marking one of the decisive moments in the history of the capacity of the public authorities to assert their power and political control over the administration of a city;
- Further research and document the evolution of the porticoes as a typology, from an architectural element of a building into covered walkways with an urban function;
- Refocus the justification for inscription from a catalogue of porticoes to a city of porticoes and reflect an urban system of covered walkways, which defines the urban identity of the city of Bologna, contributing to the sense of place and social dynamics;

- Revise the boundaries to reflect not only the elements but also the interconnections of that system, by incorporating the functional links between the covered walkways within the perimeter of the nominated property;
- Ensure that all components that would constitute the nominated property will have the highest level of protection available;
- Revise and strengthen the management and monitoring system in light of the refocus of the nomination.

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



Revised map showing the boundaries of the nominated components and their buffer zones
(February 2021)