
The Great Spa Towns of Europe (Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) No 1613bis

1 Basic information

States Parties

Austria
Belgium
Czechia
France
Germany
Italy
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Name of property

The Great Spa Towns of Europe

Location

Baden bei Wien
Lower Austria
Austria

Spa
Liège province
Belgium

Františkovy Lázně, Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně
Karlovy Vary Region
Czechia

Vichy
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region
Allier Department
France

Bad Ems
Rhineland-Palatinate
Germany

Baden-Baden
Baden-Württemberg
Germany

Bad Kissingen
Bavaria
Unterfranken Region
Germany

Montecatini Terme
Tuscany
Pistoia Province
Italy

Bath

Bath and North East Somerset, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Inscription

2021

Brief description

This transnational serial property comprises eleven spa towns, located in seven European countries: Baden bei Wien (Austria); Spa (Belgium); Františkovy Lázně; Karlovy Vary; Mariánské Lázně (Czechia); Vichy (France); Bad Ems; Baden-Baden; Bad Kissingen (Germany); Montecatini Terme (Italy); and City of Bath (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). All of these towns developed around natural mineral water springs. They bear witness to the international European spa culture that developed from the early 18th century to the 1930s, leading to the emergence of grand international resorts that impacted urban typology around ensembles of spa buildings such as baths, kurhaus and kursaal (buildings and rooms dedicated to therapy), pump rooms, drinking halls, colonnades and galleries designed to harness the natural mineral water resources and to allow their practical use for bathing and drinking. Related facilities include gardens, assembly rooms, casinos, theatres, hotels and villas, as well as spa-specific support infrastructure. These ensembles are all integrated into an overall urban context that includes a carefully managed recreational and therapeutic environment in a picturesque landscape. Together, these sites embody the significant interchange of human values and developments in medicine, science and balneology.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

13 March 2024

2 Issues raised

Background

The Great Spa Towns of Europe was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2021 on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iii) (Decision 44 COM 8B.16). At the time of inscription, the World Heritage Committee requested the States Parties to submit a minor boundary modification with a view to:

- a) Adjusting the boundaries of the property in the Mitterberg and Badener Berg areas in Baden bei Wien and extending the protection zone under the Construction Plan to include the entirety of the property in this component part,
- b) Adjusting the boundaries of the component part that are still drawn down the middle of streets in Montecatini Terme to include the building plots on the other side of the street and extending the protection statute to the entirety of this component part,
- c) Extending the northern part of the buffer zone of Karlovy Vary to ensure adequate protection from future development, particularly from a visual perspective,

- d) Extending the buffer zone around the train station in Vichy, taking into account the protected perimeters of the surroundings of existing historic monuments.

The Committee reiterated this request in Decision 45 COM 7B.177.

Modification

The proposed modifications address the requests formulated by the World Heritage Committee in Decision 44 COM 8B.16 as regards the boundaries of the property and buffer zones.

In Baden bei Wien (Austria), the boundaries of the property were adjusted to include three additional areas: Marchetstraße 58; Marchetstraße 50 and Mozartstraße 27; and Mautner-Markhofstraße 21. The protection zone under the Construction Plan was also extended and now covers the entirety of the built fabric in this component part, with the exception of two very small areas categorized as "Building Area" according to the Land Use Plan, based on the maps provided. ICOMOS considers that the proposed modification for this component part is adequate.

In Montecatini Terme (Italy), the proposed modification only partly addresses the request of the World Heritage Committee to delineate the western boundary of the component part based on the building plots, since the boundaries beyond Via Faloppio, with Viale Guido Baccelli still do not include the building plots on both sides of the street. ICOMOS notes that this point of the western boundary coincides with the northern boundary of what is designated in the maps provided as the conservation area. According to the information provided, the boundaries were changed to include buildings along Viale Baccelli, Viale Bovio and some on Viale Savi because of their early 20th century architectural character. In addition, the proposed modification slightly modifies the southern boundary of this component part to exclude the railway track. ICOMOS considers that the proposed modification to the boundaries is adequate. However, ICOMOS stresses that the area beyond Via Faloppio, in the eastern part of Viale Guido Baccelli, is still not included in the conservation area. The same concern applies to a small area in the southern part of the component part. While ICOMOS considers that the boundary modification for this component part should be approved, it recommends that the State Party of Italy continues its efforts to extend the conservation area to comprise the remaining areas that are still not covered by it.

The extension of the buffer zone of Karlovy Vary (Czechia) complies with the request of the World Heritage Committee. ICOMOS notes the information provided regarding the complementary legal and regulatory measures applicable in that area, namely the need to confirm the boundaries modification in the next change of the Master Plan, expected to be completed in 2024. ICOMOS considers that the extension of the buffer zone in this component part is adequate.

The extension of the buffer zone for Vichy (France) comprises a small area towards the north of the component part and a larger one towards the east, around the train station, as requested by the World Heritage Committee. The process and rationale for delineating the buffer zone is clearly explained in the request and supported by extensive documentation. The extension of the buffer zone is based on a Delimited Perimeter of the Surroundings, a process recognised under the Heritage Code. ICOMOS considers that the extension of the buffer zone for this component part is adequate.

3 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

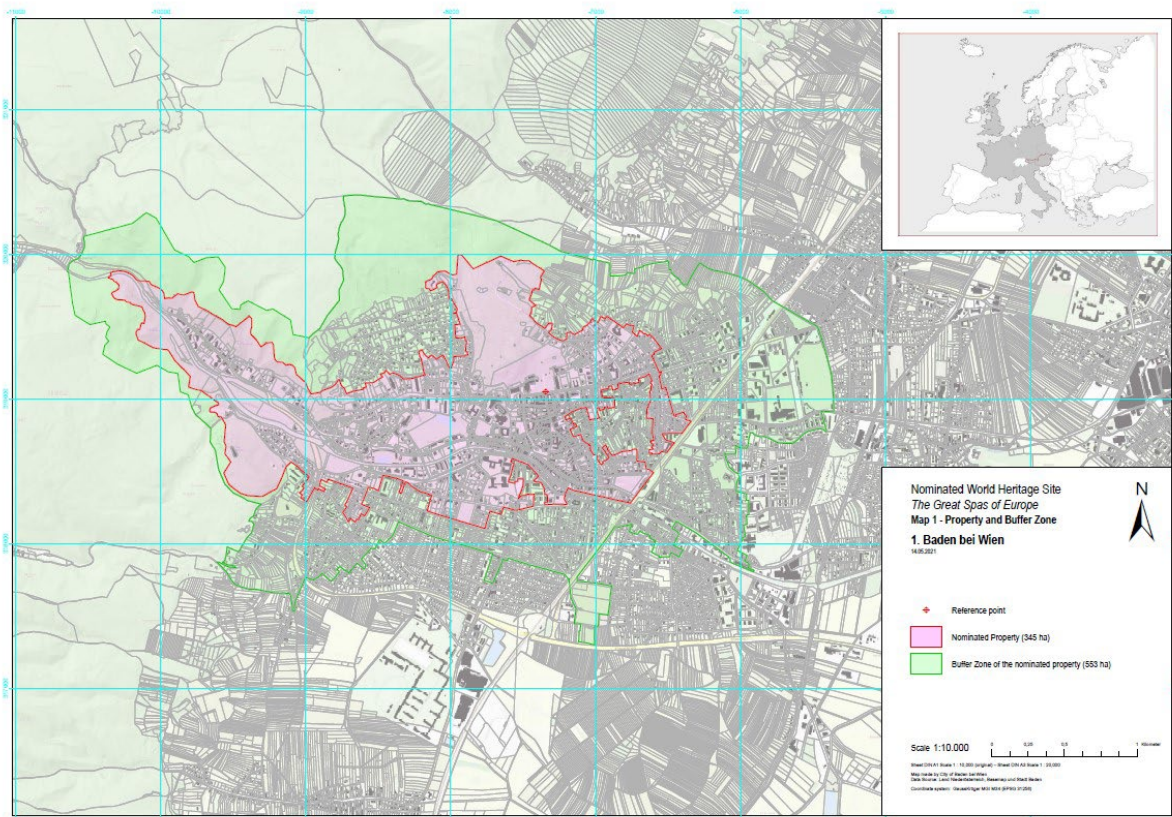
ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundaries of The Great Spa Towns of Europe, Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, be **approved**.

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundaries of the buffer zones for The Great Spa Towns of Europe, Austria, Belgium, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, be **approved**.

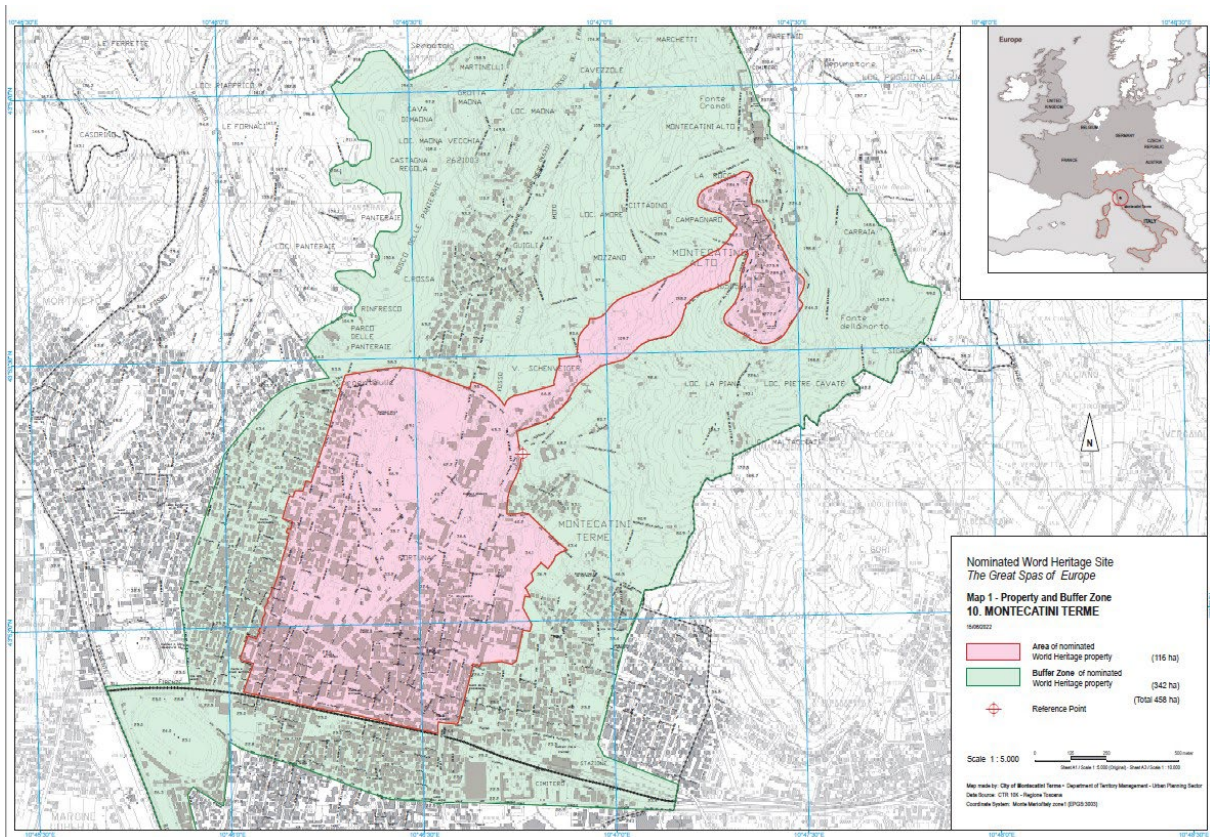
Additional recommendations

ICOMOS further recommends that the States Parties give consideration to the following:

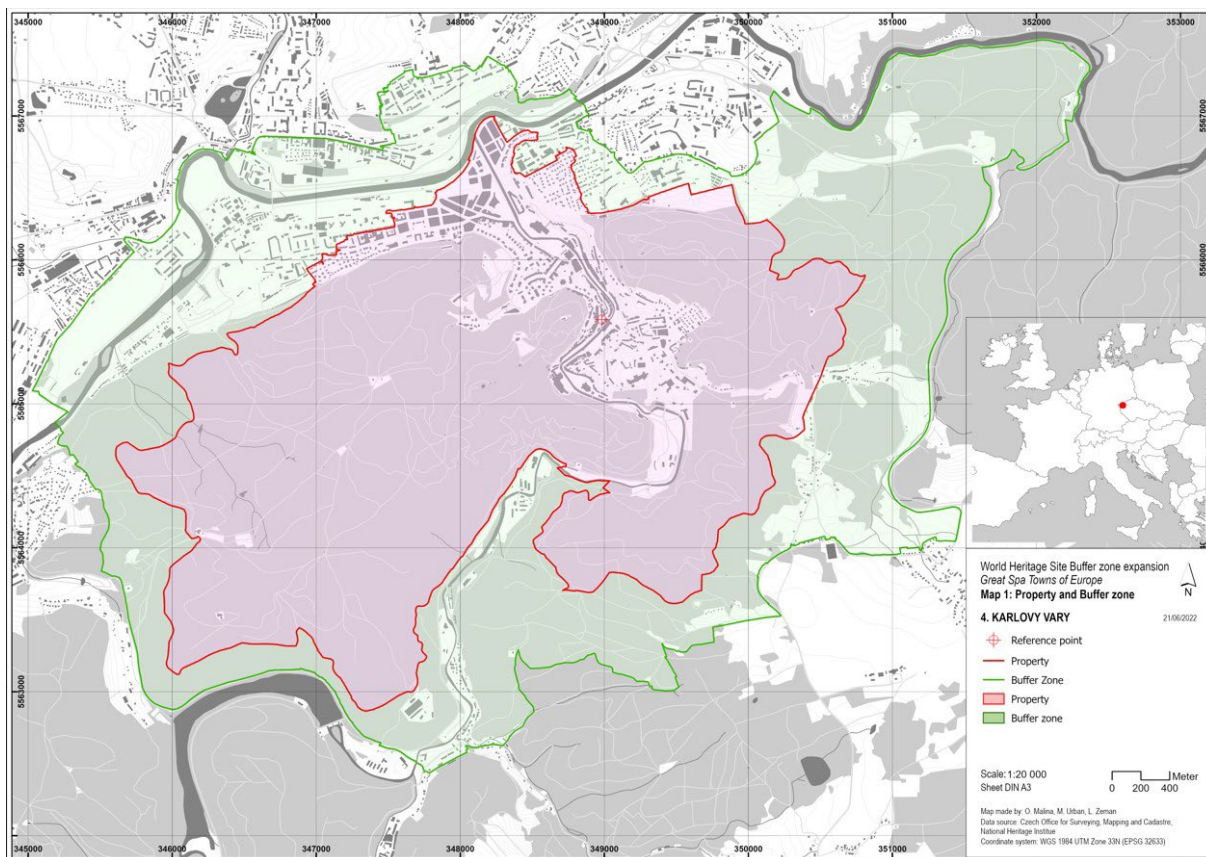
- a) Continuing the effort to extend the conservation area in Montecatini Terme (Italy) to comprise the remaining areas of this component part that are still not covered by it.



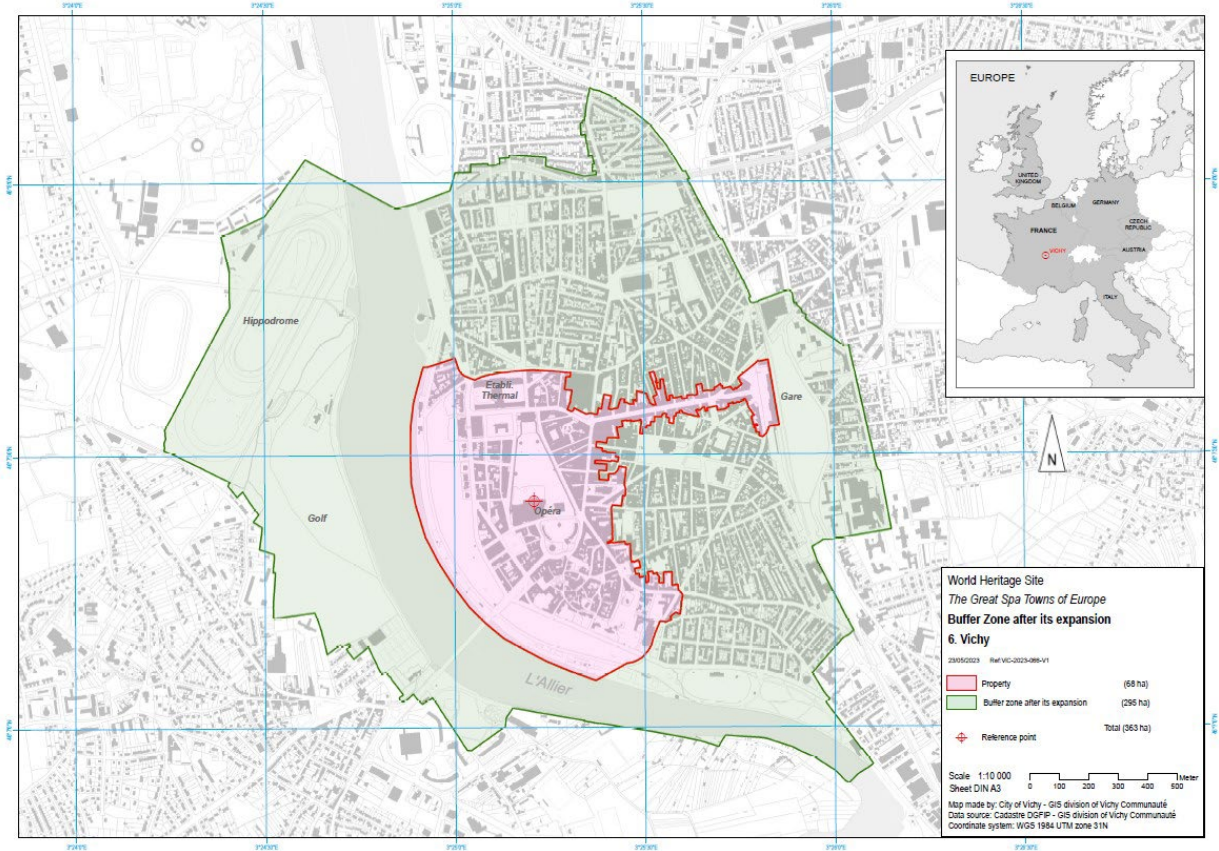
Map showing the revised boundaries of the component part “Baden bei Wien” and of its buffer zone (February 2024)



Map showing the revised boundaries of the component part “Montecatini Terme” and of its buffer zone (February 2024)



Map showing the revised boundaries of the buffer zone of the component part "Karlovy Vary" (February 2024)



Map showing the revised boundaries of the buffer zone of the component part “Vichy” (February 2024)