

STAGE TWO: DATA/INFORMATION GATHERING

Information-gathering can be such an open-ended process that those involved can easily get lost. It is therefore important to identify at the start what type of information is required, how it will be obtained and how to manage it. Information is required for assessing values and the OUV of the property, for identifying attributes that embody those values, and for evaluating authenticity and integrity. Other information will be needed for assessing the significance of the other values for which a property has to be managed; for understanding and defining the property and for planning purposes; and finally for assessing the physical condition and factors that could affect the OUV and other values. This information may form the basis for future monitoring. Additional information can always be collected to support decision-making at later stages of the management planning process.

Some of this information may have been collected for the preparation of the nomination dossier, or included in the ICOMOS evaluation of the nomination. How useful this inherited information will be for the management planning process will depend on how long ago the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Probable sources of information

The property itself is the principal source of information. It may involve collecting material from existing sources or seeking new information (including carrying out research).

Existing sources may be: archives, surveys, building records, museum collections, photograph archives, mapping / cartographic agencies (national survey offices), libraries, site files, other ministries / agencies / organizations and stakeholders (often a good source for old photographs, among other things). The traditional knowledge systems of stakeholders can also be drawn upon.

New information needs may include: new mapping / cartography, surveys, geophysical surveys, recording buildings, photographs (regular, rectified, etc.), detailed inventories, developing databases, physical (visual) surveys, written or oral surveys of various kinds, interviews and oral histories, commissioning of in-depth studies and research (e.g. comparative studies).

A basic checklist

The following information will be the minimum that is required:

1. Information to assess the (potential) OUV, authenticity, integrity and other values of the property;
2. Information on the physical conditions (impacts from various factors, risks and vulnerabilities)
3. Information on boundaries and the surroundings (including adjoining land use and development activities and plans);
4. General (explained in Part 4, checklist)