

Outstanding Universal Value Brief synthesis The Historic Centre of Bukhara, situated on the Silk Roads, is more than two thousand years old. In the context of regarding the Historic Centre of Bukhara as an entire entity – expressed through a variety of attributes including urban setting, form and design, use of materials and techniques, functions and tradition – some factors can be recognized as having the potential to impact adversely on the authenticity of the property, namely: (i) the diminishing use of traditional materials and traditional building techniques and introduction of new building materials, as well as new architectural details; (ii) inadequate documentation of major monuments and urban fabric; (iii) urban development pressures resulting in inappropriate designs of new structures. Later buildings from this phase of Bukhara's history include monumental medressehs at important crossroads: Taki Sarafon (Dome of the Moneychangers), Taki-Tilpak-Furushan (Dome of the Headguard Sellers), Tim-Bazzazan, and Tiro-Abdullah-Khan. With the advent of the Sheibanids came some of the most celebrated buildings of Bukhara: the Poi-Kalyan group, the Lyabi-Khauz ensemble, the Kosh Medresseh and the Gaukushon medresseh in the Hodja-Kalon ensemble. The citadel, rebuilt in the 16th century, has marked the civic center of the town since its earliest days to the present. Important monuments that survive from early times include the famous Ismail Samanai tomb, impressive in its sober elegance and the best surviving example of 10th century architecture in the whole Muslim world. The proportion of old structures, particularly the public and religious buildings, nonetheless remains high, and the historic centre is unquestionably of outstanding significance as an exceptional example of a largely medieval Muslim city of Central Asia. With the exception of a few important vestiges from before the Mongol invasions of Genghis Khan in 1220 and Temur in 1370, the old town bears witness to the urbanism and architecture of the Sheibani period of Uzbek rule, from the early 16th century onwards. From the 11th century Karakhanid period comes the outstanding Poi-Kalyan minaret, a masterpiece of decoration in brick, along with most of the Magoki Attori mosque and the Chashma Ayub shrine. However, the real importance of Bukhara lies not in its individual buildings but rather in its overall townscape, demonstrating the high and consistent level of urban planning and architecture that began with the Sheibanid dynasty. It is one of the best examples of well preserved Islamic cities of Central Asia of the 10th to 17th centuries, with an urban fabric that has remained largely intact. Criterion (ii): The example of Bukhara in terms of its urban layout and buildings had a profound influence on the evolution and planning of towns in a wide region of Central Asia. Criterion (vi): Between the 9th and 16th centuries, Bukhara was the largest centre for Muslim theology, particularly on Sufism, in the Near East, with over two hundred mosques and more than a hundred madrasahs. Despite the insensitivity of much of the new construction from 1920 until the 1950s and earthquake damages, Bukhara retains much of its historic ambience and still has a largely intact urban fabric. Criterion (iv): Bukhara is the most complete and unspoiled example of a medieval Central Asian town which has preserved its urban fabric to the present day. The Ulugbek medresseh is a surviving contribution from Temurid