

Archaeological Reserve Nikopolis Ad Istrum

Country or territory:
REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Name of organisation
compiling the information:
National Institute for Monuments of Culture

Contact name:
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Name and address of building(s) or site:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE
NIKOPOLIS AD ISTRUM

Inventory reference number(s):

State Gazette- 78/1968 – listed as
Archaeological Antique and Mediaeval
monumental ensemble
Decision of the Committee for Art and
Culture /State Gazette No24 1969/ – listed
as an Archaeological Reserve

Building type(s):

Archaeological reserve

Main date(s):

Beginning of the 2nd – 6th centuries AD

Current use(s):

Archaeological park

Significance:

This site includes the remains of a Roman town founded during the period of 106–110 AD. The town consists of an early fortified settlement, covering an area of 5,74 hectares, and a town covering 21,55 hectares. The city was discovered by Felix Kanitz in 1871. The first excavations were undertaken the same year by George Sior and subsequently by Vaclav Dobruski in 1906–1909. Regular excavations were carried out in 1945, 1966–68, and 1975–85. In 1985 a British team from Nottingham University joined the excavations.

The fortified system has been excavated, as well as the main road network and the central sector of the antique town. Important areas within the town are the Agora, the Odeon, the Buleverterion, the propilinian portico, the termoperipatossa and the civil basilica. Artefacts from the excavations are preserved at the National Museum of History and at the Regional Museum of History in the town of Veliko Turnovo.

Numerous conservation and restoration activities were carried out during the period of 1970–1995. A further programme of archaeological research, conservation and restoration has been prepared, including projects for some of the buildings situated around the Agora.

The archaeological reserve's area contains one of the few well-preserved antique towns in Bulgaria, preserved throughout the centuries and untouched by modern urbanisation. It is of exceptional cultural and historical, scientific and expositional value.

Categories of significance:

Of outstanding national importance

Categories of ownership or interest:

The reserve is the property of the Bulgarian Government and is being managed by the museum of Veliko Turnovo.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

Documentation

Complete survey drawings, photo, geodetic record, cadastre, programme for conservation and restoration works, design for conservation and restoration works and exposition. Publications in specialized media

Archives of the National Institute for Monuments of Culture
Archives of the Regional Historical Museum in Veliko Turnovo
Archives of the Archaeological Institute and Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Science

Condition:

The condition of the archaeological remains is poor; general deterioration of ruins.

Risk:

The risk to the reserve arises from its current condition and use, as well as from ineffective management and lack of maintenance, due to lack of funds.

The archaeological reserve depends upon the level of security, which cannot be provided in its present state.

Condition risk:

The archaeological site is exposed to immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of substance; solution agreed but not begun.

Technical assessment and costing:

Technical condition assessment, preliminary costings for repairs and rehabilitation as well as costings for different parts of the site are available. Total budget frame is of about 1 200 000 leva (600 000 EUR).

Ownership:

The site is publicly owned.

Occupation:

The site is open for cultural and specialised tourism from May to November.

Management:

The municipality of Veliko Turnovo is responsible for the management of the site. The Municipality of Veliko Turnovo, under the supervision of the National Institute for the Monuments of Culture, would be responsible for administering the funds, should they become available.

Summary:

The archaeological reserve contains one of the rare examples of well-preserved Antique towns in Bulgaria. The condition of the archaeological substance is poor. The risk to the reserve arises from its current condition, the use and ineffective management, and the lack of maintenance, due to the lack of funds.

Priority interventions are needed for the conservation and restoration of the Agora, the Odeon and the Propyleum Porch.

The potential priority level of this building is considered *high*.

Sign. and date:

Arch. Georgi Ugrinov
Director of the National Institute for Monuments of Culture
16.01.2004