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WHC-98/CONF.202/INF.7

Paris, 7 October 1998

Original: English

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

BUREAU OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-second extraordinary session

Kyoto, Japan

27 – 28 November 1998

**Information Document: Fourth State of Conservation Report on the Palaces and
Parks of Potsdam and Berlin (Germany)**

SUMMARY

The World Heritage Committee, at its twenty-first session in Naples in December 1997, examined the state of conservation of this property. The Committee concluded that although considerable improvements had been made, threats were still persisting. It decided to defer the discussion on whether or not Potsdam should be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger until its next session. The Committee requested the German authorities to submit a new report on the following issues:

- Extension of the World Heritage site
- Elaboration of a master plan
- Development competition “Grüne Mitte” Alter Markt/Lustgarten
- Quartier am Bahnhof
- Other building projects

Extensive information material regarding the master plan was also submitted and can be studied upon request.

4th Report to UNESCO on the State of Preservation of the World Heritage Site “Castles and Parks of Berlin and Potsdam”

Following the decisions of the 22th meeting of the World Heritage Committee I report again, on behalf of the government of the Land of Brandenburg and in agreement with the Prussian Castles and Parks Berlin-Brandenburg Foundation and the capital city of Brandenburg, Potsdam, on the state of preservation of the World Heritage Site.

I would like to thank the Committee for its critical analysis, for accompanying the construction and development plans for the surroundings of the World Heritage Site and for its assessment that considerable progress was achieved.

Since the last Committee meeting this process has been continued intensively and with good results by all those involved in decision-making in politics and administration, and by the respective experts.

1. Extension of the World Heritage Site

On 21 April 1998 I officially applied for the extension of the World Heritage Site. This application comprises the extension of the World Heritage Site by a total of 14 areas directly neighbouring to Sanssouci Park, the New Garden as well as Babelsberg Park, or connecting them. These areas complete and round off the present territory of the World Heritage Site as a result of which the World Heritage Site would form the nucleus of Potsdam's cultural landscape.

In accordance with the request of the Committee the parties involved have re-examined whether the “*Städtchen*” between *Pfingstberg* and New Garden fulfils the high criteria of the World Heritage Convention. Since the withdrawal of the Russian troops, who used this area until 1994, considerable efforts have been made to restore the historic character of the quarter. Confirmed by the request of the Committee the total area of the “*Städtchen*” is therefore, in accordance with my 1st report to the 20th Committee meeting, subject matter of the application.

As to the village of Bornstedt, no further steps have been planned or approved which might change the rural character of the place before the planning guidelines are completed or the present application is decided on.

I ask the Committee to take a positive decision on the present application for extension. We expect very positive impacts for the preservation and careful development of the cultural landscape to result from this extension.

2. Drawing up planning guidelines for the Potsdam's cultural landscape

Major progress has been made in drawing up planning guidelines for Potsdam's cultural landscape. In line with the objectives laid down in the 3rd report to the Committee, plans were drawn up for the surroundings of the Potsdam World Heritage Site (Appendix 2).

To this end the inner-city part of Potsdam's cultural landscape has been divided into areas comprising the territory around the World Heritage as well as the area required as buffer zone according to the Statutes of Monument Protection.

The inner-city part for which the planning guidelines are being set up has been divided into 9 areas (map 1 - survey). For areas 1 to 6 the following documentation has been compiled:

- map 2 "existing buildings" reflecting the present situation and
- map 3 "planning" summarizing potential town planning developments with due consideration to the area of the World Heritage Site.

The maps are to the scale of 1:10,000. Efforts are being made to complete the respective documentation for areas 7 to 9.

To include all relevant information of the planning guidelines for Potsdam's cultural landscape, a more detailed description of some parts of these areas is required. Therefore focus descriptions (to the scale of 1:2,000) have been added to the respective planning documents.

For areas 1 to 4 the planning documents have been drafted. Their final discussion is planned for late September 1998. The documents for areas 5 to 9 will be completed by the end of 1998.

The methodical structure of the compilations is as follows:

- short description of the area
- map "existing buildings" (scale 1:10,000) with explanations
- map "planning" (scale 1:10,000) with explanations
- table of results of local inspections, and summaries
- focus description (in part) scale 1:2,000
- transparent cover sheet displaying the major visual axis to illustrate developmental restrictions for the respective area.

After the planning guidelines have been completed they will be submitted to the town council meeting for discussion. If necessary, the plans will then be altered or supplemented and the town council meeting will decide on the areas for which the planning guidelines are to be backed up by binding construction planning guidelines.

When drawing up the planning guidelines the working group also studied current plans and included them in their considerations. No irreversible construction work which might affect the World Heritage Site was started during that period. To guarantee the future effectiveness of the planning guidelines the city of Potsdam will have to continue its related activities in close cooperation with the monument preservation authorities.

Already now it can be stated that the drawing up the planning guidelines contributed to making the requirements of the protection of the World Heritage Site and its surroundings much more concrete. The detailed and precise planning guidelines provide the conditions for determining, at a very early point, the effects any plan might have on the World Heritage Site. Hence the Committee, too, will have an even better

instrument at hand for assessing the effects of activities on the World Heritage Site. The Committee will be handed over the planning guidelines completed by the end of the year for utilization at the World Heritage Centre and will be informed on future steps as well as results in implementing the planning guidelines.

3. Results of the "green centre" - *Alter Markt/Lustgarten* town planning competition

The competitions organized for the "green centre" (New Pleasure Ground) and the Old Market in preparation of the Federal Garden Exhibition to be held in Potsdam in 2001 were completed successfully. Preparations for their gradual implementation in the respective areas are under way. For the whole area of the New Pleasure Ground the results of the competition have been put in concrete terms as to their function and appearance.

Next the respective specifications will be drawn up. The implementation will start later in 1998.

By laying out the New Pleasure Ground by the year 2001 Potsdam will be given back a large inner-city public park which combines the town planning qualities of a historic ground-plan with modern requirements.

An overall guideline was set up for town planning in the Old Market area. It includes the results of two competitions on Potsdam's centre and the area around the station (*Potsdam-Center*). The overall guideline formulates a development perspective for reshaping the historic centre of Potsdam and for the new development of the area where the castle used to be. Its objective is to reformulate the Old Market area as the oldest and historically most important part of the town according to the historic ground-plan and make it the new, lively town centre. The Old Market area is to be regained by the inhabitants of Potsdam and become a place of identification for the town where it meets and greets its guests. As regards the former site of the castle, a redevelopment in accordance with its past role is discussed.

The contents and objectives of the overall guideline are summarized in the layout plan (Appendix 1).

The overall guideline for town planning has been developed since 1995. The preparation, concept, discussion/public relations work and precision stages have been completed, and by the end of 1997 its contents was formulated. When all the maps and explanations are ready it will be submitted to the town council in autumn 1998.

To facilitate its implementation preparations for a town council decision on the rehabilitation of the respective area are under way. Practical and financial concepts are being developed for the gradual transition of the planned developments. Activities centre around the reconstruction of the most important areas and functions of the Old Market, around the buildings to be erected where the castle used to be as well as along the River Havel, and around *Friedrich Ebert Strasse* and *Plantage* (location of the former Garrison Church).

4. Results of the "Quartier am Bahnhof" town planning competition

The outcome of the competition, which also the Committee considered to be positive, provides for a better integration of the project into Potsdam's cultural landscape. This is achieved mainly by a reduction and more suitable arrangement of structures and the way they open in a large park towards the River Havel and the historic town centre on the other side.

Hence the northern facade of the station arcades (areas 9-12) gains special importance. Therefore the details of the facade were reconsidered in the light of the results of another expert opinion on the laying out of the station arcades (Winter 1997) and their compatibility with the results of the town planning competition and the historic context of the urban landscape in March 1998. Most important for Potsdam's cultural landscape was the decision then taken according to which the "moderate accentuation" recommended by the committee of experts for the face of the complex at *Lange Brücke* will not be executed. Giving up the idea of an attached three-storey tower avoids a disruption, or new accentuation, of the system of historic views, including to the World Heritage Site.

The plans for areas 9-12 were reconsidered in the light of the results of the competition for the „*Quartier am Bahnhof*“ area, and it was found that proportion and location of the structures in areas 9-12 could be executed in the planned way.

The carcass of the station arcades (areas 9-12) has been completed, the station premises and plant are under construction (see slides). The execution of the complex, which is built according to the original plans, proves that the decision to chose for the remaining area one solution of the town planning competition which reflects the special nature of Potsdam's cultural landscape was the right thing to do. The first phase of construction does not interfere with the implementation of the competition result. However, it has not been decided yet if and when further phases will follow.

5. Other building projects

Further to my last report it has to be added here that the town administration and the Prussian Castles and Parks Berlin-Brandenburg Foundation have discussed and agreed on the layout of the facades and colouring of the "*Gewoba-Bau*" (*Alt-Nowawes*). The agreement reached is welcomed by the Foundation as a good solution, too. The report also said that the project "Potsdam Windows" had no direct effects on the World Heritage Site. This projects aims at improving the urban quality of a residential quarter built in the 1970s. So far, the property owner has not made use of his construction right.

For the "residential and office buildings" at *Ribbeckstrasse* in Bornstedt no application for a building licence has been received so far, and no planning law exists. The town of Potsdam is well aware of the sensitivity of this area and will control any planning with due regard to the protection of the World Heritage. A first step in this direction is

the placing of an order for setting up of a preservation statute for the village of Bornstedt.

Conclusion

Supported by the local and national governments Potsdam, the capital city of Brandenburg, has taken up the recommendations and results of the Committee as can be seen from my report. Thus the Statutes of Monument Protection for the surroundings of the World Heritage Site (buffer zone), the application for the extension of the World Heritage Site, the drawing up of planning guidelines, corrections in town development and major changes of individual projects have been initiated since 1996. I would like to stress that all these steps were taken with Potsdam's cultural landscape in mind, which is embedded in the World Heritage Site. Since the inclusion of the original World Heritage Site in the World Heritage List in 1990 the Federal German government and the governments of the Laender Berlin and Brandenburg have invested more than DM 150 million in the preservation and restoration of the World Heritage Site which is administered by the Prussian Castles and Parks Berlin-Brandenburg Foundation. This remarkable amount has been spent on the World Heritage Site also with the intention of combining the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage with the economic development, a better infrastructure and a higher quality of life in Eastern Germany. Along this road, positive results have been attained. In order to carry on with this development the protection of Potsdam's cultural landscape will continue to play a major role in decision-making on the future development of the town.

Potsdam, September 1998

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