
Corvey (Germany) No 1447

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Carolingian Westwork and Civitas Corvey

Location

North Rhine-Westphalia
Detmold administrative region
Germany

Brief description

The Carolingian Westwork and the Civitas Corvey are located along the river Weser on the outskirts of the town of Höxter where they were erected between 822 and 885 AD in a largely preserved rural setting. The Westwork is the only standing structure that dates back to the Carolingian era, while the original imperial abbey complex is preserved as archaeological remains which are only partially excavated. The baroque monastic complex and the abbey church complement the medieval vestiges and contribute to the understanding of the significance and past role of the property.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *site* comprising also a *group of buildings*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

20 September 1999

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

31 January 2013

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted several independent experts.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 10 to 13 September 2013.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party

A letter was sent to the State Party on 27 September 2013 requesting additional information on the following points:

- Existence and structure of an overall management body;
- Clarifications on existing formal protection layers of the nominated property and its buffer zone;
- Details on the provisions contained in existing planning instruments and on a timeline for their revisions;
- Details concerning the delineation of the northern boundary of the buffer zone;
- Details on disaster risk preparedness;
- Details on involvement of the local communities;
- Details on budgeting and fund raising for the implementation of the conservation and enhancement programme.

The State Party responded on 5 November 2013. The information provided has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this document.

On 12 December 2013 ICOMOS sent a second letter to the State Party requesting further information concerning the implementation time-scale for:

- The establishment and enforcement of a management authority;
- The extension of the management system to establish co-operation for protection and management purposes of the neighbouring state of Lower Saxony;
- The formal approval and implementation of the management plan and its related master plan;
- The finalisation of the study on panoramic views and the approval and enforcement of related protective measures;
- The elaboration of a Heritage Impact Assessment according to ICOMOS guidance for all planned wind farms.

The State Party responded on 26 February 2014 and the additional information provided has been considered in the evaluation process.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

6 March 2014

2 The property

Description

Surrounded by a still largely preserved rural setting and revealed from a distance by the pointed roofs and the bare-stone towers of the westwork, the monastic complex of Corvey lies along the eastern side of the river Weser in the north-western outskirts of the town of Höxter.

In addition to the church and the westwork, and the former abbey (now housing the Duke of Ratibor's residence, a museum and a library), the complex of the nominated property (12ha) also comprises service buildings as well as the archaeological remains of the early medieval imperial monastery and of the associated fortified village (in the buffer zone). As they appear today, the monastery district and the church date back to the baroque epoch but the Carolingian Westwork is still standing, clearly recognisable in its form and substance.

The westwork

The term *Westwerk* – westwork - was invented in the 19th century to indicate a massive, tower-like western front of Carolingian churches which contained an entrance-vestibule with a chapel and other upper rooms or galleries opening towards the nave. Research has ascertained that this building type originated in the Carolingian era as a combination of different ancient architectural models with the cult exigencies of the early medieval epoch within the Frankish Empire. The use of these structures is still debated: either they had functions related to the emperor (i.e. as a royal chapel or an audience chamber) or they might be ingenious solutions to provide an additional liturgical focus on the opposite side of the main altar, to replicate the roman tradition of west-facing choirs.

Although several historic documents referred to this structure, although calling it a *castellum* (fortified structure or watch tower) or *turris* (tower), only the Westwork of Corvey appears to survive from the Carolingian period.

The Westwork of Corvey presently consists of two corner towers enclosing a multi-storey structure, the result of 12th century changes to the original Carolingian three-towered body. However, the central projecting porch, although added to with further storeys, and the three arches to the entrance hall, date back to Carolingian times. Originally the exterior surfaces of the walls were decorated with painted plaster, now lost.

A precious inscription with inlaid and gilded capital letters positioned on the front of the structure – now removed and replaced by a copy for conservation reasons – attests to the very high rank of the abbey and also that *Civitas* was the appellation for Corvey.

Through the three-arch entrance, one accesses the vestibule and then, through the portal, the crypt-like central room. This is covered by nine cross vaults supported by four central columns with Corinthian capitals and by perimeter pillars and wall projections. The inner space is surrounded on the north, south and east sides by outer vaulted aisles. A staircase in the western corner leads to the upper chamber, a double-height space surrounded by rooms on the north, south and west sides. These open onto the central chamber by means of three arches each side, surmounted by three mullioned windows. A wall with double three-arcade

openings – the result of 1950s reconstruction and restoration works – divides the chamber from the intermediate, shaft space to the east.

The central chamber preserves portions of mural paintings and the *sinopias* of six stucco figures, which complemented and emphasised the architectural space and elements. One of the painted scenes depicts a mythological episode: Ulysses fighting against Scylla; other fragments of the paintings reveal that the main scene was part of a frieze with sea motifs. The full-size stucco figures, four male and two female, have been lost and only fragments could be recovered. The nature of these figures has not been ascertained yet. The mythological theme of the painting is a rare survival that demonstrates how much classical literature was part of the Fathers of the Church's educational and cultural background, to be used as a religious parable: the 'bad sea' of the earthly temptations.

The Carolingian abbey church

The Carolingian abbey church does not survive as a standing structure; it was in fact replaced by the present baroque edifice (1667), but it has been documented through archaeological excavations which allowed the reconstruction of its plan. The church was built between 822 and 844, the choir was extended around 870 and the westwork completed the church between 873 and 885. The building had a basilica plan with three aisles and, originally, a simple rectangular choir, with an external crypt connected to the passage below the choir floor. Excavations have made it clear that it would have been considerably higher (2m at least) than the nave. Archaeological evidence shows that the choir was enlarged and lengthened by adding an additional space to the choir, an apse and two lateral chapels, and an ambulatory around the choir replaced the previous crypt.

The monastery district

Archaeological remains and investigations demonstrate that the monastic complex was located north of the abbey church. Investigations and surviving surface traces of the medieval moat and perimeter walls confirm that the medieval and Carolingian monastery precinct coincided approximately with the baroque ditch and walls. Inside the boundary of the walled area investigations have revealed the existence of cellars, wells, pit houses, workshops for glass and non-ferrous material processing. Written sources suggest that there were also an infirmary and a graveyard for the monks, a hospice for pilgrims, dwellings for important guests, the medieval abbot's residence, as well as other functional buildings and mills.

The buffer zone

The buffer zone (69ha) includes the immediate surroundings of the nominated property and corresponds to the area of the town, deserted since the 13th century. At present the area comprises cultivated fields, service buildings for farming activities, the fluvial harbour – now out of use – the railway line, the excavated remains of a

monastery and graveyard in Niggenkerken, the former market church and of the route of the Hellweg (salt road). Surveys have yielded information about the archaeological potential, the extent and the age of the deserted town.

History and development

The monastery was founded under Charlemagne's successor Louis the Pious in 815 AD by monks sent from Corbie, a convent in Picardy, northern France. The monastery took its name from the mother convent: *Nova Corbeia*, now Corvey. The original seat was in a different location but in 822 the monastic community resettled to its current location. This was made possible by Louis the Pious, who transferred the ownership of the site to the monks. The Benedictine abbey was granted privileges by the Carolingians – free choice of its abbots, immunity, market and minting rights (833) – and these, along with the transfer of the relics of St Vitus from Saint-Denis in 836, favoured the monastery's growing importance and influence within Saxony.

Corvey soon became a prominent cultural and religious centre with a school and a library. One of the largest-known Carolingian settlements grew up west of the monastery gates to develop into two distinct towns: Höxter and Corvey. The latter developed into a town between the 9th and the 12th centuries: it was given a secular monastery (Niggenkerken) as well as a market church, and was fortified in the second half of the 12th century; the construction of a bridge over the river Weser and a self-governing council ensured further economic and administrative autonomy.

The prosperity of the town of Corvey was to cease within a century: in 1265 it was destroyed by a coalition including citizens of Höxter and the bishop of Paderborn and never recovered. By that time the monastery had already lost its importance, and its neglect culminated in the transfer of the relics of St. Vitus from the abbey church to Prague Cathedral in 1355. The abbey regained some of its importance at the beginning of the 16th century but during the Thirty Years' War it was devastated, large parts of the library being lost as well as St. Vitus's shrine. In 1792 the abbey was secularised and converted into a diocese which survived until 1825; in 1803 the Principality of Corvey was abolished. After the Congress of Vienna, the monastic complex and its property changed ownership until it came by inheritance into the possession of the Duke of Ratibor and Prince of Corvey.

The complex underwent an extensive restoration campaign between 1947 and 1966. The interventions aimed to restore the Westwork to its Carolingian layout on the basis of scientific findings and evidence. The main room in its current aspect is the result of the interventions carried out between the 1950s and 1960s: further interventions concerned the stabilisation of the foundations (1960s) through the insertion of a concrete slab underneath and injection of liquid cement into the walls.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

The State Party has developed the comparative analysis firstly by defining the typological, chronological and regional framework of the nomination – religious early Christian sites of Central Northern Europe – and then selecting relevant examples to carry out the comparison in relation to the most important features of the nominated property, namely its role as an imperial abbey within the Frankish Empire, the westwork, and the mural paintings.

The State Party notes that although several buildings, among them churches, monasteries, convents, and cathedrals, are known from this period, only a few of them survive entirely or partially and only a limited number are represented on the World Heritage List. They are: Aachen Cathedral (1978, (i), (ii), (iv) and (vi)), the Monastic Island of Reichenau (2000, (iii), (iv) and (vi)), Abbey and Altenmünster of Lorsch (1991, (iii) and (iv) – all in Germany –, Abbey of St Gall (1983, (ii) and (iv)), and Benedictine Convent of St John at Müstair (1983, (iii)), both in Switzerland, and Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Former Abbey of Saint-Rémi and Palace of Tau, Reims (France, 1991, (i), (ii) and (vi)).

They have all been included in the comparison, which has been further complemented by other properties which are relevant for the present nomination but which do not survive in their original configuration or were destroyed: the Abbey of Corbie, from which Corvey originated, and the Abbey of St Riquier – former Centula, both in France. Each building has been examined in the light of its specificities and, where present, commonalities with the nominated property and of their role in depicting the Carolingian Renaissance.

ICOMOS believes that the comparative analysis demonstrates that each of the examined World Heritage properties contributes specifically and exceptionally to illustrate the Carolingian renaissance of arts and culture which played a central role in the subsequent artistic, historic and cultural development of Europe. ICOMOS also believes that the comparison highlights that the nominated property significantly adds to the representation of the Carolingian Renaissance provided by the other monuments already inscribed on the World Heritage List as one of the very first examples of a westwork – a new type of building which originated in the Carolingian era – and a cycle of mural paintings depicting classic mythological subjects applied to a religious building.

However, ICOMOS considers that comparison with later examples of early Romanesque churches would have contributed to make even more explicit the relevance and influence throughout Europe of the nominated property on the development of religious architecture in the Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque eras.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value for the following reasons:

- Corvey contains the only preserved westwork building from Carolingian times.
- The structure and decoration of the westwork outstandingly exhibit the integration of innovative Carolingian elements with ancient models to give form to an original and distinct artistic expression.
- The surviving sculpted and painted decorative cycle represents the only known example of ancient mythology reinterpreted within the Christian worldview.
- Corvey, as it survives in its present layout, with its standing structures and archaeological remains, demonstrates its links with other Carolingian cultural centres, further corroborated by a robust historic tradition.
- As an imperial abbey and with its scriptorium and one of the most important libraries existing at that time, Corvey played a crucial role not only as an intellectual and religious centre but also as a political stronghold of the Frankish empire.

ICOMOS considers that this justification is appropriate. The unique relevance of the Westwork of Corvey has been recognized for a long time; scholarly research has positioned it in its chronological and international context as one of the earliest prototypical examples of a *westwork* which was then widely adopted as a distinctive architectural element of Romanesque and Gothic architecture in Europe, and later reinterpreted by the Baroque architectural narrative.

The understanding of the major relevance of the Westwork of Corvey has been in recent years complemented by publications on its wall paintings and stucco work and on the archaeology of the church. All this body of knowledge scientifically substantiates the justification proposed for inscription on the World Heritage List.

However, ICOMOS notes that the Benedictine library was largely destroyed and dispersed during the Thirty Years' War and part of its collection is now housed at the Archbishop's Academic Library in Paderborn. Therefore the importance of Corvey as a centre of Christianity within the Frankish Empire rests solely on its surviving built fabric and archaeological remains.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

ICOMOS concurs with the State Party's view that the nominated property meets the conditions of integrity as set

out in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. There are no relevant elements outside of the nominated area and other important features are included in the buffer zone. The physical fabric of the property is in a good condition. It does not suffer from any major adverse effects of development or neglect: conservation issues, such as the leaning of the façade and salts inside the masonry, have been or are being addressed and constantly monitored.

Authenticity

ICOMOS considers that the Westwork, built between 873 and 885, forms the core of the property. Despite some modifications carried out over the centuries, restoration and limited reconstruction works, the *Westwerk* layout and its physical substance with its murals, do credibly convey the proposed outstanding universal value. In addition, St John's Choir is still used as a chapel.

The archaeological remains of the abbey church have been excavated and investigated, whilst those of the Carolingian monastery and its district have been only partly analysed and the archaeological deposit remains largely intact. However, investigations have yielded evidence of the size and age of the complex. They also may be taken as evidence, along with the associated existing historical documentation, of the importance played by the monastery in Carolingian times.

The present-day church was erected in 1667 whilst the convent was reconstructed between the 17th- 18th centuries. They are all architectural monuments of value: the abbey church has become a parish church and is still in use, whilst the monastery houses the owner's residence, a museum and a library. ICOMOS believes that they complement the surviving tangible evidence of the Carolingian Westwerk and the archaeological remains to support the proposed Outstanding Universal Value and provide the most appropriate setting for the understanding of the nominated property.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met, in spite of some limited reconstructions carried out in the 1950s on the westwork.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi).

Criterion (ii): *exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the nominated property preserves the only almost complete Westwork from the Carolingian era and that its layout is based on ancient models in its form and decoration. The Westwork was to become the basis for

further technical and morphological developments in religious architecture over the centuries to come until the end of the Romanesque period.

ICOMOS considers that the extensive research carried out in the history of architecture at the international level and on the nominated property over almost a century supports the claims for this criterion. The Westwork of Corvey uniquely illustrates one of the most important Carolingian architectural expressions. It is a genuine creation of this period which assimilated pre-existing motifs and elements, which were then incorporated into the church structure. ICOMOS further observes that the first part of the justification for this criterion also strengthens criterion (iv).

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (iii): *bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the layout of the monastery, its surviving archaeological traces demonstrate the consistency of the former Carolingian convent and its former functions. Additionally, the architectural articulation and decoration of the westwork illustrate clearly the role played within the Frankish Empire by imperial monasteries in securing territorial control, administration, as well as the propagation of Christianity and of the Carolingian cultural and political order throughout Europe.

ICOMOS considers that the surviving physical remains of the nominated property, along with the extensive body of knowledge elaborating on the Carolingian phenomenon and specifically on the Abbey of Corvey, sustains the justification proposed for this criterion and represents an outstanding testimony to the Carolingian political and cultural vision.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (iv): *be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the Westwork of Corvey represents an outstanding example of Carolingian religious architecture, whilst the archaeological remains of the abbey illustrate a settlement pattern in which convents played a central function in spreading the Christian creed but also in gaining and defending territorial sovereignty so as to aid the development of the country.

ICOMOS considers that the Westwork of Corvey represents the only surviving example of this type of building, which is a genuine and original architectural expression from the Carolingian era, and, along with the excavated and surveyed archaeological remains of the

imperial abbey, complemented by the standing structures of the baroque phase of the convent, supports the arguments put forward to justify this criterion and also reinforces criterion (ii).

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (vi): *be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that Corvey became a pre-eminent centre of spirituality and knowledge in the region, thanks to the imperial privileges conferred on the monastery, its library and school. Here Widukind von Corvey wrote the "History of the Saxons" which is among the most prominent works of western historiography. Finally, Corvey Westwork has been the object of intense research in architecture, art and church history for more than a hundred years, which has shaped our understanding of early medieval religious architecture in northern and central Europe during the Frankish Empire.

ICOMOS firstly observes that the early medieval library no longer exists following the destruction and dispersal suffered during and after the Thirty Years' War; the rich library which is presently contained at Corvey dates to a later period. Also, the Carolingian monastery survives only as an archaeological, partially excavated site.

ICOMOS further notes that the comparative analysis carried out by the State Party has essentially focussed on the aspects and tangible evidence supporting criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) whilst the comparison has not been developed in this direction to support the claims proposed to justify criterion (vi).

ICOMOS finally considers that the surviving fabric of the nominated property does not support the justification for this criterion.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has not been demonstrated.

ICOMOS considers that the conditions of authenticity and integrity have been met, in spite of some limited reconstructions during the restoration works carried out in the 1950-60s on the Westwork. ICOMOS finally considers that the nominated property meets criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and that, taken together, the justifications provided for these criteria reinforce each other. However, ICOMOS also considers that criterion (vi) has not been demonstrated.

Description of the attributes

- The westwork layout, architectural form and material substance, construction techniques and architectural elements, particularly those parts dating back to the Carolingian phase, demonstrate the reference to

antique typological or architectural models and convey the importance of the westwork as a building type.

- The surviving fragments of the mural paintings, original Carolingian or early medieval plaster still *in situ*, and the *sinopias* of the stuccoworks attest to the role of surface decoration in defining architectural spaces and of classical literary tradition as a cultural reference during the early Middle Ages.
- The excavated and buried archaeological remains of the monastery and its fortified district bear tangible witness to the consistency of the Carolingian complex.

The retention of a religious function for the westwork contributes to the understanding and appreciation of this structure.

The baroque monastery complex contributes to the continuity of the monastic and religious functions of the site throughout the centuries; the reconstruction of the church in its baroque form allowed the retention of the religious use of the westwork. The buried traces of the fortified village outside the monastery also strengthen the comprehensibility of the important role played by Corvey Abbey in the settlement pattern of the region. The rural setting constitutes the appropriate context for the understanding and appreciation of the significance of the nominated property.

4 Factors affecting the property

The Management Plan for the nominated property informs that the area is not subject to development pressures: no plans exist for new roads, bridges or industries. Current agricultural activity within the buffer zone will be moved outside of it.

Despite its proximity to the river Weser, the monastery site is not prone to flooding, thanks to its relative altitude in respect to surrounding areas, which, on the contrary, may be affected by exceptional flooding.

In its letter sent on 27 September 2013, ICOMOS asked the State Party whether bicentenary and five-hundred year disaster scenarios had been developed for the area of the nominated property and whether any disaster mitigation measures were established. ICOMOS also requested information about plans for wind energy exploitation in the area.

The State Party responded that the required water levels leading to flooding scenarios were prepared by the Detmold district government within the framework of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and that 1000 years is used as an extreme scenario. In this case, the water level would rise to affect the southern external walls of the complex and the eastern annex of the monastery church. No protection plan has been prepared for an extreme event but only for HQ100 floods and these do not concern the nominated property since it would not be affected by HQ100 floods.

With regard to wind energy exploitation, the State Party also informed that within Höxter municipality the Development Plan for the city currently in force has identified two areas suitable for wind energy utilisation: Bosseborn (5.5km SE of Corvey, area: 43ha) and Fürstenau (8.2km NW of Corvey, area: 30ha); the maximum height for the installations would be 100m. However, early in 2013 the City of Höxter resolved to modify the existing land development plan, adding new areas eligible for wind power production: these are adjacent to the already approved sites in Bosseborn and Fürstenau, the respective size of each area is 55ha and 95ha, which would double the size of the first site and quadruple the latter (89ha and 135 ha). Also an increase in the windmill height would be allowed. According to the State Party a visualisation has been done, demonstrating that no visual impact would occur on the nominated property.

Further risks deriving from fire, vandalism and theft are addressed thanks to a set of technical and organisational measures. The nomination dossier also mentions that the mural paintings are subject to decay and loss due to moisture penetration and the presence of soluble salts, which are to be addressed through a conservation programme, based on preliminary analysis already carried out in 2011.

Despite the 1950s structural stabilization of the foundations of the westwork, its leaning continues – studies are planned to identify the causes and define any intervention that may be needed.

ICOMOS expresses its concerns regarding the possibility that wind farms be developed in areas close to the nominated property.

ICOMOS requested further information on the planned wind farms in its letter sent to the State Party on 12 December 2013 and the State Party responded informing that the city and District of Höxter are considering a possible redesignation of areas for wind parks, which need to pass through amendments to the current planning requirements. The State Party has also informed that an analysis of the possible impacts of the wind farms on the nominated property, based on visualisation and photo-simulations, is currently under examination by the Landschaftsverband Westfalen – Lippe.

ICOMOS welcomes this information and expects to receive the Heritage Impact Assessment as well as the considerations of the competent Office of monument conservation.

ICOMOS further notes that information provided on the planned wind farm sites has been limited to the territory under the jurisdiction of North Rhine-Westphalia; however, given that the boundary with Lower Saxony runs on the opposite side of the river Weser near the nominated property, it would be necessary to receive information on planning provisions in force or foreseen for areas in Lower Saxony in the vicinity of the nominated property, with

regard to industrial and commercial development and wind power production, that might have an impact on the nominated property.

In this regard, the State Party informed that the representative for World Heritage of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, sent a letter on 16 January 2014 to the State of Lower Saxony requesting it to ensure that building or developments do not have any negative effect on the nominated property.

ICOMOS is pleased that this step has been taken and expects the State of Lower Saxony to formalise its engagement to take into consideration the values of the nominated property in their planning provisions.

Finally ICOMOS notes that a railway line runs very close to the southern boundary of the nominated property: preparedness measures against accidents should be envisaged for the nominated property.

ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the property concern the mural paintings and the plaster and are the leaning of the westwork, the possible installation of wind farms in areas close to the nominated property, and flooding.

ICOMOS recommends that the planned comprehensive conditions assessment and monitoring of the westwork be implemented as soon as possible. ICOMOS expects to receive as soon as possible the results of the Heritage Impact Assessment according to the ICOMOS guidance, being carried out on the possible negative impacts of planned wind farms in the surroundings of the nominated property.

ICOMOS considers it advisable that an overall risk preparedness plan be developed for the nominated property, to include consideration of flood and railway accident threats.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundaries of the nominated property and of the buffer zone are clearly delineated and include areas that in the light of future research have the potential to contribute to the understanding of the property. The nominated property limits correspond to the Civitas Corvey, that is, the assumed extent of the medieval monastery. The area is a large undisturbed archaeological archive; only the church, the medieval ditches and the curtain wall have been excavated.

ICOMOS requested additional information in September 2013 concerning the precise course of the northern boundaries of the nominated property and the buffer zone;

the State Party has clarified this point by providing a more detailed description of the property limits.

The buffer zone includes the immediate surroundings of the property corresponding to the site of the 13th century deserted town: the boundaries have been defined through indirect archaeological surveys, including augering, trial trenches, construction monitoring, geophysical survey, and airborne laser scanning, to determine the archaeological potential of the area.

Further protection to the skyline and the renowned panoramic views over and from the nominated property is also needed. An inventory of the most important views towards and from the nominated property and of their condition has been elaborated on.

ICOMOS understands that the buffer zone has been designed to include all elements and remains functionally linked to the nominated property whilst the State Party has referred to different means for the protection and safeguarding of visual corridors and panoramas.

ICOMOS considers the above-mentioned inventory of views as a preliminary step in ensuring the protection of the visual integrity of the property in relation to its setting; however, following this study, appropriate protective measures should be developed and incorporated into the relevant planning tools as soon as possible.

ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of its buffer zone are adequate. However, ICOMOS recommends that the study for protecting the panoramic views from and towards Corvey be finalised, and protection measures approved and incorporated into the relevant plans as soon as possible and before any decision concerning wind farm location is finalised. ICOMOS recommends that the State Party provides information on any progress made in this regard.

Ownership

The ownership is mixed. The westwork, the church, the forecourt and the graveyard to the south of the church is owned by the Parish of St Stephanus and Vitus. The area included in the former monastery district and the buffer zone belong to the Duke of Ratibor and Prince of Corvey. The harbour and related buildings are owned by the Federal Republic of Germany, the railway lines belong to German Rail, whilst the roads belong to the municipality or the district authorities.

Protection

The nominated property is protected under the provisions of the Act for the Protection and Conservation of Historical Monuments of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and recorded in the historic monument list of Höxter since 1986 and 1990, which is the highest level of protection. Any work or project concerning listed monuments requires authorization by the Lower Monument Protection Authority in consultation with Westphalia-Lippe Regional Association (LWL) - Department for Heritage Preservation, Landscape and Building Culture.

Spatial planning is articulated at the State, regional (district), and municipal level. Landscape planning is established by federal law, regulated at the State level and developed at the district level. The Regional Plan defines the spatial planning goals at the district level (District of Detmold, Paderborn–Höxter section) and includes a functional section for wind power. The management plan mentions a revision procedure to be initiated. Landscape plans include binding measures for landscape and ecosystem preservation and recovery and identifying outlying areas deserving protection.

In the buffer zone construction works and protection of views are regulated by the existing plans and design and conservation bylaws. The *Wesertal and Fürstenauer Bergland* landscape plan includes the buffer zone in its scope, thus providing forms of landscape protection. According to this plan, important views from and to Corvey need to be inventoried and protected. The municipal development plan defines the nominated property as devoted to cultural use, the buffer zone as agricultural areas; additionally, information about its status as an archaeological monument is included in the plan. Design and conservation bylaws aim at preserving the view of the monastic complex with the bend of the river Weser and the Corveyer Allee, excluding visual disturbances and preserving the monument and its surroundings.

ICOMOS notes that both the regional and the municipal plans are about to be modified, the latter to increase the size of areas for wind power production. In this regard the State Party has informed that an analysis of the possible impacts of planned wind farms is underway (see Section 4 of this report).

ICOMOS also observes that the legal and planning protection framework is articulated and multi-layered, therefore it requires careful coordination between respective goals and measures, in order to achieve effective protection of the nominated property.

ICOMOS finally observes that the additional information provided by the State Party on the planning provisions have been strictly limited to the buffer zone and have not concerned the wider setting. Further information on this aspect is necessary.

ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place for the nominated property appears adequate. On the other hand, the protective planning measures for the property and its buffer zone established through the different levels of planning will be adequate when measures to protect important views from and towards Corvey are elaborated, approved and implemented. Additionally, provisions to increase wind power plants should be verified against Heritage Impact Assessments and the aforementioned protective measures for panoramic views.

Conservation

Systematic recording of the nominated property was first carried out in the 1950s and concerned old plaster and

mural paintings of the westwork, but this has been revived only recently. On the contrary, archaeological research has taken place since the end of the 19th century. In the 1970s an extensive investigation based on modern methods laid down the bases for the history of the building complex. Further archaeological research using non-destructive methods is planned at the nominated property and in the buffer zone.

The current state of conservation of Corvey may be considered good overall; however, some specific decay problems to the mural paintings, partly caused by conservation works carried out in the 1950–60s, and structural defects in the westwork structure require further investigation and monitoring before any intervention is designed. A comprehensive assessment of the conservation conditions of the Carolingian monument was expected to begin in 2013. However, some of the detected problems are currently being addressed.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property is overall in good condition, despite its age and early conservation interventions which caused some decay problems, currently being addressed. ICOMOS also considers that further systematic research has to be continued both for conservation and research purposes.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The nomination dossier describes the overall management framework in force at the federal and State level, based on the existing legal, administrative and planning system and explains that at the property level the Kulturkreis Höxter–Corvey gGmbH was founded by the District and Town of Höxter and the Duke of Ratibor to carry out the museum's cultural and educational programme.

ICOMOS noted that no management authority involving all relevant stakeholders has been established yet and in its letter sent on 25 September 2013 requested additional information from the State Party, who responded that a steering committee for the preparation of the nomination had been set up and this will remain in place until the Kulturkreis Höxter–Corvey gGmbH is restructured or a foundation will be established for co-ordinated management purposes.

ICOMOS considers that any of the aforementioned solutions should be implemented as soon as possible.

ICOMOS sent a second letter on 12 December 2013 requesting further information concerning the formal establishment of a management authority for the nominated property and the buffer zone involving all relevant stakeholders.

The State Party responded on 26 February 2014 explaining that the nominated property belongs to the Prince of Ratibor and to the Parish of St. Stephanus and Vitus, therefore the owners form the management authority.

Since the buffer zone also comprises infrastructures (i.e. a road network, the port, the railway line) owned by entities other than the Parish and the Duke of Ratibor, ICOMOS considers that co-ordination among all stakeholders in the exercise of their rights, duties and competencies needs to be formalised through the establishment of a body suitable for this task, and confirms that this should be finalised as soon as possible.

ICOMOS also considers that steps should be taken to ensure that the State of Lower Saxony and relevant local authorities under its jurisdiction bind themselves to avoid adverse impact on the nominated property through projects or planning provisions concerning areas close to the nominated property.

In its letter sent in December 2013, ICOMOS also asked for further information regarding this issue.

The State Party responded that the City Councils of Hörter and of Holzminden had already expressed their joint support to the nomination. Additionally, on 16 January 2014 a letter was sent to the State of Lower Saxony requesting that buildings and developments in Lower Saxony should not impact negatively on the nominated property. An ad-hoc decree will be issued by the Ministry of the Interior of Lower Saxony requesting that the visual qualities of the property – after it has become a World Heritage property – be taken into consideration in future planning projects.

ICOMOS considers that finalisation and formalisation of this measure is particularly relevant to ensure the effective protection of the nominated property and recommends that a timeframe for the approval and enforcement of the above-mentioned decree be provided to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS.

ICOMOS notes that the translated document submitted by the State Party concerning the joint support of the nomination by the Municipalities of Hörter and of Holzminden does not include any commitment to ensure the protection of the nominated property and its buffer zone. ICOMOS considers that a more substantial engagement by the neighbouring municipalities to guarantee the safeguarding of the values of the nominated property would be beneficial, particularly in relation to the proposed wind farms (see above).

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

A management plan has been elaborated with the owners and relevant authorities. It has been designed to integrate existing legal and planning tool provisions for daily

protection and management of the nominated property and its buffer zone. In addition to the management plan, a master plan has also been envisaged to enhance the nominated property and its buffer zone with a view to improve infrastructure, facilities and offers for visitors. Projected actions include the reorganisation of traffic and vehicular access, improvement of the surroundings in terms of architectural quality, vegetation, moving incompatible functions, and design of an archaeological park within the buffer zone. A visitor strategy for the region has been planned: it integrates the nominated property with other cultural resources aimed at placing Corvey in its wider territorial and historic-thematic contexts.

ICOMOS requested in September 2013 further information from the State Party with regard to the budget and possible sources of funding for the implementation of the master plan. In its response, the State Party has provided a list of the available federal and state programmes that the nominated property and its buffer zone would be eligible for. These are: the Protection of Urban Historical Documents support programme; the World Heritage Programme, the Valuable National Cultural Monuments Programme. It also informed that an exact schedule and financial plan are being prepared.

ICOMOS asked for additional information on 12 December 2013 on the implementation timeframe and financial plan. The State Party responded on 26 February 2014 informing that the legal protection as described in the management plan does not need further confirmation. It also provided details concerning the resources needed to carry out various conservation measures and the corresponding implementation schedule. Further interventions would be subordinated by inscription to the World Heritage List, because the new status would open access to financial resources which are allocated at the federal level for World Heritage Properties.

ICOMOS observes that, although the system for protection is in force and may not need further formalisation, the Management Plan foresees coordination and conservation/enhancement measures (see e.g. paragraph 5.1.3 p. 51 or chapter 5.2 pp. 51 – 67 of the Management Plan) that need to be formalised through the approval of the management plan by all owners and relevant stakeholders. ICOMOS also believes that the envisioned Steering Committee (see p.51) should be established.

ICOMOS also notes that the budget submitted in the additional information concerns works scheduled for short-term implementation but does not clarify whether it reveals resources currently available or only the resources needed to carry out the interventions planned.

Involvement of the local communities

ICOMOS requested in September 2013 additional information on this point and the State Party responded informing that several activities and awareness-raising

campaigns have been undertaken to involve the local communities in the nomination process.

ICOMOS considers that special attention is needed with regard to the co-ordination of legal and planning tools at different administrative levels within North Rhine-Westphalia and then with those of Lower Saxony.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that formalisation of Lower Saxony's engagement to ensure that no adverse effects may derive from building or development activity in areas close to the nominated property under their jurisdiction is of the utmost importance, and expects to receive a time-frame for the approval of the above-mentioned Lower Saxony Minister of Interior's decree.

ICOMOS considers that a management body should be established and enforced as soon as possible and that the management plan and its operational master plan should be equipped with a timeline implementation, an adequate budget and a financial strategy and then be approved and implemented.

Finally ICOMOS considers that the presentation of the "Carolingian Westwork and Civitas Corvey" in the museum and outside the church should be expanded with regard to the Carolingian era.

6 Monitoring

The nomination dossier informs that monitoring for the nominated property is carried out by the owners in co-operation with the relevant authorities. Monitoring indicators on specific conservation issues of the westwork have been identified and continuously measured. Data are archived with the owners and the relevant conservation offices.

ICOMOS considers monitoring indicators should be identified and set out in relation to the objectives pursued through the management plan and not limited to conservation issues. Appropriate periodicity should also been identified for each of the indicators. ICOMOS recommends that an overall monitoring strategy be set up, integrating also current monitoring exercises.

7 Conclusions

The "Carolingian Westwork and Civitas Corvey" form an integral and authentic architectural and archaeological monumental complex that illustrates the influence of the Westwork of Corvey on the evolution of this building type in medieval religious architecture and of the role played by the abbey in the development of the territory under the Carolingian empire and beyond.

The nominated property is very well researched, and adequately protected as an architectural and archaeological monument. However the safeguarding of its setting needs to be reinforced and particularly important views from and towards the monastic complex require that protective measures be set up and

incorporated into the relevant planning instruments or bylaws. Additionally, there are unanswered questions with regard to the arrangements of the management structure, partners and the management plan that need to be addressed before inscription, to ensure that the property is equipped with an adequate set of protective and management instruments. The monitoring system also needs to be strengthened and provided with a wider scope, not just limited to structural or material conservation issues.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends the nomination of the Carolingian Westwork and Civitas Corvey, Germany, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

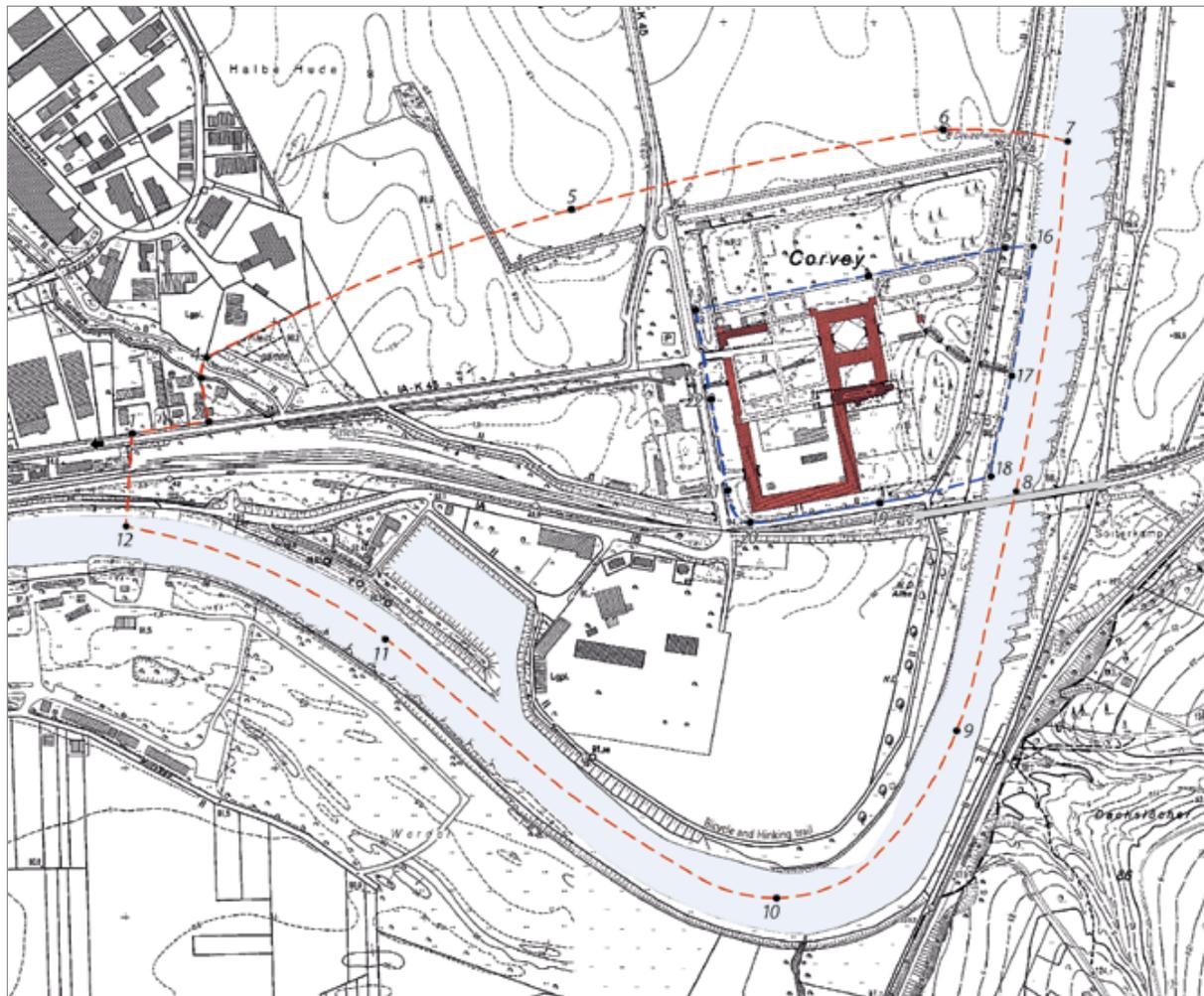
- Formally establish and enforce a management authority for the nominated property and its buffer zone that involves all relevant stakeholders so as to co-ordinate and to integrate protection and enhancement goals, functions and actions carried out by owners and stakeholders;
- Provide information on the time-frame for the approval and enforcement of the decree by which the neighbouring State of Lower Saxony engages itself and its constituencies to ensure that no adverse effect may derive from building or development activity in areas close to the nominated property under their jurisdiction;
- Approve formally and implement the management plan and its operational master plan with a budget and an implementation timescale;
- Finalise the study for protecting the panoramic views from and towards Corvey, approve and enforce related protective measures as soon as possible and before any decision concerning wind farm location is finalised;
- Transmit the results of the Heritage Impact Assessment according to the ICOMOS guidance for all planned wind farms, currently being carried out, to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS.

Additional recommendations

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- Implementing promptly the planned comprehensive conditions assessment and monitoring of the westwork;
- Developing an overall risk management plan for the nominated property, including also risk preparedness against floods, explosions and other types of accidents, considering the proximity of the railway;

- Continuing further systematic research and non-destructive archaeological investigation both for conservation and research purposes;
- Expanding the presentation of the “Carolingian Westwork and Civitas Corvey” in the museum and outside the church with regard to the Carolingian era;
- Reinforcing the monitoring system with regard to the identification of indicators related to the objectives identified in the management plan.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Aerial view of the nominated property



View of the Westwork of Corvey



The westwork, ground floor



Archaeological excavations in the Carolingian atrium