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# Jelling (Denmark) No 697bis

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## 1 Basic data

### State Party

Denmark

### Name of property

Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church

### Location

Vejle Commune, Region of Southern Denmark  
Denmark

### Inscription

1994

### Brief description

Located in central Jutland, Jelling was a royal monument during the reigns of Gorm and his son Harald Bluetooth, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and may possibly pre-date this era. The complex consists of two flat-topped mounds, a large runic stone dating to Harald Bluetooth's reign, located exactly midway between the two mounds and a second smaller runic stone created under King Gorm, but likely not in its original location. A small simple church of whitewashed stone now stands on the site of at least three earlier wooden churches, all of which were destroyed by fire. Excavations in 2006 have revealed evidence of a palisade surrounding the monument, and parts of a ship setting.

### Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

14 March 2018

## 2 Issues raised

### Background

In 1994 at its 18<sup>th</sup> session, the World Heritage Committee inscribed Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church under criterion (iii) in decision CONF 003 XI. The property area was defined without exact size by an approximated local protection plan and encompassed an area with a boundary rather tightly drawn around the three key components, two burial mounds, two rune stones and a church, under which remains of wooden buildings are preserved. A buffer zone was indicated in relation to local legislation as a circular protection zone of 100 metres radius around each key monument but was not formally designated in the context of the World Heritage inscription.

As a follow up to the Retrospective Inventory of this property made by the World Heritage Centre, the State Party provided an updated map in 2008. It indicates that

the property covers an area of 4.96 hectares, which encloses the outer mound boundary to the south and follows the line of property deeds extending somewhat further north. These boundaries were recognized by the World Heritage Committee in decision 32 COM 8D. In November 2008, an ICOMOS Advisory Mission was carried out to the property, and a recommendation was made to extend the buffer zone to include the palisade, and to not restrict this extension in relation to the archaeological potential of the area. In 2010, the World Heritage Committee adopted in its decision 34 COM 8E, a retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property.

Since 1994, archaeological excavations, especially undertaken in 2006 revealed additional larger structures: besides previously partially known traces of a boat-shaped stone setting, traces of a wooden palisade with attached wooden buildings were discovered as framing the property. Both are located predominantly outside the present boundaries. The palisade surrounds an approximately 360 x 360 metres rhombus-shaped area, within which all of the afore-mentioned monuments are located. These elements were already integrated as more recent archaeological discoveries in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted in 2010.

### Modification

The minor boundary modification requested extends the property boundaries to cover the areas of the above-described recent archaeological discoveries, including the wooden palisade and its adjacent wooden buildings. The rhombus shape outline of the wooden palisade will identify the new property boundary. It should be noted, that both, the rhombus shape palisade and the boat-shaped stone setting have been refilled following archaeological excavations to support their in-situ conservation. They are now marked on the ground by contemporary materials, which allow visitors to understand the extent and composition of the site.

This newly defined property area is proposed to cover 12.7 hectares and is delimited just outside the contemporary floor marking or its continuation in urban, built-up sections towards the south of the site. Parts of the now designated boundaries fall into private lands and the State Party assured that all property owners within the boundaries had granted their written consent to the boundary extension. A small area previously designated as World Heritage property, will be excluded following the new rhombus-shaped delimitation. The State Party explained that in-depth archaeological surveys were carried out in this area and that no archaeological evidence had been found.

The buffer zone boundaries are newly suggested and have been developed in the process of Jelling's participation in the transnational serial nomination, Viking Age Sites in Northern Europe. The buffer zone is defined in relation to visibility and protection status in municipal legislation. It is integrated in the Municipality Plan 2017-29 and as such legally adopted. Towards the south, east and

west, the buffer zone extends into the urban fabric of the town of Jelling and is described by road corridors. It is drawn to describe the area in which development may negatively impact the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. The longer extension towards the north is defined based on the legal boundaries of the Protection Order of 13<sup>th</sup> October 1947 and intends to secure the visibility from and to the North Mound and the church.

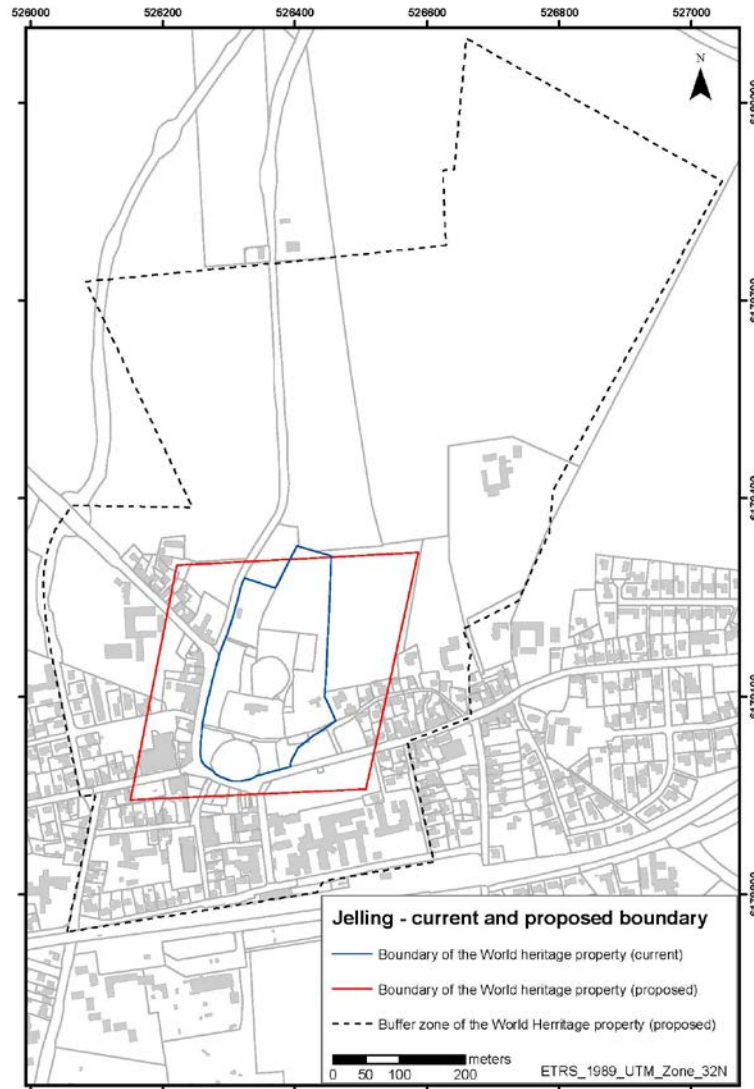
In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the proposed modifications contribute to maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value of Jelling and will have a positive impact on its integrity and protection.

### **3 ICOMOS Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation with respect to inscription**

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church, Denmark, **be approved.**

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church, Denmark, **be approved.**



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property and the proposed buffer zone