

REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON AUSCHWITZ BIRKENAU - GERMAN NAZI CONCENTRATION AND EXTERMINATION CAMP (1940 – 1945)

20-23 October 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Experts express their sincere gratitude to the Polish authorities for the arrangements and generous hospitality. The Expert Group welcomed the detailed presentations especially those on-site by the national, regional and local authorities and the Director of the Museum.

INTRODUCTION

The Expert Group met between the 20th and 23rd October with sessions at the Hotel Polski, Krakow and a public meeting at the State Vocational High School, Oswiecim and carried out a site visit to Auschwitz Birkenau camp sites and their vicinity on the afternoon of 21st October 2013.

The report identifies actions and recommendations that the Polish Government may wish to consider and adopt concerning the management of the World Heritage property and infrastructure projects, especially concerning the link road from the S1 expressway to Oswiecim. The Expert Group noted the works carried out on the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and also used the opportunity to review progress made on the implementation of the recommendations of the 2008 Expert Group meeting and to make suggestions on the way forward. All recommendations are listed below and are summarized at the end of the report.

BACKGROUND TO THE EXPERT CONSULTATION

Inscription history, criteria and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)

The property was included on the World Heritage List in 1979 under cultural criterion (vi), recognizing that

the fortified walls, barbed wire, platforms, barracks, gallows, gas chambers and cremation ovens show the conditions within which the Nazi genocide took place in the former concentration and extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest in the Third Reich. According to historical investigations, 1.5 million people, among them a great number of Jews were systematically starved, tortured and murdered in this camp, the symbol of humanity's cruelty to its fellow human beings in the 20th century.

At the time of inscription, the Committee stated that it had decided "... to enter Auschwitz concentration camp on the List as a unique site and to restrict the inscription of other sites of a similar nature."

At its 31st Session in 2007, the World Heritage Committee adopted a Statement of Significance for the property (31 COM 8B.8) and changed the name of the site to Auschwitz Birkenau: German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940 – 1945). (Annex III)

Examination of the state of conservation by the World Heritage Committee

The last decisions of the World Heritage Committee were taken in 2007 (31 COM 7B.101) and 2009 (33 COM 7B.115):

Decision: 31 COM 7B.101

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **30 COM 7B.88**, adopted at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006),
3. Notes the progress made in the preparation of the Management Plan for the World Heritage property and in particular the international consultations undertaken in November and December 2006;
4. Commends the State Party for the high level of historic documentation of the site and its landscape, prepared by the local experts, as a basis for the Management Plan, together with the conservation efforts of the Site Director;
5. Expresses its concern for the lack of planning guidelines for the approved site and buffer zones, and the resulting deterioration of buildings associated with the Outstanding Universal Value of the site;
6. Regrets the delay in the submission by the State Party of the Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre as requested both at its 29th and 30th sessions;
7. Urges the State Party to take up its responsibilities at all levels of government and the local authorities to ensure the full implementation of the Management Plan;
8. Requests the State Party to provide an updated statement of Outstanding Universal Value and site boundaries reflecting this statement;
9. Also requests the State Party to provide the approved Management Plan and details of its implementation, including timeframe and responsibilities, to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2008** for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session in 2008.

Decision: 33 COM 7B.115

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B,

2. Recalling Decision **32 COM 7B.102**, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),
3. Notes progress made with the conservation strategy and the negotiations concerning the register of additional areas in the register of monuments to further enhance the protection of the authenticity and integrity of the property;
4. Welcomes the new variant of the expressway S1 which takes into account the values, integrity and authenticity of the property and does not adversely impact on its Outstanding Universal Value;
5. Encourages the State Party to continue stakeholder and local community consultations towards the finalization of the management plan;
6. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2011**, a detailed report on the status of the consultations, the management plan as well as the implementation of the conservation strategy.

The State Party subsequently provided a State of Conservation Report on 25 January 2011 in which was transmitted to ICOMOS for review on 21st February 2011. The experts identify a number of issues in this current report which also need to be reviewed by ICOMOS.

Justification of the Expert Group

The Polish Ministry for Culture and National Heritage invited a further visit of the Expert Group which consisted of Dr Eleonora Bergman (Expert, former Director Jewish Historical Institute and Coordinator of the Ringelblum Archive, Poland), Mr. Max Polonovski (Expert, General Curator of Jewish Heritage, Ministry for Culture, France), Prof. Michael Turner (Expert, Bezalel Academy, Israel), Dr Christopher Young (Expert, English Heritage), Mr Giora Solar (Expert, Israel) and Dr. Mechtild Rossler (Deputy Director World Heritage Centre) with a view to assist in the assessment and development of the routing of the expressway S-1 and its link road to Oswiecim close to the World Heritage property. The Group was also invited to consider progress on the management and conservation of the site and to discuss other issues concerning the protection of the outstanding universal value of the site. The detailed agenda and list of participants are included in Annex I and II of this report.

In his invitation, the State Secretary for Culture and National Heritage and General Conservator of Monuments wrote:

The meeting shall be dedicated to the presentation of the situation of the World Heritage Site, especially in light of the proposed construction of S-1 expressway and Oswiecim link road located in the buffer zone. Also we would like to discuss other issues which are essential from the point of protection of the outstanding universal value of the Site.

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES

The Expert Group received presentations on work carried out since its last meeting in 2008 by different agencies including the National Heritage Board, the Monument Conservator and the Director of the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Expert Group also attended a meeting of stakeholders concerning the S1 road scheme and the Oswiecim Strategic

Programme on 22nd October. They were able to review many site components and other issues which might have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the site. The Expert Group reviewed the variants of the expressway S-1, in particular the proposed routes and preferred line for the link-road from the S-1 to Oswiecim. The map in Annex IV shows the preferred route for the link road, the boundaries of the silence and protection zones for both parts of the property notified to UNESCO in 1979 (indicated by blue and purple hatched lines respectively), and the analysis of landscape zones prepared as part of the draft 2007 Management Plan.

The Expert Group focused primarily on the proposals for the S-1 Expressway and the link road from it to Oswiecim. The Group received presentations on a number of other matters and these are also considered below. The Group was informed of progress on a number of recommendations from the report of 2008.

This report is grouped below under the following headings:

1. S-1 Expressway and Link Road to Oswiecim: Summary and analysis of variants
 2. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property Auschwitz Birkenau: German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940 – 1945)
 3. Policy issues
 1. Plans
 2. Boundaries of property and buffer zone
 3. Designations
 4. Threats and risk management measures
 1. Floods
 2. Decay
 3. Redundant Buildings
 4. New Development
 5. The State Museum, visitor management and circulation
 6. Conclusions and Recommendations
- Annexes

1. S-1 expressway and Link Road to Oswiecim: Summary and analysis of variants

The Expert Group was presented with details on the history of the planning and update of the S-1 expressway project both by the National Heritage Board and by Engineers of the General Directorate of National Roads and Motorways (GDDKiA) regional office in Katowice; and inspected the proposed corridor of the latest proposal for the link road during our site visit.

At the Experts meeting in 2008, variant IV was proposed by the Polish authorities as a priority variant to be examined; while it was close to the west of Birkenau KL, it provided for a four-lane road link to Oswiecim city. The Expert Group recalled that this proposal was not acceptable as it crossed important landscape features together with elevated junctions with exposed views to and from the camp; subsequently the GDDKiA developed variant VI combining variant IV and V which diverted the connection away from Birkenau. This was welcomed and approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009 (33 COM 7B.115).

In 2010 this variant was found to be unfeasible due to the extension of the natural protection of the Vistula River as part of Natura 2000. Subsequently, the GDDKiA re-designed the alignments with variant A (distant from the camp beyond the Vistula river) and three sub-variants, B, C and D, similar to A in the north, but separated in the south. The link-road would be four-lane with limited access and parallel access roads in some parts resulting in a road corridor of up to six or eight lanes by the railway crossing (see Annex IV for map).

As well as the site visit, at the meeting of stakeholders on 22nd October, the GDDKiA presented to the Experts variant A showing consideration for the landscape component and the Silence Zone around Birkenau, even though these are not formally recognized in the Polish planning system. It was indicated that this alternative had a minimum environmental impact (bridges, underground aquifers) based on traffic analysis (population access). This alignment is distanced from the Camp while allowing city access and complying with national Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes in accordance with European Union (EU) regulations. The GDDKiA is prepared to use exceptional measures to ensure compliance with World Heritage procedures.

The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, National Heritage Board, the Regional Inspector of Monuments and the Polish National Commission for UNESCO were invited to comment on the proposals late in 2012. The Expert Group was also informed about other representations from the office of the Chief Rabbi of Poland, the Jewish Community of Bielsko-Biala, the Convent of the Barefoot Carmelites, the residents of Plawy, Rajsko and Harmeze, due to its impact on their daily life, the Marshal of Malopolskie Province, the Council of the Oswiecim Commune, the President of the City of Oswiecim and the City Council. Six of these bodies formally intervened in the discussion at the meeting on 22nd October.

The Jewish Community of Bielsko-Biala and the residents of Plawy, Rajsko and Harmeze raised objections to the road, while the Convent of the Barefoot Carmelites in supporting the residents wanted more information and to be informed. Objections included the disruption of daily life during and after construction, the division of the historic landscape by the new road and the potential disturbance of human remains. The Regional and City authorities stressed the urgency of implementing the road due to major congestion in and around the city. The other petitions accepted the alignment but requested that special attention be given to design and implementation to ensure the protection of the property and its values. The Expert Group noted that four buildings would have to be demolished along the link road, compared with higher numbers for the other variants.

Questions were raised regarding the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment and the complexities of a two stage EIA. Further questions related to the northern alignments, road capacities, detailed design, noise levels and the elevated road by the Carmelite Convent leading to the proposed river bridge, the visual impact of which on Auschwitz I also needs to be assessed. The Expert Group was informed that the length of this elevated section, including the bridge would be 2kms, over 7m high above the ground. Clarification was requested regarding the relationship of the road to the classification of the landscape protection areas as presented by architects Rawecki in the 2007 draft Management Plan, and also regarding the noise level model applied to the road proposal.

A full consensus was reached concerning the alignment of the S-1 expressway. However the alignment of the link-road that passes through the Landscape Protection Zone was debated. This quadrant of the landscape protection zone is currently one of the best preserved with

areas defined as ‘relic landscape’ in the 2007 draft Management Plan. Though The Expert Group was concerned that the line of the southern link road was in the Protection Zone as defined in 1978, they noted that this route was similar to that endorsed by the World Heritage Committee in 2009 (33COM7B.115), and agreed that the alignment might be acceptable, on condition that further investigation and reviews would be carried out to ensure the protection of the OUV of the property.

The Expert Group was concerned by the potential impact of a four-lane highway on the landscape, particularly as in places its width would be greatly increased by the realignment alongside it of local and access roads. The Group was not presented with a detailed evaluation of the northern alternative, making it difficult to evaluate the implications of the proposals. However, the Group considers that the traffic solution should be based on reducing the proposed link-road to a two-lane highway, perhaps supported by comprehensive road improvements and traffic management measures to divert traffic to other routes north of the city as appropriate. Any changes should be based on further review of the predicted traffic volumes and the implications of the regional traffic plan in determining the road design and capacity, using more precise estimates of future traffic flows to Oswiecim city centre, the State Museum and through-traffic to the regional network. The Group considers that the Polish authorities should give notification of the road scheme to the World Heritage Centre for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th Session in 2014 in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

Recommendations of the Expert Group for continuing the evaluation of variant A:

1. The footprint of the road should be reduced to ensure effective integration within the landscape by reducing it as far as possible to a two-lane road, supported by traffic management measures to divert traffic to other routes north of the city as appropriate;
2. Review the scheme design to minimize the need for additional new access and local roads in order to avoid an over-wide road corridor. This should include also a review of the proposed bridge;
3. Impact assessment of the road scheme must include a heritage component that will ensure high environmental and heritage standards to minimize adverse impact on OUV of the property. This assessment should include, inter alia, a detailed traffic assessment of alternatives and evaluation of visual and aural impact based on visitor experiences in and around the property related to a clear understanding of the values and attributes as outlined in the Statement of OUV;
4. The Polish authorities should give notification of the road scheme to the World Heritage Centre for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th Session in 2014 in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
5. Silence should be interpreted in its wider sense, including visual and aural, and consideration should be given to establishing criteria for this in the assessment. All possible use should be made of technical solutions such as quiet asphalt to minimize noise from the road;

6. A landscape and archaeological survey should be carried out ensuring that great care be taken regarding possible human remains, under the supervision of appropriate professionals. This should be based on the excellent survey by architects Rawecki in the 2007 draft Management Plan which defined the landscape features based on historic documentation;
7. The guidelines for design of the road should reflect the different landscape features and connections to other sites in and around the property, especially the former sub-camps in Harmeze, and Plawy and routes of the 1945 'death marches'. A visual analysis of views to and from the property including the surrounding landscape features should be prepared to ensure that there would be no visual intrusion, thus ensuring its integrity;
8. Design of banks used to minimize noise, where necessary, should not be considered as a landscaped barrier, but integrated into the landscape to allow continued agricultural activities in the vicinity of the road, thus preventing the accentuation of the road by over-visible barriers;
9. If, based on the traffic analysis, the bridge across the River Sola is deemed necessary, it might be evaluated as part of a second phase. The footprint of the bridge and its embankments by the Carmelite Convent should be clearly indicated on the plans and evaluated within the impact assessment with recommendations to minimize any visual and aural impact of the bridge across the River Sola on Auschwitz I;
10. The detailed design of the road should also minimize signage and other street furniture. There should be no commercial advertising along the link road and lighting should be reduced to a minimum with poles and lights to be hidden from the views from the property.

2 Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property Auschwitz Birkenau: German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940 – 1945)

The Expert Group noted that at its 31st session in 2007, the World Heritage Committee formally adopted a Statement of Significance for the site with Decision 31 COM 8B.8 (statement included in Annex III) and changed the name of the site to Auschwitz Birkenau: German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940 – 1945).

During meetings with the national authorities the Expert Group was informed that a Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) was prepared by the authorities to comply with requests related to the second cycle of Periodic Reporting for Europe which will be presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2014/2015.

This RSOUV was transmitted by letter of the Secretary of State and General Inspector of Monuments, Mr Zuchowski, dated 21 January 2013 and noted "*This draft statement has been prepared by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. It contains amendments to previous documents, which reflect the existing conditions, in order to assure effective protection based on legal regulations in force.*" The technical analysis was carried out by the World Heritage Centre and in a letter dated 20 March 2013 the Director of the World Heritage Centre informed the national authorities that the statement did not fully comply with the previous

decisions of the Committee, in particular in the section “Justification of the Criteria”. No reply to this letter was received from the State Party.

During the visit of the Expert Group a side meeting was organized with the National Heritage Board and the Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum to review the situation. The Group understood that the letter from the Centre had not reached all the relevant authorities. The meeting was used to review the guidance for the preparation of the RSOUV, including the section on justification and issues related to the notion of integrity. It was agreed that the national authorities review the draft texts for the RSOUV for transmission to the World Heritage Centre.

Recommendation of the Expert Group on the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

- 11 The State Party is encouraged to review the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value to comply with the guidance and to ensure consistency with the Committee’s formally adopted Statement of Significance (Decision 31 COM 8B.8) prepared by an international Expert Team in 2007.

3 Policy issues

The Expert Group were informed that the National Heritage Board and the Regional Monuments Inspector have reviewed relevant documents and are working with the authorities at all levels to ensure that policies to protect the World Heritage property are included in all relevant planning documents.

3.1 Plans

The National Heritage Board has begun to develop a conservation strategy for the area around the property. This will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee as soon it is completed. The State Museum has developed a Conservation Master Plan for its property and the many artifacts which it is now implementing.

The Expert Group noted that no further progress had been made in the adoption of the 2007 draft Management Plan. We welcomed the fact that a Conservation Master Plan now existed for the Museum and that the National Heritage Board are using aspects of the draft Management Plan as the basis for their conservation strategy. However, background information and recommendations contained in the draft plan need to be integrated into these documents. After consultation with the conservator of historic monuments, some of the recommendations of the management plan were partly integrated into the development plan for the town of Oswiecim that was adopted on 29 June, 2011. However, there was no indication of approval of updated plans for Brzezinka. The Expert Group urges the Polish authorities at all levels to continue to develop cooperation and to agree and document an effective management system involving all stakeholders for the property and buffer zones (see paragraph 3.2)

3.2 Boundaries of property and buffer zone

While considering boundaries, the Group also noted and welcomed that a number of important buildings close to the existing boundaries of the property have now been designated as protected monuments by the Regional Conservator and by the local authorities (see 3.3 below). This provides the opportunity for the State Party to consider extending the property to include properties noted as being of high significance in the draft 2006 Management Plan such as the various railway sidings, including the Judenrampe, the potato and cabbage warehouses and the SS Kitchen.

Discussion also included reference to the map submitted in 1978 with the original nomination which clearly indicated the property and two kinds of “protective zones”; one was the “silence zone” surrounding the property and the other, the “broader protection zone”. The national authorities noted that the “protection zones” were not formally recognized in the Retrospective Inventory Process; furthermore the terminology used in 1978 originated from the planning system at the time, but was never formally put in place and was not reconfirmed. The Expert Group was informed that the map submitted by the State Party in response to the Retrospective Inventory was not accepted by the World Heritage Centre because it did not indicate the silence zone and the broader protection zone.

The Expert Group welcomed the fact that the GDDKiA was treating the silence zone around the property as if it was a protective designation even though it has no legal standing in Polish planning system. The Group expressed their deep concern that the silence and broader protective zones notified to UNESCO when Auschwitz-Birkenau was nominated as World Heritage in 1979 have never been given full official planning and management status.

The Expert Group considers that the broader protection and silence zones as presented by the Polish Authorities in 1978 need review based on the current situation. The excellent survey by architects Rawecki in the 2007 draft Management Plan defines the landscape zone based on historic documentation and field survey of what now survives, and could provide the basis for such a review, and for proposals for a buffer zone or through spatial planning policies (see Annex V for this analysis).

3.3 Designations

Since 2008, several buildings at risk outside the State Museum have been designated:

- i. The small potato warehouse next to the Birkenau Camp (2008)
- ii. The railway siding to the Tobacco Monopoly (2008)
- iii. Two buildings of the Tobacco Monopoly (2009)
- iv. Potato and cabbage warehouses as a ruin next to the Judenrampe (2010)

The Group noted that the railway siding from the Judenrampe to Birkenau could not be designated because of ownership issues. The Group urged that this situation should be resolved as soon as possible, if necessary by public acquisition, and that the route of the siding should be made clear and accessible.

Recommendations on policy issues

- 12 The Group urges the Polish authorities at all levels to continue to develop cooperation and to agree and document an effective management system involving all stakeholders;
13. The State Party is recommended to review the boundaries of the property to consider including significant structures as identified in the Raweckis' survey within the property close to the present boundary;
14. The State Party is recommended to give legal status to the 'silence zones' and 'broader protection zones' as notified to UNESCO in 1978, modified as appropriate in line with current conditions and taking into account the landscape zones identified in the 2007 draft Management Plan, perhaps as buffer zones or through relevant spatial planning policies;
15. The State Party is urged to continue the designation of significant structures outside the World Heritage property and to overcome legal difficulties when these occur.

4. Threats and risk management measures

The Group was informed of a number of threats to the property and the measures being taken.

4.1 Floods

It was reported that Birkenau was flooded in 2010. Since then the State Museum has taken actions to prevent this happening in the future. These include the provision of pumping facilities to prevent flooding from nearby waterways.

4.2 Decay

None of the structures of the Auschwitz and Birkenau were built for the long term and many, particularly at Birkenau, were built of poor-quality materials. Their conservation therefore requires substantial work at all times. The Expert Group were pleased to be informed by the Director of the State Museum of the work being carried out at Auschwitz I and Birkenau on both the structures and the museum collections and archives. The Director updated the Expert Group on the establishment of the Foundation with an endowment fund for future conservation works and the progress so far in raising funds (with a target of €120 million).

The Expert Group was able to inspect the recent work in Barrack Block A at Auschwitz and was impressed by its quality. We are satisfied that the conservation needs within the State Museum are well in hand.

We remain very concerned about the state of conservation of significant structures outside the Museum boundaries. These include the potato and cabbage warehouses by the Judenrampe at Birkenau, and the SS Kitchen and the works at Auschwitz.

The lack of progress on conservation is closely linked to the continued failure to find new uses for these redundant buildings which is discussed further in the next section. The Group considered that resolution of this issue is urgent and essential since these buildings can be regarded as attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, even though they are not included

within the present boundaries of the World Heritage property (see Section 3.2 above and Recommendation 13, 17, 18).

4.3 Redundant buildings

Except for the four buildings of the Tobacco Monopoly, no use for the other buildings has been found. The function for the former Krupp AG Werke hall has not been found after the withdrawal of an Italian company, due to the economic crisis. The SS kitchen is not reused, either, for lack of security (it is a wooden structure), and there is no vision for the future. We learnt too that no new function has yet been identified for the housing next to Auschwitz I for the former staff of IG Farben which until recently has been used by the Polish Army. An appropriate use for these buildings needs to be identified urgently.

The Expert Group was pleased to learn that the Old Theatre is to be used as an education centre and that the small potato store adjoining Birkenau has been acquired by the Museum for restoration and use as a works depot. The Group urges that appropriate use of designated buildings should be a high priority in preference to new construction and that conservation plans should be prepared for these newly designated structures.

4.4 New development

Apart from the road proposals discussed in Section 1, this meeting of the Expert Group was not alerted to any major proposals for new development in the vicinity of the World Heritage property. We were informed that proposals for the Mound, mentioned during our meeting in 2008, would not now proceed. It is important that any future proposals in the vicinity of the World Heritage property should be assessed for their potential impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, using the techniques of Environmental Impact Assessment, with specific evaluation of impacts on heritage, for major projects, and Heritage Impact Assessment for lesser ones.

Recommendations on threats and risk management:

- 16 Risk assessment and disaster preparedness should be an essential part of the management of the property;
- 17 High priority should be given to the conservation of significant structures outside the boundaries of the World Heritage property, linked to finding appropriate uses for these buildings;
- 18 The Group urges that appropriate use of designated buildings should be a high priority in preference to new construction and that conservation plans should be prepared for these newly designated structures;
- 19 Any future proposals for new development in the vicinity of the World Heritage property should be assessed for their potential impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, using the techniques of Environmental Impact Assessment, with specific evaluation of impacts on heritage for major projects, and Heritage Impact Assessment for lesser ones;

5. The State Museum, visitor management and circulation

Visitor Management Update

The Director of the Museum presented the statistics of visitors to the site. In the year 2012 it reached 1,430,000 visitors, which he defined as problematic, a tripling visitors in less than a decade. It seems that Auschwitz I is reaching its carrying capacity as a museum.

As a result, the museum decided that individual visitors will be admitted only during certain morning and afternoon hours during the peak season, while during the rest of the day, the visits are only by pre-booked groups with a responsible guide ensuring safety and security.

The museum presented a new plan for a larger parking area at Auschwitz I at a new location on the former Bus Station site and a plan for a new visitors center' in a new building to be constructed on the same site.

The local commune of Brzezinka initiated and implemented a new car and bus park near the entrance to Birkenau (outside the 100 metre zone) which is functioning. Next to it a facilities building is under construction. This building will include a souvenir shop, a food and beverage selling place and a visitors' centre telling the story of these communes during WWII. This initiative was discussed with the director of the museum, who had no objection to the commune's scheme.

A long section of railway sidings from the Judenrampe, next to the big, abandoned potato storage complex, had been restored in 2008 with financial support by a French Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah. Next to it, a new and quite big drop off area for visitors has now been created. The work was supervised and the site is managed, by the Museum, although it is outside its boundaries; the legal basis for its approval and management was not explained.

In the meantime, new sites for visitors are being developed by different bodies. The experts group visited a permanent exhibition of drawings by a Polish artist (Marian Kolodziej), an ex Auschwitz inmate, presented in the undercroft of the church of the nearby Franciscan monastery. Another museum, in the town, is dedicated to the Jewish community of Oswiecim. These initiatives certainly indicate growing interest by visitors as well as by the local communities.

Identified problems

- The new visitors' facilities and opportunities are not part of any comprehensive visitor management plan;
- In the town and its surroundings there is insufficient signage' to direct visitors to the new places to visit;
- While there are empty buildings in the town, directly linked with the 1940s camps activities of the concentration camps, standing without any conservation – mainly due to the fact that there are no suitable functions suggested for them, the museum is building a new center, while it could have used one of the historic buildings;

- There is no promotion of the new visitors' opportunities (the commune's centre is still under construction) nor any coordination among the tourism attractions for the mutual benefits of all the stakeholders;
- There is an urgent need for an integrated approach to access, parking facilities, visitor services and interpretation.

Recommendations on visitor management

20. It is recommended that a comprehensive tourism management and interpretation plan for the whole area to, inter alia, handle promotion, to suggest projects and actions, provide coordination and review new initiatives;
21. A signage plan should be prepared, for directions as well as for narratives regarding historic built elements outside the museum boundaries;
22. New functions, whether for the local population or visitors, should be placed, whenever suitable, in historic buildings;
23. An experts committee for the Museum (not part of the International Auschwitz Council) should be established to review and advise-on new construction projects inside and outside the Museum.
24. The involvement of the Museum in sites outside its current boundaries should be decided in accordance with a new comprehensive tourism management and interpretation plan on a case by case basis.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Expert Group welcomed the evidence of increased contact and cooperation between the various stakeholders and considered that The National Heritage Board should be encouraged to continue to develop the dialogue. The Expert Group were concerned that cooperation appears to be carried out only on an *ad-hoc* basis and that there is no formalised system for cooperation and overall management of the World Heritage property within its landscape setting. We recommend that all parties involved should continue to develop cooperation and that the government at national, regional and local levels should consider ways of establishing a more formal system of coordination, through the conservation plans and management mechanisms, and that this should be followed up by the State Secretary and General Conservator.

The Expert Group also had concerns on a number of specific issues, discussed in more detail above and in the Recommendations. The boundaries of the property, the silence and 'broader protection zone' need to be finalized and the Expert Group considered that it needed to be extended to include other significant elements (such as buildings and landscapes which are attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. There is a need too for a more coordinated approach to interpretation and visitor management to take account of the development of new centres outside the State Museum. Such an approach should be incorporated into the formal system of coordination suggested above.

The Expert Group's most urgent concerns focus on the potential impact of the link-road from the S1 Expressway to Oswiecim. There is an urgent need to take all steps possible to minimize its impact. The Expert Group was also concerned by the continued dilapidation and risk to major significant structures (e.g. the SS Kitchen, the cabbage and potato warehouses) outside the present boundaries of the World Heritage property. Their condition contrasts

sharply with the excellent work being carried out by the State Museum in the areas which it manages.

The Expert Group recognized that there had been considerable progress since its last meeting in 2008. This included, for example, the evidence of increased cooperation between many stakeholders, the designation of significant structures outside the World Heritage properties, the incorporation into local spatial plans of policies to protect the property and its setting, the development of the Museum's Conservation Master Plan, and the conservation work planned and carried out by the State Museum within its boundaries, the development of the Museum's Conservation Master Plan. There had also been work carried out on new visitor facilities near Birkenau and a new parking area by the Judenrampe. We were concerned that such improvements seemed to be carried out piecemeal without any overall strategy. Overall there continues to be a strong need to develop a coherent management system for the property and its setting and this needs to be addressed alongside the specific issues raised in this report.

List of all recommendations by the Expert Group

Recommendations of the Expert Group for continuing the evaluation of variant A:

1. The footprint of the road should be reduced to ensure effective integration within the landscape by reducing it as far as possible to a two-lane road, supported by traffic management measures to divert traffic to other routes north of the city as appropriate;
2. Review the scheme design to minimize the need for additional new access and local roads in order to avoid an over-wide road corridor;
3. Impact assessment of the road scheme must include a heritage component that will ensure high environmental and heritage standards to minimize adverse impact on OUV of the property. This assessment should include, inter alia, a detailed traffic assessment of alternatives and evaluation of visual and aural impact based on visitor experiences in and around the property related to a clear understanding of the values and attributes as outlined in the Statement of OUV;
4. The Polish authorities should give notification of the road scheme to the World Heritage Centre for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th Session in 2014 in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
5. Silence should be interpreted in its wider sense, including visual and aural, and consideration should be given to establishing criteria for this in the assessment. All possible use should be made of technical solutions such as quiet asphalt to minimize noise from the road;
6. A landscape and archaeological survey should be carried out ensuring that great care be taken regarding possible human remains, under the supervision of appropriate professionals. This should be based on the excellent survey by architects Rawecki in the 2007 draft Management Plan which defined the landscape features based on historic documentation;

7. The guidelines for design of the road should reflect the different landscape features and connections to other sites in and around the property, especially the former sub-camps in Harmeze, and Plawy and routes of the 1945 'death marches'. A visual analysis of views to and from the property including the surrounding landscape features should be prepared to ensure that there would be no visual intrusion, thus ensuring its integrity;
8. Design of banks used to minimize noise, where necessary, should not be considered as a landscaped barrier, but integrated into the landscape to allow continued agricultural activities in the vicinity of the road, thus preventing the accentuation of the road by over-visible barriers;
9. If, based on the traffic analysis, the bridge across the River Sola is deemed necessary, it might be evaluated as part of a second phase. The footprint of the bridge and its embankments by the Carmelite Convent should be clearly indicated on the plans and evaluated within the impact assessment with recommendations to minimize any visual and aural impact of the bridge across the River Sola on Auschwitz I.
10. The detailed design of the road should also minimize signage and other street furniture. There should be no commercial advertising along the link road and lighting should be reduced to a minimum with poles and lights to be hidden from the views from the property.

Recommendation of the Expert Group on the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

- 11 The State Party is encouraged to review the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value to comply with the guidance and to ensure consistency with the Committee's formally adopted Statement of Significance (Decision 31 COM 8B.8) prepared by an international Expert Team in 2007.

Recommendations on policy issues:

- 12 The Group urges the Polish authorities at all levels to continue to develop cooperation and to agree and document an effective management system involving all stakeholders.
13. The State Party is recommended to review the boundaries of the property to consider including significant structures as identified in the Raweckis' survey within the property close to the present boundary
14. The State Party is recommended to give legal status to the 'silence zones' and 'broader protection zones' as notified to UNESCO in 1978, modified as appropriate in line with current conditions and taking into account the landscape zones identified in the 2007 draft Management Plan, perhaps as a buffer zone or through relevant spatial planning policies.
15. The State Party is urged to continue the designation of significant structures outside the World Heritage property and to overcome legal difficulties when these occur.

Recommendations on threats and risk management:

- 16 Risk assessment and disaster preparedness should be an essential part of the management of the property.
- 17 High priority should be given to the conservation of significant structures outside the boundaries of the World Heritage property, linked to finding appropriate uses for these buildings.
- 18 The Group urges that appropriate use of designated buildings should be a high priority in preference to new construction and that conservation plans should be prepared for these newly designated structures.
- 19 Any future proposals for new development in the vicinity of the World Heritage property should be assessed for their potential impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, using the techniques of Environmental Impact Assessment, with specific evaluation of impacts on heritage for major projects, and Heritage Impact Assessment for lesser ones.

Recommendations on visitor management

20. It is recommended that a comprehensive tourism management and interpretation plan for the whole area to, inter alia, handle promotion, to suggest projects and actions, provide coordination and review new initiatives.
21. A signage plan should be prepared, for directions as well as for narratives regarding historic built elements outside the museum boundaries.
22. New functions, whether for the local population or visitors, should be placed, whenever suitable, in historic buildings.
23. An experts committee for the Museum (not part of the International Auschwitz Council) should be established to review and advise on new construction projects inside and outside the Museum.
24. The involvement of the Museum in sites outside its current boundaries should be decided in accordance with a new comprehensive tourism management and interpretation plan on a case by case basis.

ANNEXES

- Annex I: Agenda of the Expert Group consultation meeting
- Annex II: List of participants of the expert consultation
- Annex III: Statement of significance adopted by the Committee in 2007
- Annex IV: Map of the road variants A, B, C and D and the location of the property and its protection zones
- Annex V: Map of the property and identification of landscape areas to be protected

Annex I: Agenda of the Expert Group consultation meeting

International consultation meeting concerning Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945)

**UNESCO World Heritage Site
Kraków/Oświęcim 21-23 October 2013**

20th October, Sunday)

Arrival of the participants to Kraków
check in at the Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków, ul. Pijarska 17

Meeting in a group of Experts and the Organisers

(“Puławy” conference room in Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków)

17:00 Welcome and opening of the meeting

17:15 An introduction – presentation of situation of World Heritage Site since the last expert meeting in May 2008

19:00 Dinner

21st October, Monday

Meeting in a group of Experts and the Organisers

(“Puławy” conference room in Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków)

9:00 Presentation of conservation and investment activities within World Heritage Site and buffer zone – Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

9:45 Presentation of “Conservation Strategy for Auschwitz Birkenau, German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945), UNESCO World Heritage Site” – National Board of Poland

10:30 Coffee break

10:45 Presentation of action of Regional Monuments Inspector of Małopolska according protection of Auschwitz Birkenau World Heritage Site – Regional Monuments Inspector of Małopolska

11:30 Presentation of evolution of projects for S-1 expressway, and southern link road to Oświęcim since the last expert meeting in May 2008 – National Board of Poland

12:00 transfer to Oświęcim

check in at the Hotel Galicja, Oświęcim, ul. Gen. Dąbrowskiego 119

13:30 Lunch

15:00 Visit of Auschwitz Birkenau World Heritage Site and buffer zone

18:30 Visit to the exhibition “Memory films – labyrinths” by Marian Kołodziej (former inmate in KL Auschwitz), St. Maksymilian Centre in Harmęże

20:00 Dinner

22nd October, Tuesday

Meeting with representatives of the central, regional and local government authorities, Government Agency responsible for Roads and Motorways in Poland, representatives of local people of Harmęże, Rajsko and Pławy, the Jewish community in Bielsko-Biała, Carmelite monastery, and other stakeholders

**State Higher Trade School in Oświęcim, ul. Kolbego 8,
lecture theatre in Collegium sub Horologio**

9:00 Welcome and opening of the meeting

- 9:30 Presentation of Strategic Government Programme for Oświęcim – Jerzy Miller, the Governor of Małopolska Region
- 10:00 Presentation of a construction project for expressway S-1 and southern link road to Oświęcim – Government Agency responsible for Roads and Motorways in Poland
- 10:45 Coffee break
- 11:20 Presentation of opinions:
 Jerzy Miller, the Governor of Małopolska Region
 Marek Sowa, the Marshal of Małopolska Region
 Janusz Chwierut, the President of Oświęcim
 Małgorzata Grzywa, the Mayor of Oświęcim Community
 Representative of local people of Pławy, Harmężę and Rajsko
 Representative of Carmelite Monastery in Oświęcim
 Dorota Wiewióra, chairwoman of Jewish Community in Bielsko-Biała
- 12:30 Discussion
- 13:30 Lunch
- 14:30 transfer to Kraków
 check in at the Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków, ul. Pijarska 17
- 16:00 Working time for experts – work on the report from the meeting
 (“Puławy” conference room in Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków)
- 20:00 Dinner

23rd October, Wednesday

- 9:00 Working time for experts – work on the report from the meeting
 (“Puławy” conference room in Hotel Polski “Pod Białym Orłem”, Kraków)
- 12:00 Lunch
- Close and return

Annex II: List of participants of the expert consultation

Dr Eleonora Bergman (Expert, former Director Jewish Historical Institute and Coordinator of the Ringelblum Archive, Poland)

Mr. Max Polonovski (Expert, General Curator of Jewish Heritage, Ministry for Culture, France)

Dr. Mechtild Rossler (Deputy Director World Heritage Centre)

Mr Giora Solar (Expert, Israel)

Prof. Michael Turner (Expert, Bezalel Academy, Israel)

Dr Christopher Young (Expert, English Heritage)

Annex III: Statement of significance adopted by the Committee in 2007

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the principal and most notorious of the six concentration and extermination camps established by Nazi Germany to implement its Final Solution policy which had as its aim the mass murder of the Jewish people in Europe. Built in Poland under Nazi German occupation initially as a concentration camp for Poles and later for Soviet prisoners of war, it soon became a prison for a number of other nationalities. Between the years 1942-1944 it became the main mass extermination camp where Jews were tortured and killed for their so-called racial origins. In addition to the mass murder of well over a million Jewish men, women and children, and tens of thousands of Polish victims, Auschwitz also served as a camp for the racial murder of thousands of Roma and Sinti and prisoners of several European nationalities.

The Nazi policy of spoliation, degradation and extermination of the Jews was rooted in a racist and anti-Semitic ideology propagated by the Third Reich.

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest of the concentration camp complexes created by the Nazi German regime and was the one which combined extermination with forced labour. At the centre of a huge landscape of human exploitation and suffering, the remains of the two camps of Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau, as well as its Protective Zone were placed on the World Heritage List as evidence of this inhumane, cruel and methodical effort to deny human dignity to groups considered inferior, leading to their systematic murder. The camps are a vivid testimony to the murderous nature of the anti-Semitic and racist Nazi policy that brought about the annihilation of more than 1.2 million people in the crematoria, 90% of whom were Jews.

The fortified walls, barbed wire, railway sidings, platforms, barracks, gallows, gas chambers and crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau show clearly how the Holocaust, as well as the Nazi German policy of mass murder and forced labour took place. The collections at the site preserve the evidence of those who were premeditatedly murdered, as well as presenting the systematic mechanism by which this was done. The personal items in the collections are testimony to the lives of the victims before they were brought to the extermination camps, as well as to the cynical use of their possessions and remains. The site and its landscape has high levels of authenticity and integrity since the original evidence has been carefully conserved without any unnecessary restoration.

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 value.

Auschwitz – Birkenau, monument to the deliberate genocide of the Jews by the Nazi regime (Germany 1933-1945) and to the deaths of countless others bears irrefutable evidence to one of the greatest crimes ever perpetrated against humanity. It is also a monument to the strength of the human spirit which in appalling conditions of adversity resisted the efforts of the German Nazi regime to suppress freedom and free thought and to wipe out whole races. The site is a key place of memory for the whole of humankind for the holocaust, racist policies and barbarism; it is a place of our collective memory of this dark chapter in the history of humanity, of transmission to younger generations and a sign of warning of the many threats and tragic consequences of extreme ideologies and denial of human dignity.

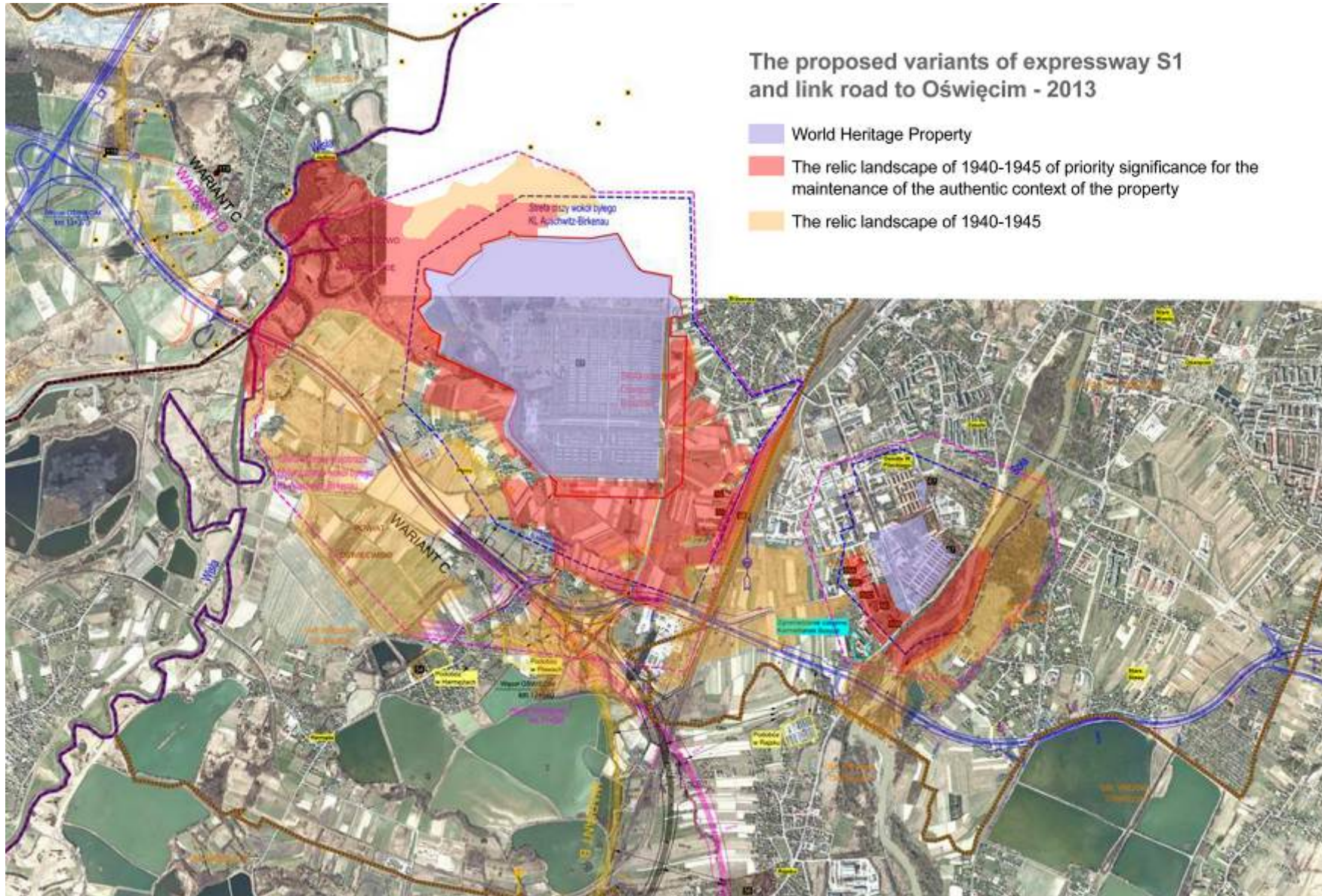
Annex IV Map of the road variants A, B, C and D and the location of the property and its protection zones

Notes:

1. The silence zones around both Auschwitz I and Birkenau notified to UNESCO when the property was nominated in 1978 are marked by a broken blue line
2. The broader protection zones around both Auschwitz I and Birkenau notified to UNESCO when the property was nominated in 1978 are marked by a broken purple line
3. The landscape zones are taken from the 2007 draft management plan

The proposed variants of expressway S1 and link road to Oświęcim - 2013

- World Heritage Property
- The relic landscape of 1940-1945 of priority significance for the maintenance of the authentic context of the property
- The relic landscape of 1940-1945



Annex V: Map of the property and identification of landscape areas to be protected
(from the 2007 Draft Management Plan)

