
Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars (France) No 1465

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars

Location

Champagne-Ardenne, Marne
France

Brief description

The Champagne hillsides, houses and cellars encompass the areas and places where the method of production of sparkling wines was developed from its beginnings in the 17th century until its early industrialisation in the 19th century. The components of the serial nomination, clustered into three distinct groups – the historic vineyards of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, the Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims, and the Avenue of Champagne and Fort Chabrol in Epernay - reflect the key processes of this agro-industrial system as well as the milestones of its evolution from a refined artisanal craft to a capitalist, site-based enterprise.

Category of property

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

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (July 2013) paragraph 47, it is a *cultural landscape*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

1 February 2002

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

16 January 2014

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS has consulted its International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes and several independent experts.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 6 to 10 October 2014.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

On 23 September 2014, ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party requesting additional information on the following aspects:

- the rationale adopted to select the components of the nomination and to define the boundaries of the nominated components;
- the expansion of the comparative analysis so as to include a few further relevant examples;
- safety and accessibility measures and requirements for underground spaces;
- current or planned projects within the nominated areas and their buffer zones;
- finalisation and approval of the prevention plan for the nominated property;
- the protection measures in place or planned for the nominated property and the buffer zones,
- the structure and stage of development of the management system and of the management plan and the monitoring system.

The State Party responded on 28 October 2014 and the additional information provided has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this report. On 3 November 2014 the State Party also provided an English version of the additional information report.

On 22 December 2014, ICOMOS sent a second letter to the State Party seeking further additional information on the following points:

- the need to extend the boundaries of the buffer zone of the Epernay component to encompass the underground cellars and to provide it with specific protection measures for the cellars;
- the need to finalise and enforce the regulatory protection of the nominated series;
- the need to formalise a commitment for a heritage impact assessment on the wind farm projects of Thibie and of Pocancy-Champigneul.

The State Party responded on 24 February 2015 and the additional information provided has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

12 March 2015

2 The property

Description

The Champagne hillsides, houses and cellars encompass the areas and places where the method of production of sparkling wines was developed from its beginnings in the 17th century until its early industrialisation in the 19th

century. The serial nominated property occupies a small part of the much larger current AOC vineyard region and includes fourteen elements that have been grouped into three clusters – vineyard hillsides, houses and cellars – and selected on the grounds of geomorphological, functional and historical criteria. These are located in three different places: the Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims, the Avenue of Champagne in Epernay, and the villages of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ. Epernay and the nominated vineyards lie in the Marne Valley and form a single territorial unit; Reims, with the Saint-Nicaise Hill, rises up to the north of the other clusters from which it is separated by a forested plateau and by the northern side of the Montagne de Reims.

The nominated components reflect the key processes of the agro-industrial system for the production of sparkling wine developed over the centuries from a refined wine-making craft.

The Champagne wine region is the northernmost area for vine-growing and the variability of its climate has a considerable influence on grape productivity; on the other hand the milder summer sun exposure and temperature allow for long maturation of the grapes and for the refinement of flavours.

The geomorphology of the region, characterised by sedimentary chalk formations belonging to the Paris basin, is the other key factor in the development of champagne. The limestone substrate acts as a water reservoir: rain and surface waters are rapidly absorbed and later released according to the rock porosity and the above-ground environmental parameters, thus allowing the vine plants to receive an adequate amount of water throughout the growing season. On the other hand, the poverty of nutrients in the limestone substrate has been compensated for by cultivation and reworking of the soil over the centuries.

The soft limestone and its early exploitation as a building material have left an important legacy that was revealed to be crucial for the development of large scale champagne production: former underground quarries were converted into cellars to exploit their stable micro-climate, which was found to be favourable for re-fermentation and champagne maturation. The softness of the stone substrate also facilitated the extension of underground cellars.

The production method of champagne involves a sequence of key passages: the rapid pressing of the grapes (mainly chardonnay, pinot noir, and meunier) that has to be carried out as early as possible after the harvest; the cleaning of the must; the re-fermentation in bottles, which produces, under stable climatic conditions, the CO₂ responsible for the effervescence. Re-fermentation causes the degradation of the yeast, forming a sediment which needs to be removed: this has been achieved by progressively turning the bottles so as to move the yeast residue into the bottle neck from which it is removed (nowadays, after localised freezing).

This complex process has affected the entire production sequence, its organisation and its spaces: e.g., the re-fermentation in bottles requires extremely extended cellars with very stable climatic conditions, and, in the absence of the limestone quarries, it would not have been possible to obtain these conditions without major technical and financial investment.

The territorial structure of the region and particularly of the nominated serial property has been marked by the entire economy of Champagne in its rural, urban and industrial dimensions: human settlement is still concentrated in compact villages that grew up in areas not suited for vine-growing, champagne-related industries also flourished to support this agro-industrial district (e.g., bottle and cork production), and the existing long-distance communication network was further developed through the construction of the railway, facilitating the distribution of champagne.

The description of the components is organised according to the three clusters in which they have been grouped: the historic hillsides of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, where champagne was pioneered; the Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims and the Avenue of Champagne in Epernay, where specific districts developed for its production and commercialisation. From a functional perspective, the clusters comprise elements reflecting different aspects of the production chain: the supply source of the grapes - the vineyards; the places for the production of champagne – the cellars; and those for its commercialisation – the marketing houses. Although the clusters include elements belonging to different production phases, each of them exhibits a different concentration of functional elements, so that each cluster preferentially reflects one of the identified key phases.

Part 1 – the historic hillsides of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ

The cluster includes seven components, reflecting mainly the phase of vine cultivation and grape-growing, with the three vineyard hill areas of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, which are complemented by four underground elements representing the earlier system of cellars. The selected vineyard areas correspond to the most ancient vine-cultivated hillsides to be documented.

The historic vineyards include the first areas of vine cultivation, the villages of Hautvillers, Aÿ and de Mareuil-sur-Aÿ and the grounds and the vestiges of Hautvillers Abbey, the Chateau of Montebello, as well as the viticultural infrastructure, such as the harvest huts and the presses which allowed grape processing in the immediate proximity of the vineyards, thus limiting as much as possible its transportation after the harvest. The underground heritage encompasses several cellars, among which is worth mentioning the Thomas cellar, which is the most ancient among the ones dug specifically to stock champagne (1673 AD), and the cellar of the Chateau Montebello (1770-1780 AD). In Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ the cellars extend upstream from the villages below the vineyard sides.

The buffer zone extends into the rest of the vineyard region and to the villages of the hillsides including the communities of Cumières, Champillon and Mutigny, and one part of the forests delimiting the upper part of the hillsides. For visual and functional reasons, it encompasses the visible landscape unit as well as the forest on the upper part of the hillsides, as it was the forest that served the vineyards for their management.

Part 2 – Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims

The component has been chosen to illustrate the integration of the champagne production process into the landscape and the effect upon the urban structure of the Champagne Houses. Saint-Nicaise Hill includes four components, three of which are below ground - the Charles Heidsieck, Ruinart, Pommery and Veuve Clicquot cellars, the Taittinger cellars (inside the medieval enclosure, under Saint-Nicaise Abbey) and the Martel cellars (old quarries reused since the 18th century) – and the above-ground part of the Hill.

This comprises enclosures with urban vineyards, public spaces and parks (Parc de Champagne, Chemin Vert, Saint-Nicaise Church), illustrating the patronage and social initiatives by the Champagne Houses, complemented by industrial buildings and grand residences belonging to the heads of the Houses, (e.g., Chateau des Crayeres and Villa Demoiselle).

The most extensive network of underground galleries can be found here: former chalk quarries have been reused as cellars and connected via galleries to maximise their use. Their existence is revealed on the surface by vent structures emerging in vineyards and parks.

The buffer zone includes two distinct areas historically and morphologically connected to the component: the collective residential district situated between Saint Remi Cathedral and the Aisne Canal, the glass-making district and the university campus of Moulin de la Housse, thus ensuring the visual protection of the nominated component.

Part 3 – the Avenue of Champagne in Epernay

This cluster encompasses both above-ground and underground components: the Avenue of Champagne with the champagne showcasing facilities and the cellars, and Fort Chabrol as well as vineyards.

From the 18th century onwards, the champagne merchants erected along this road – an important transport route from France to Germany - their headquarters, with production and reception facilities, cellars, as well as their dwellings. By virtue of the elegance and richness of the buildings, courtyards and gardens constructed by the Champagne Houses, the Avenue reflects the key role of trade in the development of champagne and its associated territory.

Fort Chabrol houses a research centre which was crucial for the recovery of vine cultivation after the spread of

phylloxera and bears witness to the know-how developed to preserve vine-growing and to the solidarity amongst the champagne stakeholders. The buffer zone includes a large part of Epernay, almost corresponding to the ZPPAUP protection zone (*Zone de protection du patrimoine, architectural, urbain et paysager*).

History and development

Vine cultivation in the region was introduced in the Gallo–Roman era (2nd century AD) but it was only with the spread of monastic orders in the 6th -7th centuries that the territory was colonised by abbeys (e.g., Saint Pierre d'Hautvillers), after which vineyards expanded and wine-making started being systematically practiced. Although much less diffused and documented, vine cultivation was not restricted to monasteries but was also an activity pursued by the gentry and the middle classes, interested in the revenues that wine-making yielded. On the other hand, the grape growing was carried out by tenants, a fact which is reflected in the small size of the plots.

The first wines produced were mostly red and still and had already been commercialised, since the 12th-13th centuries, when the need for financial resources by the monasteries encouraged the improvement of their wine production. This impulse drove the expansion of both demand and production: champagne wines found their way to Paris and to northern Europe, preparing the ground for the champagne revolution which took place in the 17th century in the vineyard area around Epernay and Hautvillers.

The first recognised protagonist of this revolution was the monk and wine-maker Dom Perignon who set the foundations of modern viticulture and wine-making.

The movement from still to sparkling wines owed a debt to England, where the passion for effervescence encouraged in the late 17th century the search for a stabilised production process, which could be helped by scientific advancements of the 18th century. It was once again in religious complexes that further achievements were reached in defining the methodology for sparkling wine production.

The real change, however, happened when new investors entered the wine sector. They brought into this thus-far traditional activity their industrial and commercial experience developed in the textile sector as well as significant financial resources, paving the way for the swift progress towards the industrial production of champagne in the 19th century. Within one century the production increased tenfold, mainly to be exported abroad: an internationalisation which has to be regarded as a founding element of the fortunes of champagne. Initially involved in the commercialisation and distribution, the new investors became, over time, wine producers themselves, whilst grape growing remained in the hands of local vine-growers.

The development of champagne production accompanied the progress of France from a traditional to a capitalist society, giving rise to a precocious agro-industrial system at the dawn of French industrialisation.

These changes in production and marketing attitudes also had a significant impact on the social and manufacturing structure. Reims was an important centre for wool textile production and commerce and, at the beginning, wine commercialisation was seen as a complementary activity to increase revenue but, with the growing fame of champagne and the decline of the textile sector, merchants turned strongly towards this enterprise.

The scale change in production caused the expansion of vineyards which extended over most of the hillsides around Epernay and Reims, and also brought substantial modification to the urban structure, the architectural language and the industrial profile of these towns.

Facilities required more and more space, therefore the Champagne Houses moved bit by bit outside the centre of Reims to occupy the Saint-Nicaise Hill, where numerous underground limestone quarries, exploited to build Reims, were located. These spaces enjoyed the most suitable indoor climate for the maturing of champagne and so were then turned into cellars, further expanded and connected with additional galleries. A similar process occurred in Epernay, where the Champagne Houses settled along the old trade road, built their production and showcasing facilities, and hollowed out an extensive network of cellars where modern equipment helped the improvement and stabilisation of the product.

The modernisation and expansion of wine production was accompanied by the improvement of long-distance communication routes through the opening of the man-made canal of the Marne river (1855) and the construction of the railway (1854). The Saint-Nicaise Hill proved to be a strategic location and several Champagne Houses placed their headquarters there.

The spread of phylloxera marked the beginning of a difficult period for champagne that ended only after World War II, when the remedial actions undertaken during the previous decades (e.g., the Champagne AOC recognition in 1935), coupled with the second industrial revolution and years of peace, could come to fruition and further expand internationally the potential of champagne.

3 Justification for inscription, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

The nomination dossier has identified for each selected criterion a number of 'indicators' corresponding to the values identified for the nominated property; thirteen in

total have been singled out. Each indicator has been explained and contextualised so as to clarify the scope of its use in the comparative analysis and the rationale for the selection of examples and typologies of property, namely vineyards, agro-industrial product-related properties, properties related to industry and to the territory.

Fifty-three properties have been examined, out of which fourteen are related to viticulture, five to distillation, five relate to agro-industry in general, sixteen are related to resource extraction and fourteen to industry and infrastructure.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis has been extended much beyond its relevant scope, by including thirty properties not associated with alimentary products. However, the overall architecture of the comparative analysis, although obviously built to demonstrate the specificity of the nominated property, contains elements of general validity, namely the clarification of the basic factors influencing production-related facilities and urban/territorial transformation and social phenomena, in relation to the natural resources exploited and to history.

Nonetheless, in October 2014 ICOMOS asked the State Party to expand the comparative analysis to include other areas where sparkling wines are produced, (e.g., the Prosecco Hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene on the tentative list of Italy), which were not mentioned in the first comparison.

The State Party submitted a supplement to the comparative analysis, examining the Prosecco Hills and the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato (Italy (2014), (iii), (v)), demonstrating the historical, technological and representational relevance of the nominated property also compared to these additional properties.

Upon ICOMOS' request, the State Party further clarified that the components of the series had been selected on the grounds of geography, historicity and representativity criteria. The identified selective factors are: the presence of the chalk formations on the surface, the historic grape supply basin, and the most relevant industrial heritage.

ICOMOS considers that the additional explanation provided has clarified the selective approach, which appears fully justified.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this serial 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 as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- Overall the serial property illustrates in an exceptional manner how the evolution of champagne production from a highly specialised artisanal activity to an agro-industrial enterprise has left its mark on the territorial, landscape and urban structures, through the establishment of Champagne Houses with their showcasing and productive units, and through the adaptation of former quarries as cellars;
- The historic hillsides along with Hautvillers Abbey bear witness to the first experiments carried out from the 17th century onwards to set up a stable and reproducible methodology to obtain sparkling wines; the villages, the first champagne houses and related cellars illustrate the specific relationship between the supply basin – the hillsides – from where the grapes were taken, the chain of production and the commercialisation of champagne;
- The Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims outstandingly illustrates the role played by the production facilities and infrastructures in defining the urban structure and fabric of Reims; the former quarries now used as cellars attest to the importance of the peculiar geomorphology of the region in the rise of champagne as an industrial production as well as to the ingeniousness of wine-makers in taking advantage of this resource;
- The Avenue of Champagne in Epernay, with the commerce houses, the production facilities, the showcasing spaces and the underground cellars, illustrate exceptionally the close interrelations between production, distribution and marketing of champagne, as well as the importance of communication and trade routes in facilitating the spread of this product and in the definition of the urban structure of Epernay and the territorial organisation of the entire area.

The three clusters encompassing fourteen components reflect the entire agro-industrial process forming the basis of champagne production and also express the strong relationship with the territory and its geomorphological and climatic characteristics.

ICOMOS considers that this justification is appropriate because the key elements and factors of champagne production from its early stages until the affirmation of industrialised processes marked by the search for excellence are well and originally presented in the nomination dossier, which offers an accurate selection of the most relevant aspects and tangible testimonies of the story of champagne.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The delimitation of the vineyard component of the nomination is grounded on a detailed historical and landscape analysis. It only encompasses a small part of the current viticultural champagne AOC region, comprising the original core area where the champagne elaboration process was developed and where relevant

elements illustrating this process still survive in an adequate state of integrity.

The built elements – vineyard villages, huts and grape vats, presses, etc. are closely connected to viticulture and allow a coherent readability of the vineyard landscape. These elements, which are part of the viticultural infrastructure, are almost all still in use, with the exception of a few huts and vineyard workshops.

The buffer zone covers the visible landscape unit as well as the forest, both for visual and functional reasons as the forest provided the wood necessary for the vineyards. The territory of the Municipality of Dizy is excluded in that it is not visible and exhibits a built heritage of lower quality.

The structure of the urban built fabric of Epernay, particularly the Avenue of Champagne, reflects clearly how the need for space and vicinity to communication routes of the industrial activity has oriented urbanisation.

In the Avenue of Champagne, the town-hall, located at the beginning of the Avenue, and some champagne houses, have recently been restored, improving the overall appearance of the Avenue. However, the homogeneity of its built fabric has been interrupted by two recent buildings. Some grounds located within the Mercier House estate at the south of the Place de la République are planned to be enhanced.

In this regard ICOMOS recalls the requirements of paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* concerning new projects.

On the Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims, the cluster comprises the Champagne Houses, their underground cellars and the workers' garden-city of Chemin Vert. The location of the Houses outside of the town centre clearly reveals the development of champagne along with industrialisation. The buildings, erected in the second half of the 19th century, suffered major destruction during World War I but were rebuilt as exact copies. Some changes have occurred recently within the cellars to allow modern installations. The ambience of the hill has been or is being enhanced with the creation of parks in place of parking lots. The cellars retain their overall integrity in terms of the network and aspect; due to flooding vulnerability, some of them have been closed and in various areas the limestone has stability problems; different consolidation methods have been used, so far with unsatisfactory visual results. Improvements in this regard would be advisable.

In summary, ICOMOS considers that overall the rationale for the component selection is clear and well-grounded, in that each element of the three clusters contributes to depicting the key geographical, technological and socio-historic factors that made possible the establishment and development of this remarkable agro-industrial landscape.

ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the whole series has been justified; and that the integrity of the individual sites that comprise the series has been demonstrated.

Authenticity

Centuries-long practices of vine cultivation in the nominated vineyards is robustly documented and the only relevant period of discontinuity relates to the spread of phylloxera, which however brought many changes in farming practices throughout all of Europe: autochthonous vine types had to be grafted onto American root-stock, the distribution of vines changed from randomly ordered to being aligned in rows; however, no alteration of vineyard plots have been undertaken. This can be ascertained on the ground but also in the cadastral documents which still show a fragmented parcelling, and only minor-scale parcel reorganisation has taken place. The farming practices have only partially changed and the most important ones must still be done by hand, e.g., harvesting the grapes.

World War I caused great loss of built fabric, due to the prolonged bombardments which Reims was exposed to; on the other hand, the Avenue of Champagne did not suffer any war damage. The champagne commerce houses were soon restored or reconstructed respecting the original design and architectural language, only the later erection of the Moët & Chandon house at the beginning of the Avenue represents a dissonant element. However, overall, comparison with historic photographs confirms the authenticity of setting and urban and architectural design. Inside, the adaptation of the showcase spaces to current tastes indicates that more changes have occurred to the internal décor.

The villages, on the other hand, underwent insensitive modifications concerning architectural details (e.g., window frames or façade detailing) or urban spaces to facilitate vehicular traffic, but these alterations are currently being remedied. The garden-city of Chemin Vert is well preserved but the rehabilitation programme needs to be strengthened by adopting a heritage approach.

Cellars are in a good state of conservation and intensively used for champagne production, particularly the superior qualities, which are traditionally manufactured by hand.

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the whole series has been justified; and that the authenticity of the individual sites that comprise the series has been demonstrated.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity of the whole series and of individual components have been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

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

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 nominated property, through the selected components, bears witness to the development of traditional knowledge and know-how through which the people of Champagne were able to overcome and exploit the limits imposed by the environment on vine-growing and mastered the art of wine-making, developing the technique for sparkling wines through re-fermentation in the bottle. Technological innovation has always been at the heart of champagne-making which was also able to profit from outside investment. Britain impelled the evolution of taste and the first experiments to obtain sparkling wines, and contributed with its technological expertise (glass making and railways). Merchants and bankers from Germany, Lorraine and Alsace turned to champagne commerce and production and contributed substantially, with their business acumen, networks of contacts and capital, in the advancement of the enterprise, making possible the swift transition from a well-organised artisanal activity towards a large, site-based agro-industrial system. Champagne Houses and vine-growers were able to come to terms with their respective constraints and an early framework of vine/wine professions could develop.

ICOMOS concurs with this justification, although notes that the role of inter-professional organisations does not seem unique to the Champagne wine region, nor can glass-making and railways be considered British technological advancements peculiar to this specific area, having spread all over Europe.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified for the whole series.

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 serial property represents an exceptional example of a production system which has its supply basin in the vineyards, the production units in the cellars and the marketing side in the champagne houses. This agro-industrial system has given rise to specific territorial and urban organisations, as well as functional and representative architecture. It was also able to exploit previous infrastructure – an extensive network of former quarries – for the production and maturation of the wine. The early fame of the product pushed technological innovation and commercialisation which are embodied in a peculiar urban development, in the production and commercial facilities (champagne

houses, cellar network) and in the communication infrastructure that was developed over the centuries (the canal, the railway) to allow rapid distribution of the product.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified: the ensemble of the three clusters of components bears witness in different ways to the key factors that made possible the development of champagne and illustrate the functional and representational dimension of this early agro-industrial production landscape.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified for the whole series.

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 champagne conveys a symbolic image which is unique to this wine. It enjoyed an early recognition by the European elites and courts from the 18th century onwards and had already become associated with the idea of the art of living well by the 19th century, becoming the symbol of celebration and reconciliation.

ICOMOS considers that while the arguments put forth by the State Party are well grounded, they refer to the product that is the outcome of the agro-industrial system of which the nominated serial property represents the tangible materialisation that make comprehensible and appreciable that system and its associated territorial and urban organisation.

ICOMOS notes that the World Heritage Convention is a property-based Convention and therefore it is properties that are evaluated and inscribed as unique, exceptional or representative examples illustrating human endeavours, achievements and values, and not the products that result from manufacturing or farming processes, although their quality and recognition may contribute to the understanding of the scope of certain aspects of human development and therefore reinforce other criteria.

ICOMOS however considers that the nominated serial property and particularly the Saint-Nicaise Hill, with the monumental quarry-cellars and the early Champagne Houses, and the Avenue of Champagne, with the showcasing spaces of the commerce houses, convey the world-renowned image of champagne as a symbol of the art of living and celebration.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified for the whole series.

ICOMOS considers that the serial approach is justified and that the selection of sites is appropriate.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi) and conditions of authenticity and integrity.

Description of the attributes

The nomination dossier provides a detailed account of the attributes of the nominated serial property and therefore it represents a reference for a comprehensive inventory of important features and characteristics that make explicit and understandable the Outstanding Universal Value. Here only a synthesis of that account is presented.

The natural amphitheatre of the historical chalk hillsides of Hautvillers, with the village at the top, and its landscape and vernacular heritage, Hautvillers Abbey and the underground cellars dug into the hillsides (the Thomas cellar and the cooperative cellars), illustrate how the geomorphology of the region was exploited for wine-making and the system of grape supply and wine production, and bear testimony to vine-growing and wine-making's historic heritage.

The hillsides of Aÿ, facing the Marne valley, have been almost exclusively devoted to the culture of vine-growing for more than four centuries. At the foot of the hill, there lies the town of Aÿ, with its tightly-packed houses running along its main streets; once surrounded by a perimeter wall, it is now replaced by a belt of boulevards. The Boulevard du Nord links the town to the vineyards, and is now home to several Champagne Houses, with their underground cellars that were dug under the hillsides and connect the built up areas to the vineyards.

The hillsides of Mareuil-sur-Aÿ offer an expansive view over Épernay, the Marne valley, and far eastward over the plain, and exhibit a very diverse range of features due to their varying exposure. Located at the foot of the hill, the village of Mareuil is associated with the Château de Montebello which is a fine neoclassical building and a production estate with outbuildings housing the grape press and fermentation vessels and a tower containing offices, as well as a network of underground wide-vaulted galleries.

The Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims is a fine illustration of how the champagne production process has been integrated into the landscape and how the Champagne Houses have affected the urban structure. The above-ground section of Saint-Nicaise Hill is located on the edge of the city and is home to enclosed urban vineyards, large public spaces and several grand residences owned by the heads of the Champagne Houses. The hill is also marked by evidence of corporate patronage and social initiatives, with the Parc de Champagne and the garden city of Chemin Vert and its remarkable Saint-Nicaise church.

The underground part of Saint-Nicaise Hill encompasses an extensive set of underground chalk quarries and the galleries linking them together. They illustrate the genius of the Champagne region: long-abandoned, former chalk

quarries were given second lives as cellars still in use today for wine-making and storage.

The Avenue of Champagne in Épernay is a particularly remarkable example of the creation of a production site. It comprises vineyards, industrial buildings, cellars, reception buildings and other prestigious constructions, and associated gardens and parks. They illustrate the history of the birth, expansion and current situation of the Champagne Houses, recounting the development of the production tool and transport infrastructure — linking first to Paris and then to the European capitals before finally establishing connections with the rest of the world — and the construction of showcase buildings. Located in the immediate vicinity of the Avenue of Champagne is the final element, Fort Chabrol, a wine-making research centre which has a very special place in the history of champagne wine-making.

4 Factors affecting the property

On the historic hillsides component, no urban development is allowed in the forest, the vineyards and the floodplain areas. Development can only occur in areas already built-up, which causes some pressure on the historic structure of the built environment.

At the moment it is very difficult to envisage scenarios which may cause the unequivocal decline of champagne and affect the economic base of the region. Climate change may certainly influence production rates or quality; to date, these changes have only had a positive impact, reducing winter frosts. However, in this regard, research has been initiated by the Inter-professional Committee of Champagne.

The transfer of agricultural activity may also be detrimental but this has not occurred within the nominated property: while service areas have been created outside it, this has not caused the abandonment of facilities located on the historic hillsides.

On the other hand, ICOMOS notes that agricultural practices have already caused water pollution and a substantial reduction of biodiversity, due to the use of pesticides. Some measures are envisaged, e.g., ecological or green corridors, to promote the safeguarding of important landscape elements; however no programme for the protection of threatened species is in place.

Due to the specific geological stratigraphy, landslides threaten the upper area of the historic hillsides, in particular the villages of Hautvillers and Ay. Erosion and run off also represent a constant threat that is being counteracted by allowing grass to be grown in the vineyards, an effective measure that needs to be extended. Flooding risks concern the Marne river plains (in the buffer zone).

The Avenue of Champagne could experience some development pressure, in relation to the search for new

forms of showcasing by the Champagne Houses and in fact, some new buildings, not completely in line with the overall character of the Avenue, can be found on its eastern side. ICOMOS notes that no significant regulations exist to avoid these trends which need, however, to be regulated to avoid further dissonant elements in the Avenue.

The Avenue underground is fragile due to the vast network of cellars. However, the latest significant subsidence event dates back to ~100 years ago.

Tourism may also become a threat: currently the Avenue is visited each year by ~450,000 people and great efforts are required to manage these numbers.

The use, modernisation and development needs of the large Champagne Houses may affect particularly the nominated components concentrated on Saint-Nicaise Hill: a number of activities are being moved to other sites for rentability or rationalisation reasons and therefore real estate is also being sold. Apparently, however, so far this trend has not affected the nominated property.

Due to the presence of underground cellars and galleries, certain areas of the Saint-Nicaise Hill are prone to subsidence and some cellars have had to be abandoned due to instability. These threats, on the other hand, reduce the urban pressure, as new construction possibilities are very limited.

In its first letter, ICOMOS asked for additional information from the State Party on this aspect.

The regional scheme for wind turbines foresees the development of wind farms in the region so as to raise the installed power to 3000 MW by 2020. The direct setting of the nominated serial property is not classified as a favourable area but, according to the additional information provided by the State Party upon ICOMOS' request, a new wind farm is already approved in the municipality of Thibie, some 20km from the historic hillside component, counting nine further turbines to be added to thirty already existing, and a further one, not yet approved, counting presumably thirteen turbines in a location much closer to the nominated property, between Pocancy and Champigneul.

ICOMOS considers that the high concentration of wind-farms in the same area and in the same sight direction may have a negative visual impact on the nominated property. Particular attention should be given to the second proposal, as this is much closer to the nominated property and therefore much more visible from it.

In December 2014, ICOMOS sent a second letter to the State Party requesting additional information on the need to develop an Heritage Impact Assessment for the planned wind farms before work for their erection begins.

The State Party responded that it is its intention to maintain the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the

nominated property, particularly through official examination procedures, and to keep the World Heritage Committee informed, via the World Heritage Centre, on any further project that could affect its value.

The State Party further explained the legislation and procedures to which wind turbine projects are subject, clarifying that they can be refused by the Prefect if the works to be carried out are found to be detrimental to the character of the landscape or of the monument's perspective.

The project of the Thibie wind farm has been assessed within the State's statutory procedures as not challenging the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property: the 9 turbines to be added to the existing 30 turbines are planned to be laid down at the same distance, with the same geometry and alignment, therefore overall they will only slightly increase the visual impact of the existing wind farm, which is held to not be particularly significant due to the distance and position in the open panorama of the Champagne plains. For these reasons the authorization for the extension project was issued in October 2014. Construction works will begin in 2015 and the wind farm will be operational in 2016.

With regard to the Champigneul-Pocancy wind farm, the State Party informs that its planned location lies at a distance of 10km from the nominated property and its buffer zone, and is expected to be perceivable only from the same points of view as the Thibie wind farm. Additional information is required from the project contractor and this is expected to be made available by May 2015, with a decision expected by the end of 2015.

With regard to the Thibie wind farm addition, ICOMOS considers that the additional information provided by the State Party may be considered acceptable. On the other hand, ICOMOS considers that the results of the assessments currently being carried out within the State's statutory procedures for the Champigneul-Pocancy wind farm projects should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2015 and before any commitment to construction is made.

ICOMOS welcomes the information concerning the State Party's intention to launch an impact study on co-visibility aspects of wind farms and World Heritage Properties or those eligible for World Heritage status. This study may result in the revision of the wind farm map with identification of exclusion and vigilance zones. ICOMOS considers that it would be useful that the State Party submits the results of this study, when completed.

Finally ICOMOS considers that measures to protect or reintroduce biodiversity within the nominated property should be sought and implemented.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are development pressure in urban areas and larger villages, landslides and soil instability on the hillsides, and structural instability for the underground cellars and

their corresponding above-ground areas. Overall the plans for increasing energy production from renewable resources may negatively impact on the property, therefore the results of the impact assessment being prepared for the Champigneul-Pocancy wind farm should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2015 before any commitment is made.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundaries of the components are clearly defined and comprehensible on the ground. In the historic vineyards the distinction between those included in the nominated property and those which are part of the buffer zone are not visibly discernible but understandable on the basis of the historic analysis. All elements needed to allow understanding of the coherence of the agro-industrial production chain as well as its industrialisation and its orientation towards a more and more globalised market are included within.

In Reims and Epernay a large part of the nominated property is covered by the protection zones that encircle the protected historic monuments: in the vineyard component this concerns the major part of each built area, while the vineyards are only included for a minor part in the listed site ('site inscrit') of "Hautvillers – Berceau du Champagne". However, the whole of the hillside components and their buffer zone are encompassed within the Regional Natural Park of the Montagne de Reims. In Epernay the perimeters of the nominated property and of the buffer zone coincide with the existing landscape, urban and architectural protection zone (ZPPAUP).

ICOMOS has requested additional information from the State Party concerning the rationale adopted to delimit the nominated components and their buffer zones. The State Party provided an augmented explanation of the delineation of the boundaries for all components that overall justifies the proposal advanced by the State Party.

Buffer zones have been conceived for all components, although none has been specifically foreseen for the underground cellars, despite the instability problems they face.

ICOMOS considers that the problems of instability of the cellars cannot be underestimated and should be addressed through specific studies so as to understand the possible scope of an effective buffer zone for this particular type of heritage. The additional information provided by the State Party on the underground heritage focuses on safety requirements, however, structural problems apparently have been addressed on a case-by-case basis.

In line with paragraph 104 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the role of a buffer zone is to provide an additional layer of protection to the nominated property and this should be pursued through appropriate mechanisms.

Therefore buffer zones should be established taking into account the specific characteristics and weaknesses of the property to be protected.

At the moment, the only area where no surface buffer zone covers the underground heritage is part of the cellars located below the Avenue of Champagne in Epernay, where subsidence problems have occurred in the past.

In its second letter dated 22 December 2014, ICOMOS asked for additional information on the possibility of extending the buffer zone of the Epernay components to cover also the above-ground areas corresponding to the cellars and to provide it with protection measures in the framework of the modification of the ZPPAUP into an AVAP.

The State Party responded on 24 February 2015, informing that modifying the perimeter of the ZPPAUP in the process of establishing an AVAP is an opportunity to strengthen the protection of the underground heritage, by including ad hoc measures that regulate above-ground works. Additionally, the State Party informs that the boundaries of the buffer zone in Epernay have been extended to encompass the underground heritage. This has been incorporated into the official maps and in the nomination dossier. The area included in the buffer zone has also been recalculated.

Following the additional information received by the State Party, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of the buffer zone are adequate. ICOMOS recommends that updated information on progress in the finalisation of protection reinforcement be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2015.

ICOMOS however considers it useful that the State Party undertakes a comprehensive study of the structural behaviour of the quarries in Saint-Nicaise Hill in relation to their geomorphology and previously-reported instability problems, and submit to the World Heritage Centre preliminary outcomes by 1 December 2016 with a view to defining specific protection measures.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of all components of the nominated serial property and of their buffer zones are adequate.

ICOMOS also considers it advisable that the State Party undertakes a study on the structural behaviour of the quarries, particularly in the Saint-Nicaise Hill component, in relation to their geomorphology, and submit to the World Heritage Centre preliminary outcomes by 1 December 2016 with a view to defining specific protection measures.

Ownership

The ownership profile of the nominated property is complex and includes privately-owned land and buildings as well as wide areas belonging to the public domain.

Protection

The clusters of components in Reims and Epernay are covered by the protection areas (500m radius) of protected historic monuments (*abords des monuments historiques*). In Epernay a Protection Zone for the architectural, urban and landscape heritage (ZPPAUP) also exists. However, amendments made to the Code of Environment introduced a revised mechanism to protect built up areas – the Areas for Architectural and Landscape Valorisation (AVAP). The legislation establishes that all ZPPAUP's must be transformed into AVAP's by the end of 2015, as ZPPAUP's will expire and the areas so protected will fall again under the protection regime for the setting of protected monuments.

The historic hillsides are included in the Natural Park of the Montagne de Reims but only part of the vineyards are protected as listed (*site inscrit*), although a study to establish a listing according to the Environment Code has been approved by the concerned municipalities and is in an advanced state of development; however, no deadline has been revealed by the State Party. The vineyard villages are almost completely covered by the protection granted for the setting of protected historic monuments; however an inter-municipal AVAP is under preparation for the urban built-up areas of the vineyard villages. Only two of the Champagne Houses have been protected as historic monuments; for other ones formal protection was requested but the request was rejected due to the existence of the ZPPAUP. The inscription of Fort Chabrol as a historic monument is completed but its protection measures are being finalised.

In the additional information provided in October 2014 upon ICOMOS' request, the State Party informed that an AVAP for the Saint-Nicaise Hill is being developed in coordination with the Local Urban Plan (PLU) of Reims (its finalisation is expected by June 2015), the creation of the AVAP of Epernay is expected by the end of 2015, the AVAP of Hautvillers, Aÿ and Mareuil sur Aÿ is awaited within the early months of 2015, while the enforcement of the listing of the historic vineyards is planned to be completed by the beginning of 2016.

ICOMOS considers that overall the protection regime of the nominated property and of its buffer zone is set up, although its effectiveness will be completely achieved only when all the protection designations being developed are finalised, approved and enforced.

In its second letter sent in December 2014, ICOMOS requested updated information on the progress made in regard to the establishment of protection measures.

The State Party has responded that the AVAP for the Saint-Nicaise Hill is scheduled for 2015 - a protected sector is under development and its finalisation is

expected within the 1st quarter of 2017; and in Epernay the AVAP will be finalised by July 2016 in conjunction with the revision of the PLU.

ICOMOS observes that, in comparison with the schedule submitted in October 2014, the finalisation of protection reinforcement is being slightly delayed: while this is understandable due to the complexity of the instruments being developed, ICOMOS considers it would be useful that the State Party submits updated information to the World Heritage Centre on the progressive finalisation of protection instruments, starting on 1 December 2016.

ICOMOS notes that only the former quarries annexed to the cellars of the Maison Ruinart are protected as *site classé* (1931), while other cellars do not seem to enjoy any specific protection status or mechanisms. Although their use represents an effective form of protection for cellars, ICOMOS considers it advisable that ad hoc measures be set up for their protection and sensible adaptation to evolving production requirements.

In the additional information provided, the State Party clarifies that some individual buildings or building complexes were not granted specific protection because the ZPPAUP or the AVAP were considered sufficient; in other cases however, specific heritage classification procedures have been completed or initiated.

The additional information provided by the State Party on the modification of the buffer zone in Epernay to cover the underground cellars, and the process being commenced to set up and extend the AVAP to coincide with the entirety of the buffer zone, clarify that the process to strengthen protection is well established.

ICOMOS also considers that specific protection mechanisms that take into account the detected instability of the underground cellar network should be established on the basis of an on-purpose scientific study and included in the AVAP or in planning provisions.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the legal protection framework is adequate and the process for its reinforcement is well established and in progressive implementation. ICOMOS recommends that updated information on the progressive implementation of protection measures be periodically submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre, starting on 1 December 2016, completed by a final report when the protection process is finalised for review by ICOMOS.

Conservation

The nomination dossier provides a detailed account of the state of conservation of the different elements comprised in the serial nomination as well as of their respective buffer zones, accompanied by a short account of already carried out or planned projects to overcome the encountered problems.

Complete and methodologically-coherent inventories of landscape, buildings and cellars do exist for both the nominated serial property and the buffer zones, which are collected in several reports and also document the state of conservation of these elements.

The minute landscape elements are recognised as vulnerable to farming modernisation processes. Hillside villages are much better preserved compared to those at the bottom of the valleys and along the river, which experienced contrasting development that affected their overall character. These trends are being reversed thanks to specific rehabilitation programmes for public spaces or to support private owners.

Interventions in public spaces and Champagne Houses have been carried out following adequate methods. The municipalities as well as the Champagne Houses have committed themselves to ensuring that the built heritage is adequately conserved. Municipal programmes for financial support have contributed to improving the conditions of the urban built heritage. The most extensive maintenance work falls on the Champagne Houses, which, however, carried on the wave of the nomination, have revived historical studies as well as conservation of their built and cultural heritage.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conservation of the nominated property is overall adequate, taking into account that a number of buildings have an eminently functional use. The conservation of the rural built heritage should be sustained. Appropriate and effective structural conservation interventions for the quarries/cellars should be studied and experiments carried out. Measures to protect or to restore the biodiversity of the landscape should be established and implemented.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

At the national level, to ensure coordination between the State and local entities, the State Party has conceived a Charter for the engagement in the management of World Heritage properties, which has been signed by the Ministries of Ecology, of Culture and by the Association of French World Heritage properties. This charter envisages forms of shared management and implies the supervision of a local commission chaired by the prefect of the region and including the state services, the representatives of the communities and the managers of the property. It will enter into force as soon as the property achieves World Heritage status.

The *Association Paysages du Champagne* has been established to be responsible for the nomination and it is planned to become the management structure. The first territorial conference has already taken place, in October 2014.

In the preparation of the nomination, a Territorial Charter for the Landscapes of Champagne, engaging all signatories to respect goals of sustainable development, heritage protection, and consideration of the value of the nominated property within the planning tools, has been shared with the 320 municipalities included in the AOC appellation region, the relevant regional council of Champagne–Ardennes, and the general councils of Aube, Aisne, Marne, as well as other institutions. The Charter already had several accessions among municipalities and other institutions.

The management structure implies a territorial conference which acts as a platform for dialogue: it includes the tourism and economic stakeholders, as well as representatives of the territorial planning system, the protection of cultural heritage, and the environment, open to the territory covered by the AOC appellation.

The decision-making body of the management structure is the executive board, where viticultural professionals (through the Inter-professional Committee for Champagne - CIVC) and the collectives are represented. A scientific and a consultative committee assist the board in decision-making.

Upon ICOMOS' first request, the State Party submitted updated information concerning the progress made with the management system and further clarification on the functioning of the overall management structure: several activities have been carried out since the nomination dossier was submitted and these are clearly illustrated. It is envisaged that the juridical status of the management structure will be approved by the end of 2015 and the operational body Mission Coteaux, Maisons et Caves will be composed of a paid staff (three posts will be created).

Financial support of the management structure falls on the municipalities and collectives as well as on the professional organisations. Municipalities will contribute proportionally to their number of inhabitants. Actions to ensure sponsorship have also been undertaken.

ICOMOS considers that this step is very important for the effective management and coordination of activities and provisions in the area concerned.

ICOMOS also confirms that the envisaged management framework is a single one for the serial property, its buffer zone as well as its wider reference territory, that is, the entire AOC appellation. The territorial conference and the executive board appear to be the appropriate bodies through which verifying the coordination or promoting the harmonisation among existing planning instruments so as to ensure that their provisions respect the value of the nominated property.

Upon ICOMOS' request, the State Party has submitted additional information on the existing risk management tools: different plans have been developed to address specific threats, e.g., the flooding areas plan for the Marne river between Aÿ and Courthiezy (PSS 1976), the plan of

flooding risk for Epernay (Plan R111-3, 1992) covering 8 municipalities, the prevention of flooding risk plan Marne–Epernay Sector (PPRi, under elaboration, finalisation end 2015–beginning 2016, approval 2017-018), the Prevention Risk plan for landslides for the Marne Valley (PPRn GT, 2014). Prevention plans include limitations in land-use for vulnerable areas.

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

The overall policy framework for the nominated property, its buffer zone and its wider territory rests upon the planning system and particularly on the Scheme for Territorial Coherence (SCOT) which defines the lines of development and the objectives to be pursued through other planning instruments at the municipal level. The serial property is covered by two different SCOT: the one for the Reims Region (SCOT2R) and the one for Epernay and its region (SCOTER). The first includes among its goals the valorisation of urban diversity and the protection of the architectural built heritage. The SCOTER on the other hand focuses on the management of the built-up areas and on the preservation of landscapes and nature.

Municipalities have to adapt their planning provisions to the goals set by the SCOTs in their PLU (local urban plans - *plans locaux d'Urbanisme*). All the municipalities included in the nominated property are covered by PLU's, which ensure goal-based planning and urban projects.

The additional information provided in October 2014 by the State Party upon ICOMOS' request on the management plan clarified that it is adequately detailed and acts also as an action plan. It contains already detailed objectives to be achieved for each area, it identifies the responsibilities and establishes priorities and a time-frame for implementation.

The management plan is the operational side of the territorial charter that has been signed by all participants. It is articulated in three parts: the first contains the orientation document setting the framework of the long-term guidelines for the property, the result of participatory workshops and linked to the diagnostic phase documenting the state of conservation and the factors affecting the property; the second part articulates in detail the short term action plan, which contains phased and detailed actions, identified partners, assessment indicators and defined financial resources; the third part concerns the voluntary engagement of the AOC region stakeholders, within the framework of their competences, to preserve and enhance the agro-industrial landscape of champagne.

Involvement of the local communities

The Association has made significant and successful efforts to favour the participation of society in the nomination process. The territorial charter is the result of a participation and dialogue process among different stakeholders.

Several activities have already been carried out to present and communicate the values of the nominated property; in particular, publications and leaflets in different languages about the property have been prepared to spread the knowledge of its values. Photographic competitions have been set up as well as didactic activities with the schools.

ICOMOS considers that the overall system that has been set up both at the State and the local level, although complex and multilayered, appears adequate as it is grounded in the multi-annual experience matured through the nomination process. The only worry concerns the small number of staff (3 posts) envisaged for the operational mission: unless it relies also on the staff of existing administrative structures, it seems very unlikely that this small number of people could accomplish the tasks assigned.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the management system for the overall serial property appears adequate although there is a need to reinforce the envisaged mission staff at least through cooperation with relevant administrations and staff-sharing formulas.

6 Monitoring

The monitoring system includes two different types of indicators: those necessary to assess the state of conservation of the property and those to assess the performance and management results. The first set lists several indicators already in use and in the responsibility of identified agencies, while the second type of monitoring concerns the achievement of management objectives at the three different levels in which the management plan has been organised: management orientation, focussing on the management framework; the action plan, focussing on specific activities to be carried out; and the monitoring of the subscription of the territorial charter.

ICOMOS has requested additional information on the periodicity of monitoring and the State Party has informed that the monitoring of the management objectives is carried out annually; however a mid-term assessment of the entire 5-year cycle is foreseen for each area of management.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the monitoring system has been well conceived and structured, although there is a need to identify the most relevant indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation, relate them to the current issues of the property, and define an appropriate periodicity of measurement.

7 Conclusions

The nominated property Hillsides, Houses and Cellars of Champagne is the original centre of the French region of Champagne-Ardenne, where the process of sparkling

wine-making was developed from the 17th century until rapid industrialisation occurred in the 19th century.

The fourteen components of the series represent a remarkable and coherent example of the territorial, urban and technological materialisation of a site-based agro-industrial system and contain the essential representative elements of the production of champagne and of the history of this production, which has enjoyed almost since the beginning international recognition. The three clusters of components include the supply basin that is the historic hillsides, the production units, that is the underground cellars, and the marketing spaces, that is the commerce houses.

The nomination dossier illustrates comprehensively the relevant aspects of the entire system from a geographical, technological and historical perspective. The role of each component is explained in relation to the whole production process and its historical development, highlighting its most important phases and the impact that the champagne enterprise had on this territory.

The components of the series exhibit appropriate boundaries that encompass the elements necessary to convey the significance of the property. The same can be said for the buffer zones as far as above-ground components are concerned; the additional information provided by the State Party in February 2015 on the extension of the buffer zone to cover also the underground cellars demonstrates the commitment of the State Party to the protection of the nominated property and confirms that all relevant attributes of the nominated property are adequately protected.

The components exhibit a good state of conservation and programmes to improve weaker situations are being implemented.

Considering the complexity, diversity and size of the nominated components, the legal protection is still uneven, with some components not covered yet by specific designations or protection measures. However, this aspect is currently being addressed, as confirmed by the additional information provided by the State Party in February 2015 and it is expected that protection of the nominated components and their buffer zone will be finalised throughout 2015, 2016 until early 2017 (*Reims secteur sauvegardé*).

The conceived management system appears well-developed and realistic in integrating different actions within one single vision. The Territorial Charter engaging the entire AOC region appears also to be an interesting solution to achieve a territorial cooperation with a view to sharing the advantages of World Heritage recognition in the wider champagne area, and to strengthen solidarity and resilience.

8 Recommendations

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars, France, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

In north-east France, on cool, chalky land, the Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars form a very specific agro-industrial landscape, with the vineyards as the supply basin and villages and urban districts concentrating the production and trading functions. The imperatives of Champagne wine production have resulted in an original, three-pronged organisation, based on functional town planning, prestigious architecture and an underground heritage. This agro-industrial system, which has structured not only the landscape but also the local economy and daily life, is the outcome of a long process of development, technical and social innovations, and industrial and commercial transformations, which speeded up the transition from an artisanal crop to mass production of a product sold around the world.

Women and the Franco-German heirs of the old Champagne fairs played a special role in this evolution, which has its roots in Hautvillers, among the hills of Aÿ, the heart of the wine-growing sector. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it then spread to the two nearest towns, to Saint-Nicaise Hill in Reims and to Avenue de Champagne in Épernay, which were entirely built on the wine-growing activity of Champagne. The three ensembles that make up the property embody the Champagne *terroir* and serve as a living and a working environment and a showcase for traditional know-how. Patronage has also been a source of social innovation, the greatest emblem of which is the Chemin Vert garden city in Reims. This is the place where the benchmark method of producing sparkling wine was born, a method that would spread and be copied across the world from the 19th century up to the present day. Champagne is a product of excellence, renowned as the universal symbol of festiveness, celebration and reconciliation.

Criterion (iii): The Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars are the outcome of expertise perfected over the generations, of exemplary inter-professional organisation and of the protection of the *appellation*, as well as the development of inter-cultural relations and social innovations over a long period of time, which women also took part in. Through the development of traditional know-how, the people of Champagne have overcome a number of obstacles, both in the vineyards (a harsh climate and rather infertile chalky soils), and in the wine-making process, through their mastery of sparkling wine production techniques, and in assembly and bottling. Champagne enterprise was able to gain from the technological and entrepreneurial contributions of the

British and Germans. The equilibrium between wine-growers and the Champagne Houses led to the development of a pioneering inter-professional structure that is still active today.

Criterion (iv): As the legacy of wine-growing and wine-making practices perfected over the centuries, production in Champagne is founded on its supply basin (the vineyards), its processing sites (the *vendangeoirs*, where grapes are pressed, and the cellars) and its sales and distribution centres (the headquarters of the Houses). They are functionally intertwined and intrinsically linked to the chalky substratum where the vines grow, which is easy to hollow out and which is also found in the architecture. The production process specific to Champagne, based on secondary fermentation in the bottle, required a vast network of cellars. In Reims, the use of the former Gallo-Roman and medieval chalk quarries, and the digging of suitable cellars in Épernay or on the hillsides, led to the formation of an exceptional underground landscape – the hidden side of Champagne. As Champagne has been exported around the world since the 18th century, trade development resulted in a special kind of town planning, which integrated functional and showcasing goals: new districts were built around production and sale centres, linked to the vineyards and to transport routes.

Criterion (vi): The Champagne, Hillsides, Houses and Cellars, and particularly the Saint-Nicaise Hill, with its monumental quarry-cellars and its early Champagne Houses, and the Avenue of Champagne, with the showcasing spaces of the commerce houses, convey in an outstanding manner the unique and world-renowned image of Champagne as a symbol of the French art of living, of festiveness and celebration, of reconciliation and victory (particularly in sport). Literature, painting, caricatures, posters, music, cinema, photography and even comics all testify to the influence and the constancy of this unique wine's image.

Integrity

The Property includes the most representative and best preserved elements, testifying to the birth, production and spread of Champagne, through symbiotic functional and territorial organisation. The entire Property has recovered from wars, the phylloxera crisis and the wine-growers' revolts. The hillside villages, limited by the topography and high value of the vineyards, remain well preserved within their original limits. Landscape and plots have changed very little and the built heritage is still in good condition. Although it was bombarded during the First World War, Saint-Nicaise Hill was restored and has maintained its function. The chalk quarries are still used in Champagne production and the network of cellars is well preserved and still perfectly operational. Long-term safeguarding of the visual integrity of the property requires monitoring of large energy installations; whilst functional integrity may benefit from a program to restore bio-diversity, which may also contribute to Champagne specificity.

Authenticity

Extensive archival, written and iconographic documentation attests to the history and development of the Champagne story in the area, and to the minor changes to the visual qualities of the landscape. As was the case across the whole of Europe, phylloxera decimated the vines: the replanting of grafted, trellised vines, to replace ungrafted, bulk vines, did not lead to much visible change, although it does bear witness to this major crisis in wine-growing history. The hillsides of Hautvillers, Ay and Mareuil sur-Ay have exported their wine continuously for at least four centuries and testify to the vine-growing monoculture based on the oldest form of external trade in Champagne. The Champagne Houses have ensured the safeguarding of their architectural heritage, including the original decor and furniture, to a large extent, and they are still used for activities related to the Champagne enterprise.

Management and protection requirements

The property benefits from a comprehensive protection scheme, applying the tools provided by regulations, contracts, land management and heritage-listing, and backed by French and European legislation.

Other tools strengthen this scheme ; for example, designated *Aires de mise en Valeur de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine* (AVAP) areas, or zones protected as *secteur sauvegardé*. The boundaries of the official Champagne *appellation*, comprising over 300 towns and villages, has been defined as a "commitment zone" within the management system. Here, the local communities, the wine growing profession and other stakeholders undertake, on a voluntary basis, to conserve and enhance their landscape and heritage. This commitment zone constitutes the setting and surroundings of the property, and is also a coherent historical and geographical ensemble, embodied by the property and without which its value cannot be understood. It allows for the implementation of extended management and ensures actions taken to enhance the landscape, heritage and the environmental are consistent with one another.

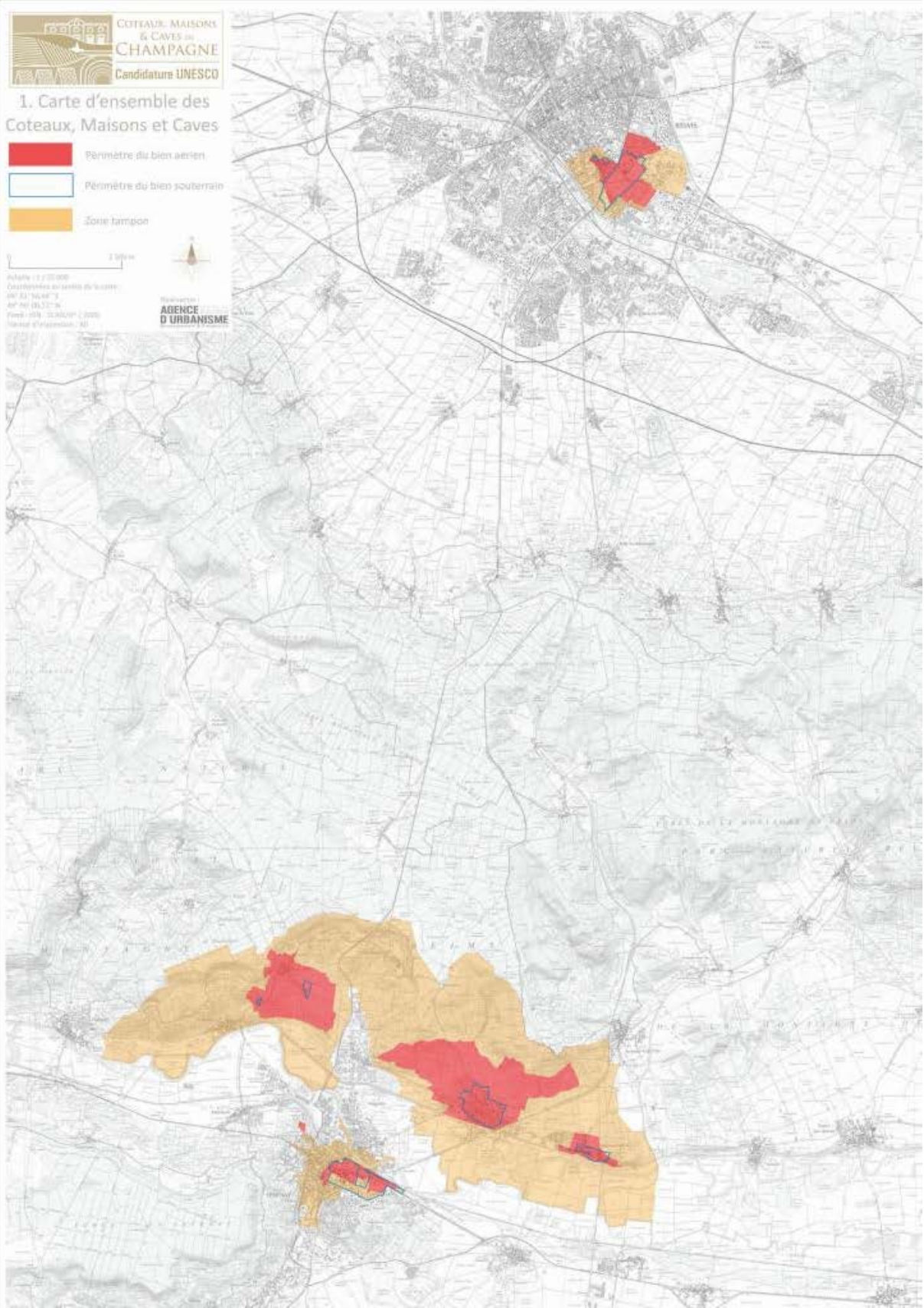
To ensure effective conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value, a management structure has been set up, bringing together public and private stakeholders, project managers and representative bodies. The management plan for the Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars is a tool for regional development as well as for protection. It incorporates the overall framework associated with the history of the Property and its territory as it is both conceived and experienced.

Additional recommendations

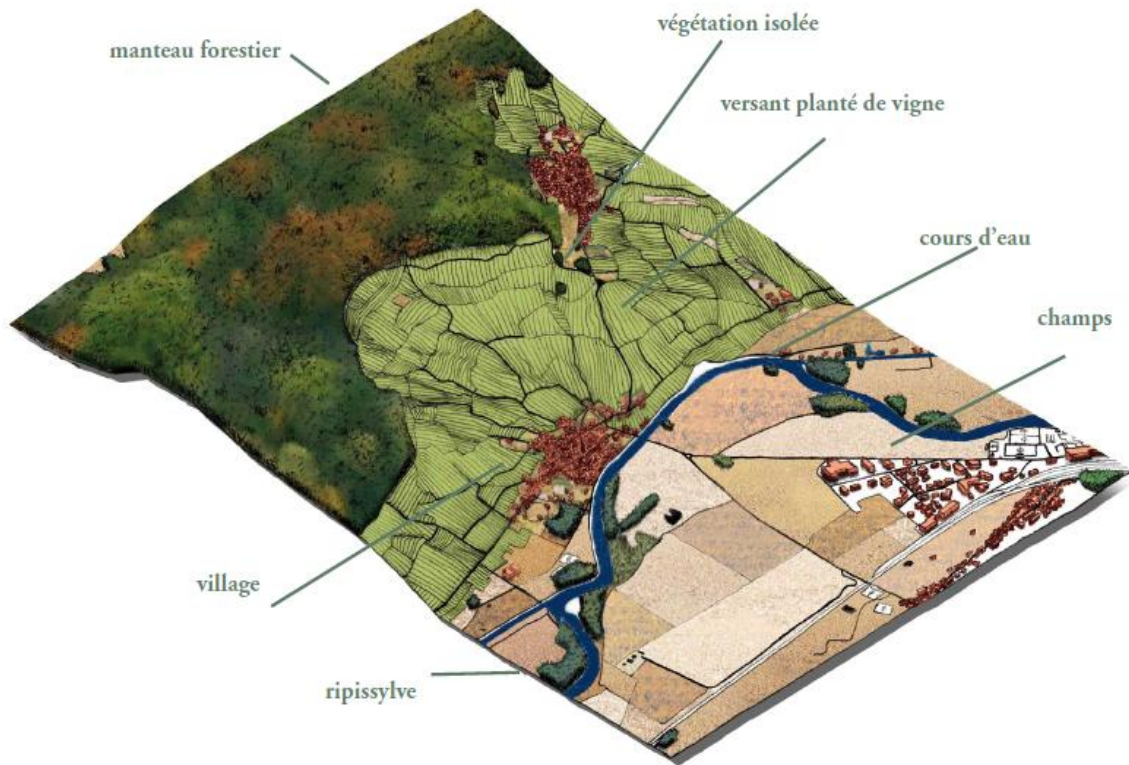
ICOMOS recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- Providing an updated calendar for the finalisation of the protection designations currently being established;

- Developing an Heritage Impact Assessment for the wind farm projects of Pocancy-Champigneul;
- Undertaking a comprehensive study on the structural behaviour of the quarries in the Saint-Nicaise Hill with a view to defining specific protection/preservation measures, including an appropriate buffer zone related to their specificity, an adequate and effective structural conservation strategy, and appropriate interventions;
- Selecting the most relevant indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation in relation to the state of conservation of the property and of its value, and define an appropriate periodicity of measurement for each of them;
- Establishing and implementing measures to protect or to restore the biodiversity of the landscape;
- Submitting to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2015 and 1 December 2016, a progress report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations ;
- Submitting to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2017, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session in 2018.
- Submitting all new projects located within the Mercier House estate at the south of the Place de la République to the World Heritage Committee for examination, in accordance with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



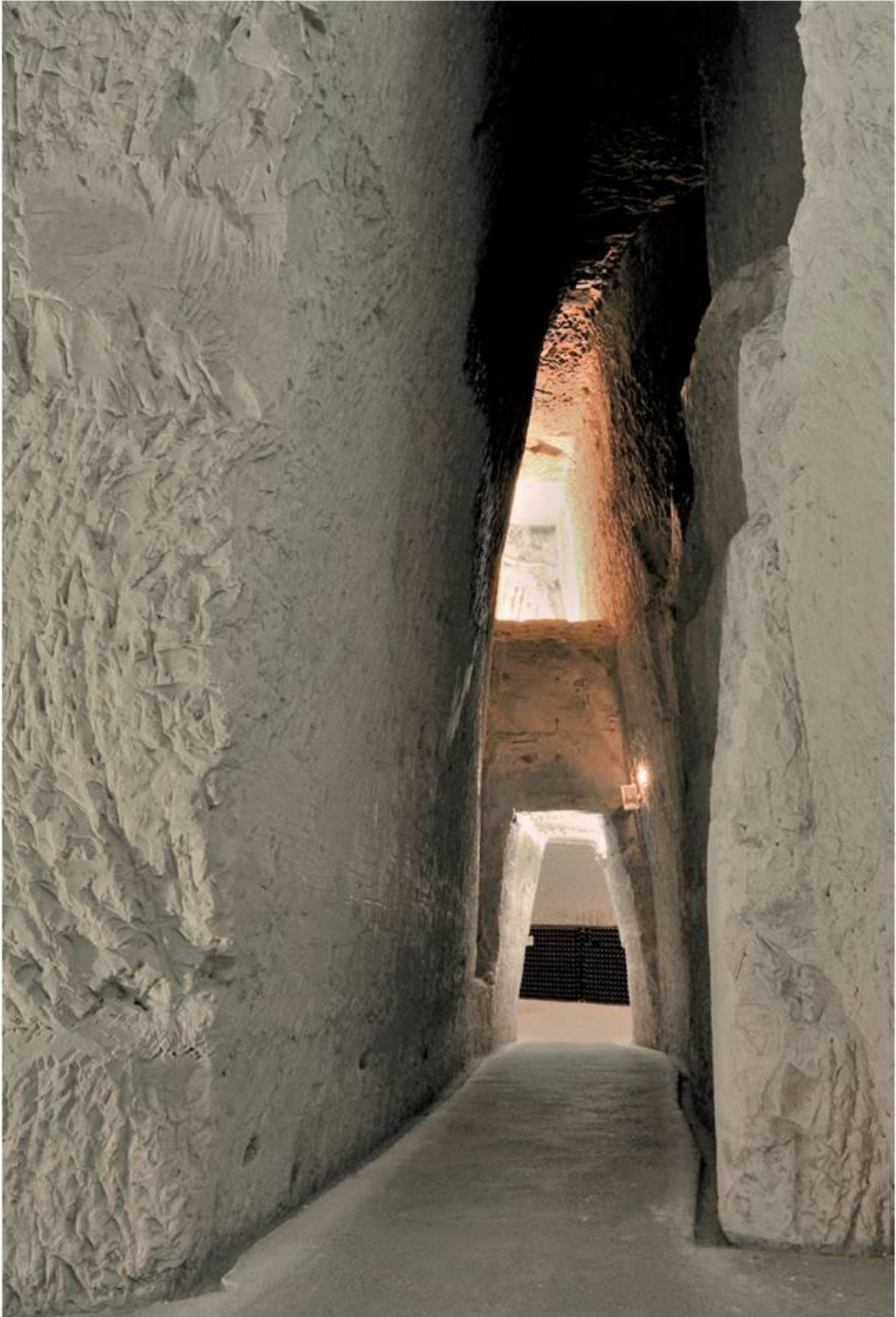
Plan representing the hillsides of Hautvilliers and Cumières



Panoramic view of the vineyard under the snow



Chalk quarry of Veuve-Clicquot House



Chalk quarry of Ruinart house