



Kingdom of the Netherlands

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Reference

2016B-029

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Subject: State of Conservation of the Van Nellefabriek, The Netherlands

Dear Dr Rössler, *dear Mechtild*,

In response to decision 39 COM 7B.81 adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session in Bonn and the letter of the World Heritage Centre of 27 July 2015 (reference CLT/HER/WHC/8131/NL/MA/PT), the Kingdom of the Netherlands hereby presents an updated report on the state of conservation of the Van Nellefabriek (ref. no. C 1441) and the implementation of the recommendations made by the World Heritage Committee.

Urban development: the municipal zoning plans

In the Netherlands, it is the municipality that develops and approves urban zoning plans based on the Spatial Planning Act (*Wet ruimtelijke ordening*). These plans have legal status and offer legal protection as a result.

The Van Nellefabriek complex is surrounded by a buffer zone of 89.3 hectares, intended primarily to safeguard uninterrupted views of and from the factory, and – given its transparent nature – vistas through the walls of its buildings. The buffer zone is covered by five different urban zoning plans, the most important being “Spaanse Polder”, into which the Van Nellefabriek is incorporated. This zoning plan became irrevocable on 3 May 2014, together with the “Spangen” zoning plan. The “Middelland-Het Nieuwe Westen” zoning plan (irrevocable since 7 August 2009), in effect at the time of the factory’s nomination, was considered sufficient to safeguard the OUV of the Van Nellefabriek. The zoning plan “Blijdorpsepolder” became irrevocable on 14 May 2016. The fifth and final zoning plan, “Overschie”, is scheduled to be adopted in the second quarter of 2017. Together, these five zoning plans protect the sightlines of the Van Nellefabriek.

Visitor facilities

As reported in our letter to the World Heritage Centre of 30 January 2016 (ref. no. 2015B-005), the parties cooperating in the Van Nellefabriek have studied the possibility of opening a visitor centre on the factory site. They have always assumed that an existing building on the site would be used for this purpose and never entertained the possibility of a new building for the centre.

When the nomination dossier was submitted in 2013, the porter's lodge at the entrance to the factory site was being considered as a visitor facility. However, it soon became clear that it would not suit large groups of visitors, for example those arriving by coach. Based on this experience, the parties then set up a visitor facility in the company restaurant, the Branderij in Koffie 2. There is now a spacious facility available there, with catering services. Panels have been installed telling the story of the Van Nellefabriek and its exceptional architectural significance, and display cases crafted especially for this location show artefacts related to the history of the complex and the production of coffee, tea and tobacco. The facility also adjoins a cinema where approximately sixty visitors can watch one of a total of six historical and recent films about the Van Nellefabriek (see attachment).

Guided tours of the factory complex also start in the Branderij. The intention is to extend and professionalise the visitor facility as it now exists there, under the auspices of the owner and the Van Nellefabriek World Heritage Foundation.

At the moment, the focus is on investigating whether the Branderij is in fact the most suitable facility for the planned visitor centre. Detailed plans will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for assessment.

In addition, an exhibition centre has been created in Tabak 7, where a joint exhibition with Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany is being held that will run until 2017 focusing on "Simultaneous Modernism". The exhibition offers a unique perspective on the modern world at the start of the twentieth century, one in which the Bauhaus and Van Nellefabriek World Heritage sites played and still play an exceptional role. There is also catering in this space and a modest shop for purchasing memorabilia. Follow-up exhibitions are being considered. The Van Nellefabriek World Heritage Foundation is responsible for planning the exhibition programme, which is still under development. At the moment the exhibition space is temporary, but the intention is to follow up the present exhibition with further exhibitions. The plans for 2017-2018 involve exhibitions related to the Van Nellefabriek, architecture and design, and Modernism. While the details of the new visitor centre are being worked out, the planners will explore the right way to link these two visitor facilities.

Admission tickets to the Van Nellefabriek can be purchased in three ways:

Online: group tours can be booked online with the Urban Guides organisation; individual tickets can be booked with VNF Ticketing Service

On location: tickets can be purchased on site from the Van Nellefabriek porter

Elsewhere in Rotterdam: visitors may purchase combination tickets giving them access to the "Simultaneous Modernism" exhibition, the Chabot Museum, and Sonneveld House in Rotterdam city centre.

A new signage system is being developed to help visitors find their way around the factory complex. The system provides information for visitors interested in the site's architecture and heritage value, as well as for business visitors. The intention is to install the new signage system in 2017.

Information billboards have already been installed along the motorways for visitors coming by car (see attachment). The improved way finding facilities and the studies concerning the future visitor centre have been made possible with the financial support of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. They are described in the new brochure *Werken aan werelderfgoed. Zes uitdagingen in de praktijk*, which the Agency will publish in December 2016.

Admission to the Van Nellefabriek is free on National Heritage Day [*Open Monumentendag*] which falls on the second weekend in September every year, when the complex welcomes an average of 2500 visitors. Major annual public events such as Art Rotterdam attract about 27,000 visitors to the complex. It is always possible for visitors to sign up for guided tours of the complex during public events.

Het Klokhuis is a popular children's television programme in the Netherlands. In 2016, it held its annual on-site event at the Van Nellefabriek. To mark this occasion, *Het Klokhuis* commenced a special series about World Heritage sites in the Netherlands, consisting of ten episodes. The kick-off was on 5 March 2016 in the Van Nellefabriek, with more than 6500 enthusiastic children and their parents participating. The series was accompanied by a special book covering the Netherlands' ten World Heritage sites. The book is now being used at many schools around the country.

The attachment with this letter illustrates some of the measures taken and how the factory is used to accommodate a wide variety of different visitors.

State of conservation of the property

The property's state of conservation is safeguarded by the Van Nellefabriek Management Committee, established in 2014. The Management Committee meets four times a year. All relevant stakeholders participate in the Management Committee: C.V. Van Nelle Fabriek (the owner), the City of Rotterdam, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), and the supervising architect. The last meeting of 2016 will take place on 6 December 2016; the meetings for 2017 are still being scheduled.

The Management Committee mainly deals with preliminary consultations regarding new activities and development and gives shape to the monitoring system for the World Heritage site, as required by the World Heritage Committee. The Management Committee works with a protocol based on the existing responsibilities and roles of the various parties. It assesses restoration plans by the owner, C.V. Van Nelle Fabriek, based on the recommendations of the City of Rotterdam's Heritage Office [*Bureau Monumenten*] and of the supervising architect. It also advises on various matters, for example a new lighting plan for the factory that involves preserving as many existing fittings as possible while replacing current light sources by energy-efficient LEDs.

The Management Committee also acts as a think-tank for future developments at the Van Nellefabriek. The restoration of the Branderij in Koffie 2 was recently completed. Possible future restoration projects, e.g. the Ketelhuis and the Technische Dienst, have the special attention of the Committee. All maintenance and restoration measures are discussed in the Management Committee, with preservation of the property's Outstanding Universal Value being the leading focus.

As stated in the Management Plan, the "railway zone" adjacent to the property is a potential development location. On one side of the tracks, a 1500 square metre commercial building,

consisting of 10 small units of 150 square metres each (including offices) is in preparation, based on a building permit dating from 2010. On the other side of the railway tracks is the 'Vreelust' area (part of the "Spangen" zoning plan) for which a study is being prepared that will include new buildings. The restrictions imposed in the zoning plan with respect to building height and sightlines will form the basis for these plans as well. This will guarantee that the property's OUV will not be damaged.

In summary:

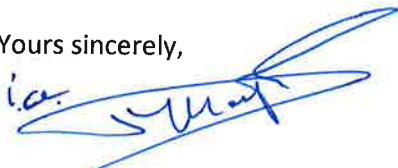
Five zoning plans impose clear-cut planning rules for the property itself and its buffer zone. They guarantee the preservation of the Van Nellefabriek's OUV. Four of these zoning plans are irrevocable, while the fifth plan will be adopted in the second quarter of 2017.

As yet, no final decision has been taken on the location and design of a permanent visitor centre. A provisional visitor facility has been set up in the Branderij, where visitors can be welcomed and where they have the opportunity to view multimedia presentations. A second location is available for temporary exhibitions. As soon as plans become available for the permanent visitor centre, they will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

The property's state of conservation is safeguarded by the Van Nellefabriek Management Committee, which meets four times a year. This system functions well. Development in the buffer zone is subject to the restrictions imposed by the zoning plans to protect the property's OUV.

Finally: we have no objection to your providing public access to the information contained in this report.

Yours sincerely,



Lionel Veer

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Permanent Delegate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to UNESCO

Attachment:

- Photographic Report. Appendix to SoC-report 20161129 concerning WHS Van Nellefabriek

c.c.:

ICOMOS Int.

Dutch National Commission for UNESCO

National Focal Point for World Heritage

Municipality of Rotterdam

C.V. Van Nelle Fabriek

World Heritage Site Van Nellefabriek

Photographic Report

Appendix to SoC-report 20161129



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NMF
Canub

BRUIN BORD VAN NELLEFABRIEK SO - versie 01 - 10 MAART 2015 - SCHAAL 1:15 (A4)
VARIANT-01

Design of the information billboards and guided tour on the complex





De Branderij, restaurant and visitor centre combined





Display cases and information panels





The exhibition floor





Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb of Rotterdam opens the Klokhuis annual on-site event in the Van Nellefabriek; 6500 children and their parents participate





Klokhuis presenter Nynke offers the education kit to Minister of Culture Jet Bussemaker, while young soldiers play a game at the Defence Line of Amsterdam





Building Amsterdam gable houses or eating cockles from the Wadden Sea





The Minister of Culture, the Minister Plenipotentiary of Curaçao and Nynke discuss, while the future generation enjoys the pleasures that World Heritage sites offer





The rhythm of Willemstad Curaçao is multi-cultural!





The Mayor of Beemster promoting 'her' World Heritage site and children from Kinderdijk interviewing Minister of Culture Jet Bussemaker

