

# DENMARK

## Roskilde Cathedral

### Brief description

Built in the 12th and 13th centuries, this was Scandinavia's first Gothic cathedral to be built of brick and it encouraged the spread of this style throughout northern Europe. It has been the mausoleum of the Danish royal family since the 15th century. Porches and side chapels were added up to the end of the 19th century. Thus it provides a clear overview of the development of European religious architecture.

### 1. Introduction

**Year(s) of Inscription** 1995

#### Agency responsible for site management

- The Congregational Council/Churchwarden  
Domkirkens kontor  
Domkirkestrædet 10  
4000 Roskilde  
e-mail: [post@roskildedomkirke.dk](mailto:post@roskildedomkirke.dk)

### 2. Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** C (ii), (iv)

#### Justification provided by the State Party

The State Party provided no formal justification

#### As provided in the ICOMOS evaluation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria ii and iv**:

Roskilde Cathedral is the earliest major ecclesiastical building in brick in northern Europe and had a profound influence on the spread of brick for this purpose over the whole region. Both in its form and in its setting it is an outstanding example of a north European cathedral complex, especially noteworthy for the successive architectural styles used in the ancillary chapels and porches added during the centuries during which it has served as the mausoleum of the Danish Royal Family.

#### Committee Decision

Bureau (July 1994): the Bureau deferred the examination of this nomination until a comparative study on religious brick Gothic architecture is completed.

1995 Session: the Committee decided to inscribe this property under criteria (ii) and (iv) as Roskilde Cathedral is in many ways the most important ecclesiastical building built of red brick in northern Europe and had a profound influence on the spread of brick for this purpose over the whole region.

The Committee drew the attention of the Danish authorities to the interest of the canonical and episcopal quarter which surrounds the Roskilde Cathedral and encouraged them to take all necessary steps for the safeguarding of this exceptional site.

- Statement of significance does not adequately define and reflect the outstanding universal value of the site
- No text proposed by State Party

#### Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: not adequate
- Buffer zone: buffer zone has been defined

#### Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained
- No foreseen changes

### 3. Protection

#### Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- The stipulations in the Act of the Preservation of Churches; the Local Preservation Plan no. 136 of 1982; the Preservation of Buildings Act
- The protection arrangements are considered highly effective

### 4. Management

#### Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction (entrance fee); religious use

#### Management/Administrative Body

- No steering group: the main responsibility for the management of the church property rests with its congregational council (Menighedsrådet). The setting up of a special "steering group" is not considered relevant in this case
- Management by the State Party; management under protective legislation
- No site manager
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national, regional, local
- The current management system is highly effective

## 5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: 1998
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Congregational council (Menighedsrådet)

## 6. Financial Resources

### Financial situation

- The church authorities account for the cost of maintenance and restoration of the cathedral, whereas all costs related to the royal chapels are defrayed directly by the state
- Extra funding has not been drawn from World Heritage status
- Funding available for the adequate management of the site: insufficient

## 7. Staffing Levels

- 10 staff

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Very good: conservation, management, interpretation; education; promotion; visitor management

## 8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- As a church in daily use priority is given to the religious purpose of the building. However, the international status as a World Heritage monument attracts an increasing number of visitors and foreign tourists to Roskilde Cathedral. Visitor management will be a major challenge in the future and the required expertise is not readily available within the church administration and management staff

## 9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 123,681 in 2004 – tendency first increasing then decreasing
- Visitor facilities: a cathedral museum was established in the Great Hall in 1995; information about the museum is scarce and only a limited number of visitors get a chance to find their way to the museum; the exhibition provides an informative and very apt introduction to the history of the cathedral in Danish; a separate brochure with an explanatory text is available in English and

German. There is no specific information addressing the youth or the children

- No tourism/visitor management plan

## 10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment, condition surveys, archaeological surveys
- The most recent publications about the cathedral provide a comprehensive description of the history of the building

## 11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- Not enough signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- No special events and exhibitions concerning the site's World Heritage status
- Web site available
- Local participation

## 12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

### Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

### Conservation interventions

- Not mentioned
- Present state of conservation: very good

### Threats and Risks to site

- Visitor/tourism pressure

## 13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme
- Measures taken/planned: annual surveys of building condition

## 14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: No specific benefits, but possibly a contribution to raising general awareness of cultural heritage values in the society
- Strength: apart from the regular up-keep and maintenance, a museum was established within the Cathedral in the same year as inscription
- Weaknesses of management: the potential conflict between the use as a church and a tourist destination

**Future actions:**

- The provision of improved visitor amenities outside the cathedral may provide a better possibility to address the visitor expectations, especially when the church is closed for visitors during time of religious service
- Activity does not require funding from the World Heritage Fund