

# DENMARK

## Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church

### Brief description

The Jelling burial mounds and one of the runic stones are striking examples of pagan Nordic culture, while the other runic stone and the church illustrate the Christianization of the Danish people towards the middle of the 10th century.

### 1. Introduction

**Year(s) of Inscription** 1994

#### Agency responsible for site management

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website: [www.vejle.dk](http://www.vejle.dk)
- Kongernes Jelling  
Gormsgade 23  
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e-mail: [irb@vejle.dk](mailto:irb@vejle.dk)  
website: <http://www.kongernesjelling.dk/>

### 2. Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** C (iii)

#### Justification provided by the State Party

The State Party provided no formal justification

#### As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criterion iii**:

**Criterion iii:** the Jelling complex, and especially the pagan burial mounds and the two runic stones, are outstanding examples of the pagan Nordic culture.

#### Committee Decision

The Committee made no statement

- Statement of significance as stated by ICOMOS 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: a buffer zone has been defined
- An extension of the buffer zone is being considered

### Status of Authenticity/Integrity

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

### 3. Protection

#### Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- The Protection of Nature Act; Local Plan no. 104 of 1989; Special Preservation Order from 1947
- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

#### Actions proposed:

- Follow up the General Plan for the property originating from 1983 with a management plan
- Action to be taken at national level

### 4. Management

#### Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction (entrance fee), national park (or other national protected area), religious use

#### Management/Administrative Body

- No steering group: ad hoc committee for the establishment of a visitor's centre is still functioning, but may be dissolved as soon as an appropriate alternative organisation has been established
- Management by the State Party; management under protective legislation; management under traditional protective measures or customary law; consensual management; management of the heritage values of the property is distributed at local, regional and national level with operational responsibility created through an established practice that is generally accepted by the involved stakeholders
- 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 sufficiently effective

### 5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: 1982

- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: the Cultural Heritage Agency (Kulturarvsstyrelsen), Ministry of Culture, is the responsible body on application of the World Heritage Convention. Other shareholders include the Municipality, the County, the National Museum, the visitor's centre (Kongernes Jelling) and the Congregational Council

## 6. Financial Resources

### Financial situation

- The State, the Municipality, the County, the church authorities and private foundations
- Extra funding has not been drawn from World Heritage status
- Funding available for the adequate management of the site: sufficient

## 7. Staffing Levels

- 5 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

- The National Museum specialized conservation departments have all relevant expertise readily available for consultations

## 9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: not provided
- Visitor facilities: "Kongernes Jelling » visitor's centre
- No tourism/visitor management plan

## 10. Scientific Studies

- Archaeological surveys
- The numerous research and documentation has been included in the exhibition set up in the visitor's centre "Kongernes Jelling"

## 11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- Not enough signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses; local authorities
- No special events and exhibitions concerning the site's World Heritage status
- Web site available
- No local participation

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

### Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

### Conservation interventions

- Construction of a new stone wall around the churchyard on the south and east; demolition of one of the remaining houses disturbing the view to the mounts; a new interpretation centre and museum 'Kongernes Jelling' was completed in 2000; the interior of the church was completely refurbished and reconditioned; the tile roofing on the church porch has been renewed in lead; an improvement scheme of the road circumventing the site to the South and West is under execution and completion is expected in June 2004; a new signboard scheme is under preparation
- Present state of conservation: good

### Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure; visitor/tourism pressure; agricultural/forestry regimes
- Specific issues: new deep ploughing of the land immediately to the north of the site may imply a threat to archaeological remains not yet properly investigated. This area is under a Special Preservation Order protecting the view from the mounds, but the area needs additional protection

## 13. Monitoring

- No monitoring programme
- Measures taken/planned: the actual condition of the Runic Stones is not known and a scientific investigation is required in order to establish key indicators for the rate of possible disintegrating of the stone surface

#### **14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions**

- Main benefits of WH status: perhaps the generation of increased awareness of cultural heritage values in the environment and the possible impact on heritage preservation generally
- Strengths: construction of a new stone wall around the churchyard on the south and east; Demolition of one of the remaining houses disturbing the view to the mounds; a new interpretation centre and museum “Kongernes Jelling” was completed in 2000; the interior of the church was completely refurbished and reconditioned; the tile roofing on the church porch has been renewed in lead; an improvement scheme of the road circumventing the site to the South and West is under execution and completion is expected in June 2004; a new signboard scheme is under preparation
- Weaknesses of management: compared to the monumental and scenic attractions offered by many World Heritage sites, the Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and the Church may appear rather humble to the ordinary visitor, and expectations may easily be frustrated, if the intangible historic importance of the site is not properly explained and communicated. The entrance fee to the visitor centre is relative high and may be prohibitive to many visitors, especially families, who will not receive appropriate guidance to the site

#### **Future actions:**

- It is recommended that the mandate of the visitor’s centre be revised and the status as a private foundation be changed in favor of a public museum with a direct responsibility for the management and presentation of the site
- Activity does not require funding from the World Heritage Fund