

GERMANY

Völklingen Ironworks

Brief description

The ironworks, which cover some 6 ha, dominate the city of Völklingen. Although they have recently gone out of production, they are the only intact example, in the whole of western Europe and North America, of an integrated ironworks that was built and equipped in the 19th and 20th centuries and has remained intact.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription **1994**

Agency responsible for site management

- Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH
Rathausstr. 75-79
D - 66333 Völklingen
e-mail: mail@voelklinger-huette.org
website: www.voelklinger-huette.de

2. Statement of Significance

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

Justification provided by the State Party

The Völklingen ironworks is a unique monument to the technological history and industrial culture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It provides an unusually complete illustration of a large-plant pig iron production process which is of major historical interest. The works is a synonym for, and a symbol of, human achievement during the first and second industrial revolutions. It is a "cathedral" of the industrial age. The Völklingen ironworks is a unique monument to pig iron production in Western Europe. As far as is known, no other historical blast-furnace complex has survived which demonstrates the entire process of pig-iron production in the same way, with the same degree of authenticity and completeness, and underlined by such a series of technological milestones in innovative engineering. The Völklingen ironworks monument is able to illustrate the industrial history of the nineteenth century in general, and of the transnational Saar-Lor-Lux industrial region at the heart of Europe in particular.

At the same time, the works is the central symbol of Saarland industry.

The plant which has survived in Völklingen embodies a world of industrial work and production which has disappeared elsewhere in the wake of subsequent technological development and continuous modernization. The Völklingen ironworks is to be preserved as an industrial museum and developed as a research facility for iron and steel and for environmental problems. The planned museum park will be able to demonstrate all the stages in the pig-iron production of a former age. All areas of the iron industry - from the ore bunker to the coking plant (raw materials preparation and storage), from the suspended conveyor system, blast-furnace complex, dry gas purification plant, blowing engine hall (pig-iron production) to the historical rolling mill engine - can be experienced directly. In the long term the facilities of the sintering plant and the charge bunker offer accommodation for the establishment of a European iron and steel museum.

To sum up: The reasons for the outstanding universal value of the Völklingen ironworks lie in its unique completeness and originality. Technological milestones like the dry gas purification plant, which was the first of its kind on such a large scale, the suspended conveyor system (the largest of its kind) and the pioneering sintering plant are all integral parts of a complex nineteenth and twentieth-century pig-iron production works which is concentrated into a particularly small area. The criteria I, II, III of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage are thus met.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

Völklingen is the only integrated ironworks of the 19th and 20th centuries that went out of production in the recent past to be preserved intact in Western Europe or North America. Several comparable installations are still in production, or have recently ceased operations, in the countries of central and Eastern Europe, but almost nothing is known of any eventual preservation projects.

On the advice of TICCIH, which is currently preparing a list of the most important metallurgical industry monuments in the world, ICOMOS consulted Dr Barrie Trinder (Birmingham University, UK), the leading expert in this field. Dr Trinder commented that "This is a spectacular site, which certainly fulfils the historical criteria for a World Heritage Site on the grounds of its technological integrity. I know of no other site in the west where a complete blast-furnace of this generation still

stands with all of its subsidiary plant.” Subsequent to the receipt of Dr Trinder’s report, ICOMOS received the first list of 28 industrial monuments considered by TICCIH to be of “outstanding universal significance” on which the Völklingen ironworks figured.

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

Criterion ii: Several important technological innovations in the production of pig iron were developed or first applied successfully on an industrial scale at Völklingen ironworks and are now in universal use throughout the world.

Criterion iv: The Völklingen ironworks is an outstanding example of an integrated pig-iron production plant of the type which dominated this industry in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Committee Decision

The Committee made no statement.

- Proposal for name change has been made by State Party: World Cultural Heritage site Völklinger Hütte

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate
- Buffer zone: no buffer zone has been defined
- State Department of Saarland for Historical Monuments in cooperation with the Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte -Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH and Saarstahl AG are aiming at defining a buffer zone - based on the compilation of an inventory of the surrounding area

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- No special administration or legislation
- Change in the legal position concerning ownership: in 1999, the Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH acquired and became the owner of the entire site
- The protection arrangements are considered highly effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, visitor exhibition and event centre for art and industrial culture

Management/Administrative Body

- Steering group: Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH
- Formally constituted
- Overall management system: management under protective legislation
- Site manager (responsibilities have been added to an existing job)
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: other (Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte, Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH)
- Current management system is highly effective

5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented
- Implementation commenced: January 1999
- The management plan comprises an outline for the preservation and development of the site. The concept is an additive benefit system which safeguards the authenticity of the place as a cultural management site with a series of exhibitions and visitor programs on a national and international basis
- Very effective
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte - Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- Republic of Germany State (Saarland) EU - Target II - ERDF funds DSD until 2002
- Bi-lateral cooperation
- Sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 80

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

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

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

- Working group of industrial culture regions; UNESCO World Heritage sites Germany e.V.; Association of state historical monument restorers, Berlin; State Department for Historical Monuments, Saarbrücken; ICOMOS Germany; Numerous Scientific institutions; Universities

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 202,057 (ticket sales), tendency increasing
- Visitor facilities: shop, exhibition hall, visitor centre, guided tours, trail
- Visitor needs: adequate
- No tourism/visitor management plan

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment, studies related to the value of the site, monitoring exercises, impact of World Heritage designation, visitor management
- Studies used for the assessment of the age and value of the components and for all preservation measures. The mapping-out of damaged areas and the condition reports form the basis for measures taken to renovate the site and render it safe for visitors. Within the outline plan, a concept was developed, the aim of which was to make the outdoor areas a place where events could be held against an industrial-historical backdrop

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities
- Special events; two exhibitions per year dedicated to the World Heritage Site; concerts, fireworks and performances
- Web site available

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- Numerous conservation and restoration works (not specified in report but to be annexed to publication)
- Present state of conservation: adequate

Threats and Risks to site

- Environmental pressure, site partly jeopardized through inadequate maintenance facilities
- Specific issues if mentioned: not all of the area of the World Cultural Heritage site is in the possession of the governing body Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte – Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH (or of the Federal State of Saarland). No.1 power station and one half of no. 3 dry gas purification plant continue to belong to Saarstahl AG. For this reason the necessary maintenance and/or restoration of the buildings by the Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte – Europäisches Zentrum für Kunst und Industriekultur GmbH is not possible. No. 1 power station is in urgent need of restoration

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme
- Measures taken: periodic inspections of those parts of the site which are not in use are carried out on foot, with the aim of maintaining their ability to be inspected. Furthermore, as part of the administrative responsibilities of the World Cultural Heritage site, condition reports are submitted in accordance with UNESCO's 'Operational Guidelines'. The aim of this is the development of a modular, systematic maintenance plan based on the abovementioned monitoring

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of World Heritage status: conservation, economic, management
- Weaknesses of management: the site continues to be in much need of restoration