

Executive Summary

STATE PARTY

The Kingdom of Belgium and the Kingdom of the Netherlands

STATE, PROVINCE OR REGION

The Colonies of Benevolence are located in the Belgian province of Antwerp, which is part of the Flemish Region and the Dutch provinces of Drenthe and Fryslân.

NAME OF PROPERTY

‘Colonies of Benevolence’

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES TO THE NEAREST SECOND

Component part A Frederiksoord-Wilhelminaoord : N 52°51'26.236" – E 6°10'1.805" Church

Component part B Wortel : N 51°24'10.2" – E 4°49'27.5" Central Crossroads

Component part C Veenhuizen : N 53°2'31.59" - E 6°23'29.72" Second Institution

TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY

The nominated World Heritage site consists of three component parts situated within the historical areas of reclamation and cultivation of the former Colonies of Benevolence. The boundaries of the component parts encompass the areas that testify to the unique integrated landscape typologies of the Colonies, with attributes dating back to the flourishing period of the Colonies of Benevolence (1818-1918).

No specific buffer zones have been defined, as the possible threats (see chapter 4B) are covered by the existing spatial regimes in the surrounding areas.

MAPS OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY

M1.3, M1.4, M1.5

CRITERIA UNDER WHICH PROPERTY IS NOMINATED

ii iv

DRAFT STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE**Brief synthesis**

The Colonies of Benevolence, an Enlightenment experiment in social reform, demonstrated an innovative, highly influential model of pauper relief and of settler colonialism – the agricultural domestic colony.

The Colonies of Benevolence created a highly functional landscape out of isolated peat and heath wastelands through the domestic colonisation of paupers. In the process, colonists would become morally reformed ideal citizens, adding to the nation's wealth and integrating marginal territories in emergent nation states. Over a seven-year period, almost 80 square kilometres of wastelands, domestic territory considered unfit for settlement, were reclaimed in Colonies in present-day Belgium and the Netherlands. The process of transforming its poorest landscapes and citizens through a utopian process of social engineering went on until well into the 20th century.

To implement this experiment, a panoptic disciplinary system for pauper settlers was developed, that resulted in a basic transformation of penal systems. The innovative disciplinary system adopted was to rehabilitate and morally transform ‘degenerate’ paupers into ideal productive citizens. This ‘panoptic’ disciplinary system is manifested in the organisation of the landscape that settlers had to create for their own support. This model fostered important associated sciences (including criminology, penology, physical anthropology and agronomy) as manifested in on-site laboratories and educational institutions.

The experiment has its foundation in the first half of the 19th century. Changes that took place later on in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century continued and built upon the original ideas of farming colonies, thus reinforcing the original Colony landscapes rather than expunging them.

The Dutch model of ‘domestic colonies’ soon spread to most other European nations, but particularly to France and Germany, where it was

adapted for use with other marginalised sectors of the population such as juvenile delinquents, psychiatric patients and the disabled. Consequently, the major social significance of the Colonies of Benevolence is to be found in their continuing impact on almost all forms of custodial care practised in Europe.

After 1918, social legislation came into being. The Colonies of Benevolence lost their relevance and evolved into 'normal' villages and areas with prisons and institutions for custodial care.

The proposed World Heritage property consists of a transnational series of 4 former Colonies of Benevolence in three component parts: Frederiksoord-Wilhelminaoord, Wortel and Veenhuizen. These are the Colonies where the original cultural landscape has been preserved and can be understood best.

All component parts consist of a combination of relict landscape layers which together illustrate the flourishing period of the Colony model.

Component part A presents former free Colonies (Frederiksoord, Wilhelminaoord), component part B a hybrid Colony (Wortel, free evolved into unfree) and component part C an unfree Colony (Veenhuizen). The characteristic layouts associated with the 'free' or 'unfree' status as presented by relict landscape layers are clearly recognisable in all areas. The attributes of the Colonies of Benevolence conveying their Outstanding Universal Value are:

The basic typology:

The characteristic landscape typologies of the Colonies of Benevolence in their flourishing period – with representative relict landscape layers illustrating the functional and spatial coherence.

The orthogonal grid:

All individual elements of the orthogonal grid: planted roads, waterways, the measurement system applied and the place of the buildings in the grid.

Representative buildings and planting:

Individual buildings, ensembles and planting which are representative of this panoptic model of an agricultural colony.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CRITERIA

The cultural landscapes of the Colonies of Benevolence are nominated on the basis of the criteria (ii) and (iv)

Criterion (ii)

To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.

The Colonies of Benevolence bear testimony to an exceptional and nationwide Enlightenment experiment in social reform, through a system of large agricultural home colonies. They proposed a model of social engineering based upon the notion of 'productive labour', with the aim of transforming poor people into 'industrious' citizens and uncultivated 'wastelands' into productive land. In addition to work, education and moral upliftment were considered essential contributions to the aim of transforming poor people into self-reliant citizens.

The Colonies of Benevolence were developed as systematic self-sustaining agricultural settlements with state-of-the-art social facilities. As such, the Colonies of Benevolence pioneered the domestic colony model, attracting considerable international attention. For more than a century, they exerted an influence on various types of custodial care in Western Europe and beyond.

Criterion (iv)

To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The Colonies of Benevolence are an extraordinary series of planned panoptic disciplinary settlements, meant for temporary segregation of able-bodied poor in a closed agricultural environment with permanent supervision. Deliberately cultivated as 'islands' in remote domestic heath and peatland areas, the Colonies implemented the ideas of a panoptic institution for the poor in their functional and spatial organisation.

The distinctive landscape organisation aimed to reinforce the disciplinary order and economic health of the Colonies. The strict hierarchical structure and dimensioning, with the carefully considered landscape layout and design, was instrumental in the intended influencing of the behaviour of the inhabitants, who were supposed to become ‘industrious’ and ‘rational’. In a context of dominant economic liberalism, the Colonies of Benevolence were an early attempt to influence the labour market and a precursor of later social intervention policies of governments in the context of employment.

The Colonies of Benevolence are an outstanding example of a landscape design that represents an agricultural home colony with a social aim. The landscape patterns reflect the original character of the different types of Colonies and their subsequent evolution, and illustrate the extent, the ambition and the evolution of this social experiment in its flourishing period (1818-1918).

Statement of integrity

The proposed World Heritage property consists of a transnational series of four former Colonies of Benevolence in three component parts:

Frederiksoord-Wilhelminaoord (and Vierdeparten), Veenhuizen, and Wortel. These are the Colonies where the original cultural landscape has been preserved and can best be understood.

All component parts consist of a combination of relict landscape layers which together illustrate the flourishing period of the Colony model.

Component part A presents former free Colonies (Frederiksoord, Wilhelminaoord), component part B a hybrid Colony (Wortel, free evolved into unfree) and component part C an unfree Colony (Veenhuizen). The characteristic layouts associated with the ‘free’ or ‘unfree’ status as presented by relict landscape layers are clearly recognisable in all areas.

Until today, the basic principles and the objective of the Colonies of Benevolence remain recognisable in the orthogonally structured landscape with avenues, meadows, fields and forests, and with the characteristic houses, farms, institutions,

churches, schools and industrial buildings. Particularly the series as a whole is distinctive and unique. The pattern of the buildings is also still present. All the forms of cultivation and the spatial interpretation of the organisational models (free and unfree Colonies) are still there to be found as the Society of Benevolence originally conceived them. The boundaries, the structure and the layout of the landscape have remained preserved.

In the course of more than a century, the Colony landscape has been enriched. The current buildings were built partly by the Society of Benevolence, partly by the Belgian and Dutch governments (unfree Colonies). Through all the phases changes occurred, frequently related and sometimes not related to the spirit of the Colonies. Their visual integrity has in some respects suffered from the effects of privatisation and temporary neglect. Currently this is no longer the case.

Adequate adaptive re-use takes place in unoccupied buildings, the importance of the heritage is fully recognised by the government and the population, and there is no pressure of urbanisation in the surrounding areas.

Statement of authenticity

The distinctive structure of the cultural landscape, the existing buildings and the archaeological sites authentically and credibly tell the story of the Colonies of Benevolence, from their inception to the present day. The series as a whole provides an accurate picture of the significance of the social experiment initiated by the Society of Benevolence.

The use of the Colonies for agriculture and the social objectives formulated by the Society of Benevolence over two centuries were mainly continued and supplemented with new functions, which redefined the original social significance of the Colonies, in the spirit of the Colonies and adapted to changing times.

The connecting factor is not one single ‘authentic’ period, but the landscape structure which has developed in two determining phases: the first phase of the creation (1818-1859), the phase of the

further evolution, the phase of state institutions and privatisation (1860-1918).

Protection and management requirements

Nationally, the Colonies of Benevolence are protected at the highest possible level: in the Netherlands mainly as ‘protected villagescape’ and in Belgium as ‘protected cultural heritage landscape’. In both countries, representative buildings have been granted monument status or are protected within the structure.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, both in Belgium and in the Netherlands and based on a long-term vision, large-scale investments have been made in the preservation and rehabilitation of the structure of the landscape and the buildings. Since 2000, extensive restorations of structures and buildings have taken place. In this context, much attention is paid to sustainable exploitation and local activities, in accordance with the cultural heritage essence of the areas. The individual territories receive recognition at European level (Europa Nostra, Eden Award).

Management focuses on: protection, preservation, sustainable maintenance and operation; appropriate incorporation of new developments; dissemination of the value of the proposed World Heritage site to society, linked to the universal and timeless theme of poverty reduction and the issue of the makeability of man and landscape (Enlightenment).

The management of the prospective World Heritage site involves owners, users and scientists in the development and implementation of site management and the safeguarding of the quality of the heritage.

Common coordination and direction are exercised in the management of the total of the seven Colonies. The province of Drenthe (the Netherlands) and Kempens Landschap (on behalf of the Province of Antwerp, Belgium), act as Site holders, and operate under the direction of a transnational steering group.

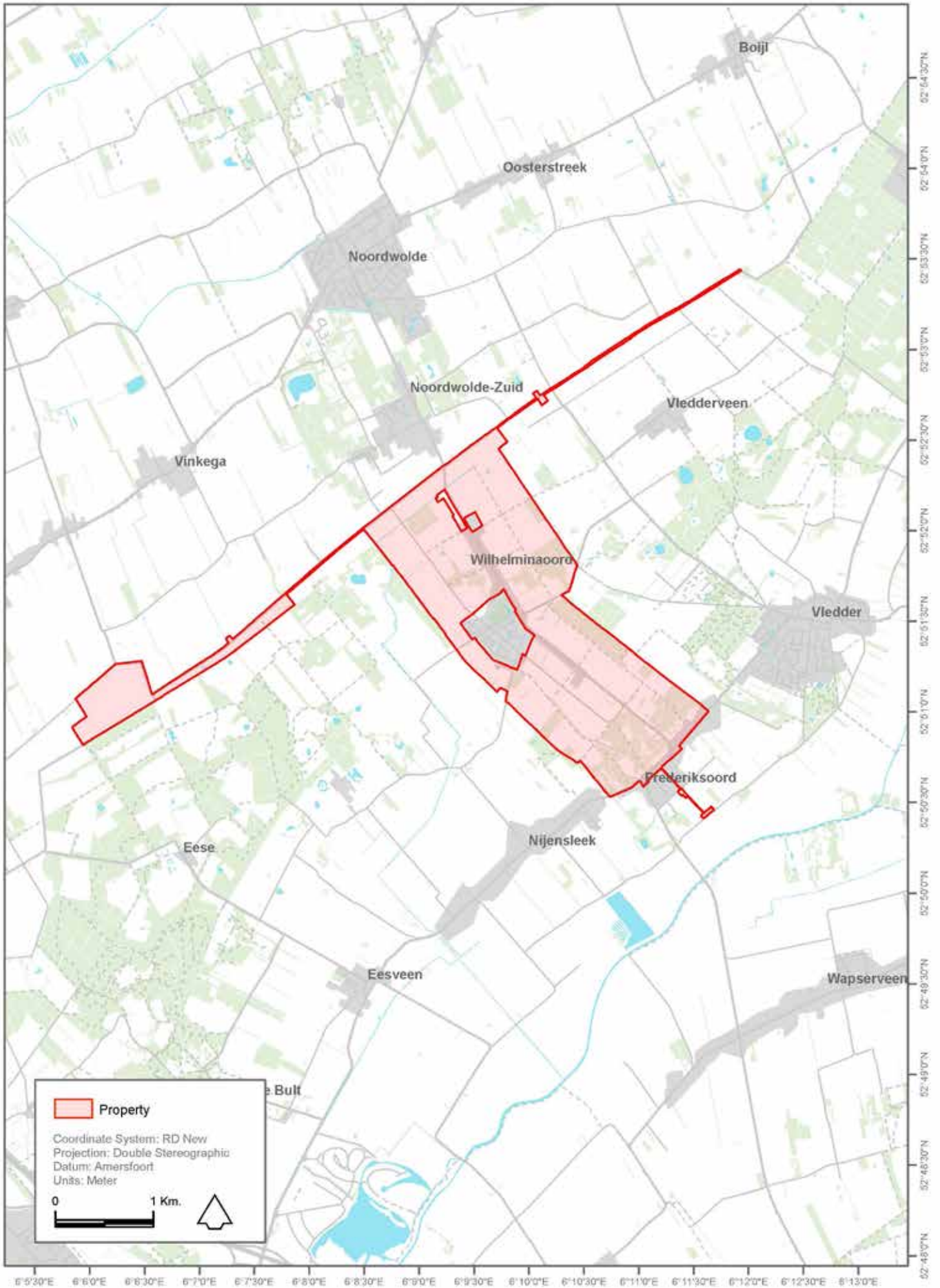
Long-term expectations and management

The main challenge for the Colonies of Benevolence is to preserve the quality of life in the areas and to seek and incorporate appropriate economic incentives which are required for the preservation. The Colonies are situated in relatively sparsely populated areas, which is why developments in the field of housing, industry, agriculture and infrastructure are small scale and gradual. The main potential challenges for the management are changing use of land influencing the scale and structure of the landscape, and the change in the use of buildings by the Judiciary. The management plan includes measures to control future developments and safeguard the preservation of the OUV. The existing infrastructure is sufficiently generous to allow for the expected increase in the number of tourists and visitors.

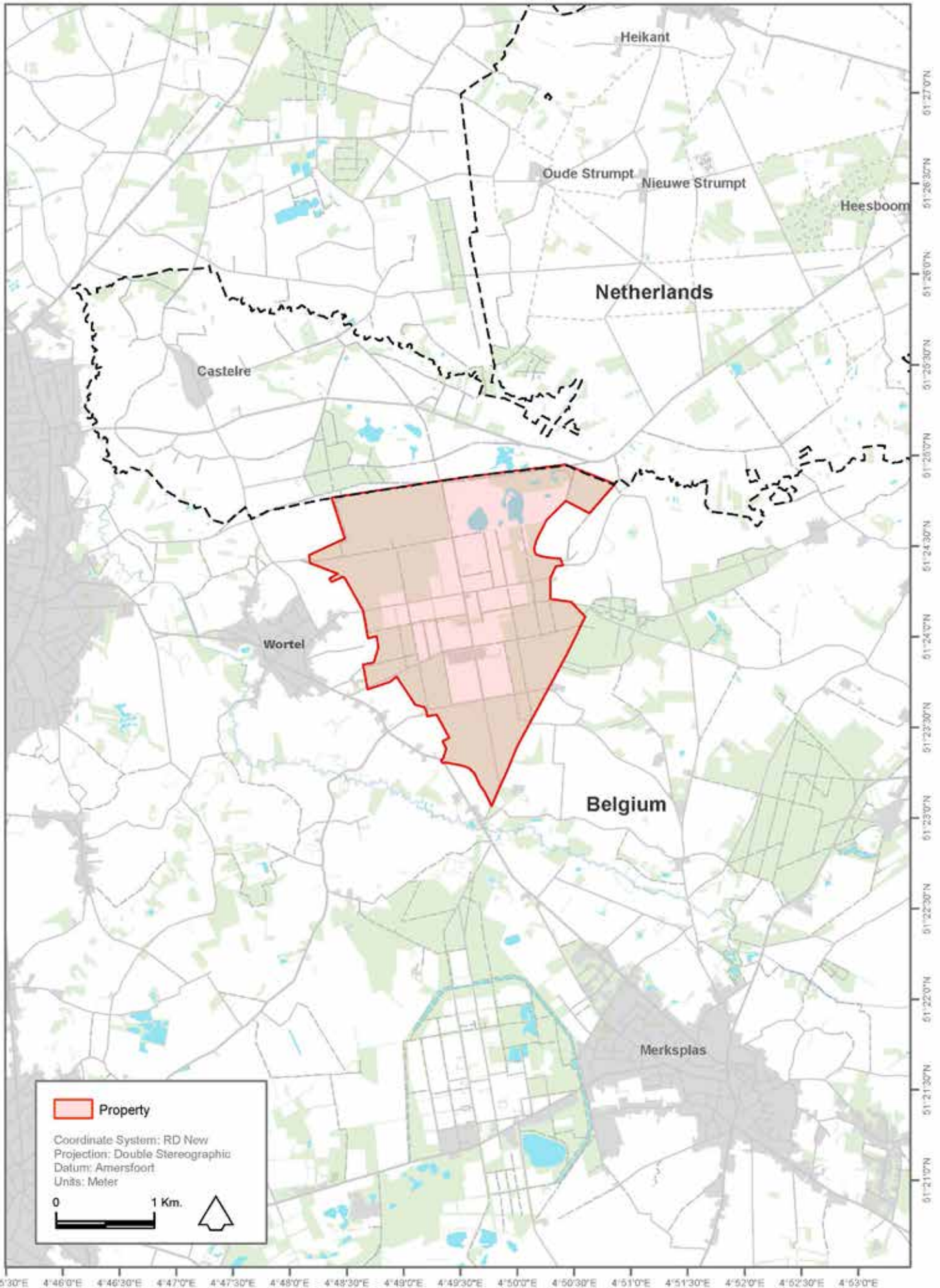
NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION OF OFFICIAL LOCAL INSTITUTION/AGENCY

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M1.3 IDENTIFICATION
COMPONENT PART A: FREDERIKSOORD-WILHELMINAORD
1:50.000



M1.4 IDENTIFICATION
COMPONENT PART B: WORTEL
1:50.000



M1.5 IDENTIFICATION
COMPONENT PART C: VEENHUIZEN
1:50.000

