

## **Report on the State of Conservation (SOC) of the Property and the Implementation of Decision 44 COM 8B.18**

### **Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt (Germany) (No 1614)**

#### **1. Executive Summary of the report**

ad) 2.a) The Visitor Centre will be moved outside the boundaries of the property into the buffer zone and the building mass will be reduced. The planning architectural office has received specifications that follow ICOMOS' recommendations and is preparing a new design. The Visitor Centre will not have a negative impact on the integrity of the property and its attributes and will keep the sightlines and visual connections (close and distant views from and to the property) defined in the management plan clear.

ad 2.b) Development Plan O 32 will be amended to ensure the new location for the Visitor Centre.

ad 2.c) The pressure from vehicular traffic on the property has been reduced to preclude any negative impact on the integrity of the property. The new location of the Visitor Centre has no impact on vehicular traffic. Parking spaces within the property have been eliminated and controlled parking has been introduced in the buffer zone. Alexandraweg has been turned into a pedestrian zone. A shuttle bus connects the property with the city centre, the Main Station and East Station. Outside the property, a drop-off-area for coaches has been laid out at East Station. Pedestrians are guided to the property by a guidance system.

ad 3: Neither in the City of Darmstadt nor in the State of Hesse are there any plans or developments that could have a negative impact on the state of conservation and the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

ad 4: No measures in conformity with § 172 of the Operational Guidelines are planned.

#### **2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee**

*1. Having examined Documents WHC/21/44.COM/8B and WHC/21/44.COM/INF.8B1*

*2. Inscribes Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Germany, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (ii) and (iv)*

*3. Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:  
Brief synthesis*

Regarding 1., 2., and 3. no answer required.

*4. Recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:*

*a) Developing a conservation management plan to guarantee a consistent conservation approach and strategy for all buildings of the property,*

*b) Strengthening the link between the private owners and conservation services,*

*c) Ensuring an appropriate balance between development and conservation activities in budget allocations,*

*d) Including in the interpretation and presentation*

The City of Darmstadt and the State of Hesse take note of the recommendations and consider them in their daily work.

*5. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2022 an updated report on the relocation of the proposed visitor centre outside the boundaries of the property, including the new project developed for the visitor centre, the new approved building plan O 32 and detailed information on the impact of vehicular traffic on sightlines for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session.*

It is the declared aim of the City of Darmstadt and the State of Hesse to implement the requirements formulated by the World Heritage Committee in its 44th session. The associated requirements and tasks have been agreed with the advisory bodies, communicated in an interagency process, and form the basis of all further planning processes.

**a) New project developed for the visitor centre**

The City of Darmstadt is continuing to pursue the plans for the new location of the Visitor Centre in the buffer zone in coordination with the Hessian State Office for Monuments and Sites and the architectural office Marte.Marte. Further coordination and on-site meetings were held and parameters for the design at the new location were specified. The following specifications ensure that the integrity of the property is maintained:

The new location for the Visitor Centre is clearly set apart from the property and lies within the buffer zone. The building mass will be reduced and the structure will blend in with the vegetation and the sloping topography of the eastern slope. The design preserves the visual integrity and the attributes and values that express the Outstanding Universal Value; the sightlines and visual connections (close and distant views from and to the property) mapped in the management plan will not be compromised; the intended open space design will strengthen the visual connections to the Studio Building [1914] with the Studio Garden.

As soon as more concrete plans are available, the World Heritage Centre will be informed about further results.

**b) Building plan O 32**

In order to be able to realise the construction of the Visitor Centre at the new location, development plan O 32 will be amended; this will be the legal basis for the new planning of the Visitor Centre.

**c) Impact of vehicular traffic on sightlines**

In order to preclude negative and visual impacts by vehicular traffic on the integrity of the property and to reduce the pressure, the City of Darmstadt reacted immediately:

The new location of the Visitor Centre will have no impact on vehicular traffic, no parking spaces are planned at the property, and existing parking spaces in Olbrichweg have already been eliminated. The visual connection and the visual interrelation of the ensemble in the Olbrichweg area can once again be experienced. The Visitor Centre cannot be accessed directly by motorised private transport or coaches.

Since the recognition of the "Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt" as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a shuttle bus service has been installed between the city centre, the Main Station, East Station, and the property. This allows good accessibility for visitors arriving by public transport, getting off the coach at East Station, or parking in nearby multi-storey car parks. Additional parking areas are planned for coaches in the north of the city.

The East Station will become the place of arrival that will provide orientation to visitors. A signage system will ensure pedestrian access to the property and guide the flow of visitors.

In addition, in 2021 the City of Darmstadt introduced controlled parking in the entire area around the "Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt". Parking ticket machines and high parking fees will reduce vehicular traffic. Residents of the neighbourhood can purchase an annual resident parking permit and thus continue to park in designated areas. Exceptions are Alexandraweg in the area of the property and parts of Olbrichweg, where parking spaces have already been eliminated. Alexandraweg has become a pedestrian zone, which means that the visual connections and the overall concept of the "Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt" can be experienced again in the area of the artists' houses and the Ernst Ludwig House.

### **3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value**

The City of Darmstadt and the State of Hesse have not identified any measures that could have a negative impact on the state of conservation and the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

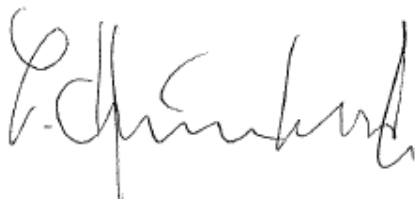
### **4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.**

No measures are planned that require reporting in conformity with § 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

### **5. Public access to the state of conservation report**

The City of Darmstadt and the State of Hesse agree that the full SOC Report will be published on the website of the World Heritage Centre's State of Conservation Information System (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>).

### **6. Signature of the Authority**



Prof. Dr. Ludger Hünnekens

The Magistrat of the City of Darmstadt

Director of the Inhouse Operation / Site Manager