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# Castles of Augustusburg and Falkenlust at Brühl (Germany) No 288bis

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## 1 Basic information

### State Party

Germany

### Name of property

Castles of Augustusburg and Falkenlust at Brühl

### Location

North Rhine-Westphalia

### Inscription

1984

### Brief description

Set in an idyllic garden landscape, Augustusburg Castle, the sumptuous residence of the prince-archbishops of Cologne, and the Falkenlust hunting lodge, a small rural folly, are among the earliest examples of Rococo architecture in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Germany, and directly linked to the great European architecture and art of unprecedented richness of the time.

### Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

13 March 2024

## 2 Issues raised

### Background

The property was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1984 under criteria (ii) and (iv), and is recognised as one of the most important and outstanding examples of Rococo style outside of France. The property consists on the Castle of Augustusburg and its gardens, which was the residence of the prince-archbishops of Cologne, planned and constructed by Clemens August of Bavaria (1700-1761), and the Falkenlust, a small country house, which served as their hunting lodge, and surrounding garden. Based on the nomination process valid at the time, neither specific boundaries nor a buffer zone were proposed.

In response to the Retrospective Inventory, the World Heritage Committee adopted the boundaries of the property in 2008 (Decision 32COM 8D). A Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was adopted in 2014 (Decision 38COM 8E).

The State Party reports that the importance of setting up a buffer zone to support the long-term conservation of the

Outstanding Universal Value of the property has been identified during the Retrospective Inventory process, when drafting the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and defining the property boundaries. The State Party notes that the property, located in the city of Brühl, which belongs to the wider metropolitan area of the city of Cologne, is currently vulnerable to increasing development pressures.

The State Party considers that the establishment of a buffer zone would ensure that any further developments do not interfere with the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. In addition, the new federal law on heritage protection (DSchG NRW) that entered into force in June 2022, requires that, in case deemed necessary, a buffer zone be designated for properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

### Modification

The proposed buffer zone corresponds to the immediate surroundings of the property which define its historical setting covering an area of 270 ha.

The proposed buffer zone has been developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and taking into account all areas and features that contribute to the maintenance of the landscape setting of the World Heritage property. It encompasses both urban fabric – the historical town – and agricultural fields and forests which are part of the immediate environment.

The proposed buffer zone has been delineated to prevent any intrusive development into the urban layout on the scale of the city of Brühl, to preserve the views and sightlines of and between the palaces of Augustusburg and Falkenlust, and to integrate the property into the surrounding landscape. The methodology used for defining the proposed buffer zone boundaries consists on a five-step process which includes the mapping of attributes; the analysis of the property boundaries; the identification of adjacent areas that support the legibility of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property; the identification of areas of functional influence; and the identification of areas of visual influence, including analysis of historic sightlines and a view shed analysis.

The proposed buffer zone will be legally protected at a regional level with a regulatory ordinance (*Ordnungsbehördliche Verordnung*) issued by the District Government of Cologne, programmed to be adopted in close consultation with the City of Brühl in 2025. Heritage Impact Assessments are required for all proposed developments. In addition, almost half of the proposed buffer zone area falls into two Landscape Protection Areas (*Landschaftsschutzgebiet*): Palmersdorfer Bach and Falkenlust.

The District Government of Cologne, acting as the higher monument protection authority, together with the City of Brühl and the Ministry of Regional Identity, Local Government, Building and Digitalization of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia are in charge of implementing

the new legally binding protection mechanisms for the proposed buffer zone. A new management plan for the property has been adopted in 2023 with a timeframe of eight to ten years, where the implementation of the proposed buffer zone was regarded as a priority.

ICOMOS notes that the proposed buffer zone could have covered a larger area of the agricultural fields which are also part of the historical landscape setting located to the east and south of the property. Yet, ICOMOS understands that a Heritage Impact Assessment mechanism is in place to support the protection of the property when any proposed development within or outside of the proposed buffer zone presents a risk for its Outstanding Universal Value.

While observing this potential vulnerability, ICOMOS considers that the proposed buffer zone seems adequate as an added layer of protection of the property, and considers that its effectiveness would need to be evaluated after its adoption and implementation. ICOMOS notes that the protection of the historical landscape setting of the property is of utmost importance and therefore recommends a strong enforcement of both the buffer zone legal provisions and the Heritage Impact Assessment mechanism in place.

### **3 Recommendations**

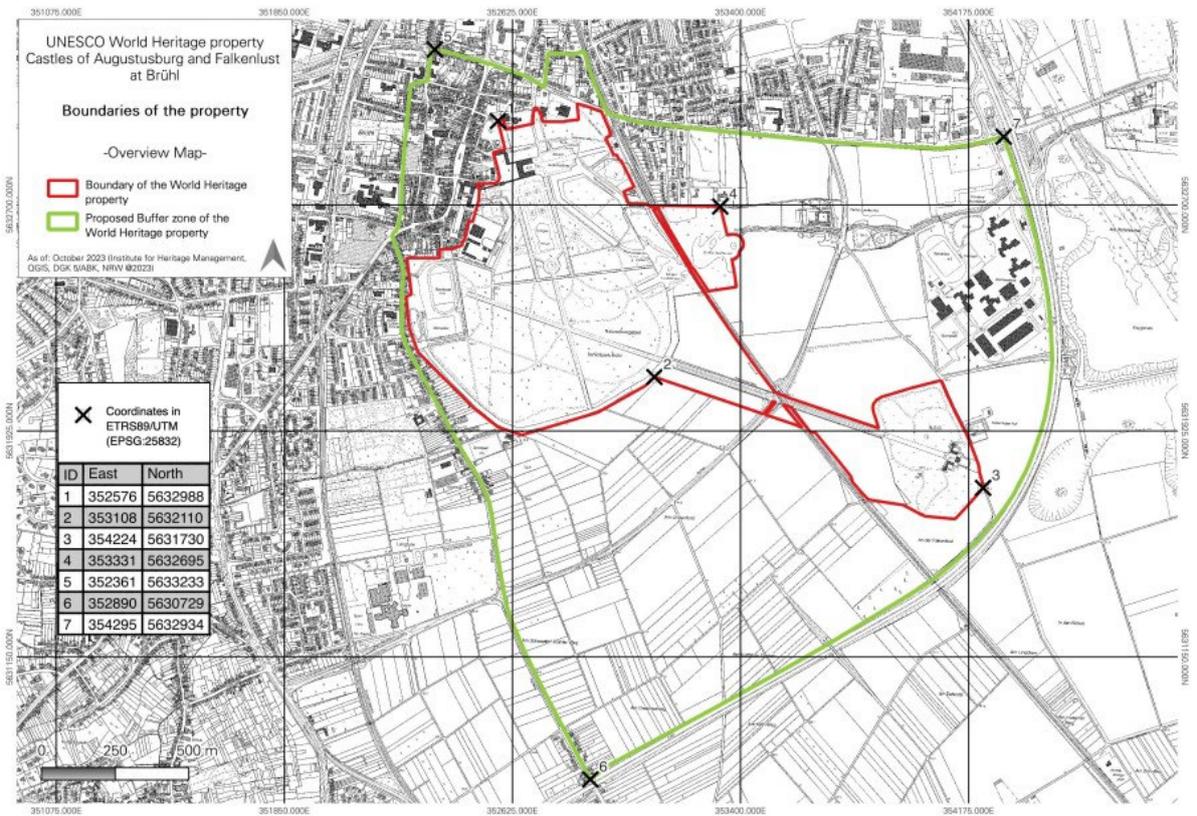
#### **Recommendations with respect to inscription**

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for the Castles of Augustusburg and Falkenlust at Brühl, Germany, be **approved**.

#### **Additional recommendations**

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Reinforcing the protection of the historical landscape setting to the east and south of the property by undertaking Heritage Impact Assessments on any proposed development in this area.



Map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone (February 2024)