

ICOMOS Technical Review

Property	Dutch Water Defence Lines
State Party	Netherlands
Property Ref	759bis
Date of inscription	1996
Date of extension	2021
Criteria	(ii)(iv)(v)
Project	Landscape Plan Connection A8-A9

1. Background

On the 8 July 2022, ICOMOS received information from the State Party, via the World Heritage Centre, concerning the 'Landscape Plan Connection A8-A9'. The Advisory Body provides its analysis of the project below.

The Defence Line of Amsterdam World Heritage property was inscribed in 1996 on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (v), (Decision CONF 201 VIII.C). In 2021, the property was extended to include the New Dutch Waterline on the basis of criteria (ii), (iv) and (v), (Decision 44 COM 8B.23). The extended property was named the Dutch Water Defence Lines. The proposed new road connection, connecting the A8 national highway with the A9 national highway has been the subject of much discussion and study. The State Party has on numerous occasions provided the World Heritage Centre with information on the various options to realise this infrastructural connection. The last communication received by ICOMOS on this matter was in 2018 when the State Party notified the World Heritage Centre that it would provide further updates on the project once the decision-making process on the Landscape Plan had been completed.

At the time of extension of the property (2021), the World Heritage Committee recommended that the State Party give consideration to, inter alia:

- b. Providing the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS with upcoming projects, including the final option for the A8-A9 junction, for review. (Decision 44 COM 8B.23)*

The submission under review was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in response to a letter dated 31 August 2021 from the World Heritage Centre (ref: CLT/WHC/EUR/21/13404, consistent with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*) following the receipt by the World Heritage Centre of third-party information concerning the project.

The planning for the proposed road extension to achieve an A8-A9 road link has been the subject of ICOMOS Technical Reviews in 2015, 2016 and was the subject of the 2017 ICOMOS Advisory mission, which took place at the invitation of the State Party.

2. Recall of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV)

Brief synthesis

The Dutch Water Defence Lines represents a defence system extending over 200 km along the edge of the administrative and economic heartland of Holland. It is comprised of the New Dutch Waterline and the Defence Line of Amsterdam. Built between 1815 and 1940, the system consists of a network of 96 forts, dikes, sluices, pumping stations, canals and inundation polders, working in concert to protect Holland by applying the principle of temporary flooding of the land. It has been developed thanks to the special knowledge of hydraulic engineering for defence purposes held and applied by the people of the Netherlands since the 16th century. Each of the polders along the line of fortifications has its own inundation facilities.

Criterion (ii): *The already-inscribed property (Defence Line of Amsterdam) and the nominated extension illustrate in its most advanced and extensive form the technology and arrangements that the Dutch developed to control inundation. Although inundation for defence had been used since the Middle Ages in the low-lying parts of north-western Europe, the Dutch brought the system to an unprecedented level of advancement and scale. The DWDL were not the last to be built: the knowledge developed here was applied and further elaborated to build other defence lines in Europe in the 1930-40s, such as the French Maginot Line, the German Pomeranian Line and, later, in the 1950s, the IJssel Line in the Netherlands.*

Criterion (iv): *the NDW illustrates an ingenious system of defence which has achieved the integrated use of landscape features, careful water management and control for inundation fields, and military fortifications to protect the vulnerable points. In particular the nominated extension offered, due to the very nature of the land morphology, larger opportunities to harness the landscape characteristics. Due to the presence of several rivers, which were points of access for the enemy and needed therefore to be defended, many forts were built for this purpose.*

The NDW also illustrates the development of military architecture in the 19th and early 20th centuries as well as the transition from brick to concrete construction. The rich collection of forts comprised within the NDW exceptionally illustrates the continuous adaptation of military engineering to new defensive challenges and complements the DLA with further attributes, thereby reinforcing the justification of this criterion.

Criterion (v): *the nominated extension represents an ingenious use of the topography and hydrology of the landscape for defence purposes. The knowledge developed over several centuries to manage water for farming purposes was perfected and put to the service of the defence of the country, with the aid of pumping stations, watercourses, sluices, ring canals and dykes, to ensure rapid and precise control of the water flow. Several structures that were built for civil use were integrated into the military defence system. The nominated extension will enhance and complement the Outstanding Universal Value of the DLA as a model of the military system that has ingeniously perfected the use of landscape features and water management to achieve a defensive system of large territorial scale.*

Expert from the Statement of Integrity

Negative impacts from new developments and large infrastructures can be found in the western portion of the DLA World Heritage Property, in the central portion of the NDW, and at the junction between the DLA and NDW, that is to say, next to the cities of Amsterdam, Haarlem and Utrecht, where the defence line passes through dense urban areas. There, fortifications, related ditches, canals and dikes have been preserved but the landscape has changed significantly and several inundation fields have been built upon or are no longer visible. Nowadays these portions of the property are exposed to strong pressure for further transformation.

The full Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, as adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2021 (Decision 44 COM 8B.23) can be found as an annex to the present Technical Review.

3. Material provided

This Technical Review assesses the following documents:

In English:

- Landscape Plan Connection A8-A9 – Summary

In Dutch:

- *Landschapsplan Stelling van Amsterdam Verbinding A8_A9* (version 02-09-2021)
With addenda:
 - Bijlage 1 - Verklarende woordenlijsten

- Bijlage 2 - *Integriteit en authenticiteit Stelling van Amsterdam in plangebied*
- Bijlage 3 - *Samenvatting ontwerp en verkeer aansluitvarianten Verbinding A8-A9 en tunnel*
- Bijlage 4 - *Impact Verbinding A8A9 op OUV SvA in plangebied*

The *Summary* document, provided in English (one of the languages of the Convention) for this review served as an entry into the project, but contains no images for illustration. Therefore, the additional documentation (annexes) was of great use. ICOMOS was able to access the content through digital translation of their tables of content and subsequent translation of sections of the documents and (utilising the DeepL tool). ICOMOS made further use of material submitted in the past, going back to the 2014 Management Plan for the property.

4. Project history

The proposal for extending the A8 to join it to the A9 will invariably affect the Dutch Water Defence Lines either by passing through the property, or by impacting its setting. The road section of approximately 5km will connect the end of the east-west A8 at Wiever to the north-south A9 passing Uitgeest.

In 2015, six alternative alignments (plus as baseline one alternative: maintaining the status quo) were being investigated. A Heritage Impact Assessment concluded that only two of the alternatives, both of which avoid the property boundaries could, after mitigation, result in a natural impact. The HIA concluded that three other options could have a “matig negative (-2)” (moderate negative) impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (Stelling van Amsterdam Heritage Impact Assessment Verbinding A8-A9, 2015, summary page 5).

In its 2015 Technical Review, ICOMOS accepted that: “[t]he social needs for improving the network of transportation in the immediate surroundings of the North-Western part of the Defence Line of Amsterdam are important. Furthermore, the ongoing global economic and urban growth in the immediate surroundings of the great city of Amsterdam are undoubtable.” ICOMOS concluded that what was then called ‘Solution n° 7’ (later called the ‘Zero-Plus variant): “appears to offer the least impact on heritage; but it would also be necessary to document whether it is a sustainable transportation solution, considering the use of a segment of national road.”

Following on-site investigations, the 2017 ICOMOS Advisory mission noted that: “Although the State Party must be commended for the conservation of the monumental attributes of the DLA, such as the forts, what is at stake is the landscape dimension as an expression of its Outstanding Universal Value. In this sense, the State Party’s efforts to restore and preserve these components will be crucial for the conservation of the property in the future.” (ICOMOS, 2017, (not numbered; page 2)).

The mission concluded that the only option then on the table, the only one that would not have a detrimental impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property would be the Zero-plus alternative but noted that implementing it would: “have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of the inhabitants in the vicinity of the property, and will also not provide a sustainable transportation solution.” (ICOMOS, 2017, Executive Summary).

The other two alternatives for the road assessed by that mission are labelled the ‘Heemskerk’ alternative and the ‘Golf course’ alternative. The mission concluded and advised the State Party that both alternatives would result in: “substantial negative impacts on the tangible attributes of the World Heritage property as well as on its landscape dimension, which is very important for the understanding and appreciation of the significance of the Defence Line of Amsterdam”. (ICOMOS, 2017, Executive Summary).

Of the three alternatives, ICOMOS advised the State Party that: “at the current time, there is no alternative that can be supported. In this context, it is recommended that further work is pursued so as to identify other options that might be able to satisfy the three main parameters stated above, namely: protection of OUV, population health, and mobility..._The mission notes that, though some

tangible attributes such as the forts are clearly strong and well- preserved in the area, as is their continuity as evidence of the defence line; the landscape expression of the area itself as a cultural landscape, by means of other features such as the landscape's geomorphology, and water system, as the expression of its Outstanding Universal Value is already partially compromised." (ICOMOS, 2017, Executive Summary).

That mission also stated that: "...the fragmentation and the progressive isolation from one another of the individual defensive structures need to be halted if the integrity and authenticity of the property are to be maintained, and, with them, the readability of this 'defensive' landscape. The maintenance of the integrity and authenticity of tangible attributes has therefore been a central issue for the assessment of the alternatives and the final recommendation." It consequently advised that: "remedial work is needed for some areas of landscape" (ICOMOS, 2017, Executive Summary). The report did not link the advised remedial work to the landscape to the construction of the road as a mitigatory measure.

The mission report was informed in part by a review by Ove Arup & Partners of the three alternatives (Golf Course, Heemskerk, Zero-plus), which concluded that the Golf Course variant would be the most impactful on the Defence Line of Amsterdam (Arup, 2017, p. 4).

Since the 2017 mission, and despite its advice that neither Golf Course nor Heemskerk alternative could be supported, the Provincial Executive of the province of North Holland (*Gedeputeerde Staten van de provincie Noord-Holland*) in 2018 selected the Golf Course Alternative as the preferred alternative for the A8-A9 road link. (Landschapsplan, 2021, p. 14). From this moment onwards, all official investigations focussed on developing this alternative. The 2019 Provincial Coalition Agreement for the Province of North-Holland included a vision for the A8-A9 connection: "To preserve the landscape the possibility of a sunken road or a tunnel will be examined. This study will also include climate adaptation and the connection of Krommenie and Assendelft to public transport. Leading in the final choice of a preferred variant is the preservation of the World Heritage status of the Defence Line of Amsterdam. To deal with the major inconvenience to residents of the N203 near Krommenie in the short term, we invest in the quality of life, for example in measures to improve air quality."¹

A design with alternatives for the Golf Course variant was further developed based on a 'Landscape Plan' which aimed:

- "1. To formulate measures to preserve, restore and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) - the unique and universal value behind the World Heritage status of the Defence Line.
2. The optimal incorporation of the A8-A9 Link, so that those core qualities of the world heritage (as an elaboration of the OUV) are preserved as much as possible and, where possible, restored and strengthened."

The landscape plan focused on the connection of the Golf Course variant to the A9, the choice for a tunnel or a sub-surface open carriageway, and interventions to reinstate lost characteristics of the Dutch Water Defence Lines in this location through the intervention and reducing negative impacts to a minimum.

5. Description of the current variation of the plan

The extensive landscape plan develops the Golf Course alternative to reduce its impact on the OUV of the property. In the main, it proposes:

1. Removal of the extant The Heemskerkse Golfclub and rehabilitation of the area (the A8 extension will pass through this area);

¹ P. 9. Available at: https://www.noord-holland.nl/Configuratie/Publicaties/Publicaties/Coalitieakkoord_2019_2023_Duurzaam_doorpakken

2. Construction of a subsurface (sunken) four-lane highway connection from the head of the A8 (Coen Tunnelweg), in a straight line through the polder landscape to join the A9 at Heemskerk to the south of fort Veldhuis, with tunnels under the two dykes that mark the defence line, the Groenedijk and the Geniedijk, (The idea of a tunnel over the full length of the road extension was deemed as having: “no added value for preserving or strengthening the OUV of the Stelling van Amsterdam defence line: in the Stelling van Amsterdam UNESCO area, the variant with a tunnel is equal to the variant with a sunken position.” Landschapplan, p. 36);
3. Removal of a filling station (on the north-bound carriageway of the A9) and a truck stop (on the south-bound section of the carriageway);
4. Construction of a connection on the location of the extant truck stop;
5. Rehabilitation of the landscape, through removal of elements that detract from its legibility (planting and infrastructure) and addition of elements, such as reinstatement of historic tree lines and designed installations at the Aagtendijk to indicate historic changes that have affected the legibility of the dyke). The ‘duikersluis’ (sluice) will be restored. This may allow for future inundation of areas.

The *Landschapplan* indicates that the current planning framework does not (yet) accommodate the proposed Golf Course variant extension of the A8 to join the A9. It also indicates that an environmental impact assessment (EIA; *milieueffectrapportage (m.e.r.)*) will need to be undertaken before a decision to amend the current planning framework can be taken (Landschapplan, p. 114). A pre-assessment that evaluated two options for the planned interchange of the A8 with the A9 (*Impact Verbinding A8A9 op OUV SvA in plangebied*; undated, but this document refers only to the former Amsterdam Defence Lines) and not the entire plan concluded that both the junction options represent “a new encroachment [on the OUV], through the intersection of the main resistance line” (p. 34).

ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre further received third-party information directly from a large number of concerned originations and individuals regarding the proposed plan. They collectively express their opposition to the Golf Course variant as it: “has the same negative effects on the environment and stronger negative effects on the OUVs of the Defense Line of Amsterdam as the plans presented to you in 2017 and on which your report from November 2017 is based.” (26 September 2022). They argue that implementation of the Golf Course project would lead to “unacceptable fragmentation” (Introduction (Cherish the Oer-IJ area!)).

This group of originations and individuals, aligned in an organisation called the *Green Combination* (including local landowners, farmers’ organisation, nature conservation organisations etc.,) have developed an alternative plan, titled *Area Vision; Green Lung* provided to ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre. This plan effectively sees the need for a conception between the A8 and A9 as an outdated concept not in keeping with current ambitions on Provisional level to transition to alternative transport modes and includes the reduction of private vehicular use and movement. Their plan addresses the Dutch Water Defence Lines section from the North-Sea Canal in the south to the northern shore of the Alkmaander Lake, which they refer to as the *Green Lung*.

6. Review

In the ICOMOS evaluation at the time of extension of the property, the attributes of the property were organized into three categories:

- the Strategically Deployed Landscape
- the Water Management System
- the Military Fortification

...which each is articulated into attributes. (ICOMOS, 759bis-ICOMOS-2352-en.pdf)

The project proposed affects all three of these categories, specifically the Strategically Deployed Landscape. The State Party, in its summary translation of the content of the *Landschapplan*, notes that the Connection A8-A9 has an impact on the core qualities of the *Stelling van Amsterdam*, (p. 1 – it should be noted that the World Heritage property is the *Dutch Water Defence Lines World Heritage Property* and not the *Defence Line of Amsterdam* – the latter ceased to exist with the extension of the property in 2021) arguing that the complete set of measures will lead to an impulse of quality for the World Heritage property.

ICOMOS in 2017 advised the State Party to seek alternative options to the Golf Course and Heemskerk variants. The State Party requested clarification on this conclusion of ICOMOS in an email dated 11 December 2017, where it stated three specific questions. These are listed below, along with the ICOMOS response of 22 December 2017:

1: “Our conclusion is that you are advising us to explore design options of the existing alternatives. Do you agree with this conclusion?”

2: “Our conclusion is that ICOMOS is seeking a solution for the A8-A9 link road in a depressed road. Do you agree with this conclusion?”

3: “We would like to know whether exploring this solution is acceptable to ICOMOS, particularly if a probable minor degradation of the OUV caused by this solution is compensated by recovery measures to the quality and openness of the landscape in this section of the DLA.”

ICOMOS’s response was clear that it did not foresee such a course of action would lead to an acceptable outcome for the World Heritage property.

Its response included that:

- It did not consider that there were any modifications that could be made to the current options (i.e. including the Golf Course option) to make them feasible. ICOMOS recalled that the 2017 mission report suggested “other options” rather than “other design options” as it considered that none of the current options, or modifications to these, were feasible.
- It did not consider that any of the options, or modifications to these options, could be supported at the current time.
- ICOMOS recommended further work is needed to explore other options.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

The current *Landschapplan* holds many positive benefits for the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including the removal of the Golf Course and the rehabilitation of that area, the removal of a filling station and the truck stop along A9. Such interventions are certainly not minor. The State Party is commended for being willing to investigate, and possibly even implement, such drastic measures.

It is considered however that the plan is likely to have negative impacts on the property and its setting. This takes the Golf Course option, which as noted in 2017 is deemed inappropriate to the Outstanding Universal Value and follows the outline suggested by the State Party in its email of 11 December to further develop a “depressed road” alternative. ICOMOS in 2017 indicated that it did not deem a solution that would lead to “minor degradation of the OUV” even if “is compensated by recovery measures” to be appropriate, and that it could not support such a solution.

ICOMOS reiterates this position. It refers also to the *2022 Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, which states that: “Any loss of, or damage to OUV is unacceptable, which means that rectification, reduction (to less severe but still significant) or offsetting of impacts is

inappropriate in a World Heritage context” (p. 27). Therefore, ICOMOS advises that, considering the negative impacts to the Outstanding Universal Value that the Golf Course Plan in its current form holds, it is not advisable to continue with this proposal. ICOMOS notes in this regards the inclusion in the statement on *Protection and Management* submitted by the State Party in its dossier for the extension of the property in 2021 that: “The Environment and Planning Act stipulates that spatial developments may not jeopardize the Outstanding Universal Value of a World Heritage property, regardless of its location.” (See: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7942>)

ICOMOS would recommend that the State Party reconsider the plans for the connection of the A8 to the A9 and reiterates its recommendation to the State Party to investigate alternative options (i.e. *other* options [stated for clarity] than the Heemskerk and Golf Course options), should a connection between the A8 and A9 still be deemed essential and in keeping with the State’s current national mobility and environmental ambitions. It further notes (reiterating the recommendation of the 2017 Advisory mission) that the improvement of the landscape quality around Fort Veldhuis and the property in general should be a goal in itself to strengthen the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. This ambition should not be dependent on development projects that impact that same Outstanding Universal Value.

ICOMOS remains at the disposal of the State Party to respond to any requests for clarification or any other request for technical support.

ICOMOS, Charenton-le-Pont
December 2022

Annex: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

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Brief synthesis

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Criterion (ii): The already-inscribed property (Defence Line of Amsterdam) and the nominated extension illustrate in its most advanced and extensive form the technology and arrangements that the Dutch developed to control inundation. Although inundation for defence had been used since the Middle Ages in the low-lying parts of north-western Europe, the Dutch brought the system to an unprecedented level of advancement and scale. The DWDL were not the last to be built: the knowledge developed here was applied and further elaborated to build other defence lines in Europe in the 1930-40s, such as the French Maginot Line, the German Pomeranian Line and, later, in the 1950s, the IJssel Line in the Netherlands.

Criterion (iv): the NDW illustrates an ingenious system of defence which has achieved the integrated use of landscape features, careful water management and control for inundation fields, and military fortifications to protect the vulnerable points. In particular the nominated extension offered, due to the very nature of the land morphology, larger opportunities to harness the landscape characteristics. Due to the presence of several rivers, which were points of access for the enemy and needed therefore to be defended, many forts were built for this purpose.

The NDW also illustrates the development of military architecture in the 19th and early 20th centuries as well as the transition from brick to concrete construction. The rich collection of forts comprised within the NDW exceptionally illustrates the continuous adaptation of military engineering to new defensive challenges and complements the DLA with further attributes, thereby reinforcing the justification of this criterion.

Criterion (v): the nominated extension represents an ingenious use of the topography and hydrology of the landscape for defence purposes. The knowledge developed over several centuries to manage water for farming purposes was perfected and put to the service of the defence of the country, with the aid of pumping stations, watercourses, sluices, ring canals and dykes, to ensure rapid and precise control of the water flow. Several structures that were built for civil use were integrated into the military defence system. The nominated extension will enhance and complement the Outstanding Universal Value of the DLA as a model of the military system that has ingeniously perfected the use of landscape features and water management to achieve a defensive system of large territorial scale.

Integrity

The extension of the Defence Line of Amsterdam through the addition of and unification with the New Dutch Waterline forms a coherent and complete system but each of them had a specific function to play. The extension would add landscape and historical coherence to the existing World Heritage property.

The boundary of the extension includes all attributes necessary to reflect the proposed Outstanding Universal Value, including the three individual component parts.

The nominated extension includes a large number of identified physical attributes. All forts are included within the boundary of the nominated extension and none has been destroyed. The identified attributes of all categories are said to be in good condition, although the area of the defence line near Utrecht has lost the inundation basins, which were very narrow in this area due to its elevation.

The new property DWDL includes almost the whole fortified water system conceived for the defence of the core urban area of the Netherlands.

The water management system (a complex network of canals, dikes, gates, sluices) is still in use and its maintenance is assured as far as it is necessary for the safety of large cultivated and inhabited areas.

The strategically deployed landscape is still well visible but its extension is notably reduced and its degree of integrity is uneven. Especially (but not only) on the inner side of the defence lines, urban growth has often overwhelmed rurality and the visual relationships between the forts and the environment have been undermined. On the outer side (the side watched over by the forts), some new developments have occurred and scattered buildings and groups of trees have modified the aspect of the landscape and the visibility of the "Prohibited Circles".

Negative impacts from new developments and large infrastructures can be found in the western portion of the DLA World Heritage Property, in the central portion of the NDW, and at the junction between the DLA and NDW, that is to say, next to the cities of Amsterdam, Haarlem and Utrecht, where the defence line passes through dense urban areas. There, fortifications, related ditches, canals and dikes have been preserved but the landscape has changed significantly and several inundation fields have been built upon or are no longer visible. Nowadays these portions of the property are exposed to strong pressure for further transformation.

The extent of the proposed extension of the property, the abundance of its elements, the strong presence of the rural landscape where it still exists, the effectiveness of the current actions of care and maintenance, can secure the integrity of the property.

Three areas have been added to the Defence Line of Amsterdam: two are still-preserved inundation fields and one is a wooded recreational area which reinforce the continuity of the DLA and contribute to strengthening the integrity of the already inscribed property.

Six small areas have been excluded from the former Defence Line of Amsterdam.

Authenticity

The physical attributes of the proposed extension reflect credibly the proposed justification for inscription through their form and design, their materials, their reciprocal interrelations and relationships with the landscape setting. Although the military use and defence function have ceased, the primary agricultural use of the landscape has been retained alongside the introduction of recreational use.

Several sources exist that can demonstrate the authenticity of the property, including bibliographical and archival sources. The physical attributes reflect the values and the historic development of the property. Restorations and repurposing of the forts have contributed to maintaining near the main military structures the spirit of the military past of the defence line territory. However, the

modifications to the landscape and the developments have, in some zones, reduced conditions of authenticity.

Protection and management requirements

The legal framework for heritage and landscape protection and spatial planning is under reform in the Netherlands. From 2022 a revised set of laws, by-laws, strategies and regulations will apply. This new Environment and Planning Act will protect World Heritage stronger and more explicit.

Currently, World Heritage properties' attributes and Outstanding Universal Value are given consideration at all national, provincial and local levels through the provisions of the Spatial Planning (General Rules) Decree, Dutch acronym Barro, issued in 2011, which identifies core qualities of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List or included in the Tentative List. These qualities must be maintained or enhanced in plans and spatial developments.

The Barro provisions will be incorporated into the new Environment and Planning Act (2016), which stipulates that regulations for the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties and the implementation of the World Heritage Convention must be developed.

The Spatial Planning Decree, Dutch acronym Bro, stipulates that municipalities must take into account cultural history when elaborating spatial plans.

All military and many water management structures of the proposed extension have been designated national monuments as per the Heritage Act (2016). On the other hand, in the DLA, heritage designations were issued on the basis of the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act (1988); additionally, a number of attributes are covered by provincial designations, based on the Ordinance of the Province of Noord-Holland, which is considered equivalent to national designation.

The fortified towns of the NDW are designated urban conservation areas and no development that can impair their heritage character is permitted. According to the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act and the Heritage Act, municipalities must elaborate protection zoning plans for conservation areas, thereby complementing the protection afforded to individual heritage structures.

In addition to legislation, national, provincial and municipal policy documents provide for priorities and objectives with regards to cultural heritage.

The Environment and Planning Act stipulates that spatial developments may not jeopardize the Outstanding Universal Value of a World Heritage property, regardless of its location. Furthermore, a Spatial Quality Advisory Team has been established: it issues opinions and recommendations to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property are not endangered by development proposals.

The new Environment and Planning Act contains specific regulations for protection of the buffer zone.

Around the inscribed property and the nominated extension also various additional protection regimes apply that have protective effects on the setting of the Dutch Water Defence Lines (DWDL): these include Natura 2000 areas, National Nature Network, provincial urbanisation buffer zones in Noord-Holland, Schiphol Airport Zoning Decree, and valuable landscape designations. These afford protection to the setting of the DWDL.

The municipal zoning plan has legal binding force and is the key instrument for implementing protective measures.

Provinces are responsible for describing the 'core qualities' of existing or proposed World Heritage properties and for developing rules for their preservation. These rules are included in provincial by-laws and inserted in municipal zoning plans. In case provinces do not comply with the above provision, the national government has the right to prescribe the rules that must be included in provincial by-laws. Similarly, if municipalities fail to comply with provincial by-laws, a province may give 'reactive instructions'.

The government and the provinces have the right to prepare government-imposed zoning plan amendments, as long as a national or provincial interest is at stake (such as in the case of World Heritage or heritage preservation). These amendments have the same legal value as municipal zoning plans.

The rural zoning plan is the central instrument for the protection of the agricultural land and therefore of the inundation fields. Provincial by-laws prevent construction outside building locations identified by provinces, and agricultural land cannot be turned into buildable land. The application of sustainability principles also require that urban developments must occur in existing urban areas. The necessity to deviate from this principle must be explicitly demonstrated.

Quality handbooks have been prepared by the provinces to assist applicants and municipalities in achieving a higher quality of development proposals.

The responsibility for the implementation of the Heritage Act falls upon several actors, including provinces and municipalities, clearly defined in the Act itself.

The Cultural Heritage Agency is responsible for two government subsidy schemes that support conservation and repurposing of protected monuments; since 2012 the provinces have been responsible for restoring national monuments.

The assurance of the quality of new developments is also an important factor complementing development restrictions. A Spatial Quality Advisory Team was established in 2005 for the New Dutch Waterline; it provides solicited or unsolicited advice on developments, challenges and trends affecting the NDW at a larger scale. Since 2016 it has a new composition and a new task: issuing opinions (e.g. on energy transition, quality assurance principles, terms of reference for HIA's) to ensure the balance between spatial development and the heritage value of the NDW. It has drawn up a memorandum on Visual Integrity of the NDW. On inscription the Spatial Quality Advisory Team extends its scope of responsibility to the whole property, including the DLA.

For highly dynamic areas – three have been identified by the State Party which amount to 20% of the area of the DWDL – more focused area analyses have been devised and are being elaborated to examine what is the capacity of the property, under what conditions and where, to accommodate developments carried out in a way to support or enhance the integrity of the property and where this might pose challenges.

In 2014 the four provinces of Noord-Holland, Gelderland, Noord-Brabant and Utrecht signed an administrative agreement for the extension of the DLA. As per the Joint Arrangements Act, the four provinces have signed a partnership agreement that establishes they will act jointly as the site-holder and the existing management entities for the DLA and NDW will eventually be fully merged into one single overarching management office as of 1 July 2020. A small portion of the NDW falls within the

Province of Zuid-Holland. The five provinces have agreed that the four provinces where the majority of the DWDL is located will look after the small section in Zuid-Holland. However, the Province of Zuid-Holland will continue to perform its spatial-planning and protection tasks.

The site-holder office will be managed by the four provinces under the direction of an independent Chair, with a representative of the National Cultural Heritage Agency as advisor. The site-holder will rely on the human resources of the Knowledge Centre of the waterlines, the independent Spatial Quality Advisory team. External support will also be provided by the Cross-Waterline Entrepreneurship Foundation, which supports entrepreneurs in and around the DWDL. The think tank Line Expert Team – 16 experts in 8 different subjects – is supported by two Provinces and offers expertise and advice to owners, managers and operators, including municipalities and water authorities.

The collective site-holder has developed a road map to achieve six key management objectives, among which is the preparation of a joint management plan, from 2021.

The current management plan covers the period 2018–2020 and outlines the cooperation agenda, based on the six above-mentioned objectives, and on strategic goals. A calendar for implementation of the tasks related to the six objectives is presented.