



3 September 2022

Mayor Tomas Breddam, President of the Museum Board &
Museum Director Tinna Damgård-Sørensen
Vikingskibsmuseet
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4000 Roskilde, Denmark
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RE: ICOMOS Heritage Alert

Dear Mr. Breddam and Mrs. Damgård-Sørensen,

In October 2018, the ICOMOS¹ International Scientific Committee on Twentieth Century Heritage (ISC20C) sent a letter to you expressing international concern about future safeguarding of the Viking Ship Hall as a significant international heritage building, notwithstanding its removal from the Danish list of nationally protected heritage properties.

The letter of October 2018 also informed you that the Viking Ship Hall was listed at the time as an ICOMOS Heritage Alert property to raise international awareness about the importance of the protection and preservation of this important building. (For further information please see: <https://www.icomos.org/en/get-involved/inform-us/heritage-alert>.)

We are pleased that the Viking Ship Hall has been the subject of renewed interest since that time, and to learn from the Danish media that there are plans to preserve the hall as a part of a new museum complex.

The Viking Ship Hall and the conservation issues and appropriate treatments for its preservation and conservation are widely known among international heritage experts, many of whom are members of the ISC 20C. The ISC 20C is following the Viking Ship Hall situation in the context of the proposed competition for the design of a new museum. We remain concerned about the future of the hall as a heritage site of international significance. A properly conserved Viking Ship Hall will remain of international value into the future. The application of heritage values and treatments in its conservation can uniquely support of future mission of the museum. Such a conservation approach to the building's future will only enhance the appeal of the museum as a destination for Danish citizens and international tourists alike.

We therefore respectfully seek your response to how the Viking Ship Museum plans to protect the Viking Ship Hall's significant heritages values, the attributes of which include its exceptional concrete structure and its setting.

We have specific questions: The expectation of the rising sea level in the Fjord and the expected future maintenance cost for the Viking Ship Hall has been a main argument for not preserving and conserving the hall. How does the museum and the municipality plan to counter these challenges?

In an interview in the Danish newsletter, Byrumsmonitor Aug 26, Mrs. Damgaard-Sørensen, director of the Viking Ship Museum stated that the funding for the conservation and transformation of the Viking Ship Hall has not yet been obtained. Is the museum in process of applying for funding for the conservation of the hall and is there a deadline for the funding?

A resumé of the meeting held in the municipality of Roskilde Aug 15th, reveals that the museum plans propose a new walkway in front of the hall. ICOMOS would like to stress that the relationship between the water and the building and the uninterrupted view of the water as a backdrop for the exhibited Viking ships are a significant attribute of the setting of the Viking Ship Hall, not only from a heritage point of view but also for visitors, from an experiential viewpoint: It is a globally unique way of displaying the ships, that can only be experienced at Roskilde. We would appreciate the opportunity to understand how the proposed walkway will respect the undisturbed relationship between the water and the building and the exceptional value it represents.

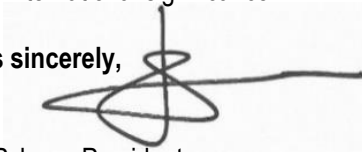
In a 2021 summer school for ICOMOS emerging conservation professionals, the students and faculty made a study of the Viking Ship Hall as a Heritage Alert. The conclusions from their work emphasized the fact that building demolition process and the resulting loss of embodied energy in existing buildings produce significant negative climate impacts added to of the heritage value lost.

The student report noted that the demolition of large concrete buildings has significant environmental consequences as can be demonstrated in an overall Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). This includes emission of greenhouse gas from both the demolition and disposal of the construction waste. To this can be added that concrete from the moments it is produced begins to absorb greenhouse gas. ICOMOS ISC 20C would like to know if the Museum plans to prepare and publish an LCA analysis for different scenarios in relation to the retention of the existing Viking Ship Hall.

The ICOMOS ISC20C hopes that this letter further expresses the concerns of ICOMOS. To provide an update of this Heritage Alert case and for the information to our concerned members, we would appreciate your response and comments.

Further, the exceptional talent and experience of the expert members of the ICOMOS ISC 20C stand ready to provide our knowledge and experience to achieve the thoughtful stewardship of the Viking Ship Museum, an important building and site of international significance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jack Pyburn", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Jack Pyburn, President
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CC. Minister of Culture Ane Halsboe-Jørgensen, Government of Denmark Mail: kum@kum.dk