

The 7 Most Endangered 2023

Programme run by **Europa Nostra**,
the European Voice of Civil Society committed to Cultural Heritage,
with the support of the **European Investment Bank Institute**

Sisters House Ensemble in Kleinwelka Germany

Report



October 2026

Technical Report

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Presentation

The [7 Most Endangered](#) Programme – run by [Europa Nostra](#), which is supported by the [European Investment Bank Institute \(EIBI\)](#) – sets out to identify sites of European heritage significance which are in danger. In identifying these sites Europa Nostra considers how significant a particular site is, what the degree of danger is and whether there is the likelihood of a solution to any problems the site may face.

Following the inclusion of a particular site on the list, a mission is undertaken, so that a European expert team can understand the situation better and give advice to the nominator of the site on what courses of action might mitigate any dangers the site faces.

The Sisters House Ensemble in Kleinwelka is an ensemble of mid-18th century historic buildings with an outstanding universal value due to its unchanged original structure. It is part of a Moravian settlement, the former colony Kleinwelka, which is a listed heritage site and an example and source of a previous cultural exchange.

The participants of the mission, which took place between 4-5 July 2023, confirmed the significance of the site. The members of the mission were able to meet the representatives of the Schwesternhäuser-Kleinwelka e.V. and an officer of the Moravian Church, owners of the site.

The members of the mission set out to understand the history of the development of the Ensemble and its significance, the reasons for its construction and the overall design philosophy.

It was important for those taking part in the mission to have a clear idea of how the Ensemble is owned and managed and its present socio-economic characteristics.

The following report sets out the findings of the mission and their recommendations for further actions which might be taken to safeguard its values.

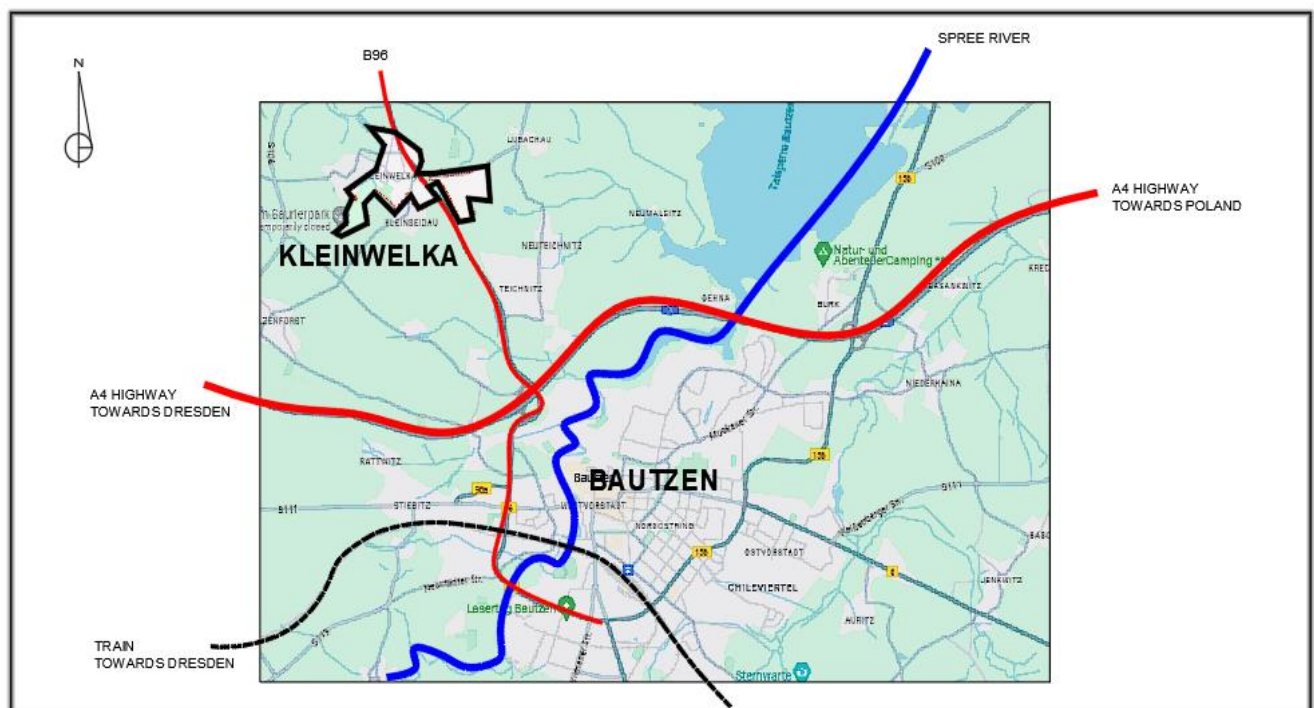
1. Description

1.1 Location

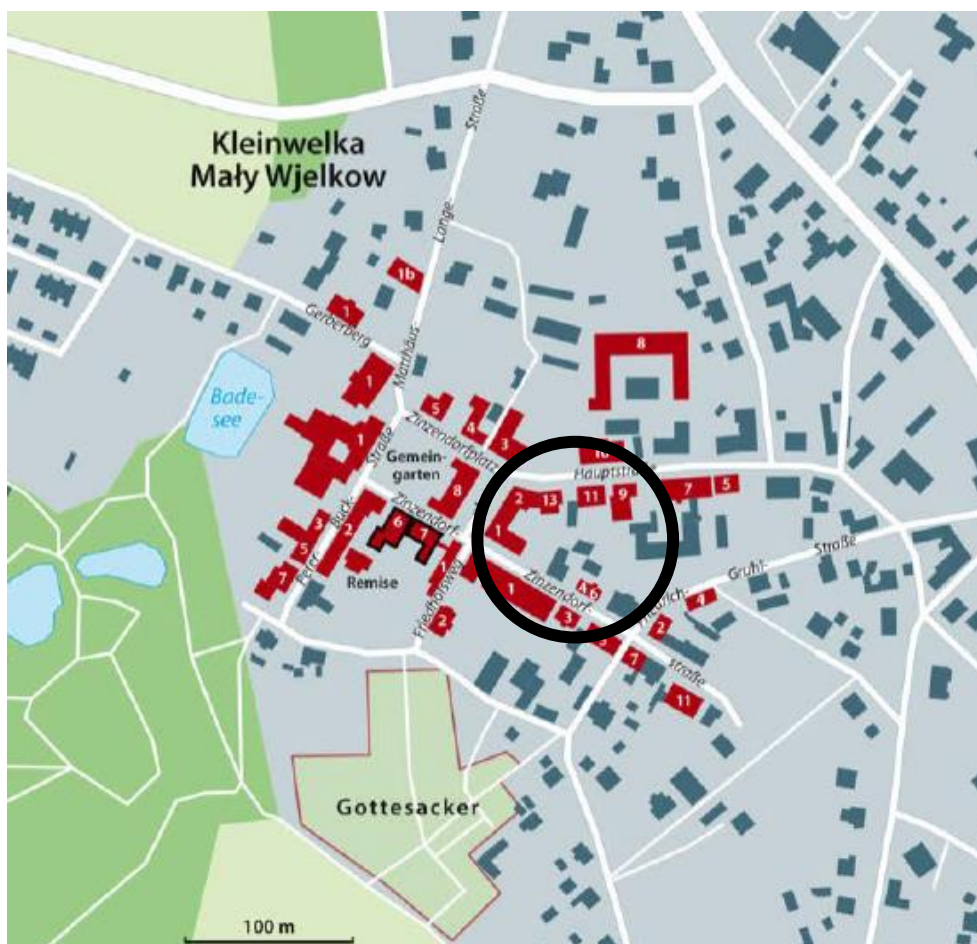
The nominated site, Schwesternhaus - Sisters House Ensemble, is located in Kleinwelka (Sorbian: Mały Wjelkow), a former colony and Moravian settlement. It is a subdivision of the city of Bautzen in Saxony, Germany. It is also part of the historical region of Upper Lusatia that includes territories of Germany and Poland.

The municipality of Kleinwelka, located in the heart of the Bautzen district, currently has 745 inhabitants (as of December 31, 2020) in an area of 1.37 km². Kleinwelka has been a district of the city of Bautzen since 1999.

Kleinwelka has good transport connections, situated at state road B96, and the nearest A4 motorway is 3 kilometres away. The town centre is traffic-calmed, with local transport links, a long-distance bus stop and three stops for regional buses. Bautzen is the nearest city, with a train station, approximately 6 kilometres away. The nearest international airport is 50Km away, in Dresden. The *Spreeradweg* (Spree River Cycle Path) is located 4 kilometres east of Kleinwelka.



Kleinwelka and its surroundings



Location of the Ensemble inside the village

1.2 Brief description of the Ensemble

The Schwesternhaus-Ensemble is an impressive example of Moravian organisation, seldom in its state and outstanding in its high level of originality.

It is part of the listed protected heritage area Kleinwelka, listed since 1995 (object numbers 09253037, 09353038, 09353103 at the Heritage Authority of Saxony).

It forms part of a larger aggregated protected site, the former Colony of Kleinwelka, consisting of 37 further individual buildings. All buildings are organised in two floors plus attic and are completed with a cellar in some areas where the street levels allow it. They represent typical modest Baroque architecture – the Moravian 18th century art of building.

The nominated site, the Sister House Ensemble was built from 1770 until 1897 and consists of five buildings:

- 1) **Sisters House** (some documents refer to this as 2 parts: the Sisters House + Choir *Schwesternhaus+Chorhaus*), the heart of the site, with large communal spaces such as a dormitory, dining room, prayer hall, and room for health care.

- 2) **Old Pharmacy** (*Apothekenhaus*): Nurses' house shop, stationer's shop, greengrocer's, florist's shop, holiday apartment
- 3) **Wash House** (*Waschhaus*): workshops and storage rooms for craftsmen, handicraft lessons, etc.
- 4) **Villa Anna** for further habitation.
- 5) **Shed** (*Gartenhaus*).

The sisters' house and pharmacy are connected by a bridge. A garden and a yard with original cobbled stone and two wells are also part of the site.



KEM Study (Nutzungskonzept für die Baudenkmale Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka)

The significance of the Schwesternhaus-Ensemble is represented by the status of its unique level of authenticity. Its management, which has been difficult for a long time, has in fact given a positive effect along the years: few has been changed in the historic building fabric and today offers the possibility of reviving this authentic ensemble of buildings, which has been overwhelmingly reflecting the outstanding universal value of the site. No other place in Europe, where Moravian women lived in sisterhood and designed their community in so-called choirs, is known to be in such an authentic state as the Schwesternhaus in Kleinwelka.

The women not only lived together and shared their faith, but also set up an education system and substantial health care provision for themselves. They had a strong sense of self-efficacy for the wider community of Kleinwelka and the rural area beyond. This found expression in opening and running a public pharmacy, which they had determinedly fought for legal permission, maintaining the related herbal garden, opening a confectionery, selling homemade sweets, and providing the local school with healthy food.

The women also educated children, who lived in the colony while their parents were overseas on missionary. Therefore, Kleinwelka was the cradle of ideas, values and skills that were taken into the world by the grown-up children departing on missionary and mingling cultures. This implies the various facets of heritage of local culture, Moravian living and cultural mix and impacts.



Wash House from the garden view



Shed



Sisters house Choir



Villa Anna

1.3 Ownership

The owner is the Evangelical Moravian Church, based in Herrnhut and not present on site. It is a Protestant free church, a member of the “Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen” (ACK www.oekumene-ack.de) and, in legal terms, a public corporation. It is a founding member of the Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V. association which was founded specifically for the preservation and utilisation of the building ensemble and, as a permanent member of the association, has two votes instead of the usual one vote in its board.

The owner provides access to two not-for-profit associations:

- Schwesternhäuser-Kleinwelka e.V. , and
- Remise e.V. (Arts and Culture Association)

The Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V. association is recognized as a non-profit and registered entity. The association is organised in two bodies: the General Assembly and the Board of Directors. The General Assembly is the highest representation of the association. Among other things, it elects the Executive Board for a term of four years.

The city of Bautzen is an institutional member of the Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V. association and is therefore entitled to all rights and obligations as a member of the association.

Regarding future ownership, no firm decisions have been made. The future forms of sponsorship or utilisation, rental and leasing relationships will have to be discussed on the basis of the further development of the utilisation concept.

2. Context and history

The nominated site is an ensemble of mid-18th century buildings with an outstanding value due to its unchanged original structure. It is part of a Moravian settlement, the former Colony Kleinwelka, which is a listed heritage site.

The Moravian Church was founded in 1727 in Herrnhut in Upper Lusatia (Saxony, Germany) by Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. He gave spiritual and physical exile to religious protestant refugees from Bohemia and Moravia (persecuted during the Habsburg-led counter-reform) and had given them land to settle in Herrnhut in 1722.

Amongst the Moravian settlements, Kleinwelka is an early colony where the nominated Schwesternhaus-Ensemble constitutes the architectural part of the centre.

Moravians started setting up colonies around the world, namely in Africa and South America. The Moravian Church has today 1.2 million members, twenty thousand of them in Europe.

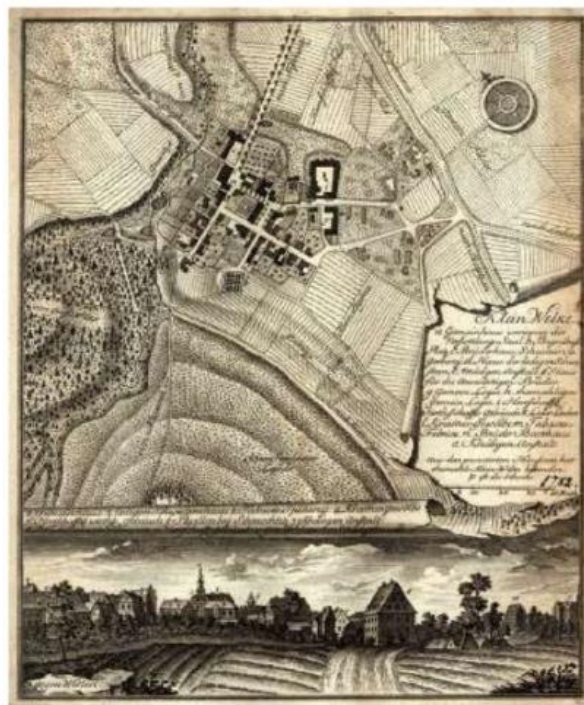


Moravian Kirche Kleinwelka – center point of the Ensemble

2.1 History

Kleinwelka is first mentioned in 1345 as "de Welkowe". The "Mannslehngut" (mansion, manor) Kleinwelka was mentioned in a document in 1519, and in 1745 Matthäus Lange acquired the place. In 1751, Imperial Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf established the Moravian Church movement in Kleinwelka. A central meeting place for the Sorbian brothers and sisters was planned by the management of the Brethren community at that time, not an independent colony yet. They came to the manor house in Kleinwelka at the invitation of Matthäus Lange. Due to the construction of the church hall in the years 1757/58, the Kleinwelka colony was finally founded after Herrnhut (1722) and Niesky (1742). In just a few years, a small manor developed into a Moravian community with businesses and community facilities. In 1772 the Kleinwelka colony was recognized as a fully-fledged community. As early as 1761, 197 brothers and sisters lived in Kleinwelka. In 1780 there were already 339.

With the construction of the choir houses, spiritual as well as artistic and musical life moved into the Kleinwelka colony. Kleinwelka developed into an important cultural centre within Sorbian Lusatia and was established as an educational location. At the end of the 18th century, not only the children of the Sorbian diaspora attended the schools in Kleinwelka, but also those of the Lusatian nobles. From 1800 onwards, the schools were expanded into boarding schools for the children of the fraternal missionary families and gained worldwide importance. The upbringing, care, and training of the Moravian (missionary) children took place in the girls' and boys' institutions. The international schools were not closed until 1942. Up until then, around 2,000 children from all over the world had attended the Kleinwelka Missionary Schools under the motto "Believe in one another. Learn from each other. Stand up for one another". The Moravian missionary work is still active today.



View and plan of Kleinwelka with indication of the important Building, 1782 (engraving by IG Krause)



View of the sisters' and choir house from around 1890 (source: Kleinwelka Municipal Archives)



Zinzendorfplatz with the sisters' and choir house around 1930 (source: Kleinwelka municipal archive)
Source: <https://www.sorabicon.de/herrnhuter-lebenslaeufe/kleinwelka/>

2.2 Historical relevance

All the buildings are of relevant importance, as the ensemble shows the development of the site. The Ensemble is considered to have the highest degree of authenticity compared to others around the world. For this reason, the entire Ensemble is protected as a listed building by the State of Saxony and is considered a nationally valuable cultural monument by the Saxon State Office for the Preservation of Monuments. Individual buildings are also designated as individual monuments.

To date, the history as well as the structural and cultural significance of the entire ensemble has only been researched and analysed in fragments. The focus was on the first building from 1770, as there was a need for action due to recent structural damage to the roof truss.

It is important to mention the relation between the individual buildings to realise the value of the site. None of them can be fully understood individually, without a holistic view of the Ensemble. Open spaces like gardens, streets, alleys, etc. create articulations of the settlement and give meaning to the complex, where uses and organisation of everyday life play a key role in its design. Moreover, concepts of the Moravian Church beliefs and spirit are expressed on the large-scale organisation, as much as on the individual buildings and small details.

Local and regional perception of the significance of the place is still very low, as the entire Ensemble was kept in storage for over twenty years and therefore inaccessible. Thanks to the designation as a building with "7 Most endangered" status, awareness has increased significantly at local, regional, and national level. Members of the state and federal parliaments from various parties visited the site to find out more about the ensemble and pledged their support.

3. Use and functionality

3.1 Previous use

The Kleinwelka settlement is one of the first newly founded communities of the Moravian Church to be designed on open land. Its location in the settlement area of the legally recognized minority of the Sorbian population in Germany was a novelty at the time the community was founded.

The settlement played an important role as a school/educational centre for boys and girls of the church's missionaries working around the world, and later also for the population living in the surrounding area and for the education of children in aristocratic circles. The missionaries' children usually came to Kleinwelka at the age of six and stayed here in boarding school-like communities until they completed their vocational training. A wide variety of cultures came together in school and boarding school life, as the children came to Kleinwelka from all the mission locations around the world. As the youngsters usually went on to serve the Moravian Church after their school education, many of them went into worldwide missionary service themselves. Kleinwelka has therefore had a remarkable significance for the worldwide work and development of the Moravian Church, including the associated cultural and economic exchange, for more than a century.

Children and young people who had completed their school education but were not available for missionary service usually received vocational training.

The nominated site was a place where women and older girls lived in a community, so-called Sisterhood, between the late 18th and late 19th century. The Sisterhood gave education and care to children who were raised and taught before most of them went on missionary. They independently run businesses, which was very progressive at the time. They also maintained a system of education for themselves and other women as well as health care. They also ran an agriculture farm, a public bakery business, a contract laundry, and even a public pharmacy, which they had determinedly fought for legal permission.

A steady use of the Schwesternhaus-Ensemble stopped in 1928 when activities of the sisterhood were terminated. The vacated rooms were used by another Moravian institution for boys until the closure in 1942. After World War II some rooms in the Ensemble were used as apartments. Under the German Democratic Republic regime unrelated uses were dictated. Until the 1990s one room was used as a local convenience store.

It is worth emphasising the close relationship between the local craftsmen and other Herrnhut colonies, in particular the former settlement of Gnadenberg in Silesia (now Kruszyń) near the town of Bunzlau/now Bolesławiec. There were close economic relationships between these two settlements, as most of the craftsmen from Kleinwelka had learnt their skills in Gnadenberg. After the closure of the schools in 1943, the school in Königsfeld in the Black Forest, also a Herrnhut settlement, took over the inventory and many members of the teaching staff.

3.2 Current use

As a local congregation, the Kleinwelka Moravian Church is now part of the ecclesiastical structure of the Moravian Church in the area of its European Continental Province.

The Schwesternhaus-Ensemble is currently cooperatively used by two associations:

- 1) Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V., looking mainly after support for maintaining and repairing the buildings and developing a vision for use for the site. They also use the Old Pharmacy.
- 2) Remise e.V., an arts association organising art and cultural events on site. Rooms in the Old Washhouse are used for occasional stay overs for guests and artists of Remise e.V.. Also uses the Shed.

The garden is shared by both groups.

The city administration has recognized the touristic value of the ensemble and the town of Kleinwelka and formulated this as potential in the integrated urban development concept. Events in the Sisters' House are listed on the city's events page and thus also publicly advertised via the city.

In this respect, cooperation can be assumed as soon as there is a tourist offer in Kleinwelka.

The Saurierpark, a dinosaur themed amusement park next to the village of Kleinwelka, is a municipal company and one of the first institutional members of the association. The desire for good co-operation was expressed here at an early stage. A potentially complementary tourist offer to the dinosaur park is recognized. For this reason, the operational work of the association has been supported by the company to date.

The city of Bautzen has included the Sisters' House ensemble in its integrated urban development concept INSEK (Integriertes Stadtentwicklungskonzept 2030+ (Integrated Urban Development Concept)) as having potential for tourist use.

3.3 Future use

No final decisions have been made regarding future ownership and operating structures in the building complex. These can only be worked out based on the developing utilisation modules.

→ For possible future activities, see point 6.2.

3.4 Kleinwelka and relation with border areas

Kleinwelka ensemble can be considered as part of a broader cross-border (Poland - Czech Republic – Germany) heritage effort. Upper Lusatia and the neighbouring areas of Bohemia have a rich common cultural heritage that still characterises daily life on both sides of the common border: transport links, settlement forms, architecture, language elements, cultural traditions.

A particular commonality lies in the history and present-day influence of the Moravian Church. It emerged in the 18th century from the old Bohemian Unity of Brethren (Unitas Fratrum) and developed into a free church with a worldwide network and its own type of settlement. This is, for example, at the centre of the current transnational UNESCO World Heritage application "Moravian Church Settlements" (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6579/>) with Herrnhut, Gracehill (Northern Ireland) and Bethlehem (Pennsylvania). Furthermore, in Kleinwelka (a so-called Moravian Church settlement), the Sisters' House is a particularly valuable example of the so-called choir houses, which, as places of communal living and working in the 18th century, are considered innovative even from today's perspective, as gender equality has been practised in the Moravian Church from the very beginning.



Moravian settlements across Europe

Unfortunately, important commonalities of this cultural heritage are unknown or forgotten by the public. There is therefore a need to raise public awareness of the shared, cross-border cultural heritage and to preserve and develop it through joint endeavors and international activities. People should become familiar with the respective national history and cultural heritage of their neighbors across national borders. This should also sensitize people in their own country to the background of life today. This also requires the development of a transnational network to communicate this special cultural heritage.

4. State of construction/degree of renovation

4.1 Current condition

The Schwesternhaus-Ensemble consists of 4.680m². The five buildings of the ensemble cover 1.570 m² in a “U” shape surrounding the central garden.

The construction materials consist primarily of stone for foundations and wall masonry. Some interior walls (partitions) are framed with wood and infilled with earth. Fired bricks are also used in specific locations, such as the basement cellar vaults. The roof systems are particularly noteworthy, featuring wooden beams and rafts, finished with slate tiles on the exterior and gypsum or lime plaster with reeds on the interior. Additionally, some details hold special interest, reflecting the rich history of craftsmanship at the site.



Building materials on walls, ceilings (basement) and roof

Earth plastering systems can also be found as a common finish solution alongside gypsum or lime plaster with reeds. In some areas, several layers of wallpaper, including even newspapers, were used as a form of sub-base and insulation.



Different finishes and plasters, including newspaper pages.

The buildings are mostly unoccupied, with the exception of a roughly 70 square metre residence on the first floor of the Old Pharmacy. Here, an artist, who serves as the Chair of "Remise e.V.," lives under an agreement with the owner. In exchange for residing at the site for most of the year, the artist organises cultural activities during the summer months to raise awareness of the location. Additionally, some rooms in the Washhouse are available for short-term rentals to generate income that supports these cultural events. The proximity of numerous members of the "Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V." association provides a sense of community oversight and facilitates a quick on-site presence when needed.

The ensemble's unique charm and authenticity stem primarily from the preservation of its many original components and spatial structures, particularly within the Sisters and Choir House. The original granite floor on the ground floor of the main building and the more than 200-year-old wooden staircase in the choir house have been preserved. Some of the doors and windows are also original.



Details on original windows, stair and floors.

4.2 Health & Safety Hazards

Some parts of the Schwesternhaus are not fully accessible due to open floors and partially insecure and uneven floors. Weight-carrying beams have been supported to prevent further bending or even damage or breakage. Handrails and stairs don't meet required standards.

Potential health impacts due to formerly used wood preservation products in roof structures are assumed but profound research has yet to be undertaken.

Hence those matters, access to buildings is restricted and only possible with authorised members of the mentioned two associations or the owner.

Access to the garden and yard is possible, however loose pavement, bumpy ground, and uneven outdoor stairs do provide health and safety hazards.



Support of beams and floors on different rooms. Roof structural problems.

→ For detailed building condition: KEM Study, Nutzungskonzept für die Baudenkmale Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka, May 2023.

4.3 Maintenance

Regular maintenance and thus the upkeep of the building ensemble is first and foremost the duty of the owner. As far as possible, the two associations ensure that the owner is relieved of this duty by carrying out minor maintenance and care measures themselves with the owner's consent. As a rule, the two associations undertake visual maintenance or immediate assistance.

5. Utilisation concept and role of the association

Basic ideas and proposals on the utilisation of the Sisters House ensemble were developed in the context of a study by a Dresden based consultancy group – Kommunalentwicklung Mitteldeutschland GmbH (KEM). The report on the utilisation concept for the Sisters House ensemble was procured and managed in 2022 by the association.

Four consecutive workshops between July 2022 and January 2023 addressed the following topics: Visions, local situation, role of the association and measures.

In the course of processing, interviews were conducted with various stakeholders in order to obtain a comprehensive assessment of the needs and opportunities.

Regarding development and needs, the following agents are involved: the architect Mr. Neuer, who is responsible for the maintenance and repair measures for the EBU; the representative of the council of the municipality of Kleinwelka, Ms. Köhler; the representative of the owner of the EBU, Ms. Carstens; and the Deputy mayor responsible for urban development and construction of the city of Bautzen, Ms. Naumann.

All those representatives were aware that successful implementation will only be possible with strong commitment from the association. Financial support may not be provided by the city of Bautzen but possibly from other public sources at regional level or above.

Furthermore, discussions were held with possible cooperation partners, such as the Herrnhuter Diakonie and the Beteiligungs- und Betriebsgesellschaft Bautzen mbH. Both welcomed the great commitment of the association. A positive development of the site is considered to be of great importance for the municipality of Kleinwelka. Both interlocutors could imagine offering support to implement some aspects of the utilisation concept (e.g. educational offers from the adjacent dinosaur amusement park) or support to marketing opportunities (e.g. arranging overnight accommodation). However, active support in the form of investment or operation is not to be expected.

5.1 Results and approach of a feasibility study

To obtain a good understanding of the technical state and substance and the future operational and utilisation options, the association has procured a study to KEM. The study was carried out in 2022 and early 2023. Different aspects of the objectives, stakeholder roles and the utilisation concept was subject to four consecutive workshops between June 2022 and January 2023, which were open to the public and attended by about 50 participants from municipal authorities, representatives of the owner, user groups and representatives of the association.

Participants agreed that while the "soul" of the village should be preserved, this must be done taking financial constraints into account. The future use, operation, management, and structural requirements must be reconciled with the desired preservation.

The future uses must also be developed in such a way it is flexibly adapted to requirements and thus ensure the long-term acceptance of the offers. Where possible, commercial letting, in addition to residential and accommodation, should not be excluded.

Based on the workshop results, the KEM study concludes that for the successful implementation of the utilisation concept a step-by-step renovation and revitalization of the individual parts of the building is recommended. In this way the heritage site of the Kleinwelka Sisters' Houses can grow in terms of construction and use, pilot projects can be launched and possibly successfully established. The residents and visitors of Kleinwelka will be able to follow the development process and will once again be able to participate in or again have a connection to this important place. Regardless of which uses are established in the buildings of the ensemble, the internal structures of the Schwesternhaus Kleinwelka e. V. need to be clarified.

The study recommends clarifying the role and scope of the association during the various implementation phases (planning, implementation, operation). It is also necessary to clarify the possibilities with the EBU as the owner.

5.2 Future use

Regarding the Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e.V. association, possible future activities include:

- Short-term:
Temporary utilisation of the building ensemble in line with the aims of the statutes according to the association's own resources (financial, personnel) until a medium-term or permanent solution is found for individual areas/buildings. E.g., temporary event room on the ground floor of the Sisters' House and Choir Hall complex, summer café in the extension to the Sisters' House, upgrading overnight accommodation in the wash house or pharmacy, upgrading the coach house as an event venue. Among other things, ensuring support regarding accessibility of the buildings, information on the history of the ensemble, cultural events...
- Medium-term:
Development of an exhibition concept on the eventful history of the building ensemble
Development of one/several event/information formats in line with the association's statutes.
- Long-term:
Concepts to be developed once financial means are ensured or at least envisaged and the operational and management roles of the owner, the association and possibly other stakeholders are determined.

Short-term utilisation, medium-term development of uses and the establishment of building blocks must form a coherent overall picture valid in the long term. The association aims at ensuring that emerging ideas fit to a consistent broader solution for the utilisation of the settlement in general and the Sisters House complex more specifically.

The association assumes that the concept of an open multifunctional ensemble, which may include cultural usage of other buildings, family residences in smaller houses and a sort of cultural / low budget tourism is the most reasonable general approach, but it will generate quite limited revenues.

Potential cooperation with the adjacent “Saurierpark”, a major tourism attraction of regional importance, is subject to planning and decision-making by the city of Bautzen.

6. Investment costs

The KEM study has undertaken a detailed cost estimate of the renovation costs of all components of the Sisters House Ensemble. The underlying assumption is a ten-year renovation process between 2023 and 2032. The assumed construction related inflation cost was estimated at 5,7 percent/annum.

Three cost components have been (pre-)analysed:

- Preparatory studies: 0,2 Mio Euros.
- Basic reconstruction: Total inflation indexed cost is calculated at 8,4 Mio Euros, based on applicable German industry standards (DIN 276). 6,2 Mio Euros of that are assumed to be needed for the sisters and choir house.
- Interior construction: Total inflation indexed cost calculated at 2,9 Mio Euros, 1,2 Mio of which for the sisters and choir house. The interior construction cost estimate considered the current assumptions on utilisation of the buildings.

7. Operation and maintenance

Current core stakeholders include the owner EBU, the association Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e. V. and the second resident association, Remise e. V., which organises cultural events and activities on the site and also offers various accommodation options.

The actual “modus operandi” will depend on the share of roles between those core stakeholders. Furthermore, the role of the municipality and the contribution from local, regional and national sources will equally potentially influence the operational model.

Costs for financing the utilisation concept, established so far, mainly under the authority of the association will be substantial. The rental/lease income derived from the implementation of the utilisation concept will be very limited and mostly only achievable with substantial public funding. As stated by the KEM report: Even if the property was offered to the real estate market, it could only provide a very low profit margin. A sale of the property is therefore considered unrealistic and is not desired by the owner or the association.

Instead, an operating company under the leadership of the association could potentially contribute to maintain the ensemble in its historical authenticity. The management of the individual units after the conversion and renovation measures can either be carried out by the association itself or be handed over to an external operator.

The KEM study has sketched three basic property and operational schemes:

- Establishment of an umbrella organisation (own company/foundation/private company) as the owner of the entire complex; letting or leasing of individual usage units (apartments, accommodation, event café, business etc.)
- Establishment of an operating company (own company/foundation/private company) as overall manager; generating the refurbishment/maintenance and operating costs from rental income (apartments, accommodation, business, event café), events, etc.
- Status quo - raising own funds/subsidies via the owner (EBU) for the refurbishment/modernization of the entire complex, securing the existing building and guaranteeing its use; operation by Schwesternhäuser Kleinwelka e. V. (& Remise e. V.)

The first option is rejected since it would require privatisation of the ensemble: In the past, the EBU was unable to find an investor/buyer for the site in the past plus the conservation objectives would be impeded in case of a sale.

Operating company for the entire Sisters House ensemble: The KEM report assumes that the establishment of an overall operating company appears to be a compromise solution for the ensemble in Kleinwelka. The refurbishment of the outer shell of the building would be carried out by the overall operating company. Several or different operators can be found for the individual parts of the building and/or different operators can be found for the individual parts of the building and usage units. The refurbishment measures within the building ensemble are carried out by the respective operators. The association would therefore relinquish part of its area of responsibility.

Possible lease or rental income from the operators as well as profit sharing would flow into the overall operating company. It is assumed that the company would at require least two full-time positions.

Status quo: Maintaining the status quo would ensure the preservation of the historic building fabric. However, it would not be possible to establish an economically viable use in the buildings of the Sisters House Ensemble. As a result, the association's need for subsidies from third parties by third parties would remain. The promotion and establishment of cultural events and offers is nevertheless possible in close cooperation with Remise e. V. and should be expanded and promoted with this type of operation.

While the KEM study seems to prefer the second model, no decision has been made so far.

The KEM study proposes objectives for the association itself and the owner for the next two years. Those objectives may be relevant to determine the framework for the use of smaller grants:

- Establish internal (& external) structures.
- Increase presence on site (coordination office - association?).
- Structural development (roof renovation, Villa Anna, interior of the Sisters' House)
- Temporary usage projects - pilot projects e.g.:
 - Garden café once a month.
 - Room offer based on the TELUX example (You need a room? We have room) where there is an actual need and demand.
- Reactivation of cultural activities by Remise e. V.
- Active use of the existing accommodation options by Remise e. V. – greater involvement
- Pursue planning of further steps.
- Opening up to the outside world - showing what and what is happening in and around the Schwesternhaus Ensemble.

8. Funding possibilities

Renovation and longer-term utilisation of the Sisters House complex and its individual components will require substantial public financial support. A relevant share of that will have to be provided by subsidies from all relevant levels of government. The funding will have to be requested also on the basis of municipal priorities and in line with state government objectives. A potential EIBI grant may be used to leverage additional smaller funds so that the planned exhibit as one of several steps can be implemented.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

The European experts have prepared this report using information provided by those associations seeking the conservation of the Ensemble, holding interviews and meetings with the association.

The report has reached the following conclusions:

- The Schwesternhaus Ensemble is a remarkable example of architectural and design principles where individual elements – buildings, alleys, gardens, and more – are deeply interwoven. This interconnectedness extends to functionality, identity, use, and even religious concepts. Each element contributes to a holistic complex design, where understanding the individual parts is essential to grasping the significance of the whole. This integrated approach is also evident in the broader Kleinwelka settlement.
- The Schwesternhaus Ensemble can be understood on multiple levels:
 - Individual Buildings: Each of the five buildings adheres to a specific typology based on its designated function. These functions are clearly identifiable within the architectural design.
 - Functional Ensemble: The five buildings collectively serve a common purpose and operate as an integrated system. Elements like the covered bridge exemplify features that facilitate the smooth functioning of the entire complex.
 - Community Context: The Schwesternhaus Ensemble is part of a larger community structure. This includes other related buildings like the Brothers House, Church, and priest's house, as well as public spaces such as gardens, cemeteries, streets, and alleys. All these elements contribute to a higher level of organisation within the settlement.
 - Global Network: The Schwesternhaus typology and construction systems, following guidelines established by the Moravian headquarters, extend beyond this specific location. This standardised approach creates a recognizable network of villages and missions around the world.
- Architecturally, the Schwesternhaus Ensemble stands out for several reasons:
 - Traditional Design: The organisation and articulation of the buildings exemplify a valuable model of 18th-century regional architecture.
 - Detailed Craftsmanship: Construction elements like roof structures, stairs, doors, and windows showcase meticulous craftsmanship.
 - Unified Complex: The Sisters House integrates seamlessly with other structures like the brother's house, church, garden, and cemetery. The design typology and layout share similarities with other Moravian settlements worldwide, reinforcing its role as a unifying element within a broader network.
 - Internal Functionality: The internal layout of the Sisters House reflects the life and organisation of the religious community, similar to other Christian communal buildings. Understanding this internal organisation is crucial not only on a local level but also within a regional and global context of Moravian settlements.

Recommendations:

- Preserving the authenticity of the Schwesternhaus Ensemble requires careful consideration at each level of complexity, from individual buildings to the broader global context.
 - Building Level: Respecting the original typologies and spatial organisation of each building is crucial to maintain their historical integrity and function as reminders of the lives lived within these spaces. Any proposed changes, no matter how minor (modifications to rooms, openings, etc.), must undergo a thorough evaluation by specialists. This meticulous approach is essential because, as previously mentioned, these buildings are not isolated structures but integral components of a larger complex.
 - Ensemble Level: Maintaining the original connections and relationships between buildings is equally important. The garden serves as a key space for articulation, fostering interaction and flow within the complex.
- Any intervention or restoration must be evaluated by specialists (architects, historians, engineers...) in order to conserve and respect the originality of the whole complex. As the KEM Study emphasises: “The preservation of the authentic building structure, especially in the sisters' and choir house, must be considered. The main building of the ensemble has a special character and regarding a possible expansion of the UNESCO World Heritage Christiansfeld (DK) by the community of Herrnhut with the Zinzendorf-Berthelsdorf Castle, the ensemble of sister houses in Kleinwelka offers an authentic spatial structure with original components that no longer exists anywhere in the world. Thus, Kleinwelka can contribute an associated site of the extended UNESCO World Heritage Christiansfeld. For this reason, the existing building and room structure in the main building should be carefully renovated.”
- As pointed out by the nominator, any intervention should be of use not only on a short-term period, but also on a medium or long term. This ensures a responsible use of resources and avoids the need for frequent repairs or updates."
- The utilisation of the Schwesternhaus Ensemble presents a complex challenge. As most of the heritage sites, the versatility of the complex offers opportunities for various functions. Before reaching a final decision, agreed from the various agents, consideration should be given to the following:
 - Respecting Heritage: Any proposed use must prioritise the preservation of the site's original character, historical significance, and architectural integrity.
 - Ensemble & Community Context: The chosen use should complement the overall function of the Schwesternhaus Ensemble and integrate harmoniously with the village of Kleinwelka and its relationship with other Moravian settlements.
 - Leveraging Regional Tourism: The utilisation plan should consider the two main tourist attractions in the area: Bautzen City and the Dinosaur Park. Collaborations or complementary offerings could be explored to attract visitors.
 - Focus on Long-Term Benefits: While immediate economic benefits are important, considerations should extend beyond short-term gains. Ideally, the chosen use should provide:

- Sustainable Income: Initiatives that generate income streams can support the ongoing maintenance and preservation of the complex. Examples might include hosting concerts, workshops, or events.
 - Long-Term Growth: Developing programs or institutions that align with the community's history and values could contribute to long-term social and economic growth. Possibilities include establishing a carpentry school (referencing the community's past) or a (para)pharmacy operation.
- The EIBI grant may now be urgently needed to develop the concept of the planned exhibition and the visitor reception desk. The implementation of the concept shall then be subject to a combination of funds from Leader or other EU funding programmes with those EIBI funds. The EIBI grant may then serve as “own” funds necessary for the application for the above-mentioned EU sources or national funding sources.