



Postindustrial living

Since the peak of the industrial age, multiple areas and places can be found all over Europe that are unmistakably shaped by industrial architecture. These powerful and often densely arranged structures and facilities leave behind an omnipresent architectural legacy. Although the greatest examples of this architecture are already preserved as monuments, such as the Zeche Zollverein, many less prominent facilities rather resemble relics from this era - despite their characteristic and impressive architecture.

The fossil age is coming to an end and its hardware is becoming obsolete. The energy transition and the climate neutrality of the EU scheduled for 2050 will render large areas, buildings and systems available that were previously used for the storage, processing and recycling of carbon-containing raw materials.

These plants bear witness to an unsustainable era. They were shaped and designed primarily according to their technical and functional requirements.

As a result, they often have special designs and spatial characteristics on which their specific beauty is based - very unique qualities that cannot be accomplished through standard urban development concepts. Therefore it could be of great value to preserve these areas and re-use them in new, sustainable ways.

Facing the climate crisis, there is now a greater awareness of the necessity to act - e.g. in the construction industry, whose enormous share of global emissions became general knowledge. This means that changes in the construction industry might render significant positive effects. In concrete terms, this applies not only to more sustainable construction methods, but also to the use of gray energy that is stored in all existing buildings.



However, changes are also required on the abstract level of spatial concepts and development strategies - this would expand the options and create opportunities to realize projects that were previously considered impossible, utopian or too laborious. Due to changing framework conditions, newly designed conversion projects can be tested in real life.

The ‚postindustrial living‘ project proposes conversion of such buildings and areas into mixed quarters, which is not based on demolition and new construction but on re-usage and renovation. The task includes a feasibility study of how inactive power plants, silo buildings, oil or gas tanks and their surroundings can be converted into contemporary, green and sustainable residential areas and neighborhoods. The special characteristics of these structures require innovation and diverse concepts, since standardized procedures cannot be used here. It is an advantage that most of these areas are currently not part of the real estate market, so that new non-profit methods of procurement and development can be tested here.

The project proposal is inspired by an earlier work by morePlatz which was about the conversion of large storage buildings under the title ‚Glowing Industries‘ in the



early 2000s. The advancing climate change and the need to counteract it have given the idea a new topicality and relevance, which has prompted us to revise and redesign it as part of the New European Bauhaus.

For the continuation of the project, some aspects are redefined and others added. The use of environment-friendly resources, renewable building materials and climate-neutral energy sources for the conversion of the buildings, as well as a balance of gray energy are important. In addition, the open spaces and the surrounding area should be included - the conversion projects are linked to the city through concepts for e-mobility, connection to local transport and landscape design of the open spaces.

Research into buildings and areas that could become available in the near future and that are suited for conversion as pilot projects is also part of the project. The aim is to go through all the concrete steps that are required for realization and implementation after the feasibility study. These include, among other things, reallocations of areas, soil examinations and cleaning, etc.

As an example, the conversion of the oil tanks in Berlin's Westhafen is visualized. In the next step, a site plan with ground floor usage, apartment types, standard floor plans, schematic section, views and a building description are to be worked out.





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