CATEGORY urban-architectural
TEAM-REPRESENTATIVE Architect/Urban Planner/Landscaper

LOCATION Wittenberge Town Quay
POPULATION approx. 18,000
STRATEGIC SITE link-up Elbe riverside with the town centre
SITE OF PROJECT 5.85 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY Wittenberge Town Council
OWNERS OF THE SITE Wittenberge Town Council, municipal housing association, private ownership

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION
Urban master plan, implementation of individual projects

HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?
The Elbe riverside in Wittenberge is a prime example of the urban transformation process. The site has lost its industrial significance and is to be gradually restructured and adapted to new uses. A major step in this direction is the proposed riverside promenade, which will open up the formerly inaccessible area to residents and visitors to the town. The site must be permeable and act as an interface between the town and its natural surroundings. Due to the town's negative growth, it will not be possible to develop all parts of the Elbe riverside at the same time. Intermediate uses and temporary solutions that leave various development options open can be part of the conversion process.

CITY STRATEGY
Due to a massive collapse of the industrial basis after 1990, Wittenberge has had to cope with substantial population loss from 27,000 to 18,000 today. The town is part of the regional growth centre Prignitz and, together with the neighbouring town of Perleberg, a regional centre for a sparsely populated hinterland. Located halfway between Berlin and Hamburg, the local authority's urban planning policy is aimed at promoting its function as an industrial centre with excellent rail connections and an attractive location as the gateway to the Elbtalaue. Urban renewal activity is focused on the conservation and the rejuvenation of the town centre and consolidation of the existing buildings, which lend it its character.

SITE DEFINITION

The core area is the former town quay between the oil mill site (Alte Ölmühle) and the historic town centre. The site holds great importance for the town's history: its industrial development began here with the construction of the main customs office in 1820 and the Herzsche Oil Mill in 1823. The town quay area is now derelict, as is the adjoining former industrial site. The remaining buildings are in part under conservation order. Of particular significance are the derelict grain silos standing directly on the river banks. The listed storehouses are testimony to Wittenberge's economic history and an important part of the cityscape. At the moment, however, they are not being used. The basic structure of the remaining warehouses is to be secured and new uses found.

ADAPTABILITY : MAIN ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

The objective is to prepare an urban development concept that can also be implemented in stages in the context of a shrinking town. The main task is to propose new economically viable uses for the warehouses, which together with the surrounding historic buildings and moderate structural additions are to be defined in an urban master plan. The 'time' factor plays a key role in this. Which are the priority development sites and which areas are suitable for temporary solutions? An example of a successful transformation is the industrial monument Alte Ölmühle, which today is a cultural tourist venue of regional significance.

The area must act as an interface between the town and the Elbtalaue biosphere, a nature reserve of special quality. The interaction with the surrounding landscape must be taken into account in the landscape design. A major part of the task will be to integrate the Elbe riverside area into the overall urban structure. Special consideration should thus be given to the links to the railway station via tree-lined Packhofstraße and to the central shopping zone in Bahnstraße. Ideas are to be submitted for enhancing the amenity value of the various urban spaces and better orientation in this sprawling area on the fringe of the town centre, characterised by demolition and vacant sites.

Bahnhof

derelict grain silos, visible from a great distance

and important part of the waterfront

between Elbe and Bad Wilsnacker Strasse

Bad Wilsnacker Strasse, oil mill site