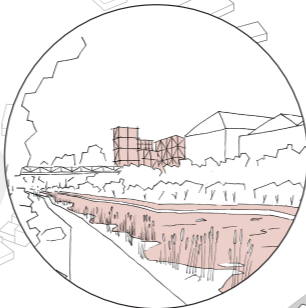


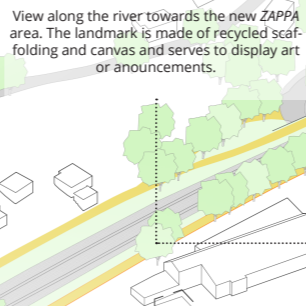
View of the Mühlbach, flowing through one of the courtyards north of Westorplatz square. The southern bank serves as rain water retention area and forms a small habitat for water animals.



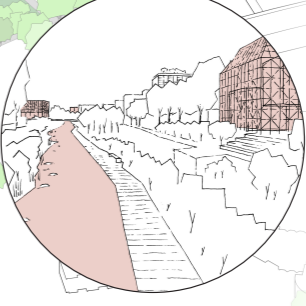
View of the Westorplatz square towards the tower. The square provides space for events like concerts, exhibitions or farmer's markets.



View along Lorcher Strasse towards the Green Wall, the tower and the square. The unwanted line of sight along the tunnel plot disappeared completely, the entrance to Gmünd is highlighted prominently by the tower.



View along the river towards the new ZAPPA area. The landmark is made of recycled scaffolding and canvas and serves to display art or announcements.



View from Rektor-Klaus-Strasse along the river. The walkway on the water level and the promenade above connect a chain of cultural venues. On the right the Dialogue Centre for Science and Design, in the background the wooden cube of the Summer Theatre.

Gmünd's new Gate Tower - kulTURM

Highlighting the western entrance to Gmünd, the tower is also the centre of the new quarter, dominating both the Westorplatz square and the Green Wall. It is inspired by the remaining towers of Gmünd's former town wall, the Himmels...

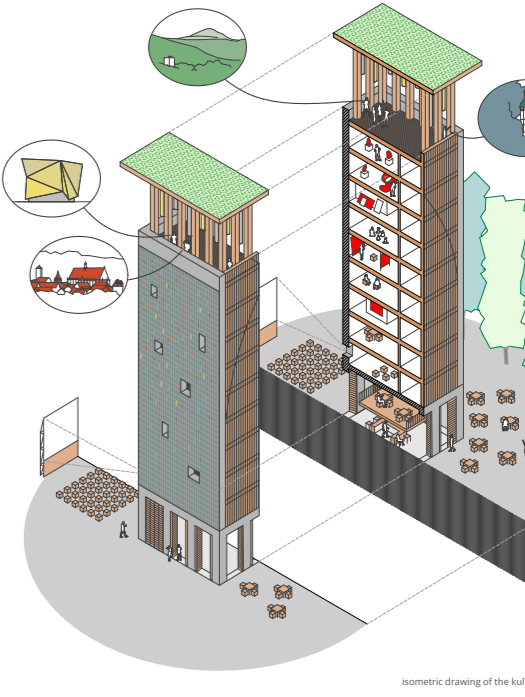
From the viewing platform on the tower's top floor many of Gmünd's characteristic elements are visible. It is also home to a cabin made of different metals, designed and manufactured by local artisans.

The tower serves as platform for artists, musicians and designers, providing space for studios, exhibitions, presentations and rehearsals.

A small independent cinema in the first floor is imaginable that can also act as projection room for an open-air cinema in summer.

The ground floor contains a cafe and bar that can serve all four sides of the tower. According to surrounding events, the doors can be shut or opened, modifying the impermeable appearance.

The three sides facing the green space are constructed massively (e.g. of brick or concrete) while the inside is a wooden construction, showing itself towards the square. The massive facades are clad with solar tiles dappled with glazed roof tiles in different colours according to those used in town.



Isometric drawing of the kulTURM tower 1:250

VIRIDITAS ANTE PORTAS

A NEW GATE FOR SCHWÄBISCH GMÜND

viriditas (lat.) verdure, vitality, vigour ante portas (lat.) before the gates, on the way, also an expression for a direct existential necessity

The German town of Schwäbisch Gmünd has a long and colourful history, dating back to the Roman Empire and its famous wall, the Limes. Its current appearance was mainly shaped in medieval times; main attractions are its gothic minster and the preserved towers of the town wall, creating a picturesque atmosphere.

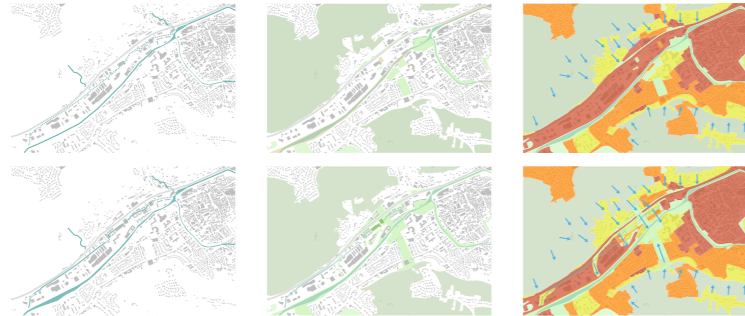
Gmünd's western entrance lacks these qualities, it is an urban wasteland, characterised by car dealers, industrial sites and the crossing railway.

But the site is also promising: the forested slopes of Nepperberg, the lush banks of the river Rems, the proximity to the old town centre and the town's transport hub as well as some important institutions make it an ideal place for a new living quarter.

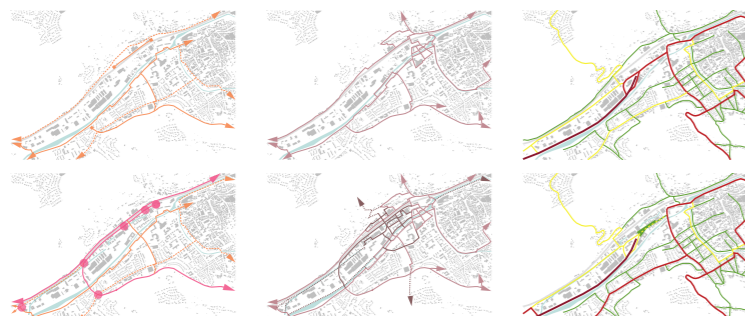
This design expands on these noteworthy potentials and aims to create a quarter that extends the town centre westwards adapting its distinctive features. It focuses on five points: 1. Historically and Contextually inspired Structure, 2. Blue-Green Connections, 3. Bike- and Pedestrian-Centred Mobility, 4. New Urban Productivity and 5. Mixed Use for mixed Lives.

By implementing the concepts developed regarding the points a district is created that is green, liveable, and productive, contributes to the development of a circular economy and circular construction, promotes sustainable forms of traffic and improves the local climate.

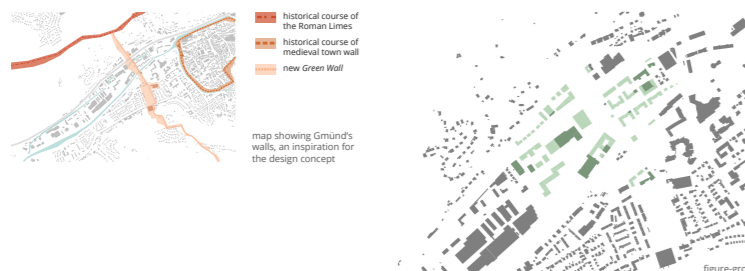
As the title indicates it will also act as a new gate to the town of Schwäbisch Gmünd, welcoming visitors and residents alike by linking the town's illustrious past to the present and hinting towards the future.



Green and Free spaces The site is confined by the river Rems in the south and the forested slopes of Nepperberg in the north. Most of the river is inaccessible, the only exception being the Remspark east of the site. There is an almost vanished millstream crossing the area and some green spaces on the southern riverbank. The site is characterized by vast patches of wasteland, partially due to the construction of the federal street's tunnel and a high level of soil sealing. Hence, the area has a very negative microclimate. Our project aims to open up the millstream and make the Rems accessible. The existing green spaces will be connected and form a ribbon going all the way from the southern to the northern slopes of Rems valley. The river and the millstream also bring green into the new quarter. By providing a large free space from the slopes to the river, the microclimate will be enhanced considerably.



Infrastructure The area lies next to the railway station and the central bus station (ZOB), right at Gmünd's main hub of public transport. There are several bike paths connected to regional routes, usually as part of the street or the pavement. A few walkways connect the site to the other side of the river but there is no direct connection on the north or the Remspark area. Lorcher Strasse is an important street, leading commuters, residents and visitors directly from the federal street to the town's centre. This project establishes a variety of new street-independent bike paths of which two are designed as regional bike freeways. A new network of pathways connects the site to the adjacent areas. Lorcher Strasse will be rendered unattractive to commuters, thus relaxing the traffic situation. Alternative routes exist, but residents and visitors shall be motivated to use other forms of transport by upgrading interchangeability.

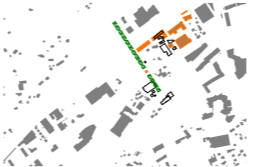


In search of Gmünd's very own character, we noticed its well-preserved structure: an old medieval town core, encircled by a green ring, followed by villas and residential quarters. This is only disrupted by a few bigger buildings, such as the Congress Centre. The project's structure is based on this observation. Close to the ZOB is a cluster of block structures resembling the higher density of the town centre. To the west follows an open space called the Green Wall that divides the first cluster from the rest just like the town walls used to. A tower highlights the new gate and leads to the Westorplatz square. A layer of bigger structures defines the western edge of the Green Wall. Beyond this and north of the railway, the structures get smaller and less dense, mediating the smaller scale of the northern residential area and the industrial zone expanding westwards.

IMPLEMENTATION

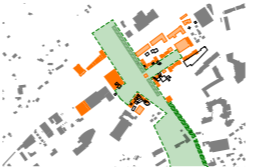
Phase 1 - Initiation

- Biforo-Hall as urban catalyst
• Tower and Green Wall as landmarks
• Bike freeways as new access to site
• Biforo building and northern block edge as productive spine along bike freeway



Phase 2 - Framework

- Formulation of green space and square's edges
• Creation of Westorplatz square and implementation of new traffic scheme
• Neighbourhood parking
• Basic framework of ZAPPlus and Zeitwerk-Quartier
• Start of urban agriculture



Phase 3 - Expansion

- Making Rems accessible
• Opening first part of Mühlbach
• Expansion of blocks towards Rems and Mühlbach
• Expansion of ZAPPlus and Zeitwerk-Quartier
• Establishing culture path along Rems

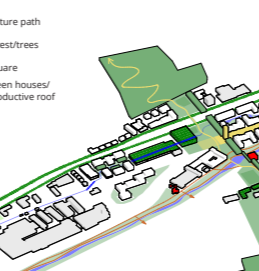


Phase 4 - Consolidation

- South-western expansion of Rems promenade (connection to Schwenbach)
• Construction of Kreuzmühlenquartier and Hainquartier
• Zeitwerk-Quartier finished
• Future expansion westwards imaginable

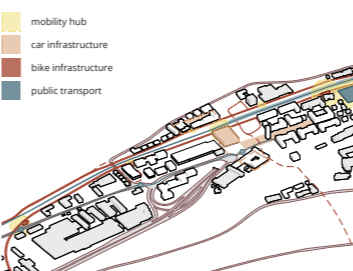


2 Green-Blue Connections



The Green Wall connects the forests of Nepperberg in the north and Siechenberg in the south via the existing sport areas. A wide, day-lit underpass overcomes the railway. There is space for urban farming, sports and relaxation. New bridges and additional ways of crossing the river Rems are installed. It is made accessible by a walkway on water level and a promenade on the embankment. Like pearls on a string, these paths connect different cultural venues. The reactivated Mühlbach becomes a secondary blue axis and brings green into the quarters. It also acts as retention area for heavy rainfall and potential source of power.

3 Bike- and Pedestrian-Centred Mobility



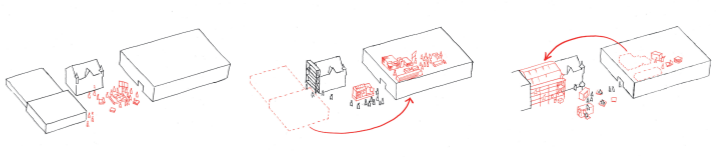
To reduce traffic by car, Lorcher Strasse is transformed into a living street and a shared space between Zapp and ZOB. Neighbourhood parking is established on the western edge of the Green Wall to obtain a car-free quarter. There are also P+R parking lots along Lorcher Strasse, e.g. at the Bosch Site or close to the Limes sites. Bike traffic is strengthened by installing two bike freeways, one north of the railway tracks (following Rems valley from Stuttgart to Aalen) and one south (Gmünd-Böpingen, following the former Hohenzollern-Ferrenbahn). They are complemented by secondary bike paths leading to the town's centre. Mobility hubs provide parking for cars and bikes, bike-sharing stations, bike-repair stations and access to public transport at strategic points.

CIRCULAR STRATEGY

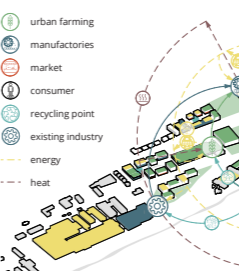
The former Biforo-Hall will act as urban catalyst. It accommodates an organisation that develops the quarter together with stakeholders via workshops, conferences and discussions. They evaluate the existing buildings regarding criteria of sustainability like embodied energy and built-in resources.

Suitable buildings are adapted to fit into the new quarter. Unsuitable buildings are dismantled. The extracted material is stored in Accumulated knowledge can be spread to other projects or lead to the foundation of companies and start-ups. This project could become a role model for circular construction.

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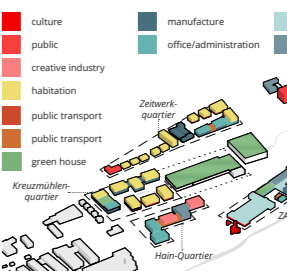
4 New Urban Productivity



Production comes back into town! The Green Wall provides space for urban gardening, and urban farming; rooftops are activated by turning them into roof gardens and green houses or by using them to produce energy. In addition, existing buildings are adapted for example as a cider mill, and delivered to the local markets by cargo bike (using the bike freeways) or regional markets using the nearby train station. The consumer's waste is collected locally, biological waste returns to the agricultural spaces, metal for example goes to the nearby industrial sites that send their waste heat to the green houses and residents. All buildings produce energy which is used locally, excess is fed into the town's grid.

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5 Mixed Uses for Mixed Lives



The return of production also means the return of work into town. This is the start of a colourful mix of uses within the blocks to avoid mono-used areas and commuting. The mix aims for synergies but also brings contrastive uses together to ensure a living atmosphere all day long. The splitting and spreading of uses causes ways within and between the clusters and therefore encounters in the public space. The clusters have different foci: Westorquartier - living, market and service; Bahnhofsquartier - production and offices; Zeitwerkquartier - production and living; Kreuzmühlenquartier - production and living; Hain-Quartier - administration, education and studios; ZAPPlus - Start-ups, college, living; St. Katharina nel Verde - community centre