Graz - Österreich - europan 11 VISIONARY SUSTAINABILITY: WOODEN HIGHRISE & CONNECTIVE BASE



CATEGORY urban/architectural

LOCATION	Graz-Liebenau
POPULATION	210.000
STUDY SITE	9,09 ha
SITE OF PROJECT	3,38 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY	City of Graz
OWNER OF THE SITE	Private Investor/City of Graz

TYPE OF ORDER AFTER COMPETITION
Implementation of urban facilities

TRANSFORMATION OF SITE
Being one of the most important entrance points of the city, the develoment of the project site will create a new landmark for the city, on the physical level as well as on the programmatic one: a horizontal structure overbridges the entrance road, providing spaces for public, commercial and infrastructural uses. It also serves as an „umbrella“ for the diverse traffic flows, including a tramway stop.
At the same time the structure forms the base for an appartment tower which becomes the highest building in the city. As an example for visionary sustainability the tower provides a wooden structure. Tower and base form the characteristic elements of a composite project which introduces innovative urban-architectural strategies as a new form of comprehensive city development.
Instead of developing the tower in detail, the project shall create an urban topology resulting in the best possible framework for the area‘s urban activation, including the possibiltiy of further developments along the N-S axis of the study area.

CITY STRATEGY
How can growth be directed in a strategic way, strengthening the urban structure of the city? How to revitalize its reserves in the already built up area?
The issue of inner urban growth constitutes one of the main focusses in the development concept of the city. Above all, it faces the challenges of the coexistence between infrastructure, mixed uses, public space and living programs. Recent infrastructural projects such as the elongation of the tram and a planned local train stop will improve the area‘s integration in the public transport network. In addition the city has recently introduced a new strategy: important sites, such as the Europan site shall be developed as radiating urban poles using a comprehensive evaluation-strategy, ranging from progressive concepts for sustainability to the creation of a strong visual identity.

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aerialphoto with strategic elements



aerialphoto with project site

SITE DEFINITION

The site is located at one of the main entrance points, representing a spot of welcome to locals, commuters, vistors and tourists alike. In the surroundings a series of programs - some established, some more recent - testify the site‘s potential as a signifcant development area which is perfectly connected and placed at the interface of inner and outer city: the Arnold Schwarzenegger (city‘s main soccer-) Stadium, the Ice-Sports Hall the New Fair-Building on the Fair Grounds, the City-Events‘-Hall, a Shopping Mall wchich is linked to the public transport.

Signifcant is the N-S organization of various band-like developments which are arranged in parallel an characterize thespatial-structure of the area railtracks, strip for goods and freights, Conrad v. Hoetzendorf street (main entrance-axis to the centre), strip of suburban developments, Muenzgrabenstrasse (second entrance road). The band-like structure embeds the Europan site in a larger structural spatial system which reflects the historical growth of the city southwards. The „loose“ and fragmented arrangement of buildings within this characteristic structure offers a lot of potential for transformation: Europan triggers a perfect opportunity for a change in programme, architecture and urban performance in order to exploit the site‘s excellent location.

NEW URBAN MOBILITY

The site is a contemporary market place for traffic exchange: a destination for changing mobility, from regional to local networks. Especially the spatial potentials of the traffic-change with its interstitial activities and transient urban qualities provides an excellent framework for the re-definition of public life, intrinsically linked to distinct rhythms and speeds of the various users: how can we „host“ the rhythm of markets, of commuters, of leisure, of stadium-events, of senior-walkers as an elastic system of coexistence, etc.

NEW SOCIAL LIFE

The culmination of the project‘s potential is its capacity to manage coexistence: being more than just a mixed use hub the project shall be able to provide a stage set for differnet speeds, different rhythms of the everyday. different uses and claims - a platform for contemporary public life in all its diversities.

NEW ECOLOGY

To live in a progressive wooden tower symbolizes a comittment for sustainability in itself - new ecology starts with the concept of how to implement the whole project - be it on the level of architectural excellence, be it in the level of urbanistic intelligence: in corresponcence to the architecure‘s concern with sustainable construction the urban plan‘focusses on the the sustainable organization of urban intensification.

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semiaerial large view


Graz Mitte
Graz Nord
Hauptbahnhof
Stadion
Stadion/Eishalle
Messe/Stadthalle
LKH Univ.-Klinikum
Mega
bauMax
Reifen Weichberger
Flughafen
Einkaufszentrum Murpark


UPC ARENA


BESTATTUNG
TANK ROTH
CAFE ROTH


VENTREX
VENTREX