The City of Berlin: The Urban Regeneration of the “Spandauer Vorstadt’ Neighbourhood

The Quarter

As the only section of the old part of Berlin that has maintained its historical structure, it is possible to perceive the course of 300 years of the city's historical development. This ranges from the original suburb to its integration in Berlin, the urban expansion during the late Barock era and the Period of Promoterism (1870/71 until 1914) until today. The area is characterised by the buildings being erected in such a way as to form courtyards. Even before 1990, discussions started around the area's preservation. The discussions were instigated by demolition plans which triggered the area into becoming a conservation area. During the 1990s a new artistic scene developed. At the start of the redevelopment, there was already an upward drive. 96.3% of the plots were burdened by restitution.

Redevelopment Requirements

As a result of the neglect due to alleged inhomogeneous structure of old and outdated buildings from the period after the Second World War into the 1980s, redevelopment was essential. Wasteland areas, gap sites in courtyard perimeters, detached empty houses and buildings with a high degree of decomposition were points of difficulty for the cityscape configuration. Trade and industrial use lay in conflict with residential use.

Considerations

The main considerations of the redevelopment process were: the suburb of Spandau is under conservation area protection, the suburb of Spandau is both a residential and business area, the suburb of Spandau is part of the ecosystem of Berlin. These considerations were noted in the reorganisation concept and the urban development master plan.

Organisation

The District Authority was responsible for the redevelopment. The Urban Planning Authority and the Redevelopment Administrative Agency were jointly in charge of the project. The 'Office Co-ordinating the Support of Urban Redevelopment in Berlin' was the redevelopment agency. A representative was appointed for parties affected by the redevelopment, as well as a 'Redevelopment Advisory Committee' and an advisory service for tenants. Surveys were regularly carried out with residents.
Implementation

The office co-ordinating the support of urban redevelopment compiled concepts for the blocks, which made the block redevelopment goals concrete and defined the building structure, height and use of buildings and open spaces for every single plot. There were even studies performed in respect of public spaces, businesses, traffic and residential environment, and a design code of practice.

Costs and Financing

From 1990 onwards, there was a considerable input of public funding with various development programs from preliminary investigations and redevelopment measures to building substance preservation being recorded. Between 1993 and 2007 a total of 205 million euros worth of public funding flowed into the area. Additional to this, it was estimated that approximately 1.1 to 1.2 billion euros would be generated. This meant that for every euro of public funding, approximately 5.4 to 5.8 euros private funding would be generated. As a result of the central location of the area and its strengthened development due to the course of the renovation, the senate anticipated an increase in the average land value to the standard land value of 61 euros per square metre. It was possible to observe a change in the finance strategy from the initially strongly publicly-assisted modernisation and restoration of residential buildings at the start of the project, to exclusive demands for the renovation and redesign of public green areas and open spaces, and infrastructures. Due to the scope of the comprehensive regeneration program, funding was provided from state and federal government programs: 'Urban Development Monument Protection', 'Renovation and Development Measures', 'Urban Redevelopment East - Evaluation', 'Modernisation and Maintenance Requirements of Residential Buildings', as well as 'Investment Planning in Berlin', 'GA Funding', 'City-wide Measures', 'The Renovation of School and Sports Grounds Program' and 'Urban Regeneration Infrastructure' and lastly, the yielding of compensatory payments.
Diagram 1:
Expenditure in connection with the redevelopment.
(Source: The Capital City of Berlin: Costs and Financial Summary 2006. Own figures.)
• Preparation and remuneration of the redevelopment agency.
• Regulatory measures
• Construction measures

Diagram 2
Income in connection with the redevelopment.
(Source: The Capital City of Berlin: Costs and Financial Summary 2006. Own figures.)
• Urban reconstruction east: upgrading
• Urban construction monument protection
• Urban regeneration and development measures
• Investment planning Berlin
• Compensatory payments
• Modernisation & maintenance demands within residential properties
• GA Funding
• City-wide measures
**Balance and Appraisal**

The intended guidance of investments through the focussing on legal planning and regeneration instruments, the consequent implementation of urban development plans, the public demand for homes with a ceiling on rental costs and residency rights for the districts was able to divert the high pressure to find investors at the start of the 1990s. Today, from around 6,300 properties, 1,300 are reserved for district occupants. Affected occupants played a main part in the regeneration process. Manifold methods were granted to enable the contribution and influence of design possibilities by the different interest groups: the residents, the business owners and the home owners. The high funding obtained, in particular from the 'Urban Monument Protection Program', had unquestionably contributed to the decision to preserve the diversity of buildings in the ‘Spandauer Vorstadt’ Neighbourhood, to bring housing to a contemporary standard with a socially acceptable rent for the centre of Berlin, and to continue the form of the monument-protected area cityscape using a high quality of design. Within a period of 13 years, the number of residences increased from 5,809 to 6,293 and the population grew by 23%. From an original 166 gap sites and wasteland areas, 114 have been built on. Up to the end of 2006, from a total of 4,060 residences in old buildings requiring refurbishment, 85.6% were comprehensively restored and modernised. A success of the regeneration process has been the flowering of city life and this residential area in the heart of Berlin. This has arisen through the high quality of the new buildings with a fixed proportion of residences, the building of owner-occupied residences and strategic involvement.

As a consequence of the readily available subsidies in the initial phase, renovation as agreed with the tenants and safeguarded by social plans, could be carried out and the modernisation related rent increases capped. The initially high number of old buildings officially required to be modernised as determined by the restitution was deferred due to the discontinuation of the economic development scheme for private residential buildings in 2001. Additionally, the funds were concentrated towards covering the renovation, new buildings and the redesign of the public infrastructure. The taking into account of all user groups in the design of urban open spaces and in particular of the play-parks, parks and sports grounds resulted in a high demand for these provisions. The implementation of traffic and design concepts resulted in a less burdened traffic system, better accessibility and well-developed pedestrian and cycle networks. The success of the implementation of the urban regeneration aims was apparent through good teamwork with participating stakeholders during the renovation.
Milestones

1989  Foundation of a 'Citizen's Initiative' against demolition plans.
1990  The suburbs of Spandau came under monument protection.
       Start of the reassignment process.
1992  Commencement of the preparatory investigations.
       Facility of representation for affected parties.
1993  Establishment of the maintenance by-law.
       Formal designation of the redevelopment area boundaries.
       Compilation of a reorganisation concept.
1994  First meeting of the Spandau Suburb's 'Urban Redevelopment Advisory
       Committee'. Gold medal for the 'Maintenance of the Historical City Areas
       within the New States'.
1995  Establishment of maximum rental prices within the regeneration area.
1998  Resolution on the preparation of the first legally-binding land-use plan to
       protect building utilisation.
2001  Setting of the modernisation requirements in private residential buildings.
       Concentration on public infrastructure.
2002  Initiation of the park area cultivation.
       Gold medal in the Federal Government competition 'Living in Historical City
       Centres and Central Locations - The Future of Urban Centres and Spaces'.
2003  Revision of the urban regeneration master plan.
2004  Concluding of a traffic and design concept.
2006  The maximum rental prices were finally declared unable to be authorised.
2007  Opening of the new 'Krausnick Park' recreation area.
       Inauguration of the newly-built wing of St. Hedwig Hospital.
Pictures:

Picture 1: Hackesch Market

Picture 2: Krausnick Park

Pictures: Katharina Janke