

E15 JURY STATEMENT

RUNNER-UP

OF CYCLES AND STREAMS

JK472

Local commission: Clear cross-connections through the urban development area were realized. Each of these connections is assigned a public green space. The Mühlgang is regarded as the predominant urban character and staged in the public squares.

The consistent attitude towards preserving and emphasizing quality spaces characterizes the concept from the urban development strategy to the architectural project.

The project has a very conceptual approach in that it plays with the reversal of the structure. The design generally moves in the space between the contrasts; the old and the new, the closed and the open, the sealed-off and the green. The temporal organization of the procedure allows the developer to meet with the tenants and future inhabitants to discuss their requirements.

The selective increase in height is very suitable. The use of the towers for production must be examined more thoroughly. Although the whole area is built up to the maximum amount, it still opens itself to the public and is inviting. The organisation of the floors in the base of the building will allow for varied uses over time. The present building is to be hollowed out and act as a contained public space. It takes on the role of a village square for the area.

Due to this it even could become a central point for the entire area. This public space allows for innovations. With its central location it provides an interactive space for the inhabitants. This area bolsters functionality with its power to connect. It makes it possible to spread out into the public space, even just temporarily.

The architectural quality comes from concentrating on the essentials, preserving quality and planning interventions with care. The facade will have greenery added and on the roof of the plinth, allotments will be provided to grow food and other plants.

The preservation of the old while creating the new lends the project a unique character. A high degree of recognition and the involvement of the public provide the project with its strong unique selling point which could have an effect beyond Graz itself.

International jury: The jury highly appreciates the internal square and the intelligent adaption of the existing building, thereby creating a new typology of space in the productive landscape. The semi-covered plaza allows productive uses to be combined with public activities and in that, offers a spatial potential hardly found in the city: an open, in-between space without a label, able to evolve and suitable for the area.

The logistics of the place are well thought and are ingrained naturally in the ground floor area. Although the transversal public axis is doubted to be feasible, the access to the internal core seems viable from the side entrance. In this respect the proposal is deemed as being very flexible, a reduction of the footprint could also be imagined - particularly its expansion towards the mill stream is viewed very critically, as it leaves only a narrow strip of land and thereby cuts off the quality of the existing natural surroundings.

On a programmatic level, the project represents a traditional model, using horizontality to distribute productive spaces. It is questionable if the upper floors are fit to adapt to productive uses, as they appear more like office towers. The plain, almost classical facades of the plinth and the towers are also seen critically.

The strategy is only very rudimentary, although it does concentrate in a very basic way on the two relevant topics, which are public space and transversal accessibility.

The strength of the project is clearly its proposal of a new typology of public space in an industrial area and the sensible approach of reusing and redeveloping the existing building and is therefore valued highly by the jury.