



E16 LINZ Site Visit

analog & digital, 06.05.2021

12:00–12:50 live stream digital site visit via Instagram: 55 participants (no questions via chat)

13:00–13:45 zoom live discussion: 13 participants /digital and 4 participants /in situ

INTRODUCTION

Site representatives: Manuel Gattermayr, project manager Froschberg, EBS Wohnen Linz;
Christian Strecker, Planning department, City of Linz

Moderation: Iris Kaltenegger (EUROPAN Austria); Linda Lackner (EUROPAN Austria)

Iris Kaltenegger: Thank you for joining us, I would like to introduce the people who are here with me: This is Linda Lackner again, who did the marvellous job of guiding us through the site via video. Then, I would like to again introduce Manuel Gattermayr the site representative from EBS and Christian Strecker from the City of Linz. Before we start: everyone is welcomed to ask questions and/or to write questions in the chat.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Q1 [Iris Kaltenegger]: As there are no questions in the chat yet, I would like to get started. I think it was very interesting to see the complexity and also the loveliness of the site. The caring attitude of the tenants who are living here was very obvious – all these gardens and flowers and so on. This is a question to Manuel Gattermayr, because I am sure you have already thought about how to communicate with the tenants here and how EUROPAN is presented in this context of a living environment? I think this question would also lead to another question – in which extend should the participants include this participatory process in their proposal?

A1 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Thank you for the question, I think it is very important to include and to inform the inhabitants of the surrounding, so we already sent out an information letter to all the inhabitants of Froschberg with the information, that we are doing a EUROPAN competition and that we are planning on the long term to develop the whole area and to modernize the whole area. Both, from the objects, the buildings, but also from the built environment in the fields of mobility and open space. We really want to develop the area on the long run into a high-quality living area. This is what we sent out to the inhabitants. And what we will send out next week or the week after, will be a questionnaire to all our tenants, to all inhabitants, where we ask them a



lot of questions concerning their living quality, concerning their flats, the objects but also concerning the whole built environment and the whole area they are living in. We are asking them which ideas they have, which wishes they have and which problems they think there are at the moment. All these questions and answers we will also provide for the EUROPAN competition. These answers, I think, will be very important information for the architects who will work on the competition

Iris Kaltenecker: Thank you, this is clear and a quite straight forward way to dealing with this. In one month time we will receive the information. This is one part, where the participants can involve the opinions of the tenants, but is it also envisaged – because the task on the site is basically on the typologies – to think about a new way of living, so basically working on the typologies as such, but also to work on a moderate, an agreeable densification.

Q2 [Iris Kaltenecker]: Should the participants also think about what is happening while the typologies are going to be converted, where the tenants should move? Should they also provide phases, scenarios?

A2 [Manuel Gattermayr]: No, this is not part of the competition, this is not what we want to see from the architects. Not because we don't think it is important – we do think it is very important – but we will face these challenges after the competition. Our intention is, first the EUROPAN competition. Here we are looking for fresh ideas, a lot of concepts, and when we hopefully will have all these ideas and concepts we want to do the phasing and the later implementation afterwards on our own, but we will always be communicating with the tenants. This implementation process is not part of the competition. We want the architects to focus on the architectural and on the urban planning.

Q3 [Linda Lackner]: I have a short follow-up question concerning the residents. It concerns the duration – how long do they stay, how long do they rent the flats – is there a fluctuation of residents? Because walking through, we could see all these nice little yards, it seems that some residents really identify a lot with this area here. I wonder, when new residents move here, probably also younger, probably also financially stronger, how to mediate between them. But the actual question is, do you have mostly long-term

A3 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Actually, we have quite a mixture of very long-term renters and also some of the inhabitants are newer. We have a little fluctuation but not very high. It is actually quite mixed. Concerning the age, it is true that we are slightly overaged here, so we expect,



when we do some projects, when we maybe build new buildings, when we have some implementations here, that the average age will be younger in the future.

Q4 [Iris Kaltenegger]: One question that popped up at the Kick-Off and was also in my head since some time concerning maybe both of you [Manuel Gattermayr and Christian Strecker]. It is about the old substance of the buildings – the prototypes you were pointing out – in how far could they be changed, demolished or added on, maybe you can just elaborate a bit on this issue?

A4 [Christian Strecker]: The City of Linz perceives this settlement as a settlement worth preserving. It is not listed, but it is worth preserving. Some parts could be demolished, but the structure itself should stay the same or even improve. To demolish the whole settlement and build something extremely different and new should not be the task! There can be attachments to buildings, or another floor on top of it or some new buildings in the open spaces in between, but to remove the whole settlement is not in the sense of the City of Linz.

Q4.1 [Iris Kaltenegger]: Okay, so it is basically working with the existing, but allowing to a certain range to adapt it and to definitely bring in a new surface, a new spirit to it, in doing so, there have to be some adaptations done, not only building within the roof or the attic and things like this. Will there be a statement coming from the City on that topic?

A4.1 [Christian Strecker]: Of course, the density has to increase, because that is the task, there is nothing wrong about that, but as I mentioned before, the structure of the settlement is unique in Linz and worth preserving so it should at least be improved or developed.

Q5: How exactly and to whom are the apartments allocated? [Who gets the flats? What is the system and how are the flats allocated to the people that want to move in?]

A5 [Manuel Gattermayr]: The flats are given mainly to workers from the ÖBB [Austrian Railway Company] because the ÖBB is the owner of the ground, only the buildings belong to the EBS, so for all the flats, the ÖBB has the right to give the flats to their workers.

Q6: Are there different price ranges for the tenants?



A6 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Actually not, I mean, of course some of the flats are in a better condition and are newer, of course these flats are more expensive than the ones in the very old buildings, but in average we have in all buildings really low prices for the flats.

Q7: Are all public services on the strategic site – such as the church, the kindergarten, and the school – are they still in service and will they be in the future?

A7 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Yes, they are all in service and will be there in the future. All these public services are in the center of the strategic site, this is why they are also part of the strategic site, but they actually do not belong to the EBS or ÖBB. They will remain there and it is not part of the competition to develop this kind of services. Of course, we have to think about these services in the public space and in the urban planning.

Iris Kaltenegger: I would like to add something to underline what you just said: Even so they don't belong to the City or to the EBS, they will be there and it is very important to take this as kind of an advantage – this is basically the heart of the Froschberg and it is very important to think also of this center and the services to develop the concept for the typological adjustments.

Q8: Are there already now some communal uses/functions, for example shops or offices, doctors or medical centers, besides schools, church, and kindergarten?

A8 [Manuel Gattermayr]: No, there are hardly any of those services mentioned right now, it is mainly a living/housing area. Right now, there are no services like that but they could be developed in the future, this is part of the task.

Q9: Is it true, that the building development plan should not be regarded?

A9 [Manuel Gattermayr]: I think so, because it is an old, outdated plan, but maybe Christian Strecker can say more to that.

A9.1 [Christian Strecker]: The existing urban development plan is a very strict plan, it only pictures the existing buildings, so there is no development range within this plan so there wouldn't be any progress in developing the buildings if we would stay with this plan.

Q9.1 [Manuel Gattermayr]: So, it can be changed in the future?

A9.2 [Christian Strecker]: Yes.



Q10: What do you think is the biggest weakness of the settlement?

Iris Kaltenegger: I would be very interested in hearing from both of you [M. Gattermayr, Ch. Strecker] what you think are the weaknesses?

A10 [Christian Strecker]: For me it is the parking area/situation for the cars which are everywhere on the streets, there is a great space for improvement in this direction. And the gardens should maybe be more used by the public. Right now, they seem to be more for the inhabitants, for the City of Linz it would be an improvement for the open spaces if they partly can be used by the public.

A10.1 [Manuel Gattermayr]: I think there are more qualities in the whole neighborhood than weaknesses because it is a very calm, green area and on the other hand it is very central, but concerning the weaknesses, I would say that actually the buildings and the objects are probably the weakness of the area, because they are very old, they are nearly 80 years old and we see that when we go inside a building. We have very outdated floorplans, there are hardly any elevators, the whole structure is very old, the technical condition of the buildings is very bad actually. So, on the long run we really have to modernize the buildings and the objects. That is also why we want to start the development now with a very broad perspective and with an urban planning competition with EUROPAN.

Iris Kaltenegger: Thank you, so it has basically these two components: in a way working on the building as such but also working on the strategic site on a broader scale, also making the landscape useable and a big topic is the public space with all the cars on it and the mobility – to change the mindset, because as we have seen, public mobility is available here but still there are so many private cars here.

Q11 [Linda Lackner]: As there are so many public transport possibilities – I wonder if there was ever a conversation with the residents for example, because there is a demand for even more parking spaces than already exist. Why is it not working in the way it could?

A11 [Manuel Gattermayr]: This is a good question, actually I don't know, we are also wondering why the focus of the mobility of the inhabitants is still on the private car and not on the public transport, because as you said, the quality of the public transport here is actually quite good. Maybe we will find that out during the competition.

Iris Kaltenegger: It is even more strange that it is like this, because the people who live here work for the ÖBB, a train company. We are curious what the survey will tell us.



Q12: Are the four selected typologies of the brief to be developed representatively for all buildings there - i.e. should the development be applicable to all buildings there - or are they to be understood as selective interventions/a starting point which initiates a development?

A12 [Manuel Gattermayr]: It is the first point you mentioned. We really see the prototypes as representatively for all buildings, because those buildings should then be replaced and duplicated to the other sites. The four prototypes are representative also for the other buildings which are there.

A12.1 [Iris Kaltenegger]: Basically, the task is to develop the four prototypes. The outcome would be having these four prototypes spread throughout the whole area. The masterplan the participants have to submit shows a “cloning” almost, of these different typologies – probably there are variants to these individual prototypical solutions.

Linda Lackner: We were also talking about this kind of modular system, that works on one building but could be repeated.

A12.2 [Manuel Gattermayr]:

I think we really should do that in this way, because this was also the intention when the whole settlement was built 80 years ago and you can see now, that actually we have four prototypes – and some other buildings – mainly there are four prototypes, there were prototypes 80 years ago already. This concept is not bad and I think we can modernize it and we can use fresh, new ideas, but I don't think we should invent something completely new. And also, the City has the opinion that we should preserve the structure.

A12.3 [Christian Strecker]:

Exactly!

Q13: Do we have to follow the urban planning rules existing on the site or at least consider them?

A13 [Christian Strecker]:

As I mentioned before, the City of Linz wants you to improve the settlement, but not to clear the whole settlement and come up with something extremely different and new. So, the urban planning rules considering density – we want to leave this topic to you. We see EUROPAN as a way to develop a perfect density for this area. But don't misunderstand me, we don't want an explosion of density here, but a moderate densification. That should be considered and of course the greening is to be considered too – there has to be at least no decrease of greening.



Iris Kaltenegger: What we hear out of your answer but also what we saw walking through the site was, that the green aspect is quite present here and is important. I think it is also important for the teams who participate to maybe have a team that consists of different expertise, like architecture for the buildings, but also landscape planning and maybe even some traffic planning – so try to also think through the landscape in this settlement.

Q14: [Iris Kaltenegger]: I would like to come back to one answer you mentioned, Manuel Gattermayr, when asked who is going to be chosen to be the next tenant and you said it is mainly workers from the ÖBB. You say, now it is a very homogeneous type of tenants here – I am wondering, will it be a very diverse community here or could it be that it is very homogenous? And what is also the intention from your side within this settlement from a user's perspective?

A14 [Manuel Gattermayr]: I need to answer that from a broader perspective, our intention as company is, that we think, in settlements like this and in living areas like this, we need to have a mixture throughout the whole people living there – we have to avoid segregation, we think that we need different kinds of tenants and I also don't think it is homogenous right now – it is true, that most of the people living here are working at the ÖBB, but ÖBB is a very big and diverse company, so we have very young people living here, but also old people living here. We have almost all kinds of jobs at ÖBB – also in Linz – from workers, to directors, to managers, so it is really diverse right now and will also be in the future. And this is our perspective on living settlements like this.

Q14.1: [Iris Kaltenegger]: When you say “living in settlements like this” it implies already that there are more settlements like this in Linz, so I think what might also be important for the participants to know is, that this is one of the first settlements that is going to be renovated, so it could also serve as a pilot project for the city, I guess?

A14.1 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Linz has a lot of settlements and we are a company which really owns numerous settlements. The Froschberg is again a different example because the ground belongs to the ÖBB, but in almost all the other settlements the ground also belongs to us. It is true what you [Iris Kaltenegger] say, this [Froschberg] could be a role model for modernizing and developing other settlements in Linz or Upper Austria.

Q15: When you are talking about mixity, do you intend it as a programmatic diversity as well as a population mixity?



Iris Kaltenegger: On the programmatic diversity: this settlement is mostly about housing but probably you [Manuel Gattermayr] want to say something – is there a possibility to have basically the functions that were asked before, like bringing start up office places in, things like this?

A15 [Manuel Gattermayr]: Yes, it is mainly a living area and it also should remain a living area, but our intention is to adapt some other functions as well, because we see that – for example the whole home-office, home-working development is going to be more and more important in the future – so I think we have to adapt the flats or implement offices in this living settlement as well in the future.

Iris Kaltenegger: Maybe it is to be understood in such a way that out of how we live in the future, these things [a mix of functions emerging from daily activities] can be developed. Because when we think about adapting the existing typologies and merging them with the green areas, you could ask “how are you going to spend your day?” for example: working from home, but also maybe tending your garden, growing your fruits... Maybe the source could be the daily living space and mixity or spin-offs could emerge from there. This might be a way to understand a [functional] mix here.

Linda Lackner: I think the second part of the question [... as well as a population mixity] Manuel Gattermayr already answered that automatically, when people from ÖBB living here you get a wide diversity.

Iris Kaltenegger: Right, the population mixity/diversity is already here and intended for the future.

Iris Kaltenegger: We are almost reaching the end, if we don't have any questions, I would like to say thank you to this active audience here. I would like to ask Manuel Gattermayr and Christian Strecker if you want to say some last words to our participants here and/or something that you think is important to share?

Christian Strecker: From our side, the City of Linz, we are of course hoping for a good competition, and for a great winner and a good project that really can be realized, so that the City of Linz has a benefit of the EUROPAN competition. Thank you!

Manuel Gattermayr: Thank you for your interest, we are looking forward to the competition results and we hope that all of you will participate in Linz. Thank you!



**EUROPAN
AUSTRIA**

Iris Kaltenegger: Thank you very much! I think it is a very interesting site, and also a very challenging site, but I think it is a site in which it is crucial to understand how in future cities can stay livable but also create some density, because spreading out into the countryside is not really an option, so I think this is a very important task here which has to answer certain questions.

Linda Lackner: I am also really looking forward to seeing the entries, I think it is a really interesting site. We are always talking about the buildings and the prototypes, but as it was already said before, in the end, the whole settlement could be taken as a prototype for further competitions and renewals. So, thank you and I'm looking forward!

Iris Kaltenegger: For people who register, there is the platform to ask questions, which we will answer till the end of June – it is on the website. And this talk will be put into a protocol and will be made available on the website.

We are all very curious about your ideas! Good luck and Goodbye!