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Bild: André Poitiers Architect RIBA, Stadtplaner, Hamburg und Janos Fierstraumplanung GmbH & Co. KG, Hamburg



## Case study: Mitte Altona

### Hamburg is cleverly regenerating its industrial wasteland

Covering an area of 78 km<sup>2</sup>, Altona was once a separate city before it became part of Hamburg in April 1938. With a population numbering some 250,000, Altona is divided into 14 districts, each with its own character. In Mitte Altona (Central Altona), an abandoned railway freight station and industrial wasteland bordering the disused Harkortstrasse brewery occupy a large contiguous piece of land. In addition to this existing site, Deutsche Bahn's intention to relocate railway lines and S-Bahn lines from Altona station to Diebsteich station by 2023 will eventually leave a central, open space totalling 29 hectares. This presents an enormous opportunity for the city, which is pushing the Hamburg Senate to conduct preliminary studies for regenerating the area. In 2010, architect and urban planner André Poitiers won the competition for ideas with his master plan for "Mitte Altona".

## The project

“Mitte Altona” is the second largest urban development project in the Hamburg region. It aims to maintain the district’s link with the past by restoring its historic buildings, which will be incorporated as landmarks into the new urban environment. To address the obvious lack of green spaces in this part of the city, the emphasis will be placed on quality of life, through the creation of squares and a park. The lungs of the city, designed to be accessible for all, these public spaces for sport, leisure and play are intended to lie at the heart of daily life, to be places where people cannot help but linger.

While awaiting the relocation of Altona station to Diebsteich in 2023, a first development phase involving 13 hectares began at the end of 2014. With an investment of 48 million euro, it will see the construction of 1600 homes, a first part of the park totalling almost 3 hectares, nurseries and a school. Developer Aurelis is in charge of building about 450 homes (with a total floor area of 78,000 m<sup>2</sup>), the school, and the commercial space in the former freight halls, which are listed buildings. ECE is managing construction of roughly 1200 homes (90,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor area in the north of the district, and 120,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the south in collaboration with Behrendt Wohnungsbau, Harmonia Immobilien and E.W. Fraatz).



Masterplan: Entwurf André Potiers Architekt Stadtplaner RIBA in Kooperation mit arbos Freiraumplanung

The second development phase will begin following the demolition of Altona station, planned for 2024. This will free 16 hectares of land on which 1900 additional apartments will be built and the park and public spaces extended to cover a total area of 8 hectares.

## Development Concepts

### An approach centred on mixed use

Mitte Altona is intended to be the opposite of an isolated, dormitory suburb. Planning has focused in particular on maintaining Altona’s quality of life and providing everything needed to live there. But mixed-use development is not simply a case of juxtaposing different uses of buildings: it is cultural, social and urban planning with the underlying goal of creating a thriving and diverse neighbourhood open to all. To achieve this, a three-thirds approach has been taken: a third of homes will be state-

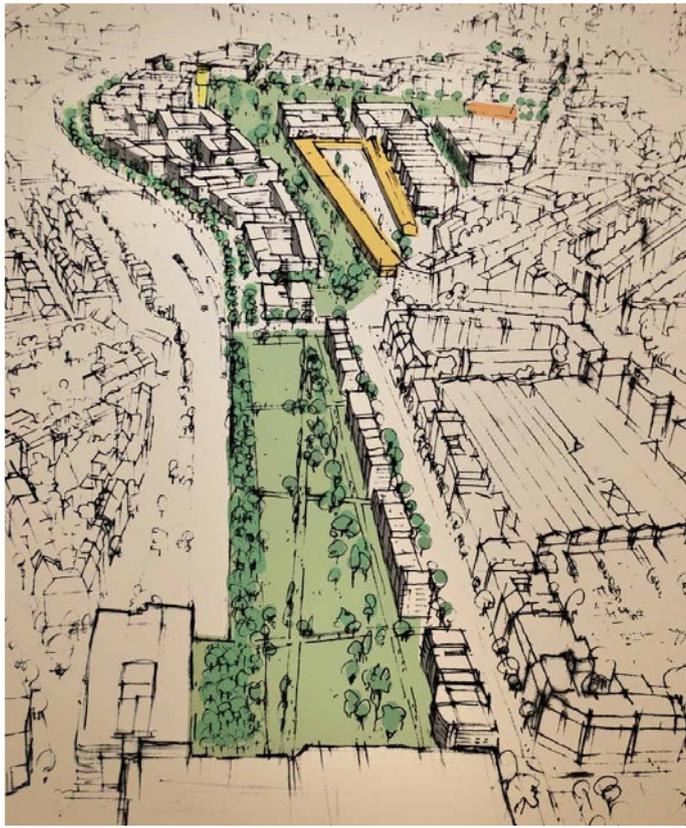


Illustration: Julian Petrin (urbanista)

subsidised social housing, another third will be privately owned and the final third will be rental apartments. Furthermore, 20% of the total residential floor area will be reserved for building cooperatives, thus ensuring the involvement of residents and encouraging them to take ownership of the neighbourhood. Lastly, 70% of ground-floor space will be devoted to tertiary activities.

## **Sustainable urban development**

A major objective set by this new district's master plan is to take a sustainable and innovative approach to transport: this means encouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport by creating or enhancing links so that most residents have no need to own a car.

Furthermore, the urban development agreement requires investors to contribute towards development costs, including, for example, those incurred for soil decontamination and building infrastructure (roads and utilities). Also

exemplary is the management of residential neighbourhoods and other areas, which will be funded by investors for the next ten years. For example, the City of Hamburg and Aurelis have signed a public-private partnership for both the building and running of the school. This sustainable management will support urban development and social housing in particular.

## **Community involvement**

Keen to hear suggestions from the district's residents and businesses from the very beginning, Hamburg's Ministry for Urban Development and Environment opened a dialogue with the public in 2010 as part of an information and support process unique to the city.

With new legislation on transparency, the development of Mitte Altona is a genuinely open and collaborative process. The people of Hamburg have been actively involved in the project through creative workshops, architectural competitions, information events and visits. Numerous objections and ideas from residents have been taken into account. All told, the project is an excellent example of community-led planning.

## **Quotes**

### **Alexander Otto, CEO of ECE, 18<sup>th</sup> november 2014, date of the launch of building work**

*"Today we celebrate the launch of one of the most exciting construction projects in Germany. After seven years of planning and development, the project took up considerable pace since the signing of the urban development agreement. Therefore, we can start building earlier than we had antici-*

*pated. This is a central, undeveloped area which offers a once in a lifetime chance for the city because of its sheer size. For Mitte Altona, not only the view of the planners but also the perspectives of the residents were taken into consideration. Mitte Altona is about far more than living. There will be a district school, day care centers, much space for small businesses as well as squares and a new park. Furthermore, the emphasis is on integration, inclusion, and innovative concepts such as a waiver for numerous parking spaces. A new, modern district for Hamburg is built here."*



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