

URBACT REPAIR

Rostock (Germany)



**The Local Action Plan (LAP) for
the promotion of the city
fortifications**

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SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE OF LAP

1. Scope and Objective of LAP

The preserved parts of its city fortification are in the focus of Rostock's activities in the REPAIR project.

The city fortifications with its ramparts, ditches, bastions and city gates were significantly redesigned after the city's defortification in the 19th century and even destroyed in many places. The main aim is the improvement of accessibility of the main entrances ramparts. There are some plans for the improvement in preparation.

The major part of fortification has been restored over the last fifteen years and redesigned again. By 2012, the architectural and restoration process will be nearly completed with the recreation of the environment of the Kröpeliner Tor, one of the former city gates. In the beginning of the REPAIR project, we intensified our efforts to develop projects and measures to document the historic meaning and original function of the rampart and city wall facilities publicly. For this, different measures and projects of the ULSG and departments of the city administration of Rostock were developed and have partly been finalized by now. Monument preservation objectives were elaborated for the major part of the rampart facilities and the city wall and have already been applied during these area's recreation and restoration.

"The ramparts as well as the fortifications and gates that were located here in former times served for defence but also for representation of the city. These days, the functions, that will remain relevant in the future, are the following:

- City-structuring function
- Connecting function between suburbs, inner city and harbour area
- Stay and recreation function
- Representative function: Entrance to the inner city
- Market function (Christmas market) and
- Bio-climatic function

The idea is to strengthen the currently only badly developed connection and orientation function of the area to improve the stay and recreation function¹.

As the ramparts and the city wall are located in the very city centre and possess a high-level of living quality and recreation potential for Rostock's inhabitants and visitors, we are and even more will be confronted with the task to meet the expectations of this area sustainability and regarding monument preservation issues. Thus, function concepts are currently developed for those particularly demanded areas, such as the monastery garden located directly next to the city wall. In addition, monument preservation objectives shall be elaborated for this

¹ Dr. Stefan Pulkenat: Monument preservation objectives. Western rampart facilities. Rostock 2011



area. Medium-term, the use of the monastery garden as recreation area and open-air theatre location shall remain intact.

Likewise, we intend to intensify the public presentation and explanation of the monument preservation aspects of already implemented or still pending recreation measures. We have already spoken about this with committees of Rostock's city council and made related public presentations.

A plan based on the key objective turned out to be very difficult to implement in Rostock, as many recreation measures have already been completed. In addition, nearly hardly any jobs will be created related to the rampart facility utilisation. The use of renewable energy sources does not play a role in the park facilities either.



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CITY PROFILE

2. City Profile

The construction of Rostock's city fortification was started in the 13th century. The period from 1265, when the construction of the city-enclosing wall was started, to the end of the 16th century is referred to as historic stage of medieval city fortifications. The City of Rostock turned into a flourishing trading centre over the 14th and 15th century. The city's importance started to fade in the 16th century in relation to the decline of the Hanseatic League.

The period from the beginning of the 17th to the end of the 18th century is referred to as historical stage of fortifications' extension. Due to the new weaponry and the Thirty Years War, the fortifications underwent significant modifications by the beginning of the 17th century. Even in 1613, Johann van Valckenburgh, a Dutch fortress builder appointed as engineer of the Joint Hanseatic Cities, presented first fortification extension plans. In 1624, Valckenburgh elaborated modified plans. The city started the extension works in 1626, after Valckenburghs death. Still, his plans were only partially implemented. The deterioration of the facilities began by the middle of the 18th century when, due to the advanced weaponry, the facilities had become obsolete. The period from beginning to end of 19th century is referred to as the historical period of defortification with the fortifications being partly pulled down and horticultural recreated.

Demography

The increasing share of elder persons in the population confronts Rostock with new challenges the community will face in due time. All efforts aim to enable an active participation in social life as well as self-determined ageing in dignity. Due to this, the recreations implemented during the last years put special emphasis on accessibility. The ramparts are green space according to the city's land utilisation plan.

Urban challenges

The cityscape changed significantly during the 19th century with Rostock outgrowing the medieval city walls. The defortification and recreation was done step by step and without an overall plan. The city became narrower and narrower which increased the longing for outdoor stays among the population. The rampart facilities were used for walking as they offered a good view to the area around.

Parts of the fortifications were destroyed further by bunker constructions and bombing during the Second World War. The modifications carried out in the 1960s and 1970s are no longer adequate from nowadays perspective as they did not take aspects like family friendliness, handicapped accessibility and age-appropriateness into account.



LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP (LSG)

3. The Local Support Group

Members of the LSG presented the monument preservation aspects related to the recreation of the Kröpeliner Tor surroundings publicly. After implemented recreation, the orientation guidance inside the rampart facilities will be improved by the LSG.

The Local Support Group comprises of representatives of the city administration, of the Rostock Society of Urban Renewal and Restoration and of associations.

In several meetings, the LSG agreed upon how to accompany the process of recreating the previous fortifications. The primary target groups for making the facilities more attractive were discussed – for instance, the target group tourists was dealt with.



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EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICES

4. Exchange of Knowledge and Best Practices

Representatives from Rostock have taken part in all workshops, among them Anarit Lorenzen-Schmidt as a NGO representative of the ULSG who attended two of the events. Inspirations were taken back regarding volunteer commitment and citizen participation, e.g. from the work of the Chatham Dockyards.

Rostock itself has presented a best-practice example with the renaturation of the woodland "Rostocker Heide".



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KEY ACTIONS

5. Key Actions

Tourists do not know the ramparts very much even though they are an attractive area. That is why the LSG wants to invest in an information system. It will be developed and publish information material for inhabitants and guests in cooperation with the Geschichtswerkstatt, residents and interested people. The existing signposts will be improved optically and if necessary replaced. At the moment some signposts are not clearly visible, therefore the placing of signs containing information must be reconsidered. To date various departments and organizations place signposts. This causes confusion. Thus, another effort must be to coordinate them with the objective of signpost unification, which will ease orientation.

Other actions considered to increase the area's attractiveness for tourists are the use of visual means, which will hopefully make the information more interesting to perceive.

The largest measures will be the redesign of the area around the Kröpelin Gate that belongs to the Northern entry of the ramparts. At the moment stairs, bollards and litter characterize this entry. These obstructions will be removed – here the aspect of being barrier free as well for handicapped people as for cyclists is an important focus.

We intend to publish information material for inhabitants and guests within the course of the REPAIR project. In addition, an information panel shall be produced. Still, the needed relevant permissions have not been issued yet. The long-term financing of the information panel shall be ensured by donations and sponsoring. The further implementation of the planning shall be based on voluntary work.



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FINANCIAL RESOURCES

6. Financial Resources

The city fortifications are located outside the inner city restoration area. Urban development funds of the state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern have initiated a rapid urban development process in this area from 1991 on, as it is unique in Rostock's history. About 224 Million Euros from urban development funds flowed into the restoration of Rostock's city centre from 1991 to 2008.

Funding is provided as well for recreating the area in front of the Kröpeliner Tor. New benches and walls to sit on will invite visitors to linger, the pedestrian zone will be modernised. Sufficient bicycle parking places are provided. The costs for this measure amount to 1.7 Mio Euros, 1.4 Mio Euros of them come from urban development funds.

Because of the reduction of the subsidies for urban development by the federal republic in the current and in next years the funding of these measures will be difficult.

Most of the actions are initiatives of NGOs and of the municipality. The NGOs will take part in the further actions on a voluntary, pro-bono basis and employees of the municipality will take part during their working time or on a voluntary basis. Sponsors shall finance the outputs such as information panels.



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