



**Launching day of the competition  
27th of March 2023**

**Organiser**

**European – German Association for the Promotion of  
Architecture,  
Housing and Urban Planning  
in cooperation with the City of Kassel**

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**Colloquium in Kassel**

**Start: 4.00 p.m., End: 5:15**

**Report written by: Lola Meyer, European**

**1. Question: What are those orange houses we saw in the project site?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: A few years ago, we were looking for potential areas to densify the neighbourhood and wanted to use new housing typologies – that's how the 10 or so terraced houses came into being. These are in great demand.

**2. Question: Why was this done only once?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: For economic reasons.

**3rd Question: What exactly should / can be done in the existing neighbourhood?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: We're looking for ideas on better accessibility and mobility, on linking into the new neighbourhood; connecting paths can be rethought, the neighbourhood can be better organised, e.g. in terms of waste disposal, but also parking spaces for cars. But theoretically, objects can also be removed and rebuilt or upgraded – keyword: golden energy. We would also like to find out how more 1- or 2-room flats could be created, as these are currently very much in demand; at the moment we have almost only 2-3 room flats. For example, how could 4-room flats be wisely converted into smaller units such as two 2-room flats?

**4th Question: What exactly would have to be taken into account in the case of neighbourhood redensification? Is it possible to add more storeys?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: In the case of redensification with new construction, the building regulations must of course be observed. However, since we are dealing with ONE owner here, there is a certain amount of leeway. In principle, according to §6 of the Hessian Building Code (HBO), there should be a distance of 3m in front of the above-ground outer walls of buildings (unless it is a border development permitted or required by planning law) and a distance of at least 5m between buildings to prevent a possible flashover in case of fire. It may

also be possible to deviate from the parking-space allocation ratio if you have a good mobility concept. On the question of adding storeys, we don't have a structural report on this issue at the moment, but we have already added 1-2 storeys at other locations. Therefore, I would say for this competition that something like a lightweight-construction roof storey can be considered.

**5th Question: How are the garages in the area used?**

Answer Mr Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: We don't know, but they are all rented out.

**6th Question: What kind of people live in the neighbourhood?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH: That is also not documented, but we have quite a few loyal tenants and rather long-term tenancies.

**7th Question: How many one-room flats should be planned?**

Answer Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbau-gesellschaft Hessen mbH: We do not have an exact figure for this.

**8th Question: Should part of the agricultural use be retained?**

Answer City of Kassel: A partial preservation of this current use (grain) will probably be difficult.

Answer European: It doesn't have to be the exact same use, but the conceptual approach of urban agriculture would of course be conceivable here to help dovetail the neighbourhood with the surrounding landscape.

**9th Question: What actors are there in the project area?**

Answer City of Kassel: There are the two big players, the city of Kassel, which owns the northern area, and then Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH. In addition, there are two row buildings in the western area with a large number of private owners, which is why they are less relevant for the competition. Directly adjacent, on the street called Am Felsenkeller, there's a privately owned standalone building that houses the Bossebande e. V. day-care centre.

**10th Question: If there are two main owners who own the entire area, can the planned development span the properties of both of**

**them, or, for example, do buildings have to end at property boundaries?**

Answer City of Kassel: The area can be thought of as ONE area if it is absolutely necessary for the concept. This could then be regulated during implementation, e.g., through land swaps.

**11th Question: How will the spaces or buildings later be allocated and to whom?**

Answer City of Kassel: That will be decided after the competition. There are various measures for addressing this issue, and concept awards could also play a role.

Answer Matthias Foitzik, Partner at foundation 5+ architekten; Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Urban Development in Kassel: It would also be interesting if ideas addressing this issue were included in the proposals submitted in the competition.

Answer European: What is needed for an urban mix? What constellation of individuals and groups will create a lively neighbourhood? Who owns here and who rents?

Answer City of Kassel: We certainly don't want to have a mono-functional, purely residential quarter. Accordingly, commercial uses or social facilities beneficial to the neighbourhood are also sought to a lesser extent.

**12th Question: What needs to be done in the study site (red line)? And what kind of people live in the district?**

Answer City of Kassel: It is a typical suburban district – there are single and multi-family houses as well as dense rental housing. It is a very old, mature and diverse district.

Answer European: The study site represents the reference area for the design, which is essentially made in the project site (yellow line). This is about social and other infrastructure – What is available, what is perhaps missing and what can be added in the project site? What are the connections to the surrounding area? For instance, where are there significant green corridors or cold-air corridors? How does mobility work?

**13th Question: What about the mining areas? What can be done here? Is ground motion a possibility?**

Answer City of Kassel: The competition brief specifies – and provides a plan for – what is possible. According to what we know now, we assu-

me a possible maximum development of two full storeys (plus staggered storeys). Ground motion should not be a problem. Basically, the design should be thought of in terms of process: How can it be realised in which construction phases? The design should also work if it turns out later that the mining area cannot be built on at all.

**14th Question: The brief states that a tram line was once considered and that areas have already been reserved for it. Can such a connection be considered?**

Answer City of Kassel: At the moment, such planning has been put on hold for political reasons.

Answer European: Of course, a public transport connection can be considered as a concept. After all, this is an ideas competition. And, depending on the time horizon you set, all sorts of things can be considered and proposed.

**15th Question: Is there any further information on vegetation? For example, are there any protected trees? What should be considered when planting new trees? Are there any specific guidelines to be followed?**

Answer City of Kassel: There are no specially protected trees in the project area. If possible, existing trees should of course be preserved. And if any must be removed, new ones should be provided accordingly.

Answer European: The task is to ecologically enhance the area as a whole. Of course, not all of the current trees can be preserved in the case of a new development, so new plantings should be considered. Overall, the vegetation should be ecologically valuable and adapted to climate change.

**16th Question: Is there a lack of social infrastructure in the area?**

Answer City of Kassel: The supply of goods for everyday needs is currently rather poor – there are two local suppliers outside or on the southern and western edges of the study site. In addition, day-care centres and the like should of course be included in any new planning.

**17th Question: Regarding parking spaces for cars – are there any bottlenecks here? And how is the traffic in the area?**

Answer Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbau-gesellschaft Hessen mbH:

At the moment there are enough parking spaces. There are now documented figures regarding traffic, but when new buildings are constructed, infrastructure must be considered accordingly.

**18th Question: Is there a need for student housing?**

Answer City of Kassel: In a university town there is always a need for student housing. However, students usually want to live close to the university, if possible within walking distance.

Answer European: A student dormitory would perhaps be excessive in this location, but student housing can of course be proposed. It is, after all, an ideas competition and you are presenting ideas on how a lively neighbourhood can be created. If you think students have a role to play in this, then propose it.

**19th Question: Are there new energy concepts? Would district heating be conceivable?**

Answer Mr. Ulrich Türk, Wohnstadt Stadtentwicklungs- und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Hessen mbH:

The existing quarter is powered by oil and gas. And of course it would be interesting, although not absolutely necessary, to propose alternatives. District heating would be conceivable here, but also other energy concepts.

**20th Question: Is the framework concept included in the competition brief binding?**

Answer City of Kassel: No, it serves as a guideline for orientation. It does not have to look exactly as depicted, but green corridors, 'green fingers' and green spaces are desirable in principle for a green demarcation of the settlement and for interweaving with the open landscape.

**21st Question: The once planned allotment garden colony in the project area – is that off the table?**

Answer City of Kassel: It is currently no longer being planned.

**22nd Question: Where exactly is the historic path mentioned in the competition brief?**

Answer City of Kassel: We do not know the exact location. If information on this comes to light from the city, we will make it available to you.

**23rd Question: To what extent must compensation areas be taken into account?**

Answer City of Kassel: In the context of an ideas competition, no balancing must be carried out. Generally, an intervention should always be compensated for in the area. In the project site, we are hoping for an ecological upgrade to the status quo, but a detailed consideration of interventions and possible compensation is not necessary at this stage of the project.

**24th Question: The green corridor at „Bossental“ ends abruptly – is there a reason for this?**

Answer City of Kassel: This is probably due to the property boundaries, but you are welcome to make a suggestion for improvement here as well.

Both the representatives of the City of Kassel and Mr. Matthias Foitzik from the jury emphasise that this is an ideas competition and that bold ideas are sought.



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