

CONTEXT

Speichersdorf is nestled in the landscape of the Fichtelgebirge mountains and has excellent connections to Bayreuth and Nuremberg. The growing community is increasingly attracting young people, and with them comes a growing need for new forms of cohabitation, production, and interaction. This is where the transformation of the festival hall comes in. As an urban hub, it mediates between the train station, the main access road, and the planned new center. The ambitious program of the festival hall and its landscaped areas ties in with Speichersdorf's former significance as a stop on the Paris–Prague railway line – and at the same time exemplifies European's claim to develop site-specific solutions with transferable model character for Europe's rural areas.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The conversion of the festival hall will become the productive hub of the new village center of Speichersdorf. Between the productive landscape areas, the cottage garden in the south and the orchard meadow in the north, the converted festival hall will become a toolbox for rural life. The hall will be opened up in a targeted manner with minimal interventions. Five precise additions make it flexible and accessible. The adjacent open spaces will become a place of communal learning, with a focus on climate adaptation and biodiversity. The scope of the intervention and the diversity of functions enable rapid implementation and economical operation. The festival hall, cottage garden, and orchard meadow form a new ensemble of spaces forming a locally rooted response to Europe's structural challenges.



TRANSFORMATION – 3 TOOLS OF CONVERSION

1 Precise incisions

With the aim of making the *smallest possible intervention*, the first step is to make targeted changes to the existing structure. The aging roof is removed. Five sections of glass blocks are dismantled on the north facade to make room for the future opening to the field. Five windows are removed from the south facade. Here, one will soon step onto the south balcony that has been built in front. The removed windows will find their place in the north facade in the future. Inside the hall, the grandstand is being dismantled – the beautiful mosaic balustrade will be reused in the counter of the new village shop, and the doors to the equipment rooms will form the new entrance gate to the orchard. The stage platform will be removed so that in future the stage area can be accessed at ground level from the hall. The new country kitchen in the former stage area will thus be accessible without barriers.

2 Activating additions

Five interventions at selected locations will transform the hall into an inclusive space with a variety of possible uses. The activating additions follow the guiding principles of flexibility, accessibility, and dismantlability.

Two fixtures divide the interior of the hall:

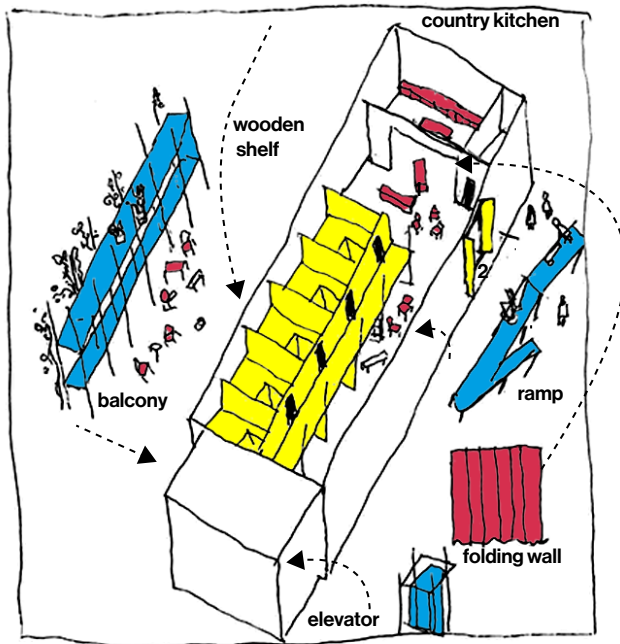
- Wooden shelf: A light, two-story wooden fixture in the hall is oriented directly toward the south facade. The fixture takes up approximately 2/3 of the hall's width and length. The shelf divides the hall both spatially and functionally, thus enabling several specific uses of the old festival hall.
- Country kitchen: A kitchen for processing the orchard fruit is installed in the former stage area.

Three lightweight additions enhance the hall from the outside:

- A steel balcony on the south side provides the necessary shade and offers a chance to enjoy the sun and views of the cottage garden.
- An external elevator next to the staircase provides barrier-free access to all floors.
- A ramp with a 5% incline on the north side is the central connection to the orchard. Walkers, wheelchairs, and wheelbarrows full of apples and pears find their way into the hall here.

3 A new landscape: between cottage garden and orchards

The old festival hall forms a central hub in the redesign of the village center of Speichersdorf/Kirchenlaibach. We see the hall and its two outdoor spaces as a mediating spatial structure between the train station, school, and new center.



On the south side, the intimate cottage garden not only provides good climatic conditions for growing currants, espalier fruit, and vegetables, but also serves as a place of exchange for day guests from the senior care center and walk-in customers from the new village store. To the north, the extensive and biodiverse orchard meadow stretches all the way to the country road, with a variety of microhabitats that are open to wildlife, residents as well as schoolchildren, who can do their homework here in the afternoons, participate in the beekeeping club, or secretly meet their sweethearts behind the apple tree.

The open spaces complement the new village center in front of the multifunctional hall with a productive landscape. The integration of the landscape into the design brings centuries-old, and now often almost forgotten, cultural practices of landscape management back into the everyday life of the community. This creates a variety of diverse, specific spaces that are intended to serve as pioneering examples for structural change in many other communities in Europe and provide a possible answer to the extractive logic of current agricultural practice.

RESULT = NEW SPACES, NEW USES

Festival hall and shelving = a toolbox of possibilities

The fixtures allow for flexible use of the hall in various configurations during the day and at night, during the week and on weekends. A folding wall and the doors in the wooden shelf can be used to create three specific zones that can be interconnected as needed:

- 1 Country kitchen + multipurpose room
- 2 Foyer
- 3 Multifunctional room capsules

For example, on Tuesday afternoons, the gardening club can cook in the country kitchen, while the flyers for the church fair are being frantically sorted in the multifunctional rooms, and a local agricultural start-up from the University of Bayreuth is making a breakthrough in programming on the first floor of the wooden shelf.

On Sunday, the big Fichtelgebirge flea market takes place. All the rooms in the hall are connected to form one large space. People gather on the north facade in front of the new gate to listen to the Speichersdorfer Musikanten at the "Concert in the Orchard."

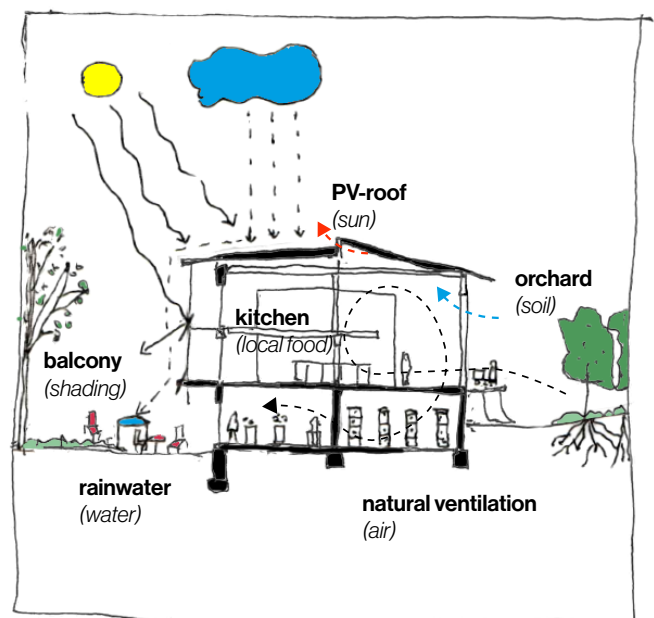
The festival hall as a production facility

The old festival hall becomes a place for gathering, producing, and eating together. Various types of fruit come from the orchard throughout the year, which are processed in the hall's kitchen. The cottage garden becomes a place of collaborative creation. Here, students and day guests from the senior care facility help each other. The hall's new roof produces a lot of electricity. So much that it can even partially supply the school. The PV modules on the balustrade of the south balcony also capture the energy of the low winter sun and at the same time cast a shadow on the glazed south facade, thus preventing the hall from overheating. The skylight in the hall allows natural ventilation of all rooms.

NEW LANDSCAPE SPACES AND TYPOLOGIES

Throughout the year – between cottage garden, orchard meadow, and festival hall

The use of the converted festival hall is shaped by the two adjacent landscape spaces. The festival hall responds to current social issues. As a place for working, harvesting, and



cooking together, it becomes a unique meeting place in a dense landscape structure. In spring, theory courses on fruit tree cultivation and pruning are held in the hall. Afterwards, participants go out to the orchard to put what they have learned into practice. In September and October, the hall is full. Numerous events related to fruit harvesting and processing are on the program. Meanwhile, more and more fruit is being brought in through the gate via the ramp in the north. The basement offers ample space for storing walnuts and jams. The village store creates a communal sales network for local products.

Festhalle – a venue for clubs, co-working, movie nights

Beyond its function as a large toolbox for working on the orchard meadow, the hall offers ample space for the diverse needs of various groups of people in Speichersdorf: students find a place to do their homework at lunchtime, clubs find space for meetings and presentations in the evenings. Lockable lockers in front of the individual rooms enable high utilization and fluctuation of users. Public welfare-oriented and commercial use for presentations and external company meetings can alternate here.

Comfortable and modern co-working spaces are being created on the first floor, which can be rented on a weekly or monthly basis and ensure basic financing for the hall.

Streuobstwiese

The large meadow to the north of the hall is being turned into an orchard. A variety of small spaces create high-quality recreational areas where people can relax after school or have a picnic on the weekend. The orchard meadow has a long tradition as a landscape feature in the Upper Franconia. At the same time, some Speichersdorf residents still engage in agriculture as a sideline. Various efforts are being made to promote knowledge about the preservation of the cultural landscape. We propose to take advantage of the unique location of the festival hall and reinterpret it as a place of inter-generational learning and working. Like no other place, a new typology of collaborative working can emerge here - for the local community of Speichersdorf, as well as regional companies. The orchard meadow thus becomes the counterpart to the open space of the “new center” – the latter as a place of shared relaxation, and the former as a place of shared working and learning.

Naschgarten

In the south, the cottage garden significantly enhances the entrance area of the hall. At the same time, it creates a place where visitors to the day care center and students in the after-school program can garden together and learn from each other. What is left over from snacking is sold in the village store along with the produce from the orchard. More than just a place for local food, the village shop serves as an informal meeting place. The small café seating in the partial shade of the south-facing balcony invites visitors to linger.



IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

The construction implementation is based on a phased implementation strategy that creates synergies between the existing building, the landscape, and energy generation and specifically addresses different sources of funding.

Phase 1 – Energy-efficient renovation and structural upgrading (2026–2027)

The first step is the energy-efficient renovation of the roof, including a large-scale photovoltaic system. This measure is eligible for funding under EU programs for building renovation (e.g., EFRE or ELER) and Bavarian programs for the energy transition in existing buildings. At the same time, balconies, elevators, and ramps will be constructed as prefabricated, reversible steel structures to ensure accessibility, shade, and access to the orchard meadow.

Phase 2 – Interior construction and landscaping (2026–2027)

Phase 2 will start in parallel with phase 1. The central “wooden shelf” as a spatial structure will be prefabricated using modular timber construction and assembled within a few days. This construction phase is suitable for programs such as *Land(auf) Schwung*, the federal rural development program (*BULE+*). At the same time, the open space design – orchard meadow and cottage garden – will be started in close cooperation with

local schools, associations, and senior citizens' facilities. Funding logic: Combination of education-related project funding, cultural landscape conservation, and intergenerationality (funding opportunities, e.g., *Streuobst für Alle*, *Streuobstpakt* of the StMELF).

Phase 3 – Operation and consolidation (from 2028)

After commissioning, ongoing operations will be financed through a mixed calculation:

- Basic financing through co-working rentals on the upper floor (e.g., creative companies, start-ups, self-employed people from the region)
- Revenue from the village shop and events
- Earmarked project funds for educational and participatory formats
- Partnerships with foundations and public institutions to secure inclusion and cultural programs
- orchard-related events for regional companies

The hall is deliberately designed as a “robust framework” that can accommodate a variety of programs – from agricultural processing and educational offerings to culture and leisure activities. The low technical complexity significantly reduces operating costs, and facility management by local actors is planned.

The combination of low investment volume, high third-party funding ratio, and a hybrid operating concept makes the transformation both economically viable and resilient to budget uncertainties in the long term.

