

RE-USE OF FORMER INDUSTRIAL AREAS AND THE RESULTING TRANSFORMATION OF ITS CITYSCAPE. CASE STUDY IN HAMBURG, GERMANY

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Abstract. Neglected sites in central parts of cities, where in the past an industry was placed, are nowadays (since about 2000) being intensively transformed in big cities of Europe. Functional changes in these areas are causing in consequence spatial and cityscape changes. The presented example of Hamburg HafenCity shows present possibilities for use of former harbours in inner-city spaces. Conclusions of the paper refer to the quality of the process of harbour transformation, considering the public open space and the accompanying cityscapes.

Key words: re-use, former industrial areas, harbour, transformation, cityscape, public open space

INTRODUCTION

Harbour areas, placed along rivers, have a specific image, consisted of vertical (cranes), and horizontal (river, line of granaries) elements. In case of Hamburg the harbour is located near the city center, which influences dynamic functional and therewith spatial changes of the area. In 2001 started the realisation of the project HafenCity. It involves today uses as services, apartments, and public spaces. However, to understand the present cityscape, we shall also look at the phase right after the industry had stopped. Namely, inspiring is the time, when the temporary use took place and the public spaces begun to be created. The formerly closed city spaces were open and accessible for inhabitants and tourists.

The method of the study in the paper is the in situ research and analysis of the published literature.

TRANSFORMATION OF INDUSTRIAL CITYSCAPE IN HAFENCITY

The described below temporary new functions of the harbour in Hamburg show most of all sport and recreation in open spaces used by visitors. It seems to be one of the concepts for revitalisation connected with the changing cityscape.

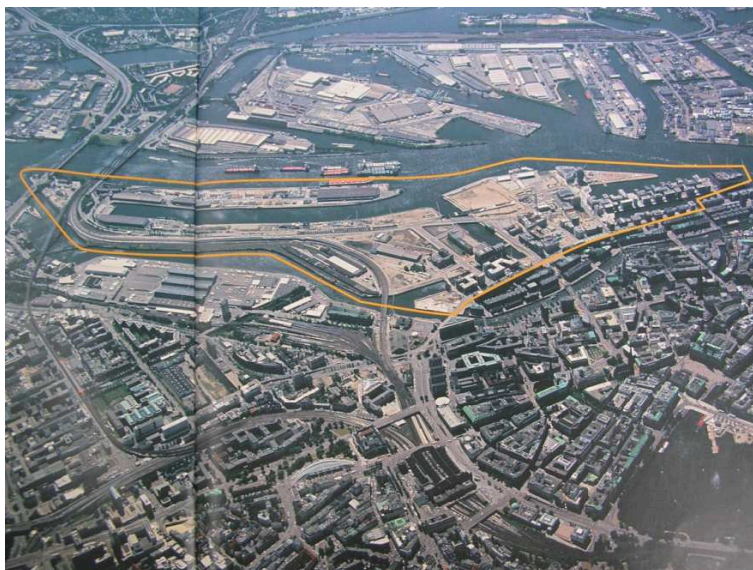


Fig. 1. Historical view of the harbour in Hamburg in the time of industry. Characteristic is the wide unbuilt space and flat horizontal line of the shore. Source: HafenCity... 2010

Ryc. 1. Historyczny widok Portu w Hamburgu w czasie przemysłu. Charakterystyczna jest znaczna przestrzeń niezabudowana oraz niska horyzontalna linia krajobrazu wybrzeża. Źródło: HafenCity... 2010



Fig. 2. Present view of the former harbour in Hamburg (compare fig. 1). To see is the intervention in the urban tissue of the shore of Elbe River. The process of revitalisation may be recognised in an intensive overbuilding of the area. Source: HafenCity... 2010

Ryc. 2. Współczesny widok dawnego Portu w Hamburgu w okresie rewitalizacji poprzemysłowej (porównaj ryc. 1). Zauważyć można znaczną interwencję w tkankę urbanistyczną brzegu rzeki Elby. Procesowi rewitalizacji towarzyszy intensywna zabudowa terenu. Źródło: HafenCity... 2010



Fig. 3. Information about the access to the harbour. In the background the massive buildings in the neighbourhood of HafenCity. Photo: The author

Ryc. 3. Informacja na temat dojścia do Portu. W tle masywne budynki sąsiadujące z HafenCity. Zdjęcie: autorka

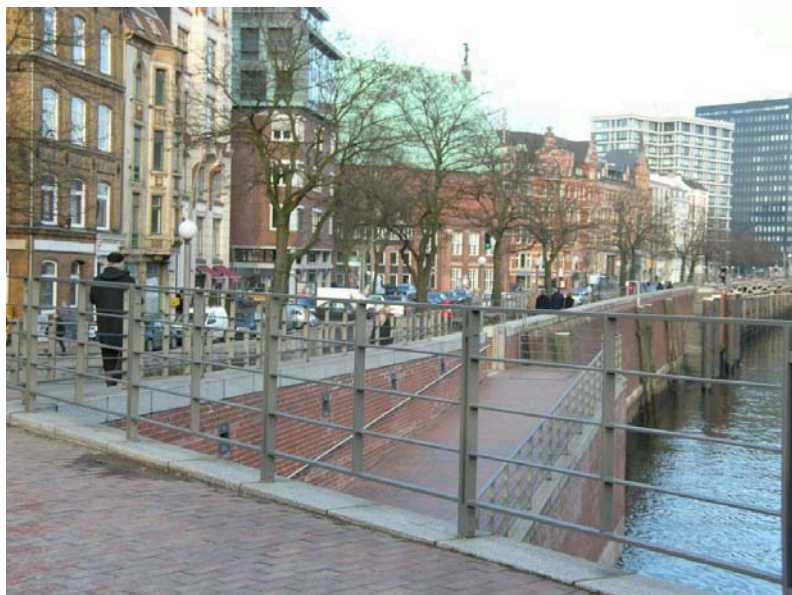


Fig. 4. Pedestrian paths along the Elbe River and the accompanying historical buildings. Photo: The author

Ryc. 4. Przejścia piesze wzdłuż rzeki Elby i towarzysząca zabudowa historyczna. Zdjęcie: autorka

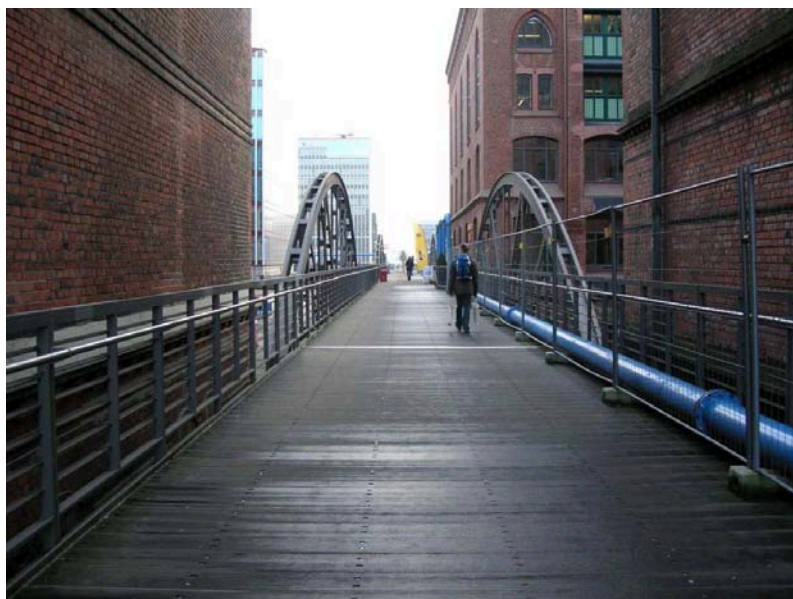


Fig. 5. The bridge connecting the neighbouring area with the HafenCity. The path is made of wood and metal.
Photo: The author

Ryc. 5. Most łączący teren sąsiedni z HafenCity, wykonany z drewna i metalu. Zdjęcie: autorka



Fig. 6. Paths for pedestrians in the former harbour. The modern buildings are standing right next to the historical one. Photo: The author

Ryc. 6. Ścieżki piesze na terenie dawnego Portu. Zabudowa historyczna miesza się ze współczesną.
Zdjęcie: autorka

The historical and present view of the harbour in Hamburg differ from each other significantly (Figs. 1–2). The industrial characteristic is connected with much of unbuilt land. In contrary the existing modern image presents intensive urban structure filled up with buildings, wherever it is possible. Only small spaces are left open, which today are being used by public.

In 2009 the different views are to be recognised in the HafenCity in the time of its revitalisation (Figs. 2–12). Here the new uses of work, apartments, and service, as well as city public spaces are to be seen (Figs. 3–12). The high modern buildings show different style to historical granaries from the past (compare Fig. 9 and 12).

The overbuilt space gives the new shapes to the open space between buildings. In this case (Figs. 4–8 and 10–11) the pedestrian zones and squares are visible next to the Elbe River.



Fig. 7. A public square next to Elbe River equipped with street furniture. Photo: The author

Ryc. 7. Skwer publiczny nad rzeką Elbą wyposażony w meble uliczne. Zdjęcie: autorka



Fig. 8. Pedestrian paths along the Elbe watercourse, used by inhabitants also in the winter time.
Photo: The author

Ryc. 8. Ścieżki piesze wzdłuż kanału Elby, użytkowane przez mieszkańców także zimą. Zdjęcie: autorka



Fig. 9. A re-used historical building in the revitalized harbour made of red brick. Photo: The author

Ryc. 9. Zabudowa historyczna w rewitalizowanym Porcie, wykonana z czerwonej cegły, przeznaczona na nowe użytkowanie. Zdjęcie: autorka

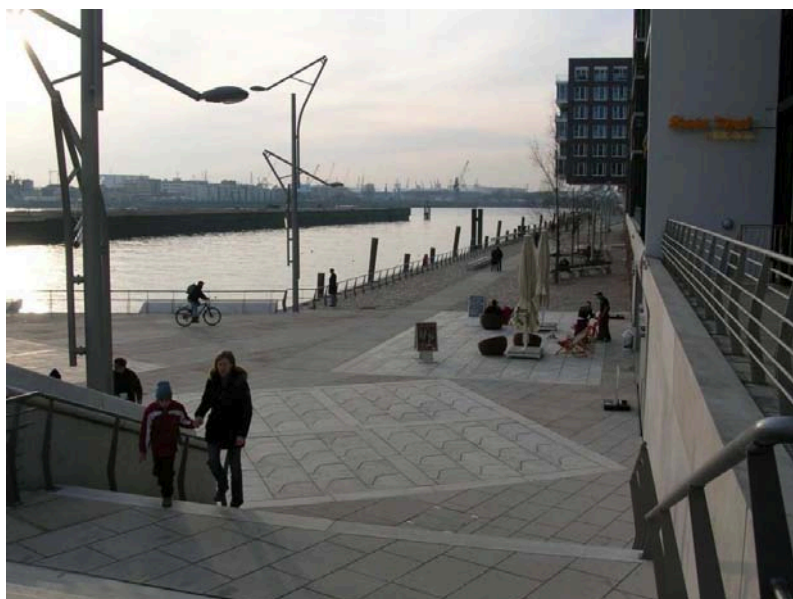


Fig. 10. Public open space in the former harbour area surrounded by the post-industrial cityscape: In the background the view line of the new architecture along the Elbe River. Photo: The author

Ryc. 10. Przestrzeń publiczna na terenie dawnego Portu otoczona krajobrazem poprzemysłowym: w oddali linia nowej zabudowy nad Elbą. Zdjęcie: autorka

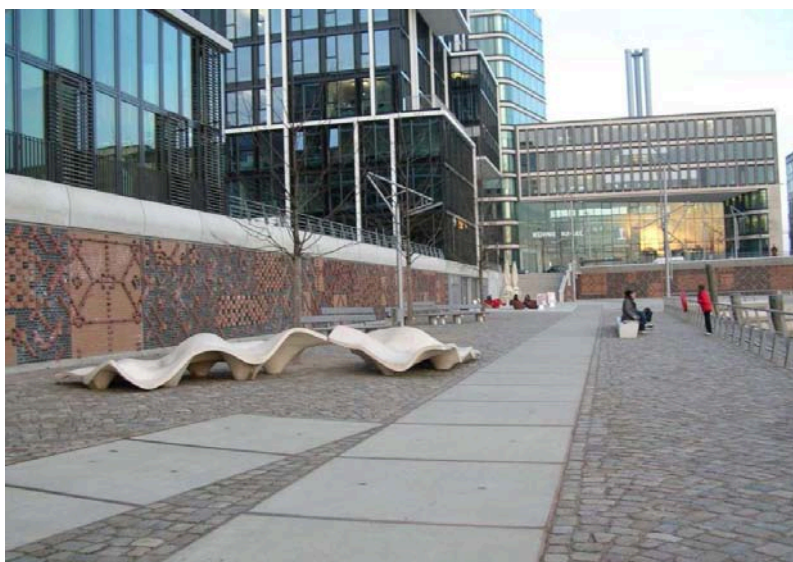


Fig. 11. Public open space made of concrete and paving stone. The artistic shapes of new street furniture are characteristic for this riverside of Elbe River. Photo: The author

Ryc. 11. Publiczna przestrzeń otwarta wykonana z betonu i kamienia. Artystyczne kształty nowych mebli ulicznych są charakterystyczne dla tego brzegu Elby. Zdjęcie: autorka

This space is also equipped with street furniture and consists of new materials (Figs. 5, 7, 11)

The mentioned relations between open and built-up space result in the new image of the site.

The squares and wide streets supply the buildings with the necessary representative space. Due to this space pedestrians can observe the cityscape from various distances, which makes the “pictures of the city” perceivable. These images seen in the HafenCity are possible to be recognised in different forms. “Visual breaks”, “cityscape windows”, and “open cityscapes” or “skylines” are examples of industrial visual perception [Włodarczyk 2009]. These kinds of narrow, squared, and wide views are shaped by the historical and new industrial architecture and structures and by the shapes and dimensions of the open space.



Fig. 12. New architecture in the area of HafenCity. Its modern look is contrasting to historical buildings of the former harbour. Photo: The author

Ryc. 12. Nowa architektura na terenie HafenCity. Nowoczesny wygląd obiektu stanowi kontrast w stosunku do budynków historycznych dawnego Portu. Zdjęcie: autorka

Moreover, the quality of the transformed industrial cityscape is described by the new materials used in the surfaces, proportions between the kept historical architecture of the harbour and the introduced new elements, as well as kind of street furniture used in the public space. In the case of HafenCity new elements in the public open space are pedestrian zones made of paving brick, paths made of wood and concrete, public squares equipped with different forms of benches, trees, dust-bins. These elements (Figs. 4–8 and 11) constitute new image of the former harbour.

TEMPORARY USE AS “BEACHCLUBS” – BACK TO THE “NEW HISTORY” OF PUBLIC SPACE

The German city councils, National Ministry for Traffic, Building and City Development, as well as National Council for Building and Spatial Land-use (Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung and Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung) prepared a rich material about temporary use of different sites in Germany. In this paper the information about “Beachclubs” in Hamburg (point 3) is based on these researches.

It is said, that the proximity to water and the central location of the harbour is one of aspects, why since beginning of 21 century the area is well known in the city and often used by people [Christiaanse 2003].

The long-time discussions in City Council and by town planners led to the situation of neglected space of no use [Bundesministerium... 2008]. In 2003 the temporary use as Beachclubs started and later between 2003 and 2006 there were three of such clubs. Usually they were open since April and lasted till September, in order to let the visitors in. After 2006 this function was changed, because a high block with fourteen storeys of living lofts and with office functions was planned in this space. In 2006 the financial authority of Hamburg wanted to use temporarily the surface of the former England-ferry terminal, which worked in the years 1992 till 2002. The building was later used also for new functions of offices. The car-parking were left empty with no use. The three new Beachclubs were allowed to use this area since 2007. They offered recreational conditions on the surface of together 0.6 ha till 1.5 ha. The view of the harbour was accompanying the sport activity. The skyline of the former industrial space was described by sand on the beach and temporary buildings. The visitors could take a sunbath on deck chairs, beds, or in beach baskets, swim in the pool, play volleyball as well as go to the amphitheatre and listen to music concerts. Apart from the last two functions, the other uses mentioned above recall the beach character of the neglected space in Berlin along the Spree River in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg.

All this elements were an attraction for inhabitants of the big city. The difference between the former “heavy” industrial and new “light” recreational function makes this “old-new” place worth seeing.

The clubs were used for various kinds of events offering the space for about 3000 people at one time [Bundesministerium... 2008]. The area of Wooden Harbour and of England-Terminal during the temporary use was not private but a communal property. The city was the owner of the site. The mentioned before financial authorities were responsible for the temporary use of these surface. After 2007 the situation changed because the Fisher Development Company was created in order to take care for the space.

This is one example of visual transformations of the former harbour areas. The described „Beachclubs“ took part in changes of the industrial cityscape of Hamburg. The atmosphere of sport and recreation is full of contrasts in comparison with the noisy and dirty work placed here before. The temporary use of harbour contributed also financially to the budget of the city, since one of reasons for allowing this kind of uses in the city is meaningful income from renting of such sites.

Who uses the Beachclubs? Mostly come here the inhabitants in the free time. Apart from sport the clubs have an offer for company events, weddings, and birthday celebrations as well. Also tourists come here, as they are attracted by the exotic image of the former industrial space and by the possibility to see something “prohibited” before.

In 2006 there was the competition prepared by the financial authorities in order to plan the use of the former England Terminal. This use shall embrace four-years of different activities. The plan referred to the surface extended at 2.1 hectares [Bundesministerium... 2008]. The purpose of the new use was culture events and tourism. Nevertheless, the condition was, that the built structures could be created only for short time – it was not a long-term planning. The result was a commitment with bosses of the Beachclubs including the specific conditions about ways of finishing the deal. The sport clubs were temporarily set in the area, but even though their buildings were designed by the professional architects obeying all the important project rules. Additionally, each year after 2006 new and different functions were being placed in the area. It is necessary to say, that the effort in creation of clubs in Hamburg HafenCity was meaningful. One of the three clubs with the surface of 0.25 hectares was prepared by bringing 1300 tons of sand.

The mentioned German city councils prepared a kind of short estimation of the transformation process in Hamburg. They say about positives seen at the use-level, as well as about difficulties, connected with the financial level and with planning process in the time of changing functions.

On the one hand, one of successes of the functional and spatial transformation of former harbour in Hamburg is the role the Beachclubs play in the culture connected with possibilities of spending free time. This role has been described by politicians and inhabitants of the city as important [Bundesministerium... 2008], considering the need of public open spaces in the central parts of the city.

On the other hand, there are some obstacles during the process. One negative is the “uncertainty of the planning process connected with increasing professionalization of clubs”. Thereby to mention are the constantly changing planning conditions in the analysed area. Another problem is building of new structures and later their destruction, since this is the specific feature of the temporary-use. Difficult are also the deals with sponsors. Besides, the harbour is located on the flood territory, because the River Elbe is adjacent to the space. This fact causes additional threats, especially during winter, when the water freezes and in flood seasons. Moreover, the negative aspect is the lack of car parking, which increases traffic and noise in the harbour.

However positive is the public traffic connecting the HafenCity with the nearby city center and surrounding [HafenCity... 2010].

As far as the financial matter is concerned, it is to be mentioned, that the price for one-year rent during the first competition was about 210 000 Euro for the total space, which is used presently by the three Beachclubs. It means, that the costs of the temporary-use are high, however, it is foreseen, that this rent will be paid back by the income from the prospering clubs [Bundesministerium... 2008].

SUMMARY

The process of re-use of former industrial areas is connected with spatial changes. These changes are to be recognised in the cityscape. Different forms of views permit presently to see, how the image of former harbour in Hamburg transforms. In this image a significant role play the quality of public open space. Thereby important are the materials, of which the space is made and the “new” and “old” elements, of which the changing skyline of the harbour presently consists. The proportion between these elements says about the quality of the process.

Moreover, one of means leading to the final re-use of the industrial area may be the temporary-use, which allows recognising the “popularity” of the space in the town and supports financially the existence of this space.

The answer to the question about the mentioned visual proportions of the transformed site shall bring the possibility for estimation of the re-use process considering cityscape modifications of the historical industrial district.

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ZMIANA PRZEZNACZENIA BYŁYCH TERENÓW PRZEMYSŁOWYCH
A WYNIKAJĄCE Z NIEJ PRZEKSZTAŁCENIA ICH MIEJSKIEGO KRAJOBRAZU.
STUDIUM PRZYPADKU: HAMBURG, NIEMCY

Streszczenie. Tereny zdegradowane, na których do niedawna (do roku około 2000) istniała jeszcze działalność przemysłowa, przechodzą obecnie w dużych miastach Europy intensywne przekształcenia. Zmiany funkcjonalne na tych terenach powodują także w konsekwencji zmiany przestrzenne i krajobrazowe. Przedstawiony przykład HafenCity w Hamburgu ilustruje współczesne możliwości wykorzystania dawnych portów w obszarach śródmiejskich. Wnioski artykułu odnoszą się do jakości procesu transformacji terenu portu, biorąc pod uwagę przestrzeń publiczną i towarzyszące jej krajobrazy miejskie.

Słowa kluczowe: zmiana przeznaczenia, dawne tereny przemysłowe, port, przekształcenia, krajobraz miejski, otwarta przestrzeń publiczna