

European Brownfield Revitalisation Agenda



Mission statement

EUBRA is a new and promising platform for European Brownfield Revitalisation. Its main objective is to identify priorities, topics and activities to be considered in future national and international programmes. The EUBRA – Agenda will help to streamline future activities and to avoid duplication of work.

EUBRA has been initiated by the INTERREG IIIB funded projects REVIT and PROSIDE and received additional funding by the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs as a targeted preparation activity for Objective III programmes in the new funding period.

There are many examples of good practice that have produced positive results from brownfield site project redevelopment across Europe. Much of this information is a result of individual EU funded projects but these have not necessarily been brought together to build up a body of collective experience. There is an opportunity to bring together best practices and the various tools that have been developed to create the best opportunities for an integrated approach for the future redevelopment of Brownfield sites, particularly for those that need solutions for complex and difficult problems. Policy makers and developers should be supported through a conduit of best practice, the collation of information, and a network of specialists with practical experience in the field.

The EUBRA team

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Content

	Mission statement	2
1	Setting the scene	4
2	European programmes related to Brownfield revitalisation	6
3	Key aspects of brownfield redevelopment	8
4	State of the art and future needs – analysis of achievements of previous and running activities	9
A	The social dimension – community involvement	9
B	The economic dimension – finance, marketing, PPP	13
C	The urban environmental dimension – Sustainability aspects, planning process, integrated approaches	16
D	Contamination of soil and groundwater	18
5	Conclusions from the REVIT&CABERNET 2007 conference	20
6	Cornerstones of Future Projects	21
7	Project list	22



1 Setting the scene

European Union leaders wish to place new impetus on economic reforms - especially to make their countries more competitive. The Lisbon Agenda, agreed by the EU member states, strives for economic growth and job creation. Similarly, the European Council, at its Gothenburg meeting in June 2001, agreed an EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) which “adds a third, environmental dimension to the Lisbon strategy” for economic and social renewal. Its stated aim is to ensure that economic growth, environmental quality and social inclusion go hand-in-hand.

Cities play an important role in this context. Sustainable urban regeneration is a key component in improving economic prosperity, creating more employment opportunities, supporting social inclusion and protecting the environment. These issues, more than ever, need to be complementary and achieve mutually beneficial goals.

As outlined in the Commission’s communication on cohesion policy for cities, over 60% of the population in the European Union live in urban areas. Cities and urban areas, in general, provide most jobs, are actively supported by businesses and higher education institutions and are key to achieving social cohesion. European cities and metropolitan areas tend to attract highly skilled workers, leading to a self reinforcing circle that stimulates innovation and business development. This adds to the charm and vibrancy of a city and thereby attracts new talent.

Cities and urban areas present not only opportunities but also challenges. Account should be taken of the specific problems urban areas are facing, such as unemployment, social exclusion, high and rising crime rates, increased congestion and the existence of pockets of deprivation within city boundaries.

In this context, it is important to dedicate resources to rehabilitate the physical environment, revitalise brownfield sites, and preserve and develop the historical and cultural heritage of depressed sites and areas. This has potential positive spin-offs for retail, commercial and tourism interests, creating more attractive cities. The regeneration of existing public spaces and industrial sites plays an important role in avoiding suburbanisation and urban sprawl, thereby helping to create the conditions necessary for sustainable economic development. In urban areas, the environmental, economic and social dimensions are strongly inter-linked. A high quality urban environment contributes to the priority of the

renewed Lisbon Strategy to make Europe a more attractive place in which to work, live and invest.

The traditional EU Member States have already established national strategies on brownfield issues and corresponding policies are evolving in the new Member States. The European Commission supports these strategies and has adopted a number of policy instruments like Framework programmes for Research and Development, the Thematic Strategy on Urban Environment, European Regional Development Funds etc., which include specific brownfields related measures.

Recently the Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection encourages the EU Member States to reduce sealing¹ and use land more efficiently. Brownfield remediation reduces the pressure to develop greenfield sites for the expansion of the urban environment. The strategy and the proposed Soil Framework Directive will also force member states to develop national remediation strategies for contaminated sites. Brownfield regeneration thus will help to achieve the goals of these national strategies.

According to its relevance as mentioned above brownfields revitalisation and mitigation of contaminated land is one of the fields of intervention which was subject to past European funding programmes and which is a priority issue for the future, e.g. European Regional Development Funds (Regulation (EC) 1080/2006). With the EU-enlargement its importance has become even more pressing.

Innovative approaches, new strategies, pilot actions and best practice examples are urgently needed. However there does not appear to be an integrated approach which combines the best achievements, activities and techniques.

EUBRA aims at bringing together the multifaceted activities related to the topic of "Brownfields" from several past funding programmes like the INTERREG IIIB co-operation areas. Furthermore new knowledge of the RDT Framework Programmes is included. Central feature of the EUBRA activity was a workshop, held 15th and 16th January 2007 in Stuttgart, with participants from projects funded under INTERREG or FP 5&6. This workshop as well as from experiences gathered during the final conference of the INTERREG IIIB NWE project REVIT "Managing urban ar-

1 According to the proposal for an EU Soil Framework Directive 'sealing' means the permanent covering of the soil surface with an impermeable material.



...”, held in Stuttgart on 25th to 27th April 2007, led to this booklet, the EUBRA Agenda.

The main objective of the Agenda is to support policy makers and programme managers in setting priorities in future national and international funding programmes. It is also meant to serve for potential project applicants as orientation guide in order to clearly determine the fields of action at project level and act as a basis for upcoming projects in order to streamline future activities as well as to avoid duplication of work.

2 European programmes related to Brownfield revitalisation

Due to its multidisciplinary nature brownfield revitalisation is supported by activities related to regional development policy as well as to environmental policy, accompanied by additional research and development. Therefore brownfield related measures can be identified under various past and present funding programmes.

The regional policy of the European Commission aims at Convergence, Competitiveness and Cooperation. The next 7 years almost 400 bln Euro are available to carry out the policy.

The major part is for Objective 1 and Objective 2: Coherence and Competition; supporting large scale infrastructures and investments. Within these objectives environmental and urban issues, including brownfield revitalisation play an important role. However decisions on how to spend these funds are based on programmes to be drafted by the member states to be approved by the European Commission. The implementation of actions is the responsibility of the member states again. It thus is vital to lobby for a substantial allocation of funds to be spent on brownfield revitalisation at the level of the member states and with the support of the Commission.

Funding for Objective 3, territorial transnational co-operation, is structured in three INTERREG (IV) strands:

- A: cross-border cooperation
- B: transnational cooperation
- C: interregional cooperation

And among others a network programme URBACT II, shows relevance for brownfields issues.

	Research & Demonstration	Demonstration	Large investment projects	small investments, best practise	Transnational co-operation, exchange of experiences
ERDF, Objective 1&2		X	X		
ERDF, Objective 3				X	X
Cohesion fund			X		
URBACT - URBAN		X			X
LIFE		X		X	
FP6&7	X				

Although based on the same principles and policy documents, the draft operational programmes of the different programme areas which were published yet are showing slight differences in the priority types of activities according to the regional characteristics. For INTERREG IV B e.g. the draft CENTRAL programme explicitly mentions brownfield related issues under two of its priorities (environment and attractiveness of cities), whereas the NWE programme does not list brownfield issues within its priority activities, although the priorities “natural resources and risk management” and “strong and prosperous communities” may give a framework for brownfield related projects. INTERREG IV C lists re-use of brownfields as an option for a fast track networks and URBACT II defined a priority axis “attractive and cohesive cities”, dealing among others with deprived areas.

The 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7) provides opportunities mainly for cooperative research in the environment programme about sustainable management of resources and environmental technologies for observation, mitigation and remediation of the natural and man-made environment.

The LIFE+ Programme which aims at supporting the implementation of the 6th Environmental Action Plan subsidises demonstration and best practise projects, networking and activities of NGOs.



Experiences of previous and current programmes show that they tend to work in isolation with regard to sharing their results and best practice. A coupling of R&D and demonstration activities of the Research Framework Programmes with the INTERREG, URBACT and LIFE programmes is thus recommended.

3 Key aspects of brownfield redevelopment

Brownfield related issues can be grouped based on the key elements of sustainable development i.e. social, economic and environmental issues. The regulatory and institutional dimension, covering policy approaches and regulatory practises can be considered as a cross-cutting issue. So far economic and environmental objectives have largely driven brownfield redevelopment. More attention needs to be paid to the social dimension: community involvement and the damage from brownfield sites to the social fabric and cultural capital of their surroundings. Focusing redevelopment on social and cultural needs of the people needs public participation. Community involvement therefore plays a key role in achieving an improved quality of life in urban areas and fostering social well being of the residents.

The economic dimension – finance, marketing, PPP

Key issues on finance and marketing of brownfield redevelopment are the development of better ways of Public Private Partnership (PPP) and new forms of financial engineering. A condition to meet thereby is a change towards a more positive image of brownfields. This requires a concentrated strategy and the support of public (European) funding.

The urban environmental dimension – towards integrated approaches

Dealing with the environmental dimension at the urban scale comprises environmental management and regulations, environmental aspects of planning, environmental tools dealing with air, soil, water and waste as well as the consideration of natural assets. There is a challenging need to generate multidisciplinary integrated approaches, in order to achieve well balanced regeneration schemes to improve quality of life in urban areas.

Contamination of soil and groundwater

Contamination of soil and groundwater is just one of the many environmental problems which have to be dealt with in brownfield redevelopment. Nevertheless it is widely considered to be a key issue, as it bears uncertainties and potential high risks related to the costs and the time needed for remediation. Contamination may block development in some cases but in many cases the revitalisation of brownfield may help to solve a contamination problem. In these cases the financial means and other resources devoted to the solution of the contamination problem may be used to contribute to brownfield redevelopment.

4 State of the art and future needs – analysis of achievements of previous and running activities

A The social dimension – community involvement

Why is the social dimension so important to the successful delivery of brownfield site renewal? There are many reasons, however primary among these is that brownfield site redevelopment is often long term, complex and involves a wide range of professional disciplines, requiring active political support and an interface with many different stakeholders throughout the often long lifetime of a project. The approach taken for stakeholder engagement, when related to brownfield sites, thus has a unique approach and this should be coupled with sustained resources, including adequate funding.

In addition, environmental assessments, detailed planning and financial support are some of the other key issues requiring an interface with different people, both professionals and those potentially affected by proposed changes. Change is the most likely outcome of all the attention that is given to renewing previously used land, and part of these changes include people, organisations and interested parties, particularly as these projects can last in excess of 10 years. Relationships and the trusts that are developed over a long period of time can quickly be reduced to starting all over again when a key “player” moves on or is replaced. A robust stakeholder engagement strategy should thus aim to be able to cope with adjusting to relationships that may need to be re-built.



Time, costs, personalities, new legislation and other unplanned events often have an impact on the initial aims, objectives and planned outcomes of a major redevelopment proposal. It is vital that these three important components are clearly set out at the beginning of the project and that they are communicated effectively to all stakeholders and if circumstances change, that simultaneously this is also communicated. This requires a fail-safe management system and an effective communication strategy.

Marginal brownfield sites frequently require multiple promoters including banks, insurance companies, developers, investors, public funding and local political support. These important stakeholders require regular and accurate information, at the appropriate level of competence to ensure that relatively complex and high risk developments do not falter and financial support is not withdrawn.

Brownfield redevelopment is often emotive and can thus become “political”. Thus it is imperative to understand political motivation, potential support or opposition at the start of the project as well as its reviewing and evaluating throughout the lifetime of the development. Politicians should be kept regularly informed and where possible positively participate in the project.

Trust and transparency are key issues that bring together private and public partnerships. Brownfield sites often require both the Private and Public Sector to enable challenging sites to be improved and this co-ordination requires particular skills and competencies.

This is not a comprehensive list or description of all the stakeholders and their respective roles within the field of brownfield site redevelopment, however this demonstrates the need to plan, resource, manage and take a professional approach to stakeholder engagement within this field.

Costs and Benefits of community consultation and stakeholder involvement

There is a saying, “do something well or do not do it at all!” This can equally be applied to community consultation and engaging with stakeholders when renewing brownfield sites.

If the decision is to undertake a comprehensive approach, a realistic budget should be worked out, based on expert judgement and calculation, and not merely on a small percentage of the total redevelopment budget! Community involvement and stakeholder consultation should be

aligned to the other professional services being used to develop the site, such as engineers, architects etc. These services all require a project plan, a clear brief and strategy and a project management approach, to integrate this with all the other work that will be taking place. Thus community involvement and stakeholder consultation should not be an add on – it should be a key part of the overall redevelopment process.

As part of the cost benefit analysis the following potential negative outcomes should be considered:

- Planning permission delayed/ refused
- Mitigation actions resulting in additional costs
- Legal Action
- Project Delays
- Harassment
- Vandalism
- Insurance Premiums high or refused
- Financial Backing risks
- Freedom of Information liabilities
- Trust
- Barriers to development
- Implications for reputation/next project
- Increased Bureaucracy

A professional approach

Stakeholder Engagement has increasingly become a necessary part of new brownfield site developments. Stakeholders include professionals, politicians, contractors, citizens, lobby groups and the press. It is no longer possible to assign the work of engaging with this array of people without taking a professional approach.

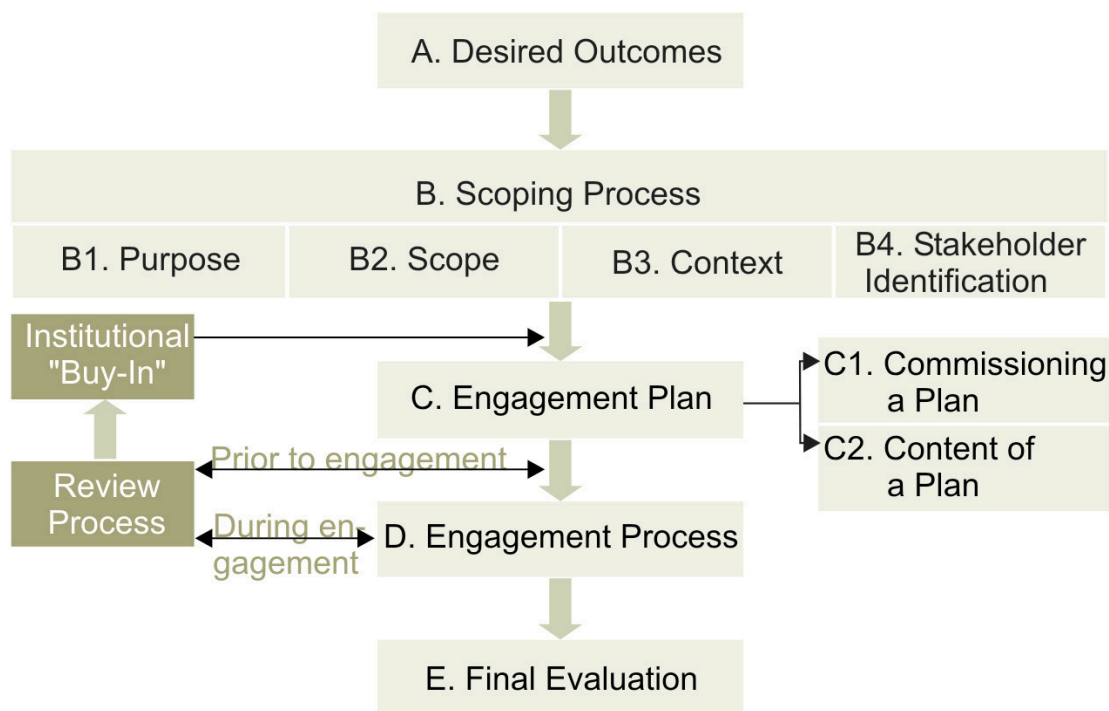
Such an approach should be systematic, i.e. not dependent on a few key people and something that can be relied upon and improved. Trained and experienced practitioners should be used to manage the process and facilitate this if necessary. Clear terms of reference should be agreed along with desired outcomes, coupled with a well worked out budget.

It is important to be able to identify all possible stakeholders together with their backgrounds and interest in a site. The compilation of a database is a necessary and important part of any engagement plan. Engagement techniques should be relevant to the stakeholder involved, including selecting venues and times to meet. It is important that those organising any engagement process ensure that there are the appropriate skills to be able to deal with a wide variety of people, such as being able to communicate with young people, ethnic minorities, professionals etc.

All this work requires a well developed and agreed engagement plan, similar to a project management plan, including clear aims and objec-

tives, identification and funding for resources, agreement of key events, venues, processes and milestones. Coupled with this is to ensure that there is a response strategy to ensure that either commitments made can be honoured or to be clear what can and cannot be negotiated. Part of this response strategy should agree the type of involvement, from simple information all the way to potential empowerment.

The sustainability of any process relies on long term involvement, delivery on commitments, continuous, regular and accurate information, all the while documenting the process as it develops. In order to check whether or not the process is reaching its desired outcomes, it is important to review and evaluate progress throughout the lifetime of the engagement plan. Small issues can be swiftly dealt with before they potentially hinder previous good work. The following flowchart shows a framework for good stakeholder engagement² developed within the REVIT project.



² REVIT Revitalising Industrial Sites (2007): Stakeholder Engagement – A Toolkit. www.rev-it-nw-europe.org

B The economic dimension – finance, marketing, PPP

Brownfield development in general is more costly and involves more risks than the development of other (greenfield) sites. Developers often focus on the costs and benefits of single sites. They do not take into account the possible cost reduction or external benefits for other related sites in an overall development. The result of this is that brownfield sites are not as attractive to develop as other less complicated sites.

Yet, looking at the financial issue in a broader perspective, collective benefits such as environmental benefits, improved neighbourhoods, preserved workspace, preservation of greenfields and lessening public health impacts are all important issues and one of the main reasons for developing brownfield areas from the public point of view. Redeveloping brownfield sites may also generate benefits for other private sector parties such as increased property values (commercial and residential) and/or increased value of neighbouring brownfield sites. At the same time brownfield redevelopment has a cost saving effect for third parties in terms of more efficient use of existing infrastructure, transportation, and other public services. Finances on brownfield areas thus should be considered in a broader prospective.

Unfortunately developers, both from the public as well as from private sector still tend to focus on the individual site. This generates a deficit and a lack of development. What are the solutions?

Although there are many approaches ranging from external finance to other ways of calculation we would like to focus on two possibilities in this respect:

Raising benefits through improving the image of brownfields including a sustained marketing strategy; Diminishing the risks and reducing individual costs through PPP for brownfield regeneration and other forms of financial engineering.

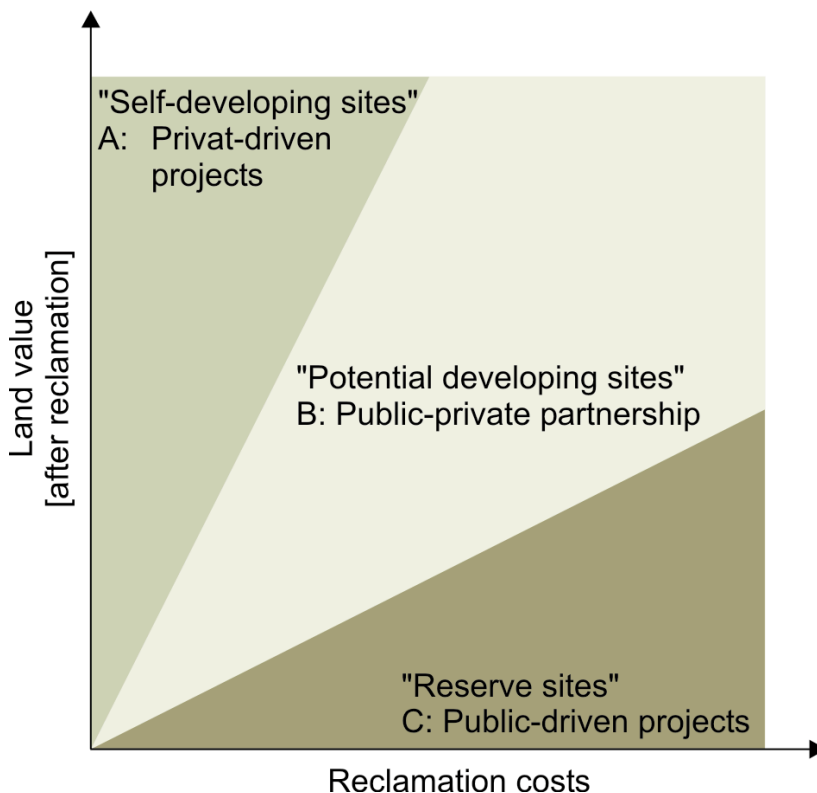
As to the aspect of image, the REVIT-activities have shown that still a lot of awareness raising in this field needs to be done. The image of brownfield areas, specifically in areas lagging behind, is negative, hindering the development of these areas. Information on the positive effects of redevelopment of brownfield areas should be constantly highlighted. Good practice in this field both on the national as well as on the European scale should be gathered and shown to the public as well as to the developers in order to break through this negative image. New marketing



techniques may help in this process. The further development of this, on the European scale is welcomed.

As to Public Private Partnership the REVIT-project as well as other projects have shown clear results. First of all a simple tool for understanding the way to handle risks and development of brownfield areas was developed by CABERNET³ and is presented in the accompanying diagram.

On the basis of this graph it becomes clearer where involvement of the public sector – or even the lead by the public sector– is necessary to



initiate redevelopment, also taking into account the financial aspects.

Furthermore, studies have revealed the types of PPP used in many regions in Europe. On the basis of the second figure shown below⁴ it is possible to understand the nature of public private partnership taking into account the

position of the various stakeholders as well as the stage of development. Four models have been identified: private development, public development, procurement and concession PPP and PPP alliance.

The more mature the PPP is, the more it will show characteristics of the alliance model. Based on the studies carried out on PPP and the models

³ CABERNET (2006): Sustainable Brownfield Regeneration: CABERNET Network Report. ISBN 0-9547474-5-3

⁴ REVIT Revitalising Industrial Sites (2007): Working towards more effective and sustainable brownfield revitalisation policies. Final report. www.revital-nweurope.org

mentioned before, within the REVIT-project a checklist has been developed to assist developers in choosing the best way possible for public private co-operation. This checklist may help to provide confidence between partners and thus generate financing from both public as well as private sources.

Stage \ Model	I. Private development	II. Public development	III. Procurement & concession PPP	IV. PPP Alliance
Initiative	Private	Public	Public	Private, public
Planning	Private, with public assistance	Public	Possibly private	Private, public
Financial	Private, with public assistance	Public	Possibly private	Private, public
Site Development	Private	Public	Possibly private	Private, public
Building	Private	Public	Possibly private	Private, public
Operating & maintenance (commercial facilities)	Private	Private, public	Possibly private	Private, public
Maintenance of public facilities	Public	Public	Public	Private, public

Besides the promotion of PPP the issue of financial engineering deserves more attention. New techniques of finance should be developed and used for brownfield regeneration. An example is the use of revolving funds by both the public and private sector to finance the activities. Thus gains on the development of one site could be used for a future other site. Furthermore to attract a wider variety of financial partners in the development would be worthwhile including the semi-public sector like trusts and NGO's. Not only would this contribute to the budgets available for brownfield regeneration, it would also help to promote a positive image for the Brownfields.

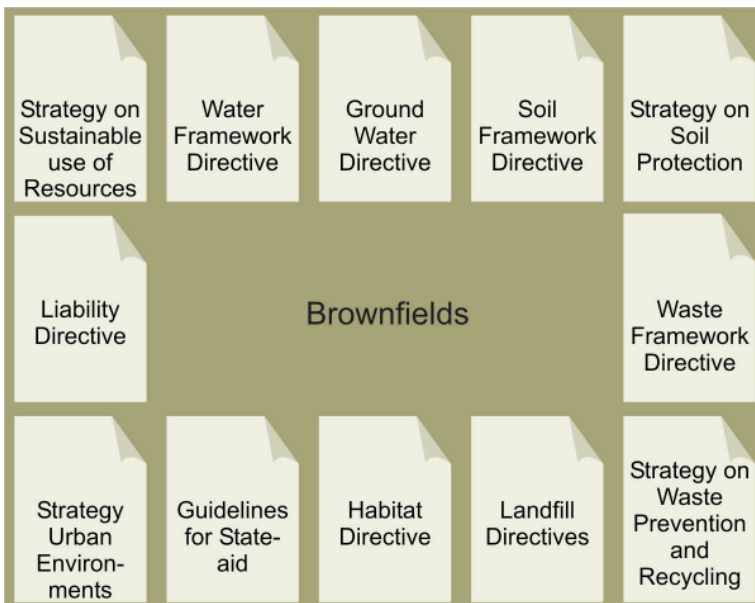
The EU is faced with a challenging task to continue to develop brownfield areas. It becomes more and more apparent that difficult problems in this field still remain and that the brownfield sites that remain to be regenerated, in general, are becoming more complex as a result of legislation and difficult sites remaining on the list. To deal with these problems the image for brownfield areas has to become more positive and Public Private Partnership is often vital. Yet, the public sector itself will have to take the first steps whenever developing brownfield areas at the scale which is desired.



The European Commission can assist in this part by providing EU-funding for those areas which are vital for the development of Europe and may at the same time contribute to the competitiveness of Europe on the global market. More studies on the most effective use of these funds for brownfield development, including ways of financial engineering, as mentioned before, would be beneficial.

C The urban environmental dimension – Sustainability aspects, planning process, integrated approaches

Brownfields have an effect on environmental media as air, soil and water. To prevent negative impacts on the surrounding areas, even without regeneration, these sites require management and monitoring, leading into societal costs. A wide range of EU policies govern environmental issues related to brownfield regeneration as shown in the figure below.



With the implementation of the European legislation on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) the sustainable development agenda is growing in importance in respect of brownfield redevelopment. Among others the Water

Framework Directive, Landfill Directive, Liability Directive, the Habitat Directive and the proposed Soil Framework Directive have to be considered. Four thematic strategies to be developed in the framework of the 6th Environmental Action Plan may have also an impact on brownfield related activities. These are the strategies on the urban environment, soil, sustainable use of natural resources and waste prevention and

recycling. A large number of policy plans, strategies and regulations may influence targets for brownfield redevelopment. On the one hand they may complicate decision making about brownfield redevelopment, but on the other hand they may provide opportunities for integrated problem solving. As brownfield redevelopment may contribute to policy goals of quite a number of these policy frameworks which are summarised in the figure above policy and financial support may be enlarged compared to a sectoral approach to brownfields revitalisation.

Unfortunately current practices are still dominated by sectoral approaches. As was observed concerning the financial aspects of brownfield redevelopment, broadening the scope of the environmental aspects is also of utmost importance. Multidisciplinary approaches are still scarce and the actors involved are in many cases following the pathways given by their professions. Energy, construction materials, waste, water management, human health, quality of life, green space and natural assets are vital elements for sustainability considerations for urban development. Integration is a key issue, and a long term strategy is required to make this a common principle in urban development.

Environmental aspects of planning

Sustainable urban environments require a spatial planning approach which includes environmental objectives in a systematic but flexible way. Subsurface and time should be added to the traditional 2D planning approach, reflecting the complex nature and long-term perspective of most of the brownfield redevelopment programmes. The juridical framework of traditional planning approaches hampers redevelopment opportunities which might arise during a long-term process. Future research and development should contribute to an integrated consideration of the spatial, subsurface and time components within the planning and development control process.

Implementation of sustainability targets

Numerous approaches to the assessment of brownfield project sustainability are available. It is common that sustainability targets and indicators have to be defined and weighted in a consultation process on a site specific base and should relate to local and national sustainability policies. It is essential to undertake a sustainable development assessment, followed by a management plan and supported by specific plans for monitoring, review and auditing throughout the whole development process. Newly developed tools and processes as the RESCUE-SAT and the Dutch Environmental Profile Process as demonstrated by the REVIT



project should be further optimised, demonstrated and disseminated as best practise, facilitating the implementation of sustainability targets in administrative processes.

Integrated multidisciplinary approaches

Environmental assessment methodologies to evaluate risks for human health and the environment are well established. In many cases they do not however provide sufficient information for the different stages of the development process, e.g. while groundwater and soil contamination are generally well-covered, issues such as air pollution and noise tend to be less so. Considerations of air pollution and climate should be linked to the use of alternative energy and even soil and groundwater investigations contribute via the calculation of geothermal energy potentials to energy and climate aspects. Planning, development and environmental assessment processes should be carefully reviewed and linked to an integrated environmental assessment process, which ensures the availability of appropriate data for each step in the development process. As a promising first step in this direction the “test-planning method” developed and applied within the INTERREG IIB CADSES project PROSIDE⁵ can be seen.

D Contamination of soil and groundwater

Former environmental policies for soil ignored spatial planning priorities, by setting priorities for contaminated sites according to environmental needs only. As a result, the redevelopment of brownfields with lower environmental priorities, were delayed and often with important social and economic consequences. However, setting priorities according to spatial planning and socio-economic needs only ignores sites that may pose a risk in view of their current use and favour the decontamination of sites with a high economic value for redevelopment. Defining contaminated land problems as a general burden for society, instead of a sectoral environmental or spatial planning problem, will assist in finding sustainable solutions for brownfield redevelopment with minimal conflicts of interest.

⁵ PROSIDE (2006): Promoting sustainable inner urban development, ISBN: 3 937750-02-9

As brownfield revitalisation has to solve environmental, social and economical problems simultaneously and often at a regional or 'megasite' scale, the choice of the optimal scenario for development can be very complex. If contamination is an important issue various risk management approaches can be used to mitigate the risks associated with the planned future use of the land. Opportunities for reducing the soil and groundwater contamination on the site or off-site, opportunities for breaking the pathways by which the contamination can affect people and other targets of concern and opportunities for adjusting local land-uses to (residual) contamination, need to be explored.

There is a need to develop and demonstrate cost effective site characterisation methods.

A reliable characterisation of soil and groundwater in is essential for the exploration of various brownfield development scenarios and problem solutions. Classical approaches for characterisation are often very costly if applied on large complex sites. There still is a need for development of lower costs characterisation techniques, and practical experience with existing efficient methods should be stimulated through expert networks and demonstration projects.

Ecological functions and services of soils in urban systems need to be better understood.

The expansion of urban areas in the next decades in Europe, which has been predicted by many landuse scenario studies, leads to several important questions. First of all, will the large cities of tomorrow be healthier than the cities of the past? Several projects are now studying how to make urban environments more attractive and ecologically sound but they mainly address above ground aspects or are addressing specific regions. The importance of ecological functions and services of soils in urban systems is not yet fully recognised. In any case complete sealing of soils in large urban areas should be avoided, because the filter and buffer capacity and the biodegradation potential of urban soils may need to be exploited to the full in future.

Most knowledge about soils (and sediments) comes from natural soils or from agricultural soils. Urban soils are quite different and deserve special attention in view of the ecological services they can provide for a sustainable urban environment and their capacity to cope with contamination through biodegradation and long-term sorption. This will contribute to ecological and human health in the urban environment and will help to prevent further spreading of contaminants into groundwater and surface



waters. A dedicated research program on all ecological aspects of urban soil is necessary, involving classification of urban soils, investigation of specific properties and their potential to perform ecological services.

5 Conclusions from the REVIT & CABERNET 2007 conference

With more than 550 participants from Europe, Mexico, Brasil, USA, Asia and Africa as well as 44 Exhibitors the 2nd Conference on Managing Urban Land held in April 2007 in Stuttgart was a success. The active participation of high level politicians as e.g. EU-Commissioner D. Hübner demonstrated that the issue of land regeneration is of growing interest. State Secretary E. Lütke Daldrup referred to the Informal Meeting of Ministers for Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion on May 24th 2007 in Leipzig. With the "Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities" the EU Member States will agree on common principles and strategies for urban development policy. Together with the final reports of REVIT⁶ and CABERNET⁷ which were also distributed during the conference, the current state of knowledge is well documented. The following conclusions were drawn from the oral presentations as well as the conference proceedings⁸.

More and more countries are starting activities to set up national land use/brownfield strategies. Monitoring and understanding land use patterns is prerequisite. Comprehensive data sets on brownfield land and other land uses would be useful to translate sustainable regeneration principles and objectives into concrete actions. This will vice versa allow to develop indicators and to set operational targets for brownfield revitalisation and will help to set priority targets at the different levels of action, in order to implement urban land management strategies from European level down to municipal level.

Notwithstanding the substantial progress in brownfield revitalisation there remains a significant number of sites which are not in the condition

⁶ REVIT Revitalising Industrial Sites (2007): Working towards more effective and sustainable brownfield revitalisation policies. Final report. www.revit-nweurope.org

⁷ CABERNET (2006): Sustainable Brownfield Regeneration: CABERNET Network Report. ISBN 0-9547474-5-3

⁸ REVIT&CABERNET (2007): 2nd International Conference on Managing Urban Land. Proceedings. ISBN: 978-3-934409-33-4

where regeneration is profitable. Stimulation by specific instruments (funding, incentives) will thus be required. Innovative financing instruments as e.g. revolving funds are possible new instruments that will assist the redevelopment of the most difficult sites. Their application, tailored to the needs of brownfield redevelopment, should be further explored and demonstrated.

Brownfield revitalisation is complex, often long term and includes operational and technical elements closely linked to strategic activities. Co-ordination and communication among technical experts, administrative staff, politicians, investors and the public are inevitable. This requires outstanding process management skills to effectively steer redevelopment processes over long periods of time.

Besides the technical aspects marketing and stakeholder engagement are more and more recognised as important elements for successful revitalisation, which require a more professional approach. Planning activities as e.g. definition of sustainability targets and indicators can stimulate stakeholder engagement processes; physical works as e.g. reuse of industrial heritage bear potential to add value to the marketing of a site. Communication aspects should also be carefully planned.

Numerous alternative technologies for the remediation of soil and groundwater contamination are available. Although the implementation of the EU landfill directive should stimulate the demand for in-situ technologies. It is difficult for innovative technologies to reach acceptance from regulators and problem-owners. There is a need to foster demonstration models, including testing and verification activities at European and national level.

6 Cornerstones of Future Projects

You have been awarded 10 million Euro for a new project. Prioritise what you want to achieve in this new project? This question was asked to the workshop participants at 15th/16th January 2007 in Stuttgart and delivered a series of project ideas. Detailed information about specific project ideas to be further developed to project proposals for different funding programmes is available at www.eubra.eu

The discussion among the experts and participants concluded:

- The pool of knowledge collected during the last decade has not always found its way into general practice.



- Brownfield redevelopment demands a multidisciplinary and integrated approach.
- Know-how transfer and learning by doing is especially important for the new member states.
- An organised brownfield platform does not exist, but would be urgently needed for lobbying on the various political levels in order to raise awareness for brownfield issues and to steer urban regeneration.

According to these findings two different kinds of projects are needed in the future:

1. Networks enhancing and securing the exchange of experience and know-how, capacity building and communication.
2. Large scale pilot projects predominantly in the central and eastern member states and the possibility to do “training on the job”.

7 Project list

The following list gives an overview of EU funded projects, networks and organisations which were invited to participate in EUBRA. Some of them actively contributed to this Agenda.

BERI; Brownfield European Regeneration Initiative; www.berinetwork.org

Berisp; Breaking Ecotoxicological Restraints in Spatial Planning;
www.berisp.org

BUUF; Baltic University Urban Forum - Implementing Sustainable Development in Urban Areas - Urban Forum; www.projekte.org/buuf

CIS; Creating a settling for investment; www.environment-investment.com

CONVERnet; Development of a Central-/Eastern European Conversion Network; www.conver.net

EPSON; European Spatial Planning Observation Network;
www.espon.eu

EUROPOLIS; Renewing the City, Managing Urban Growth;
www.europolis.equipement.gouv.fr

GIF; Gesellschaft für Immobilienwirtschaftliche Forschung e. V.!.
www.gif-ev.de

Hermes; Heritage and New Media for Sustainable Regional Development; www.swkk.de/hermes/lang_de/index.html

HYGEIA ; Hybrid geophysical technology for the evaluation of insidious contaminated areas; www.hygeia-eu.org

INCORD; Integrated Concepts for Regional Development; www.deutscher-verband.org/seiten/dv-ev-projekte/incord.asp

INTERACT; Sharing INTERREG experiences; www.interact-eu.net

LNeT; The european learning network - Enterprise and innovation in deprived urban areas; www.thelearningnetwork.net

LUDA; Improving the Quality of Life in Large Urban Distressed Areas; www.luda-project.net

MASURIN ; Management of Sustainable Revitalisation of Urban Industrial Sites; systemsresearch.ac.at/wwwsys/LUC/masurin/index.htm

NORISC ; Network Orientated Risk assessment by Insitu Screening of Contaminated sites; www.norisc.com

PLUS; Participation, leadership, and urban sustainability; www.eura.org/plus-eura

PROSIDE; Promoting Sustainable Inner Urban Development; www.proside.info

RARE; Railroad Areas Reclaim; www.rareproject.si

RELEMCOM; Reclaiming Land Empowering Communities; www.relemcom.org

RESCUE; Regeneration of European Sides in Cities and Urban Environments; www.rescue-europe.com

REVIT; Revitalising industrial sites – Towards more efficient and sustainable land use management; www.revit-nweurope.org

REVITA; Estrategia Atlántica de Revitalización en Areas Industriales; info@sevillaglobal.es

RTW; Regional triangle of Weimar; www.trireg.net

SAUL; Sustainable & accessible urban landscapes; www.saulproject.net

SRN; A Europe-wide network dedicated to the effective use and delivery of Structural Funds and regeneration programmes; www.srneurope.net

SULFANET; Sustainable Use of Former and Abandoned Landfills; www.sufalnet.net

SURE; Successful Rehabilitation - Accompanying Infrastructural Interventions; www.sureproject.net

VISP; Vitalizing City Centres through Integrated Spatial Planning; www.vispnet.org

Zorrozaurre; www.zorrozaurre.com

European Brownfield Revitalisation – the five key messages

Revitalisation of brownfield sites plays an important role in avoiding urban sprawl, thereby helping to create the conditions necessary for sustainable development. A high quality urban environment contributes to the priorities of the renewed Lisbon Agenda to make Europe a more attractive place to work, live and invest. Current practice can still be substantially improved and awareness of the need to integrate brownfield revitalisation in sustainable urban development should increase. Professional stakeholder engagement in the western and eastern EU Member States may enhance the process of rethinking in daily practice, to reach a paradigm shift, where more and more brownfield sites will be favoured over developments on greenfield sites.

Comprehensive data sets on brownfield land and other land uses would be useful to translate sustainable regeneration principles and objectives into actions at EU, national and regional level. This will allow to develop indicators and to set operational targets for brownfield revitalisation and will help to set priority targets at the different levels of action.

Brownfield revitalisation will be of growing importance in the eastern EU Member States and the issue of dealing with mega-sites will gain more attention. Besides new concepts for brownfield management, large investments will be needed to revitalise these sites and reintegrate them in the real estate market. Alongside with any EU subsidy measures the know-how transfer from western to eastern countries in order to achieve effective capacity building as well as transfer from research to practice should be stimulated.

Currently there is a wealth of methodological project results, approaches and technical tools available from EU funded projects. The first steps towards a collecting and structuring these (e.g. EUGRIS information system) have been taken. This route should be followed to achieve an optimal capitalisation of knowledge gained with the support of public funds – the existing knowledge should be disseminated more effectively and in a well structured way. Demonstration projects are needed to enhance the application of innovative approaches.

Brownfield revitalisation is often long term, complex, and involves a wide range of professional disciplines as well as political actors and different stakeholder groups. Co-ordination and communication are essential to sustain complex projects, and the management of the process as such is more evident than sole technical aspects. There is a need for professional process management to develop and deliver opportunity plans and to steer revitalisation processes. Besides a thorough consideration of process management aspects, the issue of community involvement as well as new market instruments to facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield sites should be main objective of future research and pilot projects.



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