

“As for the future, your task is not to foresee, but to enable it!”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Upstall Kreuzberg is the name and the agenda of a centrally located property in one of Berlin's most vibrant inner-city districts.

The site Upstall Kreuzberg lies at the heart of one of Berlin's fascinating cultural cityscapes. Numerous attractive venues within a 1.5 km radius can be easily reached on foot. The 5-hectare site of the former Dragoon Barracks behind Kreuzberg's tax office (Finanzamt) on Mehringdamm is an ideal location for a sustainable and socially equitable urban development – with a cultural impact on the whole of Berlin. The site with its various protected historical buildings still presents some weak points however, in urban planning terms. It is up for sale – and likely to go simply to the highest bidder, if the public does not insist now on its right to participate in an interdisciplinary planning process. Only broad public participation can ensure the location is developed as an integrated, sustainable neighbourhood project.

That is the reason we, competent citizens of Berlin took the step of founding Upstall Kreuzberg e.V. in 2011, a not-for profit association for socially equitable and sustainable urban development.

The Upstall Charter

The Wisdom of Crowds

Our City – Our Neighbourhood

Development of the Upstall site will depend on strong civic commitment to the interests of the general public. To this end, Upstall Kreuzberg e.V. invites all interested citizens, the Berlin Senate, the district council, the owners and future investors to engage in dialogue, now. It is our goal to create and maintain an intact, vibrant, and culturally and socially diverse location in Berlin. In order to underpin a community-oriented development process as well as the integration of socially equitable and sustainable factors in Berlin's current urban planning and development policy, we propose three main principles.

Principle 1 – URBAN DIVERSITY

The 'Kreuzberg mix' instead of displacement

THE PRIMARY VISION

A neighbourhood is a diverse urban space that accommodates various types of use, facilitates affordable housing and workplaces, and fosters the community life of its residents and visitors.

THE AGENDA

To cater to diverse types of use

Provision of spaces for housing, creative work, small-scale manufacture, small-scale retail, gastronomy, administration, cultural events and social facilities – integrated in a single setting

To create affordable housing and workspaces

Provision of low-rent housing and workspaces will prevent displacement to the city outskirts. New housing will be inserted in the site; existing businesses will remain there. To achieve this, we are planning simple construction standards | additions on demand | reduced unit sizes | cross-subsidisation throughout the overall project, i.e. mutual financial support by/for all the commercial and residential tenants

To combine housing and workspaces

Buildings will be adapted to accommodate a mix of residential and commercial uses. The mix on the site will take neighbourhood concerns into account. To achieve this, we are planning new types of buildings | reconfiguration of the existing urban structures

To facilitate community living

Appropriate building types will foster the residents' coexistence and identification with the neighbourhood's development.

Principle 2 – Cautious Urban Renewal

Preserve | Complement | Density

THE PRIMARY VISION

The neighbourhood is a bustling, urban area with a recognizable *genius loci* and a visible history.

THE AGENDA

To strengthen neighbourhood identity

Existing structures and buildings will be developed gradually, in line with the following principles, in order to create memorable urban spaces.

Preserve	Make use of valuable existing buildings
Complement	Trace Restore the site's historical layout by adding complementary buildings and components
Densify	Add additional buildings and components to create sufficient space for the proposed mixed-use concept

To create cultural and social facilities whose impact extends beyond the Upstall site

The heart of the site will be reserved for a new, distinctive building: a *nucleus* whose multifunctional use as an exhibition space, theatre and artists' studios will assure Upstall added cultural appeal. The historic riding hall will be converted into social facilities, the cross-vaulted mews (former carriage stalls) into artists' studios and retail outlets.

To optimize access within the entire site

Access routes between all structures in the development will be optimized: barrier-free access | motorized access to workspaces and retail outlets will not impinge on the car-free residential areas

Principle 3 – The 2000-Watt Society

Sustainable lifestyles, housing and workplaces

THE PRIMARY VISION

The Upstall neighbourhood is sustainable and upholds the principle of a *2000-Watt Society*, which derives from new energy policy guidelines developed in Switzerland. Fair and sustainable use of resources ensures that climate protection goals are reached effectively and appreciably.

The *2000-Watt Society* is the vision of a sustainable future, when no more energy than is absolutely necessary will be consumed – a future when each person on the planet will require on average 2200 watts per year. Average per capita annual consumption in Germany today is over 6000 watts.

THE AGENDA

Implementation

An appropriate choice of methods will turn the vision [the energy consumption of 1960 combined with all the comforts of 2050] into reality. Fair and sustainable use of resources ensures that climate protection goals are reached effectively and appreciably. For sustainable urban development in general, and the Upstall development in particular, new energy concepts will be developed for housing | mobility | nutrition | consumption | power supply.

Guidelines and Strategies

We will thereby adhere to the following guidelines and strategies:

Efficiency Energy conversion efficiency | cost effectiveness

Sufficiency Minimal consumption of raw materials and energy

Consistency Solidarity | participation

MASTERPLAN

Internal division of the Upstall site behind Kreuzberg's tax office will create four distinct development areas:

the housing complex | the commercial complex | the *nucleus* and riding hall | the mews (future artists' studios).

The southern courtyard will be mainly residential; the northern one will be reserved for manufacturing and retail.

The historic riding hall and the proposed new *nucleus* at the heart of the complex will serve cultural and social goals and provide space for various forms of creativity. The existing mews structure on the margins of the Upstall site will be largely retained and complemented by additions.

Vertical densification of the Mehringdamm/ Obentrautstraße intersection will announce quasi the urban rhythm of the site located behind it.

PROSPECTS

OUR CITY

CO-CREATE.

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

UPSTALL KREUZBERG

The Upstall site is currently for sale (the Federal Institute for Real Estate invited bids in December 2011). *Upstall Kreuzberg e.V.* does not want to see Kreuzberg's urban development potential sacrificed to purely financial considerations, and has therefore called for sale of the site to be put on hold – until such time as the local council has clarified its goals, in full consideration of the public's participation in the planning process. *Upstall Kreuzberg e.V.* works to achieve this on three levels:

1. Political Action

We have drawn the attention of politicians and the city administration to the potential of Upstall. This centrally located area of Kreuzberg has been neglected far too long – the public remains largely blind to it, to this day. Despite the site's size and excellent location, and despite the growing pressures on Berlin's housing market, the city administration has failed to designate Upstall a socially equitable redevelopment area and thereby ensure that it benefits the people of Kreuzberg in the future.

2. Information Channels

We organise open forums to discuss with interested citizens of Kreuzberg the potential ways Upstall might be developed. We invite professionals to contribute their expertise to the forums by introducing new ideas and identifying further scope for action.

3. Planning and Building

We have developed an urban master plan including a use and construction concept – a concrete structural design that puts into practice the principles outlined above. The next step will be to demonstrate the feasibility of the project and to attract investors/sponsors for the purchase of the property and the realization of this community-oriented planning.

UPSTALL KREUZBERG^{E.V.} Information about goals, primary visions and planning for A sustainable and socially equitable urban development on the site Upstall Kreuzberg