

The Master Plan Concept of the HafenCity Hamburg

Paper

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Table of Abbreviation

ha hectare

approx. approximately

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1 Introduction



figure 1: The model of the HafenCity Hamburg

In the course of time Hamburg grew – due to its geographic situation on the river Elbe, near the north sea – to be Germany’s most important harbour and a general economic centre.

This privileged situation, however, is endangered: The river Elbe is not deep enough for today’s huge ships: even if the river Elbe was deep enough, it would take too long for a

ship to get from the river mouth to Hamburg. As a consequence already today certain areas of Hamburg harbour are of no use anymore and more areas are about to follow: round about 155 ha of harbour area including water surface risk to be subject to economic dilapidation.

This dramatic situation drew the attention to a solution, which should guarantee the future of the Hamburg central harbour region:

This region extending into the city’s centre core, steps must be taken to maintain its economic strength so that Hamburg still will be able to compete with other big cities, as well nationally as internationally.

The idea of the HafenCity Hamburg was born: The revitalization of the city core by creating housing for 10.000 – 12.000 inhabitants, office space providing 20.000 jobs, shopping and service amenities as well as an entertaining cultural environment. This shall allow for a continuous and long-term increase in value providing stabilizing effects for the urban economy and community. Future plans will provide a high flexibility towards various uses in different construction stages.¹

In order to market the HafenCity and to sell parts of the planning area to private investors (**private public planning**) the City of Hamburg founded a company, which is called “Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung GHS”. This company manages the premises as special assets.²

¹ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 6

² S. von Bergen, “HafenCity: Start für Europas größtes Städtebauwerk – Hamburgs Jahrhundertwerk”, in: *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 10th April 2001, p. 1

The realization period has been estimated at 20 years.

2 The Master Plan Concept of the HafenCity Hamburg

2. 1. Purpose of the Master Plan

The Master Plan is composed of texts and plans. It is a flexible concept, which can be continued and will become more detailed and concrete during the further planning and development process. It takes into consideration middle- and long-term necessities.

The main aim of the Master Plan for the HafenCity Hamburg is the promotion of economic, social, cultural and ecological change of the area south of Hamburg's city centre. This change is supposed to provide stabilizing effects for the urban economy and community and – as a consequence – to allow for a continuous and long-term increase in value.³

This largest urban project in Hamburg shall bring about a quarter with a metropolitan mixture of housing, culture, entertainment, trade and commerce.

2. 2. Planning Fundamentals

It would be beyond the scope of this essay to discuss all the relevant fundamental planning items. In the following the ownership structure, aspects of the city development plan and the area utilization plan will be outlined while other items such as preservation of historical monuments (Speicherstadt), traffic development, flood control, various sorts of pollution, landscape and species program, customs and tourism will be left aside.⁴

2. 2. 1. Ownership Structure and Existing Use

In a free market economy the ownership structure is of vital importance. If there are many small private owners, urban planning is subject to more restrictions compared to a situation of mostly public ownership. Fortunately the area of the HafenCity is primarily owned by the City of Hamburg. But even though, existing

³ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg – The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 46

⁴ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 14

contracts, for instance with the harbour railway, the customs or the lessee of the Africa Terminal, have to be taken into consideration.

The municipal areas of the harbour railway will be available in the event of the ending of the harbour use. This will automatically require giving notice to the private railway connections. The locations of customs in the planning area will not be required any more, if the free-port boundary is abolished.

The long-term lease with the lessee of the Africa Terminal is planned to be revoked to induce the company to move to another part of the harbour.

All this seems to be quite simple. Negotiations, however, are required to bring about a change. Such negotiations can last very long, the political and economic interests lying often wide apart.⁵

2. 2. 2. City Development Concept (1996)



figure 2: City Development Concept (1996) – model (section)
Source: Brosure Master Plan Concept, p. 33

Concentrating on the major aim of the Master Plan as being the fundament of an overall change in the region, it is important to know how this region is embedded in the general City Development Concept. One of the great assets of Hamburg is its special identity as city on the river, as *the* green metropolis and as a major

seaport city. It goes without saying that in this respect the conversion of the harbour area must be planned with extreme attention, because these special “city design elements” as part of the overall city fabric definitely are to be preserved.⁶

This is of special importance, because in the valuation scheme the HafenCity is located directly on the boarder of Hamburg’s A-centre (that is a prime location for real estates).

⁵ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 33

⁶ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 14

Within the major spatial areas of the city development concept the HafenCity is the area where the axial development areas north of the Elbe terminate. By the intended mixture of living, working and leisure the conversion of the harbour edge area into a lively atmospheric city centre is supposed to strengthen the city as focus of major interest. This aspect is stressed because during the last 25 years several attractive centres have been set up in suburban relief centres. This implied that quite a few potential clients did not go into the city any more, risking the city to “turn dead”.⁷

2. 2. 3. Area Utilization Plan

The most recent area utilization plan was passed on October 22, 1977. Such a plan is an obliging fundament for any measures taken and construction permits given.

It declares the planning area as harbour and as such subject to the Harbour Development Act (Hafenentwicklungsgesetz). Other areas, such as the space between Kehrwidder Spitze, Binnenhafen and Sandtorkai are declared as “mixed” construction areas, or, as the area between Oberhafen and Versmannstrasse, as space for the railway. Other areas are planned to be available for supply installation, power stations flood control installation and main roads. The Master Plan Concept puts an end to the main harbour use. This implies that the area utilization plan of 1977 is obsolete and must be adapted according to new urban development and use visions.⁸



figure 3: The area of Kehrwidder Spitze, Binnenhafen and Sandtorkai

Source:

Falk Plan for the City of Hamburg 1996, p. J

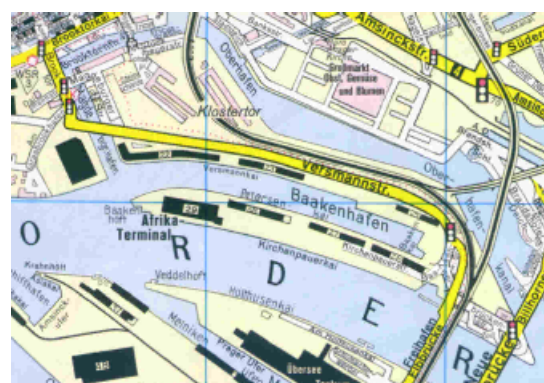


figure 4: The area of Oberhafen and Versmannstrasse

Source:

Falk Plan for the City of Hamburg 1996, p. 66

⁷ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 33

⁸ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 34

2. 3. Development Concept

Given the purpose and the planning fundament the development concept could be set up. As already pointed out in the chapter “planning fundamentals” not every relevant aspect can be discussed in this chapter. Therefore urban design and landscaping, urban integration, utilization and density as well as social infrastructure have been selected as major points.

2. 3. 1. Urban Design and Landscaping

As described above Hamburg’s major assets are its specific geographing location on the river, its status as a major sea port and its attribute “green city”. Therefore the planned HafenCity with its unique central location within Hamburg requires an outstanding quality of the design of public and urban spaces as well as of the building construction. The special amphibic character of the future HafenCity allows *and* demands a great variation of the architectural approach.

Approaching Hamburg from the south, the visitor – and the home-coming citizen – is greeted by the familiar silhouette of the prominent church spires and the Speicherstadt. This picture frequently serves as model, the inhabitants of Hamburg being emotionally attached to “their” town. The major zone of the planning area being located in this field of vision, it must be made sure that selected sites in the planning area with an outstanding urban quality receive special consideration during the development process.

One of the main aims is to develop a quarter where people do not only work or sleep, but where they live. Familiar spatial dimensions, characteristics of streets and squares should be created.

Furthermore, an authentic atmosphere should emerge from each quarter. A high flexibility of site utilization and construction must be secured to induce the inhabitants of the new flats to stay in the quarter as well as to attract people from elsewhere to take part in the activities offered in the new area. It has to be a place, where you want to live and where you want to go.

All this has to be integrated in an environment, which meets the needs of those who live in the flats and work in the offices.

The urban design planning specifications for public landscape provide a basis for creating such an environment. Thus the existing supply of landscaped spaces has to be secured by an appropriate extension of open areas next to the new housing planned. The connection to adjacent landscaped areas (such as Elbepark, Entenwerder, Embankment) allow quick access for those who live in the HafenCity. The integration of the harbour basins, into the design of open spaces means an additional attractiveness for the city centre. Doing the fine turning of the Master Plan, a landscape design, which takes into consideration the optimal use of the required space will be an integral part of great consequence. In the framework of the competition process these requirements and aims are explicitly integrated into the brief.⁹

2. 3. 2. Urban Integration

The Master Plan Concept as such is convincing. Attention has to be paid, however, to the challenge of creating an ideal, but isolated area. The concept should be integrated onto touristic, cultural, economic and socio-economic thoughts.

Landungsbrücken, Speicherstadt, City Centre, Central Station

The development of the HafenCity offers the opportunity, to extend Hamburg's outstanding panorama to the south-east. It is next to a sequence of prominent locations along the river Elbe between Deichtorhallen and Ovelgönne, which have been connected since several years by a long walkway, who attracts tourists as well as "Hamburgers". Presently there is no direct connection between Deichtorhallen and Elbepark, the walkway runs parallel the busy Amsinckstrasse without having any relation to the Elbe.

Numerous bridges connect the planning area with the Speicherstadt and the city centre. But they do not suffice as links. The improvement of such links will be decisive for the successful integration of the HafenCity into Hamburg's very centre. In addition there is the so called Mile of Arts (Kunstmeile) between Kunsthalle, central station and Deichtorhallen, which is not yet sufficiently linked with the HafenCity.¹⁰

⁹ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 33

¹⁰ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 46

City-Süd and Central Market

The project of the central market will cause an extra problem. Hamburg's central market covers 26.8 ha. It is the supply centre of 15 million consumers. Approximately 4,500 people work in this market. In October 1994 the Senate agreed to the allocation of the site for market purposes for a further 30 years – until 2024. To secure the site, investments of 150 million DM have been initiated, 100 million DM have already been invested till the end of 1998. On top, in 1996 the central market hall was classified as listed building.

On the other hand the HafenCity should be linked with the City-Süd, a new, very important centre of commerce and trade. Here the central market is a barrier between the City-Süd and the HafenCity. Traffic connection via the central market would have negative effects on internal market interest. It would trouble the daily market routine. It will be inevitable to solve this problem by conjoint solutions, which always means that there will be losers and winners. Such – in the end – political and/or lobby problems use to complicate the realization of development plans.¹¹

Rothenburgsort and Veddel

Rothenburgsort and Veddel are two areas with social economic problems. Both areas are isolated with next to no pedestrian infrastructure. Linking them to the HafenCity has to be part of the Master Plan. This link can be produced by the upgrading of the long walkway, creating a pedestrian connection from Rothenburgsort to the centre and prolonging the walkway towards Veddel. At the same time efforts should be made to create jobs close to residential areas.¹²

2. 3. 3. Utilization and Density Concept

Having defined the areas needed for public landscape, circulation and necessary infrastructure as approx. 40 % of the gross building land, the remaining area available as net-development site amounts to approx. 60 ha.¹³

¹¹ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 47

¹² GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 49

¹³ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 40

This area must allow for a structurally mixed, marketable and flexible use. All together flexible building structures have to be created which allow the combination of urban housing, office space and corresponding common needs.

As already pointed out above, the area is suitable for leisure activities, which will invite visitors – tourists or the inhabitants of Hamburg – and thus increase the liveliness of the region. Parallel to the planning development the construction of a cruise terminal on the Strandkai – the vision of a “Venice of the North” – , the transfer of the exhibition grounds into the Baakenhafen and the extension of cultural activities are taken into consideration.

If it is planned to set up a lively quarter, a considerable percentage of housing is indispensable. It is planned to be high-quality housing (though state-financed in parts) with the corresponding social infrastructure. This housing project may have welcome secondary effects: it reduces infrastructure requirements – an important argument especially regarding the threatening traffic infarct in the city centre. In addition it can invite potential customers to the city and thus oppose the exodus to suburban areas. One has to keep in mind, however, that this “invitation” need not necessarily be accepted.¹⁴

The density planned for the HafenCity being much higher than in Hamburg suburbia, it is not only a question of the supply of flats but also the preference structure of the demand for flats, i. e. whether you prefer a higher or lower density of housing and whether you are prepared to accept the cost of time and money of a long way to work.

If the project works there will be above all the opportunity to establish new urban city life in the mainly monostructured peripheral zones of the city centre. In the end the harbour area offers the opportunity to extend the city centre for tertiary use, such as office buildings, company buildings, hotels, shops or institutions for research and development.¹⁵

¹⁴ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 41

¹⁵ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 43

2. 3. 4. Social Infrastructure

Any Master Plan including housing is bound to fail if the establishment of required infrastructural institutions is not guaranteed. The conversion into a desirable urban district depends on attractive amenities, for instance the adequate provision of day nurseries and schools.

For the moment being such infrastructure does not exist.

For the planned capacity of 5,000 to 6,500 housing units the following institutions are necessary :

Elementary schools, preferably as combination of school and day nursery in one complex, should be located close to residential areas. As to secondary schools, at present the capacity of adjacent schools is exhausted. Though a reduction of the number of pupils can only be expected after 2005, the expected permanent demand for secondary, and comprehensive schools can be met by extensions in built locations. With 5,000 to 6,500 housing units a grammar-school with 27 classes will be required. The favourable location of schools near out-door sport fields restricts the total area demand for these facilities. A new public sports-field with connection to a new grammar-school would fulfil all existing requirements.¹⁶

3 Outlook

3. 1. Next Steps

The local responsible institutions based their decision for the long-term development of the planning area on a phased realization. With reference to the Master Plan the urban design points out that this principle recommends the following: districts with individual identities, which functions of their own and can be flexibly developed in case of changing conditions. At the same time they protect the original structure of the HafenCity and their connection to the city centre. The Master Plan of the HafenCity defines this type of development in sub-districts during the realization period of approximately 25 years. The Master Plan intends a principle for the

¹⁶ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the HafenCity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 68

development of the planning area from west to east. Avoiding uncontrolled construction activities throughout the whole area is the reason for this methodology.

In conclusion the development strategy includes the following conditions :

1. Every building phase must be able to function independently and requires a connection to the city centre, which makes it possible to operate and not be effected by future building operations;
2. Flood protected access via bridges and elevated streets must be built, which are requirements for the fire brigade. They must be integrated under temporarily and economic aspects;
3. The dates of tenancy expiry, clearing of sites, refuse dump reorganisation contamination clearance etc. must be fixed to be part of the stipulations for the site preparation;
4. The demand resulting from an assessed average annual rate of approximately 25,000 m² gross floor area of housing and approximately 35,000 m² gross floor area of service area per year must equal the supply in both market segments over the complete development period;
5. The “Overseas Quarter” with 110,000 m² up to 150,000 m² gross floor area of leisure and shopping premises will effect the adjacent districts and has to be developed as a spatial and temporary link, according to concurrent estimations of the real estate industry;
6. The phased inclusion and activation of water areas supports the continuity, feasibility and generation of attractions at and on the water;¹⁷

¹⁷ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafens- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 73

The subsequent sketched out development scheme with six phases results from the above mentioned criteria :

Phase 1 *Development Period up to 2005*

The construction work for the HafenCity began on 9 April 2001 :

Creating a protected emergency exit against storm tides over the Kibbelsteg-Bridges is one of the main requirement for the following investments for the HafenCity.

Already in the beginning of 2002 the world wide leader for software solutions SAP will lounge its education centre on the east side of Grasbrookhafen – with a daily frequency of 200 customers. Also in the beginning of 2002 the construction work for the “Kaispeicher A” will start. A “Mediacity Under One Roof” is planned. A international architect competition will decide over the definite appearance of “Kaispeicher A”.¹⁸

In other words: first big steps into the right direction have been taken.

Furthermore the first phase will include the development of the “Overseas Quarter”, which is located west of Magdeburger Hafen. The “Overseas Quarter” will also integrate activities of the cruise terminal, were provisional operations have already been started.¹⁹

Phase 2 *Development Period 2005 to 2010*

During the third phase the sites of Grasbrook as wells as the high density areas Strandkai/Hübnerkai will be developed. The western part of the HafenCity between Kaiserhöft and Magdeburger Hafen will be realized and utilized within the next ten years – with exception of Ericusspitze and eventual individual sites at Strandhöft.²⁰

¹⁸ S. von Bergen, “HafenCity: Start für Europas größtes Städtebauwerk – Hamburgs Jahrhundertwerk“, in: *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 10th April 2001, p. 1

¹⁹ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 74

²⁰ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 75

Phase 3 *Development Period 2010 to 2015*

The third phase of the development takes place on the north-south axis along Ericusspitze, Steinschanze and Baakenhöft. At Versmannstrasse, the eastern housing construction area could be developed and market.

Including the construction of a new main traffic connection through the Steinschanze towards the north is one of the main aim within this period - with traffic relief for the Brooktor axis. The realization of a bridge across Baakenhafen towards the south to Baakenhöft is also proposed. In order to connect the Oberhafen areas with the Stadtdeich street a bridgeline along the Mittelkanal axis will be build.²¹

Phase 4 *Development Period 2015 to 2020*

In this phase the construction works are concentrated on the south and east of Baakenhafen. The areas East of Lohsepark as well as the quay site Oberhafen will be realized.

The construction of a bascule bridge in the eastern Baakenhafen is proposed as well as a bridgeline across the eastern Oberhafen.

In order to achieve an optimal transport system within the planning area, the eastern part of the area can be connected to the rail-bound local transport system. An extension of the urban railway track (second construction stage of the urban railway project) makes this possible.²²

Phase 5 *Development Period 2020 to 2025*

All activities are concentrated on the Elbe Bridges Centre. The realization of a central service location is possible: under the pre-condition of extensive road works and the construction of the suburban train station Elbbrücken.²³

²¹ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 76

²² GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 77

²³ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg –The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 78

Phase 6 *Development Period after 2025*

Additional opportunities for the utilization of presently restricted areas could arise after the development of the above described periods.

After finished the construction work on all sites within the HafenCity during the development, the linkage of the various wharves with four flood gates can now form a continuous protection line. It will be possible to protect even those areas, which have to remain on a lower level because of their topological situation, e. g. the Speicherstadt.²⁴

By the realization of this scheme Hamburg has the unique chance to develop an entirely new quarter within the city centre. It will improve the urban image considerably, multiply the economic power and launch it to be one of the nationally and internationally leading cities.²⁵

3. 2. HafenCity – The Facts

Total size of planning area	155 hectare
Water area	55 hectare
Land area	100 hectare
Net building land	60 hectare
Distance to Town Hall	800 meters
Distance to Central Station	1,100 meters
Distance to airport	9,500 meters
Within 2-kilometre radius	2 state theatres, state opera house, art museums
Existing	Efficient road-network with links to city and motor-ways
Proposed	Attractive local public transport system

²⁴ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *HafenCity Hamburg – The Master Plan*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 78

²⁵ piazza: *Zukunft bauen*, 1st ed., Frankfurt 2000, p. 20

Development aim

New city centre district with harbour ambience for housing, offices, culture, tourism and shopping :

1. 5,500 apartments for 10,000 to 12,000 inhabitants.
2. Office space creating 20,000 jobs.
3. New centre for culture, leisure and shopping.
4. Cruise terminal²⁶

These figures speak for themselves. It is an enormous project with ambitious aims and huge costs for private and public investors. Let us hope that the dream of the city centre's return out the water – as the former Mayor of Hamburg Dr. Voscherau expressed it – will become reality and that this project will be such a success as its famous predecessor, the London Dockland Development.²⁷

²⁶ GHS Gesellschaft für Hafen- und Standortentwicklung mbH: *Master Plan Concept for the Hafencity Hamburg*, 1st ed., Hamburg 1999, p. 78

²⁷ piazza: *Zukunft bauen*, 1st ed., Frankfurt 2000, p. 19

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