

EXPLANATORY NOTE

OVERALL CONCEPT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVEMENT AND DESIGN OF THE CENTRAL URBAN PART OF THE TOWN OF DOBRICH AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FOR 25TH SEPTEMBER BLVD., VAZRAZHDANE AND SVOBODA SQUARES

This project has been developed to propose a sustainable design concept for the central part of the city of Dobrich that meets the needs of the citizens and tackles the challenges identified by the client of this competition.

ANALYSIS

The town of Dobrich has a population of approximately 74 thousand people. The central part is marked by the architecture of the 70s. The renovation carried out in the period 2011-2013 does not contribute to the improvement of the urban environment and adds stylistically incompatible elements. The poor quality of the pavement workmanship, lack of vision for the details, and overall shoddy workmanship in the renovation creates a blight in the downtown.

The scale of the spaces in the central part of the city does not meet the current needs of residents and visitors. This is particularly evident in Svoboda and Vazrazhdane squares. These large and wide streets are devoid of their context, once subordinated to the grandiose manifestations of the communist era.

One of the main and central questions we ask ourselves is: How to attract and retain more people in the centre?

ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT

Shaping new spaces and features by constructing new buildings, expanding green spaces and planting new trees. Creating areas of interest for passers-by to stay and experience the town centre.

Raster: Concrete slabs with 40x80x8cm dimensions are used as the main raster throughout the site, first in the Zone B and later in Zone A. Their colours are in the grey gamut. We are deliberately stepping back from raster shapes, which are only perceptible from aerial photographs. The monotone paving provides the necessary neutrality to better perceive the play of cast shadows and sun rays passing through the tree canopy.

Urban Design: the benches in the area shall follow the selected raster. Their base is a concrete block following the shape of the pavement and resembling a slab drawn from it. In addition to the benches, these blocks are used for the base of the information panels and for the plinth art that will find its place along 25th September blvd. The materials for the urban furniture are light concrete, steel and wood.

It is planned to remove the temporary pavilions and attractions, which stand all year round. They become truly temporary and are dismantled after each event.

Landscaping: the following techniques shall be applied: trees outside of gardens and clots shall be enclosed with drainage concrete. Landscaping at street level shall be finished with metal grass stops. Wood covered benches shall be constructed adjacent to the branches. Tree crowns shall be pruned from

below with a minimum height of 4.5m below the crowns. The aim is to make it easier for vehicles with special access and better visual fit of the trees.

Environmental: Newly planted trees are planned to provide better shade for the sunny Svoboda and Vazrazhdane squares and pervious concrete to provide more efficient drainage and improve sewer loading during heavy rains. In t. "A two-storey car park with a photovoltaic power plant is planned to power the facilities nearby and create the possibility of adding energy storage batteries to support cost-efficiency of street lighting during most of the night.

Art and integrated design, exhibitions: 25th September blvd. becomes an open-air museum. For this purpose, an elongated in height or width concrete bench module is used. This module has several possible functions: for art installations, for information boards, for mounting fountains, etc.

Cycling lanes - a very topical issue: cyclists travel at about 4-5 times the speed of pedestrians. A separate area for their traffic, such as a bike lane, would create a perception of right of way in favor of cyclists over pedestrians in the bike zone. Given the difference in speed of the two groups a separated cycle lane in the pedestrian zone is a prerequisite for conflict and dangerous situations. In order to prevent this, following the example of other European cities, we propose the shared space approach. In this way, the attention of all groups is required, which also implies lower traffic speeds.

Public Restrooms: There are numerous cafés and restaurants throughout Zone A. The municipality could require owners to allow pedestrians into their facilities for a fee. This, to a large extent, removes the need for public restrooms. Additionally, a 24-hour public restroom is planned in the proposed new parking lot.

SCOPE A - OVERALL CONCEPT

The following changes are foreseen in scope A of the central part of Dobrich:

In Democracy Square, relocatable seating modules and planters with trees or photovoltaic installations shall be placed. The aim is to utilise this beautiful area as a cultural hotspot in the urban environment to attract and retain visitors.

The Lapidarium is planned to be placed on a part of the parking lot of the Hotel Bulgaria. This will improve the space of Bulgaria Street by separating the parking lot from the pedestrian area and highlighting the sculpture of the hotel and the beautiful architecture in this part of the street.

The northern end of 25th September Blvd. turns into a kind of horizontal mall. The current solution is not optimal due to the fact that the buildings are only open on one side. This artificially creates primary and secondary spaces. Reducing the spaces between the buildings and opening them to both sides of 25th September Blvd. will improve the space on the northern part of the boulevard and create two equal zones on either side of the commercial buildings. In the northernmost part of 25th September Blvd. there's potential for the development of an underground parking.

Dobrich Cinema. The trees in front of the cinema are being pruned to get a high enough clearance under them. All shrubs, branches and curbs shall be removed. The resulting space is shared by cars and pedestrians. Speed limit will be set to 10 km/h.

SCOPE B - CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

The extension in front of the St. George the Great Martyr Church is being renovated with an expanded playground and the space is being incorporated into 25th September Blvd. In the extension in front of the Professional School of Tourism, an area with benches and dry fountains is being created. Before the intersection of the boulevard with the Svoboda Square, a playground is created in place of the current red cobblestone pavement.

Vazrazhdane Square is being restructured by adding to its landscaping and the grounds in front of the Bulgaria Hotel are being leveled and a pavilion is being built to serve as an exhibition, concert and information point. A public toilet could be planned in the pavilion as well. The new situation and the architecture of the pavilion allow accessibility to Hotel Bulgaria from Bulgaria Street to be without stairs.

Svoboda Square retains its function with enriched landscaping at its border with Vazrazhdane Square. The optical interruption of this wide space allows for a better perception of the square. A landscaped transition area is created which is used for recreation. The square is used multifunctionally: it can host the events of the city's cultural calendar such as the New Year's bazaar, concerts, Bread, Wine and Book Day, etc. By using pervious concrete, which lets rainwater through very well, the strain on the city's sewage system is significantly reduced and the irrigation of trees is ensured.

The function of the current COOP building is maintained. A new two-storey car park with a capacity of approximately 104 cars is being built at the rear of the site, which is accessible directly from the square. The canopy-like roof of the COOP building highlights the corner to Dimitar Petkov Street and the entrance to Old Dobrich. The space in front opens up. Now the town café, pastry shop and bakery, which are located there, have a new and modern look.

In the part next to the entrance of the new parking lot Dimitar Petkov Street becomes a shared space for pedestrians, cyclists and cars. Trees are being planted in its pedestrian part. Alternatively, a complete urban redevelopment of the area behind the COOP building could be considered, combining the fragmented buildings, with development potential of building a car park and a 7-8 storey building with small housing for the elderly and a B&B hotel.

DEVELOPMENT STAGES

The pavements and urban furniture in the area of scope B shall be replaced in the period 2025 - 2028, followed by their replacement in the whole area of scope A by 2030. New buildings shall be constructed in zone B by 2030, in zone A - with a year 2040 horizon.

ESTIMATED COST

We estimate the total cost of implementation to be BGN 8'356'000, VAT not included. The accuracy in this project phase is +/-20%.