

Diploma thesis

Landscape of the unfinished Saale-Elster-Canal

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Review

The author presents a complex concept for the development of the landscape along the Saale-Elster Canal. It is based on a comprehensive and thorough analysis of existing structures and potentials. In the process, both historical connections and current opportunities and deficits become clear. As a logical consequence, the canal is seen not only as a connecting element between Leipzig and the Saale, but also as an activating factor for the adjacent landscape areas.

In addition to the development of tourist infrastructure, the author also strives for a broader perspective in order to strengthen biodiversity. In this respect, the work shows a modern approach to the development of green-blue infrastructure. In order to complete the derivation and justification of the concept, it would have been helpful to place it in a broader, i.e. international, context.

The canal itself is regarded as a functionally connecting line, whereby a restoration of the watercourse is dispensed with. Correctly, the advantages are rather seen in the formation of different spaces and atmospheres, which emphasize the existing potentials. The sectional sequencing developed from this is convincing and creates interesting, eventful spaces.

The special places to be activated are also well chosen and thematically developed in a versatile way, whereby a good balance is found between targeted tourist development and protection of the ecological values. The partly somewhat schematic representation in the maps, however, gives the impression that perhaps further potentials could have been found here. This applies in particular to the neighbouring villages and residential areas.

The more detailed presentation of the lake district shows a very balanced approach to dealing with the valuable existing structures. Interesting places are activated with targeted interventions, and paths are usually led away from valuable shore areas. The focus on the bird life of the lakes strengthens the character of the area, the observation tower is a both useful and aesthetic landmark.

The structure of the lock is respected as a historical monument and is developed into a tourist destination with few ingredients. This has been very successful both functionally and creatively, especially the development and staging of the upper level is convincing. It would have been desirable to have a more detailed presentation of the newly added elements in order to establish a correspondence to the other places.

The design manual, which develops a design language for the entire planning area, is particularly noteworthy. In this way it is possible to create a connecting character even without the detailing of all the individual locations and to provide a practical tool for future planning. But unfortunately no information about the vegetation is included.

The graphic and textual elaboration of the work is clear and well structured. The author manages to produce convincing drawings and graphics on both a small and large scale. Very helpful and practical is the compilation of all individual measures. However, a temporal prioritization in a timeline would have been helpful in order to be able to design a common development strategy with many participants.

All in all the work is a good approach to further develop the various structures and elements of the landscape and to use the canal in its touristic potential. The concept is convincing and well elaborated, only in some areas further detailing would have been desirable.

The assessment will be grade B.

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Dipl.-Ing. TH Rehwaldt

