



Past - Present - Future



IMPLEMENTATION OF EXPERIMENTAL ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES

INDUSTRIAL CAMPING - BPT TRŽIČ

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0. Abstract

The cotton spinning and weaving mill BPT in Tržič, Slovenia, closed down in 2004. Since then, most of the industrial facilities, dating from 1885 onwards, have been empty. This project aims to show a possible way of revitalising the selected facility in a way that preserves and displays the industrial heritage.

The pilot project is short-term and only one room on the building's top floor has been prepared for short-term lodging. We organized "Industrial camping" designed accommodation room for the purpose of overnight stay for participants on Industrial culture event, Cobblers Sunday, on 2 September 2018. We organized the "opened place" to promote the industrial camping to the public with presentation of the project idea and strategic revitalization of the selected building in BPT. The main goal was to show a new way of tourist experience connected to industrial heritage of cotton and weaving mill. We set up the room as a pop-up accommodation for artists from culture association, who were preparing the cultural activities on industrial event.

A permanent revitalisation plan was implemented in the conceptual phase as well and foresees a hostel-like programme on the top floor. Luxurious duplex rooms will be located on the first floor, taking advantage of the high ceilings. The ground floor serves as a common room, breakfast area and reception lounge. The main building material for the new programme of the industrial building is wood, clearly distinguishing it from the original industrial building construction. Textile in different forms represents an underlying theme throughout the building - keeping in touch with the textile heritage of the whole complex. Quality architectural solutions for revitalisation show that the industrial spirit and heritage can successfully live on and enrich our present lives. Furthermore, we proposed educational camps for children and adults to take place in the building. The project takes advantage of the large empty spaces for on-site lectures and workshops, and serves as an exploration base for nearby industrial heritage experiences.

1. Project Context

InduCult2.0 project is part of the Interreg initiative and wants to revive the cultural spirit of long-standing industrial regions of Central Europe (www.inducult.eu). Together with local stakeholders and project partners from 8 European countries (Austria, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Slovenia), it aims to rediscover and create the positive elements of industrial communities and, therefore, intends to:

- Establish the idea of Industrial Culture in Central Europe and promote it as a unique feature of regional identity
- Prepare initiatives in schools to raise interest in industrial culture and show them job opportunities in that field; connecting the work force and companies through industrial culture
- Fostering creativity and innovation through distinct interaction of creative communities and productive industry

The definition of industrial culture goes beyond heritage and includes contemporary and upcoming cultural and creative resources. One of the main and general objectives of the InduCult2.0 project is to introduce new culture and heritage-based economic opportunities in the field of conventional industry, tourism as well as creative industries.

The project action of industrial camping is related to the idea of partial revitalise the cotton spinning and weaving industrial complex in Tržič, a small town nestled under the hills about half an hour from Ljubljana. It consists of the one night initiative to spend the night in the embrace of

industrial heritage, and explores the possibility of the long-term revitalisation of the selected facility with an accommodation programme.

This project intends to highlight the possibilities for the revitalisation of industrial heritage and to change people's perception of industrial or cultural heritage and the ways of protecting it through upgrades and active use.

2. Introduction

Location of industrial camping - Cotton spinning and weaving mill (BPT) in Tržič

The industrial complex is located south of the historical town centre of Tržič, at the bend of the Tržiška Bistrica River and its tributary - Mošenik, which was regulated and used for the needs of the factory.

The Tržič spinning mill started forming in 1885 just south of the historical town centre of Tržič, at the confluence of Tržiška Bistrica and Mošenik. These two little rivers provided the power, which was one of the main requirements for the development of the industry. The oldest part of the factory, the administrative premises and the owner's private villa started operating in 1886 with 500 spindles and 160 weaving machines. In the 1980s, after a hundred years of great operation, the production started to decline and the factory was finally shut down in 2004.

The significance of BPT Tržič greatly exceeds merely the industrial development of the factory area as the complex also sparked the development of power plants, contributed to the building of homes for the workers and brought investments into educational infrastructure. Due to its size, the factory greatly influenced and shaped the town.

With the end of textile production, some facilities were repurposed and in some cases, a new production or other programme took over. Most of the facilities are still in search of a new, suitable programme. Some facilities, especially the power plant, were renovated in recent years; others are being maintained in order to save them from gradual decay. Due to the various temporary uses and a large number of unoccupied areas, the entire complex looks degraded, but not abandoned or run down. The proposed building is the textile finishing facility from 1922.



Present day view.

Potential

The industrial facilities have large (industrial) dimensions and since they are mostly well preserved, they could easily be reconstructed and renovated. Such large complete areas and large empty spaces or buildings are hard to find. The rich industrial heritage of important factories (BPT, Peko...) is an important building block of Tržič's identity or the entire industrial era in Slovenia. Presenting and updating this heritage represents great cultural (and touristic) potential.

Based on detailed concept, where we prepared long-term solution of abandoned building within feasibility study of accommodation, we arranged one of the rooms on the top floor into an "industrial camp". It enables a small number of people to spend the night in the facility, at the same time discover, and experience the industrial-culture event, Cobblers Sunday, on 2 September 2018 and the cotton spinning and weaving mill in Tržič at the same time.

3. Objective

Strategic objective

Cultural heritage can be one of the foundations on which we build cultural tourism and for exploring, identifying and respecting our own heritage and, as a result, preserving it should be a key interest of today's society. To take advantage of what our predecessors left us, just as they had taken advantage of what was left behind by their predecessors. To create sustainable development from which we shall all prosper. To preserve the memory and the material reminders of our history.

InduCult2.0 in Tržič wants to establish the awareness that industrial heritage is part of cultural heritage and that it is important to know, preserve and develop it. This is especially important since this heritage is nowadays still relatively well-preserved and can be maintained and updated with smart and deliberate revitalisation. At the same time, people tend to neglect industrial heritage as it is today mostly limited to degraded areas, which not so long ago provided jobs for many of us.

Industrial culture in Tržič started with the BPT factory more than a century ago. Taking into account the relative size of the BPT (and other) industrial complexes, the social and cultural impact of industry in Tržič in the previous century was enormous. Nowadays, it has almost diminished, but not completely - new industries prosper, in many cases on the foundations laid down by BPT and Peko. Today, it is important to recognise this industrial culture, introduced by BPT a century ago, which has been so omnipresent throughout most of the 20th century in Tržič and represents the basis of our post-industrial culture.

Concrete objective

Long term - sustainable vision

The concrete goal of this project is to select the most suitable building from within the BPT Tržič industrial complex and present the possibility of its revitalisation with accommodation. As part of the project, possibilities of other supporting programmes will be looked into.

The goal of the project is to encourage the owner, the public and potential investors to direct their investment plans into the revitalisation of the selected facility and thus actively contribute to the preservation (development, and use) of cultural or industrial heritage. This publicly funded project has to demonstrate how we can develop and coexist with our industrial heritage.

Short-term - pilot action

Since the long-term vision of the revitalisation of the entire facility depends mostly on the finances or a concrete investment initiative, a short-term pilot project was developed, which only revitalises

a small part of the facility with a temporary programme for lodging and discovering industrial heritage. Transforming only one area into an “industrial camp”, which enables a small number of people to spend the night in the facility, at the same time discover, and experience the industrial heritage or the cotton spinning and weaving mill in Tržič.

The goals of industrial camping were related to:

- Promoting a new way of tourist experience connected to industrial heritage of cotton and weaving mill in Tržič to
- Show the possibilities of low-cost accommodation that can be easily transformed into different place depending on the purpose of usage
- General aim is a better linkage between existing tourism activities and the industrial past and present.
- To raise awareness of industrial identity of the town accommodation offers can bring a ‘feeling’ of the industrial past and present of the places.
- To connect industrial heritage and current/upcoming cultural resources.

4. Applied Approach

The basis for the preparation of industrial camp was a feasibility study of BPT factory for development of accommodation on a long-term and as for temporary use as well. The proposed building is the textile finishing facility from 1922.

To arrive at concrete solutions, several examples of revitalisation of cultural heritage buildings with similar programmes were studied. These solutions served as an overhaul of concepts and partially as an inspiration in designing solutions for this project. The most interesting peering project within InduCult2.0 is in Leoben, Austria, where similar industrial camping is being developed through desktop and field research. The abandoned miners’ housing quarter of Eisenerz was equipped with up-cycled furniture with two different design options and with no electricity or a water and sewer system.

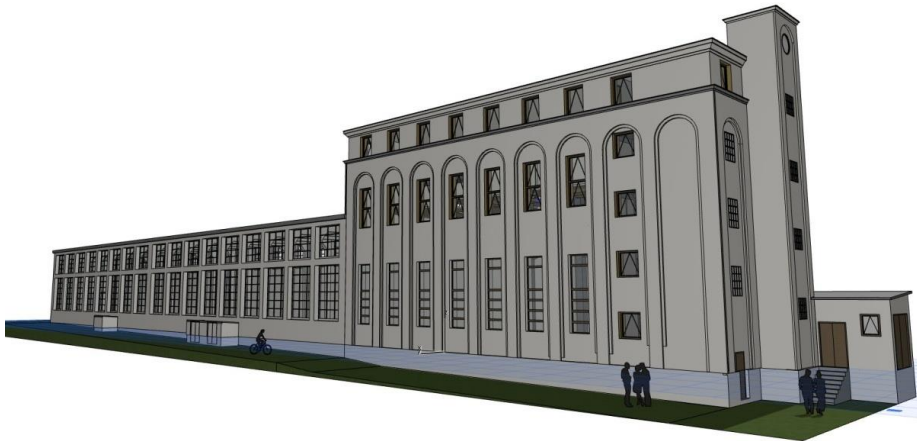
After few meetings with BPT complex about arranging the place, we all agreed that the best opportunity would be to equip one room for the purpose of overnight stay of participants on Industrial culture event, Cobblers Sunday, on 2 September 2018. We organized the “opened place” to promote the industrial camping to the public as well on the date of the event. We presented the arranged accommodation within one room for the temporary use and a strategic revitalization project of the whole building.

5. Results

Choice of facility

In accordance with the development concept of the BPT area, part of the area next to Tržiška Bistrica is intended for revitalisation with cultural, sports and other similar programmes, including the accommodation programme. The textile finishing facility from 1922 and the annex or the production hall from 1967 are empty and in relatively good shape from a technical point of view. Due to the great size of the facilities and the technical execution on the upper floors (lab, offices, locker rooms), this facility is the most suitable for the planned revitalisation with combination of cultural content and accommodation. Apart from the water tower, this is the highest building in the area and offers a great view of the entire industrial complex from its second floor. Since the upper floor most recently housed the office quarters, the current furnishing is suitable for future use. Next to the staircase core is the sanitation complex of former lockers and employee washrooms, which can be reused. Lodging has been set up in the last, biggest area, which measures around 75 m². An eventual expansion is possible.

Complex 3D model of textile finishing facility from 1922 and its annex from 1967 has been created.



Designing of the room

The concept of “industrial camping” prepared in 2017 already predicted the solution of low-cost design of the space and the purposes programme for testing. After some of the meetings with different local stakeholders, we decided to stick to the physical design of the space predicted in the concept but the purposed programme, which consist of the workshops and one night oversleep for children is, because of the safety reason not possible at the moment. The most convenient solution was to merge the testing of industrial camping with industrial-culture event, Cobblers Sunday in Tržič.

After we checked the whole building, we found out that the best way is to use existing inventory from different rooms, what was already planned in the concept as well. Hammocks and tents were used as beds. Since the available areas are relatively large, the hammocks taking up a lot of space does not present a problem. Since it is only short-term lodging, one day overnight, the “attraction” of sleeping in hammocks / tents outweighs the possible different quality of sleep compared to conventional mattresses. We used some existing inventory to be used as “wardrobes” or shelves for storing personal belongings (nightstands), which add to the focused concept of an industrial facility and the soft, temporary content of lodging or sleeping in an otherwise rather cold industrial complex. We also arranged the room with small space for socializing (chairs, tables) and corners for board games. Additionally, we wanted to show also some parts of the room design for kids, as an example that a room can be easily transformed for other uses and it can be organized also for the purpose of industrial workshop for children as it was purposed in the concept.

The design is simple, inexpensive (but not low quality) and very flexible. Only the sanitation core has a fixed design, everything else can be adapted to the current needs: the guest receives a hammock at the reception area and can mount it anywhere he or she likes. The guest also receives a hanging nightstand, lights and a clothes hanger. Personal belongings can be put away and locked in the locker. Guests can also choose a tent, which can be set up in two seconds, inflate the mattress and they are set. Depending on the needs, the guests can be given only tents or hammocks. Closed groups can partition their area with a curtain. Groups can adjust their preferred level of privacy with the arrangement of sleeping elements.

Plans for “industrial camping” in the concept



Second floor different scenarios



Implemented design of the selected space





Implementation and promotion of experimental accommodation - industrial camp for participants of Cobblers Sunday in Tržič

As we said before, the suggested implementation of educational industrial camps for children in the concept was not possible to realize it now, because of safety reasons of the building as well as organizational aspect. We set up the room as a pop-up accommodation for artists from culture association, who were preparing the industrial cultural highlight of traditional event, Cobblers Sunday, 2 September 2018. In this case, the context of industrial heritage is promoted, presented and experienced. On the upper floor, they spend the night in hammocks, which is an attraction in itself. From there, you have the best views of the BPT industrial complex. The textile furniture directly points at the past production activities.

The aim of the project was to show the public simple and inexpensive potentials of vacant spaces. Therefore, we opened the building and equipped room, to promote it widely, as an official presentation to the interested visitors and politicians at the opening of the event, on Sunday 2 September 2018 at 9.30. There were approximately 30 people presented at the presentation of temporary solution of adjustable accommodation and of the project for revitalization of the building into the combination of cultural and accommodation space.

6. Evaluation/transnational added value

The experimental accommodation implementation and assessment totally fulfilled expectations of the planned action. Industrial camping has a big potential, modular equipment offers different ways of designing the room according to the needs of target groups or purpose of accommodation. It is very appropriate for thematic workshops and promotion of industrial culture.

We can say that in general, the new way of low-cost accommodation was well accepted - acceptance of local community, visitors of industrial-culture event and artist, who stayed there overnight, was very positive.

One of the most visible results of the test is seen as spark of interest in industrial heritage and discussions on its revitalisation. Such campaigns build awareness (even if only subconsciously) and make people feel proud of their cultural heritage, which will make its preservation easier in the future and the search for new, heritage-friendly content in similar projects more self-evident.

The implemented pilot project revealed that it is possible to execute a successful promotional campaign for industrial cultural heritage with minimal time, energy and finances. We also found out

that the compatibility of the programme suggested in the concept is not proper because some technical aspects of the building have to be sort out first and addressed in the future.

In case the long-term renovation project manages to convince an investor to revive some other facility within the BPT complex, the goals of this project will have been exceeded in all respects.

However, it is already evident from the project that it is possible to adapt similar facilities for accommodation programmes in a sensible and quality manner, and that the industrial building typology is suitable for renovation and can even represent the base for a new quality or added value.

The most interesting peering in project was with PP3 from Leoben, where similar industrial camping was developed in the abandoned miners' housing quarter of Eisenerz. They equipped two rooms with up-cycled furniture with two different design options and with no electricity or a water and sewer system. We adapted the idea of experimental use for the purpose of industrial culture event and the use of old furniture as additional element in the room. This attractive low-cost model is easily applicable for / transferable to other partners as well.

Room improvement

Improvements to the programme and the project are always possible. With time and further discussion, more possibilities for the optimisation and further development of the project will probably arise.

In the future, it would make sense to focus on examining and determining the optimal programme or variety of programmes for the annex built in 1967 (8 m wide, 8 m high, 79 m long). It is a very spacious and well-lit space, which offers many possibilities for use. It is imperative that this programme is meaningfully connected to the proposed basic programme of the textile finishing facility from 1922.

Arrangement of the building planed in a Feasibility study of accommodation development in one of the BPT buildings:



7. Outlook and sustainability

The first steps towards revitalisation had already been made by the owner (conservation plan, master plan draft, renovation of the electrical plant) and his proactive approach in further revitalisation will be of crucial importance. It is also in the owner's domain to "bring" the right programmes to the buildings within the complex and to finance the revitalisation himself or to find suitable partners.

Industrial camping in the selected building of former factory BPT is reasonable if the building is revived with proper content. In that sense, has to:

- Preserve the facility as industrial heritage and minimising the changes to the building
- Present the industrial heritage complex and the building itself
- Create a high-quality programme or design, which can function independently and will fit in or function sensibly and synergistically with the revival of the surrounding buildings or the entire BPT complex
- Creating a design which is both technically and economically rational or feasible

The local community of Tržič as well as the owner are working together towards finding an investor for the building. Prepared feasibility study of accommodation development will be a basic document, which will help in the procedure of promoting the possibilities for business and searching for investors.

The prepared architectural proposal for the revitalisation of the former textile finishing facility shows that the building is suitable for the proposed accommodation. The ceiling height and the structural design of the building with load-bearing perimeter walls and central pillars offer the possibility for a high-quality design. The integration of textile as the underlying theme in the renovation of the building is a practical test to give an industrial feel or to incorporate the former industrial programme into the accommodation programme and thus connect the technical heritage with present-day applicability - maybe even create an attraction.

Nevertheless, the idea of industrial camping can be adapted in any other location of industrial sites but realization depends on many legislation and safety obstacles.