

COBRAMAN



Manager Coordinating Brownfield
Redevelopment Activities

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Recommendations organisational implementation

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Recommendations for organisational implementation of the position of a brownfield regeneration manager in European cities

Brownfield regeneration processes are often long term, complex and involve a wide range of professional disciplines as well as political actors and different stakeholder groups. Co-ordination and communication are essential to sustain complex projects, and the management of the process as such is more evident than sole technical aspects. Key tasks for professional regeneration managers are to develop and deliver opportunity plans and to steer revitalization processes. Furthermore the issue of community involvement as well as application of new market instruments to facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield sites lies within the responsibilities of the brownfield manager. These basic assumptions clearly reveal, that a the services required are manifold and do not fit to one of the traditional sections or units usually established in European cities.

The following paragraphs briefly describe the key findings of the project activities as there were

- A set of dedicated local workshops at partner level (output 4.4.1 & 4.4.2)
- Intensive internal discussion and exchange of experience during partner meetings
- A public transnational workshop held 23rd November in stuttgart, Germany (output 4.4.3)

targeted at a proper implementation of the brownfield regeneration management within municipal structures.

Situation in Europe

There are significant differences between the old Western Member States and the Central and Eastern European Countries. E.g. in UK, Germany and Italy strategic brownfield policies are to be established and the need for a professional brownfield management is broadly accepted. Organisational structures are partly established (e.g. UK) since recent years, and based on early experiences a process has started to describe the requirements for such positions and jobs, paving the way to general introduction in municipal practice within the coming years. In the Central and Eastern Countries brownfields are an upcoming issue, to be recognised very recently as an important issue for local policy and development. Beyond the realisation of some big flagship projects in major cities with international investors involved, only few targeted activities have been initiated. So informing and convincing the public and political level about the need of a targeted brownfield management approach is still a top issue in these countries.

Examples from the US and Canada do clearly indicate a strong leverage effect of national or other superior funding programs to the local policy level. Such programs do support the public perception of the topic and help to initiate structural changes at lower level. European policy documents as the Leipzig Charta in combination with e.g. the operational programmes of EU structural funds support the implementation of the brownfield regeneration issue in national policies.

The cities are key players for the realisation of brownfield related activities. Dealing with brownfields in city administrations can have a strong strategic coordinative component (e.g. land management in general, information systems etc.) or can be more focused on the role of a project manager in specific site developments. Whereas in smaller cities probably the generalist performing well in both components will be preferred, a more shared work between several persons in bigger towns allows more specific dedication of the duties. Current practice indicates that project specific appointment of staff in special purpose vehicles like development agencies and PPP constructions etc. can be an option to settle the specific project management aspects aside of the core structures in a city administration.

Structures at municipal level

The experiences of the partners reveal that integrating brownfield management into the workflow of urban regeneration is an important issue. However within the municipalities comparable and well settled structures do not exist yet. The COBRAMAN partners were all trying to establish brownfield regeneration management in their municipality by a bottom-up - approach, as the need is not fully recognised and expressed in political decisions. Nevertheless, the experiences show that an appropriate placement in the organisation chart of the administration including procedural clarifications and further top-down support could effectively facilitate the process of implementation in municipal practice.



Fig. 1. General structure of public administration

A general structure of municipal organisation in most European municipalities is shown in fig.1. Nearly all technical departments are affected by brownfield revitalisation processes from section 1 business development benefiting from new created jobs during revitalisation and later on the newly developed site, over section 2 real estate and finances leading to section 6 in case contamination has to be remediated or new building plans need to be drawn.

However the sections mainly involved are the real estate department and the departments for planning and for environment. The business development department and building department are not as deeply involved as the others. The placement of a brownfield regeneration manager could fit better to the real estate department in cases when a broad portfolio of brownfield sites is owned by the city. Vice versa it could fit better to the planning department in case most brownfield sites are private. In such cases when significant contamination of the sites is expected or known, the brownfield regeneration manager would also fit well in the environmental department.

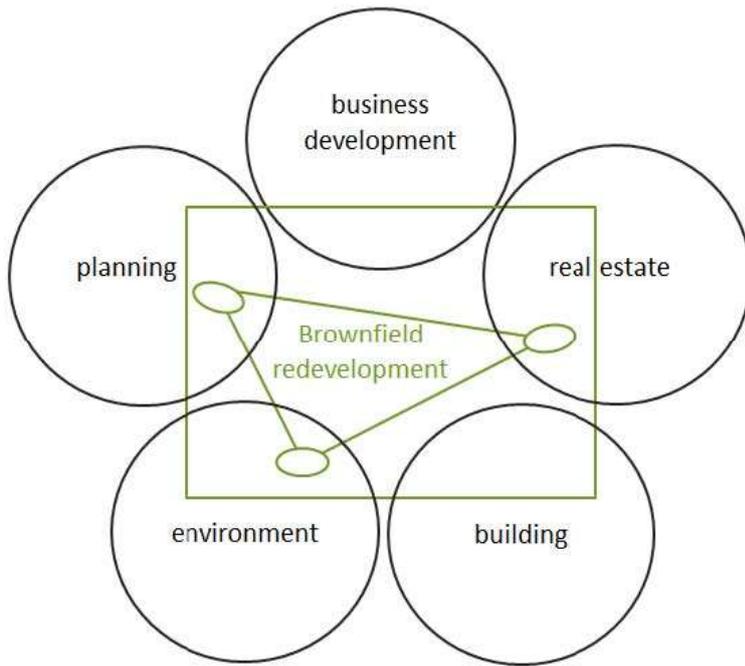


Fig. 2. Options for the localisation of brownfield regeneration managers in municipal structures

Setting up a Brownfield Management Unit

Wherever a “brownfield regeneration unit or management unit” will be located, the key scope of its activities will be:

- Organising an interdepartmental working group, which includes the preparation of their work schedules and brownfield management procedure guidelines as well as the coordination of the groups contacts to all stakeholder groups
- Acting as a one-stop-shop for all stakeholders as well as brownfield owners, investors and developers, providing information and advice and keeping the brownfield related information systems up to date.

In order to fulfil these duties properly a well described and empowered mandate from mayor level is as important as a contemporary attitude towards problem-oriented action and related procedures within an administrative body. This allows the regeneration manager to act powerful within his horizontal networks without coincidentally challenging existing hierarchical structures.