Substance Society.

A Manifesto for Our Building Stock

Jan Schultheiß, Felix Zohlen

"The future also used to be better." Karl Valentin [German comedian, folk singer, author and film producer, 1882-1948]

Our present will also one day be the past – just as our current building stock was once a vision of the future. Even the most modern new buildings are merely an expression of today's standards and demands, which will certainly change in the near future. But we cannot afford constant demolition and new construction. Therefore, those who want to shape the future should repair, improve, and continue to build on what already exists – not demolish and replace, but continue to develop it.

We desire a society that takes the work of previous generations as seriously as its own visions of the future, that courageously embraces change but does not succumb to the illusion of being better. This is not about style or ideology, but about a realistic view of the built present as a future past. This society begins with an appreciation of substance.

Summary

The future of our cities inevitably lies in how we treat our existing building stock. We have formulated five demands with outlines for solutions and implementation proposals for future-oriented approaches aimed at society as a whole: citizens, the professional community, the administration, public and private owners, and investors.

Our cities and settlements are in a constant state of tension between preservation and further development and must respond to changing challenges. Decisions about what is preserved or disposed of are often made on the basis of supposed exploitation pressure and false criteria. As a result, too little is converted and repurposed, and too much valuable building stock deteriorates and is demolished. This threatens cultural assets, wastes resources, accelerates climate change, and increases rents for the profit of a few.[1][2]

The solution does not lie in stronger legal protection of the entire building stock, but in its societal appreciation. In this manifesto, we define the building stock into three equal parts, each requiring different assessment, maintenance, and development strategies: everyday building stock, “building stock of special preservation value”[3], and monuments.

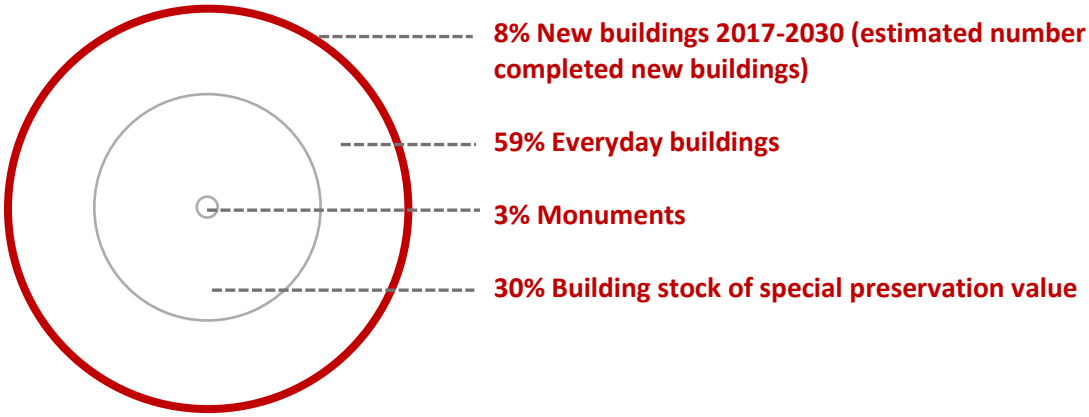
[1] Nota bene: All hyperlinks mentioned are in Germany only.

[2] The Federal Statistical Office estimates approximately 14,000 building demolitions per year, but the number of unreported cases is likely significantly higher, as demolition permits are not required in large parts of Germany. According to the Federal Environment Agency, construction and demolition waste accounted for approximately 54 percent of German waste generation in 2022 (7.3 tons of construction waste per second in 2020). See also https://abriss-atlas.de/.

[3] This category (in German, “Besonders Erhaltenswerte Bausubstanz”, abbreviated BEB) is explained in the annex.

The basis for societal appreciation of the building fabric is inevitably a "substantial participation." By this, we mean a paradigm shift that prioritizes content: Model processes and their comprehensible placement are necessary – instead of superficial communication and marketing. The sheer mass of the existing building fabric must also be addressed and anchored in education and training – these areas must clearly prioritize preservation and conversion over new construction.

Ultimately, the general public can benefit from dealing with existing architecture if it contributes to safeguarding established social structures and existing price levels (affordable existing rents). This manifesto aims to strengthen alliances in politics and the professional community to pave the way for solutions that are largely implemented by the public.



The figures cited in the figure are based on the 2018/19 Baukultur (Building Culture) Report. The number of completed new buildings is based on a projection up to 2030 and on current completion figures. The figures shown in the illustration are based on the 2018 / 19 Baukultur Report. The volume of completed new buildings is based on a projection up to 2030 and is based on current completion figures.

Demand 1: Everyday substance must be valued more!

Everyday substance makes up the majority of the building stock in Germany (approximately 59 percent). While everyday buildings are commonly considered functional without any particular architectural merit, they are often worth preserving, particularly from an economic and ecological perspective. The conversion of everyday buildings must be made more attractive and promoted compared to new construction, because we can no longer afford the latter. Conversion can also significantly increase the quality of a building:

Solution approach: Allow the gray (embodied) energy of buildings as capital for construction financing.

Solution approach: Provide incentives for "appreciation analysis" when selling a property.

Demand 2: Building stock of special preservation value (BEB) must become an urban planning priority!

BEB (approximately 30 percent of the building stock) includes historically significant buildings that shape the cityscape and are typical of the surrounding area, such as Wilhelminian-era districts from circa 1870 to 1914. This flexible, not yet widely used term offers enormous opportunities: for urban development through the continued use of existing buildings instead of new construction, for densification, for energy-efficient renovation, and for a cityscape valued by all.

Solution approach*: Define BEB uniformly and formulate, disseminate, and make visible guiding principles.*

Solution approach*: Develop conversion standards and make "conversion studies" eligible for funding.*

Demand 3: Monument protection must be further considered as monument preservation and monument development!

Buildings, ensembles, and urban areas under monument protection (approximately 3 percent of the building stock) represent individual historical layers – beautiful and difficult, old and young ones – and make these layers visible to current and future generations. We must protect more monuments in the future, but also develop them more flexibly with the existing possibilities. To achieve this, we need a powerful and future-oriented approach in practice, as well as greater transparency and adaptability:

Solution approach: Make approval practice in monument protection more flexible and offer scope of action for dealing with "original substance."

Solution approach: Leverage the potential of digital networking and data collection for monument preservation at an early stage.

Demand 4: Building fabric and the culture of conversion must also be strengthened in training!

Demolition and new construction should only be possible as an exception and last resort, for example, if this is demonstrably the best solution for energy or ecological reasons (so-called reversal of the burden of proof) – conversion thus becomes the norm. For this culture of conversion, we need qualified implementers who find their own solutions. To achieve this, competencies in education and training must be strengthened, and achievements must be recognized through awards:

Solution approach: Significantly expand cooperation between planners, skilled trades, and the construction industry.

Solution approach: Prioritize the preservation of existing structures and the culture of conversion over new construction and embed this in training, apprenticeships, and through awards.

Demand 5: To ensure greater preservation of existing structures, participation must become more substantial!

Preservation of existing buildings must become even more of a joint task in the future. Civil society should be involved and activated earlier through transparent communication. To achieve this, we need participatory, moderated decision-making processes, for example, for the development of conservation and maintenance concepts. Both model processes and digital participation options offer important opportunities in this context:

Solution approach: Achieve critical mass through storytelling and model processes.

Solution approach: Establish new collaborations for participatory planning processes.

ABOUT THIS MANIFESTO

This manifesto is the result of years of civic engagement. The Initiative House Marlene Poelzig, founded in 2020, formed a broad alliance to preserve the house designed by Marlene Poelzig in 1928 in Berlin's Westend district to establish a residence for "female masters of construction." Despite this commitment, the building, which was not listed as a historic monument, was demolished in the winter of 2021. However, the discourse did not stop. In November 2024, the public symposium "Substance?", sponsored by the State Monuments Office and held at the Berlin Museum of Decorative Arts, took the demolition as an opportunity to develop new impulses for transformations in monument protection, monument preservation, and the culture of conversion. The contributions and discussions of the symposium form the basis for this manifesto. The selected themes are derived from some of the initiative's main focuses—particularly the exploration of "places with substance" and participation.

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The photographs by Jonathan Schmalöer were taken as part of the Baukreisel project “Dem doppelten Verlust - vom Verschwinden von Bausubstanz und Stadtidentität” (The double loss - the disappearance of building fabric and urban identity) in cooperation with Richard Schmalöer. The project shows vacant, endangered and already demolished buildings from Dortmund that have been collected over the last two years. The project kicked off with the exhibition of the same name at the Baukunstarchiv NRW [North Rhine-Westphalia] in spring 2023. The project is still in progress. The crossed-out buildings were demolished during the creation of this manifesto.

Demand 1: Everyday substance must be valued more!



Why?

Valuing everyday substance means: forcing a paradigm shift and making preservation and conversion the norm! In the spirit of a ‘repair society’, we value all buildings for architectural and climate-related reasons – not by freezing the past, but by responding ambitiously and responsibly to societal changes and by repairing and rebuilding our existing buildings.[4][5] We would like to see conversion culture and resource conservation classified as a "public interest"[6] in order to anchor them as a high-level, binding goal of society that must be strictly considered in planning and construction processes. Valuing everyday substance can only be achieved through public motivation and cannot be imposed through bureaucracy. This motivation cannot be inspired by the idea of sustainability alone, but must also arise from economically viable alternatives. To this end, we must financially express the actual value of the resources and embodied (or grey) energy[7] of the substance. Many "problems" of existing buildings, such as escape routes or accessibility, stem from the discrepancy between the expectations of their use and the perceived capabilities of the building's structure.[8] Therefore, it is necessary to first identify the qualities of a building in order to derive a suitable use and opportunities for conversion. Not every building can fulfil every purpose, but there is a suitable existing building for every use.

[4] See also Lipp, Wilfried: "From Modern to Post-Modern Monument Cult? Aspects of the Repair Society" and the exhibition *"The Great Repair"* (Akademie der Künste Berlin, 2023/24).

[5] See also Federal Foundation for Building Culture (2018/19): *Building Culture Report Heritage – Existing building stock – Future.* (https://www.bundesstiftung-baukultur.de, last accessed: April 28, 2025).

[6] Public interests are understood as goals that are in the interest of the general public, including health, nature, soil, climate, and monument conservation, as well as landscape conservation. According to the German Federal Building Code (BauGB), the relevant "public interest bodies" must be actively involved in the preparation of planning documents. Including topics as public interests ensures that they are taken into account in planning processes.

[7] Embodied – or “grey” – energy refers to the energy expended in the manufacture, transport, storage, sale, and disposal of a product.

[8] See HouseEurope legal proposal 3.1: “In this context, it must also be taken into consideration that the existing legislation at EU level does not place any value on the embodied energy contained in existing buildings, making it more attractive for investors to demolish and rebuild buildings rather than preserving existing buildings. This practice often leads to unnecessary CO2 emissions and the loss of valuable building structure. […]” (https://www.houseeurope.eu/255-legalproposal, last accessed: March 18, 2025). The European citizens’ initiative “HouseEurope!” advocates for socio-economic change and sustainable practices in the construction sector and calls for EU legislation that makes the renovation and conversion of existing buildings easier, more affordable, and more socially responsible, and prevents demolitions for speculative reasons.

How?

Allowing the embodied energy of buildings as capital for construction financing.

Embodied energy refers to the energy consumed during the construction of a building, lost during demolition, and then replaced by new construction. Using so-called building accounting methods, statistical averages of CO2 equivalents (CO2e) can be defined for one square meter of usable space.[9] Based on the total environmental costs of demolition and new construction, a sum can be determined that can be granted, for example, as a 0% loan for the conversion. Two examples: Anyone who wants to renovate a typical single-family home with approximately 140 m² and the approximately 70 tons of CO2e[10] it contains could calculate a sum of approximately € 60,000, based on current environmental costs of €880 per ton of CO2e.[11] An average office building with 1,600 m², on the other hand, contains approximately 770 tons of CO2e, based on the averages used here. Consequently, approximately €650,000 could be credited. The value of the substance is expressed in concrete terms – and the calculation shows that the conversion can save costs.

Provide incentives for "value appreciation analysis"[12] when selling a property.

Society is well-positioned to make sensible decisions regarding the development of real estate. However, the information basis is often lacking. In Denmark, a method originally developed in 1989 for the protection of historical monuments is used to analyze everyday substance in order to promote transformation and prevent demolition. The tool pays particular attention to the character and intangible values of a place. Furthermore, through structured questions, it provides an overview of the architectural and technical qualities of buildings or urban spaces, e.g., with regard to time layers and building changes, wear and tear and patina of the substance, and its impact on the surrounding environment. Furthermore, the analysis makes sound recommendations on how these potentials should be addressed in order to preserve, restore, or further develop the most important values. The resulting design and structural assessment of the building is documented in a short text, image, and drawing. Adding the results to the portfolio of the property for sale provides developers or users with a basis for making an informed decision. This creates a better match between existing properties and their intended use, as well as a certain degree of protection against "misguided" investments.

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[9] German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB e.V.) (2021): *Benchmarks for greenhouse gas emissions from building construction.* (https://www.dgnb.de/de?eID=dumpFile&t=f&download=1&f=7680&token=6b175c48a009cc37052cad1afd3e3c20de079836#page4, last accessed: April 28, 2025).

[10] Ibid.

[11] Federal Environment Agency (2024): *Social Costs of Environmental Pollution.* (https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/daten/umwelt-wirtschaft/gesellschaftliche-kosten-von-umweltbelastungen#methodik-zur-schatzung-von-klimakosten-, last accessed: April 28, 2025).

[12] Vadstrup, Søren: *Analyse og Værdisætnings-Metoden til registrering af bygninger, bebyggelser og byrum.* [Method of Value Appreciation Analysis], Kunstakademiets Arkitektskole. 2017. Translation by Prof. Mikala Holme Samsøe.

Demand 2: Building stock of special preservation value (BEB) must become an urban development priority!



Why?

BEB is an opportunity to give a voice to the genius loci, the soul of a place. It is the element that is "worth preserving" and "place-defining" that we need to carefully develop to shape the future. To develop this building stock sensibly, we need guiding principles and support. Due to the large volume of this building stock and the scalability of solutions, its development also represents an economic component for cities and municipalities. The state of Berlin serves as an example here, but BEB has relevance well beyond.

Currently, BEB is still a marginal term in urban development discourses or for owners and tenants. Yet it offers unique access to capture and preserve the structural and urban design characteristics of the building fabric as a significant asset of the city, the surroundings, or the neighborhood. The BEB study, commissioned by the Berlin Senate,[13] provides a basis for uniformly defining and recording this "cityscape-defining" element. We see the so-called “careful urban renewal” as a model for implementation: Starting around 1975, the impetus provided by civil society in Berlin made it possible to rehabilitate the “tenement city”, which politicians and business initially considered to be without value, and to stop planned area redevelopments (i.e. large-scale demolitions) that would otherwise have destroyed the now popular old building fabric in districts such as Kreuzberg, Charlottenburg, or Wedding.

Due to the wide range of building typologies typical of the period and local, site-specific contexts, BEB is committed to the principle of subsidiarity: In the spirit of "think global, act local," overarching guidelines must be applied with or supplemented by local knowledge.

How?

Define BEB uniformly and formulate, make visible, and disseminate a guiding principle.
Based on existing studies, a guiding principle for a municipality (Berlin, for example) can be developed in cooperation between relevant institutions such as Chambers of Architects and Engineers, monument preservation authorities, and the Senate Administration. This principle makes concrete recommendations on building construction, energy systems, or floor plan adaptations. If this achieves clear communication and commitment toward both contractors and owners, solutions

[13] Senate Administration Berlin (2016/21): *BEB: Building stock of special preservation value in Berlin – Urban Cultural Assets: Preserving the qualities of Berlin's time layers.* (https://www.berlin.de/sen/stadtentwicklung/_assets/denkmal/beb-faltmappe_2021-12_27_web.pdf?ts=1702425640, last accessed: March 5, 2025).

can be scaled up. This increases the quality and cost-effectiveness of conversions. First and foremost, a comprehensive city-wide master plan must be developed that becomes an urban development strategy, for example within the framework of city development plans. The districts then implement this: They uniformly record and manage the preservation of BEB. They must be adequately staffed for this purpose.[14]

Develop conversion standards and make "conversion studies" eligible for funding.
Studies can arrive at very different results, depending on the focus of the investigation. The feasibility study by "an.ders Urania,"[15] for example, concluded that, all factors considered, converting the high-rise An der Urania would be more sensible than demolition and new construction. Conversion studies, which would be developed uniformly by the Chamber and Senate, can help check the potential for conversion, preservation, renovation, and subsequent re-use as compared to demolition. The knowledge of local residents must also be considered in order to identify the qualities of the existing buildings and possible future (re)uses. This is because, in addition to economic aspects, as well as functional and urban planning/architectural qualities, a decisive criterion should be whether a building is worth preserving due to its local historical significance. The handling of pollutants in a health-related, socially, ecologically, and economically acceptable manner should also be assessed. Such conversion studies should receive financial support and be conducted by experts, such as Chamber members.[16]

Demand 3: Monument protection must be further considered as monument preservation and monument development!



Why?

Monuments are not academic products or rigid relics of the past, but living reflections of our culture. Buildings such as the House Marlene Poelzig or the many disused churches must be protected and preserved, but above all, maintained and developed. The focus should not only be on individual monuments that shape the cityscape, but also on ensembles: After all, all buildings play in the orchestra; if the "quiet substance" disappears, an irreparable gap is torn in the score, the fabric of the city.

[14] See also BEB strategy in Hamburg, (https://www.hamburg.de/politik-und-verwaltung/behoerden/behoerde-fuer-stadtentwicklung-und-wohnen/projekte-und-kampagnen/energetisch-sanieren/beb-947512, last accessed: March 7, 2025).
[15] Initiative an.ders Urania: *Feasibility study for the preservation of the high-rise building at Urania 4–10.* 2023, see also https://andersurania.org/. [Please note: The state of Berlin had the high-rise demolished in 2024]
[16] Federal Foundation for Building Culture (2022): *Renovating with Joy – A Handbook on Conversion Culture:* This publication offers inspiration for creative conversion solutions (https://www.bundesstiftung-baukultur.de/publikationen/handbuecher/mit-freude-sanieren, last accessed: April 28, 2025).

Monument protection is an opportunity for the future and, as an institution, is best suited to show us a path to preserving the building fabric. We therefore need more monuments – but also an adaptation of practice, a differentiated perception, and a new image of monument protection, because the public often perceives it not as an opportunity, but rather as an unwieldy, inflexible problem. The Monument Protection Act already clearly defines the potential for change: "The appearance of a monument may only be altered with the approval of the responsible monument protection authority"[17] – the degree of change is the result of coordination and consideration (or compromise) with other public and private interests.

"Monument protection is selection and interpretation"[18] – what is deemed worthy of preservation should be transparent, and experts should continuously adapt it to our changing society. This public interest in preservation should be demonstrated even more strongly.

How?

Make the approval process in monument protection more flexible and provide scope of action for dealing with "original substance."

With regard to monument protection, it is not only the inventory of monuments (what is a monument?), but rather the approval process (what happens to the monument?) that holds potential for a dynamic approach to monuments. The contemporary further development of the practice can be seen, for example, in the Berlin Solar Guidelines of 2023: They have linked monument and climate protection more closely.

Leverage the potential of digital networking and data collection for monument preservation early on.

Through improved information pooling and transparency, civil society can proactively monitor buildings worthy of preservation – and not wait until it is too late and demolition and new construction have already irrevocably initiated: Data on vacancies, sales, and changes of ownership, as well as risk inventories such as the Red List[19] and the Demolition Atlas[20] must be more closely pooled to serve as an "early warning system." Given the societal significance of "places of substance" – not just monuments – demolition requests should be made public on a mandatory basis. This allows the public to respond to hazards early on, and authorities can make decisions regarding monument protection in a timely manner.

[17] Law on the Protection of Monuments in Berlin (Berlin Monument Protection Act – DSchG Bln) of April 24, 1995, Section 11.
[18] Initiative House Marlene Poelzig, discussion point during the *thesis workshop* in preparation for the symposium (May 2024).
[19] German Association for Art History: *Red List* (https://kunstgeschichte.org/verband/rote-liste/, last accessed: March 14, 2025).
[20] Architects 4 Future Deutschland et al.: *Demolition Atlas Germany.* (https://abriss-atlas.de, last accessed: March 14, 2025).

Demand 4: Building fabric and the culture of conversion must also be strengthened in education!

Why?

To make the preservation of substance and the culture of conversion even more effective and more future-proof as instruments of urban design, we need qualified implementers who develop their own solutions. To achieve this, competencies must be strengthened in both administration and the private sector. New knowledge and new impulses can emerge if the development of the existing building fabric is strengthened as a cross-cutting task within the framework of education and training – especially in architecture, engineering, and the skilled trades. We need new professional models for today's architectural practice; the 2024 University Day of the Association of German Architects formulates approaches to this: "A culture of repair and conversion that is conveyed in studies and that stands for restraint in architecture promotes an understanding of respectful and mindful development of the existing building stock – in contrast to the design approach in new construction, which aims for the perfect, new [state] and a legible authorship, as well as to an exclusively conservational approach in historic preservation."[21] In addition, our way of working can only find new paths if we question the hierarchical nature of planning as an all-knowing, controlling authority - because conversion requires direct cooperation between execution and planning.

How?

Significantly expand collaboration between planners, skilled tradespeople, and the construction industry.

We must embed the added value of the built environment in society and must no longer view conversion as an exception: We must make it a fundamental component of planning activities – and everyone's responsibility. To achieve this, we all – especially building professionals, teachers, specialist planners, engineers, and building owners – must change our attitude and make conversion culture the basis of our actions in architecture, urban development and building culture[22], research, education, and the skilled trades. For repair and the refurbishment of existing buildings, we also need more skilled tradespeople with knowledge of the appropriate use of building materials and experience in customized solutions, as opposed to the "click assembly" of industrial products. Such executors – those who implement solutions – must be on an equal footing with planners – conversion culture requires a team approach and must abandon planning hierarchies. To this end, traditional service phases such as design, approval, and tendering can be reorganized or combined, and, for example, contractors can be involved in the design process.[23] In the implementation phase, joint insurance policies for all participants in the construction process can also improve conversion practices through shared risk.

Prioritize the preservation of existing structures and the culture of conversion over new construction and embed this in training, teaching, and awards.

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[21] Association of German Architects (BDA, 2024): *How will architecture work tomorrow? Between conversion practice and digitalization – Theses of the 6th BDA University Day of Architecture.* (https://www.bda-bund.de, last accessed: April 27, 2025).

[22] "Building culture" corresponds to the translation of the German term "Baukultur".

[23] In Germany, the individual planning stages of an architect's or engineer's overall performance in the planning and realization of construction projects are referred to as "service phases".

(Building culture) education plays a key role in changing practice: "Building fabric worth protecting" must – alongside current focuses such as the so-called 'turnaround in the construction sector' and circularity – become a more overarching theme at universities and colleges in basic teaching and vocational training. Moreover, all age groups should develop a sense of the quality of their built environment and thus raise public awareness of conversion culture in the long term. In addition to seminar-based continuing education and training, an optional rotation in the public service could promote knowledge transfer – comparable to the legal system.

Student engagement is often underestimated, but it can make an important contribution to raising awareness for relevant topics, to inspiring, and – if necessary – to offering resistance: Students are often well-connected, work in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary as well as unbureaucratic ways. This allows them to respond more quickly and directly than the institutions in which they are embedded. Incentives and recognition can also provide impetus for practice: Excellence in conversion and in the ongoing maintenance as well as repair of existing buildings should be encouraged. To this end, existing architecture and building owner awards, as well as competitions, should be expanded, or a new award should be created.

Demand 5: Participation must become more substantial for greater preservation of existing buildings!

Why?

Given the lack of staffing capacity and increasingly scarce financial resources in many administrations, as well as growing demands for energy efficiency, accessibility, and redensification, to name just a few, the preservation of existing buildings must become even more of a community effort. To engage and activate the public, greater use should be made of communication and digitalization. This allows civil society to be involved earlier in decision-making and implementation processes. Participation must therefore focus on content and ask honest questions. This can also reduce the frequent misunderstanding between civil society, administration, and planners.

While participation enables a new division of responsibilities, it requires dedicated financial and human resources – making it all the more important to develop model processes that can also be used elsewhere.

How?

Achieve critical mass through storytelling and model processes.
Buildings shape identity. If we tell the diverse and complex stories of their origins, their builders, and their users, if we show good examples and create powerful images, we can generate momentum and public pressure towards politics and society. Visible and tangible results demonstrate: long-term civil society engagement and maintenance of existing buildings pay off! Participatory processes, such as those for Demerthin Castle in the state of Brandenburg and the pilot project for the Mäusebunker (Mice Bunker) in Berlin, have a noticeable activation and motivation effect. These examples also demonstrate: public communication and debates between planners and users should begin as early as possible, be solution-oriented, and be able to withstand arguments and counterarguments.

The management of existing buildings can also benefit from the possibilities of digitalization, both through the precise recording and analysis of the building fabric and during implementation – for example, digital production enables handcrafted wood joints on a large scale. Digitalization and social media also play an increasingly important role in the involvement of civil society, for example, in the qualitative recording of building demolitions by local residents throughout Germany in the *Demolition Atlas*[24] or in political participation in planning or legislative processes such as the European citizens' initiative "HouseEurope!"[25]. Despite the enormous power of digitalization, analogue formats and instruments remain equally important.

Build new collaborations for participatory planning processes.

We need a cultural shift and a new self-understanding of cooperation: We can only advance the urgently needed distribution of tasks and networking in the conversion culture through broad stakeholder constellations and alliances[26]. We must broaden the circle beyond professional and organizational (system) boundaries and enter into new collaborations: especially between administration and civil society, with decision-makers, public and private owners, investors, socio-cultural institutions, and students. In Berlin, the State Monument Council plays a special role as an independent advisory body and communicative catalyst.

In addition to strong collaborations, activating communication and solid planning foundations are essential prerequisites for participatory planning and discussion processes: With participation and honest feasibility studies as well as cost estimates, we can jointly develop realistic and long-term perspectives for the preservation and development of buildings worthy of protection. Only in this way can we make valid decisions and clarify or negotiate options for action and use, operating models, organizational structures, and economic efficiency aspects, to name just a few.

[24] See footnote 20.
[25] See footnote 8.
[26] See the Anti-Demolition Alliance founded in 2024: https://kulturerbenetz.berlin/anti-abriss-allianz/.

ANNEX

Definitions[27]

Everyday buildings are places of residence, workplaces, and places of leisure activities, as well as resources for new uses and further developments. In the future, these existing values must be taken more into account in the business and economic assessment of construction projects; certification systems must also be used more extensively in renovations. When new construction – which should generally be as minimal as possible – creates the "everyday architecture of tomorrow," attention must be paid to quality and flexibility so that the buildings are durable and can be further developed and reused in the future.

Unlike historic preservation, classification as a **building stock of special preservation value** (BEB) is not yet considered an established protection status. Internal administrative responsibilities and the consequences resulting from a designation as a BEB are also not clearly regulated. Nevertheless, preservation can already be controlled through the BEB status, among other things, through district design regulations, urban preservation regulations, and integrated urban development concepts. According to the German Federal Building Code (BauGB), the preservation of building culture and the further development of the urban design and the townscape as well as the landscape are listed as principles of urban land-use planning and are therefore among the concerns that must be considered in the assessment process. The Building Energy Act (GEG) mentions the BEB in Section 105, without precisely defining what exactly this includes – this is determined by the municipality. These specifications and inventory surveys of the municipalities are purely informal and do not constitute an instrument for protecting the respective building from design modification or demolition. However, they do qualify for funding under the *KfW Efficiency House Monument program*.[28][29]

Monuments are an important starting point for the further development of existing buildings in terms of preservation, conversion, and further construction. Heritage authorities place heritage monuments under protection; the maintenance of the buildings is a task and negotiation between the (specialist) authorities responsible for heritage preservation and the owners. Criteria for the selection of and strategies for dealing with monuments must be constantly adapted to current needs.

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[27] See Federal Foundation for Building Culture (2018/19): *Building Culture Report Heritage – – Existing building stock – Future*, p. 19 ff.

[28] Simplified funding conditions apply to listed buildings and residential buildings classified as BEB: These take into account monument protection requirements, for example, if these require the preservation of the historic facade and thus insulation of the exterior walls is not possible. See also https://www.kfw.de, last accessed: March 17, 2025.

[29] Other selected sources for BEB: Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Planning (2017): *Building stock of special preservation value in the state of Brandenburg – municipal approaches to recording, assessing, and developing BEB.* (https://mil.brandenburg.de/sixcms/media.php/9/2017-12-14_Abschlussbericht%20Gutachten%20besonders%20erhaltenswerte%20Bausubstanz.pdf, last accessed: February 26, 2025); Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (2014): *Building stock of special preservation value in integrated urban development.* (https://www.bmwsb.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/Webs/BMWSB/DE/publikationen/wohnen/denkmalschutz.html, last accessed: February 26, 2025).

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