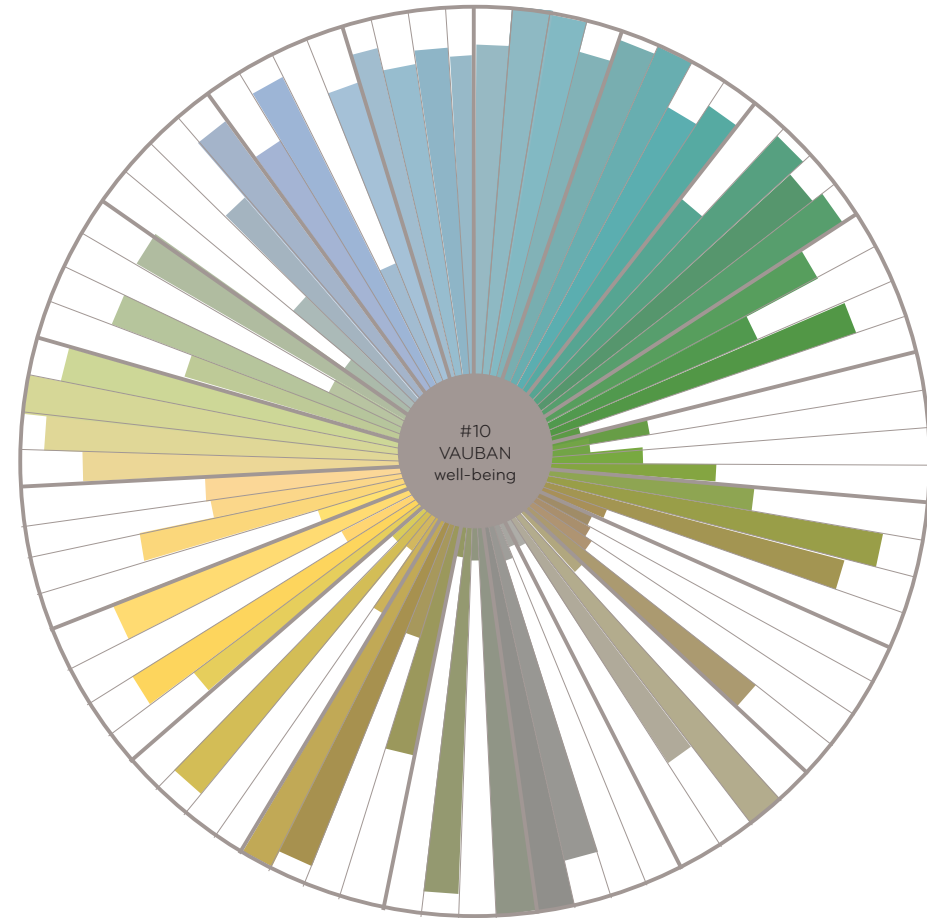


STUDY #10: ANALYSING VAUBAN, GERMANY

TYPOLOGY: new neighbourhood in the German city of Freiburg



As a sustainably new-built city neighbourhood in Freiburg Germany, Vauban shows a very strong position in ecological and infrastructural as well as some community terms. Due to its character as a city district Vauban has focused less on food and biosphere.

CLEAR VILLAGE

FACTS ABOUT VAUBAN, GERMANY

SUSTAINABLE CITY DISTRICT



Location: Freiburg, Germany
4km south of city centre
47° 59' N, 7° 49' E

Type: New, sustainably built city model district

Status: Developed from mid-1990's on a site of abandoned army barracks

Initiator: Forum Vauban, which emerged from people living informally on the site

Typology: Sustainable City District

Climate zone: Central European temperate

Population base: very young; 1/3 of all inhabitants are younger than 18 (end 2007), with young children representing the biggest group. Vauban counts as one of the areas with most children in Germany.

Density: city-like dense; 11,660 inhabitants/km²

Marked Area: 41 hectares

Built portion: very high, similar to inner city centres

GDP /Capita: 35,800€ Freiburg 2006 (average Germany: 32,000€)

Main source of income: main contribution to GDP comes from services sector (78%), a minor part from industrial activities (21%)

Population: 4,781 (end 2007); in total 2,000 flats for up to 5,000 people

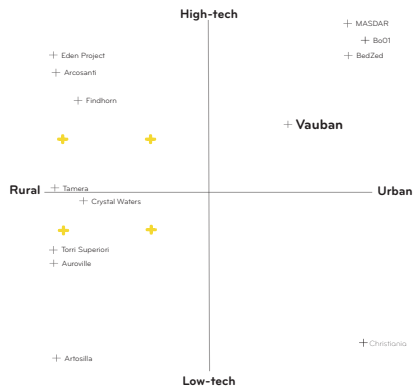
Employment: 600 jobs in Vauban, high commuter rate to Freiburg City

Political: Freiburg itself is led by a Green and Christian Democratic coalition with a mayor from the Green party. Within Vauban, Forum Vauban is one of the most important political players, even pushing the mayor of Freiburg to fight for their interests and to go further in radical green initiatives.

RELATIVE POSITIONING

There are three graphics on this page that depict Vauban's position relative to all case studies conducted within the first phase of the CLEAR VILLAGE Observatory.

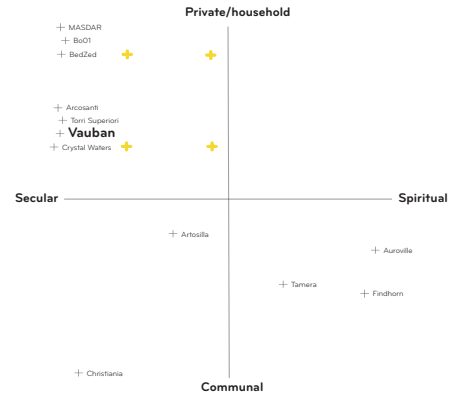
1. Technological Position



The first analysis shows the technological setting in which the place is embedded, if the settlement is rural or urban and if the built environment can be understood as more high- than low tech.

Vauban can be located as a non-central urban space that puts an emphasis on technological solutions for sustainable living whereas it is not as high-tech oriented as for example Bedzed. An opposite position of Vauban can be found in rural & low tech positioned Artosilla.

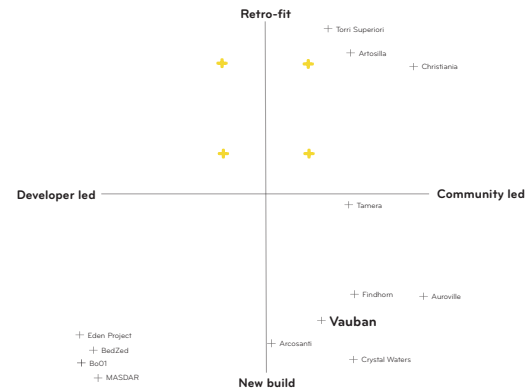
2. Community Involvement



The second analysis depicts the communitarian setting of the observed places; on one hand if the urban planning design focuses on communal living or traditional individual households, on the other hand if the community is spiritually driven or more secular.

The community process in Vauban is seen to be secularly driven, while the urban design shows a good mixture of communal facilities next to household living entities.

3. Type of Development Process



The third depiction is about the urban development process itself. It clarifies if it is led by the community with a strong emphasis on participatory self-planning or by a developer that might take participation into account. Furthermore it shows if the planning process aims at new built environment or a retro-fitting process.

Due to its history, Vauban focused much on new buildings, the development process was largely led by the community itself.

ORIGINS & PROGRESS

Revitalisation of abandoned army barracks area
Establishing a proper livelihood opportunity
Remapping traffic concept for car-free living

Vision

As the City of Freiburg moved forward with plans to develop the area as a city district, Forum Vauban applied to coordinate the participatory planning process that the city was obliged to undergo. It pursued the idea of developing the site in an eco-friendly way, and through collaboration between the Forum and the city Council a plan was developed.

The project aimed to create a city district in a cooperative, participatory way whilst meeting social, ecological, economic and cultural requirements.

Development highlights include the establishing of public parks, connected both to public space improvements and just as much to biodiversity enhancement through the agricultural principles of permaculture.

Apart from the interconnectedness of the diverse initiatives, the essential facet of this plan is to engage the community as much as possible, which will create resilience and empower every person involved. The wider and deeper the participation from the community, the more spill-off effects we will have throughout the various initiatives as well as over time.



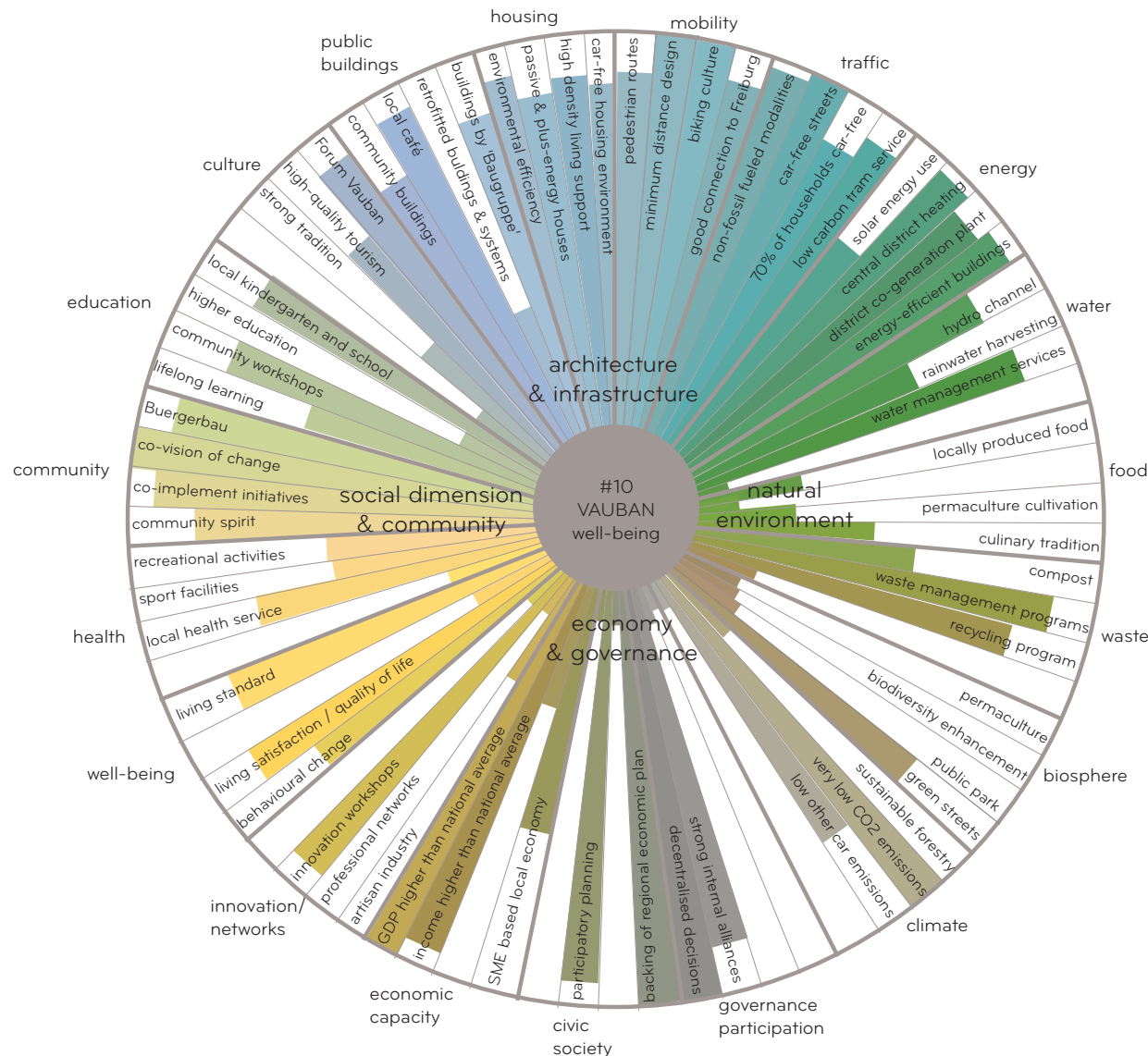
Experience

The site was sold in individual plots to a wide variety of types of buyer - some commercial developers, some co-operative groups and co-housing groups - to ensure a diverse neighbourhood in both social and architectural terms. At the same time the plan for the district ensured that around issues of energy efficiency, traffic, construction and social interaction a common set of principles and standards was adhered to. By 2001 there were already 2,000 residents.

Participation

Typical for Vauban is the model of advanced civic participation. A citizen's association founded in 1994, Forum Vauban, plays a key role in managing the district in a participatory way and in liaising with the City of Freiburg whilst introducing ecologically-alternative solutions into the urban planning process. The approach to developing Vauban has been highly participatory.

AREAS OF ACHIEVEMENT



Water, Waste & Energy

- support of high density of population
- energy-efficient buildings
- ecologically sound energy provision

Eco-Building

- low energy standard buildings
- passive and plus-energy buildings
- district cogeneration woodchip plant

Community Participation

- highly participatory development
- strong group 'Forum Vauban'
- specialist organisation 'Buergerbau'

Transportation

- car-free and parking-space free streets
- low-distance urban design
- tram link into Freiburg city centre

ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMMUNITY & LIFESTYLE

Design & Lifestyle

Forum Vauban conducted its initial participatory process leading to the urban design and playing an ongoing role in engaging residents in shaping their district. Innovative ecological and social ideas were shared and debated through this process; residents' needs and concerns raised. Meetings, workshops, newsletters and internet communication were used to enable the co-creative process.

In addition, many of the building projects have been carried out by 'Baugruppen' (building groups), groups of prospective residents, who have self-organised to manage their own construction processes. They were benefiting both from greater participation possibilities as well as lower building costs. Next to Baugruppen, there are alternative ways of living together in place, developed by co-operatives and co-housing groups.



Community Participation

The Vauban development approach has been highly participatory. The community interest group, Forum Vauban, conducted its initial participatory process which led to the district design. Since then, Forum Vauban has still been playing an ongoing role in engaging inhabitants: innovative ecological and social ideas are being shared and debated, community needs and concerns raised, development projects defined. A specialist organisation, the Buergerbau (Citizens' Building Stock Corporation) is able to support citizen groups in carrying out these collective projects.



ACHIEVEMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURES

Water, Waste and Energy

The development supports a high density of population, living in energy efficient buildings with environmentally sound energy provision, waste and water management services, and a car-free environment with plenty of green spaces.

Eco-Building

Vauban embraces eco-building with a strong focus on solar energy integration in the built environment.

Across the whole district all new buildings are being designed to meet a standard for energy efficiency that exceeds the common German environmental standard. New buildings in Vauban meet about twice the efficiency of a standard new-build and four times that of older houses. In addition, the area includes a number of passive houses that do not need conventional heating at all but make use of passive solar panels, heat recovery systems and gains from human activity to maintain a reasonable internal temperature. 42 passive houses were built in phase one of the three-phase development process, a further 50 in phase two. Ten 'plus-energy' houses were also built by an investor: these are houses which produce more energy than they require.

Where additional energy is required it is produced by central solar systems and the district's cogeneration woodchip plant, which is connected to the Vauban heating grid.



Transportation

One of the main features of Vauban is its car-free streets.

The primary mode of transport within the area is on foot or by bicycle and the urban planning deliberately seeks to keep density high and community anchor points in overlapping zones, e.g. the school, kindergartens, markets, businesses, food co-ops and recreation areas. The district is also planned to fully utilise the connectivity with Freiburg city centre.

Car-free living is encouraged through careful planning of the public space, where infrastructural spaces between buildings are not merely seen as parking spaces. By 2009 around 70% of households chose to live without a car, a figure which has increased throughout the life of Vauban so far. Freiburg city has an active car club and the biggest hub of its members, some 2,500 of them, are resident in Vauban.