Buildung Bauhaus! The growing House

A Design/Build Projekt in Dessau-Törten - Summer 2019

The grwing house next to the Deck-Access Houses by Hannes Meyer, in the meantime Unesco World heritage

By far the most innovative contribution of the Bauhaus to housing construction remained unrealised in the wake of the economic and political crisis that began in 1929 and is almost forgotten today, especially since it does not fit into the usual Bauhaus cliché: Not made of glass, steel and concrete, but of simple wooden construction, inexpensive, ecological and expandable. Almost 400 such single-family houses in three different building types were to complement the deck-access houses built by the Bauhaus under the directorship Hannes Meyer and thus create a mixed development that addressed the heterogeneous housing needs of the different population groups with different types of housing. More than 80 years after the planning, we now want to realize a prototype of this construction method with students in self-building in order to remind of this innovation, which is still relevant today. Not only to correct a one-sided picture of the Bauhaus, but also to give an impulse to today‘s housing debate.
The architect and urban planner Ludwig Hilberseimer, teacher at the Bauhaus Dessau from 1929-1933, had dealt intensively with questions of housing construction during his time there. In systematic studies, which he pursued consistently over many years, he developed new urban typologies and house types which, based on functional parameters and free of traditional principles, offer new solutions for urban living. The aim of our „Bauhaus bauen“ project is to revive Hilberseimer‘s ideas developed in dialogue with Hannes Meyer and relevant to today‘s debate on housing and urban development.

The construciton as do-it-yourself by students

In 2017, Hannes Meyer‘s arcaded houses, a hitherto neglected part of the Bauhaus heritage, were declared a World Heritage Site. The development, however, is only a partial realization in one of Hilberseimer and Hannes Meyer‘s with the Bauhaus students developed an overall concept for a mixed development. On a vacant urban property (Mittelbreite 12) in the area of the World Heritage site directly next to one of the deck-access houses we are now building an L-house type by Hilberseimer from the years 1930-32 as a design-build project with students. This is the first time that the innovative overall urban design concept is made clear, as is the equally stimulating Hilberseimer house type. At the same time, it is a kind of re-enactment that the designs and buildings of the Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer were developed, designed and built together with the students. The project stands for the following approaches to content:

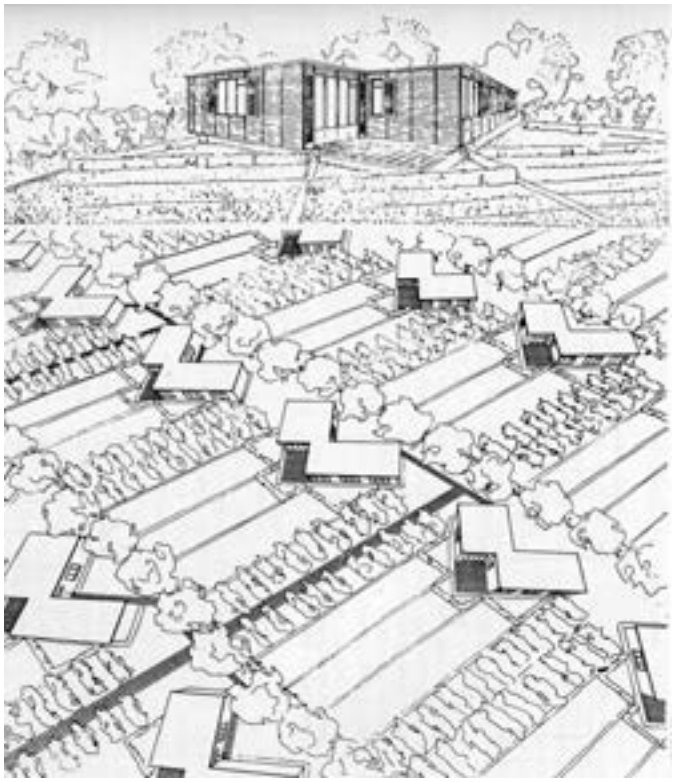
INNOVATION HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Compressed low-rise: Single-storey single-family houses on minimised plots of less than 200 square metres make it possible to achieve urban densities and thus combine the advantages of low-rise buildings (simple, cheap construction, direct access to the garden, privacy) with the advantages of urban neighbourhoods (services such as public transport, retail, social and cultural facilities), as the necessary urban building densities can be achieved.

Mixed construction: People have different housing needs. Families with children often prefer houses with gardens, while single people like to use services close to their homes in order to enjoy a modern urban lifestyle. The small-scale mixing of these different ways of living in low-rise and building construction not only promotes social cohesion, but also makes synergies possible: Compact low-rise buildings can benefit from the services offered by urban housing, while the apartments in the multi-storey buildings enjoy a clear view and generous greenery. In addition, it allows for spatial complexity: unlike in Suburbia, the building blocks structure the low-rises according to the principles of an open, flowing but at the same time clearly articulated space.

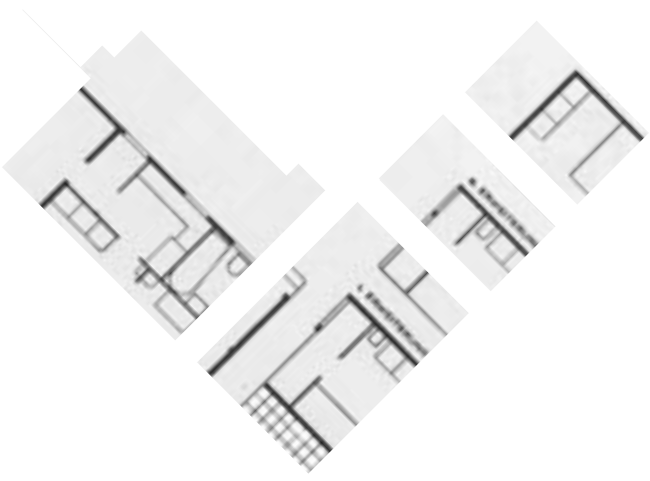
Growing house: Household sizes and housing requirements change over time, as do the available resources. The principle of the growing house allows gradual expansion (or shrinking) as desired and possible.

Timber construction: The modern timber construction permits a high prefabrication and thus inexpensive and



Aerial view with garden parcells, Ludwig Hilberseimer, 1932

Floor plan of the groing house, 1932



The stepwise extension of the growing house Ludwig Hilberseimer, 1932

fast production, offers a pleasant room climate and represents an ecological, renewable building material.

INNOVATION EDUCATION

Design/ Build: The building is being erected as a design/ build project with students from the University of Kassel and is thus a kind of re-enactment of the building of the arcades 90 years earlier by the students of the Bauhaus construction department under the direction of Hannes Meyer. It is thus in the tradition of the reform pedagogy of „learning by doing“, a research-oriented, practice-oriented education.

Learning location: The house serves learning purposes. Whether as a green classroom for the pupils and teachers of the Walter-Gropius-Gymnasium, as a real laboratory for the development of a new community in the district or as a show house for the visitors, the house is a place of learning.

The growing house by Ludwig Hilberseimer, exhibited in Berlin 1932

Contributors

University of Kassel: has developed the idea and is responsible for the planning and construction of the buidling

Constructlab: contributes the timber construction competence in word and deed, provides the tools (mobile workshop) and directs the do-it-yourself construction by the students

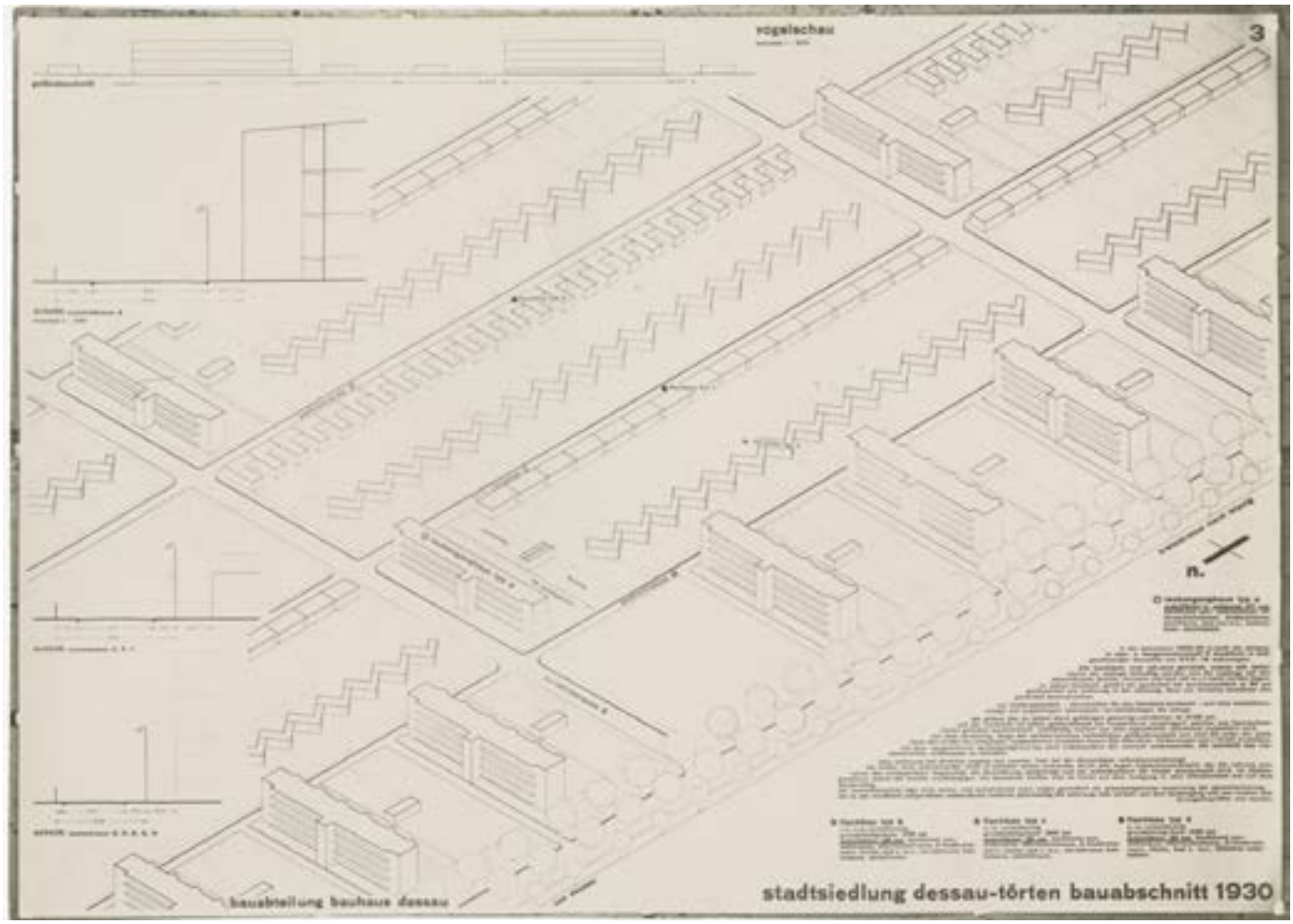
Hochschule Anhalt/ International Master Program Design (MAID) supports the project with website design, among other things

Walter-Gropius-Gymnasium Dessau: Students and teachers support the planning process and participate in its use.

The **Wilkhahn** company is a cooperation partner and contributes to the the interior design.

Werkbund Sachsen-Anhalt operates and coordinates the use of the building

City of Dessau-Roßlau: provides the land property and supports the project



The only partially realized planning of the Bauhaus Dessau from 1930 shows the innovative concept of a mixed development. So far the second type of house, the low-rise buildings in timber construction, remained unrealized. Our ‚Bauhaus bauen' project makes the forgotten original idea clear and comprehensible for the first time.

Schedule

Preparing Work
(Planning, building application,
Creation of prototypes) April - July 2019

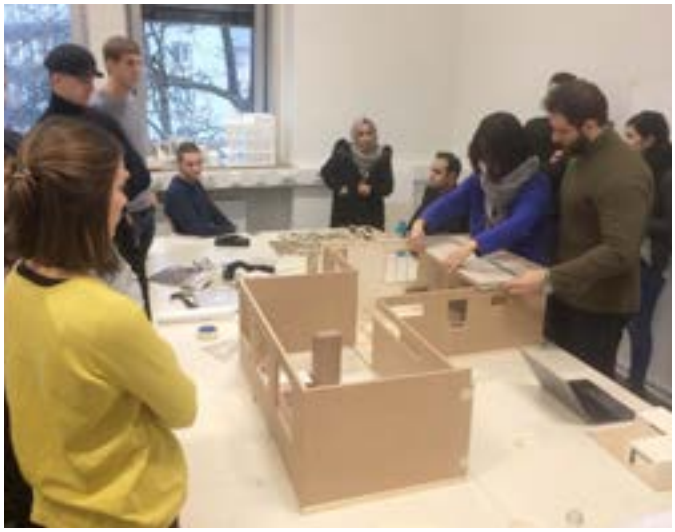
Creation of freedom of construction through
the owner (City of Dessau-Roßlau) June/ July 2019

Construction workshop under supervision
constructlab 21 July - 11 August 2019

Opening Ceremony Sunday, August 11th, 12 am

Takeover of the building by the Werkbund Sachsen-Anhalt
and use by various users
August 2019 until September 2020

Dismantling of the building and
Transfer to the new location October 2020



Students of the University of Kassel during the preliminary planning for the project in November 2018

At the citizens' meeting in Dessau Törten in November 2018, the project will be presented to the public for the first time and discussed with them.

Example of the ideas and input of the students of the neighbouring Walter Gropius Gymnasium (March 2019)

Finally we're off! With the demolition of an old shooting range in June 2019 freedom of construction will be established.

The growing house will be built on the urban property Mittelbreite 12, which is provided by Stadt-Dessau. This is located next to one of the deck-access-houses erected by the Bauhaus Dessau under the direction of Hannes Meyer in 1930, which have been UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 2017.

The building offers 85 sqm of usable space and basic equipment with toilet and kitchenette. It can be used flexibly.

Department of Architectural Theory and Design at the University of Kassel/ Prof. Philipp Oswalt

The work of Hannes Meyer (1889-1954) is a focal point of research in the field of the department. As the second Bauhaus director from 1928 to 1930, he reoriented the Bauhaus by seeking close cooperation with industry and establishing an architectural department. Hannes Meyer was looking for an architecture oriented towards social use. His directorate can be subsumed under the motto «People›s needs instead of luxury needs».
The deck-access houses in Dessau Törten are the most important building project realised by the architectural department of the historic Bauhaus. They manifest its concept of combining research-based teaching with practice, and of working on and implementing practical design tasks in class. The design/build project ‚The Growing House' emerged from the research project on the deck-access-houses in Dessau-Törten, which examines the planning, construction, use and conversion of the five buildings. In teaching, the department of Architectural Theory and Design at the University of Kassel regularly carries out design/build projects, most recently «Marshall 66/ Neues Museum Marl» as a conversion of a former school into an exhibition space as part of Skulpturen Projekt Münster 2017.

Marshall 66/ Marl 2017

Constructlab

Constructlab is a European platform for collaborative and experimental constructions and a community of designers. Constructlab creates both temporary and permanent projects. In contrast to the conventional architectural process, in which the architect creates designs and the craftsman carries them out, Constructlab projects bring conception and construction closer together. The designer helps to build, the design can be further developed on site. The construction site is no longer the place where design competes with reality, but the context in which the project can be enriched by the many good surprising possibilities that arise on site. With the building materials in the hands and the design and craftsmanship competence of the team, the design of the project can continue during construction. The focus is on low-tech. The focus is on construction methods that can be implemented with amateurs without specific technical skills or that can be repeated later without instruction. Temporary projects are planned in such a way that the materials used can be reused later.

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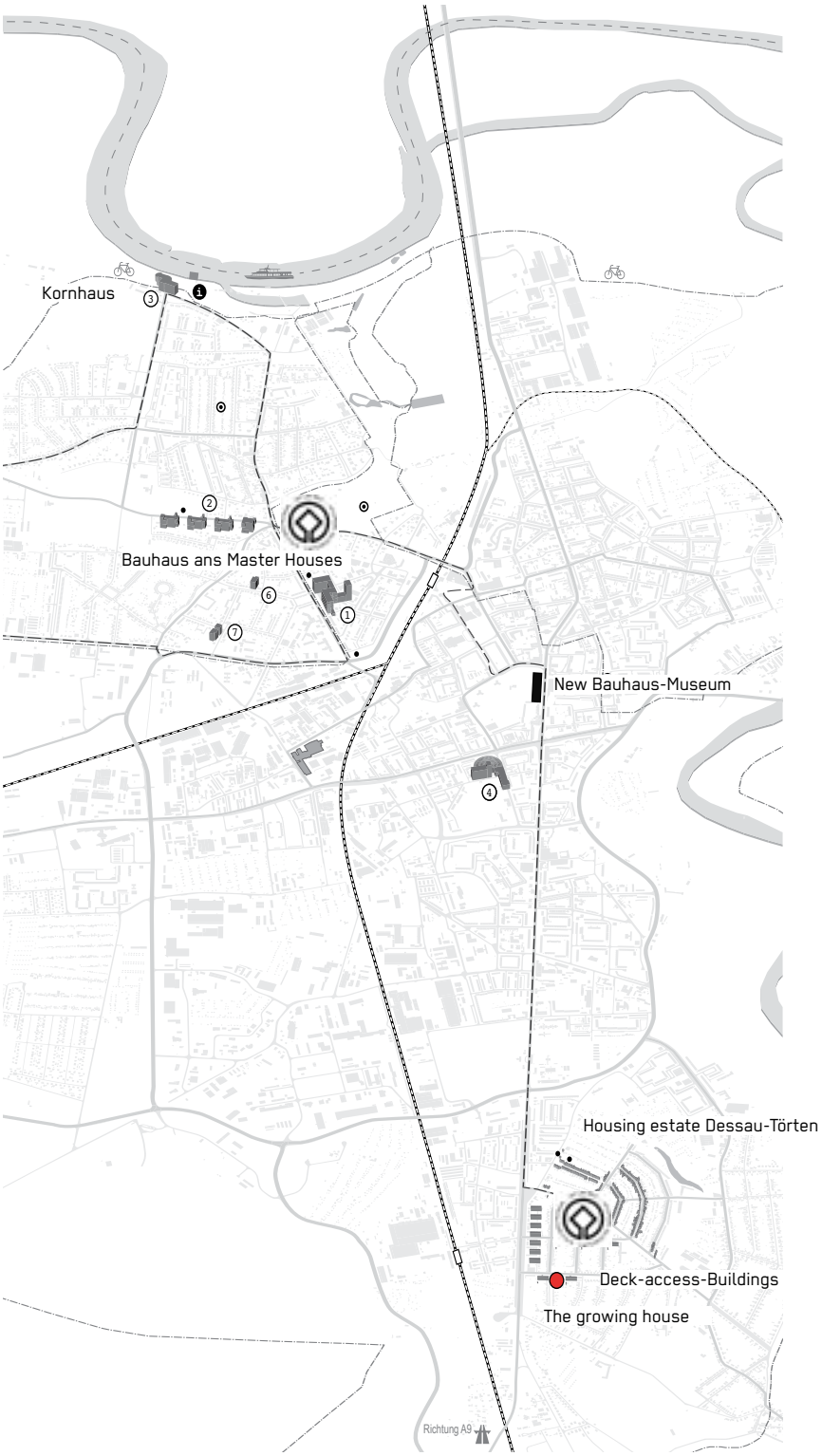

Das Projekt befindet ich in Dessau-Törten direkt an der UNESCO-Welterbestädte und ist mit der Straßenbahn und der Bauhausbuslinie direkt erreichbar, ob vom Bauhausmuseum im Stadtzentrum oder dem Bauhausgebäude.

UNIKASSEL
VERSITÄT

constructlab

Wilkhahn

Hochschule Anhalt
Anhalt University of Applied Sciences

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