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Vienna City Administration
Municipal Department 19 –
Architecture and Urban Design

Idea and concept development

Rudolf Zunke
(Chief Executive Office of the City of Vienna,
Executive Group for Construction
and Technology, Planning Group)
Michael Diem, Peter Scheuchel
(Municipal Department 19 –
Architecture and Urban Design)
Manfred Wehdorn, Jessica Wehdorn
(Wehdorn Architekten Ziviltechniker GmbH)

Project management

Wehdorn Architekten Ziviltechniker GmbH

Editing and texts

Jessica Wehdorn, Manfred Wehdorn,
Rudolf Zunke

Scientific research and map graphics

Ludwig Varga, Jessica Wehdorn
(Wehdorn Architekten Ziviltechniker GmbH)
Rudolf Zunke

**3D visualisations, visibility analyses,
photomontages**

Peter Ilias, Hubert Lehner, Gerhard Sonnberger
(Municipal Department 41 – Surveyors)

Technical co-ordination

Willibald Böck
(Municipal Department 18 –
Urban Development and Planning)
Margit Gerstl
(Chief Executive Office of the City of Vienna,
Executive Group for Construction
and Technology, Internal Services Division)

English translation, proofreading

Sigríd Szabó

Visual design

Schreiner, Kastler
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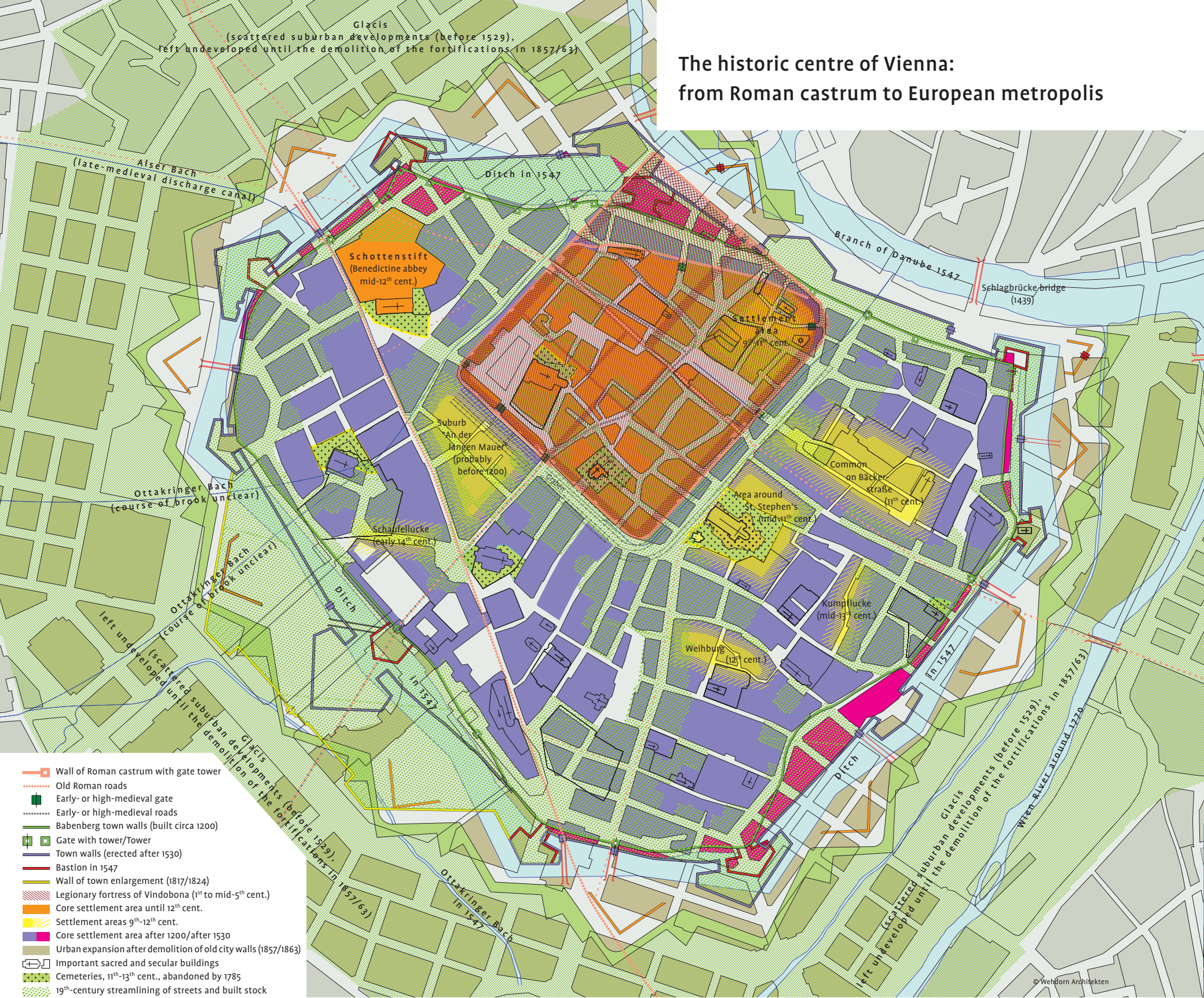
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The Historic Centre of Vienna World Cultural Heritage and Vibrant Hub

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St. Stephen's Square – changes over time



Monument protection and conservation at the international level are a task of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), which was established in 1945. In the context of its 17th General Conference held in Paris in 1972, UNESCO adopted the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage”: cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value is to be identified and preserved for humankind as a whole. This marked the beginning of the “UNESCO World Heritage List”.

The International Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage provides concerted, world-wide support for the monuments inscribed on the List. The Convention does not substitute measures taken by individual States Parties but is aimed at effectively supporting and complementing these measures.

The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is of special importance also because it constitutes the first international document to state that a natural heritage site can be assigned the same significance as a manmade one. As a consequence, the Convention distinguishes between “cultural heritage” and “natural heritage” and moreover provides for “mixed properties”, i.e. monuments with a particularly significant combination of cultural and natural features; furthermore, major prehistoric sites are listed under the portmanteau term “natural sites”. Since 1992, UNESCO has moreover been using the category of “cultural landscapes” as well.

981

World Heritage sites, total (as per May 2014)

759

Cultural Heritage sites

193

Natural Heritage sites

29

Mixed properties



Statements by political representatives

Vienna is characterised by the world's best quality of living as well as by gratifyingly dynamic urban growth that is matched by few other cities in Europe. In addition, the city's historic legacy fills us with great pride, and we certainly take our responsibility towards this cultural heritage very seriously. By the same token, however, our task to serve the needs of a cosmopolitan, prospering city is likewise part of our responsibility towards the people of Vienna. For this reason, historic cities are called upon to strike a balance between these two aspects. Safeguarding the future on a solid basis of responsibility towards the past is and remains a task of the present.

Michael Häupl
Mayor and Governor of Vienna

Walking through Vienna's historic centre, the 1st municipal district, also means experiencing history at close range. No other place in the city embodies the encounter of different eras in as impressive a manner. This heritage must be preserved while gently and skilfully combining it with new additions, as this is the only way to ensure that Vienna's historic centre will remain a place of vibrant, living history for future generations as well.

Maria Vassilakou
Deputy Mayor and Executive City Councillor for Urban Planning, Traffic & Transport, Climate Protection, Energy and Public Participation

Modern urban development in a historic environment does not signify stasis but rather calls for balance according to a principle formulated by Vittorio M. Lampugnani: "The idea must be strong enough to hold its own in the confrontation with the pre-existing urban fabric, yet modest enough to respect the extant building stock." The reference factor of this respect equals the scale of the historically evolved tissue.

Josef Ostermayer
Federal Minister for Art, Culture, Constitution and Public Service

"Vienna – a Cultural Heritage site: liveability across all architectural styles". The intact, historically evolved urban fabric of the city centre and its urban quality are special characteristics of Vienna that appeal to both residents and visitors. This appeal is backed up by longstanding commitment to the conservation of the architectural and cultural heritage – a commitment that is also ready to face the future challenges of a growing city.

Andreas Mailath-Pokorny
Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs and Science

Nomination criteria

Criteria for the inscription of Vienna on the World Heritage List of UNESCO

1

The urban and architectural qualities of the Historic Centre of Vienna bear outstanding witness to a continuing interchange of values throughout the second millennium.

2

Three key periods of European cultural and political development – the Middle Ages, the Baroque period, and the Gründerzeit – are exceptionally well illustrated by the urban and architectural heritage of the Historic Centre of Vienna.

3

Since the 16th century Vienna has been universally acknowledged to be the musical capital of Europe.

South-facing view of Vienna, 1649
Matthäus Merian

From: Topographia Provinciarum Austriacarum

“Historic Centre of Vienna”

Nominated in 2001, the historic centre of Vienna comprises the 1st municipal district “Innere Stadt” (Inner City) as well as the areas covered by Schwarzenberg Palace, Belvedere Palace and the Convent of the Salesian Sisters at Rennweg. It extends over a core zone of approx. 3.7 square kilometres with roughly 1,600 objects, and a buffer zone of approx. 4.6 square kilometres with close to 2,950 objects. In all, the surface of the World Heritage site and the number of its objects equal just under two percent of the municipal territory and, respectively, of the number of buildings in Vienna. The arguments for the inscription of Vienna on the World Heritage List emphasise the value of the “historically evolved” city with all its cultural facets. However, this recognition also implies that a city whose architecture has developed over more than a millennium must not be put under a bell jar, as it were, but has to evolve further in order to remain the vibrant centre of a prospering and prosperous city.

The inscription of the historic centre of Vienna on the World Heritage List in 2001 was a clear recognition of its Outstanding Universal Value and showed the commitment of the Austrian authorities to ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy this site. As a cradle of European culture and a city of world significance, Vienna has been a key partner of UNESCO in dealing with new challenges of urban conservation, notably high-rise buildings. Vienna’s coherent urban fabric and planning is both an advantage and a challenge as the city strives to maintain its functional, structural and visual identity.

Kishore Rao, Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Paris

The widespread public appreciation for cultural heritage has meant that in the political arena, the public has also appropriated it, demanding a voice in the socio-economic decision-making discussions on the use and treatment of heritage places. Furthermore the emergence and adoption of cultural landscapes as a heritage category fulfilled a long wish of the heritage community to envision our environment comprehensively as the dynamic setting where many inter-connected heritage elements exist, both tangible and intangible in nature. The issue of change as an integral part of the historic environment has forced a massive reassessment of the nature of heritage and the doctrine for its protection in order to understand the limits of change that a heritage place can undergo without losing its values, authenticity and significance.

Gustavo Araoz, President of ICOMOS, Paris





Top left:
The Battle of Vienna in 1683
Franz Geffels

Bottom left:
Panorama of Vienna, circa 1873
Gustav Veith

Illustrations: © Wien Museum

The historic centre of Vienna represents a unique urban monument of outstanding universal value from both the historical and the architectural points of view. The city's superlative historical value is manifested in the concept of the "capital and imperial residence of Vienna" as the political and intellectual hub of a multinational empire that played an essential role in shaping the history of Europe from the Middle Ages until the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1918.

To this day, the historical and cultural-historical importance of the city has found vivid reflection in the "urban monument" that is Vienna: Roman Vindobona can still be clearly identified in the urban fabric and can also be accessed in the form of several excavation sites. From the 12th century onward, the settlement was transformed into a ducal residence: the town was encircled by a new curtain wall that determined the spatial extension of Vienna for roughly 650 years. The line traced by this fortification, too, has remained imprinted on the urban layout and, in a few places, has in fact survived into the present. The political situation left its mark on the city's development after 1683, with the newly accentuated axes leading out to the suburbs and the palaces that were built there. The most important of these Baroque axes – encompassing the Belvedere and Schwarzenberg Palaces with their parks and gardens as well as the Church and Convent of the Salesian Sisters – forms part of the core zone of the World Heritage site. Officially initiated with an 1857 decree of Emperor Francis Joseph I, this Baroque concept was complemented and enhanced in the Gründerzeit by the contrasting urban development of the Ringstrasse with its elaborate and imposing public buildings.

Following the devastations of the Second World War, new urban zones emerged and continue to emerge north of Danube Canal and east of Wien River on towards the new Main Station, sometimes in close proximity of the historic centre.



Vienna is one of the world's most beautiful cities, and as such has been accorded the status of a World Heritage site. This distinction represents an invaluable asset in an economic as well as in a socio- and cultural-political context. The preservation and contemporary use of our cultural heritage, with due account taken of the needs of both modern municipal administration and rapid urban growth, constitutes a major twofold challenge that is met in exemplary fashion by the City of Vienna, on occasion with the support of the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments.

Friedrich Dahm, Provincial Curator for Vienna, Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments

The three main periods of the urban fabric:
Middle Ages, Baroque and Gründerzeit,
complemented by Early Modernism



Top left:
View of Graben
towards Kohlmarkt, 1781
Carl Schütz

Bottom left:
View from Glacis towards
the Church of St. Charles
Borromeo, Belvedere and
Schwarzenberg Palace, 1781
Johann Ziegler

This page, top:
Heiligenkreuzerhof
(basic structure dating from
Early Baroque), before 1900
Richard Moser

This page, bottom:
Burggarten with new
Palm House (est. 1906)
Erwin Pendl

All: © Wien Museum



This evolution over time is not only characteristic of the urban development of the historic centre of Vienna as a whole but is also typical of the individual buildings. At its core, the Inner City still contains the medieval building stock, although these structures were refurbished or given new façades in later periods, starting from the Baroque era, by members of the imperial court, the nobility and the bourgeoisie.

Considered the largest secular building in Europe at approx. 1.5 million cubic metres, the Hofburg ensemble mirrors the imperial approach to architecture in Vienna: the extensive general plans, concepts and programmes, drafted since Baroque times, were never completed in their entirety, whereas the actually built individual structures were realised in a more visually discreet style in terms of both scale and design. Respect for the existing original material may have contributed to the way in which Vienna's major squares and buildings were designed and extended throughout history, although the interventions conducted in the second half of the 19th century were indeed manifest and produced a new visual aspect of the city. From a contemporary standpoint, however, the impressive Ringstrasse buildings and sumptuous Gründerzeit palaces form an integral part of the historic face of Vienna. The major development phases – Middle Ages, Baroque and Gründerzeit – were in due course complemented by world-famous examples of Early Modernism, e.g. the Looshaus in Michaelerplatz or the Secession Building at the edge of Karlsplatz. In recent years, moreover, high-quality new structures have further consolidated Vienna's reputation as a city of architecture.

With its authenticity, this architectural heritage extending from the distant past to the very present embodies a cultural tradition of outstanding universal value that establishes Vienna's credentials as a city of art and culture.

Vienna has succeeded in counteracting the phenomenon of exclusive monopolisation of the historic centre for tourism purposes by promoting colourful urban life and the functions of work, housing and leisure activities. UNESCO anticipates this approach in its justification for Vienna's inscription on the World Heritage List by defining Vienna's historic centre an "outstanding witness to a continuing interchange of values throughout the second millennium". Middle Ages, Baroque and Gründerzeit have been cited as key eras of the past. They are to be complemented by the third millennium as an epoch of equally great import. For this reason, the World Heritage status imposes an obligation to pay sustained, intense attention to the changes of the city and above all to its vibrant core – the historic centre of Vienna.

Brigitte Jilka, Director General of Urban Planning, Development and Construction of the City of Vienna



Top left:
Festwochen inauguration
in City Hall Square/
Brein's Café & RSO Wien

Bottom left:
Edita Gruberova in the Golden
Hall of Wiener Musikverein

This page, top:
Acies Quartett at Youth Day/
MuseumsQuartier Wien

Photos: © Julia Wesely

Vienna was also inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List due to an intangible asset, i.e. its status as the musical capital of Europe.

Thus the historic centre of Vienna is directly and tangibly associated with musical works of outstanding universal significance. A particular asset of Vienna lies in the fact that many of the historic performance sites have not only been preserved to this day but still, albeit more or less intensively, serve their original purpose. This applies to the Hofburg Chapel as a central place of musical performance since the 16th century as well as to the development of Baroque music in the Redoutensäle Halls (although partly in a fundamentally modified setting).

This assertion is particularly true of the big 19th-century performance venues, of which only the Golden Hall of the Musikverein, erected from 1867 to 1870 based on plans by Theophil Hansen, will be mentioned here. This hall not only accommodates the world-famous New Year's Concerts but also to this day hosts the subscription concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. The Vienna State Opera, the Burgtheater and the Konzerthaus – all of which are located within the World Heritage site – further underline this “interdisciplinarity” between the history of music and architecture in Vienna, a nexus that ultimately is also embodied in the mostly still extant residences and workplaces of great composers such as Schubert, Mozart or Beethoven.

However, as with architecture, a vibrant city needs to carry its great musical tradition into the present by making it part and parcel of contemporary urban life – not only in the big opera houses but also on Vienna's squares and in its streets, jazz clubs and discotheques.



Over the next 15 to 20 years, Vienna's population will grow from currently approx. 1.7 million to roughly two million inhabitants. This constitutes an enormous challenge for Vienna's urban planners, as adequate housing, social and technical infrastructure must be created. At the same time, the vast interrelated green spaces of the city will remain off limits for construction activities. For this reason, densification will be a key issue for urban development in the coming years. However, this development does not contradict the World Heritage status of the historic centre of Vienna. In keeping with the Vienna Memorandum, new construction projects in the proximity of the World Heritage site will employ a sustainable scale and respect the historic environment with great sensitivity. The task of the hour lies in striking a balance between “conservation” and “development”.

Thomas Madreiter, Director of Urban Planning of the City of Vienna

The Historic Centre of Vienna:
UNESCO World Heritage site since 2001





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09 | Neutorgasse 4 office building

10 | k 47 office building

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11 | Twin City Liner ship station

→ p. 28.29

12 | RHW.2 Raiffeisen high-rise

13 | Design Tower

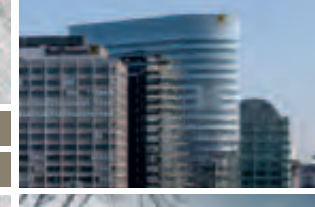
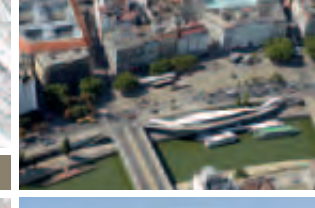
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14 | Eislaufverein

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15 | Vienna Main Station

→ p. 34.35



Kärntner Strasse/
Graben/Kohlmarkt
pedestrian zone

Upgrading public space within
the World Heritage area

Traditionally, Kärntner Strasse has always been one of the city's most prestigious streets. Already in the 19th century, the big stores of the Austro-Hungarian capital were domiciled here, especially after the street was widened in 1873.

In connection with the construction of the U1 Vienna Underground line, the first big pedestrian zone of Vienna was created here in 1974 on the basis of plans by the architectural team of Wilhelm Holzbauer together with the studio of Wolfgang and Traude Windbrechtiger. This zone originally comprised Kärntner Strasse and the adjoining sections of Graben. In 1988 and 1989, it was extended to the remainder of Graben as well as to Kohlmarkt, thereby creating the "Golden U", a nickname inspired by both the turnover of the many luxury shops located here and by the layout of the pedestrian zone.

After roughly three decades, the pavement of the pedestrian zone with all installation elements had surpassed its technical life cycle – the design had become obsolete. For this reason, the City of Vienna decided to refurbish the area in contemporary style. The work began with the near-total renewal of all installations; the structure of the street and its pavement were brought up to the state of the art, which allowed for a significant reduction of current maintenance costs. In addition to many other measures, the outside areas of sidewalk cafés as well as the kiosks were rearranged, new trees were planted, benches and other seats were put up, and lighting fixtures were specifically developed for this site.

To this day, the pedestrian zone is one of Vienna's streets with the highest turnover in terms of both shoppers and sales volume, and it is hard to imagine today that Kärntner Strasse used to be a four-lane street packed with moving and parking cars. → p. 50-51



Clients
City of Vienna, MA 28, MA 19
Architect
KIRSCH ZT GmbH
Construction period
2007–2009

Photos: © KIRSCH ZT GmbH



"My Vienna" deals sensitively with uniqueness, with "my" place of identification – a sense of quality and respect for the historic building stock merge with the very highest standards regarding contemporary urban design and architectural solutions. The value of the legacy of the past is placed above investors' financial interests; public space is protected against sell-out. My career has led me to live in various metropolises, all of which had beautiful things to offer, yet none of them has been able to match the incomparable quality of living in my home-city, Vienna!

Ambassador (ret.) Eva Nowotny, President of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO

According to architectural expert Spiro Kostof, the truth of a city lies in its change. While approaching the heritage of Vienna's past with the utmost sensitivity, we should yet always be mindful of this insight inspired by urban history.

Bernhard Denscher, Head of Municipal Department 7 (MA 7) of the City of Vienna – Cultural Affairs

Winter Palace of Prince Eugene of Savoy

The Ministry of Finance and contemporary art in a Baroque palace

The former Winter Palace of Prince Eugene of Savoy is one of the most notable Baroque buildings in the historic centre of Vienna. Its first construction phase from 1695 to 1697 followed plans by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, although its further genesis was likewise linked to the names of renowned architects, such as Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt and Nicolaus Pacassi. In 1752, the palace was acquired by Empress Maria Theresa and soon used for the Court Chamber and, from 1848 to this day, has been serving as the Ministry of Finance.

In the course of the recent refurbishment, the office premises were one the one hand brought up to contemporary standards; on the other hand, the state rooms were rendered accessible to the public at large. The exhibitions at the Winter Palace are curated by Österreichische Galerie Belvedere and focus on the dialogue between cultural heritage and contemporary art. Thus the state rooms in Himmelpfortgasse have become a place of artistic encounter between Baroque décor, the Belvedere collections and contemporary art.

Himmelpfortgasse 8
1010 Vienna
Client
Federal Ministry of Economy, Family
and Youth
Architect
Architekt Strixner ZT GmbH
Construction period
2007–2013

Photo: © S. Schreiner

Liechtenstein City Palace

Special mention at the Europa Nostra Awards for the sustainable refurbishment of a Baroque palace

The overall rehabilitation of the Liechtenstein City Palace is of particular importance for Vienna not only for cultural-political reasons. Rather, it is the biggest successfully completed restoration venture conducted according to scientific-conservational principles in the Austrian capital and has thus set new standards in monument conservation.

From the art-historical viewpoint, the Liechtenstein City Palace constitutes the very first embodiment of High Baroque architecture in Vienna; it was constructed from 1691 to 1705 based on plans by the architects Enrico Zucalli and Domenico Martinelli. The interiors were redesigned between 1836 and 1847 and represent a prime example of Rococo Revival in Vienna. Today the building serves multiple purposes and harbours premises for events and museum exhibitions as well as an in-house bank.

The restoration opted for the reuse of historic materials and employed historic construction techniques without contradicting contemporary technical and design principles, thus e. g. also fulfilling the requirements of modern green buildings.

Bankgasse 9
1010 Vienna
Client
Stiftung Fürst Liechtenstein
(property management division)
Architect
Wehdorn Architekten ZT GmbH
Construction period
2007–2013

Photo: © Peter Kubelka,
The Princely Collections



Hotel Topazz

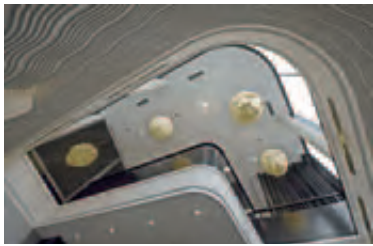
Innovative architecture in the city centre: a symbiosis of low-energy standards and high-level design

Hotel TOPAZZ rises in a small former gap in the urban fabric of Vienna's historic centre. The project aimed at blending the historically evolved urban space with pioneering design and eco-compatible, sustainable architecture. The corner position of the building is accentuated on the one hand by its height and on the other hand by its façade design, which presents a staggered sequence of oval windows. Hotel TOPAZZ is the successful example of a low-energy house with minimal heating and cooling requirements. The reduction of CO₂ emissions as compared to conventional buildings roughly equals 45 percent. Obviously, only environmentally friendly materials were used for the hotel's exterior and interior design. The latter should be understood as an homage to artists like Koloman Moser and Dagobert Peche, leading lights of the legendary Wiener Werkstätte.

Lichtensteg 3/Kramergasse
1010 Vienna

Client
Lenikus GmbH
Architect
BWM Architekten
Construction period
2010–2012

Photos: Anna BlaU © Lenikus
Hotel- und Gastronomie GmbH



P&C Weltstadthaus

A legacy reinterpreted: contemporary architecture and Viennese department store traditions

The P&C Weltstadthaus in Kärntner Strasse designed according to plans by David Chipperfield Architects was erected on a lot formerly occupied by a block of buildings that was largely rebuilt after burning down during the Second World War and on which numerous refurbishments had conferred a very heterogeneous appearance. Only the corner building with Himmelfortgasse has maintained its original, early 20th-century look; it is under monument protection and was integrated into the new edifice.

The new structure on the one hand reflects the typology of 19th-century department stores and on the other hand deploys its own, unique identity as a modern clothing outlet, thereby acting as a mediator between tradition, historic building stock and a contemporary architectural vocabulary.

A key aspect of the design concerned the façade, which is structured by 85 window apertures. The defining material used is light-coloured Danube limestone, which was applied in solid slabs. The light natural stone masonry endows the building with special visibility within the historic streetscape of Kärntner Strasse.

Kärntner Strasse 29–31
1010 Vienna
Client
Peek & Cloppenburg KG
Architect
David Chipperfield Architects
Construction period
2009–2011

Photo: © S. Schreiner

I like to walk through Vienna and never fail to enjoy the historic buildings, clean streets and friendly people. This is my Vienna – no matter whether it's a World Heritage site or not.

Ewald Nowotny, Governor of the Austrian National Bank



Museums Quartier Wien

Modern art in a Baroque setting:
the former imperial stables
become an art and lifestyle hub



Museumsplatz 1
1070 Vienna
Client
MuseumsQuartier Errichtungs-
und Betriebsgesellschaft m.b.H.
Architects
ARGE Architekten
(Laurids Ortner, Manfred Ortner,
Manfred Wehdorn)
Construction period
1998–2001

Photos:
Left: © MA18
Bottom page: © Hertha Hurnaus

At the heart of Vienna, in the immediate vicinity of Kunsthistorisches Museum and Naturhistorisches Museum, the area once occupied by the Baroque imperial stables was converted from 1998 to 2001 into what is today known as MuseumsQuartier Wien. With 90,000 square metres surface and around 60 cultural institutions, MuseumsQuartier Wien is not only one of the world's biggest centres of art and culture but, with its multifaceted combination of cultural facilities, spacious zones for leisure and rest, interior courtyards, cafés and shops, also provides an oasis of culture and relaxation at the core of the metropolis. Historic buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries blend with contemporary museum architecture to create a unique architectural ensemble.

MuseumsQuartier Wien is a place of great diversity that showcases a wealth of different artistic movements and styles ranging from digital culture, design and fashion or media, concept and sound art to game culture, street art, photography and literature. In addition to the exhibitions and programmes offered by the on-site cultural institutions, numerous cultural events – dance performances, exhibition projects, film festivals, literature readings or DJ line-ups – take place in the MuseumsQuartier courtyards. This combination of lifestyle and art has made MuseumsQuartier Wien a popular venue for both locals and tourists from all over the world, attracting a total of approx. 4 million visitors per year.

At the moment, it is planned to erect a glass superstructure on the roof of the Leopold Museum. Commonly referred to as “Dragonfly”, it will be based on plans by the architect Laurids Ortner, with co-operation by the artists Brigitte Kowanz and Eva Schlegel. Construction work is scheduled to begin in 2015.



The historic centre of Vienna may be understood as an architectural and urbanistic mirror image of European history: the different eras of the continent's past can be impressively “read” in Vienna's cityscape. We Viennese may be proud of this fact, and it is an even greater responsibility to preserve the old centre of the city in all its authenticity for future generations. At the same time, Vienna is developing rapidly, and thus the present age, too, will leave its imprint on the face of the metropolis. These additions and adaptations of the urban fabric in the condensed core city must react sensitively to social and economic requirements. I am convinced that a metropolis like Vienna can only evolve at a high level of quality if its architectural legacy and urban development over time are viewed and respected as an integral part of the city's identity.

Rudolf Zunke, World Heritage Co-ordinator of the City of Vienna

Rathausstrasse 1

New buildings in the World Heritage core zone respect the historic environment

An edifice constructed relatively recently – in 1980 – as a municipal office building for the City of Vienna is situated in the very prominent location Rathausstrasse 1 directly on Auerspergstrasse. Typically for its construction period, this is a “glass palace” that after close to 35 years can no longer meet the ecological or functional demands of the present.

For this reason, the City of Vienna decided to replace this technically obsolete building with a new, modern and generously structured office and commercial edifice. On the basis of a two-tier, EU-wide architectural competition, a first draft was developed and has been available since late 2013; the equally international jury appointed for the competition has lauded this design as the “most placid and logical complement to the district around Vienna City Hall”. By reflecting the building heights and horizontal façade structuring of the adjoining edifices, the project integrates well into the historic setting while at the same time embodying a clearly contemporary position. Traffic calming for Rathausstrasse is maintained; the area will become more attractive for the public due to appropriate open and green space design.

In the course of project development, it was made sure that the view from Josefstädter Strasse towards the southern tower of St. Stephen’s Cathedral will not be blocked by the planned new building.

Rathausstrasse 1
1010 Vienna
Client
Rathausstraße 1 Entwicklung GmbH
Architects
Stadler Prenn Architekten GbR,
Schuberth & Schuberth ZT-KG,
Ostertag Architects
Planungszeit
2013–2014

Visualisation:
© Schuberth und Schuberth



Headquarters of OPEC

Vienna – a World Heritage site as the seat of international organisations

Before the construction of the new building, the site currently occupied by the headquarters of OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) in Vienna featured a residential and office block that was erected between 1914 and 1916 as a speculative business venture but heavily hit during the Second World War. After its reconstruction accompanied by the near-total replacement of the historic material with new additions, the remaining links with the surrounding old cityscape was tenuous at most.

By way of contrast, the newly erected OPEC headquarters with its characteristic façade marked by irregular windows of different widths provides a striking counterpoint to the two buildings across the road – the Vienna Stock Exchange and the former Imperial and Royal Telegraph Office. The new building boasts maximum energy efficiency; its layout convinces with high flexibility. In addition to office space for OPEC, the structure offers a big meeting hall for ministerial conferences and a TV studio for the international broadcasts of sessions and press conferences.

Wipplingerstrasse 33
1010 Vienna
Clients
EuroPRISA Holding GmbH & Co
Haus 33 KG
Architect
Atelier Hayde
Construction period
2007–2009

Photo: © Atelier Hayde



Neutorgasse 4

Balanced dimensions blend with a 21st-century architectural vocabulary

The new office, residential and commercial building in Neutorgasse replaces three former Gründerzeit houses that, utterly devastated by wartime damage, were reconstructed immediately after the end of the Second World War. Two of these houses were duly demolished, while the street-side wing of the third edifice in Neutorgasse – which had at least conserved its historic façade – was integrated into the new project.

The urban scale of Vienna's Gründerzeit neighbourhoods was adopted by the new project as well; from outside, the structure of the formerly three separate plots was maintained despite the homogeneous design – an approach supported by the creation of a “courtyard” facing Neutorgasse. However, the most defining trait of the project is its façade, which is characterised by a sunscreen with rotary-and-sliding slats done in polyspectrally coated, expanded reinforced steel. The slats can be opened and closed individually, which over the course of a day results in an interplay between the translucent sunscreen and the yellow colouring of the main façade. While essentially permeable to light, the newly erected cube and its suncreen elements add vibrancy to the streetscape by glittering in the sun during daytime and shimmering like a crystal at night.

Neutorgasse 4–8
1010 Vienna
Client
Immorent AG
Architect
RATAPLAN-Architektur ZT GmbH
Construction period
2005–2010

Photo: Werner Huthmacher, © Bene AG



k 47

Contemporary architecture within the World Heritage zone – a contradiction?

k 47 – an office and commercial building – substituted an early 20th-century reinforced concrete edifice that had to be torn down for structural reasons.

The height and volume of the new seven-storey block pick up the scale of the surrounding edifices. Set off from the main structure, the glass skybox seems to float, thus creating a striking element within the urban fabric and moreover offering an impressive panoramic view of Vienna's roofscape. Seen from the street, the building is perceived as a semitransparent cube. Both the spatial atmosphere on the inside and the external appearance of the project are significantly influenced by the storey-high, vertical sunscreen slats done in satin white glass, which enhance the façade as a second layer.

The design of the k 47 building reacts very specifically to this particular site. By playing with solidness and virtuality, form and volume, the concept devised for the edifice attempts to meet the demands both of a modern office block and of the historic context.

Franz-Josefs-Kai 47
1010 Vienna
Client
Zürich Kosmos Versicherungs AG
Architect
Henke und Schrieck Architekten
Construction period
2002–2003

Photo: © Margherita Spiluttini



Twin City Liner ship station

Vienna moves closer to the Danube:
travelling from Vienna to Bratislava
by hydrofoil



Franz-Josefs-Kai 2
1010 Vienna
Client
Wiener Donauraum Länden
und Ufer Betriebs-und
Entwicklungs Gmbh
Architect
Fasch & Fuchs
Construction period
2009–2010

Aerial view: © MA 18
Bottom page: © Margherita Spiluttini

In 2005, Danube Canal was defined a target area of urban development in Vienna and designated a space with special potential for leisure and relaxation in an urban context. Well-aimed measures were to bring about its revival. With a length of approx. 17,3 kilometres, this waterway also “links” Vienna to the Danube proper. Since then, the Twin City Liner – a light high-speed aluminium catamaran with jet propulsion – has become an important means of passenger transport. In only 75 minutes and up to ten times per day, it takes its passengers from the centre of Vienna to the centre of Bratislava.

In keeping with the key role of this intercity link, an international architectural competition was organised for the construction of a bespoke ship station with signal effect on Danube Canal. The spatial programme comprises a boarding zone with ticket booths, exhibition and event areas, a café and a restaurant. The long and slender volume of the ship station self-confidently spans the zone adjacent to the pier, mirroring Danube Canal with its elongated design, and additionally creates a spacious, protected waiting zone directly in front of the boarding stage. The terraces, which form an integral part of the design and are mainly used by the café, offer a panoramic view of the waterway, with the Vienna Woods in the background.



Declaring the very heart of a dynamic metropolis a World Heritage site requires courage, skill and probably also a bit of audacity. After all, seemingly irreconcilable differences must be harmonised: being a World Heritage site fundamentally means to preserve the historic building stock. This is countervailed by an enormous pressure for change. The city centre of Vienna houses the most important administrative institutions of Austria, which call for ongoing modernisation; moreover, attractive residential options for wealthy investors are to be created while also meeting the need for modern hotel and shopping facilities to satisfy an increasingly demanding international tourist population. So far, Vienna has coped with this tight-rope walk very successfully. I can only wish the city the best of luck for the future as well!

Barbara Neubauer, President of the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments

Ultimately, Vienna is what it is – a World Heritage site of global significance – precisely because it has always been subject to constant change. This change is visibly reflected in the look and feel of the city. After all, what is old and worthy of preservation today was brand new sometime in the past.

Walter Krauss, Head of Municipal Department 21 (MA 21) of the City of Vienna – District Planning and Land Use

Design Tower

Vienna is evolving: pioneering architecture at the periphery of the World Heritage site

The Design Tower was erected in a strategically significant location at a point of transition from the old city to the 2nd municipal district Leopoldstadt. It is the outcome of an international competition won by the entry of the French architect Jean Nouvel. Situated across Danube Canal, the building with its striking 75-metre tower reflects the lines of its “opposite number”, Hans Hollein’s Media Tower, and in this way creates a gateway to Taborstrasse. Depending on the cardinal direction, the glass façade features different colours and shapes, causing the “skin” of the building to change over the course of a day. On the inside, the light ceilings by the Swiss artist Pipilotti Rist generate unusual visual accents.

Apart from its urban effect, this multifunctional building, which inter alia houses a hotel, a restaurant with panoramic views and a major design centre, has already today become one of the key magnets for lovers of contemporary Viennese architecture.

Praterstrasse 1
1020 Vienna
Client
UNIQA Versicherungs-Gruppe
Architect
Jean Nouvel Ateliers
Construction period
2010–2012

Photos: AnnA BlaU, © stilwerk Wien



RHW.2 Raiffeisen high-rise

An eco-friendly building on Danube Canal right across the World Heritage site

Since 2012, the first passive office tower worldwide with a height of 78 metres has been leaving its impact on the skyline along the bank of Danube Canal in the 2nd municipal district Leopoldstadt. Conceived and implemented as an addition to Raiffeisenhaus Wien, this new office building of Raiffeisen-Holding NÖ-Wien consumes only half of the energy required by conventionally designed office high-rises. This is achieved through the optimised utilisation of local resources – sun, water, earth, air – as well as by means of energy-conscious construction technologies and the application of modern materials. A biogas-powered cogeneration plant produces most of the energy needed for heating and cooling the building. The passive house standard was above all attained through radically improved energy efficiency of the climate control façade as well as of all building component connections and in-house utilities, even including coffee machines.

The architecture of the tower was specifically designed with its harmonious integration into the cityscape in mind. In this way, the gap between Raiffeisenhaus Wien and the IBM headquarters was closed while at the same time setting an urban accent right across from the historic city centre.

Obere Donaustrasse 83–89
1020 Vienna
Client
Raiffeisen Wien GesbR
Architects
Atelier Hayde Architekten,
Architekt Maurer, AW Architekten
Construction period
2010–2013

Fotos: © Manfred Burger



Area of Hotel Inter-Continental Vienna/
Wiener Eislaufverein/
Wiener Konzerthaus

Historic centre protection and urban
development at the periphery of the
World Heritage zone: an example
of an innovative planning procedure

Perhaps more than any other part of the former Glacis, the area made up of the Konzerthaus (built in 1913), the Wiener Eislaufverein ice-rink (located here since 1899) and the Vienna InterContinental Hotel (built in 1964) bears witness to Vienna's 20th-century history. The current urban situation of the site is rather unattractive; the entire block creates a barrier within the urban fabric.



Client
Wertinvest
Planner
Architekt Isay Weinfeld, Sao Paolo
Project duration
2013–14

Aerial view: © MA18
Visualisation bottom page:
© Wertinvest

Any plans conceived for this area of transition between the core and buffer zones of the World Heritage site “Historic Centre of Vienna” will inevitably affect the future of the city. For this reason, an innovative co-operative expert procedure was conducted to first lay an urban planning basis for the redesign of the area; guidelines were duly formulated and then adopted by Vienna's Commission for Urban Development. An international architectural and open space design competition resulted in the victory of an entry submitted by the Brazilian architect Isay Weinfeld. This design respects the historic environment, rids the shield-like hotel architecture from the disruptive annexe – hence providing an instance of what may be termed “urban repair” – and further evolves a modern urban planning approach. In this way, it realises the potential of the site – in particular for conference purposes, an aspect of great importance for Vienna as a congress metropolis – and creates a generous, attractive location that entails new opportunities for the hotel, for (winter) sports, but also for activities of the Konzerthaus. In addition, a square with high atmospheric quality is created as well. A “point-shaped” new building corresponding with the hotel presents a height of approx. 73 metres and thus complies with the requirements of the urban planning experts as well as with the scale of comparable high-rises erected in the areas north of Danube Canal and east of Wien River, all of which were affected by heavy war damage.



Vienna's historic centre was inscribed on the World Heritage List due to the particular contemporary visibility of the city's development over the centuries. For the future, this means that we must not “time-freeze” Vienna in 2001 but rather need to evolve its historic centre conscientiously, yet by employing a contemporary formal language.

Franz Kobermaier, Head of Municipal Department 19 (MA 19) of the City of Vienna –
Architecture and Urban Design

Being a World Heritage site means assuming responsibility: responsibility for the historic heritage – but also for future-oriented urban design.

Architect Manfred Wehdon

Vienna Main Station

A main station and a new urban quarter for a growing city: compatibility with the World Heritage status is a prerequisite



Client
ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG
Architects
ARGE "Wiener Team"
(Werner Consult/
ISP/STOIK/TECTON/PISTECKY)
together with the
architectural team
Hotz-Hoffmann/Wimmer
Construction period
2010–2020

Aerial view: © MA 18
Bottom page: Roman Bönsch, © ÖBB

The overall project "Vienna Main Station" is the most important current infrastructure venture on behalf of the city and its people. It is evolving on a total surface of 109 hectares and hence corresponds to the area covered by the entire 8th municipal district of Vienna. At a linear distance of only 2.5 kilometres from St. Stephen's Square, this area will be home to a new urban quarter with a centre – the train station – that is characterised by optimum transport links and high quality of housing and living.

The new Main Station, which will link and unify train traffic from all directions, is conceived as a through station with twelve tracks and ten platforms. With the creation of highly efficient north/south and east/west links, the station will serve as the prime hub for regional, national and international tourist and business travel and as a central node of the Trans-European rail network.

The station building with a 20,000-square metre shopping mall and over 90 shops will be inaugurated in autumn 2014. In December 2015, the entire railway infrastructure project will be completed and hence ready to take up its function in international train travel. The new urban quarter around the station – comprising 5,000 flats, offices, a school campus and a seven-hectare park as well as offering workplaces and dwellings for approx. 30,000 persons – will be completed in 2020.

From the very first planning steps, the overall project was agreed with UNESCO regarding the World Heritage site and the sightlines to nearby Belvedere Palace. → p. 44-45



Cities stand for change, diversification, development. Especially during a dynamic growth phase such as the one currently experienced by the Austrian capital, a central challenge of urban planning lies in creating a basis for the high-quality, innovative evolution of Vienna while taking full account of its historic heritage.

Andreas Trisko, Head of Municipal Department 18 (MA 18) of the City of Vienna – Urban Development and Planning

The historic centre of Vienna was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001. What has changed since then? In keeping with the intentions of the World Heritage Convention, development in World Heritage cities should proceed in combination with the respectful preservation of the historic built stock, its authenticity and integrity. Has this truly been the case? Rather, a series of interventions by ICOMOS/ UNESCO necessitated by high-profile incidents underscores the need to rethink past approaches with the aim of modifying the course set.

Wilfried Lipp, President of ICOMOS Austria



Protection of the World Heritage

Strategies, instruments and monitoring

World Heritage protection and urban development are not mutually exclusive

Over the next 15 to 20 years, Vienna will be continuing to grow from currently approx. 1.7 million to roughly two million inhabitants and hence may be called a dynamically and swiftly growing city. This raises the challenge of reconciling modern forms of urban development with the protection of the World Heritage site.

Ongoing discussions at the international level show that modern urban development and World Heritage status are not mutually exclusive. The Vienna Memorandum, a pioneering UNESCO document of 2005, recognised in fact that lively cities such as the Austrian capital should not become museums, and that urban development certainly has to take account of the requirements of a modern city.

In this context, the questions of the scale and dimensions of new structures play an important role that must be considered, as the prime goal is to avoid damage to the authenticity of any World Heritage site. A contemporary architectural vocabulary definitely does not contradict the World Heritage status, since any era demands its own architectural language, as the Vienna Memorandum indicates.

The management plan for the UNESCO World Heritage site: strategies, instruments and actors

UNESCO demands a management plan for every World Heritage site. This management plan must describe the strategies, instruments and actors that contribute to protecting the uniqueness of the World Heritage and preserving it for future generations.

For several decades already, Vienna has been striving to protect its historic building stock; even before the nomination of Vienna's historic centre for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List, binding rules had been set up to regulate the interaction of town conservation and urban development.

Since these strategies and measures have proven successful on an international scale as well, they constitute the essential thematic and organisational cornerstones of the management plan. The following section provides an overview of the key strategies and measures aimed at protecting the historic centre of Vienna as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Protection zones and monument protection: protection instruments for Vienna's historic city

From the legal viewpoint, the World Heritage site “Historic Centre of Vienna” is subject to twofold protection – in its entirety, it is safeguarded by protection zones (as part of the Building Code for Vienna, i.e. on the basis of provincial legislation), and with regard to its most important buildings, it comes under monument protection (which is a federal task in Austria).

Through the Amended Law on Old Town Conservation adopted in 1972, the City of Vienna may define protection zones independently of monument conservation regulations and hence can save characteristic ensembles from demolition or deformation. Protection zones, which are shown in the Land Use and Development Plan, are those areas where the conservation of the characteristic cityscape must be safeguarded. This protection refers primarily to the external appearance of a structure. When erecting a new building inside a protection zone, it must be ensured that it will be well integrated into the surroundings and overall cityscape.

At the moment, roughly 780 objects in the World Heritage core zone, i.e. close to 50 percent of its built stock, are under monument protection. Since an amendment to the Monument Protection Act was passed in 2000, it is also possible to extend state protection to parks and gardens. In the historic centre of Vienna, the gardens of the Hofburg complex (Volksgarten, Heldenplatz, Burggarten, Maria-Theresien-Platz and Stadtpark) were accordingly placed under protection as well.

Land Use and Development Plan: land use restrictions imposed by the World Heritage status

The Land Use and Development Plan for Vienna serves as the basis for all construction-related decisions. Any modifications of this plan must be adopted politically by the Vienna City Council as the legislative body of the City of Vienna. Within the historic core area of Vienna, the conservation of the historic building stock is principally assumed as a given. In addition, the plan now contains additional, stricter provisions that were introduced on recommendations of UNESCO with the objective of preserving the architectural heritage, i.e.:

- | development regulations in keeping with the existing building stock
- | limitation of roof storey add-ons at a maximum of 5.50 metres above the existing eaves line and addition of not more than one roof storey at most
- | prohibition of staggered storeys
- | various regulations for building design, e.g. with regard to bays, balconies, etc.

Moreover, the law stipulates that the Land Use and Development Plan for the City of Vienna must, like all construction projects of significance for the city, be evaluated by the Advisory Board for Urban Planning and Design. The members of the Advisory Board serve on a voluntary basis and are not subject to political instruction of any kind.

Old City Preservation Fund: the City of Vienna earmarks funds for the historic building stock

The Vienna Old City Preservation Fund provides public monies for the conservation and restoration of the historic building stock of Vienna.

One focus lies on the promotion of measures affecting the cityscape of protection zones. Efforts to improve or restore outstanding individual objects are subsidised, as is the safeguarding of buildings that are typical of their era and form an essential element of the historically evolved city. The additional costs arising from monument protection are eligible for funding.

“Wien Kulturgut”: real-time access to culture-relevant data

“Wien Kulturgut” is the name of the digital cultural map of Vienna, which permits access to key traits of the city's identity: extensive cartographic material spotlights the cultural-historical and urban development of Vienna from the origins to the present. Thus “Wien Kulturgut” e.g. comprises a digital, detailed age-of-building survey map of Vienna's historic centre.

Users can access these thematic areas via www.wien.gv.at/kulturportal/public by drawing on an electronic multi-purpose map (city map) and a geographic information system. After all, only solid knowledge about the values embodied by the cultural heritage will enhance understanding of this legacy.

Vienna High-rise Concept: exclusion zones and potential high-rise locations

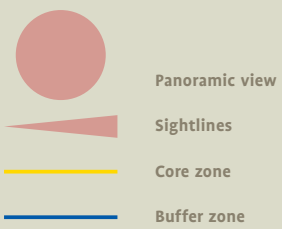
The document “Urbanistic Guidelines – High-rise Buildings in Vienna” from 2002 is the city's most relevant instrument regarding the planning and project development for high-rise edifices.

Since the High-rise Concept is no longer up to current challenges and also as a result of the June 2013 decision of the World Heritage Committee, the City of Vienna decided to revise the existing concept.

Glacis Master Plan for the periphery of the World Heritage site

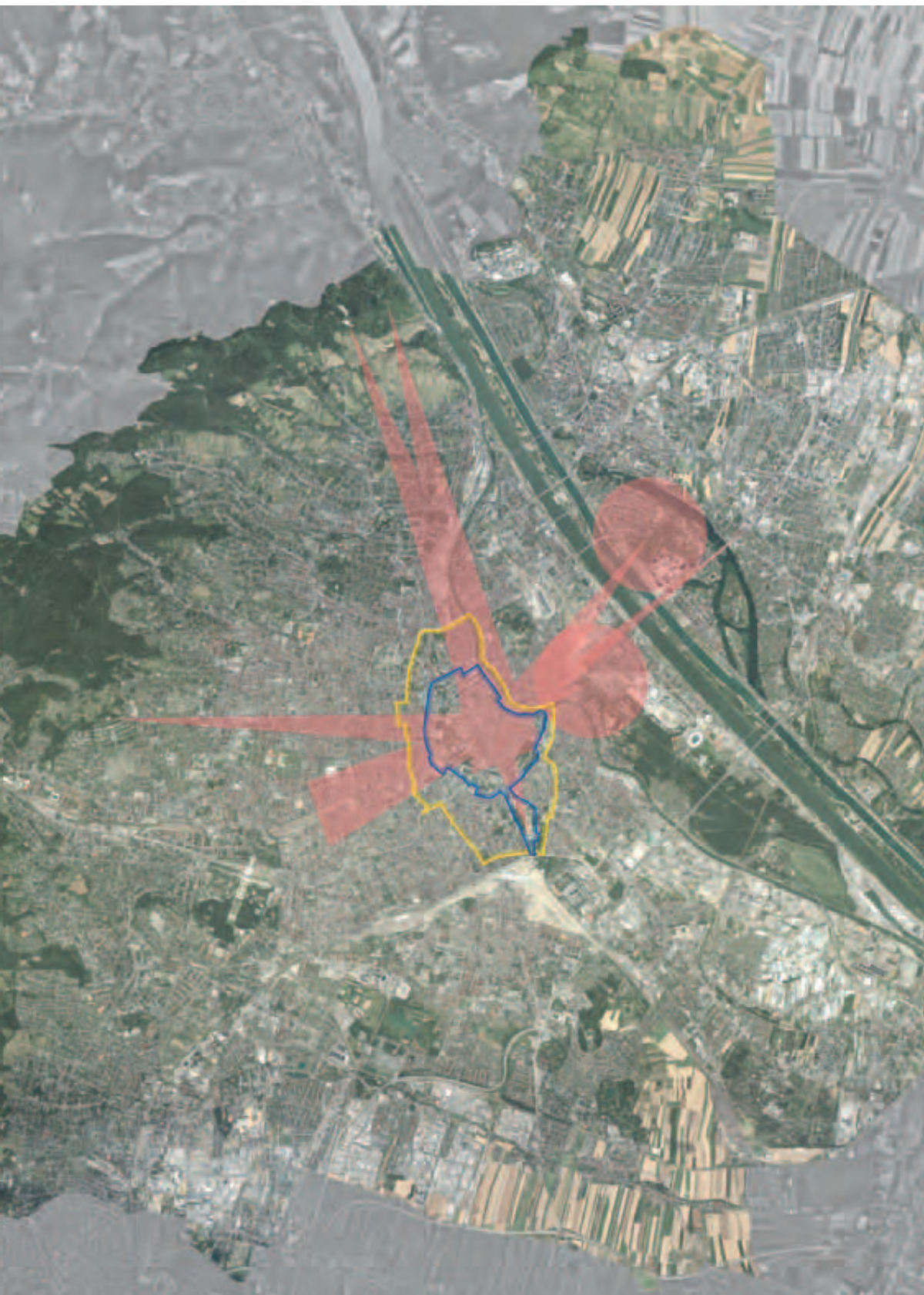
A Glacis Master Plan is being developed on an initiative of the City of Vienna. Until around the middle of the 19th century, the Glacis was an expanse of land situated at the periphery of the modern-day core zone of the World Heritage site “Historic Centre of Vienna”. This area encircled the then city walls of Vienna (whose contours roughly correspond to today's Ringstrasse) and was left undeveloped and vacant for military and strategic reasons. In the course of the slighting of the city walls and the massive urban expansion push in the second half of the 19th century, the Glacis was mostly built up.

It is planned to compile a comprehensive study on the conceivable urban development potentials and restrictions relating to this area situated at the periphery of the historic core city. At a strategic level, this is to respond on the one hand to the fact that this area still harbours a few inner-city areas suitable for new construction or refurbishment projects; on the other hand, the obligations arising from the World Heritage status are to be met as well.



High-rise Concept:
protection of
important visual axes
(exemplary illustration)

Map graphics: © MA 41



Visual impact assessments for Vienna as an outcome of a recommendation by UNESCO

The City of Vienna is fully aware of its responsibility for the two World Heritage sites on its municipal territory and takes all measures open to it in order to safeguard the compatibility of urban planning activities with the World Heritage status.

For example, it was demanded at the 33rd Session of the UNESCO Committee held in Seville in June 2009 as well as at the 34th Session held in Brasilia in June 2010 that a comprehensive visual impact assessment be conducted for Vienna's two World Heritage sites "Historic Centre" and "Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn". This was motivated by the planned projects "Vienna Main Station" and "Kometgründe Office Project" as well as by the urban development along Danube Canal.

Kunibert Wachten and Michael Kloos (RWTH Aachen University, Germany) monitored the compilation of the assessments as independent experts. In their summary evaluation, neither specialist detected any negative effects on the outstanding universal value (OUV), authenticity and integrity of the two World Heritage sites.

Regarding their technical-scientific implementation, the assessments were moreover monitored by Municipal Department 41 of the City of Vienna (MA 41) – Surveyors. They rest on a solid scientific basis and provide an objectively verifiable overview of the effects of these urban developments on the outstanding universal value of the two World Heritage sites "Historic Centre of Vienna" and "Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn".

Technically, the visualisations are derived from the capturing of the entire municipal territory by means of airborne laser scanning. As a first step, this form of surveying permits the compilation of a comprehensive visibility analysis in whose context the respective city map excerpts show the planar layout of every single point from where a new construction project will be visible – even if this visibility is minimal. The actual impact on the cityscape is then shown as a second step in sequences of photomontages; only these photomontages show the true extent of visibility. The locations for the assessments were selected in consultation with the experts of ICOMOS Austria (International Council on Monuments and Sites).

Historic city vedutas were juxtaposed with the silhouette that future observers will encounter if a planned construction project is indeed implemented. In addition to this visual juxtaposition of historic and future views, visualisations from high points of the city (e.g. Kahlenberg Hill, Wilhelminenberg Hill, Danube Tower, St. Stephen's Cathedral) were prepared as well. The intention lies in illustrating the visual impact of these projects on the future cityscape of Vienna.

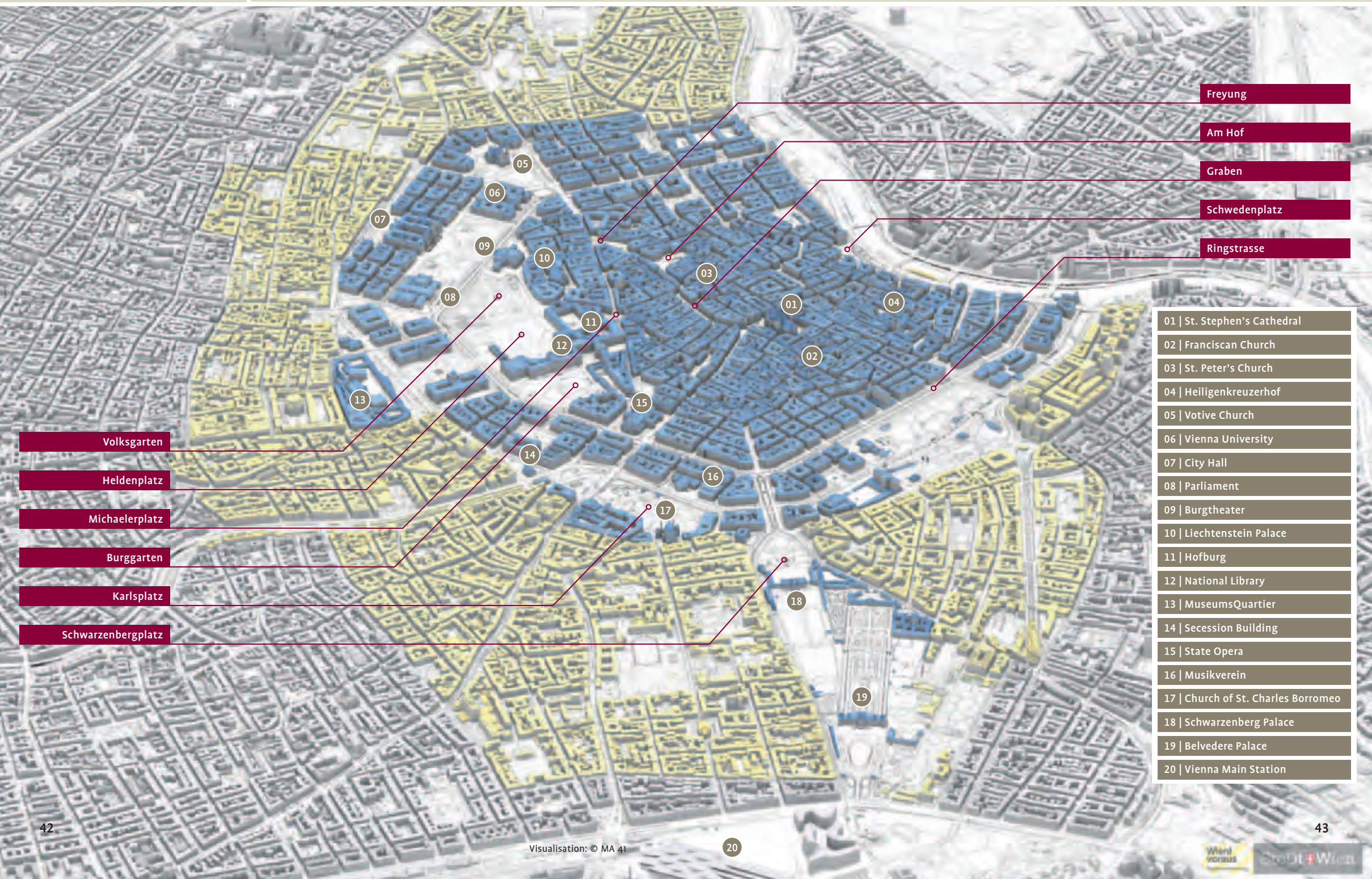
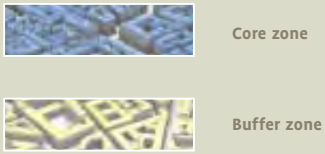
3D model of the historic centre of Vienna

The 3D model shows the core and buffer zones of the UNESCO World Heritage site “Historic Centre of Vienna”. The core zone highlighted in blue comprises approx. 3.7 square kilometres and roughly 1,600 objects, while the yellow buffer zone covers about 4.6 square kilometres and approx. 2,950 objects. In all, however, the surface of the World Heritage site and the number of its objects equal just under two percent of the municipal territory and, respectively, of the number of buildings in Vienna. The illustration shown here is an extract from the digital 3D model of the City of Vienna.

With the digital 3D model, the City of Vienna disposes of a state-of-the-art tool for modern urban planning. The fields of application are manifold: 3D models of planned projects e.g. allow for the early identification and evaluation of the impact of buildings on sightlines within the city. Above all in connection with the assessment of the compatibility of a project with the

UNESCO World Heritage status, the 3D model has become an indispensable tool. Being very descriptive and clearcut, 3D modeling also provides an important input for discussion in participatory planning processes. On the basis of terrain and building heights taken from the multi-purpose map (digital city map of Vienna), specific software then calculates three-dimensional images.

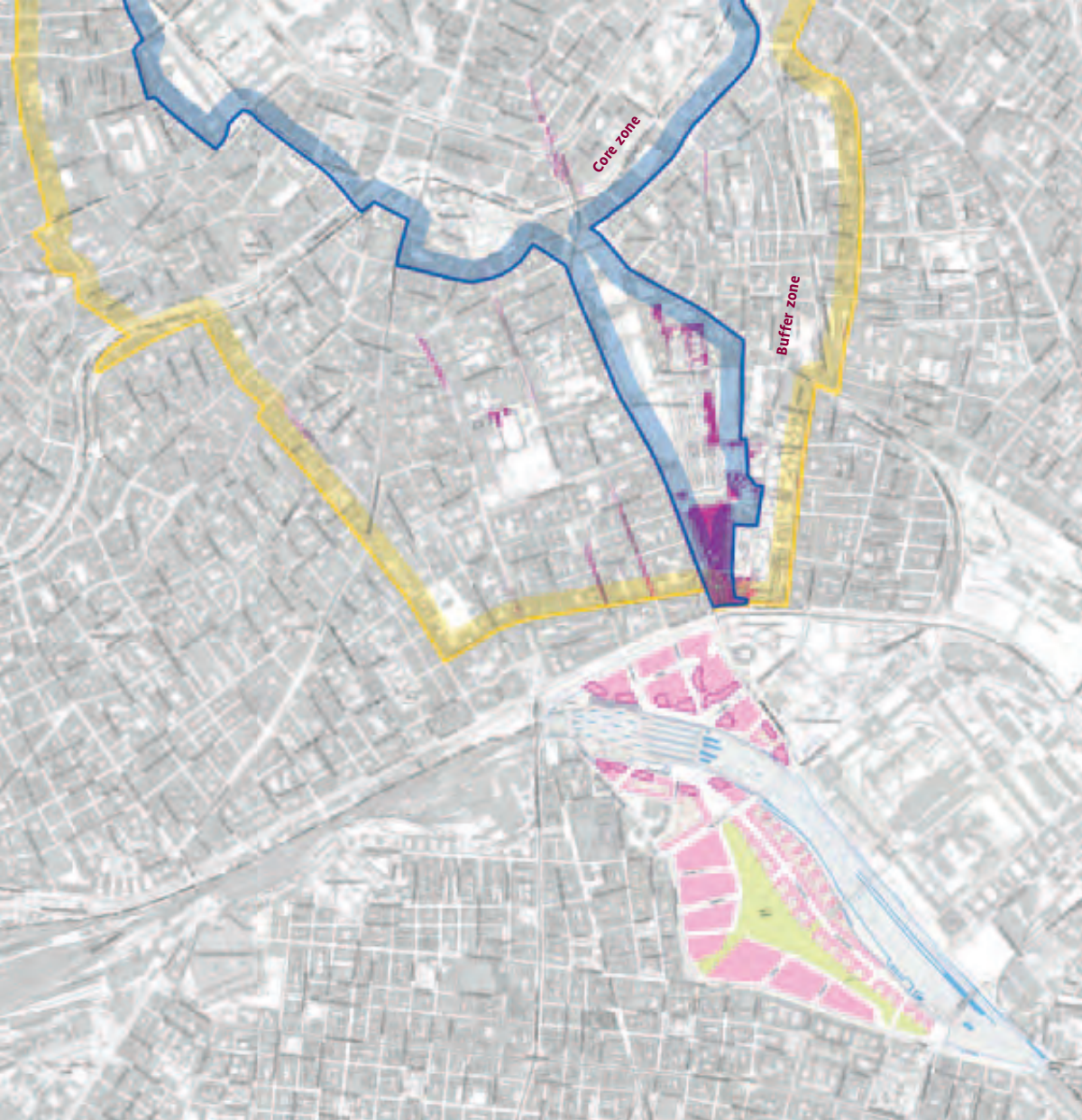
Data editing fulfils the primary purpose of providing background data for planning; it does not serve the marketing-related production of illustrative 3D images of the city. For this reason, topicality is a prime concern here. Only data whose regular updating can be safeguarded are captured. In the context of the three-year update cycle of the multi-purpose map, one third of Vienna is resurveyed and brought up to date year after year. These data are complemented by the annual, comprehensive overflying of the municipal territory of Vienna.



- Freyung
- Am Hof
- Graben
- Schwedenplatz
- Ringstrasse

- Volksgarten
- Heldenplatz
- Michaelerplatz
- Burggarten
- Karlsplatz
- Schwarzenbergplatz

- 01 | St. Stephen's Cathedral
- 02 | Franciscan Church
- 03 | St. Peter's Church
- 04 | Heiligenkreuzerhof
- 05 | Votive Church
- 06 | Vienna University
- 07 | City Hall
- 08 | Parliament
- 09 | Burgtheater
- 10 | Liechtenstein Palace
- 11 | Hofburg
- 12 | National Library
- 13 | MuseumsQuartier
- 14 | Secession Building
- 15 | State Opera
- 16 | Musikverein
- 17 | Church of St. Charles Borromeo
- 18 | Schwarzenberg Palace
- 19 | Belvedere Palace
- 20 | Vienna Main Station



Vienna Main Station and the protection of the Baroque visual axes

Since Vienna Main Station directly adjoins the Baroque Belvedere Palace and its gardens, a complex that is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site, it proved necessary from the very first planning steps to make sure that the future built structures would not conflict with the World Heritage status. It was a central demand of UNESCO that the historic sightlines from the Belvedere gardens to the surrounding cityscape remain untouched.

Intensive consultations and planning were required to ensure that the new Main Station will not create any negative visual impact on Vienna's cityscape. The visual impact assessments prove that above all the important Baroque sightlines between Upper and Lower Belvedere will not be visually compromised by high-rise buildings. More concretely, no high-rises will e.g. be visible from the gardens between Upper and Lower Belvedere when looking south over the roof of Upper Belvedere.

Top left:
Visibility analysis for Vienna Main Station:
 visibility of future built volumes (zones marked in red) within the World Heritage site
 Map graphics: © MA 41

Bottom left:
View from the historic centre of Vienna across Belvedere Palace towards Vienna Main Station
 Aerial view: © MA 18

Bottom of page:
The new Main Station adjoining Belvedere Palace: Baroque sightlines are kept clear of obstructions
 Comparison of historic city vedutas with future visual aspect (red line: future silhouette of Vienna Main Station)

Bottom left veduta:
Upper Cascade
 Salomon Kleiner, circa 1730
 Bottom right veduta:
Lower Cascade
 Carl Schütz, circa 1785

Vedutas: © Wien Museum
 Photomontages: © MA 41

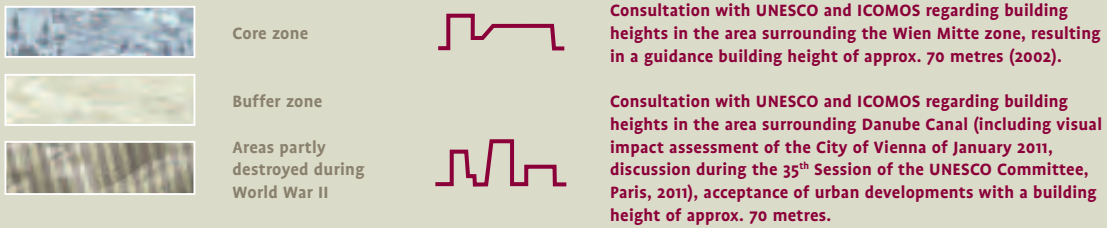


Urban development along Danube Canal and Wien River

The historic centre of Vienna was accorded UNESCO World Heritage status because the development of a European city from the Middle Ages to the present can be clearly discerned in the cityscape. The protection of the historic centre is given top priority.

Situated at the periphery of the World Heritage core zone, the area along Danube Canal and Wien River was partly destroyed by bombing and combat action during the last weeks of the Second World War. In the course of postwar reconstruction and in the following decades, numerous high-rises were erected in this area peripheral to the World Heritage site.

During the past decade, this part of the city was the topic of several discussions with the bodies of UNESCO and ICOMOS. The central issue of these talks concerned the height of existing and future built structures in this section of the former Glacis (which was damaged during the war and later reconstructed) as well as the compatibility of these buildings with the World Heritage status.



EISLAUFVEREIN/
INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL
PROJECT

INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL
1964 | 45 metres

HQ RAIFFEISEN ZENTRALBANK
1989 | 57 metres

HILTON HOTEL
1972 | 62 metres

WIEN MITTE
2012 | 74 metres

CITY TOWER
Federal Ministry of Justice
2003 | 90 metres

BRZ (AUSTRIAN FEDERAL
COMPUTING CENTRE)
1986 | 55 metres

UNIQA INSURANCE
HIGH-RISE
2004 | 75 metres

DESIGN TOWER
2010 | 75 metres

MEDIA TOWER
2000 | 79 metres

DIANA BAD
OFFICE TOWER
2000 | 65 metres

RAIFFEISEN HIGH-RISE
2013 | 77 metres

- 01 | Ringstrasse
- 02 | Danube Canal
- 03 | Wien River
- 04 | Vienna Main Station
- 05 | Belvedere
- 06 | Konzerthaus
- 07 | Karlsplatz
- 08 | State Opera
- 09 | St. Stephen's Cathedral
- 10 | Schwedenplatz

Urban development along Danube Canal and Wien River

Moreover, another key focus of the visual impact assessments was on the urban development along Danube Canal. A large part of the Gründerzeit houses along Danube Canal and Wien River was destroyed by bombing and combat action during the last weeks of the Second World War. During the postwar reconstruction extending over several decades, numerous high-rises were erected in this area peripheral to the World Heritage site. The recently completed or planned high-rises are situated outside the condensed urban core precisely in this area characterised by 20th-century reconstruction architecture.

Based on the findings of the visual impact assessments, the City of Vienna conducted a consultation with UNESCO and ICOMOS bodies in the early 2010s, which resulted in the understanding that the development of high-rises of up to approx. 70 to 80 metres is likewise adequate for the area of Danube Canal on the Leopoldstadt side, which is characterised by 1960s reconstruction architecture. In its session of June 2011, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee took note of this guidance value for building heights.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS experts visit Vienna in autumn 2012

The 35th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in June 2011 decided that a joint reactive monitoring mission of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS (one expert each of UNESCO and ICOMOS) to Vienna would be in order.

In autumn 2012, these experts duly paid a visit to Vienna on an invitation extended by the City of Vienna. The objective of the mission, necessitated by the many different urban development projects in the vicinity of the two World Heritage sites “Historic Centre of Vienna” and “Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn”, lay in obtaining an on-site overview.

In this, priority was accorded to the developments in connection with the new Main Station close to the Belvedere complex. Further objectives of the mission concerned developments in the environs of the World Heritage sites (inner-city projects, e.g. the project for the area of Wiener Eislaufverein/Konzerthaus/ InterContinental Hotel, and urban developments along Danube Canal and in the environs of Schönbrunn Palace).

In their evaluation submitted in spring 2013, the World Heritage experts concluded that the individual projects would not exert any negative influence on the World Heritage status, but maintained that the planning strategies should be modified so that future projects would entail an even better fine-tuning between the interests of urban development and those of the World Heritage. Inter alia, this led to the compilation of the Glacis Master Plan and the revision of the Vienna High-rise Concept.

Actors between World Heritage interests and urban planning tasks

Permanent Delegation of Austria to UNESCO

1, rue Miollis
F-75732 Paris
www.unesco.at

UNESCO

7, place de Fontenoy
F-75352 Paris 07 SP
www.unesco.org

ICOMOS International

49-51, rue de la Fédération
F-75015 Paris
www.icomos.org/fr

ICOMOS Austria

International Council on Monuments and Sites, Austrian National Committee
Tillysburg 1
A-4490 St Florian
www.icomos.at

Austrian Federal Chancellery Division VI/3 – Monument Protection and World Heritage

Concordiaplatz 2
A-1010 Vienna
www.kunstkultur.bka.gv.at

Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments – Provincial Curator for Vienna

Hofburg, Säulenstiege
A-1010 Vienna
www.bda.at/organisation/846/wien

Austrian Commission for UNESCO

Universitätsstrasse 5/4
A-1010 Vienna
www.unesco.at

Chief Executive Office of the City of Vienna – Executive Group for Construction and Technology, Planning Group

A-1082 Vienna, City Hall
www.wien.at/mdbd

MA 7 – Cultural Affairs

Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 5
A-1080 Vienna
www.wien.at/kultur

MA 18 – Urban Development and Planning

Rathausstrasse 14-16
A-1082 Vienna
www.stadtentwicklung.wien.at

MA 19 – Architecture and Urban Design

Niederhofstrasse 21-23
A-1120 Vienna
www.wien.at/stadtentwicklung/architektur

MA 21 – District Planning and Land Use

Rathausstrasse 14-16
A-1082 Vienna
www.wien.at/stadtentwicklung/flaechenwidmung

MA 37 – Building Inspection

Dresdner Strasse 73-75
A-1200 Vienna
www.wien.at/wohnen/baupolizei

MA 42 – Parks and Gardens

Johannesgasse 35
A-1030 Vienna
www.park.wien.at

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Challenges and vision

Historic Centre of Vienna World Heritage site and vibrant hub

The roughly three square kilometres that make up the historic centre of Vienna are home to over 16,000 persons, while more than 100,000 work here. By way of comparison, over two million overnight stays at hotels and guesthouses located in this small area were recorded in 2012.

In all, Vienna is characterised by gratifyingly dynamic urban growth: over the next 15 to 20 years, the city's population will increase from currently approx. 1.7 million to roughly two million inhabitants.

These few figures alone convey a clear understanding of the enormous challenges Vienna's urban planners are faced with. The Urban Development Plan STEP 2025 defines guidelines for the successful development of Vienna. A crucial task lies in creating a smart basis that will enable Vienna to maintain and further strengthen its worldwide top position with regard to superlative quality of living.

With regard to the World Heritage status, the development objectives can be summed up quite simply as follows:

- | The historic centre of Vienna must be evolved as the vibrant heart of the city; it is not a museum.
- | All measures to be taken aim to establish a solid balance between the interests of conservation and those of practical use.
- | While the protection of the valuable cultural heritage is given priority, it is equally important to integrate the historic building stock into a lively and vibrant urban organism.
- | Art and music are assigned the same standing as the urban fabric with its streets, squares and green spaces.
- | The holistic concept of a living urban monument is the goal of all endeavours.

It is the objective of the different instruments of urban planning, building law and cultural promotion to safeguard that Vienna will continue to evolve like a living organism in keeping with social and economic requirements and without losing its identity. Vienna can only grow into the future while maintaining its high standards if its architectural past and historic urban development are understood as part and parcel of the city's identity.