

GERMANY

World Heritage site Weimar

Fire in the Anna-Amalia Library

In the previous edition of *Heritage at Risk* we gave an account of the devastating floods of August 2002 (see H@R 2002/2003, p.

25). In the meantime the damage to the historic building fabric in Saxony and Sachsen-Anhalt has largely been repaired. This year's report on conservation problems in Germany starts with the fire in the Anna-Amalia library in Weimar, which until the tragedy struck was a building and intact interior that had been an authentically preserved part of the World Heritage site (Classical Weimar, inscribed in 1998). The fire was a tragic accident which happened just when all the preparations had been made for the required



Weimar, Anna Amalia Library, west facade on the day after the fire (3 September 2004), smouldering fires not yet extinguished (photo: J. Seifert)



Top storey of the library building on the day after the fire. On the floor burnt shelves and books (photo: J. Seifert)

extensive restoration. Meanwhile the Federal Government and donors have provided considerable funds so that the building will probably be repaired soon. However, conserving the rescued books and manuscripts will take a very long time.

The fire in the Duchess Anna-Amalia Library in Weimar on the night of 2–3 September 2004 has affected a site symbolising in a unique way the intellectual world of German Enlightenment and the period of German classical literature. This library was founded by Grand Duchess Anna Amalia and directed by Goethe from 1797. The devastating fire in the attic which destroyed approximately 50,000 books, manuscripts and scores, for instance the

larger part of the Duchess's collection of written music, also seriously damaged the exceptional library hall in the central area of the complex, built between 1761–66 based on designs by August Friedrich Strassburger. The hall's upper gallery in the mansard was lost with its ceiling painting by H. Meyer (after Caracci) as well as other paintings stored there.

However, the second gallery's stucco ceiling, which threatened to collapse, could be conserved. As a result, the Rococo hall's architecture that had its wooden elements saturated by water from fire-extinguishers remains largely intact and will be restored in the future.



The cleared-out top storey of the library (photo: J. Seifert)



West facade with scaffolding for temporary roof (photo: J. Seifert)



The cleared-out Rococo hall after the fire with remains of debris and foam as well as with provisional shoring (photo: J. Seifert)

Problems with high-rise buildings in Cologne and Munich

While the Wien-Mitte project, a cluster of high-rise buildings threatening the World Heritage site Historic Centre of Vienna and St. Stephen's cathedral in 2003, could be stopped (see *Heritage at Risk* 2002/2003, pp. 42–43), the City of Cologne has unfortunately not been willing to respect the visual integrity of Cologne Cathedral (see *Heritage at Risk* 2002/2003, p. 96). Despite all concerns, not only voiced by ICOMOS during a symposium on 14 November 2003 and despite public protest expressed at other conferences and in several newspaper articles, the City of Cologne approved its own high-rise building concept shortly afterwards without making any attempt to avoid or at least reduce the concept's negative impact on the World Heritage site Cologne Cathedral. Of course, this landmark of Cologne, which can be seen from afar, needs the buffer zone that was already required in 1996. Avoiding an appropriate buffer on the Deutz side of the river leaves the door open for the proposed cluster of five high-rise buildings up to 120 m high, which will probably dominate the cathedral on an east-west axis.

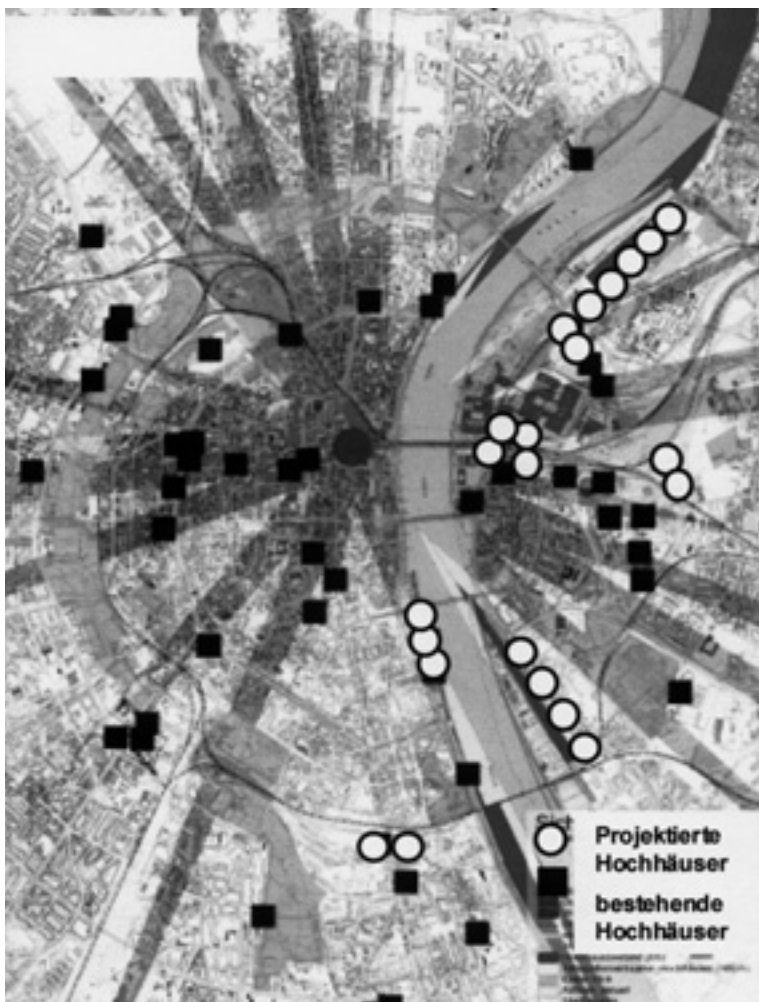
The RZVK building is nearest the cathedral and beside the Hohenzollern bridge exit ramp, and at 104 m reaches the same height as the gallery at the base of the cathedral spire, whence countless visitors have enjoyed the panoramic view of the city.

Instead of taking UNESCO's and ICOMOS' frequently expressed concerns seriously and protecting the visual integrity of this unique architectural masterpiece, the City quickly made reality: the RZVK tower is almost completed. It remains an open question if, when and how the other clusters of 120 m high-rise buildings will be completed according to the plan accepted at the end of 2003. In view of these circumstances, the World Heritage Committee at its meeting on 5 July 2004 in Suzhou, China, inscribed Cologne Cathedral in its list of World Heritage in Danger.

The government of North Rhine-Westphalia has therefore set up a taskforce to prepare the report requested by the World Heritage Committee. This report will contain statements about establishing a buffer zone and the results of the 'townscape compatibility investigation', carried out by the University of Aachen.

The cathedral, situated by the Rhine river, a *masterpiece of human creativity and symbol of the endurance and steadfastness of*

Cologne, concept for high-rise buildings (2003)



Cologne, project for the RZVK high-rise building with view towards the cathedral (computer simulation: Data Services GmbH)





Cologne, the RZVK building during construction

Christian faith over seven centuries (text of inscription in the World Heritage List 1996), is one of the most outstanding examples of Gothic architecture in Europe, although the building, including the famous double steeple façade, was only completed in the 19th century, following the preserved medieval plan of the façade from about 1280. The cathedral's condition is relatively good and the building is very well looked after, in the tradition of cathedral stonemason lodges, by the Cathedral Conservation Organisation. As well, the condition of the area immediately surrounding the cathedral, also the subject of complaint for quite a while, is to be improved soon.

In Munich there was also fierce public discussion in 2004 about high-rise building projects, that threaten to disturb the visual integrity of important monuments and complexes. The Birketweg high-rise project, four buildings up to 120 m, would have towered above the pavilions around the crescent in front of Nymphenburg Palace and would have severely affected the outstanding complex of the palace and park. Public protest, also from ICOMOS, as well as a public petition announced in August 2004 led the city council

to reduce the building heights to 60 m, so making way for a new development which will not disturb the Nymphenburg group.

However, the ruin of Ludwigstrasse, the magnificent famous avenue of King Ludwig I, cannot be restored any longer. This was caused by the so-called Highlight Towers designed by Helmut Jahn and constructed in the north of Munich near the exit to the Nuremberg motorway. When one looks from the Feldherrenhalle towards the triumphal arch (*Siegestor*) the two towers appear as if they accidentally stand next to the arch (see fig.). The Munich town-planning commission must have overlooked the consequences for this important axial view. Given such careless handling of high-rise projects, which could also threaten the famous city silhouette with the panorama of the Alps, an anti-highrise initiative has been successful: following a plebiscite on 21 November 2004, future multi-storey buildings in Munich are not allowed to be higher than the towers of the Church of Our Lady (99 m).

Cologne, the RZVK building during construction with the cathedral in the background





Munich, Ludwigstrasse with triumphal arch and the so-called Munich Highlight Towers under construction, February 2004 (photo: Heinz Gebhardt)

Munich, Nymphenburg palace ensemble threatened by four high-rise buildings in Birketweg (computer simulation: Planungsreferat Munich). Thanks to public protest this project was given up.



World Heritage site Quedlinburg

The unique Quedlinburg built assemblage, which with its numerous half-timber houses was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1993, was literally saved from final decay at the very last minute. According to urban rehabilitation plans before the German reunification, entire old town quarters were meant to be replaced by prefabricated buildings, leaving only a few half-timber façades and

thus destroying historic Quedlinburg. As a first step after reunification, the many dilapidated houses were provisionally covered and then repaired and restored one after the other – thanks to considerable funds from the Federal Government.

Initiatives by the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz, which chose Quedlinburg as one of its main funding projects, also need to be emphasised. However, here as in other historic town centres in the former German Democratic Republic, the declining population remains a problem that is difficult to solve as there is often an inadequate use for the historic fabric.



Quedlinburg, so-called Schlossberg, southern wall underneath the convent church during repair measures, October 2004 (photo: A. Hubel)

Currently, disquieting news is being spread that the so-called Schlossberg is at risk of collapsing, on which the former convent church of St Servatius and adjacent buildings are located. At the beginning of 2003, plans focussed on the urgent repair of parts of the retaining walls which surround almost the entire hill; at the moment extensive repairs of the stonework are being carried out on the particularly unstable southern side. Now it is even being said that the entire hill is at risk because underground watercourses are affecting its stability. Although no detailed evaluation is available yet, costs for the hill's stabilisation have already been identified: while the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz talks of 12 million euros, the local press states these measures will cost between 12 and 17 million euros. It seems advisable to consult more experts and to wait for their detailed investigations before decisions are made.

In all, the town suffers from a shift of retail trade from the old town to shopping centres and megastores erected outside the town on large empty blocks. These shopping areas absorb so much purchasing power that quite a number of town centre shops already stand empty. Furthermore, the usual discrepancy between ecological necessities and practical needs are found, as new estates and business parks have been erected in areas formerly used for farming, while no use is made of empty industrial sites. For instance, the buildings of the former seed growing company Mette (Harzweg 23) stood empty for years and were exposed to neglect and vandalism. Now permission has been given to demolish the majority of buildings, including the large extensions with Expressionist architectural details from the 1920s; only the main building from around 1900 is to remain. This large industrial complex near the old part of the town could have been used sensibly, even for a shopping centre. The buildings of the former infantry barracks, erected in 1909 in the triangular area between Gneisenastrasse, Halberstädter Strasse and Schillerstrasse from designs by Knoch & Kallmayer are equally at risk. These two to four storeys build-



Quedlinburg, former seed growing company Mette (Harzweg 23), extensions from c. 1920 (photo: A. Hubel)

Quedlinburg, former infantry barracks, erected in 1909, buildings in Gneisenastrasse, October 2004 (photo: A. Hubel)



ings, now used for residential purposes, are a group with a unity of design, consisting of plastered façades and natural stone elements as well as gables with volutes and half-timbering. These details and the way the buildings were grouped make a very picturesque impression.

This group of buildings on the northern edge of the old town and its urban role must not be destroyed. The buildings where the *Bundesanstalt für Züchtungsforschung* (federal institute of breeding research) is still located, (Neuer Weg 22/23) are likely to face a similar fate. This complex comprises villas, banks and industrial buildings of the former Dippe Brothers company, which established a huge seed growing empire and erected the buildings between 1850 and 1910. The two villas built between 1893 and 1895 for the Dippe brothers in the Renaissance and Baroque styles are particularly splendid. As the federal institute has started to build a new building on the Moorberg near Quedlinburg, the result will be yet another abandoned industrial site, separated from the huge Mette industrial complex by only the river Bode and a road. The question arises whether it would not have been possible for the federal institute to remain in the town by using the grounds of both former companies.

World Heritage site Lübeck

Market Square

The problematic development of a department store on Lübeck's Market Square resulted in a UNESCO expert mission in 2002 to clarify whether the World Heritage status of the city would be affected by this construction project near the historic town hall and St Mary's church. This UNESCO mission concluded that the project would not threaten the World Heritage status. No representatives of UNESCO were consulted for the subsequent detailed designs of the department store. Instead, the City intends to invite a UNESCO delegation to Lübeck when the building opens in March 2005.

At present work is being carried out on the façades and in the interiors, while the aluminium roof has already been completed. The roof material which is atypical for Lübeck and the controversial shape of the roof emphasise the awkwardness of this building in the city's roofscape. Attempts are being made to meet UNESCO's demands for a 'diversity of use' on the ground floor by installing a bistro with tables on the market square and a small tea shop.

So far there are no plans for the adjacent plot of the former Stadthaus, demolished in 2002.

The Gründungs Viertel (foundation quarter)

Another important urban project is situated in the *Gründungs Viertel* close to the market square, the town hall and St Mary's church. This area was severely damaged during World War II and is not part of the designated World Heritage site. After the war, two vocational training schools were built in this area. These school buildings whose large size did not respect the historical town structure will be closed in the foreseeable future. In order to have some influence on future town planning in this area, the City of Lübeck commissioned an expert report, which recommends the demolition of the schools and the development of small plots for houses and shops. The frontages follow the historic courses of the streets, the plot structure however is based on a grid system using the measurements of the deep-level garages and not those of the



Preserved Gothic walls in the basement of the planned hall of residence (photo: Fröhlich/Reck)

widths of the historic blocks. This concept was developed in co-operation with the heritage conservation department and takes into account the historic mixture of residential and commercial occupancy as well as the possibility of erecting these buildings in stages.

Hall of Residence Alfstrasse / Fischstrasse

Despite the existing expert report, the City has in the meantime commissioned an investor to construct a large building in one part of this quarter. In this area where extensive excavations were carried out between 1984 and 1987, a hall of residence is currently being built. Before construction work began, archaeologists gave permission to remove the excavated medieval cellars, which contained relevant information on the City's history. Only thanks to the initiative of a concerned architect two Gothic cellar walls were left *in situ*. By removing all other finds, the cellar of Alfstrasse 9, which may be considered as one of the City's first vaulted cellars



View towards the new department store at Lübeck's market square (photo: Fröhlich/Reck, October 2004)

dating from the 13th century, has also been lost. Given that the hall of residence is near public car parks and public transport the plan to build underground parking for 30 students could easily have been abandoned so that the remains could be preserved.

In spite of the careful integration of the hall of residence into the existing townscape a development similar to that on Market Square is to be feared. Again, under the pressure of potential investors, the City has given up its urban preplanning based on the historic plot structure, and instead has accepted large mono-structures.

For all building projects which may have an impact on the appearance of the historic city and its World Heritage status an advisory council was founded in 2003, consisting of independent architects, to give its expert opinion on such plans. So far all involved parties consider the work of the council as constructive and important. The UNESCO expert mission of 2002 recommended establishing a special World Heritage council, which is being set up.

Protection of the area and Management Plan

The heritage conservation legislation is supposed to be amended to include the protection of built complexes and particularly to improve the legal status of the old part of Lübeck. Nonetheless, this amendment has not yet been ratified as the legislator does not approve of the conservation department's proposal to distinguish between two zones, zone 1 being the old town on the island and zone 2 the surrounding water as well as the banks. In the latter zone alterations to buildings would only have to be announced, not require permits.

In 2002, the UNESCO Commission had recommended the preparation of a management plan. For other World Heritage sites such plans have already been developed, documenting the individual protected areas (for example, buffer zones), designating the

World Heritage zone by all its various blocks and indicating the state of the inventory work as well as of the general development plans. Designating the banks which surround the old part of Lübeck as buffer zones would have meant that they would have the status of protected public space from where the skyline of the old town could be enjoyed. Such a buffer zone would have prevented the regrettable current development in the southern part of the embanked peninsula where the master plan has been altered to allow the construction of residential buildings right by the water.

World Heritage site Bamberg

There are still concerns about the World Cultural Heritage site of Bamberg regarding the present planning situation for the so-called 'City-Passage' in the area of Lange Strasse (street) and Franz-Ludwig-Strasse. The latest plans have given up the originally proposed carpark, but all the same still intend to completely infill the lots between Lange and Franz-Ludwig Streets. Yet there are buildings worth preserving and historically important architectural remains in this area, all of which are threatened by the planned development.

For instance, it is intended to demolish the rear buildings at 11 and 13 Heller Street, both of which have rich stucco ceilings and other interior decorations from the Baroque age. There are also remains of the old 13th–15th century city walls which should be preserved. Although up to now only four exploratory trenches have been undertaken to archaeologically investigate the area, the *mikwe* of the former synagogue has already been found. Other surface areas have not yet been excavated, although this is vital before any sub-surface disturbance can start. As all archival sources show that the former Jewish synagogue was located in the area of 11–15 Heller Street, it is highly likely that archaeological remains of this late medieval synagogue will also be found here.

Dieter Roth's Mould Museum in Hamburg demolished

In the 1960s Dieter Roth (1930–98), whose work was recently fêted with a retrospective exhibition called *Roth-Zeit* in Basle, Cologne and New York, started to experiment with objects of chocolate and other perishable materials. His works of art were meant to be subject to a natural process of ageing and decay, even to total self-disintegration. This concept made him famous worldwide, but collectors and conservators have been faced with seemingly insoluble problems. From 1991, a Hamburg collector enabled the artist to install his mould museum in a former outbuilding in Hamburg's Alsterchaussee, setting up hundreds of objects mostly made of chocolate and cheese. The intention was to let the objects disintegrate, thus gradually including the entire building in the decay process. The mould museum was Dieter Roth's most important artistic legacy.

ICOMOS already reported on the mould museum and the threats to this *Gesamtkunstwerk* in the previous *Heritage at Risk* publication (see H@R 2002/2003, p. 97) – unfortunately in vain. In the meantime the museum has been demolished (beginning on 2 February 2004). While many objects had already been dismantled some time ago, the building itself was filleted wall by wall before the final demolition so as to gain further objects for exhibition. Apparently, there are plans to display the items in a nearby new building. But whoever believes that the exhibits gained from the



Situation before the demolition, room already cleared out, the frames removed (cf. *Heritage at Risk* 2002/2003, fig. on p. 97)



Start of the filleting of the mould museum

Remains of the floor on the ground floor where the famous chocolate tower, which reached as far as the upper storey, was installed



destruction of this synthesis have anything to do with the original idea of the mould museum has completely misunderstood the artist's intention. From an economic perspective isolated objects may have a much higher value than a decaying building, but the

actual artistic idea was lost when the entire context was destroyed.

ICOMOS is documenting the end of the mould museum with a series of photographs, for this case illustrates the difficulties of preserving the cultural heritage of the 20th century.

ICOMOS Germany



Cut-out wall pieces as future exhibition objects



Demolition of the museum, on the left the former entrance



Demolition of the museum, on the remaining wall painted sections



The demolition contractor rescues a remaining piece of wall with traces of the Gesamtkunstwerk

Historic Heuersdorf

Germany produces more than a quarter of its electricity from vast fields of low-grade lignite fuel. This 'brown coal' was formed during recent geological periods, permitting it to be extracted using surface mining techniques. The yearly earthmoving task of extracting 180 million tons of lignite from beneath 900 million tons of soil and rock is equivalent to excavating the original Suez Canal 15 times. This epic undertaking would deserve a gala performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida* every four weeks, were it not for the relentless destruction of natural landscapes and historic monuments it entails.

Since 1924, over 300 villages have been devastated by gigantic bucket-wheel excavators burrowing through some of Germany's most fertile soil. The mining corporation RWE (operating in the Rhineland), the US-owned MIBRAG (in Middle Germany to the south of Berlin), and the Swedish state enterprise Vattenfall Europe (in Lusatia to the east) are planning new lignite power stations to compensate for the phase-out of nuclear energy. Only rarely are cultural landmarks spared or relocated in the process of mining. Most recently, despite nominal legal protection both as a historic architectural complex and as a Sorb minority community, the entire village of Horno near the Polish border was laid waste by Vattenfall.

Mining resettlement was instituted in the Third Reich as a wartime expedient. More than 100,000 people have since been relocated from their traditional homelands into new residential subdivisions. German federal and state authorities defend this policy as a necessary measure to enhance national energy security.

In the year 2000, however, the medieval community of Heuersdorf south of Leipzig won a milestone court case by demonstrating that European power trading had rendered its resettlement unnecessary. The 52 million tons of lignite beneath the village nevertheless equates to electricity sales exceeding two billion euros at the nearby Lippendorf power plant. The destruction of Heuersdorf thus remains a lucrative prospect for MIBRAG and the plant operator Vattenfall. A permission-to-destroy law (*Heuersdorfgesetz*), passed by Saxony's parliamentary assembly on 22 April 2004, is currently being contested by the village council before the state constitutional court.

Heuersdorf probably originated as a farming settlement that expanded into a rural community in the 12th or 13th century, when 4000 villages were chartered in the principality of Meissen. The oldest structure is the Emmaus Church, built largely of fieldstone, that was first chronicled in 1297. The absence of large windows identifies it as a fortified church, perhaps the oldest in Saxony. Carbon14 dating has yet to be performed on the rafter construction, which uses a remarkable arrangement of buttressing beams to support the cupola. Horizontal grooves chiselled into one cornerstone depict the devil's futile attempts to claw his way into the building. The church now defends the northern access to the town from the assault of MIBRAG excavating equipment. A number of sturdy three-sided brick farm-houses closer to the mine have however already been vacated.

The origins of the second, Tabor Church are difficult to unravel. The present structure is exemplary for regional period architecture of the 19th century, with opposing galleries suitable for performing the two-choir works of Johann Sebastian Bach. The previous building it replaced contained a bell inscribed with the year 1388. The church stands at the southern boundary in what was once Grosshermsdorf, which was administratively united with Heuersdorf to its north in 1935. A number of houses erected along the main connecting thoroughfare merged the villages, thus defining a distinct phase of development. A subsequent chapter is evi-



Heuersdorf, Emmaus church

Heuersdorf, Tabor church, interior



dent in scattered collectivised farm buildings added after World War II.

Heuersdorf remained an intact Christian community during the Marxist regime of 1945 to 1989, with congregation members maintaining and restoring both churches. Yet Lutheran officials are now condoning the demolition of these structures under the supposition of employment benefits. In fact, however, the devastation of the neighbouring village of Breunsdorf in 1995 has not diminished the emigration of young people from the region. The jobless rate persists at over 23 percent, or about 2.3 times the national average, because of mining rationalisation and limited employment alternatives.

A number of events surrounding Heuersdorf contribute to an understanding of German history. Grosshermsdorf was initially an outpost of a neighbouring town that was destroyed during the Husite Wars in the early 15th century. Martin Luther's wife Katharina von Bora was born in Lippendorf and returned as a widow to the nearby farming manor at Zöllsdorf, which was devastated in 1981 by the same Schleenhain mine that currently encroaches on Heuersdorf. At least one Heuersdorf family traces its lineage to the Thirty Years' War. The villagers were forced to billet soldiers during the decisive battle of Lützen in 1632, at which the Swedish king Gustavus II Adolphus was killed shortly before his army swept to final victory.

Grosshermsdorf contains a feudal knight's brickwork residence (*Rittergut*) and the timbered homesteads of several farmers who succeeded in freeing themselves from his indenture. The burgeoning local economy attracted blacksmiths, saddlers, and other non-propertied tradesmen to auxiliary buildings flanking the residence. A manor house on the opposite side of the courtyard was subsequently converted for use as a schoolhouse and town hall.

The most famous historic figure from the village is Alexander Clarus Heinze, a delegate to the Dresden Parliament of 1848–49 and the ill-fated commander of the Communal Guards in Germany's unsuccessful democratic revolution.

Heuersdorf has housed families displaced by mining and post-war refugees from Eastern Europe. In 2001, it was the venue of the Third Climate Conference of German Youth (after Bonn and Berlin) that analysed and criticised the excessive greenhouse gas emissions of lignite power generation.

Following German reunification in 1990, Heuersdorf had about 320 inhabitants. Its current population has been reduced to less than 150 by MIBRAG resettlement campaigns. The sizeable financial compensation offered by the mining company cannot be willed to heirs, explaining the predominance of elderly people who have left the village.

The remaining population is intent on preserving the 43 registered buildings in the embattled community. The legal outcome of this conflict could be of incalculable importance for maintaining the historic fabric of other regions. RWE plans the destruction of 18 further villages in the Rhineland for its Garzweiler II mine. MIBRAG and Vattenfall have not issued corresponding details for eastern Germany, but they have already announced the construction of three new lignite power plants.

Jeffrey H Michel
Energy Coordinator of Heuersdorf



Heuersdorf, Tabor church



Heuersdorf, farmhouse

Feudal knight's farm

