

Nordlicht

The national museum as a square.

In terms of urban development the current situation is characterised by the fact that the city hall square is completely open to the west, so there is no defined transition from the square to the western part of the city. Furthermore, the two listed buildings on the square have to be reintegrated into the overall urban development scheme.

These urban planning issues are of decisive importance for the design we wish to propose.

In order to prevent a backyard situation being created by the national museum on the building site – because of the existing listed buildings – we suggest that the existing square be extended and developed in such a way that the whole of the museum is situated underneath. The area of the square would be seamlessly carried over into a scaled facade that is only aligned to the north. The dominance of the national museum does not arise from its direct link-up to the square, but to a much greater degree from its low-key appearance in the silhouette of the city. What would then also emerge is a smooth transition in urban space between the western part of the city and the city hall square.

The programming of the museum square

Situating the building structures in the western part of the site will open up a spacious forecourt in front of the museum. The forecourt would function in support of a clear museum entrance and act as a meeting point for crowds of people. Moreover it is designed to be an area for presentations and performances. Exhibitions, theatre performances and all kinds of events can be held on the forecourt.

Relationship to the surrounding buildings

The proposed design does not establish an 'obtrusive' counterpoint to the existing urban arrangement. Instead, it underpins the present situation of the bay. Together with the castle complex it forms a setting for the city hall square with the free-standing city hall situated in the middle. By concentrating the utilisation volumes on the west side of the building site a smooth transition can be created from the western part of the city to the city hall square.

Furthermore, this arrangement frees up the important buildings on the north side.