Main author
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Project data
Project group: Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client: Soshanguve Community
Project background: Research project

Summary and appraisal of the project by the jury
The project “Brick-Works” is based on a critique of unsustainable practices in the production of fired bricks and proposes instead a set of principles to improve the sustainable performance of the brick-making industry. Going beyond technical exigencies, the proposal envisions brick-making as a catalyst of community-building – as demonstrated in the particular case of the apartheid township of Soshanguve in South Africa. The community currently relies on informal trade and subsistence farming to survive, and lacks the necessary infrastructure as well as skills for further development. By introducing a single kiln to the rural context, a culture of brick-making is incrementally established over time. As the community grows, socio-economic conditions gradually improve and new urban nodes are formed around the production facility.

Image 1: Reconstructing the current urban condition: Quarries and industries are formed around the production facility.

Image 2: Mapping Soshanguve: The existing context is mapped as urban, rural, industry and landscapes.

Image 3: Future plan: Existing context is re-drawn with the building's influence on the landscape and community.

Image 4: Interiors: Very basic materials and construction is brought in line with natural light and people.

Image 5: Section and organic phasing: The building will grow in reaction to its surroundings.

Image 6: Reconstructing the current urban condition: Quarries and industries form an intermediate landscape.

Image 7: Permeable movement routes: Trade and social interaction is encouraged along the building's edges.

Image 8: Processes: Industrial brickmaking is restructured as a low-tech, low-cost, low-energy system.

Image 9: Systems within the brickmaking process are restructured to generate urban energy, while developing a socio-cultural language centered around clay, ideal for tourism and trade.

Image 10: Interiors: Very basic materials and construction is brought in line with natural light and people.

Image 11: Processes: Industrial brickmaking is restructured as a low-tech, low-cost, low-energy system.

Image 12: Monitoring the industrial landscape: Once the brickworks is past its industrial phase, workshops and barns are surrounded with increased quarters and the kiln towers are reappropriated as bird- and bat-roosts. This encourages a rich cultural biosphere to develop along the edges of the building and opens up opportunities for the future Soshanguve. The wetlands also act as natural water filters and reservoirs for the region, and may be used to cultivate aquaculture for food security.

Image 13: Monitoring the industrial landscape: Once the brickworks is past its industrial phase, workshops and barns are surrounded with increased quarters and the kiln towers are reappropriated as bird- and bat-roosts. This encourages a rich cultural biosphere to develop along the edges of the building and opens up opportunities for the future Soshanguve. The wetlands also act as natural water filters and reservoirs for the region, and may be used to cultivate aquaculture for food security.