

= Altes Stadthaus , Bonn =

The Altes Stadthaus is a former administration building in Bonn , built for the French occupation forces after World War I. It was designed by the Munich architect German Bestelmeyer in 1922 . Construction was completed in 1924 ? 25 . The building most recently served as a public library and administration building . As of 2012 , the Altes Stadthaus is being renovated and extended as a " House of Learning " ( German : " Haus der Bildung " ) , which will accommodate the community college and the library .

= = Location and architecture = =

German Bestelmeyer designed the building to make an impressive entry point to the city on the north side . It was erected on a bastion that remained from the former city walls , opposite the University of Bonn , which occupies the former residential palace of the prince @-@ elector of Cologne on the site of the south bastion . A curved section adjoins Windeckstraße on the south side and defines the remaining bastion as a garden space . Along with the " Old Toll @-@ House " , this bastion is one of the few parts of the old fortifications accessible to the public . In the 1980s , a new access route was created from the Florentiusgraben , and the courtyard was landscaped and trees planted . In the late 1990s part of this small park was turned into a playground .

The Altes Stadthaus is arranged around two rectangular internal courtyards . The main section , which faces Mühlheimer Platz , has a mansard roof and is framed by four @-@ storey turrets . The main entrance is at the southwest corner of Bottlerplatz , and the building bridges Windeckstraße , with two low arched openings . Bestelmeyer 's building was intended to be the nucleus of future development in the centre of Bonn . However , the only other construction there was the tax office on the corner of Mülheimer Platz and Münsterstraße , built in 1937 , and some further building on Bottlerplatz . After the Neues Stadthaus ? the new city administration building ? was built , the main floor of the section of Altes Stadthaus facing Mühlheimer Platz was rebuilt to house the library . In the course of this restructuring , the two courtyards were roofed over and several interior walls replaced with columns . The east wing of the building was demolished to make way for a C & A department store .

= = History = =

After World War II , the Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen was housed in the Altes Stadthaus between 1949 and 1957 , primarily in the now demolished section of the building .

In the summer of 2006 , the mayor and the speaker of the Social Democratic Party of Germany group in the city council announced plans to sell the Altes Stadthaus , relocating the library , the community college , and the city museum to a new building in Quantiusstraße , near the station . The Stadthaus was to be used as retail space .

= = = House of Learning = = =

The announcement to sell the building sparked a fierce public debate . The Green Party , at the time in a coalition with the SPD , strongly disagreed with the plan . The Christian Democratic Union party held a meeting in October 2006 . The director of the Bonn Women 's Museum , Marianne Pitzen , accused the initiators of the plan of selling off public property and underestimating the value of cultural heritage .

At the end of October 2006 , a citizens ' group was formed to promote the creation of a " House of Learning " ( German : " Haus der Bildung " ) at Bottlerplatz . The group demanded that the existing building and library should be kept and renovated .

At its session of 23 November 2006 , the planning committee of the city council charged its staff with examining how the Altes Stadthaus could be used for large @-@ scale retail without damaging it as an architectural landmark . The report , which was presented at the end of December ,

recommended reuse of the already modified internal space housing the library , and creation of additional usable space up to a total of approximately 1600 m<sup>2</sup> . This could be done by lowering the floor to street level and modifying stairway areas without changing the external appearance of the building , which is characteristic of government buildings of the 1920s , particularly in its blocky ground floor . Changes to the upper floors , which remained largely in their original condition , were not recommended .

On 21 January 2007 , the SPD and CDU city councillors announced that they had agreed to house the " Haus der Bildung " in the Altes Stadthaus . The building will be extended to accommodate it . On 31 January 2007 , the city council voted to accept this plan , with Greens , Citizens ' Coalition , CDU and SPD members voting for it . The cost of the necessary remodelling and renovations is expected to exceed ? 19 million .

An architectural contest concluded in October 2008 ; the entry of the Alexander Koblitz architecture firm of Berlin was chosen . The adjacent office building , the Siemenshaus , was demolished and on its site an extension to the Stadthaus is being erected that will incorporate a new main entrance . The work was planned to be completed in 2013 .