

# **ALPREM BROWNFIELDS**

*REDEVELOPMENT summary*





**Background;** In the last 10 years, the city of Kamnik in Slovenia invested heavily in housing projects rather than commercial or civic infrastructure, resulting in a 'commuter town' phenomenon where most residents work in other cities and spend very little time in Kamnik itself. The old city center is dying out. Bars and restaurants are the only public spaces that are left and still profitable, but then even the majority of bars and restaurants are outside of the city center now, which makes the historical part of the town even more empty. The Alprem factory used to sell aluminium products but has been abandoned in recent times. Now the owner is facing financial losses on his brownfield and would like to find a way to turn profits.

**Factors;** At the Alprem brownfield, we would like to create a synergistic redevelopment for both the owner and the city center. We have identified three major factors which contribute to the potential in Alprem.

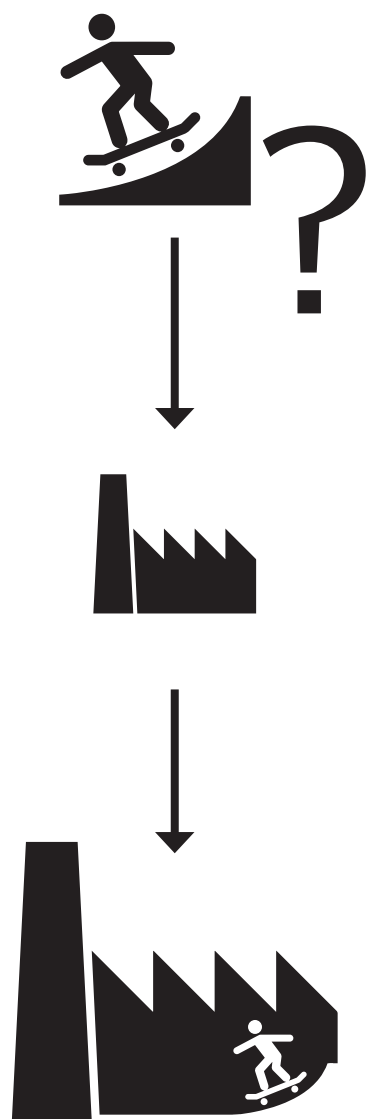
**1. The location is less than 5 minutes away from the city center.** This makes the Alprem site a good strategic location for the new leisure center of the town.

**2. Because of the crisis, almost the whole industrial complex is abandoned.** With no serious investors at the moment, the empty buildings are open to new programmatic purposes which can improve the quality and experience of space. With new programs we may be able to attract

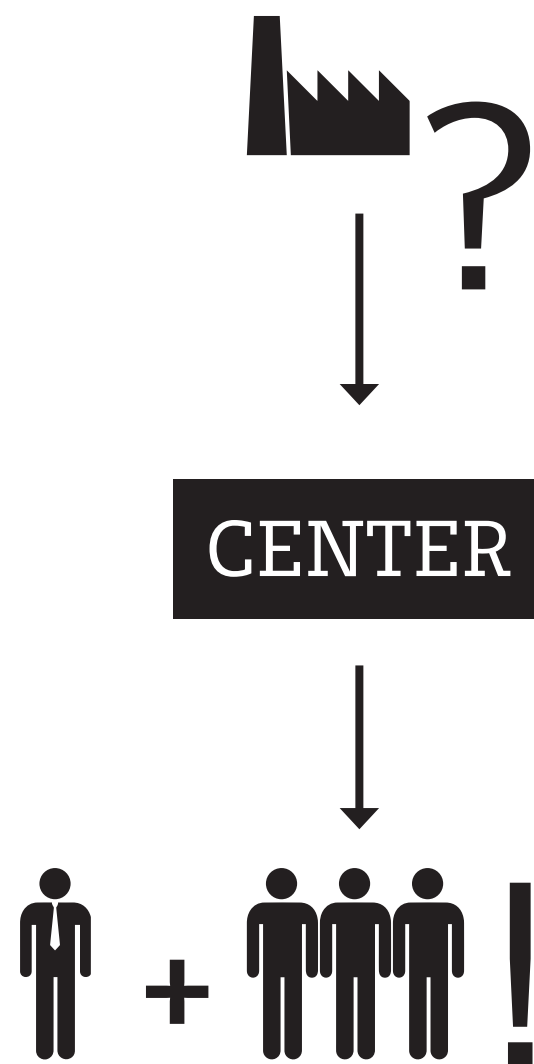
different kinds of investors. This can be a great case study for similar sites all around the world.

**3. There are many young people in Slovenia participating in cultural activities (sport, art, graffiti) who are in a need of space, but can't afford it.** Slovenia has relatively short distances between cities, which means that young people are used to driving to nearby cities such as Ljubljana and Kranj for social activities. That is in part why Kamnik has grown into a commuter town. Because newer forms of urban art and activity like skateboarding, rock climbing, and music do not have appropriate infrastructure anywhere in Slovenia, developing it at Alprem could attract young people from all over the country to the heart of Kamnik. heart of Kamnik.





**Phase one;** As a direct answer to the factors mentioned above, our first intervention on the Alprem site is an indoor skatepark, in collaboration with Skupina Štajn and local skateboarding association Debela Veronika. In 2013, we were able to get a room from the owner in one of the abandoned buildings on Alprem site. Due to space constraints, we decided to turn almost the entirety of the space into a continuous wooden bowl that conforms to the existing walls and columns. The project is going to be finished this year, and upon completion, it will be the largest indoor wooden bowl in Slovenia. This first phase demonstrates our approach of analyzing location and users and integrating new programs within infrastructure that was not designed for such programs.



**Project goals;** Our goals for the Alprem brownfields redevelopment are:

1. Comprehensive research about brownfield redevelopment as an urban challenge and a specific urban/architectural solution for the Alprem brownfield.
2. Presentation of our research and design to the owner of the Alprem brownfield, municipality, and possible investors. Realization of proposed solution.
3. For Cloud Architecture, gained knowledge on our own working process, and lessons learned for future projects.



**Next steps;** With the skatepark nearing completion, we are currently organizing our project team to begin a thorough analysis of how to develop the rest of the Alprem site in multiple phases. We believe that in the first phases we should add more programs similar to the skatepark which require no/low-investment and create no/low-profit but fill important needs in the community, as these will quickly attract greater attention and support for future programs. To this end, a significant part of our research will be determining what other groups in Kamnik and Slovenia are in need of infrastructure. We will also need to understand the current and near-future plans the owner and other groups may have for the Alprem brownfield, so that our proposals do not conflict with unexpected developments.