1
Model Project
for an Ecologically Oriented Urban-Rural Development

Responses to the ecological, social and economic crises of the modern city are developed and tested in this regional project. Special attention is given to the relationship between the city and surrounding countryside. The foundation of this model project consists of 12 individual projects that began in the politically dynamic years between 1989 and 1991. These efforts are generally characterised by a close co-operation between citizen initiatives and city administration, and instead of following the standard urban design practices have established sustainability as a primary objective. The themes of the various projects range from ecological agriculture and neighbourhood development, to the creation of an ecological-cultural centre as a forum for public activities. Overall the project is guided by three principles, organised in three project areas (Fig. 1).

1. A practical application and further development of current understanding of urban ecology in its dealings with buildings and neighbourhoods along with a networking of individual projects on a comprehensive and regional basis (project area I).

2. A renewal of urban-rural relationships that emphasise sustainability and quality of life: cycling and recycling of materials, protection of valuable landscapes and cultural sites, ecological agriculture marketed directly in the city, recreation (project area II)

3. The demonstration of economic development and employment strategies that are ecologically oriented and based on local and regional resources (project area III).

In summer 1993 the city of Leipzig obtained approval from the European Commission for running the project and received the largest sum awarded by LIFE Programme up until that time (2143 Mil. ECU funding with a total
project budget of about 9 mil. ECU). Additional support was received for sub­
projects from the Bundesbauministerium in Bonn (Federal Building Ministry, 
EXWOST Programme), and from the THERMIE Programme of the European 
Commission.

Urban Ecology (project area I) was conceived as the core of the Ostraum Project. In the following presentation some main ideas and results concerning this project area will be presented.

2
Green Radial Eilenburger Bahnhof

The former Eilenburger Bahnhof (railway station) in east-Leipzig offers a unique opportunity to demonstrate the Genius Loci of the area. The Bahnhof, including the former railyards, stretches over two kilometres, connecting the downtown with the city border to the east. Here, at the edge of the city, this urban section of land opens out onto the eastern countryside and the culturally and historically attractive landscapes (Fig. 2).

Four areas totalling 16 ha are to be transformed step by step into a multi­
functional urban-rural Green Radial. A guiding principle is that as one moves from the city gate to the countryside the open spaces will change from having an urban to a rural character. Where as the eastern area would offer room for more open and free structures, at the western end, which is the urban pole, urban forms would be represented by the architecture and the water and green spaces. The neighbourhood park with the Ecostation and the Anger/Crottendorfer railway would be situated in between. The arrangement of these four different Bahnhof sections is to be structured according to the respective histories, including varying functional characteristics and social contexts. An emphasis is placed on the experiences one would find when crossing the entire Bahnhof, and in particular this means the expression of