

## Brownfields as a tool for support of Destination Tourism development

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### ABSTRACT

The paper deals with solutions to brownfields in Slovakia in the context of the development of regional tourism. It refers to the potential that brownfields have for the benefit of further development at not only local but also at regional level in order to create aesthetically and ecologically balanced environment and landscape. It also shows the interaction of revitalization and subsequent reuse of brownfields development of Destination Tourism.

**Keywords:** brownfields, tourism, Destination Tourism

### INTRODUCTION

Brownfields represent long term unused or devastated urban areas, which impact negatively not only the local economy of the municipality, but also further development of a particular region. Their presence causes inaeesthetic and often also ecologically unbalanced landscapes and the environment, which reduces the attractiveness of tourist destination. Globally, brownfields can be understood on the one hand as a threat to the development of tourism of concerned destinations. On the other hand, revitalized brownfields can be considered as opportunities that support further development of tourist attractions and tourist destination, where they are located. A comprehensive meeting the challenges of brownfields requires a systematic approach by all participating entities, including the state and the public

administration, as well as the business sector, which would lead to the development of tourism, as well as reviving the local economy by creating jobs in the primary, secondary, and tertiary sector of tourism.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BROWNFIELDS

Brownfields problem, which is determined by socio-economic, environmental aspects and principles of sustainable development, is very diverse. The definition of "brownfields" is difficult and depends on which way we look at the problem on the reason for which brownfields are defined and in what sphere we want to re-use it. The national economy of the SR can identify brownfields as once urbanized area that is now abandoned or under-utilized.

Brownfields arose as a secondary consequence of industrial restructuring or other land use, i. e. due to economic and social changes often accompanied by extreme stress in the form of semidevastated production and administrative buildings, remnants of industrial operations, contaminated environment, and so on. From a global perspective we can consider as brownfields old, unused or economically insufficiently effectively used industrial and logistics areas, commercial and residential buildings in compactly built-up areas, as well as agricultural, military and other areas and buildings in the open country. It should be noted that brownfields arise in any country and at any time. The experience of several experts, who are dedicated to addressing the issue of brownfields, shows that in these areas gradual decrease of employment, decreased use of property and infrastructure occur. Additionally, unclean and neglected land represent also a danger of injury to potential visitors, threaten groundwater and can be a source of contamination spread to other sites that can be used for other purposes.

In the event that this area will be used again, it will bring benefits, in the form of improved environmental and landscape, new jobs, new income of the municipality, but also a better image of the region.

### **IMPACT AND CHANCES FOR USE OF BROWNFIELDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DESTINATION TOURISM**

Destination of tourism represents "target area in a particular region, which is characterized by a significant offer of attractions and tourism infrastructure." In general, therefore, we can say that the tourist destination is quite natural with unique properties that distinguish it from other destinations. Destination, as its own product and thus the competitive unit of

tourism represents a system composed of individual service providers (accommodation, catering, sports facilities, etc.) influenced by the surroundings in which it operates (political, economic, social and natural environment) and thus represents common [1]:

- a/ vision of the development of destination,
- b/ concept of tourism,
- c/ creation of menus,
- d/ marketing strategy.

Brownfields are often located in attractive tourist destinations in the interaction with primary, secondary, but also tertiary sector of tourism. Brownfields in many cases are part of cultural heritage (cultural, montaneous, and technical monuments). They are located near urban centers or major infrastructure networks. In addition, the land on which the brownfields are located, always need the same or higher costs even though it brings considerably less benefits. In addition, they significantly reduce the value and image of the surrounding land in a tourist destination. This decreases the attractiveness of the destination not only for investors but also for tourists. If a particular brownfield was revitalized and subsequently re-used, it would create potential for the development of a tourist destination in the form of an improved environment, new jobs, new facilities providing services in tourism, a better image of a tourist destination and hence new revenue village.

Development of a tourism destination creates strong pressure for expansion of accommodation, catering and other tourism facilities and thus occupancy of the natural area. However, each tourist destination needs areas for its development but it is not always possible to occupy new areas. In such cases, brownfields offer significant territorial reserve, which can be lead to further development of a tourist destination. Benefits resulting from the removal of brownfields are given in the table below (Table 1).

**Tab. 1** Positive aspects of the removal of brownfields in a tourist destination, **Source:** Authors

<b>Removal of threats</b>	elimination of health hazards (toxins, carcinogenic, teratogenic, mutagenic, other contaminants), physical hazards (unstable structures, wells, risks of floods and flooding, burning dumps, etc.).
<b>Removal of costs incurred in the destination area to no avail</b>	elimination of the cost of the brownfields area without benefit to ensure the safety, infrastructure and other social costs
<b>The acquisition of new land and development opportunities of destination</b>	importance in tourist destinations with little development space, minimizing the occupancy of new land and the possibility of preserving the natural environment for the benefit of tourist destination
<b>Increasing the attractiveness of destination</b>	improving image, quality of the environment, life, significant positive aspect for the value and further development of destination in all spheres of of tourism

Revitalization of brownfields in the territory of tourist destinations is a relatively complex process. Economically, brownfields can be divided into several categories based on the options and reasons the brownfields grant, the situation in and around it relevant to make a complex process of revitalisation of brownfields site. The existence of brownfields is often accompanied by environmental stress and therefore each site is assessed also from an environmental perspective. After the identification of previous use of the brownfield area the impact of these activities for state property, state of the individual components of the environment is assessed if necessary a detailed research on site is carried out. If an environmental burden is confirmed, the decontamination of the area must be done. The scope, time and financial intensity of decontamination depends on the specific nature of the contamination as well as future use of brownfield sites [2]. This whole process represents additional costs influencing the total amount of financial costs for the investor associated with project implementation of reuse of brownfields in the area of Destination Tourism.

As follows from the above information, revitalization and re-use of brownfields in the development of tourist destinations has its own characteristics. And it is, therefore, why investors, developers, banks (traditional subjects), but also Destination Tourism organizations, and of course the

public enter into this process.

Current practice for dealing with brownfields points to significant potential for further development of tourist destinations, where after brownfields revitalisation the image has improved, the attractiveness of a tourist destination has increased, unemployment has been reduced in the area and incomes of the village increased.

Significant examples of revitalized brownfields in the context of promoting the development of Destination Tourism are the municipalities of Bohumín, Karviná, Ostrava - Silesian Ostrava in the Moravian-Silesian region. In these places revitalization of different types of brownfields to tourism subjects was carried out which improved the image and the overall attractiveness of the specific destination.

In the municipality of Bohumín industrial brownfield - water tower (Fig. 1) was revitalized, which the last use of was within water management infrastructure. At present, this object is used in the field of hospitality services, with complete infrastructure. The investor was the Bohumín municipality.

In the city of Karviná revitalization of historic brownfield - Castle Karviná (Fig. 2) took place, whose area is 34 ha. The castle was originally the ruling family residence with farm buildings, but the last time it was used as storage and office space with a complete technical infrastructure except for



**Fig. 1** Revitalization of the city water tower in Bohumín, **Source:** [4]



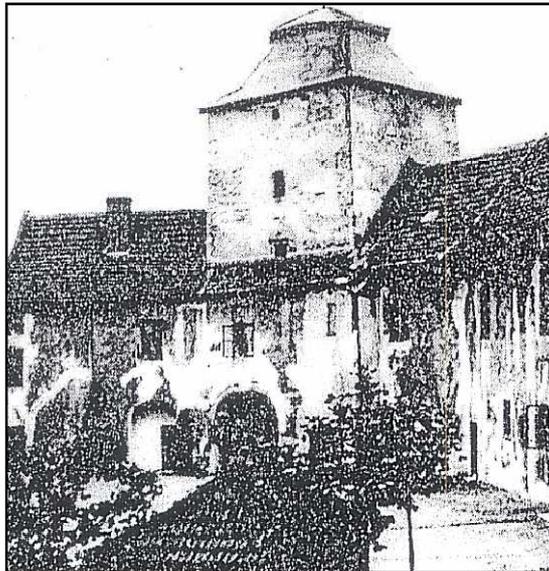
**Fig. 2** Revitalization of the castle in the city of Karvina, **Source:** [4]

data lines. After a comprehensive revitalization, the investor of which was Karviná municipality, nowadays the cultural heritage is used to implement various exhibitions and cultural events. In the city of Ostrava - Silesian Ostrava brownfield that can be included among the montaneous monuments of mining operations was restored [3]. This is a Silesian-Ostrava castle (Fig. 3) with a total area of 7.8 hectares, where the area was devastated by a long-term mining and until recently this area was also with montaneous

monument unused. The revitalization under the auspices of the City of Ostrava is the object after total renovation and extension used for the implementation of exhibitions, concerts and other cultural events and leisure.

## CONCLUSION

In many tourist destinations decaying or abandoned sites, are present i. e. brownfields, which reduce the overall



before revitalization



after revitalization

Fig. 3 Revitalization of the Silesian-Ostrava Castle, Source: [4]

attractiveness and image of the destination. Some of them are also accompanied by environmental burden, which can represent various health risks and threats. In addition, many brownfields are cultural, montaneous or technical monuments, which in the case of their recovery and reuse would create a typical range of attractions and tourism infrastructure in tourist destinations. Brownfields have significant potential for development of Destination Tourism, but their funding and revitalization represents a complex problem of cross-sectoral and thus also interdepartmental character the solution of which would contribute to further development of tourist destinations by developing competitive offers based on unique natural and cultural-historical environment.

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