

## Press information

August 2016

### **The Forest Fountain water world in Zweibrücken, Germany: watch or play along**

The new “Contwig water adventure playground” is the first of a total of three revitalisation projects, which are part of a tourism concept put together by the Zweibrücken association of municipalities. Attractive leisure offerings are intended to promote tourism for day trippers and holiday-makers in addition to the “soft” location factors (e. g. cultural offerings, shopping facilities, etc.) in the Südwestpfalz district. The Contwig municipality, with 5,130 residents, plays a central role in this association.

The valley area to the east of the Contwig municipality has the potential to become an important local recreation spot for the entire region. With walking and cycling paths along the nearby Schwarzbach, a minor body of water, it is an important area of green that stretches right into the inner city of Zweibrücken, famous for its rose gardens, and is perfectly connected to the supra-regional cycling and hiking network. The location is also optimally situated close to a railway station and linked to the excellent Rheinland-Pfalz railway network.



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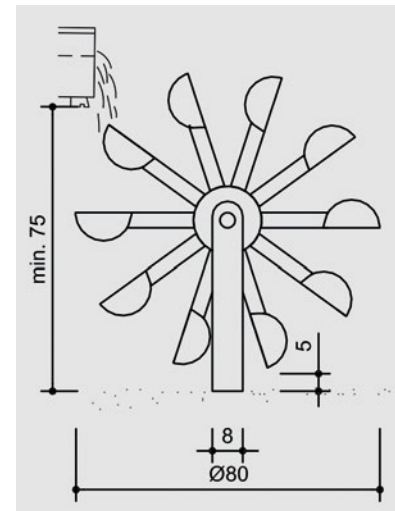
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A land development plan was drafted in the 1980s to transform the valley flat in the inner city area into a special leisure and recreation area – with tennis, a boat lake, minigolf, a children's playground and a barbeque area. After close to four decades of intensive use, it has now become necessary to completely modernise the popular area bit by bit.

### Water adventures instead of minigolf

The restructuring plans included an approximately 2,500-square-metre water adventure playground to replace the old minigolf course. During the summer months, the water playground, which was completed in 2016, can be reached via the neighbouring heated outdoor swimming pool and the walking and cycling track running past it. It is only accessible from outside in the off season. The area has been fenced in due to traffic safety.





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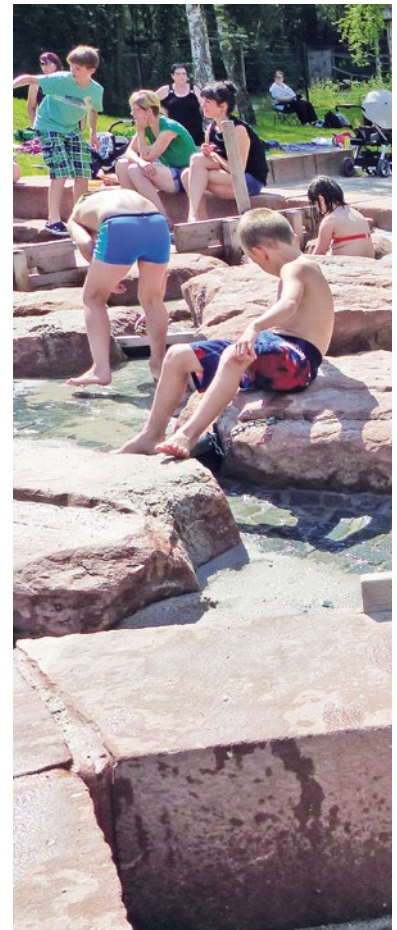
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The planning incorporates a lagoon design, surrounded by amorphous hillocks. This creates an "enclosed" play landscape with a diverse and varied topography. Two shell-shaped play islands are arranged within the lagoon, each with its own theme:

The smaller play shell boasts sand play equipment. A swipe pump conveys the groundwater through channels to the mud tables, which are arranged at different heights. The flow of water can be diverted simply by using sand. Children are able to learn all about the principles of cause and effect in a fun way.

A stylised water landscape with pumps, damming objects, channels, stepping stones and cliff motifs has been created in the large play shell. This is the highlight of the adventure playground. It includes several play stations with water feeding in from different sources – for example a Lever Pump, a Mushroom Pump, Canal Locks and Dams, which people can use to control the water level.

A "Forest Fountain" is situated at the highest level. It features wooden masts up to four metres high, which are equipped with water jets. If a pump lever is operated "interactively", people standing close by are sprayed with water from above through the perpendicular, rotating, mushroom-style or spraying fountains. This provides a welcome cooling-off in the warmer season and is fun for all age groups (all equipment is deactivated during the winter months).



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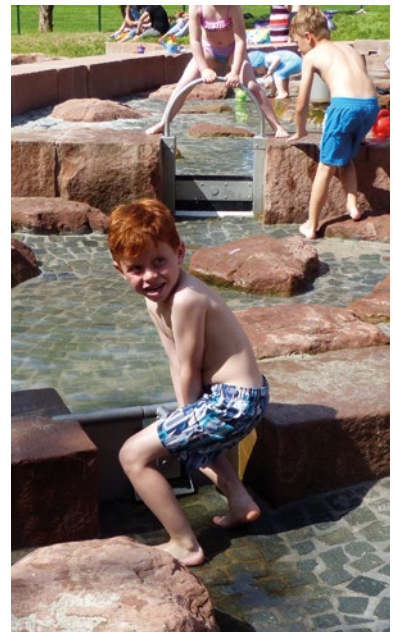
The backdrop to the play shells is a gently undulating series of hills. They enclose the perimeter of the water-play area and provide a harmonious border to the natural valley flat. Visitors have the opportunity of experiencing the area from a range of different perspectives and heights. Ample seating in the form of natural stone cubes is provided along the circular path, allowing a good view of the two play shells.

### Play, learn and discover

The concept of the water adventure playground is based on the characteristically rural surroundings of Contwig, a village of stone cutters and masons. The miniature water landscape has a very interesting and natural appearance: it encourages the children to play, learn and discover. While they are able to romp about to their heart's content in the two central play shells, parents can watch the activities in comfort from their cube seats at the periphery or can also join in the play.

The playground paths are equipped with a permeable covering for ecological reasons and water regulations. This allows any precipitation to seep directly into the subsoil without putting a strain on the drainage system. The moisture trapped in the covering layer ensures a pleasant micro-climate in warm temperatures. The playground's own well supplies the water playground with groundwater. This not only saves money but also is an ecological concept to ensure environmentally friendly handling of regenerative resources. The water is then fed back into the natural water cycle.

The play equipment was selected not only based on design aspects but also taking into consideration "play value" and "interactivity". Mainly equipment was chosen that several children can play on at once. This promotes group dynamics and prevents smaller or weaker children being excluded.





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Children, parents and grandparents all take pleasure in the high-quality play equipment, and they particularly appreciate the cleanliness and safety of the installation. According to statements from the majority of visitors, they are willing to pay the one euro that is charged by the operator. Some of the things that the visitors have repeatedly asked for are sun sails over the pumps and additional wooden benches (with backs rests) to sit in the shade. These suggestions will already be taken up on and implemented over the next few months. After all, the overall comfort of the guests is an important goal.



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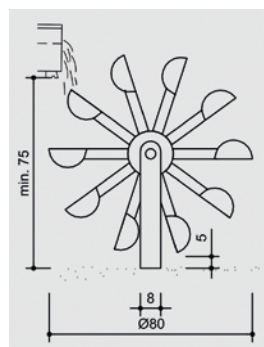
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