

Big Stuff – Cover it!

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The grounds of every industrial site have a variety of objects which are exposed to the weather. Because of the way they are constructed and the nature of the materials which they are made of, they cannot be maintained over a longer period of time if they aren't protected. Roofs can provide such a protection.

The article discusses these ideas and illustrates them on the basis of the equipment connected to the World Heritage site of the blast furnace in Völklingen / Germany.

A sophisticated examination was carried out in order to determine general principles for the size and form of the construction of the roofs. It consists of three steps:

1st Step: Taking stock. A documentation is compiled about what sort of protective roofs existed on the industrial site at Völklingen while it was still in operation. This documentation contains both a descriptive text and pictures.

2nd Step: Comparisons. A documentation is compiled about the kind of protective constructions which were used in other industrial sites. The advantages and disadvantages of these kinds of constructions are outlined. This documentation also contains a descriptive text and pictures. The information gathered here leads to a typology of protective constructions on industrial sites:

- Temporary plastic cover;
- Integrated protective cover out of metal sheets;
- Protective roof;
- Protective structure.

3rd Step: Decision-making. Using the information gathered from steps 1 and 2, general principles for the design of protective roofs are defined:

1. Protective roof as compromise between desired degree of protection and costs.
2. Protective roof as simple, modern structure to distinguish it from the object.
3. Protective roof as an object of design in itself, if possible having an abstract relationship to the object.
4. Integrated protective covering with metal plates: only for smaller objects - as an addition or reconstruction.

No good alternatives are:

- protective covering out of plastic only as emergency measure;
- protective structures as modern structure, because they
- cover too much of the object and prevent an understanding of the overall picture;
- are most expensive.

The article discusses the financial write-off between the costs of conservation and for a protective roof in terms of investment: it is clearly shown, that investment in a protection roof is a good choice.

The article concludes with a description of the principles and standards for protective roofs in the World Heritage Site of blast furnace in Völklingen.