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Incentives for Green Roofs in the Bavarian Capital of Munich through the use of Planning, Building and Environmental Law

Summary

The high level of structural build-up in the centre of Munich and the resulting strain has led the city to introduce binding obligations regarding the incorporation of roof landscaping into local development plans and city regulations concerning undeveloped areas. These obligations were introduced on an individual basis during the 1980s but have been standardised since the 1990s. The legal basis for these are the German Federal Building Code, the Bavarian Building Code and the Bavarian Environmental Law. Since then a large number of roofs and rooftops have been landscaped and the negative effects of the intense building activity on the ecosystem and the landscape have been counteracted. The financial incentives for landscaping roofs play only a secondary role.

1 | The Significance of Green Roofing in Munich – Necessity and the Current Situation

The urban centre of Munich is characterised to a strong degree by the intense concentration on the inner city. This means that the inner city is extremely built up, which in turn results in negative consequences for the climate and the water balance.

During the 1980s these correlations played an increasing role in the public consciousness as part of the emerging ecological movement and criticism of modern town planning, and thus were brought into the consciousness of the politicians and administrators responsible for this issue. The result was that the first regulations regarding green roofing in development plans were introduced approximately 25 years ago. Despite this there remained a long list of objections to rebut (e.g. regarding costs, life span, structures, fire protection), before green roofs could be anchored into the community statutes in the mid-1990s and introduced as standard in industrial and business zones, and also in residential areas.