

Aupark brand shopping and leisure centres are expanding all over Slovakia



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Piešťany: housing not built in the end

Piešťany Aupark is the second in Slovakia after Bratislava. It cost approximately EUR 25 mill., it is near pedestrian zone and historic centre of the spa town. It is located on a former car park. Piešťany's inhabitants and spa guests now have further 10 thousand m² for shopping and entertainment premises. Renowned brands found their place there as well as a bank, pharmacy, large bookshop, supermarket, restaurant and café. 390 parking spaces are available for car drivers.

Construction took place without major complications although last year's economic recession also showed here. HB Reavis Slovakia originally planned to build flats too, however, it turned out that residential sector had also suffered losses. The residences were not built as the entire project's economy would have been threatened. On the other hand, new green areas, city equipment, benches, reconstructed roads and roundabouts nearby Aupark have been built.

Remo Cicutto, mayor of Piešťany, added that they had tried to get the most financial advantages possible from the sale of land. We wanted to improve the surroundings and the building needed to fit in the town centre style. Piešťany inhabitants also approve of aupark which serves as catchment area from Hlohovec to Nové mesto nad Váhom and vicinity of Piešťany, such as Vrbové, Krajné, Myjava to Stará Túra.

Trenčín: heritage protection officials vs. town and investor

Trenčín Aupark will be built in the busiest part of the regional capital on the area of the current park between exit from bridge over Váh river and the streets Kniežat'a Pribinu and Palackého. Transport in the leisure and commercial centre must still be resolved. It will cost EUR 41 mill. After completion it will offer sales area of more than 16 thousand m².

Some town councillors, as well as inhabitants, regard the project critically. Similar to Žilina, they argue that such complex does not belong in the city centre. It will increase the already congested traffic and it will worsen the town centre skyline with historical sights under the castle, say heritage protection officials. They argue with the investors and the town authorities as the town development plan does not assign exact square metres but a maximum number of built floors. They also blame the planners that they deliberately did not show people what the building will actually look like. Trenčín's management approved of Aupark construction and they say it is in accordance with the town's development plan. The investors

can now chop down nearly a hundred trees, they still need to wait for the building permission. They will pay nearly 90 thousand EUR.

Urbanistic side of the Trenčín Aupark will also catch interest. “While creating the project, we reflected towns’ needs and remarks to the largest possible extent,” said Roman Karabelli from HB Reavis to Stavebné fórum.sk. When looking across the river, the property is laid out in such a way so that it does not interfere with the skyline of the Trenčín castle. On the other hand, when looking at the roof scenery from the castle, the roof is designed as the fifth frontage with structured green area on the roof, so that the mass does not appear disturbing but mostly unobtrusive. And the façade is the most interesting. The designed façade has never been used in Central Europe so far. Unlike the ivy growing along steel ropes behind a glass façade, we use live organism growing directly from the façade. The unique French system uses construction on the façade where plants are planted in Chilean moss.“

Žilina: two roofed squares + new street

Žilina Aupark is progressing on pedestrian zone and it will be opened in autumn. It is pegged by Štúrovo námesti, R. Zaymusa street from the north, from the east by the pedestrian road next to Dom odborov, Sociálna poisťovna and Slovenska sporiteľna. It is demarcated by Veľká okružná street from the south which has the function of inner ringroad of the centre and hotel Slovakia and premises of a primary school from the west.

Thanks to its ideal position in the very city centre, Aupark is easily accessible on foot, by car or by public transport. Public transport stops, with a dense network of buslines from various town districts, are located directly opposite the entrance to shopping and leisure centre. The coach and railway stations are maximum six minutes on foot. Sufficient number of parking spaces is available to car drivers in the underground garage. The centre offers 137 shops with a wide selection of goods and services to their visitors .

Architectural plan of the project was prepared by Jančina studio which also designed Bratislava’s Aupark. Extensive inner space of the centre with natural daylight created by two roofed squares and new street which will become a part of Žilina’s pedestrian zone. High quality materials such as natural stone, wood and glass supplemented by a large number of live green areas and tree alleys will create and an elegant and pleasant architectural design.

Construction of Žilina’s Aupark has been strongly publicized in Slovakia. New town management was against it being in the city centre and they offered the investor locations on city outskirts. After long wrangling, the Regional Court in Žilina decided in favour of the investor, ie. the company Aupark Žilina.

Košice: the second largest after Bratislava

Start of construction of the multifunctional shopping and administration complex at Námestí osloboditeľov in Košice was announced at the beginning of January this year. Košice Aupark will be the second largest in Slovakia, after Bratislava. According to the original plan, its construction was supposed to start two years ago. However, an ideal solution for transport was searched and the legalities of the ownership relations with the town had to be clarified.

Estimated investment expenses for the entire construction reach approximately EUR 93 mill., which makes it one of the largest investments in the city for the last ten years. Košice Aupark should open at the end of 2011, with nearly 34 thousand m², over one hundred outlets and 1100 parking spaces. Apart from this, it

will offer more than 11 thousand m² of lettable top standard office areas. Last but not least, it will bring several hundreds of new jobs. The company will also build a modern four-lane public road to Námestí osloboditeľov.

The property developer company HB Reavis Slovakia announced in February that during excavation works at the Námestí osloboditeľov, remains of stone walls of a citadel's bastion have been found. The experts at the Extraordinary Section of Heritage Protection Office of Slovakia called this discovery unique in the country context. The regional section of Heritage Protection Office in Košice recommended the preservation of the citadel as a whole and due to the exceptional character of the building, to preserve its material essence and location. Following the evaluation of the discovery, it is necessary to combine ways of the presenting it in a newly constructed building in a manner that is easy to understand for the public.

Photo and visualisation - HB Reavis Slovakia

1, 2 - Aupark Piešťany

3, 4 - Aupark Trenčín

5, 6 - Aupark Žilina

7, 8 - Aupark Košice

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