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Press release

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Krnov council reveals RMJM's new design proposal for central Krnov

Krnov City Council has released a new design proposal aimed at rejuvenating the northeastern Czech town. The proposal, designed by RMJM Prague, is part of the city's Strategic Plan for 2016-2023 and will see the central Shopping House PRIOR building repurposed into two smaller units for residential, commercial, civic and hospitality use.

The development of the overall project presented by RMJM is divided into three stages — demolition of the existing building and reconstruction of one of its storeys, construction of an inner square (or piazzetta) which will initially only be accessible via the building's business units, and finally, the reconstruction of the neighbouring four-storey building. Once reconstructed, this building will include a library, a cafe, a civic hall and housing units. This will be linked to the first building by the piazzetta and passages from the Chateau Square and the Liberated Square, which will also form the complex's pedestrian interconnection. A roof terrace and connecting bridges will be built at the same time.

The PRIOR Shopping Centre (also known as Shopping House PRIOR) was built between 1977 and 1979, with trading actually starting in 1983. Since then, the population of Krnov has started to decrease each year by roughly 300 people, as residents leave in search of work and better living conditions. RMJM Prague's proposal aims to support the mitigation of urban depopulation by developing civic amenities such as a library and a community centre, alongside expanding the number of housing units and parking spaces in central Krnov.

Luca Aldrichi, RMJM Prague Chief Architect and project leader said: "At RMJM Prague, we are very proud to be collaborating with Krnov City Council on this key project for the community. Our goal was to increase the value and attractiveness of the city centre and, in a way, breathe new life into it. Working in a historical environment is always challenging, but we think that our design can really improve the city's offering. We hope to proceed with the next stages very soon."

Environmental concerns are also at the heart of the design proposal. The building will be connected to a central heat supply and will therefore not produce any direct emissions from heating. On top of that, the project incorporates recyclable materials, namely photovoltaic panels and solar collectors for water heating, which will be placed on the roof of the library.

The proposed project was first released to Krnov City Council on the 12th of December 2018.

Notes to the Editors

About RMJM

Founded by Sir Robert Matthew and Stirrat Johnson-Marshall in 1956, RMJM Group is one of the largest, most geographically and culturally diverse architecture firms in the world. With studios across five continents (collectively representing 56 nationalities and 40 different language groups), the RMJM Group is a family of architecture studios who share knowledge, expertise and design talent, working together to solve design problems and focussing on consistently adding world-class projects to an ever-expanding portfolio.

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