



“There have been mobile recycling projects for years in other countries”

Short interview with Peter Schmed,
Planning Project Manager at Implenia Buildings

Mr Schmed, where did the idea for the mobile recycling facility in Winterthur come from?

In summer 2013 I was responsible for the technical development of Implenia's sue & til projects in Neuhegi. One of my jobs was to work out what to do with the excavated spoil. I heard that the company was already considering setting up a local concrete plant for the neighbouring roy project. So I just put one and one together... and in this case came up with three. By which I mean we could take the spoil from sue & til and use it on site to make concrete for roy, thus making a major contribution to sustainability.

Given the obvious environmental and economic benefits, you have to ask why the system hasn't been tried before?

That has a lot to do with the limited scale of building projects here in Switzerland. You need a certain volume to make it worthwhile and you certainly need enough space to locate the facility and store the recycled material. The plots we are dealing with in Winterthur are big enough to fulfil these criteria. Also, the quality of the excavated material is relatively good here. There have been mobile recycling projects like this for years in other countries.

It clearly makes sense to recycle building materials, but doesn't the mobile recycling system also damage the immediate environment with waste water and noise?

The water used for washing is neutralised and put back into the loop. Obviously, the facility can't work silently, but the washing process doesn't generate a huge amount of sound. We may also install another crusher for recycling old concrete, but this will be located next to the sorting and washing plant, so the nearest houses, which are actually a good distance away will be protected from the noise it makes. Implenia has already used a similar crusher opposite a college in the middle of Zurich without any problem.