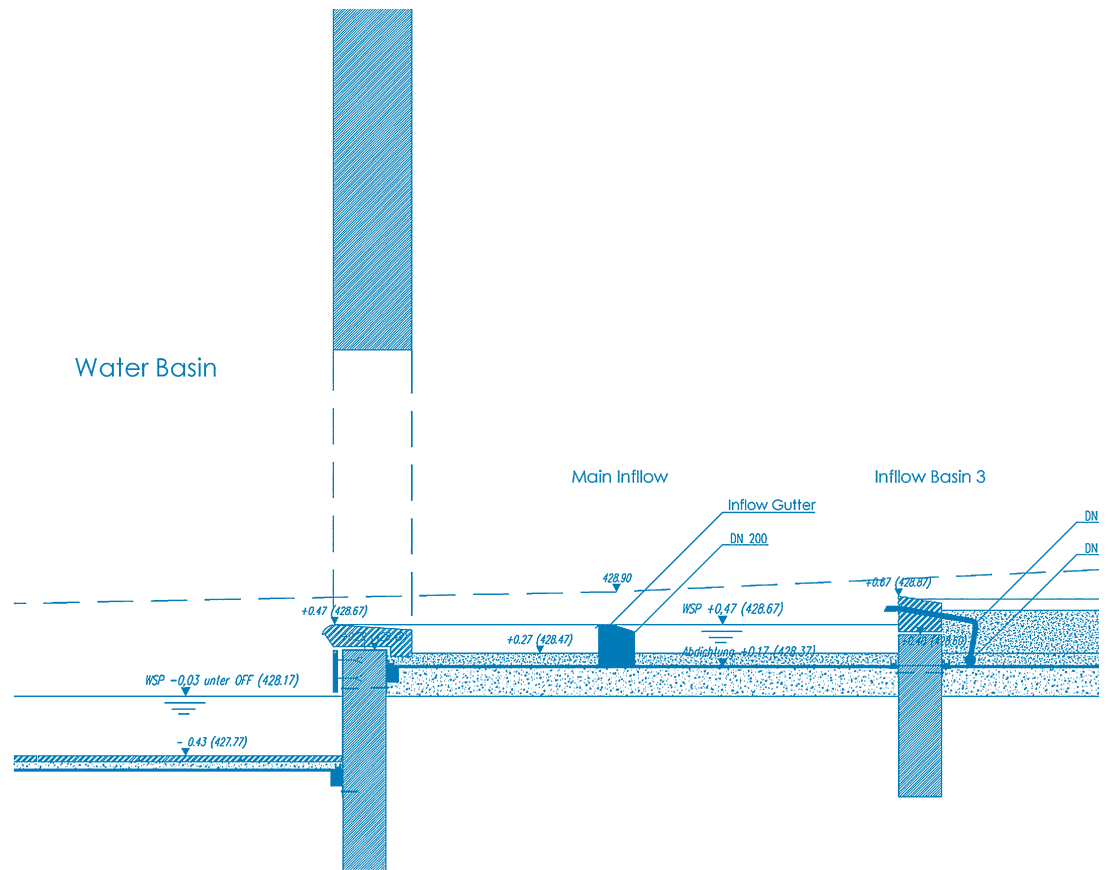


From the idea to the finished object

Section through
purification biotope



Water can be a problem in urban open spaces. Building water features seems prohibitively expensive, too many things can go wrong, and maintenance is too expensive. But when the water quality is right, pumps, filters and control devices are working properly, the parts of the building that come in contact with the water are not damaged and when water, along with light and sound effects, turns boring places into exciting ones, no one wants to be without it. But however easily and light-heartedly water flows and splashes – it needs expert handling in urban landscapes.

Constructed water features are always individual objects. They emerge from interplay between the possibilities offered by the site and clients' and planners' ideas and wishes. The techniques used to install and run them are as varied as the water features themselves. They are rarely to be had off the peg, but need a technical concept that is individually tailored to their location.

But on the other hand there are always standards and guidelines to be taken into account, for example those applying to the depth of the water or water hygiene. There are a wide range of regulations applying to these in different countries. Experience shows that these can be interpreted individually in terms of each particular situation. This is especially true if new and unconventional ideas are being realized: it is innovative concepts above all that mean thinking beyond existing norms. Here the key recommendation is that the responsible

authorities should be involved in the search for new solutions from the outset.

The following brings together a few hints on building and running water features that have emerged over the years from day-to-day work in the studio.

Sourcing and water quality

A fundamental criterion for the building and running of water features is the quality of the water. This is affected by physical, chemical and biological processes in the water itself and by its interplay with its immediate surroundings.

Water sourcing: Water features usually tap into the local water supply which generally means using drinking water. It is also becoming increasingly attractive to think of using available surface run-off, drainage water or roof collected rainwater.

The origins and quality of water are crucial in terms of its possible use. When concerning a complex planning task, it is advisable to consult experts like limnologists to develop parameters for anticipated water quality. It is also important to identify questions about water hygiene and upkeep as quality requirements even during the design phase. Different standards apply according to the purpose for which the water is being used. The more the water comes into direct contact with people, for example with children playing, the more

