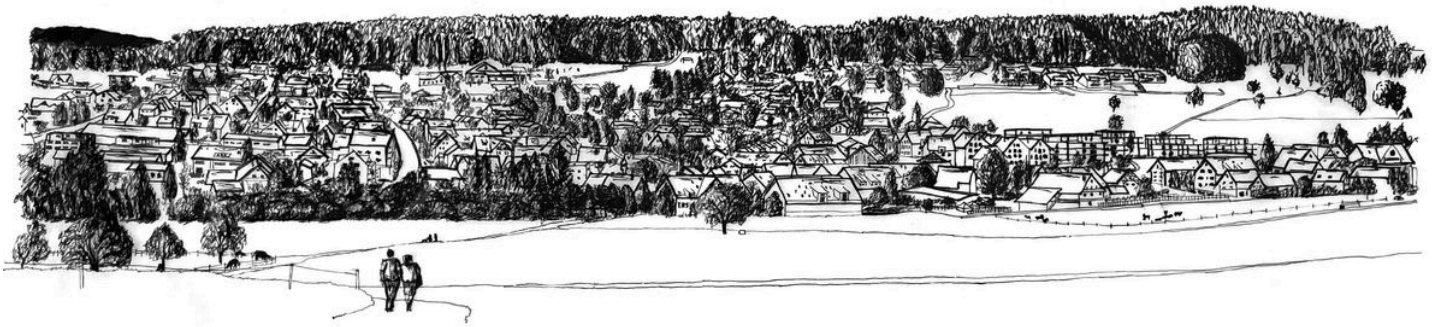
ETH Zurich Department of Architecture
ARCHITECTURE OF TERRITORY
Chair of Architecture
and Territorial Planning
Professor Milica Topalović

Village Life
Spring 2022

Aesch ZH

The Village with Cooperative Values

Bruno de Almeida Ferreira and Alessandro Paterniti Barbino



Aesch is a countryside municipality on the outskirts of the City of Zurich. In the last decade it has experienced a vertiginous population growth of more than 61 %. The large constructive land reserve makes it a highly attractive area for those who dream of a green property just a few minutes' drive from the city centre. Thanks to the opening of the Westumfahrung and the Aeschertunnel, the village and its neighbours have experienced a period of strong interest. High land prices in Switzerland and the federal building laws do not assist to a controlled development of the village; this endangers the history and face of a village, which can boast of having represented a pioneering model from the 1960s, until the integration of the zoning plan in 1983.

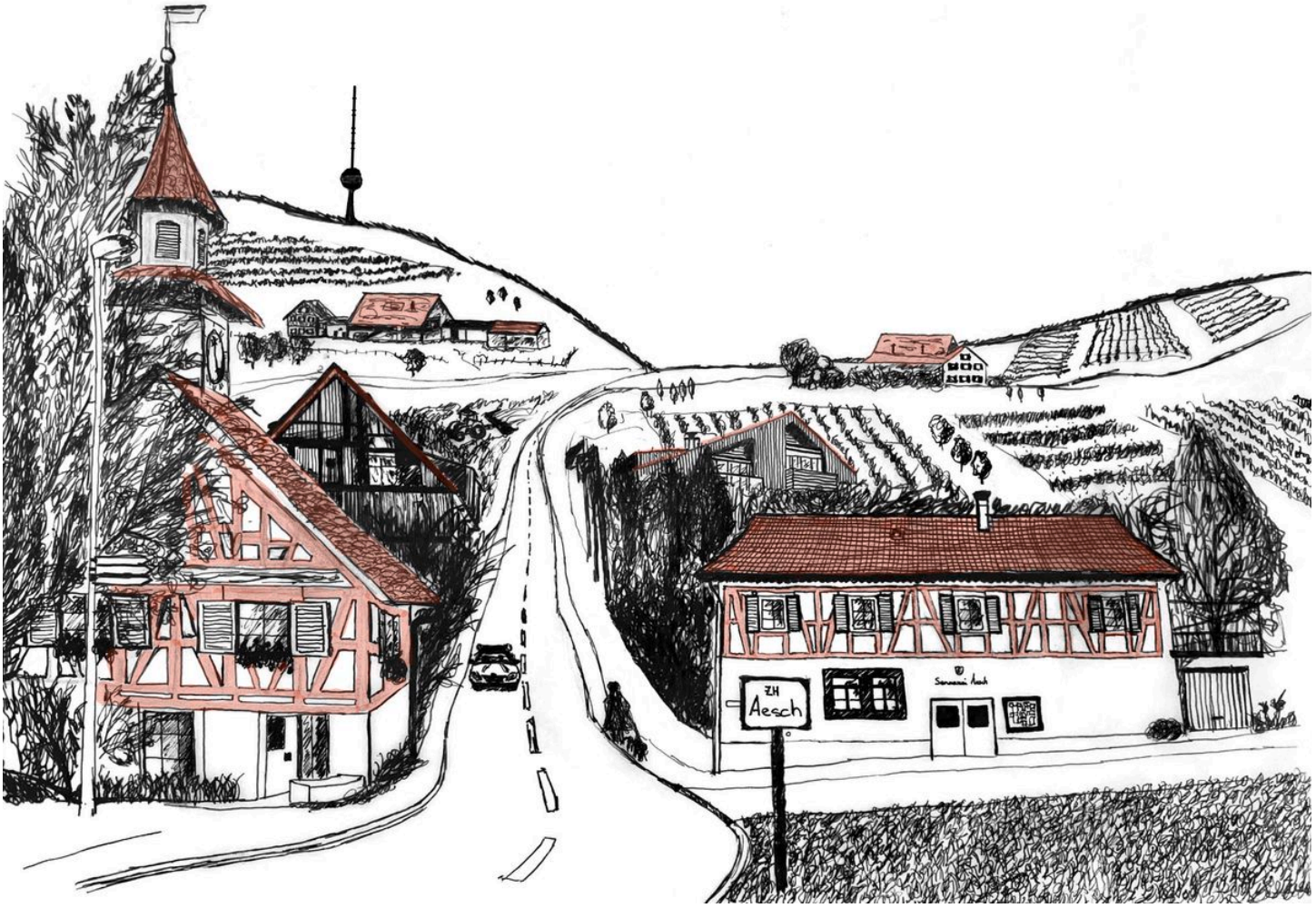
The Dorfgenossenschaft protected villager's interests by controlling growth and preserving the character of the village. Its reintegration in the present day could prevent Aesch from furious development aimed at quick profits: safeguarding the charm of its picturesque landscape.



AESCH, ZH

Elevation: 540 m.a.s.l.
Surface: 5.2 km^2
Population: 1,709 inh.
Population density: 326 inh./km^2
Population growth: 61.4 %
Average yearly income: 112,716 CHF/yr.
Population over 65 years old: 17.3 %
Share of foreign population: 20.0 %

Exploring the Presence



Aesch is a rural village characterised by a great attachment to the existing architectural fabric. The charming landscape at the doorstep of the Uetliberg has been shaped over the decades thanks to the deep history related to a village that has chosen to design its own fabric by itself.





Pitoresque landscape.







Historical buildings.







Modest living







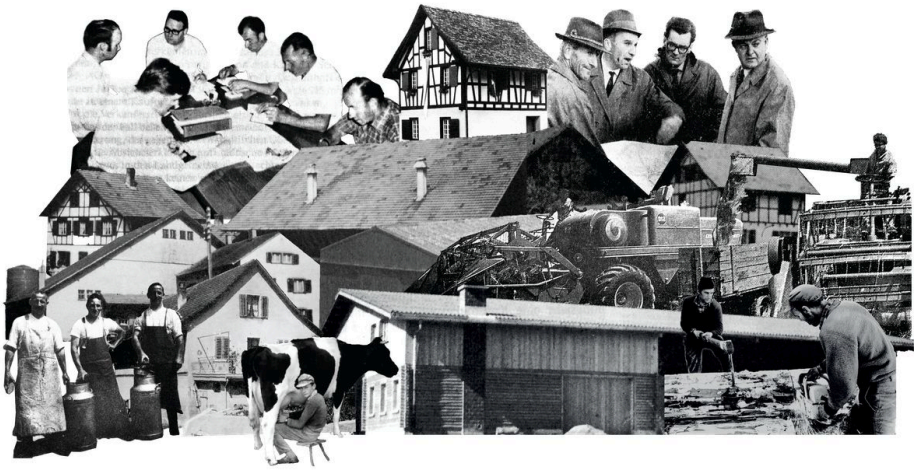
The new scale



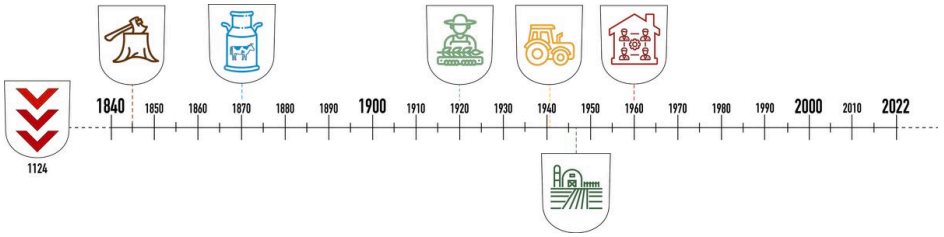
Once Upon a Time...



The call for a development of the municipality's land led to the emergence of a singular model based on cooperative work. Within the evolving village, there were 6 cooperative actors, which dealt not only with the building fabric but also with wood, milk, agricultural machinery and the selling of local products.



Collage of the cooperatives.

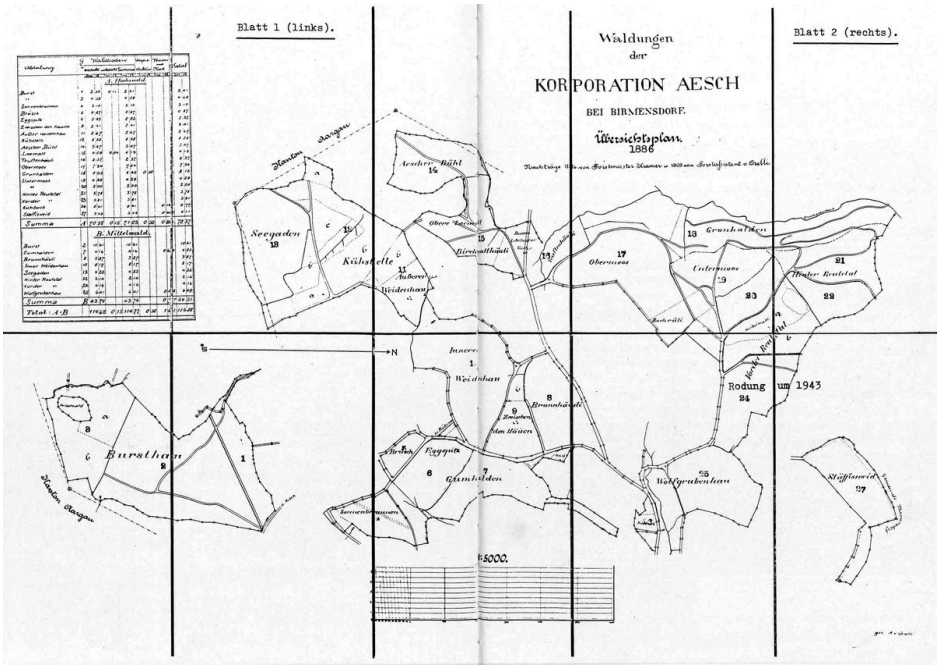


Timeline of cooperative foundings.

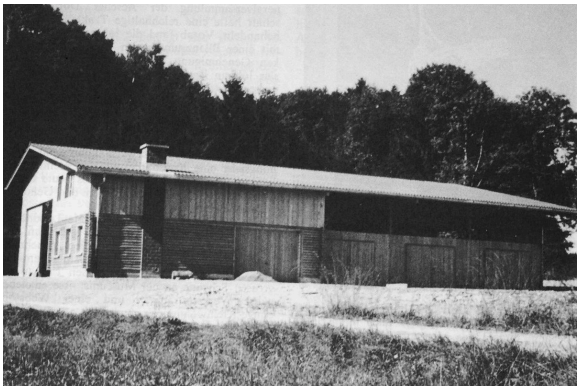
Holzkorporation – 1845



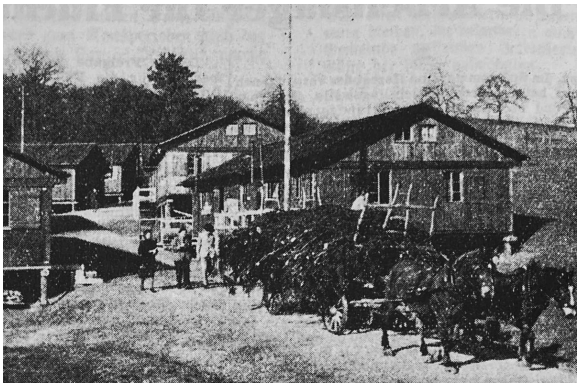
Its main objective is to protect the forest from overfelling, for a healthy and enhanced landscape.



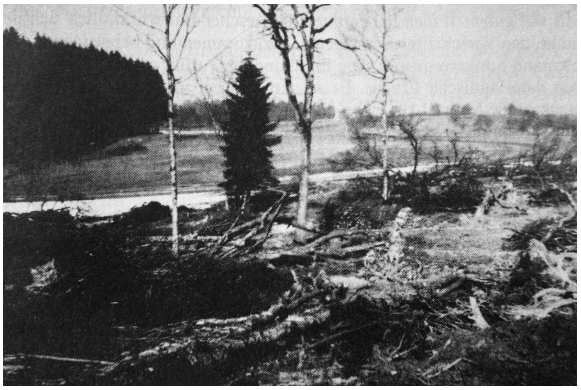
Map of 1886 showing forest owned by wood corporation.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



Wood corporation warehouse in 1973.



Refugee Camp in 1943.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



Cleansing of Reuental through refugees in 1943.



Map of Aesch in 1845.



Map of Aesch with ownership and work of Holzkorporation.

Milchgenossenschaft – 1870



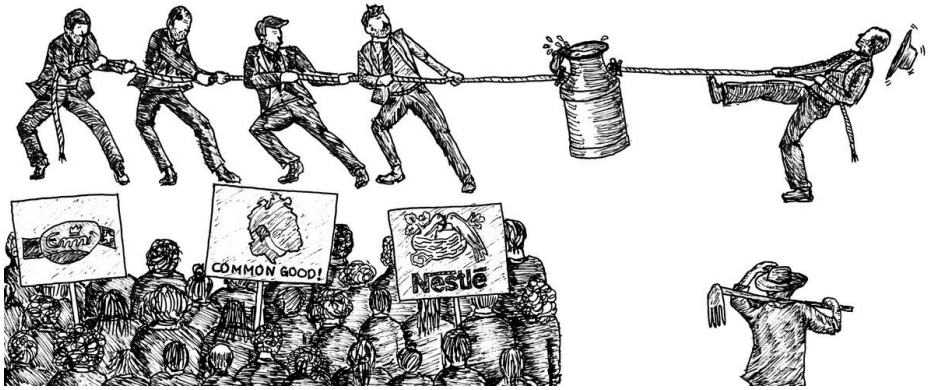
This cooperative used to be linked to the distribution of local milk to the inhabitants and then to the larger producers. Over the years, this model, present in many other realities, has gradually disappeared, taken over and overwhelmed by large cooperative industries.



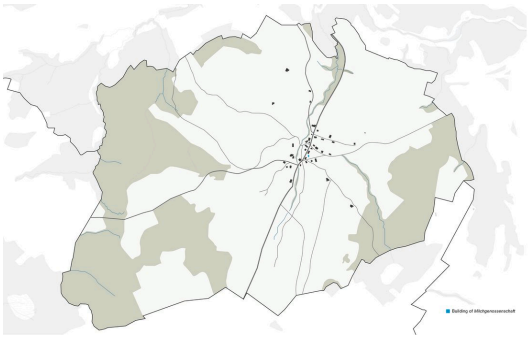




"Sännerei", "Sännermanner" and the transport of the Milk to the city
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



Converting milk to a common good.



Map of Aesch 1870.



Map of Aesch with ownership of Milchgenossenschaft.

Landwirtschaft. Genossenschaft – 1920



It is a self-supporting local sales organisation, based on the sales not only of food, but also of seeds for cultivation, fertilisers and manure. A cooperative closely linked with the Flurgenossenschaft. through the years has disappeared, taken over by supply and agriculture companies.



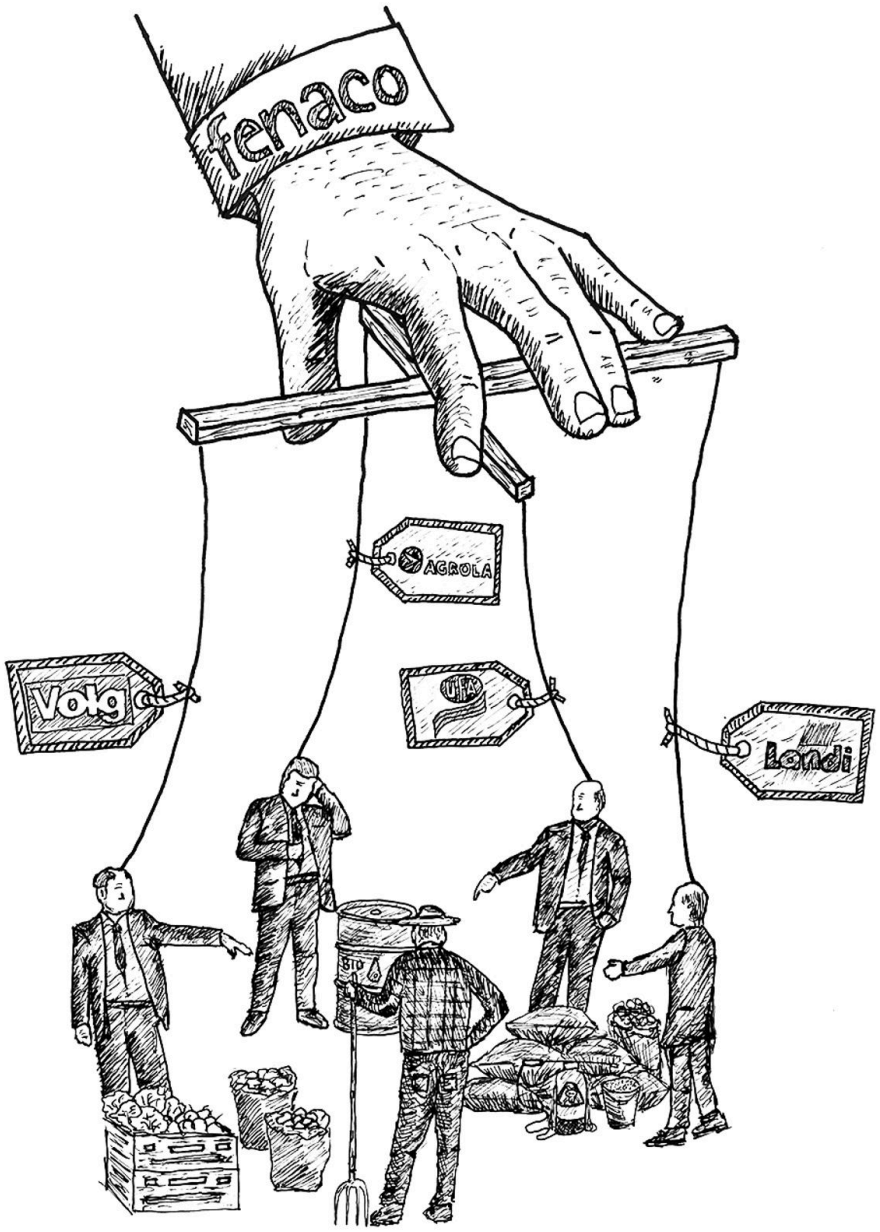
Agriculture cooperative store
before ownership change.



Trading goods between farmers.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



Agriculture cooperative store
before ownership change in 1966.



Monopolisation of goods through agricultural companies.



Map of Aesch in 1920.

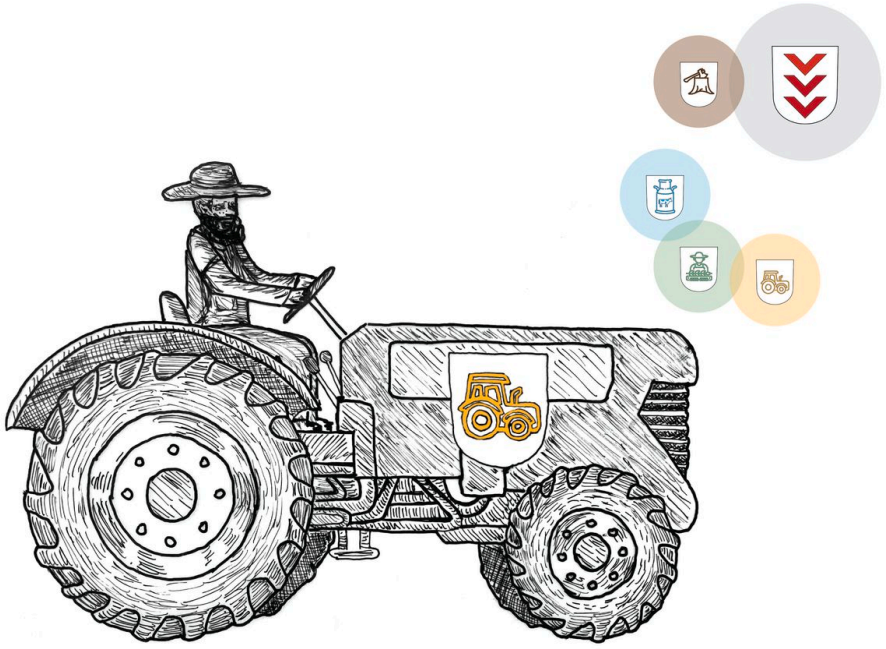


Map of Aesch with ownership of Landwirtschaftliche Genossenschaft.

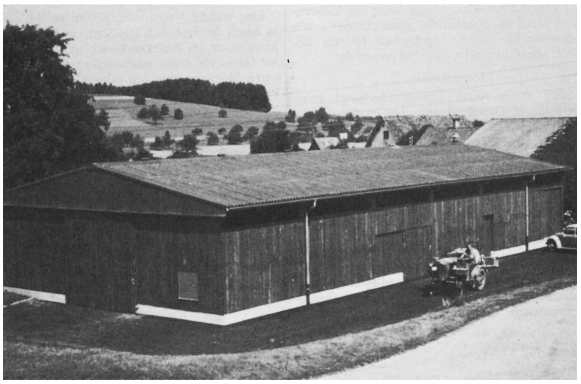


Map of Aesch with overtake of Volg .

Maschinengenossenschaft – 1941



A cooperative often found in other realities; it is responsible for making farming machinery available to local farmers in need.



Machine Hall.



Tractor.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.



Combine harvester.



Map of Aesch 1941.

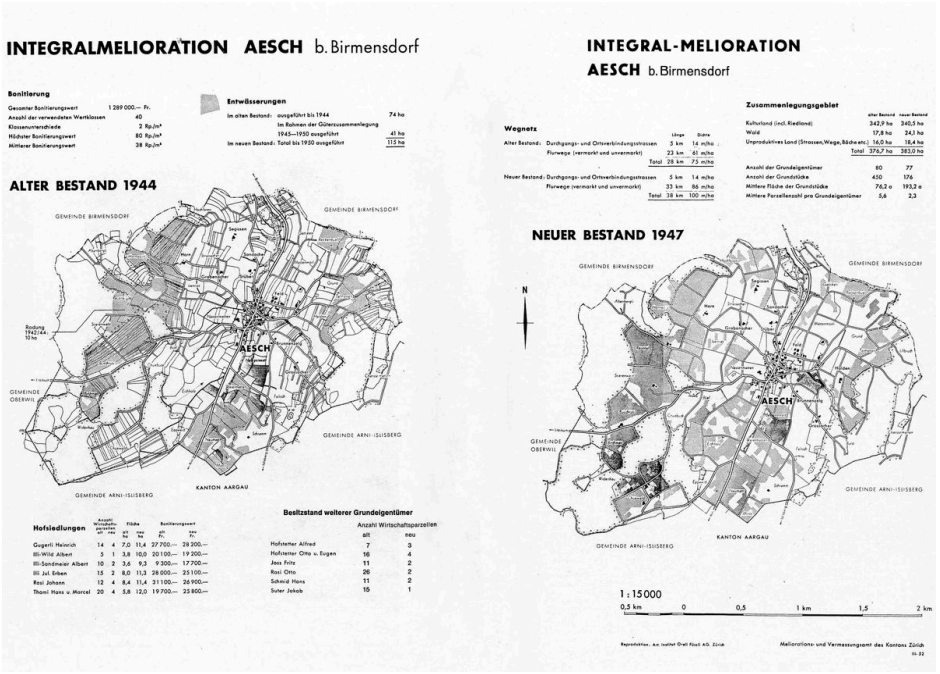


Map of Aesch with ownership
of Maschinengenossenschaft.

Flurgenossenschaft – 1947



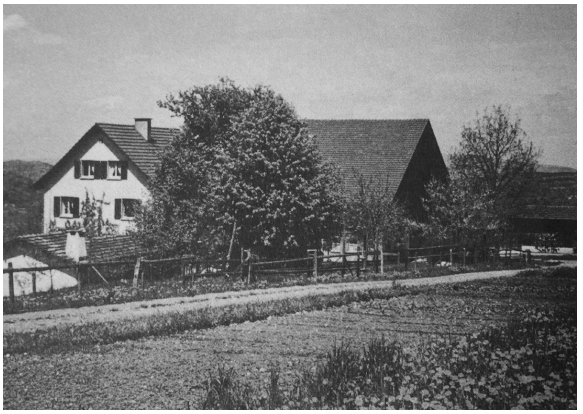
It is mainly related to land management of the rural landscape, its interests revolving around local farmers.



Maps of melioration of lands before (1944) and after (1947).
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



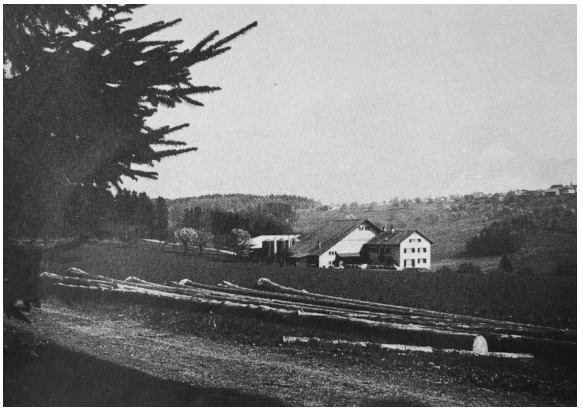
Settlement Rasi in Buechrüti.



Settlement Gugerli in Haldenhof.



Settlement Hofstetter in Chüewald.



Settlement Bannwart in Neuweid.



Settlement Illi in Reuentalk.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



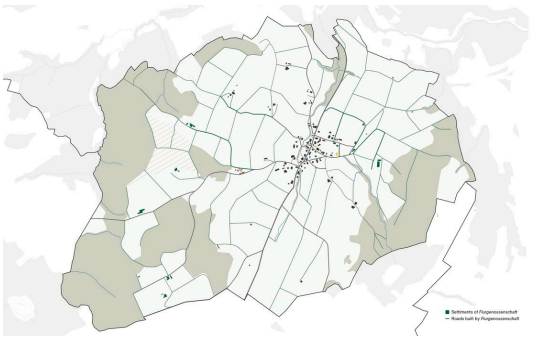
Settlement Thomi in Stierenwald.



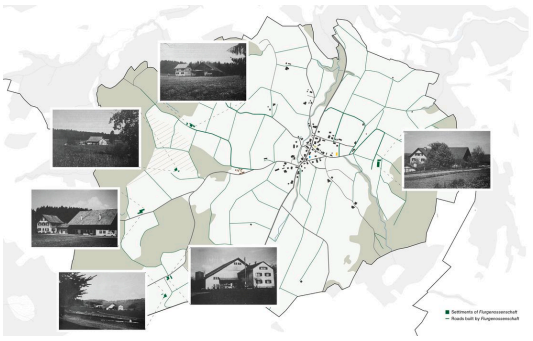
Bird eye view of land before melioration (1944).
E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.



Bird eye view of land after melioration (2015).
www.aesch-zh.ch [http://www.aesch-zh.ch]



Map of Aesch in 1947.

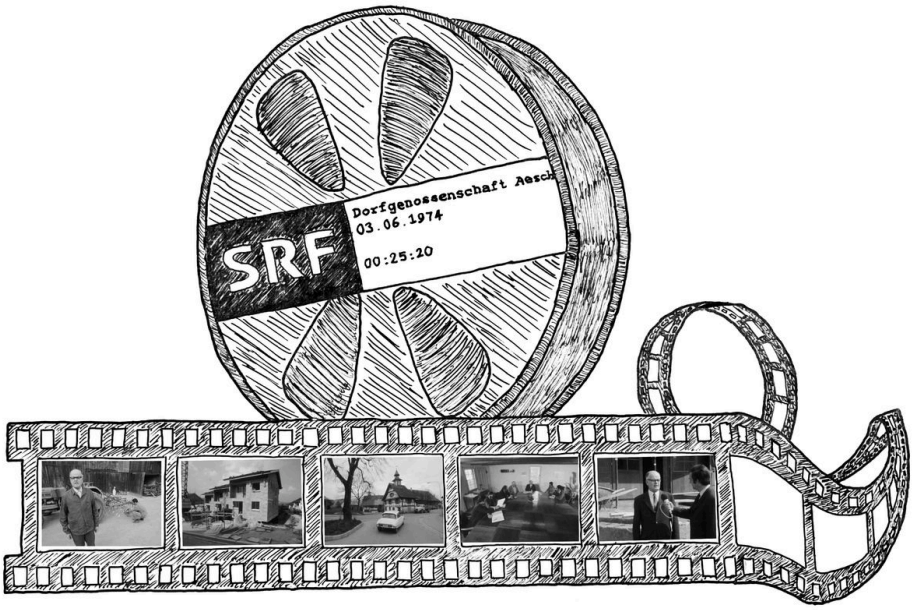


Map of Aesch with the six founding settlements of the Flurgenossenschaft.

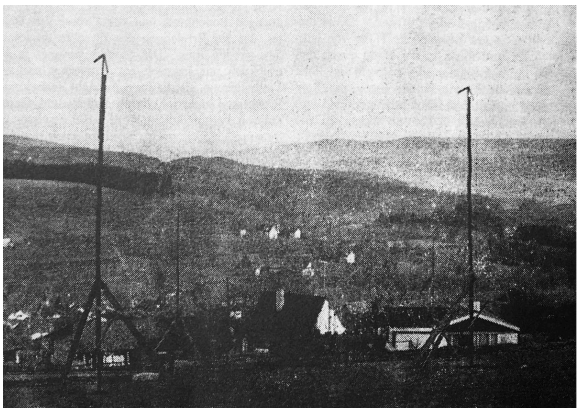
Dorfgenossenschaft – 1960



The main actor of Aesch, a cooperative that was in the business of acquiring their land, building on it and reselling it, without acting profit oriented. It was also involved in the restoration of decaying houses to preserve the character of the village.



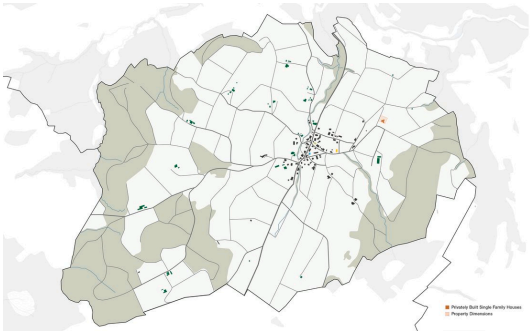
Dorfgenossenschaft Aesch
Source: SRF Documentary 1974 [https://www.srf.ch/play/tv/landwirtschaft-heute/video/dorfgenossenschaft-aesch?urn=urn:srf:video:88956670-f89b-4ee3-ad4f-19ecef22d792]



Speculation arrives at Aesch.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



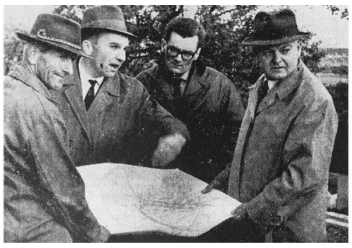
First big private property built Aesch.



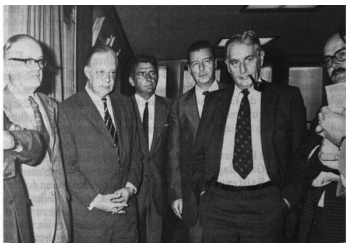
Map of Aesch in 1960.



Map of Aesch with the first privately built property in 1960.







Ernst Gugerli (1911-1993).
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.



Model of land acquirement and housing construction by the Dorfgenossenschaft.

1. A farmer decides to get rid of his piece of land to get liquidity.

2. The Dorfgenossenschaft buys the piece of land as a cooperative, each member of the cooperative invests an amount of money ranging from 500.- for the simple member to 10,000.- of the legal members, the missing money is covered by bank credit.

3. The Dorfgenossenschaft then becomes the main actor in the development of the purchased land. They not only builds residential units, but also protects and restores older dwellings to give them new life.

4. Once built, the housing units are offered directly to the buyer, often the buyers include residents.

5. The architectural features present in the village factory have been preserved, along with the beauty and charm of the country landscape. In addition, the decaying houses have been restored to their full splendour.

6. The peculiarity of this model is the fact that by acting through the cooperative, the territory always remains property of the municipality. In addition, the main monetary flow always remain, locked within the village borders, which serves as an anti-speculation mechanism to help protect the land and its characteristics.

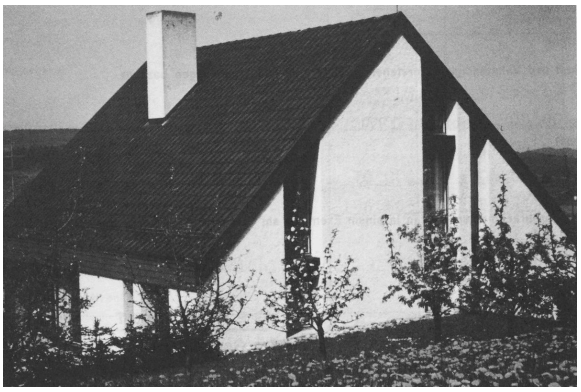
Explanation of the model

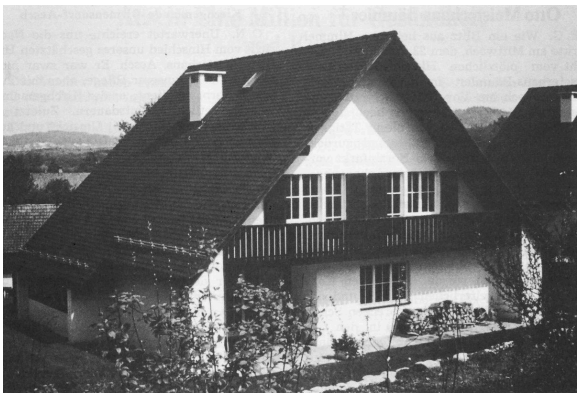


"Dorfhelferin"
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.

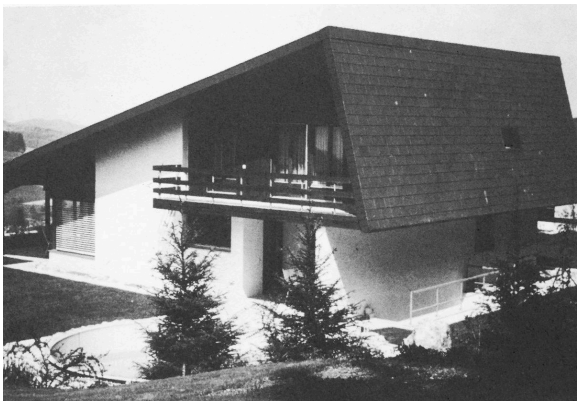


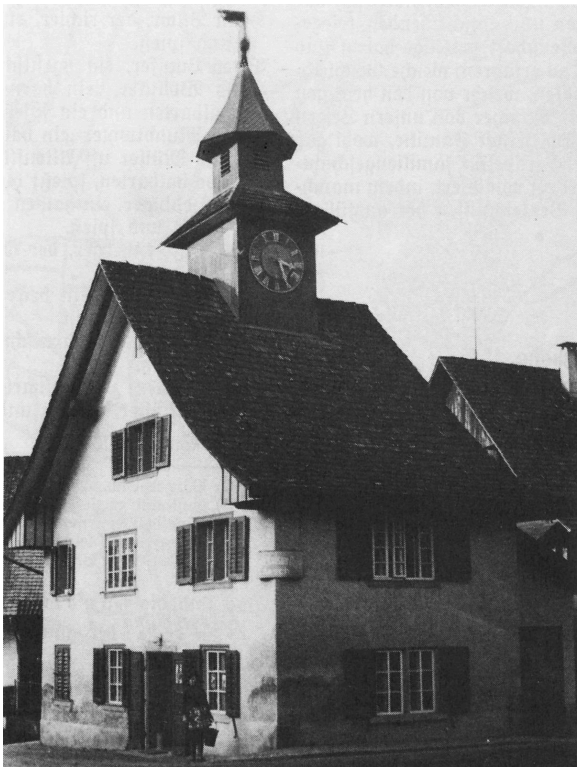
"Dorfhelfer"
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.



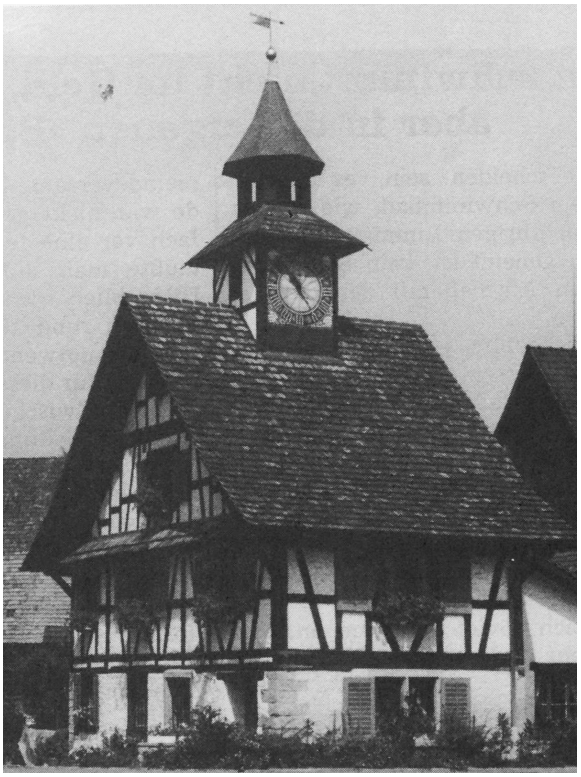


Land houses in Brunnacher.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.





Türmlihaus before restoration.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



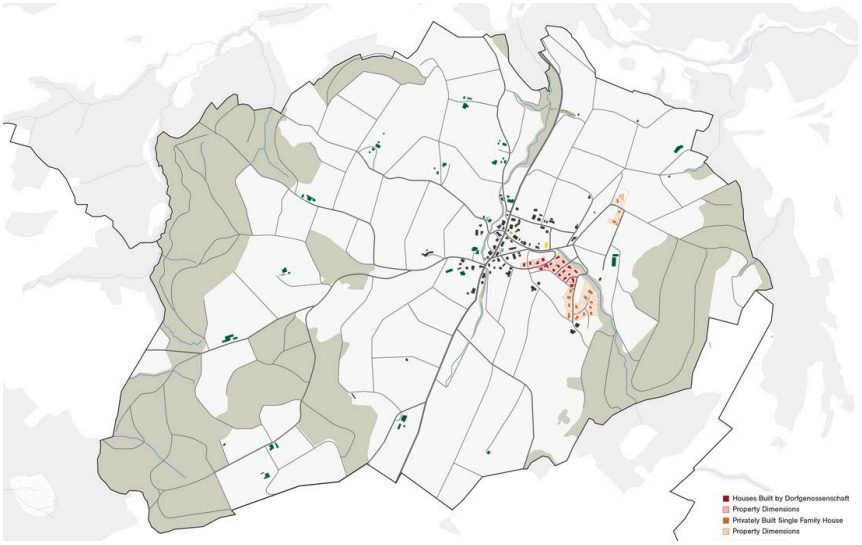
Türmlihaus after restoration.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.



Dorfmuseum before restoration.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.

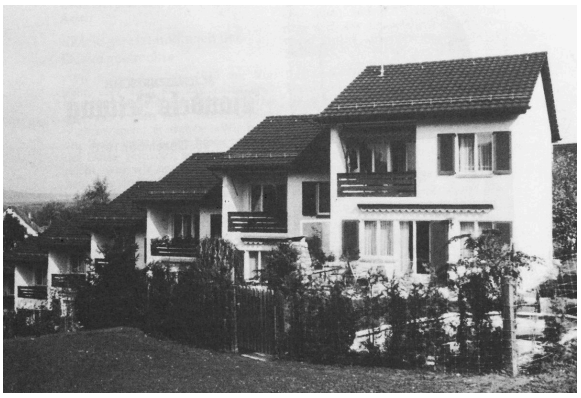


Dorfmuseum after restoration.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 1–3, 1983.

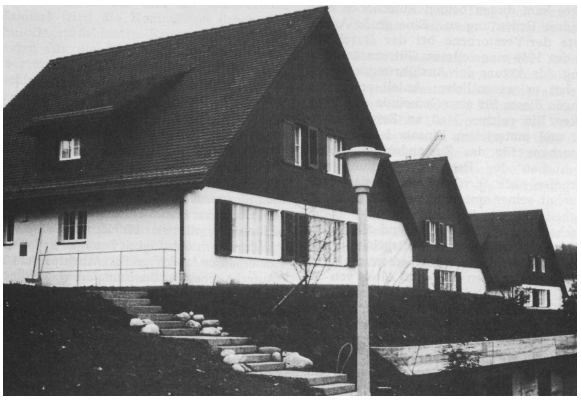


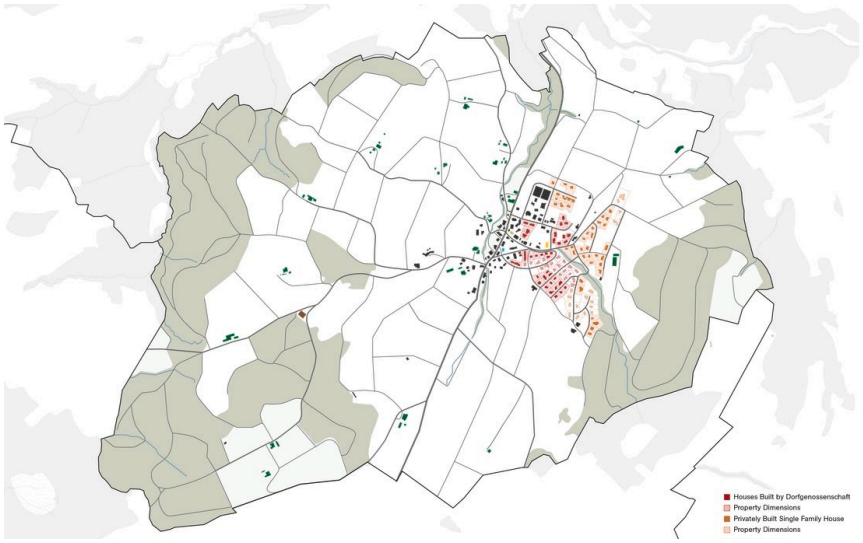
Map of Aesch and its housing development by 1970.



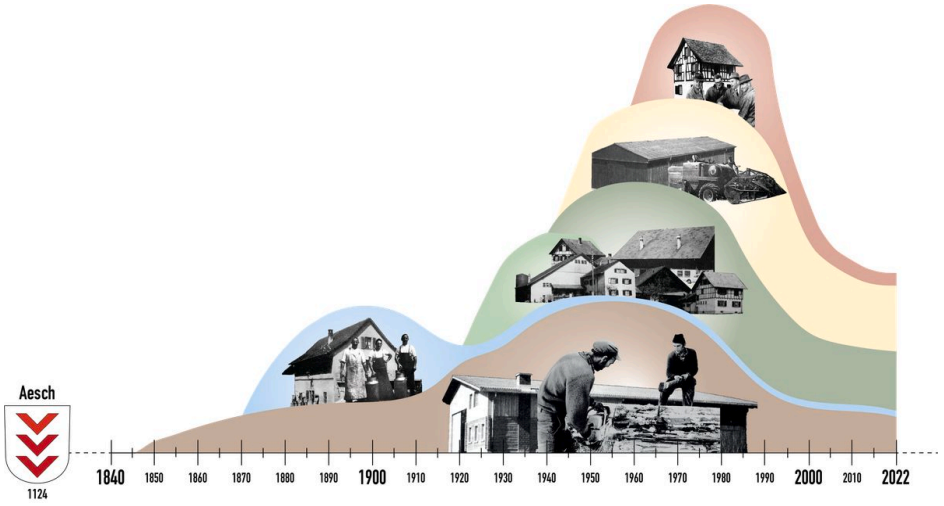


Construction of serial housing.
Source: E. Gugerli, “Dokumentation Aesch”, Band 2, 1983.



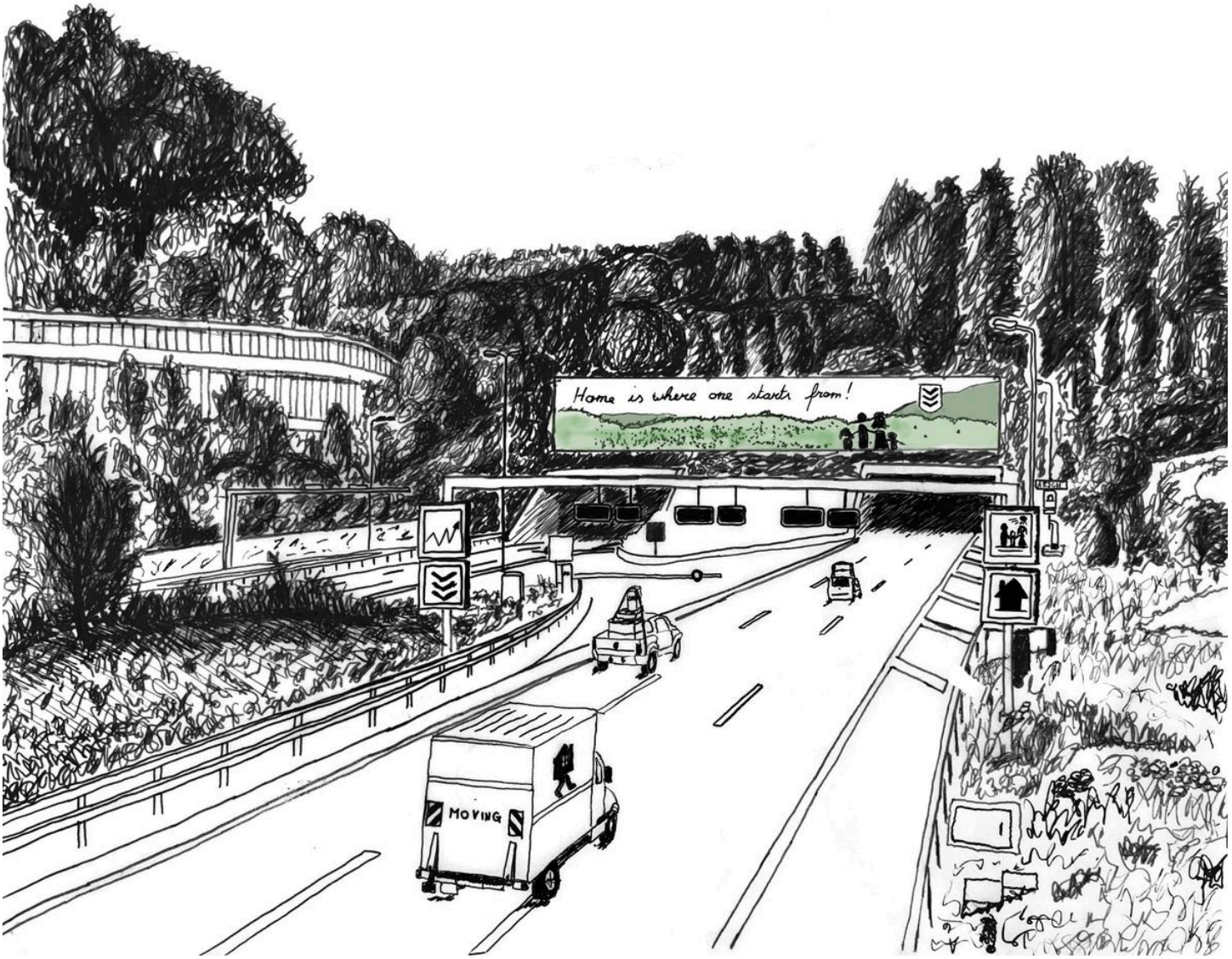


Map of Aesch and its housing development by 1983.



Activity timeline of Cooperatives.

A Highway of Opportunity...



The opening of the new Westumfahrung motorway section in 2009 made the idyllic vision of a fast connection between the countryside and the urban centre possible: turning Aesch into a strong point of attraction for relocation.



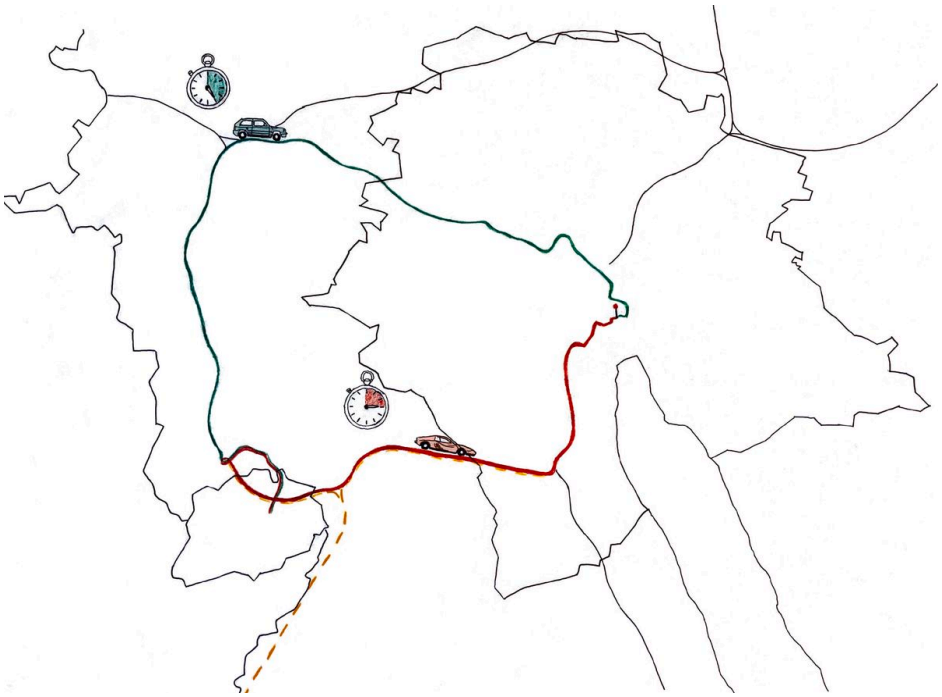
Construction Aeschertunnel in 2009.
Source: wikipedia.org



Aeschertunnel east side.



Aeschertunne west side.
Source: wikipedia.org



Average commuter times and their highway paths.



Map of Aesch of the built highway and tunels in 2009.

...Or a Highway of Opportunism?



The interest in the area often results in fierce investment, which threatens to seriously disfigure the landscape. In these realities, private investors step in, very often directing development in a disinterested manner and turning to quick profits.



Poles of Measurement.



Rigid division of nature and man made influence.



Poles of Measurement.



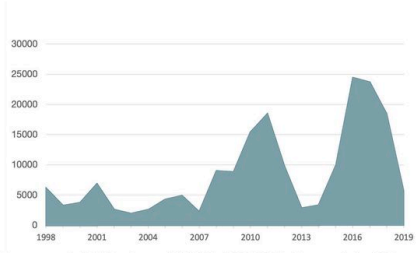
Multi family house.



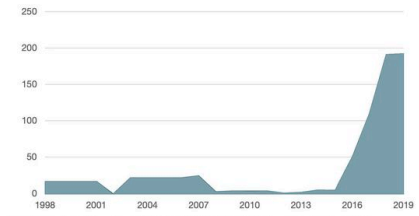
Flat multi family house.



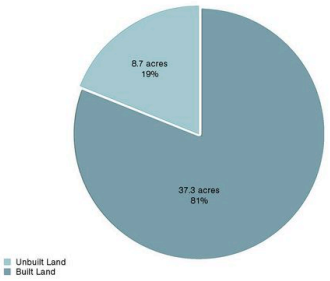
Neighbourhood of multi family houses.



Investments in Building Sector (CHF/inh), (1998-2022), Source: zh.ch, 2022.



Investmernts in Services (CHF/Inh), (1998-2022), Source: zh.ch, 2022.



Quantity of Building Land, Source: zh.ch, 2022.

General graphics based on investments and quantity of buildable land.



Model of land acquirement and housing construction by private investor.

1. A farmer decides to get rid of his piece of land to get liquidity.

2. A private investor buys the farmer's land quickly due to his strong economic power.

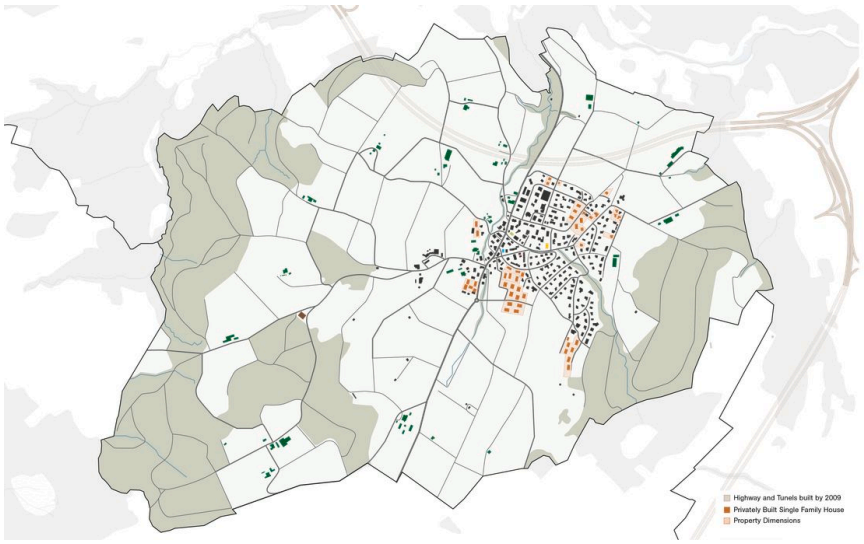
3. The investor builds on the purchased land in a way geared towards making a quick profit. As owner of his own piece of land, he decides to build settlements that ignore the architectural typology of the village and the need for service for the growing community.

4. The high demand for housing units in the area ensures that the settlements are filled quickly, so that a large amount of money flow into the pockets of the investor, through sales and rentals.

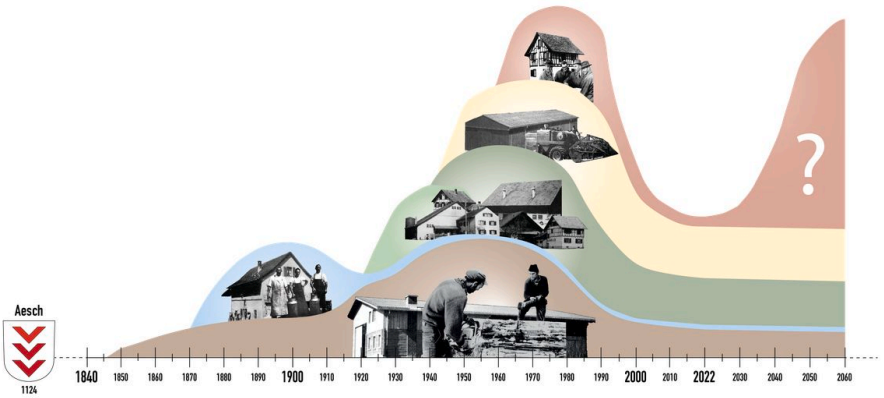
5. The result of this fierce development process is a loss of the characteristics of the countryside village. Having failed to keep up with the growth of the population, the village finds itself disfigured by the process of densification and deprived of the services necessary to achieve a better life quality.

6. This type of process ensures that the flow of money is controlled by one actor and is routed exlusively outside the municipality of Aesch.

Explanation of the model.



Map of Aesch in 2022.



Questioning about a possible reactivation of the Dorgenossenschaft model.

Reacting by Reactivating

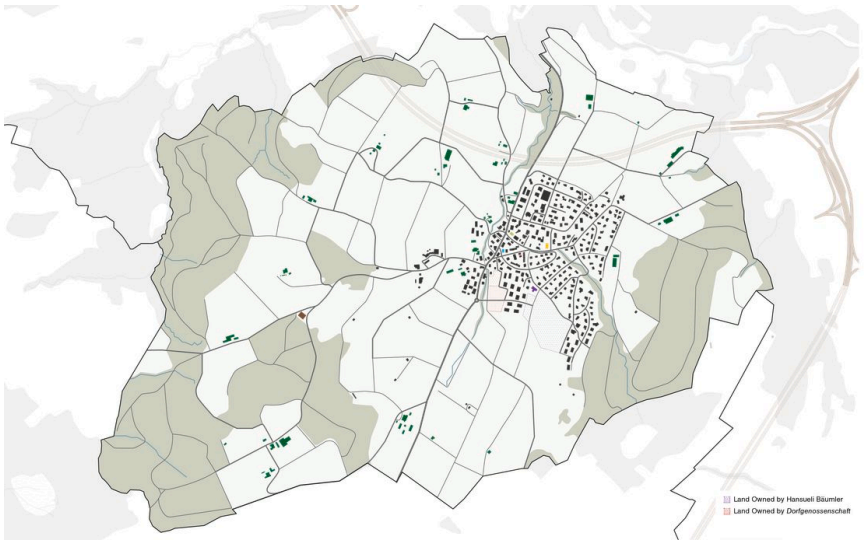


The reactivation and readjustment of a model that vanished after the adoption of the Zoningplan may be the solution for a prosperous future, that can accompany growth in an interested and targeted manner to the needs of its inhabitants





Hansueli Bäumler owning a big part of the
buildable land reserves in Brunnenzelg, Aesch.



Map of Aesch and its land reserves for future potential housing development.



Model of land acquirement and housing
construction by the reactivated Dorfgenossenschaft.

1. Mr. Bäumler decides to hand over his land to the cooperative, because as a simple villager, he finds himself both economically and technically unable to offer a development solution that would bring the inhabitants together.

2. Through a temporary increase of municipal taxes and a bank credit, it is possible to reactivate the Dorfgenossenschaft. In this way, it will be possible again to plan on the land owned. The small number of members of the old cooperative, combined with the high land price, makes it necessary for the entire communal collective to participate.

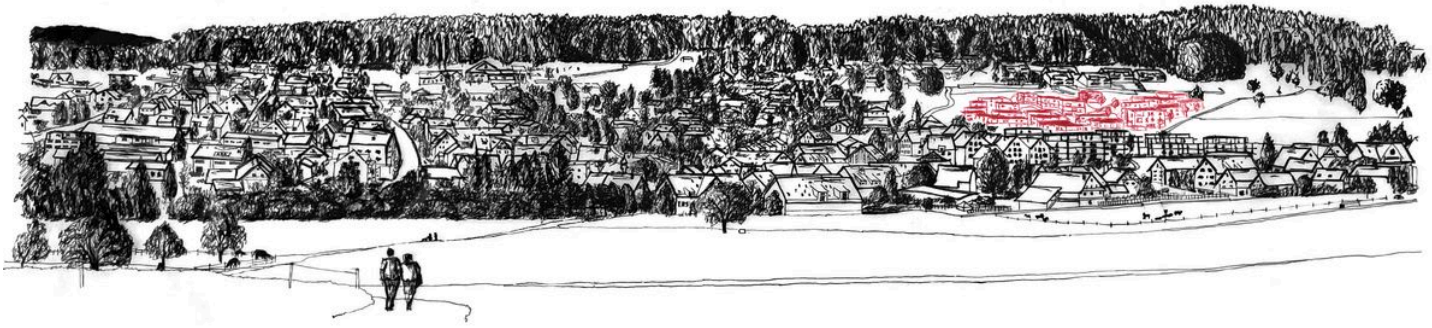
3. The cooperative is ready for proposing eco-sustainable projects to enrich the Aesch landscape. Also the activity of restoring buildings in need is revived. These will be taken care of by companies in the surrounding area.

4. Through direct sales and rents, investments will be covered over the years, until claims are paid off and profits are generated for the Dorfgenossenschaft

5. The great demand for housing units has been met to the fullest, the inhabitants are happy and facilitated by the integrated services in the municipality. The Dorfgenossenschaft has again led the development of the area and the profits generated by the executed projects can be used to lower the residents' taxes, thus maintaining the non-profit character of this cooperative.

6. Again, the main flow of money takes place within the municipality, preventing people from selling off their land outside Aesch and focusing on developing a sustainable future, riding the wave of this interest. The tax instrument is a solution that may generate discontent in principle, but it helps to ensure that the inhabitants develop a further sense of belonging to their municipality.

Explanation of the model.



A possible future landscape in Aesch

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