



Aral unveils its first 'mobility hub' in Berlin

The station embodies what the German fuelling giant considers the urban station of the future.



An Aral service station in the centre of Berlin is serving as a pilot site to look into the future of mobility. Aral's first 'Mobility Hub' is a multifunction fuelling station that uses a 'microgrid' and has a complete convenience store.

Aral, Germany's biggest petrol station chain, has chosen the centre of Berlin to try out its new mobility hub concept. The station includes a classic range of liquid fuels, a REWE To Go shop and a 'microgrid' - this includes charging points and battery swapping stations.

With this new concept Aral wants to embody what a modern city service station will be - a transfer and stop-point for various modes of transport.

"With the new Aral Mobility Hub, we offer customers a comprehensive mobility service that goes beyond that of a classic petrol station. Particularly in urban areas, the variety of transport options

plays an increasingly important role and our petrol stations can become a useful hub here," explained Patrick Wendeler, Chairman of the Board of Aral AG.

The blue and white petrol station brand, part of BP, recently announced the commissioning of more than 100 ultra-fast charging points with up to 350 kW charging capacity in Germany.

Aral sees the expansion of the ultra-fast charging as a step in reducing CO2 produced by mobility. This is in line with BP's goal to be climate-neutral by 2050.



A city platform for various types of transport

The new mobility hub will cater for a various range of mobility options. One of the key factors behind this new concept is development of Jelbi in Berlin, a mobility app that covers everything from car sharing to e-scooters and bike sharing.

"With Jelbi we offer all forms of shared mobility in Berlin from a single source. We are supplementing the excellent public transport system with environmentally friendly sharing offers. This is the mobility of tomorrow. We are pleased to have found in Aral a partner who, like us, wants to drive forward the mobility turnaround," said Dr. Henry Widera, CIO at Jelbi.

A Swobbee automatic battery changer allows users to exchange batteries for their e-bikes, cargo bikes or small electric vehicles in the space of 30 second, according to Aral.

A new method to deal with the electric grid

At the technological heart of the Aral 'Mobility Hub' are the two new charging stations operated by the company. The 320 kW location is not connected to the medium-voltage grid as is usual in this power class, explains Aral. Instead, the high charging power is provided by a local battery, which charges when no EVs are connected. The goal is for the electricity to be generated on-site and be self-sufficient. This is the first expansion stage of a so-called microgrid. With this technology, Aral can also offer ultra-fast charging where the local power grid does not meet the technical or commercial requirements. Aral is using this as a pilot site to test the technology.

The mobility hub is also connected to public transport (urban metro and bus), and it includes a DHL parcel station.

In a recent interview with Welt am Sonntag, Bernard Looney, chief executive officer at bp, said the company wants to maintain its network of petrol stations in Germany despite their investment in clean technologies.

“If BP sells less and less fuel in the future, this should not result in the death of petrol stations,” he said.

With around 2,400 petrol stations, Aral is the leading fuel retailer in Germany, the most important European petrol station market.