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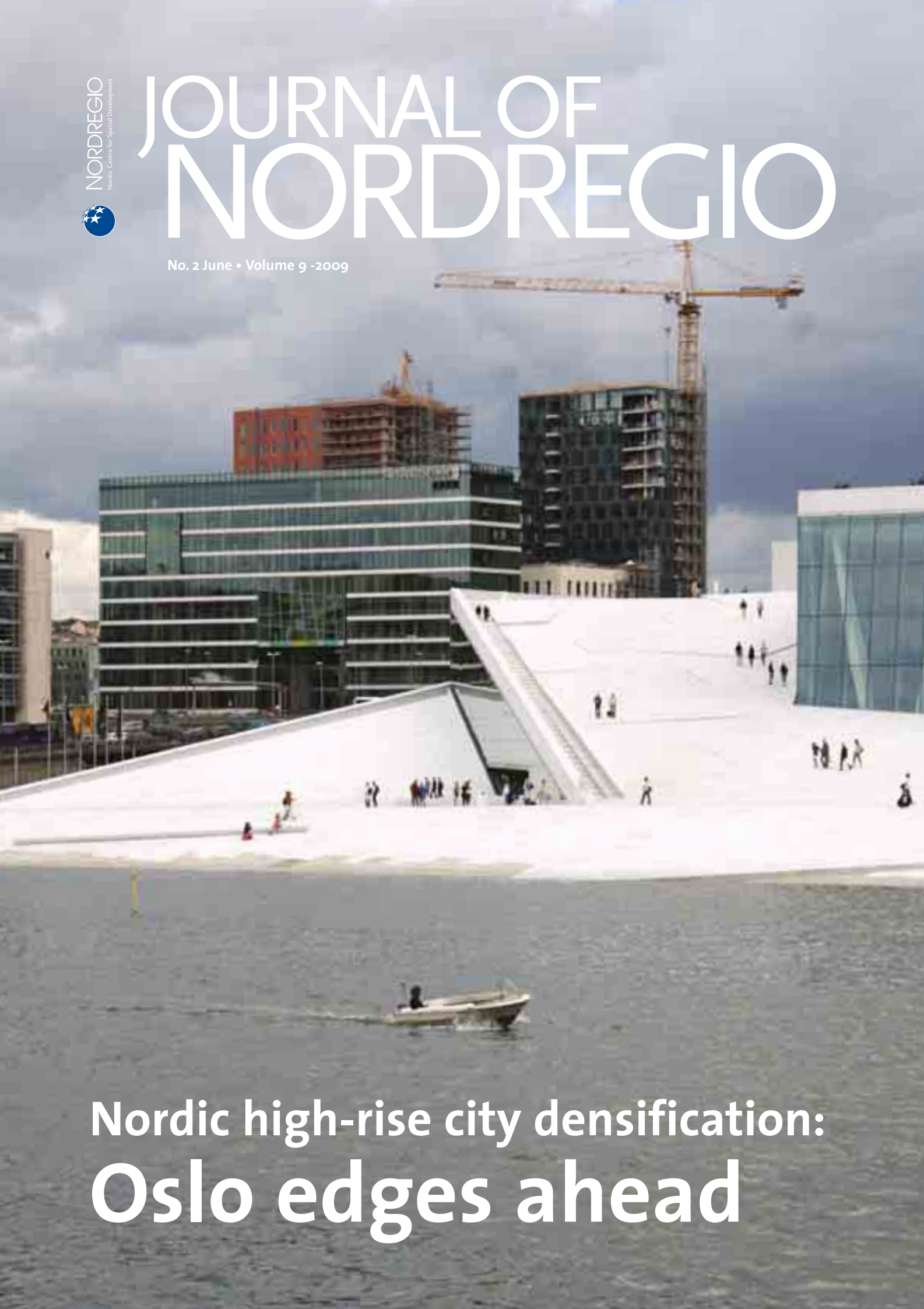

Nordic high-rise city densification:

Oslo edges ahead

Contents

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Cover photo: The new Opera House in Oslo with the emerging Barcode-project in the distance. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

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NORDREGIO Nordic Centre for Spatial Development
norden Nordic Council of Ministers

Nordregio is a centre for research, education and documentation on spatial development, established by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Gendering Climate Change

We urgently need to realise that the issues of gender and climate change are inextricably linked. This was the main message from the first ever research conference on gender awareness, climate change and sustainability arranged in Copenhagen earlier this year.

Gender, is related to climate change in a myriad of complex ways. Firstly, many causes of climate change were often shown to be gender-dependent, as the average man in a developed country tends both to consume more energy, and be less engaged in household recycling and so forth, than his average countrywomen.

Secondly gender was consistently highlighted as being spun together with processes of climate change mitigation. The gendered patterns of consumption and the need to decrease consumption were also discussed. As were the processes of mitigation, including the gendered character of decision-making, which see many of the influential political bodies and industries producing greenhouse gases dominated by men.

Thirdly, gender was seen as being fundamentally related to questions of vulnerability and adaptation to the effects of climate change such as increases in the incidence of heat waves, droughts, heavy rainfall, floods, landslides, rising sea levels, deforestation, as well as changing conditions in respect of agriculture, access to clean water, and food-security.

The way in which 'masculinist' scientific discourses separate the masculine from the feminine, culture from nature and human-animals from other animals was underlined as a necessary framework for better understanding the gendering of climate and (un-)sustainability. Researchers at the conference, however, urged us not to over-simplify this discussion as conditions of class, ethnicity and, above all, nationality, also influence the rate of greenhouse gas emissions.

The conference was attended by around 100 researchers and practitioners from over twenty countries around the world. The organizers were the Coordination for gender studies, Copenhagen University.

More information:
http://koensforskning.soc.ku.dk/konferencer/climate/

Nordregio is, together with Uppsala University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, doing research on gender and climate change, funded by the Swedish Research Council, the Swedish Research Council Formas and the Swedish national Space Board.

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On skyscrapers and desires – some Nordic lessons

The first time Helsinki saw the construction of a building of 60 metres or more in height in the city centre was in 1931. It is a slim tower – the *Hotel Torni* - on a hilltop in the western and richer part of the city. The architectural features are sublimely expressed. On the top there is a balcony open to everybody with views to all parts of the city. In many ways this is a very popular building. Since its construction no new high-rise buildings have ever been erected in the centre of Finland's capital.

The *Postgirobygget* building in Oslo is perhaps the least successfully implemented Nordic high-rise building design. Firstly, it has a relatively dark metal-cladding-type *facade*. Secondly, the building is rather voluminous and thirdly it is positioned in the lowest part of what is called the Oslo 'amphitheatre'. That is the green hills which surround this city at the end of the Oslofjord. By its location the building is very visible to anyone living or working on the hills around the city centre as well as many in the city-centre - maybe some two hundred thousand people - on a clear day. The fantastic view from the top of the *Postgirobygget* is however enjoyed only by those working in the building.

A *curiosa* maybe, but in fact some years ago the previous deputy director of *Riksantikvaren* (The Directorate for Cultural Heritage in Norway) Sissel Rønbeck, suggested that the building should be torn down. Instead the City Council of Oslo granted the owners, the state-owned property-company *Entra*, permission to add a few more floors and some more glazing to the construction. The explicitly expressed purpose here was to make the building more acceptable to the general public. The fact that it would potentially also add to the prospective income of the owners was rather glossed over.

A property company is basically like any other company. Its *reason d'être* is to generate profits for the owners – whether private or public. Nothing wrong with that, but what becomes troublesome is when this drive for "success at the market" is primarily expressed in terms of the desire to build as much and/or as high as possible on "our site".

This issue of the Journal of Nordregio looks at the converging and diverging tendencies towards high-rise construction solutions across the Nordic capitals. First and foremost we have tried to learn more about city-centre densification and the extent to which such policies actually express themselves as high-rise buildings.

What have we found? Firstly, that Oslo seems to be the city edging ahead in this field, in particular since they are adding ten relatively high and voluminous buildings in a row (the *Barcode-project,* see pp 22-25) close to the two already existing rather massive constructions *Postgirobygget* and The *Oslo Plaza Hotel* in the downtown city-centre area.

Secondly, that there are very strong forces in Stockholm pushing the idea of building more extensively around the Central Station as well as in other parts of the commercial city centre. For example a 16 storey high new hotel and large conference facility is currently under construction just south of the station rendering the famous profile of the City Hall (*Stadshuset*) much less visible (pp 14-18). In addition a 100 metre high hotel skyscraper will probably also be erected outside the main entrance to the Station.

The driving force behind most of these property developments in Stockholm is *Jernhusen*, the property-company of the state-owned *SJ* (Swedish Railways). Similarly, in Oslo it is primarily HAV (owned by the city's port authorities), ROM (owned by the Norwegian State Railways) and *Entra* (owned by the Ministry of Trade and Industry) who are emerging as the centres of power behind the changing cityscapes.

A number of emergent and interrelated questions however ought to be discussed here, not least how the current agenda of these companies corresponds with currently fashionable and vigorously promoted policies on environmental sustainability and climatic adaptation.

Many Nordic planners are members of what is called the METREX, the network of European metropolitan regions, exchanging ideas and experiences about urban and regional planning. The last congregation of METREX was held in May in the Paris-region.

Indeed even in the French capital significant conflicts rage about how to shape the city- and landscapes of the future. In fact one of the proposals for the future of Paris is to build a 40 kilometre long wall of skyscrapers around the city!

As in the Nordic countries however the debate is essentially about who should have the power to decide. On the surface it can often look like a fight between the President and the regional council, or the Conservatives versus the Socialists. The likelihood is however that the final decisions will be made by those who can provide the money, those who have access to the public funds - and those who are best able to engage and involve the building industry, property developers and the architectural elites. Such a combination always seems to make "a winning team" in these situations.

In this issue of the Journal of Nordregio we have changed the way we present the text. While we previously had three columns as the standard, we now have two. The purpose is to make the text more accessible.

The theme of the next issue will be Northern Sparsely Populated Areas. In the last issue in 2009, to be published in early December, we plan to take a closer look at Nordic approaches to climate change.

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Copenhagen city centre skyline seen from *Vor Frelsers Kirke* in Christianshavn. To the far left *SAS Scandinavian Hotel*, Amager, 26 storeys high. Just to the right of the centre of the picture is the tower of Copenhagen Townhall (*Rådhuset*). Photo: Rasmus Ole Rasmussen

Between verdigris spires and glass towers

Copenhageners appreciate the city's skyline with its verdigris green towers. The best view of the skyline is from the clover field of Amager where a spacious view of the city can be had including the 'bourgeois' manifestations such as the 105.6m town hall tower, the Christiansborg Parliament building 104m tall which towers above the churches: "*Vor Frelsers Kirke*" which has a twisted spire of 86.6m, "*Helligåndskirken*" and "*Christianskirken*". Christan IV built the stock exchange, *Børsen*, in order to turn Copenhagen into a European commercial centre and the Round Tower for scientists in order for them to be able to look out into the universe. All of the buildings are discrete yet visible as vantage points. A total of ten towers form the city skyline. When they were built there was no public debate on the pros and cons of tall buildings.

On the edge of the city centre we can see the *Hotel Europa* (1955), the *Royal Hotel* and the *SAS Hotel* (1960). Between the towers Copenhagen is characterised by a relatively unbroken flat profile. The city did not participate in the international trend in the construction of tall buildings which began in the 1920s. The general principle, adhered to since then by city planners, is that the size of new buildings should relate to their surroundings.

During the last economic boom tall building projects did however finally start to appear in the centre of Copenhagen. In particular controversy erupted because of six tall buildings planned for *Krøyers Plads* in Christianshavn. They were only 55m tall and were sketched by the Dutch architect Eric van Eferaat. The project was however terminated at the planning stage. If nothing else, what came out of this was that from this point on Copenhageners were seen to be ready to seriously discuss any suggestion for a new tall building project which emerged.

Tivoli and Scala

In November 2006, Tivoli initiated an architecture contest which was won by *Foster and Partners*. This caused heated debate, not least because the 102m tall tower would challenge the town hall tower and because the castle in Tivoli would have to be demolished.

In 2007 an architecture contest was issued for a tall building across from Tivoli, where a cinema, *Scala*, is located. Architects from the firm BIG won the contest with a 130m tall building swung with an exterior stairway sequence from Axeltorv halfway up the building.

In spring 2007, the Lord Mayor launched a debate on tall buildings in Copenhagen. In the discussion paper *Tall buildings in Copenhagen – strategy for the city's profile,* tall buildings are attributed many qualities: They create identity when big city regions are competing, they can serve as driving forces for urban development, they have great symbolic value, they create proximity, they express urban life, they create identity and are sustainable. These are just a few of the 'magical' qualities often assigned to tall buildings, which in reality however, remain rather dubious.

Desire for Landmarks

It seems then that, in Copenhagen at least, ambition in respect of tall buildings is driven by the desire to build landmarks and symbols. After all, Malmö has its 'Turning Torso'. Moreover, in the suggestion for the municipal plan 2009 a common argument in support of tall buildings is that they strengthen the image of Copenhagen as a dynamic metropolis and e.g. attract more international companies and tourists. Buildings can be used for a lot of things, but with this kind of objective such narratives rarely have a happy ending.

Copenhagen's tall buildings thus find themselves in the middle of an ongoing struggle between two rather different sets of interests. On the one side are, typically, the city's residents who want a relatively low city and who in any case want to maintain the medieval town ambiance represented by the verdigris towers. They believe that this is Copenhagen's distinctive feature and the city's strongest brand. A survey from 2007 showed that 7 out of 10 Copenhageners were against tall buildings within the embankments.

On the other side of the debate are the representatives of local government, developers and branding consultants. They believe that the city needs to show itself as a dominant modern metropolis and must therefore have tall buildings that visibly tower over the old city and serve as architectural showpieces.

Low city-centre zone

This spring, the municipality of Copenhagen presented a new suggestion for the municipal plan 2009. It was at this time that the debate on tall buildings was to be actualised in the binding plan. It is clear however that the recent public debate on tall buildings in Copenhagen has taken its toll. The main proposal however only forwards a single negative plan by marking out a zone where no tall buildings can be built. This zone comprises Christianshavn and the inner city to the lakes.

In addition no overview was made of where tall buildings could be built beyond this zone. Instead tall buildings are laid out half hidden in loose area plans and framework conditions. The tall buildings which for the moment have been laid out are placed in large new extension areas. Along the way however, more tall buildings will ultimately appear.

Ørestaden and Carlsberg

As an expansion area Ørestaden has come quite far. Here, south of *Fields*, which is the largest shopping centre in Scandinavia, tall buildings as high as 85m are being built. The *Copenhagen Towers* project, with hotel and office space, has to be completed before the COP15 meeting in December. The so-called 3rd generation office structures have been designed by the architects *Foster and Partners* in cooperation with *Dissling and Weitling.* Between *Fields* and the *Bella Center* tall buildings of 40-70m can be built. Ørestaden as well as the waterfronts of Marmormolen and Nordhavnen is owned by the municipality of Copenhagen and the state.

The area of Carlsberg used to be the site of a large brewery complex. Now labelled 'our new city' in the coming years it will be extensively transformed. The development of Carlsberg is managed by *Carlsberg Properties*. New buildings will be built between the large, attractive, production buildings.

In total, Carlsberg contains 600 000 m^2 of new floor space. Nine tall buildings can be placed here. The tallest may be up to 120m and the others between 50 and 100m. They will appear as scattered and pronounced towers in an area which will otherwise have the same character as the surrounding parts of the city.

Highest building in Denmark?

Marmormolen and Langelinie will be connected by an elevated walkway, designed by the architect Steven Holl, running between two tall buildings. They are quite distinct and it is hoped they will serve as a landmark for the new harbour development at Marmormolen, Kalkbrænderihaven and Nordhavn. This is the newest and largest urban development area where tall buildings may be constructed. The high-rise building at Marmormolen, at 148m, will be the tallest in Denmark.

A final urban development area which must be mentioned here is in Valby. Tall buildings can be built north of Torveporten and in the area of the old vegetable market which will be transformed into a dense new urban area.

Plans also exist to build nine slim, tall buildings of up to 21 storeys in the old industrial area at Krimsvej, which is located across the new Amager Strandpark. The tall buildings at Krimsvej appear to be a central ingredient in the transformation of the industrial area as was the case with Carlsberg. The outline for their suggested function is however somewhat strange.

The local plan, which was up for discussion until 30 September 2008, noted that: For the tall buildings it is important that they have slimness, limberness and an architectural quality which lives up to their function as the city's points of orientation along the coast.

▶▶

Copenhagen city centre with the new Opera house to to he right. The green dome is *Marmorkirken*. Part of Christianshavn in the foreground. Photo: Rasmus Ole Rasmussen

Who wants to live the 'high' life?

The municipality asks itself who wants to live in tall buildings: Tall buildings used for residential purposes can offer attractive living spaces with a panoramic view for people who would like to live in a place with a strong urban identity. Surveys point to the fact that such residences are especially desired by people with a modern, urban lifestyle who give high priority to work life, urban life and proximity to cultural opportunities. Meanwhile, there is reason to believe that more people will be interested in living in such tall buildings in the future as lifestyles and consumption patterns change.

This may be the case, but the municipality itself however refers to an interview survey from Rotterdam which shows that only 1-2 percent of the population would like to live in a tall building.

The municipality's strategy for tall buildings thus remains problematic. It is as if they had not yet realised why tall buildings were necessary or what it is they actually contribute. The proximity which is spoken of can more easily be achieved by means of other settlement forms.

BIG's architects 130 metre high Scala project at near.

The role of the *Metro*

Copenhagen has recently built a number of new *metro* stations with even more on their way. This represents a radical change in the city's *modus operandi*. Without *metro* stations Copenhagen would have few centres where the construction of a concentration of tall buildings successfully exploited the increase in traffic capacity. Thus the *metro* stations provide the city with significant development opportunities giving rise to more fundamental discussions over the city's structural development and character.

There is not, as is sometimes suggested, an automatic affinity between popular and low construction. The advanced popular perception can definitely be expressed in tall buildings as a delicate way of building, if the problems that are connected to it, such as price, climate condition and the urban space at street level, are resolved.

The ecological issue

By mixing functions in the building and by looking at the tall building as a completely new ecological type of construct it becomes, it is argued, an interesting type of building that seems well suited to Copenhagen. But we also see a lot of tall building projects which represent rather more the suggestion of a 'vision for the future of urban life' – created by the methods and ideals of the past – only more imaginatively than before. BIG's *Scala* project is an example of this. The 'mountain' on *Islands Brygge* however does seem to suggest the future.

There is nothing mysterious about tall buildings. New York has a lot of them, and there they have no debate. In Hong Kong there are more skyscrapers than in New York. Here the agenda is clear – forwards and upwards – but also here there is not much to discuss. In Copenhagen there are very few no tall buildings but there is a lot of debate. There is also a need for this. Why, how and where shall we build good tall buildings?

By Peter Schultz Jørgensen (psj@city.dk) architect and urban planner, currently works as a development consultant in the Culture Department in the municipality of Roskilde. In his spare time he has written extensively, in the Danish media, on Danish urbanism.

Translated by Lise Smed Olsen

Possible sites for high-rise buildings in Greater Copenhagen
Note also the `no high-rise´city centre zone.
Illustration by Peter Schultz Jørgensen

Aerial view of the new luxury flats at *Skuggahverfi*, Reykjavik seafront. Photo: Snorri Þór Tryggvason

Reykjavík Horizon

The landscape and natural setting of the Reykjavík capital area is characterised by a long coastline with many peninsulas, inlets and bays, the undulating topography of hills and valleys and the surrounding open sea and mountain range in the distance. Here, high-rise buildings are relatively few and far between. This is a low-rise and spread out city.

The historical town centre is located out on the main peninsula. In the area of the old town rises the city's most recognisable landmark, the church tower of *Hallgrímskirkja*. The church was designed by the renowned and prolific Icelandic architect Guðjón Samúelsson in the 1940s. It was designed to stand atop Skólavörðuholt hill which is 40m above sea level with a tower consisting of hundreds of basalt like columns to support it rising 75m above the surrounding low-rise buildings. As a recognisable urban landmark it towers above all other buildings in the capital area, unsurpassed in terms of visual impact since it was completed and consecrated in 1986.

While only a few thousand inhabitants lived in Reykjavik as recently as the early 20th century the city and its surrounding municipalities now host more than 200 000 inhabitants. During this last century Reykjavik and the surrounding towns grew more rapidly than many other European cities. This saw urban expansion extend inland away from the historic town centre, along the coast and up the hills leaving the old city centre on the periphery of the main urban trajectory.

High-rise buildings were to affect the city skyline much later here than in many other cities of Europe or the USA. The first systematic introduction of high-rise buildings came with the masterplans developed in the late 1950s and 1960s. Until then most of the prominent buildings on the skyline were either churches or other public buildings. The post-war years were however to see increasing housing needs for the ever growing population and a comprehensive plan was thus produced to put new land under construction. The strategy was to build higher on higher ground and to leave the valleys for parks and recreational areas. As a result numerous 8-14 storey high-rise housing developments were built on the hills across the city. Following this pattern most of the prominent new buildings introduced to the previously sparse urban landscape were for housing.

The whole of the capital urban area is characterised by extended growth and expansion escalating continuously from the middle of last century. The urban area covered is greater in relation to the number of inhabitants than that found in most other cities, with over 200 000 inhabitants occupying approximately 230 sq km of land. In this vast landscape urban development relies on the principle use of the private car resulting in a low density city, much open land, poor public transport, heavy traffic infrastructure (more than 40% of the land area is occupied by the road network and associated traffic infrastructure) and relatively few high-rise buildings.

To counteract this development a strategy of city densification emerged as a key issue within the Reykjavík planning office. An integrated urban strategy for the capital urban area and all seven connected municipalities has however traditionally been lacking with economic growth and urban expansion generally resulting in increasing competition between municipalities rather than cooperation towards an integrated urban whole. Following the

Skuggahverfi seen from Hallgrímskirkja. Photo: Snorri Þ. Tryggvason

need for general densification a number of high rise developments have been introduced, the most recent and tallest high-rise building being *Turninn* in the neighbouring municipality of Kópavogur, a 77m 19-storey office tower.

Today high-rise buildings, designed for either commercial or residential purposes, appear in a variety of settings and contexts. One noticeable high-rise cluster in Reykjavík is the luxury housing development by the coastline at *Skuggahverfi*, a northerly facing area in the shadow of the main hill of the old town. Numerous high-rise buildings can now be seen here in various states of completion, construction or renovation. This housing development has been underway since the late 1980s. This extended development was partly conceived as a response to increasing criticism in respect of urban sprawl and the call for the densification of the city. The extended development consists of a number of towers, the tallest (still under construction) being 16 storeys high and when completed the whole project will provide 425 luxury flats in downtown Reykjavík. Building here saw the redevelopment of an old industrial area. The project has however attracted significant criticism because of its lack of contextual integration with the existing endowment of low-rise historical buildings. The same concerns arise with the *Höfðatorg* high-rise development, by architect Pálmar Kristmundsson. *Höfðatorg* is currently under construction in the financial district some distance from the centre of town and will tower 70m and 19 storeys above the surrounding low-rise neighbourhood.

Densification is the leading topic in the current urban discourse. The planning strategy for Reykjavik has been to increase density and address the complex challenge of densifying and reshaping the urban landscape. The Reykjavik urban area has a history of expansion, particularly in the post-1945 period, and with the almost limitless land available for new building the increasingly acute need to address existing urban problems tends to get overlooked

With Reykjavík located at latitude 64°N experiencing a turbulent confluence of gulf stream winds and the northerly arctic storms, and where wind gusts can thus be difficult and strong, the issue of climate and high-rise development is an important one as any urban obstruction can escalate winds if not carefully planned and constructed. The sun at summer solstice rises to only 50° at most and at winter solstice to only 3° leaving long shadows all year around in the wake of any high-rise building. Consequently any high-rise development demands increased ground space to prevent the casting of shadows on the surrounding buildings.

The challenge ahead for the municipalities is then to address the need for densification while integrating new development with the existing urban sprawl. Due to the current economic crisis the opportunity now exists to halt the seemingly endless expansion of the city and to question how we wish it to develop in future. Central to this debate is the question of the need for further high-rise development. No clear strategy has emerged in recent years on this issue, either in terms of *where* to build or indeed *whether* to build at all, but with the recent appointment of Ólöf Örvarsdóttir as director of Reykjavik City Planning the necessary work is now under way towards the development of a strategy for the future.

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8-14 storey high-rise housing developments from the 1960s around the city centre. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

Helsinki skyline towards north and east. To the right the green dome at the white Helsinki cathedral on the Senate square. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

No skyscrapers yet in Helsinki

HELSINKI IN APRIL: *Hotel Torni* is the only tall building in downtown Helsinki, it is a slim tower rising some 14 storeys and buttressed by a *carré*-type building structure of approximately half that height. From the viewing balcony on the top you have a great view, several kilometres in all directions – there are, however, no other ´skyscrapers` to be seen. Only the chimneys of the power stations and some church spires provide prominent definable landmarks. To the east the green and white dome of the capital's cathedral is clearly visible.

In the southerly direction the eye soon attains the horizon of the Baltic Sea. To the north lies the central business and retail district but this soon gives way to green areas. Glancing west I hope to catch a glimpse of the only two modern high-rise buildings in the greater Helsinki area. They are located in Espoo some 15 km away. Both are some thirty storeys high and are the headquarters of the mobile-company *Nokia* and the energy-company *Fortum*, respectively. There is also one tower, containing flats, approximately the same distance away in an easterly direction, more or less on the border of Helsinki municipality. It is not, however, possible to see any of these buildings with the naked eye even on a clear day as they are too far away.

Sensibility

-´Skyscrapers` have of course been discussed for a long time by planners and politicians in Helsinki but except for the *Hotel Torni*, built in the early 1920s, they have not materialized. Just before the outbreak of the war there were 5-6 projects under consideration but none subsequently came to fruition. This was also the case with the plans to build an office block of twenty storeys just after the war. In all cases what I call 'sensibility' won out, states Mikael Sundman.

Sundman is one of Helsinki municipality's senior public planners. He has been a long time follower of the development of Helsinki's cityscape and of the city more generally. At present he works, predominantly, as the project manager for the

It is quiet at Pasila after the railway freight-terminal moved to the new Helsinki harbour. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

Gino Zucci´s award winning scheme for Pasila with 30-storey high buildings. Montage by Helsinki municipal urban planning office.

transformation of the city's Kalasatama (Fisherman's Wharf) area an old harbour district in the eastern part of the city.

- Many companies would of course like to have the advertising exposure that a high-rise development brings, but that is not enough to gain permission to build. What you really need is public acceptance that such a structure could be a benefit to society more generally. If you can generate that, I guess that you could also gain official acceptance here in Helsinki, Sundman continues. He adds that he is surprised by the high-rise developments in other Nordic capitals, particularly in Oslo and to some extent in Stockholm: - Do they really need these structures, he asks.

Thirty storeys high in Pasila?

- Plans remain on the table for multi-storey buildings in Helsinki. For example in Kalasatama plans exist for two towers each of 16 storeys. In Pasila, 3 km to the north of the city centre in the old railway yard, Gino Zucci he winners of an architectural competition showed buildings rising thirty-plus storeys high. Here we are talking about the potential to develop a new business centre, something like La Défence in Paris, Sundman explains.

New harbour

A few months ago Helsinki opened a completely new cargo harbour at Vuosaari some 20km from the city centre. Vuosaari is a medium-sized European harbour handling 12 million tonnes of goods yearly, more or less all container-based. By this movement prime development areas in both the western (Länsisatama) and the eastern (Kalasatama) parts of town became available. The development of a new facility at Vuosaari also released much of the land formerly occupied by the railways in Pasila.

3 million m²

With an exploitation-rate (floor-area relative to land-area) of 1.5-2.0 it is possible to build more than three million square metres

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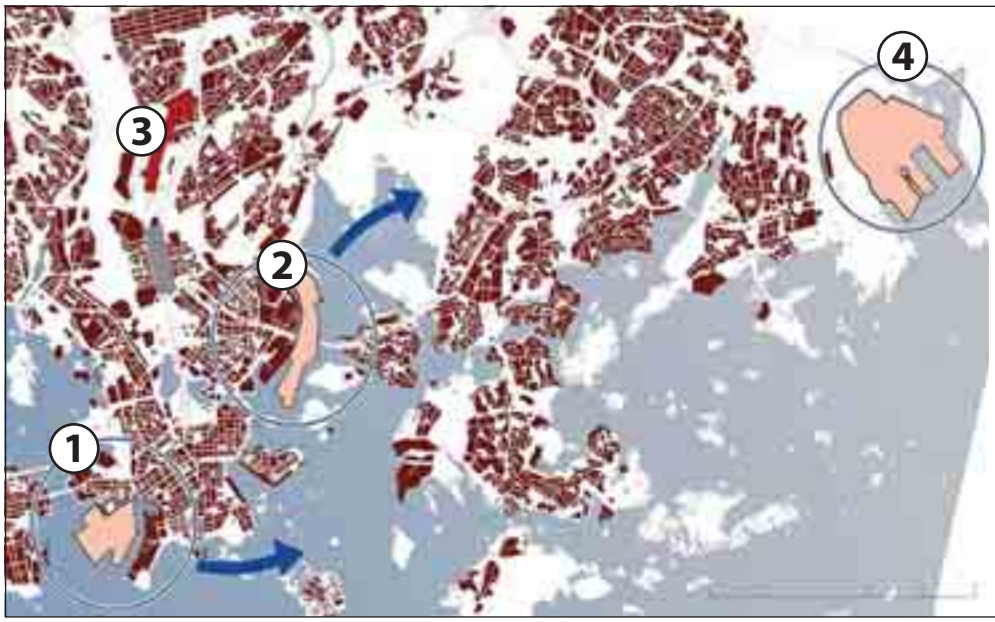


Map of Helsinki showing the relocation of the western harbour (1), the eastern harbour (2) and the railway freight-terminal at Pasila (3) to the new harbour (4). Map provided by Helsinki municipal urban planning office.

Helsinki skyline to the south (The Baltic Sea) and west. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

of new floor-space in the inner city. - That is equivalent to providing 40 000 new houses and 30 000 workspaces, quite significant figures for a city with just over half million inhabitants, says Mikael Sundman who adds: - I think we are talking of a development potential equivalent to that of Nordhavnen in Copenhagen or the old harbour area of Hamburg, some of the largest central city-sites in northern Europe.

New underground extension

Helsinki has also begun construction on the expansion of the underground passenger transport system. Thus far the trains run along a system some 10-15 km long, generally in an east-west direction following the city structure which over the decades has developed along the coast. The plans are to expand the line by some 10-15 km in each direction. This will make it possible to commute by underground for 40 km or more.

The new subway extension opens up the potential for huge property developments along the line. Through densification and urban high-rise development the greater Helsinki area could, potentially, double its population. Some are already thinking along these lines and for example in Espoo, which except for its central area, is characterised by villas and private car transport, property developers have launched plans to build four new towers of thirty storeys each. These developments are designed to create housing within walking distance of the new underground station, when it finally arrives.

Municipal mergers

- It remains uncertain however whether Espoo municipality will give the green light to the development, explains architect Fredrik Lindberg, who is also a local politician in the municipality. He also notes that the plan to merge the municipality of Helsinki with Espoo in the east and Vantaa (with the international airport) to the north remains of major importance for the future of the Finnish capital-region.

- I am not certain how this will develop, but I know that in "my municipality" there is quite a bit of resistance. Many of the inhabitants are not particularly interested in joining with Helsinki. They are afraid that this will make it more difficult to maintain their present lifestyle, he explains.

Municipality as landowner

In Helsinki the municipality owns some 70 percent of all land. Around 20 percent is owned by private developers, while the state is the owner of the remaining 10 percent. – On municipally owned land it is, relatively speaking, much easier to ensure high

Current Kalasatama (Fisherman's Wharf) site with power-station. Photo provided by Helsinki Municipal Planning Office.

New Kalasatama (Fisherman's Wharf) site with reduced power-station. Illustration by Helsinki Municipal Planning Office.

standards and the architectural quality of developments in comparison with development undertaken on privately controlled land, notes Sundman:

- The municipality does however also sell land to private developers. Usually the principle here is that it is not the highest bidder who gets the site. Rather we fix the price in advance and the plot goes to those companies with the best projects. In this way we ensure developments of good quality, he adds. At present, land for such schemes in central Helsinki is sold for 900€ per square meter. Often four-to-five companies bid for these sites, but this number can rise to as many as a dozen.

Public involvement

On a Sunday afternoon there are few people in the new underground station at Kalasatama (Fisherman's Wharf). Therefore the large photos highlighting a possible future development scenario for the area are easy to view. The posters were provided by the municipal planning authorities of Helsinki.

In fact, the town-planning office of Helsinki has, since 2000, provided each of the approximately 200 000 households of the city, annually, with a major publication detailing all significant ongoing planning projects. The brochure also lists the planner-in-chief for each programme, including direct telephone numbers for that person. Each project also has a separate website where anyone interested can discuss the various proposals.

- The law obliges us to inform the public and this is the way Helsinki has decided to do it, explains Sundman: - Of course we receive a number of not so sensible comments or questions but for the most part they are relevant. So yes, I would definitely say it is worth it, even though it costs quiet a lot of money to keep everybody updated in this manner.

By Odd Iglebaek

Mikael Sundman
Senior Planner

The tower of Hotel Torni in downtown Helsinki

Housing and offices in east-cetral Helsinki. M=Metro.

The famous *Stadshuset*, the Town Hall of Stockholm in front. Behind the start of the new hotel- and congress-centre. To the right, the "regrets of Stockholm city planning" the five *Hötorgskraparne* built 1955-1966. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

Stockholm's famous skyline is changing

There is significant pressure to build higher in Stockholm. Already the city's famous skyline is changing. Will we soon once again see the construction of high-rise buildings in the inner-city?

Shaped by its particular topography at the meeting point of Lake Mälaren and the inner waters of the Baltic Sea, the City of Stockholm is situated within a unique natural landscape - characterized by islands and water - and thus by dramatic elevation level changes throughout the city.

The urban silhouette is particularly distinctive with a smooth horizon of buildings conforming to the natural contours of the landscape. Areas of higher altitude and abrupt elevation changes are accentuated by taller and more elaborate buildings though churches and other public buildings still dominate the skyline. In previous centuries, these features have been highlighted on the skyline and refined through deliberate planning and the rational use of these natural conditions. It seems unlikely however that such an approach will continue.

A thirty year hiatus

In Stockholm's inner city only a few older high-rise buildings, built between 1924 and 1964, are currently identifiable. For example, Europe's first skyscrapers, the *Kungstornen*, are two seventeen storey (60m) buildings constructed in 1920. A considerably taller intervention into Stockholm's urban landscape, the *Hötorgskrapor* is five identical high-rise buildings, each nineteen stories high (72m), and the twenty-five storey *Skatteskraparan* in Södermalm. Each of these projects was constructed during the 1950s.

Around the same time, a series of other high-rises were built on the outskirts of the inner-city, including the *Wenner Gren Cente*r (82m), the *Folksam* building in Södermalm, the *Dagens Nyheter* building (84m) in Fredhäll, built in 1964, and somewhat later, *Foahuset*. Thereafter there was something of a hiatus in high-rise building for a period of some thirty years until the *Söder Torn* was completed 1997.

The modern suburban districts at the time were characterized by somewhat dense, horizontally-orientated apartment buildings in green surroundings. Their centres usually received a tall building as a landmark, generally however not exceeding ten storeys (30m). The most well known example is Vällingby, but others include Bagarmossen, Björkhagen, Fruängen, Gubbängen, Hagsätra, Kärrtorp, Västertorp, Alvik and Blackeberg. In the same way as in central Stockholm the more elevated parts of the landscape were often further accentuated with the tallest buildings.

More recent developments however identify a trend towards still taller buildings also in the outer districts of the city. The landmark *Kista Tower* (see p 20) constructed in 2002 stands 156 metres high and is currently being followed by a neighbouring tower, as well as a high-rise building at the *Älvsjö Conference Centre* in southern Stockholm.

For many years, the planning principle was to restrict the further development of high-rise buildings in central Stockholm. However, the economic boom that began in 2000, made it easier to finance luxury residential and commercial high-rise developments in desirable locations across all parts of the city.

Building higher than 100 metres in the city?

Currently then we can see that there are several high-rise projects in the planning phase close to the inner-city – those in Alvikstrand, North West Kungsholmen, Norrtull and the harbour area are all examples of this. These buildings are expected to be significantly taller than previous high-rise constructions in Stockholm.

Current city plans include the construction of a high-rise tower exceeding 100 metres next to Stockholm's Central Station and another proximate to the City Terminal. Both buildings will be higher than the '*Tre Krono*r' pinnacle at City Hall and the *Klara* Church crown, and will clearly disrupt the overall experience of

these monuments as the defining points of Stockholm's skyline. Another is planned in the middle of Kungsholmen. Whether or not these developments will come to fruition however remains to be seen.

The development proximate to the Central Station, called '*Western City*', will entail a significantly higher building envelope than the surrounding community. The project's first phase includes a 16-storey hotel as part of the new waterfront conference facility and is already under construction despite vociferous objections prior to development. This however highlights an all too common trend of political manoeuvring within Stockholm's planning process as it is currently laid out with the city first binding itself to development contracts and once they are in place only then attempting to implement a 'democratic' planning process.

For and against
Organizations that have voiced their opposition to high-rise buildings include the Stockholm Beauty Council, the Stockholm City Museum, and the S:t Erik Association.

From a political perspective, the spectrum of support for high-rise development in Stockholm is extremely varied. At one end, the Conservatives and the Center Party are favourable to the notion of high-rise buildings in the inner city, while the Liberal Party and Green Party are strongly opposed. Between these poles are the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats. Similarly, The City of Stockholm's Planning Department has publicly expressed caution regarding high-rise development and remarked that further feasibility and public acceptance studies are required.

Lack of plans for the skyline
With the construction of the new *Western City* hotel we find ourselves at the limit regarding damage to the public interest. The municipal plans lack a clear understanding in respect of how the city intends to care for Stockholm's skyline, commented Stockholm County's Land Secretary Carl-Gustaf Hagander in an interview.

He continued: - As for the commercial and residential high-rises in the peripheral zone that are now under discussion, it is difficult to assess the impact they will have on the suburban built environment. However, examples of isolated buildings penetrating the skyline, such as the *Dagens Nyheter* building in Kungsholmen, behind the Old City seen from the sea, urge caution about the potential impact.

Costly and not environmental
Given the well-reasoned arguments of regional planners who favour an emphasis on multiple cores of medium density development, one must wonder why some politicians are so persistent in their ambition to build a dense, vertically-oriented urban core. What is more, representatives of the construction industry also warn of the excessive costs associated with high-rise buildings because of the complicated foundations, heightened fire safety requirements, complex structural engineering, and costly future maintenance they necessitate.

If high-rise development is an attempt to accentuate an environmental building approach to help position Stockholm as an environmental capital, it is in all likelihood a terrible mistake. In contrast to their perceived environmental benefits, high-rise buildings are, in fact, expensive solutions requiring more not less building materials and technology when compared to other typical structures in Stockholm.

Furthermore, they generate uncomfortable wind corridors through the city and restrict sunlight from reaching the street level. In light of these factors, it is clear that the drawbacks of high-rise developments far outweigh the potential benefits of urban concentration in the inner city.

Densification and the suburbs
The clear answer to the question then, in respect of the merits of the further densification of the inner city, is that Stockholm entails more than just the inner city. Consequently, we must accommodate the pressing need for new apartments and architecture drawing attention to suburban centres and thus signalling the status and future prospects of these important locations.

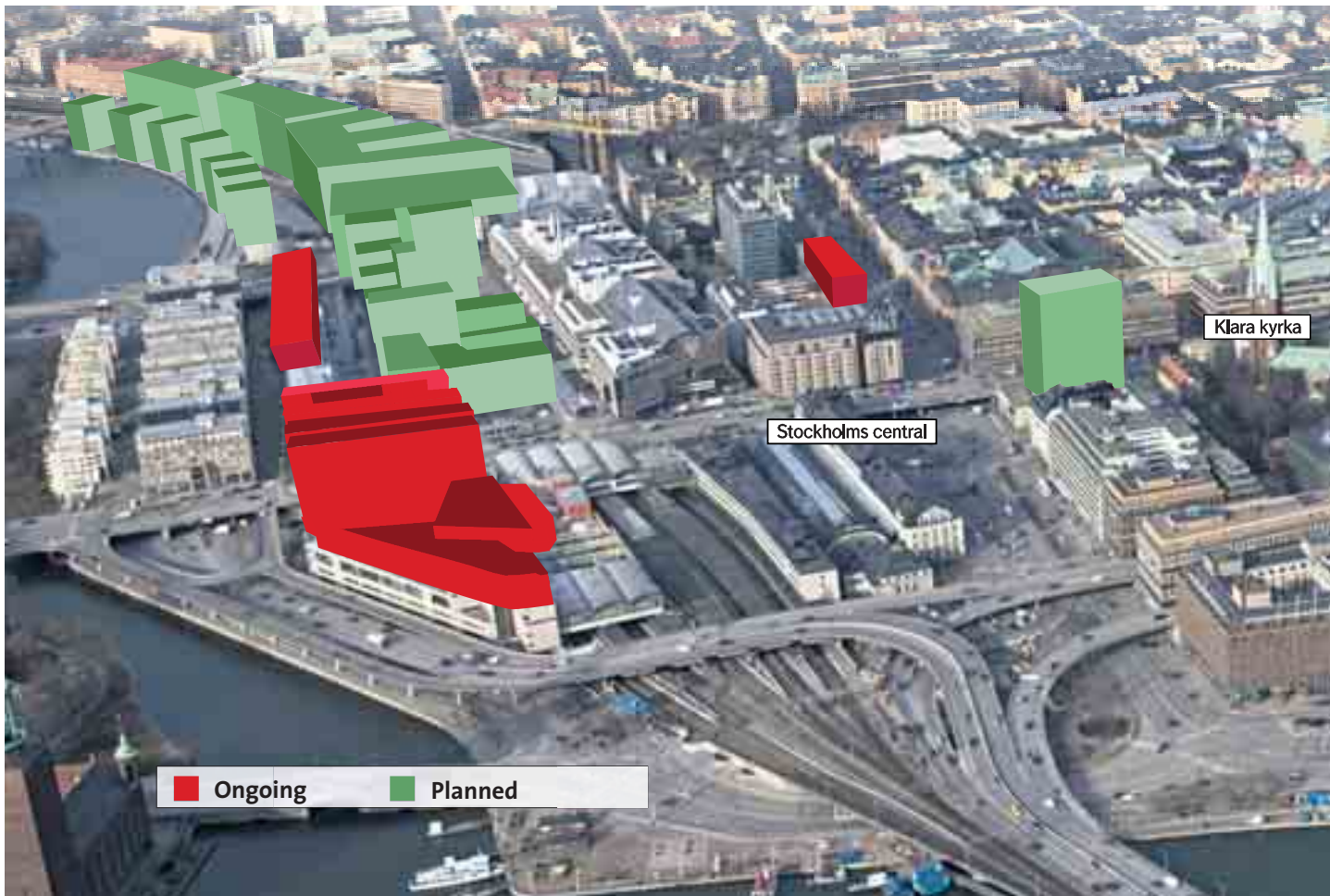
This demands that significant investment is made in suburban locales to make them attractive spaces through the creation of urban values with a variety of residential choices, creative meeting places, greater densities and short travel distances. Only then will dynamic living arrangements that depart from a traditional core and periphery urban arrangement be created.

Manhattan as the vision?
From some politicians we often hear the expression "we must plan to benefit a metropolis" or "it is outdated to allow church towers to dominate our skyline." In this view, cities like Manhattan become a guiding vision of what, moving forward, we should aspire to.

Some of the original followers of the vertical paradigm are however losing interest in high-rise buildings. What is clear is that if Stockholm decides to follow the trend of high-rise development in the inner-city it will certainly be unable to compete with those cities that have been building vertically for decades. Accordingly, any attempt to oversee a transition of inner Stockholm towards high-rise development would show that we are unable to create our *own* vision for the future of Stockholm.

Continues p. 18
▶▶

New buildings south and west of Stockholm Central Station. The three crowns on the bell-tower of *Stadshuset* to the right.


Klara kyrka
Stockholms central
Ongoing
Planned

The future of Stockholm city – ongoing and planned. At present the most intensive densification is along the railway-lines from the north towards Central station. On the western side of the railway-lines four storys (red block to the left) have already been added to the previous nine storys and the 150m long *Kungsbrohuset*. The green block between *Stockholms central* and *Klara kyrka* reflects the plan to expand the *Scandic Hotel* to 100 metres. If built, it will be the first new skyscraper in the city since 1966.

Photo and information provided by *Stockholms Stadsbyggnadskontor*. Graphical montage by Anna-Lena Lindqvist, *Dagens Nyheter*.

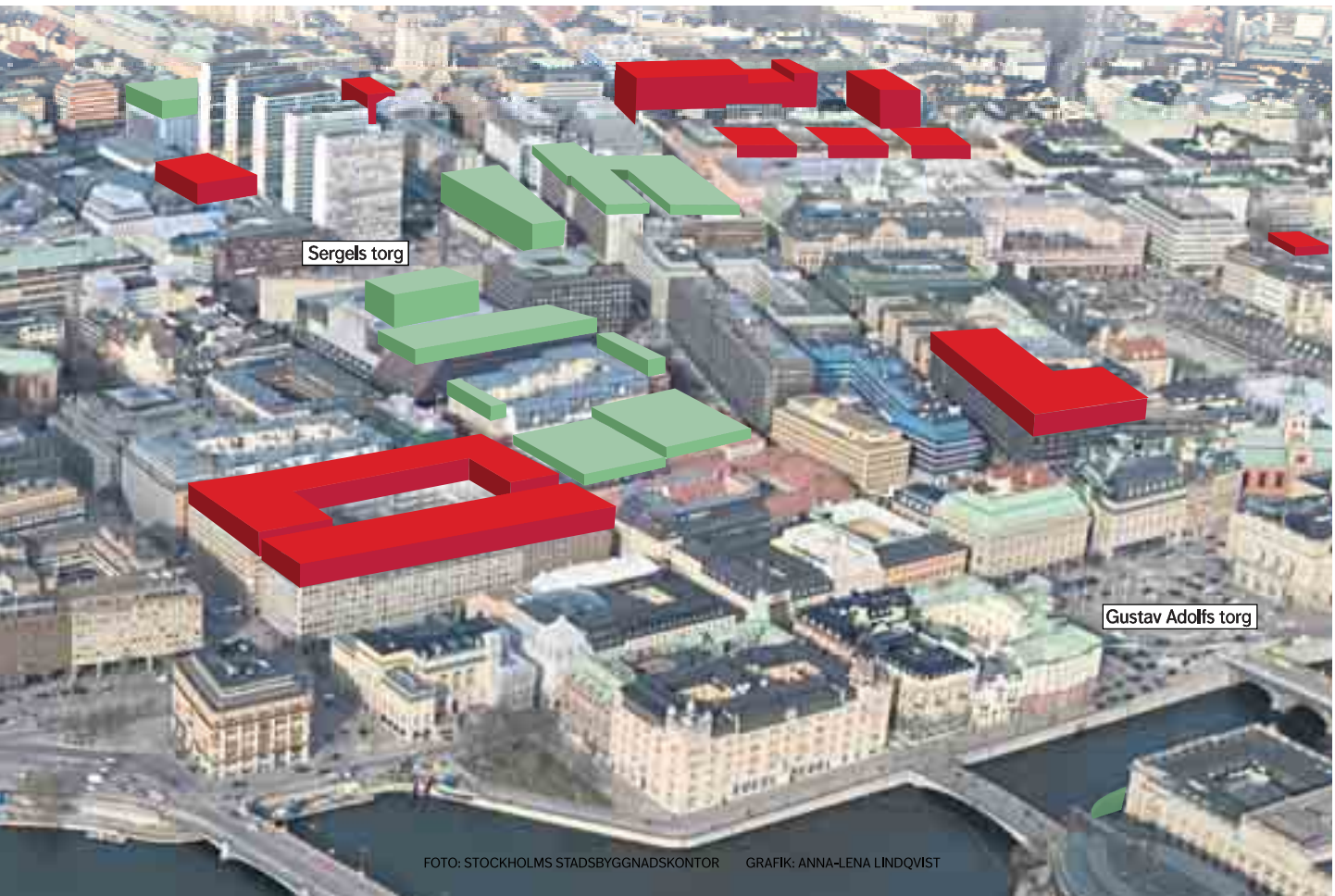


FOTO: STOCKHOLMS STADSBYGGNADSKONTOR GRAFIK: ANNA-LENA LINDQVIST

Preserve the skyline for business
The world famous skyline of Stockholm's inner city enriched by views of landmarks such as the City Hall, the City Library and Slussen Ridge prick us with nostalgia and should be preserved as such. Even so, while the emotional value of Stockholm's historical urban environment is clear to most, its contribution to overall economic success and employment is less well understood.

Research shows that economic benefits penetrate far beyond the tourism industry, as culturally and historically rich built environments are vital in attracting businesses and a prized highly educated workforce. This is evidenced by major efforts to preserve the historic environment in depressed industrial cities such as Glasgow, Barcelona, Birmingham and Singapore.

When viewed in this way, the previously mentioned high-rise development around Central Station presents a major threat to Stockholm's skyline. The focal aspects of the City Hall and the surrounding church towers will inevitably be weakened as new high-rises will obscure the gentle, varied and historic terms that characterize the current urban silhouette.

Brand on symbolism and history
Consequently, the increased level of high-rise density to the extent now being discussed in central Stockholm seems inadvisable. Instead, we must find a development plan based on Stockholm's own historic specificities, a plan that promotes the branding of Stockholm through its traditional silhouette to maintain its symbolism and history. In addition the fact that the necessity remains to preserve the city's ability to meet the unknown challenges of the future, not least, the issues of climate change and resource consumption, should not be forgotten.

Generate suburban centres
If Stockholm is to re-establish itself as a leader in urban planning then we must re-think our current development plans in respect of the inner city and its periphery. The ambition here must be to generate suburban centres with a big city 'pulse' and attractiveness that can compete with the desirability of the inner city.

To achieve this, built linkages must be developed between presently isolated suburban enclaves and greenery must be better integrated into the suburban environment instead of acting as a barrier. Furthermore, diverse housing options and a mixing of residential, commercial and recreational land-uses in suburban centres will provide pedestrian and bicycle options that can become viable transportation alternatives.

To now make major changes to Stockholm's urban silhouette, when, unlike most major cities, it has managed to maintain a relatively intact traditional character in the inner city, should be considered both arrogant and foolish. Stockholm's urban silhouette simply cannot tolerate new high-rise buildings and any attempt to build high in the inner city will come at a serious cost to its historical and cultural specificity.

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Translated by Ryan Weber

Kista: Have science

It is 8.30am and the platform at Stockholm's *T-Centralen* underground station is packed with people waiting for the blue-line train heading north to Akalla. Many are well-dressed, a suit jacket and tie or a nice blouse. Many also carry a small case, probably containing a laptop and a few written documents. Many are in their thirties or forties. Others, younger, wear baggy trousers, sneakers and a fleece jacket. The train enters the station and, as its doors open, the platform empties.

The train arrives at Kista some 20 minutes later, and everybody walks rapidly towards the north, to their offices at *Ericsson*, The Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), IBM or one of the smaller IT businesses.

At the southern end of the underground station the tempo however is not so frenzied. In one of the corners of the expansive Kista-square a man with a Middle Eastern background sets up his fruit stand. He sells mangos from Pakistan, cashew nuts from India, and dates from Egypt. Apart from him there is nobody else in sight. On the platform two or three women of foreign appearance wait for the train that will transport them to their respective workplaces in downtown Stockholm: a hospital, a private home, a home for the elderly, or a kindergarten. Their jobs are often in the care sector, tending to the loved ones of those whose work takes them to the other side of the tracks, both physically and metaphorically.

An underground ride from the centre of Stockholm to Kista, one of the capital's northern suburbs, provides something of an insight into contemporary Sweden. It is also symbolic of one of the most pressing tensions of the Western world at the beginning of the 21st century: urban economic growth paralleled by the "ghettoisation" of social exclusion.

Kista is, depending on the particular situation, either presented as the epitome of Sweden's high-tech society – an IT-cluster of international standard, or as an immigrant ghetto – another example of Sweden's failure to integrate its people of foreign origin. Kista, as well as its neighbouring boroughs within the Järva region, is a suburb with a high proportion of residents of immigrant background living on welfare benefits.

In September 2000, the Executive Office of the City of Stockholm presented the long-term plans for the Järva region in a document entitled *Kista Science City – From vision to reality*. Two broad goals can be distinguished in the Kista Science City vision. Firstly, to invigorate the business cluster present in Kista, converting it into a motor for Stockholm's, and even Sweden's, economic growth; to energise its companies and industrial sector transforming Kista into an internationally recognised high-tech region.

Secondly, to use economic growth as an opportunity to address some of the social problems present in the residential areas of the Järva region, more particularly unemployment and segregation; to create "job opportunities for the residents of Järva." In so doing, the actors behind the vision hope to integrate the residential and industrial areas to bridge today's socio-economic gap.

Kista's economic and social divide has however increased during these years. The percentage of people with an immigrant

parks anything to do with ethnicity?

background increased from 59% in 2000 to 67% in 2006. And although the number of employees in Kista increased by almost 12%, from 26 549 to 31 331 unemployment among residents rose from 3.1% to 5.5%.

Moreover, the figures look even more sombre in this regard for residents with an immigrant background. Despite all efforts to the contrary and despite all good intentions, the socio-economic gap between ethnic Swedes and people of foreign descent that divides the region has, if anything, intensified.

In this light two questions emerge, what are the economic and social processes cementing the divide? And to what extent does the logic underlying science park development models contribute to increased socio-economic differences between ethnically defined groups?

There are two things that may help us understand these increasing socio-economic differences. The first is the economic logic inherent in science- and technology-based development projects and the second is the ubiquity of the ethnic boundary.

Science parks offer a model for regional development. The logic implicit in such a development model builds upon the assumption that scientific knowledge leads to technological innovation which in turn fosters economic growth and results in social change that is global in scale. Often inspired by the history of Silicon Valley, science parks are being implemented in regions as far apart as Bangalore in India, Sophia Antipolis in Southern France and Kista, north of Stockholm.

Science- and technology-based regional development projects are structured along the technology boundary. Activities carried out are described according to the amount of technological expertise required, places according to the degree of technological specialisation, people according to their technological expertise. As such then the technological boundary is used to describe who "we" are and what "we" do. But a "we" implies a "they" and thus the beginnings of a process of exclusion.

The result is the emergence of a techie/non-techie dichotomy. "Technology" is used here to distinguish between attractive and un-attractive customers, educated and un-educated co-workers, relevant and irrelevant education, exclusive and un-desirable localities, appropriate and un-appropriate dwellers. People are positioned in a hierarchy wherein each derives meaning from the other. The "techie" is presented as sufficient, highly competent, global and transformative, while the "other" is deficient, unskilled, local and acted upon.

When science- and technology-based regional economic development policies are exercised in a historically immigrant-populated suburb, a suburb burdened with unemployment and social welfare dependency, a suburb structured along ethnic lines, the technology boundary weaves together with the ethnic boundary.

As a consequence, the project of creating a "science city" at best re-produces previous divisions. At worst, it intensifies them by adding yet another disqualifying characteristic to "the immigrant" other – that of low-tech. In a region defined and organized by high-tech and knowledge, the new epithet implies a further loss of social and economic power.

Science parks have been very successful in the achievement of regional economic development. Yet, the very logic of projects based on science and technology make it inevitable that the technological and educational elitism on which they build inevitably translates into another sort of elitism. In the Kista case this elitism is tightly connected to ethnic differences.

Without giving up on such regional development models we should nevertheless remain aware of this and try to deal with such differences accordingly.

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Who lives, works and shops in Kista and what policies could change this? Picture from Kista Gallerian. Photo: XXXX / SCANPIX

Central Kista with the 29-storey high Science Tower. Photo: Bertil Ericson / SCANPIX

Kista wants entrepreneurial ICT-students

Stockholm: – I think a major challenge is to help our universities move on from the European *Humboldt*-tradition towards embracing the US-entrepreneurial attitude. In particular this goes for *Stockholm University* and the *Swedish Royal Institute of Technology* which both have branches here in Kista, says Ulf Sandmark.

Sandmark is the CEO of the *Electrum Foundation*. For all practical purposes he is the driving force behind Kista, the place which likes to call itself 'the Science City of Sweden'. Or is this, perhaps, a notion used only by the spokespersons of the many ICT-industries located here?

In what they refer to as *Kista centre* there are close to 17 000 people working in the ICT field divided between 291 different companies. Expanding out to what is called the Kista Region the number in ICT is more than 20 000 encompassing 525 companies. It is of course *Ericsson* which drags the chariot here as some 9 000 of the employees working in ICTs in Kista work for this large international telecommunications-company. The aggressive pace of ICT-expansion has been more or less continuous here for the last thirty years.

- We like to flag up the fact that we provide a lot more than buildings and infrastructure and that we are a real ecosystem for innovation and growth. For example we have a very special support system for start ups in the ICT-business, called STING, which also provides financial guidance, notes Sandmark.

Parallel to the growth of ICT-jobs in Kista there has also been a major expansion of higher education. Already in 1988 the *Swedish Royal Institute of Technology*, or KTH, as it usually called, decided to set up their 'School of ICT' here. Their neighbour institution, the *University of Stockholm* also opened their Computer Science Department in Kista which was subsequently to be expanded into the realm of behavioural sciences, particularly where they interact with ICT.

- Today these two institutions together have some 4500 students here as well as 65 professors and 300 researchers. In fact what we

call education and research includes a total of 750 researchers at four different institutes. All-in-all we have eight global enterprises which use Kista for research and development at different levels, Sandmark explains.

Improvements needed

- There is definitely room for improvement particularly in terms of combining education with trade and industry. This however cuts both ways, enterprises should not only be concerned with production, while the universities should pay greater attention to the commercial aspects of their research. They should both know more about each others needs, and I hope that we can generate some positive changes in this respect. In fact, this is of major importance if we are going to maintain our position as one of the world's five leading growth clusters for ICT-incubations, he underlines.

- You also say that Kista needs to attract more "world-leading companies"?

- First and foremost we are looking at media-orientated companies like, for example, *Google* or for broadcasters.

- So *SVT*, Swedish Television, would be welcomed in Kista?

- Definitely or *TV4* for that matter and in addition we need some major cultural institutions here also. Even though we have 100 000 people living in the Kista Region few possibilities currently exist in terms of evening entertainment. In such a context Kista is currently a rather boring place, to be honest.

The Kista Region is made up of parts of the four municipalities Stockholm, Sundbyberg, Sollentuna and Järfälla, which again are all parts of the Greater Stockholm Region. Some 100 000 people live here and every day 30 000 commute out to work. Approximately the same number also commutes into Kista for work.

- You also say you need to attract more well-educated people to work here and that you will probably have to go abroad to find them. Do you think they would like to settle here? If they want to live in central Stockholm the cost of housing would be rather expensive?

True, but there are many possibilities relatively close by. Järfälla has many flats that are not that expensive, while Sollentuna is more middle-class, even partly upper-class, with detached and single housing.

- Skyscrapers for progress

Kista is located approximately 15 km to the north of central Stockholm. Travelling by road or rail between Stockholm City and Arlanda International Airport, you might, if you are looking west, be able to catch a glimpse of the 29-storey *Kista Science Tower*. This is the highest office building in Sweden. Soon it will get the 32 storey *Kista City Hotel* for a neighbour. In addition the local shopping centre, *Kista Gallerian,* is planning to add a pair of towers of more than twenty floors: - All of this is rather unusual for Sweden?

- In some ways yes, but we think skyscrapers are important symbols of progress, they are necessary landmarks, explains Sandmark.

The *Electrum Foundation* which he represents is a non-profit organisation. Annual turnover is in the range 30-40 million SEK. It has a top-heavy board with a vice-president of *Ericsson*, the mayor of Stockholm and the dean of KTH up front.

- This is a deliberate reflection of the importance society as a whole places on Kista, and yes you might say that planning applications from *Kista Science City* run both smoothly and quickly through the system, answers the CEO of *The Electrum Foundation*.

Started in 1975

Ericsson began their relocation to Kista as early as 1975, primarily for production purposes. Research followed later but their headquarters did not arrive until 2003, after they finally left Telefonplan, some 8-10 km to the east of Stockholm city.

These previous *Ericson*-premises are today the home of *Konstfack*, the largest school for further art-education in Sweden, which were previously located at Vahallavägen, quite close to the centre, in buildings now taken over by SIDA – the Swedish International Development Agency, who just left Stockholm city centre's expensive business-facilities a couple of years ago. And where SIDA used to have its lunch-restaurant one now finds exhibitions of the major furniture chain *MIO*.

The city-development process outlined above was primarily market-driven, one might argue. For Kista however, the official authorities of Stockholm City, have, it could be argued, also been very important stakeholders in this process. It was in fact a joint decision by the City of Stockholm, and the large companies *Ericsson* and *ABB* in 1985 which initially got the electronic centre, as it was called then, at Kista up and running.

The REKENE-project

The article above has been published as part of the Nordregio-project *Regional trajectories to the knowledge economy – Nordic-European comparisons (REKEN*E). First and foremost the project addresses how the knowledge-based economy on a regional level can be vital to Nordic competitiveness in the global economy. For more information, see: www.nordregio.se/rekene. The first Journal of Nordregio article on the REKENE-project *(- Oulu needs more than Nokia)* was published in No 1 -2008. More will follow.

By Odd Iglebæk

Ulf Sandmark presents the Kista Science Vision. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

The focus of the recent high-rise debate in Oslo has been the Barcode-project. The excavations indicate the length of the first phase of the project. Behind: The *Postgirobygget* (left) and *Oslo Plaza Hotel* (right). Photo: Odd Iglbaek

Bruising high-rise debates in Oslo

For almost a decade now Oslo has experienced a series of very bruising public debates over the question of high-rise buildings. The *Barcode project* in particular – a 350-metre long row of new office buildings, 45 to 70 metres high – has acted as the focal point for much of this debate. This project is part of the Bjørvika-development in the centre of Oslo. It is designed by the Norwegian architects *DARK* and their Dutch *MVRDV* partners. The real-estate company and property developer *Oslo S Utvikling AS (OSU)* is the owner of the project site.

Opponents of the project claim that construction will block access to, and views of, the sea for many inhabitants in the eastern part of the city. They call the project "the wall" or "the loopholes" (the embrasures). Supporters however suggest that the project represents "progress and modernity". It is perhaps more correct to see it as a set of railings rather than a massive fence, notes Erling Lae, conservative politician and for a decade leader of Oslo City Council. Other supporters have argued that the final collection of the new Barcode-buildings will "look like a comb".

Majority support for the project existed in the city council from the outset. Debate has however been long and hard, and from time to time some Council representatives, particular the social-democrates, have even called for the planning-process to be restarted. This question emerged as a particular theme during the election in 2007.

Local residents have organised numerous hearings and debates and have made proposals to the effect that the whole concept should be completely redesigned. Instead of building high, the widening of the site was proposed in addition to building over the railway lines. In this way they argued that the height of the buildings could be reduced to a maximum of 25 meters and 8 floors. In 2006, 30 000 people signed a petition in protest against the *Barcode project*. A public opinion poll in December of the same year showed that 71% of Oslo's inhabitants were against it while only 10% were in favour. Erling Lae, head of the City Council, however suggested that people had simply not been provided with adequate information about the advantages of the project.

In reality however not much has come of these protests. In late February 2008 the city council finally brought the debate to a close. The result was a reduction in the floor-space equivalent of 5-6% plus some minor adjustments in respect of heights towards the east. Thereafter opposition has been relatively quiet. Most likely they now acknowledge that the battle has been lost.

The merits, or otherwise, of high-rise buildings have of course been discussed for decades in Oslo. In the 1940s the debate concentrated on the new city-hall. In the 1960s protest stopped a high rise block initiated by *Det norske teateret* on Oslo's Karl Johan Street, the city's main parade-street. This was also the decade when *Selskabet for Oslo Bys Vel,* an NGO with the task of looking after the historical and architectural heritage of the city, initiated an architectural competition focusing on the future of the then working-class tenement housing area Grünerløkka. This proved to be a rather interesting exercise as the winners suggested flattening at least one square-kilometre of the existing three or four floor storey high buildings and replacing it with high-rise *Le Corbusier*-inspired living-machines and motorways.

This probably never came to anything because neither the politicians nor the building-entrepreneurs were really interested. They were already at full capacity building new houses in the suburbs. The 197Os saw new inroads made into the eastern working-class areas of Oslo. This time the interested tenement owners joined forces with entrepreneurs and managed – often

with the help of the police - to pull down a few blocks here and there. In their place they built "modern" flats - however no skyscrapers or urban motorways were constructed.

Many politicians, architects, planners and others also wanted to tear down the three wooden villages in Oslo - Kampen, Rodeløkka and Vålerenga - but had to give in. The protests against such plans were too well coordinated. However, a decade earlier a similar project at Enerhaugen was successful. Up in their place went three rather high new housing-complexes. Something of a memorial to the small wooden houses can now be seen at the *Folkemuseet*, the national museum for Norwegian folklore.

Parallel to these rather gruelling political fights over the future of Oslo in the eastern part of the city, in 1975 the 80 metre and 19 storey high *Postgirobygget* was erected in the centre of the city. Nobody, probably not even the architect, has ever argued that it is a nice looking building.

Some ten years later, the *LPO-architects* launched the idea of building "a slim needle" just beside the massive green-brownish *Postgirobygget.* The argument was that this would create a new *milieu.* "The needle" should be a hotel – today the *Radisson Oslo Plaza Hotel*. However, when introduced, no hotel-company would accept the needle-concept. It afforded too few rooms per floor to make it profitable to operate, they argued. The city council listened and soon the building was broadened and became like any other massive high-rise box. To maintain the needle-concept the top floors were sharpened into a broad chisel. By 1990 construction was complete and Oslo had the highest (117 metres and 37 storeys) building in the Nordic countries. Oslo held this record until the Kista-tower was erected in 2002 in the northern outskirts of Stockholm

By 2003 Oslo had a total of 100 buildings of more than 40 metres (13 floors) in height.

The writer would like to thank architect Arne Sødal, the staff of *Oslo S Utvikling AS (OSU)* and the Municipal Agency for Planning and Building Services in Oslo for their help in providing the background material for the articles about high-rise policies in Oslo contained in this issue of JoN.

- Happy to have a high-rise strategy

- Of course, we do not have to build high to express modernity, says Ellen de Vibe. She is the head of the municipal Agency for Planning and Building Services in Oslo.

The reason for asking pointedly about modernity is double-edged. Firstly, when Oslo City Council adopted their strategy for high-rise buildings in 2004, they reiterated that "high-rise buildings are an important symbol of modernity". Secondly, one of the key arguments forwarded by the planning agency is that: "Today high-rise buildings are being constructed with growing enthusiasm across Europe." In other words both the political and professional authorities argue strongly for 'building high' in Oslo.

– And now it seems like Norway's capital has edged ahead, in a Nordic sense at least, on height-concentration – particularly related to densification in the city-centres?

- The point is that we have in Oslo for a long time faced significant pressure to build high in many parts of the city. Therefore it became important to develop clear policies for high buildings. This proved to be a long process and the conclusion was that, except for Bjørvika and one other single slim building of 24 floors in the northern outskirts of the city, no buildings should be higher than twelve floors. An additional exception is also made for tower-like, sculptural buildings, notes de Vibe, the chief town-planner of the city.

- When high-rise buildings were discussed in 1991 Oslo City Council advised against building high. They argued then that the city should maintain its traditional character as "a carpet" at the bottom of the huge green amphitheatre created by the natural landscape. The same argument was subsequently deployed again and again by the city and the planning authorities in later reports and analyses, but with the *Barcode-project* it seems like this principle has been dropped and that the city will now gain a new visual expression in particular when viewed from the fjord?

- Much of this debate is linked to the fact that Bjørvika has for many years been a very open area with hardly any buildings at all. In other words it is impossible to build a town equal in size to Lillehammer without it being visible in the landscape. What we are doing now is securing commons/public spaces or "fingers" as we call them, to maintain the relationship between the sea and the hinterland. In addition we will create ample open spaces and green areas and establish several good urban spaces for people to pursue recreational activities. This is a clear and well thought out strategy for planning and I think it will be successful.

- The CEO of *OSU* Mr. Paul Lødøen has argued that the high-rise buildings in the *Barcode-project* provide an excellent approach to climate adaptation. In fact, he thinks that even higher constructions the should be allowed?

- I think the most important argument is that it is very beneficial to have a high concentration of jobs here because of Bjørvika's location with regard to public transport, says Ellen de Vibe.

She also explains the decision to build 960 000 m² of new floor-space in the Bjørvika area was taken based on an urban design feasibility studies that showed this amount was appropriate for the area.

By Odd Iglebæk

Ellen de Vibe, head of planning in Oslo. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

Aerial view of Oslo with the fjord and the `amphitheatre-landscape´. Right of the white new opera house the start of the *Barcode-project*. When finished it will stretch towards the right almost to the lake. Photo provided by *Oslo S Utvikling AS (OSU).*

Ownership and opportunities in Bjørvika

Bjørvika lies at the bottom of the Oslofjord. It is also the home of the already internationally famous, in an architectural sense, new Opera house. Located in the eastern part of the city of Oslo it is also the most important hub for passenger transport in Norway.

Oslo central railway station, including the Gardermoen airport express-train terminal and the intercity bus station are located here. Most of the Oslo-region bus-, tram- and underground transport systems also interconnect in Bjørvika. Several major hotels and shopping-centres are located close by while the area is also home to many thousands of office workers.

The new development area currently under construction is located primarily between Oslo's central railway-station and the sea. Previously large parts of this area functioned as a mixture of harbours, storage-facilities and access roads. When the transformation is complete in some 10-15 years time, 7-8000 new people will be housed here. Probably more than double the number that will work there. Close to one million square-metres of new floor-space will by then have been constructed.

The area has, over many decades, been the recipient of significant levels of public investment. This, combined with its direct access to the sea and its central location, ensured that property-values in Bjørvika remain among the highest in Norway.

Most built land in Oslo is, in ownership terms, divided into relatively small plots. Contrary to patterns across the rest of the city however Bjørvika is owned by a small number of large landowners. According to their web pages, 66% of the land is, at present, owned by the Oslo Port Authority through their company *HAV Eiendom AS* while 34% is owned by the real-estate company and property developer *Oslo S Utvikling AS (OSU).* (See: www.osu.no).

OSU is a company specifically established for the development of the *Barcode project* in Bjørvika and is owned by three of the initiating landowners in the area*; ROM Eiendom AS*, *Linstow AS* and *Entra Eiendom AS,* each holding one third of the stock in *OSU*. *Linstow* is a privately owned company, while *ROM* (Norwegian State Railways) and *Entra* (Ministry for Trade and Development) are publicly owned. From 2000 onwards the Norwegian Parliament decided that public land in Norway should be developed by ordinary (publicly owned) profit-making companies.

Their landownership status makes *OSU* and *HAV* the key economic actors in Bjørvika. Through their jointly owned company *Bjørvika Utvikling AS (BU)* - owned 66% by *HAV* and 34% by *OSU* - they claim the "potential exists to construct approximately 900 000m² of permitted floor-space […] within the zoning plan". OSU alone has the capability to produce 350 000m². These figures should be compared with those issued by Oslo City Council which has granted permission to build a total of 960 000 m² of new floor-space in Bjørvika.

This new infrastructure investment in Bjørvika is estimated to cost 2 billion NOK. The City of Oslo will pay 15% (300 million NOK) while the remaining 1.7 billion will be covered by the property-developers. The deal is that they shall contribute 2 500 NOK per m² of new floor-space constructed. The less they are allowed to build, the less they will contribute. If political decisions are taken which reduce the potential for new construction by more than 60 000 m² the infrastructure agreement will lose its validity. The total level of investment in all new structures in Bjørvika is calculated to be around 30 billion NOK. Total sales-values are estimated at between 36 and 50 billion NOK (4.0 to 5.5 billion €). In other words the project displays potential returns of 20-66%.

HAV could probably sell individual building-plots for 3.5 billion NOK in Bjørvika though *HAV* and the Port Authority also own land in Filipstad on the western side of the city where they could perhaps make another 3.4 billion NOK (*Aftenposten* 09/07/07).
The sale of Sørenga, the real prime lot in the site, with regard to proximity to the sea, saw *HAV* reap 940 million NOK. The particular lot is 35 000 m² or approximately one tenth of the

total Björvika site. Oslo City Council gave permission to build 100 000 m² of housing on the lot.

100 000 m² of the 960 000 m² total of the new floor-space planned for Bjørvika has been set aside for culture. Norway's new national opera is already situated in the area. In addition the new Deichman Library and the new Edvard Munch museum as well as a historical museum are all likely to be situated there also.

For the remaining 860 000 m² approximately half will be made up of housing with 4500–5000 new flats constructed. Some 10% of these may be set aside for social housing. The other half will be used for offices with workplaces for 15 000–20 000 people.

The total land area in Bjørvika is approximately 700 000 m². 40% of this will be used for covered with buildings, 20% will be for roads, tramlines and pavements and the remaining 40% will be parks and various other open spaces. The total length of the seashore will be some 3 km.

Formally speaking it is the elected City Council of Oslo that will make the final decisions on planning and building in Bjørvika while the municipal Agency for Planning and Building Services is tasked with preparing the plans and tabling the proposals.

From Barcode to *gullrekke* (the golden row)

The *Barcode-project* consists of around 10 high-rise buildings each 45-70 metres high, maximum 17 office-floors or 22 floors if housing, stretching a total length of 350 metres east-west between Oslo's Central railway station and the waterfront where the new Opera house is situated. Thus far three of the ten planned buildings have either been built or are now under construction.

The area of the *Barcode-project* is three times that of the opera-building. The total floor-area is 196 000 m² of which 150 000 m² is above ground-level. The area of the site is however 18 000 m² or 1/11 of the total new floor-space.

By late 2008 the design of seven of these buildings was more or less finalized. The first building, the *PCC* headquarters (12 floors and 46 metres high) was completed in May 2008. The next, the *KLP* headquarters will be finished in summer 2010 – housing office space and 54 luxury apartments – (18 floors). Next in line is the *Isfjellet* office-building designed by *Snøhetta* (16 floors and 67 metres high), the *Visma*-building (67 metres and 17 storeys) and *DnB NORs* headquarters, with three towers of 15, 16 and 17 floors respectively.

One feature of interest in respect of this project is perhaps the debate on energy-reduction. In general, modern glass and steel buildings - always a popular choice for office developments – often draw heavily on energy, both for heating and cooling. To pioneer something of a counter-movement in 2005 *OSU* the site-owners, together with *NAL*, the Architectural Association of Norway, and *Enova* the Norwegian state's authority for energy-consumption reduction, organised a competition for the most energy-conscious new office building as a part of the *Barcode-project* with the added proviso that the winner should provide an example of good practice for the whole of Europe.

In the end however they appointed two winners: Norwegian architects *Lund Hagem* who won due to their fulfilment of the actual challenges posed but in addition the Danish architects TRANSFORM were also awarded first prize – not for their energy-solutions *per se* - but rather for their spectacular glass-box design! It currently remains unclear however whether either of these buildings will actually be constructed.

Sale of the first *Barcode*-buildings indicates that a return of up to 25% on invested capital is possible. If prices remain at this level, this could see, on the finalisation of the *Barcode project,* generated profits totalling 1.5 billion NOK - to be shared between the three partners in *OSU* namely*: Entra, Linstow* and *ROM* (*Aften* 11/01/07).

- Officially the *Barcode-project* has recently undergone a name change and should now be referred to as the '*Opera-kvarteret*', explains Ellen de Vibe, head of the Municipal Planning Office.

However, when later attempting to call *OSU* to ask for a particular photo-montage of the *Barcode-project*, the receptionist replied: - Oh, you mean *gullrekka* - that's what we call it!

By Odd Iglebaek

Properties "in gold" reflect the 350 000 m² which *Oslo S Utvikling AS* can develop.
Photo-montage provided by *Oslo S Utvikling AS (OSU).*

Highest Nordic buildings - 60 meters or more

Kungstornen 60m, Stockholm City

Cirrus 86m, Helsinki

Turning Torso 190m, Malmö

When	What and where	Metres	Floors
1924-1925	Kungstornen, Europe's first skyscrapers 2 buildings, Stockholm City	60	17
1931	Hotel Torni, Helsinki City	60	13
1950	Town Hall, Oslo City (height of highest tower)	66	-
1955-1966	Høtorgskraparane, Stockholm City 5 parallel office buildings	72	19
1957	Kongens Bryghus, Copenhagen, Vesterbro	70	21
1959	Skatteskrapan, Stockholm, Söder	84	26
1959	Folksam skrapan, Stockholm, Söder	79	24
1960	SAS Royal Hotel, Copenhagen City	77	22
1961	Carslberg Hovedkontor, Copenhagen, Valby	88	22
1962	Wenner-Gren Center, Stockholm, Nortull	82	25
1964	DN-skarpan, Stockholm, Kungsholmen	84	22
1964	Kronprinsen, Malmö (housing and shopping)	82	27
1969	Domus Vista, Copenhagen, Fredriksberg	102	30
1967	Codanhus, Copenhagen, Fredriksberg	66	21
1970	Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen, Østerbro	70	17
1971	Scandic Hotel, Copenhagen City	62	19
1973	SAS Scandinavian Hotel, Copenhagen, Amager	86	26
1975	Postgirobygget, Oslo City	80	19
1976	Fortum, Espoo (Helsinki-region)	84	20
1987	Maarmerkki, Helsinki east (housing)	82	19
1990	Plaza Hotel, Oslo City	117	37
1997	Söder Torn, Stockholm, Söder (housing)	86	24
2002	Ferring, Copenhagen, Amager	81	20
2002	Kista Science Tower, Stockholm, Kista	156	32
2003	Postgirobygget (org. 1975) Oslo City	110	26
2004	Koppertårnet, Copenhagen, Østerbro	62	16
2005	Turning Torso, Malmö (housing)	190	54
2006	Cirrus, Helsinki	86	26
2010	KLP-Barcode, Oslo City	64	18

(Sources: Mostly *Wikipedia*, the list might not be complete or absolutely correct.)

In the field of architecture there have been some, but not that many, studies of high-rise buildings in the Nordic countries. In Denmark *Århus Kommune* together with *Realdania* and *Arkitema AS* have produced what is called *Højhushåndbok – Et grundlag for planlægning, vurdering og 3D-visualisering af høje hus.*

Further information for Denmark can be found at:
http://www.plan09.dk/Inspiration/kommuneplan2009/tema_hoejhuse.htm

For Stockholm municipality (*Stadsbyggnadskontoret*) some information is available in what is called *Översiktsplan* (The overall plan) from 1999. ttp://www.sbk.stockholm.se/OPtext/PDF/Sid%2098-131.pdf

In Oslo the municipal planning authorities published a policy-analysis in 2002.
Plan- og bygningsetaten: Høyhus i Oslo – vurderinger av prinsipper for høyhusstrategi, Oslo.

"Action plan" for EUs first "macro-region"

On the 10th of June 2009 the European Commission presented its proposal for the EUs Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (Communication and Action Plan) following a request by the Members States (European Council) in December 2007. The document reflects the results of an online public consultation process as well as several public debates which have been held in the eight Member States involved and included partners and stakeholders at every level.

Looking at the Action Plan, four *thematic pillars* describe the strategy in detail, which is, namely, to make the Baltic Sea Region:
- An environmentally sustainable place (main issues concerning the marine environment),
- A prosperous place (main issues concerning prosperity),
- An accessible and attractive place (main issues concerning transport and energy), and
- A safe and secure place (main issues concerning safety and security).

In accordance with the region's future development the Action Plan may be revised but for now it comprises 15 *priority areas* corresponding to the four *thematic pillars* mentioned above. Each *priority area* is coordinated by 1-2 Member States and transformed into *detailed actions*. These can be either *strategic* (addressing issues that are especially important to specific regions, citizens and enterprises) or *cooperative* (focussing on issues that might enhance cooperation between Member States and stakeholders). 80 examples of so-called *Flagship projects* are, additionally, listed by naming a lead partner and a deadline for finalisation.

The Commission as well as all of the stakeholders identified, i.e. other Member States, regional and local authorities, Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental bodies should be involved in the implementation process.

According to the Action Plan the Nordic Council of Ministers for instance leads a *Flagship project* that is going to "Create a Baltic Sea Fund for Innovation and Research" under the *priority area* that focuses on the potential in research and innovation. Other *Flagship projects* concentrate on themes such as e.g. water quality, biodiversity, climate change, entrepreneurship, research and innovation, energy, accessibility, transport, attractiveness, and safety and security with a number of these having already been implemented.

Last but not least, *horizontal actions* conclude the Action Plan. Here, the development of e.g. integrated maritime governance structures as well as the use of research as a basis for policy decisions and of Maritime and Land-based Spatial Planning are cross-cutting themes identified in order to promote Territorial Cohesion with both land and maritime dimensions.

The financing of actions and projects does not come from the strategy itself. However, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as well as other EU funding mechanisms will back their implementation in the Baltic Sea Region financially for the period 2007-2013.

Having said this, the strategy is an integrated framework and thus relies rather more on the engagement of governments and citizens than on regulations. Moreover, the strategy's overall aim is to address current and future challenges as well as emerging opportunities by enhancing the coordination of joint actions in the Baltic Sea Region. Thus, the strategy tackles problems and strengthens development potentials on a "macro-regional" level - among Member States, regions, the EU, pan-Baltic organisations, financing institutions and non-governmental bodies.

The Journal of Nordregio 1-09 focused on recent developments in relation to The Baltic Sea Region Strategy.

Discussion and cooperation will also be initiated with external partners, especially Russia. In so doing, the European Council hopes to highlight the Northern Dimension as an already existing common policy of the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland as well as of other international bodies and their decision-making mechanisms, e.g. the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Nordic Council of Ministers or the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM).

The EU Baltic Sea Strategy is one of the main priorities of the 2009 Swedish EU Presidency and its proposal is now being discussed by the European Parliament and the Member States. When the document is finally agreed by the end of the year it will surely contribute to the regional implementation of the EUs Integrated Maritime Policy.

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References:

Action Plan - Working document accompanying the Communication concerning the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region - SEC(2009) 712 - 10 June 2009
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/baltic/index_en.htm

Paris toward the north-east, seen from the Eiffel-tower. The high-rise area in the background is the business centre La Défence. An important future issue here is to what extent Paris will have more of this. In the foreground is the Palais de Chaillot, the current home of *Le Grand Pari(s)* exhibition. The green area in the middle is the Bois de Boulogne. All photos: Odd Iglebaek

Planning conflict in the Paris-region

PARIS IN MAY: Each day the museum of architecture and heritage at the *Palais de Chaillot* attracts hundreds of visitors. First and foremost they come see *Le Grand Pari(s)* – the larger game or the larger Paris – depending on how you interpret it.

In terms of physical planning the Paris region is probably 'hotter' than any other European metropolitan area at the moment. On the one hand the regional authorities are currently presenting their visions based on four years of intensive study, political debate and public hearings.

On the other hand the French head of state, President Nicolas Sarkozy, has commissioned ten private firms to present their views of the future of the French capital-region. Each has worked independently of the regional planning authorities while being paid 200 000 euros for their contributions. A special minister in charge of the Development of the Capital Region has also proposed a new scheme, including a new 130 km long underground rail line around Paris.

Paris-monumentalism

Emperors or Presidents and Grand Architecture or 'Urbanism' schemes have long gone hand-in-hand in the French capital. Examples here include *L'Arc de Triomphe* (Napoleon), *Le Grand Arc La Défense* (François Mitterrand) and the *Musée du Quai Branly* (Jacques Chirac).

Nicolas Sarkozy undoubtedly wants to join this club, but he may still be uncertain about how exactly to do it, or as he stated at the opening of *Le Grand Pari(s)* exhibition: "We need to rethink the city. To look further and deeper […] that is the spirit of the consultation that I wish to launch..."

Le Grand Pari(s) is a very visual exhibition. A number of the contributions are presented by huge banners. One highlights a proposal to build a wall of skyscrapers all along Paris' 40 km long ring-road. In the centre of the city they have placed a 1000 metre high tower structure called the Super Sorbonne. In comparison the Eiffel-tower is 324 metres high. It is the office of Winy Maas and the MVRDV team that have launched this contribution.

As far as the general public are concerned most attention has focused on the proposal by the office of Antoine Grumbach. They suggest merging the coastal town of Le Havre with the Ile-de-France region around Paris into a single region, and in so doing provide the French capital with a Channel harbour. The popularity of this proposal is based not least upon a very detailed, aerial night-satellite image where people can line up underneath the large montage to find their own neighbourhood.

Appreciate debate

- What we appreciate about Sarkozy's initiative is that he has generated a sufficient level public interest to ensure that a healthy

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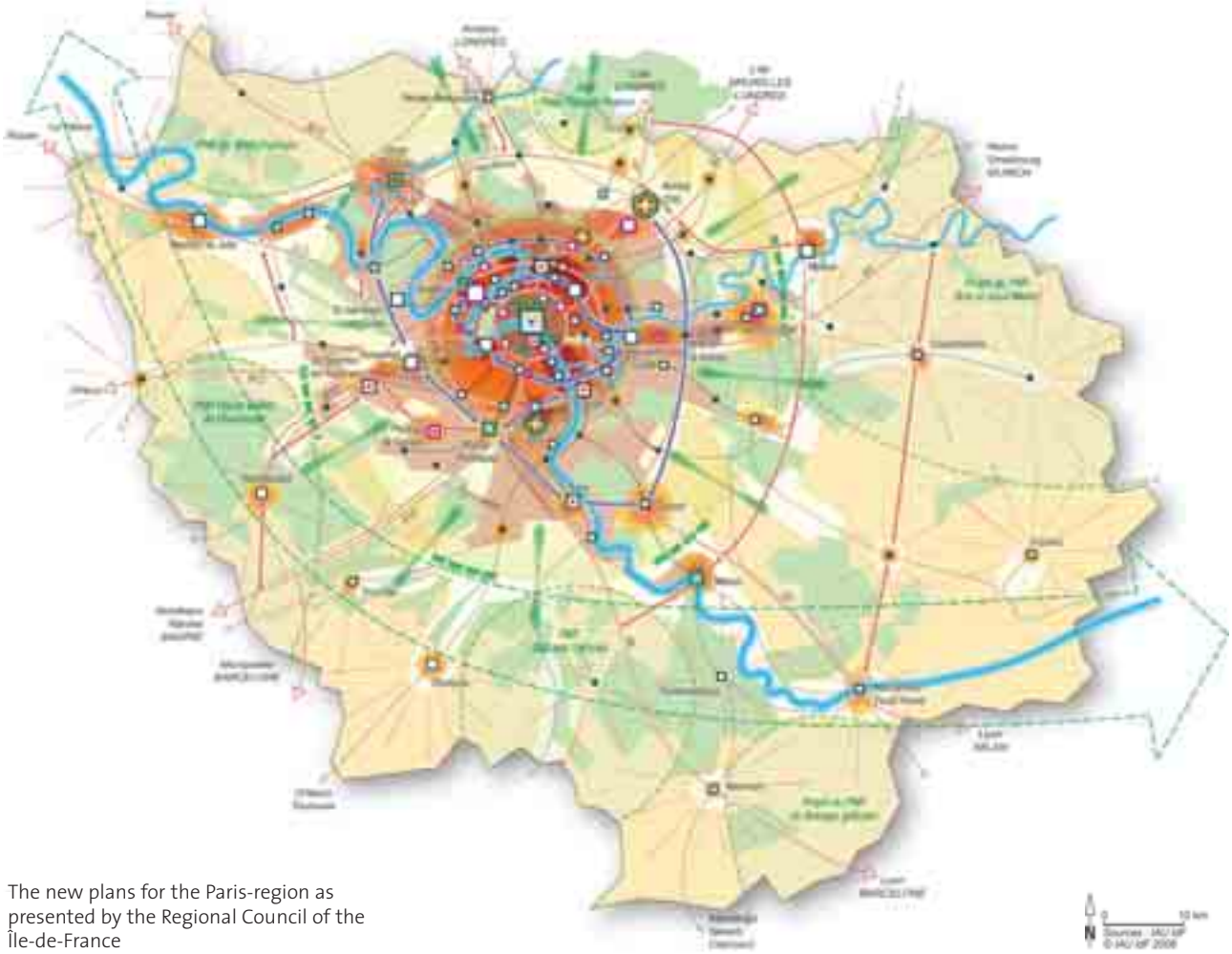

The new plans for the Paris-region as presented by the Regional Council of the Île-de-France

SCHÉMA DE PARINCIPE DU NOUVEAU RÉSEAU DE TRANSPORT DE PARIS RÉGION CAPITALE

The new plans for the Paris-region as presented by president Nicolas Sarkozy and his goverment.

discussion can now take place in respect of the future planning of the Paris-region. We also hope that there will be ample opportunity to study the implications of the ten visions compared with the Region's own proposals, comments Vincent Fouchier.

Fouchier is a Deputy General Manager at the *Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme d'Ile-de-France* (IAU-îdF). This is a large institution, a 200-person multidisciplinary strong planning agency, and an associated body of the Regional Council of the Île-de-France – a region with 11.5 million inhabitants. He was also part of the scientific committee promoting the *Le Grande Pari(s)* exhibition.

Socialists or Conservatives?
The Chairman of the Board of the IAU is also the Chairman of the Regional Council, at present Jean-Paul Huchon, representing the Socialist party. President Nicolas Sakorzy on the other hand is a member of the Conservative party. Next year there is the election for a new Regional Council in the Île-de-France. It however remains an open question as to who will win the election.

1300 official stakeholders
The Île-de-France claims historical roots back to the 5th century. Formally the region was established as a legal entity in 1976. In planning terms it is a complicated and a highly democratic structure, since each mayor in all 1281 municipalities of the region has decisive powers. The remaining 20 *arrondissements* constitute the centre of the capital city itself. In the regional planning context they count as one unit, the municipality of Paris. The same goes for the eight *départements* which the region is divided into.

Fouchier has overall responsibility at the IAU to develop the new Île-de-France regional masterplan: - What we are talking about is not only the need to develop a set of ideas and a process, but first and foremost to end up with a legal document outlining the most important guidelines for the future development of the region, he underlines.

The last time a masterplan was made for the Île-de-France was in 1994. That plan was produced and adopted by the state authorities. Since then legislation has changed and this time it is the regional authorities - through the regional administration and the IAU – that have actually done the planning work. – The national authorities must still however approve the regional masterplan, before it gains statuary status, he explains.

Stop sprawl
The 1994-plan was very much a plan of its time. The model was to extend the city through the expansion of the road-system. – Thus encouraging a significant amount of urban-rural sprawl. One example of this is that the urban character of the region grew by, on average, nearly 2000 hectares annually over the period 1982-2003 (the region covers a total of 12 012 km2), notes Fouchier.

Travelling across the region this is reflected in hundreds of thousands of plots of land, say 400-500 m^2 with a small villa on the site. Shopping centres here and there and almost all transport conducted by private car.

- Our proposal in the new plan is two-fold: Firstly, we should build very little on 'virgin' land and only in designated areas, particularly in Sénart and Val d'Europe. Secondly density should aim for at least 35 housing-units per hectare in all built-up areas. That is equivalent to a utility rate (floor-area/land-area) of 0.3 to 0.4.

Intensive densification
- For the existing suburbs, old and new towns and some villages our proposal is for intensive densification, with some places at the level of central Paris, which usually has a utility-rate of 2.5 to 3.0 and in some places up to 5.0. A regional land agency has also been created, to buy derelict industrial sites with a view to gaining more control over land-use, Fouchier continues.

During the regime of Charles de Gaulle in the 1960s five new towns, namely, Cergy-Pontoise, St. Quentin en Yvelines, Marne la Vallée, Sénart and Évry provided the central element in the growth of the Paris region. They will soon however all lose their special planning status.

Characteristic of these new towns are the many high density developments clustered around a railway station linked to the centre of Paris. The idea here was to facilitate commuting to-and-from the city centre for work and study. Unemployment however is often quite high.

New railways

Modern housing and offices at Gare de Montparnasse, Paris.

The issue is how to develop the future of the Paris metropolis as well as the Paris region as a whole, says Vincent Fouchier.

- A very important element in our new plans is to generate two new circular rail lines, (one rather close to Paris: called *'Arc Express'*), which will link the suburbs together, without entering Paris thus enlarging the network. In this way it is hoped to reduce traffic to-and-from the centre of Paris. Secondly, this will increase the possibility to commute to work while linking the major employment centres. It will also generate urban densification around the stations. Our estimate is that this will cost 15 to 18 billion euros.

- One can also say that the Region's transport-proposal is less expensive compared to *'grand8'* the new 130 km long underground railway-system, suggested by the President Nicolas Sarkozy. This would cost 35 billion and will also connect the suburbs, but much further from the centre of Paris (20 to 25 km). It is however as yet unclear whether the 'grand8' project can be financed, since the state alone cannot raise such amounts of money, says Fouchier.

Modest population and many new homes

- The regional masterplan of 1965 predicted a growth in population reaching 14 million in the Île-de-France by 2000. Even today we are approximately 2.5 millions short of this figure. We are very careful about population growth and predict only reaching 12.5 million by 2030 - an annual growth of 0.7 %, he continues.

- On average the population of the region is predicted to grow by 50 000 persons annually. Still you propose building 60 000 new homes every year?

- One reason for this is that the construction of new homes has been very low in recent years, in fact down to only 35 000 in 2003. Therefore we have a lot of catching up to do. The demand for housing will also significantly increase because of the ongoing reduction taking place in average family size, due to population ageing and changes in the French way of life: this then is the main source of new housing need.

- Sakorzy says it should be 70 000 new homes each year?

- All the experts, even those from the state, estimate the need to be around 60 000 units per year, which is already a really high objective, but the reason why President Sarkozy now wants to reach 70 000 is probably a simple matter of political ambition, concludes Fouchier.

Debate over the future of the Paris-region will undoubtedly continue. What happens with planning in the Île-de-France will also provide inspiration and guidance for many other parts of the world. And not to exaggerate the conflict; all the actors in the area seem to agree on one thing, and that is that the Île-de-France should become one of the leading "Eco-Regions" in the world. At least, this is the impression they have given so far.

By Odd Iglebæk

The Region of Paris (Région Île-de-France)

Inhabitants: 11.4 million, (Paris itself 2.2 million). Average annual growth 0.7%, equivalent to national average.
Area: 12 012 km² (Paris itself 105 km²)
Jobs: 5.5 million of which 94% are salaried. 600 000 students and 137 000 jobs in private and public research. 61.4% of the population is economically active as compared to 55.2% for the other French regions.
Housing: 5.3 million homes, of which 49% are rented, on average 2.3 persons per household.
Transport: 2 international airports. Connected to 547 cities in 135 countries. Europe's fastest rail network. Europe's second largest inland port with 70 different harbours.
Regional rail mobility: 2.4 million passengers daily. 1 600 km of high-density railway lines, of which, 100 km is high-speed. 5 RER (Réseau Express Régional lines). In total 5 000 trains daily on the 3 900 km Paris Region network. 390 stations. 14 Metro lines.
Roads and bicycles: 2 100 km of main roads and motorways. 15 100 taxis. 1 700 km cycle lanes. The Velib self-service system includes 20 600 bicycles and 1 451 stations.
Planning and political organisation: The region has 8 *départements*, 1281 *municipalities* and 9 *arrondissements* which all exercise planning authority. The highest political authority is the elected Regional Council.
Source: IAU etc.

- This is my house. The public can use one of these illustrations for a future Paris-Le Havre connection to identify their home-area as seen from space. Photo: Odd Iglebaek

World Wide Views of Global Warming – Nordregio as the Swedish partner

Project Managers from 44 countries after the reception at the Danish Parliament where we launched World Wide Views on Global Warming on March 23, 2009.

On the 26th of September 2009 *World Wide Views of Global Warming* will for the first time provide citizens around the world with the opportunity to discuss and communicate their own opinions and experiences of climate change and global warming. The results of these citizen consultations will be presented to the national delegations at the Copenhagen United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in December 2009. The Danish Minister of Climate and Energy is the ambassador for the project and is tasked with ensuring that all of the results are presented at the COP 15.

Decisions taken during the negotiations in Copenhagen will likely mould global climate policy for years to come. Given, moreover, that the world's citizens will have to live with both climate change and the policy decisions made in Copenhagen this process of citizen consultation is expected to provide a useful input into the negotiations.

Nordregio - The Nordic Centre for Spatial Development - together with the municipality of Borlänge is responsible for the citizen consultation process in Sweden. On the 26th of September approximately 100 citizens from Borlänge and its surroundings will meet to discuss climate change and to formulate the recommendations to be presented at the COP 15 in December. On the same day citizen consultations will be undertaken in roughly 50 other countries from across the world. Through a web-based tool the results of all of these individual consultation processes will be uploaded to www.wwviews.org.

The consulted citizens will be selected to show diversity with regard to gender, age, geographical zone, educational level, occupation and so on. The citizen consultation process is performed in accordance with a method elaborated by the Danish Board of Technology which is based on many years of experience and research in the field of citizen participation/ deliberation.

For more information regarding the project please visit www.wwviews.org.