



Aerial photo towards south

**CATEGORY** urban / architectural  
**TEAM REPRESENTATIVE** architect

**LOCATION** Otaniemi, Espoo  
**POPULATION** Espoo 265 000 inhabitants, part of Helsinki capital region of 1 400 000 inhabitants  
**PROJECT SITE** 5 ha  
**SITE PROPOSED BY** Senate Properties  
**OWNER OF THE SITE** Senate Properties, City of Espoo, Aalto University Properties Ltd

**COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION**  
 Commission at the level of concept development and urban planning.

#### HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY

Otaniemi is best known for being the home of Aalto university campus as well as several high tech research and business facilities. A new metro line will connect Otaniemi to Helsinki city center in 2016. That in addition to Aalto university's decision to move the School of arts to Otaniemi in 2017 have increased the interest to develop and densify the area. New university and commercial buildings will be planned in the area in the future as well as housing.

To the north of Otaniemi there is NATURA 2000 nature preserve area which is a significant bird sanctuary. There is also a population of protected flying squirrels in Otaniemi. One of the objectives is to find innovative ways how to build and densify the area without disrupting the bird or squirrel habitats.

#### CITY STRATEGY

Espoo is the second largest city in Finland and part of the Helsinki metropolitan area. Otaniemi in the south-eastern part of Espoo is only 6km away from Helsinki city center. The new metro line will strengthen the logistic connections within the metropolitan area and the strategy is to develop Otaniemi - Tapiola - Keilaniemi area into an attractive and innovative city district of science, art and business.

The vision of Espoo is to be a responsible and humane city. The most important resources of Espoo are its active inhabitants, educational institutions, communities and businesses. The city is developed in interaction with various partners. The goal is to make Espoo a pioneer in the municipal sector and a good place to live, learn and work in as well as engage in entrepreneurship.



Map of Espoo with new metro line which will open 2016

## SITE DEFINITION

In Otaniemi there is the Aalto University campus as well as several public and private research and business facilities. There are also student housing buildings located along the shores in the north with more than 2 000 students living in the area. The master plan of Otaniemi was made in the 1950's and 60's by Alvar Aalto, who has also designed several buildings there. The architecture in Otaniemi is characterised by mid century Finnish modernism including red brick facades.

The site on the north-western shore is for the most part wooded. The sea and wetlands in front of the site are part of NATURA 2000 nature preserve area for being a significant bird sanctuary. Along the shore there is a pedestrian route that is part of a 41km long recreational network of Espoo. At the southern end of the site there is an office building by Alvar Aalto that needs to be renovated.

## FUTURE OF THE SITE IN RELATION OF SITE'S FAMILY AND ADAPTABILITY

The contestants will be asked to propose 25 000 m<sup>2</sup> of new housing for the project site for both university students and people working in the area and 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> of office space for research and administrative use.

### How to Use New Inputs to Change Urban Space?

The goal of the competition is to illustrate creative and innovative solutions to integrate the vacant site to the existing urban structure while addressing to the following questions:

- How to build and live near the shore without disrupting the bird life of the Natura 2000 area?
- How to include the values of nature to the design?
- How to harmonise the squirrel habitat with the new development?
- How to connect the site to the existing structure of Otaniemi?

- How to complement the characteristic red brick facades of Otaniemi?
- What kind of housing typologies?
- How to integrate communal spaces and shared resources?



