

Østmarka re-enacted

Introduction

Lade is a unique peninsula and characterised by its green landscape, diverse ecologies and park-like structure of free open areas inhabited by important municipal institutions. This character reaches back in history, where Lade was a landscape of agricultural fields on marine clay soils, public institutions such as the psychiatric hospital overlooking carefully framed gardens, patches of small forests and tree-lined roads. Today, however, this open and green nature is increasingly compromised by densifying urbanisation and remaining ecologies are pressed for space and increasingly fragmented. A lack of human scale, the prioritisation of car mobility over pedestrian access and a loss of connection between humans and nature as well as to each other are repeating challenges urbanisation today.

Østmarka is located on one of the two prominent hilltops in Lade. Together with Ringve, it will be strengthened as an ecological haven, a viewpoint and beacon for new ways of coexistence together with nature, in a time where coexistence has become an urgent necessity. The proposal will treat the site as a park, keeping the hilltops open and strengthening the ecological connections across the site. Together with a comprehensive network of recreational paths these connections invite inhabitants of Lade in northwards towards the Lade coast, whilst structuring the site into a sequence of forest patches, pollinating meadows, shared gardens, and framed alleys. Using light-weight timber architecture specific to their local topographical conditions, a porosity is achieved that encourages connection with nature, whilst conserving local soil and ecological conditions.

General approach

The proposal balances the demand for housings, the nursing home, and local urban ecologies by innovating typologies which both regenerate ecologies, adapt to terrain and foster a closer synergy between humans and nature. It places buildings on the edge of the site, framing a sequential outdoor space, which will strengthen the local forests and identity of both a historical healing landscape and cultural landscape.

It is the landscape that dictates the urban layout of the buildings. They use the terrain to create space. While positioning the buildings we used the dynamics of the terrain.

Architecture

Lower two-story housing is placed on the eastern side of the site, adapting to the slope, and taking from the clean geometric architecture of the 1960's housing. The houses form small collective clusters supporting social living and sharing. The 1960's houses are transformed into collective and generation housing. In contrary to typical urban sprawl, the low houses are placed in denser clusters maximise open green areas and enable sheltered gardens to meet neighbours in between.

The new buildings are created using a simple, timber and stilt construction and tilted metal roofs, where an apartment block of 2-3 floors is placed sheltered by Kanonhaugen and the nursing home as a divided volume along the western forest edge. Generous circulation spaces open to the forest and Kanonhaugen northern slope, to connect to nature and support social encounters. The light-weight

stilt-pillar structure preserves as much ground as possible, and the buildings' porous nature maximises the connection to nature - fostering a healthier connection to it and utilising its healing properties for the care home residents.

The large housing was located by the hill, allowing it to be 3 stories tall. Even though it has a higher density it is still behind the hill and therefore its scale is experienced differently. Moreover, it uses the hill to close the courtyard space. Parking is centralised into an underground facility under the apartment block, where it will disturb existing ecologies the least.

The materials were chosen to speak with the senses like smell, touch, or sound. For example, a metal roof is used to amplify the sound of the rain. Materials are mostly natural - stone paths, wooden construction of the buildings and linen curtains in the windows. This way the new structure stays in harmony with nature. Thanks to large windows and open plans nature is still present inside the building.

Landscape design

The proposal integrates the neighbouring cultural landscapes by connecting existing hiking paths and transforming the cultural landscape of Kanonhaugen, formerly known as Moen's farm, into a rich hilltop garden meadow park. The garden meadow park takes from cultural landscape vegetation structures typical to Norwegian cultural landscapes, where meadows of various kinds are dotted with clusters of deciduous trees. The organic winding path references the sister hilltop of the Ringve museum and botanical garden. A meditation tree at the top of Kanonhaugen creates a new viewpoint and seating area to look towards the fjord from before embarking onto the rest of the site.

Further north, the existing brown field takes on a new role as a recreational area in constant development. Run by the households of the neighbourhood. Planting will take place on a large part of the area, thus starting the cleaning cycle of the soil. Felled trees are used as building material for the further development and maintenance on the site.

Existing wildlife corridors are further strengthened by small forest pockets to diversify the existing forests, and to continue the south-northward green corridor. Existing fungi meadows and deer resting spot are sanctioned by building at a safe distance and create a visually connected sequence, whilst construction and paths utilise light-weight wooden construction, porous paving. The path network passes the public recreational areas but also connect the new typologies which offer a layer of semi-public spaces: the apartment housing, with a uncommercial living room, the nursing home with a cafeteria open to the public and the sheltered play areas connected to the small-scale housing.

The streets on site are lined by a birch alley and ditch system, in reference to the site's agricultural past where birch alleles were a common way of transporting people between the fields and showing direction.