Porvoo – Finland – Europan 11 DEVELOPING AN OLD INDUSTRIAL AREA INTO AN ATTRACTIVE NEW CITY DISTRICT



CATEGORY urban / architectural
LOCATION Porvoo, Hattula
POPULATION 48 750
STUDY SITE 160 ha
SITE OF PROJECT 82 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY City of Porvoo
OWNERS OF THE SITE City of Porvoo and a couple of private owners
TYPE OF ORDER AFTER COMPETITION Detailed planning will be launched separately per sub-area, on the basis of the best proposals received.

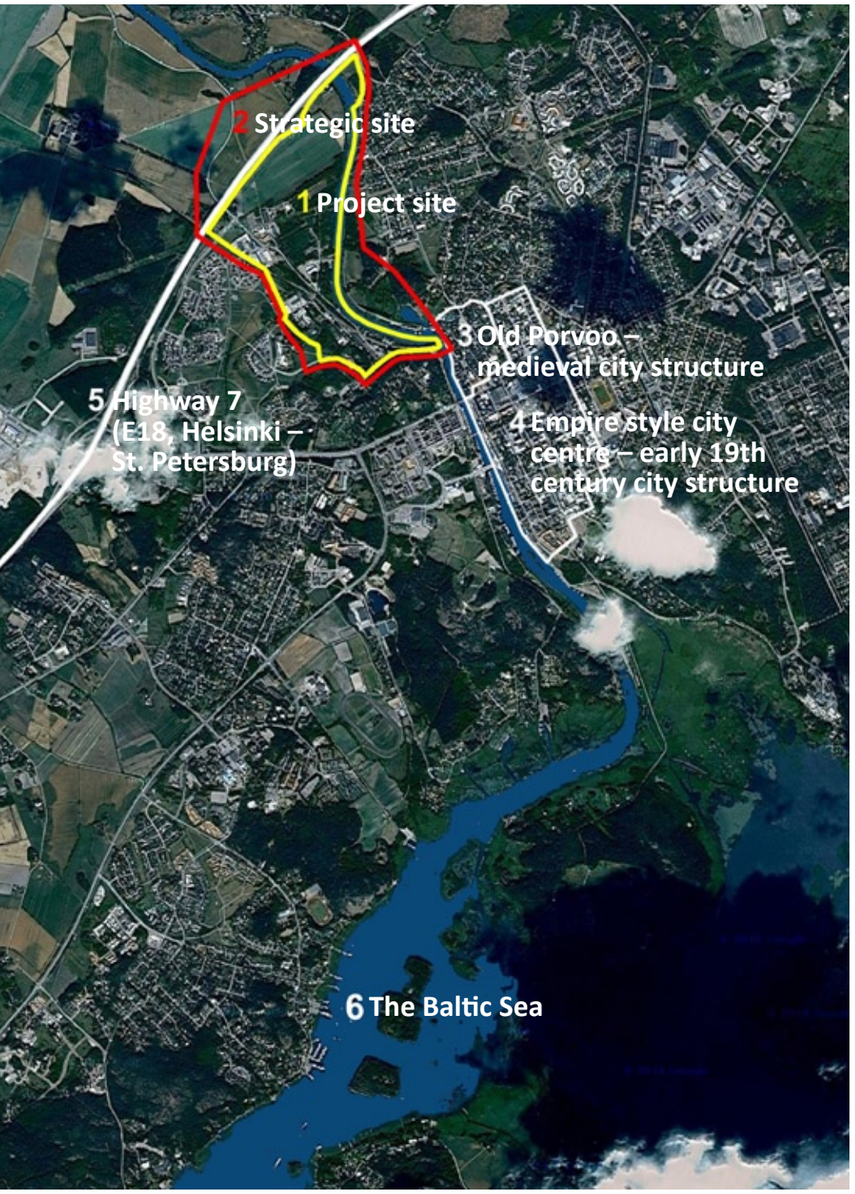
TRANSFORMATION OF THE SITE

The site is located northwest of the centre of Porvoo, and was previously an industrial area.
The site is bordered by the Porvoonjoki river, Highway 7 (E 18, Helsinki–St. Petersburg) and the surrounding neighbourhoods of detached houses. The site is part of the historical river landscape. On the opposite side of the river is the medieval centre of Porvoo. The project site is also connected to the national urban park. The old railway station in the southern part of the site is protected in the city plan.
The aim is to develop the old industrial area into a new, attractive neighbourhood that fits the surroundings and the unique tradition of the city.
Special attention should be paid to the following three aspects: the scale of Porvoo, the industrial tradition of the area, and the relation to the nature. The new functions in the area of the old railway station should maintain and develop the cultural history of the place.

CITY STRATEGY

The second oldest city in Finland is located in the metropolitan area. The milieu and the history of Porvoo are unique strengths in the city planning. Energy efficiency is important in developing the urban structure. The population is growing gradually and economic life is being developed. The capital is 50 kilometres from Porvoo and can be easily reached by various means due to Highway 7. Also the development of a future rail system is being supported.

Europan 11 – Finland – Porvoo





SITE DEFINITION

The main part of the site consists of an old sawmill area. The sawmill operated from the 1930s until the 1980s. The old railway station area, with its railway yards, dates from the end of 19th century. The regular railway service was terminated in the beginning of 1980s.

North-west of the site is a large farm estate, the Kiala manor, which has been involved in various industrial and economic activities. The manor is connected to the site by valuable cultivated fields and an alley of trees. Highway 7, which was built in 1970s, cuts through the fields. The site is part of a nationally important and valuable landscape, the Porvoonjoki valley.

The railway station area has been classified as a nationally important cultural environment, as has as the Linnamäki [“castle hill”] area and medieval Porvoo on the other side of the river. Old Porvoo, with its medieval church, can be seen from the site. The view towards one of the most remarkable national landscapes in Finland is a very important part of the identity of this site.

The aspiration for human-scale wood constructions is typical for Porvoo. The location by the Porvoonjoki river offers possibilities to use the water as a part of the urban city structure. The old sawmill area should become the centre of the new neighbourhood.

The rich cultural history and topography offer possibilities to create various types of housing units. On the site there will be dwellings for 3000–3800 people. Also other functions that would support the housing area can be suggested. New appropriate functions should be planned for the old railway station.

NEW MOBILITY

Traffic routes and communication will play an important role in the site development. Public transport and bicycle and pedestrian routes will be an integral part of the new traffic route network. On both sides of the river will be bicycle and pedestrian routes connected by new bridges. In the future it is possible that a new railway station will be placed on the site.

NEW SOCIAL LIFE

Presently there are some boutiques and workshops operating in the old railway station. The station also functions as a place for museum train activities. These kinds of activities, which are natural for the area, should be supported when the old industrial area is converted into a new housing area. The river bank and other public spaces function as a scene for social life.

NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The new city structure in the site must be energy efficient. A small carbon footprint is a key starting point in designing the various dwelling types. The situation of the site near the city centre makes it possible to create flexible public transport and good routes for bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Porvoo – Finland – Europan 11

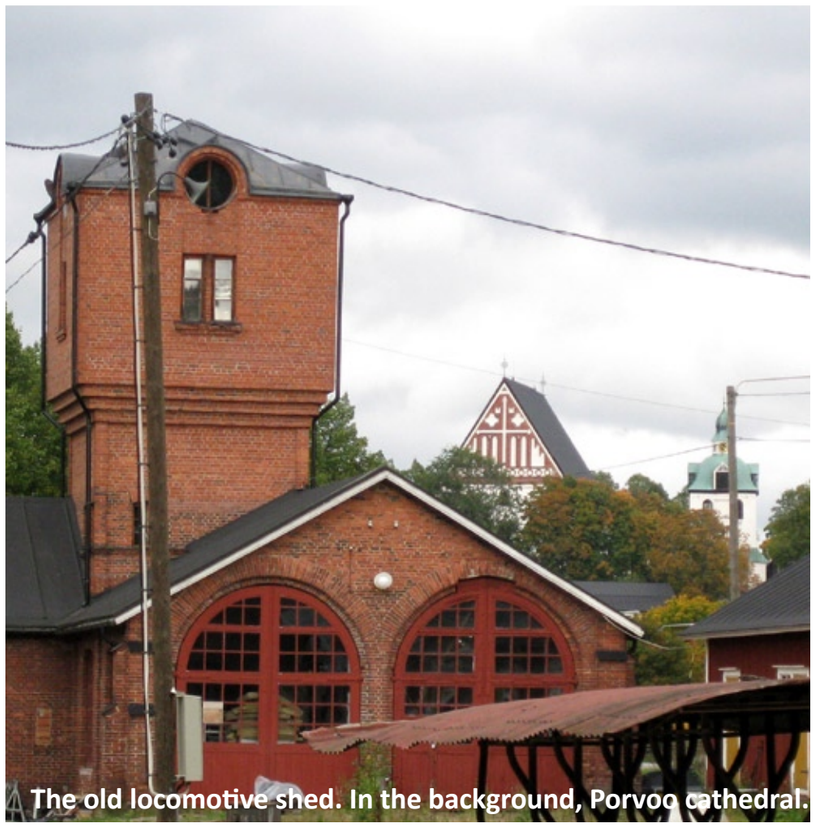


The competition area is immediately north-west of Old Porvoo. The study area comprises also the east side of the Porvoonjoki river (part of Linnamäki "castle hill"), as well as the field areas on both sides of Highway 7.

Europan 11 – Finland – Porvoo



The riverside storage houses of Old Porvoo.



The old locomotive shed. In the background, Porvoo cathedral.



The sawmill area. The ruins of the lumber delivery point.



The former factory where wooden houses were fabricated is among the only preserved buildings in the sawmill area.



In the sawmill area, some structures of the demolished industrial buildings have been preserved.