

# EUROPAN 15 VISBY

PRODUCTIVE CITIES - SWEDEN

"Visby East Centre - a vibrant district connecting  
historic and contemporary urban landscape"

Arkitekter under 40 år  
från hela Europa deltar  
och tävlingen hålls  
vartannat år.



**Europaråd SE**

■ VISBY



# INNEHÅLL

EUROPAN 15  
Besöka vår hemsida:  
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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Site Representative

Christian Hegardt, city architect  
Region Gotland

### Actor involved

Region Gotland

### "Team representative"

Architect, urban planner or  
landscaper

### Expected skills regarding the site's issues and characteristics

Architecture, urban planning,  
landscape architecture

### Communication

Anonymous local exhibition after  
the 1st jury round.

After the competition there will  
be a public prize ceremony,  
a catalogue of results will be  
printed, and the winners will  
be published on the website of  
Architects Sweden.

### Jury evaluation

With the participation of the site  
representative.

### Post-competition intermediate procedure

Meeting and workshop with the  
municipality and the prize winning  
team(s).

The ambition of the municipality  
is to involve the prize winning  
team(s) in an implementation  
process.



# PARTICIPATE IN EUROSPAN 15!



Strandgatan, Visby town centre. Photographer: Sara Appelgren, copyright Gotlands Museum and Region Gotland



### INTRO

Region Gotland and Europan Sweden would like to thank you for choosing to participate in Europan 15. The competition brief provides information about the character of the site and plot, and includes a list of references with links to supplementary information. In addition to this material, you can download high-resolution images and drawings from the project database. Please read the condensed "Short Site File" brief parallel to this unabridged competition brief. The theme of Europan 15 is "The Productive City". As an extension of the theme of Europan 14, this edition of the competition applies a broader perspective in exploring a city with natural modes of production. Central thematic concepts are: resources, mobility and equity. For questions and answers regarding the brief or competition rules, please consult the forum on Europan Europe's official website.

[www.europan-europe.com](http://www.europan-europe.com)  
[www.europan.se](http://www.europan.se)

### VISBY

The project site on Gotland is located in Visby, just outside the medieval town wall. Gotland is Sweden's largest island, with a central location in the Baltic Sea between the Swedish mainland and the Baltic countries. The smallest region in Sweden, Gotland, has a gradually increasing population of about 59 000 inhabitants. Meanwhile the island's nature, mild climate and beaches attract 2.2 million visitors per year. Visby is Gotland's only town, with 24 000 inhabitants - a growing population, thriving business, numerous public workplaces, a university, regional airport and large passenger port. The town's commercial centre Östercentrum (The East Centre) is undergoing changes where the existing buildings will be given new conditions in future planning. The project site covers 2 hectares of parking space on regionally owned land. The competition proposals should present architectural solutions and an urban approach to the area which will transform Östercentrum to a more vital part of the town centre. On the junction between the historic urban settlements and the modern town, a new model for a vibrant, dynamic small town can be established.

# Competition brief

## Visby



### URBAN CONTEXT

#### Description of the region

##### Historical background

Gotland's location in the middle of the Baltic Sea has given Sweden's largest island natural conditions that are unique from the mainland. Its nature is characterised both by the island's isolated location and a subsequent rationalisation of agriculture and forestry distinct from the rest of the country. The most important feature of the Gotland landscape is the barren limestone bedrock, whose conditions cater for a special variety of species that imbue the environment with its distinctive character. The island's present geological morphology was formed during the Ice Age when ice moved east and compressed its eastern edge, which is today marked by long sandy beaches and beach meadows. Along the West Coast, high cliffs rise out of the sea.

The location of the island in the middle of the Baltic Sea drove the early evolution of the Gotlanders,

Gutes, as a seafaring people. Numerous recovered artefacts from as early as the Iron Age indicate contacts with distant lands. During the Viking Age Gotland became one of northern Europe's richest areas. Gotlandic trade farmers, so-called farmen, conducted trade between Western and Eastern Europe. The Gutes' wealth was made evident in the construction of 95 stone churches between 1100 and the following 200 years. Of these churches, 92 still stand, and add character to Gotland's cultural landscape.

Until modern times, Gotland had continued to be an important strategic focal point. From the mid 20th century, nearly 25 000 Swedish soldiers were stationed on the island in the Gotland Regiment, which was disbanded completely in 2005. Between 2005 and 2018 the island lacked military forces; in terms of security policy, the situation in the middle of the Baltic Sea has become even more fraught in recent years and since 1 January 2018 the regiment on Gotland was reinstated.

## Gotland – Vision 2025

Administratively, Gotland is a municipality, and in 2011 the municipal government also became a region under the name Region Gotland. There is no county council, but health care and public transport is managed by the Region, which is also responsible for regional development issues usually managed by municipal cooperations or county administrative boards in many other parts of the country. The region of Gotland is Sweden's smallest region, and at the same time the island's largest employer. Gotland is also its own county, which is controlled by a county administrative board.

Gotland is the Baltic region's most creative and magical place, marked by closeness, sustainable growth and full of zest for life.

This is the joint vision of Gotland for the year 2025. Vision Gotland 2025 is also a regional development programme, i.e. a policy document for the whole of Gotland's society. Regardless individual actors, this should be the focus of common efforts.

The overall objectives of the vision are:

- For at least 65 000 inhabitants to live on Gotland
- That Gotlanders' prosperity is amongst the best in the country
- That Gotland becomes the principal meeting place in the Baltic Sea region
- For Gotlanders to have good health and highest happiness rates in the country
- That Gotland is a world-leading island region in environmental and climate issues

Today, several of the goals are about to materialise. For a number of years, the population has been increasing. Gotland is a growth region and the region with lowest unemployment in the country. After the green industries, tourism is the most important industry, with the large number of visitors contributing to many job opportunities. Gotland is one of the counties in Sweden where most companies within the cultural and creative industries have an established an office or branch. There is a living tradition of craftsmanship linked to the limestone quarry, which remains integral to cement production, steel industry and other environmental purposes. The climate and the many hours of sunshine contribute to the high number of visitors, but longer periods of drought during the summer period contribute to problems with groundwater. In recent years, efforts have been made to increase awareness of water consumption, and in extreme situations pressure in the pipes has been reduced. In addition, desalination plants for seawater are now being built in several places.

The island has steadily increasing connections by ferry and flight to mainland Sweden, and periodically flights to charter destinations abroad. Tourists are

not the only visitor group; the commuter population is also increasing. Many government agencies are established in Visby, and like several companies in the business sector they have part of their operations outside Gotland.

The number of travellers to and from Gotland by air and ferry for one year is 2.2 million. The peak season for tourism is six weeks in the summer in July and August. Various event weeks attract a lot of people, in addition to the existing success of seasonal tourism. The most intense of these weeks is the Almedalsveckan and medieval week. Almedalsveckan's was conceived in 1968 when Olof Palme, then Minister of Education, held the first summer speech in Almedalen in Visby. The political tradition of forum has thrived, and since 1991 all parliamentary parties have been represented on Almedalsveckan. The political speeches of the early years have evolved into what is now the world's largest democratic meeting place.



Limestone formations, "raukar"



Gotland's sandy beaches attract many visitors during the summer



Stora torget, Visby town center during the peak season



### Description of the town

Visby is:

- the largest urban settlement, housing both the centre for both local and regional administration
- a hub for communications with the mainland both in the air and at sea
- a driving force for the development of business and public services on Gotland
- centre for education and the labour market on Gotland
- a cultural centre for Gotland with the World Heritage site – Visby inner town – as the jewel of the crown
- the only place in Gotland that offers a complete commercial and public service

#### Visby town centre – a brief history

Today there are approximately 3 000 people residing within the town wall, in inner Visby. Visby town centre is a well-preserved medieval town. The emergence of the German Hanseatic League was the principal reason for Visby's special position as a trading town in the Baltic Sea region during the Middle Ages. In the 1200s, the Hanseatic League grew to be an increasingly successful organization, and Visby became the hub of the Baltic Sea, handling most of the Hansa's trade with commercial town Novgorod in the east. The origin of the town wall is likely linked to the conflicts between the town and the Gotlandic Althing, which led to a civil war on the island in 1288. The town walls of Visby, with its encircling moat and well-preserved medieval Hanseatic town, have been the focus of cultural heritage conservation efforts; in 1995 the town was included on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The World Heritage Committee's

motivation is as follows:

"For its outstanding universal value that represents a unique example of a northern European medieval walled town that preserves with remarkable completeness a townscape and a collection of high-quality ancient buildings."

The many medieval church ruins give the inner town a quaint character. The ruins are, to a great extent, accessible and open for daytime visits, with some of them hosting events and activities especially during the summer season. During the intense summer period there is a motor vehicle ban within the inner town. Exceptions apply to residents with parking spaces for their cars, commercial vehicles, regular traffic and heavy goods transport. Since 2010, Visby town centre has followed a new and detailed development plan, in which the protection of existing buildings is emphasised. An extended construction permit applies in combination with this, for example, for the repainting of facades.

#### The town outside the town wall

During the industrial era, the town did not grow significantly outside the wall, even though some settlements were established along the entrance roads towards the wall gates. This means that Visby, aside from its villa blocks, predominantly lacks the town blocks that grew out of most medieval town centres during the 1600, 1700, and 1800 centuries. The fact that it took until the beginning of the 1900 century before the town needed to be planned for settlements outside the walls is due to both cautious population development, and the available space for additions intramural.



Östercentrum from the town wall and the eastern gate "Österport"

### Former plans

The 1934 town plan by architect Sven Markelius is the town plan that evidences the greatest development of the area outside the town wall. The town plan manifests green “wedges” as parkland with lines of sight towards the wall. Markelius believed that the town’s highest architectural and aesthetic value was in the contrast between the open, vacant landscape outside the wall and the inner town’s closed, dense settlement: “The grand impact of the town wall is largely due to the fact that the surrounding terrain to a high extent is untouched.” New settlements were thus zoned according to modernist principles, keeping a distance to the wall and having a more rural effect. Different zones were to have distinct character and building areas were established as enclaves. The railway system’s position close to the town wall was an important factor in the town plan. However, the railway on Gotland was closed during the 1950, as car traffic increased significantly.

When car traffic gradually grew in importance for urban planning, part of the green wedges were paved with asphalt and turned into parking areas. The car park north of today’s Östercentrum, the yellow marked project site (study site), is one such area.

The town’s expansion has largely followed the town plan from 1934. The older villa blocks around the town centre still provide character to the suburbs, while residential areas from the period of the Million Homes Programme, Bingeby and Gråbo, at a greater distance from the town centre, added distinct yearly rings to the urban environment. Since the Swedish Armed Forces resumed its former regiment areas A7 and P18 Visborg, these areas have become the town’s main town growth zones. In the A7 area, in central Visby, approximately 800 new homes have been completed, while Visborg in southern Visby is due to be developed to a new district. Main streets and roundabouts of the Visby street network outside the wall create major barrier effects in some positions. Not least, this applies to Solbergagatan and Norra Hansegatan near Östercentrum.

The suburbs are given a clear boundary by the traffic routes and the distinctive barriers of the ferry route and Visbyleden. Today the most prominent is the residential area Terra Nova which was established in the 1980s. North of Visby, the former hotel area Snäck has been developed and densified to a new residential area near the airport.

Today over 20 000 inhabitants live in the town outside the town wall, an urbanity in important development and change.



City plan from 1934





Historic aerial view of Östercentrum circa 1960, copyright Lantmäteriet



Historic aerial view of Östercentrum circa 1975, copyright Lantmäteriet

### National interests

In Visby and its vicinity there are several national interests. Of these, the national interest for civilian and military flights creates a flight corridor over the airport that hinders the expansion of the town

northwards. The national interest for Visby Harbour makes it difficult to establish housing in its vicinity, and the national interest for the cultural environment in the town centre of Visby is a very important aspect to deal with in all construction in the inner-town vicinity.



View from the harbour over the medieval town and Visby Cathedral. Photographer: Sara Appelgren, copyright Gotlands Museum and Region Gotland



**Green structure**

Visby is a green town, with great access to nearby countryside and sea. Its main parks are Almedalen in the inner town, the botanical garden near the town wall and the sea, and Palissaderna just south of the wall above the harbour. The town of Visby is still characterised by the medieval street network. The trees that grow in the narrow streets are mostly

alone or in pairs. The scenery adjacent to the ruins and the town wall is often dominated by greenery. Even the older villa blocks outside the town walls often have full and flourishing gardens. Older tree lines follow the entrance roads towards the town wall. The nature reserves Södra Hällarna of southern Visby and Galgberget in northern Visby are popular and beautiful recreation areas.



Almedalen. Photographer: Sara Appelgren, copyright Gotlands Museum and Region Gotland



## Development of the town

### The whole of Visby

Today, Visby has a positive growth with people moving in from the rest of Gotland and the mainland, resulting in a housing shortage. As a basis for planning and development in Visby is the comprehensive plan "Building Gotland" (2010) and the detailed comprehensive plan for the Visby area, "the whole of Visby" ("Hela Visby") from 2009. The master plan includes the following guidelines for Visby's development:

- Development shall take place towards the "sustainable society"
- In Visby there are good opportunities to revitalise, develop, expand, build together, link together and "heal" the town if it is allowed to "grow from within" taking into account the economic, social and ecological dimensions of sustainable development.
- In this context, the Swedish term "hela" (all of...) means both "heal" and "whole", unlike "half".
- The town is to be perceived as "completed" all the time. The "completed" town means that new buildings will connect to the existing town so that islands of settlements without physical and social links to the rest of the town are avoided as far as possible.
- On the basis of the existing, the additions should provide a positive effect overall. Old and new should meet in a beautiful combination.

Visby's conditions as a place where you can live well and create a safe future are unique. In the creation of a good living environment, it is important to find ways to reconcile old with the new. The "completed" vision of Visby doesn't inhibit growth, nor is it the final version of Visby. A future ambition is that the Visby area will develop good environments for growing up, create family and grow old in, and that the area will be a dynamic environment for entrepreneurship. Urban development throughout Visby will strengthen its role as a generator for business, welfare, culture, resource and national and international competitiveness. Priorities include good schools, low crime, functioning infrastructure, good living environment, an enlivening cultural policy, a rich outdoor life, access to a diverse range of green spaces and about beautiful, attractive neighbourhoods and living environments.

One of the goals in Vision Gotland 2025 is that Gotland will develop as a centre in the Baltic Sea region. In order to achieve this, a community planning method is needed wherein all actors share a common vision. There is an opportunity to brand the island as a central meeting place in the Baltic Sea region all year round, with increased hotel and conference facilities, a growing local campus for Uppsala University and cutting-edge companies in

IT and cultural industries. The tourism industry also provides new conditions for Visby's development. In the port area, a new cruise quay has been completed and inaugurated in April 2018. The quay's purpose is to be able to receive larger cruises during the summer season.

### Visby town centre

The town centre is an important part of the town's identity. Over the course of history, various parts of the inner town have functioned as Visby town centre. In many respects, the inner town still serves as the very essence of Visby. However, Visby's development has meant that the town has grown outside its original limits. Many of the town's functions have in that process moved out of the inner town, which therefore cannot claim to be the sole centre of Visby. Today the centre is considered to include Östercentrum and parts of the inner town. In this area there is a mixture of commerce, culture, private and public services, workplaces and accommodation, all of which are ingredients of a functioning town centre and a vibrant town life. A town centre should be perceived as a natural and vibrant meeting place for the town.

- Visby's town centre is to be developed socially, culturally, commercially and design-wise, toward a natural, vibrant and viable town centre for the entire Visby area.
- An attractive town centre is developed through municipal initiatives and in collaboration with the business community.
- Preservation of inner town qualities is a foundational principle for the whole of Visby.

Preservation of the medieval town centre – the World Heritage Visby – is an obvious objective, as is the ambition to create an environment where housing and businesses can coexist and thus create the conditions for a living and thriving town. Another ambition is for the inner town to harmonise with the town outside the walls. Östercentrum should be strengthened as Visby's commercial centre and together with the inner town, is to develop into an attractive town centre with meeting places and a wide range of offerings and opportunities.

A rapid gentrification of the inner town has been going on for a while, with the risk being that the town centre will gradually be depopulated during parts of the day and year. Today, many homes are used mainly for summer residents. As a counteraction, principles are required to sustainably develop the town centre, strengthen the commerce in the inner town and create possibility for a living town. During 2008, extensive relocations of the inner town administrative agencies were initiated when the

County administrative board and the regional archives moved out to the urban area outside the town wall. In 2010 the entire municipal administration moved to the Visborg area in southern Visby.

Today many of the town's central functions are located in the urban area outside the wall, in a sparse urban environment that lacks many of the urban qualities found in the town centre of Visby. In order to create new qualities in this urban environment, and to clearly link together inner town and suburban areas, it becomes important to densify in close proximity to the wall. Places where the old and new town meet, like the port and the gates of the wall Österport and Söderport, are particularly interesting. The ambition is to create a clearer character of urbanity in these situations. Housing construction is primary, but other typologies may be developed in these zones, such as centre functions, service and

new meeting places.

Outside the Söderport a densifying housing project is already under construction. In close proximity to the wall on an attractive plot, new homes are being built. Adelsgatan which via Södra Kyrkogatan connects Södertorg with Stora Torget, was formerly Visby's main central street with shops and restaurants. Today, Södertorg and the southern part of the Adelsgatan are no longer primary attractions, as the important passage is instead in the far end of the Adelsgatan and further Hästgatan towards the Österport and Östercentrum. The hope is that more accommodation directly outside the Söderport can contribute to a larger support for the commercial service at Södertorg and the southern part of the Adelsgatan. With an equivalent development at the Österport and Östercentrum, a coherent passage inside and outside the wall can revitalize the entire area.



Map of Visby where the red boundary denotes the study site and the yellow boundary denotes the project site

## THE PRODUCTIVE CITY

The preceding competition edition, European 14, was also themed “the productive city”. The central question was how a multi-faceted city could interweave productive elements — cultural, commercial and knowledge-based activities — beyond housing to include workplaces, industry and other places of production as important components. European 14 thus studied the link between production, housing and urban life.

A mixed city that provides job opportunities has many positive outcomes. Reducing the distance between housing, production and commercial opportunities thereby reduces transport requirements, as well as strengthening local conditions. When elements find their functional contexts in greater proximity to one other, it affects the urban life and culture. A mixed urban environment can potentialise a socially diverse city, counter-acting segregation.

The current competition edition of European 15 will continue to explore “the productive city” as an important feature of the city’s development, while seeking to delve deeper into the issue and broaden its perspective. What types of synergies can be created, or are deemed necessary, for a city featuring natural modes of production? Broadly speaking, what are the types of infrastructure or interfaces needed to facilitate and optimise the city’s productive features?

European has identified three core concepts: resources, mobility and equity. These constitute important aspects of holistic and sustainable thinking, and serve as an interface for the discussion and actualisation of productivity in the city. All three concepts can be divided into a variety of special cases and factors, which of course are not all relevant to each individual plot. Still, an overview of these can prove valuable in a thorough consideration of all possible opportunities within the project.

### Resources

How do we best utilise the city’s land? This may involve renewing or broadening the areas of use for plots that have been unilaterally developed, or for unused industrial land. This would include the re-purposing of older buildings, as well as the restoration of developments and places at the site. Another issue is the management and possible accentuation of stormwater, water and sewage issues; the activation of natural resources on the plot or nearby areas; as well as the realisation of energy production opportunities.

### Mobility

How do we best design city nexuses? Are there more, new or untapped forms of transport communications via which the city can be reached? How can communications be planned in networks? How can city communication systems become more ‘urban’ so that traffic routes and tracks facilitate transfers, decreased speeding, and become bridges rather than barriers, creating continuous areas? The design of street sections needs studying. Meeting points — such as stations, bus stops, commuter parking and parking lots — also need designing. The same thing applies on a different scale to pedestrian and park trails, passages and meeting points.

### Equity

How can everyone participate in the city on equal terms, and how can this lead to positive benefits for all? The idea that spatial equity leads to social equity can be instrumental in counteracting segregation and furthering the city’s economic development. With regard to such spatial measures, revitalisation of peripheral or segregated areas could be considered, for example by facilitating new residents of a broader demographic, motivated by a range of workplaces, community services, production and transport options. It may involve opening up segregated areas to the surrounding city and other economies. Or it could involve promoting diversity in an area by expanding the range of businesses so as to provide proximity between housing and work, expanding such options to include a broader demographic. Another aspect to consider is how the function of public places become accessible for all and how such “micro-urban” places or environments can be generated.



Winning proposal “Water walk with me” by Cyril Pavlu and Katerina Vondrova, for Trelleborg, European 14, themed “The Productive City”



## THE PRODUCTIVE GOTLAND

Like other industries, Gotland's industrial companies are facing a structural transformation driven by globalization, digitisation and readjustment towards a green resource-efficient economy. Entrepreneurship with a focus on food is of great importance for the Gotland business community. Development in this area of gastro-tourism is also important for the attractiveness of Gotland.

The Gotland brand concerning food holds great promise. Furthermore, Gotland's locality spotlights the island's maritime industries. Gotland has long history of tourism, with healthy competition in

the industry. There is great potential for business development and growth in the tourism industry through internationalisation and the sustainable development of nature, culture and heritage as attractions. Similarly, the development of the digitisation and IT sector on Gotland holds great potential. Overall, the county has a very good broadband coverage with fiber expansion even in rural areas, which, in our digitised and globalised world, means increased availability and opportunity for companies to establish themselves and evolve regardless of distance or other conditions of transport.



Production / H10: food culture and design  
Photographer: Anna Sundström



Production / Adelsgatan: shopping and tourism industry



Production / Hästgatan: food culture and design  
Photographer: Anna Sundström



Production / green industries



### STUDY SITE (MARKED IN RED)

#### Short History

During the 1960s and 70s the area outside of Österport grew. Östercentrum today is the commercial center of Visby and the whole of Gotland. The historic route leading out of the gate, Österväg, is today a square resembling wide pedestrian street with low buildings on either side. The character is a large-scale centre structure with large parking areas. Östercentrum is a bottleneck where the historical and modern town meets, and the mode of development strategy is crucial to the continued transformation of Visby.

The highlighted strategic area has the same extents as the 2013 planning programme for Östercentrum.

This means that in the whole area, work is underway from its current function of commercial centre to a more varied and vital part of the town centre. This work is still in the initial stages. The demarcation of the area is made up of the town wall to the west, where the Österväg meets the historic centre at the Österport, and of Solbergagatan, and Norra Hansegatan to the east.

The development of the area requires a deliberate approach to two overall conditions:

- Adhering to the conditions of National Interest for the cultural environment and the World Heritage
- The relocation of the car park in a development of the area



The red boundary denotes the study site, the yellow boundary denotes the project site. The numbers indicate views represented in photos [see photos in page 17, 18 and 21]



### Conditions of National Interest/World Heritage

There have been two opposing tendencies in the town's expansion outside the wall. One is the spontaneous and organic building pattern around the entrance roads. From the countryside, Visby was reached via highways that led to the gates; along these the first settlements outside the walls began to emerge. A contrary strategy in plans, which was the basis of the town's expansion in the 1900 century, has been to distance new settlements from the wall so that the monumentality of the town wall and the medieval town will not be lost. The challenge is to make these conflicting ambitions work together in the development of new settlements in the area. Too noticeable densification can be problematic in relation to the National Interest and the town wall, while too sparse expansion does not take full advantage of the possibility to tie together the different parts of the town.

### Parking

Gotland has a basic public transport network, but a large proportion of Gotland's rural population, who constitute 50% overall, need to use cars. In the last 10 years, several retail areas have opened in Visby's external zones, only easily reached by car. This affects the conditions for commerce in the Östercentrum, and parking becomes an important competitive factor. Parking spaces around Östercentrum are used not only for trade but also for residents and visitors, mainly during the summer months' traffic restrictions intramural. Even outside the summer's high pressure, parking places are used for commerce, for residents and workers in Visby and for Gotlanders from other parts of the island that visit Visby. For the inner town to be able to be kept car-free in summer, parking spaces outside the wall are a prerequisite.



Town wall. Photographer: Sara Appelgren, copyright Gotlands Museum and Region Gotland



Picture 1: View of the project site at the gas station, Ihregatans, earlier route towards King Magnus road (see map on opposite page 16)



Visby inner town, S:t Hansgatan Photographer: Sara Appelgren, copyright Gotlands Museum and Region Gotland



Picture 2: Östercentrum parking towards residential areas and the town wall (see map on opposite page 16)



## Character

Östercentrum is vibrant during the daytime, and is closed in the evenings and nights with the exception of a handful of fast food restaurants with late opening hours. There are few activities that enable lively inhabitation and movement in the evenings. There are a few housing areas whose evening and night-time security is sub-optimal.

The area closest to the wall and east gate is within the otherwise green moat area, containing the moats that surround the wall. The moats are part of the World Heritage Site and the National Interest for the cultural environment. Next to the east gate there are the remains of older settlements right outside the wall. Otherwise, the plot closest to the gate is undefined and hard-surfaced, and mainly used for parking and taxi ranks.

There is a variety of store premises in Östercentrum. The larger shops are the grocery store Coop inside the mall, and an Åhléns department store on the south side of the Österväg. There are some vacant retail areas mainly in the eastern part of the site. The shopping mall is the main passage from the parking space (project site) to Österväg, and was recently renovated, and re-defined as a commercial passage with more small shops. It has one entrance to the

car park (project site) and the area's neglected back-stage. The state alcohol shop, Systembolaget, has a shop located on the north side of Österväg closest to Kung Magnus Väg. More and more work places are moving to the area, such as the major Swedish engineering consultancy company ÅF who have established a larger branch office in the block Tärnan, above Systembolaget's shop. Along the Österväg there are also elements of more small-scale shops such as a bookstore, cafes and several restaurants.

South of the main shopping street, facing the back of the stores, is Visby's only major public car park. The parking garage is perceived today as an insecure part of Östercentrum. According to the planning programme for the area, this car park can be expanded with an additional deck while building a mix of residential and commercial premises. The aim is to make the longitudinal street Skolgatan more lively and attractive in the evening. This will be further studied in the anticipated municipal work for the existing buildings in Östercentrum.

In the eastern part of the area, south of Österväg, there are still some older one-family houses left. South of the Skolgatan, just outside the area of the planning programme, is one of Visby's largest secondary schools Solbergaskolan and swimming hall Solbergabadet.



Picture 3: Österport towards Östercentrum (see map on page 16)



Picture 4: Villas along Schéelegatan (see map on page 16)



Picture 5: Österväg towards Österport (see map on page 16)



Picture 6: Kung Magnus road towards Östercentrum (see map on page 16)

### The municipality's vision and strategic objectives for the area

In the detailed comprehensive plan The Whole of Visby the following guidelines are set for the development of the area:

- Östercentrum and the surrounding area shall in appearance and content develop into a part of a natural, vibrant and viable town centre for the whole region.
- Östercentrum's connection with the inner town and east gate shall be strengthened.

The planning program for Östercentrum from 2013 is not included in the competition documents. Instead, the main features of the program are described here:

- Kung Magnus väg (street) closes for car traffic between the block Tärnan and Skolgatan, alternatively, this will become a living street (gångfartsområde).
- The passages through the area shall be developed and clarified.
- Rear sides are designed to be perceived as front facades.
- The connection between inner town and Östercentrum will be intensified.
- Housings, offices, activities and culture shall be made possible.

In addition to the possibility of building new houses on paved parking areas, possible further exploitation is suggested on existing buildings in the centre.

The limit of the floor height is three to five floors across the area. In relation to the National Interest, a three storey limit covers the area closest to Kung Magnus väg and the wall, which gradually increases to a maximum of five storeys closest to Norra Hansegatan.

#### Housing

To bring activity, security and movement to the urban life in the area, housing is needed. Both new construction and the addition of storeys to existing buildings can enable more inhabitants in the area. More housing in the area can also in the long term

improve the conditions for a larger local customer base for commerce, closer distance for the residents to shops and thus a decreased need of car.

#### Ground floors

The ground floors should be designed so that they become part of a welcoming town life. This means that all the ground floors should have inviting entrances to the streets and places, storefronts, lighting and a design that contributes positively to the townscape. Contributing to a safer place in the evenings is important.

#### Meeting places

Meeting places arise where people gather, both indoors and outdoors. Public streets and places where you can stay without consuming is a demand in the area.

#### Passages

The need of cross-passages is particularly high in the area, to connect places with each other and increase the movement in the area. Existing cross-passages are in need of renovation. New corridors/passages should be included in the planning.

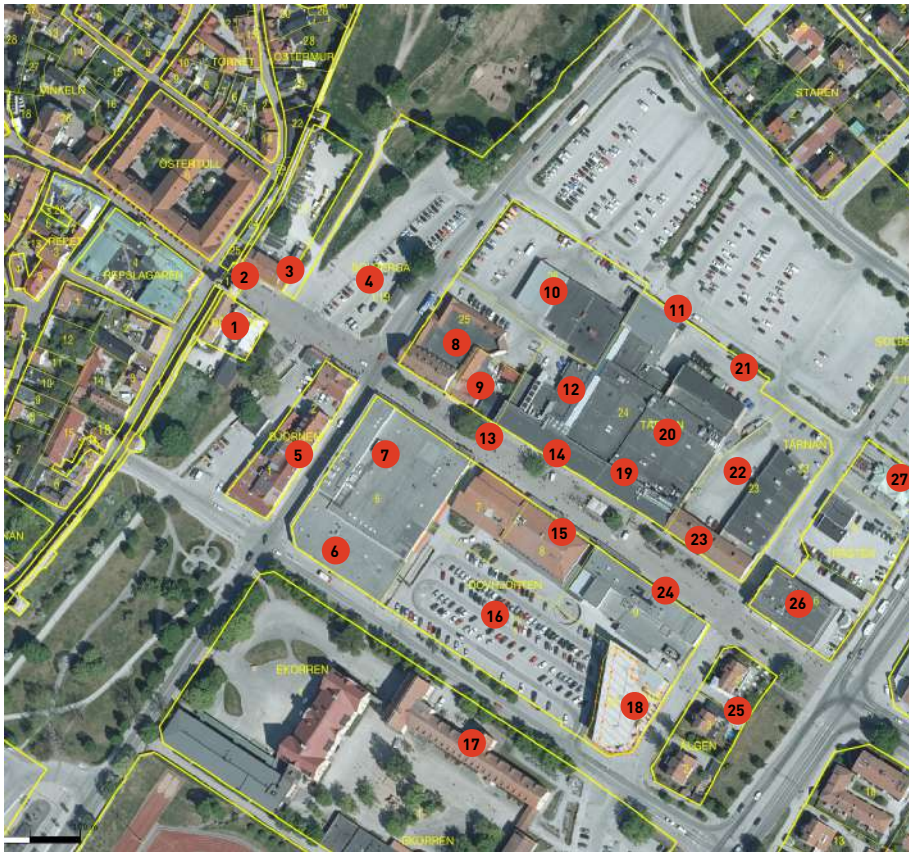
#### Line of sight and building heights

It is important to preserve lines of sight and general visibility through the area towards the wall, the east gate and the cathedral tower, although some important views will have to be neglected when building on the site. The entire planning program area is within the undefined buffer zone to the World Heritage site. The buffer zone is the area directly outside the World Heritage site where special consideration in planning and development is to be taken to the world heritage values. This buffer zone will, in accordance with the UNESCO rules, be specified in relation to the definition of the World Heritage but can be assumed to be equivalent to conditions given by the proximity to the National Interest for Visby inner town: Building heights should be kept to a minimum closest to the wall, and important lines of sight to the town wall should be preserved or strengthened.



Diagram of guidelines to take into account





1. Old building, shop premises, cafe
2. Österport, Eastern gate
3. Old building, shop premises
4. Municipal parking, taxi rank, public wc
5. Partly old buildings, shops on King Magnus road
6. Department store warehouse
7. Department Store Building, Åhléns, and shops in the basement
8. Systembolaget, office space in the upper floor
9. Old byggnad, café
10. Gas station
11. Entrance to the shopping mall
12. Shopping mall
13. Österväg
14. Entrance to the shopping mall
15. Shop premises on Österväg
16. Municipal parking on sunken deck, public parking on the roof
17. Solbergaskolan, middle school and high school
18. Housing, 20 tenant-owned apartments completed in 2011. Stores adjacent to the parking deck
19. Shop premises, restaurant, cafe on Österväg.
20. Grocery store, Coop Öster
21. & 22. Loading bays
23. Shop premises on Österväg, partially vacant
24. Shop premises on Österväg
25. Private villas
26. Office building, store premises on the ground floor
27. Max, restaurant building

Car parks adjacent to the wall, copyright Lantmäteriet

## Österväg

The Österväg opens to the east; its widest segment is 20 meters at the intersection with Scheelegatan. Strengthening the character of street is desirable, as it is too long to be well-functioning as a square, and not in coherence with the historical townscape. The commercial area dilutes towards the east, the farther away from the wall you get. It is mainly in the eastern part of Österväg that there are vacant shops.

## Parallel urban development processes

In parallel to the progress of the European competition in the project site, the municipality is working with the transformation process for central parts of Östercentrum, where most of the properties and existing buildings are owned by private property owners. The idea is to develop clearer principles for renovation and expansion of the existing buildings; the process for a detailed development plan for a new volume on top of the Åhléns building is in progress already. Within the private properties there is varying potential for development. The existing buildings are in different conditions, and both demolition, renovation and extension of existing

buildings may be relevant. The property where the gas station (Tärnan 26) is located today has a very central location and can be developed with homes, offices and in the ground floor shops. A precondition for the task for building on the competition site is that the current gas station will be relocated from the site, and thus the current safety distance of 50 meters does not need to be kept. In 2019, the Region of Gotland intends to conduct a detailed pre-study of the existing buildings along Österväg. Exploitation and development of the competition area can take place independently of the pace of development of individual private properties.

It is not relevant to make detailed architectural statements outside the project site, as the conditions for the private properties and the central areas require detailed studies for each property and are investigated in another form. Participants, however, are encouraged to find a comprehensive approach in the design of the Ihregatans meeting with the back of the private properties and to consider principles of cross-connections through the area as a whole.



## PROJECT SITE (MARKED IN YELLOW)

### Description of the area

The project site consists today of the main car park of 500 places next to Östercentrum. By car it is from this direction Östercentrum is reached through the passage in the shopping mall. The parking is also used during the summer's intensive tourist weeks by visitors to the inner town. The possibility of parking in Östercentrum also provides a precondition for

keeping the town centre car-free to a large extent. Towards the east, the site is bounded by the Norra Hansegatan, which is one of Visby's traffic routes. Some noise from the street occurs, and a quiet side needs to be accomplished if residential establishments are closest to the street. It is desirable that the Norra Hansegatan is transformed into a town street in the long run, without the barrier effect the street has today.



Picture 7: Car parks adjacent to the wall (see map on page 16)



Picture 8: Car parks by the entrance to the shopping mall (see map on page 16)



The red boundary denotes the study site, the yellow boundary denotes the project site

## COMPETITION TASK

### Detailed description

The goal is that the winning proposal will form the basis for a future detailed development plan for the project site. The proposal shall provide innovative answers as to how an attractive and vibrant town centre can be established as a link between the historical urban settlements and the modern town. The task encourages architecturally sensitive and conceptual proposals that address how the sharp meeting between the town's growth rings can be bridged and designed.

#### The goal of competition assignment:

- To propose in the competition area a development with innovative architectural solutions that can help Östercentrum develop into a more attractive and dynamic part of the town centre.

A living town centre must provide good conditions for commerce, businesses but also a public town life. Proposals for the project site need to reflect the town centre's multifunctional character. Different parts of the Östercentrum will have different schedules for development. This can also be transmitted into the competition area: a conceivable approach can be to find a model based on gradual, successive change and development where functions are established step by step.

- To create housing and enable a living district twenty-four seven and all year round.

A crucial factor in the development of the town centre is to allow for more housing centrally, which also provides new opportunities e.g. in commerce. It's also important to provide smaller homes for the elderly, young people and students in central locations. Overall, a mixture of different types of housing and forms of tenure is the goal. On the project site a large number of homes should be created.

- Establish components that can boost productivity in the area.

In accordance with European 15's theme "The Productive Town", the contestants should give conceptual, innovative and interesting suggestions for productive functions in the competition area that can contribute to the long-sightedness, sustainability and dynamism of the town centre and Östercentrum. These can be permanent as well as temporary functions, built functions as well as sites for flexible use. It is important that the proposals demonstrate what the development within the project site can

bring to Östercentrum and the town in general. Planning for residential and parking only means that the area becomes too self-contained and does not give the right prerequisite for dynamic connections to the town centre.

Proposals shall also show how to manage the following prerequisites:

- Meeting with the National Interest/World Heritage  
In a sensitive manner, the proposal is to show how it relates to the meeting with the wall and the town intramural.

- Parking  
How parking spaces should be distributed on the property is an important part of the competition assignment. Today, the approximately 500 parking spaces in the competition area are mortgaged for existing commerce and businesses in Östercentrum. 70%, of these parking lots, about 350 places, need to be recreated in the competition area in the competition proposals. The remaining part will be handled with another parking solution in another part of the area. Developers who have the opportunity to develop Östercentrum need to contribute to the financing of a common solution for the 350 relocated parking lots. It is therefore important that the intended parking solution is as economical as possible, and it is suggested this parking is built in decks over existing plots.

Overall, the proposals in the competition area should include a parking solution for both these 350 relocated parking lots and also for additional new car park requirements. Today we know very little about the ground under the parking lot. However, going down a maximum of one floor for underground parking is deemed possible. Primarily, the possibility of subsoil parking should be reserved for additional parking needs (according to the parking standard below) for the new housing and activities planned in the competition area.

Parking numbers for new homes and businesses  
In addition to the parking lots to be recreated for commerce in the area, the proposals need to present parking lots for additional housing and businesses. The following parking numbers apply:

- Office 11 Parking spaces/1000 sqm GFA (gross floor area)
- Residential 8 parking spaces/1000 sqm GFA
- Trade, consumable goods 25 parking spaces/1000 sqm GFA
- Trade, durable goods 15 parking spaces/1000 sq. m GFA



### Scale

Östercentrum in its current form has the character of a large-scale facility. In the new establishment, it is desirable to break up that scale.

The new maximum height of new buildings of three floors closest to Kung Magnus väg and five floors towards the Norra Hansegatan. Norra Hansegatan's traffic means that housing closest to it needs access to a quiet side.

### Typology

The municipality wants to re-establish the relationship between new buildings at the project site and the back of the existing buildings. Studying design principle and interfaces with the existing buildings are included in the task. The parallel work Region Gotland is conducting of existing properties in the red marked study site, is a prospective study for the expansion of real estate, outdoor environment and preservation of certain buildings. The gas station will be moved away from current place.

The competition proposal should show overall design and details with relevant presentation techniques and in relevant scales. In particular, the three submitted A1 panels will be used in the assessment, both digitally and printed in the original size. It is important that the panels communicate their content quickly and clearly to the judging team, with a well-thought-out structure and readable content.

Suggested materials that the contest proposal shall present is plan of the study site (marked in red), plan of project site (marked in yellow), air perspectives based on aerial photography, ground perspectives, street sections and presentation of buildings, parking solutions and housing types in plans, facades and sections or axonometry of buildings. A shorter explanatory text for the panels and a longer separate text shall be submitted. If the proposal has been working with a gradual development approach, this shall be presented in a suitable relationship with the whole.



Real estate borders and streets, copyright Lantmäteriet

## GENERAL

### Submission requirements

Below are abridged submission guidelines — please visit European Europe's website to read the submission requirements and competition rules in their entirety.

Proposals should consist of panels and a text. The panels should be three in A1 (594 x 841 mm) portrait format. The content should — in drawings, images and text — explain how the proposal relates to the site's needs and to the theme of "The Productive City", and how the proposal's architectural values relate to context and surrounding environment. The content should include a three-dimensional representation of the proposal (for example in perspective, photo montage or model photography). The accompanying text should be a maximum of four A4 pages long and present the proposal ideas, as well as a suggested process of implementation (for example, transforming the plot in a certain order).

### Competition timeline and dates of importance:

**190318** The competition opens. All competition sites are presented. Registration and download of complete competition documents starts.

Launch event, with lectures and presentations. See European Sweden's website.

**190409** Site visit with site representatives (pre-registration to [info@european.se](mailto:info@european.se) required).

**190614** Last date for competition questions.

**190628** Last date for answers to competition questions.

**190728** Last day for submitting competition entries.

**191202** Competition results and winners are published.

## JURY

### European 15 jury

Members of the competition jury:



- Karin Ahlzén, SE  
(chairman of jury)
- Architect
- Project Director for "Fokus Skärholmen", City of Stockholm
- Stockholm, Sweden



- Christer Larsson, SE
- Architect
- Director of City Planning, City of Malmö
- Malmö, Sweden



- Helena Tallius Myhrman, SE
- Architect
- City architect of Gävle
- Gävle, Sweden



- Dagur Eggertsson, NO
- Architect
- Founding architect of Rintala Eggertsson
- Oslo, Norway



- Jenni Reuter, FI
- Architect
- Professor at Aalto-university
- Helsinki, Finland



- Mia Hägg, SE
- Architect
- Founding architect of Habiter Autrement
- Ticino, Switzerland



- Erik Wingquist, SE
- Architect
- Programme director at KTH
- Stockholm, Sweden

### SUBSTITUTES:

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| – Per Kraft, SE                                       | – Martin Berg, SE                    |
| – Architect   | – Architect                          |
| – Founding architect of 2BK                           | – Founding architect of Schuman Berg |
| – Earlier running the secretariat for European Sweden | – Winner E14 in Narvik, NO           |
| – Stockholm, Sweden                                   | – Stockholm, Sweden                  |



## REFERENCES

**About European competition**

European Europe. This includes rules for the competition:

– <https://www.european-europe.eu>

European Sweden:

– <http://euopan.se>

Instagram account for European Europe. Lots of previous winners and examples:

– [https://www.instagram.com/euopan\\_europe/](https://www.instagram.com/euopan_europe/)

Instagram account for European Sweden:

– <https://www.instagram.com/europansweden/>

**About Gotland**

Municipality's website:

– <https://www.gotland.se/>

3d map and droneview:

– <https://www.hitta.se/kar-tan!~57.63679,18.29664,16z/tr!i=eVNjOTQ6/tileLayer!l=3/droneview!id=13fed5ff-e2ac-4d3d-bb62-9ceb-3d4b2678!m=1>

About Östercentrum:

– <https://www.gotland.se/98028>

Gotland on Wikipedia:

– <https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotland>

Visby on Wikipedia:

– <https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visby>

Car restrictions in inner town:

– <https://www.gotland.se/67773>

Historical map/Present situation:

– <https://kartor.eniro.se/?c=57.635570,18.299747&z=15&l=historic&q=%22visby%22;geo>

– <https://www.gotland.se/88175>

Info about the gates and towers of the wall:

– <http://www.tjelvar.se/>

World Heritage Site Visby:

– <http://worldheritagesweden.se/varldsarv-i-sverige/hansestaden-visby/>

**Relevant laws and regulations**

Accessibility:

– <https://www.boverket.se/sv/byggande/tillganglighet--bostadsutformning/tillganglighet/>

Noise:

– <https://www.boverket.se/sv/PBL-kunskapsbanken/planering/detaljplan/temadelar-detaljplan/buller-vid-detaljplanering/regler-och-riktvar-den-for-buller/>

BBR, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning's building regulations:

– [https://www.boverket.se/contentassets/a9a584aa-0e564c8998d079d752f6b76d/konsoliderad\\_bbr\\_2011-6.pdf](https://www.boverket.se/contentassets/a9a584aa-0e564c8998d079d752f6b76d/konsoliderad_bbr_2011-6.pdf)

BBR in English:

(från 2016, ej den senaste versionen)

– <https://www.boverket.se/globalassets/publikationer/dokument/2016/boverkets-building-regulations--mandatory-provisions-and-general-recommendations-bbr-23.pdf>

**Swedish - English Glossary**

– <https://www.boverket.se/globalassets/publikationer/dokument/2016/ordlista-glossary-pbl-och-pbf.pdf>

# About European

■ WANT TO KNOW MORE?

■ Visit our website:  
[www.european.se](http://www.european.se)

## CONTACT INFORMATION:



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## EUROPAN SWEDEN



**The Swedish European Secretariat is run by:**

Carolina Wikström and Frida Öster  
through Asante Architecture & Design.  
Europan 15 is under the auspices of  
Architects Sweden.

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ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Architects Sweden