

JURY REPORT

HELSINKI | VAASA

4.12.2023

LIVING CITIES / 2

REIMAGINING ARCHITECTURES
BY CARING FOR THE INHABITED MILIEUS



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1. / European 17 Competition

EUROPAN is a competition directed at young professionals in the fields of architecture and urban design. Competitors are encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams, each team including at least one architect. All team members, whatever their profession, must be under 40 years of age on the closing date for the submission of entries.

In European 17 there were 51 sites from 12 different European countries. The Finnish sites were in Helsinki and Vaasa.

The theme of European 17 was Living Cities 2 – Reimagining architectures by caring for inhabited milieus.

1.1 REIMAGINING ARCHITECTURES BY CARING FOR INHABITED MILIEUS

European 17 continued to develop the theme Living Cities of the previous E16 session, while emphasising the need for a profound change in the manner of envisioning projects in a context of ecological transition. This transition entails a transformation in the ways of thinking about and imagining the city and architecture. The aim was to explore the regenerative capacities of living milieus amidst new architectural, urban and landscape ecologies that attempt to overcome the opposition between nature and culture and anthropocentrism.

How can we care for inhabited milieus?

The increasingly alarming nature of the different IPCC reports, most recently that of March 2022, and the COVID-19 pandemic with its planet-wide impact, have made the vulnerabilities of the living world and the metamorphoses of habitability even more starkly apparent. The very possibility of living is now in doubt for all, given the excessive consumption of natural resources by certain human groups to the detriment of the needs of the global population, exceeding what planet earth can replace.

The climate emergency, overexploitation, pollution, inequality and iniquity – all these ills, upheavals and disorientations demand actions of “care” that address the coexistence and interrelationship of all the elements of the living world, and thus mandate a radical shift in paradigm. Sensitivity, responsibility, and creativity are aspects of care and of interest in other beings.

This demands an awareness of the affiliations and interactions at work in the situations put forward for the competition. For European 17, the contexts demand a radical change towards a more immersive approach to the conception and production of space, an approach founded in care for living milieus. A new paradigm is at work, prompting us to wonder how to reconcile things and beings at a time when the habitability of Planet

Earth is in question. Local and translocal strategies are be associated both with issues of metabolism (new ways of managing flows of natural elements, materials and human beings with the aim of developing circular economy) and issues of fairness and solidarity (inclusivity of actors in processes) which were already partially operative in certain contexts in E16.

Reimagining architectures that are embodied in “visions” or “narratives” of the evolution of sites between present and future

In response to these territorial challenges, it is more than necessary to create complex, global and dynamic spatial reconfigurations in damaged inhabited milieus in order to revitalise biological and human communities. The care-based approach will lead to a necessary interplay of innovative, dynamic and varied project processes:

- producing an active understanding of what is already in place (biological + socio-anthropological scales), a situational intelligence;
- on the basis of this immersion, repairing mistreated territories/spaces by subtraction and recreation;
- reinforcing, regenerating or creating qualities of hybridisation between nature and culture;
- linking the scale of strategic and dynamic reflection on territories (the large-scale structuring ecological challenges) with the scale of local spaces and their re-conception (everyday spaces and shared spaces);
- imagining/creating spaces today with a view to the connection between present and future and therefore their production and adaptability over time (sustainable development);
- tackling projects with a readiness for design and production processes that involve all actors with their diversity and their differing roles.

The competition sites were divided into **sub-groups** that specified the thematic classification of the sites furthermore.

LET THE BIRDS SING! REIMAGINING PUBLIC SPACE AS A BIODIVERSE LANDSCAPE

Public space imagined as the touching ground, the proof that YES, WE CAN –through design– address challenges caused by the crisis due to climate change, in terms of social and environmental issues. Public space imagined as the agent for inclusion of difference, both in terms of humans and non-humans, as a mediator between new interdependencies. Soil, water bodies, shores and eco-corridors imagined as the main actors to guide complex transformation processes. In this site category, public space was to be seen as the area where the topic of Living Cities is performed.

The sites in this sub-group had a close proximity to water: coastlines, rivers or blue infrastructures, lake shores, fjords and canals. Coastlines and lake shores have always been considered as places of opportunities. Yet, beautiful natural settings are often suffering from an overuse due to massive tourism and exploitation, reinforcing the economical, ecological and social problematics related to eco-rhythms and seasonality. Some of them are also facing the imminent issues of rising water, placing them into an extremely vulnerable situation. Questions were, how to imagine new ways of caring for these vulnerable sites? Which new relations and respectful uses to explore with nature through them? How to find new balances and co-living opportunities between seasonal activities and the related various populations that use these sites? What if we consider the eco-rhythms as a transformative strength to reimagine the future of the sites?

Sites : Åkrehamn (NO) – Cantù (IT) – Grenoble Alpes Métropole (FR) – Guérande (FR) – Ingolstadt (DE) – Le Palais (FR) – Makarska (HR) – Métropole Rouen Normandie (FR) – Rimbo (SE) – **Helsinki (FI)** – Barcelona (ES) – Chiva (ES) – Groenewoud (NL) – Larvik (NO) – Lochau (AT) – Marseille (FR) – Nalón Estuary (ES) – Torrelavega (ES)

THINK TABULA NON-RASA! DESIGNING NEW HABITATS AS A HOLISTIC ENVIRONMENT

Some nature reserves around the world are deserts –hot or cold–, but they host all kinds of animals and microorganisms hiding in the cracks and crevices, under the rocks. Some of the sites look empty, vacant, but they are not. They are full of life: in the soil, in the air, in breeze. They are part of a larger balance of natural forces and processes. On these sites, substantial new volumes of programme are required. Think of these sites as the opportunity to multiply the number of life forms, think of the request to build new habitats as an opportunity to design a holistic environment. Think tabula non-rasa! Some sites involved finding space amongst greenery, fields, trees, water, complex ecosystems that could be considered as gardens. Question was, how to introduce the constructions of the people without reducing the number of life forms?

Sites ;T Zoet (NL) – Borkum (DE) – Eivissa (ES) – Kassel (DE) – Krøgenes (NO) – Østmarka (NO) – Skellefteå (SE) – Waalwijk (NL) – Berlin (DE) – Celje (SI) – El Prat de Llobregat (ES) – Kenniskwartier (NL) – Nyköping Skavsta (SE) – Piteå (SE) – **Vaasa (FI)** – Wien (AT)

IMAGINE A SECOND LIFE! TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOODS AND BUILDINGS TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE MILIEU

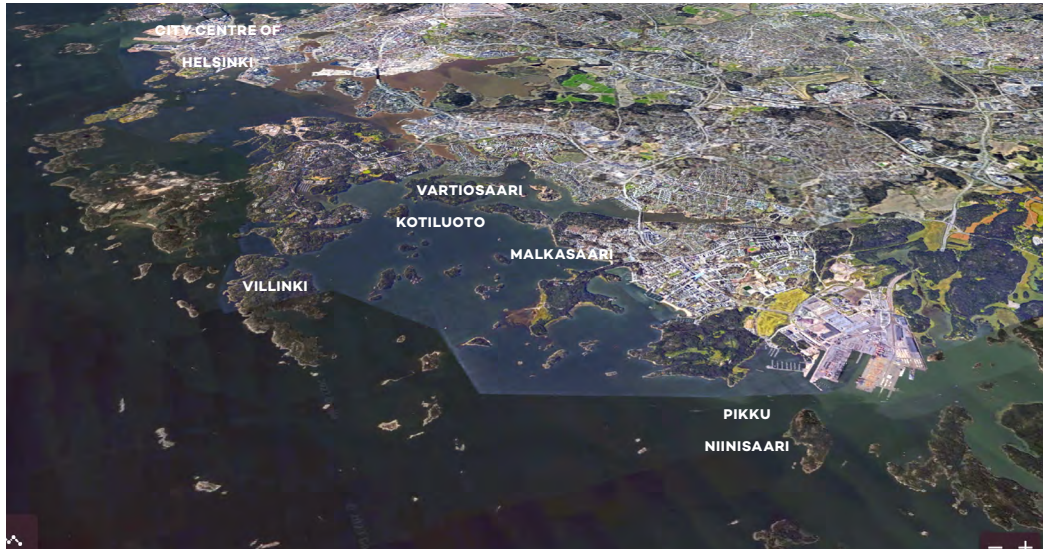
A Second Life! is a metamorphosis of a situation. The challenge is to regenerate and to support spaces in need of transformation from a new perspective towards the pre-existences and the hidden treasures that are already there. A new revalorization of all kind of resources – natural, heritage, energy, flows, economy, social... It means to reconsider uses and new proximities linking ecological and social dynamics. How to be attentive and welcoming to differences and vulnerabilities nourished by inhabited milieus facing climate change?

Sites ;Bad Lobenstein (DE) Brussels (BE) Eibar (ES) Fleurance (FR) Grensen (NO) Madrid (ES) Nantes (FR) Rennes (FR) Växjö (SE) Bernay Terres de Normandie (FR) Courcy-Grand Reims (FR) – Etten-Leur (NL) – Graz (AT) – Leipzig (DE) – München (DE) – Regensburg (DE) – Schorsmolen (NL)

1.2 / ORGANISERS

The organisers in Finland were the City of Helsinki and the City of Vaasa together with European Suomi Finland.

1.3 / SITES



Eastern Archipelago of Helsinki and the five pilot sites. © GoogleMaps

LET THE BIRDS SING! RESPONSIBLE RECREATION:

HELSINKI EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO

POPULATION	Helsinki 658 864, Greater Helsinki area 1 320 000 inhabitants
REFERENCE SITE	68 ha + 13 ha + 4 ha + 4 ha + 16 ha
PROJECT SITE	8 ha + 7 ha + 2 ha + 1 ha + 6 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY	City of Helsinki
OWNERS OF THE SITE	City of Helsinki

Helsinki's eastern archipelago is a unique maritime milieu with valuable natural and cultural-historical sites and varying landscapes. The public use of the eastern archipelago has so far been low compared to the number of islands and the extent of the area, but in the future new landing sites for boats of different sizes and related structures, constructions and buildings will be an essential part of promoting the general recreational use of the archipelago and improving its services and accessibility.

The goal of the competition was to create an overall plan and visual idea that serves as the basis for the future development of the area and as a basis for the implementation of island-specific solutions. The recreational use of the islands was to be improved while repairing the damaged and worn out natural areas and enhancing biodiversity - and protecting vulnerable and sensitive nature and landscape from new wear caused by expanding recreational use.

Landing sites (the coastal areas suitable for landing and arriving to an island by various modes of movement, like boats, water buses and canoes) had to create also social meeting places where different user groups share the same areas and functions, benefitting from their closeness. Building conditions on islands and in other coastal areas create challenges for the proposed structures, which should enhance the values and characteristics of different islands and provide a holistic solution for the responsible recreation in the eastern archipelago.



Vaskiluoto project site by yellow line, reflection site by red. @ CC

TABULA NON-RASA! LIVING CITY MEETS THE SEA

VAASA - VASKILUOTO

POPULATION	The island of Vaskiluoto 340, City of Vaasa 68 000 inhabitants
REFERENCE SITE	33 ha
PROJECT SITE	11,3 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY	City of Vaasa
OWNERS OF THE SITE	City of Vaasa

The island of Vaskiluoto is situated to the west of the Vaasa city centre. The island is connected to the mainland by an embankment in the east and a bridge in the south. Vaskiluoto is partly preserved in a near natural state, and partly heavily shaped by human action, especially in the major cargo, oil and passenger port areas. One third of the islands surface is in residential and other accommodational use, including a camping site, but there're very few inhabitants living on the island. The central location calls for developing Vaskiluoto as a unified part of the Vaasa urban area.

The competition project site consists of the plot of a demolished hotel and an existing camping area, together with adjacent areas to the east.

The goal of the competition was to conceive a new residential area on the island of Vaskiluoto, located adjacent to the city centre, where a rich urban fabric meets the surrounding nature and the sea. Competitors were asked to come up with a vision for a sustainable and attractive lifestyle for the future residents. The site holds great potential because of its central location and the surrounding sea. According to the new Vaskiluoto master plan, the competition site at tip of the northern peninsula of the island is assigned for housing.

The re-use of the sites of the existing camping area and a demolished hotel for this new housing area set amidst green and blue nature offer unique opportunities for the creation of an attractive living environment, but it has to be done in a socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable way, and cherish the nature and shorelines of the northern peninsula. A sustainable lifestyle for the new residents must be enabled. The site's proximity to the sea had be promoted and strengthened both conceptually and visually in the proposals for the new residential area.

1.4 / JURY

Anssi Lassila (chairman), Architect (SAFA), Professor of Contemporary Architecture, University of Oulu, OOPEAA Office For Peripheral Architecture

Elisa Lähde, Professor of Landscape Architecture, Aalto University, Landscape Architect (MARK)

Pia Kuusiniemi, Landscape Architect (MARK), LOCI Landscape Architects Ltd, President of the Finnish Association of Landscape Architects MARK

Jonas Nordgren (SE), Architect MAA, SAR, Schauman & Nordgren Architects (Copenhagen, DK)

Dan Mollgren, Architect (SAFA), Director of Urban Planning, City of Porvoo

Arto O. Salonen, Professor of Sustainable Well-being, Department of Social Sciences, University of Eastern Finland

Helena Wessberg (SE), Urban Planning Strategist, Architect SAR/MSA, City of Stockholm, (SE)
Competition secretary: Kirsti Rantanen, General Secretary of European Suomi Finland, architect (SAFA)

Site representatives were present in both jury meetings and had a voting right in the first meetings, but the decisions were unanimous.

1.5 / SITE REPRESENTATIVES

Päivi Korkealaakso (VAASA), architect (SAFA), City Planning Director at the City of Vaasa

Sofia Kangas (HELSINKI), Landscape Architect (MARK) at the Urban Space and Landscape Planning Dept., City of Helsinki

1.6 / EXPERTS PANELS

The entries were also evaluated by local experts before the jury meetings. The experts were:

HELSINKI

Vili Tuomisto, project director, City of Helsinki

Marko Ahola, chief landscape architect, City of Helsinki

Pihla Sillanpää, chief landscape architect, City of Helsinki

Sari Jurmo, landscape architect, City of Helsinki

Sini Moilanen, landscape architect, City of Helsinki

Inkeri Niskanen landscape architect, City of Helsinki

Mirja Vallinoja landscape architect, City of Helsinki

VAASA

Anna Myllykoski, architect, City Planning Department of Vaasa

Oliver Schulte-Tigges, architect (SAFA), City Planning Department of Vaasa

Jennifer Heikius, architect (SAFA), City Planning Department of Vaasa

Helena Iltanen, landscape architect (MARK), City Planning Department of Vaasa

Kati Vuohijoki, architect (SAFA), City Planning Department of Vaasa

Emma Widd, landscape architect, City Planning Department of Vaasa

1.7 REGISTRATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

European Finland received 55 registrations, 38 for Helsinki and 17 for Vaasa. There was a total of 1 156 registrations in European 17.

The entries were submitted digitally through the european-europe.eu web site. Helsinki received 22 entries and Vaasa 11. European 17 received a total of 814 entries. Of the 55 entries in Finland, 45% were submitted by Finnish teams.

1.8 EXHIBITIONS

All the Finnish entries have been exhibited online at european.fi after the jury had accepted them for evaluation. The awarded proposals will be exhibited in the organizing cities.



2. / Results of the Competition

2.1 THE DECISION OF THE JURY

The first meetings of the jury were held in the cities of Helsinki and Vaasa on the 15th-16th of September, 2023. At these meetings, in accordance with the competition rules, the best and most representative proposals – the so-called shortlist – were selected (Helsinki 5 entries, Vaasa 3 entries). The proposal HK483 'Stormskars Maja' for the Helsinki site had to be disqualified, as it was far too incomplete. The proposal 'SJ182 Green homes' for Vaasa site had to be disqualified, as the names of the authors were shown on the boards and the proposal wasn't anonymous anymore.

The final jury meetings were held in Vienna on the 11th and 12th of November 2023., and the jury decided to distribute the prizes, runners-ups and special mentions as follows:

HELSINKI

Winner 12 000 €	YP795 Halaila luontoa
Runner-up 6 000 €	GT776 Haven - for humans and non-humans alike
Special mention	FN264 Island tools
Special mention	LZ779 Aallonharja

VAASA

Winner 12 000 €	YZ219 (me)tsä
Runner-up 6 000 €	RY156 Paapuuri
Special mention	JS390 Field of connections

2.2 AUTHORS OF THE AWARDED ENTRIES

Helsinki

WINNER

YP795 Halaila luontoa

Author:

Benedikt Hartl (DE), architect

Collaborator:

Maximilian Löschke (DE), architect

RUNNER-UP

GT776 Haven - for humans and non-humans alike

Authors:

Saara Kantele (FI), architect

Paul Bot (NL), artist

SPECIAL MENTION

FN264 Island tools

Authors:

De Cesero Aron (IT), architect

Sartor Annachiara (IT), landscape architect

Magnaguagno Marta (IT), architectural and urban theorist

SPECIAL MENTION

LZ779 Aallonharja

Authors:

Eelis Leino (FI), architect

Filip Neagu (FI), architect

Vaasa

WINNER

YZ219 (me)tsä

Authors:

JUSTO DIAZ (ES), architect

GUILLERMO POZO (ES), architect

RUNNER-UP

RY156 Paapuri

Authors:

Sampo Ojala (FI), architect

Sara Lähdesmäki (FI), student in architecture

Milja Leinonen (FI), student in architecture

Collaborator:

Rebecca Maresia (FI), student in architecture

Anna-Juulia Alaruikka (FI), student in architecture

Cláudia Antão (PT), architect

SPECIAL MENTION

JS390 Field of Connections

Authors:

Maria Amador (ES), architect

Julio Sanchez (ES), architect

Mario Montero (ES), architect

2.3 AFFIRMATION OF THE RESULTS

Anssi Lassila
chairman of jury

Elisa Lähde
member of jury

Pia Kuusniemi
member of jury

Jonas Nordgren
member of jury

Dan Mollgren
member of jury

Arto O. Salonen
member of jury

Helena Wessberg
member of jury

Kirsti Rantanen
general secretary
European Finland Suomi

Sofia Kangas
Site representative,
City of Helsinki

Päivi Korkealaakso
Site representative,
City of Vaasa



3. / HELSINKI

3.1 GENERAL EVALUATION

The call for new solutions for sustainable recreation both for the inhabitants of Helsinki and for tourists has been met in different ways, both ideologically and visually. As the very multifaceted task provides possibilities to focus on different themes, some authors had wanted to grasp the entire field of questions, while others had wanted to present a specific innovation or ideology as a recipe for development. In general, the awareness of our common issues related to ecological sustainability seems to be on a high level

As stated in the competition programme, ecological transformation was interpreted in the different ways of perceiving nature and the preservation of natural values not only as part of a planning task but also as the most critical starting point of planning when occupying new recreational areas on the islands. Where some have succeeded better than others is in adopting holistic approach, where design meets functions, functions connect to general plans, the landscape is understood within the Helsinki archipelago context, and, on top of everything, new opportunities are gained to enjoy nature.

The architectural solutions for the structures proposed can be roughly divided into two main lines; one based on the tradition of the archipelago and the other seeking a recognizable new look. In the best concepts, the new structures emphasize the fine location, while in others the new structures take all the attention away from the magnificent natural islands, emphasizing their own identity. Several proposals focused on the process and the idea without getting far enough into the design itself. But just as many of the proposals focused on designing activities with a high degree of precision.

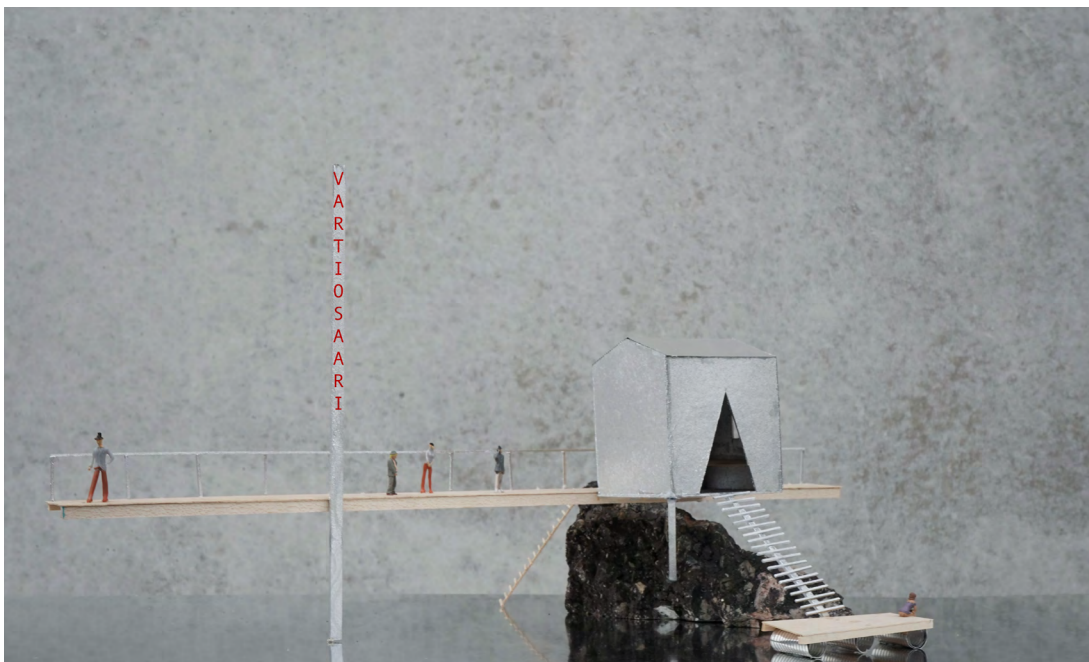
It seems that finding a balance between creating specific designs for structures and buildings and understanding the landscape and nature of the islands as a whole had been very demanding due to the broad task. On the other hand, in many proposals extensive studies managed to picture both important small-scale solutions and large-scale context-related issues in an innovative, even playful way. In many proposals, the solution in relationship to biodiversity and nature was resolved by placing any large-scale development on the water and seabed, suggesting that people's understanding of fragile aquatic ecosystems needs to be deepened. A positive quality of most of the proposals is that they are like onions – peeling one layer opens a new one, and so on. This also shows that there is a good possibility for further development, and perhaps further explanations, especially among the shortlisted proposals.

The jury was unanimous in stating that the archipelago requires its own specific field of studies and that this task, with its variety of answers, has opened up many new ways how to think about recreational activities in a responsible way. This is very valuable knowledge for the City of Helsinki, which owns this treasure of islands. It is now evident that creating new habitats of intertwined nature and people in a sustainable way most certainly is possible!

3.2 RECOMENDATIONS

The jury recommends that the proposal Halailla Luontoa becomes the starting point for further planning. Halailla Luontoa's insightful concept and holistic view regarding how to capture the spirit of the archipelago are as such valuable for more explicit definitions of all needed recreational functions on the islands. The presented structures are delightful for observing nature and the minimal footprint on the ground level is avant-garde. It would be important to preserve these qualities in the further development of the project. In order to plan further for non-human use, some closer studies of the landscape and biodiversity should be added to the design process, but in such a way that the winning concept does not suffer from possible adjustments. Likewise, without losing its strong character, some of the larger-scale construction would be structurally demanding, and thus would need to be studied further to achieve cost-effectiveness. In order to meet the needs of more user groups, special attention should be paid to improving accessibility. To some extent, the final design should also very clearly proclaim public use, welcoming everyone to visit the islands and the structures on the landing sites. The jury is convinced that the proposal can withstand some carefully studied modifications without losing its charming character.

The jury further considers that the proposal Haven's landscape plan and concept for balancing between human and non-human use should be adapted to the winning proposal or the development of the recreational use of islands in the Helsinki archipelago in general. To their core extent, Haven and Halailla Luontoa do not overlap but rather complete each other. With its methodology and strong reflection of the identity and spirit of the Helsinki archipelago, the proposal Haven is a good addition to the toolbox needed for implementing the winning project.



3.3 PROPOSALS

AWARDED ENTRIES

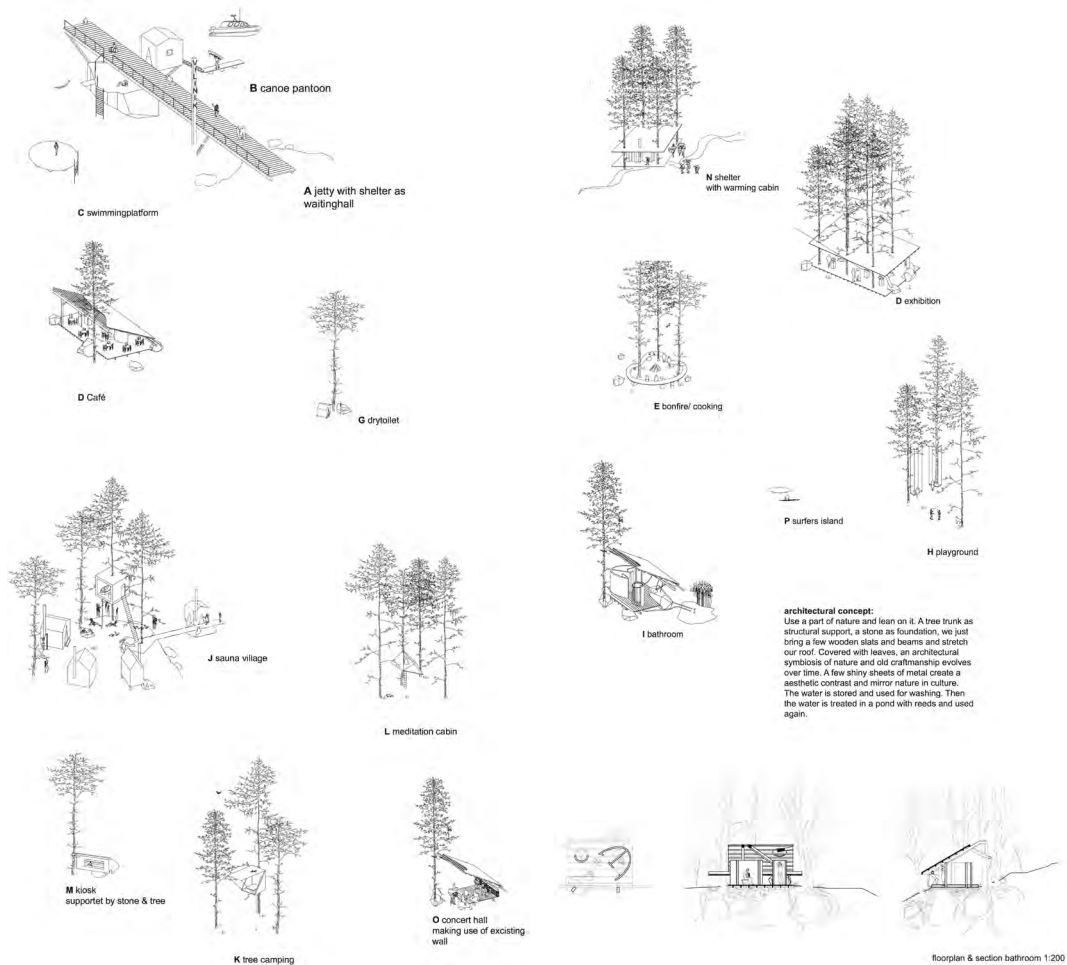
YP795 HALAILLA LUONTOA, WINNER

Halailla Luontoa proves once again that “Less is more”. The name of the proposal – literally, cuddle with nature – succinctly describes the approach taken; in other words, where the unique character of the nature tourism islands off the coast of Helsinki and the unique elements of natural processes are the object of the tourist’s admiration. The new structures on display will provide delightful surprises when spending time in and observing nature. The proposal calls for harmony between nature and man, and offers delightful ways to achieve this. Presented in a very minimalist and sensitive way, the proposal reflects its author’s strong relationship with nature and shows a sense of both personal experience and of living side by side with natural elements and processes. It is very clear that nature is the foundation of everything and that respect for nature is essential when developing solutions for the future.



The presented concept takes the interpretation of a distinctive spirit to its limits. The unique Helsinki archipelago is left almost untouched, as structures for recreational use have a minimal impact and footprint on the ground level. The design of these quite simple structures is very public in character and the chosen site is well justified. The poetic approach is part of the proposal’s very appealing quality.

Solutions for different recreational use, such as playgrounds, saunas and dry toilets, are presented through a carefully studied palette. The character of the architecture is vernacular and very simple, almost as a new chapter in the Helsinki Design Manual. The unique strength of the proposal lies in the character of its non-referential architecture: it does not get entangled in typical references, symbols, and typologies such as pitch roofs, the colour red ('falun red'), etc., that are conventional and maybe too obvious solutions for generating a vernacular architecture for the archipelago.



As ideated by architect Valerio Olgiati and written by theoretician Markus Breitschmid: *'Non-referentiality is the only way to conceive buildings that make sense in a world in which simple attributions of meaning no longer exist.'*

Larger-scale elements are well integrated into the landscape, though almost monumental, while smaller elements are hidden within nature.

Among the building structures are solutions that might suffer from too high costs or too demanding structural questions. On the other hand, other very lightweight and cost-effective elements might pay back a lot.

Nature and people are presented as coexisting without conflict. As the poetic description says: *"In nature's grasp, we all agree".*

GT776 HAVEN – A CITY FOR HUMANS AND NON-HUMANS ALIKE, RUNNER-UP

A strongly idealistic proposal that wants to extend fundamental rights to all species, and proposes a thesis as a new statute for Helsinki, namely, Helsinki – A City for Humans and Non-humans Alike, and sets out objectives to support diversity. The proposal's plan starts from this credo. It aims for the well-being of all species, such that all actions undertaken should produce well-being and aim for maximum resource wisdom.

The proposal's written description presents three scales: from the regional macro to the structural micro. These scales also form the baseline for the overall concept. The larger scales, the archipelago and the islands, are beautifully captured and well explained. The presented network between the islands is logical and embraces recreational possibilities. There is a clear vision for zones for the non-human. These could form a new interpretation in the understanding of nature in the Helsinki archipelago.

At the island scale, the presentation divides the Helsinki archipelago into four categories based on their degree of naturalness, and this has been used to justify interventions on the islands.



For each island, heat maps have been developed according to customer profiles, based on a careful analysis of the conditions on each target island and user interviews. The analyses justify the relationship between human users and other customers on the different islands and the new activities defined on the basis of this information. In the proposal, human recreational use is concentrated on the island of Villinki, while the share of non-human customers among users is concentrated on the island of Pikku Niinisaari.

The idea of using very few, but well-studied, landing sites can be a good recipe for low-cost construction and maintenance. The design of the presented small scale, the new structures, is not the strongest part of the proposal, as the overall focus is on the landscape and spirit of the archipelago. The materials used remain unknown, but certain characteristics, such as the villa-inspired roof-design, show that the author is well aware of the context. Structural elements are presented as a palette of shapes that require further planning.

The strengths of the proposal lie in particular in the vast scale, and its meritorious methodology for profiling the characteristics of different islands should serve as a concept for the further development of the islands in enhancing their unique characteristics.

The proposal has merit, and is by far the best among the competition proposals in understanding the major challenges of our time in terms of biodiversity and species interactions. It has made a good start in addressing these with an interesting planning tool for the recreational use of the Helsinki archipelago.

FN264 ISLAND TOOLS, SPECIAL MENTION

Island Tools is a very carefully and thoroughly prepared coherent proposal. Its overall concept starts from the broader idea of mobility in Helsinki and the accessibility of the islands concerned. The concept remains, however, a bit disconnected from the competition brief, although it is relevant.

The proposal also sets out an ambitious goal of how humans will stop overcrowding and make room for other species. The idea is fine and worthy of support, but in the before and after studies of the placement of each user group on the islands presented – which are meritorious in themselves – humans are given at least as much space, if not twice as much, after the interventions. The interpretation of the calculation is misleading, as seen by the claim that the combined proportion of species on each island is 150%. However, this is not the case. The method of calculation would need further detailed explanation so as to avoid misunderstanding.



However, the merit of the work also lies in its understanding of the value of nature, and it ambitiously tackles the identification of the needs of different customers and, as a special mention, the objective of accessible solutions.

The natural values of each island are carefully studied in the proposal, and the activities presented are well positioned. However, the location of activities close to the natural assets could be better suited to another location.

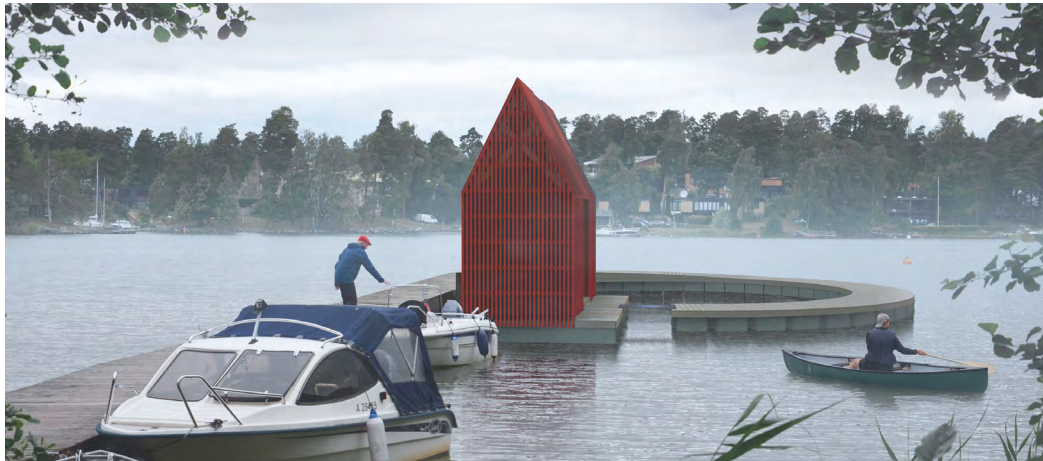
The proposal responds to the distinctive spirit and nature of the archipelago with local materials and respect for the surroundings. The concept of human nests is a fine analogy. The materials used for the structures are well justified and the use of materials is imaginative and pleasing, and the analysis has been carefully made. The idea of decomposable structures made of natural materials to enhance diversity and provide shelter for the regeneration of areas is an interesting solution.

The presented structures are simple, beautiful, and carefully studied. The landing sites and their different interpretations are well justified and form a unique system. The services provided create an attractive environment for recreation. Their modularity requires further study, but as a whole the concept is strong and implies that building these structures is relatively easy. If the amount of structure were scaled down a bit, the valuable characteristics of the archipelago could be well preserved and even strengthened. Construction of the relatively simple structures can be cost-effective, and maintenance is not believed to entail heavy logistics as the materials are common and already part of the local heritage.

The proposal creates a sustainable frame for co-existence between species during all seasons, which is a highly sustainable approach in the Helsinki context.

LZ779 AALLONHARJA, SPECIAL MENTION

The proposal Aallonharja proposes a new layer of archipelago, a reinterpretation of Finnish island structures. The proposal neatly captures the purpose of the competition, that is, to create something new and recognisable for the nature tourism islands of the City of Helsinki, and it is easy to imagine how one would look out over the landscape while boating and see the hallmarks of islands open to all.



A very strong identity is created with an iconic, almost monumental, and very recognizable structure that is modified and duplicated to fit different locations and purposes. The chosen locations for recreation and construction are attractive and create unique places for outdoor activities

The proposed new structures are based largely on the existing network of paths, which is a successful choice and in itself reduces encroachment on the natural landscape. In addition, the number and quality of the proposed activities are suitable for nature tourism and appropriate to the scale of the place. The proposal leaves the scenic islands as an asset and does not propose large-scale activities that would compromise the islands' insularity through a proliferation of activities

The principle of doing little but gaining a lot is used to its maximum. These simple structures are scalable and repeatable and with their strong red colour they add something new and inspiring to the spirit and maritime recreation of the Helsinki archipelago.

The concept of toilets as the main signpost to the islands is important for recreational use. Anyone who has boated in the archipelago and spends a lot of time in nature knows the first and most urgent need when you come ashore is to find a toilet. That is why Aallonharja brings a smile to one's face, because it is always refreshing when basic needs are transformed by design into a resource and an idea. Perhaps even a deliberately floating toilet has also solved the odour problem of sanitary facilities in the heatwave, increasingly frequent due to climate change.

The proposal's notably architectural approach does not address the wider issue of mobility on the islands and, above all, accessibility issues. In this case, while otherwise succeeding excellently in meeting the competition objectives, mobility issues could be considered worth addressing in the further design phase.

From a structural point of view, the proposal has flaws but not to such an extent that they could not be improved in a cost-effective way. The lifecycle of the presented structures is feasible if the materials are chosen carefully. The steel roof of the buildings is a bold choice but lacks justification: could it be the acoustics and the sound of raindrops?

Overall, the proposal is carefully drafted and can be further developed.

MIDDLE CLASS

AI002 KÄRA GÅRD

The proposal Kära Gård presents its concept as a design process based on the strengths and characteristics of each island. A closer evaluation of the layout and design does unfortunately not confirm that in a credible way. When a concept's starting point is a shape, in this case a triangle-shaped system, it has to be well justified both architecturally and also in economic terms. In economic terms, the proposal succeeds in modularity, flexibility, and scalability, showing various and attractive solutions. On the other hand, looking at the concept for the islands as a whole, there are many open questions concerning the definition of user groups, as it in many ways ignores non-human species. Even within these groups, the categorization of groups has no clear analogy.



The key principle of landscape design is to blend the built elements with the cultural, historical, and natural value of the archipelago environment. The proposed modular structures are very strong in appearance and do not easily blend into the landscape. Construction is in a way quite dominant, and the resulting silhouette does not reflect very well the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago.

The presentation of the basic module for all building types is carefully studied. When connecting modules in different scales, new pavilions are formed around the existing villa. What remains unanswered is the relationship between nature and people.

One strong side of the solution is that it creates high-quality structures and indoor spaces. The question then arises of whether these buildings alone can market outdoor recreational activities in line with the existing spirit of the surroundings, the nature, and the characteristics of the islands. Keeping natural areas intact is a good solution, but the solutions proposed are much larger in scale than the expected needs of nature tourism. The proposed solution would certainly work, for example, as tourist centres in the archipelago, but for nature tourism the proposal produces an infrastructure that is relatively massive in its context.

The proposal includes a high-quality modular system that most likely can be cost-effective. The pavilion-like buildings are carefully studied and well-illustrated. On the other hand, maintenance would presumably be intensive and difficult to produce sustainably in this location.

LJ752 ARCHIPELAGO OF OBSERVATION

In the proposal Archipelago of Observation, a new recreational layer is proposed in the archipelago, with the aim of enabling and protecting the preservation and development of the natural layer of the islands. In itself, this is a fine idea. However, the question arises as to whether it is necessary to create a recreational layer on this scale on the islands specifically for nature tourism. Is it necessary to transport tourists to take selfies in high heels on flat piers at designated high points of the landscape, cross the islands in water buses and then move on. If a tourist arrives alone in a kayak to sleep in a hammock and gaze up at the stars at night, then are the proposed means and activities proposed for the islands far too massive for nature tourism?



The small-scale structures have a strong identity and would as such create a new and quite bold layer in the archipelago. The author's goal to enhance the character of the natural landscape is overwhelming, especially as structures on the waterline are wide and to some extent out of scale. The bold approach, with its broad but also interesting typology, raises the question of whether its qualities would remain if some elements were not built.

The concept presents numerous small harbours, which form a huge resource for boating. On the other hand, other user groups might become secondary, as recreation is pointed to locations where direct contact to the waterfront is absent.

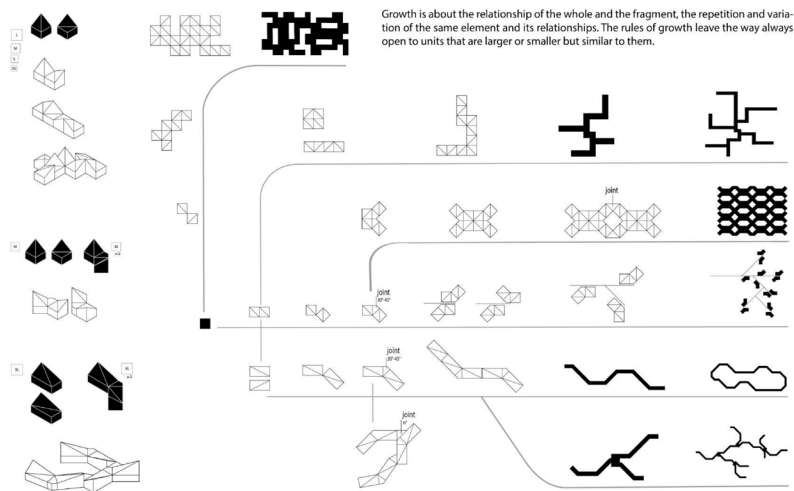
As a solution for connecting places and landing sites, some of the land structures, wooden bridges or paths seem a bit over-dimensioned. The character of the waterfront in the sensitive archipelago would, from many viewpoints, change dramatically. While the proposal relies on a great variety of construction elements – actually, a wide library – it can also become a burden for maintenance to sustainably keep the sites in recreational use. Looking at the structures in terms of their elements, they seem credible and quite cost-effective if produced locally.

The author also shows an understanding of landscape management in a tourist environment, but heavy construction on a sensitive coastline is unnecessarily heavy in its treatment of the landscape, given the nature of islands.

The proposal has carefully studied all five islands and created a concept for the development of recreational activities tailored to the characteristics of each island. The different characteristics and strengths of the islands have been skilfully identified and the proposal contains many excellent observations for the development of the islands.

MC800 HYPERCONNECTIONS

The concept behind the proposal Hyperconnections is to blend in, to dissolve into nature, and to understand that we are all part of nature – that the nature of the archipelago allows us to escape the monotony of urban life and connect with our deepest roots. The idea is a fine and ambitious one, and it is convincingly justified and described in the proposal. The proposal states that the islands offer a refuge where we can find peace and tranquillity and where the spirit can be reborn. The proposal contains extensive analyses of the interconnectedness of people to wider entities and networks, which one would have hoped would carry through to the plan level.



There has also been extensive consideration of form and the relationships between forms, looking for modularity and scalability between forms. Structures are derived from the forms and support the concept of form. Structures have been used to create pathways and structures in which activities are located. As such, a constructed pathway could solve the problem of erosion, but the proposed solution of a jetty structure extending out into the water in long stacks would also be challenging from a year-round perspective. The problem is that the structures are incongruent with the fine concept of the plan and do not blend in and dilute at all.

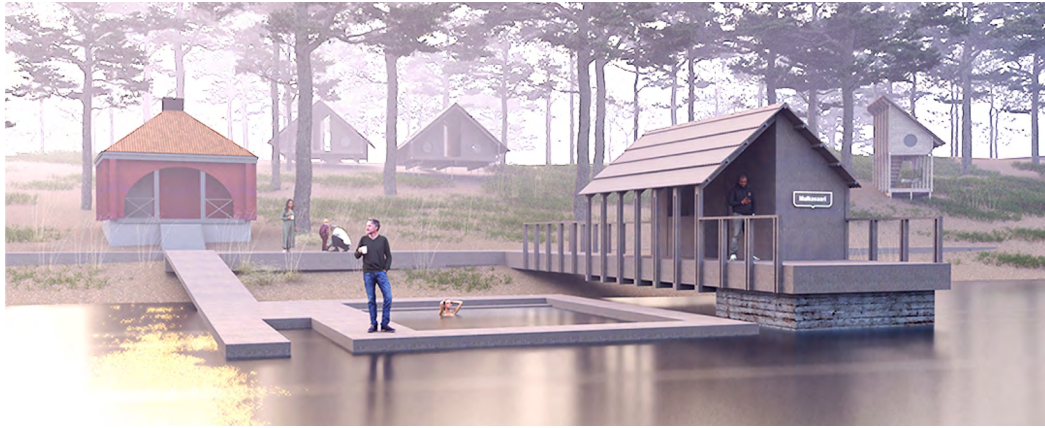
A great concept like this should have been allowed to evolve into a place-sensitive implementation. Now, as in many other proposals, the actual design elements become unnecessarily heavy, proposing a scheme that, no doubt, has its philosophical and poetic qualities but is not optimal in its context.

PB423 UNDER COVER

The concept behind the proposal Under Cover is to reinforce the existing identity and specificities of the islands and to create a common recognizable look for the islands through replicable and scalable structures. The architecture is inspired by the archipelago, and the structures and facades are characterized by the recognition of traditional building forms and details. The choice is justified, but the traditional look is perhaps too generic.

The new structures are based on land-based modules. The basic idea is that before any other activities are introduced on the islands, the first module will be a landing module that will act as a gateway to each island. The phasing of activities is well designed. The proposal has a good understanding of the scale and year-round use of the islands, as well as an idea of the changing seasonal use of the structures, such as the role of the water bus stops as a shelter for winter outdoor activities.

The construction solutions themselves, and in particular the aspect of resource wisdom, are well justified. The structures are built with reusability and portability in mind. The lack of modularity and scalability does not make the design cost-effective or easy to maintain.



The proposal suggests using recycled wood from, for example, infrastructure construction. The work proposes a basic system for the structures that can be modified so as to integrate them into the existing natural environment, leaving as little trace as possible. One of the main principles of the work is to use existing man-made elements with minimal environmental impact. The proposal also provides for an intelligent approach to the siting of new elements on islands.

The work focuses on the design of new built elements, but also considers biodiversity in general, seeking to reinforce the islands' existing identities, as defined by the analysis of the existing environment. The idea is to preserve as much of the existing natural environment as possible and to protect natural values. The objective is good, but the proposal does not answer how recreational needs as a whole are combined with protected areas.

YJ218 HUMBLE ISLANDSCAPE EMBRACING SUSTAINABLE HARMONY

The proposal is based on the concept of sustainable recreation, seeking to achieve a harmonious balance between recreation and nature as well as to promote a unique interaction between people and the environment. The overall concept is based on sustainable recreational use and seeks to achieve a harmonious balance between recreation and nature and to promote a unique interaction between people and the environment. The proposal's Principles of Sustainable Recreation thesis has been carefully and professionally prepared. The proposed architecture of the structures makes a good attempt at modularity, but the chosen design language does not quite meet the goal of recognizable individual elements as the architecture is presented in a rather conventional way.



OTHER ENTRIES

GI106 LIFE BETWEEN THE ISLANDS

The proposal has approached the task with a rather massive and conventional construction. It is difficult to see how the proposed solution takes into account the specific characteristics of the fragile island environment, in terms of appearance, layout and land treatment.

It is difficult to discern any cultural and historical references in the architecture of the plan and, although the proposed ensemble is more or less intact, the new buildings would add a rather heavy layer to the archipelago, rather than the playful one intended.

Reliefs, colours and patterns have been used to create identity and variety. The colours and ornamentation used in the solution are visually arresting, giving it a certain strong character. In contrast, the shapes, dimensions and structures are more generic and not very innovative. The modular system is simple and can be easily replicated for many different purposes. When heavy timber such as 200x200mm is used, both construction and logistical issues are raised. Lighter shelter materials would provide better alternatives for sustainable logistical solutions and also less demanding construction.

New activities are boldly introduced and the network is well represented. The snorkelling route has an educational purpose, the open canoes have a social dimension, and green canoeing is presented as an economic option.

JT491 FINNHÜTTE - ALUSTA

The proposal has developed an interesting and strong concept with a clear system and idea. The idea of a platform and tent is excellent; placing the platform when the site is open and the tent when the structure is covered.

The actual more detailed design of the structures focuses on modularity but ignores the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago. The repeated triangular shape stems from the idea of a tent that can serve recreational needs in almost any way. But while the typology may be familiar in Lapland, it does not fit the atmosphere of the Helsinki archipelago, nor the vernacular architecture, and as presented it produces an environment that is too massive in scale, almost theme-park-like.

The proposal does create numerous opportunities for recreation, and the green-coloured roofs are distinctive and highly visible in the landscape, but in the winter season the visual impact of this large-scale, almost small village could even be too strong and even disturbing.

PS692 GENTLE BOULDER

The proposal's overall concept comprises fine, modest interventions within the fragile but robust environment, and at the conceptual level there is a good understanding of the scale of the islands and a respect for fragile nature. The idea of a participatory process, as presented in the work, is also wonderful and positive.

However, the more detailed design of the actual structures presented in the work does not quite achieve the level of the concept, and although the author says that they will evolve with the process, the vision of structures suitable for the islands presented

here, the one that the jury will have to assess, is not entirely convincing, and it is also somewhat unclear how the concept would adapt to the different islands. Still, the work is sympathetic, and perhaps the notion of atmospheric architecture could be a way to explain the chosen approach.

QZ266 TIKTIKTIK

The project has done a valuable job of studying the characteristics of different islands and their accessibility. Careful consideration has also been given to the structures and different activities, and respect for natural values has been taken as a guideline for the design. As such, the concept of new structures that follow the principles of biophilic architecture is a fine one. The idea is that the structures will provide shelter and nesting sites for birds and insects, for example.

The challenge is the scale and complexity of the structures and their appearance. The structures presented seem disparate from the fragile and distinctive island nature. Modularity with buildings within buildings is suggested – but is modularity between different structures possible?

RP555 NATUR GENIE

Natur Genie - according to the proposal: the title comes from re-calling the romanticist movement part of the Sturm un Drang 'Natur! Genie! which wanted to give to nature an important power, to let men be free in their possibility to express themselves at their higher potential.

The proposal meets the aim of Sturm und Drang; an artwork that is shocking and makes the perceiver confront extreme emotions.

The pursuit of individualism and individual emotions seems like a strange paradigm in a time when we should be striving for harmony and harmony between the human species and non-human species, so that no one is above the others. Keeping in mind that the objective of the brief is to produce identifiable landing places for the City of Helsinki, for its nature travel islands, this type of message is not possible or even worth considering. In the proposal materials are carefully studied. The architecture of the proposal, on the other hand, does not quite reflect the fine principles and values described in the explanatory memorandum.

SG942 ONLY BIRDS!

The proposal Only Birds! has been carefully researched and contains many great ideas and thoughts. In general, the means of preserving nature have been identified in a superb way and the potential of biophilic architecture has also been recognised.

The proposal places the main emphasis of new interventions and structures on the landing sites, where practically all activities are concentrated. In order to preserve the seabed, the activities are mainly proposed on floating structures. The placement of buildings between 42m² and 150m² in size on floating jetties is not realistic in the Helsinki archipelago due to the weather conditions. Furthermore, the scale and volume of construction is not proportionate to the objectives of the competition brief. Underwater construction is also detrimental to wildlife; most of the sites suitable for human habitation and landing are also suitable for underwater wildlife. In addition, the scale of the activities proposed is not compatible with the bearing capacity of the islands and the scale of the recreational use envisaged, and such a large floating

structure would also be overly expensive. The report is very well structured, and the strategies and scale of the work are clearly set out. The lay-out graphics are also clear and beautiful.

SL496 ROCK ALONG

The proposal Rock along presents a strong and holistic concept. The solution comprises a stone wall winding along the different islands, inspired by the fortifications of the Suomenlinna fortress.

At first sight the idea is poetic, but also somewhat disconnected. The reference is to a military fortress with a violent history. It is difficult to see how these beautiful and fragile islands for nature tourism could draw on such a history. The proposed walls remain superficial and have no positive ecological or other desirable impact on the fragile island landscape. Stone walls would create a strong new identity instead of strengthening the existing identity.

Stone paths do not solve the accessibility objectives, and also the availability of stones on the islands on the scale proposed would be almost impossible to achieve. The actual implementation of the walls would also be very difficult.

The work contains many fine ideas and the theoretical contribution is interesting in many ways. However, the concept could have been developed in a more gentle, rooted and realistic direction.

UF657 A BIG FOLLIES GARDEN

The proposal comprises a very well written concept. The way in which the Helsinki Archipelago has been approached through analysis is interesting and well-articulated. Bold solutions are presented, and the different scales of intervention are skilfully presented at the concept level.

Nevertheless, the concept is questionable, as the parallel with Parc de la Villette is incorrect: the context there in Paris was completely different before the interventions, as the place did not yet have an identity, whereas in the sensitive and ruggedly beautiful archipelago of Helsinki it already has, and the new structures and interventions should adapt to it. Now all the structures presented are very different and form a toolbox for different places and situations – but are the tools being used in a local and natural way?

Unfortunately, the scale and mission of the work on recreational tourism and nature trips in the archipelago is somewhat misunderstood and the scale of the measures proposed would turn the archipelago into an events park. From this perspective, the message of the work reflects the human domination of nature and does not fully answer some of the main questions of the task.

WG830 TYVEN

The aim of the proposal Tyven has been to produce a bold concept for revitalizing the Helsinki archipelago through flexible, environmentally responsible, and iconic design. Yet in the images the overall impression is of a fairly traditional boathouse. Although the design goal is that the new construction is arranged in such a way that burdens nature as little as possible, the images show a very different scale of construction than what is intended for Helsinki's recreation islands, and therefore the design is far too heavy and not in accordance with the task.

Nevertheless, Tyven is from an architectural point of view one of the best “floating” proposals and forms a pleasant whole. It is simple and beautiful, but the reproducibility and modularity of the solution are not presented in more detail.

The work has taken into account nature aspects, including bird-friendly architecture, but one should be aware that massive construction on water is also a big statement. The marine ecosystem may be even more vulnerable than other nature areas on the islands.

WS335 THE MODULUS: MODULAR LANDING AND UTILITY SYSTEMS

In the proposal MODULUS, the region has been carefully studied and clear statements have been drawn up on the future development of the islands. As a result of a multifaceted concept, the authors have decided to propose new structures entirely outside the islands. Unfortunately, the chosen concept and its implementation are somewhat counterproductive. Building on the sea will damage the fragile natural marine ecosystem and biodiversity of the archipelago, whereas building on the islands can damage the land surface.

As such, the modular system of structures has been well explored in the proposal and the idea is basically correct. Unfortunately, the architectural expression of the structures does not reach a level that would meet the competition brief, the chosen Minecraft architecture does not work for the stated objective, which was to create positive, recognisable landing sites in the landscape of Helsinki’s recreational islands that would act as signposts in the landscape.

YA945 PLAIN SAILING

The proposal Plain Sailing takes the existing situation as a starting point and develops solutions that support it. However, it remains unclear how the rather conventional Finnish archipelago architecture presented in the proposal would stand out and give the City of Helsinki’s islands a recognisable look. There is a risk that the proposed solution would give too much of an architectural impression of private holiday accommodation and that tourists would not venture onto the islands.

Quite large buildings are proposed on the islands, which would require quite heavy construction and landscaping, which in turn could lead to damage to the vegetation and trees.

The work has put forward some interesting proposals for community-based management of the areas and has also come up with some other very interesting events and ways of involving people.

ZP966 REGENERATING RIBBON

The proposal Regenerating Ribbon has nicely pursued the concept of minimizing impact, where the idea is that by doing as little as possible, nature’s regenerative processes will restore natural areas as if by themselves. The authors have understood the aims of the task very well and the idea of the ribbon is beautiful. The work has been carefully and thoroughly prepared.

Unfortunately, the content of the work remains very theoretical and conceptual. The very good background thinking and the concept of structures that touch the ground are the basis of the architectural solution, but the design solution does not work on a practical level. The proposal also fails to explore modularity and replicability in detail.



4. / VAASA

4.1 GENERAL EVALUATION

The competition document stressed that the reuse of the existing campsite and demolished hotel sites for this new residential area, surrounded by green and blue nature, offers unique opportunities to create an attractive living environment, but that it must be done in a socially, culturally, and ecologically sustainable way, respecting the natural environment and beaches of the northern peninsula. New residents must be able to enjoy a sustainable lifestyle.

This clearly proved to be a challenge for many participants and the success of entries varied widely. Clearly, one of the major challenges was that sustainability challenges, and biodiversity issues in particular, are complex and difficult. They are issues of our time that no one has so far succeeded in solving, but clearly the understanding of these issues and the related skills as reflected in the design solutions varied greatly between the entries.

Broadly speaking, the design of the new Vaskiluoto district was a challenging task. The first major question – What kind of housing should Vaskiluoto have in the future? – generated different approaches. Among these, three different approaches can be identified, with variations: a traditional modern spatial development project, where the whole environment is built as a single district; a new, more urban interpretation of a forest suburb, a reflection on a new kind of urban housing in nature; and, in one case, a significantly lighter, more detached-housing solution.

Considering that the specific objective of the competition was to produce solutions based on the specific characteristics of the site and to create a district with space for all species, the proposals that presented new urban interpretations of the forest suburb proved the most interesting concepts. The more traditional proposals, based on the prevailing tradition of urban development, were unable to address the key challenge of the concept, which was to preserve the characteristics and species of the area.

The entries highlighted different types of expertise. In many proposals, biodiversity issues were not understood at all; in the present time, one would hope that every young designer and planner would understand that natural processes cannot be imposed or controlled. Therefore, not all sustainability-related ideas put forward respect the local biodiversity; but rather can be as much a violent intervention against natural conditions as, say, the construction of a road. Sensitivity to the prevailing ecosystems and habitats of a place is central to diversity issues. In principle, even an old campsite

may contain valuable species, and the placement of trees and woodland does not automatically increase biodiversity, and in the worst case can destroy existing habitats. Furthermore, biodiversity requires time to develop, and for that reason, too, rewilding existing habitats is often more advisable than introducing entirely new ones. This was not understood in many of the proposals.

It is notable that land reclamation, the construction of extensive street networks and resource wisdom were given consideration in many of the proposals, but carbon aspects, for example, were not outlined in many of the works. Land reclamation, such as large concrete parking facilities, add significantly to the carbon load of construction.

Many of the proposals had given much thought to the question of how to figure out a vision for a future, sustainable lifestyle for new residents, but the solutions remained partly process descriptions, and the plan presented did not in itself offer any unconventional solutions for housing at the planning level.

There was also a great deal of variation between the proposals in terms of the maritime location of the site and its proximity to the city centre. Some succeeded in presenting fine concepts, where the site's assets and new activities were proportionate to the new population and location.

Mobility solutions were presented quite successfully in most of the entries, but in many proposals parking solutions resulted in expensive and difficult to phase construction.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The jury recommends that the proposal (me)tsä become the starting point for the further planning of Vaskiluoto. (me)tsä successfully offers a solution to the question of what kind of urban development would provide Vaskiluoto with both housing and an environment that utilizes the characteristics and location of the area in a harmonious way. The solution is urban and city-like, communal, but also very close to nature. The presented high-quality public outdoor spaces are an important outcome of the overall concept. In further planning, this skillful mix of activities and routes, such as the public walking and cycling route along the waterfront with its waterfront activities, will provide added value to the city of Vaasa and its inhabitants. The orientability and a clear urban hierarchy (main paths / public / semi-public / semi-private / private spaces) should be studied specifically to secure a coherent and clear relationship to the future urban domain as well as the relationship to the surrounding landscape. The jury recognizes that the concept involves a lot of project management beyond the design process and will require a strong commitment from future project partners.

The jury understands the overall concept as being very optimistic and strong and yet somewhat resistant to modification. The design can and should be modified without losing any of the best features of the proposal. The placement and feasibility of the parking facilities require further alternative studies, as parking on the ground level would change and weaken the concept dramatically. It must also be noted that the centralized parking facility adds an economic challenge to the phasing of the implementation. When it comes to biodiversity, further analysis of important aspects of the natural environment is needed, so as to preserve woods to a larger extent. The frame of the largest multistorey building is too deep, and this part of the typology should be re-evaluated to ensure good housing quality but also to give a stronger urban hierarchy. As the conditions in Vaskiluoto are windy, the geometry of the squares should be tested to

ensure a good micro-climate. If the street network could be smaller in scale, it should be simulated in the name of sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

The proposal can, without losing any of its positive qualities, be developed in phases by dividing it up into separate blocks in the detailed planning. The plan can be divided into seven blocks, with the outcome of a highly developable project in terms of city planning.

The jury finds the proposal Paapuri interesting as a supplement to the toolbox needed for the future detailed planning of Vaskiluoto. It has a well-defined structure for phased implementation, which could be studied further. It also has its own fabric to enable social inclusiveness, which could be implemented to some extent. The proposal presents wood architecture, which can inspire any project related to Vaskiluoto. An inspiring and warm feature of Paapuri is that art is presented as a part of the new Vaskiluoto experience. Most certainly, this idea can be implemented in the upcoming detailed planning phase of Vaskiluoto.

Finally, the jury considers the proposal Field of Connections extremely interesting on a conceptual level. A strong recommendation is that this proposal's way of solving the preservation of natural wealth, through the reuse of the maximum number of existing roads and the occupation of minimum building area, should be applied to the winning project.

The winner: (me)tsä



4.2 PROPOSALS

AWARDED ENTRIES

YZ219 (ME)TSÄ, WINNER

A wonderfully optimistic and skilful work. The work reflects the joy and exhilaration of inventing and ideating, and the way in which we hope sustainability challenges are tackled. Sustainable solutions for the future are not an obligation to be glued on, but an asset with which we can renew our thinking. You can learn from the forest and nature and search for harmony amidst the harmony of species, just like in natural forests. The work presents a holistic forest concept. The overall concept has been dropped around a profoundly outlined (me=we)tsä / metsä = forest thinking. We view forests as constantly changing living organisms, where non-living and living species coexist in interdependence, establishing a self-sufficient and sustainable community that is deeply aware of its surrounding environment.



The work weaves together human activity and biotic and abiotic landscape elements into a whole, exploring the prevailing challenges of urban development through design solutions. Learning from forests, the project is conceived as a resilient ecosystem that adapts to changing conditions over time, not only during its lifetime but also

during the design process. The concept involves a lot of project management beyond the design process, which would require a commitment from the project partners, and the concept would certainly be best suited to a process where the future inhabitants are already known. (me)tsä, like a forest, emerges as a resilient ecosystem that is constantly changing and evolving, hosting all living creatures, and fostering spontaneous interactions of all kinds. This proposal offers an interesting concept for a new type of residential area. The buildings are positioned in such a way that many of the apartments would have a view out to nature. The contrast between built and nature as well as the ideas of an active urban space and a new kind of living in the city are clear. The result is a thriving hybrid ecosystem that not only preserves the biodiversity but actively enhances it, nurturing a thriving interdependence between all living beings.

The proposal successfully offers a solution to the question of what kind of urban development would provide housing for Vaskiluoto that utilizes its characteristics and location: that is, urban and city-like, yet forested and close to nature as well as communal, and close to quality services.



In the proposal, public outdoor space consists mainly of forested areas and open squares between the buildings, as well as trails, waterfront piers and activity areas located in the woods. The proposal provides a functionally and dimensionally balanced mix of activities and routes that are well suited to the character of the area, although the location of sports facilities in the woods, for example, should be carefully studied to ensure that the requirements of these facilities do not lead to incongruous landscaping and tree felling. A public walking and cycling route along the waterfront as well as waterfront activities will also provide added value for the people of Vaasa who live in other parts of the city.

Creating a hill over the top of the parking deck will, from an accessibility viewpoint, create steep paths for some of the routes in the area, although this could be addressed by the alignment of the routes, and accessibility can also be addressed by the proposed height spacing.

At the scale of the site, the typology of three building units of different sizes is quite appropriate in terms of quantity. Of the building types, the large housing block is questionable in terms of its frame depth and other dimensions, and is too large for the Vaskiluoto area. The housing design in general is of a high quality.

The proposal establishes a whole but it can be developed logically in phases by dividing it into separate blocks in the further planning. The plan could naturally be divided into seven blocks, with the outcome of a highly developable project in terms of city planning. It must be noted that the centralized parking facility adds an economic challenge to the phasing of the implementation.

proposed new meadows and farmed landscapes are attractive on an ideas level, but not justifiable if they result in the loss of biodiversity values.

The compact blocks of the southern part in the so-called Mixed Forest area of the Ecocampus form a very gap-like space between them. The space between the buildings, where the collection of stormwater is located, is actually narrower than the individual buildings of the block. It is unlikely that the park could accommodate many trees.

The proposal has conceptualized the blocks according to different forest types, which raises questions. In themselves, the two large blocks to the north are well sized, but will there be enough trees of the right species left to fit the concept?

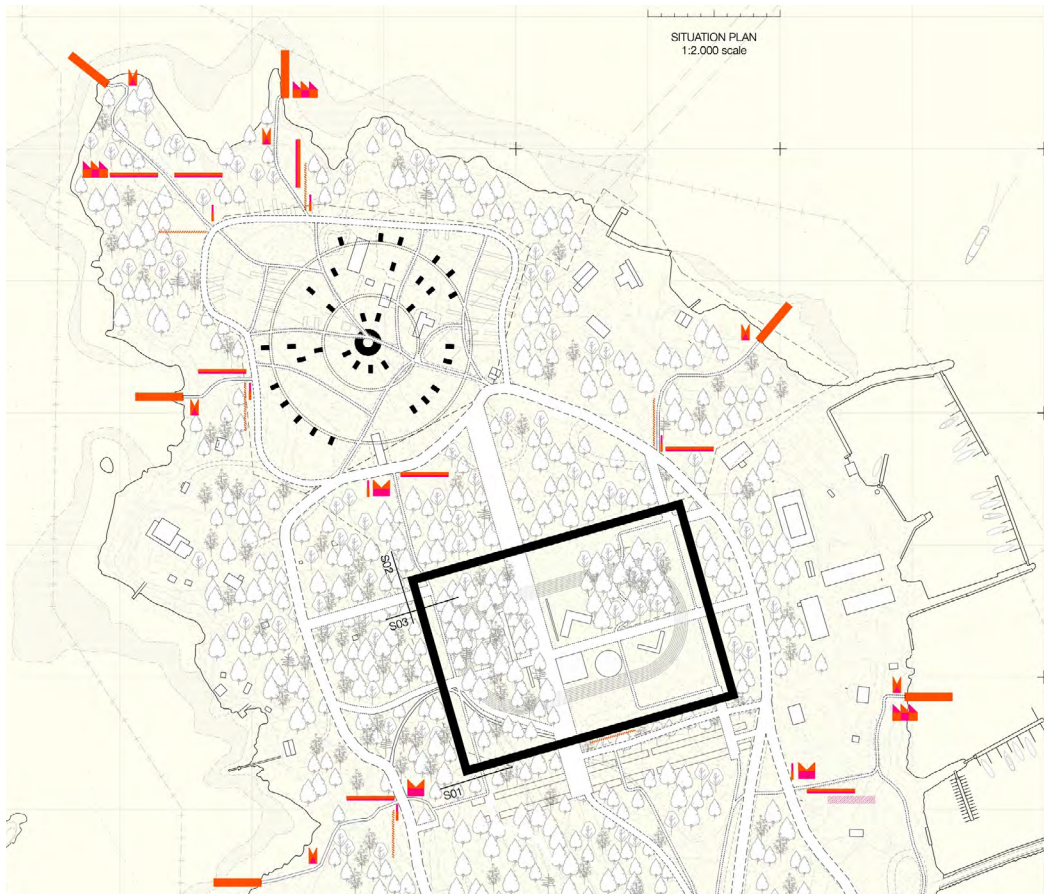
The proposal carefully shows the height curves and the relationship to the terrain. However, the presented central stormwater stream is located higher than the surrounding buildings in the blocks and the proposed diversion of stormwater to the stream would not be possible without extensive land reclamation.

The housing design includes four variations, which are otherwise well justified, but the townhouse format may be a big question mark in Vaskiluoto, because the benefits of this building type are greatest in a more urban environment.



JS390 FIELD OF CONNECTIONS, SPECIAL MENTION

This geometrical, almost militant layout offers a powerful and bold concept, a utopia with beautiful illustrations, which aims to answer the questions of resource wisdom and natural diversity by strongly limiting construction to a given, definitive area. The solution offers theoretical and poetic qualities, and, from an inhabitant's point of view, a direct connection to nature.



The goal has been to preserve the characteristic features of the area and to resolve the goal of residential construction by utilizing the existing and individual interventions. In addition, the goal has been to preserve this natural wealth through the reuse of the maximum number of existing roads and the minimum occupation of building area. The proposal has approached the problem of planning in an absolute way and produces an original, but also extremely intriguing solution, where new construction forms one large block on an empty plot of land. At the concept level, the solution is thought-provoking and successful in that way, but the concept could have been developed in a slightly gentler direction in terms of the land use plan. The solution presented is very definitive, balanced between being appalling and intriguing – and there also lies its attraction. Despite the perhaps over-dimensioned layout, looking at the ideas on the micro level, the whole can well be imagined creating a pleasant and green overall solution, a dialogue between built and soft elements. Especially the expressive perspective drawings portray depth and warmth, humanity even, in a rather chilly masterplan.

The views of nature from under the building are a pleasant idea. Yet the proposal raises the concern that there is a risk of repeating the problems of modernist mega-buildings. Some images presented without texts are difficult to understand; for example, where are the 'edible gardens' that are referred to? The perimeter area of the northern part, apparently the new location of the campsite, is unnecessarily formal.

The paths and the activities along them are a successful solution, although the number of bike shelters could have been examined more critically in relation to the size of the area. The proposal's treatment of the routes raises questions as to why the routes are treated in a uniform way and whether that solution is significant. The stormwater solution as described in the text remains unclear. Could consistency be achieved by other and more cost-effective means? As such, the strong contrast between the unbuilt and the built is interesting.

The proposal is quite faithful to its objectives in terms of resource wisdom and the preservation of vegetation.



The identity of the housing and dwellings is formed by the very dominant superstructure. The proposed scale of the building, at four storeys high, creates a pleasing vertical scale but also a sense of looseness in the overall design. The individual dwellings are monotonous and similar, with nothing special or individual about them. One wonders whether 50 000 m² can be supported by only four lifts? A lot might hang on the good community spirit, if this is the most desirable housing concept in the Vaasa area.

From a technical and phased implementation point of view, the solution would be challenging, almost impossible. On-site car parking is, of course, considerably cheaper than various types of parking facilities.



OTHER ENTRIES

BA828 VAASA ECOSCAPE ENVISIONING A GREEN AND BALANCED ISLAND

The proposal Vaasa Ecoscape Envisioning a Green and Balanced Island offers an interesting concept that reflects on the relationship between the built and nature. However, it does not quite meet its objective and stumbles into an unnecessary waste of resources in the northern part of the villa area.

The aim of the proposal is to preserve the natural characteristics of the site as much as possible, maintaining the forest in order not to harm the already established ecosystems. The concept is based on resource wisdom, which is well understood in the proposal. The starting point is to build in areas without natural values. The choice leads to a composition where the site conditions have guided the urban composition. This is clearly a new and sound approach, which leads to a very distinctive urban design. Of course, it is also a statement of the kind of urban structure that would naturally fit Vaskiluoto. It is one of the only proposals to show how the plan relates to the current situation as a justification.

Resource-wise thinking has also guided the design of the public outdoor spaces. Built outdoor spaces are positioned on top of parking decks, where they form a series of public and semi-public outdoor spaces. This is an interesting idea – but will public outdoor space in this extent be attractive to residents? The treatment has remained unnecessarily schematic.

The emphasis on the road network does not do justice to the design and the network of routes in the northern part is unnecessarily heavy and wasteful; the same result could have been achieved with almost half as many routes, and one wonders whether the treatment of the northern part, with a car in front of every villa, is at odds with the overall concept. At least the sensitivity towards nature in the central part of the planning area does not continue in the northern part.

The proposed underground parking facilities are expensive from a planning perspective and require a large initial investment in terms of phased construction. The resource-wise concept saves on earthmoving costs, but the extensive road network in the north and the need for infrastructure construction undermine the overall resource-wisdom of the plan.

The approach to housing design is somewhat institutionalised and relies on a sense of community. In this layout, the smaller the unit the better it seems to be justified. The large block suffers from one-sidedness. Phasing the implementation would be challenging and large underground parking facilities add to the challenge.

DM523 VASKILUOTO REFUGIUM

The proposal Vaskiluoto Refugium relies heavily on the brown-field sites in the region. The proposed solution does not particularly communicate with the seafront but rather turns inwards, forming a town in the woods. This is a clear choice from the author and reflects the idea of a landscape that is changed only from an inland perspective.

An ambitious goal has been set in the proposal: given the depletion of land, resources, water, and biodiversity, Vaskiluoto Refugium aims to have a net-positive impact on nature through a regenerative approach to urban development. The proposal aims to become a refugium against climate change and give wild species more time to adapt. The goal is fine and clearly defined. Furthermore, the proposal has its basis in three

approaches that support regenerative urban development: 1) the nature approach: regenerative landscaping and the restoration of ecosystems, 2) the social approach: community empowerment and nature stewardship, and 3) the architectural approach: nature-based solutions and biomimicry.

The challenges of the work come at the conceptual level, in developing great goals into a plan.

Still, it remains unclear where the target concept of 'one third' comes from and how exactly this amount is justified? Nevertheless, the concept of a third of the area being allocated to natural areas and forests for nature restoration is certainly a worthwhile idea. Concentrating new development in a clearly defined area is also a good and sustainable choice.

However, the means of supporting nature raise questions. When the idea is to support the biodiversity of the area, the best approach would be to support the existing and potentially endangered species in the area. The patchwork of different types of vegetation proposed in the work does not automatically and intrinsically support biodiversity. The same applies to the area to be afforested. Changing the conditions in existing areas of the site may also jeopardise locally valuable habitats.

It is important to take these conditions into account. The proposed bird sanctuary also demonstrates a nice sense of imagination, but an understanding of nature's own choices would help. To the south of the site there is already a pond area of high bird value, which has already been chosen by the birds themselves.

The work also suggests ways of strengthening community, etc. These objectives, which are excellent in themselves, are not quite reflected in the plan, but remain somewhat preachy, and the means outlined could also have been set out in the plan: Vaskiluoto Refugium strives for spatial and civic equality. The proposal acknowledges the significance of neighbourhood-scale governance and control, emphasising the crucial role of environmentalism at this level. The means proposed also focus on the later stages of the process, which would require projects to commit to the objectives. The proposal foresees community spaces on the ground floor of buildings, which is a good idea, but could have added more value, as many activities are now detached.

In order to function as community spaces, the common spaces remain somewhat maze-like and set aside from the building's natural traffic flows, even though they open up to beautiful views of the courtyard. The courtyards of the blocks are quite small and the sauna buildings in the middle of them divide the courtyards unnecessarily. One also wonders how much the sauna actually serves as a socialising element.

The central park area between the blocks is in some places narrower than the block courtyards, and the hierarchy of the outdoor spaces remains unclear. The theming of the blocks seems a little detached and the question arises of whether such an efficient construction of courtyards will make a big difference when the light conditions are very similar. The concentration of public services on the waterfront is a viable solution. In terms of housing, the proposal is compact and relatively cost-effective, and also resource-wise. However, the long zig-zag blocks and buildings, especially the block typology, are too massive for the area. In terms of housing design, the solutions are conventional and unsurprising. Centralized parking is perhaps a good and realistic solution, and the parking facilities are located quite successfully.

GG947 VASKIRANTA

Choosing extensive housing as a starting point for Vaskiluoto is a bold idea. The overall concept has not been presented, and the main idea remains unclear. The presentation of the site plan is very sketchy, except for the construction and traffic solutions. In the plan, a lot of attention is given to the one-way traffic solution, which is an interesting approach. However, as a solution, the end result creates a relatively massive street environment, and the urban character of the cityscape remains unclear.

The proposal has, to its credit, taken as its starting point the saving of existing woodland, which has resulted in quite massive residential buildings. The large slab blocks around the central courtyard and the shorter slab blocks on the outer perimeter of the street form an urban structure that remains fragmented. In the end, the size of the courtyards remains also quite small.

With regard to public outdoor spaces and courtyards, the main ideas of the proposal are difficult to grasp as they are not very clearly presented at the site plan level. The ideas regarding functionality and the use of materials are sometimes very detailed, but it is left to interpretation how exactly the right observations about sustainability and, for example, storm water solutions, yard activities and organic yards would settle in the place.

Senior and student housing is proposed for the area, relatively far apart. These activities are mutually supportive, partly because of similar needs, and their proximity could have been considered differently.

The playful roof shapes and expressive balcony facades of the buildings are not enough to support the overall architecture. The rather narrow typology, combined with the central corridor solutions, produce quite monotonous and conventional buildings. Due to the volume, a healthy community spirit could quite easily be created but the proposal does not explain how.

The proposal presents precise observations and solutions in terms of sustainability, carbon wisdom and diversity, but lacks more detailed concepts, plans and diagrams. Many ideas are presented in great detail, but their role in the overall picture remains unclear. This might be too big a challenge for further development of the work.

NV442 VENEVAJAT

The main focus of the proposal Venevajat is the architectural concept. At the same time, unfortunately, despite the good intentions, the relationship with nature is lost. Land use is wasteful and the approach to natural values is utilitarian. The essence of resource wisdom is not understood well enough. The proposal states the aim as 'bring nature closer', but the solutions in the proposal sweep across the whole area. Unnecessarily extensive routes lead to the sacrifice of natural elements, so that in reality, despite the promises, nature is distanced from the buildings.

The proposal has many fine objectives, but which are not achieved because of the chosen design solutions. The conceptualization of the proposal is rich, even unnecessarily rich, and it may be that less conceptualization and reliance on the power of design would have produced a proposal that more strongly reflects the stated objectives. Now, some of the conceptual elements presented, such as the bird's nest, seems glued on. The relationship between public services and rather inefficient housing raises many questions. If restaurants are built in an area with mainly small houses, will the two activities support each other or will they both undermine each other, with the

apartments losing privacy and the restaurants losing their public character and lively urban life?

Clear functional diagrams make it easy to read the solutions in the plan. The central green park core is a great idea, but the routes presented break it up into too small a chunk to work as proposed. A clearer articulation of public outdoor spaces could have better supported public amenities. For example, the proximity of a playground often supports the activities of a café or restaurant, allowing parents to have a coffee while their children play. Now these activities are separated. Also, the proximity of the sea as an attraction has not been exploited in the location of outdoor public spaces and services.

The architecture relies on playful and ground-reaching roof solutions, as well as natural colours, and warm materials. On the plan level, the design remains unfinished and therefore cannot be analyzed in detail. The typology is very monotonous, consisting of very few variations.

The proposal amounts to a waste of natural resources, especially in relation to the amount of construction achieved, i.e., per square metre. Such ineffective development requires a great deal of infrastructure, such as traffic routes, each with a carbon footprint and many of which require the removal of natural vegetation. There are perhaps unnecessarily large amounts of material proposed for building roofs, but these do not achieve the benefits that would justify it.

The Venevajat proposal would also entail quite expensive construction because the new infrastructure would serve primarily only new inhabitants.

QL248 FOORI

The overall concept of the proposal is based on a central urban space connecting the beach and the forest of the central part of the island, around which blocks of different types of houses are arranged. The overall concept is cleverly designed for the area and the conceptualisation of the public open spaces; the central park and the public services along the beach are functional. The maritime character of the area has been reinforced by opening up views and pathways lined with marine vegetation, from the centre of the development to the lushly preserved waterfront areas. The challenge is that the buildings and blocks that make up the urban fabric as a whole form a relatively traditional cityscape. An innovative city does not simply mean a wide range of building types and nature themes, but a genuine relationship with nature and the relationship of building to place.

At the concept level, the proposal achieves an innovative approach, but the land use plan developed from the concept leaves something to be desired. As such, the variation in scale of the buildings is justified and is variable, which is well reflected in the sections. The dominants, high building blocks, along the central route help improve the orientation of the area. The block structure is quite dense throughout. Unfortunately, the exterior spaces remain flat in many places. The hierarchy of spaces could have been further developed.

Overall, the green outdoor spaces in the new development are unnecessarily small in relation to the development, and the central village strip would hardly form a park or green link and as a square it would form an unnecessarily urban outdoor space in relation to the character of the site. The activities along the village street contribute to the sense of community in the area. The hierarchy of outdoor spaces and the coordination of activities could have been further developed.

In terms of the quality of the floor plans of the apartments, a small frame depth is justified. The centralised parking solution is justified, but the location of the facilities has not been successful, as they are located in almost prime locations in the urban space.

The definition of biodiversity has not been understood in this proposal. Under the heading 'Biodiversity' are presented stormwater management solutions and floodways, which in themselves are relatively functional in the proposal. Biodiversity means the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable. And this, unfortunately, has not been considered in this proposal. The intensive and extensive development of the site would effectively destroy all biodiversity in the area and the proposed outdoor spaces will not, even under optimal conditions, compensate for the lost biodiversity. The proposal talks about extensive green spaces, but in reality this is not what the proposal does. The text describes the landforms of the planning area and the placement of buildings. The inclusion of contour lines on the site plan would have been a good addition to confirm this.

The parking garages are a good and realistic solution, but at least the relationship of the northernmost one to the landscape and to the views could have been improved.

PM111 SAILOR'S KNOT

A carefully and thoroughly studied proposal that states that 'The identity of Vaskiluoto region is based on the beloved coastal and forest landscapes'. Yet the design concept has chosen to create large enclosed blocks of flats that turn away from their surroundings and do not reflect the nature and built form typical of the region.

Leaving the northern tip of Vaskiluoto as a public park is a good and worthwhile solution, which would also support potential services in the area. Efforts have been made to make use of the existing street network in the area, which is a good thing. It will provide major green links to connect housing and recreational facilities. However, the green spaces in the development are very tightly dimensioned and the block districts are correspondingly large. In many places, the park is just a narrow corridor, with hardly any trees or other ecological connections. Any collection of rainwater in the park would also require space and would thus reduce the park area. Indeed, the park may even be too small to function as proposed. Opening up the long views through the park as proposed could also be challenging in the proposed park space with all the activities combined. In the aerial view of the plan, the outdoor spaces are shown as more open, built-up, rather than green and natural. This would certainly be the case if the necessary pathways were added to the sketchy representation on the site plan. In this type of large block of flats, the outdoor routes are not the only option. In the case of outdoor routes in this type of residential development, it is also worth noting that the courtyards will be used for all movement and maintenance traffic for the buildings, so that the courtyards will not actually become large park areas but rather will also be defined by driveways.

The housing design and floor plans have become somewhat subordinate to the grand form and formalism of the streets, parking lots and parks. In addition, the extensive underground parking facilities and deck structures pose the challenge of creating green spaces that would ultimately provide a diverse and ecologically valuable environment for the area. Parking facilities disproportionate to the area beneath the deck would produce expensive housing. The zoning equation is challenging for this type of project and phased implementation is challenging due to the large parking facilities.

WR700 FOR THOSE WHO BELONG TO THE SEA

A carefully and thoroughly studied proposal that ambitiously states the importance of recognising what was previously valuable and what can be adapted to the future, and analyses the formation of interesting features of the transit space, from the scale and intimacy of the space. The analysis has led to the proposal of inner courtyards, the winding streets, the large-scale randomness and the small-scale symmetry as ways of adding value to the proposal.

In the overall concept of the proposal, the planning area is thematically divided into different interconnected typologies. The proposal places the densest blocks in the first and second phases of the development of the site. There is little justification for locating the parking facility in the north-eastern corner. Such a good location could have benefited from a solution that would have made better use of the site's characteristics.

The public outdoor spaces and the green network have been planned with ambition. The outdoor spaces have been well studied in terms of the block wings opening onto the central park area and the courtyard streets between the blocks. The proposed solution is traditional. But the main problem is the scale of the outdoor spaces. All the outdoor spaces are programmed with a wide range of options, even breathtakingly wide, and it would be good to remember that one of the purposes of design is to make choices and scale them to the conditions. The number of outdoor public space functions presented is not realistic for the site. It would have been necessary to prioritize and more clearly show what is intended for residents and what services are meant to be recreational and leisure for the broader community of Vaasa.

A central park with a green corridor is a workable idea, but at such a narrow scale it is not realistic to expect the park to be very green or natural. In some places, the park is narrower than the block wings, which can be noted in the area sections. Assigning too many activities, such as trails, tiny houses and allotment gardens, to the park will reduce the volume of the park and fragment it, thus failing to achieve the green connectivity envisioned, at least in a way that would have significant ecological value. Also, many of the green plantings proposed for the street surfaces are placed in such challenging conditions that they would be unlikely to provide any direct ecological value, let alone increase biodiversity. The proposed fitness/ski track is well thought out and functional when separated from other walking and cycling traffic.

The housing design is based on conventional multi-storey solutions, but the problem is the distance between the buildings and the orientation. The good will of the proposal with regard to biodiversity and natural elements is insufficient when the proposal is based on an urban structure consuming many of the existing natural elements of the area. As regards biodiversity, it is questionable to claim that the park-like setting of a campsite and the grassy beach are of low ecological value. Of course, not all vegetation automatically enriches biodiversity, but true diversity means different habitats and a respect for them. Grassland habitats are of course important, but the proposal as presented here is somewhat disconnected and would isolate areas from the recreational use of urban residents.

If implemented, the proposal would as such, without further development, produce a rather traditional suburban development.



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