From *Rasa* to Reverse

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1 – Piteå (SE), special mention – Lagom > See more P.233

2 – Wien (AT), special mention – Feldstadt am Heidjöchl
> See more P.249

Working with the existing situation and considering it as a set of found conditions on which to base the design requires a deep understanding of these conditions, but also of the existing systems. The existing situation is obviously made up of visible physical objects: buildings, green spaces and infrastructures, which are the 'as found' conditions. To these conditions the existing systems that underpin them can be added too: water and energy cycles, materials and mobility flows.

In terms of infrastructure and mobility systems, the situation is often ecologically disastrous. Most sites are dominated by car mobility and the presence of road infrastructure. These asphalt infrastructures are as abundant as they are costly to maintain, and they are also rooted in standards that present them as 'as found' conditions.

It would be an aberration to say that we have to start from an existing situation without thinking about the systems that govern it. With regard to the current challenges facing the discipline, it seems obvious to filter out the systems that are moving the discipline towards an ecologically and socially sustainable world. In many projects it is therefore a question of looking for traces of ecology and community in the existing situations and prioritising them in future developments.

It is a matter of applying a sort of urbanism in reverse, where priority is given to what has been neglected in Anthropocene urbanism. Priority is given to sustainable systems: green and blue ecological continuities, land reclamation, active and collective mobility at an ecological level, etc. Previously housed in residual spaces, these systems are becoming structuring elements of the territory. As for the development of social aspects, the aim is to prioritise the community in order to transform the site into an inhabited and non-speculative project.

Prioritising Nature

The condition found to prioritise on the Piteå (SE) and Wien (AT) sites is the environment.

In special mention project *Lagom* in Piteå, the system proposed to achieve sustainability is a combination of public (tramway) and pedestrian mobility. The infrastructure consists of a mobility hub and

a long promenade on stilts running along the coast (fig.1). In special mention project, *Feldstadt am Heidjöchl,* in Wien, it is – as its name suggests – the existing fields and the planning to preserve them at the heart of the project that structures the new development. The proposed system to achieve sustainability is a combination of public transport (tramway), shared spaces (bicycle, pedestrian and emergency vehicles) and two main roads. The infrastructure is made up of streets and footpaths, one of which serves as a promenade through the entire site (fig.2).

The infrastructure thus becomes biophilic. Infrastructure and nature merge to form 'nature immersed paths' or a hub that is more like an Ecoduct than a covered building in the *Lagom* project (fig.3). There is a search both in the textual narrative, using the concepts of Smulltronstaellet, Goekotta *Lagom*, and the graphic reconciliation of the human and the non-human or the infrastructure 'stitching together' the different habitats. The *Feldstadt am Heidjöchl* project, like on the Piteå site, is developed in synergy with the environment: an 'orchard route' crosses the site and the secondary paths allow the articulation of a system of recovery and circular water cycle (fig.4). The profiles developed focus more on water than on mobility. The morphology used seeks to reconcile the agricultural parcel with the built environment (fig.5).

Prioritising the Community

The condition found on the Krøgenes (NO) and Kenniswartier (NL) sites is the potential to create, on the basis of existing buildings, a neighbourhood for a community.
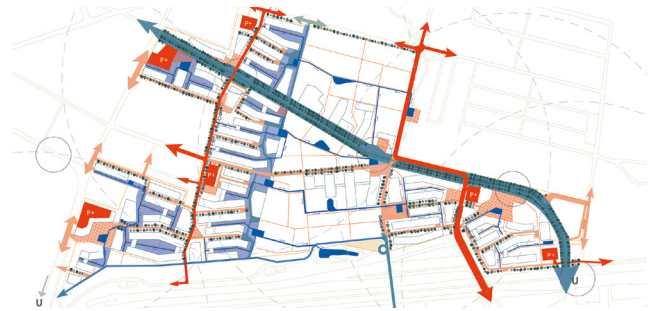
Runner-up project *Co-Krøgenes – Community is care!* in the Norwegian site proposes to create a caring community (fig.6). In this case, it is more the social aspect that is emphasised than the ecological one, although the community spaces are all ecologised (green roofs, Ekevalen, parks, natural baths, etc.). Runner-up project *Density: Mode d'emploi* in Kenniswartier creates interaction between
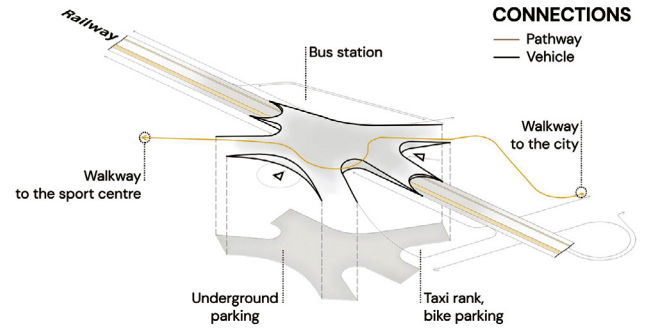
3 – Piteå (SE), special mention – Lagom > See more P.233
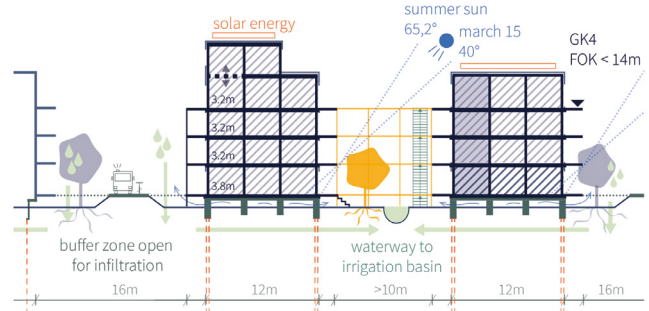
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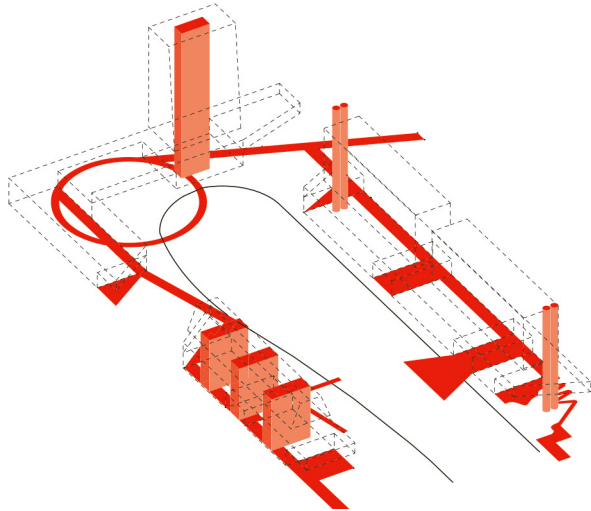> See more P.249

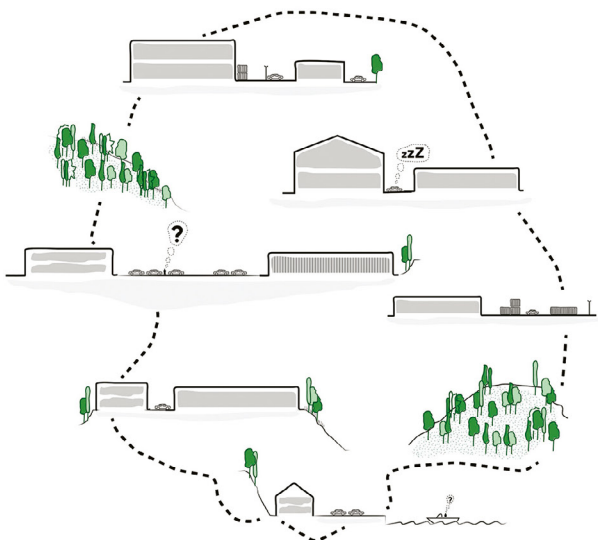5 – Wien (AT), special mention – Feldstadt am Heidjöchl
> See more P.249

6 – Krøgenes (NO), runner-up – Co-Krøgenes – Community is care! > See more P.219

7 – Kenniswartier (NL), runner-up – Density: Mode d'emploi
> See more P.216

8 – Kenniswartier (NL), runner-up – Density: Mode d'emploi
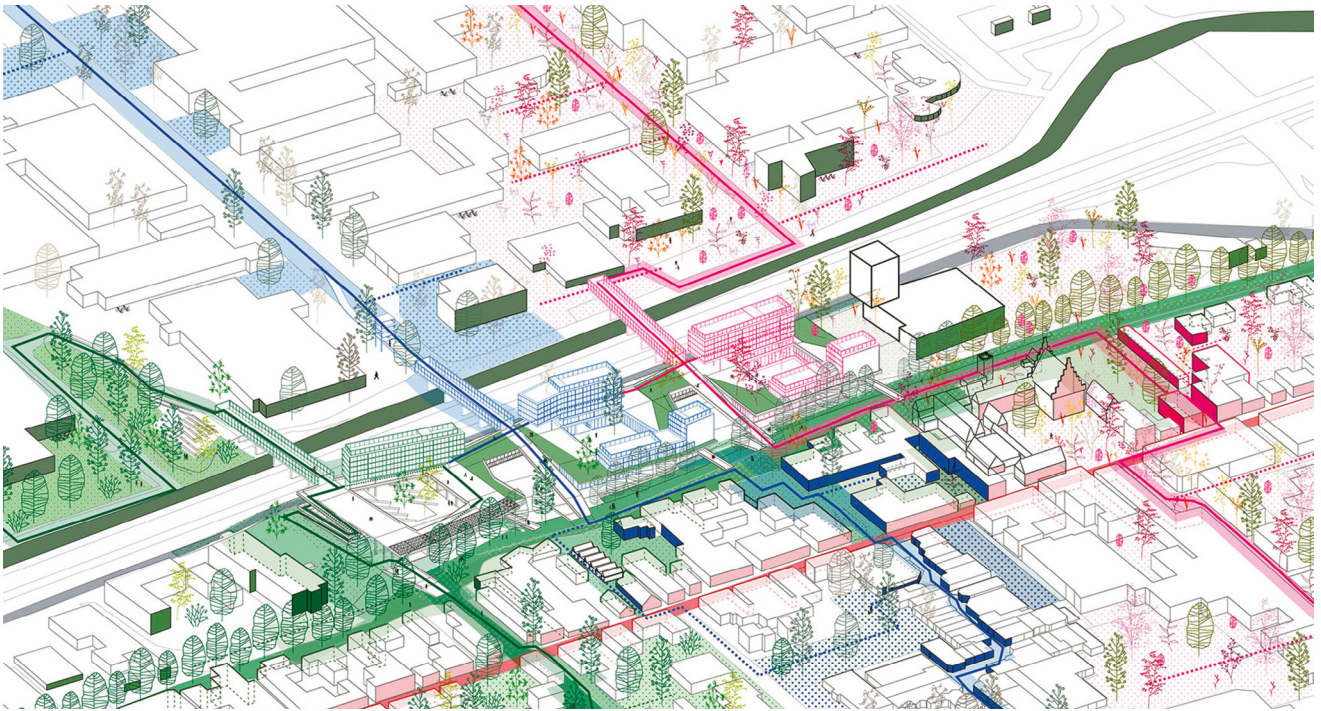> See more P.216

residents by creating shared spaces that link the different fragments of the neighbourhood (fig.7).

In both projects, the infrastructure becomes a vehicle for collective facilities, a meeting place for shared activities. This form of urban planning aims to make the most of interstitial spaces as places where the community can meet and develop. In a way, it means ensuring that social challenges are met not just at the plot level by the individual, but at the level of the common space by the community. In this vision, infrastructure is no longer a residual space, but a structuring space which by its very nature as collective spatializes the community. In the *Density: Mode d'emploi* project, a pedestrian infrastructure linked to the rail system, called the podium and gallery, provides a meeting space (fig.8). Pedestrian mobility becomes a binding element of the site, making it possible to stroll along the water or cross the buildings with their collective functions. In the *Co-Krøgenes* project, the transformation of essentially automotive mobility has made it possible to reclaim the car park spaces flanking the shopping halls and transform them into genuine public spaces: parks, square, etc., most of which have been demineralised (fig.9). On both sites, the pedestrian infrastructure becomes an element that links the built fragments of the site and structures the amenities, the car being relegated to the periphery of the project. The infrastructural space makes it possible to reinterpret the existing buildings and develop common spaces.

The condition found in Waalwijk (NL) is similar to that found in Krøgenes and Kenniswartier, i.e. the potential to create a neighbourhood on the basis of existing buildings, but there, the fragmentation, both spatial and social, is more a matter of urban planning than of architecture. Winning project *About belts and hats* proposes to create connections between the different fragments of this part of the city (fig.10). The infrastructure is conceptualised as three Belts of active mobility (cycle, pedestrian and micro mobilities) that crisscross the site and links the different fragments together. Spatially, these Belts take the form of footbridges directly linked to the built environment (fig.11).
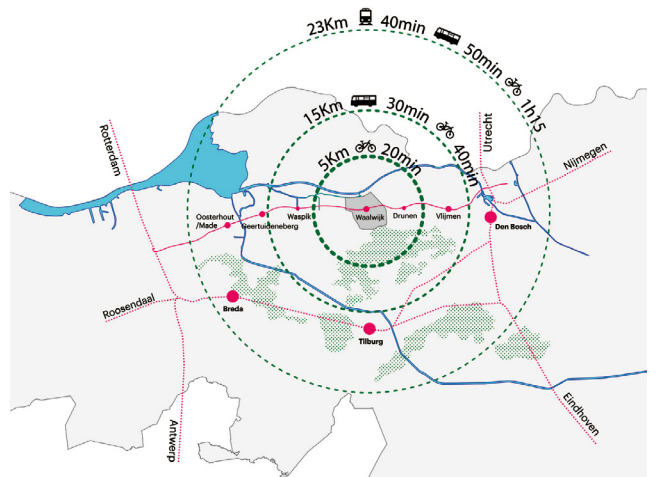

9 – Krøgenes (NO), runner-up – Co-Krøgenes – Community is care! > See more P.219

10 – Waalwijk (NL), winner – About belts and hats > See more P.243

In this case, the cycle infrastructure plays a dominant structuring role, superimposing itself on the automotive infrastructure and relegating it to a secondary role. Priority is given to cycle links, which become connections between the different parts of the site and to the city. This is less an infrastructure as a community space than an infrastructure enabling the community to take shape through the links it establishes (fig. 12).
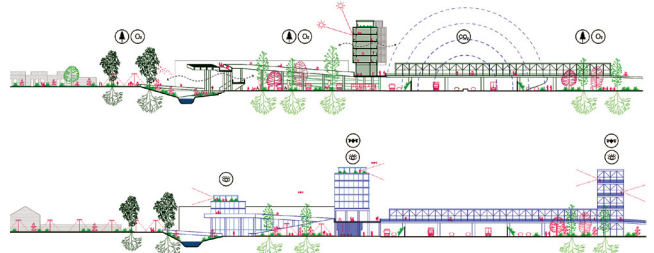
The learnings of these projects – although they are based on the sites' spatial potentials: natural environments, existing building resources, etc. – is above all the questioning of the systems, including mobility, that enable the sites to be transformed into sustainable places. There is indeed a spatial re-use of places, but above all there is a fundamental reassessment of the systems that support them. To illustrate this, the space dedicated to car parks are not being built on: the existing structure is considered as an 'as found' condition, but the mobility system is reorganised using mobility schemes to free them from the functional aspect of car mobility. They are being demineralised and transformed into genuine public spaces. We could therefore speak of a systemic reverse rather than a spatial *tabula rasa*, where the systems prioritised are those that are the opposite of the system prioritised in Anthropocene urbanism. The systems put in place no longer value individual mobility as the top of the travel pyramid, but rather mobility that builds a community in harmony with its environment, i.e. active mobility. Spaces, while structurally reused, are now seeing their materialization transformed: asphalt is giving way to wood duckboards or the greenery of concrete/grass pavement, while their layout no longer responds to the *desiderata* of speed, but rather to their potential as meeting places or places of activity and re-naturalised space (fig. 13).

11 – Waalwijk (NL), winner – About belts and hats > See more P.243

12 – Waalwijk (NL), winner – About belts and hats > See more P.243

13 – Waalwijk (NL), winner – About belts and hats > See more P.243