



Nordic Built Cities Challenge:

Evaluations by the Nordic/international jury

29 August 2016

Evaluation and decision of the jury of the Nordic Built Cities Challenge

The jury is pleased to submit our final evaluation of the winners of the Nordic Prize in the Nordic Built Cities Challenge. The competition has focused on outstanding Nordic innovative solutions to challenges that are related to specific urban spaces in the Nordic region, but that also are relevant around the world.

According to the instructions given to the jury, the goal was to select three winners that best fulfil the three criteria of the Nordic Built Cities Challenge; compliance with the Nordic Built Charter, high innovation, as well as export and development potential.

The selected winners are:

First place: "The Soul of Nørrebro", Hans Tavsens Park and Korsgade, Copenhagen, Denmark

Second place: "Kera Co-Op City", Kera, Espoo, Finland

Third place: "Eyes of Runavík", Hillside in Runavík, Faroe Islands

The jury concluded that the three winners represent solutions in a diversity of urban situations – a small community, a suburban area and a part of a large city. The winners also represent different countries participating in this Nordic cooperation programme.

The selected projects definitely have the potential to result in innovative Nordic solutions including a wide range of disciplines, knowledge and expertise.

Winner (1st place): “The Soul of Nørrebro”

Lead partner

SLA A/S

Project owner

City of Copenhagen

City

Copenhagen

Country

Denmark

Physical space

Hans Tavsens Park and Korsgade, Nørrebro, Copenhagen.

Challenge

The challenge is to handle flooding from rainstorms in an intelligent way with synergies for public spaces and local community social development.

The proposal

The proposal seeks to develop a sensuous, varied, blue-green and site-specific nature-oriented landscape concept for flooding in Nørrebro that merges recreational and natural landscape with utilitarian considerations. The space will be developed together with the Municipality of Copenhagen and the local residents and stakeholders. The proposal also entails an urban exploratorium: Copenhagen Fablab for City Nature.

Argumentation of the jury

The proposal complies well with the charter principles in a convincing way. It is innovative in that it introduces a new type of climate change adaptation. “The Soul of Nørrebro” combines technological and social factors. In doing so, it solves flooding problems and creates community development. It proposes a social process involving local stakeholders with the purpose of creating ownership, co-creativity and a sense of community. It utilizes and enhances the energy and organization of local institutions like the school and the church. “The Soul of Nørrebro” takes the diversity of the area into account, has a humanistic approach and brings different disciplines together.

The jury finds the proposal of high esthetic value, where the play and flow of water brings logic to the landscape. With a blue-green approach it creates a new and unique model for flood management. It leverages utility investment for more holistic, sustainable and resilient results that create both social and technological benefits. The proposal breaks new ground and has development and export potential through a smart application of technical, cultural and social values.

Recommendations of the jury

- The jury unanimously recommends that “The Soul of Nørrebro” be the top winner of the Nordic Built Cities Challenge.

Winner (2nd place): “Kera Co-Op City”

Lead partner

B&M Architects

Project owner

S Group

City

Kera, Espoo

Country

Finland

Physical space

Currently, this large industrial park separates the existing and future residential areas and the train station.

The site does not have any existing population but the development of Kera aims for 15,000 new residents and 10,000 new jobs. Presently, the space is fully occupied by a massive industrial logistics centre, composed of extensive warehousing in large-footprint buildings and related office space and infrastructure. The site is level, with asphalt, concrete and buildings covering most of the area.

Challenge

The challenge of transforming the industrial area owned by S-Group in Kera consists of two parts: 1) circular economy solutions to deal with interim uses and then waste materials as the existing industrial buildings are demolished; and, 2) smart community planning and urban design that will result in a new neighbourhood attractive for residents and highly sustainable, with all services and facilities accessible within 20 minutes’ walk, without the need to use a private car.

The proposal

The proposal offers a 20-minute walkable neighbourhood structure and a diversity of circular economy solutions. The neighbourhood is mixed use, connected through a network of high quality urban spaces and linked directly to regional rapid transit.

Argumentation of the Jury

The proposal responds directly to the principles and complies well with the charter. “Kera Co-Op City” includes an array of many innovative ideas. For instance, it will accommodate future autonomous vehicles, it arranges public space as a catalyst for activity, it suggests community

coordinators as agents of community development, it offers many housing forms for diverse levels of income, and it strongly embraces micro-climate conscious planning and design. The individual innovations are brought together into a coherent scheme. There is clear focus on social cohesion and to create a liveable and walkable neighbourhood. It is innovative while still building on history and local conditions. Many of the solutions included in the 20-minute neighbourhood will have both inspirational and technical exportability while also being highly practical.

The proposal makes a good case of sustainable and liveable urbanism in a suburban setting, creating a high density area whilst having a clear focus on public spaces and the quality of everyday living. It puts a focus on connectivity both within and outside the area. The combination of density and connectivity creates conditions for supporting services and a commercial infrastructure. In the creation of the space, a mix of market and non-market developers is used, creating different types of housing and a genuine social mix. This enables a residential area that is resilient over time, which is strongly endorsed by the jury. Export potential is the strength of the project and there is a world market for these types of solutions.

Recommendations of the jury

- The jury unanimously recommends that "Kera Co-Op City" be awarded the second place of the Nordic Built Cities Challenge.

Winner (3rd place): Eyes of Runavík

Lead partner

White Arkitekter A/S

Project owner

City of Runavík

City

Runavík

Country

Faroe Islands

Physical space

The site is located on a hill side between the areas of Hjallavegur and Blikagøta and has been identified by the municipality for future development. It will function as a transition between the rural hinterland and settlement.

Challenge

Typically, construction of suburban housing is organised in a pattern of single-family homes served by a local road with driveways to each house. The housing uses all the land thereby disrupting natural systems and processes, and is expensive to build and service. The goal is to

establish a viable and attractive alternative type of residential neighbourhood without large incision in the terrain and landscape but including homes that are smaller and therefore more affordable as well as arranged to maximize social interaction and support.

The proposal

The proposal seeks to achieve the 'lightest touch' possible on the natural landscape while creating a new and innovative landmark. It is specifically designed for the climatic conditions on the island and provides a new building typology adaptable for steep terrains.

Argumentation of the jury

The proposal complies with the principles of the charter and presents a number of innovations at many scales. It is a well thought out concept with solutions such as wind-shells, private gardens and community rooms. The jury believes that "Eyes of Runavík" tackles climate issues in an innovative way, using geothermal energy, collecting rainwater and using recycling surplus material. The building design fulfils passive housing criteria and cleverly manages the prevailing winds to minimize impacts on day-to-day liveability.

It presents a new housing typology for the Faroe Islands and, if embraced by consumers could position Runavík at the forefront of sustainable suburbanism while also transforming the image of the city. It conserves natural space by limiting the building footprints and gently increasing the density. The affect will be to offer a new way of more responsible living in the Faroe Islands. This type of housing has potential to re-establish lost social relations of the traditional village and to tackle new social requirements, such as that for an aging population.

There is strong export potential with the concept of "Eyes of Runavík". The concept will be relevant not only in areas where there is a need to build in steep terrain, but also in areas facing challenges with urban sprawl and new social demands – as well as sites in very different climate zones. In the further development of this proposal, the jury urges a process where citizens and potential consumers are intimately involved in detailing this new way of living in Runavík.

Recommendations of the jury

- The jury unanimously recommends that "Eyes on Runavík" be awarded the third place in the Nordic Built Cities Challenge.