Waterfronts and Life
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Lars Gemzøe Architect M.A.A.
Senior Consultant Associate Partner Gehl Architects
1. People and Public Space
   Two case studies – Aker Brygge & Oerestad

2. People – Space - Buildings
   Bjørvika Oslo

3. Different strategies for waterfronts
   Office waterfronts, Housing Waterfronts, Entertainment waterfronts or People waterfronts?

4. Life on Waterfronts - Some thoughts
1. People and Public Space
Two case studies
Aker Brygge, Oslo and Kay Fiskers Plads, Copenhagen

Published by Jan Gehl in Topos 2007

Data collected by Martina Templá and Robert Sedlák
Centre for Public Space Research 2006
The Oerestad – the new town in Copenhagen
The elevated metro-line is the “main street”
The Oerestad – the new town in Copenhagen

Ferring Tower
Arch: Henning Larsen

Kay Fiskers Plads
Kay Fiskers Plads
Total floor space 11,400m²
(car-free space only)
One long closed facade
Fields Shopping Centre
A large internalized box

Arch: Wilhelm Lauridsen
Kay Fiskers Plads (Kay Fiskers’s Square)
Closed ground floor facades and only 2 entrances

Fields Shopping Centre
Office tower
Kay Fiskers Plads (Kay Fiskers’s Square)
Access by rail, metro, bus, bike and car
What is life like on a normal weekday?
How many people are there?

7-8,000 pedestrians pass it daily
7-8,000 pedestrians pass it daily - nowhere to sit
Average number of people staying is 5.5
The waterfront at Aker Brygge is a great people place Oslo Norway
The waterfront at Aker Brygge is a great people place Oslo Norway

But what about the square behind?
The square at Aker Brygge is inside the district

Not on the famous waterfront
Open ground floor activities and many entrances
A people space with a rich edge

Photo Martina Templá and Robert Sedlák
A shopping mall inside the urban blocks at the back
A kindergarten at the corner, cafes on the right and offices and housing on the upper floors

5,000 pedestrians pass it daily
Plenty of places to sit
Average number of people staying is 212
39 times more activity on Aker Brygge Square compared to Kay Fisker’s Square

- Children playing
- Sitting total
- Sitting on things not intended as seating
- Sitting on a cafe chair
- Sitting on a bench
- Standing

![Graph showing user activity across different times of the day.](image-url)
NEW CITY LIFE
GEHL, GEMZŒ, KIRKNAES & SØNDERGAARD

You can read more about evaluating the quality of public spaces in Copenhagen including Kay Fiskers’s square in New City Life Gehl and Gemzœ 2006
Now you can read more about methods for the study of public life in relation to planning and design of public spaces.

How to Study Public Life
Jan Gehl & Birgitte Svarre 2013
The Oerestad... and many other places

Planning from the helicopter

Focus on buildings

Life?
2. People – Space – Buildings

A new planning process is necessary

life
space
buildings
A closer look at the waterfront in Oslo
Aker Brygge
Oslo, Norway

Before we thought it should be like this....

Now we know better.
Aker Brygge
Oslo, Norway

Car free access to the waterfront

...and a new tram line
A great well furnished public promenade
And a lot of cafes along the buildings
What about other parts of Oslo’s waterfront?
Waterfront strategies for Bjørvika, Oslo’s waterfront

A new process
1. General Master Plan
2. Public Space Plans
3. Plans for buildings
Waterfront strategies for Bjørvika
Part of Oslo’s waterfront

1. Life – use and activities
2. Public Spaces
3. The Edges
Waterfront strategies for Bjørvika

Precondition: New tunnels will take the through traffic away

1. A continuous promenade
2. Links to the city
3. Different activities for each sequence
4. A strong identity with a water theme developed in each space leading to the water
Waterfront strategies for Bjørvika

1. Inviting public Spaces for all user groups
2. A concentration of commercial public life
3. Public spaces with a story to tell
4. A rich edge with functions that relate to the public life
What about an inside type of activity like an opera?
Oslo Opera at Bjørvika
easy access
Much more than an Opera

Architect: Snøhetta – 2008
A great place to view the city and the fjord
Free access all over

Many visitors that do not come for the show

Architect: Snøhetta – 2008
The Oslo Opera
You can walk all over it – also on rainy days

Architect: Snøhetta – 2008
Restaurants and cafes inside
Restaurants and cafes inside
3. Different strategies for waterfronts

Intro:
The city used to be at the water....but something got in the way

Office waterfronts
Housing Waterfronts
Entertainment waterfronts
People waterfronts
The city used to be at the waterfront - but other things got in the way.
A working harbour is still a great attraction
A working harbour is still a great attraction
A working harbour is still a great attraction.
Office Harbour?
Mono-functional city districts

Parts of London’s and Copenhagen’s waterfronts and many other cities
Usually lifeless...and even the buildings are empty in the evenings, nights and weekends.

Kalvebod Brygge
Housing Harbour?
Mono-functional city districts

The former Free-port in Copenhagen
Housing Harbour?
Mono-functional city districts
Usually lifeless at day time...and they often become privatized
Entertainment Harbour?
Baltimore, Sydney and many others

“Rousification”
Tourist entertainment industry
People to the Waterfront
Toronto’s Waterfront, Granville Island, Vancouver and Islands Brygge, Copenhagen
People to the Waterfront
Granville Island, Vancouver and Islands Brygge, Copenhagen

Toronto’s Waterfront
“Please Walk on the Grass!”
Projects to be released from interim control bylaw:

1. The Harbours 1
   Gledhill Myhalowycz Architects
   Komax Developments

2. The Harbours 2
   Gledhill Myhalowycz Architects
   Komax Developments

3. Waters Edge Condominiums
   John Coyle Architect
   Rampart Developments

4. Le Lido Condominiums
   Barton Myers Architect
   Huang & Dauncey Ltd
Granville Island
Vancouver

Chapter Six
EYESORE

"Granville Island is an eyesore," complained a reporter in 1963 and he was right.

Once the object of so much ambition and greed, Granville Island was now on the verge of ruin. It had degenerated into little more than a dirty tangle of cranes, creosoted timbers and creaking pilings.

It was strictly an industrial area... I don't think there was a tree on Granville Island, there was no grass. Just dirty and dusty underfoot. The buildings were dirty, the windows were dirty. It was such a seedy area.
Granville Island
Design guidelines to keep the industrial character

Keep it unique
No chain stores.

Everything which are made or sold on the island must be from the Vancouver area.
Granville Island Farmers market
Granville Island
Great diversity of places and landscapes
Granville Island
Great diversity of places and landscapes
Granville Island
Boat repair wharf and house boats
Granville Island
Art college....and a working cement factory
Granville Island
Art college....and a working cement factory
Granville Island
Art college....and a working cement factory
Small ferries for people and bicycles
Granville Island for both locals and tourists
A great place with a true local identity
People Harbour
Islands Brygge Waterfront Park Copenhagen
Islands Brygge Waterfront Park Copenhagen – a short walk from the city centre but on the “wrong” side of the bridge and in a “wrong district”
Islands Brygge
- Before: A barrier to the waterfront
Islands Brygge

Dense housing, narrow courtyards and no parks, no playgrounds or squares
Islands Brygge
A local action group made the park

Photo Poul Jensen
Islands Brygge

“Take care of the park – it is yours”

Parken er din pas på den!
Copenhagen - Islands Brygge
A Waterfront for the people - made by the people
Islands Brygge - A multi-functional waterfront park with a series of overlapping activities

Waterfront park
Total floor space 30.200m²
(car-free space only)
Islands Brygge

Public grills and sports facilities
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge
Islands Brygge Waterfront park

1000 users in the park on a sunny summer weekday – during the day
Islands Brygge

It was a successful local park....
Islands Brygge
With the swimming facility it became a regional hotspot
Islands Brygge
Nominated the 4th hottest city district by the lifestyle magazine “Wallpaper” in 2005

Fabriksfest på havnefronten

Af Joakim Grundahl Kjeldsen  Grafik: Philip Ytournel 5396

Havnens nye scene
Med godt et år på bagen har teater- og musikscenen Play sat sig solidt på Bryggen med et udbud af forestillinger, der ikke er set før i Danmark. Det er ny dansk dramatik og nyoversatte forestillinger fra udlænding, der satses på, men i overensstemmelse med den særlige and på Bryggen lader stedet sig ikke begrænse af genrebetegnelser, så den intime sal med 50 sæder byder også på live-musik, stand-up, kabaret, litterære arrangementer og meget mere.

Play, Njalsgade 21 F, Kbh. S.
www.play-cph.dk
4. Life on a waterfront?
Some thoughts about how to make active waterfronts

Why would you come there?
What is there for you?
  Attractive functions?
  Interesting activities?
  Inviting public spaces?

How to get there?
Easy access – reduce barriers – access for all
  From the city behind
  From the water
4. Life on a waterfront?
Some thoughts about how to make active waterfronts

What to do when you get there?

What to do when you have seen the “Giraffe” as we say in Denmark?

- Other non planned activities that you happened participate in when you were there or walked a bit around
- Inviting public spaces with other people doing something
- Overlapping activities – spatially and visually
- Surprising mixes of uses

Rich edges with open interfaces

Invitations to enter, invitations to stay, sit down
Yes, it can still be done!
Go and see Western Harbour Malmö, Sweden

Thank you