Keys to Unlock Fragile Urban Landscapes

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Abstract
In Sweden large city perspectives dominate policy and the discourse on economic
production and accumulation of capital, distribution of power, risk and lifestyl
situations for small cities and municipalities regarding decreasing and ageing po
uneven conditions call for initiatives and methods that intervene with existing
and project transformations potentials.

This paper present key urban projects as complementary planning tools that: 1) i
strategic interventions, 2) constitutes bridges between planning and implementat
platforms for critical negotiation that assemble available resources, skills and
and 4) combine private and public resources.

The research is developed by design-based research methodology through extensive
local-regional planning in the Skaraborg region in Sweden, here presented by two
The complexity of potentials for sustainable development of urbanised landscapes
of concentrated and extended Urbanisation networks, decision-making and
accumulation result in local lock-ins of future transformation. Fragile situations
urban landscapes pose emerging vulnerability for sustaining local social, political
processes with substantial consequences for development of both societal and ind
Results from cases are presented with focus on describing the key project capaci
transform fragile urban landscapes and outline the roles, functions and responsi
regional actors. This stresses structural, political, discursive and situation-specifi
Triggering change in material, topologic and relational qualities on both local
enhances resilience and adaptation.

Keywords: key urban projects, fragile urban landscapes, urban ecologies

1. Introduction

This paper focuses vulnerable local-regional urban situations suffering from neg
regional imbalance, discussed here as fragile urban landscapes. The main aim is to bet
the planning problems of such landscapes, and especially to explore how key urba
developed as an operative planning method to transform such situations.

Urbanisation, urban competition and increased mobility have changed administrati
networks between cities on both global and regional scale (Harvey 1989; Sassen 2
Massey 2007), blurring specific characteristics of, and division between, urban
periphery. New approaches are needed in order to understand how urban systems, f
meaningful coherences amalgamate on local, regional and global scales (Mostafavi
Brugmans and Strein 2014) and to bridge local-regional gaps in planning (SKL 201
It is also necessary to tackle uneven geographical development with increasing d
population, economy etc. between growing and shrinking regions (Massey 2004; Tie

Sweden's strong planning tradition from the 1960s has undergone a shift from 'go
governance' with consensus-driven modes of participatory planning processes pair

ambitions for sustainable development. At the same time, urban concentration, vi
and entrepreneurial tactics drive cities and municipalities to attract dwellers
in order to secure welfare and local services (Tunstr m 2009; Fredriksson 2014).

According to sociologist and geographer Neil Brenner, current urbanisation must
both concentrating and expanding processes, the first being a clustering process
containing diverse socio-spatial changes working across territories and scales a
mechanisms of today's capitalised and industrialised economy. (Brenner 2013, p.
differences in urbanised landscapes must not be understood as a dichotomy betwee
but as an 'explosion' of changing patterns and potentials in a densifying textur
This challenges traditional conceptualisation of towns and cities as defined cen
rural (non-urban) contexts (Brenner 2013, pp. 99-101), and calls for systematic
reinvention of urbanisation from both specific material contexts and the 'contex
structural geopolitical and geo-economical processes of change (Brenner 2013, p.

With outset in Brenner's understanding of urbanisation, we speak here of 'urbani
critically recognising what Harvey (2006) and Massey (2004, 2005) discuss as gro
regional development, which threatens to be socially discriminating and regional
argue, that current planning suffers from stereotyped city models, with focus on
'regional blindness' that disregards the potentials of the regional landscape as
formations (Nielsen 2004; Tietjen 2011). Our research also responds to a recent
land use planning to better meet with societal challenges (Swedish Government 20
need new planning approaches, and an emerging interest within the Swedish planni
proactive design-based research.

Our focus of investigation has been to identify, develop and enhance the key pro
the operative capacity of key urban projects at various stages of urban planning
processes, especially concerning fragile urban landscapes. The work includes: to
theoretical framework for key urban projects; to develop and discuss key urban p
planning tools to handle fragile urban landscapes; and to test these tools in re
processes. The research has oscillated between theoretical studies and collabora
local-regional planning situations, exemplified in this article through two empi
ambition has also been to formulate a conceptual and methodological framework fo
local-regional planning, primarily concerning fragile urban landscapes.

The study is part of a practice-based PhD-project in architecture, conducted by Nils
supervised by Catharina Dyrssen, with the overall aim to enhance local-regional
possibilities in urban development. The paper first presents central concepts an
overview of relevant research and practice approaches to key urban projects. The
methodological framework is outlined followed by a description of two cases refl
landscapes, and in which Bj rling has actively participated as an architect and
student.

2. Fragile urban landscapes

The mechanisms of urban competition and its inequality effects may lead to formi
defined as fragile urban landscapes, i.e., local situations that suffer from wea
more important, find themselves locked in their existing circumstances, physical
positions and identity.
Our empirical and theoretical studies have discerned four interdependent conditi
landscapes: (1) The local situation, lack of resources, planning competences and decision mandat
handle local-global change and meet with new demands about sustainable conditions and

to adapt the current situation to new needs and possibilities; (2) the current si
physical structures that are resource-demanding to adjust to new possible use; (
have affected the local position and function within regional and global networks; (
situations are augmented by the use of idealizing and unrealistic future images,
of the successful city classify the fragile urban landscape as problematic or ir

The lack of power and capacity in relation to ideals and expectations for develo
situations vulnerable to the impact of ongoing political, social, cultural, econ
this often hinders them to recognise new meaning and potentials in resources (ma
well as in the physical landscape. Therefore, it is necessary to approach the si
systemic level, as a physical-structural problem, and from a sense-making perspe
understand this as an integrated topographical, topological, systems related and
densification, of importance both to the local and to the regional contexts.

To meet with new demands, fragile urban landscapes need to transform and be prov
accessibility to urban functions and increased collaboration (between municipali
sectors, areas and actors) in order to strengthen the local-regional possibiliti
resilient urbanised local-regional landscapes. It is therefore crucial to study
and meaningful relations can be developed, and how new combinations of existing
bridge the lack of built density.

3. Key urban projects

Key urban projects are defined here as projects that can open, lock or change di
transformation processes. This includes to make visible, question, generate and dr
specific, local-regional, relational conditions; to bridge gaps between local an
make operative the transformations by gathering resources, competences and decis
We use the concept of project in regard of its projective capacity, where the ar
tool to assemble relevant knowledge, give it coherent form so that it can be dis
stakeholders, and suggest a direction for a transformation process (Cuff and She
conceptualization of 'project' is always inscribed in continuous transformation
may have far-reaching impact in both space and time. Thus, the single project is
part of systemic urban processes. Key urban projects shall have a projective cap
and design processes and an operative role in the actual urban redevelopment. The cor
indicates that the project needs to have the capacity to either open, lock or ch
transformation, and that it shall be able to meet with existing conditions of ea
'urban' refers to the extended urbanised landscape that humans shape and form in
develop societies.

Thus, key urban projects shall be able to manage step by step transformation of
landscapes and form a fruitful method to handle planning situations. Accordingly
through what they are, but through what they can do; what they can make visible
process, how they operate in decision making, and what processes they open or lo
projects-capacity should include to: (1) handle relations between center and per
contingencies with onset in space as interconnected processes between urban and
make visible driving forces for the development (change) of society; (2) operate
spatial and planning conditions to identify available resources, skills and poss
(3) support dialogue and critical negotiations; (4) develop diverse perspectives
available resources into alternative directions of development; (5) develop and s
making relations, positions and networks; (6) intervene in local-regional situat
and relevant meaning; (7) make possible alternative strategies for regional and
where Key Urban Projects provide concrete steps to strengthen fragile urban land

Investigating key urban projects sets focus on the possibilities to rather densi
co-productive relations than urban space as such, that is, to reveal conditions
densify relational networks, i.e. increase connectivity in scattered urban forma
realistic and resilient visions of the future urbanised landscape. It is assumed
qualities and values can be improved as conditions for transformation, and used
different scales and qualities of the urbanised landscape.

4. Urban acupuncture and projective prototypes

During the last thirty years several efforts have been undertaken to develop the
that can initiate urban transformation at different scales. Early examples are t
Sol –Morales, with Urban Acupuncture where specific small scale interventions
coordinated strategy to trigger urban transformation (de Sol –Morales 2008, 24).
through a detailed understanding of spatial formations, possibilities can be rev
making relations in apparently meaningless and abstract urban landscapes.

Correspondingly, Raoul Bunschoten demonstrates how Projective Prototypes can b
operative mapping-tool to reveal hidden potentials and possibilities in urban la
2001). Through interactions between the documentation of existing conditions and
alternatives, a number of options are created, in turn identifying liminal bodi
actions that are needed to transform the current situation in new directions. Af
critical negotiations, alternative changes are tested through the prototypes wit
flows and reveal both the material conditions of urban formations and the underly
sustain them.

On a regional scale, Emscher Park in the Ruhr region (Sieverts 2003; Waldheim 20
strategic plan for Flanders (Stalenhoef and Geldof 2007) are examples of how sma
coordinated through overall frameworks to step by step transform regional landsc
formed a flexible structure that connected and facilitated new regional networks
existing potentials through a large number of individual projects. Flanders focu
economic driving forces in a national perspective. Both cases contributed to giv
landscape new meaning from available resources, skills and mandates.

Relating to these examples, we argue that there is a need to see key urban proje
mapping tool and a mode to establish collaboration and critical negotiations, wh
be identified and obviated, and existing qualities combined in order to build me
productive networks for lasting strength.

5. Theoretical-methodological framework

The knowledge production in our studies moves forward by continuously shifting b
theoretical framing, comparisons to relevant reference projects, and development
Theoretical models have been tested and remodeled in actual planning situations
mapping processes that oscillate between defining problems and outlining concept
spiraling process gradually forms strategies for negotiation and implementation
situations, with the intent to assemble resources, skills and mandate in adequat

To support the systemic and operative logics of key urban projects it was necess
correspondingly flexible, multi-faceted theoretical-methodological framework, of
components are: (a) design based, proformative strategies (Corner 2006; Cuff and
constructed around (b) an understanding of the urban landscape as layers of urba

2001 (1971); Guattari 1989; Reed & Lister 2014), (c) diagrammatic layers (Deleuz
1987; Deleuze 2006) of urban form, (d) a discussion on space as absolute, relati
(Massey 2005; Harvey 2006), and (e) assemblage (Deleuze amd Guattari 1987; DeLan
Dyrssen 2010) as design-based tools to elaborate sense-making relations.

a. Design-based, proformative strategies
Dana Cuff argues for proformative methods, i.e. future-oriented approaches opera
complexities rather than abstract models (Cuff and Sherman 2011, pp. 24-31). The
approach can be understood as a type of action-oriented, design-based research,
an investigative methodology with concrete steps and close feed-back loops betwe
mapping, construction of problem settings and theoretical reflection (Dyrssen 20

b. Urban ecologies
In 1971 Reyner Banham characterised Los Angeles as based on four ecologies (Sur
Foothills , The Plains of Id and Autopia), deriving from the city as layered
aspects of climate, topography, water-supply and infrastructure etc., which incl
cultural systems forming the premises and intricate mechanism for development (B
pp. 117-121). Movement and mobility in all scales and with all kinds of infrastr
preconditions for urban life in a double process of what can be made possible (B
Combining space with time and speed, Banham questions traditional notions of den
structures and urban identity, arguing that the concept of urban ecologies can b
definitions of what composes the urban landscape, and to indicate new relations
and social life (Banham 2001, p. 218f).

As a conceptual basis for our work, Banham's material ecologies need to be suppl
dynamic interplay between mental, social and environmental ecologies, as introdu
Guattari in The Three Ecologies (1989) and which, he argues, constitute a contin
process for individuals and their habitats through a logic of intensities rather
(Guattari 1989, pp. 134-136). However, as biopolitical processes, ecologies need
producing and forming concept of power, shifting between producing and being pro
and being controlled, distributing and being distributed, thereby articulating c
and normative processes (Foucault 1998, p. 15, p. 33).

Hence, production of space is always related to a power perspective concerning w
produces spatial norms and meaning, at the same time as space in its material co
subjects and produces societal frames. Spatial design with its capacity to deal with ph
meaningful structures and historical layers is one of the most useful tools we h
change of society (Reed and Lister 2014, p. 98). Urban ecologies can bridge the
urban and rural, culture and nature etc., and are therefore crucial for a sustai
understand and handle the interplay between systems to position the social condi
centre of discussions on urban transformation.

c. Diagrammatic layers
With onset in the biopolitics of Michel Foucault, the spatial configurations o
seen not only as the result of advanced capitalism, urbanisation, the welfare society
essential tools for producing and ordering modern society (Wallenstein 2009, p.
Deleuze's reading of Foucault, normative identities, hierarchies and relations o
through the spatial context where the layered relations that constitute power fo
discloses the mechanisms producing order and control embedded within all institu
all physical typologies (schools, supermarkets, highways, intersections, apartme
coding and un-coding mechanisms of the diagram, society can be changed (Deleuze
Diagrammatic layers are in constant modulations and can thereby be seen as relat

compose and assemble sense-making networks (Deleuze 2006, p. 69) in an ongoing c
process of control of and control by, production of and production by etc. Hence
diagrammatic layers key urban projects can trigger, accelerate, block or break t
processes and open up for new productive combinations.

d. Absolute, relative and relational space
The notion of urbanised landscapes as overlaid and combined ecologies can explai
transformation can be triggered by apparently small changes. The potential of th
connected and transformed through both physical and narrative changes. In order
foundations of, and trigger points for, qualities of a certain urban ecology, we
spatial aspects presented by geographer David Harvey (2006, 2009): absolute spa
material, topographical, Euclidian spaces), relative space (topological relati
as well as individual interpretations and abilities), and relational space' as
sense-making relations of space. According to Harvey there is no such thing as
of the processes that define them , and these processes do not occur in space b
spatial frame (Harvey 2006, p.123).

Both Harvey and Cuff argue that planning using predefined understandings of what
should be produces static spatial solutions to planning problems (Harvey 2006; C
2011) and has resulted in urban landscapes of typologies, specialised for progra
have difficulties to handle diversity and change over time. In order to grasp th
urban landscape, architects and urban planners need tools that work through all
relational) notions of space. The consequences otherwise are urban landscapes un
shifting processes coursing through and across the urban field: terra fluxus . T
be space as process rather than space as form (Corner 2006, pp. 28-30).

e. Assemblage
The concept of assemblage is important in order to structure and handle the spat
operative and flexible way. Manuel DeLanda, transferring the theory of assemblag
and FØlix Guattari towards a design theory, stresses that a relevant assemblage
linkages between components as well as mechanisms of change, interaction between
interior-exterior contingencies in which one may discover triggers and catalysts
p.20, p.32). The assemblage is a flexible composition of content and expressi
ongoing processes of territorialisation and deterritorialisation through cod
condition and develop the assemblage (DeLanda 2006, pp.12-21, pp.28-31).

To deal with the complexity of the urbanised landscape, we need to replace the t
cause and effect by the assemblage as a sense making, relational, evolving and t
composition (DeLanda 2006, p.20). This can be regarded as a design approach to k
evolving mappings of key points, links and qualities of relations in specific si
With urban ecologies, connecting also to diagrammatic layers and space as absolu
relational, assemblages can be constructed as evolving models of thought that op
both to transform the urbanised landscape and to change normative identities of
or large scale operations. Essential here is the design competence to handle and
temporal-material complexities, and the recognition of evolving, non-linear processe
with ecologies, assemblage is also useful to map active processes that constitut
situations.

6. Empirical contexts

In this section we will describe two projects and how their capacity to transfor
landscape can be used as key urban projects. It is discussed how they may addres

continuities rather than hierarchies, how they develop as sense-making rather th
and how they may have the capacity not only to produce solutions in a local situ
trigger change of relative and relational qualities and networks. The projects c
fieldwork included in the doctoral studies, and have promoted the understandings
capacity and the construction of the framework (also see Bj rling 2014).

Project 1: Beneath the pavement is a beach , Mariestad
The town of Mariestad in Sweden used to be an important local center as capital
inland port for regional and national transportation of grain and oil. The main
Mariestad as a fragile urban landscape are the topological changes in trade-flow
being the county capital to a position in the geographic periphery of V stra G t
region in Sweden), which affects the notion of what Mariestad is and can be in t
structure is also locked into reproducing existing spatial relations between its
therefore has problems to adapt to new needs.

In 2004 the architect office AIM Architecture Is Made won a competition about th
brief was to find a strategy for how to transform the area into a residential an
town and thereby add a considerable number of new housing and activities in the
Mariestad. The motto was Beneath the pavement is a beach . With the aim to esta
transformation process that could evolve over a long period of time, the proposa
describing relations instead of physical form. Scale and details of public space
given specific positions but were described as relations to the surrounding area
as between buildings and streetscape in both a short and long time perspective.
outlined relational and topological principles for future change that would impr
That far it was a process-oriented urban design project. Later, as part of pract
studies, it also initiated a methodological framework for key urban projects fro
perspectives:

a) A changed narrative: First, the project suggested a new beach. The future saga
created has been very important both for the waterfront project to evolve around
new position of Mariestad as the town by the lake in a regional context. It ha
administration, politicians and the public in order to move forward with the pro
waterfront. The beach illustrates the relational perspective and the impact of t
creates a common future narrative that changes relational space and plays a powe
transform local identity and spatial sense making.

b) Temporary projects: Mariestad struggles with the backside effects of global e
stagnated population and a small annual investment budget, changes of absolute s
pace. It has therefore been important to identify projects that focus on change
aspects. Art projects, small commercial booths and a new playground have been te
in the harbour area to activate the boardwalk and make it a strong public space.
along the river now evolves as an additional recontextualisation project. The te
two main focuses; first to show immediate change and, second, to involve people
are seen as laboratories that through additions, like Bunschoten's projective p
existing potentials, include a diversity of individual initiatives and relative unde
future relational memories of the waterfront and the town.

c) A future context: Also (more) permanent projects need to be dealt with as too
possibilities. During and through the design process the existing situation is c
future context that in return generates guidelines for how to further develop th
architectural projects. In this way the planning process takes its onset from bo
historical context and a modelled projective future situation.

These three perspectives relate to alternative and interlinked ecologies, from w
not developed towards a final master plan but opens up for a number of parallel s
slowly transform the fragile urban area and change the conditions for Mariestad
strategy needs to be open for limitations that, instead of blocking the transfor
new ways forward. At the same time the project itself, through temporary actions
new common and personal memories, create additional layers of meaning that estab
narratives. This process transgresses the borders between urban planning and urb
a flexible framework within which small scale projects can be implemented and in
overall plan, whether this is a comprehensive plan, structural image, strategy o
exemplifies how the planning process is extended through the use of key urban pr
of de Sol –Morales, small scale interventions are used in order to establish new
scale of the human body and the urban spatial context.

In 2009 the design-process of the waterfront area was expanded into a new Compre
for Mariestad, with the understanding that the waterfront project was, in fact,
issues concerning relations within the whole town and relational and relative ne
scale. The plan was managed as a research project run by AIM and Chalmers in col
municipality in order to further investigate key urban projects as a planning to

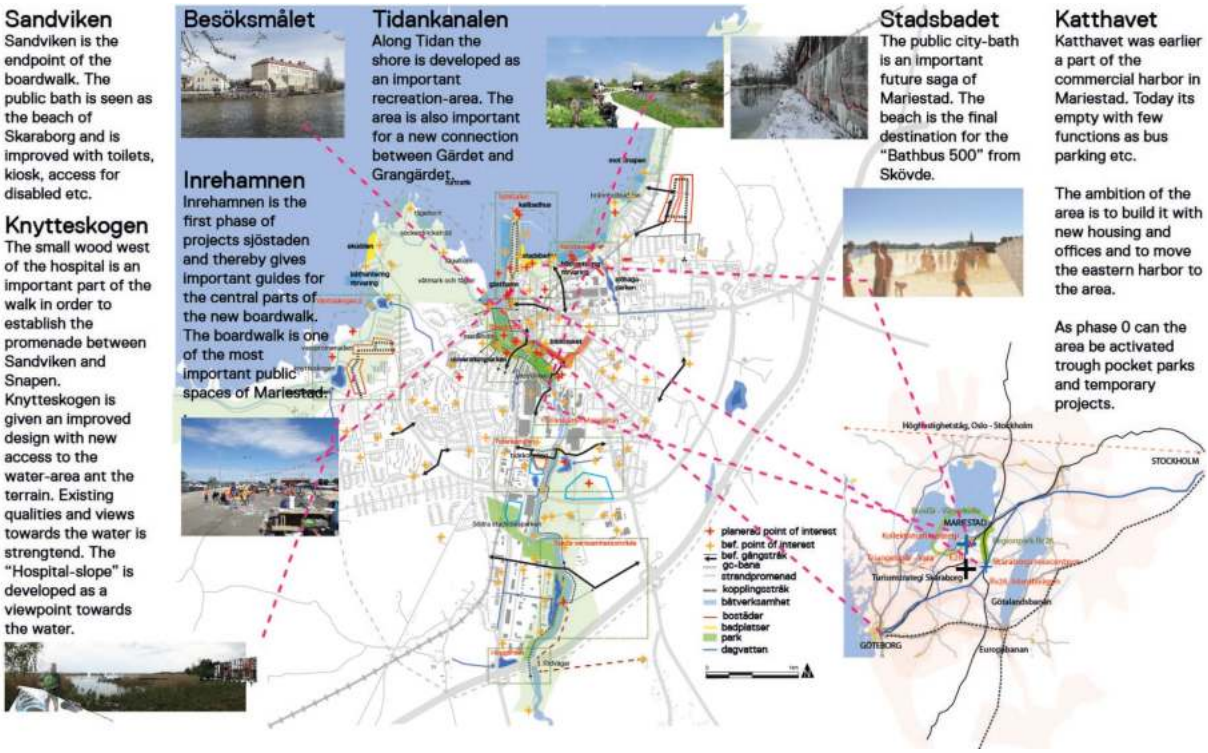


Figure 1: A strengthen public boardwalk is one of the main principles in the CP situation is overlaid by future alternatives key urban projects that link existi the promenade can be identified.

The CP continued as a transformation process that moved between different perspe
Consequently, maps representing absolute space were modified with additional lay
relational aspects. Alternative interpretations of the local and regional contex
translated into relative and relational networks. The infrastructural and topolo
modelled as future scenarios in local and regional scales, and additional progra
preparatory projects to reveal hidden potentials in the existing urbanised lands

reprogramming and reconfiguring process is a design process where temporary proj
contexts guide and move the planning process forward. When these articulated lay
mapped, key urban projects have been identified as intersections of issues of di
themes, and as a strategic mode of modelling with the potential to trigger trans
These intersections, or key points, have been investigated concerning relevant c
blockers, and by sorting, categorising and combining these aspects the key urban
further defined. The Mariestad project is ongoing and the next step is to start
the identified projects, in return providing the process with new conditions for
project development.

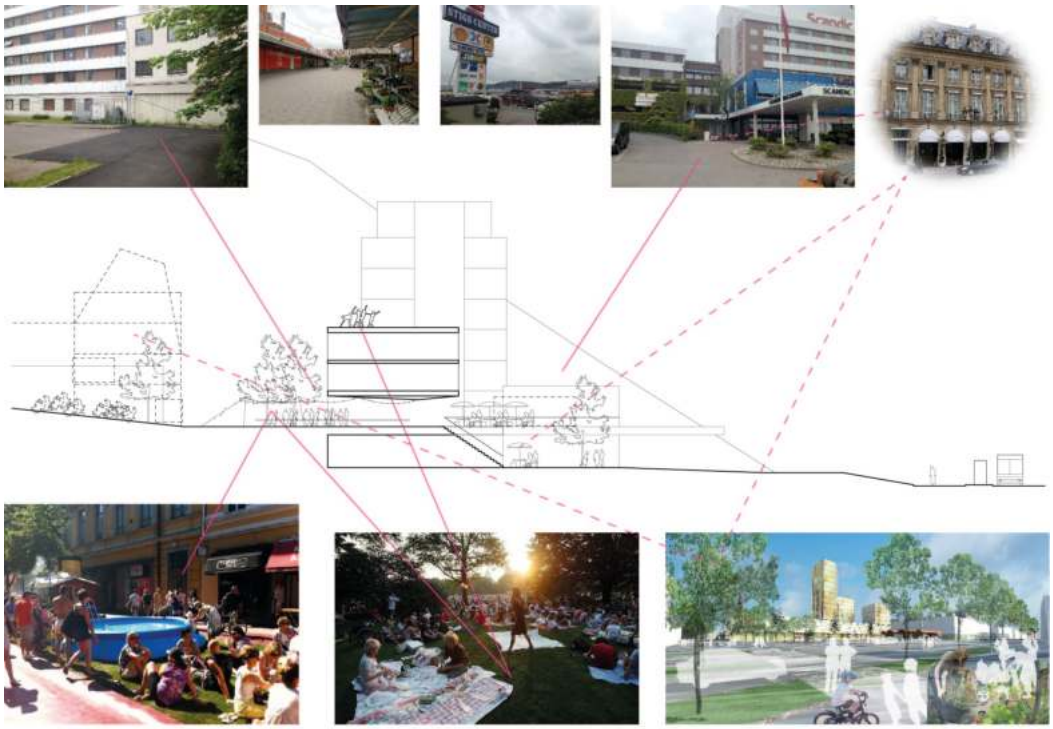
With small economic resources it is important for a municipality such as Mariest
effective and relevant strategies working with concrete aims and interventions.
relational change and densification of sense-making relations can be tools to in
exchange, break social and mental barriers and establish strategic linkages, thu
topographic network of streets and pathways, and the topographical network posit
connections between people.

Project 2: Selma, G teborg
Another example of a fragile urban landscape is the transformation of Selma Lage
the G ta ˜lv river valley in Gothenburg. The valley can be described as both par
interconnected systems of different urban ecologies. In collaboration with Noema
Mapping, AIM made an invited competition in 2011 about how to regenerate the are
square. The competition program presented the square as a problem area that coul
diverse mix-used urbanised landscape. This makes the area s current values, prog
fragile for future development. The proposal by AIM and Noema was presented as a
with its point of departure in the existing social situation, qualities and pote
tried to start processes of transformation and densification from local conditio
approach was to combine potentials from different urban ecologies into new possi
development by adding new functions and at the same time sustaining existing pro
ambition was to work with a stepwise densification of both buildings and new rel
feed into the overall revitalization process for the area.

Selma Lagerl f square is a local square surrounded by residential areas about 7 k
centre of Gothenburg. From a traditional perspective it relates to the city peri
the main motorway entrance from the north to Gothenburg (road E6), and thus the
places today, relates to double and complex center-periphery conditions. The highway
Stig Center, close to the square has a characteristic program with gas stations,
and workshops. So depending on scale, issue and perspective, the square and the
can be seen as nodes, either central or peripheral, as part of the local ecology
structure from the central city or as part of the regional ecology that connects
the regional network of Gothenburg. It is important to recognise this flexible i
understand the specific site conditions and potentials; depending on perspective
ecologies change the articulation and qualities of the topographic and topologic

These ecologies are in several ways interconnected but at the same time they are s
physical design of the urban landscape, a relationship in which Scandic Hotell
point (Figure 2). The hotel was built in 1971 as a motel including restaurant, b
station. Even if the building mainly served travelers from the motorway, it turn
entrance-zone towards both the regional and local ecology. However, since the se
been extended with rooms and parking and the entrance-zone has been redirected o
motorway, turning its backside to the residential areas with weak connections to
the same time the main entrance towards the motorway does not have a satisfactor

appearance of functions and programs connected to the regional ecology. With a s
wintergreen plants and a large cherry-tree it rather communicates an ambition to
metropolitan surrounding. By reworking the hotel area, its entrances and connect
link could be formed between local and regional, old and new structures.



Future memories
The regeneration process of Selma Lagerlöfs torg is important for creating a future saga about the local situation and create a will to reopen the closed fasade.

The narrow green space around the main entrance can then be delevop as a passage where a part of the parking-space is rebuild as a small workshop or office-space. maybe a barber? or a gym.

On the west side a small "silent" park can be a part of the open air café.

Temporary projects
As a project to create common memories the garage can be used for a street-dance festival to connect the hotel to the local dance-school.

Future context
When the area around Selma Lagerlöfs torg is regenerated new buildings will be added and old buildings replaced. New housing will give more people to the area and bring more activitities. But it is important that new additions are seen in relation to the two ecologies and that new buildings contain programs that support the relation between The square and the intersection, between Selma and Stig.

Figure 2: The passage from the local to the regional scale is re-open

This split situation has been the context for elaborating ideas about how the ec
different programs and functions can be connected in new ways in order to use th
potentials to deal with related urban issues. What we want to stress here is tha
transformation needs to build on different perspectives of centrality, grow as i
find key solutions, sometimes small interventions, that can unlock the conflictin

Several other projects have been conducted, also coordinated within the ongoing, Structural Image for the Skaraborg Region, conducted in collaboration with fifte municipalities and West Sweden at large, and for which Nils Bj rling is the proj means both an opportunity to upgrade the methodology development to a larger com challenge more extreme polarities between perspectives on centre and periphery (West Sweden's major city), and to test possibilities of local-regional effects o their potential capacities.

7. Results

Our results so far show that the capacities for key urban projects as an operativ fragile urban landscapes need to develop in coherent, flexible, adaptable, inven refined in accordance with urban ecologies, assemblages and multiple spatial und where design based thinking-making forms the basis for knowledge production. Mor planning processes, the key projects' capacity includes to:

(i) operate mappings processes (topographic, topologic and relational) to invest contemporary urbanised landscape as overlaid systems, model alternatives and inc diversity of perspectives on needs and opportunities; (ii) identify, analyse and processes that maintain, open or block conditions for urban formation; (iii) mak specific interventions that change the local position and function in networks, of meaning, and establish spatial relations between the urbanised landscape and Establish platforms for critical negotiations and set up dialogue to discuss dif long-term sustainable development; (v) Form co-operations that gather a diversity relevant actors, and combine available resourses, skills and mandates to secure

8. Discussion

To qualify as key urban projects, planned interventions need to trigger or open transformation process. This capacity depends on situation-specific qualities an but adapted to various contexts.

As described through the projects in Mariestad and G teborg, transforming the ph fragile urban landscape is often characterized by slow pace and lack of economic this landscape needs tools able to reveal keys that start or turn the direction qualities can be improved and combined in new ways.

In order to distinguish key urban projects within the planning process, mappings identifying relevant issues and relevant contexts (ecologies) and the constructi part of constituting the framework. To reveal what is relevant it is necessary t models that reach over and interact between scales, with assemblages simultaneou micro and macro-scale. This, in turn, can guide how the concepts of site and pla understood as a combination of all Harvey's spatial aspects. Such mappings can r conditions for, and significance of, a site, with its specific qualities and pos transformation. Further, key urban projects can be used to visualize implementat shown in the Mariestad case. In order to formulate future visions and aims, key been used to trigger critical negotiations and support decision making. So in order t urban projects they need to gain the capacity to transform both relative and rel reconfigure its own typology, question existing normative images of the urban, o Stig, connect urban ecologies challenging preconceived understandings of center

Through assemblage thinking, and with the complex urbanised landscape as articula
urban ecologies in mind, we may turn back to the critique of strategic planning,
introduction, of space as form rather than space as process. It is then clear th
some cases no longer make sense. Short term problem solving needs to be replaced
of normative identity. It is also important to work with the urbanised landscape
own site specific and regional networking capacities in order to develop long-te
resource efficient conditions and to expand the notion of what the urbanised lan

9. Concluding remarks

It is through the material reality that relative and relational aspects of space
play. The characteristics of these processes are an ongoing search for the relat
assemblages that reveal significant issues which, in return, may open up new fie
combinatory possibilities to develop. Here key urban projects can wedge in betwe
catalytic and proformative potential to transform urbanised landscapes by connec
revealing relative and relational qualities, visualising strategies and triggeri
mechanisms for implementation. This must always be accompanied by an awareness o
and unstable conditions in the understanding of the urbanised landscape. Deleuze
DeLanda's theories of assemblage and Guattari's and Banham's definitions of ecol
these compositions are never stronger than their relations. New knowledge and ch
always require that the whole assemblage is revalued. The relevant assemblage is
to identify key urban projects and a composition that helps to also reveal and d
the specific key urban project.

We argue that key urban projects, by taking on these active roles, can be used to streng
form strategies for incremental densification of sense-making networks in urbani
lack resources, skills and mandate to meet with current competitive modes of str
key urban projects are also developed as diagrammatic additions to change unde
de-coding of assemblages, they can also increase the capacity to change the me
relational networks and qualities, and to trigger synergy effects and produce ne
Through such understandings, sustainable strategies can be projected as guidelin
transformation and densification of fragile urban landscapes.

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