

Kysttunet

- a proposal on how visible marine activities can contribute to making the seafront more inclusive and active.

WHY

The border between land and sea holds special significance in Bergen's identity, harkening back to the time when Bryggen was a hub for events. Known as "Havbyen" (the city by the sea), Bergen's modern architecture along the seafront should strengthen this connection. Ensuring that Bergen's coastline remains accessible to everyone is paramount. The inclusion of both active and passive participation opportunities in the seafront programs will foster a sense of engagement and belonging. I believe that sail sports and marine hobbies can serve as social anchor points within the new seafront development.

Sailing and water sports often seem complex and inaccessible to many. Thus, it is essential to showcase the potential of sail sports and increase their visibility among people. Simultaneously, the residential areas along the seafront will benefit from a more diverse range of activities. Currently, many of Bergen's seafront housing projects appear privatized and fail to contribute to the accessibility of the city's coastline.¹ The rapid transformation from industrial areas to housing projects prompts us to question the pace of this change. By demonstrating how sail sports, despite being unfamiliar to some, can contribute to a more active and inclusive seafront, we can benefit both the sport and the development of Bergen's new coastline.

A large amount of the seafront housing projects in Bergen, it is hard to find other reasons for their location, other than the view and quick access to the water. In some of those cases you end up buying a piece of view without any other site-specific qualities. In the worst case they end up being monocultures for wealthy people with lack of diversity in both programs and people.

By mapping the visible water activity along the city fjord, it seems to be quite fragmented and something that is decreasing.

"Back in the days, harbor areas were the city's roughest areas. Now they are the most exclusive and groomed. A kind of everyday intermediate variant should be the clue going forward."

Sverre Bjerkeset

My personal interest in activities on the harbor and along the seafront drives my desire to examine these areas more closely. My background in sailsport and experience living on a sailboat in various marinas, inform my programmatic and conceptual understanding of waterfront development. How can we transform modern seafronts into places where people can actively participate, observe, and feel an interest to search for something?

¹ Since the 1980s, urban development has changed character from being publicly managed to being characterized by private projects. Public planning largely consists of setting the framework for private actors, where 80% of today's regulatory plans are privately initiated. What does this perspective have to say for what is currently emerging along the seafront?

WHAT/WHERE

This project aims to create an active hub for water sports and marine activities in the center of Bergen. Hegreneset, an extension of the seafront in Sandviken, is the next area up for development of new housing projects. But it should contain more than housing. Through the establishment of a sports center, sea bath, marina for houseboats and housing for students, a robust marine environment can flourish in the area and contribute in making watersports more inclusive and engaging. The project also touch upon the third housing sector in forms of marina for unconventional housing which can be a starting point for this sector, reinforcing the marine environment along the coast, particularly considering rising sea levels. Specific programs are necessary to establish a suitable sailing stations, including working halls, well-designed ramps with smooth transitions, wardrobes, and facilities used before and after sailing sessions. Additionally, other programs unrelated to the primary activity will contribute to the creation of a vibrant marine environment.

Hegreneset is known for its large silos and holds a rich marine history dating back to the Napoleonic War. Hegreneset is currently under development as a new housing area, aligning with the movement of transforming post-industrial zones into exclusive residential enclaves in Sandviken. The 70-year-old, 47-meter-high grain silo serves as a prominent landmark, visible from the south-facing Hegreneset that extends 300 meters into Byfjorden. Profier, the developer, has bought this large property on Hegreneset, the huge silo and a further 10,000 square meters of conservation-worthy buildings. In ten years, Hegreneset will be a destination and address for many hundreds who want to live in what will become a new modern seafront.

If the seafront should be a place where everyone wants to spend time, the activity and the programs have to mirror the diversity that we want.

HOW

Instead of transforming post industrial areas into exclusive housing projects, we should stick to keeping some of the activities that actually create a lively and active seafront for everyone and in relation to the ocean. The development of these areas and the sequence in which they are implemented are of utmost importance. Moreover, such developments must occur at a reasonable pace. The tempo for how the seafront changes, happens very fast and with a character that has a little scope for further changes. I believe it's important to recognize that certain areas should be left without permanent structures, allowing for future exploration and development. Striking a balance between new architectural additions and temporary installations can foster a dynamic environment of growth in the future. Inspired by the research from Sverre Bjerkeset and the theory that visible activities facilitate interaction ², I believe that sail sports and marine hobbies can serve as social anchor points within the new seafront development. Hegreneset should be a destination, planned on what we learned from the previous projects along the front of Sandviken.

² There are reasons why chance encounters between strangers hold significant importance both at an individual and societal level. Over the course of a distinguished career, Sennett underscored the value of impersonal interactions in public spaces. These encounters, often considered the essence of urbanity, have the power to foster personal growth. They allow individuals in urban environments to learn that "people can collaborate without the need to conform."