

Charrette & Urban Planning

Oslo, Norway
22nd – 26th January 2008

Background

"Regarding the London workshop, our collaboration partner (the Shoreditch Trust) has now definitely announced that they will not be able to run the planned Charrette workshop in London in February. We are all quite frustrated about this, and I am sure you are, too. As I mentioned we have backup plans of arranging a study tour in London and surroundings, or an alternative workshop site in Britain, but both events will take time to organise and will unfortunately not happen this winter. I hope we will be able to arrange something this spring / early summer, but I am not sure.

But suddenly we have opening for another workshop, with very much the same content as the one we had planned in London. Arne Sødal has on a very short notice gotten a project from a part of the city in Oslo to make some alternative plans for the harbour development in Oslo, through a Charette workshop. This is an excellent opportunity for the ESUA project, so we have on very short notice decided to make ESUA a partner in the Oslo Charette." E-mail Claus Zapffe

The original application

Four partners will collaborate on developing the curriculum module.

Based on the curriculum & training methodology hypothesis the WP 2 the partners will work out a proposal for a curriculum & training methodology module for their area of expertise, with respect to their experience and external input from users and related organisations. They will choose a well-defined element of that module to be translated into an intensive test short course and workshop..

The proposed methodology for WP 7 will be tested by involving local stakeholders in a urban planning process, with the aim of producing plans for the sustainable transformation and regeneration of a rundown social housing estate in London.

The method to be tested is "Enquiry by Design", a workshop where inhabitants and stakeholders take an active part in analysis, problem solving and actual design. The case study chosen could be Brixton, London, where some of the partners already are involved in a user-initiated transformation project of a social housing estate. In collaboration with a tenants association in Brixton, London, partners will arrange a test Enquiry by Design planning workshop. The test activity will aim at establishing consensus on plans for the sustainable development of a slab social housing estate in bad need of repair and regeneration to improve social and functional diversity. Relevant cooperating organisations on the test course and subsequent workshop would be owners, local tenant associations, social housing associations and local government. Prior to the workshop, participants will attend a short course on relevant methodology.

The aim of the Enquiry by design is to develop and test the WP methodology by establishing consensus among all parties (tenants, owners, local government and practitioners) on a proposal for sustainable urban regeneration.

The outcome of project will be presented at a public meeting in a local assembly hall. All participants and the general public attending the meeting will be invited to comment on the methodology and the outcome of the process. The results will also be exhibited and published locally.

The student and trainee liaison (WP 11) will be actively used to attract committed students from all over Europe to participate in the test activity. Representatives from affiliated organisations (both industry and academic) will be invited to give their input in the form of lectures, evaluation and criticism.

The end result of the workshop will be a test plan produced by urban designers, based on consensus and feedback from all or the majority of participants. The outcome of the workshop and feedback from participants will be the basis for a revision of the methodology and the draft curriculum proposal. INTBAU staff will illustrate the plan and produce a report for dissemination to participants and relevant local stakeholders immediately after the workshop. In the report INTBAU will take into consideration input and reactions collected from students, trainees and practitioners (see WP 11) as well as from industry partners, affiliated organisations, local authorities and NGOs.

Finally, the WP partners will adjust their curriculum and training methodology proposal in accordance with the input and criticism recorded.

The revised curriculum will be reported to INTBAU and presented at the final project conference in London, September 2008. The final curriculum module will be published, see also WP 10 Dissemination, to be freely used by European educational institutions.

The Oslo Test Course
ESUA Workshop Report 3:
Bjørvika charrette, Oslo.
21 - 26 January 2008.

Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to test how a group of students can be involved in a live planning charrette in order to learn to work as a team, in collaboration with public and local stakeholders, and in order to arrive at one collective proposal within a limited time-span.

Method

The workshop was arranged as part of an actual formal contract for a charrette with the local authority adjacent to Bjørvika development area.

The aim of this charrette was to produce plan for the urban development of the vacant harbour areas of Oslo East, which could be more adapted to the needs of the local population, compared to the current plan from the planning authority of Oslo.

A temporary planning office with a professional staff was set up locally, linked with student facilities enabling them to both work separately from the professionals, or being actively involved in the charrette process when required.

In parallel, the students were brought up to date with relevant knowledge through lectures which were also open to the charrette team and the public, thus spreading "gap knowledge" also outside the ESUA partnership.

Results

The results of the charrette where two-fold:

Official plan

This was presented by the professional team at a public meeting the last day and in a report produced one week after.

Student plan

The student outcome was presented as one collective plan at a closed meeting for a team of evaluators, and in reports produced by the students after returning to their universities.

The first plan had to be realistically adapted to political, economic and technical restraints, and was supervised by a committee of local representatives.

The second student plan was also given realistic constraints, but with a wider choice of urban solutions, allowing for a more visionary plan.

Conclusion

The Bjørvika workshop proved to be an optimal compromise, with student both having to conform 100% with delegated tasks as full members of a charrette team (as in Bran) and working theoretically in a separate group without the constraints and inputs from a live charrette.

The students achieved:

- Investigating a local area effectively over a short period.
- Assessing information through stake-holder and public meetings.
- Exploring a wide range of urban proposals, and through a negotiating process arriving at one collective solution.
- Presenting a solution within a limited timeframe.

The ESUA partners achieved:

- To test out educational efficiency by integrating teaching within a real charrette planning process, teaching students how to merge their individual proposals into one collective plan, and having them present it in a professional manner within the timeframe; confirming that combining teaching with a live charrette works well.

Programme:

January 19 - 20: Arrival Oslo

January 21: Jet-lag recovery, site visit for the charrette

January 22-26. Oslo Harbour charrette

January 27-28: ESUA curriculum workshop. Students and partner representatives.

January 29-30: Curriculum follow-up session, with Anders and you. (maybe held in Stockholm, returning to Oslo)

January 31- February 1: CEU Congress planning.

February 1, 2 or 3: Departure

List of participating partner representatives

Arne Sødal
Audun Engh
Claus Zapffe
Stefan Bortnowski
Cristian Blidariu
Smaranda Bica
Michael Mehaffy
Anders Söderling
Joanna Alimanestianu

Student Participants:

Pierre Bortnowski (Be)
Marko Brasovan (Ro)
Bogdan Isopescu (Ro)
Gabriel Nicoara (Ro)
Clara Piscoi (Ro)
Sergiu Sabau (Ro)
Alexandra Spiridon (Ro)
Paul Valeanu (Ro)

Workshop Results

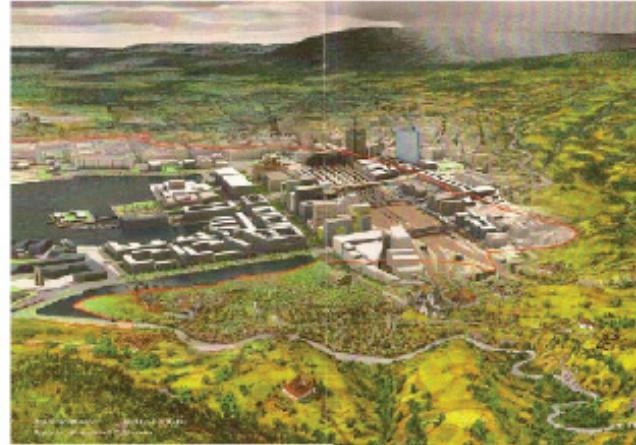
OSLO WORKSHOP: student's report



Workshop presentation

The Oslo workshop was the third one, after Bari and Bran, in the process of creating a curriculum for the ESUA program. It took place between the 20th and the 26th of january 2008.

The purpose was to gather foreign students to participate in the charrette regarding the Bjørvika harbour development and to give feedback and discuss, in a brainstorming session, the establishment of the ESUA future school program.

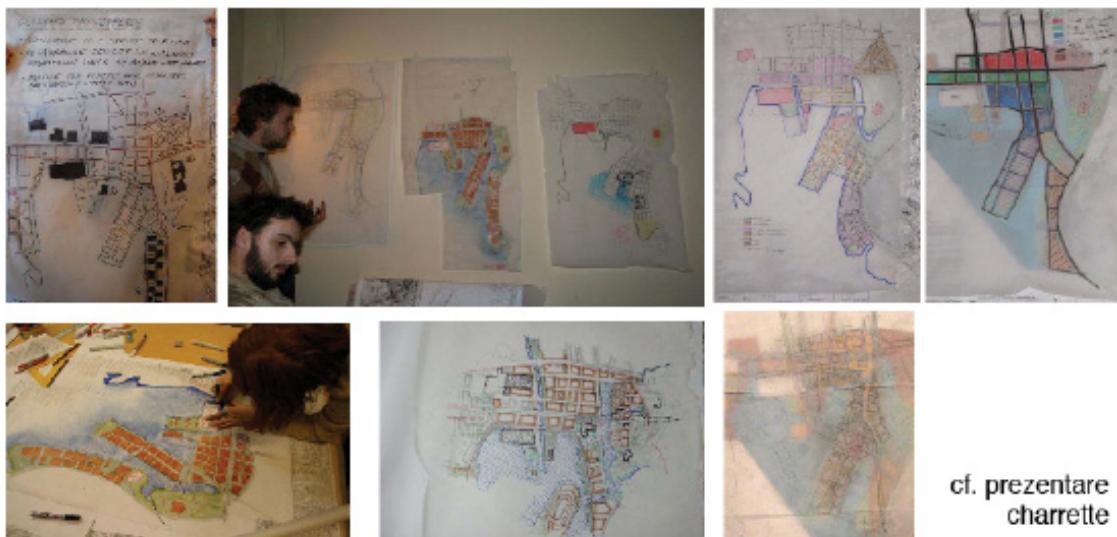


The students were:

Gabi Nicoara , Bogdan Isopescu, Clara Piscoi , Alexandra Spiridon, Sergiu Sabau, Marko Brasovan, Paul Valeanu, Pierre Bortnowski

The charrette:

The charrette proceeded alongside the official proposal for an out-of-the-box opinion about the Bjørvika harbour development and also as an educational process for us to get acquainted with how planning should be done and how a charrette is done at this level.



cf. presentare
charrette

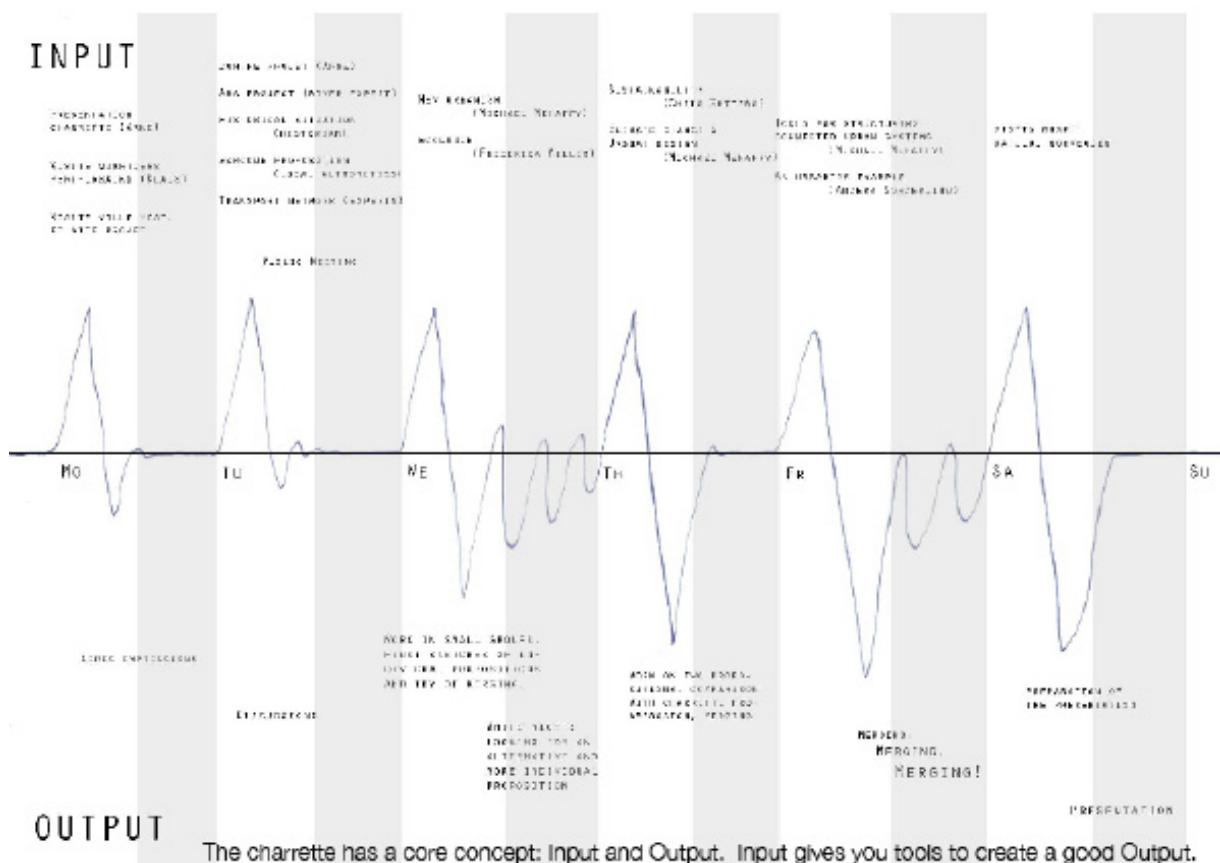
ESUA program

After the charrette, we were involved in the elaboration of the parameters for the future European School of Urbanism and Architecture.

The idea was to build upon the work and feedback gathered from the past three workshops and to set the guidelines for future activities of the program.



cf. curriculum, as proposed in Oslo



Practical skills



learning about the charrette, an input/output process. A charrette is a quick process, involving visits, collecting feedback from experts' lectures, community and local stakeholders (input) and merging the information into one complete solution to the problem the charrette was called in to solve (output).

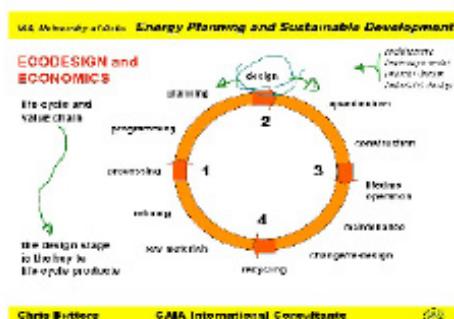


-teamworking: the optimal use of peoples skills



- understanding the existing context
(social environment, economical pressure of the developers, environmental factors, needs of the local people, logistical networks, relationship between built and empty spaces, and so on ...)

-drawing the proposals of urban spaces for the use of the community following one urban theory (New Urbanism) and using a drawing language quick to do and easy to understand without losing important information.



-about sustainability:

-for each building, we found out how to use sustainable technologies both for construction and subsequent use of the building (processing, design, lifetime operation and recycling).

building (processing, design, lifetime operation and recycling).
-for the city as a whole, creating communities that are involved in making their activities friendly to the environment and cost effective.

and cost effective.
Arnsteins Ladder, non participation of the citizens, degrees of tokenism, real citizen power.

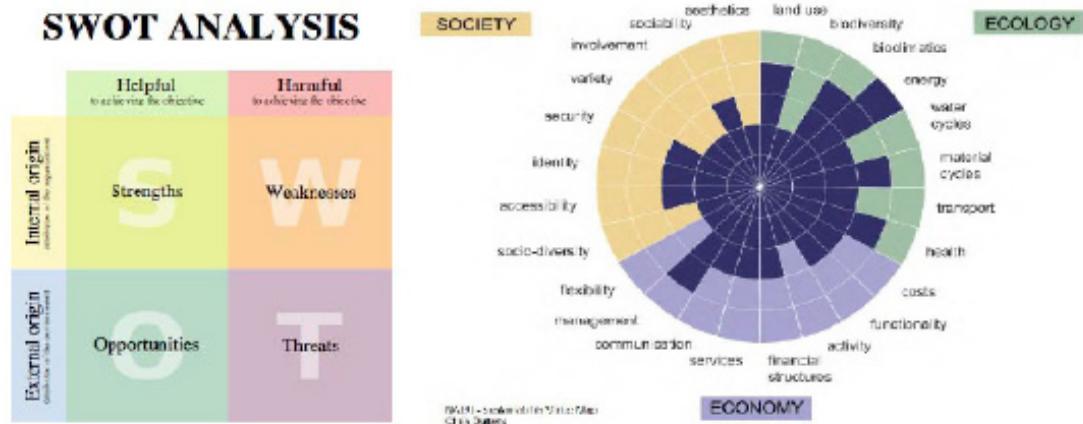


-merging the different solutions into one

Conclusion:
A good urbanist should be a specialised generalist

How to share...

The knowledge we acquired during the workshop seems enormous to us. It has been an unique experience to participate in such a big scale (and real) project. Since then, we have been preparing an exhibition to present to our colleagues what we have learned. In parallel, we shared tools and concepts we were taught of, such as the sustainability value measuring tool or the SWOT analysis. Of course, nothing can replace experience! That is what the ESUA project is all about.



2008 Oslo Workshop Journal



Monday 21.01.2008



The student charrette proceeded alongside the official proposals for an out-of-the-box opinion and also as an educational process for the students to get acquainted with how planning should be done and how a charrette at this level is done.

Students and foreign experts were on Monday introduced to the on-site situation with a walk around the site features of the charrette. There also was a tour that continued from St. Olavs hospital that introduced us to most of Oslo.



Meetings

Experts presentation

Students and charette participants listened to presentation of local experts in different fields.

River expert spoke about the *A-HA* concept where the three letters represent a river that passes through the charette site but have been covered by past developments in infrastructure. The concept desires that future developments in the area should uncover the rivers and the banks used as walkable green areas.

A historical perspective was given to us by a member of the Antiquity Association in Norway. It gave us an insight of the past memory of the old Oslo and how history was perceived by the citizens.

The wants of the local authority have been presented during a meeting with representatives of this administrative body. Their desires focused on the interconnectivity of the city and the fjord, the present infrastructure (highway and railroad tracks) and the planned building development is considered a barrier between the people and the fjord.

Transport network insight has been provided by an expert in that field. How the network works and what are the requirements of the system were observed in this meeting.

Public meeting

This meeting presented to the citizens the problems and solutions this charette wanted to amend. Different experts presented their views of the problem. Also during the meeting, a questionnaire was used to poll and probe the desires, comments and fears of the people concerning the charette site.



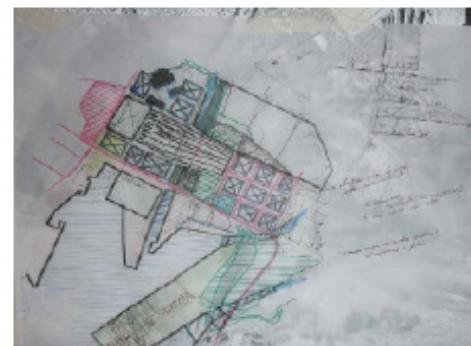
Design Session

Wednesday, the first large scale sketches have been done and discussed with the urbanists present at the charette. The 8 students were split into four teams and each came up with its own reinterpretation of the area in question. The ideas differed in urban fabric and in solution to different problems. The most important one, the height of the "barcode buildings", has been solved by trying to move them in the south-eastern part of the fjord, but with a question if this area will work if not properly connected. Also the coastline of the fjord was solved in different ways (as seen in the pictures below).



Wednesday 23.01.20

Design Session



Wednesday 23.01.2008

Conferences

Michael Mehaffy – New challenges of New Urbanism

The conference was about how the New Urbanism movement is growing its tools into bringing "urbanism" back into cities. From troubles with segregation to how the street pattern has to be connected.

Frederika Miller – Sustainability in urbanism

The issues of global warming and CO2 reduction has been a new incentive to develop or bring back ideas in planning and design to create new no emission cities. Some of the topics were about the "good" placement of buildings and spaces to get the best efficiency and comfort. To different ways in which you can cut down on emissions and improve health. But for this practices to work it is required to integrate the inhabitants in the process so they can make conscious decisions.



Thursday 24.01.20

Design Session

By the end of the day there were three proposals to discuss about. Two student proposals and the official one at that time. There were two student proposals, one trying to use the space occupied by the medieval coastline for better communication with the sea and the other trying to use the coastline in the planning, among other differences. The final proposal tried to merge the better points of the three into one.



Thursday 24.01.2008

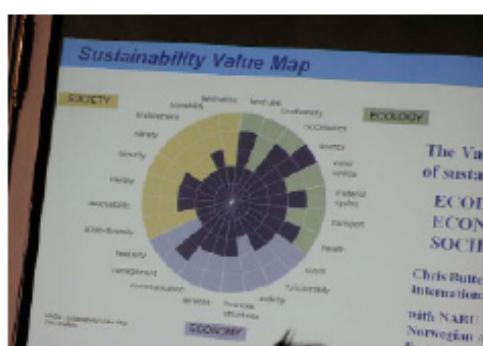
Conferences

Chris Butters - Sustainable architecture and planning

This conference came as continuation of the previous one. The interdependencies, connection and cooperation between the different players involved in shaping present and new neighbourhoods. The optimal design is where the three spheres ('oikonomia', social, ecological) meet and interlace.

Michael Mehaffy - Climate change and urban design

It was a conference about which tools new urbanists use to design ecological buildings. In particular, the system and point based checklists that evaluate the ecological potential of different buildings.



Friday 25.01.2008

Design Session

The final proposal uses the original medieval coast line and makes a connection between the train station and old town. It creates urban spaces within the street fabric, defines new neighbourhood based on a medieval inspired urban pattern, tries to connect the two south-eastern land pieces.



Friday 25.01.2008

Conferences

Michael Mehaffy - Tools for structuring connected urban system.

The conference highlighted the main ways to connect spaces. And the possibility to create in a controlled environment streets that have a higher degree of circulation or less, but not create any "dead" spaces. Types of useful codes (volume interaction, performance, transect), the mining and use of material for the codes and the application.

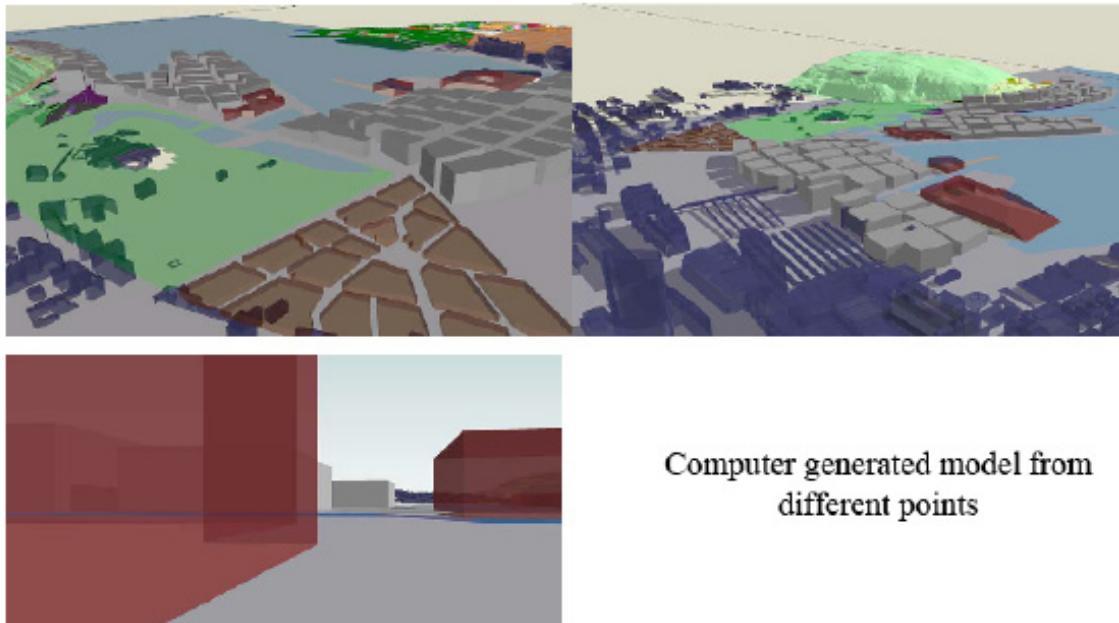
Jerker Sörderlind - An example of urbanism

An example from Stockholm was presented to us showing how different procedures can create a pleasant urban context for the inhabitants. How form and placement has influence. And how pluralism in styles and decisions can create a diverse and always amazing landscape of architecture, design and lifestyle.



Saturday 25.01.200

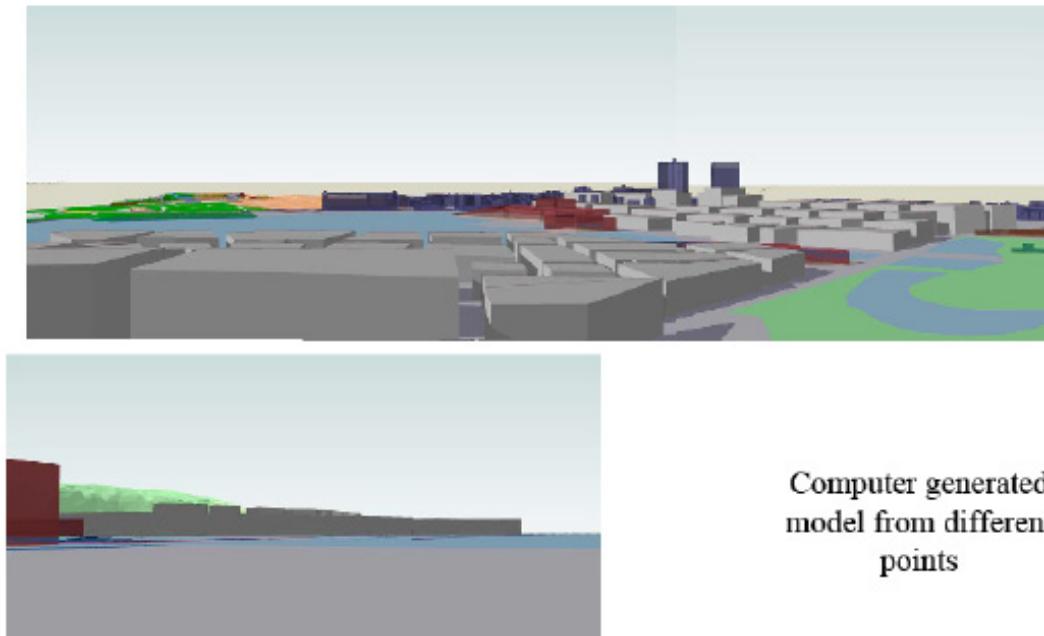
Design Sessions - Saturday



Computer generated model from
different points

Saturday 25.01.200

Design Sessions - Saturday



Computer generated
model from different
points