

Design Developer Competitions in Härryda - From Programming to Implementation

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Abstract

This study examines three design developer competitions organized by Härryda Municipality in 2015, 2017 and 2018. The competitions aimed at new housing. The investigation of the competition processes is part of a research project developed in 2020 in collaboration with the municipality.

The design developer competition is a type of competition that emerged in Sweden during the deregulation of the building sector in the 1980s. Since then, the number of these competitions has grown and is now more common in Sweden than the traditional architectural competition. However, there are still no national rules. Instead, the design developer competition is regulated locally in municipalities through political guidelines and professional competition programs.

This investigation of competition processes in Härryda Municipality is based on a close reading of documents, study visits and interviews with a limited number of key players. The intention is to describe, review and comment on the planning, steering and implementation of the winning design.

The research issues have a fundamental nature. They include the process from local guidelines to programming, design and judging of proposals to implementation. Härryda Municipality has a strong position in this type of competition and may safeguard qualities in architecture as organizer, landowner and planning authority by designing detailed development plans and checking building permits.

The results of the study have been summarized in six conclusions that discuss the transformation of guidelines into design, planning and programming, design proposals, judging model and the organizers' use of steering tools.

Keywords:

Design Developer Competition, Housing, Programming, Judging Model.

The first conclusion is that the politicians' overarching target for the housing guidelines has been steering the requirements on forms of tenure and presentation of housing costs in the competition programs. From this point of view, the competitions seem to be an effective political tool for housing in a local context providing diversity.

Introduction

This study concerns three design developer competitions organized by Härryda Municipality. The competitions were executed in 2015, 2017 and 2018. The competition programs vary in precision and scope. The review of the competition processes is part of a research project developed in 2020 in collaboration with the municipality. The competitions have been discussed at a seminar as part of the work of developing a research application. The municipality contributed to the seminar through politicians and officials from the Department of Planning and Community Development.

Design developer competitions are a type of competition that appeared in Sweden and Finland during the deregulations of the building sector during the 1980s (Östman, 2014). There are no national competition rules. The regulation is carried out locally in the municipalities in four typical ways (Rönn, 2019). Firstly, the competition is influenced politically on a general level by guidelines on housing, etc. Secondly, by specific political regulation on the allocation of municipality-owned land to developers. Thirdly, professionally through officials who design competition programs that describe the task, aim, the submission requirements and criteria for the judgment of the proposals. Fourthly, administratively through agreements with developers that regulate the implementation of the winning proposals. These characteristics are found in the examined competitions that were arranged by Härryda Municipality.

The design developer competition has three key players: the organizer, the design teams and the jury. It is the municipality that as an organizer is responsible for the competition program and appoints jury members. The competition program presents the competition task, the assessment criteria and the terms which the accepted proposal must fulfil. The jury's task is to assess the competition proposals, rank the solutions and recommend a winner. The competition proposals are produced by design teams that consist of architectural firms and developers (construction and real estate companies). The relationship between the companies in the design teams varies. There are normally no prizes (financial compensation) in design developer competitions for the submission of proposals. This is the case for the competitions in Härryda. The developer produces proposals at their own expense. Architects contribute by working extra time hoping for assignments. The profit lies in the access to buildable sites for the developer, along with the exclusive right to negotiate the execution of the project.

The first known study of design developer competitions in Sweden is from the end of the 1980s (Hansson, 1988). Since then, the number of competitions has expanded and is now much more common than the classical architectural competition. Common competition rules and uniform language use is, however, still lacking.¹ In the municipalities' land allocation policy, the competition is viewed as a method for the distribution of land for the building of housing.

In the 2020 survey by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, 79 municipalities answered that they allocate land to developers following price and qualities in competitions.² 41 municipalities use only quality as the basis for the choice of winner. By presenting the price in the competition programs, the municipality wants the proposal givers to compete with good solutions to the competition task, and not with marked, adapted bids for the land. 159 municipalities used direct procurements by developers without competing bids on the plots.

Despite the prevalence of the design developer competition, the research in the area is minor, which is surprising considering that the municipality can control the planning process and steer the design of housing as a) planning authority, b) landowner and c) competition organizer. In the role of organizer, the municipality

determines the competition task, appoints the jury and selects the first-prize winner. As administrative authority, the municipality is responsible both for the regulation of the competition plot and the review of architectural drawings in connection to building permits. As landowner, the municipality regulates the execution of the winning proposal in a contract with the developer. Instead of studying the competitions as an architectural product, the research has treated the municipalities' allocation of land as economy, law issues, procurement, building and municipal politics.³ There are therefore large knowledge gaps when this type of competition is viewed as a tool for the design of housing, which becomes particularly clear in comparison to the architectural competition (Rönn, 2012).

International research presents both risks, opportunities and experiences of the new competition form. Herbert Liske (2008) presents experiences from design developer competitions in Vienna. He notes that the competitions may promote innovation by bringing together architecture, economy and ecology. Architects in the Netherlands on the other hand express great concern in a report that compares the procurement of architectural services in Europe. Véronique Biau notes that *"it is the growth of developer competitions for building of public amenities organized by local authorities that most worries Dutch architects"* (Biau, 2002, p. 124). According to the critique, commissions have been distributed without insight and transparency, with "local nepotism" as the result. This risk, however, seems to be larger in direct procurements, compared to publicly announced competitions. Municipalities that present competition programs, design proposals and jury statements make themselves verifiable, which should contribute to fair and credible decisions. Lampel et al. (2012, p. 76) remind us of the fundamental principles for a just competition process: *"At the heart of the competition is the assurance to participants that all performances will be judged impartially, without allowing competitors' previous reputations or economic clout to influence assessment. This means creating a governance structure where rules are fair and unambiguous, and communicating this governance structure as clearly as possible."*

Theory and Method

This is a case-study. The objective is to examine three competitions as cases in their natural context (Groat and Wang, 2012). The case-study's closeness to practice eases experience feedback. Bent Flyvberg (2006) argues that the case-study as a scientific method is useful for the development of theories, to test assumptions and to present informative stories. The method is thus suitable when the studies of competition processes are transformed into detailed descriptions.

Data Collection

Knowledge of the competitions is mediated through the collection of several different types of data such as documents, study visits and four follow-up interviews with representatives of the organizer, one developer and two architects' offices. Härryda Municipality has contributed with detailed development plans, competition documents and contracts for land transfer. The documents have been analyzed through close reading. Supplementary data has been collected from the websites of the municipality, developers and architects' offices. Data that informs of the competition proposals as built environments have been reviewed through visits to the sites. To see the new housing first-hand in their natural context gives ground for architectural assessment and experience-based reflections on the competition processes.

Aim and Research Questions

The aim is to present, review and comment on the planning and execution of the chosen design developer competitions. The study assumes the organizer's perspective. The questions lift the process from conversion of political guidelines to the implementation of the winning proposals:

- Which policy instruments do the municipality use in the competitions?

- How does the competition relate to the municipality's housing and political goals?
- How is the competition task described in the competition programs?
- How are the proposals presented, evaluated and ranked?
- Which type of assessment criteria are used?
- How well has the competition been used as a tool by the organizer for transforming objectives into successful design and built environments?

The research questions have resulted in six conclusions that are discussed in a final section of the paper.

Disposition

Five appendices containing statements from juries and visualized data from the competitions are attached at the end of the paper. They are placed here for practical reasons. Four appendices show the detailed plans of the competition sites and key illustrations from the winning design proposals. The presentations vary a lot in both scope and degree of detail. The fifth appendix shows how juries point out the winning design.

The study is initiated with an overarching description of the politically approved guidelines for planning and housing development in Härryda. For the practical execution of the regulatory documents in the competitions, the officials are responsible. They are supposed to implement and transform the political guidelines into actions. The basic model for the municipality's steering of housing construction through design developer competitions can be summarized in this way:

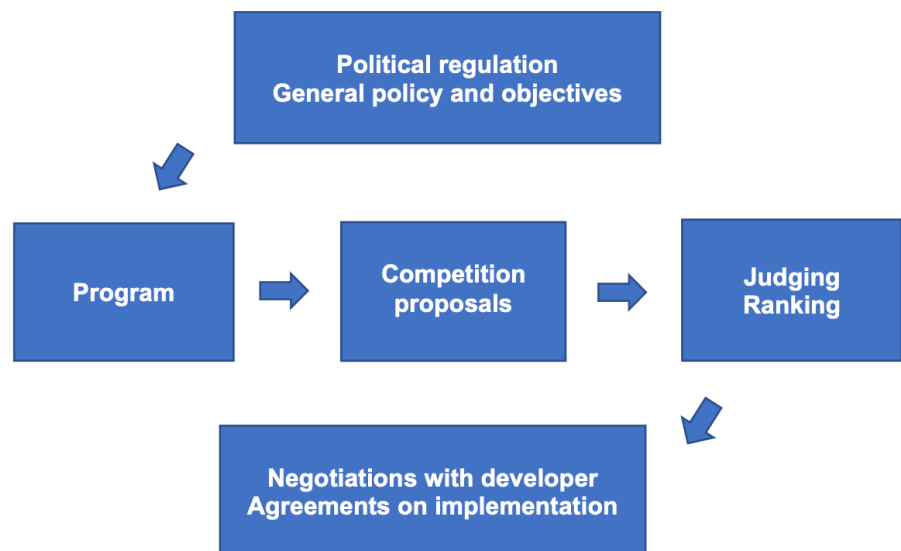


Figure 1. Planning and execution of design developer competitions in Härryda Municipality.

Municipal Guidelines

Härryda Municipality is part of the Gothenburg Region with 38,000 citizens. The building of housing is regulated in two documents: *The Housing Sustainment Program* (Bostadsförsörjningsprogrammet) and *Guidelines for Land Allocation* (Riktlinjer för markanvisningar) based on the law (SFS, 2014:899). There is also a plan for Agenda 2030. The land allocation policy is a document of six pages that can be relinquished "in individual cases" (Guidelines for Land Allocation, p. 3). The municipality uses two methods when transferring land to builders: direct allocation and competition procedure, respectively. The competition is to be prioritized. "Several actors are to be given the opportunity to submit interest and

participate in a selection process" (ibid p. 4). The municipality's land is to be sold at market price with support from an external valuer.

The Guidelines for Land Allocation has no clear description of the competition. On the municipality's website, it is briefly stated that competitions are used "*for the execution of larger projects.*"⁴ In the cases where the competition is executed on plots that are part of a detailed development plan, the land regulation is to be broad and not too restrictive. Consequently, the reviewed detailed development plans lack clear requirements for the architectural design.

The Housing Sustainment Program describes the aim for the building of housing within the municipality. According to the update from 2019, a yearly population growth of at least 1.5% is expected. To meet immigration, housing is to be built both in population centers and in the countryside. Diversity is to be favored by building housing with a mix of forms of tenure: rented housing, tenant owned apartment and proprietorship.

According to *Strategic Plan Agenda 2030*, the municipality is to "*be a frontrunner in the matter of environmental and climate work in the short and long-term*" (p. 8). In this document, the municipality requests fresh ideas, innovation and an increased level of ambition in the work with sustainable development. "*New work procedure is needed to create innovative solutions, to push for a community planning with fresh ideas and create attractive communities*" (ibid, p. 8). These are the aims, which to a varying degree reoccur in the competition programs.

Case 1. Competition for New Housing in Mölnlycke

The Detailed Development Plan

In 2014, a detailed development plan for a new built environment in Mölnlycke was passed. In the comprehensive plan, the land is marked as an expansion area. The purpose of the detailed development plan is to construct new roads as a foundation for exploitation for housing and business. According to the detailed development plan, the area is suitable for accommodation of around 60, housed in row houses and apartment buildings. As a complement to the legal regulation of the land, an illustration that shows how the area can be developed is included in the detailed development plan. There are no detailed preconditions for the design. The detailed development plan therefore appears flexible and only informs which parts of the area are reserved for nature, park, housing and business premises (Detaljplan för del av Hönekulle 1:3) (Detailed Development Plan for part of Hönekulle 1:3). See Appendix 1.

The Competition Program

In 2015, the municipality presented an open design developer competition for housing in the planning area in Mölnlycke. The program comprises 16 pages. The exploitation of the land has been increased to accommodation for 130, with three forms of tenure: 80 rentals, 40 tenant owned apartments and a maximum of ten row houses with proprietorship. The municipality's architectural intentions are formulated as a wish "*to create unique built environments with their own character... in a bold form-language,*" and that "*façade, material and coloration is to be well thought-out*" (Program, p. 2). The goal is to create "*attractive and affordable housing*" near workplaces, schools and nature with good communications (ibid, p. 3). To emphasize this intention for architectural quality, it is stated in the program that a tastefully placed, built environment is more important than heavy exploitation of the site.

The municipality sees the design and quality of housing as a question for the market. "*It is up to the developer to determine the size and composition of the apartments*" (ibid, p. 7). But the proposal is to contain apartments from 1.5 rooms

and a kitchen to 4 rooms and kitchen as well as apartments with 1.5 rooms and kitchen of simple standard and extra-low rental. 13 apartments are to be rented to the municipality as accommodation for disabled people and refugees. The price of the land for rented housing is 1,130 SEK per sq.m./GFA (gross floor area). The land price for tenant owned apartments is 3,000 SEK per sq.m./GFA and the price for land for the row houses with proprietorship comes to 700,000 SEK/plot.

Submission Requirements

The competition proposal must contain the following documents:

- Site layout plan at a scale of 1:500 with ground-plan
- Colored perspective and images/sketches of the environment
- Drawings/sketches of row houses and apartments with plan and façade at a scale of 1:100
- General room descriptions
- Presentation of rental levels and selling prices
- Presentation of a long-term custodian and the rented housing properties

Criteria and Assessment of the Competition Proposals

In the competition program, it is clearly stated that the competition proposals will be evaluated by a group of officials from the municipality's section for Planning and Community Development. There is no detailed information of the professionals'. The proposals are to be evaluated on three main criteria, which in turn are divided into four sub-aspects and weighted in percent:

- Architectural Whole, 40%
Sub-aspects: a) The proposal's architectural cohesion (50%), including creativity and fresh ideas that contribute particular character to the area, b) The houses' adaptation to the plot and landscape (30%), c) Soil treatment (10%) and d) Meeting space/playground (10%).
- Design, 30%
Sub-aspects: The design of the houses (40%), including façade, color and details, b) Floor plan of the apartments (20%), c) Number of 1.5 room and kitchen apartments of normal standard (20%) d) Number of 1.5 room and kitchen apartments with simple standard and lower rent (20%).
- Economy, 30%
Sub-aspects: a) The economic executability of the project (40%), including the municipality's experience with the companies as a whole and eventual collection of references, b) Rental level (30%) for housing and (c) selling price (20%) for apartments in cooperative housing, in both cases including heating and water for the apartments as well as the ability of the landlord to manage the property in the long-term for tenancy apartments, d) selling price (10%), for privately owned housing.

Winner

The competition generates ten proposals, mainly from local and regional companies. The winning proposal is given 54 out of 60 points in the assessment. Architectural qualities are evaluated by a collective judgement by the jury (Appendix 5). The design team behind the proposal consists of two Gothenburg companies: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter. Tornstaden is a construction and property company with a main office in the city; they have a steering role in the design team and had contacted the architects for the task. The proposal is presented in 16 posters of A3 size that describe the design through illustrations, architectural drawings, diagrams, inspirational images and text. It is a presentation method that is typical of competitions in architectural and urban planning. Tornstaden's tender also includes reference housing projects and supplementary information,

such as technical information about the construction, management of the properties and the company's financial status.

The proposal from the design team contains 118 dwellings in three apartment buildings and nine row houses. The apartment buildings have an angled design with the aim of providing an increased access to the sun from the south. The buildings have white plastered façades with touches of wood at the windows, balconies and exterior corridors, painted in an orange color. The roofs are dressed in sedum. The yard has fruit trees and room for grilling and cultivation (Tornstaden 2015-05-04). See Appendix 2.

The competition proposal has 20 small apartments of 35 sq.m., with 1.5 rooms and a kitchen. Ten of these apartments have a simple standard and a rent of 1,337 SEK per sq.m./year.⁵ The developer explains the low rent through simpler surfaces, washing machines in the kitchens (no access to a laundry room), storage only in the apartments (no external storage space), patios in the yards (no balconies) and that the apartments have not been encumbered with parking spaces.

Implementation

According to the contract of land transfer, Tornstaden is to build the housing in accordance with the competition proposal and the submitted building permit. The land, which in the detailed development plan is reserved for residential purposes, the builder can buy for 15,424,800 SEK. For land that is used for rented housing, Tornstaden pays 1,150 SEK per sq.m./GFA. On land used to build tenant owned apartments, the builder pays 3,000 SEK per sq.m./GFA. For the row house sites, the price is 7,000,000 SEK per proprietorship, including sewage charge and street cost (Land transfer contract, no. 8-2016).

The rental level in the contract is the same as in the competition proposal. The selling price for the tenant owned apartments is estimated at 22,000-24,000 SEK per sq.m. with a charge (rent) to the tenant owner's association of 650 SEK per month. The selling price for the row houses with proprietorship is calculated as 3,900,000 SEK. The requirement for long-term tenure of the rented housings has in the contract been transformed into a prohibition against the selling of the properties for ten years without the municipality's approval.



Figure 2. The winning proposal.
Design team: Tornstaden and T+E
Arkitekter.
Photo: Magnus Rönn, 2021.

Case 2. Competition for New Housing in Björkelid

The Detailed Development Plan

In 2017, the municipality presents a detailed development plan for Björkelid at a site located in Rävlanda. The aim is to make exploitation possible in the community of about 60 dwellings in apartment buildings and small houses. According to the detailed development plan, the use of the land is to be *“as flexible as possible within the set framework, and the built environment’s final design tested according to the regulations of the plan at a later stage: the land allocation and building permit”* (Detailed development plan, p. 4). Following opinions from citizens in Rävlanda in the joint consultation, rules for the height of the buildings and the angle of the roofs are added to the detailed development plan. The scale of the intended housing is reduced to a maximum of three floors with the possibility of furnished attics.

The land is located in connection to a valley, which has been classified as a valuable landscape with high natural qualities. Large parts of the area are covered by shoreline protection. To make the land available for exploitation, new roads need to be constructed at the site. The municipality therefore applies for an exemption to the shoreline protection for parts of the plan area. For the rest of the land, the prohibition against exploitation remains in the detailed development plan. See Appendix 1.

The Competition Program

In 2017, the municipality presented a brief and simplified competition program of three pages for an open, design developer competition for new housing in Rävlanda. According to the program, there is room for 40-60 dwellings in apartment buildings and row houses on two separate plots. The housing is to include both rented housing, tenant owned apartments and proprietorship. It is up to the builder to suggest the composition of housing, but there are to be both small and large apartments (1-5 rooms and a kitchen). The proposal is to contain at least 20 apartments for rented housing and at least 20 apartments for tenant owned apartments. Row houses are to be built as proprietorships.

The apartment buildings are to have communal spaces for social contact, hobbies and recreation. The dwellings are to be architecturally adapted to the location and designed with a unique character. The presented rental levels and selling prices in the proposal are binding for the builder and are to be regulated in the municipality’s contract of land transfer.

The land is to be transferred to the winner according to the following economic conditions. The land price for rent housing is 550 SEK per sq.m./GFA. The price for tenant owned apartments is 1,100 SEK per sq.m./GFA. The price for row house plots is 200,000 SEK per plot. Additional street costs are calculated to 4,700,000 SEK. The rearrangement of water and sewage pipes is calculated to 1,100,000 SEK.

Submission Requirements

The following documents and presentations are to be a part of the competition proposal:

- Presentation of the work for a sustainable community development in the area.
- Comprehensive plan for land allocation, plantations and the arrangement of the surrounding area within the property borders.
- House types (character, number of floors, roof and façade material as well as shape).

- Number, approximate size and composition of apartments.
- Storage and parking/carports.
- Foundation, framework.
- Long-term management of the rented housing properties.
- Selling prices and annual rent levels as SEK/sq.m. (including water and heating).
- Potential additional qualities of the neighborhood.

The competition proposals are to be presented anonymously to the politicians in the Municipal Executive Board. The housing project is to be described under the three following headings: (1) house types (tenant owned apartments, rented housing, row houses), (2) potential additional qualities in the neighborhood, as well as (3) how the proposal wants to work with sustainable community building in the area. For the ranking of the proposals, the officials at the section for Planning and Community Development are responsible.

Judging criteria

The assessment foundation in the competition is:

- Comprehensive plan (adaptation to the neighborhood), 20%.
- House types (design and adaptation to the neighborhood), 10%.
- Additional qualities for the neighborhood (creativity and fresh ideas are favored), 10%.
- Sustainable community development (creativity and fresh ideas are favored), 10%.
- Number of dwellings (higher number is highly ranked), 30%.
- Price (rent with water and heating and selling price to the customer), 20%.

Winner

The competition attracts five housing projects. Four local and regional developers submit proposals. Behind the fifth proposal is a large Nordic housing developer. The winner is awarded 8.1 out of 10 points in the assessment.⁶ The jury highlights both the low price for housing and high architectural ambition (Appendix 5). The winning proposal has been submitted by Strand, which is a local developer. The architects are made invisible. A review of the company's webpage shows that Tengbom Arkitekter is responsible for the design.⁷ This is a large consulting company with eleven offices in Sweden and Finland. There are no architectural drawings in the proposal. The presentation deviates from the traditional way of visualizing architecture in competitions. Instead of posters with drawings and illustrations, the proposal is presented in a simplified way in text, inspirational images, reference projects and a situation plan.

Strand has the intention to build apartment buildings and row houses. The housing project includes six apartment buildings with 72 apartments for rent and tenant ownership (Nya Björkelid, Strand 2017-01-16). The average rent level in the proposal is 1,430 SEK per sq.m./year. It gives the dwellings affordable rents. The selling price for the tenant owned apartments is 21,000 SEK per sq.m. with a fee for heating and water of 650 SEK per sq.m. The row house contains 9 accommodations with proprietorship, estimated to cost 2,950,000 SEK, which corresponds to 25,000 SEK per sq.m.

The apartment buildings are to be built in wood, have three stories and gabled roofs. The reference images show façades in wood with parts painted in gray, black, white and red colors. The entryways and balconies are to be detailed. That the dwellings are built in wood is motivated by the material's renewable quality. As additional qualities to the neighborhood, an overnight-apartment, communal room, green areas with plantations, playgrounds, cultivation plots and extended

recycling are referred to. The row houses are to be built in two floors with a mono-pitched roof in a white color with sections of oiled wood. See Appendix 3.

Implementation

The implementation of the winning proposal is regulated in two contracts from 2018. According to the contract on land transfer, the municipality sells the land to the builder for 6,650,450 SEK. The selling price for the rented housing amounts to 550 SEK per sq.m./GFA. The land for the tenant owned apartments is transferred to the builder for 11,000 SEK per sq.m./GFA. The purchase price for the row houses is 1,800,000 SEK. The division of forms of tenure has later been changed somewhat in the contract, compared to the competition proposal. All the apartments become rented housing. Otherwise, the rental levels and selling prices are regulated in accordance with the winning proposal. The developer is contracted to follow the comments from the assessment of the proposal. Application for a building permit is to occur in consultation with the municipality's town architect. The proposal is supplemented with charging stations for electric cars as an additional quality (Genomförandeavtal nr 81-2018) (Execution contract) and Marköverlåtelseavtal nr 80-2018 (Land transfer contract).



Figure 3. The winning proposal implemented as housing architecture. Design team: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter. Photo: Magnus Rönn, 2021.

Case 3. New Housing in Landvetters-Backa

Detailed Development Plan

In 2015, the municipality presents a detailed development plan for an expansion of Landvetters-Backa. The planning area is an area of detached houses and weekend cottages that have been gradually transformed into year-round dwellings. Through the detailed development plan, the municipality wants to create an infrastructure in the neighborhood with water and sewage plants, roads and a main street, which make it possible for an expansion with a school and dwellings. According to the detailed development plan, the neighborhood can be densified with around 100 dwellings in apartment buildings, row houses and detached houses (Detaljplan för del av Landvetters-Backa 1:4) (Detailed development plan for part of Landvetters-Backa 1:4). See Appendix 1.

To ease the exploitation, the municipality intends to revoke the shoreline protection in parts of the planning area. The need for a school and housing weighs heavier than the shoreline protection. According to the detailed development plan, a stonewall has to be dismantled because of the exploitation. The County Administrative Board grants exemption with the condition that the stonewall is to be rebuilt in the same location *“with well-laid stonework to the original height, breadth and appearance”* (The County Administrative Board, decision 2016-05-05). For land, which in the detailed development plan is to be used for the building

of dwellings, the use is flexible; the regulation only covers roof angles, the degree of exploitation and the access to sunlight. At least half of all accommodation rooms are to be oriented toward the south.

The Competition Program

In 2018, the municipality invites an open design developer competition. The competition program describes the task in 11 pages. The purpose is to supplement the neighborhood with at least 40 new, rented dwellings of 1-4 rooms and a kitchen. The design is to be permeated by a high ambition level. *“The design of the houses/scale, color, shape and material, adaptation to terrain and the neighborhood’s qualities is important. Care for the yard environment and how the neighborhood is experienced from surrounding streets are of importance”* (ibid, p. 8). According to the competition program, the price of the land for the planned rented housing house is 2,000 SEK per sq.m./GFA.

Submission Requirement

The following documents are to be a part of the competition proposal according to the program:

- Presentation of the Competition Proposals:
 - Summarizing text with the proposal’s bearing ideas.
 - Information about types of houses, framework, foundation as well as façade and roof material.
 - Presentation of apartments and apartment sizes. The project has to comprise at least 40 apartments of 1-4 rooms and a kitchen.
 - A description of how the proposal will work with sustainable community development in the area.
- Drawings and Sketches:
 - Site layout plan at a scale of 1:500, which presents the built environment, parking, yards and additional relevant functions.
 - Representative façade at a scale of 1:100 or 1:200.
- Rent Level:
 - The rent is to be presented as SEK per sq.m./year including water and heating.
 - The rent in the competition proposal is to be binding and presented as an average rent level for the whole housing stock.
- Time Plan:
 - The proposal is to anticipate that construction to be started in the Spring of 2019 at the latest.
- Companies and Management:
 - The proposal is to prove that the company has the organizational ability and economic strength needed to execute the housing project.
 - If several companies are responsible for the competition proposal, it is to be clear who will execute the project and manage the apartments.
 - The presentation of a model for long-term ownership and management of the rented housing; by long-term, at least 10 years are meant.

Criteria and Assessment of the Competition Proposals

Design proposals that fulfill the requirements are to be assessed by four general criteria:

- The area's design (in entirety, arrangement in the surroundings, streetscape, yard environment), 30%
- The built environment's design (architecture, scale, color, shape, material, adaptation to the terrain and surroundings), 20%
- Sustainable community development (executable ideas, concepts, ambitions), 10%
- Rent levels including water and heating (the lowest rent levels are favored), 40%

The proposals are to be evaluated by a group of officials from the Section for Planning and Community Development at the Municipality.

Winner

The competition generates five proposals from local and regional builders. In first place comes a proposal with 40 apartments of 1-4 rooms and a kitchen. The rent is on average 1,470 SEK per sq.m./year. The winning competition proposal is awarded 4.3 out of 5 points in the assessment. The jury justifies the choice of winner by its adaptation to landscape, architectural qualities and low rentals (Appendix 5). Also in this case, the winning proposal has been submitted by Strand, the same company that won the competition in Rävlanda.

The architectural office behind the proposal is not presented this time either. However, the municipality's webpage informs that the dwellings have been drawn by Tengbom Arkitekter.⁸ This time too, the presentation of the draft is simplified and differs from normal practice in competitions. The proposal consists of a description in text that has been supplemented with two façade drawings, a site plan, illustrations and inspirational images. See Appendix 4.

The design proposal contains three apartment buildings in two stories with external corridors and four detached single-story houses. In the center of the neighborhood, there is a communal room for social meetings and a playground. Along the road to the new housing area, there are 57 parking bays, a building for waste-sorting and room for the reuse of secondhand toys, household utensils, smaller furniture pieces and books.

The dwellings have been designed with a traditional barn as their basis. The façade is covered with an upright panel glazed in green hues. The entryways, doors and windows are marked externally with panels in a light gray tone. The gabled roofs have corrugated light gray fiber-cement, which emphasizes the simple form-language of the barn. The apartments in the single-story buildings all have their own entryways and attic. Sustainable community development is to be achieved through energy-preserving measures, the installment of geothermal heating, sedum on the roofs of the storage houses, increased waste-sorting and replanting of trees that are to promote the ecosystem in the area.

Implementation

The execution is regulated in 2019 in a contract of land transfer. According to the agreement, the developer can buy the land for 7,100,000 SEK. Should the apartments be transformed into tenant owned apartments, the municipality is to be reimbursed with 4,500 SEK per sq.m./GFA. The builder is obligated to follow simple drawings from the architects' office, which have been attached to the contract. Before the application for a building permit, a consultation is to occur with the municipality's town architect.

The rent on first occupation can total a maximum of 1,470 SEK per sq.m./year including heating, following the KPI (consumer price index). Any potential deviation is to be approved by the municipality. The requirement for a sustainable community building has in the contract been transformed into the installment of

geothermal heating for the heating of the dwellings and sedum on low angled roofs (Marköverlåtelseavtal 1-2019) (Land transfer agreement 1-2019).



Figure 4. The winning proposal transformed into a built environment. Design team: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter. Photo: Magnus Rönn, 2021.

Conclusion followed by discussion

With support in the three case descriptions, six overall conclusions can be formulated:

A first conclusion is that the local politicians' overarching target for housing guidelines has been steering the requirements for forms of tenure and presentation of housing costs in the competition programs. From this point of view, the competitions seem to be an effective political tool for housing providing diversity in a local context. In two of the competitions, the proposals are to contain both rented housing, tenant owned apartment housing and proprietorship. The dwellings are to be built both in population centers and in the countryside. A part of the housing has to be rented by the municipality. In the competitions, there is also a wish for good quality, environmentally smart solutions, fresh ideas and solutions that contribute to sustainability. The critical question is not primarily about the direction of the political goals but the lack of governance and clarity in the competition programs. The descriptions of the competition task, assessment criteria and submission requirements do not support each other in a concise manner. One explanation for this shortcoming is that there is no closer description of design developer competitions as a political tool for housing in the municipality's guidelines. The guidelines for land from 2019 neither discuss the competition rules nor competition forms (open or invited competition with pre-qualification of competitors).

A second conclusion is that the illustrations in the three detailed development plans have driven the design of the site layouts in the winning proposals. The regularized function in the detailed development plans' illustrations is strengthened by re-publication of the competition programs. Kristian Kreiner (2013) notes that the competition programs can be read in two different ways by the design teams: partially as information about the competition task and the conditions that the proposal must meet, and partially as a source of inspiration for the development of design ideas. The design teams can thus interpret the competition program as both an enforcing rule and as a starting point of a creative search for solutions to the competition task. Kreiner bases this two-sided reading of the competition program as a recipe and/or a starting point for innovation on experiences from a study of design proposals in a tender competition in Denmark.

Kreiner's understanding of the competition program is relevant for the competitions in Mölnlycke (case 1) and Björkelid (case 2). Here the competition programs state that creativity and fresh ideas are favored in the assessment of the proposals. Despite the stated objectives for innovative solutions, the design teams behind the winning proposals have let themselves be controlled by the illustrations in the competition programs when it comes to the siting of the built environment in the competition area. The idea that existed in the detailed development plans for an open and flexible regulation of the land use has not promoted creativity and fresh ideas. Nor do the design teams produce innovations in their presentations of the proposals. Also, in the jury's statement, new ideas and creativity are lacking as justification for the choice of the first-prize winner.

A third conclusion is that the pricing in the market differs in the competitions depending on the diversity of tenure: rented housing, tenant owned apartments and proprietorship. The law (2014:899) dictates only that the municipalities are to establish administrative routines, inform about basic conditions for the land allocations and present "*principles for land pricing*" (§ 2). Härryda Municipality has applied the principle of set prices for the land in the competitions. The market value for the plans has been set in advance in the competition programs. The builders do not need to compete with offers on the land. The economic means for competing are instead rental levels and selling prices to occupants. The idea of a set price on the land is that the design teams are to compete with solutions that provide good housing environments. Set prices can from this point of view be seen as a promotional strategy for quality in competitions. "*Smaller actors have a large chance of becoming eligible for a land allocation as long as you don't have market price as the only heavy weighing component*" answers one of the participants from the design teams in the questionnaire.

In the competitions, the price of the land for rented housing is considerably lower, when compared to tenant owned apartments. The largest price difference is found in the competition for new housing in Mölnlycke (case 1), which contains ten dwellings with extra-low rent. The pricing of the land corresponds to a political ambition of the municipality to create dwellings with rental levels that the citizens can afford. The rent in the winning proposals in all three competitions is much lower than concurrently built dwellings in the Gothenburg region. According to SCB (the Central Bureau of Statistics) the average rent for new housing in the region during 2018 was 1,704 SEK per sq.m./year. In the competition for housing in Mölnlycke (case 1) the rent level varies from 1,337 SEK per sq.m./year to 1,680 SEK per sq.m./year. In Björkelid (case 2), the rent is 1,430 SEK per sq.m./year. The average rent in the competition for housing in Landvetters-Backaplan (case 3) is 1,470 SEK per sq.m./year. The design development competitions are therefore an effective and consumer-friendly tool for the creation of cheap housing in the municipality.

A fourth conclusion is that the assessment model in the competition processes is a combination of architectural critique and measured criteria, presented as numerical values. The transformation of values into points lies as the foundation for the ranking. For the assessment of the competition proposals, a handful of civil servants are responsible. The ranking of the proposals is an application of the rational judging process with weighted and point-awarded criteria (Bazerman, 2006; Svensson, 2008). The goal is to identify the most favorable decision. The winner through this method is the proposal that ultimately receives the most points from the jury. The architectural critique is then used to motivate and legitimize the choice of winner. The jury needs to express what is good/bad or better/worse in the proposals. There is also a need to point out ambiguities in the design that need to be seen to in the planning. The architectural critique appears as describing, interpreting and evaluating assessments in the statements (Attoe, 1978). This way of lifting qualities and explaining the reasons behind the choice of first prize winner is typical of competitions in architecture and urban design.

A fifth conclusion is that the judging criteria in the competition programs show what Härryda Municipality, in the role of organizer, sees as valuable in the built environment. The points awarded to the criteria speak to how valuable they are in each competition. Presented values in the competition programs can be collected into four base criteria: *Housing Architecture*, *Neighborhoods*, *Sustainable Community Development* and *Economy*. Each of these criteria is connected to objectives in the competition, delivery demands and information of how proposals are going to be assessed. The relation to diversity is not clear.

Housing Architecture has been ranked by the organizer on a varying degree of information about façade, colors, apartments (how many, what sizes, what composition), house types, building materials, façade, construction, roof, foundations and room descriptions. The assessment of the proposals is based on descriptions, floor plans, sketches, perspectives and illustrations. This is dimensioned at 20 to 40% of the value in the competition programs: 30% in Mölnlycke (case 1), 40% in Björkelid (case 2) and 20% in Landvetters-Backa (case 3). That the dwellings as architecture, apartments, material and construction are seen as valuable is an expected result. The low number of points for the housing in Landvetters-Backa is explained by the economy being prioritized.

Neighborhood is an assessment criterion, which is expressed as an architectural term for the design of the area, the site layout, yards, meeting places, playgrounds, landscape planning, streetscape and parking lots. In two competitions, creativity and fresh ideas are extra qualities in the evaluation. This criterion is dimensioned at 20 to 40% of the value in the competition programs: 40% in Mölnlycke (case 1), 30% in Björkelid (case 2) and 30% in Landvetters-Backa (case 3). A good context for housing is seen as just as necessary as the building design.

Sustainable community development is associated in the competitions with executable ideas, concepts, ambitions, creativity and novel ideas. The criteria have been given a very broad and open description. The meaning is difficult to interpret, and the criteria is only dimensioned at 0 to 10% of the value in the competitions: 0% in Mölnlycke (case 1), 10% in Björkelid (case 2) and 10% in Landvetters-Backa (case 3). The penetration of sustainability questions is therefore limited in competitions, which in turn is a critical finding in the study.

Economy in the competition programs is about the ability to execute the winning design, the selling prices, rental levels and property management. The company's economic status and organizational competency is judged in the programs on the basis of requested references. The selling prices to the customer are included in the assessment of tenant owned apartments and row houses with proprietorship. The rented housing is evaluated with consideration to the present rent and the long-term management of the rented housing properties. The criterion has the same value as the architectural issues and is dimensioned from 20% to 40% of the value in the competitions: 30% in Mölnlycke (case 1), 20% in Björkelid (case 2) and 40% in Landvetters-Backa (case 3). That the economic questions are ascribed extra-large weighting in the competition for new housing in Landvetters-Backa may be because the municipality wants to construct apartments in an area dominated by row houses and detached houses with proprietorship. According to the competition program, proposals with lower rentals are favored in this competition.

A sixth conclusion is that the organizer has not effectively used the competition as a tool for guiding proposals and transforming the design into buildings. There are several missed opportunities in the investigated competition processes. The possibility for the organizer to gain access to well worked-through and well-designed projects through the competition program has not been handled to its

potential. The design proposals are models that show how the future may look like as a built environment. The clearer the design requirements, the larger the probability that the proposals present architecture that accord with the realized housing projects. Both the opportunity for credible predictions of proposals and the steering of the housing's architecture are based on the program and its submission requirements. Through the competitions, the organizer has been able to select from alternative solutions to the task. The competitions have collectively attracted 20 design proposals. The question is how the municipality as an organizer has used the competition's advantages, compared to direct procurement and tender competitions. Clear assessment material of well resolved solutions is only found in the design developer competition for new housing in Mölnlycke (case 1). Here the submission requirements have resulted in a winning solution to the competition tasks, visualized in illustrations, colored schema for the apartments' sizes and allocations, site layouts with landscape planning and yards, reference images, parking plan, furnished apartments in the typical plans and façade sketches. In this case, the built solution accords with the winning proposal, although the area proves to be isolated and without access to local services.

The competition in Björkelid (case 2) is based on a simplified competition program. The submission requirements are focused on building technique and economy. There are no requirements that the competition proposals are to contain architects' drawings (façade, plans, sections) and furnishing plans, which is surprising since the competition program states that the proposals are to be presented anonymously to the politicians. The submission requirements have in this case resulted in information lacking assessment material. The built environment is shown through inspirational images. The winning proposal is presented in a simplified site layout plan with buildings, streets, parking space and landscape planning. The row houses are briefly described in the text. The politicians have not had access to designed assessment material. The form of tenure of the dwellings has afterwards been altered to comprise solely of rented houses, which in turn means that the competing builders can criticize the changed game rules. As a built environment, the location shows two different faces. People who approach the apartment buildings from the city center are met by a large parking lot. But seen from the ravine around the creek in the surrounding environment, the residential houses appear in an undulating landscape. Another quality in the area that could not be found in the competition program is the access to shops and trains.

In the competition for housing in Landvetters-Backa (case 3), the program dictates that the proposals are to be presented in a site layout plan with buildings, parking lots and yards, together with a representative façade. The quality of the dwellings has also this time been left to the market. There are no requirements for the competitors to present the apartments or furnished plans. Although the first-prize recipient fulfils the requirements of the program, the assessment material is incomplete from a design point of view. The apartment buildings have afterwards been supplemented with solar collectors on the roof. The neighborhood has an inviting character, and the architecture is appealing. There is a new school in the area that *"is distinguished by a high architectural quality, low energy use and environmentally friendly construction materials"* (Program, p. 2). The surroundings of weekend cottages and detached houses have also been supplemented by new row houses painted in white. It gives an architectural appearance dominated by contrasts in the new built environment.

Through the competitions, Landvetters-Backa and Björkelid have been supplemented with rented housing that adds to the diversity of forms of tenure. The rent for tenants appears to be affordable. These are two factors for its success. A critical aspect of the two competitions in Landvetters-Backa and Björkelid is that the submission requirements and assessment criteria resulted in assessment material that is difficult to interpret with regard to the ranking of the proposals and

the decision on the winning submission. The organizer has not taken advantage of the opportunity to guide the design through clarifying requirements that show what the winning proposal is expected to look like as a housing area. The competition as a production of knowledge about future built environments through design has not been taken advantage of effectively.

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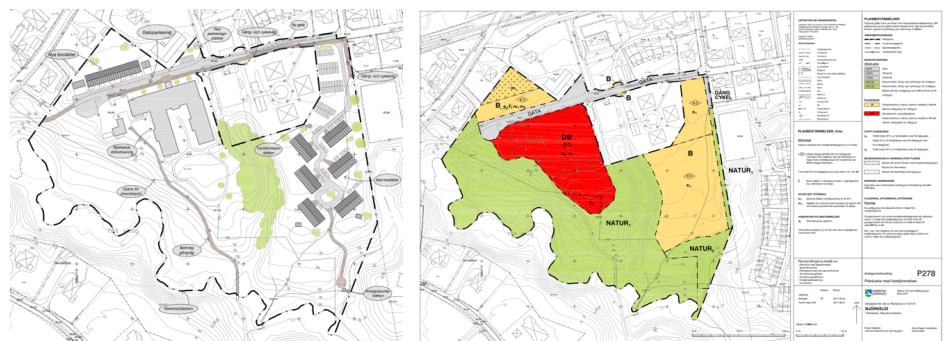
Appendix 1. Illustrations and detailed development plans



Detail development plan for the competition in Mölnlycke. Illustration on the left and regulations of land use and design on the right. Source: Härryda Municipality



Detail development plan for the competition in Björkelid. Illustration on the left and regulations of land use and design on the right. Source: Härryda Municipality



Detail development plan for the competition in Landvetters-Backa. Illustration on the left and regulations of land use and design on the right. Source: Härryda Municipality

Appendix 2. Winning proposal for competition in Mölnlycke



Plan showing location of the two row buildings and the three collective buildings as well as the landscape architecture in the competition area. Source: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter.



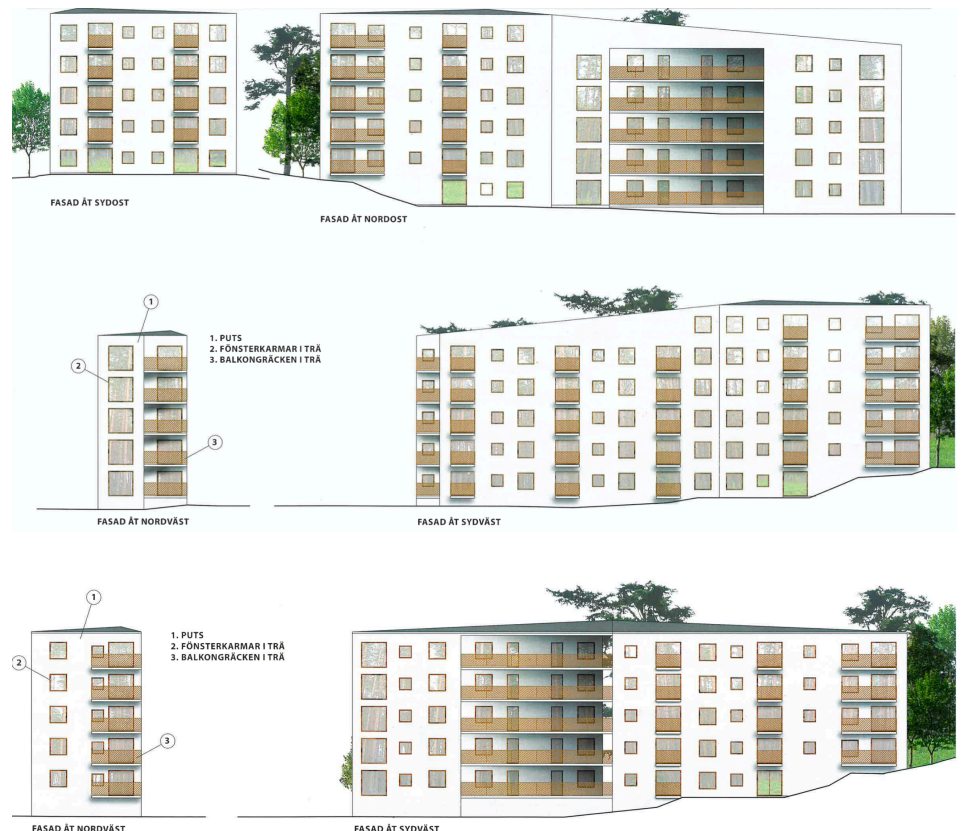
Illustration of rental buildings in the winning proposal. Source: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter.



Illustration of row houses in the winning proposal. Source: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter.



Plan of apartments in rental buildings and illustration of furnished rooms. Source: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter.



Facade drawings of the rental buildings seen from north, east and south. Source: Tornstaden and T+E Arkitekter.

Appendix 3. Winning proposal for competition in Björkelid



Plan showing the location of buildings and landscape planning. Source: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter.

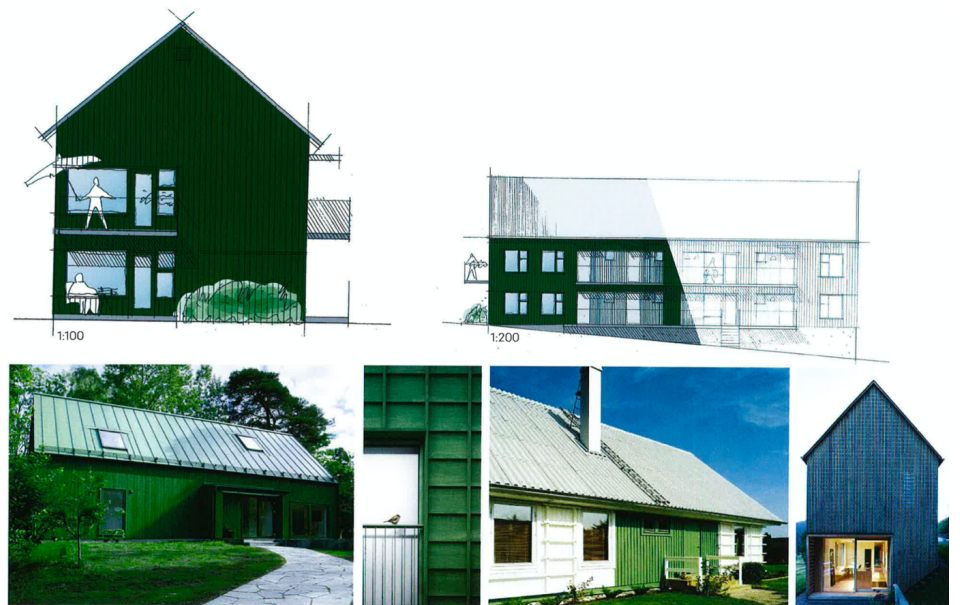


Inspiration pictures from the winning proposal showing facade materials, building types and colours. Source: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter.

Appendix 4. Winning proposal for competition in Landvetters-Backa



Plan showing location of the buildings and the landscape architecture for the competition area. Source: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter.



Drawings and illustrations of the winning design proposal, both rental buildings (above) and row houses. The illustration show building types, colour and material in planned housing. Source: Strand and Tengbom Arkitekter.

Appendix 5.

Jury statements

Case 1. Competition for New Housing in Mölnlycke

The following qualities are taken from the assessment of the first-prize winner.

A light and airy proposal with many meeting spaces in an airy environment. The proposal has angled houses with generous extruding windows that tie together the different house types and give the neighborhood character. Well-studied outdoor environment with many place creations that provide opportunities for both play and meetings. The proposal presented some of the parking spots in garages, which reduces hard-paved surfaces in the housing environment. The proposal has low rentals for the rented housing and the lowest price for the tenant owned apartments and row houses. (Samlad bedömning 2015-05-25) (Collective assessment)

Case 2. Competition for New Housing in Björkelid

The first-prize winner gets the following architectural judgments:

The submission has the lowest price and highest number of apartments. It takes advantage of the conditions with varied placement of the apartment buildings surrounded by nature. The central street through the neighborhood is a quality because it invites the possibility of moving through and into the natural environment. The description of the apartment buildings in the text and reference images presents clean shapes and colors with gabled roofs, a good material choice completely in wood and a will to add detail. A classical form-language in a modern spirit. The row houses strengthen the street environment with its entryways facing the street and a façade that varies in depth. In the text, high ambitions for the outdoor spaces are presented, such as generous green areas with plants that promote the ecosystem, cultivation plots for the residents, communal room and playgrounds. To reach the high ambition level, this needs to be developed and explicated in the continued work because the many parking spaces risk dominating the outdoor environment. The proposal also shows high ambition when it comes to recycling and charging of electric cars. (Bilaga 3 till marköverlåtelsesavtal) (The third appendix to the land transfer agreement)

Case 3. New Housing in Landvetters-Backa

The winning proposal is ascribed the following qualities:

The proposal is founded on the idea of a built environment in the green, nature-near environment and takes inspiration from the classical barn with narrow, tall proportions, gabled roof and wood façade as well as a thoroughgoing stairwell. In the execution, the details are presumed to be executed with the same high ambition level as is described in the proposal. The lower buildings lie parallel with Backavägen as a protection against traffic and parking spaces. The gabled two-story houses are placed along the local street, which provides variation and draws from

gable motifs from the surrounding built environment. In the middle of the area, there is a communal, car-free playground and yard environment with a community room, where the design becomes important so as to utilize the potential. The good conditions for outdoor spaces to the south and west are made the most of. The housing's foundations are to vary in height on the inside and along the façade, for adaptation to the terrain, which needs to be further studied as there are large topographic differences to the neighboring municipal nature land. The distance between the two-story buildings needs to be studied with consideration to shadowing and privacy. The color scale in green gives the neighborhood an identity, but the color and need for variation should be discussed, as well as the roof material's suitability from an age resistance perspective. The large and relatively dominating parking area as well as traffic solution with walkways and garbage collection need to be developed. From a sustainable community building viewpoint, heating with geothermal heating, recycling with garbage bins for glass, paper and cardboard is indicated. The replanting of trees within the area and roof covering with sedum for low, angled rooves, as well as the reuse of items for other housing in the area. This contribution has the lowest average rental level expressed in SEK/sq.m. and year (including water and heating). (Utvärdering markanvisningstävling Landvetters-Backa östra etapp 1) (Assessment design developer competition Landvetters-Backa eastern phase 1)

¹ It is difficult to make a sound comparison between countries through an unclear terminology around design development competitions. It is a condition which Walter Menteth (2018) brings up in the article *Competitions and confusion words*, which is part of the anthology *Competition Culture in Europe: Voices*. On pages 148-153, English competition terms are presented in the passage 'Glossary of UK Terms Design Contests and Competitions.'

² See:

<https://www.boverket.se/sv/samhallsplanering/bostadsmarknad/bostadsforsorjning/kommunernas-verktyg/mark/>

³ See: Anderson and Lunander, 2004: Boverket, 2005; Stenberg, 2006: Statskontoret (The City Planning Office), 2006: Lahpenderö, 2009: Morgan, 2010: Statskontoret (The City Planning Office), 2012).

⁴ See:

https://www.harryda.se/byggaboochmiljo/bostaderochoffentligalokaler/langsiktigbostadsplanering/markanvisning_4.4344131013da8f3d63a2695.html

⁵ In 2015 the average yearly rent for newly constructed dwellings of 2 rooms and a kitchen in the Gothenburg region was 1,845 SEK/sq.m. according to SCB, the Central Bureau of Statistics

⁶ The winning proposal receives the comments: "The buildings' placement connects it to and opens the neighborhood to nature, also for the public. However, a large parking lot," (Site Layout Plan) "Attractive material and color choice, simple and clean form-language, well-chosen size of the building. No variation in the house types" (House Types); "Communal room, playground, cultivation plots" (Extra qualities in the neighborhood); "Planning which promotes the ecosystem, ambitious recycling, charging stations for electric cars" (Sustainable community development).

⁷ See: <https://www.strandab.se/nybyggnation/>

⁸ See:

<https://www.harryda.se/arkiv/nyhetsarkivbyggaboochmiljo/detoghemtavlingenomnyahemilandvettersbacka.5.2755955f1666af8986eab754.html>