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Chalmers University of Technology

Proceedings 2020

# **CULTURAL HERITAGE COMPENSATION:**

**APPROACHES TO TRANSFORMATION OF SITES WITH  
CULTURAL VALUES AND ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**

*Editors: Magnus Rönn and Benjamin Grahn Danielson*

**Kulturlandskapet  
Chalmers University of Technology**

Proceeding 2020

**CULTURAL HERITAGE  
COMPENSATION:  
APPROACHES TO TRANSFORMATION  
OF SITES WITH CULTURAL VALUES AND  
ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**

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# CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS – A SOCIAL MATTER

Mathilde Kirkegaard

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## ABSTRACT

The paper will originate from the perspective that cultural environments contain both physical and social understandings, and that it shall not be conserved, but rather reinterpreted. The text will focus on developments of cultural environments that are anchored to, and integrated with the local community, and address the missing link between the intrinsic potentials of the cultural environments and the compensation of cultural environments.

Different cases will exemplify the process of cultural environments becoming a central part of their respective local communities. These cases express how the historic traces contribute to a new narrative for the local community and the development strategy. They underline the link between the life that has been lived in the historical frameworks of the cultural environment, and a development where “life” is in the centre of the development scheme.

The social context is being undermined in many governing heritage management situations. The strategic development of cultural environments can be tied to the local community and thus generate a symbiosis which secures the development of the cultural environment and enhances the identity and site-specific value of the local environment. The compensation of cultural heritage is considered in relation to a continually changeable heritage environment - when perceived to contain a social layer. This social view on compensation is rooted in the attempt to ensure that cultural heritage, besides securing the national historical interest, has a value for people today.

## KEYWORDS

Development, Compensation, People, Intangible, Inclusion, Identity, Perception

## INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is described by the Cultural Ministry in Denmark as something in the context of “ours” and “us”. The ministry underlines the common value of cultural heritage in the following introductory statement on their webpage:

*Through time, Denmark has built collections that have given us the opportunity to relate to our past in order for us to relate and understand our present and the world around us. [...] A large part of the Danish cultural heritage is located in the country’s museums, archives and libraries. However, the preservation of the country’s ancient monuments and buildings is also comprised by the effort of protecting our common cultural heritage. (Kulturministeriet 2019)*

UNESCO has expanded their notion of cultural heritage with an immaterial list of 508 cultural heritage subjects of an intangible nature (UNESCO list 2019). The material list of UNESCO is comprised of 1092 subjects (UNESCO list 2019) and to these there are clear guidelines for the preservation and development of heritage. The immaterial list is in its nature of definition not connected to something tangible, but there are exceptions. One of the exceptions is the Chinese traditional architectural craftsmanship for timber-framed structures, which in its essence is connected to the physical wooden structure, but since it is the craftsmanship that comprises the (UNESCO defined) heritage, it is registered on the intangible list.

The example of traditional Chinese architectural building methods articulates one of the current imbalances when defining cultural heritage, and thus the fundament for preservation or development. Cultural heritage is comprised of both the physical elements and an intangible value of certain use, act or work, or the intangible value that the physical heritage is given by the people.

On UNESCO’s material list, there are different types of subjects and some of them can be described and categorised as cultural environments: as a collection of buildings or/and landscapes connected by the same historical narrative. A few of the areas have been labelled “in danger”, but almost all the sites have a description of elements that pose threats to the preservation of the heritage. One of the sites that could be categorized as a cultural environment is Antigua Guatemala, which in 2017 had the following threats: “*Commercial*

*development, housing, and impacts of tourism, visitor and recreation” (UNESCO Antigua Guatemala 2018, see Figure 1).*

How can cultural environments be a part of the development of society, include the life lived in it, in a manner that does not pose a threat towards the self-same environment?

The text will shed light on the social aspect of cultural environments, and its inseparable relation, as a point of departure for the discussion about compensation measures in cultural heritage. Cultural environments will be explored as a type of heritage that is in-between the immaterial list and material list, as something that contains a social layer. This orientation will be elaborated with case examples focusing on development schemes. “Democratic” development of cultural environments will be discussed as a possible approach to the management of cultural environments and as a way to compensate loss when altering or developing cultural environments. Compensation of cultural heritage is also considered in relation to a continually changeable heritage environment - when perceived to contain a social layer. This perspective on compensation is rooted in the attempt to ensure that cultural heritage,



*Figure 1. Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, credit: Murray Foubister, Original title IMG\_3059.jpg, source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mfoubister/6849911252/>*

besides securing the national historical interest, has a value for people today. Integration of the social layer in the management of cultural heritage is thus a way to compensate for material loss, but when cultural environments are perceived in a less materially orientated manner, the matter of compensation becomes evident. Because, for whom does heritage have value?

## THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

The Danish research group from Aarhus School of Architecture called Screening af Kulturmiljøer (SAK) has for the past years screened 2000+ Danish cultural environments in collaboration with the respective municipalities (Figure 2). The screened cultural environments are outlined and mapped by means of a description condensed to the following: a built area that cohesively tells the narrative of the site.

The Danish cultural ministry describes cultural environments as follows:

*It is not only the singular cultural heritage element that needs to be protected. Often the surroundings are just as important and thus should be preserved as valuable cultural environments. All these traces from human activities through time tell a narrative of the development of the past society (Translate: Kulturministeriet 2019).*

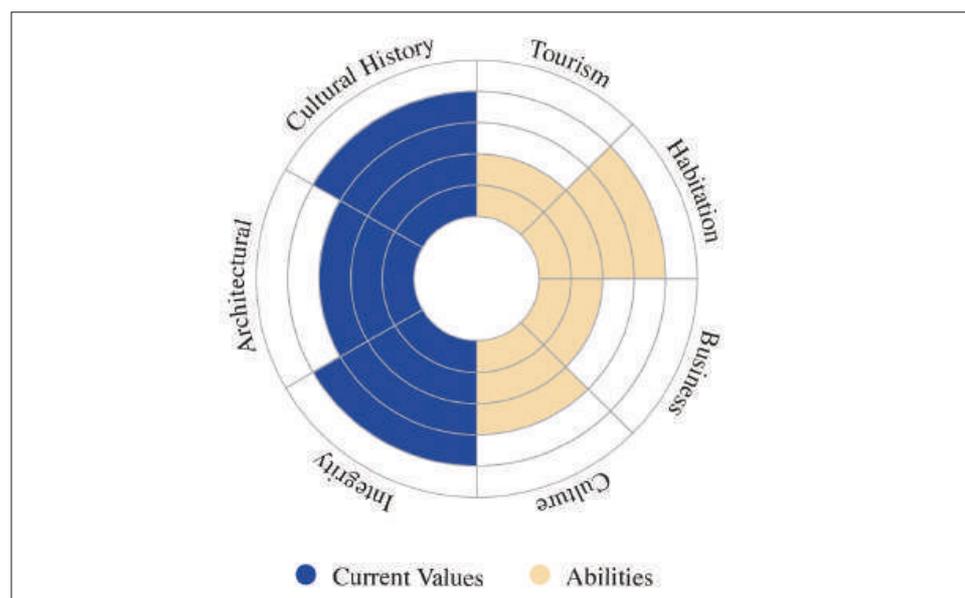


Figure 2. The SAK evaluation diagram. Source: SAK, Aarhus School of Architecture.

The cultural environments both comprise a value of preservation due to the historical traces, but they also comprise a local connection. Cultural environments need to be considered as part of a context of the surrounding buildings and the network of people living in and around it. Cultural environments cannot be conserved in a glass display cabinet in a museum; they are a part of the adaptable context of lived life. Cultural environments are a result of human acts and can be a part of the current acts of people.

The research group SAK rates the cultural environments in Denmark in collaboration with the respective municipality (Figure 3). The rating is made with a focus on the current state of the cultural environment: the architectural value, the historical value and the integrity (cohesiveness), but also the abilities of the cultural environment in the categories of: tourism, businesses, culture or habitation. These abilities, or potentials, of the cultural environments is linked to a development orientation with an offset in the intrinsic values of the cultural environments.

Many examples show the effect historical areas can have on the ability to attract tourism, new inhabitants or new businesses. In the previous example of Antigua Guatemala, UNESCO described these abilities (tourism, business and habitation) as possible threats against the cultural environment. The evaluation that (in a condensed description) are presented on UNESCO's webpage can be interpreted as conflicting with the social layer of heritage.

The value of cultural environments is an official matter, but also a matter of perception and thus it cannot be separated from the perceiver. A cultural environment is given a value by the people visiting, using and living at the

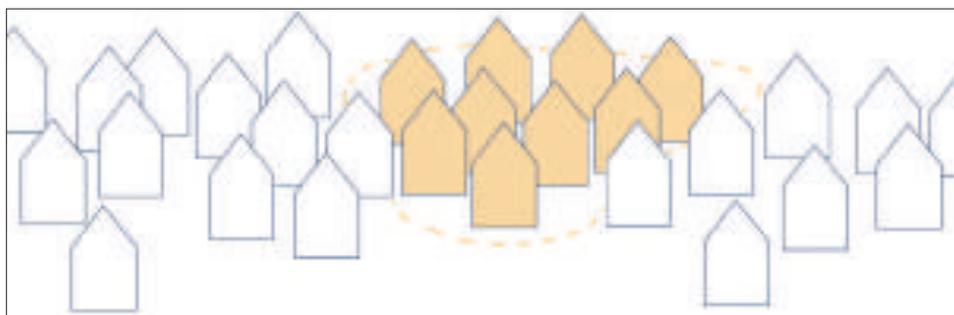


Figure 3. Concept drawing of a cultural environment and its context. Source: Mathilde Kirkegaard.

site. The value of the cultural environment can be found both at a personal level, but also in a collective understanding of the narrative of the site. The connection between the cultural heritage and the value given by the people is described in *Uses of Heritage* from 2006 by Laurajane Smith:

*It is value and meaning that is the real subject of heritage preservation and management processes, and as such all heritage is 'intangible', whether these values or meanings are symbolized by a physical site, place, landscape or other physical representation, or are represented within the performances of languages, dance, oral histories or other forms of intangible heritage (Smith 2006:56).*

Laurajane Smith categorizes all heritage as intangible. In relation to the two lists of tangible and intangible heritage, made by UNESCO, the question of the balance between these two themes arises in the quote. Tangible and intangible are subjects that both consist of counterparts, but also subjects that are dependent on one another. In this paper, the meaning of tangible and intangible will move towards the notion of a physical part of the cultural environments and a social part of cultural environments.

Since cultural environments cannot be conserved in glass display cabinet, they need to be able to follow the development of society. Cultural environments can be perceived as a line, not as a fixed point in time, where the line represents the past use of the environment and invites for current and future use. Laurajane Smith describes in the following quote how the interaction between current use and the historical frames is evident:

*There is an interlinked relationship between the activities that occur at places and the places themselves – but it is this tension between action and material representation that is an important element of heritage (Smith 2006:83).*

#### “CITY BRANDING”

Nordkraft is a former power plant located in the Danish city of Aalborg. It is an example of the balance between new use and historical frameworks. The former power plant is located at the harbour front and it has a prominent appearance in the cityscape, which categorizes the building as a landmark. Aalborg has been famous for its large industries, smoking chimneys and rough environment. Today, the city of Aalborg has been transformed into

a city of knowledge (connected to the growth of the university). The former power plant gave and still gives its context a sense of place and local identity. The transformation of Nordkraft has operated as a milestone for the changing city.

Architect and writer Anna Klingmann explores the interlink between city and branding in her essay *Heros with Flaws*, and she underlines the power of the built environment in the following quote:

*Thinking about architecture as part of our economic environment brings us also to think about opinion shaping, power, identity, and experiencing the world. When seen in a socio-economic context, architecture is now no longer part of marketing our environment; it has become the essence of it (Klingmann 2009:30).*

The subtitle of this part of the paper is “city branding”, which has become a well-known term among architects, and also somewhat rejected, due to its simplification of the added value buildings or areas can create. The word 'branding' is also associated with the consumer culture: e.g. the rapidly changing fashion industry. Branding can organize products so the consumer can differentiate the product from other products and identify it with that particular brand. “City branding” can, therefore, be viewed as a distancing approach from organic developments and inclusive development methods, but some of the aspects of city branding can work as inspiration to strategic methods in the striving for a collective, local identity.

Aalborg has, in its development from an industrial city to "knowledge city", attempted to preserve the industrial characteristics, which today is the main identifiable character of the city. Nordkraft has a visual link to its history, but through a new use it has been reinterpreted. The Danish architect Lars Juul Thiis describes in his essay *Tales of the Unexpected* how the industrial landscapes in general are important in relation to the identity of the area:

*The conversion of industrial buildings for public purposes has been a major force in rejuvenation of the European city. These conversions represent not only the reuse of a physical, historical framework but also a new approach to the urban fabric as a defining factor for new neighbourhood and city identities (Thiis 2010:55).*

Lars Juul Thiis is the founder of Cubo, the architectural firm that transformed the industrial building Nordkraft. Along with the previous quote, Thiis exemplifies Nordkraft with the following: *“the stories and tales of this vast building complex have [...] informed and energized the design process”* (Thiis 2010:55). When the power plant Nordkraft closed, the immediate solution was to demolish the building. The reinterpretation, introducing a new program with new use, has generated a strong sense of identity. The architectural theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz describes in *Genius Loci* from 1980 how a building must be understood in its physical, social and historical context.

*To respect the genius loci does not mean to copy old models. It means to determine the identity of the place and to interpret it in ever new ways. Only then we may talk about a living tradition which makes change meaningful by relating it to a set of locally founded parameters* (Norberg-Schulz 1980:182).

He states that the genius loci – the spirit of the place – must be respected, and by doing so the identity of a place can be enhanced or reinterpreted in a transformation that relates to the local context. The research group SAK describes how: *“cultural environments contribute to the creation of a historical understanding and identity”* (Translate: Arkitektskolen Aarhus 2018:4). The physical environment can generate a general understanding and identity that is perceived collectively. It becomes a common understanding of the narrative of the site and a testimony of the historical DNA of the site – which is one of the strong intrinsic abilities of cultural environments.

## PLACES VS. NON-PLACES

In the example of Nordkraft, it is apparent that the transformation has had an effect on the local identity. The historical references are relevant in relation to a collective sense of identity, which could be linked to city branding. In *Non-Places – An Introduction to Supermodernity* by the French anthropologist Marc Augé from 1992, places and non-places are described. The notion of ‘place’ becomes clear when non-places are described:

*If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place.”* (Augé 2008:63).

Marc Augé describes non-places as places without any relational, historical and identity value. Augé furthermore underlines how non-places are places without any social interaction. The relational value is connected to the people relating to the place, and the historical value is given by the people perceiving the place. The matter of identity is likewise a value that is sensed by the people affected by the place. Cultural environments are places with layers acting as a testimony of the previous "life" at the site. The visual narrative of a cultural environment can become a common development direction, which Nordkraft in Aalborg exemplified. One of the intrinsic potentials of cultural environments lies within the social layer of the common narrative – the collective sense of identity.

Laurajane Smith describes in *Uses of Heritage* how the notion of identity in relation to cultural heritage is something that happens between people:

*Identity is not simply something 'produced' or represented by heritage places or heritage moments, but something actively and continually recreated and negotiated as people, communities and institutions reinterpret, remember and reassess the meaning of the past in terms of the social, cultural and political needs of the present (Smith 2006:83).*

Identity is described as something that collectively is created in different social constellations, but also something that is in constant change and challenged by these changes. At the moment, the notion of identity is challenged by having a hollow sound in planning and design. It is considered something that can be captured in the built environment and as something that can be created in a culture. The notion of identity is in a divide between individual identification with the place and the collective understanding of the identity of the place. The definition of identity has to cover a very broad term, which makes the term less specific in development schemes. The description of non-places by Marc Augé emphasizes the importance of identity, the role it plays in the definition of a place and its specific nature, despite its broad sense.

## HISTORY AND ATMOSPHERE

In the subject of identity, there is the notion of effect from the physical environment. 'Effect' refers to the impact created when people are affected by the physical environment, and it can be described in an individual and collective sense. Christian Norberg-Schulz is in *Genius Loci – Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* merging the physical environment with its ability to affect people and he underlines the intangible ability of the physical environment:

*What, then, do we mean with the word "place"? Obviously we mean something more than abstract location. We mean a totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture and colour. Together these things determine an "environmental character", which is the essence of place. In general, a place is given as such a character or "atmosphere". A place is therefore a qualitative, "total" phenomenon, which we cannot reduce to any of its properties, such as spatial relationships, without losing its concrete nature out of sight (Norberg-Schulz 1980:7-8).*

Norberg-Schulz emphasizes the identity of the place and individual perception. The quote is concluded by a statement of the sensing being a qualitative phenomenon between subject and object. Maurice Merleau-Ponty described in 1945 in *Phenomenology of Perception* how an object cannot be separated from the person that is doing the seeing (Merleau-Ponty 2012:334). The connection between the subject and object is crucial in phenomenology, and within the notion of affect, there is a phenomenological relation to the physical environment.

The effect of the built environment is also introduced by architect Juhani Pallasmaa and psychologist Ingrid Gehl. Ingrid Gehl describes in her book *Bo-miljø* how some of the needs people have in relation to the built environment are a psychological need for identification with the surroundings (Gehl 1971:18). Ingrid Gehl tries to map the different impacts the built environment has on the social constellations, both in the collective sense and the individual one, as a part of a collective. Gehl underlines the importance of the local community having an impact on their surroundings and that the surroundings are relatable for the people affected by them. The relatable characteristics are tactile structures, signs of use and warm colours. Juhani Pallasmaa describes in his book *The Eyes of the Skin – Architecture and the Senses* how the materiality and sign of use (expressed by the age of the building) influence the people affected by the built environment.

*Natural materials express their age, as well as the story of their origins and their history of human use. All matter exists in the continuum of time; the patina of wear adds the enriching experience of time to the materials of construction (Pallasmaa 2012:34).*

The historical signs in the built environment give an expression of time and age, which Pallasmaa expresses as an important factor for the modern person. Pallasmaa elaborates with the following quote:

*We have a mental need to grasp that we are rooted in the continuity of time, and in the man-made world it is the task of architecture to facilitate this experience.* (Pallasmaa 2012:35).

The part of the built environment that represents history is according to Pallasmaa something attractive to the modern person. The sensing of time is in this case, like effect, something that happens in the interaction between the subject and the built environment. Cultural environments can express a narrative connected to the previous use and its age. Pallasmaa underlines the intrinsic ability of historical environments, which can have a value for people today. The connection between the people affected by the cultural environment and the matter of sustaining it can be used as a powerful tool in preservation schemes. The built environment can through its age and historical traces give an indirect “message”. This indirect message becomes an effect of the historical buildings, which is sensed by the individual, but also experienced collectively. It can thus be used to empower the collective sense of place and local identity.

#### INDIVIDUAL RELATION AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

The text has touched upon different aspects of the cultural environment:

- A) The sensing, which is experienced individually, but can be expressed as a general effect
- B) An individual perception, connected to the individual relation
- C) A collective understanding, that can generate a strong sense of identity

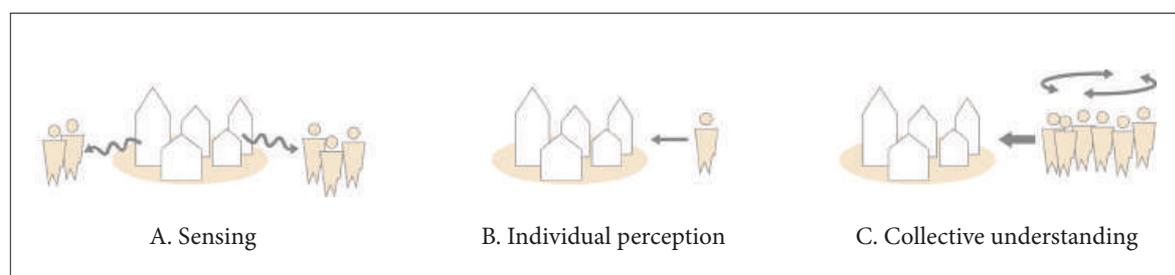


Figure 4. Concept drawing of a cultural environment in relation to senses, perception and collective understanding. Source: Mathilde Kirkegaard

In Figure 4, the diagram shows three types of intrinsic abilities of the cultural environment. The sensing: the effect that can emanate from the historical frames. The individual perception that recognises the personal gaze. The collective understanding that can be found in a cohesive understanding of the identity of the site. By outlining these, the people in and around the cultural environment become evident.

If the historical areas are in the category of “ours” and “us”, affects individuals and have an impact on the community, it ought to be managed through “democratic” means. This orientation is not new in architectural planning and it refers to a top-down and bottom-up balance in decision-making. Among other methods, it can be endeavoured through designs of an inclusive nature. Catalyst design is a planning method that moves the process of decision-making into the public space. Through catalyst designs, or process-orientated designs, the community can gain an insight into the process, or be invited to participate in the process.

#### “DEMOCRATIC” PLANNING

Jesko Fezer describes in *Urban Catalyst – The Power of Temporary Use* how small designs can act like acupuncture that, with a small needle, give energy to an area beyond the small pin (Oswald et al 2013). When one is working with designs as a catalyst to activate an area, the main purposes is to explore the opportunities of the area and to change the perception of the area. It can activate the area, and inform and invite the local community to engage. As described previously, the research group SAK points towards a set of intrinsic abilities, or potentials, within the cultural environment: habitation, tourism, business or culture. This can be translated to potentials for “new life” in the cultural environment, which underlines the importance of integrating the local community and respective relevant parties in the interventions during a transformation.

The integration of the local community and relevant parties can vary from e.g. actual cooperation to casual interaction with the design (using it, watching it, touching it). The intervention will, as mentioned, strive to open dialogue and invite the local community and relevant parties to engage. After an intervention in the cultural environment, the following process would be influenced by the gained knowledge from the intervention and the relation with the social layer in the cultural environment. The following process could consist of a permanent design, development plans or a workshop regarding

development strategies. The intervention can work as a catalyst to activate the cultural environment and it has the purpose of exploring the development opportunities.

The narrative of the cultural environment can be, in development schemes, a strategic baseline, which also can underline the unique characters and identity of the cultural environment. One example is how the municipality of the Australian city Ballarat placed cultural heritage in the focal point of a large regeneration strategy. As mentioned above, the built environment can be understood to be something beyond the physical object and to contain a social layer - addressed as something that needs to be considered in the process of implementation or alteration.

Ballarat is an inland city in Australia with a population of around 100.000. The city was in 2003 registered as a member of the International League of Historical Cities and in 2006 it hosted the 10th World League of Historical Cities Congress. The tourism in Ballarat has not grown since the 1960s, it consists of around 15% of the economy of Ballarat, and it employs 2870 people. In December 2017, the City of Ballarat presented a plan to sustain the heritage of Ballarat. One of the main subjects of the plan was to gain an insight into the citizens' attitude towards the different cultural heritage areas and elements. Two of the four aims stated the following:

*- Liveability: Making sure local people are central to our work in delivering the heritage plan. [...] – Accountability: Continuing to meet and expand on our legislated responsibilities and making transparent decisions to meet our community's expectations (City of Ballarat 2017:1).*

The City of Ballarat describes the reasoning behind the heritage plan with the following:

*Heritage is of critical importance to the Ballarat community and our city's future. In whole-of-city consultations, the people of Ballarat said that of all the things they value about Ballarat, they love its heritage the most and want to retain it (City of Ballarat 2017:2).*

The plan seeks to share the responsibility of the heritage and introduce a participatory planning approach that gives local people and stakeholders a central role. The participatory approach has been established by the Council's

Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), which is a pilot program by UNESCO. HUL has been working holistically to align conservation with social goals. The participatory planning invites the local community to contribute to the different stages of the planning process from the initiating phases to the final decisions. The participatory method empowers the local community and puts them at the centre of planning – and in this case at the centre of the heritage plan. The plan is supposed to run from 2017-2030, and is in this paper exemplified as a top-down planning attempt to include the local community. The plan strives to cover aboriginal cultural heritage, archaeology, geomorphology, built/created landscapes, living intangible elements (traditions, stories, historical events, skills, etc.) and material culture (objects, images, etc.). Thus, it strives to include a large spectre of the local community.

With this strategy, Ballarat attempts to open up the planning and management of their heritage. The project is still very new, but the method and the intention to include the public voices in the process acknowledges that the cultural environments are “ours” and therefore also should be treated more “democratically”. Public workshops and online forums have been some of the methods to include the local community of Ballarat in the process, but also a method for the government of Ballarat to gain an insight into the perception of the heritage through the eyes of the local community.

The means of inclusion and underlining the site-specific identity are in the case of Ballarat managed through physical/visual interventions and through ordinary information methods on news platforms (e.g.: public events, workshops, built improvements of the heritage and via textual descriptions). The combination of the two different methods targets a larger group of the local community compared to strictly using written communication on news platforms.

The heritage in Ballarat is claimed to be an important factor in the attractiveness of its habitation and of great importance for the people in the city. The invitation to participate in the heritage management is an invitation to influence the process, but also an invitation to be educated and informed about the heritage. The knowledge generates a deeper insight into the heritage, but it also generates a more collective perception. The city of Ballarat is allowing individual voices to be heard, while creating a common narrative for the city. The common understanding of the narrative creates an opportunity for the citizen, businesses, municipality and government to streamline the effort and enhance the site-specific narrative.

In Ebeltoft, a small coastal city in Denmark, an old malt factory had been left to decay (Figure 5). The factory is located in the heart of the city. It has high towers, working as a landmark, and the contrasting appearance along with its powerful red colour makes the building unique in the cityscape.

By an intense effort, citizens raised the economic means to renovate the building and hereafter the municipality joined the project and contributed financially. The old malt factory is not yet open, but it has become a landmark for the city and attracts a new type of citizen: young entrepreneurs. The industrial building connects the city of Ebeltoft with its past and it expresses a new narrative of the city of Ebeltoft. Its visual appearance expresses the industrial part of the history of Ebeltoft that was hidden and forgotten. The landmark has become a symbol of the engagement, commitment and collective effort.

The approach, in the case of the malt factory in Ebeltoft, is in its order opposite to the development of the heritage in Ballarat. In Ballarat, the government and official institutions initiated the enhancement of the historical narrative of the city that, as part of the process, includes the citizen. In Ebeltoft, the initiative of the citizens made a development plan for the histor-



Figure 5. Malt Factory, Ebeltoft, Denmark (under reconstruction). Photo: Mathilde Kirkegaard.

ical building where after a collaboration was established with the municipality. In both cases, the heritage management was balancing bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up meaning the engagement or initiative of the citizens and top-down meaning the official management of the heritage.

A balance between bottom-up and top-down in the development process of a cultural environment, in relation to compensation measures, can be understood to generate a socially sustainable solution. The ownership and engagement that can be created among the local community, along with the use that ultimately can gain an economic benefit, can delegate the maintenance and preservation. A collective effort, due to the collective understanding of the site-specific history, can compensate for the alterations often needed in developments.

#### THE ARBITRARY ECONOMICAL PERSPECTIVE

Menon, a Norwegian firm working with environment and resource economy in Norway, explains in the report *Verdien av Kulturarv* the economic effects of cultural environments and historical buildings. They state the following:

*We find the same positive willingness to live in a cultural environment as to live nearby a cultural environment [...]. Furthermore, the study shows that the preservation of worthy buildings contributes to increased wealth in the local community in the shape of increased labour and tourism. This shows that historical elements and cultural environments contribute with worth for society* (Translate: Menon Economics 2017:69).

The quote explains their findings, which in the report are explained through a percentage increase in estate values, labour and tourism. The report underlines an economic benefit for the people living or working in and around a cultural environment. The end of the quote states that cultural environments, in general, have a value for society, and that the effect is not isolated to the specific site. The investigations from Menon also exemplify that the economic value is attached to the "use of the cultural environment" (Menon Economics 2017:47). There is an increase in the economic benefits from an active cultural environment, compared to a cultural environment acting as a backdrop.

#### MANAGEMENT OF DANISH CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

In Denmark, there is no official preservation law for cultural environments. The buildings within the cultural environment can have an official

degree of preservation value, but in many cases, the buildings cannot be granted that status because they are historically relevant in relation to the context of the cultural environment. It is the collective of buildings and its landscape that conveys a strong narrative, which ultimately categorizes it as a cultural environment.

The municipalities can make preservation plans for an area, but this is very costly, and the government can only grant the landscape or the individual building with an official preservation status. A cultural environment can contain a few buildings having an official preservation status, but otherwise, it is without a collective preservation plan. This can both generate a possibility to be freer in the alteration of cultural environments, but it can also result in cultural environments being destroyed by development.

When broadening the definition of cultural environments to be more than the physical frameworks, the management of cultural environments cannot be confined to physical preservation methods. The management methods are often not inclusive of the life that is lived in the cultural environment or can be unfolded within it. If historical buildings and areas are recognized to be “ours”, they should be treated “democratically” and generate value for people today. Management becomes a social matter.

#### COMPENSATION AND THE SOCIAL MATTER

Antigua Guatemala exemplified, as a cultural environment, how the use can be considered a threat to the preservation of the cultural environment. Contradictorily, the same types of use (tourism, habitation and business) are considered a development ability by the research group SAK and the report by Menon underlines that an active cultural environment (an environment in use) gains economic benefits in and around the cultural environment.

“The use of cultural environment” is a vital part of cultural environments when understanding it to contain a social layer and being of a social matter. It is interlinked with the perspective that cultural environments should have a value for the people today and tag into its present context. In other words, the cultural environment should include a contemporary substance. In this context, compensation is closely connected to everyday life. “The use”, or an active cultural environment, generates an experience for the people that are affected by the place. Compensation measures, within this social orientation, can thus be generated both in the management and in the transformation process.

As mentioned, a cultural environment consists of an area, not a single object, and it is entwined in its context of physical structures and social networks. The social network comprises the people present in and around the cultural environment, consisting of tourists, inhabitants or labourers. Previously, phenomenological theory was mentioned in relation to individual perception. If the notion of social networks and individual perception are combined, then the matter of “who” becomes evident, because, as mentioned earlier, who gives the cultural environment its value?

*Ditt Kulturarv Ä Inte Mitt* is the title of Orvar Löfgrens paper from 2003 (Carlberg et al 2003), which means: “your cultural heritage is not my cultural heritage”. He seeks to underline that there is an individual perception of historical elements. Such a statement underlines the span of cultural heritage, thus it can be perceived as a collective identity, but also as something that can differ from person to person.

The compensation becomes a matter of collective utility, but it is also rooted in a recognition of the individual perception. When compensating loss of cultural heritage, the “product” of the loss can be of a tangible nature, but it can also be of an intangible nature, or both. Likewise, the gain, added value, or the preservation can be of a tangible and/or intangible nature.

## CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS IN DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

The malt factory was (and is) a large contrasting building in the cityscape of Ebeltoft. Due to its visible historical narrative, the building has a profound impact on the citizens. The bottom-up initiative was rooted in the individual relation to the building. Some citizens reminisced about their own time as an employee at the factory or family members who worked there. The newer citizens and young people found the ability for creative and innovative expression in the raw industrial and attractive structures.

A collective perspective of the building was generated after the effort of fundraising and communicating the project. The narrative of the building streamlined the effort of the citizens and the municipality. In this case the social network in and around the cultural environment was an indispensable asset. The malt factory has become a flagship for Ebeltoft and an important part of the historical DNA of the city.

Cultural environments can be understood as a line: with traces of previous use, abilities for present use and adaptable for future use. The restoration of the malt factory allowed the history of decay to be present. The building has not been polished, but made habitable for new use in a framework that represents its history and the two different phases of its lifespan: factory and decay.

Fred Scott describes in *On Altering Architecture* from 2008 how heritage can be considered as a line. In this relation, he stresses how cultural heritage influences the collective experience in relation to the local identity and belonging:

*The past is not abstract; it has material reality as heritage, which in turn has material consequences for community identity and belonging (Scott 2008:29).*

As mentioned, cultural environments can generate a collective identity and a united understanding of the site-specific history. As a part of the collective understanding lies an individual perception, which also shapes the attachment to the cultural environment. These individual attachments and the ability to generate a united identity are part of the intrinsic abilities of the cultural environment. These intrinsic abilities can be used strategically in development schemes both to develop the cultural environment and its context.

## THE NARRATIVE IN DEVELOPMENTS

As mentioned previously Jesko Fezer describes how design means can be communicative and inclusive of the local community. Marielyst is a small holiday town in Denmark, which has hosted Danish tourists in the summer months at the seaside hotels since the 1930s. In recent years, the identity of the small town has become unclear and the town suffered from a decrease in tourism and habitation.

In 2014, a new design for the town square was established with support from a large Danish fund Realdania. The design consisted of a large wooden terrace connecting and framing the buildings, leading towards the beach and pulling the seaside into the town square. The design managed to underline the historical identity of the city.

In a podcast by Realdania, the local shop and hotel owners in Marielyst describe how the new design has had a collective effect on the individual effort to maintain the different businesses' visual appearance (Realdania

2019). The shop owners explain how they are united in the effort of connecting to the same visual language. This new visual language is connected to the history of the seaside town. It has generated a collective effort to underline the narrative of the site. The enhanced identity by the new design, has caused an increase in tourism and a longer season of tourism. The large wooden terrace has worked as a reminder for the locals of their town's historical identity as a seaside holiday town.

### COMPENSATION IN CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Design can be used in cultural environments to underline the narrative of the site. When the narrative is enhanced, it can communicate the site-specific history to the local community. The development can be streamlined so that the municipality, businesses and local community maintain the cultural environment under the unison of the common narrative. The narrative is a counterpart to the collective identity.

In Figure 6, the diagram shows a cultural environment where the “life” is posing a threat, like the example of Antigua Guatemala. Two arrows point towards a second state of the cultural environment where the “life” has become a part of the development process and has gained knowledge about the cultural environment. In this example, the “life” in the cultural environment is a part of the preservation management. A synergy between the use of the cultural environment and the knowledge about the cultural environment can generate a sustainable preservation solution, as the malt factory in Ebeltoft and the seaside town of Marielyst exemplified (and maybe the city of Ballarat will exemplify in the future).

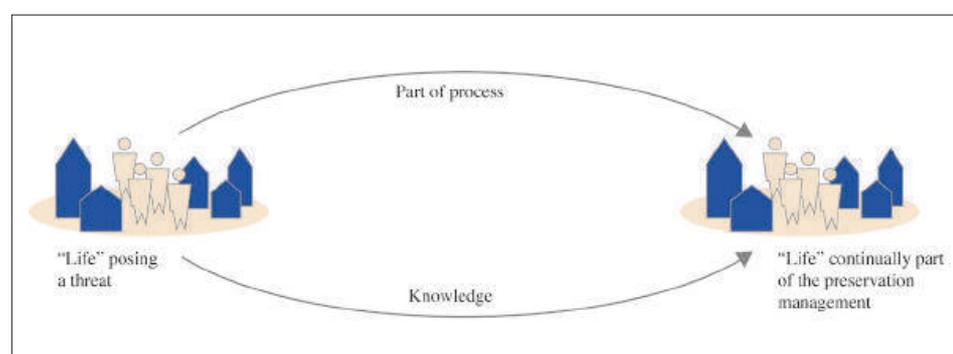


Figure 6. Diagram of “life” as informal preservation management. Source: Mathilde Kirkegaard.

The individual relation to the cultural environment can increase the interest in the development, and the collective understanding can streamline the efforts. When recognising the social layer in cultural environments, management needs to do the same. Compensating measures in relation to heritage can have many outcomes, and many case examples exemplify the physical compromises. When understanding heritage to contain social layers, the initial phase has to consider for whom the development is, and who is affected by the development? Hereafter the “product” of the compensation can be defined. Accordingly, the way in which people interact with the place and the value of the place, both individually and collectively, needs to be considered.

When compensating in heritage sites, e.g. cultural environments, the compensation has to be present in the process of alterations as part of the negotiations. An inclusive and informative process can in turn generate a streamlined development effort and a collective identity. A streamlined development effort can generate a continually evolving environment, but in a direction that builds upon the site-specific history. Likewise, the inclusion and knowledge without obligation can encourage a voluntary management effort.

A collective identity can be a “product” of the compensation – one of the aims in the negotiation process. The “product” of compensation measures are consequently not understood to be a physical added value. The compensation measures need to be a part of the process, to secure a local inclusion, and this can generate a compensation “product”: a strengthened collective identity tied to the specific site. The social view on compensation is rooted in the attempt to ensure that cultural heritage, besides securing the national historical interest, has a value for people today.

#### LIVELY CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Fred Scott underlines that when altering a historical building, there are both cultural, physical and special factors to be considered (Scott 2008:144). Scott describes historical buildings as “host” to a certain use, and to avoid demolishing or decay the building must host a new use or new life. This orientation is linked to compensation as a social matter, which, when incorporated into the alteration, can generate a sustainable preservation solution by the inclusion of the social network of the cultural environment. In the quote below, Scott underlines the link between the integration of new use and the historical frames:

*Change of use almost always requires spatial and physical changes. [...] most alteration occurs as a result of changes of use; this is the source of the new life of the building. The new use is one usually derived from expediency, from needs that may be outside of formal different and more complex in re-use than in pure architecture. This disjuncture has its value” (Scott 2008:171).*

The disjuncture between historical, physical frameworks and the social layer has value, and this value has been described in this text as a value to the individual and the collective understanding. The social layer can present a threat towards the cultural environment, but it can also be considered of great value to the continued preservation of the cultural environment. “Life” in cultural environments is equivalent to developing and continuing the life of the cultural environment.

The “life”-line of the cultural environment continues and is redefined, generating value in the present through the people in and around the site. The “life” can be a safeguard to the preservation, but the measures of preservation needs to be articulated on different levels: from citizen to preservation experts. The management balance of bottom-up and top-down, often used in urban developments, can be a relevant method in the matter of compensating for loss. This perspective on compensation outlines a compensation strategy, but the balance of bottom-up and top-down also generates a compensation “product”: a value for people today.

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