

CENTRAL PARK DRIVE

AKUREYRI'S GREAT AVENUE



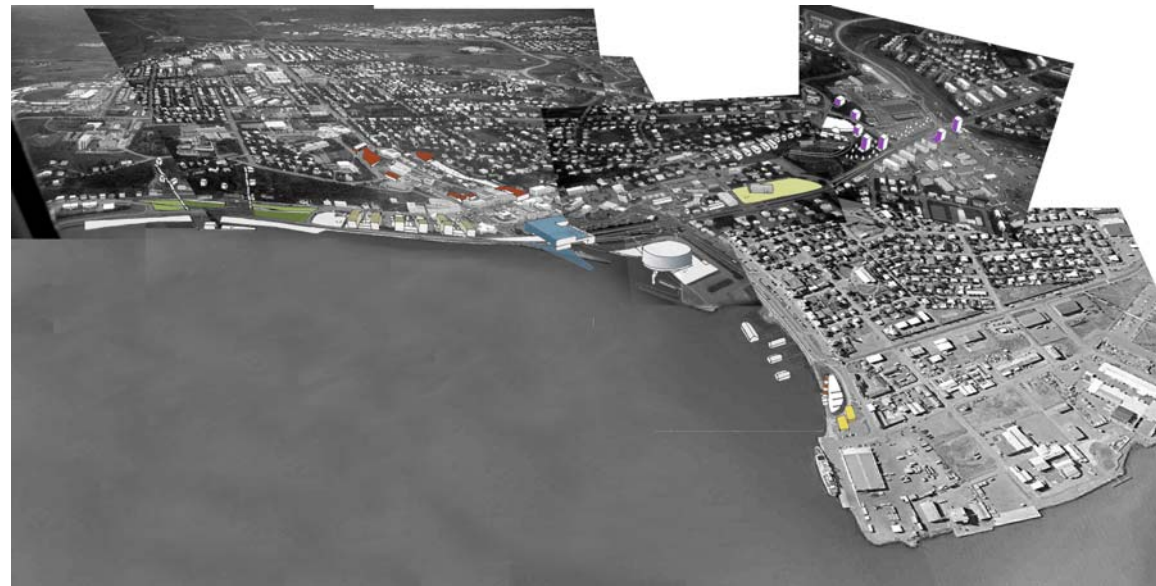
Highway n° 1



necklace



central park drive



URBAN NECKLACE :

Highway nr° 1 has spread a general urban condition all over the Icelandic territory. Being the major connective infrastructure it acts as a spine for urban equipments. The road collects landscape and hereby unifies both wild and cultivated sceneries along its verges. Dense urban fragments, more peripheral areas and vast natural voids are equally grafted onto its infrastructural body. The road is therefore flanked by a juxtaposition of different entities which are exposed to a multitude of conditions. A 'drive-by-perception' subsequently depicts an urban form which continuously evolves from a state of city to a state of land. Highway nr°1 thus reassembles Icelandic scenic diversity into an 'urban necklace'.

AKUREYRI'S GREAT AVENUE. CENTRAL PARK DRIVE

Akureyri's central area consists of a linear strip along Highway nr°1. The area can be read as a distinctive zone within the overall urban structure. Highway nr° 1 here becomes Akureyri's 'Great Avenue'.

In the first place it is mainly characterized by a continuous change of open spaces, pictorial views and shifting horizons. On the second hand it has strong demarcated outlines on which the city's major urban equipments are plugged. The strip is almost completely defined by clear edges: in the west, Brekkan slope acts as a steep corridor in between lowertown and uppertown. In the east Hordafjörður creates a shore front and in the north the river creates a physical barrier.

By the simple act of considering Highway nr° 1 as a central park drive, every scattered fragment, whether built or unbuilt, whether large or small, becomes a pictorial entity, a unique precious stone of the urban necklace.

3 major spheres are perpendicularly grafted onto Highway nr°1: the landfill in the south, the major strip descending from Grófgarði and Skátagili to Strandgata and finally a sphere reaching from Strandgata to the river and the Glerartog shopping mall in the north.

TOWNSCAPE

How to design a townscape which is related to the very pictorial morphology of Akureyri's settings? How to design an artificial landscape as an integrated part of nature's topography?

Akureyri's major defining tripartite are the road, the water and the slope.

Along the Great Avenue, every single fragment bears upon the three essential elements in a different way. By enhancing the differences between each part, the entire image gains quality. This urban pars pro toto technique also has the advantage that a partial realisation doesn't necessarily mean failure. According to market, political and demographic evolution, the whole scheme can become visible. *The great avenue as a long run.*

URBAN ATMOSPHERE

The scheme wishes to generate a more dense urban atmosphere welcoming 15 000 potential new inhabitants.

If Akureyri lacks an amount of urbanity, it is mainly because of three reasons:

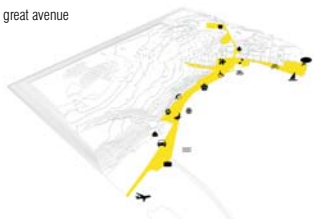
- a general idea of sprawl: the whole city is laid out and lacks hierarchy.
- a lack of enclosure: un- or weakly defined public space.
- generic housing, a typologic stamp being repeated in endless siedlungen, most of the time denying specific conditions and potential

The above mentioned idea of the Great Avenue achieves an alternative for the sprawl. It is clear that by capturing all fragments into a central park drive structure, the sprawl is incorporated and organised in some way.

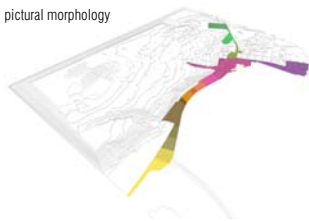
By concentrating, densifying and exaggerating existing public structures, a firmer and more enclosed public space is achieved. The individual schemes focus on the particularities of every part.

Plugged on to this new definition of public ground, new and atypological housing is introduced. Although it is beyond the intention of this competition to show every possibility, yet a few examples are worked out.

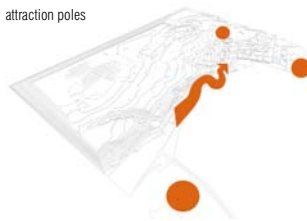
great avenue

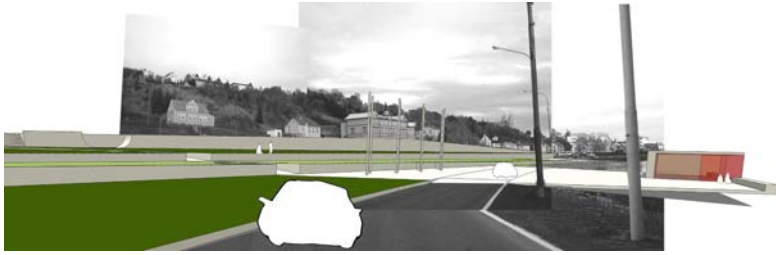


pictorial morphology



attraction poles





The landfill is conceived as a terraced parkstrip, a cultivated landscape which establishes better relationships between land, road (H1) and water. The terraces descend from Brekkan slope down to Hordalfjordur-shoreside, creating alternative links between city center, theater, schools, the botanic garden and the shoreside. By integrating terraced houses and public passages within the underused Brekkan slope, its 'qualities as a major belvedere' will be reinforced. To 'activate' the links through the area, new activities will be added such as a fishing club at the waterside, a pic-nic-meadow along the road, a skatepark, a playground and an open air theater integrated within the terraces. ... Relations with the road are made in two ways. Generally the road is as an autonomous terrace, pedestrians and cyclists are separated from car traffic, profiting from generous views on the water. At the fishing club a second relation is made: the road gets integrated within the terraced structure allowing the road to be crossed and hereby giving direct access to the waterside. Landscape is materialized through a mixture of mineral and green surface. Terraces are conceived in concrete, thus cutting sharp edges into the landscape and allowing the integrating of stairs and streetfurniture within the general conception of the landscape. The waterbank is conceived as a natural shore, by planting reed at the shore, birds get a place to nestle and fishing gets a more intimate sphere.

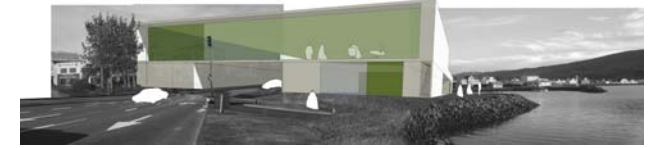
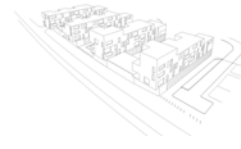
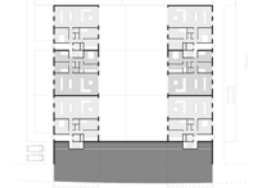


LANDFILL



AUSTURBRÚ

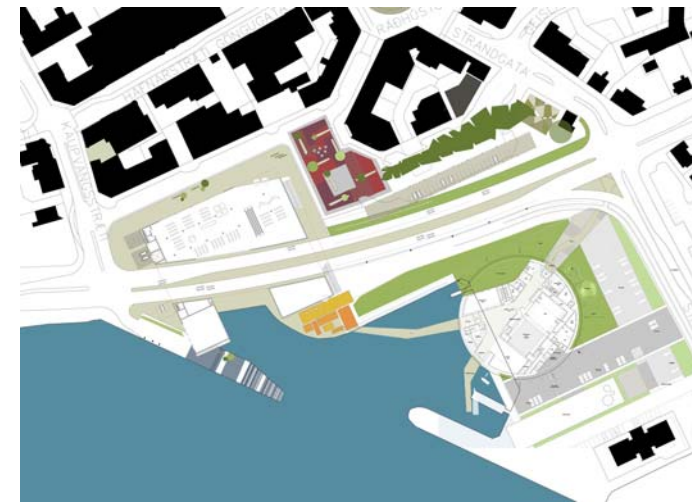
The area of Austurbú is conceived as an urban strip which will upgrade the programmatic density within the city centre. The added building mass will increase the enclosure of public space and thus reintroduce a new scale more suitable for housing. In order to create views and perspectives on Hordalfjordur, volumes are positioned perpendicular to the waterline, hereby integrating the existing buildings within the general scheme. In order to create a 'boardwalk' the level of the strip is situated half a level above Highway nr 1 and thus offers undisturbed views on the fjord. The strip can contain an underground parking facility and will hereby avoid the loss of parking places within the city centre. In order to generate strong links with the rest of the city centre retail stores are situated along the boardwalk creating an urban atmosphere along the road. The existing busparking is integrated within the area at the end of the boardwalk and is therefore more intensively linked to the rest of the city centre. Heights of the buildings and distances in between are measured on sunlight and orientation. The entire project could host up to 80 or 90 new families. The plan consists of 2 or 3 bedroom appartments and provides private terraces and gardens both facing south.



In order to increase the special enclosure and programmatic definition of Akureyri's existing urban centre a new building is conceived at the crossing of Kaupvangstraeti, Skipagata street and Glerargata. As a 'supernode building' it embraces both Highway nr.1 and the old port, it creates a central plaza in between the New Culturehouse and the buildingblock of Skipigata street, and defines a clear endmark to Kaupvangstraeti. The building will hereby reshape Akureyri's public domain into a triangular constellation and it will create an interface between both road and water. The building was therefore conceived as a wide pedestrian bridge, as an 'elevated plaza'. The main program of the building is a 5000m² grocerystore. Both groundlevel and first level are dedicated to shopping, additional facilities can be developed: a harbour house will re-establish the relation between city and port and can be added at the side of the old port. At the side of the Culturehouse a cafeteria on groundlevel and a restaurant on the first level could become additional activities for both cultural and commercial programs. Within this context the grocery store could be seen as the economic sidekick, as the counterpart for the cultural centre while the entire program could be considered as part of leisure shopping. The central plaza in between Skipagata, Hofsbót and the grocerystore will become a 'stage' for public urban life, a podium on which different planned and accidental temporary events can take place. The central plaza is directly connected to Kaupvangstraeti and indirectly to Skítagi thus allowing quick access from uppertown. An additional connection to lowertown-Strandgata will be made as the central plaza evolves through the grocery-store-building and folds over H1. Hofsbót will be organized as the central busstop together with an additional short term parking area and a kiss and ride-zone, directly plugging visitors into the central area. Parking facilities can to a large extent be placed underneath the grocerystore and the central plaza thus contributing to a maximum accessibility of the central parkdrive.



SKIPAGATA - HOFSBÓT



0	9	0	8	7	6

K A U P V A N G S T R A E T I S K Á T A G I L

The area is part of the central ribbon-structure which is perpendicularly grafted onto the central parkdrive and which descends from Grófargil down to Strandgata. Within our overall approach this smaller strip constitutes an important link between upper- and lower town. The strip connects the Borunnarstræti - 'service boulevard' (swimmingpool, sportcomplex, campground,...) and the 'commercial centre' around central plaza. Consequently the area represents a considerable amount of daily movements. In order to improve the overall quality of these links and movements, the existing spatial and functional relationships are reinforced by means of a connective system of punctual terraced interventions.

Kaupvangstraeti is improved on 3 locations:

1. at the top: a Belvédère-plaza is created to improve the link towards the duckpond and to slow down descending traffic before taking the slope. The intervention creates a shelter at the duckpond with a panoramic view on Akureyri. The shelter in front of the shelter lies the 'artplaza' where Akureyri's artworks can be exposed as a link to the museum, where people can stroll and take a rest. The plaza is equipped with benches, a bicycle storage and flowerbeds. The existing trees can be integrated within the partly terraced structure.

2. in the middle: a new building is conceived in front of the former KEA koop on the head of the lower buildingblock. The volume reinforces the existing street perspective and creates extra square metres for commercial or cultural facilities. In order to keep the public domain open, an additional parking is created on the roof. The parking is to be accessed in the back on the level of the church.

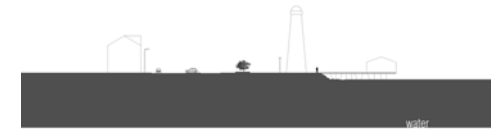


3. in front of the church: a public podium is created on top of a parking lot, it rises out from the slope creating a terrace which constitutes of a major open space facing the Museum-building-cluster, the terrace evolves into a new frontbuilding which faces Kaupvangstraeti and which can house offices, shops and houses. The terrace is accessible on two points and links the Kaupmanstraeti with the Gilsbakkavegur by means of a wide public staircase. The podium can as well be used for the exhibition of artworks as for different kinds of planned and unplanned temporary events. It is equipped with benches.

Skatagil is improved on 2 locations, the area remains green and has a recreational use: sledging in winter....

1. at the top: a small plaza is created along Oddeyrgata to improve the entrance into the green area. The plaza creates a restpoint. The surface of the terrace evolves into a 'benchwall' (cf. Parc Guell) which gives a demarcation to the edge of Skatagil in the north. At the bottom, the benchwall evolves into a footbridge which gives access to a new building at the bottom of Skatagil.

2. at the bottom: to generate a comfortable link upto Gilsbakkavegur a new building is created in combination with a public domain along Hafnarstraeti. Public space evolves through the building in the form of a staircase which gives access to the footbridge and to Gilsbakkavegur via the roof. The steep green slope of Skatagil climbs up around the building, above the footbridge and creates an entrance-gate into the area. Different functions such as shops, a cafeteria, a newspaperkiosk, a musiciosk, housing offices,... can be integrated within the building.



S T R A N D G A T A

The area is part of the central ribbon-structure which is perpendicularly grafted onto the central parkdrive and which descends from Grófargil. Within our overall approach this linear strip constitutes an important link between land and water. In order to generate a more intensive atmosphere, benefitting from the idea of a waterfront, the existing multitude of roads is reduced to a smaller profile. In that way Strandgata becomes an urban boardwalk, along the shore of Hordafjörður.

A small marina, a sailing club and boathouse and a lighthouse mark a temporary end to this walk.

The existing parking spaces are captured in green dikes.

By this asymmetrical orientation, the focus of the boardwalk shifts towards the horizon.

Small piers offer the ability for housing and/or catering facilities, thus introducing a total new scale of public space. Here again the differences are emphasized, even exaggerated in order to define more enclosed areas: tiny spots vs. the giant floor.

It is clear that the development of the cultural house can work as a kick-start for the appraisal of Strandgata as a real part of town.



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GLERÁRTORG - AKUREYRI FIELD

ANNEXATION OF GLERARTOG SHOPPING MALL as an integrated part of the Central Park drive

continuing Brekkugata into the shopping mall area => Brekkugata as a street for local commercial activities which runs along the facade of the shopping mall
redefinition of the parking lot as an urban field, equipping the area for manifestations, events, potentially exploiting the field as a drive-in cinema using billboard as movie screen, integration of vegetation within the parking lot visually linking the area with Akureyri-field, demarcation of the zone with new and higher building volumes which mark the edge of the river (business center/housing), creating a public sphere down at the riverside adjacent to the parking lot and continuous underneath the bridge linking it to the other verge of the road, integration of a giant fountain as a landmark, hereby creating a stepping stone for the development of a landscape park adjacent to the river, park could generate an alternative link for pedestrians and cyclists between the university and the central park-drive

AKUREYRI FIELD: LEAVING THE VOID OPEN

further development as a public park a place for family-recreation: walking, sports, playgrounds, skate area, gathering,...
reinforcing the park by leaving the void mainly open and redefining vegetation, activating the landscape qualities by grafting new houses onto the edges of the park, densification of Brekkanslope along Brekkugata, introduction of a terraced and middle-high housing typology anchored within the context of the slope facing the park and the shopping mall area extending the existing tribunes into an accessible terraced public structure, integrating Eiosvollur within the park, reversely creating visual and functional links

CREATING A TRANSITION ZONE BETWEEN PARK AND URBAN PLAZA

creating a transition zone between park and urban plaza, introduction of a green finger coming out of the park into the square at the Landsbankareitur, generating more shelter and giving a back to the houses of the Brekkugata.
town hall: definition of public sphere: the sphere around town hall is conceived as a mineral square (dolomite), demarcated by a dense mass of trees, the spot performs as a more quiet zone within the park, also the edges the building block above town hall can be defined more strongly by the use of vegetation. the car park can be concentrated in the back and organized by a grid of trees
enclosing building block Sjállareitur: the building block situated at the edge of Hofsbót is strongly fragmented, public space demands for a stricter definition, since the block is adjacent to the central plaza area, it also has a clear relation to the smaller scaled Strandgata area as the old houses are continuous within the block.
In order to combine these conditions it needs a more urban character with a stronger enclosure, in order to demarcate the public domain the block is densified incrementally taking all existing buildings and activities into account.

