

The architect's evolving role in shaping social welfare

Optimizing positive impact in public
housing areas

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Fig. 1. *Lundtoftegade*, by Daniela Kietz

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the role of the architect in society by exploring methods used to resolve social dilemmas in public housing communities. Evolving social needs and changes in ethical values invites to reevaluate the architect's role, in order to optimize positive social impact. The research sought out to explore different methods of social development and rethink alternative social roles and responsibilities for the profession.

First, the analysis is focused on the contextual framework needed to solve the research question. It addresses the architect's evolving role and responsibilities, the image of a welfare state and the ghetto list. Secondly, examples of efforts made to facilitate social development are divided into three scales: large-, medium- and small-scales of intervention. Examples are derived from two neighbourhoods: Gellerup (Aarhus) and Lundtoftegade (Copenhagen). The analysis utilizes resources from literature and interviews to analyse the outcome of these methods.

The paper concludes that the relationship between the architect, users and trans-disciplinary practices illuminate the path for the future role of the architect and long-term successful development projects.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2007 a new masterplan was created to diversify and reduce the amount of social housing in Gellerup. This "Massive physical conversion"¹ marked the initiation of the 'ghetto package' affecting other exposed residential areas that had been on the 'ghetto list' for more than 5 consecutive years. The rapid, significant changes echoed a negative community response as new forms of insecurity emerged due to gentrification and loss of place identity. In 2018, the neighbourhood of Lundtoftegade was placed on the list for the second time. Shocked and saddened by the stigma that was placed upon them, the community took action against the impending physical consequences. Community efforts succeeded, leading to a removal from the list in December of 2020. To maintain this new image, the housing association sought funding to finance an infrastructure development project. Revisions of this project would later become an example of a collaborative success among amateurs, architects, and residents.

The traditional role of the architectural profession faces new challenges as the world rapidly transforms due to factors such as population growth, environmental concerns, aging demographics, urbanization, and technological advancements.² Modern-day projects' scale and complexity requires collaboration between fields for success. This paper believes that the re-evaluation of professional practices is necessary to eliminate the risk of repeating mistakes, wasting resources and stalling development. Consequently, evolving social needs and changes in ethical values necessitate an evolution of the architect's role to optimize positive social impact.

This research paper investigates the architect's role by analysing methods for social development in exposed residential areas. The historical role of the profession, unconventional methods and alternative social roles in society are explored through literature. Interviews are utilized to paint a picture of the tools available for positive social impact from both the perspective of the architect and the resident.

¹ Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer m.fl., "Gellerup", i *Gellerup* (København : Aarhus: Arkitektens Forlag ; Arkitektskolen Aarhus, 2021), 315.

² Ashraf M. Salama, "The Architect, the Profession, and Society ", i *Transformative Pedagogy in Architecture and Urbanism*, Routledge Revivals (Routledge (Taylor & Francis), 2021), 53–79, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349680394_The_Architect_the_Profession_and_Society.

Research question

This essay aims to investigate the role of the architect by addressing the following research question:

What do methods used to resolve social dilemmas in public housing communities reveal about the architect's role in society?

This research question is grounded in the hypothesis that the architectural profession must take on greater ethical responsibility over project facilitation and re-evaluate its traditional social role. From large scale gentrification projects to small scale community interventions, what is the architect's role in this context?

METHOD

Structure

This essay will explore the research question through a diverse range of social development projects. It focuses on identifying the role of the architect in relation to interventions used in public housing areas. The first section of the paper covers relevant historical information about the profession and social context. The second section analyses the footprint of the architect on development projects executed in Gellerup and Lundtoftegade. Supporting the exploration are works and theories from various authors and interviews both from the perspective of the architect and the resident.

Method, empirics and theory

To answer the research question, this essay will use 2 main methods of information gathering.

1. Literature

Aiding in the analysis are the works from Sidse Martens Gudmar-Høye and Aarhus School of Architecture, Claus Bech-Danielsen and Marie Stender, Ashraf M. Salama, Aske Kvist Tybirk and Søren-Emil Schütt, among others. A majority of the works and theories challenge the traditional role of the architect and open up for discussion about alternative social roles.

2. Interviews

An integral part of this essay are the interviews of Sune Oslev and Søren-Emil Schütt. Co-founder and partner of the architecture office MASU Planning, Sune Oslev expands on his role as designer and his view on what makes a successful project. Active member of Nørrebro United, co-founder of Til Vægs and active member of AKB København, Søren-Emil Schütt provides knowledge from the perspective of the resident.

Furthermore, the role and presence of the architect will be explored through various scales of intervention. The 'scale' is constructed by specific examples for this essay. It is used as a tool to organise and compare a range of physical to non-physical intervention and explore the involvement of the architect.

Large scale interventions: Removal of existing buildings, addition of new structures, prominent infrastructure changes and privatization. Example: Gellerupplanen.

Medium scale interventions: Addition of new structures, light infrastructure changes and landscaping. Example: Lundtoftegade rainwater management project.

Small scale interventions: Non-physical interventions, creation of new activities, clubs and increase in social support. Example: Til Vægs, Café Lunden.

ANALYSIS

Terminology

KAB: "Københavns Almindelige Boligselskab" (established in 1920 by F.C. Boldsen, 2007 fusion with AKB)³

AKB: "Arbejdernes Kooperative Boligselskab" (established 1913 by Frits Ortman, 2007 fusion with KAB)⁴

Society: noun: an organized group of persons associated together for religious,

³ "I KAB", *KAB's Historie*, set 30. oktober 2023, <https://www.kab-bolig.dk/om-kab/kab-faellesskabet/kabs-historie>.

⁴ KAB, *KAB's Historie*

benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes.⁵

Public housing: form of government-subsidized housing. Public housing often provides homes to people who earn significantly less than the average national income, though some countries do not set income ceilings.⁶

Ghetto: noun: a section of a city, especially a thickly populated slum area, inhabited predominantly by members of an ethnic or other minority group, often as a result of social pressures or economic hardships.⁷

Association: noun: an organization of people with a common purpose and having a formal structure.⁸

Image: Informal. to create an image for (a company, public figure, etc.): The candidate had to be imaged before being put on the campaign trail.⁹

Context

The architects' evolving role and responsibilities

The conventional role of the architect faces new challenges due to rapid changes in the modern world: expanding populations, environmental concerns, aging demographics, urbanization, and technological advancements.¹⁰ Chad B. Jones's research paper: *The Role of the Architect: Canges of the Past, Practices of the Present, and Indications of the Future*¹¹, discusses causes to the historical evolution of the profession, diminishing responsibility in contemporary processes and its relation to industry fragmentation. Jones points

⁵ "Society Definition & Meaning", *Dictionary.Com*, set 10. september 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/Society>.

⁶ Rachel G. Bratt, "Public Housing | Affordable, Low-Income, Subsidized | Britannica", *Britannica.Com*, 27. juli 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-housing>.

⁷ "Ghetto Definition & Meaning", *Dictionary.Com*, set 10. september 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/ghetto>.

⁸ "Association Definition & Meaning", *Dictionary.Com*, set 10. september 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/association>.

⁹ "Image Definition & Meaning", *Dictionary.Com*, set 12. september 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/image>.

¹⁰ Ashraf M. Salama, *Architect, Profession and Society*, 58

¹¹ Chad B. Jones, "The Role of the Architect: Canges of the Past, Practices of the Present, and Indications of the Future" (Theses and Dissertations, Brigham Young Univeristy, 2006), <https://scholar.archive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1394&context=etd>.

out that technological advancements in the nineteenth century made projects grow in size and complexity. The demand for architects had increased parallel to living standards, transforming architectural design into a business in need of organization.

Specialization was needed in new materials and techniques, resulting in industry-fragmentation. Consequently, the design-construction process separated into specific design and construction phases. These were led by other professionals¹² including artists, interior designers, landscape architects and project managers. Ashraf M. Salama explores in the chapter *The Architect, the Profession, and Society* chapter within the book *Transformative Pedagogy in Architecture and Urbanism* the contemporary needs associated with architecture.¹³ According to him, accelerating social diversity, environmental challenges and technological advancement necessitate a redefinition of the role.

Social changes and increasingly complex projects open up for the profession to explore alternative social roles and methods. An example of these alternative methods is the concept of 'Image care' which is being explored in the book *Fra Ghetto til Blandet By* by Claus Bech-Danielsen and Marie Stender. 'Image care' refers to methods used to change the perception of a specific area. It is usually combined with physical alterations to the buildings and infrastructure of the area with the goal of creating a brighter image to the outside and pride on the inside. These measures can vary from collaborations with artists and media, the creation of events inviting other neighborhoods from the surrounding area and even changing the name of the area, according to new infrastructure being build and changes of addresses.¹⁴ The authors mention Engen & Ådalen, 'La douchère – naturellement Lyon' and Park Hill where renaming and storytelling is combined with other physical and social interventions.

The image of a welfare state

Modern welfare state models are shaped by their historical circumstances and characterized by social, political, economic, and demographic factors. Established welfare states are upheld by institutions managing societal

¹² Chad B. Jones, *Role of the Architect*, 1-101

¹³ Ashraf M. Salama, *Architect, Profession and Society*, 53-79

¹⁴ Claus Bech-Danielsen og Marie Stender, *Fra ghetto til blandet by*, 1. udgave. ([København]: Gads Forlag, 2017), 194-95.

expectations and supporting the economy and labour market.¹⁵ These ideas and their relation to social inclusion are discussed in Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Pærregaard's book *The question of integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State* (2011)¹⁶. The book describes the birth of the Danish welfare state, marked by the Social Reform Act in 1933 during a time of political instability in Europe. Through the coordination of national policies "universal schemes" were established, the main pillars of the Scandinavian welfare model. The schemes contributed to the then accepted image of the Danish society; unity and social homogeneity. Steffen Jöhncke argues that ".../ Denmark is held together not just by the mutual identification and trust of the inhabitants of the country, but also by culturally defined mutual interests in certain economic and practical arrangements, and that the two sides are closely linked."¹⁷ This perspective enhances the welfare states apprehension towards immigration and fear of 'breaking' the linguistic, religious and ethnic homogeneity. The urge to upkeep this homogeneity is expressed in a quote from the Danish government in the book Gellerup: "In Denmark, we have for generations built a safe, rich and free society /.../ We must not accept parallel societies in Denmark. We must change the areas where Danish values are not fully established. We must intervene in the areas that are closed off from the surrounding society."¹⁸

But why is the image of welfare important? Creating a systematic and reliable image of a nation aims to strengthen internal and external political support and international influence.¹⁹ These basic outcomes of a positive image can also be applied on a national, community and individual level: increased growth, confidence, connection and approachability. A negative image can isolate a neighbourhood, fostering loneliness and hindering development.²⁰

The significance of image is exemplified in Gellerups and Lundtoftegades history with the ghetto list. Here, consequences of a negative image are physical

15 Karen Fog Olwig og Karsten Paerregaard, red., *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 39

16 Olwig, Karen Fog, and Pærregaard, Karsten, eds., *The Question of Integration*, 30-50

17 Olwig, Karen Fog, and Pærregaard, Karsten, eds., *The Question of Integration*, 35

18 Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer et al., *Gellerup*, 304.

19 L Godinho og N Teixeira, "National Image in the Age of Mass Self-Communication: An Analysis of Internet Users' Perception of Portugal", *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering* 9, nr. 6 (2015), <https://repositorio.ual.pt/bitstream/11144/4458/1/GodinhoLnationalImage.pdf>.

20 Terri Mannarini m.fl., "Image of Neighborhood, Self-Image and Sense of Community", *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 26, nr. 3 (september 2006): 202-14, doi:10.1016/j.jenvp.2006.07.008.

in the form of gentrification and significant alterations to the area. But, the process of regaining homogeneity risks negatively affecting the place identity of an area, characteristics that makes a neighborhood unique and plays a big role in individual and collective understanding of self.²¹

The ghetto list as a tool

The ghetto list has played a massive role in the perception of public housing communities in Denmark since its creation in October of 2010. In 2022, 17 residential areas were defined as exposed housing areas, 10 of them parallel societies and 9 transformation areas. Lastly, in 2021, an additional list of 'prevention areas' was added which comprises of 67 residential areas in 2022.²²

An exposed residential area is defined by minimum 1000 residents who collectively fulfil at least two of the following criteria:

1. The proportion of residents aged 18-64 who are neither in work nor in education exceeds 40%. Calculated as an average over the past 2 years.
2. The proportion of residents who have been convicted of breaching the Penal Code, Weapons Act or Act on Intoxicating Substances is at least 3 times the national average, calculated as an average over the past 2 years.
3. The proportion of residents aged 30-59 who only have a basic education exceeds 60% of total residents in that age group.
4. The average gross income for tax payers aged 15-64 in the area (excluding people applying for education) is less than 55% of the average gross income for the same group in the region.

A parallel society (formerly known as ghetto) is an exposed area where also:

5. The proportion of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries exceeds 50%.

21 Terri Mannarini m.fl., *Image of Neighborhood*

22 Susan Fiil Præstegaard, "Hvem er på listen over udsatte boligområder (den tidligere 'ghettolisten') 2022?", *BL.dk* (BL - Danmarks Almene Boliger, 10. april 2023), <https://bl.dk/politik-og-analyser/temaer/her-er-listen-over-parallelsamfund/>.

A transformation area (formerly known as hard ghetto) is an area that has been defined as a parallel society for more than 5 years in a row. 'Prevention areas' are defined as any area where the proportion of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries exceeds 30% and two of the following criteria are met:

1. The proportion of residents aged 18-64 who are neither in work nor in education exceeds 30%. Calculated as an average over the past 2 years.
2. The proportion of residents who have been convicted of breaching the Penal Code, Weapons Act or Act on Intoxicating Substances is at least 2 times the national average, calculated as an average over the past 2 years.
3. The proportion of residents aged 30-59 who only have a basic education exceeds 60% of total residents in that age group.
4. The average gross income for tax payers aged 15-64 in the area (excluding people applying for education) is less than 65% of the average gross income for the same group in the region.

In 2018 the latest version of the 'Ghetto-package' was introduced. Housing associations affiliated to the 15 'hard ghetto' areas were demanded to bring down the percentage of public housing to 40% before the year 2030.²³ Housing associations were presented a variety of choices including demolishing public housing, creating new construction for private rental, converting public housing into senior or student housing and selling public housing to private owners.²⁴

The list and the usage of the word 'ghetto' has been heavily accused of stigmatizing and creating a negative narrative of communities.²⁵ In his interview Søren-Emil Schütt, resident at Lundtoftegade, means that the list also holds a racist connotation saying: "Though it doesn't concern me as much I can feel the stigma too. But there are some people who absolutely suffer from it, because you are creating a narrative about residential areas as 'black spots' on the map. /.../ the Danish legislation has been implemented with force in these areas because "gangs have taken over"...I mean it doesn't fully make sense. And

23 Præstegaard, *Hvem er på listen*

24 Præstegaard, *Hvem er på listen*

25 Kietz Daniela, "How Does MASU Planning Contribute to the Perception of Lundtoftegade and What Are the Relationships between Narratives and Stakeholders Involved in the Project?", 15. juni 2021.

there are a lot of people who suffer from it, face difficulties in finding work because of it. So this stigma takes up insane space in peoples lives who live here. Non-Westeners exclusively, right? Because they are the ones affected by the racism."²⁶ (Søren-Emil Schütt)

The issues surrounding the list continues to be discussed across multiple platforms. Lecturer Troels Schultz Larsen from Roskilde University, in his article "*Lektor: 'Riv Den Ghetto-liste Ned, Hr. Minister'*" (2018) critiques the list for creating a false image, stigmatizes and punishes the community. Larsen calls the list 'worthless' and 'counterproductive' and notes how the list ignores important structural factors such as globalisation, the labour market and housing market.²⁷ So why does the list exist? According to the same source, the government claims that the aim of the list is to "/.../ identify and solve the ghetto problems as well as being able to follow the development and monitor the effects of interventions in these areas."²⁸

Scales of Intervention

Large scale interventions: Gellerupplanen

In *Gellerup* (2021)²⁹, authors describe the profound transformation project, Gellerupplanen, emphasizing the role architecture has played in shaping this particular parallel society. Part three, *The transformation (Transformationen)* pin points certain architectural features in the masterplan. In 2007 a new masterplan, described as a "Massive physical conversion"³⁰ was initiated in Aarhus municipality. The primary goal was to diversify the residential composition and reduce social housing to 30% by 2030. Emphasis was laid on the construction of new 'iconic buildings' which were going to symbolize the new business and create a varied typology. One of the most prominent changes, involved the construction of the new gate on Edwin Rahrs Vej. The gate, which is covered by golden aluminium sheets, was supposed to both bring infrastructural value

26 Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

27 Troels Schultz Larsen, "Lektor: 'Riv den ghetto-liste ned, hr. minister'", *By og Bolig* (Altinget, 28. januar 2018), <https://www.altinget.dk/by/artikel/lektor-riv-den-liste-ned-hr-minister>.

28 Troels Schultz Larsen, *Riv den ghetto-liste ned*

29 Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer et al., *Gellerup*, 5-406

30 Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer et al., *Gellerup*, 315.

as well as symbolize an “.../opened and changed.”³¹ Gellerup. The symbolic meanings are described in the book *Gellerup* and by the architecture offices *Vandkunsten*³² and *TRANSFORM*. The gates have also been referred to resemble Johan Otto von Spreckelsens triumph arc in Paris.³³

The research made for this paper stumbles upon 2 interesting observations: The negative response by the community and misinterpretation of symbolism. The first observation is brought forward in the book *Gellerup*. It reads “.../that today new forms of insecurity are experienced by the residents of Gellerup. Firstly the uncertainty about whether you, as a resident, will be forced to move from your home; secondly, that as a resident you are to a greater extent uncertain whether the people you meet in the common areas are residents and thus implicitly part of the community, or whether they are outsiders; and thirdly; that there is now passing traffic in the residential area, which poses a greater danger to the children.”³⁴

The second observation regards the historical resemblance between the gates of Gellerup and the Golden Gate in Jerusalem. The ‘Golden Gate’ is the oldest of eight gates in Jerusalem estimated to have been built between the 520s AD and the 7th century.³⁵ The gate has great significance in both Jewish, Christian and Muslim beliefs. Conflicting religious beliefs led to the establishment of the present day Muslim cemetery, guarding the front of the gate.³⁶ What makes the connection between these two gates eerie is their shared history of religious and ethnic conflicts. Without assuming meaning behind this specific design decision, it can be agreed on the basis of common knowledge that designing elements for a diverse group of residents increases the importance of considering how architecture can be perceived. Who should take responsibility over the response?

In his interview, Søren-Emil Schütt sheds light on the balance between values

31 Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer et al., *Gellerup*, 327.

32 “Portene til Gellerup”, *Vandkunsten*, set 19. september 2023, <https://vandkunsten.com/projects/portene-til-gellerup>.

33 Grønvald Henrik, “Triumfbuen i Aarhus: Gellerup får en byport”, *Jyllands-Posten*, 5. maj 2017, <https://jyllands-posten.dk/jpaarhus/ECE9555330/en-triumfbue-for-en-ny-bydel/>.

34 Sidse Martens Gudmand-Høyer et al., *Gellerup*, 341-342.

35 Mavro, “The Golden Gate of the Holy City of Jerusalem ASH - Abrahamic Study Hall”, *ASH - Abrahamic Study Hall*, 25. december 2017, <https://www.abrahamicstudyhall.org/2017/12/25/the-golden-gate/>.

36 “Jerusalem’s GOLDEN GATE History & Prophecy”, Blog, *Magdalene Publishing* (Magdalene Publishing, 5. november 2017), <http://www.magdalenepublishing.org/blog/jeruselems-golden-gate-history-prophecy/>.



Fig. 3. *Portene til Gellerup*, by Vandkunsten

and ethics in a capitalist society. He recites: “I read an article where some large, design firm was saying: ‘We draw what the market want’s us to draw.’ /.../ I mean, why aren’t there design offices that say ‘We don’t want to be involved in this’ or something like that, ‘We shouldn’t demolish old buildings and build new ones’/.../ Why aren’t there critical architects who in some way say ‘Here is something we certainly could make money on, but ethically and for other reasons, we will not participate.’ And that’s bad for business, but maybe it’s also bad for the society.”³⁷ (Søren-Emil Schütt) Schütt emphasizes that though intentions might be pure, firms are understandably ought to prioritize monetary gain. Perhaps the increased size and complexity of projects, number of stakeholders and professionals makes it difficult to pinpoint where the responsibility lies. Could the architectural profession acquire a stronger presence over the facilitation of their designs and play a larger role in bridging the gap between the physical and the social?

Medium scale interventions: From Lundtoftegade LAR-project to Nørrebro Samles på Banen

When Lundtoftegade was included on the Ghetto list in 2018, a request for approx. 60-70 million Danish crowns was made to the national building fund to finance an infrastructure upgrade in the area. The primary goal was to enhance the connectivity to other neighbourhoods with emphasis infrastructure and increased activity. However, in December of 2020, Lundtoftegade was removed from the ghetto list and state funds were retracted. Therefore, the application of funds was re-directed towards HOFOR (Hovedstadsområdets Forsyningsselskab: Greater Copenhagen Utility). The new project had to be presented as an attractive asset in the larger masterplan for Copenhagen. MASU Planning, led by founding partners Malin Blomqvist and Sune Oslev, was invited to act as advisor and conveyor of the housing associations vision.

In his interview, Sune Oslev explains that the strategy was to transform the high-rise area with large open spaces into a rainwater recipient for all surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the plan was politically complicated, and with other structural projects being executed in the same area, the municipality eventually declined the proposal. This meant that all remaining funding was now coming from the housing company (KAB) or housing association (Lundtoftegade)

³⁷ Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

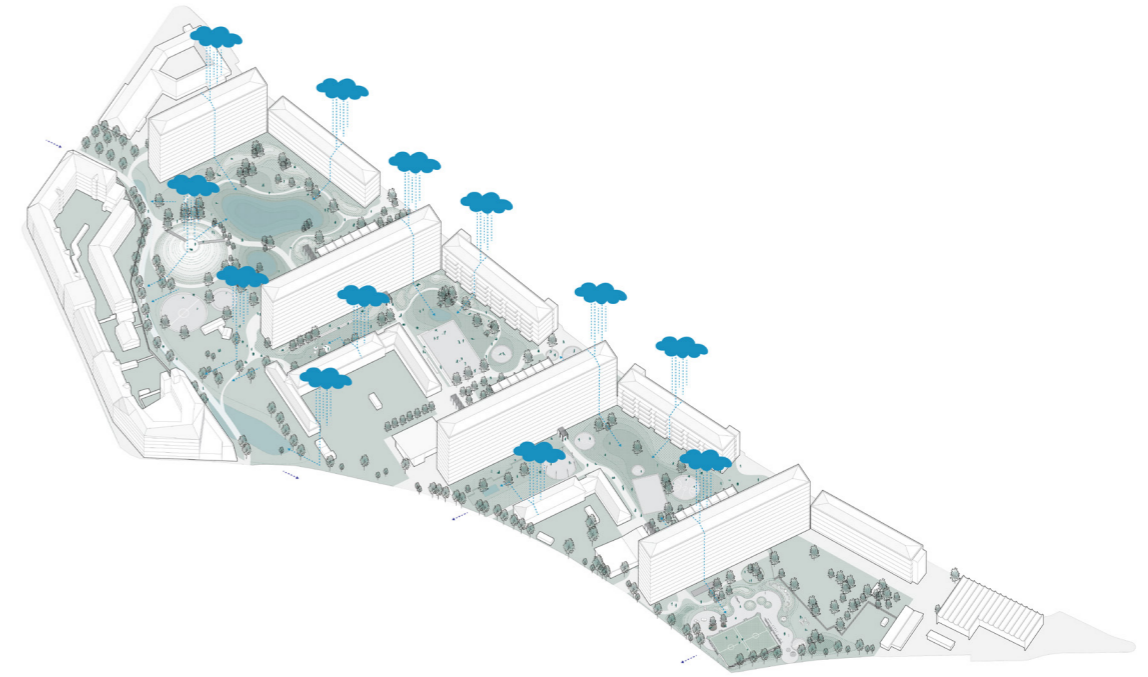


Fig. 3. LAR Flooded Axo 1:1000, by MASU Planning

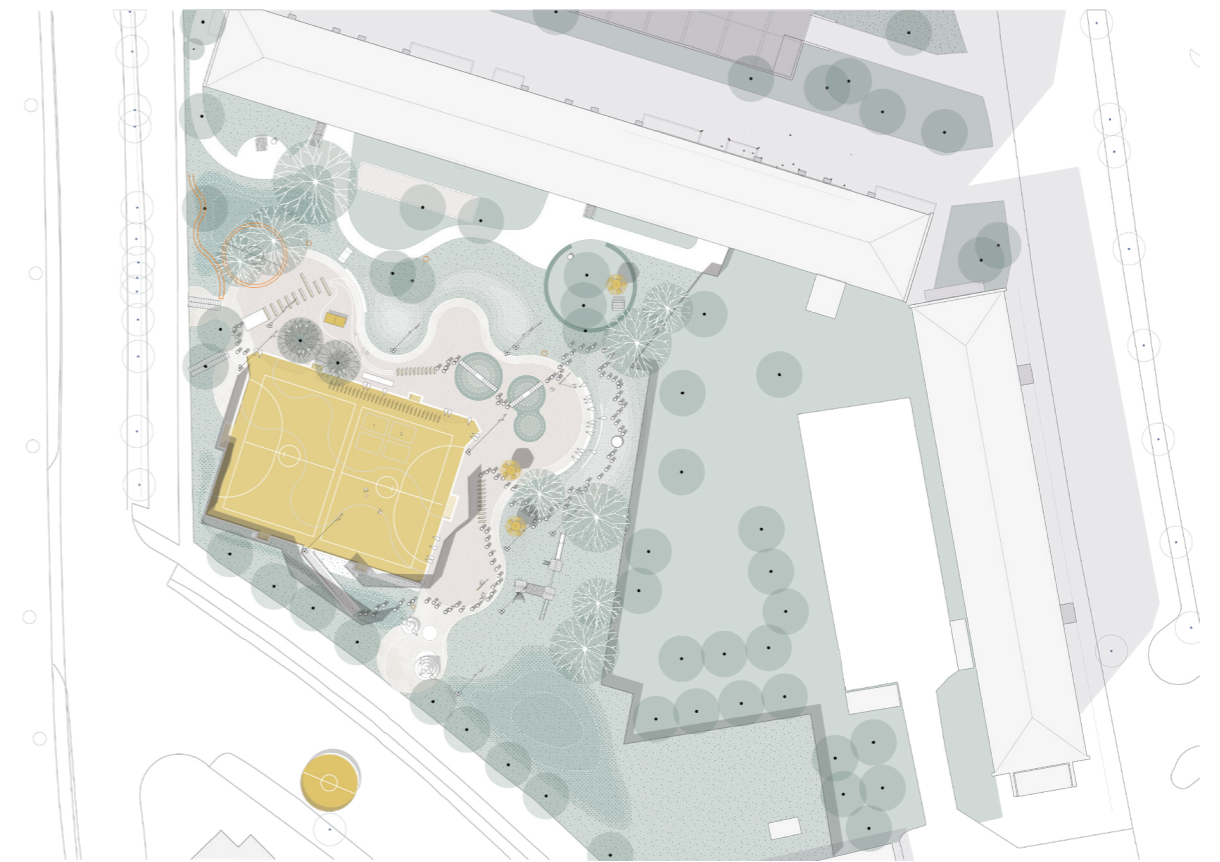


Fig. 4. Lundtoftegade South-courtyard Plan Concrete Path 1:250, by MASU Planning

themselves.

With the loss of state funds, remaining resources were directed towards the last courtyard. Nørrebro Samles På Banen (NSPB) is a collaborative project involving several public housing associations, AKB Lundtoftegade included and Nørrebro United. After the first establishment of soccer practices on Lundtoftegade premises, the collaborators recognized the need for improved facilities and social inclusion. *Et Ufærdigt Fælles Sted* (2021)³⁸ by Søren-Emil Schütt and Aske Tybirk Kvist, reflects on the participatory and attentive development. The collaborations primary aim was to make soccer more accessible for children in public housing, strengthening security and improving the image in the area. Sune Oslev elaborates on the user participation process, saying: “It is a very special place, Lundtoftegade. They have a very peculiar resident structure and organizational structure, which consists of many committees and boards, that is extremely active and participatory. And yes, additionally, they (the housing association) are at the forefront of their field and have excellent contacts, both political and official contacts that they utilize. /.../ It is a involvement process you actually develop together with them /.../ They are very attentive of the fact that they have a committee and forum, where elderly and working people have the opportunity to participate and others who appeal to younger people and to girls, women. And they use them both actively in these development workshops that have advisers and such but also in reality, right down to the execution of it, where they also have created social economic enterprises and all sorts of things, who then actually also participate in the construction of tasks and creation of contracts.”³⁹ (Sune Oslev)

Tybirk and Schütt describe NSPB: ‘Boldspilstorvet’ (The Ball court plaza), as a product developed through a long, dragged out design process. A collaborative effort between amateurs, including residents and coaches from Nørrebro United under architectural guidance.⁴⁰ A sense of mutual responsibility that results in greater social welfare. Utilizing other professionals from relevant fields and the information from residents enabled the architect to visualize activities and spaces tailored for the community’s needs.

38 Aske Kvist Tybirk og Søren-Emil Schütt, “Et Ufærdigt Fælles Sted”, *Social Kritik: Tidsskrift for social analyse & debat*, nr. 164 (december 2021): 16–25.

39 Sune Oslev, Lundtoftegade: The architect, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 29. september 2023.

40 Aske Kvist Tybirk og Søren-Emil Schütt, *Et Ufærdigt Fælles Sted*, 16–25.

Oslev describes his role in the project as responsible partner and key designer from the architectural perspective. This included being responsible for conveying the vision of the project physically and maintaining a high degree of artistry. MASU Planning joined the process user participation had already been going on for years. Follow-up meetings helped integrate MASU into the detailed dialogue which led them create the design which was custom-made for the participants and their neighbourhood. One of the smaller custom-made features include a ‘cat hotel’. It was seamlessly integrated into the design after residents expressed the importance of caring for the stray cats in the community. It works as an example of a niche design detail that supports unique characteristics in the area; a way in which the architect can play a key role in strengthening already existing potentials and have a positive social impact on a community.

Small scale interventions: Non-spatial intervention

In 2018, Lundtoftegade was placed on the ghetto list again. Legislations had changed making the consequences physical. Søren-Emil Schütt describes how shocked the community was by receiving the news: “We looked at each other, and first of all thought, that it was a deeply racist legislation, which now could be experienced hands-on; what was done to our neighbors and us as a residential area. And then, besides that, I think we had some ambitions to, alongside this policy, like to develop our residential area, local area, by terms other than those that were in the legislation. And the pressures that lie there (consequences of being on the ghetto list) is, after all, something we must also try to solve at the same time.”⁴¹ (Søren-Emil Schütt) Members of the housing association gathered representatives from all social groups to a large meeting to determine a common vision for the life at Lundtoftegade. Social visions included an abundance of well-functioning activities, clubs, art, cultural, educational and social events. Physical visions include an open and inviting area, connections to the surrounding environment, a diverse selection of apartments, agreeable rent and a physical framework for activity.⁴²

The community implemented a ‘patchwork’ method created by the housing department board in collaboration with AKB København, KAB and the

41 Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

42 Lundtoftegade Afdelingsbestyrelsen, “DET GODE LIV I LUNDTOFTEGADE”, Meeting summary, (2019), 1–4.

architecture office LABLAND.⁴³ In the application, *Dit Mit Vores*, it is described as a plan that: “Supports differences by strengthening the identity of the individual courtyards and outdoor areas – and in this way, creates unity.”⁴⁴ According to Søren-Emil, the ‘patchwork’ plan combined with democratic processes create a formula for community development that stands out from conventional methods, such as Gellerupplanen. To elaborate on the difference he explains: “The thing of not thinking about it as a whole, big project, but trying to make small, thoroughly processed pieces all around. So, this house for example (Lundtoftegade 23) has just been nominated for, among other things, the City Award, side to side with huge, huge, huge gentrification projects. /.../ because it is a connection between physical and social development. Where as you can see in Gellerup, where there are big, big plans that go way too fast, you don’t have any... It’s a social experiment in one way or another. /.../there is no connection between physical and social mobility or the way you hope the area will interact with itself or others in the future.”⁴⁵ (Søren-Emil Schütt)

Huset 21-23 illustrates how recognizing local needs, qualities and potentials has a positive effect on the development of a community. The former institution, acquired by the housing association in 2021, is now utilized by socioeconomic firms caring for the residential area. The first occupants of the building were a group of gang-related young men, a common issue surrounding public housing areas. They played a pivotal role in the remaining construction and today, all of them are either enrolled in education or fully employed. *Café Lunden*, located in *Huset 21-23*, might at first glance seem as the most gentrifying project in the area, serving ecological wine and oysters. However, it is also a product of the needs and potentials that have been recognized in the area, offering employment and exclusive discounts to residents.

Til Vægs is an exhibition platform for art located at Lundtoftegade.⁴⁶ To raise funds for physical alterations, *Til Vægs* has contributed by fostering collaborations between artist and climate protection projects. They have also organized numerous exhibitions, catalyzing discussions between outsiders and Lundtoftegade residents. These events create an exchange, where outsiders can get new insights into the true character of the community. Murals, made by

43 Lundtoftegade Afdelingsbestyrelsen, “DIT MIT VORES” (Application, Copenhagen, u.å.).

44 Lundtoftegade Afdelingsbestyrelsen, *DIT MIT VORES*, 3

45 Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

46 “Til Vægs”, set 20. oktober 2023, <https://tilvaegs.com/>.



Fig. 5. *Café Lunden*, by Daniela Kietz



Fig. 6. *Huset 21-23*, by Daniela Kietz

members of Til Vægs, give the stairwells at Lundtoftegade a whole new look. Cold and uncomfortable stairwells have now been transformed into inviting spaces, improving image and user activity without renovation. In his interview, Søren-Emil mentions Til Vægs role in building bridges to other institutions and how these initiatives broaden young minds and helps to prevent the formation of parallel societies.

Community driven, small-scale-high-impact solutions played a vital role in the neighborhood's removal from the list. It involves non-spatial projects that are born from the collaboration across a variety of fields. As Søren-Emil describes, NSPB and Til Vægs are "Strategic moves, basically, that blend the city in a completely different way than the way it has been done in Gellerup/... /"⁴⁷ (It is important to note that 'Gellerup' in this example refers to the drastic gentrification attempts in Gellerup, not community led initiatives such as the art platform Andromeda⁴⁸.)

DISCUSSION

Contributing to social welfare: As an individual or part of the community?

Drawing on the examples from Gellerup and Lundtoftegade, two main discoveries allude to a change in the future role of the architect: Trans-disciplinary methods in smaller scale projects and the tools available for long-term success.

It seems like the responsibilities of the architect have evolved with the definition of a successful project. Ashraf M. Salama notes ".../ the project's success is dependent upon the success of a larger, economic, social and ecological systems."⁴⁹. 'Responsibility' has taken on a new meaning, from prioritizing short-term economic goals to concerning the community and environment. This new definition of success alludes to the importance of social facilitation. The problematic was emphasized in the inclusion process of NSPB that originated from the imbalance between participants from Lundtoftegade and surrounding Nørrebro children. Though an agreement was created between the

⁴⁷ Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

⁴⁸ "Andromeda8220", Homepage, *ANDRO MEDA 8220*, set 29. oktober 2023, <https://andromeda8220.dk/>.

⁴⁹ Ashraf M. Salama, *Architect, Profession and Society*, 61



Fig. 7. Murals by Til Vægs 1, by Daniela Kietz

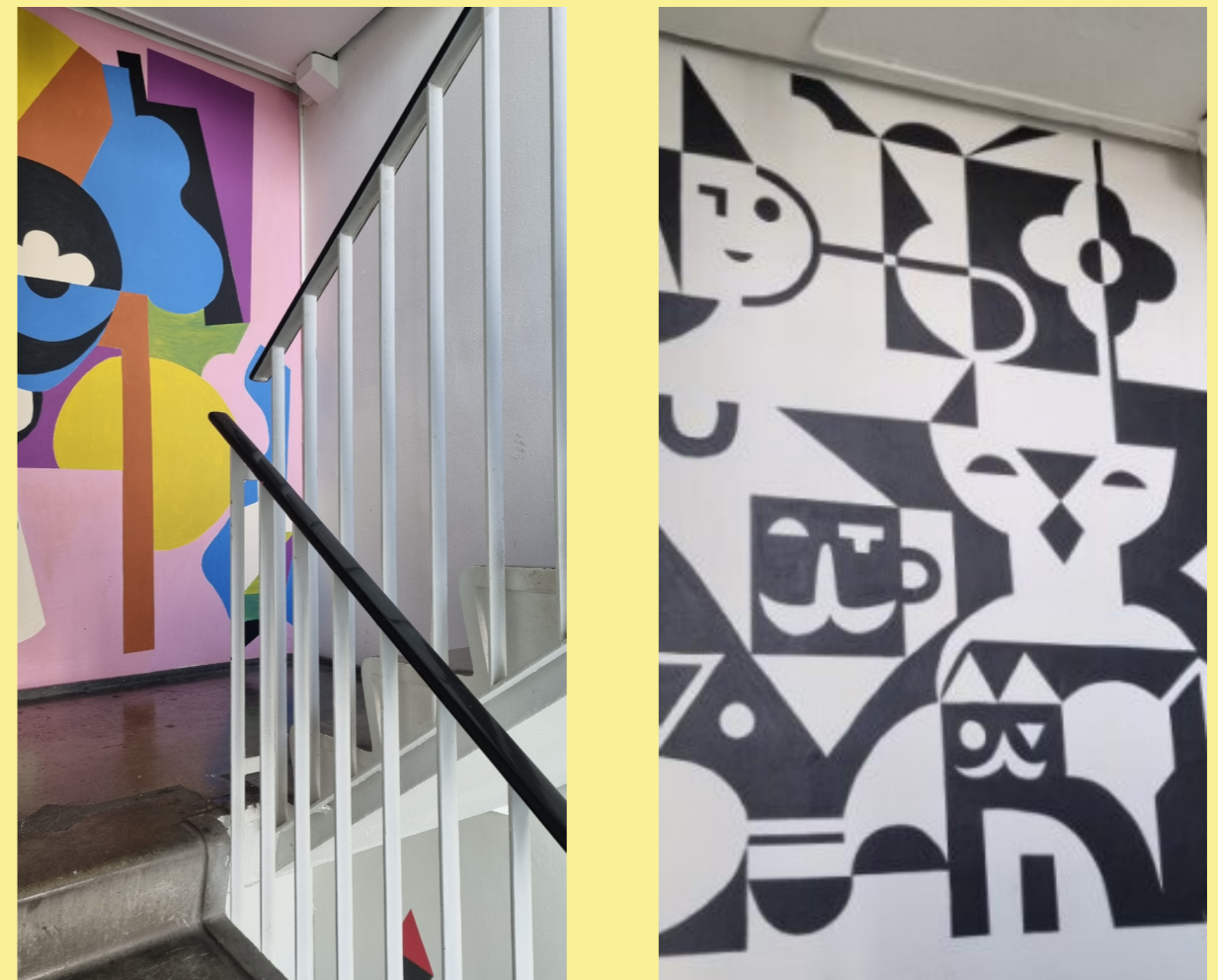


Fig. 8-9. Murals by Til Vægs 2-3, by Daniela Kietz

housing association and Nørrebro United to include 50% of participants from Lundtoftegade and 50% from the NU waiting list, it failed to consider the extra support some families needed to enable their children's participation in the facilities. This resulted in 100% of the children who showed up coming from surrounding neighbourhoods.⁵⁰

The issue seems to stem from the assumption that the access to physical structures for activity is enough. It puts the architect in an interesting position, where the success of a project is dependent on skilled facilitation. The examples of small-scale interventions show the importance of collaboration in creation of long-term success. It requires trust in the perspective of amateurs, residents and other professions architects have historically been known to compete with. Salama encourages the concept of trans-disciplinary, a “/.../ a new form of learning and problem-solving involving co-operation among different parts of society, professionals, and academia in order to meet complex challenges of society.”⁵¹, practices that “provide a basis for understanding design and built environment professions in the sense that they share skills, values, and approaches that are amenable to collaboration rather than competition.”⁵² Perhaps, trans-disciplinary practices provide an entrance for the architectural profession play a more significant role in the facilitation process?

Or could it be, that the available tools illuminate the path to the future role of the architect? According to Sune Oslev and Søren-Emil Schütt, there is no better tool than the residents. /.../ it is important that you don't trust that you know, what the project is going to look like, when you come to such a meeting. You have to meet them with open arms, so even though you might have thought further about the project development and things /.../ Both to show that you are taking it into account, but also to actually do it in reality. And then, when you bring forward physical feedback, they can actually recognize themselves and their input and such. It is therefore a huge key to success. /.../ It is the most important part for it to remain changed and be a success.⁵³ (Sune Oslev) Oslev and Salama seem to agree that use participation improves the design as it reflects the history and experiences of its users. The approach also harnesses an existing

⁵⁰ Søren-Emil Schütt, Lundtoftegade: The resident, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 10. december 2023.

⁵¹ Ashraf M. Salama, *Architect, Profession and Society*, 58

⁵² Ashraf M. Salama, *Architect, Profession and Society*, 58

⁵³ Sune Oslev, Lundtoftegade: The architect, interviewet af Daniela Kietz, Recorded on phone, 29. september 2023.

network of knowledge, like in NSPB, where part of the design was shaped by the soccer coaches' observations. Optimizing disposable tools could give the architect responsibility, not as an individual, but as part of the community.

CONCLUSION

Our society is growing more complex due to factors such as increased technological advancements, environmental concerns and rapid globalization. Naturally, an evolving climate necessitates for the evolution of professions too, including the architects, to optimize the positive impact on the world. In this paper, the role of the architect in the society is explored through methods used to further social development in public housing areas.

Firstly, shedding light on the future role of the architect are the residents of the development areas. The projects discussed in the analysis exemplify opening up the door to the local community is done by optimizing the tools for disposal. Greater user participation and smaller-scale projects correlate with greater exchange between architects, users and improved long-term social outcomes. New values and ethical responsibilities urge the architect to take a stance on the choice between 'head builder' and collaborator. Increased, complex projects require collaboration and responsibility across fields. Allowing the evolution of the architect has the possibility of opening up the profession to a larger variation of social roles. Transgressing into a more prominent part of the trans-disciplinary and local community is a potential key to a more meaningful impact on social welfare.

This paper emphasizes the important role of the relationship between the architects and users in accomplishing successful development projects. If the value of a facility is dependent on facilitation, the architect should demand a stronger part in connection between the physical and the social aspects of a project.

Perspectivation

Scenario one focuses on embracing the concept of trans-disciplinary. It manifest itself in a merger between architecture and non-architectural disciplines such as anthropology, visual arts, music, politics, economic, marketing or others.

This effort aims to create a custom-made development project, derived from the combination of knowledge and skills from multiple fields, seeking out to solve a specific, community dilemmas. This scenario would also involve exploring alternative ways of utilizing and combining professional skills and knowledge to optimize positive, social impact.

Scenario two focuses on reflecting 'community' in a larger-scale development project. The aim is to formulate a masterplan, derived from existing potentials and characteristics in the area. The creation of a renovation project challenges the balance between facility and facilitation and the communication between architects and residents. The development of this project would also emphasize the utilization of residents as a valuable tool in creating long-term success.

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Figures

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