

The importance of nature

- as a parameter to boost the attractiveness of peripheral Denmark

Ziff Vilhelm Hansen, ziff.hansen@gmail.com

30 ECTS master thesis

Supervised by, and thanks to: Professor Frank Søndergaard Jensen



There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more

Lord Byron

Abstract:
An increasing number of villages and remote areas in the countryside suffer from depopulation and deterioration as the majority of Denmark's inhabitants leave to reside in the cities.
The objective of this project is to illustrate why and how 'nature' can be used as an important parameter in the countryside to spur counter-urbanisation.
First, a brief historical review outlines the tendency of urbanisation from the Second World War till today and circumstances which may have impacted on this. Then the consequences of the increased urbanisation are considered, followed by an empirical examination of nature as one of the main attractions to look into when seeking to bolster counter-urbanisation. The concept of nature is then put in relation to human needs as per Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs after an introduction to the theory. This relation results in a selection of design suggestions/ guidelines to implement when planning or designing for counter-urbanisation.
Finally, the suggestions are deployed in a design proposal for a new residential area in Viby Sj., in which the concept is a root, firmly anchored deeply into nature, supporting both the residential area, town and surroundings with nutrition and energy from the enhanced nature.

Studies show that there are at least three motives for counter-urbanisation:

- One is to be closer to nature by moving to more open space and greener surroundings. Easy access to nature is the most frequently stated reason by all age groups as to why they choose to migrate from the city to the countryside (Hansen, 2014, p.12). This creates a great demand for recreational trails. People want to be able to walk round-trips and to access the countryside without having to walk along the highway

(Primdahl, 2011).
- The second reason is a longing for a community; a wish for 'togetherness' believed to exist somewhere in the countryside.

- The third motive is financial. The lower estate prices in the less urbanised parts of the country can lead to migration. It is likely that in some cases people will prefer to commute to work in the city, where they can't afford to live (Andersen et al, 2010, p. 7, Primdahl, 2011).

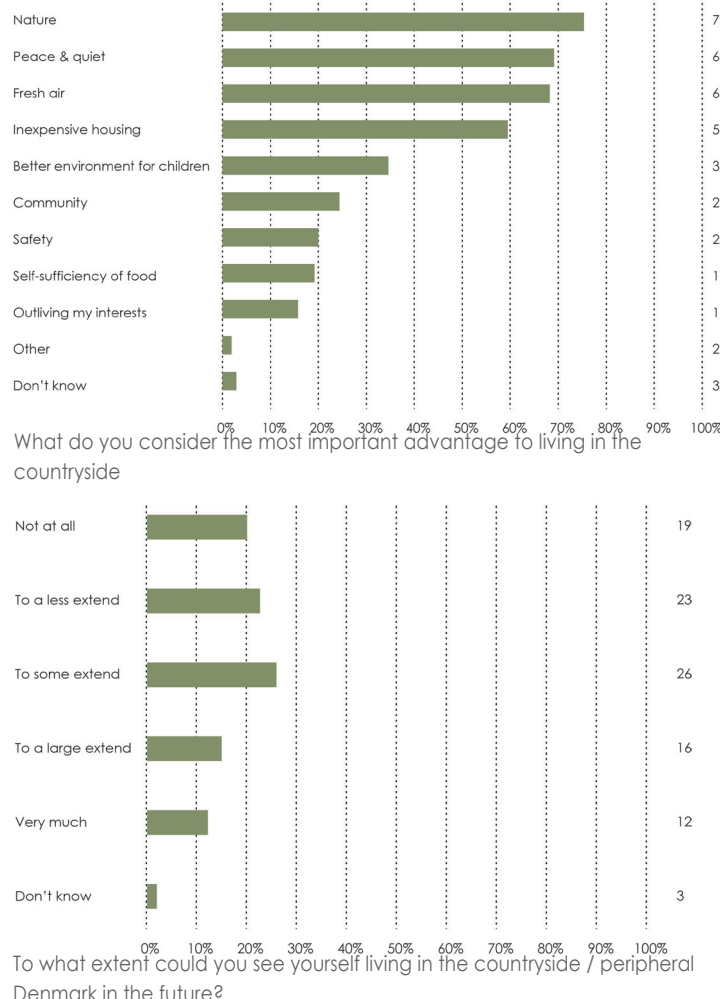
'SKOVSBØ':
In June 2014 an architectural competition was launched by Roskilde Municipality for a 75ha new residential area in Viby. The purpose with the new residential area is to attract Copenhagen citizens who want to move out of the city while still living within fair distance to citylife and other settlers (Roskilde, 2015).

Viby has fairly limited nature access although many would consider the town being situated in the countryside. By creating a new residential area with a large natural content on a site formerly used for intense agricultural purposes, there is a great potential for creating nature rather than building in existing, perhaps fragile nature sites. Despite the few kilometres to large and diverse nature areas such as Romsdalen (3.5km) and Klosterkoven (1km), which are considered important places for excursions for the inhabitants, the access to larger nature areas, recreation and everyday nature is fairly limited and most places are to be visited mainly by car. The town is in need of public, accessible, everyday nature for exercising, leisure, learning, recreation, fresh air etc. in order to enhance the benefits of living outside a city. At the previous farmland 'green land

development' is the point of departure: The existing landscape qualities become a catalysts for the urban development as well as the highest priority. The natural values thereby emerges from day 1 and provides experiential qualities and amenity created by the already existing qualities. Everything built is fitted into the landscape letting the nature elements create the distinction and identity to the future residential areas.

The principle of the housing groups are relatively simple and can be scaled up and down to fit to the flexibility of a human life, so that it's possible to live in the area in whatever stage of age one is. All housing groups look more or less the same. The identity to each house and housing group is added by the landscape as well as its inhabitants.

To encourage a stronger ownership to the housing groups as well as a larger access for public use, a smaller extend of privacy is planned in the surroundings, compared to e.g. single-family houses. The people living in the housing groups agree on the design of the shared facilities while the inhabitants have the possibility to add their own influence on the space closest to their house as well as in each their garden lot.



Housing-group
Garden lots
Shared parking
Housing-group
Shared parking
Housing-group
Housing-group
Garden lots

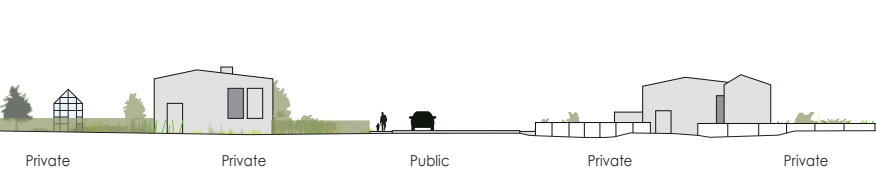


The houses are compiled as in the organic community Munksgård, Trekroner. The buildings in Munksgård are established in communities, gathered around a central area, available and visible for everyone. Every housing-group is placed in relative proximity to each other and are combined via comprehensive path systems for everyone to navigate between each housing-group safely. Every housing-group share gardens, playgrounds and a community house for gatherings, guests or shared cooking to relieve potential everyday stress.

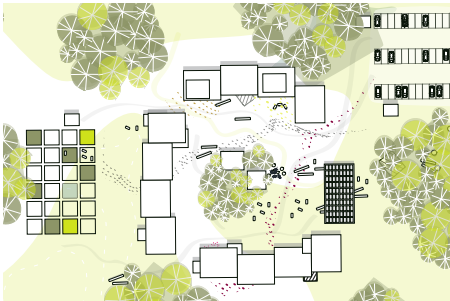
Housing group. Public private relation



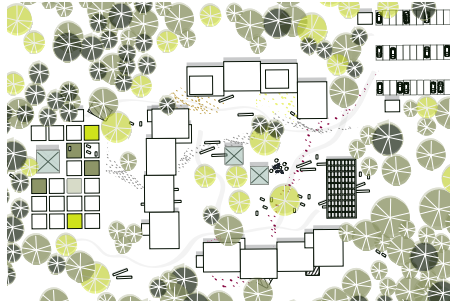
Comparison: single-family-house, Public private relation



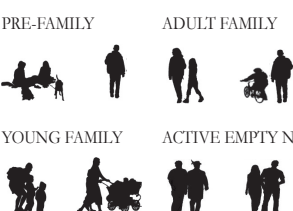
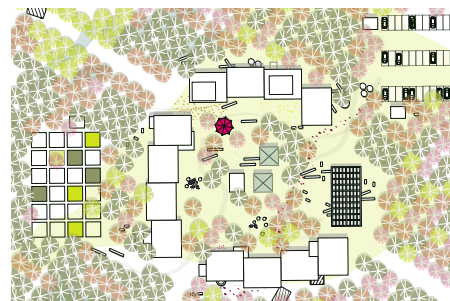
Housing group in the marsh



Housing group in the forest



Housing group in the orchard



Housing groups

Garden lots

10m²

1/ apartment

Housing group

Two floors

24 apartments of 120m²

Shared parking lot

1,5/ flat = 36 lots

Community House

100m²

Senior/ Youth - Housing

Garden lots

10m²

1/ apartment

Senior/ Youth - Housing

Two floors

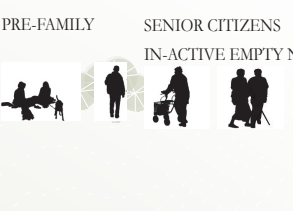
24 apartments of 50m²

Shared parking lot

24 lots

Community House

100m²



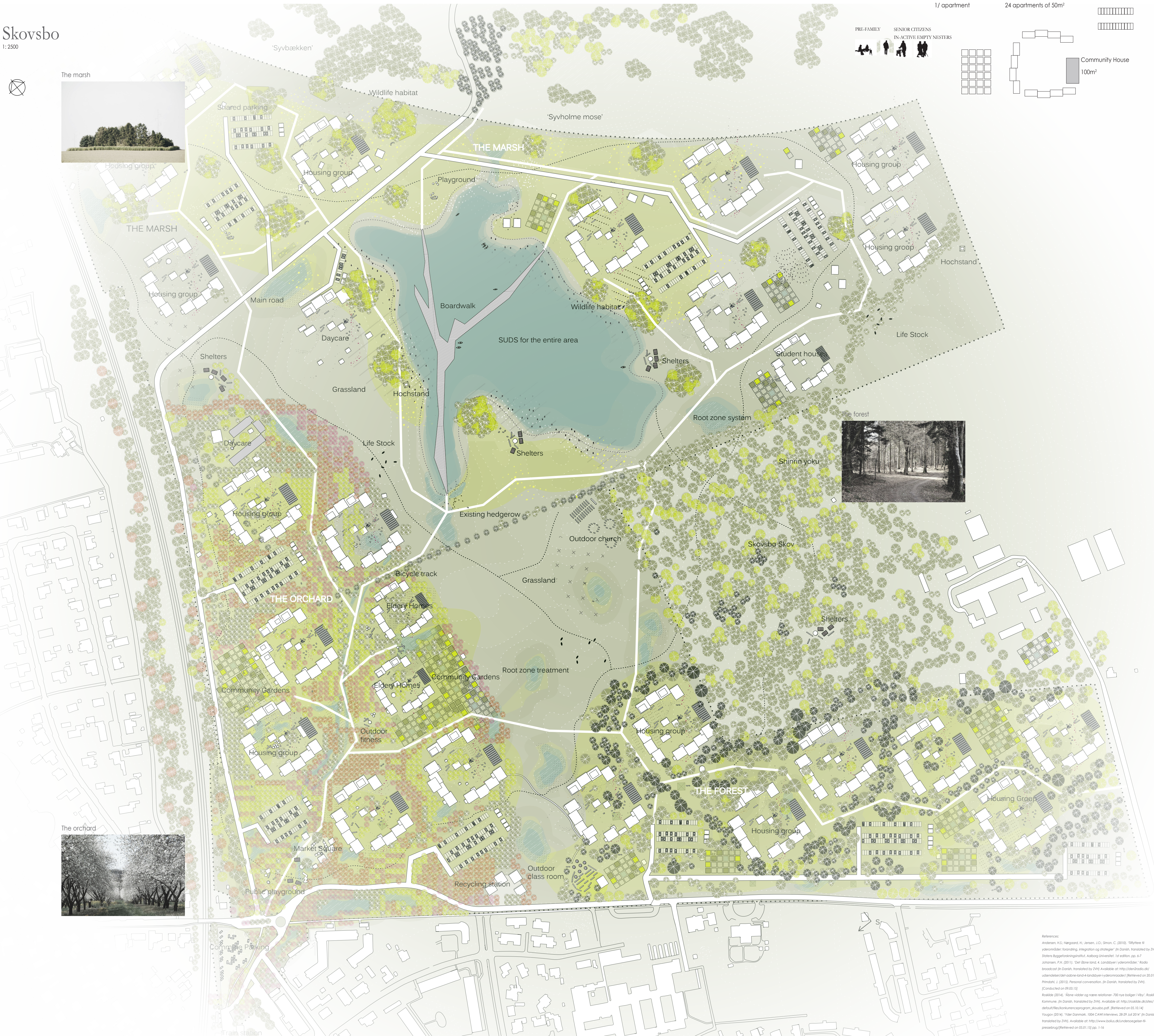
Skovsbo

1: 2500

The marsh



The orchard



References:
Andersen, H.S., Møgelgaard, H., Jensen, J.G., Simonsen, C. (2010). 'Milkshake II' - a new residential development, integration of nature. In: Danish, translated by Ziff.
Steffen, B. (2011). 'Det nye land 4. Landskabet i Munksgård'. Roskilde: Roskilde Kommune. In Danish, translated by Ziff. Available at: <http://roskilde.dk/land/4> [Retrieved on 20.01.15].
Primdahl, J. (2011). Personal conversation. In Danish, translated by Ziff.
[Conducted on 09.03.15]
Roskilde (2014). 'Skovsbo - nye boliger i Viby'. Roskilde Kommune. In Danish, translated by Ziff. Available at: <http://roskilde.dk/land/4> [Retrieved on 20.01.15].
Hansen, V. (2014). 'The new land 4. Landskabet i Munksgård'. Roskilde: Roskilde Kommune. In Danish, translated by Ziff. Available at: <http://roskilde.dk/land/4> [Retrieved on 20.01.15].



Section_Southwest(SV) - Southeast(se). 1:2500



Section_South(S) - North(n) 1:2500