

Physical Planning and Preservation of Buildings and Historic Settlements in Denmark

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Technical development inevitably involves change of the physical environment. At the beginning of the industrial revolution no one could realize the enormous impact new building principles and building materials would cause to the urban environment, not to speak of the destruction of the urban structures by the intersection of motorways. Old photographs from the beginning of this century clearly visualize this transformation of the urban streetscape.

Few people regret this, because the changes have been followed by an enormous improvement of health and living conditions. We have realized, however, that indiscriminate demolition of historic buildings increases the loss of historical heritage. The result is that much too often new settlements provide no excitement or anything to be delighted about. Traffic, noise and pollution impair daily living quality and much too often motor traffic is given higher priority than pedestrians and cyclists. Whatever the reason, it is clear that wanton destruction of property and graffiti painting appear in environments, where the inhabitants feel no personal attachment to their physical environment.

Some people still think that old buildings impede development, arguing that we do not want to live in a museum environment. These people often have a direct economic interest in land speculation and new constructions. But having realized the negative impacts of modernization, the interest and care for the historic environment have increased considerably at all levels in society and people are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental qualities they are about to lose. This awareness has been enhanced by environmental and resource problems at a global scale.

Realizing that the problems are universal, this paper gives an outline of the historic situation in Denmark and provides a description of the Danish way of dealing with the preservation of the physical heritage as reflected in current legislation and day-to-day planning.

Retrospect of Building Protection and Legislation

- listing and preservation of buildings according to the Building Preservation Act

Historic events may imbue a monument with intrinsic qualities or a memorial may possess

symbolic value that goes beyond the sheer face value of the building. Much pride may have been invested in the embellishment of individual buildings, providing personal incentives to the preservation, otherwise utility value - and economy - have determined the fate of a historic building.

Not until the 18th century veneration of the historic environment became a matter of concern to the central building administration charged with the maintenance and upkeep of the royal castles. For the sake of efficiency it was proposed to straighten the bridge giving access to the main court at the Frederiksborg Castle in Northern Zealand. But for the first time in Denmark inherent historic qualities were explicitly put forward by the architect C.F. Harsdorff as an argument justifying the preservation of the curved bridge roadway. As the inspector general of the royal castles, he was pleading on many other occasions that genuine historic qualities should be respected, thus helping to set a precedent for the treatment of buildings with historic and architectural merit.

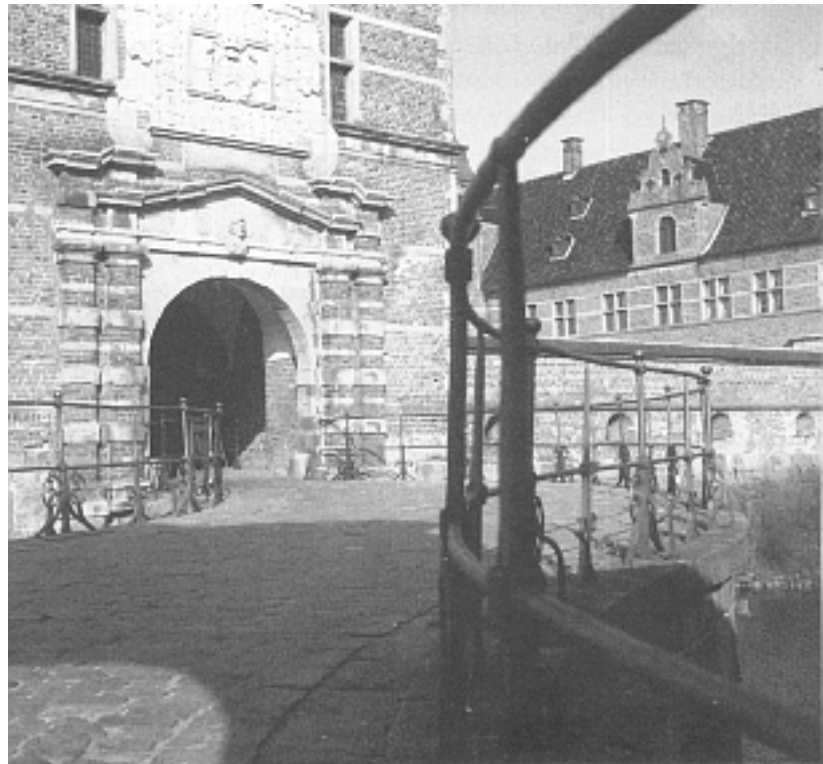
However, such extravagant considerations could hardly be af-

forded by the ordinary house owner and overall regards for care in the built environment is of a much later date.

The demolition of several important renaissance buildings by the end of the 19th century and around the turn of the century evoked an immense public debate. Demolition took place not only because the buildings were in disrepair, but very often simply because these unique buildings were considered old-fashioned or prevented economic profit through higher exploitation of the site. Eventually, the creation of the first Preservation of Buildings Act was passed in 1918. For the first time it was recognised by law that the preservation of Denmark's most valuable architectural treasures was not a matter to be left entirely at the interest of individual house owners.

The founding of the Better Building Practice Association in 1915 also helped generating more interest in the built environment. Likewise, architects and historians associated with the 'Adult High School' movement worked along these lines of cultural revival, creating the broad public support, which was needed to impose restrictions upon private property that followed as a consequence of the Act. Even the members of the Conservative Party voted for the adoption of the new Act, which was passed in 1918.

The first list for protection contained 1258 buildings, monuments and properties divided into two grades - A and B - according to the architectural value. Grade A was legally protected against



Originally built by Christian IV in 1602 on the site of previous structures the Frederiksborg castle was planned as one of the most remarkable buildings in the Nordic countries. The S-shaped bridge shown on the photo originates from an older period and leads towards the new gatehouse erected in 1734. The main wing of the castle burnt down in 1859, but it was subsequently rebuilt to accommodate a national historical museum.

Representing different periods of construction the Frederiksborg castle is of unique importance as a historic monument and was among the very first buildings to be listed in 1918. The S-shaped bridge shown on the photo originates from the very first construction period and leads towards a new gatehouse erected in 1734.

structural alterations, whereas protection of grade B related to the external appearance only.

In retrospect it appears that mainly buildings, which were representative of the more affluent class of society, such as manor houses and castles, were afforded protection at the outset. Subsequently, a more balanced view has been introduced in order to preserve a variety of buildings, which originate from different periods and represent society at large.

Buildings of considerable architectural and historical value are

eligible for listing. It has been argued that the reason for listing should be evident from the external appearance of the building. At the outset this elitist point of view was possibly motivating the choice, but also more humble buildings demonstrating living condition and production activity are now qualified for listing. Lately a more systematic approach to preservation has been adopted through thematic listing of specific categories of buildings. On this account, a series of representative schools, railway stations and dairies have recently been listed throughout the coun-

try and likewise, factories and industrial buildings from the period of the industrial revolution have become specifically interesting in terms of cultural history. Since 1980 even modern buildings can be listed according to the Building Preservation Act, if they represent an original and innovative design.

Extant buildings dating back before 1536 are automatically listed, whereas in-situ antiquities, castle mounds and other defence structures are protected according to the provisions in the Protection of Nature Act. The Danish Evangelical Lutheran churches account for the majority of medieval buildings in Denmark, but they are protected by legislation administered by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and put under supervision by six architects appointed as Royal Building Inspectors, who also deal with the supervision of state buildings and royal castles in their respective districts of responsibility.

The Act has been amended a number of times, but no radical changes were made until 1979, when among other changes the distinction between grade A and B buildings was abolished and all building works that involved more than normal maintenance became subject to official approval.

The Day-to-day Administration of the Building Preservation Act
- a pragmatic approach to building conservation

As a consequence of the listing no changes may be carried out without prior permission. The buildings being listed without any grading, each application will be con-



Timber framed buildings with thatched roof are characteristic for the building tradition in Denmark. Along with the introduction of new technologies and amalgamation of small holdings many farmsteads are becoming obsolete with only the farmhouse being maintained. In order to preserve the best examples, thematic listing of farmsteads has been carried out in recent years. This way a more representative picture of the built heritage is being pursued among the listed buildings. The majority of buildings, however, are left to their own faith. As a consequence, the outlook of the cultivated landscape with traditional farmsteads is put under heavy strain, and buildings worth of preservation are disfigured by unsightly modern windows and inferior roof materials.

sidered individually taking proper account of the actual condition and use of the building and adopting a pragmatic approach that ensures conservation rather than preservation. To this purpose a thorough knowledge of building history is providing the background for maintenance and restoration of buildings with proper respect of the authentic building qualities.

General safety such as statics, fire precautions and health standards are anyhow prescribed in the general building regulations, but they do not necessarily apply to historic buildings.

Listed Properties

Denmark has today some 3800 listed properties with a total of about 9000 individual buildings that are protected according to the provisions of the Building Preservation Act. The main purpose of the act is to ensure the conservation of the unique historic buildings.

Additionally about 300.000 buildings are classified for preservation under the jurisdiction of municipal planning authorities. These numbers may be measured against a grand total of about 2.3 mill. housing units in Denmark, of which nearly 40 % are blocks of flats.

In compensation of the restrictions imposed by the law, tax relief is offered as well as direct grants amounting to 20-40 % of the actual cost of specific conservation works. Through economic incentives as well as offering professional advice and guidance, the aim is to create a positive climate of cooperation. The professional advice includes a series of information sheets on different restoration subjects relating to craft techniques, traditional building materials, architectural details and colour scheme, legal and finan-

cial aspects, etc. The information sheets are distributed free of charge.

The objectives are not preservation by all means, however. Few buildings appear as they were originally constructed. Adapted to new uses over time and bearing the stamp of wear and tear, buildings acquire ageing qualities that make up intrinsic qualities of that particular building. Excellent additions, for example, may be considered a valid contribution to the history of the build-

ing. In this respect international principles as expressed in the Charter of Venice are being followed. This charter, adopted by ICOMOS (International Committee on Monuments and Sites) in 1975, is generally accepted as the most authoritative principle of ethic.

Essentially, no society can afford to maintain a large stock of buildings that cannot fulfil contemporary functions. Except for pure museum purposes, the buildings must serve an appropriate purpose. The move of the entire navy station from its original location in Copenhagen is a recent example of the adaption of historic buildings for new use. The former naval dockyard and auxiliary service buildings have all been restored to accommodate the School of Architecture and related educational and cultural institutions.

Otherwise buildings constructed for very specific purposes are not easily adopted for new uses. Upkeep of castles and manors, for example, create a specific problem at a time when the social structure of society has radically changed. Not least the high succession duties have put a heavy burden on the rentability of large estates. Representing the more affluent part of society, the owners of these castles and manors may still be associated with the former oppressors during feudal times, and the idea of subsidizing restoration work on these buildings is met with certain reservations. In fact this animosity can be compared to the inferiority complex, that exists in many new independent states, where preservation of colonial architecture is difficult to justify. However, the



Kronborg castle is built 1574-85 by the Danish king Frederik II. As a national monument of unique importance to Danish history, the castle was listed in 1918. Regrettably, the Act for Building Preservation does not provide protection of the immediate environment. Subsequently, encroachment on the outwork in favour of industrial developments has considerably jeopardized the unique Renaissance military installations.

For this reason listing as a World Heritage Site by Unesco has been deferred. Obsolete during the 1980s, partial demolition of the shipyard structures will provide an unobstructed view to the castle, but the future use of this area is disputed. The municipality argues fiercely in favour of keeping parts of the industrial buildings in order to maintain places of work that generate income, whereas the Ministry for the Environment and Energy intends to have the outworks of the castle restored. A compromise is now being sought that may content the conflicting interests, possibly keeping parts of the dockyards for a marine museum.

owners of castles and manors can also be considered as custodians of our common heritage. In fact, many of the privately owned estates are partly open to the public, generating a better understanding and appreciation of the specific problems related to the preservation of these large historic buildings, which are inevitably part of our national history.

The Minister for the Environment and Energy possesses all the necessary power in pursuance of the law, but in practical terms, the power is delegated to the National Forest- and Nature Agency. This administrative set-up may not appear very logic in connection with preservation of the physical heritage, but it is a consequence of the sectioning out of the expertise within the former National Agency of Physical Planning after a law reform in 1991. In

the context of future planning this new interrelationship may prove to serve the purpose since the restructuring of agriculture as an industry and the increased use of the countryside for recreational purposes pose a new challenge to preservation. In Denmark, nature is influenced by man and one of the main tasks of the future will be to ensure the integrated protection of cultural history, the built environment and the landscape.

The day-to-day administration of the Act is carried out by the preservation officers, who most often have a background as architects trained in building restoration, whereas any major and controversial cases are submitted to the Historic Building Council for expert opinion before decisions are taken. The twelve members of the Council represent public institutions, professional societies as

well as the interests of owners and users alike and the members are elected so as to ensure full professional and political debate. Decisions taken by the agency are final, but an appeal lies with the Minister.

Generally, listing procedures and building consents are decided in an atmosphere of mutual agreement. Only in a few cases conflicting interests come into open collision as it is, for example, presently the case concerning the extension of the Royal Theatre in the very centre of Copenhagen. In this case conservationists and modernists dispute the result of an architects competition and the fate of the existing listed buildings. Not only the preservation of individual buildings is at stake, but demolition of a whole residential quarter is envisaged to make room for a new extension

The National Forest and Nature Agency

The National Forest and Nature Agency is part of the Ministry for the Environment and Energy, and it's objective is to combine sustainable development with the conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage.

The Central Organisation of the Agency comprises 16 divisions of which three are directly concerned with the protection of cultural heritage.

Cultural Heritage Division: Provisions of the Nature Protection Act regarding ancient monuments. Registration, preservation and restoration of protected ancient monuments. Cultural heritage issues involving nature conservancy and planning. Surveying and protecting historic shipwrecks and other ancient monuments on the sea bed. Secretariat for the Cultural History Council.

Listed Buildings Division: The Preservation of Buildings Act. Preservation policy. Decisions on building projects. Guidance and financial support for conservation work on listed buildings. International co-operation on building listing and conservation. Secretariat for the Historic Building Council and for the State Preservation of Buildings Fund.

Preservation of the Urban Environment Division: Surveys of urban environments and buildings worthy of preservation. Publication of the surveys in 'municipal atlases'. The integration of preservation interests in municipal planning. The State Documentation Centre. Nordic co-operation.



The streetscape of Ribe is still dominated by the cathedral and the surrounding low, one-storeyed buildings blending into a unique historic milieu in which building appearance, pavement, lighting and other street furniture form a harmonious whole.

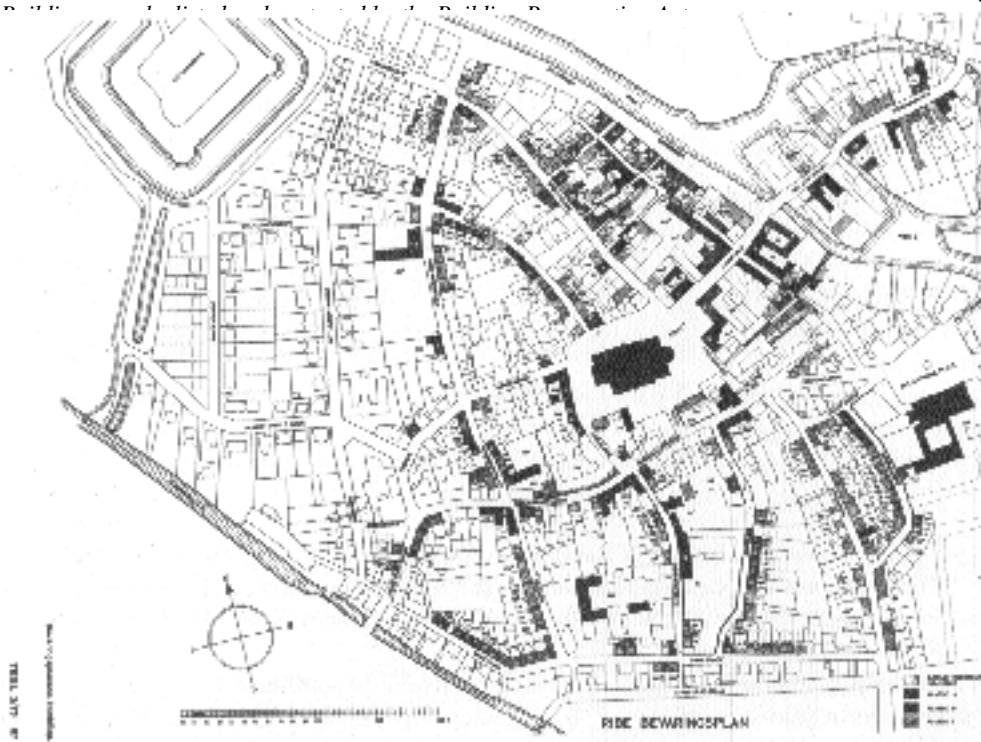
The preservation is regulated through the provisions in the local district plan.

raising to a total height of about 15 metres above the surrounding four or five storey apartment buildings. In such cases not only the Historic Building Council has a saying, but also the whole procedure related to the adoption of a local district plan needs to be carried through.

Historic Building Registration as Means of Preservation

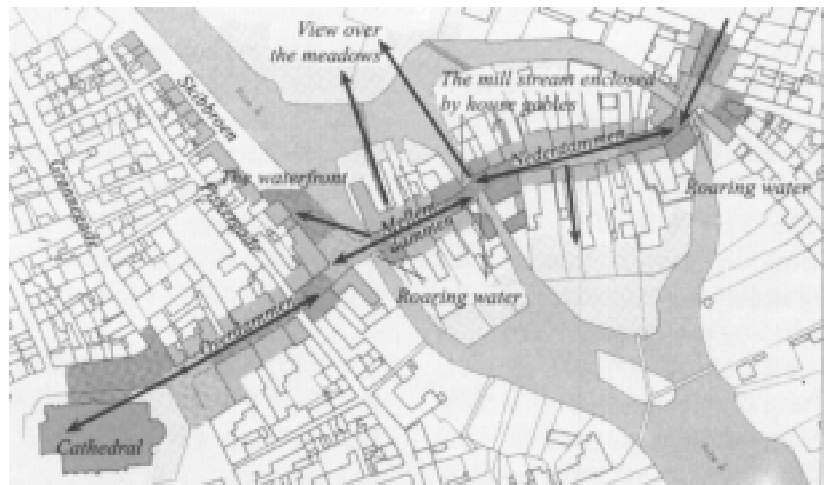
-methods of generating public awareness and involvement

In the wake of modernization and the threat to the historic environment, the Danish National Museum prepared from the 1960s and onwards a large number of Historic Building Registrations, mainly concerned with the preservation of the medieval centres of provincial market-towns, which up to then had changed very little in appearance. The listing and subsequent description of individual buildings had a tre-



Plan of the medieval town of Ribe with evaluation of the historic and architectural value of buildings. Source: Historic Building Registration carried out by the National Museum in "Bevaringsplan Ribe 1969", by Hans Henrik Engqvist.

mendous impact on the general appreciation of the historic buildings. When the house owner realizes that his house is described in a publication prepared by the National Museum including a photograph, a general building description and historic records of changes and ownership, the house becomes much more precious to him. These building records are being prepared in close cooperation with local historic societies and through the active support of local citizens, they act as effective means of maintaining knowledge and appreciation of the historic environment. Through such modest efforts public interest in the course of conservation has been generated over a long period



Registration of characteristic elements of the urban environment as presented in "International Survey of Architectural Values in the Environment" by the Ministry for the Environment and Energy, The National Forest and Nature Agency, 1995. The registration incorporates topographic investigations, historic analysis and architectural observations into an overall evaluation of the preservation values.

Planning

Planning is carried out at three levels in Denmark: nationally, regionally for each of the 14 counties and in each of the 275 municipalities.

At the municipal level two types of statutory plans are produced (i) the Municipal structure plan and (ii) local plans.

The Municipal Structure Plan determines the overall structure of the whole community indicating the objectives for development and land use, including the designation of residential areas, commercial and industrial areas, transport and other services, recreational areas etc. for a period of 12 years. Additionally, the general land-use plan establishes a framework for more detailed land-use in local plans. The plan must be accompanied by a report describing the premises on which the municipal council has based the plan proposal, including economic planning of the municipal and the timetable for investments. The plans are scrutinized and revised every four years after elections to municipal and county councils have been held and subsequently adjusted as society develops.

The local plan is a detailed plan for a smaller district within the municipality. It can contain provisions about virtually any aspects of development, e.g. land use changes, site lay-out, open space planning and landscaping, the constructional details of new buildings, establishment of land owners associations etc. In the context of urban renewal and preservation it can establish guidelines for the land owner's use of the property and prescribe use of building materials, colour scheme, architectural detailing and any aspects, which can be considered important for keeping the original appearance of the historic townscape. In such cases it may be referred to as a preservation plan.

The preservation plan is legally binding for the individual land owner as soon as it has been adopted by the municipal council, and the owner or user of a building in that area is obliged to respect these stipulations, when for example maintenance or repair work is carried out or when the building is being renewed.

of change ensuring that traditional materials and crafts have been revived and maintained during a period of rapid transformation towards industrial production.

The 1979 amendment of the Building Preservation Act increased the consideration for building preservation in the municipal planning. The tasks of the central agency came to include information, documentation and guidance in preservation planning. This duty has materialized in the production of a large number of so-called Municipal Atlases, which are produced in close cooperation with local museums and municipal authorities. They provide a description of topological, historic and architectural features following a well established three-

step pattern of survey, evaluation, and policy. Published for sale the Atlases provide reference guides to local features and they have proved a valuable tool in municipal planning (for more details see: Interplan no. 9, *Surveying Architectural Values in the Environment in Denmark*, 1991).

Building Preservation in the International Context

In a European context the 1975 campaign for preservation of cultural heritage generated considerable influence upon the situation in Denmark. The adoption of the so-called Amsterdam Declaration was a giant stride forward to accepting the concept of integrated area preservation of the environment. The development

towards a broader and more comprehensive view on the preservation of architectural heritage has been further promoted through the Grenada Convention from 1985 by which the member states of the Council of Europe are committed to make proper provision for the protection of monuments, groups of buildings and sites as stipulated in the convention. The extensive program of duties and obligations also includes the protection of the architectural heritage as an essential town and country planning objective. The protection of the European cultural heritage is also envisaged to be part of the co-operation within the EU.

On a global scale Denmark has recognized the collective interest in pursuing conservation objectives that *inter alia* lie behind the Unesco Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

The Planning Act of 1994

The Planning Act of 1994 emphasizes that the purpose of planning is aiming towards:

- (i) appropriate development in the whole country and in the individual counties and municipalities, based on overall planning and economic considerations;
- (ii) conserving valuable buildings, settlements, urban environments, landscapes and coastal areas;
- (iii) preventing pollution of air, water and soil and noise nuisance, and
- (iv) involving the public in the planning process as much as possible.

A regional plan determines for a period of 12 years the framework for the development of a county with regard to urban development, the overall transport structure, siting of large shopping areas, protection of land and natural resources, use of watercourses, lakes and coastal waters, areas of recreation, etc. As an integrated provision of the Act, polluting enterprises and major projects require an environmental impact assessment.

Regional and municipal plans cover a period of 12 years and must be revised every 4 years. As a special case, in Copenhagen the municipal plan also serves as a regional plan due to the size of the capital city.

New Challenges in the Wake of Modernization

- by-laws and local district planning for preservation

The small provincial town of Ribe to the south of Jutland is probably one of the oldest settlements in Denmark with a history of about three thousand years. The exceptional homogeneity of the historic townscape of low one- or two storied houses, surrounding the medieval cathedral is of genuine beauty and harmony in scale and proportions. When replacement of the traditional red tile roofs started in the 1960's in favour of much cheaper imitations in corrugated asbestos sheeting, the authorities had no means to prevent the degradation. *Then*

provide such legal means' was the logical request of the mayor to the technical administration and subsequently, the Town Council adopted local *by-laws*, which were more restrictive than the general law and building regulations. Changes to the external facades would only be allowed after consent was obtained by the local building administration, thus preventing impair to the intrinsic

qualities of the historic townscape. Locally, these initiatives have been most appreciated by the citizens, who enjoy the attractive living qualities in the well regulated urban environment and as a side effect, the initiatives have generated more income due to an increase in tourism.

This lesson has been commonly accepted and gradually incor-

porated as an integrated part of the planning procedures, at least with regard to the town centres or urban districts of about 275 medieval market towns in Denmark, which possess specific historic and architectural merit.

A similar development took place in Elsinore, North Zealand, due to the conscious and strenuous efforts by a local planning engineer, who decided to convince the local shop owners and retail dealers of the highly inappropriate and oversized signboards and advertisements, which disturbed the general appreciation of the architecture and vulgarized the streetscape. The success of his efforts was mainly due to the general support he succeeded in generating within the business community on a volunteer basis, and gradually it became a commercial asset to present the shop front in compliance with the general architecture. A similar discussion related to artificial lighting, colour schemes and application of street furniture. The success of the scheme was mainly achieved through co-operation between individual shop owners, the business community and the technical staff of the town planning office. Furthermore, street interviews have shown that no correlation exists between the size of signboards and the turnover. On the contrary, ugly shop fronts may have a negative effect on prospective customers if awareness of environmental qualities has been generally adopted. To this end public information and debate is essential.

This success story has had an immense influence upon the integrated conservation and planning



Through powers of persuasion and determination, the town planning office has reduced commercial advertisement and succeeded in restoring inherent architectural qualities in the historic streetscape in the old town of Elsinore.

of historic city centres throughout the county. Height control, facade regulations and similar restrictions are regulated by way of local plans, ensuring the harmonious appearance of the streetscape. Such restrictions are especially important as an instrument to preserve the unity of style in the vernacular architecture at a time, when new materials and building techniques are degrading environmental harmony and urban qualities. Additionally, they can be used to regulate use patterns, imposing for example the obligation to reside in one's house. Such measures have proved necessary in very attractive coastal towns as Skagen, Ærøskøbing and Svaneke. Otherwise the houses

would be used for vacation only, leaving the towns deserted during winter. Furthermore the prices go up and local residents can no longer afford to purchase the houses, if the cost is being determined by affluent town-dwellers according to supply and demand.

Generally, the harmonious life and appearance of the historic city is kept in very high esteem, but the degree of public regulation is dependent upon the political positions in the local council. The democratic tradition in Denmark has fostered the concept of public participation in the planning process, which has been adopted in current legislation. According to this principle all people, who are

affected by the planning initiative in one way or the other, have the right to express their opinion before the plan is finally adopted by the council. The free public debate is essential to ensure a democratic procedure and help reach a fair and just decision - not necessarily the most ideal.

A recent example from the small island of Lyø to the South of Denmark is telling in this respect. After the end of the public debate period, the inhabitants had raised so many objections against the restrictions imposed by the preservation plan that the local council had to give in and ask the town planning office to modify the plan on several issues before final adoption.



Hundige, South of Copenhagen. The new large shopping centres outside the historic town centres largely based on private motoring distort the established purchase pattern, severely affecting the traditional urban qualities with a network of small scale retail shops.

Regional Planning and the Influence on Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation

The Urban and Rural Zones Act of 1969 was designed to prevent urban sprawl and to ensure that future development takes place in connection with the existing settlement pattern. Thereby public investment is utilized optimally, avoiding scattered developments in rural areas and keeping the open landscape free from industrial and residential development. As part of a law reform in 1992 several acts containing provisions on zoning and planning were integrated in a new and simplified Planning Act. The law is now administered by the Ministry for the Environment and Energy.

With a view to preserving the historic settlement pattern, the regulations have proved useful in controlling the extend of built-up areas, maintaining the demarca-

Conservation legislation - a cursory outline of the legislation relating to the preservation of natural and cultural heritage

Year	Enactment and summary of provision.
1907	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings founded.
1917	Conservation of Nature Acts. Protection of landscape and Natural sites. Protection of all archaeological sites and ancient monuments and surrounding zones of 100 m radius; revised 1969, amended 1972, revised 1992.
1918	Preservation of Buildings Acts. Secular buildings generally over 100 years old may be listed. List revised every five years. Grants, tax exemptions and consultant advises. Revised 1966, establishing Government Preservation of Buildings Fund for state purchase, restoration and optional resale of threatened historic buildings; amended 1969, 1979 and 1986.
1962	State church legislation: protection of churches belonging to the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church and administered by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs; amended 1947.
1962	Town Planning Acts, enabling limited protection of historic urban areas; revised 1970. According to the Act, characteristic historic areas or streetscapes can be designated as preservation zones, where changes are allowed only after consent by the City Council.
1962	City Reconditioning Act. Special law for the implementation of a conservation plan for Christianshavn, the sector where most of Copenhagen's about 650 listed buildings are situated
1969	Slum Clearance Act. A general law including special provisions for rehabilitation programmes in historic urban areas; establishing provisions for public grants and loans and the formation of corporative urban renewal companies; replaced 1983 and amended 1987 by the Urban Renewal Act.
1969	The Urban and Rural Zones Act dividing the land into rural and urban zones and accepting urban development only in designated areas; amended 1978, replaced 1992 by the Planning Act.
1975	Municipal Planning Act. According to the Act, local preservation plans can establish regulations for the external appearance of individual houses and the environment; amended 1989, replaced 1992 by the Planning Act.
1982	Urban Renewal Act. The regulations in this law is aiming at rehabilitation through a high level of public subsidize, considering demolition an exception. The provisions of the Act makes it possible for local authorities to plan for renewal of housing in specified districts and to renew open space in housing areas
1992	The Protection of Nature Act. The law opens the way for the protection of large adjoining areas of countryside and nature reserves. The Act also provides general protection to natural features such as moors, bogs and lakes. In situ antiquities, castle mounds and defence constructions are protected according to this Act within a surrounding zone of 100 metres; amended 1994.
1992	The Planning Act. The Act integrates and simplifies provisions on zoning and planning contained in five existing Acts leaving, however, the main principles of the legislation concerning municipal and local planning unchanged. The local plan has a binding status in determining the use of individual property, which may relate to preservation of historic urban areas or to more general environmental protection; amended 1994.
1994	Coastal Zone Management Act. Amendment to the Planning Act and the Protection of Nature Act relating specifically to the protection of a three kilometre wide coastal zone.

tion towards the surrounding cultivated landscape. The strategies for public regulation and subsidized housing during the rapid expansion of the 1960s could not, however, prevent the monotony of the suburban districts that surround the bigger cities. Generally these new housing areas lack identity and much too often accessibility and shopping possibilities rely on private motoring.

In recent years keen competition has resulted in the construction of a large number of drive-in, low-cost department stores, that are mushrooming around the provincial towns. Citizens, who are conscious of the environment, know that it is wrong. There are few winners, but many losers, and traditional urban qualities are at stake. Prospective customers are lured away from the city centres, many small retail shops lose earning capacity and city life deteriorates. At the same time, large public infrastructure investments are required to serve for the private enterprises and money is drained away from the maintenance and up-keep of traditional habitat and historic areas. In this game of economic profit, customers without a private car, the

elderly people, the young and the poor, are left without easy access to the new centres and human networks suffer. A vicious circle has begun and eventually, city areas may turn into slum.

Denmark's nature and environment policy 1995 specifically outlines that allocation of new land for urban purposes is not appropriate, while the amount of slum and urban areas keeps raising. Reality is yet another matter.

Like the attitude to private motor traffic, a collective double standard is prevailing. A few municipal councils have tried in vain to impose an upper limit to the total floor area of new low-cost department stores through the local planning initiatives. However, the good intentions have been obstructed by neighbouring cities, which demonstrate their individual interests by allowing such developments within the potential catchment area.

Promising though, this year the Minister for the Environment and Energy has imposed a temporary stop to construction of such low-cost department stores, awaiting the conclusions of a commission set up to recommend upon a pos-

sible future localization policy, which eventually can be administered by the 14 counties through the regional plans.

The Coastal Zone Management is an example of planning regulations recently implemented by an amendment of the Planning Act. Within the designated coastal zone, approximately three kilometres from the coast line, additional construction and development will only be allowed in exceptional cases. For example, new recreational facilities must be justified by a comprehensive tourism policy. The main purpose of the Act is to maintain the unspoiled coastal environment to the benefit of all citizens and future generations.

Obviously future planning initiatives will take environmental problems in a broader context of ecology much more into consideration. Building restoration and preservation will play a bigger role, because it is indispensable to care for the environment and the great virtue of reversibility and renewability will come into focus. These principles of ethic have for decades been sound practise in building restoration and preservation.

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