

Waterfront Development in a Regional Context

edinburgh



INTRODUCTION

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland with a population of 450,000 in a city-region of around 780,000. Two areas of Edinburgh's waterfront are currently being developed, both of which are mainly 'brownfield' – formerly industrial and port-related sites: Granton (140 hectares) and Leith Docks (170 hectares). The two development areas constitute the largest expansion in Scotland since the 2nd World War, and will yield approximately 33,000 new homes for the city plus new schools, retail, leisure and business land.

Edinburgh's work package in the Waterfront Communities Project focuses on the 'integration of waterfront development with city and regional strategic objectives'. As a key aim of the work package is to enable the Council to improve its planning processes at a local, city-wide and city-region level, Edinburgh is comparing how each of the partner cities achieves its cities' 'strategic objectives' at its waterfront.

Therefore, in order to evaluate its own approach, an understanding of the roles undertaken by various

countries' planning systems at various spatial levels is seen as helpful to providing a comparative perspective. In this regard, the nine Partner Cities are located in seven different countries each with its own planning system¹.

This practitioner briefing provides:

- an overview of each of the individual planning systems²;
- an identification of its key elements at the national, regional and local level;
- an analysis of the role regional or 'city region' planning has within the system; and,
- analysis of the Strategic Objectives of the partner Regional Plans in relation to waterfront development.

1: The seven different countries are England, Scotland, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The project is partners with Hull, Gateshead, Edinburgh, Schiedam, Hamburg, Odense, Aalborg, Gothenburg, and Oslo. The project has also visited Copenhagen and Stockholm as part of study visits.

2: A full report on each of the partner cities planning systems accompanies this briefing and is available on request from: www.waterfrontcommunitiesproject.org

KEY LEARNING

Strategic Planning, which integrates development efforts at a national, regional and local level, is a common goal of the partner cities in the Waterfront Communities Project. However, a main difference between the cities and countries is in the organisation and powers derived within the partners planning system at the **regional level**. Regional planning ‘bridges’ between national policy and local effort and provides the appropriate framework for planning in the city-region.

The Scottish planning system, like many of the partner systems, is in a period of flux particularly in relation to ‘city region’ planning. At present, at a regional level, Scotland has single tier local governments, generally smaller than a city region, working together to prepare regional plans or ‘Structure Plans’.

Since 2001, the Scottish Executive has under taken to modernise development planning in Scotland (‘Review of Strategic Planning’ (June 2001), ‘Modernising the Planning System’ (June 2005) and the Planning Bill). With regard to regional planning, the Scottish Executive proposes that Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) be prepared for the four largest city regions and their hinterlands – requiring ‘city region’ planning bodies to be formed by planning authorities acting jointly. A real challenge is for local authorities to work together. SDPs will be focused on matters that are genuinely strategic and will adopt a long term perspective (15 years minimum).

The planning summaries contained within this policy briefing highlight that the need for, and role of, regional bodies is an issue being faced in each of the partner countries. For example:

- In England, despite a recent review of planning recommending that the regions of England have elected regional governance³, regional planning and the development of regional spatial strategies is carried out on a consensual/ partnership basis between local authorities. Regional Spatial Strategies are however legally binding;
- In The Netherlands, elected Provincial Councils prepare non-statutory regional plans. However, the preparation of regional plans in the Netherlands are non-obligatory;
- In Germany, regional policy is a joint task between the federal government and the States and the Government has recently placed more focus on regional planning in the States by making a regional state land use plan compulsory and legally binding;
- In Sweden, non-elected regional bodies, currently provide a forum for political discussion in regards to regional planning but there is no official requirement to prepare regional plans – this is currently left to the region to decide (example, there is no regional plan for Gothenburg, however, Stockholm has just approved theirs) but there are moves to make them obligatory;
- In Norway elected counties are currently being replaced by non-elected regional bodies; and non statutory regional plans will become binding, and,
- In 2006, the Government of Denmark prepared a national planning report – “*The new map of Denmark – spatial planning under new conditions*” which paves the way for a major reform of government structure in 2007. The national planning report now defines five new regional councils which will be responsible for preparing regional spatial development plans for the administrative regions.



The eligible area showing each of the nine partner cities of the Waterfront Communities Project.

3: See full planning summary for further details on the failure of the North East England referendum

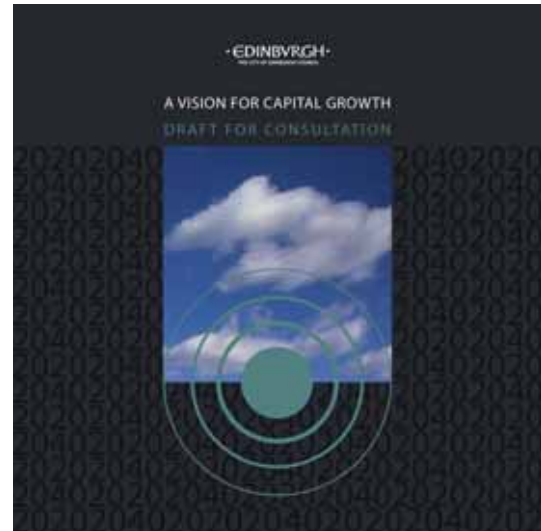
Regional Planning and Waterfront Development

This briefing also provides an overview of how each of the partner’s regional plan addresses the issue of their waterfront development. For Edinburgh “A Vision For Capital Growth 2020-2040” identifies the waterfront as a potential development zone for the period up to 2040 for housing, employment and other mixed uses. The vision also highlights a ‘key role for (the) Waterfront redevelopment – post 2020, we [the city] still expect parts of the wider waterfront to contribute to our urban regeneration strategy. Leith Docks, for example, is phased beyond 2020’. The vision also proposes the introduction of a ‘Blue Belt’ – a strategic policy mechanism to regulate the city’s northern expansion onto land reclaimed from the sea.

In addition, the following is key learning from the partner regional or city-region plans with particular relation to waterfront development:

- In the RSS for Newcastle/Gateshead, the Quayside is promoted as a location for tourism development in order to strengthen the city region;
- Hull’s waterfront is promoted as a location for economic and social development with a particular focus on shipping and water bound trade, one of the key industries for the Humber region;
- In Scheidam, Schieveste is promoted as an important transportation and mobility hub and a location for offices;
- In Hamburg, Hafen City is promoted as “Europe’s most significant inner city development project and the centrepiece of our concept: “Metropolis Hamburg – A Growing City”.⁴”
- In Gothenburg, the waterfront is promoted as a new central district for living and working;
- Oslo are promoting the city and the region as a ‘Fjord City’, with the waterfront being a major contributor to the city’s reserves for housing/workspaces;
- In Aalborg, the waterfront is designated as an “area of interest” and prioritised as an urban regeneration area with a particular focus on architecture;
- In Copenhagen the north and south harbours of Copenhagen’s waterfront are identified as ‘Regional Focus Areas’ where urbanisation should be supported regionally; and,
- In Stockholm, the regional plan supports the strengthening of the connections between the region and the waterfront.

Edinburgh has much to learn from its transnational partners on the role that regional or city-region bodies play with within each of the planning system frameworks around the North Sea region, how they are set up and managed. Trends in regional planning can across the North Sea region show that many countries (Scotland, England, Sweden and Norway) are moving towards non-elected regional governance approached based on partnership working to prepare statutory, forward thinking and strategic development plans.



Above: The City of Edinburgh Council's consultation document 'A Vision for Capital Growth'.

Right: Gateshead regeneration area.

Below right: Hull's waterfront regeneration area.

4: <http://www.hafencity.com/The Birth of a City>

PLANNING SUMMARIES

Introduction

The following summaries highlight each partner country's approach to Regional Planning with a particular focus on new initiatives. The summaries also detail how a relevant regional strategy in each country addresses their strategic objectives at their waterfront. In addition to this briefing, Edinburgh has prepared a full report on each of the partner planning systems, looking at approaches to national, regional and local planning to accompany this briefing.

ENGLAND

England is currently in the process of a major overhaul of its planning system which will follow a plan-led approach based on two levels (regional and local) at which statutory plans are required to be prepared. Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) set out policies relating to the development and use of land for each of the nine "regions" of England. Each of the nine regions has a Regional Assembly which contains members from the local authorities, private business sector, trade unions, culture, media, sport, further and higher education, skills and training, MPs and MEPs, health, rural, the environment and voluntary sectors. Eight of the nine assemblies are non-elected – the exception is London which has 25 elected members.

Through a white paper in 2003, the UK Government had envisaged that each of the eight remaining English regions would have directly elected Regional Assemblies like London. However due to the failure of the North East Referendum, held in November 2004, to produce a 'yes' vote, elected regional assemblies are no longer on the Government's agenda. The political situation is in a state of flux but RSS continue to provide a spatial framework to inform the preparation of local development documents and the current system of non-elected regional assemblies will remain.

For **Gateshead**, RSS "*View: Shaping the North East*" is currently being prepared by the North East Regional Assembly and has four key strategic themes:

- Delivering Economic Prosperity and Growth
- Delivering Sustainable Communities
- Environment
- Transport Connections.

The Environment Technical Paper accompanying the consultation on each of the themes identify the Newcastle Gateshead Quayside as an opportunity to increase tourism for the region in order to help diversify and strengthen the region's economic base. Additionally, Gateshead's "*2030 Vision*" focuses on creating cultural facilities at the waterfront.

For **Hull**, "*The Yorkshire and Humber Plan*" is currently being prepared by the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly (YHA) and has six key strategic themes based on the "*Advancing Together*" vision also prepared by the YHA:

- An advanced economy
- Excellent infrastructure
- High quality environments
- Educated and skilled people
- First class quality of life
- Good governance and civic participation.



The spatial strategy identifies the coast as a key element of the strategy, and recommends its enhancement both in environmental terms, but also for economic and social development. The strategy also identifies the need to optimise the Humber Ports as a Trade Gateway. Hull has also recently prepared its “*City region development programme*” which is related to the national government led ‘Northern Way’ programme and focuses on the development of the River Humber and its ports.

THE NETHERLANDS

Planning in the Netherlands is based on a three tier system – national, provincial and local. The national government is responsible for supervising provinces’ and municipalities’ spatial policy. Regional planning in the Netherlands is carried out by elected Provincial Councils who prepare Regional Plans (or Streekplan). A regional spatial plan is in principle indicative rather than binding. It does, however, have some binding force in that it sets out the limits within which the province may depart from the regional plan. The drawing up of regional spatial plans is not obligatory. The province is also not legally bound to follow national plans and policy. The Minister can, however, compel a provincial government to adopt or modify a regional spatial plan.

For **Scheidam**, the region plan is “*RR 2020*”, a new plan combining the region plan of the Province and the plan of the greater Rotterdam City Region. The Region Plan was approved formally in November 2005 and came into effect in May 2006. The Region Plan’s objectives are:

- Complete and well functioning green-blue embedded in the landscape, with ecologic development, long term protection against the water, and with a positive effect on the liveability on/in the urban areas
- Strong connection with national and international economic networks with at the same time a more liveable region
- Within the region a higher diversity in housing, work and stay areas (retail, recreation etc), a strong transport system and mobility network, and a good environmental quality.

RR2020 designates ‘Schieveste’ as an important transportation and mobility hub and a location for offices. Additionally, Schiedam is mentioned in RR2020 as a location for industrial parks, office parks and as a transformation area.

GERMANY

Spatial planning in Germany is determined by the federal structure of the nation and governmental organization. Germany has both a horizontal pattern of responsibilities between the national, regional and local levels and vertical structures in regards to the territorial cooperation between the different levels of responsibility, especially on the regional level. The legal responsibility for spatial planning lies on the level of the federal states and the municipalities and therefore the national government has limited planning powers.

Regional policy is a joint task between the federal government and the States. The States also act as mediators between local and national government tiers. This division of responsibilities requires co-operation between the different planning levels. Within Germany there is a growing emphasis on Regional Planning, with the Federal Spatial Planning Act recently being amended to include the requirement that regional state use plans are prepared by the federal states.



For **Hamburg**, there are two relevant regional documents – the vision “*Metropolis Hamburg – A Growing City: Making a vision reality*” (October 2005) and the “*Regional Development Concept for the Metropolitan Region Hamburg 2000*” (last Revision 2005). Both documents highlight the two waterfront redevelopment projects in Hamburg:

- **“A jump across the river” (Leap across the Elbe)** which aims to link the area south of the Elbe more strongly with the core of the city in the north. Until now, the city’s southern districts have been isolated, squeezed between port-related industry and major transport routes, however, they still offer a great deal of space for living and working on the river. The plan aims to enhance and reorganise this area for living and working,
- **HafenCity: “urban trends in the 21st century”**. The Hafen City project is the biggest urban redevelopment project in Europe and will expand the city centre’s surface area by just over 40 percent and will accommodate around 12,000 residents and 40,000 employees.

DENMARK

Planning in Denmark is a plan-led system based on a four levels (national, regional, municipal and local) system that is highly decentralised with decision making and administration being carried out at a regional and in particular local level.

In 2006, the Government of Denmark prepared a national planning report - “*The new map of Denmark – spatial planning under new conditions*” which paves the way for a major reform of government structure in 2007. The national planning report now defines five new regional councils which will be responsible for preparing regional spatial development plans for the administrative regions. The report highlights that the regional spatial development plans will be a joint project between the municipal councils, business, the regional council and the other actors in the administrative region. Compared with the current regional plans, a regional spatial development plan focuses more on an overall spatial strategy for regional development and will be much more oriented towards the future and action.

For **Aalborg**, the current region plan for the whole of North Jutland is the Regionplan 2005. However, Aalborg is also covered by the Aalborg Municipal Development Plan – Primary Structure 2005, “*Hovedstruktur 2005*” which was adopted by Aalborg City Council on 13 June 2005. It has a revision period of four years and a plan period of 12 years. The urban policy strategy contains the city council’s principal idea for the physical development of the Municipality of Aalborg until 2016, as well as further development in the longer term. The strategic objectives of the ‘Hovedstruktur’ are described as follows:

- As the largest city in North Jutland and the region’s “driving force”, Aalborg shall take on a particular responsibility for development;
- Aalborg shall be northern Denmark’s most energetic and innovative city and occupy a strong position in terms of global competition;
- The towns and cities shall take part in a dynamic interaction, and urban development and services shall be based on the needs and opportunities in the town or district concerned; and,
- Aalborg shall contribute to the development of sustainable towns and local communities.

Left: Schiedam

Below left: Hamburg.

Below: Aalborg’s regeneration area.



Developing the waterfront is one of the main action areas in the Hovedstruktur 2005, Primary Structure 2005. As well as one of the high prioritized urban regeneration areas and as an architectural focus area designated as 'Particular area of interest'.

Copenhagen is covered by the Greater Copenhagen Region Plan 2005. The plan has been prepared by the Greater Copenhagen Authority (HUR) which a politically-governed regional organisation is covering the Greater Copenhagen Region with powers over public transport, regional planning, Oresund (Copenhagen/Malmö Bridge) co-operation and development, industrial policy, tourism and cultural development given to it under a 1999 Act of Parliament. The strategic objectives of the Region Plan are:

- The world's best recreational areas
- A rich and varied housing supply – enough plots and building opportunities
- An attractive and innovative business environment; and
- A fine and efficient infrastructure for all modes of transport.

The Oresund Committee was founded in 1993 and has 13 local authority members. A key aim of the Committee is to create a single labour market in the region through better connectivity and by investing in infrastructure. In 2000, Denmark and Sweden were connected by the multi-modal bridge Oresund Bridge. The opening of the bridge has created a cross-national region of 3 million inhabitants in a 50 km radius. In addition, city collaboration between Copenhagen and Malmö (and the Oresund Bridge) has enabled port activities to be rationalised and all freight handling to be transferred to Malmö, thereby releasing substantial areas of land in Copenhagen for development.

The region plan therefore designates the north and south harbours of Copenhagen's waterfront as 'Regional Focus Areas' where urbanisation should be supported regionally. For the north harbour, the plan highlights that the redevelopment is linked with efficient public transport services (new S Train terminals and a possible regional station). The redevelopment of the south harbour is also connected to improving public transport linkages, but also to increasing public access to the land and water in the harbour area.

SWEDEN

Planning in Sweden is characterised by a high degree of decentralisation of power to municipal level. Strategic planning is weak at the regional level, where the emphasis is on regional economic development and service provision (e.g. roads and traffic, schools and hospitals). Although weak, the government can appoint a regional planning body to deal with land and water areas, which cross municipal boundaries, through an indicative Regionplan. There is, however, some evidence of a trend to greater intra-municipal coordination and a stronger relationship between regional planning and spatial planning. In recent years, the aims of the Översiktsplan have changed from being mainly a land use plan to a more strategic document with increased focus on social aspects and peoples' living conditions. This change encourages citizens to participate more in the planning process.

As **Gothenburg** does not have a formal regional plan, the closest document to such a plan is "*Rådslag – andra runda*" (meaning consultation/debate – second round; first round made in 2002). The report on 'Rådslaget' has been approved by the political board of GR (The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities). The main themes are:



- Develop exchange of information and knowledge around social structure to reach cooperation on powerful measures and contribute to inhabitants feeling part of society – employment and integration are key words
- Create a political arena for discuss strategic housing issues
- Plan for new housing areas were public transportation investments already has been made
- Improve public transportation and create more attractive connections
- Develop adult education through GR
- Show the concrete effects that regional growth can have for the Göteborg region.

With regards to waterfront development, the background material to ‘Rådslaget’ emphasises that in order to grow, the region needs a strong concentrated centre where new housing and workplaces should be built. The report highlights the areas on both side of the river, ‘Göte Älv’ in Göteborg as part of this regional centre.

Stockholm County Council is the Regional Planning Authority for the Stockholm Region. The Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation (RTK) has been delegated responsibility from the Stockholm County Council for regional planning, overall traffic planning and regional development issues.

The strategic plan covering the Stockholm region is the Regional Development Plan 2001 which has the following strategic objectives:

- Increase the region’s capacity
- Create attractive centres and strengthen the environment for innovation
- Expand and maintain the unity of the region
- Develop effective systems and structures; and,
- Internationalise the region.

In terms of waterfront development within the Stockholm region, the strategic objective of ‘Expand and hold the region together’ highlights that ‘the functional Stockholm region is growing’ and that ‘the expansion of the region into adjacent counties in the Valley of Lake Mälaren can be supported by improved interregional transport that facilitates commuting to work and other contacts’.

However, the plan states that at the same time ‘the region must be held together’ and ‘the connections from Lake Mälaren to the Baltic Sea need to be strengthened’. The waterfront is also identified as a ‘blue structure’ which provides recreation and water supply, as well as an environmental impact and therefore should be taken into consideration when new developments by it are planned.

NORWAY

The planning system in Norway is traditionally decentralised, with a limited role for national government in planning. The system assigns broad powers to the municipalities to decide on its own spatial development and can approve spatial plans for their own territory as long as national and county authorities have no objections. At the regional level, County Plans (Fylkesplan) set long term guidelines as well as co-ordinate activities with national and local levels of government such as transport and housing (via working groups and task forces), but are not legally binding on local planning

Below left: View of Göteborg

Below : Oslo’s regeneration area.



NEWCASTLE HULL ODENSE OSLO SCHIEDAM AALBORG EDINBURGH
EDINBURGH GÖTEBORG GATESHEAD-NEWCASTLE HA
HULL ODENSE OSLO SCHIEDAM AALBORG EDINBURGH



WATERFRONT COMMUNITIES PROJECT

The Waterfront Communities project is co-funded by the INTERREG IIIB North Sea programme, an initiative of the European Union to encourage “harmonious and balanced” development through co-operation between European counties in Spatial Planning.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

www.waterfrontcommunitiesproject.org

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