

JYVÄSKYLÄ ARCHITECTURAL POLICY

THE CITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ'S ARCHITECTURAL POLICY PROGRAMME





The City of Jyväskylä's architectural policy programme was approved by Jyväskylä City Council on 17.06.2002

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JYVÄSKYLÄ'S CITY IMAGE STANDS UP TO COMPARISON

Mayor Pekka Kettunen

A new urban strategy for Jyväskylä was launched in the mid-1990s. A few years later an urban programme for the shore of Lake Jyväsjärvi was also published. It contains the urban utopia of a human-centred technology cluster on the lake shore right in the centre of the city.

Jyväskylä, which has been through far-reaching structural change, drew on its new strategy of partnership for the strength needed to spur development. The city's strong upward course was also widely noted. In 1999 and 2000 the City of Jyväskylä won national awards for best enterprise policy and image building achievement.

Jyväskylä's rise is clearly reflected in the cityscape. A cluster of ten thousand specialists is currently taking shape in the middle of the city along the shores of Lake Jyväsjärvi. The beautiful buildings of the university's Ylistönrinne site have served to reinforce Jyväskylä's image for more than a decade now. Agora was a success story from the very outset. Lutakko's new landmark, the 15-storey Innova building, captures the attention of all who pass by.

In Jyväskylä, however, there is no risk of lapsing into complacency. In accordance with our urban strategy we also want to see our city and our cityscape through the eyes of outsiders; to measure ourselves by an international yardstick, too.



Dr Topi Antti Äikäs has begun a two-year research programme extending over a couple of years that will investigate the stories of two Finnish cities that have enjoyed success – Oulu and Jyväskylä – from the perspective of image research. Madrid has been chosen as the city for international comparison.

Jyväskylä has undoubtedly much to learn from the success story of our partner Oulu. In the international market place Oulu presents itself as Technology City at the gates to mythical Lapland. Considering Jyväskylä's own traditions the title Human Technology City would seem to sit most easily. The title com-

bines the skills of building paper machines, first-class expertise in psychology as well as the revolution brought about by information technology.

There is no better place to ponder human-centred technology than in a building designed by Alvar Aalto or Arto Sipinen. Numerous examples of the work of these renowned architects are to be found in prime locations around the city.

Jyväskylä was the first city in Finland to approve its own architecture policy programme. The decision of the city council is a demonstration of a joint resolve to raise still further the quality of the city's architecture and built environment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Topi Äikäs". The signature is stylized and fluid.

PROGRAMMES AT NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL LEVEL

The government's architectural policy was approved by the **Council of State** on 17.12.1998 with the aim of defining the goals for action to be taken by the public authorities. Correspondingly on 20.11.2000 the **Province of Eastern Finland** drafted an architectural policy programme intended, among other things, to preserve and develop the distinctive character of the area's environment. Both programmes contain guidelines as well as concrete proposals for specific action.

In the **government's programme** (www.minedu.fi/kupo/ty/arkkitehtuuri.html) the definition of architecture rests on three cornerstones: **utility, durability and beauty**. The programme lays down a number of points of departure, including:

- That the government calls for building projects financed from the public or government purse to serve as high-quality **examples** for the construction sector as a whole in Finland
- That when formulating **rules and regulations** proper attention should be paid to the assessment of impacts associated with the architectural quality of the living environment
- That a natural strategy be drawn up for the **preservation of buildings** and the protection of Finland's architectural heritage
- That the Ministry of Education should work actively to reinforce the status of architecture in the spheres of **culture and the arts**





- That quality-driven **development projects** in building and the construction sector be started with a view to promoting an operating culture of overall cost efficiency
- That the government urges organisations engaged in public sector building to make even greater use of **architectural and planning competitions**, taking different forms and as demanded by the purpose, in order to seek exemplary solutions and as a means of selecting a designer
- That the Ministry of Education shall investigate ways of improving the **system of awards** for the built environment and architecture in order that projects implemented with merit, as well as the persons responsible for the same, are given the appropriate recognition

The **Eastern Finland programme** seeks to highlight the means by which an influence on architecture and the environment can be exerted within the province at regional and municipal level. These are in particular:

- An increase in **architecture education** for all age groups
- **Informing the public** about architectural and environmental issues
- Adequate levels of **expertise** in planning and architecture at municipal level
- Greater attention to studying and preserving the province's **building heritage**
- **Expert planning and maintenance** of building areas

Main building of the University of Jyväskylä. Alvar Aalto 1956.

LOCAL AIMS

Jyväskylä's architectural policy programme is local in character and establishes local aims for improving the quality of the built environment.

The programme takes the new urban strategy as its point of departure

- The vision is of a city of innovation and pooled strengths and an urban concept which goes much further than the needs of individual projects and limitations on land use. Elements are added to functional areas by a process of interlacing with the result that from them strands emerge which boost operating potential and internal synergy
- Development leans on the idea of a balanced urban policy: balance is pursued from the perspectives of competitive ability, social harmony and sustainable solutions
- The fantastic is realism: when the fantastic disappears, the economic foundation is fractured, too

The city is a centre of growth, the rapid changes in the environment caused by which present challenges to all those involved in construction. A major factor in the city's appeal is also its natural features, its hills and lakes, their domination and accessibility. Preserving and emphasising these characteristics can be considered the starting point for all building in the city. In recent years the city has invested particularly in planning,





architectural research and events, architectural competitions and international co-operation in the field of architecture with the aim of providing the city with **the world's best architecture**. Good architecture and a quality environment can only be attained in a situation where we all set targets for our own work which are sufficiently high – reality will ensure that we do not achieve absolutely everything. However, we will have done everything we can and the end result in consequence will be the best possible.

In terms of profile Jyväskylä is consciously **a city of modern architecture**. Jyväskylä is the city in which academician Alvar Aalto spent much of his early life and where he opened his first office. The city features no less than 24 buildings of Aalto's design from all periods of his working life. One of the aims of this programme is indeed to **emphasise Aalto's heritage in urban planning**. Jyväskylä is a young city; the grid plan dating from the 1830s was to a large extent built over during the second half of the 20th century, which also saw the creation of the new residential areas around the city centre.

The location of the city centre, squeezed between Lake Jyväsjärvi, the Harju ridge and the university, has brought about the change: the only direction in which to grow has been up. The open structure of 1960s urban planning gave way to unification of the grid plan. As an entity the city centre reflects the various layers of 20th century architecture and it is balanced in terms of scale, despite some need for further harmonisation and improvement in terms of quality.

Taken as a whole, construction in Jyväskylä in the 20th century was characterised by its quality. Buildings designed by female architects Vivi Lönn and Elsa Borg from the early years of the century are still features of the cityscape. Rautpohja's functionalist apartment buildings, the old campus of the University of Jyväskylä, Viitaniemi, Lohikoski, Kortepohja, Kuokkala and Lutakko are all examples of their times and trend-setters

Viitatorni apartment block. Alvar Aalto 1961.

where urban planning is concerned. The majority of these areas were built on the basis of **architectural competitions**; the city has strong traditions of arranging such competitions, which continue to this day, for example, five competitions in total were staged in 2001. Professor Arto Sipinen's production, from his designs for university buildings in the 1970s right up to the present day, has brought Aalto-like timelessness to the general aspect of the city.

The city is developing at the pinnacle of **international new architecture**; one example of that is the international architectural competition for a Centre for Music and the Arts staged in 1998 which was won by Zita Cotti and Martina Hauser from Switzerland, who continue to work on the project. In the autumn of 2001 the internationally renowned Swiss architect Peter Zumthor began planning a residential block in the very heart of the





Architecture summer school.

city. The European 6 competition for young architects in 2001 was won by Cristina Diaz-Moreno and Efrén Garcia Grinda, with whom work on the planning of this compact area of detached housing located in Äijälänranta is also progressing. In addition, from the middle of the 1990s onwards, Jyväskylä has been a regular venue for international **architecture summer schools and seminars**; of these the most significant are the Alvar Aalto Symposium, Design for Architecture Symposium and a conference of architecture researchers arranged by the Alvar Aalto Academy on a three-year rotation, the annual Soundings for Architecture summer school as well as Ranko Radovic's IFHP summer school. The events bring hundreds of architects and students to Jyväskylä each year, who in addition to providing some external perspective on the development of the city also see to it that Jyväskylä gains welcome exposure around the world.

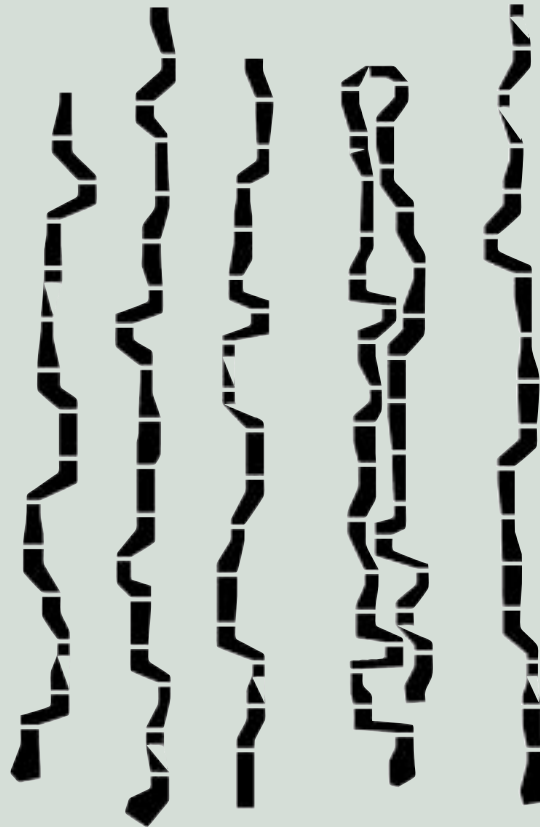


GOALS OF THE PROGRAMME

The goal of the programme is to create the means for **raising the quality of the city's built environment**; the built environment includes not only areas and buildings but also street space, the construction of green areas, street fixtures and fittings, lighting, benches, advertising stands and so on. This entails political and economic commitment to the proposals put forward in the programme. The goal of the programme is also to help citizens to understand changes in the urban environment and in particular to demand that changes implemented are long-term in nature and hallmarked by quality.

The programme leans heavily on the government's architectural policy programme and its goals, but emphasises local goals and in particular **concrete measures for both achieving and monitoring these**. A separate follow-up programme drawing on the architectural policy programme will be drafted subsequent to approval by the city council.

THE CITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ'S ARCHITECTURAL POLICY PROGRAMME



ESTABLISHING GOALS FOR ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION

According to the new Land Use and Building Act citizens must be given an even greater say in planning and building matters. Dialogue with experts and decision-makers functions effectively and is more comprehensible, the better the parties involved are acquainted with building the environment and the opportunities that presents.

The provision of architecture education from childhood onwards teaches us to pay attention to the built environment and to engage in discussion about it. Adequate architecture education reduces the need for controlling or guiding construction; enlightened and critical citizens ensure their surroundings are harmonious and in tune with the environment in the manner of 19th century farmsteads.

In Jyväskylä the Alvar Aalto Museum is a natural and experienced conductor and developer of architecture education. Aalto's impressive production in the city presents an equally good foundation for architecture education as for all construction in the city.

Measures:

- the drafting of a development programme for architecture education
- the mapping of individuals/bodies with expert knowledge operating in the branch and the creation of a co-operation network supporting the development of architecture education



Architecture education at the Alvar Aalto Museum.

Experimental house.
Alvar Aalto 1953.



TOWN PLANNING, BUILDING AND INSPECTION FUNCTION AS A HIGH-QUALITY EXAMPLE

A goal of one's own that is set as high as possible produces the best result, the best example.

The cityscape committee is the most influential fraternal body in the shaping of a new general aspect for the city. Its modes of operation, composition and power to influence should be subjected to assessment.

Achieving the goal is dependent on correct budgeting of resources; the economic goals of operations must include a quality bonus, the opportunity for creativity and development.

Measures:

- the staging of a seminar for the relevant parties in order to find methods for raising the quality level of the whole
- the creation of a working party charged with redefining the work of the cityscape committee
- the strengthening of building inspection resources by hiring an architect to direct planning



Gummeruksenkatu,
City Hall.
K.V. Reinius 1899.

City church.
L.I.Lindqvist 1880.

Pedestrian precinct.



ATTENTION TO ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY WHEN DRAFTING REGULATIONS

The significance of a planning regulation is virtually nil if it is over-general in nature or otherwise difficult to interpret. The same applies to the connection between the planning and implementation stages: co-operation between the person drawing the plan, building permission authorities and the designer of the project in question must proceed absolutely smoothly.

In the development of regulations the intention should be to cut down the conventionalities and concentrate on the special goals of a quality nature associated with the location in question.

Measures:

- Town planning and building inspection to co-operate more closely in the development of planning regulations and to draft a guideline for quality-boosting planning regulations as well as use of the same



Lutakko is taking shape around the chimney of a former plywood factory.

Messutori.

Innova. Arto Sipinen 2001.



DRAFTING A STRATEGY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BUILDINGS

Measures taken by the city to protect buildings did not commence in practice until the year 1970. A substantial number of buildings have been protected, chiefly via a town plan. However, buildings worthy of protection or preservation emerge continuously and unexpectedly in the normal course of matters. This is a disadvantage from the standpoint of all concerned: the owner of the property, those intent on pushing a project through rapidly and those keen to preserve the various layers of the urban structure.

Measures:

- Outdated town plans to be gone over, and the order of urgency for their renewal specified
- Drafting of a classification system for the protection of buildings in accordance with the importance of the location concerned
- Drafting of guidelines on building protection principles from a local perspective



Nikolainkulma (Asemakatu 6). 1899.

Suksipajantie 18.
Carl Bengts 1929.

Schaumanin linna
(‘Schauman castle’)
Gunnar Wahlroos 1923.



STRENGTHENING THE FORMS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND ART

Architecture is art, but it is also the product of extensive co-operation. Matching different art forms to the architecture and environment may complement the whole or provide just that vital detail.

The main obstacle to purchases of art is usually money; for this reason, too, incorporating art into built environment projects right in their initial stages is vital.

Measures:

- Agreement on a recommendation regarding the percentage figure allocated to art in connection with public building projects
- Agreement on a recommendation concerning the percentage figure allocated to art in connection with the construction of office blocks and apartment buildings
- Organisation of a seminar for all relevant parties to establish methods



Painted ceiling in Cygnaeus school.
Urho Lehtinen 1925.

Mural in the Torikeskus shopping
centre.
Jaakko Valo 1988.

Säynätsalo town hall.
Alvar Aalto 1952.



INITIATING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN SUPPORT OF ARCHITECTURE

In developing architecture the local level, too, has a vital role to play in international co-operation in all its different forms.

Jyväskylä has not made sufficient use of the capacity of local educational institutions in its efforts to study and develop the built environment.

Measures:

- Active involvement in EU projects impacting on the Jyväskylä region
- Increased co-operation with the University of Jyväskylä and other educational institutions, to include making use of dissertations written in the branch



For those at Jyväskylä Vocational School training to become painters the redecoration of the Jyväskylä Lyceum provided valuable work experience.

Jyväskylä Polytechnic has premises in the Turbiini ('Turbine') building, formerly part of a plywood factory.



ORGANIZATION OF ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING COMPETITIONS IN ORDER TO FIND EXEMPLARY SOLUTIONS AND RAISE PLANNING QUALITY

A competition gives architects and planners a chance to show off their skills, it brings both new talents to the surface and confirms the vitality of older hands. At its best a competition provides the commissioning party not only with welcome publicity and media exposure but above all with something new, something to strive for. The majority of Jyväskylä's finest buildings and areas, too, have come about via competitions.

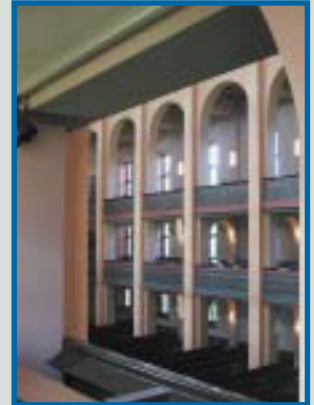
A competition generally supplies the ideas or concept for a project. Further refinement may alter the winning entry substantially; the key consideration, however, is the final result. The preparatory stage and goals of the competition must be given careful attention.

Measures:

- Establishing as a goal the staging of at least two architectural and planning competitions each year involving locations or areas categorised as important



Kortepohja.
Bengt Lundsten 1964.



Taulumäki church.
Elsa Borg 1929.

Jyväskylä's new Travel Centre,
a rail/coach interchange.
Harris-Kjisik-Rouhiainen 2002.



AWARDS FOR PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED WITH MERIT

The giving of an award and extensive coverage of the event in the media constitute a simple and cost-effective means of improving the quality of the environment. A good example provides positive thoughts not only for the person(s) behind the project, but especially for planners and designers of new building schemes as well.

Measures:

- Introduction of awards for the Architectural Project (Action) / Apartment Building / Small House / Overall Scheme / Environmentally Friendly Solution of the Year



Church park.

Mattilanniemi.

Nenäinniemi.

University of Jyväskylä,
Ylistönrinne site.
Arto Sipinen 1990–1999.





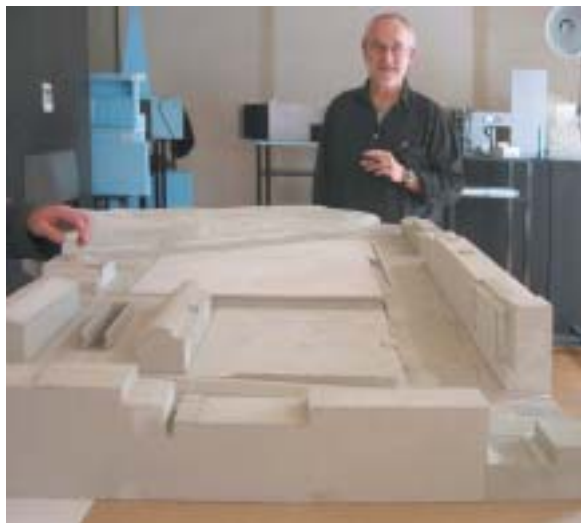
FUTURE

Centre for Music and the Arts.
Zita Cotti, Martina Hauser 1999.

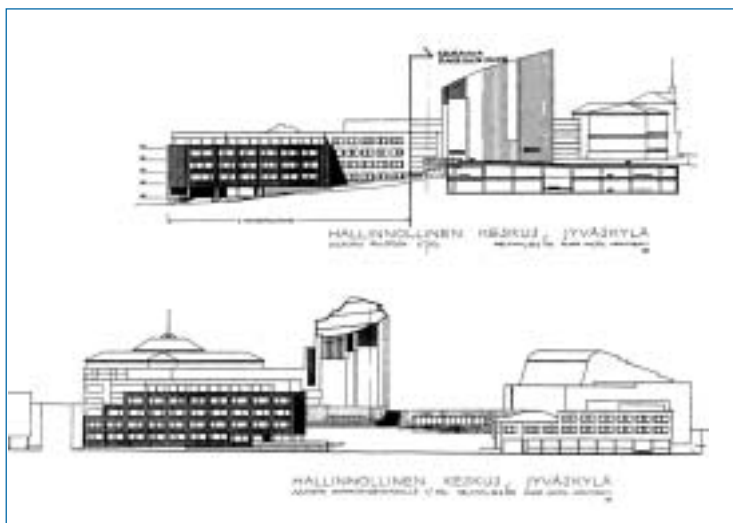
Äijälänranta. Cristina Diaz-Moreno. Efrén
Garcia Grinda 2001.

Peter Zumthor's design for a city centre
residential block. 2002.

Administrative block and a council
chamber. Alvar Aalto 1964.



Jukka Hallinen





Hannu Vallas



JYVÄSKYLÄ

**HUMAN
TECHNOLOGY
CITY**

