

# THE DIRECTORATE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

## Strategy for Management of Norwegian Urban Cultural Heritage 2017-2020



The Directorate for Cultural Heritage advises the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment on policies concerning the management of national archaeological and architectural monuments and sites. The Directorate also oversees the implementation of national cultural heritage policies, and in this capacity is the supervisory authority for regional-authority (Norwegian counties and the Sámi Parliament's counties) activities involving archaeological and architectural monuments and sites, cultural environments and landscapes.





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# Preface

Important components of Norwegian national history are linked to the layout and location of its urban areas. Many of these urban areas have a long history, which in some cases dates back to the Middle Ages. The modern cities and towns of Norway bear the traces of their history in the layout of their streets, buildings and built environments. These are the monuments and sites that give urban areas their distinctive character and attributes.

Public spaces, squares and buildings of different ages hold great experiential value for residents and visitors alike. The cultural heritage sustained by urban areas is also an important factor for identity and sense of community. It is a resource for visitors and residents; it provides attractive urban environments and sustains tourism and other sectoral development.

The goal of achieving sustainable urban and societal development entails criteria such as short travel time, increased building heights and energy efficiency. Population growth in Norway's main cities, urban sprawl and densification are placing pressure on preservation-worthy buildings and historic urban environments.

While some cities are growing, other towns and historic urban environments are becoming less attractive for retailers and other businesses who are relocating away from the urban centres. Dereliction and abandonment also pose a challenge for the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural environments.

The actions taken to counter these challenges will be decisive for the urban environment and urban values in the future. Ongoing urban development adds new stories to urban heritage, yet also has to accommodate and preserve the stories that already exist. Archaeological and architectural monuments and sites in Norwegian urban areas should be managed from a long-term perspective, while being utilised as resources and collective benefits in developing a thriving society and attractive urban areas.

Long-term and sustainable management of historic urban environments entails that old buildings are used and maintained, and that historic districts continue to be seen as attractive residential areas with adequate service and shopping amenities.

Through this Strategy, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage aims to promote sound management of urban cultural heritage and cultural environments nationwide in Norway, for the good of the nation, local communities, residents, visitors and businesses.

Oslo, March 2017

Jørn Holme  
Director  
The Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage

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# Introduction

Norwegian national policy documents emphasise the status and significance of urban areas with respect to socio-economic growth. The Ministry of Climate and Environment's White Paper no. 16 (2004–2005) and White Paper no. 35 (2012–2013) stressed the importance of heritage monuments in Norway's urban areas. The white papers emphasised that cultural heritage is integral to the quality, attractiveness and continuity of environs undergoing substantial changes, and that cultural environments are perceived as significant for quality of life and identity. Norway's urban areas are consequently invested with major national interests.

Ensuring sustainable urban and societal development is a distinct objective. We are currently facing major environmental and climate challenges. The energy transition and sustainability are fundamental for urban development for the future. The preservation and utilisation of cultural heritage and cultural environments as resources in urban areas are important in this context.

In the Norwegian Government's *national expectations regarding regional and local planning* (12 June 2015), cultural heritage is highlighted as a key theme in the efforts to create attractive urban environments. Excellent architecture, historic buildings and urban environments are singled out as being conducive to local identity and positive impressions of urban centres, and as resources in developing attractive urban areas.

This is also laid down in the Government planning guidelines for coordinated housing, land use and transport planning, which state that: The planning shall show due regard for green structure, proper surface water management, important natural diversity, arable land, cultural heritage assets and aesthetic features, and that cultural heritage and cultural environments should be utilised actively as resources in urban development (unofficial translation of Article 4.7 of *Statlige planretningslinjer for samordnet bolig-, areal- og transportplanlegging*, established by Royal Decree of 26 September 2014).

Based on these policy papers, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage has drawn up the present *Strategy for Management of Norwegian Urban Cultural Heritage*.

## STRATEGY STATUS

The Strategy is not to be understood as Government guidelines, but as a set of recommendations in which the Directorate for Cultural Heritage sends proactive and clear signals as to what we regard as best practices in safeguarding urban cultural heritage. In the Strategy, we emphasise the importance of areas of national interest, including the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's NB!-register (database listing of urban centres in Norway with cultural environments of national interest), and the recommendations made are a signal to local and regional cultural heritage management authorities on the possibilities and limitations for interventions in the principal historic urban environments.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage will also be drawing up an action plan containing initiatives implementing the present Strategy. The action plan will be a self-contained document and is not appended to the Strategy.

*Our attitudes to urban areas are informed by both reason and emotion. Affinity for places is fostered by presence over time. Monuments, sites and existing buildings are consequently a significant part of the urban dynamics and foster recognition and civic belonging.*

Unofficial translation, Den moderne bærekraftige byen (on modern sustainable cities), Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2013, p. 20.

## Definitions

*Built heritage and cultural environments in all their diversity and detail shall be protected as part of our cultural heritage and identity and as an element in integrated environmental and resource management.*

*It is a national responsibility to safeguard these resources as scientific source material and as an enduring basis for the experience, self-awareness, quality of life and activities for present and future generations.*

Excerpt from Section 1 of the Cultural Heritage Act (unofficial translation).

*The term "cultural heritage" is defined here as all traces of human activity in our physical environment, including places associated with historical events, beliefs and traditions.*

*The term "cultural environment" is defined here as any area where monuments or sites form part of a larger entity or context.*

Excerpt from Section 2 of the Cultural Heritage Act (unofficial translation).

Cultural heritage comprises all tangible and intangible manifestations of human activity through the ages.

Non-physical traces are found in skills and know-how concerning the utilisation and development of cultural heritage. Examples of this would be choice of materials, traditional crafts, the utilisation and maintenance of artefacts and environs, and stories associated with physical artefacts.

The concept of cultural heritage also includes procedures associated with the assessment and selection of archaeological and architectural monuments and sites, cultural environments and landscapes of significance for their inhabitants.



The piers in Trondheim. This row of buildings has immense national value, but their future use poses a challenge. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Norwegian Government's cultural heritage policy. The Directorate is the supervisory authority for local (municipal) and regional heritage management (Norwegian counties and the Sámi Parliament's counties), involving archaeological and architectural monuments and sites, cultural environments and landscapes. It is invested with the authority to determine whether monuments, sites and cultural environments are of national significance. The Directorate also has the authority to lodge objections to local and regional initiatives and to grant exemptions pursuant to the Cultural Heritage Act's provisions for archaeological and architectural monuments and sites protected by law, and to decide on exemptions for interventions affecting listed national buildings and estates. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage shall promote and advise on the utilisation of cultural heritage assets and cultural environments as resources in urban development in the interests of fostering dynamic urban environments and quality surroundings.

The Norwegian county authorities and the Sámi Parliament are the regional cultural heritage authorities. They also have supervisory responsibility for local-level planning, including urban planning. Each regional authority plays an important role through its delegated responsibility for ensuring that national expectations for regional and local planning are met, and that cultural heritage interests and assets are taken into account in local planning. The regional authorities are responsible for the utilisation and preservation of resources in their regional and land-use planning, and for the management of archaeological and architectural monuments and sites, cultural environments and landscapes in considering planning and building applications.

The local authority is the local planning authority and ensures that land-use planning and urban planning are consistent with the general public interest. Both regional and local plans are important management resources in facilitating appropriate and sustainable development while protecting the interests associated with cultural heritage and historic urban environments. The local authorities are also responsible for identifying important monuments and sites and cultural environments, and for their protection through local planning decisions (pursuant to Royal Decree of 12 June 2015).

The Strategy will also be useful for national sectoral authorities, and other national agencies and state-owned enterprises. It will also be of use to land and infrastructure developers, property developers, land and property owners and other stakeholders, as it provides important information on factors to be given due consideration and emphasis in urban development and land-use planning.

## What is an urban area?

Although variously defined internationally, for our present purposes, urban area serves as a convenient umbrella term for the urban morphologies of *by* (loosely equivalent to city or town) and *tettsted* (loosely equivalent to small town or village). In the English version of the Strategy, the term *urban area* denotes a built-up and more or less delimited geographical area of a certain size and/or significance. Urban areas are universally characterised by the density of their buildings, relatively high population density, commerce dominated by retail, skilled trades and administration, and limited emphasis on agriculture.

## Urbanisation

The present Strategy uses the term *urbanisation* to denote the various processes associated with the migration of people, markets and activities from rural to urban areas. The term is also used to refer to processes that reinforce the character, modernisation and development of urban areas.

## Sustainable development

The standard definition of this concept is that it *meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Sustainability must be assessed with regard for the economic, environmental, cultural and social aspects of socio-economic progress.

(United Nations Association of Norway, <http://www.fn.no/Tema/Baerekraftig-utvikling>)

## Sustainability and urban development

The expert council on sustainable urban policies (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2013) recommended strengthening Norway's urban areas and increasing the positive attributes of established urban environments. It stated that: *It is not sustainable for existing buildings to be vacated, become derelict or demolished. Consequently, measures must be put in place to facilitate urban transformation by means of re-use and densification. Urban sprawl causes existing positive attributes to disappear and loss of assets.* (p. 13). The council also pointed to the importance of easing the pressure on the most attractive urban areas and stimulating investment readiness in less developed urban areas (p. 44).



Climate change will result in more storms and extreme weather. This poses a challenge for conservation of Norway's cultural heritage. The photo shows a storm over Sand in the Ryfylke district of Western Norway. Foto: Tor J. Jørgensen



## STRATEGY SCOPE

The Strategy comprises historic urban centres and their preserved buildings, streets, squares and greenspaces. The Strategy does not comprise sub-surface cultural layers, traces and building remains. Several urban areas in Norway have delimited sites containing sub-surface cultural layers dating from the Middle Ages. While these are important to safeguard, they also hold cultural heritage mediation potential which should be taken into account as a resource in urban development. Readers are referred to the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's medieval archaeology programme (2015), Norwegian Standard NS 945:2009 on requirements for environmental monitoring and surveys of cultural layers, and SINTEF Byggforsk title no. 721.305 (2010) concerning construction on cultural layers in medieval towns.

## CHALLENGES

The population of Norway is increasing, and its cities are growing. The four main cities and metropolitan regions are growing the most in numbers and speed. Heavy population growth in the main cities and suburbs is pressuring land-use and infrastructure (<http://www.byrogdistrikter.no/vekstkraftige-bo-og-arbeidsmarkeder-i-hele-landet-2/>). The years up to 2030 are projected to show a 30% increase in the population growth rate around the four main cities of Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger. The Norwegian Government's objective from a sustainability perspective is compact urban areas with short journey times (*Bymiljø og bærekraftige byer (Urban environments and sustainable urban areas)*, on the Norwegian Government website: Government.no, 10 October 2016). Compact urban development can be sustainable in terms of energy and transport economics, but also poses challenges. Modifications to existing buildings, vertical and horizontal extensions and densification requirements potentially pose threats to cultural heritage assets. Physical cultural heritage and its symbolic value are pressured by heavy densification or sub-standard adaptation of newbuilds to heritage buildings and sites.

Norwegian cities have few skyscrapers or other monumental buildings. Exceptions include churches and city halls that tower above the urban skylines. Historic urban centres often have a hierarchy in which buildings with public and significant functions loom large. High-rises would in some locations be a means of achieving urban densification. Equally, such high-rises and other large buildings can easily come into conflict with the urban landscape and other cultural heritage assets in cities.

In some cities, the city centre's significance for retail and service enterprises is weakened by car-based retailing away from the centre, and online retailing. Some of the historic urban environments are also tending to lose their attractiveness as residential neighbourhoods. This results in falling property prices, lower rental revenue, vacant housing and impending dereliction. Such changes have the potential to undermine the vitality of these districts and options for future use and conservation of the urban environment.

The building and construction industry largely favours newbuild projects. There appears to be greater readiness and capacity to invest in newbuilds than in maintaining and upgrading existing buildings. The focus on newbuilds and a lack of structural expertise concerning older buildings also pose a challenge for positive transformation and new uses for buildings in historic urban environments

Climate change will affect Norway's urban areas with increasingly extreme

## Conservation and development

Historically, in cultural heritage preservation, the paired concepts of *preservation* and *development* have been mutually opposed in that development by and large was seen as posing a threat to the protection of cultural heritage. However, this dichotomy is now dissolving. This applies equally to the preservation of urban cultural heritage and the nature of the forces governing urban development. The relationship between preservation and development has transitioned through four main phases:

- 1 Prior to 1975, the objective was either preservation or development; one or the other (Venice Charter 1964).
- 2 Following the European Architectural Heritage Year 1975, the need emerged to address both preservation and development in parallel (Amsterdam Declaration 1975).
- 3 Through the 1990s, it became increasingly more prevalent to adopt integrated solutions such as *safeguarding via development* and to regard cultural heritage as a resource (Granada Convention 1985, Washington Charter 1987).
- 4 Today, besides constituting a resource, cultural heritage is increasingly a driver for urban development, meaning that the original paired concept has been inverted to *development via preservation* (European Landscape Convention 2004, Faro Convention 2005, UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape 2011).



The construction of new homes on small vacant lots in existing urban environments is an effective densification strategy and serves to improve perceptions and readability. Such infill projects are also demanding and require a high standard of quality and adaptation to the surrounding architecture. In this example, the height poses a challenge. Foto: Ivan Brodey



weather such as storms and heavy rainfall and ensuing damage from flooding, rock falls and wind. This can have severe consequences for cultural heritage monuments, sites and cultural environments.

Measures to improve the energy performance of existing buildings in order to contribute to more climate-friendly cities can also pose a challenge if those measures are not properly adapted to the buildings. Expertise on how various energy-efficiency measures can be implemented in different types of buildings and at district level in Norwegian urban areas is currently in great demand, but in short supply.

Many historic cultural environments are linked to historic thoroughfares and arterial roads. Roads and streets, public spaces and squares have been, and still are, important meeting places in urban areas. The car-based urban development of the post-war era has resulted in increased congestion to the detriment of the environmental and experiential value of many Norwegian towns and cities.

In many urban areas, projects are planned and carried out for road and rail infrastructure expansions between the historic urban centre and outlying fjord, or for reclamation and development of former industrial seafronts and docklands. Such interventions may be detrimental to the experiential and utility value of historic urban environments and reduce the options for future preservation.

Studies have shown (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research commissioned report 31/2016) that many cities and municipalities lack up-to-date district or zoning plans for their urban environments. These are the plans that are needed to chart the course and lay down objectives for urban development while safeguarding cultural heritage assets. As a consequence of this, planning and building applications under some local authorities are extensively granted as exemptions to existing plans, as revealed by KOSTRA (Municipality-State-Reporting) statistics. In such cases, factual data on existing cultural heritage assets is often non-existent or deficient, and the conflict potential is substantial.

In many Norwegian urban areas, urban development is often project-based and planning proposals are made by the developers. This poses a substantial challenge for integrated and long-term urban development.

### **The Norwegian Planning and Building Act on quality (unofficial translation):**

*Any project pursuant to Chapter 20 shall be designed and executed so as to ensure its sound architectural design consistent with its function pursuant to the rules laid down in or pursuant to this Act.*  
Section 29-1. Project design.

*Any project pursuant to Chapter 20 shall be designed and executed such that it embodies, in the opinion of the local authority, sound visual quality intrinsically and in relation to its function and its built and natural environs and siting.*  
Section 29-2. Visual quality.

*Where buildings are to undergo alteration, renovation or refurbishment, the local authority shall ensure that heritage, architectural or other cultural assets associated with a building's exterior are, to the extent possible, preserved. Section 29-2 is likewise applicable.*

Section 31-1. The preservation of cultural value in work on existing buildings.



**Bioforsk, Holtevegen 70, Tromsø. Grade 2 listed national building, not scheduled for preservation. Built in 1928 as a research shed, subsequently served as a laboratory facility/office building/library and now a nursery school. The extension predates the area protection plan and challenges the preservation-worthy assets embodied by the original building.**

Foto: Åse Dammann, NIKU

**The AMFI Brotorvet shopping centre in Stathelle was built next to an early timber building area and severely impairs the experiential value of the neighbourhood. Its location, design and volume present an adverse contrast to the preservation-worthy buildings.**

Photo: Kristin Bakken, Directorate for Cultural Heritage





## OBJECTIVES

Monuments, sites and cultural environments in Norwegian urban areas should be managed from a long-term perspective, while being utilised as resources and public assets in developing thriving communities in attractive urban areas. This must be accomplished both by improving protection instruments and preserving existing features of the most important historic urban environments.

A parallel objective is to strengthen the role and significance of monuments and sites in the Green Shift (national policy on climate and environmentally friendly restructuring) and to facilitate development and transformation where this is feasible.

Another goal is for urban cultural heritage management to be proactive, clear and solutions-oriented, and for decisions to be informed by participatory processes.

**Back alley in the UNESCO World Heritage town of Røros. Norwegian urban areas are highly diversified in nature, which entails differentiated solutions.**

Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage





# Strategies

## THE DIVERSITY AND DISTINCTIVENESS OF NORWAY'S URBAN AREAS MUST BE PRESERVED AND SUSTAINED

Built heritage, sites and cultural environments that are diverse in nature, function, style, materials and age constitute the foundation for the distinctiveness and historic value of urban areas. In the management of urban cultural heritage, it is important to take into account the diversity of monuments and sites.

Equally, it is important to maintain the distinctive attributes characterising many of the country's urban areas, the historic (often homogeneous) vernacular architecture, the characteristic features and structure of the built environment that define a given urban area and which constitute its special characteristics.

The preservation of the distinctive historical attributes and value (integrity) must be based both on conservation of old buildings and on reiteration of the attributes characterising the historic urban environment in new projects (newbuilds and vertical and horizontal extensions). This is particularly the case for the main historic urban environments (listed districts). In these same districts, the vernacular architecture and region-specific attributes merit special regard. In unified, homogeneous districts, contrastive visual aspects that do not sustain the attributes of the cultural environment are to be avoided. In certain cases, it is also desirable to recreate and reconstruct buildings and positive features that have been lost. Such urban remediation may be appropriate if buildings are lost in fires and/or when erecting infill buildings in place of buildings that formerly formed part of a homogeneous urban environment.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE MUST BE MANAGED IN LIGHT OF ITS SOCIETAL VALUE

Cultural heritage represents important values, assets and communal resources for contemporary society – and in the future. Experiential value, identity value, symbolic value and knowledge value are important components of the value and significance of cultural heritage for society. Monuments, sites and cultural environments also provide a basis for thriving neighbourhoods, dynamic local communities and economic growth. Cultural heritage can also boost the reputation and competitiveness of urban areas in the interests of attracting a workforce, visitors and brand-building.

Although cultural heritage assets represent high utility value, their ongoing use must be balanced by long-term protection. This entails that we must manage cultural heritage and the many different assets it represents as a resource for future generations, and that our utilisation of cultural heritage is not for short-term gain.

## QUALITY MUST BE EMPHASISED AT ALL LEVELS – FROM PLANS TO INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

Through long-term and appropriate land-use planning, sites, monuments and cultural environments must be safeguarded and development needs accommodated. Up-to-date, integrated land-use plans and local authority cultural heritage plans are key instruments in protecting Norway's urban



**Knøsesmauet in Bergen is characteristic of streets in the historic timbered housing of this city. Cobblestones combined with compact buildings create both attractive urban spaces and attractive residential districts.** Photo: Siv Nytrøen Leden, Directorate for Cultural Heritage



**Architecture in Kristiansund from the early post-war period gives the town its distinctive character and attributes. The urban planning for the early post-war rebuilding project emphasised sightlines, street layout and meeting places.** Photo: Lene Buskoven, Directorate for Cultural Heritage



**This newbuild in Trondheim received the local authority's building excellence award for its successful architectural blending. The building adopts the dimensions and roof designs of the surrounding architecture.** Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage

cultural heritage and promoting sustainable urban development.

Regulatory and building application processes must be conducive to a high standard of architectural design, positive visual attributes and respect for the environs. In the case of newbuild and vertical and horizontal extension projects, the emphasis shall be on quality and on preservation, to the extent possible, of historic, architectural or other cultural value represented by the exterior of a building or structure. Sections 29 and 31-1 of the Planning and Building Act stipulate the same, and are important regulatory instruments for maintaining and sustaining the attributes of Norway's historic urban areas.

In the main historic urban spaces, a high standard of architecture and adaptation to existing buildings is imperative. New buildings that are functional, of a high standard and that contribute to attractive surroundings have the potential to be preservation-worthy heritage monuments and cultural environments in the future.

### THE METHOD OF CONSERVATION MUST REFLECT THE ASSETS TO BE PROTECTED

It is important to determine what merits protection and the justification for this. Assets and attributes embodied by a building or environment must provide the criteria for protection strategies and physical methods for their conservation. For example, their value as a source of information and knowledge versus their experiential value will provide differing parameters for determining which method of conservation is best suited to preserving the value of a building or its environs. The extent to which a monument or site has local, regional or national value is also significant in determining the appropriate protection strategy and conservation method.

This entails that a variety of instruments and diverse conservation strategies must be taken into consideration – ranging from individual protection orders to zones requiring special consideration, to radical transformation or preservation of the facades.

### THE MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS MUST BE PROACTIVE, CLEAR AND SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED

Proactive clarification and clear communication of cultural heritage values pave the way for good solutions and are a precondition for the predictability of the cultural heritage management authority in planning and building applications.



Newbuild in the Grünerløkka district, Oslo. The building contrasts with the adjacent buildings, but the high quality of the exterior design, choice of materials and adapted volume make the project acceptable. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



Godt Brød AS at Sølberget, Stavanger. Arkitekt Helen & Hard. A good example of an infill project in which the compact newbuild offers a positive contrast to the adjacent buildings while being lesser in volume. Photo: Siv Egeli, Stavanger Local Authority

Preservation of facades along Tollbodgaten, Kristiansand. The facades along Tollbodgaten were preserved, while the project facilitated transformation of the inner neighbourhood. While not ideal, this is one solution where the alternative might have been demolition and newbuilds, and where the building fronts are vital for the homogeneity of the cultural environment. Illustration: Developer: Christiansholm Eiendom / Architect: Ragnhild Hald





The cultural heritage management authority shall also ascertain the scope of each application, specify limitations and options and the consequences these will have for a given project. Early clarification is a precondition for effective and sound planning.

The cultural heritage management authority must also be solutions-oriented, participate in land-use planning and urban planning, advise and cooperate with the stakeholders involved. Data on cultural heritage must be open-access and readily available to politicians, planners, developers and the general public.

### **CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS MUST BE UTILISED AS RESOURCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLIMATE-FRIENDLY URBAN AREAS**

In the interests of the climate, it is important that urban development contributes to the Green Shift – climate and environmentally friendly restructuring. Essentially, the green shift involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions and making better use of resources towards a renewable and sustainable society. Proper maintenance, use and re-use and enhancements to existing buildings and cultural environments serve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Demolition, densification and intensified use of under-used urban areas and inexpedient buildings may also contribute to a more sustainable urban development. A good balance between intensified land-use and conservation is important both in advancing the green shift and in preserving positive attributes in cultural environments.

### **MONUMENTS AND SITES MUST BE EQUIPPED TO WITHSTAND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Increased climate impacts mean that proper and appropriate maintenance and preventive measures will be even more important than in the past. Risk and vulnerability assessments should be performed for historic urban environments and preservation-worthy buildings. This should be followed up by effective management and intervention when damage cannot be avoided. The cultural heritage management authorities should cooperate closely with other sectors to put in place emergency response systems and in order to plan and execute preventive measures.



Turnhallen in Oslo exemplifies heritage protection values linked to experiential values. Following a fire in 1988 that gutted the interior of the building, a new building was erected behind the preserved facade. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage

### **Participatory processes**

It is important that cultural heritage management is characterised by civic engagement and a climate of openness to different approaches, perspectives and stories.

The Faro Convention, the European Landscape Convention and UNESCO's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape advocate a comprehensive and open participatory process in planning, identifying values and priority-setting concerning cultural heritage.

Bryggen, the historic harbour district in Bergen, was at one time scheduled for demolition. Today, the Hanseatic buildings are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage





## ACTIVITIES MUST BE BASED ON PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

The general public is heavily affected by interventions in urban areas and should therefore be involved in the processes that determine what is to be protected and how this is to be accomplished. The cultural heritage management authority must ensure that effective processes are conducted to facilitate participation, transparency and effective assessment procedures.

It is important that the management at all levels contributes knowledge of urban development and conservation in open and constructive debates, and stimulates local community involvement. Consensual outcomes are dependent not only on effective organisation and transparency, but also on the legitimacy and endorsement of outcomes on the part of the stakeholders involved. Openness and participation also entail that projects, plans and planned urban development interventions are illustrated and disseminated in such a way that their consequences are clearly apparent to all stakeholders.

## COMPETENCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF URBAN CULTURAL HERITAGE MUST BE STRENGTHENED

Conservation, utilisation and development of cultural heritage assets are complex undertakings requiring expertise, interdisciplinarity, knowledge-sharing and competence-building at all levels of the public-sector's cultural heritage management, and between public and private-sector actors, nationally and internationally.

It is important to build and share knowledge, not only within the cultural heritage management, but among planners, architects, developers and other actors. Networks and various physical or digital forums that facilitate knowledge sharing, dissemination and dialogue on new information and information needs are important.



**Flooding in Feda. Increased precipitation causes more frequent and heavier flooding which endangers historic buildings.** Photo: Erno Langereis



**Stormen library and concert hall in Bodø. The two landmark buildings exemplify many of the positive attributes of the post-war rebuild era.**

Photo: Morten Delbæk



**The well-preserved Art Nouveau architecture gives Ålesund its historic character.**

Photo: Cornelis Horn Evensen, Directorate for Cultural Heritage



**Infill building in Stavanger which harmoniously connects the Functionalist building and the historic timber building.** Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage





The location, height and design of this newbuild challenge the heritage protection values linked to the old seafront buildings in Stavanger.  
Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



# Recommendations

## HISTORIC URBAN ENVIRONMENTS OF SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL VALUE

- Street-facing exteriors are the ‘walls’ in the cityscape. The experiential values linked to historic urban environments and streets must be prioritised, preserved and continued in new projects.
- In the most well-preserved urban environments of significant regional and national value, including listed sites, the aim should be to encourage conservation and ensure that assets and positive attributes are emphasised in new projects.
- In listed sites of national and significant regional value, an integrated approach must be taken to the cultural environments in which new projects should submit to the existing buildings. New projects must maintain the district’s distinctive features. In this context, building height and volume are important. Excellent design, choice of materials and colours are also extremely important in harmonising the new with the old.
- Efforts must be made to preserve valuable buildings with historic facades and structures, and original elements such as windows, doors, casings, facade cladding and roofing materials, and buildings that form important elements in a homogeneous architectural and street environment. Where renewal is necessitated, the structural elements must match the building’s original style of architecture and materials.
- Buildings, streets, alleys, commons and plots are important elements of urban histories and should be preserved and maintained.
- For newbuild projects adopting a localised vernacular architecture, the quality of the design must be given due priority. Quality is taken to mean materials with a long service life, design excellence, structural details and sound workmanship. Newbuilds must not impair the cultural environment’s value and integrity.
- In the event of fires or irreparable damage to preservation-worthy homogeneous urban environments, a new building should either be erected as a copy based on documentation or in compliance with the foregoing recommendations.
- Where projects have reduced the value of the cultural environment, urban remediation may be carried out. This may involve restoring buildings or erecting new ones that adopt the localised vernacular architecture and safeguard the neighbourhood’s distinctiveness and experiential value.
- Important monuments and sites, in cultural environments that are not of national interest or listed, should nevertheless be afforded protection and provided for in local planning. In these settings there may be more flexibility as regards design, choice of materials, building heights and volume. Respect for the heritage value of individual buildings and cultural environments should be taken into account in planning and building applications.



**Buildings that contrast with the surrounding architectural environment have subsequently proved dysfunctional. This example is from Risør.**

Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



**Newbuilds that present a marked contrast to their environs in Stavanger city centre.**

Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



**An extension in Levanger which severely impairs the heritage value of the former school principal’s residence.** Photo: Trond Blikø/Trønderavisa



**The extension to this residence in Drøbak is a positive example of reiteration of the vernacular architecture and building materials.** Photo: Per-Willy Færgestad

## URBAN LANDSCAPES, BLUE AND GREEN AREAS

- Characteristic landscape formations and visual connections between historic buildings are important for the urban experience and awareness of historic contexts. Attributes of the spatial landscape, including coastal and waterfront areas and greenspaces must be preserved and included as important parameters in urban development. Streets open to the sea are an example of this and should not be sealed off again.
- Distinctive urban skylines of significance for the historic urban landscape and topographical features charactering the cityscape should be sustained for recognition, distinctiveness and experiential value.
- Development of former industrial areas, seafronts and docklands and constructions of roads and railways that visually and functionally sever the link between the historic urban centre and the sea, should be avoided.
- The reopening of diverted watercourses can strengthen historic urban environments and experience of the landscape and aid surface water management.

## URBAN SPACES, STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

- Adaptation of urban areas to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport is an important measure in achieving the Green-Shift. Adaptation and design should respect historic streets and urban spaces, and contribute to preserving and reinforcing distinctive heritage attributes.
- Universal design must be implemented in historic environments and in interventions in historic buildings.
- The construction or upgrading of roads, railways and other new infrastructure must not degrade the physical or experiential assets of the main historic urban spaces and environments.
- Well-designed meeting places and public urban spaces make urban centres attractive to inhabitants and visitors alike. Upgrading of streets, public spaces and other urban spaces is important in preserving these urban features.

## DISTRICTS CHARACTERISED BY LOSS OF FUNCTION AND ABANDONMENT

- Local and other cultural heritage management authorities should facilitate stimulation, vitalisation and activity in historic cultural environments so that the cultural heritage is utilised as a resource for positive urban development.
- New uses for disused buildings should be facilitated if their original intended use is no longer expedient, while preserving the main attributes and features of their cultural heritage and cultural environment.
- Densification in the form of locally-adapted infills and urban remediation may be valuable measures for vitalising historic urban environments.
- The re-designs of backyards may be necessary in order to raise housing standards, while old backyard structures should also be given special attention as important elements in a historic architectural environment.



Oslo tramways' old logo shows the outline of Akershus Fortress, a landmark in the capital city's urban landscape.



The old part of Stavanger. Homogeneous architecture also includes street paving, lighting and other street furniture that are important to provide for in urban development. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



Christiania Torv in Oslo is a model of best practice in urban remediation and blending the new with the old.

Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



## HUB DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION AREAS

- In transformation areas, important cultural heritage buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, old quays, waterfronts and the like should be preserved. These give a district distinctive attributes and appealing features.
- Monuments and sites important for local identity should be preserved and made use of as resources in developing hubs and transformation areas.

## HIGH-RISES, LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

- It is not recommended to locate high-rise buildings in locations where they would significantly alter the urban landscape and impair important topographical waypoints. High-rises should also not be sited in locations where they would weaken the significance and prominence of other historic buildings such as city halls, churches and important listed heritage sites.
- New buildings that conflict with the character of other urban buildings in height, length and volume will potentially impair the experiential value and residential appeal of historic urban environments. When building high-rises and other buildings that conflict with the existing urban structure and skyline, clarity must be obtained as to precisely where such buildings may be located and how they would impact the urban landscape, skyline and axes.
- Public buildings include churches, city/town halls, schools, hospitals and stations. The function and symbolic value of such buildings is often important to the inhabitants. It is imperative that the status of such buildings in the cityscape is not weakened. Historic, monumental public buildings should in the main serve public purposes. Continued use is in most cases a precondition for protection. The cultural heritage management authority should therefore be instrumental in identifying good solutions to ensure continued use or new public-amenity purposes.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE

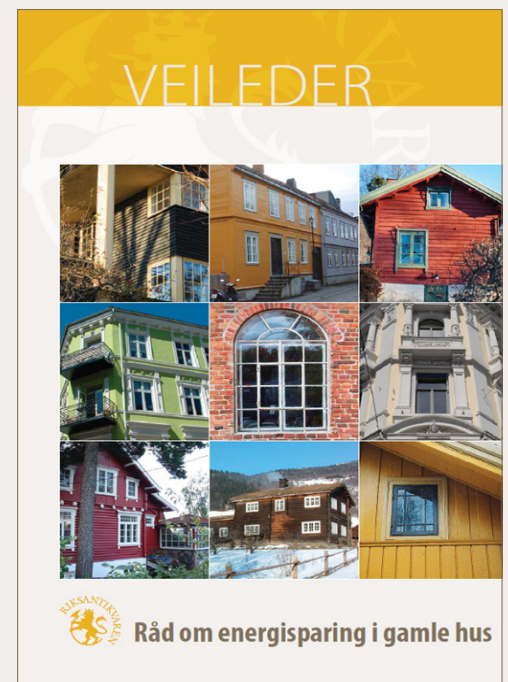
- Existing urban areas represent significant cultural heritage assets, and between 70 and 80% of existing building stock in Norway will still be in use by 2050. Comprehensive life-cycle analyses show that demolition and new construction are typically responsible for higher greenhouse gas emissions than conservation and re-use. From a sustainability perspective, it is important that existing buildings are preserved, upgraded and utilised.
- Old buildings are often not energy efficient, but sound maintenance, appropriate energy-conservation interventions and adapted upgrades can improve the energy performance of buildings. This should be carried out in such a way that cultural heritage assets are preserved.
- In urban environments with a low utilisation grade, densification and infills may be positive measures for ensuring sustainable urban development. It is important, however, that regard is shown for preservation-worthy buildings and urban environments.
- Management plans and risk and vulnerability assessments of historic urban environments and preservation-worthy buildings should be addressed in the management authority's efforts to counter climate change.
- Effective management of surface water in districts with historic buildings should be given particular attention in urban management and development.



Skøyen station in Oslo is a historically important landmark that serves to define a historic hub. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



High-rise buildings that do not respect the existing skyline and prevailing dimensions rarely result in harmonious urban environments. The photo shows Bergen city hall. Photo: Directorate for Cultural Heritage



The Directorate for Cultural Heritage has published a guide to energy-conservation in old buildings that is useful for property owners, developers and management agencies alike  
[Råd om energisparing i gamle hus](#)

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## WEBSITES REFERRED TO IN THE STRATEGY

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*Vekstkraftige bo- og arbeidsmarkeder i hele landet (high-growth residential and employment markets nationwide in Norway)* (2016) available (in Norwegian only) from:  
<http://www.byerogdistrikter.no/vekstkraftige-bo-og-arbeidsmarkeder-i-hele-landet-2/>

*Bærekraftig utvikling (Sustainable development)*, available (in Norwegian only) at:  
<http://www.fn.no/Tema/Baerekraftig-utvikling>

*Municipal-state reporting on cultural heritage*, available from Statistics Norway (in English) at:  
[https://www.ssb.no/natur-og-miljo/statistikker/miljo\\_kostraaar/2016-06-30](https://www.ssb.no/natur-og-miljo/statistikker/miljo_kostraaar/2016-06-30)





A new use for disused industrial premises by the Akerselva river in Oslo. Conversion of the buildings has been achieved so as to enhance the character and distinctive features of the original premises. This is a best-practice example of re-use and transformation of a disused building. Photo: Ivan Brodey





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