



# Planning and decision-making in Høje-Taastrup

Extract from the Demonstration Report

Høje-Taastrup, Denmark



# Contents

Demonstration Activities with organizational changes _____	1
Demolition of the old city hall: Planning and decision-making process _____	1
Organizational changes - planning and decision-making _____	3

This text describes Høje-Taastrup's experience in the planning and decision-making process of demolishing the old city hall. The sections come from Høje-Taastrup's CityLoops demonstration report available [here](#).

# Demonstration Activities with organizational changes

Høje-Taastrup's demonstration cases are all related to the current urban development taking place in the municipality and they are 1) the demolition of the old city hall and 2) the construction of the new city hall. The demonstration cases are to certain degrees related to each other and the demolition of the old city hall is dependent on the final construction of the new city hall.

## Demolition of the old city hall: Planning and decision-making process

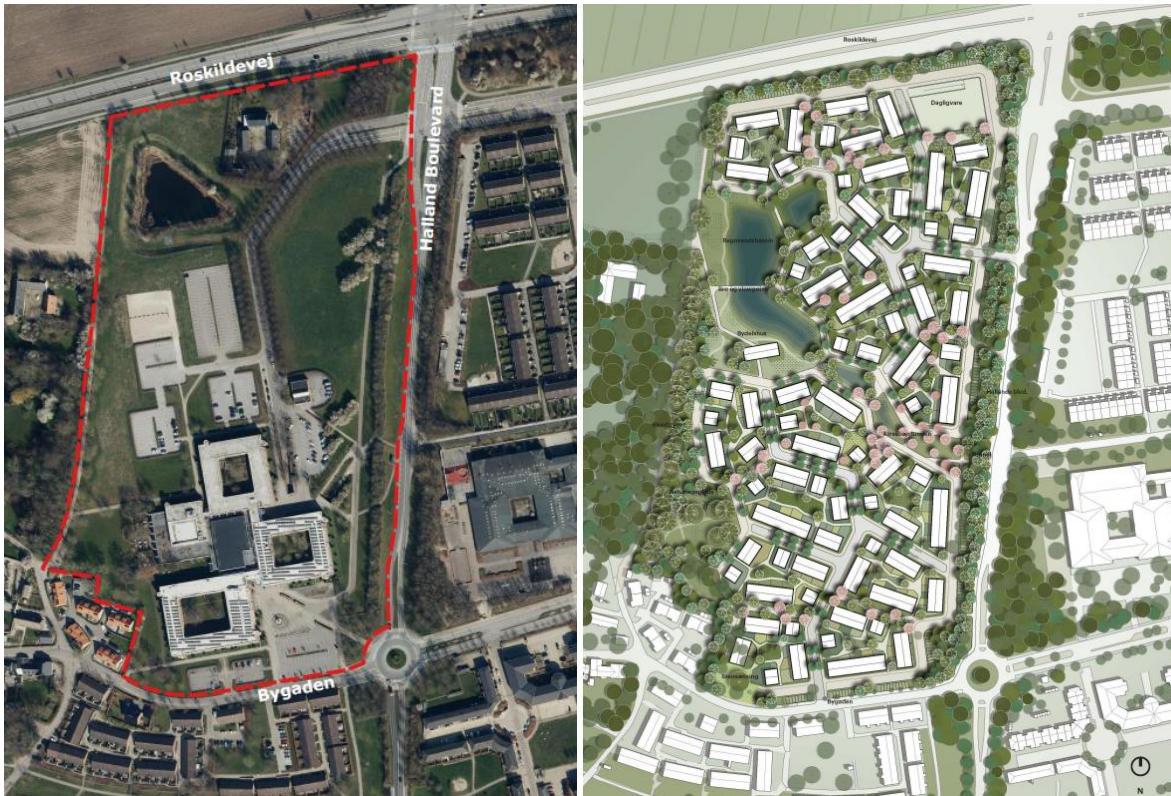
### ***Pre purchase development agreement***

Danish procurement law allows private companies to participate in the planning of the development of urban areas under special circumstances. Hoping to secure such an agreement, in 2017 (pre-CityLoops) the municipality outlined the parameters of an agreement for developers to consider. IKANO approached the municipality hoping to make a pre-purchase development agreement with the urban development department based on this outline. An agreement was signed in 2020, and this allowed IKANO to influence how the property would be developed after the sale of the grounds. The city hall had to be sold on the open market, but the pre-purchase development agreement ensured that IKANO had the advantage of the opportunity to re-bid with a new price if another developer outbid IKANO. Particulars of the agreement were finalized before CityLoops and needed to be respected. This limited somewhat the scope of influence CityLoops could have as nothing could be changed in the project without IKANO's agreement.

### ***Urban development plan***

IKANO made a proposal for urban development of the area (including maps, sketches, materials, infrastructure, parking etc.) which constituted the basis for a formal urban development plan which was prepared by the urban planners in the municipality. The draft urban development plan for the area was in public hearing, after which the final development plan was rectified by the City Council. The final urban development plan is public: [Lokalplan 2.05.3](#)

The CityLoops project managers in cooperation with the development department initiated a close dialogue with IKANO about sustainable and circular initiatives in this phase. IKANO showed a great interest in circular and sustainable initiatives.



*Existing city hall and map from the urban development plan showing the suggested locations of buildings, roads, green areas, parking etc.*

## **Lessons learned**

The pre-purchase development agreement resulted in a very fruitful collaboration with the possible developer – with a practical and targeted vision of how the area could be developed. Pre-purchase development agreements are in general quite common in Denmark.

At an early stage, while the details of the pre-purchase development agreement were still being outlined (pre-CityLoops), one of the future CityLoops project managers, working in the environmental department, approached the urban development department to discuss the opportunities for including sustainability criteria when selling the old city hall. At the time, economic interests and perceived costs of sustainability initiatives dissuaded the urban development department from integrating any specific sustainability initiatives into the material. The pre-purchase development agreement was thus entered without specific sustainability criteria, but rather a recognition of intent towards sustainability. In the years since, there has

been a change in focus such that sustainability has been a higher priority. When the idea of implementing circularity was brought up again in conjunction with more detailed planning of the tendering material for selling the grounds of the old city hall, the idea was embraced. The CityLoops project manager offered help formulating the criteria for the tendering material, and furthermore offered assistance from an experienced consultant. The collaboration and understanding between the urban development department, the urban planning department and the CityLoops project managers in the environmental department was a great advantage. The collaboration helped break down barriers between possible municipal silos.

While focus within the organization has shifted towards a higher prioritization and focus on sustainability, it is still largely left to chance on a case-by-case basis whether or not the people involved consider it or are given specific mandate to prioritize it. In order to ensure that circularity criteria are implemented in future similar cases/projects, a more structured approach must be established. This would involve, among other things, a requirement that sustainability is considered at specific checkpoints in a project. This approach will be suggested in the future citywide sustainability strategy and action plan which the CityLoops project managers in the environmental department are in charge of, in cooperation with the internal sustainability group.

## Organizational changes - planning and decision-making

The CityLoops project gave interesting insight into how planning and decision-making has taken place in the municipality, and how it should take place in the future. A common thread in the demonstration actions is that until now there has been no formal structure in place to ensure circularity or sustainability in most municipal operations, and the success was due to identifying and taking advantage of windows of opportunity as well as cooperation with passionate and willing colleagues. The high level of chance involved in this model does not make it a very robust system for ensuring circularity. In the municipal organization there wasn't any obligation to ensure circularity either, among the various roles the municipality plays in building and development projects: there is not yet a specific political mandate or internal policies which require that circularity or sustainability should be taken into account. There is also no procedure that ensures that the relevant departments consult one another to ensure a common vision for sustainability. It became clear that specific structures need to be in place to ensure that sustainability and circularity are taken into consideration. This directly support the need for a sustainability strategy and corresponding action plan, which are currently being developed by the CityLoops project managers with support from the internal sustainability group.

In addition, the sustainability group raises awareness of circular economy across the organization. The group works as an inspiration forum where members share relevant experiences or projects with each other, support each other's projects with interdisciplinary knowledge and information, and bring inspiration back to their own departments. The group

consists of employees from across the organization - who are all passionate about sustainability and interested in moving the municipality in a more sustainable direction.

Høje-Taastrup participated in developing the CityLoops planning and decision-making methodology. In the co-development process, a framework was used to map key actions in the different phases of the demonstration projects. This exercise facilitated a reflection process on learning from the projects, hence fostering a formalizing of circular procedures for future projects.

In the future, stakeholder mapping can be used prior to projects instead of retrospectively. A workshop concept to promote organizational change helped facilitate a joint space for reflection, to discuss strategic and operational actions to promote circular construction, demolition, and urban development.

The experiences from the demonstration actions have furthermore contributed to an increased focus on circular procurement in general in Høje-Taastrup. For instance, Høje-Taastrup is a part of “partnership for green public procurement” (POGI) where ambitious procurement goals are set for a number of different goods and services.

CityLoops has contributed to clarifying that the municipal organization have several roles to play in relation to circular construction depending on the specific project. It is important to identify roles and accordingly, different approaches to exploit the opportunities for influence on circular economy. Municipalities can influence circular construction through their role as a construction client, city planners, waste management authorities, road authorities, purchasers, urban development and through political mandate and publicity.

In general, CityLoops experiences have increased the awareness about circular economy and sustainability across the organization.

# CITYLOOPS

CityLoops is an EU-funded project focusing on construction and demolition waste (CDW), including soil, and bio-waste, where seven European cities are piloting solutions to be more circular.

Høje-Taastrup and Roskilde (Denmark), Mikkeli (Finland), Apeldoorn (the Netherlands), Bodø (Norway), Porto (Portugal) and Seville (Spain) are the seven cities implementing a series of demonstration actions on CDW and soil, and bio-waste, and developing and testing over 30 new tools and processes.

Alongside these, a sector-wide circularity assessment and an urban circularity assessment are to be carried out in each of the cities. The former, to optimise the demonstration activities, whereas the latter to enable cities to effectively integrate circularity into planning and decision making. Another two key aspects of CityLoops are stakeholder engagement and circular procurement.

CityLoops started in October 2019 and will run until September 2023.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 821033.

**Disclaimer:** The sole responsibility for any error or omissions lies with the editor. The content does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission. The European Commission is also not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.