

# A Vision for Väsby Sjöstad

## Community Planning Weekend Report Back



### Väsby Sjöstad – achieving a Natural Balance

Väsby Sjöstad will provide new, high-quality housing, sensitively located alongside a well preserved, well managed and valuable forest with numerous high-quality recreational opportunities. Väsby Sjöstad will also provide a new area of waterfront living, marina, boardwalks and floating houses on lake Mälaren, and a new community-driven organic farming area.

These are just some of the ideas from the 'Vision for Väsby Sjöstad' presented to the public on Wednesday 12 October at Messingen in Upplands Väsby.

Upplands Väsby is a growing town of around 40,000 people and one looking to transform its image. Upplands Väsby is strategically located between Stockholm and Arlanda Airport, served by a good road and rail network. A new sustainable neighbourhood called Väsby Sjöstad is proposed to accommodate part of the expanding population within the Stockholm region. The municipality's ambition for Väsby Sjöstad is for it to be a model for sustainable development in an area of high ecological value - within the Stockholm region as well as the rest of Sweden. However, opposition to the

planned expansion has been growing as residents fear the loss of the forest to development.

The municipality is keen to find the right balance between preserving this natural asset and achieving growth and economic prosperity for the community. In line with their policy of involving citizens in the decision making process they commissioned an international Community Planning practice, John Thompson & Partners, along with their local partners People Owned to facilitate a participatory design process known as a Charrette.

### Väsby Sjöstad Forum

**25 November 2011 at 3pm**

**Messingen, Upplands Väsby**

## A Vision for Väsby Sjöstad

### Community Planning Weekend Report Back

Over 120 people participated in the Charrette workshops on 7th and 8th October that began with an assessment of what people valued about their town as well as its problems. This was followed by further creative sessions where people worked with the Community Planning team to explore ideas for sustainable development and establish some key principles to guide the masterplanning process. These principles have been developed into a plan that seeks to achieve a 'Natural Balance' between growth and preservation of recreational and ecological assets.

#### Participation and Communication

- Establish a Community Forum to encourage further public and stakeholder involvement in the masterplanning process.
- Provide regular updates on the development of the plan through newsletters and a website.
- Raise the profile of VS with a view to attracting new resident/developer pioneers with an interest and commitment to sustainable living.

#### Sustainable Design

- Establish key principles and standards for sustainability to ensure community and municipal aspirations for creating a special place are fulfilled.
- Appoint a masterplanner with a track record of sustainable design and a commitment to involving the community in the decision making process.
- Develop a sustainable transport plan for VS that integrates with the local and regional transport strategy.

#### Conservation and Stewardship

- Undertake further surveys to assess the ecological and recreational value of the forest in consultation with local experts.
- Fix the boundaries of the forest area to be protected and enhanced and explore ways of implementing statutory protection such as designating it as a nature reserve.
- Develop a new 'forest plan' in consultation with local people and landowners that sets out how protection of areas of ecological value can be balanced with the recreational uses of the community.
- Establish a mechanism for developers to fund the implementation of the 'forest plan' including jobs and training for local stewards and guides.

#### Implementation

- Subject to establishment of the forest plan, begin the process of changing the boundaries of the existing nature reserve to facilitate development of selected areas.
- Undertake detailed capacity and viability assessment of agreed development areas based on an assessment of requirements for the percentage of different housing types.
- Develop a phasing and implementation plan underpinned by a sound evidence base.
- Select suitable 'green' developers and begin phased development.





# Väsby Sjästad - achieving a Natural Balance

## Sustainable housing solutions within beautiful surroundings



### A Vision for Väsby Sjästad

Proposal by John Thompson & Partners och People Owned Community Planning team

#### Masterplan Key:

##### 1. Forest Village South

Car free solar apartments in woodland pocket

##### 2. Forest Village Square

School, shops, café, meeting place and bus stop

##### 3. Forest Village Main Street

Shared surface with apartments and sequence of public spaces

##### 4. Forest Village Edge

Low density housing near lakeside and forest

##### 5. Upper Forest Village Square

Bus terminus, apartments and community facilities

##### 6. Upper Forest Village

Low density housing

##### 7. Eco Hotel

##### 8. Improved pedestrian and cycle route

##### 9. Protected forest wetland

##### 10. Protected mountain forest area

##### 11. Protected forest view point to lake

##### 12. Kairo and Canoe Club

##### 13. Floating Village and public boardwalk

##### 14. Improved marina

##### 15. Lakeside Village

Mixed use area with apartments and bus stop

##### 16. Boat Club

##### 17. Existing stables

##### 18. Farm Village

Eco-homes, with Terra Preta system

##### 19. Perma-Culture Village

Low density solar housing in forest clearing

##### 20. Forest Hamlet

Car free eco housing

##### 21. Boardwalk

Improved route to picnic area and beaches



FLOATING HOUSES



BOARDWALKS WITH EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION



FARM VILLAGE



# A Vision for Väsby Sjöstad

## Community Planning Weekend

October 2011

### Key themes from the workshops

The following themes capture what people from the community said over the weekend.

#### Population growth and diversity

Most people recognised the need to build more homes in order to accommodate the growing population. The importance of developing a more diverse population in terms of age and income group was also agreed.

#### Economy

Safeguarding the local economy by making the town attractive to the new knowledge based businesses that are replacing older manufacturing industries was considered vital.

#### Barriers to growth

It was recognised that these new businesses found Upplands Väsby attractive due to its location but that their employees were reluctant to relocate there due to the quality of housing on offer and the poor school results. Noise pollution from airplanes, motorways and the railway were a problem for existing residents and would also deter new residents seeking a high quality of life.

#### Eco-Innovation

Many people stressed the importance of developing sustainably and supported the municipality's ambition to make Väsby Sjöstad Sweden's most sustainable neighbourhood.

#### Nature Reserve

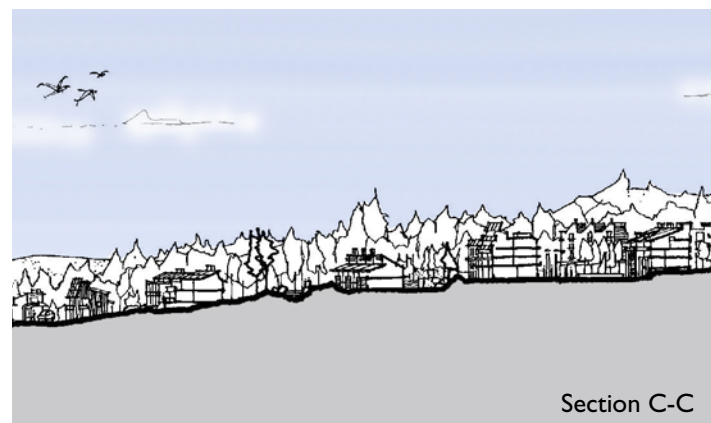
Some local people favoured changing the existing boundaries of the nature reserve to allow new nature-related cultural and recreational facilities to be built there along with a café and a limited amount of housing. It was suggested that this proposal should be linked to the creation a new nature reserve in Runby forest to ensure there would be an overall increase in protected green area for the benefit of the community. However officers from the municipality advised that this would be very difficult to achieve.



Section A-A



Section B-B



Section C-C



Section D-D

*Illustrative sections through the area*

# A Vision for Väsby Sjöstad

## Community Planning Weekend

October 2011

Illustrative aerial view  
over Väsby Sjöstad



### Potential loss of forest habitat

People were passionate about maintaining existing forest habitat around the town and emphasised its ecological value as well as its importance as a recreational resource. Stockholm's regional policy of maintaining the 'green wedges' connecting the city to the countryside was also discussed and it was generally agreed that maintaining as much of the forest as possible for the benefit of future generations should be a priority. It was also noted that the most ecologically valuable parts of the forest were not within the nature reserve and were therefore vulnerable to damage from logging.

### Why build near the lake

Many people questioned the need to build in the selected location close to the lake as they believed there were adequate sites within the existing urban area. However, the municipality advised that many of these sites were affected by noise and they already have plans for developing apartments on the remainder so that additional sites are needed to accommodate the predicted population growth. Some people also favoured building to higher densities within the town rather than extending along the lakeside. But it was noted that Upplands Väsby already has the highest density of Stockholm's 26 municipalities and building more apartments would not attract a more diverse population.

### Accessibility

It was noted that existing access to the lakeside site is poor for both vehicles and pedestrians and that there is already serious congestion in summertime. It was agreed that if new homes and attractions are to be built, a sustainable transport solution will be essential and that recreational cycle and pedestrian routes through the forest should also be improved.

### Lakeside recreation

Many people wanted more facilities for recreation and would like to see public access to the lakeside improved.

### Communication

Some people complained of poor communication between politicians and the community but the opportunity to participate in the Community Planning Weekend was generally appreciated and people stressed the need to continue community involvement in the masterplanning process. Representatives from the municipality emphasised their commitment to an open and democratic process in developing plans of the town expansion.

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