

Resurfacing: Public bath in central Oslo

Pre-Diploma Report

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1. Introduction

-What makes a bath public?

When the city takes stock of the swimming facilities available to the public, their coverage includes everything from small private expensive institutions, to hospital facilities aimed at therapy and not available to the general public.

In Røa bad, a new private swimming facility in Oslo, the price of one adult ticket equals the price of two adults and two children in a public bath. It is however still deemed a success, and the city pays a premium to rent it for educational purposes.

In our opinion, the existing demand bodes well for an affordable and centrally located public bath, with a strong emphasis on architectural quality. Looking back on the last 35 years, it seems the city can not rely on private parties alone to provide this service to the public.

Our proposal entails constructing a new public bath in what is today a mostly unused courtyard, in a large architecturally diverse city block in central Oslo. The project aims to better the facilities for the recreational swimmers, who make out around 75 percent of the users of the city's public pools today.

Offering a bath to this area would reintroduce public functions in an area that today is almost exclusively



Stadtbad Mitte, Berlin. March 1951

-What does the public bath represent in the context of modern society?

The public bath's subsistence has always reflected the conditions and ideas of its time. As societies change, such values and needs may cease to exist, and be replaced by new necessities. This can also be said about the stylistic evolution of the architectural space.

As the city continues to move and focus its new public development along the city's waterfront, the adjacent neighborhoods are left without the institutions that once enriched public life.

The public bath represents a space which is met with certain expectations. Here, architecture is expected to serve a purpose beyond mere functionality- the conditions of light and space should emphasize the poetic and sensual nature of the experience.

It also provides a break from the omnipresence of media, where individuals shed their clothes, and with them their social markers, and peacefully coexist as individuals or socially.

Our belief is that these spaces are increasingly rare, yet very important in a city fabric, defined to a large extent by a liberalist market economy.



PUBLIC BATH.

Sento, Japanese traditional bathhouse

2. Background

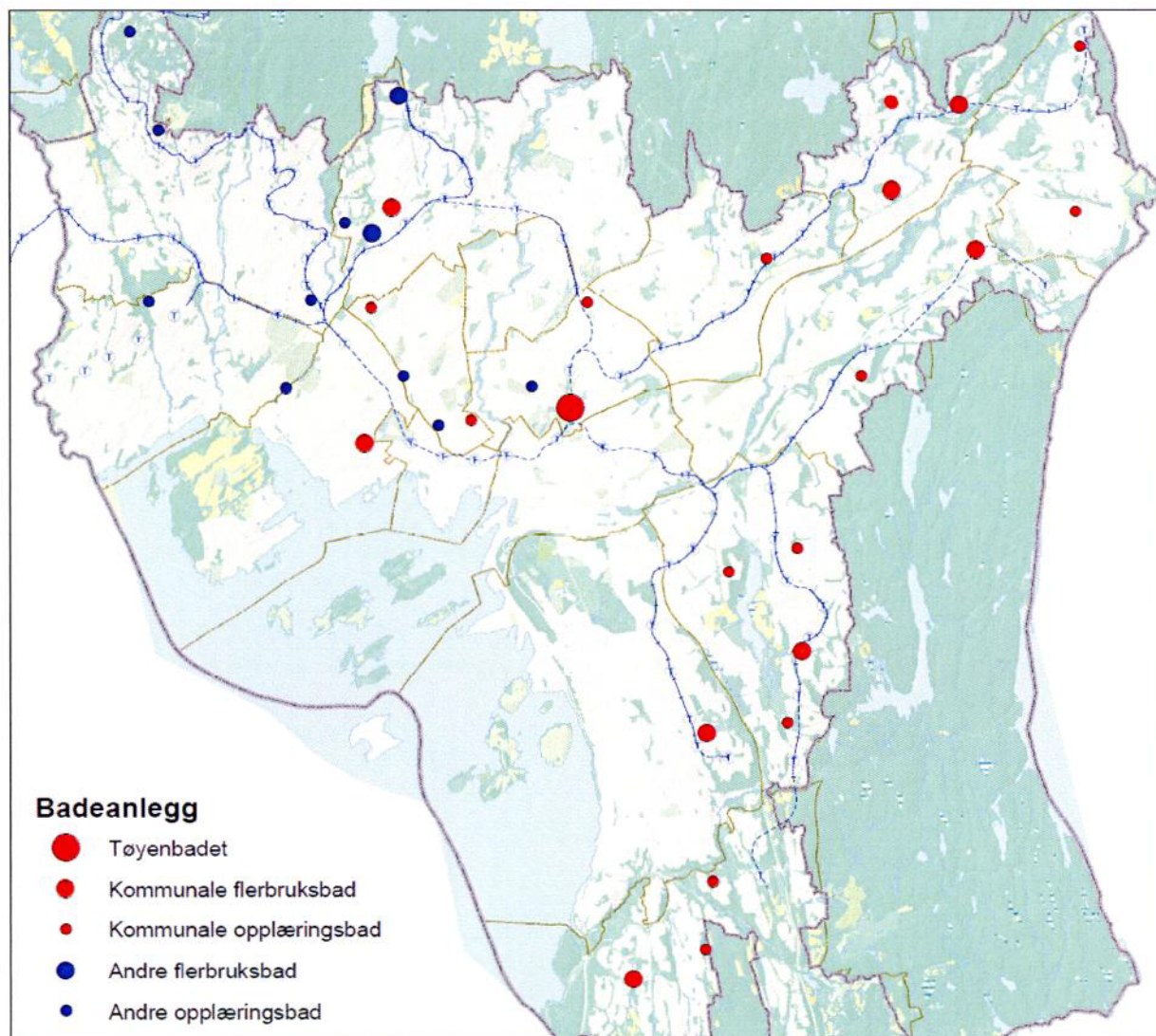
The benefits of swimming and general physical activity in water are well known, and the tradition of public baths dates back to antiquity, where it was an integral part of the civic culture in both greek and roman societies.

In Oslo, the first public baths were built in the mid 19th century, initially as private donations provided to promote cleanliness and personal hygiene. The first publicly funded baths were built a few decades later with an emphasis on public health and fitness. The biggest of these early public baths was Torggata bad, which during it's heyday in the 1940's boasted an annual 1000 000 visitors.

In the 1960's swimming lessons became a mandatory part of the public school curriculum, and a number of new public swimming pools were built during this era. Most of Oslo's 32 public pools that are still in service were built between 1960 and 1983. Today, many of these are in need of extensive repairs, and are expensive to maintain, and the city council is looking to shut several of them down in the coming years.

Simultaneously, there is consensus among politicians that the service and coverage provided by the public baths in Oslo today are insufficient, and there is political intent and funding ready to erect three new public baths in the coming years. Our proposal argues that one of these should be located in the central part of Oslo.

Figur 1. Bade- og svømmeanlegg i Oslo



3. Site

3.1 Description

The site is the courtyard of a diversified city block located in a dense area of Oslo, between Brugata, Storgata, Hausmannsgate and Christian Kroghs gate.

As it appears on the map (1) most of the buildings at the site are listed as cultural heritage by Oslo Municipality, both for its cultural-historical significance and as part of a city fabric, typical of the area. Most of the buildings are protected by law.

The building in the block that surrounds our site are owned partly by the city, and partly by Oslos largest private real estate developer/owner. At present time, there are ongoing plans to demolish and covert part of the block into a commercial development housing a shopping mall and a hotel.



3.2 Historical context

Origins; 1600's and 1700's

Mangelsgården dates back to 1670, when it was built as a private residence in the countryside of Christiania. It was organized as four wings surrounding an inner courtyard, with additional huge garden facilities.

The property was bought by Fredrik Ferdinand Hausmann 1732, whom continued to develop the property by adding more land, and established rococo gardens, fish pawns, islands, pavilions, exotic botanicals and fountains.

By the mid 1700's the property was so fashionable that King Frederik the 5th was lodged here during his visit to Christiania in 1749. After Hausmann's death the property remained within private owners throughout the century.

1800s – Prinds Christian Augusts Minde

In 1809 the foundation of "Prinds Christian Augusts Minde" was established by some of Christiania's more affluent citizens. Christiania had seen a dramatic increase in poverty and the foundation's purpose was to offer help to the poor and unemployed. The foundation bought Mangelsgården 1812 to establish it as a workhouse for citizens unable to support themselves.

The many rooms of the former mansion were converted into workshops, classrooms, sleeping dorms and hospital facilities. The workers were primarily engaged in tasks like spinning, weaving and quarrying. Many of these artefacts supplied public institutions in the city, and were also sold in stores to costumers. Some workers were rented out to private costumers.

The institution developed a more prison-like instruction. A solitary confinement was established for the most reluctant workers. It soon became a place for the homeless, drunks, prostitutes and street children of Christiania.

In 1829 Christiania Asylum were established in the south wing of the building.

Over the next period new buildings were added to the property, as the institutions grew bigger. In 1938 a hospital for the city's poor was established in a new building east of Mangelsgården, with a capacity of 120 patients. In 1856 a new factory building was built, while Mangelsgården became offices and apartments for stab officials.

The architecture clearly expressed an ideology of separation. Different categories of patients and clients were separated into different buildings with separated courtyards. Only the church-room and central kitchen were shared.

The central kitchen, known as "Prindsenkjøkkenet", was placed by the entry of Mangelsgården. In addition to supply the institutions it also provided food for the homeless and poor in Christiania. In 1959 it became a medical care centre for the city's prostitutes.

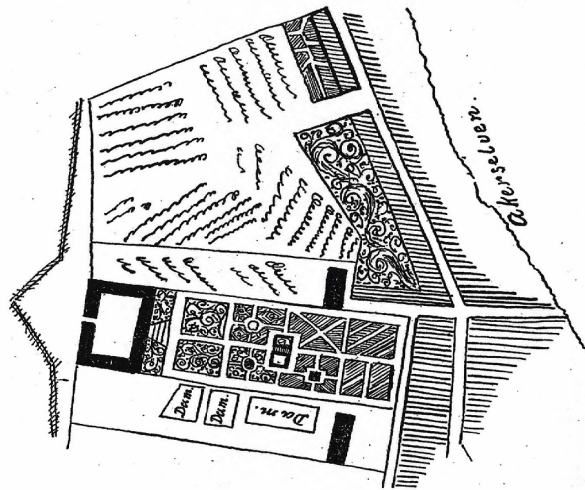
1900's

The asylum was closed down in 1908, and the workhouse was gradually discontinued as similar facilities were established outside Christiania. The workshops continued until the 1970's, when it was continued as a rehabilitation centre for drug addicts.

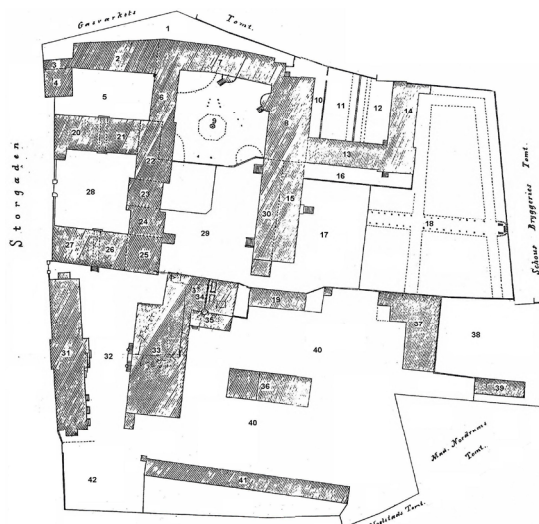
In the 1930's a modernistic wood building was built in south part of the property by Storgata, and contained a merchant market.



Christian Krogh
 "Politilegens venteværelse", 1887



Plan ca. 1730



Plan ca. 1880

4. Approach

All the surrounding buildings in the south end have exposed firewalls, making a coherent display of mural material. Our plot lies in the contrasting conditions of the older freestanding buildings, shaded by large trees, nestled within a structure of raw brick firewalls, and a large concrete parking garage.

The courtyard, surprisingly large for a plot this central, has a number of conflicting qualities and challenges we want to explore. The typology of the public bath, reliant on light but not necessarily on views, offers an interesting fit for this site.

We see a great potential in the mural materiality of these walls, and wish to further investigate the possibility to make this materiality an aesthetic part of the project.

Our approach will be to study how we can develop a project and add mass within the physical and legal restrictions.



5. Program

City-district bath and swimming facilities:

Estimated footprint of 2300 m²

Swimming pool 25 x 12,5 m

Divingtower 1+ 3 + 5 m

Stands (estimated 100 persons)

Hot baths

Saunas

Serving place connected to the park

Public park

Estimated footprint of 3000 m²

In their report for Oslo Kommune, Asplan Viak, states four categories of the public bath (1). These are not absolute standards, rather an attempt at organizing existing swimming facilities, according to size and function.

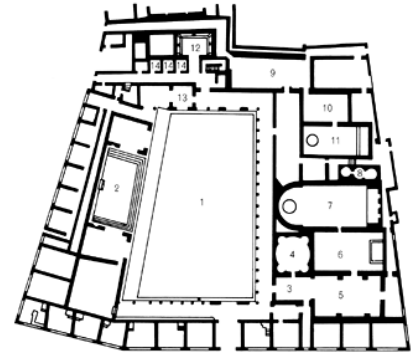
Given that our proposal is a city-district bath, these sizes will be useful as guidance, but not necessarily taken as answers. The final proposal will depend on site-specific conditions.

Tabell 4: Mulige folkebad i fire størrelser

Kilde: Asplan Viak

Årlig besøk - i mill	Hovedbad 1	Områdebad 0,5	Bydelsbad 0,25	Lokalbad 0,15
Kapasitet samtidig besøk	2 400	1 200	600	300
Svømmebasseng	50 x 25	50 x 25	25 x 12,5	25 x 12,5
Stupebasseng	25 x 20	-	-	-
Stuphøyder	1+3+5+7,5+10	1+3+5+7,5+10	1+3+5	1+3+5
Tilskuerplasser	1 500	500	100	50
Familiebassenger	8 stk 900 m ²	6 stk 400 m ²	4 stk 300 m ²	1 stk 50 m ²
Varmtvannsbassenger	2 stk 300 m ²	2 stk 220 m ²	1 stk 110 m ²	1 stk 110 m ²
Surfebasseng	1 stk 120 m ²	1 stk 120 m ²	-	-
Samlet fotavtrykk Ca. BYA m ²	10 000	5 500	2 700	1 400
Prosjektkostnad eks. moms ca. mill kr	600	350	140	90
Tilskudd spillemidler Ca. mill kr	70	40	15	15
Driftskostnader - ca. mill kr eks. kapital og avskrivning	42	25	16	8
Inntekter - ca. mill kr	90	45	20	8

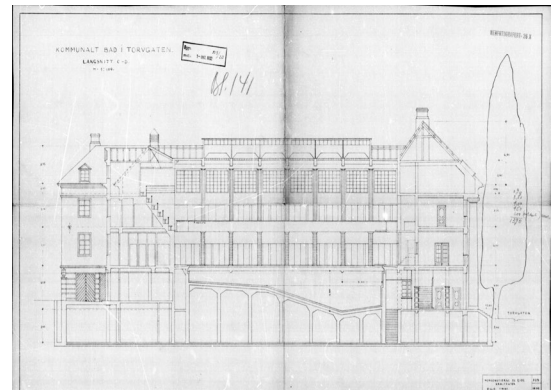
6. References



Stabian Bath, Pompeii

Great Bath

Torggata bad, 1923, Morgenstjerne og Eide



Stadtbad Mitte, 1930, Heinrich Tessenow

Skådalen school, 1977, Sverre Fehn

Neues Museum, David Chipperfield Architects

Fondazione Prada, 2015, OMA



7. Submitted Material

Site model 1:200

Project model 1:50

General plans 1:100

General Section 1:100

Site Plan 1:500

Detail sections horizontal/vertical 1:20

Illustrations and renders

8. Schedule (in progress)

Pre-semester:

Arrange interview with Asplan Viak

Finishing mapping site;

- Ownership
- Restrictions
- Regulation plans

Final program

Preparing Site model

August – semester start

Site visits

Site Model 1:200

Volume studies

Concepts models 1:500