

A STUDENTS LIFE

Seclusion and social interacting in the scenery of
Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk

a diploma project by Anne Ringstad

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INTRODUCTION

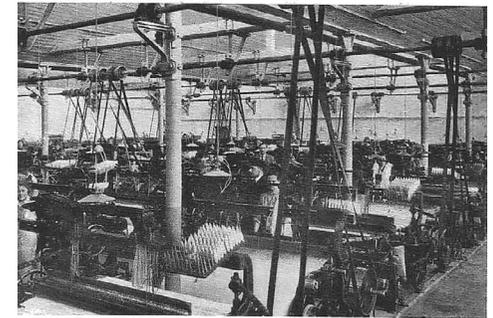
In recent years, transformation has become an important and urgent issue. Not only is it environmentally valuable, but it also creates exciting and innovative architecture. When an area is vacated or a building is no longer in use, it is our job to see the potentials, and fill it with new content.



Stoppsalen.
Stibary ordte t.v. i bakgrunnen.
Ved siden stoppermester Harald Bergeresen.

A/S SEIERSBORG TEXTILFABRIK — FREDRIKSTAD

My diploma addresses the meeting point between an existing structure and a possible new program. Can the existing structure withstand the pressure of a given, new program and will the new program benefit from the flexibility that is provided by the existing structure?



INTERIØR AV V.EVERIET

EXISTING BUILDING

Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk is situated in Fredrikstad city centre and is conveying the history of one of Fredrikstads most important industries, the TEKO-industry. It was constructed in 1917 and later on sold to Sandvika Veveri in 1990 which is interesting with transition in mind.

Today, Seiersborg is one of the area's most characteristic industrial buildings with an interest in conservation. The conservation value does not lie in pure conservation, but more in a positive reuse concerning the original structure.

My initial interest is to challenge the industrial structure with a new program, and reuse with the restraints and potentials of Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk.

PROGRAM

During my pre-diploma, I decided to conduct a thorough mapping of the current student situation, and I was made aware that the lack of student housing is an urgent issue.

I've chosen to work with a student housing program for many reasons, but mainly because it's an important political instrument to ensure equal access to higher education.

For most students, paying the rent is the highest expense of the month, and the housing program could be instrumental in helping students who otherwise would be at the mercy of the private rental market. Student housing is currently a shared expense between the state and Studentsamskipnaden. Norsk Student Organisasjon believes that at least 3000 dorms/apartments should be built annually until the target of 20% national coverage is reached.

In addition to this, and due to the shattered habitation and renting through the private rental market, I believe that the students of Fredrikstad are in more need of a place to meet, compared to other, more dense cities with established student offers. Over 50.000 students have replied to students' health- and satisfaction survey performed by Folkehelseinstituttet. Among other things, the responses show that 29%, close to one out of three students, experience loneliness "often" or "very often" in one or several forms.

My vision is that my proposal will make Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk accessible again, but also create a building that the inhabitants and students of Fredrikstad want to use, now and for the future. I imagine a clear distinction between the individual, the community, and the outside world, each given appropriate, well thought through qualities that fit a student's life.

VALUES

So, what are the values worth preserving in this building?

ROOF CONSTRUCTION AND ROOF WINDOWS

The roof is protecting the machinery and the workers from direct sunlight. The north-facing windows still admit natural light, which is a big benefit in this deep structure. (approx. 40-60 meters).

The roof's original shape is called a sawtooth roof. Before electric light was substituted for daylight in the late 19th century, consideration of good daylight strategies was essential. It was particularly useful in design factories and manufacturing buildings like this. Natural daylight will still be essential when building student housing, and this allows me to have dorms also in the middle of the structure.

CONSTRUCTION

One of the biggest benefits of this building is its open and flexible space due to the existing construction. It consists of basic, exposed columns, beams, and trusses, which also give us a generous ceiling height (8 meters from floor to roof). This construction method was important to fit all the heavy machinery, and will also benefit my project in several ways.

PRODUCTION FLOOR

The concrete floor is a big value in this building. You can see traces of over 100 years of production and life - the visible, three-dimensional record of our life on earth. I want Seiersborg to play a role in a vibrant future society, with the old floor as a "denkmal" of the busy life within the building in its early glory days.

VALUES

FACADE

The facade is a self-bearing brick wall in a traditional red-brown color. Fredrikstad was one of our country's most significant industrial cities with industries related to sawmills and brickyards as the most important industries. In a way, the brick symbolizes Fredrikstads industry and industrialism in general. Furthermore, the brick is a very solid and almost maintenance-free material, and in my opinion - very beautiful and decorative.

OPENNESS AND FLEXIBILITY

As mentioned, the existing structure leaves behind a spacious and flexible, open space. Where the columns bring the load to the ground, the open space is being "punctured", which gives the space some limitations, or guidelines. These guidelines can be represented by a 4 by 8-meter grid, and I find it natural to work within the grid.

SYMBOLIC VALUE

It is obvious to me that citizens of Fredrikstad have a special relationship with Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk. For several years, it has adorned the city as a landmark. Not only does it represent the past, but there were many employed in the TEKNO-industry compared to other lines of business. The factory is one of the area's most characteristic industrial buildings with an interest in conservation. The conservation value does not lie in pure conservation, but more in positive reuse concerning the original structure.

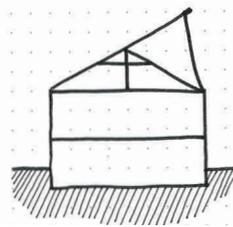
LOCATION / SETTING

Glomma is a significant part of Fredrikstad's landscape, and played an important role in the industrialization of the city. As with most urban rivers, the banks were sites of heavy industrialization in the late 19th century. The building is parallel to Gutzeits Gate and Teglverksgata, close to the city center. It has a generous amount of surrounding space and is also only 1 km from Høgskolen i Østfold. These aspects make it attractive and easy to access for students and others.

APPROACH

I wanted my project to be different from other student housing projects by avoiding the typical "corridor composition". I also had to have in mind the existing, and make proposals based on the given grid and structure.

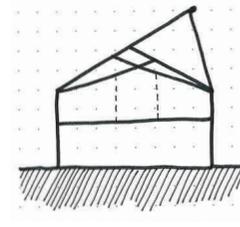
Every dorm should be connected with the roof windows in terms of letting the natural daylight in. I also wanted both big and spacious and small and intimate shared functions evenly distributed all over the building. The shared functions should be a low threshold offer for the students living there.



STRATEGY 1:

EXTRUDE DOWNWARDS

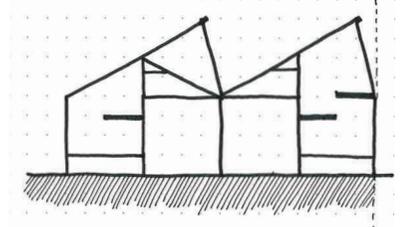
1. floor: shared
2. floor: dorms



STRATEGY 2:

DEVELOP TRUSSES

1. floor: shared
2. floor: dorms



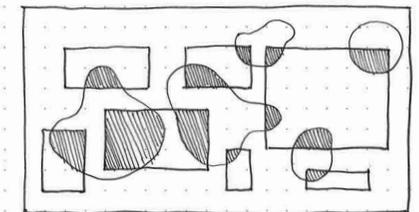
STRATEGY 3:

COMBINE PROGRAM ON ONE FLOOR

1. floor: both dorms and shared (dorms with internal stair and loft)

To achieve this, I tested three different strategies with different qualities and sacrifices. Strategy 1 and 2 would both have given me more total area, but they were also sacrificing two important elements - either the production floor or the trusses. Therefore I decided to work with strategy 3, which allowed the structure to be "untouched" - but with less area in total.

The dormitories are located in small neighborhoods that relate to the existing grid. The negative space is reserved for the shared functions which will appear more vibrant and organic.



PROJECT

My proposal is a student community where students can both live or meet. In addition to offering innovative student housing that challenges the well-known student housing structure, it also provides shared functions that are available to students not living in Seiersborg Studentbolig.

The project consists of 6 neighborhoods with a total of 46 dorms and 76 beds. All neighbourhoods have a kitchen for sharing between 4-7 dorms. The shared space occurs in the negative space between the neighborhoods together with circulation.

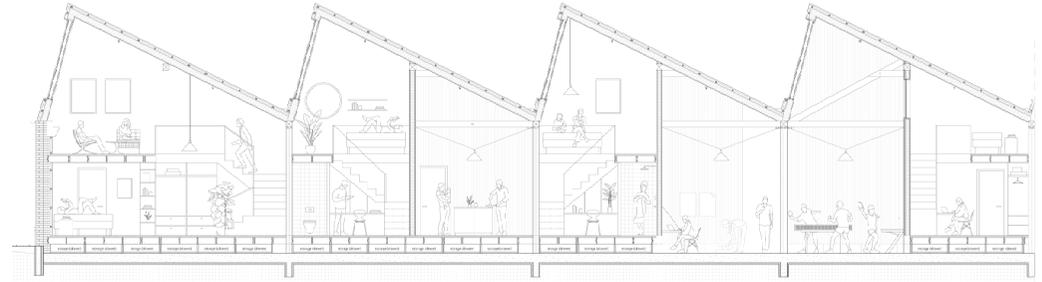
My proposal also invites students living nearby to a cafe/bar and a health center. Due to the poor offer of habitation to the students in Fredrikstad, I believe offering a place where students can meet besides school will play an important role in the student's life.

I aim to offer students in different stages of life good living conditions with the possibility to socialize, but also to withdraw to seclusion. To achieve this, I work with several levels of privacy. The dormitory represents the most private part, together with the shared kitchen. To highlight this, it's lifted 50 cm above ground, and creates a physical barrier. Every dormitory gets its private stoep, and the void beneath is dedicated to storage for the students and their private belongings.

The shared functions are evenly distributed between the dormitories. The proposal strives to create shared functions from loud and messy to quiet and tranquil. The open "piazzas" is where you can be loud and messy and play table tennis, while the more intimate spaces are for studying, reading, or relaxing. Furthermore, there is an auditorium which could be used for lectures, stand-ups, cinemas, or similar.

In the southwest part of the building and the "ordinary" part of the structure, there is a public meeting point for all students of Fredrikstad, allowing them to meet besides school.

The health center is important for students' physical health, and the café/bar is important for socializing. The outside park is open for everyone passing by, and is where the sun hits the most. This is a lovely offer for the inhabitants where you can arrange barbeques, play volleyball or bocchia, sunbathe or just go for a walk.



CONCLUSION

When introducing my thesis, I asked if the existing structure can withstand the pressure of a given program, and if the program could benefit from the flexibility that lies within the existing structure.

The architectural design is based on the structural logic of the original building, yet great care has been taken to avoid nostalgic glorification. The proposal strives to create a full spectrum of zones from private to public, from the loud and messy to the quiet and tranquil. By adding new interior with soft timber and bright colours, contrasting the industrial materials, the spatial qualities lacking in the existing building have been created.

The structural system has already shown its ability to adapt itself to new uses, and with small adjustments it proves that there is a lot of inherent potential in an old industrial building, and that Seiersborg Tekstilfabrikk can get a completely new area of use and can live further for many new years through an environmental perspective.

I also believe that if the need for student housing should decrease, the project would work just as fine as a co-living project, or, maybe any other program if the right decisions is being made.