

HUKODDEN SJØBAD

Rejuvenating a historical bath house at Bygdøy

On the peninsula Bygdøy, at one of Oslo's most popular bathing sites lies a small building commonly known to the people of Oslo as *Hukodden Strandrestaurant* or *Hukodden Beach Restaurant*. It is the remains of what used to be a beautiful building with a wide view over the Oslo Fjord with sun from morning to evening. Nevertheless, the building is closed, and forces of nature have been ravaging freely for over two years. Some windows are broken, and grass and moss have taken over the sundeck. Just by looking at it one would not comprehend the history it accommodates. In fact, it has not always been a restaurant, as the name would suggest, but a private bathing house for Quisling during World War II. Still, the property has not only a dark past, but contains happy memories for a lot of people, before and after the time of Quislings bathing house. Today, the condition of the building makes it unavailable for further use without proper care and renovation. While the condition of the building makes one suggest it should be torn down, it has an important history and is therefore listed. Its future is uncertain but, in my opinion, the possibilities are great.

Hukodden Strandrestaurant is today untouchable in many ways. One reason is its dilapidated condition, making it difficult for further use and programs. Another reason is that *Hukodden Strandrestaurant* is listed as a building with historic importance, making it impossible to do major alterations and hard to implement new programs. The building stands today as somewhat of a question mark and there is no definite answer for its future purpose. Especially after *Bymiljøetaten* decided to build a service building with public toilets, a year-round café and changing room for lifeguards, 50 meters away from the existing restaurant. Not only is it a potential competitor for a future program, but it limits the restaurant's future and underestimates the building's potential to fulfill the service building's functions. The restaurant has been empty for several years. Why prioritise a new service building instead of a plan for *Hukodden Beach Restaurant*? Instead of rehabilitation and providing activities and programs to the restaurant, *Bymiljøetaten* is building a cafe next door. With improvements, *Hukodden Strandrestaurant* could fulfill the service building's functions. At least, there should have been

an assessment of the existing building's potential before a completely new structure was decided.

By investigating, probing, experimenting and analysing I have transformed the existing restaurant into a public beach house, *Hukodden Sjøbad*. It will serve as an alternative to the new service building, as well as add more accessibility, life and activity to the building and its surroundings. Because of its location, views, ambiance and architecture, I have strived to offer a program that everyone could enjoy. Transforming the building into a public beach house that is open and accessible to all, gives everyone who wishes to use it the opportunity to take advantage of one of the sunniest and most scenic areas in Oslo.

In order to reach *Hukodden Sjøbad's* full potential, I have investigated what should be done with the building and the area surrounding it. I have examined key aspects of the building through value assessment and tried to understand how to bring life and program into the building again. By analysing the necessities of the area and looking at examples of other bath houses, I have been able to form an opinion on what a bath house accommodates and implement a program thereafter. I have strived to save its historical character, while at the same time make it more available for a new purpose in relation to a modern Huk.

Although there are many activities and programs that could be incorporated into a public beach house, I have chosen to focus on site-specific needs as well as programs that characterize a bath house. The diploma is an alternative to the new service building. Therefore, the necessary site-specific programs; public toilets, a year-round café and changing room for lifeguards, has been maintained in *Hukodden Sjøbad*. In addition to this, I have incorporated public changing rooms, HCWC, rental for kayaking, a saltwater pool, a jetty with a sauna and jumping tower, lockers, storage, technical rooms and enough space for high capacity for sunbathing, eating lunch, relaxing and enjoying the view.

I have strived to save its historical character by restoring some of the original expression to further enhance and convey the history, while at the same time make it suitable for modern

standards. Mainly the building needs to be refurbished in its entirety for it to meet the requirements for modern standards.

I have preserved the shape, used similar materials, and restored distinctive facade elements as I value them as character defining elements. Also, I have kept the public pathway along the terrace, as it enables people to walk around the building any time of the year. Some of the original expression has been restored such as the colour of the facade panels, the open passages, the main volumes and the open atmosphere. Additions and extensions that have been applied later have been removed and restored back to its original state. Distinctive facade elements such as arches, columns and windows have been emphasized or implemented into new elements and expressions.

An important aspect when designing has been to make *Hukodden Sjøbad* welcoming to all residents, whether they want to get in the water or not. Today, the building opens up to the fantastic view towards the Oslofjord and Fornebu, but it appears closed off and unwelcoming from the back. What you encounter when walking towards it is a wall. The original open passages on all sides have been closed off. A public bath house at a location such as this should be welcoming and attract visitors. That is why I have restored the open passages so that it is welcoming and integrated with the beach as an extension to the public area. This makes *Hukodden Sjøbad* more accessible and open to anyone who may wish to use it.

One of the distinctive facade elements are the arched windows on the north-west facade. To preserve these windows and at the same time embody programs, I have incorporated the window arrangement and placements into new doors for public toilets. This way, the facade does not change the appearance, but it also makes this side of the building more activated. To solve the problem of transparency when incorporating the windows in the toilet doors, a technique when locking the door is added that will provide privacy for the user. It also indicates if the toilet is occupied or not.

Surrounded by the L-shaped building is the sundeck. The shape allows for considerable sunlinlight and meticulously forms a natural meeting point on the sun-deck. The sun-deck can be accessed from all sides of the building through passages or stairs making it the center of

attention. It was imperative that this public area was filled with life and activity. I have filled the sundeck with a saltwater pool as a more refined alternative to swimming in the ocean.

Surrounding the pool is the opportunity to throw down a towel and appreciate the sun and views, or sit down and enjoy a snack from the café. The possible strong winds from the ocean have been tackled with transparent glass surrounding the sundeck. This way the public areas can be enjoyed throughout seasons without compromising the view.

A public beach house should be integrated with the beach as an extension to the public area. In the current situation, there is a need for better access to the water as many of the young bathers are jumping from the no longer used boat dock to the east. I recognized a great opportunity in further developing, not only the building, but the area surrounding it. I saw an unused potential to further expand the crowded beach onto a new jetty in front of the beach house. In front of the building are sloping rocks going down to the ocean, but they are too rough for anyone to sit down or jump from. The jetty will create a more accessible and comfortable sunbathing and swimming situation, and will serve as an extension to the neighbouring beach. It is reversible and mindfully adapted to the terrain since the rocks are listed. The jetty stretches out in two directions creating a developed bathing situation and a suitable place to enter and exit the kayaks. Connected to the jetty is a sauna, a diving tower and outdoor showers to rinse of the salt.

My vision is that my proposal will make the historic building accessible again. By providing needed and popular programs, restoring and maintaining the architecture and making the building accessible for anyone to enjoy, I hope the building will get new life in relation to a modern Huk. *Hukodden Sjøbad* should be something the citizens of Oslo would enjoy and be proud of.