

## NEW MEDIA COMPLEX FOR GOTA MEDIA AND BAROMETERN

### THE EVALUATION OF THE PARALLEL COMMISSION STAGE II. Concept nr 1

#### **THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF SYDOST PRESS AB (Gota Media)**

Upon the recommendation of the assessment team, the Board of Sydost Press AB (Gota Media) has decided to appoint **Dorte Mandrup Architects, Copenhagen** to continue their commission through to the finished building.

#### **The Board's motivation as to the winning proposal**

Dorte Mandrup Architects have designed a building which greatly exceeded the expectations of the most stringent of requirements, as regards the cultural history of the site, the inner City's need for quality recreational space and the operational functions of the company.

Kalmar and Gota Media, will be endowed with an unusual and beautiful building that gives the City, the location and company operations a significant return on investment. The proposal will increase the surrounding recreational areas when compared with the current situation.

The fortress Gustavus Primus was once part of the Swedish Kingdom's ultimate defence of democracy. The site can now resurrect a permanent bastion of free speech, which is an integral part of the defence of a democratic society.

#### **THE NEXT STEP**

The Winning Proposal as presented by Dorte Mandrup will be further processed, mainly by reducing the volume of the building and the floor area and through increased efficiency in the functions of the building.

The building is planned for occupancy in early 2013, subject to the ongoing detailed town planning process.

#### **THE PROCESS**

##### **Parallel Commission**

The proposal has been conceived after a yearlong process, from which about 50 architectural offices were invited. After prequalification, the remaining 6 architect's offices were selected to participate in a parallel commission. These six offices represent the region and national and international offices. They are:

- Caruso St John Architects, London

- Dorte Mandrup Arkitekter, Copenhagen
- Johan Celsing Arkitektkontor AB, Stockholm
- Lundgaard & Tranberg Arkitekter AS, Copenhagen
- Strindberg Arkitekter AB, Kalmar, in co-operation with Pomarch and Scheiwiller Svensson Arkitektkontor AB
- Anders Törnqvist Arkitektkontor AB, Karlshamn

The commission ran between February and April of 2009 and included an individual meeting with the Review Board during the commission.

Stage I was brought to a conclusion, after an evaluation of the proposals, by the choice of Caruso St John Architects, London, and Dorte Mandrup, Copenhagen, to continue their work to the second stage.

The two remaining finalists have developed their respective proposals during the summer and autumn of 2009.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Gota Media AB intends to construct a new building in central Kalmar, in an area that is greatly influenced by the city's cultural and historical values which are of national interest. The building will be a media complex serving as headquarters for Gota Media AB and for the local daily newspaper, Barometern.

Gota Media AB's intention is to illustrate that a home of free speech has a central place and position in the development of local society.

### The Commission – basic requirements.

During the commission, and during the meetings with the architects, the Review Board has clearly indicated a number of important aspects that are to be developed and clarified.

In short, the key parameters are as follows;

**1** The location of the new Media Complex in the fortress Gustavus Primus provides challenges beyond those that are normally encountered in a new building.

The cultural heritage of the site has been partially destroyed and heavily distorted during the past 150 years. Notwithstanding this fact, the site is expected to gain from the proposal when a public environment with such a strong cultural history is changed.

During the year-long process, the intention of nurturing, developing, and improving the visibility of the cultural heritage aspect has been given very high priority

The objective of the new Media Complex is to ensure that:

- **The site's rich cultural history be clarified and made more understandable.**
- **The site must gain from having a new building and be improved and transformed, with clear roots in its cultural and historical heritage**

2 Gota Media, as does the Kalmar City Council, find it most important that the building meets the town in an open and welcoming manner. The architectural challenge is therefore defined as:

- **Provide a solution that will furnish the City environment with new qualities in the form of a building that creates interest and participation.**

3 The operation of Gota Media AB and the planned new building are characterised by five key words that are to be epitomised by the building:

- **Candour (Openness), Creativity, Modern, Progress (Belief in the Future), and Established Locally.**

4 The building shall exhibit exemplary environmental consideration and be certified as a Green Building:

- **Simple and robust solutions will be appreciated in not only the design, but even in the choice of materials and services solutions.**

5 The building shall have excellent long-term economy:

- **The building shall not cost more than is normal and acceptable for this type of building. The building shall have reasonable maintenance and service cost levels and they shall be flexible in their design.**

## Background information

In preparation for the start of the project in February 2009, six architectural offices in Kalmar were brought together to give a joint review of all program issues. This resulted in the programme for Stage I, dated 9<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2009.

Expertise in various disciplines outlined the content of the program as follows:

- The operative aspects and the visions of Gota Media and Barometern as regards the new building
- Kalmar County Museum compilation summary of the facts in the form of report 2009:2 upgrading the national interest for Kalmar.
- The interpretation of the national interest - cultural and historical conditions.
- Other programme requirements, items 1-5 above, infrastructure, requirements and expectations from the City of Kalmar, customer expectations, etc.
- Environmental aspects, including energy, ventilation, materials etc.
- The pedestrian environment

In preparation for the start of stage II involving the two remaining architects, the following conditions were added to the programme:

- The Evaluation Stage I, dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009
- Specific advice to each proposal respectively was given
- Expertise from Deltate for the requirements of energy conservation and ventilation to be complied with for each architect throughout stage II.

Three working sessions between the architects and the Review Board were carried out.

## The Review Board

The Review Board is comprised of the following six persons:

- Gota Media AB: Bennie Ohlsson Chairman of the Review Board, MD.
- Gota Media AB: Gunilla Sax, Media Director.
- Gota Media AB: Sören Björklund editor and member of the Board.
- The City Architect in Kalmar; Staffan Lindholm architect A/MSA.
- Representative for the confederation of Swedish Architects: Louise Masreliez architect SAR/MSA.
- Representative for the County Antiquarian: Annette Johansson, Building Antiquarian for the County of Blekinge.

Secretary of the Review Board: Project Leader Rolf Möller, ark SAR MSA, guest professor at the Beijing Technical University.

## The Method of Evaluation

The Review Board has had a number of meetings and has consulted expertise in construction, finance, geology and landscaping.

The Board has also met with representatives for the preservation of cultural history, geologists, town planning, climate systems etc.

## Additional investigation

### 1 Archaeological investigation.

The County Administrative Board has, through the National Board for the Preservation of Cultural History, conducted an archaeological investigation of the area in the autumn of 2009. The investigation has not yet been reported in writing.

The test excavation briefly showed the impressive foundation of the fortress. There were no surprises. No other findings of greater value were reported during the oral presentation for the Review Board.

### 2 Geotechnical investigation. Report dated 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009.

WSP conducted a geotechnical investigation at the same time as the archaeological investigation.

The study confirmed previous assumptions about the geology of the soil. Piling will be required, which the architects have taken into consideration.

### 3 Climate. Report dated 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2009.

Deltate concluded its involvement with an evaluation of the proposals for the heating and the climate systems.

## EVALUATION – THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE REVIEW BOARD

### Cultural history and location analysis

Both offices have given an impressive and interesting account and detailed analysis of the history of the site and the conditions and opportunities available.

**Caruso St John** has placed the building as an inverse volume in the bastion, i.e. filled out the previous chamber, within the walls. The location is thereby based on the principles that formed the Kalmar Castle, the new Art Museum and other public buildings, by having a free position relative to that of the city's street grid.

The Review Board has in previous reports pointed out that the selected mode is not understandable as being part of the fortress Gustavus Primus. On the other hand the placement provides opportunities for beautiful and subtle meetings with both the water and park area to the north.

The building is still somewhat high in relation to the surrounding existing buildings.

**Dorte Mandrup** have clearly understood the challenge of highlighting the cultural heritage and has worked with the Media Complex within the fortification, thereby making the cultural heritage more visible and valuable to the city. The bastion is renewed with great awareness through new volumes and materials. The access to the public to the upper level of the bastion is facilitated, at the same time fulfilling the conditions of the building programme.

**Dorte Mandrup** have progressively developed this challenge in harmony with the cultural heritage and the requirement for modernity, openness, etc. The site is reinforced with several exciting and qualitative new green areas, next to the house by the water, the slope of the hill etc.

The building leaves the surrounding street areas free and has, with its divided volume, succeeded in fulfilling the construction program without outflanking the surrounding buildings.

### Town Planning

**Caruso St John** have explained and skilfully argued for its placement of the building. The building is beautiful with high architectural values - but not convincing in its answer as to how the site can be urbanized to this extent.

The association to a pavilion is remarkable, but fails due to the compact form of the building in a single body and its subsequently strong context as a volume.

**Dorte Mandrup** have created a unique solution. Unique to the site and with a force that in one entity enhances the site, the city's role in international history and the importance of the coastal landscape to the city's development.

The breakdown of the local program into several buildings, which are partially incorporated into parkland or the bastion, works well. Not least because this approach provides a good opportunity to manage the scale of the building, while shaping a brand new park landscape with extraordinary qualities.

In principle, Mandrup, in this sense, has solved most of the demands and expectations that were initially set out in the program.

### **Architecture**

Both proposals have delivered two very different solutions, each with a high level of architecture.

**Caruso St John** has been inspired by early Swedish functionalism, combined with sublime Japanese style transition between land and building and between land and water. The building is unnecessarily large and provides difficult meetings with adjacent property while obvious qualities are created in other transitions with the surroundings.

The building is divided into three floors, all with different characteristics. The top floor with an elevated floor contributes to an exciting exterior expression, whilst highlighting the editorial desk.

The architect has designed a very beautiful house well worth building, but not on this site. The building privatizes public space (the site) and does not meet the requirements of openness and candour – deeply rooted in the local environment.

**Dorte Mandrup** has clearly been inspired by the site and skilfully plays on the ambient conditions, where the building climbs into the collapsed walls of the bastion.

The city is given a building with a strong identity that highlights the bastion without taking up excessive space.

The floor plan is clearly flexible whilst the building's basic architectural idea with divided volumes, provides room for revision.

The proposal is commendably designed and can be seen as breaking new ground in its genre.

### **Landscaping**

The Site is, at present, carelessly landscaped, with technical facilities, parking lots, roads, etc., in the midst of a site of cultural heritage. The commission has therefore formulated clear demands as to the development of the quality of the park areas as an important part of the public sphere.

**Caruso St. John** have pursued a series of sequences clearly inspired by Japanese garden architecture. It is sublime, beautiful and compact and is a natural consequence of the free position of the building in a comprehensive green city thoroughfare. The landscaping is somewhat contradictory; where the elevated the city wall is likely to privatize the site, despite the ambition to the contrary.

**Dorte Mandrup** integrates the building with the landscape. The roof becomes an extended part of the fortification works.

The new spatial formations in the form of terraces, squares, lawns, aisles, seats etc all have great potential to enrich the site allowing the remaining parkland to be quite large. The building's exterior and interior surfaces invite transition, while explaining the history and development of the City.

The architect has realized the seriousness of returning a public place of greater value than that which is taken. The proposal provides more green space than that which is available today.

### **Operations**

The best design of tomorrow's media landscape is unknown. The requirements for great flexibility are therefore particularly high.

**Caruso St John** creates some, but limited flexibility with their architectural form.

Offices and workplaces would need to be looked into further for the proposal to be fully assessed in relation to the required program for the premises.

The ground floor is likely to be perceived as empty and desolate for longer periods of time - thus negating the purpose of transparency i.e. acceptance by the general public. The upper level - the editor's desk - with its spacious rooms meets the requirements for development.

**Dorte Mandrup** manages the programme for premises required with skill. The building is full of expressive places and rooms. The interplay between indoors and outdoors is exciting and innovative in several respects. The main staircase is more than a staircase; it creates a meeting point for both scheduled and spontaneous meetings.

The Editors Desk lies to the north, high above the park, on the third floor and seems to flow into and merge with the parkland by the water tower. An ingenious, practical and extraordinarily beautiful solution.

The Ground Floor of the proposal needs to be revised, while the editor's desk needs to be larger and more compact. Such revisions are fully possible without major change, due to the great flexibility obtained with the breakdown into several architectural volumes.

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability can sometimes be perceived as a buzzword, without major commitment. Gota Media takes a serious stand on the issues of sustainability and is determined that the building shall be certified as a "Green Building". This requires, among other things, that the energy consumption is 25% less than that of the regulation requirement. Gota Media is not content with this, and believe that the city will gain from the provision of accessible public locations, and that robust and environmentally friendly construction solutions are important parameters.

**Deltate** has been working with expertise in the fields of energy consumption, indoor climate and ventilation. Deltate has worked together with the architects and has issued its own report on the proposals. The report notes that both proposals can be built to the requirements for a Green Building Certificate. The two proposals are relatively equal, with an extra plus for Mandrup.

### **Availability and Security**

The site currently lacks adequate access, for example the path up to the water tower is too steep.

The task is to design and customize the building as well as its proximity to conform to existing regulations as to availability and safety in regard to health and safety, fire, etc.

**Caruso St John's** proposal has deficiencies in the building's communications system. The building is not accessible to disabled persons. An emergency fire escape is missing.

The area around the water tower is not accessible to disabled persons.

All these deficiencies can be remedied by further amendment to the proposal.

**Dorte Mandrup's** shortcomings relate especially to the access to the external environment. All public areas must have full access, e.g. to the bastion towards Systraströmmen and to the roof terraces, water tower area, etc.

All these deficiencies can be remedied by further amendment to the proposal.

### **Building Construction and Economy**

A small group of experts in civil engineering, geotechnical engineering and construction economy has assessed the proposals.

The conditions of the commission stipulate that the building should cost about 18 000 - 20 000 SEK/m<sup>2</sup>, including client expenses, but excluding infrastructural expenses. If one of the proposals is subject to a maximum of infrastructural costs, the total costing could be too high.

**Caruso St John** has had the opportunity to save on infrastructural costs, but have not used them adequately. The building may well be built to normal construction costs, but will however, be subject to infrastructure costs of approximately 7 million SEK, which gives the proposal an excessively high final cost.

If the building can be changed, large savings can be achieved e.g. for the existing sewage pumping station and the transformer.

**Dorte Mandrup** has avoided additional infrastructure costs, but the proposal is burdened by relatively high costs for construction, especially where the building meets and interacts with the fortress. These additional costs can be reduced significantly by restructuring the solution for the premises required.

**Both proposals** have a traditional structural frame with extensive glazing, which, however, does fulfil the requirements for indoor climate and energy consumption. Further development of the proposals in this respect is desirable.

The total cost estimate for both proposals is too high, with a slight edge for the Mandrup proposal, which is a few million cheaper. Costs must be reduced by approximately 20% if the target is to be met.

## **THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW BOARD**

The overall assessment of the Review Board is that **Dorte Mandrup** should be appointed to complete their proposal and fully complete the building.

The original six recognized and highly qualified architectural offices have, through their dedication shown that the task is difficult but not insoluble. The remaining two offices that progressed to the second stage, Caruso St John and Dorte Mandrup have, through their

separate and clearly convincing proposals, further developed, highlighted and demonstrated the strong qualities of the site. The exposure of these qualities that are to this day hidden to the public was part of the challenge.

The chosen process of meetings during the parallel commission has given solutions that have a clear relation to the cultural heritage of the site. A relationship that looks into the future, respects historical values without reducing their importance, and that dare to develop, test and experiment with new approaches.

The Dorte Mandrup proposal shows that there is every reason to believe that the project will create a strong, positive contribution to Kvarnholmen. This contribution will partly be in the form of an interesting building that better explains and develops the rich history of the city and partly by improving recreational areas and promenades, which will enhance the understanding of the area's values, history and possibilities.

The Media Complex, with its green surroundings is well placed to become the missing healing supplement to the urban environment:

A building that brings joy and pride.

A public place to rediscover, enjoy and take full advantage of.

Bennie Ohlsson  
MD Gota Media

Gunilla Sax  
Director Barometern

Sören Björklund  
Editor-in chief, member of the board

Anette Johansson  
Building Antiquarian

Staffan Lindholm  
City Architect

Louise Masreliez  
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