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### Disconnected innovations : new urbanity in large-scale development projects: Zuidas Amsterdam, Ørestad Copenhagen and Forum Barcelona

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**Publication date**  
2008

[Link to publication](#)

#### **Citation for published version (APA):**

Majoor, S. J. H. (2008). *Disconnected innovations : new urbanity in large-scale development projects: Zuidas Amsterdam, Ørestad Copenhagen and Forum Barcelona*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. Uitgeverij Eburon.

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*“Ørestad is not a decision taken with your brain, but with your heart. Therefore you either hate it or you love it”.*

(Dan Christensen, ‘intellectual father’ of the project)

*“I know about planning failures, and about projects people have a lot of problems with. But I do not know a project with regard to which everybody not hired for the project thinks it will not work”.*

(interview with David Rehling, journalist at the Informationen newspaper and former president of the Danish society for the conservation of nature)

## CHAPTER 4

### COPENHAGEN ØRESTAD<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.1 Introduction

Ørestad is a major urban development scheme in Copenhagen (*København*). It is located on the island of Amager – between the old city centre and Copenhagen’s international airport and the new bridge to Malmö. The idea was to establish a ‘city annex’ to attract national and international investors. The actual building process of this 3.1 million square metre development started at the end of the Nineties and is expected to take about thirty-five years. Ambitions for new urbanity were aired prominently in the original project proposals. We investigate the extent to which conditions have been created in Ørestad to realize this objective during the last decade.

The Ørestad development project resembles other major European projects in the sense that it is part of an entrepreneurial strategy by which the city and the region intend to improve their position in the competition for international investments. However, it is certainly also influenced by the local institutional context in which it was envisaged. Its most distinctive features include:

- Political involvement of national government: the development project was decided upon in the Danish Parliament and is being executed via a publicly controlled development corporation;
- Major investment in public transportation predates – and facilitates – the development of the area;

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a modified, extended and somewhat updated version of an earlier published chapter: Majoor, S.J.H. and Jørgensen, J. (2007). “Copenhagen Ørestad: Public partnership in search of the market”, in: W.G.M. Salet and E. Gualini (eds.). *Framing strategic urban projects*, Routledge, London, pp. 172-198. An earlier version of this research was presented at the 2005 Congress of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), in Vienna, 13-17 July 2005.

- The Ørestad Development Corporation (Ørestadsselskabet I/S) is operating on market terms while the state guarantees the loans which cover the development costs;
- The development is based on a master plan that envisions a high density and mixed-use environment consisting of office development, housing, major (public) facilities and green space. The master plan has been incorporated into the Municipal Plan.

Although plans were made for the western part of the island of Amager in the 1960s, the first plans for the Ørestad development in the form that is actually materializing were made at the end of the Eighties. In this chapter we first analyse the development of the project in a wider framework of governance change in Denmark during the last few decades. Ørestad can be seen as a clear marker and product of change towards a more developmental oriented urban policy and polity. We then discuss the initiation of the plan in section 4.3. From section 4.4 on we critically analyse the project and its ambition for new urbanity, using the conceptual framework presented in chapter two.<sup>2</sup>

## 4.2 From ‘welfare planning’ to ‘entrepreneurialism’ in the Copenhagen region

In many respects, the history of spatial planning in Copenhagen is a typical tale from a Scandinavian metropolis. As part of the welfare-state philosophy, the public sector had a considerable influence on the city’s spatial development through planning measures and large public investments in infrastructure and housing, especially after the Second World War. Interestingly enough, at the beginning of the Nineties, a quite abrupt change of policy led to the embracement of a stronger market-oriented ‘entrepreneurial’ philosophy which was applied to spatial planning and development as well (Thor Andersen and Jørgensen 1995).

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<sup>2</sup> Research for the empirical part of this chapter took place primarily during November and December 2004, having been prepared during a one week quick scan in April 2004. During that two month period at the end of 2004, planning and policy documents related to the Ørestad development were reviewed and twenty-six interviews with major players were conducted. The full list of interviews, including the position of the interviewees at the time of the interview, can be found in the appendix at the end of the book. All the interviews (except one) were conducted face-to-face in the Copenhagen area and in English. Each was about one hour long and was semi-structured, taped and subsequently transcribed. Although written questions were prepared for each interview, the sessions were conducted in a somewhat informal way as the issues presented themselves rather than by following a rigid script. For the selection of the interviewees a combination was sought of (1) practitioners currently involved in the Ørestad project, working at the Ørestad Development Corporation, the city government, the national government, or other organisations, (2) former practitioners who had been involved in the project in different roles – either currently retired or in another job – who were able to give a historic perspective and (3) academics and journalists who could help understand the bigger picture and sharpen the critical analysis. During our written analysis we use the information from these interviews regularly, and especially in the second part of this chapter. Mostly there are no direct quotes, but references made to a concern, issue, thought or question that came up in that particular interview. The idea is for this to underpin, strengthen or illustrate our own line of reasoning. In each case we include the name of the interviewee in brackets.

The Ørestad project can be seen as one of the prime examples of this new policy direction (Jørgensen, Kjøersdam and Nielsen 1997). To understand this change, we have to recognize some socio-economic, political and spatial developments that took place in the previous decades. From a spatial perspective, the expansion of Copenhagen from 1940 to 1980 took place primarily in the rural areas adjacent to the municipality in the west and the north. The spatial framework for this expansion was formed by the famous 1947 'Fingerplan', officially named 'Skitseforslag til egnsplan for Storkøbenhavn', which presented a clear philosophy of controlled suburbanisation in radial corridors around several infrastructure corridors that were connected to central Copenhagen by a rail system (Egnsplankontoret 1947). During these four decades, approximately 240,000 new housing units were constructed. The dwellings predominately attracted young households which had moved out of the lower quality small apartments in the city (Thor Andersen and Jørgensen 1995). In this process of controlled suburbanization the Fingerplan acted as a 'Leitbild' for the regional plans that have been produced ever since. However, this meant that the island of Amager on the southeast of Copenhagen has been somewhat overlooked, compounding the problem that the plan largely neglected the area which resembles the palm of the hand (see also the Overview of Amager later in this chapter). Hence, commuter trains were constructed to service the 'fingers', while the palm of the hand, i.e. the 100,000 citizens on Amager, were served only by buses that could only cross the water separating the island from the city centre at two locations. This spatial movement of households to the suburbs had immense economic and financial consequences for the municipality of Copenhagen due to the erosion of the tax base. The Danish state has a decentralised financial system which means that local governments are heavily dependent on income from taxation within their premises to balance their budgets. Although a complicated system of compensation exists between the City of Copenhagen and its more prosperous suburbs, the city's financial situation worsened during the Seventies and Eighties. A net loss of wealthy inhabitants meant that the City of Copenhagen was fighting increasing social needs with decreasing taxable incomes (Thor Andersen and Jørgensen 1995).

Figure 4.1: The famous image of Copenhagen's 'fingerplan', with the island of Amager in the south-east



In this rapidly growing but politically fragmented metropolitan area, the need for metropolitan governance became apparent not only with a view to professionalizing the welfare state, but also to ensuring the coordination of tasks relating to transportation and physical planning. However, the nationwide reform of local authorities, which was decided upon at the beginning of the 1970s, did not consider the metropolitan conditions of the Copenhagen region. In order to compensate for this, a relatively strong regional body, namely the Greater Copenhagen Council (GCC), was set up in 1974. The main tasks of this council were planning, hospital services, public transport and secondary schools. The council was thought of as a fourth tier of government, with indirectly elected politicians. It was an unique governance setting for Denmark. However, the GCC was abolished in 1989, in an attempt by the national government to simplify decision-making and to reduce the number of local governmental officers (Thor Andersen, Hansen and Jørgensen 2002).

The problematic relationship between the city government and the Danish state is a recurring feature of the Seventies and most of the Eighties. While the city of Copenhagen faced a decline in population, employment and investments in the 1980s, direct support from the national government was limited. As a matter of fact, the municipality had to borrow money from the state to close its rising budget deficits. From the late 1980s onwards, in order to break the impasse of decline and growing budget deficits and debts, the national government, which was by then dominated by a liberal/conservative coalition, urged Copenhagen to initiate a metropolitan growth strategy. This was an important strategic decision. In the Copenhagen political scene this coincided with a leadership change and the adoption of a more pragmatic orientation of the dominant Social Democratic party, which became less committed to the classical values of the Welfare City (Andersen 2002).

### **4.3 Initiating Ørestad**

At a strategic level there was a switch in government policies from a welfare-oriented perspective to a growth-oriented, 'competitive' rationale at the end of the Eighties, as referred to in the previous section. Due both to its aims and governance structure the Ørestad project fitted perfectly into this new discourse. Moreover, during the last decade it developed into one of Copenhagen's most iconic markers of this new policy direction.

The concrete start of the Ørestad project has to be linked to the decision by the national parliament, at the end of the Eighties, to close Copenhagen's naval harbour and move the activities to Jutland. Given a situation of depopulation, deindustrialisation and a financially strained city government, this meant a loss of even more jobs and increased the urgency among the city government and the private sector to come up with actions to revitalize the city's economy and improve its financial position (interview with Schröder, former director of Confederation of Danish industries and member of the Stallknecht committee). A small group of people that had expressed views on Copenhagen in the past formed the Stallknecht Committee, named after the director of the Ministry of Finance. This committee was asked to come up with proposals to be presented to the parliament that could bring new prosperity to the Copenhagen region. They presented the report 'Hovedstaden – Hvad vil vi med den?' ('Our Capital – what

is to be done?’) (Thor Andersen et. al. 2002).

The recommendations of the group were discussed in parliament in 1990 and mainly included infrastructure investments (new rail links, new highways and expansion of the airport), given that the general belief was that Copenhagen had, for a long time, suffered from underinvestment in infrastructure. Ideologically, important shifts in policy direction were visible. The recommendations of the committee were heavily inspired by some important geo-political changes at the end of the 1980s. Because of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the application of Sweden and Finland for membership to the EU, the geo-political and economic position of Copenhagen suddenly changed from peripheral to central – at least in a Nordic context. In the discussions that followed, a clear step in the direction of a pro-active growth oriented policy style was taken, which was intended to improve the competitive position of Copenhagen vis-à-vis other metropolitan areas in Europe (Lund Hansen, Thor Andersen and Clark 2001). As a whole this meant, ‘a shift away from the former dominant orientation in Danish regional policy, which had emphasised on interregional equalisation, hence disfavoured the Capital in the ongoing struggles over public infrastructure and other investments’ (Andersen and Hovgård 2003, p.39). The sudden change in direction can thus be attributed to changing external circumstances that became framed as opportunities such as European integration and international competition between regions, together with internal political difficulties such as unemployment and lack of public and private investments. Due to a change in government and a sense of both crisis and opportunity, it suddenly became possible to take new steps. The way ahead was paved for two major decisions which the Danish Parliament approved within a couple of years at the beginning of the Nineties. The first decision was to build a fixed link between Copenhagen and its neighbouring Swedish city Malmö and the second decision was to establish Ørestad.

Having introduced the context in which Ørestad was initiated, we now turn to our analysis of the project. First of all, we analyse how the project was connected to the metropolitan action space by its symbolic-cognitive and organizational framing and how this framing has developed over time. We then assess the operational domain of the project. Finally we specifically analyse to what extent ambitions for new urbanity have been normatively reflected upon in the project (i.e. have become part of social norms). As we explained in chapter two, this sequence does not mean that we see a straight hierarchical relationship between these three levels of analysis. In this case it is more a matter of organising the empirical data. It does make sense, however, to start with the connectivity to the metropolitan action space since this allows a more effective explanation of the broader context of its development.

#### **Overview Amager, the strategic and contested repositioning of a forgotten part of Copenhagen**

The famous 1947 regional plan, which covered a huge area of 3,000 square kilometres and a housing program to accommodate up to one million inhabitants, largely ignored the partly artificial island of Amager, which is located on the south-east side of the historic city centre. Most new urban developments in that plan were located to the west of Copenhagen. While most of the north-eastern part of Amager was already urbanised at that time, including the independent municipality of Tårnby, the western part had been left untouched. This

part of Amager is reclaimed land. During the Second World War it was created in a forced-labour program which prevented Danish workers going to Germany. After the War the Danish Army used this area for target practice. Although different plans were made in the 1960s and 70s to urbanize this part of Amager, none were actually implemented. This was mainly due to the poor infrastructure connections between the island and the rest of the metropolitan area. Amager was only connected with the rest of the city by two small harbour bridges in the historic centre.

From a planning perspective, the zoning of the area was rather peculiar. The western part, the actual infill part, was zoned as a rural area, while the part with most environmental value, the former coastline area close to the existing built up area, was zoned for urban uses. The growing environmental awareness of the Seventies caused the Danish society for the conservation of nature, *Danmarks Naturfredningsforening*, to start a process in 1974 to get a nature conservation status for the whole area. They expected such a status to prevent any future development. The public authorities opposed this status since they claimed to have long-term development plans for the area which would then be frustrated. The preservation case, which was decided by a court, was then stalled.

During the Eighties it became clear that the military would eventually move out of the area. This triggered a new comprehensive planning effort, which included a large number of stakeholders. A commission was formed to come up with new plans for the area. After two years of thinking and negotiating, a new zoning ordinance was agreed on that would protect the largest part of the area, but which would also permit some development activities in the form of a linear north-south strip on the eastern fringe of the untouched area. While the former military site was protected by an official preservation easement, the most valuable environmental parts, the former coastline close to existing built-up areas, was protected by regional planning guidelines. In the Eighties, this was a rather theoretical difference since there was no sign of any development pressure on this part of Amager. Most of the parties involved were happy with this compromise since it allowed some development while also protecting up to 90% of the area, including many of the most sensitive environmental parts. A protocol was drawn up which was signed in an official setting by the national government, the city of Copenhagen, the Copenhagen regional council and the Danish society for the conservation of nature. It looked as if the western part of Amager would stay untouched for a longer period.

However, due to external reasons mentioned above, this somewhat forgotten 'palm of the hand' of Denmark's finger-shaped capital became an attractive development option at the end of the Eighties. The most important reason was that it formed the natural starting point for the bridge to Malmö. Together with the presence of Copenhagen's expanding Kastrup International Airport at the south east section of Amager, ideas on the potentials of this area were placed in a more economic competitive framework.

When the first proposals for the Ørestad development, which would cover large parts of the 'protected' area, leaked to the press, the environmental groups felt like they had been caught out by a thief in the night (Paludan 2000). The plan for Ørestad partly coincided with the areas zoned as urban areas, but it also covered areas which the environmental groups thought were under protection by means of regional planning guidelines. This compromise suddenly seemed forgotten by the initiators of Ørestad, and the environmental groups quickly started a procedure to achieve an official conservation status via the preservation court. The national government immediately appealed against this request. Then the new Ørestad Act stated that all pending court cases would be invalid and overruled the whole case. This opened the area up for urbanization and left the environmental groups stunned. According to the former chairman of the Danish society for the conservation of

nature, “It was all very ugly. This is not the normal way administration is done in this country. This is actually the ugliest I know” (interview with Rehling, now journalist Informationen newspaper, then chairman of Danmarks Naturfredningsforening).

(This reconstruction is based mainly on an interview with Rehling and the writings of Gaardman 1996)

#### 4.4 Connectivity to the metropolitan action space

The two research questions we posed in chapter two regarding the connectivity to the metropolitan action space were:

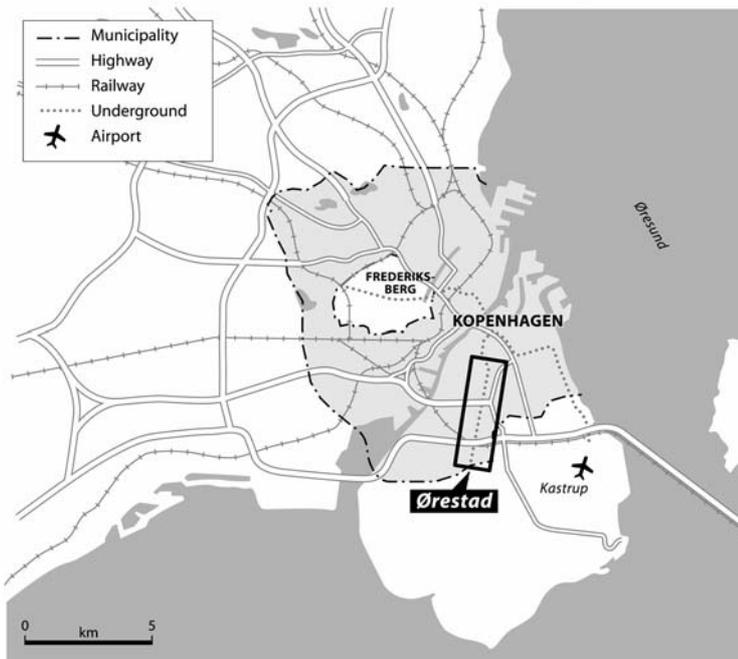
- *To what extent has the ambition to realize new urbanity been reflected in the way Ørestad is strategically framed in a symbolic-cognitive way and how has this framing developed?*
- *What dynamic in time is observable in Ørestad in the way the project is organisationally framed in the four distinguished domains of the metropolitan action space?*

We explained before that our hypothesis is that it is necessary for a project, with the ambition for new urbanity, to be broadly organisationally framed in all four domains of the metropolitan action space we identified since only this will ensure that, at the project’s operational level, the maximum of energy (ideas, initiatives, investments, support) from society is accommodated in these efforts and turned into a sustainable and mixed flow of investments into the area. We therefore expected changes over time in projects that were first limitedly connected to certain domains of the metropolitan action space to repair this situation and create a broader connectivity.

Assessing the cognitive-symbolic framing of Ørestad, we found that the project was initially framed in a dual manner. First of all as a prestigious landmark and spatial component of a policy of cross-border integration and economic development in the emerging bi-national Oresund region. Since the historic city centre was seen as unable to accommodate these new investments physically, a new central location was needed. It was expected that the strategic location of Ørestad, which is close to the city centre, the airport and the new bridge to Sweden, would make this the most appealing site for future international investors (see: Figure 4.2, next page). It was further framed as a device to provide the Copenhagen area with a major investment in public transport that would not only serve Ørestad but the whole city and provide an additional connection to the airport. The development of a mixed program of approximately 3.1 million square metres on a 5 kilometre strip of empty parcels on Amager (310 hectares), that were jointly owned by the city and the state, would create sufficient revenues to eventually pay back the construction costs for this new form of public transport.

## Copenhagen Ørestad

Figure 4.2: Map of Ørestad in the Copenhagen area, strategically located close to the airport and the new bridge to Malmö



Source: UvA-Kaartenmakers

### 4.4.1 The symbolic-cognitive dimension of framing Ørestad

#### 1. Ørestad framed as a major economic pole in an emerging cross border Oresund region

From the earliest discussions onwards, the development of Ørestad was materially and symbolically linked to the ambitions to create a European cross-border region, the Oresund region (*Øresundsregionen* in Danish), which consists of the most eastern part of Denmark, Sjælland, and the southern part of Sweden, Skåne (Bucken-Knapp 2001; OECD 2003; Wichmann Matthiessen 2000; 2004). The most tangible feature of this ambition is the 16 kilometre Oresund road and rail bridge (*Øresundsbron*) that opened in 2000 between Copenhagen and Malmö. Ideas for a fixed link between the different sides had been made since 1872 and these became more realistic from the 1960s onwards when they became linked to the concept of a cross-border region in an integrated Europe. The concept for a fixed link grew stronger under the joint influence of the European Round Table of Industrialists, the European Commission and the Scandinavian Link Consortium (OECD 2003, p.76-77). The final agreement to build the bridge was approved and signed in 1991 by the Danish and Swedish governments.

The location of the Ørestad project is directly linked to the bridge and the new connecting car and rail infrastructure. Together with the expanding airport, the strategic position of the island of Amager improved consistently in the last decade. Coming from the Swedish side of the Oresund by road or rail, the Ørestad project presents itself as the first stop and gateway to Denmark for international businesses.

It is important to note that the Oresund initiative consists of more than pure infrastructure investments. A wide range of policy programs and networks have been set up to improve the competitive position of the region vis-à-vis other regions, most notably the Stockholm region, which is the other major competitor to acquire a dominant position in the Nordic market. As early as 1964, the Oresund Council was formed to support cooperation between local politicians in both regions. However, this initiative did not attract much attention (OECD 2003, p.76). The concept of economic and political integration in the Oresund area acquired real political importance in the 1990s. The EU Territorial Employment Pact for Oresund, a collaborative initiative between Denmark and Sweden was used by the EU Commission as a ‘model’ for cross-border integration in 1997 (OECD 2003, p.88). INTERREG (International Regions) funds from the EU have been allocated to the area to support a variety of policies to accelerate socio-economic integration between the two regions. In the first INTERREG phase (INTERREG II A), between 1996 and 2001, the Greater Copenhagen area and Skåne received total funding of € 29 million (€ 13.5 million provided by the European Commission, € 13.5 million from public funds from the region itself and € 2 million from private sources). In the next program (INTERREG III A) for 2000 – 2006, an expanded geographical area consisting of the whole Øresund region was allocated a budget of € 61.8 million (co-financed equally by the EU commission and the Danish and Swedish governments) (OECD 2003, p.87-90). These initiatives are taking place in a setting which the OECD (2003) characterizes as ‘governance without government’ since no initiative has yet materialised to create any form of official government for this newly constructed region. The emphasis in the Oresund program is on integration programs and common marketing of specific professional activities and its chances in the region. Programs to integrate labour markets and foster exchanges between universities and other research institutes in the two countries pursue the advantages of economies of scale. The economic, cultural and social effects of the integration, which is in essence a very long-term trajectory, have been difficult to measure until now. Some hard indicators, like cross-border travelling or working, suggest that its effect has been very moderate in the first years of the initiative (OECD 2003; Wichmann Matthiessen 2004; Hospers, 2006).

Besides the Oresund bridge, the Ørestad project is probably the most visible physical representation of the Oresund development agenda. Due to its strategic central location in the region – close to Copenhagen, the airport and the bridge – it has been framed from the outset as the most important location for international businesses in a high-quality environment.

## 2. Ørestad framed as a new town development concept to finance a new urban transport system

Although the framing of Ørestad as being a strategic part of an emerging cross-border region reflects a major ideological and economic component of the project, the material origin of the first proposals for Ørestad emerged as a result of dissatisfaction with the lack of sufficient infrastructure and public transport in the city. This aspect of project framing has to be properly understood since it turned out to have major repercussions for the program of the project and its financial aspects.

The recommendations of the Stallknecht Committee (‘Our Capital – what is to be done?’) to invest heavily in new infrastructures in Copenhagen proved to be an impor-

tant stepping-stone along the route that eventually led to the decision to establish Ørestad. Another committee (Würzten committee) was assigned the task of defining these infrastructure investments in more detail and to find the means and methods to finance these plans.<sup>3</sup> The latter was a very politicized issue. Not only did Denmark as a state face huge debts at that time that could hinder its financial integration into the European Monetary Union, history had also shown that it was always very difficult to acquire approval of the national parliament for infrastructure investments in the Copenhagen area.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, as has already been pointed out, the weak financial situation of the city government itself prevented it from taking any substantial initiatives. It was therefore necessary to come up with investments without huge (visible) public costs.

One of this committee's most creative solutions, with representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Traffic and the Environment, the Copenhagen government, Danish Railways and other metropolitan municipalities, involved a focus on a large-scale urban development project that could work, at the same time, as an economic development zone *and* as a means to create investments for a new public transport system for the whole city (see Figure 4.3, next page). The origin of this idea links back to the concepts furthered in the British New Town developments at the turn of the century (Howard 1902). The huge increase in value of a plot of land that was jointly owned by the national government and the municipality would be capitalized to finance a new public transport system for the city. The next section explains that this particular 'format' had far-reaching consequences for the organization of the operational domains in Ørestad.'

#### *4.4.2 The organizational dimension of framing Ørestad*

How did the organizational dimension of framing develop in this first period? How was the project connected to the different domains of the metropolitan action space?

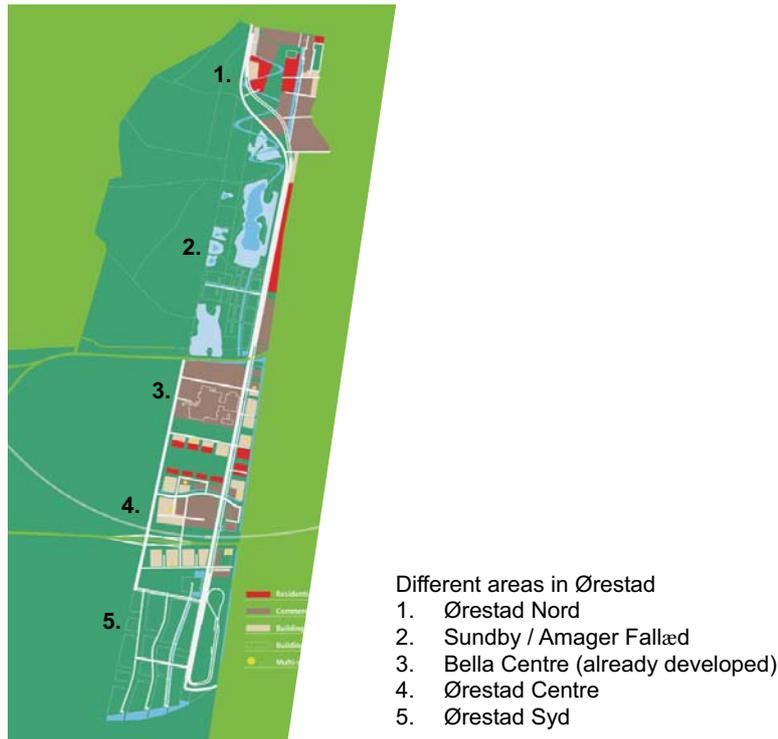
Our overview of Ørestad leads us to conclude that the organizational framing has been extremely stable and concentrates on the interregional and international government domain *and* on the inner regional governmental domain. This framing safeguarded strong presence, support and investments of national and local government in the area. The framing as public transport development project has, in particular, been strongly institutionalized in the governance structures in the operational domain (which we will cover in the next section). Although the project was specifically set up to attract businesses to the area, the connection to the private economic sector, in terms of their iden-

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<sup>3</sup> This also included the new fixed link with Sweden, meaning that this frame was also linked to the emerging cross-border frame we introduced above. However, separate financing was eventually found for this bridge (Flybjerg et. al. 2003).

<sup>4</sup> The so-called 'Jutland mafia' was often referred to by interviewees in our study. Denmark's national parliament consists partially of district representation. By setting aside party differences, the members from Jutland (a large predominately rural area in the west of the country) were always very effective in operating like a regional block to make sure that infrastructure investments in the Copenhagen area were matched by investments in Jutland, in the form of package deals which, to a certain extent, were acquired regardless of any actual need for these investments. This tactic frustrated the whole policy process. Cynical Copenhagen observers keep mentioning the empty highways in Jutland while highlighting the fact that much-needed investments in the Copenhagen area were sacrificed.

Figure 4.3: Ørestad, the vision of a linear city alongside a new infrastructure axis



Source: Ørestadsselskabet (edited)

tification of Ørestad as the major prestigious area in Copenhagen, has been a major weakness of the project from the start. Subsequently, investments in offices – the most important source of income for the project – have been much lower than expected in the early years of the project (Anderson 2003). Section 4.5 explores the lack of private investments in the area. Together with huge cost overruns in the construction and operation of the metro, this resulted in major financial problems for the Ørestad Development Corporation.

Interestingly enough for a project that is striving to become a new economic *and* urban centre, the framing of Ørestad in the social, civic and cultural domain has also been rather underdeveloped, both in the initial stage and during the period until the end of our empirical fieldwork (end 2004). Throughout Ørestad’s development there were huge difficulties connecting the project to the social, civic and cultural domain. In the initial phase, the project was heavily criticized for its exceptional status, and this made it more difficult for non-governmental groups and citizens to participate and influence its development (interview with Bloch Poulsen, Sundby local council). There was serious discomfort about the magnitude of the plan (Gaardman 1996; Paludan 2000). In our overview of Amager we referred briefly to the environmental impacts of the project in this allegedly very sensitive area. This had negative effects on public opinion in an environmentally-conscious city, where economic development is not seen as an uni-

versal acceptable goal. As a result, and combined with the governance setting, this made the project feel like a ‘runaway train’ that could not be stopped or altered and interest in the project faded away from most environmental and neighbourhood groups (interview with Liliendahl Larsen, Roskilde University and Supertanker, independent group of urban activists).<sup>5</sup>

A lack of connection with broader circles of society might be beneficial from the point of view of efficient decision-making and project execution, but it also resulted in a situation of general disinterest in the development (Gaardman 1996). Our empirical data hints, however, that the framing in the social, civic and cultural domain was almost deliberately ignored by the project’s initiators in favour of a closed governance setting in which to execute the project in a ‘business style’ manner (various respondents). This strategy eventually proved to be quite unsuccessful for the realization of ambitions for new urbanity as we will analyse later. Due to the strongly institutionalized organizational framing it is no surprise that we have hardly identified any initiatives by the project’s initiators to ‘repair’ this situation during the course of the project, neither is this way of framing very receptive to bottom-up initiatives. An interesting exception can be found in Ørestad-Nord, where pioneering residents have recently formed a very active on-line community which is focusing on the future development of the neighbourhood (interview with Peder Boas Jensen, retired professor of urban planning).

#### *4.4.3 Conclusion connectivity Ørestad: strategically innovative but lacking private and societal connections*

The overall picture of the strategic framing of the project, both symbolic-cognitively and organisationally, is therefore that it is innovative but at the same time rather introverted. It can be described as ‘innovative’ since it represented a clear break with the past. The framing of Ørestad resembles the pro-active development-oriented attitude that emerged at the beginning of the Nineties within national government and the Copenhagen municipality. It was clearly a project that tried to capitalize on the expected economic development that the emerging cross-border Oresund region would provide. To a certain extent this vision pacified ideological differences between the conservative-ruled national parliament and the social democrat-oriented Copenhagen municipality. The framing as a means to finance a new public transport system for the city also gave the project a redistributive character and this was an important argument for the social democrats. However, at the same time it resulted in a public-public development corporation that was rather introverted. Further decision-making on the project was depoliticized as we will see in the next few sections. While these frames secured the material (infrastructure) conditions for the area’s development, a strategic deficiency was identified as regards safeguarding ‘content’ as we will explore in the sections below. The private economic sector oriented itself around other areas and within the Copenhagen region there was no clear priority for Ørestad. The social, civic and

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<sup>5</sup> The environmental value of the area is contested however, at least according to the interviewee’s for our empirical research (it was not our intention to research this, but it was a feature of almost every interview). Although some use a combination of hard and soft facts to underline the area’s environmental value, other respondents call the area Ørestad has been developed on ‘a polder’, ‘a garbage dump’, ‘just a former army shooting practice field’ or even ‘a psychological problem’.

cultural domain had difficulties identifying with the project. Table 4.1 provides a short overview of the development of the symbolic-cognitive framing, while Table 4.2 summarizes the organisational framing in the four domains of the metropolitan action space.

Table 4.1: Summary of the symbolic-cognitive framing of Ørestad and its development till 2005

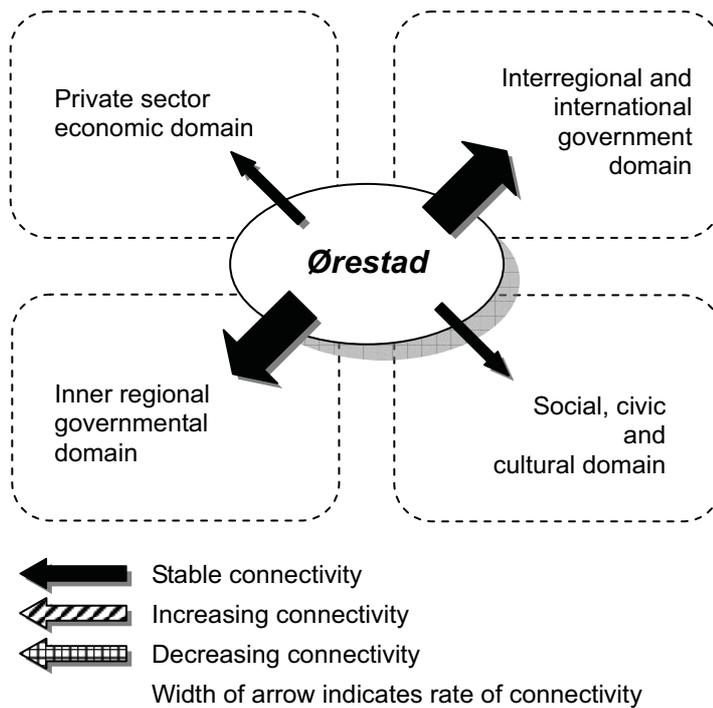
<i>Symbolic-cognitive framing</i>	<i>Situation begin 1990s</i>	<i>Development till 2005</i>
Ørestad as major economic pole in Oresund region	Oresund region develops as a 'model' for European integration, optimism about potentials, new bridge and other economic programs with Ørestad as a key.	Bridge realized, economic integration improved, cultural integration slow. Ørestad still framed in this way, unclear if it can fulfil its role due to weak connectivity to private economic sector.
Ørestad to finance a metropolitan public transport system	Concept of new public-public development corporation to de-politicise project. Ørestad as means to finance metro 'off budget'.	First phases of metro in operation, further plans for expansion. Ørestad model has not proved to be successful formula to finance it.

Table 4.2: Summary of the organizational framing of Ørestad and its development till 2005

<i>Organizational framing</i>	<i>Situation begin 1990s</i>	<i>Development till 2005</i>
Private economic sector	Private sector not directly involved in initiating the project, although it is the main future client.	Individual private sector actors are clients of the development corporation. Lack of interest in office parcels.
Interregional / international government	Strong institutionalized partnership between city and national government. Project framed in the perspective of cross-border integration with Sweden, linked to the investment in the fixed link to Malmö and the establishment of the Oresund region.	Partnership city – national government still intact, though challenged by various project difficulties.
Inner regional government	Municipality of Copenhagen strongly connected, lack of a metropolitan and regional framework.	Stable situation.
Social, civic and cultural	Protest, especially because of development in an environmentally sensitive area and frustration about closed character of decision-making.	Stable situation, domain largely ignored by project initiators.

In chapter two we hypothesized on the importance of an integral framing in all four domains to create the conditions for new urbanity. Our empirical study on Ørestad shows a project in which ambitions for new urbanity have not resulted in a very integral connectivity to all domains of the metropolitan action space (see Figure 4.4). The strong axis between the inner regional governmental domain (especially the municipality of Copenhagen) and the interregional and international government domain (especially the national government and the Oresund program) has not been complemented with strong links with the other two domains we distinguish. The lack of a connection with the private sector economic domain was surely not the intention of the initiators. However, their initial strategy to attract firms seemed to be rather ‘thin’ and ultimately very supply-oriented because of its sole focus on safeguarding the material conditions (i.e. infrastructure) in the area. Over the course of time, some attempts were made at the operational level to ‘repair’ the lack of private investments in Ørestad as we will explore in the next section. Connecting to the social, civic and cultural domain seems never to have been a high priority of the project’s initiators. Most of the investments in Ørestad with a social, civic or cultural orientation have been realized through some form of top-down (government steered) decision-making. We will see later that this has worked in one section of the area, but not in others. Overall we can conclude that Ørestad is framed in quite an introverted manner for a project with ambitious economic and urban goals.

Figure 4.4: Graphical representation of the organizational connectivity of Ørestad and its development in the metropolitan action space



## 4.5 Operational Domain

We now turn to the operational domain in which we study the action situation created in the Ørestad project. We do this by studying the rules that structure action situations, and how these rules have developed over the course of time. We pay specific attention to rules that influence the ambition of the project to become an urban place.

In the next section on social norms we specifically study these action situations by examining whether this ambition to become an urban place is normatively performed in actions (a concrete building project). We study to what extent the ambition of new urbanity can be considered to have evolved into a 'social norm', and to what extent this has been developing throughout the project's history. Self-evidently there is a strong relationship between the rules that structure the operational domain (and their evolution) and the social norms that are performed in concrete situations of choice. Nevertheless, it makes sense to analyse them separately and subsequently since the rules directly affect the *structure* of a situation, while social norms are more closely linked to the production of behaviour in a particular situation.

For the analysis of our empirical case study we specifically examine two aggregated sets of rules that are conducive to an understanding of the project's action arena:

1. Rules that affect who participates, the positions of the participants and their modes of interaction;
2. Rules that affect the scope and strategy of the participants (actor constellations).

Ostrom defines rules as '...linguistic entities that refer to prescriptions commonly known and used by a set of participants to order repetitive, interdependent relationships. Prescriptions refer to which actions are *required*, *prohibited*, or *permitted*.' (Ostrom 1986, p.5)

### 4.5.1 Rules that affect the participants and modes of interaction

Due to the specific governance arrangements, the number of participants in Ørestad's operational domain is quite limited. The strategic framing of the project is strongly mirrored in the operational domain in which the Ørestad Development Corporation plays the most important role on the public side. In June 1992, the Ørestad bill was enacted by parliament. It became the first Act for thirty years which organised state involvement in a major new urban development.<sup>6</sup> According to the Act, a development corporation, Ørestadsselskabet I/S (Ørestad Development Corporation), co-owned by the City of Copenhagen (55%) and the Ministry of Finance (45%), was to develop Ørestad on an area which was likewise co-owned by the two parties. Within the realm of Danish urban development it represented an organizational innovation. The Act gave the Ørestad Development Corporation the power to plan the area, provide the required

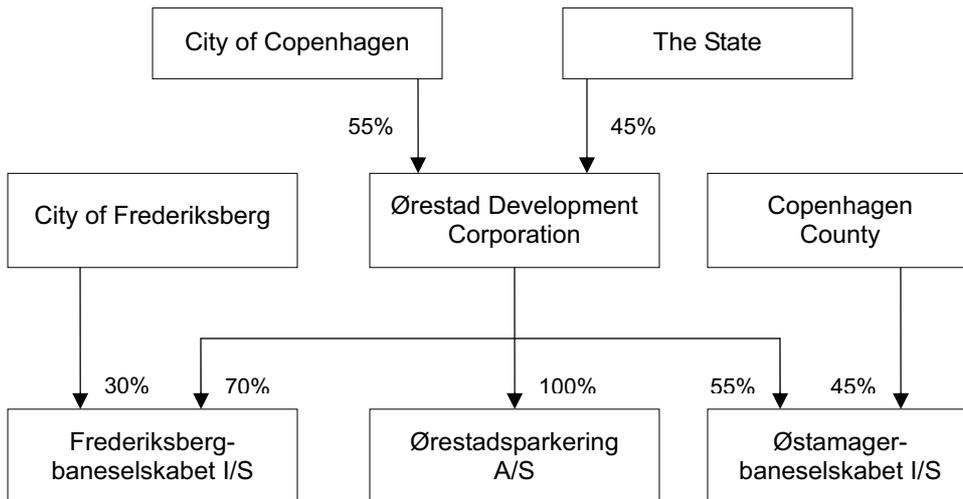
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<sup>6</sup> Although this was a major governance innovation in the Danish planning context, a relatively similar proposal was put forward and executed in the Sixties to develop one of the development corridors of the Copenhagen Finger Plan. This Køge Bugt-fingeren (Køge Bay finger) extends from the capital to the southwest. The national government Act stated that a joint committee representing the interests of eight local municipalities, two counties, six ministries and the Danish Railways would manage the planning. The plan integrated new infrastructure (highway and new suburban train) with urban development. In reality, infrastructure was realised years after the first urban developments were completed and this caused a lot of trouble for the low-income groups that moved there (Christensen 2003, p.32).

## Copenhagen Ørestad

land improvements and infrastructure and to plan, develop and operate a new public transport system in the area and the rest of Copenhagen. For the latter several other companies were created.<sup>7</sup> The capacity to invest in the infrastructure and public transport was ensured by allowing the Ørestad Development Corporation to obtain loans on the international financial markets.<sup>8</sup> In other words, by improving the accessibility of the area, the price of the building sites would rise and the development corporation would then be able to pay back the loans. Along with the organizational innovation, this represents a financial innovation in Danish urban development schemes. Figure 4.5 shows the organizational structure of the Ørestad Development Group.

Figure 4.5: Structure of the Ørestad Development Group



Source: Ørestadsselskabet 2006a, p.12

The Board of the Ørestad Development Corporation has three members appointed by the City of Copenhagen and three members appointed by the Minister of Transport and Energy. The set of rules that were created gave this city-state controlled development corporation executive power on almost every operational aspect of the operational domain in Ørestad. Ørestadsselskabet I/S is responsible for the planning, marketing and sales of the area, from a more strategic comprehensive level to the concrete level of the developable plot. It also plans and realises all the infrastructure in the area. It was re-

<sup>7</sup> These were Frederiksbergbaneselskabet I/S together with the City of Frederiksberg (30%) to construct phase 2 of the Metro and Østamagerbaneselskabet I/S, together with Copenhagen County (45%) to construct phase 3 of the Metro (see Figure 4.6 for different metro phases).

<sup>8</sup> Owing to the Danish Government's joint and several liability, the Corporation has indirectly been credit-rated in the same way as the Government, which means Aaa at Moodys and AAA at Standard & Poors. Consequently, the Corporation is generally able to obtain capital market terms equivalent to those available to the Government (Ørestadsselskabet 2005, p.17).

sponsible for the decision-making relating to the alignment, technical system and station locations for the new public transport system.

It is interesting to investigate the background to this peculiar form of governance innovation in slightly more depth since it created a very clear format that organizes the participants and modes of interaction in the Ørestad operational domain. We noted before that it forms both an interesting change *and* continuation of a history of government-oriented social welfare planning initiatives in the Copenhagen region. Although it was certainly set up as a result of conscious decisions, in hindsight it became clear that this particular form of governance also had disadvantages.

The special status of the Ørestad development and the concept of such a public-public development corporation was beneficial to its proponents for a variety of reasons. First, it made the project almost invisible in the national budget since the investments made during the initial stage were ‘only’ government-secured loans, not direct capital investments. This made it a lot easier to secure the proposal through parliament, where normally large infrastructure ‘investments’ had to be matched outside Copenhagen to guarantee regional equalisation. Furthermore, the proposal for an Ørestad development project was seen as a political solution to create a new partnership between levels of government that were (traditionally) at odds with each other (interview with Henning Dyremose, then Minister of Finance for the conservative party). At state level there was a conservative-liberal coalition whose agenda was to adopt a more market-oriented form of urban development.

Although it was not the first ideological preference of the social democrats that were

Figure 4.6: Alignment of the Copenhagen metro, including the new airport line in the south-east and the proposed new circle line. The Ørestad stretch of the network is the line in the south to Vestamager



dominant in the Copenhagen city council, this solution was acceptable for pragmatic reasons since it was expected to stimulate development, increase employment and improve the public transport system and the city's tax base (Christensen 2003; interviews with Bligaard Pedersen, then political advisor to the social-democrat party; Andersen, Roskilde University and Foss, director of Ørestadsselskabet).

According to this reasoning, the benefit was that a stable project execution situation would be realized once the law had been adopted. This would happen in a business style, at a certain distance from all kinds of possible daily political deliberations. An additional advantage was that the project would not be harmed by a situation in which political majorities would suddenly change. According to one of those directly involved in the decision-making this was one of the major hindrances in Danish politics: "Because of the coalition governments, decisions were changed and many times nothing happened. (...) The only solution was to put it in a separate entity. If you talk to the politicians involved in these projects, it was done to prevent it from being on the state budget, but also to prevent projects from being stopped when the majority changed" (interview with Bligaard Pedersen, then political advisor to the social-democrat party, now at Dong energy).

This strong alliance between state and city has been the political backbone of the project ever since. It survived different government changes both at national and city level in the last decade, leading Andersen to conclude that this coalition works as a sort of growth regime: 'The three major political streams in Denmark, the conservatives, the liberals and the social-democrats have found each other in this project in an effective political partnership pushing and supporting the project, that could be interpreted as a neo-corporatist growth regime' (Andersen 2003, p.99).

However, powerful as it was, the governance innovation continued to be seriously contested. According to Andersen, 'The project's proponents argued that the development corporation combined the best of two worlds: it was publicly controlled but with sufficient autonomy to operate efficiently in market terms. The critics argued that the project combined the worst of two worlds: the lack of both effective democratic control and the transparent economic management' (Andersen 2003, p.100).

To a certain extent the opinions of both the proponents and the critics were true. The development corporation was both the ideal device to unlock a problematic political situation and a way to make efficient use of speculative gains from land development for a common good, which would result in a high-quality new public transport system for the city and the region. On the other hand, it was indeed also an entity that could operate at a certain distance from effective democratic control. The project was constructed in a small expert committee, opened up for a short period for political decision-making, and then closed again in line with a business-oriented development style. Fundamental public discussions on the strategic aspects only took place in a short period of decision-making on the Ørestad Act (1991-1992). After the proposal was accepted, the project developed in a business-like manner. Once a first period of massive investment decisions relating to infrastructure had passed, a point of no return was quickly reached. The project became an 'inevitability' for the coming decades.

### Other actors

It is clear that, within this configuration of rules, the Ørestad Development Corporation is of paramount importance for the project's development. However, it is important to mention a number of other (groups of) actors in the operational domain. First, the City of Copenhagen. Not only is the city government the most important stakeholder (55%) in the Ørestad Development Corporation, it also has to give planning permission for every development within the framework of the project. This might provide a crucial environment for debate and bargaining, especially with regard to qualitative aspects of the individual developments within the Ørestad framework. Though there is no rule to withhold this power from the municipality, it is hardly used in practice (interview with Walbjorn Christensen, municipality of Copenhagen). This seems most likely to be due to the double role of the municipality, given that it is a stakeholder in the development corporation as well.

Different private developers have been soliciting for development plots in the area. Within the frame of rules they are perceived as individual 'clients' by the development corporation, capable of buying the different plots indicated in the development scheme. However, these actors have not organised themselves on a more strategic level than that of the finance and development of the individual projects.

Two categories of actors are absent in Ørestad's operational domain that one might have expected to be of importance: on the one hand there are the social and civic groups. Existing active local groups, like the Sundby local council, and different active nature conservation groups, feel alienated from the project due to the non-participatory style of decision-making (interviews with Bloch Poulsen, Sundby local council and Rehling, former head of Danish society for the conservation of nature). The Ørestad Council existed during the first years of project planning. In this framework, a couple of civic organizations participated in the preparation of the master plan. Once that plan had been accepted, the council was abolished.

On the other hand, there are no actors that represent the metropolitan dimension. We mentioned above that, at an abstract level, the project is connected to the Oresund integration project. However, this does not seem to influence the rules that affect the participants and modes of interaction directly. At the moment there is no powerful regional body which coordinates urban planning in the Copenhagen area. There is no framework of rules available to prioritize Ørestad clearly in a regional dimension. The result is that, even within the municipality, Ørestad faces strong competition from other locations, as we will analyse in the next section.

### Conclusion regarding participants and modes of interaction

To summarise, most of the rules that affect the participants and their positions were specifically drawn up for this particular project. The most important actor from the governmental side, the Ørestad Development Corporation, is a direct product of the Ørestad Act. It operates under the auspices of its main stakeholders, the Danish state and the municipality of Copenhagen. Within the framework of rules, it is required and permitted to control every aspect of the development of the area. It is prohibited to approve plans that are opposed by the planning department of the Municipality of Copenhagen. The local government has multiple roles in the development. It is a stakeholder (and therefore a co-investor) in the development. The law requires the municipality to approve or disapprove local plans of the Ørestad Development Corporation.

Most interestingly, it does not prevent the municipality from making developments possible in contested locations for the higher-end office development in the Copenhagen area. This makes its commitment to the project rather ambiguous. The other stakeholder in the Ørestad Development Corporation, the national government, played a major role in safeguarding the inexpensive loans of the company to finance the infrastructure and public transport system.

Other actors, specifically the ones representing social, civic and cultural interests, or the metropolitan dimension of the project, have not been identified in the operational domain. These observations partly mirror our analysis of the strategic domain in the previous section, namely that the lack of connection to the social, civic and cultural domain not only resulted in a lack of interest from these actors. The sets of rules that affect the operational domain also made it quite difficult for other actors to play an active role since they were purely focused on organizing a relationship between Ørestadsselskabet, as initiator and manager of the area, and individual private investors, as clients for the different plots.

#### *4.5.2 Rules that affect the scope and strategy of the participants (actor constellations)*

The Ørestad Act of 1992 quite loosely defines the scope of Ørestad project. We noticed before that the Ørestad Development Corporation was the most important project executing actor. In hindsight, this actor misinterpreted its power and initially chose a provision-oriented strategy for the direction the development was to take. Different problematic issues forced Ørestadsselskabet to change its strategy towards more demand-oriented development principles during the course of the project. This was reinforced by the set of rules affecting this actor that created a heavy dependency on the financial performance of the project.

The goal of the Ørestad Development Corporation was to execute the double goal of the project, namely (1) to realize a new public transport system for Ørestad and the whole Copenhagen area, by (2) the development of a new mixed use urban extension of the city, especially targeting high-paying multinational private firms.

One of the first important decisions was on which type of public transportation. The Ørestad Act left this issue open, to be decided by the Ørestad Development Corporation. This decision had wider spatial and economic impacts since most parts of the system would be operating outside the project area. After a long (internal) process of studying and decision-making the preferred option was for an innovative driverless mini-metro system. Compared to other alternatives that were studied – especially trams – this solution was more expensive to build, but expected higher revenues from ticket sales would compensate the extra cost (Søndergaard, 1996). On top of that, the mini-metro system was expected to be safer due to it not interfering with street level traffic. It would be able to run at a very high frequency and it would have a modern, ‘21<sup>st</sup> century image’, especially important for the Ørestad project (interviews with Foss, Ørestadsselskabet; Christensen, retired from Copenhagen municipality).

The first planning documents for the Ørestad area itself are related to the master planning competition and its outcomes (Ørestadsselskabet 1994; 1995). They indicate a progressive stance towards different planning issues with a heavy concentration of developments around the stations, mixed use environments and special attention for environmental issues like water and parks (see more in the next section). The strategy of

the Ørestad Development Corporation was to develop two subareas first to generate a sense of completion in those areas, instead of decade-long construction across the whole project area. These two subareas were Ørestad Nord and Ørestad Centre (see Figure 4.3, p.129).

Table 4.3: Milestones in the development of Ørestad

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestone</i>
1964 - 1965	Ideas competition on West-Amager: winning proposal: new housing for 200,000 residents.
1967	<i>Amager og Generalplannen</i> : study on airport location and building possibilities on Amager as a new 'finger'.
1973	Vestamager: <i>Dispositionplan for Vestamager</i> : suggestions for development at the west side of Amager. Plans never implemented.
1989 - 1990	Hovedstaden Commission, investigated new ways of economic development, introduced a strongly competition oriented perspective to Copenhagen's urban development: proposal for extensive infrastructure works in and around the capital.
1990	Parliament decided to set up an expert committee composed of representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Traffic, the Environment and of local government, Danish Railways and metropolitan municipalities to formulate a comprehensive plan for investments in transport in the Greater Copenhagen Region, which would be implemented gradually, and also to propose ways of financing these transportation investments.
1991	On 22 March, the committee presented its work and proposed a number of new traffic investments and models for their funding. One element of the total package was a proposal that the state and the city of Copenhagen would, on the basis of a partnership, develop a new urban district on Amager around the future railway and motorway to Sweden which had been debated since the end of the Eighties. This new 'Ørestad' area would be built on part of the land which the two parties would jointly own. A state/municipal development corporation would plan the urban expansion, provide the required land improvement and infrastructure and finally sell of building sites to finance a new city wide light-rail system.
1991	On 23 March, the Danish and Swedish governments agreed in principle to build a bridge.
1991	On 30 May, Copenhagen's city council decided to support the Ørestad bill.
1991	On 24 August, the Swedish and Danish governments ratified the decision for the bridge. The Ørestad bill was postponed until the following parliamentary session (1991-92).
1991	Draft proposal for an updated municipal plan in which Copenhagen positions itself as the centre of gravity in the Oresund Region and Ørestad as the region's key to development.
1992	On 19 June, the national government approved the Ørestad bill.
1993	Establishment of <i>Ørestadsselskabet I/S</i> , the Ørestad Development Corporation, with a 55% stake held by the Copenhagen municipality and a 45% stake by the Danish state.
1994	April – September: Competition, start of public process that led to master plan.
1995	June: final master plan published.
1996	Approval of first municipal guidelines and local plans.
1997	Preparation of concrete lay-out plans for the University District and Ørestad City.
1998	Construction of metro started.
2000	Opening fixed link with Sweden.
2001	First public and private building constructions in Ørestad finished.
2002	First phase of metro in operation.
2004	Opening of Field's, Scandinavia's biggest indoor shopping mall.

However, already in an early stage, problems arose concerning the crucial and peculiar double goal of the project to be both an urban development and a 'money maker' to pay for the new infrastructure. As referred to above, the (financial) dependence on annual sales of land (for a set price) obviously shaped interactions between the development corporation and the private investors and influenced the execution of these planning intentions. Within the given set of rules that governed the Ørestad Development Corporation, two important circumstances that arose at around the turn of the century influenced the scope and strategy, namely (1) the excessive additional costs for metro construction, and (2) the lack of demand for the office parcels in the project.

#### 1. Additional costs for the metro

The construction costs of the driverless mini metro system, especially in relation to the alignment under the city, rose considerably more than expected. In 1996, before construction started, the construction work was expected to cost 5.2 billion DKK (0.74 billion Euro) (Søndergaard 1996). The latest results from 2005 show that the total costs of phases 1 and 2 have been 12.3 billion DKK (1.64 billion Euro in 2005 prices), an increase of 222% (Ørestadsselskabet 2006a). Besides the explosive increase in capital investments, returns in the form of ticket fares have been lower than expected. In 1996, the corporation optimistically expected to facilitate 69 million passenger trips a year in 2010.<sup>9</sup> The mini metro system itself got off to an unfortunate start, with various delays and technical problems. The hesitant development of parcels in the project in the first years resulted in smaller passenger numbers on the Ørestad stretch of the network.

Though it is difficult to anticipate what is going to happen in the future, the reality is that the metro only accounted for 34 million passengers in 2004 and 36 million in 2005. This means that a strong increase in the use is necessary to meet the expectations. Consequently, the financial results from the metro operation have been much lower than expected and more loans had to be obtained. Undoubtedly there will be a future increase of usage of the Ørestad stretch of the network, but this is only a small part of the total network. The new line to the airport (extension of phase 2, see Figure 4.6, p.135), that will open in 2007, will also attract new passengers. However, this line is criticised as being quite redundant – due to the existing train service to the airport – while only stopping at low-density areas in between.

#### 2. Lack of demand for office parcels

Given the rising costs, the lack of income from the sales of land in the first development period created a very tense situation. The financial rationale of the project demands high-paying clients, especially for the more expensive office plots and, ideally, a quite constant stream of clients as well. Table 4.4 shows the disappointing results in the first development stages from a quantitative point of view regarding office develop-

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<sup>9</sup> Quantitative studies by Flyvbjerg et. al. have shown that higher than expected investment costs and lower than expected revenues are a structural feature of 9 out of 10 rail or road 'mega' projects throughout the world in the second half of the twentieth century. Flyvbjerg et. al. distinguishes (1) 'technical explanations': forecasting errors in technical terms; (2) 'economic explanations': self-interest or public interest to make projects appear better so as to acquire funding; (3) 'psychological explanations': a 'monumental complex' for engineers or politicians; and (4) 'political explanations': cost underestimations due to intentionally biased forecasts to serve the interest of project promoters in getting projects started (Flyvbjerg, Holm and Buhl 2002; Flyvbjerg et. al. 2003).

Table 4.4: Overview of first development stages in square meters, as of 1 January 2005)

<i>Land use</i>	<i>Realized</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Offices	61,600	17
Housing	35,700	10
Facilities	265,700	73
Total	363,000	100

Source: Ørestadsselskabet 2006b

ment and also reflects the fact that the mixed character of Ørestad, at least according to the statistics, has not yet materialized. The first major real estate constructions were completed in 2001. However, in the beginning of 2005, the realized program consisted of only 17% offices. The total developed volume was mainly safeguarded by the huge 178,000m<sup>2</sup> Field's shopping mall in Ørestad centre. Other major buildings which were completed were direct investments by the national government, rather than market-driven investments (see subsection 'change of strategy 1: direct investments by the national government', p.143).

The most important reason that the project suffered from a lack of private investments in office construction was not primarily an economic one – although Copenhagen also suffered from a post 9/11 economic recession. Despite the fact that the Copenhagen area has exhibited favourable economic growth in the last decade, together with a steady influx of foreign companies, for a long time the Ørestad project only accommodated one, namely Ferring, an international pharmaceutical firm with its headquarters in Switzerland. Most experts we interviewed agreed that the main reason why the initiators failed to connect Ørestad successfully to the private sector economic domain had to do with strong inner-regional competition from other prestigious areas. This was confirmed in various other studies on the project (Paludan 2000; Andersen 2002, 2003). Copenhagen's newly developed harbour front – another major icon of Copenhagen's (economic) revitalization policy – became a major competitor for prestigious offices in the higher segments of the market. Large parts of the harbour became available for development in the early Nineties after most navy and other economic activities had left (Desfor and Jørgensen 2004). The development of Copenhagen harbour forms an interesting contrast to the Ørestad development. While the latter is a very comprehensive planning scheme managed by a public authority that is striving to integrate development with public transport improvements, the former is being developed in a more haphazard, parcel-by-parcel way, without adding any provision of new public transportation till now. Ironically, most developments in the central part of the harbour are being initiated by the Danish State, one of the shareholders (45%) in the Ørestad Development Corporation. The other shareholder in Ørestad, the city government of Copenhagen (55%) is also heavily involved in the waterfront development, since it owns some parcels and holds final responsibility for zoning issues and planning permissions in the whole area. A situation of two actors with conflicting spatial priorities has therefore arisen.

The opening up of different plots in the harbour front for development has caused a certain over-supply of available development options for the office sector, without

there being a strong strategic planning framework in the metropolitan area to prioritise locations. This was also one of the biggest criticisms of the project during its initial phase made by a group of Danish urban planning professors. They warned that this project-oriented approach, in a situation in which a regional perspective was lacking – given that the Greater Copenhagen Council had already been abolished – would result in a fragmented spatial development of the region if it were to take place without an overall strategic framework that prioritizes locations (interview with Boas Jensen, retired professor of urban planning).

With the Ørestad development corporation desperately fighting to get private office investments on board, it became clear that it had fewer trump cards in its hand than it expected. Although the location of the Ørestad development may be strategic and very well connected by both private and public transport, it missed some of the location qualities that this main intra-regional competitor offered in terms of (historic) atmosphere and waterfront vistas. The Ørestad Centre area, in particular, is perceived as a spatially rather unattractive district (see next section). Furthermore, the central parts of the harbour that became available for office construction were closer to the city centre. Its attractive quay site locations accommodated various office investments made during the past decade that would be expected to relocate to Ørestad. These include Sonofon, Ericsson and Nokia in Sydhavn. Both the north-western suburb of Hellerup and the central borough of Østerbro reported substantial higher average office rates than Ørestad in 2003 (Sadolin & Albæk I/S 2004).<sup>10</sup>

The development rationale of the Ørestad project demanded high-paying clients in search of a quality location. This is just a small part of the office market, and it was precisely in that part of the market, which is most interested in the ‘soft’ qualities, that the harbour front areas scored better. The ambition for new urbanity in Ørestad was certainly related to the expectation that such an environment would increase the attractiveness for offices. However, based on the new private sector locations, this has not yet been a convincing aspect of the Ørestad area. Different respondents refer to companies that could have moved to the Ørestad area but choose other locations instead, for example in the harbour or the northern suburbs (interviews with Nielsen, Ørestadsselskabet; Rehling, Informationen newspaper; Schröder, former director confederation of Danish industries).

The consequence was that the corporation’s debt grew at a more rapid rate than initially planned. Total debts reached 14,73 billion DKK in 2005 (around 2 billion EUR), and the expected period to amortise was extended to 2038. An overview of the financial difficulties of the Ørestad Development Corporation regarding the metro operation and the sales of land is found in Table 4.5 (next page), which shows the differences between the forecasts made in 2002 and the actual results till 2005. It does not include the cost overruns for the construction of the metro. We already mentioned that total development costs for the first two phases have been 222% higher than expected. The table shows that while the site development costs (additional infrastructure, canals etc.) were substantially higher than expected, the profits have been much lower than the forecast.

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<sup>10</sup> In 2003 the typical office rents for prime buildings in the central harbour areas were 1,650 DKK (222 EUR) per square meter, in Østerbro they were 1,600 DKK (215 EUR), while Hellerup was around 1,550 DKK (208 EUR). Ørestad in the meantime reported prime office rents of 1,250 DKK (168 EUR) (Sadolin & Albæk I/S 2004).

This situation urged the Ørestad Development Corporation to change its strategy. Three aspects were important. Firstly, in the short term, the project was helped by the national government which subsidized the relocation of various public bodies to the Ørestad area. Secondly, the corporation made a strategic move and changed its development policy towards a more demand-oriented principle leading to a greater emphasis on housing at the expense of office development. Finally, a process of organizational decoupling of the metro and urban development has been started.

Table 4.5: Differences between the forecasts and actual results of some key financial aspects of the Ørestad Development Corporation (in millions DKK)

	<i>site develop- ment costs</i>		<i>administration costs</i>		<i>railway opera- tion profit</i>		<i>sales of land profit</i>		<i>property tax</i>	
	forecast	result	forecast	result	forecast	result	forecast	result	forecast	result
2002	236	306	67	71	- 93	- 20	583	362	40	18
2003	149	140	65	65	99	- 76	210	199	26	22
2004	88	345	61	54	153	10	498	222	34	21
2005	75	119	54	62	167	- 66	348	639	42	28
total	548	910	247	252	326	- 152	1639	1422	142	89
difference		+ 66%		+ 2%		- 146%		- 15%		- 60%

Source: Ørestadsselskabet 2002, p.50 and Ørestadsselskabet 2007, p.46

Change of strategy 1: Direct investments by the national government

During the first problematic period of Ørestad development, the national government was instrumental in persuading (and partly subsidizing) some (government) institutions to locate in the Ørestad area (see: Table 4.6). The Ørestad Nord area not only consists of a large cluster of educational facilities, but also includes the new headquarters of Danish national television and radio an expansion of the existing university and a new IT University. The establishment of some government-related functions in Ørestad was always an aspect of the plans, and the establishment of these institutions strongly reinforces the mixed character of this part of Ørestad as we will see in the next section. Ørestad provides excellent spatial location factors for these large-scale (public) facilities. However, the forced character of their move reflects the urgency of needing to cope with the financial difficulties of the project in this early stage (Andersen 2003). For example, various respondents refer to the fact that the Danish Broadcasting Corporation was not interested in leaving its old location, but that the move was insisted on by the Ministry of Finance. The capacity of this ministry to force this move shows that the project is well connected to this domain, as we mention earlier.

Table 4.6: Major public investments in first phase of Ørestad development

<i>Project (date finished)</i>	<i>Public investment (million €)</i>	<i>Size (m<sup>2</sup>)</i>
Copenhagen University (2002)	228	40,000
IT University and Research Park (2004)	48	30,000
Danish Broadcasting Corporation (2008)	269	135,000

Source: Andersen 2003, p.102; Ørestadsselskabet 2006b

Another, more indirect, strategy to improve the finances of the corporation was the proposal for another phase of the metro, a new central ring line (see Figure 4.6, p.135).

## Copenhagen Ørestad

This would optimise the integration of the metro with the existing S-bahn system and would repair the omission that Copenhagen's metro is not stopping at the central train station. This massive public investment of 2 billion euro would take place outside the Ørestad financial formula (which is also expected to change, see later this section). The ring line is expected to strongly enhance the number of passengers on the whole system. In the meantime a final decision is taken and the line is expected to open in 2018.

### Change of strategy 2: Towards demand-oriented planning

Typically for a plan initiated by the government, supply-oriented policies dominated in the beginning. Within the frameworks of the initial plans, the lack of demand for offices could largely be compensated by speeding up the housing developments. The current boom in the Copenhagen private housing market came after a period in which government involvement had been scaled down and there was less emphasis on social rental housing. At the beginning of the current century, there was considerable demand for housing in almost every segment of the market and this made it a more profitable form of investment for private developers than was previously the case (interview with Wiese, sales department of Ørestadsselskabet). This has resulted in pressure from project developers in Ørestad to speed up the housing parts of the project (especially the Ørestad Syd part of the project), and has also increased the land prices of housing plots vis-à-vis office areas. The price per floorage metre for housing has increased strongly from 2,000 DKK (268 EUR) in 1999 to 4,500 DKK (604 EUR) in 2005. Remarkable is that in this year it even easily topped the average price per floorage metre for offices that stood at DKK 3,100 (416 EUR) (Ørestadsselskabet 2006a).

Figure 4.7: The driverless Metro



Change of strategy 3: Decoupling the metro and urban development

A recent (2005) organisational split between the Ørestad Development Corporation, which is responsible for land development, and the Metro organisation, which is responsible for the maintenance and expansion of the mini-metro, in itself proves that the ambiguities were too large to handle within one single organisational structure. This might prevent the Development Corporation from being forced to compromise on planning goals in favour of economic gain. However, the split has led to other concerns, given that some of the local authorities that obtained loans to pay their share of the development costs for the metro now fear that they will have to cover the debts without having the possibility of relying on the profits earned from the sales of building sites within the Ørestad area.

Conclusion regarding scope and strategy of the participants.

An examination of the scope and strategy of the participants clearly shows that the rule of financial accountability became the most important rule governing the behaviour of the Ørestad Development Corporation. Ørestadsselskabet had to create enough profitable developments to pay back the loans for constructing and operating the metro. This rule became so pressing that it decreased the corporation's room for manoeuvre, especially when demand for the most profitable functions, namely the offices, fell far short of expectations. Table 4.7 summarizes the situational frames and their development of the most important actors in the operational practices on the Ørestad project. An interesting aspect is the dual role of the municipality which supports the project but also actively supports its major competing locations. This situation is understandable if one believes that a municipality should create a level playing field. However, in this case, the economic difficulties of Ørestad had major consequences for public finances. In the next section we investigate the consequences this had for the alleged urban character of the area.

Table 4.7: Development of the situational frames of the most important actors

	<i>Initial situational frame</i>	<i>Development (till 2005)</i>
Ørestad Development Corporation	Progressive stance towards a high density mixed use area, Ørestad expected to be a very attractive location for offices. Supply-oriented strategy.	More pragmatic execution of project and slight adjustment of goals because a need for financial accountability. Change to a demand-oriented strategy.
City of Copenhagen	Supports goals of Ørestadsselskabet to turn Ørestad into a new prestigious addition to Copenhagen.	Silent supporter, not very active in influencing project. Actively developing one of Ørestad's main competitors, the harbour.
National government	More focused on the economic performance of the project.	Loyal supporter, helps project with additional loans and direct investments to improve balance sheet. Trying to decouple metro and urban development.
Private investors	Not specifically interested in Ørestad, special weak demand for offices.	Focus on housing development, less on offices. Ørestad has not developed into major office location in Copenhagen area.
Civic groups	Especially worried about the environmental impacts.	Frustrated about lack of access to operational domains.

#### 4.6 Social norms on new urbanity in Ørestad

The previous section analyzed the rules that constituted and influenced the operational domain of the Ørestad project. We introduced the relevant actors, their scopes and strategies, the way they interact and the changes in all these areas throughout the history of the project. In this section we focus on the ambition to create new urbanity in Ørestad. We touched on this briefly in the previous sections. In this section we look specifically at the behaviour of actors within the rules of the operational domain regarding this specific ambition. With a view to doing so we first investigated the ambitions laid down in the policy reports produced during the first stages of the project. A highly interesting aspect is, of course, is the process of materialization of these ambitions at the micro level of the first concrete building projects.

We will now answer the following two questions posed in chapter two:

- *As regards the ambition for new urbanity: To what extent is this ambition normatively reflected upon and validated in the operational domain of Ørestad?*
- *Are processes of change in dominant social norms perceivable as regards this issue being hinted at in the literature? Is there a change in group composition, an increase in power of actors holding the norm for new urbanity, a charismatic norm entrepreneur, or a change in the positive externalities for new urbanity as perceived by the participants?*

In the previous section we analyzed the quite introverted operational domain of the Ørestad development and its most important actors. We concluded that the scope and strategy of actors changed due to changing circumstances. With this knowledge in the back of our mind we now turn to the micro level of the (ensemble of) concrete buildings in Ørestad. Although frames and rules structure the action situation at an operational level, they do not produce a satisfactory answer to the question of why actors adhere to certain rules (and not others) in behaviour at micro level. We therefore need to specify our analytic toolkit with a more normative instrument to understand this level. That instrument is social norms. Social norms are *social* rules of conduct. They represent a form of consensus in a social system that a particular form of behaviour is an appropriate form of behaviour in a certain situation. Therefore, the concept of social norms adds a normative dimension to (the analysis of) behaviour (see section 2.5 for an introduction to this concept).

In this case we are interested in the alleged urban character of Ørestad, that is to what extent this ambition is normatively reflected on and validated in the choices of the relevant actors, and whether processes of change in dominant social norms are perceptible with regard to this issue. Relevant actors in this case are the private investors soliciting for plots in the project, the Ørestad Development Corporation (and its stakeholders) as the owner of the plots and manager of the project, and – although it is less important – the municipality of Copenhagen in its capacity to validate local land use plans in the project.

As regards the Ørestad project we can state that a rather strong concept of urbanity has an aspect of the proposals at an early stage. However, the precise interpretation of the concept via a process of site planning and concrete development proposals has shown a certain development away from the original concept in a situation in which the normative reflection was obstructed. This development is strongly related to different aspects

relating to the strategic framing and operational domains we discussed before. However, the particular phasing of the planning of Ørestad into relatively independent sub-projects with strongly varying results regarding new urbanity leads to different conclusions for the different subareas.

#### 4.6.1 *Origin of the ambition*

We begin our analysis of the normative roots of the urban character of the Ørestad project by focusing on the nature of the concepts of new urbanity that are being introduced in the official policy documents drawn up in the beginning. In chapter two we defined urbanity outside traditional urban areas as: ‘A (proposal for a) considerable program of spatial functions alongside a program of office construction, plus a certain ambition to spatially integrate and/or connect different uses, either by locating them close to each other, or by proposing the shared use of buildings’.

The first reports on the spatial concepts for the Ørestad are related to the competition for the master plan. They make a strong case for the area’s future distinctiveness. Ørestad was intended to be designed to compete with attractive sites in other cities, and it had to be planned ‘...not as a hasty answer to an acute need for centrally located building sites – but as a contribution to the long-term development of Copenhagen.’ (Ørestadsselskabet 1994, p.58).

After the premises of the project and its basic features were agreed upon in parliament in 1992, a competition for a master plan for the area was launched. Ørestad was to develop in a linear north-south shape alongside the new high quality public transport-system that would connect the area with the inner city of Copenhagen. The area is shaped like a long rectangle 600 metres wide and 5 kilometres long (it has been dubbed

Figure 4.8: The Ørestad Nord district, the most urban part of Ørestad, with new university buildings, housing developments and a concert hall, located close to the centre of Copenhagen



Source: Ørestadsselskabet

'the tie' for that very reason). It includes the existing Bella Centre, Copenhagen's large congress and exhibition facility. A development potential of 3.1 million square meters was foreseen, with an emphasis on offices. The rest would be a mixture of housing, public institutions like universities and medical facilities, retail and entertainment.

The Finnish firm ARKKI, that won the master plan competition in 1995, proposed the alignment of the metro on the eastern fringe of Ørestad. In combination with the decision to limit building in the north on Amager Fælled, this would leave one of the most precious nature areas largely untouched. This compromise partly satisfied the nature conservation groups that strongly opposed the project in the initial phase (see: Overview Amager). Development was to be concentrated around the six future stations in the area. Since it was foreseen as a long-term development, a decision was made not to build in the whole area from the beginning but to concentrate development in two neighbourhoods that could then quickly develop into (independent) lively city quarters. Once these were finished, other neighbourhoods would then be developed. In 2004, the Sundby and Vestamager stations were still located in almost empty areas awaiting development at a later stage.

Each neighbourhood was expected to have a unique character and identity, although there would be a clear mixture of uses. 'The fully developed Ørestad will not, therefore, look like a continuous urban ribbon, but ideally like a series of separate, harmoniously formed, smaller urban neighbourhoods, strung along the City-Line [metro] like pearls on a string' (Ørestadsselskabet 1994, p.56). The two neighbourhoods where development would start were firstly in the north around the Islands Brygge and Universitetet metro stations with a proposal for a mixed area with an emphasis on university institutions and housing named *Ørestad Nord* or *University district* and secondly the so-called *Ørestad centre* or *Ørestad City* area where the metro crosses other infrastructure lines (highway and train) in the direction of the airport and the bridge to Malmö. The latter area was foreseen as a prime location for international businesses.

In the documents related to the master plan (competition), the planners put a lot of emphasis on the expected future urban character of the new area. The metro would not only be a convenient link with the inner city, but would also be the backbone of an area not dominated by cars, since '...it can no longer be accepted that the car determines how our towns should be organized and how our daily lives should be lived' (Ørestadsselskabet 1994, p.64). Building densities would therefore be high and public institutions and other large attractions would be close to metro stations. The environmental dimension of the plan was further enhanced by a new curving canal in the Ørestad Nord area and a linear canal alongside, located partly under the elevated metro track.

As far as spatial functions are concerned, an early emphasis on 90% office construction that was mentioned during the discussions in parliament was quickly scaled down. The first official documents refer to a proportion of 60% offices, 20% housing and 20% facilities. Planners had high expectations of the benefits of mixed use development, as reflected in the statement, 'A building that is designed for only one specific purpose would hardly be appropriate in the long term, neither would it suit the urban purposes for which Ørestad is conceived. In Ørestad, efforts should be made to integrate the various functions known from the historic city. The mixture of functions will help to make Ørestad a living town where people walk around comfortably and are able to

meet conveniently at all times of the day' (Ørestadsselskabet 1994, p.64). Given the above clarification of the intentions we can conclude that the initial plans propose a rather classic interpretation of new urbanity. Its innovation was in a proposed transfer of these concepts to a green field area.

We can only assess the extent to which this ambition has been normatively reflected upon and validated if we compare these ambitious planning concepts with reality. Our empirical investigation covers the development till 2005, a time at which the realized developed floor area was roughly 12% of total 3.1 million square meter capacity of the Ørestad area. Self-evidently, Ørestad is a very long-term development project. Building activities are currently planned to last till 2024 (Ørestadsselskabet 2006a). Nevertheless, some initial observations are possible and additional information and opinions have been gathered during interviews with experts. Since the two sub-areas of Ørestad Nord and Ørestad Centre have seen a lot more developments, our conclusions will focus especially on these.

#### 4.6.2 Ørestad Nord

The Ørestad Act stated that the northern part of Ørestad would primarily be the location of university departments, research institutions, knowledge-based industries, housing and cultural facilities. Our investigation has shown that the Ørestad Nord area is currently (at the beginning of 2005) the most successful part of Ørestad by far as regards the realization of the ambitions for new urbanity in actual building projects.

Figure 4.9: The central canal in Ørestad Nord



The area has also accommodated some of the most interesting ‘public’ facilities of Ørestad, namely an extension of the University of Copenhagen, the building of a new ‘IT-University’ designed by Henning Larsen, a new concert hall designed by Jean Nouvel and, in the future, the Ministry of Culture. This subarea mostly profited from the direct government investments in public buildings that were stimulated by the Ministry of Finance to improve the balance sheet of the Ørestad Development Corporation in the first few years (see: section 4.5.2). In Ørestad Nord, these functions generate activities and attract visitors. They have been mingled with different types of housing, for example for students, and offices. The public space has been structured using two separate canals. Overall, the area gives the feeling of already being (but certainly becoming) an accepted and appreciated part of the city.

However, there is more to the area than the buildings themselves. The location, which is close to the existing inner city and well connected not only via the new metro but also via existing bus services and bike, makes it a very ‘natural’ addition to the city. The connection to the north is not optimal, with an area of light industrial uses in between Ørestad Nord and the rest of the city. However, to the east and west, the area borders existing housing areas in Amager.

#### *4.6.3 Ørestad Centre*

The other area that has been (partly) developed in the last few years, namely the Ørestad Centre area, certainly provides a different feeling at the moment. The Ørestad Act stated that the southern part of Ørestad should primarily accommodate ‘city-related commercial development’ as well as incorporate cultural facilities and housing.

According to the master plan, the completed Ørestad Centre would consist of more than 1 million m<sup>2</sup> floor space. Building densities of up to 250 per cent are allowed and building heights of up to 80 metres. In the Act itself the legislators directly dictate that this new central area would acquire an urban character of high architectural quality matching that of the historic inner city. This ambition is supported by Copenhagen Municipal Plan which uses the same graphical legend for both places. Within the project, the Ørestad Centre area has the best regional accessibility, being right on the crossing of the metro with the train to the airport and Malmö and next to the highway Copenhagen – Malmö. Although, the Ørestad Centre area was foreseen in the first plans as the new centre and most lively area, its performance to date in that respect has been very disappointing. It has not lived up to the expectation of becoming a new second city centre either economically – due to the lack of office investments – or in terms of new urbanity. There are different functions in the area, but there is no integrative design. Functions do not relate to each other, outdoor public spaces are empty and unattractive and have little use. There is a considerable lack of spaces that give the area an urban character, like pedestrian zones and ground floor activities. Most people who come to the area only visit the large indoor shopping mall.

While the Ørestad Nord area is well connected to the city, Ørestad Centre it is too far away to reach by bike from the downtown for most and feels spatially detached from the built-up area of both the centre of Copenhagen and the existing built-up areas of Amager, located nearby. The other edges of the area are not very conducive to realising the new urbanity ambition either. On the south side there is a transportation corridor (highway and train), to the west a rather empty area that will probably be transformed

into a golf course one day, and to the north the Bella Centre which is a collection of (mostly unused) boxes. The spatial and functional integration with the low rise areas of Amager directly to the east of the area is minimal.

Although Ørestad Centre was expected to become the focus of commercial activities it has failed up to now to attract many offices. Due to the booming housing market the development corporation decided to speed up the housing part on the north side of Ørestad Centre, around the Ørestad Park on the area's northern edge. The question is whether offices will ever be established in the numbers the planners expected.

Two buildings dominate the scene at the moment, namely the Ferring office tower and the huge Field's shopping centre. Neither contributes anything to the expected 'street life', or multi-functionality of buildings, although Field's attracts a lot of shoppers, especially in the weekends. Some educational facilities that are going to open in the future may help to attract other people to the area, but the dominant image of an artificially 'created' urban area appears to be hard to overcome on the basis of the expected future functions and the urban design displayed to date.

Figure 4.10: Aerial overview of the Ørestad centre district at the crossing of the metro with the highway and train, Field's is pictured in the centre



Source: Ørestadsselskabet

*4.6.4 Black shadow over integrative ambitions, the development of the Field's shopping centre*

As long ago as 1993, the Copenhagen Municipal Plan designated the land around Ørestad station as 'a potential location for a shopping centre'. The size and character of this centre was finally decided by the Minister of Environment and Energy in 2000 after a procedure involving a regional analysis of volume and trends in retail shopping and a regional public enquiry based on an Environmental Impact Assessment Study (Christensen 2003). The development of this new indoor shopping mall turned out to be the only building development in Ørestad to attract any significant attention during its short history. 'Field's' as it was named, opened on 9 March 2004 and consists of 150 shops, restaurants and leisure facilities. It was advertised as being the largest shopping mall in Scandinavia (178,000 m<sup>2</sup>) and occupies one of the most prominent and central parcels of the project, next to the Ørestad station – the interchange station between metro and the train – and is visible from the high way to the airport and Malmö. The strategy of its investors is clearly to capitalize on this highly accessible location by also attracting Swedish customers (in 2004, 6% of customers were Swedes, Ørestadsselskabet 2005). Both its planning process and its eventual spatial concept and constructed shape have generated fierce criticism (interviews with Rehling, Informationen newspaper; Liliendahl Larsen, Roskilde University; Hendriksen, advisor to the Socialistisk Folkeparti in parliament).

Figure 4.11: Metro with Field's on the left



The development of Field's is a very telling example of how initial macro-level ambitions for new urbanity were not normatively reflected upon by private investors, and how the Ørestad Development Corporation was unable to influence this. It reflects the difficult position of the Ørestad Development Corporation as regards implementing its spatial goals for the area in a situation of actual negotiations with private investors which is under financial pressure itself.

For a long time, a moratorium on out-of-town shopping mall construction to protect inner city shopping areas was included in the Danish planning guideline, which then prevented large-scale retail developments from taking place in the Ørestad area. However, due to the weak financial position of the Ørestad Development Corporation (caused by cost-overruns in metro construction and the lack of demand for office parcels mentioned above) there was a desperate need for development in the area. As a result, the proposal by the Norwegian investor Steen & Strøm to build a shopping mall was more than welcomed for financial reasons. Not only would it result in the selling of some of the most prominent parcels, the expectation was that it would also create a 'destination' in the area and thereby improve metro ticket sales. There was opposition from inner city shop owners as well as from environmentalists who referred to the expected increase in car traffic which was contrary to the project's environmental rationale to reduce car use and stimulate public transport (interviews with Rehling, *Informationen* newspaper; Hartoft-Nielsen, Ministry of the Environment). Since it interfered with national planning guidelines on large out-of-town shopping mall construction, permission for this development was only granted after interventions by the national government. This happened after a very misty decision-making process which, according to critics, again showed the introvert, private-oriented character of the whole project (interviews with Hendriksen, advisor to the Socialistisk Folkeparti in parliament; Liliendahl Larsen, Roskilde University).

The shape of Field's, namely a huge typical box-type shopping mall with a closed facade, which is completely oriented towards the shoppers inside, is very disappointing from the viewpoint of new urbanity and does not reflect the ambitions of the original plans for the development of this central area of Ørestad, especially with regard to street liveliness. Although it was desperately needed for the income of the sale of the parcels, and valuable as a destination in the area, the shape is disappointing, even to top officials in the development corporation (interviews with Foss, Nielsen, both Ørestad Development Corporation).

#### *4.6.5 Ørestad Syd and other areas*

The plans for the other two districts, around Sundby station (Amager Fælled) and Vestamager station (Ørestad Syd), were not studied when we researched the project. The area around Sundby station will be the last quarter of Ørestad to be developed, after 2010. In the autumn of 2005, after we had finished our fieldwork, a local plan for Ørestad Syd was presented. There are plans to develop 5,000 housing units and social institutions in this area. By the end of year 2005, 40% of Ørestad Syd had been sold to developers and this area is expected to be completed within 10 to 15 years. However, since this area will mostly be used for housing, and is located even more on the periphery than Ørestad Centre, there are expected to be difficulties creating new urbanity here as well.

#### 4.6.6 Conclusion

Interestingly enough, the Ørestad Development Corporation described the urban ambitions for Ørestad in 2006 as it did at the beginning of the project, namely 'The Ørestad Development Corporation envisions Ørestad to be a site for developing a dynamic and varied city quarter characterised by institutions of higher education, research institutes, highly sophisticated and city-oriented companies, attractive residential areas and cultural institutions. The new city quarter is intended to be a modern counterpart to Copenhagen's old city centre. (...) Ørestad will have an urban environment of unique artistic and environmental qualities functioning as a laboratory of new ideas, demonstrating the efforts characteristic of Copenhagen's planning and the architectural prowess of our time.' (Ørestadsselskabet 2006a, p.19). After approximately fifteen years of plan-making and more than half a decade of actual spatial investments in buildings in the area, a preliminary assessment of the realisation of Ørestad's integrative ambitions can now be made. We concluded before that since demand for offices has been lower than expected a few strategic moves were made by the Ørestad Development Corporation. Some did not actually seem to be detrimental to the spatial performance of the area, like a greater emphasis and speeding up of the housing part of the project and the attraction of some public institutions to Ørestad. Especially in the northern area, they were able to (and did) create a more mixed and lively urban area with a mix of lifestyles, featuring both higher-end housing and student housing. Its closeness to existing built-up areas guarantees a natural fit in Copenhagen's built environment.

The Ørestad Centre area is the only other area that can be assessed at the moment and the results there have been very disappointing. Although the concept of a concentration of shopping functions, in combination with other leisure and cultural activities could greatly support the concept of new urbanity, the result in the form of the box-shaped indoor-oriented Field's shopping mall is not. Here, the 'introversion' of the strategic framing and the operational of the project is clear. The limited framing in private sector economic domains hampered interest in office plots in the area. Due to the weak economic situation, Ørestadsselskabet, which was supposed to implement the initial concepts for new urbanity into actual buildings it was discussing with private investors, had to 'concede' and accepted an investment that discarded many of the original concepts. We can therefore conclude that it was not capable of implementing a social norm on new urbanity. In this case, the Norwegian investor was able to realize its non-urban mega block. Some of the individual planners and architects of the Ørestad Development Corporation tried to improve the design but when this went against the will of the investor they had little chance to change or stop the investment. The municipality of Copenhagen did not stop the investment either.

We also wondered whether processes of change in dominant social norms regarding new urbanity are perceptible. The conclusion is that we have hardly detected any in this case. We can conclude however that, in an early phase, predating the actual spatial investments, the emphasis on new urbanity in the plans increased. This reflected an expected change in positive externalities for new urbanity, at least by the dominant actors in the master planning process. New urbanity, in the form of a mixed use urban environment, was expected to enhance the attractiveness for future private investors in the area and it played a prominent role in the first ideas for development. However, as we have described extensively, at the moment of the actual execution there were hardly

any powers to ensure other actors complied with such a social norm. The weak economic situation diminished the powers even further and the municipality of Copenhagen, that had to accept all building proposals, did not play a very active role in trying to implement this ambition either. The introverted and strongly institutionalized operational domain made it almost impossible for other parties to influence these processes. We have not observed any form of change in group composition, as regards deciding the spatial aspects of Ørestad over the course of time. Charismatic norm entrepreneurs did play a role in this project, especially former Copenhagen lord-mayor Jens Kramer-Mikkelsen, now managing director of Ørestadsselskabet. However, his interest in the project was never focused very strongly on the urban aspects, but more on its long-term economic contribution.

We can therefore conclude that, generally speaking, the clearly defined initial ambition for Ørestad to create new urbanity has not been normatively reflected upon and successfully validated in the project's operational domain. At the moment, the individual micro level investments of private investors do not seem to contribute to the goal of integrated use of space. There are no strong spatial concepts to integrate these individual investments in a sum worth more than the individual parts. The symbolic-cognitive framing of the project has eventually safeguarded initial infrastructure investments but has not resulted in a commonly supported spatial vision by public *and* private actors. Broader spatial visioning in Ørestad largely remained a matter for the small group of public initiators. Within the current workings of the operational domain, it is hardly

Figure 4.12: The Ørestad Syd area, ready for housing development



Source: Ørestadsselskabet

possible for Ørestadsselskabet to enforce a social norm on new urbanity, simply because the actor that has to do this does not hold much power vis-à-vis private developers. Apparently these developers have been occupied with their own individual building projects and very limited attention has been paid to common visioning processes with public, private and civic input regarding the development of the area.

To some extent, Ørestad Nord is the positive exception. In this area, private investments were supplemented during the first building phases with different investments in 'public' buildings. However, the more successful urban character of this area seems to be the result of these investments and its favourable location close to existing build up areas. The other areas in Ørestad do not have these beneficial conditions. In our conclusion we elaborate on this point further when we connect the activated social norms with the operational domain and the strategic framing of the project.

## 4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter on Ørestad we studied the following scientific oriented main research question:

*As regards the initial ambition for new urbanity, how can we understand the dynamics between the connectivity of Ørestad in the metropolitan action space, the systems of rules that structure operational domains and social norms?*

Our analysis shows that both the strategic framing and the decision-making at operational level in relation to Ørestad were quite introverted and that the realisation of the integrative ambition has not been very successful up to now. At a strategic level, the project received considerable support from a city-state political elite that was able to reconcile political differences and grasp potential economic opportunities but it did not connect its project very well to private spheres or civic interests. At an operation level, a governance structure was put in place to execute this project with a double goal, based on a business-oriented focus.

Concepts of new urbanity were introduced in the documents related to the master planning process and the master plan itself (Ørestadsselskabet 1994; 1995). Some of the basic physical prerequisites for new urbanity were accommodated in the form of infrastructure investments. Theoretically, the way Ørestad was strategically framed, as a public-public partnership with a long-term perspective that implements infrastructure investments first, could lead to beneficial conditions for the realization of such an ambitious program of spatial compactness and functional integration. Not only is high-quality public transport always close by, one would expect a public company to be more receptive to the balanced needs of a new neighbourhood and the place of 'non-profitable' functions in it, aspects that could enhance the urbanity of the location. However, these macro-level intentions have to be followed up by micro-level investments. The introverted organisational framing of Ørestad resulted in a failure to connect to the other domains we distinguished. This had two major negative consequences for the ambition for new urbanity in the area.

First, the lack of connection to the social, civic and culture domain alienated and frustrated the impetus from society that might contribute to the 'content' of the area. Ambi-

tions for urbanity largely retained the status of macro-level ambitions and were not matched by micro-level bottom-up investment proposals. At an operational level, there was a lack of strategic thought regarding how to apply the concepts in the Ørestad context. It was only in the Ørestad Nord part (the university district) that spatial concepts were followed up by adequate spatial investments in a mixture of public buildings, public spaces and a varied housing program (both student housing and higher end housing).

Secondly, the lack of connection to the private sector domain and the absence of a regional spatial strategy in the Copenhagen area resulted in a lack of demand for office investments in the parcels in Ørestad. Although offices in their traditional sense are not the first spatial use that is related to ideas of a lively urban district, they are able to contribute to a more varied street life, especially if they are properly integrated into the urban space. But of equal importance in this case, they could bring in the profits to cross-subsidize economic 'weaker' functions, like social and cultural facilities or lower income housing that could help to strengthen the concept of new urbanity.

Because of the massive cost overruns in the metro construction and lack of passengers, much larger debts than foreseen were accumulated and subsequent higher financial performance targets to pay back these debts were needed. This forced Ørestadsselskabet to change its scope and strategy over time to serve according to rigid market terms. It was precisely this crucial aspect that turned out to be the most problematic issue during the initial development stages. This referred back to the weak connectivity to the metropolitan action space. While the project was well connected to government domains, ironically it suffered a lot from a lack of efficient regional planning to prioritise Ørestad in favour of other development alternatives for offices that emerged, especially in the harbour area. This became a problematic weakness of the project: the capacity to realize a strategy that safeguarded a sustainable flow of (private) investments in office development to the area. It seems that, after the abolishment of the Greater Copenhagen Council, Copenhagen has been moving away from strategic planning, and to a large extent, this is in line with the development of a more business-oriented style of planning dominated by private spatial preferences. Whatever the (political) opinion is on this matter, in this case it hampers the financial performance of a very public investment. Although the project is ideologically linked to the development of a cross-border Oresund region, this is no guarantee at all for the successful attraction of private investments to precisely that area.

The governance structure at operational level was obviously too introverted to rectify this strategic problem. The role of the most central actor, the Ørestad Development Corporation, is basically to execute a development scheme. Though backed by important parties (the national government and the municipality of Copenhagen) its actions lack a strategic dimension. The logical consequence was that the corporation decided to make some operational changes. It tried to attract private investors by becoming more flexible to accommodate market demands, which were apparently not directly related to the (public) ambition for new urbanity in the area. The most visible results of this turn towards demand-oriented planning were extensive housing development and a large indoor shopping mall.

The dominant theme at operation level is therefore that the project seemed to be negatively affected by the (financial) package deal with the infrastructure development. From an infrastructure and financial perspective, the development project existed only

to generate revenues to pay back the metro investments. From a (broader) economic and urban planning perspective, Ørestad was (and continues to be) of course much more. The rather naïve expectation of a win-win situation, that it would be both a major investment in infrastructure and a high quality new development area, resulted in a forced development speed and in hard demands for financial performance of the area, which proved to be at odds with a more incremental and inclusive development style. The latter would probably have safeguarded in richer democratic processes and a spatial result which is more in line with the original proposals.

This peculiar institutional and economic situation of the operational aspects of Ørestad makes the project rather inflexible. Even if there was a will to organise more inclusive processes of deliberation for the remaining development period, that is processes that would accommodate citizens' involvement, they have to take place within the context of the financial burden of the expensive metro line. This would make it almost impossible to change phasing, development intentions or land uses. Within the current setting, the only flexibility the Ørestad Development Corporation has is to speed up certain aspects that are in demand on the market. This is what happened with different housing developments in the project during the last few years. However, if this eventually results in a project dominated by housing development with very little high end offices, questions will have to be asked not only about the project's financial rationale (housing plots are on average cheaper than prime office plots) and the necessity for such an expensive transportation system to serve a 'housing location', but especially about the alleged strategic character of the project as a premier business location to improve the competitive position of Copenhagen.

We can therefore conclude that the initial plans foresaw a strong form of new urbanity in Ørestad. Up to now this has not resulted in an enforced social norm that influences individual investors. Due to the weak position of Ørestadsselskabet, this actor was not able to implement this vision in a top-down, supply-oriented manner. Neither did the introvert strategic framing and operation domain create successful conditions for a validation of a social norm on new urbanity. The change of strategy of the development corporation towards a more demand-oriented approach only increased the need for an effective social norm regarding urban quality to make the whole of Ørestad bigger than the sum of the individual market-oriented investments.