

# COBE and Lundén Architecture transform central Helsinki into citizens park



Image: COBE and Lundén Architecture

Press release 17th November 2015.

**Danish architects COBE and Finnish Lundén Architecture in collaboration with N2 have designed an ambitious proposal for the transformation of the heart of Finland's capital, Helsinki, to a recreational and cultural citizens park.**

There are few areas in Helsinki that have been as discussed as the Töölönlahti bay area. Many prestigious architects from Alvar Aalto to Eliel Saarinen have proposed bold visions for how this natural bay area in the heart of the city should be developed. These visions have ranged from transforming the site into a cultural monument, to using the entire area for urban development. None, however, have been fully realised.

Rapid development of Helsinki in the late 1800s began a transformation of the city centre, especially in the Töölönlahti bay area. The naturally occurring bay area, part of the unique Finnish skerries, was occupied by factories that polluted the water. Due to a low level of water circulation, water eutrophication continues to this day. It is predicted that without intervention, the bay will turn into a swamp before eventually drying out completely.

Danish architects COBE and Finnish Lundén Architecture in collaboration with N2 have created a new vision for this important landscape in the heart of the capital.

"Töölönlahti bay area is a forgotten pearl in the heart of Helsinki. Its location between the neighborhoods of Töölö and Kallio, the olympic park, the central station and the city centre, makes the bay and its surroundings a place of great importance in 21st century Helsinki. Surrounded by a series of cultural icons such as the Opera House, Helsinki Music Centre, Finlandia Hall congress center, Kiasma Museum among others, the Töölönlahti bay is situated in a completely unique urban setting," says Dan Stubbergaard, Founder and Creative Director of COBE.

The project transforms the polluted bay, currently dividing Helsinki city centre in two, into an attractive green heart, which unifies the city. The project proposes new pedestrian and bicycle routes that will re-connect the surrounding neighborhoods with the bay area and provides an eventful promenade along the water, as well as cleaning the currently polluted bay.

"We want to give Töölönlahti back to the people. Through a comprehensive and ambitious water purification plan, the currently polluted bay will become Helsinki's main central urban space. A place where people from all over the city will swim in the water, sunbathe in the summer sun and drink evening coffee along the promenade. Like the purification of Copenhagen's central harbour area at the end of the nineties, this could be a catalyst that begins a major revitalization of Helsinki. New public functions, restaurants, cafés, conference facilities, a hotel and housing will create an economic basis for implementing this grand vision," says Dan Stubbergaard.

Eero Lundén, Director of Lundén Architecture, adds: "The new vision is as much about enhancing the existing qualities and conditions, as introducing new programs and public spaces in order to create a new citizens park for all of Helsinki."

**For further information please visit [www.kansalaispuisto.fi](http://www.kansalaispuisto.fi) or contact:**

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**Illustrations:**

Illustrations attached. They can be used freely in connection with the mentioning of COBE and Lundén Architecture.

**About Töölönlahti:**

Location: Helsinki, Finland

Client: N2

Architects: COBE and Lundén Architecture

Engineers: Rambøll Finland

Water purification: Terramare Boskalis

Program: Vision for park area in Helsinki

Size: 40.000 m<sup>2</sup>

Images: COBE and Lundén Architecture

Websites: [www.cobe.dk](http://www.cobe.dk), [www.eerolunden.com](http://www.eerolunden.com), [www.n2.fi](http://www.n2.fi)

**About COBE:**

COBE was founded in 2005 by architect Dan Stubbergaard. COBE has since then created a number of prestigious and award-winning projects. This includes among others Nørreport Station - Copenhagen's busiest station, the development of Nordhavnen in Copenhagen - the biggest urban development project in Scandinavia in the coming years, a new flagship building for Adidas located at Adidas' HQ in Germany, and Denmark's new Rock Museum opening in the beginning of 2016.

**About Lundén Architecture:**

Lundén Architecture is a Helsinki based office focused on larger strategic planning projects and smaller experimental projects exploring the possibilities of new design and manufacturing tools. The work includes the Töölönlahti master plan in Helsinki, a new airport concept for Tampere and the Central Finland and wooden pavilions in Turku and Shanghai. Currently the office is designing a new school campus with three new school complexes in Pieksämäki. Lunden Architecture is led and owned by Eero Lundén.

COBE and Lundén Architecture have in collaboration designed Tampere Travel and Service Center.