



Let the Birds Sing!

Re-imagining Helsinki's Shorelines!

Helsinki - known for its lush greenery, impeccable landscapes and enriching habitats. It is reflected in its architectural language as well its people, who adore this seamless landscape and value it to infinity. **Finland, known to be the country of beautiful lakes, has another treasure trove - its islands. Quietly hidden among the blue waves, they have been the escape for many who try to find solace in biodiversity.** While being utilized in its popularity quite well and good, over the years, constant tourism, recreation and general lack of maintenance has caused this biodiversity to come into danger of oblivion. It has lost the charm that once captivated the ones who experienced it. **The perpetuation for them falling behind due to the fast lifestyle of the times.** A simple rejuvenating touch is not enough. A stark and bold step must be made - **to break out of box to think how and what could be the way forward? Sometimes the smallest steps can break into a marathon that endures over a long time.**

R.O.L.I.

Revelers of the Lost Islands

We present you - the **MODULUS (Modular Landing and Utility Systems).**

A defining confluence of tradition, culture and the heritage these islands offer.

Ages worth of biodiversity, at your service, which can be experienced, while also teaching about our humane responsibilities in the changing environments all over the world. This metaphysical nature of the Modulus and its free-flowing connections with visual and experiential aids envisions an assurance in breaking the borders between the islands, an inclusive and visual amalgamation on the sea.

Accessible Modularity.

The keywords guiding our vision.

A look at the variety of islands surrounding Helsinki (for that matter, the whole of Finland) yields the question - **How to explore, understand, rejuvenate and enjoy this biodiversity in a sustainable manner?** Not everyone owns a boat to sail away to these little parcels of paradise at their will but must await certain moments in the year to even venture few miles away from the mainland. Some routes to these islands are

not even existing at this day, yet many yearn to explore this hidden wealth of Helsinki. Linking the Centre to these islands is not an easy task, but one we have chosen to explore.

As efforts have already started to improve the few existing routes and to think of newer, better ones for the coming future, our ideas further **the inspiration to integrate these veritable sources with the rest of Helsinki and formulate an urban approach for redeveloped routes that can better the connection and inclusivity between these islands and other existing ones.** Our interpretation of the competition is to have answers which reinterpret the idea of accessibility of these islands South Helsinki (and more beyond). While the base challenge is to create permanence on these islands, our band-aid is based upon temporality and modularity as a function - **reinvigorate the existing islands, enhance recreation, alleviate stress on the islands, create awareness for the heritage and biodiversity of the islands, while being adaptive and scalable at various degrees.**

Let the Birds sing. **Let the islands float.**

Let the nature rejuvenate itself. Let man and wild coexist.

The overall picture is to create a system which facilitates exploring these islands using the existing water bus routes and other modes of recreation, which are tied closely with Central Helsinki (as a node). On an urban level, this would be a representation of routes circling around these islands and offering connections all year round. Supplementing this vision is to make these islands connected, interactive, interdependent and coexisting with each other in the larger realm. **Answers which don't develop heavily, but offers better engagement with the islands.** Sustainability is also called into question and **we deeply assert the wish to not build on the islands at all, but small revisions and redevelopments to be done, which keeps the islands as intact as possible,** while also providing all the necessary space and infrastructure for the activities proposed on these islands.

Each of these islands in themselves have unique characteristics which should be exalted while also reflecting the concentric circles of biodiversity around the Helsinki Archipelago.

Design Visions and Concepts

Master Plan

Helsinki's Master plan lays down guidelines for envisioning the Blue and Green of the city being an expansive environment in itself. **Our attempt is to further the explorable, accessible, evolving and perennial nature of the islands.** Existing transit situations (both for tourism and recreation) at Meri-Rastila, Vartiosaari, Aurinkolahti and Herttoniemi towards these islands **would aid the idea of an expanding Archipelago.**

Rejuvenating the Biodiversity

Another important aspect is to **maintain, rejuvenate and respect the huge diversity and variety of flora and fauna found in these islands.** Many rare and unique species reside here and are often the first ones to take a negative hit when newer developments are proposed. **To curb any such effects, our design decisions rely solely on the constructions NOT being on the islands themselves, but an extension of them.** They would offer all the necessary infrastructure as needed, without being a burden on the islands themselves.

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A MODULE-based System

The best way of ensuring our vision, we keep our approach with the simplest system possible - a MODULE-based System. **We rely on using only existing available material and structures (in their commonest sizes, ex wooden planks, pontoons, piers) to create systems which are easily available, adaptable, serviceable, transportable and in addition, keep the *image* of their environment.** Our attempt to steer clear of making anything permanent is to alleviate pressure on the islands to serve for themselves and have a lot of maintenance. Since these systems are modifiable, they can be scaled to any degree but stay within the design strategies. **While being simplistic in their approach, these modules reflect the various activities and interactions that they facilitate and improve for each of the islands and promote ideas for sustainable recreation and restoration.** The modularity of the system also makes it possible that any and every element can be maintained and repaired easily (by the residents or by the city).



Mobility, Seasonal Adaptability and Usability

Modular structures would make it possible to have most of this infrastructure around the islands usable all year round as a mobile platform can be easily relocated. Another important strategy used is to have a **system which can be assembled/disassemble either standalone (on water) or be an additional element to the infrastructure within the islands. Depending on the needs, they are also scalable to the required volume and area.** Helsinki is known for the extensive use of sea routes throughout the year. While most of the recreational and travels happen during the summer, few routes are kept open all year round for maintenance and infrastructural support. These also become important where the structures can easily move from being on the sea to being on land - aiding the fact that these structures are usable year-round. **Imagine a system where this adaptability is scaled to such a degree that each and every kind of infrastructure needed, can be planned for. The structures floating as small islands themselves. Creating connections at any given point in the year.**

Response to Identity, Recreation and Other Activities for the Islands



A Unique Character

Each of the islands in the challenge has their own specific and unique identity. The first takeaway is to have a system of identifiable colors/markers which help identify them (based on recreational activity, heritage, biodiversity etc.). They extend way beyond just markers by creating their own **Brand of an Island** where the modular system makes it easy to implement at various points.



Diversification

When it comes to these islands, few are aware about their existence, and are only taken by avid recreational-ists who form a specific and small demographic. Our system offers an ability to foster diversity to utilize these islands. Any and every kind of activity can be catered to, scaled, made flexible and also delineate the lines between the public and the private.



Activating the Island Functions

The idea with the modular system is to engage with the islands meaningfully and preserve their originality as much as possible. **While reflection sites are the ones where the core of the islands' beauty lies, we have kept their access to a minimum for tourism, but enthusiasts can venture further**

into the wild - improved paths, signs, information boards and maps improve the visibility, create more vantage points, landmarks and providing small-scale infrastructure. Focus has been to cater towards recreation, year-long usage, maintained routes, better visibility and directional messages towards Points of Interest. **On the long run, this would help expand the sustenance of the islands and prolong their adaptability to increase in population.**



Vartiosaari

Temporary Solutions for a Changing Island

Best known for its well-preserved Villas and the Garden culture surrounding it, this island also houses the most valuable bat / bird habitats in the Helsinki region. Many new proposed garden and villa preservation sites make this island a viable stop for anyone with a keen interest in history and biodiversity. A round trip through the island yields many points of interest - the prehistoric burial mound, the valley of views, the villa and the church, which are considered for the overall design vision. While the island is the quite modern and reachable in terms of facilities (like information booth, maps, trail directions, cafes, services etc), the addition of a separate jetty for boats would reduce the load on the solar water-bus.

Conceptual Interpretations and Applications

The Project Sites

The two proposed landing sites in question offer varying degrees of approach to the island. **The Reposalmi jetty is being reconsidered as a floating dock helping tourists and visitors reach the island comfortably.** Since a bridge is also being considered, heavy loading for this landing site is not a viable direction. **The other landing site is taken to serve specifically the recreational facilities that the island can provide - for campers, canoeists, kayakers and swimmers.** This would keep this area well in touch with the mainland, the island while also increasing the influx of people looking for a short getaway from the city. **Facilities such as - Cafe, Kiosk, Museum of History and Shop shall be re-purposed into the existing villa infrastructure (barring some redevelopment). Few other infrastructural inputs include - guided tours, information kiosks, BBQ services, toilets, swimming / sauna areas and urban infrastructure for more recreational possibilities.**

The Reflection Sites

The island already has a good existing technical structure and requires little to no redevelopment towards this. **Our approach is to have more points of interest marked and mapped, better maintained routed with duck-boards would improve the year-round accessibility of the island to a better degree.** Proximity to the mainland and a new bridge would greatly increase the influx of people.



Villinki



Villinki

Landing Sites as Recreational Hot Spots

Being one of the largest islands in the archipelago, this island forms one of the most geological and ornithological sites of Helsinki. **While there are many existing jetties and piers all around the island, many are not in use or in heavy disrepair.** The ones under use are for the people utilizing it for their summer cottage or for the small amount settled on the island. **While it has some basic technical infrastructure (electricity, sewer and running water etc), much of the island is not easily accessible.**

The island has the potential to become one of the starting points (like Vartiosaari) for water buses and recreational users. **The urban level intervention provides possible additional routes to increase accessibility** - in a way increasing the coordination between the many landing sites, thereby allowing an influx of diverse demographics.

As such, **we propose an all-year maintained water route to and from this island, which can be traversed by one of the designed modular pontoon elements.** This enables easy serviceability, movement, management and keeps the island being the sustainable cyclic biome it is.

Conceptual Interpretations and Applications

The Project Site

We choose not to build anything on the island. The Villa would be get redevelopment to make it a capable place for a small Café. **If not, it can be converted to a Cooking / BBQ Shelter with storage (this reclaims the value of the villa to some extent).** In addition, the modular pontoons provide the following facilities near each of the two landing sites - toilets, sauna, pier (for small boats, kayaks and canoeist, dock-able glamping hostel, swimming module, kiosk, covered shed and recycling / waste module.

The Reflection Sites

Most of the landing areas have proper paths around them, with little to no signage. **Our attempt would improve those by providing new and better directions on the island - in terms of paths, legends, benches, resting points / P.o.Is, maps and vantage points.**

Certain paths have been developed on the plan to necessitate the convergence of the natural elements with man, but care has been taken to not dive too deep into the island.

Kotiluoto

Kotiluoto

Recreational Structures as part of a Valuable Villa Milieu

Right in the middle of many other small islands, relatively easy to reach from the mainland, this island is realized to be a recreational retreat which celebrates the island's villa heritage and native biodiversity. Currently rented to the Helsinki Navigation Club, **the island still retains most of its infrastructure in good form (including a dry toilet, sauna, the path networks and a cooking shelter), which can be further utilized to make this into a perfect haven for a day outdoors.** The island can hence become a part of these group of Recreational Islands, which can be a system in itself. **We also propose an attempt to recreate the Baroque Style Garden to completeness which shall add further emphasis and cultural preservation for the island.**

Conceptual Interpretations and Applications

The Project Site

Through the modular system, we aim to provide a landing pontoon for **smaller boats and paddlers (the existing water-bus stop can still be used for larger groups).** **The Villa is slated to be redeveloped and used a Cafe, Souvenir shop, Info Point and short-term stay possibility.**

This would make the island a perfect spot within the group of islands to have longer getaways within the recreational hub. Another addition is be made in terms of **floating camp-sites which would connect the various islands while also allowing the chance to experience more islands over time.**

The Reflection Site

Routes have been designed to experience the island and get to vantage points. These points shall give a nice overview of other islands around as well. An **Experiential Guided Tour can promote the Garden History and Villa's Architecture to be prominent for visitors.**

Malkasaari

Malkasaari

An Easily Accessible Recreational Island for Various kinds of Visitors

Smack dab in the middle of the little island group (which we envision as the **Recreational Hub on Water**), lies this small woody island with rocky beaches and endangered grass types. Mostly used by casual campers, hikers and canoers since decades ago, it retains some of its former built structures quite well but has been under wear due to overuse. Quite accessible by rent-able boats / kayaks / canoes, it

remains a very popular place for short camping trips and just a nice day out.

Importantly, **the city has already developed some of the infrastructure here for future use – including a water-bus jetty, pontoon, sauna and existing structures like cooking shelter, fireplace and a toilet are available.**

The island further exhibits a suitable platform for organizing maritime business and leisure services.

Simple technical services like solar power / battery / generators can be used to power the island for year-round usage.

Conceptual Interpretations and Applications

The Project Site

Since many facilities and infrastructure are already in place for the island, it would not be viable to build anything more here. Rather, the better option is to facilitate the activities around the island. **Camping spots and floating camping modules will be made on or near water, where the usage does not cause further wear on the island and can be for a longer duration.**

The edge of the landing site and the pontoon can become another good place for swimmers and kayakers to have a place of their own. **Designated areas for picnics, BBQs, storage and other facilities have been also provided.** The Old villa has can be redeveloped to serve as a Museum / Souvenir / Information / Rent-able Event Space which can offer some revenue stream.

The Reflection Site

To rejuvenate the wear on the island's biodiversity, care has been taken to **carve out proper paths and designated spots.** Reducing casual activities on the land would also help in curbing the wear. The island is fairly small, and a walkable route can be established connecting the various services on the land and on water. **The old BBQ / fire shelter can be further utilized in its existing form with minor upgrades to structure and infrastructure additions - like electricity, water and waste management.**

Pikku
Niinisaari

Pikku Niinisaari

Starting from Scratch

A seclusion from the rest of the island systems, this little island offers a pleasant way-point for large ships passing by.

Flanked by two major trunk routes, it **provides surprise colorful glimpses of the Vuosaari harbor area.** Predominantly a stony island with trees, limestone deposit and decaying valuable wood, **this small island has become a unique recreational outpost on the edges of Helsinki.** While one can **reach this island by any means (own boat, kayaking, canoing etc), our idea is to make it accessible by water-bus routes as well.**

Conceptual Interpretations and Applications

The Project Site

Our vision is to recreate this island as a secondary base of recreation within the system. It benefits from the addition of **shaded benches (or picnic spots), BBQ area, small sauna, dry toilets, using the villa as a Café, recreating the trails and incorporating spots for short-period camping (day trips only).** The choice to redevelop, rather than build, makes sure that incoming population can be managed and the modular system helps prevent the busy and crowded nature of the landing spot spilling over to the island. Further infrastructure has been added to utilize the available resources on the island – **the sandy beach being partly used as a volleyball court, the shack redeveloped into a small storage area and trails made to realize some landmarks to be visited.**

The Reflection Site

Many of the spots within the reflection can be used as landmarks for recreating a trail within the island. Small improvements to the infrastructure are done to improve way-points, information and walk-ability, but not interfere with harbor operations or sea traffic.

Further Efforts

The temporality and urbane framework of our proposed system can prove to be an effective result. The modular systems can be deployed to access the acceptance, movement, seasonal changes and usage rate for each island. Certain functions can be diverted to regions which would need more of the infrastructure. Hence, excess built can be controlled which would decrease maintenance.

