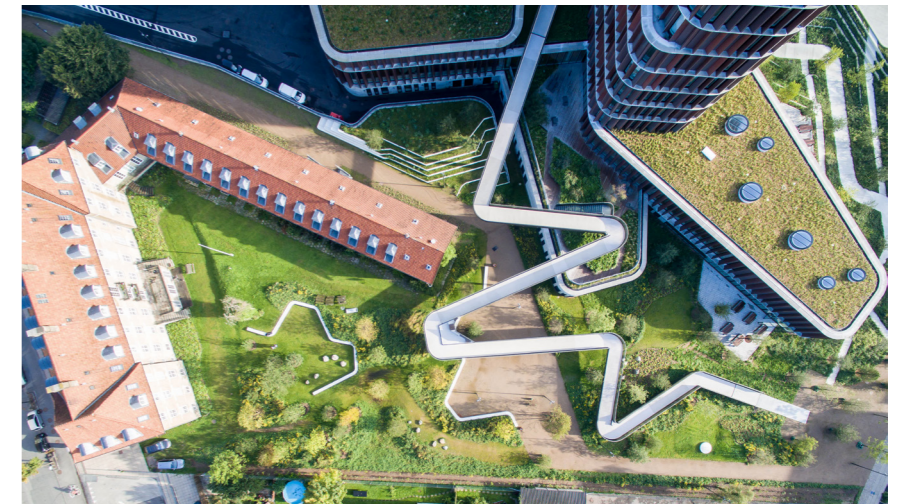


SUND NATURE PARK | SLA

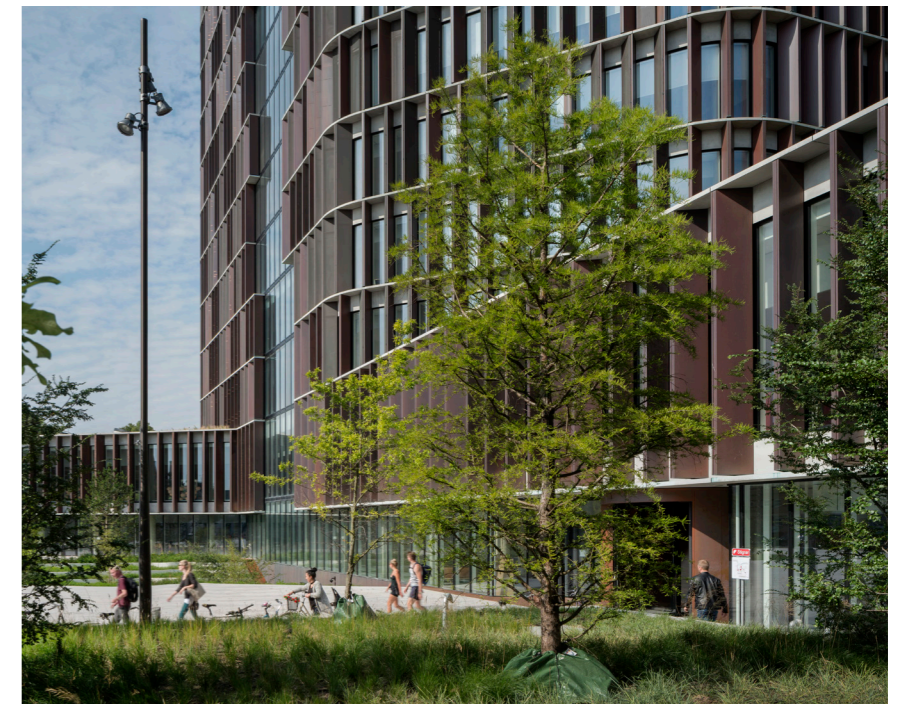
Facts, SUND Nature Park:
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT/ SLA
CLIENT / Danish Building and Property Agency and University of Copenhagen SUND
AREA / 37,000 m²
COLLABORATORS / C.F. Møller, Rambøll, Aggebo & Henriksen, Skælskør Anlægsgartnere,
Byggros, Birkholm Planteskole



SUND Nature Park is a modern campus park that optimises a good research and student's life while adding a green, social and ecological heart to the Nørrebro neighbourhood.



All rainwater in the park and on the green roofs is collected, cleaned and recycled.



Trees and plants are brought all up close to the tower to enhance nature's creative and stress-reducing capabilities.

Previous State

SUND Nature Park is the public space for the Mærsk Tower, a new health sciences research complex in Nørrebro, Copenhagen. Together, park and building constitute a modern expansion of the original Panum-complex from 1986. The brutalist Panum-complex was generally perceived as cold, closed and without significant relation to its context. Its outdoor area was characterised by plain lawns without substantial recreational qualities, very low biodiversity and vast parking lots. The outdoor area was only aimed towards the researchers and students and not towards the rest of Nørrebro, as bars, walls and fences created a physical and mental barrier against the neighbourhood. Thus, the old complex, surrounded by three high-traffic roads, created a large inaccessible gap in the middle of the neighbourhood without providing significant value to either its primary users or neighbours. Furthermore, the neighbourhood has a population characterised by being very ethnically diverse, less affluent and by having a high degree of vulnerable citizens, while at the same time being the least green and most densely populated neighbourhood in Copenhagen. None of those issues were addressed in the old complex.

Aim of intervention

The aim of the client, Copenhagen University, was to create attractive surroundings for a modern study and research life. To solve this, SLA suggested to create a lush nature park that utilized the newest research that proves how a high quality natural environment increases creativity, reduces stress and supports general wellbeing. Additionally, SLA proposed to create a truly generous campus area by designing an open and inviting park with recreational and social qualities for everyone. Thus, the existing barriers would be eliminated and the park opened and connected in new ways – especially for pedestrians and cyclists. SLA also proposed to strengthen the neighbourhood identity by uniting elements of the past and the future, of city and nature in one coherent park design. Finally, SLA suggested to closely integrate climate adaptation, ecosystem services and performative nature that would help clean the polluted city air, improve the micro-climate and enhance the overall sustainability of the complex. To solve the multitude of challenges, SLA involved its cross-disciplinary team of landscape architects, horticulturists, biologists and anthropologists in the design development.

Description of the intervention

To create an optimal research environment, SLA created a highly lush, attractive and accessible nature park. The park includes 296 trees and 5000 m² of public green roofs. The aim is to bring nature and its positive capabilities up close to the tower. Furthermore, SLA designed an abundance of outdoor study spaces, rooms for informal social interaction, quiet spaces for quick naps among wild nature, lush lawns for games, and good picnic areas for all. The park also creates new connections across the neighbourhood through the 300 meters-long zig-zagging pathway bridge that leads pedestrians and cyclists through the campus area. An integrated underground bike parking basement with space for 1,000 bikes encourages Copenhagen's bicycling culture. To create a clear identity for the park, SLA chose, while, as an homage to today's multicultural Nørrebro, the native plants are combined with exotic species such as Antarctic Beech, European Hop-Hornbeam and Kobus Magnolia. All rainwater falling on site is collected, naturally cleansed and recycled for irrigation or as grey water inside the building.

Evaluation

SUND Nature Park and the Maersk Tower have succeeded in creating a new form of modern city campus and have already received several international awards for best education and research complex. One goal of the client was to attract more qualified researchers – an effect that has already started. The design of the nature park has added a clear identity to the site and 3.4 times more green than before. While the previous campus had few recreational qualities, the new SUND Nature Park has provided the entire Nørrebro neighbourhood with a highly appreciated green common space that creates new physical, social and mental connections in the area. The park's recreational, biological and stress-reducing qualities and inviting design does not only benefit students and researchers but also improves the life quality of all local citizens. From day one, SUND Nature Park has also added much-needed environmental value to Nørrebro: Through its natural climate adaptation, the park can now absorb a 100-year cloudburst event and prevent the local neighborhood from being flooded. Finally, the recycling of rainwater has also led to significantly reduced consumption of water in both park and tower.