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# CONTENTS

EDITORS' NOTES.....	5
MADELEINE GRANVIK, DANIEL KOCH AND MAGNUS RÖNN	
SIGHTS BEYOND ILLUSIONS: TOWARDS COMMENSURABLE COMPETITION PROPOSALS .....	9
TIINA MERIKOSKI	
AALTO THROUGH YOUNG UTZON'S EYES: THE ROLE OF ALVAR AALTO IN DEVELOPING THE ARTISTIC MATURITY OF JØRN UTZON .....	35
CHIU CHEN-YU, AINO NISKANEN AND NUR YILDIZ KILINÇER	
THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN MANOR AND CITY: MANOR LANDSCAPES IN URBAN PLANNING IN HELSINKI .....	73
HAUTAMÄKI RANJA	
ARCHITECTURAL REPERTOIRE AND DAYLIGHT METRICS.....	99
MALIN ALENIUS AND MARJA LUNDGREN	
READING THE IMAGE – ENDORSING CO-CREATION IN PLANNING COMPETITIONS?.....	127
TIINA MERIKOSKI	
<b>FORUM</b>	
DISSERTATION REVIEW <i>IRA VERMA (PHD STUDENT, AALTO UNIVERSITY):</i> HOUSING DESIGN FOR ALL? THE CHALLENGES OF AGEING IN URBAN PLANNING AND HOUSING DESIGN – THE CASE OF HELSINKI.....	147
REVIEWER: MARIANNE ABRAMSSON	





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## THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN MANOR AND CITY: MANOR LANDSCAPES IN URBAN PLANNING IN HELSINKI

HAUTAMÄKI RANJA

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### Abstract

This article examines the encounter between historical manor landscapes and urban development in Helsinki. It looks at the transformation of privately-owned noble estates and their agricultural land into suburban landscapes from the early 20th century to the present. The study, which focuses on urban planning and the conservation and management of historical landscapes, addresses two questions: How has the historical value of manor landscapes been recognized in urban planning, and how can the integration of historical landscapes and urban development be best supported? The main data addressed by the research consists of planning documents, historical maps, and empirical observations. Four case studies are used to elucidate the evolution of the manor landscape, planning solutions, and conservation measures. The article emphasizes the interaction between conservation, urban planning, and the adaptive reuse of historic environments to support the integrated management of historical landscapes. The findings deepen our understanding of landscape heritage and contribute to the development of a future-oriented strategy of change management, through which historical landscapes can be meaningfully integrated into contemporary urbanized society.

Keywords:  
manors, historical landscapes,  
urban planning, integration,  
Helsinki

## 1. Manor landscapes in Helsinki

### 1.1. From manorial estates to urban landscapes

Manors have substantially influenced the history and land policy of Helsinki; most suburbs have been built on the former grounds of manors and have also been named after them. Despite this, the historical context of these suburbs remains largely unexamined, as suburbs have primarily been studied from the point of view of spatial planning (Palang & Peil, 2010, p. 700). This article aims at combining these two perspectives, by exploring the historical dimension of Helsinki's suburbs and their morphological transformation from manor landscapes to urban neighbourhoods. This transformation process has been affected by four phases of urban expansion: villa allotments at the turn of the 20th century, suburban settlement at the beginning of the 20th century, the extensive construction of suburbs after the Second World War and, eventually, infill development from the beginning of the 21st century (Hautamäki, 2016, p. 289).

The summer villas and their plots, which were cut away from the manor holdings at the end of the 19th century, acted as the first signs of urbanization. Major societal changes at this time gave impetus to the parcelling and sale of land, as manor culture declined and the power of the nobility and the financial position of the great estates weakened (Lönnqvist, 1975, p. 163; Snellman, 2014, p. 288). Landlords gradually sold their properties to fuel the growth of the city, and land was converted for the purpose of suburban settlements and villa communities. Extensive planning of the manor grounds began after the Second World War and the incorporation of land areas. The rapid growth of the population, the implementation of the 1945 Land Acquisition Act, and a shortage of housing resulted in preparatory planning for the construction of suburbs on numerous manor estates (Schulman, 1990, p. 116). The most recent phase – infill development – began in the 2000s as part of an expansive urban densification movement, which continues today.

The urbanization trajectories of manor landscapes have been influenced by multiple factors – societal, political, and juridical structures; the economic situation; land ownership; and natural and topographical conditions. Urbanization constitutes the key driving force behind the transformation of manor landscapes, both externally and internally. Two major changes have taken place in most of Helsinki's manors: residential and extensive agricultural use has come to end, and ownership has been transferred from private families to city, state, corporate, or community use. For a few manors, a meaningful new function was found at an early stage, but in most cases there have been frequent changes in use. Many manors have been used for leisure and social services, as the spacious buildings and comfortable surroundings naturally lend themselves to this purpose. Manors have thus reflected the relevant social and economic needs of society in each period (Hautamäki, 2016, p. 292-293).

After the Second World War, safeguarding the manors' heritage value was often of secondary importance. Several manor houses were designated for inappropriate uses, or left abandoned and fell into disrepair. As the cultural heritage conservation movement arose in the 1970s, manor environments evolved new functions that highlighted their historical and scenic values. In addition, manor environments were increasingly put into public use, as they were given new functions, such as recreation facilities, attractions, community spaces, and various other activities. In the 2010s, a new phenomenon emerged: manor properties owned by the city began to be sold to private stakeholders for economic reasons (Hautamäki, 2016, p. 118-123, 301).

### 1.2. The evolution of landscape and green heritage conservation

Urban planning and conservation are mutually dependent practices that, since the 1960s, evolved in tandem in Finland. The field of landscape and green heritage – as a newcomer to the preservation field – was not established until the 1990s, which has weakened conservation efforts in relation to historical landscapes. Besides conservation and institutional preservation, however, urban planning has also had a key role in protecting and managing landscape values. Contrary to many other cities, from the early 20th century onwards Helsinki pursued an active land acquisition policy, purchasing the land that was to be developed, which has supported farsighted and comprehensive land-use planning (Lönnqvist, 1975, p. 13). This has also promoted the systematic planning of the city's suburbs and the careful integration of manor landscapes into the urban structure.

The planning principles exercised in relation to manorial lands exemplify the shifting aspirations of urban planning during different decades. The garden and forest city movements of the 1940s and 1950s emphasized a harmonious relation between the landscape and the city, and topographical and historical features were viewed as the outset for urban planning. Conversely, in the compact city movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the interface with nature became more distant. The aim was rather to achieve a contrast between the urban structure and the landscape (Hirvensalo, 2006, p. 235). As a result, the link to history and tradition was cut, and numerous historically significant buildings were demolished and landscapes were destroyed. At the end of the 1960s, a protest was launched against the destruction of cultural environments and by the end of the 1970s a conservation movement had been established within the urban planning community. The first manor building with a park was preserved by the Act on the Protection of Buildings in 1972; and in the late 1970s, the first larger entity with manor buildings and park was preserved in a local detailed plan (Degerö, 1977). The suburban comprehensive plan of 1978 contained the first thorough report on the protection of cultural heritage and landscapes.

The late 1990s witnessed a turning point in the recognition of historical landscapes. The focus of conservation was gradually broadened from buildings to cultural landscapes and historical gardens, which were also highlighted in the Florence Charter, registered as an addendum to the Venice Charter in 1982. Moreover, from the 1980s onwards, ecology and landscape planning were introduced into urban planning, reinforcing the values embedded in historical landscapes (Rosengren, 2014). In the Helsinki comprehensive plan of 1992, significant heritage sites, including manor landscapes, were recognized as districts of cultural and scenic value that were to be preserved. The first detailed protection orders concerning parks and cultural landscapes were developed in local detailed plans (Haltiala, 1990; Tullisaari, 1999), and historical surveys on the manorial landscapes were introduced as important tools, providing information for conservation and change management (Karisto, 2014). A cross-administrative manor task force supported the preservation, conservation, and public use of the manor environments (Kivi, 1995, summary). Owing to the work of the task force, heritage planning advanced and multiple manor environments were restored.

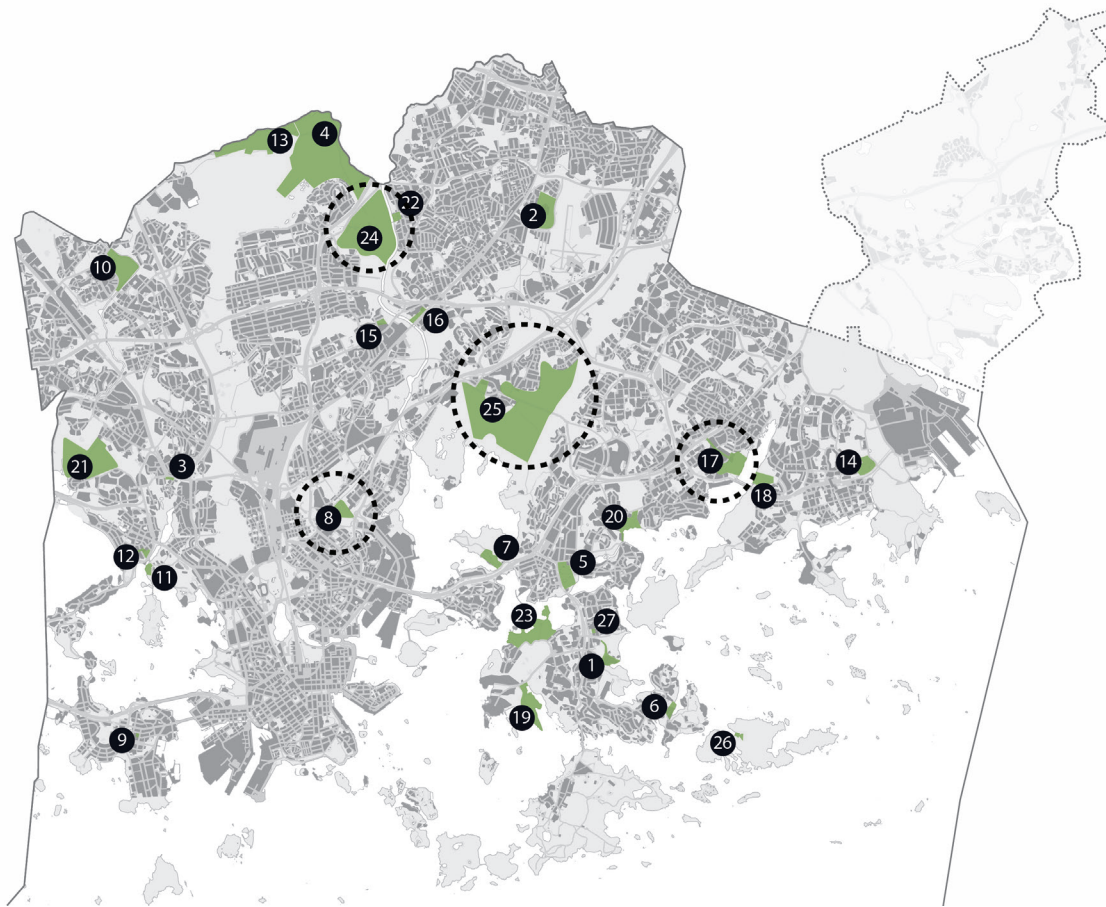
From the 2000s onwards, historical landscapes and green heritage have received greater recognition, even as, at the same time, they have been contested by accelerating densification. The comprehensive plan of 2002 highlighted the conservation of cultural landscapes and drew attention to the versatility of Helsinki's historical green areas. The subsequent comprehensive plan of 2016 manifested a paradigm shift in the position of conservation in urban planning. While the previous plan clearly demonstrated the conservation objectives of cultural environments and landscapes, the new plan omitted protection boundaries and regulations, viewing them as restrictive. This transferred heritage consideration to separate, local detailed plans, where the matter can no longer be comprehensively resolved. Due to the comprehensive plan of 2016, tension between conservation and urban planning has risen, and several severe planning conflicts have been generated.

## 2. Research design and methodology

### 2.1 Research design

This article examines the encounter between historical manor landscapes and urban development in Helsinki. Helsinki manors provide an interesting framework for research, as their extensive estates – gradually transferred from private landlords to public ownership – have substantially influenced the suburbanization process from the early 1900s to the present day. The 30 or so manor environments in Helsinki establish an important part of the cultural heritage and identity in several suburbs. Most of the manor buildings and their surroundings are owned by the city and their public use, especially for the purpose of recreation, is well-established in tradition.





This study explores the integration of manor landscapes and urban development by focusing on two questions: (1) How have historical values of manor landscapes been recognized in urban planning? (2) How can the successful integration of historical landscapes and urban development best be supported? The article explores four case studies – Tuomarinkylä, Viikki, Puotila, and Kumpula – in terms of three themes: urban planning, adaptive reuse, and conservation. The results identify significant patterns within the sustainable management of historical landscapes and contribute to deepening our understanding of culturally sustainable and resource-efficient urban planning, whereby historical landscapes are recognized as providing a valuable resource for future.

## 2.2. Methods and materials

The research understands historical landscapes to manifest interaction between humans and natural environments. With the prefix “historical,” I underline the temporal dimension of landscape, which includes both the material-physical reality and immaterial existential values (Antrop, 2006, p. 188). Historical landscapes also refer to heritage that is worth protecting and managing. Conservation and management are defined by the European Landscape Convention as “actions to conserve and

**Figure 1**  
Manors in Helsinki embrace a wide range of landscapes from large entities to manor fragments. Case study areas are marked with circles and bold type. 1. Degerö, 2. Fallkulla, 3. Greijus, 4. Haltiala, 5. Herttoniemi, 6. Jollas, 7. Kulosaari, **8. Kumpula**, 9. Lauttasaari, 10. Malminkartano, 11. Meilahti, 12. Munkkiniemi, 13. Niskala, 14. Nord-sjö, 15. Oulunkylä, 16. Pukimäki, **17. Puotila**, 18. Rastila, 19. Stansvik, 20. Ströms, 21. Tali, 22. Tapaninkylä, 23. Tullisaari, **24. Tuomarinkylä**, **25. Viikin latokartano**, 26. Villinki, 27. Yliskylä.

SOURCE: HAUTAMÄKI 2016, 15.

maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity” (Council of Europe, 2000a, article 1). This definition embraces a wide range of practices from traditional preservation to management of values, and finally heritage-led development and urban planning (Fairclough, 2009, p. 30; Riesto & Tjetjen, 2018, p. 248).

Manor landscapes, as the object of this study, are multifaceted historical landscapes encompassing a diversity of culturally and historically significant elements, from agricultural lands to designed gardens and historical built environments with residential and farm buildings. The article looks at the historical, authentic elements of manor landscapes but also examines urbanized and changed structures – for example, fields and farmyards that have been transformed to accommodate other land uses or merged into the urban structure. A holistic approach is emphasized in the research, which both looks at manor landscapes as an entity and also scrutinizes the broad range of measures for protecting and managing those landscapes. Manor landscapes, with their age and visibility, constitute a substantial part of the heritage of Helsinki’s suburbs. In addition to conservation measures, it is argued that urban planning and adaptive reuse have laid the foundation for fostering that heritage into the future.

The research applies a case-study methodology, which provides concrete, context-dependent knowledge through a narrative inquiry that develops descriptions and interpretations of the phenomenon in question (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The four case studies demonstrate different models of interaction between manor landscapes and urban development, from largely preserved agricultural entities to urbanized manor islets. They also represent different functions, from recreational areas and public uses to more specialized, semi-public uses such as university plantations and a riding school. A common criterion for the selection of the case areas was their designation as valuable historical environments, Tuomarinkylä and Viikki being nationally important cultural environments, Kumpula a regionally significant environment, and Puotila a locally valuable cultural environment. They also all include protection regulations in their local detail plans, ranging from preserved manor environments to a few protected buildings. Moreover, all case studies faced major urban development processes in different decades, from the 1960s to the 2010s.

The study has included three phases: (1) a historical review of the spatial transformation process in relation to manor landscapes; (2) an analysis of the planning processes applied to manor landscapes, focusing on the case studies; and (3) field work, comprising of the qualitative analysis of manor landscapes with special attention to the case study areas. The aim of the historical review is to investigate the urbanization process

as it has affected manor landscapes during the expansion of Helsinki. The main research data consists of maps, aerial photos, and research literature. The objective of the analysis of the planning processes and the fieldwork has been to gain insight into the interaction between manor landscapes and the city. The planning documents that were systematically examined included comprehensive and local master plans and detailed plans, landscape analyses and plans, other decision-making documents, discussions in newspapers, and supplementary oral information from urban planners and landscape architects. The evaluation of the planning processes was complemented with fieldwork and the qualitative evaluation of the landscape, which aimed to identify the divergent transformation models and configuration patterns resulting from the interaction of manor landscapes with urban development.

### 3. Framing historical landscapes and urban development

#### 3.1. Safeguarding landscape heritage

The European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000a) constitutes the international framework for landscape protection and management. The framework is further supported by the Florence Charter on historical gardens (Icomos, 1982), the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (Unesco, 2011), and the newly drafted Icomos-Ifla principles on rural landscapes as heritage (Icomos, 2017). These documents manifest a broadening of the concept of heritage, extending the notion from encompassing objects to urban districts, landscapes, and finally intangible heritage such as cultural traditions (Vecco, 2010; Goetcheus & Mitchell, 2014). They also elucidate a fundamental shift from protecting selected monuments to managing change in the whole built environment and using heritage as part of urban development (Janssen, Luiten, Renes, & Rouwendal, 2014). In Finland, like in many other countries, historical environments, including their landscapes, are further managed and protected by legislation, through national strategies such as the Cultural Environment Strategy (Ministry of Education and Culture & Ministry of Environment, 2014), and by urban planning instruments. These measures all seek to recognize landscape and green heritage and to establish an equilibrium between conservation and development.

Despite their established and seemingly self-evident status in present-day planning, landscapes are newcomers to the field of preservation. In legislation, they have long fallen between two stools – built heritage and nature conservation – and thus have lacked proper legal status (Riesto & Tjetjen, 2018, p. 247). Due to insufficient recognition, the instruments for protecting and managing landscapes have developed

slowly. For example, in Helsinki the recognition of historical landscapes began in the 1970s but was established as late as the end of the 1990s. Historical landscapes have been a constant battlefield for competing land uses; this is especially true of agricultural landscapes, with manors and farms giving way to intensive urban development in Helsinki. The rural landscape has deteriorated, as the sources of livelihood and the land ownership have changed in response to urbanization. Protecting cultural landscapes that have been shaped by agricultural land use has proved difficult in the urban context. The current focus on compact city policies and densification has further reinforced the tension between historical landscapes and urban development.

### 3.2 The confluence of conservation and urban development

The notion of a holistic approach towards heritage and urban development has been accentuated in international cultural policy documents since the 1960s (Veldpaus, Pereira Roders, & Colenbrander, 2013, p. 8). Since the 1990s, a growing interest in integrated heritage management has been seen in many countries (Janssen et al., 2014; Veldpaus, 2015; Stubbs & Makaš, 2011; Pereira & Bandarin, 2019). For example, English Heritage has stressed an integrated approach to managing the historic environment, and the Netherlands installed the Belvedere programme to stimulate the integration and use of cultural heritage in spatial redevelopment (Janssen et al., 2014; van der Valk, 2014). National policies, in addition to the international conventions and guidelines of UNESCO, acknowledge that heritage is recognized as a key resource for socioeconomic development and urban regeneration (Unesco, 2011; Icomos, 2011).

The confluence of heritage and urban development – understood as “new heritage” – also pertains to landscape. In particular, the Faro Convention and the European Landscape Convention present new heritage and landscape as holistic concepts “which bring together previously separate aspects of the world into a stronger whole” (Fairclough, 2009, p. 30). The recommendations on the Historic Urban Landscape, HUL, emphasize sustainable development in rapidly expanding urban centres using a “landscape approach,” by managing historical areas within their broader context. This context implies interrelationships between physical forms, their spatial organization and connections, their natural features and settings, and their social, cultural, and economic values (Unesco, 2011). A parallel concept in urban morphology presents landscape as a *palimpsest*, in which traces from the past interlace with those of the present and future and continuously modify them (Scazzosi, 2011, p. 10).

A landscape-based approach pertains not only to the scope of heritage but also to the practices of conservation. According to the Landscape Convention, “In seeking the right balance between protection, management and planning of a landscape, ... the aim is not the preservation or

‘freezing’ of the landscape at a particular point in its lengthy evolution” (Council of Europe, 2000b, p. 7). By focusing on the context and not on the object, the measures for sustainable management are expanded from traditional preservation and conservation to reuse, transformation, and the thoughtful management of change (Fairclough, 2009, p. 30; Veldpaus et al., 2013, p. 11). Similarly, a traditionally strict division between new construction and conservation in architecture is currently under transition, becoming more nuanced and containing different degrees of change between preservation, transformation, and alteration (Bock, 2011; Harlang, 2011). Historical elements are now regarded as an inspiring resource for urban development, which supports the sustainable utilization of natural resources and creates historically layered and visually interesting landscapes. In these new heritage practices, the notion of conservation expands from protecting existing values to creating new values (Olsson, 2003, p. 354). In the new paradigm, heritage protection is no longer the opposite of development; it is inherent to development and part of a larger, continuous, evolutionary process (Veldpaus et al., 2013, p. 12).

However, even though change is inherent to landscape, this does not mean that landscapes can be freely altered without questioning the limits beyond which historical values are physically destroyed or used in an instrumental way. In order to preserve and transmit the specific characters of each place, limits on growth and alteration have to be acknowledged (Scazzosi, 2011, p. 10). According to the European Landscape Convention, planning action or projects should comply with landscape quality objectives. Each action should not only match, but also be appropriate to, the features of the place (Council of Europe, 2008, part I). Furthermore, HUL states that special emphasis should be placed on the harmonious integration of contemporary interventions into the historic urban fabric (Unesco, 2011, p. 22).

Specific challenges can be identified when it comes to landscapes. For example, in Finnish legislation, landscape values are not recognized to the same extent as the value of the built cultural environment or nature. Furthermore, as Swensen & Jerpåsen (2008, p. 296) have demonstrated, heritage is still mainly understood in terms of individual objects and not as larger environments or landscapes. Landscapes, and their distinct characters as heritage, are complex, and their multidimensional values are difficult to capture in assessments. Landscape values encompass multiple divergent values - aesthetic, cultural, recreational, and natural values - which are hard to perceive as one entity (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Board, 2003; Plottu & Plottu, 2012). For the same reason, monitoring is fragmented into several administrative sectors (e.g. Janssen et al., 2014, p. 4). In urban areas, the challenges specifically address vast cultural landscapes in which land-use pressures have been particularly strong. Fields, meadows, and forest parks may be regarded as a waste of



land, and also as an environment that is alien to the urban lifestyle, even if they embody multifaceted historical, scenic, and recreational values (Hautamäki, 2019, p. 26-27).

#### 4. Case studies: Tuomarinkylä, Viikki, Puotila, Kumpula



**Tuomarinkylä** manor is an exceptionally intact landscape made up of manor buildings, parks, and fields along the Vantaa River at the northern edge of Helsinki. The city purchased the manor lands already in 1917, but the area has remained unbuilt, mainly due to its distance from urban clusters and the poor ground conditions of the river valley (Yrjänä, 2013, p. 64). The biggest change in the landscape was the motorway that was built in the late 1960s to the north of the manor, in addition to suburban development on the outskirts.

The manor has been designated as a nationally important cultural environment by the National Board of Antiquities and part of the nationally valuable landscape of Vantaa River valley by the Ministry of

**Figure 2 (top)**  
Tuomarinkylä manor landscape in 1950 (left) and 2011. 1. manor house and garden, 2. farmyard with farm buildings, 3. manor park, 4. fields, 5. Vantaa River, 6. riding centre, 7. centre for the Public Works Department.

SOURCE: AERIAL PHOTOS BY CITY OF HELSINKI. NUMBERS BY AUTHOR.

**Figure 3 (below)**  
The manor house of Tuomarinkylä (left), the historical landscape (middle) and the farmyard and riding centre (right).

SOURCE: PHOTOS BY AUTHOR



Environment. This status is acknowledged in the regional land-use plan of 2014 and several local detailed plans (1979, 1998, 2013). The first local plan of 1979 preserved the manor buildings, but it was only with the plan of 1998 that the larger entity was protected, including the garden, park, and the surroundings of the manor. It is also noteworthy that fields were designated as open landscapes for agricultural and recreational use. In the local plan of 2013, the protection regulations were further elaborated – many of the regulations set out in the previous plan stipulated that this was “area to be preserved” without specifying the rationale and objectives for conservation. Together with the developed conservation plan, a historical and vegetation survey was composed, accompanied later by the management plan for the Tuomarinkylä manor landscape (Perälä, Alapeteri, & Ruoff, 2011; Pimenoff, Tuomisaari, & Luontotieto Keiron Oy, 2011; Liski & Perälä, 2015). These documents have provided a profound basis for the conservation and sustainable management of the Tuomarinkylä historical landscape.

Despite its status, the comprehensive plan of 2016, which acted as a driver of densification in Helsinki, proposed urban development within the manor landscape. The aim was to densify the area along the planned rail connection through the fields lying southwest of the manor (City of Helsinki, 2015, p. 32). The comprehensive plan did not explicitly designate Tuomarinkylä or any other heritage sites and thus differed notably from the previous comprehensive plan of 2002, which identified the area as a culturally and historically significant landscape to be preserved. The proposed urban development threatened the integrity of the manor landscape and its scenic role as a landmark, in addition to the recreational and ecological values of the area. Because of these disadvantages, a strong opposition emerged, and the citizen movement called Pro Tuomarinkylä was established to save the manor. Consequently, several appeals were made and finally, after a long process in the Administrative Court and Supreme Court, the appeals were accepted (Decision

**Figure 4**  
The comprehensive plan 2016 with the new housing area and the proposed development marked in the aerial photo.

SOURCE: LEFT: TAPANI RAURAMO, KSV, CITY OF HELSINKI. RIGHT: CITY OF HELSINKI.



of Supreme Court, 2018, p. 74-76). The argument was that the planning contradicted the regional land-use plan, as it did not take into account the nationally valuable landscape. The decision was notable, and together with several other accepted appeals, it questioned the densification principles of the comprehensive plan.

The Tuomarinkylä main building was in residential use until the late 1950s, after which it was turned into a manorial museum operated by the Helsinki City Museum (Helminen-Nordberg, 1964, p. 124). For economic reasons, the museum and the restaurant in the adjacent building were closed in 2013 – despite strong opposition – and after a few years of searching for a suitable new tenant, a reception center and a restaurant were opened (Mannila, 2013; Erjonsalo, 2015). The entrepreneurs have changed a few times since then, and today an art school operates in the main building and a new restaurant in the adjacent building. Despite the economic challenges of keeping alive a cultural environment on the outskirts of the city, Tuomarinkylä manor encompasses a wide range of facilities that support safeguarding the historical values of the site. A riding school is situated in the farmyard of the manor, and a new farmyard has been built with new stables, a riding ring and the centre for the Public Works Department. The historical buildings for the former workers at the manor are now in residential use. The fields are cultivated by the city, and in the beginning of every July, city dwellers are invited for hay harvesting.

**Figure 5**  
Viikki manor landscape in 1950 (left) and 2011. 1. manor house, 2. university farm, 3. fields, 4. historic road, 5. new park, 6. university campus of the 1950s, 7. new university campus, 8. housing area, 9. nature reserve.

SOURCE: AERIAL PHOTOS BY CITY OF HELSINKI.  
NUMBERS BY AUTHOR.





The development of the **Viikki** manor landscape in the eastern Helsinki began as late as the 1990s when the land, owned by the state, was transferred to the city (Yrjänä, 2013, p. 189). Earlier, the state had built a university and model farm in the 1930s and a university campus for agriculture and forestry in the 1950s. The university farm, and the vast cultural landscape are designated as a nationally important cultural environment by the National Board of Antiquities. Moreover, the manor environment has been preserved by the government. In 1959, a nature conservation area was established in southern Viikki on the shore of Vanhankaupunginlahdi Bay. The nature reserve has been gradually enlarged; and in 2005 it was designated as a Natura 2000 site, which is part of the EU's major measures to safeguard biodiversity.

For the growing city, Viikki was a primary development project with ambitious expectations of a new university campus and an ecological residential area. Despite the targets for high-density development, the manor landscape with its vast agricultural fields was largely preserved and constituted a crucial part of the identity of the new district. When the planning of Viikki was launched, urban planning practices were rapidly advancing in the landscape, nature, and heritage sectors. The local master plan of 1995 and the subsequent local detailed plans took the

**Figure 6 (top)**  
Viikki manor fields and the manor house as the landmark (left) and the historic road turned into a campus street (right).

SOURCE: PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

**Figure 7 (below)**  
New development plans for Viikki. The manor is marked with a circle.

SOURCE: ESA KANGAS, KSV, CITY OF HELSINKI, 2015.



historical landscape into consideration on many levels. The local master plan comprised a landscape plan (1989) and a comprehensive environmental impact analysis (1990), which was the first environmental impact assessment for urban planning in Finland. Thanks to the measures recommended in the impact analysis, the extent of the built area was reduced, and the planned building projects south of the manor were abandoned (City of Helsinki, 1990, p. 51-53; Hemgård, 2014). The manor environment was designated as a park with a preservation status, and the fields were designated for agricultural land for research and education purposes. The road fragmenting the manor garden was relocated, which allowed a new park to be constructed next to the manor (Local master plan of Viikki, 1995). The historical road leading to the manor house was preserved as a street on the university campus, and the old trees along the road were protected in the local detailed plan of 2005.

The historical manor landscape and urban development together form a unique collage. The manor environment, adjacent to the new university campus, is a public park; and the main building has been turned into a university canteen, which links the manor functionally to the campus. Fields and a cattle farm, both managed by the university, provide an interesting contrast to the urban development areas, and they safeguard continuity for the cultivated and pasture landscape. The nature reserve area has significant ecological and recreational values. It is one of the most popular recreational areas and the most important nature conservation area and bird sanctuary in Helsinki. Despite the multiple values, the new comprehensive plan of 2016 proposed a major new development in the fields near the university farm. However, as in the case of Tuomarinkylä, the appeal against the construction was accepted by the Supreme Court (Decision of Supreme Court, 2018, p. 68-73). The rationale was the threat to the nature reserve near the proposed development.





The **Puotila** manor lands in the eastern part of Helsinki were purchased by the city in the early 1930s (Yrjänä, 2013, p. 84). The construction of the Puotila suburb began in the 1960s in a period of rapid urbanization. The local detailed plan of 1959 evidenced the turning point between forest city and compact city strategies, simultaneously articulating an organic spatial configuration and a square block structure (Kervanto Nevanlinna, 2012, p. 97). The urban plan was mainly based on the conception of one designer, who detected the value of the historical manor landscape and took it as a starting point (Sundström, 2014). The tree-lined avenue leading to the main building became the backbone of the composition, and the main road passing the manor was also preserved. The manor buildings were reserved for public use and the park for a recreational area. Former fields near the shore have been later turned into allotment gardens. Thanks to the open landscape, the significant view from the manor to the sea has been preserved.

**Figure 8 (top)**  
Puotila manor landscape in 1950 (left) and 2011. 1. manor house and garden, 2. manor park, 3. tree alley, 4. farmyard (left), the new housing area (right), 5. fields (left), allotment garden (right), 6. Puotila suburb from the 1960s.

SOURCE: AERIAL PHOTOS BY CITY OF HELSINKI. NUMBERS BY AUTHOR.

**Figure 9 (middle)**  
Puotila manor house (left), tree-lined avenue (middle) and the allotment garden in the former fields (right).

SOURCE: PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

**Figure 10 (below)**  
The new housing area in the former farmyard.

SOURCE: PEKKA HEIKKINEN, 2006.

Whilst Puotila manor does not have national heritage status like Tuomarinkylä and Viikki, it is designated as a locally valuable cultural environment. In the local detailed plan of 2000, the manor buildings and the garden were preserved. However, the entity of the landscape was not recognized, leaving out the manor forest park, the tree-lined avenue, and the open landscape in the former fields. Moreover, the plan allowed extensive new construction on the site. The proposed buildings near the main building and the granary have fortunately not been implemented as they would have had a major impact on the core of the historic manor. However, a low-density residential area in the former farmyard has been successfully integrated in the landscape. The scale, configuration, and detailing of the infill construction has been harmonized with the manor buildings as a modern interpretation of the farmyard.

Puotila manor is an illustrative example of a living heritage site that has a strong bond with the local community. The main building has been used as a restaurant since the 1970s, the adjacent building as a cafe, and the granary as a chapel established in 1963 (Donner & MA-Arkitehdit, 2007, p. 19-20). The manor park and allotment gardens provide recreational values for the community. The neighbourhood association has actively followed urban planning projects in the area, and a special association, The Friends of Puotila Manor, has been established to foster the history of the manor and support neighbourhood activity in the area.

Even though Puotila today seems to constitute living heritage, with its diverse residential activity, the situation in the early 2010s was different, when the city started to sell historic properties, including the Puotila manor. The rationale behind the property sales was a shift in the city's real-estate policy and the aim to eliminate extra costs due to the high maintenance and restoration costs of historical buildings (Helsinki City Board, 2012). The selling process was problematic, as an appropriate restaurant entrepreneur with an interest in heritage was not easy to find (Pentikäinen, 2012). The city also considered the option of converting the building to residential use, but the idea was rejected by the residents who feared that it would restrict the public use of the area (Kangasniemi, 2012). Finally, a decision was made to sell the manor and adjacent building to actors with the idea of developing the place into a cultural centre. The restored manor restaurant opened its doors in 2014 (Rissanen, 2014).





The **Kumpula** manor and its grounds are located in a valley, between the suburban area and the inner city of Helsinki. The manor was among the first land acquisitions by the city at the end of the 19th century (Yrjänä, 2013, p. 43). In the 1930s, an allotment garden was built in the fields of the manor, which promoted the position of the area as an unbuilt recreational zone. The park-like nature of the area was strengthened in the local master plan of 1984, and a botanical garden was proposed to be located on the grounds of the manor. The manor buildings have been renovated for the university, and a new botanical garden has been built as a natural extension of the historical manorial park. Thanks to its usage, the manor has become an attraction in its neighbourhood.

The plan for Kumpula was drafted in the 1980s, when landscape planning was establishing itself in the urban planning process, and an extensive study of green and recreational areas (1982) preceded the local master plan. The plan proposed major urban development, but as they were carefully situated, these new areas preserved the status of the Kumpula manor and the green belt. A low-density residential area was designed to the west of the manor and a high-rise university campus was proposed to be located on the cliff to the north of the manor house. In the later local detailed plan of the campus (2003), the height of the university buildings

**Figure 11 (top)**  
Kumpula manor landscape in 1950 (left) and 2011. 1. manor house, 2 manor park, 3. fields (left), recreation area (right), 4. allotment garden, 5. botanical garden, 6. university campus, 7. housing area, 8. former railroad.

SOURCE: AERIAL PHOTOS BY CITY OF HELSINKI. NUMBERS BY AUTHOR.

**Figure 12 (below)**  
Kumpula manor house (left) and the allotment garden in the former fields (right).

SOURCE: PHOTOS BY AUTHOR



behind the manor was lowered in order to maintain the landmark position of the manor and preserve its forest hill as an intact background.

Kumpula manor is designated as a regionally valuable cultural environment, but only a few manor buildings – and not the site as a whole – have been protected in the local detailed plan (1987). However, the allotment garden was preserved in the local detailed plan of 2012. In the comprehensive plan of 2002, the valley, including the manor environment, was acknowledged as a culturally and historically significant landscape. Even though the status is not a preservation regulation, it has been influential. In 2012, the city decided to build a bus road across the valley, between the manor and the allotment garden. The street was to be built on a former railroad; therefore, the city assessed the impact as being minor. However, the local residents expressed strong opposition, and the Centre for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment made an appeal on the final local detailed plan on the basis of the recreational and historical significance, designated in the comprehensive plan. Consequently, the city council had to suspend the project (Helsinki City Board, 2012; Local detailed plan draft, 2010). Nevertheless, the traffic connection was discussed again in 2016, when the comprehensive plan proposed a new rail connection across the valley. Even though the rail cuts through the valley and restricts its recreational use, it has a greater social acceptance than the bus road. In spring 2019, the city council approved the local detailed plan, and it seems that the project is proceeding (Jokinen, 2019).

**Figure 13**  
The plan for the bus road across the valley (left) and the road marked in the aerial photo (right).

SOURCE: LEFT: CITY OF HELSINKI, 2010. RIGHT: AERIAL PHOTO BY CITY OF HELSINKI.



## 5. Discussion and conclusions: towards integrated and holistic heritage management

### 5.1. Manor landscapes in urban and heritage planning

This study of the manor landscapes of Helsinki demonstrates that, from the 1990s onwards, practices of conservation have been broadened in order to embrace historical landscapes and green areas in Helsinki. As Swensen & Jerpåsen (2008, p. 298) have concluded in their study on Norwegian suburban areas, cultural heritage registers, competence, and understanding of heritage questions, as well as effective cooperation between different administrative departments, and engagement among local citizens all promote the management of cultural heritage. The case study of Helsinki confirms these findings and evinces that manor landscapes have been taken into account on many levels. The national, regional, and local inventories recognize several manorial parks and gardens, in addition to the most intact agricultural landscapes surrounding the manors. The historic gardens and landscapes have been recognized in comprehensive planning and local detailed planning regulations, in addition to conservation of historical buildings and parks. Moreover, historical values have been managed by urban planning and the adaptive reuse of environments, which have both generated also new values. The study emphasizes that all these dimensions are relevant for the sustainable management of landscape and green heritage.

Even though the case areas of Helsinki accentuate successful models for integrating historical landscapes into the urban structure, the study also reveals conflicts. Several manorial buildings have been demolished, gardens have been destroyed, and fields have been built over. The encounter of historical landscapes and urban development has been – and still is – full of tensions in rapidly growing cities, where conservation objectives compete over appropriate land use (e.g. Swensen & Jerpåsen, 2008; Jones, 2009). The strong emphasis that has been placed on densification since the 2010s has increased the degree of confrontation between historical values and growth in Helsinki. The new comprehensive plan does not include any specific designation for culturally valuable heritage even though the previous plan of 2002 clearly demonstrated their status. The pressure has been particularly hard on cultural landscapes in peri-urban areas. Agricultural land is seldom given a strong protection status, even though such areas are an integral part of the most intact manor landscapes. Additionally, since the 2010s the city has sold numerous historical properties for economic reasons. Converting historical buildings into private properties is an increasingly common phenomenon that is particularly problematic if the building is located in a public park. Although many manor buildings have found an appropriate use, ownership changes and the sale of sites to private owners remain a threat.



## 5.2. Implications for urban planning

The case studies from Helsinki examined in this article reveal that in addition to conservation measures, urban planning has major importance in fostering historical landscapes and managing their future. The results demonstrate that even if entire manor landscapes cannot be preserved in an urban environment, they can provide a central starting point for urban development and be meaningfully integrated into the suburban fabric. The transformation of the agricultural landscape into suburbs and residential areas has led to interesting configurations that have safeguarded the cultural meanings embedded in landscapes, even when authentic physical entities have not been preserved. The transformation has created new typologies of urbanized manor landscapes with recreational parks, allotment gardens, community centres, restaurants, and reception centers. Adaptive reuse and a site-sensitive planning approach that is anchored in history has contributed to preserving landscape heritage and also created new scenic and social values and new ways of using heritage. Together with heritage-led planning, the conservation methods have advanced and supported the recognition of landscape and green heritage, which nowadays is acknowledged as an integral part of Helsinki's identity (e.g. City of Helsinki, 2014).

Despite their specific differences, the four case study areas have several similarities: Landscape has been a key driver of the development strategy, from early policy discussions to final implementation. The case study areas also manifest an interplay between the urban structure and the manor in their urban configuration. The study highlights five relevant aspects in their urban planning: (1) manors as a source of identity, (2) the respectful use of manorial landscape structures, (3) safeguarding the cultural meanings of manor landscapes, (4) community engagement, and (5) manor sites in public and appropriate use.

Manor landscapes contribute to the identity of their neighbourhoods, being visually and functionally embedded in the new district. The manor provides the new city structure with historical depth and yields opportunities for diverse activities. The manor, especially the main building, has traditionally been a landmark, which is visible from a distance and constitutes a key element in the identity of a district. In order to preserve its status as a landmark, sufficient spaciousness – surrounding green areas and open spaces – is required. Additionally, the case studies considered here evince multiple examples of the respectful use of manorial landscape structures in the urban fabric: manor gardens as recreational parks, fields as allotment gardens, and historical tree avenues as main roads. The use of historical elements supports resource-wise, site-sensitive, and heritage-led planning.

The cultural meanings of manor landscapes can be safeguarded on several levels. The former position of the manor as the heart of the

village can be made visible through new uses and community engagement. The agricultural use has continued and transformed into public hayfields and allotment gardens. The link to the community is manifested not only through activities and the use of facilities, but also through a strong community spirit, anchored in the history of the neighbourhood. Moreover, community engagement has expressed itself as powerful citizen activism in urban planning. Finally, the study highlights the importance of appropriate and public use of manor environments, in ways that recognize and safeguard historical values and the historical significance of the sites in question. In addition, public use ensures that cultural heritage remains accessible to the residents, linking manor environments more closely to surrounding communities.

The equilibrium between continuity and change constitutes the basic storyline of urbanization. With a deep understanding of landscape heritage and a future-oriented strategy of change management, historical landscapes can be meaningfully integrated into urbanized society. In the face of an accelerating urbanization, historical landscapes represent continuity. They embrace not only knowledge of the past, but also constitute a source of inspiration for future landscapes (Antrop, 2005, p. 31-32). A sustainable future is built on a historical continuum.

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Ranja Hautamäki (D.Sc. Architecture) works as Associate Professor in Landscape Architecture at the department of architecture, Aalto University, Finland. Her field is landscape planning and society, including green planning and management, in addition to historical landscapes. She has a 13-year professional background as the head of the landscape planning unit at the City of Tampere where she was responsible for numerous restoration projects, in addition to green planning strategies and landscape plans related to urban planning. Her research has focused on historical landscapes and green structure in urban planning context, especially related to densification. Her dissertation on urban manor landscapes in Helsinki was published in 2016.