



## Fact sheet for planning levels

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## Facts: Municipal Plan for Aarhus 2017. General Structure

### Legal basis

- Planning Act (*Planloven*) LBK nr. 1157 of 1 July 2020.
- Danish municipalities are required to prepare municipal plans (*kommuneplaner*) and set out planning regulations in local land-use plans (*lokalplaner*).

### Competences

- Municipal authorities are responsible for preparing binding municipal plans pursuant to the Planning Act §11.
- The municipal plan 2017 for Aarhus was developed according to the municipal planning provisions of the Planning Act.

### Binding force

- The municipal plan is binding on local planning. Proposals for local plans as well as land-use decisions must therefore be consistent with the provisions stipulated in the municipal plan.
- The municipal plan is not binding on landowners, but the municipal council must strive to implement it.

### Tasks and content

- In accordance with the Planning Act §11, the municipal plan should consist of:
  1. a general structure (*hovedstruktur*) which sets out the overall objectives for development and land-use within the municipality;
  2. guidelines for land use (*retningslinjer for arealanvendelsen*); and
  3. a framework for the content of local plans (*rammer for lokalplanernes indhold*) for individual areas within the municipality.
- The general structure of the municipal plan 2017 is a comprehensive synthesis of the content of the plan, which serves as a gateway to the more detailed content. It includes detailed maps to show the municipal council's objectives for strategic development and land use. In this case, the general structure is presented alongside the guidelines.
- The general structure is divided into six sections:
  1. The first section provides a general explanation concerning the rationale behind a municipal plan.
  2. The second section, entitled 'Smart Growth', sets the tone and strategic direction of the plan while elaborating on its main objectives. Four objectives are emphasised, namely i) ensuring the frameworks for economic growth and a pleasant everyday life within the municipality, ii) securing a social balance within the city, iii) saving resources by focusing on 'closer' development, and iv) ensuring a robust city.
  3. The third section, entitled 'The Great Story of Development in Aarhus', introduces the strategic spatial aspect of the plan by providing a spatial image of the municipality which makes use of spatial concepts. The image suggests that smart growth in the Aarhus municipality should take place by prioritising urban growth i) along a series of 'growth axes' (*vækstakser*), ii) at densification nodes in proximity to light rail stations, iii) in new suburban towns, and iv) in the centres of old suburbs.
  4. The fourth section entitled 'Aarhus – A Growing City and City Region' places the emphasis on the East Jutland city region (Den østjyske byregion), which is comprised of 12 municipalities. The section also highlights Business Region Aarhus – the political interest organisation serving as a catalyst for growth and development in the city region.
  5. The fifth section entitled 'City Quality and Liveability for All' provides detailed maps for strategic development and land use as well as guidelines in relation to the following thematic elements: the mixed city with stronger centre areas, mixed neighbourhoods, street spaces and city life, recreational areas, urban landscapes and forests, green and blue infrastructures, connections across districts and rural areas, cultural environment areas, the visual environment (architecture and high buildings), and common spaces.
  6. The sixth and last section is the most detailed part of the general structure. Entitled 'The Gear for the Greater City', it sets the objectives and guidelines for the overall spatial planning in relation to urban development, water resources, landscape, and nature. Detailed maps for urban development are provided in relation to i) urban growth and priority axes and areas, ii) new cities and other larger urban development

sites, iii) housing, iv) business and environmental considerations, v) agriculture, vi) retail, vii) mobility and traffic, viii) noise considerations in planning, and ix) technical facilities.

- The guidelines for land use are intended to materialise the objectives of the general structure. The guidelines cover a diverse range of themes as stipulated by the Planning Act. For instance, the municipal plan for Aarhus includes specific guidelines to safeguard nature conservation interests (Natura 2000 sites), to site technical facilities, to make use of water resources, to locate business areas, and so forth.
- The framework for the content of local plans establishes the link to local planning while addressing what a local plan can and should decide for a specific area. The framework is thereby aimed at ensuring a cohesive urban structure in compliance with the municipal authorities' overall objectives.

#### Process, duration, participation

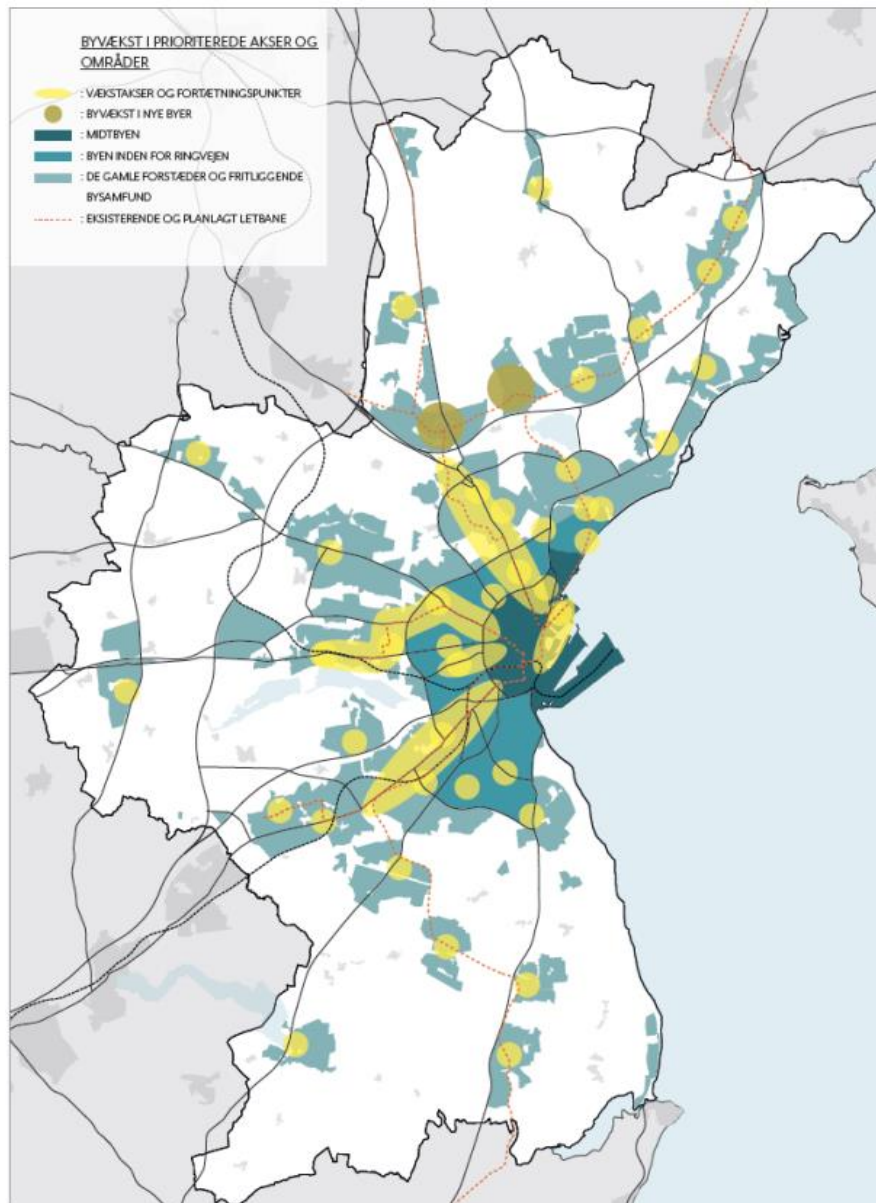
- The municipal planning process comprises a series of stages determined by the Planning Act:
  1. Preliminary debate every fourth year
    - Information on previous planning
    - Strategy for planning
    - Period of public consultation of at least eight weeks
  2. Preparation of the planning proposal (forslag)
    - The plan proposal should be prepared after the planning strategy is adopted.
    - It is prepared in collaboration with inter alia other public authorities, citizens, and NGOs.
    - The planning proposal is based on the strategy and usually takes a point of departure in the revision of the existing municipal plan.
    - The planning proposal can take different forms depending on the municipality in question. It can either comprise the entire municipality; a specific aspect, such as the retail trade, urban regeneration, business, transport or housing; or an individual area of the municipality, such as one or more areas of a town or villages, old harbour districts or a town centre.
  3. Publication of the planning proposal
    - The period of public consultation and objections lasts at least eight weeks
    - Submission to public authorities
    - The minister is obliged to object (on behalf of the government) to local planning proposals that conflict with overall national interests.
  4. Adoption of the municipal plan  
Consideration of objections, negotiation of proposals for amendments
  5. Publication of the municipal plan  
Both the proposals as well as the adopted plans are published digitally on the municipality's website and on Plandata.dk, which is Denmark's digital register for spatial plans (both local and municipal):  
<http://kort.plandata.dk/spatialmap>
  6. Administration of the plan  
The local authority strives to implement the plan
- After the adoption of Aarhus's Planning Strategy 2015 entitled 'Smart Growth Towards 2050' (*Planstrategi 2015 – Klog vækst frem mod 2050*) in 2016, the municipal council decided to implement a full revision of the municipal plan.
- In municipal planning, procedures for public participation are ensured both before and after the plan proposal is issued.
- Appeals can be lodged only in regard to legal and procedural issues. The content of the plans is not subject to appeal.







#### Duration of validity

- The document has a time horizon of 12 years as stipulated by the Planning Act

## Details of the plan

## Aarhus Strategic Plan 2019 (Aarhus Municipality 2019)

**Legend:**Urban Growth in Prioritised Axes and Areas

-  Growth axes and nodes of densification
-  Urban growth in new cities
-  City centre
-  City within the ring road
-  Old suburbs and detached urban communities
-  Existing and planned light rail

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## Characteristics

### Location of the area

- The plan covers the whole municipality of Aarhus, which is located in the administrative region of Central Denmark (*Region Midjylland*) on the east coast of the Jutland peninsula.
- Aarhus is Denmark's second largest city with a population of 350,000 inhabitants. The area covered by the municipal plan comprises a total of 470 km<sup>2</sup>.

### Initial situation

- The municipal plan 2017 for Aarhus is the result of a full revision of the municipal plan 2013, which was itself a result of a partial revision of the municipal plan 2009.

### Particularities of the process

- A new planning strategy for Aarhus was published in 2019 with the aim to support the municipality's goals, visions, values, and policies on the strategic development of the city.
- While the strategy is aligned with the previous planning strategy 2015 as well as the municipal plan 2017, it also stresses that the latter is to be partially revised in relation to nine specific aspects: housing areas, conversion to green energy, coherence between natural areas, the countryside, green and blue infrastructures, windmills and solar power plants, business areas, retail planning and flooding and erosion. The regeneration of *Spritfabrikken* will significantly contribute to the completion of Aalborg's waterfront, which has gone through several waves of redevelopment since the 1990s (Galland, Hansen 2012). The transformation of *Spritfabrikken* similarly contributes to Aalborg's identity as 'The city by the fjord', which was the long-term planning strategy pursued by Aalborg Municipality back in the late 1990s (Aalborg Municipality 1999).

## Further information and links

Aarhus Municipality (2017). Aarhus Municipal Plan 2017: General Structure and Guidelines for Land Use (in Danish): <https://aarhus.viewer.dkplan.niras.dk/plan/2#/1152%20> (19 January 2022)

Aarhus Municipality (2017). Aarhus Municipal Plan 2017: Frameworks for Local Planning (in Danish). <https://aarhus.viewer.dkplan.niras.dk/plan/2#/1554> (Accessed 19 January 2022)

Aarhus Municipality (2019). Strategic Plan 2019. Wise growth towards 2050 – Focus on selected themes (Planstrategi 2019. Klog vækst frem mod 2050 – Fokus på udvalgte temaer). Aarhus: Aarhus Municipality. <https://aarhus.viewer.dkplan.niras.dk/plan/2#/1556> (Accessed 19 January 2022)

Local Plans in Aarhus (in Danish): <https://aarhus.viewer.dkplan.niras.dk/plan/3#/>