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Ideological planning rationales and hegemonic dominance

Investigating strategic planning documents by Randers Municipality

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Abstract:

Ideological planning rationales regarding social inclusion, diversity, and citizen participation are often neglected and hegemonically overshadowed by planning rationales embedded in neoliberal and environmentalist ideologies. The reasons hereto are attributed to an institutionalized growth paradigm and increasing environmental concerns regarding climate change. As Randers Municipality is struggling to maintain its position as the sixth largest municipality in Denmark as well as dealing with climate issues such as storm surges and centennial events through rising sea levels in the river of Randers, this research will, through a two-part analysis, investigate to what extent ideological planning rationales from the three currently prevalent ideologies, i.e., neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participatory democracy, are present in the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and, subsequently, in the urban development project 'the River Town of Randers'.

This research is positioned within critical realism, and the background for the preparation of the analyses is the establishment of a theoretical framework that contributes with knowledge regarding how ideological planning rationales are expressed in strategic planning documents as well as an analytical framework that guides the analyses. This research is concluded with a number of recommendations on how the River Town of Randers can be planned and developed in a socially inclusive manner.

Preface

This research is the result of a master's thesis on the civil engineering degree M.Sc. Urban Planning and Management at the Department of Planning at Aalborg University concerning ideological planning rationales and hegemonic dominance in strategic municipal planning.

This research contains seven chapters in addition to the table of contents, reference list, and appendices. This research applies references through the Harvard method, i.e., an author is referenced as (author, year). With three or more authors, those are referenced as (author name et al., year). The reference list and the appendices are provided at the back of this research. The tables and figures applied in this research are numbered by the chapter in which they appear, i.e., figure 3.1 indicates that this figure is appearing in chapter three and is also the first figure to appear in that chapter. Figures and tables created by the author are denoted 'own illustration', whereas other figures and tables are provided with source references.

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Keywords:

Neoliberalism, environmentalism, participatory democracy, strategic planning, Randers municipality

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Introduction 1

Urban planning is a multifaceted and complex discipline that shapes cities' development and spatial organization, addressing various social, economic, and environmental challenges. At its core, urban planning involves making decisions about land use, infrastructure, transportation, public spaces, etc., to create sustainable and livable communities [Gunder, 2010]. However, urban planning processes are not solely driven by technical considerations and objective assessments. They are also profoundly influenced by ideologies and ideological planning rationales that reflect the values, beliefs, and political perspectives of planners and decision-makers[Freeden, 2001]. The field of urban planning has witnessed a shift from purely technocratic approaches to recognizing the significance of ideological underpinnings in shaping urban spaces, and it is now widely acknowledged that urban planning is not a value-neutral exercise but rather a reflection of societal values, interests, and power dynamics [Gunder, 2010]. Therefore, investigating the role of ideologies becomes essential in comprehending the broader implications of urban planning decisions.

In a Danish context, national spatial planning has undergone a significant transformation, shifting from a focus on expanding the welfare state and promoting equal growth throughout the country to prioritizing the development of competitive cities by investing in larger urban regions [Olesen, 2014]. During the 1980s, numerous Danish cities faced dilapidation due to de-industrialization, leading to declining tax revenues, a shrinking middle class, and inadequate investment in several major cities. These challenges prompted a shift toward a more growth-oriented approach to planning, with a strong emphasis on the economy [Tasan-Kok and Baeten, 2012]. The driving force behind these changes in spatial planning was globalization, which drove the centralization of socio-economic activities, and this shift introduced a growth-first perspective, prioritizing job creation and attracting investments as the primary goals. Welfare concerns were relegated to a secondary position, and efficiency and competition between cities to attract investments became influential factors in urban development and decision-making processes [Peck and Tickell, 2002].

This new approach to spatial planning reflects a paradigm shift, as economic considerations take precedence over social welfare concerns in the pursuit of urban development. The focus is now on fostering economic growth, securing investments, and enhancing the competitiveness of cities, and this transformation in national spatial planning strategies has profound implications for urban development policies and decision-making processes in Denmark [Peck and Tickell, 2002; Olesen, 2014]. By understanding the historical context and the driving forces behind this evolution in spatial planning, it is possible to gain insights into the priorities and challenges associated with promoting economic growth and competitiveness in Danish cities. This understanding is essential for formulating effective strategies that balance economic development with social welfare considerations, ultimately leading to more sustainable and inclusive urban environments.

1.1   Problem Statement and Research Question

This research will focus on the investigation of ideological planning rationales in a range of strategic planning documents created by Randers Municipality. By analyzing these strategic planning documents, this research aims to uncover the ideological planning rationales that constitute the basis for the strategic planning in Randers Municipality as well as the development of the project 'the River Town of Randers. The research question which guides this research is as follows:

> **How have different ideological planning rationales affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality, and to what extent are the planning rationales of 'the River Town of Randers' socially inclusive?**

To support the research question and to structure this research, three sub-questions have been created, and each sub-question will subsequently be addressed in three different chapters. The sub-questions are as follows:

> - *What constitutes an ideology, and what are the prevalent ideologies within current urban planning?*
> - *How are these prevalent ideological planning rationales expressed in the overall strategic planning documents, and in the urban development project 'the River Town of Randers'?*
> - *How can 'the River Town of Randers' become a socially inclusive place that encompasses diversity in housing, functions, and residential composition?*

Each of these sub-questions addresses, respectively, the theoretical chapter, the two analytical chapters, and the discussion chapter *(see figure 3.2)*.

1.2   Structure of the thesis

This research is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** will unfold the theoretical concepts of neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participatory democracy to establish an analytical framework that will be applied to the empirical case of the River Town of Randers.
- **Chapter 3** presents the scientific stance of this research, the methodological approach to collecting and analyzing data, and the research design.
- **Chapter 4** contains part I of the analysis. In this chapter, the analytical framework is applied to strategic documents from Randers Municipality to assess which planning rationales form the basis for the strategic spatial planning of the city.
- **Chapter 5** contains part II of the analysis. In this chapter, it is investigated to which degree the planning rationales found in chapter 4 are present in the case of the River Town of Randers.
- **Chapter 6** discusses a series of recommendations that are aimed at transforming the River Town of Randers into a more socially inclusive and diverse city district. These recommendations seek to address multiple objectives, including accommodating future residential growth, incorporating citizen input and desires to a certain extent, and facilitating a change in the residential composition within vulnerable areas.
- **Chapter 7** presents and summarizes the findings of this research.
- **Appendix A** contains a figure summarizing the content of the strategic planning documents investigated in this research.

Theoretical framework 2

Ideology has always been a component within planning [Xue, 2022] and this ideological component encompassed in planning; *"[...] largely reflects each dominant ideology of the time"* [Gunder, 2010, p. 309]. Throughout history, we have witnessed various approaches to urban planning, and these approaches include the rational scientific management of cities, the incorporation of values through communicative planning, and currently, a significant influence of the expanding capitalist market [Gunder, 2010]. According to Sager [2015], three dominant ideologies shape contemporary planning and urban geography: *neoliberalism*, *environmentalism*, and *participatory democracy*. These ideologies play a crucial role in shaping the principles and practices of modern-day planning. Drawing on an extensive literature review, the primary objective of this theoretical framework is to unfold these three predominant ideologies by examining some of the underlying concepts they entail. Additionally, the theoretical framework aims to synthesize these ideologies into an analytical framework, which is to be employed in the analysis of the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and in the analysis of the River Town of Randers. The intention is to explore the planning rationales derived from the three predominant ideologies that serve as the foundation for the strategic spatial planning in Randers Municipality. Moreover, the analytical framework seeks to assess the extent to which these rationales are reflected in the development of the River Town of Randers.

2.1   Ideologies

In order to explore the three predominant ideologies in contemporary planning and urban geography, it is crucial to establish a clear understanding of the concept of ideology and its components. The term 'ideology' was originally introduced by Antoine Destutt de Tracy in 1796, defining it as 'the scientific examination of ideas'. However, as the 20th century progressed, this original meaning underwent significant changes and lost its original connotation [Gunder, 2010]. The concept of what constitutes an ideology has been subjected to; *"[...] a range of different, partly incompatible, interpretations"* [Freeden, 2001, p. 1], e.g., Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels offered a distinct perspective on ideology, grounding it in socioeconomic capitalist systems. According to their conception, ideology serves as a tool the ruling class uses to subjugate and exert dominance over the majority. In this view, ideology takes on an inverted form that reflects social contradictions, enabling repressive capitalist practices, such as the notion of a 'free' market, to appear liberating [Freeden, 2001; Gunder, 2010]. Later on, Marxists used the term ideology to denote a; *"[...] conspiratorial ideational wool pulled over the eyes of the masses"* [Martin, 2015, p. 2], to which this was further emphasized by the Marxist Antonio Gramsci who recognized ideology as; *"[...] a conception of the World consolidated by intellectuals, directing social and political practices [...]"* [Freeden, 2001, p. 2]. Furthermore, the work of Gramsci also introduced the concept of hegemony to ideology, i.e.; *"how dominant beliefs come to engage with and accommodate wider society and its popular thinking"* [Gunder, 2010, p. 300], and this was primarily based on the political power struggles of the 19th and 20th century. Karl Mannheim's interpretation of

ideology assisted in changing the conception of ideology as he accepted both the social and the historical aspects of ideology from the Marxist conception of ideology, but he also argued that ideology is contrasted with utopia, to which ideology becomes a transformative set of ideas relative to the sociohistorical location of the thinker [Freeden, 2001].

During the late 19th century, there was a growing recognition of ideas' influential role in shaping political action and organizing political parties along with their respective programs [Metzger et al., 2020]. This led to the domination of competing political ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, and conservatism in various forms within the European political landscape [Freeden, 2001]. The concept of ideology now encompassed belief systems and thought structures imposed upon subjugated populations, as fascism and communism, derived from socialism, competed for dominance against conservatism and liberalism on a global scale [Freeden, 2001]. Furthermore, both Žižek and Laclau attribute 'lack' to their theory of ideology, rendering the concept of 'lack' to be regarded as something which causes ideological effects as it constitutes desire, and therefore it can explain; *"the mechanisms of hegemony in dominant ideologies"* [Gunder, 2010, p. 307]. The lack of, e.g., sustainability, competitiveness, safety, etc., can be a powerful political and technical tool to create a need for response and action as no one wants to live in a 'deficient' city. Therefore, identifying the lack or a shortfall of something and articulating an ideological resolution is a powerful (political) tool to implement specific planning policies or uphold or create new institutions, etc. [Gunder, 2010].

Foucault provides a different interpretation of ideology, as he understands the concept of ideology to be neither positive nor negative; it is solely the use of ideology that determines its influence on social purposes - be it positive or negative [Gunder, 2010]. Foucault argues that this is due to ideology coexisting with the knowledge practiced at the time as; *"every society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth"* [Gunder, 2010, p. 304]. Therefore, Foucault is ushering us to move away from the use of both ideology and hegemony as these concepts encompass sovereignty in terms of both governments, ideas, and people. However, according to [Gunder, 2010], a fatal flaw in Foucault's abandonment of ideology and hegemony is that he fails to bridge power to the materialization of causal effects in the world as; *"[...] we still reside in a global culture steeped in transcendent ideals of a better world, a world shaped by ideology"* (p. 304), to which the failure of explaining the emergence of power and the mechanisms ascribed hereto is flawing the argument made by Foucault to abandon the concepts of ideology and hegemony. Apart from the sociological and political interpretations of the concept of ideology, throughout time, anthropological, semantic, and linguistic interpretations of ideology have arisen as well, and according to Eagleton [1994], at least 15 possible definitions of ideology have been acknowledged and are in current circulation in the scholarly society. Eagleton [1994] does, however, pinpoint that some of the conceptions of ideology are contradictory, e.g., if; *"ideology means any set of beliefs motivated by social interests, then it cannot simply signify the dominant forms of thought in a society"* (p. 17). This research will look no further into the different conceptions of ideology; instead, a philosophically neutral interpretation and definition provided by Sager [2015] will be applied, which states that an ideology is;

> *"[...] a set of ideas or beliefs that form the basis of an economic or political theory or that are held by a particular group or person"* (p. 270).

After establishing how ideologies are defined and interpreted in this research, the forthcoming sections will concentrate on identifying the prevailing ideologies in contemporary urban planning. Therefore, the forthcoming sections will explore the extent to which these ideologies intersect as well as examine potential conflicts that may arise among them.

2.2 Ideologies in urban planning

Throughout time urban planning has been influenced by many different ideologies, and these ideologies all share the common goal of influencing the planning of cities based on different values, ideas, or beliefs. However, what makes ideologies in urban planning stand out from other concepts like, e.g., institutions or culture, is that ideology; *"[...] simply captures and highlights power dynamics relating to struggles of political influence in a more explicit way than many other related concepts"* [Metzger et al., 2020, p. 3]. This statement resonates with Marshall [2020], who argues that planning and politics have always been interrelated as planning is affected by political agendas and that planning needs to serve the political regimes in power. Planning is, therefore, rooted in both ideology and politics. Moreover, in terms of ideological evolution, and thereby the emergence of different ideologies within urban planning, Marshall [2020] argues that there; *"[...] is no simple or pure core to any of the primary ideologies [...], and this is even less the case for numerous hybrids or variants of these ideologies"* (p. 14). This claim is supported by Metzger et al. [2020], who argues that the unstable and dynamical character inherent in ideology causes ideologies to be prone to evolution, thereby paving the way for hybrids or variants of ideologies to emerge.

Historically, some of the major ideologies in urban planning are modernism (1950s-1960s), postmodernism (1970s), new urbanism (1980s-1990s), and smart growth (2000s) [Filion, 1999; Wey and Hsu, 2014]. However, due to ideologies being prone to evolution and to influence from external factors, other ideologies have emerged as well, such as citizen participation (1960s-70s) [Arnstein, 1969], neoliberalism (1980s) [Sager, 2011], environmental planning (1990s) [Keene, 2015], and diversity planning (2000s) [Fainstein, 2005]. It is important to note that this is by far not a complete list of ideologies, but it showcases some of the major and dominant ideologies within urban planning. Furthermore, it is also important to note that ideologies are often interwoven as the planning rationales embedded within these ideologies can be either complementary, competitive, or even conflicting [Foley, 1960]. Moreover, when conducting urban planning, different ideologies and, thereby, different planning rationales, may be drawn upon either one at a time or simultaneously creating various 'mixes' and, hence, the outcome can be the emergence or the evolution of new ideologies [Foley, 1960]. In regards to drawing upon different ideologies at the same time when practicing urban planning, Campbell [1996] discusses the role of the planner in terms of navigating between being an economic planner, an environmental planner, and an equity planner. Each planner emphasizes a separate ideology from which multiple conflicts arise. However, in the article Campbell [1996] highlights the fact that a planner needs to be aware of and balance multiple different ideologies in order to create growing, 'green', and equitable cities. Therefore, with Metzger et al. [2020] arguing that; *"[...] sustainable development is the now dominant spatial planning narrative"* (p. 7), with Sager [2015] discussing; *"[...] the allegedly hegemonic status of the neo-liberal ideology in the city planning"* (p. 271) and with Fainstein [2005] stating that; *"diversity represents the new guiding principle for city planners"* (p. 3), the forthcoming sections will investigate three prevalent ideologies identified in recent urban planning. This investigation will be conducted by unfolding some of the concepts embedded in these ideologies in order to construct and provide an analytical framework that can identify and assess the planning rationales of Randers Municipalities' strategic planning.

2.3 Neoliberalism

The first ideology to be explored is neoliberalism, and since the 1970s and 80s, this political-economic ideology has come to influence the Western world significantly [Olesen, 2014], to a degree where it has

become an institutionalized and default logic in terms of public policy-making in many societies today [Schram, 2018]. Since the oil crisis and the economic recession in the 1970s; *"the global capitalist system has become increasingly neoliberalized"* [Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 342], and neoliberalism is most centrally reflected in its critique of the welfare-state and Keynesianism - which rests on the idea that only the state is powerful enough to counter market fluctuations [Schram, 2018]. Historically, the ideology of neoliberalism arose in the 1970s as an opposition to said Keynesianism and Keynesian welfare politics, and especially since the early 1980s, liberalization, deregulation, and state retrenchment are processes that have been imposed on multiple spatial scales, ranging from global to local and everywhere in between [Brenner and Theodore, 2002], and this; *"[...] multifaceted, multiscalar dynamic of neoliberalization has entailed the loosening or dismantling of the various institutional constraints upon marketization, commodification, the hyperexploitation of workers, and the discretionary power of private capital [...]"* [Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 342]. In Denmark, post World War II, the distribution of functions and resources was distributed proportionately all over the country, and there was a focus on ensuring equal conditions for all through geographically scattered public organizations, private companies, recreational areas, and infrastructure [Carter et al., 2015]. However, instead of ensuring equal development and growth through prioritizing geographical redistribution, neoliberalism entails increased attention to the country's largest urban regions and cities to strengthen certain geographical positions and their competitiveness.

Neoliberalism can, therefore, be understood as a restructuring of the relationship between the state and the private sector capital owners [Sager, 2011], who rationalize and accommodate the growth-oriented approach to urban development, to which neoliberalism; *"[...] refers to the repudiation of welfare-state economics and the ascendance of market liberalization"* [Sager, 2015, p. 271]. In this regard, freedom of choice, individualism, and entrepreneurialism are central values. This is due to neoliberalism being shaped by international capital mobility and economic globalization to which; *"[...] fewer restrictions on business operations, extended property rights, privatization, deregulation, erosion of the welfare state, devolution of central government, uneven economic development and increasing social polarisation"* [Sager, 2011, p. 149] are central characteristics of neoliberalism. However, central to the understanding of how neoliberalism is theorized and how it takes place in reality is an understanding of neoliberalism as a process rather than neoliberalism as an end-state, i.e., whether something is neoliberal or not. Furthermore, Peck and Tickell [2002] argue that neoliberalism should be understood as a process on an equal footing with, e.g., globalization, and therefore, neoliberalism should be conceptualized as neoliberalization, i.e., the process by which neoliberalism and a neoliberal mindset become increasingly accepted and integrated into our thinking and acting. Neoliberalism must, therefore, be perceived as an umbrella term that covers a specific view of the relationship between the market and the state, and by that notion, neoliberalism is thus a deep context-dependent process shaped by prior legislation and regulation, institutional practices, materialities, and political discourses [Carter et al., 2015].

It is essential to note that neoliberalism is less about retrenching the state and more about marketizing the state. Thereby, neoliberalism is not all about market fundamentalism but more about getting the state to operate in ways that complement the market [Schram, 2018]. However, in recent times, the term neoliberalization has received a negative connotation to which the term is often applied when the negative consequences regarding the political changes since the economic recession in the 1970s are to be discussed. Furthermore, despite neoliberals arguing that neoliberalisation leads to deregulation, less state, and increased democracy, neoliberalism has been accused of not achieving increased democracy but rather a state that willingly suppresses democracy in favor of achieving market rule [Peck and Tickell, 2002].

Three phases of neoliberalisation

As mentioned earlier, neoliberalisation has been happening for more than three decades, and the evolution of neoliberalism can, broadly speaking, be divided into three different phases and forms of neoliberalisation. The first phase is denoted as 'roll-back neoliberalism' by Peck and Tickell [2002], and it refers to a period in the 1980s when Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were elected head of the states in, respectively, the United Kingdom and the United States of America [Olesen, 2014]. Increasing globalization and the economic recession of the 1970s, to which the blame for the economic recession was; *"[...] unambiguously laid at the door of Keynesian financial regulation, unions, corporatist planning, state ownership, and "overregulated" labor markets"* [Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 388], caused neoliberal state policies to be introduced to promote both competition in the public sector and market logic, but also to reduce the state's role to an absolute minimum [Olesen, 2014].

The second phase is denoted as 'roll-out neoliberalism' by Peck and Tickell [2002], which emerged in the 1990s. After a decade of dismantling the welfare-state the purpose was now to roll out the state again in a more neoliberal version, and during this phase, the state actively facilitated the accumulation of capital by intervening in the market through; *"[...] generating public investments in infrastructure and urban development projects to support market logics and competition"* [Olesen, 2014, p. 292]. However, a lesson learned from the 1980s was that the market could not solve all problems by itself, to which it must be helped and supported by the state, as it was recognized that; *"[...] earlier manifestations of this (neoliberal) project, rooted in dogmatic deregulation and marketization, clearly had serious limitations and contradictions"* [Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 390]. Thereby, a planning rationality of the state supporting the market began to arise.

The third phase is denoted as 'roll-with-it neoliberalism' by Keil [2009], which emerged in the 2000s. This phase is characterized by neoliberal practices and concepts being increasingly normalized in urban policy-making through tools like performance indicators and contracts [Olesen, 2014], which are both derived from the idea of New Public Management (NPM) - a concept that draws on private-sector notions for the public sector to produce more efficient and effective outcomes. In brief, proponents of NPM argue that governments are to be run as businesses [Marshall and Abresch, 2016] to which; *"public agencies should be organized and managed in accordance with the same logic of competition and economic efficiency as private companies"* [Sager, 2015, p. 271]. In summary, the first two phases in the evolution of neoliberalism concerned, respectively, the dismantling and the rebuilding of the state, whereas the third phase is to be understood as a period in which neoliberal discourses have dominated public policy-making [Keil, 2009].

According to Sager [2011], it is important that planning are aware of how; *"[...] the public realm is constricted through privatisation, the marketisation of public services, the introduction of competitive pressures into public bureaucracies, and the infusion of private financial arrangements into public institutions"* (p. 150), to which the forthcoming subsections will highlight three key concepts of neoliberalism where ideological neoliberal planning rationales have affected city planning and urban development.

Intercity competiveness

Today's cities are characterized by a competitive mentality where they 'compete' against each other, both nationally and internationally, and this intercity competition is driven by economic globalization through increased trade, cooperation, and investments across national borders, where especially private capital plays a decisive role Pedersen [2011]. When cities need factories, company headquarters, infrastructure capital, etc.,

they are forced to make more attractive bids than the other ambitious cities in order to continue to grow and expand, and; *"the decisive fact is that highly mobile investment capital forces cities to compete"* [Sager, 2011, p. 153]. In the attempt to achieve strengthened competitiveness, both nationally and internationally, the cities try to brand and promote themselves to attract both economic and human capital through primarily three groups; *"(1) inhabitants that want an attractive place to live, work and relax, (2) companies looking for a place to locate their offices and production facilities, do business and recruit employees, and (3) visitors seeking recreational facilities in the cultural or leisure domain"* [Sager, 2011, p. 157] to which marketing strategies such as mega-events or flagships project are applied in the planning for urban development. Therefore, instead of being controlling and regulation-keen bureaucrats, the local politicians of the cities are forced to convince private businesses and developers that by forming public-private partnerships, with a shared goal of getting ventures and projects approved and implemented, together they can secure increased revenue and thereby succeed in this intercity competition [Sager, 2011, 2015].

Thus, local politicians need to demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit through flexible planning and increased speed in terms of development plan preparation and public inquiry procedures as; *"planning authorities are compelled to adopt a positive view of market-led development, and simplification of the planning process"* [Sager, 2011, p. 155]. Therefore, many countries are more frequently experiencing planning proposals being made by private developers to which private consultants either create the planning documents, such as local plans and environmental impact assessments, or assist herein. According to Harvey [1989], the increasing preoccupation with exploring new ways of fostering and encouraging both employment and local development growth by urban governance is an entrepreneurial stance that is in direct contrast with; *"[...] the managerial practices of earlier decades which primarily focussed on the local provision of services, facilities and benefits to urban populations"* (p. 3). At that time, spatial planning was used to spread public organizations, private enterprises, and recreational areas equally across the national geography, and infrastructure was established to connect parts of the country with more road systems to create shorter distances to education for all [Pedersen, 2011]. In this regard, Harvey [1989] argues that the rise of urban entrepreneurialism will serve to both deepen and sustain the uneven geographical development caused by capitalist relations, to which the cities will be only for the benefit of the well-educated and economically strong individuals, the businesses, and for the tourists - neglecting those who are not part of these groups [Larsen and Lund Hansen, 2012].

Infrastructuralism

A city must be integrated into the international transport system. Either it must constitute a node in itself, or it must lie close to one. This applies to goods transport, i.e., ports, motorways, and railways, as well as to passenger transport, i.e., airports, highways, and high-speed trains. The infrastructure must connect the city with other cities, reduce transaction costs by transport and give fast access to all the world destinations for goods and persons [Pedersen, 2011]. Therefore, the competitiveness of cities is significantly influenced by efficient transportation, to which the provision of infrastructure plays a major role in both the intercity competition but also in city branding as the provision of infrastructure makes the city more attractive to outside investors and companies which then attracts investments and knowledge as well as creating jobs [Pedersen, 2011; Sager, 2011].

Furthermore, in addition to the creation of the aforementioned physical structures, cities further boost their competitiveness through hallmark events in culture and sports, in which some of these events are of such

magnitude that new infrastructure is required, and this can cause a; *"[...] resetting of priorities amongst already planned municipal projects"* [Sager, 2011, p. 155]. This has also resulted in a higher degree of private involvement in the form of public-private partnerships in the construction and operation of infrastructure, as these partnerships help make large-scale infrastructure projects possible. Public-private partnerships and collaborations of such help to enable the implementation of mega-projects, which contributes to branding the city as attractive and modern in the intercity competition [Sager, 2011]. According to [Marshall, 2012], the planning of the cities' infrastructures today is largely characterized by infrastructuralism, i.e., an endless desire for more and better infrastructure. Neoliberalisation has thus led to an increased demand for new infrastructure, as new and better infrastructure is perceived as crucial for the city's competitiveness and economic development. It can thus be argued that it is largely the desire for new transport infrastructure that drives many of the city's strategic urban development projects. This is primarily due to the fact that the investment in new transport infrastructure is often either directly or indirectly economically linked to urban development [Marshall, 2012].

Urban regeneration and neighborhood renewal

In many nations, property-led or project-based planning has become increasingly popular as opposed to long-term comprehensive plans [Sager, 2011]. The lawful public authority's master plan used to be directly guiding urban development, but it is now customary to give priority to private building projects and to modify any existing public plans as necessary. According to [Tasan-Kok and Baeten, 2012], property development is a key driver of neighborhood redevelopment, boosting confidence through the demonstration effect produced by a place's obvious physical alteration. Cultural festivals, mega-events, or flagship projects might increase this demonstrative impact as property, and real estate development are key participants in urban revitalization due to property-led regeneration. [Sager, 2011] argues that this approach calls for more public-private cooperation in terms of public-private partnerships rather than serving as a substitute for public-sector development.

Because of the inherent political and financial weight of large-scale property development, the implementation process is sometimes pushed forward despite these large-scale property developments being incompatible with the aesthetical character and the overall function of an area to which planners have criticized this form of urban development for; *"[...] focusing on projects rather than plans and strategies as this easily results in a failure to address wider issues of equity and distribution of benefit"* [Sager, 2011, p. 176]. Furthermore, Harvey [1989] argues that behind many flagship projects lie serious economic and social problems to which many cities are experiencing 'dual cities' taking form with inner city regeneration surrounded by increasing impoverishment. It can therefore be argued that the economic aspect in terms of, e.g., housing, in neoliberal ideology, is hegemonic to more social aspects to which, e.g., social housing projects are harder to realize physically Harvey [1989]. As a consequence of the deregulation embedded in the ideology of neoliberalism, market forces control housing rental prices, which is why the less well-off can have trouble finding housing and may even be pushed out of areas. This development can lead to a segregation of the population into economically weak and strong [Sager, 2011]. Furthermore, gentrification can also be a result of neoliberal planning tendencies [Martin and Beck, 2016], and despite there being several reasons for gentrification, liberalization of the housing market and rising rental price levels play an important role. As rental prices rise, so does the less well-off population who can no longer afford to stay in their homes, to which this group is squeezed out and replaced by an economically stronger group [Sager, 2011; Martin and Beck, 2016].

Summary of features of neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is expressed in urban planning through a number of trends, and these trends have, in many ways, set the framework for today's urban development in the form of intercity competitiveness and infrastructurelism, as the cities are competing to attract businesses, highly skilled labor, and private capital. Furthermore, the market forces have gained more power within urban development, which is expressed through, for example, the liberalization of the housing market and the increase in public-private partnerships, to which urban regeneration strategies and neighborhood renewal plans are often somewhat disregarded in favor of large-scale development projects which focuses primarily on economic aspects - neglecting other aspects, e.g., the social in the process. Therefore, neoliberal-oriented tendencies have been criticized for often bringing about negative social consequences, polarization, and unequal societal structures.

By unfolding the concepts of intercity competitiveness, infrastructurelism as well as urban regeneration and neighborhood renewal, and also drawing on some of the policy examples provided by Sager [2011], the policies listed below are examples of how neoliberalism is expressed in practice in urban planning, and therefore, how neoliberalism has affected urban development:

- City marketing
- Economic development incentives
- Competitive bidding
- Public-private partnerships
- Property-led urban regeneration
- Private sector involvement in financing and operating transport infrastructure
- Liberalisation of housing markets

The analysis of the planning strategies for Randers Municipality, the development plan of the River Town of Randers as well as the Comprehensive Social Housing Plan for Randers 2021-2025 will be looking to possibly identify some of these policy examples in an attempt to uncover the ideological planning rationales embedded in the spatial planning and urban development of the city of Randers.

2.4   Environmentalism

The second ideology to be explored is environmentalism, and this 'green' ideology is encompassed in the overall ideology of sustainability but with a focus on the environmental perspective. According to [Sager, 2015], it is; *"[...] the environmental perspective that most clearly sets the sustainability ideology apart from participatory democracy and neo-liberalism"* (p. 273), to which an emphasis on the environmental aspect decreases the overlap with the ideologies of neoliberalism and participatory democracy. Furthermore, in this research, the green ideology of environmentalism will be investigated in relation to urban planning in which more attention is given to policies regarding, e.g., resource management, biodiversity, and climate change, than to endangered species and nature protection.

More than 50 years ago, in the year of 1972, the concept of sustainability was discussed during the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment [Keene, 2015]. This was the first conference that was dedicated solely to the environment UN [n.d.b], and since then, the concept of sustainability has received increasing attention in the decades to come. In this regard, the Brundtland Report from 1987 was a seminal

milestone [Johnston et al., 2007]. In terms of sustainability and sustainable development Alhaddi [2015] found that depending on the scientific field, different definitions of sustainability have emerged, but in general, they all encompass topics related to either economic, environmental, or social sustainability (or combinations of these). In that regard, Brown et al. [1987] defines a sustainable world as; *"[...] one in which humans can survive without jeopardizing the continued survival of future generations of humans in a healthy environment"* (p. 717). That definition bears a resemblance to the definition of sustainable development in the Brundtland report, in which the concept is defined as; *"[...] development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* [Brundtland, 1987,p. 37]. In this research, sustainability and sustainable development will follow the aforementioned definition by the Brundtland report, as this definition is most often referred to today because it provides a way to combine people's needs with the objectives of sustainable development through economic growth.

As Brundtland [1987] introduced the concept of sustainable development due to growing environmental concerns, the concept was further developed in 1992 with the introduction of Agenda 21 to include both environmental protection and the preservation of natural resources. As of today, sustainability currently has an environmental, economic, and social component since the addition of social sustainability as the 'third pillar' to the concept of sustainability in 2002 [Hák et al., 2016]. Furthermore, after the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the year of 2000, the UN introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the year of 2015 [UN, n.d.a] and given the multiple perceptions and definitions of sustainability, a variety of urban planning trends, such as urbanization, privatization, and segregation, may be recognized as having influenced how sustainability is conceptualized. Moreover, a planning trend that greatly influences the conceptualization of sustainability is climate change and the planning hereof. Multiple (inter)national agreements, policies, and goals have been adapted and implemented into legislation in order to handle, or at least mitigate, the environmental changes that climate change brings about [Savaşan, 2019], e.g., the Paris and the Kyoto agreements, the policy goal of achieving CO_2-neutrallity by 2050, the UN's Aichi goals regarding biodiversity, resilience strategies to deal with sea levels rising, etc.

According to Keene [2015]; *"environmental planning has become a critically important component of the new paradigm of sustainable development"* (p. 769), and the conceptions of how humanity and environmental change are interrelated have changed over time to which goals, strategies, methods and ethical foundations regarding environmental planning have continuously evolved. To the general public and through extensive media coverage, sustainability is gradually becoming synonymous with climate change, which is why the ideology of environmentalism can now be perceived as a separate prevailing ideology within planning and urban geography [Sager, 2015]. The forthcoming subsections will highlight three concepts of environmentalism where ideological environmental planning rationales have affected city planning and urban development.

Urban densification

Loss of farmland and green spaces are results of the growth of densely populated metropolitan areas. Outward expansion of cities tends to lengthen travel distances by vehicle or public transportation and causes habitat fragmentation. Thus, in order to restrict the continuing expansion of urban areas, several regions and cities have implemented planning policies that are committed to encouraging urban densification through in-fill construction and urban centralization. [Teller, 2021]. The concept of urban densification largely

focuses on urban area locations of housing, services, green space, etc., but it also considers the consequences of the spatial organization within these urban areas, particularly in terms of housing density [van der Waals, 2000]. The idea of urban densification is primarily centered around the notion that a higher population density reduces the environmental impact of urbanization, i.e., the negative effects such as noise-, odor- and air pollution but also through a focus on protecting green field areas around the city, reducing car traffic, reducing buildings energy use as well as ensuring access to services [Kotulla et al., 2019]. In terms of mitigating urban sprawl through urban densification, and thereby increasing biodiversity, van der Waals [2000] argues that; *"[...] enlargement of distances between habitats hinders the movement of animals, which may ultimately result in the extinction of populations"* (p. 117) to which urban densification should be preferred. Furthermore, urban densification is often associated with mixed land use, well-developed public transport systems, and high-density developments, and due to concerns regarding the social and economic situation within cities, as well as the protection of urban spaces, urban densification strategies have often been favored due to their presumed benefits regarding the urban economy, i.e., housing, education, services, etc., and the preservation of the contrast between rural and urban areas [van der Waals, 2000]. However, despite van der Waals [2000] putting further arguments in favor of urban densification, such as; *"[...] a dispersed urbanisation pattern has the most negative effects for natural areas"* (p. 117), arguments against urban densification are also being raised as negative effects such as more congestion and increased air pollution, higher noise levels and frequencies of traffic accidents, more crime, etc., are; *"[...] often associated with inner-city areas generating a less healthy environment compared to the suburbs"* [Kotulla et al., 2019, p. 2]. However, infill development projects are increasingly being promoted, and in reality, it entails acknowledging the need to prevent urban sprawl and make sure there is enough space for other uses, e.g., biodiversity, agriculture, ecosystem services, forestry, etc. This represents a significant paradigm change in the realm of urban planning since land is now viewed as a finite resource that must be treated in a circular, closed-cycle manner as opposed to a linearly open-cycle manner where greenfield areas are continuously being expropriated [Teller, 2021].

Nature in the city

According to Sushinsky et al. [2017]; *"people have an inherent need for contact with nature, and experiences of the natural world provide a range of benefits to human health and well-being"* (p. 1). The benefits regarding health and well-being associated with nature and experiences herein range from physiological, cognitive, and psychological to spiritual, social, and tangible. With the continued increase in the cities' population size and density, the risk of decreasing experiences in nature, and thereby negatively affecting the health and well-being of humans, have increased [Sushinsky et al., 2017; Mata et al., 2020]. The way people access nature in the cities in order to experience the benefits attributed to it is complex, and multiple societal and geographic factors are at play. Public green spaces, such as parks, gardens, and landscaped roadways, provide places where people may connect with nature on a regular basis, but people can also enjoy nature in backyards, i.e., private green spaces, in ways that are different from what they can do in public green spaces. In high-density regions, providing open-space spaces is vital to improving neighborhood satisfaction, and the influence of green spaces regarding liveability is significantly related to quality, maintenance, and accessibility of the area [Kotulla et al., 2019].

Moreover, according to Sushinsky et al. [2017], public and private green spaces support the city's healthy biodiversity, and citizens use gardens and parks for relaxation, restoration, exercise, and to engage in social interactions. Furthermore, the presence of green spaces in urban areas is linked to broader social advantages,

including reduced crime rates, violence, and aggression, and therefore; *"[...] an accessible network of public and private green spaces throughout a city is important for regular access to nature"* [Sushinsky et al., 2017, p. 1]. Natural experiences and encounters influence human health and well-being, but as more people live in cities and towns, there is growing worry that such experiences are disappearing. In cities, it is doubtful that everyone would have the same opportunity to encounter nature, and these variations can either aggravate disadvantages or, when properly managed, promote equity. Nonetheless, the quantity and quality of public parks and gardens are frequently poorer in socioeconomically deprived communities [Sushinsky et al., 2017], and the majority of relevant policy initiatives are either aimed toward managing and safeguarding already existing nature, e.g., preventing harm from invasive insects to native trees, etc., or toward green infrastructure and urban greening, e.g., community grants to help encourage citizens to install green roofs, etc. At the moment, there is still a disparity in the level of enthusiasm among policymakers and practitioners in the fields of planning, design, landscaping, health, and biodiversity for integrating nature objectives into both local, regional, and global initiatives [Mata et al., 2020].

Resilience strategies

The consequences of global warming are already being observed all over the world in a variety of ways, and the ability of humanity to develop suitable solutions is put to the test by the pace, intensity, and complexity of both recognized and unrecognized changes in the climate and, subsequently, the ecosystems [Adger et al., 2011; Hakwendenda, 2022]. Multiple studies have shown how communities adapt their economic activity, alter how they utilize land, implement public health programs to battle heat dangers, and change how their infrastructure is designed and implemented in response to climate change through adapting resilience strategies, etc. However, two key issues can be identified when developing and adapting resilience strategies. First, unless significant attention is paid to local-level adaptation techniques that improve resilience in both the short and long term, the current environmental change and unpredictability rate may exceed adaptation in many countries around the world [Hakwendenda, 2022]. This statement is further supported by Ruehlemann and Jordan [2019], who argues that; *"unless much more attention is devoted to local beliefs and priorities, it is highly unlikely that effective adaptation to climate change can be achieved"* (p. 4). Yet, there is a mismatch between the range and dimensions of the environmental issues at hand (long-term and strategic) as well as the authority of decision-makers (short-term and local). Since these are unable to impact change at a level necessary to solve (or mitigate) these issues, in some cases, this has resulted in inefficient management and the marginalization of participants. Secondly, there are a number of factors that contribute to resilience strategies' narrow focus on efficiency, and these indicators include a preference for easily visible measurements, electoral and political systems, as well as a tradition and culture of addressing social and ecological issues in this way [Adger et al., 2011].

The involvement of resource stakeholders as a way to develop a constituency in order to raise awareness of the development repercussions and generate support for policy decisions are key components in developing and adopting resilience plans [Tompkins and Adger, 2003]. As a result, it is crucial to strengthen social networks at all levels, i.e., local, regional, national, and international, and every resilience strategy must be socially acceptable and flexible enough to adjust to societal and environmental changes [Tompkins and Adger, 2003]. Yet, as the need for resilience strategies has become more widely acknowledged, there has been a formal as well as informal change in some countries in the roles and obligations that organizations have in regard to climate change. This may allow for the replacement of narrowly focused technocratic business-as-usual methods with more comprehensive, reliable, and transformative ones [Ruehlemann and Jordan, 2019].

Summary of features of environmentalism

Environmentalism can be identified in urban planning through multiple different trends and planning rationales, with three aspects of environmentalism having been investigated in the previous sections. A focus in these sections has been, respectively, on urban densification, on bringing nature into the cities, and on the development and adaptation of resilience strategies to deal with climate change and the consequences hereof. Embedded within these three aspects is a range of green urban policies, with a majority of these policies focusing on the physical urban structures and urban development and, to a lesser degree, on service provision, etc. In this research, the policy examples listed below can be helpful in identifying traces of environmentalist planning rationales in the study of the strategic planning of Randers and, subsequently, the planning for the River Town of Randers:

- Urban densification and high-density, mixed-use development
- Land use and resource management
- Green lungs, parks and planting
- Biodiversity and conservation
- Development and adaption of resilience strategies

Likewise, with the ideology of neoliberalism, the analysis of the planning strategies for Randers Municipality, the development plan of the River Town of Randers as well as the Comprehensive Social Housing Plan for Randers 2021-2025, will be looking to possibly identify some of these policy examples in an attempt to uncover the ideological planning rationales embedded in the spatial planning and urban development of the city of Randers.

2.5   Participatory democracy

The third ideology to be explored in this research is participatory democracy, and this ideology encompasses both the participatory aspect of various (political) activities, in which citizens and stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process regarding urban development, as well as the social sustainability aspect in which the concept of 'the right to the city' is embedded. Therefore, this ideology is concerned with, respectively, the ability to participate in decision-making processes and the ability to access the activities of the city, regardless of race, gender, income, etc. According to Sager [2015], the participatory ideology; *"[...] enters urban planning through a concern for places and designs that stimulate inclusion, public access, interaction, deliberation, identity formation, and a sense of belonging"* (p. 273), to which emphasis in this ideology is put on the possibility of taking part in the activities of society regardless of demographic as well as being involved in planning processes. In addition to this, the key values in the ideology of participatory democracy are fairness, empowerment, tolerance, and inclusiveness [Sager, 2015], to which the purpose of exploring this ideology is to identify policies that lead to better living conditions and more socially sustainable, inclusive, and equitable cities.

However, designing cities for the people is not an easy task, and a wide array of scholars have attempted to develop theories, plans, systems, layouts, etc., in the pursuit of designing better and more sustainable cities, both economically, environmentally, and socially. One of the challenges faced during the emergence of modern societies has been to which degree the planning of cities should serve the needs of the many instead of the few, to which; *"[...] the welfare state's urban development efforts resorted to mass production of standardized environments"* [Madanipour, 2007, p. 126] based on utilitarian rationales. However, these

standardized environments, and the assumptions behind their creation, failed to satisfy societies as these became increasingly more diverse as individuals may belong to several different 'groups' at the same time. This leads to a large range of possible considerations that need to be taken into account when planning for diverse and equitable cities and communities [Madanipour, 2007; Carmona et al., 2012; Zhou, 2019]. Furthermore, it leads to societies being stratified in a lot of different ways, both vertically and horizontally, and therefore, when planning for socially sustainable, inclusive, and equitable cities where people are involved in decision-making processes as well as able to participate in the activities of the city, many factors need to be considered. The forthcoming sections will look at three concepts embedded in the ideology of participatory democracy in order to identify policies related to the creation of diverse, participatory, and equitable cities.

Citizen participation

Traditionally, urban planning was carried out by small groups of professionals, i.e., engineers, developers, and surveyors, without much input from citizens, communities, etc., and during the mid-twentieth century, urban planning was subjected to a top-down approach that focused on efficiency and technical expertise rather than citizen participation and community engagement [Vicuña and Galland, 2018; Campbell, 1996]. This was based on the assumption that urban planners were experts and, therefore, knew best to which citizens should simply comply with the plans produced. However, comprehensive planning and this technocratic planning approach were subjected to massive critique in the 1960s by Altshuler [1965], as he argued that comprehensive physical planning is; *"[...] neither practically feasible nor politically viable, and that the comprehensive planner has no basis for legitimacy as a professional"* [Innes and Booher, 2004, p. 460]. Altschuler's critique was based on the fact that it is impossible to measure the public interest, and as such, no one has the expertise to conduct comprehensive planning. Furthermore, according to Altshuler [1965]; *"[...] for the planning process in any community to be democratic, [...] the goals must win approval from a democratic political process"* (p. 186), but as Arnstein [1969] argues, citizens are often merely perceived as statistical abstractions to which participation in political processes is measured by the number of attendances at hearings, the number of brochures taken home, or the number of answers in questionnaires, and therefore citizens have only achieved that they 'participated in participation'.

The response to this critique was a shift in urban planning towards more participatory planning approaches where citizens became more actively engaged in political and planning processes as it was recognized that citizens could possess unique knowledge regarding their communities, and by involving the citizens in planning processes the outcomes hereof would be more inclusive and equitable [Caves, 2004]. According to Fung [2006], the participation of citizens in political and planning processes serves three important democratic values; 1) justice, 2) legitimacy, and 3) effectiveness of public action, to which participation should operate in synergy with administration and representation in order to create more desirable outcomes in terms of collective decision making. In the modern democratic societies of today, many urban planning projects apply the use of participatory approaches, such as workshops, public meetings, online engagement, surveys, etc., in order to involve and engage citizens in the various different stages of a planning process, and this ranges from the initial development of a project, plan, or strategy to its final implementation [Caves, 2004].

Public space

Public spaces are everywhere, and people use them every day, often without thinking of it. According to Orum and Neal [2010], most scholars agree that public space encompasses; *"[...] all areas that are open and accessible to all members of the public in a society, in principle though not necessarily in practice"* (p. 1), thereby including the likes of sidewalks, parks, and plazas, as well as public buildings such as courthouses, libraries, etc. [Staeheli, 2010]. Furthermore, despite restaurants and shopping malls traditionally being privately owned, these places can also be viewed as (quasi-)public spaces, as their use is dependent on the owner [Orum and Neal, 2010]. Therefore, public spaces are important aspects regarding the quality of life of citizens as public spaces play a key role in the perception and experience of cities and their activities [Carmona, 2018]. However, since the beginning of globalization and, subsequently, the rise of neoliberalism, intercity competitiveness and image-based promotion have influenced the role of public places in the cities, and in this regard, it is important that; *"[...] our public spaces are inclusive for all because everyone should have equitable access to utilize the free valuable resources provided by public spaces"* [Zhou, 2019, p. 9]. The importance of this quote is emphasized by the fact that increased commodification and privatization of public places have brought about a rise in social polarization as investments in public spaces equal wealth and growth to some as well as gentrification and displacement to others [Staeheli, 2010].

With public spaces having the potential to be representative of diversity regarding groups of people with varying different social backgrounds and values, as well as positively impacting the well-being of the people using them, the issues related to commodification and privatization of public spaces erode the spatial justice and equity and reduce both social and cultural diversity [Zhou, 2019]. Public spaces need to be 'environments' for different communities to engage, meet, and form relations in order to promote and increase social integration in cities [Cattell et al., 2008], as public spaces can improve health benefits both physically and mentally as well as decrease depression, anxiety, and stress [Carmona, 2018]. Therefore, the issues regarding public space relate directly to these physical and mental benefits, as the purpose of public spaces is that everyone gets to access these benefits regardless of individual socioeconomic status. In this regard, privatization and commodification of public spaces not only contribute in creating unused urban areas, they amplify larger societal issues like segregation and polarization, to which Zhou [2019] states that; *"when public spaces are only friendly and accessible to certain people, it is no longer just an issue of accessibility, but a challenge in social justice and equity"* (p. 14). Furthermore, despite 'good' public spaces being hard to define as these can include functions, be placed, and be scaled in infinite ways as well as being heavily reliant on both the policy-makers and the general priorities of the planners, the actions and decisions taken during the planning process strongly influence the diversity and inclusivity of the public space [Zhou, 2019].

Social inclusion

According to [Short, 2021]; *"[...] cities are sites of social differences"* (p. 1), and these differences encompass the likes of gender, age, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc., but are not limited thereto. These social differences are both resisted and contested, as well as embraced and disputed, they are sites of action, and they can initiate social mobilization both privately and publicly [Short, 2021]. Therefore, the concept of social inclusion also raises a counter concept - social exclusion, which rests on the fact that plans, strategies, and practices of social sustainability often fail to address issues regarding equity, power, and justice [Fainstein, 2005, 2010]. Therefore, the challenge for modern democratic societies becomes how to create spaces and provide services that are both sufficient in quantity and high in quality that meets a universal standard in order to create fair societies as well as encompassing flexibility which enables the

possibility of meeting the needs of diverse groups and individuals [Madanipour, 2007]. Utilizing urban planning to meet the needs of the citizens rather than focusing on serving the interest of politicians and developers is not a new way of thinking. The term 'the right to the city', coined by Henri Lefebvre in 1968, encompasses and emphasizes both the importance of influence, empowerment, and citizen participation in decision-making processes regarding urban development as well as the ability of the citizens to access and enjoy the activities and benefits of the city [Fainstein, 2010; Larsen and Lund Hansen, 2012]. 'The right to the city' attempts to foster more sustainable and equitable cities that satisfies the requirements of all community members regardless of socio-economic status by giving the citizens' wants and aspirations first priority. This includes having access to reasonably priced housing, public transit, parks, and other features that enhance a satisfactory standard of living [Lefebvre, 1996].

With many cities today facing the challenges of housing affordability, social inequality, environmental sustainability, etc., the aspects embedded within the concept of 'the right to the city' is becoming increasingly important in the strive towards achieving more socially inclusive and sustainable cities. Therefore, focusing on local neighborhoods is important, especially regarding poor and deprived areas, as these areas concentrate many social problems and vulnerable people to which some solutions should be neighborhood-based [Madanipour, 2007]. However, social problems are not only generated in deprived neighborhoods as these are; *"[...] only spatial manifestations of these problems, which themselves lead to new problems for vulnerable populations"* [Madanipour, 2007, p. 136], to which attention should be given to both local neighborhoods and strategic thinking regarding the creation of socially inclusive and equitable cities.

Summary of features of participatory democracy

The ideology of participatory democracy can be identified in urban planning through multiple planning rationales, with three concepts of participatory democracy having been investigated in the previous sections. These sections have focused on, respectively, citizen participation, public space, and social inclusion - to which these concepts can prove useful in identifying to which degree the ideology of participatory democracy is present in the strategic planning of Randers. Embedded within these three concepts is a range of diverse, equitable, and inclusive policies whose purpose is to create more socially sustainable cities. In this research, the policy examples listed below can be helpful in identifying traces of participatory democratic planning rationales in the study of the strategic planning of Randers and, subsequently, the planning for the River Town of Randers:

- Affordable housing
- Universal design and public space design
- Community participation and empowerment
- Public transportation
- Mixed-use development and inclusive zoning
- Community Benefit Agreements

As it is also the case with the ideologies of neoliberalism and environmentalism, the analysis of the planning strategies for Randers Municipality, the development plan for the River Town of Randers, as well as the Comprehensive Social Housing Plan for Randers 2021–2025 will also be looking to trace the ideology of participatory democracy through possibly identifying some of these diverse, equitable, and inclusive policy examples in an attempt to uncover the ideological planning rationales embedded in the spatial planning and urban development of the city of Randers.

2.6   Analytical framework

Urban planning has been, and still is today, subject to influences by different ideologies and their embedded planning rationales. What all of these ideologies and planning rationales have in common is their focus on solving (or mitigating) different planning issues [Sager, 2015]. Three prevalent ideologies in urban planning are being investigated here, i.e., neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participator democracy, in order to identify the planning rationales of Randers Municipalities' strategic planning and, subsequently, the planning of the River Town of Randers.

To quickly summarize the three ideologies of this analytical framework, *neoliberalism* is a political-economic ideology that emphasizes individualism, free markets, and limited government intervention. In terms of urban planning, this ideology focuses on market-oriented urban development as well as privatization, and this has meant reducing government regulation regarding the built environment whilst emphasizing the attraction of private developers and investors. This ideology has been criticized for neglecting environmental sustainability and social equity by prioritizing economic growth.
Environmentalism is a 'green' ideology which, in general, promotes the protection of land and natural environments and, in an urban planning context, emphasizes sustainable development, i.e., green infrastructure, land use and resource management, as well as enhancement of biodiversity, etc. This ideology has brought attention to the environmental challenges that cities are facing, e.g., climate change, loss of biodiversity, and pollution. This ideology has been criticized for being too reliant on technical solutions regarding environmental issues and not focusing enough on the root causes of, e.g., overconsumption and overproduction.
Lastly, the ideology of *participatory democracy* promotes the importance of citizen participation and empowerment in decision-making processes, and in an urban planning context, this ideology emphasizes community engagement and collaboration through opportunities to participate in workshops, public meetings, online engagement, surveys, etc. Despite this ideology being praised for promoting community empowerment and social equity, this ideology has also been criticized for failing to represent marginalized communities.

In sum, these three ideologies have impacted urban planning significantly by shaping the built environment in multiple different ways [Sager, 2015], and by understanding the planning rationales embedded within each of these ideologies, it is now possible to construct an analytical framework in order to trace to which degree these different planning rationales are present in the strategic planning of Randers and as well as in the planning for the River Town of Randers.

Constructing an analytical framework

An analytical framework is comprised of concepts, methods, and principles which are applied in order to understand and analyze problems and phenomena. Therefore, the purpose of constructing an analytical framework is to guide the analysis as well as the interpretation of data but also to present a structured approach of how to analyze a problem or a phenomenon [Jabareen, 2008]. Using an analytical framework can be a clear and organized way to present a problem, it can be an efficient way of streamlining the analytical process, and it can provide a way of communicating complex issues through, e.g., visual representations [Jabareen, 2008]. The analytical framework of this research is comprised in figure 2.1.

Ideologies		
Neoliberalism	**Environmentalism**	**Participatory democracy**
Intercity competitiveness Infrastructurelism Urban regeneration and neighborhood renewal	Urban densification Nature in the city Resilience strategies	Citizen participation Public space Social inclusion
Policy examples: *- City marketing* *- Economic development incentives* *- Competitive bidding* *- Public-private partnerships* *- Property-led urban regeneration* *- Private sector involvement in transport infrastructure* *- Liberalization of housing markets*	*Policy examples:* *- Urban densification and high-density, mixed-use development* *- Land use and resource management* *- Green lungs, parks, and planting* *- Biodiversity and conservation* *- Development and adaption of resilience strategies*	*Policy examples:* *- Affordable housing* *- Universal design and public space design* *- Community participation and empowerment* *- Public transportation* *- Mixed-use development and inclusive zoning* *- Community Benefit Agreements*

Figure 2.1. *Overview of the analytical framework of this research highlighting the three ideologies, the concepts investigated to express these ideologies, and policy examples that can be utilized to identify the planning rationales of the three ideologies*

Methodology 3

Before research on the (social) world can be conducted, it is now recognized that assumptions about what the social world is composed of *(ontology)*, assumptions about what can be known about the social world *(epistemology)*, and how to carry out research investigating the social world *(methodology)*, are needed [Farthing, 2016]. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to present how this research was planned and carried out, as well as the considerations regarding methodological choices. This chapter will present the scientific stance of this research, the methods used to collect and analyze data, and how a case study research approach was applied to investigate the case of the River Town of Randers.

3.1 Philosophy of Science

When research is conducted, the aim is often to solve a real-life problem, and it is the problem that dictates which philosophical position (or paradigm) that needs to be adopted. Therefore, this section will outline the scientific position of this research in order to place it within the philosophy of science. This research will apply a critical realist scientific position based on 1) the interest in identifying the (invisible) underlying structures and mechanisms that shape the way the world works and 2) the aim to explain and understand a phenomenon - both of which are embedded in the critical realist paradigm.

Ontology

Within the philosophy of science *ontology* is conceived as a key concept, to which it addresses the notion of being or existing, i.e., assumptions concerned with; *"[...] what we believe constitutes social reality"* [Farthing, 2016, p. 23]. In terms of ontology, both Rienecker and Jørgensen [2012] and Egholm [2014] acknowledge that there exist two main ontological distinctions; *realism* and *constructivism*.
'Realism' assumes that relationships, characteristics, and objects exist, independently of our understanding of the (social) world, whereas 'constructivism' assumes that only through our own understanding of relationships, characteristics, and objects can these be studied [Egholm, 2014]. Therefore, ontological realism perceives social phenomena to exist regardless of our observation of them, whereas ontological constructivism believes social phenomena can only be studied through the meaning attributed to them by the observer;

> *"Where ontological realism seeks to understand and explain that which exists in the world independently of how academics understand it, ontological constructivism focuses on how these factors are created and perceived"* [Egholm, 2014, p. 26]

Therefore, in this research, ontological realism provides the opportunity to explain and understand the underlying structures and mechanisms of the ideologies of neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participatory democracy as it perceives the world to exist independently of our understanding of it - to which

the world can be experienced, described and theorized differently; however, it will always be the same world that is referenced to. In this regard, critical realism takes on the ontological position of realism.

Epistemology

Another key concept within the philosophy of science is *epistemology*, which addresses the nature of knowledge, i.e., assumptions; *"[...] made about possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be"* [Farthing, 2016, p. 24]. Regarding epistemology, both Rienecker and Jørgensen [2012] and Egholm [2014] acknowledge the existence of three main epistemological distinctions; *objectivity*, *subjectivity*, and *intersubjectivity*. The question that separates these three epistemological positions is; *"[...] (how can we) acquire knowledge about the world as it is, without that knowledge being distorted by human cognition(?)"* [Egholm, 2014, p. 28]. Where 'objectivity' entails an attempt to avoid observer bias altogether regarding the phenomenon observed, the contrast to this epistemological position is 'subjectivity', which argues that complete observer bias can never be achieved. 'Intersubjectivity' is the attempt to combine the individual 'subjective' understanding of a phenomenon with the opportunity to validate results and analyses embedded in 'objectivity', and thereby validity is achieved, not through results corresponding with reality, but by the agreement between researchers [Egholm, 2014]. According to Yucel [2018]; *"[...] critical realism is not fully realist about epistemology. It acknowledges that knowledge is a social product, which is not independent of those who produce it"* (p. 8), to which it can be argued that critical realism takes on the epistemological position of intersubjectivity.

Critical Realism

Since its emergence in the 1970s, critical realism has offered an alternative to social constructivist and positivist accounts of science [Yucel, 2018]. Critical realism seeks to both explain and understand at the same time, and critical realists; *"[...] are not interested in how phenomena are perceived by the people who experience them, but in what they really are once we peel away their surface"* [Yucel, 2018, p. 126]. As stated earlier, critical realism departs from the ontological basis of realism, and it assumes that the structures, mechanisms, and interrelationships exist in the (social) world regardless of them being studied or observed. According to Egholm [2014], the aim of critical realism is to uncover the invisible, sometimes unconscious, structures, mechanisms, and interrelationships that exist in the (social) world. This is equal to the understanding of critical realism by Yucel [2018] as;

> *"Critical realism basically assumes that the structures and relationships they study exist in reality*
> *- even if they cannot be observed directly. The purpose is to uncover the invisible and often*
> *unconscious structures and elements that exist independently of the researcher"* (p. 126)

Furthermore, in critical realism, it is maintained that science is never value-free and; *"[...] the invisible and often unconscious structures (...) must be discovered through recurring patterns and elements"* [Yucel, 2018, p. 128], to which critical realism, in this research, is deemed applicable to the analysis of how planning rationales - embedded in different ideologies - have affected the strategic planning of Randers, and to what degree these planning rationales are present in the River Town of Randers. Moreover, Xue [2022] argues that a critical realist approach to ideology is advantageous because it has the potential to strengthen planning as a driving force in terms of societal transformations due to critical realism offering 1) the opportunity to evaluate the beliefs and values embedded in an ideology as well as their impacts and results on (substantive) planning strategies, 2) the possibility to critique ideology and thereby gaining insights to the underlying structures

and mechanisms which generates and sustains an ideology, and 3) the possibility to challenge existing norms, beliefs and values in terms of societal transformations. In sum, critical realism; *"[...] enables an exploration of the societal roots forming the ideology in question"* [p. 5] [Xue, 2022]. In terms of studying these hidden and invisible structures and mechanisms, critical realism believes that the (social) world consists of three levels (or domains), divided into two dimensions - the transitive and the intransitive dimension [Egholm, 2014]:

1. **the *empirical* level:** consists of the phenomena and events we experience and that we can observe.
2. **the *actual* level:** contains the phenomena and events which have been created through the underlying structures and mechanisms in the deep level
3. **the *real/deep* level:** consists of the underlying structures and mechanisms that constitute the possibility of phenomena and actions in the actual level, but they cannot be observed directly [Egholm, 2014]

The first level, the *empirical* level, contains the epistemological part of critical realism, and it is at this level that scientific analyses and theories of the social world are developed, which are inevitably shaped by our perceptions and beliefs. This level is also denoted as the 'transitive' dimension. The second level, the *actual* level, and the third level, the *deep* level, contains the ontological part of critical realism, and together these levels form the 'intransitive' dimension, i.e., the actual world when its neither analyzed nor discussed [Egholm, 2014].
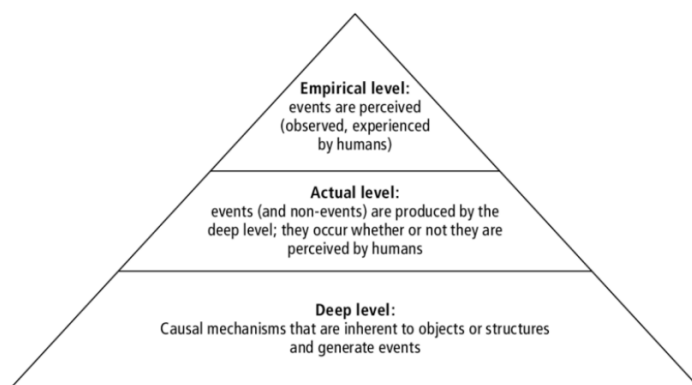

Figure 3.1. An illustration of the three levels encompassed within critical realism. The figure is derived from Ruehlemann and Jordan [2019]

Occurrences of phenomena at the actual level are caused by the underlying hidden mechanisms and structures in the real/deep level to which these phenomena can be analyzed and theorized at the empirical level. These underlying hidden mechanisms and structures; *[...] can include features, such as economic structures; cultural norms; political landscape; social structures, for example rules and laws; institutional settings; and discourses"* [Xue, 2022, p. 6].

The purpose of critical realism is to uncover these hidden structures and mechanisms at the real/deep level to explain these occurrences of phenomena at the actual and empirical level, and as these underlying mechanisms and structures at the deep/real are directly non-observable, the way to explain these occurrences of phenomena is by examining patterns and regularities at the empirical level [Archer et al., 2016]. In this research, the invisible, hidden structures and mechanisms of investigation are the planning rationales embedded in each of the three prevalent ideologies in planning and urban geography and how these planning rationales have shaped the strategic planning of Randers Municipality as well as the new urban development project the River Town of Randers. The structures and mechanisms guiding these planning rationales at the real/deep level are non-observable and must therefore be studied through observation of occurrences at the actual level by investigating patterns and regularities in planning strategies and planning processes. Investigating these patterns and regularities at the empirical level offers the possibility of understanding the planning rationales of each ideology and their effects on the strategic planning of Randers Municipality.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

This section describes the approach applied in this research to obtain empirical data to answer the research question and the sub-questions, as well as the approach to reach a scientific inference of phenomena existing in the social world.

Qualitative research approach

This research has applied a qualitative research approach where the qualitative methods of literature review, document analysis, an informal interview, and an on-site observation have been applied with the purpose of generating knowledge of how different ideological planning rationales have affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality as well as the development project 'the River Town of Randers'. The data obtained for this research relies primarily on secondary data obtained through both the document analysis and the literature review, supplemented by primary data derived from the informal interview. The qualitative research approach was deliberately applied to this research as qualitative methods, according to Rienecker and Jørgensen [2012] are; *"[...] based on analysis and interpretation of observations, expressions, statements, and cases, etc."* (p. 191, own translation). Combined with the philosophical position of critical realism, this research approach was deemed applicable in order to uncover the hidden structures and mechanisms of the real/deep level through the observation of recurrent patterns and regularities in the strategic planning documents.

Retroductive approach

In critical realism, the world is complex and hierarchically stratified into layers, i.e., empirical, actual, and deep/real. The relationship between these layers is comprised of causation and strong correlations, but instead of seeing causality as relationships between events (like in positivism), as this is only useful to predict but not to explain events, critical realism sees causality as mechanisms associated with causal powers to which; *"[...] social structures can both enable and constrain social activities, while themselves being changed by the activities"* [Mcavoy and Butler, 2017, p. 1315]. In terms of conceptualizing the probability relationship between mechanisms (i.e., the causal power of these), Fleetwood [2016] argues that only closed systems and open systems exist. Closed systems are comprised of deterministic event regularities where events can be 100 % predicted, and open systems are comprised of statistical and probabilistic event regularities where randomness as a factor determines the occurrence of an event. However, Næss [2019] argues that; *"[...] an increased likelihood of certain outcomes due to certain conditions, really exists in society, though not in a deterministic form"* (p. 9), to which he argues that partly closed and partly open systems exist as well determined by the degree of how likely an event can be predicted to occur. This argument rests on the notion that if only open and closed systems existed, planning would have no meaning at all as no outcomes in regard to policy-making could be predicted, and therefore planning as a tool to combat societal issues would be useless. In the social world, all predictions are fallible, but not all predictions are equally fallible [Næss, 2019]. As our society has planning, policy-making, and politics proofs that probability relationships can be assumed to exist within the (social) world and that; *"the probabilities are context-dependent, vary across time and space, and any attempt to measure or calculate them is necessarily fallible"* [Næss, 2019, p. 10], to which our societies should be understood as partly open or partly closed systems.

Therefore, this research will follow a retroductive research approach as it is central to critical realism that; *"[...] the explanation of social phenomena is achieved through revealing the mechanisms that produce them"*

[Meyer and Lunnay, 2013, p. 2]. The 'revealing' part of this quote is what separates retroduction from abduction, both of which are tools anchored within critical realism, as retroduction does not "just" want to find the best explanation for a social phenomenon, which is the root of abduction, it wants to reveal the cause of the social phenomena existing [Meyer and Lunnay, 2013]. Furthermore, retroduction also distinguishes itself from deduction and induction, which are concerned with respectively theory testing and theory creation, as retroduction is non-linear. It doesn't move the researcher from a theory/hypothesis to a conclusion, or the other way around, as retroduction; *"[...] is a means of knowing the conditions fundamental to the existence of phenomena"* [Meyer and Lunnay, 2013, p. 3] by asking questions such "what makes X possible?" and "which conditions makes X occur?", with 'X' being a social phenomenon. As these questions can be answered by combining the causal relationship of everything in the world, critical realism aims to delineate the phenomena to be studied by determining relevant mechanisms through eliminating irrelevant mechanisms and supporting others [Mcavoy and Butler, 2017].

In this research, a retroductive research approach is applied to uncover the causes of why both the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and the development plan for the River Town of Randers are shaped as they are by uncovering the structures and mechanisms that have caused this through observing patterns and regularities in strategic planning documents.

3.3   Methods

This section describes the qualitative methods applied to collect and analyze empirical data to answer the research question and the sub-questions of this research. Furthermore, this section will discuss how each method has contributed to collecting data and why these methods were relevant to apply.

Literature review

In order to establish knowledge regarding the ideologies of neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participatory democracy - as well as the concepts embedded within these ideologies - and thereby create the foundation of an analytical framework for this research through a critical selection of existing literature, a literature review was applied. A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources regarding a certain topic to which the literature review can provide an overview of the current knowledge regarding a specific topic. According to Rhoades [2011], the purpose of the literature review is therefore to; *"[...] assist readers in understanding the whole body of available research on a topic"* (p. 61) and to *"[...] critically appraise and summarize the literature relevant to an identified topic"* (p. 62). This allows for identifying relevant methods, theories, and gaps in existing research concerning the subject of study.

At the very beginning of this research, the collection of scientific literature was conducted relatively unstructured as this gathering phase allowed for the initial finding of themes, phrases, and keywords to which an overall understanding of the strategic planning of Randers Municipality was achieved. These initial themes, phrases, and keywords then allowed for the literature review to be more focused and targeted, to which searches now included specific terms such as: *"roll-back/roll-out neoliberalism"*, *"green growth"*, and *"the right to the city"*, etc. Several search engines were applied in the literature review phase, with AAU's Primo search engine and Google Scholar being the main search engines. Furthermore, to ensure the validity and the quality of the literature applied in this research, the books referenced to needed to be published through scholarly presses, and articles needed to be peer-reviewed. The literature review has, therefore,

contributed to obtaining general knowledge of the subject of study - however, during the writing process, the literature review became more targeted with new literature that provided more specific knowledge regarding the subject of study. This has increased the validity of this research as the literature review has ensured that only material according to the subject of study has been included. The use of the literature review has ultimately contributed to establishing an analytical framework that has been applied in both analytical parts of this research.

Document analysis

Document analysis has constituted the basis for obtaining data, and this method is, according to Bowen [2009], a; *"[...] systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents — both printed and electronic [...]"* (p. 27) and this method; *"yields data—excerpts, quotations, or entire passages—that are then organised into major themes, categories, and case examples specifically through content analysis"* (p. 28). In this research, document analysis has been the core method applied in the qualitative study of the strategic planning of Randers Municipality, and it has provided valuable knowledge regarding which ideological planning rationales have affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality. Document analysis is often applied in conjunction with other (qualitative) methods in order to triangulate data. By triangulating data, according to Bowen [2009], the researcher attempts to; *"corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study" (p. 29)*. This also resonates with the arguments made by Angers and Machtmes [2005], stating that document analysis should be paired with other methods, e.g., interviews and observations, to corroborate and validate data obtained during a study to which these methods have also been applied to this research as well. Furthermore, Bowen [2009] argues that document analysis is; *"[...] particularly applicable to qualitative case studies — intensive studies producing rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organisation, or program"* (p. 29), and that document analysis can provide the opportunity of tracking both change and development. The arguments made here have established the foundation for applying document analysis in the investigation of how ideological planning rationales have affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and, subsequently, the planning of the River Town of Randers.

In the selection of documents, strategic planning documents prepared by Randers Municipality have been chosen for investigation. These planning documents were reviewed and analyzed systematically to identify ideological planning rationales based on the analytical framework. This means that text within these strategic planning documents, which could indicate expressions of neoliberalism, environmentalism, and participatory democracy, were marked as areas of particular interest to the analysis. Read-through of the strategic planning documents was conducted chronologically to identify a possible development in the content of the planning documents *(see appendix A)*. The municipal planning strategies are published at least once every election period, i.e., every fourth year, and must contain themes such as community development, strategic objectives, etc., and the planning strategies are prepared by the civil service but approved by the politicians in the city council. Therefore, these strategic planning documents are valid secondary data with a uniform source basis as they must be assumed to reflect Randers Municipality's visions for urban development as the municipality prepares them. They thereby provide an authentic picture of the municipality's ambitions. Furthermore, as the planning strategies are prepared by planners who are expected to have a professional background, the content of the planning strategies can, therefore, be deemed credible. The reliability in the document analysis is, due to the qualitative study, difficult to ensure completely, as readers might identify different parts of the planning documents as being indicative of, e.g., neoliberalism or

social inclusivity, etc. However, the theoretical framework has helped ensure reliability as it has contributed to creating an analytical framework for the concepts examined in the document analysis. It can, therefore, be assumed that other researchers will reach the same result as the document analysis does by using the same documents.

Informal interview and email correspondences

An informal interview is a conversation without a fixed structure, which takes place if an opportunity suddenly arises to talk to a respondent about an interesting topic. There is no interview guide and no audio recorder, and during the interview, completely new questions can emerge to which the informal interview requires a good memory and the writing of field notes during or as soon as possible after the interview [Aarhus Universitet, n.d.; Larsen, John A., 1995]. The city of Randers is on the verge of significant transformations in the upcoming years. At the political level, a decision has been made to relocate the harbor, which serves as one of the primary employment hubs in the city. In light of these developments, a guided tour of the Randers harbor was organized on April 20th, 2023, attracting approximately 25 participants, including the writer. The tour offered a unique opportunity to gain insights into future plans and activities related to the harbor. Notably, attendees had the privilege of exploring the port's inner workings, granting access beyond the secure perimeter. Leading the tour was Daniel Madiè, a city council member and the current chairman of the Harbor of Randers, and divided into two segments, the tour featured an hour-long presentation followed by an hour dedicated to observing the actual harbor operations. Throughout the excursion, participants were encouraged to ask questions, which the author and others readily took advantage of. Considering the nature of the experience, one could perceive the guided tour as an informal interview with Daniel Madiè.

Besides the informal interview on the guided tour, three email correspondences with, respectively, a city planner from Randers Municipality, a journalist from Randers Amtsavis, and an employee from Danmarks Statistik have provided both the opportunity to acquire strategic planning documents that weren't available online anymore, the acquisition of articles that is normally behind a paywall as well as the knowledge of to find proper statistical data. The combined outcome of all of these email correspondences has been influential in the investigation and analysis of ideological planning rationales in the strategic planning of Randers Municipality. However, it was not the primary intention of this research to rely on interviews or, subsequently, email correspondences as primary sources of data. Instead, this research is heavily dependent on data obtained through the literature review and document analysis. The informal interviews and email correspondences should be regarded solely as supplementary sources of information, providing additional support to the overall knowledge base.

On-site observations

In conjunction with the aforementioned data sources, the method of observation was also used - however, to a limited extent - and consisted of a trip around Nordhavnen, Bolværket, Tronholmen, and Brotoften. The observation was conducted in the project's data collection phase on the 22nd of March. It lasted for approximately two hours and contributed to gaining a first-hand impression of the area. The observation was unstructured and spontaneous and therefore had nothing specific in mind other than getting a feel of the area. Therefore, it must be pointed out that the observation conducted in the aforementioned areas has not directly influenced the design and content of this research other than establishing a relation to the subject of study.

3.4   Research Design

The aim of this section is to describe the research design applied in this research to explore and investigate a particular phenomenon, and in this research, a case study research approach has been applied. Generally, a research design is concerned with the planning of how to conduct research on a specific topic [Farthing, 2016] - in this case, the ideological planning rationales which have shaped the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and, subsequently, the planning of the River Town of Randers in a particular way. Furthermore, this section will also provide an illustrative overview of the complete research design.

Case Study Research

According to Farthing [2016], the case study research approach is prone to many different perceptions and definitions, where case studies can be denoted as, e.g., a study; *"[...] using multiple different methods of data collection or generation"* (p. 116), to case studies being a research design in which cases are; *"situations, events or the behaviors of interest"* (p. 116). Yin [2018] and Flyvbjerg [2006] both indicate that when the investigated issue deals with contemporary events and when the research question examines why or how a social phenomenon exists, then the use of a case study is relevant. The emphasis is here on **why** or **how** a social phenomenon exists, as this is what distinguishes case study research from other types of research, such as ethnographical or phenomenological studies, etc. Furthermore, Stake [1995] denotes the case study research approach as; *"[...] the study of a particularity and complexity of a single case"* (p. 11), and that the utilization of the case study research approach is applicable to the researcher when a case has a special interest. According to Onghena and Struyve [2015], different kinds of case studies exist, i.e., *descriptive*, *instrumental*, *interpretive*, *exploratory*, *explanatory*, and *evaluative*. Many of these types of cases have also been recognized by other scholars such as Yin [2018] and Stake [1995], and given that this research focuses on how different ideological planning rationales have affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality and, subsequently, the planning of 'the River Town of Randers', the case study approach of this research most resembles the explanatory approach due to; *"an explanatory case study tackles "how" and "why" questions"* [Onghena and Struyve, 2015, p. 3] to understand the underlying causes or mechanisms that led to a particular phenomenon.

However, the case study research approach has been exposed to criticism. Flyvbjerg [2006] summarizes this criticism into five different misunderstandings of the case study research approach, in which nr. two; *"you cannot generalize from individual cases, and therefore the case study can not contribute to scientific development"* (p. 465, own translation) is perhaps the most widespread criticism of the case study research approach, but also the most important one in terms of applying case study to the investigation of social phenomena. However, Flyvbjerg [2006] rejects this criticism as; *"[...] it is wrong to conclude that you cannot generalize from a single case. It depends entirely on the case in question and how it is selected"* (p. 469, own translation), and due to the fact that; *"[...] knowledge cannot be formally generalized does not mean that it cannot be included in the collective accumulation of knowledge in a given field or in a society"* (p. 471, own translation). Furthermore, Flyvbjerg [2004] argues that social sciences are context-dependent, and therefore it does not necessarily makes sense to generalize. Although this research is based on a single case study, the findings of this research can contribute to deriving what Randers Municipality should consider in order to reduce potential social consequences when planning for large urban development projects such as the River Town of Randers.

Illustration of the Research Design

This section provides an illustration of the research design that this research will follow. By conducting a literature review, the theoretical framework provides an understanding of the current prevalent ideologies in today's urban planning. The outcome of this is a combined analytical framework in which the purpose is to guide the analysis, which in this research is divided into two parts. Part I will analyze the strategic planning of Randers Municipality by examining strategic planning documents, and part II will analyze the urban development project 'the River Town of Randers' by investigating the development plan hereto. The discussion will debate how 'the River Town of Randers' can become a socially inclusive new city district, and the conclusion of this research will encompass a summary of the findings.
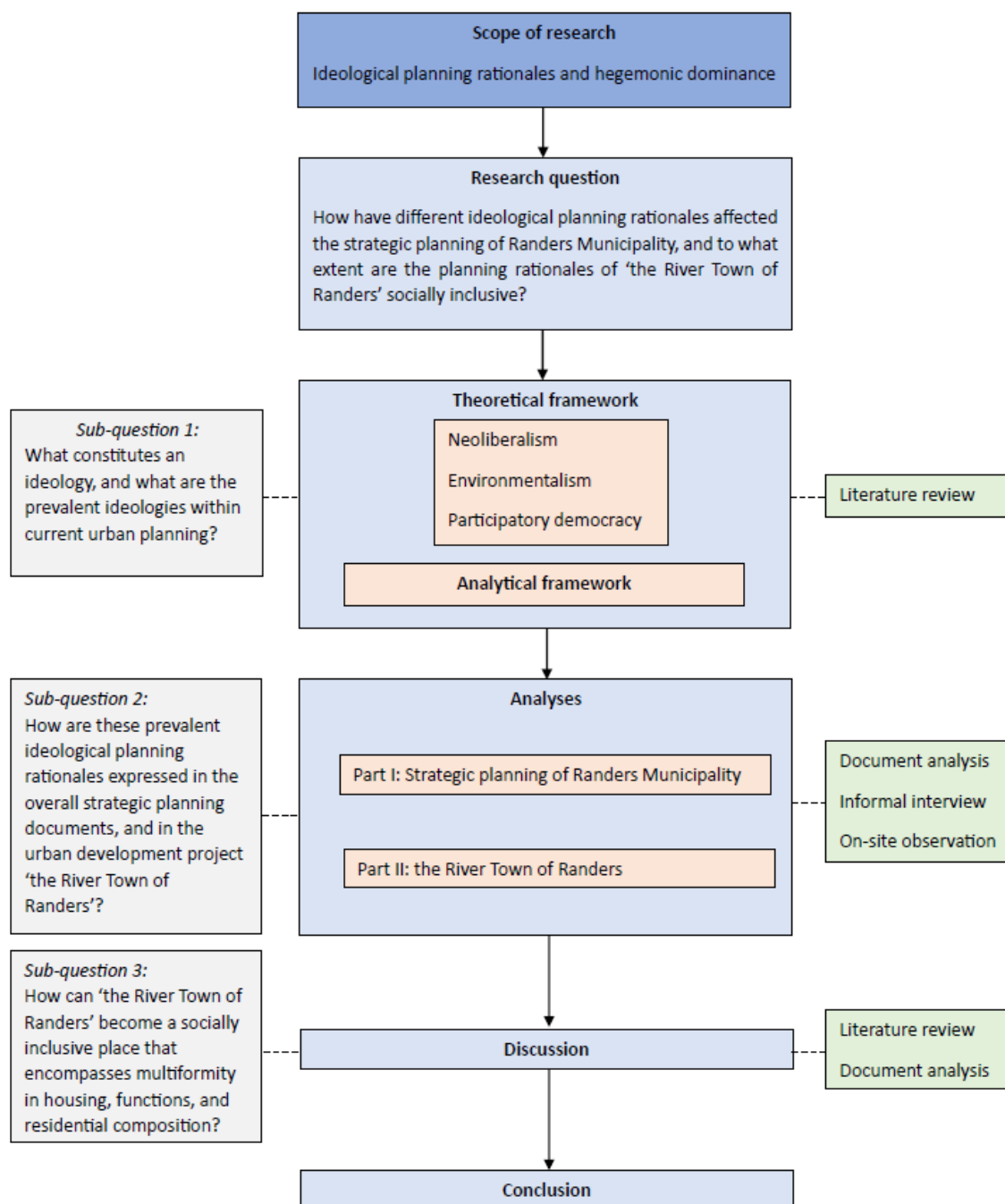

Figure 3.2. *Figure illustrating the research design of this research (own illustration)*

Strategic Planning in
Randers Municipality 4

In order to manage the urban growth and development of cities, strategic planning can be an essential tool that can help to ensure that cities become sustainable, livable, and inclusive for all citizens, as strategic planning denotes the process of developing and implementing long-term plans, strategies, and policies for the development of cities and regional areas [Albrechts, 2006]. Therefore, this chapter aims to investigate the ideological planning rationales that constitute the basis for the strategic spatial planning of Randers Municipality by using the analytical framework constructed in section 2.6 on multiple strategic planning documents created by Randers Municipality.

4.1   The strategic planning documents of Randers Municipality

Figure 4.1. *Timeline showing the years in which the strategic planning documents were adopted (own illustration)*

According to the Planning Act § 23a, all municipalities have a legal obligation to formulate a planning strategy. This planning strategy serves as an overarching plan that outlines how the city council will approach the strategic and physical development of the municipality during the upcoming planning period. It is an integral component of the Danish planning system and is required to encompass three key elements. Firstly, it should incorporate an assessment by the municipal board regarding the municipality's development and a corresponding strategy. Secondly, it must provide an account of the planning activities undertaken since the last revision of the municipal plan. Lastly, it should specify which parts of the municipal plan will be revised in the creation of the subsequent municipal plan, including whether the plan will be partially revised, completely revised, or re-enacted in its entirety. The strategic planning documents of Randers Municipality were officially adopted in the following years: 2003, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2019, and 2022. Additionally, a comprehensive social housing plan was adopted in 2021. These strategic planning documents *(see figure 4.1)* hold significant importance as they establish the direction for the municipality's future development, thereby indicating specific trends or special priorities. An overview of each strategic planning document's unique characteristics and overarching trends will be briefly presented.

Planning Strategy 2003

The planning strategy from 2003 is the first to be investigated; likewise, it is also the first to be created by Randers Municipality. This planning strategy is primarily centered around Randers and is characterized by a review of the city council's visions regarding the specific themes of; traffic, education, nature, city center and cultural life, housing, business, and municipal reform. Each theme is divided into what Randers Municipality want to do in the future and what they presently doing. Lastly, a section has been devoted to local Agenda 21, describing sustainable measures regarding Randers Municipality. Furthermore, this planning strategy is more action and solution-oriented than some other planning strategies.

Strategy 2007-2016: Planning and development in a sustainable perspective

This planning strategy from 2007 was created after the structural reform was completed and, as such, is clearly affected by it and as a result of the structural reform, Langå, Nørhald, Purhus, Sønderhald, and Havndal were added to Randers Municipality. This planning strategy focuses more on the entirety of Randers Municipality and not just the city of Randers, which primarily was the case in the strategy from 2003. Furthermore, this planning strategy is centered around the themes of; housing and land, traffic, leisure and culture, environment and nature, as well as business and education, but Agenda 21 do also have both its own entire section as well as subsections in which it is being tied to every other theme in the planning strategy. However, the concepts of growth and development are pervasive concepts that take up more space in this planning strategy than in the previous one from 2003. Furthermore, this planning strategy is also action and solution-oriented, and not just a political tool.

Strategy 2017

Adopted in 2010, this planning strategy focuses on the themes of; prestige projects, housing, city center, city life, mobility, knowledge, nature, climate, and Agenda 21. This planning strategy is heavily centered around the development of Randers and thereby, to some extent, neglecting the rest of the municipality. Growth, development, and tourism are pervasive concepts, and connections to Aarhus and Aalborg regarding work, travel, sharing of knowledge, etc., are also recurring concepts in this planning strategy. Furthermore, this strategy also emphasizes that Randers is situated between two universities, i.e., Aalborg and Aarhus, and

that should be taken advantage of. However, compared to the former two planning strategies from 2003 and 2007, this strategy is less hands-on regarding specific projects or action plans and focuses more on visions for the future.

Planning Strategy 2014: Onwards to the future of Randers

This planning strategy was adopted in 2014, and it encompasses the themes of; history, Randers as a catalyst, nature and the land as quality, and the way forward. Embedded within these themes are a number of sub-themes, with the majority of those focusing on growth, development, and mobility. This planning strategy is also very much centered around the development of Randers and thereby, to some extent, neglecting the rest of the municipality. Nature and sustainability are often only mentioned in conjunction with urban development and population growth, e.g.; *"the blue belt as a lever for development"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 15, own translation], and this planning strategy doesn't try to hide its emphasis on urban and business development. Therefore, this planning strategy continues the trend of the former two planning strategies, from respectively 2007 and 2010, in which growth and development are increasingly pervasive concepts to which this planning strategy somewhat neglects environmental and social aspects. Furthermore, the planning strategy is also less structured than some of the planning strategies to which it serves more as a political document.

Planning Strategy 2018: We dare to walk new paths

This planning strategy, adopted in 2019, revolves around the themes of; green and sustainable development, attractive settlement municipality, attractive business municipality, and the River Town of Randers. The focus of this planning strategy has switched from being centered around Randers to focusing on the entirety of Randers Municipality. The structure of the planning strategy regarding what the municipality does presently and what the municipality wants to do in the future is back, a structure that was lost in the previous two planning strategies, i.e., in 2010 and 2014. The focus from being situated between two universities has switched to Randers instead being part of the East Jutland growth region' and 'Business Region Aarhus', to which the ladder has been dedicated an entire section of its own. Furthermore, this planning strategy is also more action and solution-oriented than the previous two strategies from 2010 and 2014, which were more concerned with being political documents and setting the tone for the future of Randers.

Planning Strategy 2022: Growth in Randers Municipality

The last planning strategy to be investigated in this research was adopted in 2022, and it is centered around the themes of; Randers municipality in a larger context, the city of Randers as a locomotive, urban development with quality, the good life in rural areas, the open country, and sustainability as a benchmark. This planning strategy is also focused on developing the entirety of Randers Municipality; however, despite this planning strategy being action and solution-oriented, it is also less structured and more visionary descriptive. Furthermore, the term 'Business Region Aarhus' is now replaced with the 'the East Jutland city of millions' theme.

Comprehensive Social Housing Plan for Randers 2021-2025

The reason for investigating this action plan regarding social housing, which was adopted in 2021, is because this action plan highlights the most severe social issues in Randers Municipality. This action plan, therefore,

offers up the opportunity to examine the planning rationales regarding the ideology of participatory democracy in a more specific way, as it has been the case in almost all of the planning strategies investigated that planning rationales regarding participatory democracy are either neglected or used in accordance to promote growth and urban development. The comprehensive social housing plan for 2021-2025 includes five distinct residential areas, all located in the city of Randers in a belt north of the fjord *(see figure 4.9)*. The comprehensive plan covers 2.982 rental units and approximately 5.758 residents [Randers Kommune, 2021]. Therefore, to give attention to the social issues of Randers Municipality, this action plan has been included as future urban development, especially the development of the River Town of Randers, will directly influence how these social issues will be dealt with.

4.2   Ideological planning rationales in the strategic planning documents

The overall strategic planning documents briefly presented before will constitute the basis of the analysis of Randers Municipality's strategic spatial planning and its embedded ideological planning rationales - derived from the three currently prevalent ideologies investigated earlier, see sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5. The purpose of the forthcoming sections is to dissect these overall strategic documents by utilizing the analytical framework presented in section 2.6 in order to investigate how different ideological planning rationales have affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality, but also what has been the implications of these planning rationales.

4.2.1   Neoliberal planning rationales

Randers as a 'Center of Growth'

Since the creation of the first planning strategy, Randers municipality has had ambitions regarding achieving a municipality that inhabits 100.000 citizens. This goal has continuously been mentioned throughout all the planning strategies, with the first planning strategy from 2003 estimating that the goal will be achieved in 2016 (which didn't happen) and the latest planning strategy from 2022 estimating that; *"the municipality will soon reach 100,000 citizens, and the basis for growth and sustainable development is growing"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 8, own translation]. In this regard, growth and (sustainable) development have also been consistent aspects in all of the planning strategies, as highlighted in the examples below;

- *"Through interaction with the outside world [...] the municipality will create good frameworks for diverse development"* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 3, own translation]

- *"Business development is about strengthening entrepreneurs [...]. Entrepreneurs play a significant role in the economic growth of our area and business development"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 42, own translation]

- *"We see the opportunities in investing in development [...] and new infrastructure that supports this growth"* [Randers Kommune, 2010, p. 23, own translation]

- *"Randers' city council will create growth and development throughout our municipality - from Havndal in the north to Langå in the south"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 2, own translation]

- *"The foundation for growth must be secured – both in number of companies and in workplaces - to ensure the economic activity and welfare"* [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 16, own translation]

- *"We want to prove that it is possible to have an ambitious growth agenda for both business and settlement [...]"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 25, own translation]

An important note here is that the purpose of putting forwards these examples is not to infer that the strategic planning of Randers Municipality is overly focused on neoliberal rationales. It is to show that, to varying degrees, growth and urban development are present in every single planning strategy. Furthermore, this 'trend' of creating growth through urban development has especially been present in Randers since 2020, where 638 dwellings were constructed, in 2021 577 dwellings were constructed, and an estimated 1150 dwellings are to be constructed by the end of 2024 [Randers Amtsavis, 2021a]. The construction of these dwellings is also expected to be distributed between 1.013 owner-occupied homes and 1.345 for rental. With Randers Municipality having risen from 93.000 to 99.000 citizens during the past 20 years - an average influx of 300 citizens pr. year - the construction of nearly 2.400 dwellings in five years may seem to be too many, especially compared to the fact that there are more empty homes in Randers Municipality than there have been in the past 12 years [Randers Amtsavis, 2022b]. As shown in figure 4.2, the number of empty dwellings in Randers Municipality anno 2022 was a combined 3.348, with apartments making up 2.237 dwellings, detached houses making up 836 dwellings, and terraced houses accounting for the last 275 dwellings. With apartments making such a large proportion of the number of empty dwellings, it can be inferred that the majority of empty dwellings are situated within the city of Randers.
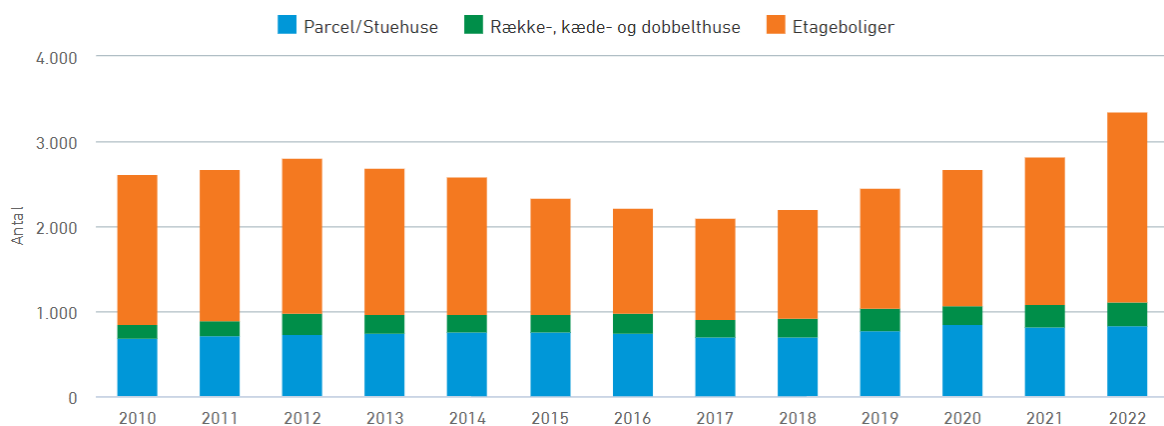

Figure 4.2. *Figure showing the number of empty dwellings in Randers Municipality from 2010-2022 [Statistikbanken, 2023a]*

These numbers can be interpreted in a number of ways, with one being that Randers Municipality is constructing way too many dwellings compared to their average influx of citizens, and therefore, the planning and development of, e.g., the River Town of Randers will only contribute to this problem. Another way to interpret these numbers is that Randers Municipality is 'artificially' trying to create growth, capitalizing on the fact that cities like, e.g., Aarhus are becoming continuously more expensive to live in and, therefore, it is cheaper for the average citizen to live in Randers and commute to Aarhus. This is how Jens Heslop, director of Development, Environment, and Technology in Randers Municipality, has chosen to interpret the numbers as; *"we are accelerating growth in Randers. We can also see this in the population, and this means that there will be a gap between new homes being built and those being rented out"*

[Randers Amtsavis, 2022b]. By focusing on the phrase 'accelerating growth', it can be inferred that Randers Municipality is actively engaging in supporting this infrastructuralist concept, where new infrastructure is needed for cities to compete, develop, and attract investments, as the municipality has plans for developing multiple large areas besides the River Town of Randers, i.e., Kasernegrunden, Sporbyen Scandia, Thors Bakke, and Munkdrup *(see figure 4.3)*.

Furthermore, providing a diverse range of housing options that meet the requirements of various buyers regarding, e.g., house sizes, housing types, ownership forms, materials, etc., can also attract more citizens as, so far, single-family home construction has been very dominant [Randers Kommune, 2007]. However, as stated in the first planning strategy from 2003, Randers is 'suffering' from having; *"[...] more and more elderly people and fewer and fewer people in the working age"* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 4, own translation], and this is supported by the fact that the average age in Randers is 42,8 years whereas in Aalborg it is 40,3 and Aarhus is all the way down to 38,0 years [Statistikbanken, 2023b]. Therefore, to support the supply of "used" family homes, the construction of homes for the 50+ generation needs to be increased [Randers Kommune, 2007]. Although there is a relatively large influx of young people in Randers, many people also move away from the city. This mainly happens among families with children to which suburbs like Stevnstrup and Harridslev are growing the fastest [Randers Amtsavis, 2021a]. Furthermore, another aggravation of Randers Municipality's settlement problem with regard to increasing the overall population can be attributed to the low birth rates within the municipality itself - an issue that is only raised in the first planning strategy from 2003, stating that; *"our 'own population growth' is therefore low. This is partly because there are few women of childbearing age, partly because women in Randers give birth to fewer children than the rest of the country"*
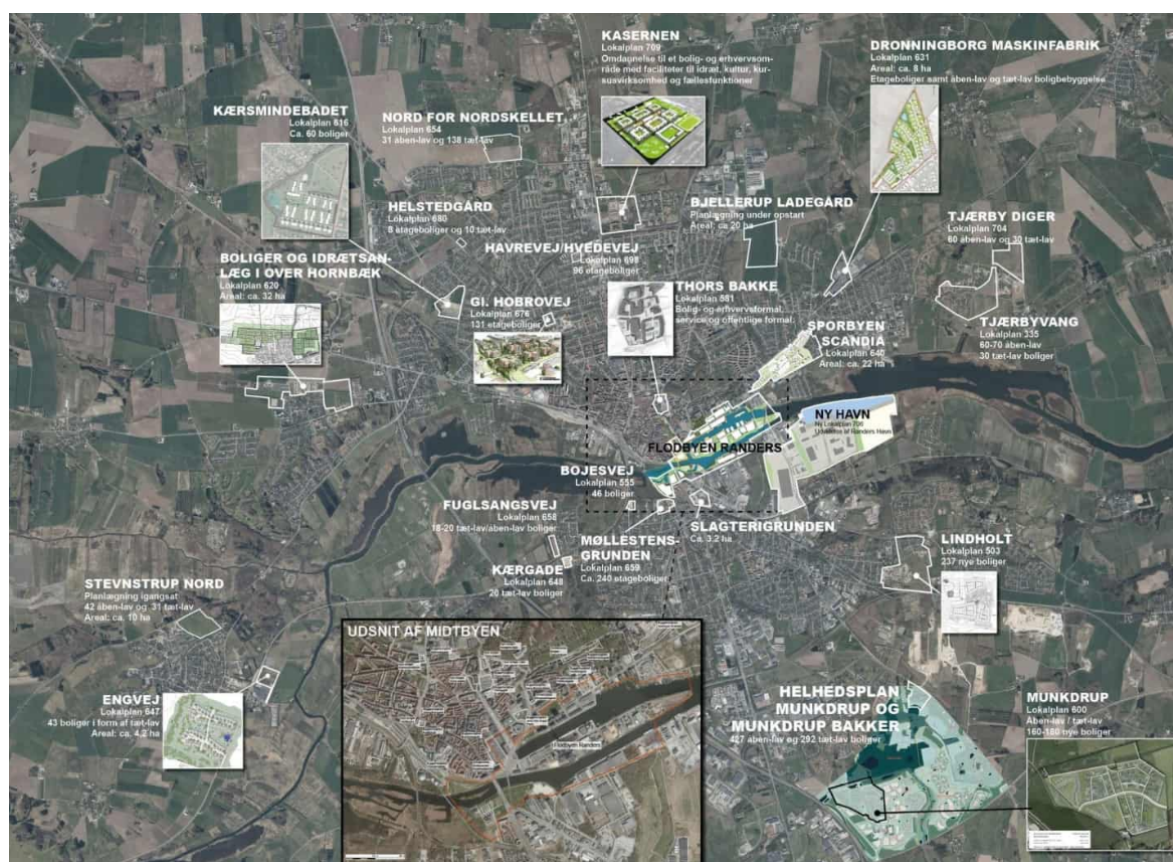

Figure 4.3. *Figure showing where urban development are expected to happen [Randers Amtsavis, 2021a]*

[Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 5, own translation]. The identification of these moving (and birthing) patterns could be the reason why the recent planning strategy from 2022 has a separate subsection denoted 'Revision of housing frameworks to support densification and new moving patterns' (own translation), which is set to change the moving patterns in order for Randers to grow as a city.

City marketing and intercity competition

As mentioned in section 2.3, it has become a general trend that cities want to brand and promote themselves in order to attract citizens, businesses, and tourists [Sager, 2011], to which the basic hypothesis is that this trinity will contribute to creating growth and develop the cities [Pedersen, 2011]. Given its location, the city of Randers attracts labor from the neighboring municipalities, which contributes to the growth of the municipality. This growth partly occurs naturally, as urbanization and migration to the cities is a widespread trend worldwide, but also because Randers Municipality works purposefully to channel the growth to the city of Randers. This is done by promoting elements that create competition, such as actively using the river in Randers and Randers Rainforest as attractive forces. Furthermore, as highlighted earlier in the quotes from the strategic planning documents, competition, accompanied by growth and globalization, are pervasive themes in the municipality's planning strategies. With a population of just over 99,000, Randers Municipality is the second-largest municipality in the Central Jutland region and the sixth-largest municipality in Denmark. However, comparing Randers Municipality with the surrounding municipalities of a similar size showcases that Viborg Municipality, at some point, actually had a population growth rate that where slightly higher than Randers Municipality, whilst Horsens and Silkeborg have had massive growth rates, i.e., between two and three times higher than some of the other municipalities, albeit with a lower number of inhabitants [Randers Amtsavis, 2022a].
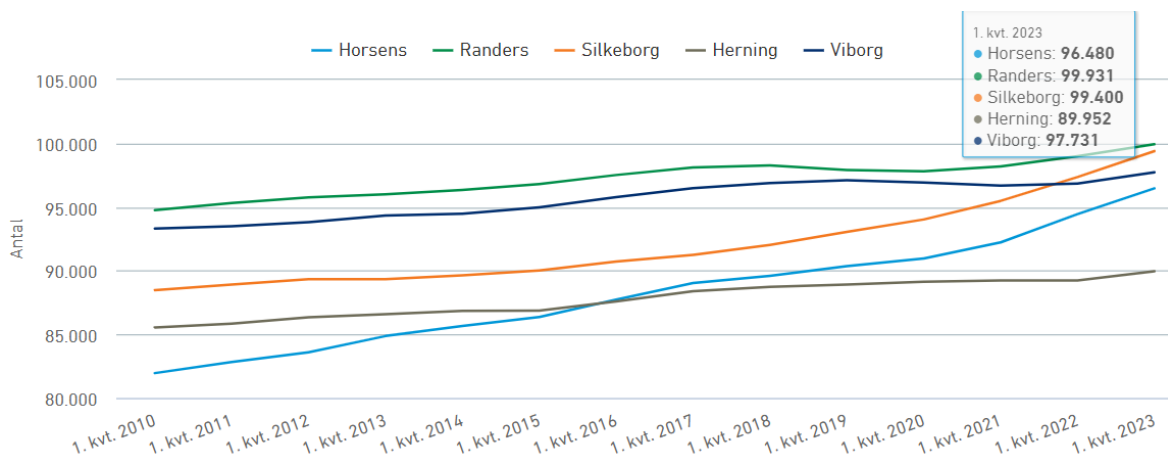

Figure 4.4. *Figure showing the growth in population in different municipalities during 2010-2022 [Statistikbanken, 2023c]*

Based on figure 4.4, Randers Municipality needs to increase its population through the attraction of citizens and businesses if the municipality is to retain, or increase, its current position as Horsens and Silkeborg are experiencing rapid population growth rates. The prevalent focus on growth and development in the planning strategies, especially those from 2010 and 2014, may indicate that Randers Municipality is well-aware that they are about to be surpassed by not one but two other municipalities in the years to come. This could also explain the change in which Randers Municipality has promoted itself throughout the planning strategies. In the planning from 2003, Randers Municipality wanted to attract branches of existing educations, and in the planning strategies from 2007 and 2010, Randers Municipality focused on using

'knowledge' to brand the city by emphasizing that; *"Randers is a city with two universities! One in Aarhus and one in Aalborg. It is a central element in our efforts to utilize the location between the two cities"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 43 (own translation)]. However, in the planning strategy from 2014, the focus has shifted away from focusing on 'knowledge' and towards being a part of the 'East Jutland growth region' as well as a part of 'Business Region Aarhus' as; *"businesses in Randers must be seen in the context of the growth region around Aarhus and the many thousands of jobs in this area. That is why Randers Municipality is also part of Business Region Aarhus, which will create growth and jobs [...]"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 11, own translation]. Randers doesn't have the capabilities to brand itself as being a 'knowledge city' like, e.g., Aalborg because only 14 higher educations are placed in Randers [Randers Kommune, n.d.b], so instead, the municipality has chosen to take advantage of the massive growth rates that Aarhus is experiencing by entering into municipal partnerships. This focus on being part of Business Region Aarhus is also repeated in the planning strategy from 2018. In the planning strategy from 2022, this focus is expanded even further to now encompassing an entire city region denoted the 'East Jutland city of millions' (see figure 4.5) where the cities in this city region; *"[...] stand stronger together, and the cooperation in the city region supports the development of Randers municipality in the globalized world of the future"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 4, own translation].
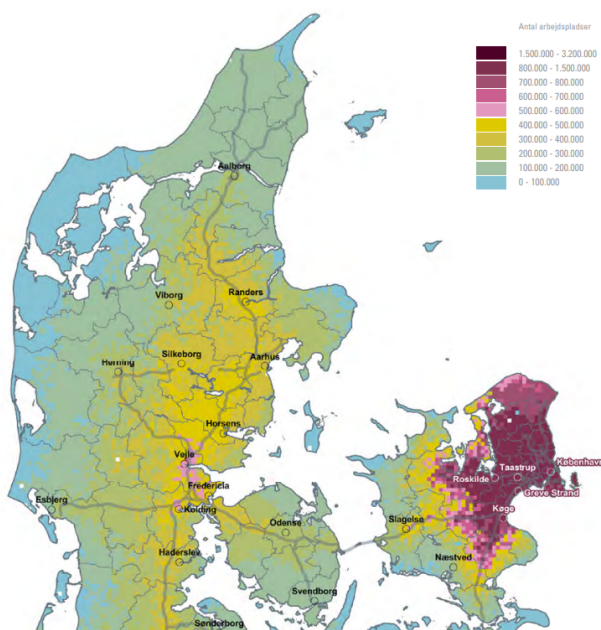

Figure 4.5. *Figure showing how many full-time jobs are available within 60 min. driving by car from it area in question in 2017 [Nielsen, Tom and Jensen, Boris Brorman and Bisgaard, Holger, 2019]*

Being part of the 'East Jutland city of millions' is not only a matter of promoting Randers in order to attract citizens, businesses, and investments on a municipal, regional, and national scale, it is also a matter of being able to enter into the international scale of intercity competitiveness through joint partnerships with other cities and municipalities as the attraction of global companies will be beneficial to everyone. This could be inferred as being the reason why Randers Municipality has switched promotion strategy throughout the different planning strategies by discarding the local perspective from the first planning strategy in 2003 to adopting a more global one in the latest from 2022.

Mobility and Infrastructure

Recurrent themes in all of the planning strategies are traffic and mobility. The fact that Randers have motorways, train traffic, a short distance to the airport, a hub for bus traffic, and connections to Aarhus, Aalborg, Viborg, and Djursland are mentioned in different ways in multiple planning strategies. Moreover, the general road network is prioritized in all of the planning strategies emphasizing the need to upgrade and expand the current infrastructure to attract businesses and investments. However, as pointed out in the first planning strategy from 2003, accessibility is the biggest problem regarding public transport and car traffic to

which; *"the bridge of Randers is our most vulnerable place"* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 2, own translation]. This issue is also pointed out in the planning strategy 2007, stating that; *"the bridge of Randers already creates traffic jams today"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 20, own translation] as well as in the planning strategy from 2018 stating that; *"Randers has a number of challenges, in particular in the form of congestion on the bridge of Randers"* [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 20, own translation]. Therefore, the construction of a new bridge has also been a recurrent theme in all of the planning strategies, with the planning strategy from 2003 stating that; *"One of the projects that have been discussed for many years is a new bridge connection over the river."* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 2, own translation] to the planning strategy from 2014 ensuring that; *"We are working on connections across the river both inside the city of Randers and to the east"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 13, own translation]. On the 6th of November 2017, the city council decided on the route for the new bridge denoted the 'Climate Bridge' (Klimabro) [Randers Amtsavis, 2020], and in the planning strategy from 2018, it is stated that a well-functioning infrastructure is important for businesses and that a new Climate Bridge will ensure that citizens and businesses have several opportunities to cross the river [Randers Kommune, 2018]. However, the purpose of constructing a new bridge is not only to alleviate pressure from the current bridge or to attract business to settle in the eastern part of Randers. The bridge will also serve the purpose of joining together an entirely new future district, denoted the River Town of Randers, as; *"the Climate Bridge is a central part of the realization of the city to the water project"* [Randers Amtsavis, 2020], whilst also creating more direct access to the new harbor.

4.2.2 Environmentalist planning rationales

Nature, Sustainability and Local Agenda 21

According to the provisions outlined in § 33, a and b of the Planning Act concerning local Agenda 21, regional and municipal councils must release a statement outlining their strategy for promoting sustainable development in the region and municipality throughout the 21st century before the midpoint of the municipal and regional election period. This statement should emphasize the necessity of adopting a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and long-term approach to the task at hand. It should also detail how the engagement of the general population, businesses, organizations, and associations will be facilitated as part of this endeavor, drawing upon the principles of local Agenda 21. In this regard, each planning strategy has either included a dedicated section specifically addressing local Agenda 21, or they have integrated the principles throughout the strategies by highlighting their connection to local Agenda 21. The following examples demonstrate how the planning strategies of Randers Municipality has incorporated local Agenda 21:

"[...] the city council's strategy is that we include environmental considerations in the planning and [...] focuses on our recreational and nature areas" [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 1, own translation]

"The city council's strategy for efforts regarding sustainable development (the Agenda 21 strategy) is incorporated into the planning strategy." [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 2, own translation]

"Strategy 2017 sets the agenda for our Agenda 21 efforts, physical development, and for the next municipal plan, which is revised in its entirety." [Randers Kommune, 2010, p. 3, own translation]

"The planning strategy is also the city council's strategy for local Agenda 21, which describes how we work with sustainability, climate, and environment in all of our planning." [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 2, own translation]

"Through Local Agenda 21, we focus on working holistically, interdisciplinary and long-term in: reducing the environmental impact, promoting sustainable urban development and urban transformation [...]" [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 24, own translation]

"[...] below is our report on Local Agenda 21, which is a statutory report on strategy for sustainable planning." [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 24, own translation]

The term 'sustainability' has consistently remained a key concept in all planning strategies. Therefore, it can be asserted that all of the planning strategies have addressed the notion of sustainability, albeit to varying degrees, with a primary focus on environmental sustainability. However, without entering too much into discourse analysis, the utilization of the concept 'sustainability' has been on quite a journey as the number of times the word is mentioned in the planning strategies varies from 6 times (2003), 10 times (2007), 7 times (2010), 6 times (2014), 30 times (2018), to 31 times (2022). Sustainability has, therefore, become a key concept, especially in the latest planning strategies from 2018 and 2022, where a massive rise in the utilization of the word can be identified, and it could be inferred that the intense focus on the transition to more 'green' and CO_2-neutral societies have impacted the extent to which the concept of sustainability is utilized in planning documents. Another perspective on the increasing adoption of sustainability can be considered by taking a broader approach to the concept.

While sustainability is mostly associated with environmental concerns in the planning strategies, the 2007 planning strategy offers an intriguing addition by expanding the understanding of sustainability beyond its environmental aspect. This broader view recognizes sustainability in relation to various other aspects, rather than solely focusing on the environment as; *"sustainability is of course about a better environment, [...]. It is also about economic development and good living conditions in all parts of the municipality and about social conditions"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 2, own translation]. This broader view regarding sustainability does then somewhat disappear in the planning strategies from 2010 and 2014, but in the planning strategy from 2018, the broader view of sustainability is reintroduced again as; *"sustainable development is largely about action thinking holistically and planning for the long term – physically, environmentally, socially and economically"* [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 8, own translation]. This broader perspective of sustainability is repeated in the planning strategy from 2022, where the focus is also on both the economic, environmental, and social aspects embedded in the concept of sustainability as; *"Randers Municipality must grow without compromising sustainability. We want to prove that it is possible to have an ambitious growth agenda for both business and housing while at the same time taking the necessary considerations into account in regard to the climate"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 25, own translation]. However, it is important to keep in mind that, despite the latter planning strategies from 2018 and 2022, but the also the planning strategy from 2007, applies a broader perspective of sustainability by also, to some degree, addressing economic and social aspects, the use of sustainability is predominantly applied in connection with environmental issues in all of the planning strategies, i.e., focusing on CO_2 reductions, waste sorting, groundwater protection, afforestation, natural recreational areas, etc.

In addition to the concept of sustainability, all the planning strategies have also encompassed the concepts of nature and the environment to varying degrees. These concepts are interconnected with the local Agenda 21 visions and initiatives within the planning strategies. Moreover, it is not surprising to observe the inclusion of natural and environmental considerations in the 2003 and 2022 planning strategies, as these planning strategies demonstrate a well-balanced incorporation of planning rationales from the three currently prevalent ideologies investigated in sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5. However, it is somewhat surprising

to witness significant attention given to environmental planning rationales, specifically addressing nature and the environment, in the planning strategies from 2010 and 2014, as these planning strategies prioritize neoliberal planning rationales to a great extent. Similarly, the planning strategies of 2007 and 2018, which are skewed towards neoliberal planning rationales, also allocate substantial sections to addressing environmental planning rationales. In this regard, a quite surprising and unexpected observation is the fact that the concept of biodiversity, which is a widely discussed and recognized concept of today, did not receive any mention or recognition in any of the planning strategies up until the planning strategy from 2022, in which the concept of biodiversity is mentioned six times. As opposed to the concept of biodiversity, every planning strategy includes terms such as, e.g., 'city park' [Randers Kommune, 2003, 2007], 'green structure' [Randers Kommune, 2010], 'recreative spaces' [Randers Kommune, 2014], 'green recreative structures [Randers Kommune, 2018], and 'green spaces' [Randers Kommune, 2022]. Furthermore, the planning strategy of 2022 is also explicitly stating that green recreational spaces are good for both biodiversity and public health, they constitute togetherness, and they must be designed so that there is; *"[..] space for activities for all age groups and for individual immersion in quiet green breathing holes"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 12, own translation]. In general, all of the planning strategies are advocates of bringing together the 'green' and the 'blue' into the cityscape by emphasizing the use of green recreational spaces as well as the River of Randers.

Urban transformation and densification

As mentioned earlier, Randers Municipality has for a long time aimed at reaching 100.000 citizens, and in doing so, the development of multiple large areas such as Kasernegrunden, Sporbyen Scandia, Thors Bakke, Munkdrup and the River Town of Randers has been initiated. However, besides the planning strategy from 2003 honestly acknowledging that because the population growth in Randers is low, there is no need for new dwellings in the forthcoming planning period as there is enough residual space in the municipal plan (of that time) [Randers Kommune, 2003], the rest of the planning strategies have focused on urban transformation and densification.

Figure 4.6. *Figure showing in which directions Randers are expected to grow as well as where densification and transformation is expected to happen [Randers Kommune, 2022]*

Reducing the acquisition of greenfield areas, i.e., land that has yet to be developed, and instead making use of existing brownfield areas, i.e., land that has previously been built on, by transforming and densifying existing business and commercial areas are a common theme in the rest of the planning strategies, and it is promoted as being interlinked with a sustainable development approach. This is exemplified in a quote from the planning strategy from 2007 stating that the long-term sustainable development of Randers must; *"[...] reduce the acquisition of new areas for urban purposes by making the best possible use of existing residential and commercial areas"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 2, own translation].

This statement is also repeated in the planning strategy from 2022, in which Randers Municipality states that; *"transformation and densification contribute to sustainable urban development, as the least possible area is involved in urban development"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 13, own translation]. In the planning strategies, the process of transforming and densifying existing urban areas is mainly directed towards

redeveloping both the inner city and the industrial sites of the harbor *(see figure 4.6)*, thereby paving the way for the development of the River Town of Randers. By transforming the old industrial sites when they are no longer in use [Randers Kommune, 2010], and by converting former business premises into new dwellings [Randers Kommune, 2018], the vision of applying this densification approach is to; *"uncover the many unexploited opportunities inherent in [...] transforming the harbor areas near the city and integrating these new areas with the city center"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 8, own translation]. As shown in figure 4.7, the primary focus regarding urban transformation and densification of brownfield sites is on the inner city of Randers. Compared to figure 4.3, it is possible to identify similarities as the focus on redeveloping the inner city and the harbor is continued. This continuation can be inferred from a statement in the planning strategy of 2018, asserting that; *"we want to densify our cities by expanding the city centers and transform areas near the city centers into new functions"* [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 9, own translation]. The statements from the planning strategies regarding the transformation and densification of brownfield sites support the argument that Randers Municipality is traversing a more sustainable path in which land is valued as a finite resource and should be handled accordingly.

The development plan for the River Town of Randers *(see figure 5.2)* will show how multiple development prospects in figure 4.7 from the planning strategy of 2014 are carried over, thereby asserting the focus from Randers Municipality on redeveloping existing industrial sites, etc., that are no longer in use. Furthermore, according to Randers Amtsavis [2013], the area east of Randers Regnskov, denoted as 'Hvidemølleområdet,' is also expected to be transformed from an industrial area into a tourist attraction and recreational area. This is stated in the planning strategy from 2007, which envisions that by 2016; *"the rainforest has been expanded and is included as a nationally known city attraction - also integrated with the Hvidemølle area"* [Randers
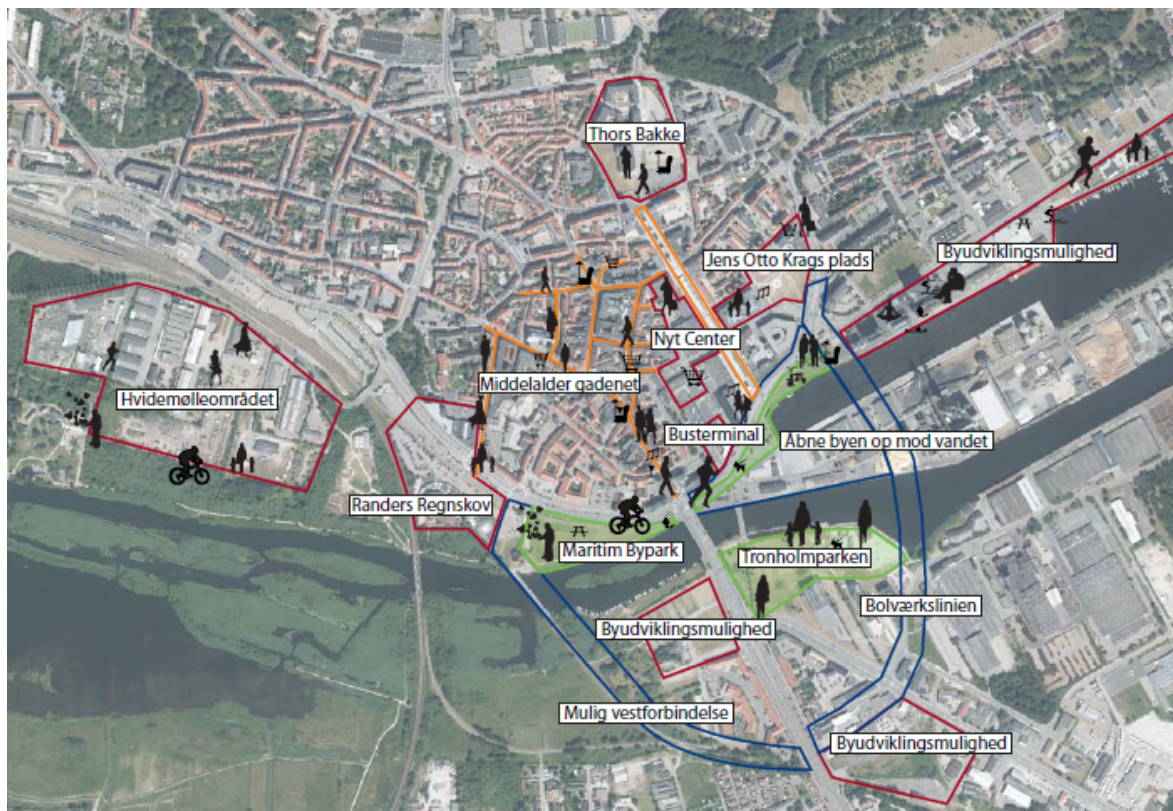

Figure 4.7. *Figure showing the expected redevelopment of the inner city as well as possible urban development sites north and south of the river [Randers Kommune, 2014]*

Kommune, 2007, p. 8, own translation], as well as in the planning strategy from 2014 emphasizing that the continued development of Randers Regnskov should be supported. However, even though this didn't happen by 2016, the planning strategy from 2018 still asserts that the development of Randers Regnskov must be seen in the context of the comprehensive plan for the Hvidemølle area to which the area is to be developed in the future along with climate protection of the banks of the river.

Environmental protection and climate control

As established earlier, the focus on the climate and the environment has been present in every planning strategy. Moreover, with the planned development of the River Town of Randers on the current areas of the harbor to the east, the envisioned future expansion of Randers Regnskov to the west, and the battle against rising levels due to climate change, environmental protection and climate control are being increasingly emphasized in the planning strategies. This intensified focus has resulted in the creation of the 'Climate Belt' (Klimabåndet) - a belt that combines climate control and urban development. In 2018, Randers Municipality held three workshops with two consulting teams, and the results were a range of innovative solutions that both protect against high water levels and make the waterfront areas attractive for residents. It is the vision that these solutions can be gradually implemented by the municipality as urban development progresses. The solutions vary from integrated dikes to intelligent drainage systems to an elevated path that serves as a combined flood protection, enclosure, and pedestrian connection [NIRAS, 2021].

This Climate Belt is expected to span from Randers Regnskov in the west to the (future) Climate Bridge in the east at the end of the pier *(see figure 4.8)*. The Climate Belt is to be established to safeguard the city of Randers from potential flooding caused by storm surges along the 6 km long waterfront, and this
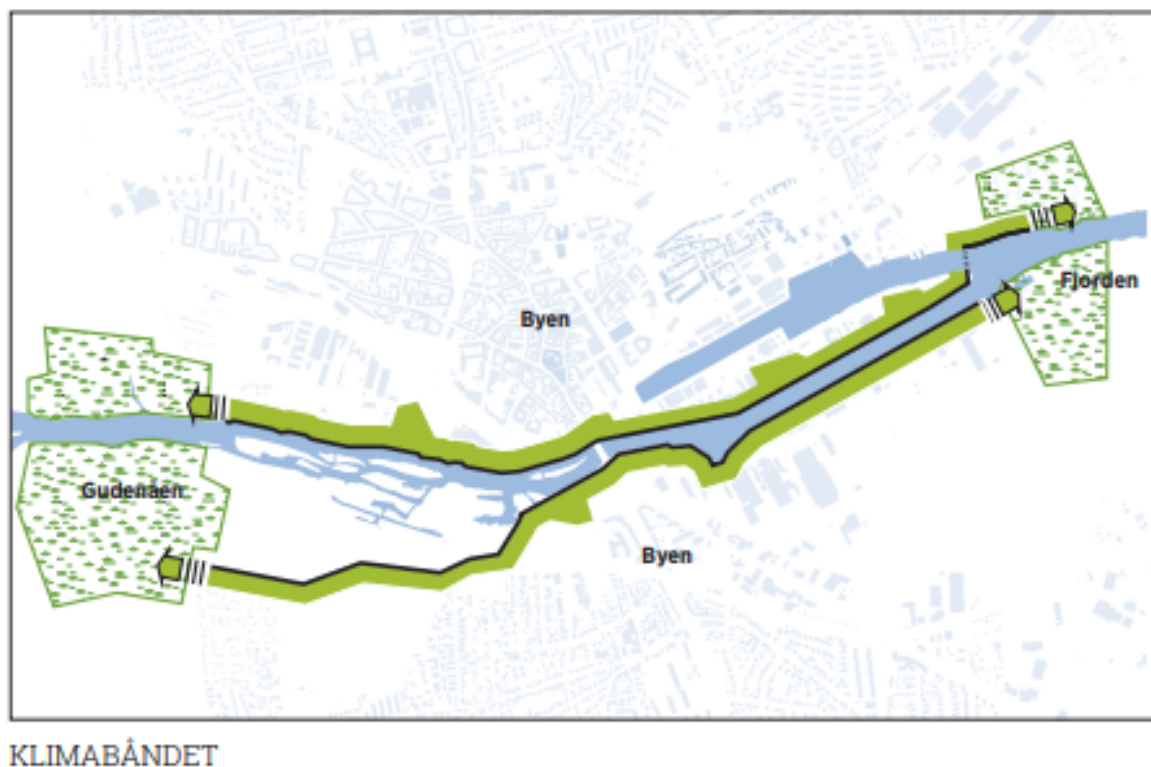

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Figure 4.8. *Figure showing the expected 'Climate Belt' that is to prevent the inner city of Randers from flood and storm surges [Randers Kommune, 2020]*

initiative is based on a shared strategy aimed at addressing existing and future water-related challenges [Randers Kommune, 2018]. The Climate Belt is to be realized in multiple stages and is also envisioned to offer great opportunities for recreation and experiences. Furthermore, in an attempt to contribute to mitigating the CO_2 emissions, another environmental issue that Randers Municipality is facing is in terms of afforestation. The planning strategy from 2003 addresses the issue regarding the lack of forests by stating that; *"even though we have beautiful nature, Randers is one of the least forested municipalities in the country"* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 4, own translation]. This planning strategy also states that even if the ongoing afforestation projects (of that time) are realized, the amount of forests in Randers Municipality is still well below the average in the rest of the municipalities. Given that this issue is portrayed so directly in the planning strategy from 2003, it is quite curious that afforestation is only quickly mentioned in the planning strategies from 2007 and 2018, and the planning strategies from 2010 and 2014 are not giving attention to this issue at all. However, in the planning strategy from 2022, afforestation has resurfaced and is given much more attention by, e.g, pledging to create an afforestation strategy and for setting the goal that by 2050, almost 25 % should consist of forest [Randers Kommune, 2022]. As of today, only 9% of Randers Municipality's area, which corresponds to approximately 7,000 ha, is covered by forest, and the national average is 13.5 % [Randers Kommune, n.d.a].

4.2.3   Participatory democratic planning rationales

Citizen involvement and participation

In the purpose clause [1] of the Planning Act, § 1, paragraph 2, no. 5, it is stated that the public should be involved in the planning process to the widest possible extent. Furthermore, citizen involvement in decision-making processes is also mentioned and regulated in § 23a-f and § 24 of the Planning Act. These sections establish the requirements and procedures for involving citizens in the preparation and amendments of municipal and local plans. Therefore, citizen involvement and participation in planning and decision-making processes are stated by law. Highlighted below are excerpts from the planning strategies showing how citizen involvement and participation are both practiced and envisioned:

"The city councils strategy is that we [...] develop and preserves local democracy. This includes [...] involving citizens, businesses, and associations in the work towards sustainable development." [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 1, own translation]

"Local democracy, citizen involvement, and networks must be the basis for joint efforts." [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 2, own translation]

"We see the possibilities in citizens taking responsibility for and actively participating in our common democracy" [Randers Kommune, 2010, p. 23, own translation]

"In our efforts to develop the city center [...] we will place emphasis on an inclusive process that involves not only politicians and investors but also the citizens who are the foundation of the city and who live their lives in it" [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 10, own translation]

"Through Local Agenda 21 we focus on [...] involving citizens and businesses in the work with Agenda 21" [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 24, own translation]

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[1]Formålsparagraf

"It is our responsibility to set the right course for development, secure balanced cities, and attractive districts. But the development takes place in dialogue with citizens and businesses" [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 3, own translation]

Despite citizen participation being a legislative provision, none of the planning strategies but one are specific in regards to how citizens are to be involved nor to what extent citizens are to be participating. Only the planning strategy from 2007 is explicitly stating how citizens are to be involved in decision-making processes in which; *"the tools include public meetings, information through media, focus groups, citizen panels, collaborations with educational institutions, etc."* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 4, own translation]. This planning strategy further states that assembly meetings are democratic traditions in which the city council will continue to participate in such public meetings and that the effort to engage even more citizens in the public debate will be strengthened in connection with the municipal planning process [Randers Kommune, 2007]. Moreover, the planning strategy from 2007 takes citizen participation even further by stating that; *"we aim to make a special effort to engage those who may not normally participate in the democratic debate. Therefore, a citizen panel has been established with randomly selected members"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 4, own translation]. These excerpts show that the planning strategy from 2007 is, by far, the most explicit planning strategy regarding how to engage citizens in order to increase participation in decision-making processes as this planning strategy dedicates nearly two pages to describing local democracy, public participation as well as tools to engage with citizens.

Besides statements like; *"we believe that development occurs through democratic debate"* [Randers Kommune, 2010, p. 3, own translation] and *"in the political process, we target development in a dialogue with citizens, builders, and businesses."* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 3, own translation], over time the explicit emphasis on citizen involvement and participation found in the 2007 planning strategy has diminished almost entirely, and none of the subsequent planning strategies address this social aspect as directly. In fact, the same statement; *"it is only through the engagement with citizens, businesses, and associations that we create sustainable results"* (own translation) can be directly found in both the planning strategy from 2014 [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 18] and the planning strategy from 2018 [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 24], which in a way can be interpreted as a signal that citizen involvement does not hold as much importance for Randers Municipality as it did in the planning strategy from 2007. In order for participatory democratic planning rationales regarding citizen involvement and participation to not be completely forgotten and overshadowed by, e.g., neoliberal and environmentalist agendas, a more 'direct' and explicit approach in future planning strategies is needed.

Demographics and residential composition

Like the rest of the country, Randers is dealing with the issue of an aging population. Furthermore, as stated earlier, Randers is also dealing with the issue of low birth rates as well as families with children moving to suburbs outside of the city. With the exception of the planning strategies from 2010 and 2018, the remaining planning strategies address the demographical challenge related to an aging population and the challenge regarding residential composition due to the migration pattern of families moving to rural areas. A recurrent theme in the planning strategies (except the 2010th and the 2018th) is that through planning, settlement policies, etc., new residential areas for families with children can place increased emphasis on initiating relocation chains, where seniors living in villas and detached houses can move into smaller homes, thereby making the larger housing available for families with children [Randers Kommune, 2022]. Combined with the construction of high-quality, low-rise terraced housing, apartments, etc., for

the 50+ generations, the supply of 'used' family homes for a new generation of families with children can be supported [Randers Kommune, 2007]. However, in none of the planning strategies does Randers Municipality specifically state whether these housing options should be located in Randers' central areas or in other parts of the city or municipality as; *"good senior housing options in both Randers city and the smaller towns are crucial to accommodate the national demographic trend towards an increasing elderly population"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 6, own translation]. Still, all of the planning strategies acknowledge that it is attractive for many citizens to settle close to the city center. Therefore, these centrally located areas, such as Broften, Pieren as well as the northern and southern part of the current harbor *(see figure 5.2)*, are seen as a strength for the city of Randers as they provide opportunities for the construction of dwellings in (future) urban redevelopment areas. However, with most of the planning strategies acknowledging and addressing the issues regarding an aging population as well as families with children moving to suburbs such as Stevnstrup or Harridslev, the planning strategy from 2022 is the only planning strategy to address the issues regarding the 'vulnerable areas' in Randers. Given that the planning strategy from 2003 stated that; *"The city council's strategy is that we: [...] work to counteract the distortion in the composition of the population"* [Randers Kommune, 2003, p. 1, own translation], it's quite surprising that none of the planning strategies, besides the one from 2022, have addressed the social issues in the vulnerable areas. A vulnerable area is a social housing area with a minimum of 1,000 residents and that meets two out of four criteria such as, e.g., the percentage of residents between the ages of 18 and 64 who are not employed and not engaged in education exceeding 40% based on the average over the past two years, etc. [BL, 2022].

In the northern part of Randers *(see figure 4.9)*, two areas are denoted as vulnerable areas, i.e., the areas of Gl. Jennumparken and Glarbjergvej, and the areas of Hermann Stillingsvej, Energivej, and Vangdalen are regarded as areas that could potentially turn into vulnerable areas, whilst the area of Sjællandsgade-kvarteret is being monitored [Randers Kommune, 2021]. In the planning strategy from 2022, Randers Municipality states that; *"the municipality aims to integrate the vulnerable housing areas with the surrounding city"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 13, own translation], thereby actively acknowledging the issues in the social housing areas. Furthermore, according to Jens Heslop, director of Development, Environment, and Technology in Randers Municipality, Randers needs to have; *"a broader focus and develop a more comprehensive and city-wide approach to the efforts against parallel societies in Randers Municipality"* [Randers Amtsavis, 2021b]. The planning strategy of 2022 supports this assessment by stating that Randers Municipality, in collaboration with the housing associations, has initiated a strategic collaboration regarding the vulnerable housing areas in northern Randers, i.e., through the development of the comprehensive social housing plan.

The comprehensive social housing plan directly states that the reason why these areas have been denoted as vulnerable areas, etc., is because these areas consist of a; *"[...] very vulnerable and exposed resident composition"* [Randers Kommune, 2021, p. 5, own translation]. Furthermore, the comprehensive social housing plan also states that the purpose of this plan is to make the residential areas able to attract a varied residential composition, offer a strong community life, and provide good recreational opportunities [Randers Kommune, 2021]. This could be done by introducing new rental regulations, physical transformation of the areas such as opening up the areas, by removing vegetation, embankments, or other barriers, developing pedestrian and cycling paths to other neighborhoods, activating green spaces as parks for the entire district, or introducing new facilities and destinations that attract people from outside the area, through renovations, and other initiatives [Randers Kommune, 2022]. This way, these areas are integrated both physically and mentally into the rest of the city. The fact that the planning strategy from 2022 addresses both the
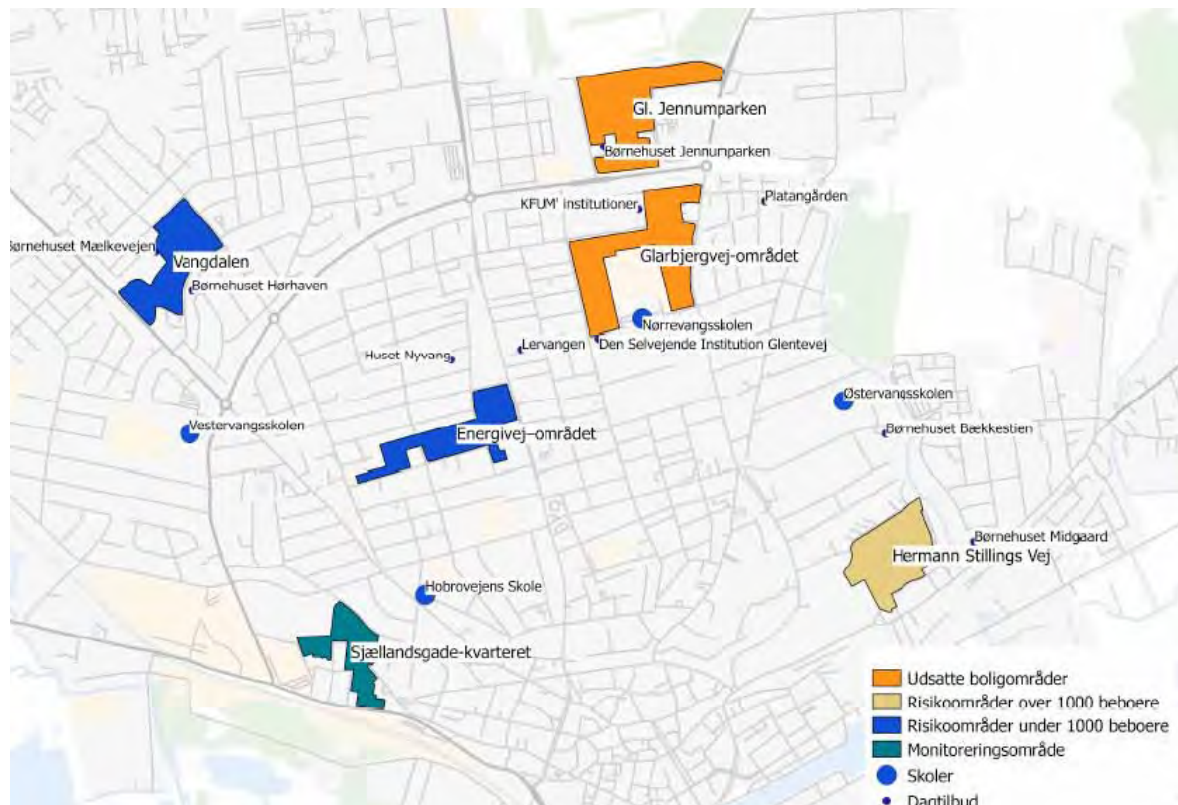
Figure 4.9. *The map displays the five residential areas in the Comprehensive Social Housing Plan Randers 2021-25, along with the Sjællandsgade neighborhood, where development is being monitored [Randers Kommune, 2021]*

vulnerable areas in northern Randers and refers to the housing social initiatives implemented through the comprehensive housing plan is indicative that Randers Municipality is acknowledging the issues in these areas.

Inclusion, accessibility, and diversity

As deprived neighborhoods can be interpreted as spatial manifestations of social problems [Madanipour, 2007], to which attention should be given at both the local and the strategic level in order to solve these social problems, the analysis of the strategic planning documents revealed some quite surprising facts. Firstly, the term 'inclusion' is not mentioned a single time in any of the planning strategies or in the comprehensive social housing plan. As inclusion, often understood in connection to social inclusion, refers to the process of ensuring that all individuals and groups within a community have equal access to and participation in the benefits and opportunities provided by the urban environment, it was perplexing to discover that this term is left out in all of the strategic planning documents given the social problems inherent in the deprived neighborhoods of Randers, see figure 4.9.

Secondly, the term 'accessibility' is also, to a large extent, left out of both the planning strategies and the comprehensive social housing plan. In only a few of the planning strategies is accessibility mentioned, e.g., in the planning strategy from 2007, accessibility is mentioned in regards to; *"[...] making cultural offerings as accessible as possible [...]"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 27, own translation], and in the planning strategy from 2014, accessibility is mentioned in regards to; *"[...] making the city more attractive and nature more accessible"* [Randers Kommune, 2014, p. 13, own translation]. Only the planning strategy from 2022

mentions accessibility in relation to public spaces as; *"[...] emphasis should be placed on the quality and accessibility of shared public spaces and green oases"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 13, own translation]. Again, by leaving out the term accessibility or using the term in connection with anything other than access to public spaces, Randers Municipality is implying that access to public spaces, regardless of age, physical ability, socioeconomic background, or ethnic affiliation, is insignificant and, therefore, deprioritized in the strategic planning documents.

Thirdly, despite the term 'diversity', within urban planning, referring to the recognition of various social, cultural, economic, and demographic differences within a community, this term is only mentioned once in all of the planning strategies combined, and this is in connection to addressing 'biological diversity'. The term 'diversity' is also completely left out of the comprehensive social housing plan. However, an important note here is that 'diversity' translates directly into two Danish terms, i.e., *diversitet* and *mangfoldighed*. For analytical and interpretative purposes, *diversitet* will be translated into 'diversity', and *mangfoldighed* will be translated into 'multiformity', despite these two terms colloquially being used interchangeably. This distinction is made due to the term 'multiformity' being applied in all of the planning strategies, except for the social housing plan, in connection to, e.g., denoting diverse housing forms as seen in the planning strategy from 2007 as; *"Randers is characterized by multiformity, ranging from high-rise buildings [...] to a variety of detached houses in different price ranges"* [Randers Kommune, 2007, p. 8, own translation]. This term is also applied in relation to citizens, e.g., in the planning strategy from 2018, in which it is stated that; *"we will also have city life, security, socializing, and social multiformity in our cities and neighborhoods. Therefore, we will prepare an architectural and urban life policy"* [Randers Kommune, 2018, p. 9, own translation]. In the planning strategy from 2022, multiformity is also mentioned in relation to citizens, as this planning strategy states that; *"in cities and neighborhoods [...], there is also natural space for recreational experiences, culture, and a multiformity of citizens"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 3, own translation]. Despite 'multiformity' being applied a few times in connection to more social planning rationales in the planning strategies from 2018 and 2022, this term is also mainly applied in connection to business or environmental aspects throughout all of the planning strategies, such as 'economic multiformity' which is mentioned in the planning strategies from 2007 and 2018, as well as 'biological multiformity' which is mentioned in all of the planning strategies. Furthermore, given that 45% of the residents in Gl. Jennumparken, 37% in the Glarbjergvej area, and 34% in Vangdalen *(see figure 4.9)* have a non-Western background, as well as the fact that 6% of the population in Randers Municipality consists of immigrants or descendants with a non-Western background [Randers Kommune, 2021], the concepts of 'diversity' and 'multiformity' relating to more social planning rationales, should occupy a larger portion of the strategic planning documents in order to properly address the social issues inherent in the vulnerable areas of northern Randers.

4.3   Summary of planning rationales in the strategic planning documents

By applying the analytical framework of this research *(see section 2.6)* to the overall strategic documents created by Randers Municipality, the analysis of the strategic planning documents and the comprehensive social housing plan has revealed that neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales have been quite pervasive, as both ideologies permeate almost all visions and initiatives in these planning strategies. Concepts such as *'growth'*, *'urban development'*, *'mobility'*, and *'sustainability'* have been consistently present in all of the planning strategies to which it can be asserted that all of the planning strategies have incorporated both neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales. However, there has been a slight shift within

the past two planning periods as the content of the planning strategies from 2018 and 2022 has slightly transitioned from prioritizing urban competition and growth to also placing somewhat more emphasis on social multiformity and accessibility. The background for this shift can partly be attributed to the increased societal pressure on politicians to take responsibility for the social challenges that have emerged in various places, e.g., the vulnerable areas in the northern part of Randers. However, despite the slight change in the latter planning strategies, it was generally less obvious to attempt to identify the planning rationales underlying the ideology of participatory democracy in the strategic planning documents as these planning rationales are remarkably neglected, and the planning rationales are often only brought forward in relation to businesses or the environment, not the citizens. Concepts such as '*inclusion*', '*accessibility*', and '*diversity*' are often either completely left out of the strategic planning documents or used in order to promote neoliberal or environmentalist agendas. Planning in a neoliberal manner can be positive in terms of generating economic growth and urban development, but the negative consequences inherent in these planning rationales, as outlined in the theoretical framework, can be observed in Randers Municipality's planning. Although negative consequences such as segregation and gentrification are not directly evident in the cityscape of Randers, they may become more apparent in the future through the municipality's renewal and transformation projects, i.e., projects such as the River Town of Randers.

The priorities outlined in the planning strategies indicate a direction that could potentially increase income-based segregation, push economically disadvantaged citizens out of central areas, and thus contribute to creating an unjust city. Visualized in figure 4.10 is a summary of the identified ideological planning rationales in the strategic planning documents created by Randers Municipality. This figure shows that neoliberal and environmental planning rationales have primarily guided the strategic planning of Randers in the last 20 years at the expense of participatory democratic planning rationales. The outcome of this strategic approach has been the (initial) development of multiple large areas such as Kasernegrunden, Sporbyen Scandia, Thors Bakke, Munkdrup, and the River Town of Randers, as well as other smaller urban development projects *(see figure 4.3)*. However, this strategic approach has at the same time neglected the increasing social issues in some areas leading to the creation of multiple vulnerable areas as well as other risk and monitoring areas *(see figure 4.9)*. The planning rationales identified in the strategic planning documents primarily operate at a strategic level and, therefore, the forthcoming chapter will investigate a more local level by analyzing the development plan for the River Town of Randers, despite this plan still being a strategic tool to guide future development, in order to assert if or to which degree the participatory democratic planning rationales are being hegemonically overshadowed by neoliberal and/or environmentalist planning rationales.

Ideological planning rationales identified in the strategic planning documents	
Neoliberal rationales	- Randers Municipality has delegated power to the private sector, engages in public-private partnerships, and has taken on the role of facilitator - Randers Municipality is 'accelerating' growth by continuously greenlighting urban development projects - Randers Municipality utilizes investments in transportation projects as catalysts for development and growth - Randers Municipality has entered into Business Region Aarhus in order to promote the municipality on a regional and national scale
Environmentalist rationales	- Randers Municipality has emphasized sustainability, with a particular focus on the environment as a central element, in all of the planning strategies. - Randers Municipality has incorporated Local Agenda 21 visions and initiatives in every single planning strategy - Randers Municipality has emphasized land management and brownfield transformations in all of the planning strategies
Participatory rationales	- Randers Municipality works to ensure multiformity in urban functions, housing types, and the composition of residents - Randers Municipality works to ensure the broadest possible citizen involvement and participation

Figure 4.10. *Figure summarizing the ideological planning rationales identified in the analysis of the strategic planning documents (own illustration)*

Redeveloping the Harbor 5

This chapter revolves around the harbor of Randers and the redevelopment hereof through the development plan for the River Town of Randers. The aim is to assess to which extent the ideological planning rationales identified in Chapter 4 have influenced this urban development project. Furthermore, this chapter also seeks to explore the associated issues arising from this development project.

5.1 The River Town of Randers

'The River Town of Randers' is the ambitious vision by Randers Municipality for the development of a new future district that is envisioned to inhabit approximately 7-8.000 citizens, as the current harbor of Randers relocates to new areas, and simultaneously address the challenges related to climate adaptation and flood protection as well as addressing traffic issues. The development plan for this urban development project covers an approximately 59-hectare land area in the center of Randers, revolving around the harbor and the nature surrounding the river in Randers [Randers Kommune, 2020]. On the north side of the river, the development area is delimited by Randers Rainforest and the recreational area 'Justesens Plæne' to the west, the city center to the north, and the new urban development area Sporbyen Scandia as well as the Venezuela allotment garden association to the east. On the south side of the river, the development area is delimited by the recreational areas Brotoften and Tronholmen to the west, the commercial and industrial area along Grenåvej to the south, and the new future harbor areas to the east [Randers Kommune, 2020] *(see figure 5.1)*. A significant portion of the development area is currently utilized as the city's active commercial harbor, and the municipality primarily owns the remaining areas. The area is currently used by both port-related businesses and the Verdo combined heat and power plant [FAOD, 2022]. Randers Municipality and AP Ejendomme, a subsidiary of AP Pension, did enter into an agreement in 2022 to establish a land development company denoted Flodbyen P/S for this urban development project and over a period of 30 years, this development project aims at transforming the River Town of Randers from a harbor area into a modern and central district located in connection to the river. As a result, AP Ejendomme becomes a long-term investor and developer, as AP Pension owns 51 percent of the company, while Randers Municipality owns the remaining 49 percent [FAOD, 2022].

The development plan for the River Town of Randers includes two scenarios. In scenario A, Verdo will remain in their current location, and urban development will take place around their production facilities. In scenario B, Verdo will relocate along with the companies on the harbor to new areas to the east. Scenario B is the sole focus of this research as Daniel Madié, a city council member and the current chairman of the Harbor of Randers, revealed on the guided tour of the harbor that all harbor-based companies have been informed about the relocation plans and, consequently, lease extensions for these companies are not

Figure 5.1. Figure showing the current state of the areas on the harbor [Google Maps, 2023]
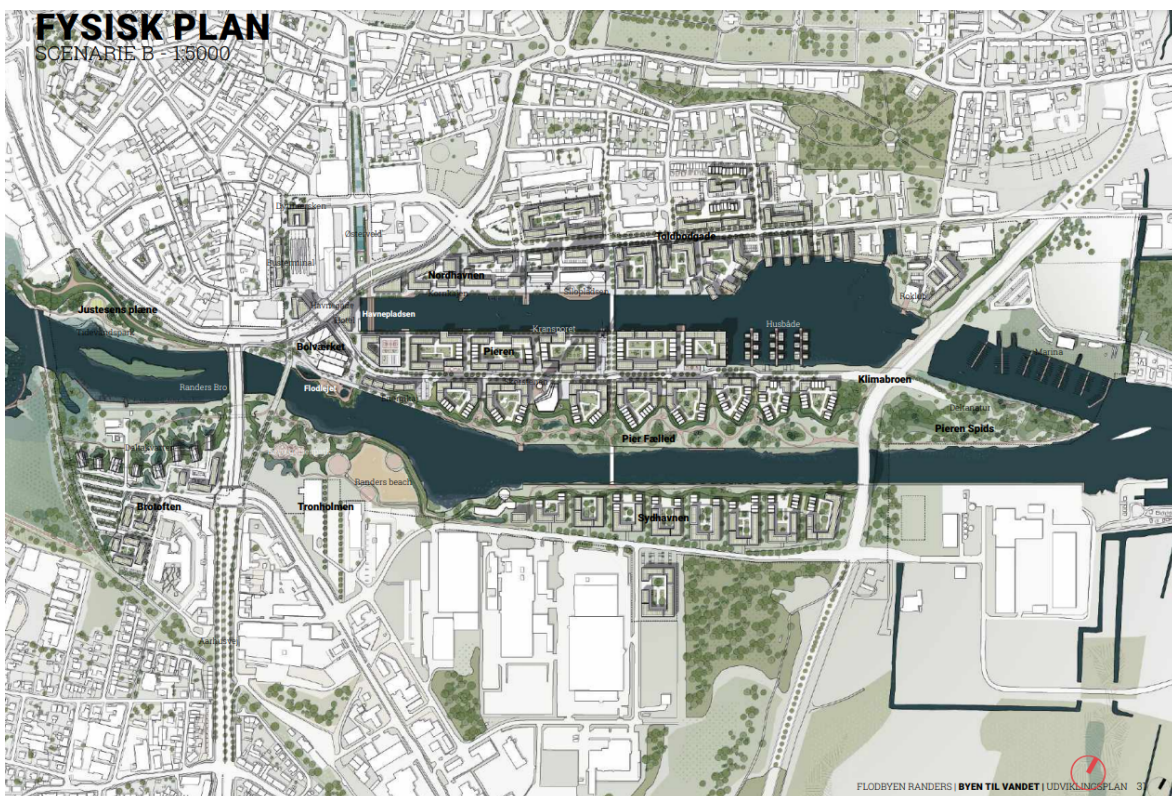

Figure 5.2. Figure showing scenario B in the development of the River Town of Randers [Randers Kommune, 2020]

possible. As a result, Verdo will need to relocate its production facilities to the new harbor by 2036, which will open up opportunities for the construction of new residential areas - making scenario B the targeted option for the redevelopment of the harbor *(see figure 5.2)*.
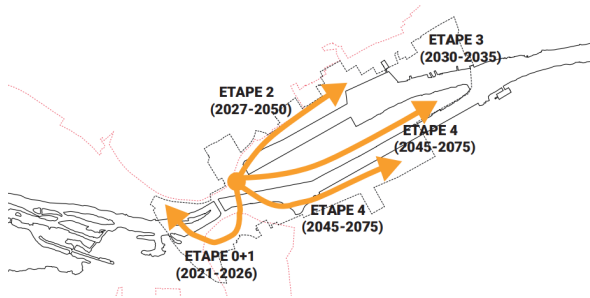
Figure 5.3. *Figure illustrating the different stages of the redevelopment of the harbor area [Randers Kommune, 2020]*

According to the development plan for the River Town of Randers, the revitalization of the harbor areas is anticipated to occur in five stages, including stage 0. The entire development project is projected to be completed by 2075 [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Notable milestones within this process include securing the final financing for the Climate Bridge by 2026. By 2028, decisions regarding the preservation or removal of the DLG buildings are expected to be made, and by 2030 the construction of the Climate Bridge is set to commence.

Regarding residential composition and housing types, a positive population growth of approximately 8,000 people is expected in Randers Municipality by 2045, corresponding to an annual increase of around 300 individuals, and based on a series of analyses, Randers Municipality expects that approximately 470 homes can be sold and rented annually at prices corresponding to new construction with nearly 3/4 of these homes being apartments [Randers Kommune, 2020]. The number of citizens under 40 has remained stable over the past ten years, while the number of citizens over 40 has significantly increased. Therefore, the youth are among the target groups that the municipality finds interesting in trying to attract. Other significant target groups for the municipality are individuals from rural areas and smaller villages, as this demographic often moves towards larger cities, as well as a group denoted 'well-established homeowners'. In this regard, Randers Municipality has identified four core target groups that the municipality wants to focus on: youth, families with children, seniors, and single individuals. Furthermore, this development plan also assumes a share of approximately 12% of the housing stock being dedicated to social housing, and in the central harbor area construction is expected to be in the range of 5-8 floors, with a few buildings reaching 9 and 14 floors, respectively. In the remaining areas, construction is expected to be in the range of 2-4 floors [Randers Kommune, 2020].

Basically, the development plan establishes the overarching principles for future planning and the dialogues with prospective investors and landowners regarding the area's development. Consequently, the development plan outlines the desired development of River Town *(see figure 5.3)*, which will subsequently be further specified in quality manuals, framework local plans, supplementary municipal plans, etc., that will provide the foundation for specific project local plans. This approach allows for the incorporation of evolving conditions, desires, and needs in urban development, which is expected to span the next five decades. [Randers Kommune, 2020]

5.2 Ideological planning rationales in the development plan

As early as the planning strategy of 2003, initial thoughts of moving the harbor in order to convert the industrial areas into dwellings, etc., were presented, and by 2010 the city council made the final decision to relocate the harbor. Then, in 2015, an initial study was initiated to explore seven different scenarios for the waterfront development of the city. From these scenarios, the city council selected three for further refinement, which was then subjected to a 10-week period of citizen involvement [Randers Kommune, 2020]. From 2016 to 2022, multiple public meetings were held, economic investigations, as well as noise

and soil studies, etc., were conducted, local plans were initiated and approved, and a land development company was established. In 2023, a new intersection on 'Havnegade' as well as a large rainwater basin in the southern part of the pedestrian street 'Østervold' was completed, thereby paving the way for connecting the city center and the pier. Furthermore, the adoption of the local plan for Justesens Plæne, which is a part of phase 0, as well as the initiation of the local plan for Brotoften and the establishment of a new intersection on Havnegade, both of which are part of phase 1, signifies that the process of creating the new urban district of the River Town of Randers is underway.

Climate Bridge and Climate Belt

With its future connection to the city center and the surrounding recreational areas, the redevelopment of the harbor area is an example of an urban development project where investments in infrastructure contribute to promoting growth and development. As highlighted in section 4.3, investments in infrastructure projects are a tool that Randers Municipality relies on to accelerate growth and development. Therefore, the construction of the Climate Bridge, for instance, will enhance the attractiveness of the harbor area by connecting this area more closely to the city center [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Another argument used in favor of constructing the Climate Bridge whilst redeveloping the harbor areas is that without an additional connection across the river, it would not be possible to construct more housing in the city center without contributing to additional traffic congestion as; *"it is an important prerequisite for the River Town development that the Climate Bridge is constructed. The Climate Bridge will serve as an alternative road connection, making the entire infrastructure in Randers more resilient"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 58, own translation]. Consequently, without the Climate Bridge, the development of the harbor pier would be hindered because all traffic from there would have to pass through Kulholmsvej and onto Havnegade, leading to increased congestion [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Furthermore, as a low-lying city, Randers faces challenges in the form of growing risks associated with storm surges, cloudbursts, and rising groundwater levels. According to DMI (Danish Meteorological Institute), it is projected that; *"[...] the permanent sea level in Denmark will rise by approximately 20 cm by 2040 and 50-100 cm by the end of the century"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 42, own translation], and as the sea level continues to rise, it will impact the intensity and frequency of storm surges. An event that currently occurs once every 100 years can be expected to occur more frequently, potentially every five years, by the end of the century [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Therefore, it is essential for long-term urban development to account for these expected changes, and measures such as securing new buildings against rising groundwater, planting drought-tolerant trees and plants, and creating a climate-friendly city with ample shaded areas should be incorporated into the planning process [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Therefore, by constructing the Climate Bridge, along with the Climate Belt *(see figure 4.8)*, Randers Municipality has developed a collective solution that helps protect both the new (future) district and the existing city center from heavy rain and storm surges as it is envisioned that on the north side of the pier, the Climate Bridge is going to rest on a dam that incorporates a high-water barrier [Randers Kommune, 2020].

The arguments put forward in the development plan for the River Town of Randers regarding the construction of this new urban district, and the establishment of the climate bridge as well as the climate belt, are, to a large extent, influenced by neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales. This is inferred by the fact that urban development and climate control are pervasive themes throughout the entirety of the development plan as the repetition of the term 'Climate Belt' can be observed a total of 66 times, while the term 'Climate Bridge' appears similarly with a frequency of 55 mentions. Given that the

development plan for the River Town of Randers revolves around the redevelopment of the harbor areas, this redevelopment plan is heavily reliant on the construction of both the Climate Bridge and the Climate Belt, and this implicitly emphasizes the neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales. These planning rationales can also be inferred by the fact the development plan explicitly states that; *"when selling land areas along the harbor to developers/construction companies, requirements are set for establishment, operation, and maintenance [...]"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 121, own translation], indicating that this urban development project is to be financed by the sale of building rights and that external companies are going to be responsible for establishing, operating, and conduct maintenance on the Climate Bridge and the entire Climate Belt. However, the selling of land to private companies or developers is not only delimited to areas just along the river; in fact, the development plan states that; *"[...] the majority of the development is based on the sale of residential building rights"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 121, own translation], indicating private companies and developers will be owning and constructing the majority of this new city district. Furthermore, without going too much into discourse analysis, but still to further support the argument that participatory democratic values are hegemonically overshadowed by neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales, 'urban development' is mentioned 69 times in the development plan whilst 'climate' and 'nature' is mentioned, respectively, 175 and 218 times in the development plan. By examining the amount of how these terms are used in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, it can be inferred that the social issues put forward in the comprehensive social housing plan, in which action is needed in order to rid Randers Municipality of vulnerable areas, is predominantly neglected as other terms such 'inclusion' is completely left out of the development plan, 'diversity' is only mentioned in regards to biodiversity, and 'multiformity' is primarily mentioned in regards to having a multiformity in the housing stock.

Sustainability - Economically, Environmentally, and Socially

As mentioned in section 2.4, sustainability is a broad term encompassing topics related to both economic, environmental, or social aspects. In the development plan for the River Town of Randers, every aspect of sustainability has found its way into the plan, exemplified in this quote; *"[...] where spaces - both physical and social - are created in order to develop Randers in a new, sustainable direction with nature at the center"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 12, own translation]. Here, it can be argued that the economic aspect is encapsulated by the words 'physical' and 'develop', the environmental aspect through the words 'sustainable' and 'nature', and lastly, the social aspect by combining the words 'social' and 'spaces'. The development plan also states that in order to create; *"[...] a sustainable district for housing, workplaces, urban experiences, and access to nature and water for all"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 15, own translation], sustainable initiatives is needed. By directly examining the use of the word 'sustainability', it can be observed that this term is mentioned 27 times in the development plan. However, contrary to the planning rationales identified in section 4.3, where sustainability is mostly applied in connection to environmental issues, the use of sustainability in the development plan for the River Town of Randers is applied in much broader terms, than just focusing on the environmental aspect. In the development plan, sustainability is most often applied in connection to broad strategic initiatives that cover, respectively, the economic, environmental, and social aspects. This is exemplified in the chapter denoted 'Sustainable measures and initiatives' within the development plan, in which it is stated that; *"[...] there is a focus on social, climate, nature, environmental, and resource sustainability"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 123, own translation]. That sustainability in this development plan is embraced in a broader way, and not just focusing solely on environmental aspects, could be related to the fact that Randers Municipality has drawn inspiration from the UN's 17 sustainable development goals, thereby broadening the understanding of sustainability also to embrace the economic

and the social aspect.

Furthermore, within the aforementioned chapter of the development plan, sustainability is dissected into, respectively, 'social sustainability', 'climate, nature and environmental sustainability', and 'resource sustainability'. These three aspects, combined with 10 of the development goals from the UN, make up the sustainable foundation from which six different sustainability strategies have been created [Randers Kommune, 2020]. Each of these six sustainability strategies has been assigned a pilot project, e.g, sustainable strategy nr. 1 denoted 'A dense and mixed district with electricity as its foundation' is assigned the areas of Broften and Bolværksgrunden in order to; *"[...] increase the share of renewable energy"* as well as to create; *"[...] a focus on infrastructure for electric bicycles, electric cars and strategies for batteries for charging"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 124]. It can be regarded as positively proactive that Randers Municipality has embraced a broader understanding of the concept of sustainability in both this development plan for the River Town of Randers, but also in the latest two planning strategies from, respectively, 2018 and 2022. However, despite developing six different sustainable strategies, derived from 10 of the UN's sustainable development goals, only a single strategy is somewhat dedicated to multiformity and inclusivity. Although, it is positive that this specific sustainability strategy mentions the need to; *"[...] create a foundation for supporting multiformity in the neighborhood, social alliances, and access for all"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 125, own translation], which hopefully leads to specific initiatives in the future planning of this new district, as well as a focus on; *"[...] working with inclusive and participatory consultation processes at multiple scales in urban development"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 125, own translation], this strategy doesn't specify how to realize this in practice. With, e.g., the planning strategy from 2022 introducing new rental regulations in order to create more diverse and socially inclusive urban spaces and residential compositions [Randers Kommune, 2022], a more direct (or specific) approach regarding how to create these social alliances and consultation processes at multiple scales in practice is needed in this sustainable strategy.

Citizen participation and inclusivity

Randers Municipality's rationale for ensuring the broadest possible citizen involvement, as identified in section 4.3, is reflected in the transformation of the harbor areas through the multiple public meetings, forum meetings, and conferences conducted as well as through the hearing processes regarding local plans, municipal amendments, the development plan, etc. Regarding the development plan, which was in hearing in 2020, Randers Municipality received 45 hearing responses distributed among 23 individuals/organizations. In this regard, the majority were personal responses, while a few were on behalf of interest groups. Furthermore, interest groups such as the rowing club, sailing club, and cycling association responded twice whilst one person responded five times, and another person responded no less than 15 times. Furthermore, since 2015 Randers Municipality has conducted annual citizen involvement processes in addition to the hearing processes for local plans, municipal plan amendments, etc., in the same period.

As visualized in figure 5.4, Randers Municipality has conducted multiple different citizen participation processes, ranging from debates (2015 and 2020), events (2016), public meetings (2017), and forum meetings (2018 and 2019), and it can therefore be acknowledged that the citizen participation and involvement planning rationale, identified in section 4.3, is also present in the development plan for the River Town of Randers. However, regarding the second participatory democratic rationale, in which Randers Municipality works to ensure diversity in urban functions, housing types, and the composition of residents, the development plan are somewhat imprecise. An example of this is that; *"[...] attractive panoramic residences are mixed with more economically accessible owner-occupied and rental properties"* [Randers Kommune, 2020,

Figure 5.4. *Figure showing Randers Municipality's annual citizen involvement processes that the population has been invited to since 2015 [Randers Kommune, 2020]*

p. 128, own translation], but what constitutes an 'economically accessible property', be it rental or owner-occupied, is not defined. This raises the question if less well-off citizens, e.g., the economically disadvantaged citizens residing in the vulnerable areas of northern Randers, can afford to live in this new district as the comprehensive social housing plan explicitly states that; *"[...] Randers should be a city in balance - a city without ghettos and vulnerable housing areas"* [Randers Kommune, 2021, p. 3, own translation]. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the development plan does not incorporate the term 'inclusion' at all, and 'diversity' is only mentioned in connection to biodiversity. Instead, the development plan applies the terms 'social diversity', 'social variety', 'social user groups', and 'social housing options', in what can only be interpreted as an attempt to address social inclusion and diversity without explicitly stating it. Despite diversity only being mentioned in relation to biodiversity, the term multiformity is used multiple times in the development plan to denote, e.g., a; *"[...] multiform and vibrant urban and everyday life"* (p. 12), a *"[...] multiform housing stock"* (p. 72), a *"varied and multiform new district"* (p. 118), as well as *"[...] multiformity and flexibility in housing options"* (p. 72) [Randers Kommune, 2020]. It can therefore be inferred that albeit the development plan of the River Town of Randers never mentioning 'diversity' and 'inclusion' in direct connection to concepts such as social inclusivity and social sustainability, the development plan does somewhat encompass the planning rationale of ensuring diversity in urban functions, housing types, and residential composition as other terms, such as multiformity, are applied instead - however, to a much less extent than, e.g., urban development, climate, nature, and sustainability.

5.3   Summary of planning rationales in the River Town of Randers

The analysis of the development plan for the project 'the River Town of Randers', and the subsequent transformation of the harbor of Randers, has demonstrated that this urban transformation and redevelopment project is primarily driven by neoliberal and environmental planning rationales. Several of the previously identified ideological planning rationales in the strategic planning documents *(see figure 4.3)* can also be identified in the development plan for the River Town of Randers. For instance, with Randers Municipality entering into a land development company with AP Ejendomme owning, respectively, 49% and 51%, and by relinquishing significant power to private developers and companies by directly accommodating many of their interests in the development plan regarding, e.g., not imposing specific requirements regarding types of housing, Randers municipality has effectively acted as a facilitator in this urban redevelopment project. Furthermore, by utilizing investments in large infrastructure projects such as the Climate Bridge, Randers Municipality is using these projects as catalysts for development and growth which exhibit neoliberal charac-

teristics. Moreover, the implementation of the Climate Belt, aimed at safeguarding the inner city of Randers against flooding and storm surges, along with the revitalization of brownfield areas on the harbor, is considered to be environmental planning rationales as these initiatives emphasize land management and climate control, reflecting concepts rooted in ecological principles. In this regard, the development plan also introduces six sustainable strategies encompassing various actions and initiatives aligned with 10 United Nations development goals. This integration establishes sustainability as a fundamental principle within the development plan, thereby emphasizing environmental planning rationales.

Regarding the planning rationales derived from the participatory democratic ideology, Randers Municipality has, in connection with the entire process leading up to the adoption of the development plan for the River Town of Randers, conducted a series of citizen involvement and consultation processes, including public meetings, forum meetings, and conferences. This emphasis on citizen involvement supports the planning rationale of public participation and involvement, although the actual influence granted to the public is not very high, as a large amount of power has been transferred to private developers and companies through the sale of building rights to external companies, etc. In terms of ensuring multiformity in urban functions, housing types, and residential composition, the development plan does, to some extent, encompass this participatory democratic planning rationale as multiformity, along with other terms such as 'social diversity' and 'social variety', is applied in order to address social inclusion and diversity indirectly.

The forthcoming chapter will explore multiple recommendations that can contribute to transforming the future planning of the River Town of Randers into a socially inclusive city district, that fosters an inclusive environment for all individuals and that, subsequently, aids Randers Municipality in addressing and dealing with the issues of the vulnerable areas within northern Randers.

Discussion 6

By analyzing the strategic planning documents and development plan for the River Town of Randers, it has become evident that neoliberal and environmental planning rationales prevail and characterize these planning documents, both at the strategic and the more local level. However, there have been slight changes in Randers Municipality's recent planning strategies from 2018 and 2022, such as an increased focus on multiformity in housing, urban functions, and most notably, residential composition. Although these changes are somewhat reflected in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, it is still important to note that the dominant emphasis remains on neoliberal and environmental planning rationales, as these rationales permeate almost every action and initiative outlined in the strategic planning documents (excluding the comprehensive social housing plan). Therefore, it can be asserted that neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales, within the strategic planning documents and the development plan for the River Town of Randers, are hegemonically overshadowing the participatory democratic rationales.

Therefore, in order to make the urban development project the 'River Town of Randers' more socially inclusive, as well as contribute to Randers Municipality getting the vulnerable areas in northern Randers off the 'List of vulnerable residential areas' (formerly known as the 'Ghetto List'), four recommendations will be discussed in the sections to come. In this regard, the purpose of the forthcoming sections will therefore be to present and discuss a set of recommendations that can contribute to the River Town of Randers becoming a socially inclusive city district that can both accommodate the expected residential growth in the future, to some extent include the input and desires of the citizens in the future planning, as well as contribute in changing the residential composition in the vulnerable areas.

Urban densification and social housing

Although the concept of urban densification revolves primarily around the idea that higher population densities reduce the environmental impact of urbanization, Fainstein [2010] also argues that the densification of cities; *"[...] would enhance diversity as well as equity"* (p. 182, own translation). This is due to the fact that, in theory, an increased housing stock would lead to the accommodation of more citizens, thereby leading to increased diversity and equity. Furthermore, as urban densification also reduces the need for cities to expand outward, thereby avoiding the consumption of natural areas, urban densification enhances both the environmental and social sustainability of cities. Although the idea of urban densification of cities has been widely embraced as a fundamental strategy in numerous Western cities, not everyone embraces this type of urban configuration. One possible explanation for this is the enduring appeal of the suburban detached house with a garden, which continues to be seen as the ultimate dream in many Western cultures [Kotulla et al., 2019]. However, in Randers, only 22% the housing stock constructed between 2009 and 2018 was comprised of apartments and the rest of the housing constructed in that period consisted of detached houses, terraced houses, etc., and therefore, in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, it is assumed that there

is a need for the construction of apartments that can be either sold or rented [Randers Kommune, 2020]. If applied correctly, this demand for urban densification through the construction of more apartments in Randers can be used in order to adhere to both economic, environmental, and social sustainability. First, by constructing dwellings that cater to economically well-off citizens and families, private investors and companies are more inclined to engage in urban development projects, thereby making the project more economically sustainable. Second, through urban densification and redevelopment of brownfield areas, less land is consumed, and therefore environmental sustainability is increased. Third, by constructing dwellings for the 50+ generation due to the aging population, for the large influx of young people in Randers, and for less well-off people in, e.g., the vulnerable areas of northern Randers, social sustainability is increased due to more social diversity and inclusivity.

Furthermore, in regard to social housing, only 12% of the housing stock in the River Town of Randers is expected to be constructed as social housing, with the rest being private rental or owner-occupied housing. According to § 15 in the Planning Act, municipalities have the option of requiring that up to 25% of the housing stock must be social housing, and in order to achieve diversity and equity, Fainstein [2010] argues that; *"all new housing development should provide units for households with incomes below the median [...]"* (p. 182, own translation). With the construction revenue for social housing assumed to be the same as the revenue for standard owner-occupied housing in the development plan, Randers Municipality should require a higher percentage of the housing stock in the River Town of Randers to be constructed as social housing if this development project is to contribute to vulnerable areas not being a part of Randers. The downside of making this demand is that there is a concern that pension companies, such as AP Pension, will not participate in housing investments in an area where social housing associations can offer rentals at significantly lower square meter rates compared to private landlords [Jurainfo, 2015]. However, by increasing the density through the addition of more floors, this issue can be somewhat alleviated, even though it may contradict some of the hearing responses from the public, which opposes tall buildings. Therefore, if more apartments are built on the plots, the average price per square meter will typically decrease, while the total income for the developer will increase. Urban densification can thus support an increase in residential diversity whilst also supporting the developer's financial interests. Dense and tall residential construction with a wide range of housing types will also reduce the need for urban sprawl, which is also one of the municipality's goals [Randers Kommune, 2022]. A recommendation is, therefore, that Randers Municipality should demand a higher percentage of social housing to be constructed by allowing private developers and companies to build slightly few additional floors albeit this contradicts some of the hearing responses received.

Public space and diverse functions

Public spaces possess the capacity to reflect the diversity of people from different social backgrounds and values while also exerting a positive influence on the well-being of those who utilize them [Zhou, 2019]. Nonetheless, due to intercity competitiveness and image-driven promotion, the role of public spaces within cities has been somewhat negatively influenced. Consequently, the privatization and commercialization of public areas not only lead to the creation of underutilized urban spaces but also exacerbate broader societal problems such as segregation, polarization, gentrification, and displacement [Staeheli, 2010]. In the development plan for the River Town of Randers, it is stated that this plan; *"[...] ensures a diverse integration of residential, cultural, commercial, and other functions in the individual neighborhoods and subareas"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 35, own translation], however, almost all of the functions, except for

residential, are placed near the city center on 'Bolværksgrunden'. In the development plan, it is also directly stated that 'Bolværksgrunden' will become a gathering place for public functions, citizen-oriented activities, community, and cultural life to which this makes the rest of the harbor look like a uniform residential district - especially on the pier.

As multiformity in both urban functions, housing stock, and residential composition is emphasized in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, it is quite odd that most functions are centralized in one place, leaving the rest of the harbor for the construction of dwellings. In fact, only three areas in this development plan are specifically allocated as urban public space as Randers Municipality will employ; *"an urban strategic and social approach that creates three strategically positioned urban spaces that connect the city to the water. Three urban spaces that ensure that the city's blue and green resources are something we share in our everyday lives"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 29, own translation]. The creation of only three dedicated urban public spaces leaves the residential areas on the entire pier and the southern part of the harbor without a public space for gathering, and with most of the urban functions centralized at 'Bolværksgrunden', the rest of the harbor will suffer from lack of multiformity in urban functions, and perhaps residential composition. A recommendation is, therefore, that Randers Municipality should consider making alterations to the development plans stage 2 and, especially, stage 4 *(see figure 5.3)* when the time comes to initiate the local planning process for the areas, in order to accommodate for the lack of public space and multiformity in urban functions.

Citizen involvement and participation

By examining the planning strategies, it becomes clear that citizen involvement and participation haven't taken up a large amount of place - in fact, it has been quite the opposite. Excluding the planning strategy from 2007, which is the only strategy to properly and explicitly address how citizens are to be involved in decision-making processes, all of the other planning strategies have, to a large extent, neglected to address citizen participation properly albeit the planning strategies still incorporate superficial articulations such as; *"[...] the development takes place in dialogue with citizens and businesses"* [Randers Kommune, 2022, p. 3, own translation]. However, in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, citizens have been invited to participate in annual citizen engagement processes since 2015, and the development plan also states there should be; *"[...] ongoing involvement and engagement, where citizens and stakeholders can contribute proposals for specific projects, activities, and potential solutions"* [Randers Kommune, 2020, p. 117, own translation]. This can be interpreted as the Randers Municipality actually wanting the citizens to contribute and have influence throughout the entire process of the largest project in Randers' history.

However, it is important to remember that involvement does not necessarily equate to influence. Because Randers municipality has already relinquished a significant portion of decision-making authority by entering into a land development company where the municipality does not have the shareholding majority, it can be challenging to grant more power to the citizens, as it would mean taking power away from the private developers and companies who are to construct the buildings, the infrastructure, etc., and who is likely not interested in relinquishing it. If Randers municipality imposes requirements for the private developers and companies to incorporate some of the citizens' proposals into their plans, thereby demanding citizen influence, there is a risk that these developers and companies may withdraw, resulting in the municipality losing valuable capital. As a result, despite citizen involvement and participation being conducted, the actual influence is often limited, and this reflects the neoliberal tendency concerning the power of private developers in urban development and the predominantly facilitating role of the

municipalities. In the case of the River Town of Randers, the municipality is, therefore, walking a fine line between acknowledging demands from private developers and companies in order to actually get a new city district constructed, and including the demands received from the citizens during the hearing processes, forum debates, citizen meetings, etc. Randers Municipality has already conducted early and transparent engagement with the citizens in terms of annual citizen involvement processes as well as established a strategic regulatory framework in terms of the development, so Randers Municipality is in a position where they can require private developers and companies to consider and incorporate citizen demands in their future local plans using, e.g., community benefit agreements wherein private developers commit to including specific citizen demands in exchange for certain benefits. A recommendation is, therefore, to listen to the demands of the citizens, use them in negotiation processes with private developers and companies, and include them in the future local planning processes, as the citizens are the ones who are going to live in the future city district.

The municipality as a regulatory authority

In the words of [Sager, 2015]; *"goals and other statements of an ideological character are especially prominent in the municipal plans [...]. This is the planning level where good intentions can be freely aired"* (p. 284, own translation). In terms of turning these 'freely aired good intentions' from strategic planning documents into reality, Randers Municipality needs to assume a greater regulatory role than its current facilitating role, as it is not guaranteed that private developers and companies prioritize social concerns over their own interests, and it is conceivable that private developers and companies will prioritize building housing for the economically privileged population to maximize profits. By prioritizing a resourceful group over others, a group that already possesses significant social and economic capital is favored, benefiting those who already have the means to further their own interests. On the other hand, the interests of less resourceful and socially vulnerable groups may struggle to be heard due to their lack of capital, resulting in their interests being disregarded and contributing to an unjust development. To prevent the interests of the resourceful from being disproportionately prioritized in planning, there should be a greater focus on the interests of the less well-off citizens [Fainstein, 2010]. A recommendation is, therefore, that the municipality assumes a more regulatory role to avoid contributing to an uneven distribution where only the affluent population benefits from the development of the harbor, i.e., the River Town of Randers.

Conclusion 7

Urban planning in Denmark has undergone significant changes in recent decades. These changes are attributed to a shift in political focus, which has steered planning towards a market-oriented approach with a dominant emphasis on growth. This departure from the previous welfare-oriented planning, which prevailed from the post-war period until the late 1980s, when equal distribution and development were prioritized, can be considered a result of this altered political direction. The shift from a welfare state to a competition state, driven by globalization and, subsequently, neoliberalization, has brought about a fundamental change in planning rationales. This transformation has resulted in numerous negative social consequences, and therefore, the objective of this research has been to investigate the ideological planning rationales inherent in the strategic planning documents of Randers Municipality to examine how these planning rationales have affected the planning of a specific urban redevelopment area, i.e., the River Town of Randers. The following research question has guided this investigation:

> **How have different ideological planning rationales affected the strategic planning of Randers Municipality, and to what extent are the planning rationales of 'the River Town of Randers' socially inclusive?**

The analysis of the strategic planning documents by Randers Municipality showed that the influence of neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales has been extensive, as both ideologies permeate nearly all visions and initiatives in these planning strategies. Terms such as *growth*, *urban development*, *mobility*, and *sustainability* have consistently appeared in all of the planning strategies, indicating the incorporation of both neoliberal and environmentalist planning rationales. However, a slight shift has occurred in the past two planning periods. The content of the planning strategies from 2018 and 2022 has transitioned slightly from prioritizing urban competition and growth to also placing somewhat more emphasis on social multiformity and accessibility. Nevertheless, the planning rationales aligned with participatory democratic ideology are noticeably neglected, often only brought up in relation to businesses or the environment rather than citizens.

The analysis of the development plan for the 'River Town of Randers' revealed that this development project is also primarily driven by neoliberal and environmental planning rationales, as many of the previously identified ideological planning rationales in the strategic planning documents can also be found in the development plan for the River Town of Randers. However, there is a slightly greater emphasis on participatory democratic rationales in the development plan as this plan acknowledges the importance of urban functions, housing types, and residential composition in order to achieve social multiformity. This approach indirectly addresses social inclusion and diversity. Additionally, annual citizen meetings have also been held since 2015 to actively involve the residents in the future processes of developing this new city district.

However, despite the development plan for the River Town of Randers emphasizing a slightly greater focus on participatory democratic planning rationales, it can thus be concluded that the majority of the neoliberal and environmental planning rationales identified in the strategic planning documents by Randers Municipality are also inherent in the development plan for the River Town of Randers, indicating that this project is heavily influenced by neoliberalist and environmentalist rationales, which, to a large extent, neglect and overshadow the participatory democratic rationales. Therefore, the analyses have led to the formulation of a set of recommendations aimed at transforming the River Town of Randers into a more socially inclusive city district.

- Randers Municipality should advocate for an increased percentage of social housing by permitting private developers and companies to construct slightly taller buildings, despite some opposing responses received during the development plan hearing that express concerns about high-rise structures.
- When the local planning process for stage 2 and stage 4 of the development plans is initiated, Randers Municipality should consider making adjustments to accommodate the lack of public space and enhance the diversity of urban functions.
- To ensure the future city district reflects the needs and desires of its residents, Randers Municipality should actively listen to citizen demands, incorporate them into negotiation processes with private developers and companies, and involve citizens in future local planning processes.
- To prevent an uneven distribution in residential composition from the development of the River Town of Randers, Randers Municipality should assume a more regulatory role, ensuring that the advantages of construction this new city district are not limited to only the affluent population.

These recommendations for the River Town of Randers, and the future planning hereof, seek to address multiple objectives, including accommodating future residential growth, incorporating citizen input and desires in future development, and contributing to bringing about a change in the residential composition in vulnerable areas - thus, reducing the hegemonic dominance exerted by neoliberal and environmental planning rationales over participatory democratic planning rationales.

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Appendix A

Title of strategic documents	Focus of the strategic documents
Planning Strategy 2003	- Focus is primarily centered around Randers despite being created before the structural reform - Good structure throughout the strategy regarding what Randers Municipality wants to do in the future and what they presently doing - More action and solution-oriented than some of the other planning strategies - The addition of a new bridge, as well as a change in resident composition, was introduced already in this strategic document
Strategy 2007-2016: Planning and development in a sustainable perspective	- The structural reform --> six municipalities become one - Focus is on the entirety of Randers Municipality and not just the city of Randers - Action and solution-oriented, and by far the longest strategy of them all - Emphasizes that Randers is situated between two universities, i.e., Aalborg and Aarhus, and that fact should be advantageous to Randers
Strategy 2017	- Focus is heavily centered around the development of Randers, - Not action-oriented, more political, and setting the tone for the overall development of Randers - Less structured than the previous two planning strategies - Does also acknowledge that Randers should take advantage of being situated between two universities
Planning Strategy 2014: Onwards to the future of Randers	- Focus is still much centered around Randers, but it also somewhat recognizes the rest of the municipality - This planning strategy is less action and solution-oriented and serves more as a political document. The shortest strategy of them all. - Lacks the structure that was present in the first two planning strategies - Being situated between two universities is now replaced by the introduction of 'the East Jutland growth region' and 'Business Region Aarhus'
Planning Strategy 2018: We dare to walk new paths	- Focus is much more on the entirety of the municipality and not solely on Randers - More action and solution-oriented than the previous two planning strategies - The structure regarding what the municipality does presently and what the municipality wants to do in the future is back - Dedicates an entire section to Business Region Aarhus
Planning Strategy 2022: Growth in Randers Municipality	- The focus is again much more on the entirety of the municipality and not just on Randers - Still action and solution-oriented like the previous planning strategy - Less structured and more visionary descriptive - Introduces the theme of 'the East Jutland city of millions', thereby replacing 'Business Region Aarhus'
Comprehensive Social Housing Plan for Randers 2021-2025	- Focus is on five specific areas in the northern part of Randers - Action and solution-oriented, applying much statistical data - Revolves around the themes of; education and life chances, employment, crime prevention, as well as cohesion and citizenship

Figure A.1. Figure summarizing the content of the strategic documents by Randers Municipality [own illustration]