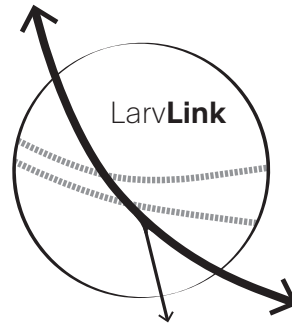


# Larvick (NO) \_ Bokkerfjellet Bridge

## An architectural approach to a connectivity issue

In pursuit of an interconnected and accessible city that enhances mobility, convenience, and overall quality of life of its community by extending the existing network of public spaces.



The city of Larvik is situated on a narrow stretch of land nestled between Lake Garvin and the northern sea. Its distinct topography, characterized by steep slopes leaning towards the coast, provides breathtaking views of the surrounding natural beauty.

Regrettably, this unique morphology, while being one of the city most valuable aspects also determines a vertical distance between the urban center and its waterfront which is not easily overcome by foot. Moreover, the infrastructure development of the past century resulted in a series of physical barriers that now enclose Bøkkerfjellet Park, separating it from the sea. The railway and the main regional street, which connect Oslo to the coast, have divided the city center from the shoreline, creating two separate worlds that are presently connected mostly by car.

Our proposal aims to **restore** the **physical connection** between these two areas, overcoming the existing barriers while **preserving** the **visual relationship** between them and **enhancing** it with **new viewpoints** and unseen perspectives of the city and the surrounding landscape.

In addition, through the **integration of several key elements** interconnected by a green belt, we intend to **extend** the **existing parks** and establish a new pedestrian pathway.

This **new promenade** will significantly reduce the distance between the city and the sea, both physically and psychologically.

By strategically **adding specific functions** at key locations and connecting them together, our programmatic approach intends to **unlock the city's untapped potential** and support the expression of its community, without completely disrupting the established routines of the population.

Cultural and recreational spaces alternate, expanding the city center right to the sea while preserving its commercial and administrative essence. Inclusive of more distinct seasonal attractions such as the marina, these functions will be complemented by permanent features like the concert hall and the covered market, ensuring a vibrant waterfront life throughout the year, even during colder months.

The design of Bokkerfjellet pedestrian bridge assume a central role in this composition, serving as a **sculptural symbol** of the **renewed connection**. An architectural feature acting as a link between the sea and the city, reuniting two worlds that can now mutually influence each other, benefiting from their newfound proximity.

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A handful of important features are revealed to the public as they traverse this new pathway from the city center down to the shore, with each step uncovering the beauty of the coastal landscape.

Situated on the edge of Bøkkerfjellet Park, within a few minutes' walk from Torget square, the **library (1)** serves as a beacon, guiding visitors along the new path. Its location symbolizes the beginning of this interconnected journey.

A **pedestrian bridge (2)**, designed with accessibility in mind, features a gentle slope of 1/12 and includes a dedicated lane for cyclists, overcoming the physical obstacles and enabling the connection.

The bridge seats on a **new green area (4)**, designed as an artificial topography, accommodates a **parking lot (3)** underneath and improves the perception from below of the steep hill on which Bøkkerfjellet Park is situated. Its slope eases the access to the bridge with a system of ramps and stairs offering a privileged point of view on the sea while laing towards the beach.

By the sea, a **food market** and **concert hall (5)** occupies a mix of historic buildings and newly constructed covered outdoor areas, providing a year-round attraction on Larvik's shore. The market is strategically positioned between the western beach and the piers to the east, ensuring a cohesive integration with the surrounding environment.

Expanding towards the horizon, a **marine park (6)** features artificial beaches, seawater pools, and a **canoeing and sailing center (7)**, offering the community new opportunities to enrich its relationship with the sea.

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All these new functions added to the seaside work as catalysts for enhancing the existing system of attractions along Larvick's coastline, seamlessly connecting them and creating a continuous public space right by the sea.

The area once reclaimed from the fjord is now thoughtfully restored, revealing an expanse of sandy beach extended into the water by a **floating platform (7)**, connected at several points to the waterfront. This wooden pier rises occasionally creating artificial **diving cliffs** or opens up to **seawater pools (6)**, interconnected with or independent of the ocean. This design offers a myriad of ways to experience the North Sea waters, providing diverse opportunities for individuals to engage with the natural elements and embrace the maritime surroundings.

Furthermore, It creates a delightful space where people can bask in the natural beauty, explore the ocean's depths through diving, or simply relax in the tranquil **seawater pools (6)**. By embracing and celebrating the proximity to the sea, this revitalized area enriches the overall urban experience, ensuring a deep connection between the city and its coastal surroundings.

The **Concert hall** and the **Food market (5)**, housed within the old customs buildings of the harbor, will breathe new life into these historic landmarks, reviving memories of a bygone era. A light wood structure acting as a canopy will connect the two buildings, blurring the line between interior and exterior spaces. This architectural intervention offers enhanced flexibility and expands the potential for diverse utilization scenarios, all achieved with minimal economic and temporal impact.

With an emphasis on accessibility, the **bridge (2)** ensures a safe and convenient journey for all pedestrians and cyclists, enabling them to traverse over the railway and the regional street with ease. It also allows the population to join the vibrant community life centered around the **library**, fostering a sense of inclusivity and promoting interaction within Larvick's new dynamic public domain.

This cultural hotspot, positioned centrally within this system of public spaces connecting the lake and the sea, acts as an extension of the community space, providing a platform for sharing, exchanging, learning, and performing. The design intentionally remains **flexible**, allowing for future participatory design processes involving the **community and local authorities**. This approach aims to respond to the needs of citizens while meeting the expectations of the administration.



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The pedestrian bridge will serve as the gateway to this newly acquired area, rising swiftly yet gracefully from the sea. The curved path that it will follow is designed to lie on the parking roof, enabling it to reach Bøkkerfjellet Park without any intermediate support. This design approach respects and preserves the existing cliff and its incredible viewpoints, as well as the panoramas from the rest of the city.

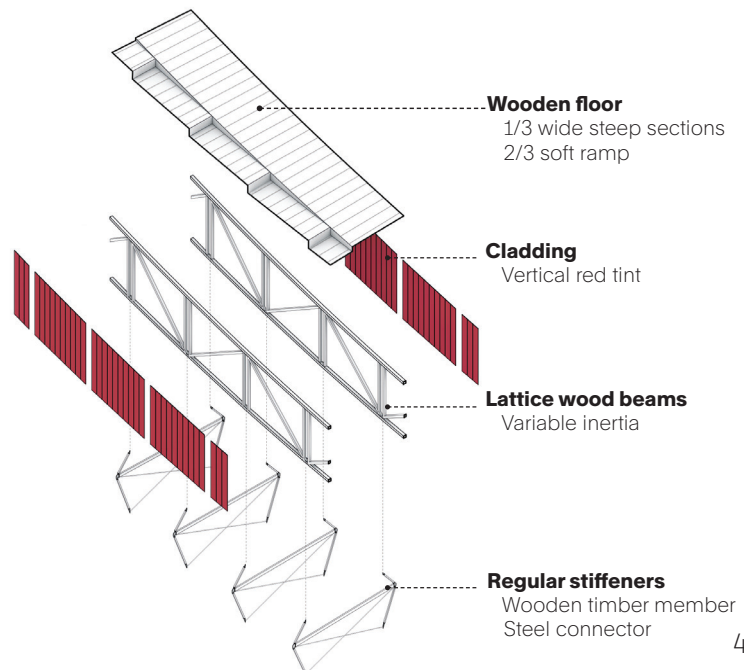
Respecting the local architectural context, this newfound link is designed entirely in **wood**, from the supporting structure to the cladding, gracefully integrating itself into the existing urban fabric. **Two lattice beams** with **variable inertia** utilize the strength and stability of their framework to overcome both the railway and road in **a single span**. On Bokkerfjellet side, these two structural elements are **seamlessly embedded** in a natural deformation of the topography, **carving** their way into the park right on top of the existing staircase. After **floating**, without visible supports over the transportation infrastructure, they **lean**, on the other hand, softly on the inclined landscape, which forms the new park hosting the parking lot underneath.

The bridge structure is articulated by **regular stiffeners** that stabilize and brace it, protruding from both sides in an elegant complex of **timber members** and **steel connectors**. This vibrant articulation highlights the curved and smooth layout of the footbridge, a simple yet powerful gesture capable of reducing the perception of distance.

Also, the deck, divided into two unequal sides, is made of **local timber**. Two-thirds of it form a **soft ramp**, enabling cyclists to use this connection, while the remaining third, featuring **wide steep sections**, offers a more urbanized approach to the pathway.

**Vertically oriented lumber planks** follow the variable section of the beams, cladding the bridge while serving as railing; their red tint symbolically marks the connection, **respecting** the **local codes for wood stains** and making it a **visible landmark** harmoniously integrated into the landscape.

At the end, this sequence of spaces, both natural and artificial, seamlessly integrates with the existing context, harnessing its potential and enhancing the community's realm from the historic center, through the park and the bridge, extending all the way to the sea. Bringing together the two Larvik-s, one down by the fjord, the other sitting on the hill, using landscape design and architecture as tools to shape a new way of experiencing the city.



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