In order for our cities to respond global issues related to climate, sustainability agendas and increasing urbanization, urban planning must be a discipline of improving and adapting the existing – avoiding fragmented project development – focus in transformation of the existing into the agenda of the future.

For this, I suggest a change from development towards transformation on the concept of urban heritage. Transformation is about continuity of the existing – a continuum. I have investigated the change from development towards transformation through case studies of transformation in Danish former working-class districts in Vejle, and Copenhagen. The case studies of Copenhagen depart in a market-driven project development. The case study of Vejle takes its departure in an approach of transforming existing.

In the case studies, I investigated how the different approaches created different perceptions of the area and how the different approaches created different output towards an answer on the global issues.

Based on the case studies, I suggest a transformation approach based on the concept of urban heritage in planning of existing urban districts, trying to contribute to a planning
process where the understanding of the existing is not just knowledge production but a situational action connecting the past, present and future. Creating continuity, infills and slow transformation as a way to access the urban issues with start and end in the existing urban fabric. The approach is described through new heritage and assemblages (Fairclough, 2009; Farías, 2017; Latour, 2005; Smith, 2006).


• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Kasper Albrektsen is a Danish PhD student at the Aarhus School of Architecture (AAA) and the Municipality of Vejle, researching in the field between urban planning and heritage. From 2014-2018 he has been working as an adviser in urban planning advising municipalities, developers and other stakeholders in the search for sustainable urban transformation.

From 2018-2020 he worked as a research assistant at AAA in the field of cultural environments as part of the research lab Transformation, Architecture and Territories researching in urban planning, heritage and transformation. He has been a part of 25 rapports on cultural environments in 25 different municipalities in Denmark investigating the potential of cultural environments and heritage in the development of urban areas. At AAA he has also been part of different research projects related to urban heritage and teaching at the Studio for urban transformation and heritage.