

# Replicable Low Energy Towns – investigating the “PLUSSBY” concept

## *Description of a student project*

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“PLUSSBY” has emerged as a model aiming at creating neighborhoods or small towns where energy production exceeds energy usage. There are currently a few planned examples in Norway, and the idea has been presented internationally as unique and innovative. However, there are plenty of international examples with similar characteristics, labeled differently; “eco villages”, “eco towns”, “zero emission towns”, “zero carbon towns”, etc.

Such initiatives may be seen as one of many initiatives as part of climate change mitigation and policies aiming at a transition towards a low energy society. However, it may also be argued that such initiatives are part of place marketing and entrepreneurial strategies to promote neighborhoods, towns, cities and municipalities. Thirdly, they may be the result of business led initiatives and financialisation strategies, developed by consultancies, in order to create replicable models. This last strategy is evident in the increasingly internationalized production of architecture (see Faulconbridge 2009), but Hodson and Marvin (2010) argue that this is also the case for large scale urban planning and in the creation of new towns.

In this project the overall aim is to investigate the so-called “PLUSSBY”-model.

- How are these initiatives framed as low energy projects, visually and discursively?
- What are the specific measures to be implemented in such projects?
- Will these projects deal with embodied energy, as well as its wider implications for energy systems and transport?

The first step will be a mapping of PLUSSBY-projects in Norway. Secondly, a number of cases have to be selected. At last, each case will be investigated based on the questions above. The methods used will be document studies and media analysis, interviews with developers, planners and architects (based on an interview guide developed in cooperation with the supervisor), and in-situ interviews (for projects that already are being developed). The project will deliver a report (of maximum 50 pages) presenting the aims and methods of the project, the collected data, and a descriptive analysis.

## **Literature:**

Faulconbridge, J. R. (2009). The regulation of design in global architecture firms: embedding and emplacing buildings. *Urban Studies*. Vol. 46, no. 12, pp. 2537-2554.

Hodson, M. & Marvin, S. 2010. Urbanism in the anthropocene: Ecological urbanism or premium ecological enclaves? *City*. Vol. 14, no 3, pp. 298-313.

