

THE DILOGY OF KLAIPĖDA'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT I. SHAPING OR PRESERVING THE HISTORICAL IMAGE OF THE PORT CITY

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Abstract. The paper explores the transformation of urban image in the context of global cities, focusing on Klaipėda, Lithuania's only ice-free seaport and a historically multi-layered urban area. The research addresses the challenge of maintaining local identity amid globalization and historical disruptions that altered urban development trajectories in the mid-20th century. These changes often led to the loss or radical transformation of cities' visual and structural identities. The study investigates how Klaipėda's image, historically shaped by its fortress origins, timber trade, and later port functions, is evolving today. The first impression of the city, especially for cruise passengers arriving via the Curonian Lagoon, is dominated by industrial port elements rather than its historical core. However, recent transformations – such as revitalization of industrial areas and the reconstruction of the castle tower in 2024 – signal a shift toward re-establishing historical identity. Research methods include long-term urban structure analysis, review of territorial planning documents, and application of a tested methodology for assessing urban landscapes and their relationship with new developments. The authors also draw on Lithuanian and international sources and their professional experience, complemented by feasibility studies conducted in 2022–2023. Results reveal that the southern horn at the mouth of the Danė River, a strategic entry point, plays a crucial role in shaping Klaipėda's identity. The analysis identifies principles for harmonizing heritage preservation with contemporary development, emphasizing the concept of “protect by developing.” Conclusions and recommendations advocate for a balanced approach: neither rigid preservation nor unrestricted transformation, but a strategy that integrates historical elements with new urban forms. This approach can strengthen Klaipėda's unique identity within the global network of port cities, ensuring that development enhances rather than erases its historical character. **Keywords:** urban morphology, waterfront redevelopment, place identity, historic urban core, seaport Klaipėda

Introduction

The urban image issue in the context of a global city remains particularly relevant, especially in countries where the course of cities' historical development was rerouted in the middle of the 20th century by tragic events, forced conditions or artificially introduced processes [3]. Such shocks have left a deep imprint not only on the urban structure of cities, their vitality and evolution consistency, but also on the overall image of the city, both locally and internationally. Experience shows that just a few decades are enough for a city to lose or fundamentally transform not only its visual image, but also its urban identity that formed throughout history.

In such forced conditions, cities are often transformed by means of new deliberately chosen symbols or signs that do not always match the previous character of the city and its possibilities [7; 8; 17]. Under the influence of globalisation, contemporary strategies of urban development are increasingly aimed at restoring or developing a unique local identity, giving a city prominence in a broader context [16]. Various urban development means are used for this purpose, which help to purposefully complement the spatial structure of the city, to form new visual elements and functional connections. These means affect not only the image of the city, but also its structural identity, which is reflected in the visually readable city view [16].

One of the first factors shaping the impression of a city is entering the city. It may happen by land, air or water. The latter entry is especially important for ports, i.e. cities that have historically formed by water for economic and defensive reasons. These territories, therefore, often become key to urban image creation. Today, such port access points are gaining symbolic value – they become part of the visual identity of the whole city.

Klaipėda is the third largest city in Lithuania and the only ice-free seaport of the country. It is one of the most significant hubs on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea, which was historically inhabited by Lithuanians, however belonged to

Prussia and Germany for a prolonged period of time. The city is also considered to be the cultural centre of Lithuania Minor [19]. The beginning of Klaipėda is associated with the castle and defensive fortifications dating back to the 13th century, so initially the city emerged as a fortress. In the 18th century, with the increase in timber processing and trade, Klaipėda gained the image of a “mill city”, and since the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries – with the rapid expansion of the coastal area used for port needs – the city has established itself as a “port city” [18].

Today, when cruise ships arrive to Klaipėda through the Curonian Lagoon, the first impression of the city comes from functional elements of the port – cranes, industrial complexes, individual vertical buildings. The historical core of the city is currently difficult to recognise, but the situation is changing: the industrial areas on the New Town side are transformed into lively urban spaces, and the castle tower rebuilt in the Old Town in 2024 is becoming an important landmark. These processes have led to assumptions that allow a new look at the significance of the historical part of the city and open up an opportunity to rethink the image of Klaipėda.

The territory at the mouth of the river Danė, in one of the horns formed for entering the river, occupies a strategically significant position that shapes the identity of the city. The ongoing changes show that the image of the historic city is in the process of active transformation, which can fundamentally change the identity of this place and affect the image of Klaipėda in the global network of port cities. A question therefore arises: to what extent this historical place of city entrance from the lagoon should be subject to shaping processes and to what extent it should be preserved as it is? Is it worth restoring it on the basis of the former build-up and historical elements, with regard to adjacent processes, or on the contrary – preserving only what remains, without seeking to create a new image of the city gateway?

The authors of the article have been researching the urban

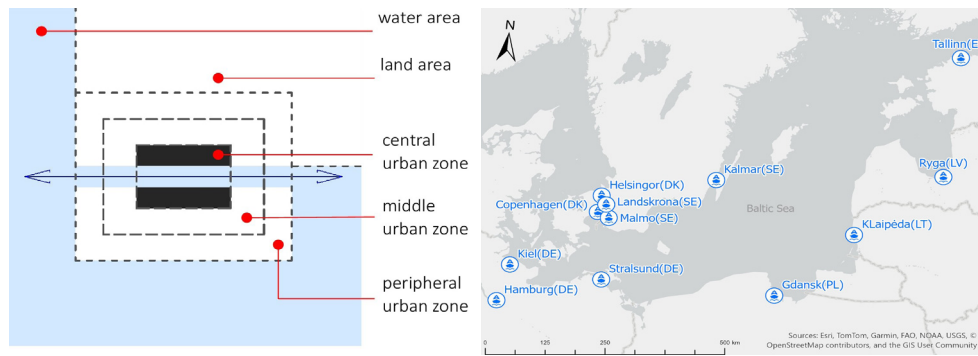


Fig. 1. Port city model and researched port cities in the Baltic Sea region [created by the authors]

structure of Klaipėda city for decades, and in 2022–2023 they prepared several development feasibility studies for the historical part of the city. These papers followed the global trends on the integration of urban development and heritage. Seeing these processes as contradictory often leads to conflict, but their harmonious combination can produce unique results that add to local identity. This is particularly important in multi-layered historical areas where a balance between heritage preservation and opportunities for new development is needed.

The authors dedicate two articles to the historical-urban issues of Klaipėda, which share a common principle – “protect by developing”. This first article addresses the issues of transformation of the port city image, which are related to the hypothesis: whether to shape while protecting or just to protect without shaping – and how this choice affects the changing image of the city. The aim of the article is to identify the urban build-up principles that should be used in the shaping of approaches to the castle site in order to determine whether it is necessary to continue with the structural elements of the city or to interpret them differently.

Based on professional experience and Lithuanian and international sources, the authors examine the development of the historical part of Klaipėda, paying special attention to the elements that formed the image of the city and the historical context of the city entrances. The relevant territorial planning documents are overviewed. The area in question, as an urban landscape that has formed and is still under formation, is analysed and assessed according to the sound methodology of the authors of the article [6], which has been applied for numerous times, also, the relationship between newly formed build-up and the characteristics of the external urban landscape is identified. The research results allow forming the principles and strategy of urban shaping of the area in question, i.e. the southern horn for entering the river Danė. The article is based on the 2023 study of urban development principles for the territory in Klaipėda at approaches to Priešpilio St. 6.

Study of port city entrance know-how

Due to the increased spread of technogenic elements and the increase in the area taken by the port itself, many port cities face port city image issues, where both cultural relations and economic interests intertwine. The master plan of the city of Klaipėda [11] specifies a task of management of immovable cultural heritage objects and urban areas “Highlighting identity features of Klaipėda as a fortress city”, which supposes an intention to explore what role the castle site plays in the image of the port. Is it part of the local identity? Is a detail of the image? How often this characteristic feature is highlighted in fortress cities today and how? For more detailed research, port cities similar to the relevant situation in Klaipėda were selected, main evaluation biases were determined and a comparative study was carried out.

Selection and research approaches

For the study of know-how, port cities in the Baltic Sea region that are close to Lithuania historically, culturally and geographically and meet the following criteria were selected:

1. Geographical location: cities by the open seacoast or channels connected to the sea; the coastal types characteristic of the Baltic Sea (skerry, scar, fjord, level, lagoon), which determined the location of the historical part and the silhouette formation, were assessed.
2. Image of fortress city: relationship between port territories and the central part, entrance directions, city model that allows for comparison of the silhouette significance and image creation.
3. Interaction of historical and new elements: relationship of the castle and the core with new structures, with regard to the character, visibility and context of the silhouette [2].
4. Highlights of the access to the centre: elements that shape the silhouette (historical and new), revealing the balance between heritage and new architecture [2].

According to these criteria, there are three types of ports:

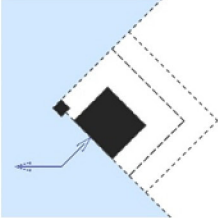
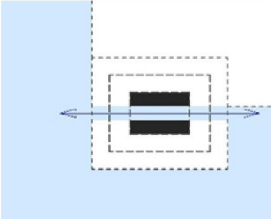
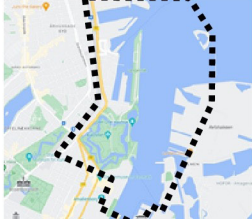
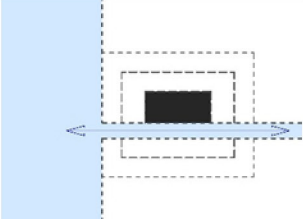
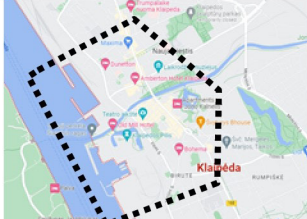
- I – the castle/historical centre dominates the panorama, new objects are built further away.
- II – the castle/historical centre is in the background, while the foreground is formed by contemporary architecture, taller buildings in strategically selected locations.
- III – no foreground formation (e.g. due to demolitions during the war), the city is in search of new solutions, build-up height is matched to valuable elements

Research and its outcome

12 port cities by the Baltic Sea were selected (Fig. 1). The selected port cities have been divided into two categories according to their country's political economic experience: that underwent various cataclysms during the 20th century and that did not. This is also reflected in their current silhouette:

- Smaller cities, which were less affected by various conditions, preserved a significant domination of the castle (Kalmar, Helsingør, Landskrona). In many cases, it acts as the element that shapes access to the city, kind of a gateway to the city.
- Largest cities (nearly metropolises), which have been spared politico-economic cataclysms, confidently signal the water-side gateway to their central area through new contemporary architecture, where either (1) the height of buildings matches the total background height, whereas the higher buildings are planned in strategically selected places as landmarks at a respectful distance (Malmö, Copenhagen, Stralsund); or (2) a new landmark is created, coming as unique and testifying to the city part value (Hamburg).
- Cities affected by politico-economic cataclysms.

Table 1. Most characteristic practical examples of the Baltic Sea port cities (markings: green – citadel of fortress city; yellow – historical core of the city; orange – quays accessible to the public; white – industrial areas not accessible to the public) [created by the authors]

Category I. The castle/historical centre is an active primary component of the panorama. Newly emerging objects are built at a distance from the central part of the city as not to create any competition.			
Helsingør (Denmark). Fjoldal coast, smooth terrain. The whole city silhouette is perceivable, with multi-layered character prevailing and a historical castle of the 15 th century as a dominant. The castle stands as a city gateway, therefore, the historical context is perceived in the first layer of the view.			
			
			
Category II. The castle/historical centre is a background component of the panorama, while the foreground is shaped by the 21 st century solutions and contemporary architecture.			
Copenhagen (Denmark). Fjoldal coast, smooth terrain. The silhouette perception is partial (fragmented), dominated by large objects, making the view monotonous. The city gateway is shaped by new, contemporary construction, while the historical context is perceived in the background.			
			
			
Category III. The foreground is not yet shaped (demolished during the war, etc.), the historical centre being a complex component of the panorama. As the city approaches the water, new solutions with contemporary architecture are being sought.			
Klaipėda (Lithuania). Lagoon coast; smooth terrain. The silhouette is monotonous, perceived gradually, dominated by technological objects, lacks the multi-layered character of the view. No city gateway has formed, access to the central part of the city is marked by the prominent new construction. The historical context is perceived in the background, while the foreground is in the shaping stage.			
			
			

Some have kept the richness of the silhouette (Riga, Tallinn, also Gdansk to some extent), while others suffered a major blow and lost most of their image and urban identity (Klaipėda).

Assessment of the city silhouettes and the significance of their historical parts in the context of the whole city makes it obvious that the historical part is visible in almost all silhouettes: either in the first or the second visual layer (Table 1). The water side view shows the castle site and city centre location, and the publicly accessible quay. In both smaller and large cities, castles and new buildings (created as landmarks) have become city symbols due to their sculptural character, i.e. objects that help identify the city.

The study of the territory and silhouette of each researched city makes it obvious that the historical part of the city is distinctive in the silhouette, standing out among other city parts. All port cities in the world undergo a change in the ratio of the city and port areas, only the timing of the process differs. These changes are very significant as the freed-up port areas are returned to the city: the public gets access to water, new jobs are created, raising the economic, cultural level of the city or city part. Change of function in these zones goes along with change not only in the planned structure of the territory, but also in the general image of the city, its spatial urban character.

In addition to the observations already made, the study of the Baltic Sea port cities allowed to notice the following trends in the transformation of port cities:

- The city silhouette changes along with the processes in the city – changes in the plan structure, transformation of social and cultural self-awareness and economic factors.
- The castle and/or historical centre is an active primary component of the panorama, shaping the identity of the city. Historical and newly created city landmarks are represented and placed differently, based on the city size and its international weight.
- Cities in countries that were and were not subject to political-economic cataclysms differ in the representativeness of their historical parts and richness of their silhouettes. However, the attitude towards the shaping and display of a valuable part of the city and its silhouette is similar, testifying to common cultural values and urban patterns.
- Multi-functional urban structures have formed or are purposefully developed on the coast of the port cities, with integration of representative objects, emphasising the significance of the area for the visual perception from the water.
- In general, when shaping the city silhouette, the priority is always given to the display of the historical and natural environment of the city.

Port city of Klaipėda and input data for urban research

Despite the tendency of cities to keep changing and transforming, a city and its people should keep signs of historical memory, as they are important and significant for the identity of the place and for the identification of the people with the place where they live. Therefore, every urban research begins with an overview of the historical urban development of the area, which focuses primarily on the broader context. Then the overview switches to its current urban structure, its elements and effective applicable documents on the development of the territory. This is done in search of the most prominent landmarks that shaped the city identity.

History

Historical urban development of Klaipėda city in historical plans is analysed both in general terms and with more focus on the structure in the mouth of the river Danė. The overall change in the panoramic view and silhouette of Klaipėda city is analysed (Table 2). This research has allowed to identify several clear periods of the city image [18]:

1) *fortress city* (from early times to the second half of the 18th century): this is the early development of Klaipėda, when the castle dominates the city structure – the city remained dependent from the authority in the castle till the 18th century. The changes in military warfare in Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries and the increased importance of artillery led to the development of defensive fortifications in Klaipėda. In the 17th century, the city gained the status of a fortress with a garrison and fortifications formed around. The city was considered an impregnable fortress for several centuries, but at the end of the 18th century its military role diminished, and in the 19th century its defensive structures underwent dismantling.

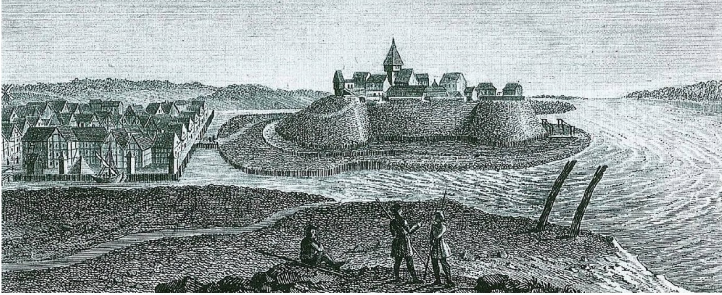
2) *mill city* (at the junction of the 18th and 19th centuries): at the end of the 18th century Klaipėda became an important centre of timber export in response to the increasing demand for construction timber. Due to favourable port conditions and low taxes, the timber processing industry grew rapidly, closely related to windmills. They shaped the silhouette of the Klaipėda coast and became a landmark of the city identity, depicted in the 19th century cartography. Later, technological change and the transformation of the industrial structure led to the disappearance of the mills.

3) *port city* destiny has been with Klaipėda from the very start of the city. Initially, the functions of the Klaipėda port were performed by the banks of the river Danė then, in the late 18th century, the coast also started to be used for industrial purposes – storage, sawmills, shipyards. This process expanded the port territory to the Curonian Lagoon, where the industrial port infrastructure took root over time. This development changed the city's relationship with water and separated public spaces from the coastal zone and fundamentally changed its spatial and social structure.

The historical urban development of the build-up at the entrance to the river Danė, also known as the entry horns, in the city plans illustrates the past formation of the perimetric build-up and its street elevation on both banks of the Danė and the subsequent demolition of this build-up. And the views of Klaipėda panorama and silhouette convey the change of the whole city image (Table 2):

- Before the war, the view was that of a graceful, expressive city. The main elements shaping the silhouette were slender ship masts, pointed towers of churches and the castle, and the natural elements – the green areas. In the context of the entire city, the distinctiveness of the territory was created by the castle and later by the castle site, the lighthouse, navigation signs, natural environment.
- In Soviet times, the silhouette of Klaipėda changed drastically, becoming monotonous, lacking character. The main element shaping the silhouette and the image of the port city is cranes lined up along the coast, whereas historical vertical landmarks were destroyed, with only fragments of horizontal elements remaining, which are recognisable only in the plan, but are no longer identified in the city panorama or silhouette [20].
- The 21st century dominant element of the city image is the remaining industrial port and its attributes. The image of Klaipėda as a mill city is completely lost,

Table 2. Most characteristic historical silhouettes of Klaipėda city and horn formation fragments [5; 9; 12; 14; 15; 18]

Year	Panoramic view and silhouette, their shaping elements and dominants
1535	 View of Memelburg (Klaipėda) castle and the western part of the city with the mouth of the river Danė. Picture of 1535, copied by the painter Rosmässler from the painting by J. Klingenkamp, dated 1535, which was in the German St. John church in the Klaipėda Old Town till the fire of 1854. (<i>Alt- und neues Preussen</i> by Chr. Hartknoch, 1684). Though the view is from the riverside, the silhouette is clearly dominated by the castle.
1808	 View of Klaipėda from Smiltynė. The panoramic view is formed by small-scale residential houses and utility buildings; the silhouette is dominated by the rising church tower, windmills and larger warehouse buildings.
1902	 A capture of the characteristic silhouette of the city before the world wars. The foreground of the panoramic view is formed by the warehouse and residential buildings that are in parallel or perpendicular to the Curonian Lagoon; the background is formed by the castle rampart; the silhouette is dominated by church towers rising in the further background.
2022	 The foreground of the panoramic view is shaped by technological elements (cranes) of the industrial port, in the approaches to the territory in question – by fragments of the remaining historical build-up of warehouses and residential buildings, standing in parallel to the Curonian Lagoon, and buildings of the Lindenau shipyard; the silhouette has lost church towers and is dominated by the 21st century high-rise buildings K and D.

without any physical signs in its urban fabric, while the time of the fortress city is still reminded by fragments of the system of defensive fortifications and the castle territory.

Urban analysis of the current situation

Urban analysis of the current situation allowed to determine peculiarities of urban structure that formed in the approaches to the territory: characteristic morphological division, block structure, system of urban public spaces, main visual links and dominants (Fig. 2) [1; 11]. Examination of the principles of build-up and block structure

formation along the Danė (from the Castle Bridge toward the Curonian Lagoon) allows stating that no blocks are formed on both of its sides but detailed plans and tender papers provide for their future shaping. The perimetric linear character of the build-up is based also on the former build-up principle followed throughout the history. The study of possibilities of public urban spaces shows that the approaches to the area in question are important for the whole city because the system of public urban spaces that consists of three significant elements – the castle site, the quays of the river Danė and the Curonian Lagoon – allows for the city's access to water and creates the exceptional

image of the port city, reminding also of the historical past of Klaipėda. These zones must not lose public access and multifunctionality.

The dominants and their influence zone in the area in question are adjacent to the zone of direct spatial influence of the horizontal highlight (the castle site). The area can be well observed from the upper terrace of the vertical highlight – building K – on the right bank of the Danė, from the observation deck in the tower of Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace Church that is slightly southeast, and from the rebuilt castle tower. In the future, the observation will also be possible from the tower of St. John's Church to be rebuilt. Therefore, shaping of the area must take into account its observability from the said vertical highlights.

Discussion of the visual links creation possibilities should also include emphasis that the territory can be viewed not only from the vertical dominants but also from ground level local observation sites. As the territory under design has the castle site and Paul Lindenau shipyard structures behind it, in shaping of the new build-up, the building volumes and their placement must ensure a possibility of fragmented observation of the said objects.

Documents

The area in question falls within Klaipėda Old Town territory (unique code 16075), adjacent to it are the Klaipėda castle site (unique code 10303), the Klaipėda castle and bastion complex (unique code 848), Paul Lindenau shipyard complex (code 25898), whereas on the other side of the Danė is the historical part of Klaipėda city called the New Town (unique code 22012). The following aspects of the new build-up relationship with heritage objects were, therefore, pointed out:

1. The newly suggested build-up can have an effect on those characteristics of heritage objects that are visible and observable from characteristic viewpoints. For the assessment of the suggested build-up, it is relevant to examine its relationship with the external urban landscape characteristics, as reflected in panoramas, silhouettes, and dominants/ensembles.
2. In forming the principles for newly suggested build-up, it is also important to take into account the categories of surrounding buildings and the valuable build-up typology, as named in the relevant statement of the Old Town Assessment Council. In the said document, the land plot under design is recorded as a changed non-shaped urban structure, consequently, new construction is possible here and, as there is a fragment of regular perimetric build-up next to it, continuing this type of build-up is recommended.

Territory planning documents [4; 11; 14; 15] indicate such tasks of management/preservation of immovable cultural heritage objects and urban locations: highlighting the features of the city identity; restoration of the characteristic silhouette, dominated by the castle and church towers; highlighting Klaipėda as a fortress city. The approved heritage management project (covering the area in question) allows new construction and the requirements set out in it should be followed.

Assessment of the territory and recommended principles for shaping it

One of the main imperatives in the assessment of the territory in question is the relevant relationship of newly shaped build-up with the external urban landscape characteristics, reflected in panoramas, silhouettes and dominants or

ensembles. The territory is, therefore, assessed according to the panoramic view analysis and assessment methodology, which has been developed and described by authors of this article [6]. Assessment sequence: (1) selection of relevant viewpoints of the territory; (2) description and assessment of observation sectors; (3) analysis of relevant panoramic views in terms of the distinctness of elements in a visible view, domination and obscuring of objects, visual links between objects, multilayered character of the panoramas; and (4) presentation of recommendations and the territory shaping principles.

Viewpoint selection

The selection of relevant viewpoints of the territory was based on the Klaipėda city viewpoints established for the first time [10], where different observation sectors produce a different silhouette and panorama quality. Viewpoints were divided into three categories: important for the whole city, revealing the Old Town value and viewpoints of local impact.

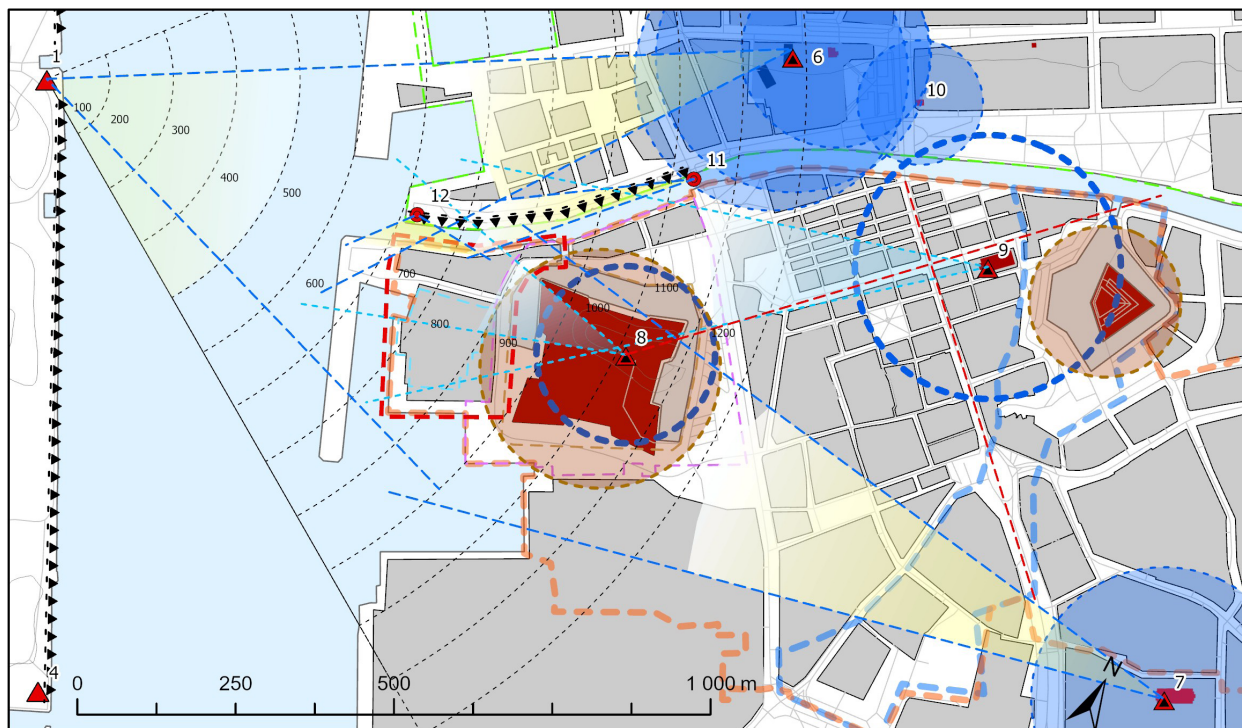
The current master plan of Klaipėda city provides for six main observations sites: four in Smiltynė (Meadow Horn, Ferry Terminals I and II, Yacht Club), Hagen Hill and observation deck planned in the castle tower. The Old Town visibility is limited by flatness of the area – broader views open only from Smiltynė, the Curonian Lagoon and some streets. The territory at Priešpilio St. 6 and 9 is well observable, however neither the Klaipėda master plan [11] nor heritage documents [13; 14; 15] indicate any specific viewpoint in it except for the observation sites marked in the castle and bastion complex plan. The authors of this paper suggest additional public viewpoints in public gathering places. 12 viewpoints were assessed in total, but for a detailed analysis 6 relevant points of two types were selected:

1. 4 points relevant for the whole city – from Ferry Terminal I in Smiltynė, from the Yacht Club in Smiltynė, the outdoor terrace of the cafe in the administrative high-rise K, the observation deck in the tower of Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace Church. They are for assessing the impact of the new build-up on the city panorama and on the relationship with the heritage. They can also be considered external (Smiltynė, ~600 m away from the territory) or internal (high-rise terraces, church tower, 500–1,250 m away from the territory).
2. 2 nominal points – from the Castle Bridge and from the North Horn of the Danė – are for assessing the relationship of the new build-up with the closest heritage objects, also changes in the silhouette and the quay build-up. They are on the ground and at a distance of 50–100 m and 350–400 m from the territory in question in the approaches to Priešpilio St.

Analysis of relevant panoramas

The analysis of relevant panoramic views and silhouettes involved examination not only of the view from a certain point but also of the territory plan. The panoramic views and the silhouette were analysed and their valuable elements were named: the distinctness of elements visible in the view, domination and obscuring of objects, possibilities and peculiarities of visual links between objects/areas and the character of the panoramic view. The examination followed the sequence that leads to consequences in the visual frame:

- Panoramas and silhouettes are divided into visual layers according to structural boundaries set in the territory plan or based on specific distances.
- The visual layer where the apparent object in question is located and its distance from the viewpoint are identified.



LEGEND

Visual dominants and accents

- Historical (< 20th century)
- Modernist (from 1950)
- Contemporary (21st century)

Public viewpoint category

- Global_external
- Global_internal
- Local_internal

Viewing sector field

- Existing from the 1st pier in Smiltinė, Taikos Church, from Pilies Bridge, the northern horn of the Danė River, building "K"
- Possible from St. John's Church and the Castle Tower

Other symbols

- Study area
- Water bodies
- Block structure

Visual connections and viewpoints

- Historical urban-structure compositional relationship
- View sectors toward the study area from: Pilies Bridge, Church of Peace, "K" Building, Northern horn of the Danė River, First Smiltynė Ferry Terminal
- Potential view sectors from Pilies Tower and St. John's Church
- Lines of visual points
- Zone of direct spatial influence of a vertical (existing) landmark (object height 3h)
- Zone of direct spatial influence of a vertical (perspectival) landmark (object height 3h)
- Zone of direct spatial influence of a horizontal (topographical) landmark (object height 3h)
- Distance from the First Ferry Terminal marked every 100 m toward the study area

Boundaries of the immovable cultural heritage sites

- Historic part of Klaipėda city, known as Naujamiestis (code 22012)
- Klaipėda Castle Site (code 10303)
- Klaipėda Castle and Bastion Complex (code 848)
- Paulius Lindenau Shipyard Building Complex (code 25898)
- Klaipėda Old Town (code 16075)
- Klaipėda City Bastion Fortification Complex (code 10457)

Fig. 2. Visual links and dominants [created by the authors using GIS]

▪ Peculiarities visible in the view are assessed in terms of their relationship with valuable elements of the view.

▪ Objects dominant in the view are pointed out.

Out of 6 viewpoints considered, this article presents the only one that is the most manifest illustration of the former historical entrance to the river and a possible city gateway from Smiltynė side. This view allows the sight of the entire western facade of Klaipėda with the most urbanistically mature part that is most representative of the city's history. Having assessed the technical information and the viewing sector itself, it was established that the visual frame (excluding the close-up and far-off layers) consists of 6 intermediate visual

layers. Although it is the whole city external point (outside the urbanised city part) and one of the low (lower terrace of the terrain) viewpoints, the view from there is perceived both as a silhouette and as a panorama. The latter is identified through different visual layers. The area under consideration is at the distance of 700–800 m from the point (layer I) and is observable at the angle of 180° (Fig. 3).

Distinctness of elements in the visible view: In layer I – the Danė mouth, entrance to the historical centre, P. Lindenau structure, port cranes. This layer is perceived best as it is on the 0.5 km distance boundary from the viewpoint, making its elements and their details clearly visible, therefore, in the

future its image as a city entrance – the gateway – is worth developing. In layer II – the castle site complex with the castle tower and the Laivītē territory with a new structure planned in it according to the project *Memel City* (0.5–1.2 km). In layer III – the Old Town core, the Friedrich Suburb, the future tower of St. John Church, the complex of buildings K and D (1.2–2.5 km, perceived as a background). Layers IV–VI are practically invisible due to the lowness of point; only the Musical Theatre tower (IV) and the Old Power Plant chimney (VI) can be distinguished.

In terms of *object domination*, it is currently difficult to distinguish the limits of the Danė side and the horn, as horizontal industrial architecture dominates here. P. Lindenau structure (on the right) and buildings K and D (on the left) dominate. The vertical of the currently rebuilt castle tower reinforces the Old Town perception, and the planned tower St. John's Church would accentuate it even more. Meanwhile, a new building of the port administration and Memel City (currently under preparation and construction) will reinforce the New Town perception. Such development on both sides of the river Danė basically changes the visual significance of the central part of the city.

In terms of the *visual links between objects*, the centre of the observation sector partly coincides with the mouth of the Danė, therefore, both sides of the Danė mouth – both the North Horn and the South Horn must be shaped as the hub serving as the city gateway. The area in question is purely an element shaping the South Horn, therefore, it should serve as the background for valuable heritage objects visible in layers II and III: P. Lindenau structure, the castle site with the rebuilt castle tower and the tower of St. John's Church that will accompany them in the future. It is important not to

overshadow these verticals and maintain the readability of heritage objects.

The *panoramic view* is multi-layered where the first layer is particularly important for revealing the urban structure variety and specifics. Its shaping requires purposeful and responsible solutions, therefore, preservation of the multi-layered character is a prerequisite for the development of the Danė mouth and the city gateway hub.

Urban shaping principles for the area

The territory at Priešpilio St. 6 and 9 is strategically important for the whole city as it enters the city historical core zone and is an element shaping the South Horn of the Danė mouth, which influenced the changing image of the city throughout history: from the fortress city and the mill city to the industrial port. In addition, this territory has a significant impact on the panorama, the silhouette and the very image of Klaipėda. Until the middle of the 20th century, the area was dominated by the perimetrical build-up, which greatly accentuated the river channel. The currently remaining vestige of the urban structure does not give the place a full image, therefore, the territory must be shaped to achieve a European city image. Based on the research described, the urban shaping strategy for the area under consideration – the South Horn of the Danė mouth – has been drawn up, recommending four main principles (Fig. 4):

- **Build-up type selection.** The newly formed build-up should be perimetrical as it was the type that historically developed in both horns of the Danė (until 1959) but disappeared later. The river has traditionally been treated as a street spatial corridor, so it is appropriate to maintain this principle on both sides of the mouth, too.

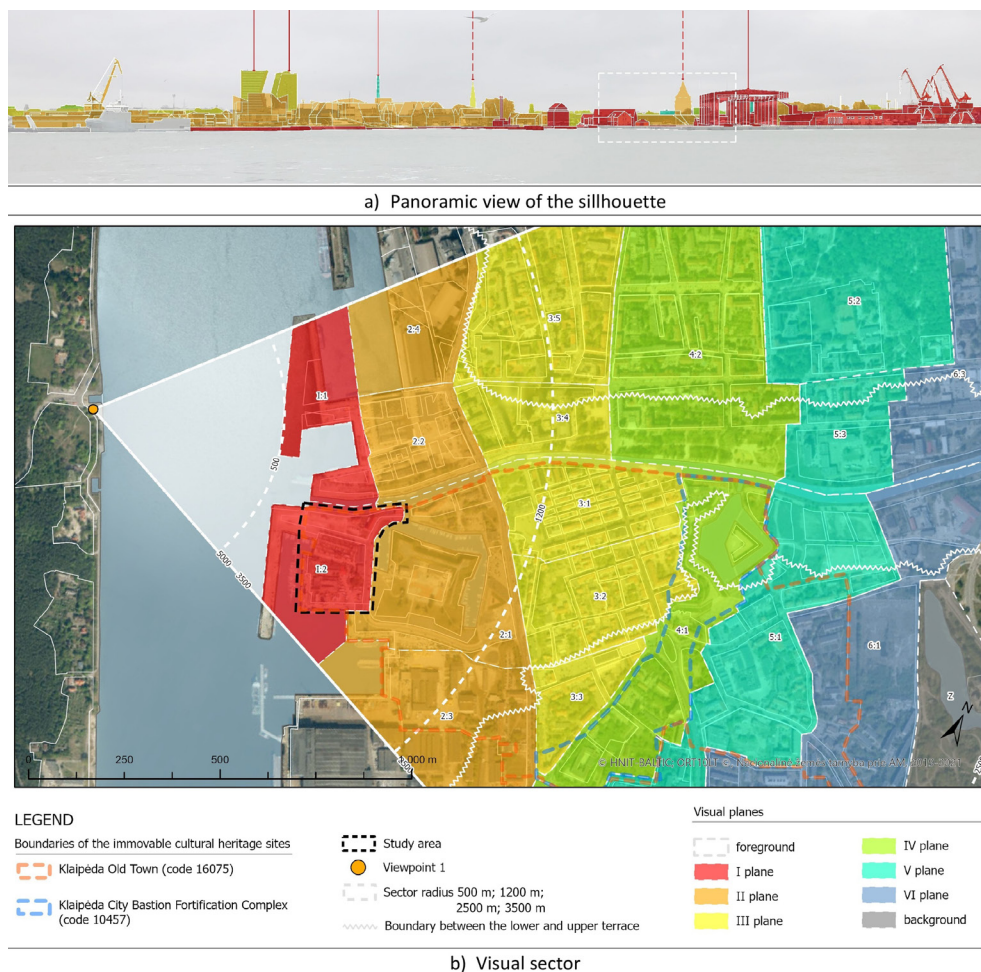


Fig. 3. Observation of the area in question from Ferry Terminal I in Smiltynė, its structure in the plan and in the view [created by the authors]

Volumetric-spatial solutions must respect the zone of visual influence of the dominants and not overshadow it.

- **Respecting the build-up height.** Two territory image options are possible: moderate background build-up or an expressive highlight of the river mouth as a gateway, while maintaining a respectful relationship with valuable dominants. The first option is based on historical features of the build-up and the second – on contemporary international practice of port cities. The tower must remain a dominant element (without exceeding 2/3 of its height) so as not to create competition with existing valuable properties and to keep the multi-layered character.
- **Shaping of the view layers.** Klaipėda city has a predominantly smooth terrain, therefore, in order to have multiple layers, buildings should become higher as they recede from the coast. It means that, in shaping of the new build-up, the volumes and placement of buildings must allow a fragmented view of the castle site and P. Lindenau shipyard structures and should not overshadow the visual layer behind or affect the one in front.
- **Introduction of multifunctionality.** The approaches to the new build-up must merge into the network

of public urban spaces created by the castle site, the quays of the Danė and the Curonian Lagoon, and the new build-up must ensure the viability of these spaces. Therefore, the creation of multifunctionality of buildings is a prerequisite for maintaining city life in this part of the city. This practice, when the quays of the central part of the city are accessible to the public and are as multifunctional as possible, is demonstrated by all the studied port cities of the Baltic Sea.

Discussions and Conclusions

In the port cities of the Baltic Sea region, **the distinctiveness of the city image in the context of other city parts is created by the silhouette of the historical part of the city.** All port cities in the world undergo a change in the ratio of the city and port areas, only the timing of the process differs. The changes that are taking place these days in potentially transforming areas in central parts are very significant, as these areas are given back to the public for city needs. The formation of access to water, creation of new jobs, raising the economic and cultural level of a city or city part are strategic priorities of cities in their central parts.

The city silhouette, as well as its image depend on various processes taking place in the city: change of the plan structure of the area, change of the social and cultural

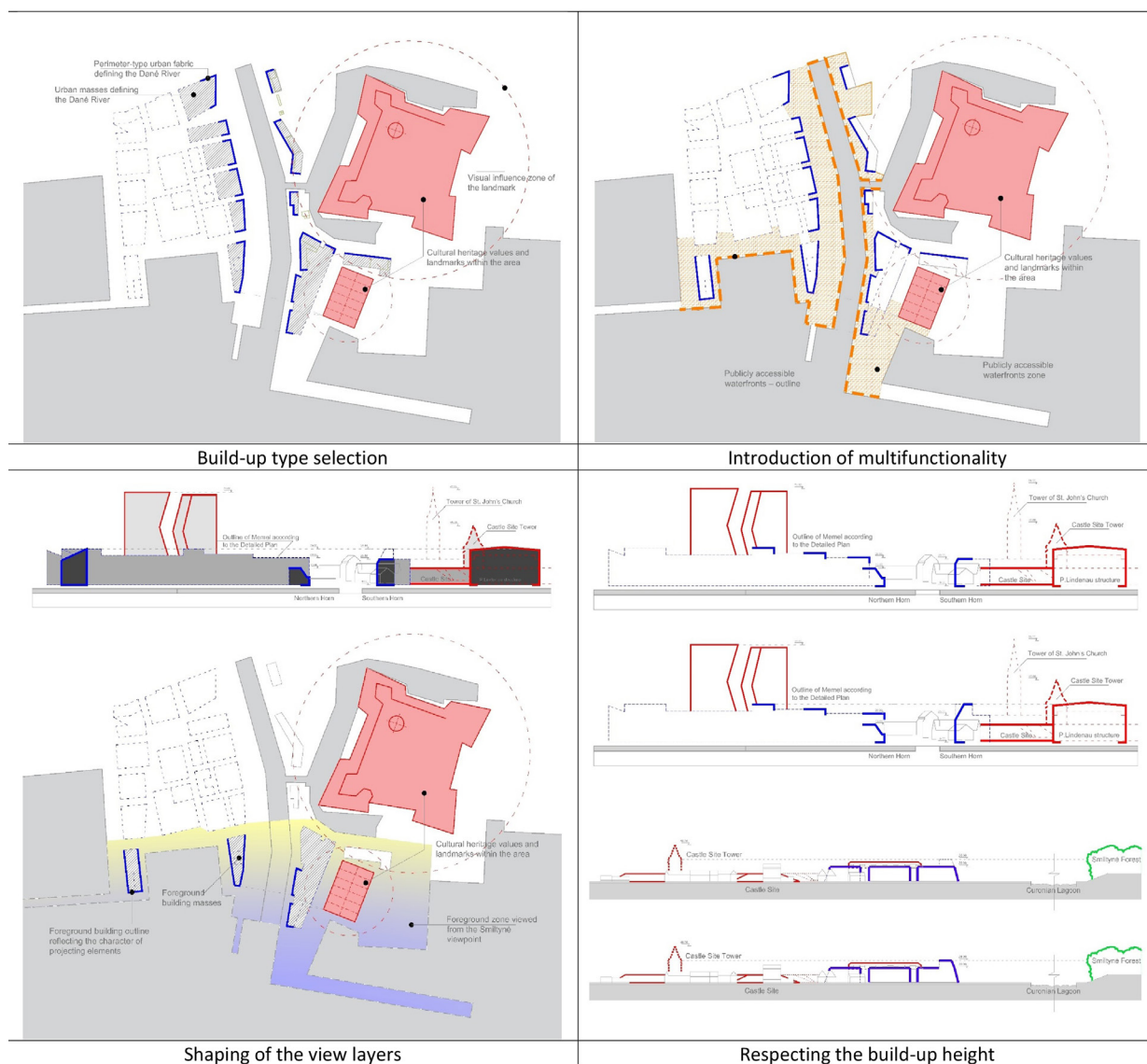


Fig. 4. Urban shaping strategies and principles for the area pertaining to: build-up type, multifunctionality, multi-layered character and height [created by the authors]

self-awareness, economic factors. Therefore, in shaping the city image, priority should be given to highlighting the city identity or even restoring it (if lost), bringing back the relationship between historical and natural environment.

The constant transformation of the city image, which directly depended on the change of economic activities and technologies, can be pointed out as the main feature of historical urban development of Klaipėda. Despite the tendency of Klaipėda to keep changing and transforming, **the city and its people should keep signs of historical memory**, as they are important and significant for the identity of the place and for the identification of the people with the place where they live.

Before the war, Klaipėda had the image of an elegant and expressive city. In the context of the entire city, the distinctiveness of the territory was created by the castle and later by the castle site, the lighthouse, navigation signs, natural environment. Currently, the image is different, its main forming element is cranes that line the coast. Restoration of the identity of this place requires **transformation of the image of the territory. It must be based on historical data, looking for a proper ratio between preservation and shaping.**

The guidelines for urban shaping of the area are dictated by the assessment of the urban context – **the relationship of the newly shaped build-up with the external urban landscape characteristics.** They are reflected by panoramas, silhouettes and dominants/ensembles. The assessment should include analysis of characteristic views and signs of multi-layered character in them, conditions of domination and highlighting of valuable objects, possibilities of the presence and/or creation of visual connections. The urban context of the area and its shaping are important in the system of urban public spaces that includes the castle site, the quays and the approaches to the lagoon, which create the character of the port city and historical memory connections. Therefore, **new objects that will appear must be of high artistic quality, visually integrated, not overshadow the visual layer behind them and not compete with historical and natural elements.** It is very important not to create the effect of competition with the existing valuable properties in the place and to keep multiple layers. The area is, therefore, subject to key urban structure principles: build-up type selection, build-up type regulation, shaping of the view layers, introduction of multifunctionality.

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Kopsavilkums

Rakstą analizėta pilsėtvės tēla transformācija globālo pilsētu kontekstā, īpašu uzmanību pievēršot Klaipēdai – Lietuvas vienīgajai neaizsalstošajai jūras ostas pilsētai ar vēsturiski daudzslāņainu pilsėtvės struktūru. Pētījumā aplūkots izaicinājums saglabāt vietējo identitāti globalizācijas apstākļos un vēsturisko satricinājumu kontekstā, kas 20. gadsimta vidū būtiski mainīja pilsėtas attīstības trajektoriju. Šādas pārmaiņas daudzviet ir izraisījušas pilsētu vizuālās un telpiskās identitātes zudumu vai radikālu transformāciju. Pētījumā analizēts, kā mūsdienās mainās Klaipėdas pilsėtvės tēls, kuru vēsturiski veidojuši pilsėtas kā cietokšņa pirmsākumi, kokmateriālu tirdzniecība un vēlāk – ostas funkcijas. Pirmo iespaidu par pilsētu, īpaši krūza kuģu pasažieriem, kuri Klaipēdā ierodas caur Kuršu jomu, galvenokārt veido industriālās ostas elementi, nevis pilsėtas vēsturiskais centrs. Secinājumos un rekomendācijās uzsvērtā nepieciešamība pēc līdzsvarotas pilsėtvės attīstības pieejas, izvairoties gan no pārmērīgi stingras vēsturiskās vides konservācijas, gan no nekontrolētas pilsėtvės transformācijas.