

Sweden is well positioned with regard to sustainable urban planning, design and architecture. One of the key drivers behind this is the strong Swedish tradition of cooperation between planning authorities, architects and developers. This cooperation provides opportunities to establish systematic large-scale processes and systems that support the sustainable development of cities. Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm and Västra Hamnen in Malmö are good examples of this. However, the most innovative schemes in the future may be developed elsewhere. Why? It's a matter of need, speed and opportunity.

# Sweden – world leader in sustainable design?



## THE ARCHITECT COMMENTARY

Magnus Meyer Tengbom

Hammarby Sjöstad is a unique development in Sweden, in terms of both size and sustainable design. Halfway through the development of Hammarby Sjöstad, its success is evident. Tengbom, having been heavily involved in the development of Hammarby Sjöstad for the past ten years, regularly accepts international delegations interested in Hammarby Sjöstad, and the project is a clear example of world-class

sustainable design. Our experience from projects like Hammarby Sjöstad and Västra Hamnen has made it possible for us to work on projects focusing on sustainable design in other parts of Europe, and also in Asia and Africa. The challenges are quite different in different parts of the world, of course, but our experience is that the basic Swedish design approach in combination with a strong local touch creates a perfect mix.

**THE GROWTH AND URBANISATION** of Asia are creating great challenges with regard to balancing growth and limiting negative social and environmental effects. At the same time, these challenges provide a huge incentive for innovative design, and for



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Swedish technology. Since Tengbom entered the Chinese market a couple of years ago we have been invited to take part in several projects focused on sustainable design that are comparable in size with Hammarby Sjöstad. The differences are that these projects



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- ▣ are developed three or four times as fast – and that there are numerous projects of similar size under development in all the major cities in China.

A couple of months ago, Tengbom was invited to participate in the design of part of the Asian Games Village in Guangzhou. The assignment was to provide a master plan for the Media Village and to design one of the three arenas and the Media Centre itself. The games, with 12,000 athletes from 43 countries, will take place in October 2010, and since the site is just farmland today, this leaves only 30 months to design and build not only the buildings but also all the surrounding infrastructure. The visibility of the project, which is one of the major sport events in Asia, has put a lot of emphasis not only on appealing design but also on sustainability.

**ANOTHER PROJECT TENGBO**M has just finished in China is a master plan for the Jingan District in Shanghai, which forms part of the CBD. This is a mixed-use development ranging from housing and offices to retail and hotels. Our expertise in the preservation of historical buildings was a bonus in this project

and made it possible to suggest ways of preserving and refurbishing the traditional li-long buildings. While the Asian Games Village will be developed on farmland, the Jingan project is a redevelopment of the Shanghai CBD; consequently Tengbom had to establish quite different approaches in order to provide suitable sustainable solutions.

**WHILE TODAY WE APPLY** sustainability skills and know-how from Sweden in Chinese projects and elsewhere around the world, we may do the opposite in the future. The Chinese market, for instance, already provides the need, the speed and multiple opportunities to create world-class sustainable design. As urbanisation and pollution continue to increase in the Chinese cities, the incentive to focus on sustainable solutions grows faster day by day.

At Tengbom, we believe strongly that the opportunity to work on big and complex projects in various parts of the world makes us better prepared to meet the future challenges in the Swedish market. Because good design principles are applicable everywhere, locally as well as globally. ■