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E18 Norway Jury Report Roa



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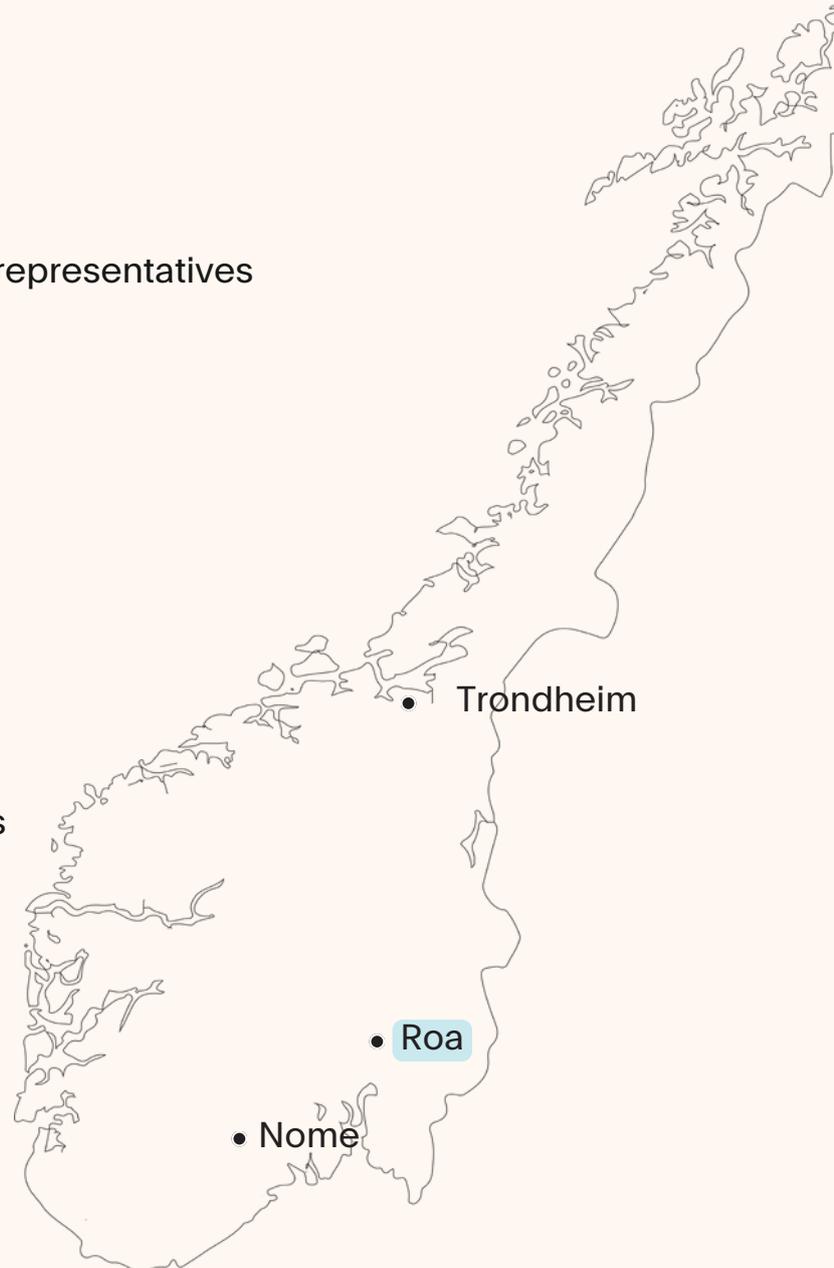
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European 18 in Norway

European is an innovation process for architecture and urban development, centered around an open competition of ideas for architects, landscape architects, and urban planners under the age of 40. The European competition takes place every 2 years with European 18 being the 18th edition.

In European 18, 47 competition sites from 12 different European countries were launched at the same time connected by the theme Re-sourcing.

For European 18 there were 3 sites in Norway:

- The Fen Complex, represented by Nome municipality.
- Trondheim, represented by MiST (Museene i Sør-Trøndelag)
- Roa, represented by Roa municipality.

European-Norway is a foundation that organizes the European process in Norway. The secretariat of European Norway is run by Utopic.

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The composition of the jury

Magnus Wåge

President of the jury. Architect and partner at Mestres Wåge.

Jens Richer

Architect and partner at Estudio Herreros.

Siri Lundestad

Architect at DRMA.

Mansoor Hussain

Politician and urbanist.

Kotchakorn Voraakhom

Landscape architect, CEO and Founder of Landprocess and Porous City Network.

Rainer Stange

Landscape architect, partner at Bokemo and professor in landscape at AHO, Oslo.

Therese Øijord

Architect. City architect in Askim.

Substitutes:**Oda Solberg**

Architect at Natural state and leader of the national association of architects in Oslo.

The jury procedure

The competition is organized as a tender under the Norwegian rules public procurements as a "Plan-og Designkonkurransen" according to the Rules for European 18.

As stated by the rules for European 18, the jury met 2 times per site. The first jury meeting selected a shortlist of a maximum of 25% of submitted entries. The second jury meeting selects the winner(s), runner-ups, and special mentions.

Technical Committee

The secretariat for European Norway made up the technical committee. The technical committee prepares the jury process, controls the eligibility of the proposals, and takes notes of the jury discussions.

The Technical committee consisted of Bjørnar Haveland and Ingeborg Katie Åtland

The 1st jury round

The purpose of the 1st jury round is to select a shortlist for the second and final round of the jury. The site representative participates as a jury member with one vote. The jury met for a full day per site. The meeting was conducted using the A1 printed boards of the proposals and Miro as a digital exhibition.

The 1st jury round took place the 09.09.2025 in Lunner.

Attending:

From the jury: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain, Kotchakorn Voraakhom, Rainer Stange and Therese Øijord

From the technical committee: Bjørnar Haveland and Ingeborg Katie Åtland

From the site: Torstein Brandrud and Eivinn Fjellhammer



Midpoint dialogue meeting between jury and site representatives

A dialogue meeting was held between site representatives: Torstein Brandrud and Eivinn Fjellhammer and jury members: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain and Kotchakorn Voraakhom at the European Forum for cities and juries in Lisbon on the 18th of October 2025.

The 2nd jury round

Selection of winner, runner up, special mentions.

Conducted as a physical meeting on the 19th of October 2025, also in Lisbon.

In this meeting the site representatives participate as an observer, with the right to make a statement at the start, but without any vote.

The decision of the jury is final and independent.

Attending:

From the jury: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain, Kotchakorn Voraakhom, Rainer Stange and Therese Øijord.

From the secretariat: Bjørnar Haveland.

From the site: Torstein Brandrud and Eivinn Fjellhammer

Matrix of submitted entries

	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
01	Shortlisted	UK452	Roa's Rag Rug	Winner: 12 000 EUR prize
02	Shortlisted	KY808	Living Roa	Runner-Up: 6 000 EUR prize
03	Shortlisted	MZ624	From Fragment to Framework	This project qualified for the shortlist. The jury commends the strategic approach responding to the need for housing densification by proposing flexible flats and transforming existing buildings, noting that the project successfully tests its own strategy. The project introduces a new urban scale in Roa with a permeable positioning to the road. However, the jury was not convinced by the architecture itself and found that the design failed to effectively manage the relationship between private and public spaces. While the emphasis on Hadelandsveien is strong, the jury found the plaza's positioning awkward, situated at a road crossing, and in a lower spot on the plot.
04	Shortlisted	EI734	Full House	This project qualified for the shortlist. The jury commends the experimental concepts, specifically its challenge to existing typologies, different combinations of activities, and the proposed financial model. The project suggests a new type of interior public space, which the jury believed could be a strong addition to the Nordic village climate in Roa. However, these ideas were found to be underdeveloped and undercommunicated. The jury thought the project to be highly diagrammatic, demonstrating a lack of hierarchy within the plan, which furthermore makes the area seem isolated from the rest of Roa.
05	Shortlisted	ZZ580	Invisible City: Roa 2.0	This project qualified for the shortlist. The jury praised the project for addressing the critical demand for elderly housing by proposing a dense residential plan. The project seems to create identity primarily through its architectural massing, reminiscent of a type of suburban village, rather than through the design of its public space. However, the jury noted a critical lack of public infrastructure, activities, services, and public space to accompany the amount of housing. While the team thoughtfully considered a multiplicity of possible residents, the proposed subsidized financial model appears unworkable due to its unusual nature in the Norwegian market.
06		GQ180	Common Grounds	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury commends the intention to transform the existing building mass and thereby minimize new construction. The jury found the environmental argument to be strong, but the project failed to architecturally solve the challenge, requiring a serious approach to maintenance and cleverly assigning them with necessary new uses. The project presents a compelling vision for inside and outside relations. However, the jury thought the open areas around the buildings to be unresolved and oversized for the population of Roa, which could also benefit from some smaller, more intimate spaces.

Matrix of submitted entries

	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
07		FA109	Roa 3-5-1	The project did not qualify for the shortlist. The jury commends the process-oriented approach and workable strategies, easy for both the public and private developers to understand. The proposal effectively establishes good pedestrian access and moves parking to a location northwest of the main site. However, the jury does not consider the submission a complete urban or architectural proposal, but rather a strategy for development. The jury also doubts the strategy's specificity regarding the core challenges Roa is facing.
08		IS082	Urban Canopy	The project did not qualify for the shortlist. The jury commends the effort put into detailing the apartments and the encouragement of trust within communal living. The illustrations are beautiful, with the three-dimensional section particularly effective in communicating the apartment concept. However, the jury found that the proposal fails to deliver a convincing urban design. The combination of unresolved public spaces and the placement of new buildings does not create the necessary urban tension needed. Additionally, the jury is doubtful about the north-east orientation of the flats, considering it non-ideal.
09		VF807	Next age Resourcing urban life	The project did not qualify for the shortlist. The jury acknowledges the "acupuncture approach," activating specific spots, with the aim of strengthening a diagonal connection through the plot to the other side of the street and the river. Hadelandsveien is given more identity and care by the positioning of green elements and building mass. However, the placement of housing was found to be insensitive, and the overall spaces around the buildings appear underdeveloped. While the project proposes a necessary phased implementation, the jury questions whether each phase is robust enough to succeed on its own.
10		AY751	A communal framework	The project did not make the shortlist. The jury praises the project's approach, particularly the clever variety and adaptable, modular design of its housing and apartment typologies. The core principles are strong and well-received. Despite this, the submission struggled in execution. The jury found the architectural style unconvincing and the public spaces around the buildings to be undefined and lacking hierarchy. Additionally, the ideas would be strengthened by improving the consistency and clarity of communication between the plan and perspective drawings.



Matrix of submitted entries

	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
11		SJ423	The crust and the core	The project did not make the shortlist. The jury acknowledges the creation of a public space situated within the building mass, recognizing its potential. However, the jury found the proposal to fail on issues of scale and clarity. The buildings appear far too large for the plot, resulting in ineffective pedestrian routes. The attempt to apply a traditional "courtyard" structure was considered unsuccessful for the site's scale. The jury thought the project lacked a key to successfully tie all its elements together. Clearer communication between the plans and perspectives could have greatly enhanced its readability.
12		HM751	Somewhere in between	The project did not make the shortlist. The jury commends the "palimpsest" approach of reusing existing structures for the new development. The efforts to keep some existing traces of Roa's identity and build new structures atop existing foundations were found to be a particularly successful idea. However, the jury found the design a bit too rigid, missing solid connections throughout the site, and lacking convincing public spaces. The placement of roads on both sides of the plot was also noted as problematic, potentially isolating the site and failing to solve traffic issues.
13		UQ799	Sense of belonging	The contribution was disqualified due to breach of anonymity requirements.



Repurpose the former school grounds into a vibrant village centre: integrating housing, services and public spaces.

How can the site become an identity marker for youth in the village?

The task is about generating a vision for how the site can be transformed with housing, social and physical activities for young and elderly people as well as a few key services.

The second objective of the competition is to explore how developing Frøystad can be the starting point to help structure a denser, more attractive, and inclusive center in Roa beyond the project site, in a way that can free up brownfields for development to ease the pressure on virgin lands.

Summary of the task

Roa, nestled north of Oslo, faces a paradox. While its sister villages thrive as Oslo suburbs, the northernmost settlement of Lunner Municipality Roa, stagnates, seemingly "just a little too far away" from the metropolitan boom. Fragmented and dispersed planning and a dearth of public spaces further erode its appeal. Ironically, its strategic location sitting just outside of a newly established road toll is making Roa increasingly attractive to larger industries and big-box retailers.

Norway's unique geography, climate, and rugged terrain have led to the development of numerous communities with a car-based suburban structure. Additionally, Norway's economy has traditionally been based on resource extraction and agriculture, which has led to the development of smaller, dispersed communities like Roa. These settlements often lack the infrastructure and amenities of a traditional city center, such as public transportation, walkability, and mixed-use zoning. Often, these communities are characterized by an aging population, as the younger generations move to the cities in search of work. Thanks to better healthcare, nutrition, and living conditions, life expectancy is high, and people are living longer than before. Coupled with a rapidly declining birth rate and decrease in fertility, this results in fewer young people and, essentially, fewer hands at work. Norway is no exception to this. Neither is Roa.

The aging population, commonly known as "eldrebølgen," will increase the demand for healthcare and support services, putting significant strain on the health system and its resources, personnel, and infrastructure. The very fabric of Roa – its dispersed single-family housing model – will aggravate these pressures. The fact that Roa needs 300 senior-adapted housing units underscores the urgency of addressing this demographic shift.

The need for housing, coupled with the need for modern medical facilities, a new library, and much-needed public spaces, presents a chance to reinvent the village centre. The former Frøystad school grounds and a soon-to-be-vacant industrial site offer a whole new chance to rethink the centre of Roa. It is essential for these housing units to be built as inclusive communities that prioritize social connections among residents and public spaces that give youth and elderly chances to meet and hang out all year. The vision is bold: to transform these sites into mixed-use neighborhoods, converging at the main street, breathing life into a new village heart.

General remarks

From a national urban planning perspective, Roa is highly interesting. In many ways, it represents the majority of small Norwegian towns that for decades have struggled to prevent sprawl, resulting in a historical center that is all but eroded of meeting places and public space. Several past attempts at planning a revitalized center have failed because the proposals did not successfully understand the local scale or infuse the village with a renewed sense of identity. Now, however, demographic changes create a new imperative for reurbanizing the center: Lunner municipality requires up to 300 new dwellings for the elderly. Without a dense, walkable village structure where an older population can easily access stores and receive health services efficiently, the municipality will be unable to provide the statutory services required. Lunner is wisely approaching this issue as an opportunity to renew the village's identity and make it attractive to people of all ages.

Roa is a small village situated in Hadeland, one of Norway's most fertile agricultural regions, located where the Vigg river flows northward through Viggadalen. Grown along the Gjøvik railway, Roa's name means "corner," reflecting its unique north-facing position in Eastern Norway. The village is characterized by open landscapes and generous space between houses, with Hadelandveien running through it. The strengthening of Roalinna as the village's main street and transport hub is logical and promising, marking the beginning of crucial urban development.

One of the key challenges in planning Roa's future development is finding the appropriate scale and degree of urbanization. The right balance between necessary growth and realism is essential to ensure that the expansion feels both achievable and contextually grounded. The question is how much new area can be added while still supporting a credible and sustainable transformation. At the same time, the plan must create conditions for active public life, shared spaces, and everyday interaction. Housing and social sustainability are central to the task, demanding a convincing housing structure that accommodates diverse groups and lifestyles. Increasing housing density in central areas is necessary to support local functions and ensure walkable distances between key destinations. This introduction of a new level of density also requires careful design of the transition between private and public realms to ensure both a vibrant urban character and high-quality living environments. These thresholds are key to creating a sense of community and comfort in a denser village setting.

Crucial as a strategy for the development of smaller municipalities is the establishment of robust infrastructure. Water, sewage, and a continuous network of sidewalks designed on the site's and pedestrians' terms are prerequisites for dense living and good towns. The jury strongly believes that the municipality must take charge of developing the street plan and strong public spaces first to effectively manage densification and invite investors to create a framework where all infrastructure is included. Then, the buildings can develop gradually, as needed, as the housing market evolves. Development in smaller municipalities with limited budgets must be attractive enough for investors to engage, requiring the proposal to explore how to stimulate investment and reverse the trend affecting many rural areas.

The jury's discussions consistently focused on the broader vision for Roa, particularly how to connect the existing areas and foster a strong sense of belonging. We explored how spatial organization, housing typologies, and public spaces could support everyday social interaction and strengthen local ties. The selected proposals stood out for their ability to inspire, excite, and generate optimism about Roa's future development. They present clear, flexible strategies that can be developed in phases. Our primary strategic advice to the municipality is to utilize zoning regulations and development requirements to ensure that all necessary public spaces and street plans are fully in place before construction begins or buildings are approved for use. Densifying around existing key meeting places—the school, cultural institutions, and sports facilities—remains the soundest strategy for Roa's future growth.

Winner Winner Winner Winner Winner



Winner Winner Winner Winner Winner

Winner

UK452 - Roa's Rag Rug

"This project can create dreams." The storytelling in Roa's rag rug is compelling and evocative.

The winning proposal presents a convincing narrative through Roa's places, function, and experiences. The red axis acts as a strong backbone through the village, connecting Roa Station via Roalinna, across Hadelandsveien, and up past the old school buildings to a new square near the sports fields. This spatial sequence continues northward toward the swimming hall, bus station, and future residential development. The project skillfully combines existing identity with strong placemaking strategies and highlights movement, connectivity, and shared life as central themes. It reveals and enhances the qualities of Frøystad, making them accessible to all, and proposes a rich and playful concept for all generations and seasons.

The proposal demonstrates a thoughtful balance between history and future development, with engaging ideas around the relationship between private and public spaces, meeting points, and visual connections. It encourages outdoor activity, walkability, and social interaction—promoting health and counteracting loneliness. The project shows a strong commitment to reusing and reinforcing existing local functions, which adds depth and continuity to the proposal. It places clear emphasis on sports, culture, and the care centre as central anchors in the urban structure, creating meaningful meeting places for the community. These elements contribute to a socially inclusive and place-specific strategy that supports everyday life and long-term development in Roa. Existing local functions such as Lupro, car services, and small-scale commercial programs are reinforced, and the process includes active participation from local residents. The use of local red natural stone in public spaces introduces pride and identity into the built environment, and the continuation of Roalinna up to the school generates a variety of spatial experiences. The proposed building typology contributes to a dynamic and coherent streetscape.

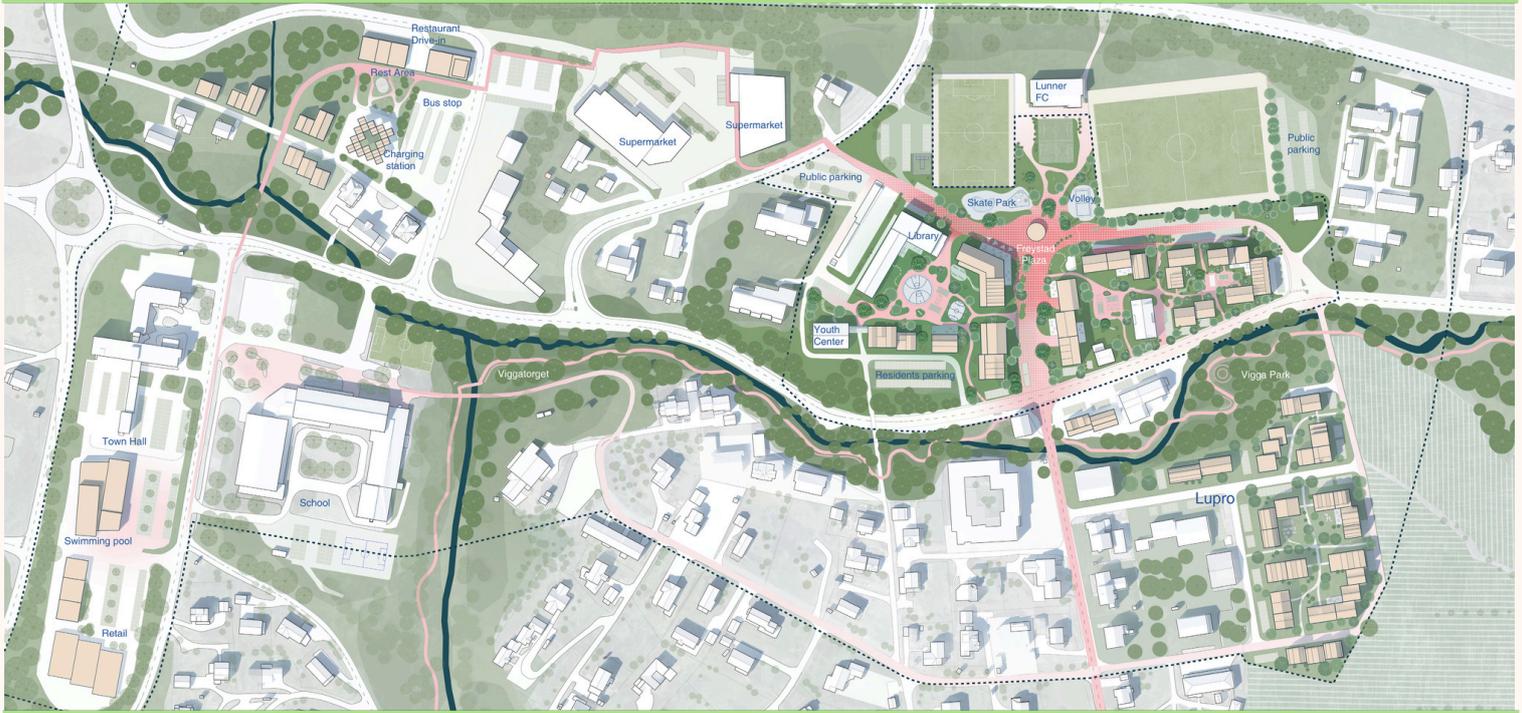


The project's housing strategy presents a promising framework that can be further refined to strengthen its urban impact. The scale feels well-considered and appropriate for Roa, but there is an opportunity to increase density to support a more vibrant and sustainable urban plan. Including ground floor plans in the presentation would enhance the understanding of how public and private zones interact. This could help clarify transitions and support active street-level engagement. The emphasis on sports as a central element is strong and well-considered, offering a solid foundation for community engagement. However, it may be worth reassessing the relocation of the football field to ensure the benefits justify the potential costs. The proposal outlines an ambitious vision for public investment, including a new health centre, library, adult education facilities, and a public bath. To fully realize this vision, further work is needed on long-term financing strategies and the activation of ground-floor spaces with public functions. The plan is good on walkability, but the current village sprawl and car-dependence—especially in steep terrain—pose challenges. Sidewalks along Roalinna and Hadelandsveien are essential, and the new street must balance social life, commerce, parking, goods delivery, and snow storage. Further development of the plan could be a master plan or a street plan, where there is a good balance between sidewalks, street, parking, and goods delivery, so that Roa can flourish again as a pleasant station town in Hadeland.

In summary, the proposal offers a flexible and robust strategy with a clear vision for Roa's identity and scale. It presents a strong urban concept with rich storytelling and placemaking, and has the potential to transform Roa into a vibrant and people-centered station town. With further development—particularly in housing, traffic solutions, and street design—the project could successfully support a compact, walkable village structure that encourages community life and sustainable growth.

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Runner-Up

KY808 - Living Roa - Collective identities

This proposal presents a clear extension of Roalinna up to Frøystad, integrating key public institutions such as a library, skatepark, and other sports attractions. The east-west axis along the Vigga river and the park structure, including the riverside promenade along Hadelandsveien, is well illustrated in the site plan. The public street is marked in red, emphasizing its role in the urban structure. However, the plan would benefit from a more detailed discussion on the relationship between sidewalks, carriageways, parking, and goods delivery to ensure the space functions well throughout the day and across seasons.

The concept is nature-based, accessible, and strategically rooted in existing identity. It marks an important first step in connecting Roa's municipal functions and demonstrates a strong analysis of the village. The proposal strengthens existing qualities along the river and connects key elements of the urban fabric. The housing is well scaled and appropriately dense, with convincing neighborhood qualities and a strong relationship to context. It supports diverse living arrangements and includes places for social interaction. The subdivision of plots and scalability of the plan are thoughtfully considered, and the illustrated fragments convey the project's spatial qualities.



Despite its strengths, the main square feels oversized and under-programmed, and the lack of a clear and readable enclosing edge diminishes its spatial character. The round building appears too modest and disconnected from its surroundings, and the orientation of outdoor restaurants is unclear. The architectural identity is generic and lacks the centrality needed to create a strong village core. Public spaces feel dispersed and do not fully achieve the desired human scale, making the overall urban design appear somewhat diluted.

In summary, this is a thorough and realistic proposal with strong housing solutions and a holistic understanding of Roa. It addresses many aspects of village life. However, the project would benefit from a clearer urban design, stronger spatial concentration, and a more distinctive identity.

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