



City of Helsinki
City Planning Department

Keski-Pasila

Central Pasila





Images on this spread, unless otherwise stated: © Cino Zucchi Architetti



Keski-Pasila

Aim

The building project in Keski-Pasila is intended to improve the competitiveness of Helsinki and its metropolitan environs by creating a new centre with a fresh identity. All of Pasila will become a functioning entity with Keski-Pasila as its local centre.

Keski-Pasila will be developed as an urban area with workplaces, services, and housing that will be compact, well functioning and cosy. Within the traffic arrangements strong emphasis will be given to public transport. Rail traffic is the main feature of the central area, and the development of Pasila station will guarantee an opportunity to increase the traffic of rail passengers.

The Keski-Pasila project will create a new urban centre that will fill the existing railway yard and unite those areas that it currently cuts off from one another. Keski-Pasila will become part of the increasingly close-knit urban structure which also includes building in the Pasilan konepaja engineering yard and Pohjois-Pasila (North Pasila).

In the area enclosed by the fronts of office buildings in Itä-Pasila to the east and Länsi-Pasila to the west, as much housing as possible will be built to create a lively urban environment.

Current situation

Keski-Pasila is located some three and a half kilometres north of central Helsinki. It is a valley-like area between the two existing districts, Länsi-Pasila to the west and Itä-Pasila to the east. Keski-Pasila currently consists of a sizeable rail and traffic area, the outer fringes of which have long and fine views of Helsinki city centre and across the railway area from one district to the other.

Currently, the area is dominated by functioning railways. To the east in Itä-Pasila, Pasila station provides a stop for all trains going to or from Helsinki's main railway station. From Pasila station the tracks divide

into the Pääräta or Main Line going north and the Rannikkorata or Coast Line going west. To the west of the station platforms a railway yard, the so-called lower yard, occupies some 12 hectares. Among other activities this area is used as part of the marshalling yard for trains going to and from the ports at Jätkäsari and Sompasaari.

The engine sheds, the Toralinna building, the wooden housing, and the signal-box are all historically valuable buildings that make up an important complex of building and railway history that contributes a rich sense of historical layers to the area.

Letter of Intent

As a result of planned changes to the railway functions, an area comprising some 18.3 hectares will become available for other uses in Keski-Pasila. The State of Finland owns approximately 84 per cent of the area, with the City of Helsinki owning the remaining 16 per cent. A Letter of Intent has been drawn up between the State and the City regarding principles for land use in Keski-Pasila.

The agreement states that the City will have a detailed plan drawn up and will change the existing detailed plan so that within

Keski-Pasila in numbers

area	59 ha
housing	80,000–120,000 floor m ²
offices	285,000–360,000 floor m ²
inhabitants	2,000–3,000
jobs	10,000–15,000
years of construction	2010–2040

Image: © Helsingin kaupunkisuunnitteluvirasto. Aerial photo: © Kaupunkimittausosasto, Helsinki

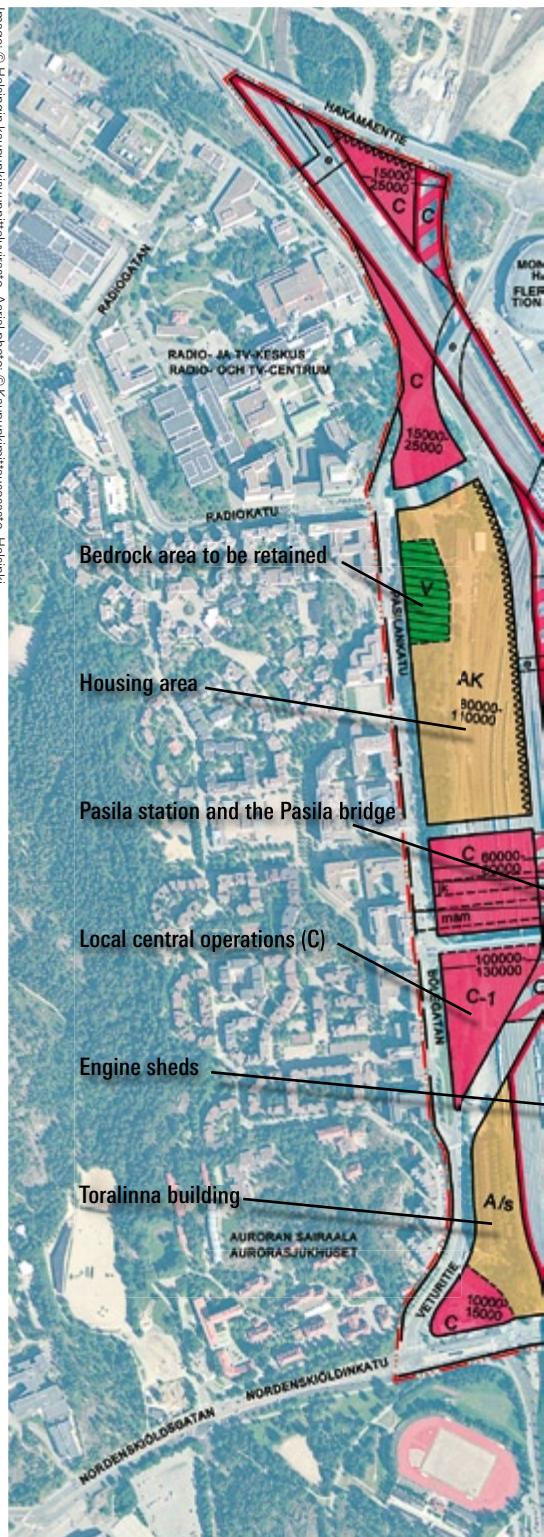




Image: © Arkkitehtitoimisto Tuomo Siitonen Oy



The local master plan for Keski-Pasila inserted in an aerial photo of the area

the area covered by the agreement land is allocated for blocks of housing, business premises, offices, and public buildings with inherent public spaces.

Ground planning for the area will give it a block structure where as much building as possible is to be ground-based. The aim is to provide a framework level land-use plan for the entire area covered by the Letter of Intent and to ensure that there is a current detailed plan for that part of the area which will later be selected to be where building will commence, and the moving of goods traffic to other areas will begin.

Outline plans

Two outline plans have been commissioned to form the basis of the local plan for Keski-Pasila. In their plan, Cino Zucchi Architetti of Milan have focused on the area around the Pasila bridge and Pasila station. Whereas, the plan drawn up by the architects Tuomo Siitonen Oy of Helsinki focuses on the area along Pasilankatu street.

Local master plan

The local master plan covers an area of 59.3 hectares. New buildings will provide some 345,000–480,000 square metres of floor area, of which a minimum of 250,000 square metres will be within the area covered by the Letter of Intent. This will provide space for some 2,000–3,000 inhabitants and around 10,000 jobs.

As some of the rail traffic functions get relocated, land will become available in Keski-Pasila. However, a significant part of the area will remain in railway use in the future.

In the local master plan Keski-Pasila is divided into areas for a centre, housing, recreation and traffic. As much as possible, buildings will be based at ground level. Local central functions will be within the vicinity of the Pasila bridge and in northern parts of the district. Pasilankatu street will form the boundary of the new housing area on the Länsi-Pasila side to the west. A central

bedrock area within the housing area will be retained for recreation purposes.

Local central amenities, particularly office space, services and cultural premises, will be built in the vicinity of Pasila station and other areas where noise and exhaust pollution make them unsuitable for housing.

The main visual feature of the area will be the zone of high office buildings to be built south of the Pasila bridge. The operational centre of Keski-Pasila will be in the area north of the bridge, where various functions and routes converge on the central square of the area. The section north of the Pasila bridge will be developed to provide a range of services and cultural outlets. The bridge will be restructured to make it more street-like and to improve the connection between Itä-Pasila and Länsi-Pasila.

For the local master plan for Keski-Pasila, a number of reports have been prepared regarding the urban structure and townscape, social factors, and nature. Furthermore, several technical studies have been done on the organisation of traffic in the area, particularly rail traffic; the possibilities of building; soil contamination; noise from both road and rail traffic; vibrations caused by rail traffic; and wind conditions.

The local master plan comprises a local plan map, a report, and an impact assessment study. The local master plan is a local plan with legal consequences. The City Council approved the local master plan for Keski-Pasila on 14 June 2006.

Future planning and realisation of plans

The local master plan is the basis for planning development. The master plan is prepared area by area. Planning and design competitions will be arranged for local areas and buildings. The building work in Keski-Pasila will not commence until operations in the lower railway yard have moved to the new Vuosaari harbour. If all goes to plan, operations in Vuosaari harbour will begin in 2008. Most of the building in Keski-Pasila will take place between 2010 and 2040.

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