

# UC Berkeley

## Places

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Graduated Structure

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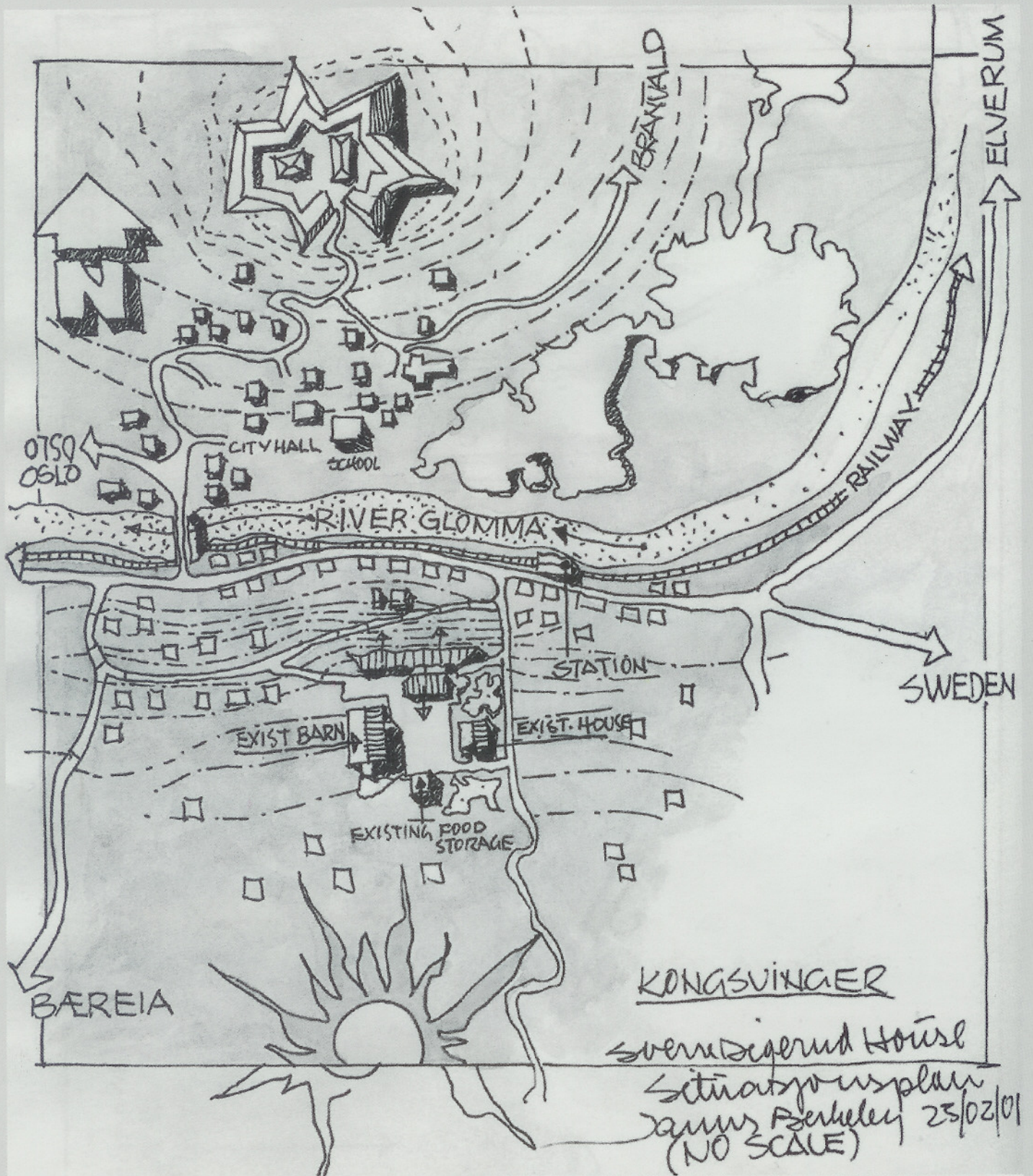
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## 2. Graduated Structure





Establishing a graduated structure of spaces and forms is central to making places within which we can comfortably dwell.

It helps to know where you are within an ordering scheme. This doesn't mean always being inside or at the center; sometimes we may like most being at the margins, where choice is at hand. What matters is having various places to use and being able to hold their relationships in mind. A hierarchy of sizes can help the mind to sort through these opportunities, supporting both the concentration involved in dwelling and the confidence that nurtures exploration and improvisation.

Jan Digerud's diagrams show clearly how intimate details of dwelling can be embedded within an understanding of the larger place and climate. The complex by Barton Phelps offers many lessons in the skillful use of hierarchy. Differing clusters of rooms are organized around a large central court, itself defining a niche in the larger landscape. The pattern, here cast as a very large house, is an enduring and highly serviceable one that could as readily serve as the armature for a satisfying school, institution or conference center.

To fully support dwelling, the graduated structure must extend to the scale of personal involvement. Thus the small and immediate are also of great importance in the hierarchy of place. This is illustrated in the suggestively articulated window niche designed by Rob Quigley for a shelter in Las Vegas. It would create a framed place within the larger structure where people of extremely limited means could locate a few possessions or treasures, and with dignity claim the space as their own. A vigorously formed lobby space creates a middle level between the intimacy of the room and the large articulated structure of the whole.

To set daily actions in a larger landscape frame Buzz Yudell maps the choreography of bodily movement through two houses, referencing the iconic polarity of the hills and the sea.