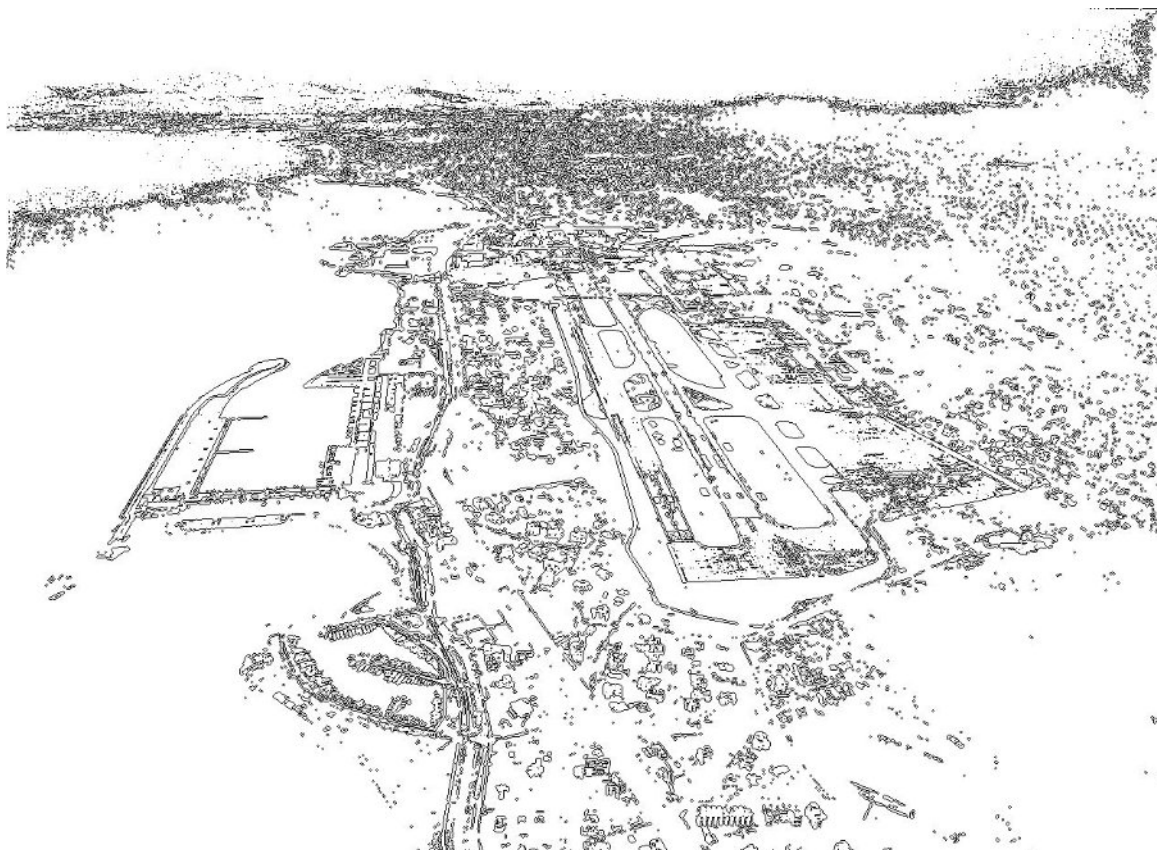


CITY OF HELLINIKON - ARGYROUPOLI

# HELLINIKON: DEVELOPMENT FOR WHOM?

Brochure



Symposium

## FORMER AIRPORT OF HELLINIKON & AGHIOS KOSMAS WATERFRONT THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF A METROPOLITAN PARK FOR ATHENS

### Organizers

City of Alimos  
City of Glyfada  
City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli  
National Technical University of Athens  
Technical Chamber of Greece  
Committee for the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon

April 20, 2013  
Hellinikon Olympic Indoor Arena, Basketball Court

Contact info: Tel.: +30-2132018726 E-mail: [press@elliniko.gr](mailto:press@elliniko.gr)

Symposium videos and proceedings (in Greek & English) are publicly available at: <http://www.elliniko-argyroupoli.gr/article.php?id=2310>

URL: [www.elliniko-argyroupoli.gr](http://www.elliniko-argyroupoli.gr)

## What are the plans of the Greek government for Hellinikon?

The plans of the Greek government for the site of Hellinikon, currently promoted as the most valuable real estate asset in Europe, aim at privatizing the area, creating a new luxurious city, and bringing extraordinary profits to investors. They demonstrate no concern for the needs of the residents of the Attica region. Specifically, the government provisions for the 620-Ha site of the former airport of Hellinikon and the waterfront of Aghios Kosmas include:

- **3,700,000m<sup>2</sup> of new construction**, which is 60 times the floor area of “The Mall Athens”, the largest mall in the region.
- **Demolition of more than 360,000m<sup>2</sup> of buildings in the site**, which are either currently used or can be reused in the future, several of which with significant architectural and historic value, and others constructed at significantly high costs to the state to host the 2004 Olympics.
- **A wide range of land uses**, including hotels, golf courses, shopping malls, marinas, theme parks, casinos and night clubs, offices, private hospitals, private universities, as well as thousands of luxurious residences.
- **Construction of expansions and artificial islands off the coast**, as well as **blockade of the free access to the coast**.
- **Construction of large-scale infrastructure projects**, such as urban highways, electrical power stations and other utility infrastructure to serve the area, further aggravating already negative environmental conditions across the region.
- **Shutdown of the National Sport Centre of Aghios Kosmas**, the largest training centre for professional and amateur athletes in the country.
- **Eviction of a large number of organizations and institutions**, currently located in facilities within the site, such as services of our City, the Hellenic National Meteorological Service, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, the Athens Urban Transport Organization depot, cultural associations, social welfare institutions, and organizations supporting people with disabilities.

These plans employ the arguments that privatizing and developing the site of Hellinikon “will bring money to the country,” “will contribute to economic development,” and “will create thousands of new jobs.” However, the fact is that the area is up for sale for an unacceptably low price by any measure, any resulting privatization proceeds will be used to pay just a few monthly installments of the Greek state debt, while the Greek state will cover the huge cost of the construction of urban highways and utilities infrastructure well beyond the area, as well as the high costs of relocating the existing uses, both of which are preconditions for the real-estate development of the site. Regarding the arguments of the Greek government about job creation at Hellinikon, various projections based on no documentation or business plan are being presented. In any case, the jobs that will be created if the proposed development is implemented, are expected to be flexible and precarious ones, without labor rights and with unacceptably low wages based on exceptions and privileges granted to investors, while many jobs are expected to be lost in the local and regional market of Athens by small and medium-sized enterprises due to increased competition.



Figure 1. Rendering on potential future development of the site of Hellinikon. Source: HELLINIKON S.A. (2012).

## What is the proposal of the City of Hellinikon – Argyroupoli for Hellinikon?

The City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli is against any privatization and fire sale of the site of Helliniko. It demands the creation of a public metropolitan park, a green park with low-intensity recreational, cultural, research and other necessary social uses, based on the research project and proposed plan by the National Technical University of Athens Urban Environment Laboratory. This plan centers on the social needs of the residents of Attica Region and the protection of environment. Further, it is a low-cost proposal which could be partly financed by the revenues of the park, while at the same time, the jobs that it creates are jobs with full labor rights and decent wages.



Figures 2-4. Re-appropriating the free public beach of Hellinikon (2007). The creation of the Hellinikon olive grove (2012). Festival of Resistance and Creativity for the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon (2011). Source: City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli.

## What initiatives has the City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli undertaken for the creation of the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon?

Over the past decade, the current City administration has undertaken, has coordinated and has participated in a number of local and broader regional initiatives, along with/in collaboration with educational and professional institutions, unions, environmental, social, political, cultural and sport organizations and urban social movements towards the creation of the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon.

Recent activities include tree-planting initiatives, sport events, music festivals, art exhibitions, film screenings, academic conferences and public discussions. Since the re-appropriation of the beach of Aghios Kosmas, our City manages and operates it, maintaining it as one of the few public and free beaches in Athens.

In collaboration with Alimos and Glyfada, the two other Cities that include the former airport and the Aghios Kosmas waterfront in their administrative boundaries, as well as the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica representing the local authorities of the region, we commissioned the National Technical University of Athens Urban Environment Laboratory to conduct a research project on the documentation of existing conditions in the area and the region, as well as the necessity, feasibility, planning and design principles, and strategy for the creation of the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon.

The City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli has been in close cooperation with the Cities of Alimos and Glyfada, with the state agencies and organizations that use facilities within area of the former airport and the coast, with local collectives and initiatives, as well as with a number of political, social, labor, environmental, cultural, sport, scientific and academic institutions and organizations operating on a regional and national basis.

## **BASIC PLANNING & DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR THE CREATION OF THE METROPOLITAN GREEN PARK AT THE FORMER HELLINIKON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT OF ATHENS**

**National Technical University of Athens - Urban Environment Laboratory**

### **Objectives**

- Upgrade and extension of the network of open public spaces and green spaces across the Greater Athens Area.
- Creation of a unified and public green open space, with metropolitan cultural and recreational facilities, and other social uses accessible to all the inhabitants and visitors of Athens, by maintaining and reusing 75% of the extensive building stock of the area.
- Connection between Imittos Mountain and the waterfront as an indispensable ecological unit for the regional ecosystem and the regional climate.
- Protection of antiquities, monuments, and buildings of special architectural or historical importance.



Figure 5. Master Plan.  
Source: NTUA Urban Environment Laboratory (2010).

### **Basic planning and design directions**

#### **A. Existing and proposed land uses**

- Ecological Coastline Park, Hellenic Centre for Marine Research and aquarium of Mediterranean species.
- Open metropolitan sports and recreation pole.
- Archeological Museum of the Saronic Gulf and archeological laboratories.
- Museum of Civil and Military Aviation.
- Conference and exhibition center of the East Airport Terminal.
- Social services and cultural uses.
- Transport infrastructure (e.g., tram, metro and bus depot).

#### **B. Mobility**

- Demolition of the 40 km of internal fences that fragment the area.
- Free access to the beach.
- Creation of walking and cycling network connecting paths, focal points, and transit.
- Extension of the tram network inside the park and connection with the metro network.

#### **C. Green**

- Protection and regeneration of existing green spaces.
- Extensive programmes of tree-planting with species of the Mediterranean flora.
- Regeneration of the natural coastline and streams.

A summary of findings and overview of the proposed plan (in English & Greek), the full 300-page report (in Greek) including maps, plans, graphs, documentation and the full list of references are publicly available at: <http://courses.arch.ntua.gr/elliniko.html>