

LINE OFF SITE

ACTIVE BRIEF:

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS OBSERVATORY



CLOSING DATE:

04/07/08



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Northern Lights Observatory Brief

Throughout history the Aurora Borealis – commonly known as the Northern Lights - has fascinated all those who have witnessed it. Scholars, scientists and astronomers have become totally absorbed with what is undoubtedly one of nature's most spectacular and beautiful phenomenon.

The Aurora can be enjoyed and studied without the need for specialist scientific instruments; however, the location from where it can best be viewed is critical. Longyearbyen, Svalbard is perhaps one of the most stimulating venues from which to view the Lights. It is remote, small, sparsely populated, cold and spectacular and it is here that we have chosen to locate what is to be the unique Northern Lights Observatory.

Building description:

A lodge with an Aurora observatory as its raison d'être. It is to be the 'home' for Arctic travellers wishing to take time to observe the amazing luminous display of the Aurora. Currently the best viewing environment for the Aurora is outside in the frigid chill of a sub-arctic night. Unquestionably the cold enhances the experience, however, it can also be considered a constraint. The building should have an unobstructed 360° view from inside and/or outside.

Longyearbyen offers a wide variety of activities including hiking, dog-sledding, kayaking and snowmobile safaris and the observatory will need to cater for these activities of the guests.

Location:

Longyearbyen, Svalbard is located on an island north of Norway and north of the Arctic Circle. It is directly below the auroral oval and experiences regular northern lights displays on almost every dark night whilst also benefiting from daytime Auroras.

Grid reference: 78°13'20.33"N, 15°38'50.07"E

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Building Feel:

Viewing the Aurora Borealis is said to leave you with a very spiritual feeling and a profound sense of amazement. The building should be designed to enhance, but not detract from, this experience.

The building is intended to be home to guests for 1 week to 10 days and should offer the 'appropriate' levels of comfort to guests who will be there to experience Arctic nature at its rawest and most powerful.

The observatory will need to cater for the needs of visitors who will be enjoying the various leisure pursuits (see Building purpose) whilst also creating an appropriate environment for those who have only travelled to see the Aurora.

The Environment

The islands have a fascinating geology, geography and ecology. Glaciers and mountains form the panoramic backdrop, whilst polar bears, reindeers, polar foxes, seals and walrus, as well as many species of arctic birds, provide a rich ecological landscape. In mild parts of the island, large areas of tundra vegetation are punctuated by delicate flowers for the short period when the heavy snow covering disappears.

The Population:

Approximately 2000

The Economy:

Coal mining is the major economic activity on the island of Svalbard however only Norwegian and Russian companies are still mining there.

Approximately 60% of Norwegian employment on the island is through the Norwegian state-owned coal company however there are also some people still employed in traditional trapping of seal, polar bear, fox, and walrus.

Although Svalbard is not teeming with tourists, the last decade has seen a substantial increase in tourism. This now provides a vital source of income for the Longyearbyen settlement.

Area Available for Build:

There is no absolute directive although the observatory will need to sleep and to cater for a maximum of 30 people.

Ground Conditions:

A 'shaley' stone ground condition with a brownish green moss vegetation (no trees on the Island)

Planning for the Future:

The observatory may need to expand in the next 10 years to cater for 80 visitors whilst also becoming a base for expeditions to the North Pole.

Cultural Issues

Respect the environment and ecology.

Links:

<http://www.auroraexperience.com/>

<http://www.nightskyhunter.com/index.html>

<http://www.svalbard.com/webcam/>



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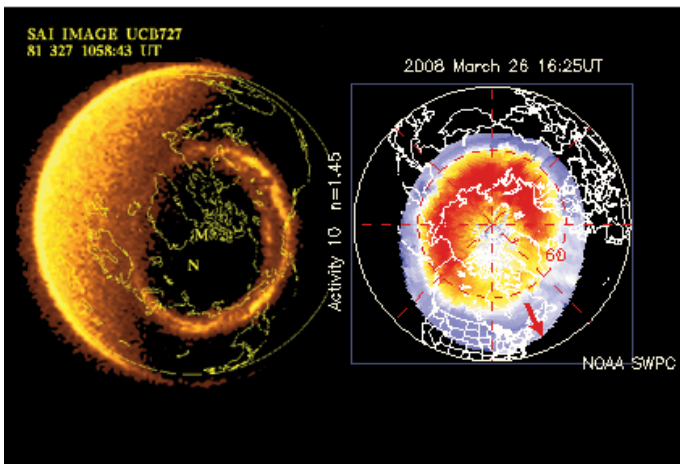
1. Aurora Borealis photograph



2. Aurora Borealis photograph



3. Satellite images showing the Aurora Oval



4. Housing in Svalbard



5. Ground conditions in Svalbard



6. Observatory example : Slovakia



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Judging Criteria

In addition to the elements detailed in the brief this brief will be judged against;

1. The visual appearance
2. The quality & accessibility of the Indoor viewing experience
3. Buildability

NB. These are not the exclusive criteria against which submissions will be judged.

Timetable: **Must arrive by 04/07/2008**

Rules - Line of Site competition

- 1 To enter the competition, you must have successfully completed the competition registration form. This only needs to be completed once, even if submitting an entry for more than one brief.
- 2 There is no restriction to the number of entries a competitor can submit for each brief, however each entry must have a unique email address.
- 3 Registrations will only be confirmed with the inclusion of a valid, operating email address for the applicant.
- 4 The competition is free to enter and open to anyone aged 18 years and over as of 06 June 2008.
- 5 Relevant entries must be submitted (and have been received) within the time schedule for each brief.
- 6 All entries must be original work created by the registered competitor.
- 7 To be judged, all submitted entries must be accompanied by registered competitors name and contact details.
- 8 All competition entries, be they hand drawn sketches or digital images, will only be accepted if submitted in the specified formats (see 'Enter Your Sketch').
- 9 All winners will be notified by email.
- 10 The judges' decision, in regard to all elements of the competition, is final.

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Enter your Sketch - Line of Site Competition

Upload your entry to our servers

Log on to the website and choose 'upload' from the main menu, follow the on-screen instructions.

You can submit your entry as a free-hand drawing or as a digital image, judging criteria does not favour one approach over the other. You can use any media you like to create your sketch we just ask to ensure you end up with ONE Jpeg image of around A4 (297 x 210mm landscape, 300dpi approx 4MB) size, and any hand drawn entries should be scanned to this size. You can enter hand-drawn sketches through the post if you do not have the facility to scan your image - See below

Postal entries

Just remember to include your name, address, and registration email address with your sketch, preferably written on the reverse. Also any supporting text should be included with the sketch.

Line of Site Competition

The Studios

Mansell Road

Wellington

Shropshire

TF1 1QQ



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Extra downloads

SketchUp and Google Earth

To enable you to use these powerful creative tools you will need to download both SketchUp and Google Earth and in order to get the very best results and to submit the most visually appealing work we recommend that you follow some of these tips;

- When using Google Earth be sure to have the terrains option ticked, this will allow you to view the terrain on which you will build in its most realistic view. Once you have that ticked use the rotate, zoom and tilt controls to view the site and its surrounding area.
- Before you export your selected view make sure that you have tilted the Google Earth view so that you are looking at the site from a "top down" perspective. This will ensure that you take the truest view of your site into SketchUp.
- Before you start creating your SketchUp model on top of your chosen Google Earth view or before you place your completed SketchUp model onto your Google Earth view make sure that you have the "terrains" turned on in SketchUp. This will allow you to place your model on the ground and not beneath it, so that when you send your completed model back to Google Earth that it is not vertically land locked.

Download SketchUp

Download the free version or pro version of SketchUp to create your Sketch at www.sketchup.com

Download Google Earth

Make sure that you have the latest release of Google Earth, download it from <http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html>

