# ANALYSIS OF THE SUITABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN REGARDS TO THE LANDSCAPE UNITS OF LANDS DESIGNATED FOR HOUSING IN THE LOCAL PLAN OF THE RURAL COMMUNE OF PRUSZCZ GDAŃSKI

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**Summary.** The paper presents the analysis of the environmental regulations set out in the local spatial development plan of the commune of Pruszcz Gdański in regard to the landscape units. Investigation of the chosen regulations set out in the local plan of the commune of Pruszcz Gdański was conducted to identify whether these decisions are used for good management of the local space or are inadequate to the environmental values. Lack of recognition of the whole natural system of this suburb and its environment, may contribute to the progressive degradation of the landscape system.

Key words: landscape units, local spatial development plan

# INTRODUCTION

It is often noticed that urban areas are reaching into the terrains unfit for them. This especially affects communes located near or in the direct vicinity of agglomerations. Areas used for cultivation, that were an open landscape, are designed for investment. Growing investments become overly dispersed, leading not only to high economical and social costs, but also to adverse and irreparable changes to structure of natural environment and the processes in it. Economic and ownership transformations, lifestyle changes of inhabitants and fluctuation of the authorities in communes are only a few main reasons for a growing number of granted permissions for development on areas without binding local plans. According to article 14, act 1 from 27.03.2003 about planning and spatial development to establish designation of the land and means of its development, commune council accepts a resolution to begin creation of local spatial development plan. This plan is an act of local law and is a basic mean of managing areas of local level, both natural and anthropogenic, which makes execution of its premises

vitally influencing the landscape. According to article 15, act 2, item 3 of mentioned act in local plan obligatory things like: rules of environment, wildlife and cultural landscape protection, are determined.

Main objective of every local plan is designation of the lands and defining the ways of their development. Szulczewska [2008] points out that "the goal of spatial planning is to transform spatial structure of areas according to social and economical needs, while preserving maximum of the existing natural values, conditions and resources. Starting point of describing reasons and means of essential transformations is to adequately describe and assess existing spatial (landscape) structure". Description and assessment of spatial structure should take place before setting about planning work, when ecophysiographical study is conducted for a local plans. Conclusions and recommendations included in ecophysiographical studies should be the basis for formulating local legal regulations, so that its elements would protect environmental systems to the maximum.

According to article 5 of the Resolution No. XXXII/178/2005 for highland area (and respectively Resolution No. XXXII/190/2005 for lowland area) first goal of the plan is creation of a legal framework, that will allow harmonious spatial development of highland area of the commune (and respectively lowland area), considering its uniqueness and following tenets of sustainable development. According to article 6 of both Resolutions, plan's objective among other things is to determine the rules of developing and protecting natural, as well as cultural, environment and landscape.

The goal of this research is to discover if in a local plan of the rural commune of Pruszcz Gdański designation of the lands for housing was determined with a consideration of landscape units.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Landscape in this study, in a material sense, is defined as a spatial unit composed of geocomplexes. Their division and spatial placement determines the degree of landscape diversity and means of its functioning [Richling and Lechnio 2005]. Landscape system is defined as a grouping of biotic and abiotic components of a landscape (land relief, lithology, soils, waters, climate, plants and animals, humans and effects of their activity), that shows high level of complexity [Malinowska *et al.* 2004]. Geocomplex is defined as relatively closed fragment of an environment, that is a system of properly connected (according to the laws of nature) components. It is a whole, thanks to the ongoing processes and correlation of the components [Richling and Lechnio 2005]. Landscape unit and environment unit are identified with geocomplex [see Szulczewska 2008, p. 76]. Geocomplexes were determined by aggregation (overlapping of borders) of such partial geocomplexes as:

 morphohydrotops – smallest homogeneous environmental units in respect of relief and waters' ratio,

- lithotops smallest homogeneous environmental units in respect of surface formations,
- pedotops smallest homogeneous environmental units in respect of physical and chemical properties of soils.

## DELIMITATION AND CHARACTERISTIC OF A RESEARCH AREA

Analysis of rural and urban-rural communes surrounding functional agglomeration of the Tri-City (aggregation of three neighbouring cities - Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia) was performed to choose an object of research. Communes surrounding this agglomeration are subject of increased suburbanization. The rural commune of Pruszcz Gdański was selected due to highest amount of area covered in year 2009 with binding local plans (86.52%) and projects of local plans (13.22%). In other considered communes those indicators were: the commune of Kolbudy – 29.76% and 7.35%, the urban-rural commune of Żukowo – 16.61% and 6.71%, the commune of Szemud - 24.50% and 0.16%, the rural commune of Wejherowo – 10.67% and 4.67%, the commune of Kosakowo – 34.60% and 1.20%. It should be noted that situation where almost entire area of commune is covered with binding local plans is a desirable situation, yet extremely rare. Because less than a quarter of a country is covered with local spatial development plans, permissions for development had become main planning tool. It is a chaotic and uncontrolled form of spatial development, leading to the degradation of the landscape. It should be noted that binding local plan does not guarantee improvement of landscape condition, because factors outside of spatial development influence its quality, for example economical situation, respect of cultural and natural values, education or even good manners of citizens [see Kopeć 2011, p. 136-1371.

Rural commune of Pruszcz Gdański borders city Gdańsk from north, from west with commune of Kolbudy Górne, from south with the communes of Trąbki Wielkie and Pszczółki, and from east with the communes of Suchy Dąb and Cedry Wielkie (Fig. 1). The urban commune of Pruszcz Gdański is in a way an enclave in a middle part of a rural commune.

Herein analysed commune is located on a borders of two macroregions: Pojezierze Kaszubskie (Kashubian Lake District) and Żuławy Wiślane [Kondracki 1994]. Environmentally differentiated west part of the commune, lying in Pojezierze Kaszubskie, is composed mainly of boulder clay with postglacial gravel and sand. Height differences reach 135 m, with highest elevation 150 m AMSL in south-western corner of the commune. From there terrain lowers toward north-east and east, to valleys of Radunia and Kłodawa and other lesser watercourses, that often cut the edge of the upland. In this highest part of commune also lies the greatest forest complex (planned as the Skarszewy Protected Landscape Area), but compared to the surrounding lakeland areas the rest of the commune is scarcely

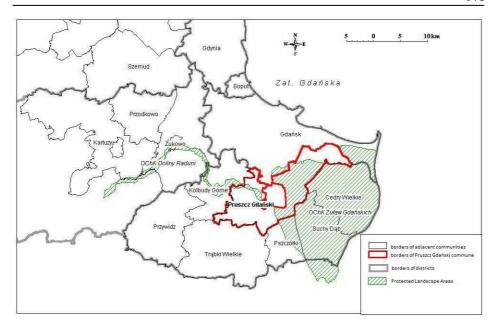


Fig. 1. Location of the rural commune of Pruszcz Gdański in respect of administrative units and protected areas

forested. The largest reservoir is Lake Straszyn (surface area 0.7 km<sup>2</sup>) on main river of the commune – the Radunia River. There is a large number of endorheic areas with related wetlands in the upland part of the commune, which is a typical characteristic of lakelands. Eastern part of commune is a vast sand-clay alluvial plain, covered with organogenic formations. Depth of the first level of groundwater is from 0.5 to 1 m BMSL. Unique hydrographic characteristic of the Zuławy is double type of drainage: gravitational and polder. Because of the artificially (anthropogenic) developed landscape there are none determined watersheds in this topographical area, and a whole delta can be treated as a distinct geosystem. But like it was emphasized, it is mainly directed by a man. Whole region of the Żuławy is a part of the Żuławy Gdańskie Protected Landscape Area. Protected Area of Żuławy Gdańskie, as well as located in western part Protected Area of Radunia Valley were excluded from further analysis, because of low levels of protection which means small restrictions for investment. Alluvial cone of Radunia River, gently descending eastwards towards the central point of commune, is another distinct environmental unit. Area of the commune shows two different types of environment: moranic plateau on the west and delta plains on the east. Edge zone of the upland runs from north to the south through the central part of the commune, factoring changes in the area development. Parallel to this natural environmental border runs a main transport axis (roads and trains) from the Tri-City to the southern Poland.

In the area of rural commune of the Pruszcz Gdański local plan of spatial development is in force according to Resolution No. XXXII/178/2005 of the

Commune Council of Pruszcz Gdański from 10.08.2005, concerning the local plan of spatial development of the commune of Pruszcz Gdański – lowland area A. Local plan was passed based on article 26 of null and void resolution from 07.07.1994 about spatial development, with consideration of the article 85 sec. 2 of resolution from 27.03.2003 concerning planning and spatial development. According to it current regulations apply to all local plans of spatial development, that passed a resolution to create or change plans and have had announced date of releasing these plans for public, but proceedings were not concluded before the day resolution was in effect.

#### RESEARCH METHOD

Research was conducted in following stages:

Stage 1. Selecting areas designated for housing from spatial development plan of the commune of Pruszcz Gdański (mixed development from agricultural settlements, single-family development, extensive development, multi-occupied development, mixed development (single-family and multi-occupied) and residential and commercial development).

Stage 2. Defining landscape units (geocomplexes) considering usefulness for buildings construction in the area of commune. This stage included:

a) defining of partial geocomplexes (morphohydrotops, pedotops and lithotops); morphohydrotops were defined according to topographical charts, scale 1: 25000, while any doubts in defining units were solved according to charts with more accurate scales; morphohydrotops integrate information about relief and related intensity of surface water circulation; lithotops were defined according to agricultural-soil charts with scale 1: 25 000, type of surface geological formations was taken into account according to the value of the safe stress coefficient for geological formations – the higher the coefficient k, the better formations are for development; safe stress of soil is a highest pressure exerted by a base of foundation on a ground level, that does not lead to distortion of the ground endangering building itself [Racinowski 1987]; pedotops were also defined according to agricultural-soil charts with scale 1: 25 000 and they include complexes of agricultural quality of soils as an indicator of the best suitability for development;

b) evaluation of defined morphohydrotops, pedotops and lithotops using method of point bonitation against suitability of a given unit for development, that assigned higher point value the better was characteristic suited for development; for morphohydrotops and pedotops three bonitation classes were defined, four for lithotops, because of the range of the safe stress coefficient k; evaluation criteria for suitability of areas for development that were taken into account are: relief and related transportation of matter i.a. gradient of the land, ways to supply and depletion of matter, intensity of surface washing and accumulation – including absorptive and evapotranspirational endorheic areas (Tab. 1);

- c) defining of geocomplexes by aggregating partial geocomplexes; code of geocomplex describes performed analysis, where first digit shows evaluation of morphohydrotop, second digit of pedotop, and the last one of lithotop, e.g. geocomplex with code 311 is an area with a very high suitability for development, taking into account relief and water ratio (3), but with bad lithological conditions i.e. with low value of stress coefficient (1), and inadvisable for development because of high agricultural productivity of soils (1).
- Stage 3. Overlaying the landscape units (geocomplexes) on areas designated for housing development and selecting geocomplexes least fitting for buildings' construction.
- Stage 4. Analysing decisions from local plan for areas created in stage 3 (i.e. areas designated for building construction overlapping least fitting geocomplexes) against restrictions in building on those areas.

#### **RESULTS**

In the first stage of the research areas designated for housing were selected from the local plan of the commune of Pruszcz Gdański. There are six kinds of areas, denoted with the following symbols:

- MR mixed development from agricultural settlements (farming, residential, commercial, tourist etc.),
  - MJ single-family development,
  - MJE extensive development,
  - MW multi-occupied development,
  - MM mixed development (single-family and multi-occupied),
  - MU residential and commercial development.

In the second stage of the research morphohydrotops, pedotops and lithotops were determined, and their bonitation was defined. Codes of the units created by overlaying borders of partial geocomplexes are describing usefulness of a given unit for development (Tab. 1).

The outcome of the third stage of the research is an indication of geocomplexes with the characteristics least suitable for development, by identifying spatial distribution of geocomplexes on the areas designed for housing. (Fig. 2, 3, 4, 5).

In the areas designed in plan for housing, 327 units exists with at least one characteristic unfavourable for development. Of them 139 have at least two unfavourable characteristics and those are geocomplexes with codes 113, 131, 211 and 311. Synthetic description of each geocomplexes is as follows:

- 113 are the areas available for development considering types of surface geological formations, but inadvisable because of the intensity of erosive processes or possibility of flooding, as well as high agricultural productivity of soils,
- 131 are the areas available for development considering low agricultural productivity of soils, but unsuitable for development because of the intensity of

Table 1. The criteria of delimitation of partial geocomplexes

	Grouping and bonitation against suitability for development	areas best suiting for development, because of small height difference and low intensity of slope processes.		areas of lesser value for development, because of the need for technical solutions and the danger of sinking and flooding (Dw)	
Morphohydrotops	Code	A	Z	$T_1$	Dw
	Types of basic landscapes	Recharge areas (autonomic) – plateaus and elevations of the land with gradients no greater than 3°, in which matter is transported only by atmospheric circulation, while matter depletion occurs via catchment and surface washing, feeding low-lying areas.	Complex areas – transportation, deposition and feeding – lands with gradients no greater than 3°, in subordinated positions, where deposition of matter from higher areas and from atmosphere dominates, but also transportation of matter towards depositional areas occurs if the hydrometeorological conditions are favourable. For example: slopes' bottomset beds, the bottoms of the dry valleys, alluvial cones, or glacial lake plains.	Transit areas with low intensity of matter transportation – slopes with gradients of 3° to 8°, where inflow of matter occurs from atmosphere, recharge areas and more intense transportation. Surface washing and matter transportation to the low-lying areas dominates, but a small fraction of matter is accumulated.	Deposition areas partially closed – auto- and allochthonic deposition of matter dominates, as well as clear relation with neighbouring areas, best shown by groundwater circulation: valley's bottoms, deltas, flatlands of organogenic and marginal deposition, bottoms of accumulation troughs and absorptive endorheic basins.
	Description	Units integrating information about relief and related surface water circulation. Mapped according to topographical charts.	Lakes as the areas of aquate deposition (Da) and rives as the areas of linear transit (Tl) were not analysed further.:		

	Transit areas with high intensity of matter transportation – slopes with gradients of at least 8°, where matter comes from atmosphere and recharge areas. Matter transit and surface washing dominates: most commonly high regions of slopes and erosion cuts.	atter transportation – slopes with ter comes from atmosphere and urface washing dominates: most erosion cuts.	T2	areas unsuitable for development, because of the intensity of erosion processes (T <sub>2</sub> ) and possibility of
	Closed deposition areas – clear deposition of matter from higher areas and from atmosphere: bottoms of the evapotranspirational endorheic areas.	sition of matter from higher areas ne evapotranspirational endorheic	Dd	flooding (Dd)
		Pedotops		
Des	Description	Soil quality classes	Code	Grouping and bonitation, against suitability for development
Units mapped from agricultural-soil maps, containing compagricultural suitability of soils as an indicator for their best cu Symbols from the agricultural-soil charts are given in brackets. From further analysis following areas had been excluded previously build-up areas, surface waters and barren lands,	olexes of Iltivation. : forests, including	Very good wheat complex (1) Good wheat complex (2) Very good rye complex (4) Very good & good grasslands (1z)	1	Areas unsuitable for development, because of the high cultivation value.
ny drogenic barrens.		Flawed wheat complex (3) Good rye complex (5) Strong grain-fodder complex (8) Average grassland (2z)	2	Areas that can be developed, because of the mediocre cultivation value.
		Weak rye complex (6) Rye & rye-lupine complex (7) Weak grain-fodder complex (9) Arable lands designated for grassland (14) Weak & very weak grassland (3z)	$\boldsymbol{\omega}$	Areas suitable for development, because of their low cultivation value.

	Lithotops		
Description	Types of surface geological formations	opoO	Approximate value of the safe stress coefficient, kPa
Units mapped from agricultural-soil and geological charts, taking into account the safe stress coefficient for geological formations. The higher the coefficient, the better formations are for development.	Gravels & light sands (moraine and outwash), as well as loamy sands on gravels	4	k > 250
/Safe stress of soil is a highest pressure exerted by a base of foundation on a ground level, that does not lead to distortion of the ground Boulder clays, loamy sands, silty endangering building itself./	Boulder clays, loamy sands, silty sands	3	200 < k< 300
	River sands & eolian, silts, clays on sands or on glacial till	2	80 < k < 200
	Alluvial soils, clays, peats and gyttas	1	0 < k < 100

Source: Korwel-Lejkowska 2005

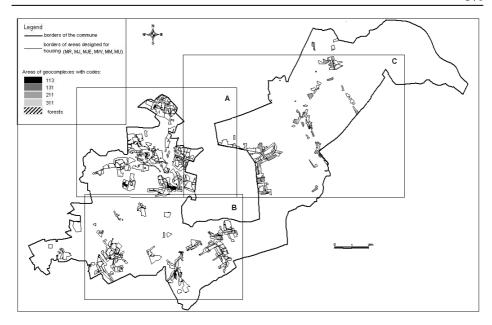


Fig. 2. Spatial distribution of geocomplexes most unfavourable for the land development over areas designated for housing functions on the background of the whole municipality divided into sections A, B and C

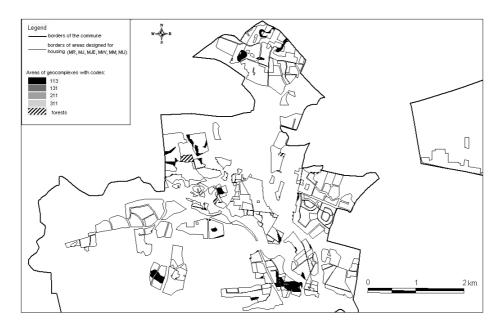


Fig. 3. Spatial distribution of geocomplexes most unfavourable for the land development in areas designated for housing functions – section  $\bf A$ 

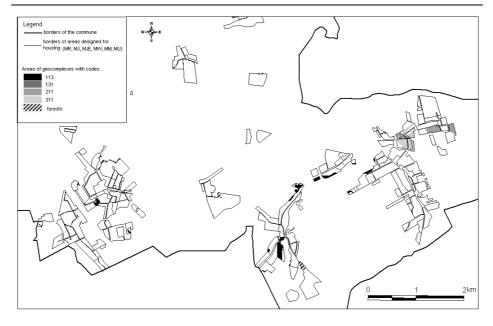


Fig. 4. Spatial distribution of geocomplexes most unfavourable for the land development in areas designated for housing functions – section B

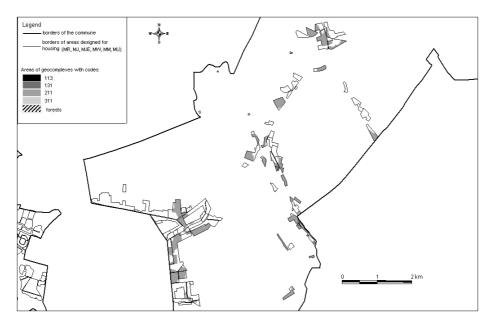


Fig. 5. Spatial distribution of geocomplexes most unfavourable for the land development in areas designated for housing functions – section  ${\bf C}$ 

erosive processes or possibility of flooding and the types of surface geological formations,

- 211 are the areas of lesser suitability for development, because of the need for technical works and a risk of sinking or flooding and the types of surface geological formations,
- 311 are the areas best suited for development, because of the small height differences and low intensity of slope processes, but inadvisable for development because of the types of surface geological formations and high agricultural productivity of soils.

66 units of type 211 exists in the borders of areas designed for housing in plan and they cover the greatest surface area compared to the other geocomplexes i.e. 1,39 km². Similar number exists (60) of units of type 113, with the total surface area of 0.47 km², as well as 12 units of type 311 with the total surface area of 0.12 km² and one unit of type 131 with the surface area of 0.00078 km². 17.87 km² of area was designated for housing in local spatial plan. Combined area of forests and lands with unfavourable characteristics for development (areas of units with codes 113, 131, 211 and 311 – i.e. with two unfavourable characteristics concerning development, based on analysed environmental elements) is over 2 km², which means that they cover almost 12% of the areas designated for housing (Chart 2).

Surface areas of units with codes 113,131,211 and 311 (i.e. based on analysis of elements of the landscape characterised by two unfavourable attributes regarding possibilities of development) along with forest areas takes almost 12% of all the area designed for housing in plans.

Table 2. Quantitative characterization of the geocomplexes most unfavourable for the land development

Type of geocomplex	Number of units	Surface area, km <sup>2</sup>	Percentage of the area of local plans
113	60	0.47	2.63
131	1	0.00078	0.01
211	66	1.39	7.78
311	12	0.12	0.67
Forests	37	0.104	0.58
Sum	176	2.08	11.67

Source: self-reported data.

Geocomplexes of type 211 are in most part fragments of terrains from plans of lowland commune, where development is planned on the areas of lithology

unsuitable for buildings and on very good soils, that should remain cultivated. Large parts of those terrains include existing and planned development of the villages Bystra, Dziewięć Włók, Mokry Dwór and Ledowo, along with places in the direct vicinity of the city Pruszcz Gdański (bounduary of Radunica and Rokitnica). Continuation of a dense development is especially unfavourable on areas not long ago cut by numerous drainage channels, with a lush waterside vegetation (reeds) and located below level of 0 m (parts of Radunica and Rokitnica). In those places free-standing single-family buildings are abut to terraced buildings. Developers are advertising those as houses in the city Pruszcz Gdański, while by law those areas belong to the rural commune. Geocomplexes of type 113 are the areas of unfavourable relief and lithology, but with weak quality soils, and as such good for development. Their small total surface area shows that these are small, most often designed for development as a continuation of existing investment, for example in Straszyn, Rotmanka and Juszkowo. In the valley of Kłodawa is an especially unfavourable situation, where further development of Żukczyn and Rusocin is planned on a small parcels, marked on a plan with symbols MJ and MR and located on slope with gradient over 7°. Investment there will probably start landmass movements on the slope. Construction on such steep slopes is planned also on terrains marked in plan with symbols MH, MJE and MU in the vicinity of Prędzieszyn. Geocomplexes with codes 113, 131 and forests present in the areas designated for development are exist only in highland part of the commune.

Analysis of local plans for areas where terrains designated for housing overlap the geocomplexes with the least suitable characteristics for development, shows that there is no entry restricting such activity. Meanwhile in plans of areas designated for housing, high minimal share of areas biologically active or designated for green, cultivation and recreation, was defined. And so plan states that for MJ terrains located in the highland part, size of biologically active areas cannot be lower than 50% of the surface area of the free-standing single-family construction parcel, 40% for semi-detached and 30% for terrace. For lowland part plan states that size of the areas of green, cultivation and recreation cannot be smaller than 70% of surface area of single-family construction parcel. For MJE terrains in the highland, plan sets minimum 70% of surface area of parcel for green and recreation. In lowland part there are no MJE terrains. For MU terrains located in the highland part, plan sets that the size of areas designated for plants, cultivation and recreation cannot be smaller than 30% of the surface area of residential and commercial development, while in the lowland part it is 50% respectively. However setting such a high level of minimum share of areas biologically active or designated for plants, does not guarantee that it won't be the geocomplexes least suitable for buildings to be left undeveloped. It would be much favourable situation, if areas of unsuitable characteristics became excluded from possibility of development on a plan's sketch, for example by correctly setting closed building line.

It should be noted, that in many places of the resolution, there is an obligation to create town planning project or town-architectonic project based on plan's decisions. And so in article 15, section 1 of both resolutions, plan states that "for all areas where division on parcels is made and necessity for plotting driveways exists, it is required to create a property development project or town planing project, that will serve as pre-project study that will be underlying for creation of geodetic documentation". In resolution for highland part involving MM terrains, article 67 section 2 states, that "proportions of single-family and multi-occupied developments depend only on town-architectonic project of comprehensively built housing estates". Town-architectonic project taking into account the selected environmental units, should indicate a possibility of excluding them from development.

Additionally in article 18, item 1 of both resolutions, plan states that "all project documentation has to include subject of the investment or modernization, along with analysis of the surroundings and environment". If created, analysis of the environmental surroundings, taking into account environmental units, should exclude them from development. Lack of regulations forbidding development on the areas of geocomplexes with unsuitable characteristics and occurring in terrains designed for housing, as well as investment pressure, will ensure that they will be entirely designed for development and building.

Herein was performed analysis of designation of lands for development, taking into account environmental units. It is one of the many environmental conditions that should be considered while setting local spatial plans of development. Because of their complexity other environmental issues i.e. ecological corridors, airing corridors and town-planning issues i.a. shaping and defining wide concept of spatial order, were not included in this analysis.

# **CONCLUSIONS**

The rural commune of Pruszcz Gdański has valid plan of spatial development, covering almost 90% of its region, which is beneficial as it limits uncontrolled spread of built-up area of suburban zone of the Tri-City agglomeration. On 12% of the terrain designed in local plan for housing there are geocomplexes of characteristics unsuitable for development. From the conducted analysis of the plan's regulations, it appears that no restrictions in development localization on the areas of such geocomplexes were issued. However plan sets high level of minimal share of the area biologically active or allocated for green, in the areas designed for housing. Plan also establishes a requirement of creating documentation (town planning project or town-architectonic project), which may help in protection of the most sensitive elements of the environment from the development.

Local law regulations for environmental protection are often inadequate to the value of the nature of this region. In many cases using them only for a small area, without the recognition of the whole environmental system of cities and surroundings, may contribute to its continuing degradation.

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The Act of 7 July 1994 on spatial planning.

# ANALIZA PRZYDATNOŚCI POD ZABUDOWĘ TERENÓW PRZEZNACZONYCH W PLANIE MIEJSCOWYM GMINY WIEJSKIEJ PRUSZCZ GDAŃSKI POD FUNKCJE MIESZKANIOWE W ODNIESIENIU DO JEDNOSTEK KRAJOBRAZOWYCH

**Streszczenie.** Artykuł prezentuje analizę wybranych zapisów dotyczących środowiska w miejscowym planie zagospodarowania przestrzennego gminy Pruszcz Gdański w odniesieniu do jednostek krajobrazowych. Postępowanie badawcze prowadzi do rozpoznania, czy zapisy te służą dobremu zarządzaniu przestrzenią, a w jakim stopniu są nieadekwatne do wartości środowiska. Brak odniesienia planowania przestrzennego do całego systemu przyrodniczego miejscowości i jej otoczenia może przyczynić się do postępującej degradacji całego systemu krajobrazowego.

Słowa kluczowe: jednostki krajobrazowe, miejscowy plan zagospodarowania przestrzennego

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