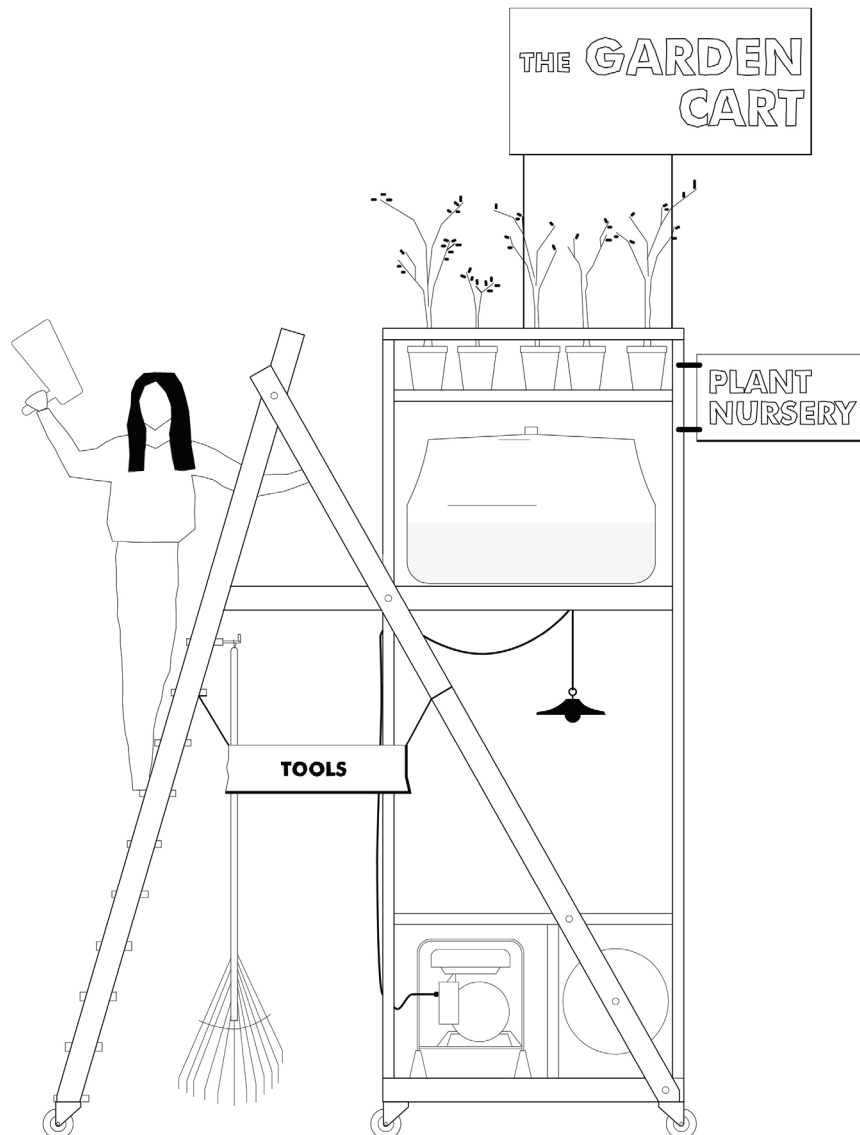


RENATURALIZATION FACTORY

participatory fabrication of nature



Julia Johansson

2025

Chalmers School of Architecture

Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering

Examiner: Joaquim Tarrasó

Supervisor: Louise Didriksson

A big thank you to Louise Didriksson and Joaquim
Tarrasó for appreciated feedback throughout the
process of making this Master Thesis



fig. 1. *Front Page Illustration – the Garden Cart*

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ABSTRACT

As a result of rapid urbanization certain challenges have increased such as environmental pressure and social exclusion. This calls for sustainable ways of dealing with continuous city expansion. Evenemangsområdet is at the center of discussions about how Gothenburg should expand but the municipality's proposal has been critiqued not least because of its exclusive process and its ignorance towards local ecological values.

The objective of this thesis is to explore possible futures for a site within Evenemangsområdet by speculating about how that site could become renaturalized through citizen engagement. The site is currently underused, both from a human and nonhuman perspective, meaning that it provides little value to either group.

The research is qualitative and partially speculative. Through a case study analysis, mapping of opportunities, and speculative design, the thesis focuses on social and ecological sustainability, and alternative tools for urban designers through the following themes: human and nonhuman actors, temporary activation, disruptive architecture, wilderness, renaturalization, speculation, scenario, prototyping, participation, and alternative mapping.

The site analysis focuses on social, cultural and ecological aspects and makes out the foundation for the speculative design proposal that follows. It focuses on the two local assets that frame the site: Stora Katrinelund landeri and Mölndalsån. The thesis results in a speculative design proposal of a temporary activation project – the Renaturalization Factory. With a common mission to renaturalize the site, people could mobilize around the Garden Cart, a prototype that facilitates

collective gardening. The goal of the factory is to convert asphalted areas into a renaturalized landscape. The activation would be the operation of the factory.

As the Anthropocene makes itself heard through climate disasters around the world, it seems as if more people come to realize the urgency of the situation. Through the activistic and disruptive activity of breaking up asphalt to plant seeds of future ecological resistance, the Renaturalization Factory engages those who are scared, angry and hopeful. Those who see the site as a site of opportunities.

This thesis is a statement to move more radically towards ecologically and socially sustainable urban practice.

Keywords: human and nonhuman actors; temporary activation; renaturalization; speculation; scenario; prototyping; participation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.A PURPOSE

This thesis results in an urban design project that is a speculation about how the alternative architectural practices of temporary activation and renaturalization could be implemented in Evenemangsområdet, an area in Gothenburg. The broader purpose is to search for alternative futures for the area. The word ‘alternative’ implies that there is something ‘conventional’, and in this case the ‘conventional’ is regular top-down planning approaches.

1.B BACKGROUND

1.B.1 MORE PARTICIPATION!

As urbanization continues, cities grow to accommodate multiple new citizens. Since the 1980s, the population in cities across the world has more than doubled, which has forced massive urban development (European Commission, 2023). As a result, certain challenges have increased such as environmental pressure and social exclusion (European Commission, 2020). This calls for sustainable ways of dealing with continuous development.

Gothenburg city is no exception to the growth trend. According to the municipal statistics, the city reached 600 000 inhabitants in year 2023, meaning that the population had grown with 100 000 inhabitants since 2018 (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.). According to their forecast, the population is expected to have reached 713 700 inhabitants by the year 2050, compared to the 609 000 inhabitants that the city has today. Because of that rapid growth, the municipality explains that the city is amid its most extensive urban development phase of modern times.

This thesis zooms in on a site (see fig. 2. Evenemangsområdet

Location) within a central area of Gothenburg often referred to as Evenemangsområdet, that is characterized by a high concentration of large-scale event venues such as Svenska Mässan, Ullevi and Scandinavium. While Evenemangsområdet is a developed area, the municipality considers it suitable for complementary development in their comprehensive plan (Göteborgs Stad, 2022), and a proposal has been produced. Recently, the municipal council decided to proceed with planning the (re)development of a part of Evenemangsområdet next to the river Mölndalsån following their initial proposal (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.B). It has now become a key area in discussions about how the city should expand.

The urban planning proposal for a part of Evenemangsområdet can be considered insensitive because it is expected to have considerable negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment (Stadsbyggnadsförvaltningen, 2025a). Because of that, the public expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposal as it was published. In addition to that, citizens experienced that they had no chance to influence the planning process (Stadsbyggnadsförvaltningen, 2025a), indicating that they perceived the planning process as excluding.

There seems to be a gap between the influence citizens seek and the level of inclusiveness that regular planning processes offer. To include citizens in planning processes through temporary, small-scale, co-creation projects is an important step towards having a socially sustainable development practice (Dahl & Olsson, 2023).

In recent years, there has been a worldwide rise in temporary activation through small-scale citizen-initiated urban projects referred to as DIY-urbanism, guerrilla urbanism, tactical urbanism, and so on (see for example Bishop & Williams, 2012; Lydon & Garcia, 2015; Hugill, 2018). This supports the argument that citizens want to participate in the process of making their neighbourhoods better, evidently to a degree where they take

matters into their own hands.

In coherence with that global trend, Gothenburg’s citizens express their willingness to impact architecture and urban planning processes. This is for example notable through the formation of activist groups that face critique towards what is planned, built or demolished. Amongst others, those groups include the Facebook groups Arkitektupproret (Swedish for the architecture uprising), Rädda Valhallabadet, and the association FASAD (see for example Arkitektupproret – det finns alternativ till fyrkantiga lådor, n.d.; Rädda valhallabadet n.d.; Fasad, n.d.).

People’s willingness to influence their surroundings call for a more inclusive planning process as Gothenburg city continues to expand extensively. Not least in the process of planning Evenemangsområdet. Instead of proceeding with the top-down planning approach, this thesis suggests that the municipality should take a step back and give more influence to citizens.

1.B.2 SAVE MÖLNDALSÅN

While Mölndalsån is an asset in Evenemangsområdet and beyond, it is a neglected asset in some respects. Many water species depend on a natural riverbank for their survival, but widespread exploitation of these attractive areas have pushed many species towards extinction (Naturskyddsföreningen, 2021). In Sweden, close to one third of all red-listed species live by coastal lines or in water environments (Naturskyddsföreningen, 2021). Mölndalsån has artificially constructed riverbanks, erosion protection and flood control (Länsstyrelsen västra götaland, 2022). As a result, the environmental conditions as it passes the site are only between moderate to poor.

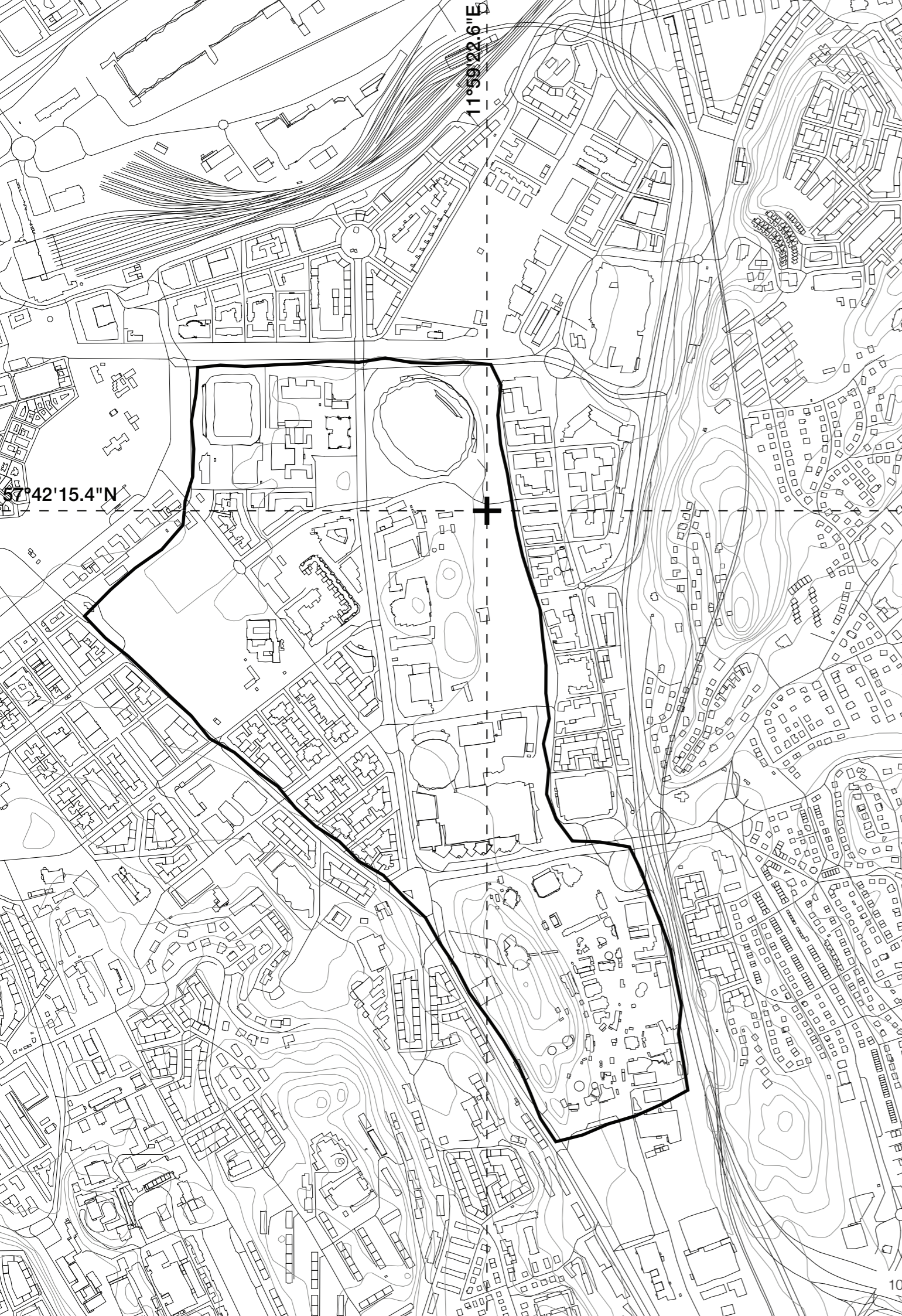


fig. 2. (to the left) *Evenemangsområdet* Location, scale 1:10 000

1.C OBJECTIVE

The objective of this thesis is to explore possible futures for a site within *Evenemangsområdet* by speculating about how that site could become renaturalized through citizen engagement.

1.D RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Regular urban planning and practices often fail to include citizens in the development process. Small-scale and participatory prototype projects have shown to bridge the gap between the level of inclusiveness that regular top-down planning approaches offer and the level of inclusiveness that citizens seek. In addition, there is a clear opportunity to prioritize the ecological needs of the river and its surroundings. *Evenemangsområdet* is in the center of discussions about how Gothenburg should expand, but the planning process and the proposal have been critiqued. Against that background, this thesis asks:

- *How can the site redevelopment be influenced by the open-ended design practices of Landscape Urbanism and Transspecies urban theory?*
- *How can a small-scale prototype be implemented by *Stora Katrinelund landeri* and *Mölnålsån* to generate spontaneous social and ecological activation?*
 - *How can a program of temporary activation be implemented at the site?*

1.E DELIMITATIONS

This thesis concerns temporary activation projects and renaturalization. While inclusive urban design practices may take form in other ways than through temporary activities, this thesis tries not to compare different procedures.

To enable a more frequent appearance of temporary activities, planning regulations must be updated accordingly (Bishop & Williams, 2012). Regulations and permits are central to this discussion because unless they allow temporary activation (temporary alternative land use or temporary building permit), the projects cannot happen legally. While

that is important, this thesis has no ambition to suggest specific alterations of the existing planning regulations in Sweden that would benefit temporary activation. Instead, the focus lies on design, speculation and alternative practice.

This thesis is not opposed to the idea of changing Evenemangsområdet per se, but it critiques the top-down planning approach that hinders citizens from being active participants in (re) making their surroundings. Because of the ongoing process of planning how Evenemangsområdet will be developed, this thesis positions itself in relation to that proposal and that process. By offering a speculation

about another potential future for Evenemangsområdet, the goal is to show a potential result of an alternative approach to development. The result is very different from the proposal by the municipality, and they are therefore not directly comparable designs. Yet, this proposal could offer an alternative that considers certain values that have been lost in the planning process that was carried out by the municipality.

Through the diagrams below, the focal themes of the thesis project are brought to light.

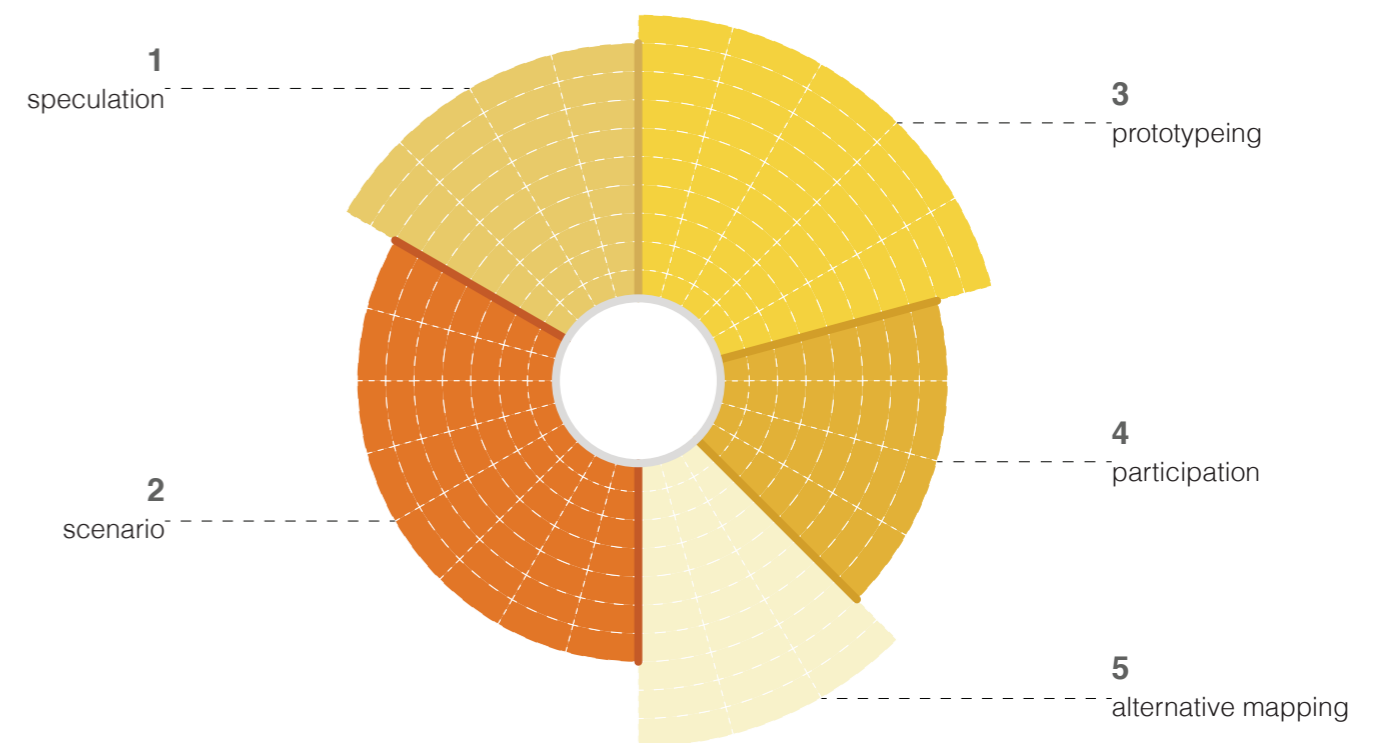
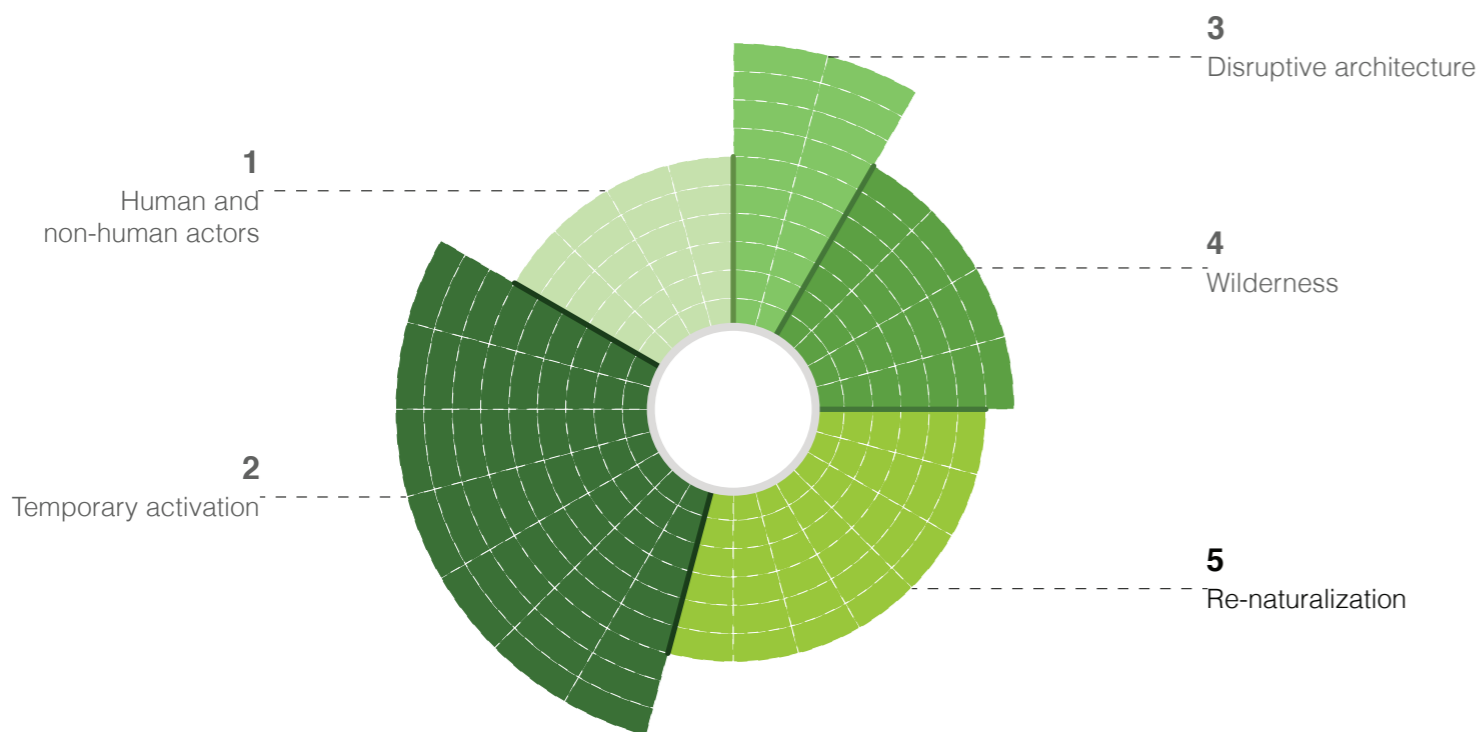


fig. 3. Delimitation Diagram
Social and Ecological Sustainability

fig. 4. Delimitation Diagram
Alternative Tools for Urban Designers

The approaches that are used in this project are based on an understanding of space as dynamic and continuously produced by its users. They try to grasp the context not merely by studying its spatial and static qualities but by considering its temporal activities and users too. That approach derives from theoretical ideas that are presented in the theoretical framework that follows this chapter.

The research is qualitative and partially speculative. It builds upon personal experiences of the site conditions of Evenemangsområdet, for example regarding what may be underprioritized local assets. These experiences are occasionally backed up with literature reviews, that strengthen their credibility. This qualitative approach was chosen because the thesis focuses on aspects that are difficult to measure in numbers, for example whether Evenemangsområdet is used to its fullest potential. Questions like that inevitably leave room for interpretation but are still important to ask.

Three main approaches were undertaken: case study analysis, mapping of opportunities, and speculative design. Together with the theoretical framework, the case studies helped define key alternative practices. Guided by the theoretical framework, the context analysis of Evenemangsområdet considered the area's uses, users, and opportunities. The speculative design continued to explore how Evenemangsområdet could become renaturalized through temporary citizen engagement.

Each chapter of the thesis will be described more thoroughly hereunder.

1.F.1 EIGHT CASE STUDIES

In this chapter eight examples of alternative urban practice were explored. The intention of studying practical examples was to understand how theoretical ideas of alternative practice can manifest itself in real life. For each case study, there is a description of the project and a summary of which themes it addresses, relating back to the delimitation diagrams on the previous page.

1.F.2 MAPPING

OPPORTUNITIES

This chapter contains a context analysis, focused on social and ecological aspects. It is based on research and personal observations and experiences of the site. It focuses on both assets and issues, with the ambition to identify and illustrate site opportunities. Hereunder, the methods that were used in this chapter will be introduced.

The approach to context analysis includes ethnographic explorations through **site observations**, that are documented through sketches, notes and drift mapping (see description of drift). Using informal observations as a design method in this way was proposed by Hanington and Martin (2012).

Corner (2011) proposed **drift mapping** as an alternative drawing technique that aims to capture the experiences of a city dweller. Corner explains the technique as “more a form of cognitive mapping than mimetic description of the cityscape”. What he means is that it tries not to trace exact conditions of reality. Instead, the map emphasizes what caught the attention of the ‘drifter’. Corner says that “practices of ‘drift’ use maps as instruments for establishing and aligning otherwise disparate, repressed or unavailable topographies”. That indicates that the agency of the mapping is not to render a single ‘truth’, but to show otherwise neglected or forgotten aspects of contexts. In this thesis, drift mapping is employed as an instrument for identifying noteworthy site conditions including both positive and negative aspects.

Another mapping approach that was employed is **mapping of function mix** through an assemblage approach as suggested by Dovey and Pafka (2017). There are many reasons as to why it is important to understand how mixed the functions of a city are. For example, Dovey and Pafka explains that the more mixed an area is in terms of functions the more intense the street-life becomes.

The way that Dovey and Pafka (2017) suggests that function mix should be mapped is through a ‘live/work/visit triangle’. For each function we could ask, why would you come here? And the answer would either be for living, for working or for visiting. For buildings that offer multiple functions, the answer might be both for living and for visiting, for example. There are other ways of measuring function mix, but Dovey and Pafka believe that this approach emphasizes the relations between functions and the complexity of their co-existence better than other methods.

Because temporary activation is strongly associated with the social dynamics of a neighbourhood, it is fundamental to consider who comes there and for what reason.

Petrescu (2012) developed the mapping technique ‘**Relationscape**’ as a tool to map how social relations evolve over time, following a spatial intervention in urban space. It derives from her suggestion that architects should become ‘relational architects’ that are engaged with designing social networks rather than static designs. For relational architects, mapping Relationscapes is a useful tool to evaluate a project. The collective practices of ‘Relational architects’ are discussed further in the theoretical framework.

While Relationscapes include how social networks evolve over time, other tools can be useful ways of mapping potential actors before a project begins. For example, Hanington and Martin (2012) proposed **stakeholder diagrams**. Often, stakeholder diagramming begins as a speculation about who may be a suitable actor to include in a project. It can evolve into more factual maps in later stages of the process.

This thesis applied an approach that drew inspiration from both Relationscape and Stakeholder-diagram. The approach was used to identify a potential community that could be involved in the implementation of a collective temporary activation program in Evenemangsområdet. It was also employed to speculate about potential

effects on social dynamics caused by the temporary activation program.

1.F.3 SPECULATIVE DESIGN

This final approach is a speculative design proposal of a temporary activation project – the Renaturalization Factory – in Evenemangsområdet that results in a renaturalized site. It includes a scenario about how a prototype called the Garden Cart could facilitate collective gardening activities in the area.

By using **speculative design** in this thesis, the goal is to encourage critical thinking and political engagement, and not to make predictions about the future. Dunne & Raby (2013) argues that designing “possible futures” is an effective way of making people reflect upon the present and about desired change. In accordance with that reasoning, Doucet (2019) argues that architects have the “capacity to imagine alternative futures”, and by doing so generate political engagement. About “alternative scenarios for planetary survival”, she says that they can function as “seeds of inspiration for the future”, making them essential.

1.F.4 GENERAL TOOLS

The primary method used to visualize and communicate design ideas, is two-dimensional and three-dimensional **drafting**. The results include maps, axonometric views, perspective drawings, illustrations, and diagrams.

Sketching and note-taking was the primary form of documentation which was especially helpful when recording observations during site visits. Some sketches are presented in this work, for example as part of the ‘drift’ map which is a mapping technique presented hereunder.

Findings from **literature review** are presented throughout this work, while the main part appears in the theoretical framework and in the case study chapter “Eight Case Studies”.

1.G THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Terra Fluxus
2006
James Corner

1.G.1 LANDSCAPE URBANISM

Corner (2006) discusses the **Landscape Urbanism** approach which he describes as an interdisciplinary method that combines worldviews of traditional urban design and planning, architecture, and landscape architecture. It emphasizes the effects of dynamic processes such as natural and artificial flows and forces. The author means that, in the school of Landscape Urbanism, urban form is not unimportant, but the focus lies on the processes that interact with it rather than on the urban constellation itself. It is a free-spirited, fluid and open-ended approach that tries to grasp the full complexity of cities, the parts and their connection to the whole.

Corner (2006) describes the focus and scope of Landscape Urbanism through four themes: “process over time, the staging of surfaces, the operational working method, and the imaginary” By “Process over time” he means that the fluidity of the city should be studied by shifting focus to how things work rather than what they look like. He writes about agents that can be elements within the ecological system but also cultural, social, political or economic. All agents affect urban form, which makes it provisional. By focusing on the agents and process, for example birds and bird migration, we are more likely to grasp the full complexity of cities. The second theme, “the staging of surfaces” is about viewing areas as “surfaces of potential” and to organize them for future appropriation. As such, the approach is open-ended as it leaves the planned area in a state where it is open to new opportunities. With the “operational working method”, the author explains that the complex and interdisciplinary approach of Landscape Urbanism requires new creative methods of designing - otherwise visionary proposals risk never leaving the drawing board. The fourth theme, “the imaginary”, emphasizes the strength of collective imagination when rethinking public space. Public spaces, Corner argues, are places for opportunities-thinking.

1.G.2 TRANSSPECIES URBAN THEORY

Wolch (1996) argues that traditional urban theory is deeply anthropocentric, meaning that they all derive from a human standpoint. None of the theories, she says, acknowledges animal subjectivity and tries to grasp the world from a nonhuman’s point of view. As a result, wildlife habitats are being destroyed as cities around the world grow. This causes Wolch to propose **Transspecies Urban Theory** which suggests redefining urban needs and planning practices from the standpoint of nonhumans.

Wolch (1996) describes that the result of practicing Transspecies Urban Theory would be renaturalized cities where animals have been reinvented. In a renaturalized city animals’ living spaces and their subjectivity are respected. The author presents a vision where design facilitates and enriches human and nonhuman interaction.

Wolch (1996) argues that cities must be viewed as an integral part of the natural environment, otherwise neither human nor nonhumans will survive. This is an ethical matter, and caring for nonhuman species requires humans to balance their own needs with those of other species.

1.G.3 COLLECTIVE PRACTICE

When reading about examples of **collective practices in architecture**, certain influential characters keep reappearing. One of them is Henri Lefebvre who saw space as a product that is continuously being produced. That idea was introduced by him in the book *The Production of Space* which was originally released in 1974 and translated into English in 1991. In it, he famously writes that “(social) space is a (social) product” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 26). With Lefebvre’s definition of space as a social product, it is no longer only produced by architects and other professionals but produced and perceived by all.

Awan et.al. (2011) agree with Lefebvre’s definition of space, and for them that worldview is critical for their

Zoöpolis
1996
Jennifer Wolch

Mapping Agencies of Relational Practice in Architecture
2012
Doina Petrescu
Spatial Agency: Other Ways of doing Architecture
2013
Awan, N., Schneider, T., & Till,

argument. They reason that a spatial intervention is inserted into a complex and dynamic social setting which it will both influence and be affected by. The authors critique how the architecture profession has been overly concerned with static aspects of architecture while forgetting the social and ecological dynamics of space. Instead, they argue that professionals should shift focus to the “consequences of architecture” which requires a new way of working for architects. They propose the term “spatial agents” instead of the orthodox “architects”, where agency means the capability to make an intentional difference to a spatial and temporal condition. An essential mission for a spatial agent is to encourage others (including non-professionals) to make a difference to their surroundings, emphasizing collaborative production of space.

In alignment with the idea of having spatial agents instead of architects, Petrescu (2012) proposes the term relational architects. The main goal of a relational architect is to work with and design social networks. That clearly demonstrates a way for architects to engage with dynamic aspects of space interventions, moving focus from the static aspects of building design. A relational architect, Petrescu explains, should work with enabling and driving collective creative processes that can activate and make use of temporarily vacant or underutilized urban spaces. It is about encouraging appropriation of available space in a collective spirit. As the work of Petrescu and Petcou’s collective practice Atelier d’architecture autogérée have demonstrated, activation of temporarily underutilized space can transform a whole neighbourhood into becoming diverse and lively. Through their work on the collective garden project called the ECObox, their action towards collective temporary activation of public space grew extensively by “catalysing activities in the whole neighbourhood” (Petrescu, 2012, p.136).

There are many driving forces behind the work of spatial agents, but the common goal is to make improvements to the spatial and temporal context. As Awan et al (2011) concludes,

motivations vary from making a political difference, to caring for the ecological environment, and to addressing human crisis concerns. For Petrescu (2012), relational architects work towards the goal of having diverse shared spaces that are collectively and continuously created by the community.

1.G.4 TEMPORARY ACTIVITIES AND PROTOTYPES

To begin with understanding **temporary urban projects** one should ask what temporary means. Bishop and Williams (2012), state the obvious: we can only know that a spatial intervention was temporary once it has been removed. But for simplicity’s sake, they choose to define a project as temporary if it was intended to be, even if it becomes permanent. That’s a solid definition which will be used also in this thesis.

Often, temporary projects are **prototypes**. Dahl and Helsing (2023) define urban prototypes as essential testbeds for permanent solutions. They are often made in a small and manageable scale together with citizens and therefore they become a tool for planning influence. The authors mention some pros of prototyping: that they can quickly be implemented, that they test a site’s potential, and that they offer an opportunity for citizens to build a relationship to a site that is under development.

For Bishop and Williams (2012), temporary activation in public space can be deemed successful even in cases when it has no effect on long-term development. In fact, they argue that temporary activation would be more effective if it wasn’t limited to being a prototype for permanent solutions. According to them, temporary activation is a vital part of our spatial and social environments either way because they can bring life and joy, strengthen a site’s identity, explore a site’s potential, and bring people together. Either way, temporal projects and prototypes are essential aspects of urban development.

Temporary City
2012
Bishop & Williams
Prototypal! Bygga platser tillsammans
2013
Dahl, C., & Olsson, T. (Eds.)
Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change
2015
Lydon, M. & Garcia, A.

While Dahl and Helsing (2018) focus on prototyping as a municipal planning method, Lydon and Garcia (2015) show how prototypes can also be a product of grassroots action. They discuss tactical urbanism projects which essentially are strategic, small-scale projects that strive towards influencing long-term development. Not rarely, they embody a type of public disobedience, for example when they are used as physical resistance towards land-use policies. Some find themselves on the border of legality, or they may even be fully illegal. Some temporary urban projects are certainly disruptive. For example, many co-machines (a type of mobile architecture) find themselves on the border of legality, as discussed by Hugill (2018). He writes that their disruptiveness is a useful way to “measure the temperature of shared space” by revealing regulations and attitudes that are normally hidden. Drawing conclusions from these practices, disruptive examples of temporary activation generally have a political character or agenda.

Bishop and Williams (2012) explain that the appearance of spontaneous temporary activation – grassroots action – is strongly related to planning regulations. The authors write that, creative environments “are bottom-up spontaneous happenings that principally require cheap space and freedom from constraints” (Bishop & Williams, 2012, p. 174). To achieve environments like that, they propose “zones of tolerance. where government planning and regulations can be more permissive and flexible” (Bishop & Williams, 2012, p. 174). This indicates that while grassroots actions are bottom-up activities, official planning regulations still play an essential role in enabling them. In conclusion, the planning authority can either work directly with prototype projects or indirectly through purposeful land-use planning.

Often, temporary activation takes place in vacant or underutilized public locations (see for example Bishop & Williams, 2012; Lydon & Garcia, 2015). For example, Bishop and Williams (2012) explain that the activities can represent a meanwhile use, in the absence of any development

plans or formal use. According to Lydon and Garcia (2015), vacancy and lack of planning seem to leave room for action. Bishop and Williams (2012) argue that one of the strengths of temporary activation is how it can explore a site’s potential better than any permanent solution could. Through community engagement, the short-lived experiments explore how a site can be transformed in accordance with what the local community wants, based on their experiences of the site.

1.G.5 MANIFESTO

The theoretical framework is concluded in a research- and opinion-based architectural manifesto which states what should shape the built environment. At the end of the manifesto says “fill in the blank” which communicates that the manifesto is in a state of incompleteness. The idea is that

anybody could contribute to the list by adding a point to it.

The manifesto converts research into an agenda which guides this thesis exploration. It’s statement is clear: to move towards social and ecological sustainability in architecture, urban planning and design.

manifesto

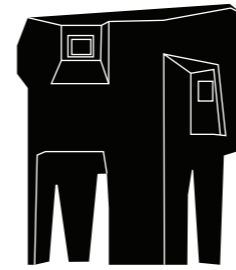
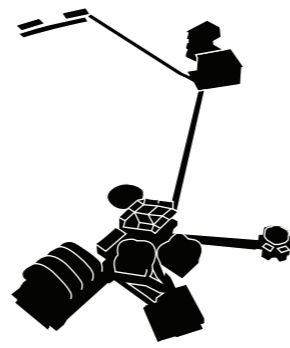
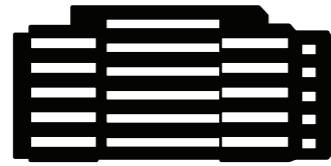
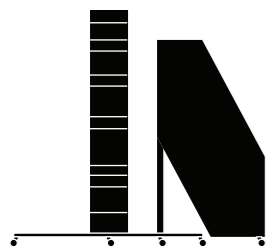
form follows

- Environmental needs
- Non-human standpoints
- Non-human influence
- Environmental dynamics
- Interdisciplinary research
- Social needs
- Collective desires
- Social dynamics
- Site potentials
- Responsibility
- Community engagement
- Prototypes
- Site opportunities
-
-
-
-
-
-

[fill in the blank]

*informed by the
theoretical framework*

2 EIGHT CASE STUDIES



1
Rök N Roll

2
Al Madhafah

3
Fixoteket

4
Floating University

5
Allmänna Badet

6
ECObox

7
The Highline

8
Duck Land

Information

Size: small
Year: 2018
Location: Mobile/
Hammarkullen
Architects: ON/OFF

Size: small
Year: 2016-2018
Location: Boden
Architects: Sandi Hilal

Size: small
Year: 2018
Location: multiple in
Gothenburg
Architects: architecture
and engineering students

Size: medium
Year: 2018
Location: Berlin
Architects: Raumlabor

Size: medium
Year: 2014
Location: Gothenburg
Architects:
Raumlaborberlin

Size: large
Year: 2001-2006
Location: Paris
Architects: Atelier
d'architecture autogérée
(AAA)

Size: large
Year: 2009-2019
Location: New York City
Architects: James Corner
field operations & Diller
Scofidio + Renfro

Size: large
Year: 1989-1991
Location: Hamburg
Architects: Cedric Price

Type

A mobile smoker for
public cooking events

An art project in the form
of a semi-public living
room where people in a
temporary housing
situation (refugee home)
can act as hosts

A neighbourhood repair
shop concept where
people can recycle,
upcycle and socialize

A transdisciplinary
laboratory and platform
for envisioning new forms
of urban practices that
respond to global
environmental challenges

A public outdoor bathing
facility in a former
industrial harbour site. It
includes swimming pools
and a sauna and sits
within the Jubileum park.

A temporary community
garden that encourage
citizens to critically
occupy and transform
underused or misused
spaces

Transformation of an
elevated and overgrown
train track into an
elongated park

Unbuilt proposal to
deconstruct an industrial
harbor site and transform
it into a nature reserve for
birds

Focus

Human and non-human actors

Temporary activation

Disruptive architecture

Wilderness

Re-naturalization

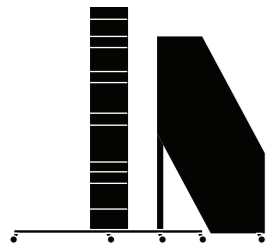
Speculation

Scenario

Prototyping

Participation

Alternative mapping



Rök N Roll

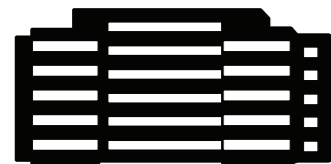
2.A RÖK N ROLL

Rök n roll is a mobile fish smoker that was created by ON/OFF in Hammarkullen 2018 (ON/OFF, n.d.). It was and is used for spontaneous cooking events. As ON/OFF (n.d.) describes on their website, when the smoker is being used, the smoke that leaves the chimney can attract citizens' attention and let them know that cooking activity is happening so that more people can join. In 2018, ON/OFF collaborated with women from the organization Hoppet on preparation work and cooking. Other users include people from the neighbourhood and anyone who pass by and want to join.

Besides offering opportunities for citizens to gather and socialize, the project Rök n roll can be viewed as an exploration of creative uses in public space. With a comedic and light-hearted approach, this project pushes the imagination of what types of activities can take place in public space, and which role the public can play in people's everyday lives. This approach is an inspiration for the scenario design that the project results in.

2.B AL MADHAFAH

As presented by the Public Art Agency Sweden (2018), this art project called Al Madhafah (Arabic for the living room), initiated by architect and artist Sindi Hilal, took shape as a semi-public living room. It was set in multiple locations, with the original version being set in The Yellow House in Boden which has temporary accommodation for asylum seekers. The background to the project was the research that Hilal had done that showed how people who live in temporary situations struggle to feel belonging when they are always guests. Instead, Hilal proposed the addition of a semi-public living room where individuals could act as hosts. In the yellow house, converting a private bedroom into a semi-public living room enabled that type of activity because before, the residents had no such space where they could get together. The project included the physical space which was the living room plus the hosting program.

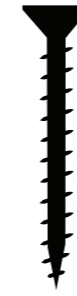


Al Madhafah

While Sandi Hilal is the front figure for this project, many others played key roles in its progress. It is a product of a collaborative process that happened through interviews and collaboration with residents of Boden, and later local actors in other areas. The Boden residents Yasmeen Mahmoud and Ibrahim Muhammad Haj Abdullah for example, developed the project by inviting people to their own living room, following the program of the living room of the Yellow House (Statens Konstråd, n.d.). Al Madhafah has been implemented in other

locations too, for example on the West Bank. By encouraging others to change their social context by acting as hosts and by opening their own living room to the public, they could become active co-creators of their spatial and social contexts.

In the case of Al Madhafah, the reason for making a living room with a hosting program is very clear: the living room offered a place and time for the activity "hosting", with the goal of making temporary residents feel less like guests, and more like they belonged. While a living room is not a new intervention, nor is the function to host, the project Al Madhafah lets people view the room and the function from a new perspective. As an enabler of changed social dynamics. In line with Awan et al. (2011) proposed, this project has a clear focus on "the consequences of architecture". The end goal was not only to make sure that people had the possibility to host, but that they could feel belonging even though they were in a temporary living situation.



Fixoteket

2.C FIXOTEKET

Fixoteket was a concept that was implemented and tested in four locations in Gothenburg during 2018: Hammarkullen, Rannebergen, Biskopsgården and Majorna. A Fixotek is a function where people can gather to do work-shop activities together with the purpose of giving new life to clothes and things. Architecture and engineering students at Chalmers University of Technology developed and built the project together with local actors in Hammarkullen (Dahl & Olsson, 2023). While the project is no longer active in its original form, Fixoteket remains in three out of four locations since the local housing company Bostadsbolaget took over its operation (Bostadsbolaget, 2025).

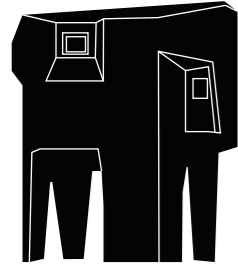
Like Allmänna Bastun, Fixoteket started as a prototype, but after having been tested it was considered successful and therefore it remains active. This illustrates one of the opportunities of working with temporary, small-scale spatial interventions: the function may be tested before any permanent decisions are made.

2.D FLOATING UNIVERSITY

The so-called Floating University by Raumlabor Berlin was active during the summer months of 2018. It was an extremely hot European summer that reminded people of the daunting future that lies ahead unless climate change is taken seriously. Raumlabor (2018) describes the project as "a laboratory and a platform for new forms of urban practice" where researchers and students from different disciplines gathered to share knowledge. With an uncertain future ahead, Raumlabor emphasizes the importance of experiments and collective learning. Floating University is a clear example of a collective, experimental initiative that contributes to new perspectives on urban practice.



Floating University



Allmänna Badet

2.E ALLMÄNNA BADET

Allmänna bastun in Frihamnen—a sauna—was constructed collaboratively through local engagement (Raumlaborberlin, n.d.). The project was introduced to Frihamnen in 2014, a site in transition from a former harbor to a central city area. On their architecture website Raumlaborberlin (n.d.) describe that, as part of their mission, they tackled the challenge of finding new uses for the area and alter the image of it while preserving its memory. The architects refer to the project as a ‘prototype’, meaning that it explores new uses for this changing site. Sauna bathing in Frihamnen became a popular activity, and after ten years when the prototype’s intended lifetime had passed, the municipality decided that the sauna should become permanent (Dahl & Olsson, 2023).

The sauna project shows something that was of interest to Bishop and Williams (2012), which is that temporary activation through a collaborative process can be used to explore a site’s untapped potential. As such, temporary activation can help explore an answer to the question: what could this site become? While it may have seemed far-fetched and strange to propose a sauna in a place as rough as a former harbor industry area, the sauna turned out to be an attractive destination. In that way, this example demonstrates how temporary activation can be used as an exploratory tool in urban planning. It may have started with a what-if question, which according to Dune and Raby (2013) is a typical starting ground for provoking imaginary thinking. For example, what if we built a sauna in the middle of this industrial site? Instead of contemplating back and forth around the drawing table, the prototype provided an answer.

2.F ECOBOX

The ECObox is an example of an alternative urban practice that was initiated by Atelier d’Architecture Autogérée (AAA). They were actively involved in its operation between the years 2001–2006. ECObox was a set of underused or mal-used locations where AAA initiated and enabled temporary

collective gardening activities, and later other activities too (Spatial Agency, n.d.). Spatial Agency describes how the community gardens evolved into lively hubs of collective, cultural activities that were eventually self-managed by the community. Through their practice, AAA showed another way of working for urban designers and planners, where participation and community engagement is at the center. Instead of designing and establishing gardens at their final stage, they offered tools for the community to engage in and shape their surroundings. It seems like the ultimate form of participatory urban design practice, where urban designers still play a fundamental role.



ECObox



The Highline

2.G THE HIGHLINE

This well-known park in New York was originally a raised railway. After being abandoned, it became overgrown with wildlife. Midst skyscrapers, traffic and people, on top of a concrete and steel structure, nature had returned.

Not surprisingly, James Corner, who advocates landscape urbanism, was one of the lead architects for this project. The Highline comprises a mix of wildlife and tidy urban design, and it is an example of a project that reclaimed an underused site of potential (Dilleriscofidio+Irenfro, n.d.).

2.H DUCK LAND

In 1989–1991, Cedric Price Architects proposed a degrowth scenario for the port of Hamburg. Doucet (2018) sheds light on the unbuilt project. She describes how the visionary suggestion was to establish a nature reserve for birds where once there was an active harbor. The suggestion was in big contrast to other suggestions for densification that would lead to large financial returns. By removing the buildings one after the other, the site would be cleaned from construction. The whole site, Doucet explains, would then be transformed into a marshland where people could enter occasionally on adaptable walkways. At times when the birds would need privacy, people would be obliged to leave the site alone.

Doucet (2018) adds Duck Lands to the category of projects she describes as “alternative scenarios for planetary survival”. While some would dismiss degrowth projects such as Duck Lands as utopian, climate change sends a reminder to think again.



Duck Land

3 MAPPING OPPORTUNITIES

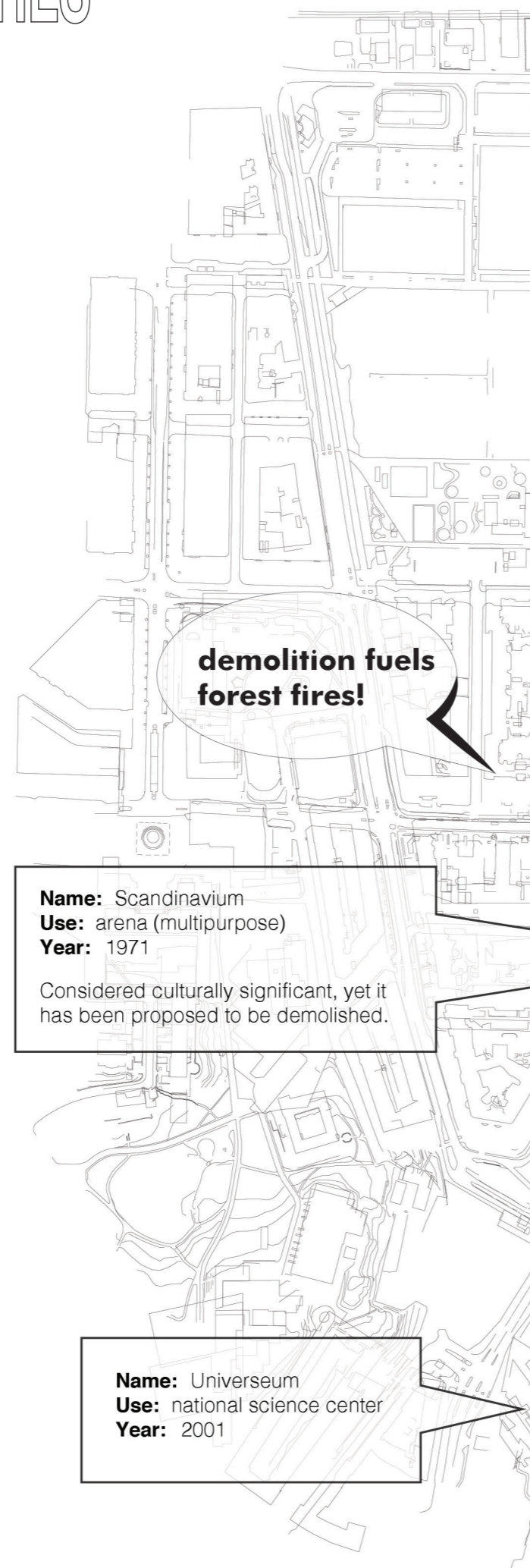
3.A AN OVERVIEW

In this chapter, the area of Evenemangsområdet will be explored and explained. The site analysis focuses on social, cultural and ecological aspects and makes out the foundation for the speculative design proposal that follows. The goal is to identify and visualize spatial, environmental and social potentials of the place. That is why the chapter is named “mapping opportunities”.

First, what is Evenemangsområdet and what happens there? The function mix map is a starting point for understanding the character of Evenemangsområdet. It is overlaid with further information about significant functions and political protests (normally online) related to the municipality’s development plan.

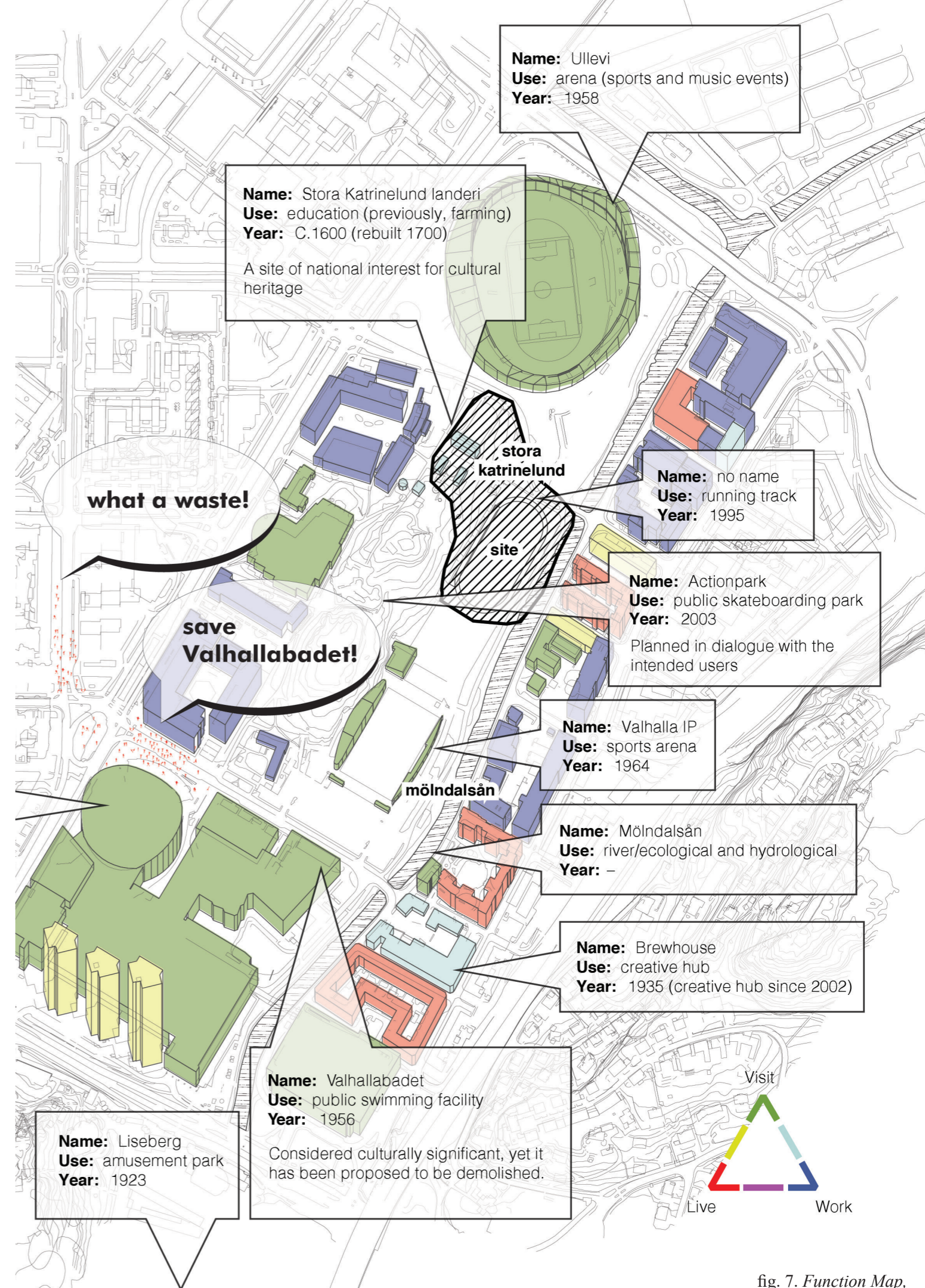
The function mix exploration shows that the area west of Mölndalsån is not particularly mixed while the area east of the river is more so. On the west side are event venues, schools, and other locations that attract visitors. On the east side, offices are mixed with residential buildings and restaurants. The map leaves a clue about something that was confirmed in the municipal report about the area: that when there are no big events, Evenemangsområdet is empty. As Dovey and Pafka (2017) explained, diverse areas are generally associated with a high level of street-life vitality.

From a social and ecological viewpoint, the map highlights certain functions that are valuable. Those include Scandinavium, Valhallabadet, Actionpark and finally the two functions that frame the site: Stora Katrinelund Landeri and Mölndalsån. The latter two are focal points in this chapter, not least because the site once belonged to Stora Katrinelund Landeri.



Name: Scandinavium
Use: arena (multipurpose)
Year: 1971
 Considered culturally significant, yet it has been proposed to be demolished.

Name: Universeum
Use: national science center
Year: 2001



Name: Stora Katrinelund landeri
Use: education (previously, farming)
Year: C.1600 (rebuilt 1700)
 A site of national interest for cultural heritage

Name: Ullevi
Use: arena (sports and music events)
Year: 1958

Name: no name
Use: running track
Year: 1995

Name: Actionpark
Use: public skateboarding park
Year: 2003
 Planned in dialogue with the intended users

Name: Valhalla IP
Use: sports arena
Year: 1964

Name: Mölndalsån
Use: river/ecological and hydrological
Year: –

Name: Brewhouse
Use: creative hub
Year: 1935 (creative hub since 2002)

Name: Valhallabadet
Use: public swimming facility
Year: 1956
 Considered culturally significant, yet it has been proposed to be demolished.

Name: Liseberg
Use: amusement park
Year: 1923



fig. 7. Function Map, axonometric view scale 1:3 000

3.B DRIFT AND OBSERVATIONS

Fig. 8. *Drift Map* is a collage of sketches that were made on site during a drift through the area. The drift started on Levengrösvägen, continued through Burgårdsparken, past Valhalla. It then followed the river and ended on the other side of the river in Gårda.

The map gives an overview of what was experienced as noteworthy elements for various reasons. Assets that were noted include Stora Katrinelund landeri, which appears as an outsider in the area because of its old age. Burgårdsparken and Mölndalsån because of their ecological value, with old and large trees. Issues were also noted, for example large areas of asphalt, big parking spaces, long stretches of fence and non-accessible areas, and limited accessible space along Mölndalsån.

Here follows a complete list of experienced noteworthy elements, including both assets and issues:

- Ullevi
- Asphalt
- The alley leading up to Stora Katrinelund landeri
- **Stora Katrinelund landeri**
- Gardening activities by students at Stora Katrinelund landeri
- Burgårdsparken (green area)
- Fences along paths of Burgårdsparken
- Action Park (skateboarding)
- More fences
- Valhallabadet's entrance
- Empty benches and tables
- Ducks
- Long stretches of fence, again
- Running track
- **Mölndalsån**
- Old and large trees next to the river
- Few bikers, dog walkers, and students



3.C STRANDSKYDD

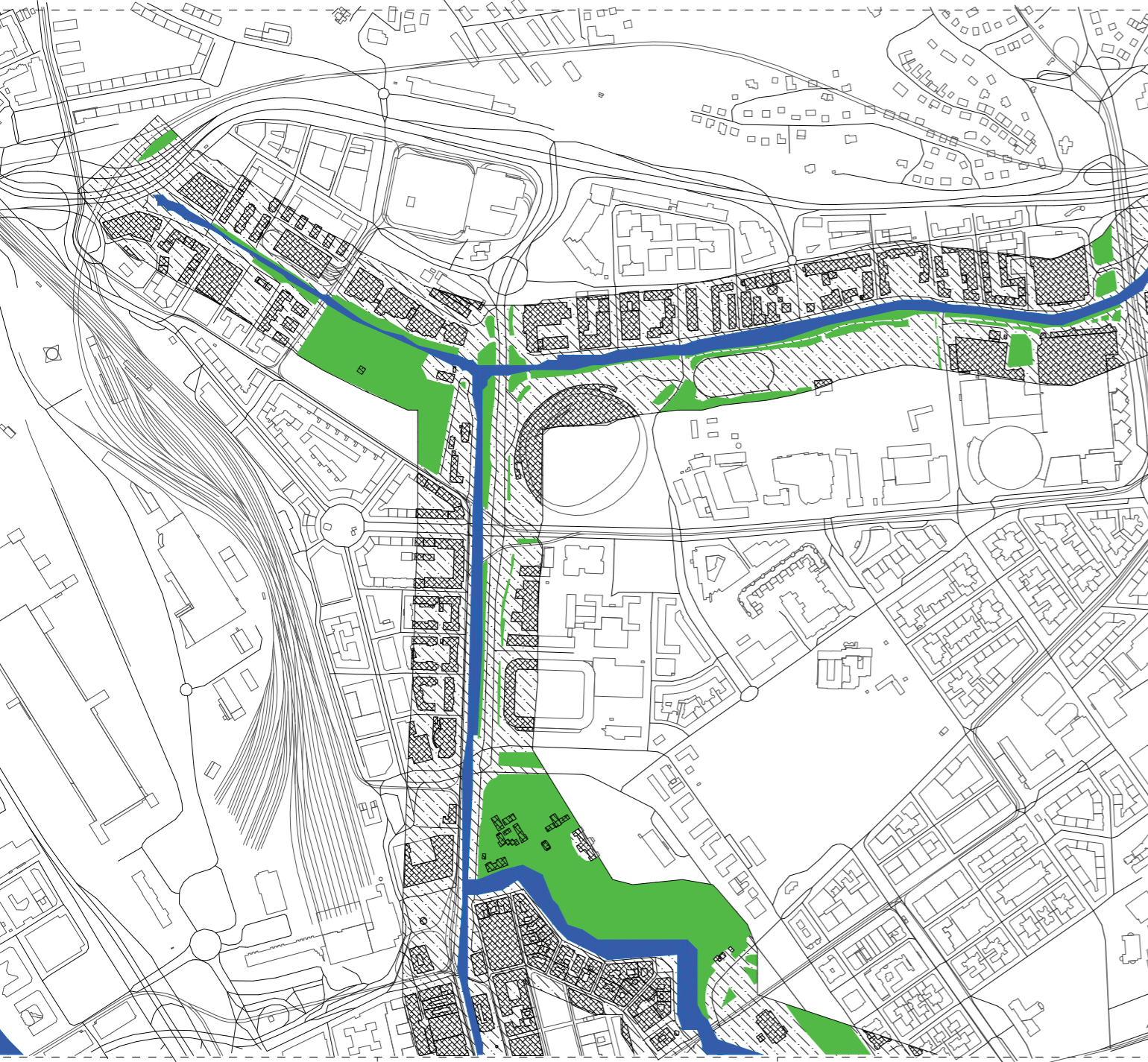
The Swedish Strandskyddslagen (shoreline protection regulation) prohibits any construction within a hundred meters from the water line to protect nonhuman life (Naturskyddsföreningen, 2021). That zone should ideally be completely

natural. Fig. 9. *Strandskydd Map* shows the section of Mölndalsån which is within central Gothenburg. The map shows clearly that most of the landscape within the shoreline protection area is hardscaped.

For example, the width of the green area along Mölndalsån is only

between 3,5 to 11,5 meters where it passes by the site. As a result of that, together with other mistreatments of the river (for example flood control), the status of Mölndalsån's central section is moderate to poor. That is illustrated through fig. 10. *Diagram of Mölndalsån's Status*.

These findings indicate that there are opportunities to strengthen Mölndalsån's influence as a local asset, both by reconsidering the uses next to the river and by ensuring that its health is a priority. That finding aligns with the municipal report which argues that Mölndalsån is a quality with potential (Stadsbyggnadsförvaltningen, 2025b).



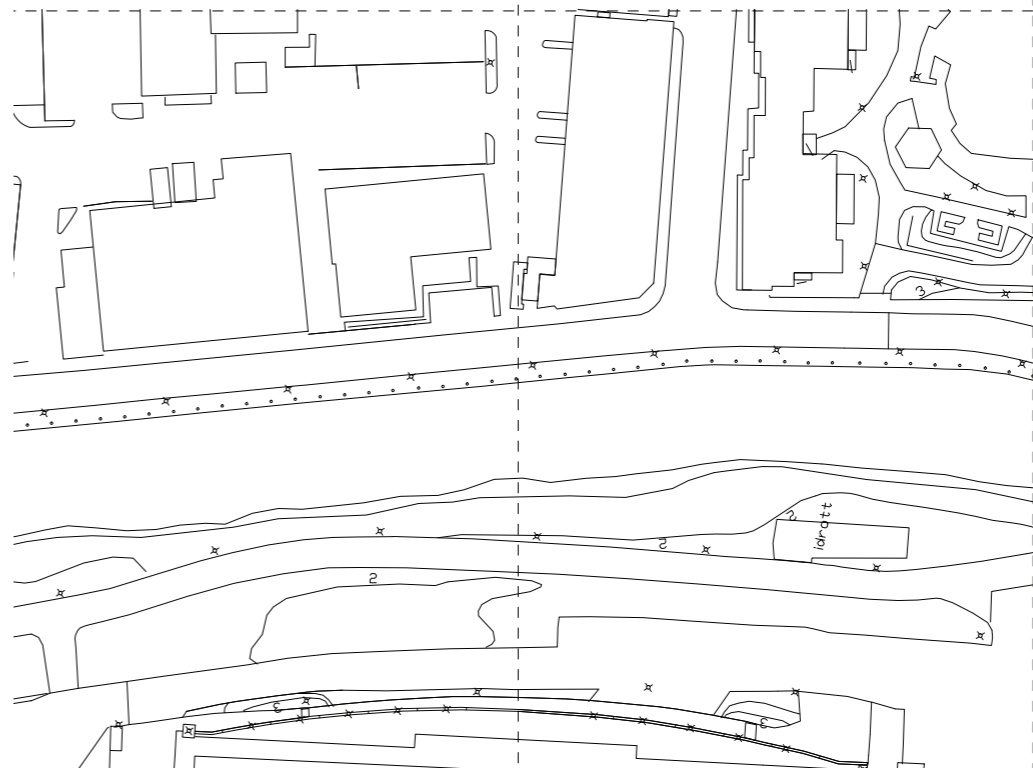
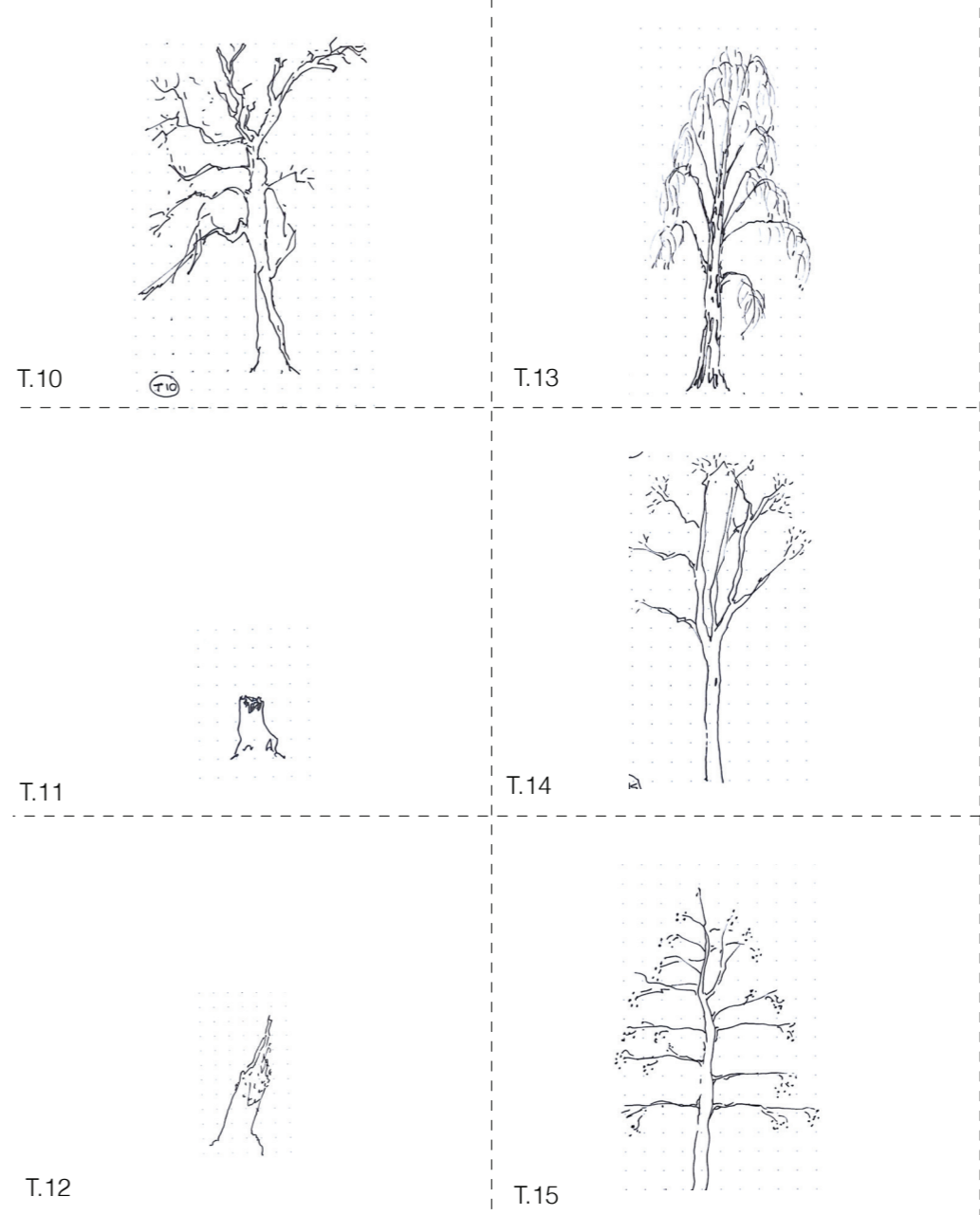
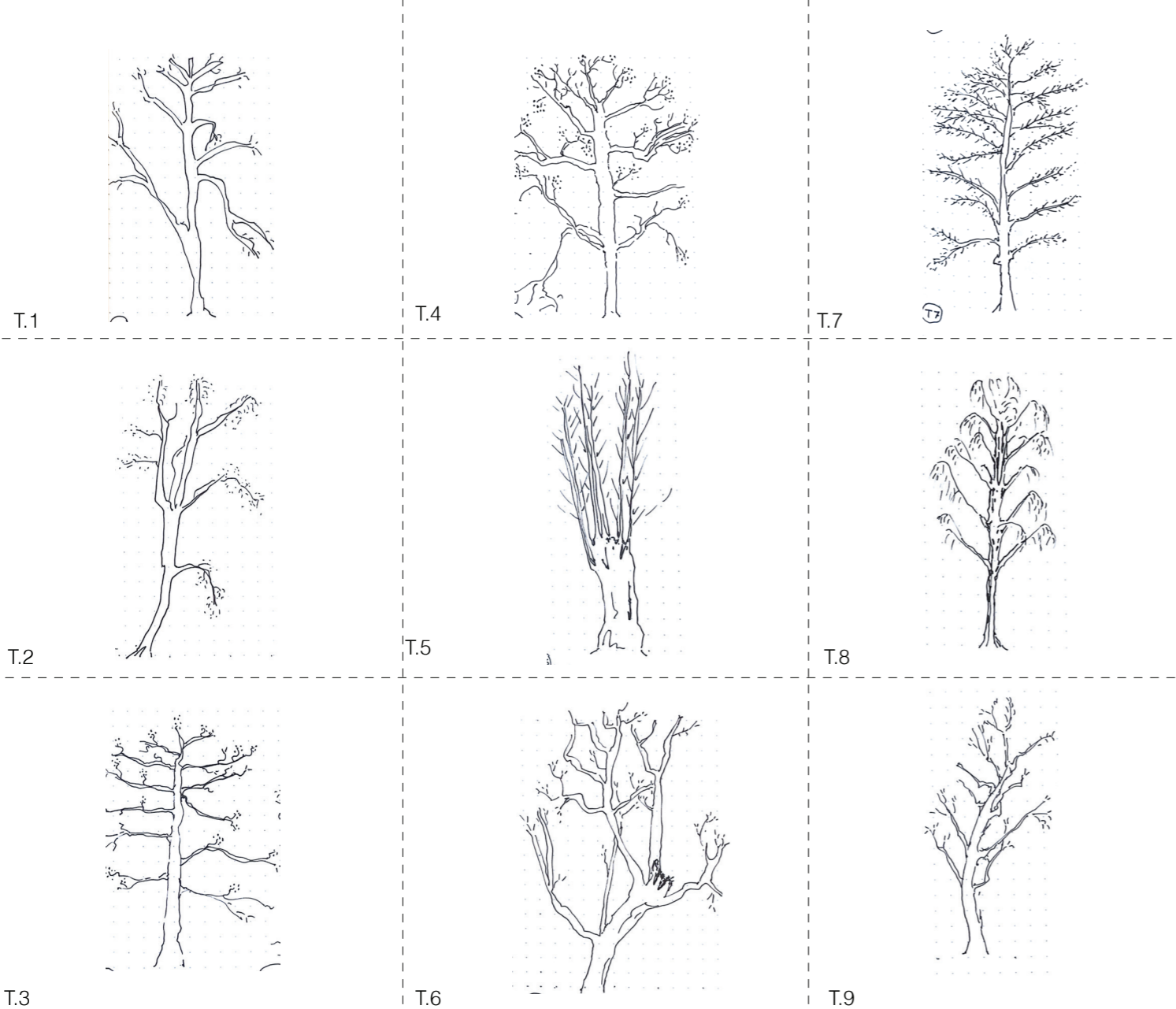
- 100 meter from the waterfront
- ▨ hard landscaping
- soft landscaping
- ▤ buildings within 100 meters of the waterfront
- water surfaces

fig. 9. *Strandskydd Map*, scale 1:10 000



- the site
- good status
- moderate status
- insufficient status
- poor status
- (01) ecological status
- (02) fish status
- (03) hydrological status
- (04) morphological condition

fig. 10. *Diagram of Mölndalsån's Status* adapted from Länsstyrelsen Västra Götaland (2022)



3.D TREES

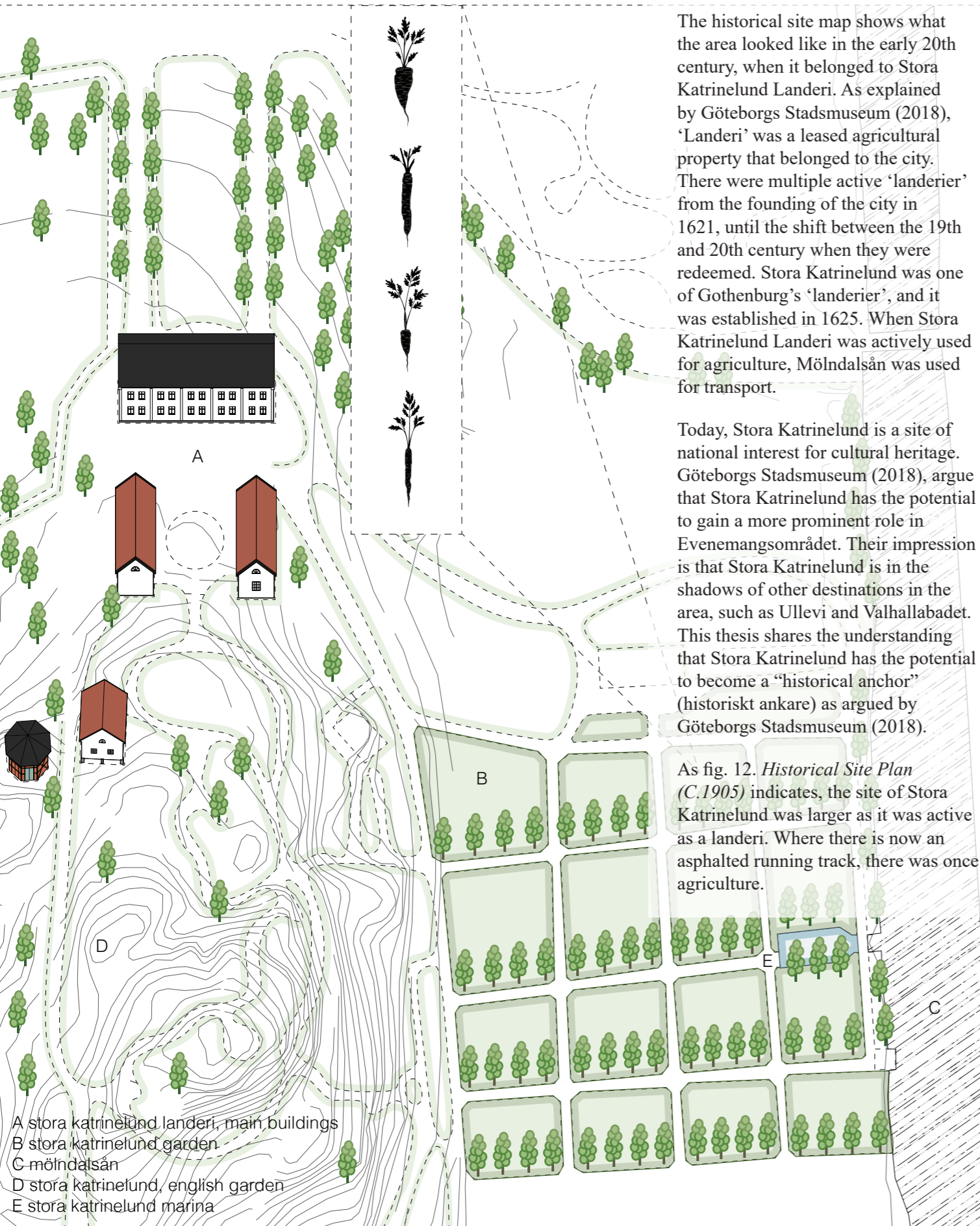
Even though the riverbank along Möldalsån is underprioritized, there are significant ecological values there, particularly 62 hollow trees. Fig. 11 *Tree Sketches* shows a collection of sketches of the diverse trees that line the site.

3.E STORA KATRINELUND

The historical site map shows what the area looked like in the early 20th century, when it belonged to Stora Katrinelund Landeri. As explained by Göteborgs Stadsmuseum (2018), 'Landeri' was a leased agricultural property that belonged to the city. There were multiple active 'landerier' from the founding of the city in 1621, until the shift between the 19th and 20th century when they were redeemed. Stora Katrinelund was one of Gothenburg's 'landerier', and it was established in 1625. When Stora Katrinelund Landeri was actively used for agriculture, Mölndalsån was used for transport.

Today, Stora Katrinelund is a site of national interest for cultural heritage. Göteborgs Stadsmuseum (2018), argue that Stora Katrinelund has the potential to gain a more prominent role in Evenemangsområdet. Their impression is that Stora Katrinelund is in the shadows of other destinations in the area, such as Ullevi and Valhallabadet. This thesis shares the understanding that Stora Katrinelund has the potential to become a "historical anchor" (historiskt ankare) as argued by Göteborgs Stadsmuseum (2018).

As fig. 12. *Historical Site Plan (C.1905)* indicates, the site of Stora Katrinelund was larger as it was active as a landeri. Where there is now an asphalted running track, there was once agriculture.



A stora katrinelund landeri, main buildings
 B stora katrinelund garden
 C mölndalsån
 D stora katrinelund, english garden
 E stora katrinelund marina

fig. 12. *Historical Site Plan (C.1905)*, scale 1:1 500

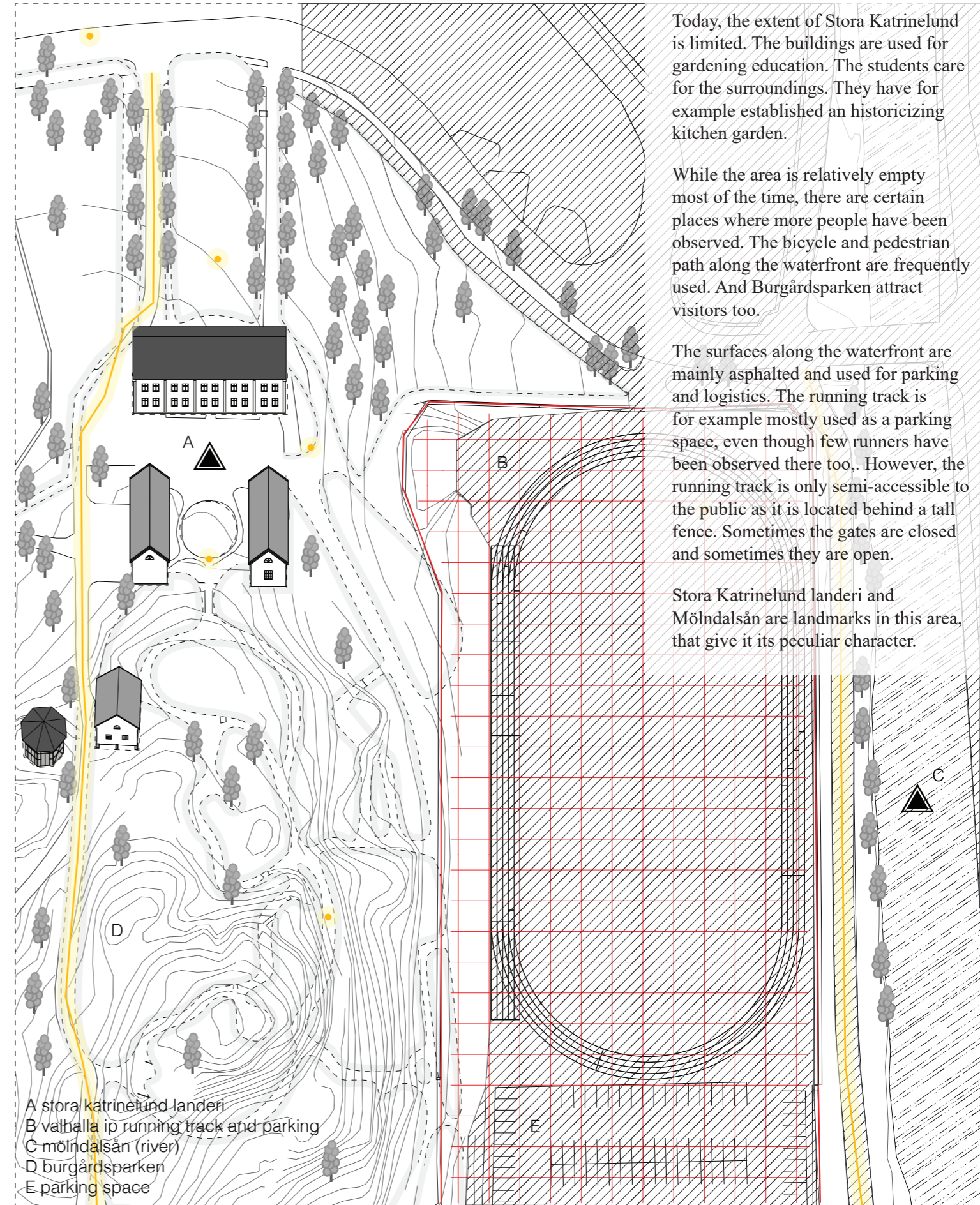
3.F THE SITE TODAY

Today, the extent of Stora Katrinelund is limited. The buildings are used for gardening education. The students care for the surroundings. They have for example established an historicizing kitchen garden.

While the area is relatively empty most of the time, there are certain places where more people have been observed. The bicycle and pedestrian path along the waterfront are frequently used. And Burgårdsparken attract visitors too.

The surfaces along the waterfront are mainly asphalted and used for parking and logistics. The running track is for example mostly used as a parking space, even though few runners have been observed there too. However, the running track is only semi-accessible to the public as it is located behind a tall fence. Sometimes the gates are closed and sometimes they are open.

Stora Katrinelund landeri and Mölndalsån are landmarks in this area, that give it its peculiar character.



A stora katrinelund landeri
 B valhalla ip running track and parking
 C mölndalsån (river)
 D burgårdsparken
 E parking space

● activated location ▲ landmark location □ area behind fence ▨ hardscaped surface

fig. 13. *Existing Site Plan A*, scale 1:1 500

3.G THE PEOPLE

Because this mapping of opportunities considers social aspects, it asks who the people, organizations and companies of the area are. What are the opportunities of social activation? A social project needs people, and fig. 14. *Potential Actors Map* tries to map who those people could be. The mapping technique used draws inspiration from the mapping techniques Relationscape, and stakeholder diagram, as presented in the methodology. The list of potential actors is not complete, but a speculative selection.

The motivations for choosing these actors begin with the standpoint that Mölndalsån and Stora Katrinelund landeri are local assets with potential to gain a stronger influence in the area. As suggested by Bishop and Williams (2012), a temporal activation project should ideally take existing activities and actors as a starting point. Because of that, the selected actors can be linked directly or indirectly to the location or activities of Mölndalsån and Stora Katrinelund landeri.

To begin with, the site of the running track is owned by the municipality through Exploateringsförvaltningen. It is used by Got Event in support of the operation of Valhalla IP and Ullevi, amongst other arenas that they operate and develop. Stora Katrinelund is owned and managed by Higab. A temporary activation of the interface between Stora Katrinelund and

Mölndalsån would require cooperation with these actors.

Together with ICA Focus and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Kulturförvaltningen could sponsor or make financial contributions to the project. These actors may find an interest in contributing to its development because they are involved in nature and culture protection, and food production.

Other potential actors include educational institutions and students that may be more actively involved in the on-site activity. The educational institutions include Universeum (natural science center), Studium (adult school with gardening education programs) and Burgårdens gymnasium (high school with an animal and nature management program). These three educational centers are local actors, where Studium and Burgårdens Gymnasium have education located inside Stora Katrinelund.

The actors would have different roles in a temporary activity and those roles could evolve with time, as a student becomes a gardener for example. The idea is that the social networks of collaboration and community engagement can expand to involve more local actors, which is what happened in the ECO-box case.

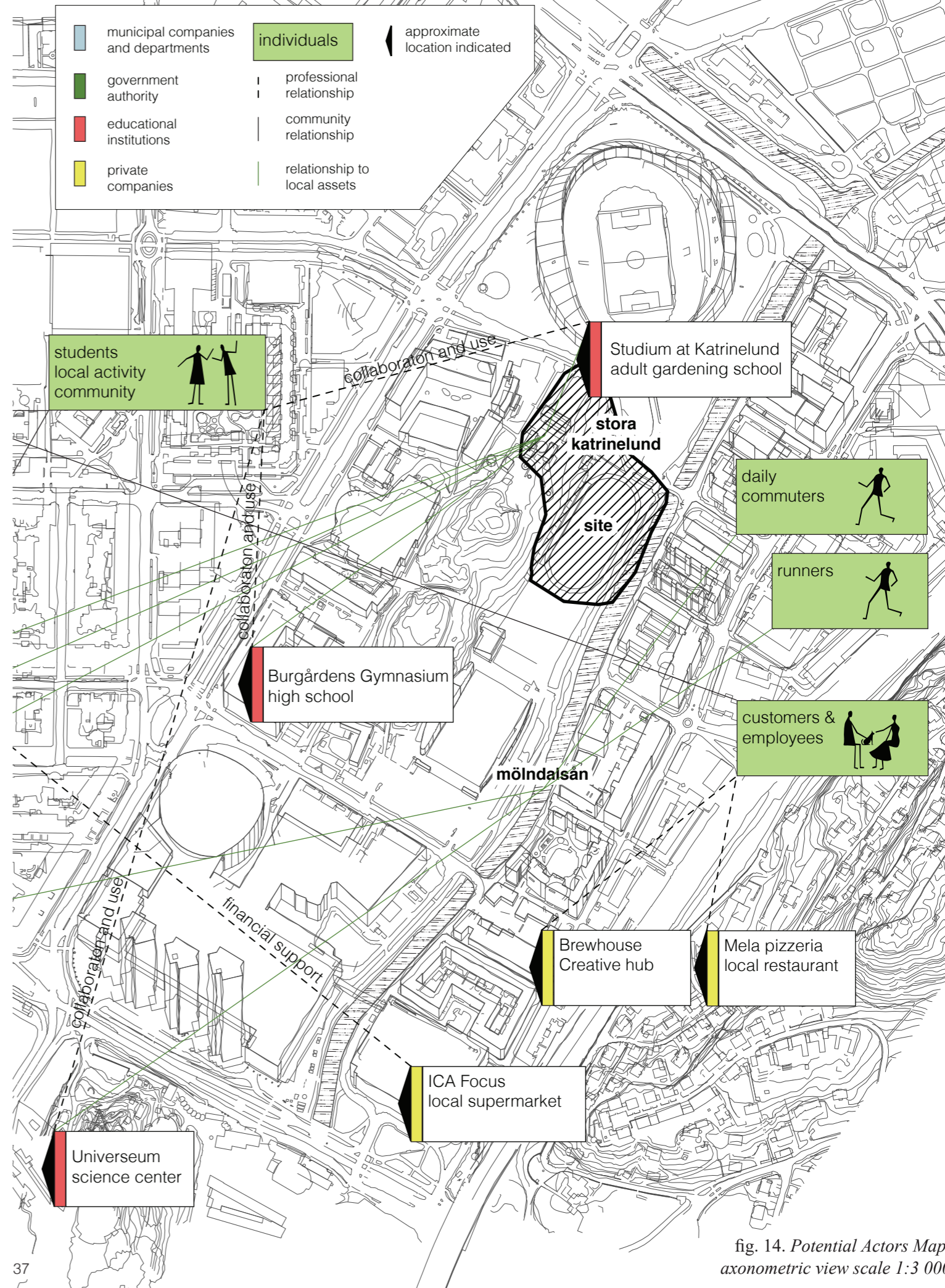
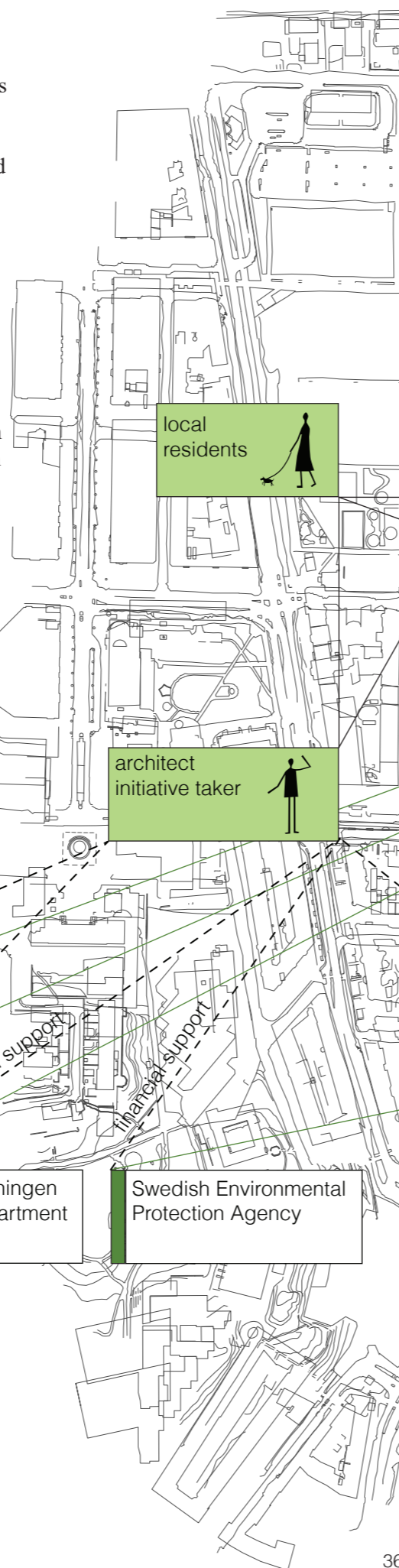
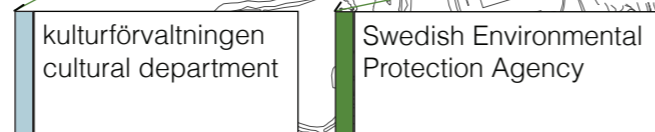
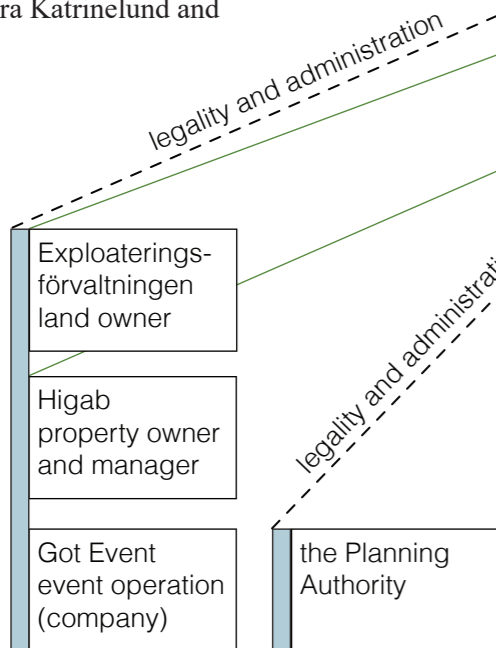


fig. 14. *Potential Actors Map*, axonometric view scale 1:3 000

4 SPECULATIVE DESIGN

4.A THE RENATURALIZATION

FACTORY

In this chapter, the Renaturalization Factory is explained. The proposed design is guided by the theoretical framework, the case study analysis, and the opportunities-mapping. It offers an alternative and speculative scenario of how the site could become renaturalized through temporary gardening activities.

The speculative program is narrated as a scenario of how it begins,

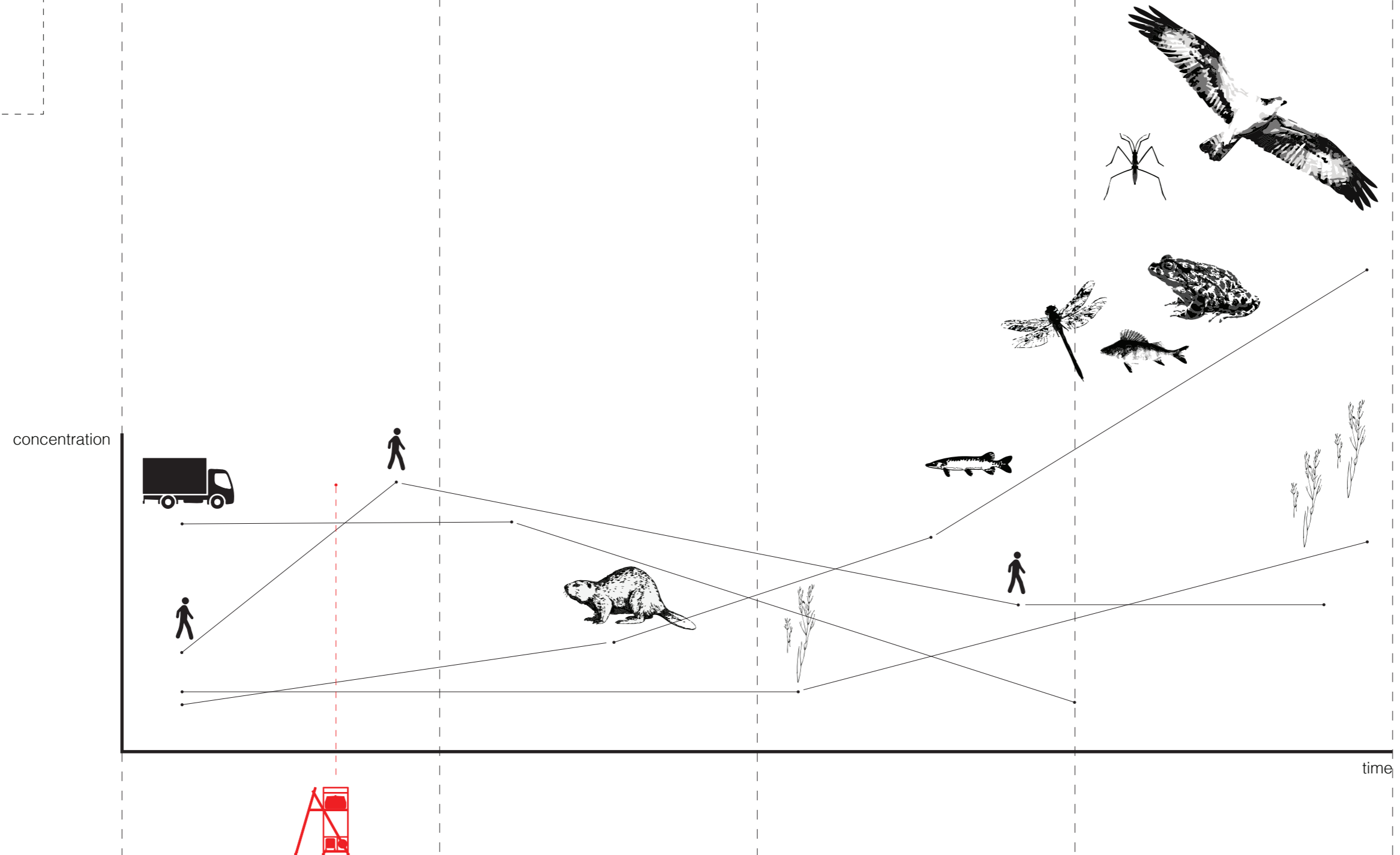
and how it unfolds. It should be understood as a representation of one out of multiple potential scenarios for Evenemangsområdet. It is not a prediction for the future, as mentioned in the methodology, instead it is a scenario that could engage people politically and make them reflect upon potential uses and futures for Evenemangsområdet.

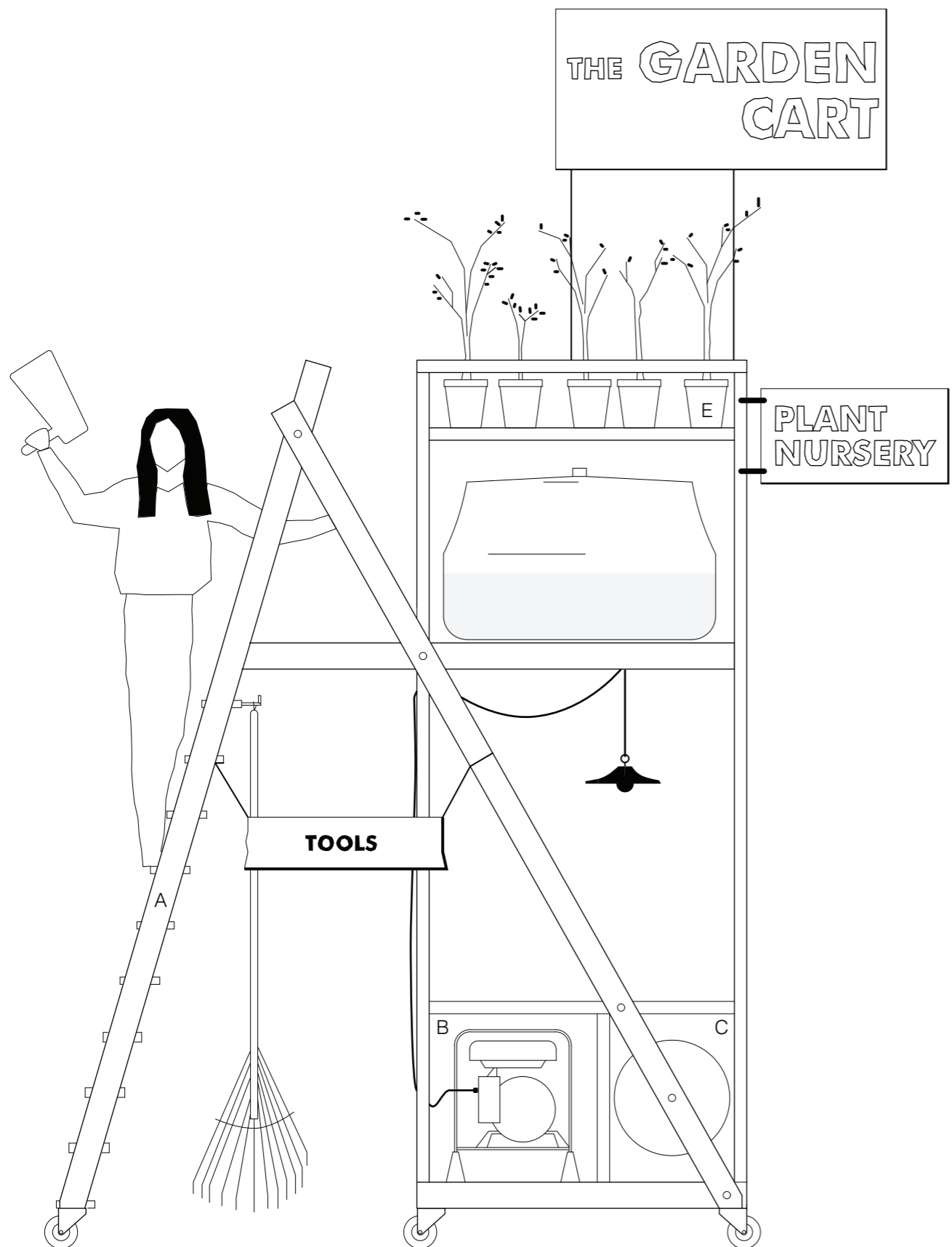
The scenario begins with a prototype and ends with pure nature. The proposed prototype is a gardening unit on wheels, called the Garden

Cart. It includes facilities for breaking up asphalt and planting vegetation. It supports the goal of the Renaturalization Factory which is to convert asphalted areas at the interface between Mölndalsån and Stora Katrinelund landeri into a renaturalized landscape. The program addresses the need to prioritize the well-being of Mölndalsån, and it relates to the gardening and food production activities of Stora Katrinelund landeri (both current and former). The activities are collective, offering opportunities for people to gather and

socialize while gardening together.

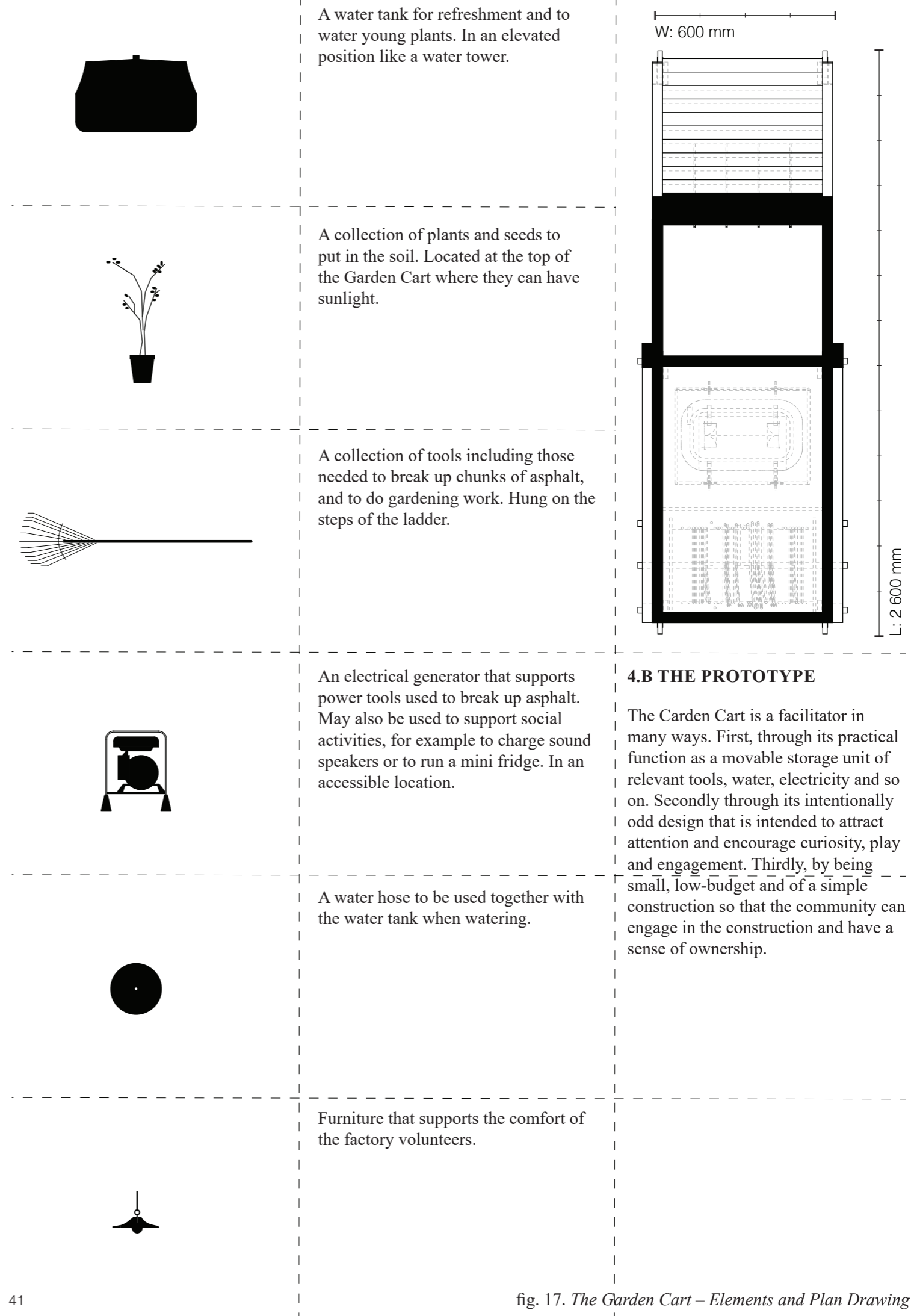
Fig. 15. *Development Diagram*, shows how the concentration of certain elements increases or decreases with time. Traffic, for example, decreases. The number of people increases at the Renaturalization Factory is active and decreases as wild nature starts taking over. Later in time, wildlife dominates the site where people only have limited access out of respect for nonhuman habitats.





- A ladder
- B generator
- C water hose
- D water tank
- E vegetation storage
- F gardening and asphalt breaker tools

fig. 16. *The Garden Cart*, elevation scale 1:20



A water tank for refreshment and to water young plants. In an elevated position like a water tower.

A collection of plants and seeds to put in the soil. Located at the top of the Garden Cart where they can have sunlight.

A collection of tools including those needed to break up chunks of asphalt, and to do gardening work. Hung on the steps of the ladder.

An electrical generator that supports power tools used to break up asphalt. May also be used to support social activities, for example to charge sound speakers or to run a mini fridge. In an accessible location.

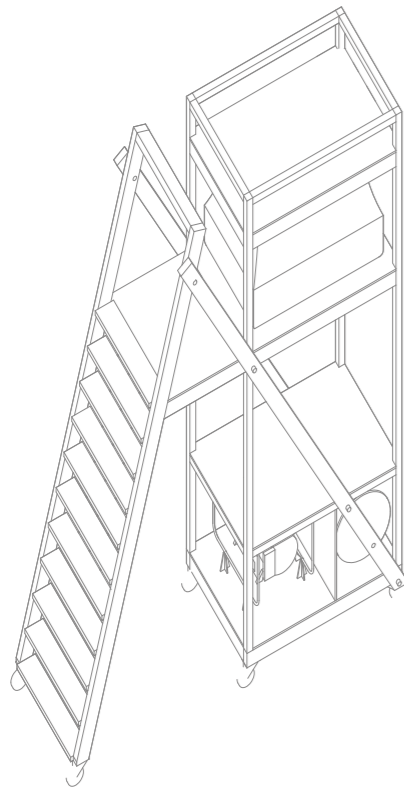
A water hose to be used together with the water tank when watering.

Furniture that supports the comfort of the factory volunteers.

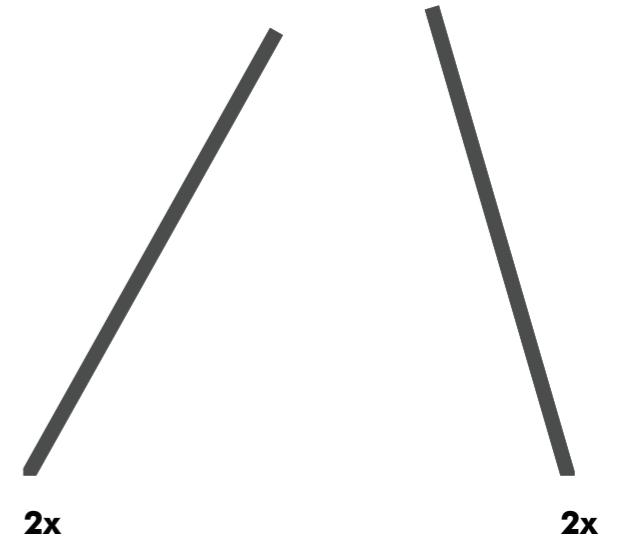
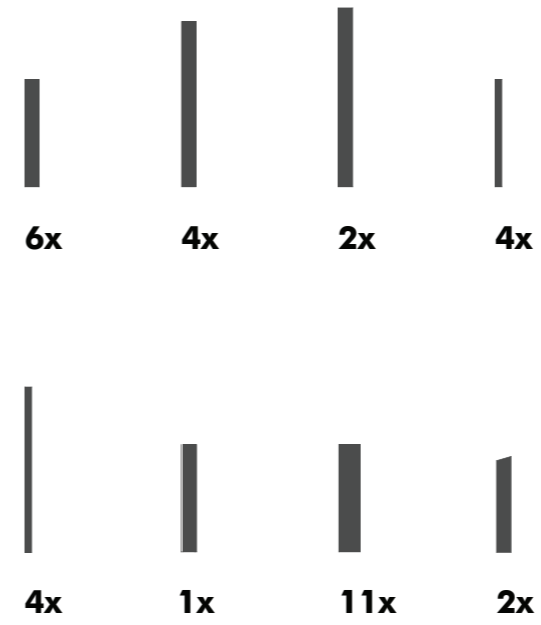
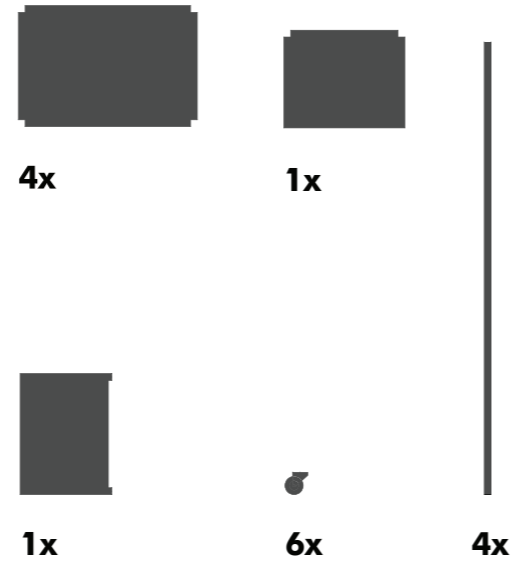
4.B THE PROTOTYPE

The Carden Cart is a facilitator in many ways. First, through its practical function as a movable storage unit of relevant tools, water, electricity and so on. Secondly through its intentionally odd design that is intended to attract attention and encourage curiosity, play and engagement. Thirdly, by being small, low-budget and of a simple construction so that the community can engage in the construction and have a sense of ownership.

fig. 17. *The Garden Cart – Elements and Plan Drawing*



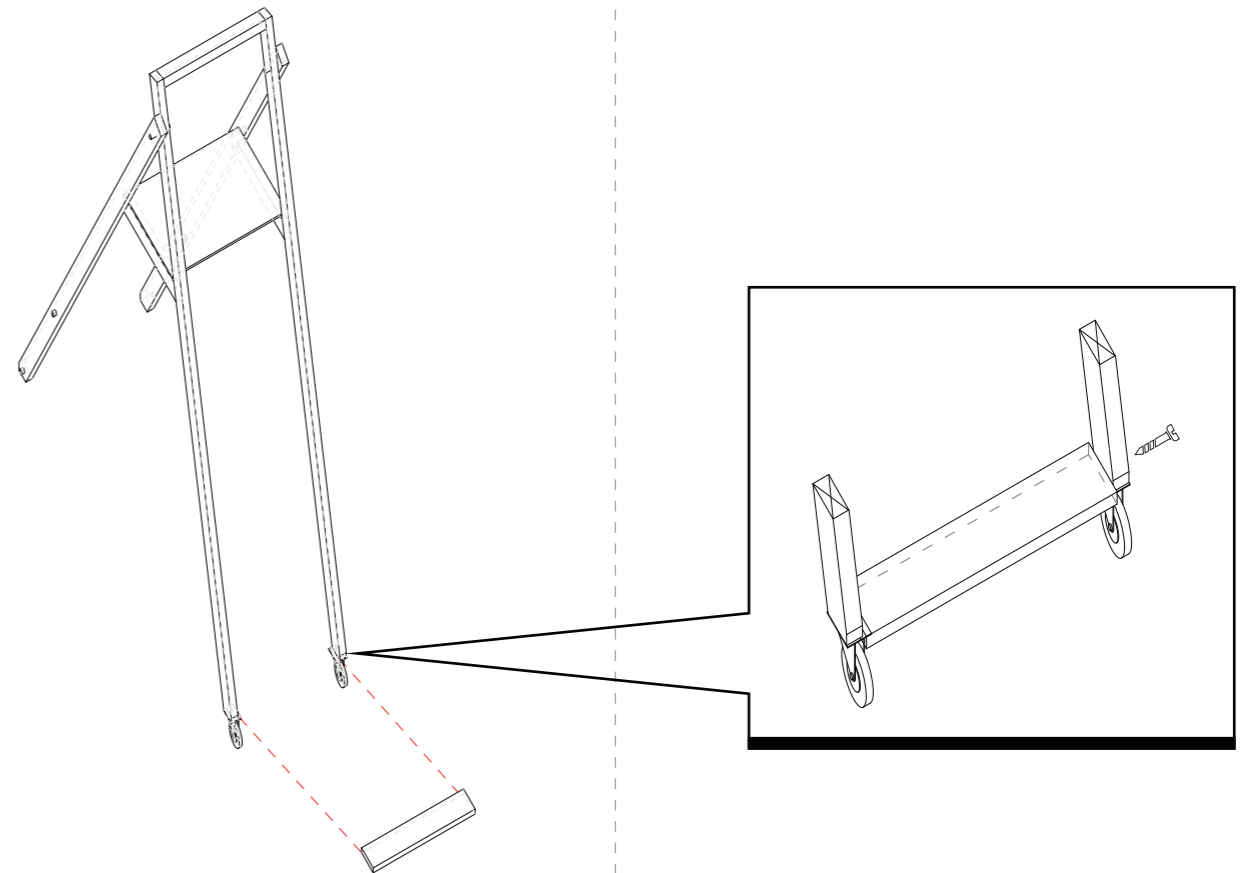
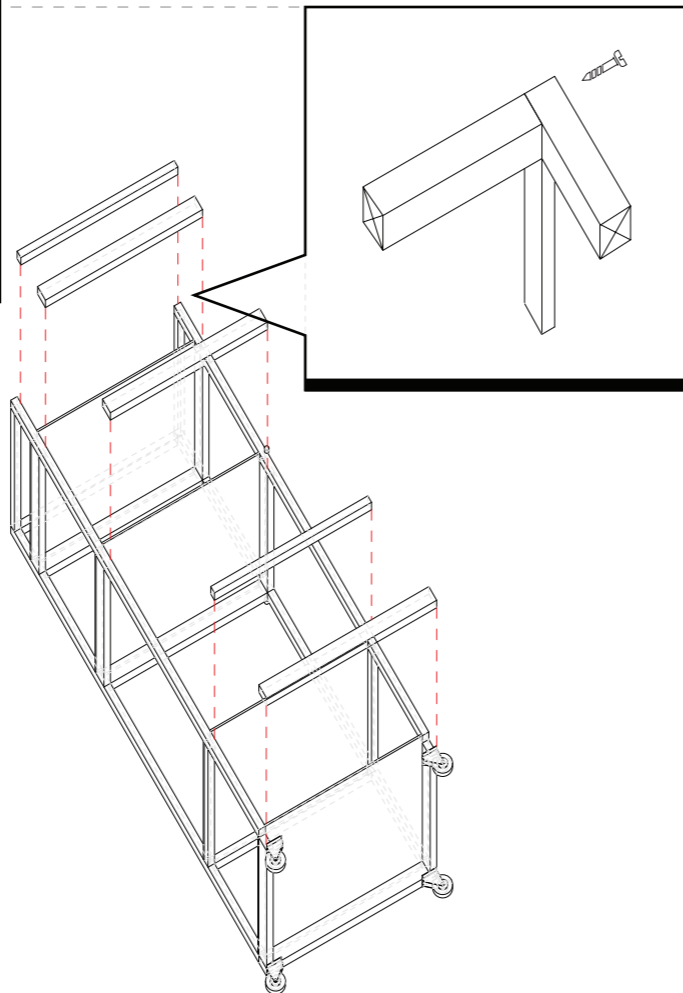
pieces catalogue



assembly guide

the garden cart

required tools
assembly instructions



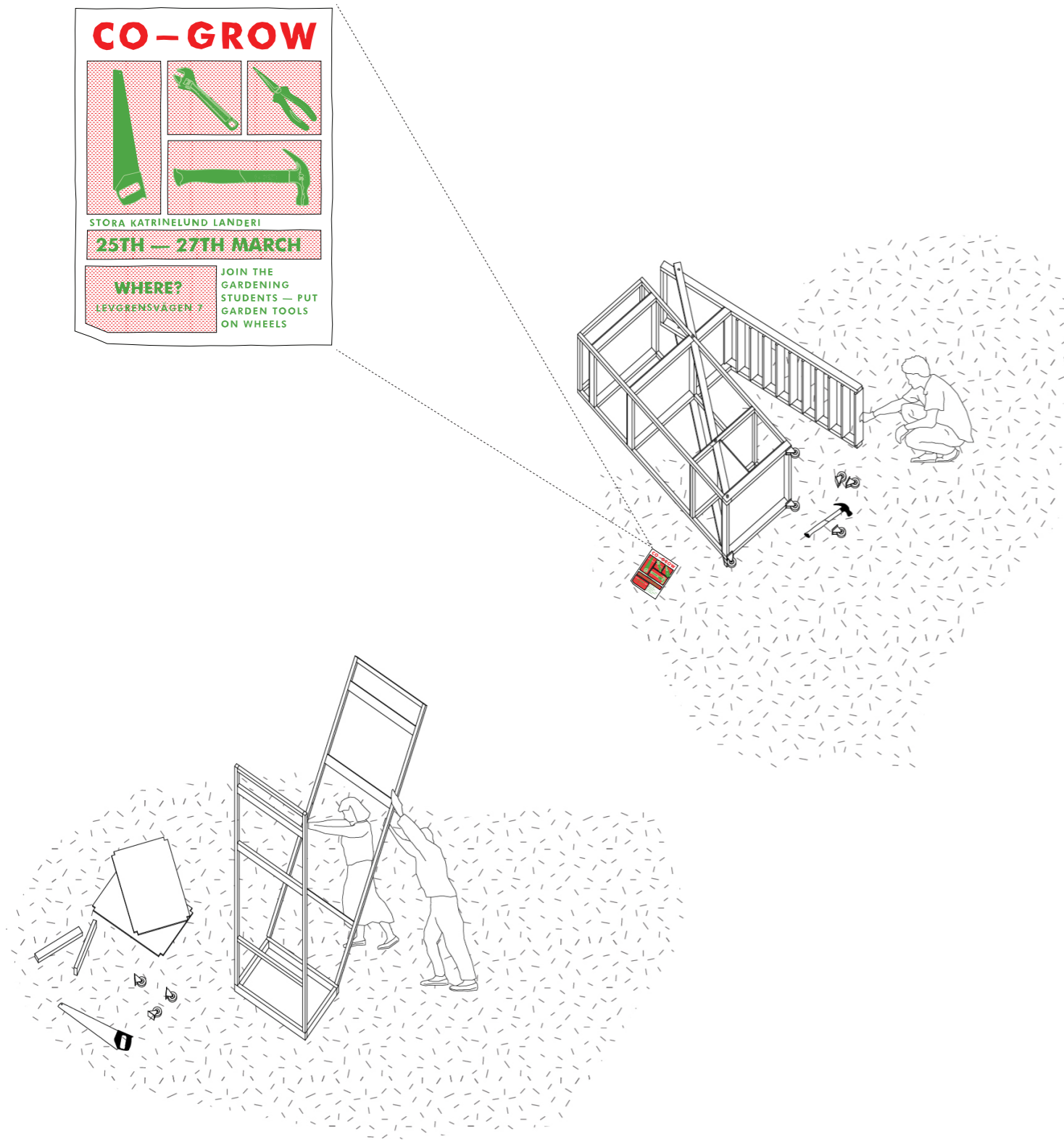


fig. 19. Fictional Invitation Flyer & Kick-off

4.C AND SO IT GOES

An open call goes out to the public to engage in the Renaturalization Factory. First, there is an event during which the Garden Cart is built collectively (see fig. 19. *Fictional Invitation Flyer & Kick-off*). To advertise the project, flyers are handed out.

After the kick-off, the volunteers gather to break up chunks of asphalt and plant vegetation in the remaining holes. The activity is merged with existing activities of food production at Stora Katrinelund. Once a season has

passed, it is time for the first harvest, and the students throw a harvest party to which they invite their friends. The activities have now started to attract more visitors. The following figures (fig. 20. *Axonometric View A*, fig. 21. *Axonometric View B*, fig. 22. *Axonometric View C*, and fig. 23. *Perspective Drawing*) illustrate these scenarios of how the site is temporarily activated through gardening activities.

With time, more actors have become encouraged to engage in the activities between Mölndalsån and Stora Katrinelund. The initial activities

worked as a catalyzer for more creative and collective activities in the area, like the development of the ECObox project by Petrescu (2012). Once more actors engage in activating the area, the activities become multiple and diverse. As illustrated in fig. 21. *Perspective Drawing*, the riverside could become a social hub of diverse activation. Social networks expand as more actors become involved in the activities. When people gather to co-grow and socialize, the effect of the temporary activities is not only spatial but relational, like the projects of Petrescu (2012).

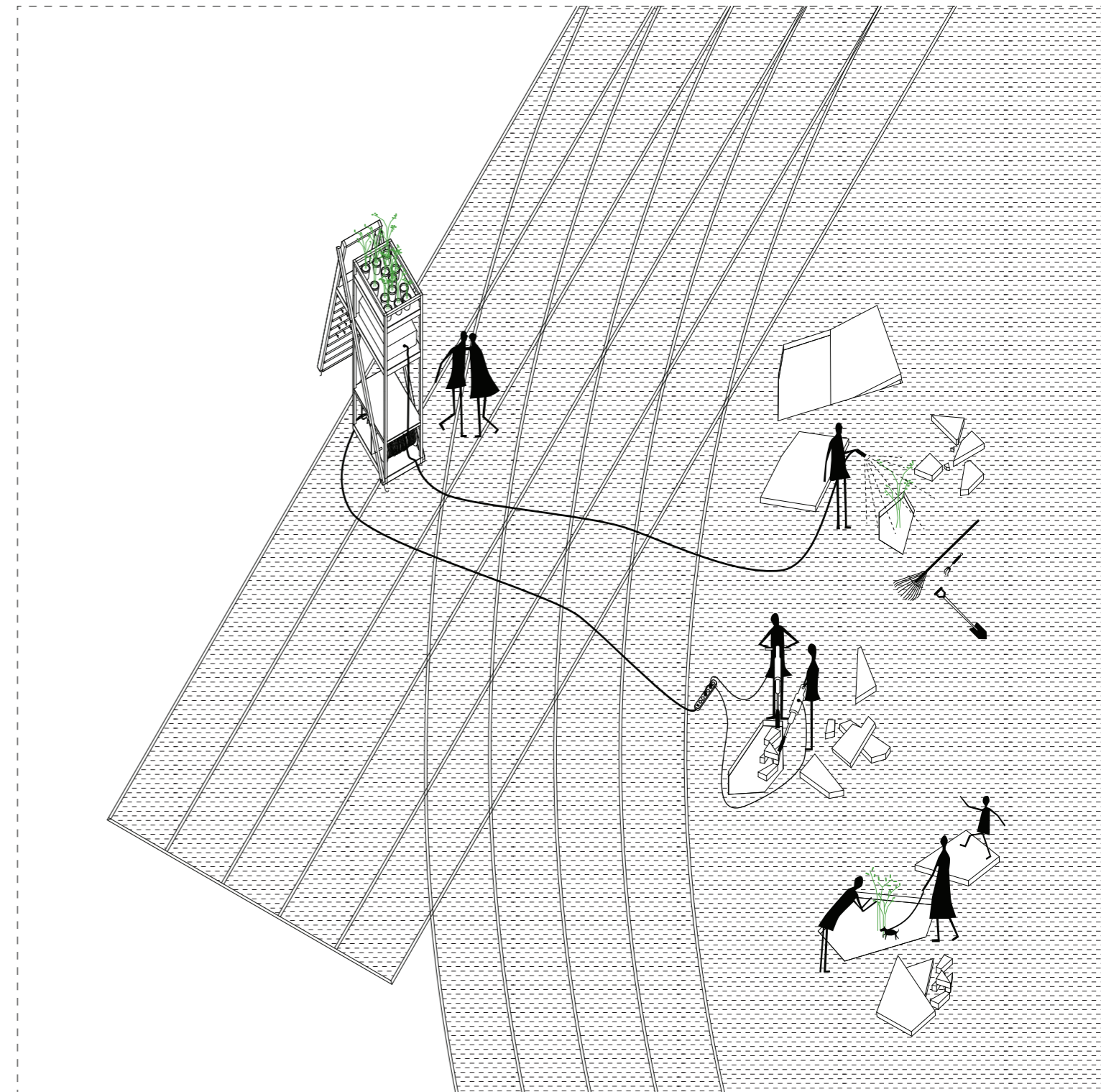


fig. 20. Axonometric View A, scale 1:100

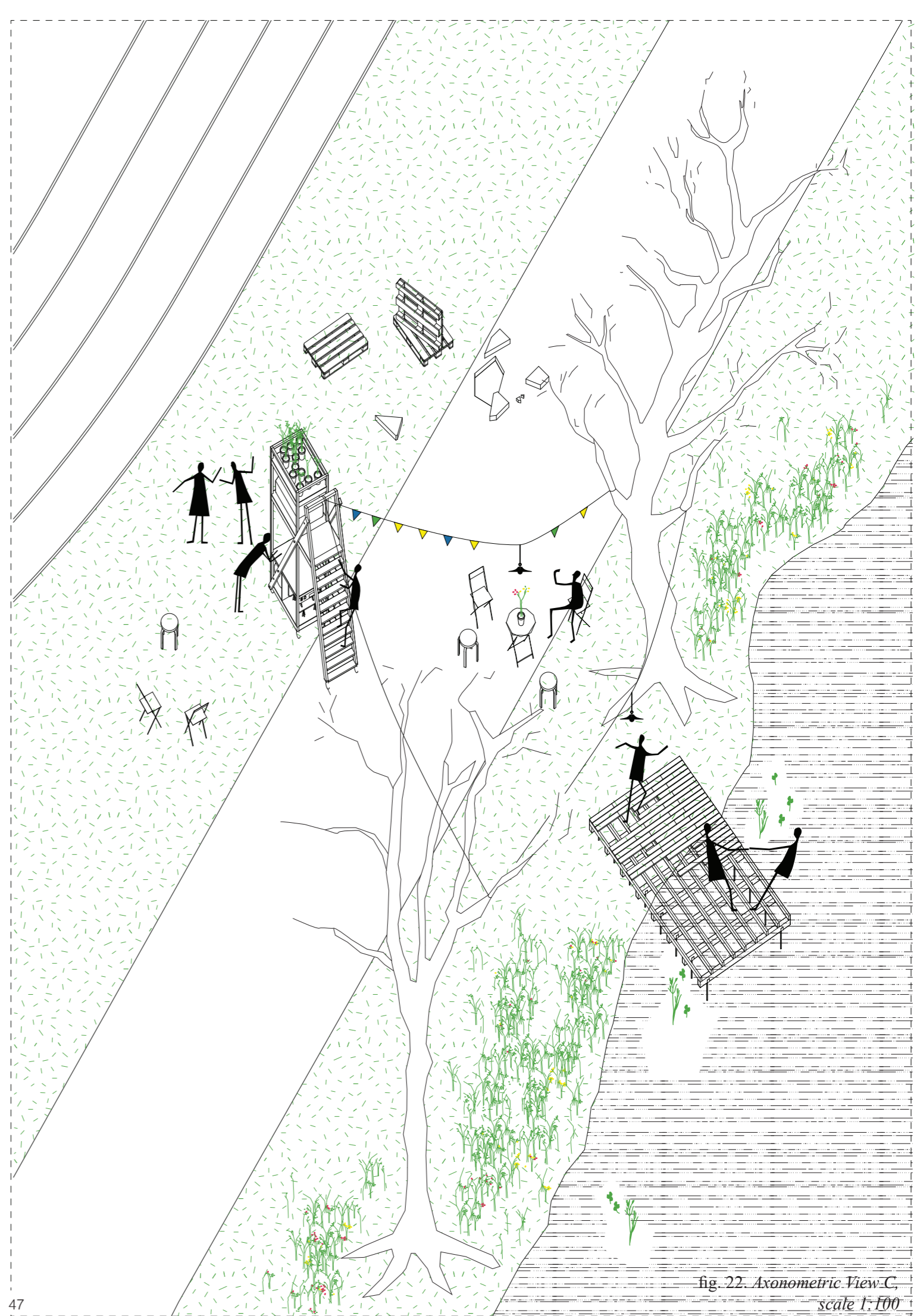
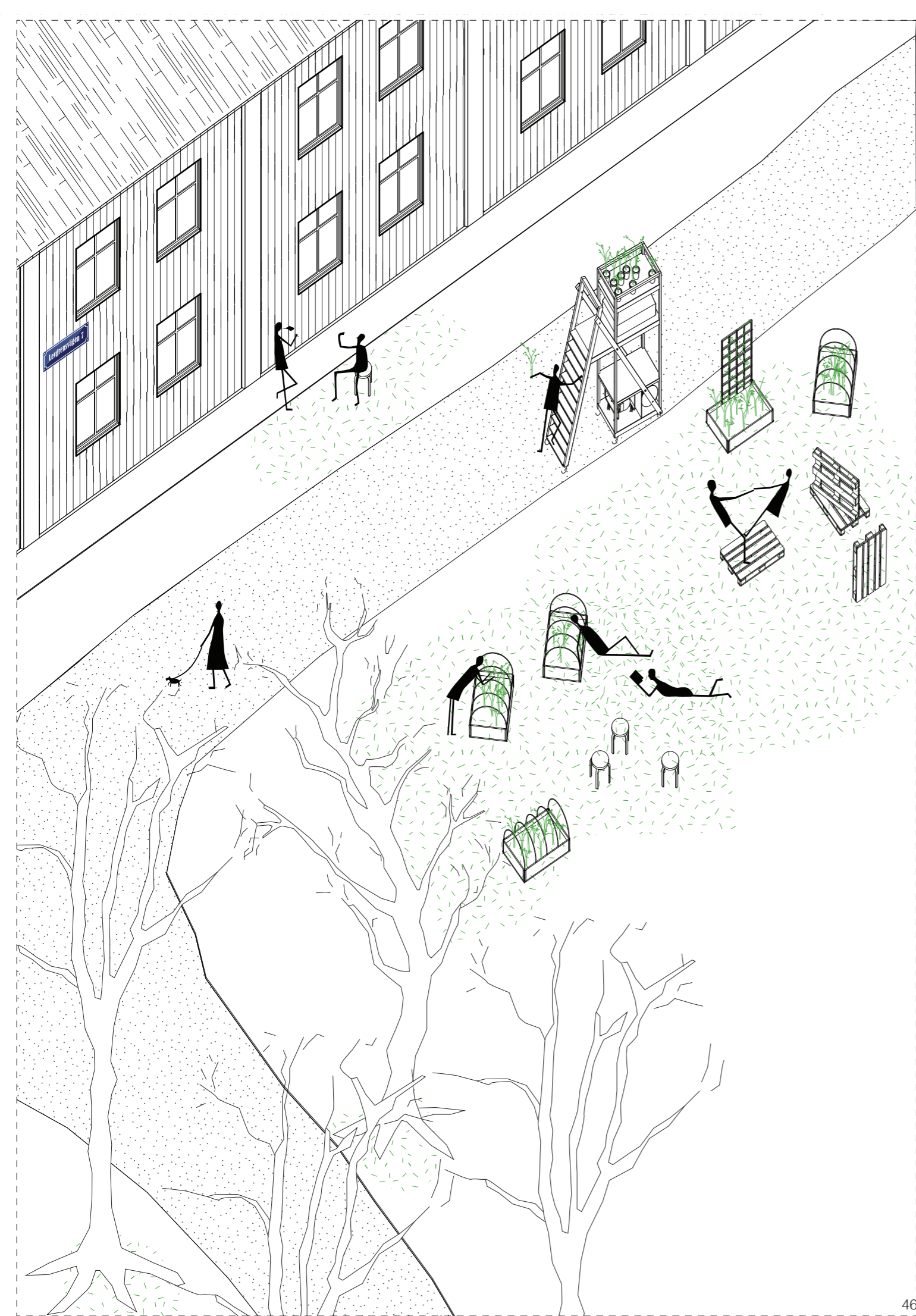


fig. 22. Axonometric View C,
scale 1:100

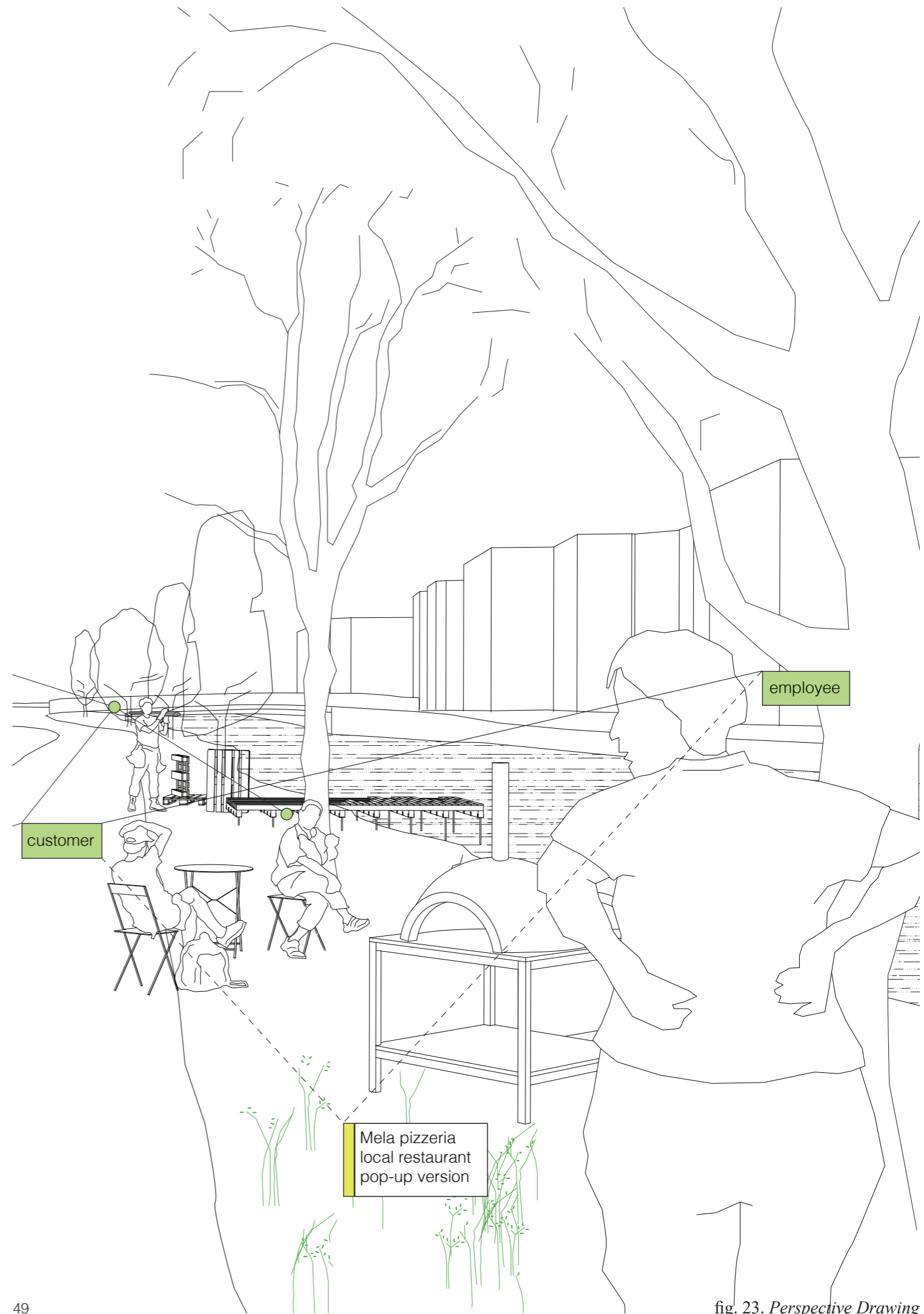
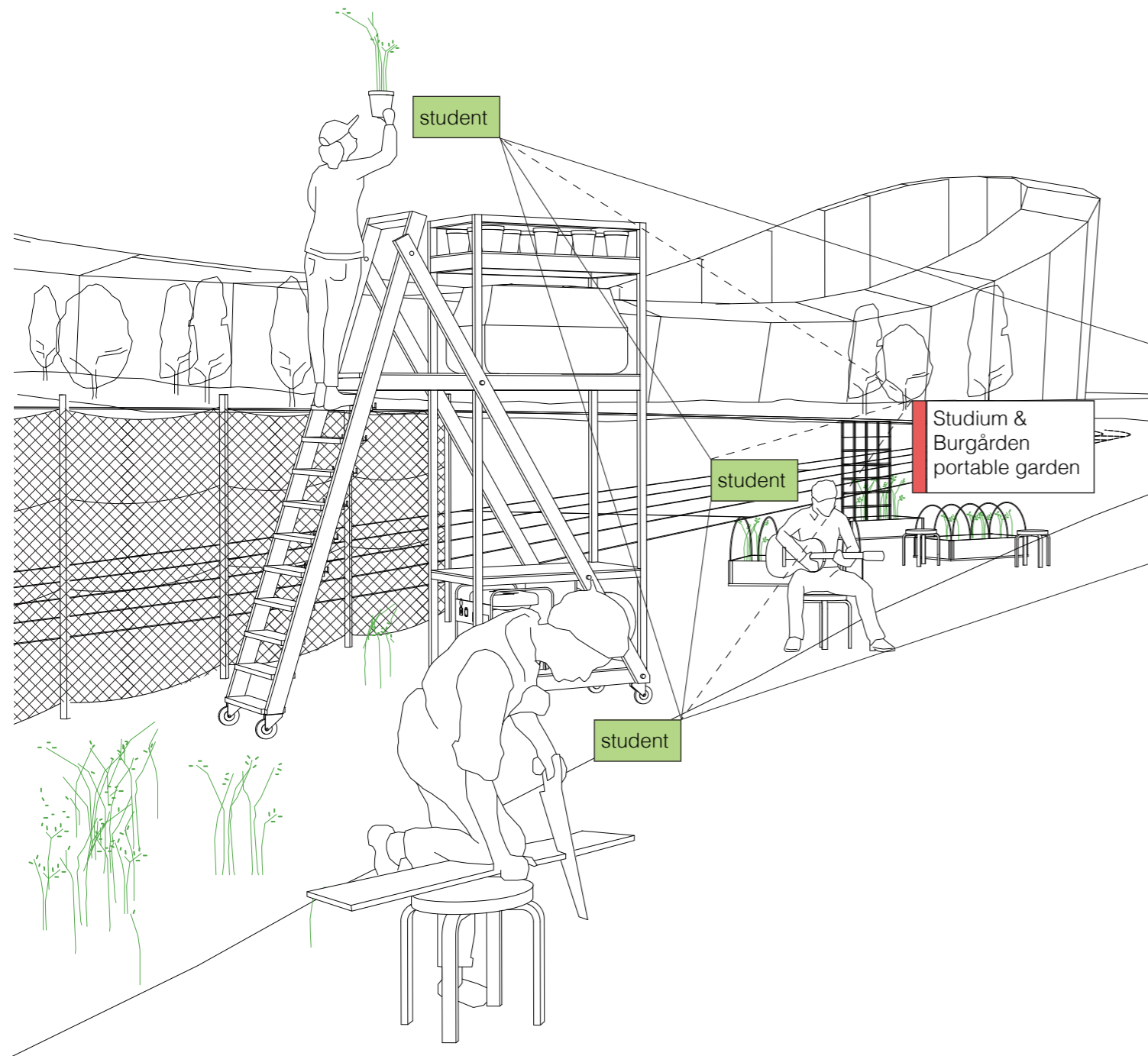


fig. 23. Perspective Drawing

4.D AND THEN THERE WAS

NATURE

The activities of the Renaturalization Factory have now come to their end. A site that was once nature became dominated by asphalt but has now become nature again. The volunteers of the Renaturalization Factory gave natural growth a kickstart and a growth-zone.

Wildlife need relief from human control which is why the site should only be semi-accessible to humans.

On the following spread is a comparison between fig. 26. *Existing Site Plan B* and fig. 27. *Proposed Site*

Plan. It shows that the running track that is underused and misused today is proposed to become a wildlife habitat where humans would have limited access.

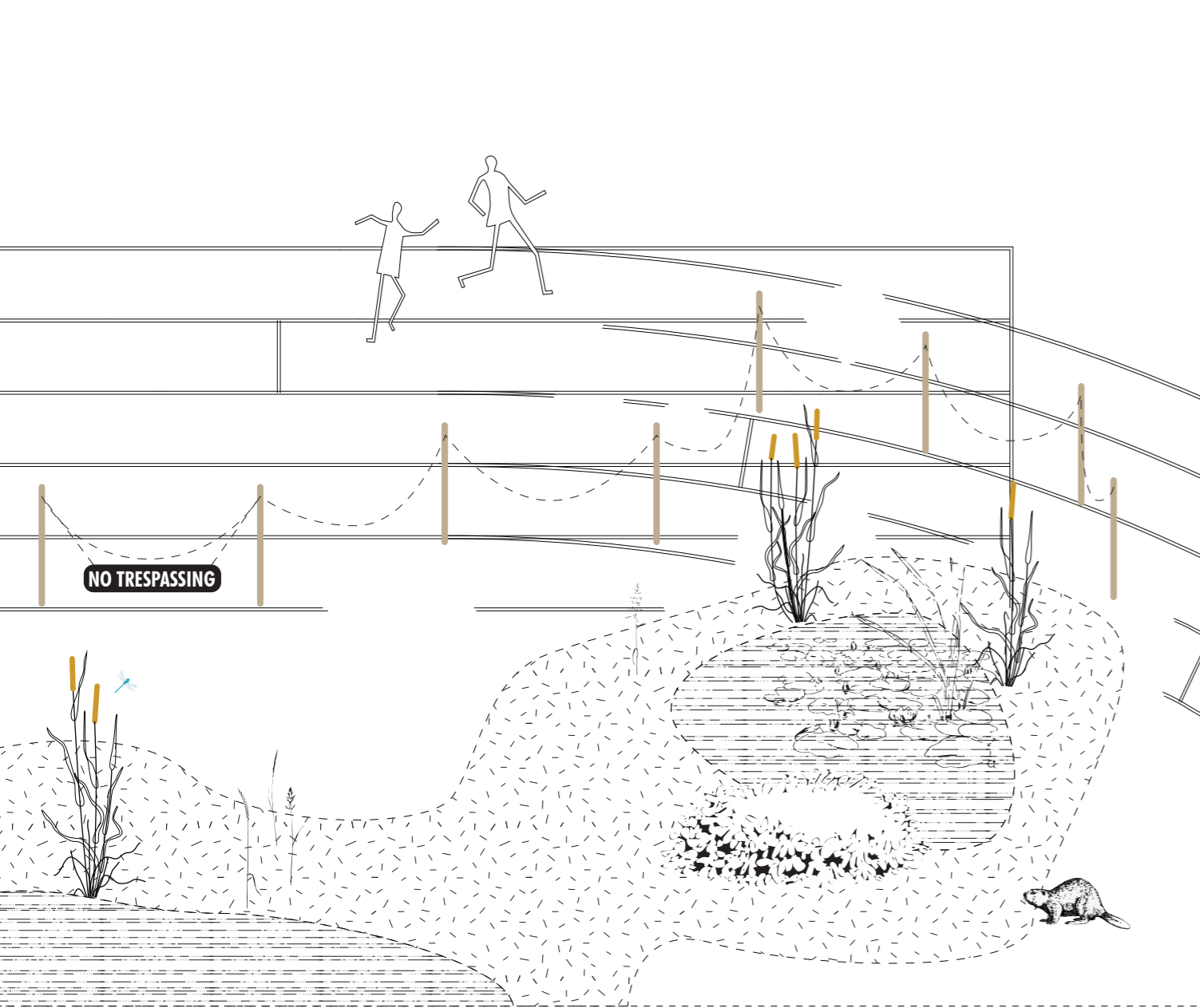


fig. 24. *Leave the Animals Alone – Illustration*

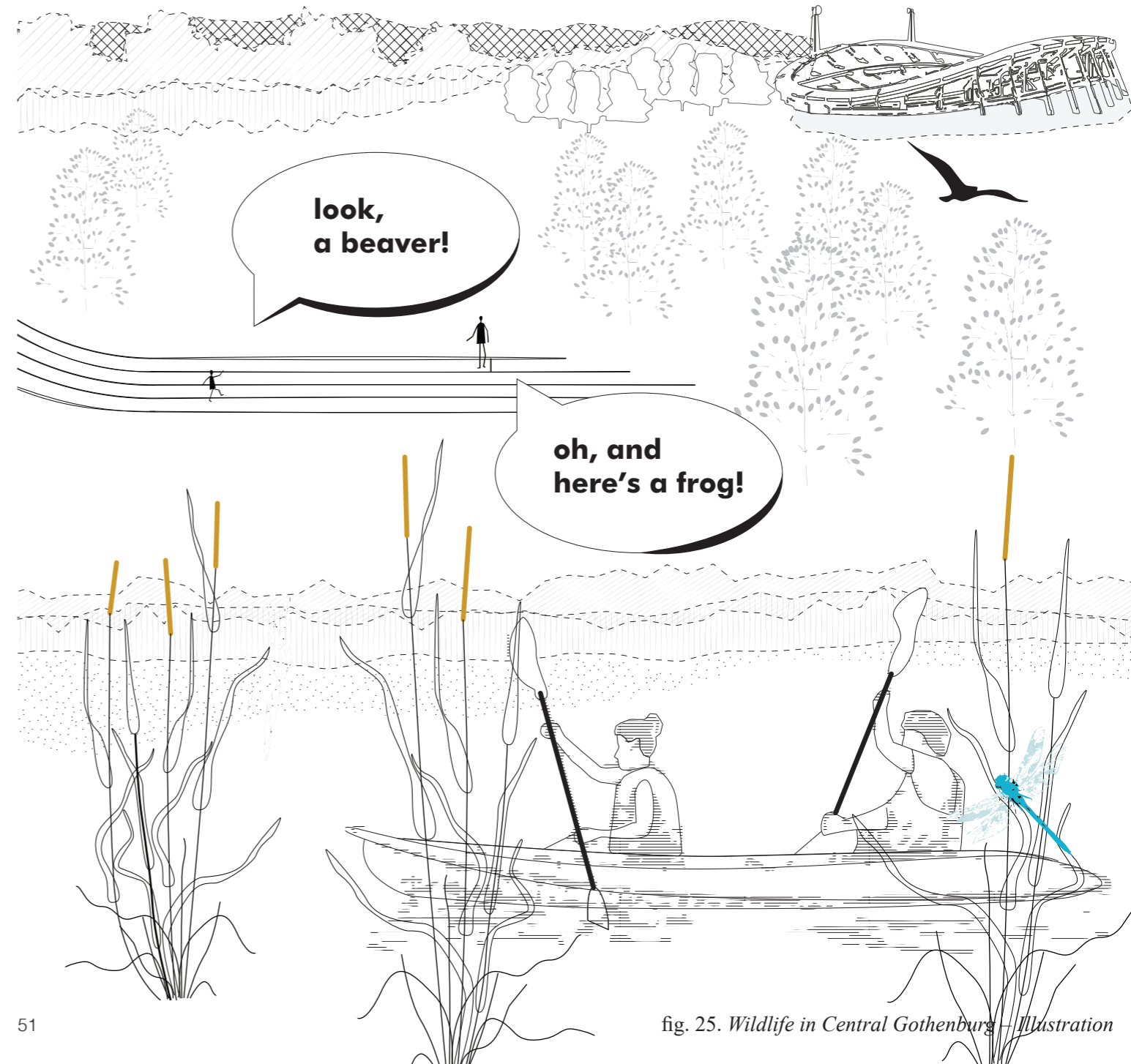


fig. 25. *Wildlife in Central Gothenburg – Illustration*

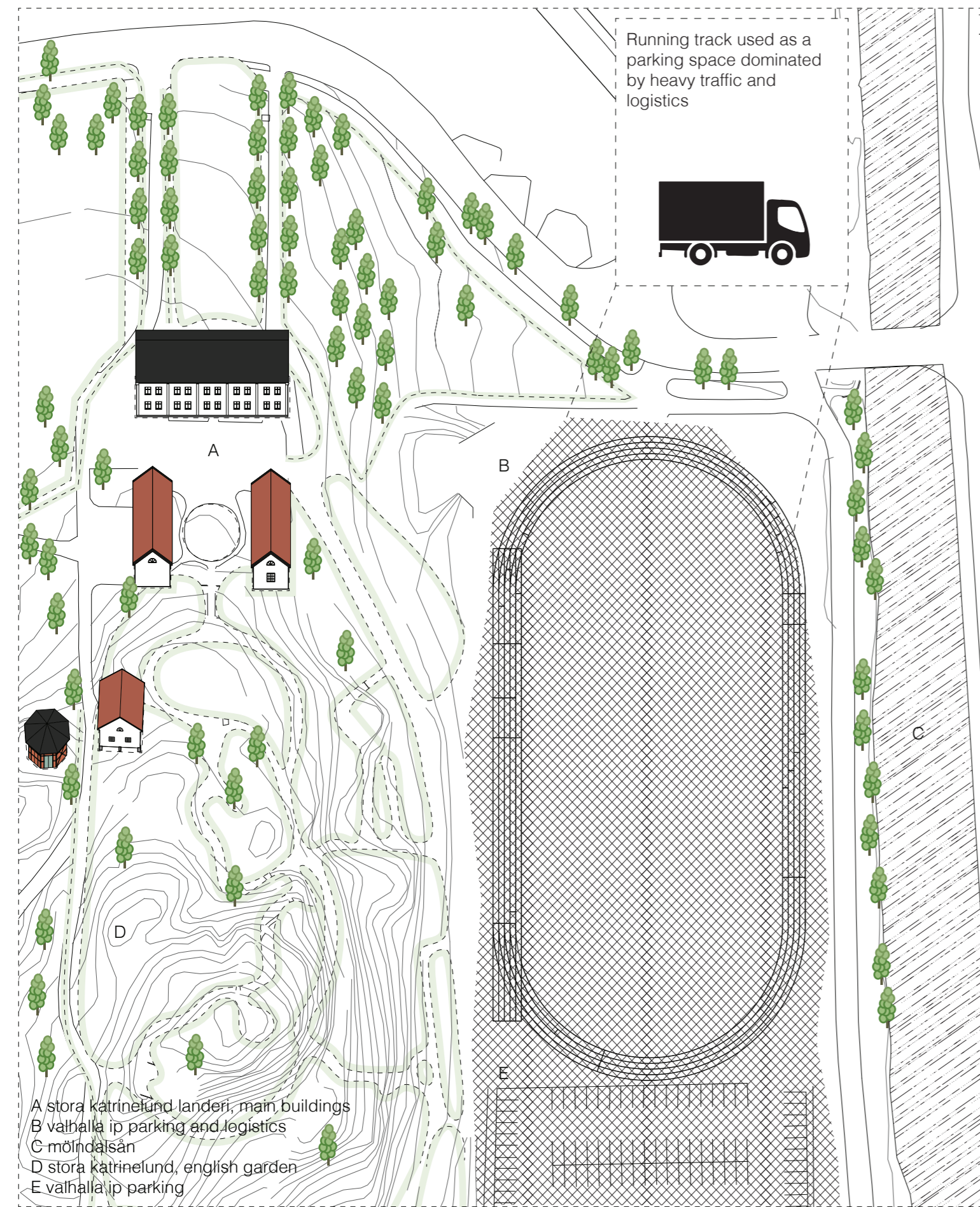


fig. 26. Existing Site Plan B, scale 1:1 500

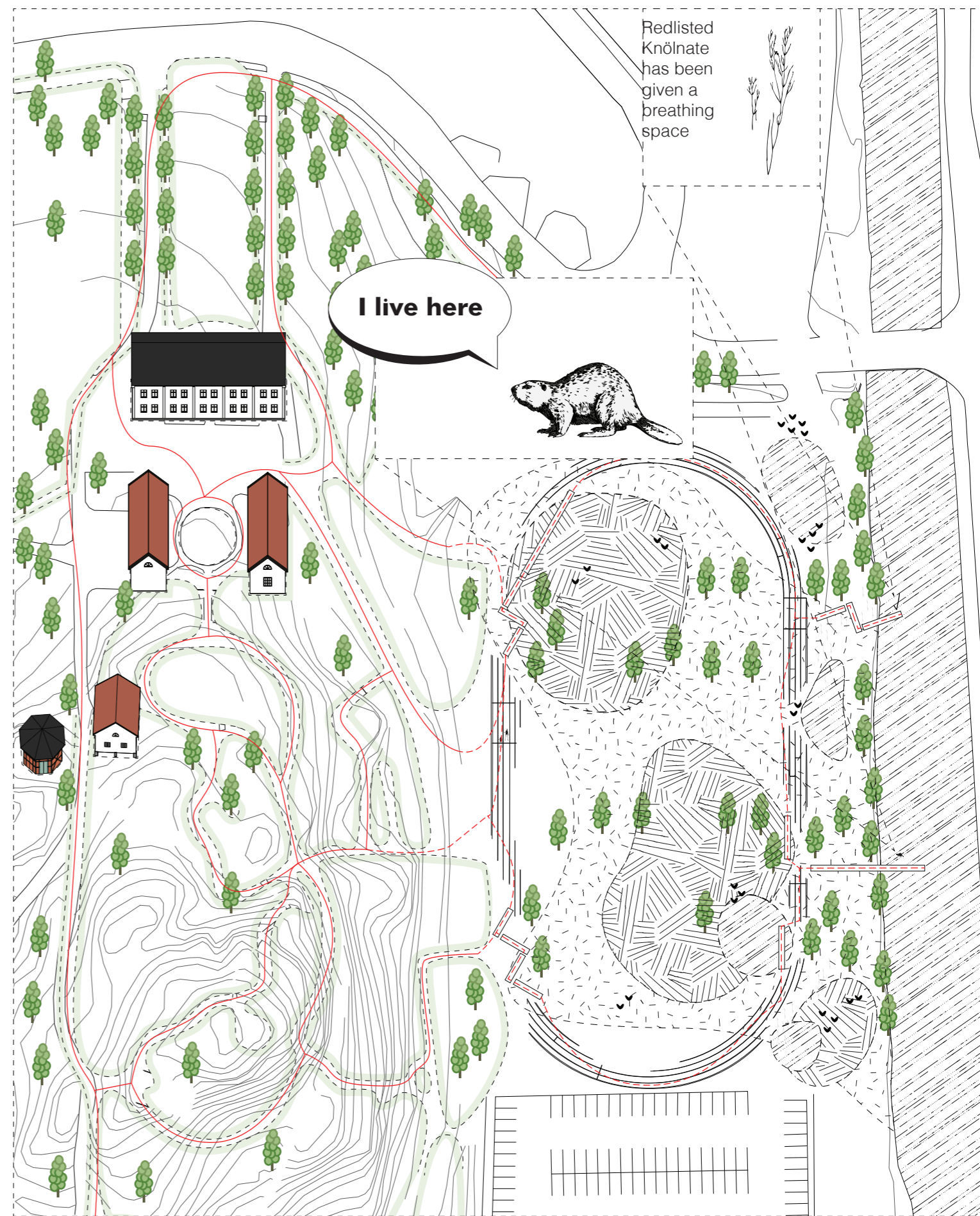


fig. 27. Proposed Site Plan, scale 1:1 500

5 DISCUSSION

This thesis explored an alternative scenario for a site within Evenemangsområdet that is currently underused, both from a human and nonhuman perspective, meaning that it provides little value to either group. It considered local opportunities, including both social, spatial and ecological, and it was based both on research and subjective experiences of the site.

Through a case study analysis, mapping of opportunities, and speculative design, the thesis focused on social and ecological sustainability, and alternative tools for urban designers through the following themes:

- human and nonhuman actors
- temporary activation
- disruptive architecture
- wilderness
- re-naturalization
- speculation, scenario
- prototypeing
- participation
- alternative mapping

5.A THE QUESTIONS AND THE ANSWERS

The thesis addressed three questions:

1. How can the site redevelopment be influenced by the open-ended design practices of Landscape Urbanism and Transspecies urban theory?
2. How can a small-scale prototype be implemented by Stora Katrinelund landeri to generate spontaneous social and ecological activation?
3. How can a program of temporary activation be implemented at the site?

By designing a scenario rather than a static plan, it should be clear that the design focus lies not on how the site *looks* but how it *works*. Especially because the scenario shows how the site is activated, first through collective events and later through ecological development. Behind the disruptive and activist activity of breaking up asphalt is the positive view of the site as “a site of opportunity”. The “final” stage of the design represents an unfinished park, indicating that the site may be an object of future appropriation and change. Through the collective prototype, this thesis argues that imagining alternative futures is a collective practice. The above aligns with core ideas of Landscape Urbanism and explains how the proposed site redevelopment is influenced by that theory.

Transspecies Urban Theory acknowledges nonhuman subjectivity, meaning that there are nonhuman actors. By proposing a garden that is initiated through active planting but that can later be “overtaken” by nonhumans and like so become bewildered, the project leaves an opportunity for nonhumans to shape their surroundings – to be actors that act. That is how the project conceptualizes Transspecies Urban Theory.

As demonstrated by some of the case studies, a small-scale prototype can have an impact that is greater than its size. All the case studies, and the project too, have in common that their success lies in the consequences rather than the style. The prototype was designed to be a facilitator of the activities proposed for the Renaturalization Factory. The last stage of design is the beginning of a natural development of wild nature, and the meantime use is the collective and social activity of gardening. It is a visionary example of a site “development” that is more of a degrowth scenario, like the Duck Lands proposal by Cedric Price.

One could think of many ways a small-scale prototype could generate social and ecological activation, but this thesis offers a specific suggestion: the Garden Cart. With a common mission to Renaturalize the site, people could mobilize around the Garden Cart that would offer them tools and be a clear (although movable) meeting point. As the Anthropocene makes itself heard through climate disasters around the world, it seems as more people come to realize the urgency of the situation. When fear and anger grow, so may the ambition to “do something”. Through the activist and disruptive activity of breaking up asphalt to plant seeds of future ecological resistance, the prototype engages those who are scared, angry and hopeful. Those who see the site as a site of opportunities.

Temporarily, the site would become not only a Renaturalization Factory but an interdisciplinary discussion forum for social and ecological concerns, where people could meet and discuss alternative approaches to urban practice.

5.B THE END

While the situation in Evenemangsområdet is very much real, the idea here is not to propose an entirely feasible solution or a “true” or probable scenario. Instead, the idea is to offer a visionary example of an “alternative future” for the site. One that considers human and nonhuman standpoints.

As demonstrated through the manifesto, this thesis is a statement to move more radically towards ecologically and socially sustainable urban practice. Hopefully, this thesis is a valuable contribution to perspectives about alternative urban practice. A piece of hope.

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All images and graphics have been produced by the author unless otherwise stated. See complete list of figures below.

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