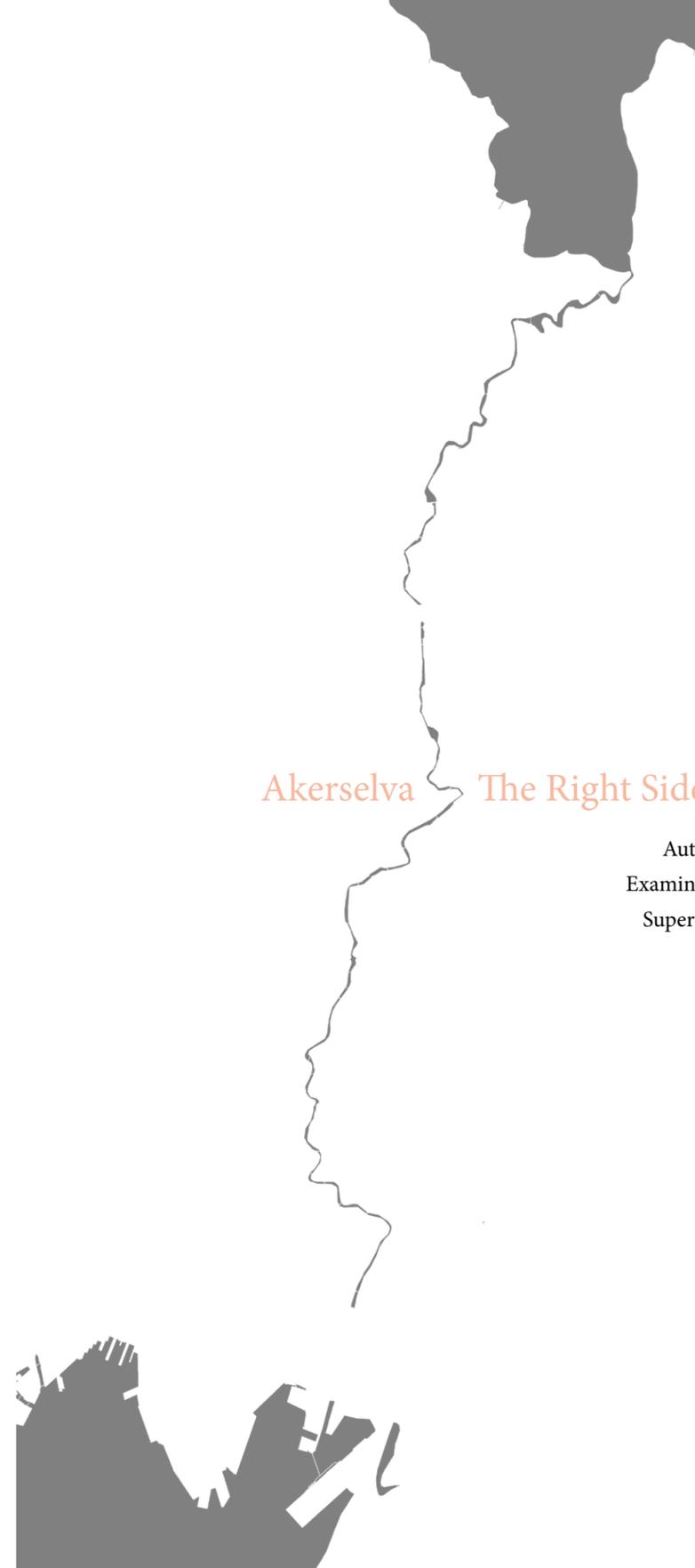




Akerselva The Right Side of The Brain



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Lunds Universitet 2018



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[1] Abstract

Oslo has until now been divided into the west and east, separated by categories of economic and social class as well as a physical barrier, the river, Akerselva. The west predominantly represents people of middle to upper class, whereas the east represents the middle to lower class people. This division has been formed throughout history, as the river that separates Oslo has been home to industry, supplying energy for industries to thrive and grow along its edges.

The difference between the east and the west has always been present, but it is mainly in recent years that they have been discussed. There are many plans of development on how to enhance Oslo's city centre, such as new cultural centres and a Fjord Boardwalk, however, how does this influence the east and the identity it will have in the future?

Akerselva is seen as a clear distinctive physical barrier that people associate with the border. However, according to the municipality the actual line that distinguishes the west and the east is the main road, Uelandsgate, which runs parallel to the river. This slight difference in the perception of the boundary leaves an undefined zone, where the project is located.

Given the history of industry and innovation along the river there is a local interest in homemade products, which has inspired my decision to design

a learning lab for industrial design, incorporating students and new entrepreneurs. The site in which the building is located was chosen because of an existing courtyard, framed by the facades of the surrounding industrial brick buildings. This location sparked an idea, that the area could be transformed into a meeting place, where both neighbouring companies and companies from further away, could meet to be inspired and discuss new creative processes.

The focus during the design phase has been to establish new connections between the three actors consisting of students, new entrepreneurs and the public. The design of the open circulation core is oriented towards the public and allows for an exploration of the building and the process it contains. I have separated the process into different workshop environments that are placed vertically throughout the building. The different workshops serve as meeting places for the students and entrepreneurs, which makes it possible for them to collaborate and discuss the design process.

Working with the city scale to influence the function of the built scale, I want to encourage Akerselva's identity to become a spine for learning. The centre of Oslo represents the brain and Akerselva is the creative Right Side of The Brain.





How can the shift of the industrial identity to culture and learning connect the west and east of Oslo?

Oslo

[2] Exploring Akerselva



Journey Along Akerselva

As I began my journey from the Oslo central station, I started to gain an impression of the characteristics of the river, Akerselva, and what makes it distinctive in contrast to rest of Oslo.

The architecture along Akerselva is unique as it portrays Oslo's industrial heritage. Although, it still has a strong industrial atmosphere, there is also an interesting contrast on site with creativity. This alternative creativity is expressed in grassroot businesses, cultural buildings and the well-known graffiti found in the area.

Another quality of the area is the close connection it has to the water. It is interesting to see the different relations that each building has with the water. The distance between the buildings to the water varies between 15 metres to -5 metres. An example is the contrast in the environment surrounding DOGA and Oslo National Academy of Arts. The former is in a much more open environment, while the latter is projecting out into the water. The fluctuating pattern the buildings proximity to the water creates interesting dynamic spaces.



View from the student residential building



Oslo National Academy of The Arts



Hausmania meets the bar, Bortenfor.



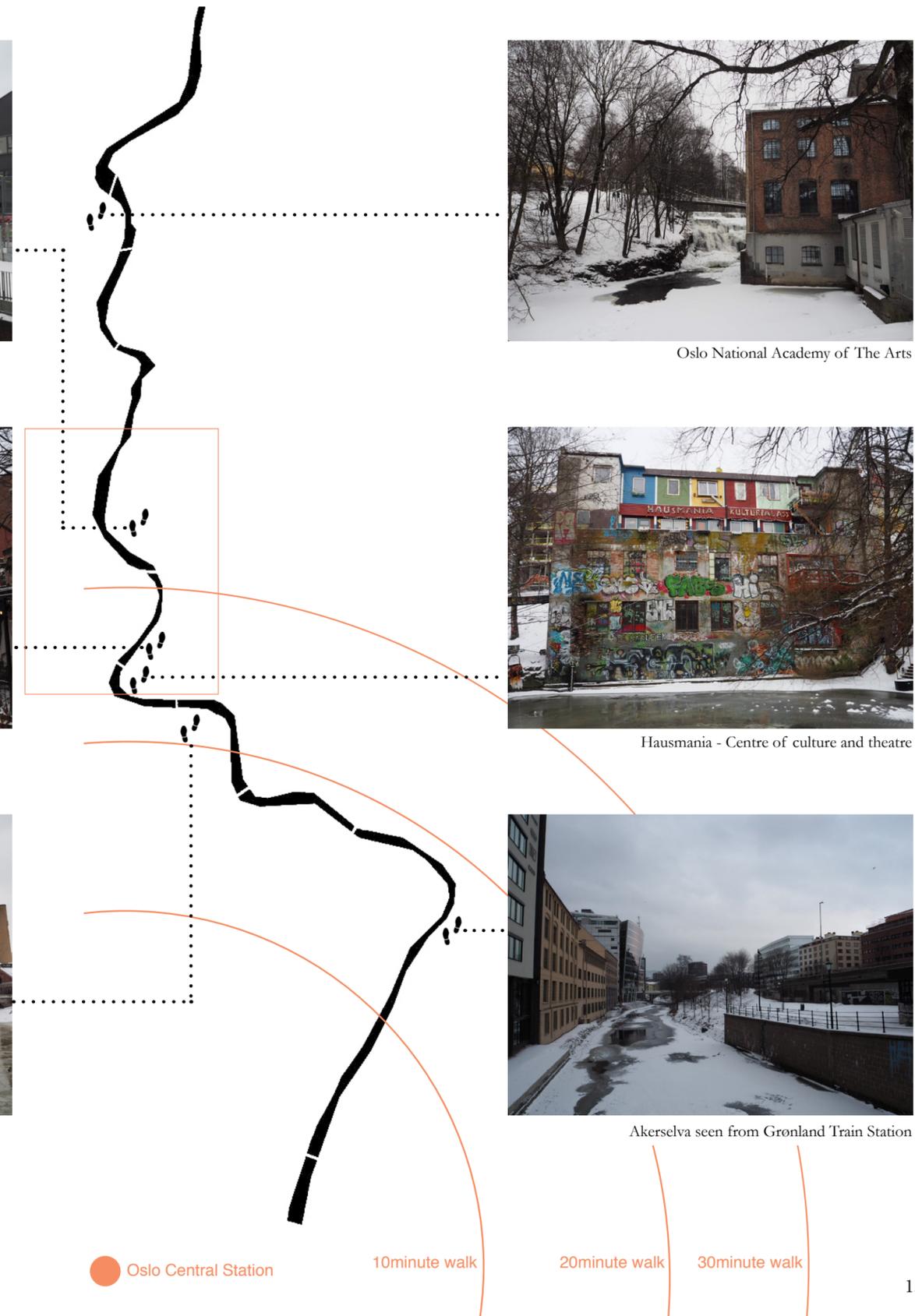
Hausmania - Centre of culture and theatre



DOGA - Design and Architecture Norway



Akerselva seen from Grønland Train Station



Oslo Central Station

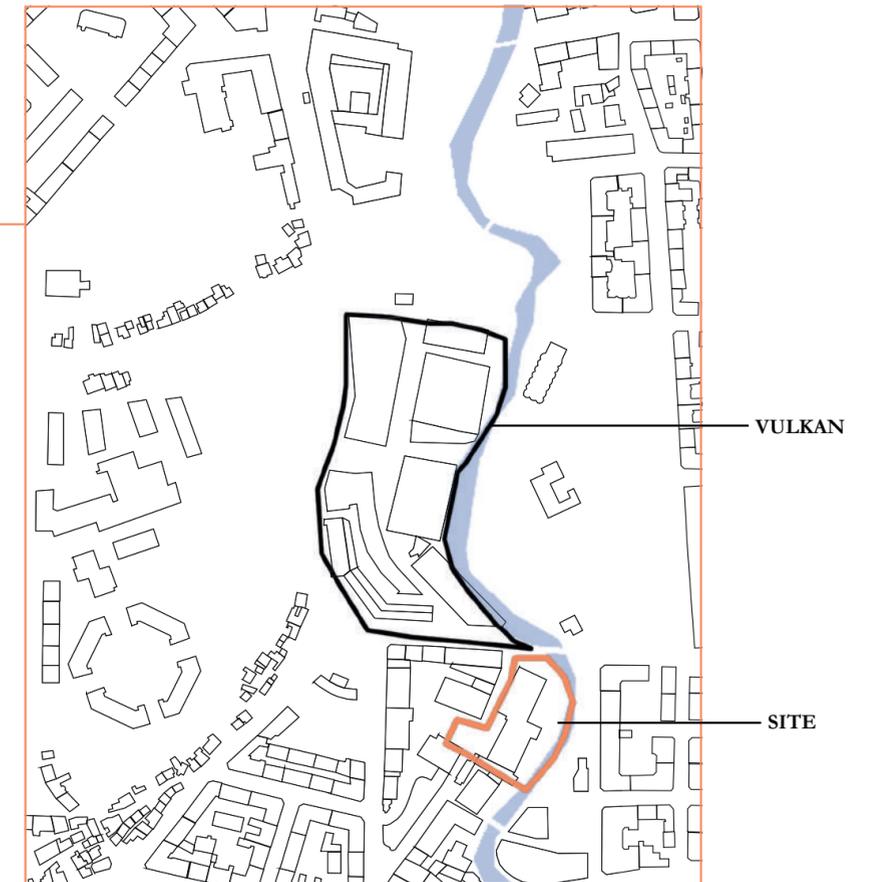
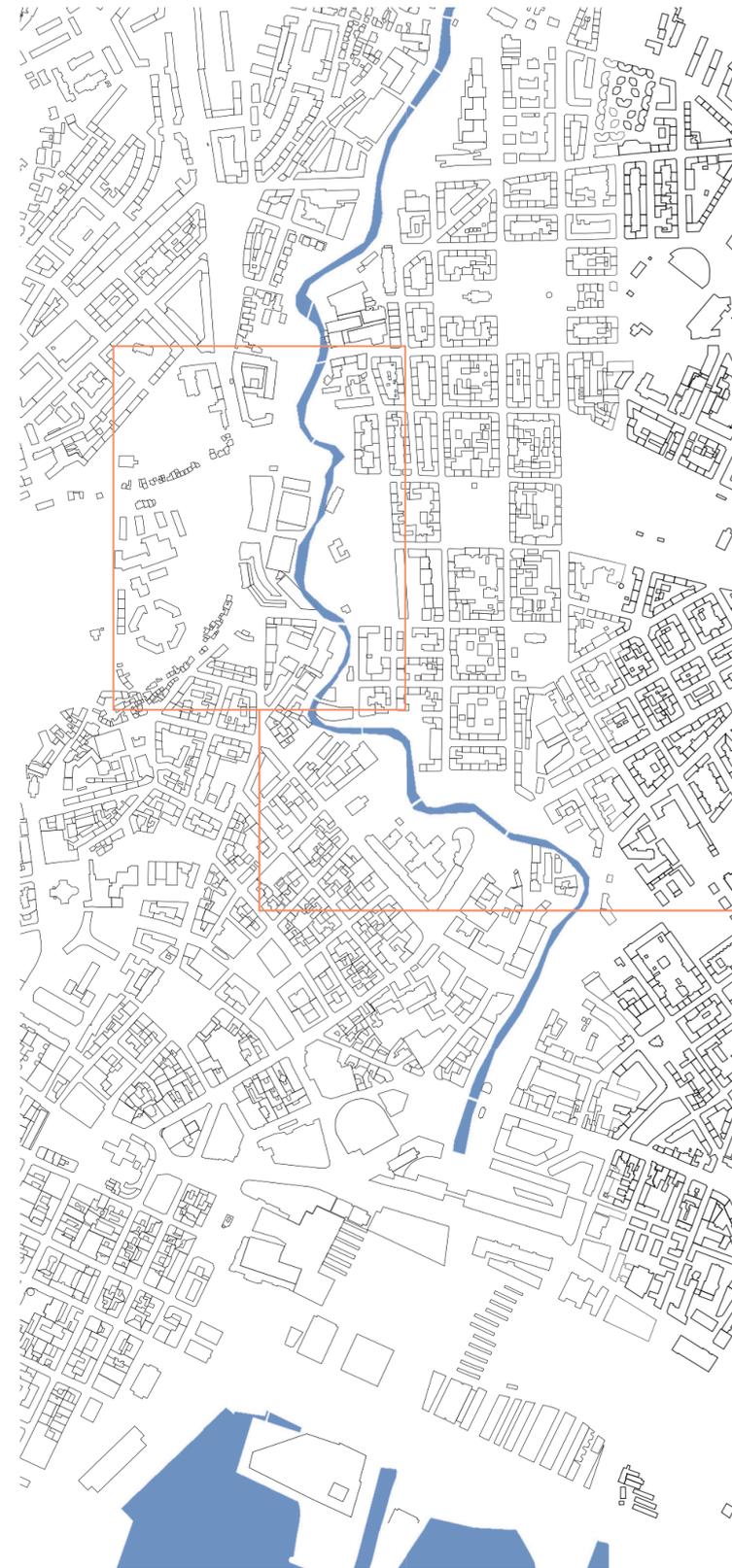
10minute walk

20minute walk

30minute walk

The Site

When exploring the area, I came across a site that appeared to be a hollowed out courtyard, formed by tall brick buildings. The volume of the space was very dynamic as it contrasted the strict linear facade of the buildings along the street. This in particular was intriguing and inspired me to choose this particular area as the project site.



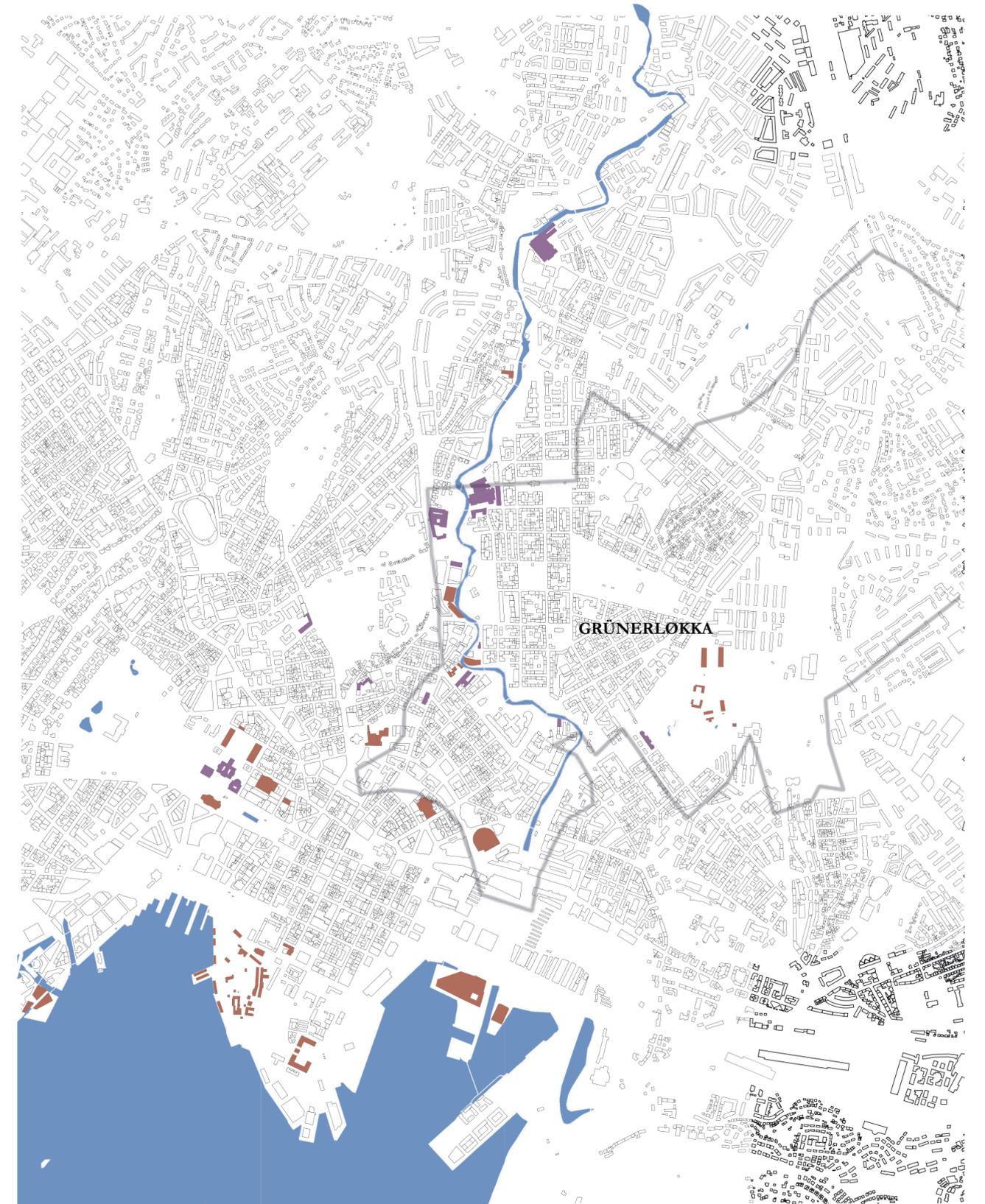
Mapping of Functions

Having mapped out the functions of the learning facilities and the cultural buildings, it became evident that they are located in quite separate areas of Oslo. In the east lie the majority of the educational facilities, while more of the cultural buildings are in the west. The buildings in the east, even though categorized as educational buildings, are hosts for cultural learning. This is where people rehearse, train or meet to discuss further engagement. It is this flexibility in function and level of professionalism that is unique in the creativity of the area.

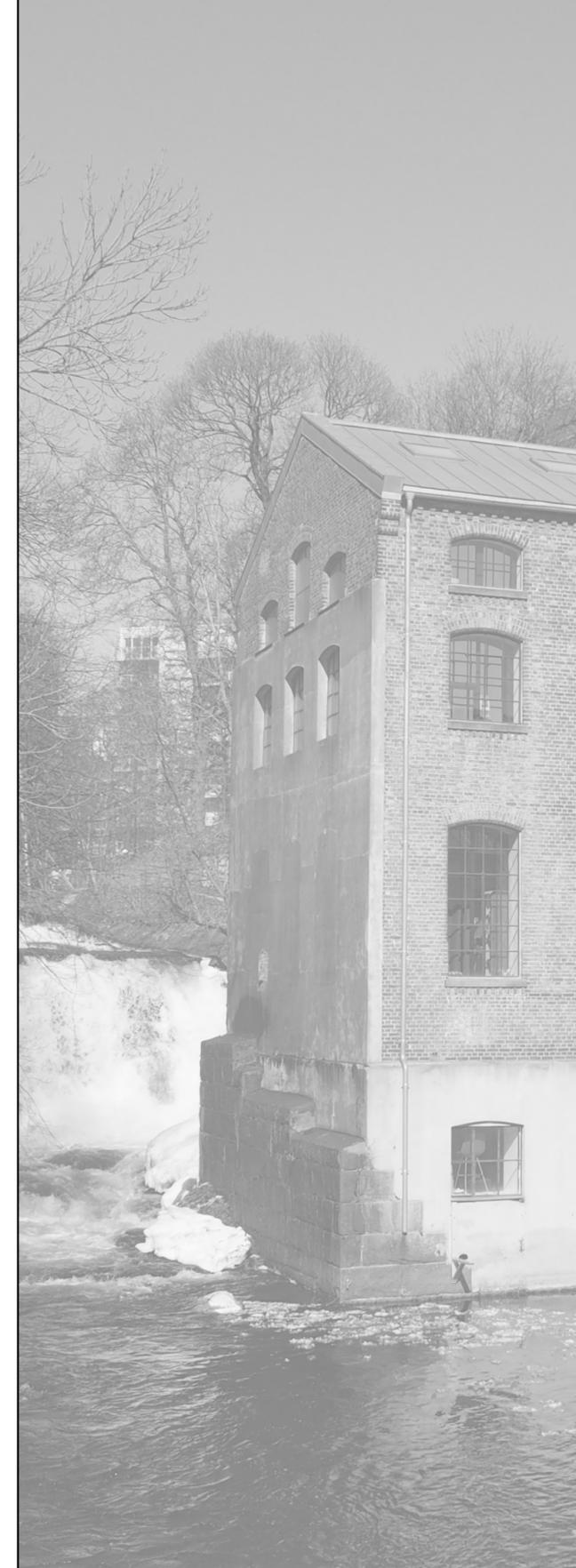
key:

- learning facilities
- cultural buildings

Both are linked to research and learning. Cultural education can be in the form of museums, theatres or libraries.



[3] Overview of Oslo



Division of Oslo

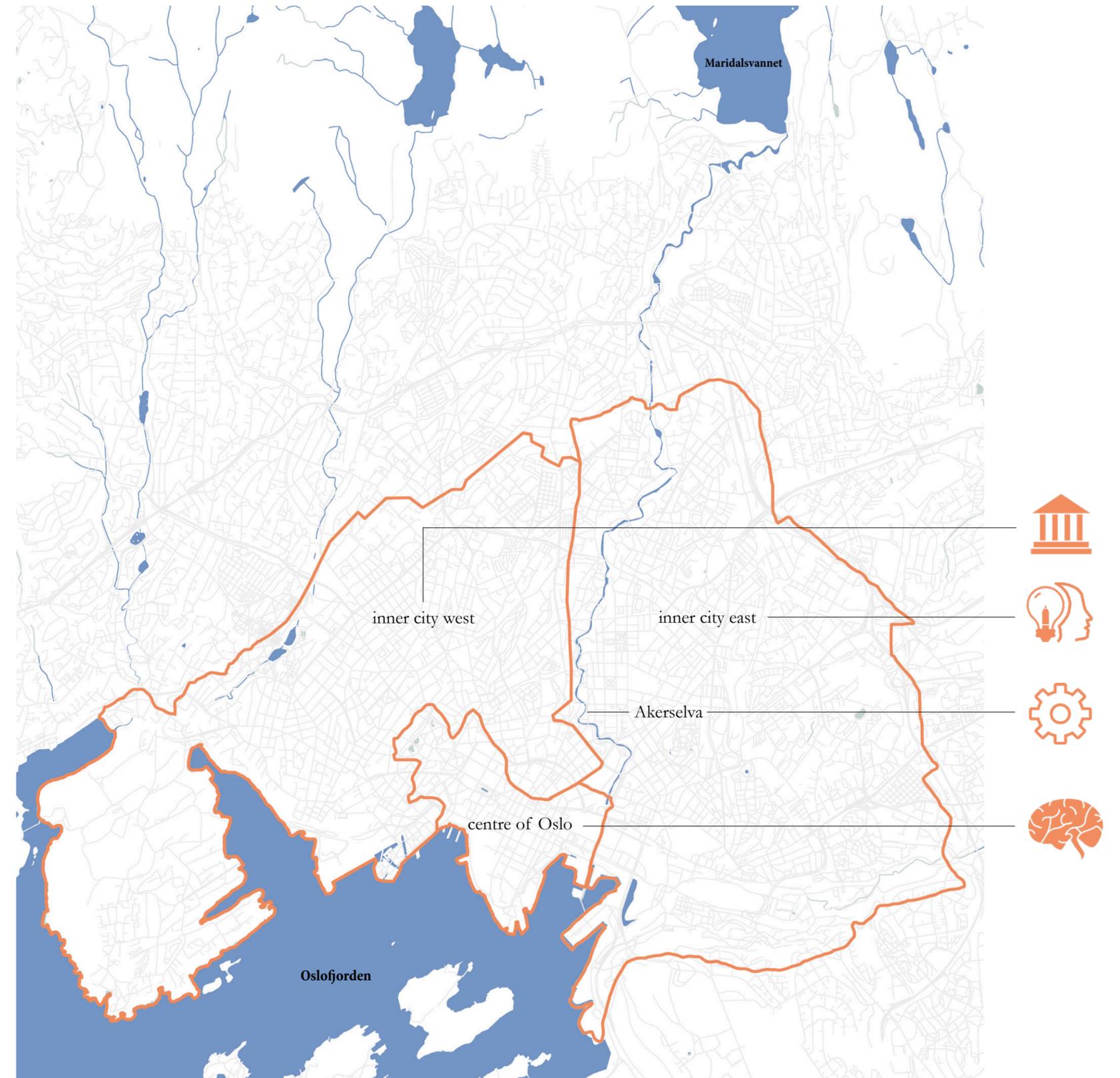
The river, Akerselva, has during the course of many years faced a shift from industry to culture. In the 1950's there occurred a large change in industrial production as many industries were moved away of the city centre. This resulted in many large vacant buildings along the river.

Due to the large size of the buildings it became important to place functions that would not alter the existing fabric. Many of these have therefore been repurposed for residential or commercial use, but there is also a prominent unique background quality that is growing simultaneously, education and culture. These are present in the form of grassroots establishments such as Hausmania, a centre for cultural activities such as talks and theatre performances. Another example is Dansenshus, a dance studio that showcase performances from new and experienced dancers. These differ quite greatly to the establishments found in the west and centre of Oslo. In the west and centre of Oslo the establishments are more formal with examples from the Nationaltheatre, the Opera House and the Astrup Fearnley Museum.

Through the project Akerselva - The Right Side of the Brain, I will address the division of Oslo and try to bridge these two distinctive characters with a function that peaks the interest of people from both areas.

key:

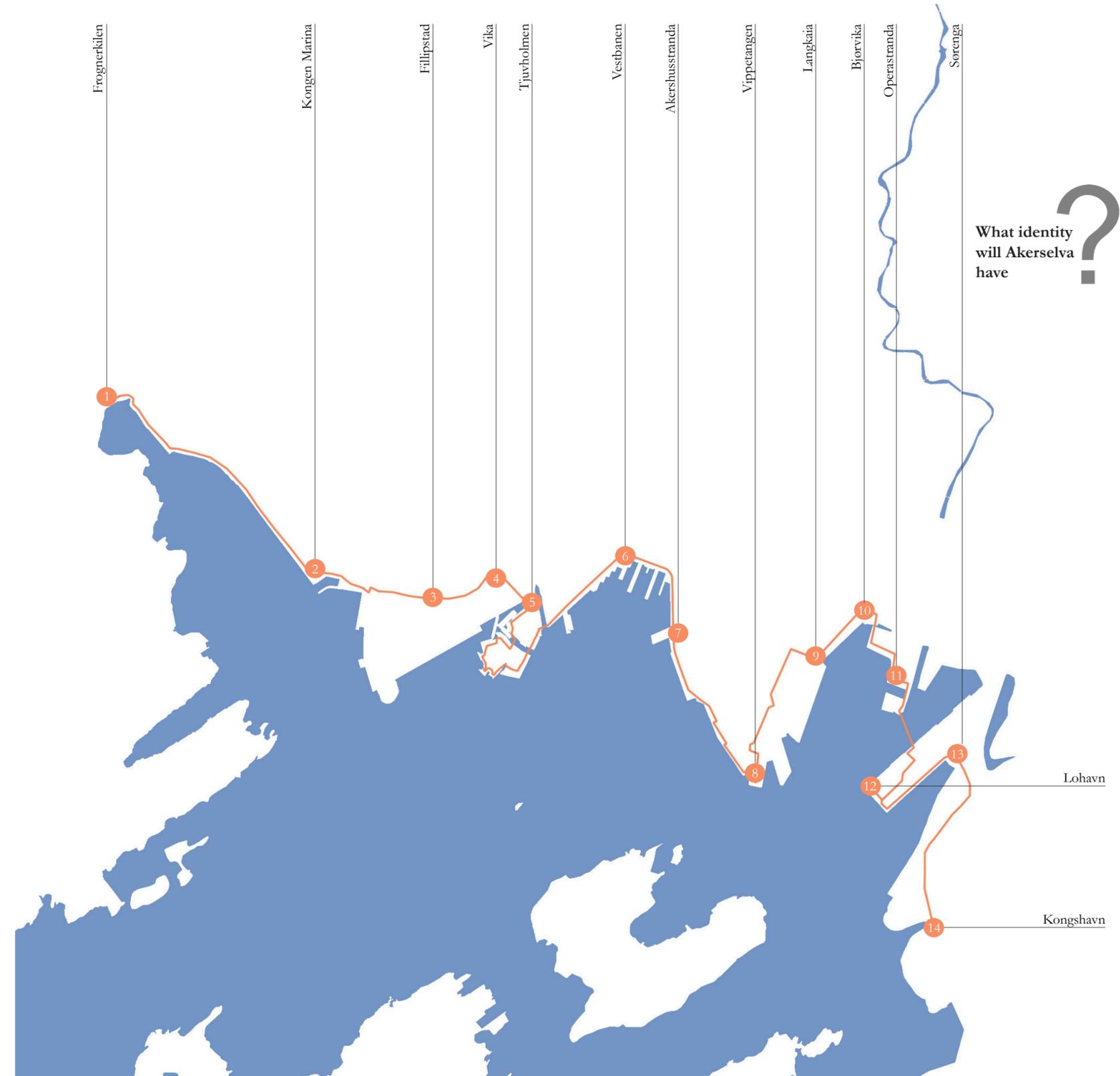
- The Brain - centre of Oslo
- The Historic Industry - Akerselva
- Grassroot Creativity - inner city east
- Established Culture - inner city west



Oslo: The Fjord City

As Oslo is rapidly developing, the local municipality has decided to focus resources on a boardwalk called The Fjord City. Oslo has always been greatly intertwined with nature and this is embedded in the Norwegian culture. The Fjord City sets a focus on the waterfront and how it can become more interactive with nature. Instead of building towards the inland, there is a new drive of building towards the fjord. Many projects initiated have been built to increase the cultural value and give space for meeting places.

Even though this development will increase the value of Oslo, economically and socially, it is also important to address: what will happen to Akerselva's identity in the future?

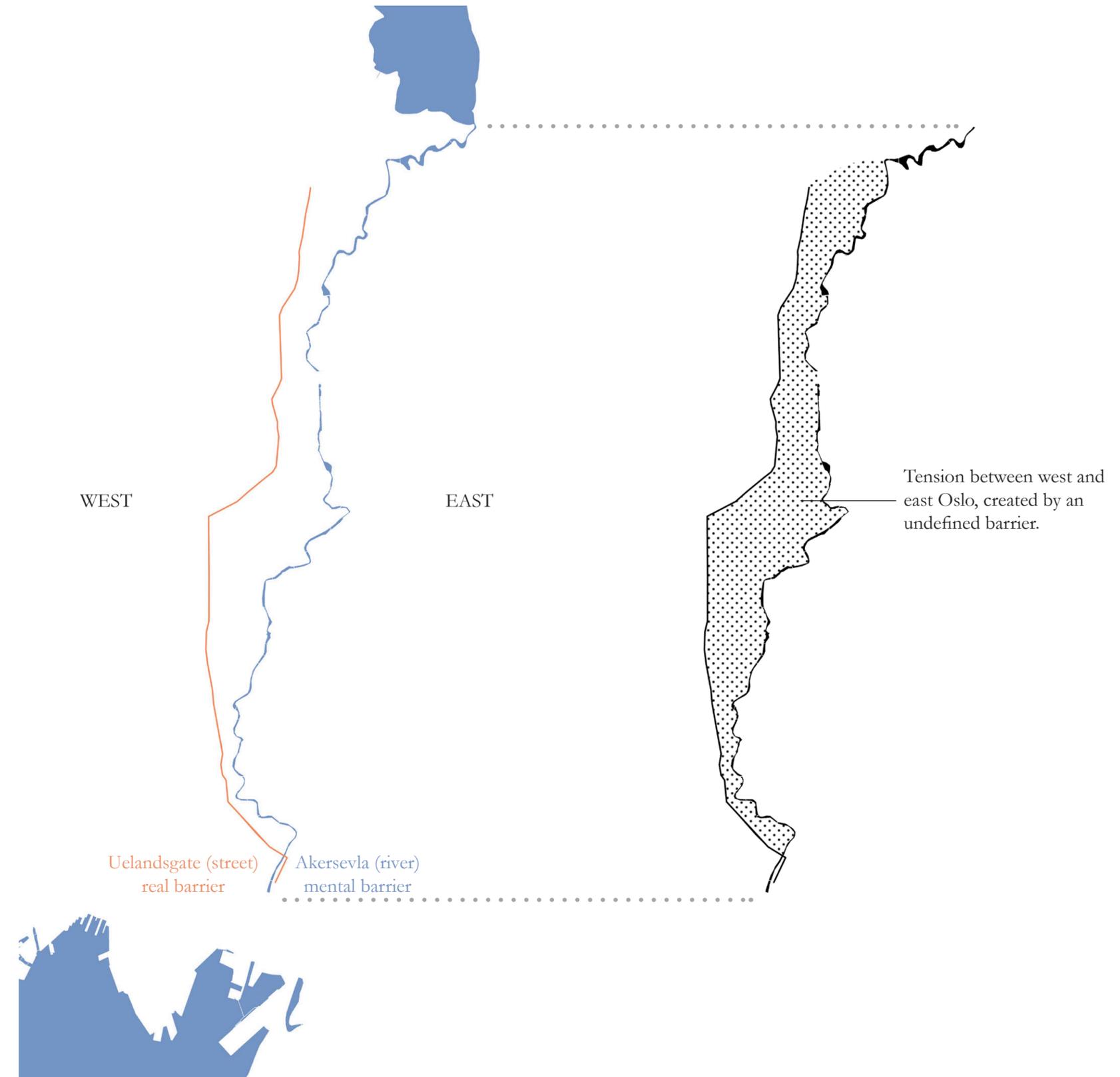


What identity will Akerselva have ?

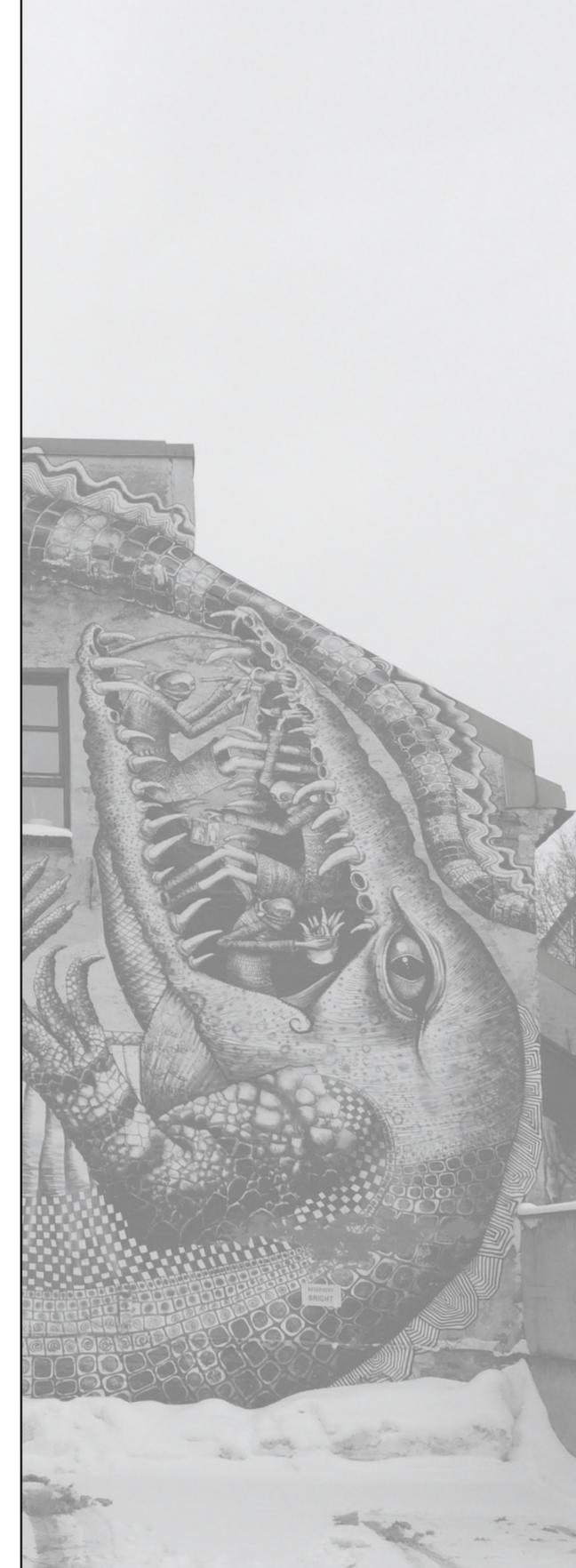
Barrier Between the West & East

In Oslo there has always been a difference in function between the west and the east. These have been separated due to economy, class and a physical barrier, Akerselva. The river, Akerselva, divides Oslo and has been a clear distinctive object that people associate with the boarder.

According to maps from the municipality, the actual line that distinguishes the west and the east is actually the main road, Uelandsgate. This road runs parallel to Akerselva and the slight difference in the technical line and the physical barrier allows for an unidentifiable zone in-between. The grey zone is an area of blurred identity that creates tension between the two. It is in this particular area that I have decided to choose a site for the project, due to its proximity and interaction between the west and the east.



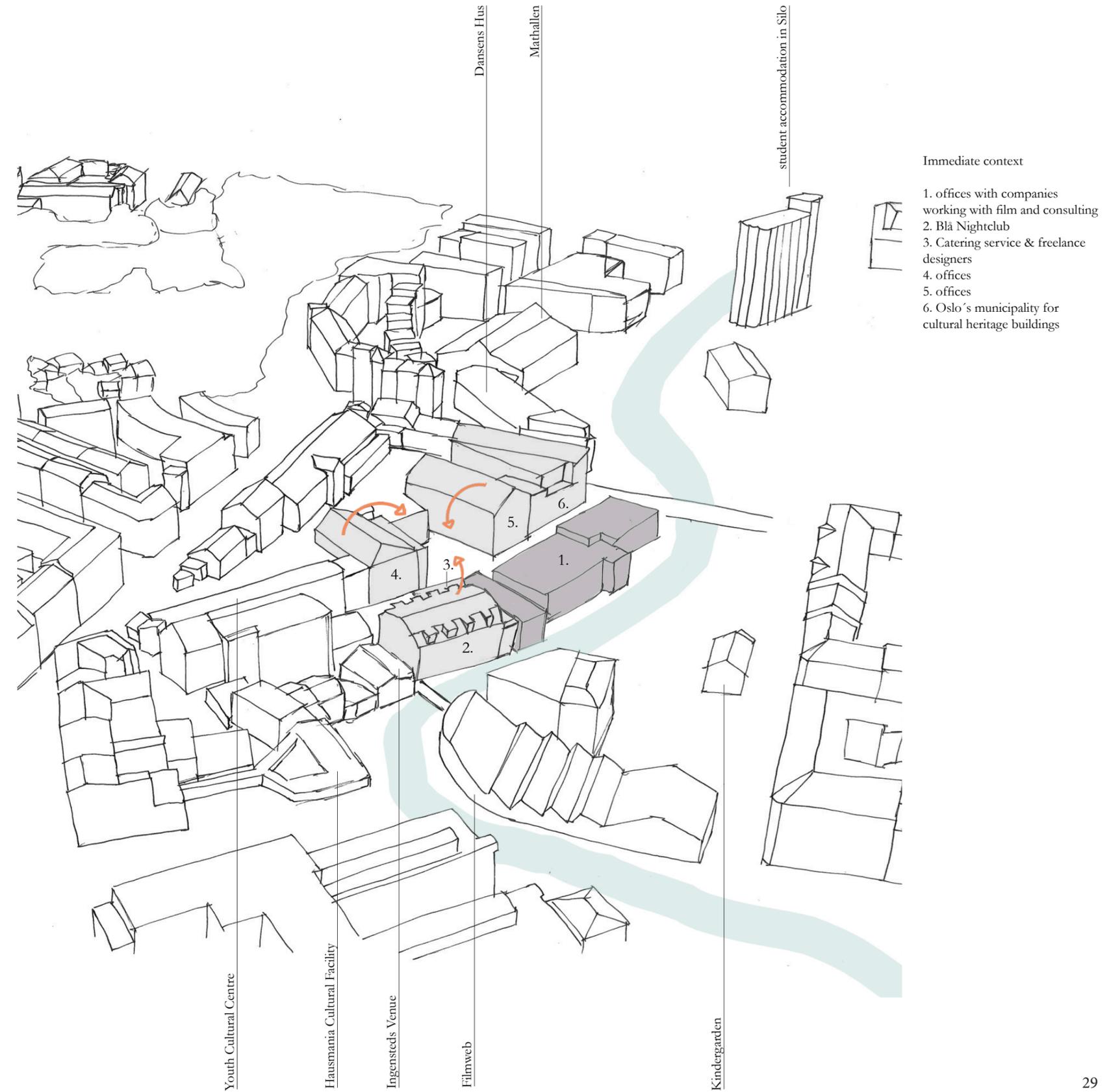
[4] Defining the Brief



Existing Site Context

The majority of the buildings surrounding the site are inhabited by different offices, conducting work on creation through media/film, catering and IT, to name a few. These companies, whether large or small would benefit from a nearby open square for flexible use. Many of the companies could conduct exhibitions or presentations of new work. This outdoor exhibition would not only be open for the neighbouring buildings, but would influence Oslo on a larger scale.

The exhibitions that will take place here will be open for other companies to come and view or take part in. This courtyard will embrace the history of the site and regenerate Akerselva as the source of production.



Main Influence near Site

The alley that runs parallel to the site is a narrow pedestrian street with qualities that embraces the characteristic of the area. It incorporates the industrial heritage along the river with the current interest in creative industry.

One of the current areas where creative industry occurs is located on this street. It hosts a Sunday market where locals and companies can come and sell homemade crafts, often in the form of jewellery, clothing or other accessories. Passing by, I became inspired by this tradition and decided to combine the idea of the external exhibition with a building that encourages community activity and turn it into a centre for learning and for newcomer entrepreneurs. By formalising the activity that takes place on a weekly basis, the building will be an education centre specialising in industrial design.

Sunday Market - Alleyway neighbouring Blå

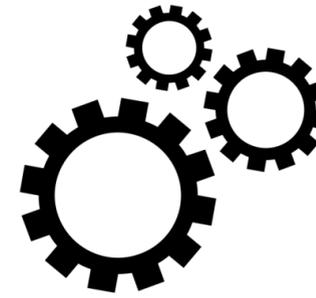


Brief

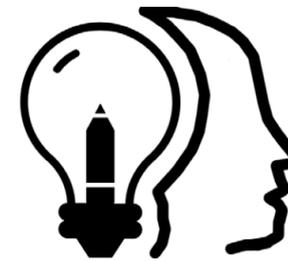
By combining the components that make Akerselva unique, namely industry and alternative creativity, the project will be an education centre for industrial design. Even though it is orientated towards education, it will also host new entrepreneurs. The building will focus on creating meeting places in the form of workshop rooms that encourage conversation and collaboration between the two.

As for the public, the building will be permeable to view the process. The concept of the building is interaction and visual openness. The visitors of the building will be a part of the extended internal exhibition and be able to understand the mechanisms behind the production of design through the workshops.

AKERSELVA



Industry



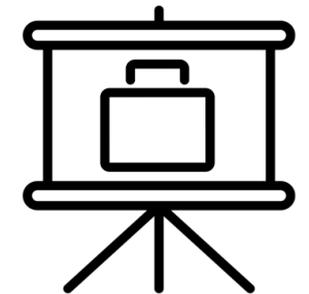
Alternative Creativity

Industrial Design

PROJECT



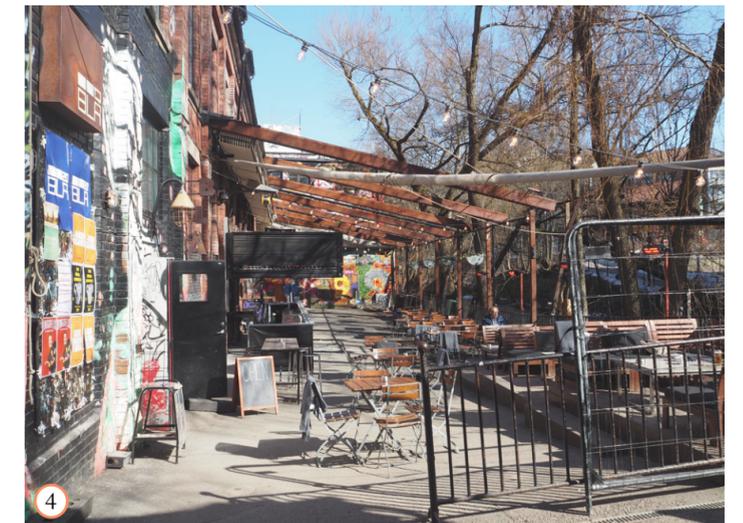
Learning Facility



New Entrepreneurs

Site Images

The site photos present a general image of the surrounding context as you walk along the intersecting street, Brenneriveien. The first image presents the existing building currently on site, serving as office space. According to the local building conservation, this building does not hold a built value and has been listed as a building set for removal.



key:

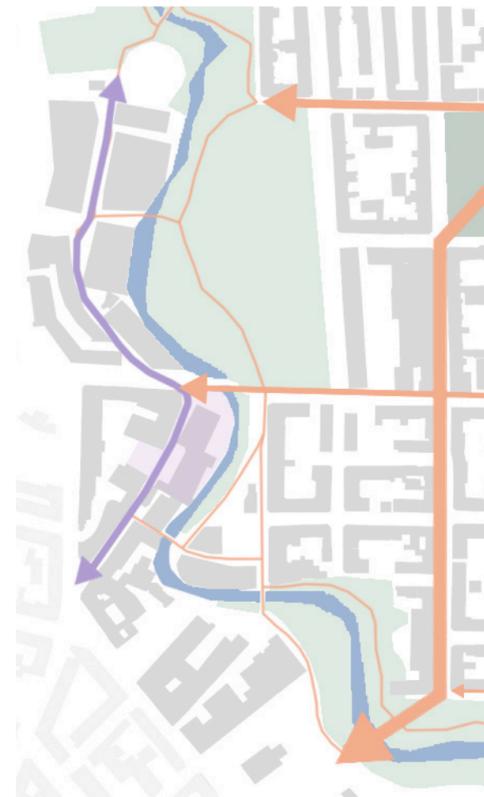
1. Existing building currently on site
2. Graffiti fitted to the existing facade
3. Courtyard formed by existing industrial buildings
4. Seating area for the bar/club at Blå
5. Approaching the site from the south

[5] Urban Interventions



Pedestrian Flow in Grünerløkka

The pedestrian flow analysis shows that the main path taken is north to south. I am interested in creating a new west to east connection on the site. Walking along Akerselva I explored different paths and realized that the one intersecting my site is a secondary pathway, acting as an alternative to the scenic route on the west of the river. I want to emphasize this route and create pockets of interaction, of which the site will be one of the main nodes.



Green Functions

There are many green areas surrounding the site that have different qualities. Akerselva Miljøpark is a fluid, organic green area, while the surrounding squares have set functions.

Looking closer at the site, the design will embrace two very distinctive outdoor spaces. The first is the urban exhibition garden, the second being the park addressing Akerselva. The latter is an extension of Akerselva Miljøpark and will therefore hold similar qualities. On the other hand, the urban exhibition garden embraces the industrial qualities present today and will contrast the surrounding green places, both in function and aesthetic.

key

Akerselva Miljøpark - is a variety of different green spaces following the spine of the river, Akerselva. It is defined by its qualities of open grass and pathways, and serves as an alternative route where pedestrians can walk freely. Many different activities take place along the river as it is so flexible but the most common is a place to relax or play sports.

Birkelunden - consists of vast grassland with open plains. It is used often during park concerts as there is a pavilion from 1926 located inside it. The pavilion is an extension of Paulus Church. Additionally, the park hosts concerts, festivals, meetings, etc.

Paulus Plass - it is directly located next to Paulus Church. It has a playground, but is mainly used as a place for arrivals for those who visit the church.

Sofienbergparken - is a large park with many intersecting pathways. It has large open grassland and a playground.

Olof Ryes Plass - is one of the busier parks as there is a lot of pedestrian traffic. In the North of the park there is a restaurant that has outdoor seating sharing the space with the park.



Akerselva Miljøpark

site



1 Urban exhibition garden formed by existing buildings and the new research facility.

2 Park addressing Akerselva becomes part of the park system around the river.

Birkelunden

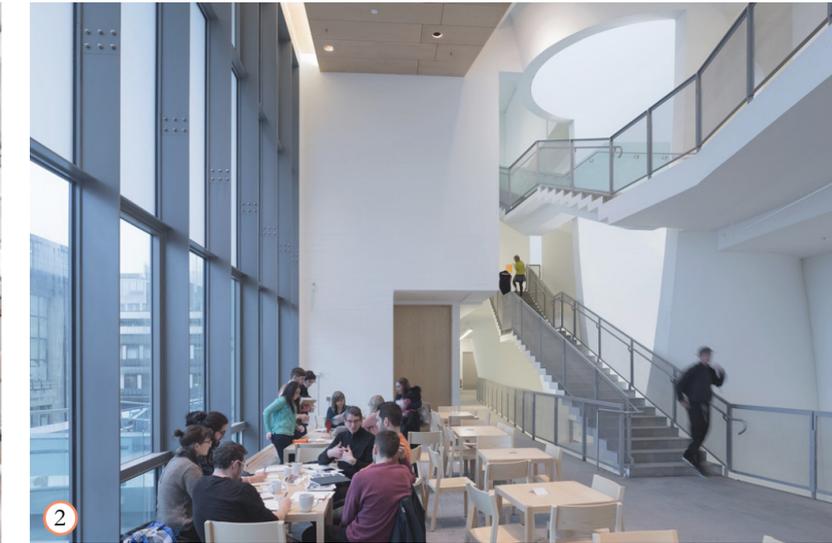
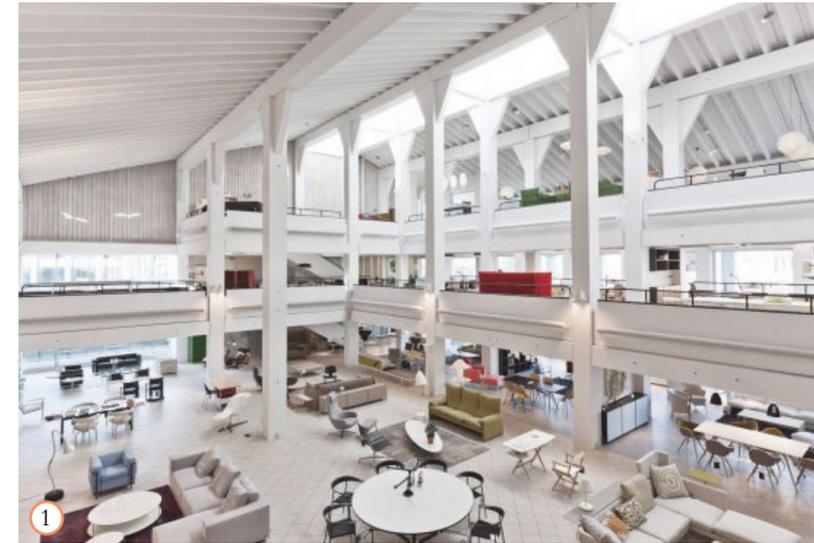
Paulus Plass

Sofienbergparken

Olof Ryes Plass

Precedents

The precedents analysed have given insight and inspiration to buildings with industrial and exhibition features. After researching each of the projects it became clear that collectively they share a few distinguishing features. These include: controlled volumes with single storey and double-heightened space, industrial materials and circulation that encourages a visitor to explore the building. These are key design elements that I will incorporate into the design.



key

1. Paustian Furniture Company

- interactive floors levels
- industrial context relected in the design as there are many double heightened areas.

2. Reid Building (Glasgow School of Art)

- prominent circulation
- rooms connected by the main space

3. Mesh

- integrated start up companies
- open hall with a café and lounge area
- internal meeting place surrounded by walls of external facades

4. Centraal Beheer

- internal street emphasized by material choice, which is typically associated with external facades.
- openness in the floor structure, allows for communication.

[6] The Design Project



Diverted Path

The street taken by pedestrians walking towards the centre of Oslo, Brenneriveien, is one that intersects the site with a north to south orientation. From the first site visit an important element that is one of the main features of the design is the urban exhibition courtyard. Approaching the courtyard there will be two thresholds that frame the area and these are set to equal distances “x” on the diagram. The courtyard is to be further emphasized by the built environment. The orange arrows divert from the north to south pedestrian route and visitors are encouraged to enter the building as the exhibition continues internally in a “street”. The building is therefore orientated in a west to east direction.

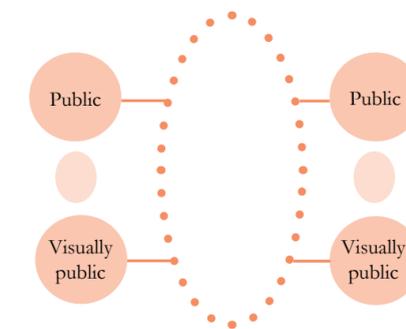
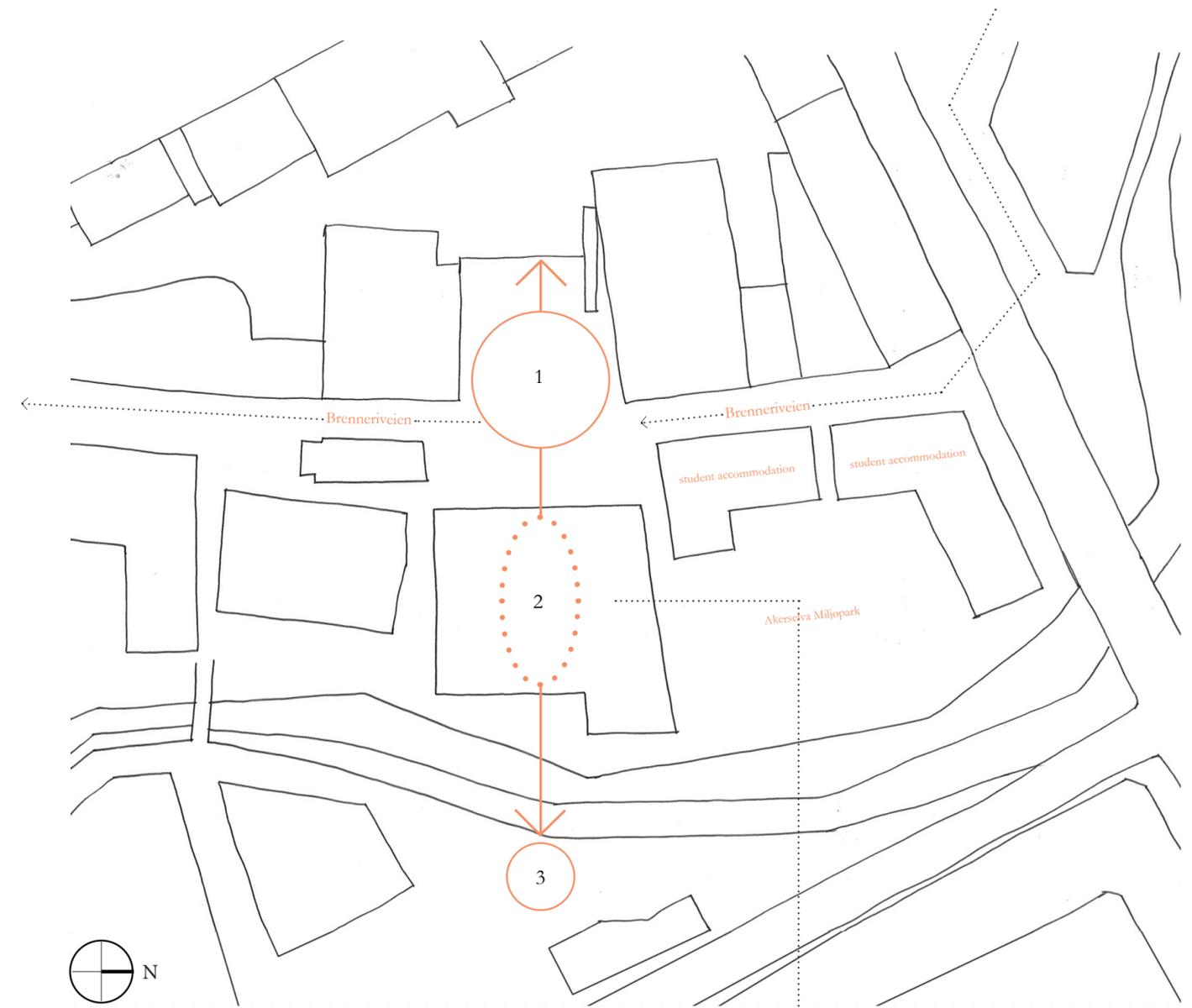


key

X - equal spacing in the width of the street that defines thresholds from both sides.

Circulation of the Building

Along the west to east direction there are three nodes that are connected in function and are seen as a fluid line with ripples. The functions of these are slightly different, as they serve as meeting places or visual connections that strengthen the circulation route of the building.



key

- 1. Urban Exhibition Garden
- 2. Internal Exhibition Street
- 3. Sculpture

Site Plan (1:500 on A2)

1. Brenneriveien pedestrian street
2. Urban Exhibition Garden
3. Internal Exhibition Street
4. Secondary access between the educational centre and Blå
5. Akerselva Miljøpark
6. Student accommodation
7. Visual connection - sculpture



Ground Floor Plan (1:200 on A2)

- 1. urban exhibition garden
- 2. internal street (exhibition continued)
- 3. café
- 4. kitchen
- 5. print shop
- 6. outdoor informal meeting area
- 7. workshop circulation
- 8. wood workshop machine area
- 9. storage
- 10. outdoor wood workshop assembly area
- 11. metalworkshop machine area
- 12. outdoor metal workshop



First Floor Plan (1:200 on A2)

- 13. informal meeting with tables
- 14. seminar room
- 15. textile workshop
- 16. workshop circulation (free movement space)
- 17. sculpture studio
- 18. storage





Second Floor Plan (1:200 on A2)

- 19. circulation bridge
- 20. lecture theatre (access from third floor)
- 21. common workshop for students and entrepreneurs
- 22. studio for students
- 23. office entrance hall
- 24. large meeting room
- 25. office

Third Floor Plan (1:200 on A2)

- 26. landing overlooking common workshop
- 27. circulation
- 28. lecture theatre (viewing box for external exhibition)
- 29. kitchen for students and entrepreneurs
- 30. large meeting room
- 31. informal meeting balcony
- 32. office
- 33. seminar room
- 34. computer room

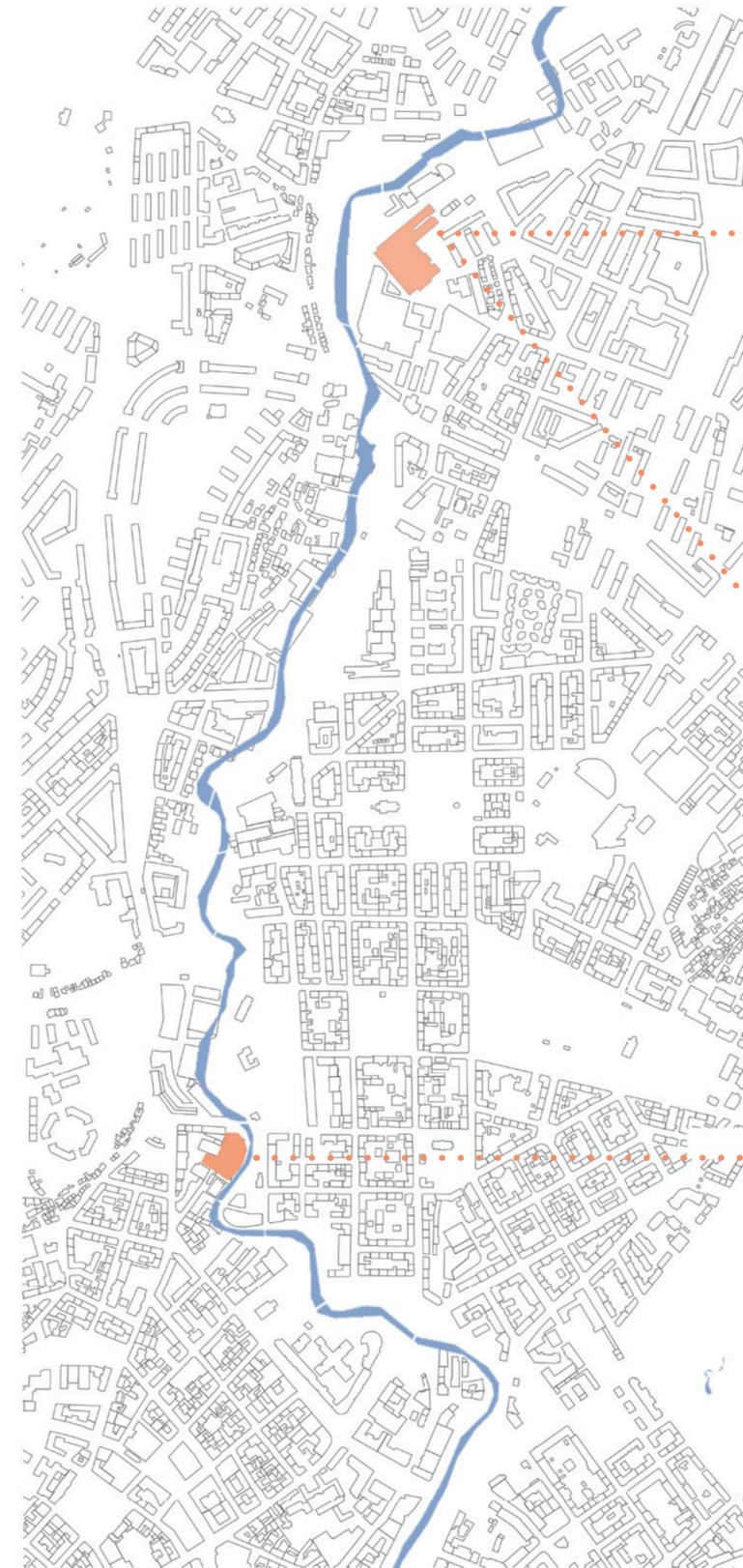


Inverse Materiality

The industrial buildings located along Alkerselva would normally consist of two main materials, brick and concrete. Brick was primarily used on the external facade and concrete the internal internal walls.

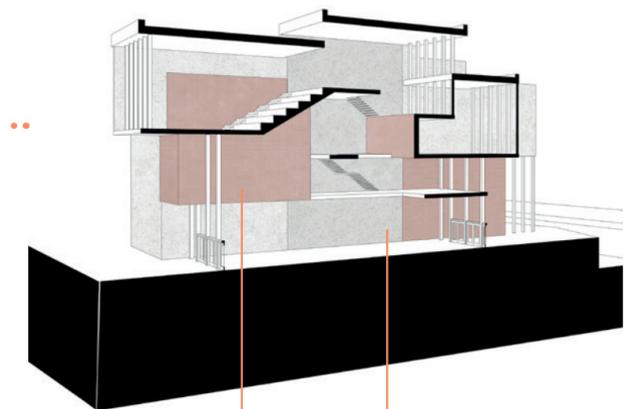
One of the design concepts in the project is the idea of permeability through the building. The building is to be accessible for all both those who are curious and want to see the workshops, therefore the external exhibition courtyard has been designed so that it continues the ground floor of the building, less than the concept of an inner street. How can the material choice?

The materials chosen for the building acquire the same characteristics of the surrounding context. To refer to the context, the building decided to use typical materials of the surrounding building which consist of brick and concrete. The facade and workshops will be of brick, but the internal walls will be of concrete. The circulation will be of concrete, but the external walls will be of brick. The circulation will be of concrete, but the external walls will be of brick. The circulation will be of concrete, but the external walls will be of brick.



Myrens Verksted

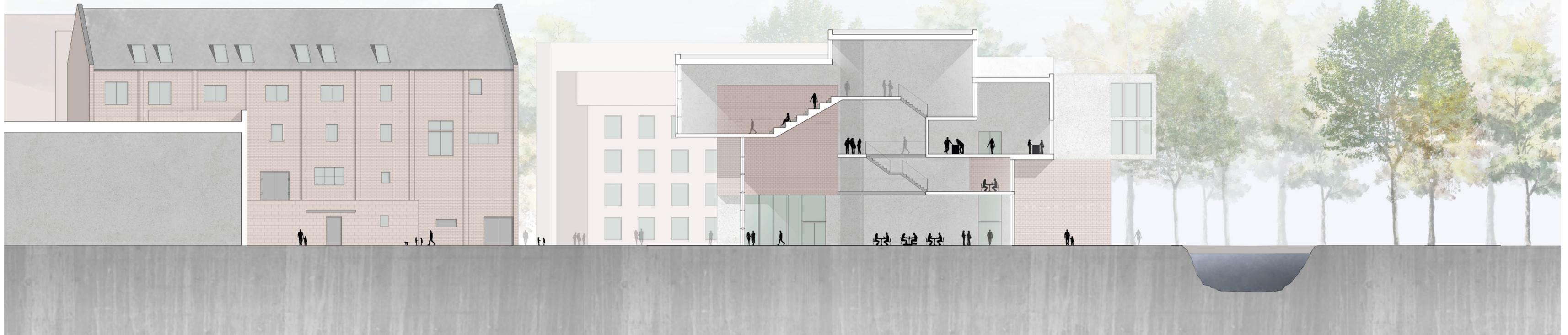
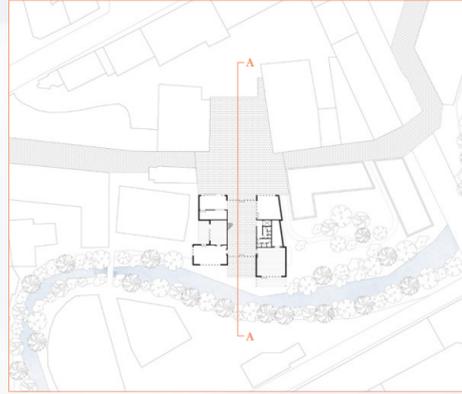
- converted into a climbing centre
- facade: brick
- internal: concrete



- brick - emphasis on workshops
- concrete - highlights the circulation

Section A-A

1:200 on A2



Building in Context

The building in context shows the roofscape in relation to the surrounding unique volumes.

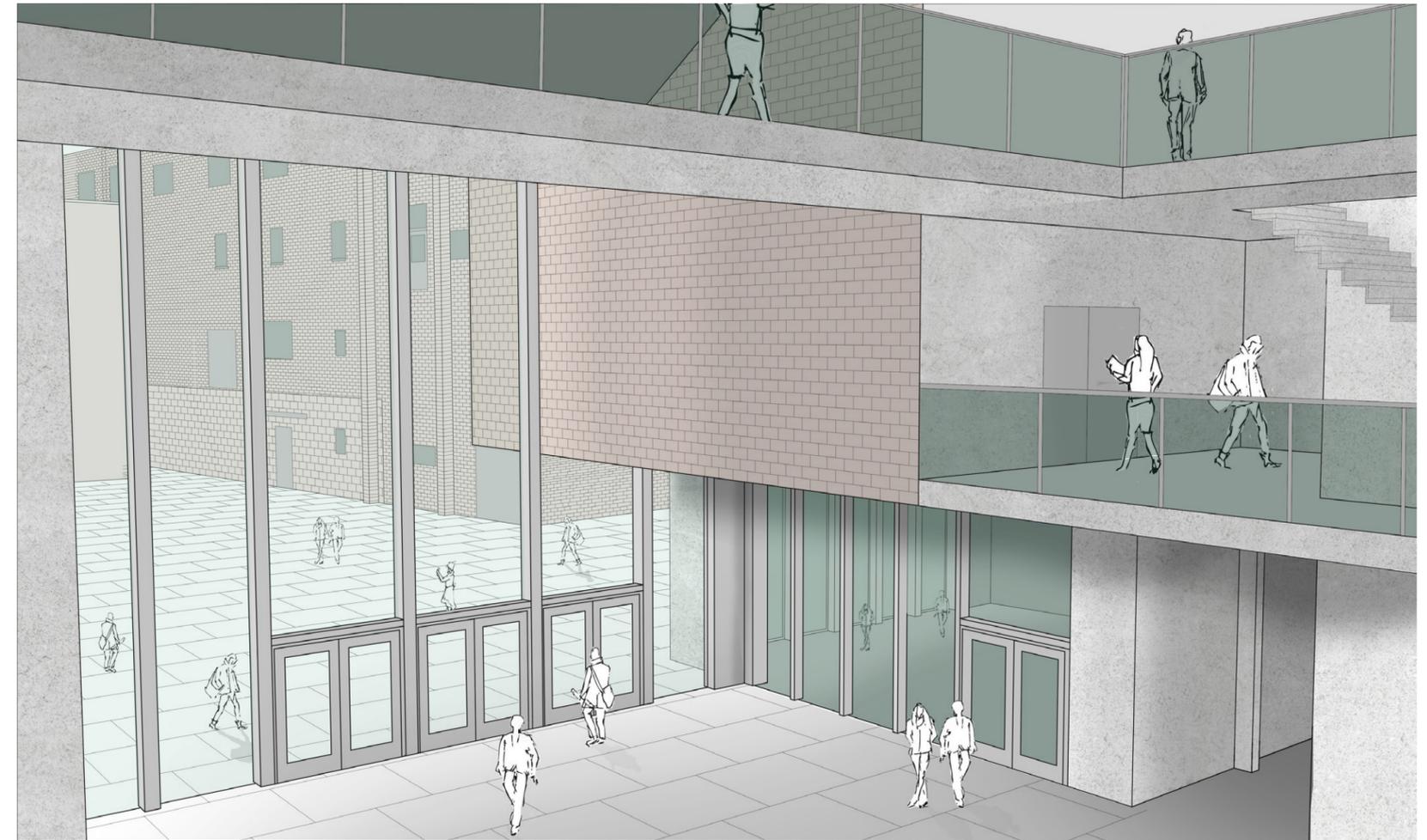


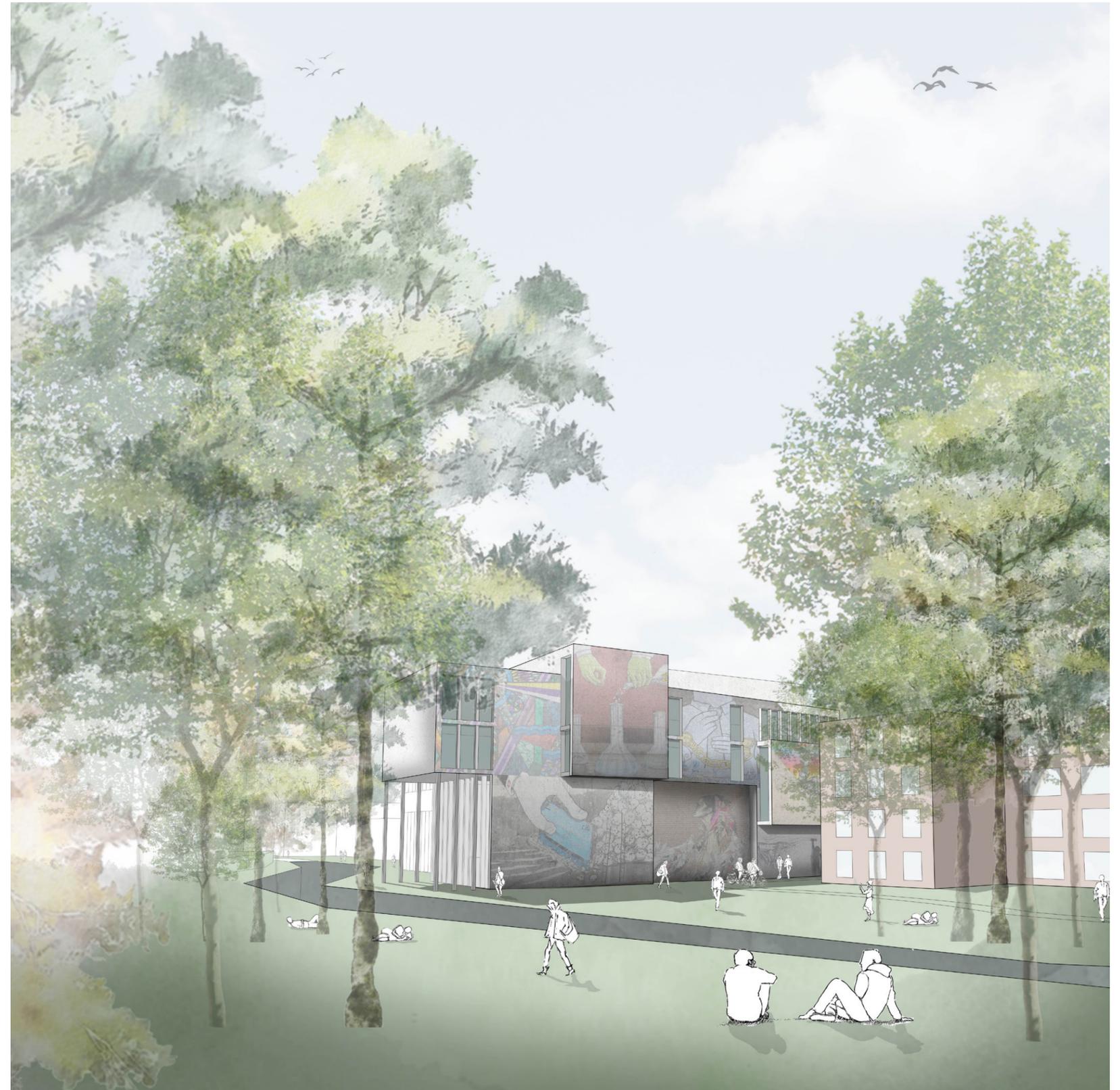
key of 3D views

1. Urban Exhibition Garden
2. Internal Circulation
3. Graffiti Canvas

Urban Exhibition Garden









[7] Reflection

Throughout the progression of the design phase, the key elements of industrial heritage and new art culture have been the main influencers. Simultaneously influencing the function of the building as well as the design process.

The building allows for new possibilities of meeting, for people either passing by or there specifically for an event. The main facade of the building facing Brenneriveien serves as a public front with inverted materials. This gives the visitor an indication that the building is accessible, as the brick facade of the surrounding buildings continues throughout the “internal built street”. The public street and the new internal street are seen with similar qualities. Seen from the larger scale, not only will the building have an impact on its surroundings, it will integrate people arriving from the west and the east.



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Images:

Black and white cover photographs taken by author

Icons taken from TheNounProject

Map of Norway. Page 9. https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2012/04/01/17/10/norway-23574_960_720.png, <https://www.google.se/> (accessed 20/02/2018)

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