

# Making stuff

*the agency of doing in non-growth contexts*



Degree project in Architecture AAHM10

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In this project I am visualising possible results of a community that has been strengthened in a process enabling redevelopment, less dependent on growth, through the agency of making.

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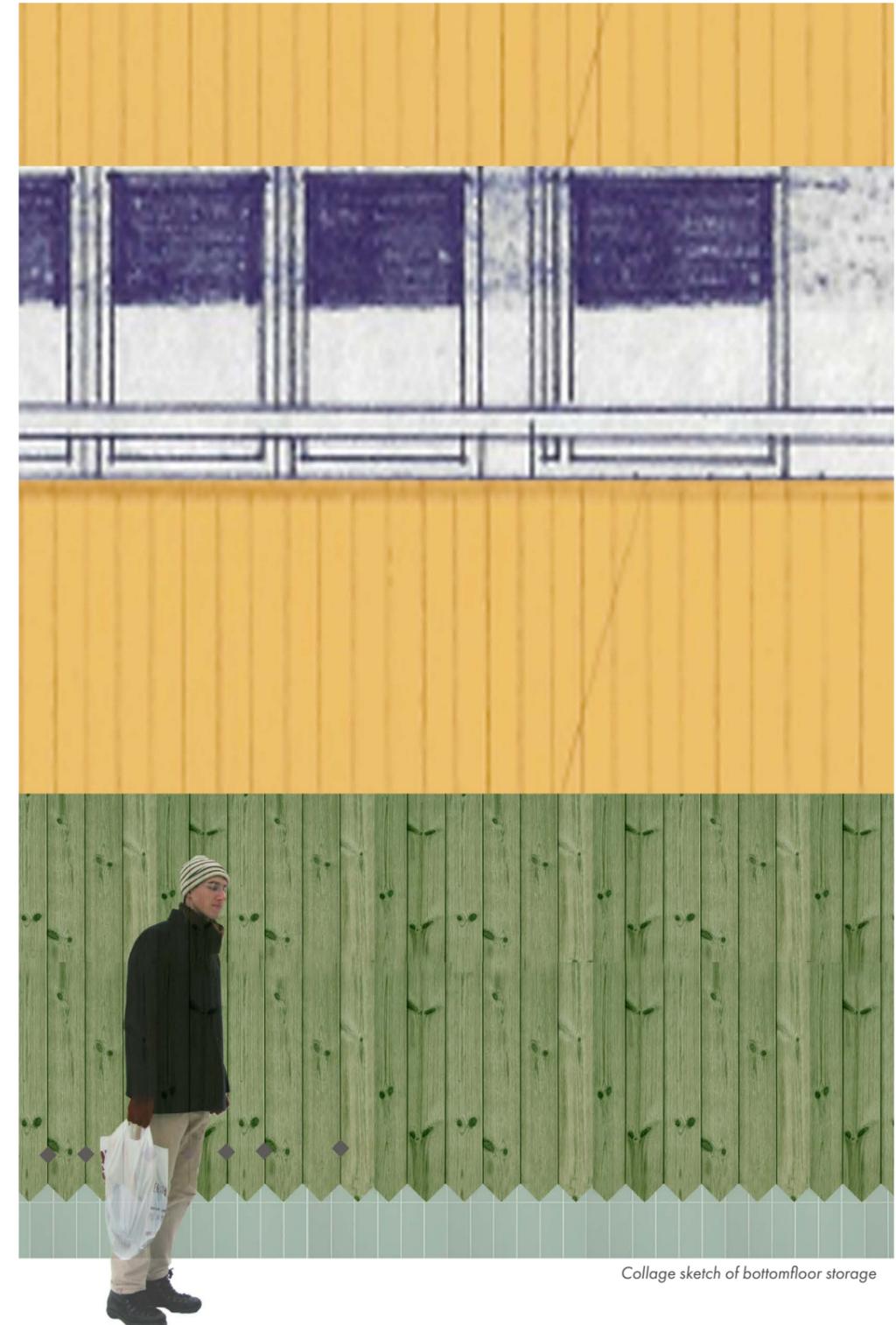
# Summary

This project has developed from the site and building conditions in an area of central Boden, a town in the inland north of Sweden.

In post-war times, the city grew thanks to the military and regional hospital resulting in the development of the site Prästhölmén that was realized true to the modernistic ideal of the time. Since then, Boden together with its inland neighbours, have struggled against the tides of urbanisation and decline but at Prästhölmén we see the marks of this in the footprints. Here, 12 buildings were demolished during the government subsidized demolitions in the end of the 1990's and since then little has happened in the environment. One yellow building, the last one of its kind, stands alone, far away from everything else on the site. In the building, the only major physical improvement since its construction in 1974 is the space renovated as an art project of empowerment in one of the bottom-floor apartments.

Today, there is generally little sympathy for the building among the people in the area and the likely outcome of its situation is that it, like its previous neighbours, will be demolished, despite a well-documented housing shortage in the town. This housing shortage might be contradictory to the non-growth context, but it seems like the unstable population condition effects the opportunities for development, leaving an urban environment in deterioration. This relationship indicates a need of understanding the urgency in appreciating the existing building stock as an important asset, and in creating conditions giving possibilities for people to develop their surrounding from within, in the absence of external actors.

In this project I am dealing with this through the agency of making, or even more broadly- the agency of doing. Through suggesting strategical frameworks, networks and enabling environments as well as visualising possible results, I want to deal with making as a tool for both effecting once surrounding and as a way of appreciating it.



Collage sketch of bottomfloor storage

# 1. Introduction

In this degree project I have worked with the concepts of growth, specifically what happens in a world driven by growth when growth does not happen, with value, and its continuously shifting meaning and with agency, suggesting how it might be discovered through action and mobilization. On a site in Boden, the town where I grew up, I try to synthesise these into one project that spans from site strategy to birdbox, in different scales trying to support the action of making or doing to effect and give care.

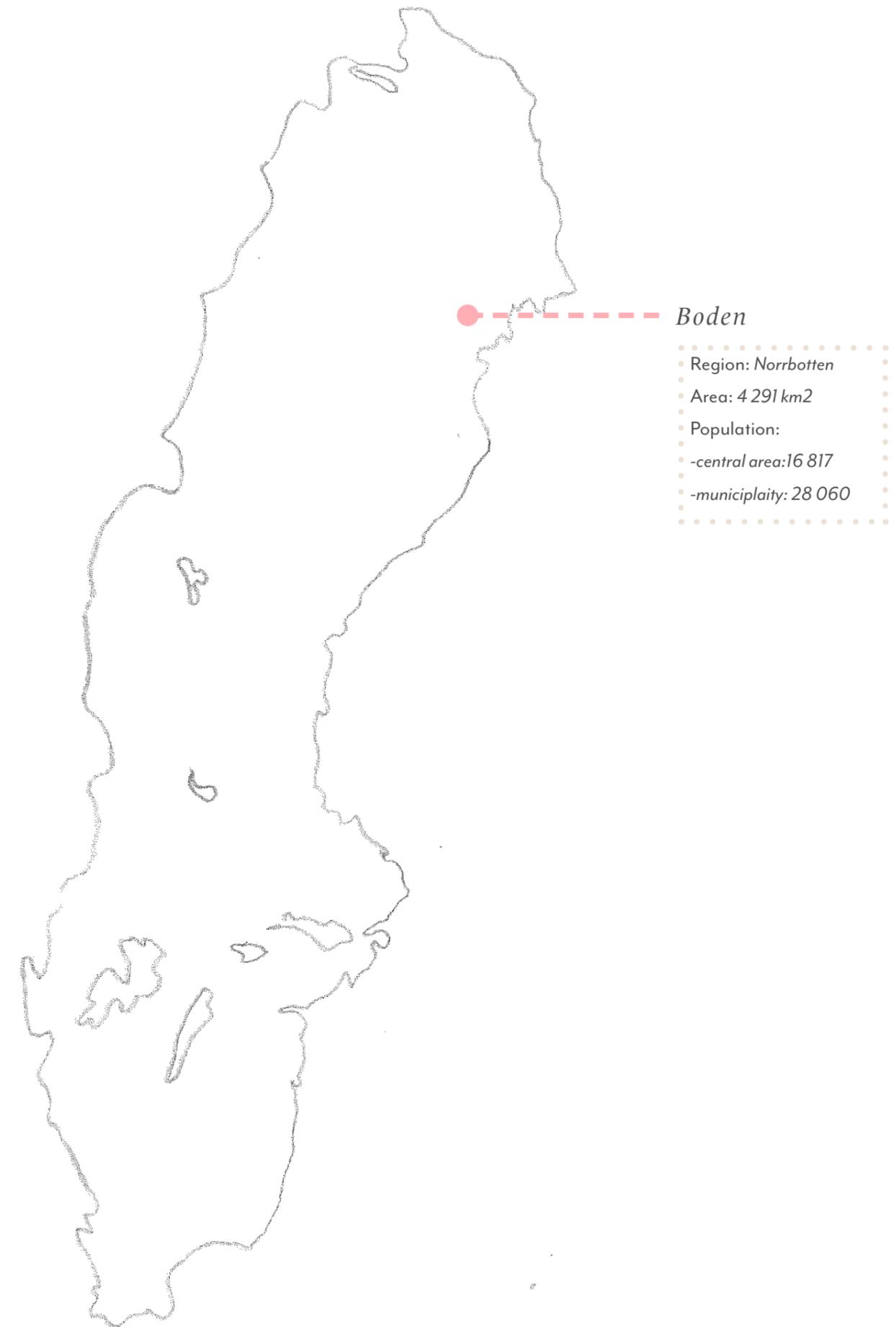
## 1.1 Research aim and questions

### Research aim

I aim to investigate the conditions surrounding the demolishing of 12 residential buildings located in the modernistic residential area of Prästhölmarna in Boden, focusing on the conditions it has created and how the remaining environment can be the basis of a regained state of dignity, towards redevelopment.

### Research questions

- How can the concept of development be explored in a way that makes it less dependent on growth?
- How can narratives of a space help expose embodied energy and how can it become an agent and caretaker in the making of space?
- What is this sites potential in a state of instability?

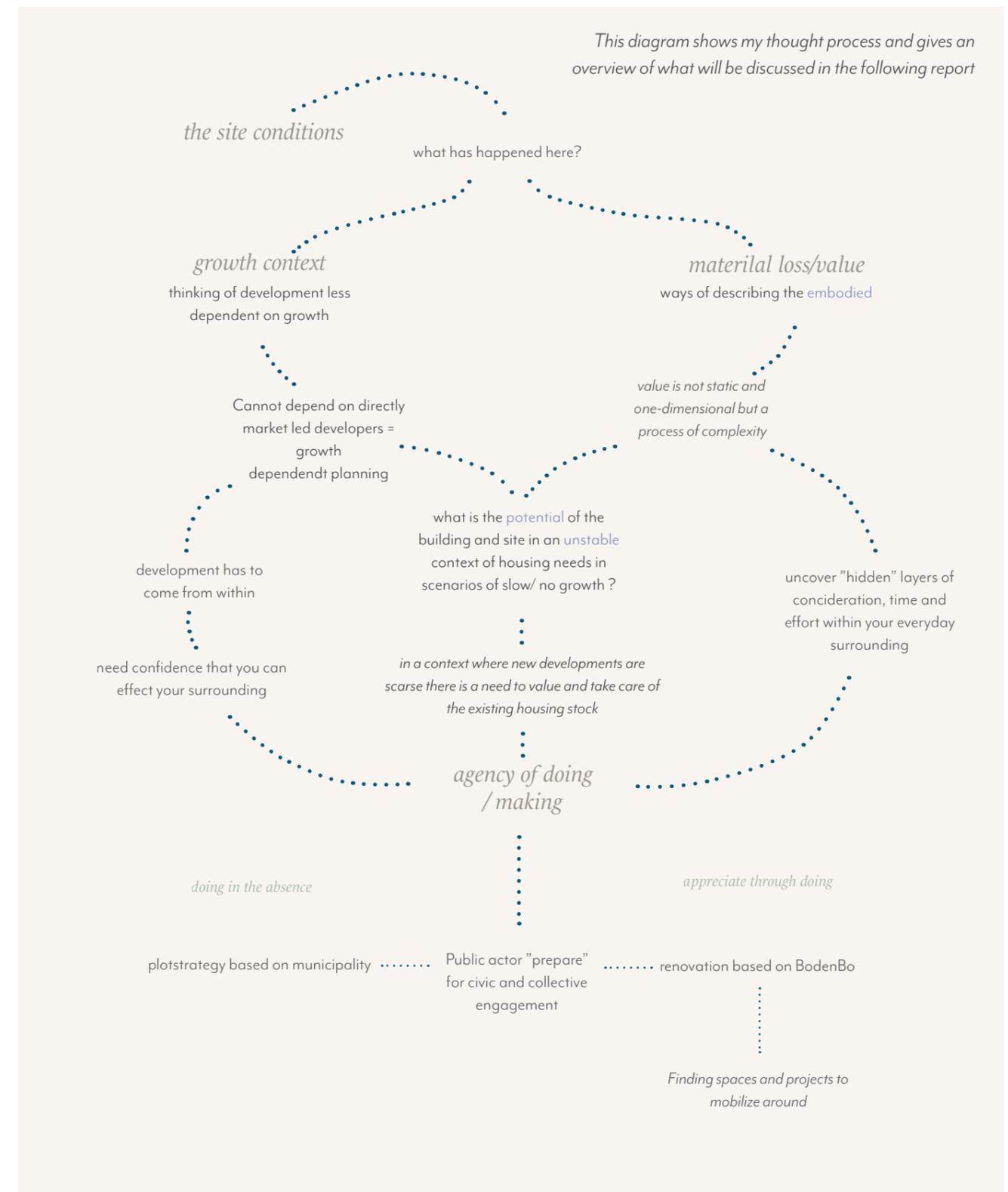


Contextual map showing location of Boden in Sweden

## 1.2 Process and material

In the process of working with this project I have done:

- Literature studies, to create a base of understanding about the concepts that have been framed by my research aim and questions as well as the development of my project.
- A site visit, in the beginning of the process to visit both the site and the common facilities of one of the buildings on site as well as documenting my findings by sketches and photography.
- Archive studies, to map actors and stakeholder and narratives about the site.
- Interviews, to enrich my understanding of both the building and the social and spatial conditions and to increase my understanding of other people's perception of the site and built environment. In the interviews with people that are not representing the municipality or public housing company, I was inspired by the methods of oral historians in my interviewing tactic. This, for me, means only having a loose structure for the conversation and letting it find its way through the nature of talking to trigger memories and lines of thoughts that build on each other.
- Reference project study, to find predecessors of projects dealing with concepts and issues that overlap with my project and use my findings in the development of my own project.
- Sketching, to develop my proposals for the site and to process my research.
- Modelmaking, physical and 3D.



### 1.3 New conditions

In January of 2021, news of a steel plant with plans to set up in Boden were revealed and with the plant, up to 1500 local employment possibilities. Since the focus of my project has always been rooted in exploring a non-growth scenario, I have decided not to take this in direct consideration when working on my proposal for the site. However, I still feel obliged to briefly mention it in my report and consider how looking at the conditions of Präsholmen might be relevant to learn from.

In Boden there has been a mildly positive population development over the last years, now projected to increase in the light of expectations of a new industry.

When the news of the industry was revealed, I struggled with how to continue with my research topic but what I kept coming back to is the fragility of the scenario. What I mean to be the fragile aspects can be found when the urban movement patterns of Sweden are contextualized with the history of the site. Here we see the effects of planning relying on one primary employer in the footprints. It is a context that has already been produced because it did not, for understandable reasons, manage to take unknown scenarios of decline or growth into consideration. This resulted in the massive effort of demolishing 12 buildings, and later, not being able to house its inhabitants or forgetting the physical marks of the decline. This has simply made me wonder about how it might be relevant to evaluate the tools of planning to respond to the fragility of growth and decline in many contexts, since we, in the light of a global climate crisis, cannot afford to repeat the same mistake.



1. Altered image. Base image found with help from Norrbottens museums image archive.

### 1.4 Word and concept list

*Non- or slow growth contexts:* I use this term to describe an area with a population development that is between rural decline and urban growth. It is necessary to use this term since I perceive a tendency to divide contexts into these two categories, thus not recognising areas with urban expressions and challenges without the urban conditions of growth.

*Agency:* The word agency is used to describe a realisation of control and power through the possibility of effecting a given situation or context.

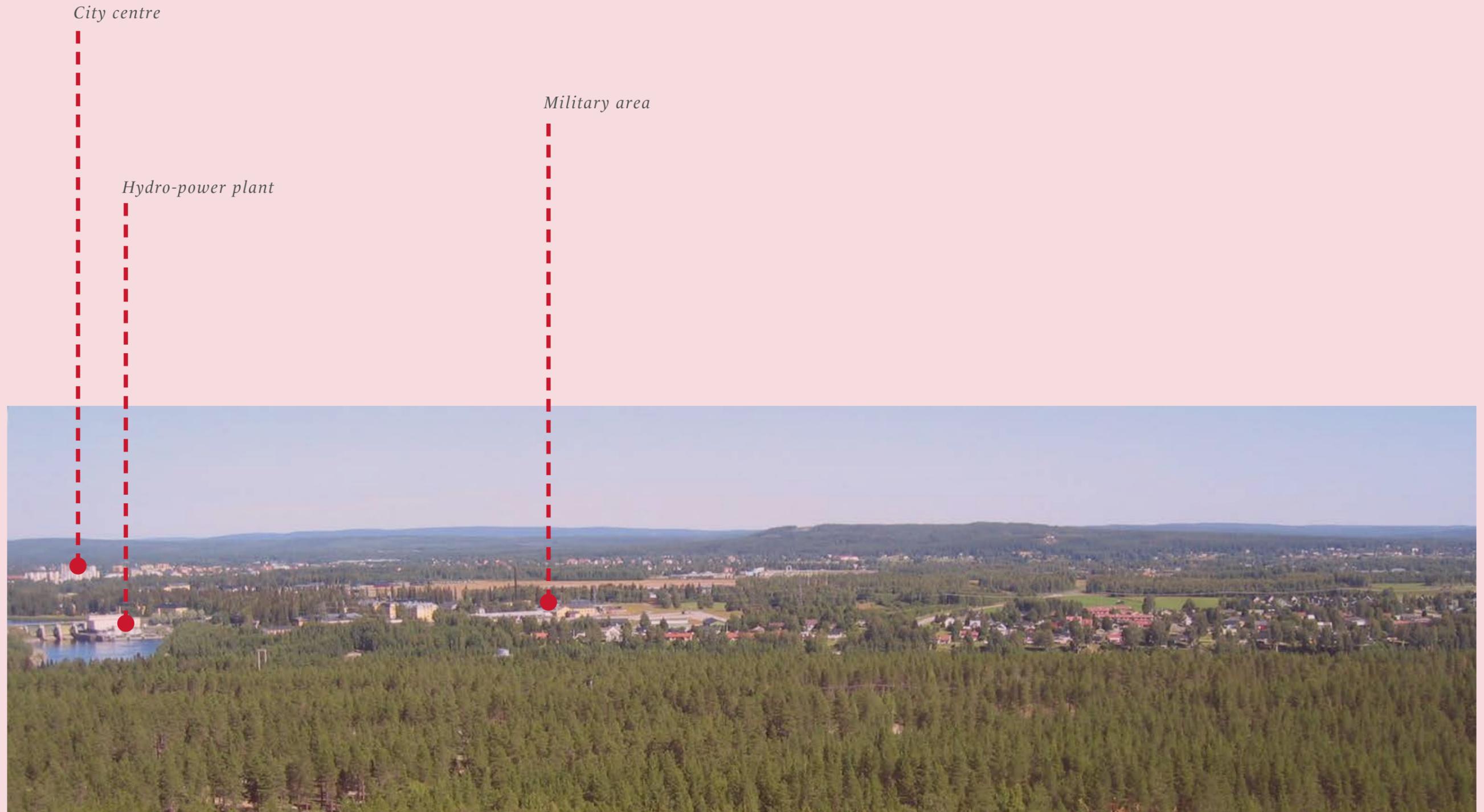
*Value:* I am using the word value with awareness of its subjective nature, where it holds different meaning to different people, in different conditions and contexts.

*Embodied:* The term embodied will be discussed further in chapter two but as an introduction I primarily use it to describe both a technical energy that is “built into” a material or object but also a social energy that relates to how people might form their perception of, for example, the built environment, through their gathered experience, lived or in other ways appropriated.

*Narrative:* This word is used to describe accounts that have been made or recorded, not restricting them to those produced with a storytelling purpose.

*Stuff:* The word stuff refers to things being made and done and is used with awareness of its casual tone.

*View over Boden from Rödbergsfortet*



2. View from Rödbergsfortet (Elisson, 2016)

## 1.3 Context

### Local context: Prästhölmén in Boden

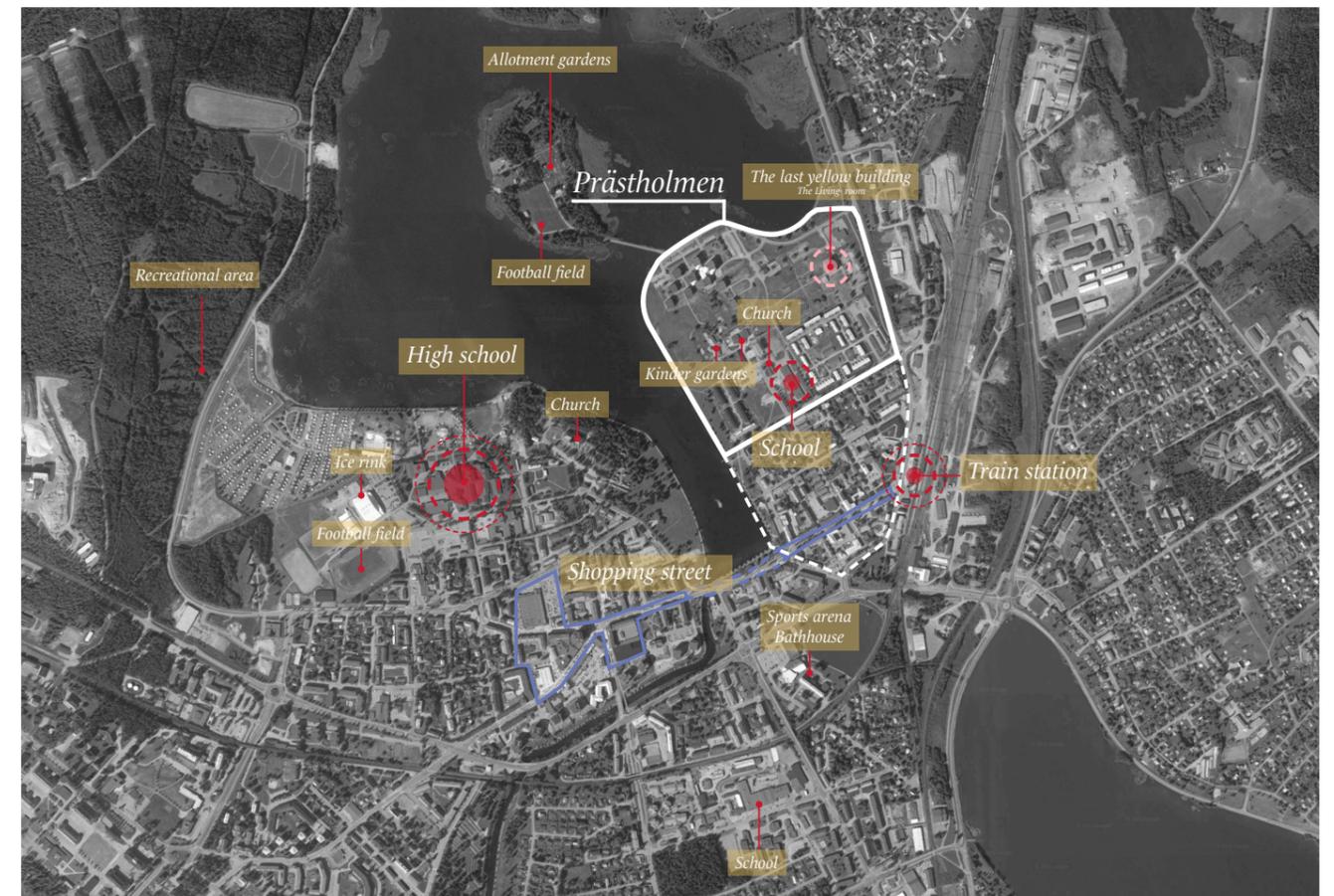
Boden is a small town that houses around 28.000 inhabitants, with around 15.000 of them, living in the central area. In the beginning of the 1800's the area was acknowledged as the centre of the habitation that had distanced itself from the already established church-district of Luleå, located 40 km southeast along the coast. The development over the coming 100 years, including the development of the railway and railway station, eventually led to complete city-rights. In the early 1900's the military was established in the city together with a military hospital and in the post-war era these two activities would become the basis for a period of steady population growth (Bergmark, 1980). It was during these times of growth that the residential area of Prästhölmén was developed as part of the effort to deal with the severe housing shortage that had emerged. The development was true to the internationally spread modernistic ideal of efficiency and rationality that is found in the Swedish million program.

By 1975 Sweden's, and Boden's housing shortage was overcome and soon long-term vacancies among the new housing was a fact (Melchert 2015). As a response, the government began subsidising the demolition of surplus buildings by the end of the 1990's and among the demolitions in Boden were 12 residential buildings at Prästhölmén.

The site is located centrally within the city, just 1,5 km from the city centre and a five-minute walk from the train station. It is part of a bigger neighbourhood division called the lower city, which I believe refers to its geographical location being below the city centre in the direction of the city structure and altitude. Prästhölmén's building stock primarily contains multifamily housing (*flerfamiljshus*) in buildings spanning from two to seven storeys. The buildings can be divided into four main categories and areas.

- The two storey row houses located in the south-east part of the site
- The strip-type three storeys apartment buildings (*lamellhus*) in the south-west
- The tower blocks in brick, between three to six storeys, in the north-west
- The single remaining, seven storey, yellow steel clad strip-type building (*skivhus*) in the north-east.

It was among the tower block and steel clad strip-type buildings that the demolitions primarily occurred. Besides housing, the area also contains a school for pupils between the grades of one to six, two preschools, a church, a nursing home, as well as a public-space art project and refugee housing in the remaining yellow house. Along parts of the site runs a popular recreational path next to the water's edge and this path connects to a small island that houses a football field and allotment gardens.



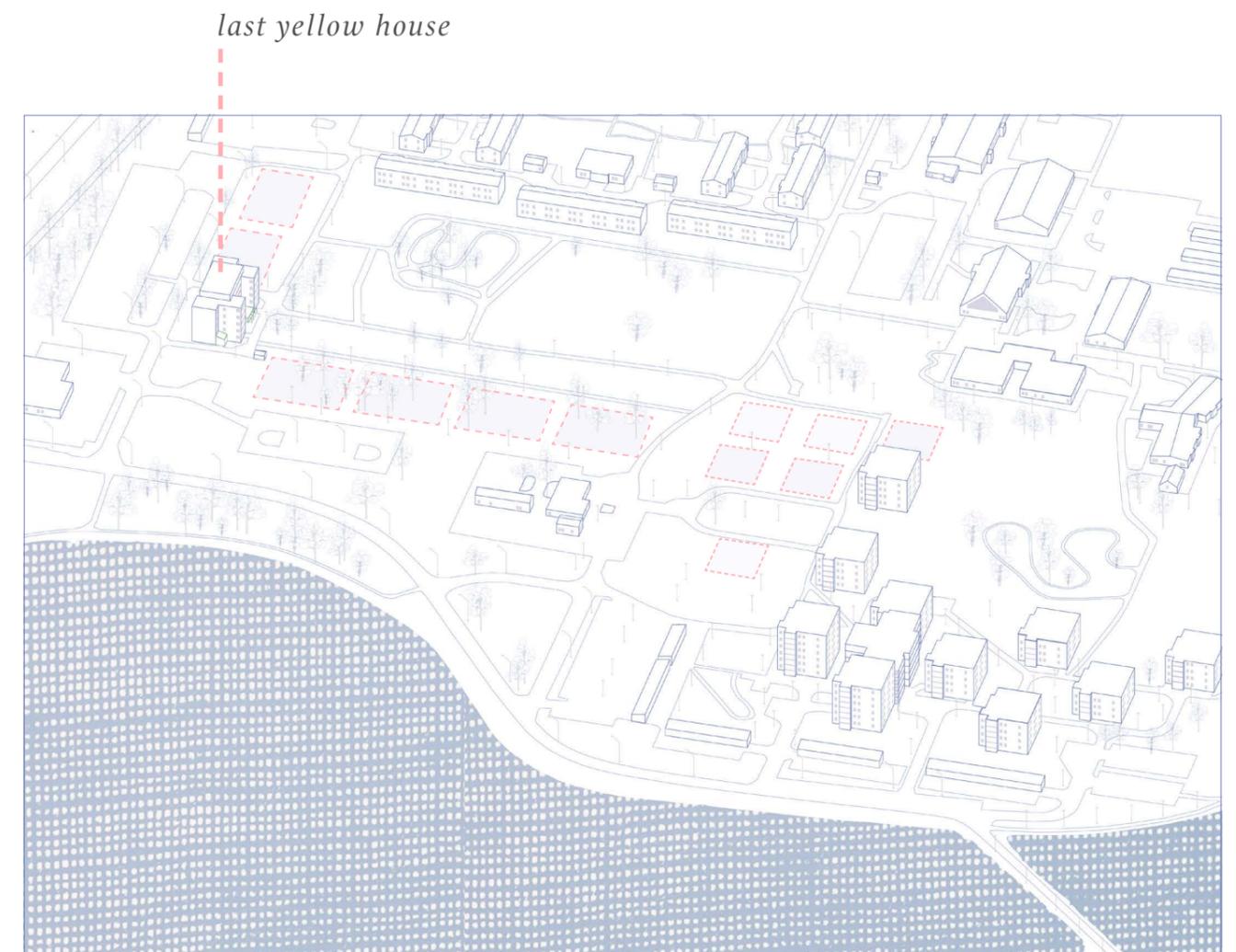
Contextual map of Boden showing functions in relationship to Prästhölmén

Scale on A4 1:20 000



Since 1968, Boden has had a total population growth of just 2%, spanning over periods of both growth and decline. (Regionfakta 2021) Looking at the population development since 2009, a bigger concentration of growth has occurred, and this growth is being linked to the higher amounts of immigration in Sweden. Despite this growth, the population development still become very modest when contextualized with the high pace of relocation of inhabitants to other regions. For the newly immigrated population of the city, around 70% choose to leave upon receiving their residence permit. When summed up, the overall biggest group that relocates is in the age span of 19-29. People within this group mainly move to metropolitan areas and university cities. (Bodens Kommun 2018) As a response to this, Youth up North, a part of the Youth 2030 Movement, established a local branch in Boden. This initiative focuses on the northern inland, working with strengthening the youth communities in this area. In collaboration with them, the media house Fanzingo, that focuses on lifting voices from unheard parts of Sweden through media-labs in Alby, Angered, Haparanda, Rosengård, Skellefteå and Skärholmen, has also been represented in Boden through a local youth correspondent.

The municipality have worked towards the goal of reaching 28 000 inhabitants by 2020. At a total of 28 060 people, this goal was reached successfully and sums up to a growth of just under 600 people since 2010. The next goal is 30 000 inhabitants by 2025 and this, together with the current housing shortage, means that several new housing units are needed. The main type requested, are small apartments in central locations, for older people, military employees, young inhabitants and newly immigrated people that have received their residency permit. Within the group last mentioned, one of the major obstacles to staying in Boden has become the low accessibility to housing. (Bodens Kommun 2018)



Axo drawing of existing context in Prästholmen



## 1.4 The last yellow house

The last yellow house is, just as it sounds, the last remaining building out of seven of its type, on the site. The building contains a maintenance central in a bottom-floor space that, before the demolitions contained different types of functions in the seven buildings ranging from sauna, hobby room and meeting spaces. It is likely that this maintenance function is the primary reason why this building has been kept despite its relationship with the rest of the built environment on site, placing it as far away as possible from everything else. In addition to this, I have found mentions of this spatial organisation overlapping with a request, concerning the current program of refugee housing where it is described as a desired outcome to keep it as physically segregated from the rest as possible.

No matter the reason, the spatial organisation, in my opinion, seems to be set up for demolishing. This perception is in lines with the plans of the municipal housing company BodenBo, who say that demolition is the most likely outcome. By placing the temporary use of refugee housing in this building, the tenant contract is ensured with minimal renovation demands. But when the contract is terminated, the spatial organisation that has been set up is likely the most comfortable option to fulfil the plans of demolishing.

From an outside perspective, this building has had a complicated past ever since the last demolitions when started out as refugee housing only for men, a period with many reports of violence and disturbances. This time and the related incidents are something that many citizens of Boden are likely to still associate with the building. The specific housing organisation has changed since many years and now welcome families, women and children, something that has been described as greatly improving the situation.

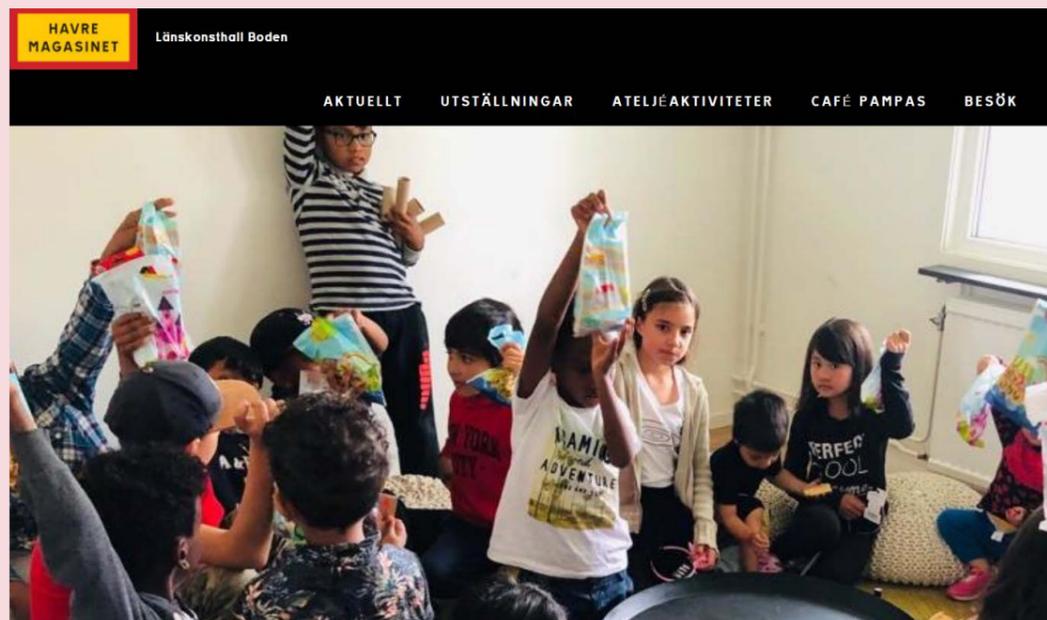
The only bigger renovation that has been made on the building since it was built was initiated by the internationally spread art project called Al-Madhafah, or the Livingroom (*Vardagsrummet*) by Sandi Hilal and Alessandro Petti, in collaboration with Yasmeen Mahmoud, Ibrahim Muhammad Haj Abdulla, and Ayat Al-Turshan. The art project is dealing with the situation of the refugee and the right to host as disruption in power dynamics between the refugee and the local. This is, for example, done through the much-appreciated international kitchen events, where people come together to cook and eat. Other examples are events where refugees have invited local politicians and treated them to dishes from their origin, as a way of starting conversations about culture. This project connects Boden, and this building, to an international network of living-room projects in Eindhoven, Paris, Abu Dhabi, Stockholm and Fawwar refugee camp. It also connects the site to the local art museum Havremagasinet and the Swedish Arts council. (Decolonizing architecture research 2019)

The project was developed within the frameworks of a national effort called Art happens (*Konst händer*) that invested in art in selected million program housing areas. These places were nominated through an open call directed to the civic community and many of the projects have been developed in



The last Yellow house

collaboration with the communities. The living room in Boden received a four-year grant to run activities within the frameworks of the program and is now halfway through that period. Right now, the local project leaders of The Livingroom in Boden are fortunately not worried about continued funding since the living room model, that originated in this project, has received much international press and has many collaborators. This project is described with enthusiasm and curiosity among the people I have talked to who know of it. It is a project with a high level of integrity and advanced post-colonial agenda with great importance, not only in the local context, but also in the world. For this project, it also becomes very interesting to note that this project of empowerment and engagement through collaboration between different actors triggered the only major physical alteration in the building since 1974.



3. The Living-room (Havremagasinet, 2019)



The Yellow building



Surrounding context

## 1.3 Context

### Regional context: Boden in Norrland

In the coming years, the share of Sweden's population living in the three metropolitan regions, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö is projected to increase. The effects of this process are hitting the northern inland particularly hard. Here, the young population move away because of the lack of higher-level education and, because of the local job markets lack of diversity, many never return. (Padel 2008)

Norrland is the Swedish name for the geographical area that is stretching from the region Gävleborg in the south to Lappland, more than 1000 km to the north, covering around 60 % of Sweden's surface and containing nine different regions, one of them being Norrbotten, where Boden is located. In the beginning of the industrialisation era Norrland was thriving due to its embedded natural resources of forests, minerals, and rivers, resulting in the growth of small production communities being linked together by the inland railway. Soon it was clear that this development would not last and was by the end of the second world war, overtaken by the population movement to bigger cities, continuing today. In the wake of this, a sense of national exclusion has strengthened its roots in the region where inhabitants perceive a centralized state that is disconnected from, and at times, counteracting the north. (Wollin Elhouar 2014)

That the conditions are different of living in bigger cities as compared to less populated areas in Sweden is according Björn Hellström, professor of architecture at KTH, a fact, and the disadvantages are growing. This is resulting in unfavourable effects on public and private functions, economic resources, infrastructure, cultural life, and housing. The problems are enhanced by lacking coordination between national, regional, and local authorities resulting in regulations lacking awareness of negative effects on local, small-town contexts. Connected is also what Hellström calls the normative outlook (*normer och synsätt*) that premier urbanisation to bigger cities, resulting in growing anti-establishment movement with failing trust in the democratic system. The uneven conditions are mirrored in our systems of food, raw material, and energy productions, where the smaller communities often have the role of passive supplier rather than an active part in mutually strengthening solutions. (Hellström 2021, conference)

Keeping both the local and regional context in mind is very important when moving forward as it sets some specific conditions for an urban language that is represented all over Sweden. It is a place that is neither a rural area of decline nor an area of urbanising growth, but in-between, where growth is very slow or simply stagnating. It is a context that struggles with finding a way forward in the conditions set by the growth norm of the urbanising areas whilst simultaneously facing very urban problems of housing shortages. This condition ultimately results in an urban environment in deterioration with few tools to counteract it but with a great need to do so.



4. The last Yellow (Boden municipality)

## 2. Conceptual framework and analysis

### 2.1 Thinking of development less dependent on growth

Imagining development processes in conditions of decline or non- or slow-growth certainly seems hard but at least not impossible. It generally becomes an exercise in rethinking the way we organise value and time, focusing less on economic profitability and in extension growth, and more on a slower pace that has time for development from within. I have treated this topic as an exploration that only in smaller parts deals specifically with the physicality of architecture and finds most of its potential in looking at how to set the conditions for it.

In this section of the report, I partly look towards Yvonne Rydin's work on the issues of what she has termed growth dependent planning through the book *The future of planning: Beyond growth dependence*. In her work, Rydin examines the background, and reality of growth dependent planning in England and lifts both the benefits and negative effects that can occur, ultimately arriving at a critique of its dominance within the UK planning system. Problems with the contemporary world's reliance on growth can be found in depopulated contexts where its tools become ineffective and to a great extent useless because of its dependency on market processes. This incapacity is embedded in its nature that is both, its main strength and its greatest weakness, being its reliance on economic growth to drive urban development. Without the right type of demand, the growth dependent model does not work. Demand is the driver without which, the profitable side effects of development, such as green and social benefits, might not occur. The assumption of growth that has laid the foundation for its condition is not unreasonable. Since World War II, UK governments have generally grown accustomed to national economic output increase. This reality has naturally affected how planning policies have framed and defined its solutions. However, at a closer look, a more complex development unfolds, showing longer and shorter periods of decline in economy as well as recessions. By analysing this, Rydin means that there is no great problem, as such, in placing some development of social and ecological benefits in the hands of growth, when growth happens. The problem is instead clear when and where it does not, leaving government policies relying on growth ineffective (Rydin 2013). To sum up this problem Rydin says in a lecture, that growth dependent planning:

- Assumes demand for new development.
- Seeks to get social and environmental benefits from that development
- Is therefore dependent on market-led development for those benefits
- As a result, actively encourages and promotes market- led development

This means that the conditions of market led development is not only inefficient in decline but also problematic where the local population is considered vulnerable in the face of growth, risking gentrification and ultimately displacement. This also includes conditions where the need for external developers is so big that there is little room to place demands on their sustainability efforts, especially in the treatment of existing buildings. (Rydin 2014, lecture)

When it comes to environmental sustainability there are approaches that attempt on combining the consequences of growth with the beneficial sustainability effects by strategies such as green growth and ecological modernisation. These models rely on the development spurred by growth to go in a green direction with focus on dealing with various aspects of the climate change. Even if growth has potential in leading green development, it does not disconnect it from its harmful relationship to natural resource use, where it in many stages consume a lot. The already mentioned risks of displacement is a sustainability factor that can also risk getting further fuelled by the green growth that, through its environmental pursuit, lay the base for pushing out communities that cannot afford its changes. Rydin brings up the example of Curran and Hamilton that coined the term 'just green enough' with the goal of working with environmental improvements that does not lead to gentrification. They mean that the goal is to actually improve the conditions for the existing community but not to an extent that attracts 'upscale' sustainable residential development that will drive out working-class and industrial business. This indicates an intention of working with less visible aspects of improvement that are less likely to drive up the price of land. (Rydin 2013)

In her suggestions for reforming the growth dependent condition, Rydin puts a lot of emphasis in the planning system and the work and regulations of the public functions in government, as the base of creating conditions that supports development that does not rely directly on growth. Setting the framework for development is part of the core of the government mission and in Sweden we have seen this through periods of subsidized loans, for example the million program, during which, Prästholmen was developed. Another example is the self-build home movement (*egnahemsrörelsen*) that in the end of the 1800's started as a civic movement to enable the less economically strong groups of society to improve their own conditions of living. Starting as a more rural movement it soon spread to the cities and eventually was supported by state financed loans and available priced plots.

Duvedsmodellen is a local scale, contemporary example of public functions driving development. It is located in Duved, a part of Åre municipality, in Jämtland. This project was initiated by public housing company Årehus AB through a vision of how the small-city scale of Duved would be turned into an asset and attraction through digitalisation and circular economies. Duved, thanks to its close proximity to the

## 2.1.1 The demolitions and non-growth

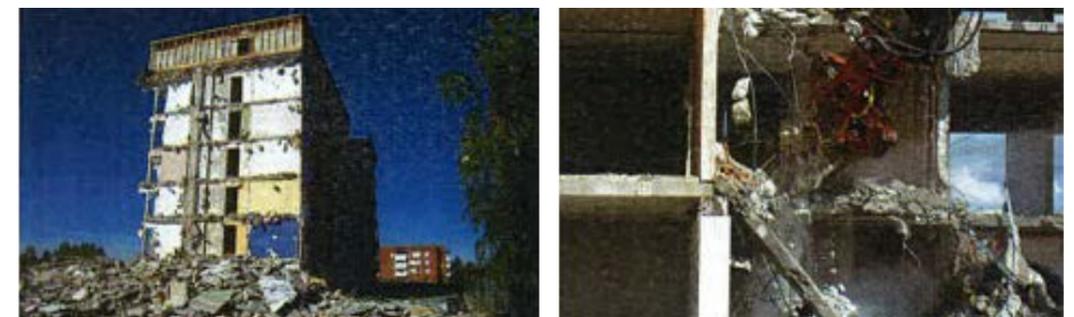
popular skiing resort Åre, now wants to become a model of how small communities can develop based on its own circumstances and gain resilience against outwards change and gentrification. Åre municipality decided to dedicate 300 million SEK (*Swedish krona*) for a school and 39 small rental units in central Duved. In the model, the public housing company is the motor ensuring reasonably priced housing and services but to increase capital, private actors have been invited to invest through the company of Duved framtid AB, together with the local community association (*byaförening*) who is granted the casting vote in the board. Jan Åhman, who is involved in the project, describes it as a test at “updating the democratic system” by not only doing citizen dialogs and surveys, but by actually including them as partners. A common greenhouse has been requested and envisioned, subsequently becoming a symbol for how the locals themselves can assemble this building and ultimately run and own it as well (Gunne 2021) Björn Hällström professor of Architecture at KTH is working on Duvedsmodellen and in a talk he gave on the conference Gestaltad livsmiljö he emphasises a need to start with the local community engagement in his phrasing “digging where you stand” as a metaphor for looking closely at what is already there, before trying to make suggestions for what can become. (Hellström 2021, conference)

This emphasis on the community as a driving force is something I find to be central in many concepts and models that are challenging the growth dependent one. Kathrine Gibson mentions this in an interview for the chapter Community economies in the book *The social (re)production of architecture: politics, values and actions in contemporary practice*. Her message is centred around how the concept of being in common opens the possibility of seeing our environment in a more ethical way. A way that includes care for the other in our practice of survival. By including this in our outlook on the built environment, questioning what processes it can contain and produce, she means that we can discern many questions relating to what we build, for example what materials we build in, where they come from, what their relation is to their environment, who processes them and so on. These questions of interdependence set up for a different development than that of the capitalist economy which, in contrast, is considered with various kinds of productivity of returns and extractive relationships with the environment, without a need for considering its wellbeing. Here architecture is an enabler through its nature of being the environment in which we live and there is potential in letting our environment allow for collective sharing and acts of care. Gibson also deals with the importance of the local outlook and emphasises that we must first appreciate that every space, in itself, is diverse and complex when thinking about how we want to influence it (Gibson, Petrescu & Trogal. 2017)

The government subsidized demolition that occurred in Boden in the 1990's is certainly not a local incident but effected many areas all over Sweden due to the widespread issue of surplus housing that had emerged (Reppen, Vidén 2006). In the northern inland, where population development is predominantly stagnant, these demolitions seem to have left contexts where communities lack the type of opportunities that the buildings could have provided, and now struggle to find ways of replacing them. Having needs to fill in terms of housing shortages and other types of facilities might be contradictory to what many would expect in an international scenario of urbanisation and a de-population. However, in parts because of this urbanisation, the small town has an increasing part of their demographical formation consisting of an elderly population and immigrants, (Hellström 2021, lecture) as well as people with limited economical means to access all types of housing. This situation naturally puts a demand for certain types of housing, in areas with more access to services.

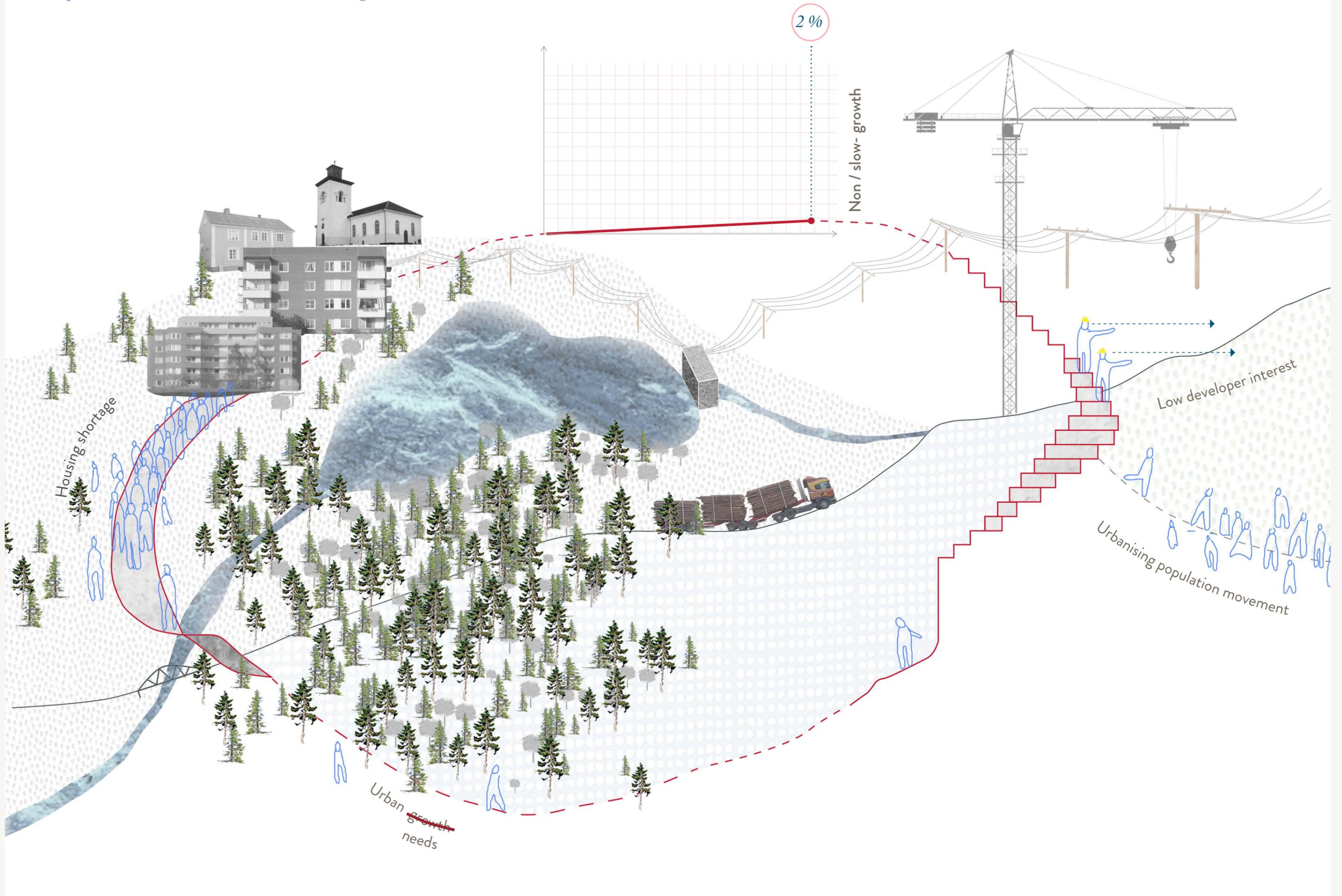
The scenario seems to make up a complicated situation where housing needs cannot be satisfied within the existing housing stock, at the same time as the de-populated or non-growth contexts make for risky investments to redevelop. In Boden this can be illustrated by looking at the fact that there is a well-documented housing shortage in the town since many years (Abrahamsson et al. 2018) at the same time as the population growth since 1968 sums up to just 2%. (Regionfakta 2021) The way that I see it, this in the long run, indicates a risk of demolishing housing in an area where it most likely will be hard to replace it, meaning that there is much to gain when you value and take care of the existing building stock.

In the following section of this report, I will discuss the concept of value further and focus it on the last yellow building that is today heading towards demolition.



5. Demolition process (BDX, 2008)

Development conditions in non-or slow growth context



## 2.2 Describing the embodied

### 2.2.1 Caring for the existing

One of the aspects that initially drew me towards investigating the site of Prästholmen is the will to better understand the material losses that occurred here during the demolitions. In the face of a global climate crisis, I see a rising urgency within the architecture profession to look at our existing building stock with more care.

In similarity to the times when the million-program housing was built, our society is facing serious global challenges with much at stake. Today we need to radically reduce our energy and non-renewable resource consumption. It seems like it has now become necessary to look at the heritage that has been left to us in our existing building stock and actively continue to renovate and adapt these to our current needs. (Musseler 2020)

After the second world war, people longed for the visible results of a fresh start and the new architectural agenda was healthy living conditions with light, fresh air, and sunshine- for all. Because of the tremendous housing shortage, modernists emphasised clear and simple structures that promised calm, safe, equal, and equitable conditions for everyone, made possible by new technologies. Soon, the debate of the social and psychological effects of these spaces arose and the need for diversity and mixed structure was rediscovered. (Musseler 2020) The structures of the modernist era, starting out as an expression of a generations hopes and dreams has instead become symbol of a negative narrative involving social, technical, and architectural issues. (Alonso. Palmarola 2019) It is, of course, very important to carefully examine the shortcomings of the mass-produced housing from this time but it must also be equally important to study the specific qualities they hold and how these can be the basis of becoming- or continuing to be, vibrant neighbourhoods. (Musseler 2020)

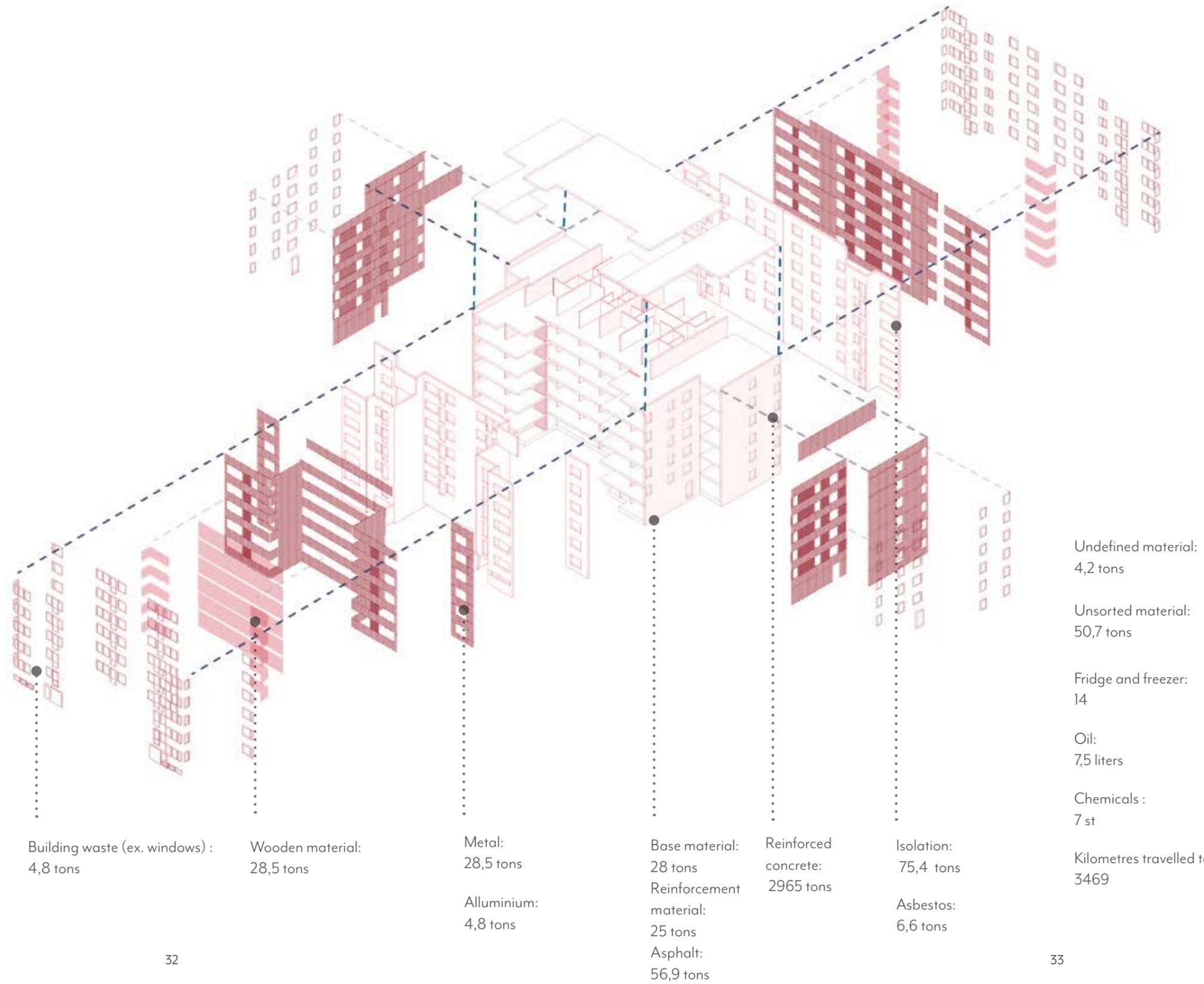
### 2.2.2 Embodied energy

Embodied energy is the term for the energy consumed to extract, refine, process, transport and fabricate a material or product. This term does not include the operational energy, referring to the energy consumed throughout the operation of the building or demolishing energy, which is the energy consumed to terminate a building. Traditionally the embodied energy of a building has been less considered than the operational energy resulting in efforts to improve the energy performance with less awareness of how they are produced. Now we know that the embodied energy can be equal to many years of operational energy, where operational energy is based on its use, embodied energy is built into its material. (Milne. Reardon 2013)

This term of embodied energy is one of the primary arguments I have encountered when making the case to renovate and take care of existing buildings, especially when dealing with the ones from an era that has yet to reach a mainstream acceptance as culturally important. Based on this, I have looked at the final report of demolition of one of the phases in the demolition process at Prästholmen. This report contains receipts from the termination of two nearly identical strip-type buildings to the last yellow one. This exercise has helped me visualize what this building actually contains in terms of materials to use it as a part of the discussion on its value. This study has also helped me get a better understanding of the demolition process and in extension termination energy of these buildings. This includes the number of truckloads of material that was transported of the site and how far they travelled.

In the end, the main point that I bring with me from this exercise is how little this material value and awareness says about how the environment is considered today. In a world where embodied energy is increasing in value, resulting in conditions where it is more or less expected for companies and public functions to act with awareness of energy consumption, the yellow building is likely still facing demolition. Furthermore, this is not in a context unknowing of the soon to be housing shortage, as was the case with the previous demolitions, but in the middle of one. The only reason behind this approach must subsequently be based in the general perception of the lack of value this place holds. This is a perception that in turn, only contains a structurally limited array of perspectives of the space. The need for including narratives and conflicting views the context to further investigate what the space embodies, beyond its energy and carbon, thus becomes evident when you consider who is generally being heard.

Material waste from previous demolition



### 2.2.3 Embodied social energy

In the introduction to the book *Oral history- Speaking of building*, Janina Gosseye discusses the untold in a history of architecture that is dominated by an elite, mostly western and male description. The untold is in parts, what happens beyond the day of a building's completion- both before and after, and she describes an entire field of people "authorized" to write the history of our buildings failing to see beyond structures frozen in time. Gossey uses a quote by author Rebecca Solnit, speaking of ghost-libraries that contains all the stories that have never been told and how they outnumber those of the recorded by some unimaginably vast sum (Gossey 2019) The agency of listening and recording is later articulated by Helena Mattson and Meike Schalk in a following chapter in the book about their project Tensta action archive. Here they question the outlook of western philosophy, political theory and culture that centres the act of speaking as a basic pillar of democracy.

*"While the voice, speaking, and writing are considered active, listening is often regarded as passive and not part of the political process."*

- Mattson. Schalk 2019. p 95

For my project, this expresses the urgency of listening to more narratives than that of the "major" in trying to understand the remaining environment at Prästholmen.

In the situation caused by Covid-19 I could not use my site visit as an opportunity to interview and visit people living on the site in a more un-structured way. Instead, I have turned to written material about the site in archives, news articles, and other types of written material, for example that produced by the art-project the Living-room. Though this approach I have been able to get in contact with people representing different organisation as well as a woman who have been living in the area her entire life.

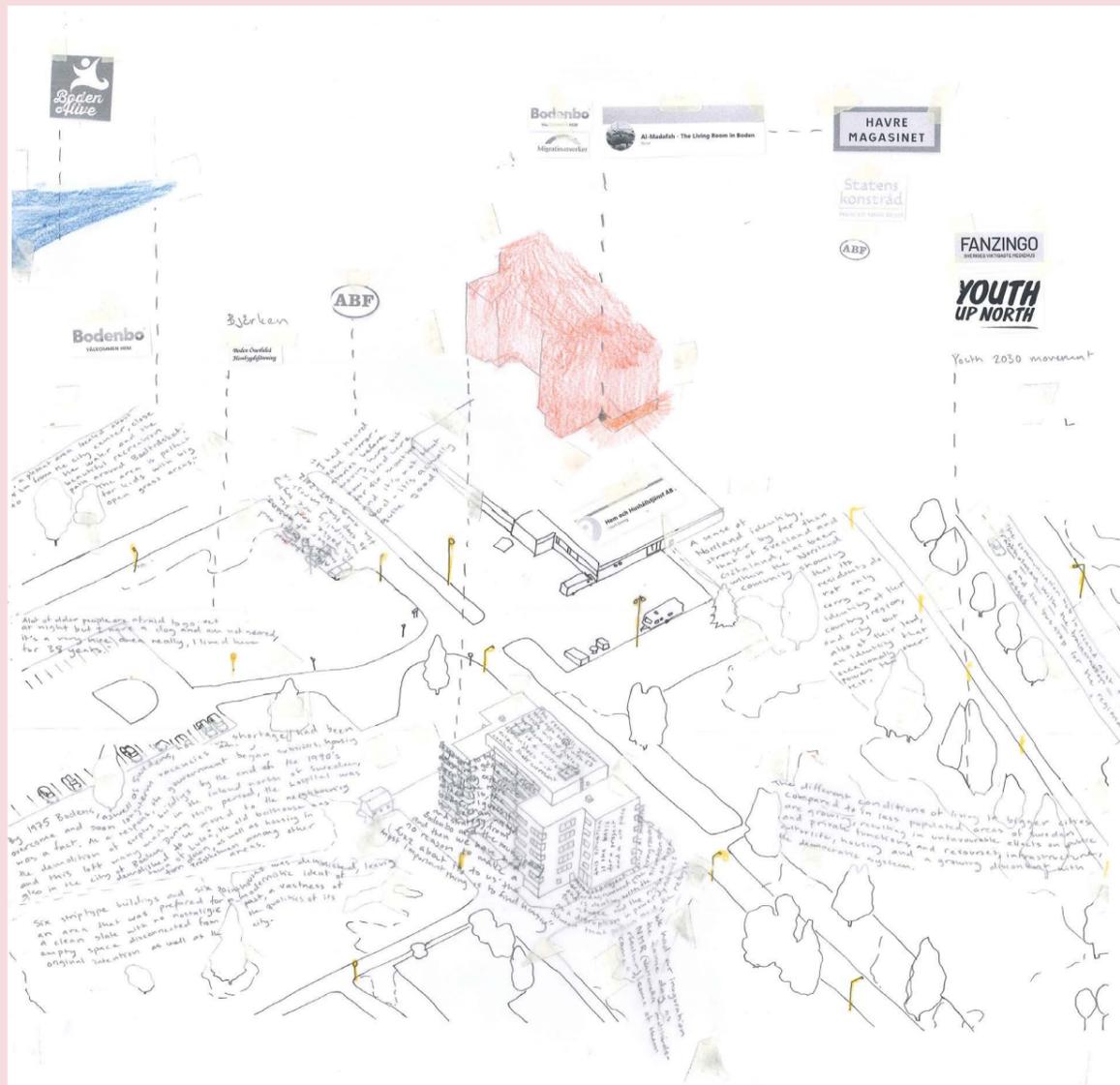
This woman gave me an interview containing many levels of information, both in her nostalgic memories of riding her bike around the neighbourhood and going swimming or skiing on the other side of the lake and in her more hands-on thoughts of conditions on the site. In the future, she hopes to see an open meeting space in the area and, in connection, expressed a will to engage her-self more in the different activities going on in the community but so far, lacking the confidence to do so. She described her routine of recreational walking as a very social process, often a time for random social interactions. These walks are when she meets people she knows without planning to and end up talking to new ones simply based on having seen each other around on previous walks. She describes the walk, for example along the water edge, as a natural way of connecting to people and because of the small-town scale, everyone knows everyone, where you stop to talk to a friend or relative and often is joined by someone new,

bringing the opportunity to form new relationships. Through this interview I also received second-hand accounts describing life in this area as she talks about her friends and neighbours, mostly pensioners and how they have maintained an active lifestyle through different programs in the city.

Besides this woman, I talked to the developer of asylum and immigrant activities at ABF, the study association that is active on the site, earlier in their own venue on-site and today, in activities organised by The Livingroom. Interviewing her was incredibly interesting since she, as an immigrant, lived in Prästholmen when she first arrived in Boden. She started her journey at ABF by taking part in study circles, begun to lead them her-self and eventually became a activity developer. Her description of Boden was for me, rather revolutionary. She describes a city where everything and almost anything can happen. She explained this through remembering the different study circles she has taken part in or helped organize either on the site or with people from it. The activities range from summer and winter fishing, snow sculpturing, cultivation classes, handicraft, cooking, baking, and braiding of hair. This narrative, something she says that she shares with her friends, has made me see a context that is far richer in activity and engagement than I remember. According to her, it is also a reason why many of her friends who have left Boden, wants to come back. They miss the place where, as she describes it, everything happens. This description and worldview are very refreshing to someone like me who grew up with a constant subconscious assumption that the world was going on elsewhere.

Mixed up with these accounts I realized is that I, to some extent, started including the material from articles, texts, and archives as narratives as well. Here I found accounts from the disturbances linked to the earlier organisation of the refugee housing showing both descriptions of concern as well as those of optimism. In the interview material that was produced by the Living-room I got a better understanding of how the situation is in the Yellow building today and what effects the physical condition of it has for its inhabitants. Using this as a method of including narratives framed by others obviously has its risks when seeking narratives to complement the one that has already been heard. But by keeping aware of what circumstances has prompted them, I still find the process enriching. It has highlighted how value is not something static that can be determined by one perspective but instead is highly subjective and interconnected to other processes and events. It contains many levels of information and is always a mix of positive and problematic factors, making it something that can never be exclusively either good or bad.

# Narrative mapping



Process drawing

# 3. Project

So, in the light of what has been discussed so far in this report, what is my proposal to deal with the problems of this scenario of a low valued environment that increases the risks of further demolishing despite the housing needs, in a context of non- growth?

- To do stuff!

## 3.1 The agency of doing

At first glance 'to do stuff' might seem like rather shallow suggestion in the depth of problems facing this site, but what I mean is that there is an agency in doing and making. Both in creating conditions that gives possibility to develop ones surrounding, and as a way of appreciating ones existing environment as an important asset.

*"The things around us are not simply passive object, but vibrant matters that produce and take part in the forming of our surrounding"*

-Benett 2010, introduction

Within the outlook of recognising the agency of things (or stuff) I think that there is a layer in the making of those things as a way of enriching how we see our everyday surrounding. Through making, we have the possibility of using the experience we gain from the process to decode layers of time and consideration around us, beyond the specific object produced. This aspect of recognising complexity and time in our built environment is discussed by Katherine Gibson who takes the example of looking at the life of a building. This building might have been developed under capitalist relations of employment but over time gotten modified by its users who put their own labour into it. The outcome becomes a mix of many different types of value-making and if we do not explore this, we can only see a building that has been industrially built. (Gibson, Petrescu & Trogal 2017) This way of thinking becomes interesting in relation to the discussion of value in chapter two, based on the perception of the Yellow building. Here we have a building that has an actual value in its embodiment of energy and carbon dioxide, a type of value that in the global climate crisis generally has risen but still, this specific building carries so little perceived value that it continues to risk demolition. It is hard to ignore how this might be linked to its position within a mass manufactured housing stock that has perceived connections to both social and technical problems. But if we see the yellow building (and its counterparts) as a type of building of

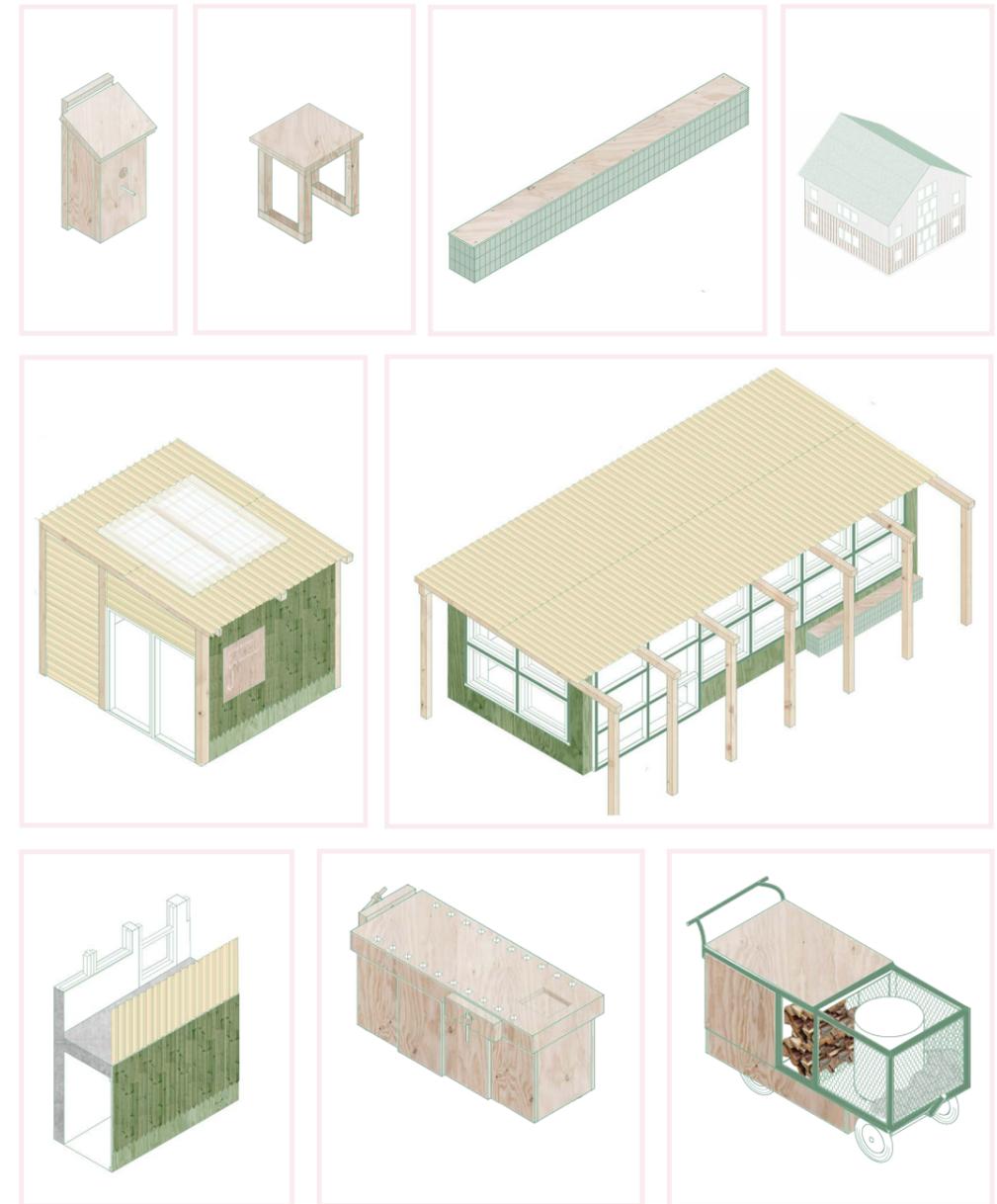


Illustration of proposed "stuff"

## 3.2 How?

the past, to simply not reproduce, we lose this temporal aspect of its value as non-static. Obviously, this is a discussion that will not be solved by only introducing the element of making but I do think it has its place in uncovering the complex nature value, that might be the base of a more sympathetic approach.

The concept of doing and making has become the core of my proposals where the essential purpose of my strategies, intentions and interventions on the site is to support ways of organising and mobilizing oneself in action, especially when action does not come from outside. This concept is concerned with making, not as an exclusive way of self-expression but as a way of taking part and contributing to the world. Richard Sennett, professor of sociology at the London school of Economic discusses this in the radio-documentary *The sympathy of things together* with architects and designers Amica Dalls and Giles Smith. He means that making is a way of recognising and exploring difficulty in our surrounding and that this is further developed when explored in common processes. He suggests that the more cooperative we are in the making of thing, the better and more meaningful experiences they produce. This way, much of making as a value is centred around figuring out how to work together as a critical part of opening to new possibilities. This approach confronts you with a world outside your own head and forces you to be more sympathetic with other people.

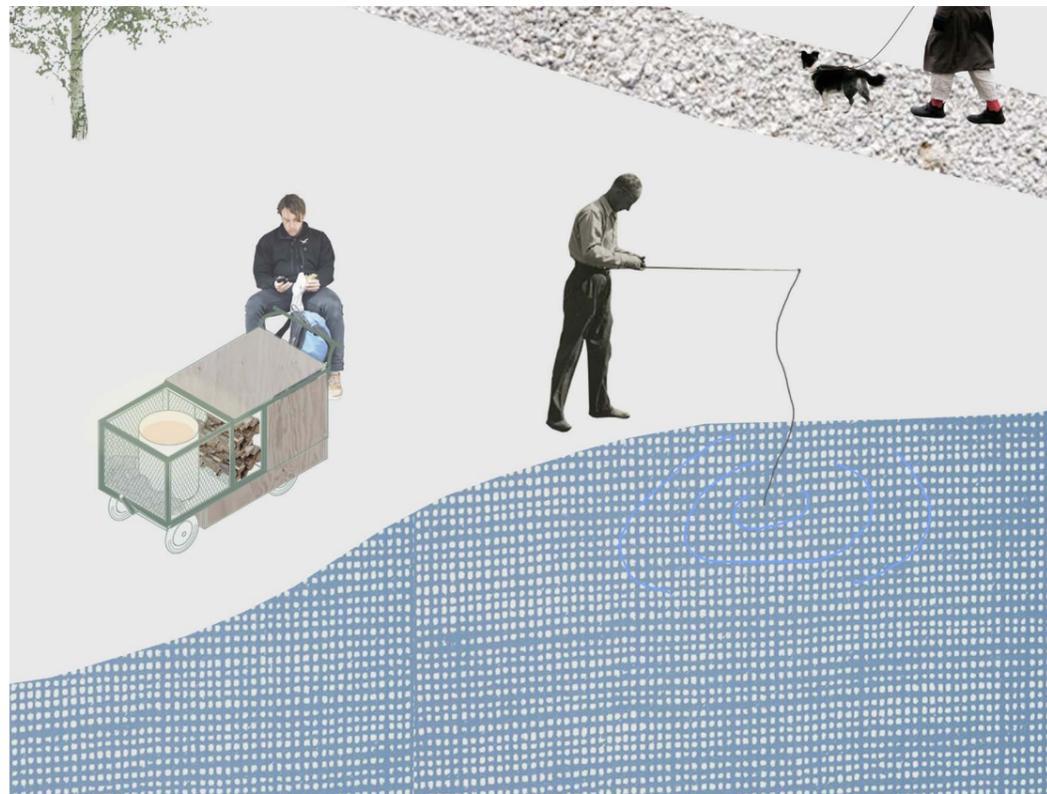
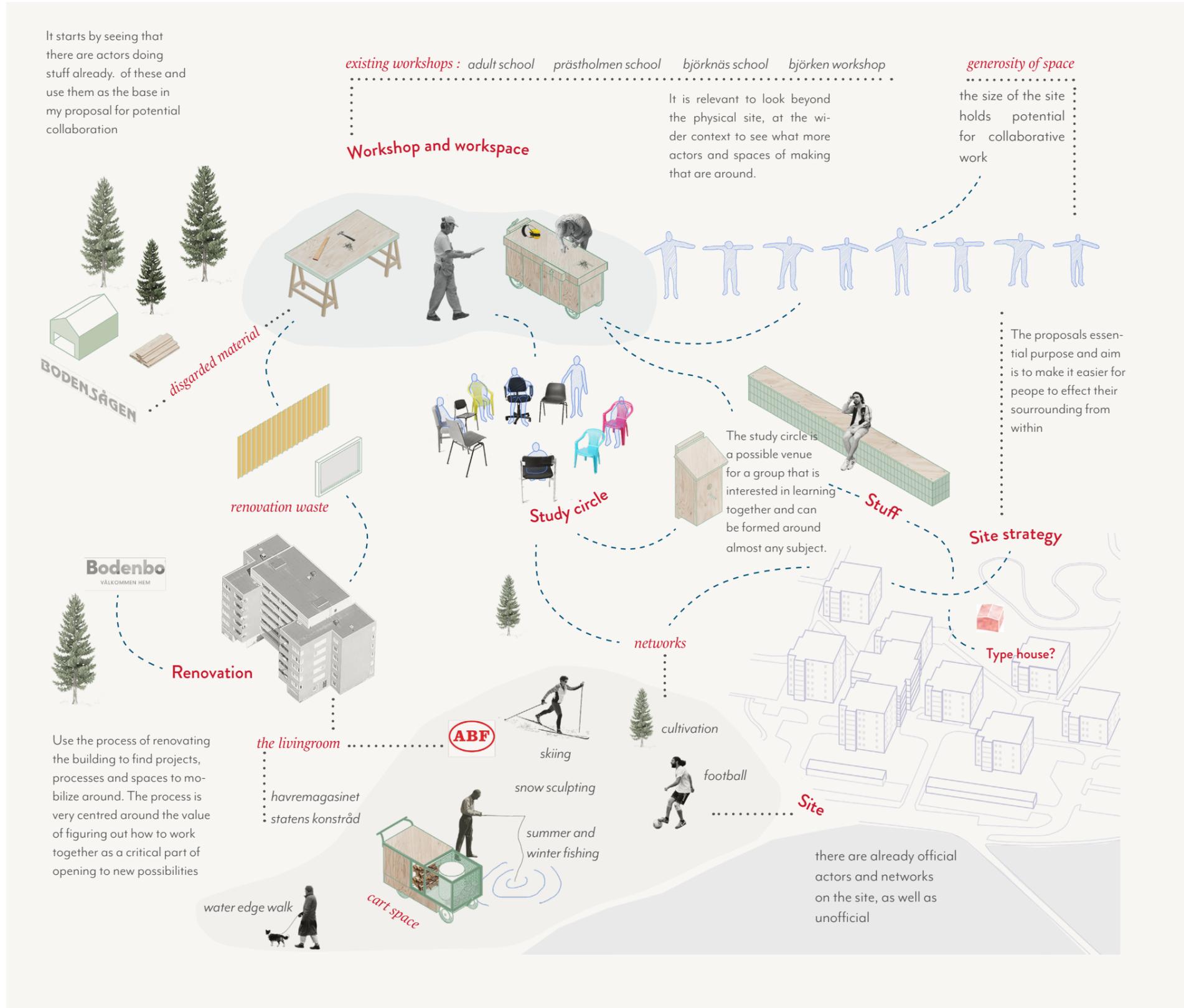


Illustration of stuff that already happens with the addition of the Cartspace.-Fishing by the lake

In the sentence proposing to do or make stuff I am using the word stuff with awareness. Part of my project is concerned with defusing the monumentality of this strategy, which essentially is to take on the site from within. To deal with this I suggest that the differently sized outcomes from various projects are equal no matter their physical output when you instead look at the process of finding ways to build confidence and work together as the key. Doing and making things might seem a bit more possible with this outlook, meaning that it is easier to build a bench or a birdbox than a house, at least to start with. So how do I think that this could be done in this context? I think it starts by seeing that there are actors doing stuff already. As I have already mentioned, there are active networks on the site, and I use this as the base in my proposal for potential collaborations. Here the format of ABF's study circles is potentially important.

The study circle is a possible venue for a group that is interested in learning together and can be formed around almost any subject. There are three different types of study circles, a friendship circle initiated by the group in question, an association circle that is linked to the activities of a specific association where the circle leader often is active, and a program circle where the activity is advertised to gain participants who pay a participation fee, and the circle leader can receive payment. By organising processes of learning and working in any of these formats ABF can for example help with facilities, study material, technique, and planning. Keeping this organisation in mind becomes interesting when thinking of how to form a base or part of collaborations with different actors of doing that are already here.

To continue, it becomes important to look for the stable actors and processes, like the municipality and public housing company. Here, there is an opportunity to, through their input and activity, form collaborations around spaces and projects that add value, both as end-products, but primarily as processes. It is also relevant to look beyond the physical site, at the wider context to see the additional actors and spaces of making that are around. Here we can for example find Björken snickereri, a wood workshop in a pensioner activity centre along the main route to the city centre. This workshop has previously been very active and was paired with other facilities such as a sewing atelier and a restaurant. Other examples are the school at Prästhölm, that has a wood workshop, and the high school across the lake, that houses both a wood workshop and a metal workshop. In the high school, some of these facilities are used by a carpentry program where the pupils traditionally build a house to sell every year, a procedure that could potentially be explored. This program also has an adult equivalent that educates students in traditional wood and concrete techniques, painting, and tiling.

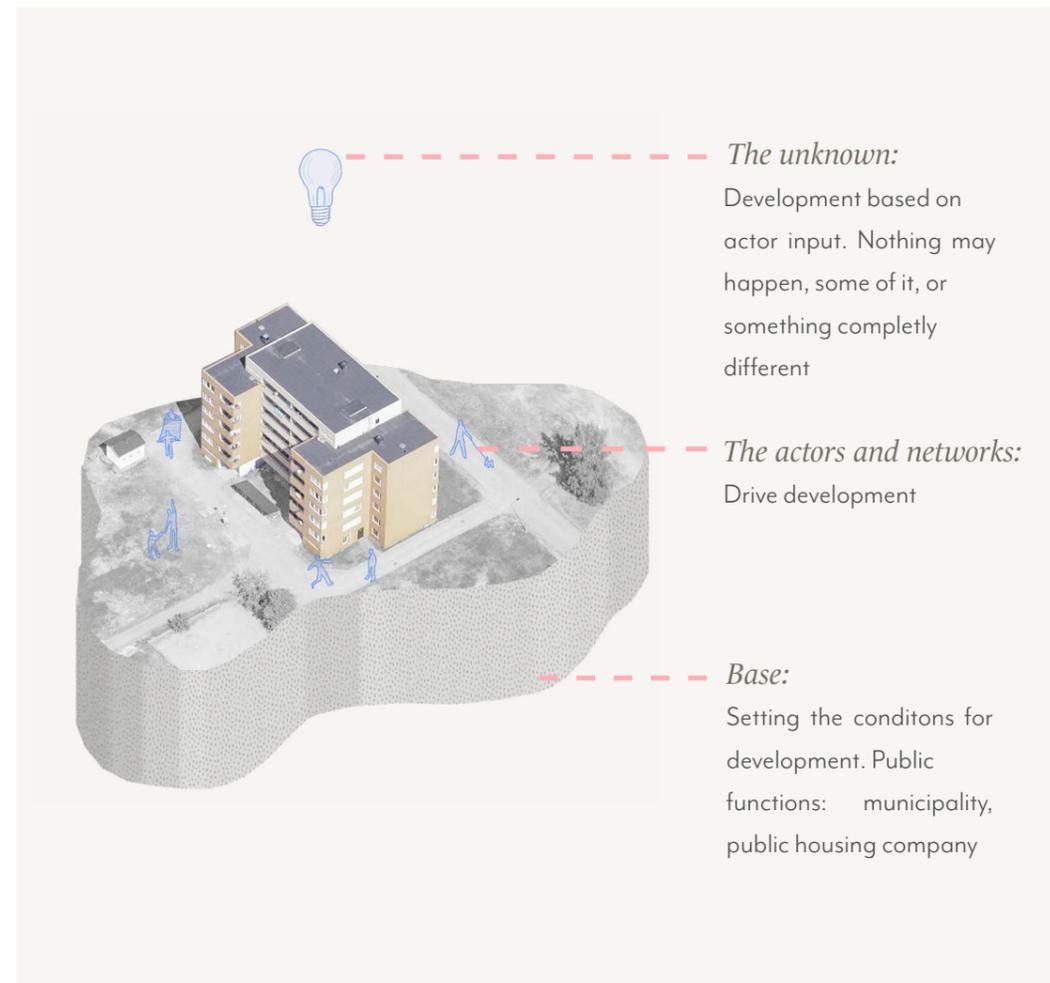


Strategy and actor diagram

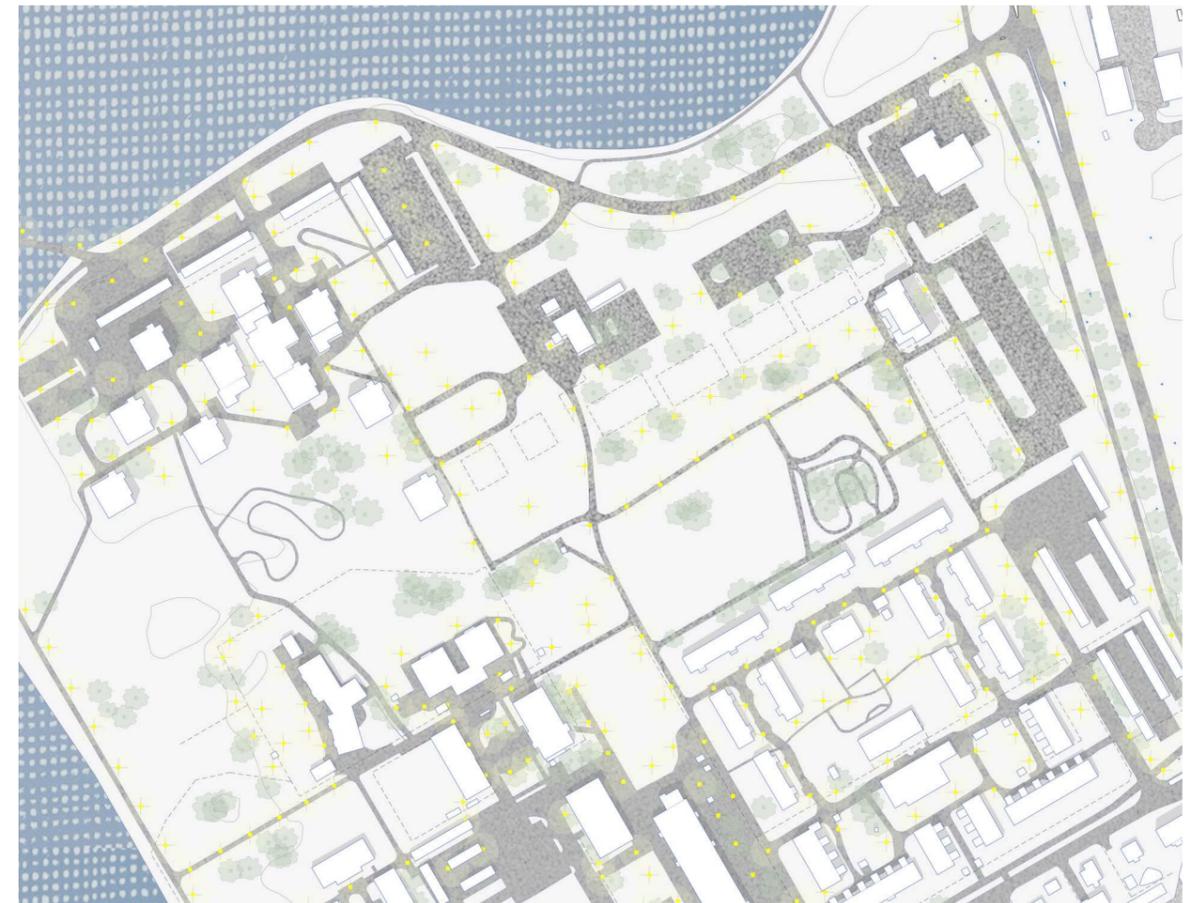
At this point, what I am proposing in terms of collaborators is very much based on different actors voluntary and educationally purposed labour but there is also an aspect to seeing collaboration with local businesses, as well as with non-organised input from engaged inhabitants. What I am giving examples on here, are an attempt on illustrating that the self-organised effort that my project is, in some parts relying on, is not just a nameless group of individuals that need to come together to work collectively. But that there are some relevant actors and networks that already exist. They, with a bit of extra imagination, effort and organisation, have the capacity to start with the small intervention and build their ability to collaborate, to maybe attract new interest.

### 3.3 Strategies, interventions and intentions

Through my research in embodiment and the urgency of framing local actors and community as drivers, I have come to see the site through the potential of layers where what happens depend on what the community input is. These layers are not phasing and are not based in a time axis, nothing what I propose might happen, some of them or maybe something completely different, in what-ever order. There is one exception and that is what I have defined as the base layer. In this layer we find the actions that are very much founded on effort and input from both the public housing company and the municipality. This is an effort of preparing the site to be better equipped to house development less dependent on growth and using the process of renovating the Yellow building to outline community projects.



Layer diagram



Sit map of existing context in Prästholmen  
Scale on A4 1:4000



#### 3.2.1 Preparing the site

During the million program, actors in the Swedish building sector had to grow in capacity to handle the volumes of built environment that was to be produced. (Nylander 2014) This development is likely one main reason behind the industry's conditions today, where a few very big developers hold the tools to act on a market that subsequently are setting conditions to fit them. Possibly, this is even more evident in less commercially attractive contexts where the landowners will struggle to find interested developers and thus have little demand to put on their ambitions.

The site at Prästholmen still has the same detailed development plan as it did during its development in 1974, meaning big plots and largescale development. By defining a new vision as the base for redoing the detail plan, the municipality has the opportunity of evening the odds a bit between the bigger actors and the alternatives. A lot of potential and framework is found when looking at the remaining infrastructure of the site with a existing road network and remaining streetlight.



### *smaller plots*

Making smaller plots to make them more manageable for the smaller actor and co-builder that are not likely to venture into largescale development

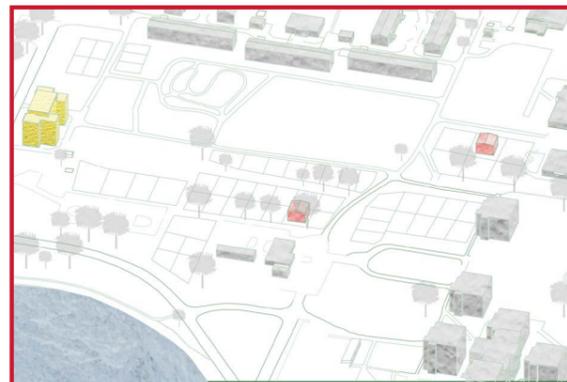
Introducing process pilots can be relevant to help navigate unexperienced developers and co-builders through the rigours bureaucracy that might seem intimidating to many.



### *networks support*

It could be relevant to work actively with establishing a network between local actors to simplify joint ventures and co-funding. An example of this is Vänboendet in Hogslätt, where a group of co-builders managed to receive funding through the help of a local developer, a collaboration with the local bank and a municipal loan. With these partners the group was able to handle one of the most common economic obstacles for co-builders which is funding and the bank's unwillingness to lend money to this type of projects.

Introducing process pilots can be relevant to help navigate unexperienced developers and co-builders through the rigours bureaucracy that might seem intimidating to many. Here, the format of the study circle is a relevant example.



### *payment and land allocation*

Placing payment for the plots in later stages of the process since it is often very hard for unseasoned developer and co-builders to have a sufficient economy in the early stages of the project.

Making land allocations in the end of the development plan to make shorter processes and base it on qualitative values rather than economic gives better odds for co-builders to be able to compete with bigger developers.



### *typehouse?*

A complementary action could be to develop a contextually specific type-house that is designed to fit the context and the co-building process meaning simple technical solutions and an "easy to build" approach.

(Shcartner 2019, conference)  
(Oksanen, Larsson 2019, conference)

### 3.2.2 A contextually specific type-house?

Looking at the suggestions of my site strategy, the problem of economical sustainability becomes quite evident in placing such a big effort within the municipality when often the work they do on drafting detailed development plans is requested and funded by developers. However, it might be like Yvonne Rydin suggests, that planner employed by the municipality must go to work anyways to earn their salary paid for by taxpayers, it is just the matter of finding ways of redirecting the work that is being made. (Rydin 2014, lecture)

In the suggestion of developing a version of a type-house to fit the process of small scale building it should not be confused with the type-house suggestions that has recently been considered in a government investigation to increase the market conditions of housing production (SOU 2020:75). In the suggestion considered by the government, some mass-produced houses would essentially be able to be developed despite of current detailed development plans. When analysed by the organisation Egnahemsfabriken, who was invited by the government to give their opinion on the proposal, they instead found that the suggestions will likely lead to an increase of the already uneven market conditions, that does not manage to take local conditions in consideration. Instead, they propose a way forward that gives more agency to the local municipality to take their own conditions into consideration when working with planning and strategies of housing production. (Berg 2021)

I have looked at some of the local typologies in Boden, based in the local heritage and occurrences of the self-build movement (*Egnahemsrörelsen*) and typologies at the site and comment briefly on their main potential as co- or self- organised building typologies.

#### *Single family houses*

Like many areas in Sweden, Boden has the self-build movement (egna hemsrörelsen) represented in parts of its built environment which has mainly resulted in one storey single family houses. The single-family house enclosed by a garden is a popular typology in this context and in the coming years 260 new units are projected to be needed to fill the request. Within the tradition, scale and size this type of building there is potential for self- and collectively organised building methods.



6. Backgatan (Melchert 2015)

*Rowhouses and townhouses*

One of the dominating typologies of Prästhölm is the two storey town house and rowhouses. This provides a lower and more intimate scale to the neighbourhood and provides for different types of housing wishes and needs than those of the apartment complexes. Their layout exhibits the potential of framing common and social spaces. Row houses has an efficiency and scale that might be more adapted for the urban character of this area than single family houses. The typology is probably more likely to be developed by smaller, local developers than co-builder, that will rent them out or sell them at the end of their production.

*Two-storey freestanding houses*

In the central area of Boden there are many two-storey freestanding wooden houses. Some of these have likely been built as self-built development and they are often shaped as a square with inner walls that meet at the central supporting masonry (murstocken) (Melchert 2015). There is one appartement in each floor that is connected by a staircase located in the middle of a façade. The upper apartment sometimes also has an attic floor that is fully furnished. Many of these houses are owned by single families and develop into multigenerational living where the use depends on the family configuration resulting in expansions or retractions to different floors. Sometimes, one of the apartments can be sublet if the family does not use it. I think this typology is interesting to investigate as a typology for Prästhölm since it offers many ways of organising both ownership and production collaborations. I find the multigenerational living as very relevant in the local context where many families are represented in multiple generations. Many young people that move away often express the will to come back attracted by the closeness to family and friends. This way of living and sharing resources could become interesting, being a structure with inbuilt flexibility to change how it is used over time but small enough in scale to make this flexibility possible in terms of organisation and ownership.



7. Font: Rowhouse, Back :Town houses (BodenBo)



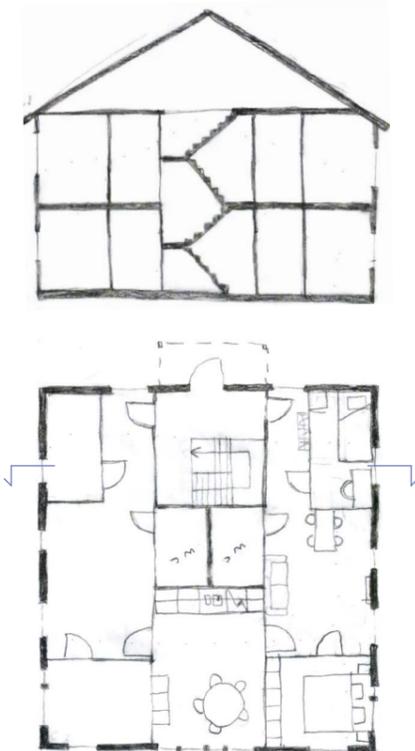
Example of two-storey freestanding house

Image: Melchert 2015



"Type house" illustration

This is a sketch based in the potential defined in the two storey freestanding typology to be used as an illustration. The floorplan experiment with elasticity and flexibility and allow for two, two bedroom, units with shared kitchen or a bigger four bedroom unit with possibility of two entries and a seperate kitchen. experimenting with elasticity and flexibility. can allow for two, two bedroom, units with shared kitchen or a bigger four bedroom unit with possibility of two entries and a seperate kitchen. Windows are dimensioned to be able to re-use the changed once from the renovation process and by using them in two layers, the energy performance increaces.



Scale on A4 1:200

### 3.2.3 Renovating the Yellow building

The initial base of this proposal simply becomes about the action of doing something to deal with the inactivity and slow decay that is currently leading the building towards demolition. To repeat what has already been said, this is centred around the input of the owner of the building which is the public housing company. This approach is considered within the frame of rather conventional frames for renovation and is made from a partly pragmatic process but with room for added value, which will be discussed further down in this section of the report.

#### *Beauty and everyday use*

##### *Facade*

The current façade in a striped pattern of lightweight metal sheet cladding is generally perceived to be in good conditions with minor repairs needed here and there. On the Ground floor however, this metal has been more effected by damages and mechanic stress. The panels seem to be intact but have dents and other cosmetical damages to them. Inspiration is taken from the central area between the two entries where instead of steel cladding the façade has been plastered and on two walls covered with white ceramic tiles. What I propose is to use these materials around the entire bottom floor with white plaster in the main part and grey-green ceramic tiles in a stirp just above the base. The white plaster also joins the newly renovated Livingroom apartment that has been executed with white metal panels in its window sections. The ceramic tiles that have been used on different walls in the building are very effectful and gives depth to the original design and extending their use in the purpose of renovation is giving attention and respect to these already existing moments of craft within the building.

##### *Entries*

The dark brown, light weight metal entry and window sections are exchanged for a new one that catches the geometric pattern made by the new tiled base with wooden posts that will complement eventual future additions.

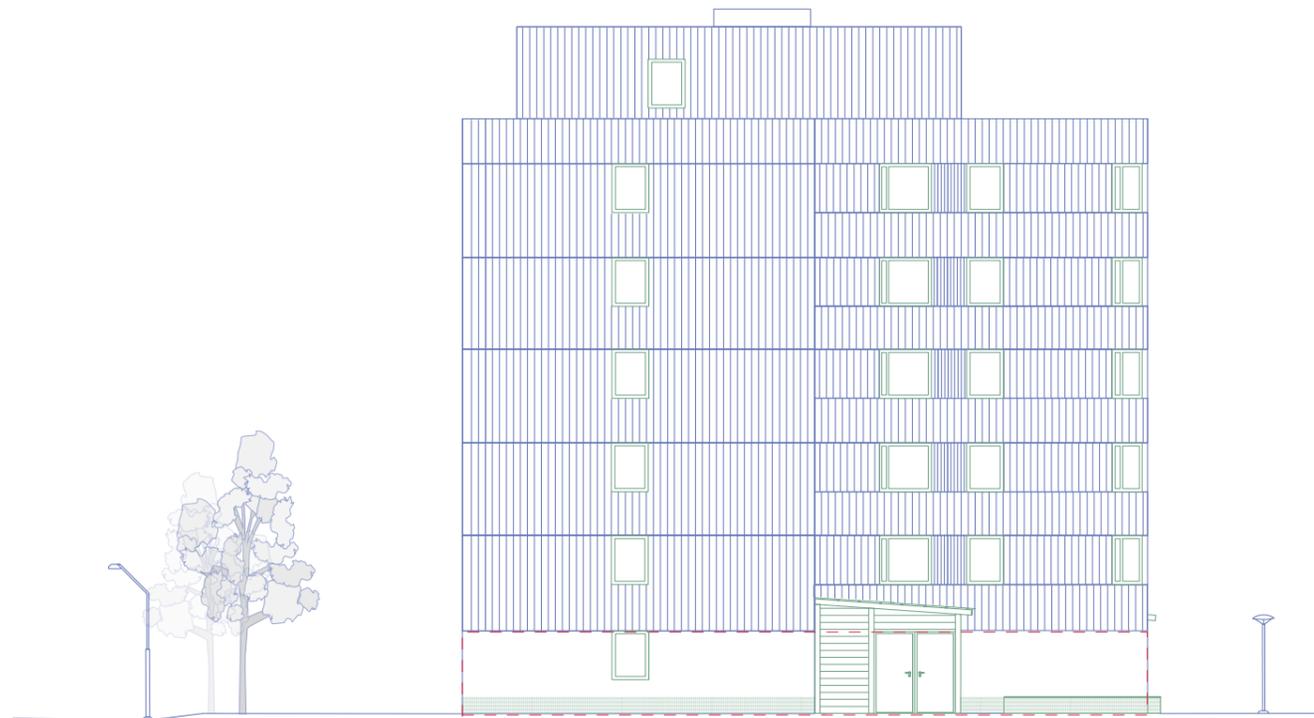


Exterior view. Entry situation

Red: removed  
 Blue: existing  
 Green: new



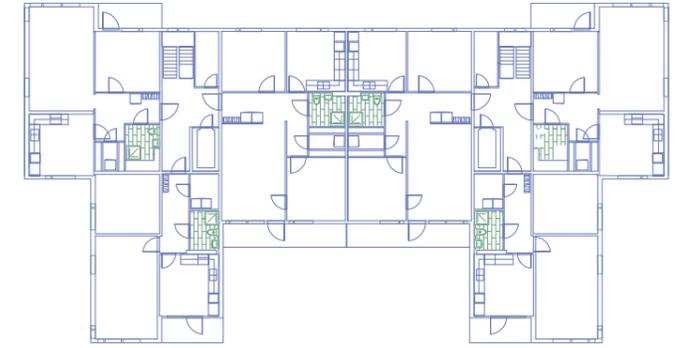
Northeast Elevation  
 Scale on A4 1:200



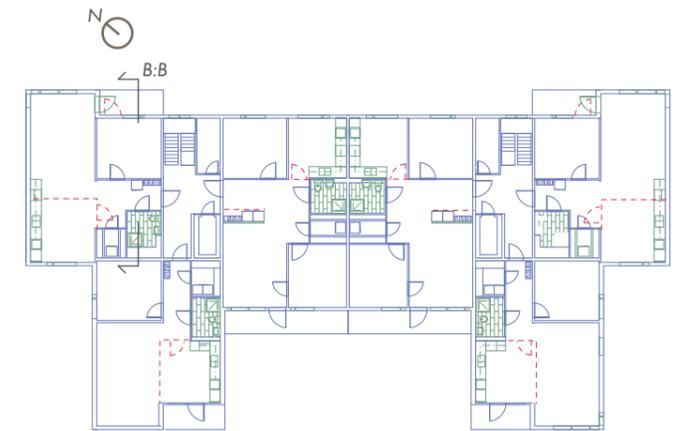
Southeast Elevation  
 Scale on A4 1:200

### Apartments

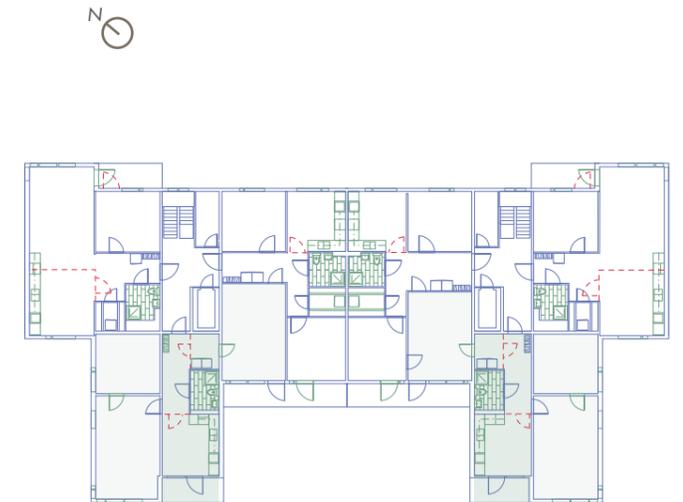
The existing apartments plans hold many qualities with windows in two directions, balconies for every apartment and much storage opportunities. By doing rather simple interventions like removing walls that separate the kitchen from the living room and placing an access to the balcony from this area rather than the bedroom the apartment could become more updated to more contemporary ideals. Besides this there are possibilities to investigate ways of introducing more units where smaller, separate units share facilities like kitchen and bathroom, if it would be requested among tenants.



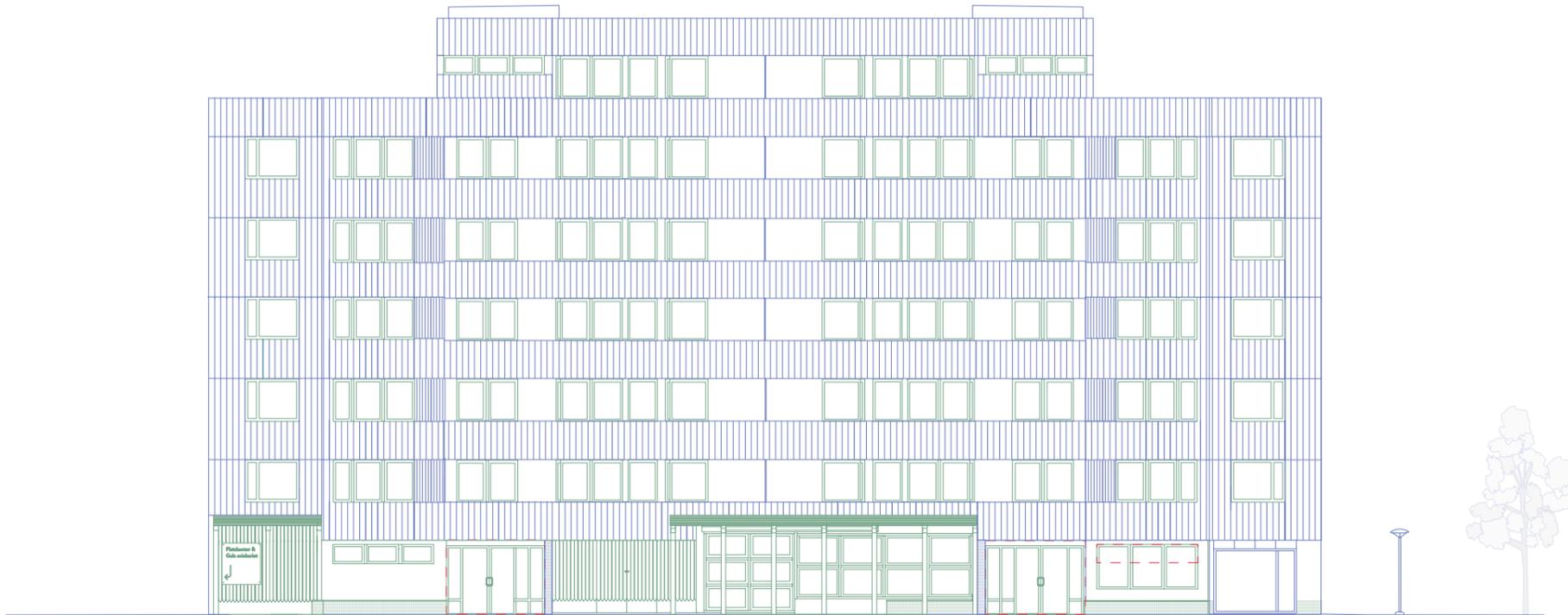
Generic apartment floor plan  
 Alternative: Minimum changes  
 Scale on A4 1:400



Generic apartment floor plan  
 Alternative: Open floorplan  
 Scale on A4 1:400



Generic apartment floor plan  
 Alternative: Joining apartments, shared facilities  
 Scale on A4 1:400



Southwest Elevation  
Scale on A4 1:200

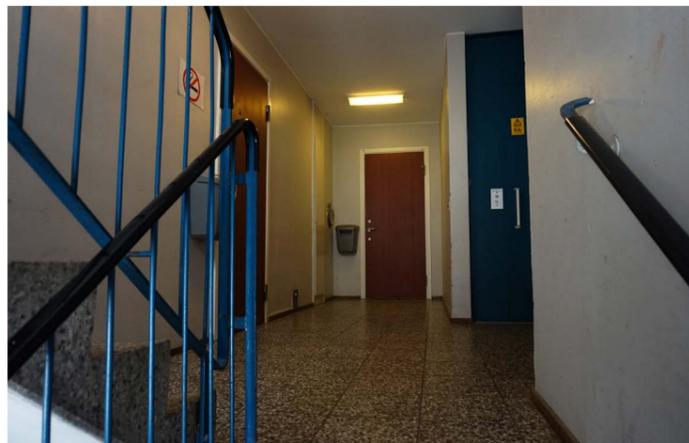
Red: removed  
Blue: existing  
Green: new



Ground floor  
Scale on A4 1:200



- 1. Kvartersgård
- 2. Workshop pavillion
- 3. Workshop /Gula snickeriet
- 4. Site office
- 5. Meeting room
- 6. The livingroom /Vardagrummet
- 7. Seating / solbänk
- 8. Storage



Existing staircase and groundfloor

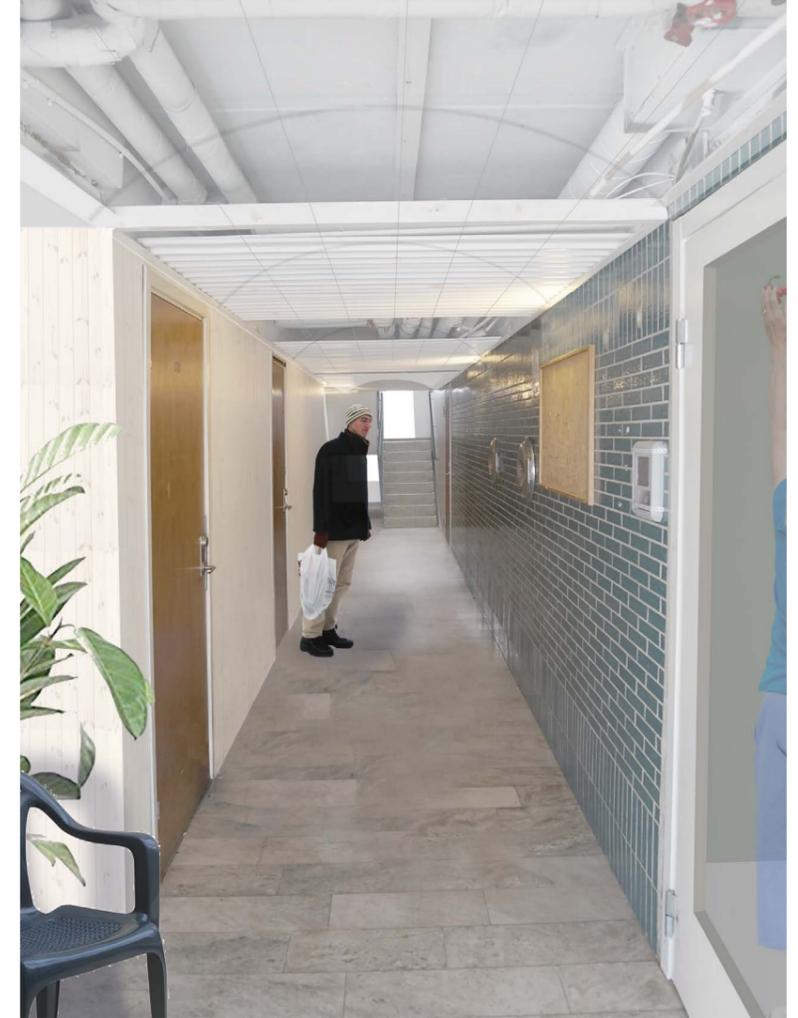
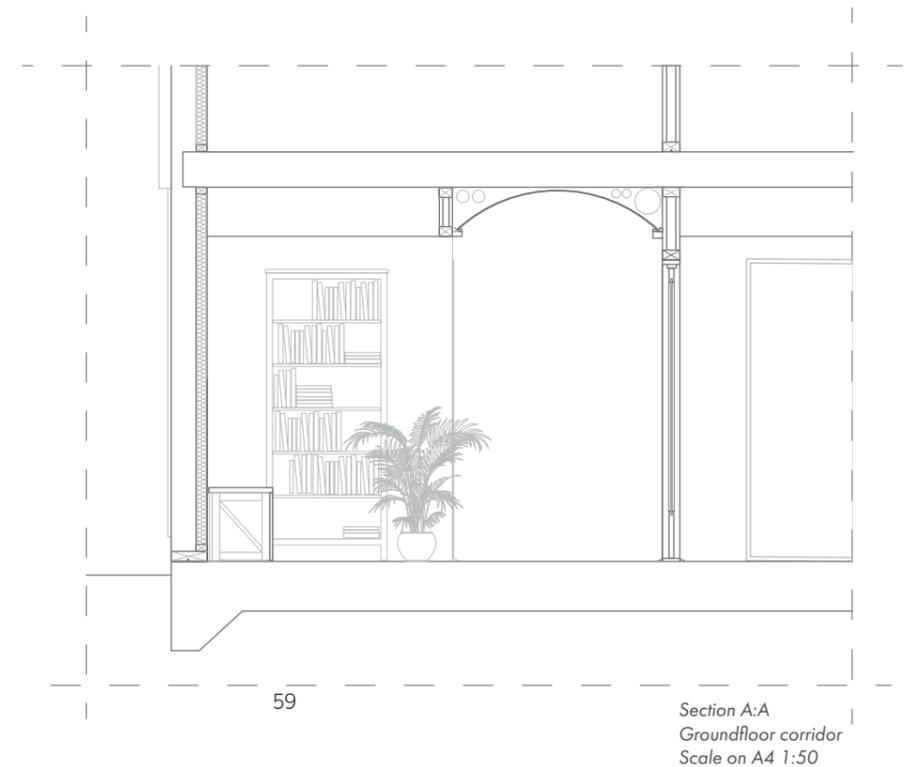


Illustration of renovated groundfloor

### Ground floor corridor

The teal-coloured ceramic tile wall in the southern entry is original and very well preserved and mirrored by an equally preserved yellow toned in the northern. This continue to be the main feature of this space and is complimented by a bright hue of white tinted wood in the mirroring wall that is currently a painted structured wallpaper that has many damages. The stone floor is kept in its original form and the lighting is changed from fluorescent luminaires to LED strips that are running along a translucent plastic ceiling. This ceiling is arched to give space for technical fixtures running along the edges but give more height in the middle. A new window is placed behind the stairs to complement the daylight that is let in along the staircase also at the ground floor, introducing light in two directions. The previous stroller storage in the entry will be removed to give space for seating. The space this creates in the south staircase is facing the laundry room which gets a new partly glazed door to make a more social space. The façade of the laundry room gets bigger windows to connect the inside to the outside in the bottom floor. Next to the staircase the technical storage will be moved into the centre storage place between the two entrances to give more space as you arrive through the stairs or elevator.



*cart space*



*Interior view of laundryroom*

*Existing interior material palette:*



Stone floor



Ceramic tiles



Wooden door



Ceramic tiles



White painted structured wall paper



Iron cast stair railing

Terazzo tiles

*Existing exterior material palette:*



Ceramic tiles



White plaster



Lightweight steel cladding  
NCS: S 2030 Y10R



Gravel



Lightweight steel cladding  
NCS: S 2060 Y30R

*Added material palette:*



CLT wood



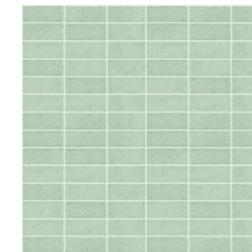
Green stained plywood



New white plaster



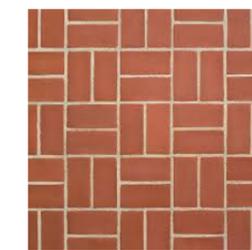
Green stained wooden panel



Ceramic tiles



Natural plywood



Brick flooring



White stained wooden panel

## A pragmatic process

The main part of the more conventional renovation process is considered as quite pragmatic and deals with the building's energy consumption. I have worked with this as a process that must happen including:

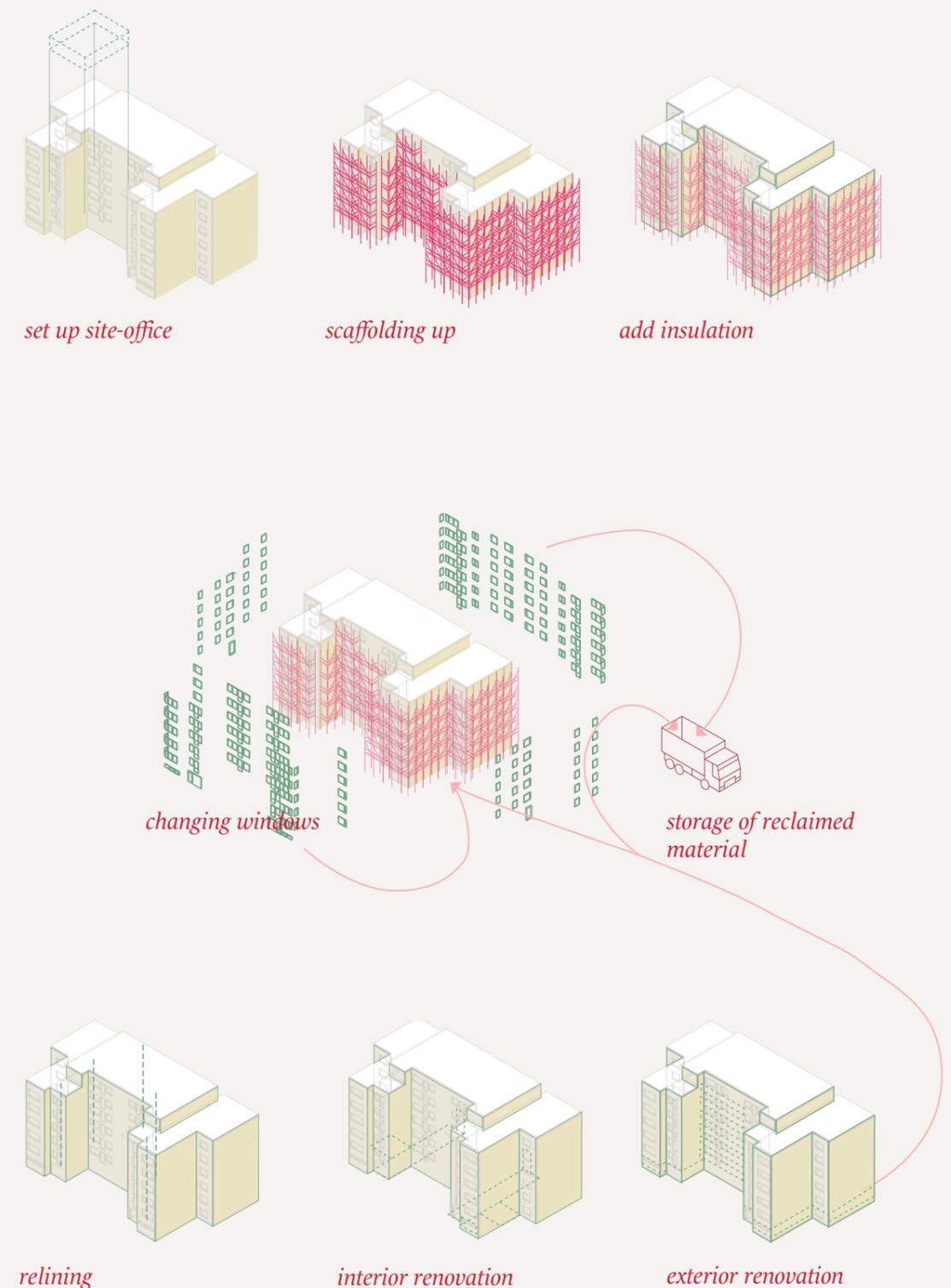
- Adding insulation in outer walls and slabs
- Changing windows to new, more energy efficient, but storing the old ones to be used in the making of stuff.
- Relining or changing of pipes
- Updating wet spaces to improve standards
- Installing modern technologies of keeping track of energy consumption in the building, like individually measured electricity use, to promote more sustainable habits.

For this proposal I have ended up focusing on how it might be plausible in this context more than the technical details.

Since the built environment is the culprit behind roughly 40% of Sweden's total energy consumption (Statens energimyndighet 2020) it seems reasonable to consider this when renovating buildings from an era known for consuming much energy. Finding the economical motivation to do this can however be challenging for the real-estate owner since it is a big and costly commitment. In a master thesis report from Chalmers University, two students test the economical sustainability of four different options of renovation or re-building in the million programs. These options are:

- A zero alternative where nothing but the most needed is done
- An alternative that achieves passive housing now (year 2011 when the report was written)
- An alternative that pushes the renovation to 2020 which was meant to be the year when all renovations bigger than 25 % needed to achieve passive house standard
- Lastly an alternative where the building is demolished and replaced by a building made with CLT and wood.

Their results indicate that the options for extensive renovations are the best ones, seen over time, and the most expensive one is a completely new building, both considering rent prices for the tenant and investment from the owner. The model that BodenBo, probably unknowingly has set up for, the one where minimum upkeep is done for 10 years followed by a big renovation, is the alternative that seems to have the lowest impact on the rental costs. When analysing their findings, the authors mention the need to consider the ownership of the building. Now, it is becoming more common for investment companies to buy and run buildings from the million program and for these companies the economic situation of the



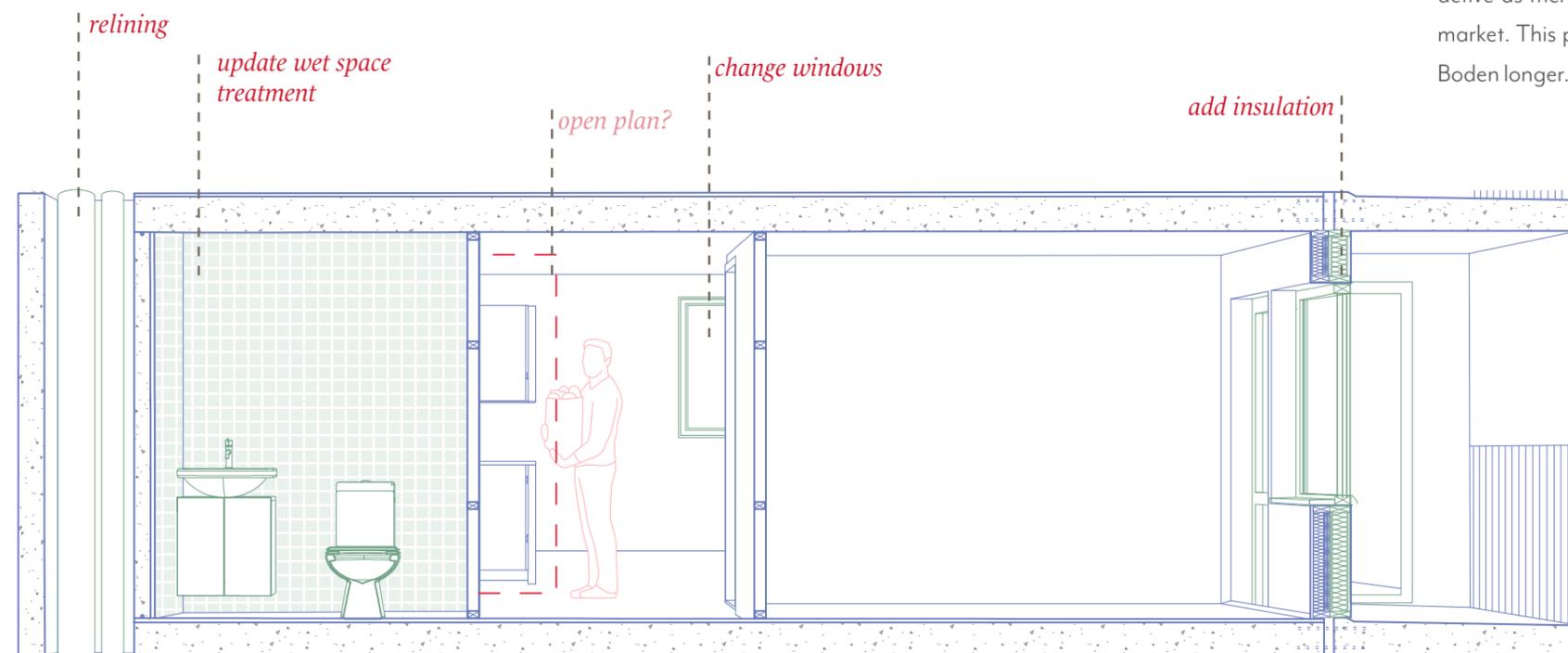
Demolition process diagram

ten-year alternative does not apply. But if the building has stayed in a long-term ownership like the one of BodenBo, the profits based on a 30-year span makes for better results.

The zero option is the most expensive one after 25 years followed by the newly built one. This was not expected since the hypothesis was that the newly built, although initially more expensive, would earn back its investment in low maintenance costs and energy use. However, this ended up false and it is not until 25 years in that the zero option passes the newly built-in costs. In terms of rent prices, the newly built option is the most expensive the entire test period. But in its defence, it is likely to last a lot longer than the 30-year test period which probably would have effects for its overall economy (Dahlöf, Malmros 2011).

The aspect of ownership is discussed by Lovisa Högberg, PhD student at KTH, in a chapter considering the incentives for real-estate owners to invest energy efficient solutions in their million program houses. She divides the ownership models into three categories: the short-term investment, the one that does “a bit extra”, and the one that is fully committed to sustainability.

- The short-term investment companies are going to treat interventions to increase energy efficiency as an economic investment like any other and likely not find the motivation proceeding.



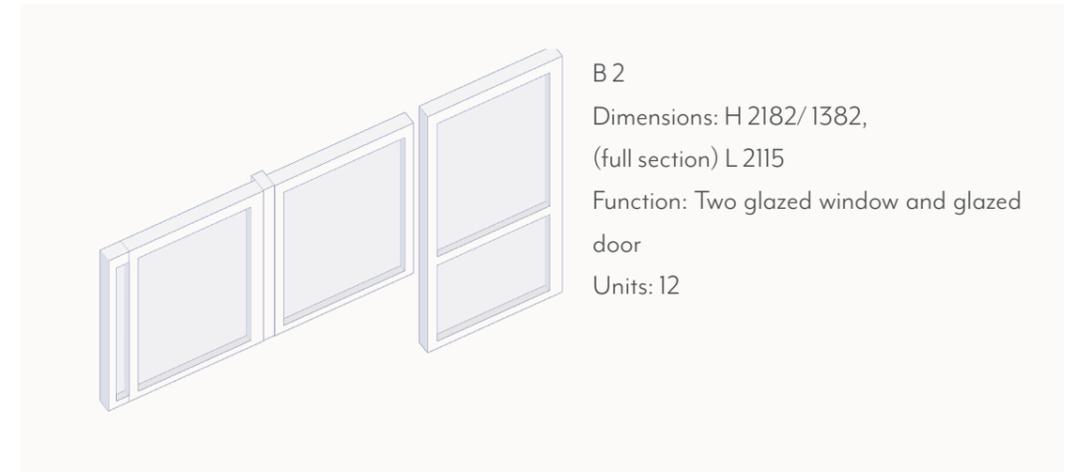
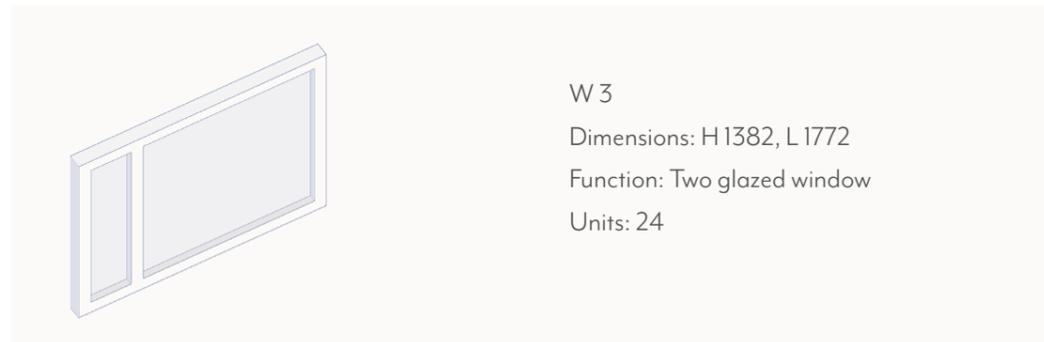
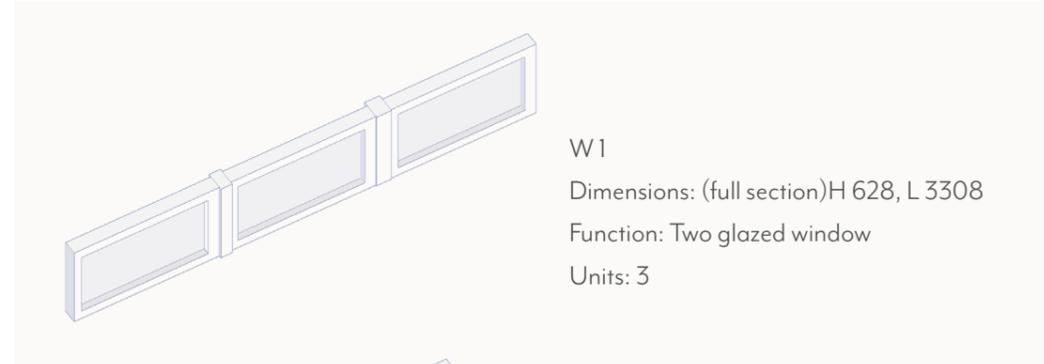
- The company that does “a bit extra” is likely the most common type in Sweden. They allow a reduced energy use to be weighed into the equation with the motivation of strengthening their brand. Economy continues to be the most important factor, but they have a longer timespan for their investments which makes it more likely that they can renovate with better energy efficiency goals despite a slower repayment, with the motivation that it will be economically more sustainable over time.

- Lastly there is also the company that goes above and beyond what can be expected. These companies are often run by highly engaged individuals and have a clear political profile. They tend to plan ahead and have a holistic perspective where the economy is not the most important factor but is outweighed by environmental sustainability. Here, the creation of job opportunities can for example be an added motivation, or a will to be at the forefront of technical advancement. (Högberg 2012)

Considering BodenBo within these different ownership models, at least, places them in the second category of doing “a bit extra”. They have been the owner and manager of the Yellow building since it was built and I am sure that if they envisioned a viable option to demolishing, they would consider it. They are working on a bigger renovation of another building from the same period in the area Sveafältet and are changing the windows to more energy efficient among the row houses at Prästholmen. They also help run projects that provides the “extra”, and to some extent goes beyond that. Here I include the renovation made on the Livingroom that is unlikely to have been considered to pay itself of over time. This was likely made in part because it was good publicity but also with a genuine interest in improving the environment. Besides this project, BodenBo is also involved in a local innovation lab where they are active as mentors in an integration and collaboration program that guide people to and on the job market. This project is aimed at newly arrived immigrants but also help people that has been living in Boden longer. This can certainly be considered as a community strengthening project that goes beyond

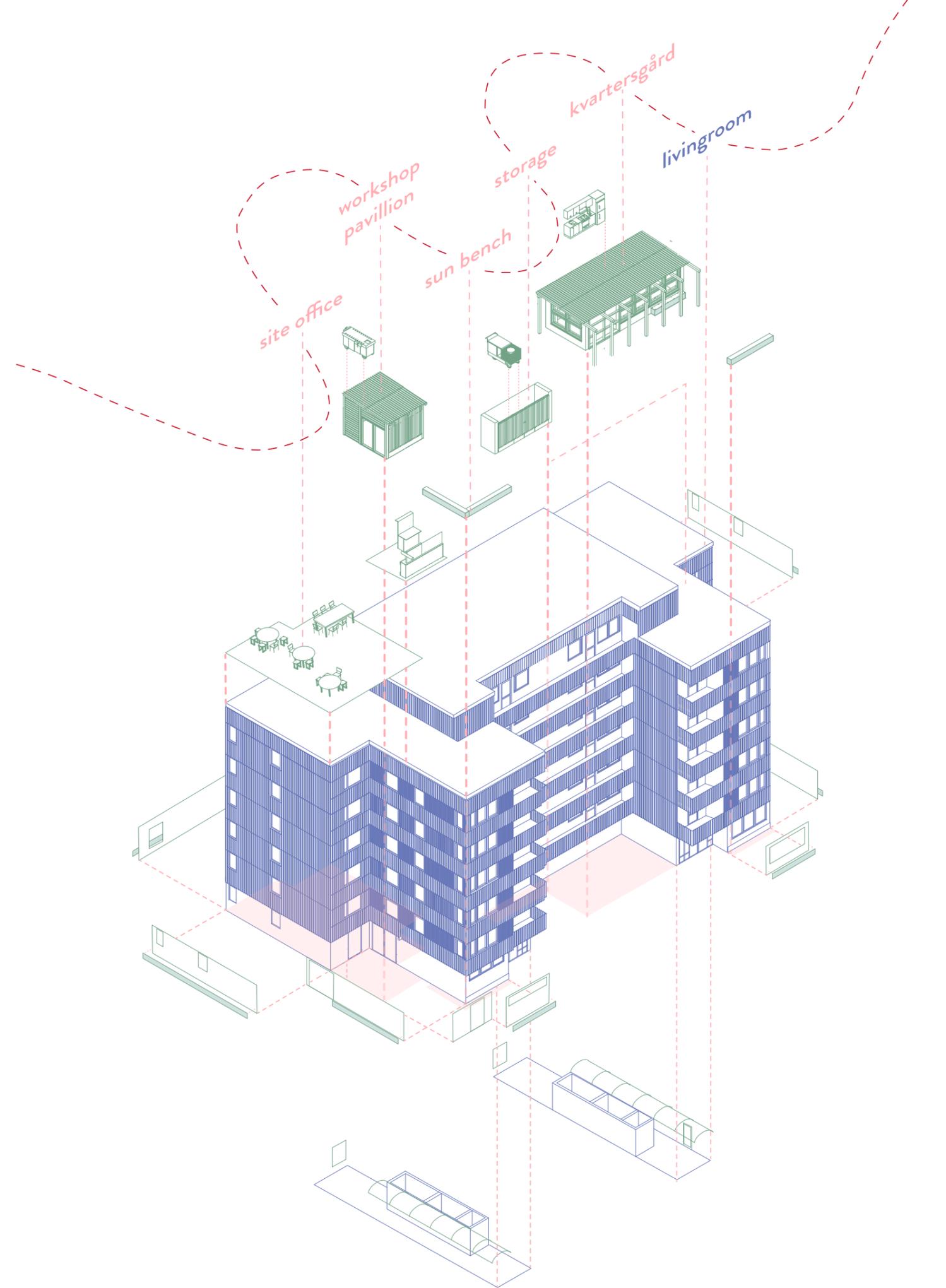
## Register of material from renovation

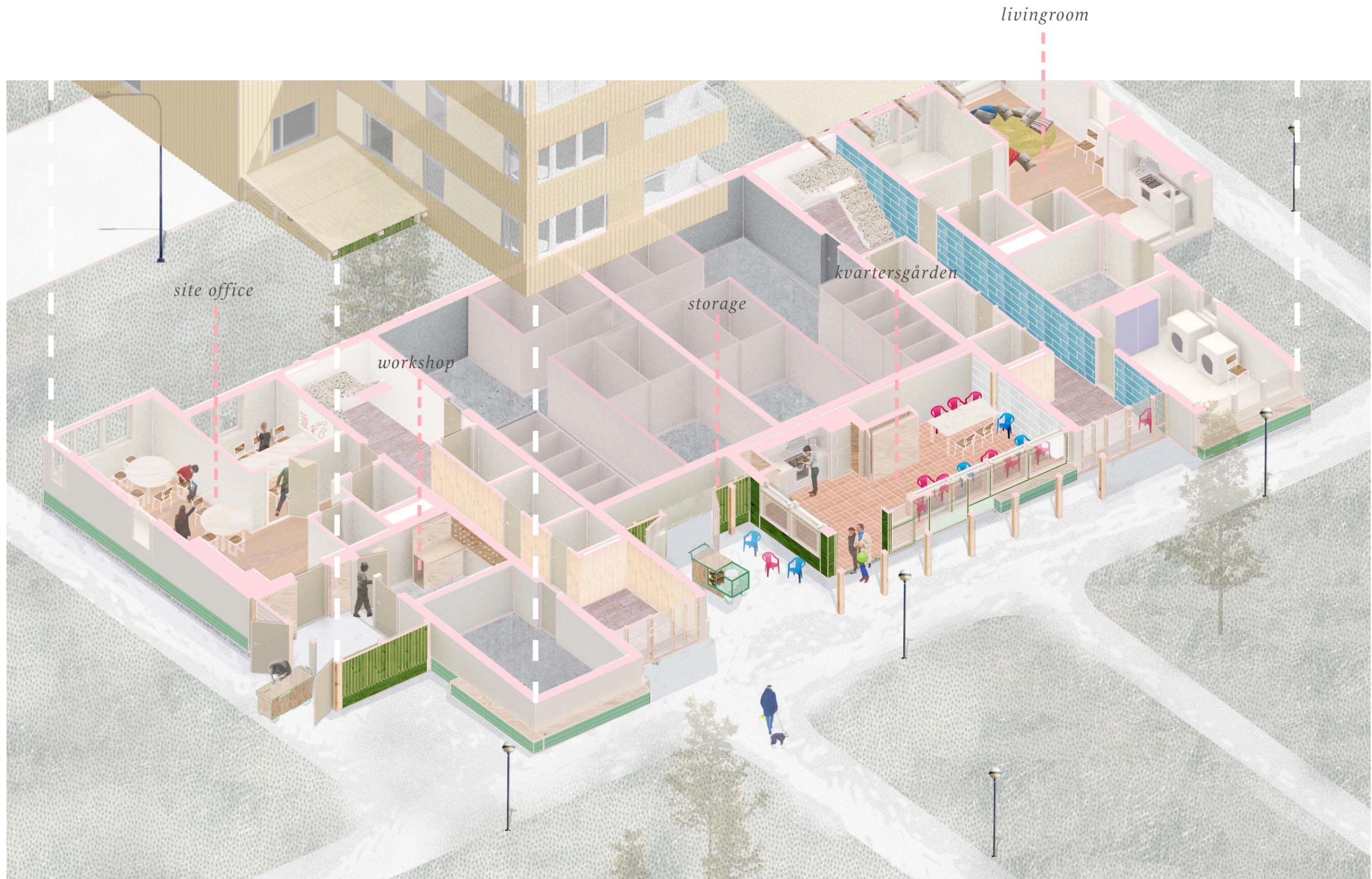
Part of register



## A mobilizing process

When working with the more pragmatic part of the process my main focus has continuously been to see potential in what spaces, project and network this might produce or mobilize. This has resulted in a series of spaces that are both arranged within the existing building and outside. These interventions are all part of the strategy to provide spaces to collaborate in, and projects to collaborate on.



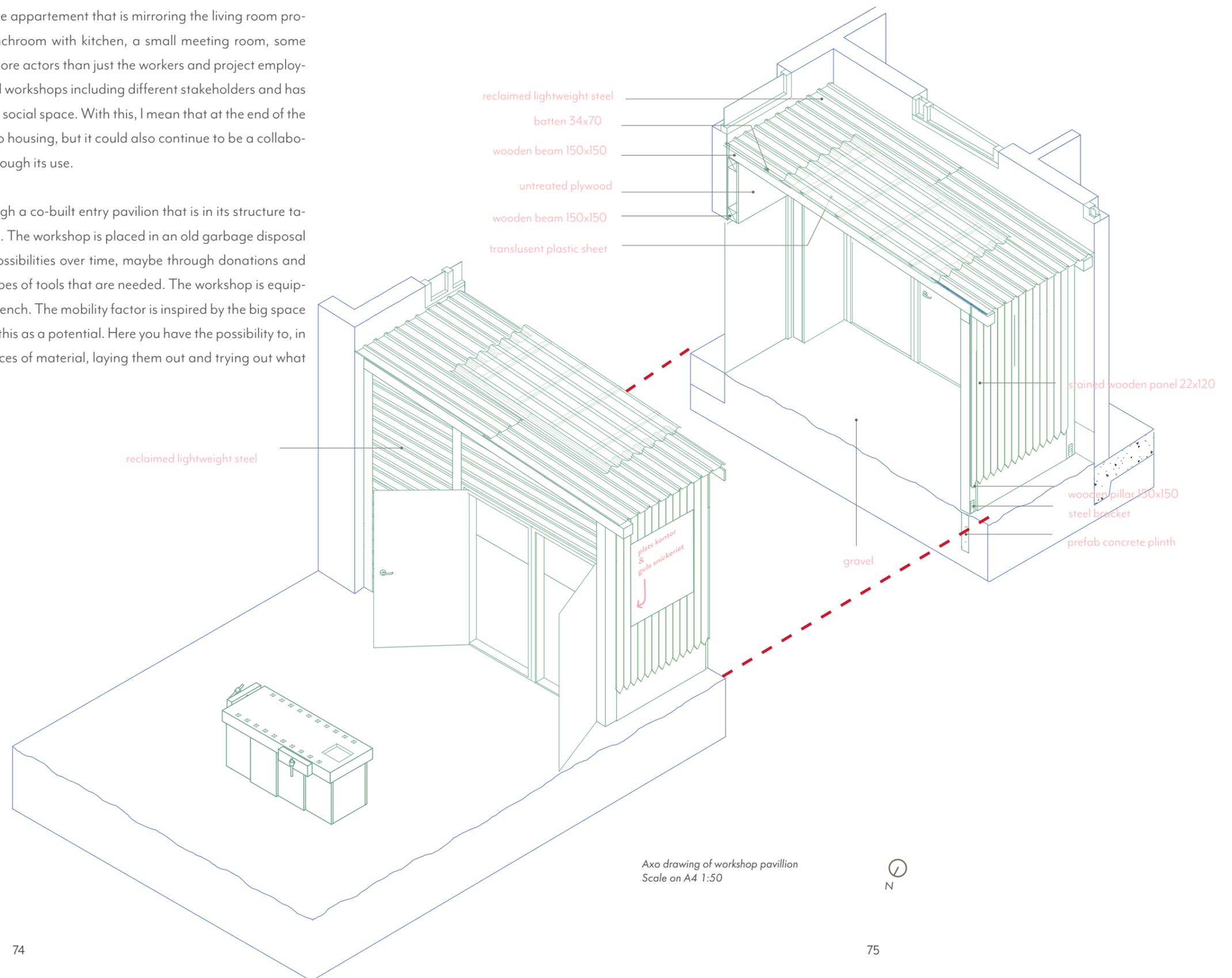


Axonometric view of ground floor

*Site office, workshop and workbench*

To start with, I am proposing an on-site office in the appartement that is mirroring the living room project. The on-site office would contain a small lunchroom with kitchen, a small meeting room, some storage, and a bathroom. I see this as a base for more actors than just the workers and project employees. It could be an office for collaborative work and workshops including different stakeholders and has a potential to find a continued program by being a social space. With this, I mean that at the end of the renovation, this apartment could be turned back to housing, but it could also continue to be a collaborative space that finds a more specific program through its use.

This office is connected to a small workshop through a co-built entry pavilion that is in its structure taking care of some of the waste from the renovation. The workshop is placed in an old garbage disposal room and will hopefully be filled with tools and possibilities over time, maybe through donations and through taking on new projects, it will affect the types of tools that are needed. The workshop is equipped by and other proposal of a movable working bench. The mobility factor is inspired by the big space around the building and the opportunity of seeing this as a potential. Here you have the possibility to, in appropriate seasons, work outside with bigger pieces of material, laying them out and trying out what you can do with them.

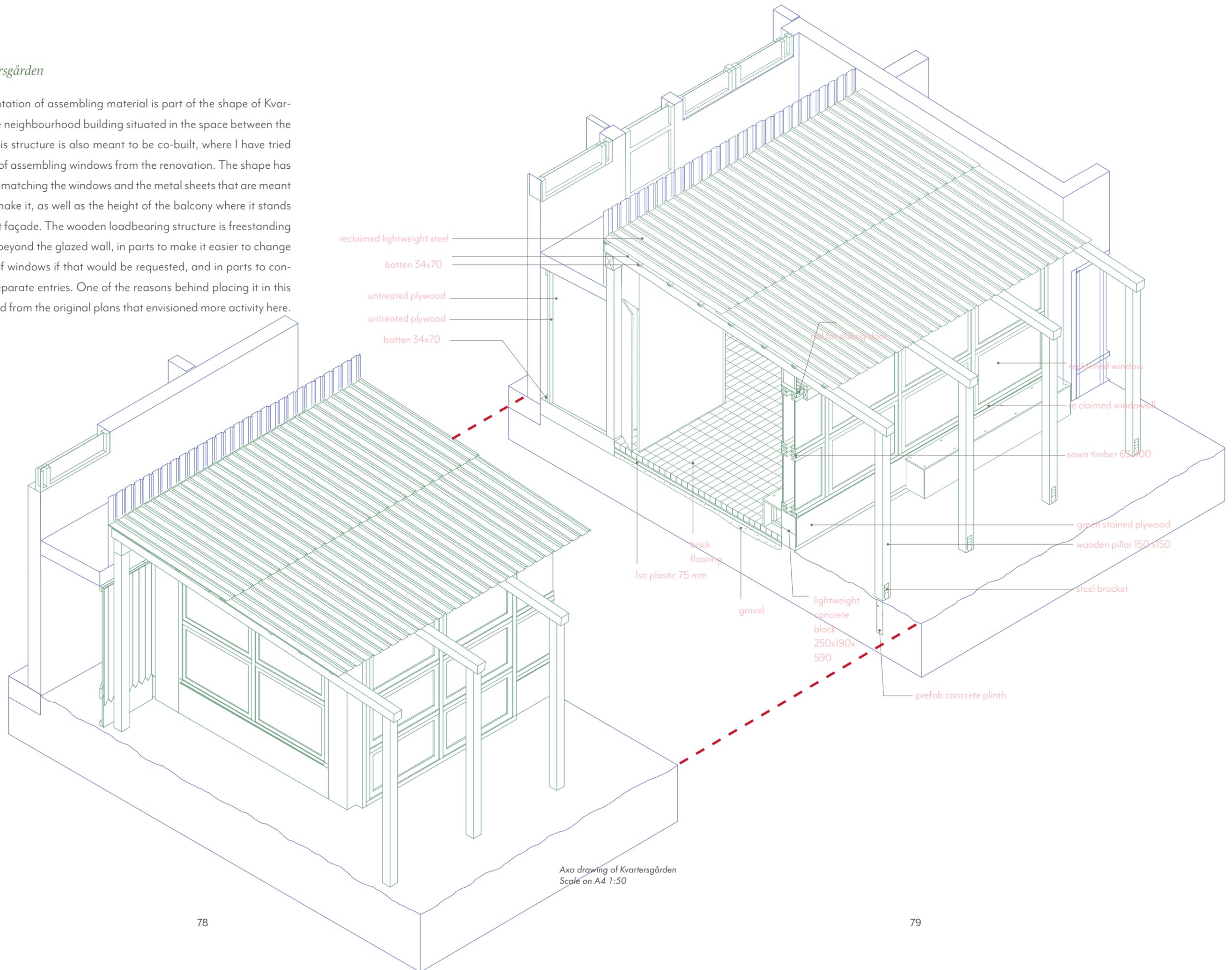




Interior view of Workshop (Gula snickeriet) and workshop pavillion with entry to site office

## Kvartersgården

This experimentation of assembling material is part of the shape of Kvartersgården, the neighbourhood building situated in the space between the two entries. This structure is also meant to be co-built, where I have tried different ways of assembling windows from the renovation. The shape has a lot to do with matching the windows and the metal sheets that are meant to be used to make it, as well as the height of the balcony where it stands next to the east façade. The wooden loadbearing structure is freestanding and extended beyond the glazed wall, in parts to make it easier to change the assembly of windows if that would be requested, and in parts to connect the two separate entries. One of the reasons behind placing it in this space is inspired from the original plans that envisioned more activity here.



Axo drawing of Kvartersgården  
Scale on A4 1:50

Besides the glazed gathering spaces there is a small, insulated kitchen under the balconies. Other than this, the space is not built to be heated, but has two layers of reused windows to keep the temperature better, once heated. The main motivation to making it a non-heated space is that it would be easier to construct. I also think that, even though the winters are long and cold in this context, there are other seasons as well and most importantly very long transitional periods. Having a season lengthening space heated only when used could therefore become very appreciated.



Interior view of Kvartersgården in context

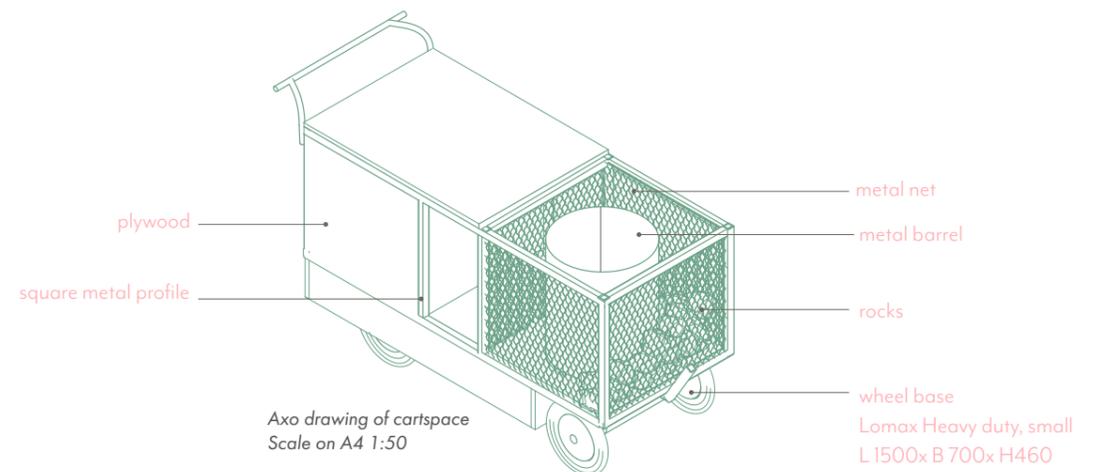
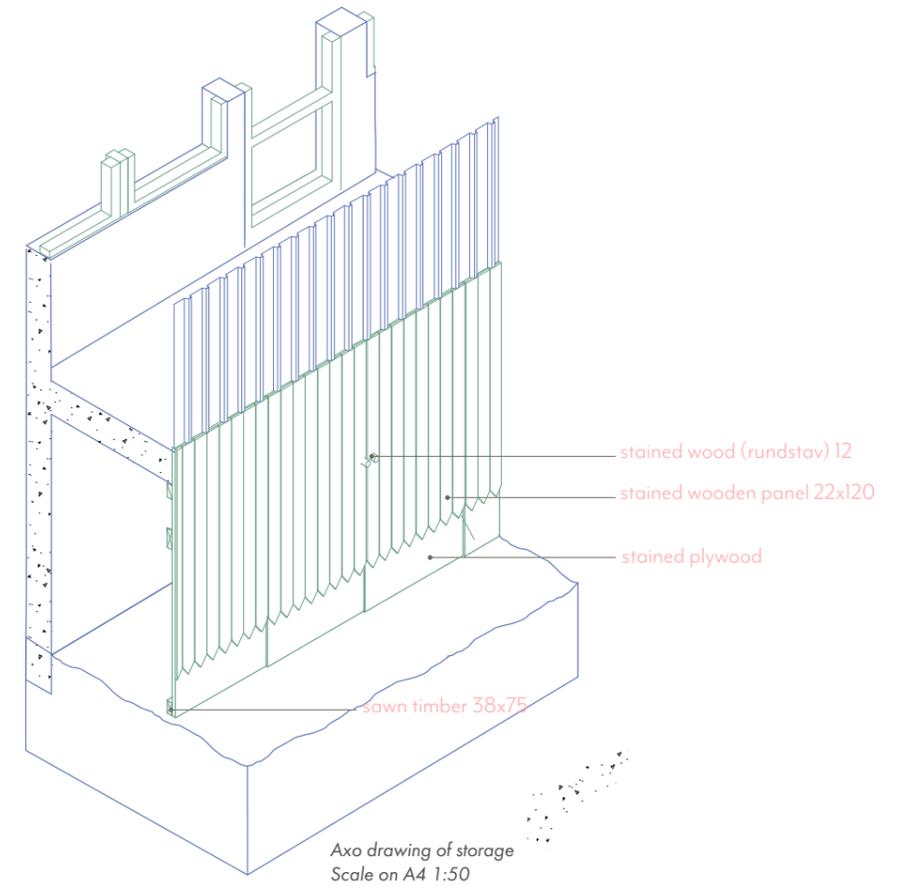
*Storage, cartspace, bench, stool and birdbox*

Just next to Kvartersgården, is a storage space placed underneath the existing balconies. In the storage, the cart-space is kept. This is a movable cart that is meant to give attention and support to the already existing things happening. The primary purpose is to make them more visible and spatially defined in the vastness of this context. This cart could be moved around the site to give space and frame, primarily to the more organised activities, like the example of the study circles of ABF, but also the things that happen without specific structures, like fishing by the lake. It is built on a prefabricated wheelbase that allows for steering and manoeuvring in on rougher ground conditions and has a caged fire pipe. Here you can keep a fire going and by placing rocks in the cage, translating and elongating the heat, or keeping the fire at a safe distance when left empty. There is also storage that could be used to transport tools or seating out to your chosen site as well as a working surface on top.

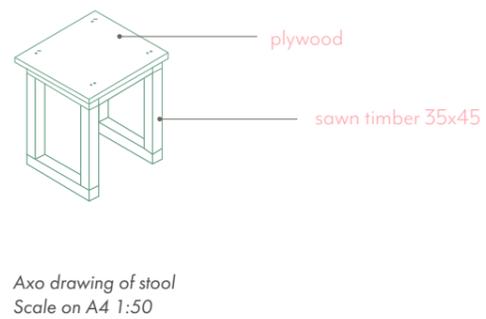
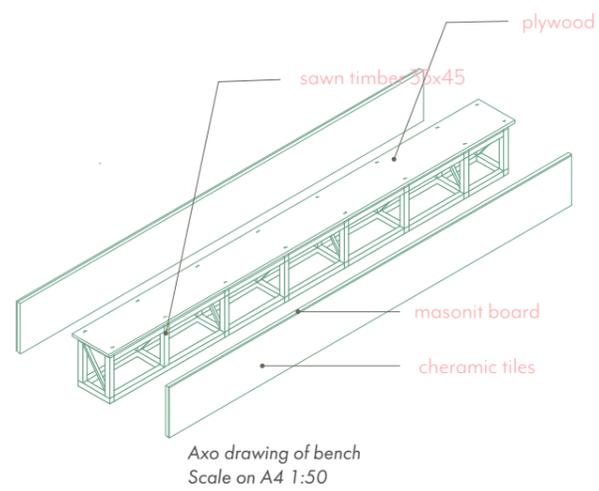
The expression of the storage is subtly experimenting with the language of something that is handmade with a hint to the tradition of decorative carpentry.



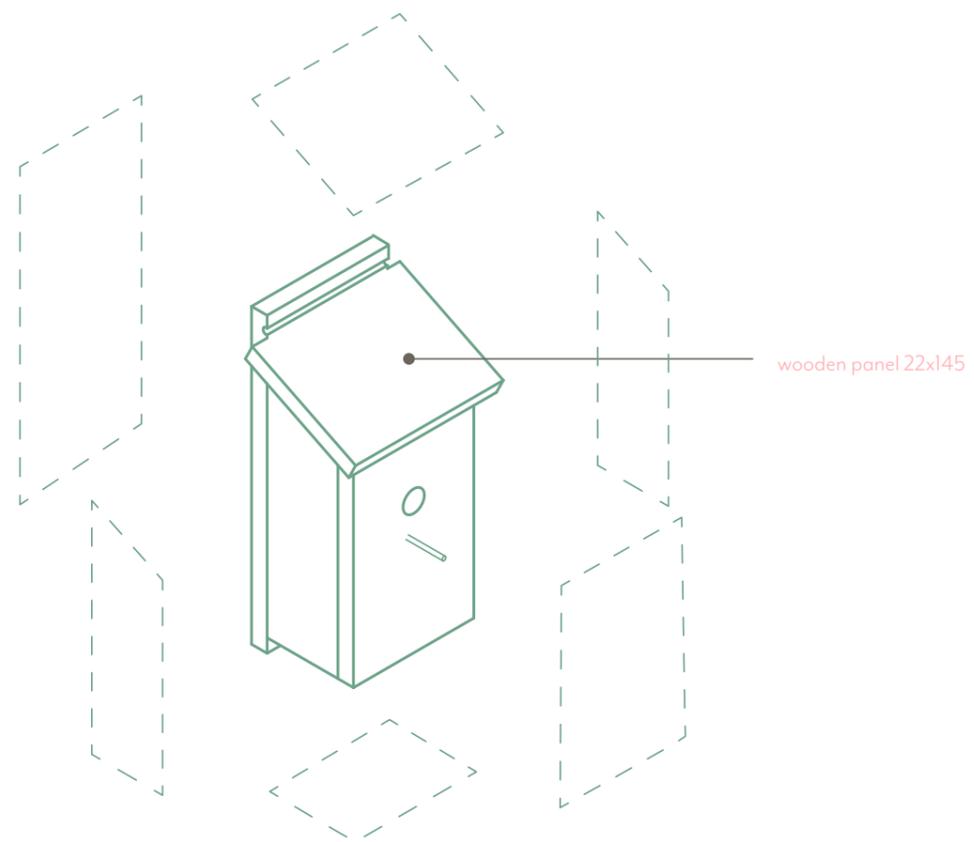
Exterior view



This essence of the crafted as an action of care is also the reason why I have chosen to work with ceramic tiles in the base of the building and on the co-built benches. The inspiration comes from the original exterior and interior ceramic walls. The benches are situated along sun exposed walls and is an enrichment of the architecture as well as a place to sit, both as a resident, or as a person out on a walk.



Among these smaller interventions is also a birdbox. This proposal goes back to discussion on how to deal with big issues by starting with something small. For me, there is a sort of primal understanding that the birdhouse is something that can be constructed by everyone and in this project, this holds just as much value as the rest.



Axo drawing of birdbox  
Scale on A4 1:20



## 4. Conclusion

This project has let me touch upon several very big discussions through a site of multiple layers and complexity. I have discussed the situation of the local and regional context in many parts of the inland north, exploring an environment with areas of urban challenges but without the urban condition of growth. I have looked at how this condition relates to deterioration and development and discuss how this relates to the specific site of Prästhölm in Boden through its history of material loss and its current, often one-dimensionally defined, value. My studies result in some suggestions of development that focuses on the action of making and doing to move forward and what specific strategies and structures that can support this. Since I have made space to reflect and discuss throughout this report, I will try to not repeat myself too much and instead attempt a broader reflection on my project.

Choosing to think critically about growth and resource efficiency is definitely a product of this time. It is not possible to deny the urgency of these concepts within the architectural profession and the building industry at large. In the wake of a relentless pursue of growth we often see negative effects on our climate and social equality, something that highlights how this discussion is also important in contexts of growth. Still, the limitation of growth is perhaps never more clear and inescapable than in the slow or no-growth context. In choosing a context with these characteristics I can enter a discussion that will explore this concept, and topics related to it, without deviation. By also choosing a context that I know well, I have a base for an understanding that has helped me exemplify and visualize how I think of the tools of development.

Having the personal connection that I have to the site and context has been a very important factor in this project. This has meant having knowledge about the physical and social environment that is so embodied in me that I might not even have considered it as knowledge without the frame of my questions. It has also forced me to investigate the limits of this knowledge, to test how my understanding relates to other people's experiences and what positions my views have as an insider in the context of the town but an outsider to the specific site. I have found qualities in this intention of exploring the balance of personal memory and a more collective and interconnected reality. This intersection proved to be one of my most productive tools to deal with the site, translating into an attempt on a less dogmatic relationship to my intentions. Instead, I try to test my suggestions as thoroughly as the scope of this project lets me, allowing for a twisting and turning of different topics, weighing them against one another until I can form strategies around them.

The reality I choose to focus on for this site and context forces me to think of a different development, and this has challenged me with having to consider the unknown. Without being able to rely on various

actors to enter with incentive and capital in different phases of a well-rehearsed development procedure, it becomes quite hard to anchor my suggestions in a specific time axis or physical structure. Instead, what I suggest turns into an interdependent process that needs to be based on local actors and stakeholders' willingness to take part and adjust the process. This way of envisioning development puts much demand on having a temporal awareness of architecture and the built environment, seeing it as a process that is continuously changing and being changed. This continuous transformation is true for all architecture and in this project, it becomes the driving force.

Considering this space and its conditions, together with my proposals, as a process in different scales has greatly helped me in my way of approaching the project. It gives the possibility of always letting the time aspect inform my decisions, making them less rigid. The concept of designing with awareness of the unknown has not reached beyond being a tool for me to think about the project, and besides their process of becoming, it has not made a great impact on the physical structures I propose. This effect is probably based in the difficulty of suggesting actual structures in a project that finds most of its value in a common process, that is ultimately not executed. But still, I have tried to push myself to make specific suggestions and instead of seeing these ideas of strategies and intervention as "solutions" I treat them as tools to support the process I rely on. It has been important for me to make this push since it is in this translation between the intangible discussion of process and the physical of the architecture that there is a great possibility for me to learn. By keeping the temporal awareness of how I choose to see architecture it also becomes a bit more comfortable to stay in this awkward transition and actually "sit" with the different aspects of what my proposals are, to reflect on them.



*The Yellow building with interventions added*

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- Olivia Steen, Local project leader of the organisation Youth up North
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- Ibrahim Muhammad Haj Abdullah, The Livingroom in Boden
- Developer of asylum and immigration activities at ABF in Boden and former resident at Prästholmen.
- Long-time resident at Prästholmen.

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*Images without number is taken or made by the author.*

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## 5.2 Reference projects

*Egnahems fabriken*



Image: [https://www.google.com/search?q=egnahemsfabriken&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwihg6qz5rDx-AhXF-icKHWL2AcIQ\\_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=2048&bih=1004#imgrc=s2VsqJjZfK49M](https://www.google.com/search?q=egnahemsfabriken&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwihg6qz5rDx-AhXF-icKHWL2AcIQ_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=2048&bih=1004#imgrc=s2VsqJjZfK49M) [2021-06-24]

Sweden, 2017->

*some collaborators:*

Vinnova, Föreningen för  
Byggemenskaper, Ekopoolen, Svenska Kyrkan,  
RISE, Chalmers,

*organisation:*

Economic association, non-profit association

A organisation continuing the legacy of Egnahems rörelsen, initiated by the will of addressing the problem for the small town of Tjörn of providing housing, primarily for immigrants who wanted to stay in the area after receiving their residency permit.

*Bridport housing*



Image: Raise the roof. Proposition for Bridport. pg 6

by : Assemble

UK, 2020

*some collaborators:*

Bridport Town council, Wessex  
community asset, Common Ground,  
England Arts Council, The Arts  
Development company, Dorset,  
Reach

Bridport is a popular town for vacation homes driving up the price of land and effecting the conditions for the year-round population. Assemble proposes a series of locally anchored type-houses to increase the possibilities for the local population to stay in their town.

### Fittja People`s Palace



Image: Project info. Fittja peoples palace by Spridd. pg 4

by : Spridd  
Sweden, 2013  
Collaborator:  
NCC

This is the winning proposal of the Swedish part of the Nordic Built challenge 2013. The focus is to take advantage of the qualities in the area and involve residents, local business people, politicians and organisations in a transparent process.

### Blackhorse Workshop



Image: <https://assemblestudio.co.uk/projects/blackhorse-workshop> [2021-06-24]

by : Assemble  
UK, 2014 ->  
*some collaborators:*  
LB Waltham Forest, the Mayor of  
London and Create

Blackhorse workshop is an open-access community workshop in London. It specialises in wood and metal processes, with affordable access to tools, space, and on-site technical expertise.

*Allmänna badet*



Image: <https://raumlabor.net/bathing-culture/> [2021-06-24]

by : Raumlabor  
Sweden, 2014

Raumlabor work with discovering and using what they find within the conditions at the site. Through their work they get to know the site better and adapt the process according to their findings. In the work with the bath at Frihamnen in Gothenburg they worked in a collaborative process with different stakeholders and much of the material that was used was found on the site.