

# A place in between places

AAHM01 Degree project in Architecture  
School of Architecture  
LTH, Faculty of Engineering, Lund University

2023  
Ana Gilmet  
Examiner: Gunnar Sandin  
Supervisors: Per-Johan Dahl and Sandi Hilal



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

School of Architecture  
LTH, Faculty of Engineering, Lund University

Diploma project in Architecture  
Ana Gilmet  
Examiner: Gunnar Sandin  
Supervisors: Per-Johan Dahl and Sandi Hilal

# Foreword

This project is a reflection made on a turbulent time. In a time of deep-rooted crisis, the interconnectedness of things has become more apparent. The reality of Skellefteå, although far away from my own, enabled me to grasp a tiny bit of the world that is - becoming.

The work centred around understanding a new industrial landscape characteristic of the contemporary condition and imagining how to act in this context to bring about spaces for a new culture to be expressed. Putting people in the centre of the narrative, the project is an attempt to translate the global culture into spaces where lasting collective experiences can be performed.

This project like any other has been the result of shared knowledge and discussions. Therefore, I would like to thank the collective that participated in its production.

Thank you to Per-Johan Dahl, Sandi Hilal and Gunnar Sandin for guiding and supporting the work.

Thank you to Eva Frühwald Hansson for the structural engineer advice.

A special thanks to Pierre Pettersson, Lars Westerlund, Enar Nordvik and Amanda and Oscar (not their real names) for openly sharing your experiences and views.

Big thanks to Keir Milburn for guiding the drafting of the Common Public Partnership.

Last but not least, to my friends, family and to Edoardo, for the patience, meaningful discussions and bedded sofas.

With the hope that this project can contribute to the discussions about the present and future of Norrland.

# Contents

Foreword	06
Abstract	09
A contested result	11
Planetary territories	15
The Northvolt landscape	19
Field notes	25
The production of culture	33
Precedents	37
A place in between places	49
Conclusions	93
References	97

# Abstract

Skellefteå is calibrating its position in multiple overlapping maps, sometimes located in the centre and sometimes in the periphery (if those are even relevant). It is a place in between places. A geographical periphery of Europe that becomes one of the centres of production of one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In the reconciliation of these scales stands a public administration that intends to meet the demands of a global corporation, to make Skellefteå an attractive destination for qualified workers. As the local government's function becomes to secure conditions favourable for capital accumulation (Cockburn, 1977) an inherent contradiction is presented: workers need several conditions to stay in a place, but these conditions cannot be met under a system that prioritises capital reproduction.

The "green revolution" is bringing hundreds of people from all over the world for jobs in the new sector, changing the landscape and culture. However, the favourable policies to facilitate multimillionaire investments in green energies have not had corresponding effects on the people who are needed for these enterprises to realise. Migration policies, urban development, social and educational plans are not catching up to the challenge, leaving the protagonists of this revolution in insecure living and working conditions. New institutions and spaces are needed to accompany these industrial reforms.

On the other hand, the people interviewed in this project express a lot of hope and enthusiasm for the future. After years of economic stagnation and isolation, a new landscape is forming. Many mention hearing multiple languages in the supermarket and new restaurants and activities appearing in the city centre of Skellefteå.

This is not an isolated case but part of a complex web that stretches beyond Skellefteå and the region and responds to geopolitical dynamics and climate change adaptation policies. Skellefteå and other cities in Norrland might be the first cases of a new industry and society in Europe, it is therefore paramount to understand its implications and find tools to act in this new context.

This thesis will be a reflection into the material cultures, social infrastructures and everyday actions that can allow for new lifestyles to emerge in one of the epicentres of the post climate change world.

Which are the spaces where global economic dynamics make effect in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Skellefteå? How does architecture operate in the new green industrial landscapes to favour the flourishing of these new communities?

The purpose of the project is to create the conditions for informal practices to take place on the bridge. Nurturing the creation of new communities among the participants through the performance of cultural, economic and social activities.

1. Metaphors by Ettore Sottsass, 1972.



# A contested result

It was heartbreaking, if not obscene... to have to imagine here, a city (Koolhaas, 1997, p.972).

In June 2017 the city council decides to re-start the work on a wooden bridge over Skellefteåälven. In October 2020 the environmental agency gave its approval to the project with regard to certain conditions for its construction. Kauno Tiltai was given the commission and by the beginning of 2021 the work had started. The bridge will be built in Södra Lasarettsvägen and designed for city traffic, with particular focus on cyclists and pedestrians, as well as having a clear wood profile. The investment is calculated to be 300 million Swedish Crowns and the municipality will receive max. 72.5 million Swedish Crowns in state subsidy for the investment.

(Kommunledningskontoret, 2021)

A bridge named Karlgårdbron is being built in Skellefteå despite criticism and a popular vote against it. Karlgårdbron connects southern west Skellefteå to the main highways without crossing the centre of the city. In this way it is said the proposal would improve air quality in the commercial centre by deviating most of the traffic. The brief requires the following: over construction in wood, car road at least 6 meters wide, pedestrian and bicycle lane at least 3 meters wide, max speed: 50km/h, dimensioned for heavy traffic category BK1 for bus lines and emergency vehicles, no other heavy traffic. However, the objective of this work is not to analyse Karlgårdbron as a road infrastructure and its possible consequences in traffic, or whether it is a good or bad intervention, but to acknowledge its symbolic importance in the cities transformation and re imagine it as a social infrastructure.

The bridge has been in the public debate since the '70s, most commonly named Centrumbron (Centre bridge). The project was part of a modernist traffic strategy where the bridge was illustrated as a highway. This image has stayed in the collective imaginary, and it has continued to awaken strong reactions in the whole political spectrum. In 2014 a referendum was held after a popular initiative gathered support, the "no side" won but now 8 years later the bridge will be built anyway.

In a local political debate ahead of the elections a politician from the social democratic party asks and answers: "What has happened during these 8 years? What has happened since 2013 when an opinion against the bridge appeared, is that it has happened a lot in central Skellefteå". A lot has indeed happened, since then the lithium battery company Northvolt has chosen Skellefteå as one of the centres of its operations, forcing major changes in the city to accommodate the thousands of workers expected to come.

1.



What has happened since 2013 when an opinion against the bridge appeared, is that it has happened a lot in central Skellefteå

1. Extract from a local political debate in the last elections.

This political anecdote gives an insight into processes of participation in urban planning and the production of urban imaginaries. Can the political debate on Karlgårdbron be rethought to renegotiate the relationship of the bridge to the landscape, lifestyles, and desires of the inhabitants of Skellefteå?

The bridge has been the most debated transformation in Skellefteå, even though it could be argued it has a very low impact on the everyday life of its inhabitants. The circumstances can be compared to the debate surrounding Västlänken in Gothenburg, which despite having greater consequences in the city, it has had a disproportionate attention in local politics. In their essay “Västlänken a question of political trust”, Andersson, Oscarsson and Solevid argue that the debate on the Västlänken reflects other issues in which the electorate is dissatisfied. Infrastructure projects usually entail very big investments that become visible in the landscape, this prompts these questions to become a symbol for other forms of social discontent. In Skellefteå, local politicians argue that the budget for the bridge (218 million Swedish crowns from the municipal budget) could be used for other sectors in which the money “is more needed”. On the other hand, the bridge is a necessary infrastructure in a city divided by a river and where most of the services and industry are placed on the north side. What this budget should instead go to has different answers depending on the political leanings of who is asked. On the other hand, millions are being invested in the transformation of the city centre, Sara Kulturhus (Sara culture house) is one of the examples. According to Enar Nordvik (Skellefteå Municipality) in an interview with the author, the bridge was the last intervention to be debated in this way. It marked the beginning and end of a public debate over the urban transformation of Skellefteå. Unfortunately, the debate was marked by binary positions which did not enrich the discussion or addressed the

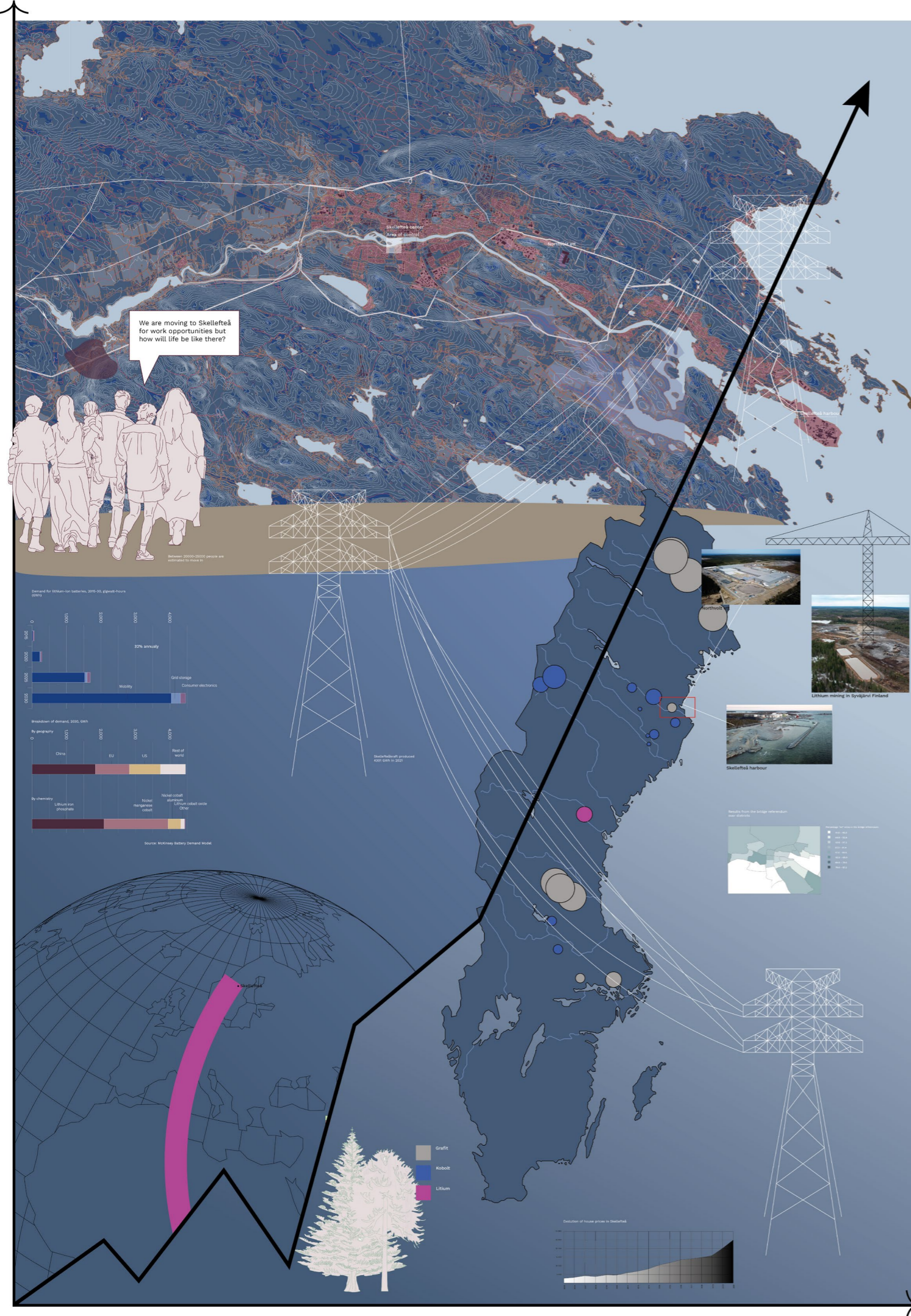
complexity of it. It is therefore interesting to rebirth the debate under new terms, first by acknowledging the web of events that have occurred over these last 8 years and secondly by putting them in the context of a future that is uncertain but potentially very rich.

2.



Demonstration på Ådalsoffrens begravningsdag i Skellefteå. NV 23 maj 1931. C 8762

2. Protests in Skellefteå in solidarity with the victims of the shooting in Ådalen in 1931. The back-ground to what unfolded in Ådalen was a wage dispute in October 1930 at the Marma-Långör group in Hälsingland, which was followed up by a sympathy strike at two factories in Ångerman-land. In a protest five people were shot to death by the police. From the archive at Skellefteå museum.



1. Infographic by the author.

# Planetary territories

A bridge is a man crossing a bridge (Cortázar, 1995).

Due to the nature of the debate Karlgårdbron has prompted, the fact that it is a public investment and that the design remains fairly undefined, the bridge commonly known as Centrumbron, is chosen as the site of this project. The bridge will be used as a case study to deepen the understanding of a new kind of territory that is forming in the Skellefteå region and the lifestyles it favours.

A bridge is obviously a particular kind of space that has been explored in many disciplines. In Libro de Manuel, Cortázar tells the story of a girl that crosses a bridge in the arms of her mother, who will one day cross it as a woman carrying her own child in her arms (Cortázar, 1995). The act of the person crossing the bridge transforms the experience of the landscape, engaging into new relationships with one side and the other. Cortázar also refers in this book to how the character could change by crossing a bridge, coming back as a new person (Cortázar, 1995).

Andrea Kahn argues that a site should be understood from the perspective of what it does instead of where it is. According to Kahn, the boundaries of a site are a construction that is negotiated with its surroundings, examining what effects it has on them and what influences the site itself. These operations occur in multiple scales that influence each other. For the purpose of the analysis Kahn identifies an area of control and proceeds to identify the influences and effects mechanisms (Burns & Kahn, 2005). In the case of Karlgårdbron, deconstructing the complexity of networks that operate on the bridge and that the bridge operates on is a hard task that will be undertaken throughout this text, with the objective of giving better tools for the discussions surrounding the bridge.

In the essay from 1981 "Integrated World Capitalism and Molecular Revolution" by Felix Guattari a new relationship between capitalism and the territory is established. It is no longer the material relationship of capital and territory that is central for capitalist expansion, but the relationship of human and territory. In other words, how we inhabit the territory (practices and experiences) becomes an arena for exploitation once the territorial domination is consolidated (Guattari, 1981).

As this new condition is realised, we are facing a dissonance between the material realities and the thought making process. With or without us major restructurings are ongoing, changing our relationship to the territory. The result is that while a new world is forming, we are still struggling to grasp the contours, yet to learn the new practices of inhabitation forced on us by planetary scale transformations. The previous democratic mechanisms for involving us in the building of our habitats are failing, since we no longer inhabit space in the same way.

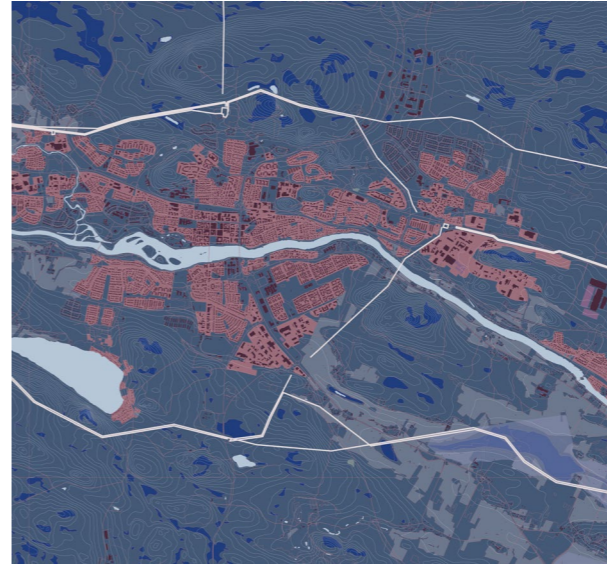


This differentiation between the material and the experienced reality is in fact partly false. As Corboz points out in the “Territory as palimpsest” the concept of territory “is the result of a collective relationship between a surface and those who inhabit it” (Corboz, 1983). As he puts it “there is no land without imagining a land” (Corboz, 1983), which is to say, “a bridge is a man crossing a bridge”.

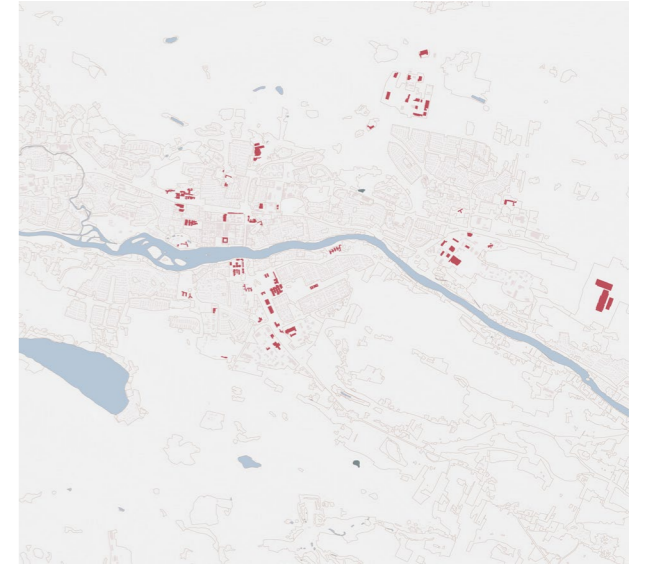
The bridge is particularly illustrating of this relationship with the territory as it produces a site, as Heidegger points out in “Building, dwelling, thinking”. Heidegger argues that the bridge “it’s a thing of its own kind; for it gathers the fourfold in such a way that it allows a site for it” (Heidegger, 1971). The bridge establishes a point in the stream of the river as a site; it does not come into a place but produces a place (Heidegger, 1971). The gathering that Heidegger refers to is of course by the action of people dwelling in the territory, transforming the bridge into a space of congregation.

What we can conclude from this reflection is that a bridge is not merely a road that takes us from point A to B, but rather it is a place in itself. And a special kind of place, that allows us to inhabit the in-between, to dwell in what Cedric Price calls “a distorter of time and space”, the river (Hardingham, 2015). This fact gives the conditions to challenge how we dwell and propose a site of experimentation and encounter.

1.



2.



3.



4.



1. Skellefteå city and electric infrastructure.
2. Public buildings.
3. Road infrastructure.
4. Green areas and protected green areas.



# The Northvolt landscape

The most palpable transformation occurring in Skellefteå is the arrival of the battery factory Northvolt.

According to Bloomberg magazine: “Northvolt AB manufactures renewable energy components. The Company offers batteries to replace fossil fuels with electricity that helps in energy generation and distribution from coal, oil, and natural gas. Northvolt serves auto industries in Europe”.

[www.bloomberg.com](http://www.bloomberg.com)

In an environmental report presented to the ministry of Environment in 2018, Northvolt argues to have chosen Skellefteå for its operational base because of its availability of clean energy, which would allow a cheap green production of lithium batteries. Apart from that, the company points out the proximity to the natural resources needed for production and the available skilled workforce coming from the mining sector. This, they argue, would further lower the emissions since most stages of the production will be based in Scandinavia (Gustafsson, 2018).

Northvolts decision came after an unofficial competition between cities in Sweden that started in 2016. The competition was fierce as the municipalities fought to show they had the best conditions for the company’s development, under the promise of thousands of new jobs and the hope of being at the forefront of the green future (Lärka, 2017).

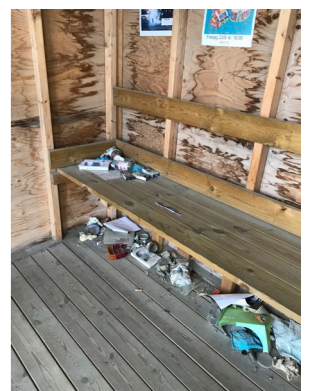
Skellefteå had made a good case as it had already been working to

1. Construction site in Skellefteå centre. Image by the author
2. Northvolt ett under construction. Image from Northvolt.
3. Interior of the bus stop at Northvolt ett. By the author.

2.



3.



make itself attractive for new industries. After a local survey the municipality put forward the plan “Skellefteå 2030”. A plan intending to reverse the growing trend of young people moving out of the city. Among the interventions, Sara Kulturhus was built. One of the tallest timber structures in the world, which includes a hotel, three restaurants, Västerbotten Regional Theatre, Anna Nordlander Museum, Skellefteå Art Gallery, as well as the City Library (White Arkitekter, 2022).

When Skellefteå was officially chosen as the production base for Northvolt, major restructurings started to set off. The harbour is currently under expansion, the Gigafactory was built on land bought by the company, the local energy producer is expanding its capacity and other infrastructural projects have been accelerated.

However, housing demand has been hard to meet, even if in 2022 there are 2000 housing units being built and 1000 in the planning stage. The municipality’s objective is to come up to 5000 units in 2025 to meet up the demand (Hjerpe, 2022). To alleviate the situation temporary housing is being built in Skellefteå city and region. 1200 temporary units are in the planning phase, in addition to the 800 that have already been built in Ursviken. These units are financed by Northvolt and destined for construction workers who have come to build the factory. Moreover, in the attempt to liberate already available housing to the market, for qualified workers such as engineers, the municipality has moved students into temporary housing. 220 units of 7sqm with a kitchen shared every 22 students has forcibly replaced 11-24 sqm apartments. The former student housing is now a tenant-owned property (Andersson, 2021).

This enormous effort must be understood in the context of a national policy to

revive the economy of northern Sweden through “green industries”. In 2021, Stefan Löfven (former Swedish Prime Minister) visited the factory and pointed out the importance of the investment for the future of Norrland (Marklund, 2021). On top of the national interest, there is a European interest in reaching the climate objectives the European Union has set up for 2050. Therefore, the European fund is investing 196,3 million euros in the region to support green growth. This figure can be compared to 54 million being invested in southern Sweden or 33,9 million in the Stockholm area. On the other hand, west Sweden where most car industries are based gets 462 million and there will likely be a second Northvolt Gigafactory in the Gothenburg area (Tillvaxtverket, 2022).

The International Energy Agency states that the global demand for lithium will multiply by 40 by 2040. The first signs of this exponential growth are already visible in many communities of the global south that are being displaced for the exploitation of lithium. In the meanwhile, economies like the Swedish, see this development as an opportunity to generate jobs and kickstart the “green revolution” (Buller & Lawrence 2022).

As China takes the lead in battery production, the race for Europe to catch up has led to a certain urgency in the process, with big investments and tight time schedules. A big media coverage of the process has had certain success in attracting highly qualified workers who have an interest in contributing to climate adaptation. In 2022 Time magazine put Skellefteå in the list of world’s greatest places (Japhe, 2022). However, on the ground the picture is more nuanced. Most workers coming to Skellefteå are living in very poor conditions, paid low wages that in many cases do not comply with Swedish regulation.

These workers are a tiny part of the biggest transnational flows of people seen in history, the UNHCR estimates that more than one hundred million people are currently forcibly displaced (UNHCR, 2022) and according to UN Migration 281 million people were migrants in 2020 (IOM, 2022). Besides the incentives to work in Northvolt Ett, there are multiple causes that have led people to accept jobs in the factory with very poor conditions. The systems that sustain these movements are complex and rely on both infrastructural interventions and policies. The conditions for these workers to settle with their family are currently not being met, with harsh migration policies, lack of housing and very few incentives to engage in other activities outside industrial work.

Jenny Kejerhag in a recent article in Dagens Nyheter titled “Less labour immigration threatens investments in northern Sweden”, argues that the urgent need for competence in the new sector cannot be met with new migrations policies proposed by the government and the inability to realise urban transformation that can make the north a more attractive place to live (Kejerhag, 2022).

The Northvolt landscape is characterised by a number of interventions that are based on speculation and designed to not leave any trace behind. The workers (in particular construction workers) are hired on short contracts and through third parties, which results in them not being able to get integrated into the “Swedish model” or build lasting relationships. On top of that they are isolated from the city centre and lack recreational or common spaces. Moreover, the scale of the factory (the size of Gamla Stan in Stockholm) makes it very hard for union representatives to reach the workers and understand their realities. In the same community where construction workers share tight living spaces with no facilities for recreation, the company has bought a villa of 365 sqm with eight rooms

and 11000 sqm of land for the company leadership to use when visiting Skellefteå (Norran, 2019).

To conclude, the urban transformation of Skellefteå is one layer of a complex stratification of coordinated reforms occurring at different scales (global, continental, national, regional, local). As Deleuze and Guattari put it, every politics is simultaneously a micropolitics and a macro politics and therefore every scale is acting, producing, and reinforcing these reforms simultaneously (Deleuze, Guattari, 1987). The free time of a migrant worker in Skellefteå is as much part of the process as the directives of the European Union or the objectives set up by the Swedish government.

In this sense it is useful to understand Skellefteå as a situational reality instead of local. As Colectivo Situaciones puts it: “the situation is conceived in relation to other things around it, it is not separate from the whole but exists only as a part of it” (Colectivo Situaciones, 2008).

4.



4. Northvolt ett. Image by the author.  
5. Disponentvillan. Photo by Ola Westerberg.

5.





1. Image by the author of Nordåna.  
2. Collage from gathered material.

# Field notes

I spend a few days in Skellefteå in mid-September, when the leaves are starting to get yellow and the temperature dropping. I arrive in a modest bed and breakfast. The reception is also the reception of a gym, the stay offers the visitor free use of the gym I am told.

These days lead me mostly through a familiar landscape of local institutions, chain supermarkets, forests, and commercial streets.

In the streets of Skellefteå where public debates are held and the annual international food markets make their appearance, people walk and enjoy the food on tables and benches. I recognize the exact same market vendors from the same festival in Lund. They tour the country selling French cheese and pierogi.

I take an early bus to the factory Northvolt Ett from a hub bus station located in the proximity of the main square. The line quickly leaves the main city and leads into an area where forests and industries cohabitate. Arriving at the factory area is quite unsettling. Its overwhelming scale is evident even though it's surrounded by trees. The area seems automated, with machines and vehicles coming in and out.

Pierre Pettersson

Behind the giant warehouse looking structures and the sound of gates, two thousand workers are still building the factory and many others are already working in it. I met with Pierre Pettersson that same day, we arranged by phone to meet up at Sara Kulturhus.

Pierre is a punk musician and has worked in setting up scaffolding. He is now the responsible contact at Northvolt Ett for the union Byggnads (construction sector). In his job description he was supposed to be on site and recruit new members, but he encountered an unprecedented situation when he arrived. Most of the companies working on the site did not have a negotiated contract and were therefore not following most Swedish regulations. They were also subcontracted and most of them also foreign, which made it challenging to find managers to talk to. The situation was overwhelming, the size of the operation made it extremely difficult to get a real grip of the scale of the problem. In the two years Pierre Pettersson has been working on the site in Northvolt he has encountered hundreds of code violations. After all this time he finally feels the situation is enough under control so that he can do his actual job.

In the bed and breakfast where I spent the night, silent steps circulate from the kitchen to the rooms and doors shut down while I see faces sneaking in. It becomes clear after a few days that these people live in the room and are not just visitors. The fridge is full, and their rooms look more like my student housing in Lund. The failure to understand these subjects as part of larger systems of social reproduction leaves

them at the periphery of urban development in Skellefteå. In my conversation with Pierre it becomes apparent that there is a certain dissonance between the expectations and images produced about Skellefteå and the reality on the ground. As Pierre expressed it:

“Above all, you notice how the people have been forgotten. That has been the most obvious thing. That in this rush to build and expand, and it will be so...it will be green energy, there should be a lot of trees, there should be sustainable constructions and so on. But nobody thinks about the fact that 80% fly to and from work every day, if you’re talking about green energy. And nobody has thought about the fact that these are workers who live in really bad conditions. Most of them don’t even know what collective bargaining is. Those who know don’t dare say anything because they are afraid of being sent home.”

Despite this, Pierre expresses a lot of excitement for what is happening in Skellefteå, he thinks it is positive that the city has entered a new chapter and he is happy to see new people in the supermarket or walking on the street. But he is clearly also worried. Working closely to the workers on site has logically resulted in a big commitment to them and their living conditions. In his engagements he noticed how many of them are lonely in the new place. The majority live in temporary housing located in Ursviken, where they are not allowed to receive guests. The buildings are barracks with small rooms of 9sqm that include shower and toilet, the kitchen is shared. An even larger complex like this one will be finished this autumn. Every Sunday Pierre organises a barbecue on the outside space overlooking the river, 200 workers usually join. Pierre is involving other actors in these activities such as ABF and other social organisations, he believes everyone should join forces for this development to turn out right. In this sense, he points out Northvolt has a “moral responsibility for the free time of the workers since they brought them here”

and the municipality should have a plan for integration.

Many of them are interested in nature, they would like to go fishing. Most of them will spend 10 months in Skellefteå and then return to their homes.

I walk through the area where Karlgårdsbron will be built. The city is bombarded by the sounds of machines going through concrete, moving materials, and trucks. The noise is annoying, I move away from it, I sneak into a path by the water, I sit there and watch the birds. In the middle of the river there is a sign “no trespassing”.

Lars Westerlund

Lars Westerlund has a busy day when he agrees to meet with me. He is holding the last local politics debate before the elections. He is a journalist at the local newspaper Norran and a figure in the culture scene. I am interested in discussing with him the project “Kylan och mörkrets glada vänner” (cold and darkness happy friends). Their purpose:

We work on a non-profit basis to develop positive experiences in those parts of the world that have a long period of darkness and cold.

It’s all about working with others to turn the darkness and cold into something that enriches the lives of both those who live in these areas and those who have the privilege of visiting this part of the world. [darkandcold.com](http://darkandcold.com)

The whole thing started a couple of years ago when Lars was doing a reportage on winter swimming in Finland. He thought it could be interesting to import this activity to Skellefteå and started with a swimming competition. It took a brave first group to start with the first events but today people from all over the area come to bathe every Sunday. Apart from



“Above all, you notice how the people have been forgotten. That has been the most obvious thing. That in this rush to build and expand, and it will be so...it will be green energy, there should be a lot of trees, there should be sustainable constructions and so on. But nobody thinks about the fact that 80% fly to and from work every day, if you’re talking about green energy. And nobody has thought about the fact that these are workers who live in really bad conditions. Most of them don’t even know what collective bargaining is. Those who know don’t dare say anything because they are afraid of being sent home.”

Pierre Petterson - Union representant LO

Inside me two worlds try to belong, both equally inescapable and essential. The heritage that is the very reason, the genesis of me, and who I am really becoming in my time.

Kroppar i myrmarken - Lo Ragnar Lindström



Demonstration på Adaloffsrens begravningsdag i Skellefteå, NV 23 maj 1931. C 8762

A lot of the underground culture has disappeared but the fact is that it was very inaccessible. You had to know someone who could take you to those places. There are new initiatives now from people who just want to do things. For example, a local bar is doing board games nights and they are very appreciated.



“We need to put more resources into soft interventions. Its is not enough anymore to bring a company and build housing. You have to want to come here for the culture.”

Enar Nordvik - Skellefteå kommun

“Winter swimming is not an activity rooted in Swedish culture. We brought it from Finland to Skellefteå and it has become very popular.”

Lars Westerlund - Cold and darkness

this, the organisation holds international competitions and participants from all over the world come to swim in the coldest waters of Sweden.

Besides many claims on the possible health benefits of swimming in cold water, the thing that drives people to do it according to Lars is the experience of doing something dangerous together. He argues that it creates a special bond to bathe with other people at 0.2 degree Celsius and come out alive.

Cold and darkness also organises other activities like walks in the forest with the intention of enjoying the silence, which have been recorded by the French radio. He believes the silence and darkness of northern Sweden allows for reflection and stimulates the mind, as Lars puts it during our conversation: “Between joy and depression that’s when you find creativity”.

The group also finds new ways of enjoying the winter, like a poetry reading competition in the cold water that they held in 2019. Ice poetry is called, and the winner came all the way from Liverpool, UK.

Some years ago, winter swimming was not practised in Skellefteå and it has now become a routine. It shows an enormous potential in creating new habits. Moreover, it shows how the exchange between cultures and people can produce positive experiences of their own local landscape. Lars himself also sees it as a tool for integration and points out that many newly arrived migrants join for the Sunday activities.

Enar Nordvik

I contacted Enar Nordvik through Instagram after some failed attempts to have an interview with the municipality of Skellefteå. I found his name in an article by Expressen titled “Northvolt is being built by modern

slaves - this doesn’t work”.

Enar Nordvik is an architect, he oversees construction permits in Skellefteå municipality. He has been working in this office for the last 3 years but has been in the municipality for a total of 14 years taking different roles in the urban planning department, either as a politician for the Social Democratic Party or as a professional. Ergo, he has witnessed and been an active part of the development in Skellefteå.

He describes the arrival of Northvolt as a journey from surprise to panic. The initial excitement of getting a big investment in the city was quickly overshadowed by the enormous challenge it would mean for a city that has maintained its population stable since the 1930’, to suddenly welcome thousands of new inhabitants from all over the world. Ten years ago, the planning department joked about putting municipal construction cranes around the city, to make it look like something was going on, now they are barely able to provide enough housing. According to Enar the municipalities plans to attract investments in the area were targeting another type of industry (less labour intensive) such as a data centre. However, these plans could easily be adapted to Northvolts program, and that work was used for the “competition”.

On the other hand, he argues that the establishment of Northvolt gave the municipality the possibility to discuss and perform other plans for the city with the argument that things needed to change. Enar believes part of the challenges the municipality is facing have to do with an old mentality associated with an outdated idea of how industrial towns work.

“It is not enough to be able to live in Skellefteå, you have to also want to live in Skellefteå”. This means, in his view, that more focus needs to be put on “soft values”, such as investments in culture and enhancing the commercial life of the city. In the same way,

Northvolt is a different actor than companies one hundred years ago, according to Enar they are not interested in supporting sport associations or cultural events. Their strategy is mainly to build temporary housing for their workers, three thousand units in total.

As to how he sees on the temporary housing Enar admits that the municipality could not have been able to provide so much housing so fast. In 2011 the municipality demolished one thousand units owned by the municipal housing company Skebo that had been empty for a long period (Israelsson, 2021). Unlike Pierre, Enar thinks the workers living in the barracks are not interested in participating in the life of Skellefteå and sees their presence as problematic for the feeling of security in the city.

Regarding what role Sara Kulturhus (Sara culture house) could play in this new scenario, Enar states the culture house was built in a period in which the municipality had resources and not much was happening in the city, with the intention of creating a “cathedral for fine culture” but he concedes that in today’s context it will have to take a new role as a “public living room”. Sara Kulturhus has also the mission to be involved in other areas of Skellefteå region.

A positive outcome is that the establishment of Northvolt has facilitated the collaboration between the municipalities in the north. The new train line North Bothnia is a big hope for the region that will enable Skellefteå to become a new centre in Norrland.

When asked about the strategy from the municipality for integrating the people who are coming to Skellefteå Enar answered as following:

The strategy is that we give up on these first ones, we don’t have time for them. They’ll live in these barracks and then they’ll disappear and then you’ll get others and so on. But that we still must plan for it, because in fifteen

years there will still be such settlements and it still matters, it’s a long development.

And then we’ll have to make attractive living environments for those who will then move here and work. And here it’s really exciting because we have no idea. If you’re from Shanghai, you might think our squares are really cool but you probably think our squares are really ugly. Maybe you think it’s really cool to live out by the sea in a little cottage or you think it’s scary to live in the forest where it’s like this.

We’re planning for everything now. Both like houses a bit more...apartments in the middle of town. Both high-rise, townhouses, and all kinds of housing because we don’t know.

Moreover, he believes they need to work on all the outdoor spaces, not just on their appearance but also in who will manage them and how. In this sense he thinks “it is very important for us that the bridge becomes impressive”. He mentions an island that is naturally forming adjacent to the bridge as a potential place for leisure. Enar sees the referendum for the bridge as a breaking point in the local debates. According to him, it was the last time changes in the city were received with this attitude.

Amanda and Oscar

It is some months later that I talk to Amanda and Oscar via zoom. They are a couple living in Skellefteå, Oscar works in the factory and Amanda in the public sector, he is from Australia, and she is from Sweden. Like the other interviewees they also express excitement. They have witnessed a transformation in the city and say there are more things to do. Oscar is happy to see restaurants opening that offer food from other cultures, he enumerates a couple of new places which are opening. When finishing the interview, he expresses “I’m living my best life!”

I talk to Amanda and Oscar to get the perspective of individuals who experience the city from their own perspective. We have an informal chat about culture in Skellefteå and the transformation it has had in the last years. From the start, they both point out how they find themselves in a privileged position since Amanda is from Skellefteå, she can introduce Oscar into people and places. Oscar says it is much harder for most of his colleagues who do not know anyone who is not foreign. In this regard, they emphasise how important are the individuals who take on the role of introducing people to each other, through private dinners and events.

Luckily, new contexts for meeting are emerging in the city. A local pub is offering a board game night each week that brings together different people. Amanda and Oscar enjoy attending the gatherings. Amanda says these kinds of events are very different from the culture she found growing up in Skellefteå. Underground culture, that many remark has been lost in the transformation, was not open or available for everyone. You had to be introduced to these places by a local. Throughout the conversation Amanda is reminded of a music festival when a floating stage was set in the river, she remembers this fondly.

Moreover, when asked about the role Sara Kulturhus plays, Oscar jumps to state that it is too expensive (referring to the restaurants), Amanda adds that they have been to some performances in the culture centre. The nightlife is described as quite limited for people of their age (mid 20'). The night scene is dominated by younger people who do not have many places to hang out. Luckily a new endeavour by Studiefrämjandet has just opened, a youth house intended to be used as an open living room for youngsters in Skellefteå. She also tells me the municipality is opening a bank to borrow equipment for outdoor activities, this will hopefully make them more accessible.

They are both excited about the upcoming

Christmas market, which they point out is a highlight event.



# The production of culture

A trivial day in our lives - what do we make of it? If studied, it would be clear that a trivial day would have nothing trivial about it at all. How the average man in his ordinary, day to day life, relates to the large corporations. Where does he encounter them? (Lefebvre, 1978).

During the 8 years since the referendum on the bridge, new institutions have appeared in Skellefteå, forging new subjectivities through their rules, practices and image. The process is ongoing and is reflected in many different aspects of the city's development. As mentioned before, it began before Northvolt had decided to put up its operational base in Skellefteå, it could even be said that decision was a result of the ongoing transformation. The document "Skellefteå 2030: strategy for sustainable social transformation" is a pillar of the ongoing changes and sets up the importance of "a good everyday life" for the development of the city. Karlgårdsbron has symbolically become an image of the new sustainable life and the zone of conflict between those who are more welcoming of the change and those who are not. The images produced by the municipality of the bridge have changed over the years it has been debated, becoming each time more livable and "green".

Sara Kulturhus is a great example for this debate. The multi-storey building in wood is a new symbol for the city, representing sustainability and open access to culture. As mentioned by Enar Nordvik it was intended as a "palace of fine culture". Concerts from well-known artists are often held and a fine dining restaurant has recently opened on the top floor. Moreover, it came to replace "Rivhuset", which was an autonomous culture house held together by the underground scene of Skellefteå, housing multiple activities over several years. These collectives were promised space in the new building, which was built on the same site after demolishing Rivhuset. The promise was never met, and many complain about the new house being centred around bringing artists from Stockholm instead of supporting local culture. As witnessed by the author and mentioned in the interview with Oscar and Amanda, the culture house has expensive restaurants and a luxurious spa on the rooftop, inaccessible to most people.

The construction of Sara Kulturhus was financed by Skellefteå municipality, 1245 million Swedish crowns was the final bill (Thorén, 2022). In February 2022 the municipality sold the property to SBB (Samhallsbyggnadsbolaget i Norden AB) for 1 billion Swedish crowns and rents the spaces for 44.5 million Swedish crowns a year for 25 years and with the possibility of extending the contract 25 years more. This means that if the municipality rents these spaces for 50 years it will be paying 2.2 billion to the private actor SBB.

Even though there has been much criticism, the culture house has been a radical change for Skellefteå. Both in producing a new image of the city but also in real terms by offering services that were not available before. Nevertheless, if we refer to the initial inquiry, it is interesting to examine Sara Kulturhus as part of a larger project aiming at the creation of new subjects in Norrland that represent a new green vision of a region that has been characterised by mining and the forestry industry. As Enar Nordvik mentioned in the interview "this place was looking like Twin Peaks". The new Norrland is instead framed as innovative green technologies, high end cuisine and culture. In the meanwhile, thousands of workers building this bright future are still part of the "Twin Peaks" reality as they do not fit into the other description.

The undefinition of Karlgårdsbron and the fact that it has been the object of debate presents a chance to imagine an institution that can be open and abstract enough for a multiplicity of subjects to fit in its description. Timothy Morton in a conversation with Slavoj Žižek discusses how it is problematic to think that the meaning of things is inherently inside the sign, word, place cause then the meaning can only be searched in the past. When in fact, we can find the meaning in the future if we allow the "thing" to be incomplete. The meaning is for Morton found in the interaction between the past (the traces, sediment) and the future (Real Review, 2021). To re-



International food festival



Ursinnig Festival



Trästockfestivalen



The storytelling festival



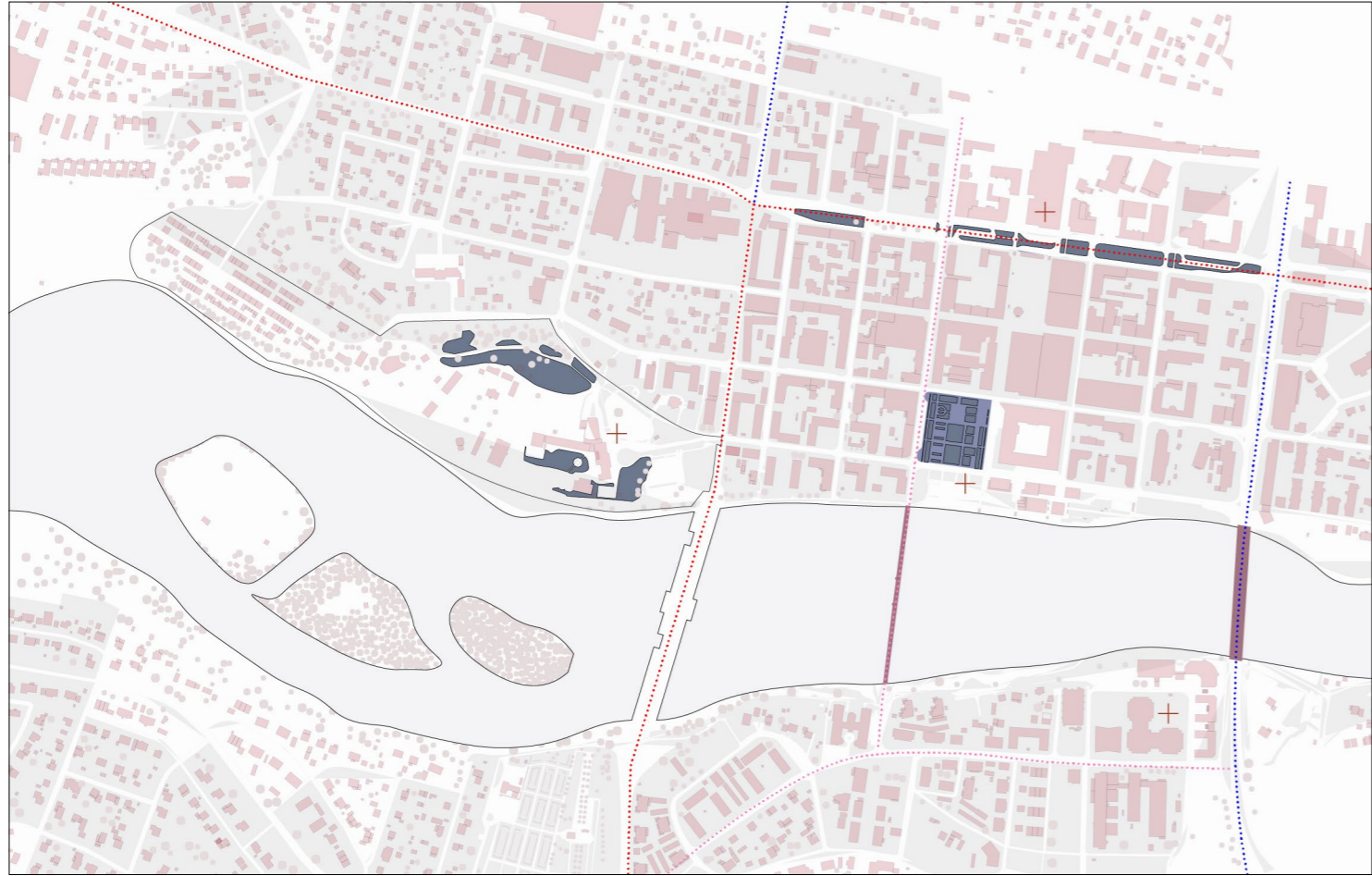
International Winter Swimming Association's World Cup



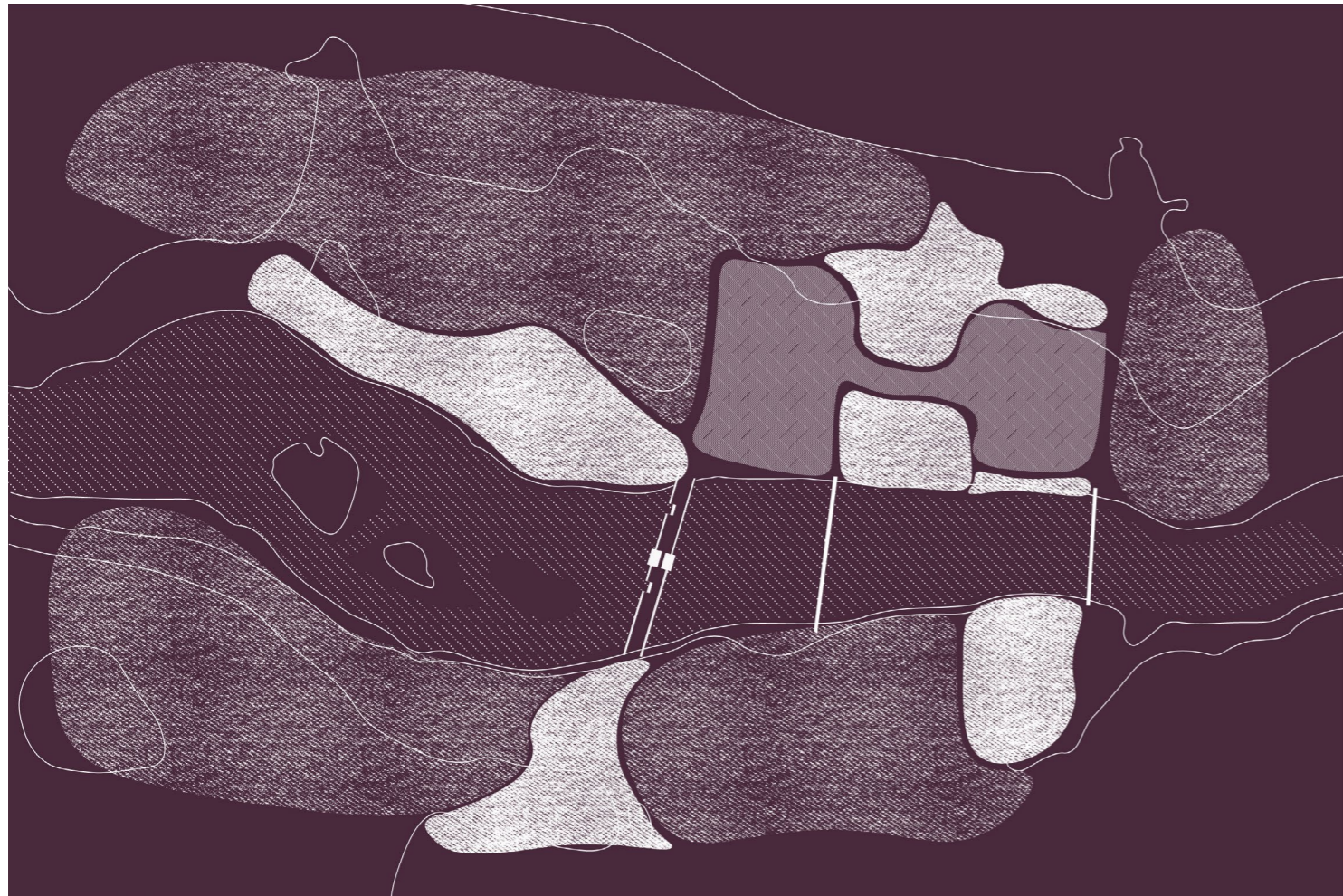
Skördemarknad i Löfvånger kyrkstad

## 1. Festivals in Skellefteå area.

1.



2.



3.



1. Map of the existing culture areas (marked in dark blue).
2. Tentative map of a possible extension of the recreation and cultural areas.
3. Sara Kulturhus. Photograph by the author.

open the debate on Karlgårdsbron could allow to find alternative paths in the creation of the future of Skellefteå and construct collective meaning over its institutions and places. This requires rethinking Karlgårdsbron from the architectural and the programmatic perspective.

One way to start is by turning to the opposite end and ask ourselves what sort of institutions could develop the kind of subjects we would like to see in the new world that is approaching in Skellefteå? Keir Milburn in a report for the think tank Common Wealth asks: "What sort of institutions could help develop democratic subjects who are able to participate in a flourishing democracy that sees problems as social problems that can be addressed through collective action and cooperation?" (Milburn, 2022).

The local and the global, the old and the new, can reunite in a hybrid condition that is not imposed but continuously negotiated in the common ground of the bridge. From the information and perspectives obtained in the interviews, it was identified a need for spaces where activities could be performed allowing a certain degree of informality, as it had been the case with the underground culture of the early 2000'. Festivals have been recurrent in Skellefteå over its history. In his description of festivals Lefebvre points out how festivals used to be an intensification of everyday life, a magnification of what was already there (Lefebvre, 1978). At the same time, festivals are opportunities for new social forms to be tested and are often seen as glimpses of an alternative society. Festivals are also an opportunity for exchange, it is often the case that artists or professionals join for these occasions. As described in an article by The Guardian titled "Ice-swimming in Sweden: how to really chill out by the pool", the International Winter Swimming Association's World Cup gathered people from around the world for winter swimming and social activities (Goble, 2016). While 150 years ago festivals were an intensification of everyday life, today they look more like an intensification of a global culture, producing exchanges between visitors and between performers.

Among the many festivals in the Skellefteå region there is Ursinnig festival, the result of a project supported by the Culture Council (Ursinnig, n.d.) called "Listen to us". Jörn is a small town outside Skellefteå city where 1400 people live, 400 of them are asylum seekers. The project aimed at giving a voice to the multiple stories in Jörn and has had continuation in an annual festival where different cultural expressions are tested. In the report from

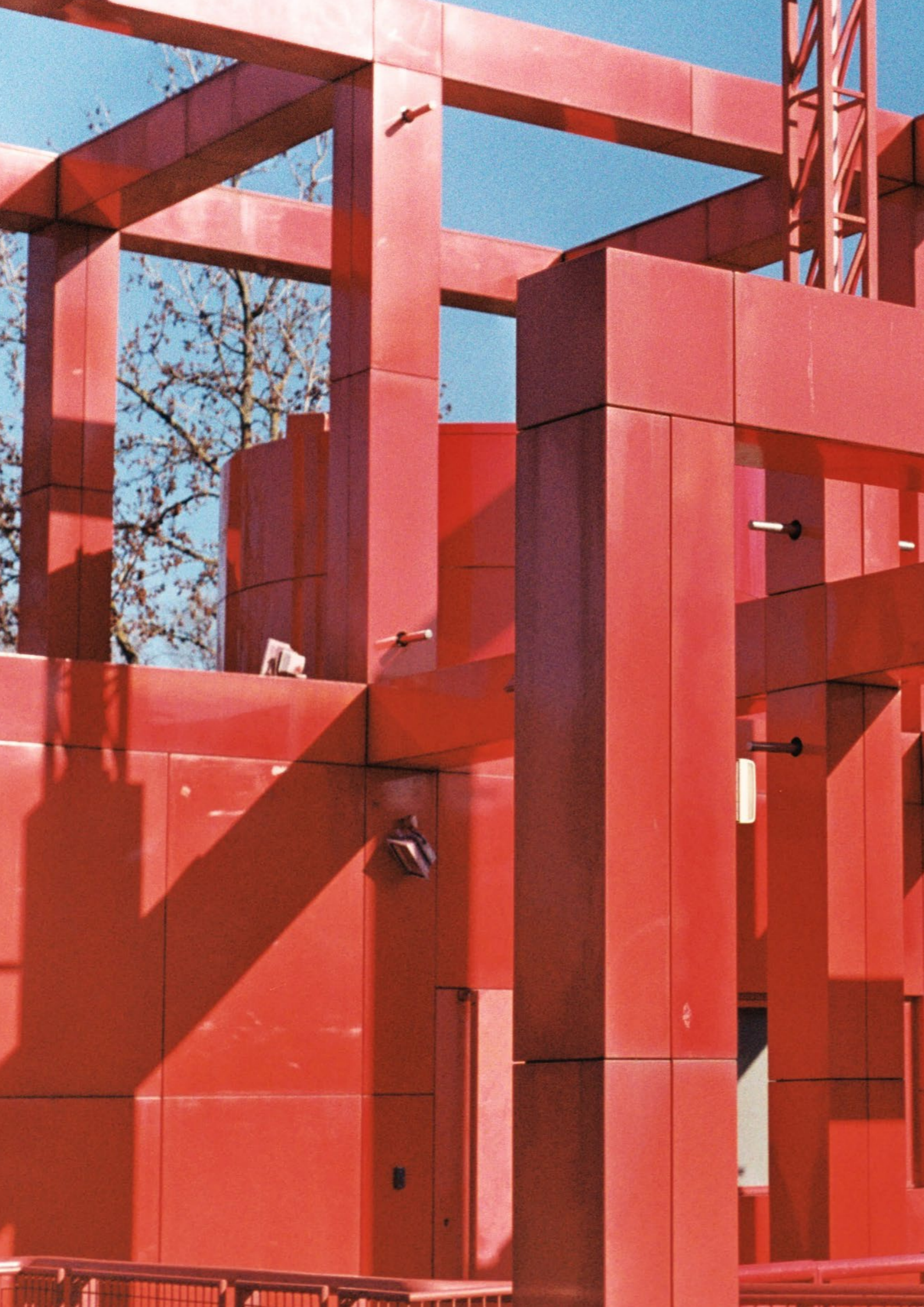
"Listen to us", participants say the festival changed the cultural life of Jörn year-round. The festival took what was there and amplified it, transforming the relationships between the people and place. Ursinnig festival is an interesting precedent in the area, in which the festival had a positive outcome in building an identity of the place. In this sense, like Keir Milburn pointed out in an interview with the author in December 2022, the existence of a community is not a given and should not be assumed in contemporary society, rather it must be built through a project. A critical mass, a social initiative, a local organisation, anything can be a starting point to build new relationships between individuals under a common project.

Therefore, the strategy for this project is based on building a coherent whole that can simultaneously be one and many. The structure of the bridge is regular and simple making it recognizable, while the system embedded in the structure allows for different forms of appropriation depending on the needs of its temporary use. Moreover, the space can adapt to the size of an event or activity, with the intention of giving the conditions for an activity to grow or shrink. Bigger events, like festivals, can be catalysts for cultural exchange and bring the resources needed for new initiatives to take place. More than anything, the design of the bridge intends to present an alternative image for the future of Skellefteå acknowledging that the bridge, much like the rest of the city, must be built by its different components in coordinated collective action.

4. Winter market in Skellefteå 1828. Skellefteå museum archive.

4.





1. Parc de la Vilette.  
Image by the author.

# Precedents

Several examples have been considered for the design of the new proposal, first to understand how new hybrid programs could be coordinated and second to look into projects that have created a new kind of landscape.

Parc de la Villette has been taken as a precedent in this project as it proposes an innovative way of appropriating the territory. Tschumi redefined the relationships between people and landscape in this project, marking a new era in the city of Paris along with projects like the Centre Pompidou. The idea of departing from possible scenes instead of defined programs has been a great reference for the new proposal for Karlgårdsbron. The undulating rhythms that lead the user through the park and the grid as a strategy for territorial occupation have also guided the design.

Parc de la Villette was built in 1982 after an open competition held by the French ex-president Francois Mitterand. Designed by Bernard Tschumi who was at that time conducting investigations about new forms of imagining architectural programs. In his project The Manhattan transcripts, Tschumi creates a storyboard of a criminal case to describe Central Park, with this he intended to liberate the activities produced in space from control mechanisms and pre-dispositions (Davies, 2011). Tschumi meant that what happens inside a building is a lot more complex than a list of requirements, his stories were a strategy for liberating human activity from the constraints of space. The proposal for Parc de la Villette superposes different grids in the space, giving the space a greater degree of complexity and unpredictability, in particular in the moments where these grids intersect. The most well known aspect of the project are the “folie”, small pavilions design by Tschumi of 10\*10m that have no intended function (Davies, 2011). The bright red colour of the folies makes the space more graspable and their undefinition allows for spontaneous activities to develop. Interestingly, the proposal was done in conversation with John Hejduk while he was working on the proposal for a memorial park in Berlin. Hejduk worked with his concept of – masques – which Fabrizi defines as “architectural structures embodying a character”, which might have inspired the unusual design of the folies (Fabrzi, 2015).

Derrida, in his essay about Tschumi, writes how the contradictions and tensions generated in his architecture produces an architecture of events. He goes on to refer to the notion of - vectors and envelopes – the vector represents movement, it is the activation of space and the envelope defines such space.

Tschumi used as a starting point the social conflicts of Paris in 68’ expressed in the city. Seeing the city is a space of conflict, in accordance with his studies for the Manhattan transcripts. The park is also situated on the limit of Paris, adjacent to the Peripherique, a site of obvious encounter and bridging between the different realities of the city and its surroundings.

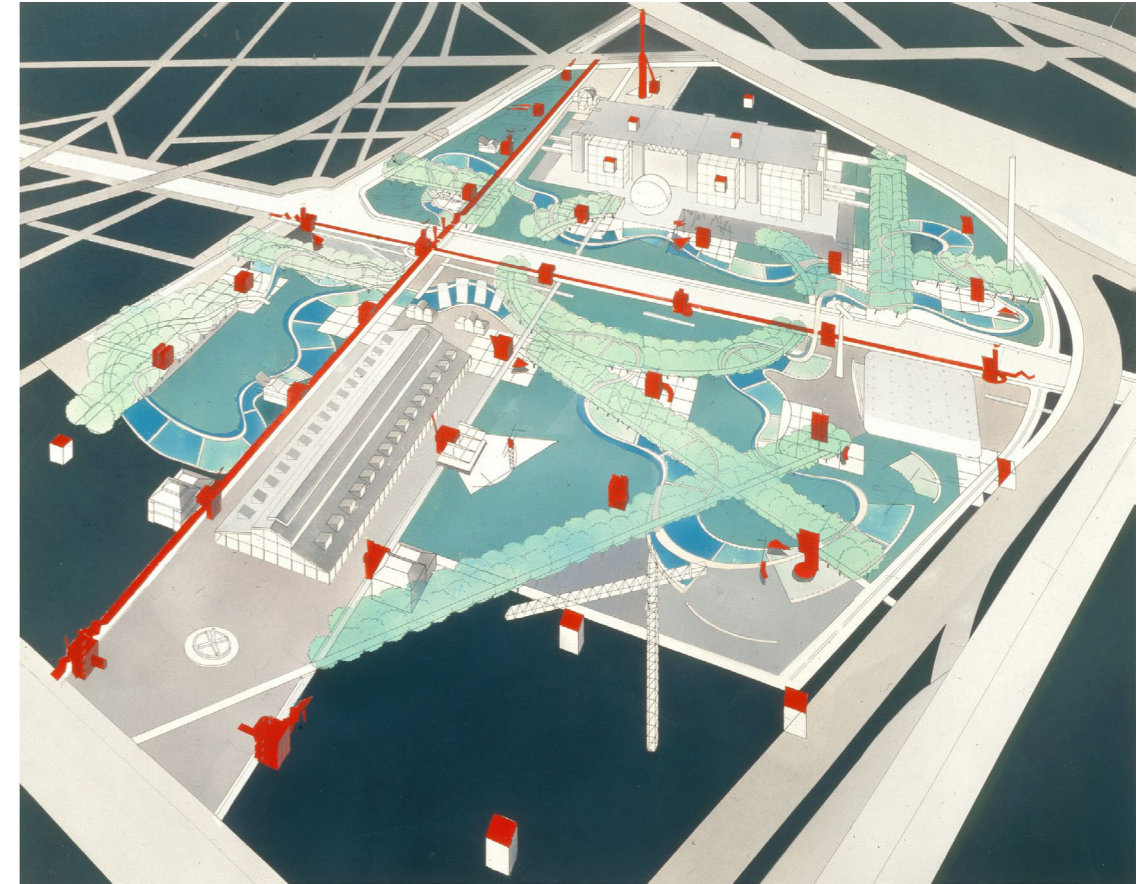
Cedric Price, who also presented a proposal for Parc de la Villette, is mostly known for his project Fun Palace, conceived as an entertainment laboratory. He often defined architecture as “a generative system mediating between the complexity of a society in crisis and, and the necessity of producing the built environment”. His projects are characterized by the use of structures that sustain and liberate cultural production, a fundamental idea in the proposal for Karlgårdsbron. Price in his studio at the Architectural Association worked with his students on multiple speculative projects on the river Thames in London (Hardingham, 2015). Often using bridges as structures containing restaurants, movie theatres, sport activities, etc. On an urban scale, Price argues a city should have “magnets” that attract people to zones of activity.

In their book on Metabolism, Koolhaas and Obrist describe the projects as “on the verge of impossibility due to the territorial conditions facing Japan”, and argue that this brought a huge amount of inventiveness to the architectural environment. Metabolism was, according to them, the last movement in architecture that saw the project of a country as their own project, in other words it was deeply political and entrenched with the idea of society being developed in Japan (Koolhaas; Obrist, 2011). One of the projects mentioned is Tanges big roof, designed over 20 years as a research project and unfortunately never realised. The thickness of the roof contained a village formed by housing units., a structure that could be placed on top of existing railways and roads Stratiform modules that could be placed over existing railways and roads. The use of public infrastructures integrated in the city landscape was a common theme for the metabolists. This strategy has been taken to consider Karlgårdsbron as part of the network of spaces and roads in Skellefteå instead of an isolated case.

2.

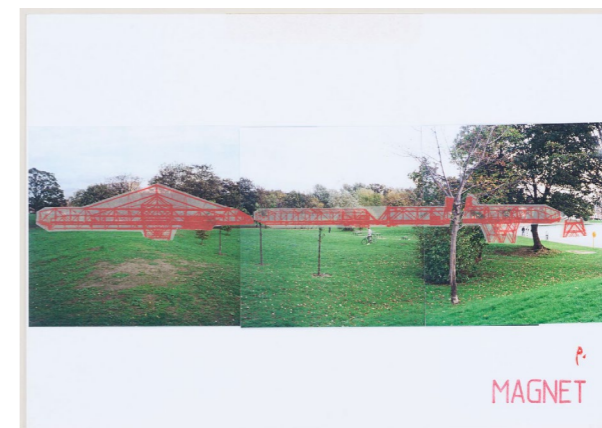


3.



2. Kenzō Tange Big Roof At Expo 70, 1970.  
3. Parc de la Vilette proposal, 1987. Bernard Tschumi  
4. Magnet by Cedric Price.

4.







1. Image by the author in the site of the bridge construction.

# Emerging communities

As discussed in previous chapters, there is a dissonance between the policies and urban interventions and the actual impact those have on the protagonists of this new phase of industrialization in Norrland. For the workers to stay in Skellefteå it is necessary to build forums where they can have the opportunity of forming new communities, between them and the people who are already inserted in existing communities. As witnessed through the interviews, engaged individuals are key to integrating new members. Small activities such as the board game meetings or the Sunday grilling, can be the starting point for many people to find a social context. Therefore, the project proposes the establishment of informal activities on the bridge that can help create community around them, creating new cultural practices shared by the participants. These activities can evolve into more formalised structures over time.

The main target of this intervention would be the families of those coming to work for the factory, since they often find themselves unable to make a livelihood in Skellefteå; due to policies, lack of housing and lack of incentives. Moreover, they are fundamental for the creation of new communities and to guarantee the realisation of long term planning.

In this case, the management of the project is not secondary as it ultimately defines its physical shape. The arrangements between the users will determine the position of the walls and the regularity of activity across the bridge, also expressed in the different seasons and days of the week. Moreover, the decisions on the use of resources will engage them in conversation.

Creating a commons association is fundamental for the democratic ownership of the bridge to be guaranteed. The project proposes an alternative model to the one developed for Sara Kulturhus, based on the democratic ownership of public space.

Massimo de Angelis argues that commons are social systems. They are made of interacting parts that relate to an environment, responding and evolving with it. The environment is simultaneously also composed of systems; state systems, capital systems and ecologies. These interconnecting systems are the context in which the commons develop their own practices (De Angelis, 2017).

Taken from the think tank Common Wealth, the model called Public Common Partnerships (PCP) proposes the creation of a joint enterprise between a public local authority and a commons association that share the ownership in equal parts. The revenue generated by the joint enterprise would go 50% back to the local authority to finance the investment and 50% for reinvestment by the common association into new projects, first inside the bridge and later in the rest of the city. The main source of revenue would be the renting of spaces for big events such as the annual christmas market or music festivals.

Inside the board of the joint enterprise there would be a third member which is an advisory body with experts from the local universities such as Umeå University or/ and Luleå University. Inside the board each member has one vote.

The commons association can be created under the process in collaboration with the existing social associations such as trade unions, ABF and Studjefrämjandet. A starting point could also be the people who led the referendum against the bridge, the association could be a strategy for reopening the debate on the bridge under new circumstances. The common enterprise would have its own democratic mechanisms to take decisions on who and how long the spaces are used, following the existing protocols for economic associations in Sweden.

Previous experiences, such as the management of the occupied building Rivhuset by local activists and cultural figures will be an asset. Likewise, looking at projects in the region and allying with artists and organisations from the rest of Norrland and northern Scandinavia would be a valuable step in this process. For example, artist Joar Nango based in Tromsø, Norway, who is developing a set of practices coming from the Sámi cultural tradition. His work on what he calls “indigenousandness”, a resourceful mentality that is based on using what is around to create a place, is an important precedent. Moreover, the Girjegumpi, a Sámi architecture library Joar Nango moderates, is an interesting model of an alternative institution that is built in continuous exchange and defined mainly as a space instead of a program or form of organisation (Nango, 2021).

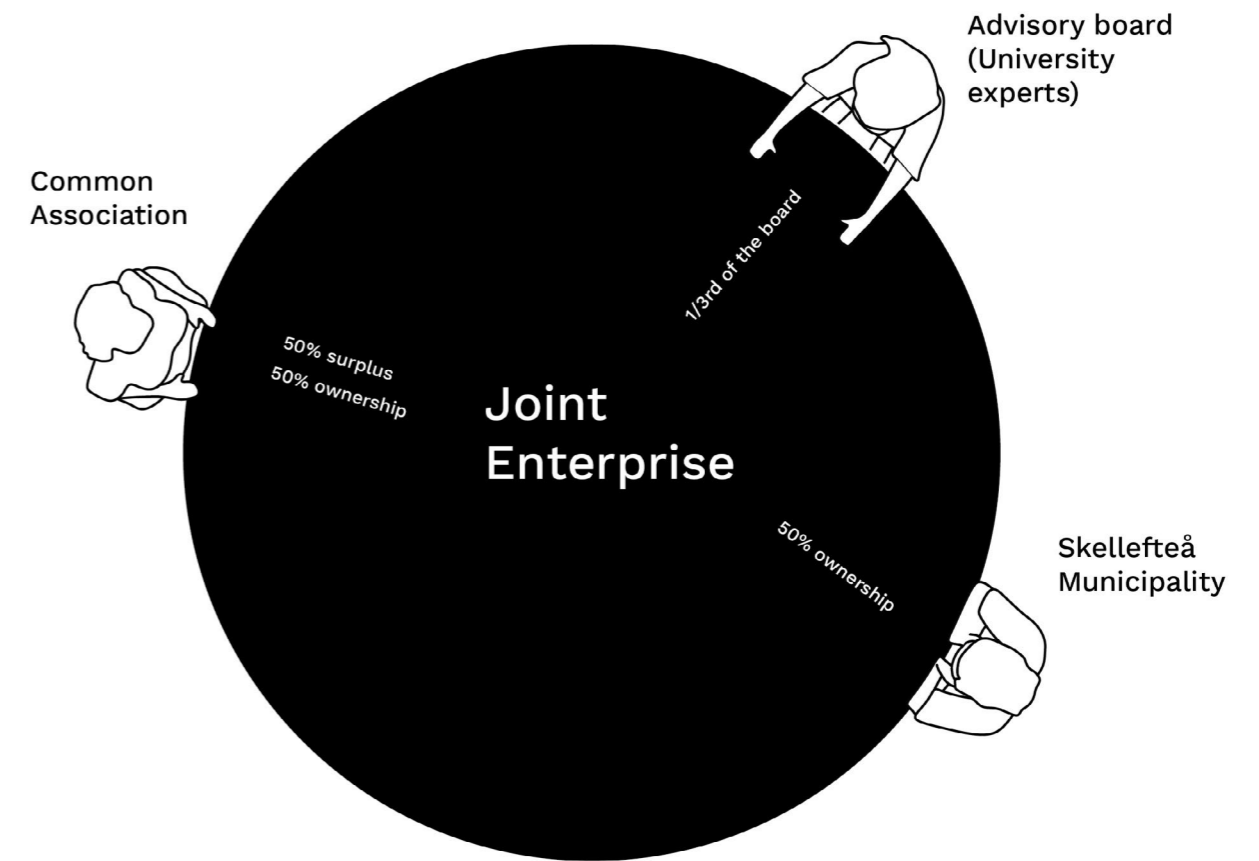
Likewise the project for Sara Kulturhus, the investment for the bridge construction would be done by the municipality of Skellefteå, with support from Trafikverket

since the bridge is a public infrastructure. The added value brought by the commons association is that which Enar Nordvik referred to as “soft interventions”. The commons association would not be able to contribute financially but will contribute with its knowledge and add cultural value to the city, enhancing public space and contributing to the integration of the new inhabitants.

The reinvestment could generate what Common Wealth calls a circuit of commons, a network of people and interventions that can multiple the encounters and generate an alternative economy.



2.



1. Rivhuset, an occupied house in central Skellefteå.
2. Diagram depicting the Common Public Partnership.
3. Installation by Joar Nango.

3.





# A place in between places

The project has focused on designing a bridge that is a generous and open superstructure, ready to be appropriated by its occupants in various levels of commitment.

The project has explored how a public structure can be designed for a world that is changing at a rapid pace, seeking to integrate the act of change within the building. Designed to be part of the process of transformation of the city instead of an imposition. The Northvolt landscape is in fact not a given but a negotiated territory that could provide an innovative conception of the industrial landscape if it is porous enough to accept certain contradictions. The proposal is to rewire the forces of transformation in Skellefteå to create new kinds of spaces.

The proposal is therefore other bridge, which is neither bridge nor building. A public space that is continuous negotiation of its own rules.

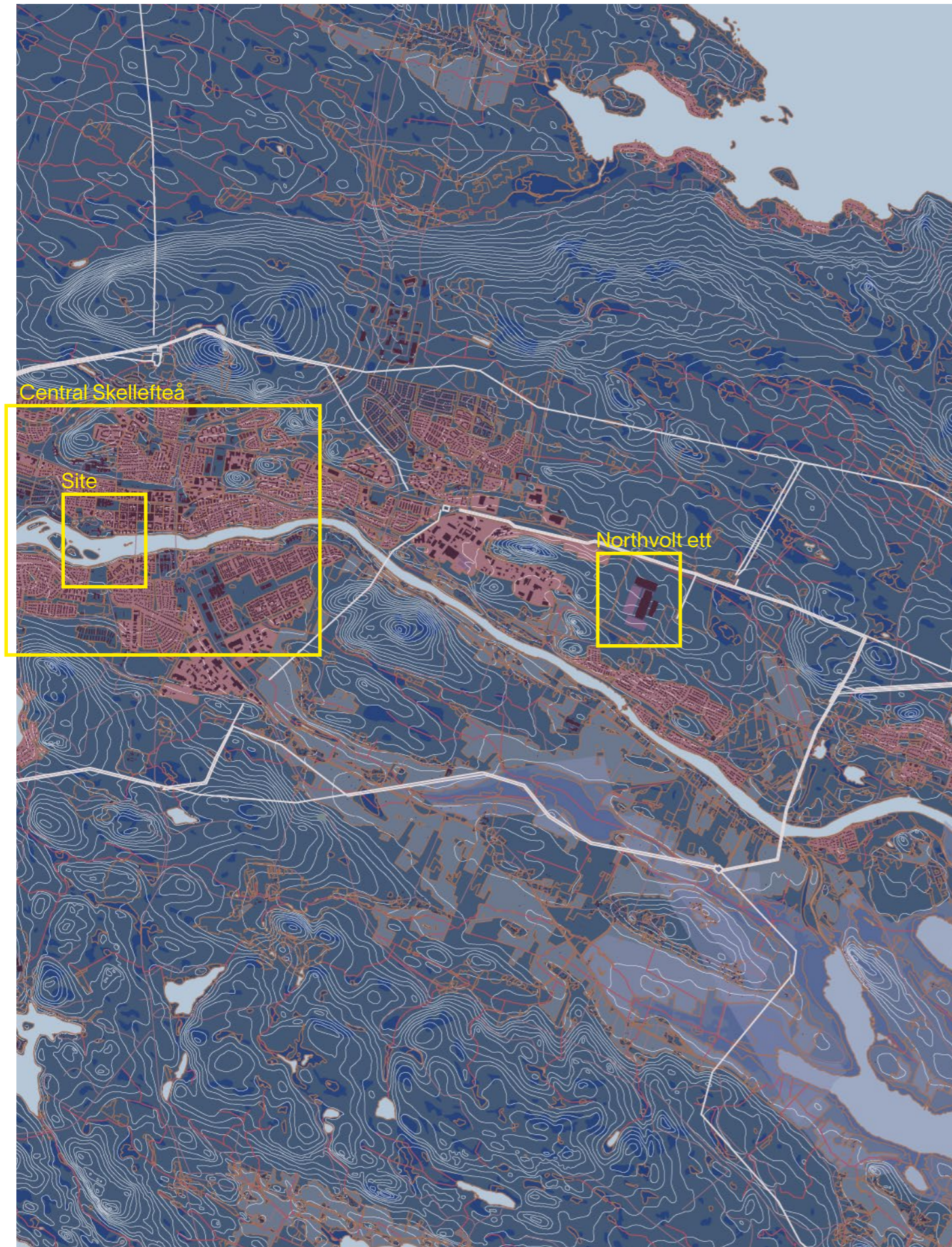
For the bridge to be able to gather the parts of the complex reality that is currently forming in Skellefteå it is fundamental to re-imagine it as a place in itself, creating the conditions for people to inhabit it and transform its meaning. As a result of the conversations and inquiries of this project it has come to light that there is a lack of common spaces for recreation. Although Sara Kulturhus plays a big role as a venue for cultural activities, most interviewees describe it as a formal setting and wish for more informal settings for the performance of culture and the creation of community.

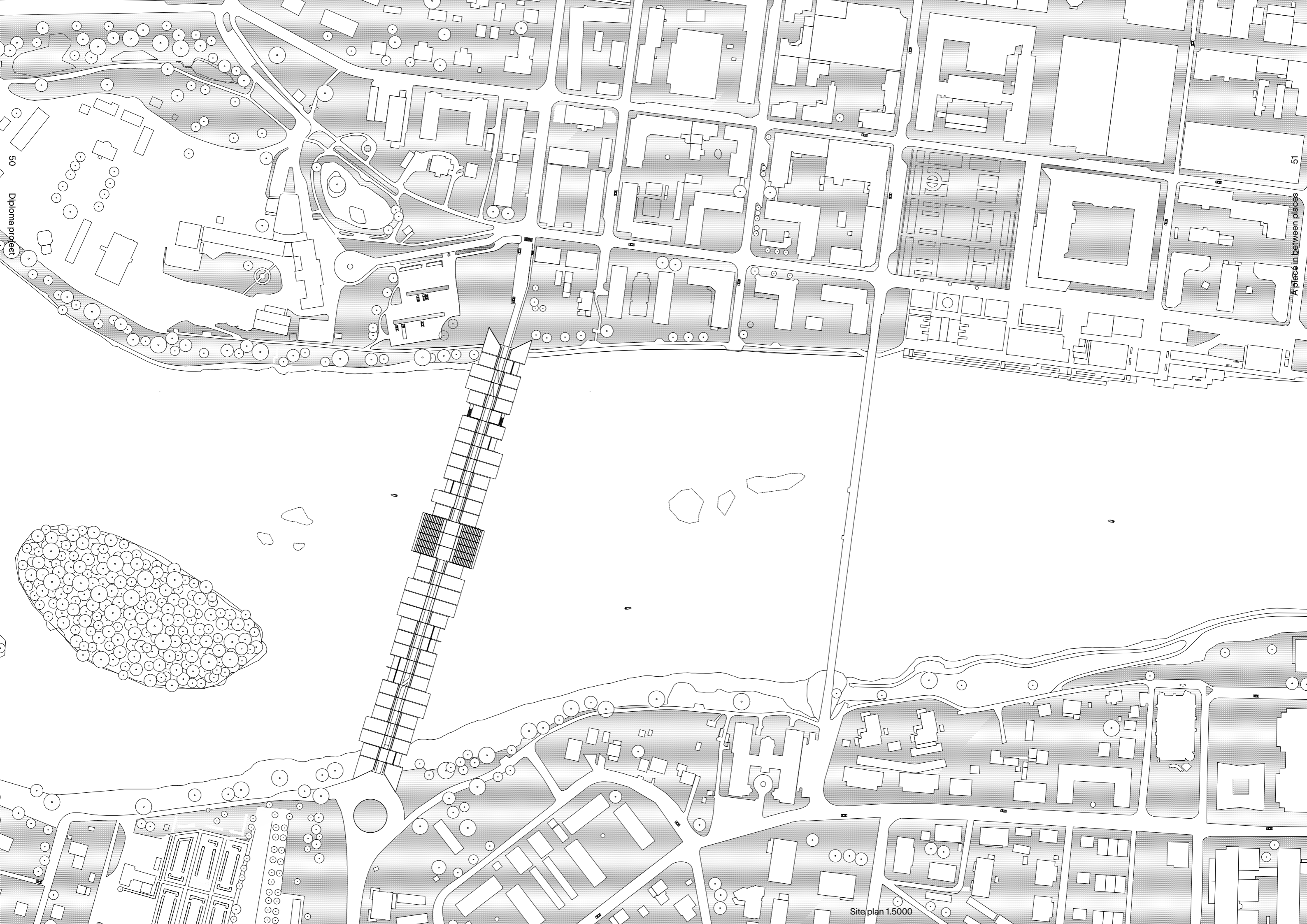
The proposal for the bridge has 3 main elements: the pillars and beams in reinforced concrete, the supporting structure of the roof in steel and wood with movable panels and the grid on the flooring that functions as a guide for the different ways it can be appropriated. Moreover, there is a fourth element in the centre, a social magnet, a large hall that allows for bigger gatherings and when in use signals the inhabitants of Skellefteå by lighting up. The hall also has a second level hanging from the main beam that connects to the water.

The hanging element is built in a lighter structure in wood, which will also better handle the contact with the water and the changing patterns of the river (high tide, low tide, freezing temperatures).

The moving elements are the most flexible elements that create different space configurations and can contain more or less formal spaces, keeping in mind that a more temporary activity could become more formalised over time. The panels rotate in a single axis creating different configurations that can also be combined. From a simple table for a market stand, to a wooden structure for public activities to ultimately a housing unit with adjacent space for a commercial activity, these spaces can be adapted to the needs overtime following the given design strategies or modifying them according to the needs of the occupants. The basic structure of a roof, a wall and a floor are given; basic water and electricity facilities are contained in the thickness of the slab. Moreover, the pavement has a grid of holes for a basic structure to be added and removed easily.

1. Map of Skellefteå area.





50  
Diploma project

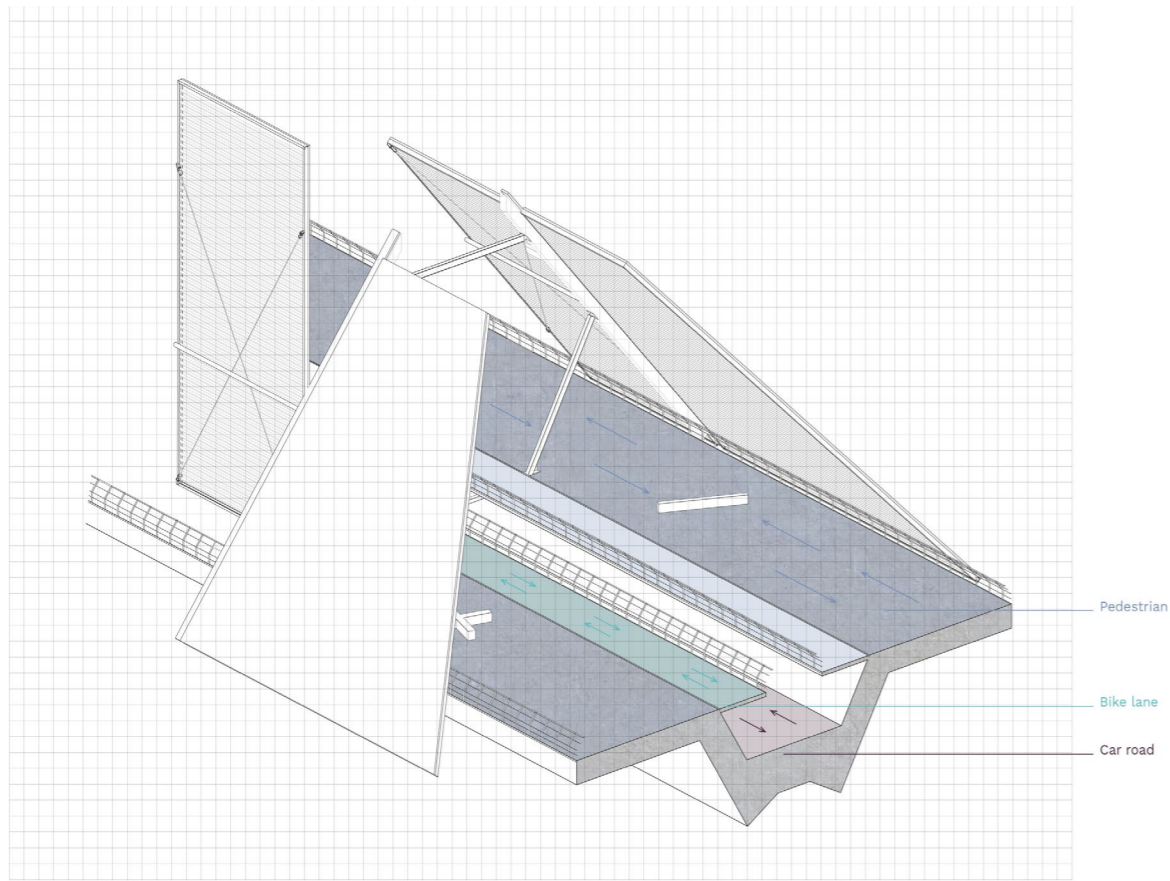
51  
A place in between places

Site plan 1:5000

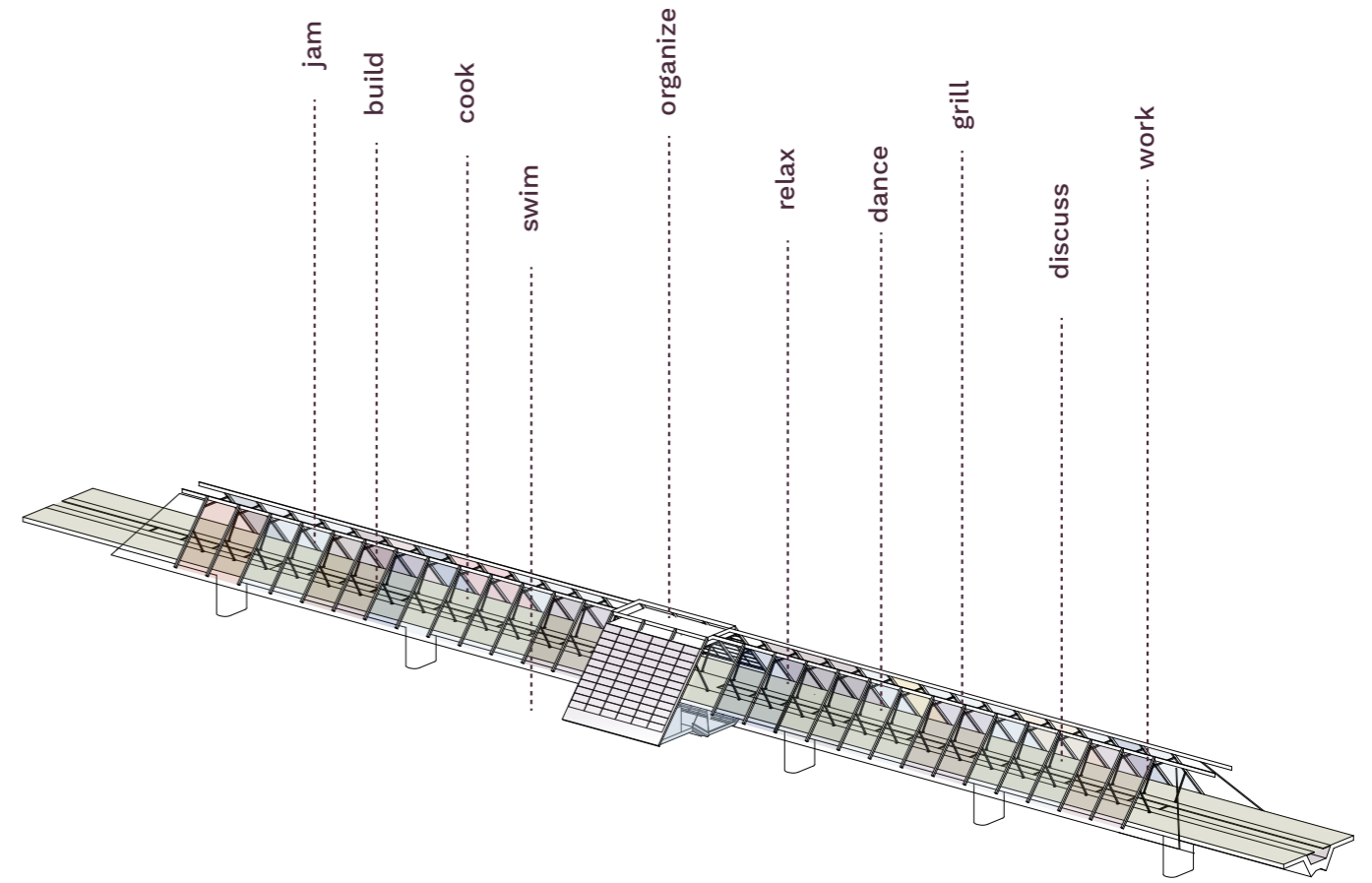


Additionally, the design integrates the basic requirements of the brief: a car lane 6m wide dimensioned for public transport and a bike lane of 3m wide.

1.



2.



1. Diagram depicting the circulation distribution.  
2. Examples of activities that can be performed on the bridge.

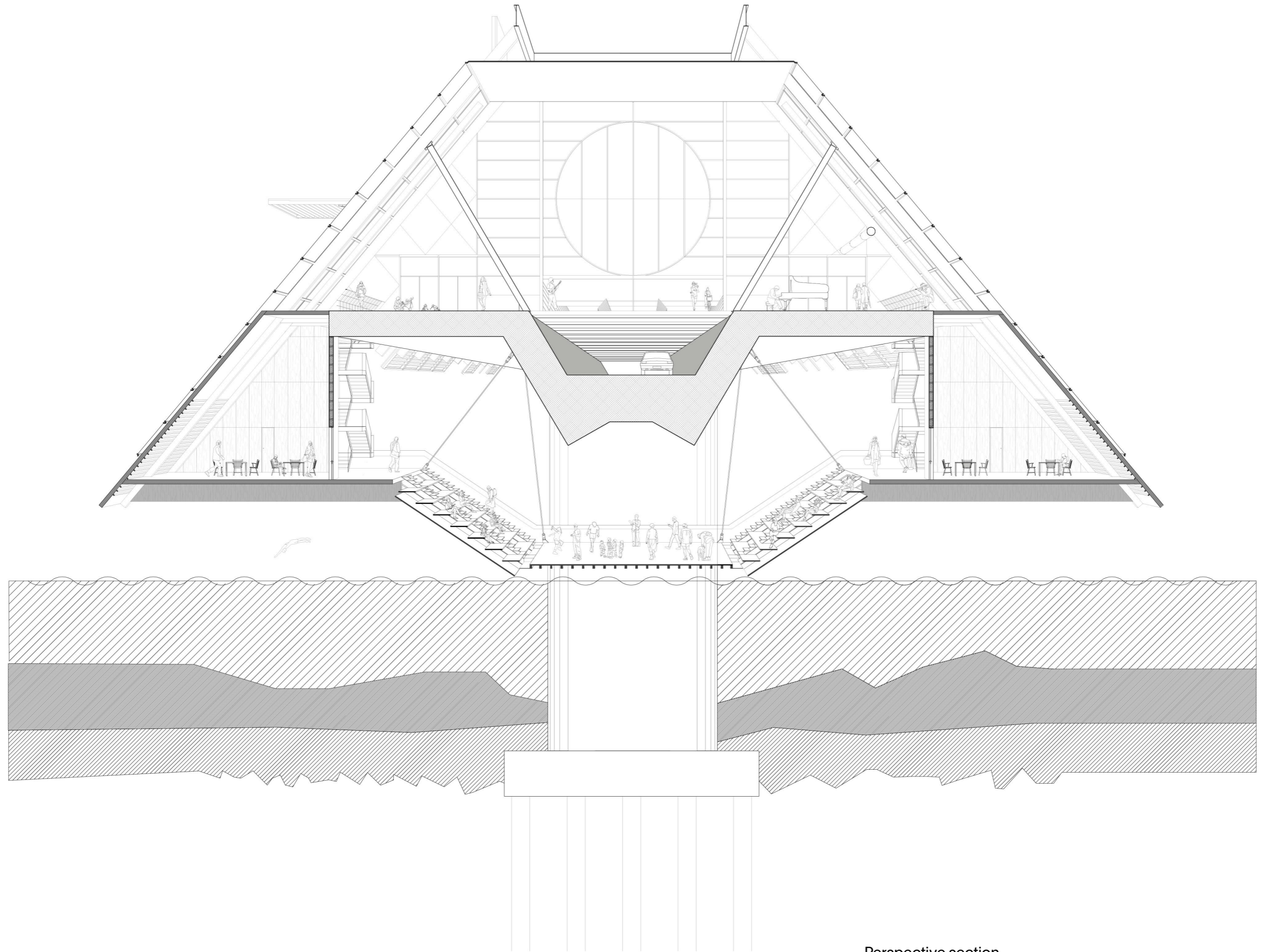
# Sunday 10:00 am

Lars Westerlund has been coming to the river for a swim for some years now. A fresh jump in the morning gives him the feeling of a fresh new start.

He takes his bike down to the central hall and prepares the space before everyone arrives. The usuals show up early and help fixing up. A lot of curious eyes join later to swim or just to watch.

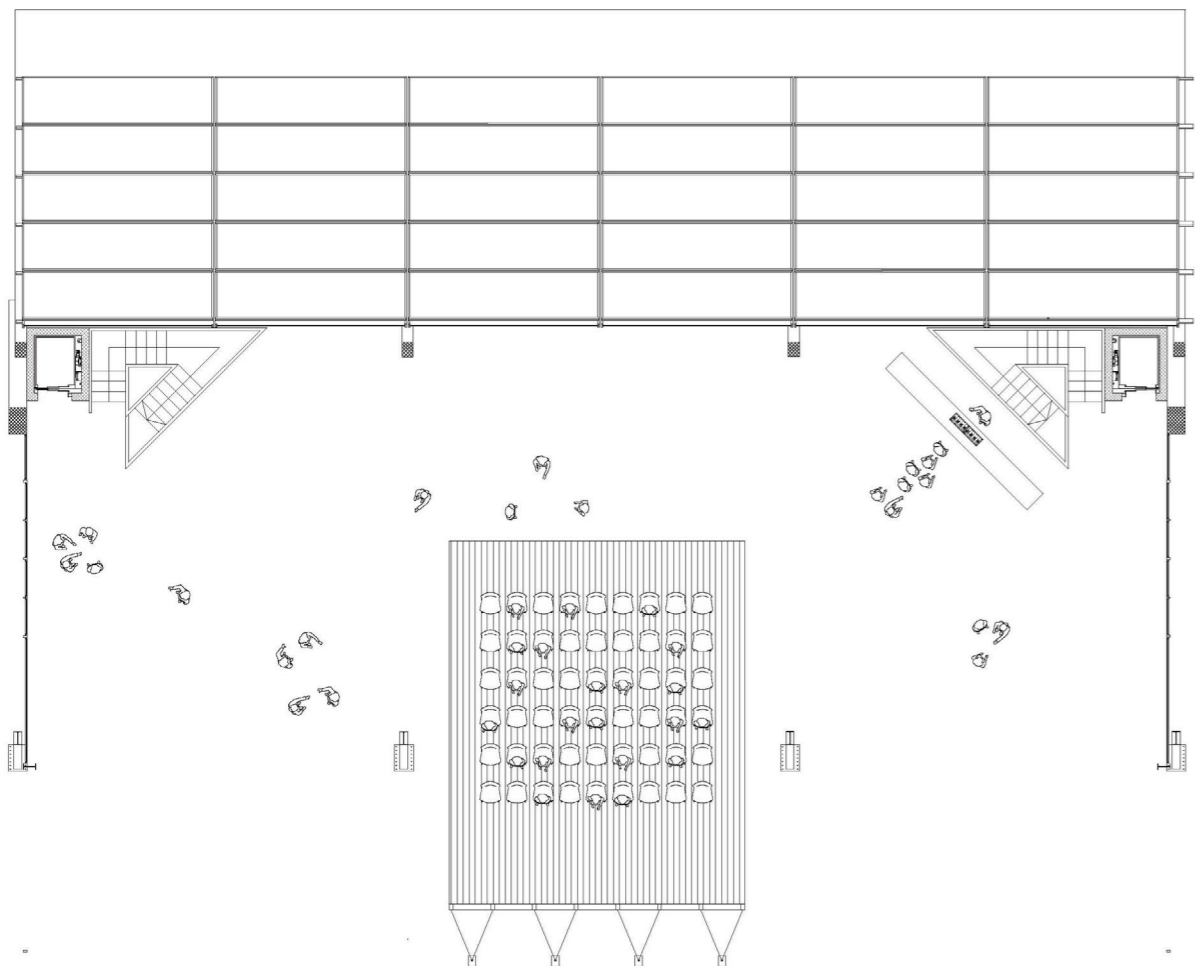
The group becomes bigger as the hours pass by. For many is the first time in the cold waters of Skellefteå Älven.



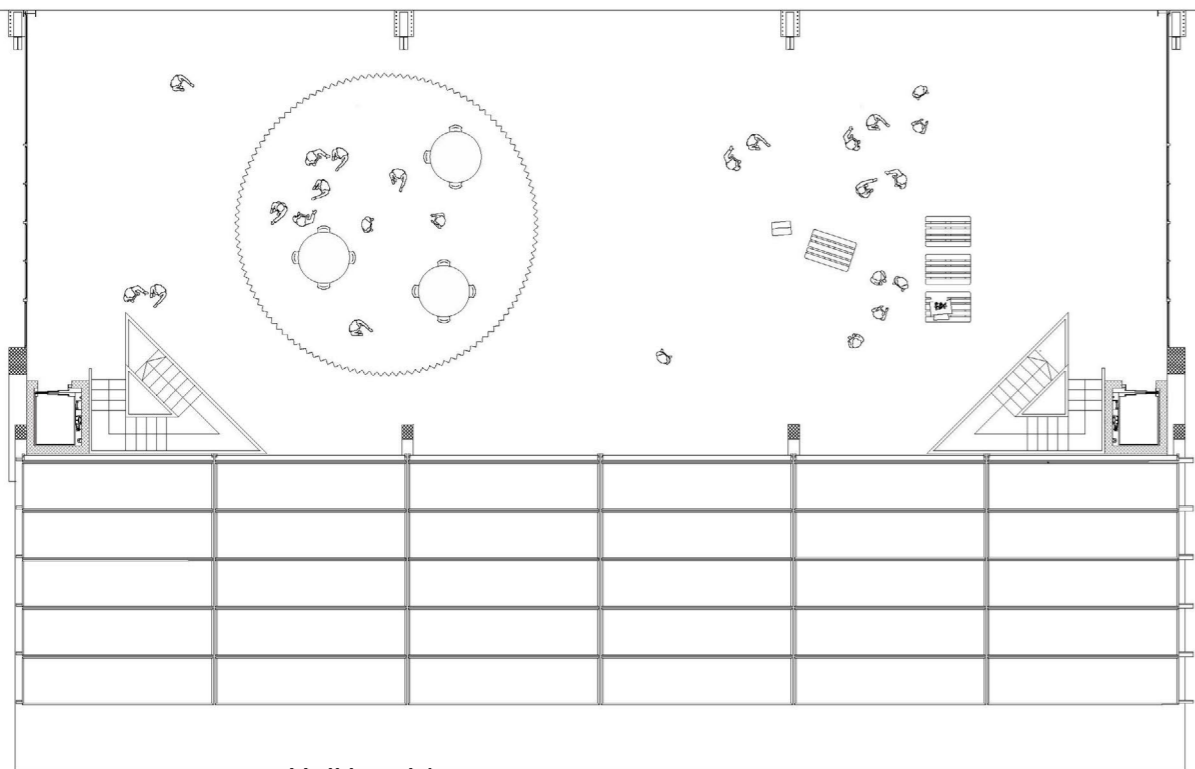


Perspective section

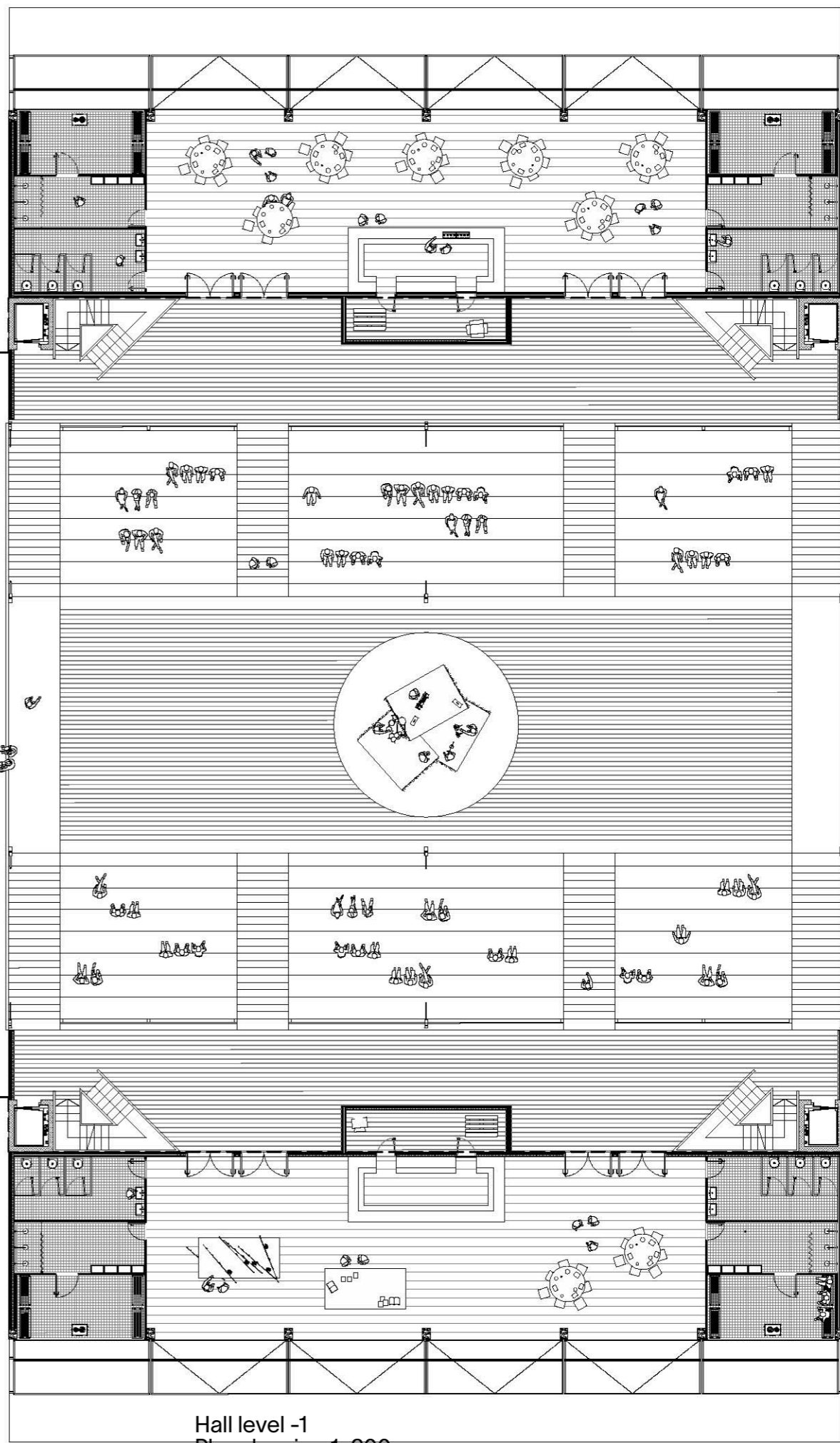
Proposal



Hall level 1  
Plan drawing 1-200



Hall level -1  
Plan drawing 1-200

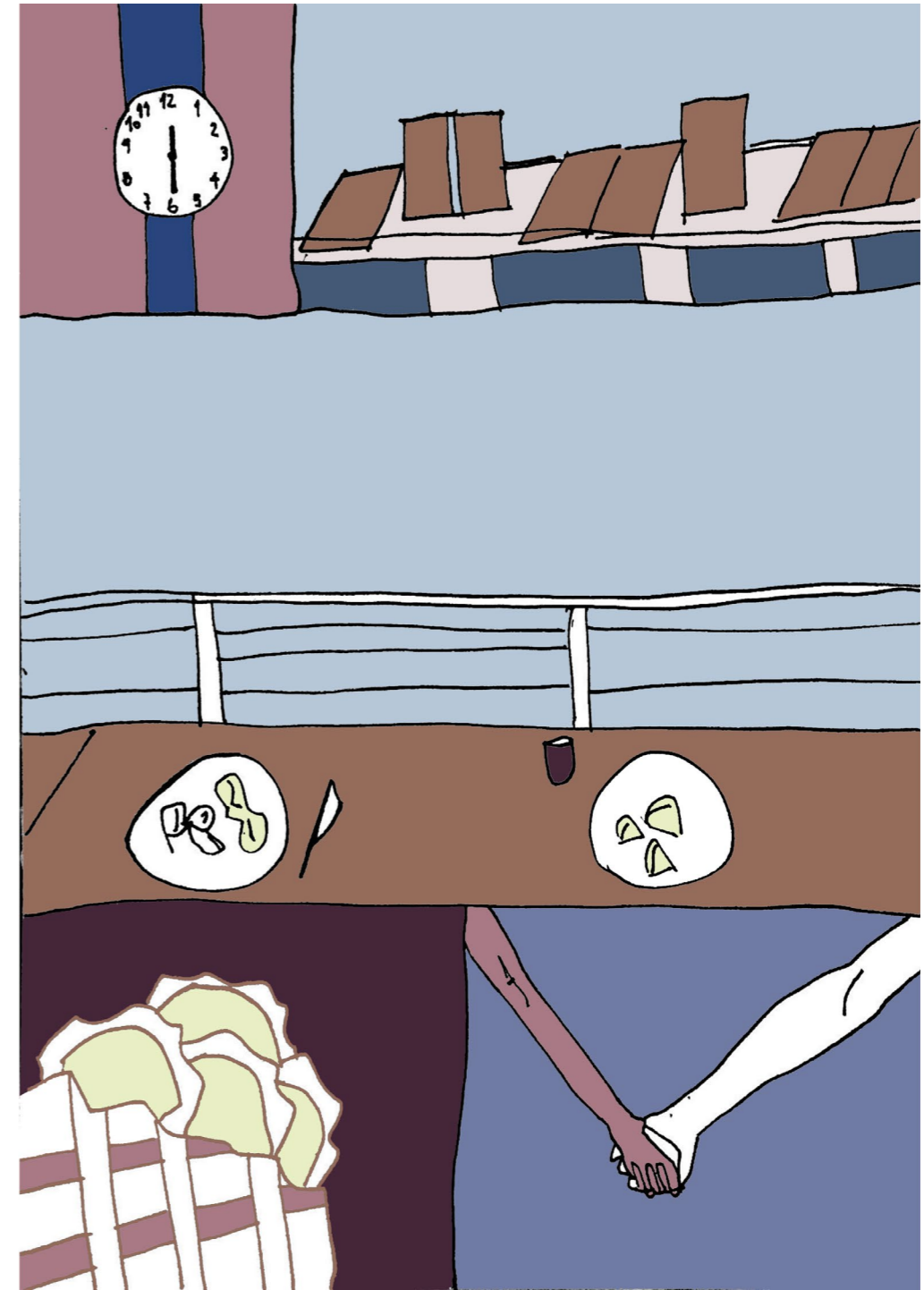


# Sunday 12:30 pm

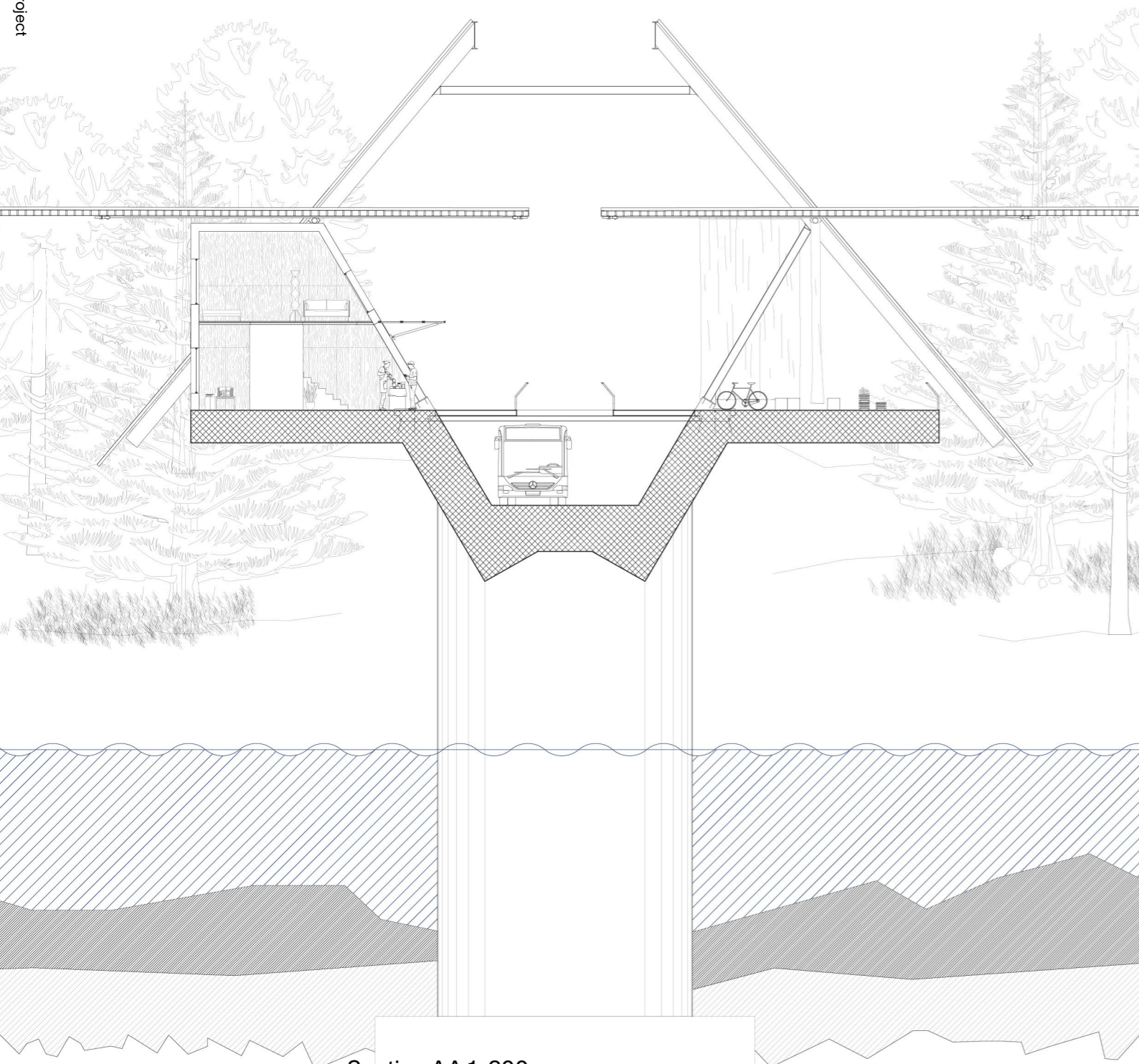
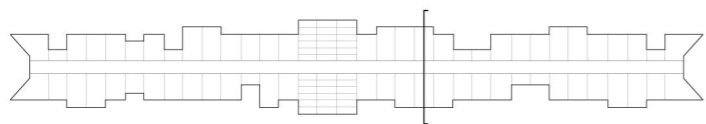
The sound of the market setting up rings across the banks of the river. The bridge seems to awaken as the panels open up to welcome everyone to join.

Amanda and Oscar had seen on their way to work that a colleagues wife had opened a pierogi stall. They could not wait to eat some warm pierogi overlooking the river.

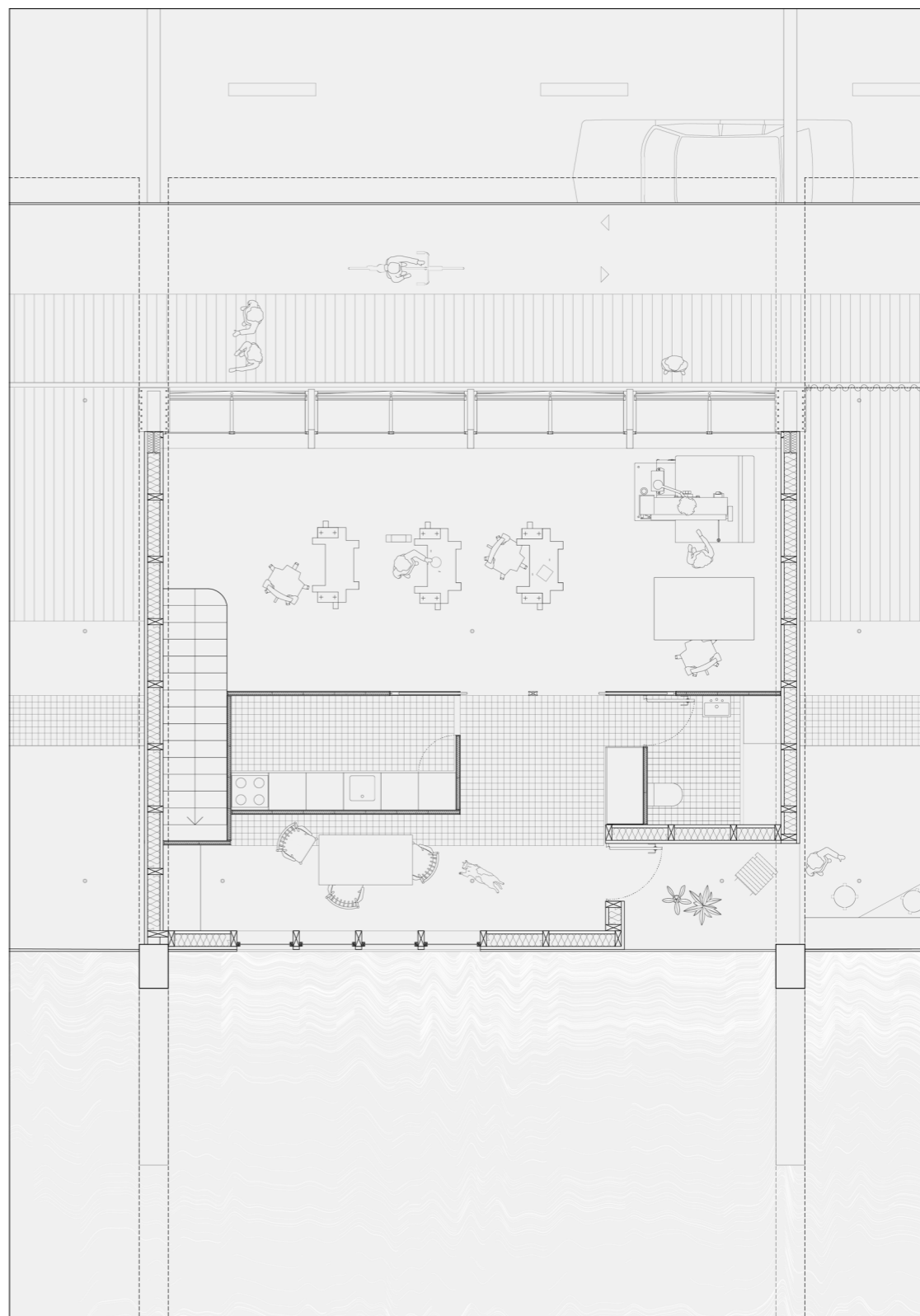
Sunday morning they walk to the bridge and pass by the stall, on their way they meet with other colleagues and their families. The warm lunch is enjoyed by everyone.







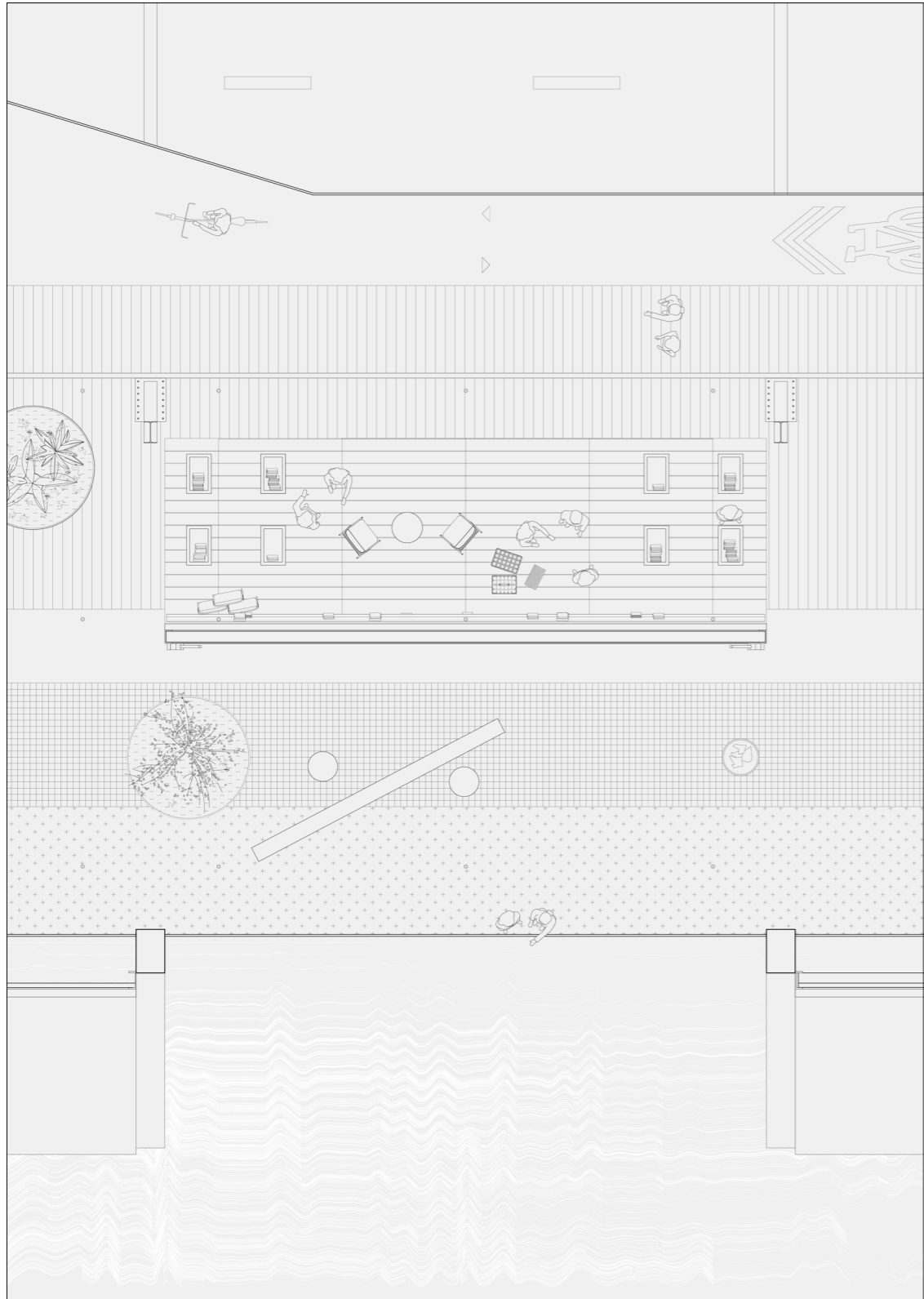
Section AA 1-200



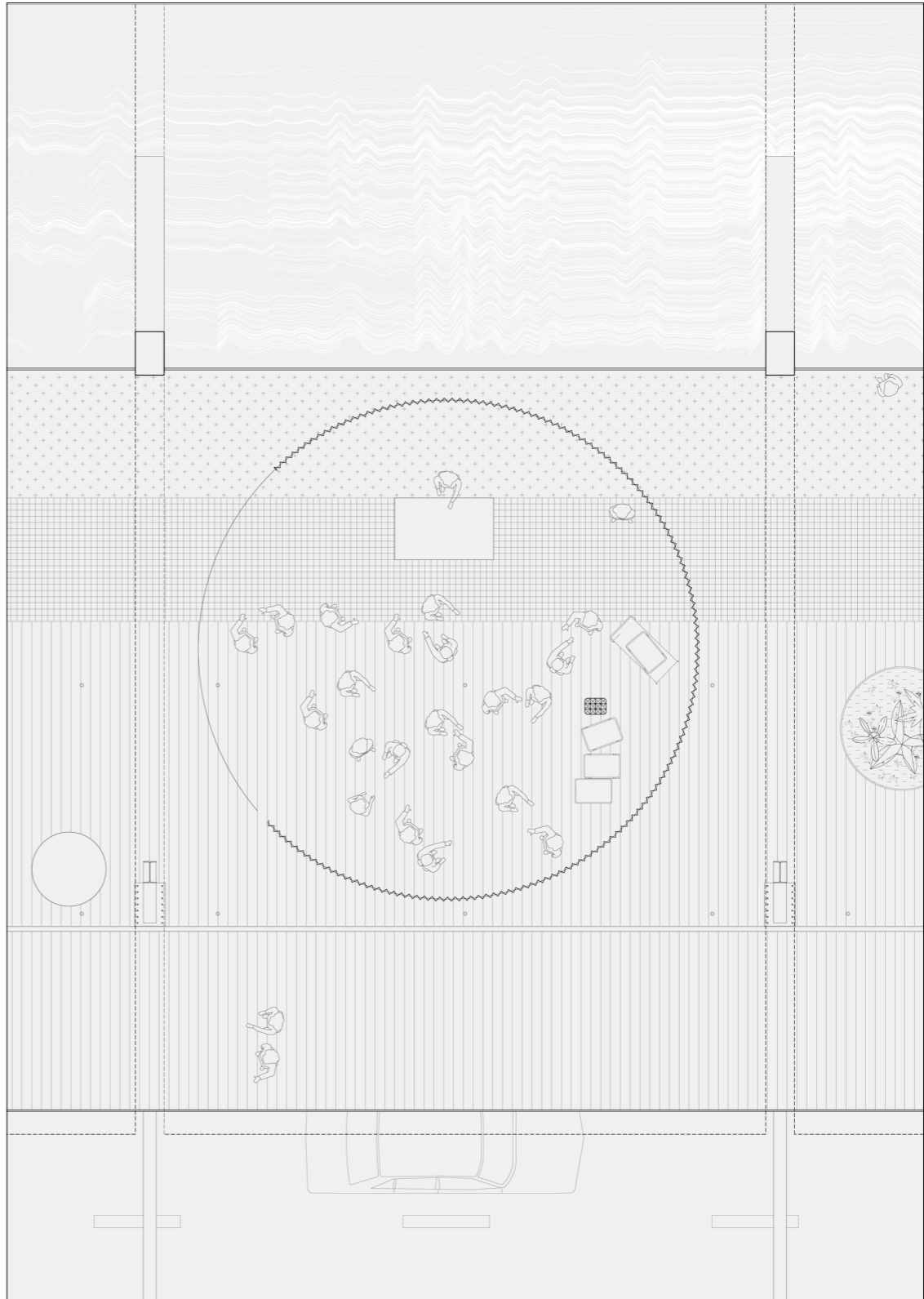
Zoom 1  
Plan drawing 1-100

Introduction

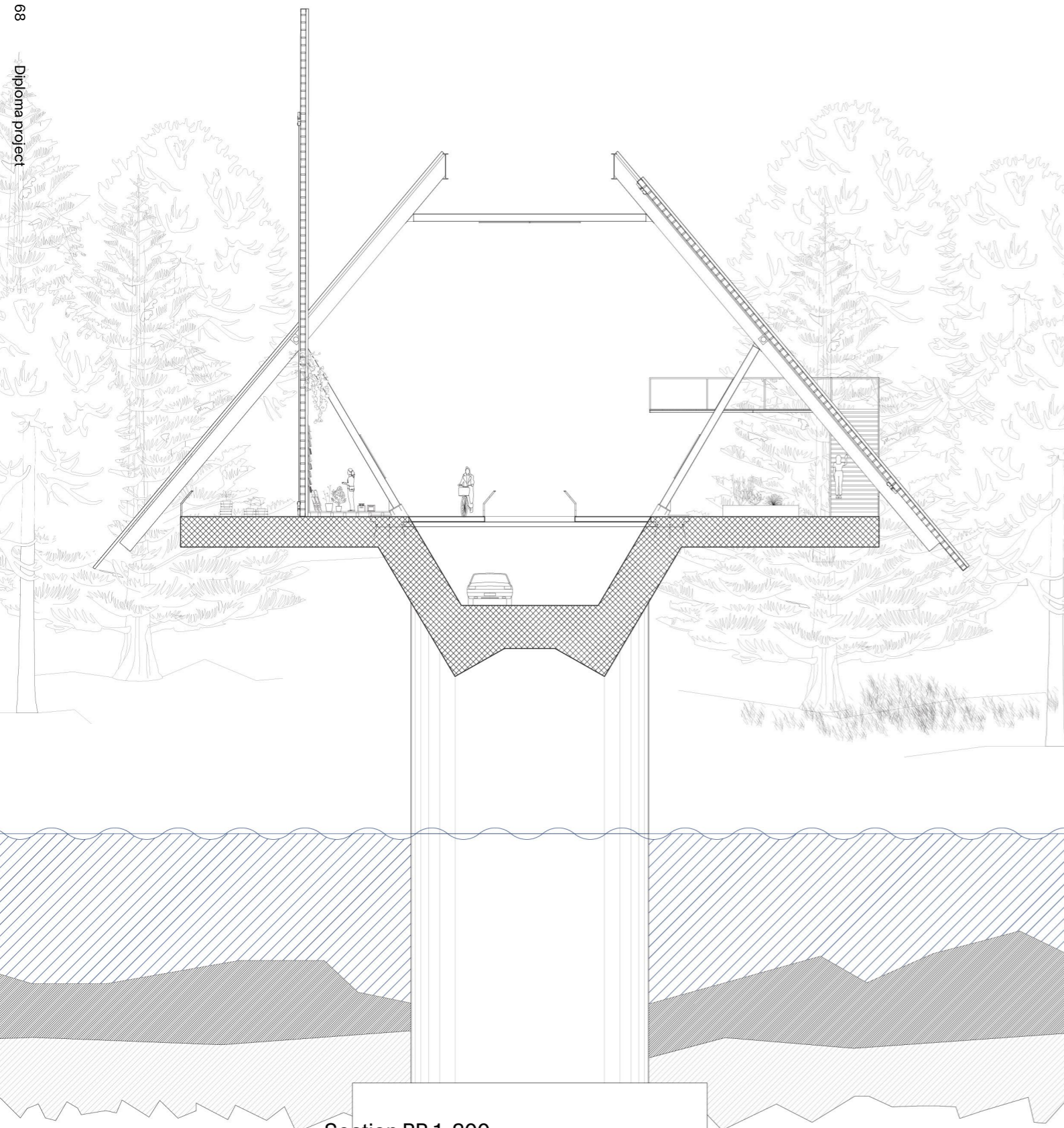
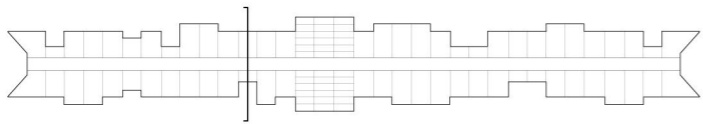




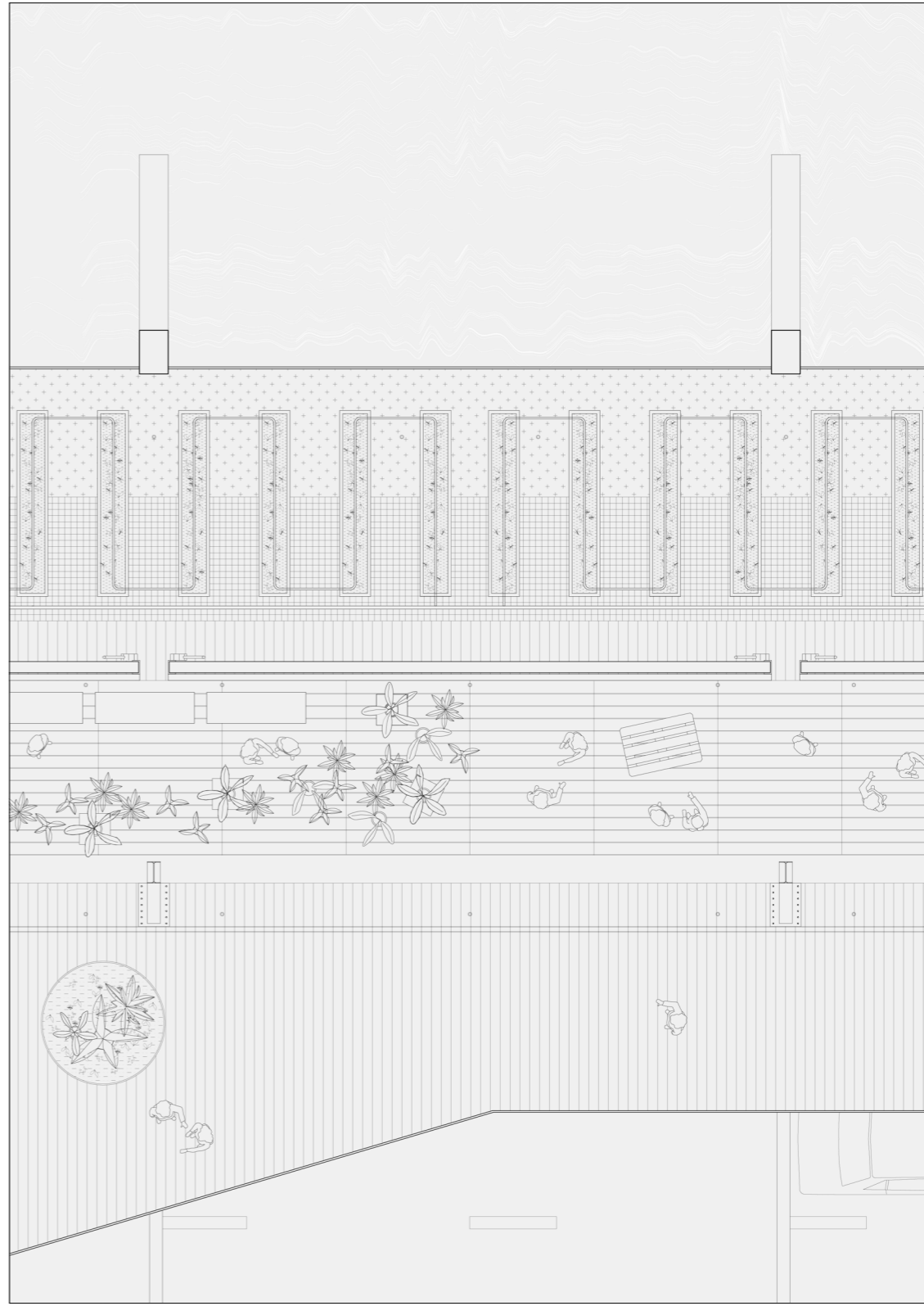
Zoom 2  
Plan drawing 1-100



Zoom 3  
Plan drawing 1-100



Section BB 1-200



Zoom 4  
Plan drawing 1-100

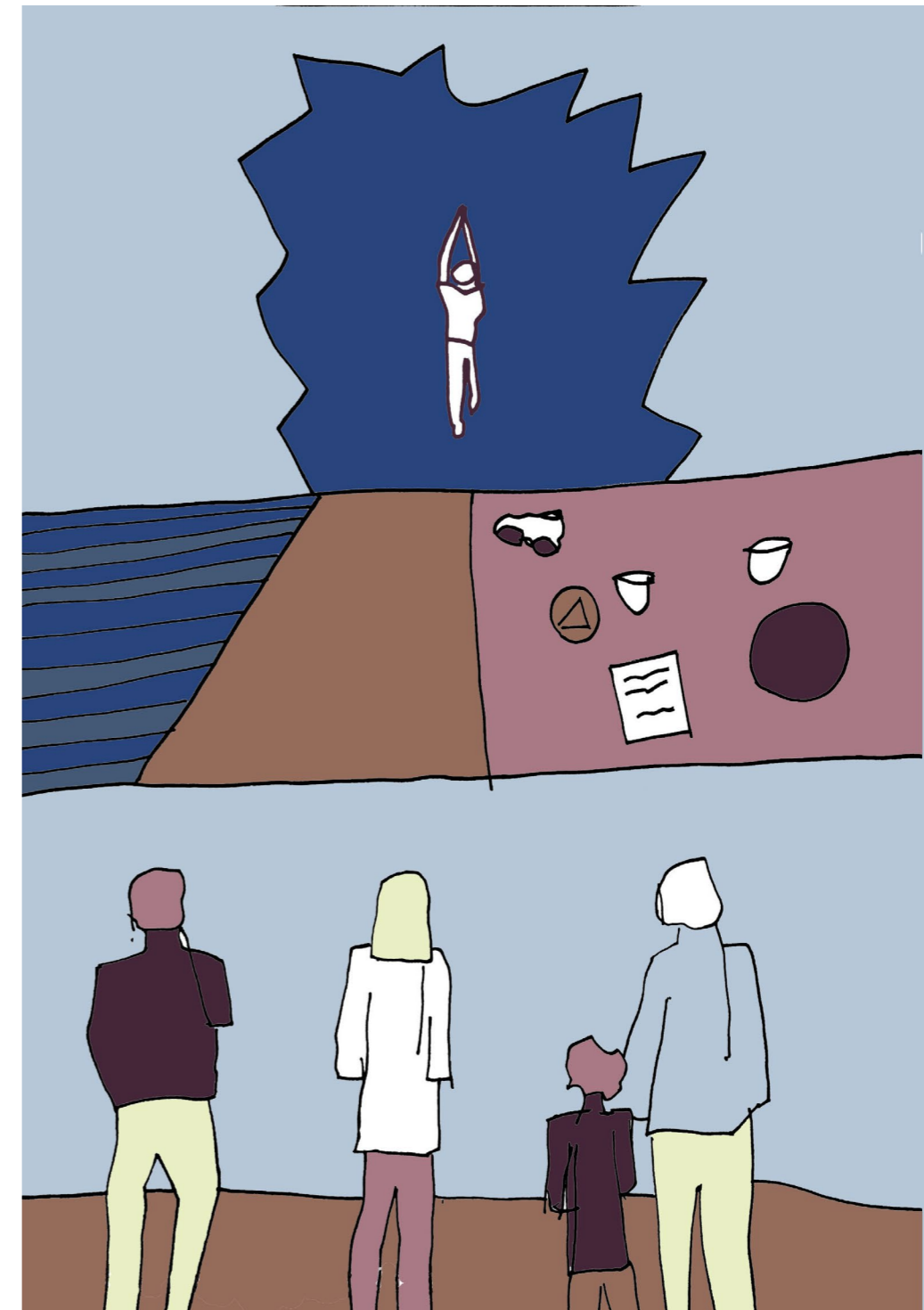


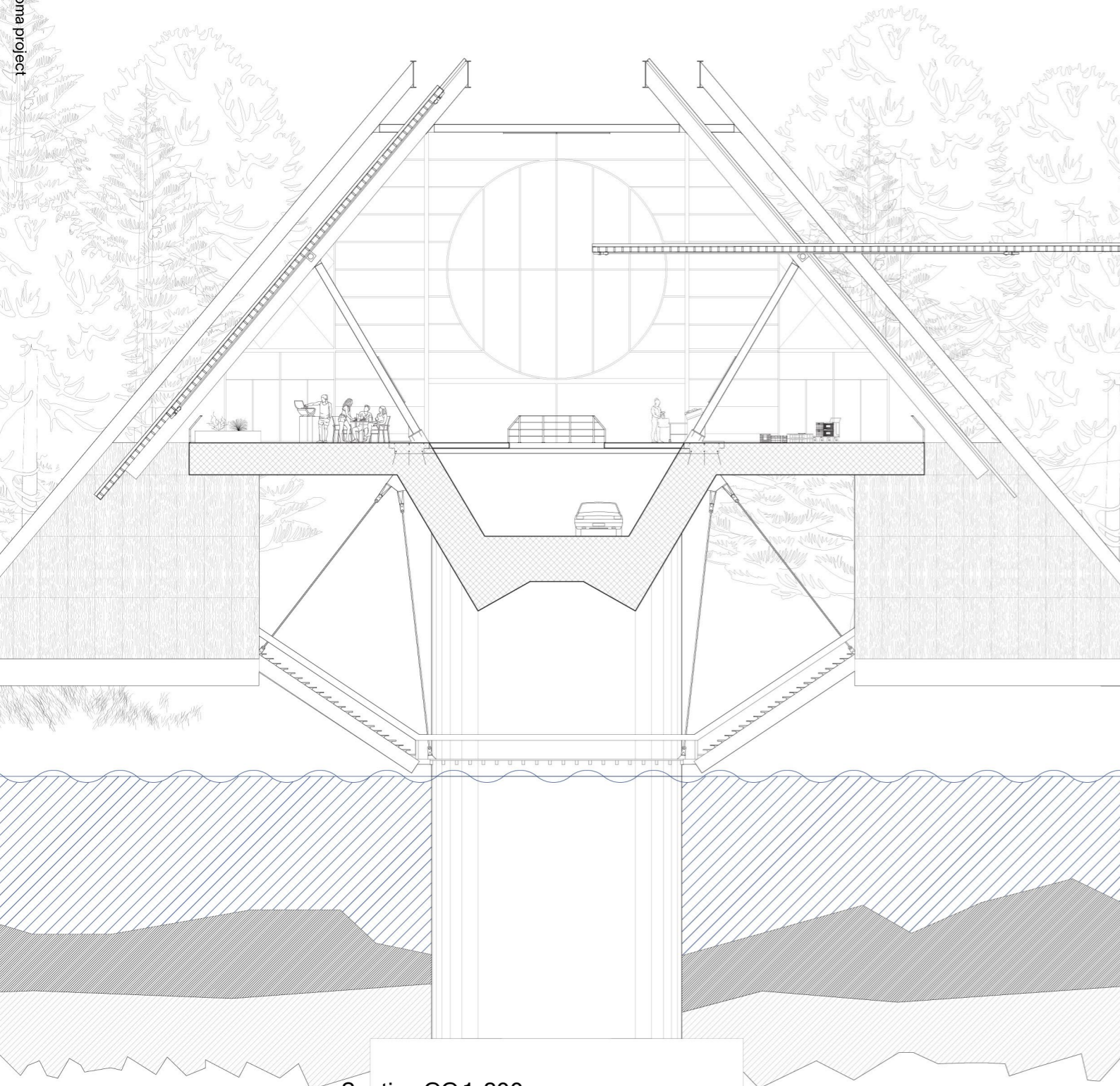
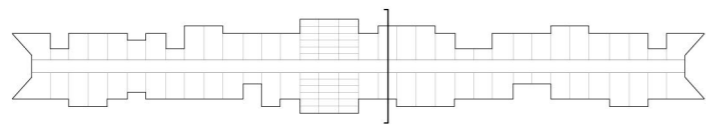
# Sunday 16:05 pm

The warming heat of the barbacue and the smell of food gathers construction workers from Northvolt ett. The activity that has become a routine is well known for also other people who join to eat and drink.

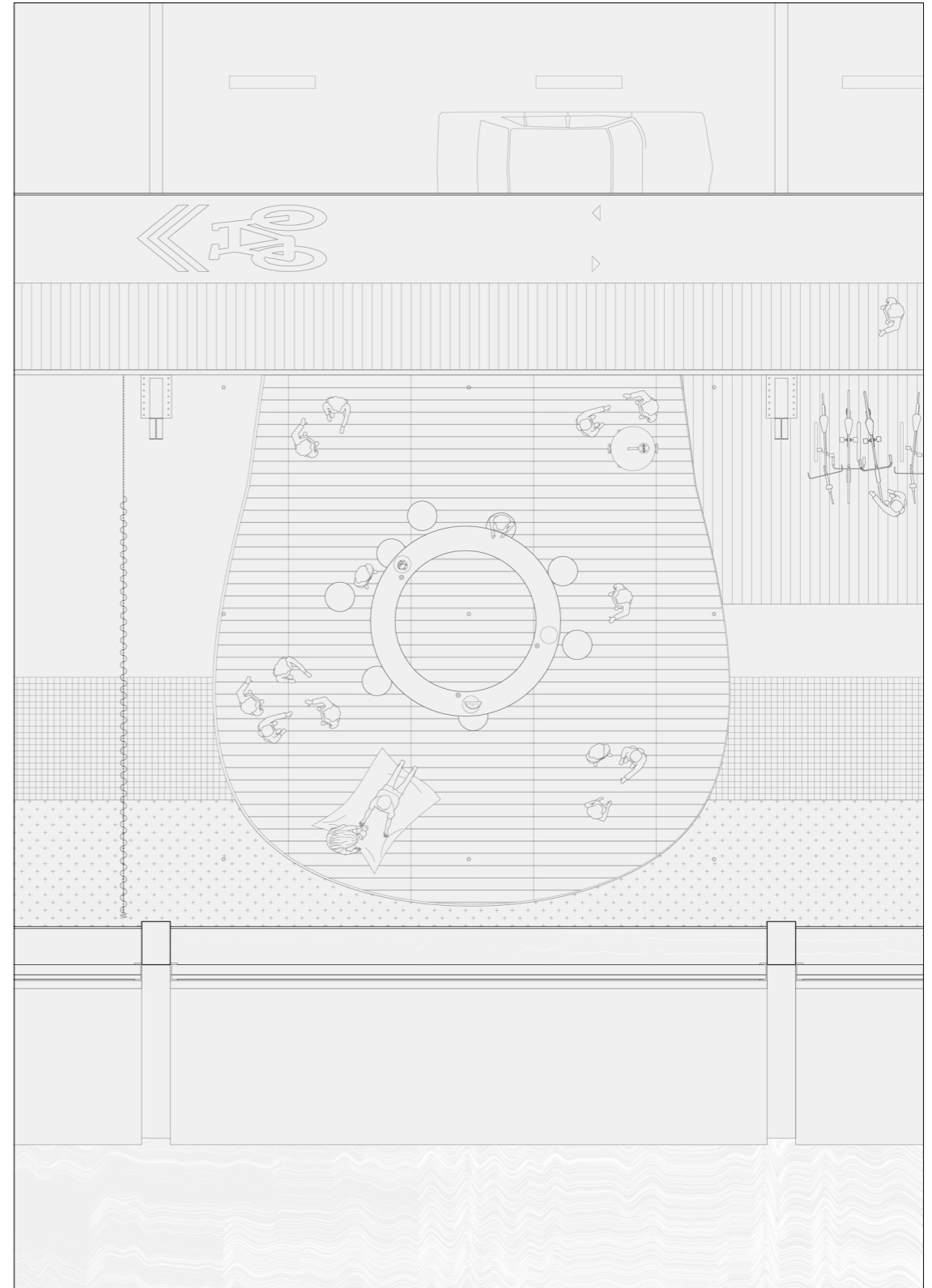
All kinds of languages are spoken and Pierre Petterson walks around saying "Hej" to almost every person.

As the sun goes down in the horizon, they run out of food and the night brings with it games and conversation.





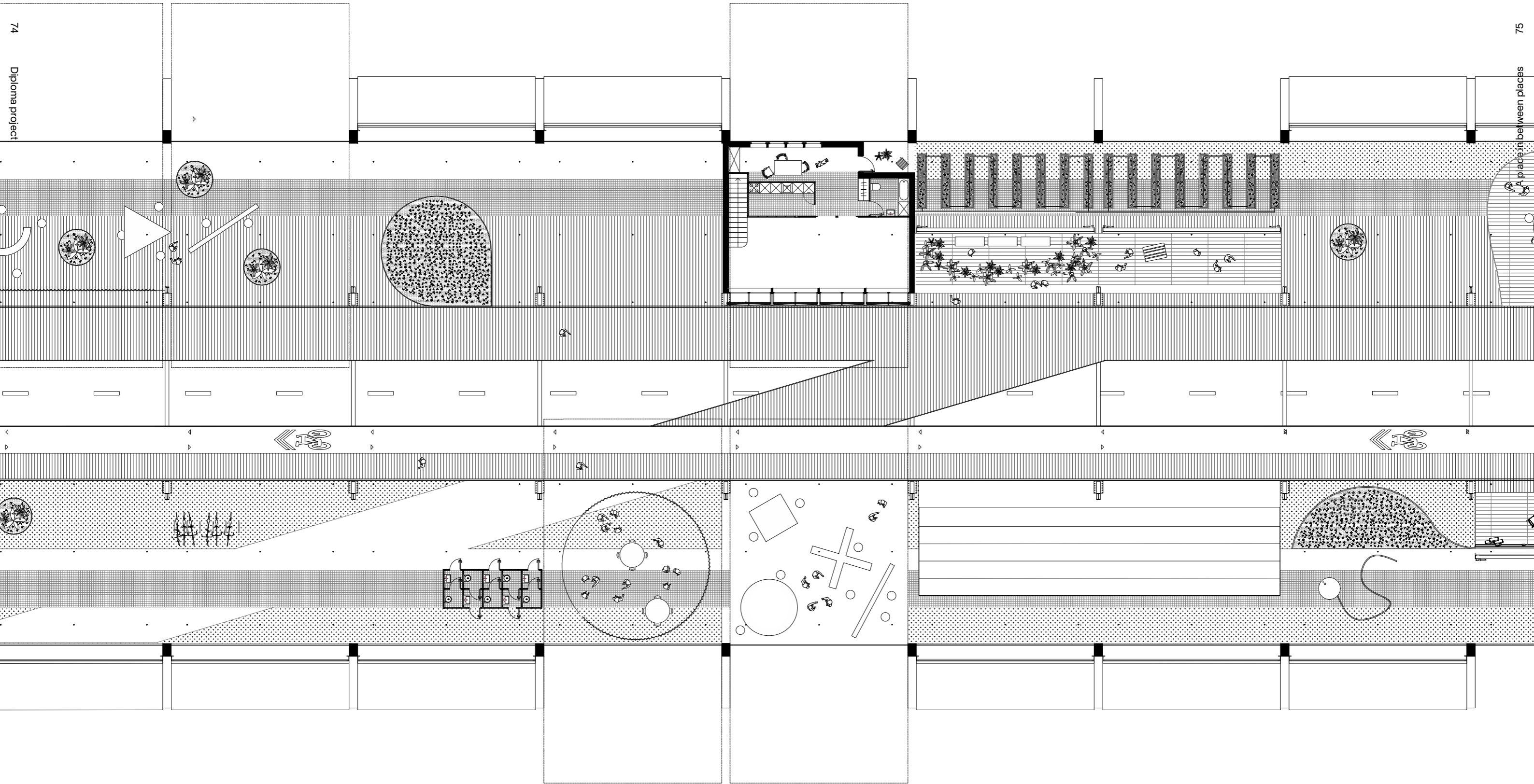
Section CC 1-200



Zoom 5  
Plan drawing 1-100

Proposal





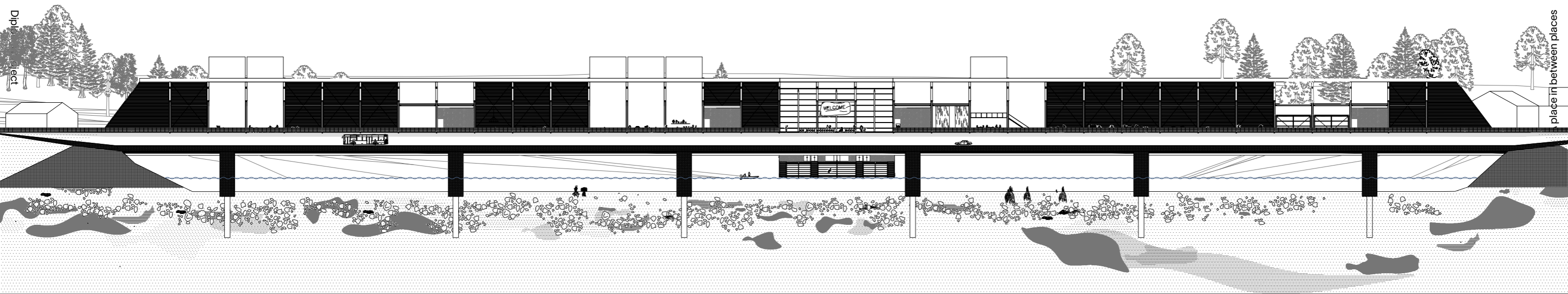
74  
Diploma project

75  
A place in between places

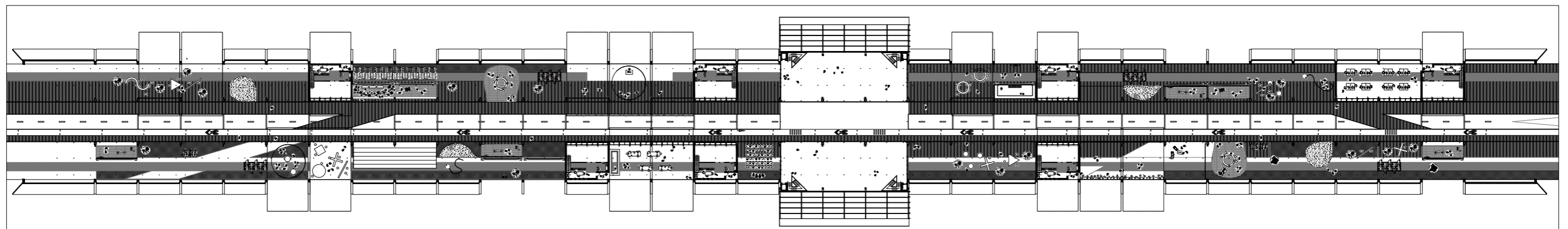
Plan drawing 1-200

Proposal



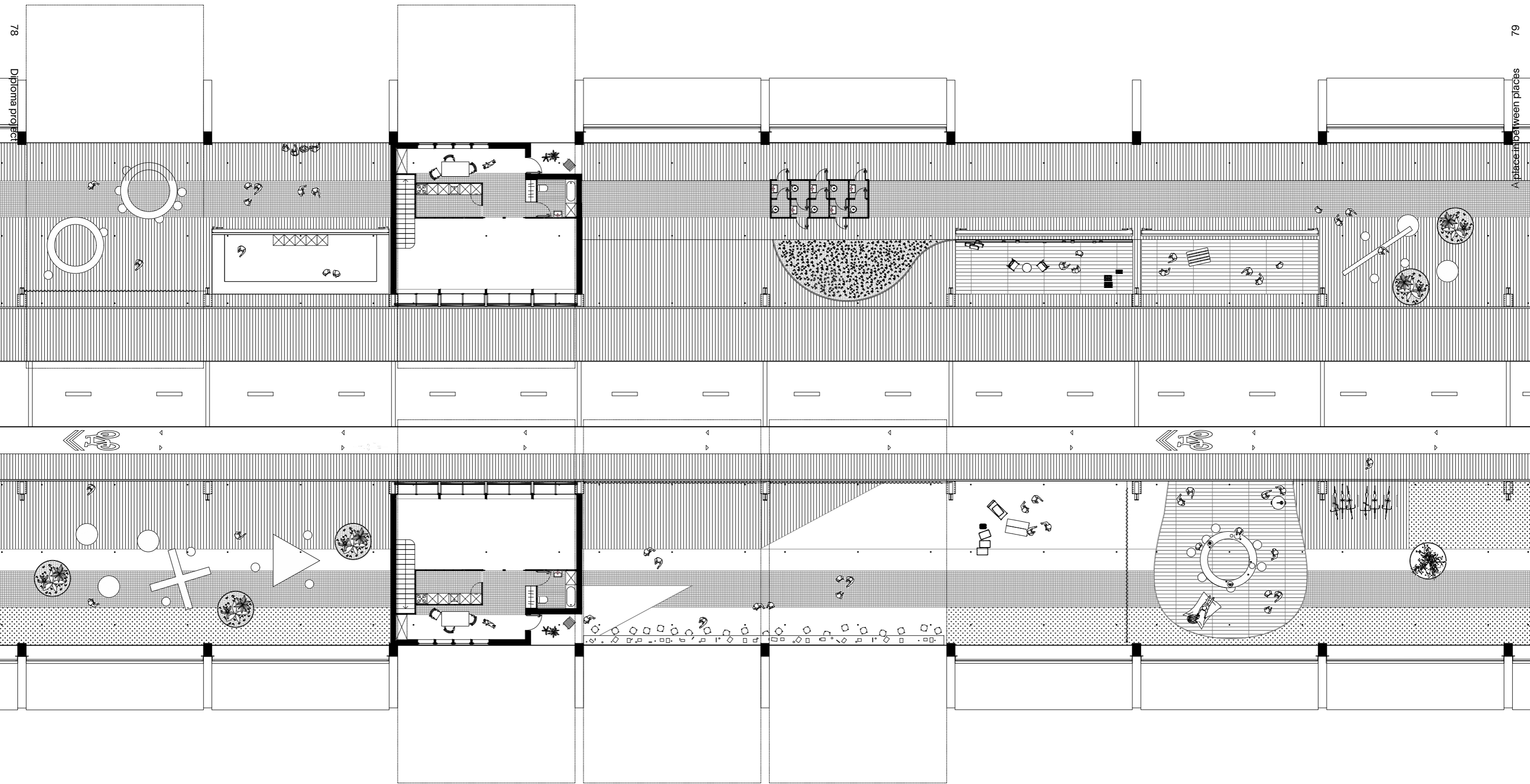


Longitudinal section 1-1000



Plan drawing 1-1000





78  
Diploma project

79  
A place in between places

Plan drawing 1-200

Proposal





The circuit of commons would be generated in phases. The first activities promoted by already existing social and cultural organisations will provide the financial basis for more long term projects.

The central space will not hold permanent activities in order to preserve its flexibility. Other spaces on the bridge can be rented on a more long term basis provided the activities are open to the public.

Three alternative arrangements are presented, which provide three levels of financial commitment. The arrangements are designed for one structural module of 10m by 9m but can be adapted for larger spaces. They can be placed on any available structural module in the bridge excluding the main space. Ideally a balance is maintained between the different levels of commitment so that there is always space for different types of activities. The construction materials can be kept by the association stored on the shore of the bridge and be re-used as the activities change and evolve.

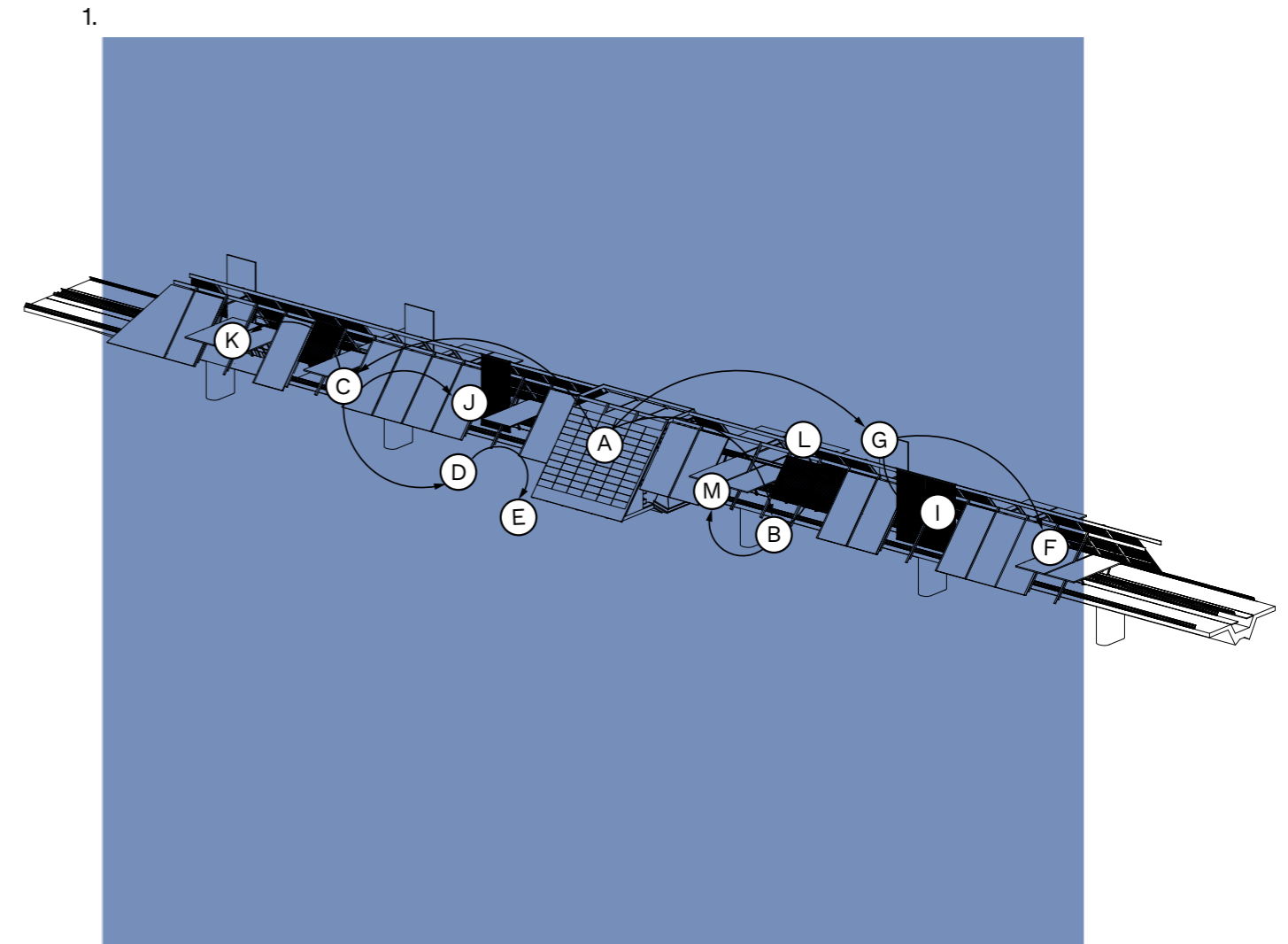
The first level is intended for temporary cultural or social gatherings and consists simply of the installation of thermic performing curtains that provide a sense of privacy and delimit the spaces.

The second level is intended for a market stand. The vertical wall allows for the display of products on sale, on top of that a wooden platform is added to distinguish the spaces from the walking area. The back can be used as storage or left free for circulation. When the market is closed, it can be safeguarded by using the subsidiary structure to cover the space with wooden panels.

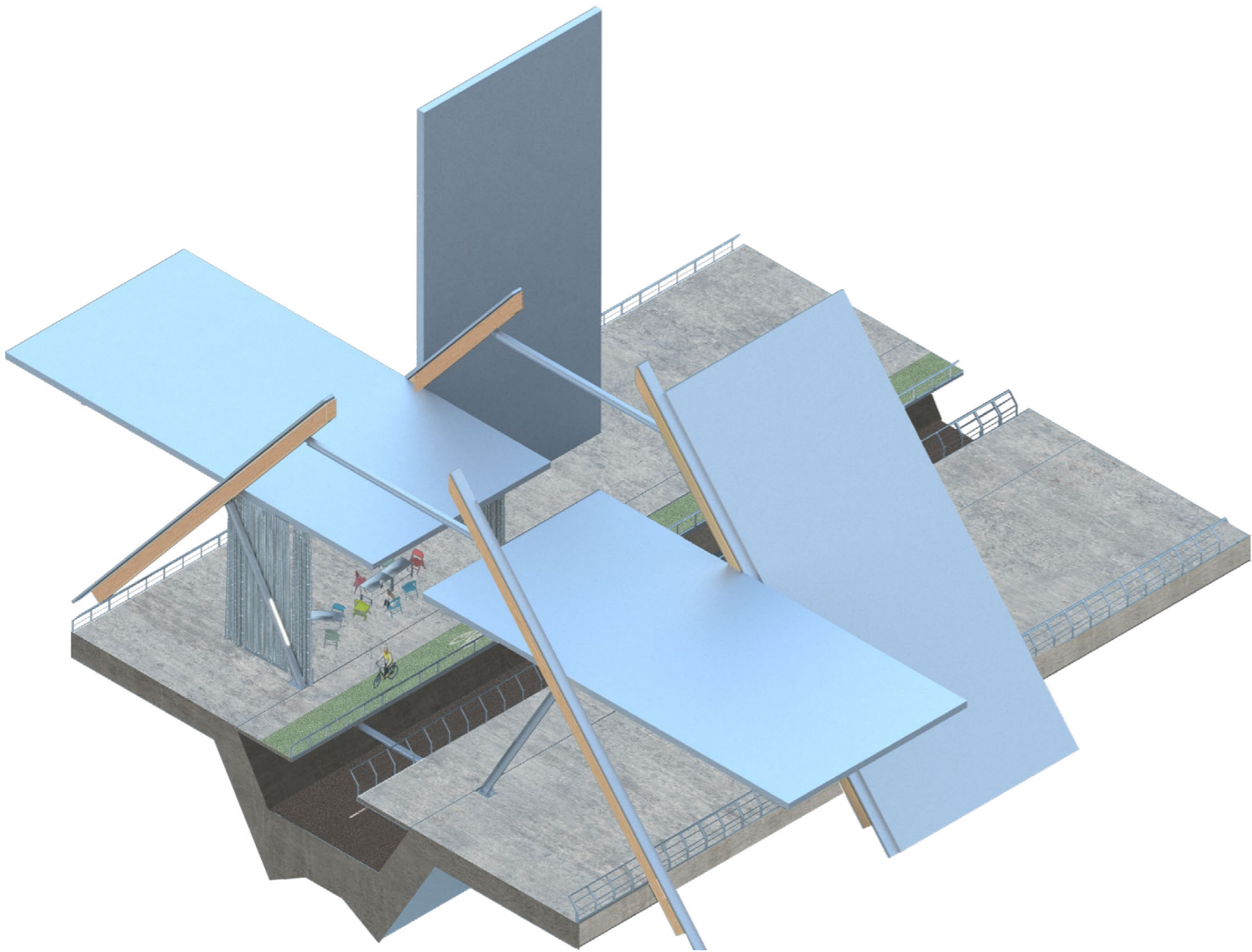
The third one is a module for a simple housing unit + working space. The unit is connected to an open space that can be configured in different ways depending on the needs and can be accessed from both front and back. The elements are made of prefabricated wood and steel profiles. The facade facing the interior of the bridge is made of walls that open to the public like a

garage door. The unit is designed to expand its area of influence into the exterior area, in case the user would be interested in enlarging their activities.

When not in use by one of these three functions the spaces of the bridge are a public walkable area with views of the river and the city. Furnished with plants and sitting areas. When used as public space the municipality rents the spaces from the joint enterprise (in the same way it rents the spaces of Sara Kulturhus) producing a constant revenue for the commons association.

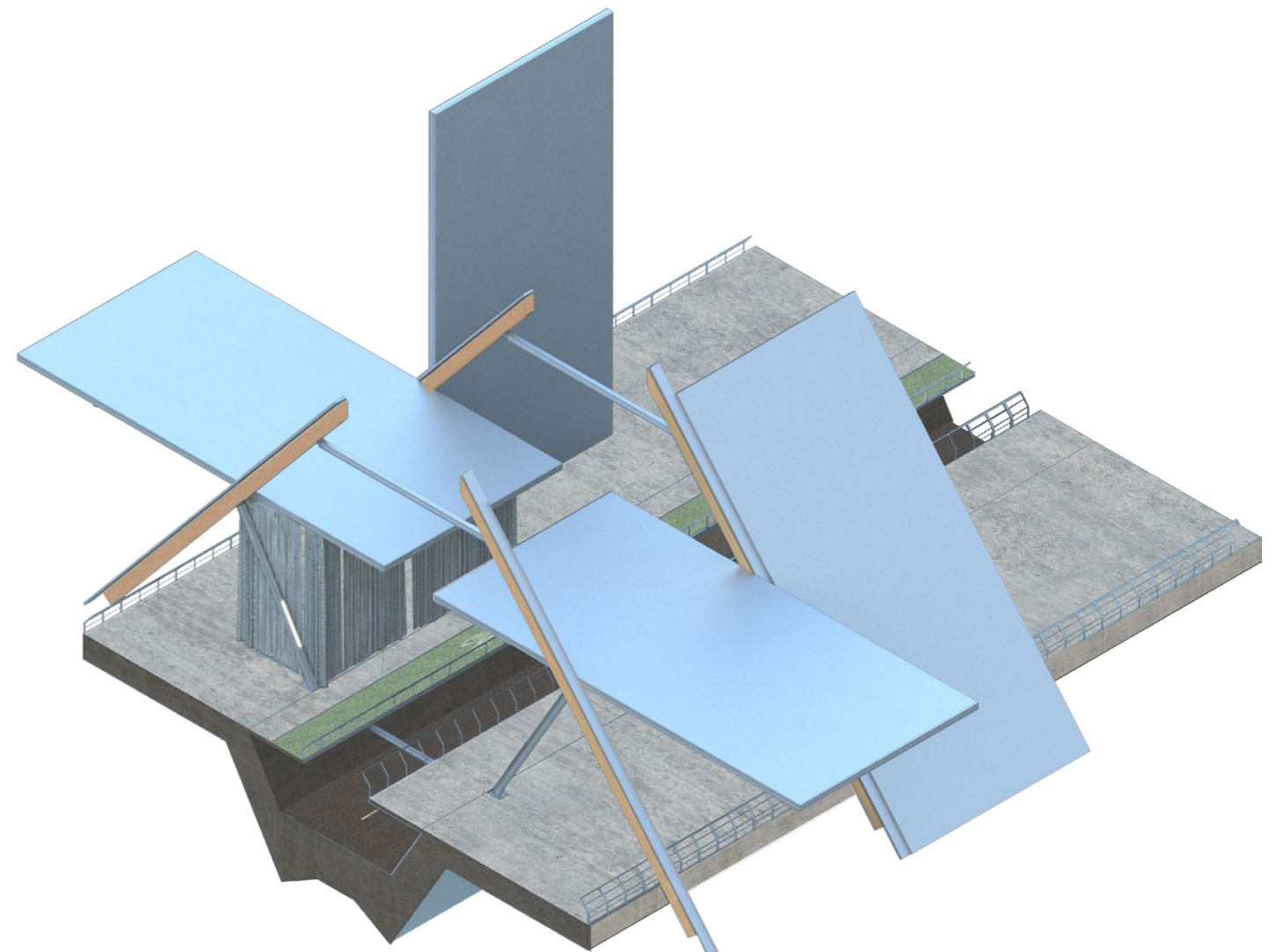


1. Diagram illustrating the circuit of commons.



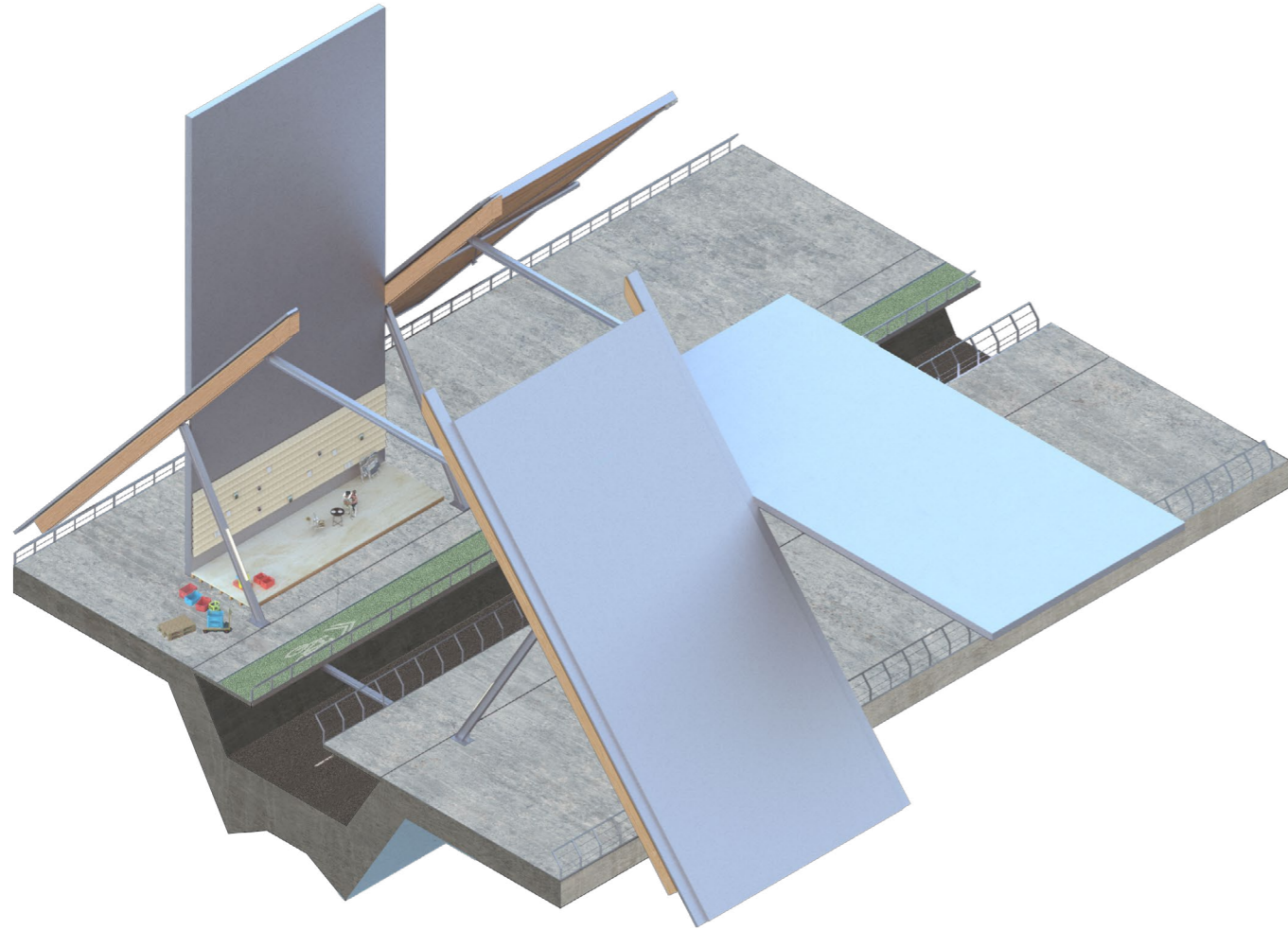
GETTING EVERYTHING ARRANGED

# First act

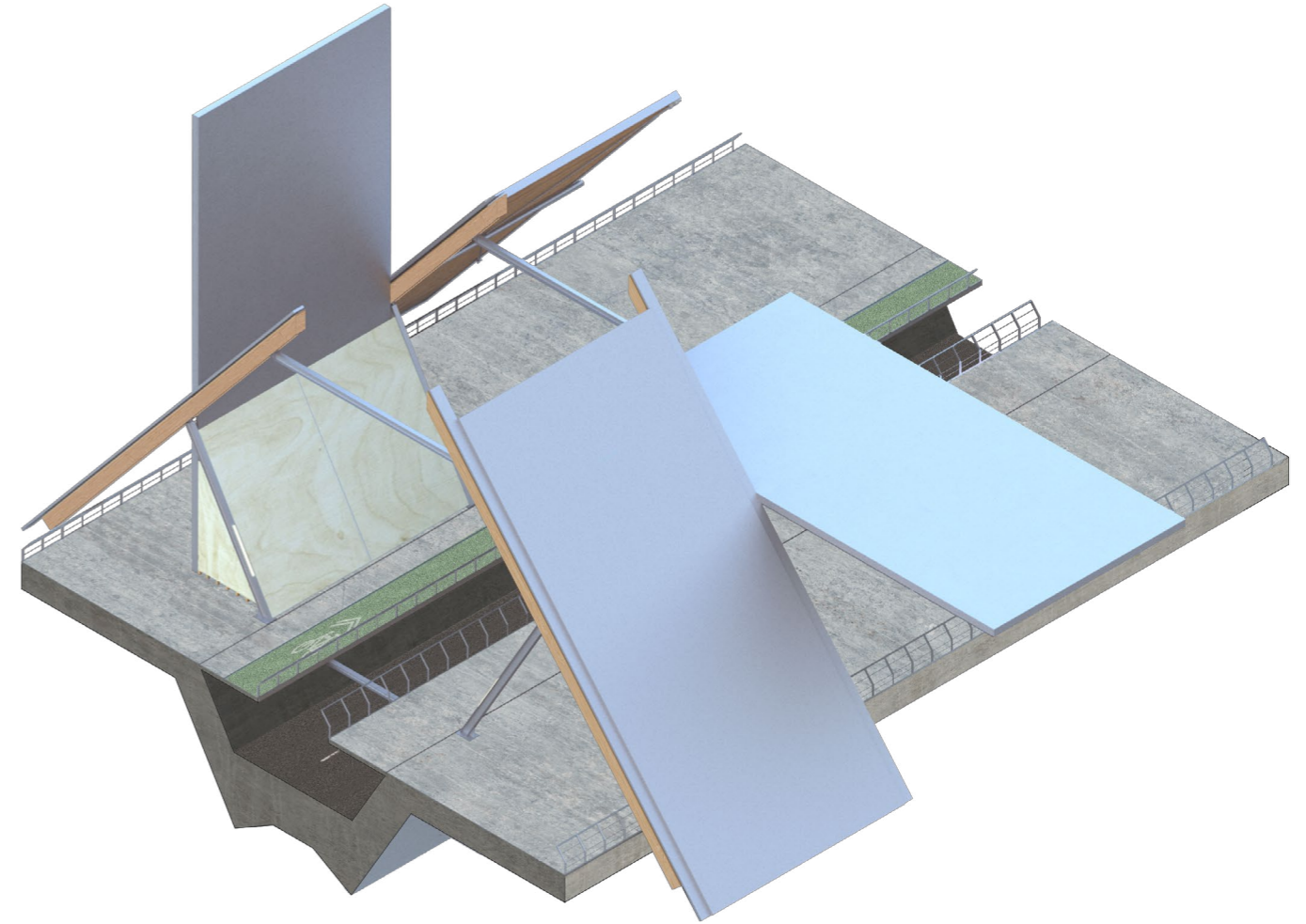


WHEN THE CURTAIN CLOSSES  
IT'S TIME TO GO HOME

# Second act

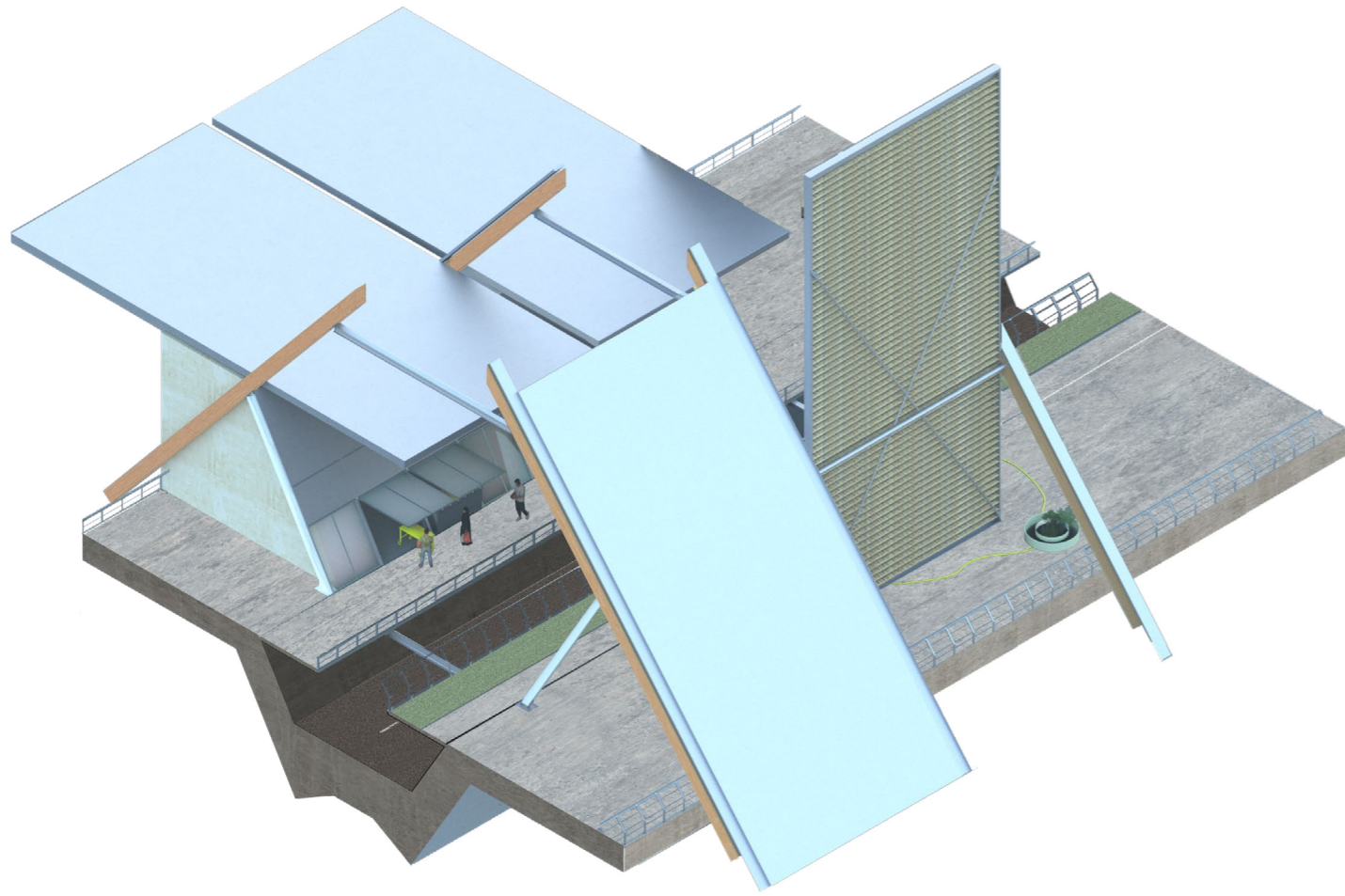


THE MARKET STALL SALES  
BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

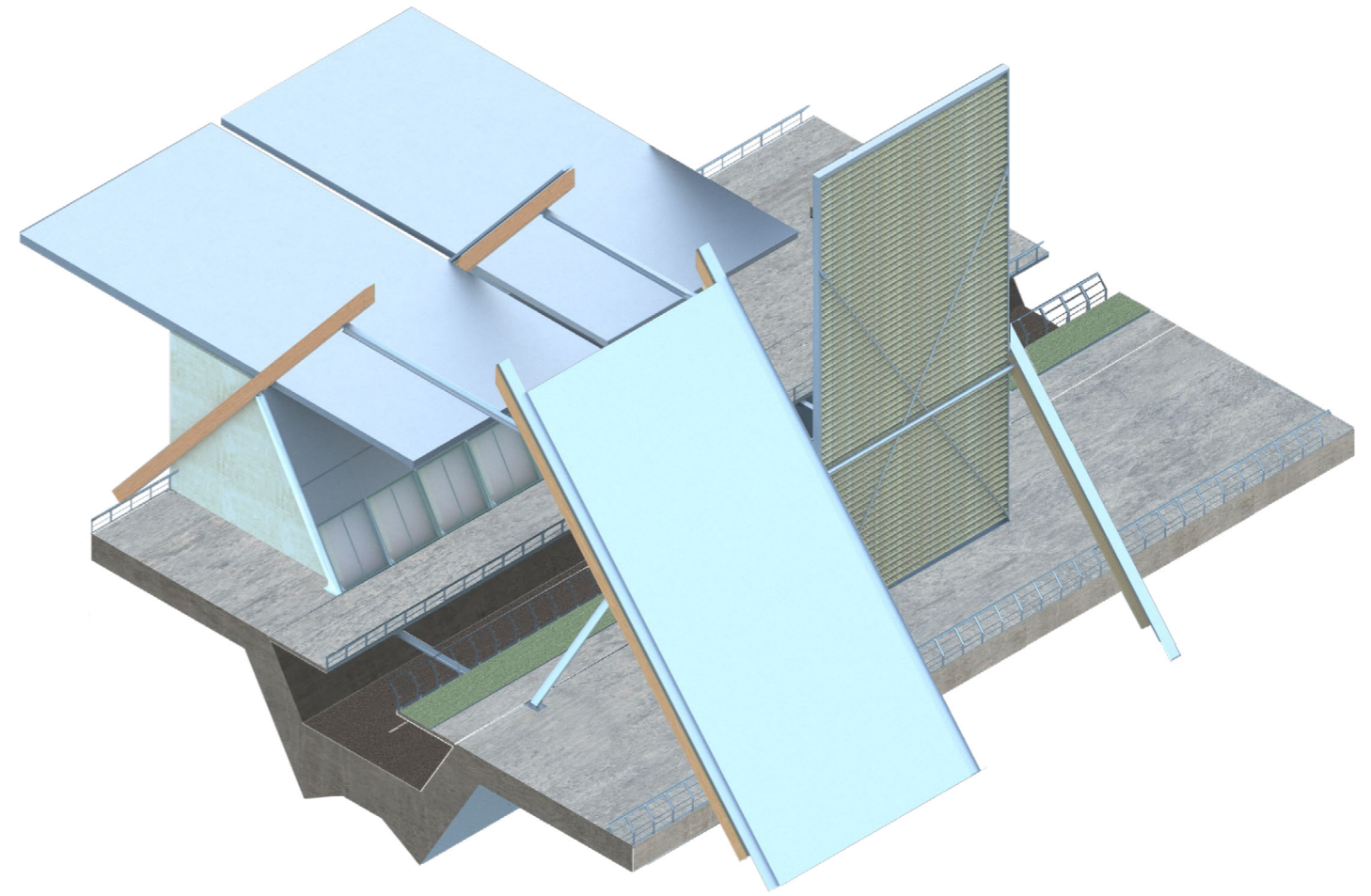


ON SUNDAYS THE STALL  
IS CLOSED

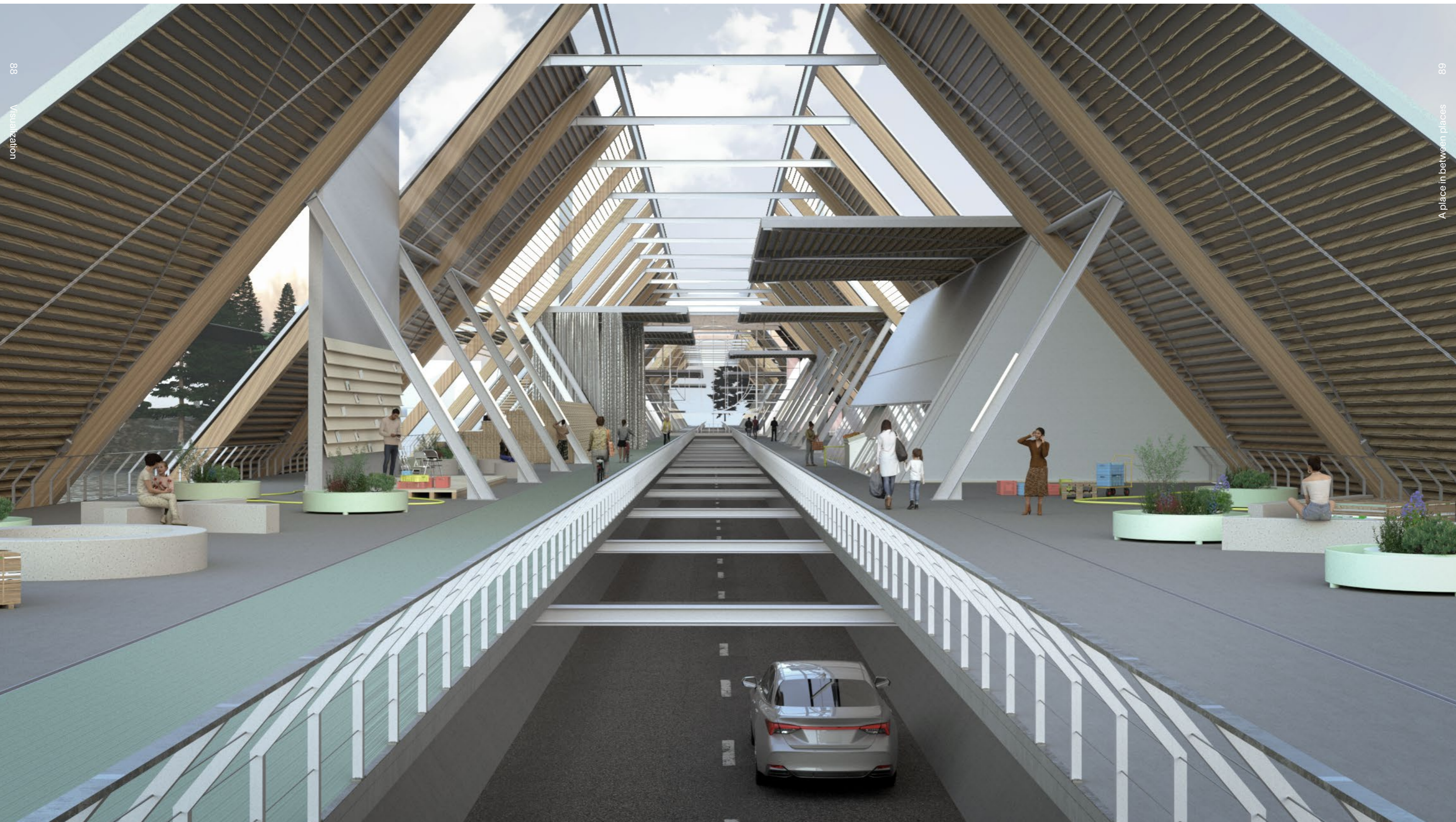
# Third act



OUR FRIEND SELLS BAKLAVA  
FROM THE GROUND FLOOR  
OF HER HOME



AT NIGHT THE STORE CLOSSES  
BUT THE LIGHTS ARE STILL ON



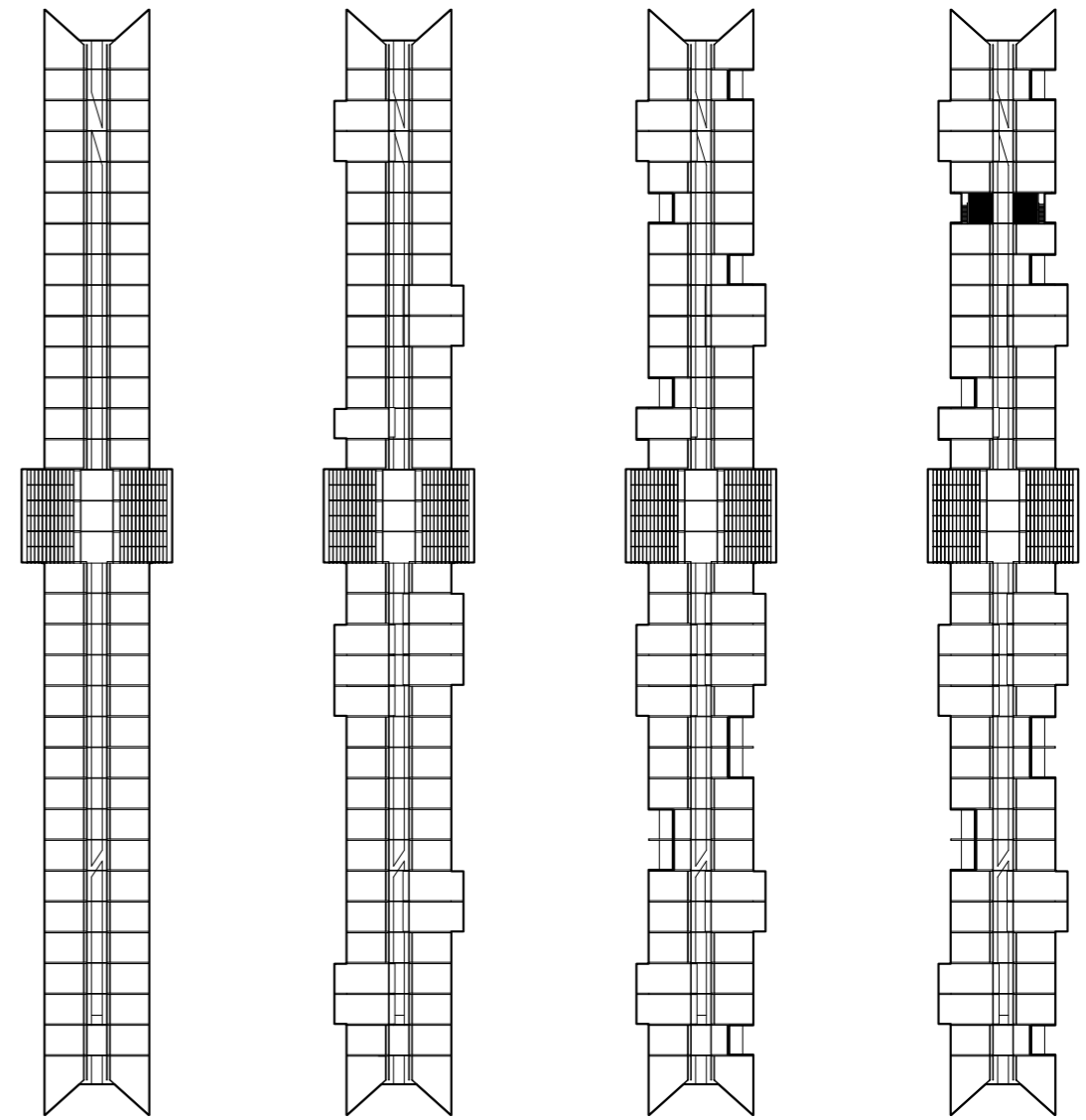
A central figure in this model is the doorkeeper, the person or collective allowed to move the panels changing the space and its potential use. Two questions arise in this respect: one is technical, how to move the panel, and the other is social, how is decided who is allowed to move the panel. Since the spirit of the project is to create a democratic space where spontaneous activity can take place, it is from this premise that both questions will be answered. In this sense, the objective has been to achieve a system that is decentralised and accessible. However, there are economic and organisational matters to consider.

For the space to be used the individual or collective must apply to the board of the joint enterprise stating the type of activity and duration. Once an individual or group has been approved it can use the space with liberty by booking it through a website. A similar system to the one used when booking a seat in the theatre or a space in a culture house. The website would show a plan drawing with the available spots in green.

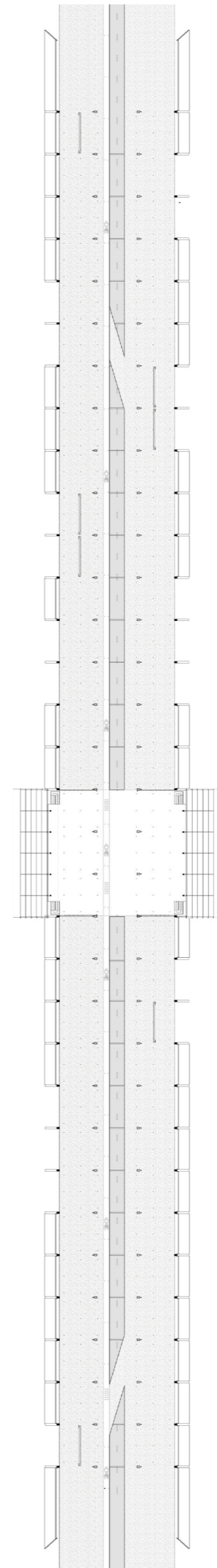
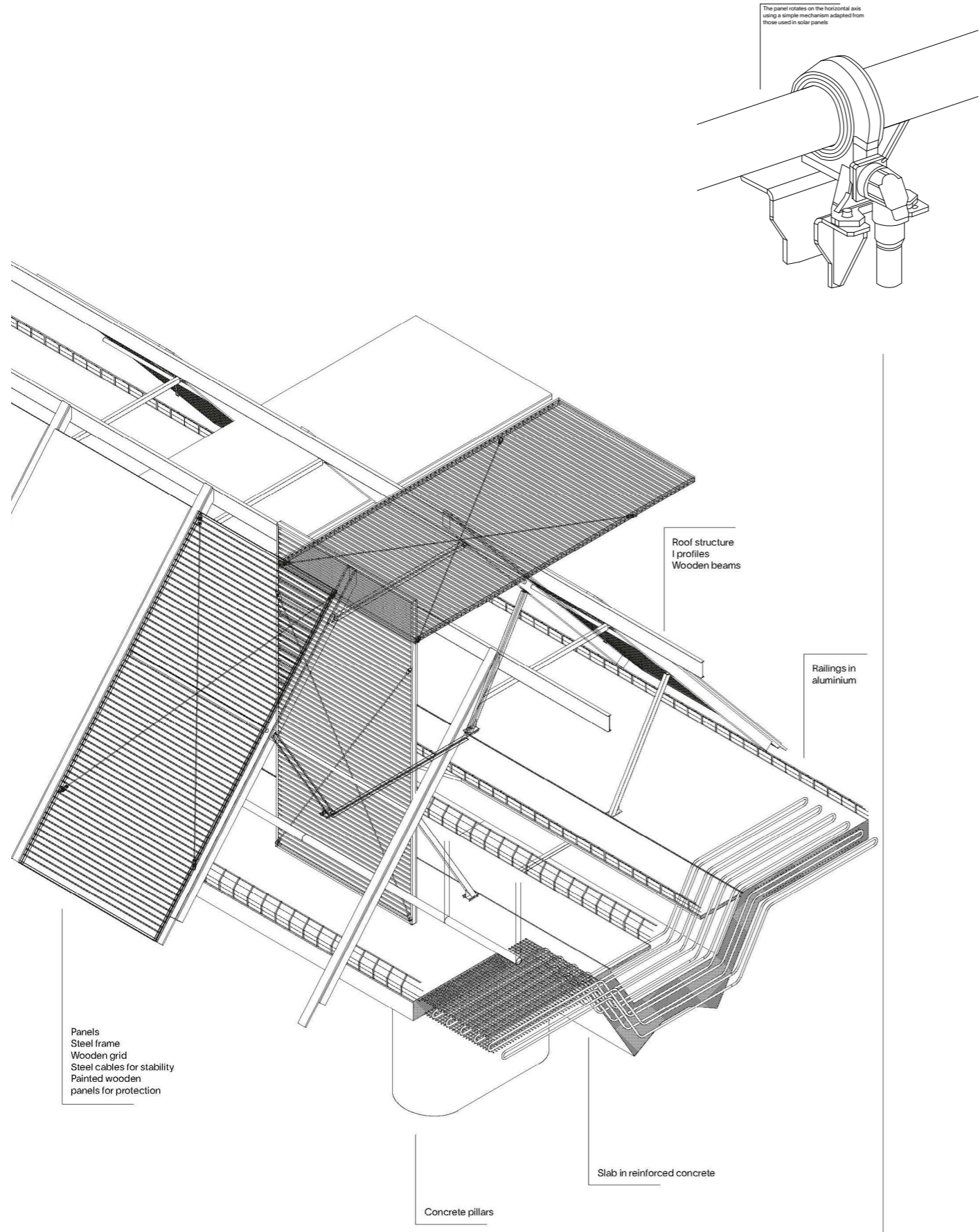
If the space is successfully booked, the user will receive a code that can be used to operate a motor driven system for rotating the panel. The system will function in a similar way than a garage door, rotating in a single axis. This solution is chosen instead of a manual system to ensure the accessibility of any individual.

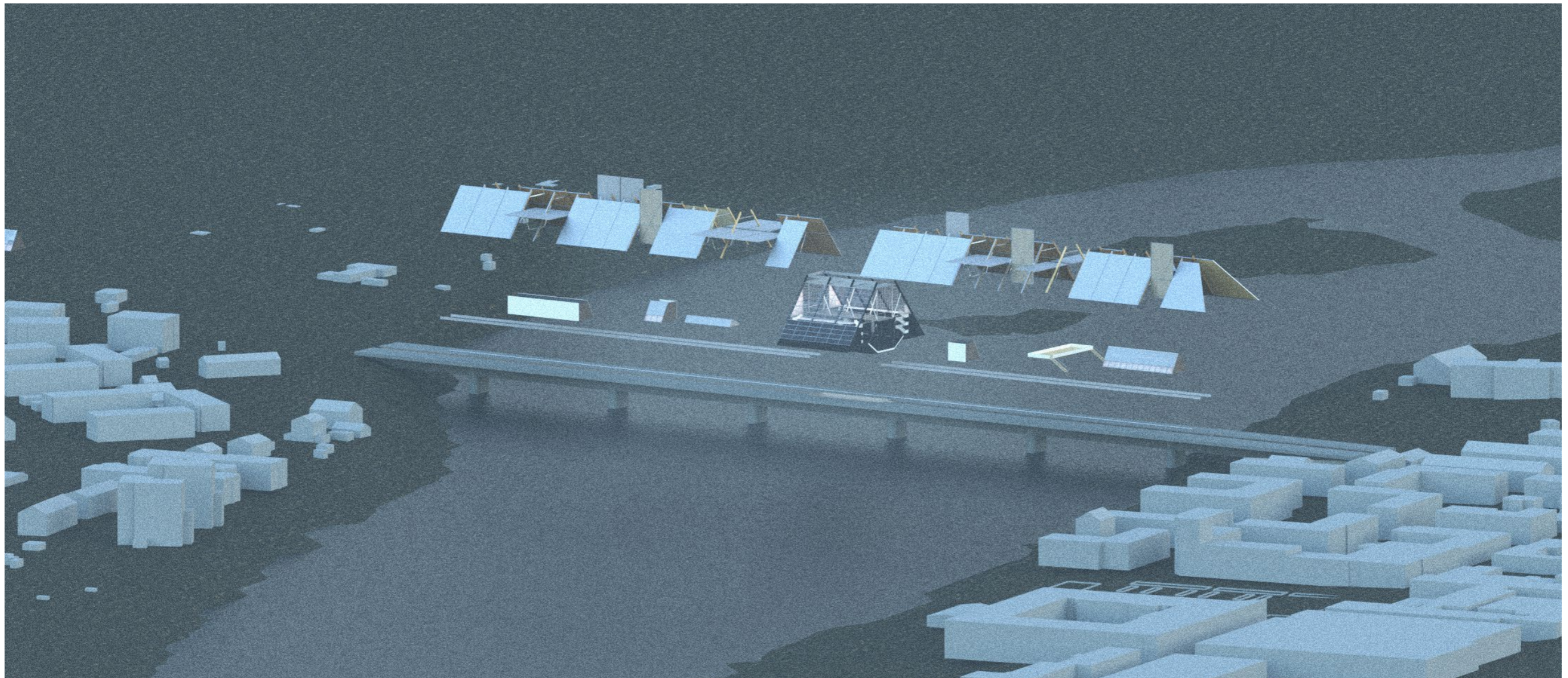
The reason to introduce a control mechanism is that the purpose of the project is to provide spaces for those who have difficulties to enter existing rooms like Sara Kulturhus or a normal commercial space in the city centre. The board of the joint enterprise will have the task of ensuring that the bridge is a space for more vulnerable groups of people to have the opportunity to perform activities. The commons association will have the task of promoting the spaces and spreading the word among newcomers.

After a group or individual is accepted, the program is self regulated through the website.



1. Diagram illustrating a possible transformation of the bridge.





The different layers act upon different scales from the micro scale of a social gathering to the urban. Adapting to the needs of the users and the landscape.



# NORRRAN



2023 · Vecka 24 · Årgång 106 · Nr 139 · Telefon: 0910/577 00 · E-post: redaktion@norr.se · Pris 20 kr · www.norr.se

## Stor satsning på industrin görs på Campus Skellefteå

En ny fastighet som ska stå klar nästa höst blir ett toppmodernt utbildningscenter med inriktning på industri på Campus Skellefteå. Polaris bygger 900 kvadratmeter som kostar mellan 15 och 20 miljoner kronor. **NYHETER · SID 8**



My mot nya äventyr

### LOKALT

NYHETER · SID 12

#### SEXORNA FLYTTAR TILLBAKA

Det blir 15 miljoner kronor dyrare per år, trots det ska årskurs sex åter till mellanstadiet.



HELG · DEL 2 SID 8-9

#### Även Skellefteå är ute och cyklar

Försäljningen ökar – allt fler Skelleftebor väljer cykeln.



AFFÄRSLIV · DEL 2 SID 20

#### Ny stor marknad för Nordic Sport

Företaget har fått en rekordorder – från Uzbekistan



FOTO: JEANETTE LÖVREN

## Plats för fler

I helgen kommer Skellefteåbo samlas för att inbygga Karlgårdsbron. Flera lokaler är redan upptagna till nya verksamheter som passar alla. Det har finansierats av kommunen med stöd från Trafikverket och förvaltas av en samling ideella kafter. Tusentals besökare förväntas komma när det bjuds på musik, mat och dans. **NYHETER · SID 10**

SMS- & MMSTIPS 72091    INSÄNDARE: VÅRDSTUDERANDE SLUTAR NÄR DE SER HUR VI HAR DET.    DEL 2 SID 23    VÄDRET ☁️ +13°

<p>Mycket fina Pelargonier 10 färger</p>  <p>Per st 39:- 4 st 130:-</p>	<p>Bacopa/Snöflinga vit, blå och rosa</p>  <p>Per st 49:- 3 st 130:-</p>	<p>Dahlia Midi</p>  <p>Per st 49:- 3 st 130:-</p>	<p>OBS! Nu öppet till 19 på vardagar! Måndag-fredag 10-19 lördag 10-15, söndag 11-15 www.burmanshandelsträdgård.se</p> <p><b>Burmans Handelsträdgård</b> Kvalitetsblommor till låga priser! TJÄRN (4 km söder om Ske-Å) tel 0910-168 36.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

# Conclusion

In the course of this project it became clear that the bridge had become a site of conflict in Skellefteå, between those favouring an urban culture characterised by ideas of sustainability and “fine culture” and those more willing to maintain the “twin peaks reality”. As the debate on the bridge was brought to a closure, so was the cultural battle. However, on the shadows of this development thousands of people arrived to Skellefteå to work in the factory, a big percentage of them enduring bad work and living conditions. The lack of public spaces, housing and policies that could support them and their families has resulted in many of them working in Skellefteå for months at a time, unable to form a new lifestyle in the city.

Understanding this development as a situational reality, in which recent events are interconnected and constantly influencing the outcomes, is key to finding new paths for the future of the city.

Going back to the initial research question, it is apparent how public space is a site of construction of new identities that negotiate within a global scale, affecting financial decisions and the livelihoods of people. There are multiple ways in which the architect can operate in a context that is building a new cultural identity. The objective of this project has been to test an architectural approach that could leave space for informal activities so as to allow for new cultural practices to emerge and create communities around them. The project proposes to re-think the bridge as a public space that can be in constant negotiation between its users. The current strategy has imposed images, leaving many in the shadows of those definitions and others in opposition to them. Alternative ways can be found to open the field for these identities to be constructed collectively through periodic and sporadic events.

For this, a basic infrastructure is needed that can provide the spatial conditions for the occupation of public space. The strategy intends to preserve the spatial qualities and identity of the bridge while leaving freedom for the necessary changes that could be made. In this way the bridge can offer a space for a diverse group of people to gather.

1. Montage of the local newspaper announcing the inauguration of the bridge.

# References

- Andersson, Åsa (2021). "Skebo bygger tillfälliga studentrum – då frigörs 88 lägenheter". Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://news.cision.com/se/skebo/r/skebo-bygger-tillfalliga-studentrum---da-frigors-88-lagenheter,c3349045>>
- Buller, Adrienne & Lawrence, Mathew (2022). *Owning the future: power and property in an age of crisis*. London: Verso
- Burns, Carol & Kahn, Andrea (2005). *Site Matters* [Elektronisk resurs].
- Cockburn, Cynthia (1977). *The local state: management of cities and people*. London: Pluto P.
- Corboz, André (1983) *The Land as Palimpsest*, <https://www.atlasofplaces.com/essays/the-land-as-palimpsest/>
- Cortázar, Julio (1995). *Libro de Manuel*. Buenos Aires: Alfaguara
- Davies, Colin (2011). *Thinking about architecture: an introduction to architectural theory*. London: Laurence King
- De Angelis, Massimo (2017). *Omnia sunt communia: on the commons and the transformation to postcapitalism*. London: Zed Books
- Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Félix (1987). *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- DN (2021) "Fastighetsmiljardären Ilija Batljan slår ifrån sig kritiken mot affärsmodellen". Viewed 24 November 2022, <<https://www.dn.se/ekonomi/fastighetsmiljardaren-ilija-batljan-slar-ifran-sig-kritiken-mot-affarsmodellen/>>
- Fabrizi, Mariabruna (2015). "A Growing, Incremental Place – Incremental Time: "Victims", a Project by John Hejduk (1984)". Viewed 18 November 2022, < <https://socks-studio.com/2015/11/01/a-growing-incremental-place-incremental-time-victims-a-project-by-john-hejduk-1984/>>
- Goble, Sally (2016) "Ice-swimming in Sweden: how to really chill out by the pool". Viewed 20 January 2023 < <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2016/feb/23/ice-swimming-sweden-how-to-chill-out>>
- Guattari, Felix (1981) *Integrated World Capitalism and Molecular Revolution*, Conference on Information and/as New Spaces of Liberty (CINEL), which took place in Rio de Janeiro in the Fall of 1981.
- Gustafsson, Anna (2018). "MKB Utökad anläggning för storskalig produktion av litiumjonbatterier". Viewed 18 November 2022 <[https://www.nexi.go.jp/environment/info/pdf/18-028\\_EIA2.pdf](https://www.nexi.go.jp/environment/info/pdf/18-028_EIA2.pdf)>
- Hardingham, Samantha (2015). *Cedric Price works, 1952-2003: a forward-minded retrospective*. London: Architectural Association
- Heidegger, M. (1971d). *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*. In A. Hofstadter (Ed.), *Poetry, Language and Thought* (pp. 143-162). New York: Harper & Row.
- Hjerpe, Annika (2022). "I Skellefteå byggs tusentals nya bostäder". Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://www.dagensp.se/teknik/i-skelleftea-byggs-tusentals-nya-bostader/>< <https://da.se/2022/06/nar-blir-det-ordning-pa-northvolt/>>
- Huang, Sheng-Yuan (2021). "Living in Place, Enabling the Coming – Together, 1995-2008". How will we live together?: *Biennale architettura 2021..* (2021). Venezia: La Biennale di Venezia
- IOM (2022). "World migration report". Viewed 20 November 2022, <<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>>
- Israelsson, Marit (2021). "Från rivningar till byggboom i Skellefteå – tusen bostäder ska byggas per år". Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/vasterbotten/fran-tusen-tomma-lagenheter-och-hus-som-revs-nu-ska-tusen-lagenheter-snabbt-byggas>>
- Japhe, Brad (2022). "Skelleftea, Sweden. Nordic warmth". Viewed 18 November 2022, <https://time.com/collection/worlds-greatest-places-2022/6194523/skelleftea-sweden/>>
- Kejerhag, Jenny (2022). "Mindre arbetskraftsinvandring hotar satsningar i norra Sverige". Viewed 08 December 2022, <<https://www.dn.se/ekonomi/mindre-arbetskraftsinvandring-hotar-satsningar-norra-sverige/?fbclid=IwAR1PVuAsRLCX8D5A2eS-sAh1FREkKDSkoFWoG5JU129auOJA1odp7gMi8JlY>>
- Kommunledningskontoret (2021). "Skellefteå kommuns delårsrapport", april 2021. Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://skelleftea.se/download/18.1139985317cc6b7c71c11f6/1635491092941/Delårsrapport%202021%20april.%20dok%20till%20KS.pdf>>
- Koolhaas, Rem (1997). *Small, medium, large, extra-large*. New ed. Köln: Taschen
- Koolhaas, Rem & Obrist, Hans Ulrich (2011). *Project Japan: metabolism talks....* Köln: Taschen
- Koolhaas, Rem. (2020[2020]). *Countryside: a report*. Köln: Taschen
- Lärka, Per (2017). *Malmö kämpar för att få miljardsatsningen*. Viewed 18 November 2022, <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/skane/malmo-slass-om-miljardsatsning-utan-egen-analys>>
- Lefebvre, Henri (1974). *Critique of everyday life: the one-volume edition*. London: Verso 2014.
- Marklund, Daniel (2021) "Statsministern besökte Northvolt: "Det stärker Norrland"". <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/vasterbotten/lofven-8>>
- Milburn Keir (2022). "Q&A: Public-Common Partnerships". Viewed 24 November 2022, <<https://www.stirtoaction.com/articles/q-a-public-common-partnerships>>
- Morton, Timothy (2021). *All art is ecological*. [London]: Penguin Books
- N/A (2019). "Northvolt köper Disponentvillan i Ursviken". Viewed 19 November 2022, <<https://norr.se/bli-prenumerant/artikel/1wp37nvr>>
- Nango, Joar (2021). "Space in itself is a language. A conversation with Joar Nango". Viewed 20 January 2023 < <https://www.azuremagazine.com/article/space-in-itself-is-a-language-a-conversation-with-joar-nango/>>
- Real review: what it means to live today.. (2016-). London: The REAL Foundation
- Tamburelli, Pier Paolo (2022). *On Bramante*. MIT Press.
- Thorén, Caroline (2022). "Så blir slutkostnaden för byggandet av Sara kulturhus". Viewed 24 November 2022, < <https://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/skellefteakommun/pressreleases/saa-blir-slutkostnaden-foer-byggandet-av-sara-kulturhus-3171704>>
- Tillväxtverket (2022). Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://tillvaxtverket.se/eu-program/vara-eu-program/stockholm.html>>
- UNHCR (2022). "More than 100 million now forcibly displaced: UNHCR report". Viewed 19 November 2022, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1120542>>
- Ursinnig (n.d.) Viewed 19 November 2022, <<https://ursinnig.nu>>
- Weiss, Holger (2017). *International Communism and Transnational Solidarity: Radical Networks, Mass Movements and Global Politics, 1919–1939* [Elektronisk resurs]. Brill
- White Arkitekter (2022). "Sara Kulturhus". Viewed 18 November 2022, <<https://whitearkitekter.com/project/sara-cultural-centre/>>

