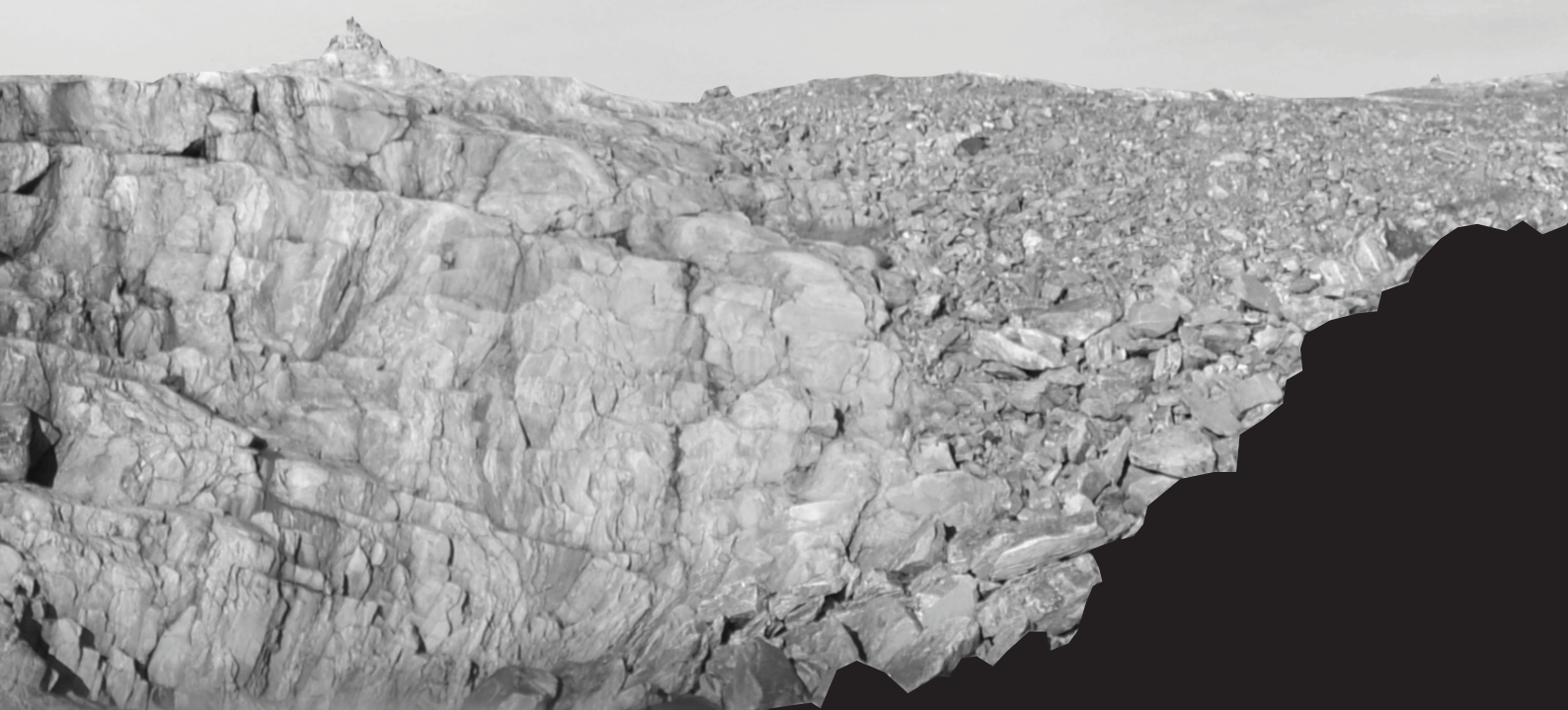


# IN PLACE

AN EXPLORATION OF THE RELATION BETWEEN  
ARCHITECTURE AND THE PLACE DEFINING  
ELEMENTS OF A NATURE ENVIRONMENT



ALBIN PETTERSSON BRÅTHE

CHALMERS SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE  
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE & CIVIL ENGINEERING, CHALMERS UNIVERSITY

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EXAMINER: DANIEL NORELL  
SUPERVISOR: PETER CHRISTENSSON



**CHALMERS**  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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Author:  
Albin Pettersson Bråthe

Chalmers School of Architecture  
Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering, Chalmers University

Examiner:  
Daniel Norell

Supervisor:  
Peter Christensson

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## IN PLACE

A big thanks to fellow students at MSS and other studios for pleasant conversations and keeping up a joyful mood at floor 5 throughout the thesis work.

A big thanks to Peter for super support trough supervision, and contributing to making this thesis process fun and free, from day one until the very end.

# ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to investigate the experience of nature environment in relation to architecture, and how the two may enhance one another. With the city of Gothenburg as point of departure, a locally characteristic context acts testbed to explore the place defining elements and qualities of a nature environment, how it is perceived, and how architecture may act as an agent within this perception of the place.

The area for investigation through this thesis is Galterö, an island located in the outskirts of Gothenburg southern archipelago. Various techniques of mapping and recording are used to gain an understanding of the different present layers of the site and the elements defining the *place*. In contrast to more conventional mappings of urban contexts, this thesis explores mapping as a tool to decode and interpret a rural landscape. The notion of situated knowledge of the place is relevant in relation to the outcome from these exercises, and in the further process of architectural design on Galterö.

Experience of nature environments is very much about being present and being in direct contact with the place and the elements. Hence, the mapping methods used are dependent on physical presence and my own perceptions as moving my body through the landscape. This value in physical contact with the site is recurring through different phases of the process, such as in model making, program formulation etc.

*In Place* is synthesized as a proposed architectural intervention at the very western point of Galterö, called Galterö huvud. The architecture manifests the site as a culminating situation of the journey through the landscapes of Galterö. It recognizes the experience of nature environments as an act with high value in physical presence where the sense of disconnectivity from urbanity is a key aspect.

Formulating architecture in relation to this circumstance, two contrasting, yet relating, structures are suggested on the site. An *oceanspace*, hovering at the edge of the landscape – a shelter that exposes you. And a refuge on the shore, merged into the landscape – a shelter that actually shelters you.

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# BACKGROUND & CONTEXT



*The notion, or phenomena, of a **place** is made up of the things and further underlying phenomena found in relation to it. People, animals, flowers, trees and forests, of stone, earth, wood and water, towns, of streets and houses, doors, windows and furniture, are multiple layers that in assemblance can be seen as a concrete phenomena of our everyday life-world. Together these things determine an 'environmental character', which is the essence of a **place**.*



– Christian Norberg-Schulz

My main approach angle into this thesis is to investigate how architecture can co-play with, perhaps even enrich or enhance, nature. When I talk about nature, I refer to the appreciated qualities of it as raw. To me, the definition of raw nature, are the found structures, patterns, textures, etc., that appears in the same way as they would in a context without human interference.

As my area of focus is the Gothenburg archipelago, its characteristic environment will be the context for my explorations. The Gothenburg archipelago is an area with rich nature qualities in close connection to the city center of great value to preserve. As it being a popular place to visit for Gothenburg residents, primarily during summer time, and an important attraction to Gothenburg as a tourist destination, the activity on the islands is occasionally quite intense. Though, the archipelago has its moments of rather harsh and uncomfortable condition. Exposure to weather and the fact of being disconnected, and possibly occasionally isolated from land, has its impact on the environment of the archipelago and eventually appears in a very unpleasant way.

The archipelago yet is an appealing area considering the real estate market, and hence an attractive region for exploitation. A great value in the archipelago today is the balance and gradient between the dense built structures around the marinas and major infrastructural axes sprawling out into a sparser structure and present nature. This close connection to the characteristic raw nature environment is not a side aspect of life on the islands, but rather rooted in the experience of it as a whole. Thus, it is

of relevance to reflect upon how, and if, the archipelagic environment should be further exploited. If these above mentioned core qualities can be preserved, and how new structures may even help to enhance the characteristics of the archipelagic experience. This circumstance motivates the archipelago as relevant testbed in relation to the broader aims with this thesis.

The investigations through this thesis departs from fragmented understanding of a greater circumstance composed in a quote by Christian Norberg-Schulz (1980), as part of explaining his theory of how an environmental character can be formulated, and the fundamentals to the notion of a place; *"The notion, or phenomena, of a place is made up of the things and further underlying phenomena found in relation to it. People, animals, flowers, trees and forests, of stone, earth, wood and water, towns, of streets and houses, doors, windows and furniture, are multiple layers that in assemblance can be seen as a concrete phenomena of our everyday life-world. Together these things determine an 'environmental character', which is the essence of a place."*

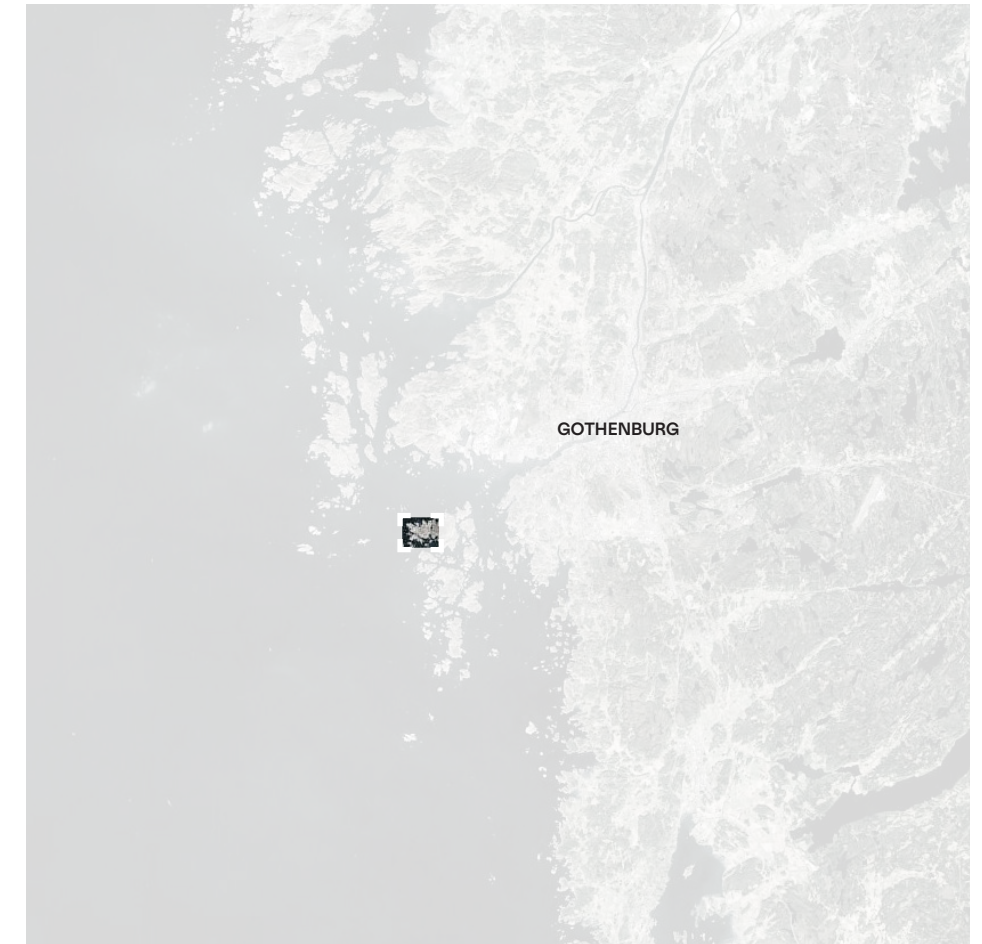
The importance of understanding the context and its role in architectural projects may appear obvious, but is far from central in the architectural theory and discourse (Komez Daglioglu, 2015). Character of site, and *place*, are seldom investigated, reflected upon, and treated as a form of situated knowledge of the place, which further often leads to a weak and poor contextual understanding in the process of formulating architectural design.



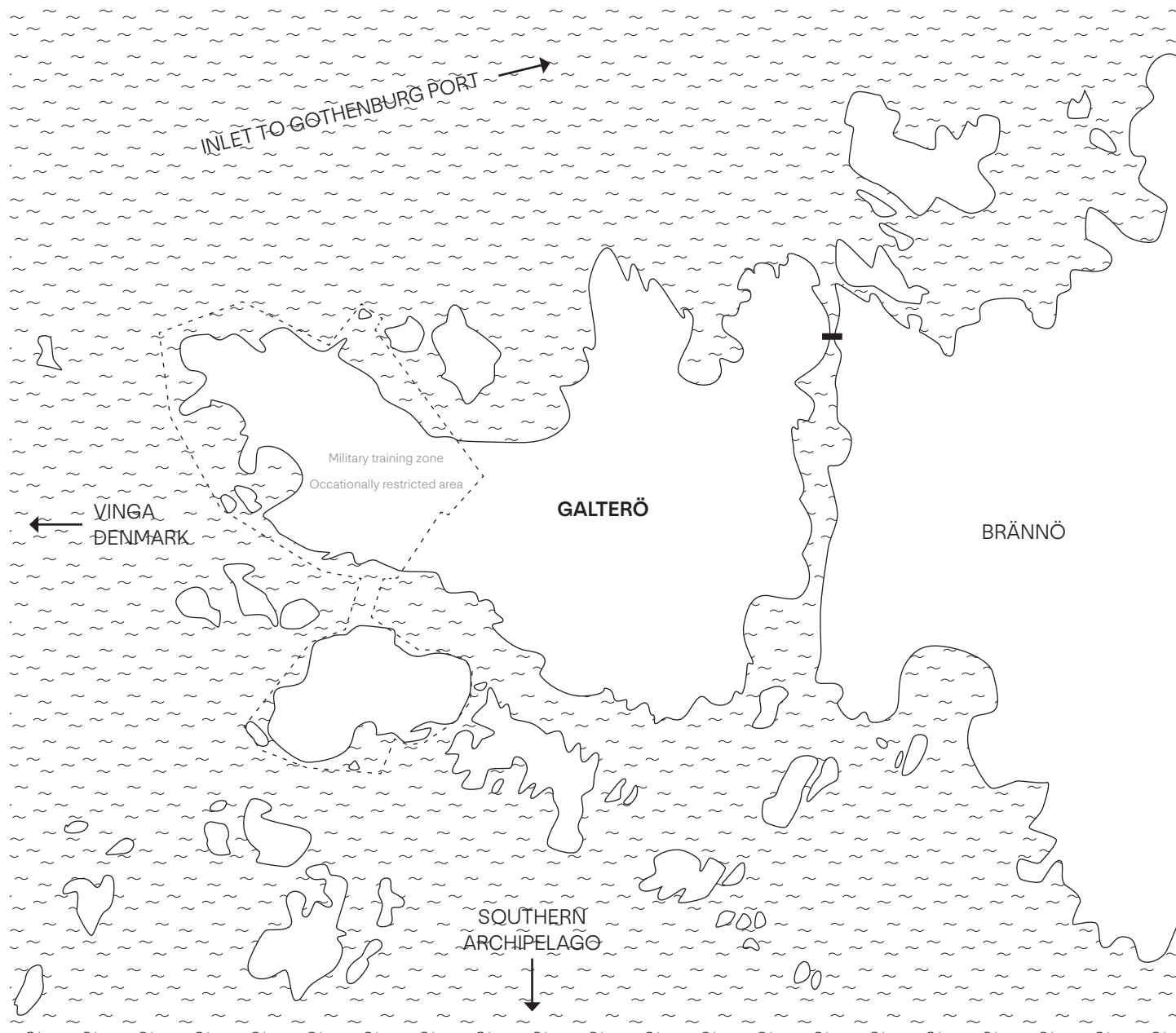
# THESIS QUESTIONS

- How can architecture be designed to relate to a nature environment in a symbiotic promotive manner?
- How can one develop situated knowledge of a place through mappings and recordings, and how can that influence the process of design?

# SITE



From Eniro. (2022). [orthophoto]. <https://kartor.eniro.se/?c=57720653,11769791&z=10&l=aerial>



## Galterö

### – Gothenburg southern archipelago

To zoom in on a specific site to use as context for my investigation, I have chosen the island of Galterö in the north-western area of the southern Gothenburg archipelago.

I find Galterö to be an interesting site as its location deals with quite a few rather complex circumstances. It faces the inlet to Gothenburg port towards north. Towards east there is easy access with beautiful hiking trails from the popular tourist destination island Brännö. The western part of Galterö is occasionally restricted area as it being a part of the Swedish military forces' marine training zone, and further west is open water towards Denmark.

Except for the western military training area, the island of Galterö is a part of Galterö nature reserve. In Sweden there are more than 5000 nature reserves with the purpose to protect and preserve valuable nature environments such as forests, waters, mountains, swamps, meadows, etc., and keep them available for nature experiences - in the present and the future.

The shore meadows of Galterö have a rich biodiversity and function as habitat to several threatened vascular plants, fungi and insects. Also, the diversity in nesting birds is high and of great value to preserve. (Hellman, Lorén, Sandberg & Lind, 2020).

Taking these aspects into account, I see Galterö as a rural landscape in an urban context where the ocean and weather is constantly present. Many qualities of a raw nature occur, yet it is affected and closely connected to human presence and the city of Gothenburg. Hence, I find it suitable and interesting as context for investigation in relation to the agenda of this master thesis.

# MAPPING





## Four mapping exercises

This initial mapping phase intends to be a broad inventory of certain layers found on site. The purpose with this phase is to get an overview and understanding of the things and phenomena that occurs in relation to the site and how these makes up the certain *place*. To accomplish this in a multi-faceted manner, following four mapping exercises are implemented:

### 1. GPS-tracked drifting/Dérive

The very first site visit of the mapping phase in this project aims to explore the initial, spontaneous paths of movement directed by my personal perception. Influenced by Guy Debord's *dérive* and the Situationists, I practice the act of unconditionally strolling around the area to generate a cognitive mapping of the site (Corner, 2011). Main tools for capturing perceptions of this first contact with the site was mainly sketches, photography and diary notes. Unlike Debord, I as aimlessly walked around Galterö wore a GPS tracking device through which I was able to sample precise data of my movement and objectively record what areas and paths that attracted my curiosity throughout this drift.

### 2. Lynch mapping

A method to systematically understand the essential functions and perceived structures of an urban context was introduced by Kevin Lynch (1964) in his book *The Image Of The City*. Whereas Lynch's characteristic way of mapping and illustrating a context is developed in a very urban context, where the essential layers are distilled to landmarks, edges, districts, paths, and nodes, I here see potential in making my own interpretation of these categories relevant to the Galterö context. Creating these 'mental maps' based on the understanding of physical structures by navigating through them, helps me to understand my perception of the place through a more diagrammatic and arbitrary language.

### 3. Landscape inventory

As support to other mapping exercises, I see it relevant to perform a more general and objective physical inventory of the natural landscape on Galterö. By categorizing the environment according to different characteristics, I can gain a scope of the diversity in physical qualities. Within this categorization I make a spot-check inventory of a randomly selected 1 x 1 meter square to get a quantitative understanding of the material content of each landscape typology.

### 4. Intentional artefacts

The presence of human interventions to the nature environment on Galterö is rather severe. Though it is a nature reserve with the purpose to preserve and protect the local nature qualities, many artefacts are found. Both intentional and unintentional. This fourth mapping exercise aims to map all intentional artefacts placed on Galterö. With *intentional* it is referred to items placed, built, or installed there for a reason, with a function in its certain appearance within the context.

## Outcome: GPS-stroll/dérive

[23.01.23]

On January 23rd, I conducted a very first site visit for this thesis project on Galterö. The action of aimlessly strolling around the island for five hours, constantly thriving in whatever direction my unconscious fancied, subjectively gave me some first spontaneous observations, emotions, and impressions of the site.

As this event was GPS-tracked, looking at the resulting movement map, it is quite obvious that the situations that interests me the most are in the outskirts of the island along the shores. The water level was quite low this day. Twice throughout the day I made a sidestep outside the usual shore of the island taking a detour on what normally is seabed. Also, some of the high points relatively close to the shore was passed.

### Some strong impressions:

- **The orthogonal cracks in the rock characterizing the landscape.**
- **The small ocean bays formed by the cracked rock landscape.**
- **The beautiful color palette. In the local environments as a whole but also as smaller scale phenomena.**
- **Traces of human impact on the local environment:**
  - **Intentional. Bolts, duckboards etc.**
  - **Unintentional. Drift waste.**
- **Few people. Met none.**
- **Presence of the elements.**

Maybe the most intriguing aspect with the context of Galterö is all the artefacts and traces of human interference with the nature environment found on the island. Despite its current status of being a nature reserve with the purpose of preserving specific nature qualities, the impact of human activity is rather severe. I suggest overviewing the traces of human presence into following categories:

### Intentional artefacts Unintentional artefacts

With *intentional artefacts* I address all man-made structures that are placed, built, or installed for a purpose. This purpose is usually for functionality or practicality but can also be recreational for instance. Of course, one may question, what is actually necessary in a context like this? I might get back to this later. Examples of intentional artefacts on the island are:

- Bridges
- Steps
- Railings
- Duckboards
- Buildings
- Mooring bolts
- Jetties
- Bunkers
- Power lines

*Unintentional artefacts* are all man-made findings that occurs on site without being placed there for a reason, but rather dropped, thrown, or drifted. How they ended up on Galterö varies and is in many cases somewhat open for speculation. Although, one often may have quite qualified ideas of most artefacts' origin, whether it is being trash left by visitors, drift waste washed up by the ocean or material dropped by the military forces during exercises. Examples of frequently found unintentional artefacts are:

- Fishing web
- Plastic bottles and packaging
- Buoys
- Shards of glass
- Metal cans
- Etc., etc., etc...

To walk around and explore all things washed up by the sea is a quite contradictory experience in itself. One floats between the two states of being heartbroken by all trash humanity have been littering our oceans with and the realization that what is washed up here is just a tiny, tiny piece of what is out there in the great oceans. On the other hand, simultaneously being really fascinated captured by excitement and curiosity of the story of these drifted items are carrying, where they are from and how they ended up here. I would describe this as a love-hate experience that I think could be interesting to explore further in relation to design throughout my thesis project.





From Suunto. (2023). [orthophoto + gps route]. <https://maps.suunto.com/move/albinpb/63cea4dc9421ad416e5d564d>

GPS-tracked movement path from first site visit.

1. One of the first overwhelming impressions of the site is how influenced the terrain is by the layering and crackle of the bedrock. When this orthogonal structure meets the ocean, a rather dramatic situation occurs. These gulfs hold several interesting aspects such as the matter of accessibility, shelter, trapping of boulders and smaller rocks from the ice age as well as driftwood and waste from more contemporary times.



One of the small gulfs in the north-eastern corner. Facing the inlet to Gothenburg in north.



Where these gulfs meet the bedrock a diverse palette of boulders, rocks, various vegetation, and drift waste assembles.

Potential sites.

When reflecting upon my unconditional stroll, there are a few sites that caught my attention a little more than others due to their certain qualities and relation to the surroundings.

- 1. North-east corner
- 2. Western peninsula
- 3. South-east rocks



Modified from Göteborgs Stad. (2019). [orthophoto]. <https://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglink%3a2015816171319546>

2. Another site that caught my attention is the very western point of the island. A cliff diving into the ocean neighboring a rock shore with a quite spectacular view towards Böttö, Vinga lighthouse and further the horizon. What astonishes me the most with this site is the vivid exposure to the raw elements. The wind and ocean are constantly present, and the shape of the coastline provides a collecting function of whatever the sea may bring.



The west point of Galterö. View of Böttö, Vinga and towards the horizon.

3. The third site is located in the south-eastern area of the island. Its terrain is in some ways similar to the first site but slightly more protected and less dramatic. I found it very harmonic and somewhat poetic with its composition of two juxtaposing little peninsulas pointing out into the ocean. One a sharp ridge, almost like a dragon back, and the other one flat and smooth, more like a turtle back.





**Outcome:  
Lynch mapping**

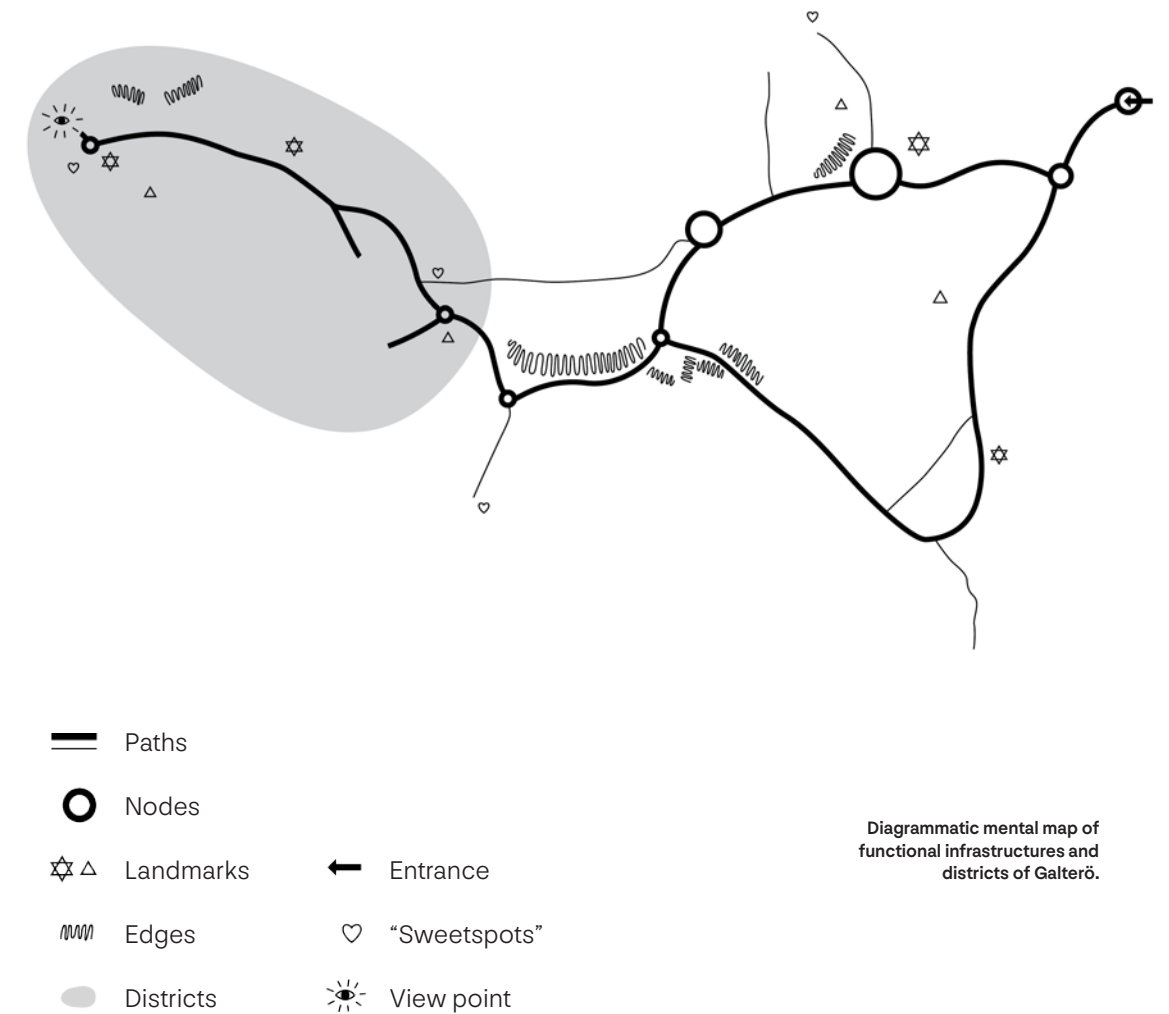
[23.01.25]

On my second site visit to Galterö, I conducted a diagrammatic and distilled mapping exercise inspired by Kevin Lynch (1964) and his way of reading and representing urban structures, formulated in his book *The Image Of The City*. Among the by Lynch suggested elements, I found paths, nodes, and landmarks most obvious and relevant within the Galterö context. Also, edges are to a certain extent present. Districts, as they appear in cities, are slightly less present in this more rural area. This since the diversity in program and social structures are quite limited and as well that the island is quite small.

Of course, the contrast in vegetation and terrain is a circumstance that could act as a driver of formulating districts. As this aspect is not very defining in regards of how the space is used, I chose to not formulate districts informed by this. The one district that is formulated in my Lynch inspired mapping is the western peninsula of Galterö, where the military forces have their training facility. Though this area occasionally is used

by the military, it is open to access when there is no training activity going in. This space is excluded from the nature reserve which is quite obvious when entering. The most obvious contrast is in how human interventions are present and for what function. In the nature reserve district, man-made structures are primarily gentle interventions in shape of signs for orientation and guidance around the island, duck boards for crossing wetlands, and paths reinforced with rocks to preserve the terrain. In the military district, these gentle interventions are less present and instead more overwhelming and brutal structures are dominating. Examples of these are gravel roads for vehicles, bunkers, blasted trenches in the bedrock, amongst other military infrastructures.

I think this circumstance provides a quite interesting clash within the context of relation to nature qualities. Gentle infrastructures to preserve and appreciate nature transforms into the opposite in the 'wildest' and most exposed area of the island.



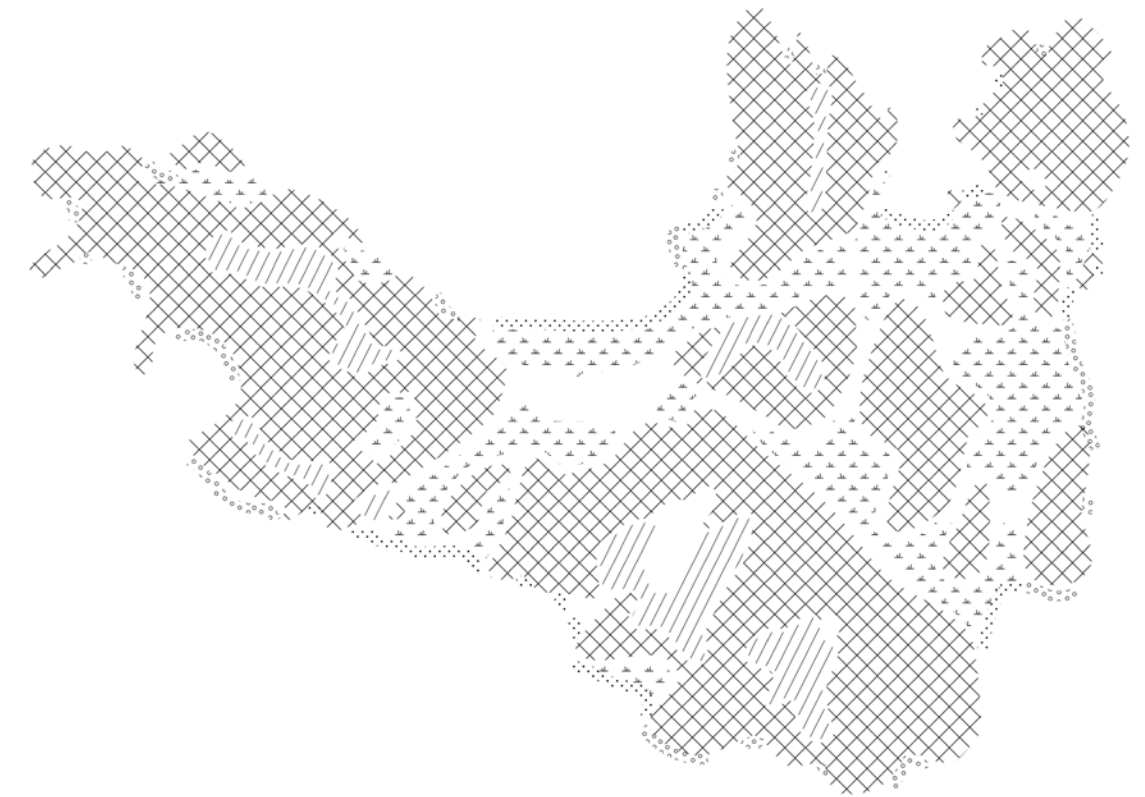
Diagrammatic mental map of functional infrastructures and districts of Galterö.






## Outcome: Landscape inventory

[23.01.31]

My third conducted mapping exercise was a quantitative inventory of the dominating terrain typologies of Galterö. Five different typologies were identified and documented. To get a detailed and objective understanding and overview of the landscape and what the island consists of, I used a technique of framing a one by one meter square as a sample of each certain terrain. This square was photographed, sketched and its content was listed.

The extent of these five terrain typologies were drawn out on a map with help of orthophoto assessment and further cross checking through visual observations on site. As these terrains to a large extent somewhat overlaps with one another, this mapped expansion of terrain typologies should be seen as a general estimation of the overall distribution of space rather than an accurate representation of precise area. This inventory will have the function of exposing the natural occurring landscapes to be looked at together with other mapping findings such as programmatic and artificial observations.



-  Rock
-  Heather/Juniper
-  Meadow
-  Stone shore
-  Sand beach

Compiled map of the different terrain typologies found on Galterö.



Inventoried 1 x 1 meter squares of the different terrain typologies:

Photo:

Rock



Heather/juniper field



Meadow



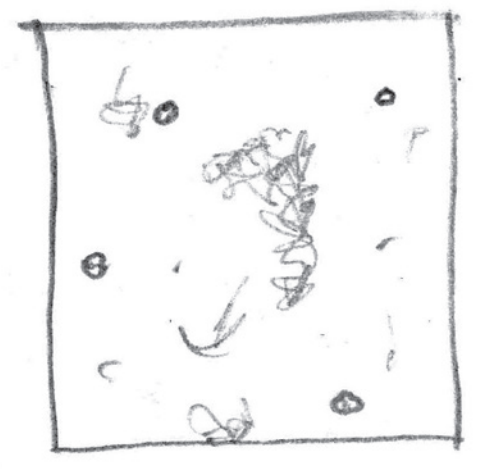
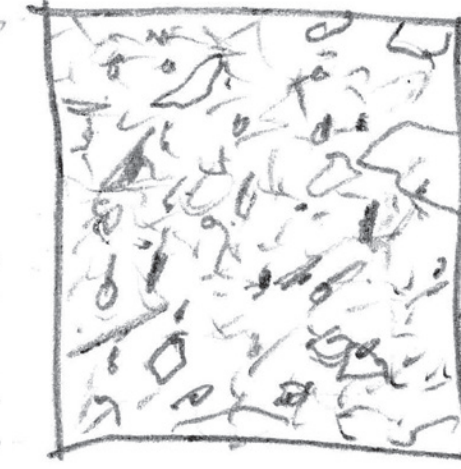
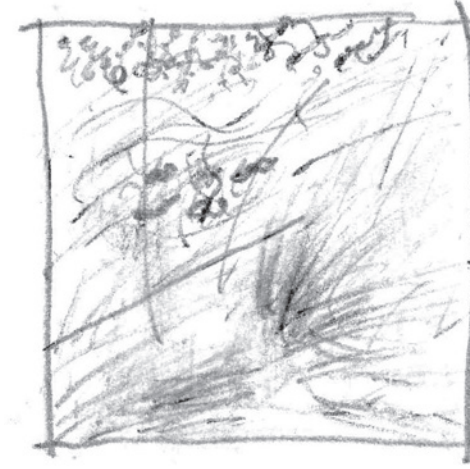
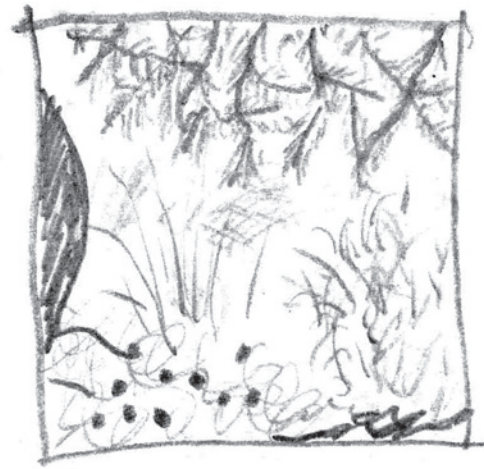
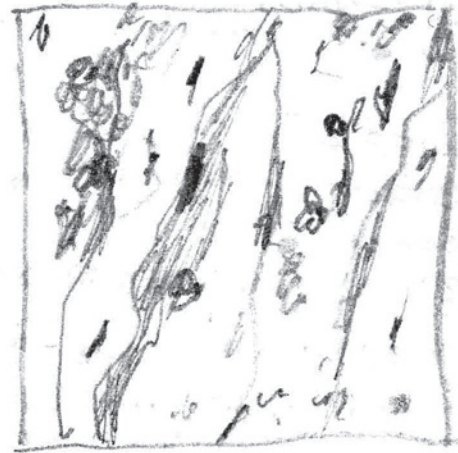
Stone shore



Sand beach



Sketch:



List of content:

- Bedrock, grey/white
- A palette of moss/lichen:
  - Mint green
  - Grey (Cauliflower-like)
  - Red/brown
  - Grey (merged with rock)
  - Yellow (fine)
  - Grey lichen
  - Yellow-green (tiny)
- Grass straw
- Gravel in cracks
- Loose pebbles

- Juniper
- Heather
- Rock
- Green moss on rock
- High grass
- Old leaves
- Sheep faeces
- Small boulders
- Other vegetation (blackberry?)

- High dense high grass
- Heather (various presence)
- Other vegetation

- Rocks/pebbles
- Driftwood/chips/bark
- Metal lid
- Piece of plywood
- Birds feather
- Seashells/mussels, approx. 20 pcs
- Glass shards, approx. 5 pcs
- Plastic waste:
  - Lids, approx. 10 pcs
  - Lypsil lip balm
  - Fuse
  - Fishing web
  - Cable section, 5 pcs
  - Lollipop sticks, 5 pcs
  - Random pieces, approx. 30 pcs.

- Sand
- Seaweed
- Reed
- Seashells, 5 pcs
- White dots - crushed shells

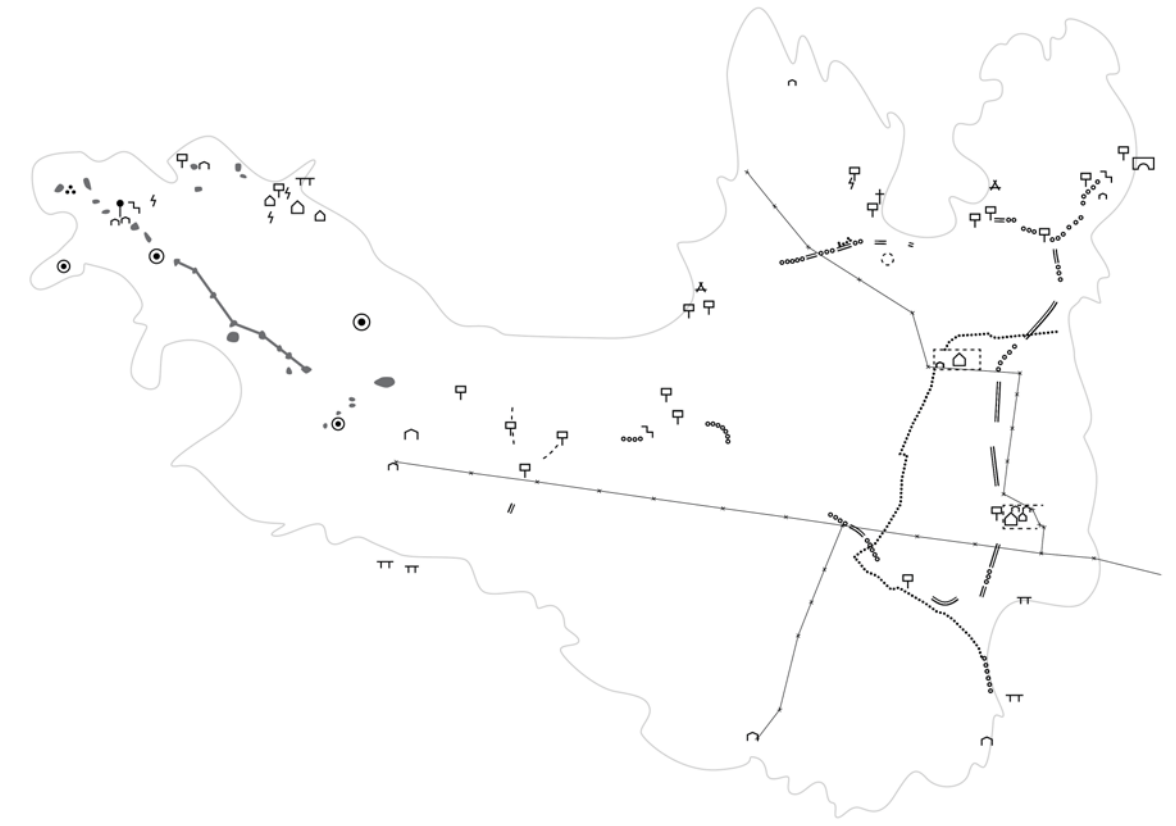
**Outcome:  
Intentional artefacts**

[23.02.02]

Through my previous mapping exercises, I have generated a first impression through my spontaneous perceptions of Galterö, gained an understanding of how the infrastructural patterns functions through mental mapping as experiences while moving through the area, and also made an inventory of the natural terrain landscapes that occurs on site. With this fourth exercise, the ambition is to expose all intentional man-made structures on the island. Of course, one may have different opinions on what defines what is man-made or not. In example, is a path an artefact? Is the path the first ever piece of architecture, as being created by humans walking from the cave to the creek to get water? (Careri, 2002). In my mapping of intentional artefacts, I chose to overlook this overlapping condition of the path and similar phenomena, and instead focus on all interventions that are clearly intentionally placed or arranged in the natural environment.

My method for doing this was to physically move around, observe, and take notations. To have efficiency in doing this I developed a semiotic system, somewhat influenced by the simplicity in the graphical style of Lynch's maps.

Though, as implementing this exercise, I quite instantly realized I had to take a decision regarding the resolution and accuracy of my mapping. As mentioned above, I found paths to be less relevant in this exercise due to their arguable artificial origin. Also, some findings were found irrelevant to map within my timeframe as they simply are too many and randomly spread out in the area. Examples of such findings are white and blue path marks, iron bolts in the bedrock and trenches.



- |            |                   |               |
|------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Building   | Sign              | Fence         |
| Shed       | Power line        | Bunker        |
| Duck board | Antenna           | Cairn         |
| Stone path | Jetty             | Power station |
| Bridge     | Concrete platform | Fire camp     |
| Stone wall | Steps             | Grave         |



MAPPED INTENTIONAL ARTEFACTS

Building



Shed



Duck board



Jetty



Concrete platform



Steps



Stone path



Bridge



Stone wall



Fence



Bunker



Cairn



Sign



Power line



Antenna



Power station



Fire camp



Grave



EXAMPLES OF "UN-MAPPABLE" ARTEFACTS

White-blue path marks



Trenches



Bolts





## Compiled mapping

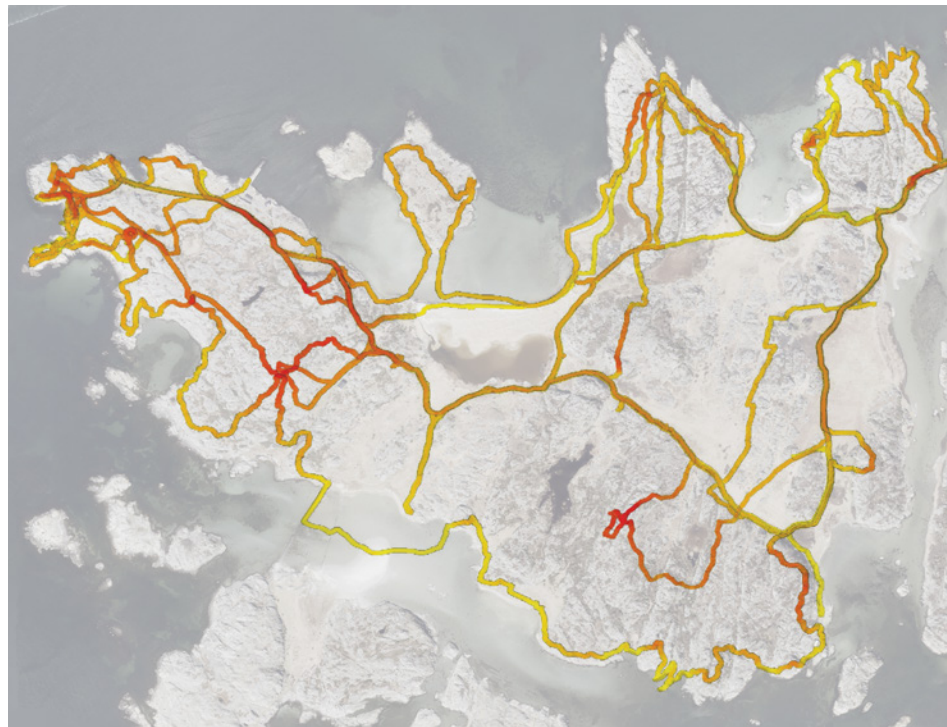
The conducted mapping exercises have given me a multi-faceted subjective understanding, a situated knowledge, of some of the present and relevant layers of Galterö. Both physical and more programmatic structures have been mapped.

A common denominator through all explorations is that the act of walking through the landscape in order to map and understand it has been a key aspect. The practice of walking is something Francesco Careri has explored further from an artistic perspective, partly through the Italy based artistic collective Stalker. From the point of view that when walking exceeds the basic functions for vital necessities, it turns into an act of art where the walker becomes a physical, as well as symbolic, agent in the landscape (Careri, 2002).

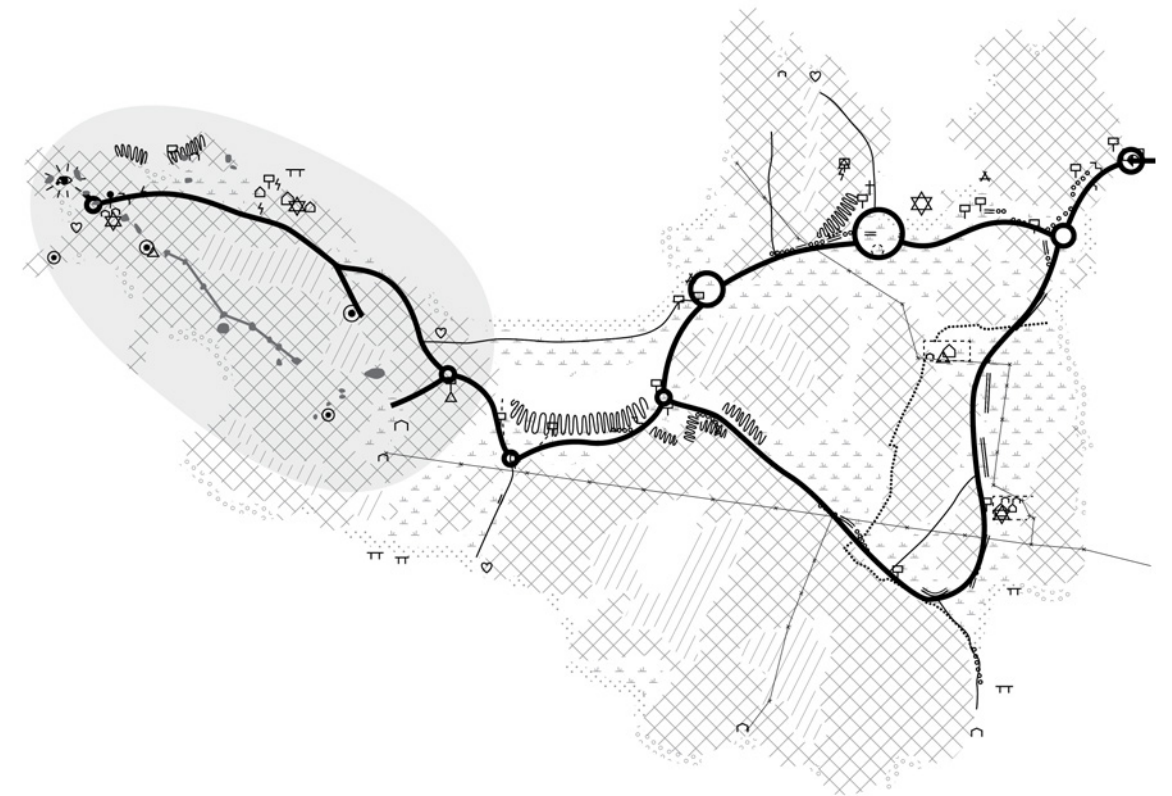
By physically moving my own body to all places and findings, I add dimensions of cognitive as well as emotional qualities to the perception. Also, it is a way for myself to verify, if yet subjectively, that my findings are valid. By GPS-tracking all my site visits throughout the mapping exercises, I can retrospectively overview all my activity on the site. This information provides an objective map in complement to my other more or less subjective methods of collecting data in relation to my exploration of the area.

I have taken the time to go out to the site a lot and each time I have assigned the full day of explorations to only one mapping exercise. This in order to be as precise as possible in conducting the certain mapping method for the session, but also to be efficient enough to more or less cover the entire island. It has also been helpful in order to stay organized in my work, as going there looking at several aspects at the same time implies the risk of messing data and findings up.

Compiled map of GPS-tracked movement paths throughout the four mapping exercises.



From Suunto. (2023). [orthophoto + gps route]. <https://maps.suunto.com/move/albinpb/63cea4dc9421ad416e5d564d>



Overlaid map with all notations from the later three mapping exercises.



## Site of focus: Galterö huvud

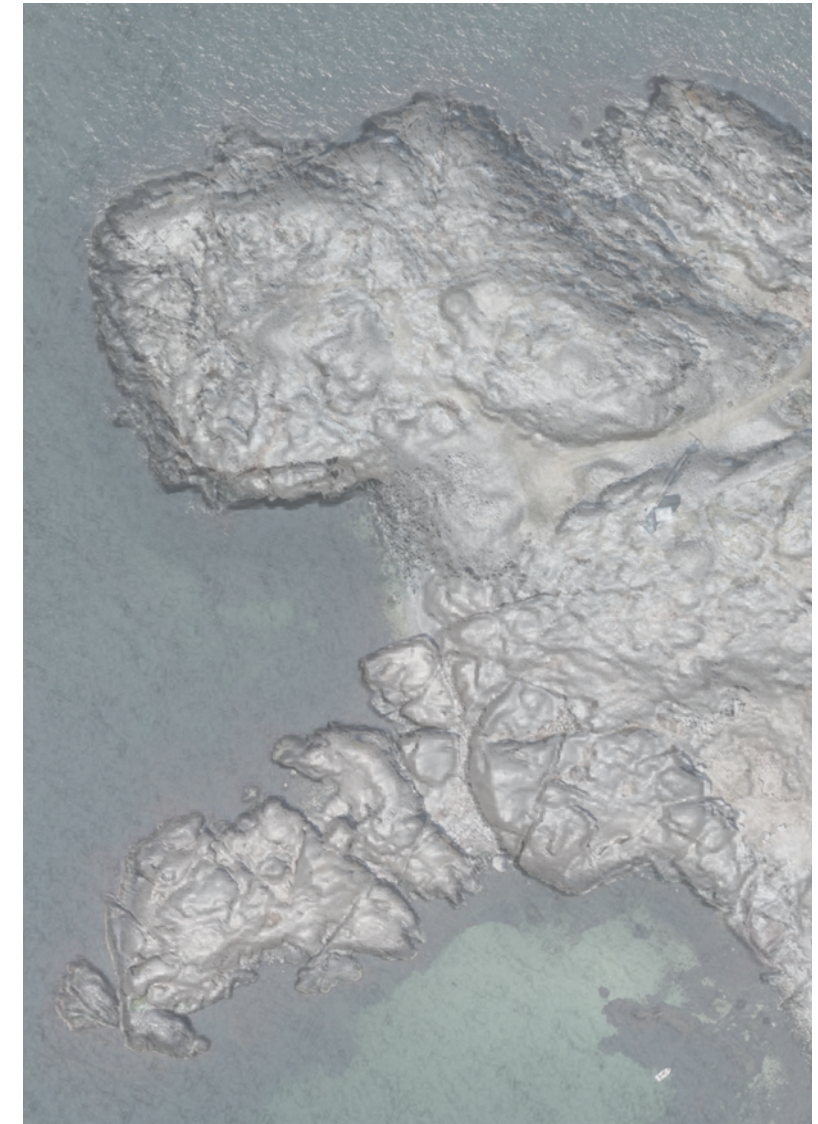
Overlaying the different mapping outcome, a few sites captures and relates to the mapped qualities in interesting ways. To me, the most interesting, and perhaps also the most critical, site is found at the very western point of the island; the peninsula called Galterö huvud.

As Galterö huvud is in the very opposite area to the only place where one can enter the island by foot, it is inevitable to pass a majority of the island to get there. It is as far out as one can reach, hence all experiences and perceptions of exploration and discovery of the place culminates here. Many of the initial impression of Galterö from my first site visit plays central roles in characterizing this specific site, such as the bedrock landscape being very present, traces of human impact as well as intense presence of the elements to mention a few.

The Kevin Lynch inspired mental map of space usage enhances the perception of this site as a quite distant, yet active, part of the island. The eastern parts of the island is according to the mental map significantly more accessible with infrastructure to promote a circular walk of comfortable distance. To reach Galterö huvud, one must make a diversion from this round tour and step out into this district of slightly different character. From being in the nature reserve district where all paths and human interventions are there with the purpose of preserving nature and guiding visitors to carefully experience it, the character shifts to a space with presence of military facilities and affection to the nature environment. The nature is still there, the elements are still there, but the character of human traces changes. The site at Galterö huvud is the peak of this transitional clash as the ocean horizon opens up and the elements are more present than ever. This as bunkers, blasted rocks and other traces of military and human activity are intensely present on the site.

With the data from the terrain typology inventory presenting five different components, one can read that this site is occupied by two types of terrain: bedrock and stone shore. As I find it too extensive to work deeper in detail with the characteristics of all five identified terrain typologies, this situation where two types are dominating is reasonable to relate to within the scope of this thesis.

Looking at the resulting map of all intentional artefacts on Galterö, the entire island more or less seems to be exploited. The interventions are to some extent clustered along, or close to, the main paths of movement. I consider this correlation partly as a coherence rather than a general rule. That the characteristics and function of the interventions changes as one moves through the landscape is touched upon above looking at the outcome from the Lynch-mapping, how the character of the man-made structures goes from primarily careful and guiding to more brutal and anonymous. The major part of Galterö, that is part of the nature reserve, contains artefacts in shape of signs made out of wood logs, stone paths where rocks are simply placed dense on the paths to prevent the ground from being beaten by pedestrians, and wooden duck boards to provide passages through swamps. When one steps out into the military district excluded from the nature reserve, all these gentle interventions are left out and instead the artefacts find on site takes the shape of gravel roads for motor vehicles, bunkers, concrete platforms etc. As the nature experience culminates at Galterö huvud, so does the extent of these brutal artificial structures.



From Göteborgs Stad. (2022). [orthophoto + height model]. <https://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglik%3a2015816171319546>

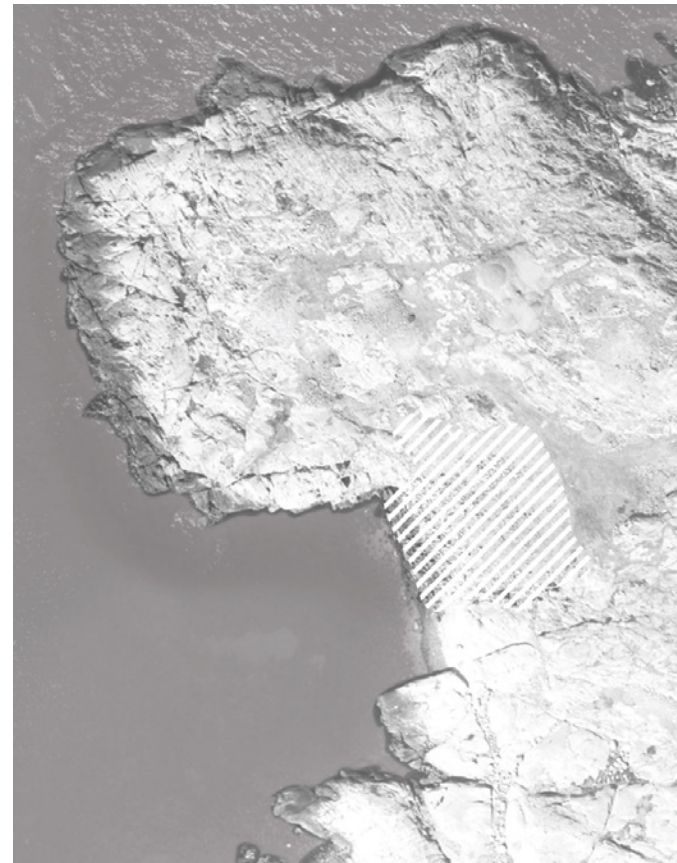


The most brutal and figuratively overwhelming finding on the site is this beautifully located stone shore completely intervened by blasted rocks and boulders poured out on the slope all the way down into the water. One inevitably sparks a wonder of what lays underneath and how this place appeared before this overtaking. Though this can be seen as a devastation of the nature qualities of this exceptional site, to me, there would be no relevance in an attempt to restore it to its previous state. Similar to more conventional architectural projects where valuable qualities and details from a previous state may have gone lost, it is rarely productive to try to mimic the precursor, but rather to see the potential in interpreting and developing qualities further within the contemporary context. This will be the attitude and approach through the design process as a further investigation of this site.

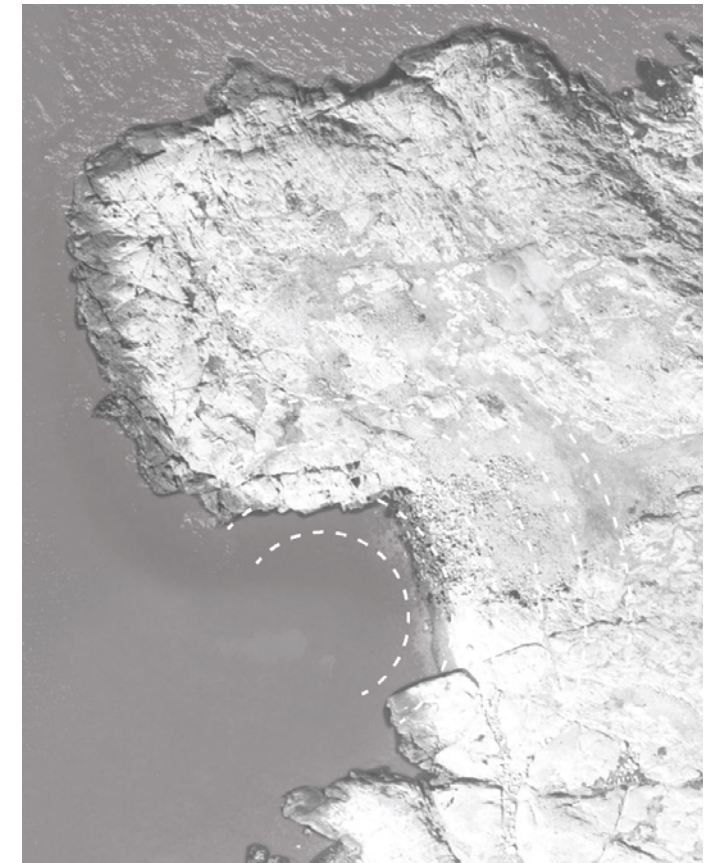
A second layer of this dump of a slope is how it functions as a collector of random drifted objects and artefacts from the surroundings and the ocean. A rapid inventory of unintentional artefact found in this slope results in a broad scope of findings:

- Steel: Wired, rods, plates
- Reinforced concrete
- Plastic bottles
- Plastic buckets
- Fishing web
- Cables
- Flowerpot
- Wood: Planks, plywood
- Ropes
- Styrofoam
- Shoe
- Shoe sole
- Random piece of plastic
- Metal can
- Air freshener bottle
- Smashed wine bottle
- Tyres
- Plastic lid
- Empty sleeves
- Fishing buoy

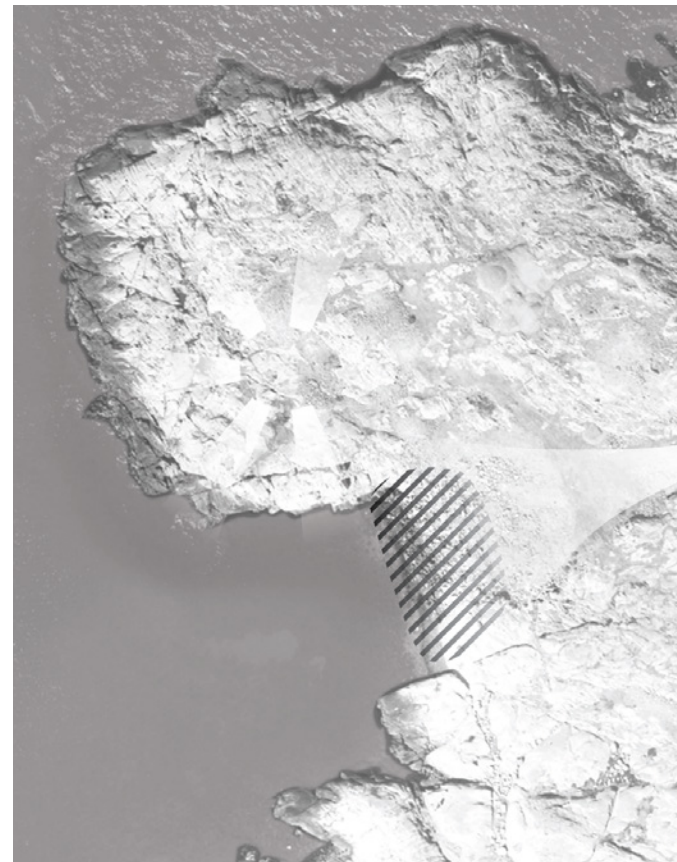
A third intriguingly aspect about the place is the concealed condition of the shore bay. As one approaches, views of the ocean horizon open up in all directions and the bay remains unnoticed pretty much until one reaches it. This act of discovering what is beyond the edge adds some extra appreciation to the experience of it.



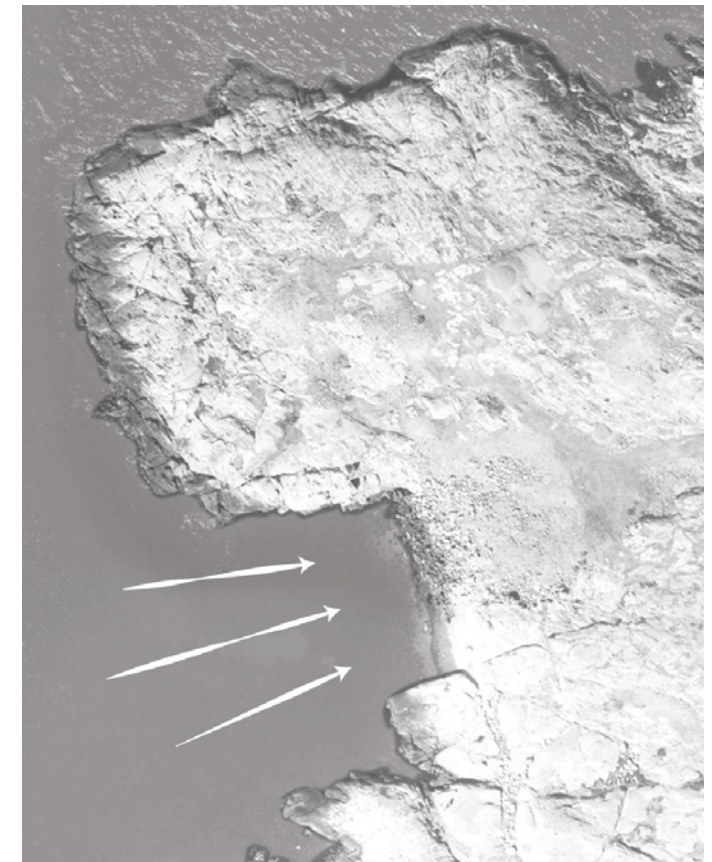
Coverage of blasted rocks and boulders poured down the slope on the shore.



The natural formation of the site suggests some radial formation with focus towards a center in the middle of the bay.



When entering the site by foot from east, the shore is completely hidden and reveals itself as one approaches. The shoulder north of the bay facilitates a spectacular 270-degree panorama view of open seas.



The shape of the coastline in combination with the structure of the rock shore makes this site an efficient collector of drift waste.



## Walking the site

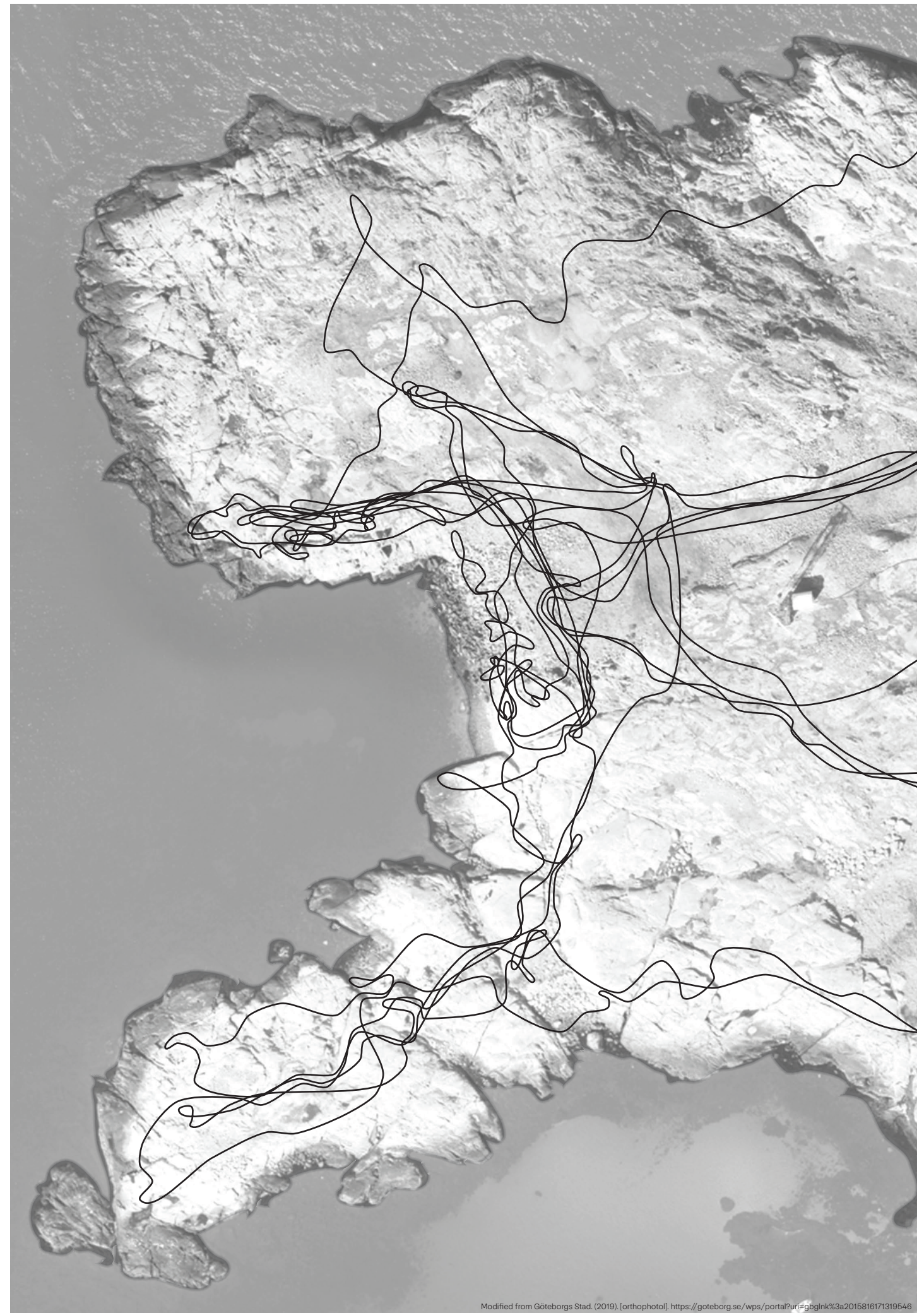
As walking is the only way to reach the site, except for by boat, the act of walking has a quite central role in the experience of the place in terms of defining accessibility, remoteness, etc. From the bridge between Brännö and Galterö, there is a walk of approximately 30 minutes to get to Galterö huvud, with a precedent walk of another 30 minutes from the ferry at Brännö Rödsten. In addition to this circumstance, that the one-hour hike reaches end of land, and hence culminates at this point, there is the aspect of how the site is walked on a smaller zoomed in scale.

On the contrary to Careri, who recognized walking as an act where the walker becomes an agent in the landscape, Braae, Diedrich and Lee (2013) elaborates through their *travelling transect* how it may act as an 'immediate and mobile form of site exploration', that can complement other remote kinds of site analyzes such as studying maps, statistics, other data, etc. Recognizing themselves as 'sensing, thinking, and communicating subjects', and valuing quantity of experience, and hence seeing the accumulated knowledge of the context to increase with every kilometer travelled along their transect. This as being aware of that the notion of travelling along a transect only allows for a partial absorption of a larger context.

This map contains graphics of my tracked paths of movement from my four mapping exercises and visits to the site. The density, as well as the shape and curviness of the lines, implies subjective information of different characteristics of the local landscape.

Some areas with high intensity in lines obviously attracts my attention. Where these lines are rather straight appears to be spaces that are easy to access and convenient to walk. In opposite, spaces with less intensity/density in lines, and a more meandering character, seems to be areas slightly trickier to access but probably with other aspects that sparks my interest enough for me to make the effort to go there anyway.

There are several ways this data can be used and interpreted in a design phase. Either the frequently walked spaces can be seen as relevant areas to be further stimulated, or the less used spaces can be activated in coordination with the already active parts.



Modified from Göteborgs Stad, (2019), [orthophoto], <https://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglnk%3a2015816171319546>

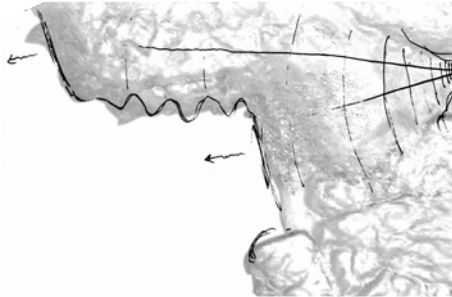


# DESIGN

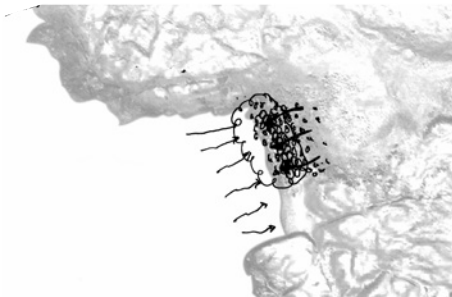


## Site analysis

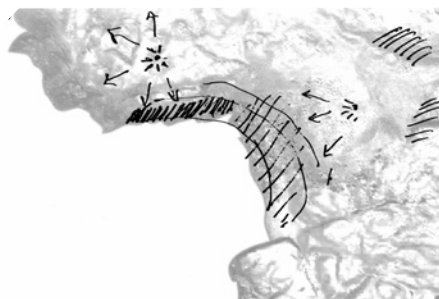
These four key aspects, in relation to the site, acts as foundation of focus in program and design development. Here, they are sketched out on the site to illustrate how they apply and to further help informing design strategies.



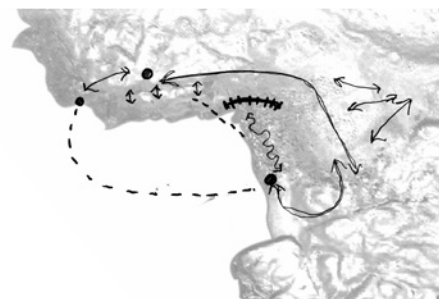
- **The culminating nature experience of this place as a part of the Galterö landscape. The sense of disconnectivity from urbanity is an important quality.**



- **The blasted rocks on the slope acting as a man-made lid covering the underlying nature landscape. Also, how it captures unintentional artefacts drifted from the ocean, acting as a porous mass getting saturated over time.**



- **The view aspect, both in terms of the panorama horizon, but also the concealed condition of the place in how the shore bay pops up in the field of view as one approach.**



- **The act of walking as the way of getting to, experiencing, understanding, and using the place.**

There is a lot of potential in these aspects to intertwine and being developed, both programmatically and form wise, in coherence with one another. Doing this, with the approach that what has been, has been, and using the current situation to formulate what could be, is central in the program and form finding phase.

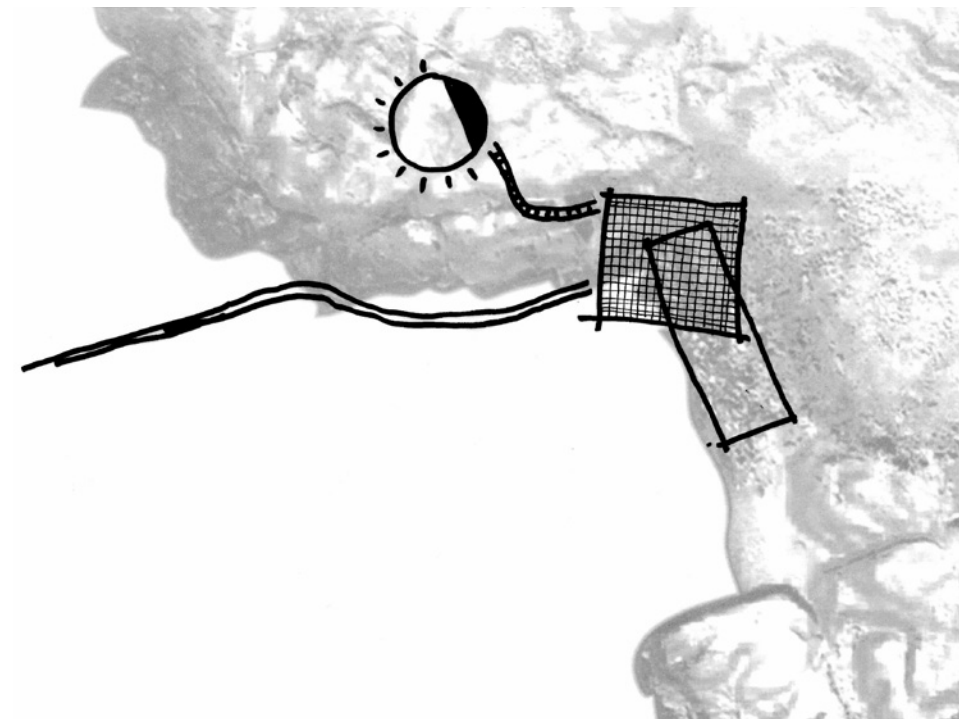
This diagrammatic sketch illustrates a conceptual spatial zoning for how the different aspects could be physically represented as interventions on the site.

**Sundial circle:**  
Viewpoint with astonishing panorama horizon view.

**Rectangle:**  
Intersection of the forces of intentional and unintentional artefacts.

**Hatched square:**  
Concealed corner visually "hidden" until within close range.

**Lines:**  
Extension of walkable surface "further out into nature experience".

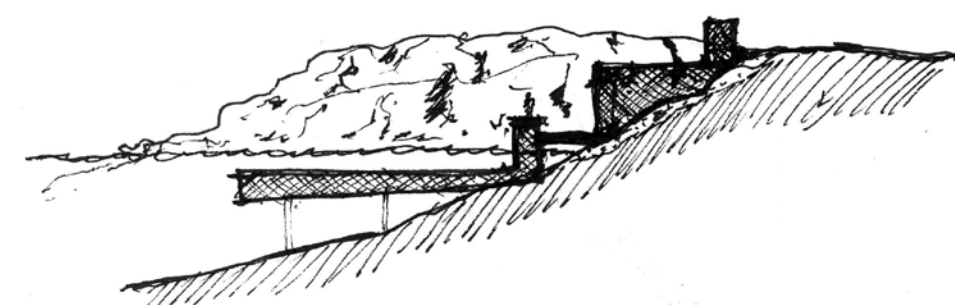
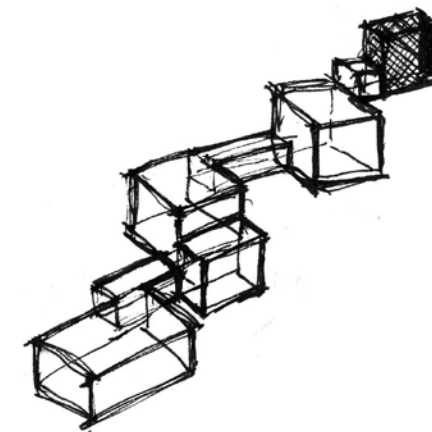
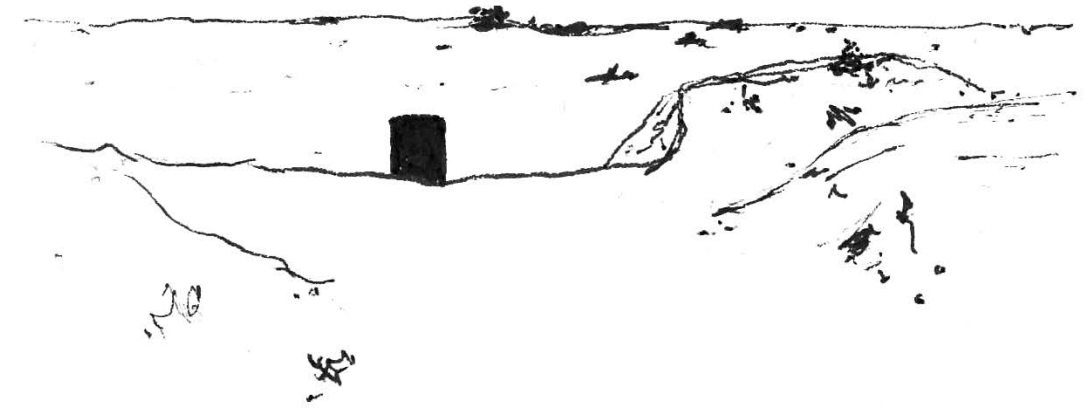
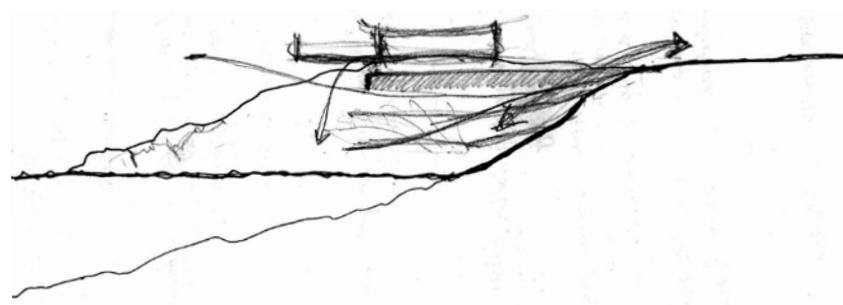
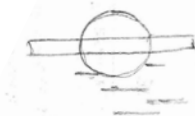
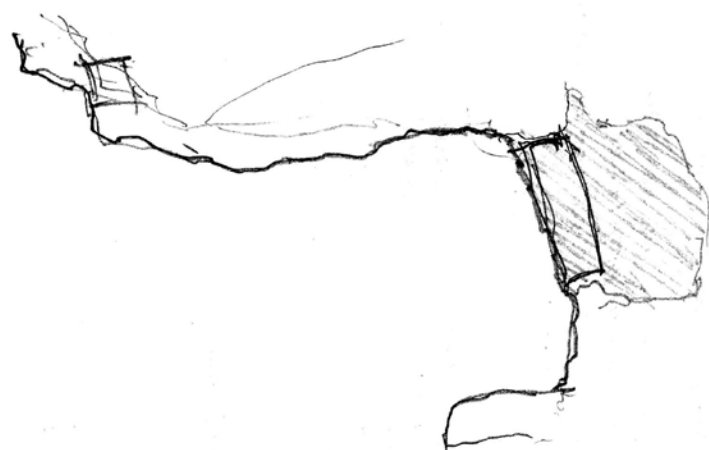


# Design explorations

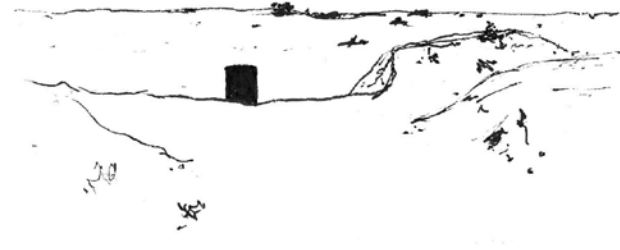
Some initial sketches of how architectural structures could relate to and land on the site.



Modified from Göteborgs Stad, (2022). [height model]. <https://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglink%3a2015816171319546>



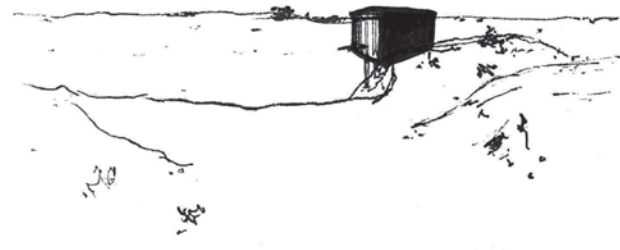




A monolithic box points out in the landscape with an appearance of wonderment.



A solid wall is interfering the view sparking a curiosity of what is hidden behind.



Also, a solid wall interfering the view, but with a hint of the space behind.



A stringent structure intervening yet emphasizing the landscape of the concealed shore.

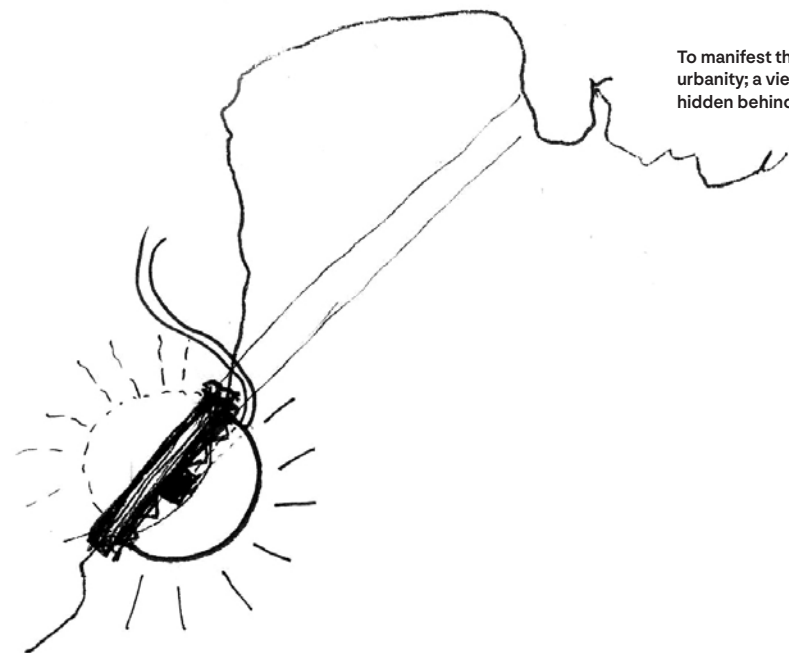


A very discrete, yet distinct, initial appearance sparking curiosity to experience it further.

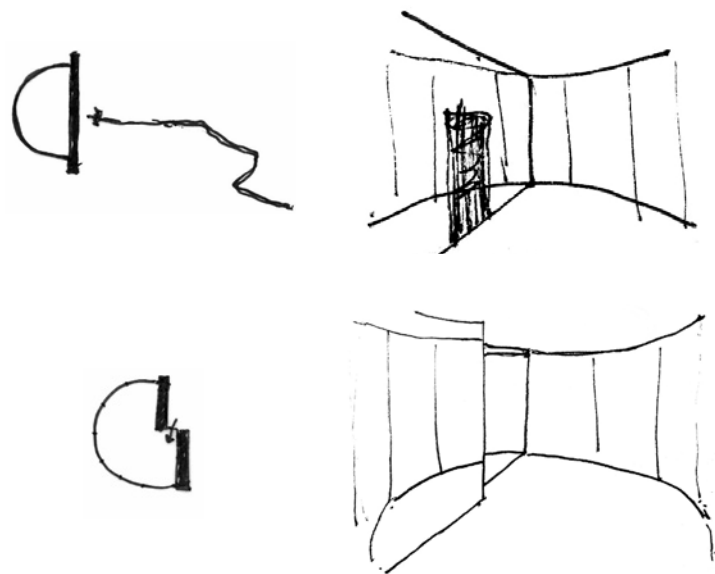
An important aspect of an intervention on this site is its role as the very climaxed experience of Galterö. Hence the appearance of the intervention as arriving to the site is of relevance to be considered. This series of sketches explores different takes on this situation spanning from gentle and 'shy' gestures, to more provoking and bold. I can see interesting qualities in the different approaches. To compile my intention with this arrival situation, two key words can be formulated: curiosity and exploration. With that in mind, one may evaluate these situations more critically.



Collage of arrival view to the site. Intervention sits humble, yet distinct, in the landscape to spark curiosity to the visitor for further exploration.



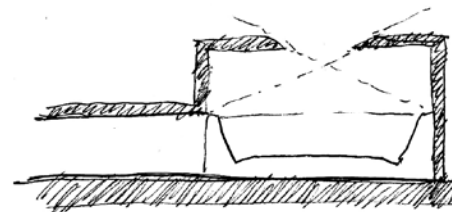
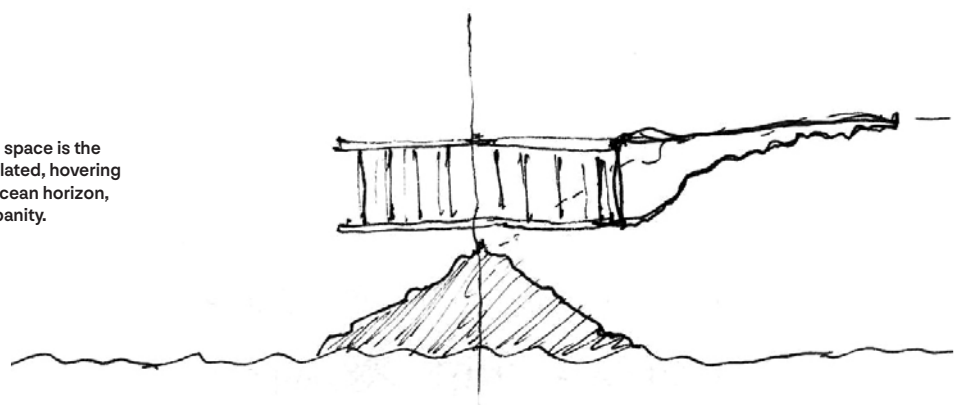
To manifest the view and the disconnection from urbanity; a viewing platform with a panoramic space hidden behind a solid wall.



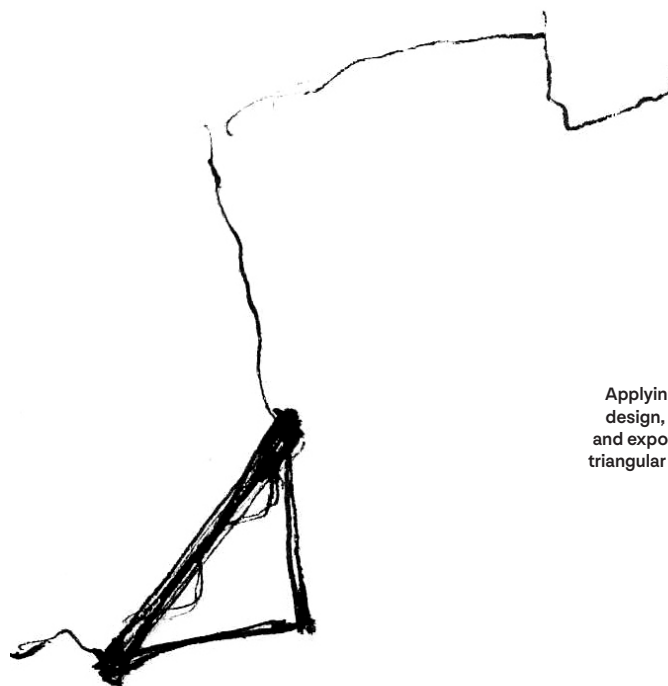
By adding a mirror to the solid wall, the disconnection can be enhanced as it appears as an infinite ocean space.

Splitting the wall in two and placing them slightly shifted to one another, provide an entrance to the space without the need for a door.

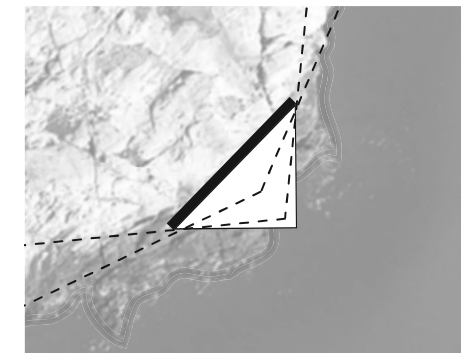
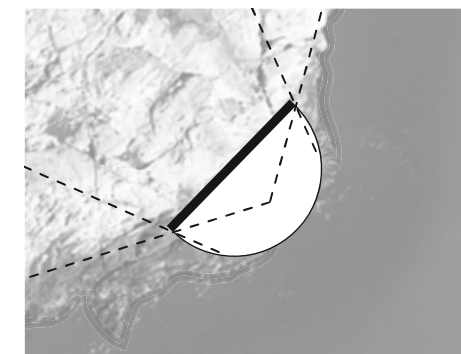
The effect of the mirror in the space is the perception of being on an isolated, hovering platform surrounded by the ocean horizon, totally disconnected from urbanity.



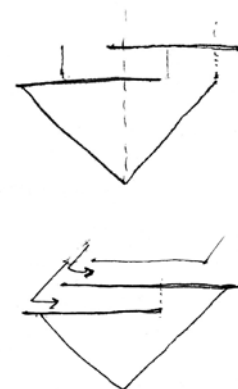
A section sketch study of James Turrell's skyspace. Awareness of sightlines in the design elevates the exposing feature of the space.



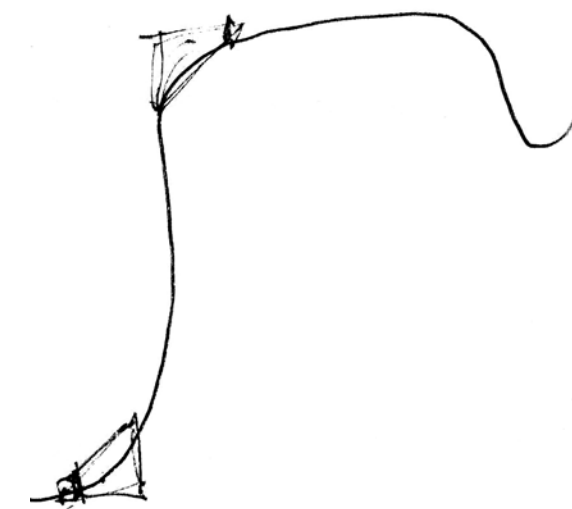
Applying this awareness of sightlines to my design, to achieve disconnection from land and exposure towards the ocean, suggests a triangular shaped space rather than a sundial.



As this volume at the tip of the peninsula is very pure and true to its exposing function, the same volume could be used in a contrasting way as a more conventionally sheltering structure at the concealed corner of the shore bay.



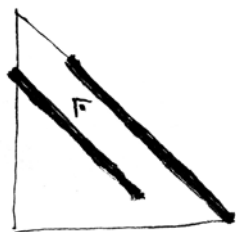
This organization of the space allows a very simple disposition of constructing elements in the design. Simply placing two rectangular vertical slabs between two triangular horizontal slabs provides all that is needed for this space to function as intended.



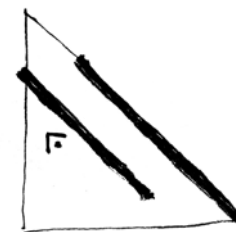
Situations



Model photo collage on how the ocean view reveals as entering the oceanspace.



Model photo collage illustrating the spatial experience of an infinite horizon achieved by a mirror wall and the structure being composed with sightlines towards land being screened off.





## Resolution: An oceanspace and a refuge

As response to the key aspects of the place, two structures with complementing program are placed on the site.

An *oceanspace*, a shelter that exposes you. And a refuge on the shore, a shelter that actually shelters you.

The western intervention, referred to as the oceanspace, departs in the function of a viewing platform to emphasize the astonishing ocean horizon view of the place. It also contains a developed programmatic extension of the experience of the place as a nature environment. As mentioned earlier in the mapping phase, experience of nature environments is found closely related to the sense of disconnectivity and distance to the urban and all what urbanity implies. As crossing Galterö, the walk is experienced as a gradient of stepping further away from urbanity, and as this journey culminates at Galterö huvud, so does the nature experience.

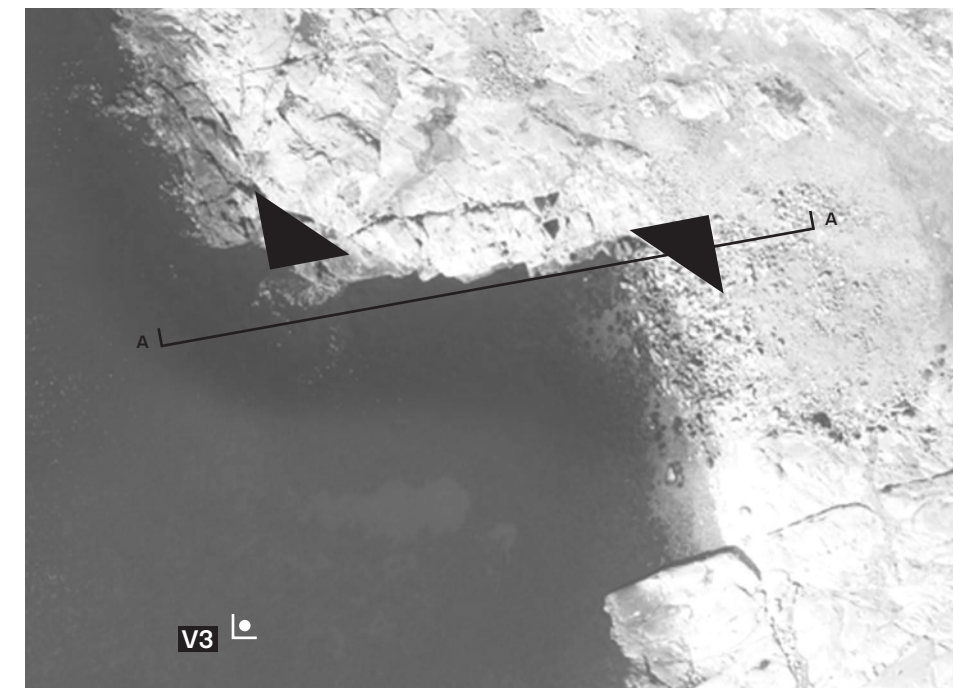
Some current qualities of the place, as well as this sense of disconnectivity, are visually and spatially emphasized through the composition of the viewing platform. As arriving to the site, the appearance of the intervention is humble, yet distinct. By not being visible from distance arriving by the main path, a sense of exploration will appear as the intervention reveals. When entering the oceanspace, consisting solely of four slabs hovering on the edge of the landscape, one is led through a passage as being tempted with a framed glimpse of what is to come. Stepping into the oceanspace is stepping out in an ocean landscape that is disconnected, or isolated, from the precedent possible remaining senses of urbanity. A shelter that exposes you to nature.

The site of the other structure is a place within the same character and context, but in a condition that can be seen as inverted from the tip of the peninsula where the oceanspace sits. This invert-

ed, or opposing, relation between the sites is paid attention to and used as a driver in formulating program and design for the two structures. As the oceanspace sits hovering on the very tip of the peninsula, the refuge is merged into the landscape in the concealed corner of the bay. With similar volumetric scale and shape, the oceanspace and the refuge are designed in relation to one another. At the same time, their contrasting relation to the landscape and program symbiotically enriches their individual functions.

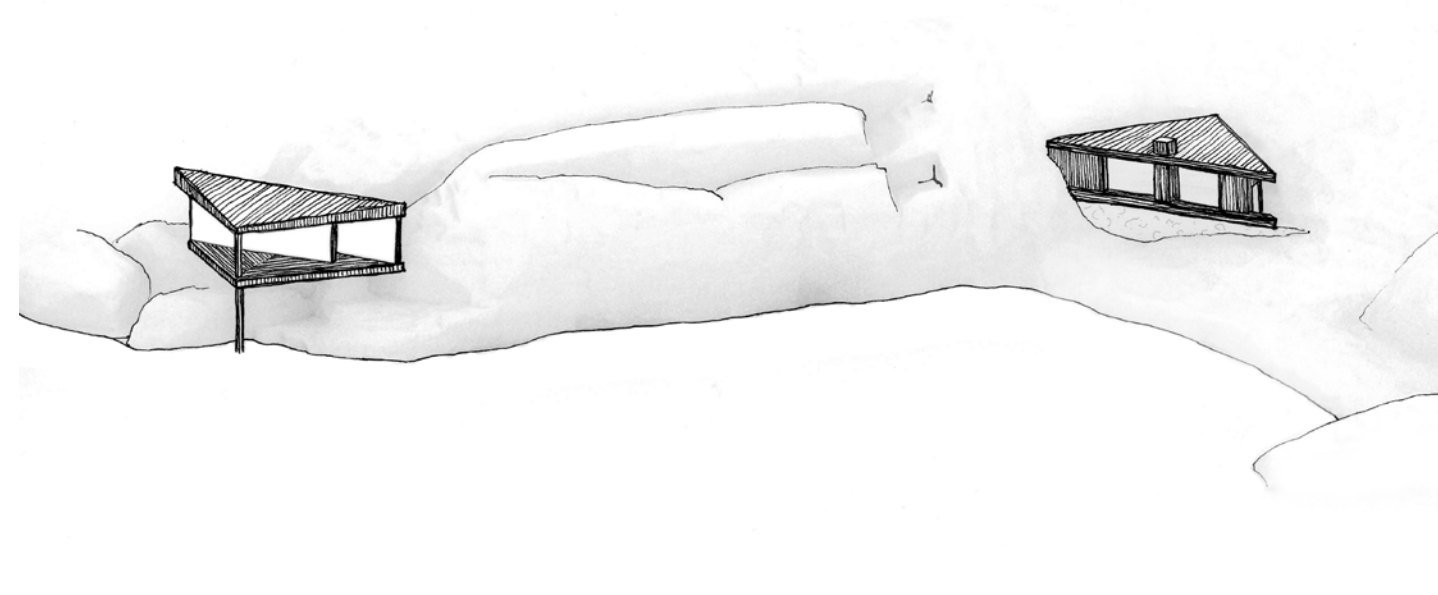
How these two interventions are synthesized can be described as situated objects in how they relate to the landscape and context (Stan Allen, 2020). Applying architecture to any context implies drastic change to the ground of the site as land changes from one state to another. They appear situated as the oceanspace and the refuge are fixed in place as the buildings are fitted to land instead of land being fitted to the buildings. One can identify them as architectural objects, as being shaped by three design strategies accumulated in the architectural profession over the years, identified by Allen; a formal language that works with ordinary building materials, the iconic potential of the figure in the landscape, and a design process based on simple geometrical rules.

As the oceanspace exposes you to nature and the elements, the refuge embraces you and gives you warmth and protection if needed. The refuge takes you down to earth, and water, with a gesture implying safety as being steady set on solid ground, whereas the oceanspace puts you on the edge of tipping over as being perceived as a pedestal elevated in the middle of the ocean. The oceanspace shows you the nature that is out there and puts you in it. The refuge welcomes you, and the solid bedrock, into a safe and sheltered space.



Modified from Göteborgs Stad, (2019), [orthophoto],  
<https://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglnk%3a2015816171319546>

Siteplan 1:1000





Section A-A 1:200

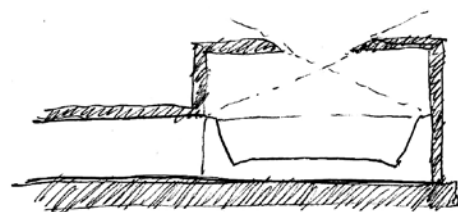
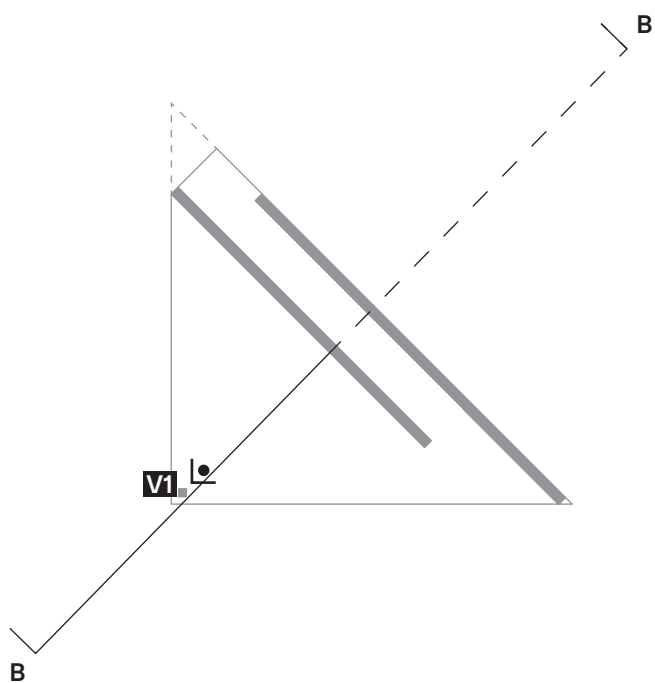


## The Oceanspace: A shelter that exposes you

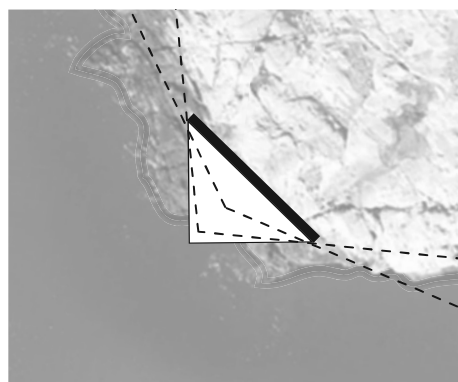
In the early design phase, some exercises of random character were tried out making generative intentional mis-readings etc., a method formulated as *accident and the unconscious as sources* (Jormakka, 2014). However, as the reached outcome from these exercises did not land strong, or close, enough in relation to the framework of this thesis, this material is left out and instead presented separately in an appendix.

What was gained from these exercises though, that is more relevant to this thesis framework, is the crossing of James Turrell and his work. His making of these pavilions for appreciation of the sky, often by Turrell himself referred to as *skyspaces*, was found to further be a relevant reference. Jeffrey Kosky (2012) writes about Turrell's skyspaces as '*shelters that exposes you*'. This way of formulating a function in the gradient between art and architecture is found very applicable to the intention and function of parts of this thesis and is brought further to describe the aesthetics of the suggested structures.

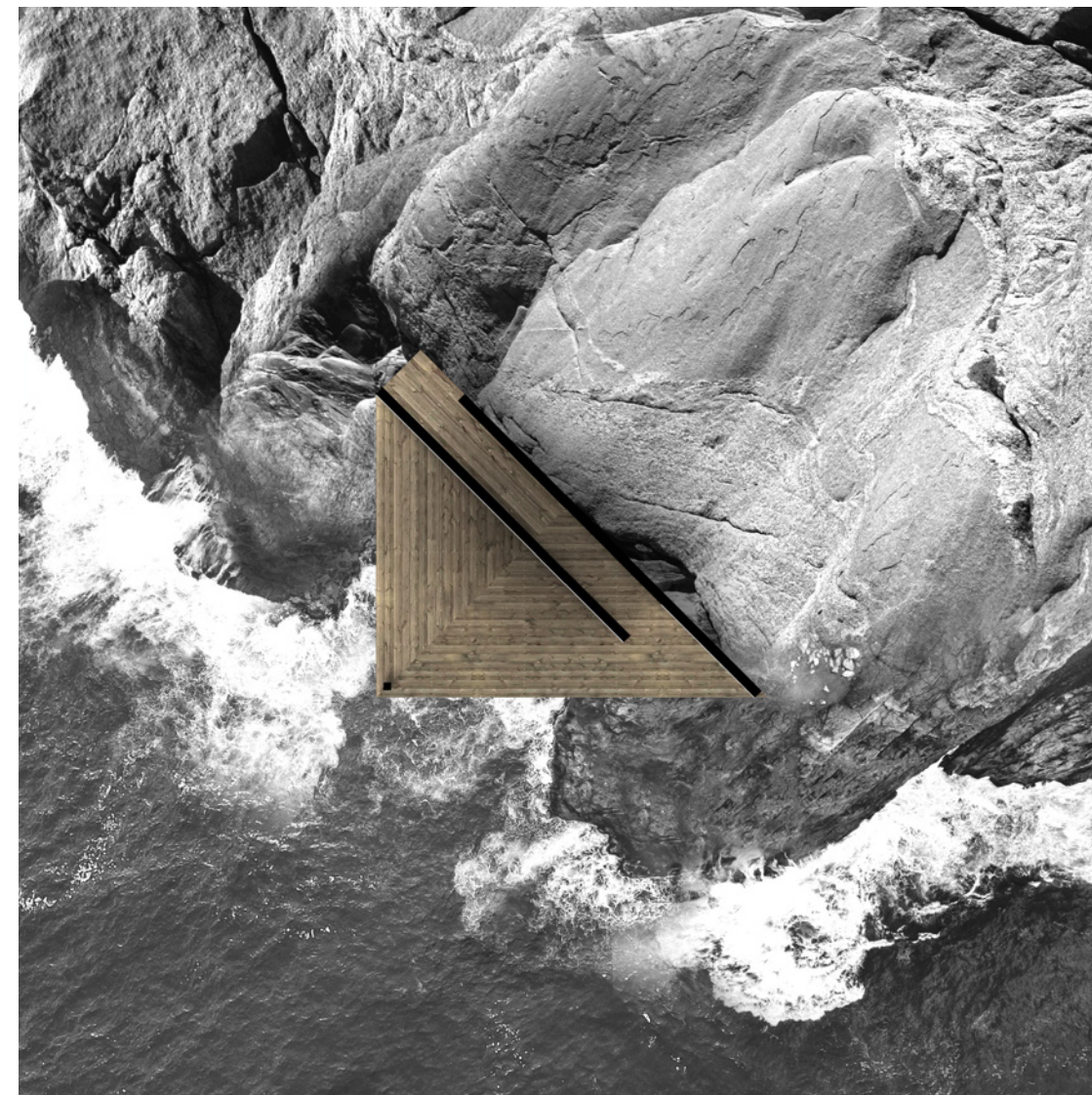
Like Turrell's skyspaces, this oceanspace is designed with attention to sightlines in order to achieve the purposed situation. Whereas the skyspace is considering sightlines in the vertical plane, as its intention is to frame and emphasize observation of the sky, the oceanspace puts its attention towards the ocean horizon and hence deals with sightlines in the horizontal plane. One major contrast to the skyspace is the way attention is given to the certain view. The skyspace consists of a very concealed space with a relatively small opening towards the focus, where the extensive interior surfaces of the architecture have a minimalistic and monolithic appearance contrasting to the opening towards the sky. As the oceanspace gives more attention to the surroundings of its location, it is a very open structure. A result of the composition of the space with the mirror walls is how attention towards the focus is achieved through an overwhelming exposure rather than a contrasted framing. In this sense, one could claim the oceanspace to fulfil the notion of a 'shelter that exposes' in a more complete and coherent way than the skyspace.



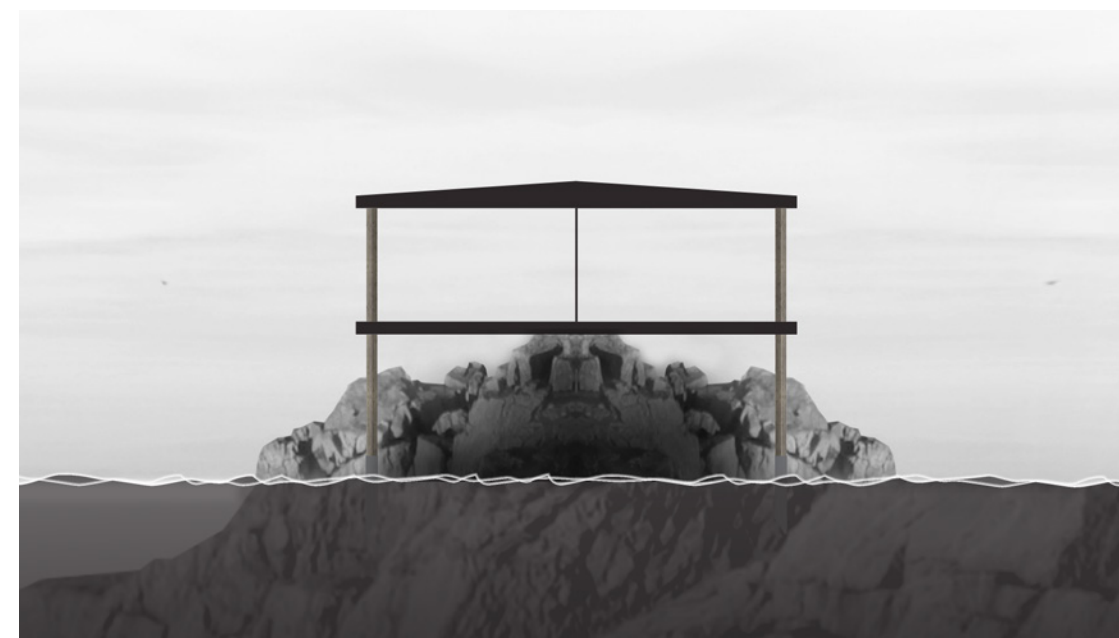
Section sketch of James Turrell's skyspace. Awareness of sightlines in the design elevates framing of the sky and the exposing feature of the space.



The shape of the oceanspace is informed by the sightlines towards land being screened off.



Plan 1:200



Section B-B (as perceived from within the oceanspace) 1:200



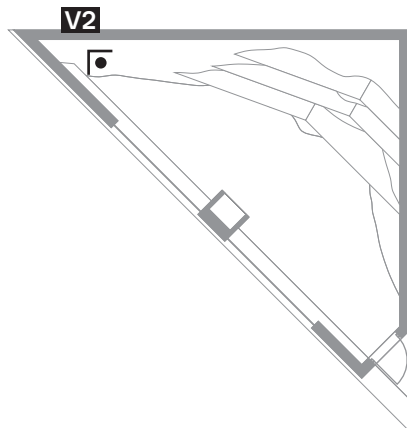


V1



## A refuge on the shore

As the oceanspace emphasizes key aspects of experiencing the nature environment of Galterö, it does just that. Convenience and pleasure in visiting nature is very dependent on individual experiences of spending time in such environments, hence Galterö huvud is not always a place for everyone to visit. The contrasting situation of the shore bay and the peninsula is manifested program wise through the suggestion of a shelter that do not exposes you, but actually shelters you, on this opposing, yet closely related site. With one structure putting you on the spot, and another embracing you with warmth, the experience of Galterö huvud can be emphasized to a broader audience. Together with a shelter that exposes you: A refuge on the shore.

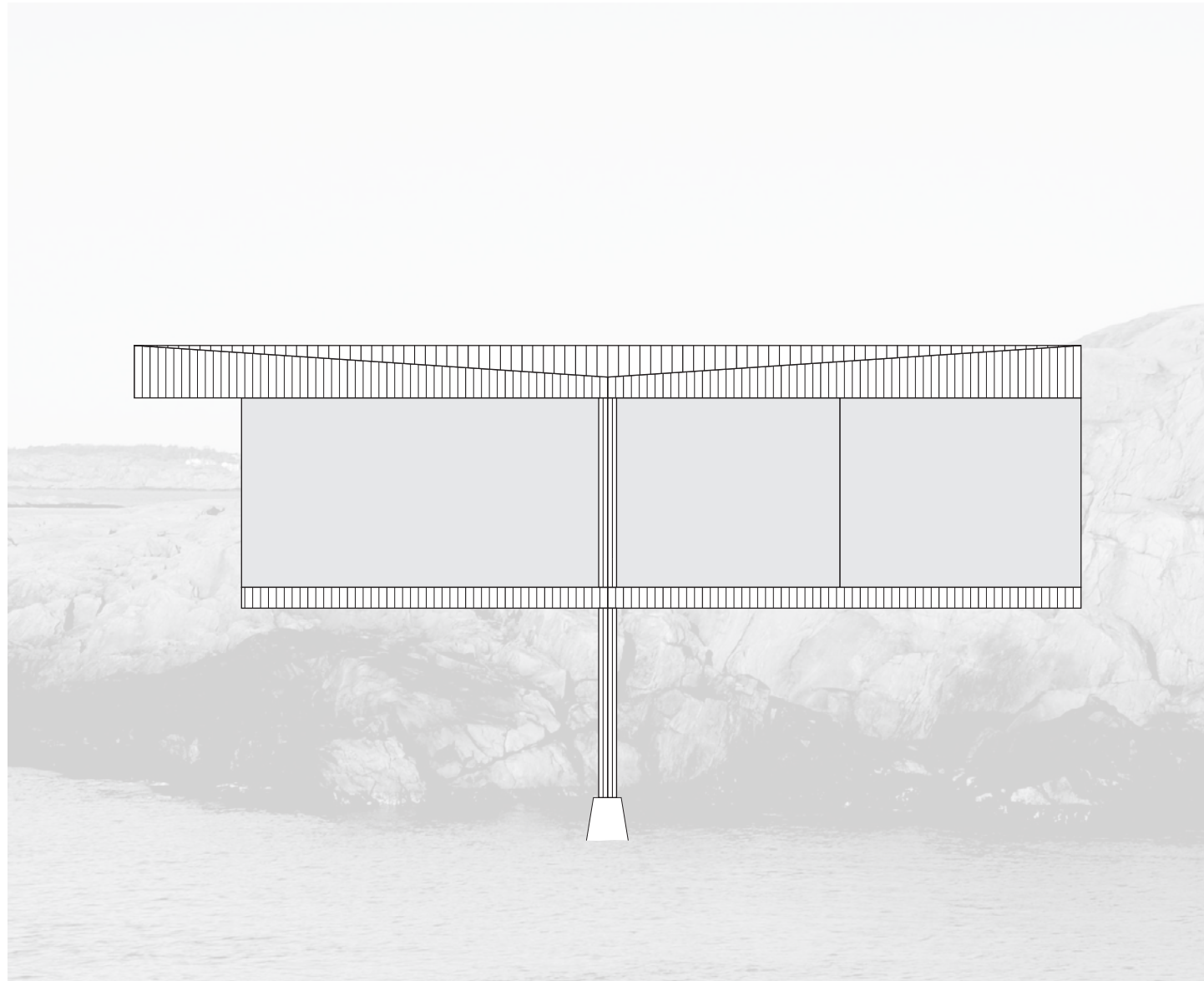


Plan 1:200



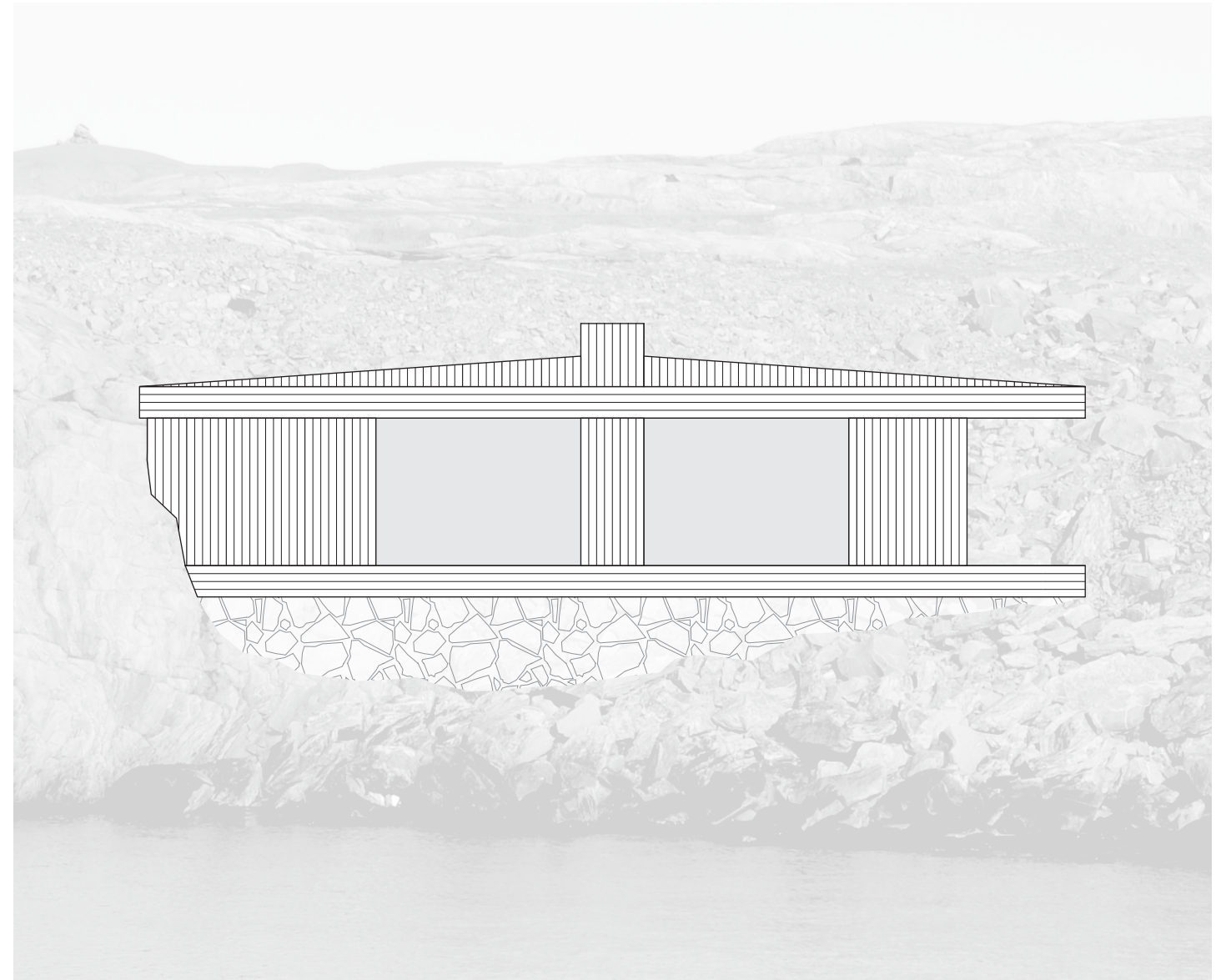
V2





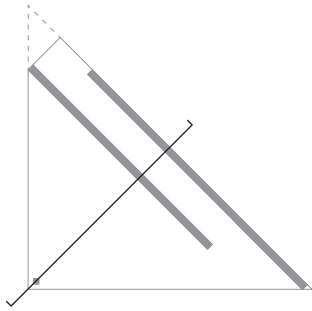
OCEANSPACE

Elevation south west  
1:100



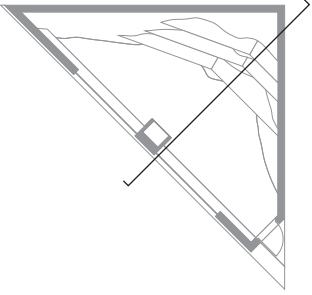
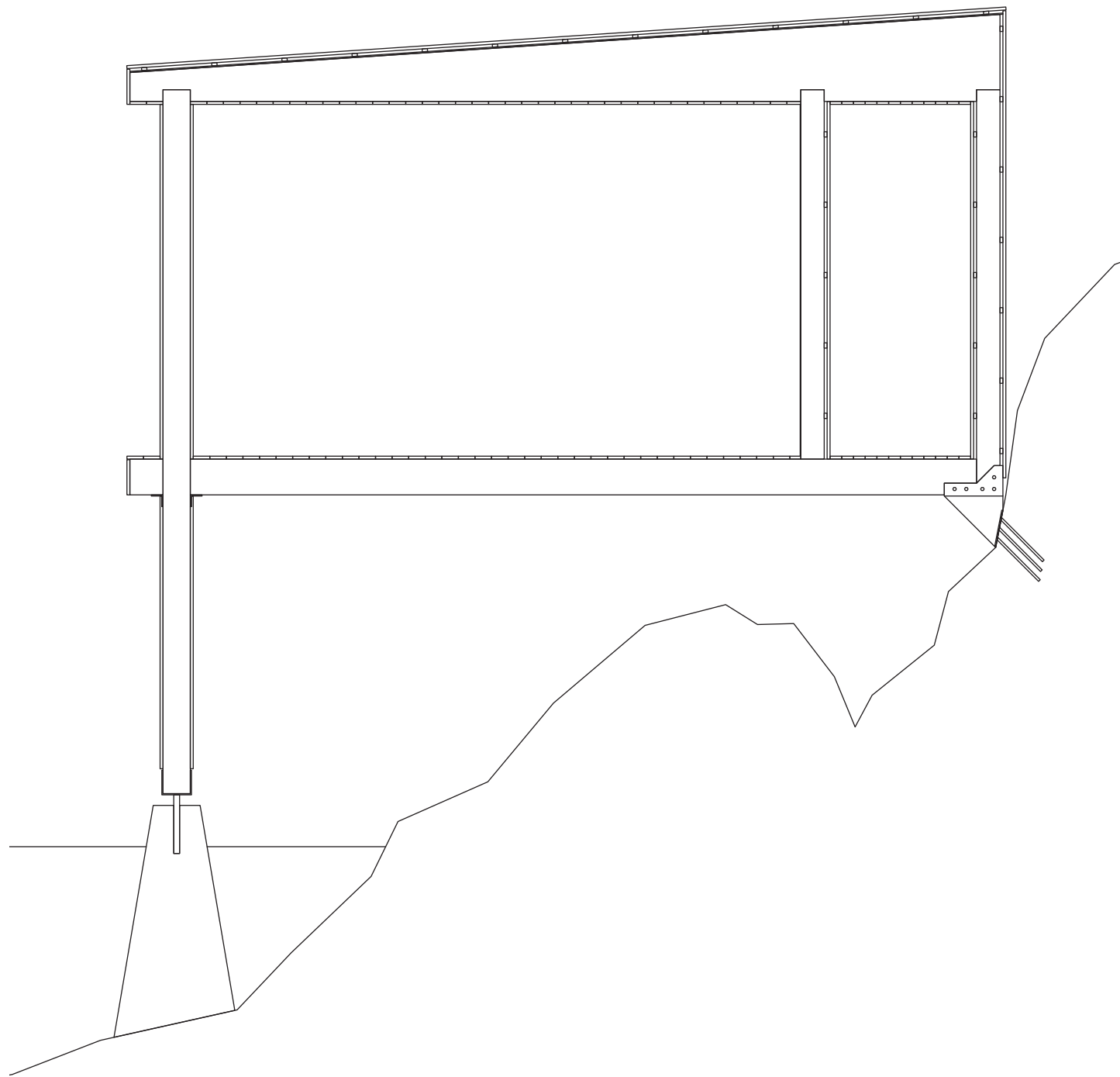
REFUGE

Elevation south west  
1:100



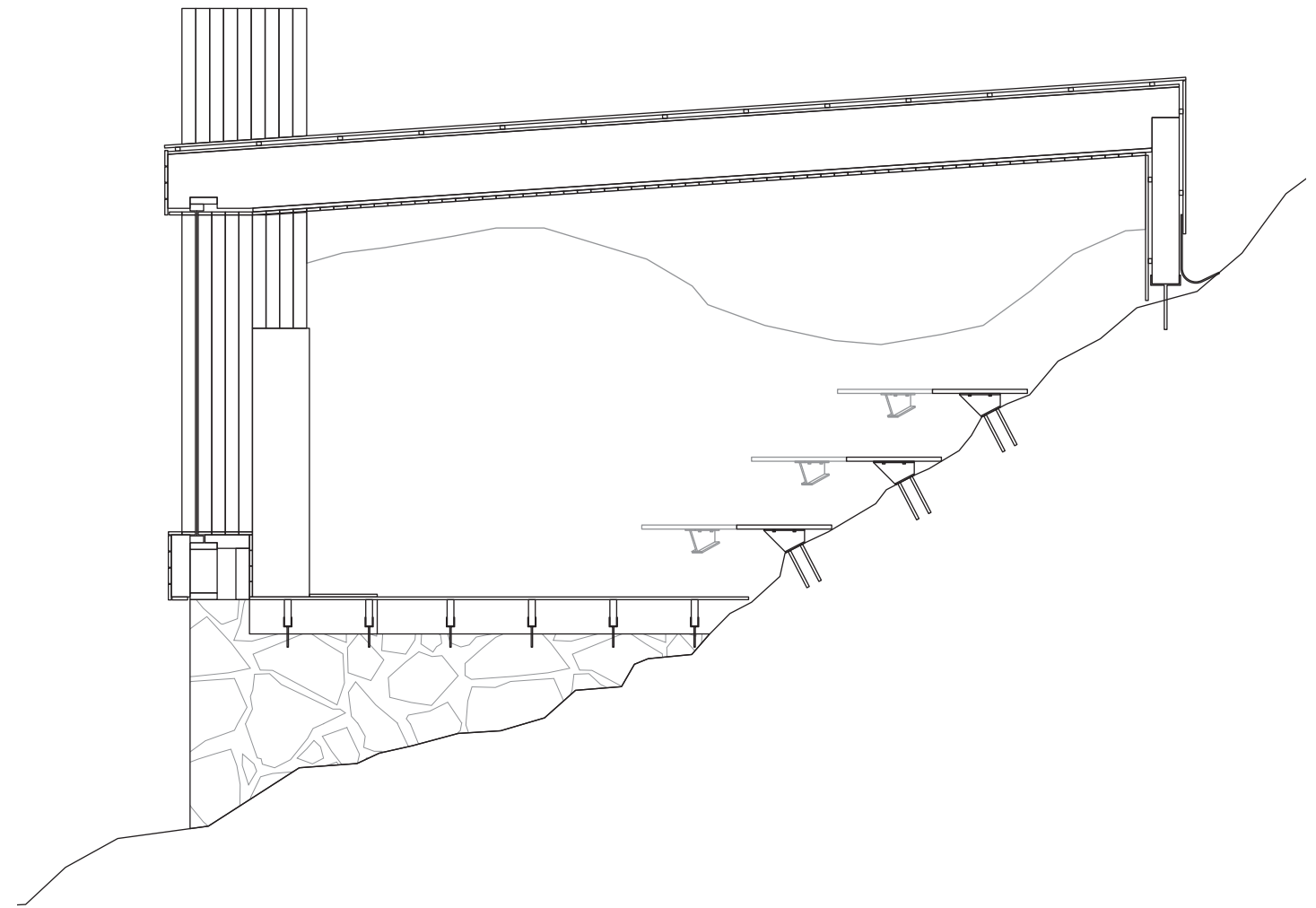
OCEANSPACE

Detail section  
1:50



REFUGE

Detail section  
1:50







V3



## Model photos

As the landscape has a central part in how architectural interventions relate to a site like this, a proper landscape model of the site was made in the early design phase. Due to the lack of digital material with high resolution of the site, and no possibility of making a 3D-scan using a drone as there are three overlapping flight restriction zones on the site, an analog technique was chosen. From visual observations, and photos taken of the site, the landscape model was chiseled out in wood on free hand. As this procedure was quite time consuming, it

was very rewarding in terms of required attention to the details of the landscape of the site. It was also in line with earlier mapping methods with focus on physical contact and presence on the site, to proceed this physical contact and value in time spent on the site, into the making of the model.

The model is made in scale 1:100 and measures 100 x 60 cm. Here, photographed with the final interventions; the Oceanspace and the Refuge, sitting *in place* on the site.



# REFLECTION DISCUSSION

## Some thoughts on a design process based on situated knowledge from mappings and recordings of a nature environment.

In the beginning of this thesis work, my ambitions were to investigate the relationship between nature and architecture with an open-ended mind set and approach to the process. As this uncertain beginning of a process can be rather scary, it is not unusual for architectural school projects to be conducted within this format. This type of process usually takes interesting turns and lands where one hardly could predict or imagine. Isn't that what makes it interesting?

My first thesis question has been functioning as a manifest of my aim with the general idea of suggesting architectural structures to an appreciated nature environment at all. I have a personal passion for nature experiences and often debate with myself when it comes to human interventions in nature environments, where the threshold is between convenient facilities to help the experience, and where they become too arranged and instead disturbs the pureness and tactility of the raw. As my conclusion in this debate with myself often lands in that raw is more preferable than convenient, and that any interventions will most likely decrease the nature qualities, this thesis has been a great opportunity to challenge myself to test the opposite. Hence the formulation of symbiotic promotiveness is key and pin points what I aim to achieve with my design.

It is a challenge to go into the investigation of how architecture could, or should, relate to nature. There are innumerable approaches to this questioning and for sure no right nor wrongs. What quite instant comes to my understanding though, is the subjectivity in this matter, and that my own perception and experience of investigated situations must have a central role. Simply as there is no such thing as objectivity in this regard. This realization can easily be put in a broader context of conventional architectural projects, and how subjective understanding of context is severely present in development of all projects. This subjective understanding can further be supported by a situated knowledge by the designer based on the awareness of one's own individual appearance within a certain context, within a certain time, etc. As the evaluation of this accumulated situated knowledge in many ways lacks language for formulation and definition in relation to the profession, very little focus and value is put into this, which is an issue for the architect corps to face. This reflection is regarded in the formulation of my second thesis question.

My mappings and recordings have been a way for me to situate myself in the context of Galterö and gaining knowledge from spending time on the site. I am aware that my project is developed from my perspective as an architecture student living in an urban context, with the experience of nature as something recreational in my life. I am also aware of my own agenda as an architecture student with a final goal of designing an architectural structure on the site, and that my chosen mapping exercises, and

how they have been conducted, have affected my observations, and further my understanding of the place.

The designed outcome is the resulting occurrence from above mentioned circumstances within the given timeframe of the master's thesis. As the design responds directly to my perception of Galterö, I am humble to accept that everyone might not agree with my intervention on the site, and that someone else redoing this project with similar method might end up with a totally different outcome. Though, I am convinced that the process of spending a lot of time on the site and physically engaging with it in various ways, is very important and enriching to any project, in any context. Thus, though some might not agree with the design outcome, I hope to spark the reflection upon situated knowledge and physical presence in architectural projects to be valued to a broader extent.



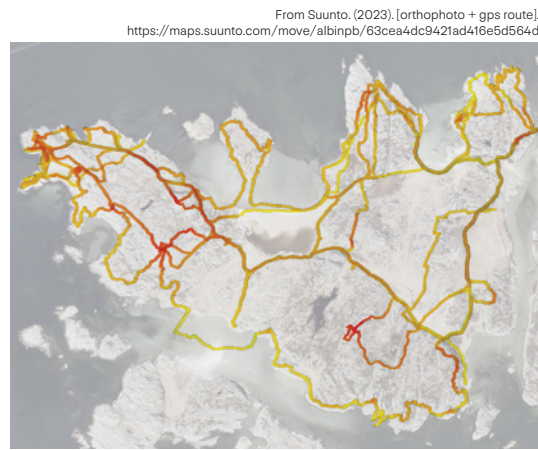
# APPENDIX

## Processing

As part of the initial outlined project process, a phase of processing was incorporated. A generative exercise where compiled mapping is looked at from different perspectives and interpretations, combinations, overlaps, intended misreadings, re-interpretations etc., are conducted. Kari Jormakka (2014) writes about *Accident and the unconscious as sources* and reflect upon how less controlled events can be useful as a tool in design processes. Through processing, events of random character are implemented with the aim to generate productive input to the further design process.

In the early design phase, some exercises of generative misreadings were conducted. As the timeframe didn't allow the outcome from these exercises to land strong, or close, enough in relation to the framework of my project, this material is put aside and instead displayed separately in this appendix.

However, I find this method interesting to work with as I have experience of it being critically productive in previous projects. What I have gained from it in this thesis work is that it led me to look into James Turrell's work as reference. And further, writings about Turrell's work and his skyspaces and how they are referred to as shelters that exposes, a way of formulating a function in the gradient between art and architecture very applicable to this thesis' intentions.



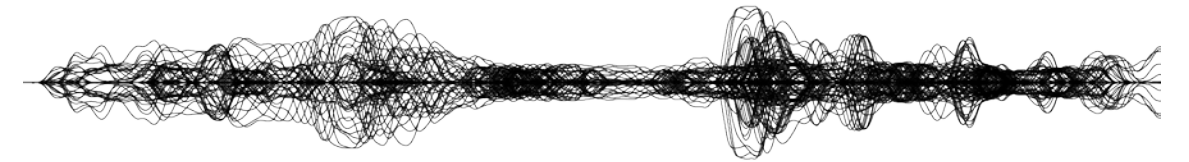
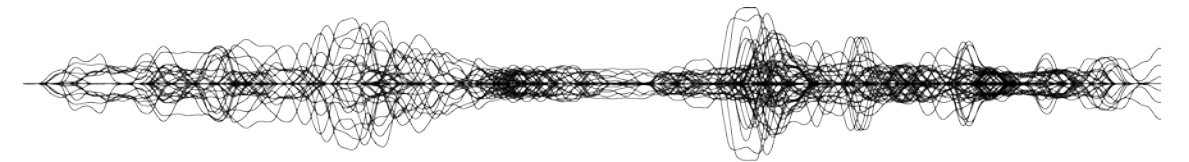
Compiled map of GPS-tracked movement paths throughout the initial four mapping exercises.



3D-printed mass-void model of GPS-tracked movement in the terrain of Galterö.



Wireframe elevation (south perspective) of generated mass-void model. Depth resolution: 25 curves.



Various depth resolutions of 25, 50 and 100 curves. Here vertically mirrored to suggest intentional generative misreadings.



Mirrored elevation line illustrated with color spectra in accordance to outline read as a wave length graph.



Smaller black and white gradients within the highs and lows of the graph. Illusion of pipes, volumetrically interpreted on next page.



Light and dark gradient with width.



Inspired by James Turrell, imagining the shape as a cut out in a volume framing the lit sky. Here facing west in the evening.

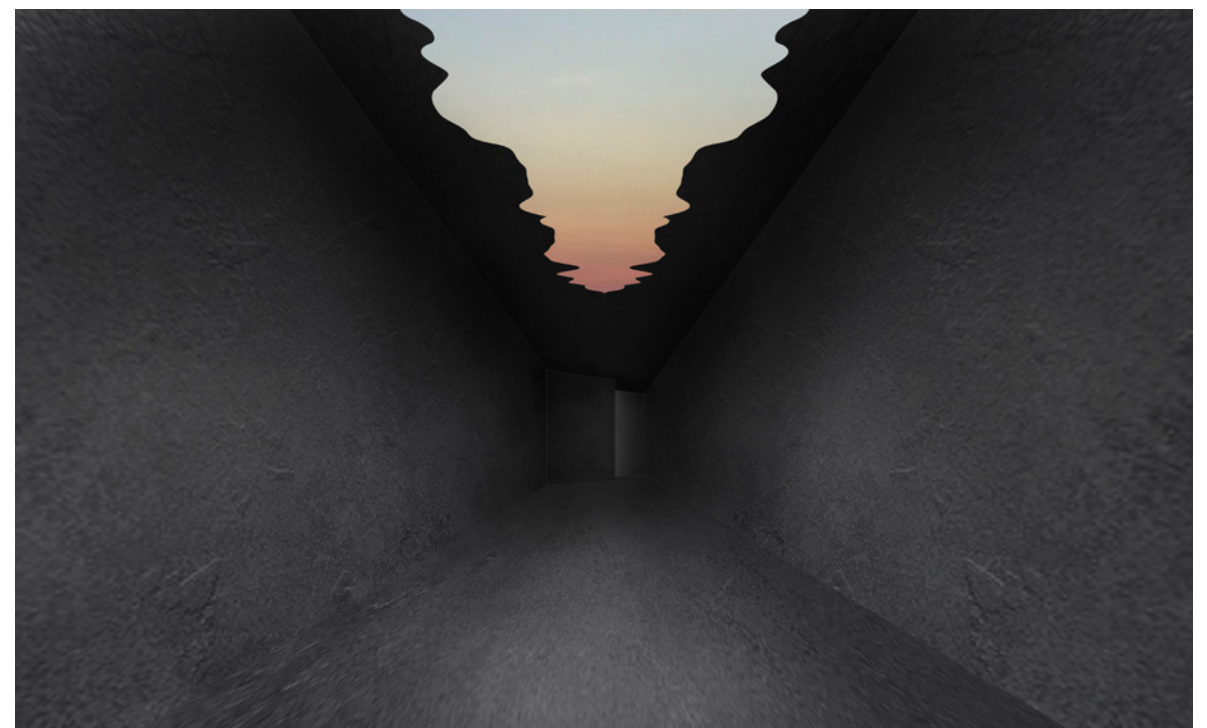


Same as above but facing east.



Second left graphic illustration volumetrically interpreted as a connected series of variously cut pipes.

Fourth left graphic illustration translated to a spatial experience with the meandering shape cut out in the ceiling.





Collage of entrance space emphasizing the landscape as well as framing the sky. With reference to James Turrell's work, this could be referred to as a "skyspace", here with an outline shaped by an interpretation of the landscape of Galterö.



Collage of arrival view to the site. Intervention sits humble, yet distinct, in the landscape to spark curiosity to the visitor for further exploration.



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# STUDENT BACKGROUND

## **Name**

Albin Pettersson Bråthe

## **Bachelor degree**

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architecture  
2016-2019  
Umeå School of Architecture

Erasmus exchange semester  
Spring 2018  
Aarhus School of Architecture

## **Internships/employments**

Architect intern  
Spring 2020  
*Kanozi Arkitekter*

Architect intern  
Fall 2020  
*Kjellgren Kaminsky Arkitektur*

Architect  
2021 –  
*Kaminsky Arkitektur*

## **Master studios at Chalmers**

Matter Space Structure 1  
Fall 2021

Housing Inventions  
Spring 2022





# IN PLACE

ALIBN PETTERSSON BRÅTHE  
MASTER'S THESIS 2023