



# Reactivate Kista

An examination of the urban environment  
in Kista Science City to increase perceived  
safety and activity in the public space.

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Thanks to..

Job van Eldijk  
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Family and Friends

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the emergence of perceived unsafety and low human activity in public space within monofunctional urban environments and explores how these phenomena are interconnected. The research is grounded on a case study of Kista Science City, one of Europe's biggest science and technology clusters, which currently is facing increasing signs of abandonment as companies relocate elsewhere.

The study investigates how public space can be designed to enhance perceived safety and activity by strategically placed interventions to catalyse urban vitality in Kista Science City that both encounter the current functions as well as the entering development. By integrating stakeholder perceptions through a conducted survey, the research examines how locally grounded knowledge can inform context sensitive design interventions.

The theoretical framework is based on urban theories related to public space, safety through architecture and urban acupuncture. To deepen the site analysis, the thesis examines the development logic of science and technology clusters and incorporates why stakeholder involvement should be used as a methodological tool in addressing complex design challenges. Furthermore, the design framework is based on practical guidelines

and frameworks from the same theories as the theoretical framework together with reference project and examples of science hubs.

Based on the frameworks, a concept providing a general vision and solution together with design guidelines are created directed towards increased perceived safety and activity. According to these, a design proposal is planned along Kistagången in Kista Science City, consisting of suggested possible implementations to catalyse wider effect locally in a realistic and strategic way.

Finally, the thesis concludes that design of public space serves a crucial role in the perception of safety in a neighbourhood. Also, the correlation between safety and activity is evident, emphasising the presence of people in the urban environment is critically important, both of which are currently lacking in Kista Science City. Lowering local barrier effects with architectural solutions can potentially contribute to improved perceived safety and activity in Kista Science City that eventually has a positive impact, restricting the escalation of abandonment. Despite the potential of the solution mentioned in this research, it is important to emphasise the complexity of the problem and that design implementation alone cannot solve the problem.

*Keywords: Urban Planning, Public Space, Safety, Urban Acupuncture, Monofunctional Areas, Science and Technology Clusters*

## Terminology

Safety	<i>A reaction that is created when humans read a physical environment in combination with their own experience.</i>
Public space	<i>Space accessible to all. Example parks, squares and streets.</i>
Semi-public space	<i>Space accessible to many people but still privately owned or controlled. Example shops.</i>
Third place	<i>A place that is made for spending spare time that neither is home nor work. Includes both public and semi-public spaces.</i>
Monofunctionality / Multifunctionality	<i>Organisation of urban space with one dominant function or land use versus multiple.</i>
Urban acupuncture	<i>Urban planning strategy by Jamie Lerner, focusing on strategic design implementation to catalyse wider transformation.</i>
Barrier effect	<i>Decreased movement and reduced connectivity caused by spatial division or infrastructure.</i>
Cluster	<i>Related functions and structure placed closely to each other</i>
S&T cluster	<i>Shortage for Science and Technology cluster, a neighbourhood, city or region with local concentration of technology and science.</i>

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# INTRODUCTION

## Background

**My first interaction with Kista Science City for a long time was a big contrast to my childhood memory. In the first time in eight years, I took a stroll through Kistagången, the street that connected every reason why I visited. Strong memories of eating in the mall food court looking at sporadic episodes of the comic Tom & Jerry, weekends at the fair and spending time in and around the building where my parent worked.**

**It's Friday, early lunch time in September, and the mall is crowded with people, but as soon as I enter the connecting square towards the Science City it's rapidly reduced. I walk pass the restaurant "Det arroganta svinet", nothing I remember I've visited in my past but I notice the strange opening hours. Tuesday to Thursday 11 to 13, that wasn't long. I took a spot on a bench in the sun, surprised to find myself sitting in the park, the most central part of Kista Science City, completely alone.**

## Context and problem

In Kista Science City, north of Stockholm, approximately 40 percent of the office buildings stand empty which emphasises the current problem of abandonment in the biggest science and technology cluster, S&T, in Sweden and one of the biggest in Europe. Companies that have been established during a long period, in some cases decades, start to empty their premises and move to other city parts. Ericsson, IBM, and KTH Campus Kista are some examples of big companies or institutions that are or have been established in the area, but today all of them are in the process of moving at least parts of their business elsewhere. The reason why companies leave is due to perceived unsafety in the urban environment. Furthermore, the problem tends to escalate as more companies relocate, leaving Kista Science City more depopulated which creates a negative spiral with parameters of abandonment and unsafety triggering each other (Dagens Nyheter, 2025).

## Perceived safety and urban activity

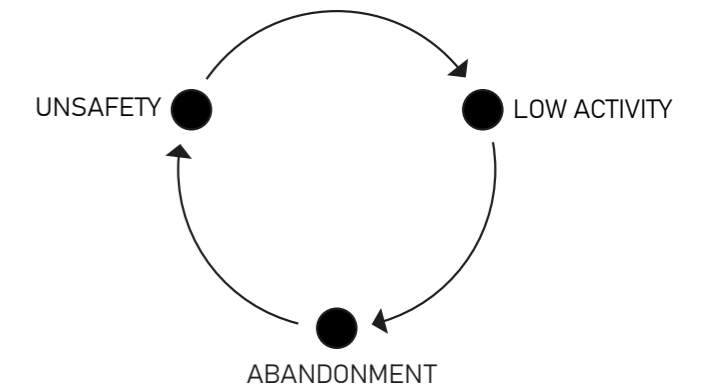
Safety is an ambiguous term and will in this thesis be understood in relation to fear of crime in urban environments, thereby focusing on perceived safety rather than actual crime rates (Boverket, 2025). This thesis is

theoretically grounded in urban theories, particularly regarding the relation between perceived safety, activity and their spatial connection with focus on public and semi-public space.

## Urban structure of Kista

The intention when building Kista was to design a destination that had access to work, housing and centre, named with the term ABC-city. In this way, the space of Kista can be divided into four different zones which are the residential area, Kista Science City, the centre and the green area (Stockholms stad, 1975). Since functions weren't mixed rather put adjacent to each other, strong zones of monofunctional areas were created where Kista Science City consists almost entirely of office buildings, parking lots and streets. In between the monofunctional zones in Kista there are deficient connections due to traffic infrastructure such as the highway E4 and the metro line which causes negative effects on possible movement, in this thesis called barrier effects. Moreover, there are other parameters acting as local barriers which will be further examined.

Regionally, Kista has strong connections to important nodes both within Stockholm city but also to adjacent municipalities. This was one important aspect when the area was planned,



to enable people to commute to the area even if they didn't live in Kista themselves which is visual in the local urban environment since the supply of parking lots are high as well as the integration in the public transport system. Another, and maybe the most important, aspect is the function of Kista Science City as an important long-term investment both regionally, nationally and even globally. Therefore, there is a high interest in preserving the usage of the structures and the branding as a S&T cluster but potentially in an adapted and more modern way (Stockholms stad, 1975).

## Representation and perception

According to the list of particularly vulnerable areas published by the Swedish police authority, Kista is not included, but some areas nearby like Husby, Rinkeby and Tensta, are which may have a negative effect on the district of observation. These areas are strongly affected by problems connected to segregation, injustice, unemployment and socioeconomic vulnerability (Polismyndigheten, 2025). Demographical data shows that these types of problems are not as extended in Kista as the vulnerable areas in proximity. Despite this, authorities tend to either connect Kista together with Rinkeby or Järva in its whole, as one compiled area which can be misleading since there are different types of city parts.

For example, that 9797 crimes were reported in Kista-Rinkeby the year 2021, doesn't necessarily tell how many of these crimes that happened in Kista, even less in Kista Science City. In that matter, the information tends to create more fear without a direct connection to the number of crimes (Stockholms stad, 2023).

Moa Tunström, lecturer in human geography, claims that urbanism is language and that the use of words affects the way we look at built environments. The selected terms associated to the site influences the picture among the society and can either praise or condemn (Tunström, 2014). The way Kista is portrayed today, especially by media, has a direct impact on the site, contributes to the negative perception and accelerates and reinforces the trend of abandonment.

### Research gap

Due to the problem of abandonment in Kista, there is a crucial need for increased perceived safety and activity in the urban environment. Furthermore, current plans from the municipality and local property owners have visions of transforming buildings to serve other functions, exploiting unbuilt ground with new neighbourhoods, extending public transport and contributing to a new district narrative, something that also needs

to be taken into consideration. At the same time, the interest of the S&T cluster remains, to preserve companies and institutions establishment together with fulfilling national and global purposes.

Something that yet haven't been fully explored is the possibilities in current public spaces to create a safer and more vital district. This project intends to explore that gap and discover the potential of such spaces with Kista Science City as a case study for research. By this, Reactivate Kista, investigates the correlation between safety and activity with design of public space and how it's connected to local barriers effects. The objective is to contribute with knowledge to enable redirection of the trend of abandonment in Kista Science City by grasping the perspective of safety in public spaces that both is useful for the district as it is today as well as the coming plans of development in near future.

This project is also about locating needs and experiences on site by connecting with stakeholders since the project is focusing on human perceptions and behaviours. By listening to local voices, information is collected to be used in the design process. All this, to ensure that space is provided for everyday life that aligns with the development of a safer and more active neighbourhood.

## Relevance for Sustainable Development

Social sustainability will be central in this research since the topic revolves around human perceived safety in urban environments and how this is connected to potential barriers.

There is also a strong economical connection since the financial assets for development in Kista is lower due to the deficient proof of secure financial investments.

Due to climate change, there is a big connection in how active and public space can increase resilience in urban districts to maintain relevant despite change of requirements and behaviour. By this, the risk of abandoned districts, that is both an environmental and financial disaster, could potentially decrease.

### SDG's

To ensure sustainable relevance, connections to relevant SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals formulated by the UN, are mentioned.

The connection to SDG goal number eleven will be the most relevant connection to work with since it's covering a lot of physical planned aims connected to social sustainability. It focuses on inclusion and sustainability for a more social, economic and ecological city. To promote urban space with safe and accessible

green and public space, that contributes to better city life. The goal also focuses on to provide safe space for all traffic users and promote sustainable transport as bicycle and walk that contributes to lower emissions but also have a positive effect on human health (Svenska FN-förbundet, 2023).

SDG goal number fifteen focuses on the ecological aspects of life on land. To preserve vital green space and to promote new possibilities for growth of ecosystem services, even in urban environments. To facilitate biodiversity and integrate ecosystem services in the planned environment to live in symbiosis with human life. Due to this, the planned space gain positive qualities for example to fill recreational values for social sustainability and increased human wellbeing (Svenska FN-förbundet, 2023).

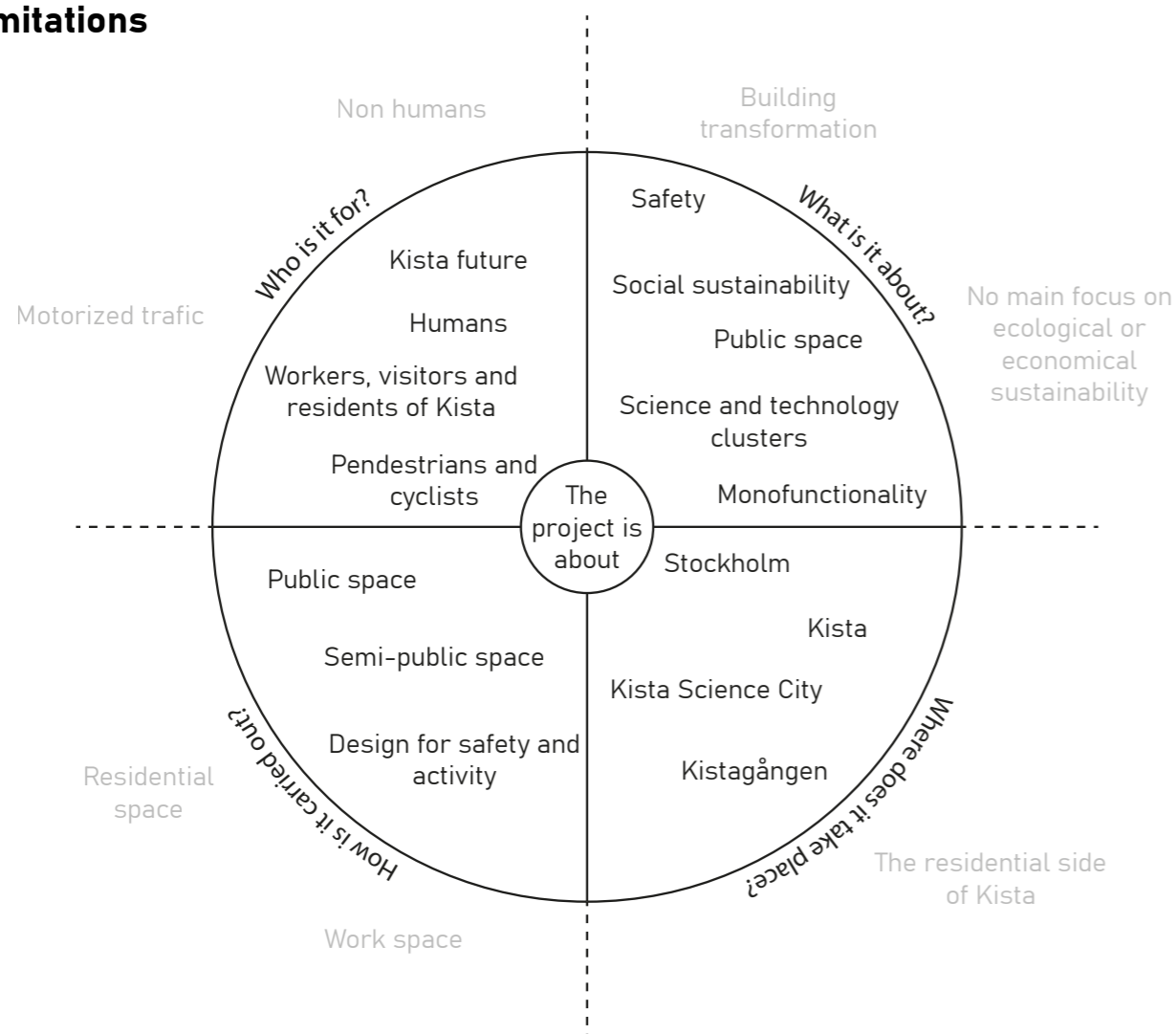
The relevance to SDG goal number three is covering the impact on human health. Aspects of safety and inclusion in the planned environment regarding public space. To provide well-being among the residents with possibilities to recreation, comfort and a healthy lifestyle (Svenska FN-förbundet, 2023).

## Purpose

The essential purpose of the thesis is to contribute to a positive development in Kista Science City to enable future existence and contribute to recovery of its reputation as an important node of developing science and technology.

Another crucial aspect is to gain knowledge in the connection between public space design and local barriers and how it affects perceived safety and activity.

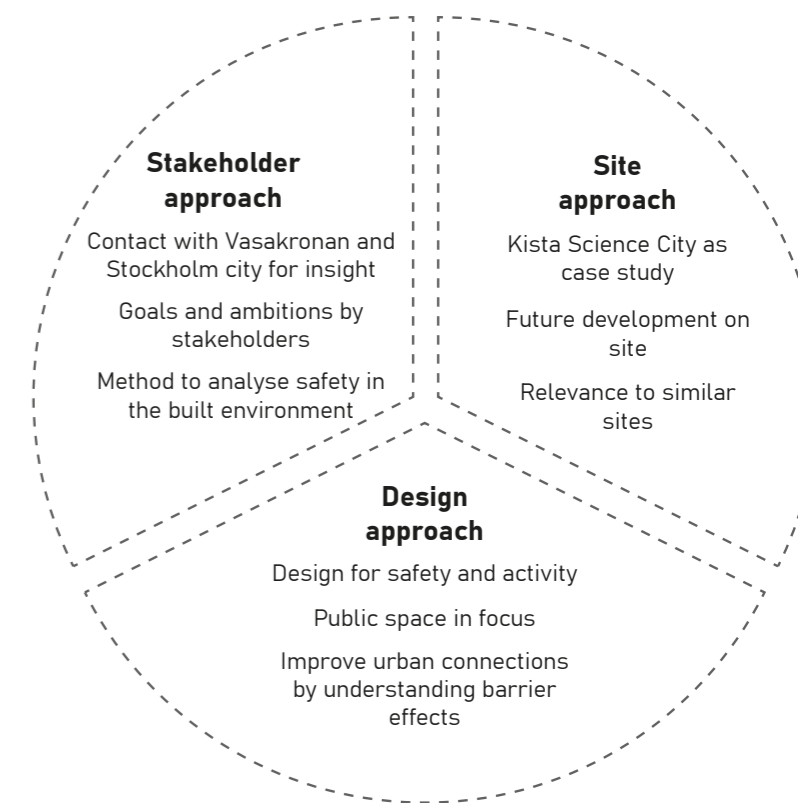
## Delimitations



## Aim and research question

This research examines the emergence of abandonment in monofunctional science and technology clusters based on the case study of Kista Science City. The aim of this master thesis is to investigate the correlation between safety and public space in such environments by finding concrete causes and solutions. The problem will be managed by incorporating three approaches, the site, the stakeholder and the design, to increase the understanding of the problem, identify local experiences and find possible solutions.

By implementing design interventions in chosen acupuncture nodes, the project strives to catalyse increased safety and activity in Kista Science City that remains relevant both in the current situation as well as in near future with external development taken into consideration. The research also explores the possibility of gaining knowledge from stakeholders when managing with problems connected to human experience.



**RQ 1. Design tool to increase safety in public spaces**

**How can design be used to enhance perceived safety and activity in public space?**

**RQ 2. Public space in Kista Science City**

**How can design interventions along Kistagången increase safety and activity in Kista Science City?**

**RQ 3. Increased safety by stakeholder objectives**

**How can local stakeholder perceptions and experiences be collected and used to create safer more active public spaces?**

# THEORY

## Creation of good public space

Public space defines the character of a city and serves an important role in our built environment though it provides room that is accessible for all. It's providing space for city life to happen and can be in many different forms such as streets, squares, parks, in between spaces, sidewalks and more. Public space creates a network which the whole city relies on though it improves life, mobility and function (UN-Habitat, 2019).

**“Public spaces – including streets – are, and must be seen as, multi-functional areas for social interaction, economic exchange and cultural expression among a wide diversity of people. It is for urban planning to establish and organize these public spaces, and for urban design to facilitate and encourage their use, in the process enhancing a sense of identity and belonging. Safety and security are important dimensions to be considered in any such design, together with vital infrastructure (water, energy and communications).” - Global Public tool kit Pg 4.**

### Jane Jacobs - the Street and the Four conditions

In the book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs explains how a well-functioning city with a vibrant and active environment relies on the street room. Active streets with high presence by residents, shops and pedestrians create a sense of safety and comfort that makes urban life thrive. The author expresses the importance of the street condition and how it affects the whole view of the neighbourhood that either can glorify or destroy the impression (Jacobs, 2020).

Jacobs also expresses the street as a central role for public space in the city and claims that sidewalks are not only made for transport by feet, rather making contact with people. The width of the sidewalk is crucial since extra space provides bigger possibilities to meet and that the more popular a street is, the wider it should be (Jacobs, 2020).

The author has created four conditions that are necessary to create a vibrant, active and healthy urban neighbourhood. These are the need of mixed primary uses, short blocks, varying conditions and age of buildings and sufficient dense of people (Jacobs, 2020).

The first condition highlights the importance

of diversity with mixed-use, where public space is one of the important parts together with residential, office and commercial spaces though it increases the use of the urban setting over the whole day. She argues that diversity stimulates and permits more diversity and that a lively city is created in its supply of small elements. These elements, or attractions, should lead the people further though the neighbourhood in an easy way. The second point advances the implementation of short blocks as a design element to create a more vital city with more possible routes and intersection points to increase possible meetings and safety. Moreover, the third condition embraces the meaning of varying conditions and age of buildings to increase social diversity and strengthen diversity of spaces. Lastly in the fourth condition, Jacobs explains that vital neighbourhoods require enough density of people that can use and activate the public space (Jacobs, 2020).

Jacobs mentions small enterprises as an important provider of public space and that these require closeness to the people to survive, to enable the continuation of them supporting the neighbourhood. Moreover, the meaning of diversity of public space is clarified and includes not only commercial activities, but also social, economic and ecological diversity (Jacobs, 2020).

### Ray Oldenburg – the Third place

In the book, *The Great Good Place*, Ray Oldenburg introduces the concept of the third place. The third place is consisting of a physical site where you go to that is neither your home (first place) nor work (second place), it is semi-public and public space. He argues that these third places are crucial for the city where people can interact and shape community. A third place should preferably be providing neutral ground where anyone can go and feel safe, to interact with people and take part of qualities that can't be found at home nor at work. Neutrality is important since conversation and quality time is the main activity, to create a gathered society that cares about their neighbourhood. The author argues that households alone can't create a whole community and that third places are required to maintain people and make them

**“A man works in one place, sleeps in another, shops somewhere else, finds pleasure and companionship where he can, and cares about none of these places”- Ray Oldenburg Pg 4.**

feel comfortable (Oldenburg, 2023). Importantly is the matter of time and location, meaning the third place should be easy to access and be open when people have time. This enables both the third place to survive economically but also the visitor to be able to make a visit and connect. A third place does not necessarily need to consist of a commercial activity but can also be other sites for informal public life such as parks, streets, squares, in-between spaces and etcetera (Oldenburg, 2023).

There are many positive aspects of intertwining public space in the city though it reduces stress within the urban environment and enable a less expensive and car centred life for the people. Oldenburg informs how more effort were put into the third places during the industrialisation, when work and home was the same, and mentions that later created public spaces tend to lack this kind of extra effort. Meanwhile, he also emphasizes the need of homeness, a home away from home, and that third places should have a quit low profile, not to modern or luxurious. Then the third place becomes a form of formal public space that is not as accessible as informal ones (Oldenburg, 2023).

The author examines examples of successful third places such as the Viennese coffeehouse,

the main street, the French cafe and the English pub. All these are providing informality, neutral ground, and possibilities for meetings in an accessible way that Oldenburg claims to be crucially important (Oldenburg, 2023). Moreover, other examples that are not oriented around consumption could be added in a more modern setting such as libraries, community centres, outdoor gyms, playgrounds and parks.

## Safety through architecture

There are direct connections between architecture and safety which provides possibilities to effect human behaviour and perception of space through the built environment. The definition of safety is ambiguous and therefore important to clarify in relevance to this thesis. The definition from Boverket is that safety is a reaction that is created when humans read a physical environment in combination with their own experience. Unsafety would in that sense occur when humans are feeling threatened or experiencing fear (Boverket, 2025).

**“By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities “- UN-Habitat, 2019. SDG goal number 11, Safe cities and communities, target 11.7.**

## Boverket – directions from the state

Boverket, the Swedish national authority for planning, building and housing, has directions how to maintain and increase safety in the built environment. They advocate that the physically built environment must be adapted in certain ways to decrease fear of, and possibilities of crimes. On the other hand, it's emphasized that physical adaption is rarely enough and therefore they intend that other methods need to be used as well such as increased knowledge, by problem and context analysis, and cooperation between stakeholders (Boverket, 2025).

CPTED, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, is an evidence-based design how to adapt the physical environment do decrease fear of, and possibilities of crimes. The method is shaped to decrease fear, strengthening community and aggravate crimes by presenting six principals. These are territoriality, activating the site, surveillance, access control, image and aggravation of crime. To activate a site, Boverket suggest mixed use and a spread of activities in the neighbourhood, especially in exposed areas (Boverket, 2025).

Moreover, Boverket examines two specific spaces, where one of them is parks and other

green area. They argue that implementation of green space is important for human health though it provides better wellbeing by reducing stress, space for interaction and recreation. Despite this, the experience of this type of area is varying through the day and season. Therefore, it's crucial to adapt the site to feel safe even in darkness and during winter. They also highlight the implementation of lighting and surveillance as effective tools for improved safety (Boverkett, 2025).

### **Jane Jacobs - the Eyes on the Street**

One theory of how design influences safety is Jane Jacobs' concept of "Eyes on the Street," which emphasizes the importance of natural surveillance in the city. The author explains that darkness and emptiness, especially on the street that Jacobs claims to be the main public space, attracts crimes and creates unsafety. The street is where the everyday life happens and the trust to a city is built on many small public meetings on the sidewalk. If a bad situation occurs, there is a risk that trust will decrease rapidly (Jacobs, 2020).

Jacobs state that unpersonal street rooms create anonymous people that decrease the possibility to public meetings and that it's not connected to aesthetics, rather what enterprises that ties the street movement

together. These enterprises are represented by small scale businesses that not only provide diverse services, but they also have direct contact with the street. In that sense the street becomes safer because there's always someone that can step in if something happens. Besides, these shop owners also have the highest of interest in keeping the streets safe since it's crucial for their business (Jacobs, 2020).

Moreover, the power of flow is mentioned and that the street requires movement by people all over the day. This is why diversity is so important, to have access to users that appear differently and requires different needs, both to support the small businesses economically but also from a safety aspect, because crimes and unsafety occurs when no one is looking (Jacobs, 2020).

In the book, it's mentioned about the importance of recognition and for residents to know their neighbours to feel safe. It doesn't necessarily mean that you need to talk to everybody but that an overrepresentation of anonymity tends to make you feel more unsafe (Jacobs, 2020).

### **Oscar Newman - Four key principals**

The designing of space can reduce crimes and increase the sense of safety in a neighbourhood. In the book *Defensible Space*, Oscar Newman identifies four key principals that are useful when designing urban environments which are territoriality, natural surveillance, image/milieu and safe adjoining areas. The first principal emphasizes the importance of territory, the feeling of ownership of space, boundaries and clear definitions whether if it's public, semi public or private. The second one is describing natural surveillance, the possibility for the residents to easily keep "the eyes on the street". This is affected by structural placement, lightning and windows placement, all to create visibility. The third one is lifting the sense of care and order to maintain attractivity in the area to increase safety. Lastly, the author emphasises the importance of considering the surrounding context and the potential implementation of buffer zones to protect the neighbourhood (Newman, 1972).

Based on the previous book, Newman created Design guidelines for creating defensible space, where he continues the concretization how to shape safe neighbourhoods. The importance of creating smaller clusters

to improve the sense of belonging and implementing semi-public space where these people can meet naturally (Newman, 1976).

### **Wekerle and Whitzman - guidelines for planning, design and management**

Gerda R. Wekerle and Carolyn Whitzman argue that safety in the city should be seen as a human right and not a privilege. In their book *Safe Cities: Guidelines for Planning, Design, and Management*, they explain safety in the city from a gender perspective since women are often more easily exposed in public spaces, either experiencing violence or being afraid of it. By increasing safety for women in the urban environment, safety increases for all (Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995).

The authors claim that fear of crime is a more common problem than crime itself in urban contexts. Therefore, they focus more on how to decrease fear and not as much as direct ideas to aggravate crimes. The fear is discussed in a public space context and occurs when the person feels alone and/or exposed which increases when it's dark (Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995).

Thus, physical design guidelines are developed for implementation on the built environment,

thereby extending earlier theory by structuring three areas which is awareness of the environment, visibility by others and finding help. Firstly, awareness of the environment is explained by designing to understand space. This includes aspects of lighting, sightlines and entrapment spots. Secondly, to be visible by others provide a sense of safety and feeling of not being isolated. This is implemented by movement predictors, mixed land use and activity generators. Lastly, the possibility to find help is important to feel that there is assistance if needed. Before portable telephones, accessibility to a phone booth could a useful implementation (Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995).

Moreover, a completion with social design guidelines is described to engage residents, increase social responsibility and encourage collaboration between stakeholders. This is the aspect of territoriality and increases sense of ownership, care and pride that create better condition neighbourhoods (Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995).

### Ray Oldenburg – the Third Place and Safety

Ray Oldenburg gives another perspective of the connection between architecture and safety in his book *The Great Good Place*. He intends that

implementation of informal public space in the city that serve as neutral ground and provide social safety. This empowers the possibilities of meetings, lowers the number of strangers and decreases the risk of social abandonment (Oldenburg, 2023). This perspective handles another type of unsafety, fear of loneliness and social isolation, Jacobs, Oldenburg and Wekerle and Whitzman mainly connects unsafety to fear of crime or accidents.



### The science hub

The science and technology cluster, S&T clusters also called science hub or innovation district, depends on local concentration of science and technology with innovation and science publications. The clusters are ranked by the Global Innovation Index, GII, where two aspects are taken into consideration. The first one, identified by the location of inventors and the second one includes listed authors in scientific articles (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2024).

The function of the science and technology cluster is both economical and structural, to support and connect all other innovation within the nation and in that sense serve as an innovation ecosystem. The cluster also serves an important role globally where innovation and knowledge can be shared and create opportunities for cooperation between nations (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2024).

Spatially, a S&T cluster can consist of a part of a city up to a whole region depending on the context where one of the most known ones is Silicon Walley, San Jose-San Fracisco USA, resulting in the 6:th place in global ranking. Stockholm, where Kista becomes an important part of, is ranked in 40:th place globally with LM Ericsson as the top applicant and Karolinska Institutet as top organisation.

In a ranking of intensity, where relation to population is considered, Kista is on the 14:th place globally (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2024).

In the book *Från Runor till Radiovågor*, the development of Kista Science City as an important part of Stockholm S&T cluster is described. The specification in Kista is mainly Information and Communication Technology, ICT, and serves an important global role for mobile telephony worldwide since it is one of the biggest clusters in Europe of this kind. Kista Science City serves an important economical role with good regional connections, office buildings, laboratories and established relations that are worth preserving. Despite this, the authors also emphasize future needs to remain global relevance, to increase the field of specification and enhance the collaboration with academy. They also mention, already in the year 2011, the need of local activity in Kista, to diverse and develop to maintain relevant (Björklind Bengtsson, 2011).

Other examples of big S&T clusters are Saclay in Paris, 22@Innovation district in Barcelona, MADBIT in Madrid, Pangyo Techno Valley in Seoul and Adlershof in Berlin (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2024).

City:	Stockholm	Barcelona		
Site:	Kista Science City	@innovation district	Superblocks	Parc del Poble Nou
Time, day, weather:	10-16, Wed, cloudy	13-15, Sat, sunny	18-23, Fri, clear	10-13, Sun, sunny
Type of environment / room:	S&T cluster	S&T cluster	District	Parc
Connection to city low - high:	Medium (outside ctr)	High (near ctr)	High (in ctr)	Medium (near ctr)
Flow low - high:	Medium	Medium	High	Medium high
Type of movement:	Passing	Stopping	Mixed	Mostly stopping
Activity low - high:	Low	Medium high	High	High
Mono - multifunctional area:	Monofunctional	Multifunctional	Multifunctional	Multifunctional
Programed - spontaneous:	Programed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
Users:	Workers, adults, cars	All, less cars	All, less for kids	All
Activity mix low - high:	Low	High	High	High
Percieved safety low - high:	Medium	High	Medium high	Medium
Why:	Lack of activity, few meeting spaces, very limited open hours	High activity, sight, mix of structures and people	High activity, light, sight, but partly a lot of traffic	Bad sight, lot of homeless, no enterprices
Relevance to Kista Science City:	-	Same type of district	Crossing and street	Playground
Current work with safety and activity:	Multifunctionality, public transport	Multifunctionality, green-blue structure, smart city project	-	-

	Madrid			Gothenburg
Parc Diagonal Mar	MADBit District	Madrid Rió	AZCA / RENAZCA	Lindholmen
16-18, Sat, sunny	10-13, Thu, sunny	18-20, Thu, clear	14-15, Thu, sunny	10-11, mon, cloudy
Parc	S&T cluster	Parc	S&T cluster	S&T cluster
Medium high (near ctr)	Medium (outside ctr)	Medium high (near ctr)	High (in ctr)	Medium
Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium low
Mostly stopping	Mixed	Mostly stopping	Stopping	Passage
Medium	Medium low	High	Medium high	Low
Multifunctional	Multifunctional	Multifunctional	Multifunctional	Monofunctional
Mixed	Programed	Mixed	Mixed	Mostly programed
All	Workers, adults, cars	All	All	Workers, students
High	Medium	High	High	Low
Medium high	Medium high	High	High	Medium low
Bad sight, no enterprices	Many cars but still many enterprices and meetingspots	Good sight, high activity and enterprices	Good sight, high activity, mix of structure, no cars	Light, activity, scale, empty, monofunctional
Green area	Same type of district	Green area and play	Same type of district	Same type of district
-	Multifunctionality, light, smart city project	-	Third places, greenery, multifunctionality etc.	Multifunctionality and connection to the city

## Introduction

To increase my knowledge about S&T clusters and the examples of planning of public and semi-public space in such districts, a small comparisment was made between Kista Science City and a few other tech districts. In connection to the thesis, a trip was made to visit the two biggest S&T clusters in Spain, Barcelona and Madrid. To get more inspiration in the creation of safe and active urban environments, other interesting public and semi-public rooms where visited and examined.

Lastly, a shorter visit was made to Lindholmen Innovation district, to enable comparisons between Kista Science City and another swedish S&T cluster.

## Purpose

Explore examples of S&T clusters to increase the understanding of the district type, discover public and semi-public space within these areas from an activity and safety perspective.

### Visited S&T hubs

- Kista Science City
- 22@ Innovation District, Barcelona
- MADBit District (Julian Camarillo / San Blas-Canillejas), Madrid
- Azca/Renazca District, Madrid
- Lindholmen

### Other visited public spaces

- Superblocks, Barcelona
- Madrid Rio, Madrid
- Parc Diagonal Mar, Barcelona

- Parc del Poble Nou, Barcelona

## Result

See diagram.

## Conclusion

The typology, science and technology clusters, is an important place for innovation and research and require established companies and communication with academic institutions. By comparison of different science hubs, it was evident that the typology doesn't has to be monofunctional to function and that there is a common strive towards multifunctionality today in all the observed examples. Despite this, many office dense neighbourhoods still form clear monofunctional zones which easily can be perceived as unsafe with low activity at certain times. Notably, is the increased

risk of exposure towards S&T clusters that have longer distance to the city centre since less people generally pass in the suburbs. By observing the perceived safety and activity level, based on my personal experiences on site, but also through information written on websites of the S&T clusters, unsafety in public spaces, due to low activity among other things, is common in these areas and a challenge that many of the mentioned examples are coping with presently. Two sites that was extra inspiring to visit was the 22@Innovationdistrict in Barcelona, where they used green- blue-structure and invited users of public spaces take part of the smart city, and AZCA/RENAZCA in Madrid where they have built a big park between the big office buildings with activities, green- blue-structure and smaller buildings in human scale.

## Visited S&T clusters



## Involving stakeholders in design processes

### Wicked problems

Since the situation in Kista is complex, involving many layers, different structures and groups of people, the design solution can be shaped by observing the issue as a wicked problem. This is a perspective by Rittel and Webber that meant that in design problems where there is unclarity between goal and solution, the understanding and knowledge increases in parallel with trying to solve it. They argue that design could be understood as negotiations and emphasises the importance of finding solutions together with other that are involved in the process (Lundequist, 1992).

The idea of the wicked problem became central within the second generation of the development of design theories between 1962-1982 where focus was shifted to complexity and how a problem is treated rather than fully defined in advance (Lundequist, 1992).

This supports my approach of involving stakeholder perspective in the thesis, to ensure that my perspective as an architect is collateral with the other involved to provide a realistic design solution. These groups are property owners, the municipality, local initiatives and citizens of Kista which all have strong attachment to the site. By listening to local stakeholder perspective and keep

communication during the process, I will both be provided with more knowledge to use in my design and make sure we have common grounds to handle the wicked problem.

The use of the term is still applicable in today's design processes, to emphasise that design demands dialogue, involvement and iteration, not only by the designers themselves but also by involving others. What can be added is that, rather than defining design problems as inherently wicked, design can instead be understood as a way of approaching and framing complex situations (Lundequist, 1992).

### Involving stakeholders

The second reason of involving stakeholders is directly attached to the physical space and to locate why it's unsafe and where. To apply the knowledge of the users of the space I will get more concrete reasons connected to the environment while persisting in my role as the architect and the one taking the design decisions.

In the third generation of the development of design theories, design is described as contextual and bound to practice, meaning that it is not created only from analysis but also through interaction with users and situations (Lundequist, 1992).

## Urban acupuncture

### A concept by Jamie Lerner

The concept *Urban Acupuncture*, founded by Jamie Lerner and presented in his book *Urban Acupuncture*, is the possibility to catalyse development by interventions in intersection points that trigger positive change (Lerner, 2014).

The scale of the interventions can differ, despite often being smaller in size, with focus on strategic placing to spark wider improvements. There is also an economical aspect of urban acupuncture, to implement simple and cheap solutions to enable change without big assets, to create possibilities for development in neighbourhoods that don't have big financial prerequisites (Lerner, 2014).

**”Good acupuncture is about drawing people out to the streets and creating meeting places. Mainly, it is about helping the city become a catalyst of interactions between people.” - Jamie Lerner p. 47**

In urgent need for change, Lerner suggests implementation of temporal solutions rather than prolonged, complex processes (Lerner, 2014). This is also a way to try new uses of the space to ensure effectivity before implementing expensive design and in that sense provide a more secure result of the design process. This perspective is even more central in another, closely related, concept called *Tactical Urbanism* that complement Lerner's ideas, where the main idea is to proof efficiency before investing in expensive structure (Lydon & Garcia, 2015). Lerner mentions the importance of letting planning processes take time since it's involving many actors and problems but encourage precise and quick design implementation to provide new energy to the space (Lerner, 2014).

The author also examines the importance of triggering chain reactions and that the goal necessarily is not the design itself rather the following reaction. All this to encourage interactions, attract activities and inspire future development in adjacent areas (Lerner, 2014).

Urban acupuncture aims to activate low activity spaces to create increased safety and social connections. By this, earlier unused space reclaims its dignity, and becomes a space for vitality that attract people. He also mentions

the street as a crucially important public space and emphasises the need of multifunctionality to ensure multiple use over time (Lerner, 2014).

Lerner writes about activity in relation to safety and that they are strongly connected and bound to each other. Activity creates safety but safety attract more activity. Lerner argues that design alone does not necessarily attract people, rather people attract people. Activity is also described to be dependent on mobility though better access create more use and vitality (Lerner, 2014).

He expresses the importance of connecting with the space and making the identity visual, something that makes people feel pride and a sense of belonging. This category enables local initiatives which could intertwine knowledge of local stakeholders with the urban environment (Lerner, 2014).

Some possible design components that can be provided in public spaces mentioned by the author is light, water elements (acupuncture), vegetation, multifunction, a vision of self-esteem and connections. Examples of functions that can be used is for example seating space, parks, playgrounds, sidewalks or bicycle paths, eating spaces, art and local initiatives.

**“The city is an integrated structure of life and work. The city is a melting pot of human activities. The more you blend income, ages, and activities the more human the city becomes.” - Jamie Lerner p.63**

## Summary and reflection

By lifting different topics of relevance, knowledge is conducted to simplify the understanding of the problem, site and connection between these. Also, by considering different theories within the topic, a wider supply of perspectives is provided that enables combinations of solutions.

Regarding the public space theories, Jacobs and Oldenburg share many similarities such as their focus on public space for interaction and safety in everyday life. On the other hand, there are differences such as the place of focus, the street and neighbourhood in its whole versus the third place. Together, these two perspectives will be useful since they share values but covers different scales and provides different solutions that can be implemented in the design.

Concerning safety and architecture, many of the chosen theories share common foundations, which naturally leads to overlap and repetition. This is reasonable, as several of the later theories build directly on previous ones and thereby it's important to mention more than one. For example, CPTED was influenced by the work of Jacobs and Newman, and Wekerle and Whitzman have in their turn developed ideas that draw on CPTED. Despite of the age of the urban theories, they remain relevant, which is the reason that a major authority such as Boverket continues to promote them.

Key insights from the urban theories are that the design and planning of public space serve an important role regarding perceived safety which all the urban theories mentioned emphasise by proposing solutions. Jane Jacobs theory with the Four principals, serve an extra big role in the project and is complemented by Oldenburg's Third place and Wekerle and Whitzmans Guidelines for planning, design and management. The influence of Newmans Defensible space will be more used to indicate overlap but also as a comparison since his work serves is central within the topic. Some of the guidelines mentioned to be crucial and could serve an important role in this design project is the aspect of mixed use

and multifunctionality, natural surveillance, light/sight, activity generators, movement/ accessibility and building/block size.

Additionally, the value of stakeholder input and cooperation to create stronger community is mentioned, to increase knowledge and care for the site but also simplify the solving of a complex problem.

Moreover, the understanding of the urban typology is required. Therefore, it is important to inform about S&T clusters and mention examples to enable comparison to explore that they don't have to be perceived as unsafe with low activity.

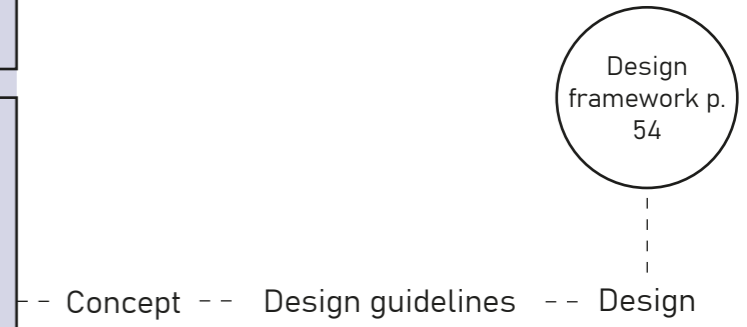
The introducing of Urban acupuncture is explained under theory but is also used as a method, in the following chapter.

In summary, there is a clear connection between safety and public space since they are closely connected and improvements in one enhances the other. Also, the implementing of stakeholder engagement seems to support safety since it's mentioned more than once that it increases responsibility and care for the site.

The theoretical framework creates an important foundation regarding the development of Kista Science City in a try to increase activity and perceived safety in public environments.

# Theoretical framework

	Subjects to analyse	Main theory	Supporting theory	Other reference	Methods
<b>How can design be used to enhance perceived safety and activity in public space?</b>	Activity by public space Safety through architecture Urban acupuncture Swedish guidelines for safety in urban environments	Theory: Jacobs four conditions Theory: Newmans Defensible space Theory: Urban acupuncture	Theory: Third place Theory: Wekerle & Whitzmans Guidelines for planning, design, and management Theory: Tacticle urbanism Website: Boverket		Literature studies Reference projects Urban acupuncture
<b>How can design interventions along Kistagången increase safety and activity in Kista Science City?</b>	Context: Kista Science City Current plans and wishes Barrier effects	Article: van Eldijk, J., Gil, J., & Marcus, L. (2022)		Stockholm city's website etc. Material from Vasakronan & Stockholm city	Demographical data Context analysis Space syntax Site visit Literature studies
<b>How can local stakeholder perceptions and experiences be collected and used to create safer more active public spaces?</b>	Perceived unsafety on site Stakeholder opinions in design processes		Wicked problems	Stakeholders on site	Survey Literature studies



# METHOD

## DESIGN

### URBAN ACUPUNCTURE

### LITERATURE STUDIES

Academic references and theories supporting design suggestions.

### REFERENCE PROJECTS

Built references to inspire and evaluate wished qualities to implement at the site. To promote creative ideas, structure knowledge and find possible connections

### REFERENCE PROJECTS S&T CLUSTERS

Visit four cities, Stockholm, Gothenburg, Barcelona and Madrid, to observe S&T clusters for observation, evaluation and comparison. See p. 22.

## SITE

### LITERATURE STUDIES

Searching information about the type of environment, site and the development.

### SITE VISIT

Exploration of the site through my perspective and inventories of the existing. Collecting photographs and note possible findings.

### CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Analysing the context to increase the understanding of the site to enable development with the new design. Use of QGIS and OpenStreetMap to gather quantitative data. The analyses of the site is also be made through my own observations and stakeholder mapping.

### SPACE SYNTAX

Quantitative method.

### DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA

Quantitative method.

### BARRIER EFFECTS

Qualitative method.

## STAKEHOLDER

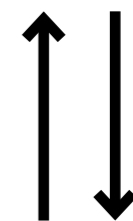
### SURVEY

Interviews, stakeholder mapping and stakeholder groups. Taking use of participatory methods to increase knowledge about the problem, the site and possible input to a solution. See p. 73.

### LITERATURE STUDIES

Academic references and theories supporting implementation of stakeholder engagement.

RESEARCH BY DESIGN



DESIGN BY RESEARCH

The selected methods support a design process that combines design by research and research by design, as the study draws on both quantitative and qualitative data to develop and evaluate design that enhance activity and safety.

## Space syntax

Angular integration visualizes how integrated a street is within the network and indicates segregated and integrated areas. The maps are showed by connected lines, representing the motorized and non-motorized street network, in different colours where red is the most integrated and blue is the most segregated (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

Angular betweenness visualizes the shortest possible way between points in the network. The maps are showed by connected lines in colours of different strength from light to dark, where the dark one is representing the shortest possible path (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

The two networks are showing different types of traffic where the motorized layer is representing cars, busses and trucks while the non-motorized layer shows pedestrians and bicycles. The importance of analysing the two layers is crucial for the understanding of the site since the networks are representing fundamentally different patterns of experience, movement, speed, distance and accessibility (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

In Space Syntax, the radius defines the scope of the network and reflects on local vs global connectivity. The different distances limit the possible number of connections and flow within the chosen radius. A shorter radius,

such as 2km, would indicate on a more local movement within the network while a longer radius, such as 5km, would be described as more global. In this way, the network is observed from two different perspectives describing the street's function and importance within the limited measurement (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

Depending on the size of the network that is used while analysing, the result will differ since information is cut off together with the removed part of the network. In this way, parts of the network can be put in to focus by making a clip out of the area and analysing only those streets from a local perspective. In contrast with changing the radius, where all information is preserved in the analyse but limited by distance or steps, clip out of a network removes everything surrounding (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

## Urban acupuncture

A design strategy by Jamie Lerner to implement strategic interventions to catalyse wider effects. Furtherly explained in p. 18.

## Summary and reflection

The use of methods is selected to encounter the approaches design, site and stakeholder and to receive a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data. Common in all approaches is the importance of literature studies, to ensure strong theoretical connection that is based on previous research.

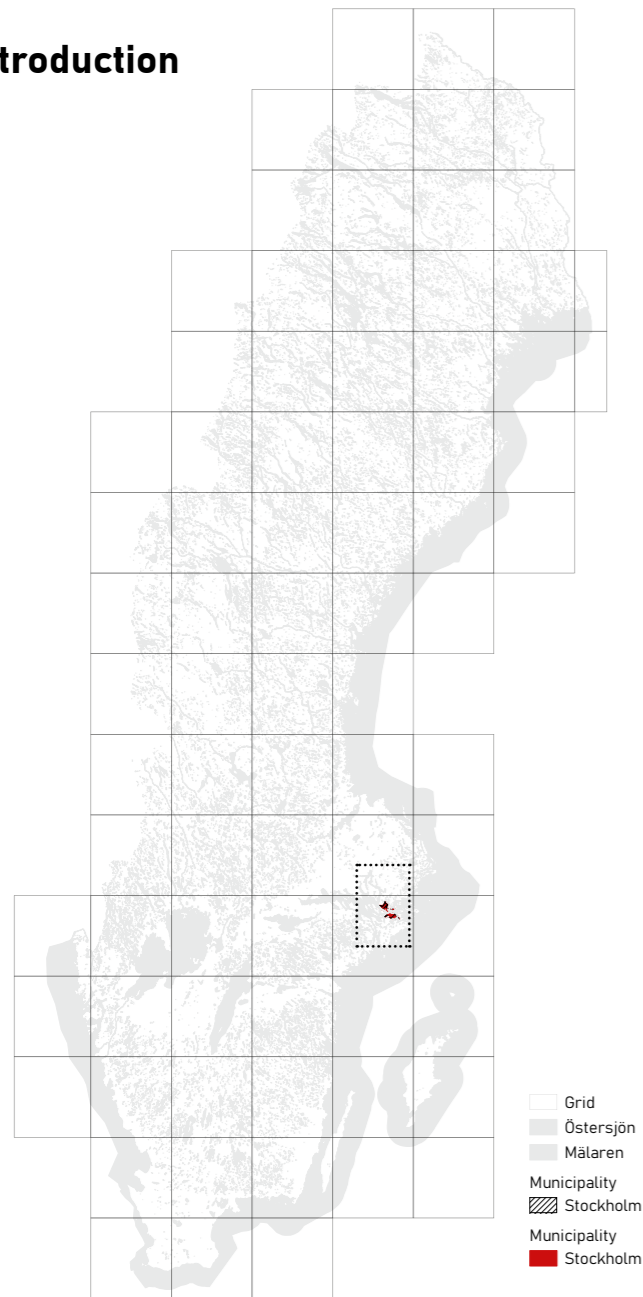
Through investigation of the design the method of Urban Acupuncture, explained in theory on p. 25, is central and used as an important part of the concept that is both connected to theory and design with specific reference projects. Additionally, the observation of reference projects also constitutes an important part of the methods in the design approach including the visit to different S&T clusters.

When encountering the site approach the method context analysis is crucial. This method is conducted in more than one way and includes space syntax, demographical data, stakeholder mapping (see appendix) and detecting barrier effects.

For the purpose of the stakeholder approach, a survey was made to collect human experience and knowledge that is connected to the site analysis. It was also important to involve users to enable evaluation and, in that sense, increase their connection to the site.

# CASE STUDY KISTA SCIENCE CITY

## Introduction

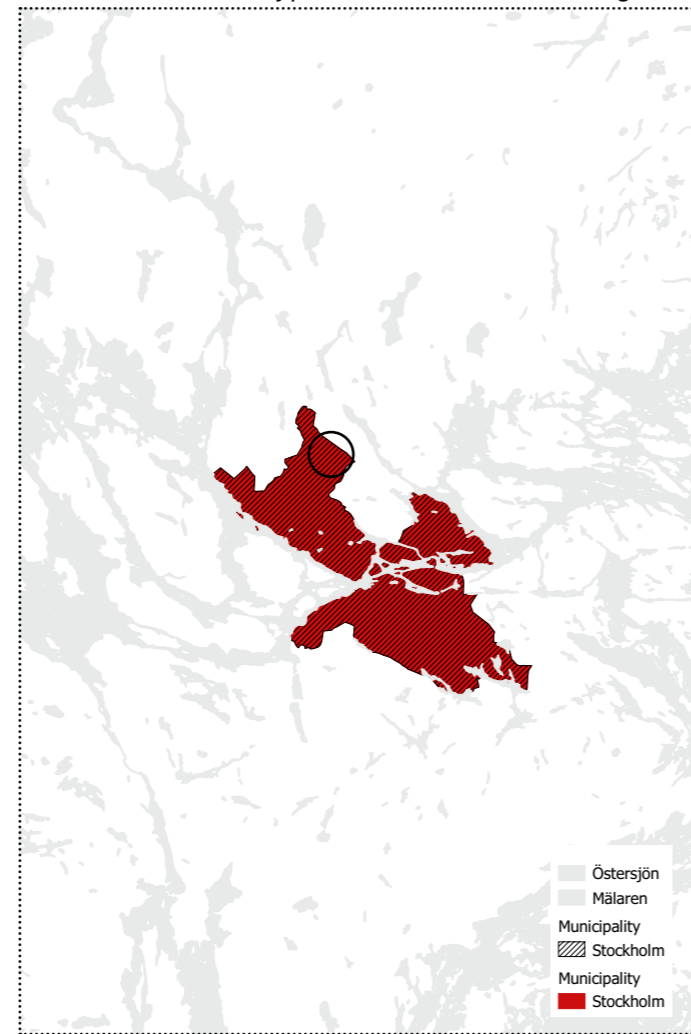


Location of Stockholm municipality

Scale 1:6 000 000

Kista is a district located in the northern part of Stockholm city with near connection to Sollentuna municipality to the east.

In the area of Kista and close by, there are several different types of land use creating a

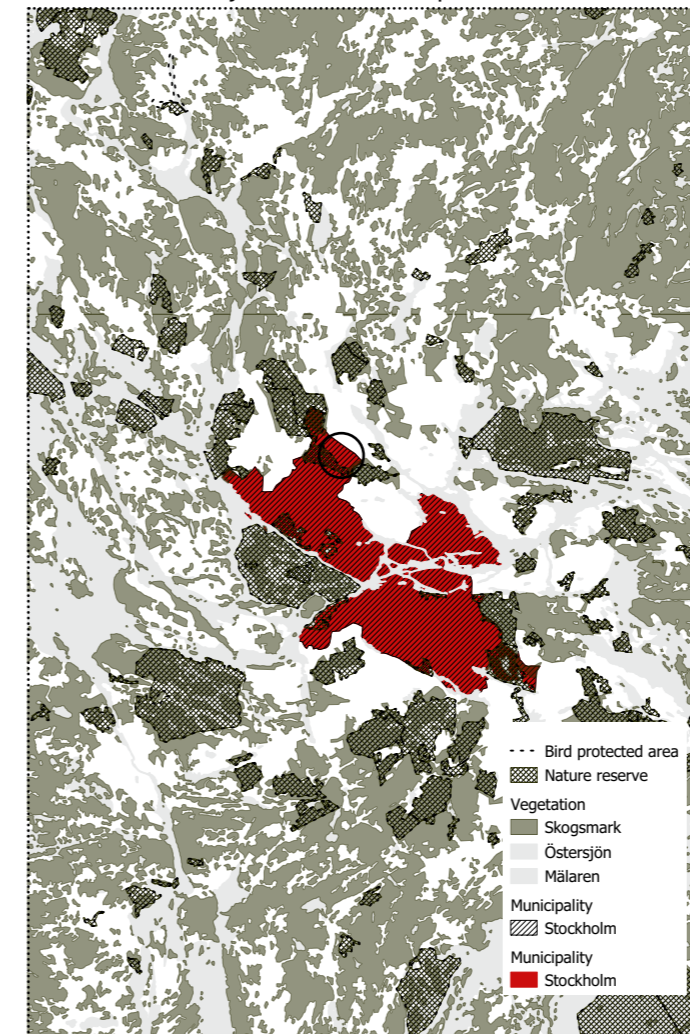


Location of Stockholm municipality

Scale 1:60 000

diversity that can be beneficial. Particularly interesting is the nature reserve, the ancient settlements and the bird protected area in the southern parts.

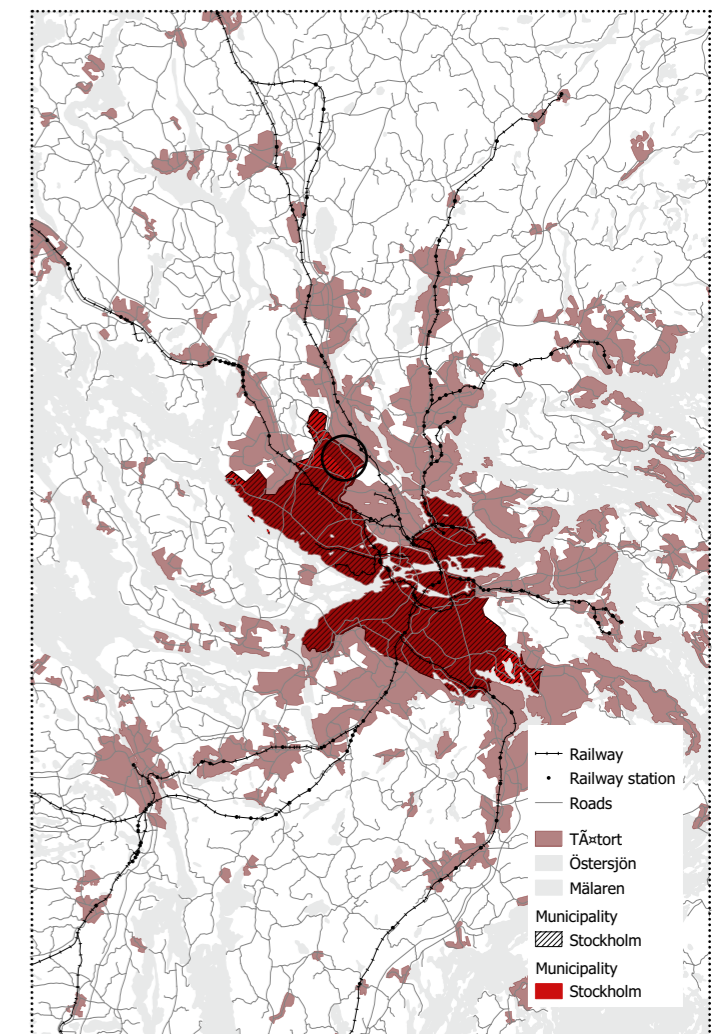
Kista is closely located to important



Vegetation and protected areas

Scale 1:60 000

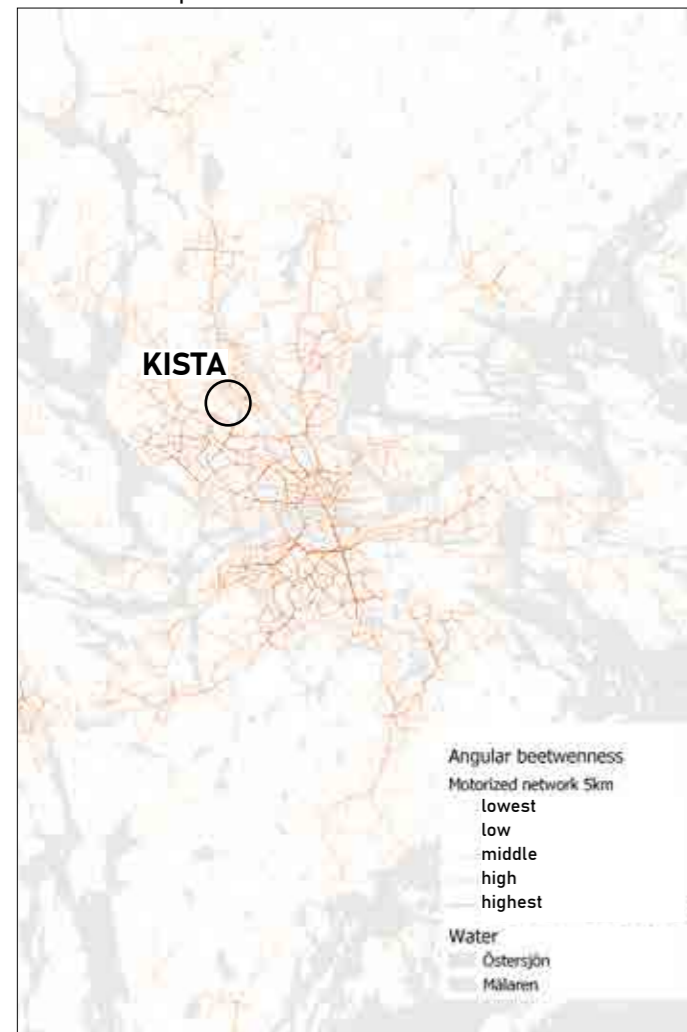
commutation infrastructure such as big, motorized roads, the metro and bus (Kista station), the commuter train (Helenelunds station) and soon also the tram network that will be extended from Sundbyberg to Helenelund.



Communication and densely built areas

Scale 1:60 000

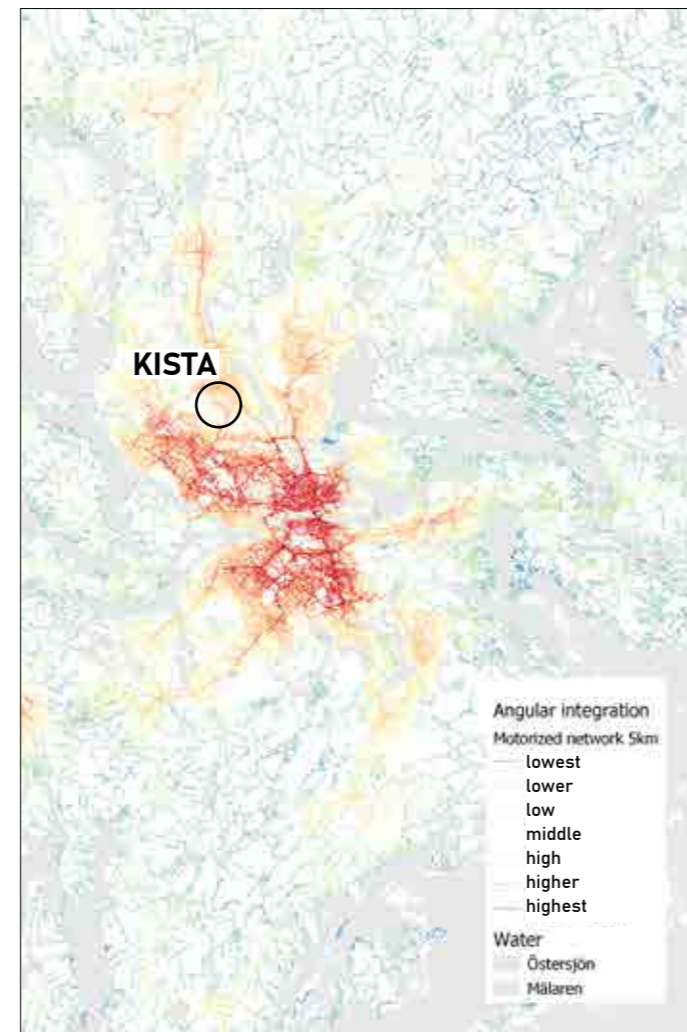
Within a regional scale, Kista has a quit high level of integration in the motorized and network particularly since the district is located approximately 13 kilometres from the city centre. This indicates that the accessibility to Kista is quite beneficial.



Angular betweenness 5km motorized network

Scale 1:XX

Since a big infrastructural development, Förbifart Stockholm, is currently under construction with phases close to Kista, the motorized network integrations are likely to be even higher in the future.



Angular integration 5km motorized network

Scale 1:60 000

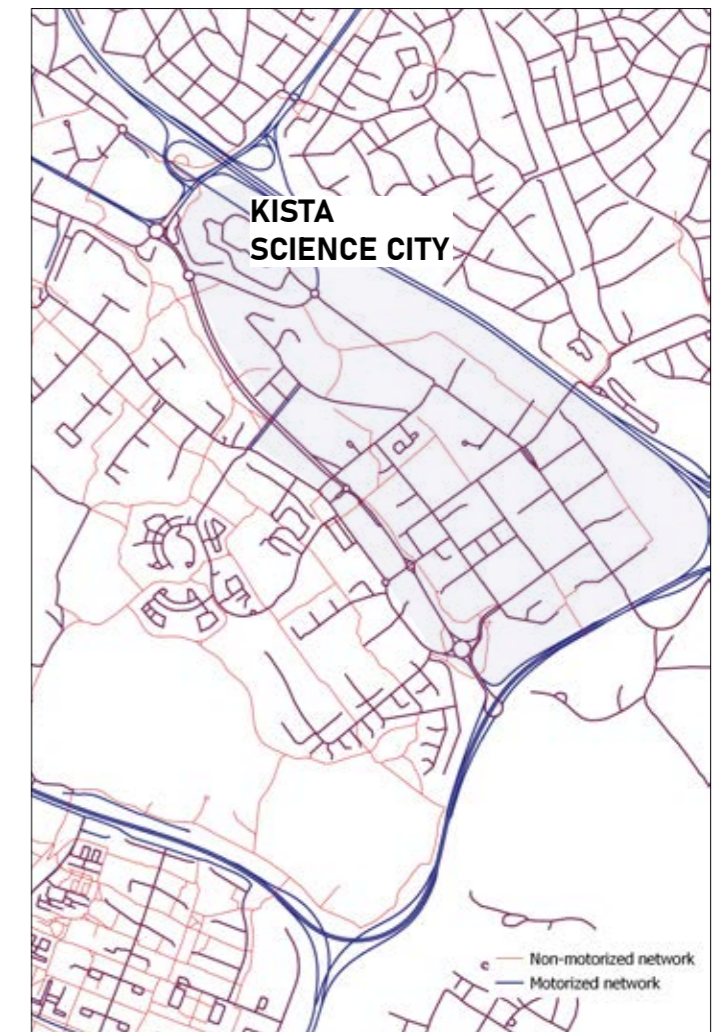
Kista Science City is located in the northern part of the district, framed in by the highway and the metro line, with direct adjacent areas such as Helenelund, Kista residential space and Husby.



Areas in location to Kista

Skala 1:60 000

The motorized network in Kista Science City is highly developed and creates a neighbourhood that is car centric which is strengthened by the big supply of parking lots.



Networks in Kista Science City

Scale 1:30 000

# Timeline Kista

## 1800

Despite Kista's long history of spatial use, the area consisted mainly of natural landscape in the 19th century. The development of the area as we know it today had not yet begun and only a few buildings existed, some of them have been preserved (Stockholms stadsmuseum, n.d.).

## 1900

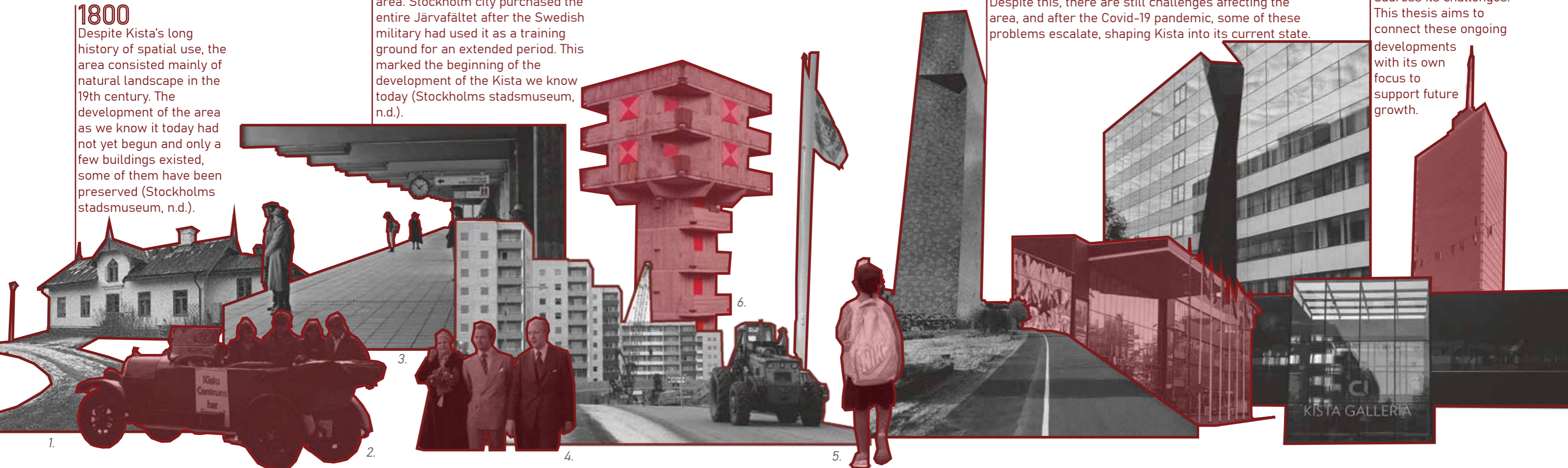
In the mid-20th century, major changes began to take place in the area. Stockholm city purchased the entire Järvafältet after the Swedish military had used it as a training ground for an extended period. This marked the beginning of the development of the Kista we know today (Stockholms stadsmuseum, n.d.).

## 2000

At the beginning of the 21st century, Kista continues to flourish, and Kista Science City is well established. Kista is fulfilling its role as an ABC city, where people live, work, and have access to a centre (Sax, 2005). Despite this, there are still challenges affecting the area, and after the Covid-19 pandemic, some of these problems escalate, shaping Kista into its current state.

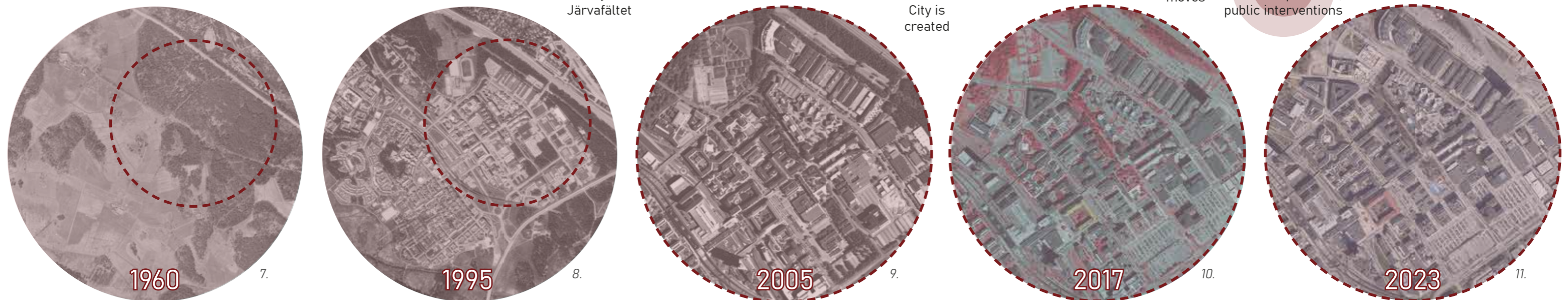
## Future

Currently, Kista is undergoing numerous plans and changes to address its challenges. This thesis aims to connect these ongoing developments with its own focus to support future growth.



- Ancient settlement
- ▨ Million program
- ▨ Covid-19 pandemic
- Military training area
- Excavations

0 AD	1000	1600	1800	1900	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2100								
		1600 Kista gets its name	1800 Oldest structure that still exist		1962 Started to plan future Kista	1966 Sthlm city buys Järvafältet	1969 Detail plan	1973 SML	1975 Metro station	1976 SRA > Kista	1977 City centre	1987 KTH campus Kista	1999 Kista Science City is created	2002 Kista Science tower	2006 Järvalyftet	2009 Kista city centre expands	2023 KTH leaves Kista	2025 IBM moves	2027 New functions	2027-2040 "Reactivate Kista" Urban acupuncture, public interventions	2040 Recovered reputation	2050 Strengthened branding	2100 Kista continues to grow



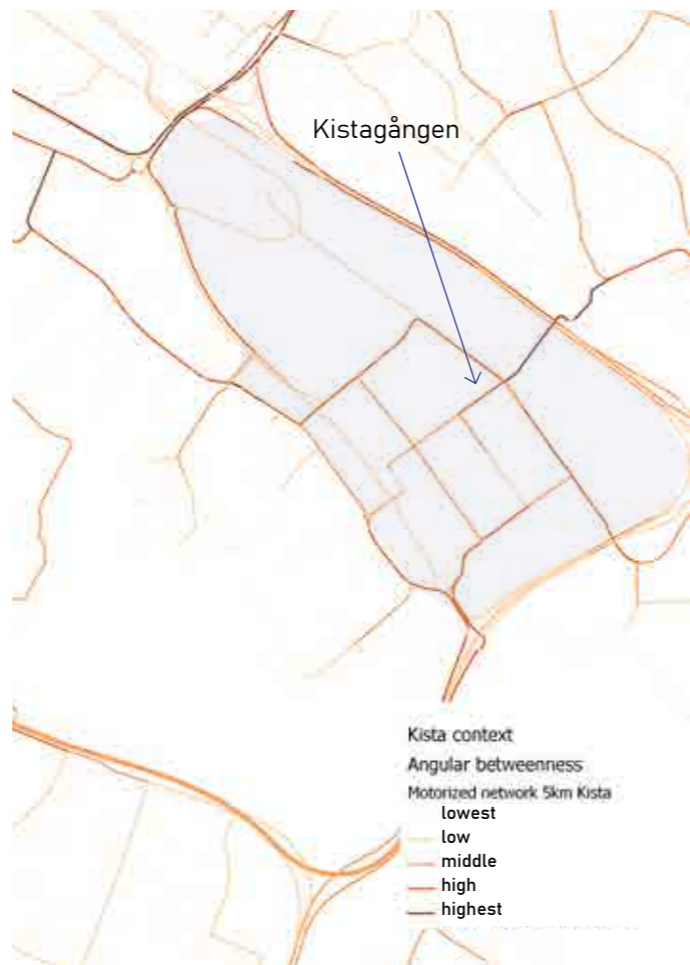
Picture 1 - 11, Kista through time

# Site analysis

## Space syntax

Kistagången stands out in angular betweenness, often providing the shortest possible route in the network regarding non-motorized traffic. Other roads that indicate possible of high use are Isafjordsgatan, Torshamnsgatan, Borgarfjordsgatan, Hanstavägen and Danmarksgatan.

This analysis indicates the strengths and possibilities along Kistagången as a potential site for public interventions since easy access to possible flow and meetings is importantly required.



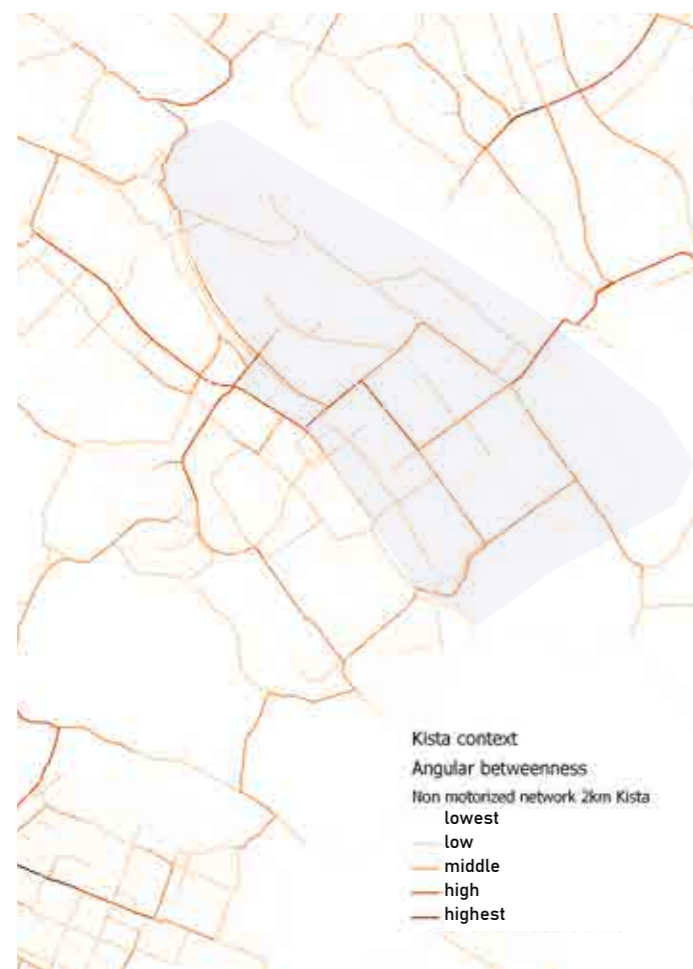
AB 5km motorized network Scale 1:30 000

There are differences on integration between the northern and the southern part of Kista where Kista Science City is more integrated in the motorized network than the residential side. Regarding the non-motorized network, it's visual that the highway E4 creates a barrier for pedestrians and bicycles towards Helenelund both in the local and global radius. Also, the mall and the nature reserve reduce possible connections between Kista Science City to adjacent areas.

By observing angular integration maps, it's visual that Kistagången stands out in its context as one of the more integrated streets in the network. This indicates that the street has beneficial connections and may have good prerequisites for high flow. As well as in the non-motorized network this seems to be the case. Despite this, it's clear that there exist crossings that require change to enable increased movement in the whole district but also, that the current movement is quite restricted with long blocks.



AI 5km motorized network Scale 1:30 000



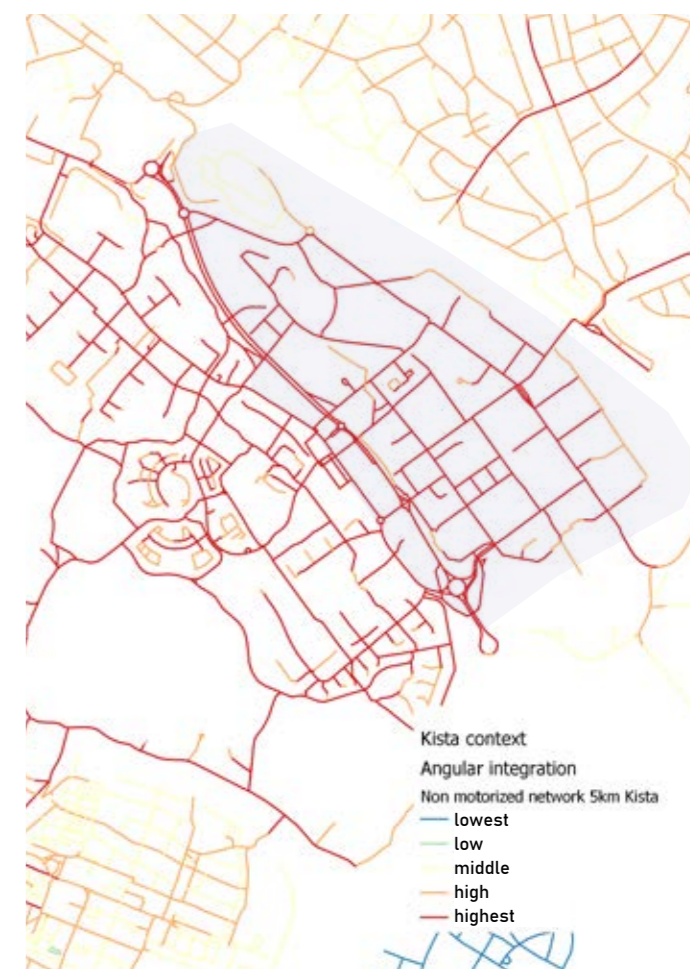
AB 2km non-motorized network Scale 1:30 000



AB 5km non-motorized network Scale 1:30 000



AI 2km non-motorized network Scale 1:30 000



AI 5km non-motorized network Scale 1:30 000

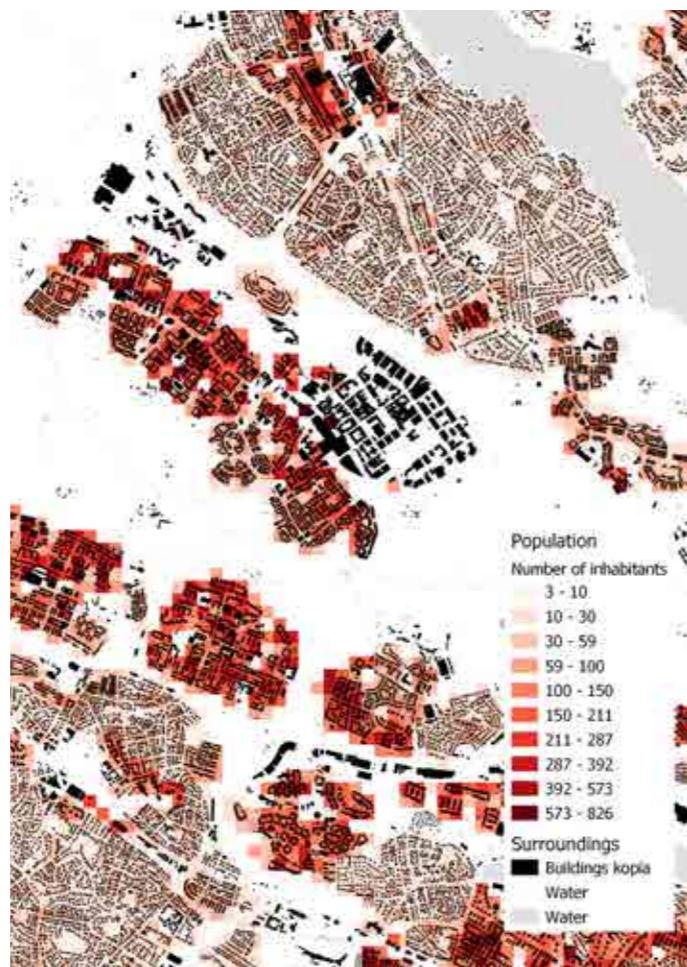
(Reviewed January 2025)

## Demographical information

The diagrams bellow describes the demography of the people living in Kista and in the surrounding areas to understand more about the environment and human behaviour. Interesting factors that are taken into consideration is age, gender, education, employment, income and origin.

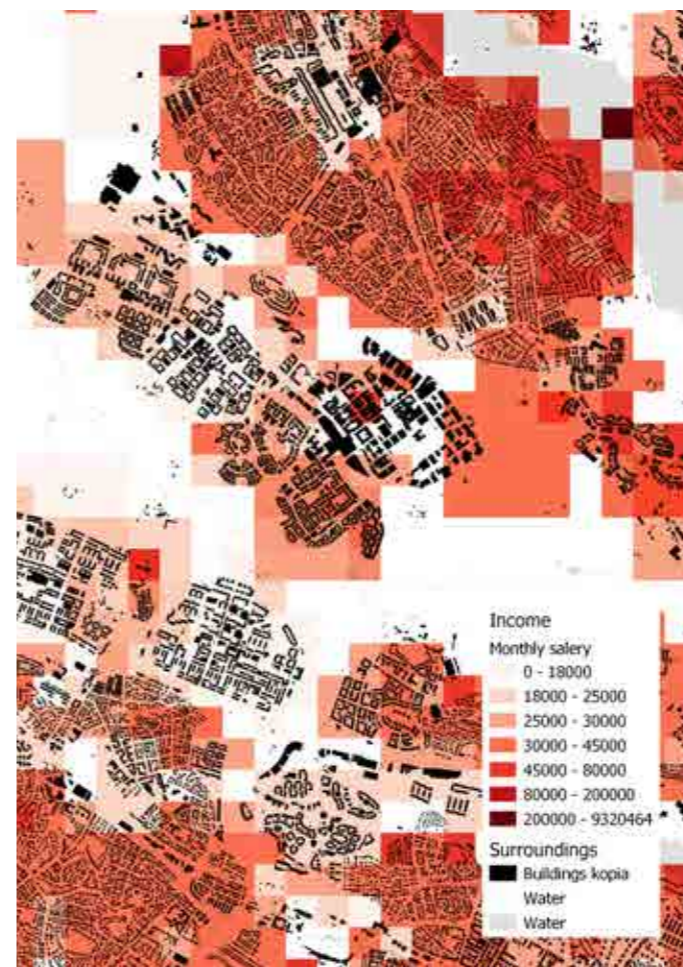
These diagrams provide knowledge about where there are people, what type of environments that could attract and at what time it's likely that people are in movement.

All diagrams are based on the latest data that was available in November 2025 from SLU Geodata Extractions (Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet, n.d.).



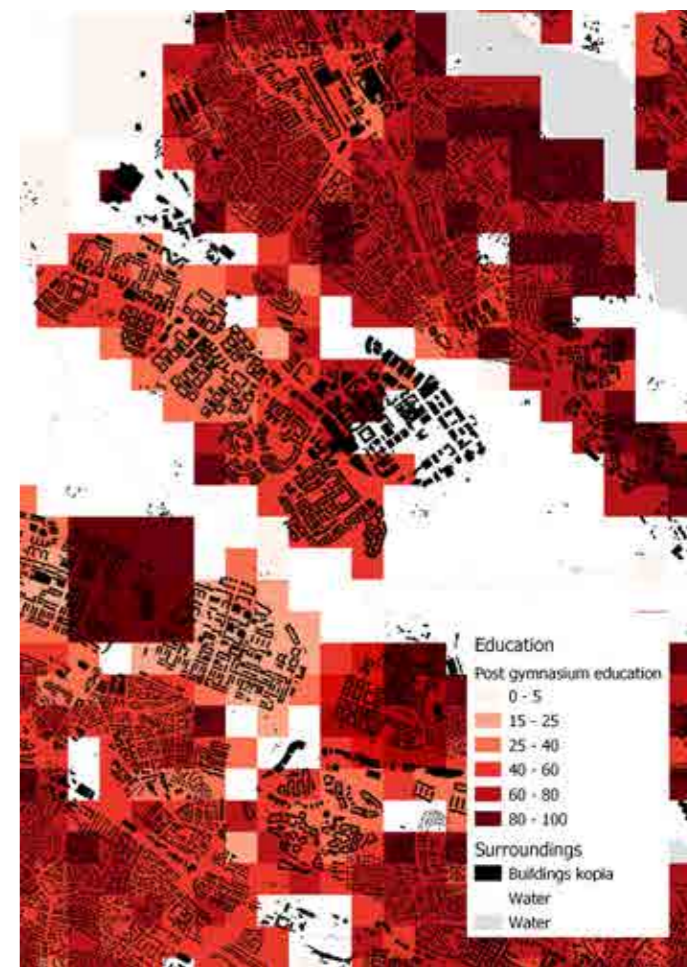
Population density

Scale 1:60 000



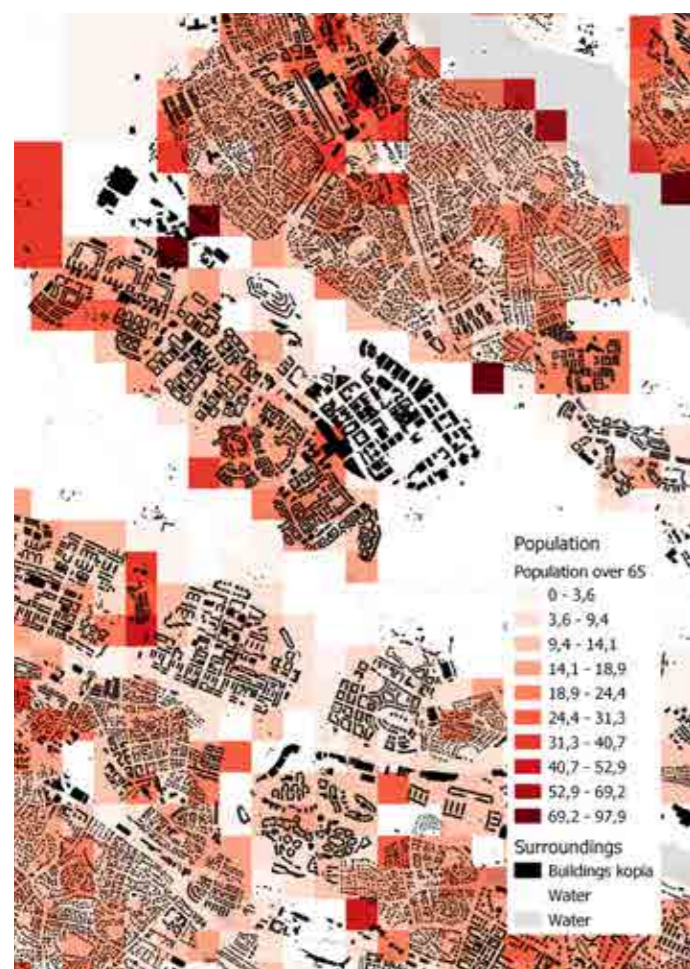
Monthly salary

Scale 1:60 000



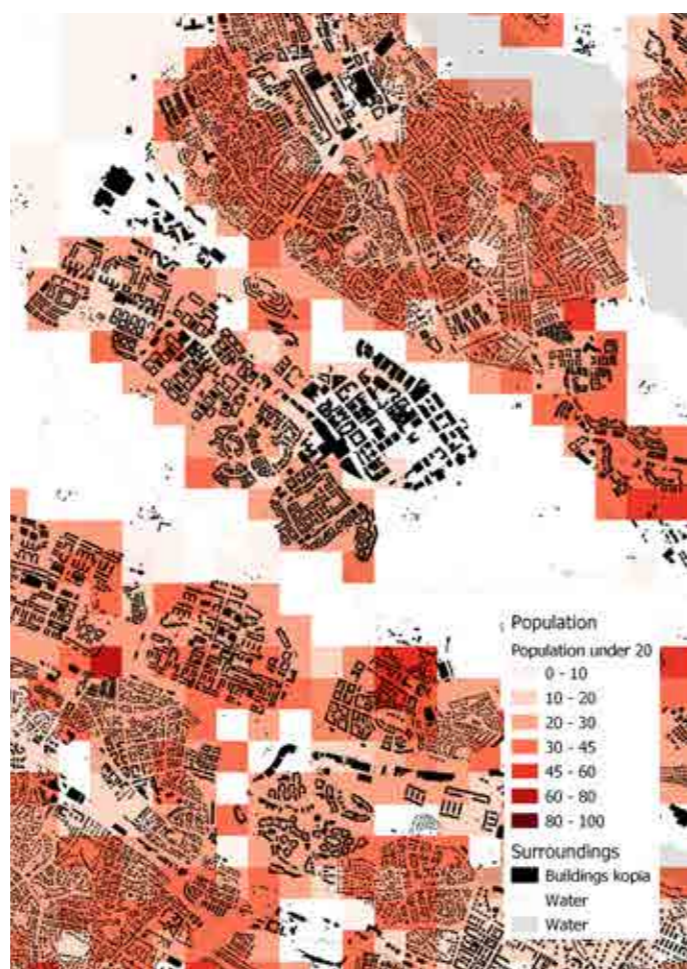
Post gymnasium education

Scale 1:60 000



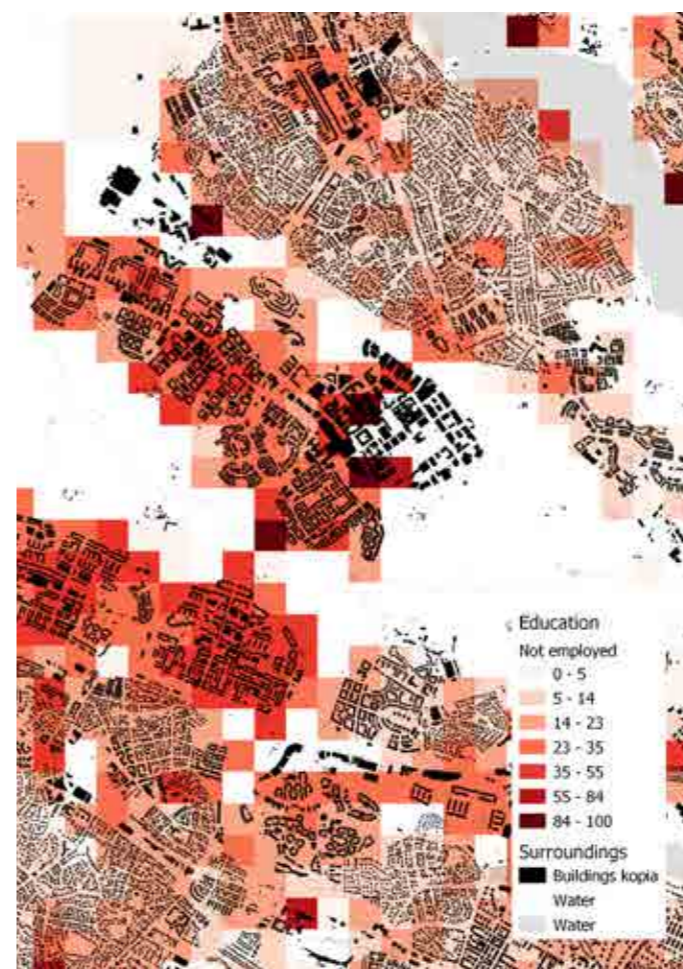
Population over age of 65

Scale 1:60 000



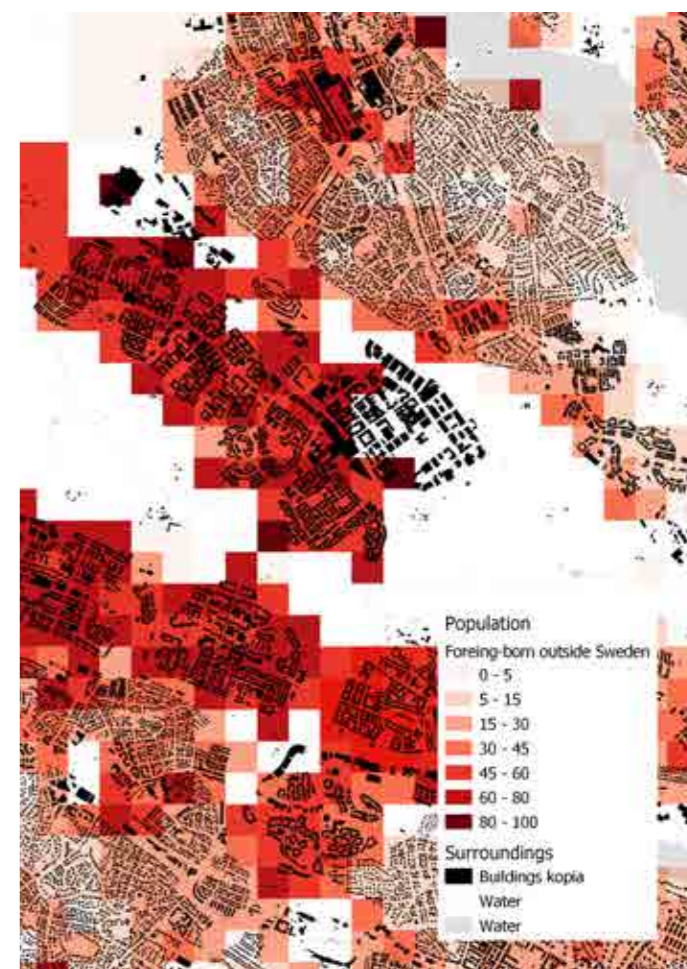
Population under age of 20

Scale 1:60 000



Population that are unemployed

Scale 1:60 000



Population born outside Sweden

Scale 1:60 000

## Spatial division in Kista

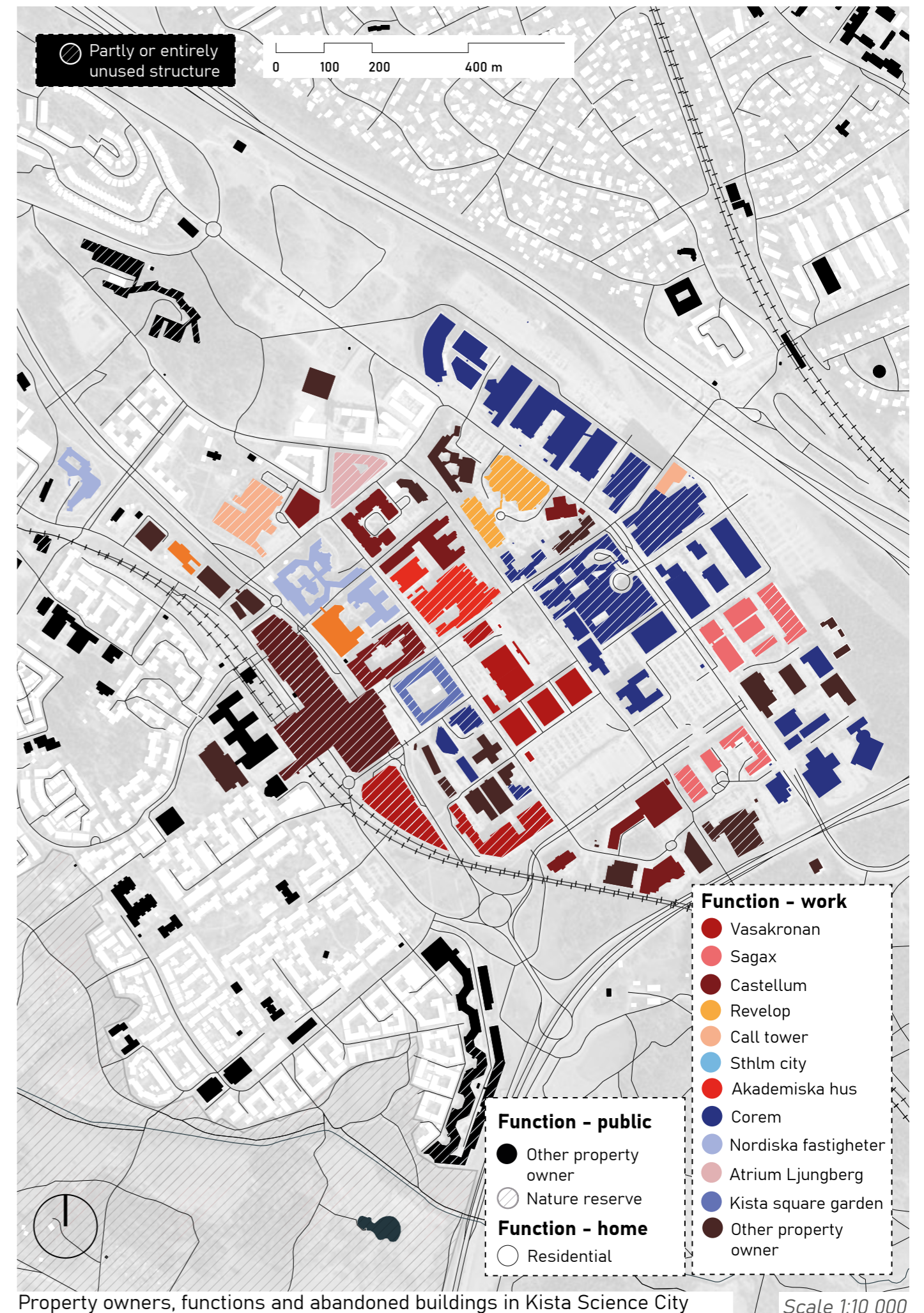
Kista is divided into four strong characterized zones which is the S&T cluster, the mall, the residential area and the nature reserve. Generally, all functions are separated from each other and sorted into the suitable zone creating strongly monofunctional areas, which was the intention when planning Kista as an ABC-city. Furthermore, there are big infrastructural barriers separating each zone which decreases possible movement between each district.

Kista Science City have a big supply of parking lots since many workers commute with car. This is both an attractive asset for the established companies and selling point for the property owners but also a strong indication that many people that work in the S&T cluster don't live close by. The strong monofunctionality causes separation of people that move and use the public spaces differently within the same city part.

Also, the building structures differ within each zone. Kista Science City has a majority of big, deep blocks with many levels, while the residential side consist of lamellas, more narrow with high movement possibility. Kista mall is consisting of one big building, the biggest footprint in the area, and the nature reserve is unbuilt.

Almost 40 percent of the premisses in Kista Science City stands empty today. The map to the right showcases the approximate situation, based on office renting websites and information from stakeholders.

The supply of indoor public and semi-public spaces is low but will be further explained in the current public space map on p. 43.



## Barriers

It's crucial to locate actual barriers that cause negative effects in Kista Science City to understand the reason for low activity and increasing unsafety. The barriers are detected through the presented theories about public space and safety that are more directed towards human experience in urban contexts.

Moreover, barriers caused by transport infrastructure are also important to examine. Therefore, the article and model by van Eldijk will be introduced to explain the correlation between infrastructural barriers and accessibility, ease of reach.

### Barrier effects by infrastructure

Transport infrastructure can improve accessibility regionally but at the same time cause local barriers that have negative effects on movement for pedestrians and cyclists. The model presented below explains the complex relation between determinants by traffic infrastructure and barrier effects.

Importantly, is that a barrier only exists when it stands in way for someone transporting from point A to B. In simple terms, barriers can cause negative effects that creates

detours, reduced access and lowers chance for social interaction. These are affected by the determinants which further on creates different extensions of barrier effects.

### Located barriers effecting safety and activity

- Block and building size - Jacobs, Newman
- Light & Sight - Boverket, Jacobs, Newman, Wekerle and Whitzman
- Emptiness - Jacobs, Oldenburg
- Monofunctionality - Jacobs, Newman
- Reputation - Tunström, Jacobs
- Accessibility (disability) - Boverket
- Accessibility (ease of reach) - Oldenburg, van Eldijk
- Connecting points - van Eldijk
- Traffic separation - van Eldijk
- Segregation - Jacobs, Oldenburg

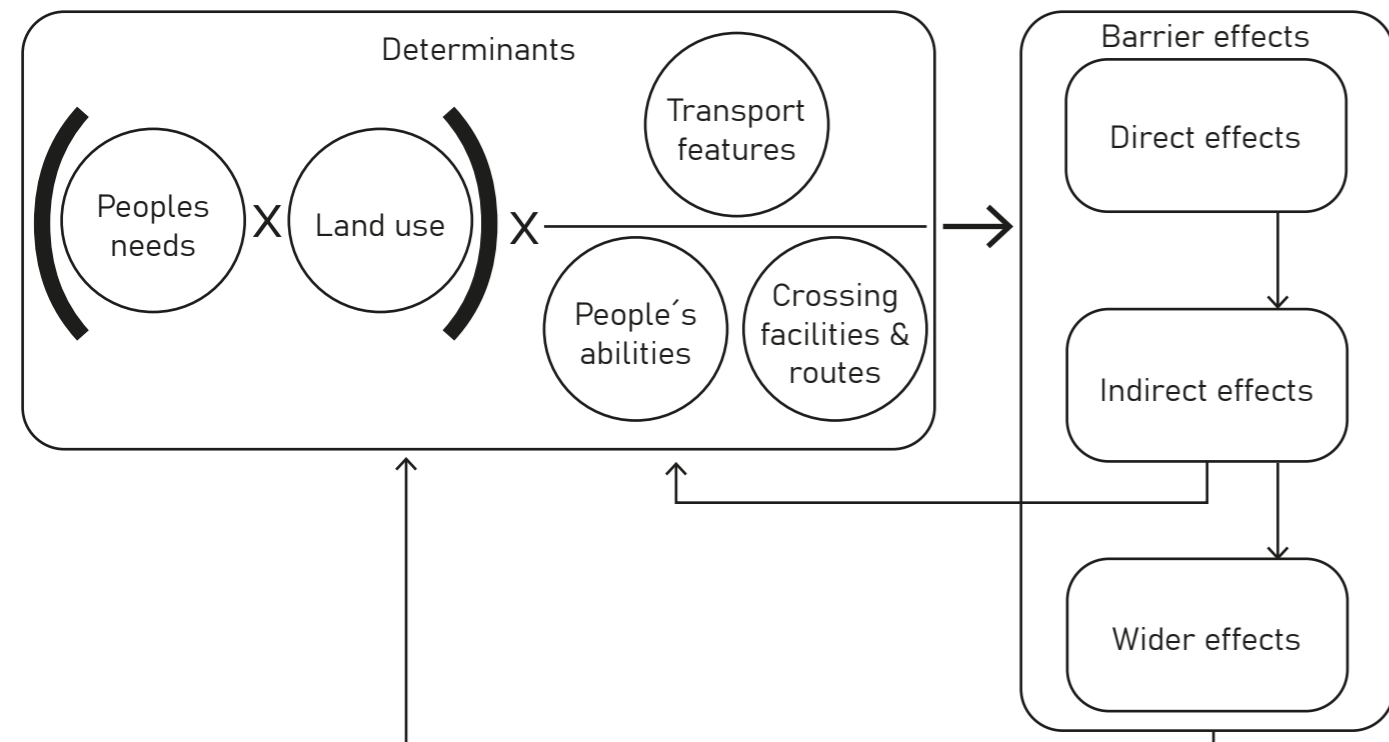
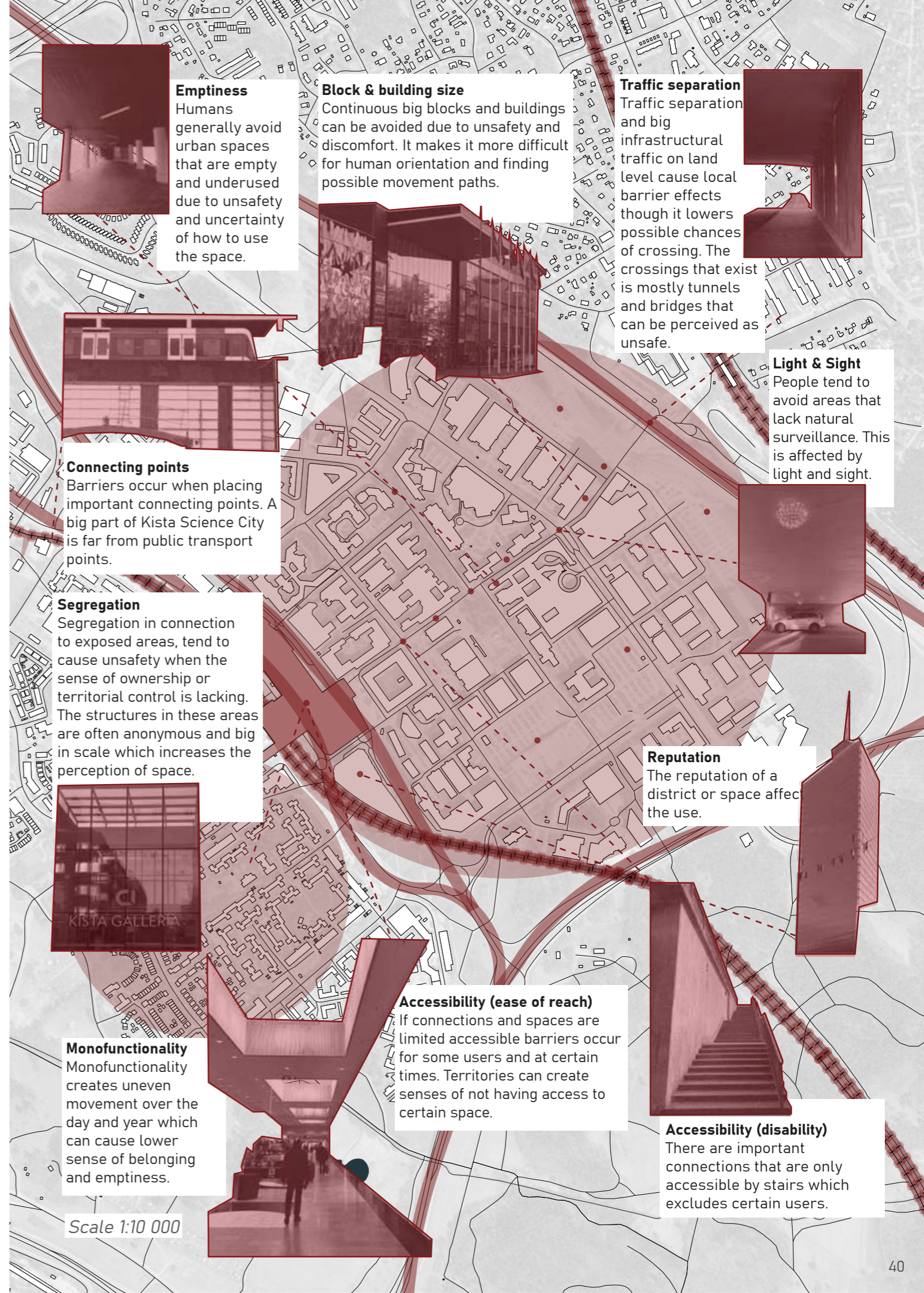


Fig 1. Barrier effect model by van Eldijk



## Development on site

The situation in Kista has concluded in big involvement from property owners and the municipality, to redirect the negative trend of abandonment and unsafety to make Kista more attractive. The following section presents both planned and ongoing projects to provide an overview of Kista's current development. Since the problem in the district is urgent, this thesis aims to explore a possible solution that both is relevant to the current situation as well as future development. By this, the public space design needs to be directed towards office workers to increase their use of the urban environment during and close to office hours as well as attracting inhabitants in adjacent areas all day. Regarding future development, the same public space design should also be directed towards new user groups to maintain relevant and efficient.

### Bringing new functions in former office buildings

The project Hekla 1, in the crossing between Isafjordsgatan and Kistagången, is focusing of transforming an office building into a residential building with a public ground floor. The project is aiming to create a more diverse neighbourhood with new functions in a building that has been without use during a period (Stockholms stad, 2025). There are also transformation plans for the already existing property Reykjavik 1, located northwest of Kista mall. The building has earlier been functioning as an office but will now be transformed into a school and housing. The project is placed to serve an important role in the city planning development to a more diverse city part that are less separated by traffic (Stockholms stad, 2025).

The former IBM quarter, in the northwestern part of Kista, will be transformed into a new residential area with public functions including, commercial premises, a preschool, a park and a square (Stockholms stad, 2025). Skalhott 1, the big property into Jan Stenbecks square, is currently being transformed to serve new functions such as hotel, housing and rentable premises. The building has earlier been

functioning as an office but been unused since the companies moved elsewhere (Stockholms stad, 2025).

### New residential areas and functions

A new neighbourhood is currently built in northern Kista called Kista Äng, including 1800 apartments, school, preschool, square and a park. Several buildings are planned to have commercial possibilities in the ground floor level to increase activity and create a livelier street life (Stockholms stad, 2025).

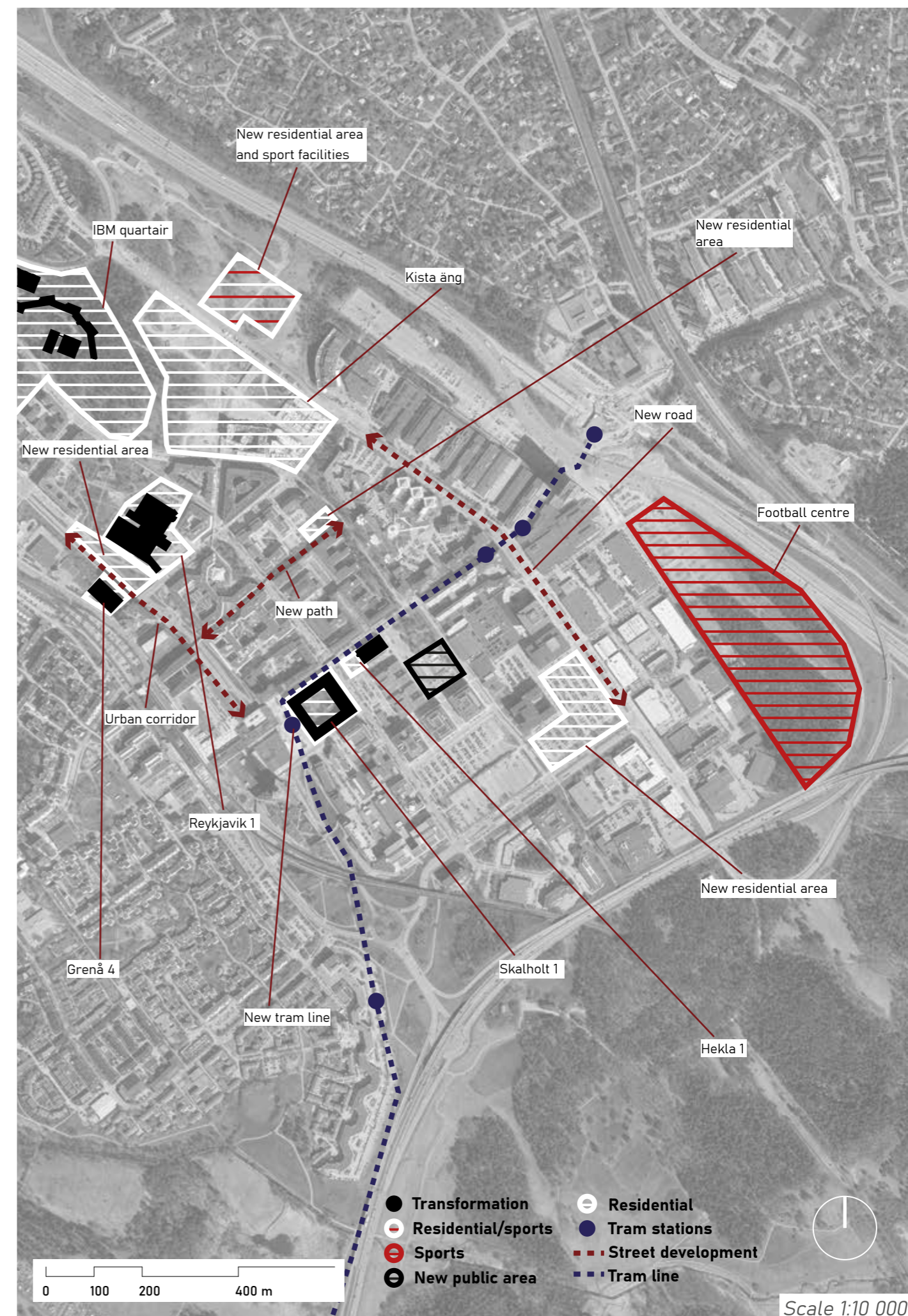
Housing and sports facilities are planned in the northern part of Kista at Torshamnsgatan with building start 2028 (Stockholms stad, 2025). There is a proposal for a new residential area in the crossing Kistavägen/Grönlandsgatan, an area that today is occupied by parking (Stockholms stad, 2025). Residential buildings are planned together with commercial activities in the transformation to create a new urban corridor along Hanstavägen (Stockholms stad, 2025).

### Extension of the tram

The tramline will be extended from Ulvsunda in Bromma, through Kista along with Kistagången, with the end station in Helenelund. With this new transport Kista will be more established on a regional scale. The purpose of the new tram line is to ensure efficient and climate effective transport for a population that continues to grow and connect neighbourhoods that constitutes important nodes (Stockholms stad, 2024).

### New national football arena

In the eastern part of Kista, a new national football centre is planned in the area that today is consisting of parking lots. The centre would create a higher flow in the eastern part and make a new target point and attract visitors both locally and regionally but also globally (Stockholms stad, 2025).



Scale 1:10 000

**Current public space**



- COMMENTS**
- Low supply of public and semi-public activities
  - Closeness to big areas of nature and public space but with lacking connections
  - Few enterprices with very limited opening hours
  - Many inactive facades
  - Blocks are long with few movement possibilities
  - Many anonymous entrances
  - Big supply of streets and squares with big potential
  - Majority of terretories are semi-public, too monofunctional.

The map is created from a pedestrian and cyclist perspective to describe possible movement in terretories on a scale from public, accessible space, to private, unaccessible space.



LEGEND			
PRIVATE SPACE	SEMI-PRIVATE SPACE	SEMI-PUBLIC SPACE	PUBLIC SPACE
○ Private space and buildings	▨ Semi-private space	▩ Semi-public space	■ Public space
• Private entrance		▩ Semi-public activities	▩ Public activities
		▩ Semi-public buildings	▩ Public parks
		• Enterprices	▩ Forest
			● Water
			▲ Public entrance

0 100 200 400 m Scale 1:10 000

## Stakeholders

### Vasakronan - property owner

Vasakronan is a Swedish property owner that has several properties in Kista and therefore, have a big interest in the development of area to ensure future establishment and district attractiveness.

To contribute to improvements in Kista Science City, Vasakronan are engaged in several projects and strategies developed on site. Moreover, they are a part of the local initiative Kista Limitless.

They emphasise the unique qualities of Kista with well-developed communication, closeness to work, nature and shopping and provides visualisations of a future Kista that is greener, smarter and more including (Vasakronan, 2025).

Vasakronan strives towards a multifunctional district that provides room for work and spare time with space for interaction both out- and indoors with stronger local connections and developed mobility.

**“Whatever you have thought or believed about Kista before, it is time to forget that now. Kista is facing and exciting transformation. With billion-dollar investments in both business and the urban environment, a vibrant and sustainable future is taking shape” (Vasakronan, 2025).**

### Stockholms city

Stockholm city indicated high interest in the development of Kista and expresses the importance of preserving the S&T cluster in combination with increased mixed functions. For example, the city mentions the wish of providing space for sports and culture but also an examination of potential increased connection to recreation.

The importance of public space is emphasised to create space for interaction and increased safety and is mentioned as a requirement for future local development. Specific spaces are identified as spaces that are in crucial need of development where Kistagången, Jan Stenbeckstorg and Torshamnsgatan are all mentioned.

Stockholm city also expresses the need of residential development, attracting and retaining the companies and create prerequisites for everyday life in a safe and vital urban environment. The need of more qualitative green area is also mentioned (Stockholms stad, 2018).

**“Kista Science City is one of the country’s and region’s most important business districts and a significant cluster, particularly within information technology” (Stockholms stad, 2018, p. 117).**

### Kista limitless

Kista Limitless is a communication and development company connected to the property owners, Castellum, Corem, Vasakronan and Akademiska hus, to link with other local stakeholders such as the municipality, Kista Science City group and Stockholm business region. Their two main intentions are to strengthen the position of Kista, to create a leading science and technology cluster and create an attractive and vital city part.

Regarding the strengthening of the science and technology cluster they mention points of focus such as marketing, events, sponsoring cooperations, transparency and contributions to more relevant meeting spots.

The creation of Kista as a destination is described to strive towards increased use over the whole day by for example increased lighting and art, contribution to a path strategy and increased orientation, a placemaking strategy and coop operations with local stakeholders (Kista Limitless, n.d.).

**The company works closely with local actors ... to strengthen Kista’s position as a leading tech hub and vibrant district” (Kista Limitless, n.d.).**

### Citizens

Based on the result from surveys answered by local citizens consisting of workers, residents and other users of the space. For more information about the stakeholder survey see p. 73.

Local citizens wish for increased activity and more functions that creates more vitality locally. Many people still feel a connection to Kista and have belief in the potential site it could develop into.

Unfortunately, parts of the answers indicate a high level of perceived unsafety especially during dark hours despite a low level of people being exposed to crime the last year. Generally, perceived unsafety is marked in used public space that suffers from barriers causing difficulties in movement and exposure. Furthermore, areas close by such as Kista residential side, Rinkeby and Husby, is frequently marked as space where people feel unsafe despite that the respondents mention that they don’t move there. This is most likely connected to barriers created by reputation and segregation something that also affects Kista mall.

## Reference projects

Project

### Superkilen, Copenhagen, Denmark - 2012

Architect: BIG, Topotek 1 & Superflex

Picture



What I bring

- Place activation
- Multifunctional area
- Strengthening pedestrian connections

### Jubileumsparken, Gothenburg, Sweden - 2021

Architect: Älvstranden Utveckling, Urban planning department City of Gothenburg et al.



- Temporal > permanent
- Place activation
- Multifunctional area
- Stakeholder involvement
- Character

### Selmas nya vardagsrum, Gothenburg, Sweden - 2015

Architect: 02 LANDSKAP



Picture 12. Selmas nya vardagsrum

- Temporal design intervention
- Character
- Strengthening pedestrian connections

### Museum plein, Amsterdam, The Netherlands - 1999

Architect: Sven-Ingvar Andersson



- Mixed-use function
- Third place
- Green element
- Human scale

Project

### Madrid Río, Madrid, Spain - 2015

Architect: Burgos & Garrido Arquitectos, Porras La Casta Arquitectos, Rubio & Álvarez Sala Arquitectos & West 8

Picture



What I bring

- Place activation
- Urban activity
- Multifunctional area
- Design element of the slope
- Green- blue element

### Plaza Santa Bárbara, Madrid, Spain - 2009

Architect: Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos



- Pop-up structure
- Urban activity
- Multifunctional area
- Human scale
- Green element

### Technical pop up in 22@ Innovation district Barcelona, Spain - 2026

Architect: Unknown



- Pop up structure
- Human scale
- Character

### The parklet concept

Architect: Unknown



- Mobile structure
- Urban activity
- Interaction on the street
- Strengthening pedestrian connections
- Green element

## Summary and reflection

To summarize the case study chapter, with introduction and context analysis, it is important to be aware of the complexity of the problem. This is a prioritized selection of what I considered is important to lift and reasonable within the scope to create a foundation strong enough to potentially find solutions that could have a positive impact on site.

By observing Kista Science City from a regional scale there is good prerequisites for the site to be activated with high integration regionally in the motorized network, visible in the angular betweenness 5km, together with high public transport possibilities represented by bus, commuter train, metro and soon also tram. Furthermore, there is a wide supply of areas that should be able to cover daily demands such as recreational area, shopping centre, residential and work. The S&T cluster also serves an important national role as a node for global cooperation within the field that attracts companies and talents.

The idea of Kista being an ABC-city is valid but is inhibited by the monofunctional division with strong characterized zones, causing unbalanced flow over time. By this Kista Science City, that has a strong dominance of industry and office buildings, remains unused outside traditional working hours. As a result of companies leaving permanently, abandonment escalates.

The problem, described by media and stakeholders, occur locally and seems to be attached to perceived unsafety and low activity. In turn, safety and activity is affected by many parameters that are detected through the chosen urban theories and the research review by van Eldijk. Barrier effects lower activity which increases unsafety. In turn, the perceived unsafety causes abandonment for those who have the possibility to move elsewhere which is the high-income tech companies which escalates the appearance of the barrier effects such as emptiness and bad reputation further.

By looking at the local analysis the result is rather fragmented. Detected barrier effects such as monofunctionality, traffic separation and physical findings on sight regarding accessibility, light and sight are evident. Also, is the lack of public and semi-public space with activities and space for interaction. Still the Space syntax informs that the street network has relatively high prerequisites for use and the demographical data indicates that the residents of Kista have higher education and income than other areas in Järfället. Despite this, all detected crimes in the area are presented collectively.

In the space syntax, with angular integration and angular betweenness, it's visual that the street Kistagången plays a central role both in the local and global analysis. The same street binds together important destinations as the mall, fair, KTH Campus Kista (the small establishment remaining) and the connection towards Helenelund versus Rinkeby. Kistagången is also marked as a frequently used street in the stakeholder survey and mentioned in meetings with Vasakronan as a street of interest for future development. The current development also aligns with my interest of Kistagången since the new tramline will be connecting through the street that will increase movement on the street. Other development that will be taken into consideration is the strive towards multifunctionality with transformation projects, residential additions and the new national football centre.

This leads the focus towards the design phase with formulated overall concept and specific design guidelines, for increased safety and activity, implemented in a design proposal. To provide public and semi-public design implementation at strategic acupuncture nodes along Kistagången, based on this context analysis and the stakeholder survey, with inspiration from presented reference projects.

# KEY PROJECT KISTAGÅNGEN

This thesis explores the possible solution of design of public space for positive impact on perceived safety and activity Kista Science City. Through context analysis, based on site and stakeholder opinions, the street Kistagången is chosen as a suitable key project to implement theoretical and design-based research.

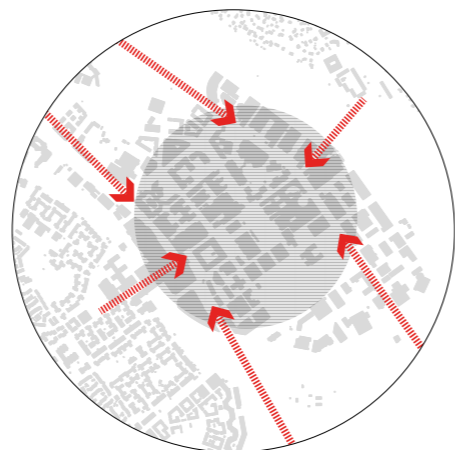
Through the created concept and guidelines, a design proposal is shaped consisting of eight interventions in analysed strategic sites that creates a linear network along Kistagången that potentially can be extended and expanded in the future. Of the eight design interventions, three are developed more thoroughly while the others simply suggest a suitable function for the location.



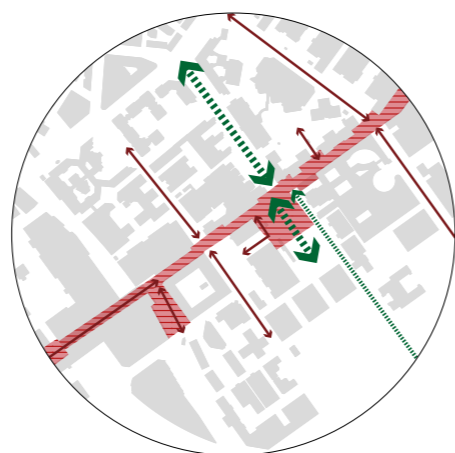
## Concept

Concept providing general needs to increase perceived safety and activity in Kista Science City based on theory.

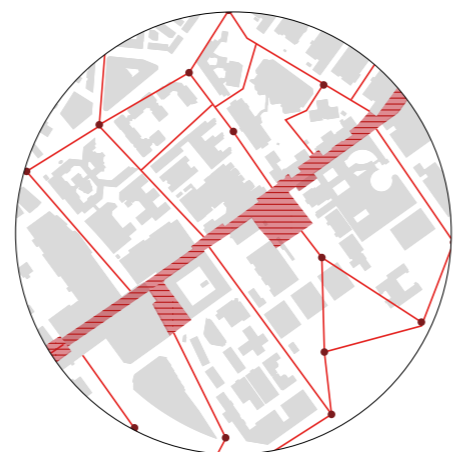
**City scale:** Attract visitors from surrounding neighbourhoods to activate public and semi-public rooms and contribute to Kista Science City as a destination. Implementing prerequisites for activity close to adjacent districts and enable easier movement, in first hand to Helenelund and Kista residential area, which also increases the connection to Rinkeby. Furthermore, connections to other districts also are relevant.



**Local scale:** Create safe connections within the urban environment to attract users within the local context and enable distribution of activity in other parts of the site. Also, including possible green connections.



**Process:** To ensure positive impact and secure effective use of financial assets the method of urban acupuncture is used. The design implementations demand connections to each other and need to coexist to enable bigger efficiency and catalyse wider development. This method creates a more realistic centred time perspective dividing the project into phases where the first one is temporal, stage one, and the second is permanent, stage two. By this, local financial investments can be made with higher security since impact is measured before implementing the second stage.



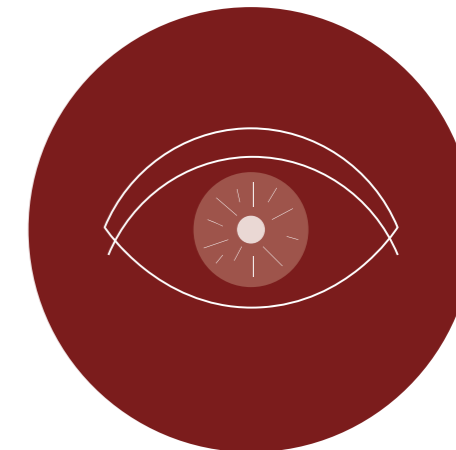
## Design guidelines

Design strategies aimed at enhancing perceived safety and activity in public space based on theories and design exploration.

### Designing for natural surveillance

An important component for safety in the urban environment is the possibility of making interaction to feel less exposed and alone. Important components for this is light, sight lines and prerequisites for activity on the ground floor. By this, the possibility of increased use is enhanced which also contributes to a safer space with more natural surveillance. Also, considering development of unused or underused spaces is important within this design guideline.

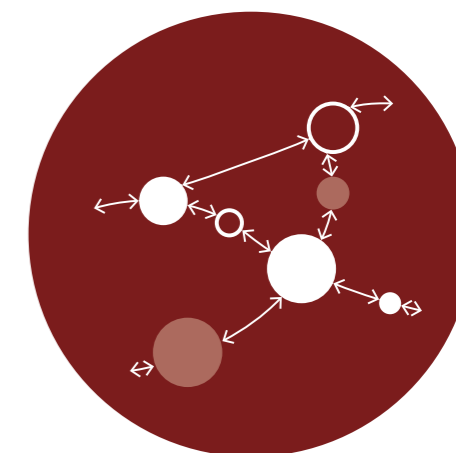
Theories: Boverket, Jacobs, Newman, Wekerle and Whitzman, Oldenburg



### Mixed-use interventions

The implementation of mixed-use provides prerequisites for increased use over the day and seasons which directly effects activity and further on the perceived safety. This contributes to a more multifunctional urban environment that attract more people.

Theories: Jacobs, Newman, Boverket  
References: Wishes from stakeholders



### Working with the human scale

By designing elements in human scale, smaller structures that are easy to measure with the human body, the urban environment feels easier to orientate in and connect with. Since current structures are big in scale with long continuous blocks, design elements in the human scale will contribute to a more mixed urban environment.

Theories: Jacobs, Newman



## Design framework

### Third places to create a new narrative

To maintain people in the urban environment there is a need of providing public and semi-public space that people can take part of outside home and work. This will contribute to increased activity and shaping a new narrative for the site, that the district is a destination during the whole day. To find safe places in the urban environment creates stronger bonds, creates local care and potentially changes the words connected to the district. The third places can also be designed to strengthen local character and make it visual to the public.



Theories: Oldenburg, Wekerle and Whitzman  
References: Wishes from stakeholders, Moa Tunström

### Strengthening and creating pedestrian connections

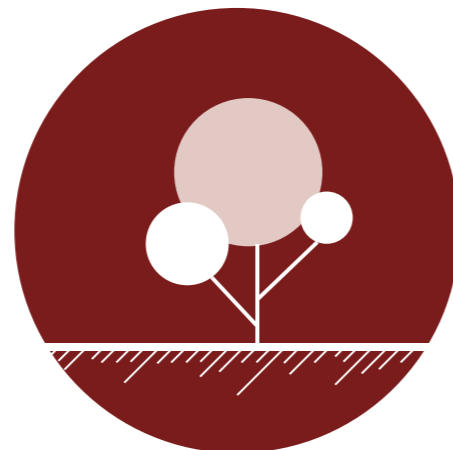
Movement possibilities and accessibility is crucial for perceived safety and enable activity. Therefore, strengthened current, and creating new connections, is prioritized to focus on the street as a public room for interaction and movement between destinations from a non-motorized perspective.



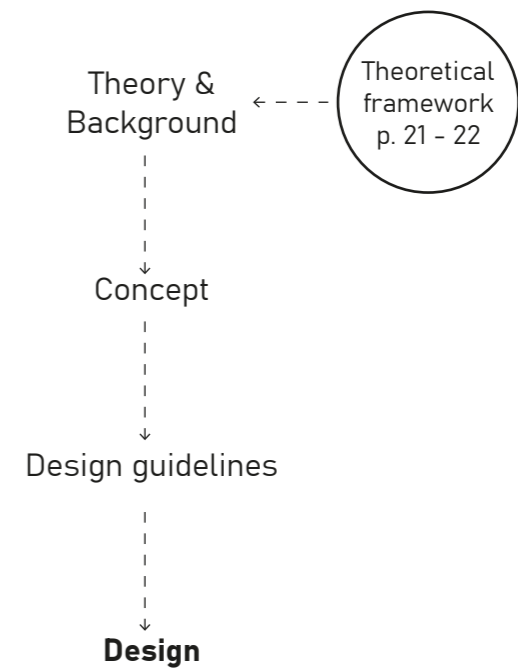
Theories: Boverket, Jacobs, Oldenburg, van Eldijk

### Adding green-blue elements in the urban environment

To contribute to increased social and environmental sustainability, green-blue elements are used as design components to increase wellbeing and decrease climate change.

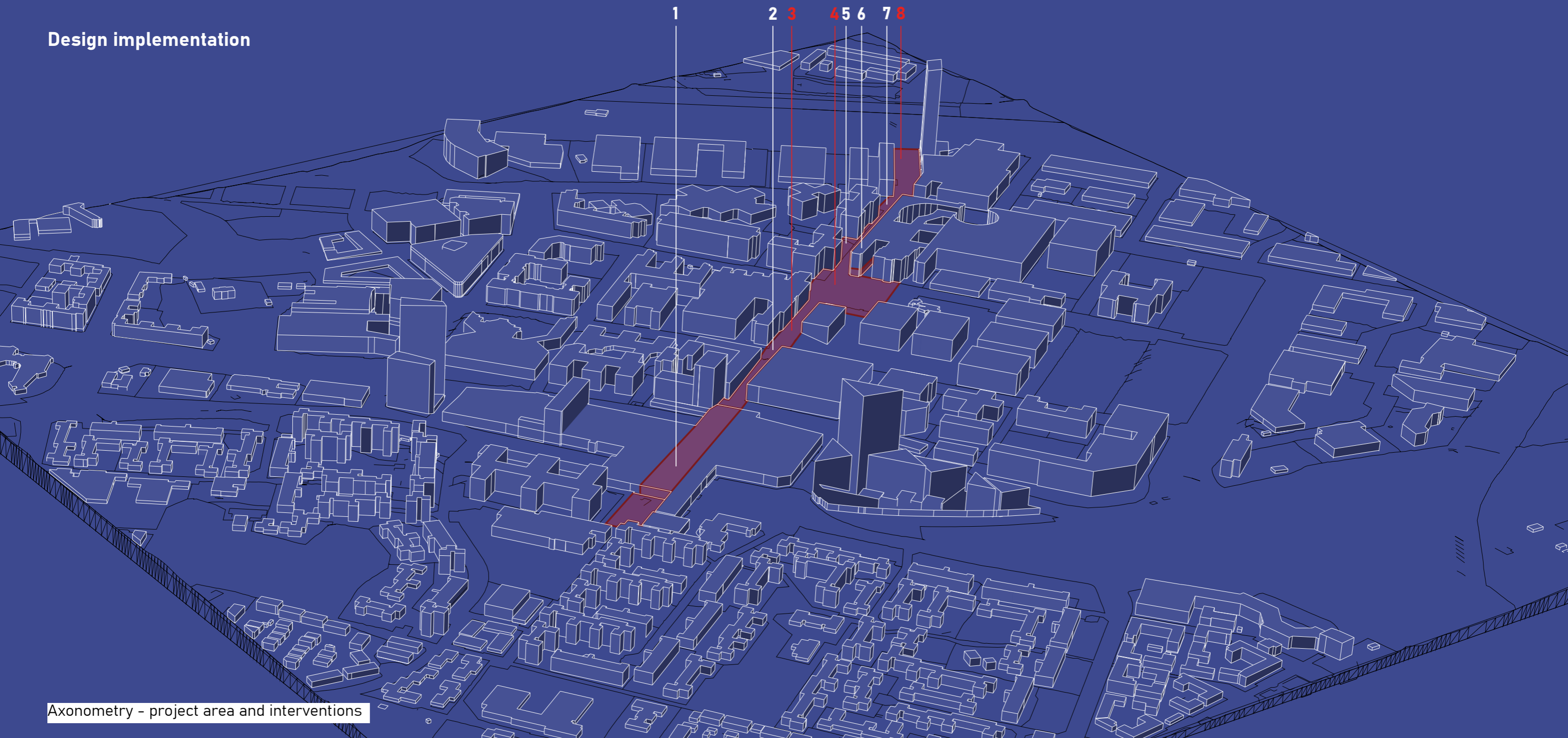


References: Boverket, SDG's & wishes from stakeholder



FUNCTION	Frameworks	Design language	Practical guidelines	Reference projects
WHAT	Barrier effect model Theory: Newmans Defensible space J. Jacobs theory Oldenburgs Third place	Design for safety & activity	Boverket CPTED Guidelines for planning, design, and management	Reference projects p. 47 - 48 Examples of science hubs p. 15 - 16
OUTCOME	Analysis	Decreasing barrier effects Activity & Safety	Design guidelines	Urban acupuncture

## Design implementation



Axonometry - project area and interventions

### Site

1. KISTA MALL
2. THE CROSSING KISTAGÅNGEN-  
ISAFJORDSGATAN
3. THE STREET
4. GRÖNLANDSPARKEN
5. THE VOID
6. THE TERRAIN
7. THE CROSSING KISTAGÅNGEN-  
TORSHAMNSGATAN
8. ARNE BEURLINGS SQUARE

### Problem

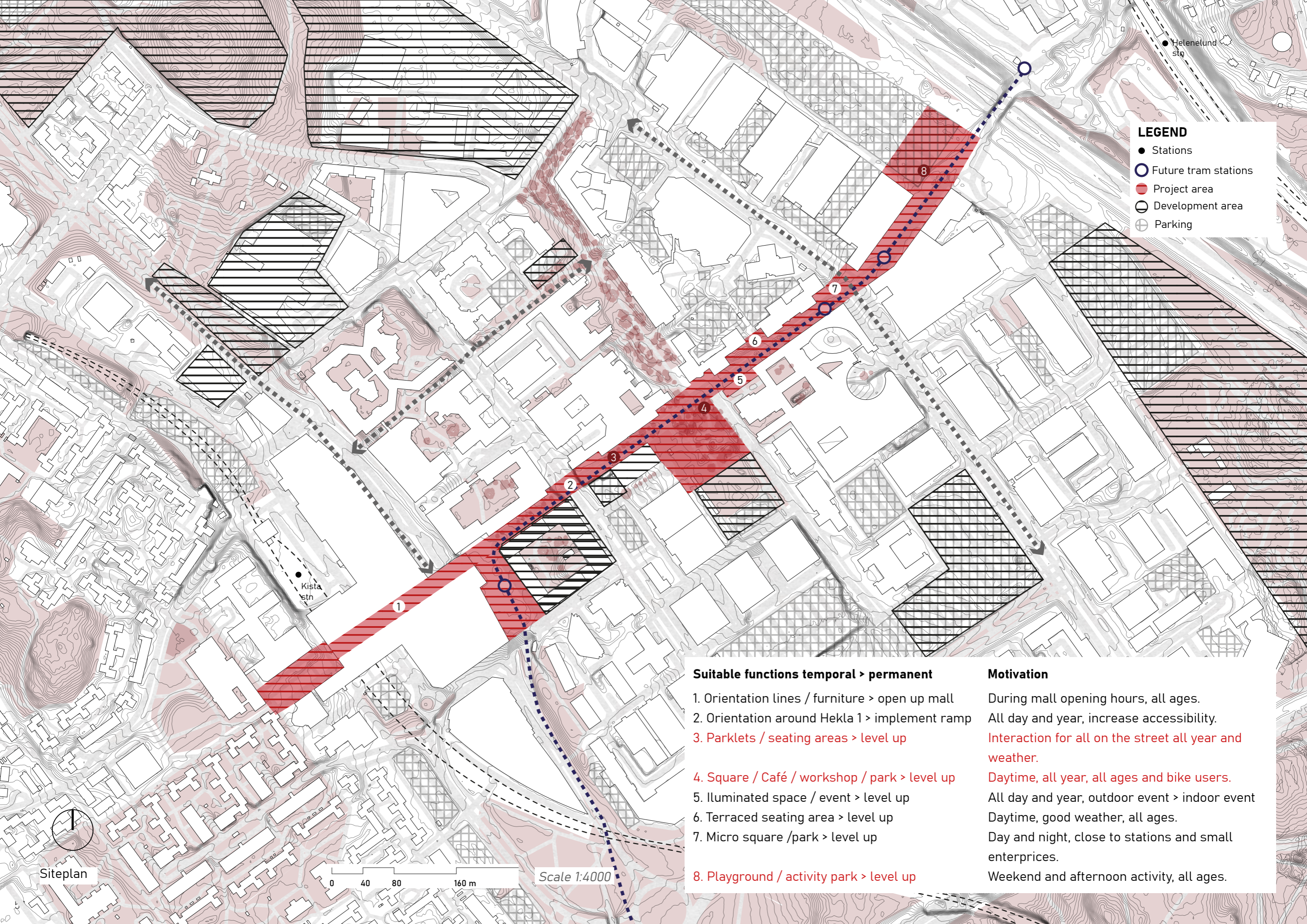
- Bad orientation - limited accessibility  
 Limited accessibility - bad sight
- Doesn't encourage interaction - unhuman scale  
 Bad sight - dark - monofunctional
- Dark - bad sight - underused  
 Unaccessible - bad sight - underused  
 Dark - bad sight - Doesn't encourage  
 interaction - traffic separation  
 Low activity - underused - monofunctional

### Needs

- > CONNECT THE TWO SQUARES
- > CONNECT FOR MANY - LIGHT
- > SPACE FOR INTERACTION
- > ACTIVATION - NATURAL SURVILLIANCE
- > ACTIVATE - LIGHT
- > ENABLE USE - ACTIVATE
- > ACTIVATE - LIGHT - REMOVE TRAFIC  
SEPARATION
- > ACTIVATION - LIGHT

### Possibilities

- > Increase movement - improve orientation
- > Increase movement - improve orientation
- > Enable spontaneous interactions
- > Provide new functions - green public space
- > Provide new functions - new destination
- > Improve orientation - new destination
- > Increase movement - commercial activities in  
the crossing
- > Provide new functions - new destination



**LEGEND**

- Stations
- Future tram stations
- Project area
- Development area
- ⊕ Parking

Kista stn

Helenelund stn

Siteplan

0 40 80 160 m

Scale 1:4000

**Suitable functions temporal > permanent**

1. Orientation lines / furniture > open up mall
2. Orientation around Hekla 1 > implement ramp
3. Parklets / seating areas > level up
4. Square / Café / workshop / park > level up
5. Illuminated space / event > level up
6. Terraced seating area > level up
7. Micro square /park > level up
8. Playground / activity park > level up

**Motivation**

During mall opening hours, all ages.  
 All day and year, increase accessibility.  
**Interaction for all on the street all year and weather.**  
**Daytime, all year, all ages and bike users.**  
 All day and year, outdoor event > indoor event  
 Daytime, good weather, all ages.  
 Day and night, close to stations and small enterprices.  
 Weekend and afternoon activity, all ages.

### 3. THE STREET

#### Activity and safety on the street

Stockholm city have made a detailed development plan that has become legally binding. Since Kistagången is quit narrow, providing space for many types of traffic, the supply of meeting spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists are limited.

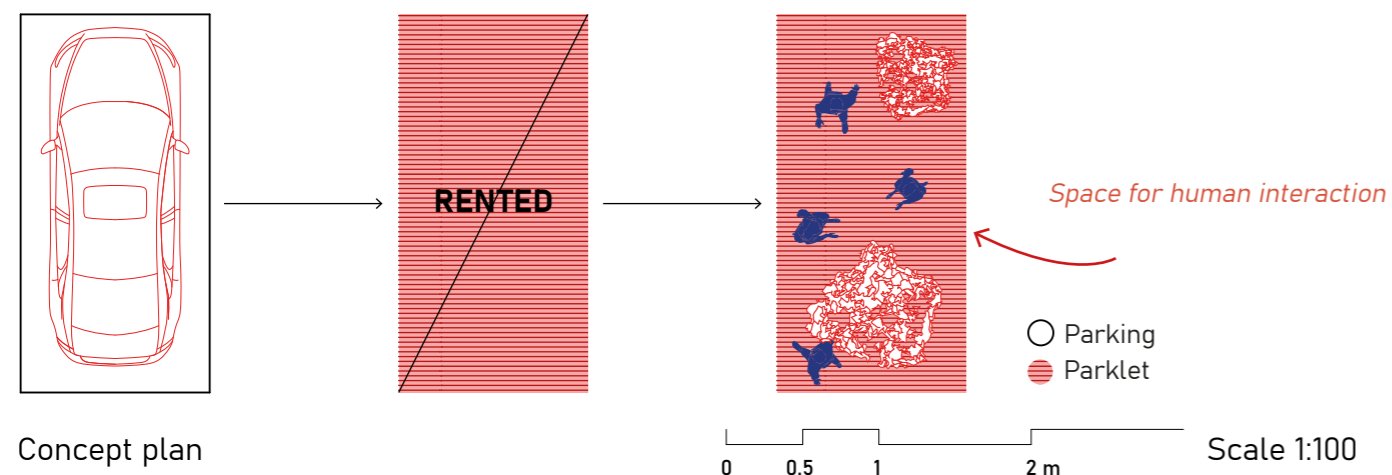
In sections of long blocks there is a need to implement space designated for human interaction since the distance to crossings occasionally is far. Though there is no evident space for deeper interaction on the sidewalk, the parklet is used to provide functions such as seating, bicycle parking or spontaneous space.

#### What is a parklet?

A parklet is when one or several parking lots are used to fullfill a social cause with one or several public functions. By renting the lot and placing mobile or siple structure the parking lot can easly be replaced again. The possible uses of the space is big but common functions are seating place, bike parkings, green area or outdoor restaurants.

#### Purpose

- Increase possibility for social interaction on the street.
- Adjust function after need.
- Small, easy to implement.
- Mobile structure, can be moved to where it's needed.

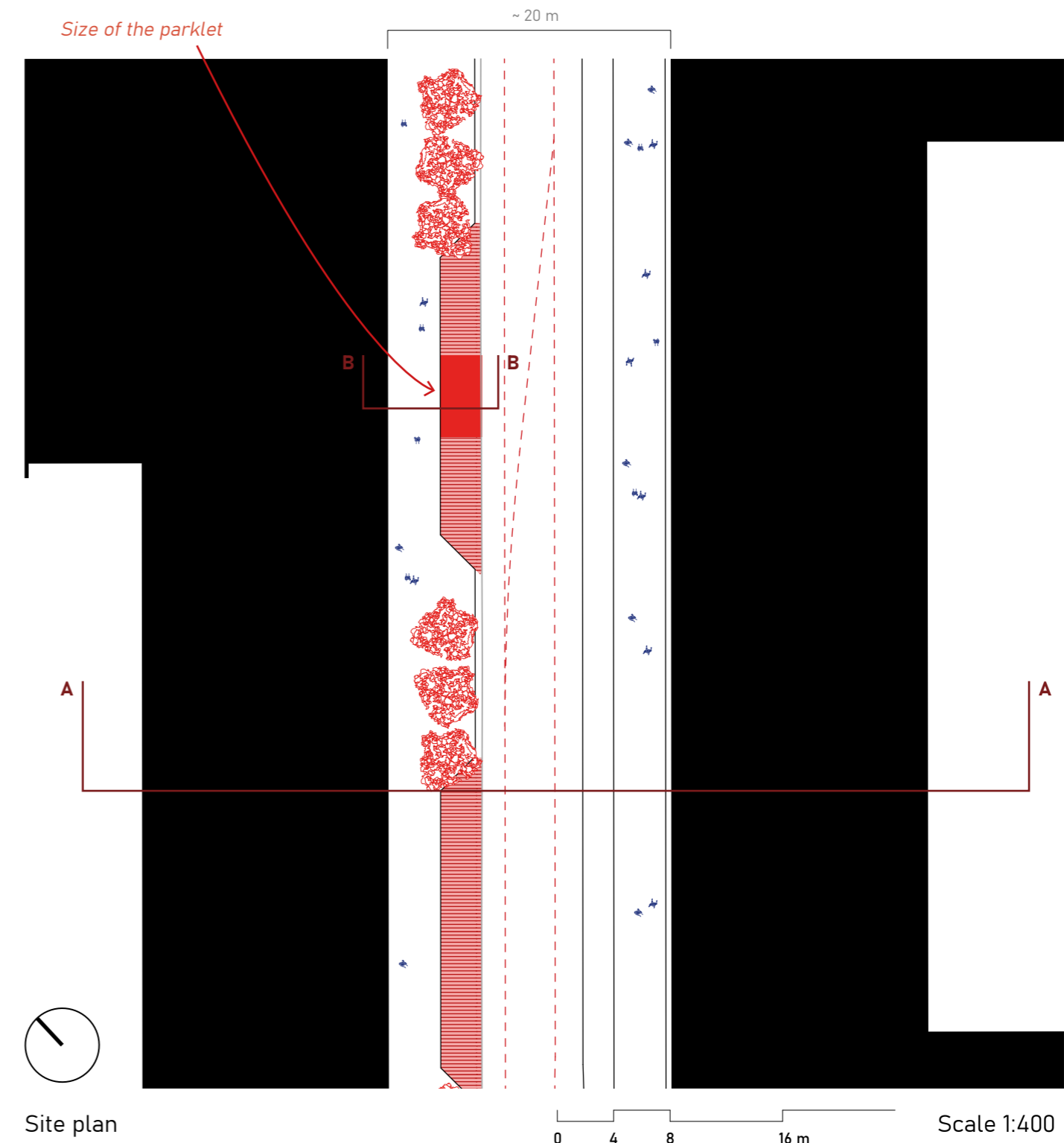
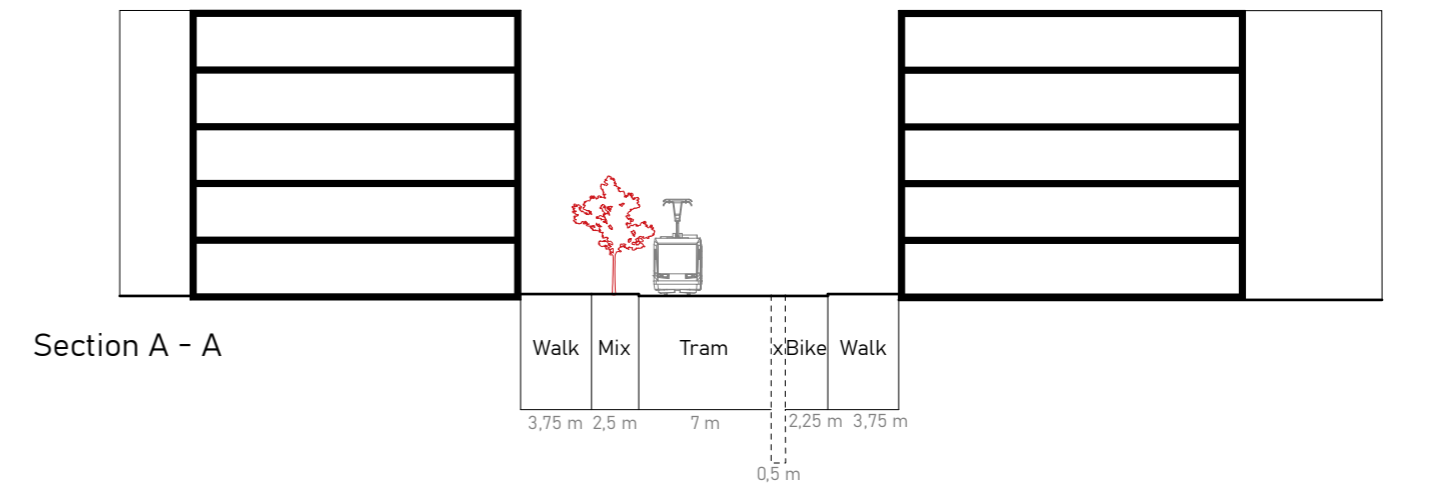
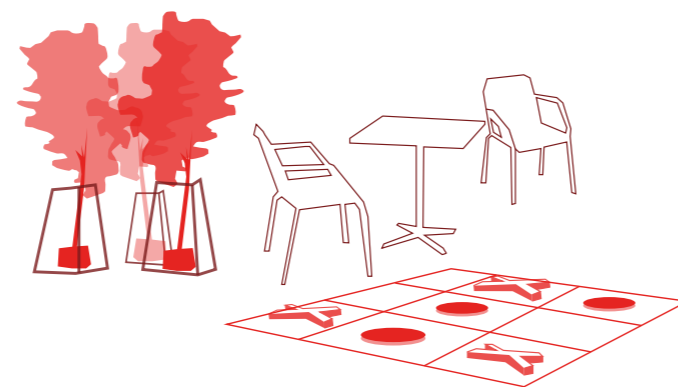


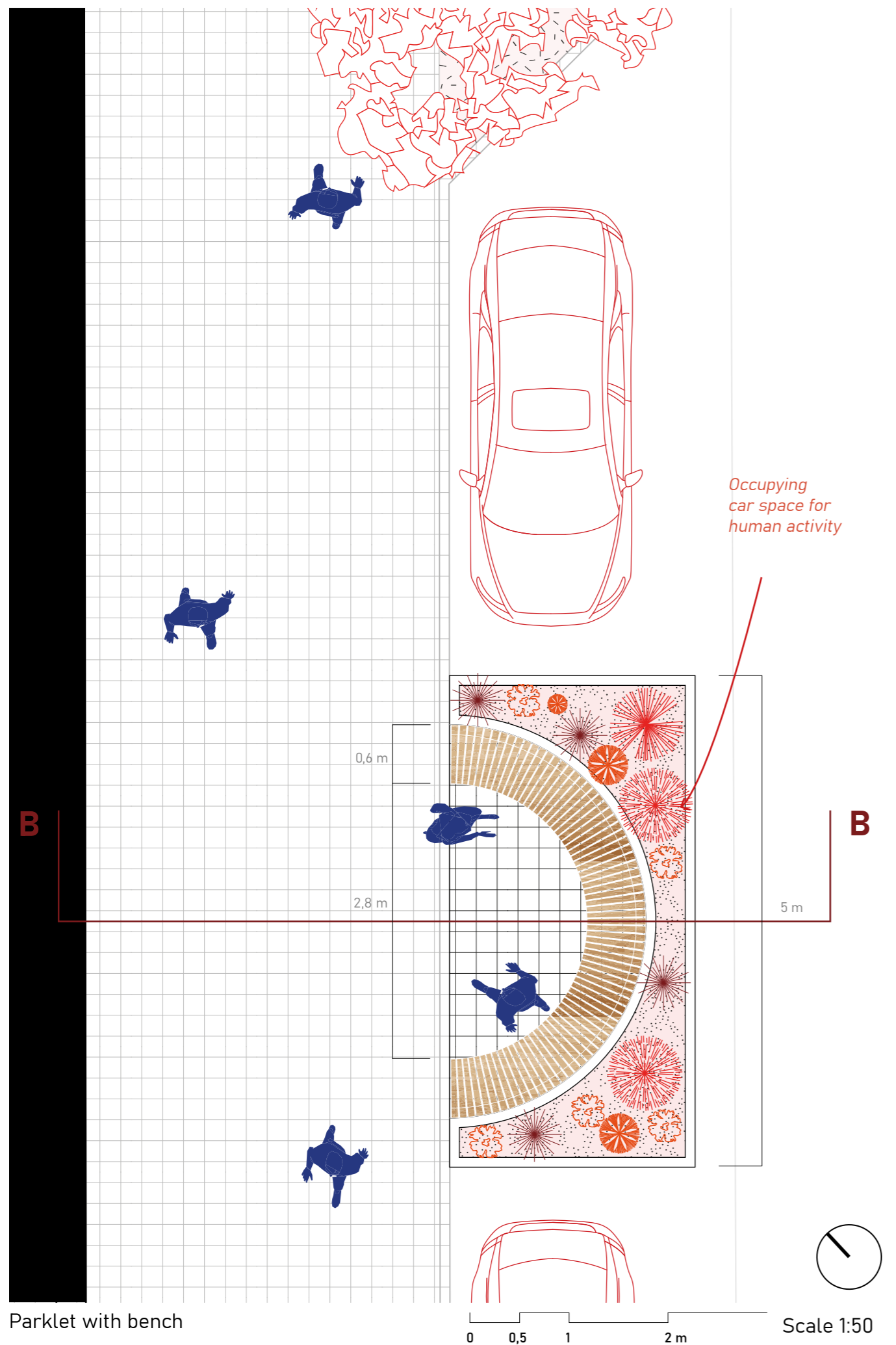
#### Temporal solution - stage one

The temporal solution for the parklet is easy to conduct. One or two parking lots are rented and occupied to convert space for cars to humans.

By putting simple structures on the plot there is a possibility to both try different functions and also location. Examples of this could be:

- Benches
- Movable trees
- Tables
- Big size games such as chess or noughts and crosses (tre i rad)
- Standing platform
- Rain/wind protection
- Heatsources during winter ex heated bench

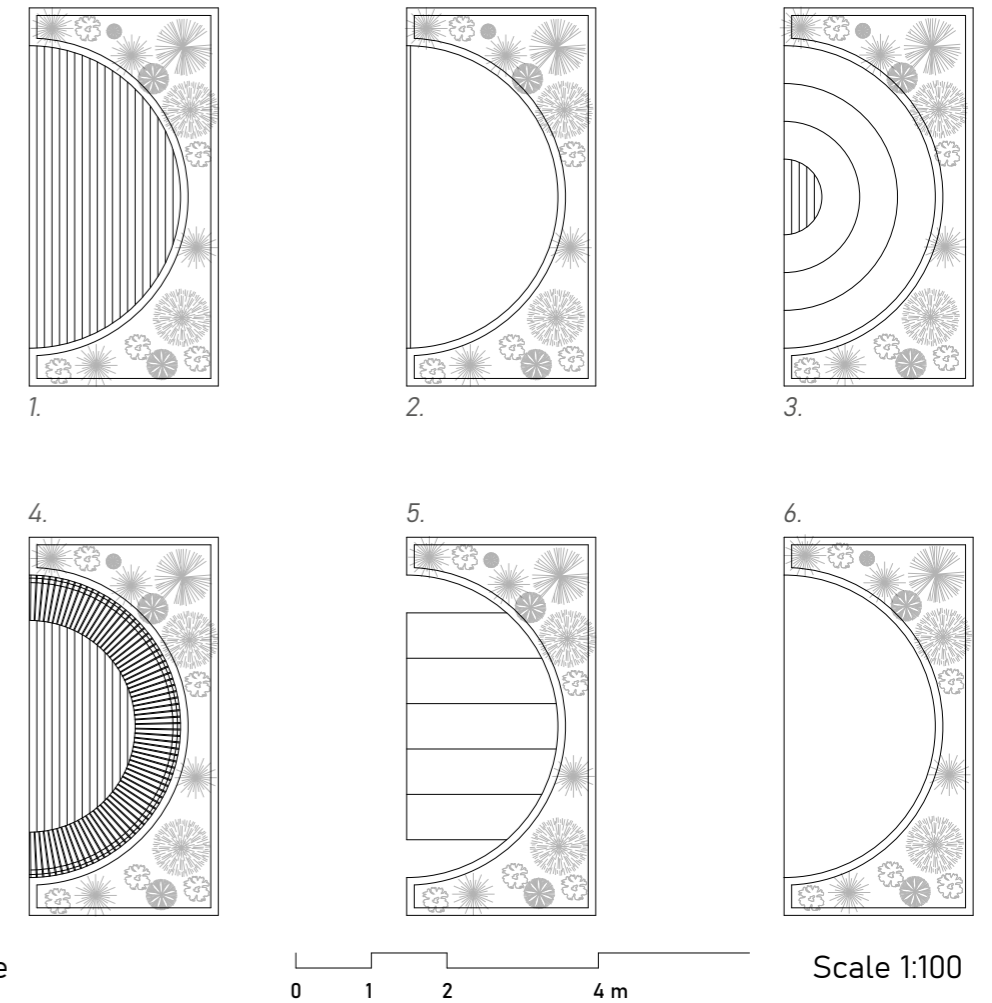




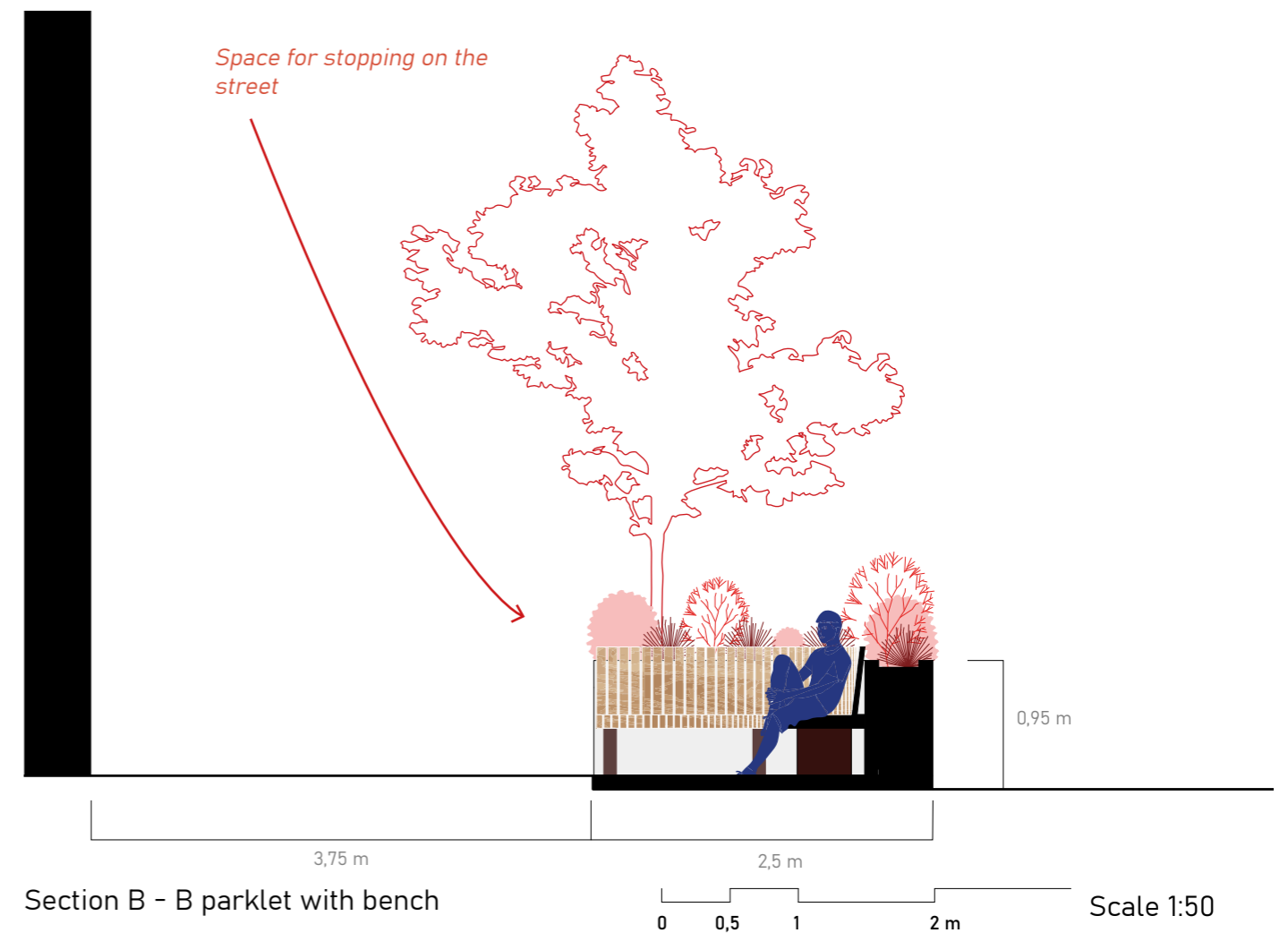
### Permanent structure - stage two

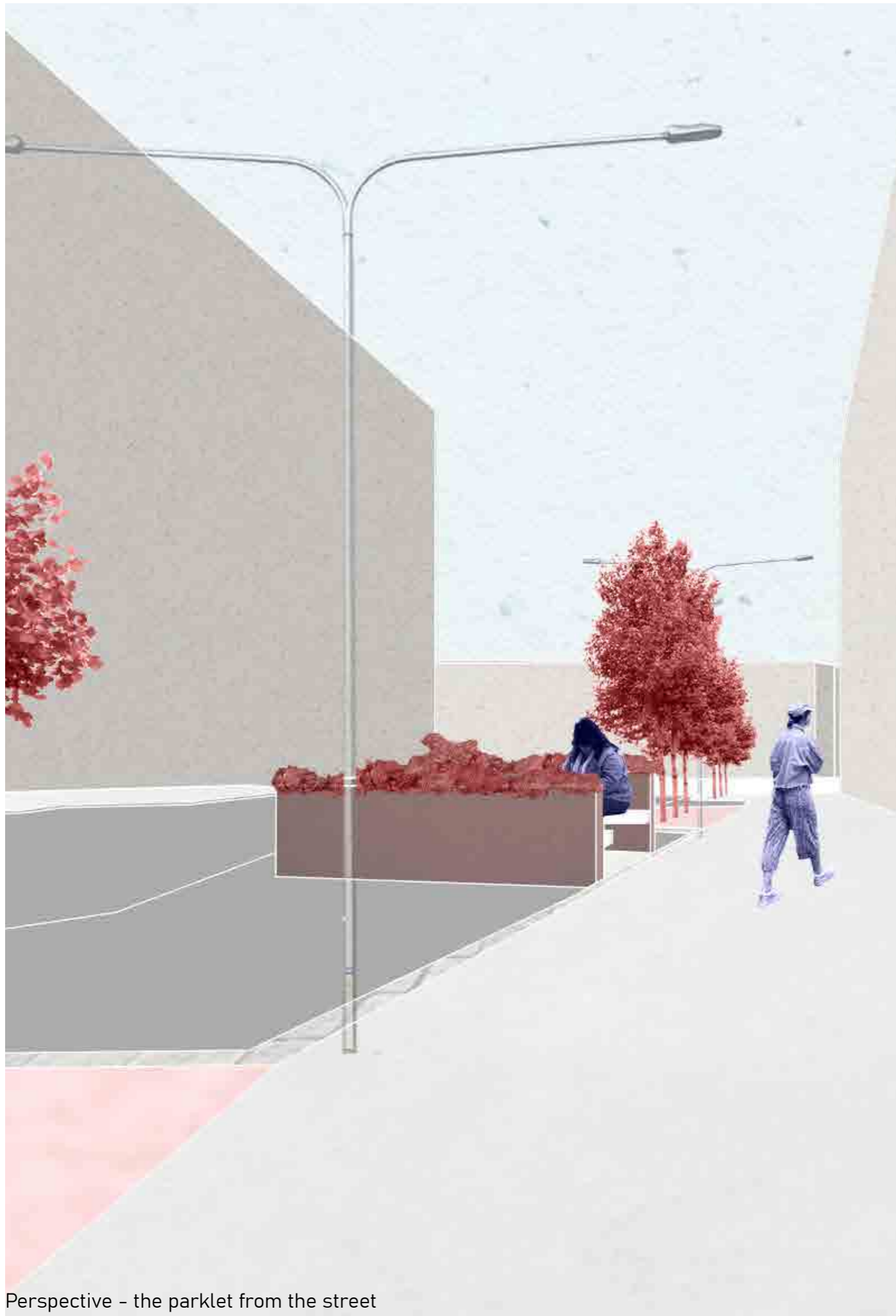
Implement a more robust structure that provide protection from traffic and direct the user towards the sidewalk for increased social interaction. The parklet can still be moved, and the function can be adapted over time.

1. Seating platform
2. Flower bed
3. Seating stair
4. Bench
5. Bike parking
6. Micro square, spontaneous space



Flexibility within the structure





Perspective - the parklet from the street

#### 4. GRÖNLANDSPARKEN

##### Activity and safety in the park

Accessibility to reach green areas are important for human perception of space in an urban district though it provides possibilities for social interaction, activity and recreation. Despite this, parks tend to lack in natural surveillance with bad sight and low activity depending on weather conditions. Grönlandsparken today is providing programmed public space for seating and passing in a quite dense vegetation. To increase safety and activity in the park there is a need to implement natural surveillance but still preserve the sense of isolation from the traffic. By exploiting the northern corner of the park by replacing trees with a lower building, providing openness with a tilted green roof and lawn, the park receives a spontaneous area for human interaction. At the same time the crossing is framed to receive qualities of a smaller square which can gather semi-public space and act as a connection point. The trees that are removed are moved to other locations within the park and to increase green implementation in other parts of the district.

##### Design elements

- The Square
- Slope
- Bike workshop

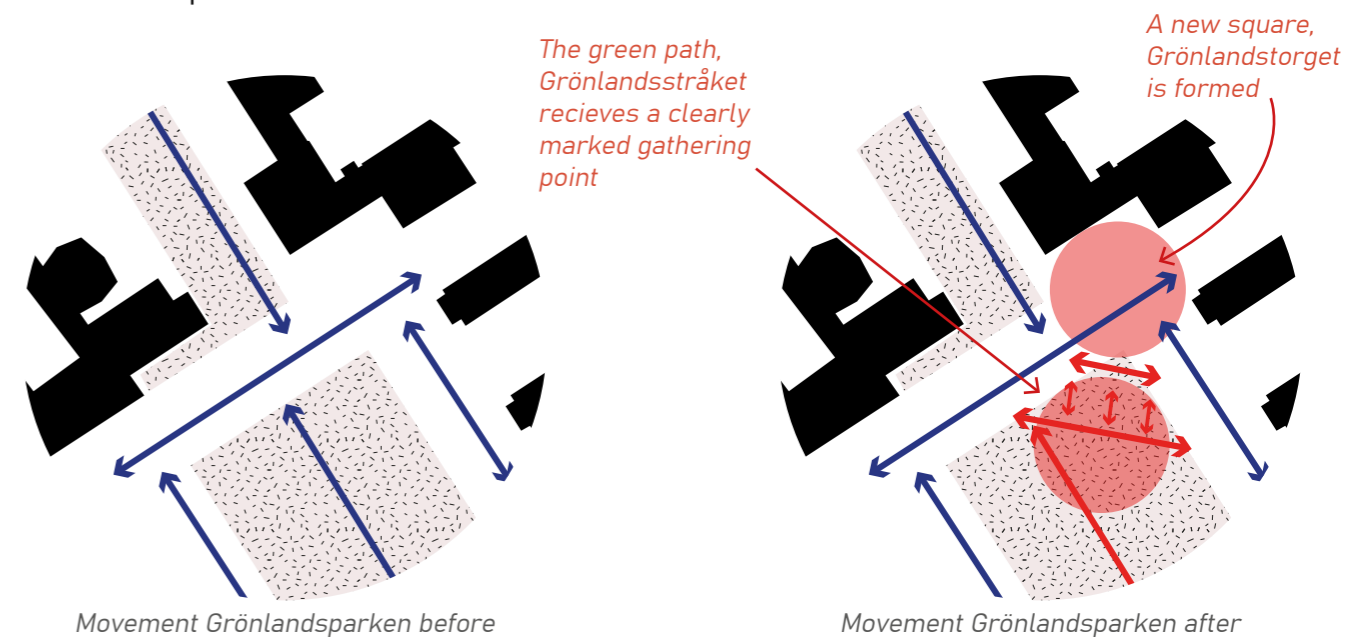
- Café
- The to go coffee
- Spontaneous green space

##### Purpose

- Implement human scale project in surroundings of large structures.
- Increase natural surveillance in the crossing/square and in the park.
- Small, easy to implement. Possibility to up-scale to larger structure.
- Enable activity in- and outdoors over the day and season.
- Implementing third places in shape of public and semi-public space.

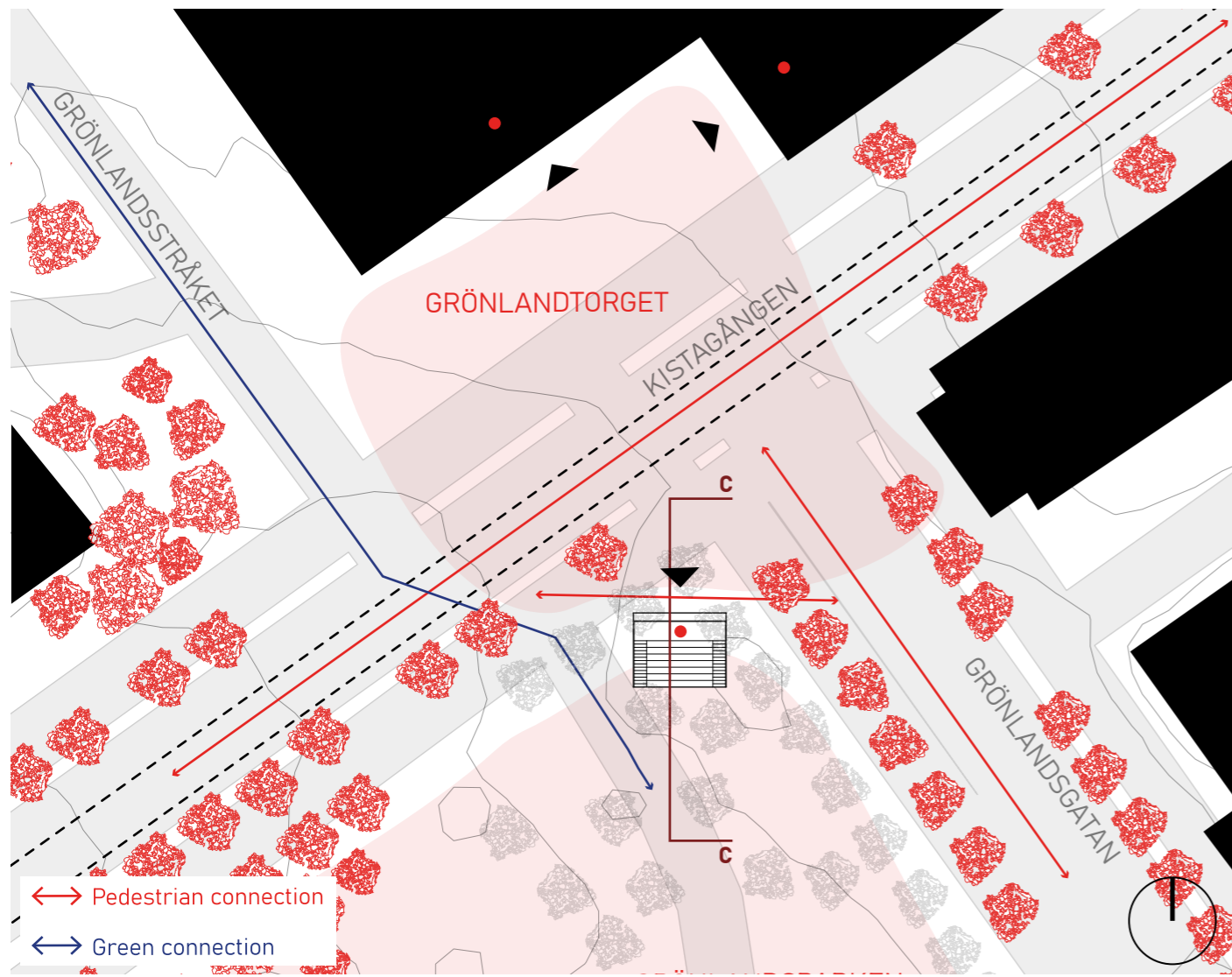
##### Temporal solution - stage one

The temporal solution is planned to implement the functions and qualities with a smaller and more simple structure. This structure is similar to the size of a common food truck to try the functions of activating outdoor space and does not provide indoor semi-public space.

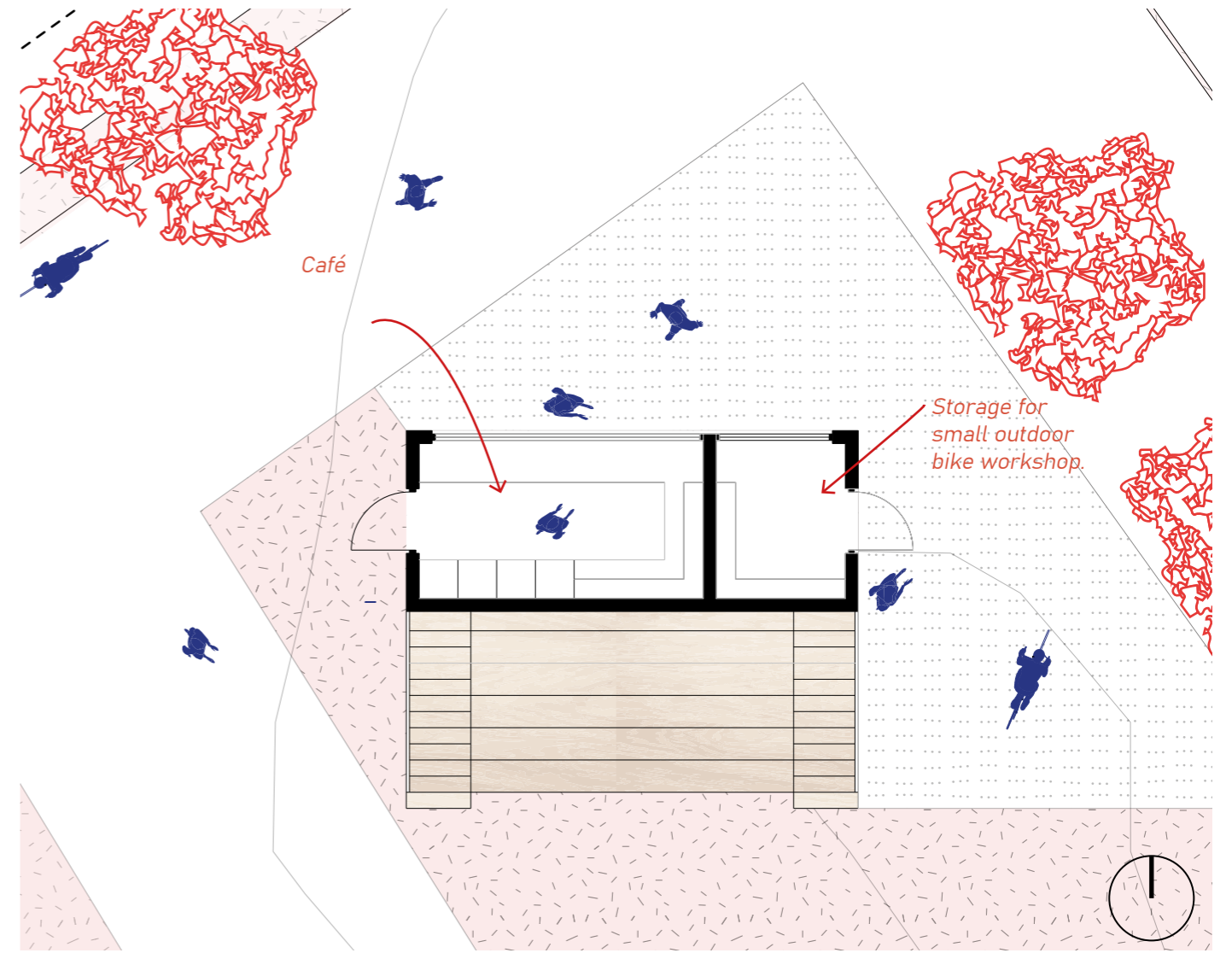


Movement Grönlandsparken before

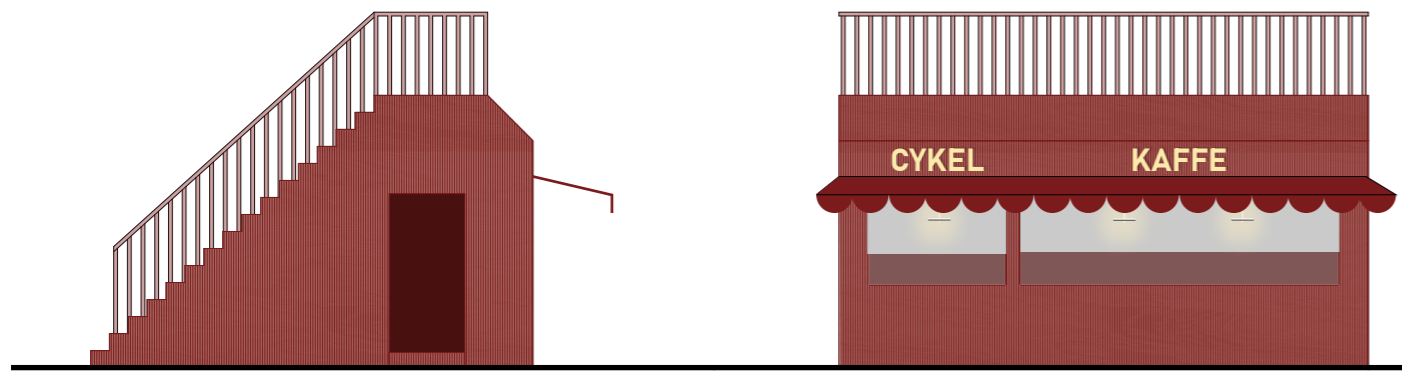
Movement Grönlandsparken after



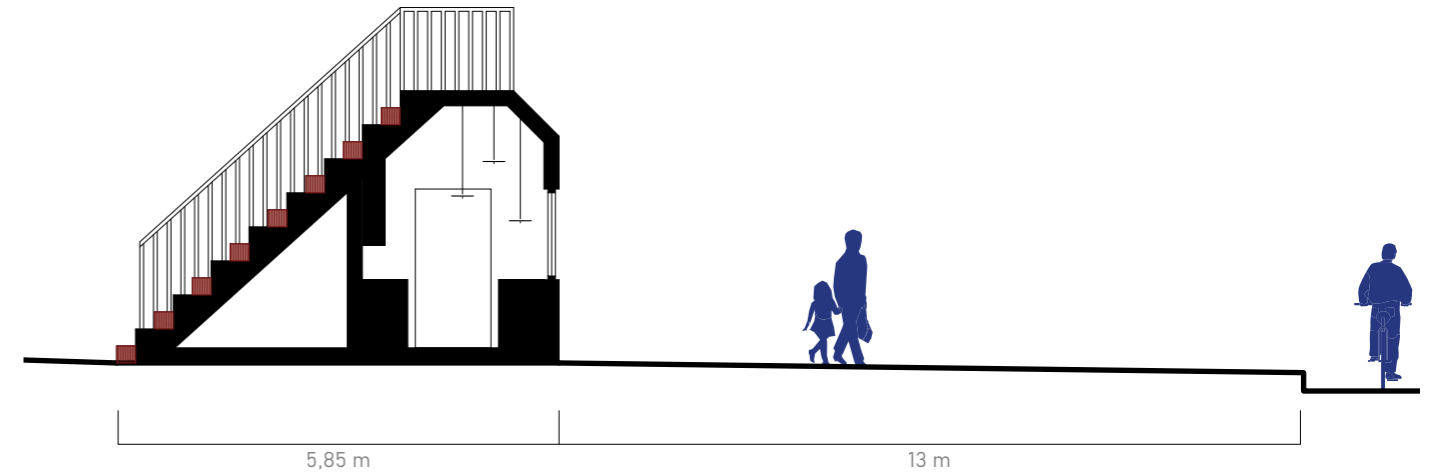
Siteplan Scale 1:500



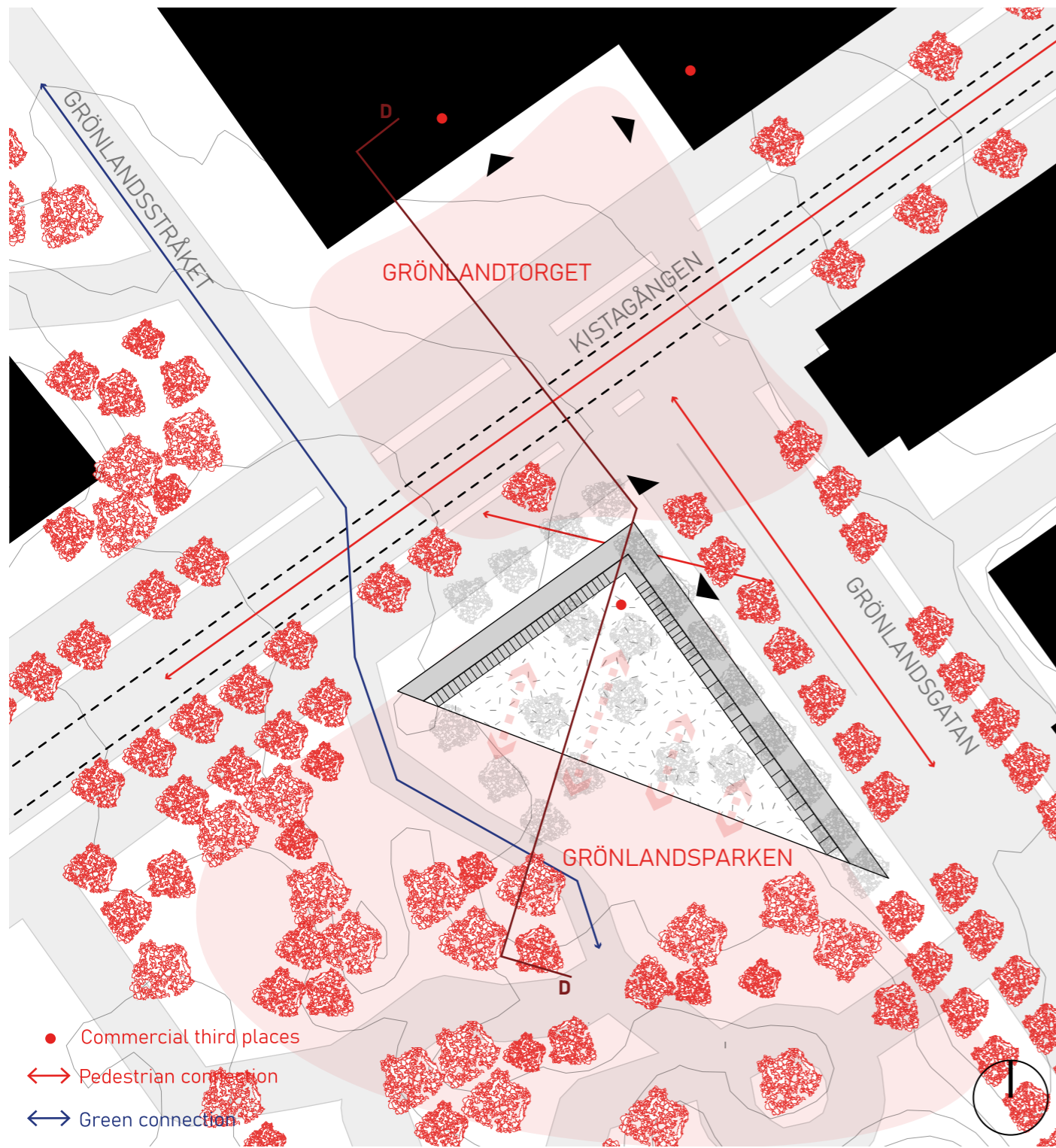
Plan Scale 1:100



Facades Scale 1:100



Section C - C Scale 1:100

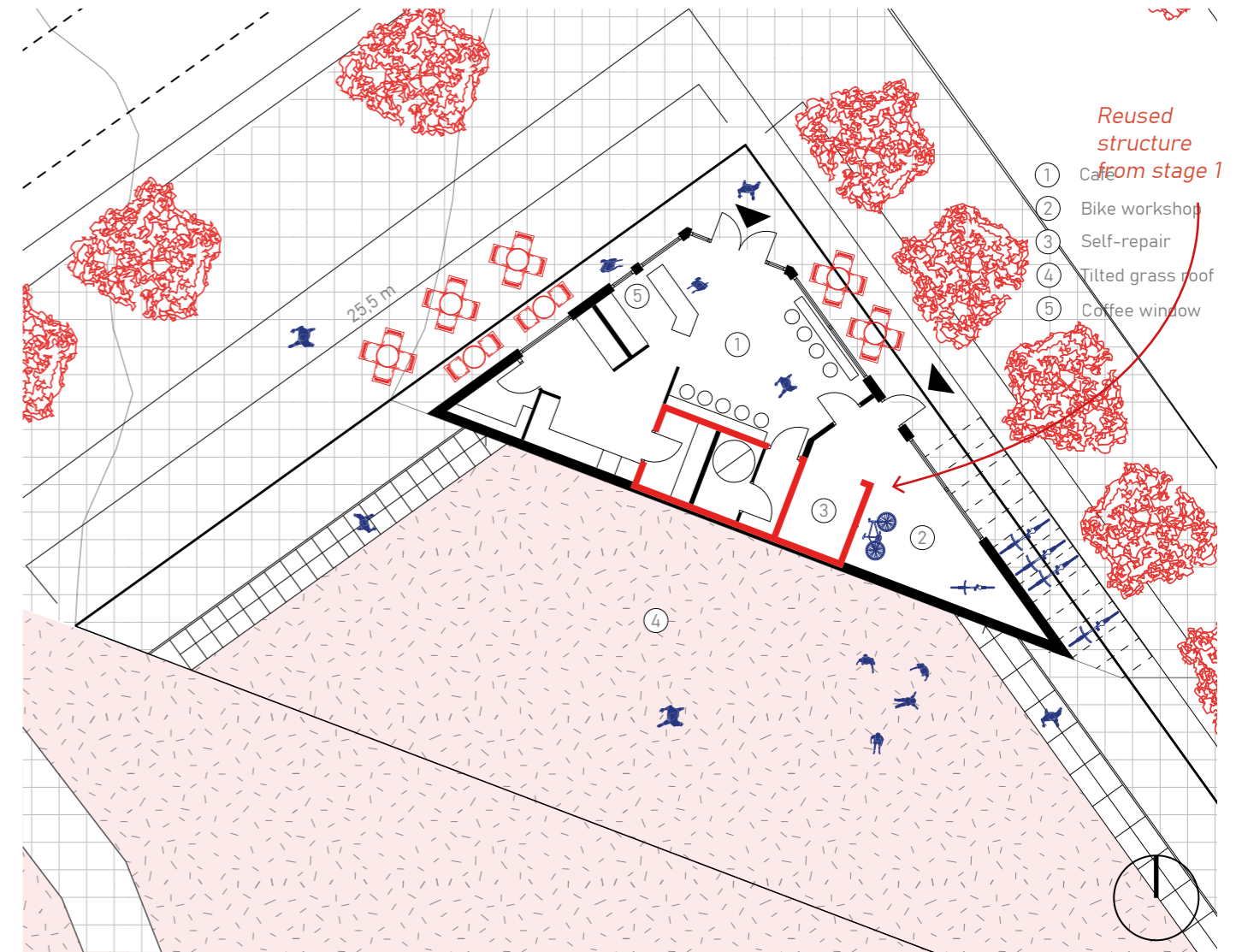


Siteplan

0 5 10 20 m Scale 1:500

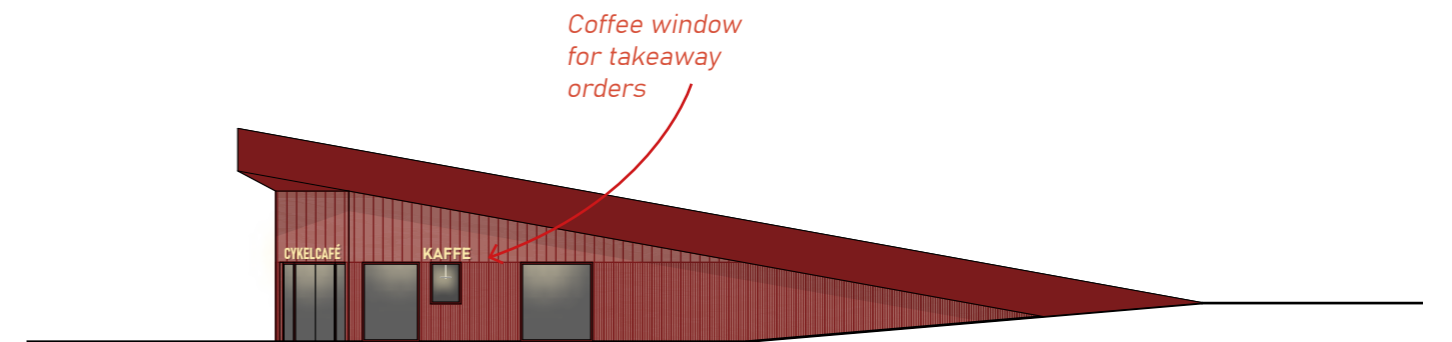
**Permanent structure - stage two**

Reusing building structure in stage one and transforming into the bigger tilted version. The new building intends to serve both indoor and outdoor functions that focuses on the square versus the park. Semi-public space is expanded with commercial activities inside the building and enhanced prerequisites for other small businesses in the crossing/square.



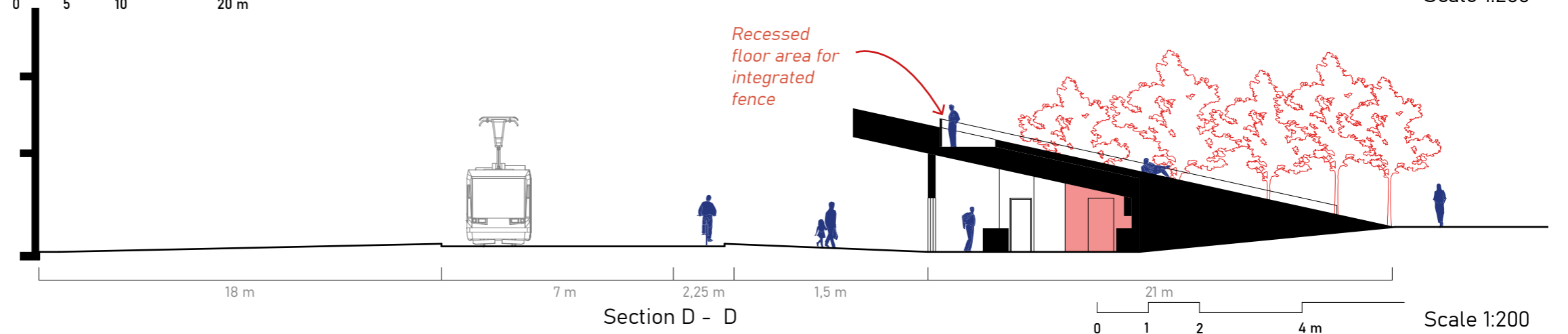
Plan

Scale 1:200



Facade

Scale 1:200



Section D - D

Scale 1:200



Perspective - the bike café from the street

## 8. ARNE BEURLINGS SQUARE

### Activity and safety on the square

To increase activity and perceived safety in Kista, movement between adjacent areas is required. The connection to Helenelund is mainly restricted by infrastructural barriers, but through observing current public space, there was an evident lack of activities and social functions, something that can attract and motivate movement towards Kista.

Arne Beurlings square is an open big open space several small businesses and the fair located on the ground floor, closely located to a big parking. Through an expansion of human space, by occupying several parking lots, a park is placed next to the square to provide space for programmed semi-public space and open green space that creates a possible destination. In that way, Arne Beurlings square, becomes more multifunctional with programmed versus spontaneous public- and semi-public space.

### Design elements

- The park
- The square
- The playground
- The outdoor serving
- The second hand shop, for example books
- The water element

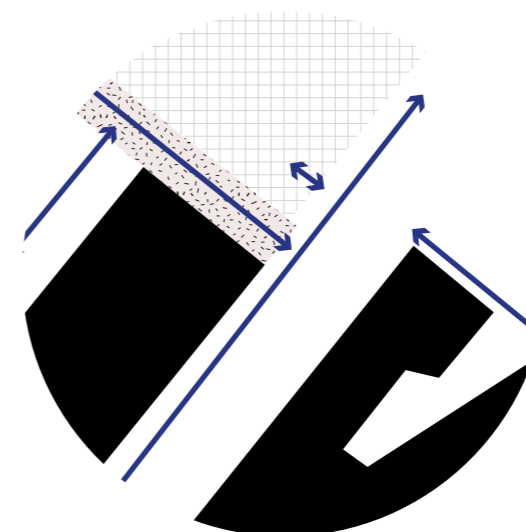
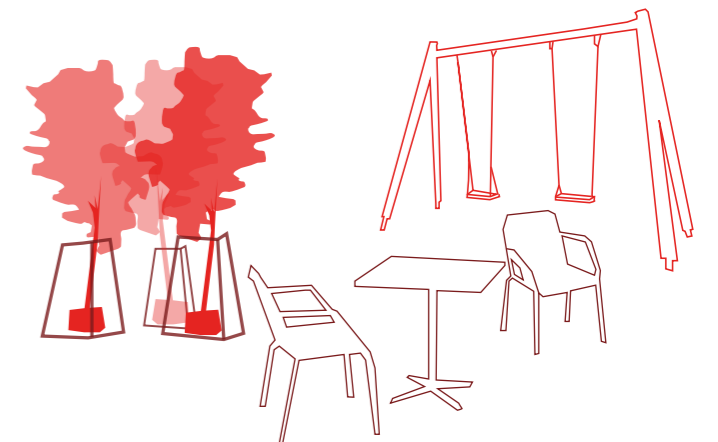
### Purpose

- Increase natural surveillance on the square.
- Strengthening the connection to Helenelund
- Implement new green-blue structure.
- Adding mix of functions for human activity.
- Implement human scale

### Temporal solution - stage one

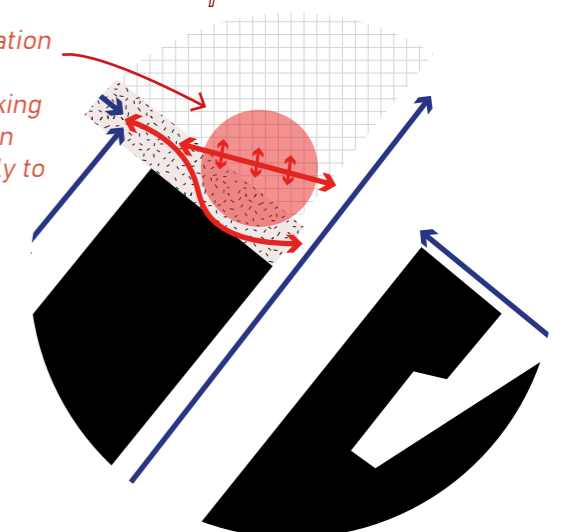
Similarly, with the parklet concept. Rent a bigger area consisting of several parking lots. Occupy the area with pop-up structure that are following the considered functions.

This stage doesn't require a carefully considered design proposal. The important part is the occupation of the parking lots for human use. This could be a simple building construction or second-hand purchases to create a space for play and seating with portable trees similarly as the parklet.

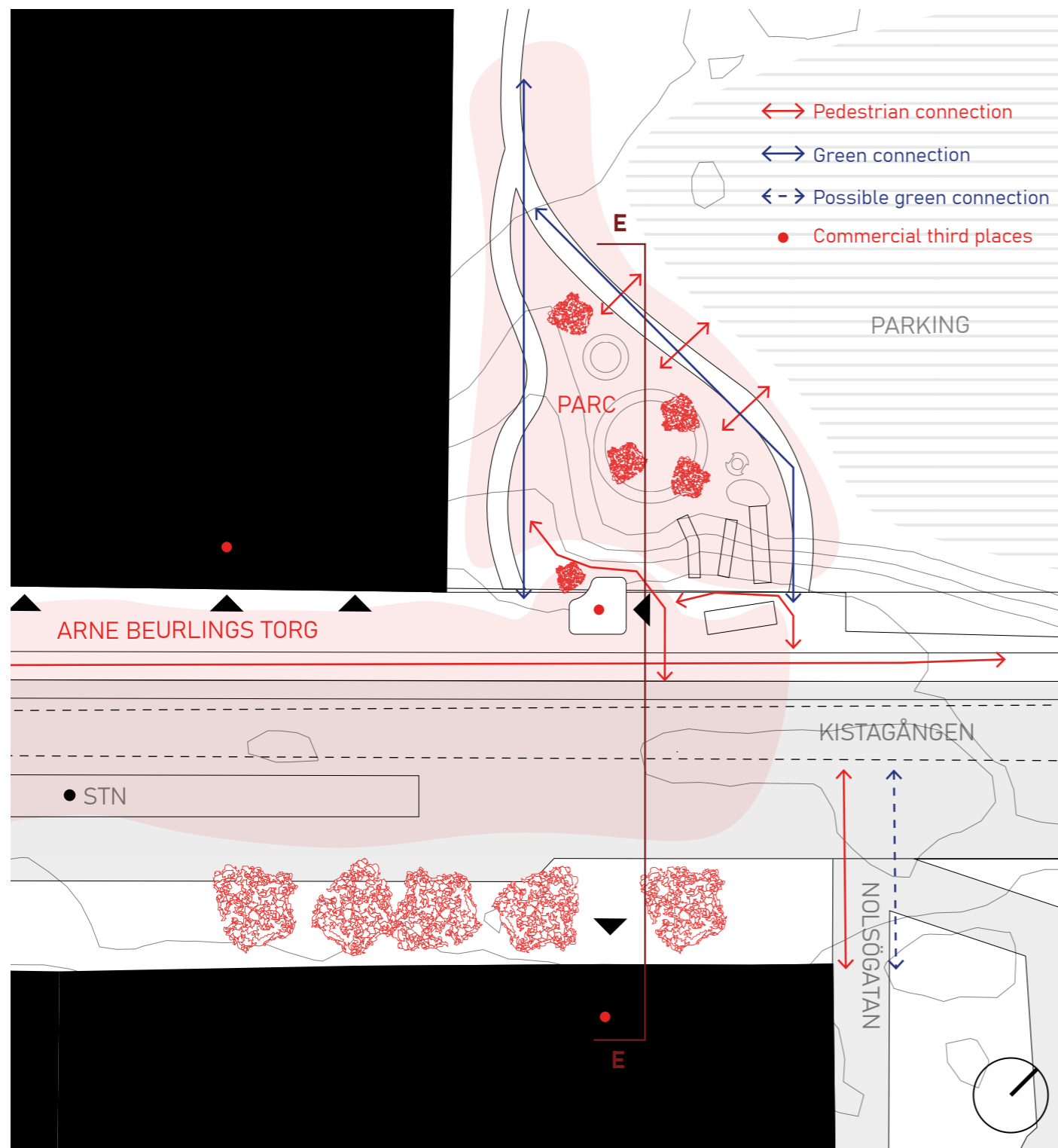


Movement Arne Beurlings square before

A new destination is created on occupied parking lots for human activity closely to Helenelund



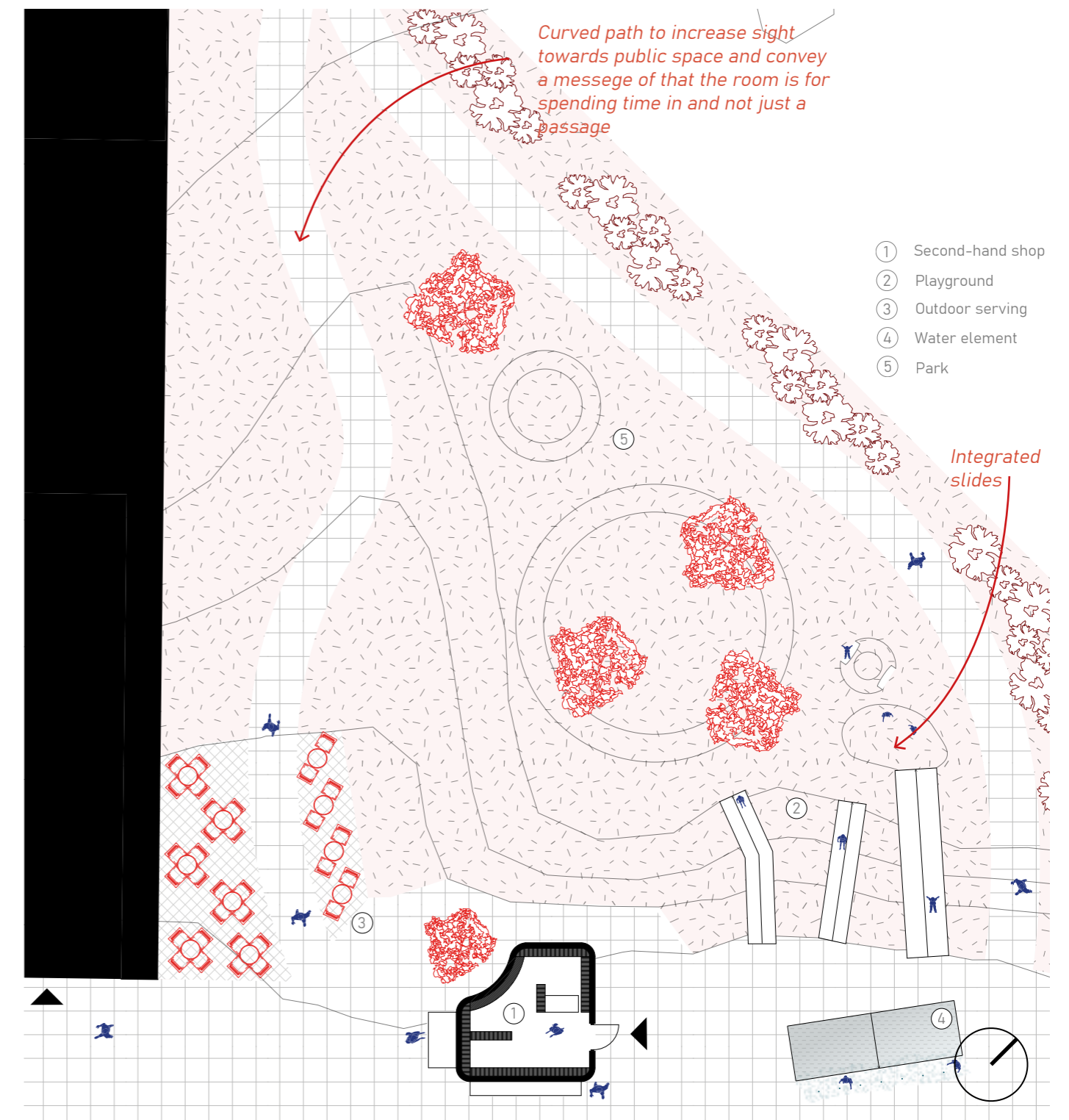
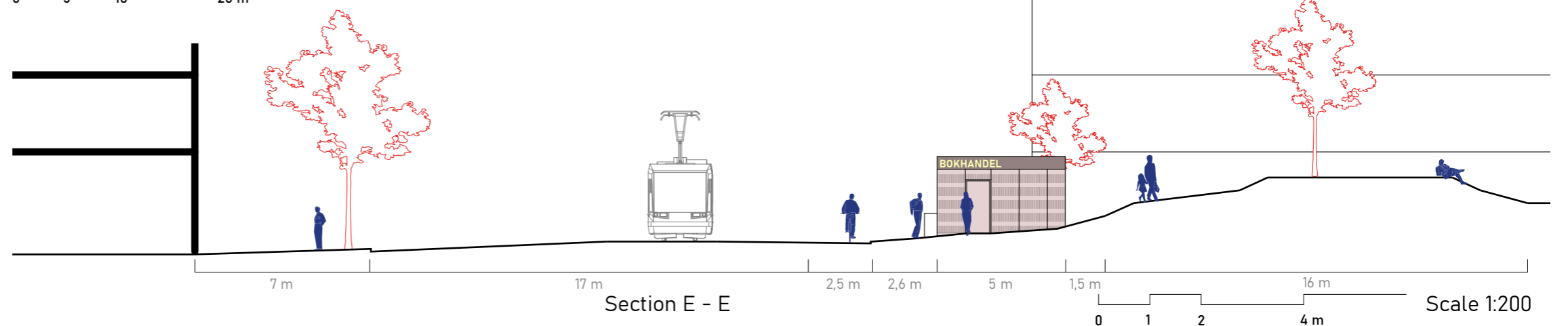
Movement Arne Beurlings square after



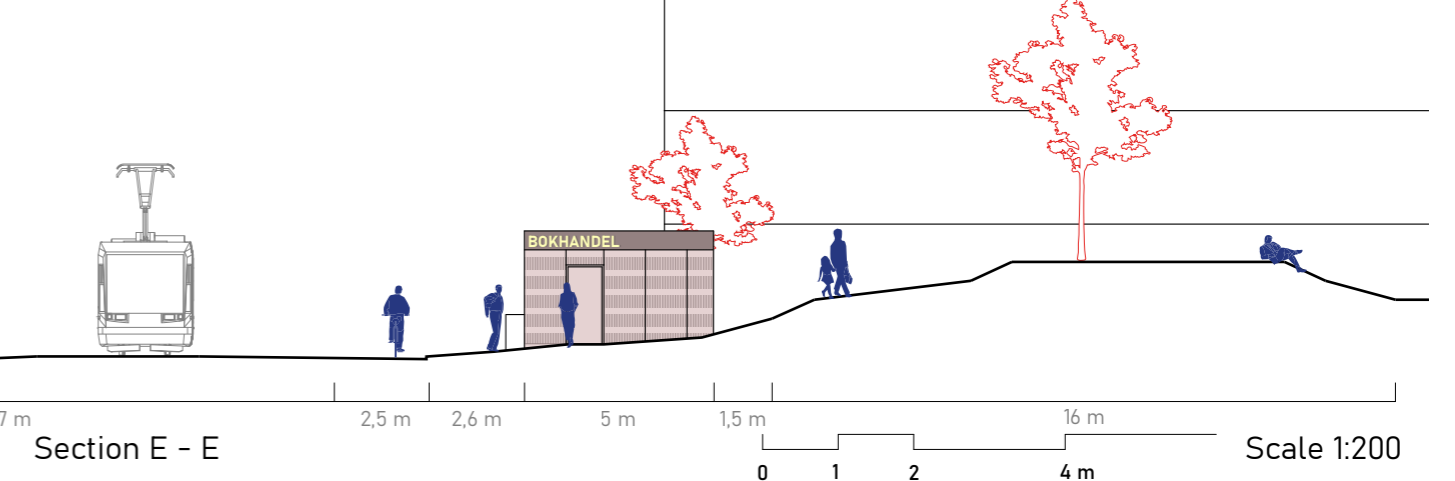
Siteplan Scale 1:500

**Permanent structure - stage two**

Permanently establish the park and the square development with the small second-hand shop. In the future, this green area can be further developed to construct a green corridor in the northern part on Kista Science City, binding together Igelbäcken nature reserve and Ursvik recreation area with the developed green area in the new neighbourhood Kista äng.



Plan Scale 1:200



Section E - E Scale 1:200



Perspective - the square and park from the street

## DISCUSSION

First and most importantly, the problem in Kista Science City is very complex and layered. There is not one single reason for the negative trend of abandonment in Kista, but this thesis examines the relation between perceived safety and activity in public spaces within monofunctional urban areas, using Kista Science City as a case study.

By combining established urban theories, context analysis and stakeholder perspectives, the study explores how architectural design can influence perceived safety and activity in public environments. While the theories differ in focus, together they suggest that perceived unsafety and urban activity are shaped through the interaction of multiple spatial and social factors.

The discussion is structured according to the three approaches with connected research question to provide structure and involve different layers in order to receive a more holistic and realistic perspective. Since the district is in crucial need of change, the thesis aims to propose a solution that is directed to the current functions on site as well as taking future development into account. In that way the project intends to have an impact on site both in a short- and a long-term perspective.

### **How can design be used to enhance perceived safety and activity in public space?**

Design serves a significant role in the connection between activity and perceived safety and can, based on the theoretical framework in combination with observed reference projects, be used to enhance their presence in public spaces. Especially by focusing on increased activity since fear of crime is occurring when humans feel unseen and have difficulties to orientate.

To address this, it's important to identify local barriers affecting activity and perceived unsafety in order to understand the spatial conditions on the context. These barriers can both be infrastructural, mentioned in the article by van Eldijk, or other barriers directly or indirectly connected to safety or activity, detected in the urban theories such as building size, monofunctionality and sight.

To reduce these barrier effects, this thesis proposes a concept focusing on connecting adjacent areas, local movement and applying the method urban acupuncture. This is also complemented with design guidelines shaped to increase perceived safety and activity in the public environment, based on combined urban theories and design exploration. The key design

strategies include natural surveillance, mixed-use development, human scale design, third places, pedestrian connectivity, and green-blue infrastructure. Together, these strategies suggest that design can create conditions for improved perceived safety and increased activity by shaping public environments that supports visibility, movement and social interaction.

One possible problem that could occur is the need to offer privacy in urban environments, something that can be contra productive with planning for natural surveillance. Through more focus and implementations of territorial design consideration this could be improved.

### **How can design interventions along Kistagången increase safety and activity in Kista Science City?**

The analysing the site indicate that Kista Science City suffers from monofunctionality with an overrepresentation of offices where most people have similar movement in the area and at similar times. Since there are a lack of residential space and third places, outside work and home, Kista Science City becomes underused outside office hours and during weekends which further limits the opportunities for everyday activity and

social interaction in the district. Except monofunctionality, there are several other barriers causing negative effects in Kista Science City such as lacking sight and accessibility, traffic separation and bad reputation.

The findings indicate that the street Kistagången is a good site to establish implementation which could follow the method urban acupuncture to ensure increased activity and perceived safety without requiring big financial assets before proven positive result. The method provides a realistic implementation process that enables positive change with strategic placement of design interventions to spark wider improvements. Therefore, temporal design (stage one) is proposed, potentially followed by the more expensive and well-established permanent alternative, stage two. The design interventions can also be implemented to increase safety and activity by increasing connections to adjacent areas and assuring safe connections locally within the district.

There is a possible risk regarding planning for public activity along Kistagången which is connected to traffic noise. Since the tram is passing on the street, there is a possibility that noise will have a negative effect on human health and make people avoiding the space.

With increased focus on noise cover and vegetation this problem can be decreased. However, while urban acupuncture offers a realistic implementation strategy, isolated interventions risk having a limited long-term impact. Broader urban planning processes for bigger structural change is also required for positive change from a long-term perspective.

The design interventions, following the guidelines, could improve activity and safety along Kistagången that intend to catalyse change further in Kista Science City since the problems on the site is strongly connected to public space.

There is a risk that the intervention becomes more symbolic than acting and that change isn't catalyse. This is why the concept of process is important to ensure secure investments of big financial assets.

### **How can local stakeholder perceptions and experiences be used to create safer more active public spaces?**

The thesis demonstrates the potential of using stakeholder input, in this case through surveys as a tool to create safer and more active public spaces. Through the created stakeholder survey, perceptions and experiences about the

specific environment was conducted directly from its users. Despite the low percentage of only 4 % of respondents reporting that they either have been exposed to or seen crime, almost 40 % feel fear of being exposed to crime at least sometimes. Also, less than half could say that they feel safe in Kista Science City when its dark.

The survey also collected wishes and improvements which in many cases aligned with findings from the site analysis. Also, the observed reference project such as Superkilen and Selmas nya Vardagsrum, envisioned similar themes, wishing for active streets, green areas, multifunctionality and places to gather.

As highlighted by Wekerle & Whitzman, perceived safety and urban activity are strengthened through inclusion sense of ownership, which can be achieved by stakeholder involvement in design processes. Stakeholder input therefore not only informs about spatial needs but also contributes to enhanced social responsibility and establishing stronger relation between user and site.

Regarding this, the thesis could be more developed from stakeholder input to involvement to increase the community aspect between the site and the user.

### **Limitations and uncertainties**

This thesis does not argue that design interventions alone can solve complex challenges. Rather, design is used as a tool to create conditions for urban activity and perceived safety.

The origins of the problem in Kista are not yet entirely clear but one reasonable interpretation is that multiple factors are likely contributing to the situation. It's also hard to say if the negative trend started with abandonment, unsafety or low activity. What can be concluded, is that all these parameters are strongly connected and have strong effect on each other.

Despite this, there are many challenges connected to perceived safety in public spaces where the potential effect of design may not be enough. One challenge is the difficulty of accommodating perceptions of safety. What one person experiences as unsafe may not be perceived similarly for the other. This leads into the fear of crime versus the actual crime rates. In Kista Science City the fear of crime seems to be a bigger problem than actual occurrence of crimes, but fear is more difficult to grasp and measure.

In this thesis there is a lack of knowledge

regarding fear connected to reputation and prejudices towards, for example, segregated areas and socially and ethnically diverse communities, which could be relevant within the topic. This is also connected to how Swedish authorities present crime statistics, presenting data where Kista is combined with Rinkeby, or sometimes, entire Järvafältet. Furthermore, negative media representations and the development of Kista's reputation have a big effect how the site is perceived, as discussed in Moa Thunström's article, something which cannot be addressed directly by design. Despite this, design can contribute to creation of a new narrative and establishing human connections to the site for increased care and belonging which indirectly have an impact on reputation.

### **Methods**

The methodological approach of this thesis has been shaped through an iterative process that combines research by design and design by research that was adapted towards the three approaches site, design and stakeholder. Literature studies of urban theories have served an important role together with the stakeholder survey, observed reference projects and site visits which has enabled a combination of qualitative and quantitative insights.

A limitation in the process is the lack of real-world implementation and validation of increased activity and improved perceived safety. By adding the method usability testing, to enable evaluation by stakeholders of the early design proposal, the design could be validated to strengthen engagement with stakeholders and estimate impact.

The possible risk with the concept of urban acupuncture is the lacking impact in a long-term perspective if the design interventions are not complemented with wider urban planning processes over time such as transforming building functions to achieve multifunctional purpose. If support from high power stakeholders is deficient, there is a risk of the interventions becoming disconnected with low maintenance, which no longer contributes to fulfil its intended function.

### **Future and relevance to the discourse**

In connection to the current reality in Kista Science City there is a strong need for redevelopment, and several projects already have become legally binding. This thesis contributes with ideas and perspectives managing perceived safety and activity in urban environments with design of public and semi-public space, a topic that yet haven't been fully discovered in on site. By linking perceived

safety with activity in monofunctional areas the thesis combines well established urban theories with local site-specific analyses and proposes the strength of temporal implementation with strategic placement to catalyse wider improvement. This is planned to both be directed to the current use of Kista Science city as well as the future development towards increased multifunctionality and extended public transport.

Furthermore, this topic is relevant from a social sustainable aspect to ensure that urban environments are made for humans and not shaped for humans to serve cities which monofunctional S&T clusters such as Kista Science City, with large structures and underdeveloped public and semi-public spaces, can be interpreted as. To prioritize wellbeing among people, with third space for social interaction that have taken safety aspects into account, in a world that becomes more digital as time pass. Particularly in the areas were digitalization and technology is developed and evolves around.

There is also an important economic and ecological sustainable aspect connected to the topic, to plan for resilience that makes districts persist over time despite change of spatial demand and human behaviour. Most likely, S&T clusters together with other office

dense areas, have been negatively affected by the pandemic, general development over time and the development of AI since the behaviour of working from home escalated, the norm of required office space has been compressed, and less labour force is needed. The situation of abandonment of big structures, even whole districts, is not sustainable and have to be actively avoided.

### **Further development**

This thesis has several possibilities for areas of improvement and potential to be developed even further. Firstly, the stakeholder survey, to map unsafety and activity connected to the physical urban environment, could be developed to be more precise and covering, together with a higher amount of respondents. This would increase the detection of sites with potential for implementation but also ensuring mutual experiences. The whole stakeholder approach could also be developed further with design workshops and usability testing to enhance the voices of the users to increase connection between community and the site. Potentially this could be a development of design guideline four, "implementing third places to create a new narrative".

The directions from Boverket today are advocating for CPTED which is an evidence-

based method, focused directly on decreasing crimes, and share many similarities with the urban theories laying the foundation to this thesis, and CPTED itself. Further possible development of this thesis would be to involve more of the six principals of CPTED, enhancing the connection to example territories that also Newman advocates for.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to measure activity over time with digital tools to have more quantitative data when emptiness occurs to adapt functions and place them more securely. This data could also be used during to strengthening the concept of urban acupuncture to enable comparison before and after the temporal implementation, stage one. By this, the activity result indicates potential increase which proof the value of upgrading the structure to the more permanent version, stage two.

# CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the correlation between safety and activity in public space to cope with abandonment of monofunctional districts, in this thesis based on a case study in Kista Science City.

Based on literature studies of urban theories, context analysis, stakeholder surveys and site visits the street Kistagången was chosen as a project site. The theoretical and design framework have served a crucial role in the project to develop the concept and design guidelines that was implemented through the design proposal with three design interventions along the street.

As imagined, design serves an important role to enhance perceived safety and activity in public spaces. This thesis mentions solutions to increase perceived safety and activity with urban design that supports visibility, movement and social interaction.

Design interventions along Kistagången can be implemented through the concept of urban acupuncture that builds on strategically placed, small-scale interventions creating a network that catalyses activity in the district. Regarding this research question it's also important to enhance the connections to adjacent areas and ensuring safe connections locally.

Stakeholder perceptions and experiences can be used through surveys to receive knowledge regarding the site and indicate activity and perceived safety by mapping that can inform the design. This also influence the local community and the sense of belonging.

To summarize, the connection between safety and activity is evident and can be affected by design. Despite this, the topic is complex and versatile, there is not one single solution, certainly not only by implementing design. The future of Kista Science City is difficult to predict but what is secure is the crucial need for development, particularly connected to the public urban environment.

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## PICTURES AND FIGURES

All pictures, diagrams and drawings are produced by the author unless other is mentioned. Images used in collages to create textures etc are all marked with the licence CC0 and are thereby free for use.

*vardagsrum* [Photograph]. 02Ladskap. <https://www.02landskap.se/projekt/selmas-nya-vardagsrum>

**Figure 1.** van Eldijk, J., Gil, J., & Marcus, L. (2022). *Barrier effect model*. European Transport Research Review, 14(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12544-021-00517-y>

**Picture 1.** Ingrid Johansson. (1950). *Kista gård* [Photograph]. Stockholmskällan. <https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/post/3043>

**Picture 2.** Jan Gustavsson. (1977). *Old car*. Svenska bostäder. <https://www.svenskabostader.se/var-historia/omraden/kista/>

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**Picture 4.** Lars-Henrik Larsson. (1986). *Kista metro station* [Photograph].

**Picture 5.** Jan Gustavsson. (1977). *Building Kista* [Photograph]. <https://www.svenskabostader.se/var-historia/omraden/kista/>

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**Picture 7-11.** Lantmateriet. (2026). *Historical orthophotos* [Photograph]. Lantmateriet. <https://www.lantmateriet.se/>

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# APPENDICES

## AI

The use of artificial intelligence tools in this thesis has been made with the services CoPilot and ChatGPT (OpenAI). The tools were used to find some of the references and theories relevant to the topic as well as for checking spelling and text flow. All answers provided by AI tools have been reviewed and rewritten by me. All references identified through AI tools were manually checked for accuracy, relevance and credibility. Only peer-reviewed and reliable sources were included in the thesis.

AI tools were used during early stages in the research process to:

- Suggest potentially relevant authors and publications
- Suggest potentially relevant references to explore further

AI tools were used during the whole research process to:

- Check text flow in parts of the text that have been difficult to phrase
- Check for eventual spelling mistakes in

passages of text

To summarize, AI have not been used to generate text, rather it has been used as a tool to improve the thesis grammatically. It has not been used to explain relevant theories and references, only providing examples connected to my described topic that have been further examined with reliable sources.

## Stakeholder workshop

1. Short interview
2. Movement mapping
3. Unsafety mapping

### Introduction

To receive a better understanding of the site and the problem connected to the physical environment, data is collected by making a survey. Stakeholders are asked to declare their use and experience of Kista Science City by following three steps which is an interview part and two mapping exercises.

### Purpose

By making this survey, data is received to gain knowledge about the site directly by its users. Stakeholders get a chance to express their opinions and help to localize eventual unsafe spots and development possibilities.

### Stakeholder groups

Residents

Workers

Visitors

### Result

See next four pages.

### Conclusion

The information received by the stakeholders indicate that the fear of crime is significantly bigger than the actual occurrence of crimes. The problem of unsafety also seems to be partly exaggerated by media and mostly connected to the experience and feeling of the context that suffers from emptiness and lack of presence. Regarding public space, many users are disappointed and expresses a need for more functions, lack of third places, bad design and deficient connections. Moreover, the public space that already exists seem to have development possibilities though some stakeholders express the space as unsafe.

### Short interview

- Name?
- Age?
- Gender?
- Where do you live?
- What do you think of Kista Science City?
- Do you enjoy the urban environment?
- How often are you here?
- What time of day are you usually here?
- How do you travel here?
- What is the best thing about Kista Science City?
- What is the worst thing about Kista Science City?
- What do you think is missing here?
- Do you agree with the way the media portrays Kista Science City?

The following questiones are copied from Boverkets website about safety and used by the municipality, police and Brå, an authority that makes national safety investigations each year. (Boverket, 2025)

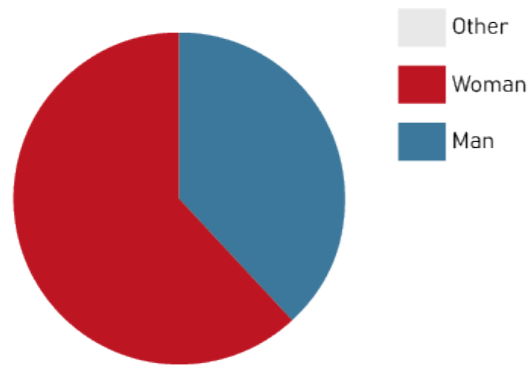
- Have you been exposed to, or seen crime the past year?
- Do you feel fear of being exposed to crime?
- Do you feel safe in Kista Science City when it's dark?

### Movement mapping

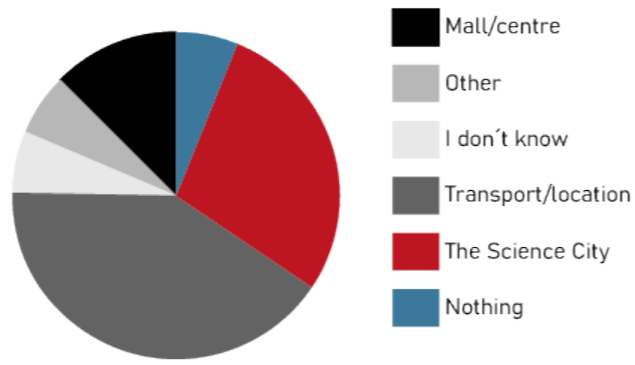
Stakeholders draw their common movement pattern on a map.

### Unsafety mapping

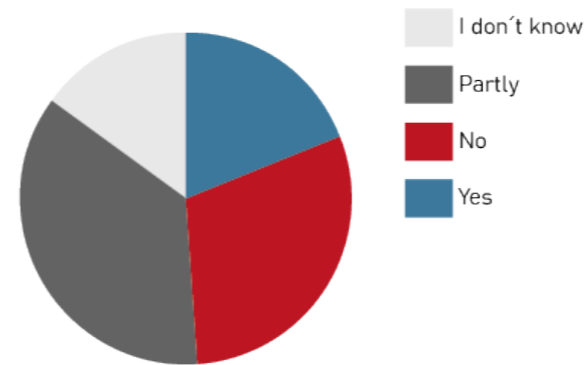
Stakeholders draw where they don't feel safe on a map.



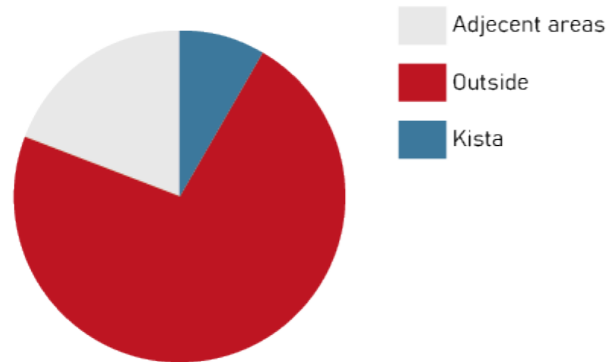
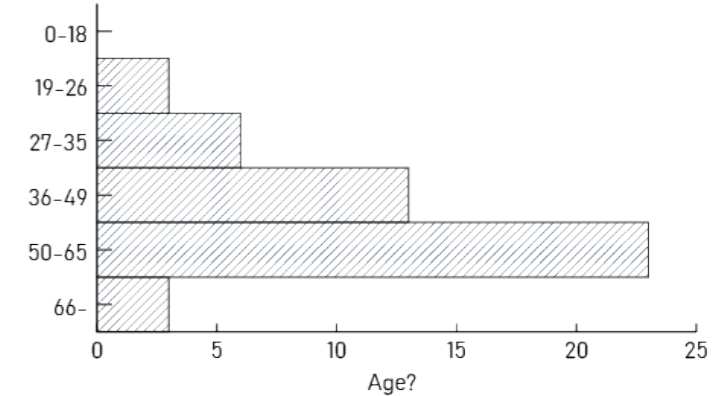
Gender?



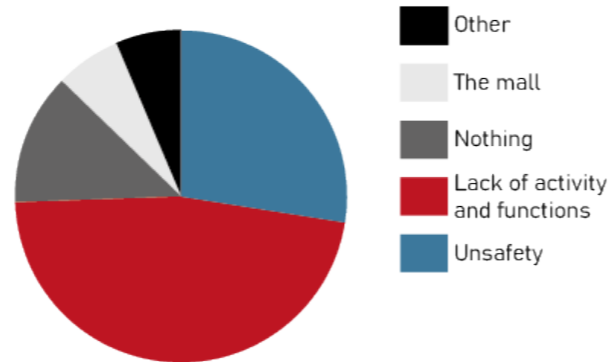
What is the best thing about Kista Science City?



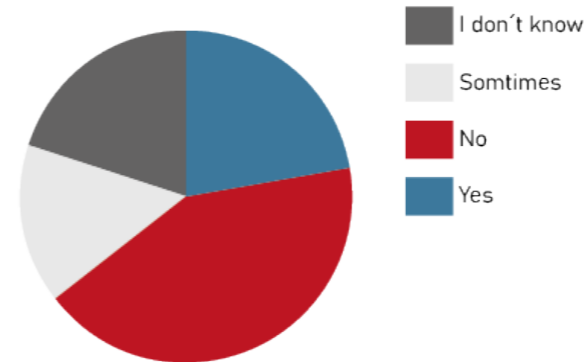
Do you agree with how media portrays Kista Science City?



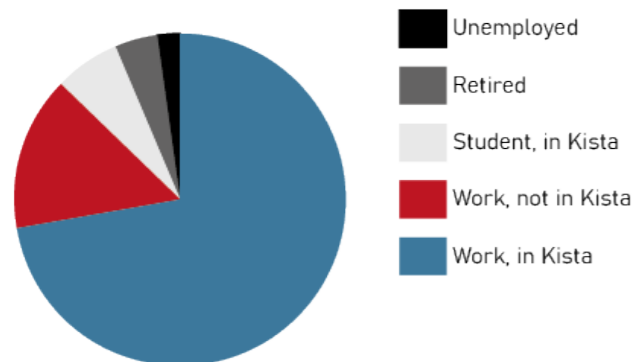
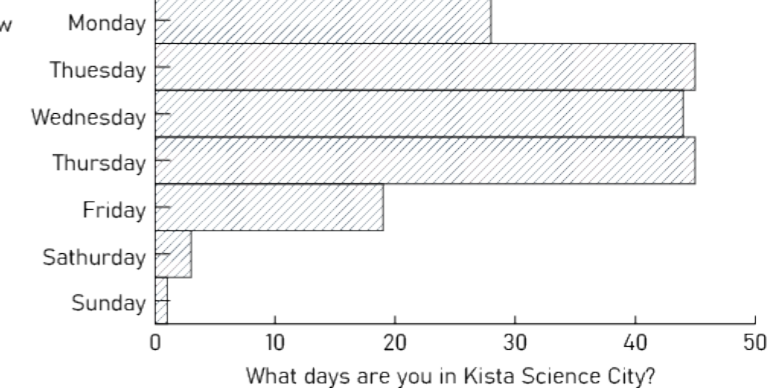
Where do you live?



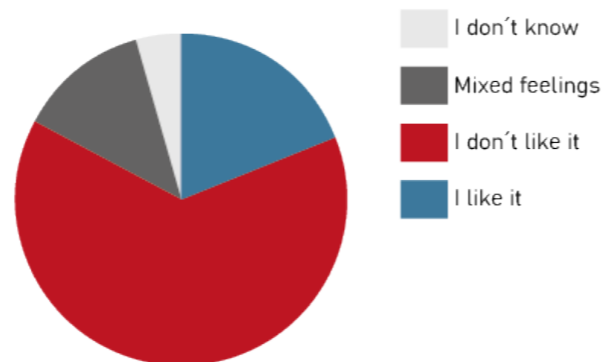
What is the worst thing about Kista Science City?



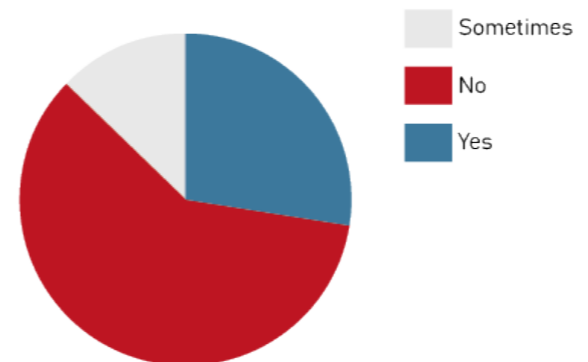
Do you feel safe in Kista Science City when it's dark?



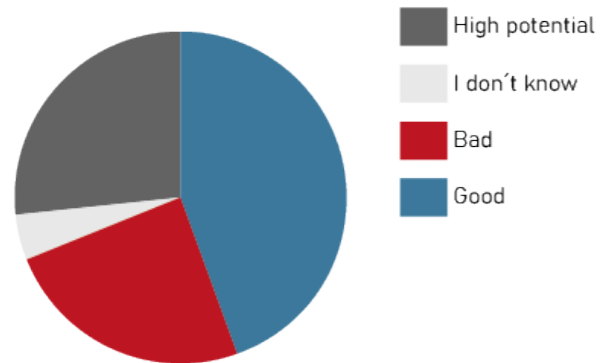
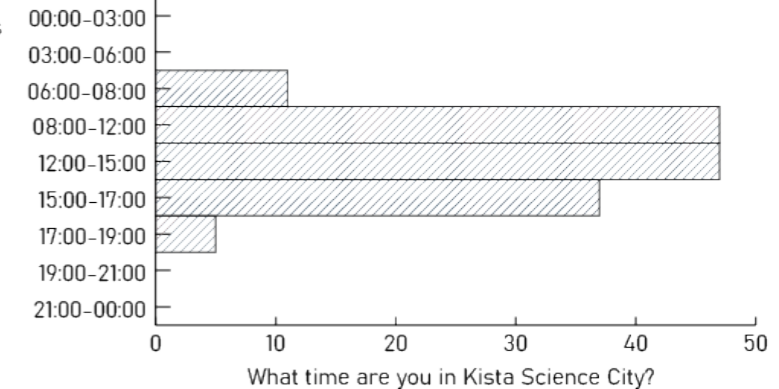
Occupation?



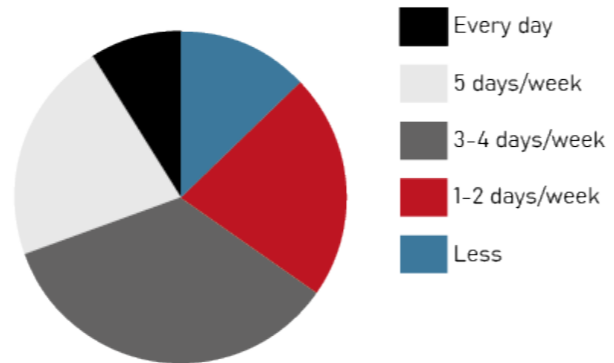
What do you think about the urban environment?



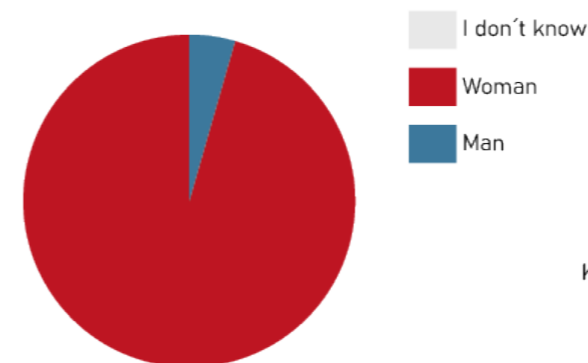
Do you feel fear of being exposed to crime in Kista Science City?



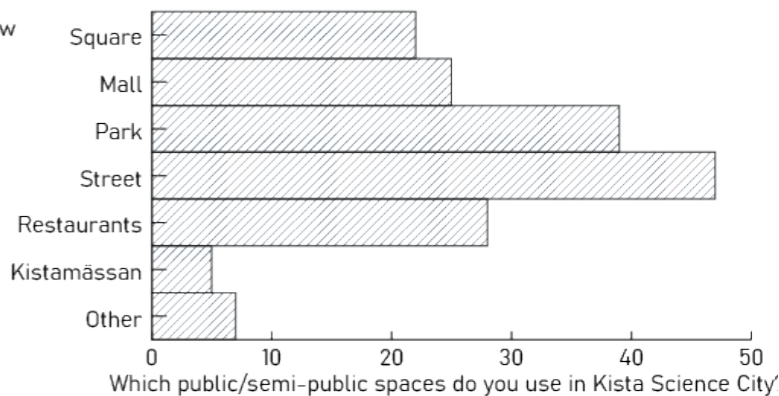
What is your opinion regarding Kista Science City?



How often are you here?



Have you been exposed to, or seen crime the past year?



Which public/semi-public spaces do you use in Kista Science City?

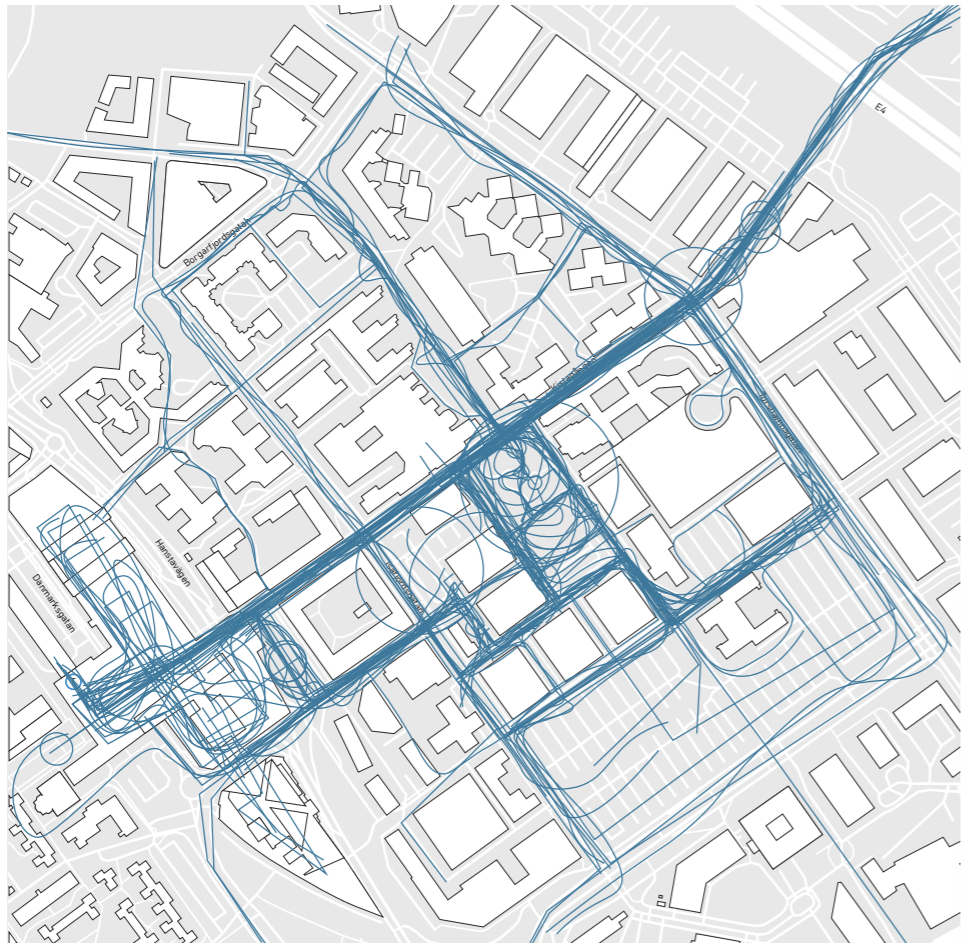
**What do you think is missing in Kista Science City?**

- Cafés
- Restaurants outside the mall
- Swimming pool
- Outdoor sitting space
- Pubs
- More people outside
- office hours
- Other functions
- More shops
- Puls
- More students and companies
- Open space for flea market and christmas market
- Green areas
- Active streets
- Tram
- Welcoming environment
- Places to explore and enjoy
- Life
- Coffee house
- Children
- Water elements
- Museum

**Other relevant comments**

- Keep Kista diverse and alive
- Bad connection to green areas
- Much have changed
- The news worries me
- The mall is chaos
- It's so empty here
- Very windy
- Nowhere to spend time
- Unsafe at night
- Good space for work but
- I would never live here
- Change is crucial

Answered surveys: 51



Movement mapping

● This is my common movement pattern



Unsafer mapping

● I feel unsafe here

Reactivate Kista