

An Alternative Future for LoalImenningen

Mathias Sagvik Diploma Spring 2024

Supervisors
Eirik Stokke & Espen Heggertveit

The Oslo School of Architecture and Design Institute of Architecture

Binder 1

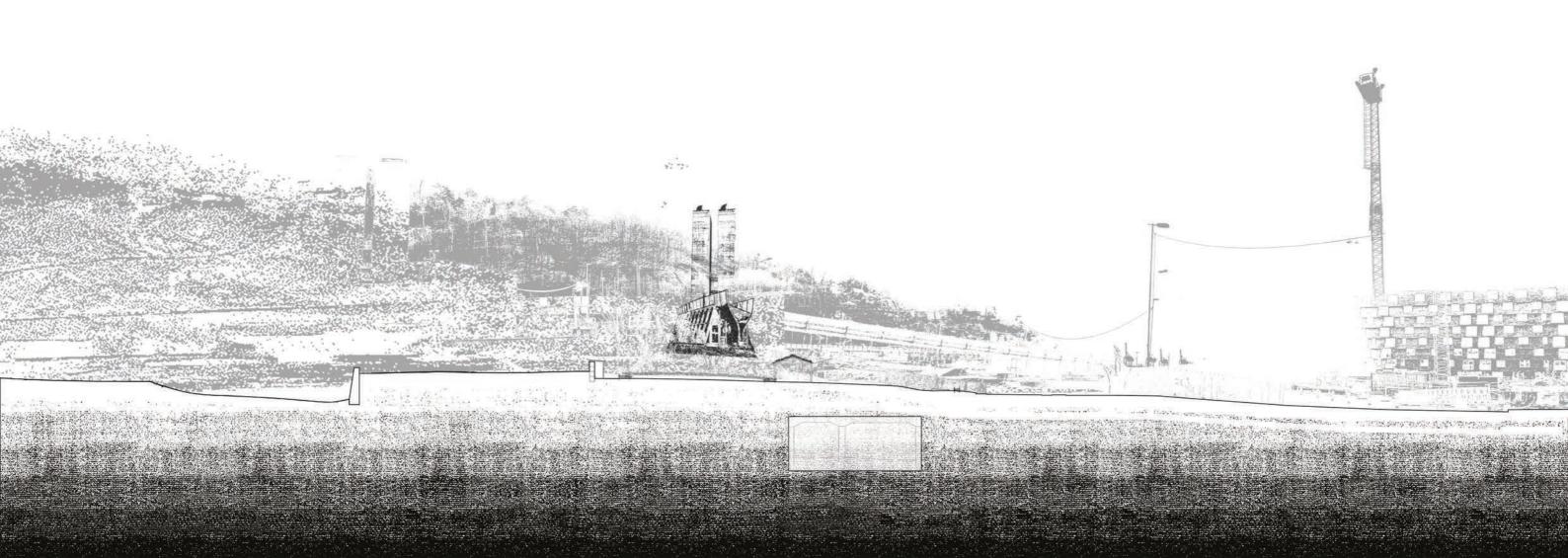
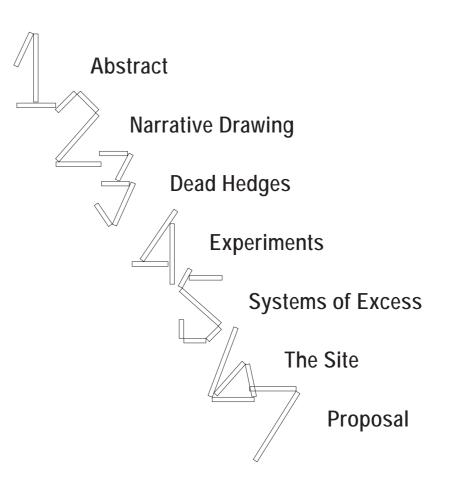


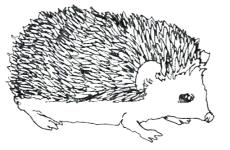


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RESEARCH QUESTION

How can dead hedges become a catalyst for being together in the city?



ARSTRACT

Introduction

The thesis uses the dead hedge as a spatial instrument to imagine an alternative future of Loallmenningen. The aim of the proposal is to increase urban biodiversity, facilitate spaces of being together, and provide an alternative solution to the current development plan of the site. HEDGEHUGS experiments with structural elements and spaces informed by the dead hedge, which can be employed as catalysts for urban publics to emerge. The proposal employs some of these elements to form spaces for humans and other-than-humans in Loallmenningen, continuing the commons of Losæter farm. Maintenance, multi-species coexistence, unprogrammed public spaces, and waste materials are valued toward an alternative urbanism of the Oslo harbourside.

Dead Hedges

Dead hedges are the antithesis to decorative hedges. They are not quite hedgerows; not quite compost piles; not quite land art. And that's the beauty of them. They are at the margins of landscape hegemony. HEDGEHUGS explores the incorporation of dead hedges into urban realms for human and other-than-human coexistence.

Dead hedges consist of cuttings from trees and bushes, supported by timber piles typically spaced 1-2m apart. This porous spatial device is most often found in the perimeter of gardens, parks, forests, and farms. The materials used to assemble the dead hedge is a direct result of tree maintenance processes, collecting twigs and branches to make use of the leftovers. Dead hedges have existed as an inexpensive and informal form of land protection requiring little skill for thousands of years. Scholars suggests that it is the very first form of garden protection. In Norwegian context, the practice of laying dead hedges has been prevalent everywhere, with colloquial names for them: risgard, natgar, trasgali, ratutgar, garvonn, vondagar, stek og skat, pasgar, buskegard, risgal, fellegard, hafelle, kvistegard, lurvegard.

Current gardening and maintenance practices that employ dead hedges as a way of utilising waste, improve the biodiversity of the area immensely. Approximately 40% of wildlife, from the hoverfly to the mighty owl, depend on deadwood matter for creating habitats. Furthermore, 2000 invertebrate species are saproxylic, which means reliant on decaying wood for their life cycle. This attracts woodland birds, hedgehogs and bats, thus increasing the biodiversity of the area. Deadwood is a paradise habitat for lichen and fungi, such as the candlesnuff fungus. Soon after the hedge is layed, the process of life and death starts to unfold as critters move into the gaps and eggs start to hatch. Therefore, establishing dead hedges as an intrinsic part of a publicly accessible space will have great benefits to local ecology. The protected species can function as agents of resistance, protecting sites as places that cannot be discarded in political action.

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Loallmenningen

'Allmenning' is the Norwegian word for 'commons'. Commons can be described as collective and local ownership of land, resources, or ideas that are held in common, often in opposition to private property rights. In Norway, Lov om Bygdeallmenninger, describes official rights for forestry and agricultural commons. There are no equivalent laws in urban areas where private property laws are most prevalent. Therefore, urban commons must be viewed as being under development where practice, laws, and discourse is formed over time. I would argue that urban commons are spaces that suggest a community of humans and other-than-humans that actively utilise and upkeep what they hold in common. The test site for this thesis, Loallmenningen, is an example of such a commons.

Loallmenningen consists of three parts: A large opening to the tunnel going under the site, Losæter park, and an area to the north currently housing workers for the development of adjacent buildings. Losæter is a public park commissioned and produced by Bjørvika Utvikling in collaboration with the international art collective, Futurefarmers. There are several collectives organising activities in the public 'baking house' as well as the cultivated land surrounding. Losæter is this leftover space in the city which has managed to carve out another way of being together through creative collaboration and revitalising the soil. The northern area, called D5 in planning documents, is planned to become a residential and commercial building. However, the municipal plan for squares and meeting places from 2009 claims that Loallmenningen should be an area of non-organised recreation. In 2023, Oslo Municipality retrieved responsibility for this land. Now is the ideal time to reconsider the development of the commons. HEDGEHUGS proposes an alternative plan of D5, intending to continue a public practice of care, maintenance and making.

Systems of Excess

Waste does not exist in nature. Everything that grows will eventually decay so new life can thrive. The thesis intervenes into two main existing waste streams in Oslo: tree cuttings from maintenance work, and used formwork from building sites adjacent to LoalImenningen.

Current stakeholders important for the former is Oslokompost, Grønmo recycling station, and Oslo Municipality's maintenance of trees in public space. Instead of all the waste being composted or turned into composite materials, twigs are transported to Loallmenningen for use in the formation of public spaces.

The latter consists of housing, commercial, and residential developments, whereby used formwork is redistributed hyper-locally to Loallmenningen. The formwork can be cut, shaped, and attached with dry joints to take on the form of a simple timber pile or a 5m tall column. These building materials become the ingredients for re-interpreted dead hedge structures.

This requires a collective act of building, filling, and maintaining, organised by Oslo Municipality in collaboration with the public programme of Losæter farm. Therefore, the architecture of the proposal is minimally controlled in order to allow experimentation over time.

Dead Hedge Experiments

To explore ways of expanding the typology of the dead hedge, a collection of 'dead elements' are developed: dead column, dead roof, dead wall, dead floor, wide dead hedge, dead enclosure, dead passage, dead retaining wall, and the dead shelter. These elements take architectural archetypes and invisions them with the materials of scrap timber and excess cuttings. They should be viewed as an incomplete pattern book of architectural catalyst for being together, which can be incorporated into public spaces. A selection of these are incorporated into the design proposal.

Loallmenningen is surrounded by parks, public dwelling spaces, medieval ruins, and an urban farm. Can an alley, a square, a monastic garden, and a 'grendehus' be dead hedges? Alleys and squares frame spaces to dwell and space to move through. Translating these with the language of the dead hedge reveals the potential of less ordered publics that change over time through accumulation and decay. The monastic garden and the 'grendehus', or 'common house', are more enclosed spaces for gathering. Dead hedges provide more porous enclosures that filter light and encourage multi-species interaction.

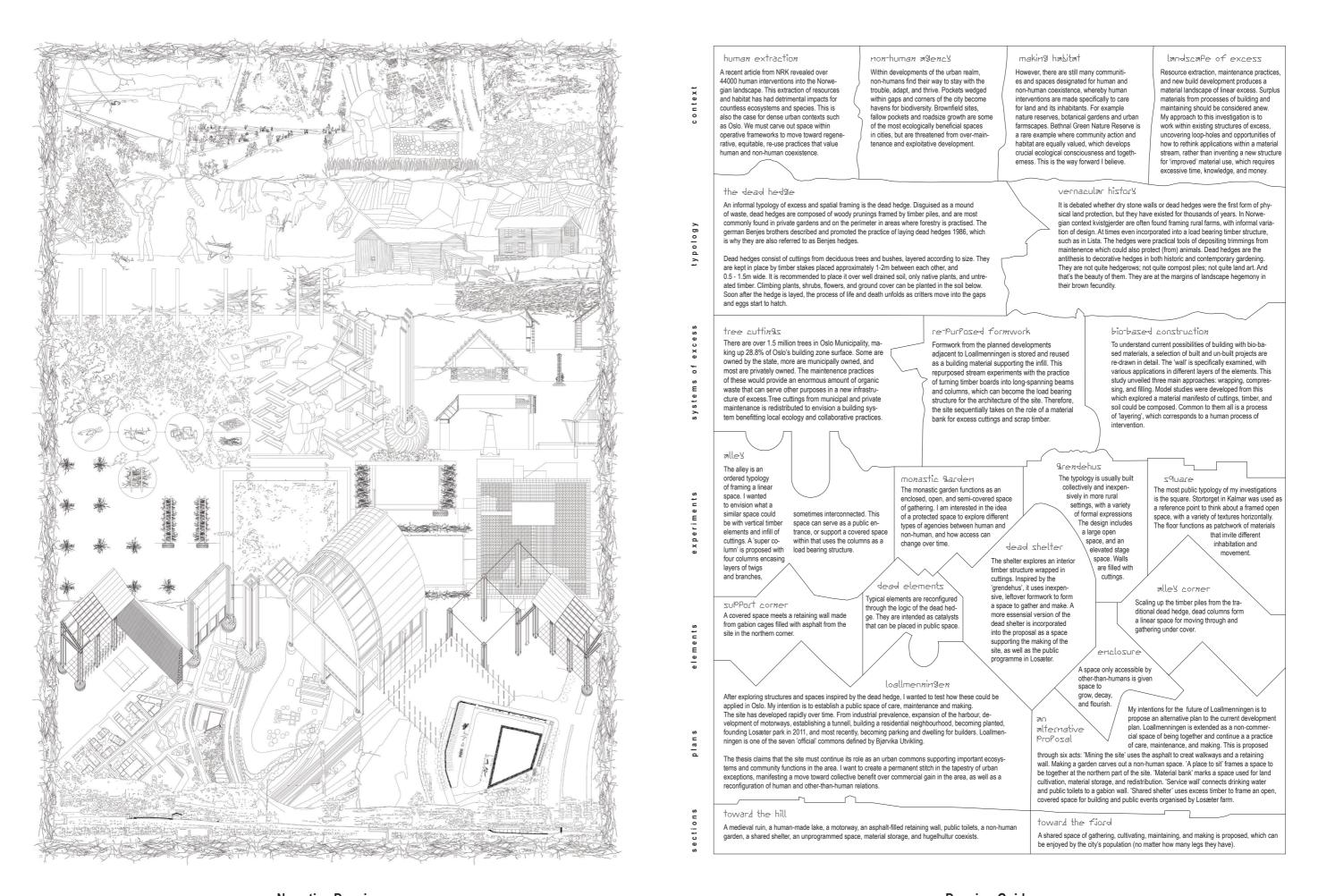
The dead hedge experiments revealed the endless potentials for architectures of excess. Combined thoughtfully, they can become catalysts for urban publics to emerge among humans and other-than-humans.

HEDGEHUGS

In an area of rapid development, I think it is important to make spaces for being together that thrives at a slower pace. The intention of the design is to continue a public practice of care, maintenance and making. It is a direct alternative to the current development plan and site boundary, continuing Loallmenningen as a non-commercial public space. Seating, cover, drinking water, toilets, urprogrammed surfaces, a shared shelter, and permeable ground surfaces provide essential functions for being together. This is made into **structures** informed by the architecture of the dead hedge. The architect's role in this project is to be a mediator between Losæter and the municipality, between humans and other than humans, embracing uncertainty along the way.

Six acts are suggested: 'Mining the site' uses the asphalt to create walkways and a retaining wall. 'Material bank' marks a space used for land cultivation, material storage, and redistribution. 'Shared shelter' uses excess timber to frame an open, covered space for building and public events organised by Losæter farm. 'Making a garden' carves out a non-human space. 'A place to sit' frames a space to be together at the northern part of the site. 'The Service wall' connects drinking water and public toilets to a gabion wall. As natural succession flourishes, and informal additions are made on site, so does this public space of being together.

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Narrative Drawing Guide Drawing Guide



DEAD HEDGES

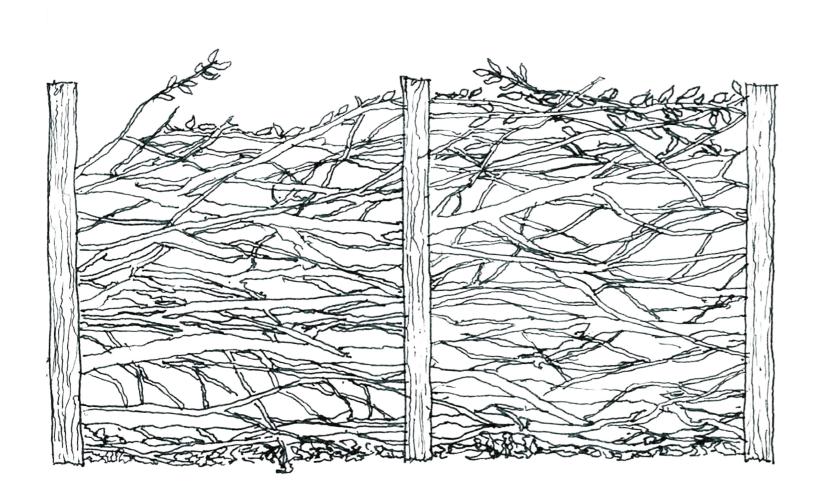
Disguised as a mound of waste, dead hedges are composed of woody prunings framed by timber piles, and are most commonly found in private gardens and on the perimeter in areas where forestry is practised.

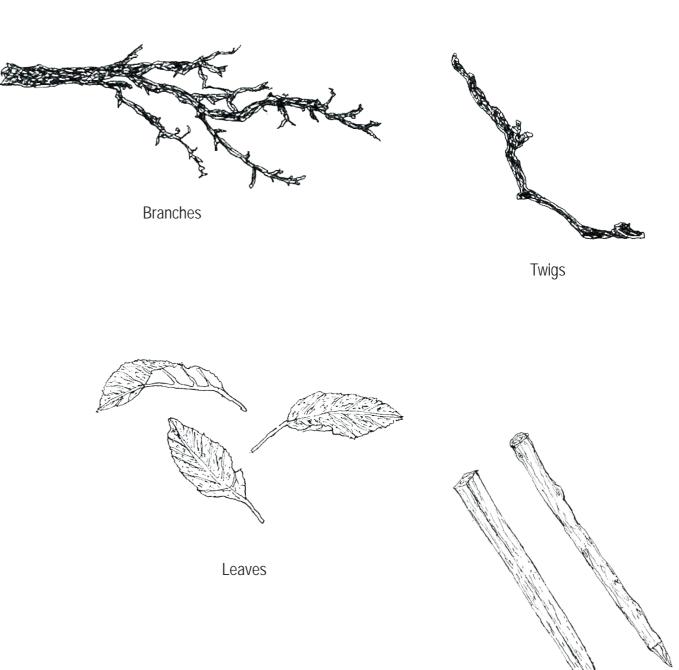
The german Benjes brothers described and promoted the practice of laying dead hedges 1986, which is why they are also referred to as Benjes hedges.

Dead hedges consists of cuttings from trees and bushes, layered according to size. They are kept in place by timber stakes placed approximately 1-2m between each other. Soon after the hedge is layed, the process of life and death to unfold as critters move into the gaps and eggs start to hatch.

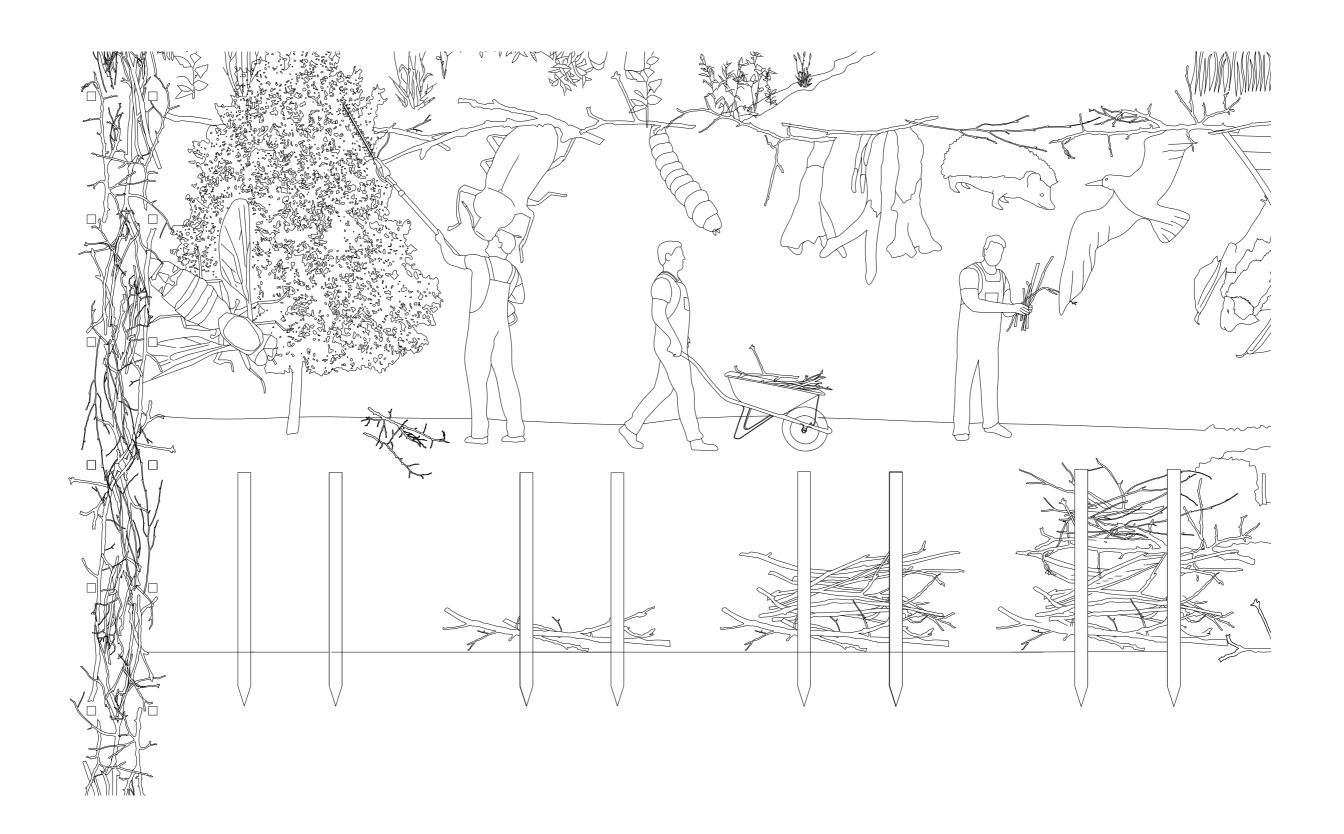
Dead hedges are the antithesis to decorative hedges in both historic and contemporary gardening. They are not quite hedgerows; not quite compost piles; not quite land art. And that's the beauty of them. They are at the margins of landscape hegemony in their brown fecundity.

Exploring dead hedges as a tool and metaphor, how can we facilitate human and other-than-human coexistence, challenge aesthetics of the built environment, and suggest use?





Timber stakes









Private Garden Forest Farm



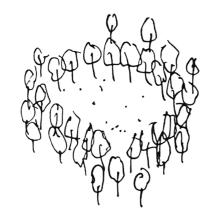




Park House City

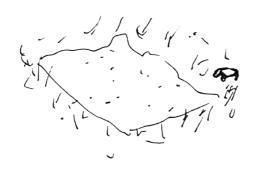
"The garden is probably one of the oldest cultural forms [...]. A barrier of thorny branches was presumably the most common type at first [...]."
"Man began to plant and sow in rows and this led naturally to a square or rectangular enclosure [...]"

Iron and Bronze Age



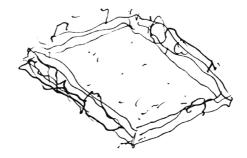
`Assart hedges`

Saxon and Roman Era



`Infield outfield`

12th Century



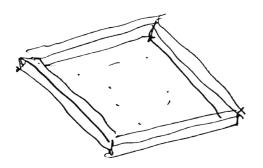
Hedgerow enclosure Newly planted hedges Loss of common grazing Privatised Mixed species

Revolt



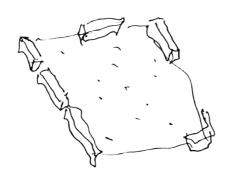
Hedgerow opposition
Citizens removing enclosures
Democtatise land

Enclosure Acts



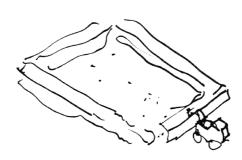
Official bills of enclosure in England 1603, 1801

Modern Removal

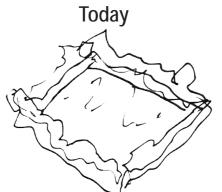


Large scale hedgerow removal After WW2

New Management



Machanical trimming



Protected status
Efforts to plant new
hedgerows and maintain
existing

Dead Hedges have existed alongside this history in the margins, and do not have the same connotations of power; rather, maintenance and care.



Risgard

Ratgar

Trasgali

Ratutgar

Garvonn

Vondagar

Stek og skat

Pasgar

Buskegard

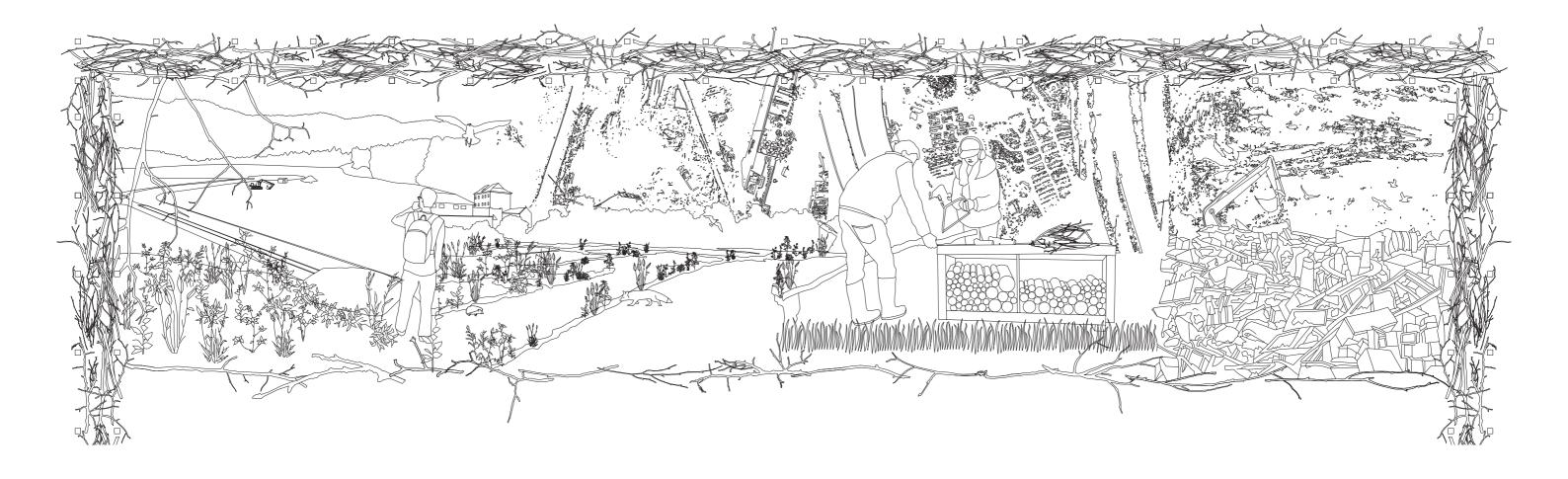
Risgal

Fellegard

Hafelle

Kvistegard

Lurvegard



Within developments of the urban realm, other-than-humans find their way to adapt, and thrive. Pockets wedged within gaps and corners of the city become havens for biodiversity, but are threatened from overt maintenance and exploitative development.

Facilitating a space of pause in a rapidly developing urban realm can benefit human togetherness, ecological processes, and re-use.

Dead hedges have immense ecological benefits, providing habitat for invertabrates, amphibians, small mammals, birds a, fungi and lichen that feast of the dead wood.







Fungi and lichen





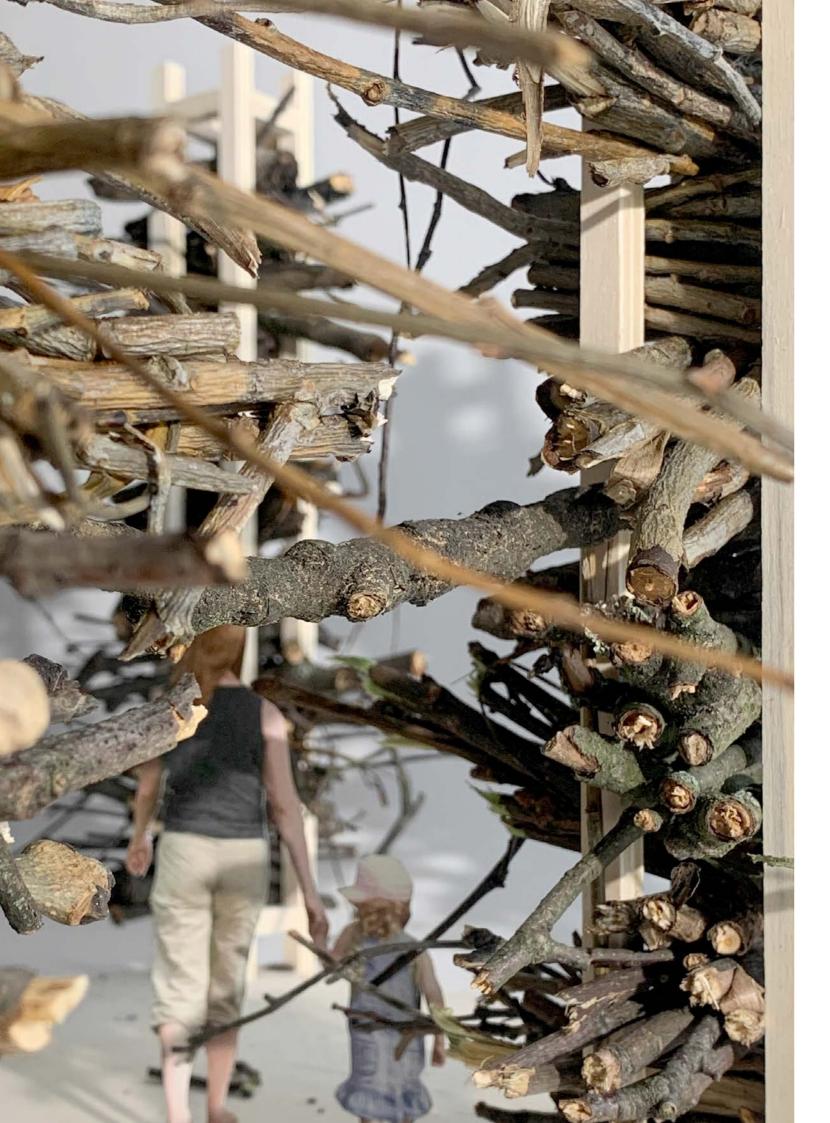
Small mammals



Woodland birds



1:1 Dead Process Hedge



EXPERIMENTS

I wanted to expand on the dead hedge typology and test other ways of using these materials. Influenced by several case studies that use waste materials to build, I discovered three main principles: Wrapping, compressing and stacking.

With this in mind, I explored a series of archetypes informed by the logic of the dead hedge. These are imagined as a series of catalysts that can be placed in public areas. These catalysts are ingredients that can be used as initial architectures where humans and other-than-humans can dwell.

Can dead hedges be an alley, a monastic garden, a square, and a grendehus? Here, the principles of the dead hedges are expanded upon to test the typology spatially.

The alley is an ordered typology of framing a linear space. I wanted to envision what a similar space could be with dead columns.

The monastic garden functions as a protected, semicovered space of gathering. I was interested in a space that feels more intimate despite being open.

The most public typology of these explorations is the square. Timber pathways support a patchwork of excess materials that encourage a variety of use and movement.

The grendehus is an interior typology usually built collectively and inexpensively in more rural settings. The design includes a large open space and an elevated stage space supported by timber columns and beams, with cuttings all the way around.

The dead hedge experiments revealed the endless potentials for architectures of excess.

MATERIAL EXPERIMENTS





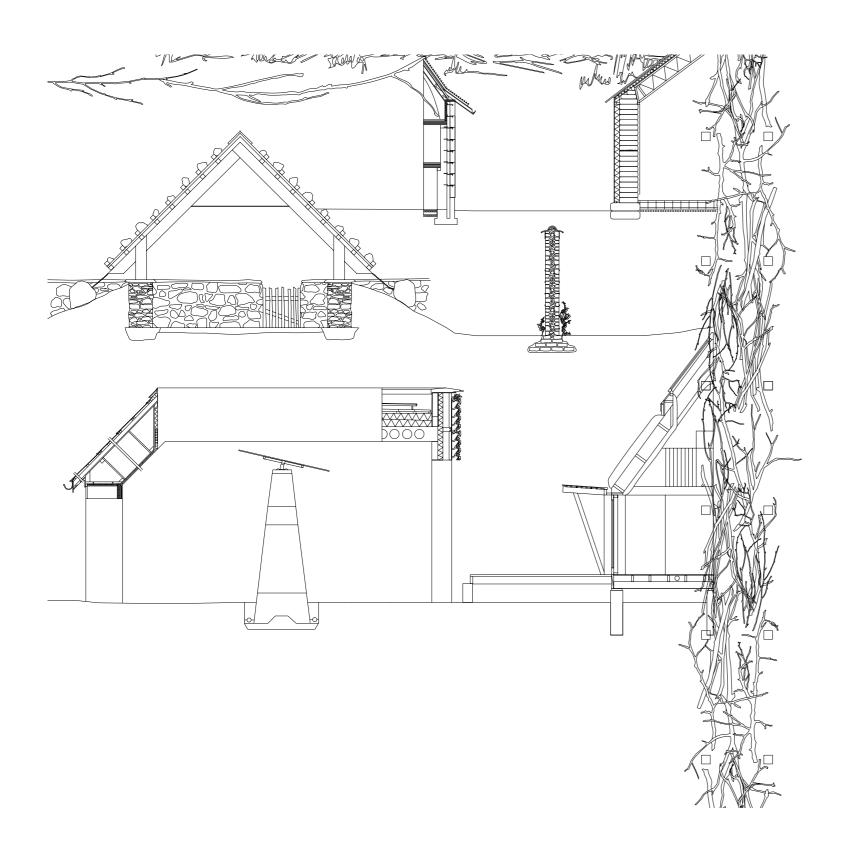
Study Model: Stacking Study Model: Wrapping

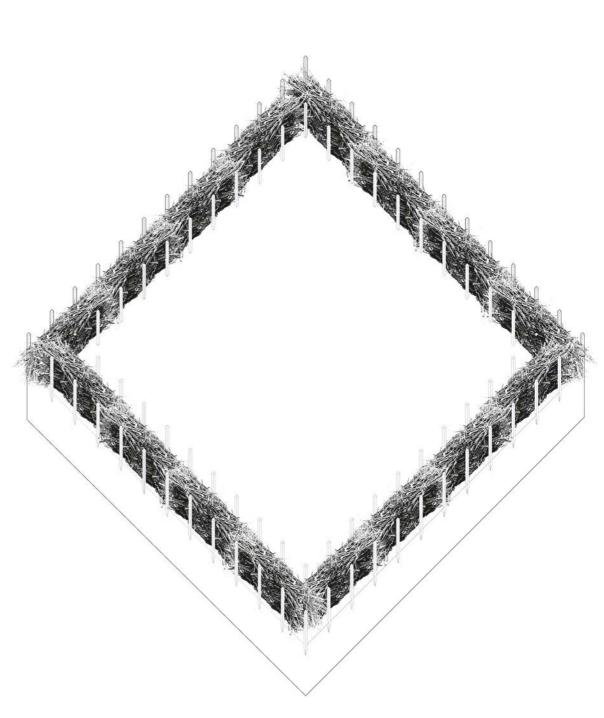


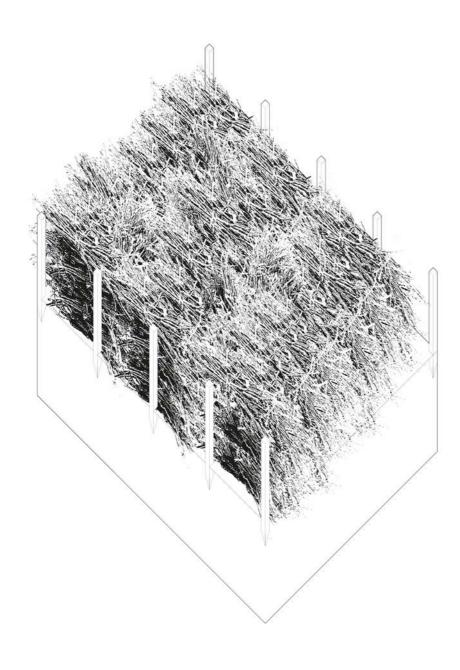


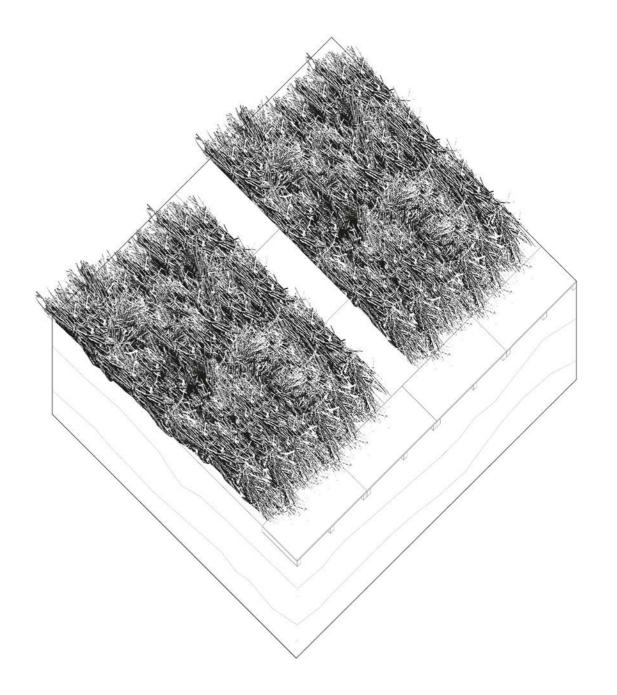
Study Model: Compressing Study Model: Collage

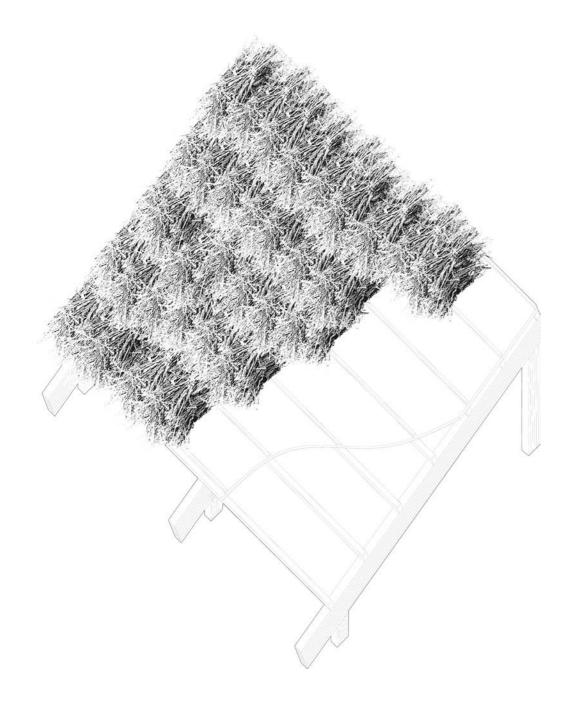
CATALYST\$

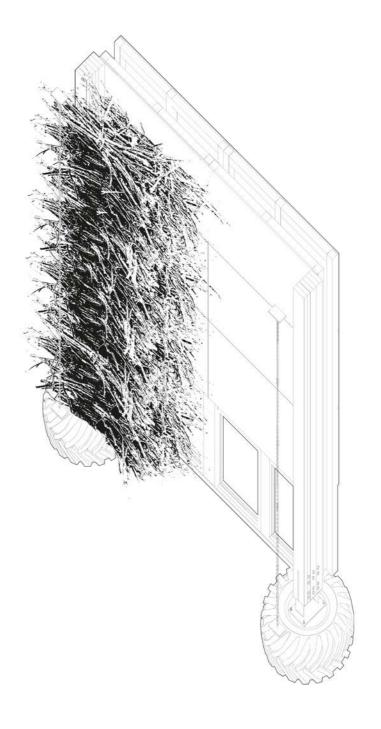


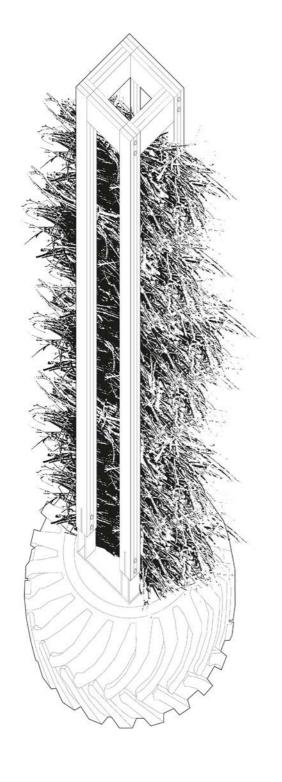


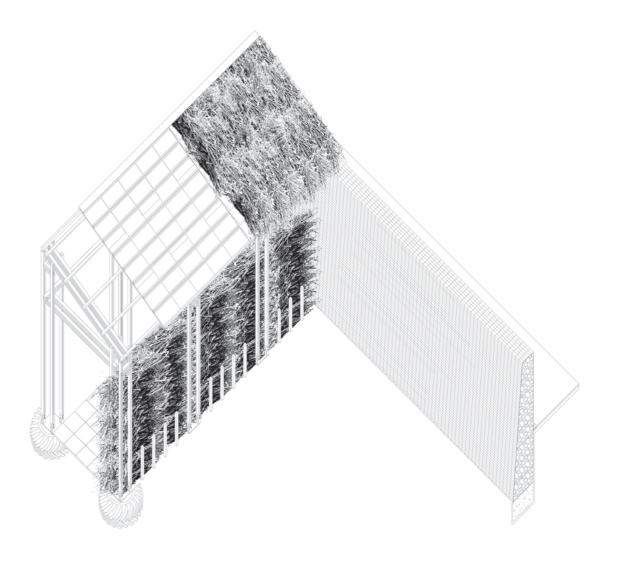


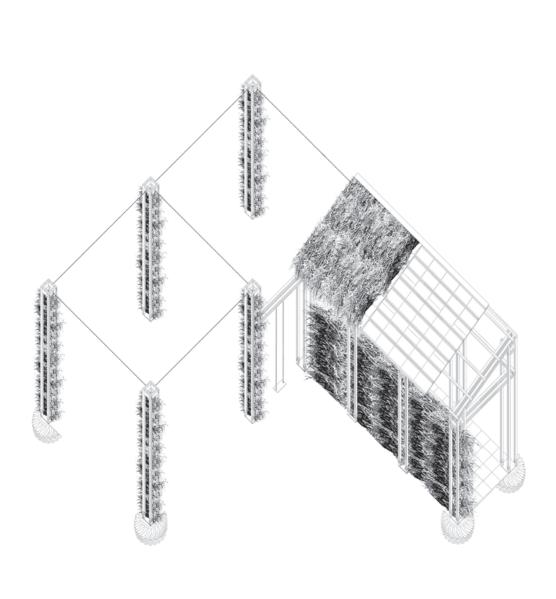


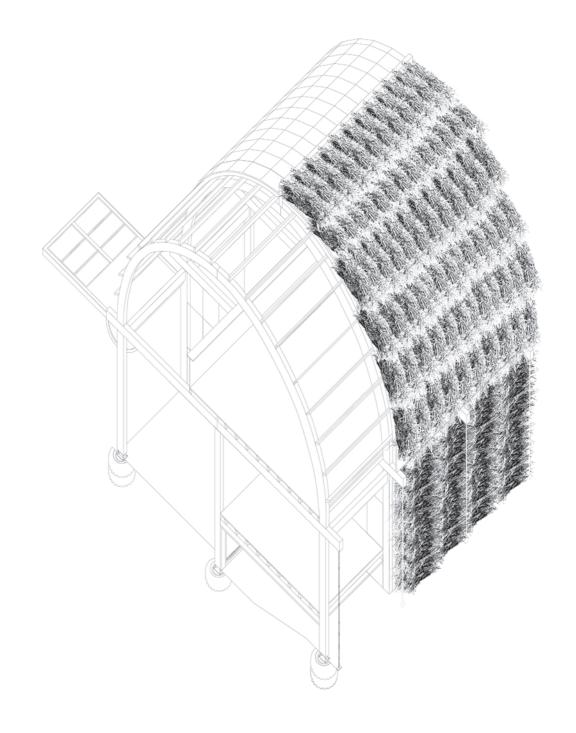




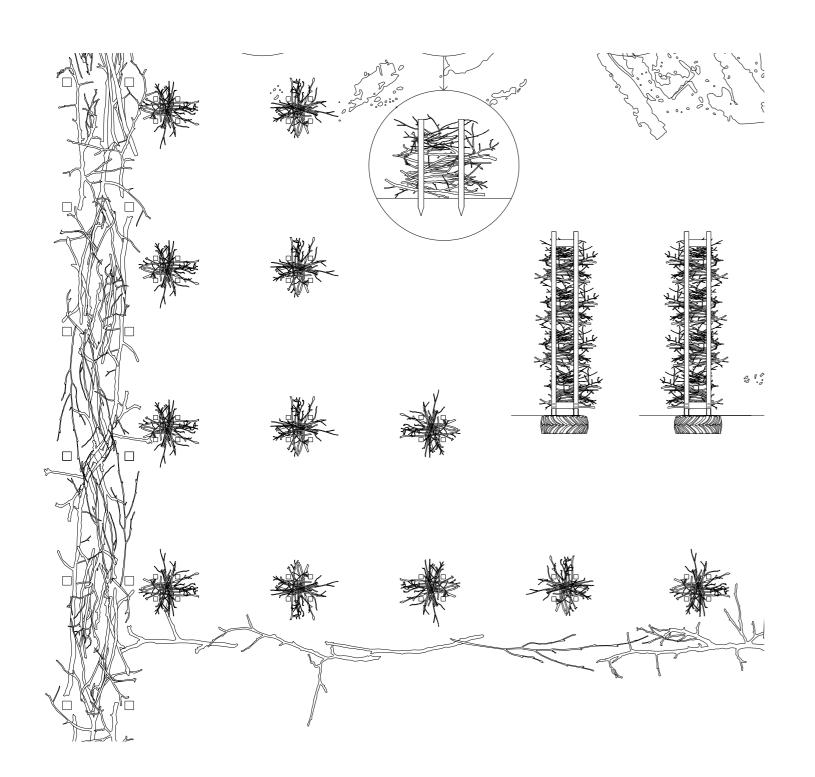








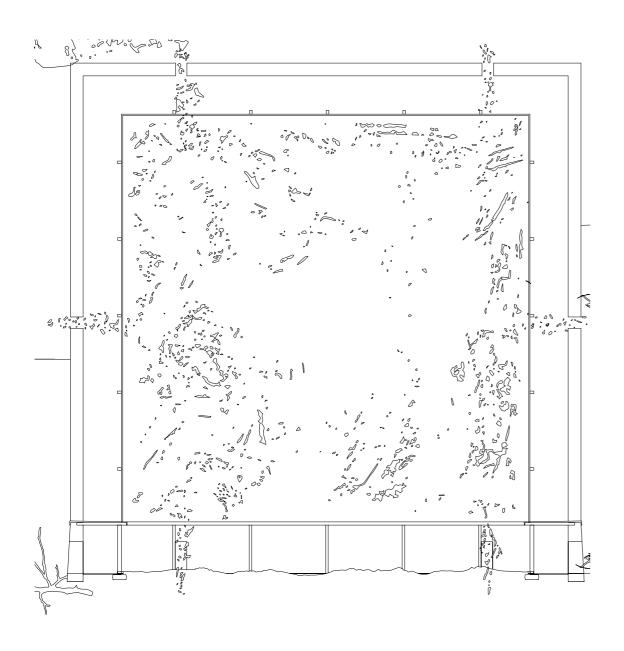
SPATIAL EXPERIMENTS



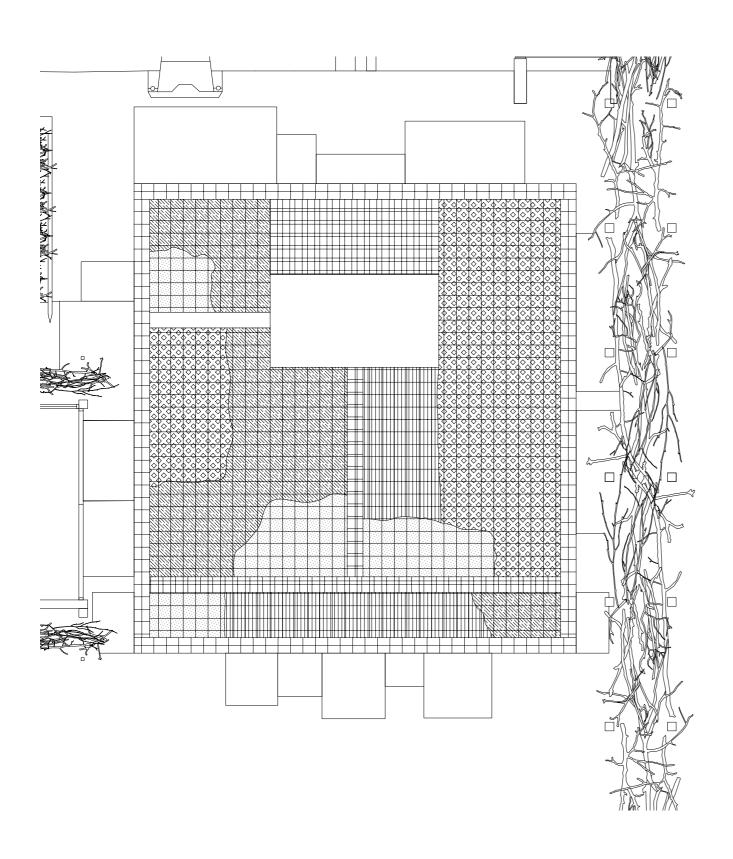


Study Model: The Alley

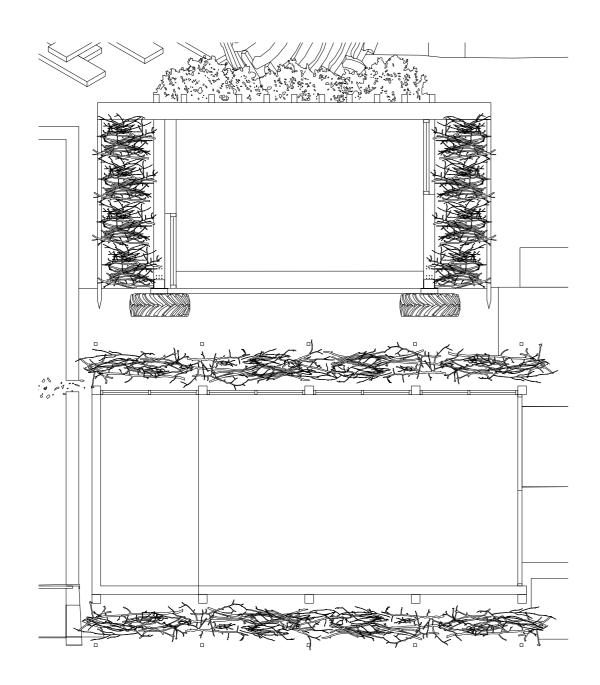
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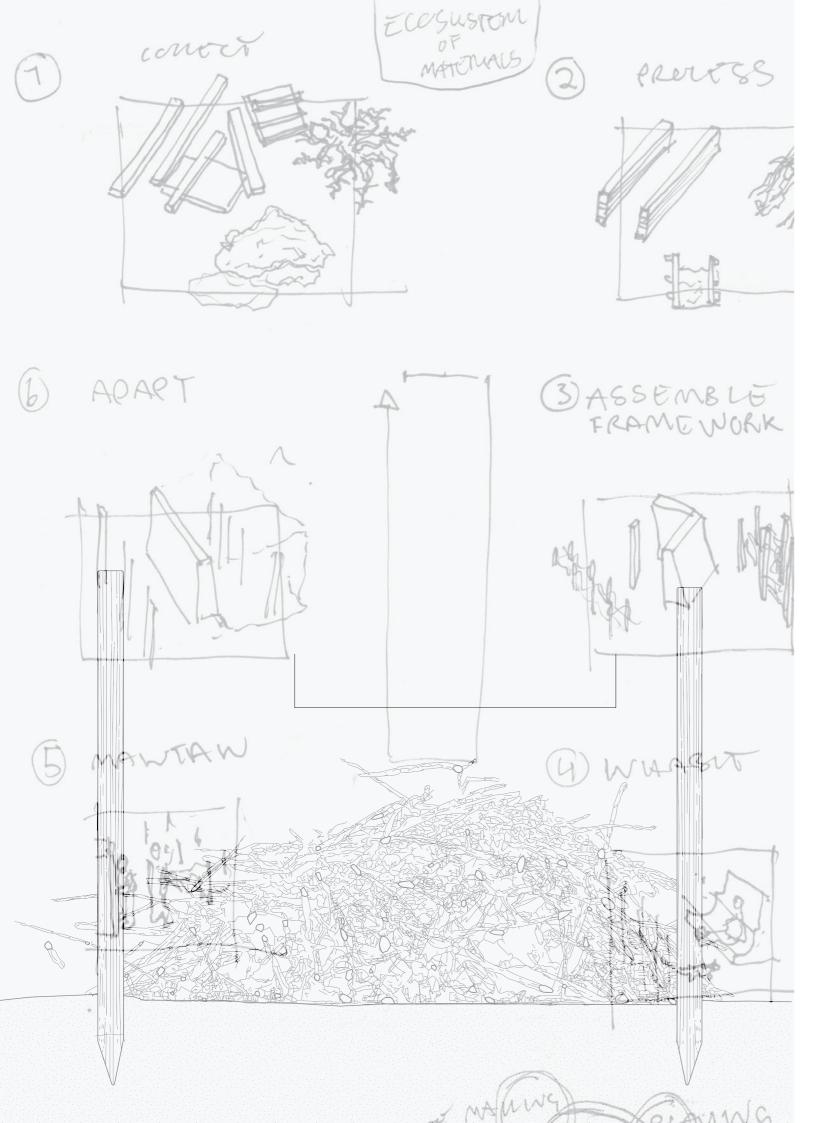












SYSTEMS OF EXCESS

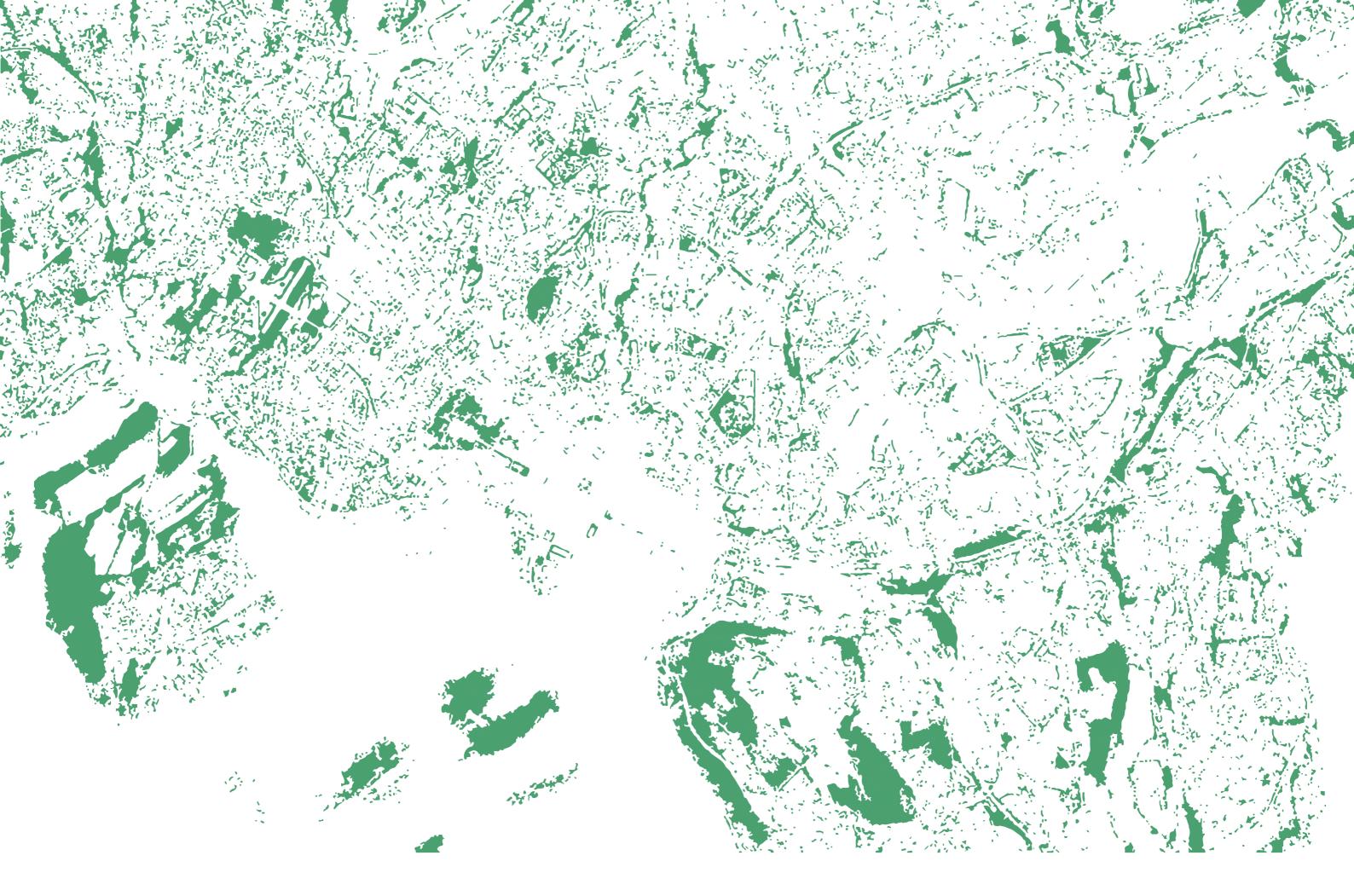
The thesis explores potentials to access the city's surplus resources. Waste streams are reconsidered as a common good beyond utilitarian use within strict regulatory frameworks. The intention is to design structures that piggy-back on existing infrastructures of excess, and seeks to democratise the city's resources into a continuation of the commons at Loallmenningen.

Two material streams are the building materials for these structures: Tree cuttings from maintenance work and reused formwork from building sites close to the project area. Current stakeholders important for the infill are Oslokompost, Grønmo recycling station, and Oslo Municipality's maintenance of trees in public space. Instead of all the waste being composted or turned into composite materials, I propose that the cuttings are collect infill materials for making public spaces.

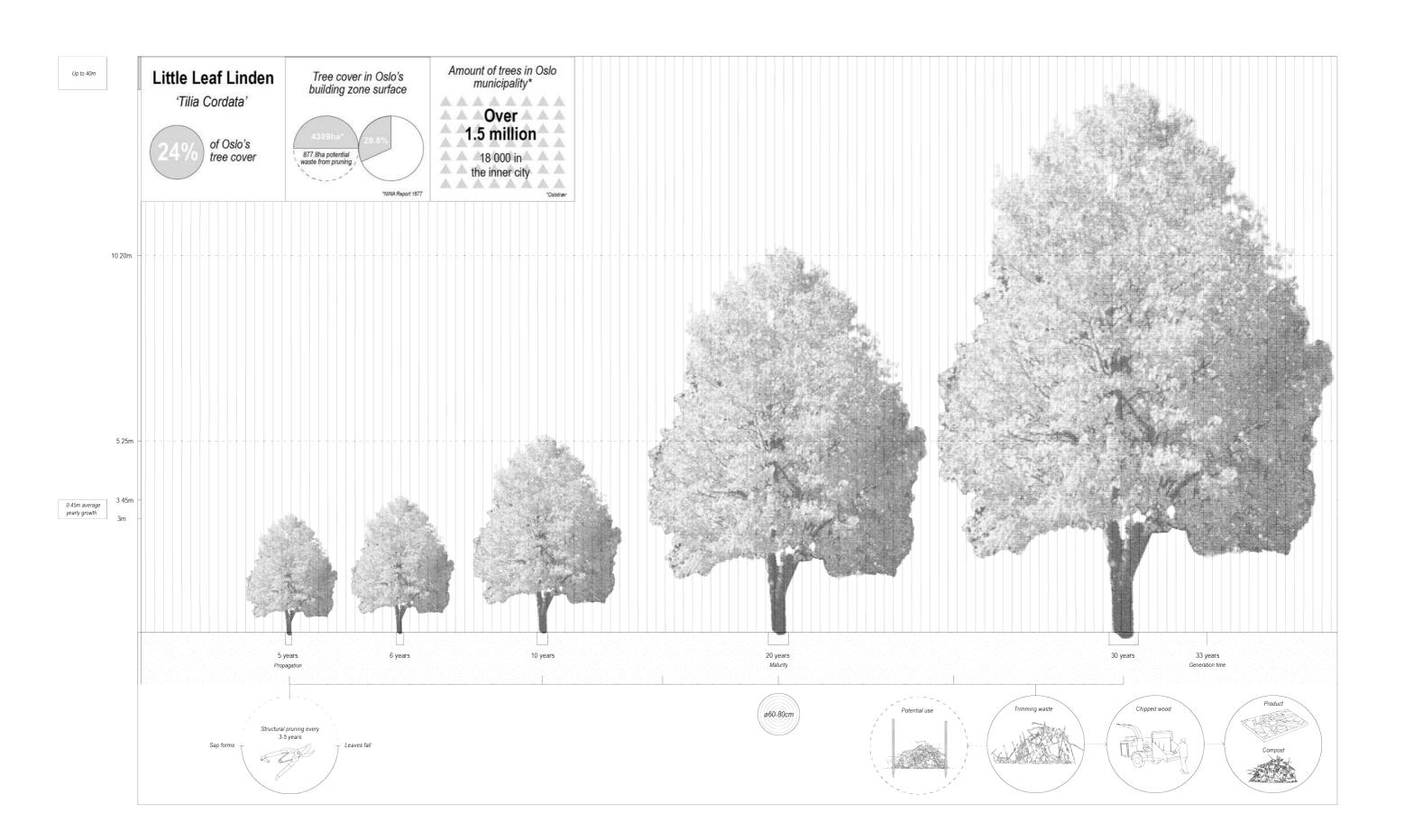
What if dead hedges they became the protagonist for a new material strategy of the built environment? What if they became a catalyst for a new common urbanity?

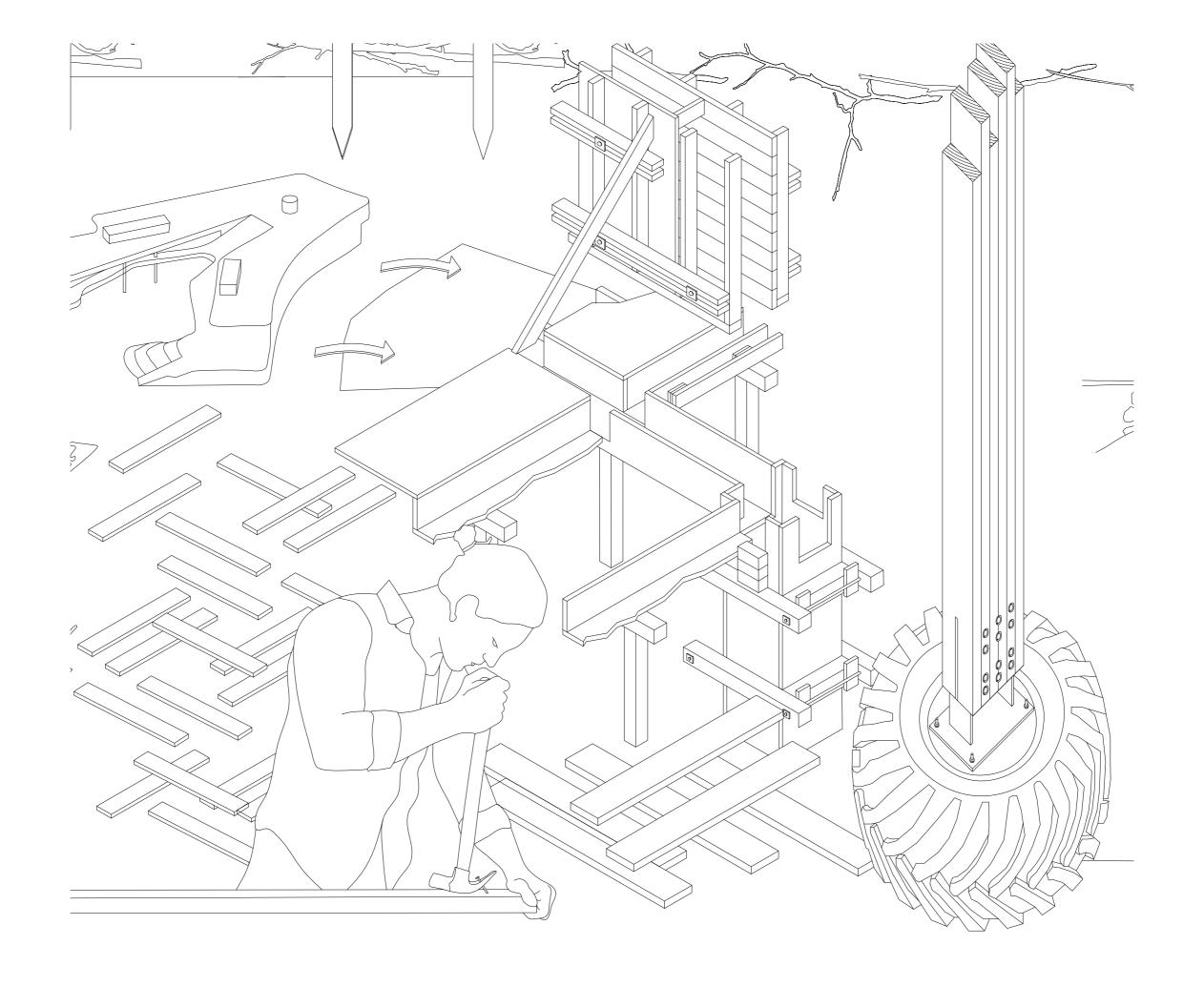


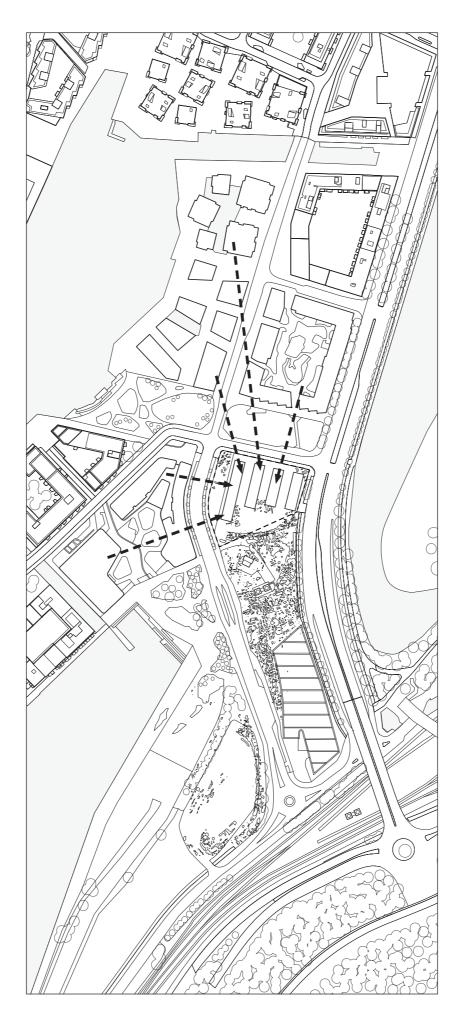




Tree Cover in Oslo







Projects in Development: Hyper-Local Material Source



THE SITE

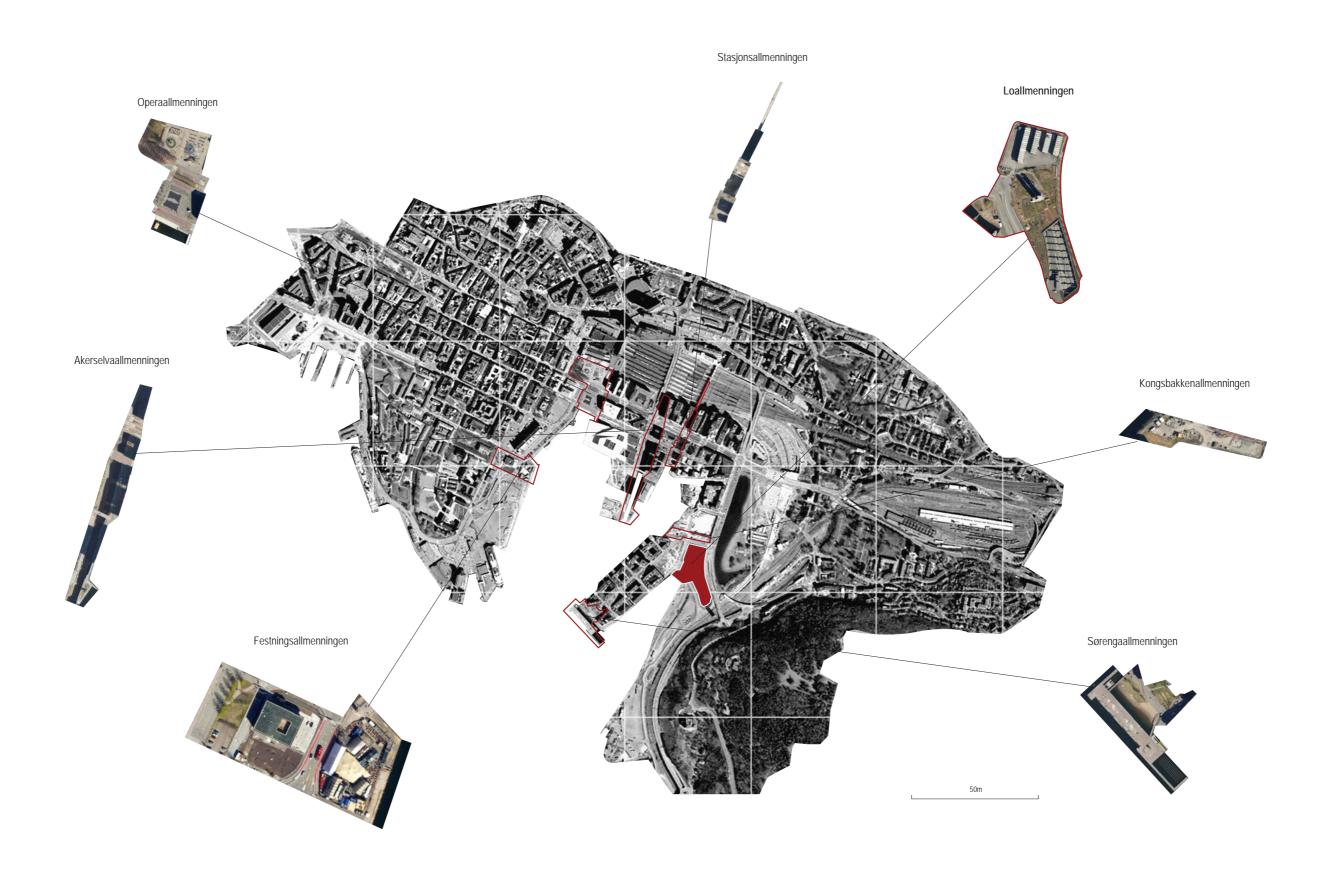
The site 'Loallmenningen' has developed rapidly over time, from industry, expansion of the harbour, development of motorways, establishing a tunnel, developing a residential neighbourhood adjacent, becoming planted, founding Losæter park in 2011, and most recently the northern part becoming parking and dwelling supporting development.

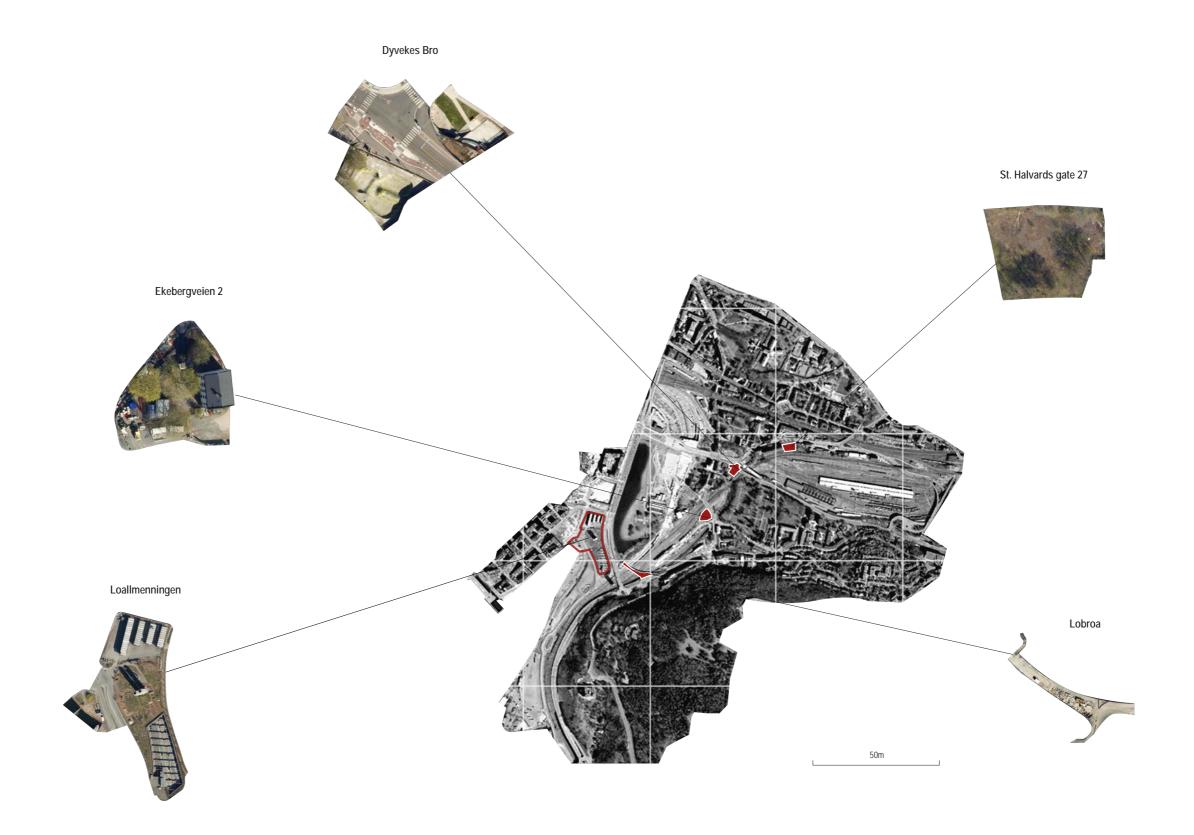
Losæter is part of Bjørvika Utvikling public art program, and it is commissioned and produced by Bjørvika Utvikling in collaboration with the international art collective, Futurefarmers. There are several organisations and collectives running activities in the public 'baking house' as well as the productive land surrounding.

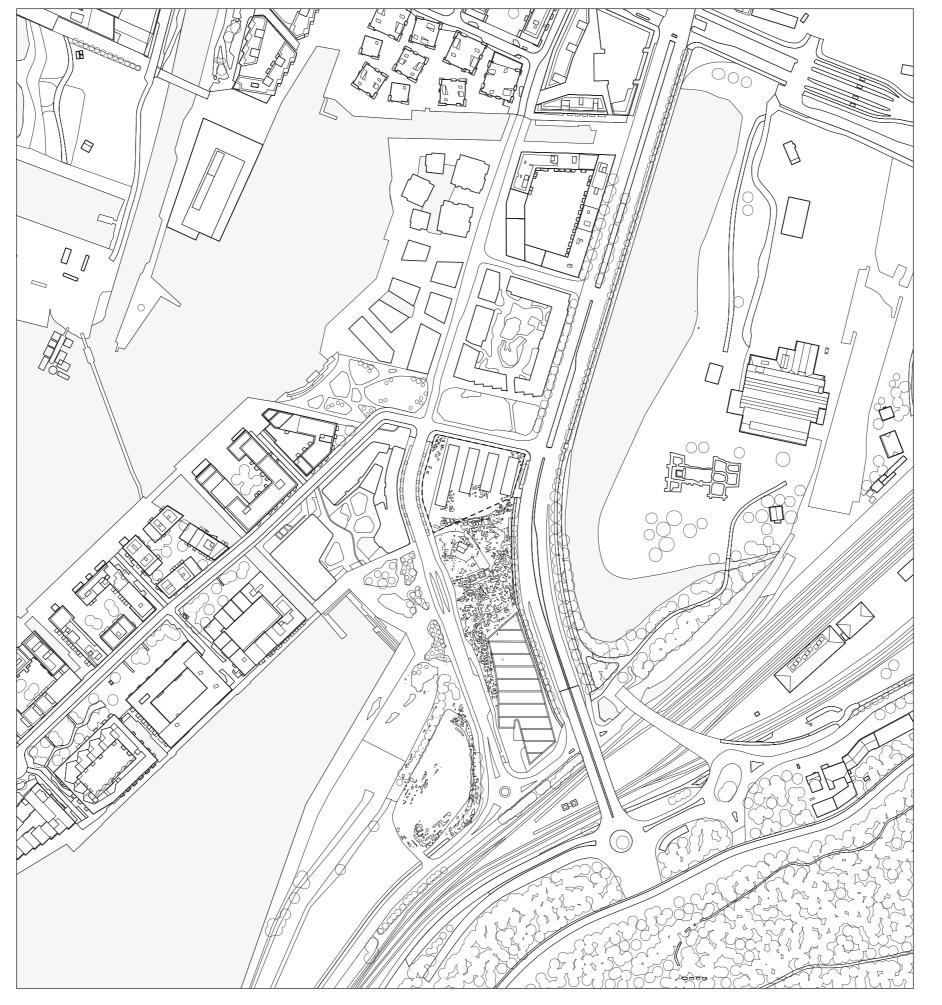
The eastern part of Oslo close to the city centre has developed rapidly the past 20 years through harbourside expansion, large infrastructural interventions, and housing developments still being built. This has resulted in these urban exceptions, that developers have been hungry to get their claws on. These are leftover spaces that have large ecological and community value. However, these spaces have resisted through community action and negotiation with the municipality.

A space that is especially important because of its ecological and public role in the city is Loallmenningen. This site is particularly fascinating because it is defined as a commons, or 'allmenning' in Norwegian. I view urban commons as spaces that suggest a community of humans and other-than-humans that actively utilise and upkeep what they hold in common.

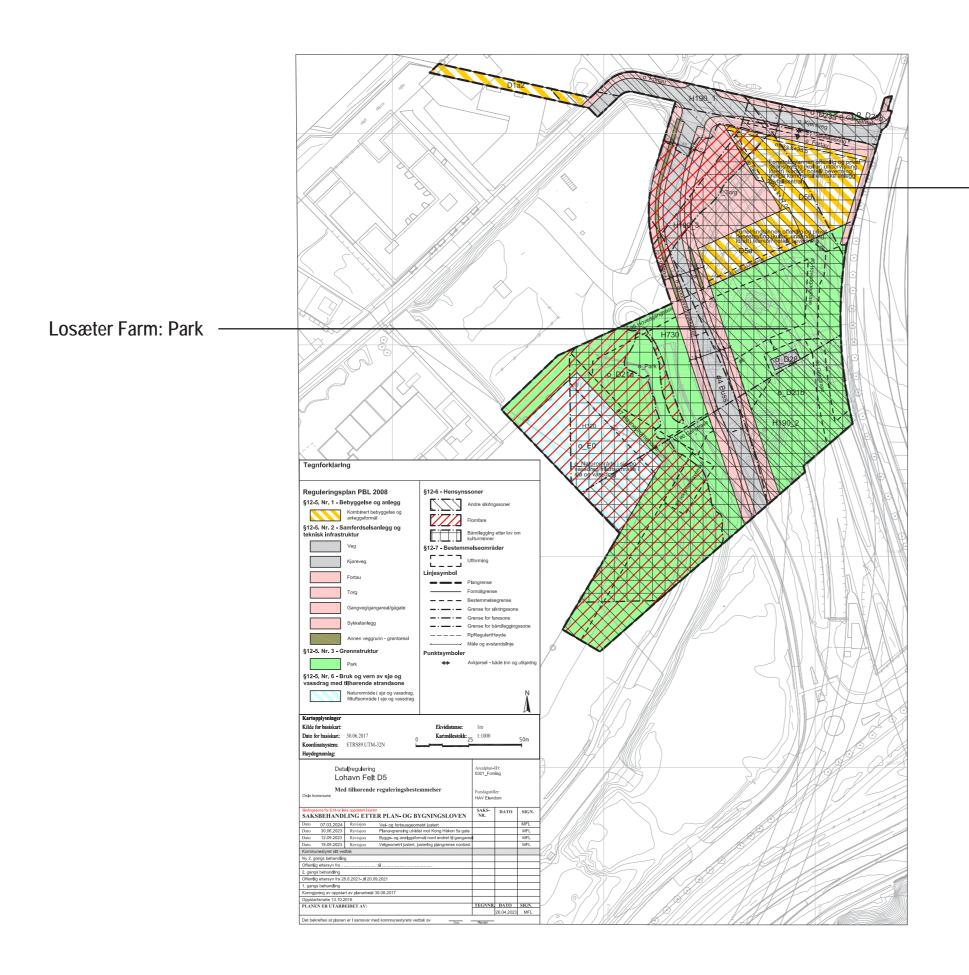
My intentions for the site is to propose an alternative plan to the current development plan, continuing Loallmenningen as a non-commercial space of being together. Also, continuing a practice of care, maintenance, and making that is already present in Losæter.







Existing Site Plan



Commercial and Residential
Reduced building area over time
(2004-2024)

Land ownership
Bane Nor Eiendom AS
Statens Vegvesen
D5 Lohavn AS

Felt D5:

Formål: boliger, forretning, kontor, hotell, bevertning, allmennyttig formål (kultur, undervisning, idrett, serviceanlegg småbåthavn) og garasjeanlegg.

Høyde: k+ 26,37

Utnyttelse: 21 000 m² T-BRA / TU 428 %

Minst 20 prosent av T-BRA skal være boliger.

Forretningsarealer skal maksimum tilsvare 50 % av 1. etasjes bruksareal.

Tension in two plans: public or private?

I kommunedelplan for torg- og møteplasser (2009) er Loallmenningen vist som annen overordnet møteplass (allsidig, varierende rekreasjonsbruk, med vekt på ikke-organisert bruk).

Planned Development 36



FLATBREAD SOCIETY

SOIL PROCESSION

LIST OF FARM

Alhaug, Helgøya | Alm Østre, Stange | Aschim

Vestre, Brandbu | Bakkan, Tromsø, Kaldfjord ("Calfjornia") | Bergsmyrene, Hurum | Bogstad, Oslo | Botanisk

Hage, Oslo | Bygdø Kongsgård, Oslo | Bøgedal, Denmark |

Den Norske

Opera og Ballett, Oslo | Dysterjordet, Ås | Ekebo,
Nesodden | Energigården, Brandbu | Evje Gård, Prestfoss |
Fjellvik, Øvre Eiker | Fokhol, Stange | Geitmyra Skolehager, Oslo | Grette, Hov | Grøset Seter, Nedre Eggedal | Hegli,
Nannestad |

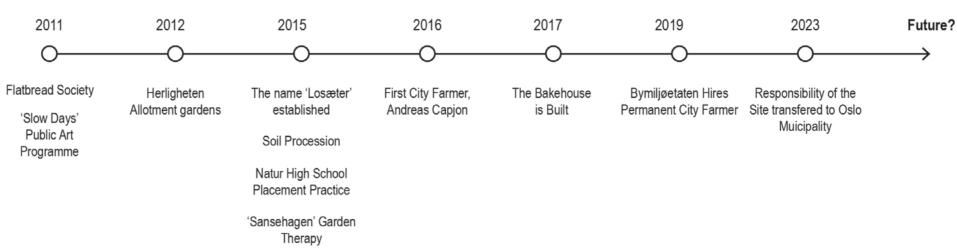
Heinrich Jung, Solør | Holli, Spydeberg | Horgen, Nes | Hov, Prestfoss | Hovlandsmoen, Prestfoss | Kampen Økologiske Barnebondegård, Oslo | Kulturstua i

Ro, Vestre Gausdal |

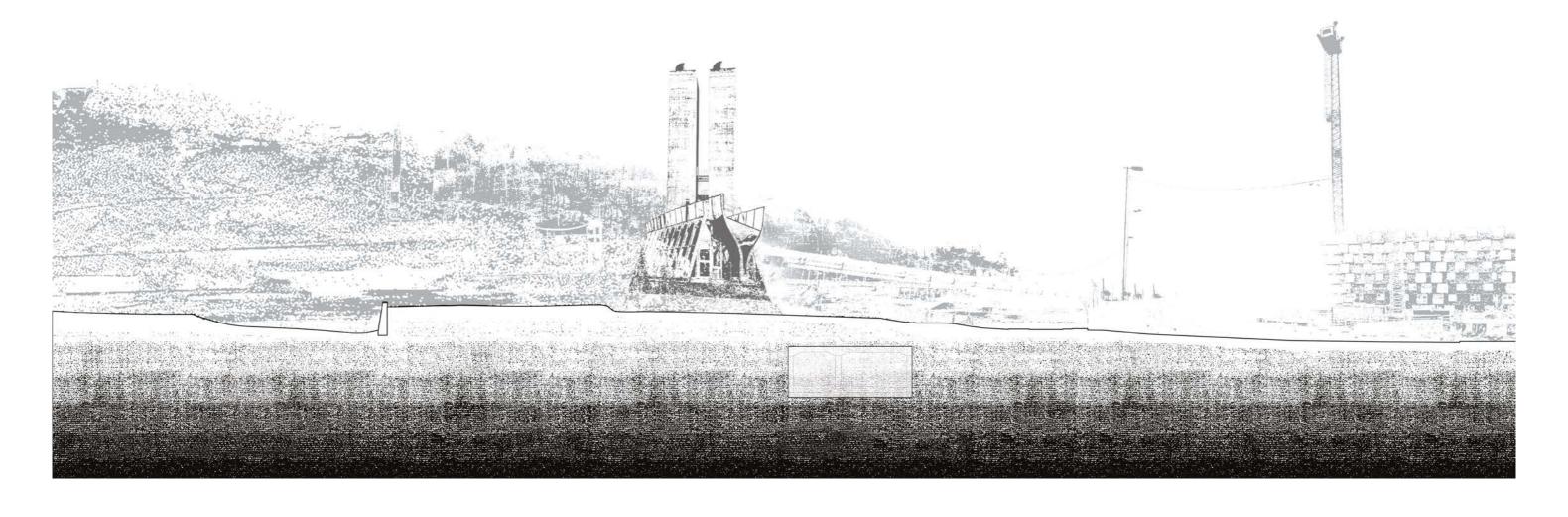
Lislerud, Eidsberg | Nedre Båsum, Prestfoss | Nes, Rolvsøy | Ommang Søndre, Løten | Ramstad, Prestfoss | Solhagen, Ådalsbruk |

Solheim, Holmestrand | Solli, Stokke | Sø-strøm, Nittedal | Uksum, Vestre Gausdal | Vikabråten, Valdres | Ødeverp, Øvre Eiker | Øverland, Bærum | Øvre Haugan, Prestfoss | Øvre Ringstad, Skiptvet

Bjørvika Development Future Farmers



Losæter Farm

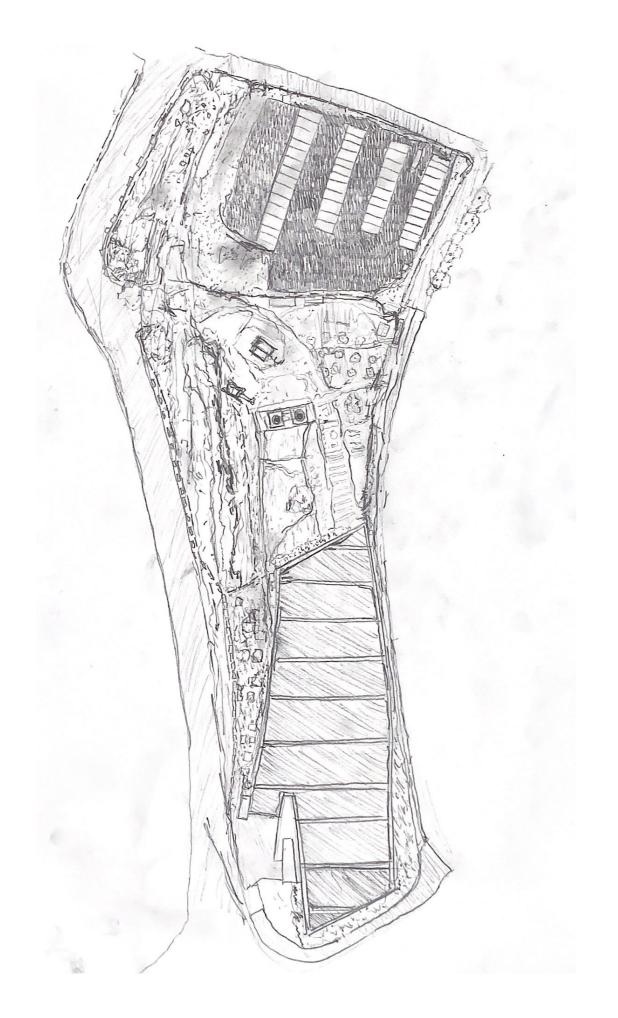


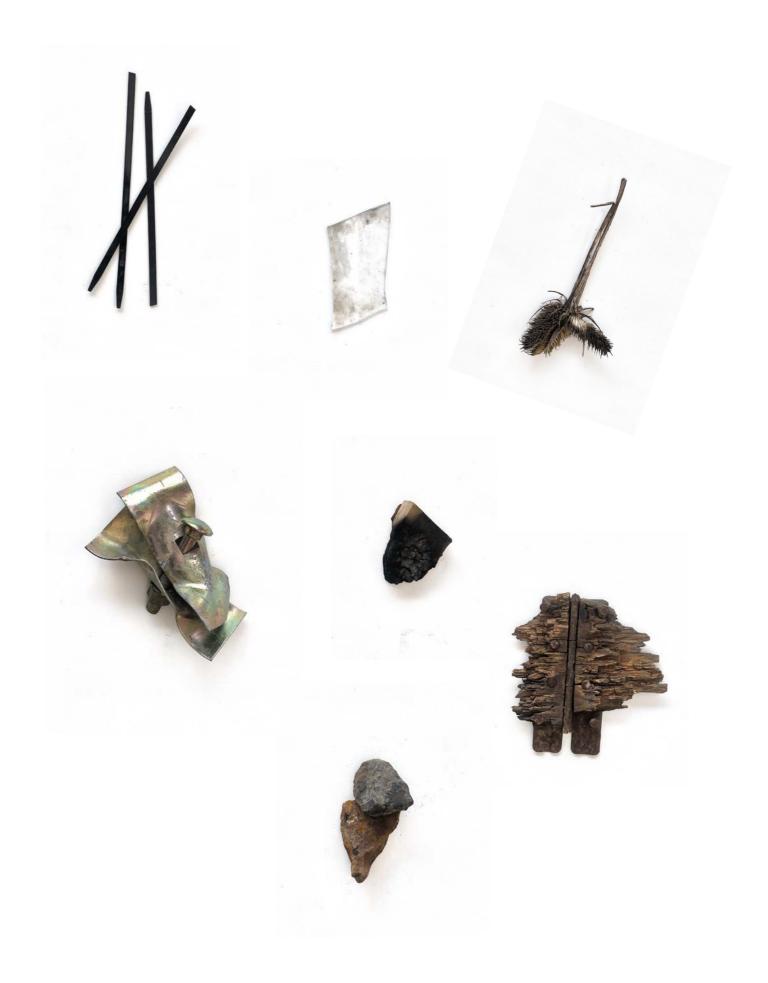






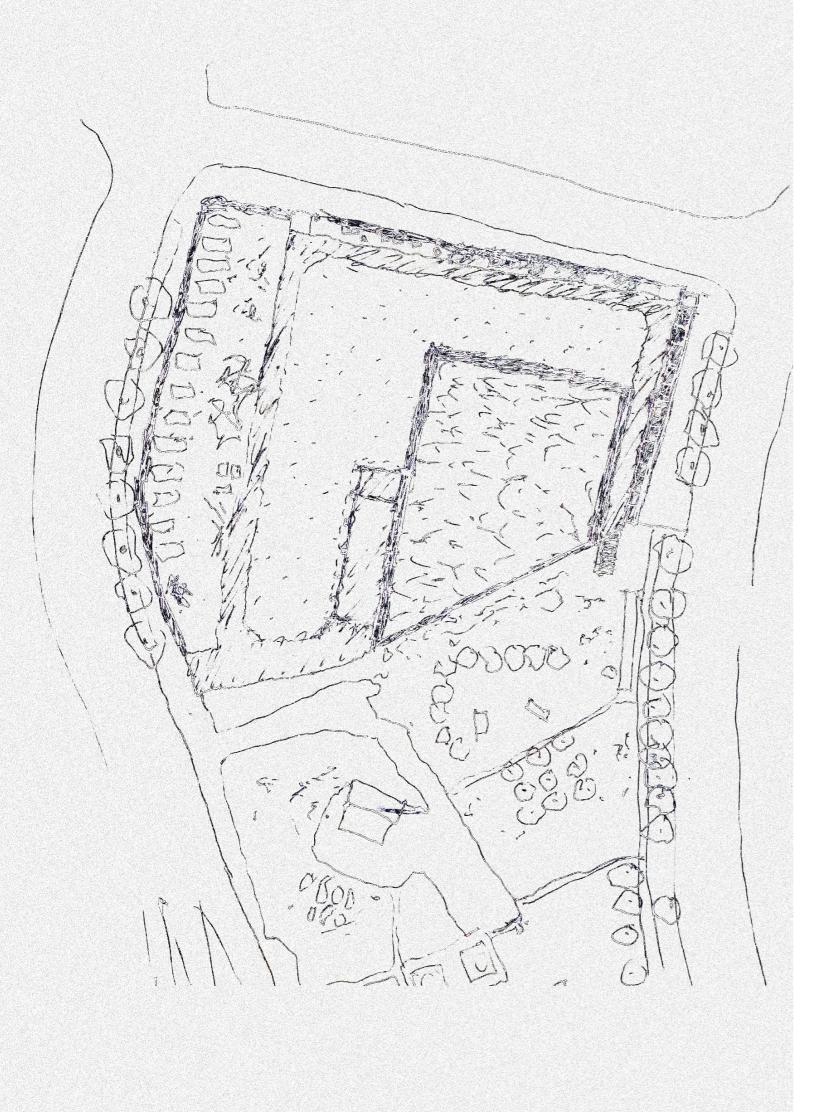






Sketch of Current Site Conditions Found Objects on Site



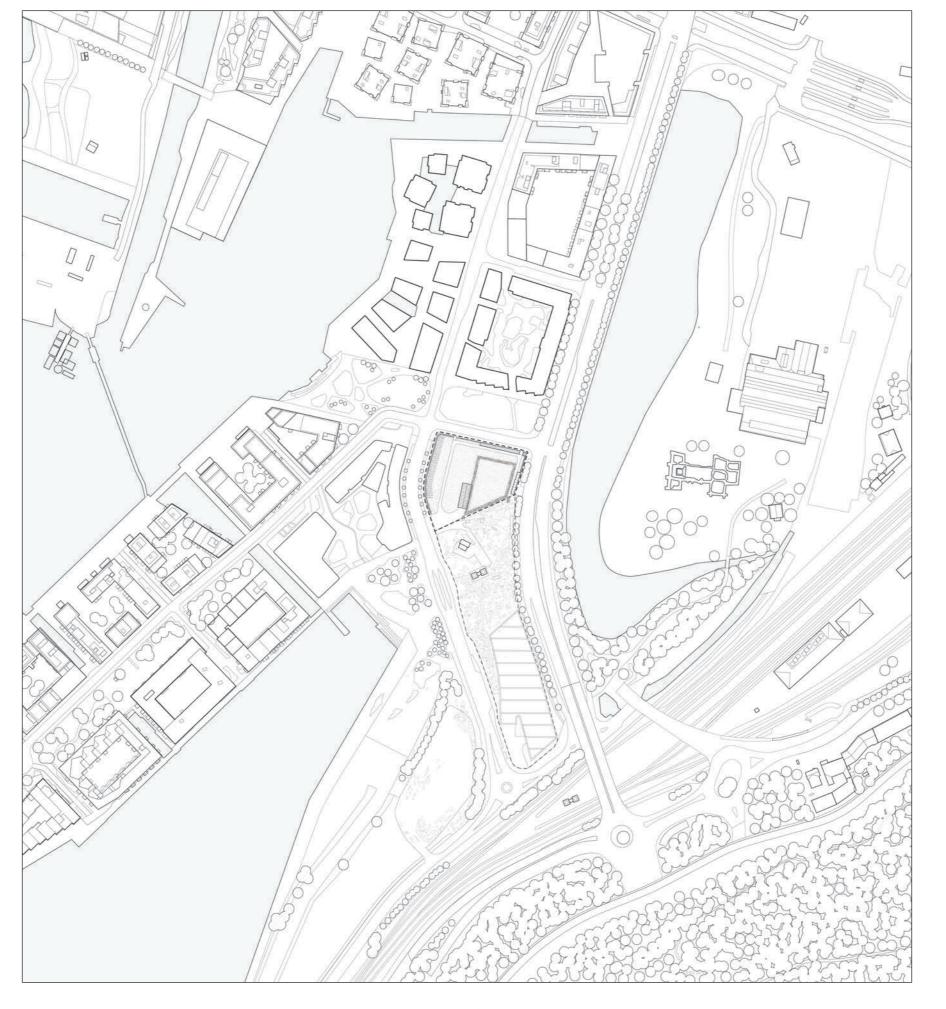


HEDGEHUGS

In an area of rapid development, it is important to make spaces for being together that thrives at a slower pace. The proposal is a direct alternative to the current development plan and site boundary, continuing Loallmenningen as a non-commercial public space. Seating, cover, drinking water, toilets, urprogrammed surfaces, a shared shelter, and permeable ground provide essential functions for being together. This is made into structures informed by the architecture of the dead hedge. The architect's role in this project is to be a mediator between Losæter and the municipality, between humans and other than humans, embracing uncertainty along the way.

Six acts are suggested: 'Mining the site' uses the asphalt to create walkways and a retaining wall. 'Material bank' marks a space used for land cultivation, material storage, and redistribution. 'Making a garden' carves out a non-human space. 'A place to sit' frames a space to be together at the northern part of the site. 'Service wall' connects drinking water and public toilets to a gabion wall. . As natural succession lourishes, and additions are made on site by the dwellers, Losæter, and the municipality, so does this space of being together.

The intention of the design is to continue a public practice of care, maintenance and making.





MINING THE SITE

MATERIAL BANK

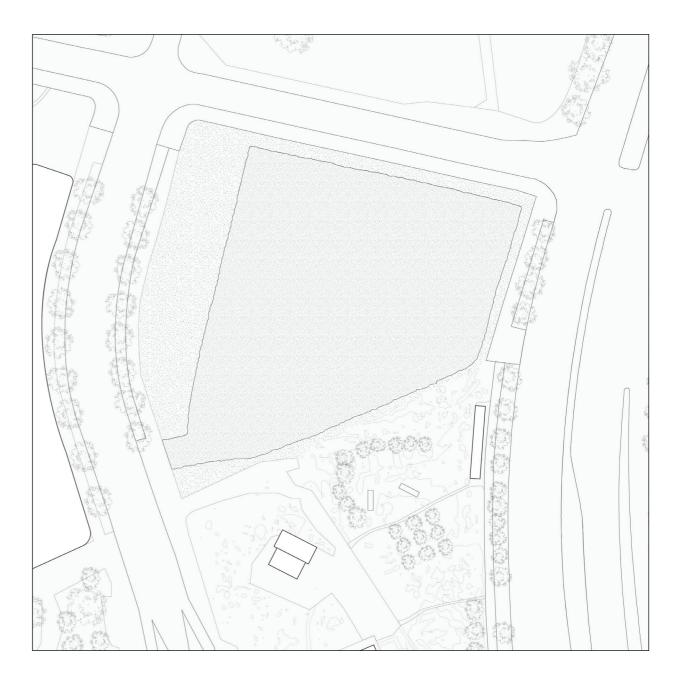
MAKING A GARDEN

SHARED SHELTER

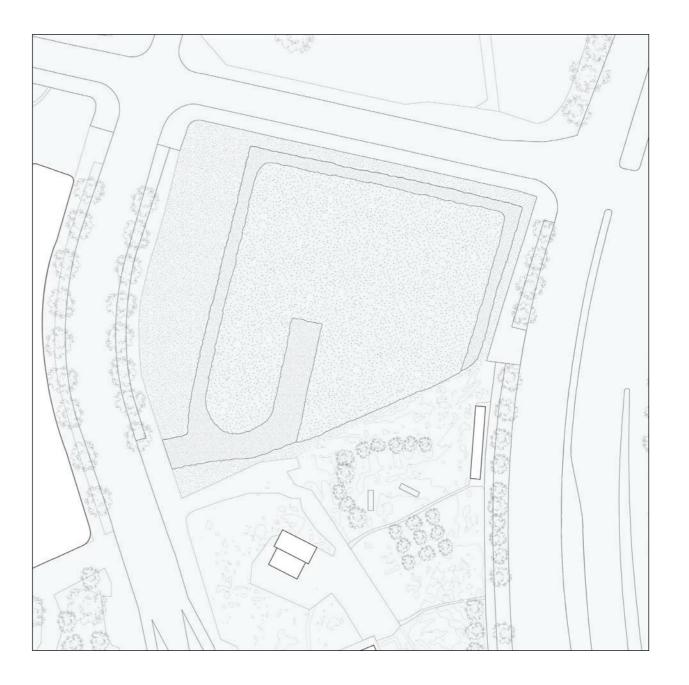
A PLACE TO SIT

THE SERVICE WALL

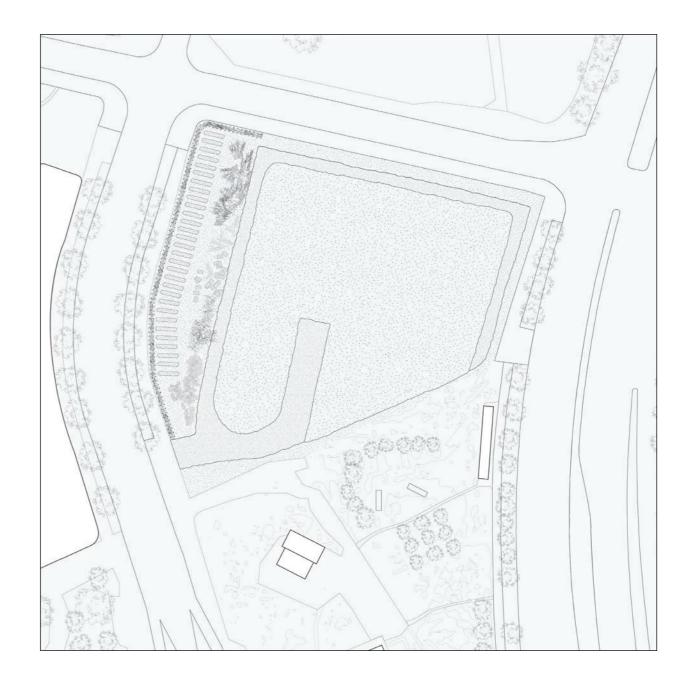




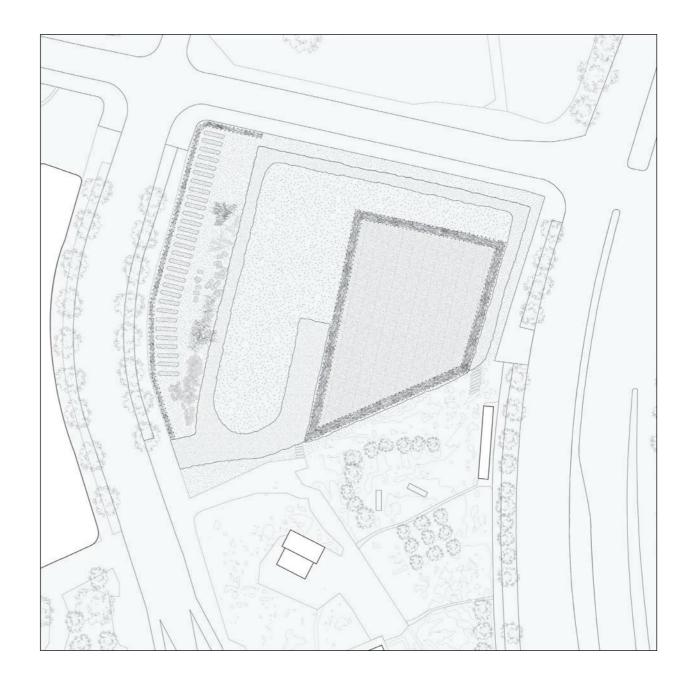


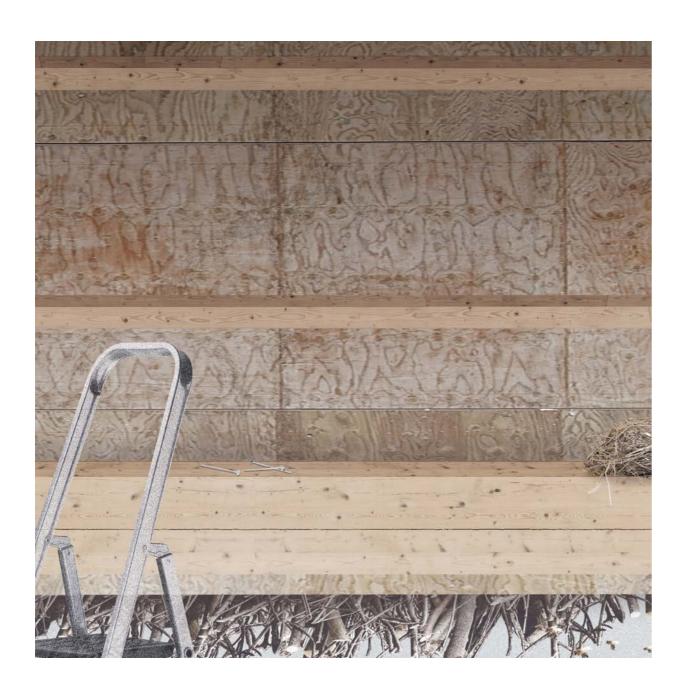


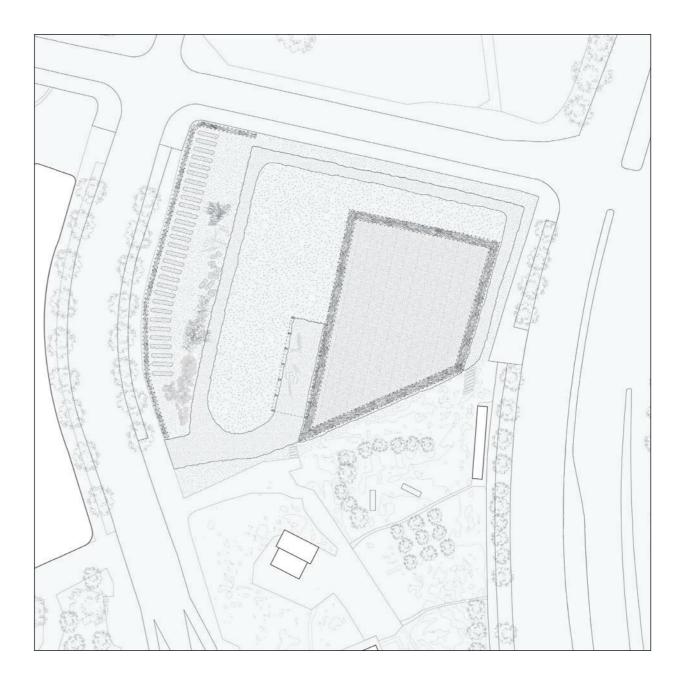




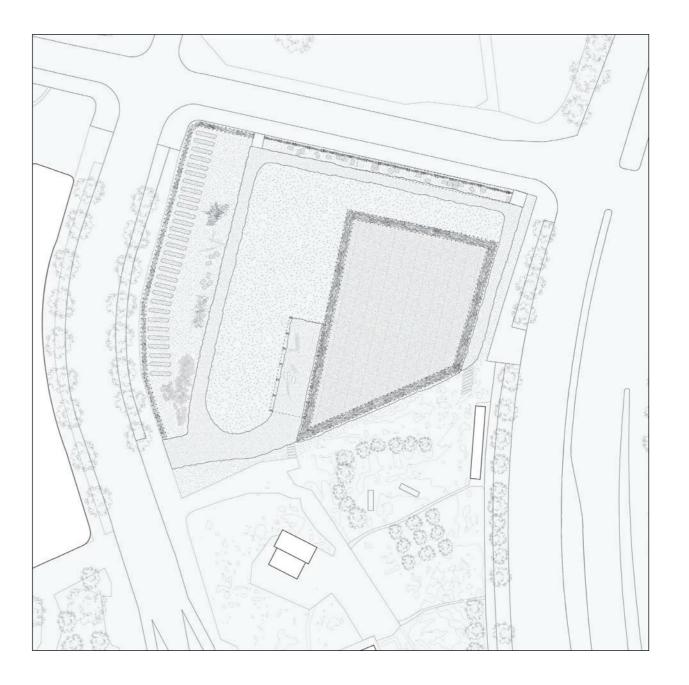




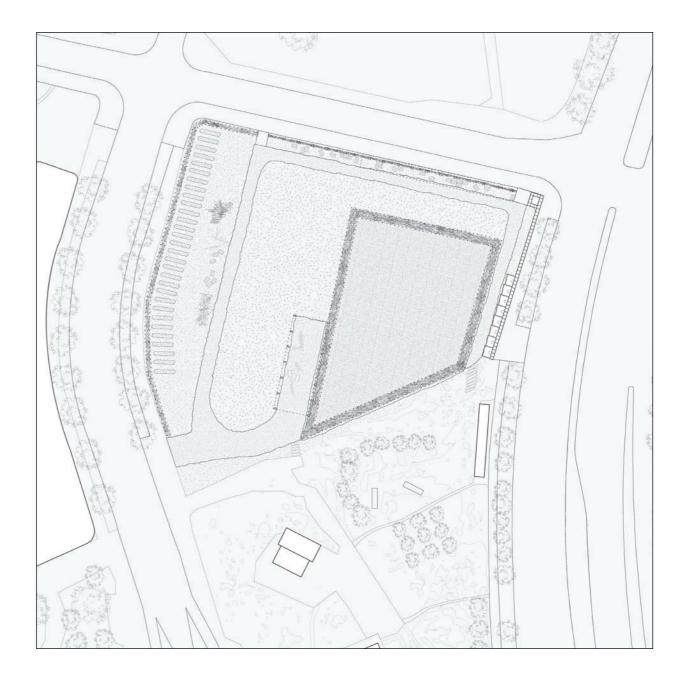










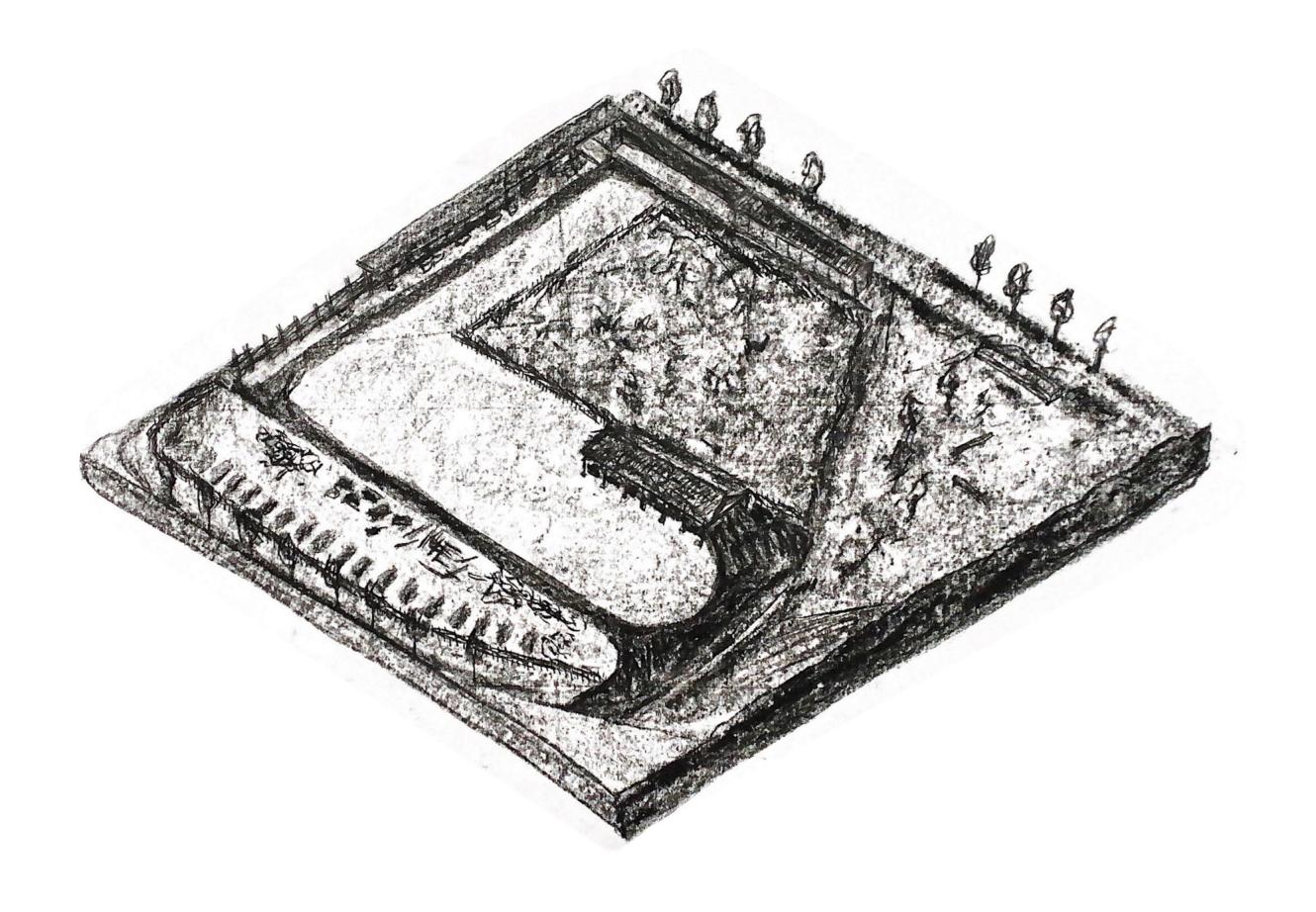


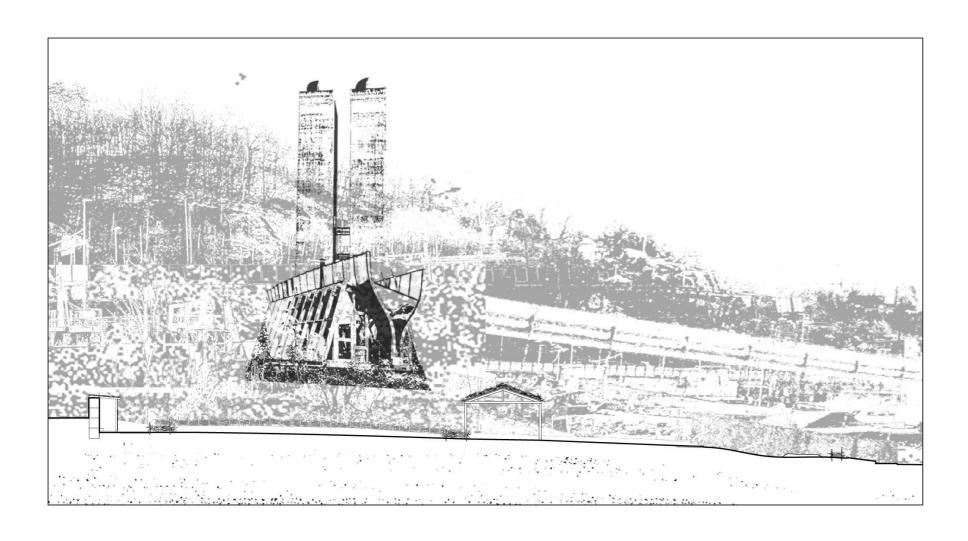


Public Square

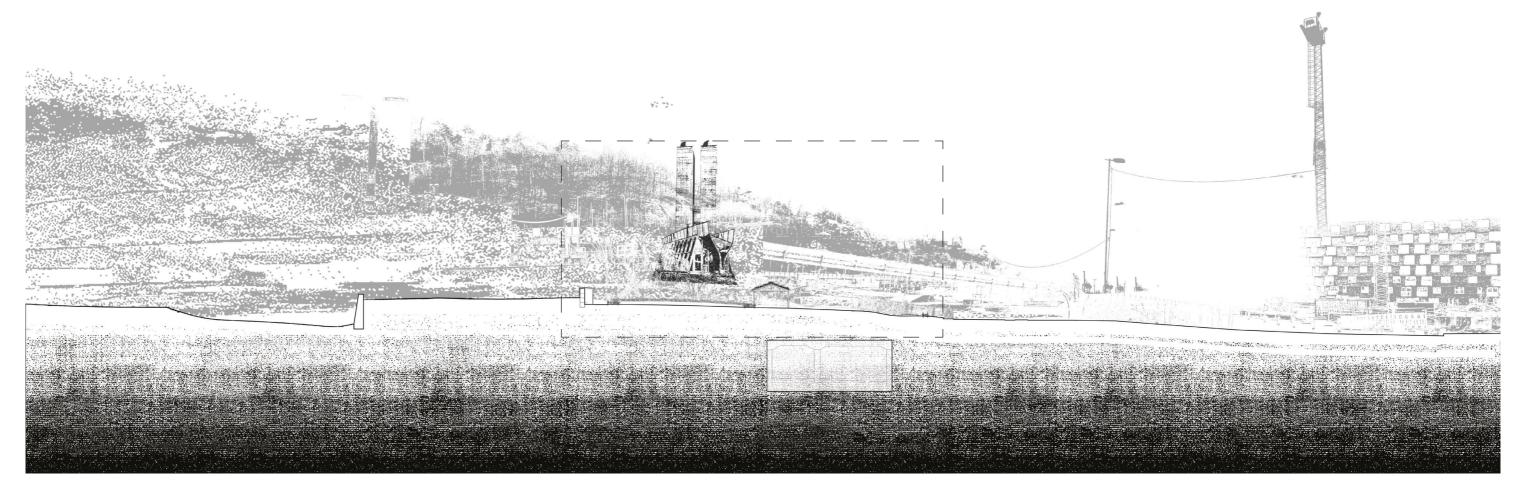


Non-Human Space









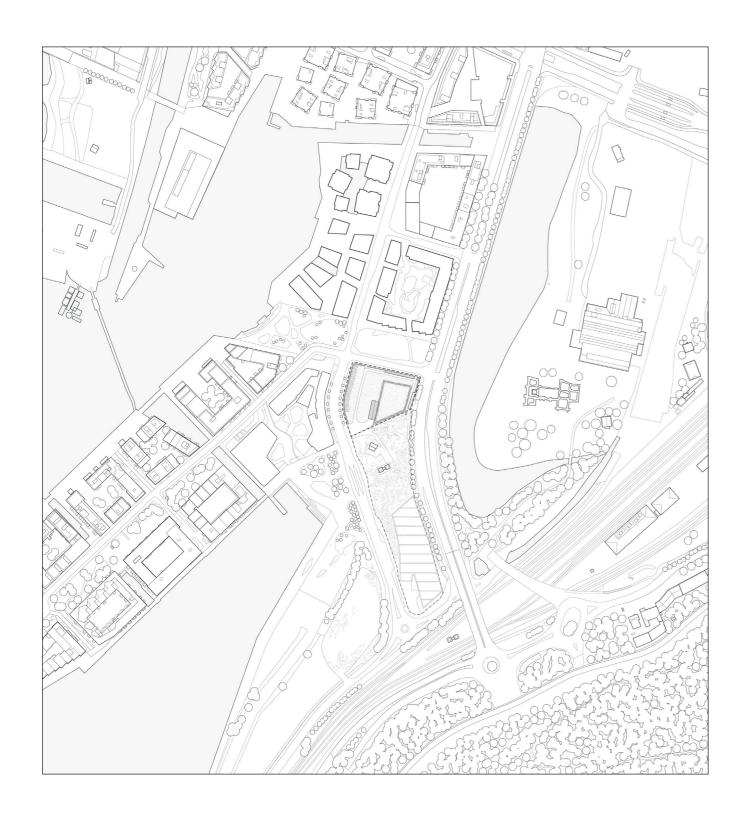
Section A

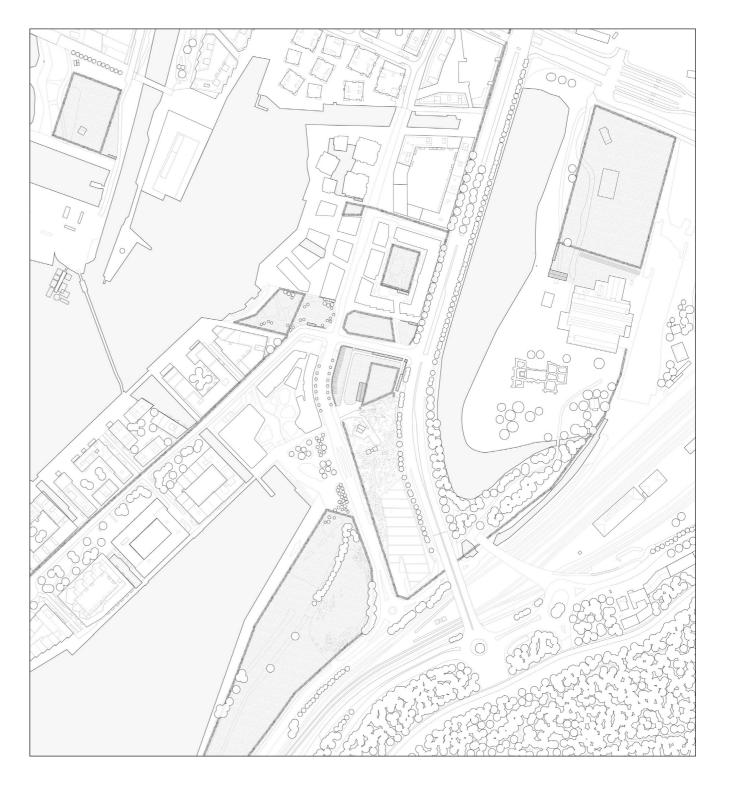




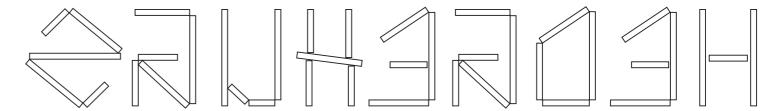


Section B





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An Alternative Future for Loallmenningen

Mathias Sagvik Diploma Spring 2024

Supervisors

Eirik Stokke & Espen Heggertveit

The Oslo School of Architecture and Design Institute of Architecture

Binder 1

Additional supervition: Matthew Anderson

Benjamin Sjöberg Matthew Dalziel

Typeface: Arial Narrow.

Anthony designed by Sun Young Oh, Velvetyne

