



# Soft Pier

**Designing for urban  
continuity and  
everyday livability**



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# Title page

## ***Project title***

Soft Pier: Designing for urban continuity and everyday livability.

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# Abstract

This design proposal focuses on the transformation of Pier 3, located in the harbor district of Aarhus Ø. Currently functioning as an underused site between the modern waterfront developments and the historic city center, the site presents an opportunity to bridge contrasting urban scales. The project seeks to shift the area from a transitional space into a unifying destination.

Analysis of the site emphasized a clear need for accessible green spaces, active water edges, and stronger community cohesion. To address this, the design breaks down the heavy, hard scale of the harbor to prioritize the everyday pedestrian experience. This directed the proposal's concept Soft Pier. By moving away from monumental architecture and drawing inspiration from the classic block structures of central Aarhus, the design creates a more intimate neighborhood adapted to a slower pace.

Preserving the area's maritime character is a primary objective. Rather than clearing the site, key historical harbor structures are retained, and raw harbor like materials anchor local identity. The proposal introduces a large park, green buffer zones, and intuitive paths that draw public life to the waterfront. Active ground floors and flexible meeting places are integrated to encourage social interaction among diverse user groups.

Additional interventions, including elevated green rooftop park, wind-mitigating landscapes, and adaptable modular structures, ensure the area becomes a welcoming environment year-round. By physically and socially connecting the old and the new, the design creates a dynamic urban platform where everyday users and local groups can connect and actively shape their surroundings.

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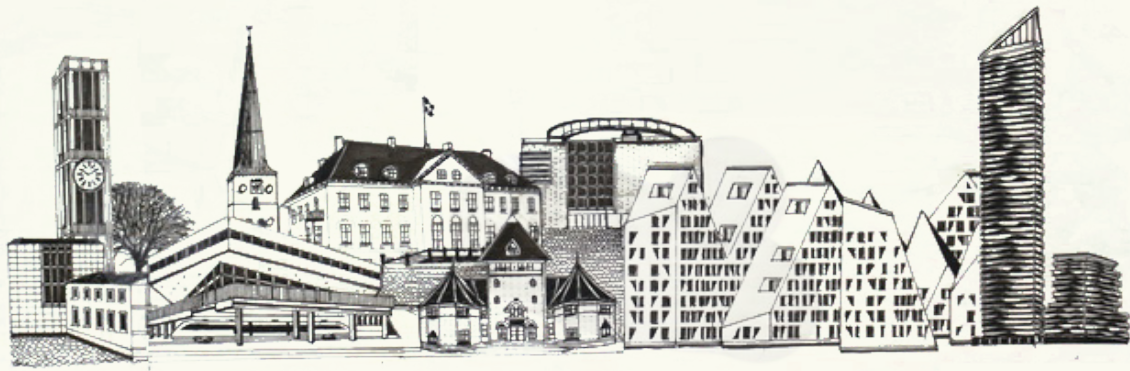
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# Prologue

01



*“There has been global interest in the Danish phenomenon of hygge, the everyday togetherness; the cozy, convivial atmosphere that promotes well-being. Hygge reflects the softness of Scandinavian societies. There is a gentle pragmatism, characteristic of the Nordic countries, where an exceptional quality of life for the many is built on a foundation of taking care of ordinary and everyday things, and making the best of limited resources (and arguably also reflected in the deeper values of the welfare state). This pragmatism is built on the possibilities and limits of human senses, by obeying laws of nature and living with the realities of climate and changing seasons.”*  
(Sim, 2019, p. 2)



*Fig. 1: City motif of Aarhus drawn by Torben H. Andersen.*

## Project introduction

In recent years, cities like Aarhus have experienced rapid redevelopment of old harborfronts, often driven by large-scale construction and financial profit. However, this development comes at a cost: new districts are frequently criticized as cold, windswept, and detached from their context. Areas dominated by monumental architecture lack a genuine heart, leaving locals wishing for active, inclusive civic spaces rather than simply residential extensions.

As part of the Urban Design Master Thesis at Aalborg University, this project presents a design proposal for Pier 3. The proposal introduces the Soft Pier, which prioritizes human scale and everyday life to create a

gentle transition from the historic center. By focusing on active ground floors, direct access to water and greenery, and varied spaces for play and rest, the design aims to create an inviting waterfront environment. Anchored in the intimate scale of the pedestrian, the proposal seeks to transform the pier into a socially inclusive extension of Aarhus.

# Reading guide

The report consists of seven main chapters. Chapter 1 functions as the prologue and introduces the process and method, motivation, strategy, analytical framework, and problem statement. Chapters 2.1-2.4 contain the analysis and are structured through the themes Aarhus, Urban Continuity, Livability, and Communities. These analytical chapters establish the foundation for Chapter 3, which presents the concept, vision, spatial criteria, and design principles of the project. Chapter 4 develops the final design proposal through the masterplan and a series of site-specific interventions. Chapter 5 concludes the project with a final conclusion and reflections on the process and the proposal. Finally, Chapter 6 contains the sources and Chapter 7 includes appendixes.

A central element of this report is how theory is actively applied to the site rather than isolated in its own section. Theoretical background is integrated throughout the text to clarify key concepts and frame spatial observations as they arise. To ground these

ideas, each sub-chapter in the analysis begins with a dedicated theoretical context page paired with a specific case study. This structure connects abstract urban design principles to concrete site conditions. It provides a clear understanding of what is being analyzed, how similar urban challenges have been handled elsewhere, and why these specific approaches are relevant to the proposed design.

Visual accessibility has heavily influenced the presentation of information. To make the content inclusive for readers with varying types of color vision, the design prioritizes strong contrast and clear differentiation over color reliance. The report utilizes a high-contrast color palette, and when color differentiation isn't enough, it relies on varying line thicknesses and styles (such as dashed lines). This ensures that the data is legible and clearly communicated to everyone. Testing the visual accessibility can be found in appendix H.

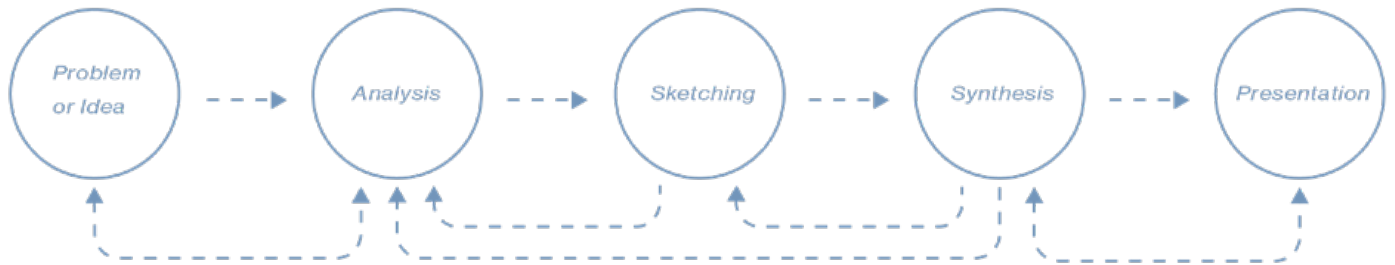


Fig. 2: Process diagram.

# Process

## **Integrated Design Process**

The Pier 3 project utilizes the Integrated Design Process (IDP), structured around five iterative phases: Problem, Analysis, Sketching, Synthesis, and Presentation. This methodology guarantees a systematic approach to resolving the specific spatial and environmental challenges of the pier. Continuous feedback loops remain central to the workflow, allowing early concepts to be reevaluated as new site data is collected.

### **Problem**

The initial stage focused on defining the primary challenges of Pier 3, particularly concerning public accessibility, coastal exposure, and integration with the adjacent urban fabric.

### **Analysis**

Comprehensive data was gathered to understand the pier's physical and social context. This included examining microclimates, existing infrastructure, and current usage patterns along the waterfront.

### **Sketching**

Diverse spatial solutions were developed to address the identified issues. Hand drawing and digital tools were used to test layouts, wind mitigation strategies, and public space configurations.

### **Synthesis**

The final spatial concepts are communicated through drawings, diagrams, and isometric visualizations, clearly demonstrating the proposed modifications to Pier 3.

### **Presentation**

The final spatial concepts are communicated through drawings, diagrams, and isometric visualizations, clearly demonstrating the proposed modifications to Pier 3.

# Method

## ***Desktop analysis***

Online sources, municipal development plans, historical archives, and GIS databases were utilized to gather comprehensive information about Pier 3 and its immediate surroundings. Tools such as Scalgo Live and QGIS were used to map out environmental constraints, existing infrastructure, and future development zones.

## ***Site analysis***

Pier 3 was visited multiple times at different times of the day and under varying weather conditions. These visits allowed for a direct assessment of wind exposure, edge conditions, materiality, and existing structural boundaries. Observations were heavily inspired by Jan Gehl's techniques to evaluate the human-scale experience and the quality of the public realm along the water.

## ***User analysis***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on-site with a diverse group of current users, including pedestrians, nearby residents, and sports community members. These interactions provided valuable insights into the community's relationship with the pier and their specific spatial needs.

## ***Theoretical framework***

Academic literature and architectural theories regarding livability, urban continuity, placemaking and others were studied. This research defined critical problem areas and established the guiding principles for the structural and social interventions on the pier.

## ***Mapping***

All quantitative and qualitative data gathered from desktop research, site observations, and user interviews was visually synthesized into mappings. This method provided a clear, accessible way to communicate spatial hierarchies, movement flows, and environmental vulnerabilities.

## ***Sketching***

Sketching served as a primary tool for exploring and iterating design concepts. Hand drawings and transparent overlays were used to quickly test spatial arrangements, transition zones, and landscape elements across multiple scales, moving from conceptual brainstorming to concrete design decisions.

## ***Modelling and simulations***

Digital 3D models were constructed to gain a precise spatial understanding of the pier. Software such as Rhino 8, SketchUp and Autodesk Forma enabled the testing of wind mitigation, shadow casting, and sightlines. Besides spatial analysis, these models formed the basis of analytical sections and design drawings.

## ***Photography & collages***

Photographs were continuously taken to capture the raw materiality, weather exposure, and distinct maritime atmosphere of Pier 3. These images were actively used to create collages, convey subtle spatial narratives and potential future atmospheres that are difficult to express through maps or descriptions alone.

# Motivation

This thesis investigates urban harbor transformations with a particular focus on human-centered design. While the project scope defines the boundaries of our work, our true motivation lies in reclaiming the waterfronts and exploring how they can better support everyday public life and reconnect people with the harbor. We believe that by expressing our passion behind the thesis, this section provides context for the analytical findings and design strategies developed throughout the project.

As residents of Aarhus, we are personally connected to the city and its waterfronts, which form an important part of our everyday lives. Pier 3 represents a significant

transitional site between the historic city center and Aarhus Ø, making it a highly debated topic within the city. Aarhus Ø has received considerable public criticism for prioritizing large-scale starchitecture and high-rise development, resulting in a disconnected neighbourhood with poor and lifeless in-between spaces.

Our eyes fire up by the possibility of preventing Pier 3 from following the same trajectory. Through placemaking, greenery, and human-scale urban spaces, our ambition is to weave the city together and create a continuous and green public domain where human-scale design invites people to stay.

# Gratitude

We would like to express our gratitude to our supervisor Lea Holst Laursen for her guidance, critical feedback, encouragement throughout our journey, and for sharing her expertise.

We are also grateful to the local communities and organizations at Pier 3 who shared their experiences, perspectives, and enthusiasm for the future of the harbor.

Finally, we would like to thank our friends and families for their patience and continuous support during the shaping of this project. A special thank you goes to Thomas, Helga, and Mila for their care and constant belief in us.

With this, we dive into Soft Pier.



Figure 3: Group photo.



Figure 4: Project teaser.

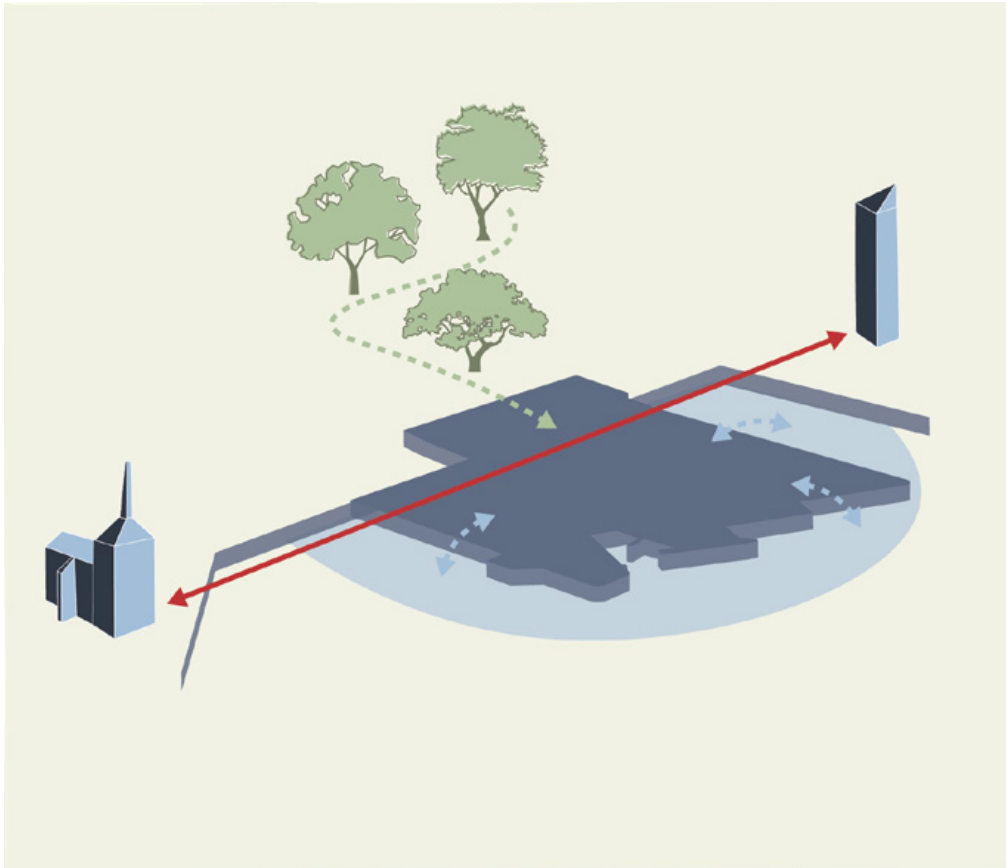


Figure 5: Teaser diagram.

# Delimitation

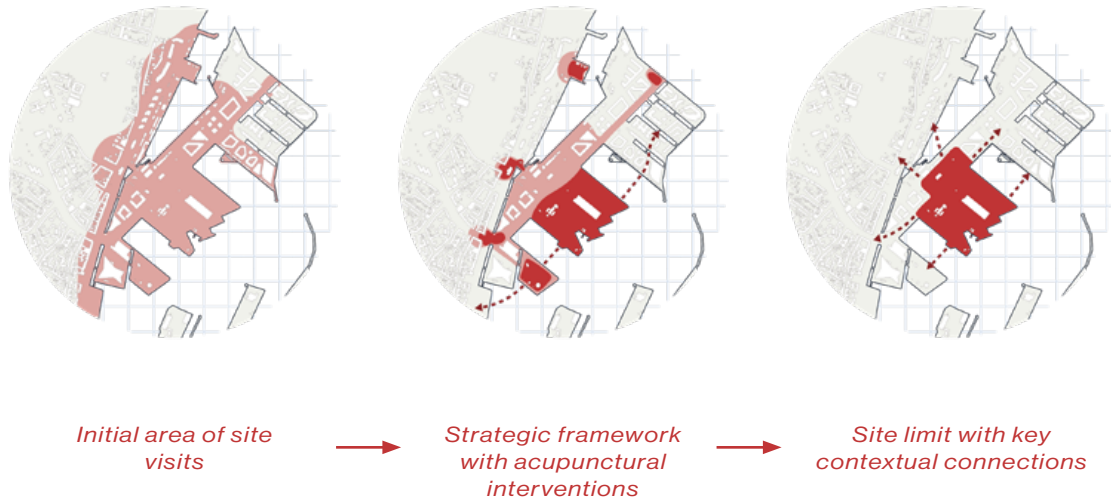


Figure 6: Process of site delimitation.

The region of Aarhus has a population of more than 375.000 inhabitants, and forecasts expect this number to grow to more than 420.000 by 2035 (Aarhus Municipality, u.d.). In response to this growth, the harborfront has undergone rapid redevelopment to accommodate the expansion of the city. Aarhus Ø is a part of this ongoing growth, transforming from a former industrial harbor into a newly developed neighborhood in Aarhus.

The project did not begin with a fixed site. Instead, it started as a broader investigation into the spatial and architectural relationship between Aarhus C and Aarhus Ø. Through repeated site visits, observational mapping,

and urban analysis during the first part of the semester, several locations in the area were explored, including the gateway intersection to Aarhus Ø, Østbanetorvet, Træskibshavnen, and Pier 3.

Across these areas, recurring themes of fragmentation, sudden transitions, infrastructural barriers, and contrasting architectural languages became visible. The relationship between Aarhus Ø and the historic city center often felt disconnected rather than experienced as a natural continuation of the urban fabric. At this stage, the project focused more on understanding broader urban relationships than on defining a specific intervention site.

As the analysis developed, Pier 3 gradually emerged as a particularly significant area within these investigations. Its location between the historic city and Aarhus Ø, together with its industrial heritage and unresolved character, made many of these conditions especially evident. During this phase, the development proposal for Pier 3, published in 2025, also became an important part of the project delimitation. The proposal represents the next step in the municipality's plans to address the growing demand for housing in the city, and a local plan for the area is expected in 2027 (Aarhus Kommune, 2026).

The thesis was also explored through ideas of smaller acupuncture interventions intended to strengthen connections across the harborfront and “weave” the city together. This approach helped reveal important spatial relationships and tensions, but it also became clear that the fragmented nature of the interventions would make it difficult to engage deeply with the local architectural and urban complexity of the area.

Through this process, the investigation gradually condensed around Pier 3 as the site where the project's main urban questions became most clearly concentrated. The municipal development zone for Pier 3 was therefore not adopted simply as a predefined boundary, but because it represented a critical threshold between Aarhus Ø and the historic city while still remaining closely connected to the surrounding urban context.

Figure 6 shows the process of moving from broader urban analysis to Pier 3 as the final project site, while figure 7 shows mappings of the site visits. Full versions can be found in appendix A.

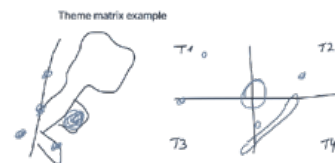


Figure 7: Initial observations from site visits.

**Shippinghuset**

First dedicated office building for shipping companies at Aarhus Havn (Aarhus Wiki, 2026).

**Cykeløen**

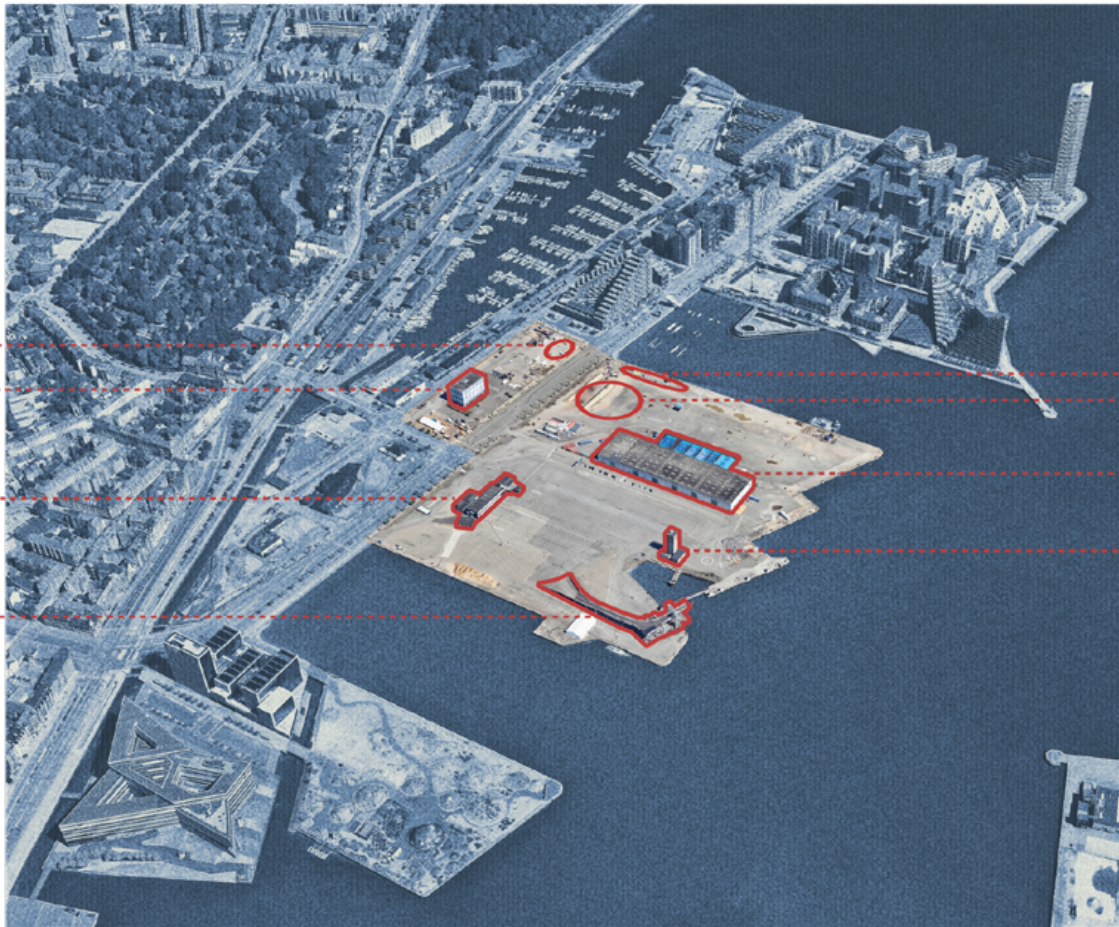
A playground where kids are taught how to safely bicycle in traffic (Aarhus Kommune, n.d.).

**Local recycling station**

Multifunctional station for waste sorting or for donation of no longer needed items (Kredsløb, n.d.).

**Containers**

Formerly at the northside of Bassin 7, Aarhus Watersports Complex and cafés are now situated at Pier 3.



**Ferry ramp**

It served the former ferry terminal at Pier 3 until a new one opened at Østhavnen in 2020 (Aarhus Havn, n.d.).

**Lodstårnet**

The harbor pilot tower was the first in Denmark with a radar system. (Danmarks Lodsmuseumsforening, n.d.)

**Hveensgade 4**

The building previously occupied by Molslinjen is now used for offices.

**Pakhus77**

Former warehouse currently occupied by padel courts, boxing club, and a café (Pakhus77, n.d.).

Figure 8: Site delimitation.

# Analytical framework

The analysis is structured around three recurring themes that emerged through site visits, mappings, interviews, workshops, and studies of Aarhus Ø and Pier 3.

Urban continuity examines how the area connects to Aarhus C and how the contrasting architectural languages surrounding the pier affect the continuity of the urban fabric.

Livability focuses on the physical and environmental conditions affecting everyday life and how the site performs at a human scale.

Communities investigates the existing social life and local actors at Pier 3 through questions of belonging, participation, and everyday use of the waterfront.

The project operates primarily at an urban and architectural scale. Hydrology is therefore included as a spatial and environmental design parameter rather than as a fully engineered technical solution.

# **Problem statement**

**How can Pier 3 weave the current threshold between Aarhus Ø and the historic city in ways that enhance livability through strategic placemaking?**

# Direction

The problem statement determines the direction of the thesis, and to begin addressing it, we need a broader urban context and history first. This is explored in chapter 2.1 Aarhus.

To address the threshold between Aarhus Ø and the historic city, we first need to look at the spatial relationship between Pier 3 and its surroundings. This is explored in chapter 2.2 Urban continuity.

To enhance livability, we need to examine the current infrastructural conditions of the site, its microclimate, mobility, and existing public life. These aspects are explored in chapter 2.3 Livability.

To explore strategic placemaking, we need to investigate the existing communities, everyday activities, and local identity. This is explored in chapter 2.4 Communities. Together, these analyses establish the framework for the final design proposal, which aims to weave the current threshold between Aarhus Ø and the historic city in ways that enhance livability through strategic placemaking.

# Analysis



02



## 2.1 Aarhus

Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark and is known for being the capital of Jutland. The location on the east coast makes it strategically well-connected to the rest of Denmark through both highways and ferry connections. Aarhus is known as the “City of Smiles” which represents the city’s character and its vibrant cultural scene and urban life (Skjernov, 2017).

*Fig. 9: Denmark, Aarhus Municipality, 3 biggest cities & their connectivity.*



Figure 10: Map of landmarks along the waterfront (1 : 20000).



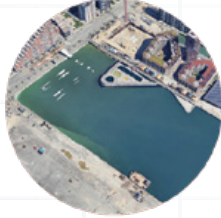
1. Den Permanente



2. Træskibshavn



3. Lighthouse



4. Bassin 7



5. Pier 2



6. Navitas



7. H. Sallings Plads



8. Dokk 1



9. Aarhus Filmby



10. Industry terminal



11. Container port



12. Ferry terminal

## The harbor city

The city's location by the bay has shaped both its identity and development through time. The industrial port has been relocated to a bigger port expansion south of the old harbor. The former industrial port has been transformed into a new urban waterfront with a diverse mosaic of business, culture, housing, recreational areas and public functions, while the active port nearby serves as a reminder of the area's industrial past. The port of Aarhus remains Denmark's largest container port, and the tall container cranes and enormous Maersk ships dominating the landscape can be clearly seen from the waterfront (Port of Aarhus, n.d.).

The project site is located on the threshold of Aarhus Ø, which is a great example of the transformation of a former industrial harbor to a new urban district. Pier 3 still has the old industrial structures, giving evidence of the city's maritime heritage.

Along the entire coastline there are several key elements that all together create a vibrant waterfront with visible traces of its character of being a harbor city.

Figure 11: Pictures of landmarks along the waterfront.

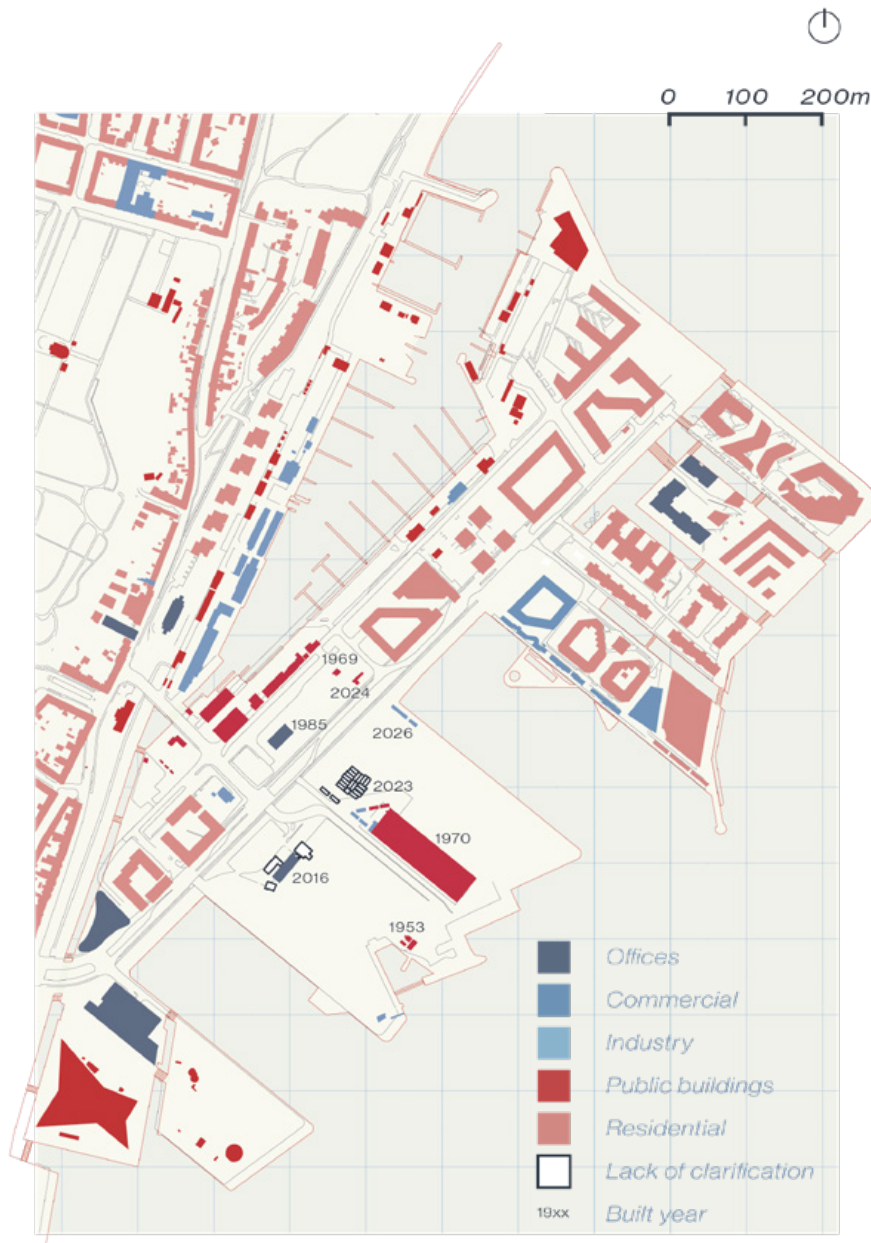


Figure 12: Existing uses map (1 : 6000).

## Existing uses

Pier 3 is an old port zone acting as a middle ground between the redeveloped harbor and the city center. While largely empty, existing buildings host offices and businesses. Most importantly, the site's most active and visible presence is driven by small sports communities, specifically water sports, cycling education, boxing, and crossfit. They are the primary draw bringing people to use the site today.

The surroundings are diverse. To the north is Aarhus Ø, a new residential and commercial district. To the south are recent university and commercial developments. Westward along the canal is a hub of maritime businesses and local clubs (foreninger), leading into the residential Trøjborg neighborhood. This strategic placement gives Pier 3 the potential to become a vital link connecting these educational, maritime, and residential areas.

# The debated district

Aarhus Ø has become a district that people either love or hate. It is a highly debated area that attracts strong opinions, with criticism ranging from the experience of the place itself to its “starchitecture”. The neighborhood is often described as cold, windswept and emotionally detached, with hotel like buildings lining formal urban boulevards (Gehl, 2023). Others argue that it lacks a genuine heart or emotional grounding (Mandrup, 2024).

Professionals regard such debates as healthy and constructive, as it forces urban development to consider how people actually use and experience the city (Rasmussen, 2024).

The discussion surrounding Aarhus Ø is therefore central to the development of Pier 3, ensuring that planning balances architectural ambition with the social qualities needed to create life between the buildings. Furthermore, local stakeholders also contribute to the debate, wishing for Pier 3 not to be developed solely as a residential extension of Aarhus Ø but an active and socially inclusive place supporting communities, movements and public engagement (Bundgaard & Hviid, 2024).



Figure 13: The debated district diagram.

# History

Aarhus has been a trading city since the Viking Age and was originally known as Aros, meaning “mouth of the river” (Jessen, 2025). Since then, the city’s coastline and harbor have undergone substantial transformations driven by successive port expansions and land reclamation, as clearly illustrated in the maps in figure 14.

The first map shows how in 1870 the city remained closely connected to its original coastline, with a small river harbor located at the mouth of Aarhus Å. The 1901 map reflects the impact of industrialization, marked by a significant enlargement of the harbor area and the establishment of new basins and piers as the industrial port began to take shape (Jessen, 2025).

The maps from 1953 to 1980 depict the continued expansion of both the northern and southern harbor areas, as well as the eastward extension of the port into the bay. This period consolidates Aarhus’ position as one of Denmark’s most important commercial ports (Lund , Olesen, Bendsen, & Brøndum, 2019).

The final two maps, from 1993 and the present, illustrate a shift toward urban restructuring in the areas closest to the city. Here, the former industrial harbor begins to lose its original function and is gradually repurposed for urban development (Aarhus Municipality, 2024). The emergence of the new district Aarhus Ø on the former Nordhavn is visible through the expansion of Pier 3 and the construction of the canal system. At the same time, the continued growth of Aarhus’ industrial harbor is evident, extending further out into the bay.



Figure 14: Transition of coastline.

● **16th century**

Aarhus is a major trading hub

● **1855**

Due to the industrial growth a harbor is established

● **1933**

A leisure harbor opens in the northern area



● **1953**

Lodstårnet is built - first of its kind

● **1956**

Container transport is invented



● **1966-1974**

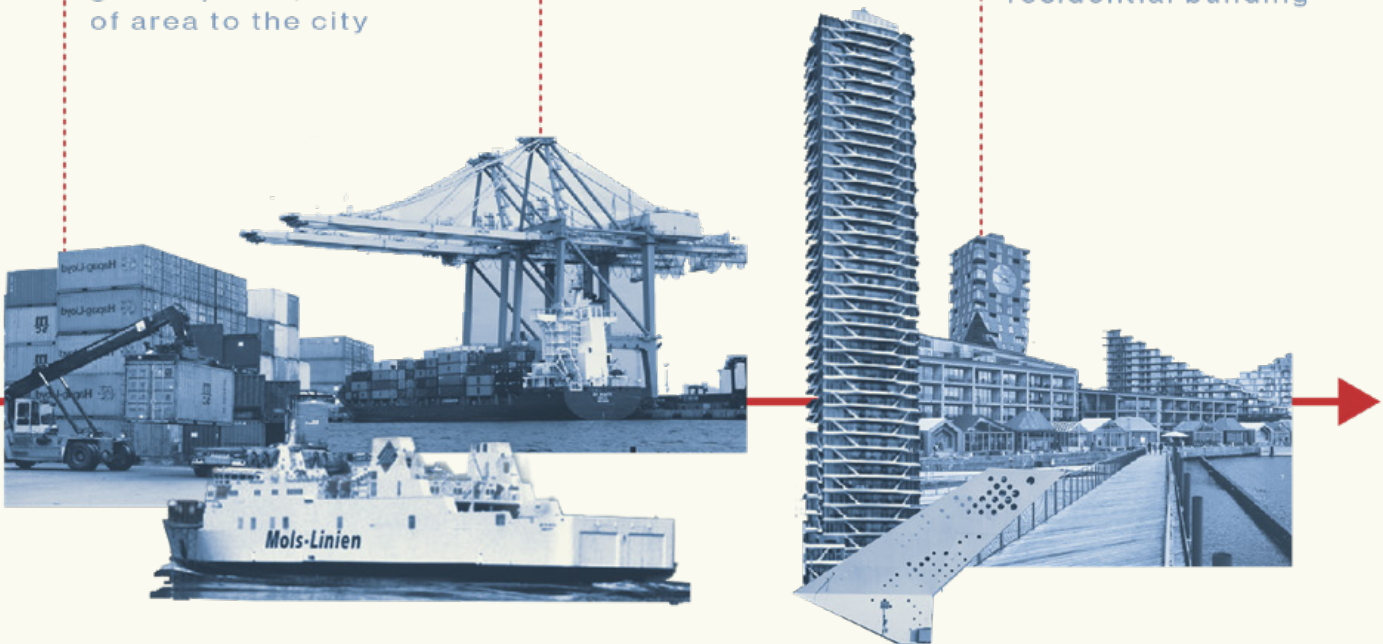
The port expands and a container terminal is established

● **1985**

The Shipping House is built



- **2001**  
The Molslinjen ferry docks at Pier 3
- **2003**  
A development plan for the inner harborfront is approved
- **2005**  
The Port of Aarhus gives up 600,000 m<sup>2</sup> of area to the city
- **2006**  
The container terminal moves to the new eastern harbor
- **2007**  
Construction works begin at Aarhus Ø
- **2012**  
First residents moved into Aarhus Ø
- **2020**  
Molslinjen's ferry dock is relocated
- **2022**  
Lighthouse becomes Denmark's tallest residential building



Information gathered from AarhusWiki (2026), Port of Aarhus (n.d.), & Aarhus Stadsarkiv (2018).

Figure 15: History timeline collage.

# Conclusion

Aarhus is shaped by its harbor identity, and preserving the connection between the city and the waterfront is essential for establishing urban coherence.

The area's existing mix of functions and users should be considered in future development to support a diverse and active urban environment.

Pier 3 should learn from Aarhus Ø by prioritizing familiar and human-scale spaces, inclusivity, and vibrant public life, even if paired with bold architecture,

Aarhus Harbor has continuously evolved throughout history, from industrial infrastructure towards residential and recreational use, creating an opportunity to incorporate its history into the future design of Pier 3.



## 2.2 Urban continuity

Urban continuity is a fundamental aspect of site design, as it shapes how new developments integrate into their surroundings. This is especially relevant at Pier 3, a large open area that is disconnected from both Aarhus Ø and the historic city. For the site to be a successful part of the city, it must be experienced as a natural continuation of the city with coherent spatial connections and transitions. Physical links play a central role here, making it important to design not only the pier itself, but also how it connects back to the city.

*Fig. 16: Urban continuity chapter diagram.*

# Theoretical context

New waterfront developments and large-scale architectural projects have increasingly emerged in former port areas across European cities. These spaces are often characterized by modern aesthetics and high-density housing, despite their rapid introduction into the existing urban fabric. Aarhus Ø is no exception, as the once active industrial dockland has now become home to a variety of residential towers and commercial spaces built along the edge of the sea.

Places like these often challenge traditional urban continuity because newly developed areas lack the gradual historical evolution found in older parts of the city. While this rapid development allows for high-density and large building volumes, it creates uncertainty in establishing long-term, cohesive street life. In historical settings, morphological continuity anchors a neighborhood. "It contains three distinct complexes of plan elements: (i) streets and their arrangement in a street-system; (ii) plots and their aggregation in street-blocks; and (iii) buildings or, more precisely, their block-plans" (Conzen, 1960, p. 5). This slow layering of streets and plots provides a stable, conservative framework. Aarhus Ø lacks this gradual growth, making it essential to deliberately design physical spaces that mimic organic continuity.

Policy and physical design play a crucial role in enabling such places to flourish. The physical structure of streets and blocks therefore plays a central role in

creating urban vitality. "Most blocks must be short; that is, streets and opportunities to turn corners must be frequent" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 178). Short blocks create a highly permeable pedestrian network, preventing the isolation often caused by the massive, impermeable super-blocks frequently found in modern dockland developments.

Equally important is the presence of a strong human scale and active public spaces. While the architecture in Aarhus Ø may be visually striking, its success at ground level depends on everyday public life. "Life takes place on foot" (Gehl, *Life between buildings: Using public space*, 2011, p. 72). Walkability dictates whether a district feels alive or deserted. To achieve this, the entire planning hierarchy must be inverted. "The widespread practice of planning from above and outside must be replaced with new planning procedures from below and inside, following the principle: first life, then space, then buildings" (Gehl, *Cities for People*, 2010, p. 198).

In conclusion, achieving this balance requires rethinking density in these coastal zones. "The urban pattern of enclosed blocks with independent, joined-up, and layered buildings can accommodate density and a diversity of uses while maintaining the human scale" (Sim, 2019, p. 86). Joined-up buildings can shelter public spaces from the harsh winds of Aarhus Ø, helping create a more continuous neighbourhood that supports everyday life.

# Thomas B. Thriges Gade



The transformation of Thomas B. Thriges Gade is used as a case study to show how large-scale redevelopment can strengthen urban continuity instead of disrupting it. Similar to Aarhus Ø, the project transforms an area previously dominated by infrastructure into a mixed-use district. However, while many contemporary developments struggle with isolation, large building volumes, and fragmented public life, Thomas B. Thriges Gade focuses on reconnecting surrounding neighbourhoods and creating continuity with the existing city.

For decades, Thomas B. Thriges Gade acted as a physical barrier through central Odense. The project material explains how “Not only did one of Denmark’s most heavily trafficked streets have to be closed to cars, but large buildings, public spaces, parking basements, and a light rail system also had to be constructed” (Niemann-Christensen, 2024, p. 16, translated from Danish). Instead of functioning as a traffic corridor, the area was transformed into a permeable neighbourhood consisting of streets, public spaces, pedestrian routes, and development plots. The redevelopment replaces a large infrastructural barrier with a fine-grained urban network that encourages movement through the district.

The project also demonstrates how environmental comfort contributes to urban continuity and public life. “More than 100 trees have been planted in the area [...]. In addition, green edge zones, roofs, and facades have been created, supporting the city’s green profile” (Niemann-Christensen, 2024, p. 16, translated from Danish). These landscape elements soften the dense urban structure while improving microclimate conditions and the overall pedestrian experience. Public space therefore becomes an integrated part of everyday urban life rather than leftover space between roads.

Although the district introduces contemporary architecture and new development, the project attempts to create continuity with Odense’s historical identity. “The paving was chosen to resemble cobblestones, creating a clear reference to Odense’s medieval past” (Niemann-Christensen, 2024, p. 17, translated from Danish). The article further describes the project as an attempt to strengthen cohesion and reconnect urban areas previously divided by infrastructure.

The project demonstrates how permeability, public life, and human-scale public spaces can help large contemporary developments create stronger urban continuity and support a more cohesive everyday experience.

Figure 17: Photos of Thomas B. Thriges Gade.



1

Trøjborg

Træskibshavn

2

Universitets  
Byen

3

Aarhus Ø

Øgaderne

4

Indre  
Aarhus Ø

Vestergade &  
Mølleparken

Latiner-  
kvarteret

5

Ceres  
Byen

Indre  
By

6

8

Aarhus K

Banegårds-  
kvarteret

7

Sydhavn

9

Frederiksbjerg &  
Langenæs

0 500 1000m



# Urban context

The distinct neighbourhoods of inner Aarhus were analyzed to understand the spatial qualities shaping the city's identity and to inform the connection between Aarhus Ø and the rest of the city. The map shows the division of these areas.

Trøjborg is known as a "village within the city," centered around its main shopping street and surrounded by green areas such as Nordre Kirkegård and Risskov. The neighborhood features villas and low-rise blocks.

Aarhus University is built around open green landscapes, and the characteristic yellow-brick buildings are an architectural landmark.

Øgadekvarteret is an attractive residential area with historic townhouses, courtyard blocks and narrow cobblestone streets. Its sloping terrain creates a calm atmosphere.

The Latin Quarter is one of the oldest parts of Aarhus, with narrow streets, low historic buildings and a lively environment filled with cafés, bars, shops, and outdoor seating.

Vestergade and Mølleparken feature old merchant houses, cobblestone streets, older

apartment buildings and newer industrial structures. The area is characterised by cafés, shops and cultural activity, with Botanisk Have, Mølleparken and Vesterbro Torv as green focal points. The Brabrand path along Aarhus Å begins here.

Inner City is the historic centre with gathering spaces at Store Torv and Lille Torv by the Cathedral. The area is dominated by retail and chain stores, and with cafés and restaurants along the river.

The Station District is a busy transport hub connecting Aarhus to the rest of Denmark via trains, light rail and buses. It is filled with shops, restaurants and businesses.

Aarhus K is the city's creative and cultural district, home to ARoS, Musikhuset, a theatre, Institut for X and Godsbanen. Raw industrial architecture, railway tracks and containers shape the urban environment.

Sydhavnen is a former industrial area undergoing rapid development, blending culture and business close to the harbor. Frederiksbjerg and Langenæs are dense residential districts with a lively shopping street. Ingerslevs Boulevard serves as a parking area on weekdays but transforms into a popular market space on weekends.

Træskibshavn combines commercial activity, leisure and community life, closely connected to the maritime environment.

Aarhus Ø is a newly developed waterfront district, with the inner part still under construction.

Ceresbyen is a modern, dense neighbourhood with housing, shops, businesses and VIA University College. The area features contemporary buildings and green spaces along the river.



Figure 18: The different districts near the harborfront (1 : 20000).

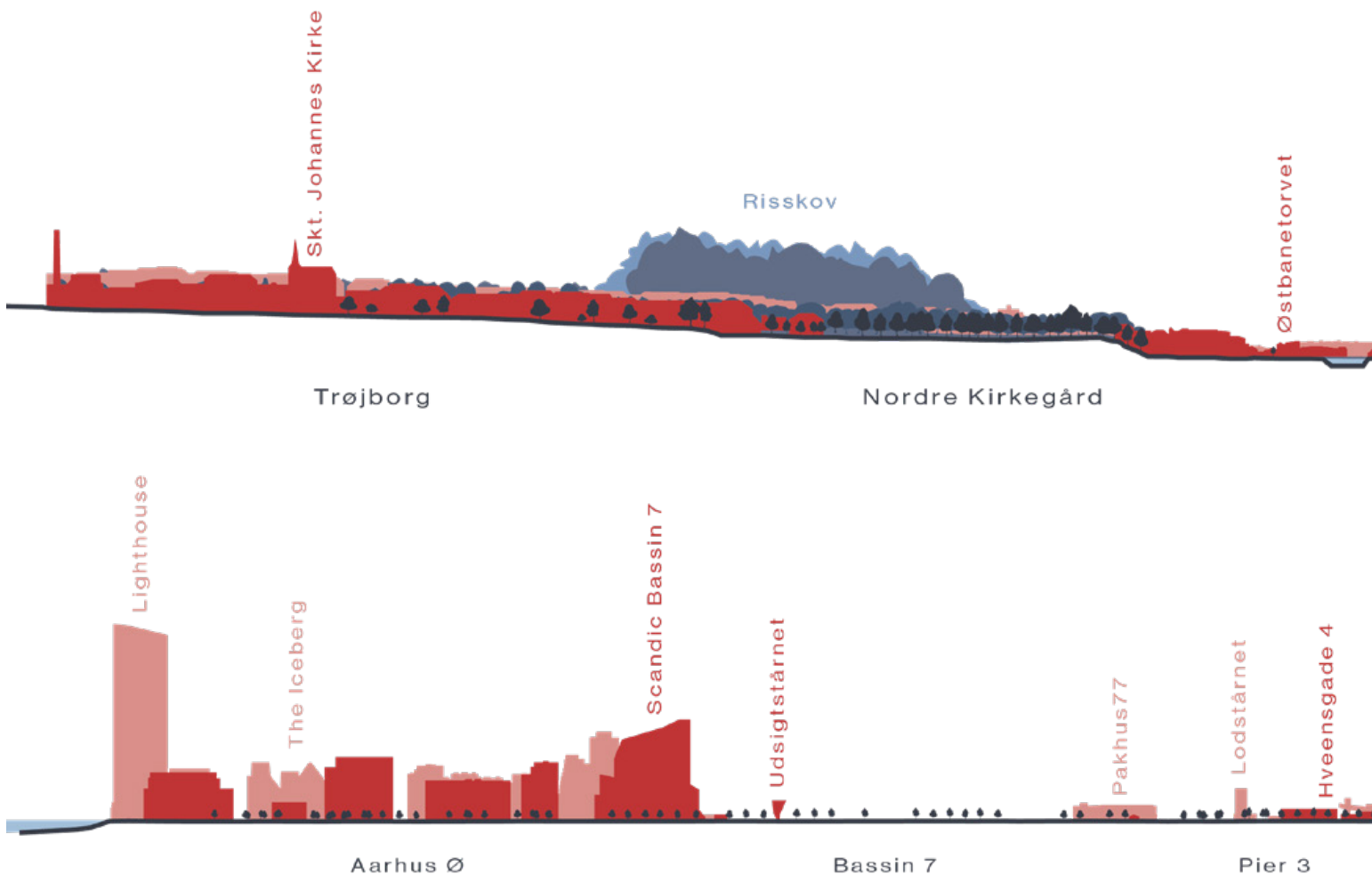
# Context sections

The layered sections show the wider context around Pier 3 and how the site sits between very different parts of Aarhus. Since both foreground and background elements are visible, the sections reveal not only the immediate surroundings but also the skyline, terrain, and spatial relationships within the site's context.

Section A-a shows the transition between Trøjborg, Nordre Kirkegård, and Aarhus Ø. The section highlights the contrast between lower-scale and more topographically shaped urban fabric of Trøjborg and the flat, large-scale development of Aarhus Ø. Trees

and terrain elevations dominate the older neighborhood, while Aarhus Ø is denser and more vertical.

Section B-b focuses on the relationship between Aarhus Ø and the historic city center. The section illustrates the difference in scale and architectural character between the two areas. Aarhus Ø is characterized by large building volumes, isolated high-rises Denmark's tallest building, The Lighthouse, while Aarhus C has a denser and more continuous urban structure dominated by the cathedral. Pier 3 sits between these contrasting urban conditions.



- Buildings in foreground
- Buildings in background
- Terrain cut
- Terrain in background
- Water
- Aa Neighbourhoods / Places
- Aa Landmarks
- Trees in foreground
- Trees in background

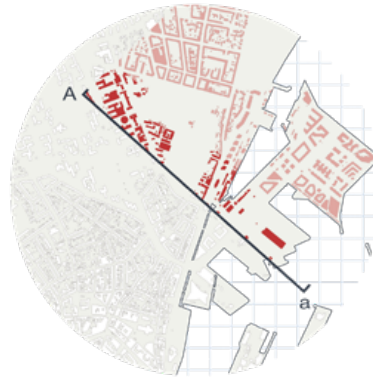


Figure 19:  
Section A-a location diagram.

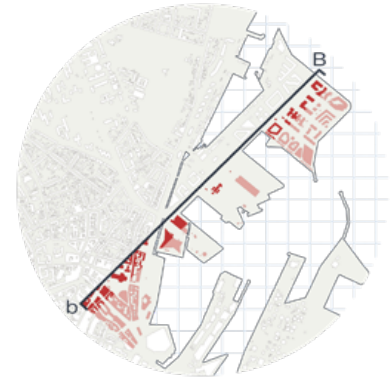


Figure 20:  
Section B-b location diagram.

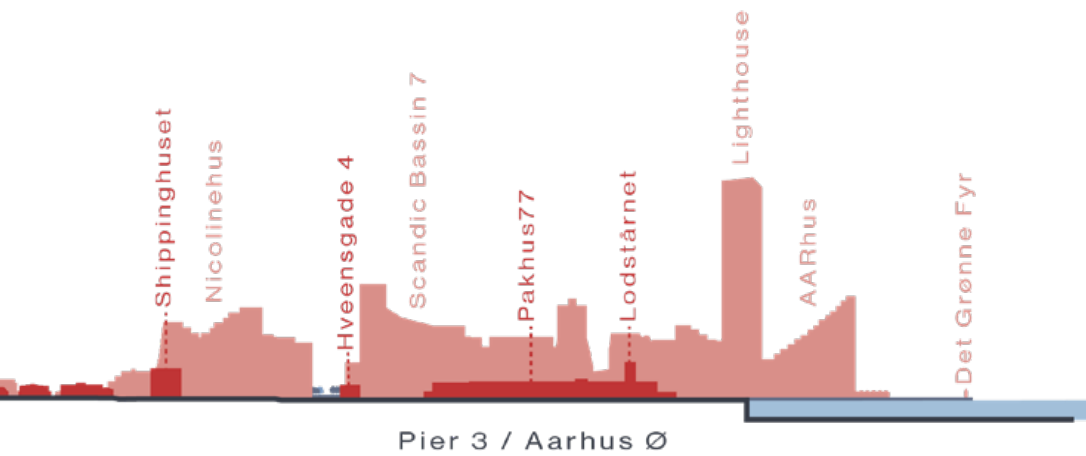


Figure 21: Section A-a - Context relations (1 : 5000).

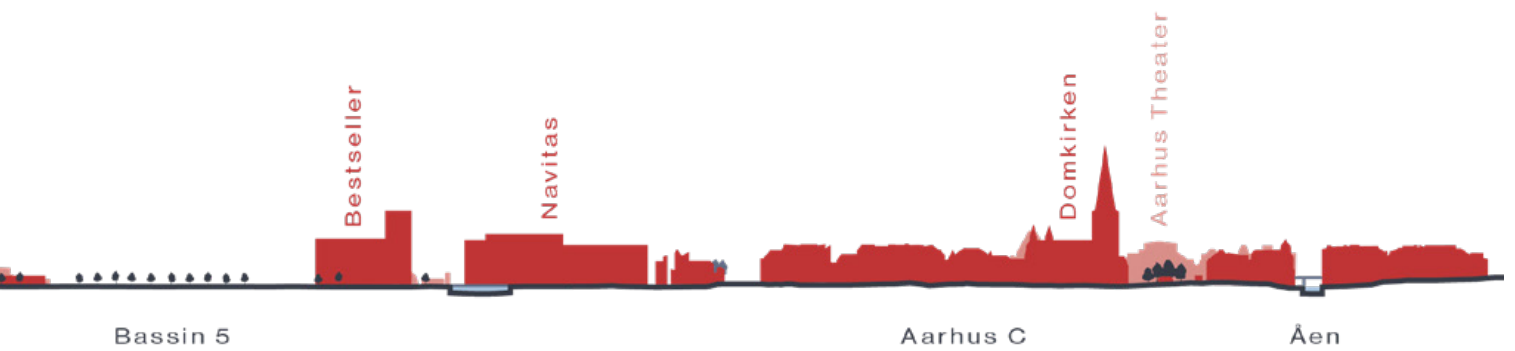


Figure 22: Section B-b - Context relations (1 : 5000).

# Phenomenology

## Theoretical context

Phenomenology is important in urban design because it emphasizes how people experience space rather than viewing the city only as a physical object.

Lynch argues that “nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences” (Lynch, 1960, p. 1), highlighting how urban environments are understood through perception and memory.

Ingold adds that “the world becomes a meaningful place for people through being lived in, rather than through having been constructed along the lines of some formal design”, emphasizing that the way people inhabit and use a space shapes its meaning over time (Ingold, 2000, p. 168).

Gehl further illustrates this by noting that “life between buildings comprises the entire spectrum of activities, which combine to make communal spaces in cities and residential areas meaningful and attractive” (Gehl, *Life between buildings: Using public space*, 2011, p. 14). Everyday life and social interaction therefore play a central role in creating vibrant urban environments.

Phenomenology shifts the focus of urban design from abstract planning towards lived experiences. By considering how spaces are perceived, used, and remembered, and by rooting design in human experience, phenomenology supports the creation of urban environments that foster atmosphere, participation, and a strong sense of belonging.

From a phenomenological perspective, understanding Pier 3 requires observing how the site is perceived and experienced in everyday life. The following analyses explore

legibility, serial vision, and atmosphere to understand how movement, spatial sequences, and sensory qualities shape the experience of the site.

## Legibility



Figure 23: Legibility map (1 : 10000)

A legibility analysis identifies how an urban environment is perceived, navigated, and remembered. As Kevin Lynch states, legibility is "the ease with which its parts can be recognized and can be organized into a coherent pattern" (Lynch, 1960, pp. 2-3). The mapped area is structured through five physical elements: districts, edges, paths, nodes, and landmarks.

The spatial organization is anchored by two primary districts: Pier 3 and Aarhus Ø. These zones are distinctly separated and defined by major and minor edges that trace the waterfront and the structural perimeters, establishing hard boundaries between the

development and the water.

Movement is dictated by a network of major paths that serve as primary longitudinal connectors across the site. Where these major paths intersect, major nodes form critical points of transfer and spatial convergence. A secondary system of minor paths and minor nodes distributes local movement deeper into the districts.

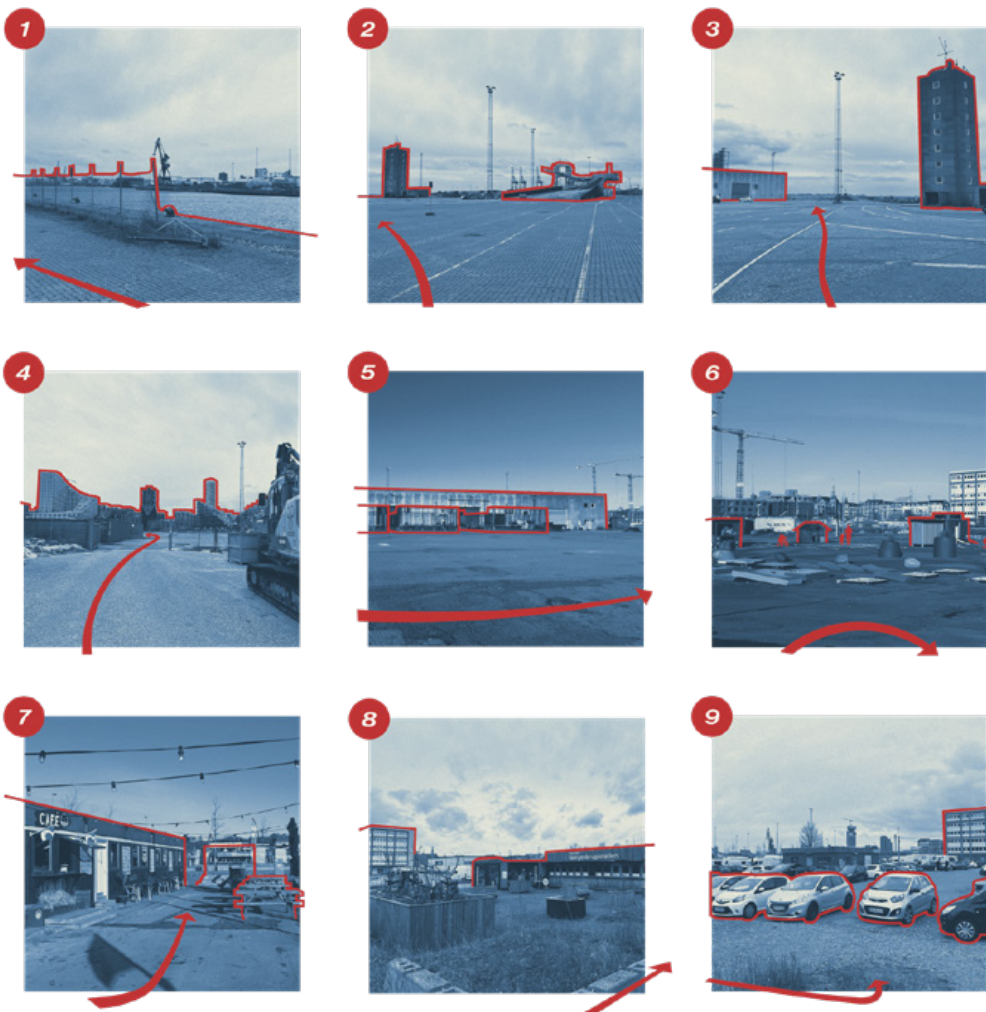
Visual orientation relies heavily on highly visible reference points. Lighthouse, Kampanilen, Aarhus, and Lodstårnet act as major landmarks, dominating the area and guiding regional navigation. Scattered minor landmarks provide further support for wayfinding in the entire area.

## Serial vision

Introduced by Gordon Cullen (1961), the method of serial vision examines a site as a sequence of spaces experienced in motion, helping identify key visual cues for intuitive wayfinding. The analysis demonstrates how first impressions and spatial sequences strongly influence navigation and overall user experience. Three primary routes were analysed.

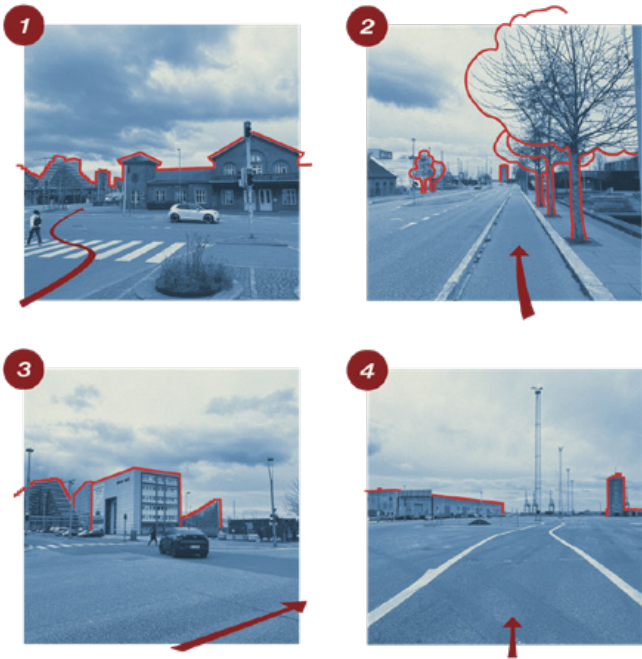


Figure 24: Serial vision routes



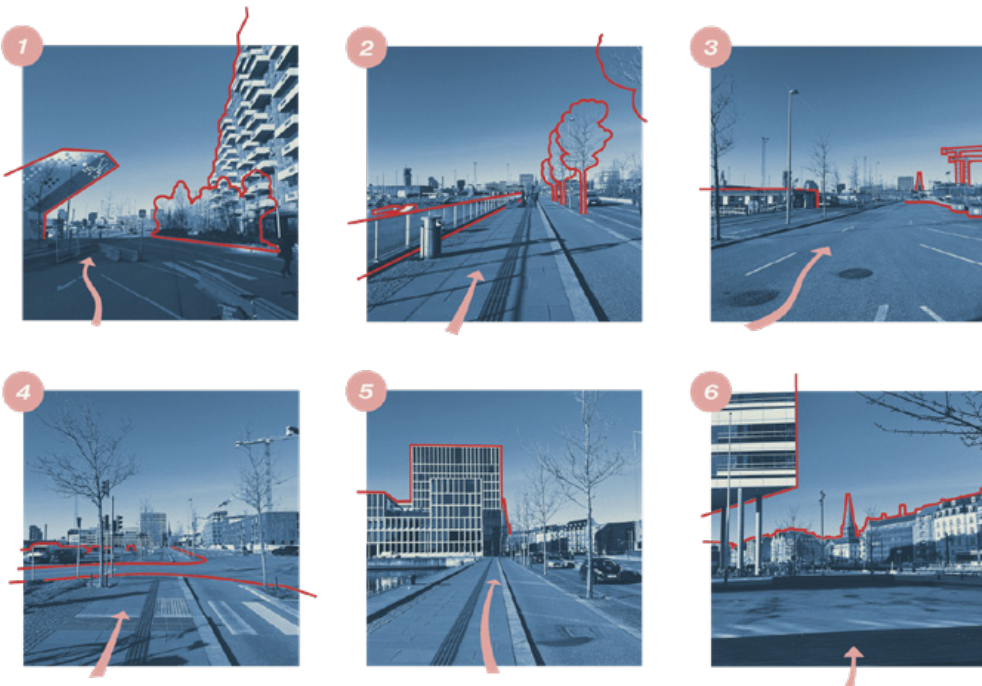
Route A explores the site's wayfinding and visual anchors, entering Pier 3 from the south-west. The industrial character is reinforced by obstructed access to the waterfront and the remnants of the old ferry ramp. Lodstårnet, Pakhus77 and the Aarhus Ø skyline act as clearly defined visual cues along the route. The sequence continues through Cykeløen and the recently relocated water sports complex before ending around Shippinghuset, where the local recycling station is located, while the remaining unoccupied area is largely used for car parking.

Figure 25: Serial vision route A.



Route B begins at Østbanetorvet, revealing the architectural contrast between Trøjborg and Aarhus Ø. It passes by Shipping Huset before ending at the vast and largely empty parking area at Pier 3.

Figure 26: Serial vision route B.



Route C starts near Bassin7 and the experimental pocket park, proceeding towards Aarhus Watersports Complex and an underused section of Bernhardt Jensens Blvd. It then crosses the main entrance of Pier 3 and heads towards Aarhus C, once again showing the difference in architecture and building scale between Aarhus Ø and the historic city center.

Figure 27: Serial vision route C.

## Atmosphere & Furniture

“To some extent the character of a place is a function of time; it changes with the seasons, the course of the day and the weather, factors which above all determine different conditions of light.” (Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

The three following collages were made with photos taken in February (snow conditions), March (cloudy conditions) and April (sunny conditions). The collages show the site’s roughness and maritime spirit. The open, empty, and windy feeling is almost the same throughout the site, with the exception where the clubs have established their spaces. There is almost no urban furniture present, with a few exceptions at the communities’ areas.

When it snows it feels like we are out in nature since all we can see is the snow and the water edge, but once it is gone and the asphalt becomes visible the area feels quite industrial. Water accumulates easily across the site

due to the poor condition of the ground, contributing to a wet and undermaintained atmosphere.

Some of the community elements are colorful and vibrant, drawing attention to the pier, which otherwise feels monotonous and dull. Overall, the area has an industrial, rough, and grey character, contrasted by moments of color and activity introduced by the local communities.

In this context, the site’s spirit emerges from its raw and layered atmosphere, an informal space shaped by a community that values it. It is defined by contrasts: nature and industry, stillness and activity, isolation and connection. Together, these qualities give a strong sense of authenticity. As Böhme (2017) notes, “Atmospheres fill spaces; they emanate from things, constellations of things, and persons.”



Figure 28: Collage during snow conditions.



Figure 29: Collage during foggy conditions.



Figure 30: Collage during sunny conditions.

# Conclusion

Aarhus Ø should feel like a natural extension of central Aarhus. Pier 3 should combine modern development with the spatial qualities and atmosphere of the historic city, rather than functioning as an isolated district.

Narrow streets and intimate public spaces should be prioritized to create a pedestrian-friendly and welcoming neighbourhood.

Wayfinding should be intuitive through clear sightlines, direct connections, and active street corners that naturally guide movement.

The raw maritime character of the harbor should be preserved but softened through greenery, wind protection, and public seating that support year-round use.



## 2.3 Livability

The future design of Pier 3 should support an environment where everyday life can thrive. Rather than prioritizing density alone, the focus must be on human-scale spaces, comfortable microclimates, and opportunities for daily social interaction. Green spaces, recreational areas, and wind protection create a foundation for year-round outdoor use and public life. A successful design should therefore create a safe, vibrant, and welcoming environment that supports both physical comfort and community well-being.

*Fig. 31: Livability chapter diagram.*

# Theoretical context

Urban livability relates to how the urban framework supports the human dimension of a city. In newly developed districts like Aarhus Ø, buildings are often very large in scale and height, making the experience at eye level increasingly important. Jan Gehl argues that “the challenge is to build splendid cities at eye height with tall buildings rising above the beautiful lower stories” (Gehl, *Cities for People*, 2010, p. 59), emphasizing that the ground floor and pedestrian experience are essential for everyday urban life.

A livable city must also support walkability. If people cannot move comfortably and safely on foot, opportunities for social interaction and community contact are reduced. Jeff Speck defines the conditions for successful walkability by stating that “the general theory of walkability explains how, to be favored, a walk has to satisfy four main conditions: it must be useful, safe, comfortable, and interesting” (Speck, 2012, p. 10). In waterfront districts such as Aarhus Ø, this requires mixed functions, accessible pathways, and protection from strong winds.

The quality of the physical environment directly influences how people use public space. Gehl explains that “when outdoor areas are of high quality, necessary activities take place with approximately the same frequency - though they clearly tend to take a longer time, because the physical conditions are better. In

addition, however, a wide range of optional activities will also occur because place and situation now invite people to stop, sit, eat, play, and so on” (Gehl, *Life between buildings: Using public space*, 2011, p. 11). Well-designed public spaces therefore encourage longer stays, social interaction, and improve overall livability.

Creating livable urban environments often relies on simple design interventions rather than complex technological systems. David Sim argues that “rather than looking to complex new technologies to solve the challenges of increasing urbanization, we can instead look to simple, small-scale, low-tech, low-cost, human-centered, gentle solutions that help make urban life easier, more attractive, and more comfortable” (Sim, 2019, p. 4). Elements such as small gardens, varied seating, and active frontages can therefore strengthen everyday social life.

Finally, the design of a city plays a central role in shaping social trust and collective well-being. Charles Montgomery notes that “of all of these, the most important psychological effect of the city is the way in which it moderates our relationships with other people” (Montgomery, 2013, p. 36). Livability is therefore not only about comfort and accessibility, but also creating environments that foster social connection, trust, and a stronger sense of community.

# Vauban district

Livability theory focuses on creating urban spaces that support human well-being, prioritizing people over infrastructure. The Vauban district in Freiburg, Germany is used as a case study to show how these ideas can be implemented in practice.

## **Mobility and traffic calming**

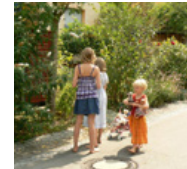
Livability means designing neighborhoods for people rather than cars. In Vauban, traffic rules fundamentally shape the character of the public realm. "The speed limit on the district's main street is 30 kilometers per hour [...], and in residential areas it is limited to 'walking speeds' of [approximately 5 kilometers] per hour" (Fraker, 2013, p. 101). Slowing down vehicles creates a calmer and safer environment, allowing pedestrians to reclaim the street as a public space.

## **Social connection**

When streets are no longer dominated by fast-moving traffic, they can function as spaces for everyday social interaction. "These streets often function as extended front porches and are frequently used as places for neighbours to socialise" (Knox, 2012, p. 258). This spatial configuration encourages informal encounters, builds community trust, and strengthens social relationships between residents. "The overall result is something quite unusual in contemporary residential districts: a sense of vitality that comes from the happy sounds of young children running around at play" (Knox, 2012, p. 258). The ability for children to safely occupy public spaces is an indicator of a livable and socially secure environment.

## **Green environments**

Nature is a core part of creating livable urban environments. The quality of public life depends not only on buildings, but also on the surrounding landscape and environmental conditions. "Given this rigidly functional and somehow neutral urbanism, the area's living



quality heavily depends on the aesthetic quality of the landscaping concept" (Firley, 2013, p. 8). Plants, trees, and water trenches soften the dense urban structure and improve comfort. "The overwhelming sense is that this urban neighborhood, as defined by its density, mixed use, and transit orientation, has become a multiple-level park" (Fraker, 2013, p. 105). By integrating greenery directly into the urban fabric, Vauban demonstrates how dense development can coexist with strong environmental and social qualities.

The success of Vauban demonstrates that livability is achievable when urban design prioritizes human experience. By intentionally restricting traffic, reclaiming streets for daily social life, and weaving nature into the residential environment, the district transforms how residents experience everyday urban life. Vauban serves as a practical example of how planning strategies can create safe, vibrant, and socially connected communities.

Figure 32: Photos of Vauban district.











# Infrastructure

Infrastructure analysis exposes how a site functions. It maps the routes that dictate how people move through and use the space every day.

The main road, Skovvejen, acts as a primary arterial connection. Located on the border between Aarhus Ø and the old city center, it serves as one of the most important traffic corridors in the city. To manage this heavy flow, proper bike lanes are strategically located where car traffic is most intense, providing necessary separation for cyclists.

A large amount of space in and around Pier 3 is car oriented. There is a high concentration of parking areas throughout Aarhus Ø, encompassing both expansive street parking and parking houses. Despite the dominance of vehicle infrastructure, the site benefits from nearby public transport. The closest tram stop, Østbanetorvet, is located significantly closer to Pier 3 than to the rest of the buildings situated further out in Aarhus Ø.

Soft infrastructure is supported by pedestrian pathways distributed throughout the area. Most of these paths are in good condition, with a few exceptions where accessibility is limited. Additionally, rental bike stations are currently concentrated in northern Aarhus Ø. This bike station network might naturally expand into the site alongside the future development of Pier 3. Currently, since Pier 3 remains a vast open area, movement is largely unrestricted, making it possible to walk, bike, or drive freely across the site.

-  Main Road
-  Local Road
-  Rail tracks
-  Busstop
-  Tramstop
-  Parking lots
-  Rental Bike
-  Bike lanes
-  Pathways
-  Construction area

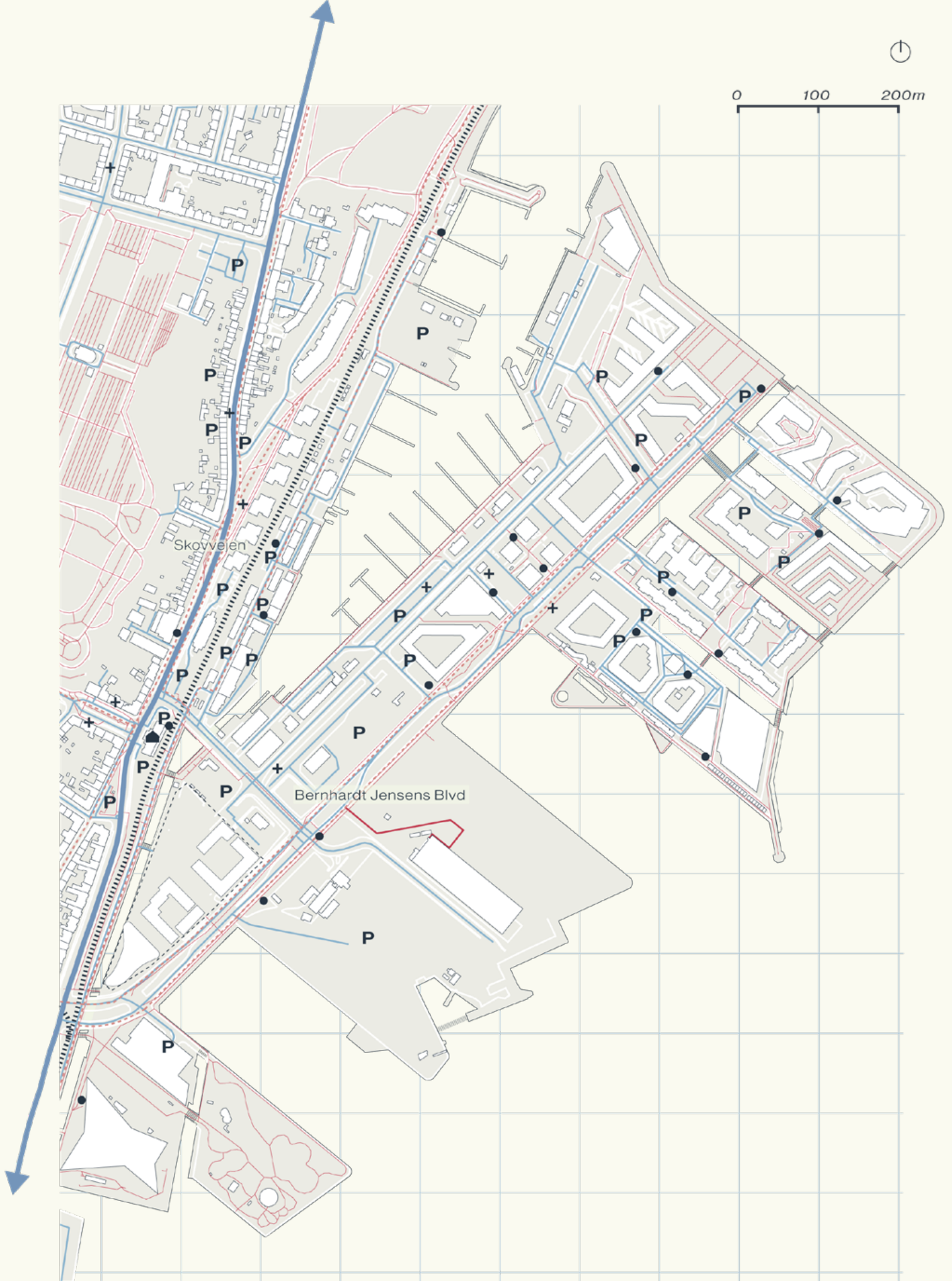


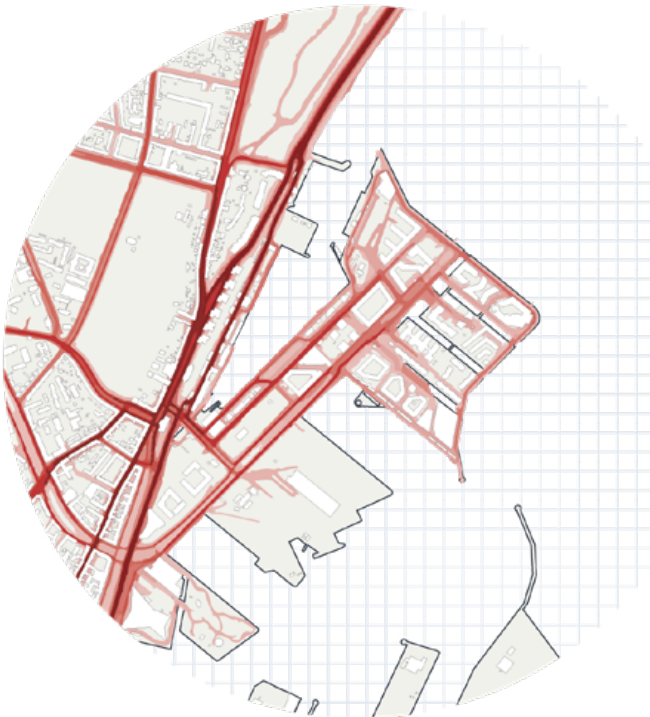
Figure 33: Hard & Soft infrastructure map (1: 6000)

# Movement patterns



## Walking & Running

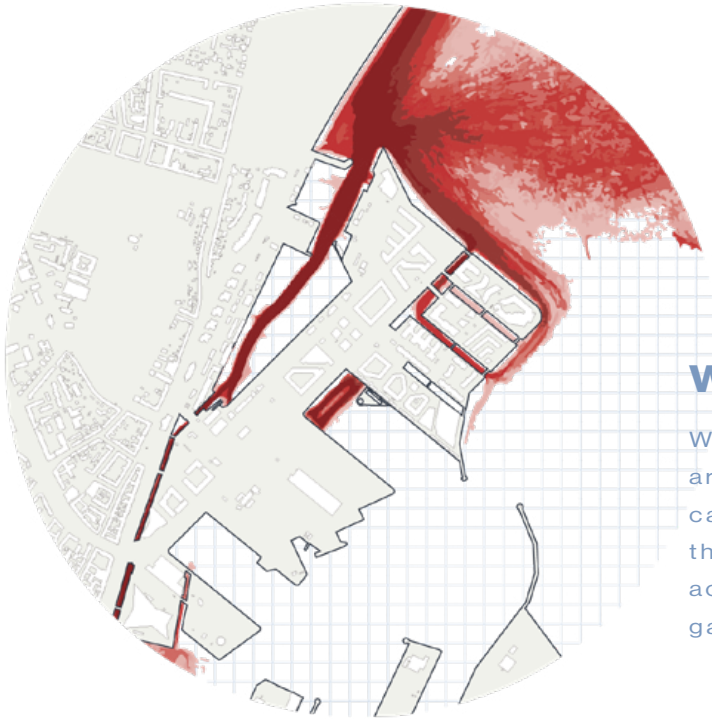
Walking and running activity is concentrated along the waterfront promenades and edges of Aarhus Ø. Almost no activity is visible at Pier 3, but the high usage of Bernardt Jensens Blvd creates potential for continuous recreational routes through the site. Data gathered from Strava (Strava, n.d.).



## Cycling

The cycling pattern follows the main infrastructure corridors connecting Aarhus Ø with Aarhus C and to the north towards Risskov. Pier 3 currently functions as a transitional area within this larger cycling network. Data gathered from Strava (Strava, n.d.).

Fig. 34-35 from top to bottom:  
Walking & running pattern; Cycling pattern.



## Water sports

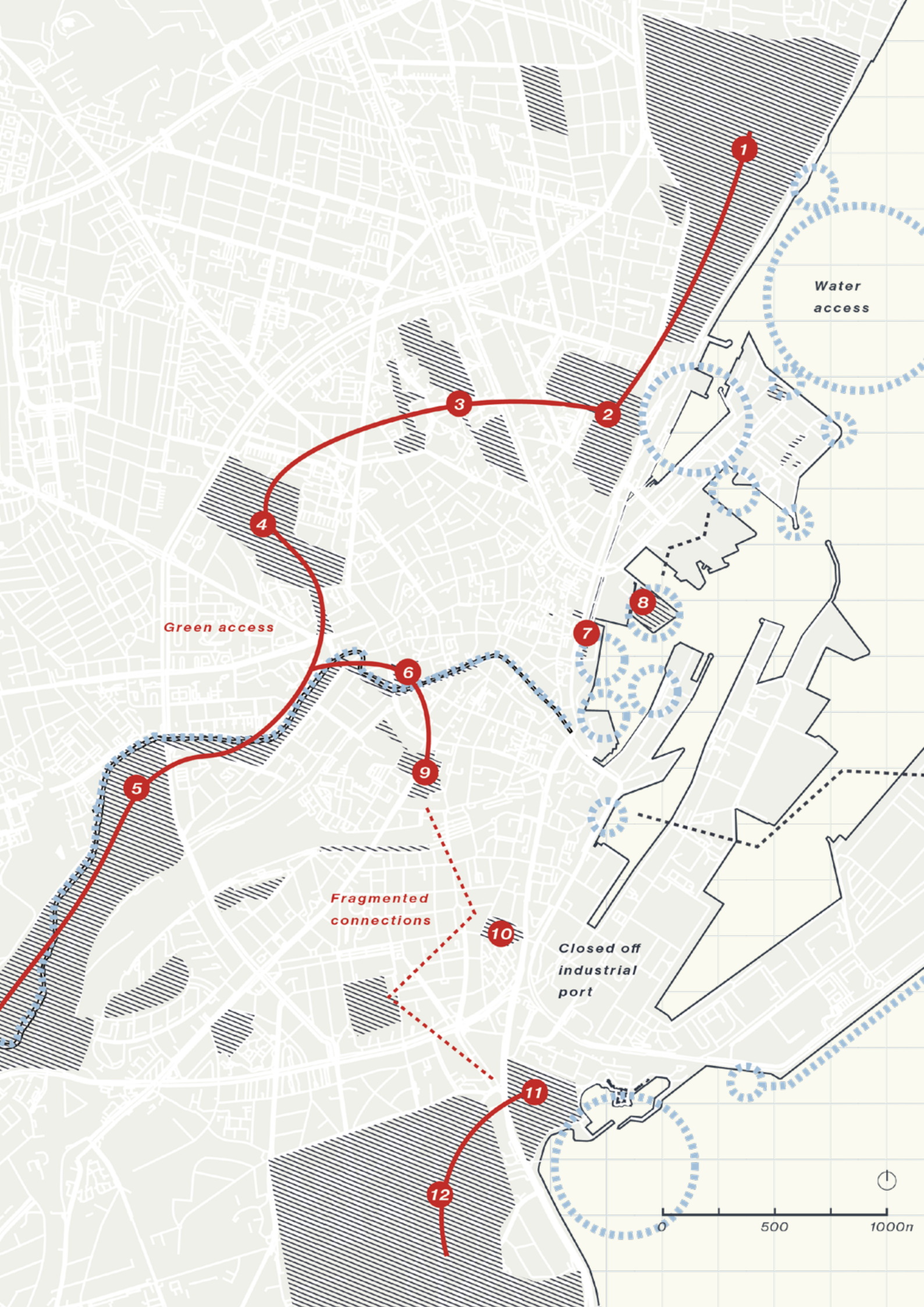
Water sport activities are mainly located around Bassin 7 and at the nearby marina and canals of Aarhus Ø. The diagram highlights the strong relationship between recreational activity and direct access to the water. Data gathered from Strava (Strava, n.d.).



## Car traffic

Car traffic is concentrated along Skovvejen and Bernhardt Jensens Boulevard, which act as the primary vehicular connections through the area. Limited traffic activity is registered at Pier 3 itself. Data gathered from Waze (Waze, n.d.).

Fig. 36-37 from top to bottom:  
Water sports pattern; Car traffic pattern.



Water access

Green access

Fragmented connections

Closed off industrial port

0 500 1000m




# Recreational connections

Aarhus's location by the sea, together with the forests north and south of the city, forms strong recreational elements. Furthermore, Aarhus Å plays a central role in the cityscape, connecting several green areas through its route from the bay to Brabrand Lake west of Aarhus. The stream plays an important role in the city's connection to and experience of the water.

From a broader perspective, the green network within the inner city is somewhat fragmented. There is significant potential to improve this by introducing more greenery into urban spaces, especially at the project site and throughout Aarhus Ø.

The waterfront continues to develop as new projects are built along the former harbor areas and supported by established waterfront activities. Located directly at the waterfront, Pier 3 has strong potential to connect both green and blue elements within the site.



-  Parks and forests
-  Water connections
-  Shoreline

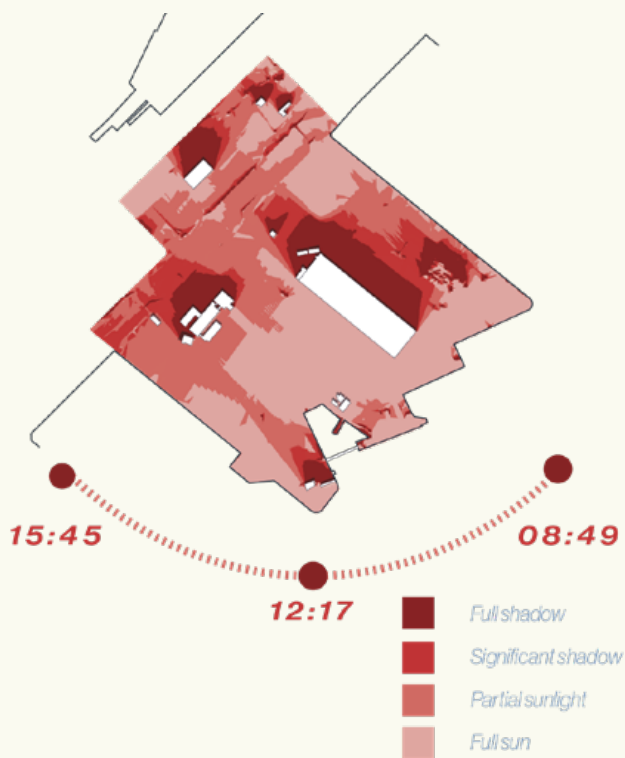
## Green areas

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>1</b> Risskov             | <b>5</b> Brabrandstien                            |
| <b>2</b> Nordre Kirkegård    | <b>6</b> Mølleparken                              |
| <b>3</b> Universitets Parken | <b>7</b> Herman Sallings Plads & Skt. Olufs Plads |
| <b>4</b> Den Botaniske Have  | <b>8</b> Pier 2                                   |
|                              | <b>9</b> Musikhusparken                           |
|                              | <b>10</b> Skanseparken                            |
|                              | <b>11</b> Tangkroen                               |
|                              | <b>12</b> Marselisborg Skov                       |

Figure 38: Recreational connections map (1:20000).

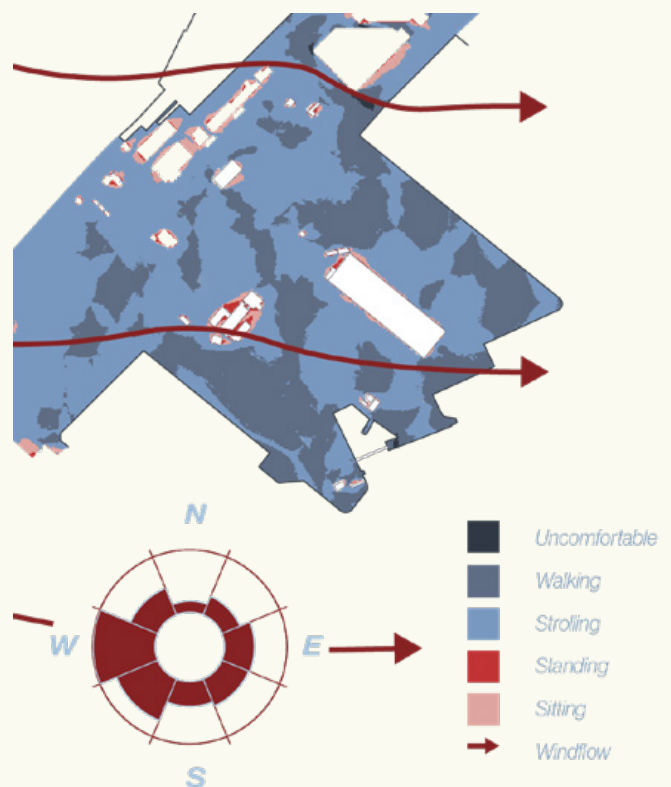
# Microclimate

Microclimate analysis is used to identify the site's qualities and challenges. The data is collected from Autodesk Forma (Autodesk, n.d.), ScalgoLive (Scalgo, n.d.) and the Urban Heat app (UrbanHeat.app, n.d.). The area is likely affected by soil contamination, which fits with the site's former use as an industrial harbor (Appendix B).



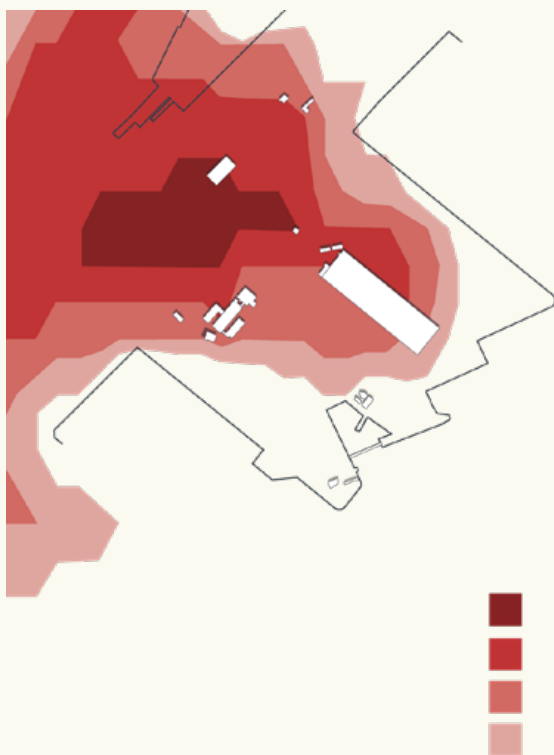
## Sun hours - winter

Pier 3 receives significant sunlight due to its waterfront location and open surroundings. The area is exposed to sunlight for most of the day throughout the year, as also shown in the solstice and equinox maps in appendix B. Pakhus77 and Shipping Huset create the primary shaded areas on the site. As a result, the south and east-facing waterfronts of Pier 3 have strong potential as attractive outdoor spaces.



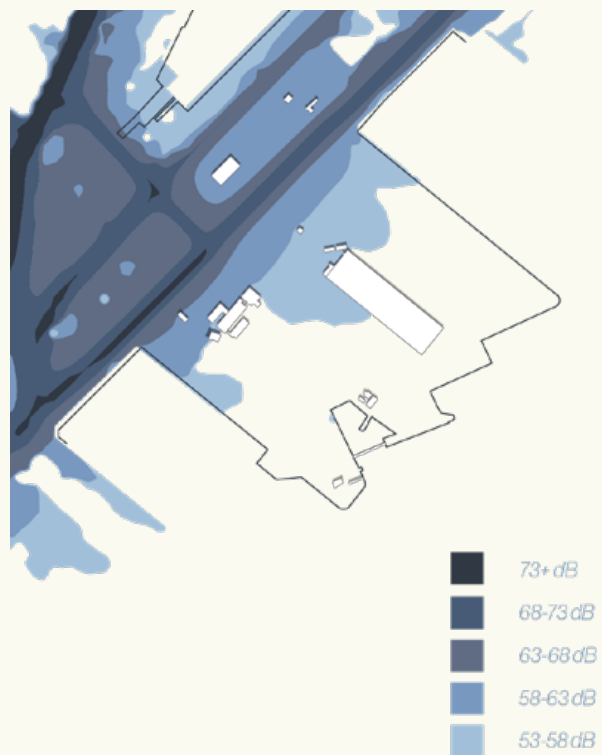
## Wind

The area is highly exposed to wind, particularly from the west and partially from the sea as shown on the wind rose. These conditions often create discomfort, making the area primarily suitable for walking and short stays rather than prolonged outdoor use. As a result, wind channeled between tall buildings can create strong tunnel effects. Wind-protective design strategies should therefore play a central role in the planning of comfortable and usable outdoor spaces.



## Urban heat island

Urban heat islands occur when dense urban structures, heat-absorbing materials, and limited vegetation cause rising surface temperatures. (Phelan, et al., 2015) The amount of asphalt at Pier 3, combined with the lack of vegetation and ground permeability, helps explain the urban heat island effect in the area.



## Noise

The area is affected by traffic noise, particularly in the south-western part where the main entrance towards Aarhus Ø is located. Once construction work at inner Aarhus Ø is finished, noise levels are expected to decrease. However, Bernhard Jensens Boulevard will still require noise mitigation measures.

Fig. 39-42 from left to right: Winter solstice and shadows; Wind comfort & wind rose; Urban heat island; Noise pollution.

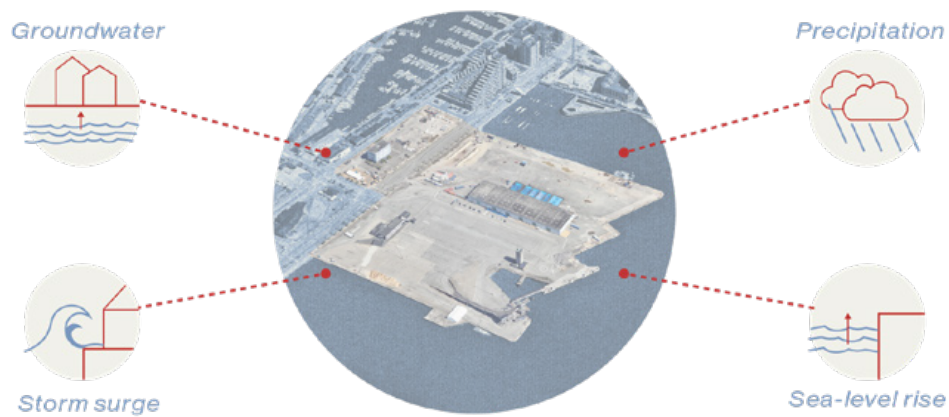


Figure 43: Hydrological conditions diagram.

# Hydrology

The water dynamics at Pier 3 are driven by a combination of marine and inland forces as shown in the figure 43. The site is affected by several overlapping conditions, including sea level rise, storm surges, surface runoff, and rising groundwater levels. At the same time, the low elevation of the site makes it particularly vulnerable to water accumulation during heavy rainfall and extreme weather events. Together, these conditions create hydrological challenges that require adaptive strategies.

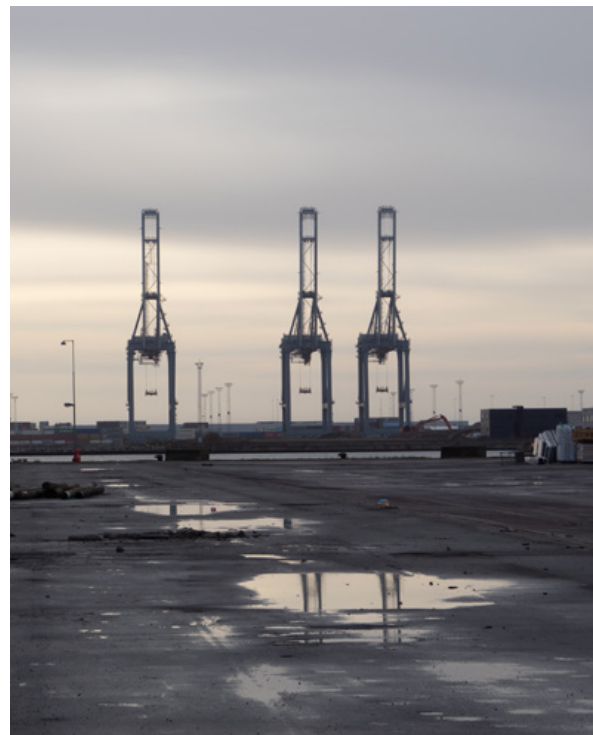


Figure 44: Photo of surface water on site.

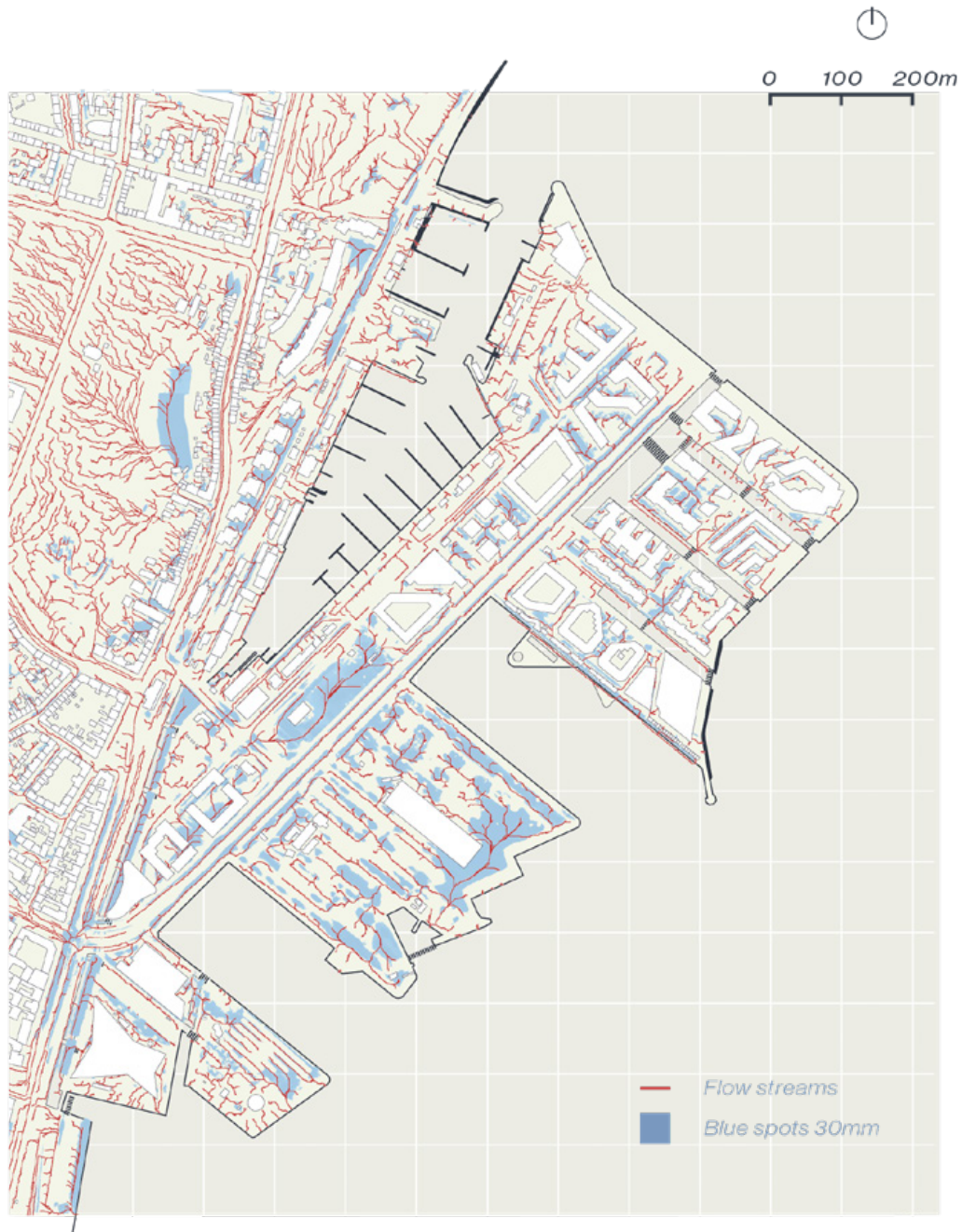


Figure 45: Flow streams and blue spots map (1 : 10000).

## Precipitation

Figure 45 highlights how Pier 3 is affected by significant local water accumulation during heavy rainfalls. The harbor is naturally at a very low elevation, and the relatively flat terrain of Aarhus Ø slows the drainage of surface water. As a result, the areas surrounding Pakhus77 and the Shipping House show clear blue spots formations and

persistent puddles. Surface unevenness across the site further trap runoff, as seen in figure 44 “Photo of surface water on site”. During periods of heavy rainfall, combined with strong harbor winds, these conditions make parts of the site difficult and uncomfortable for pedestrians to navigate.

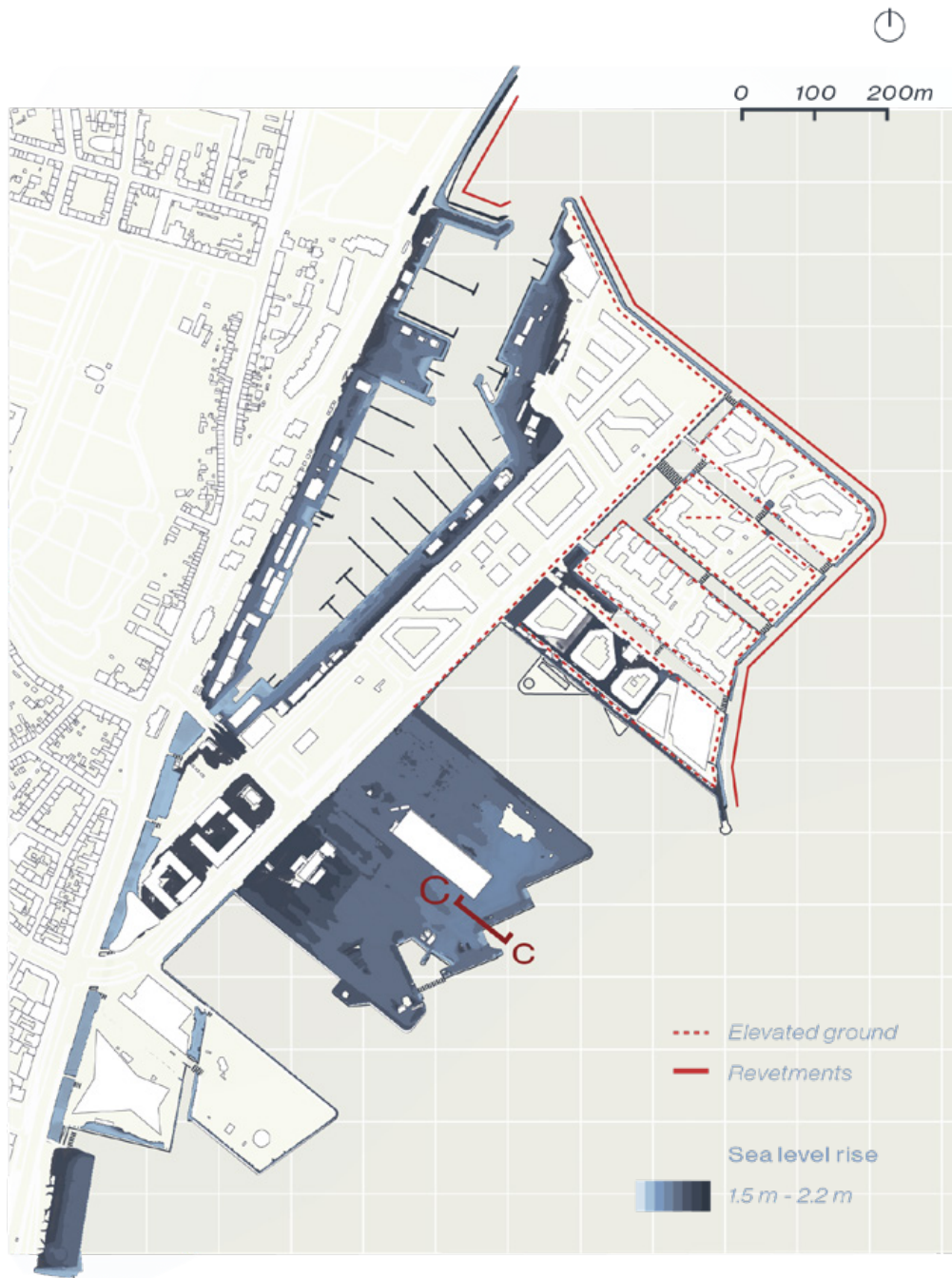


Figure 46: Storm surge map (1:10000).

## Storm surge

Pier 3 sits at a lower elevation than parts of the surrounding Aarhus Ø district, making the site vulnerable to coastal flooding and sea level rise. The storm surge map (fig. 46) illustrates how several areas of the site become flooded when water levels exceed 1.5 meters. To forecast the frequency and severity of future surges, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) uses climate scenarios known as Representative Concentration Pathways

(RCPs), which describe possible futures based on varying levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

The climate scenarios and storm surges table (fig. 49) highlights the worst-case scenario across three different time periods. Today, a storm surge of approximately 173 cm corresponds to a 100-year return period and, as seen on the map, water levels of this magnitude would significantly affect large

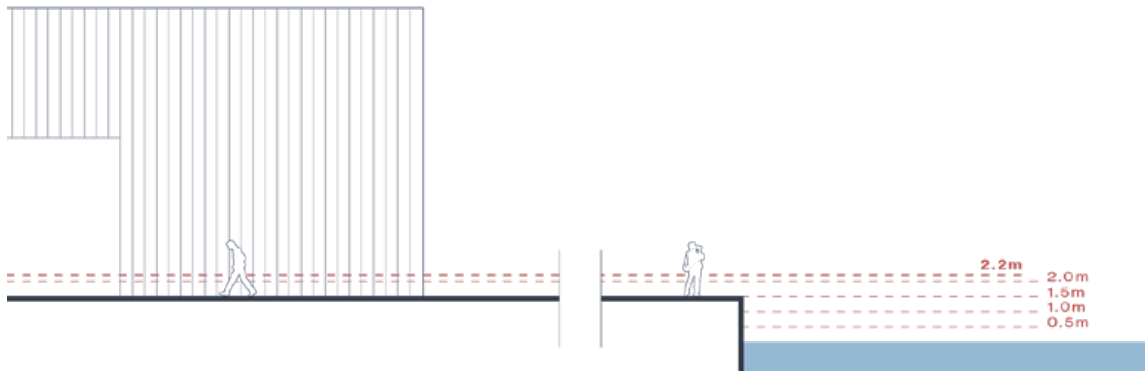


Figure 47: Section C-c - Sea level rise (1 : 250).

parts of Pier 3. Future climate projections further indicate increasing water levels under both medium and high emission scenarios.

The area to the south-east of Bernhardt Jensens Blvd is particularly exposed and requires flood protection strategies to support future development. Fig. 48 highlights the flood prevention strategies implemented when the Aarhus Ø neighborhood was originally built for residential use. While the area has not yet experienced major flooding, the hydrological analysis demonstrates how future sea level rise and storm surges will increasingly challenge the long-term resilience of Pier 3. Current risks primarily threaten the small existing communities located there, as section C-c (fig. 47) illustrates the relationship between projected water levels and Pakhus77.

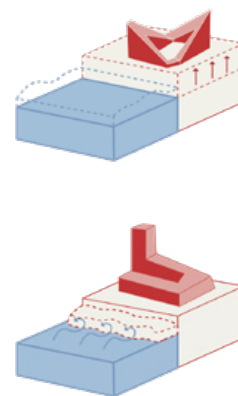


Figure 48: Hydrological strategy diagram.

All hydrology information is gathered through the Danish Meteorological Institute (Danmarks Meteorologiske Institut, n.d.) and ScalgoLive (Scalgo, n.d.).

Climate scenario	2011-2040 SSP2-4.5	2011-2040 SSP5-8.5	2041-2070 SSP2-4.5	2041-2070 SSP5-8.5	2071-2100 SSP2-4.5	2071-2100 SSP5-8.5
Mean water level rise [mm]	12	11	25	28	40	57
1 year return period [mm]	113	112	126	129	141	158
5 year return period [mm]	135	135	149	151	163	180
20 year return period [mm]	155	154	168	171	183	200
100 year return period [mm]	<b>173</b>	172	186	<b>189</b>	201	<b>218</b>

Figure 49: Climate scenario and storm surge table.

# Public & Private

## Theoretical context

As post-industrial harborfronts transition into recreational areas, the strong prioritization of private interests on public land demands scrutiny. Understanding who benefits from these environments requires defining public and private spaces through political, social, and economic perspectives.

### **The political dimension**

*"The state actively intervenes in the production of space and treats space as a political instrument through which social order can be maintained."* (Butler, 2012, p. 50)

Authorities use spatial design and planning to organize movement, behavior, and access within the city.

### **The social dimension**

*"In reality, social space 'incorporates' social actions, the actions of subjects*

*both individual and collective who are born and who die, who suffer and who act."* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33)

Human experiences and everyday activities give physical spaces their social meaning.

### **The economic dimension**

*"The policing of public spaces ranging in size from small squares to fairly large urban parks and train stations had been turned over to private police forces paid for by, and under the direction of, Business Improvement Districts."* (Mitchell, 2003, p. 1)

Corporate wealth and private interests increasingly dictate who can access communal areas.

## From public to private

Together, these political, social, and economic perspectives raise questions about access, ownership, and inclusion. To illustrate our working understanding of public and private space, we broke it down into the following four-tier spectrum:

A public space is universally accessible at any given moment. It supports interactions between diverse groups of people and allows civic and social activities to take place.

A semi-public space remains accessible but introduces a degree of exclusivity. It often

encourages social interactions within more defined social circles.

A semi-private space is more exclusive while still allowing certain forms of social interaction. The feeling of belonging or exclusion often becomes more apparent within these environments.

A private space is strictly limited to specific users. It is defined by a strong sense of personal ownership, control and privacy.

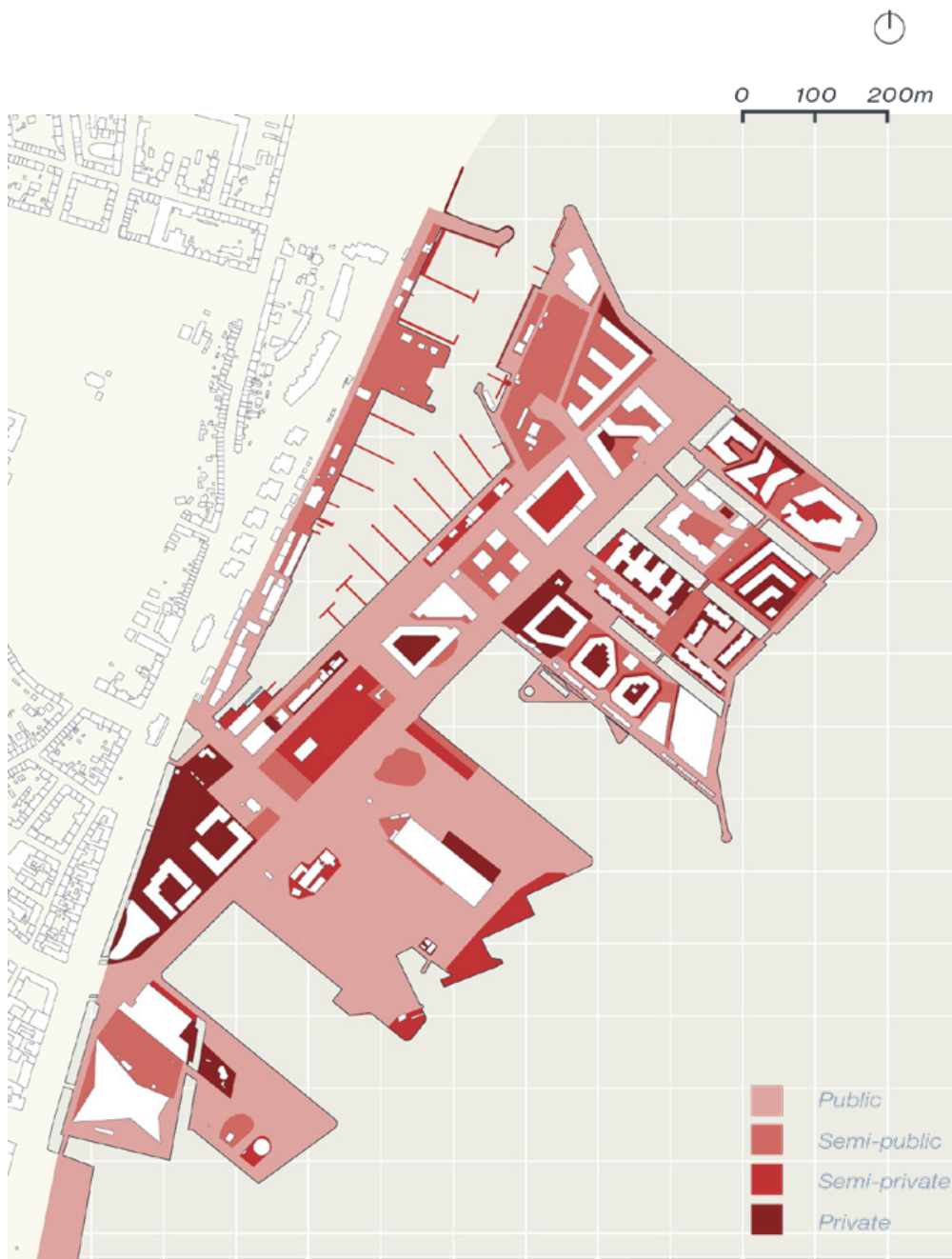


Figure 50: Public and private map (1 : 10000).

## Public and private analysis

Most of Aarhus Ø functions as public space, especially Pier 3. However, the openness of the site often feels excessive and discourages use. In the eastern part of Pier 3, the atmosphere becomes semi-private due to the use of the area as a construction storage yard.

Around Pakhus 77, the well-maintained padel courts create a distinctively private character, where the contrast between the neat facilities and the rough surroundings signals clear ownership. Near Shippinghuset, a partially

fenced parking lot also creates a semi-private atmosphere.

Overall, spaces closest to buildings feel less public, especially where enclosed private gardens create boundaries of ownership. In the north-east of Aarhus Ø, the atmosphere varies, but the scale of the tall buildings can give visitors the sense of being observed, making the area feel more private. Finally, the large south-western zone is occupied by an active construction site and functions as a clearly private area.

## Public space performance

This analysis uses a phenomenological approach to understand how public spaces at Aarhus Ø perform in everyday use. It focuses on how the different places are experienced on site, how they function, how they feel, and what kinds of activities or movement they support. Five parameters were selected to evaluate and compare the qualities and experiences of each site. The examination of microclimate, spatial comfort, greenery, activity levels, and water connections highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each place.

The approach is based on human-scale thinking and observations of public life. These principles are used to identify the qualities that shape a good public space, such as the ability to invite people to stay, seek shelter or exposure, connect with nature, or engage with the waterfront.

The aim of the analysis is to understand how the different places support everyday life and recreational activities at Aarhus Ø, in other words what works well and what does not. Due to formatting limitations, three locations have been placed in Appendix C.

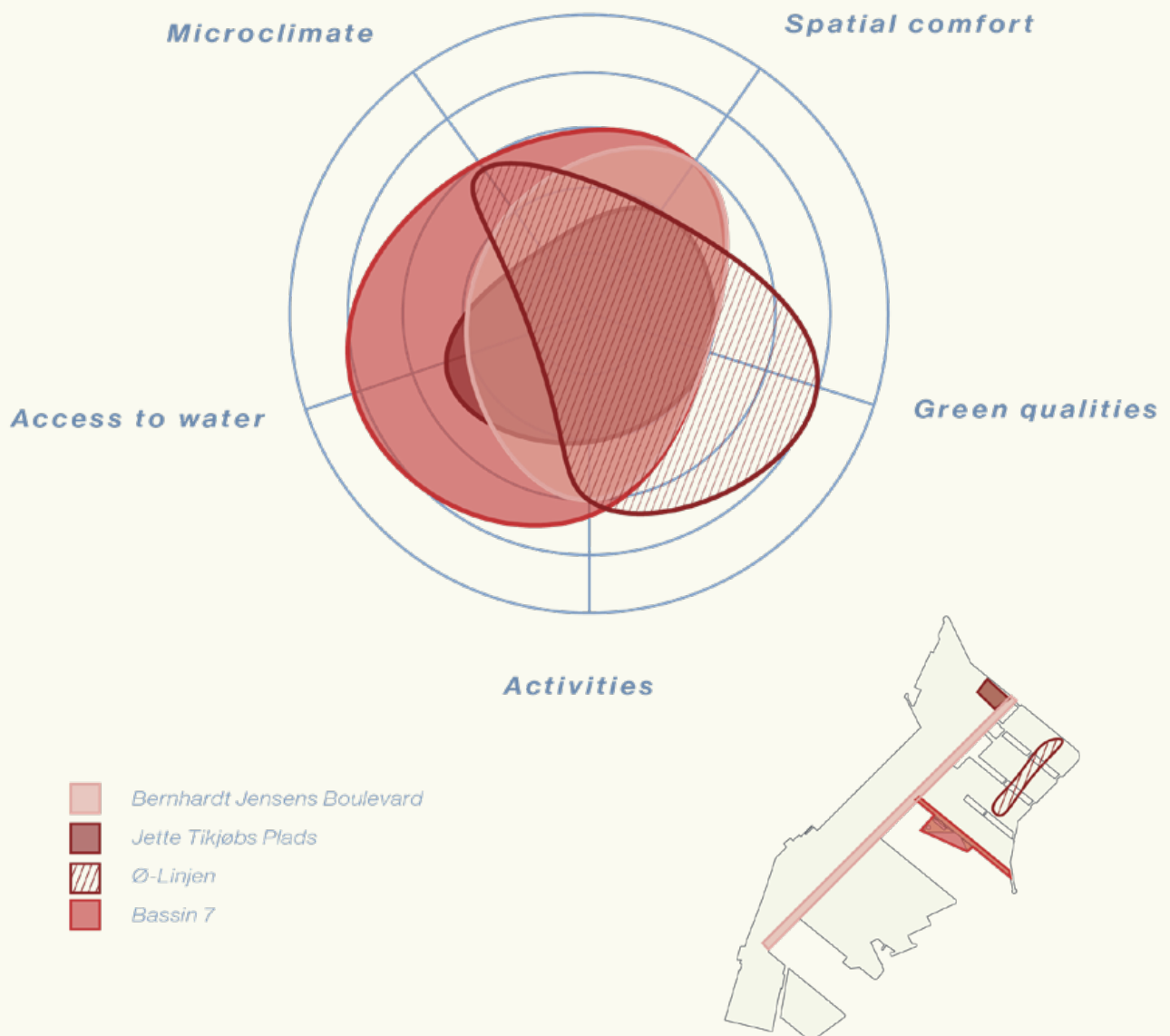


Figure 51: Public space performance matrix.



## Ø-Linjen

A linear green corridor runs across the small islands, offering a recreational pocket between the tall buildings. However, the tall surrounding buildings cast shadows that make the space feel cold. This leads to low activity during certain times of the day and year, leaving the area with fewer “eyes on the street”. The park becomes of a semi-private character, almost like someone’s backyard, which weakens the sense of openness but makes it well suited for quieter activities such as walking a dog.

## Jette Tikjøbs Plads

An open space at the end of the boulevard, containing one of the few points of water access. The large gap between the grass fields and the bathing bridge, combined with the concrete path and rocks, creates a significant barrier, making the waterfront feel disconnected and uninviting. The minimal greenery adds to the dull atmosphere, while the lack of shelter leaves the area highly exposed to wind.

*Fig. 52-53 from left to right: Photos of Ø-linjen; Photos of Jette Thikjøbs Plads.*



## Bassin 7

A lively waterfront space with a mix of culture, urban life, and recreational activities such as swimming, sunbathing, and socializing. The strong connection to the water attracts people and encourages longer stays. However, the narrow path between the buildings and the waterfront can quickly create a feeling of overcrowding.

## Bernhardt Jensens Boulevard

Speeding cars made the street unsafe, so the municipality added barriers to curve the road and slow traffic. Roadside pockets were tested as leisure areas, like the small green park at Nicolinehus. However, the park’s tall greenery now blocks sightlines for drivers’, creating a new danger for pedestrians trying to cross the street.

*Fig. 54-55 from left to right: Photos of Bassin 7; Photos of Bernhardt Jensens Boulevard.*

# Light & Safety

## Theoretical context

Well-designed lighting is essential for creating urban environments that are safe, accessible, and ecologically responsible. Proper illumination is important for public safety, as "street lighting may encourage increased street usage, which intensifies natural surveillance. The change in routine activity patterns may reduce crime " (Welsh, Farrington, & Douglas, 2022).

In addition to safety, lighting is highly relevant to urban sustainability, as "smart public lighting is growing as its implementation represent quick wins (such as increase security and safety, improve

mobility, increase the attractiveness of public spaces, or improve quality of life for citizens) with a massive impact on energy savings and maintenance, and can be achieved through low-cost connectivity." (Pardo-Bosch, Blanco, Sesé, Ezcurra, & Pujadas, 2022).

Finally, lighting design must balance human needs with environmental protection, because "for nocturnal species, darkness or very low light levels are important, and exposure to artificial light can have unwanted ecological consequences" (Jägerbrand & Bouroussis, 2021).

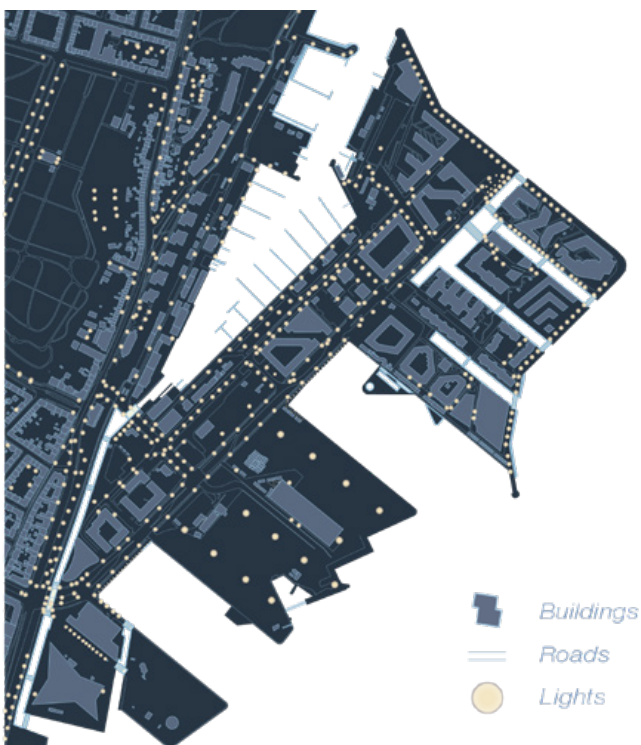


Figure 56: Street lights diagram.

## Evaluation of light and safety

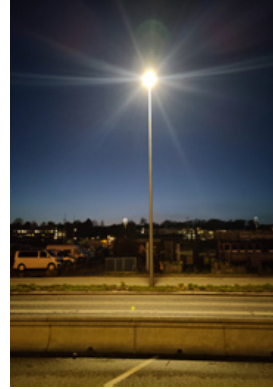
Evaluating light and safety is important to understand nocturnal accessibility and perceived safety within the urban fabric.

The lights & safety diagram (fig. 56) highlights clear contrasts in illumination across the site. Aarhus Ø is densely illuminated, with major light points clustered throughout the developed areas. In contrast, Pier 3 and its surrounding waterfronts lack consistent lighting. Furthermore, the main arterial road Skovvejen, together with the western edges of the site, are marked as dark streets that feel unsafe to navigate at night due to poor illumination.



### **Overlighting**

Strong floodlighting in the parking area creates glare and deep shadows. Rather than improving safety, this intense illumination feels aggressive and clinical, making the space feel harsh and uninviting.



### **Streetlights**

Tall traffic-oriented streetlights prioritize car movement but counteract local low-speed goals. They fail to provide pedestrians and cyclists with the close-range surface visibility required for safe navigation.

*Fig. 57-58 from left to right: Photo of overlighting; Photo of streetlight.*



### **Street lanterns**

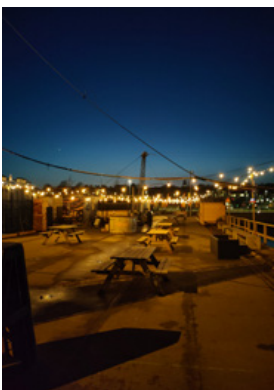
Street lanterns create a warmer atmosphere and improve orientation and spatial awareness for pedestrians and cyclists. They are widely used throughout Aarhus Ø and help slow traffic down but are largely absent at Pier 3.



### **Guiding lights**

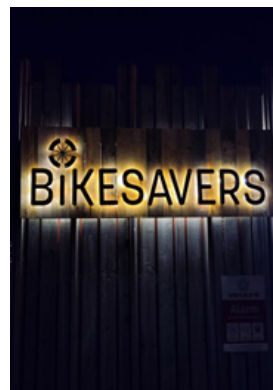
Mostly found at the water edge in the developed areas of Aarhus Ø, low-level guiding lights offer better orientation. They are ideal for park paths, creating more human-scale illumination and improving the feeling of safety.

*Fig. 59-60 from left to right: Photo of street lantern; Photo of guiding light.*



### **String lights**

String lights create atmosphere, identity, and informal gathering spaces. These are found at Pier 3 in between the community containers and are created through private initiative.



### **Community signs**

Handmade illuminated signs strengthen ownership and reflect the local community identity and ownership. They foster atmosphere and are an important part of people-centered design.

*Fig. 61-62 from left to right: Photo of string lights; Photo of community sign.*

# Mobility

## Theoretical context

Mobility in cities extends beyond the physical act of moving from one location to another. It actively shapes how people interact with their surroundings and with each other. "The meaning of mobilities lies in the relations and embodied practice of mobile situations." (Jensen, *Staging Mobilities*, 2013, p. 20). Movement is therefore connected to social interactions and spatial experience while in motion. When planning new urban areas, focusing on how mobility contributes to public life is critical.

The layout of streets provides specific cues, or affordances, influencing how people navigate the city. "We argue that 'affordances' for consumer journeys are generative within urban environments as movement infrastructure domains." (O'Brien & Bednarowska, 2020, p. 74). The physical design of pathways creates direct opportunities for people to explore and connect. As new districts develop, clear affordances for movement help residents discover local shops, engage with the community, and establish routines.

Prioritizing walking is essential for active and livable urban environments. "The walkable city is not just a nice, idealistic

notion. Rather, it is a simple, practical-minded solution to a host of complex problems that we face as a society, problems that daily undermine our nation's economic competitiveness, public welfare, and environmental sustainability." (Speck, 2012, p. 11). Pedestrian-friendly streets can support local businesses, improve public health, and reduce environmental impact. Good street design tackles tangible urban challenges, while also strengthening the quality of public space.

Connecting new developments to the existing urban fabric requires attention to safety, accessibility, social interaction, and overall human well-being. "Better communities are safe, walkable, healthy places that promote sustainable and equitable access to a wealth of destinations by multiple modes and strengthen interpersonal connections and community interactions." (Cervero, Guerra, & Al, 2017, p. 18). When new urban areas provide safe and accessible movement, they can foster a stronger sense of belonging, encourage social interaction, and strengthen connections between residents.

Based on this theoretical framework, analyzing boundaries and pavements becomes important to understand how the physical environment shapes accessibility, movement,

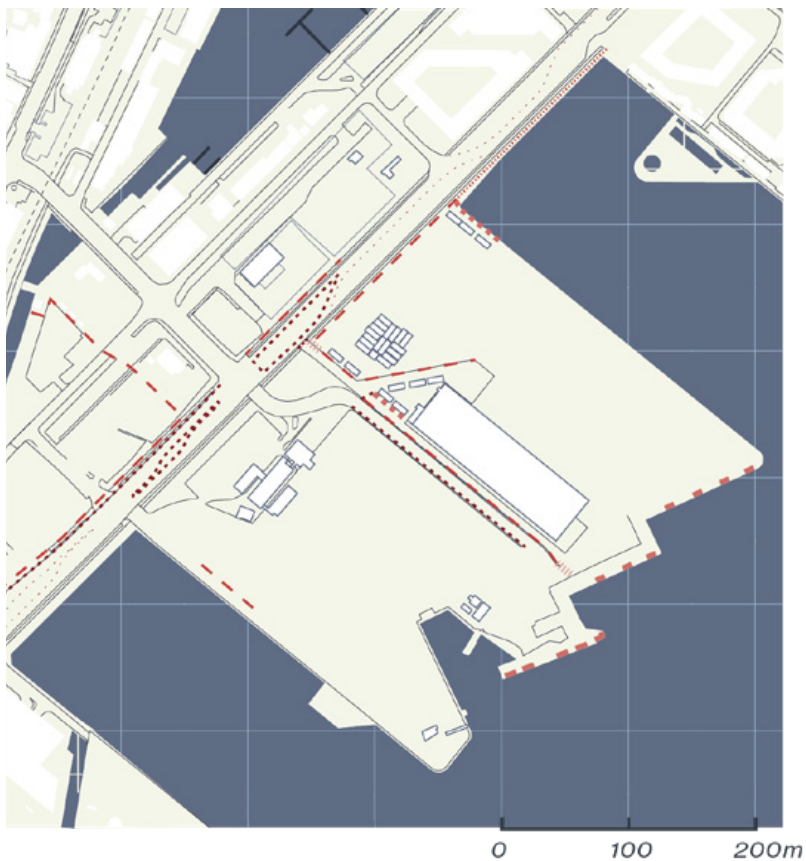
and social interaction at Pier 3. These elements influence how people navigate the site, perceive safety, and experience belonging to the urban fabric.

## Boundaries

Due to the site's industrial past, many fences and boundaries remain standing or have only been partially removed, making navigation through the area confusing. Although the site is largely open, visitors are often confronted with unexpected barriers, forcing them to walk around those fences for considerable distances and consequently reducing accessibility across the site.

Additionally, the area around Pakhus77 was previously closed off by a chain-link fence and

two large metal gates. These elements remain, although the gates are now permanently open. On the western side of Pakhus77, where containers for the existing communities are located, a tall wooden wall was built to create a sheltered space from the wind and openness of Pier 3. Furthermore, temporary metal traffic barriers were installed along Bernhardt Jensens Blvd to reduce speeding in the area.



- |  |                  |  |                  |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|
|  | Gate             |  | Chain-link fence |
|  | Concrete barrier |  | Traffic barrier  |
|  | Wood fence       |  | Steel railing    |



Figure 63: Boundaries & access map (1 : 6000).



Chain-link fence



Temporary traffic barrier



Gate



Wooden wall

Fig. 64: Photos of boundary types.



*Various pavement types*



*Many asphalt layers*

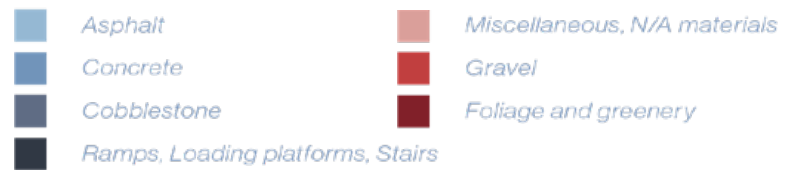
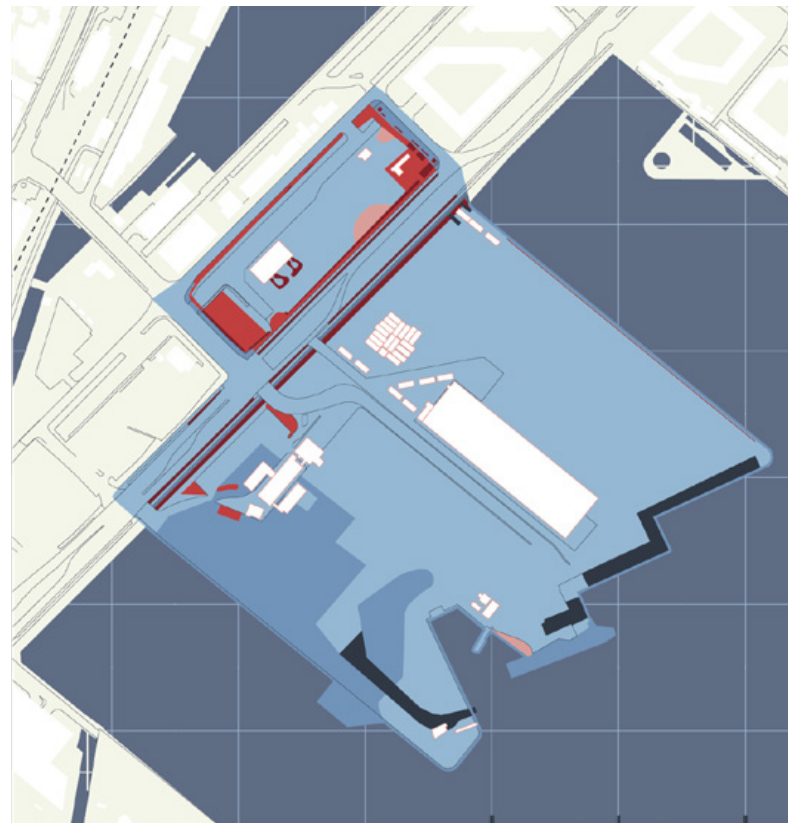


*Nature growing*



*Poor ground condition*

*Fig. 65: Photos of pavement types.*



*Figure 66: Pavements & affordance map (1 : 6000).*

## Pavements

Pier 3 has transitioned from an old industrial past to a space located between residential neighborhoods and is now partially utilized by diverse communities. This shift in function demands new pavement affordances. The site must change from supporting heavy industrial machinery to accommodating a wide range of people with diverse needs, an affordance it currently lacks.

Due to its industrial history, the area is mostly covered by different layers of asphalt and concrete found in many forms, such as old

and modern concrete blocks and in-situ cast surfaces. Grass grows through cracks in the pavement that has remained untouched for many years. In several places, very different ground surface types meet without any clear logic, such as old sidewalks intersecting with ramps and parking lots. Because the functions of the site have changed significantly over time while the pavement has remained mostly unchanged, navigation through the area can become confusing for users.



Figure 67: Tree canopy diagram.

## Greenery

The 3-30-300 rule establishes thresholds of “at least 3 well-established trees in view from every home, school, and place of work, no less than a 30% tree canopy in every neighbourhood; and no more than 300 meters to the nearest public green space from every residence” (Konijnendijk, 2022, p. 821). This 30% canopy target is vital because “local tree canopy cover is positively associated with cooling and other aspects of climate moderation” (Konijnendijk, 2022, p. 821), and studies indicate that “a canopy cover of at

least 30% for all these aspects resulted in higher health benefits” (Konijnendijk, 2022, p. 823).

While the broader Aarhus urban footprint includes 13.8% tree canopy cover (Owen, et al., 2024, p. 4), only 2.6% of Aarhus neighborhoods satisfy the specific tree canopy target established by the rule (Owen, et al., 2024, p. 7). This is clearly visible on the tree canopy cover diagram (fig. 67), where Aarhus Ø remains below 1% of tree canopy cover.

# Survey

The consultancy agency Voluntas conducted a citizen survey as part of the development of Pier 3, and a report summarizing findings from all 5453 participants is available on Aarhus Municipality's website (Aarhus Kommune & Voluntas, 2025). While the survey provides extensive quantitative data, this summary highlights broader public perspectives on the future of Pier 3. It focuses on the recurring spatial themes, concerns, and desires expressed in participants' responses.



## Greenery and openness

Greenery and openness emerged as central priorities in citizens' visions for Pier 3. The word "green" appeared more than 2200 times in response to the question "How can Pier 3 make Aarhus a better city?", and almost 40% of the participants pointed to green recreational spaces as an important future function of the area. Many responses described Pier 3 as one of the last open waterfront spaces in Aarhus and stressed the importance of preserving this openness rather than continuing the dense development associated with Aarhus Ø.

Figure 68: Greenery and openness diagram.

## Fear of another Aarhus Ø

Many participants expressed concern that Pier 3 would follow the same development pattern as Aarhus Ø. Responses often described Aarhus Ø as too dense, too tall, and lacking green and public spaces along the waterfront. Instead, participants called for a different approach at Pier 3 with lower building heights, more diverse urban spaces and a stronger connection to the waterfront.

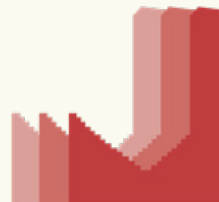


Figure 69: Fear of another Aarhus Ø diagram.



## Waterfront access

Access to the waterfront was one of the clearest priorities throughout the survey. Many participants described the harbor edge as an important public feature and pointed out the need for spaces that allow direct contact with the water. Swimming areas, saunas, promenades, watersports, and places to stay along the waterfront were repeatedly mentioned as important elements in the future development of Pier 3, with recreational activities forming a central part of how people imagined the area being used.

Figure 70: Waterfront access diagram.

## Recreation and culture

Recreational and cultural activities were described as important qualities for the future of Pier 3. Many participants highlighted the need for accessible public spaces that support everyday activities, informal sports, cultural events, and places to stay without necessarily consuming anything. Rather than introducing more commercial waterfront development, many responses pointed toward creating a more publicly accessible area centered around recreation, community life, and shared public use.



Figure 71: Recreation and culture diagram.

# Conclusion

The ground level of Pier 3 should be elevated to protect the site against future sea level rise and storm surges.

The exposed waterfront should be designed for year-round comfort through greenery, wind protection, and building heights that reduce harsh winds while maintaining sunlight.

Asphalt and hard surfaces should be replaced with greenery and softer landscape materials.

Walking, cycling, and public transportation should be prioritized over car infrastructure.

The large amount of already existing parking infrastructure in Aarhus Ø should be used to the site's advantage. New parking within Pier 3 should be limited and instead a walkable and cycle-oriented neighbourhood should be prioritized.

Physical barriers should be minimized through continuous paving, clear pathways, and direct connections to the waterfront.

Green and accessible public spaces should be prioritized over dense high-rise development.

Public access to water recreation should be guaranteed, and gentle transitions between different zones should be prioritized to support an inclusive district.

Layered, human-scale lighting should create safe and welcoming public spaces at night.



## 2.4 Communities

The way local groups settle in and connect at Pier 3 is central to the site's social foundation. The public's relationship to the waterfront, how shared spaces are occupied, and how ownership is formed all provide insight into the pier's social dynamics. While physical structures define the spatial boundaries of the site, social networks and local initiatives shape everyday life. These relationships define Pier 3's identity and culture and are therefore a central part of the analysis.

*Fig. 72: Communities chapter diagram.*

# Theoretical context

Creating a new urban area like Pier 3 requires understanding how spaces become meaningful. Placemaking theory explains how environments shape social interactions and public life. Hajer and Reijndorp argue that "public domain can even arise in an urban field that is composed of enclaves of various kinds, providing some dynamic is occasionally organized in that enclave landscape that breaks through the predictable (and often highly prized) peace of the enclaves" (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001, p. 129). This idea is especially relevant in newly developed district built from scratch. Although a newly built enclave may appear calm and attractive, it does not automatically function as a shared public realm. True public domain instead depends on spatial disruptions, activities, or events that encourage different groups of people to cross paths. A common issue in new developments is that they are often designed primarily for residents, while successful urban districts also need to attract outsiders to create interaction and support urban diversity.

The physical layout directly influences how people experience these interactions. Gehl states that "at eye level the good city provides opportunities for walking, staying, meeting and expression, and that means it must provide good scale and good climate" (Gehl, *Cities for People*, 2010, p. 176). These conditions demonstrate how the physical environment must first accommodate the human body before social life can emerge. In waterfront areas such as Aarhus Ø, the absence of

wind protection, seating, or sheltered public spaces can discourage people from staying in the area. Public spaces can therefore become uncomfortable or even hostile if human comfort is not carefully considered.

Beyond physical comfort, urban structure also carries social meaning. Dovey explains that "urban design as the shaping of urban public space involves the framing of these spaces of public encounter" (Dovey, *Urban Design Thinking: A Conceptual Toolkit*, 2016, p. 10). While physical barriers often affect accessibility, it is equally important to consider how spatial design influences who is expected to meet whom. Streets, pathways, and public spaces therefore act as frameworks for civic life by shaping opportunities for encounter and social exchange.

At the same time, the identity of a place extends beyond its physical form. Dovey also argues that "a large part of what distinguishes place from space is that place has an intensity that connects sociality to spatiality in everyday life" (Dovey, *Becoming Places: Urbanism/Architecture/Identity/Power*, 2010, p. 3). While the previous perspective focuses on the physical framing of encounters, this idea emphasizes the lived and emotional experience of urban environments, as well as the subjective feeling of being somewhere unique. A new development may initially exist only as a geometric space, but it gradually becomes a meaningful place through everyday use, routines, memory, and social activity.

# Musicon Roskilde



Musicon in Roskilde is an example of participatory urban development, where belonging, ownership, and everyday use help shape a new urban area. It is used as a case study to show how community is not created by buildings alone, but by giving people opportunities to use the place, understand it, and take part in its development.

A central aspect of Musicon is the need to create a connection between people and the area. As described in *MusiConTemporary*, “It is important to establish a connection to the area and a meaningful activity taking up the emptiness both in the physical sense but also in peoples perception.” (Pedersen, 2009, s. 18). This highlights how belonging begins when empty space becomes active and meaningful. People need a reason to come, stay, and feel the place has value in everyday life.

Participation is also central to creating ownership. “The area must become part of the city and to ensure this people in the city are involved in the project.” (Pedersen, 2009, s. 23). This shows how Musicon is not planned solely from above, but strengthened through

citizen involvement. Participation allows people to feel that the area also belongs to them.

The design of community space must also begin with the people who use it. In *The Musicon Path*, Bonde writes, “Another important factor to understand in relation to create a meaningful lighting design, is the users of the path. Who are going to use it, when and why?” (Bonde, 2016, s. 16). This emphasizes how pathways, lighting, and public spaces should support everyday activities and lived experiences rather than functioning only as aesthetic elements.

Musicon also accommodates a wide variety of users and activities. “Leisure activities are a big part of the Musicon area” (Bonde, 2016, s. 16). This is important because community depends on spaces that support different forms of activity, interaction, and shared routines. In this way, Musicon therefore demonstrates how belonging can emerge when the same urban environment accommodates work, leisure, culture, and everyday encounters. The area becomes meaningful because people use it in different ways and start to feel part of it.

Figure 73: Photos of Musicon Roskilde.



Figure 74: Stakeholder matrix by users of Pier 3.

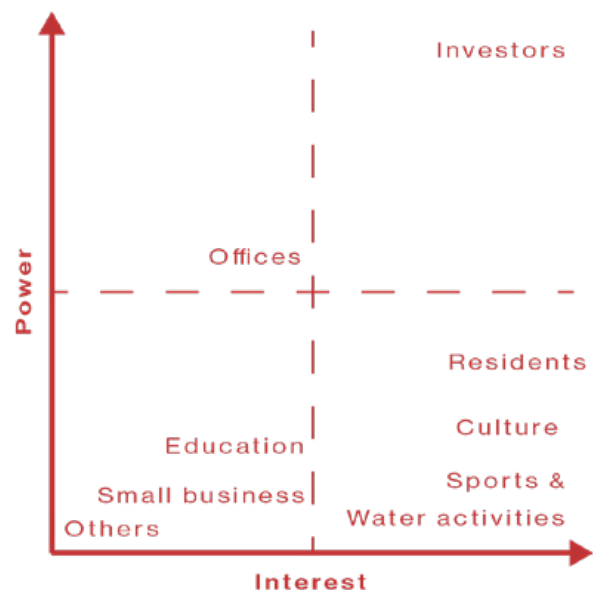


Figure 75: Stakeholder matrix by overall category.

## Stakeholders

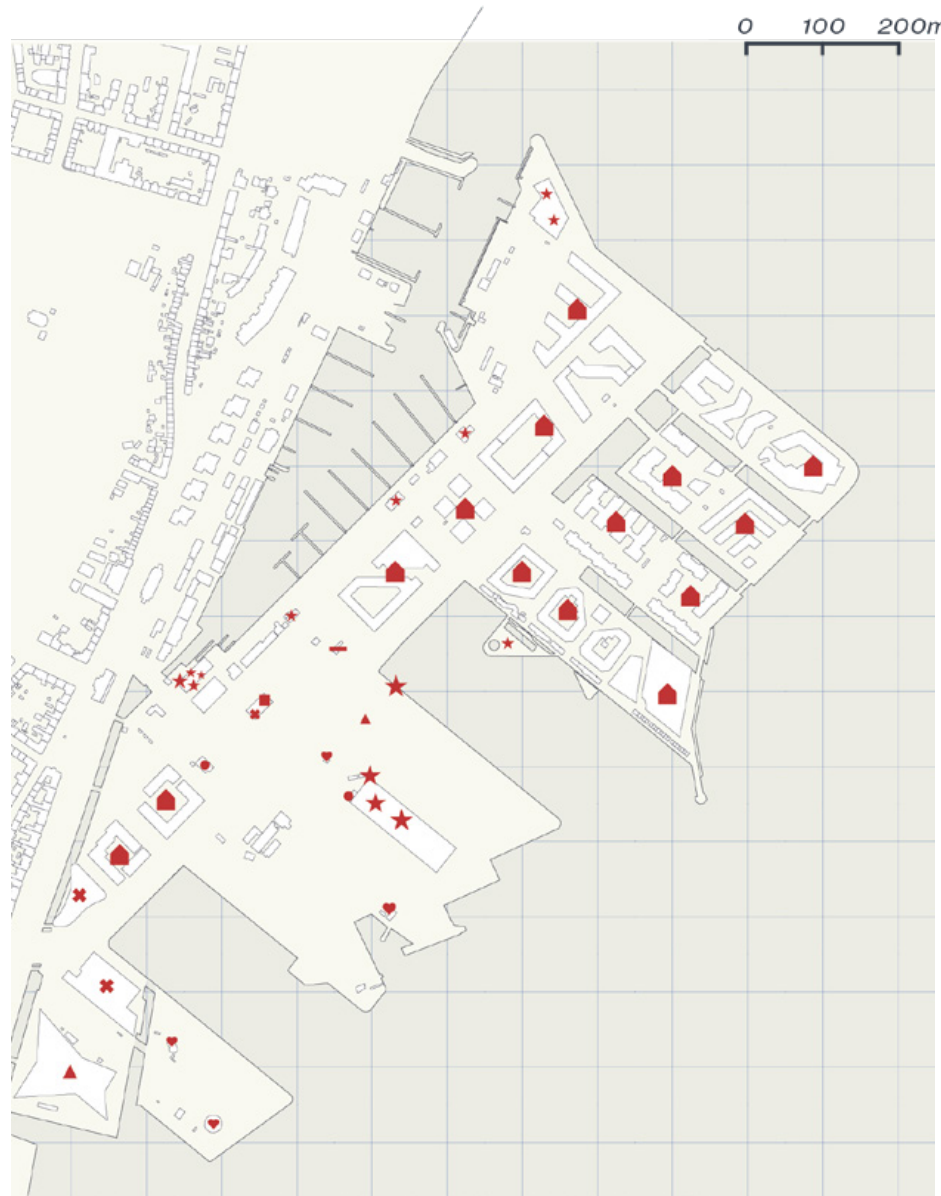
The area around Pier 3 contains many different stakeholders connected to housing, offices, culture, education, small businesses, and waterfront activities. Existing communities already shape much of the identity and everyday life found at the site, especially around the harbor edge and Bassin 7. Sports communities such as wakeboarding, padel, boxing, and calisthenics groups are particularly visible and activate the pier throughout the year. These users, together with their level of interest and influence in the future development of Pier 3, are shown in figure 74 and on the stakeholder map.

Figure 75 compares the different stakeholder groups connected to Pier 3 and its surroundings. Aarhus Municipality and several developers have the highest influence, while local communities, sports associations, and everyday users have a stronger connection to the daily life of the site.

The stakeholder map (fig. 76) shows all these different interests are distributed across the Pier 3 and Aarhus Ø. Sports clubs, cultural functions, small businesses, offices, and residential buildings are all located close to the site and influence how the area is used today.



0 100 200m



■ **Investors**

**Institutions**

Aarhus Kommune  
Bylageret

**Developers**

Kilden & Hindby  
Heartland  
AP Ejendomme  
Bricks  
Voluntās Group II

**Advisors**

SLETH  
COBE  
BRIQ Group  
Voluntās Advisory  
Artelia  
Niras

● **Small businesses**

Bikesavers  
Havnens Perle

♥ **Culture**

Aarhus Søfartsmuseum  
Domen  
La Sauna Aarhus

✕ **Offices**

Bestseller  
KJØLHEDE arkitekter

▲ **Education**

Cykeløen Aarhus  
Navitas

★ **Sports & Water activities**

Champs Camp Aarhus  
Pakhus77 Padel  
Calisthenics Oe  
Aarhus Watersports Complex (AWC)  
Søsporten  
Aarhus International Sailing Center  
Stand Up Paddle Aarhus  
Aarhus Sejlklub  
Sejlkлубben Bugten  
Aarhus Motorbådsklub  
Vinterbadeklub Aarhus Ø  
Sportsdykkerklubben KVAK  
Aarhus Roklub  
Aarhus Kano og Kajakklub

▲ **Residents**

Buildings with over 150 households

– **Others**

Recycling station (Kredsløb)  
Visitors

Figure 76: Stakeholders location map (1 : 10000).

# Communities

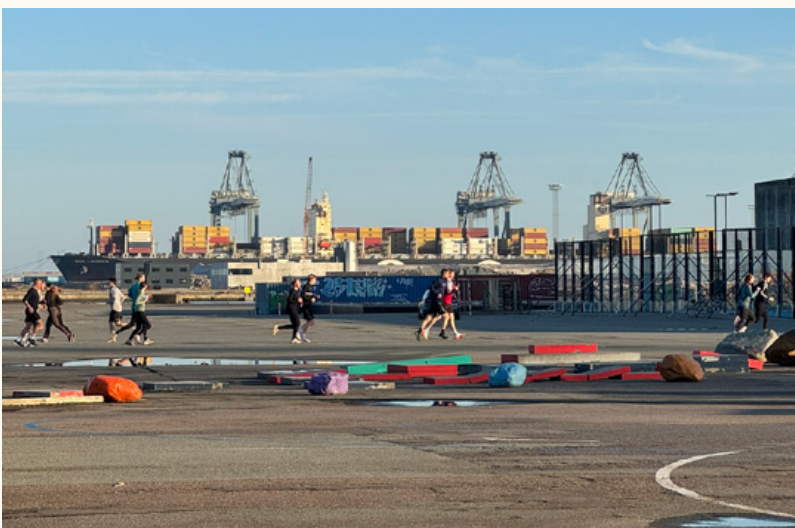
Site visits and dialogue with local communities informed an understanding of their specific needs, everyday life, and social dynamics.



## Sports

Champs Camp, Calisthenics Ø, Pakhus 77, Sport X Tribe, as well as skating and BMX obstacles attract hundreds of active users to Pier 3. These sports communities bring a diverse public to the waterfront and keep the area active throughout the year, but several struggle with limited space. Most are based in the aging Pakhus 77 building, which suffers from roof leaks. Pier 3 remains one of the few central areas in Aarhus with enough space for communities like these.

*Figure 77: Sports community diagram.*



*Figure 78: Photos of sports community.*



Figure 79: Photos of water activities community.

## Water activities

Havnebadet and AWC are major activity and community hubs at Aarhus Ø. Havnebadet opened in 2018 as the closest maritime sauna club to Aarhus C, while AWC has operated since 2016 as the city's only wakeboarding facility. Both attract large numbers of visitors, with AWC also supporting smaller clubs at Pier 3 as an umbrella organization. Their shared focus on accessible facilities has an important role in the maritime life of Aarhus Ø by creating active and social waterfront spaces.



Figure 80: Water activities community diagram.



Figure 81: Photos of cycling education community.



## Cycling education

While families also use the track independently, Cykeløen is mostly occupied by classes organized by Dansk Skolecykling, bringing children from different schools to learn to cycle in a safe environment. The scale of the track makes this type of teaching possible, and there is no other area in the inner city that could accommodate such a facility. As the only initiative of its kind in Aarhus, Cykeløen plays an important role in teaching future generations to navigate the city by bike.

Figure 82: Cycling education community diagram.



## Offices

Surrounded by expensive new developments, Shippinghuset and Hveensgade 4 offers a big contrast in both price and community. While a few medium-sized firms operate there, the buildings are mainly occupied by entrepreneurs and small businesses. Lower rents make it possible for these companies to work close to the waterfront, something many could not otherwise afford in Aarhus Ø. The older industrial buildings therefore function as informal and accessible workspaces for startups within the harbor area.

*Figure 83: Offices community diagram.*



*Figure 84: Photos of offices community.*

# Workshop

A public workshop was held at Pier 3 to gather local perspectives, experiences, and reflections on the site and its future development. It took place between 14:30 and 17:30 on Wednesday, 18th of March 2026, during good weather at Bernhardt Jensens Blvd. The workshop featured three consecutive stations in order to gather diverse opinions from passersby through different forms of participation. The aim was to uncover users' underlying needs,



experiences, and views on the site. To gradually build engagement, participants first completed Sticker Democracy (Slinde & Martinez), followed by Pictogramming (Martinez, Gallis, & Reich), and finishing with The Goals Grid (Nickols, 2015). It is important to acknowledge potential biases, as both the selected poster material and the limitation of conducting the workshop during a single sunny afternoon inevitably influenced the collected feedback.

Figure 85: Workshop photos.

## Participants

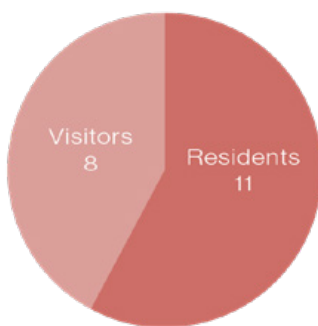


Figure 86: Participants residency distribution.

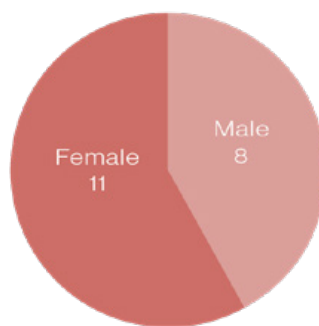


Figure 87: Participants gender distribution.

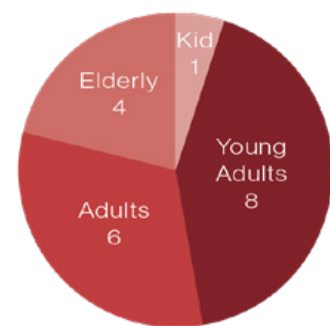


Figure 88: Participants age distribution.

A total of 19 people participated in the different exercises, with some completing all three and others only doing one or two. From the participants, 11 were residents and 8 visitors, while 11 were female and 8 male.

The age distribution consisted of 8 young adults, 6 adults, 4 elderly, 1 kid, and 0 teens. A participants breakdown for each of the exercises is available at appendix D.

## Sticker democracy

Sticker Democracy is an intuitive participatory method where people vote on several options using stickers. It is a simple tool that allows participants to express their preferences and priorities.

This part of the workshop involved 16 participants, consisting of 11 residents and 5 visitors. Each participant got three votes per category. Water access (16 votes) and open field (15 votes) were the top priority when it came to the Activities category, while local cafés (14 votes) and farmers market (14 votes) were the most desired business functions. Latinerkvarteret received the highest number of votes (15) when it came to the participants' favorite places in Aarhus.

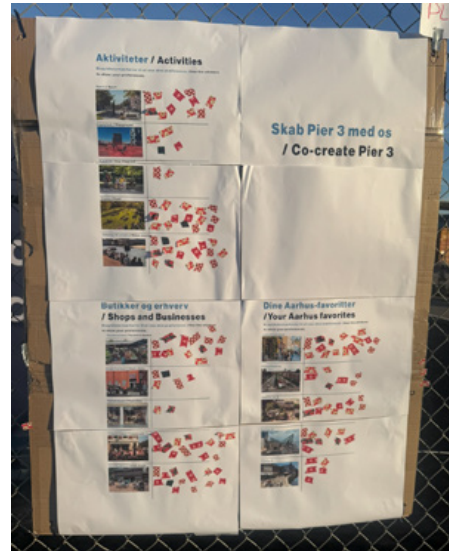


Figure 89: Photo of sticker democracy board.



Figure 90: Voting results for activities preference.

Figure 91: Voting results for shops preference.

Figure 92: Voting results for areas preference.

■ 10 votes and above ■ Below 10 votes

The overall outcome points towards an authentic, locally rooted and socially active urban environment. There is a distinct rejection of large chain stores and franchises in favor of small and independent shops, community markets, and informal

gathering spaces. The strong interest in water access, open fields, and places such as Latinerkvarteret and Institut for X also highlights demand for accessible, recreational, socially engaging and culturally active public spaces.

## Pictogramming

Pictogramming is a participatory method where people map their own behavior by placing icons representing different activities onto a map of the project area. Each participant received one icon for each category: sit down, feeling unsafe, favorite place, never go, be alone, hang out. This method helps identify where different activities take place and how people experience specific areas.

A total of 14 people participated in this part of the workshop, including 10 residents and 4 visitors. The collected responses were grouped into positive and negative feedback to identify patterns and recurring themes.



Figure 93: Photo of pictogramming board.

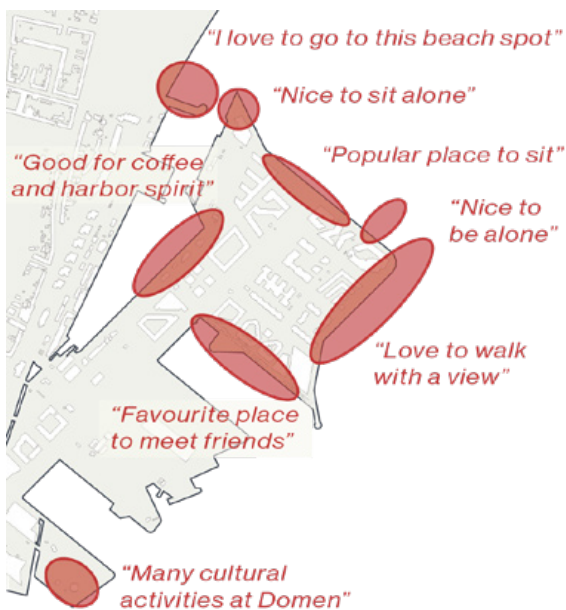


Figure 94: Positive pictogramming feedback diagram.

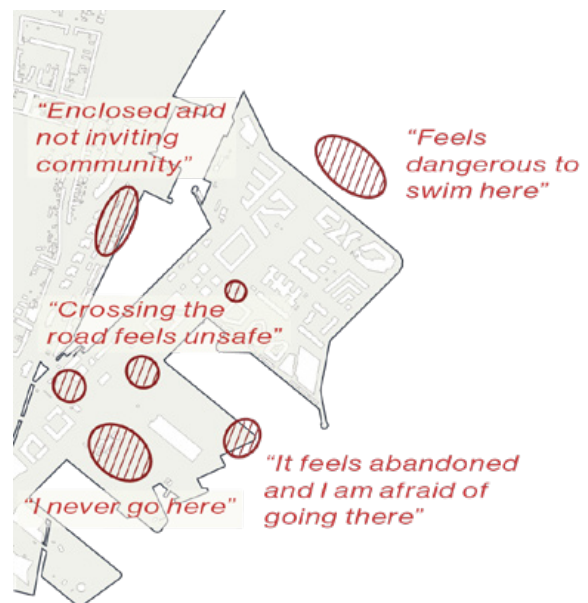


Figure 95: Negative pictogramming feedback diagram.

The results showed that the neighbourhood's strongest qualities are linked to its waterfront location, beautiful views, peaceful atmosphere, and great spots for walking or watching the sunrise.

At the same time, the participants were critical about Pier 3's current physical condition. Many consistently noted that the

space is windy, empty, dull, and dominated by concrete and cars. The distinct lack of greenery and sheltered spaces contributes to an environment that feels inactive and uninviting.

The results highlight a clear need for more vegetation, softer edges, and spaces that support everyday activities and longer stays.

## The Goals Grid

The Goals Grid is a simple participatory exercise used to compare the current qualities of a site with the public’s future wishes and concerns. Participants responded to four questions: what should be achieved, preserved, avoided, and eliminated at Pier 3. This method helps clarify shared priorities and worries.

This part of the workshop gathered input from 12 participants, including 8 residents and 4 visitors. The exercise provided direct written opinions on Pier 3’s future. To summarize the responses, one core priority from each category was highlighted. For Achieve, participants wished for “green areas, a park”; for Preserve, “Lodstårnet and Pakhus77”; for Avoid, “tall buildings and cars”; and for Eliminate, “the vast amount of asphalt”.

The results show a strong interest in preserving the site’s authentic, maritime character while transforming its large, paved surfaces into more accessible and inviting public green spaces. The responses also reveal a clear preference for lower-scale development and stronger connections between people, greenery, and the waterfront.

<p><b>1. Achieve</b></p> <p>Hang out spots Green spaces and parks Recreational and sports Water access</p>	<p><b>2. Preserve</b></p> <p>Maritime character Key landmarks Local spirit &amp; cafés Water activities</p>
<p><b>3. Avoid</b></p> <p>High-rises and offices Private and unused spaces Chain stores Traffic</p>	<p><b>4. Eliminate</b></p> <p>Unused spaces Parking Obstacles to the water</p>

Figure 96: The Goals Grid summary diagram.

## Conclusion

The workshop analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of the physical, social, and functional wishes participants have for the site. Across the different exercises, participants consistently expressed a need to transform the current car-dominated asphalt landscape into an inviting and green public space with direct access to the water. There was also a clear preference for preserving the area’s maritime identity and supporting local, independent businesses, while avoiding large chain stores and new high-rise developments.

Many participants described the site as empty, windy, and lacking activity, highlighting a need for more vegetation, shelter, and spaces that support vibrant and engaging social life. The full workshop material and data can be found in appendix D.

# Interviews

Locals share what Pier 3 means to them and to Aarhus, from the essential qualities of the site that must be preserved to the everyday challenges the area currently faces. These conversations outline practical ideas for what should happen along the waterfront and at Pakhus77. Full interview transcripts can be found in appendix E.



## Mathias, 30

Location: Aarhus Watersports Complex (AWC).  
Occupation: Administrator and café manager.  
Time in the area: 9 years.

*“Pier 3 could be more important to Aarhus if more clubs join us here, since Aarhus is missing more places for activities. [...] It is important to keep the openness of this area, so it doesn't get cramped like in Basin7. It is also important to keep all the activities that are already here. [...] At the waterfront we would like to build a cable park for water sports and an aqua park.”*

Figure 97: AWC interview diagram.

## Ebbe, 46

Location: Cykeløen. Occupation: Teacher.  
Time in the area: 2 years.

*“[Pier 3] is a free spot in the city, it is a place for creativity and sports, and there is much space here, different from other places in town. [...] I think it is important to give space besides housing in the area. I think Pier 3 supports dog walkers, families with kids and people to do sports. I think the feeling of horizontal space in Pier 3 is important, not vertical like in Aarhus Ø with the tall buildings and a little space in between. [...] I think we should keep Pakhus77, and build an urban bike park at the top of it to make Pakhus77 a landmark for Pier3.”*



Figure 98: Cykeløen interview diagram.

## Rikke, 28

Location: Champs Camp. Occupation: Student.  
Time in the area: 4 years.

*"It is important to keep the openness, keep the activities in Pakhus 77, and keep the forening (NGO) sport spaces. [...] It would be a challenge if they build skyscrapers. And it is a challenge that we can lose our club space. Another challenge is that the traffic is messy, not a clear path to where to go. [...] Champs Camp should stay and we should get more space, with more toilets. [...] It should have more parks, small communities like Domen (since it has been taken down)."*

Figure 99: Champs Camp interview diagram.



## Lars, 67

Location: Bikesavers. Occupation: Bike mechanic.  
Time in the area: 5 months.

*"Pier 3 is a place that functions as a playground for many different groups, brings diversity to the area. It is a place that is important for the underground culture of Aarhus, especially because many of those places are disappearing in Aarhus. [...] The main qualities that are important in the site are to have an area where people can come and do different activities. [...] I think they should take off the asphalt and make more green areas here, with a big park."*

Figure 100: Bikesavers interview diagram.



## Mathias, 25

Location: Pakhus77. Occupation: Finance Manager.  
Time in the area: 2 years.

*"I hope it becomes more focused on activities, more like sauna, instead of only offices and apartments. More activities like a food court and sports. [...] I think it is important to keep Pakhus77 and the existing activities that are on the site."*

Figure 101: Pakhus77 interview diagram.



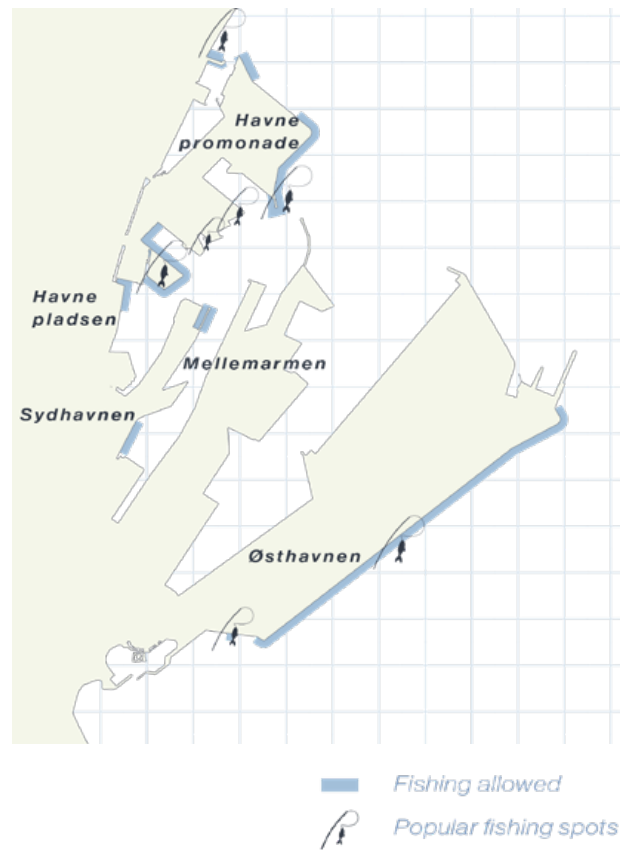


Figure 102: Fishing in Aarhus diagram.

## Life by the water

Aarhus Ø's greatest strength is its close proximity to the water. The area contains both historic maritime environments and newer spaces for recreational use. Aarhus Marina and the Wooden Ship Harbor (Træskibshavnen) support long-standing traditions and communities, together with the remaining activity related to fishing and trade.

Traditional harbor uses are still seen through boats on land and in water, rowing and sailing clubhouses, and industrial traces found at Pier 2 and Pier 3. Elements such as mooring bollards, Lodstårnet, Shippinghuset, and Pakhus77 together help preserve the area's characteristic maritime environment. Newer maritime activities reflect a more

recreational use of the waterfront, such as bathing bridges, sauna cabins, wakeboarding, Havnebadet, a floating playground, and the promenade at Bassin 7 with food and drinks stalls. Bassin 7 truly brings harbor life, recreation, culture, and city life together. Fishing also remains an important activity.

There are several designated fishing spots as visible on the fishing in Aarhus diagram (fig. 102). (Aarhus Kommune, 2025). Observations from the site and posts in the Facebook group "Fiskeri på Aarhus Havn" (n.d.) indicate that fishing also takes place outside the permitted areas. Cod and mackerel are most commonly caught, together with several other species.

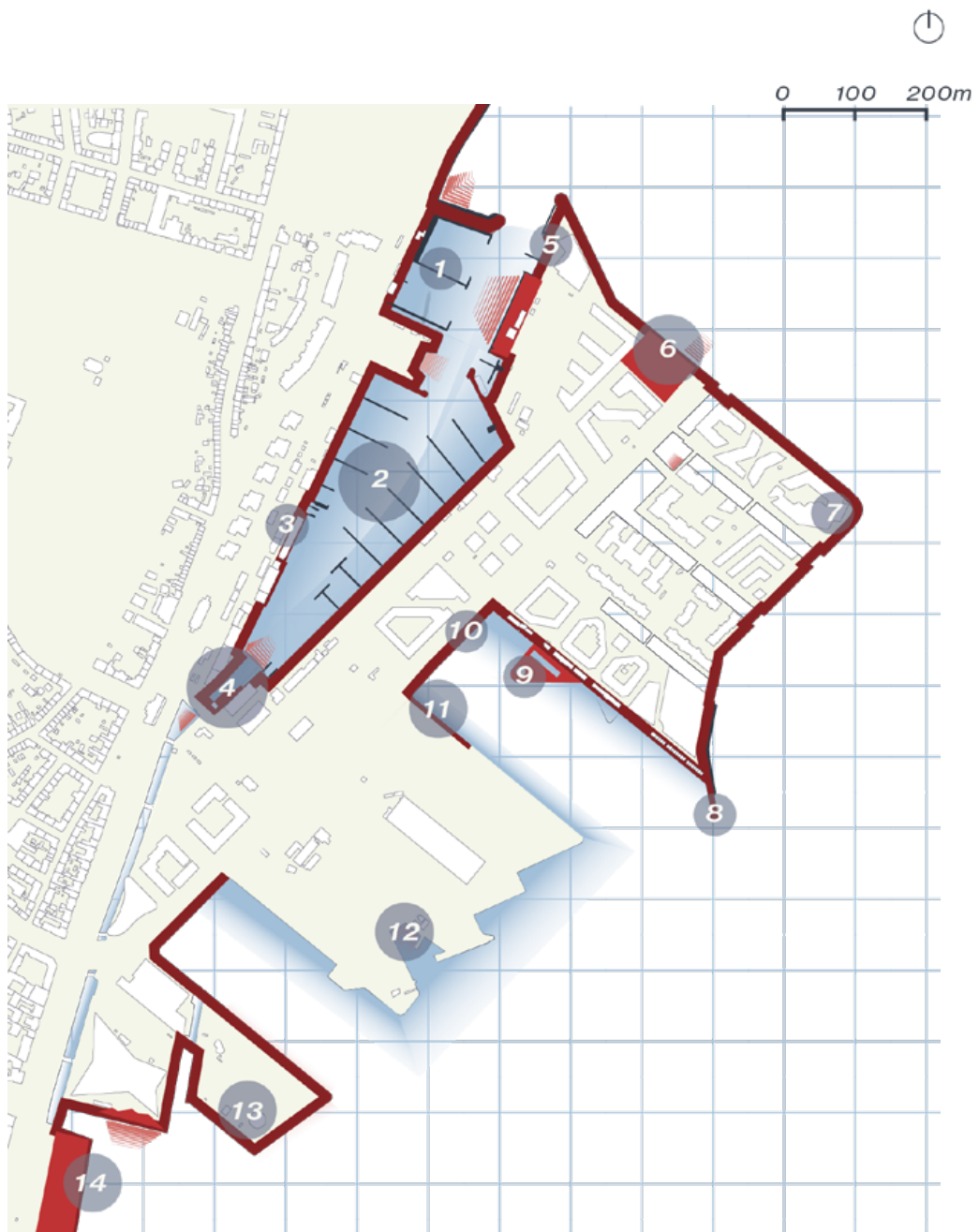











Figure 103: Access to water map (1 : 10000).

- |   |                                      |   |                                     |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | Promenade                            |  | Aarhus International Sailing Center |
|  | Spaces connected to the promenade    |  | Jette Tikjøbs Plads                 |
|  | Access to water                      |  | Aarhus Øje                          |
|  | Marine-like environments             |  | Det Grønne Fyr                      |
| <b>Marina nodes</b>   |                                      |  | Havnebadet                          |
|  | Træskibshavnen                       |  | Udsigtstårnet                       |
|  | Aarhus leisure marina                |  | Aarhus Watersports Complex          |
|  | Fishing shops & restaurants          |  | Lodstårnet                          |
|  | Søsporten - Rowing and sailing clubs |  | Domen & Pier 2 Park                 |
|   |                                      |  | Waterfront Sports Plaza             |

# Demographics

## Age

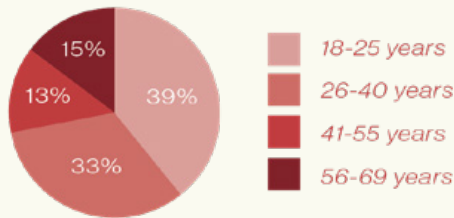


Figure 104: Age distribution at Aarhus Ø.

The neighborhood is characterized by a highly youthful demographic profile, with most residents being under the age of 40. The most prominent age group consists of young adults between 18 and 25 years old, making up 39% of the local population. This is closely followed by individuals aged 26 to 40, who account for 33% of the residents. Older age groups are significantly less represented; residents aged 41 to 55 cover 15% of the population, while those aged 56 to 69 make up just 13%. This strong concentration of youth indicates a community likely driven by students and young professionals, suggesting that urban spaces should be designed to support the dynamic and social lifestyles of early-career residents.



Figure 105: Demographics analysis area.

## Households

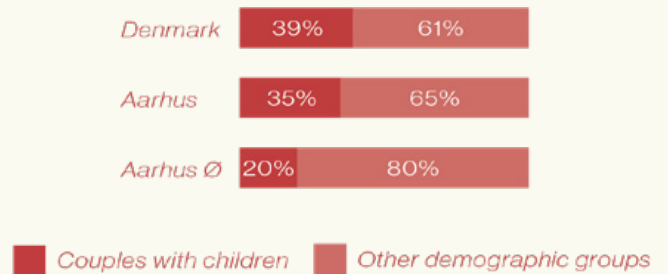


Figure 106: Couples with children share of population.

When looking at household compositions, the data shows that only 20% of the residents in this neighborhood are couples or cohabiting individuals with children. This relatively low proportion of families with children implies that the area is predominantly occupied by singles, roommates, or couples without dependents, which aligns with the high concentration of younger residents.

## Housing

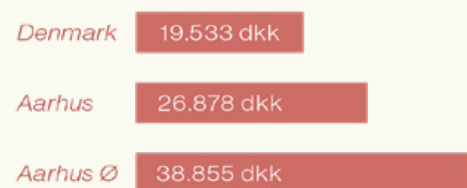


Figure 107: Average housing price per sq.m.

The economic baseline for housing in the area reflects its location and urban context. The average square meter price for residential properties is valued at 38.855 DKK based on 2020 pricing.

All demographics information is taken from NabolagsAtlas. (Department of Built Environment at Aalborg University, n.d.)

# Conclusion

Existing communities and local groups at Pier 3 should be protected while creating space for new communities and activities to emerge over time.

Large-scale development should be balanced with grassroots initiatives to support an active and lived-in neighbourhood throughout the year.

Large asphalt surfaces should be transformed into green and sheltered public spaces with direct connections to the water.

The harbor's raw character should be preserved by supporting small businesses, recreation, and everyday waterfront life.

Human-scale environments should be prioritized through comfortable and inviting public spaces that encourage people to stay, meet, and socialize.

The neighbourhood should be accessible and inclusive for different ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

Social and student housing should be explicitly integrated into the development to maintain affordable living opportunities.

# Concept



03

This chapter connects the main analysis findings to the design proposal for Pier 3. Through a SWOT analysis, key spatial conditions were evaluated to preserve the waterfront and transform infrastructural barriers.

This shaped the concept of Soft Pier, which focuses on creating a gentle transition from the city to the harbor. The design is guided by a series of spatial criteria and design principles derived from the analysis:

Pier fabric, bridging the contrasting urban fabrics surrounding the site; Communities, fostering informal encounters and universal design; Recreational value, ensuring accessible connections to water, greenery, and play; Sense of belonging, retaining maritime identity through inventory and references to the site's industrial heritage.

The chapter concludes by outlining the design driver leading to the final proposal.

# Design process

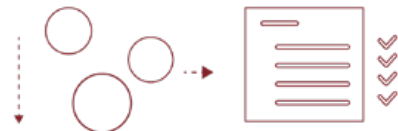
## **Brainstorming & Context**

The process begins with open brainstorming and the sharing of early ideas. These initial concepts are then grounded site analysis and research into the local context and existing conditions of Pier 3.



## **Themes & Criteria**

Findings from the research are organized into the key themes: urban continuity, livability, and communities. These themes are used to define the project's problem statement and establish the design criteria to guide the proposal.



## **Ideation & Collaboration**

Based on the identified themes and conditions, a range of concepts are developed through sketching and discussion. The ideas are then continuously evaluated, combined, and refined in relation to the design criteria.



## **Prototyping & Testing**

The refined concepts are translated into a masterplan. The design is tested through drawings, modelling, simulations, and human-scale evaluations, allowing for continuous adjustments.



## **Criteria & Finalization**

The final proposal is evaluated through the toolbox of spatial and design principles. The process concludes with a cohesive masterplan supported by spatial representations and visualizations.



Sketches from the design process can be found in appendix F.

Figure 108: Design process diagram.

# SWOT

A SWOT analysis was used early in the process to structure the initial site observations and identify the main spatial conditions affecting the area. Rather than documenting every detail, this analysis focused on the most recurring qualities and challenges connected to Aarhus Ø and Pier 3.

The method helped categorize the existing strengths of the site, the weaknesses limiting everyday urban life, the opportunities for future development, and the threats that could negatively affect the long-term quality of the area.

The analysis also became a tool for defining priorities within the project. Existing qualities such as the waterfront location and active local communities became important to preserve and strengthen, while issues such as fragmentation, harsh microclimates, and infrastructural barriers highlighted areas requiring further design attention.

By organizing these conditions into clear categories, the SWOT analysis helped establish an early roadmap for the design process and the overall direction of the proposal.



Figure 109: SWOT analysis.

# Site-specific interventions

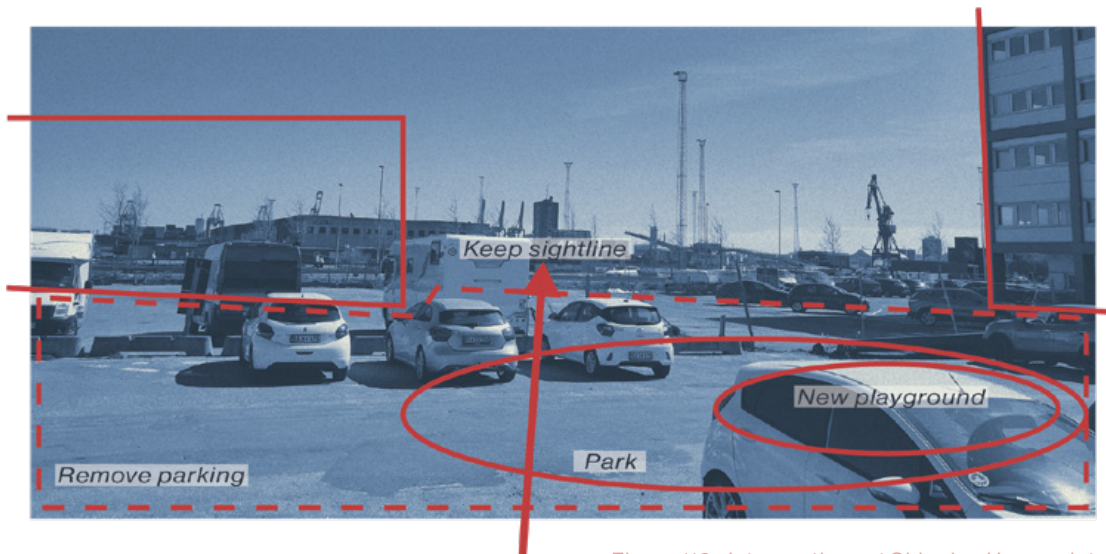


Figure 110: Interventions at Shipping House plot.

Currently functioning as a parking lot, this space should become a green park featuring a robust playground. By preserving the

Shipping House and framing the site with new buildings, a direct sightline to Lodstårnet is preserved.



Figure 111: Interventions at the water edge.

The terrain of Pier 3 should be elevated as part of a climate adaptation strategy. A new waterfront edge with rocks and native plants should create new

opportunities to experience marine life, while rolling green hills can form a smooth connection between green and blue infrastructure.

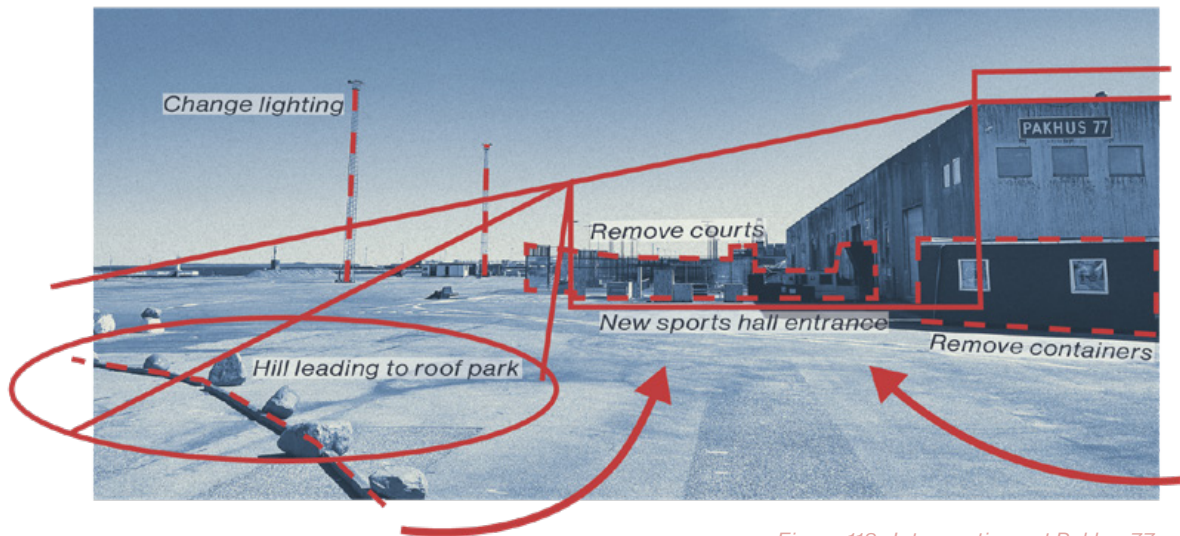


Figure 112: Interventions at Pakhus77.

The active gathering spot is strengthened through a new extension north of Pakhus 77. This permanent structure provides

more interior space for the sports communities, lowering the need for temporary containers, and features a green roof park.

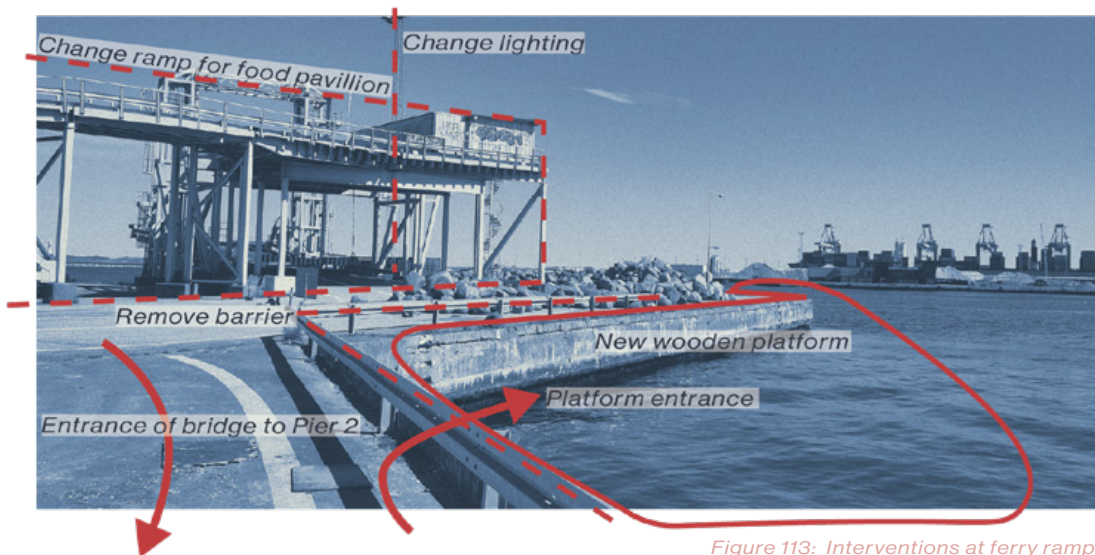


Figure 113: Interventions at ferry ramp.

The sunniest part of the pier should be activated for recreational use. New platforms for sunbathing and swimming create a stronger connection to the water. The old

ferry ramp should be removed, and lighting should be upgraded to transform the space into an inviting entrance from the new bridge connecting Pier 3 to Pier 2.

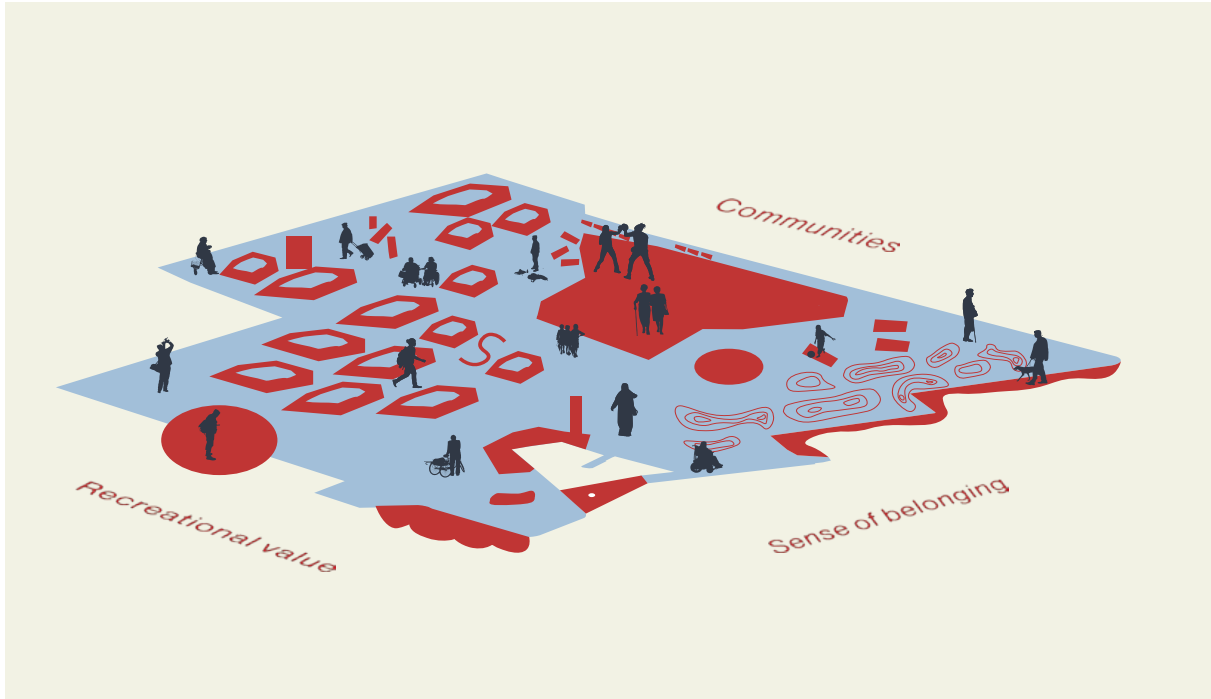


Figure 114: Concept diagram.

## Concept

Soft Pier prioritizes human scale and the sensory rhythms of everyday life by refining the urban layout to create a gentle transition from the historic center to the harbor. This softness centers on an adaptable environment designed for the pedestrian, where the quality of togetherness is prioritized over monumental starchitecture.

Within the theme of Communities, the concept emphasizes active ground floors and meeting places to ensure that street-level spaces remain accessible and inviting. The ground floor is understood as a tactile and social interface for local shops, activities, and communities, supporting interaction and informal public life.

Recreational Values are integrated through direct and intuitive access to water and greenery, alongside varied spaces for play and rest. Together, these elements create a flexible urban infrastructure that supports the physical and mental well-being of different age groups and lifestyles.

Finally, a Sense of Belonging is established by connecting old and new through human scale. By extending the existing urban grain and introducing soft edges such as transitional buffer zones, green courtyards, and welcoming entrances, Pier 3 is envisioned as natural extension of Aarhus, anchored in the intimate experience of the pedestrian.

## Vision

The vision for Pier 3 transforms a transitional barrier into a unifying destination connecting historic Aarhus with Aarhus Ø. Driven by the Soft Pier concept, the design softens heavy infrastructure to prioritize an intimate, human-scaled pedestrian experience. By weaving together active ground floors, accessible waterfronts, and green recreational areas, the pier acts as a shared urban axis. Rooted in the site's maritime identity, it provides an inclusive and adaptable urban fabric supporting everyday public life, local communities, and year-round recreation.

# Spatial criteria

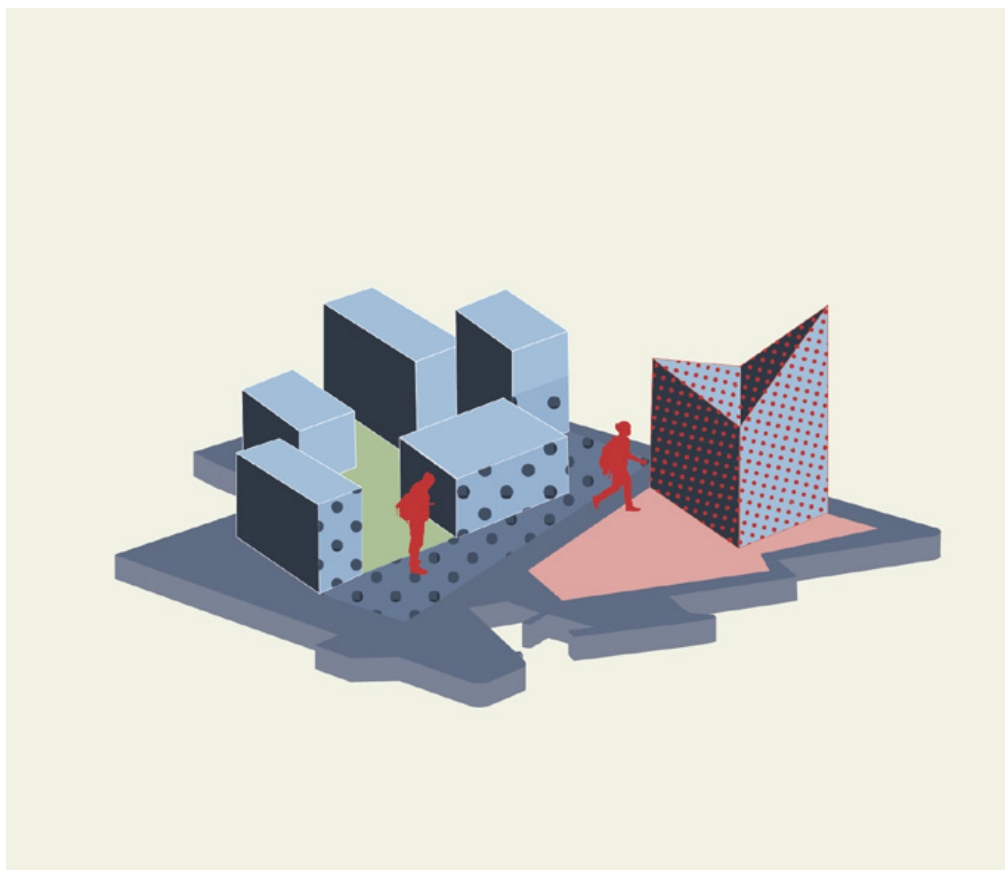


Figure 115: Spatial criteria diagram.

## Pier fabric

The pier should function as an evolving arrangement of streets and spaces, a functional fabric supporting public life and a living cultural landscape shaped by everyday use. A cohesive design language should extend from the city center through the pier

and towards Aarhus Ø, weaving the two areas together. By establishing a familiar and shared spatial language, the design should support a diverse range of communities and activities across the site.



## Mixed uses

Mix housing, shops, and workspaces so streets stay lively and safe at all hours with constant eyes on the street.

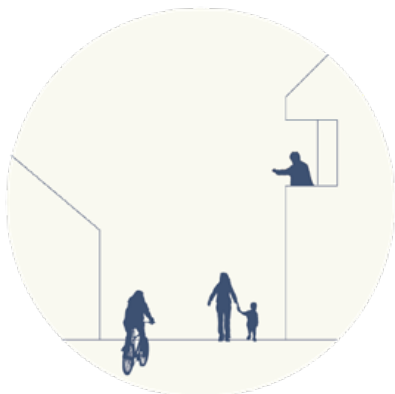
*Figure 116: Mixed uses diagram.*



## Grid and grain

Match the city center's grid and grain for a 5 km/h walking speed and make clear sightlines that naturally guide pedestrians to the waterfront.

*Figure 117: Grid and grain diagram.*



## Human scale

Cap buildings at four floors and match historic Aarhus block sizes to preserve sunlight and street connections.

*Figure 118: Human scale diagram.*

# Design principles

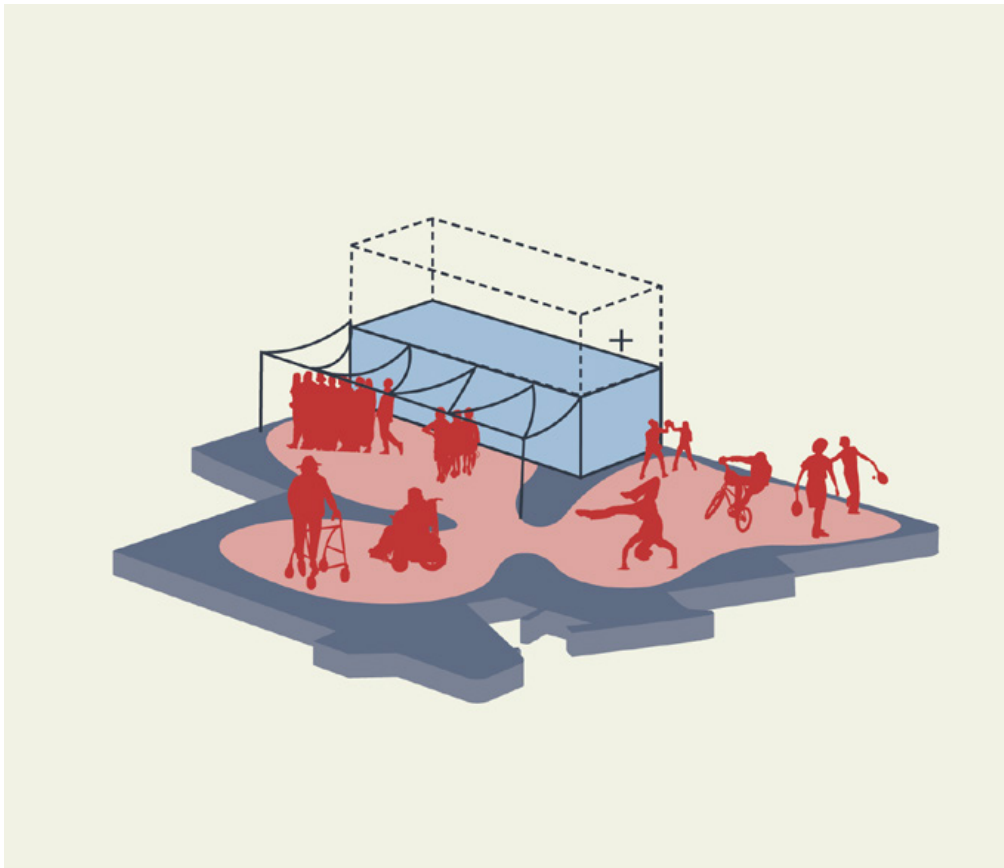


Figure 119: Design principles - Communities diagram.

## Communities

Community design fosters informal encounters, shared activities, and everyday public life through human-scale spaces and collaborative placemaking. Pier 3 should support this by establishing flexible public

spaces, adaptable containers and furniture, and temporary elements that allow different communities to shape and use the site over time. Supporting coexistence and a diverse urban identity should help minimize areas of conflict.



## Universal Design

Create flat and barrier-free connections with tactile paving and clear lighting to support equal access and mobility across the site.

*Figure 120: Universal Design diagram.*



## Flexibility

Use movable and non-stigmatizing furniture, accessible playgrounds, and public facilities that support adaptability and build a sense of ownership.

*Figure 121: Flexibility diagram.*



## Personification

Allow residents and users to personalize entrances and shared spaces through planting and furniture to strengthen local identity.

*Figure 122: Personification diagram.*

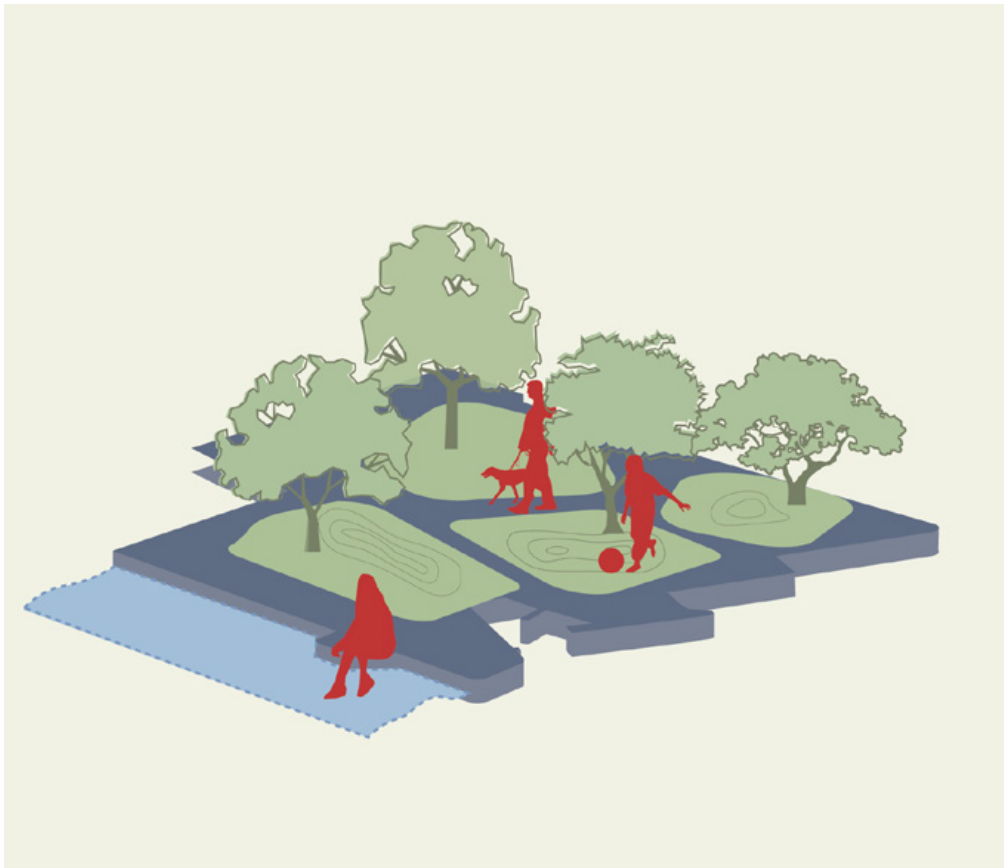


Figure 123: Design principles - Recreational value diagram.

## Recreational value

Recreational value relies on accessible spaces that invite social interaction, integrate nature, and are shaped by everyday users. Pier 3 should support this by ensuring water access for both the local neighborhood and the wider city of

Aarhus. New spaces for activities in, at, and on the water, together with surrounding green areas, should support a lively and active environment throughout the year. The design should also strengthen biodiversity and accommodate a diverse range of users.



## Water connection

Build gentle ramps, terraces, and coastal habitats to create easier access to the sea and strengthen the sensory connection to the waterfront.

*Figure 124: Water connection diagram.*



## Greenery

Introduce hills, native coastal planting, and a 30% tree canopy goal to create more green spaces in the area while supporting biodiversity and public health.

*Figure 125: Greenery diagram.*



## Activities

Establish playgrounds, sports areas, and well-lit public spaces across the pier to encourage everyday recreation and healthy habits at all hours.

*Figure 126: Activities diagram.*

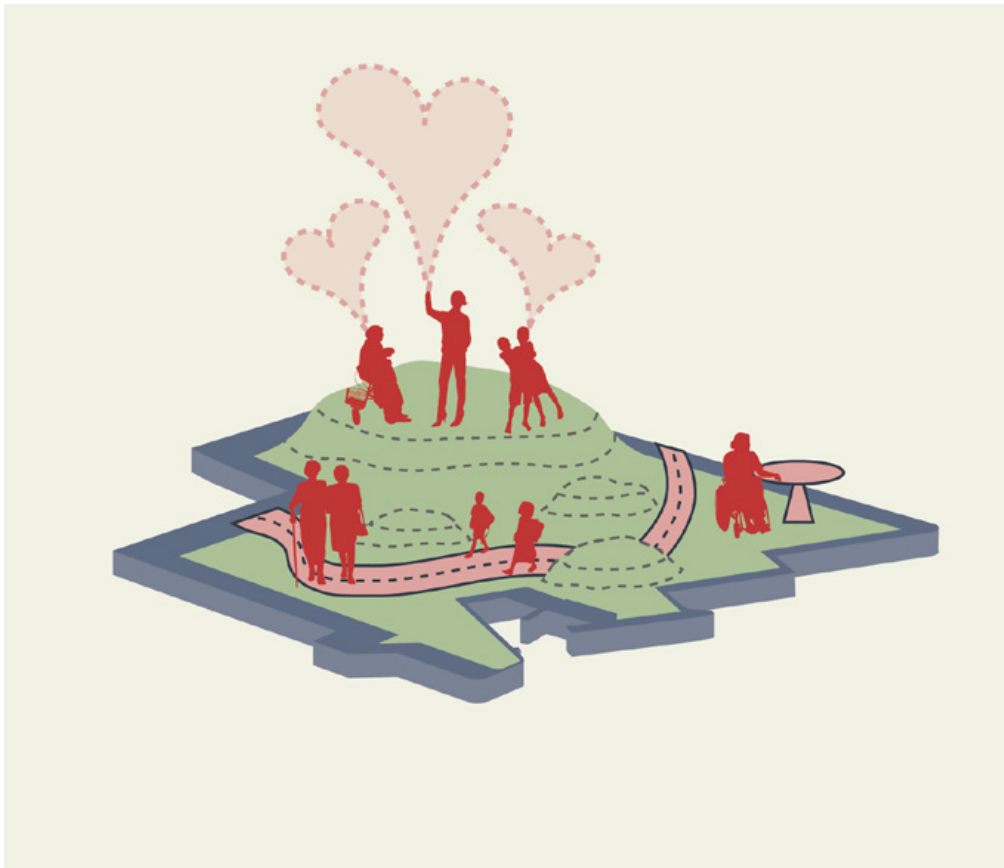


Figure 127: Design principles - Sense of belonging diagram.

## Sense of belonging

A sense of belonging grows from legible environments, social mixing, and spaces people can actively shape. Pier 3 should support this by preserving elements of Aarhus Ø's industrial identity and reusing historic buildings and materials such as

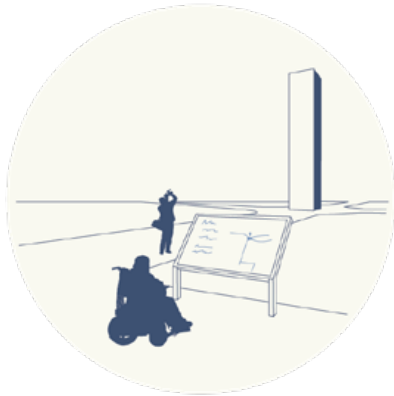
shipping containers. Blending the harbor's character with the city center creates a familiar and distinct spatial language. Signage, public art, and installations should make the site's cultural history visible and accessible in everyday use.



## Landscape

Shape green hills across the site to function as windbreaks and playful spaces, helping divide the large open areas into smaller intimate environments.

*Figure 128: Landscape diagram.*



## Wayfinding

Use tactile surfaces, well-designed lighting, public art, and interpretive signage to support intuitive navigation and make the site easier to move through for different users.

*Figure 129: Wayfinding diagram.*



## Inventory

Reuse shipping containers, rusty steel, mooring bollards, and ropes as seating, lighting, art, and public elements to reflect the industrial history and maritime spirit.

*Figure 130: Inventory diagram.*



# Design driver

The design driver diagram synthesizes the spatial criteria and the three core principles, Communities, Recreational Value, and Sense of Belonging, into a single framework. It illustrates how human-scale criteria, such as a recognizable grid and mixed-use urban fabric, form the physical foundation of the project. Layered on top of this are the design principles: supporting inclusive communities through flexible spaces, enhancing recreational value through direct access to water and greenery, and anchoring local identity through reused maritime inventory and wind-mitigating landscapes.

By translating the analysis and conceptual goals into concrete design drivers, the framework moves the project from abstract planning to spatial intervention. This synthesis informs site-specific strategies, such as establishing a permanent community hub at Pakhus77 and activating the sunny pier for everyday recreation. Together, these principles aim to shape Pier 3 into a cohesive urban anchor that leads into the final design proposal presented in the next chapter.

# Design



04

The design proposal for Pier 3 begins with the masterplan, development timeline and a section overview of the site. Afterwards, the chapter is structured around the project's spatial criteria and design principles.

Pier fabric explores the proposal's spatial qualities through zoning strategies, block form development, and illustrations of how residential and mixed-use streets are organized across the pier.

The focus then shifts towards communities, highlighting central squares, gathering spaces, and active urban environments designed for street play and water sports.

Recreational value and connections to the water are emphasized through green and blue infrastructure extending throughout the site.

Finally, sense of belonging is explored through carefully planned urban inventory, flexible public spaces, and clear wayfinding across streets, bridges, and waterfront connections.

# Masterplan

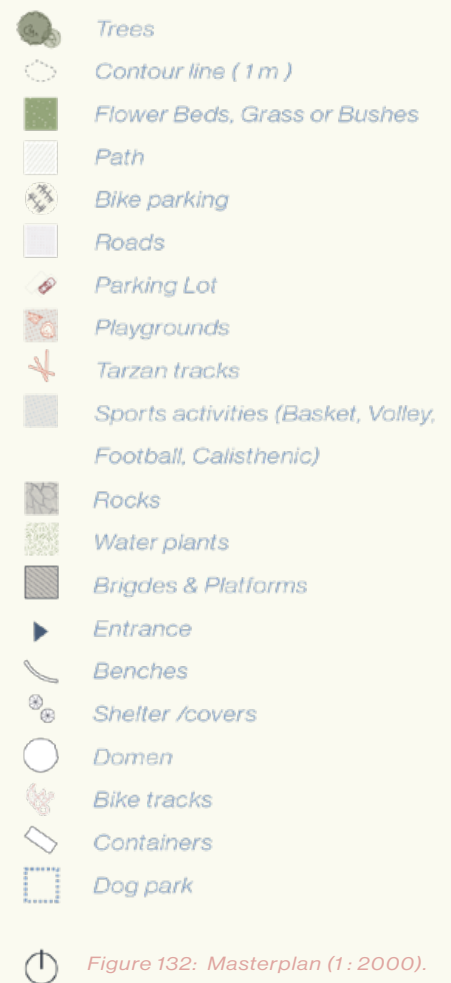
Pier 3 sits where the city meets the bay. Crossing Bernhardt Jensens Blvd, visitors enter a space where everyday urban life blends with the harbor landscape. The masterplan is shaped around strengthening that identity.

Important historical elements are preserved, including Lodstårnet and Pakhus77. Pier 3 Kvarteret forms the residential core of the proposal, while Shipping House Kvarteret reflects the harbor's past and creates a green connection towards Træskibshavn.

Rather than locking the area into a fixed design, the masterplan introduces flexible spaces able to adapt and evolve over time. Cykeløen functions as a multifunctional space for cycling classes, street markets, and temporary activities, while Pier 3 Torvet and the community house create a shared gathering point. The street play area further strengthens flexibility and community involvement.

Creating connections to the water is a central part of the proposal. Bassin 7 functions as an active water sports area, while Bassin 5 offers a calmer recreational environment. Pakhus77 becomes PaRkhus77 through the introduction of a green rooftop landscape connected to Kystparken, which extends nature towards the waterfront through green hills, coastal vegetation, and bridges above the rocky shoreline. Finally, a maritime, nature, and science museum connected to Lodstårnet expands the different ways of experiencing and engaging with the water.

Overall, the masterplan aims to weave Aarhus Ø together with the historic city, create new opportunities for public life along the waterfront, and strengthen the maritime and community-driven identity of Pier 3.





Shipping House Kvarteret

Bassin 7

Water sports

Street play

Bernhardt Jensens Blvd.

Pier 3 Torvet

PaRkhus77 Roof

Terraced view point

Kystparken

Pier 3 Kvarteret

Cykeløen

Bassin 5

Museum

Fishing platform

Pavillion

0 50 100m

# Timeline

The Pier 3 timeline prioritizes preserving existing communities by first establishing temporary structures to accommodate them during construction. Areas IV, V, and VI will be temporarily closed in order to elevate the terrain as part of the flood protection. Area III, the water park, can begin earlier since much of its construction water-based and less dependent on the terrain works.

On land, Area IV (PaRkhus77) is prioritized first. Finishing it early allows part of the site to reopen so the communities can move from the temporary facilities into their permanent locations. Construction then shifts to Area VI (Basin 5), which is faster to complete than

the denser Area V. Once the communities are settled in Area IV, work on Area I (Shipping House Kvarteret) can begin. Meanwhile, Area II, containing the primary road infrastructure, is phased to accommodate construction machinery while maintaining public access to active parts of Pier 3.

Overall, this Gantt-based schedule is designed to minimize disruption throughout the development process. By prioritizing open and currently unoccupied spaces first, the existing communities are able to remain connected to the site during construction rather than being fully displaced from Pier 3.

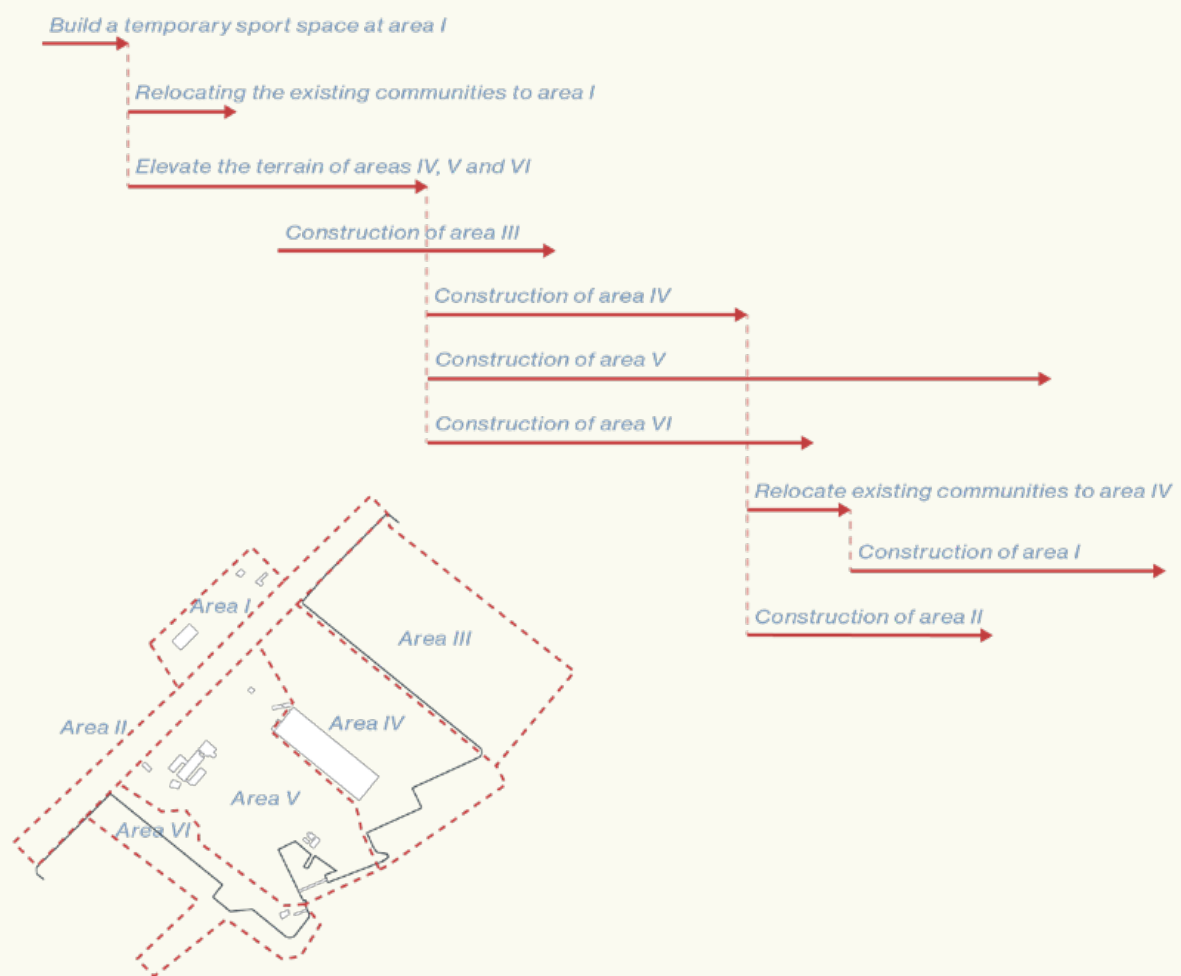
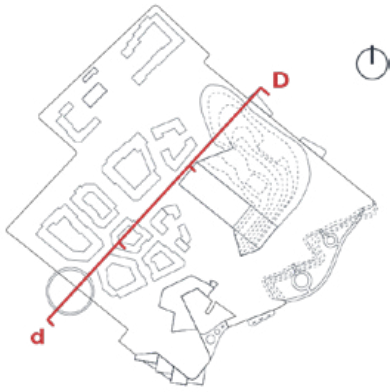
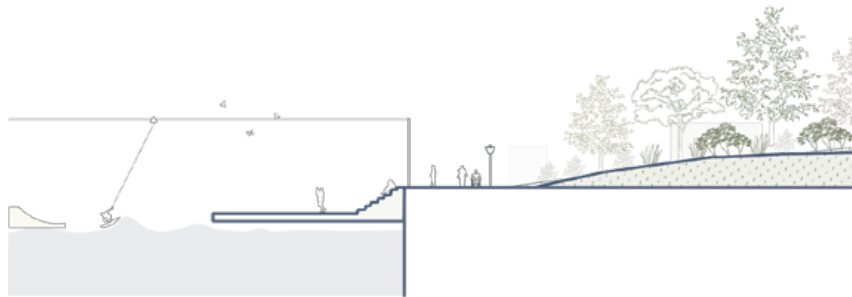


Figure 133: Timeline diagram.



Watersport complex



Accessible parking

Section D-d across Pier 3 showcases a dynamic maritime neighborhood. To the north, the waterfront features a water sports complex and a large rooftop hill park. Pier 3 Torvet and the Community house are at the center of the section, anchoring the area and promoting a resilient and inclusive urban environment. To the south, the urban fabric integrates mixed-use blocks with intimate courtyards and active ground floors. Bassin 5 plaza features a public sea bath and aquatic facilities, enhancing recreation and the connection to water.

Pier 3 Kvarteret



Active ground floor

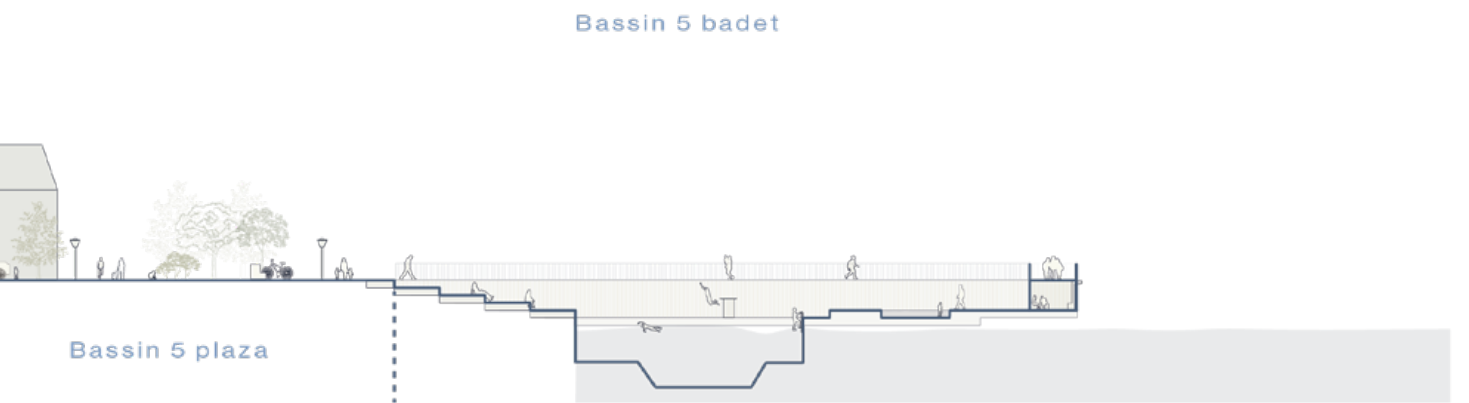
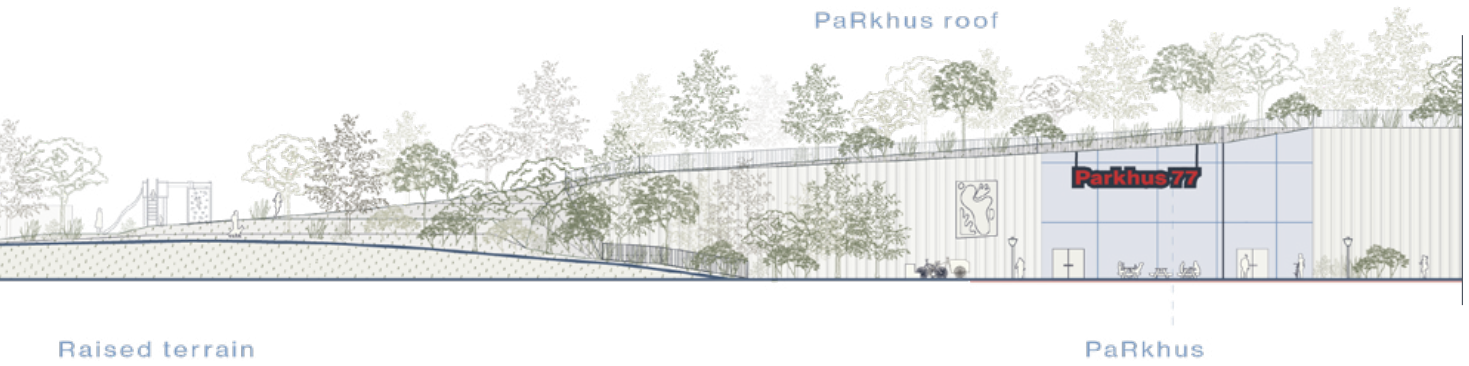


Figure 134: Section D-d - Pier 3 proposal (1 : 500).

# Pier fabric



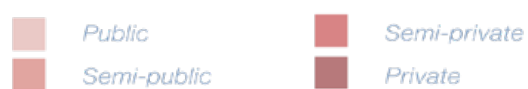
- |   |             |   |                         |
|---|-------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Residential |  | Commercial ground floor |
|  | Offices     |  | Public                  |
|  | Communities |   |                         |

## Zoning

The site is divided into distinct zones, each serving a clear spatial and programmatic purpose. Commercial ground-floor functions are placed along the primary pathways to encourage daily activity and social interaction. Residential and office zones provide areas for housing and work, while community zones promote shared activities, local engagement, and flexible use. Public zones ensure open access and reinforce the civic role of the waterfront.

Towards the center of Pier 3, these zones begin to overlap and connect, creating opportunities for interaction between residents, visitors, and communities. Through thoughtful spatial organization, the design proposal balances diverse functions and user needs.

Figure 135: Zoning at Pier 3 diagram.



## Public and private

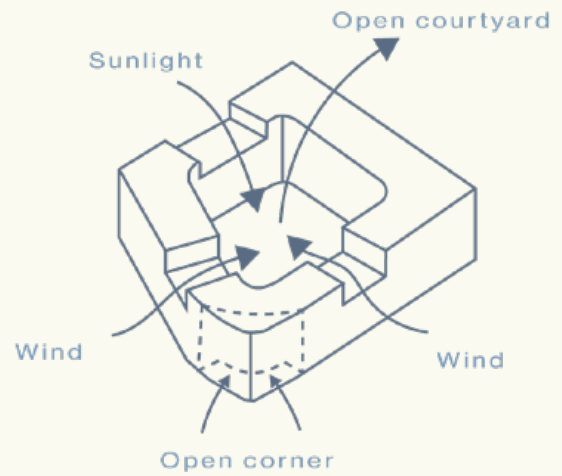
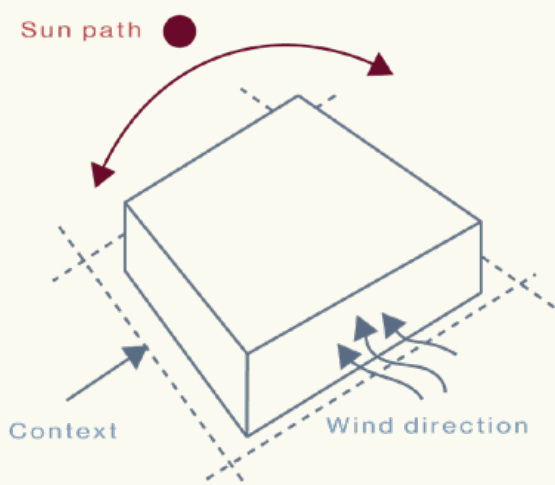
Much of Pier 3 is designed as a publicly accessible space with gradual transitions between public, semi-public, semi-private, and private zones. Parks, plazas, and the main streets are primarily organized as open public spaces. These transitions help create a welcoming atmosphere with a variety of urban experiences.

Areas located closer to the communities naturally feel semi-public, and the building blocks contain private or semi-private

courtyards intended for residents. The spatial hierarchy allows visitors to engage in the active public life of Pier 3 without disrupting the quieter and more secluded spaces within the neighbourhood.

Figure 136: Public and private at Pier 3 diagram.

# Form development

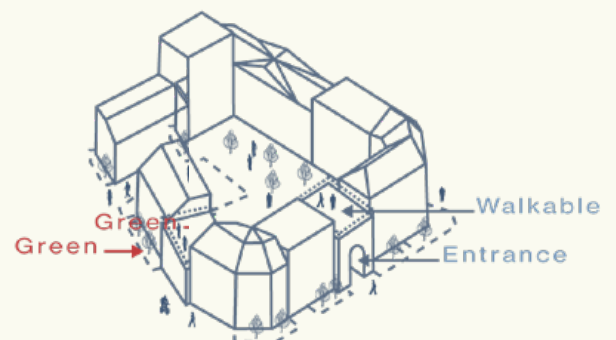
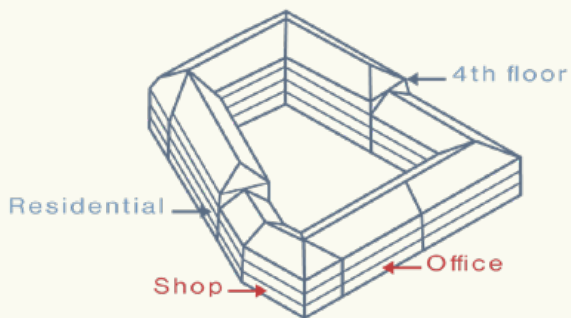


## 1. Initial mass and context

Building masses are positioned to fit site boundaries and oriented to respond to sun and wind patterns.

## 2. Sculpting and environment

Volumes are shaped to create courtyards and internal spaces. Daylight and comfortable microclimate are prioritized.



## 3. Multifunctional layering

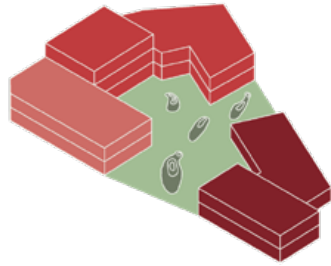
Stacking different functions and variations in building heights create a diverse and mixed-use urban fabric.

## 4. Walkable and integrated

Breaking the larger mass down into smaller, interconnected buildings. The structures are linked by walkable pathways, public gathering spaces, and integrated landscaping.

Figure 137: Blocks form development diagram.

# Block types

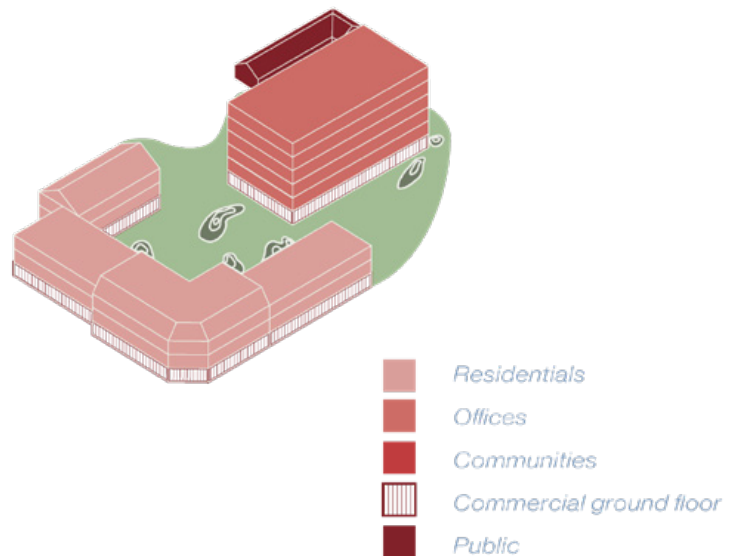


The non-residential block offers a soft transition into Pier 3 Kvarteret. It accommodates offices, a day care and kindergarten, and two buildings for the community house that function as the social heart of the site. The block includes a semi-private garden and playground, while the daytime-active functions and characteristic courtyard hills establish a shared landscape language across Pier 3.

Figure 138: Non-residential block diagram.

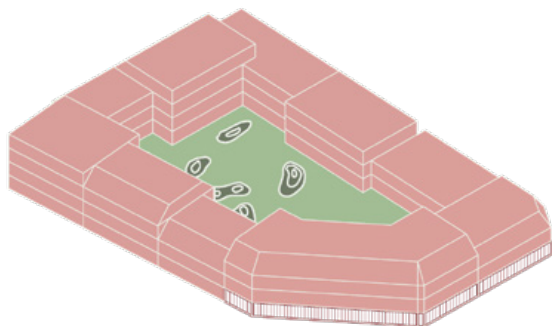
Shipping House Kvarteret combines the existing tall office building with a public building and residential functions. The housing is arranged in a U-shaped formation, creating a public outward edge and semi-private courtyard. While the Shipping House reduces daytime privacy, the integrated courtyard hills help create spatial enclosure. The mix of residents, workers, and public functions ensures activity throughout both day and evening.

Figure 139: Mixed-use block diagram.



The enclosed residential block consists of 11 buildings, two of which include commercial ground floors. At its center, a private courtyard provides a secluded green space for residents. The integrated landscape hills strengthen the connection to nature while continuing the shared landscape language that visually ties the site together.

Figure 140: Residential block diagram.



Appendix G show microclimate studies done during the block design stage.

# Residential street

The residential streets at Pier 3 are designed to encourage everyday interaction between neighbours. Located between the building blocks, these semi-public spaces vary between 10 and 14 meters in width, creating a close eye-to-eye connection between the street and the residential balconies. Low building heights ensure good sunlight conditions throughout the day. Regular traffic is restricted, allowing access primarily for service and permitted cars. The streets function as a safe, shared space for walking and cycling.

Nature flows into the residential streets and courtyards, creating a shared landscape language throughout Pier 3 together with Kystparken. Cobblestone paving gradually transitions into grass, perennial planting, and trees integrated within the street spaces. Integrated Tenji blocks support accessibility and safe navigation for visually impaired users. Benches and bicycle parking further support everyday social life and informal gathering.

The intention is for the spaces between the buildings to function as a green and welcoming living environment where social interaction becomes a natural part of daily life at Pier 3.



Figure 141: Residential street reference photos.



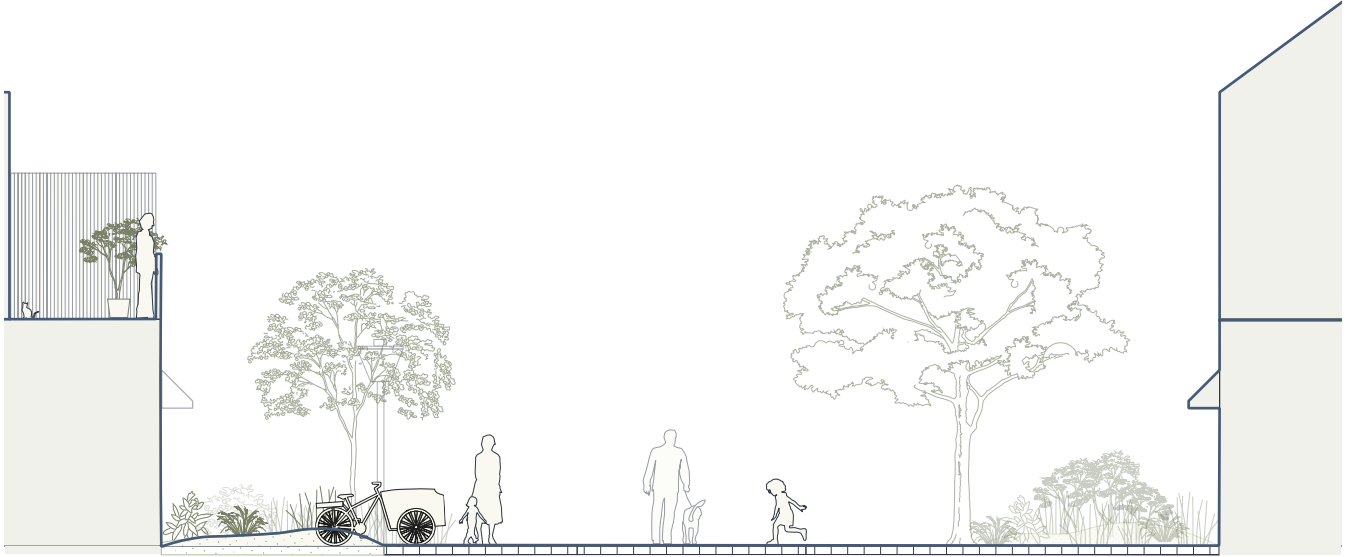


Figure 142: Section E-e - Residential street (1:100).

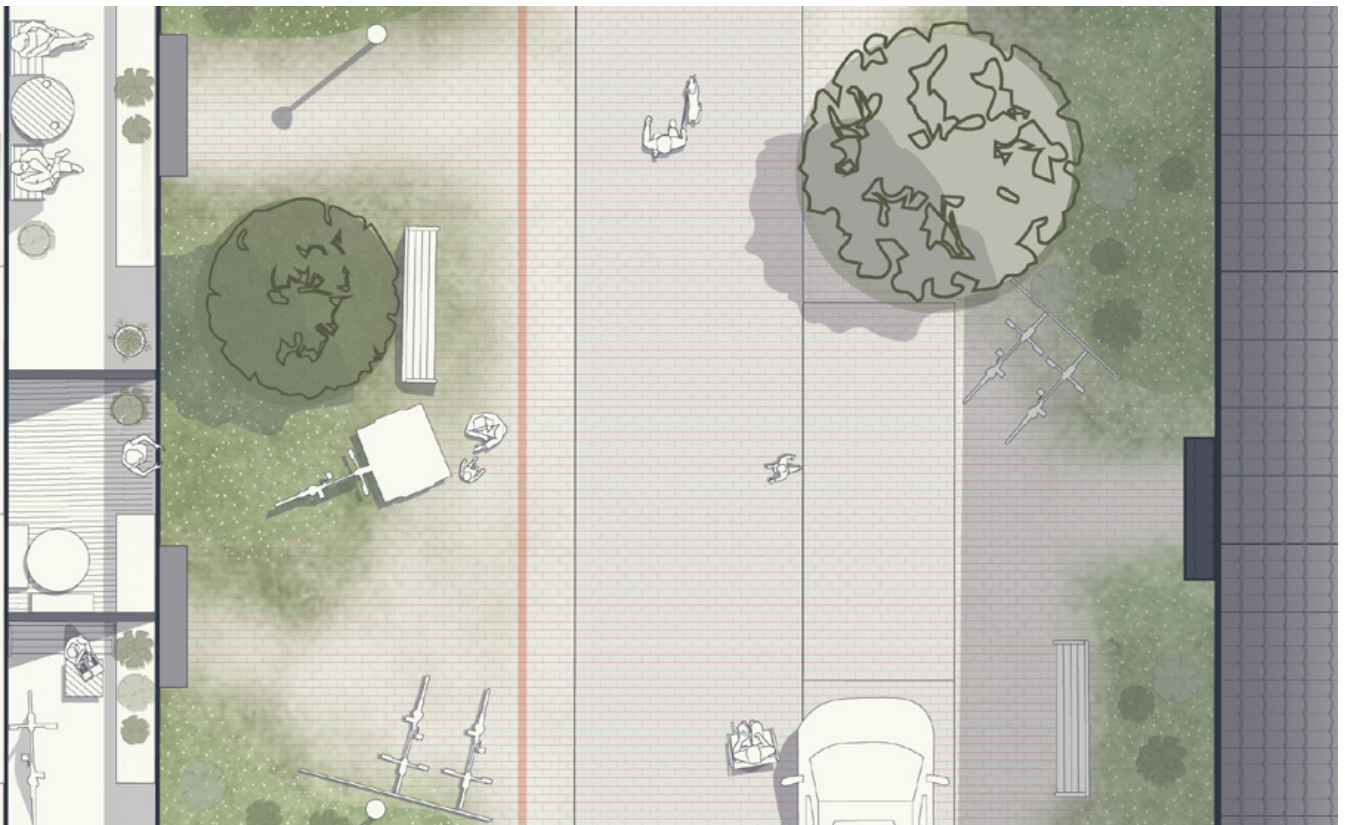


Figure 143: Residential street plan (1:100).



Figure 144: Mixed-use street reference photos.

## Mixed-use street

The mixed-use streets at the center of Pier 3 Kvarteret function as a contemporary interpretation of the classic Danish gågade. Open commercial ground floors combined with apartments above create active and lively public spaces. They vary between 12 and 14 meters in width, maintaining close visual connections and a human-scale atmosphere. Pedestrians and cyclists are prioritized along the cobblestone streets, while service vehicles are only permitted at specific times. Integrated Tenji blocks support accessibility and safe navigation.

Greenery is integrated both at ground level and in raised planting beds that also function as public seating. Residents and visitors can gather on benches or at outdoor café seating throughout the streets. While building heights reach up to four floors, the streets are laid out to allow generous sunlight into the public

spaces. The trees and building layout further help reduce wind exposure and improve comfort. Overall, the intention is to create an active and social neighbourhood environment centered around restaurants, cafés, bars, and everyday public life.





Figure 145: Section F-f - Mixed-use street (1:100).

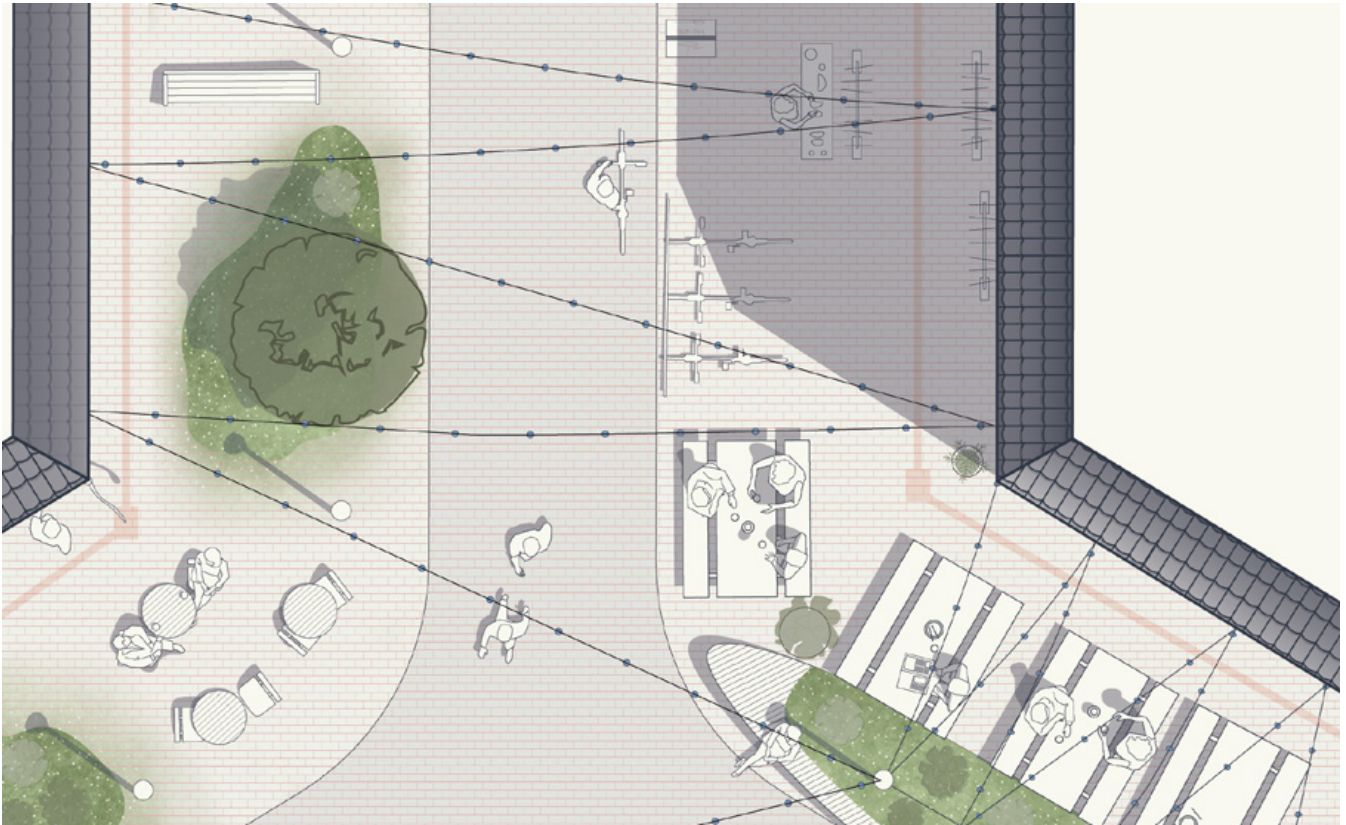


Figure 146: Mixed-use street plan (1:100).

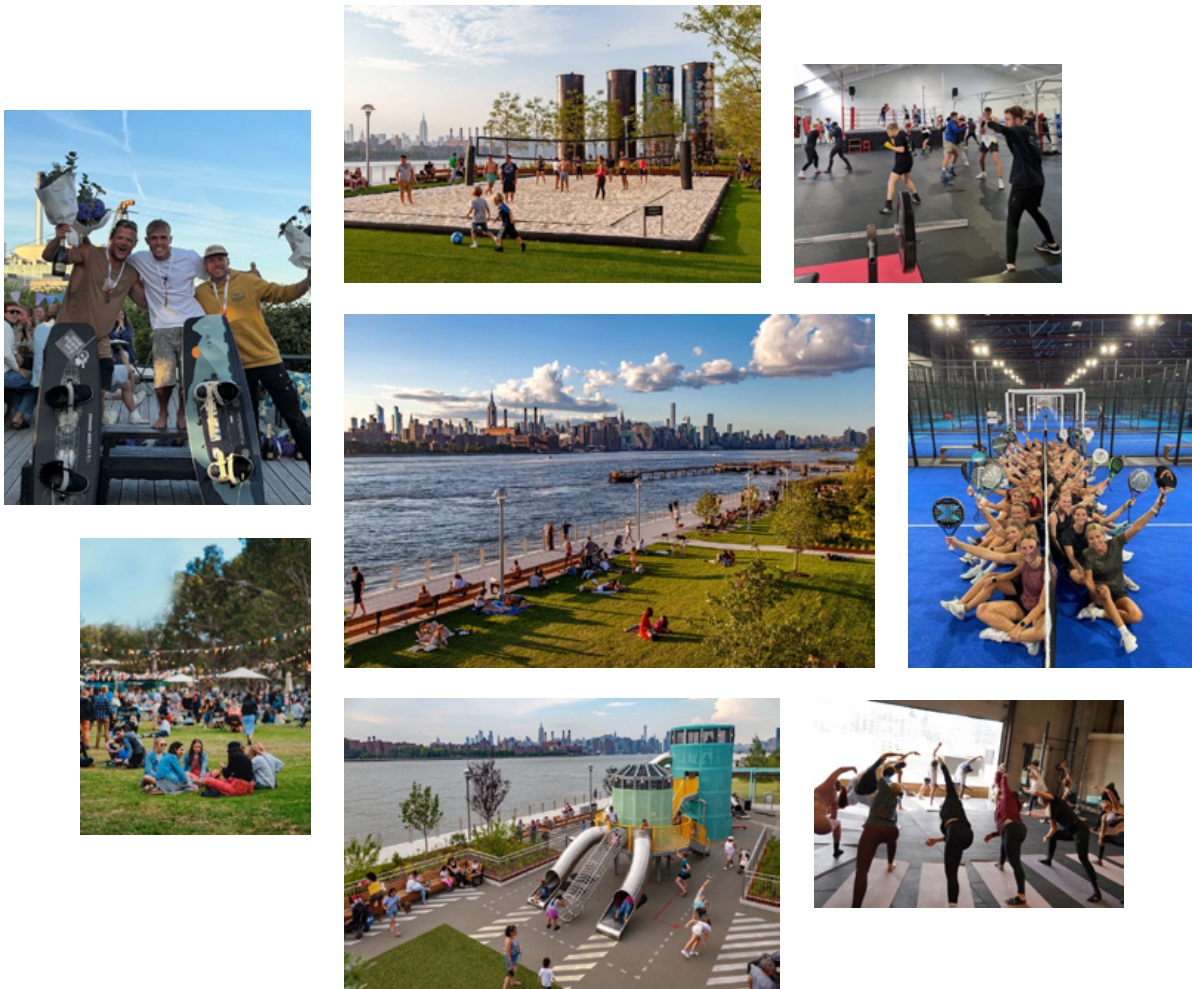


Figure 147: Communities reference photos.

# Communities

Preserving existing communities at Pier 3 and making room for new ones is vital for long-term sustainable urban development. Grassroots groups act as incubators for civic engagement, local culture, and innovation. Instead of top-down planning that risks creating homogenized cityscapes, these communities support bottom-up growth and can contribute to a unique urban identity for Pier 3.

Inclusive environments are an important aspect of improving the quality of life. They can counteract loneliness, boost mental well-being, and foster a strong sense of belonging. By providing flexible and adaptable spaces, Pier 3 can support continuous social and entrepreneurial growth. Integrating these existing and emerging communities into the development of Pier 3 helps preserve the social and cultural qualities already present while allowing new forms of everyday urban life to emerge over time.



- |   |                               |    |                           |
|---|-------------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Water sports                  | 10 | Calisthenic               |
| 2 | Skateboarding / Street biking | 11 | New Social Groups         |
| 3 | Emerging Sports & Culture     | 12 | Sauna Club                |
| 4 | Dorms                         | 13 | Shopping street community |
| 5 | Domen                         | 14 | Volleyball                |
| 6 | Padel, Boxing, Sport X.       | 15 | Community House           |
| 7 | Basketball & Football         | 16 | Museum                    |
| 8 | New Social Groups             | 17 | Cykeløen + Food markets   |
| 9 | Emerging Sports & Culture     | 18 | Fishing community         |

Figure 148: Communities at Pier 3 diagram.

# PaRkhus77

Currently at Pier 3, Pakhus77 functions as a central hub for diverse communities. As the largest existing building on the site, it is preserved and transformed into PaRkhus77. By nearly doubling the ground floor area, existing clubs are provided with larger and improved facilities, while creating space for new communities and activities to emerge over time.

With the recent closure of the Pier 2 Domen, the PaRkhus77 rooftop will now feature a new, double dome. This will turn the roof into an active public landscape alongside a large rooftop playground. Towards the east, a terraced landscape connects the rooftop park to the ground below, functioning as seating, a viewpoint towards the waterfront, harbor cranes, and Lighthouse, as well as an informal event space overlooking the lower grass field.

To the north, the new extension of PaRkhus77 features a large accessible hill providing direct roof access. The hill integrates a sloped playground and gradually extends toward ground level, connecting to two sports courts equipped with containers for community storage.

Although positioned north of the existing Pakhus77, the scale and form of the hill help transform what is currently a predominantly shaded area into a space with improved sunlight exposure throughout the year (see Appendix G). Gentle slopes combined with elevators ensure universal accessibility across the terrain and up to the rooftop. Pathways and smaller trails flow throughout the landscape, creating numerous opportunities for rest, play, and recreation.





Figure 149: PaRkhus77 reference photos.

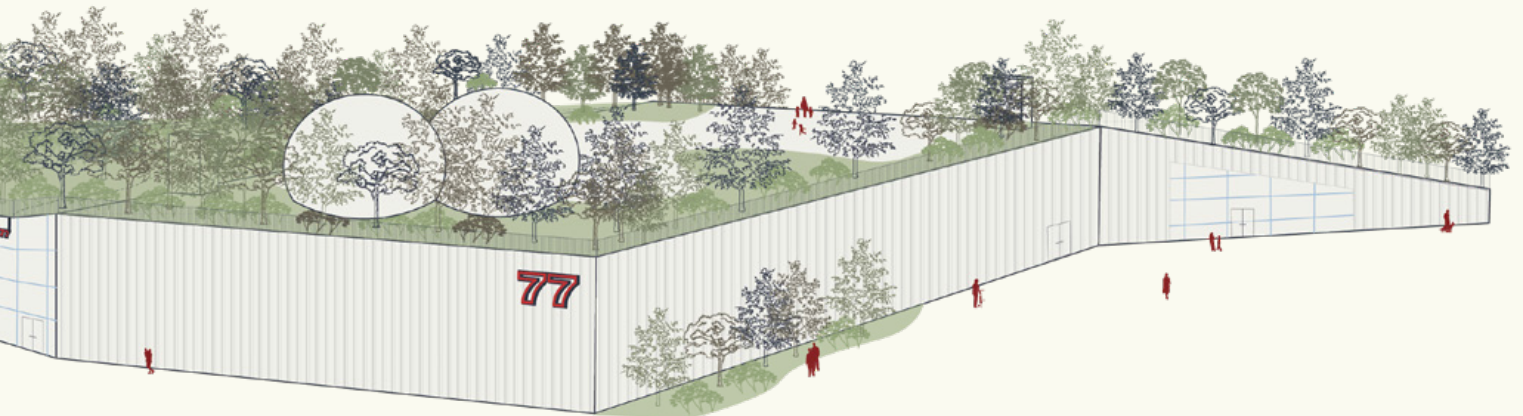


Figure 150: PaRkhus77 perspective view.

# Pier 3 Torvet

The design of Pier 3 Torvet intentionally creates a vibrant and active urban space. While a street passes through the square, its S-shaped curve naturally slows traffic to walking speed. This layout creates protected pockets that serve as buffer zones, filled with greenery, seating, and bicycle parking that support outdoor activity and everyday public life.

To help activate the area from the beginning, a dedicated community house is located at the square. Serving as the central heart for all communities across Pier 3, it provides a space for residents and local actors to organize events, create art, and participate in shaping the future of their neighbourhood.



Figure 151: Pier 3 torvet and Community house reference photos.

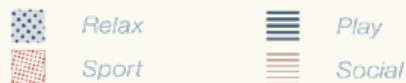


Figure 152: Activities at Pier 3 diagram.

## Activities

Pier 3 is programmed to create a welcoming atmosphere that supports a wide variety of activities and urban experiences. Most recreational and relaxation spaces are located along the waterfront and within the park areas. Sports facilities are primarily concentrated in the northern part of the site around PaRkhus77 and Bassin7, while the south waterfront features beach volleyball courts.

Playgrounds are distributed across the site and offer different forms of play for various age groups. The main social gathering spaces are located around the waterfronts at Bassin 5 and Bassin 7, as well as throughout the central areas of Pier 3, creating opportunities for everyday social interaction, recreation, and community life.

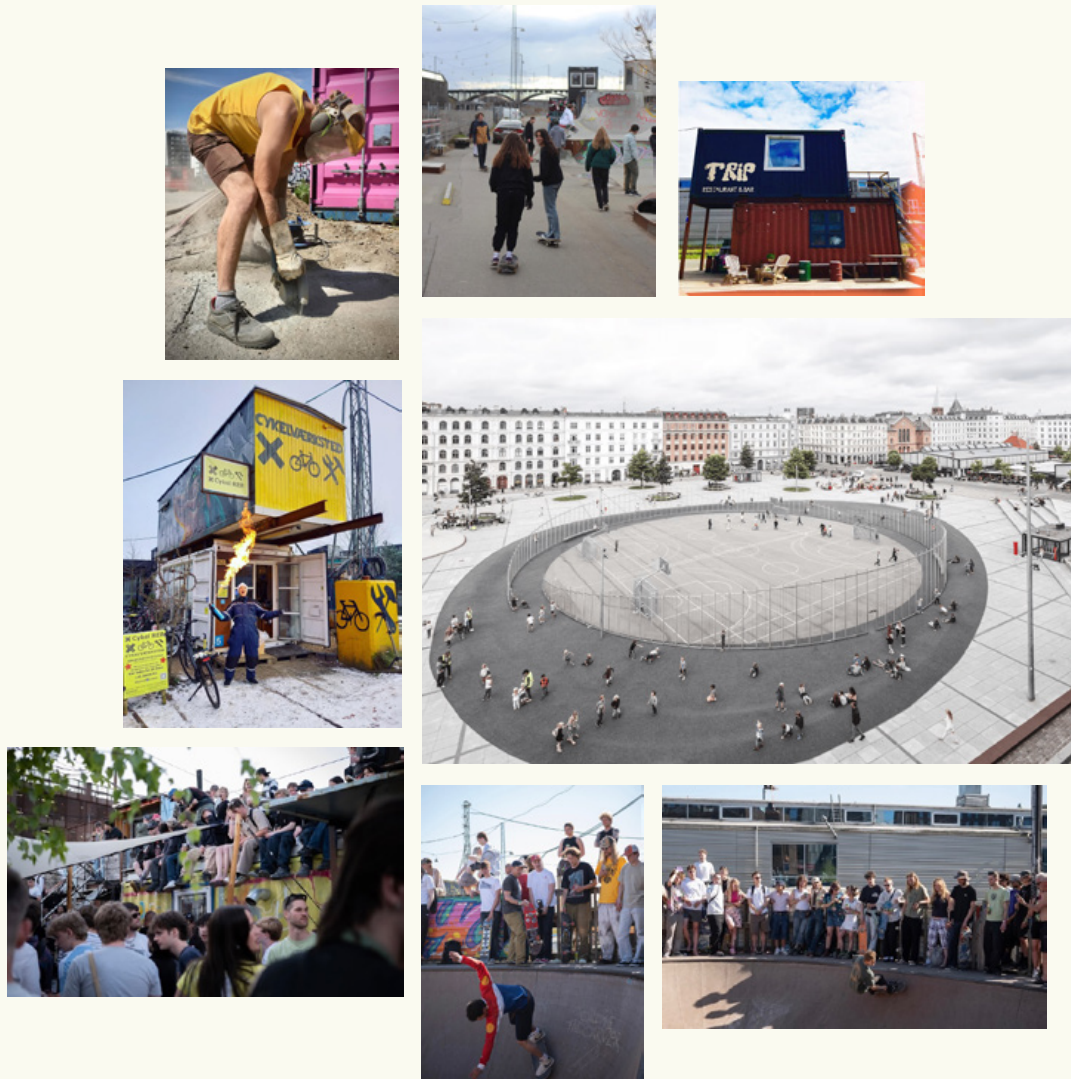


Figure 153: Container park and Street play reference photos.

## Street play

Shipping containers provide an affordable and flexible foundation for grassroots communities. They function as modular spaces for start-ups, workshops, and creative production, allowing activities with noise and experimentation to exist without high overhead costs.

Today, vibrant communities already occupy container structures at Pier 3, making it important to preserve and support this organic growth. The proposal therefore allows local communities to gradually expand throughout

the site, helping maintain an authentic and user-driven environment.

To support this development, a large street play area is introduced for skateboarding, scooters, and other street sports. This inclusive space invites different age groups to participate, practice, and engage with the neighbourhood. By integrating active infrastructure directly alongside the container workspaces, the proposal connects physical activity with the raw and entrepreneurial energy already present at Pier 3.

# Water sports

The water park at Bassin 7 is a central element of the Pier 3 proposal. Building upon the existing wakeboard circuit, the design proposes a significant expansion that creates a larger course allowing more users to participate simultaneously. Complementing this, a versatile floating platform introduces a wide range of leisure and sports water activities.

The wakeboard facility is given a dedicated area, acknowledging the community's long-standing efforts to establish and maintain the

activity at the site through seeking municipal approval. With a highly active group rooted in Aarhus Ø, the circuit also functions as a social attraction where visitors can gather and observe the activities along the waterfront.

Overall, the vibrant water sports zone is designed to support physical activity, social interaction, and direct engagement with the water.



Figure 154: Water sports reference photos.

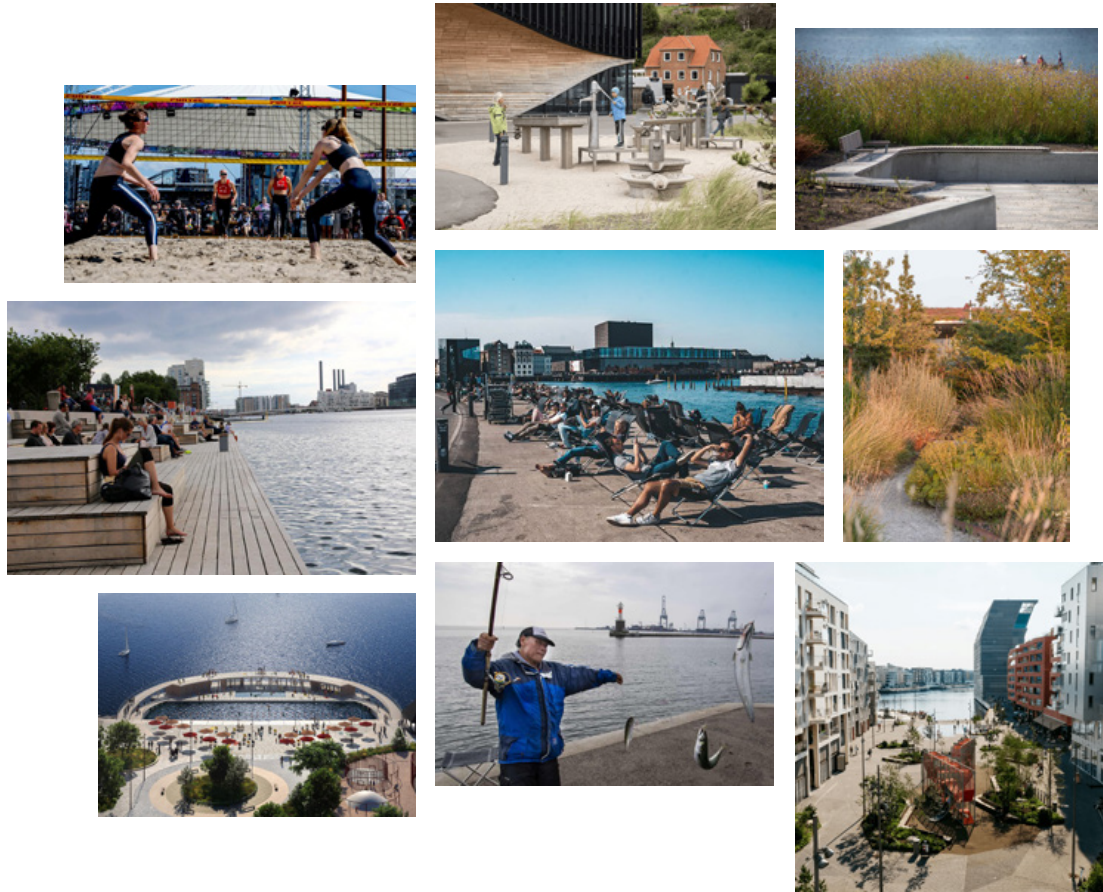


Figure 155: Recreational value reference photos.

# Recreational value

Across Pier 3, a range of recreational activities are strategically distributed to engage both communities and visitors, ensuring spaces for social interaction, recreation, and everyday use. A sea bath and sauna club is placed at Bassin 5, while wooden steps descending towards the water create space for sunbathing and informal gathering. Flexible public spaces with movable furniture support a variety of everyday uses. Different playground typologies are featured across the pier, including wooden nature-inspired Tarzan tracks at Kystparken and a more urban playground in Shipping House Kvarteret. Planter benches made of concrete and wood provide resting spaces throughout the site, alongside a public beach volleyball court located between the museum and Bassin 5.

The recreational green connection weaves throughout Pier 3, linking both smaller and larger spaces. Intimate green paths, pockets of grass, and expansive parks with native vegetation create diverse ways to experience nature across the site. Importantly, these areas directly support the 3-30-300 concept. By incorporating a high density of trees, Pier 3 helps raise the overall tree canopy percentage for the entirety of Aarhus Ø.

These recreational initiatives directly support public health and everyday well-being. By encouraging physical activity, social interaction, and daily contact with nature, the proposal aims to create an environment that actively strengthens both mental and physical well-being.



- |       |                        |          |                                   |
|-------|------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| →     | Major green connection | <b>1</b> | Lodstårnet                        |
| →     | Minor green connection | <b>2</b> | Nature, Science & Maritime museum |
| ■     | Green areas            | <b>3</b> | PaRkhus Roof                      |
| ◄     | View points            | <b>4</b> | Lighthouse                        |
| - - - | Vision lines           | <b>5</b> | The container cranes              |
|       |                        | <b>6</b> | The inner harbor                  |

Figure 156: Recreational value at Pier 3 diagram.

# Connection to water

The view of the eastern waterfront illustrates the network of bridges connecting Pier 3 to its surroundings. The design offers diverse ways to engage with the water, supporting activities such as water sports, swimming, sunbathing, fishing, marine life observation, and visits to the nature, maritime and science museum. A cohesive architectural and landscape language ties the site together through bridge structures, green areas, rolling hills, and winding paths.

Beyond recreation, the proposal aims to strengthen people's relationship with the waterfront by encouraging direct interaction with water and coastal nature. Through these experiences, the design aims to cultivate a stronger sense of belonging and connection to Pier 3.

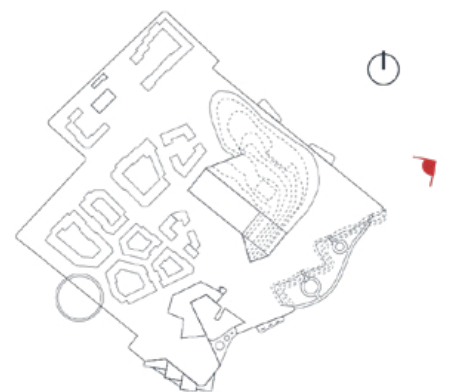
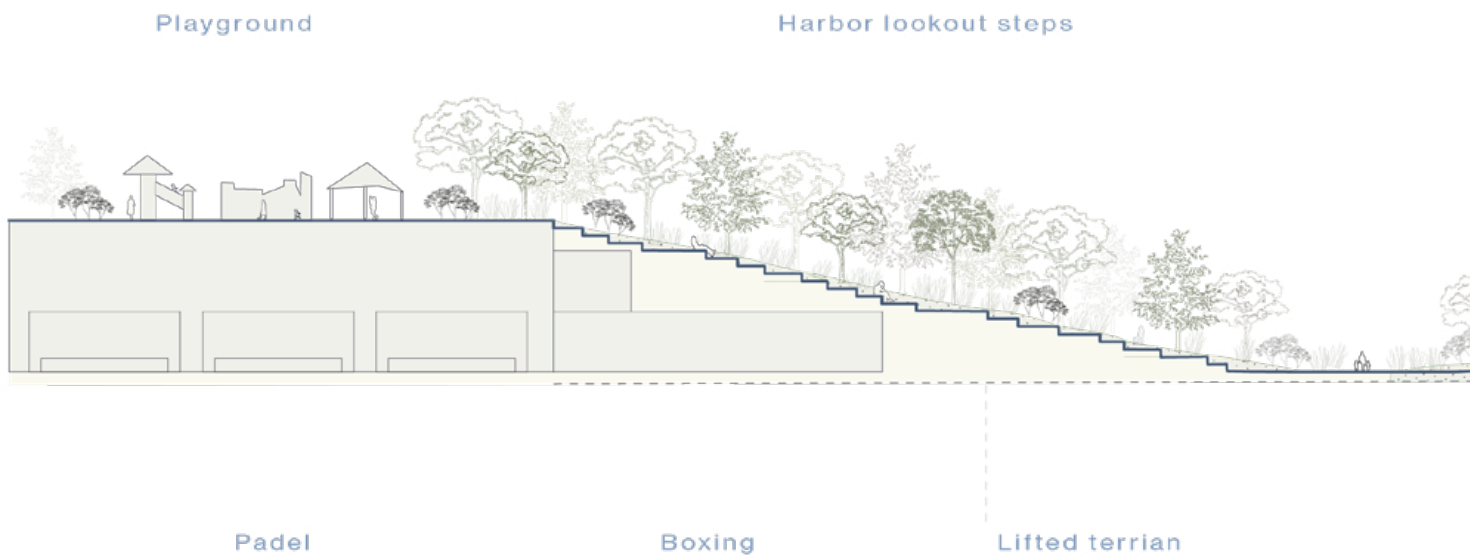


Figure 157: Waterfront isometric view.



Section G-g illustrates the transformation of Pier 3 from the PaRkhus77 rooftop landscape down towards the eastern waterfront. The cascading landscape features public facilities, recreational spaces, and interactive green areas that gradually step down towards the sea. As the terrain reaches ground level, the lush greenery transitions into a new aquatic environment, promoting community recreation and direct interaction with the water.





Lawn stage

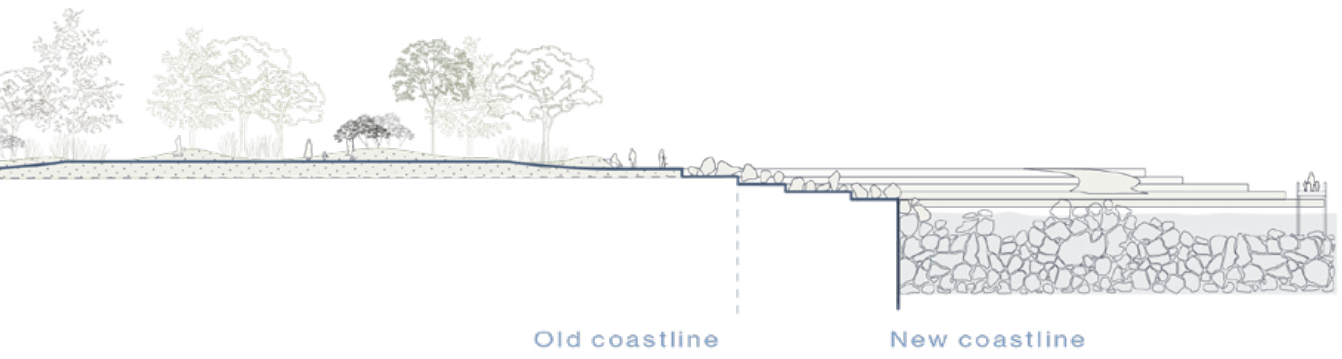


Figure 158: Section G-g - PaRkhus77 and Kystparken (1:500).

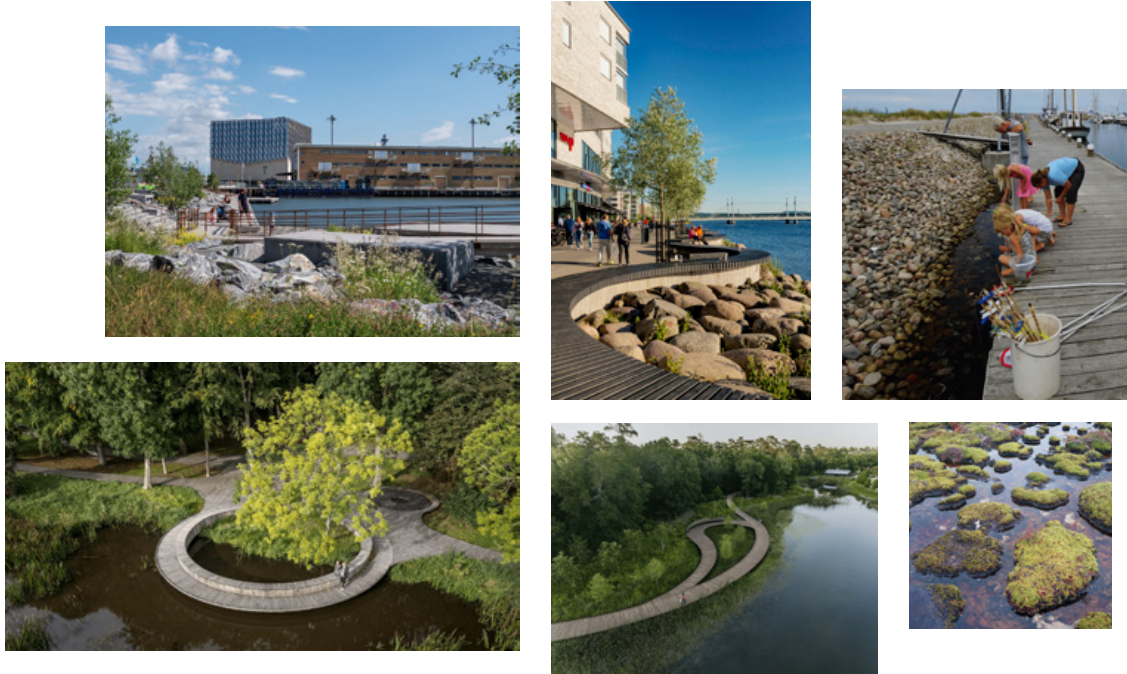


Figure 159: Kystparken waterfront reference photos.

# Kystparken waterfront

Along the eastern edge of Pier 3, the waterfront landscape of Kystparken offers a range of recreational opportunities. An organically shaped bridge extends further into the sea, strengthening the connection along the waterfront. A continuous bench integrated into the inner side of the bridge creates spaces for rest and social interaction, while the outer edge is defined by a railing to allow full accessibility along the route.

Between the bridge and the mainland, the terrain gradually terraces down into a rocky coastal edge that provides shelter for both vegetation and marine life. The design aims to strengthen the relationship between people and the coastal environment by creating an accessible transition between land and water.

This allows visitors to approach the shoreline and directly engage with the waterfront landscape through activities such as catching crabs and exploring marine life.



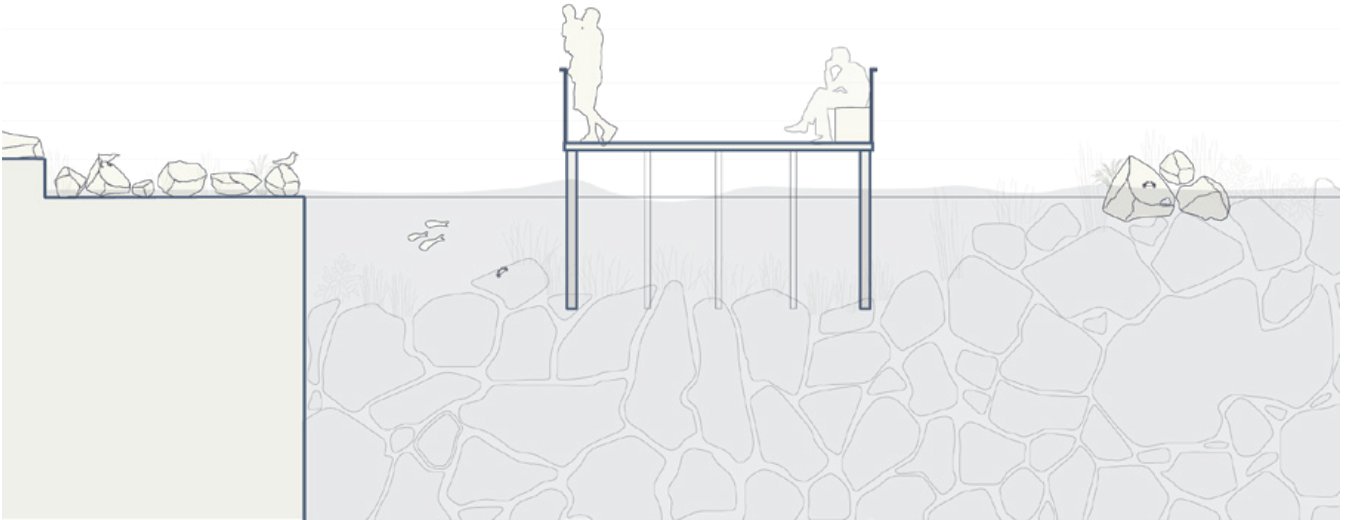


Figure 160: Section H-h - Kystparken (1:100).

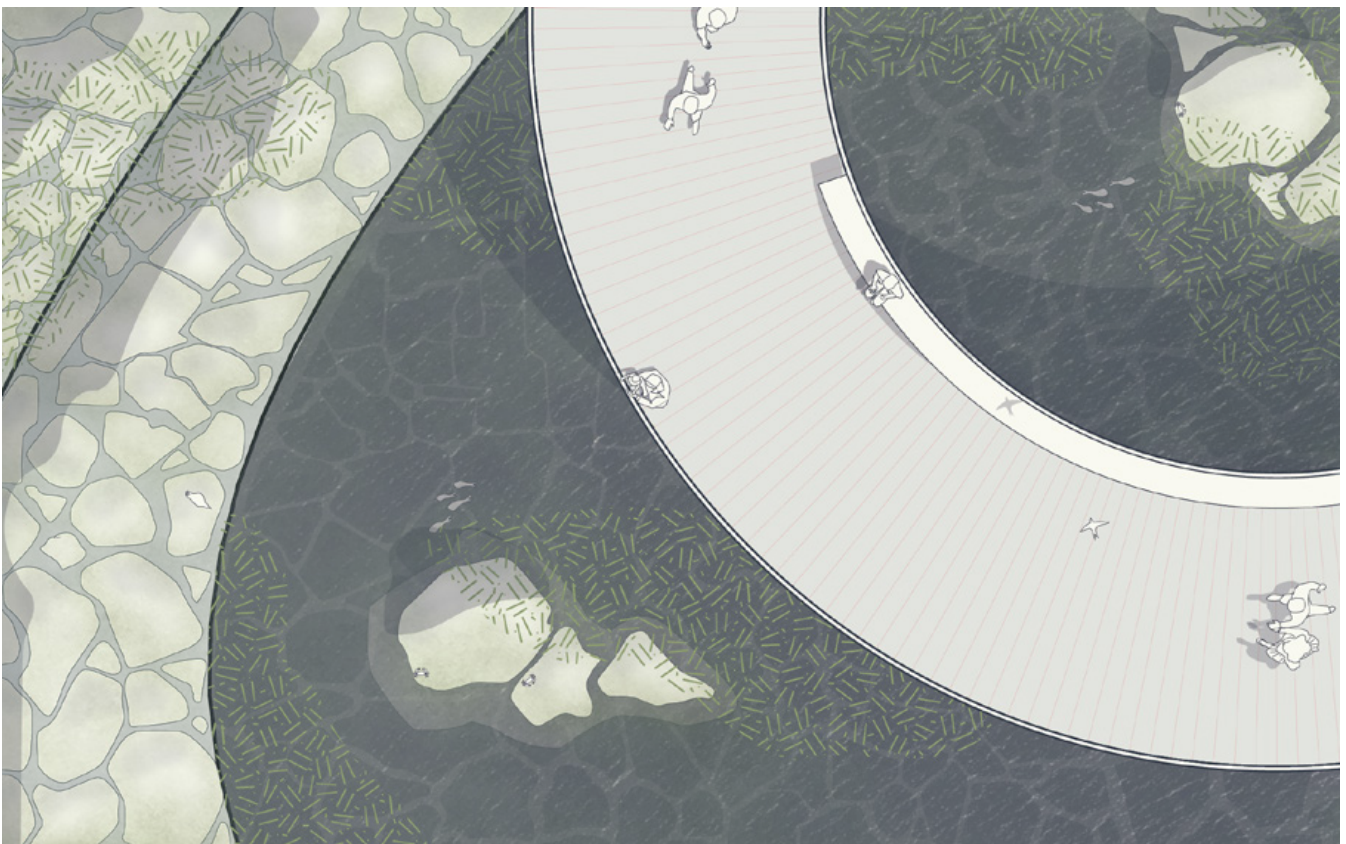


Figure 161: Kystparken plan (1:100).

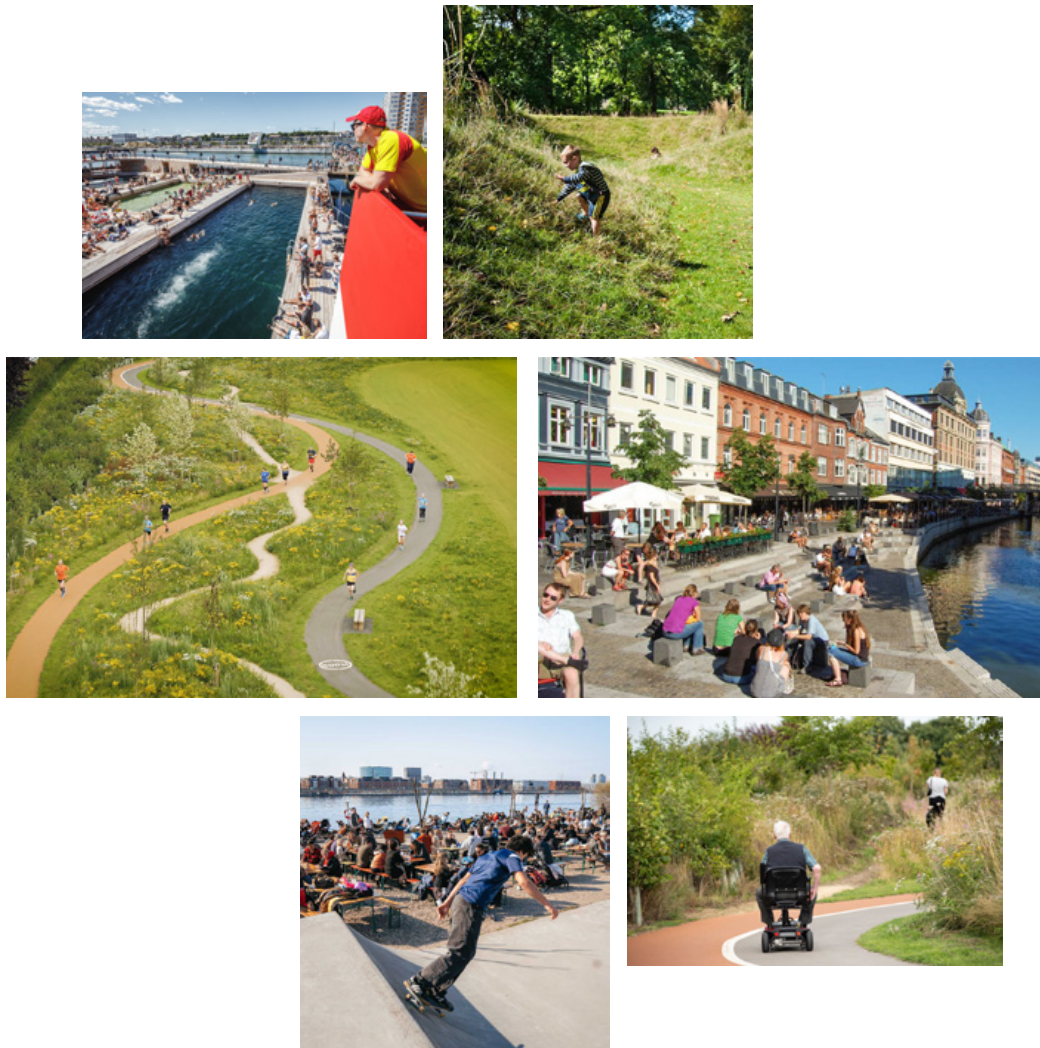


Figure 162: Sense of belonging reference photos.

# Sense of belonging

A sense of belonging at Pier 3 is created through an environment that feels familiar, accessible, and easy to navigate. A shared landscape language of greenery connects the entire site, while hills function as natural windbreaks to turn large open areas into cozier and more intimate spaces. The waterfront itself acts as a clear and accessible route through the area, supported by layered lighting and intuitive wayfinding that guide people naturally.

Reused harbor materials such as wood and rusted steel are integrated into seating, urban furniture, and art, preserving references to the pier's maritime and industrial heritage. Along the waterfront, platforms extend directly towards the water, offering active spaces for play and relaxation. By combining the raw character of the harbor with inviting green spaces and open public access, Pier 3 aims to become a connected and welcoming environment that communities can identify with and make their own.



Figure 163: Sense of belonging at Pier 3 visualization.

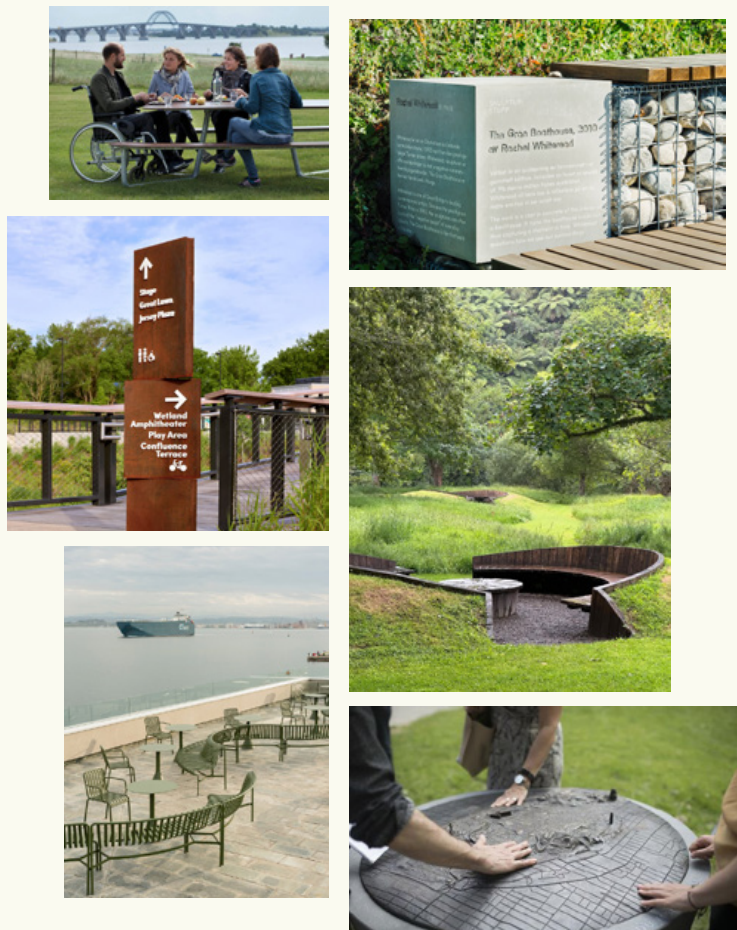


Figure 164: Inventory reference photos.

# Inventory

## Furniture

The site furniture follows a cohesive design language rooted in the harbor's character. Materials such as concrete, rusted metal, wood, and aluminium anchor the elements to the maritime setting. Seating is distributed across the site to support different uses. In selected areas, lightweight movable aluminium chairs allow visitors to reconfigure the space according to their needs, while other seating is permanently integrated into the landscape, such as benches embedded in hillsides. Across these variations, making every piece of furniture universally accessible remains a central design principle.

## Info boards

The site's information boards must be accessible and understood by everyone, regardless of their capabilities. To support this, the signage appears in multiple formats and physical scales adapted to different locations and user groups. While their placement and structural design vary, they follow the same cohesive language as the site's furniture. Consistent typography and a common palette of harbor-inspired materials create a recognizable identity and ensure readability.

# Lighting

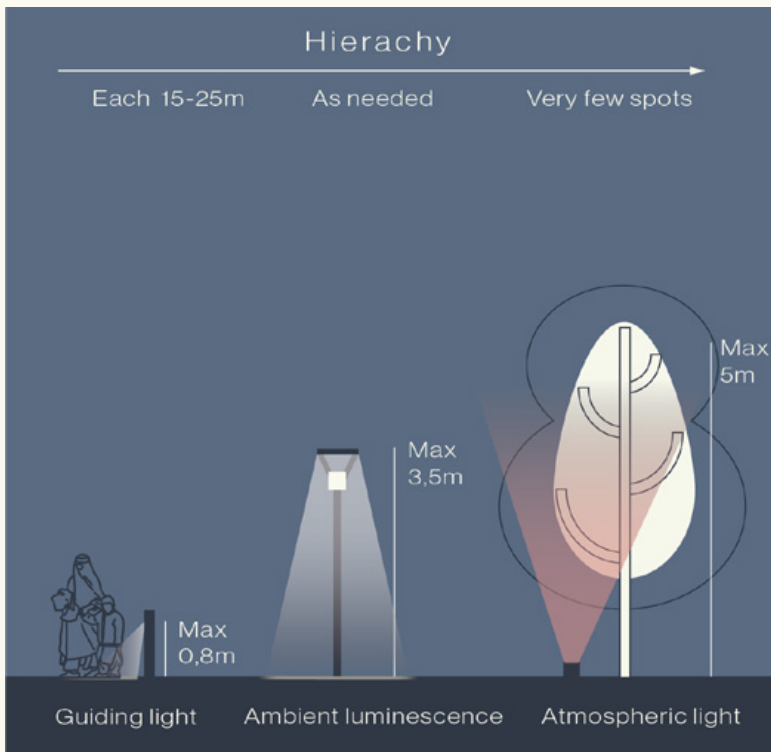


Figure 165: Lighting hierarchy diagram.

## Lighting hierarchy

Urban lighting is structured around three categories. Functional lighting provides strong illumination for baseline safety and daily routines. Effect lighting encourages social interaction through ambient glows and guiding lights that improve orientation. Atmospheric lighting influences spatial character and local identity by shaping the mood of different public spaces. In pedestrian zones without heavy traffic, the lighting hierarchy prioritizes guiding illumination before layering additional visual effects.

## Lighting design

A well-considered lighting strategy ensures Pier 3 feels safe and welcoming. Floodlights in sports areas and along roads provide clear visibility for evening use. In gathering spaces, street lanterns cast a warm glow, while guiding lights spaced 15 to 25 meters along pathways strengthen wayfinding and continuous sense of security.

To strengthen zone identity, subtle colored tree uplights create a sense of well-maintained area and spatial character. String lights suspended between buildings and trees add an inviting, intimate layer to the nighttime environment. This layered approach merges functional visibility with distinct character, resulting in a secure, active, and people-oriented environment.



Figure 166: Lighting reference photos.



Figure 167: Cykeløen plan (1 : 100).



Figure 168: Sunday market plan (1 : 100).

# Flexibility

The design proposal for Pier 3 is based on the idea that public spaces must adapt to changing community needs over time. A key example is Cykeløen. While designed to host children's cycling classes a few days a week, the space is not limited to a single function. Its open layout allows it to easily shift into a lively street market filled with stands, tables, temporary activities, and public gatherings.

This flexibility is a central principle across the entire pier. Adaptable public spaces allow a single area to host a variety of activities and events. By using movable furniture and open spatial organization, Pier 3 supports both planned activities and informal everyday use. This approach helps create multifunctional and inclusive public spaces that invite different age groups, communities, and forms of social interaction to share the area.



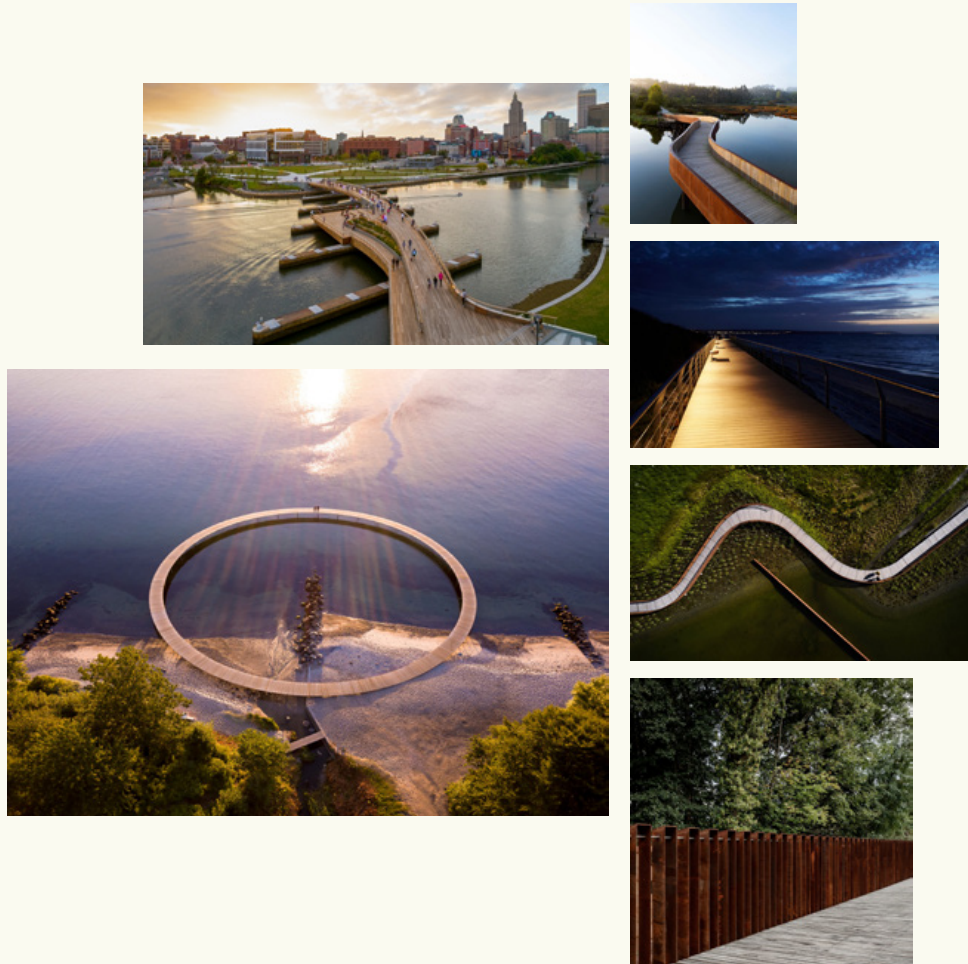


Figure 169: Bridges reference photos.

## Bridges

Inspired by the Infinite Bridge in the south of Aarhus, the bridge network at Pier 3 connects the eastern waterfront with Aarhus Ø to the north and Pier 2 to the south. The network shortens connections towards the leisure waterfront and invites a variety of interactions with the landscape. To withstand the harsh harbor climate, the bridges combine durable

metal structures with wooden surfaces that provide a warmer and more tactile experience along the organic pathways.

The bridge language is defined through two main typologies: winding organic pathways and circular elements. Together, these forms create a cohesive identity expressed through wood rusted steel.

# Connections



- ▶ Primary connection
- -▶ Secondary connection
- ·▶ Tertiary connection

Figure 170: Connections at Pier 3 diagram.

# Roads hierarchy






-  Normal cars road direction
-  Service cars road direction
-  Parking

Figure 171: Roads hierarchy at Pier 3 diagram.



Figure 172: Bernhardt Jensens Blvd plan (1 : 500).



Figure 173: Section I-i - Bernhardt Jensens Blvd (1 : 200).

To address current speeding issues at Bernhardt Jensens Blvd, all roads in Pier 3 share a coherent design language focused on traffic calming.

The boulevard's streetscape is organized into three distinct zones, where both vehicle lanes and pedestrian paths use cobblestone as the primary paving material. Car lanes use cobblestones to naturally reduce driving speeds. Bicycle lanes are slightly elevated with stone curbs and use asphalt paving to provide a smoother surface for cycling. The sidewalks are raised above the bicycle lanes and return to the cobblestone finish while integrating tactile paving to support accessibility and navigation.


In selected areas, green buffer zones separate car lanes from cycling and pedestrian paths. These planted pockets improve safety by further calming traffic while also contributing to the project's green infrastructure strategy. They additionally create opportunities for informal stay through integrated benches and bicycle parking.

While parking spots are provided near public buildings, the proposal aims to support a neighbourhood that is not dependent on private cars. Parking connected to residential areas is limited and primarily intended for necessary access and service-related use. Walking and cycling are prioritized as the main ways of moving through Pier 3.

# Epilogue



05



Pier 3 is far more than concrete at the water's edge: it is a threshold where we reshape ourselves by stepping up to reshape the city.

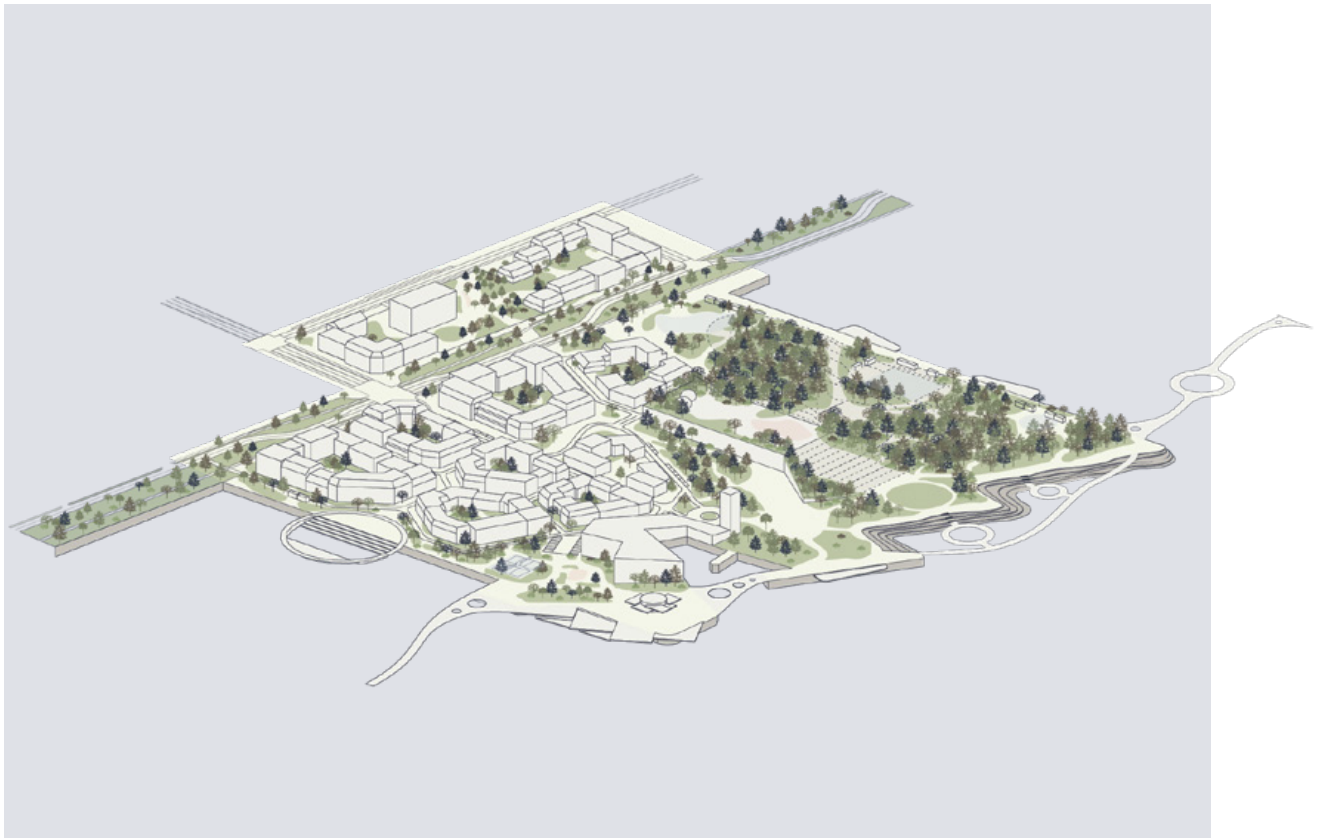


Figure 174: Soft Pier diagram.

# Conclusion

This project set out to achieve several interrelated goals, focusing on transforming Pier 3 from an empty, disconnected space into a unifying destination between historic Aarhus and Aarhus Ø. The design introduces practical interventions like a recognizable street grid, low-rise building blocks, and green buffer zones. These elements soften the hard, open surfaces to prioritize an intimate, human-scaled pedestrian experience and equitable spatial use.

The inclusion of green hills, elevated coastal habitats, and intuitive bridge networks, creates direct water access and supports everyday recreation. Leisure and nature are further woven together at the lush PaRkhus 77 roof park. Combined with accessible pathways, tactile paving, and adaptable sports facilities, the design empowers independent and meaningful engagement for all users.

Equally important was the preservation of the pier's maritime character. The proposal retains key structures like the Shipping House and Lodstårnet and integrates raw materials

like shipping containers and rusted steel. Rather than replacing the existing atmosphere of the harbor, the project improves what is there, anchoring local identity and ensuring grassroots groups remain rooted in the site.

At the center of the proposal is the Soft Pier concept, which encourages interaction, shared use, and coexistence. Flexibility is voiced through movable furniture, modular structures, and flexible spaces like Cykleøen, allowing the environment to adapt and accommodate various activities over time.

By combining adaptable and community-oriented strategies, the project proposes a resilient framework for Pier 3. Through strategic placemaking, the project weaves together historic Aarhus and Aarhus Ø by transforming the waterfront into a shared everyday environment rather than a transitional edge. It reimagines the waterfront as a dynamic social platform where informal communities and everyday users can connect, collaborate, and actively shape the urban environment.

# Reflection

The Pier 3 project has been an exploration in changing a heavy, empty harbor space into an intimate, human-scaled neighborhood. At its core, this project shows that community design must be an ongoing, participatory process. To create a truly "Soft Pier," we need to move away from rigid, top-down planning. Instead, we should use collaborative, dialogue-oriented methods based on placemaking. This approach honors how people naturally use and adapt their surroundings on a daily basis, while respecting the harbor's history, the local environment, and the groups already established there.

Functioning somewhere in between a strategic masterplan and a detailed architectural proposal, our design establishes a framework for the future development of Pier 3. While our site observations, mappings, and research provided a strong analytical foundation, the process could have benefited from prioritizing continuous participatory workshops throughout the design phase rather than

relying primarily on a single public workshop. Ongoing co-design sessions with local communities, residents, and stakeholders would have grounded the proposal more directly in everyday needs while revealing overlooked spatial and social considerations.

Although we designed flexible spaces such as Cykeløen and the container park at the street play area to allow communities to continuously shape and adapt the spaces over time, more extensive dialogue could have added further layers of understanding regarding specific needs.

Reflecting on the areas we did not fully explore reveals important limitations in our approach. Our spatial analysis was heavily focused on the immediate boundaries of Pier 3. A more complete understanding would have required deeper investigation of the surrounding urban, such as the wider Aarhus Ø developments to the north and the city connections to the west. Even though we have considered these areas, a more detailed

exploration of those places could have probably expanded our understanding of the area. Unfortunately, the time constraints of a university project meant we did not have the time to take these investigations further or spend more time co-designing.

Additionally, we assumed certain political and legal conditions to make the masterplan function, such as the approval of the expanded Bassin 5 to a bathing area, Bassin 7 to a waterpark and the creation of bridges connecting the entire Aarhus Ø. We assumed political support for a neighbourhood with limited private car parking, relying instead on the extensive existing parking infrastructure already present throughout Aarhus Ø.

Another topic we did not fully explore was the transitional phase during the construction and transformation of the site. Since we addressed in the timeline plan that the communities will be moved to the Shipping House area while their areas of Pier 3 are being built, this was kept at a very superficial

level. If we had more time, we could have dived into making a detailed plan with spatial considerations of how these transitions would take place.

While we proposed shared, adaptable furniture and universal design elements, these micro-scale details were not tested physically. Observing how people interact with real, full-scale prototypes of the reused maritime inventory or the wind-breaking green hills could have helped us refine our solutions based on actual use. The vision for Pier 3 shows that designing a neighborhood is about setting a stage for everyday life to happen. To succeed long-term, future phases must move beyond observation and invite the community to actively shape the spaces they inhabit.

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## Epilogue

FIGURE 174 SOFT PIER DIAGRAM.

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## Analysis

Fig. 1: City motif of Aarhus.

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Right column 2nd row: Andrew Lloyd Photography. (2013, March 11). LEDPOD at Carrum Foreshore by Klik [Photograph bridge light in the night]. Gooood. <https://www.gooood.cn/ledpod-at-carrum-foreshore.htm-arkitekter-chemin-des-carrieres-corten-steel/>

Right column 3rd row: Berg, M. (2023, October 22). White Arkitekter designs Exercisfältet stormwater pond in Sweden [Photograph bridge shape]. Dezeen. <https://www.dezeen.com/2023/10/22/white-arkitekter-exercisfaltet-stormwater-pond-sweden/>

Right column 4th row: Michel, F. (2019, December 18). Reiulf Ramstad Arkitekter creates Corten steel trail Chemin des Carrières [Photograph of bridge materials]. Dezeen. <https://www.dezeen.com/2019/12/18/reiulf-ramstad-arkitekter-chemin-des-carrieres-corten-steel/>

# Appendix



07

# Appendix A

This appendix contains detailed maps from our work delimitation process; we choose to show the mapping exercises from Pier 3 to illustrate how the work was done.

By doing site visits, we mapped the area to try and locate the most important contextual relationships. The drawings demonstrate the boundaries detected.

## 1. First look



## 3. Second look



- Concerns**
- East/West connections
  - Exposed to climate
  - Contrast between old and new districts, an in-between place
  - The development plan doesn't answer citizen's concerns
  - Study of Aarhus B. focus on profit, high density of buildings, and buildings over nature and activities
  - Future flooding
- Potentials**
- Creating a cohesive district that answers its concerns
  - The site is a blank canvas
  - Activating the waterfront
  - Encourage communities and leisure activities
  - Preserve the harbor atmosphere (Pierhus77, Løddammen)
  - Big interest in the area from many stakeholders (A Museum)
- Focus areas**
- Pier 3
  - Harbort entrance (access point to pier 3)
  - Øst Bane Torvet entrance (access point to pier 3)
  - Bernhard Jensen Boulevard
  - Shipping House Quarter
- Themes**
- Mobility and connectivity
  - Greenery/Sustainability
  - Safety (road + waterfront, lighting/footing)
  - Experience/Design culture
  - The quality of spaces: Profit vs. People
  - Temporal Identity: Programming for 'the Harbour'
  - Environmental Sustainability & the Waterfront
  - Connectivity & Regeneration
- Approach**
- Core and periphery approach
- where the same themes apply to both the core area (Pier 3) and contextually relevant interventions but they don't necessarily follow the same hierarchy
  - the themes can be done in a matrix rather than a list so that the area of intervention is placed in the matrix based on its needs instead of a strict list

## 2. Places of interest



## 4. Places of interest #2



- Concerns**
- East/West connections
  - Exposed to climate
  - Contrast between old and new districts, an in-between place
  - The development plan doesn't answer citizen's concerns
  - Study of Aarhus B. focus on profit, high density of buildings, and buildings over nature and activities
  - Future flooding
- Potentials**
- Creating a cohesive district that answers its concerns
  - The site is a blank canvas
  - Activating the waterfront
  - Encourage communities and leisure activities
  - Preserve the harbor atmosphere (Pierhus77, Løddammen)
  - Big interest in the area from many stakeholders (A Museum)

# Appendix B

## Soil pollution

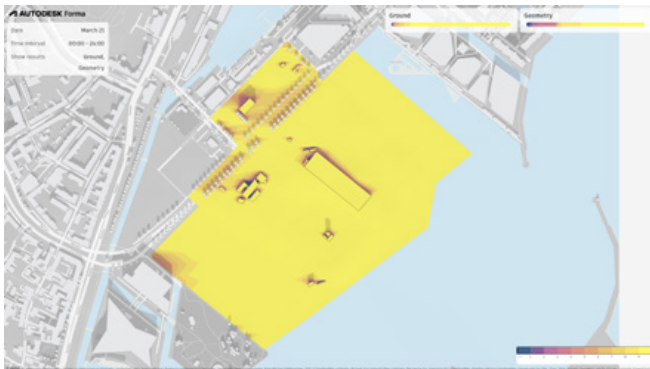
The soil in the area is registered as it might be polluted, since there are known factors that may be a source of soil contamination in the area. This is related to the fact of the area's historical use as an industrial port. Before any new construction at Pier 3 it needs to be ensured that there aren't any high concentrations that have a harmful effect on humans or the environment.



## Sun hours (soltice & equinox)

These diagrams provide detailed sun hours analysis. The maps demonstrate the varying sunlight hours across the area during different seasons.

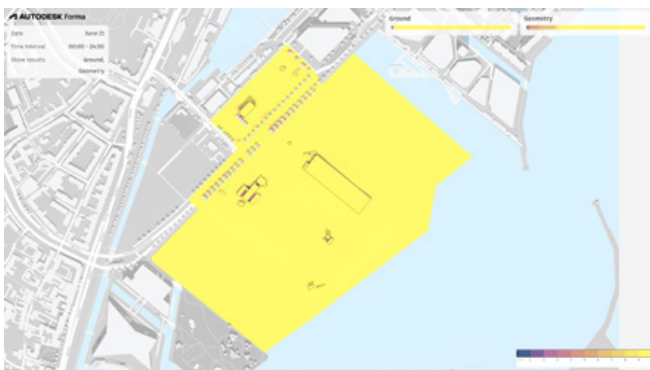
1. Spring Equinox



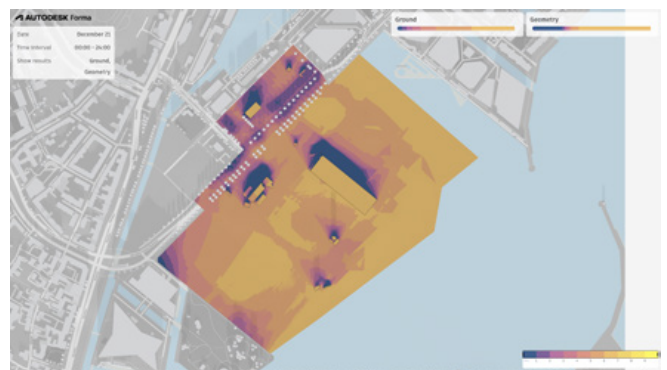
3. Fall Equinox



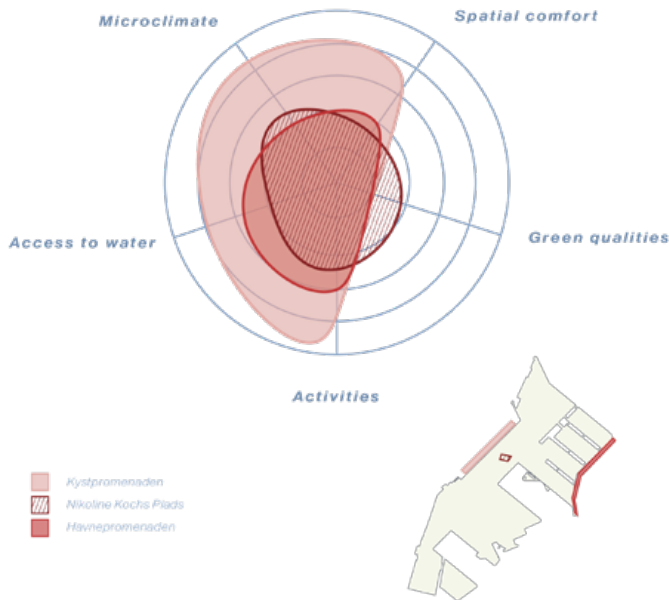
2. Summer Soltice



4. Winter Solstice



# Appendix C



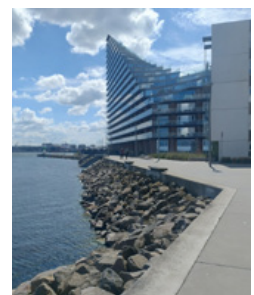
## Kystpromenaden

A long path at the waterfront with a strong visual connection to the industrial harbour and the bay of Aarhus. It performs somewhat poorly on the matrix microclimate due to the heavy wind exposure. The greenery near the buildings creates a clear barrier from what is public and private. The rocks along the waterfront creates a distance which relates to the fact that you should not get into the water.



## Nikoline Kochs Plads

A passage between the leisure harbour and bassin 7. It is a functional place with clear programming of where you can sit and walk. The limited sun from the tall building makes it a cold place in the shadows, which enhances the feeling of being a transit place. The activity reflects this, people either walk through or go into the market next door.



## Havnepromenaden

An active waterfront with a strong identity connected to the leisure harbour. The activity on the water attracts people to hangout. There are many places to sit along the waterfront, and it is an active place when the sun is out. There is little greenery and it feels somewhat uninviting.

# Appendix D

## Workshops

This appendix presents the data collected during the Pier 3 project's three workshops: Sticker Democracy, Pictogramming, and The Goals Grid. The dataset is divided into two sections: general participant data collected by us, and the specific answers provided by the participants during each of the three workshops. The following data also contains some photos of the workshops results to better illustrate the workshops. Note: We have translated the Danish answers for The goals grid from Danish to English when needed.

### Total participants(All workshops)

Total: 19 people – 11 residents and 8 visitors (1 kid, 0 teens, 8 young adults, 6 adults, 4 elderly)

8 males – 5 residents and 3 visitors (1 kid, 0 teens, 2 young adults, 3 adults, 2 elderly)

11 females – 6 residents and 5 visitors (0 kid, 0 teens, 6 young adults, 3 adults, 2 elderly)

### Sticker democracy workshop

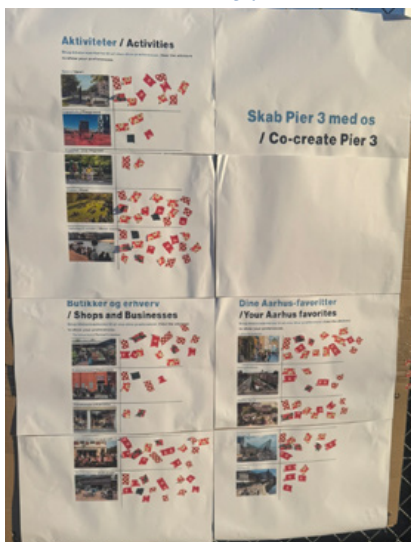
Participants info: Total: 16 people – 11 residents and 5 visitors

6 males – 5 residents and 1 visitor (1 kid, 0 teens, 2 young adults, 2 adults, 1 elderly)

10 females – 6 residents and 4 visitors (0 kid, 0 teens, 6 young adults, 3 adults, 1 elderly)

Results:

1. Sticker Democracy photo



## Activities

Sports	11
Playground	4
Bike playground	2
Field	15
Water access	16
Shops and Businesses	
Farmer's market	14
Chain store	5
Franchise	2
Local cafés	14
Small shops	13
Aarhus favorites	
Latinerkvarteret	15
Frederiksbjerg	7
Institut for X	11
Aarhus Ø	9
Åen	5

### Pictogramming workshop

Participants info: Total: 14 people – 10 residents and 4 visitors

4 males – 3 residents and 1 visitor (0 kids, 0 teens, 1 young adult, 2 adults, 1 elderly)

10 females – 7 residents and 3 visitors (0 kids, 0 teens, 5 young adults, 4 adults, 1 elderly)

Results:

1. Photo of pictogramming answers



2. Clustering positive and negative feedback



3. Negative feedback + participants comments



- The water feels dangerous
- Feels like a enclosed community, not inviting
- Crossing the road feels dangerous because of the fast cars
- Feels abandoned and I am afraid of going there
- I never go there

3. Negative feedback + participants comments



- I love to go to this spot, because feels like a beach
- A nice place to sit and be alone
- A popular place to sit down
- A place to be alone, go to the water or sit down, with less tourists
- Favourite place to walk and sit down, with a nice view
- Favourite place to meet friends, even though can be crowded
- Nice place to sit down, with good cafe options and harbour vibe
- Established community at Domen, with many cultural activities

**The goals grid workshop**

Participants info: Total: 12 people – 8 residents and 4 visitors  
 5 males – 3 residents and 2 visitors (0 kids, 0 teens, 2 young adult, 1 adult, 2 elderly)  
 7 females – 5 residents and 2 visitors (0 kids, 0 teens, 3 young adults, 2 adults, 2 elderly)  
 Results:

**Answers for 1. Achieve:**

- Hangout spots so the people don't crowd as much in Bassin 7. Kødbyen/Papirøer vibes inspired from Copenhagen
- Park
- Grill areas to meet with friends and bring over own food and drinks
- Park
- More green areas, a market square with greens
- Easy access to the water, sunny spots
- Green areas, a park
- Parks & green spaces, trees (also around the big streets)
- More green spaces, more trees, more wind-sheltered places in the sun, more student apartments
- More green (plants and trees)
- Recreational area where sports, relaxation and green areas are prioritized, parking spaces
- Gathering place for Sport & Exercise, padel, green area, exciting architecture.

**Answers for 2. Preserve:**

- The "rough" urban expression, concrete "vibes"
- Urban/industrial vibe
- Lodstårnet and Pakhus77
- Whole Ø
- Water sports, VinDanmark, the marina, the broad boulevard
- Shapes from the old ferrys, Lodstårnet
- Access for everyone(?)
- The small cafes, the walkability around the water
- A path along the water
- Mix of generations living here
- Pakhus 77 (Padel)
- Padel hall
- Padel in 8000 Aarhus C, open area

### Answers for 3. Avoid

- Chain stores like Rema1000, more tall buildings built randomly like the ones existing at Aarhus Ø already
- Ships
- Cars
- More houses/tall buildings, cars
- More buildings, more concrete
- Spaces closed to the public
- That it's only apartments like Mejlbryggen being built
- More gray areas (streets, unused street spots like on Bernhardt Jensens Boulevard)
- Too many office buildings/ buildings that don't get "life" out on Aarhus Ø
- Franchises, fast fashion offices, empty buildings
- Too many big apartment buildings
- Office buildings, public buildings
- More concrete construction, meaningless boring construction, the mess that is everywhere

### Answers for 4. Eliminate

- Nothing
- Bad energy
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- High quay wall (so that it's easy to get to the water and it's not such a hard edge)
- All the concrete + sketchy stuff at night
- Huge gray area like Pier 3 that isn't getting used
- The weird things on the street and the empty "asphalt" spaces on the street
- Ugly naked spaces
- Large boring area with Asphalt & Parking.

### 1. Participants answer example #1

I forhold til Pier 3-området:

Ønsker vi det?	Ja	1. Opnå More green (Plants and trees)	2. Bevare Rådhus 77 (and 1)
	Nej	3. Undgå too many big apartment buildings	4. Eliminere Ugly naked spaces
		Nej	Ja

Har vi det?

### 2. Participants answer example #2

I forhold til Pier 3-området:

Ønsker vi det?	Ja	1. Opnå Samlingsted for sport & motion - Padel. 2. Grønt område 3. Spændende arkitektur.	2. Bevare Padel i Zoo Area. - Alent område
	Nej	3. Undgå Mere Betonbyggeni Livedydigt ved høj byggeni Detrad der er overalt	4. Eliminere - stort bedelt areal med Asfalt & parkering.
		Nej	Ja

Har vi det?

### 3. Participants answer example #3

I forhold til Pier 3-området:

Ønsker vi det?	Ja	1. Opnå Rekreativt område med sport, afslapning og grønne områder. Diverse præsentat. P-pladser	2. Bevare Padel hallen!
	Nej	3. Undgå Kontorbyggeni, offentlige byggeni	4. Eliminere En bestemt Padelhallen
		Nej	Ja

Har vi det?

# Appendix E

## Interviews

This appendix is a collection of interviews conducted at the Pier 3 project. It details the interview guide which was used to gather general information to confirm the sources' credibility, while also serving to gain valuable information regarding specifics about the site. The answers are notes taken during the interview and are not directly transcribed, but sums up the interviewer's opinions.

### Interview questions:

#### Local?

1. **What is your name? And age? And occupation? And time in the area?**
2. **What does Pier 3 mean to you?**
3. **Why is Pier 3 important to Aarhus?**
4. **What qualities of the site are important to keep?**
5. **What are the challenges on the site?**
6. **What do you think should be done at the Pakhus 77? / What do you think should be done at the Waterfront?**

Local: Parkhus 77.

Name: Mathias.

Age: 25.

Occupation: Finance Manager.

Time in the area: 2 years.

2: For me it is the old ferry harbour, and I hope to become more focused on activities, more like sauna. Instead, only offices and apartments. More activities like a food court and sports.

3: Now it is quite empty, like a blank canvas. The municipality should make it a priority. The blank canvas offers many opportunities.

4: I think the Pakhus 77 is important to keep, and the existing activities that are on the site.

5: The main challenge you could say is money.

6: The area outside of Parkhus77(towards north) doesn't get used much use, because the municipality has some rules that block it, but I think that area could be used for more activities.

Local: Bikesavers.

Name: Lars.

Age: 67.

Occupation: Bike mechanic.

Time in the area: 5 months.

2: Pier 3 is a place that functions as a playground for many different groups, brings diversity to the area. Is a place that is important for the underground culture of Aarhus, especially because many of those places are disappearing in Aarhus.

3: Is important to free have places like this in Aarhus, an area like Institut for 'X', a place with free room.

4: The main qualities that are important in the site are to have an area where people can come and do different activities.

5: I think a challenge for places like ours is that they make the area with affordable rent for small social businesses like this one.

6: I think they should take off the asphalt and make more green areas here, with a big park. Maybe renovate Parkhus77 and make more places for small social businesses.

Local: Cykeløen Aarhus.

Name: Ebbe.

Age: 46.

Occupation: Teacher.

Time in the area: 2 years.

2: First, Pier 3 is my workplace. Also is a free spot in the city, is a place for creativity and sports, and there is space much here, different from other places in town.

3: I think it is important to give space besides housing in the area. I think Pier 3 supports dog walkers, families with kids and people to do sports. I think the feeling of horizontal space in Pier 3 is important, not vertical like in Aarhus ø with the tall building a little space in between.

4: I important to keep the clubs and the possibility to do different sports. It is important to keep low rise, with possibility to have a distant view. I also think the municipality should make a park here, so people have a good reason to stop and be in the moment, instead of just passing through the area.

5: The main challenge right now is that it is not clear what is going to happen here, we don't know what the municipality plan is yet. And the Municipality should decide it soon, because everybody down here is waiting the plan to be done.

6: I think we should keep Parkhus77, and build an urban bike park at the top of it to make Parkhus77 a landmark for Pier3. I think the area should have low-rise buildings, with the taller buildings in the center of the area and with the height descending to the waterfront until it touches the water. I think it should have a lot of in between spaces as well.

Local: Aarhus Watersports Complex - AWC.

Name: Mathias.

Age: 30.

Occupation: Administration and Café boss.

Time in the area: 9 years.

2: Pier 3 is important to me because we have space to be here and it is nice to have other clubs here as well, and I hope more clubs will join us in this area.

3: Pier 3 could be more important to Aarhus if more clubs join us here, since Aarhus is missing more places for activities, for the population to enjoy life.

4: Is important to keep the openness of this area, so it doesn't get cramped like in Basin7. It is also important to keep all the activities that are already here.

5: The main challenge is waiting to get a decision from the municipality about what is going to happen here.

6: At the waterfront we would like to build a cable park for water sports and an aqua park. So, more people could do water sports at the same time. Now we can only have 2 people practicing at the same time, and if we build the water park, we could have 10 persons practicing at the same time.

Local: Champs Camp.

Name: Rikke.

Age: 28.

Occupation: Student.

Time in the area: 4 years.

2: pier 3 is boring, doesn't mean anything, but pakhus 77 is where the club is, so it is important .

3: Is not unique, in its own, but all the harbor areas together are nice for the outdoor activities and Pakhus 77 is nice for the unique indoors activities. It is one of the last spaces in the center that you can have foreign (NGO) sports clubs. Like Domen and Basin 7 together with Pakhus 77 connect the harbor into a unique space.

4: It is important to keep the openness, keep the activities in Pakhus 77, and keep the foreign (NGO) sport spaces.

5: Would be a challenge if they build skyscrapers. And it is a challenge that we can lose our club space. Another challenge is that the traffic is messy, not a clear path to where to go.

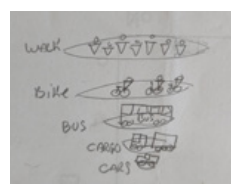
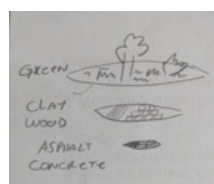
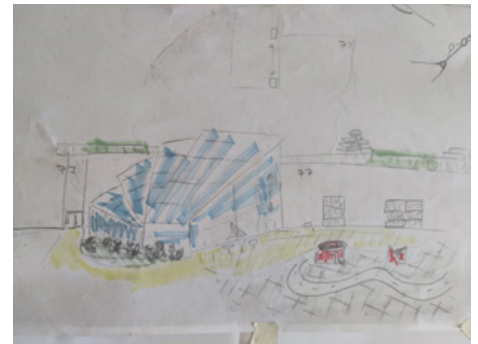
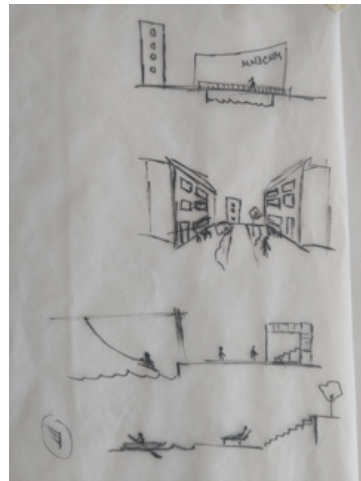
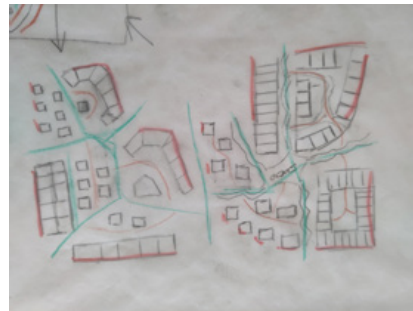
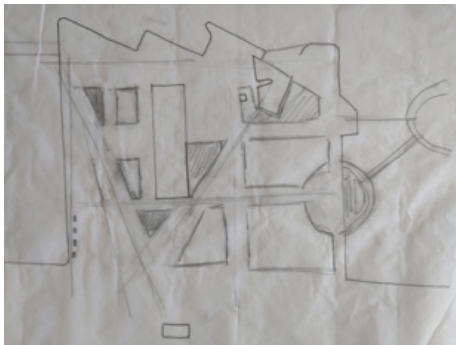
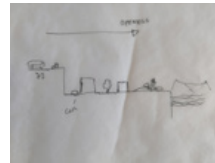
6: Pakhus 77: Champs Camp should stay and we should get more space, with more toilets. Someone should take care to manage the space, to solve things like a liking roof.

Pier 3: Should have more parks, small communities like Domen (since it has been taken down).

# Appendix F

## Sketches

After initial site analysis, our team created numerous process sketches, exploring spatial forms for Pier 3. We then reworked our strongest ideas into collective concepts. To organize our efforts, we tested multiple scenarios and ideas.

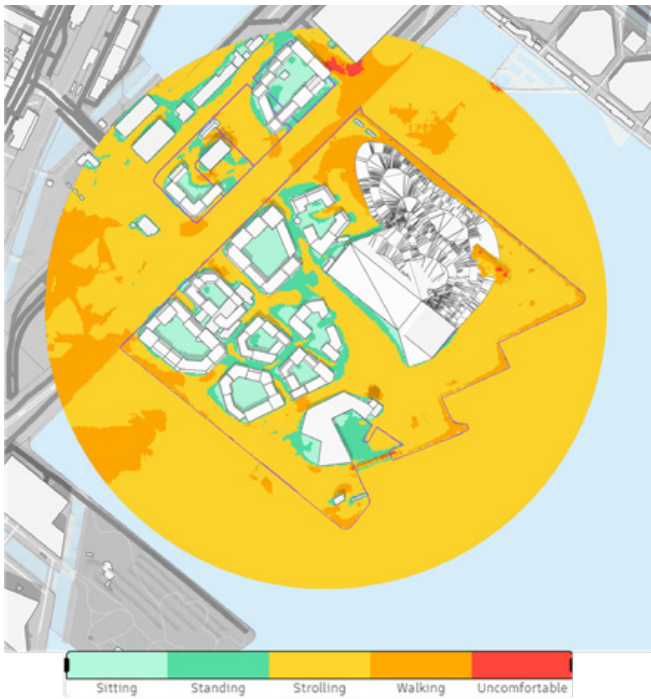


# Appendix G

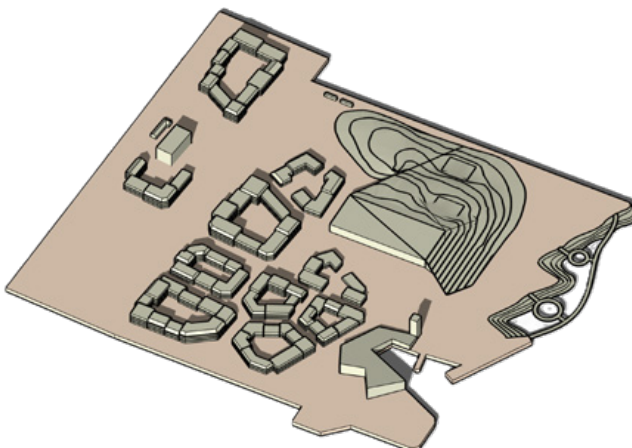
## Design microclimate studies

These diagrams provide detailed microclimate analysis for the Pier 3 design proposal. The maps demonstrate the varying shadow, sun hours, and wind comfort conditions across the area during different seasons. Specifically, the studies evaluate these environmental effects on the proposed block buildings and the Parkhus77 building.

### 1. Wind comfort



### 2. Shadows



### 1. Spring Equinox - Sun hours



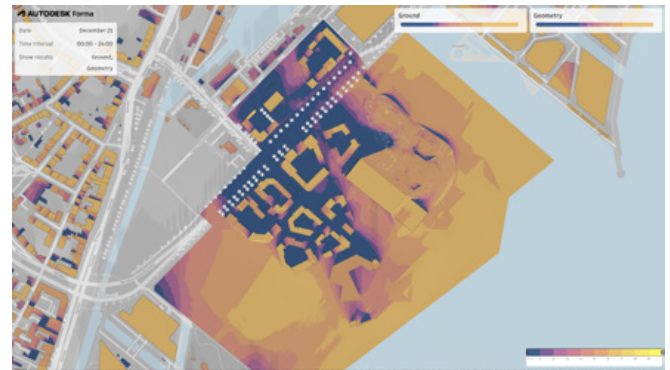
### 2. Summer Solstice - Sun hours



### 3. Fall Equinox - Sun hours



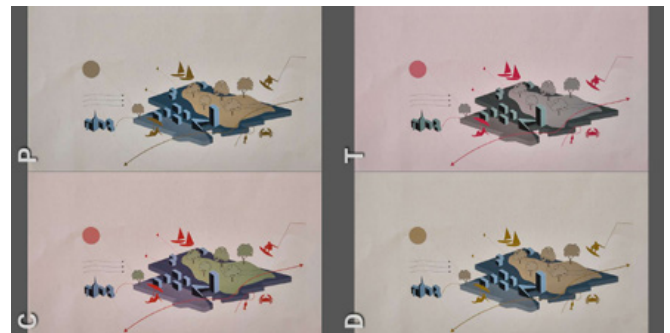
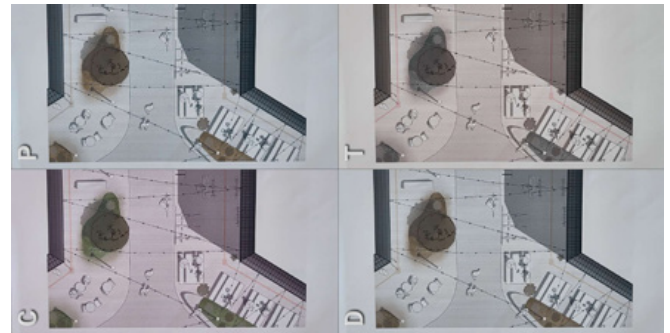
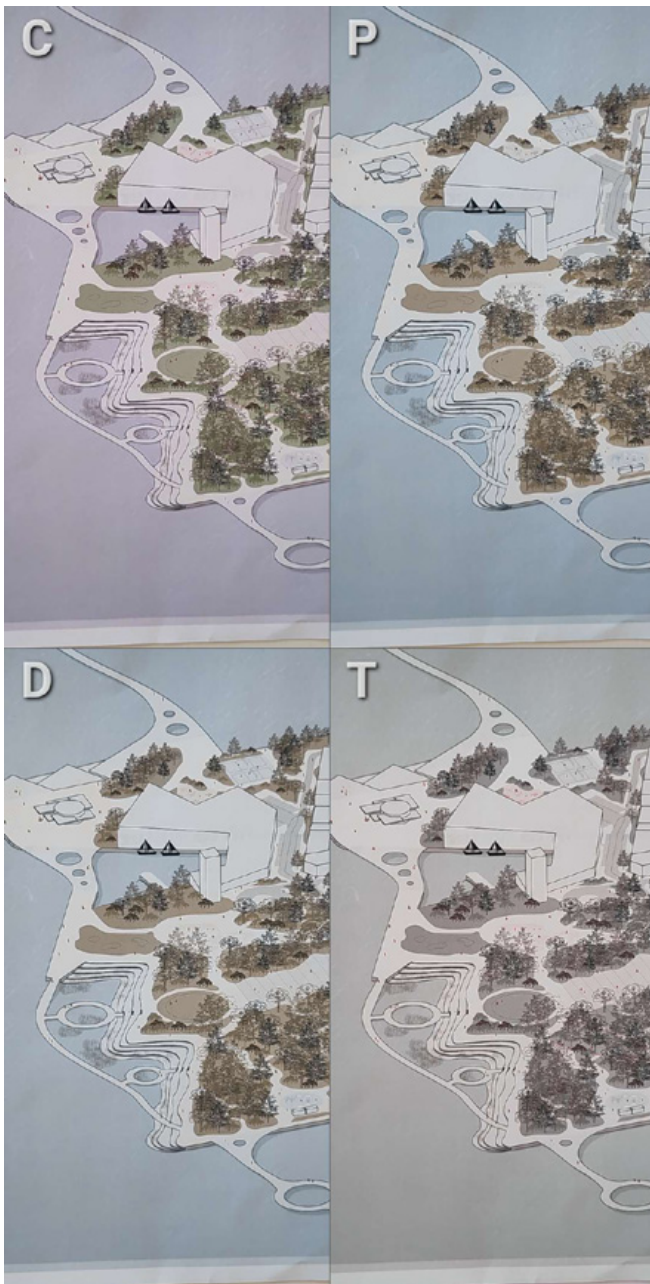
### 4. Winter Solstice - Sun hours



# Appendix H

## Visual accessibility

The following images present screenshots of our process, where we use an app to ensure our figures maintain sufficient contrast for everyone. The maps demonstrate clear contrast and distinct palettes optimized for red-green and blue-yellow color vision.





Plar

Soft

zier

Soft

Plar

Soft

zier

Soft



■ **Master thesis**

*Aalborg University  
Spring 2026  
Urban Design MSc04*

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