Temporary areas
-using temporality to improve the image and liveabilty of Upper-Breiðholt.

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Abstract

Long processes of modern day planning realisations can be a burden on the functionality of cities which are constantly evolving. The addition of temporary areas which serve the user's needs could be an answer to this problem.

By including temporary areas in the planning process, knowledge about users and sites can be gained and adapted to a more permanent process later. Knowledge of elements such as materiality and functionality as well as social interaction on site and behaviour of users. By using these temporary methods, up-to-date results can be expected. (Bishop & Williams, 2012) The role of temporary areas in modern day planning and how they have been implemented is examined in this thesis in an attempt to see how they can be beneficial for constructers as well as users.

Numerous cases of temporary uses, of varying qualities and nature are examined in a search of influences and inspirations for the design process of a temporary installation in Breiðholt.

These examinations and concluding design proposal are made in an attempt to improve the socially problematic area of Upper-Breiðholt, Iceland. The purpose of this is to improve the outwards image as well as the self-image of the inhabitants which analysis revealed to be negative.

The thesis conclusions include a design for a temporary area as well as a strategic plan of temporary uses for the business cluster at Fellagarðar, Upper-Breiðholt. The purpose of these design proposals is to improve the image of Upper-Breiðholt, as well as improve the business area of Fellagarðar, making the site more likely to evolve alongside its inhabitants.

Contents

1.Introduction

Background

The concept of time is an important one in planning and in the development of cities. Conventional plans for cities often deal with the city as a static element and draw up an image of what the city should look like at the end of a certain time period, a sort of before and after method. What is neglected in these sorts of plans is the transformation period in between.

The use of ephemeral places has through recent decades often sprouted up in stale and stagnant areas, as can be seen in cities like Berlin, a city that has gone through massive changes, last after the fall of the Berlin wall. These ephemeral uses were initially the inhabitants answer to what they felt missing from the city and these catalytic uses thus displayed what the city was missing for example: parks, squares, markets, etc. (Oswalt, Overmeyer, & Misselwitz, 2013) Some cities have seen these sorts of uses as opportunities and have initiated programs and recruited professionals or users of the areas in queation, and utilised them to transform areas in a more democratic way.

Studies of these sorts of areas and their uses do not have a long history. Literature and theories regarding these sorts of areas are therefore relatively young, most of them being published in the 21st century, though cases studies in these publishing's can often be traced back to the 20th century. Their case studies are most often located in either Berlin or London, whether this is due to the nationality and employment of the authors cannot be stated but in all likelihood those reasons as well as the population of the cities and therefore number of projects within them are the reason for this.

The three pillars of these researches have been the publications of "The Temporary City" by Peter Bishop & Lesley Williams, the "Urban Catalyst: The Power of Temporary Use" by Philipp Oswalt, Klaus Overmeyer, Philipp Misselwitz and the "Temporary Urban Spaces: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces" by Florian Haydn, Robert Temel. These books have set the theory this thesis is based on as well as collecting and bringing to light many of the case studies used as examples to strengthen arguments for the use of open spaces in a temporary way.

Reykjavik is one of the cities that has a program dealing with temporary use of areas and installations. The program like similar ones in other cities has been used to achieve a variety of goals, ranging from intensifying the use of centrally located squares, to adding uses to otherwise unused plots in suburban neighbourhoods. The amount of information about these sites is limited and almost solely on summer projects from 2011 and 2012 due to an interest group working at that time.

Aim

This project deals with the concept of temporality within the realms of landscape architecture and planning as well as how stagnant suburban areas can be improved to serve their inhabitants better.

The idea for all of this came from the results of numerous public participation meetings regarding the new Municipal plan for Reykjavik and how a very common complaint or concern were the conditions and future of small business clusters within residential neighbourhoods. (Reykjavík City, 2013) (KPMG, 2013)

These concerns led to an exploration of these

areas within the city and examination of their conditions. This led to an exploration of Fellagarðar in Upper-Breiðholt and the social problems and image related issues the area is currently dealing with.

The aim of this project is therefore to create a site at Fellagarðar that can simultaneously become an element that generates new memories, functions as a disruption of use for users as well as passersbyers and can be a part of a larger plan to improve the neighbourhood and its image.

It is the authors believe that the time for this sort of intervention is ideal at this moment due to the current neighbourhood restoration implemented in recent years as well as the increased public participation and growing culture of temporary uses within the community of Reykjavík. The intervention could also be used to draw attention to the unhealthy transportation culture of the city as well as the amount of land that is used for parking spaces in the city which is something that the new Municipal plan of Reykjavík intends to strike against. (Reykjavík City, 2013)

This thesis suggests a site and design that is to become the initiator of temporary use of the site, suggestions that are of course to be tightly linked to the use and receptions that the initial suggestions receive from its users as well as the development of businesses at Fellagarðar.

The proposals are in compliance with the will of the city of Reykjavík that set a course to improve the liveability of Breiðholt with an emphasis in Upper-Breiðholt, where Fellagarðar is located.

Method
To reach a deeper level of understanding regarding the subjects of temporality in architecture, landscape architecture and modern urban life, a literature study was performed. A study of numerous articles led to the findings of the published books that form the theoretical base of this thesis, as stated on page 10.

These studies helped in finding a site suitable for a design proposal of a temporary nature in the suburbs of Reykjavík. This area, Fellagarðar, was then analysed by studying relevant statistics, both in former and current

plans as well as images from the site. Site observations were lastly performed over the Easters of 2014. These observation allowed for the area to be studied in detail and also allowed for the author to engage with the users themselves and examine their usage of Fellagarðar during different parts of the day, weekdays or weekends.

Designs of similar nature were examined during the literature study and were revisited once the design period began. Influences from these projects are not hard to notice once the finished design is examined, be it in materials or the nature of the finished project.

Delimitation
Theoretical publishings and articles written on the subject of temporary sites are based on researches done in cultures and climates that can be considered more appealing for outdoor uses. There have been researches on these sorts of areas and their usage in Iceland, made by a group called Borghildur. (Borghildur, 2012) The groups findings were helpful but were never published or reviewed in any way apart from their own website.

Temporary sites and ways they can be utilised to transform the areas in which they are based are studied in depth but other methods of are merely touched upon, such as urban acupunture. A study of other methods and strategies would have been enlightening but due to the timeframe of this thesis work it was sadly not feasible.

Public participation is a hard concept to count on in a project that is not done in co-operation with any neighbourhood association .The idea of using the users of the site to build the site is an idea that was kept in mind during the design process and concept making.

For the project to be realised there would have to be a great collaboration between the municipality of Reykjavík and the business owners of Fellagarðar. This sort of collaboration has been successful in the past but has also failed. (Magnúsdóttir, Guðmundsson & Ingvarsson, 2012) Whether or not it could be succesful in this case is impossible to state without proper meetings.

Disposition

This thesis consists of six different parts
Firstly there is an introduction into the thesis and its background.

The second part studies theories and literature written about the subject of temporary uses, sites and structures. Relevant typologies are studies as well as the ways municipalities and cities have utilised temporary areas to there benefits.

Part three studies the neighbourhood of Breiðholt in a wide sense, its development, image, actions taken to improve it and the results of these actions.

Fourth part of the thesis studies the site of the proposed temporary installation and deals with the results of site observations as well as the possibilities the site offers.

The fifth chapter is the design proposal, where the construction is explained as well as its functions and the affects that it could possibly have on the neighbouthood and its image.

The sixth and final chapter examines the thesis as a whole and critically evaluates the project, its potential of realisation as well its shortcomings.

2.Theory & Practices

Introduction

In his influential book "The image of the city" Kevin Lynch starts off by saying that much like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space. They are both temporal but their scales and length of time spans differ. (Lynch, 1960) Cities are dynamic and ever-changing organisms. They grow and change through time and no two are alike since the cities are a reflection of the history and culture of its inhabitants. However, this growth and changes can become problematic for the people whose responsibility it is to steer and influence the paths the cities take in their evolution.

These difficulties can be traced back to many problems with the way municipalities, cities or towns are often organised and how their systems run. The slower the system works the slower the city progresses. Difficulties in changing rigid and often outdated master plans can result in a city not evolving alongside its actors; this can cause a city to become obsolete. That's not to say that cities should not have a master plan or that they should make any changes to it that its people ask for, these things need to be controlled and regulated but for the same reason as the system should not be too rigid, for the chance of a city and

its users to evolve together which leads to a prosperous relationship for both parties. Cities need to be open to the ideas of organic growth and changing alongside its inhabitants and realise that the often considered contrasts of organic city growth and stewardship can function together, as long as stewardship is not too rigid. (Bishop & Williams, 2012)

Ever since man started travelling the Earth he began homogenising it. Plants began being transported all over the globe, engineering knowledge spread out and one thing is for sure, this movement has not been slowed down with the accessibility of international travels and the internet.

Architecture and city planning is one of those things that have become international and often very similar throughout the world, which has often sparked heavy criticism. That does not mean that all architectural and planning knowledge can be transferred from one end of the world to the other. The sort of thinking that; "since this worked there so it must work here as well" has at times ended disastrously. The easiest way of finding out what sort of solutions work in an area must be to simply test them out. But constructing a site can cost

vast amounts of money and if the test doesn ot provide the results initially hoped for it will cost as much to either make alterations to the site or to remove it. This is where the construction of a temporary site could become greatly useful.

Making a site that is not meant to stand for as long as the ones we are used to in the city can provide great new tools for both the designer and the users. This and other aspects of temporary spaces will be discussed more thoroughly in this thesis along with discussions on different sites and various systems deployable when using temporary ways of testing and designing urban spaces.

Figure 1. Parking spot temporarily hosts life.

What is temporary?

Spaces within a city that are built or occupied for a shorter period of time than the modern permanent norm have been around for a long period of time. Temporary camps for living and market places have been, and still are, set up around the world through human history. Given the fact that temporary use of areas isn't a new invention makes it so strange that both designers and authorities seem to have so many different definitions of the phenomenon. This inconsistency could partly be due to the lack of definition of the word "temporary" when it comes to constructions of sites, as researchers have noted the vast difference in the terms usage. This became apparent in one of the interviews carried out by Killing architects.

.."*The binary distinction of 'temporary' and 'permanent' is deeply inadequate to describe the range of projects which happen in a city. 'Temporary' is ascribed to projects which vary wildly length, too much so for it to be a truly useful descriptor, and 'permanent' developments, usually intended to last for between 25 and 50 years, are not truly permanent.* (Killing Architects, 2012)

So according to that, one could say that; all sites are temporary, even the permanent ones. This confusion has been more clearly solved by researchers on the subject of temporary use;

"Temporary use refers to temporary activation of vacant or underused land or buildings with no immediate development demand. In principle, any action that uses a place for other than its common use for a period of time is temporary use"
(Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012)

This definition shows just how open the category of temporary use and design is even though it is more defined than Peter Bishop and Lesley Williams state in their book "The

Figure 2. A temporary cathedral.

temporary city" that any space that doesn't have an end or closure date is permanent and everything else is temporary. The idea of the temporality gets even more complicated when temporary projects become established as permanent ones, such as the Eiffel tower or imply the need for a permanent construction as in the case of the pavilion for the Helsinki, World Design Capital in 2012. The temporary construction, which was an extension to the city's Museum of Architecture and Design, served as an event space for the festival and at the same time strongly highlighted the need for a permanent enlargement of the museum, i.e. a temporary construction implying the need for permanence. (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012)

This thesis will follow the latter part of the definition of temporary use and design as stated by Panu Lehtovuori and Sampo Ruoppila above, since a temporary design on a fully used and occupied site can just as easily be constructed. That sort of temporary use of an area would be classified as a "Subversive temporary use" according to Peter Bishop and Lesley Williams, their classification is later explained in chapter 2. (Bishop & Williams, 2012)

Temporality vs. Permanence

Creating permanent things and achieving permanence seems to be a subject close to the human heart. To find everlasting love and come up with permanent solutions are concepts we are thoroughly familiar with. The idea of something so stable and enduring seems to be a goal that mankind has strived to achieve for ages. Monuments have been raised, preservation laws approved and matrimony vows stated, all in the effort of permanence.

One must realize that nothing truly lasts forever however big or infinitely important to us, e.g. the city of Pripyat, Ukraine a 45000 people city which was evacuated due to the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 and the original

Figure 3. The abandoned city of Pripyat.

Seven Wonders of the World, a list of great constructions from around the second century, out of these remarkable and monumental constructions only one is still standing, the "Great Pyramid of Giza". (Lunde, 1980) This goes to show that no matter how important a construction is, it can never be permanent. This is blatantly relevant today as we know about the threat that the rising sea levels have on modern harbour cities.

The idea of a soft or ephemeral city is one that isn't easily grasped due to the way we look at cities today but the fact is that cities haven't always been built like this. Cities used to consist of certain permanent structures such as great churches and governmental buildings but large parts of the cities were temporary markets and residential houses built with such limited means that they constantly had to be rebuilt and were therefore constantly changing. (Bishop & Williams, 2012)

Reasons for temporary use

To investigate the root of the usage of temporary space design one must examine the city and how the city has evolved in the last century or so. During the industrial revolution, the population numbers of cities grew extensively and masses of people occupied smaller and smaller spaces which caused the city planners to expand cities both to be able to handle the masses of people but also to fit the constantly growing industrial areas within the larger cities. Ironically some of the hastily built housing was intended to be temporary but ended up surviving much longer and even in some cases ended up on preservation lists. (Bishop & Williams, 2012)

This evolution of city spaces was a reaction to the state of culture and life at the time. Over the decades, culture and businesses have changed drastically. With changes in logistics, technologies and warehouse requirements as well as internet connections allowing people to

work out of office, even in other countries, it's obvious that even though the modern persons primal needs are the same as before, the needs of the modern city occupant are no longer the same as the needs of the occupants of cities during the urban revolution. These changes in needs have caused businesses to move from their giant buildings based in industrial areas to buildings and areas more suitable for their modern needs.

These changes in the needs of both occupants of cities and the businesses placed there have resulted in areas changing dramatically. Changes that have resulted in industrial areas, once booming with work, to become abandoned, lifeless or derelict and in often cheaply built neighbourhoods that were built for mass amounts of people now seem empty and suffering from social problems due to low income housing, as is the case with the areas of Breiðholt in Iceland that will be studied later on.

These empty or under-used areas hold great opportunities as temporary urban areas because they have a lower market value and are often occupied by people that seem to be more creative and open to changes from

the norm of the common city. (Overmeyer, 2007) (Nisenbaum, 2008)By adding life to these idle areas, city actors are giving the city intermittent life. By doing so the city has grown an almost second timeline containing smaller and shorter lifespans that run parallel to the city's own lifespan. (Smet, 2013) These spaces in the intermittent city are, just like the areas previously discussed, well suited to be used as nodes that can act as a driving factor in an area, a sort of catalyst spaces. These sorts of areas can be considered as heterotopic and can serve as testbeds of change. (Shane, 2005)

If the strength of the temporary is used, these ephemeral places can have a stronger attraction than the more common permanent ones. The strengths of temporary areas are similar to the ones of pop-up shops, a phenomenon that started in the 90's with artists starting shops in cheap un-used re-tail spaces to sell their own products and creations.

These strengths are among others:
- They have a limited life-span so if a user postpones his visit to the site he might miss it.
- They often have a fashionable image due to them being quite recently constructed.

- A buzz can easily be created through social media.
- They can be cheap to set up and can easily be altered if needed.
- Can be a great opportunity to try new things and experiment with them.
- Ideal for consumer research, trying out new services and/or locations.

(Bishop & Williams, 2012)

In their essence temporary spaces look, feel and are different than the mundane city spaces that we know. It is often this contrast to the surrounding spaces that seems to attract people to temporary areas.

Typology of temporary use

As mentioned above there are many ways that the tool, which a temporary use of a site is, can be used. All of these temporary areas have different types of identities and each of them therefore has a different meaning of the temporary space, based in various conditions such as: use, perspectives, location, etc. Klaus Overmeyer and the Urban Pioneers make a clear definition between the spatial conditions of central and marginal areas and state them to be the two types of temporary areas. (Overmeyer, 2007)

The table below was created by Lehtovuori and Ruoppila based on the findings of Overmeyer, as can be seen they have added the third type of area which is they call "areas losing significance". Their definition of this category is areas that are suffering from problems causing them to lose popularity and thereby users. (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012) This typology of temporary uses can be seen in table 1.

Urban central areas

Often the pride of cities and the areas where people get together in large numbers and are therefore often filled with life. Temporary use of space, varying from public seating to environmental art, has been used in these sorts of areas to break out of the stability of the mundane city landscape, e.g. "Torg í Biðstöðu" projects in Reykjavík (Reykjavík city - Environmental and planning council, 2012), the Paris Plages which are temporary beaches in downtown Paris open every summer since 2002 (Mairie de Paris, 2013) and the Robson St. summertime plaza in Vancouver. (City of Vancouver, 2014) Changes to sites that are placed in well used areas and have strict planning policies can be constructed more easily when done in a temporary manner rather than a permanent one.

Temporary designs in urban central areas could be considered to be the easiest to transform successfully since the user-base is often occupying the area already and the goal of the temporary use is to strengthen that use or introduce a new function at the site. (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012) The categories definition is closely defined in its title, possibly too closely since by specifically using the word "central" and describing these areas as being elitist and having clearly defined functions, the definition rules out "central" areas that are poorly defined and in conditions considered to be undesirable. The use of the word "central" also rules out areas of similar conditions and uses but have a more suburban location, or even rural.

Currently under-used areas

These sorts of areas have become more frequent alongside industrial areas being reintroduced as stronger parts of the city. The roles of

Table 1. Typology of temporary uses

	Urban central areas	Currently under-used areas	Areas losing significance
Use, function	Defined	Not defined, loose	Defined, but weakening
Attention and flux of people	High	None	Some, could be better
Apprehension, meaning	Fashionable, classic, elitist	Edgy, daring, promising	Out of fashion, low-brow
Development perspectives	Stable, lack of new ones	Open (risky)	Redevelopment optional
Goal of temporary uses	Intensification	Introduction, initiation	Redefinition, diversification

Table originally created by (Overmeyer, 2007) "Area losing significance" added by (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012)

the temporary sites have been to introduce people to the area and to start a user group for these spots. These temporary areas are often connected to the first stages of new-planning of former industrial areas as in the case of Køge, Denmark (Tegnestuen Vandkunsten A/S, SLA A/S & Grontmij A/S, 2011) and the old harbour of Reykjavík, Iceland. (Observation by author)

Areas losing significance

This category was added to the table of temporary area types by Panu Lehtovuori, Sampo Ruoppila, the table was originally put forth by Klaus Overmeyer in his book Urban Pioneers . This category covers projects that are placed within used or occupied areas that are suffering from problems causing them to lose popularity and thereby users. These problems can vary from high crime rate to being image related. These sorts of areas where the method of temporary spaces have being employed are often used to highlight the problems the area is facing as was in the case of the open-air library in Magdeburg, Germany and the Spare Space temporary office project in Groningen, Netherlands.

Although this typology of temporary areas creates clear distinction between the roles of different types of temporary areas, describes their conditions and what can be expected from them, the list cannot be considered to be complete or precise.

Table 2. Typology of temporary uses based on their usage.

	Currently well-used areas	Currently under-used areas	Areas with declining usage
Use, function	Defined	Not defined, loose	Defined, but weakening
Attention and flux of people	High	None	Some, could be better
Apprehension, meaning	Fashionable, classic	Edgy, daring, promising	Out of fashion, low-brow
Development perspectives	Stable, lack of new ones	Open (risky)	Redevelopment optional
Goal of temporary uses	Intensification	Introduction, initiation	Redefinition, diversification

Table originally created by (Overmeyer, 2007) "Area losing significance" added by (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012) elaborated by the author.

Elaborated typology of temporary uses

The typology, in table 1, lacks for example a category for well used suburban areas. An improvement to this would be to base the table solely on the strength of the sites usage regardless of their locations, the classes would then be:

- Currently well-used areas
- Areas with declining usage
- Currently under-used areas

Figure 4. City beach in Paris, 2012.

The altered categories can be seen in table 2, created by the author, based on the typology originally created by (Overmeyer, 2007) "Area losing significance" added by (Lehtovuori & Ruoppila, 2012)

The categories distinctions would stay the same apart from the "Urban central areas" apprehension would stop being elitist when the category is given the title of "currently well-used areas".

These changes in definitions and categorisation might seem pedantic but these distinctions can add to the designers awareness of the sites they are designing and of the uses and users they have. This is of course important with every site and design, but arguably more so when designing temporary spaces since their functions and results can be so reliant on the users actions and their usage of the site. In a case where a temporarily designed site has not been successful, the area surely benefits from the fact that the temporary use of the area can be dismantled and the site has therefore not been physically damaged in any way. The result is an additional chapter in the sites' history and knowledge as to what doesn´t work there has been gained.

Uses of temporary areas can be compared to the part of mutation in the evolution of species. A new area is constructed, if it is well received by its users and fills a niche which had not been filled it survives and either keeps evolving or simply betters the history of the area and the memories of the place. If it is badly received it simply dies off and something else takes its place.

There are many other arguments for temporary designs that are especially relevant to the state of the world today. Spaces that are used in a temporary manner are often succesful in problematic times and areas. Marcio Nisenbaum detected a notable relation between the areas of high unemployment in Berlin and areas occupied by temporary spaces. (Nisenbaum, 2008)

The financial crisis has noticeably caused businesses to shut down and thus leaving lots and buildings vacant. The combination of all of these factors makes for a positive environment for the use of temporary areas and use of buildings. (Bishop & Williams, 2012)

The modernistic "tabula rasa" method of start designing an area from an empty slate

is not in-sync with the kind of rebuilding an environmental mentality that is becoming increasingly popular in modern society. This is one of the main advantages of the temporary use. (Bishop & Williams, 2012) The use and design of these areas are most often done on small budgets and therefore have to make use of elements found on-site and by doing so they incorporate the spirit of the site into the new temporary design. By doing this they not only save money and include the existing elements and spirit but also show precedent in methods of re-use and recycling. The idea of creating something that exists for a shorter period of time doesn't sound like a process that is environmentally friendly, do it once and do it well is something many people were taught as children. The fact is that many temporary spaces are built in a "do no harm" sort of way. The projects must dismantle easily and are commonly re-used. These sorts of projects are categorised as stand-in projects. (Oswalt, Overmeyer, & Misselwitz, 2013)

Good examples of this are the "Southwark Lido" built in 2008 and the "Union Street Urban Orchard" built in 2010. Both built on the same derelict lot on Union Street in London these project are the epitome of how temporary projects tread lightly and add to the community. The Southwark Lido was a communal pool, a place which brought people together and was a surprising element in the middle of London. (Bishop & Williams, 2012) After the project had run its course, elements such as huts and lawn chair were sold to pay for the projects expenses but the rest of materials such as wood and vegetation were given away to people of the community or charity. (EXYZT, 2008) The urban orchard was partly built with reclaimed wood, used in the Southwark Lido project. This orchard was made from re-used construction matter such as rubber tires, wooden pallets and vegetation donated by the local communities. The orchard was home to numerous activities such as movie-screenings and courses in jam making. Much like after the "Southwark Lido" plants were donated to community gardens and materials were recycled, leaving. (Bishop & Williams, 2012) The site was once again reused temporarily in 2011 hosting "The Urban Physic Garden". (Wayward plants, 2014) and repeatedly after that, see page 76.

One can see that the categories of temporary sites have been clearly distinguished based on the current conditions and usage but they have also been studied and categorized based on their nature and lifecycle.

Based on extensive researches throughout Europe, Oswalt, Overmeyer and Misselwitz (2013) grouped temporary areas into nine different types. This typology takes into account the sites before their temporary uses were established, what the temporary uses were meant to achieve and how the temporary usage ended up evolving or dissolving. The categories, as identified by Oswalt, Overmeyer and Misselwitz (2013) are: Stand-in, Free-flow, Impulse, Consolidation, Co-existence, Parasite, Pioneer, Subversion and Displacement.

Figure 5. Public library at Occupy Wall Street.

Stand in-temporary use:

A site is used meanwhile it is not used for anything else. Temporary sites of this category have no physically lasting effect on the site but can add to the sites immaterial meaning. This is the most common type of temporary use.

An example of this type of use is the aforementioned lot in Union Street in London which has hosted many temporary projects to this day.

Free flowing-temporary use:

Temporary usage travels between sites, having to constantly adapt to new sites and areas. This lack of stability allows the usage to adapt well to the format of temporality and adapting to long-term developments.

This was the case of the nightclub, Club WMF in Berlin. The originally illegal club travelled between unused buildings in Berlin, forced to constantly move and adapt to its new locations due to its illegality. The club later on became legal but maintained its special character by constantly moving, thus simultaneously being free-slowing and consolidating.

Impulsive-temporary use:

Temporary usage is utilized to create a new image for a site or its surroundings.

This was the case of the formerly heavy industrial site of Sulzer-Areal industrial sector in the city of Winterthur, Switzerland. Temporary and rather minimal installations mixed with permanent structures, using the existing elements from the sites industrial era were used to change the overall heavily industrial and uninviting site to a large scale area with plentiful public spaces. Giving it a more inviting image causing increased usage and therefore more businesses flocking to the area.

Consolidating-temporary use:

Temporary use of an existing site is successful and ends up becoming established. Short term usage becomes long term.

Figure 6. The Sulzer-Areal industrial area.

The route of temporary use was taken by Nokia, concerning one of their disused cable manufacturing buildings in the 80's. The building was split up into units which were rented out to users who then renovated them to suite whatever use they had in mind. The rent was low, but enough to pay for the maintenance of the building. The cable factory was such a success that it ended up being acquired by the city of Helsinki and continues to host festivities, studios etc.

Coexisting-temporary use:

Temporary use is setup but by time a more permanent use takes over. The temporary use still functions alongside the newly established more permanent usage.

A trailer park in Berlin called the Black Canal is an example of this. Starting on an unused lot the trailer park got an approval to stay there until the building of a permanent construction began. By the time the constructions were to be started the trailer park had developed in to a colony of sorts. The site had of course to be emptied but the colony got permission to stay at another site close by.

Parasitical-temporary use:

The temporary use operates next to a more permanent use, exploiting the existing and functioning use.

There are not many examples of this sort of use to be found, but the temporary operation of vehicles outside of recycling plants can be considered to be one. The base of these operations is that people have to pay the recycling plants fees if they wish to discard of their electronic devices. This fee has sparked the profession of people offering to take the unwanted electronic devices out of the hands of those who don't want them, without charging a fee. These people then either scavenge the devices for recyclable material or try to re-sell them later on. The business run out the vehicles parked outside of the recycling centre therefore survive parasitically of the recycling centres.

Pioneering-temporary use:

A former unused site becomes a venue for a completely new kind of temporary usage. This temporal usage becomes successful and increasingly established, taking on a more permanent role through time.

The cases of city beaches are an example of this sort of temporary use. An example of these, Strandbar Mitte located in Berlin, is a man-made outdoor beach area, which sprang up through an entrepreneurial private initiative. It simply began with a theatre needing an outdoor bar space in 2001. By utilizing an unused sandy area, enlarging it and discovering new uses this pioneering temporary site has revealed the potential of the waterfront of Berlin and influenced further temporary developments in the park of Monbijou and all of Berlin as well.

Subversive temporary use:

An established long term site is temporarily used in a manner that disrupts its established usage. These types of uses are usually very short lived but can have a serious impact on the pre-existing site and its usage.

The occupy movements such as Occupy Wall Street are an example of this. Tent cities made in Zuccotti Park were occupied by people protesting the greed, inequality and corruption in the monetary system of the USA. The temporary use was not to disrupt the usage of the actual park but to change its surroundings and its ideology.

Temporary displacement use:

Established uses are temporarily re-located where they continue their usage until they move back to their original location.

The case of Mini-Market convenience store in Breiðholt further dealt with in chapter 4, is an example of temporary displacement use. Due to the stores original location being burnt down the store temporarily moved to an adjacent housing while restorations were made to its original site.

(Oswalt, Overmeyer, & Misselwitz, 2013)

Figure 7. Part of the 2008 Bat-Yam biannale.

Temporary uses by municipalities

Different authorities have established different types of systems so that unused places or areas that seem to be losing their significance are used in a temporary way. This can be done for spaces scattered over the whole city or clustered spaces as a part of a festival for instance. Cities such as Berlin, London, Bat Yam and Reykjavík have all hosted some sort of organized actions of a temporary manner; each city having their own way of planning and structuring these places.

Bat Yam, Israel

The city of Bat Yam is located on the Mediterranean Sea coast of Israel and has a population of 160.000 inhabitants. (Bat-Yam Biennale, 2012) The city of Bat Yam has hosted a "Biennale of landscape urbanism" twice, once in 2008 and then again in 2010. This biennales aim is improve the quality of public spaces throughout the city and by doing so improve its image and quality of life. The project is funded by the municipality in addition to various funds. This collaboration of artist, community groups, planners and municipality was initiated by the city which has proved to work very well. There is a law in Israel that gives the mayor a right of temporary use on a vacant privately owned land, as longs as it is for car parks or parks, and this law has worked out heavily in favour of the biennale.

The Bat Yam Biennale hosted open calls for actors interested in participating and organised community groups to provide tours to the applicants. Out of this environment of temporary urban experiments another phenomenon grew, the 72 Hour urban action competition (72 HUA).

Initially a part of the Biennale, 72 HUA was an extremely fast paced and low budget competition where designers were designated an area that was in need of regenerating. The competition area was a derelict street were 10 groups or individuals, each designed a public space after getting an introduction into the needs and status of the area. As one could guess from the competitions name, designers had 72 hours to plan, design and construct their projects. Those projects that were deemed successful were granted building permits retroactively. (Killing Architects, 2012) The results of these actions seem to have increased the participation of local communities and city officials as well as increased landscaped gardens that have been designed for the

purpose of public use from 60 hectares at the beginning of the 2008 biennale, to 140 hectares at the end of the 2010 biennale. (Bat-Yam Biennale, 2012)

London, UK

London is of course a much larger city than Bat Yam and seems to have a stronger tradition of temporary use of derelict and underused areas and buildings.

Many examples of temporary usage of space can be mentioned such as the Spitalfields market, The Union street urban orchard and the numerous companies and organizations working as mediators between landlords, communities and individuals, for the use of business space, land or any kind of space for a shorter period of time with the aim of improving the use of space in the city and thereby the city itself. (The Meanwhile Foundation, 2014) (Meanwhile Space, 2014) (Locality, 2014).

In the last years there have been many competitions and proposal events held by institutions and boroughs of London. Many of these competitions, like the Meanwhile London competition and the Forgotten Spaces had the main purpose of adding life to places

that have become under-used and left behind in the last years.

The project explored here is the "Meanwhile London competition". This competition was held by The City of London and the Newham borough of London and launched in 2010 and its aim was to start the transformation of The Royal Docks and canning town in Newham, this transformation of the area was intended to be show investor how much potential for growth and prosperity the area had to offer, but the area was to be quite much in the spotlight during the 2012 London Olympics. (Newham Council, 2010)

The competition was as previously stated held by the city of London and the Newham borough of London but in co-operation with the "DFL group" and "Meanwhile space". (Killing Architects, 2012) DFL stands for "Design for London" and was a unit started by the Mayor of London and its role was to:

"..take a lead in providing design input to relevant developments, policy and strategy work within Greater London. This includes extensive partnership working within the GLA group, and with borough councils and other

Figure 8. London Eye, initially temporary.

key partners to input into the development of area design strategies, masterplans and planning frameworks and to ensure high quality design is delivered in relevant development and infrastructure projects." (Mayor of London, 2008)

"Meanwhile Space" on the other hand is a community interest group that tries to raise the profile of interim projects in hope that they will become a bigger part of the modern city life. Their work revolves around communicating between landowners or landlords and people interested in using places or spaces that are currently un-used. (Meanwhile Space, 2014)

Clearly the Meanwhile London competition holders were invested in the idea of getting the authorities, interest groups and communities together, in making the final results successful. The competition was very open with 3 lots assigned to be built on. Proposals had to be accompanied with solid business plans that should take into account construction costs as well as the funding for their vision of the site. 47 projects were handed in as proposals, 4 of them were picked as winners for the three sites. They received no prize fee or grants from the competition but instead were given free land of use and a waving of planning fee. If any money was to be made from the projects they were to be shared with the Borough of Newham.

But as it turned out the projects ended up having trouble due to funding. The business plans turned out to be so rigid and sensitive, to the unsuspecting halts and permit delays, that the investors fled from the projects and thereby forcing the groups to re-finance their proposals. This was successfully done through a mixture of funding from commercial loans and community grants as well as self-funding from the project leaders themselves. (Killing Architects, 2012) These funding related problems, unsuspected costs and lack of financial support from the city and borough led to the closings of all these projects in 2012.

It's quite obvious what went wrong in the set-up of this project. The competition holders were planning on using the competition as a way of advertising and to get the area into the social spotlight and media without spending a pound more than they had to. To be fair the competitions briefing document was honest in saying that there was no specific budget for developing the contestants' ideas and they had to be prepared to do that themselves. (Murray, 2012) Ultimately the burden lies on the proposal makers, they should have known what they were getting into but the idea of a city unwilling to invest in projects that they want to use to attract investors worth 22 billion pounds, is a highly unethical one. (Mallett, 2010)

Reykjavík, Iceland

The greater Reykjavík area is similar to Bat Yam in population, 196.492 (Statistics Iceland, 2014) as opposed to Bat Yams ca. 160.000. (Bat-Yam Biennale, 2012) This of course doesn't make them fully compatible; the vast differences in climate and culture are even outnumbered by their difference in density. Reykjavík has a density of 258 people per. km² (Stefánsdóttir & Haraldsdóttir, 2010) while Bat Yams density in 2008 was 15,782 people per. km², making it the second most densely populated city in Israel after Bene Beraq. (The State of Israel, 2014)

It can therefore be considered a given fact that the word suburbs means to completely different things to the people of these cities. One thing they have in common is that city officials have made an effort in trying to get

the people of the city to make the cities more liveable through the usage of temporary spaces. The method employed in Bat Yam was described earlier but the one employed in Reykjavik is quite different.

Despite the number of squares and open spaces in the city of Reykjavik there has been lacking a culture of their usage. This might be due to weather and climate or even the designs and location of these areas, this is hard to confirm due to lack of research and people counting throughout the years. This has been improved in the last years alongside the pedestrianising of streets and increased emphasis on greener methods of transportation by the city of Reykjavik. (Borghildur, 2012)

Whatever the reason for this lack of usage has been, the city set up a program to try and make better of this and thereby increase the life within the city. The program is called "Torg í biðstöðu" (English translation: Squares on hold) and the ideology of it is that the city makes a list of areas that they consider to be suitable for the project, this could be due to under-usage, upcoming changes or derelict conditions etc..

Over the spring time there is an open call for people interested in working with these areas,

applicants are arranged to be interdisciplinary and as varying as possible. The groups are free to manipulate the sites in almost any which way they choose as long as it doesn't make it impossible for the area to be returned to its former state without great expenses. (Tryggvason, 2012)

This program started in 2010 but has been growing every year since. Sites have grown in numbers and they all share a quite temporary look, i.e. materials primarily being untreated wood and turf. This look has not been decided by the city but is most likely due to the low budget of the whole project, which is around 20 million ISK (1.1 million SEK.) in total.

Locations of these temporary projects have spread from exclusively being in the centre of the city and the program has since then reached the suburbs as well. The main focus is still set on the city centre because of it being easier to attract people when there are people around, as opposed to the suburbs where there are fewer people around. The city of Reykjavik considers the program as a whole to have been successful even though some areas have worked better than others, understandably. (Randversson, 2014) But how do they come to the conclusion that the project is an overall

success? To answer this one must look at the initial goal of the project:

"... The project Torg í Biðstöðu is meant to activate the citizens, nurture public spaces and do something different." (Reykjavík City, 2013)

Citizen activation and difference can be confirmed. Squares have been used differently than before and citizens have been more involved. This can be seen by the suggestion and announcement web of the City of Reykjavik, where people have requested more of these areas or in some cases that designs will be made permanent.

The temporary design of Baldurstorg in 2010 was heavily criticized by the inhabitants of the area for not being designed to their liking and not separating motorized traffic from pedestrian traffic, this resulted in a redesign the following year. That redesign was met with great appreciation by inhabitants and businesses surrounding the square, as their ideas and complaints had been considered in the design process. The next 2 years the inhabitants requested the city to assign the same group of people to design the square and they even pitched in and helped with the

manual labour needed for the construction. (City of Reykjavík, 2012) The temporary design and use of Baldurstorg has resulted in the decision of the city to make a more permanent change to the square that will be influenced by the experiences gained from the temporary square program. (Randversson, 2014)

Another example of increased citizen participation is the case of "The Heart

Figure 9. The Heart garden, Reykjavík.

Garden", see figure 9. The area which the garden occupied is a private property that got left undeveloped due to over-ambitious and slowly developing plans to build a shopping mall there. The constructions were cancelled due to the financial crisis in 2008, this financial uncertainty resulted in the area becoming derelict and attracting undesirable activities. (Þórólfsdóttir, 2013)

A group of street artists took the area under their wing and contacted city officials who contributed financially for the spaces remodelling. The outcome became a lively and well used square that welcomed people of all kinds and classes. Party people mixed with tourists and graffiti artists created an informal green space lacking in the city centre, the only other popularly used green area in the city being surrounded by the Icelandic parliament and the Reykjavik Cathedral. The garden was completely open and the initiating group sought after ideas and participation from the users. The garden hosted pop-up markets, concerts, protest rallies and children's birthday parties. (Sverrisdóttir, 2013)

As the cases above show the use of ephemeral areas can be very versatile both in theory and

construction. Bat Yam's case was a competition that closely worked with the inhabitants of the area in improving their surroundings while the case of "The Heart Garden" from Reykjavík was a grass root idea of creating a common space without class and judgement in the city that eventually became supported by city officials. The example from London is a more governed and controlled way of trying to change the image of an area that was city run from start to finish and heavily governed during the whole process.

The cases differ in many ways but all seem to be aiming for a common goal. To build better communities, ones that are based on the users and their actions. The problems with these sorts of projects are often the masterplans which are strict and can be hard to change and adapt to the ever-changing conditions of reality. This is why more cities are implementing softer and more flexible ways of working with their masterplans which allow for developments to be made in layers and happen in their own frame of time. The main difference of these sorts of plans from the conventional planwork can be related to their consideration of the fourth dimensions. This fourth dimension often not considered in the conventional

plans, of course being time. By implementing a masterplan which does not have a fixed ending but works towards main goals instead the cities or areas are allowed to grow on their own terms, allowing for softer transitions and increased site specificity. (Bishop & Williams, 2012) Examples of these sorts of methods being utilised are; Il de Nantes area in France and King's Cross Central in London.

Creations of the sort of programs and encouragements of ephemeral activities and uses are without a doubt like a wind beneath the wings of actors in the creative sector, the sector of which most actors within the temporary realm seem to sprout from. This sort of assistance from the municipal officials has given cities the opportunitt to re-define what makes them an attractive place. Cities can now be seen advertising themselves as "Creative cities" and emphasising on the ground up projects that often arose from their inadequate planning and urban mistakes. (Oswalt, Overmeyer, & Misselwitz, Introduction, 2013) This was the case of the Heart garden in the centre of Reykjavík as previously mentioned. These actions are of course quite hypocritical.

3.The area - Breiðholt

Introduction

The island of Iceland is a geologically young and dynamic land. It's population has been slowly growing since its settlement around 871 and has only reached about 320.000 people. (Statistics Iceland, 2014) In comparison that is only 7000 more than live in the city of Malmö, Sweden. (Statistics Sweden) (Reykjavík city, 2013)

The capital of this small country is called Reykjavík and is the only city in it. Its population is ca.120.000. The city was originally founded by the first settler of Iceland, Ingólfur Arnarson and his family in ca.871. Legend has it that this location of settlement was chosen by releasing pillars, carved in the likeness of the Nordic gods, from the ship while still at sea. The pillars supposedly came to shore in Reykjavík. The mild climate, good natural harbour conditions and other positive natural resources have to be considered as a more rational and likely reasons for the settlements location. The location of the settlements is now called Aðalstræti (Main Street) and is located in the centre of downtown Reykjavík. The settlement was not more than a farm for a long period of time and didn´t really start its rise of importance in Iceland until the

18th century alongside the rise of the wool industry.

During this period Iceland was a property of Denmark and continued to be so until WWII when the allied occupied nation of Iceland declared independence from the Nazi occupied Denmark. The Second World War brought great prosperity to the country of Iceland, in the form of major infrastructure improvements, abundant work opportunities and increased connections to the outside world. This increase in employment opportunities caused a lot of people from the rural areas of Iceland to move to the city of Reykjavik and this called for an increase in housing and therefore a need of an enlargement to the city.

The 60's were a time of great change and expansion to Reykjavík. It marked the planning and construction of the first two of the current major suburbs of the city, Árbær and Breiðholt.

Kjalarnes

Vesturbær

Miðborg

Laugardalur

Grafarvogur

Hlíðar

Háaleiti

Grafarholt-Úlfarsárd.

Breiðholt

Árbær
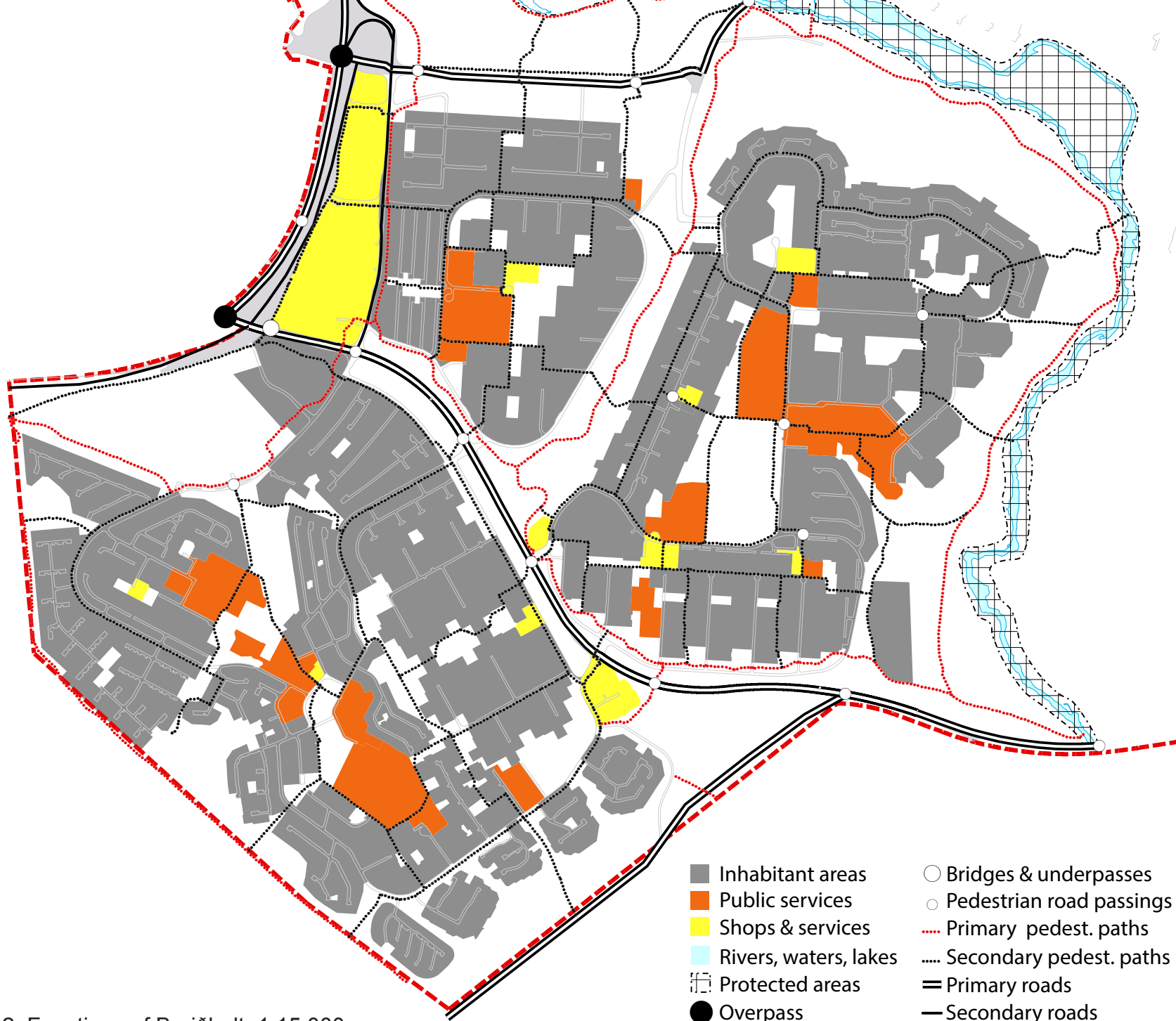
Figure 12. Functions of Breiðholt. 1:15.000

Legend:

- Inhabitant areas
- Public services
- Shops & services
- Rivers, waters, lakes
- Protected areas
- Overpass
- Bridges & underpasses
- Pedestrian road passings
- Primary pedest. paths
- Secondary pedest. paths
- Primary roads
- Secondary roads

N

Figure 13. Walkway in Breiðholt

Breiðholt

The suburb of Breiðholt is divided into 3 main neighbourhoods: Upper-Breiðholt, Lower-Breiðholt and Seljahverfi. These main areas are split into smaller areas. Upper-Breiðholt consists of Fell, Berg and Hólar, Lower-Breiðholt consists of Bakkar and Stekkir, finally Seljahverfi consists of Sel and Skógar neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods in additions to the commercial area of Mjódd make up the suburb called Breiðholt, see figure 14.(Reykjavík city, 2013)

This half a century old suburb covers an area of 633 hectares, according to the Municipal plan of Reykjavík. 503 of those hectares are built land and 130 hectares are open land. Breiðholt is home to about 21.000 people and its habitants are of all stages of the social spectrum. (Reykjavík city, 2013) This wide variety of people is due to the fact of how heterogeneous the buildings of the whole area are. There's a striking difference between the neighbourhoods within Breiðholt. In that way it is not the typical suburb as often is depicted regarding urban sprawl and other suburb related problems in urbanism and planning. This difference can best be seen in the comparison of neighbourhoods like Seljahverfi and Fellahverfi.

Lower-Breiðholt was constructed in a very mixed manner, with rather large U-shaped apartment buildings, smaller complex buildings as well as grandiose villas. Houses are located close to each other and without primary roads separating the neighbourhood into smaller parts. Fellahverfi on the other hand has been synonymous with social problems since its construction in the 1960's.

This is clearly depicted in the fact that people who live in the area often send their kids to other school districts for education, this result in a school that once had 1527 students to currently only having 320 students, finishing at the bottom of many subjects in national scores. (Reykjavík city - Education and youth, 2013)

Fellahverfi is characterised by some of the largest apartment buildings in Reykjavík. This was planned after the constructions of neighbourhoods in Lower-Breiðholt and the realisation of how much cheaper it would be to build bigger than it would be to build the U-shaped apartment buildings with a communal garden in the middle, like had been done in Lower-Breiðholt. (Fritzson, Haraldsson, Jóhannsson, Pétursson, & Ásmundsson, 2010) This inexpensive way of building has unsurprisingly resulted in inexpensive housing which has attracted groups of people that have resulted in the areas reputation being negative.

Table 3. Neighbourhoods of Breiðholt

Breiðholt	Upper-Breiðholt	Fell
		Berg
		Hólar
	Lower-Breiðholt	Bakkar
		Stekkir
	Seljahverfi	Sel
		Skógar
	Mjódd	

This negativity can be seen in public discussions during everyday conversations, the biggest apartment buildings are often referred to as "Langavitleysan" (The long non-sense, or Longsense) and the social housing of the area has often sparked the comparison to other problematic areas in Scandinavia, such as Rosengård, Malmö or Nørrebro, Copenhagen. These factors led to the area of Breiðholt often being to refer to as "The Ghetto of Reykjavík".
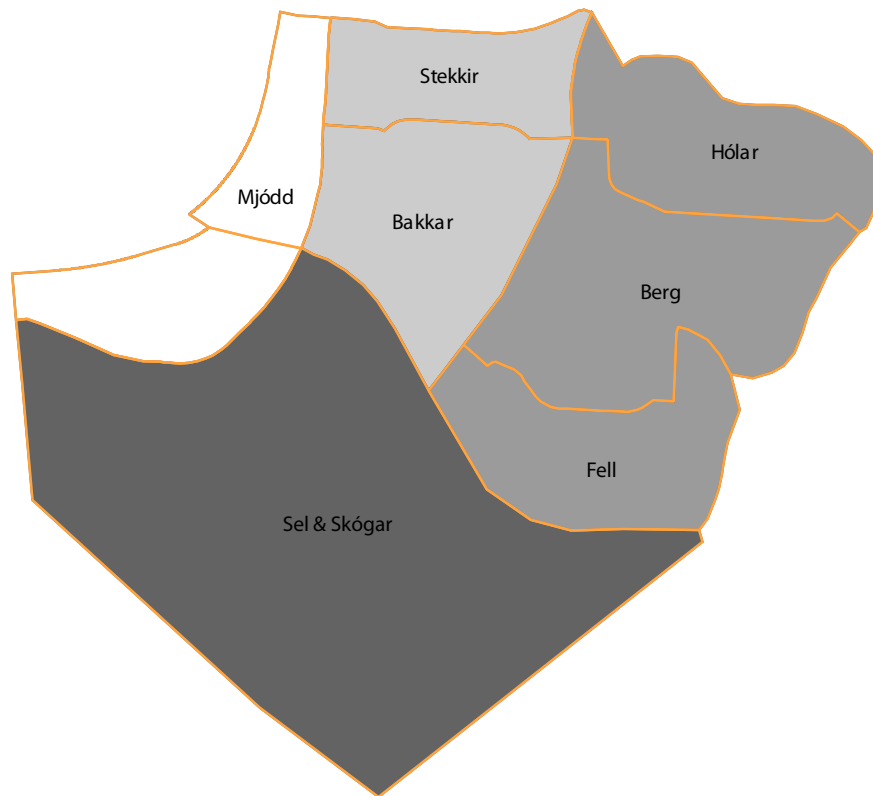
Figure 14. Neighbourhoods of Breiðholt. 1:25.000

This name-calling is at best laughable but city officials have started to take this seriously and in the last few years there has been an ongoing campaign to turn the public discussion of the area around and thus improve the image of Breiðholt. (City council of Reykjavík, 2011)

The fact of the matter is that Breiðholt has abundance of positive factors. It offers a wide range of housing, allowing people of all social statuses to live there. Geographically it is located near natural areas that offer many affordances to its inhabitants. Area such as Elliðaárdalur, a natural area filled with vegetation, a salmon fishing river and multiple picnic and playground areas, both natural and man-made. An important cultural centre and public library called Gerðuberg is located in Breiðholt, as well as five elementary schools and a college. Breiðholt has a swimming pool, a ski slope, and is home to two big sports teams offering a variety of sports training to the people of the area. This is in addition to a big cinema complex and a smaller scale shopping mall being located in the area as well. When describing an area that hosts all of these functions the word "ghetto" is not what springs to mind first.

Figure 15. Buildings at Upper-Breiðholt.

Recent improvements

To highlight the positive factors of the area and try and turn the public opinion the mayor of Reykjavík has taken some measures. The official announcement of majority-collaboration between the political parties: Besti flokkurinn and Samfylking, was made on the roof of a building in Æsufell, which is one of the biggest apartment buildings in Breiðholt. This was to mark the change of things to come and be an indicator of the impact their collaboration was to have on the area of Breiðholt. (Morgunblaðið, 2010)

The author will not go into arguments about whether or not this promise was fulfilled or not, but some of the collaborations actions will be mentioned. Actions such as the creation of the title of "Neighbourhood manager of Breiðholt" whose role it is to oversee the project of improving Breiðholt and the services, education and transportation of the area. All of which are under the responsibility of the city of Reykjavík. (City council of Reykjavík, 2011)

The opening of a "fabrication laboratory" (FAB-LAB), which is a non-profit laboratory equipped with machines like 3-D printers and laser-cutters that is meant to encourage designers and other entrepreneurs in production. The mayor himself moved his office temporarily to Gerðuberg in Breiðholt in hopes of becoming more in touch with the people of the area and their needs.

Constructions have recently finished on a walking path alongside the longest apartment building of the city, previously referred to as: "The never ending non-sense". This walkway was designed by "Tvíhorf Architects" after collaboration and analysis sessions with children from the nearby Fellaskóli. This project has been nominated for cultural awards in Iceland as well as receiving attention from the media and public.

Development

The "Municipal plan for Reykjavík 2010-2030" was approved in February of 2014. This plan marks a shift in the city's policy on transportation and neighbourhood density. The emphasis is set on making services within each neighbourhood a desirable choice and by doing so decreasing motorised traffic in the city as a whole. Bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways are increased as well as sparsely populated areas made more dense. (Reykjavík

city, 2013) All of these actions are in direct opposition to the Municipal plans the city has been erected in accordance to since the Municipal plan of Reykjavík 1962-1983, which was the Municipal plan that outlined the planning and constructions of the suburbs of Reykjavík.

This plan expanded the city's outlines substantially and set the tone for the heavy use of private vehicles that have plagued the city ever since. The suburbs were only linked to the inner part of Reykjavík with a road network and not train, subway or monorail systems as are in place in many other cities of Scandinavia. (Reykjavík city, 1966)

Despite the suburb of Breiðholt being built based on a municipal plan that praised the private vehicle, the neighbourhood was planned in a self-sufficient way regarding liveability and services. The aspect that was not included as a part of the plan was employment. The whole area was planned with the intention of people commuting to jobs near the city centre.

Given the fact that bus usage in Reykjavík is low but increasing, the current annual record was set in 2012 with 20% of the city's residents having used public transportations once a month, its numbers were only a fraction of this in the 60's and 70's when the

suburbs were being built. (Strætó, 2013) This low usage of the public transportation system is most likely due to the fact that a culture of suburban people driving to work has long since been established in the city.

In 2006 there were 110.706 vehicles registered to people living within the boundaries of Reykjavík. (Statistics Iceland, 2007) The number of people, age 17 or older, was 90.359 (Statistics Iceland, 2014) this means that in 2006 there were ca. 1.2 motorized vehicles registered to every person, of a legal driving age, living in Reykjavík. These numbers do not include the neighbouring municipalities to Reykjavík but a large part of their population

Figure 16. The newly renovated pedestrian path. 1:3.000

commutes into Reykjavík daily for work. This high vehicle ownership and the transportation culture of the city plays a part in the decline of small businesses, especially convenience stores, within the neighbourhood because private cars make it easier to visit larger supermarkets located further away.

Once the businesses were in decline there were almost only residential areas and municipal service buildings such as schools, kindergartens and libraries, left in the area making it more homogenous in usage.

Figure 17. Commuters of Breiðholt compared to the average of Reykavík.

Upper Breiðholt

Buildings and structures

Lower and upper parts of Breiðholt are different from the many parts of Reykjavík in the way that the buildings are very similar within each area i.e. there is a clear separation between areas due to their building types. The segregation is less noticeable in Seljahverfi where there is more of a mixture of building types and architectural styles. As previously mentioned, almost all of Breiðholt was built in the 60's and 70's; the dominant apartment buildings of Bakkar and Fell neighbourhoods were the city' answer for the need of housing for people flocking to the city as well as the growing local population that had caused the city to expand. The buildings are dominantly made of concrete, as is with all of the countries constructions, due to Iceland's lack of clay mines and usable forests. Therefore there wasn´t much of an effort put into embellishing the concrete apartment buildings or sometimes even cladding them. Their facades are therefore simply textured and in tone with the parking spaces minimal details and overall blank asphalt surfaces. These materials are a giveaway of the era in which the houses were constructed in.

The good intensions and ideas that were the driving force for the design of Lower-Breiðholt were abandoned due to a lack of budget and instead of the U-shaped apartment buildings that have a playground in the middle and often parking garages underneath, a decision was made to build larger box-shaped buildings and place them in lines instead of U's. By doing so, parking areas for the buildings could be unified and therefore made easier to construct, playgrounds could also serve multiple buildings if well placed. This resulted in large continuous areas being covered in asphalt and almost identical buildings being positioned in lines creating homogenous areas
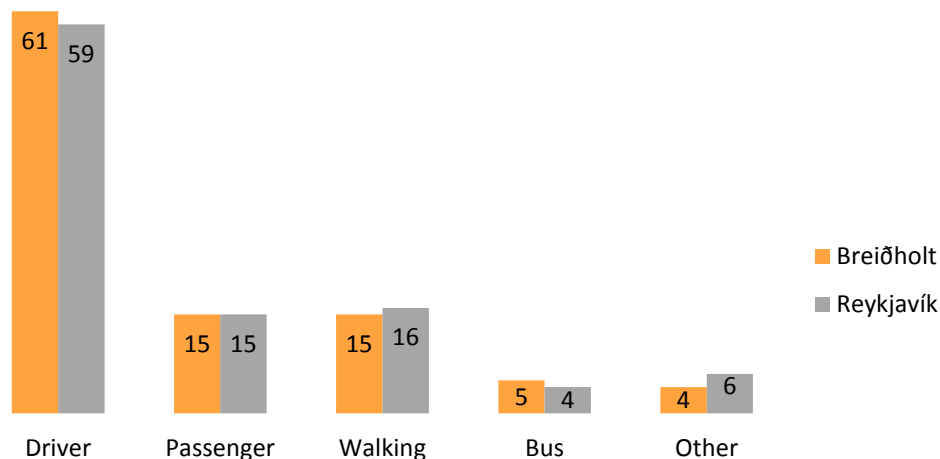
of hard surfaces and inexpensive materials.

The nearby streets of private homes are more diverse since their constructions were more individually made by each inhabitant. Their styles are more diverse and colours vary greatly. The privately owned gardens are similarly diverse and have gotten quite grown and add much needed complexity to the streetscape, creating more enclosed areas than can be found in the surroundings of larger apartment buildings of the neighbourhood.

In the centre of Upper-Breiðholt there is a vast openness, created by low rise buildings and open spaces of football fields. This open area is home to the local sports team Leiknir, College of Breiðholt, the neighbourhood's elementary school and the swimming pool of Breiðholt. These big buildings are located next to one another and are joined by parking lots that add to the flatness of their surroundings. Next to these buildings a long and narrow recreational area, grown with vegetation creates a buffer from the surrounding apartment buildings on the western side.

Streets and walkways

The modernistic way in which Breiðholt is designed is characterised by the wide streets and large apartment buildings. These streets in Breiðholt are of course not in the scale represented by Le Corbusier and other influential modernists due to the small population of the area compared to cities in which the modernist ideology was formed. The bigger streets surround the neighbourhoods of Breiðholt and smaller streets connect into them. Fellahverfi has a two lane street that forms a circle around the middle of the area, and connects the aforementioned services of the middle to the outside areas and larger roads. The circular road has a 30-50 km/hr speed limit but because of its often heavy traffic

it creates a barrier between the apartment buildings outside the road and the services within it.

The roads have through the years been in dire need of maintenance especially in the areas close to the derelict business clusters. There has been a certain turnaround in this due to the improvements that the municipality has initiated in the neighbourhood in recent years.

Walkways have been rebuilt and design improvements made to the existing pedestrian infrastructure to make it less homogenous, this was done in co-operation with the students of Fellaskóli. Facades facing walkways have been

Figure 18. Buildings of Fannarfell,

decorated with illustrations to create areas of interest within the pre-existing environment.

Concrete sidewalks are along the roads of the neighbourhoods but pedestrian paths are also placed between buildings connecting the now underused business clusters.

A non-Icelandic person might find the absence of cycling paths in the area quite strange. The simple explanation for this is the lack of cycling culture in Iceland. Although bicycle paths are becoming more frequent, traffic laws allow bicycles to be used on sidewalks, as well as streets and bicycle paths. The lack of bicycle-paths does therefore not exclude cyclists from the area.

Green areas

The area of Breiðholt is relatively grown, despite the areas bad image. Areas with a high percentage of social housing, immigrants and under-achieving schools are usually not areas that are grown with vegetation and open spaces. This also highlights the humour in calling the area "a ghetto", especially when "ghetto" areas of other cities are compared to Breiðholt.

The negative side of the green areas in Fellahverfi is that they are often private gardens or simply leftover areas, i.e. buffer areas from roads and small grassy lawns used as boundaries between areas of differing usage. Many of them are therefore not useable for any sort of recreation and offer no affordances, but they do give the neighbourhood a much needed colour and life. The apartment buildings have gardens as well but they are simple rectangular areas covered with grass.

Trees have been planted in beds alongside paths but are in many cases overgrown and have made areas shady instead of lively, this can and has been fixed with simple maintenance in some area but needs to be done even further to evoke the feeling of security to pedestrians travelling through Fellahverfi.

There is a large green area linking the western part of Upper-Breiðholt to the services in the centre of it. This area has a well connected system of walking paths that are spread evenly throughout the area and connect to other parts of Breiðholt. Inhabitants have made complaints about this area not being used and have expressed ideas about constructing community gardens inside of it. (KPMG,

2013) Whether or not this is a good idea will not be discussed here but the possibility of restoration is currently available at the site Behind Fellagarðar and there is a small square-like area that the pedestrian path leads to. Benches are placed there but the surrounding buildings and lack of relevance due to it being small and placed behind the buildings make it unlikely to be used. During observations this area was entirely unused.

Image of Breiðholt

Breiðholt and especially Upper-Breiðholt has had to deal with an image crisis ever since its construction started in the 60's. The reasons for the negative image it has had to deal with are twofold. On one hand the neighbourhood's construction supplied a needing market of lower income citizens with cheaper housing than could be found in other parts of the city.

This has continued to this day and is the reason for the neighbourhood having the highest number of inhabitants born in outside of Iceland. (Statistics Iceland, 2013) The other negative-image problem facing Upper-Breiðholt is the number of apartments owned and operated by the Municipality's Social housing services. 357 or 20% of the city's

social housing is located in Upper-Breiðholt. (Reykjavík Social Housing, 2012) These two reasons have made a black mark on the neighbourhood's image.

As a result of this Upper-Breiðholt is ranked in the lowest quarter of neighbourhoods in Reykjavík people would like to move to, despite it being more centrally located than other neighbourhoods. (Capacent, 2014)

The stereotypical "ghetto" image that has plagued Upper-Breiðholt is not only affecting real estate prices and similar issues, it also affects the inhabitants feeling of safety and pride in their neighbourhood. A study done by the Reykjavík Police Department in 2013 showed that even though the area of Breiðholt was under the average rate of violent crimes in Reykjavík, the rate of inhabitants that felt safe walking in Breiðholt after dark were 11 percent lower than the average citizen of Reykjavík. (Reykjavík Police Department, 2013)

Given the aforementioned reasons and statistics, one could say that the least popular neighbourhood of Reykjavík at the moment seems to be Upper-Breiðholt. Upper-Breiðholt being the least desirable one at the moment does

Figure 19. Open green spaces in Upper-Breiðholt, 1:25.000

not mean that the neighbourhood is horrible or dangerous, it just means that there are other neighbourhoods at the moment that are more appealing to the majority of Reykjavík, it is good to see that the municipality of Reykjavík has not given up on Upper-Breiðholt. On the contrary the city officials seem to be putting

an emphasis on the area and vast rejuvenation has improved the area over recent years.

During the numerous meetings city officials and planners have had with the inhabitants of Breiðholt, it has become apparent that the people of Breiðholt are proud of their
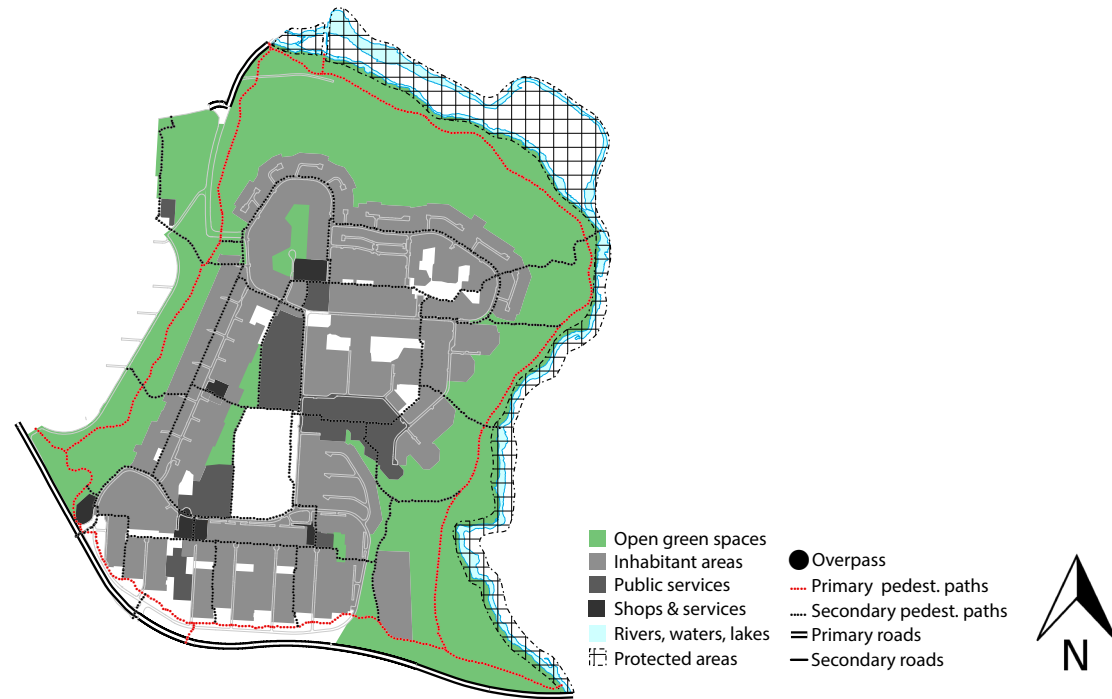
neighbourhood and consider it to be a good place to live in, but have grown tiresome of the lack of maintenance and interventions towards the slumification of the area, especially Upper-Breiðholt. The opportunities within the area are apparent to the inhabitants and are repeatedly pointed out during these public meetings.

Green areas are stale and underused, business clusters are filthy and don't meet the needs of the current users, buildings are uninviting due to their facades being blank and entrances being characterised by parking lots. These are the things that are repeatedly being pointed out by inhabitants during official meetings and therefore have to be considered as the most important for the inhabitants. (Reykjavík City, 2013) (KPMG, 2013)

The design part of this thesis aims to follow the direction set by the municipality and improve the underused and derelict area of Fellagarðar in an attempt to raise the morale of inhabitants as well as the image of Upper-Breiðholt from being a lower class, suburban sleep-town to being a melting pot of multicultural influences that deserves a better reputation than it's currently being given. The choice of location
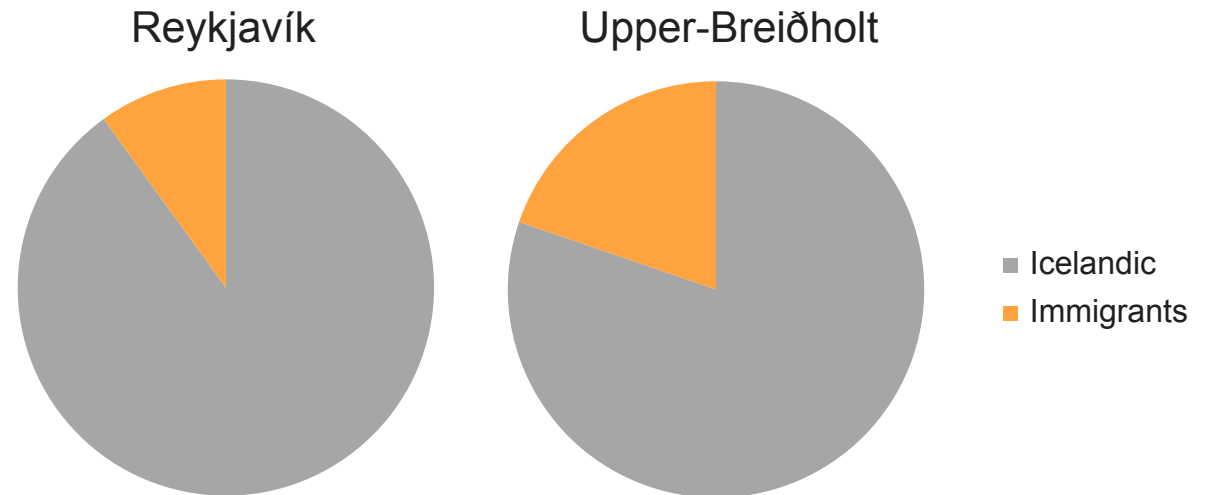

Figure 20. Comparison of immigrants in Upper-Breiðholt and the whole of Reykjavík.

is based on the cultural background of the area and the inhabitant's outcry for decent areas that showcase the personality and good aspects of the neighbourhood. It is the authors firm believe that a surprising and different area from any other in Reykjavík could raise the profile of this small business area and by doing so attract companies or entrepreneurs to the poorly used business housings.

It clearly states in the municipal official plans for the area that it is considered to be a grown residential area in the suburbs of Reykjavík. The neighbourhood's main planning related problem is the lack of businesses and services within its residential areas which gives them

a homogenous atmosphere. This project attempts to disrupt the users' conventional use of the area by adding new elements to it, foreign and noticeable elements that forces the users to look twice and re-consider it and its environment. These actions are all proposed in an attempt to make Fellagarðar a place and not only a space in Upper-Breiðholt. (McClish, 2010)

Temporary spaces in Breiðholt

As previously mentioned, the area of Breiðholt is a suburb in Reykjavík and as a suburb it does not offer the same amount or types of affordances for groups of people as downtown areas do, i.e. there are not as many people visible on the streets of Breiðholt as there are on pedestrian streets in the downtown area of Reykjavík. This is one of the reasons why the temporary site initiative of Reykjavík City has mainly focused on the downtown area. Flow of people being higher means that an area is much more likely to be used and by that easier to see if an intervention of an area works or not. (Randversson, 2014) This doesn't mean that there have not been any temporary designs or meanwhile spaces in the suburbs. In fact, out of the 21 meanwhile projects started in 2013 as a part of the "Torg í biðstöðu" initiative 11 were in areas that could be considered to be placed in suburbs. (Reykjavík city - Environmental and planning council, 2013)

Their impact on the other hand has not been as visually powerful as the ones more centrally located. It is hard to say with certainty why that is but their density and amount of users are sure to be important.

There is a difference in the way the squares or meanwhile areas are dealt with depending on whether they are located in the suburbs or more centrally. In 2012 the city started adding areas in suburbs onto their meanwhile area shortlist, 7 of them ended up being added to the project list. 3 of these projects were distributed to groups that declared interest in participation but the other 4 were designed and overseen by a single group titled "Biðsvæðisstjórar Reykjavíkur" (in English: Meanwhile-site Directors of Reykjavík).

They worked as designers for several suburban areas both in 2012 and 2013; plans are that the program will be set up in the same manner for 2014. As described by themselves in an interview in 2012, their work is more about being the initiators of a sustainable use of the areas that they deal with. While the downtown designers are simply making construction for people passing by and adding fun and unpredictability to pre-existing squares, the Meanwhile-site directors are finding places that have been forgotten or unused and bringing them to life and by doing so showing businesses and interest groups options in use that have gone unnoticed.

Their actions were well executed in the Laugalækur, where a square ambience was achieved by simply using flower pots to move

Figure 21. Aerial view of Upper-Breiðholt.

Figure 22. Locations where temporary areas have been located in Breiðholt. 1:25.000

parking spaces slightly further away from facades and by doing so creating a walkway and enough space to spark life into the area. This was done in co-operation with the businesses in the surrounding area that in return got to use the space for outdoor seating. This has helped the local businesses to lure the people of the neighbourhood to visit the area over the summer months and dwell there for longer period of time than they used to. (Magnúsdóttir, Guðmundsson, & Ingvarsson, 2012)

The downside to the use of Meanwhile-site directors is that they oversee many areas in different suburbs and ultimately that can lead to these areas being changed or used in the same manner. It is always easier and cheaper to manufacture in bulk and when working on similar problems on multiple fronts it is easiest to use similar interventions. That is not to say that they do not work as well or deliver the sought after results, but when creating temporary spaces and raising constructions that are to stand out and awake curiosity among people that pass by, the opportunity to do something totally new and exciting is to be taken and not copied and pasted in several different places repeatedly.

The Meanwhile-site directors managed the same two sites in Breiðholt in 2012 and 2013. One site was located in Arnarbakki, next to a very small scale, nearly derelict shopping cluster. The other site was on Markúsartorg, a square surrounded by Gerðuberg, the museum and culture centre, the local health clinic and other businesses, such as a bakery and a convenience store. (Reykjavík city - Environmental and planning council, 2012) (Reykjavík city - Environmental and planning council, 2013) As mentioned, these sites are both next to clusters of businesses and services and that is unlikely a coincidence.

There has been a problem with these sorts of clusters all over the city in the recent decades. The neighbourhood corner shops stopped thriving as the supermarkets started opening and given the citizens high car ownership the demand for a more expensive smaller shops dropped drastically. This has left several of these formerly business-booming clusters empty and or in bad condition and forced the inhabitants to travel further to shop for necessities. A study has shown that only 54% of people in Reykjavík had an opportunity to walk to a grocery store in 2010. That number dropped down from being 85% in 1990.

(Jónsson, 2010)

The locations of the projects are clearly an attempt at shining a positive light on these areas and hopefully resuscitate them. Many of the sites that host the temporary projects under the "Torg í Biðstöðu" initiative are selected through an online voting website run by the city. This website, called "Betri hverfi" (in English: Better Neighbourhoods), gives people the opportunity to make suggestions to projects the city should start, stop or change and other users can then comment and vote, either in favour or against the proposal.

It becomes clear, when reading through the results of these elections, that the people of Reykjavík are tired of the empty building clusters reminding them of the flourishing business that once served the neighbourhoods. This is confirmed in the public participation process of the neighbourhood plans, now being processed. When asked to point to areas that need further attention from the municipality these clusters are almost always mentioned, indicating their importance to the people.

The areas that have been used as venues for the temporary designs are very different from

each other. Markúsartorg is an established square surrounded by buildings, some hosting services important to the neighbourhoods such as cultural centre, library and a health clinic; others give the impression of an ongoing dereliction. Buildings are of mixed architectural styles but the overall impression of the site is bare concrete dominant and the
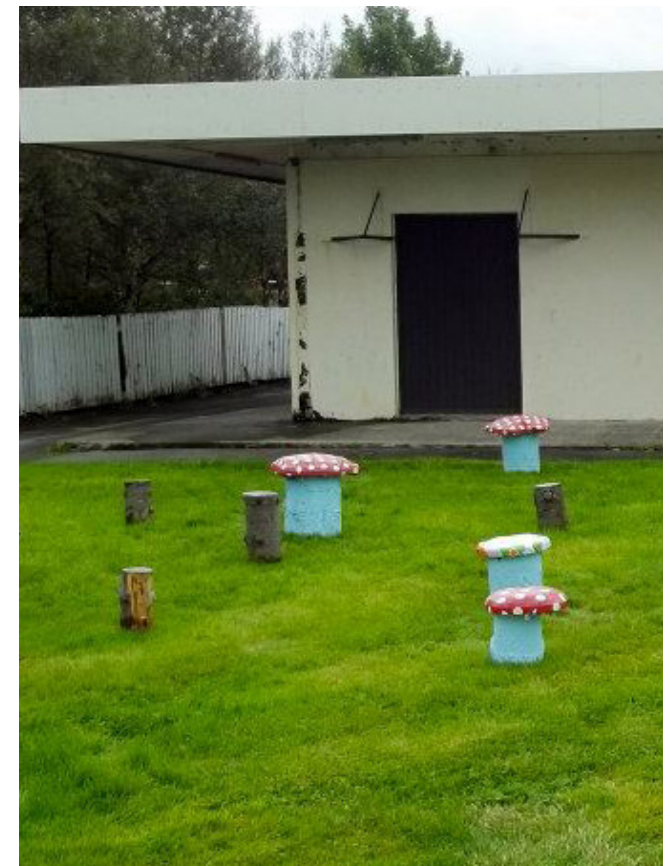

Figure 23. Temporary installation in Breiðholt.

vast amount of parking spaces located nearby the site only add to this impression. Outside the circle of surrounding buildings a variety of services can be found. Swimming pool and an indoor sport centre or located next to 2 football fields run by the team of Leiknir, these facilities are just across the street from Markúsartorg, so is a college and an elementary school.

All of these businesses and institutions are surrounded by concrete apartment buildings. During the squares temporary usage there wasn't that much added to its barren appearance, the alterations made to the square were more in the form of happenings. There was a market and festival with barbeques and a stage was erected to host entertainment for the crowd of the festival. This was managed by the Meanwhile-site directors in collaboration with the cultural centre of Gerðuberg. An art installation was also made to the site by a group of student from the nearby college in collaboration with a group of English students from "Sir Roger Manwood's School of Sandwich, Kent". The art piece was a conceptual bridge decorated with a colourful mosaic pattern made out of multicoloured bottle caps. The students saw the bridge as a reference to Bifröst, the bridge

from Nordic-mythology that crossed between Asgard, the realm of the gods and Midgard, the worlds as we know it. Therefore it is a bridge between worlds which was considered to be appropriate, giving the collaboration between college students from two different countries as well as the art-piece being located in the very culturally mixed Breiðholt.

The second temporary square was located on a small grassy area in Arnarbakki, next to the aforementioned cluster of businesses. The area looks as though it has been left behind in the planning process for the neighbourhood. It is simply a grassy area and nothing more. It had not been used for anything, as far as the business owners in nearby shops could remember, for a long time. There was no incentive for use as the area offered no affordances.The temporary designs introduced seating options to the area in form of mushroom-like stools and hammocks. In addition to the seating options, picture frames containing material on the history of Breiðholt were mounted on various vertical elements, such as: streetlight posts, fences and walls. These interventions seem to have been well taken, both according to the meanwhile-site directors themselves as well as business owners. (Magnúsdóttir,

Guðmundsson, & Ingvarsson, 2012)

These are the temporary areas that have been utilized in the area of Breiðholt apart from the retail area of Mjódd. The shopping centre has a square inside of it that has been used as a community market during festival days, such as the "Breiðholt Days". These sorts of markets are not uncommon in the city but what is baffling is the markets location and timing. The "Breiðholt days" are held in November, a month not often well suited for outdoor activity and recreation. The market therefore has to be held indoors, forcing people out of the neighbourhoods and into the shopping centre, an action that does nothing but further the idea of Breiðholt being a sleeping town, lacking in community spirit and identity. Meanwhile, markets in other neighbourhoods are held outdoors over the summer months, figure 25.

In an ongoing effort to increase liveability and boost the neighbourhood spirits in Breiðholt, the same group that started the Heart-square area in downtown Reykjavík (see page 30) was contacted by the municipality and invited to host events at one of the derelict business clusters of area. The cluster of Fellagarðar

became their headquarters and from there events were planned and strategies for the area were formed. Weekly events involving people from the area getting together, cleaning up the surroundings of Fellagarðar and partake in a variety of activities such as ballroom dancing and skateboarding. The space has been used as an off-venue concert hall for music festivals based in downtown Reykjavík.

Even though the interventions that have been constructed on the aforementioned sites in Breiðholt have not managed to change the area drastically, the designers can be considered to have been the initiators of change. These interventions were the first changes made to the area in a long time and proofed one crucial thing, that small scale and often sensitive constructions and other elements can be put up in the neighbourhood without being vandalised or stolen. This came as a surprise to the people of Breiðholt, who had previously dismissed these sorts of constructions, saying that the installations would never last a weekend in the area. (Magnúsdóttir, Guðmundsson, & Ingvarsson, 2012)

These projects have, by standing untouched over a period of one summer, proved that the

Figure 24. Art installation at Markúsartorg.

neighbourhood and its inhabitants are capable of not vandalising or demolishing elements added to their neighbourhood to liven it up and introduce new affordances.

Most of these temporary installations, happenings and venues for changed affordances as well as most of the actions undertaken by the municipality of Reykjavík are located or aimed at the neighbourhood of Upper-Breiðholt and especially Fellahverfi. This is most likely due the areas many social

problems and derelict conditions which are a result of many years of poor maintenance and the area being used as an area for the disposing of unwanted problems within the social-system. The actions that have now been started are a clear announcement for a wanted change of these things and that is why the following chapters will focus on Upper-Breiðholt and the temporary actions possible to undertake and use further.

In addition to these there are markets set up inside the shopping area of Mjódd a few times a year. These markets are a venue for the elderly as well as others to sell their crafts and merchandise created in various activity programs in the area. Within the underused area of Fellagarðar in Fellahverfi there is, as this is written, a temporary shop specialising in Polish products and products aimed at the Polish population of Upper-Breiðholt. This shop is located in a basement of a poorly maintained building facing Fellaskóli, the neighbourhood's elementary school. This temporary use came out of necessity due its former location burning down in December of 2013. Re-constructions of the Polish grocery store are ongoing and owners of the shop are optimistic regarding the future of Upper-Breiðholt. (Jakubek, 2014)

Figure 25. An annual fleamarket held by a neighbourhood association in Reykjavík.

4.The site - Fellagarðar

Asparfell

Norðurfell

Elementary school
of Fellaskóli

Drafnarfell

Eddufell

Fannarfell

2-4

6

2

6-14

16-18

8

13 15 17 19 **21**

Völvufell

In plans

The site of Fellagarðar is categorised as a "Shop and Service area" in the newly published Municipal plan of Reykjavík 2010-2010. The municipal plan classifies Fellagarðar and the pedestrian path alongside it as one of the developmental areas of Upper-Breiðholt and states that ground floors should host businesses and services while upper floors can host apartments. (Reykjavík City, 2013) A proposal for the enlargement of this developmental area, to include the whole middle of Upper-Breiðholt is being finalised during the writing of this thesis. That proposal is to be a part of the neighbourhood plan of Breiðholt. (Reykjavík City, 2013)

To classify an area as a developmental area means that a local plan, that states the timeframe of a realisation period, needs to be approved for the area. This timeframe should be between 5-15 years from the time of the local plans validity. If a local plan of a developmental area does not contain a timeframe of realisation the timeframe should be considered as 15 years. (Icelandic planning laws nr.12322/2010)

A local plan of the area was last revised and approved in 2005. This plan allows for the current buildings to be raised by adding 2 stories to them and allowing them to be used as either apartments or shops. (Arkhúsið ehf., 2005) Even though this local plan is in accordance with the current municipal plan the local plan must be re-validated if realisation of this local plan will not take place before 2020, since it does not contain a timeframe for the period of realisation. If the local plan of Fellagarðar will need to be revised an opportunity of re-development of the area arises due to newly stated limitation of parking spaces in the new municipal plan.

Before the current local plan was approved, buildings of Fellagarðar were solely allowed to house shops. While there does not appear to be a need for more housing in the area, this makes Fellagarðar more likely to be occupied instead of standing empty and decaying. The building enlargements approved in the revised local plan of 2005 have to this date not been constructed. The building of Völvufell 13-21 has been adapted to host homes instead of businesses and has because of this weakened its role in the union of Fellagarðar.
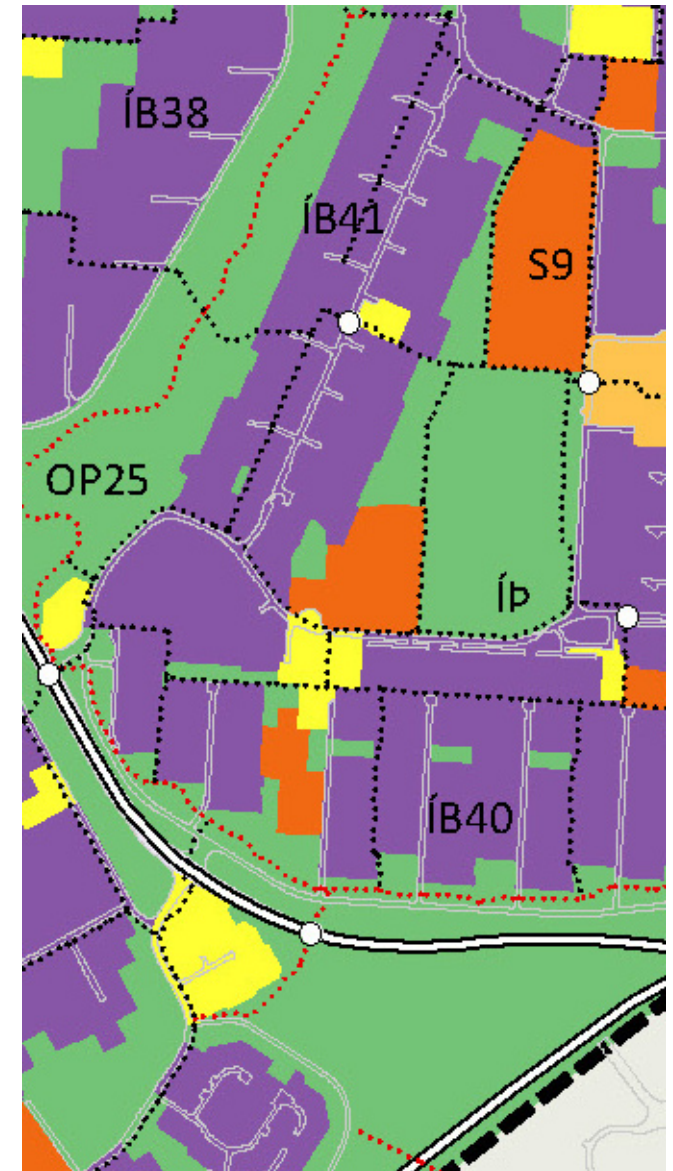

Figure 28. Fellagarðar in The Municipal plan of Reykjavík 1:10.000 (sv. översiktsplan).
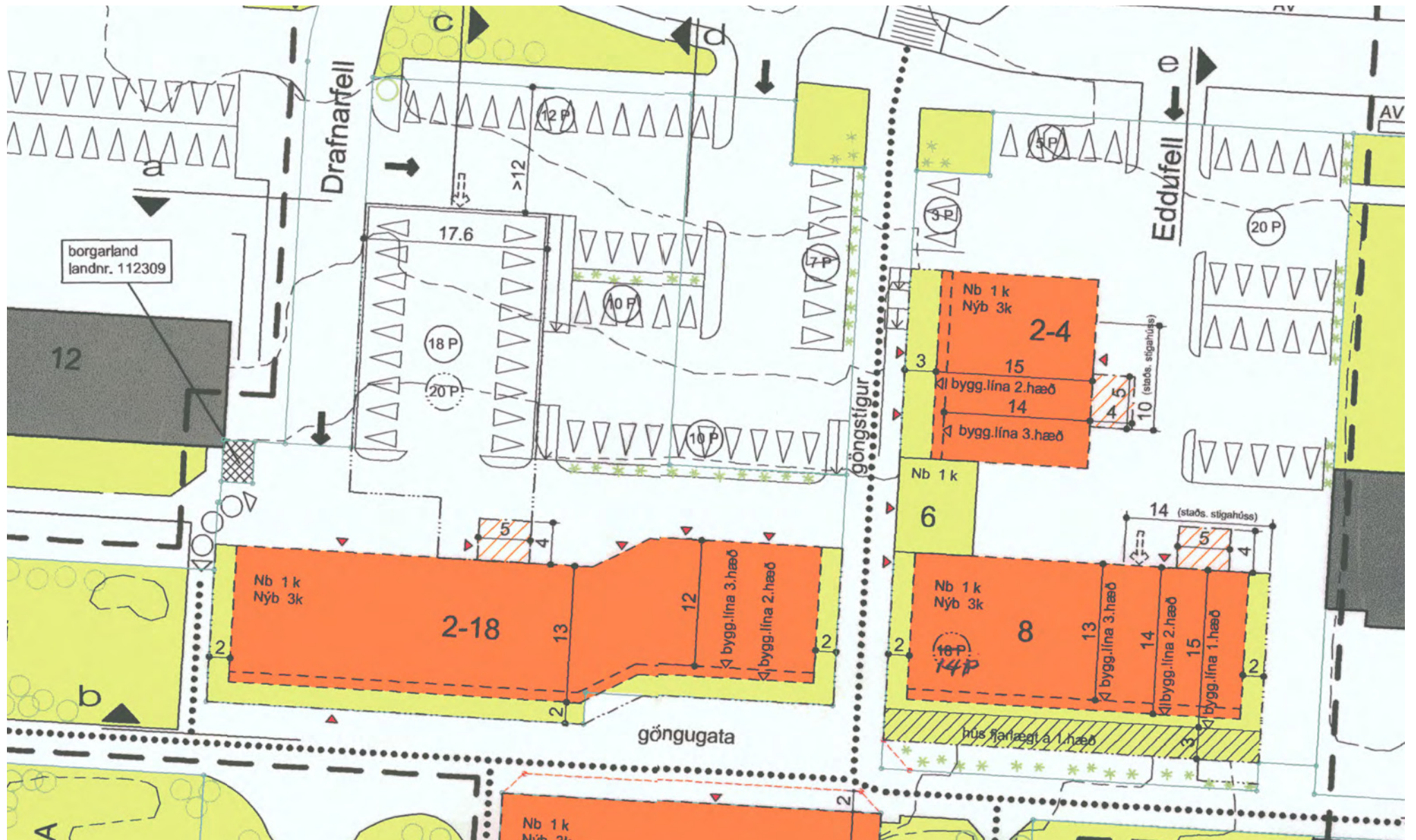
Figure 29. The local plan of Fellagarðar 1:500 (sv. detaljplan).

Figure 30. Former business housing, now classified as apartments. Völvufell 13-21.

Description

As previously mentioned, Fellagarðar is a cluster of businesses housed in attached buildings in the neighbourhood of Fell in the Breiðholt area of Reykjavík. The whole site consists of 3 buildings and a parking lot that can accommodate 139 cars. Building regulations at that time called for minimum number of parking spots. This was revised in the new Municipal plan and today there are restrictions on maximum number of parking lots. The current local plan is therefore outdated in that sense.

Two of the buildings of Fellagarðar have entrances facing the main parking lot. These houses are Drafnarfell 2-18 and Eddufell 2-8. The third building of Fellagarðar is placed further away from the main street and is not visible from Norðurfell. This house is Völvufell 13-21. A previously stated this building was re-classified as an apartment building in 2005 and will therefore not be included in the design process of this project.

The space between the buildings of Drafnarfell and Eddufell and the building of Völvufell form a part of the pedestrian path that stretches beyond the limits of Fellagarðar, see figure 16. This pedestrian path has recently been renovated as previously mentioned and is one of the actions undertaken by the municipality to improve the image of Breiðholt. The path is constructed out of concrete and metal, the greyness of which is not adding life to the rectangular and concrete dominated area, but the main disadvantage of this path is its visibility since it is not visible in any manner from the street and is therefore only inviting to the people who are familiar to the area. Outsiders of Breiðholt are unlikely to see a difference when travelling through it, be it by car, bicycle or foot since they do not know it exists. In the same effort of renovations, sides of the apartment buildings facing the pedestrian path, which were windowless and depressing, according to the inhabitants (Reykjavík City, 2010), were decorated with illustrations and prints. Lighting was improved as well causing the area to have a

stronger feeling of safety.

The pedestrian path is surrounded by apartment buildings with parking lots between them. The main entrances of these apartment buildings do not face towards the pedestrian path but towards the street of Norðurfell where the parking lots are placed.

The businesses of Fellagarðar were planned to face the pedestrian path but today they all face the parking lot, except for the dance studio. This was most likely done to make the businesses more visible from the traffic street. One could say that was achieved but at the expense of the pedestrian path, which became weakened because of this and the expense of Fellagarðar themselves since entrances are now located at areas were trash disposal was originally planned. The current entrance side is now chaotic and cluttered while the backside is disused and empty.

This small scale service and shopping area used to be the home to a wide range of shops and services such as a bakery, grocery store and bookshops along with hair salons and video stores. This was all quite recently after the construction of Breiðholt and before chains of supermarkets started in Iceland.

Figure 31. The backsides of businesses at Fellagarðar.

Figure 32. Entrances of businesses at Fellagarðar

Figure 33. Minor temporary alterations made by to the shopping cluster at Laugalækur create an area for suburban life

These times were characterised by numerous small convenience stores located in every neighbourhood of the city. These stores have been closing down over the last decades and it is not uncommon to see remnants of these stores in now renovated apartment buildings. There are a few of these clusters of businesses that appear to be thriving. What make these businesses different from those now closed us the fact that they are more relevant to the modern ways of living and appeal to the lifestyles of their users. This has proven successful to the area of Laugalækur where specialised stores manage to attract people due to them being more specialised in their services, dealing with handmade and locally sourced produce.

The history of Fellagarðar is similar to that of other business clusters within the city. The businesses inability to evolve alongside the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods as well as the changing times resulted in loss of business and their eventual foreclosure. Several ideas have been suggested as to how businesses can be enticed to the area, such as:

- The municipality should purchase the buildings and offer low rent to start up businesses.
- Buildings should be used for apartments.
- Buildings should be torn down and new buildings be erected instead.
- Housing should be offered to artists, bringing live to the neighbourhood.

- Fellagarðar should be run by the municipality and function as a culture-centre for the Upper-Breiðholt.
  (Reykjavík City, 2013) (KPMG, 2013)

The current poor state of the buildings is negative for the image of the neighbourhood as the main road of Fellahverfi, which connects all of the main attractions of Upper-Breiðholt, goes past it. One could therefore say that this ill maintained shopping cluster is on display for those who pass by. This could be seen as a negative element but also as an opportunity. The site is well connected to surrounding areas and could be used as a visible statement of transformation to the neighbourhood.

Conditions

Climate

Wind measurements from a nearby weather station, illustrated in figure 34, show the East-wind is by far the most common wind direction in the area followed by the Southeast-wind. These wind directions are also quite strong with average winds of about 8 m/sec. The strongest wind direction is from the northeast, averaging at about 9 m/sec; luckily it is not nearly as common as the two most dominant wind directions. (Iceland Meteorological Office, 2014)
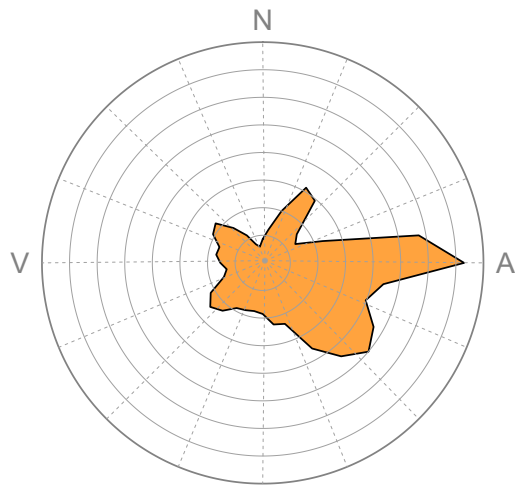
The building plan of Fellagarðar does a good job at sheltering the site around it from wind and is only exposed to the north direction. The wind from the north should still be somewhat blocked by the vegetation of the area placed in the middle of Upper Breiðholt, hosting the schools and sporting grounds. Other wind directions are blocked, either by the buildings of Fellagarðar or by the surrounding apartment buildings and the vegetation surrounding them.

Wind measurements, illustrated in figure 34, are made at a nearby heath which is much more open then the built area of Breiðholt. Because of this the wind information says more about the wind directions than the actual strength of the wind.

Average heat of the summer month over the years of 2002-2011 was 9.3°C, the hottest month always being July. (Iceland Meteorological Office, 2012)

Seasonal variations

Due to the climate there is a strong difference in the use of open spaces depending on the season. Life in the city of Reykjavík increases and that most likely happens at Fellagarðar as well.

Foliage of trees adds to the softness of the area as well as the grassy areas highlighting the summer months. The football fields of Leiknir become used adding to the life and activities at the area.

Fellaskóli closes over the summer just as other elementary schools of the country, causing a decrease in peaks of pedestrian traffic around Fellagarðar. The children will most likely continue to use the area but in periods more evenly spread over the day.

Due to Iceland's global position the summers are very bright and the winters very dark.

Figure 34. Wind directions of nearest weather station to Fellagarðar.

Figure 35. The field of Upper-Breiðholt. Home to Leiknir Football club

Materials

The neighbourhood is quite homogenous as previously described, with mainly white apartment buildings with splashes of colour on their facades, the biggest building being white with red balconies.

Ground materials are asphalt roads with concrete sidewalks often framed by patches of grass to help separate the parking lots from the roads. These grass patches result in aerial photos being mostly green but closer inspection reveals that many of these patches are small and uninviting for uses due to closeness to traffic.

Newly reconstructed schoolyard of Fellaskóli has a multicoloured ground materials covering large parts of it. This will become partially blocked from the view of Fellagarðar when vegetation refoliates.

Sand covered much of the asphalt during the observations. This sand is an anti-slip protection distributed by the municipality over the winter months. Observations at the area took place quite some time after snow had melted and the sand therefore revealed much about the usage of the site and traffic of people in the area.

Atmosphere

Lightscape

Since the surroundings of Fellagarðar face north, large shadows are a problem at the site. Adjacent apartment buildings are a concern regarding the blockage of sunlight but over the summertime this will not be as big of an issue due to the high angle of the sun. The buildings on site are relatively low-raised but produce shaded areas close to their facades, sadly limiting the areas usability. Lighting conditions at the site are illustrated in figure 36.

Light posts are positioned at the parking lots and the facades of the buildings are equipped with lights facing the walkways.

Soundscape

The sound of the coarse sand rubbing between the asphalt and soles of users shoes makes up the background noise for the area, slightly becoming stronger in areas of increased usage, such as nearby playgrounds and the main pedestrian path. The long stretching and hard surfaced buildings in addition to the sounds of children make a slight echo, only noticeable on the south side of Fellagarðar.

Traffic noises were not strong since the nearby streets has a 30km/hr speed limit at Fellagarðar but the low humming sound of running cars was apparent at the site.

Scents

The diverse ethnicity of the inhabitants became revealed when evening came with odours coming from the apartment buildings indicating diverse styles of cooking which spread around the area mixing with the smell of pizza from the pizza place in Fellagarðar. Seasonal scents had not yet become apparent but vegetation in the surroundings is bound to give of some sense of seasonal changes and nature.

Tobacco smell arose near the facades of buildings when people stopped for a cigarette, this was fairly often.

Observations led to the conclusion that the site had no dominant scent but many varying ones, especially at evening time.
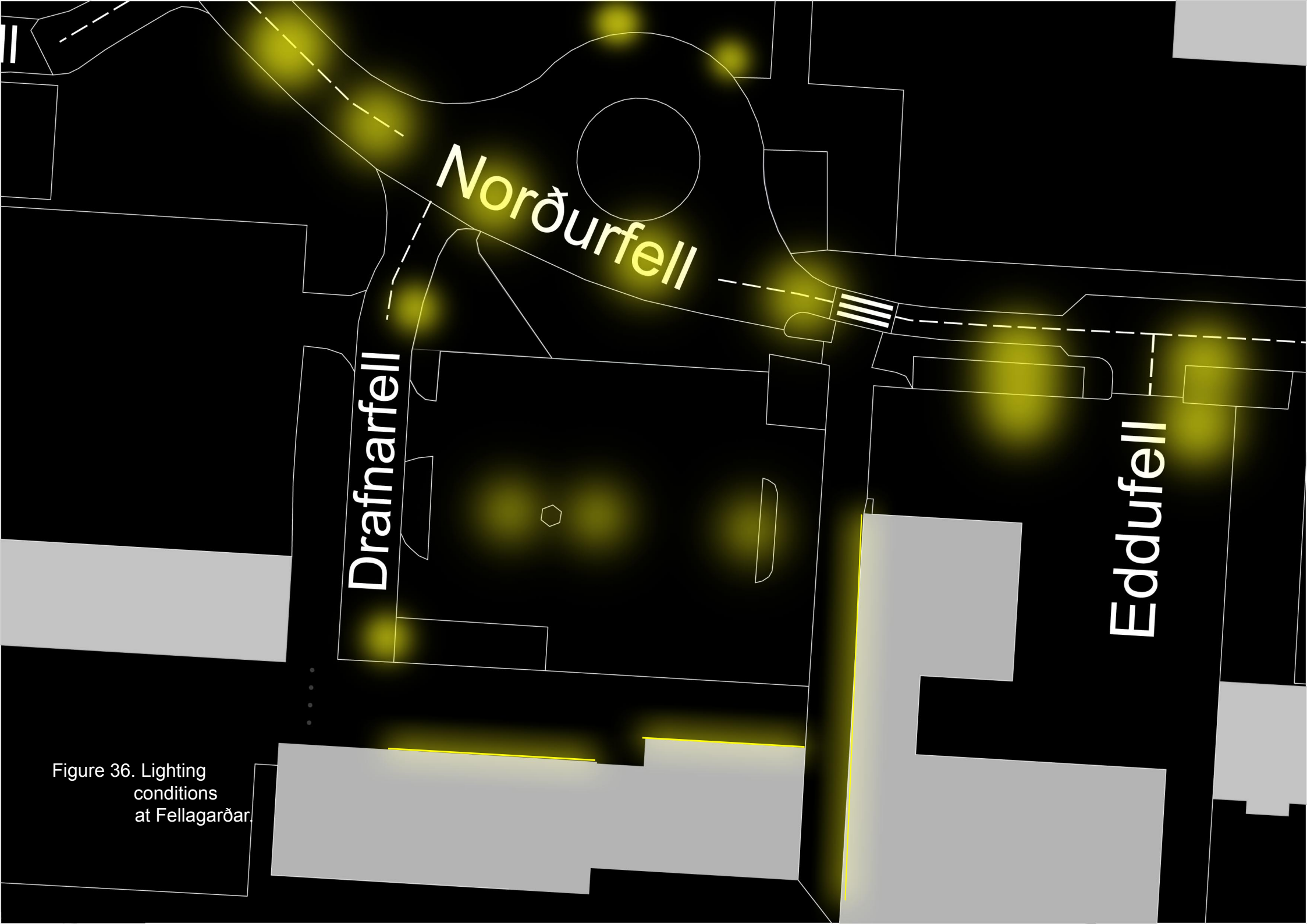
Norðurfell

Drafnarfell

Eddufell

Figure 36. Lighting
conditions
at Fellagarðar.

Social

Activities at the site

Wilson's Pizza: An Icelandic chain of Pizza places. They only offer take-away food so users come and go relatively quickly. This business brings traffic of people to Fellagarðar but does not provide affordances so people dwell there, apart from teenagers that can be spotted eating pizza slices around the parking lot.

Mini-Market (i.e. The Polish store): An established part of the community currently operating from a temporary location within Fellagarðar due to a fire having burned down its previous location. The shop opened with the concept of serving the polish community of Upper-Breiðholt but became popular within the local Icelandic community as well. Re-construction of the former place has begun.

Kornið Bakery. An Icelandic chain of bakeries: Offering their customers a few seats and tables but seems to mostly serve people of the area as a take-away bakery. The culture of bakeries in Iceland is a mixture of bakery and café, and these can be found in most neighbourhoods of the city.

Fab-Lab: This newly opened facility is a fabrication laboratory funded by the Innovation Centre of Iceland. The laboratory is equipped with computers, 3-D printers as well as other sorts of mechanism necessary for modern designers and developers to further their ideas in a professional way. The facility opened in 2014 and is expected to bring new users to Fellagarðar and raise the level of life within the area. Users of the Fab-Lab can be expected to spend quite some time there and differ from other business of the area in that way.

Komið og dansið, dance studio: This dance studio specialises in teaching and organising ballroom and swing dance lessons at their location which they call the Dance Palace. Dances are held at least once a week and lessons given to people of all ages.
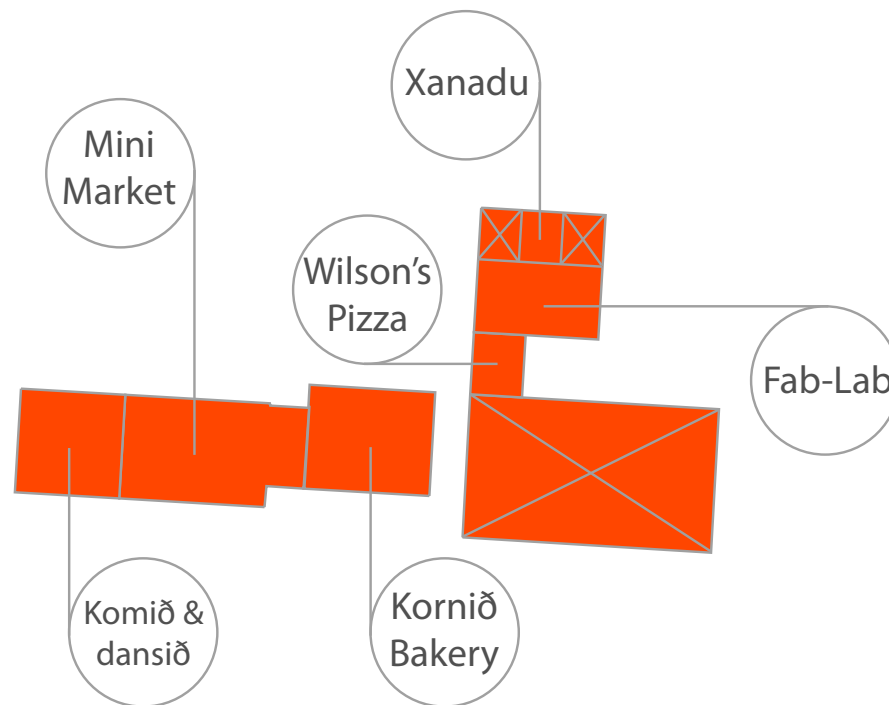
Figure 37. Location of businesses at Fellagarðar.

Xanadu, beauty salon: Located between two empty retail spaces, this salon gives of a feeling of isolation and disuse despite its tidy interiors and some use.

Activities near the site

Fellaskóli has a new outdoor area as previously mentioned, which includes playground equipment.

Leiknir sports team has numerous football fields next to the school yard. These fields are closed to the public except during matches. The main field can accommodate over a thousand visitors. (The Football Association of Iceland)

The library and cultural centre of Gerðuberg is close by, as is the recreational area of Elliðaárdalur, a natural area with flowing water and lush vegetation.

Social activities

Observations on site revealed it to be moderately used, especially by visitors of the Mini-Market in addition to the clientele of the bakery during the first part of the day and the pizza place during the later part of the day.

Figure 38. Children at the pedestrian path near Fellagarðar.

As previously described, the parking spaces around Fellagarðar are split into two separated areas, one serving the main business area and one located on the Eastern side of the buildings. During observations there was no apparent use of the Eastern parking area apart from garbage and containers.

Observations revealed what appeared to be a cross section of the community of Upper-Breiðholt, based on the languages spoken in the area and variety in ages of users. Around half of the conversations were in some Eastern-

European languages the rest was in Icelandic. The Icelandic users were more often than not travelling alone while group formations appeared to be more common among the Easters-European users. Children were the majority of users during afternoons, their backpacks and direction of travels indicated them to be travelling from school. They dispersed into the surrounding apartment buildings.

Although there was a steady stream of users walking through the area of Fellagarðar there

seemed to be little to no lingering going on. People either walked through the area on their way to the surrounding buildings or straight from their cars to the businesses and then back again.

Orientating at Fellagarðar

The previously mentioned pedestrian walkway that runs through Fellagarðar is the newest testament to the cities policy of rejuvenating the areas appearances. Although the designers of this walkway could be criticised for their material choices and lack of colours, the fact that the design process included help and ideas from the children of the nearby Fellaskóli adds to the likelihood of it becoming an established element in the neighbourhood.

Facade decorations were added to the windowless sides of buildings that face the walkway. Ideas of which can be traced back to inhabitants meeting with the municipality. (KPMG, 2013) (Reykjavík City, 2010)

These are the elements in addition to the buildings of Fellagarðar themselves that one uses when orientating at the site

Conclusions of observations

The use and atmosphere of the outdoor environment of Fellagarðar is best described as chaotic. The outlines of parking spaces have apparently not been painted in quite some time resulting in the area being disorganised due to people not seeing or choosing not to see the lines, especially during snowy seasons.

Closer to the facades of the buildings the degree of disorganisations magnifies with the addition of dumpsters, illegal parking and business visitors trying to get as close to the entrances as possible. The fact that the space closest to the businesses is only open in one end only adds to the disorganisation since people have to turn their cars around while trying not to hit pedestrians or garbage containers.

Life at the site does exist but is hidden away on the inside of the buildings. Nothing at the site suggests that there is ballroom dancing going on or that new and fresh ideas are sprouting in a think-tank for designers and the tech-savvy alike.

5.The design

Design strategy

As previously stated the aim of the design is to improve the underused and derelict area of Fellagarðar, in an attempt to increase the liveability of the area for its users. Meanwhile improving the image of Upper-Breiðholt. The reasons for the choice of location being Fellagarðar are numerous:

- Good visibility from one of the main traffic streets of Upper-Breiðholt.

- Renovations of poorly maintained buildings and surroundings of Fellagarðar could function as a facelift for the neighbourhood.

- Number of unused parking lots create a convenient venue

- Users could use an area where their multi-ethnicity can be displayed

- Businesses could use an outdoor area as a part of their businesses, especially those which deal with food.

- The actions of the municipality in the neighbourhood have focused on this area. This project would therefore be an extension of those actions.

- Inhabitants have, on numerous occasions, expressed feelings of concerns about the area.

- By basing the proposal in the more used parking area a disruption in use is achieved. Forcing users to form new uses in the area and therefore making it larger and creating foot-traffic by other businesses.

The reasons for the design being a temporary one as opposed to more permanent are numerous as well:

- A temporary disruption of the way people engage with their surroundings improves the public activity of people, as well as increasing their community participation . These disruptions can be in the form of street installations or street art for examples. (McClish, 2010) (Ambler, 2010)

- A permanent construction could obstruct the future use of Fellagarðar and therefore hinder further developments of businesses within it.

- The temporary installation can allow for constant alterations to be made to it and by so allow experimentations and researches to be made with it.

- A temporary installation can be more daring and experimental since after its lifespan is over, it leaves no mark. That is as long as it is of a "Stand-in" sort of manner, as explained in chapter 2.

- A constantly changing temporary installation would disrupt the users engagement with their surroundings even more and therefore have increased effects on their public activities and participations.

- It is in accordance with the ongoing "temporary installation program" the municipality has been overseeing in the recent years.

- Temporary areas encourage use since; if one delays their visit to the area they could miss it.

SWOT-analysis of a temporary use installation at Fellagarðar, Breiðholt

Strengths

- Centralised locations in the neighbourhood
- Inhabitants have nostalgic memories of the sites usage
- Surrounded by fully inhabited apartment buildings
- Parking places are plentiful
- Good connections, for cars as well as pedestrians
- Plenty of inhabitants
- Public participation has become more common in planning processes

Weaknesses

- Poor image outwards as well as a weak self-image
- Ill maintained buildings
- Businesses on site are poorly connected to the outside environment
- The area has been a socially problematic one for decades, a constant reason of complaints
- Strong car-culture

Opportunities

- Inhabitants want the area used and have expressed ideas
- The neighbourhoods multi-cultural background could be represented better within it.
- Changes of demand for parking places
- Facades of buildings facing street could display the character of the neighbourhood
- Breiðholt has been the site of temporary uses and installations
- A lot of actions are ongoing in Breiðholt to rejuvenate the area
- Empty housing could be used to host temporary events

Threats

- Ill maintained buildings have attracted vandalism
- Changes of planning restriction could cause the buildings to be changed into apartment buildings
- Low maintenance might have caused buildings to become damaged
- Peoples fear of crime might prevent usage of outdoor areas
- Businesses might not approve of parking spaces being used for other things than their original purposes

Influences

Three works have been the main inspiration for this project. These projects are all fairly small scaled and modest but have all had strong effects on their surroundings and are successful in that way. The influences they have had on the design of Fellagarðar are different and will be explained with each of the examples.

The open air library

This increasing less used district of Magdeburg in East Germany became the host of a temporary area which grew in time.

The project was done in close participation with the people of the area and the end result of that work became an open air library based at the location of the former district library of the area which has been removed. An empty shop was used as a base for the project and a book collection was started. The site was then constructed temporarily out of more than 1000 beer crates, shaped in accordance to the design most popular among the residents.

This construction was a 1:1 model in a way, which made it available to display the usage the site could have and assist in getting the funds needed to build the more permanent structure. (Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona, 2010)

The more permanent structure, which was mostly constructed out of re-used materials, opened in 2009 and has since then functioned as a library as well as a: theatre, a café and a community hub, all under the control of the users themselves.

This renovative project lifts its surroundings up and has started to fill the nearby houses with life as well. Proving that these sorts of project can have a positive effect both on their communities as well as their surroundings. (Arhitext, 2011)

This case clearly displays how improvements can be made by simple interventions if they are done well and in co-operation with potentioal users.

The open air library displays a will of improving ones surroundings and how a communal hub where people can get together in equal grounds can have powerful effects.
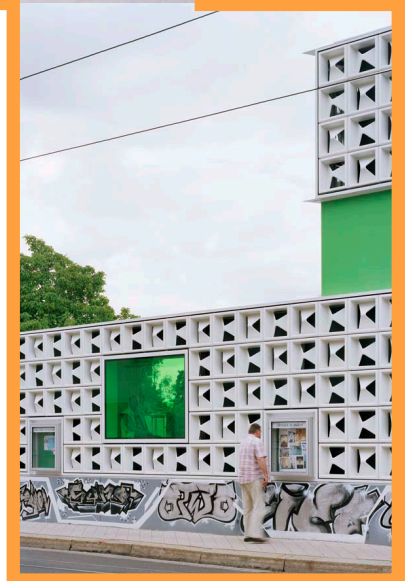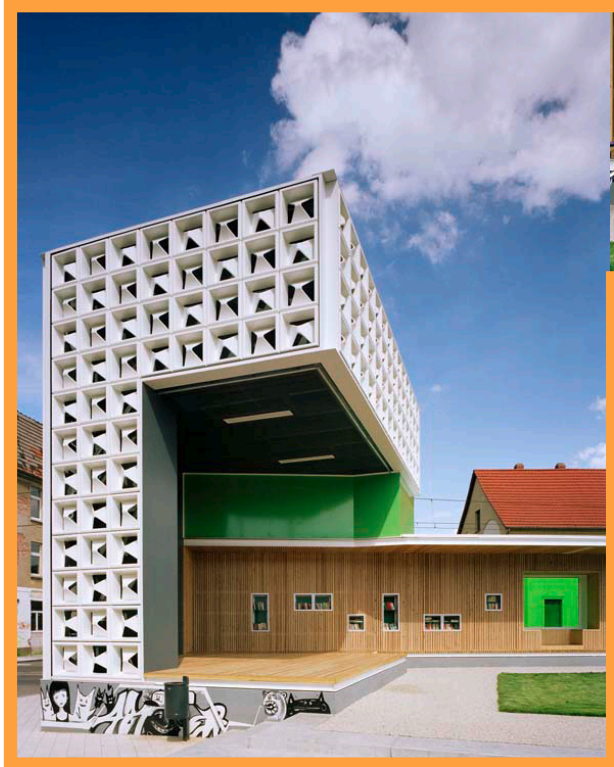
Figure 39.
The open air
library in Magdeburg.

100 Union Street

Previously mentioned in chapter 2, the lot at 100 Union Street in London has been used and re-used temporarily again and again. The sites owner has permission to build an office building at the site but its surroundings are currently not seen as appropriate for the constructions to begin.

To assist in creating a more suitable area for his project, the owner Roger Zogolovich, has made his lot available for meanwhile uses.

(Bishop & Williams, 2012)

So far these uses have been:

2008 - The Lido –
            a poolside hangout area
            (Figure 40. Upper left)
2010 - The Urban orchard –
            a green and sustainable orchard
            (Figure 40. Middle)
2012 - The Physic Garden –
            a showcase of medicinal plants
            (Figure 40. Bottom left)
2013 - The Lake –
            an urban oasis featuring a boat lake
            and deck (EXYZT, 2013)
            (Figure 40. Right)

The lot at 100 Union Street is a case where the owner sees the opportunity and the rewards he can get from the site being used and seeks usage. The images from the temporary installation (see figure 40) really display the diverse use and possibilities one site can have if used in the right way.

Whether or not the temporary installations can have an effect on the nearby areas, making them more suitable for the office building being erected is hard to say without further investigation.

The project could be viewed in a negative manner due to it advocacy for gentrification. The manner of which this advocation takes place is quite different from what one usually sees.

The temporary uses have proved to be beneficial for the actors which have managed these temporary sites. Many of which have gotten further jobs and projects due to their works at Union Street. This plot at Union street has also gotten a lot of publicity likely causing its image to be improved.

Figure 40.
Four different temporary
installations at Union Street.

Squares on hold

The squares on hold projects, mentioned in chapter 2, is a program advocating and initiating temporary uses.

The program is run by the City of Reykjavík and therefore only works within the city limits. The program has hosted dozens of projects over the last 3 years and has succeeded in making the area of central Reykjavík more diverse and colourful. All of these projects are small and diverse, due to them being designed and constructed by different groups of people. (Reykjavík City, 2013)

Experiments in moving these projects out to the more suburban areas of the city have not been as successful, most likely due to differences in policies. (Randversson, 2014)

The first time the author came in contact with an officially temporary area was one of these squares and the feeling was different and interesting. One could say that the projects within the program of "Squares on hold" mostly influenced the author in getting interested in these sorts of projects.

Another way the squares on hold influence this design is that if the area will be constructed it will most likely be a part of the squares on hold program.

The scale of the project therefore had to be modest and materials would have to be easily available and easy to work with.
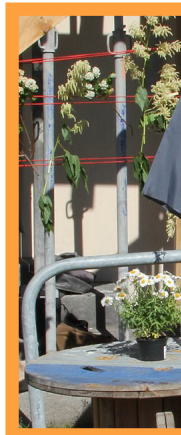
Figure 41.
Examples of
installations of
"Torg í biðstöðu"
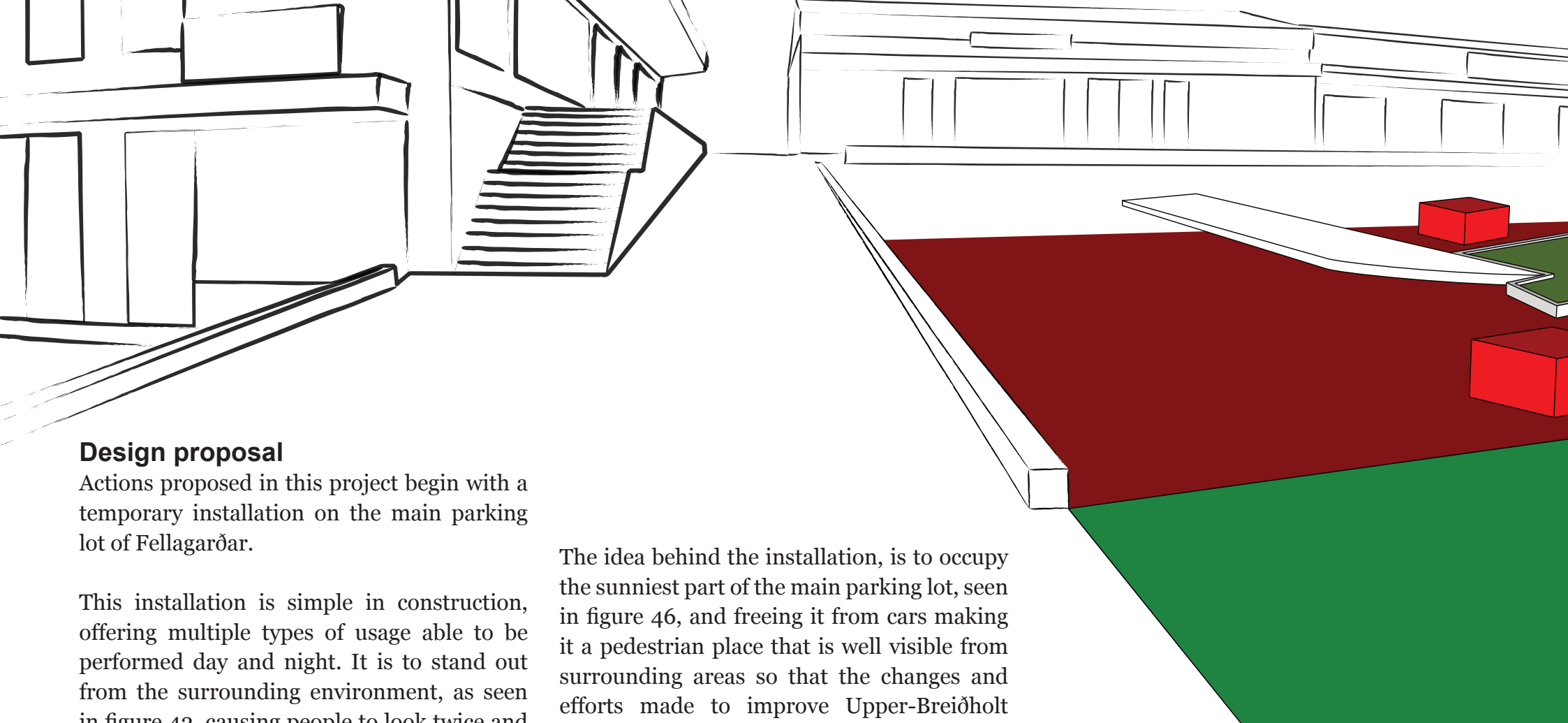
Design proposal

Actions proposed in this project begin with a temporary installation on the main parking lot of Fellagarðar.

This installation is simple in construction, offering multiple types of usage able to be performed day and night. It is to stand out from the surrounding environment, as seen in figure 42, causing people to look twice and hopefully connect to.

Through its design and affordances it offers, it is to establish a connection with the users as well as the businesses of Fellagarðar. To increase the likelihood of the installation creating new positive memories of the site the strategy behind the installation is focused on leaving the site in a better condition than before its construction.

The idea behind the installation, is to occupy the sunniest part of the main parking lot, seen in figure 46, and freeing it from cars making it a pedestrian place that is well visible from surrounding areas so that the changes and efforts made to improve Upper-Breiðholt are more visible than those previously constructed by the municipality. By making a part of the main parking lot inaccessible to cars, the usage of the east-parking lot likely be increased, generating more foot traffic by the facades of the buildings.

By disrupting the current flow of traffic and making the installation stand out from its surroundings the changes of the area will not go unnoticed and will guarantee it to be dismantled and removed after the proposed time frame of June - August, has passed.
Depending on the success of this installation and its effect on the business of Fellagarðar, a continued development of the site in the following years should be looked into. The site could then be moved to the less used parking lot which is flatter and more spacious but offers less foot traffic. The design and
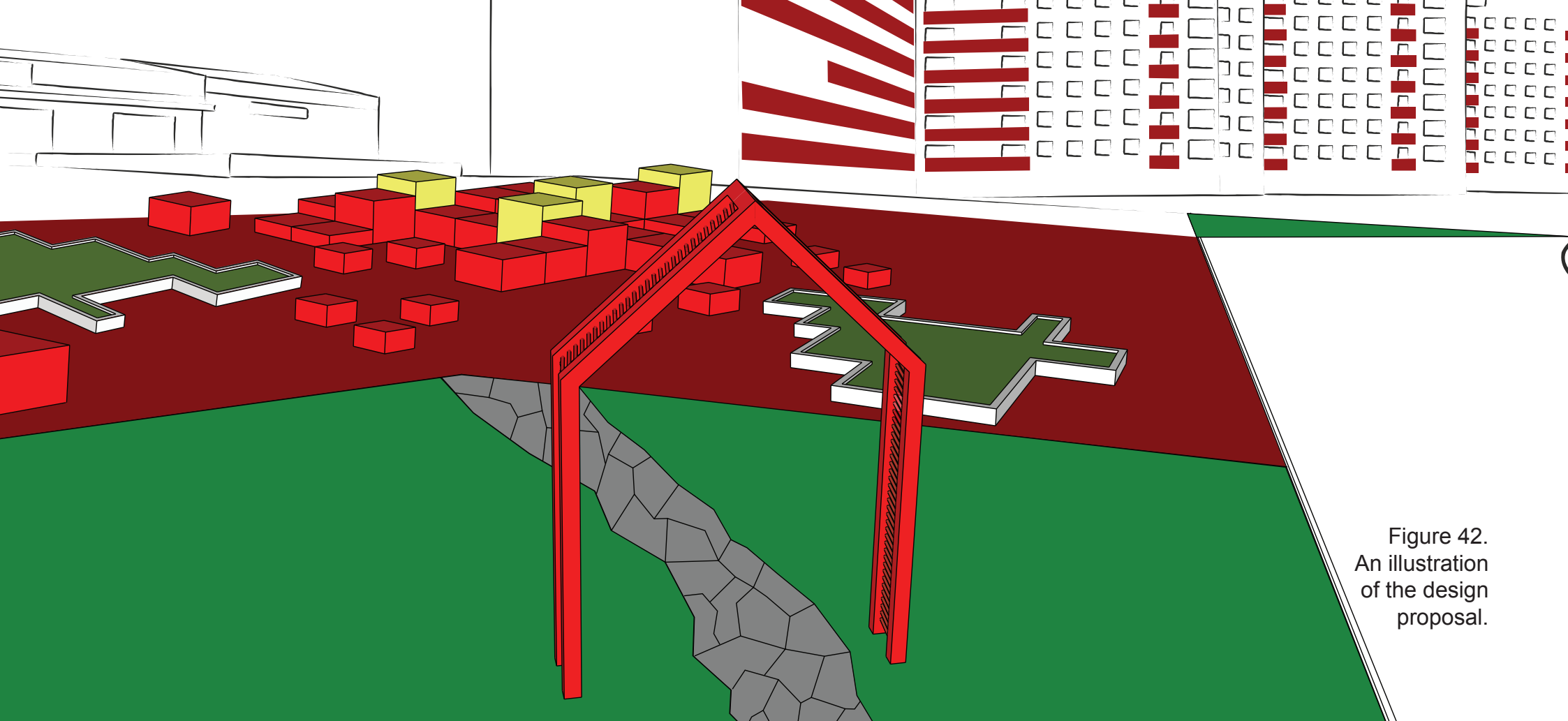
Figure 42. An illustration of the design proposal.

development of that site should be based on information gathered and knowledge gained from the initially proposed installation.

The design and position of the first installation is to introduce these sorts of uses into the area and disrupt the sites habitual usage, the best way to do this is by being closer to the users, which as observations have revealed are almost solely based at the main parking lot due to the businesses at the site being there. The installation would ideally show the people of the area as well as city officials that such an area can be constructed, used and improve its surroundings, i.e. Pioneering but at the same time Free-flowing, according to the typology in chapter 2.

By hosting a site of temporary use at a different location the following summer possibilities in use increase. The parking lot of Eddufell 2-8 in figure 44, offers a more enclosed feeling due to surrounding facades and has available housing due to foreclosure of businesses. This housing might become used in that time but currently there are possibilities for e.g. pop-up shops, use of local community groups or workshops. These possibilities are illustrated in figure 48.

Figure 43.
The main parking lot of Fellagarðar.

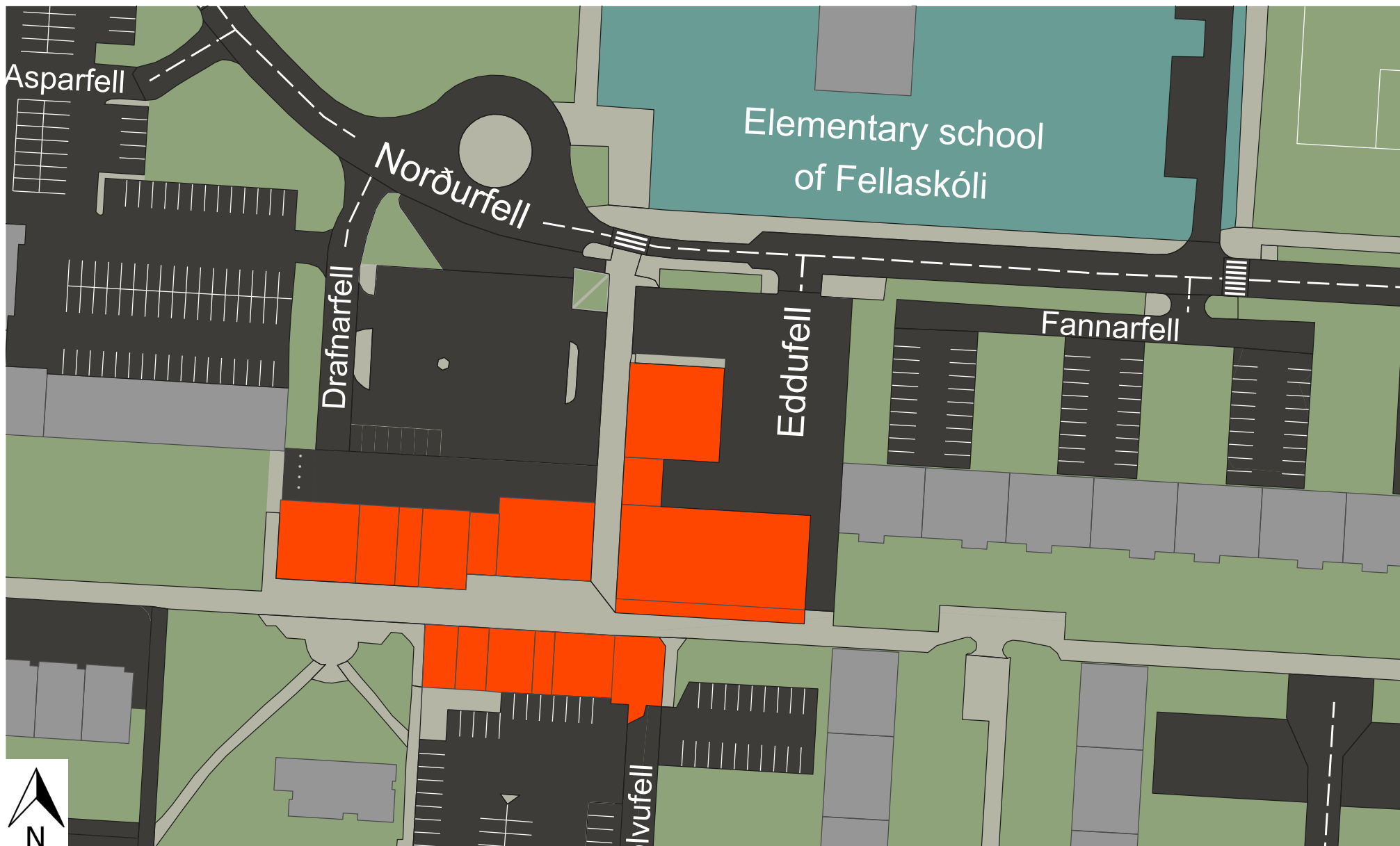Figure 44.
The Eastern parking lot of Fellagarðar.

Figure 45. The current condition of Fellagarðar. 1:1000.

Labels on map: Asparfell, Norðurfell, Drafnarfell, Eddufell, Fannarfell, Elvufell, Elementary school of Fellaskóli
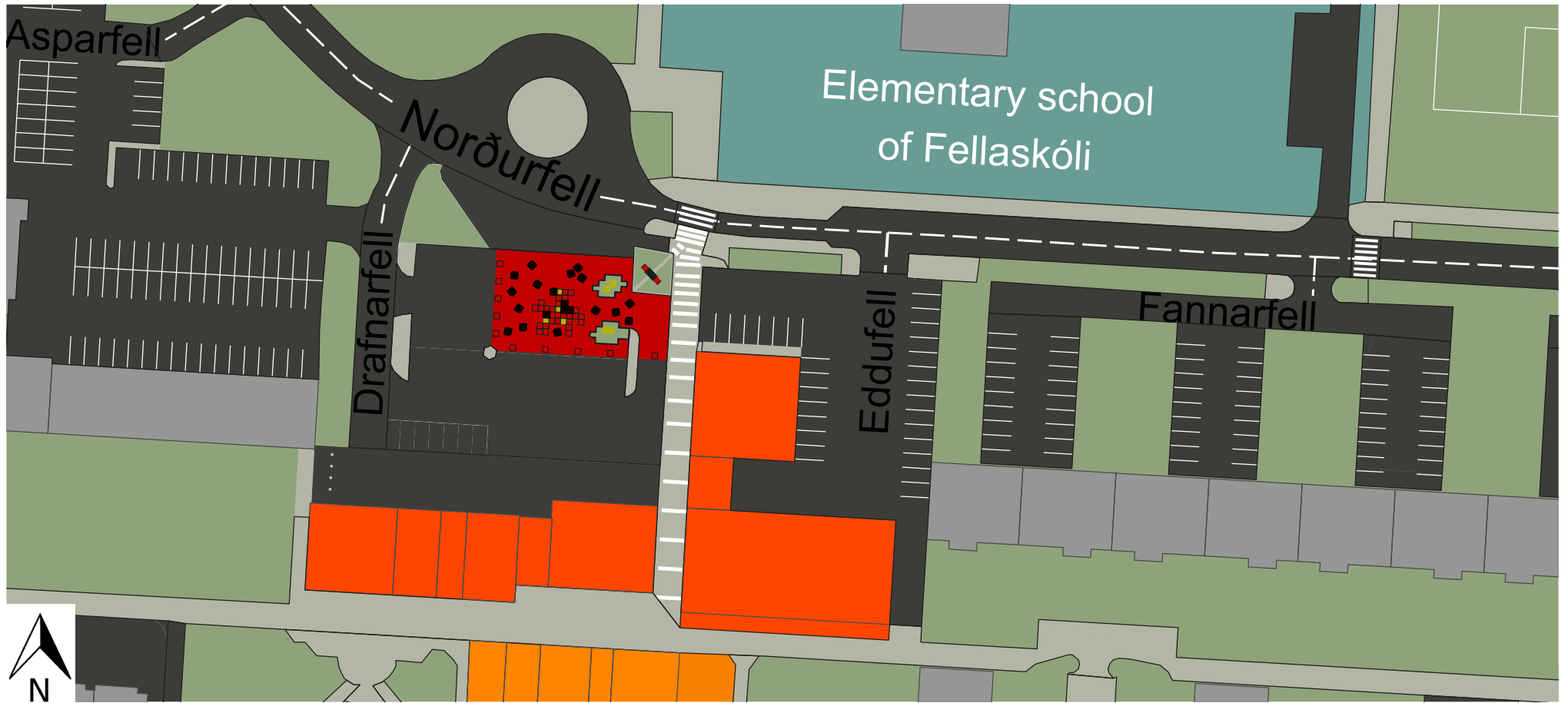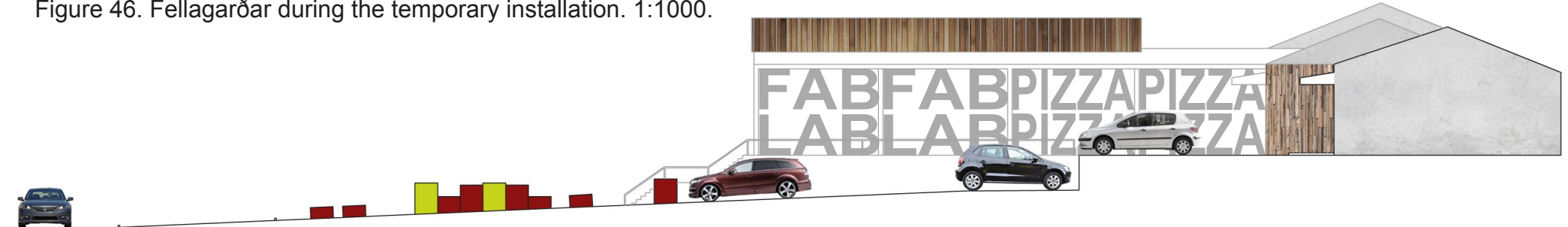
N

Figure 46. Fellagarðar during the temporary installation. 1:1000.

Figure 47. Section of the temporary installation at Fellagarðar. 1:250.

Figure 48. An idea of how the secondary parking lot of Fellagarðar could host a variety of temporary uses.

Breidholt

POP
UP

TEM POR ARY

Construction

To mark a defining place and making the temporary site more visible, the existing asphalt is to be painted in a bright red colour creating a clear difference between the area intended for parking and the area intended for people, as seen in figure 51.

In the middle of this marked area a red painted wooden construction will stand, made out of wooden squares a meter by meter squared, displayed in figure 52. This wooden construction is shaped so varying spaces are created that can be changed by the users by inserting or removing 50 cm wooden cubes, seen in figure 52. These cubes alter the construction so it can accommodate any desired activity. In addition to this, the construction will feature clear plastic containers located in the unevenly heighted construction.

The clear plastic containers, seen in figure 50, have a light inserted in them allowing them to be lit up as seen in figure 49. This adds a distinctive touch to the otherwise uncomplicated design. The site is made interactive by including a speaker with a Bluetooth receiver underneath the wooden
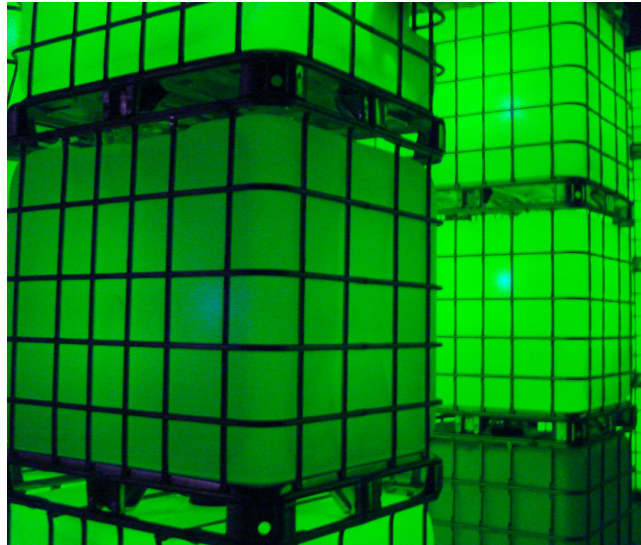

Figure 49. Plastic containers lit up.

construction.

Electricity needed for the speaker, as well as the lit up containers can either be taken from the light-posts at the parking lot or from the houses of Fellagarðar. Power lines will have to be protected.

The cubes will be decorated with pictures of an eye on two opposite sides. The eyes depicted on the boxes will come from photographs taken of people of the neighbourhood and made into a two coloured black and red print, which will be glued onto the cubes. There will be 25 cubes at the installation site. An illustration of such a cube can be seen in figure 53.
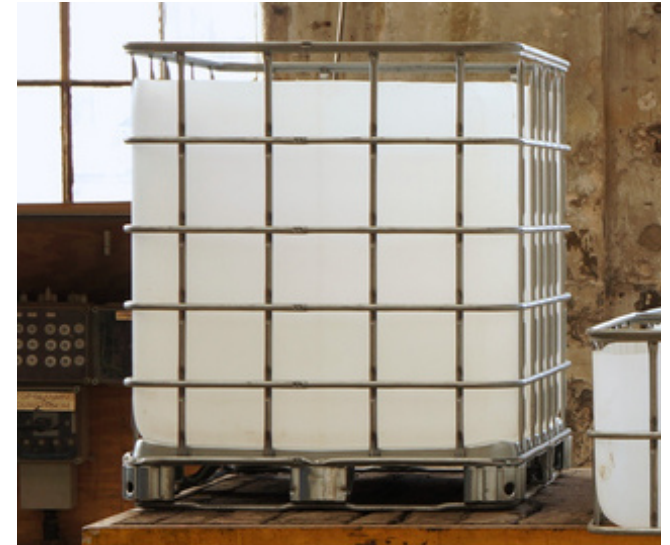

Figure 50. Plastic container unlit.

To announce the temporary installation at Fellagarðar, 5 groups of five cubes will be spread around the neighbourhood of Upper-Breiðholt. Placements will be at schoolyards, playgrounds, swimming pools, football fields and library.

This wooden construction is joined at the site by two grassy areas raised with a wooden frame that can be utilized for seating. Within each grassy area, two previously described plastic container are placed, allowing for partial privacy, back-support or simple climbing opportunities.

Figure 51. The temporary installation at Fellagarðar. 1:150.
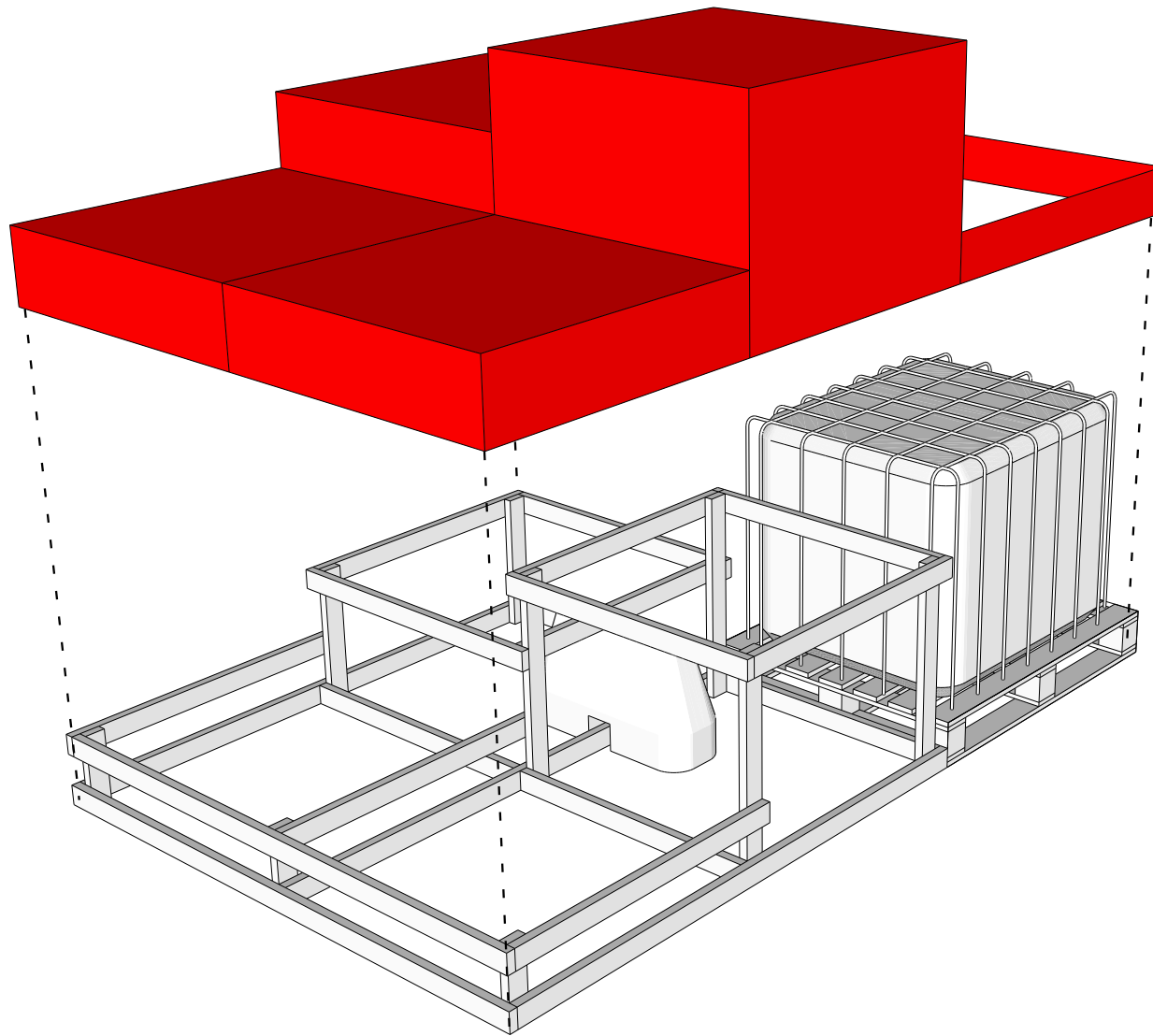
To link the area to the walking path located behind Fellagarðar, the stripes from the zebra crossing over the street of Norðurfell will be continued from the crossing all the way to the walking path making that path more obvious to visitors of the site as well as livening up an ill-maintained path.

A pentagonal shaped wooden frame,displayed in figure 42, is erected over a small path existing at the area. Creating an entrance to the area welcoming people to enter the site. The shape of the entrance is derived from the outlines of nearby buildings.

Concrete blocks will be added on top of the base of the construction to weigh it down and secure its position. These blocks will be hidden inside of the construction and will therefore not affect the aesthetics of the installation.

Figure 52. A part of the wooden construction.

Usage of the temporary site

By including movable objects that can be joined to or separated from the main wooden structure the users are given the freedom to make alterations to the design of the site for themselves. Due to the inclusion of a Bluetooth speaker inside the wooden structure the site comes alive and can function as a stage or a simple lounge depending on the needs and wishes of the users, who have the control via their smart phones or computers.

Grassy areas allow for sitting and playing as well as offering affordances linked to the businesses that sell food.

The sites multifunctionality is ideal for improving the image of the neighbourhood and displaying the diverse backgrounds of the inhabitants. This can be achieved by hosting; street markets, food festivals or small concerts in connection to larger music festivals. The products designed and manufactured in the Fab-Lab facility could even be displayed on site in an effort to advertise their newly opened offices.
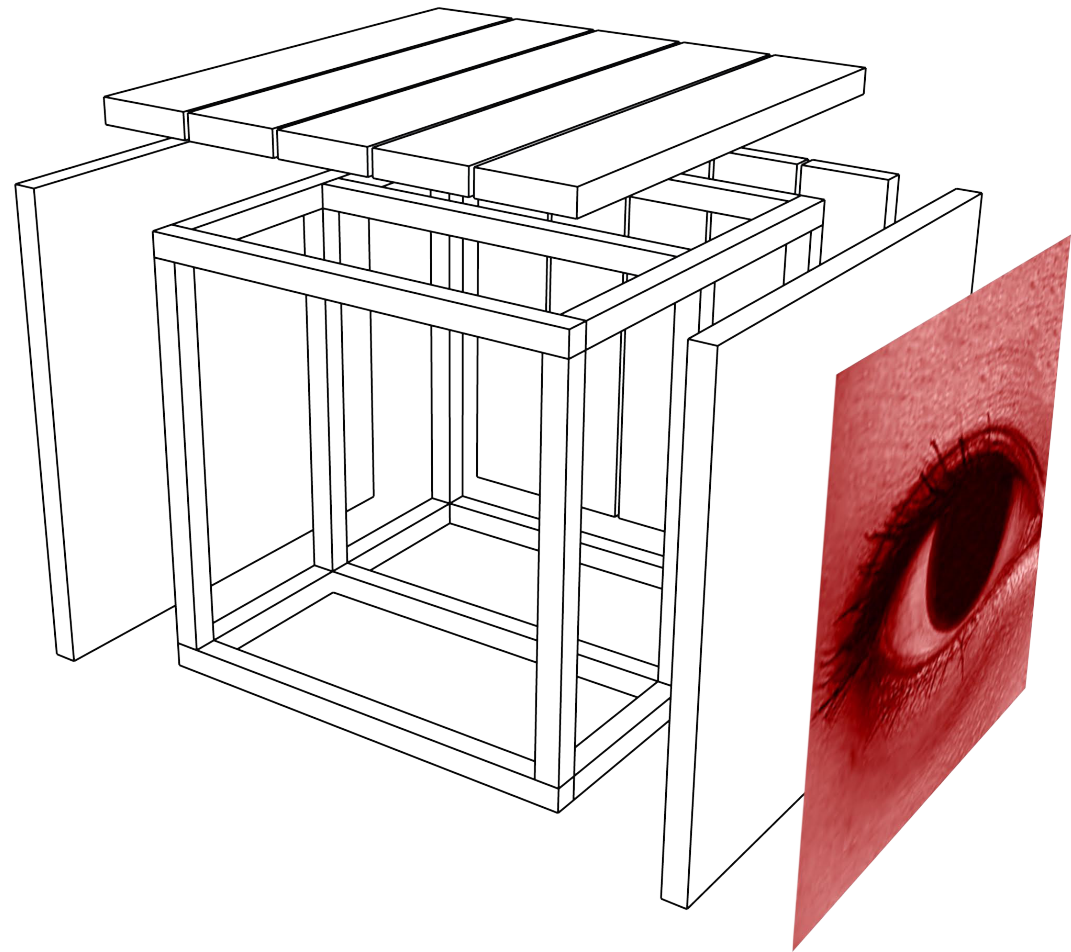
Figure 53. An example of the wooden cubes.

As described in the design proposal, this design installation is a testing ground for temporary installation at the site of Fellagarðar. This test will then hopefully lead to more uses in the following years.

Maintenance

If the installation will be free from vandalism it should not need much maintenance. Grass lawns might have to be cut once during the end of July but that depends on the weather. The higher grass will simply add more softness to the area. If vandalism occurs, that will have to be dealt with depending on its nature.

Theft is always a danger when movable objects are included in design of open spaces. If elements, specifically the boxes start to vanish, that will be considered to be a positive thing. The designer will consider that to be an indication of acceptance by the people of the neighbourhood. More boxes will not be added instead of those gone missing since the movement of boxes out of the area is no different than boxes being moved within the area. It simply displays usage and knowledge of this can be used further on in the development of Fellagarðar.

Light bulbs within the plastic containers and functionality of the speaker should be monitored but aside from that no maintenance should be required.

Deconstruction

After the summer has passed and everyday life begins again with schools opening up and summer holidays being over the installation should be dismantled.

Plastic containers can be returned and reused, as can the speakers. Wooden constructions will be dismantled and can either be stored to be reused the following year or be used to improve the site of Fellagarðar. The wood could be used to build steps that need to be fixed or build resting areas next to the entrances of the businesses of Fellagarðar.

As stated in the design proposal, the spirit of the project should be to leave the area in a better condition than before. The red asphalt paint will be cleaned of and the whole parking area re-painted in a conventional manner marking out the outlines of parking spaces. These lines will be coloured white all over the parking lot except for the area where the installation took place, that place should be painted in the same red colour used during the installation, seen in figure 54.

The boxes spread over the area will be collected and given away if there is a will for that. Otherwise they will be re-used or recycled. The possibility of storing the re-useable materials inside some of the empty spaces inside Fellagarðar should be examined.
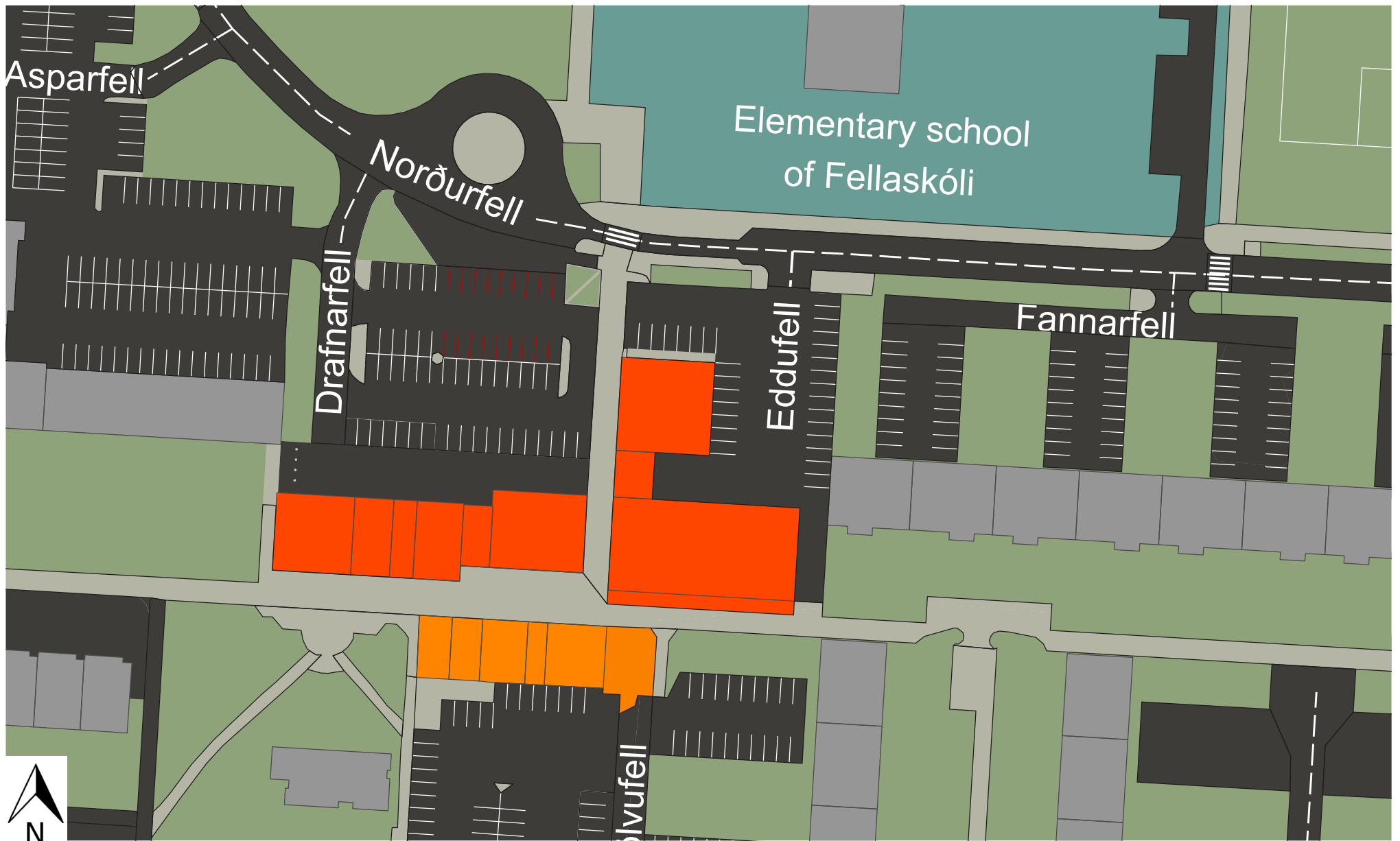
Figure 54. The condition of Fellagarðar after the initial intervention. 1:1000.

Asparfell

Norðurfell

Drafnarfell

Elementary school
of Fellaskóli

Eddufell

Fannarfell

Ölvufell

N

Affects

It is impossible to know what affects this sort of space and temporary usage will have on the users. It might cause criticism and negativity like Baldurstorg, mentioned in chapter 2, when it initially hosted a temporary square.

Hopefully though, this sort of area will help in strengthening the identity of the neighbourhood as well as increase the usage of Fellagarðar and hopefully help the area develop in a more liveable and sustainable way. Increased usage could cause the empty spaces of Fellagarðar to fill up and maybe eventually cause the masterplans of the area (Arkhúsið ehf., 2005) to be realised and the buildings enlarged. Something that seems very unlikely at this current time.

If the strategy for this design does not come true and the installation proposed in this project will not continue after the first summer than it will just have been an experiment in urban interventions that can be built from in the following years.

The affects the project will have depends heavily on its usage. Not just the basic affordances it offers but how it will used by the community. If it becomes a part of a market, concerts or festivals than the likelihood of it being accepted are multiplied.

6.Conclusions

Process

The idea of this thesis was sparked by the ideas and suggestions made by the inhabitants of Breiðholt during participatory meetings which were a part of the planning process for the Municipal plan of Reykjavík 2010-2030. (Reykjavík City, 2013) (KPMG, 2013) A clear pattern was visible in these suggestions which highlighted the need for an improvement of the business clusters of the area, as well as improving the poor image of Breiðholt.

This being a temporary area was influenced by the program "Torg í biðstöðu" which I have been an observer and user of over the last few years. The idea of employing a temporary strategy led to a study of temporary areas and temporary architecture. This literature study expanded my horizons regarding the subject of temporality and interim uses, vastly. By studying other cases and strategies of temporary uses and the significance they have played in the growth and life of cities viewed the limitations that temporary uses and areas have to deal with in city planning and how their full potentials are seldom used.

A further examination of Breiðholt and its inhabitants led to the focus being put on Upper-Breiðholt due to its social problems, multi-ethnic inhabitants and the negative image the area has due to these factors. Finding an area within Breiðholt that was applicable for this sort of project was not complicated since there are not many shopping clusters in the most problematic parts of the neighbourhood. Fellagarðar was chosen due to its closeness to elements that attract outsiders to Breiðholt such as; swimming pool, football field, college and as well as the amount of potential users living near the site. The fact that restorations had been going on in the area over the last years strengthened the decision of making Fellagarðar the site for the temporary intervention this thesis would suggest.

The design process of the site firstly involved understanding the affects a temporary site can have on its surroundings and how that can be used furthermore to develop the site after the initial intervention. The site on the main parking lot at Fellagarðar was selected over other areas because of its visibility from the main street of Norðurfell, the foot traffic detected at the site during on-site observations and the amount of disruption the occupation of parking lots would likely have on the users of Fellagarðar. The area is positioned in a way that it would not go unnoticed to any visitor of Upper-Breiðholt.

The usage of the site had to be quite versatile and open to as many different uses as possible without being empty and requiring large groups of users in order for it to function. Its usage should also work together with the on-site businesses in order to improve the business area. Constructionally it would have to be in the spirit of "Torg í biðstöðu" projects (as seen on page 79) since if it became realised, the project would most likely be categorised as such and its funding would be very limited.

Articles stating the importance of surprising elements and structures in place-making
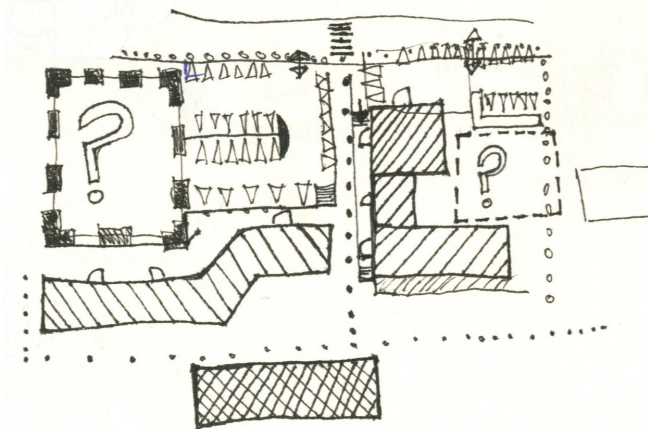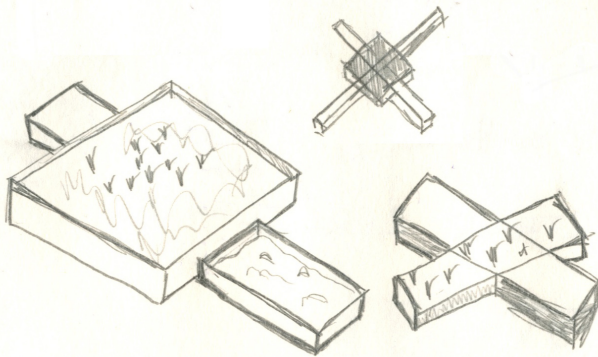

Figure 55. Sketch of potential locations

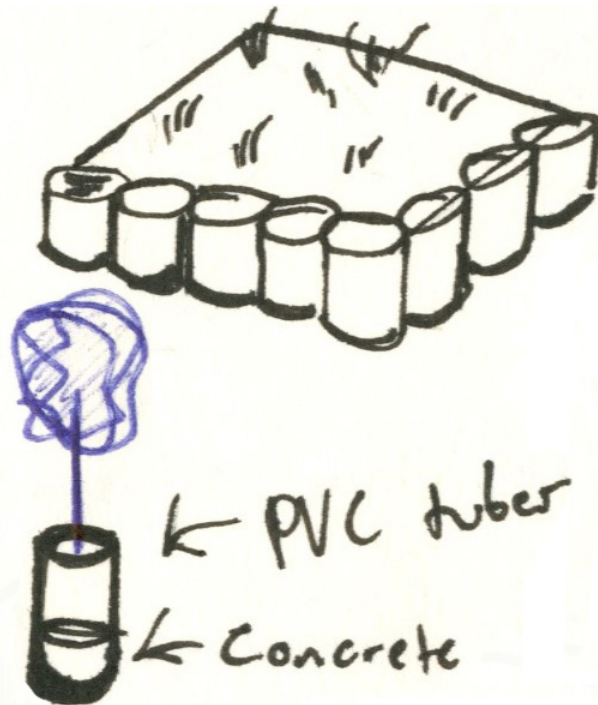Figure 56. X-shaped constructions

Figure 57. Choice of materials included PVC tube at one time.

opened up a lot of possibilities and led to sketches of elements that might be more suited in playgrounds than areas suitable for this project. A step back, looking at the shapes and colours of surrounding buildings, guided the sketching towards a more rectangular shape of construction. A strict shape similar to the buildings of the area might not be as daring and surprising as a tape cow and small plastered hay rolls but the placement, materials and functions of the stricter construction resulted in a more usable and realistic sort of project. The decision of making a seating construction came quite shortly after moving towards stricter shapes. Wanting the area and construction not to feel empty during times of limited usage required the construction to be shaped in a way that would allow for both enclosed spaces and open spaces to be occupied. The first sketch of this idea was a simple X shaped structure, being a word play on the saying: "X marks the spot", as well allowing for smaller groups or individuals to be positioned in the tighter angles. The cross shaped structure was revised in light of the multi-cultural backgrounds of the potential user base and because of its overly simplistic shape. This X then started stretching and deforming in ways to accommodate the users,

ending up in the way described in chapter 5. The final wooden construction can easily be built using materials of differing lengths and qualities by skilled professionals as well as amateurs.

The lit up plastic containers are influenced by the Kubik club, a temporary roaming club that is simply constructed by stacked containers. The usage of these was also seen as an elaboration to the often used shipping pallets, seen in many temporary projects, for example "Torg í Biðstöðu" projects on page 79. These sorts of containers have to my knowledge not been used in Iceland for lighting purposes and would therefore add to the uniqueness of the installation. The presence of lighting at the site also prolongs the areas time of usage at night.
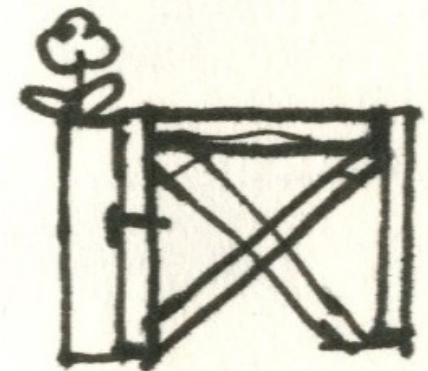

Figure 58. PVC tubes attached to the wooden construction

Having the movable cubes at the site makes brings the design to live, allowing for the site to be changed as desired by the users. This was a very important element that changed shapes and sizes during the process but always remained there. Allowing the site to be changed by its users multiplies the sites role in Breiðholt. In addition to it being a recreational area it also becomes a tool to monitor the type and amount of usage at the site. The information gathered from the sites usage could then be used in future projects of similar nature as well as more permanent ones. These cubes are also a tool used to announce the temporary site to its surroundings. This is done by adding groups of cubes to popular sites at Upper-Breiðholt.

Colouring the whole construction in a bright red colour was a decision that came about after
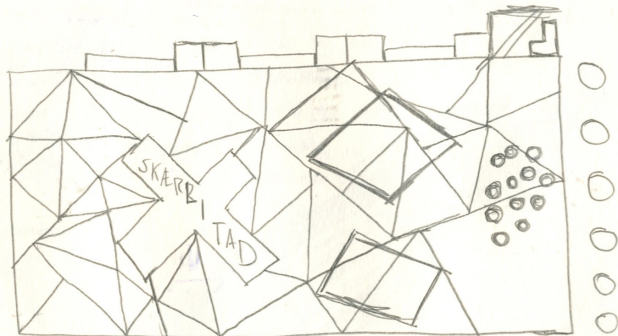

Figure 59. The basic layout becoming clearer.

observation of the area. Dominant colours of the area were detected to be the monochrome concrete and asphalt pavement and the mainly white colour of the building facades. Despite the buildings having splashes of colour there was a lack of a strong coloured element that could grasp ones eye. The red colour comes from the splashes of colour of the nearby buildings as well the three coloured pavings on the south side of Fellagarðar.

To appropriate the area to its users the inclusion of the Bluetooth equipped speakers as well as the "eye" illustrations on the construction were made. The speakers were based on observations of young people sitting in their cars listening to music while passing time at Fellagarðar. The idea behind the eye illustrations came from the negative ideas many Icelandic people seem to have about Upper-Breiðholt due to its high percentage of immigrant inhabitants. These ideas were quite obvious during simple internet searches for the keywords: "Breiðholt" "Fellahverfi" "Immigrants (Innflytjendur in Icelandic)". The thought behind the eye was to get people to look the inhabitants in the eye and see them as people and not statistics or percentage facts.
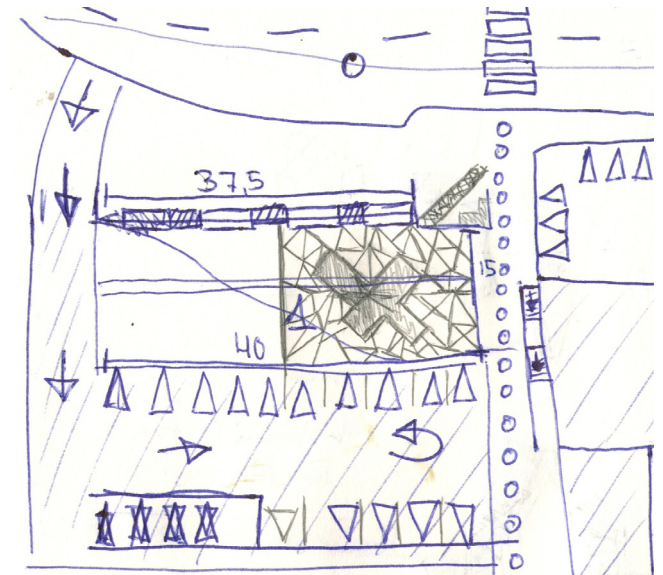

Figure 60. Sketching the disruption of traffic.
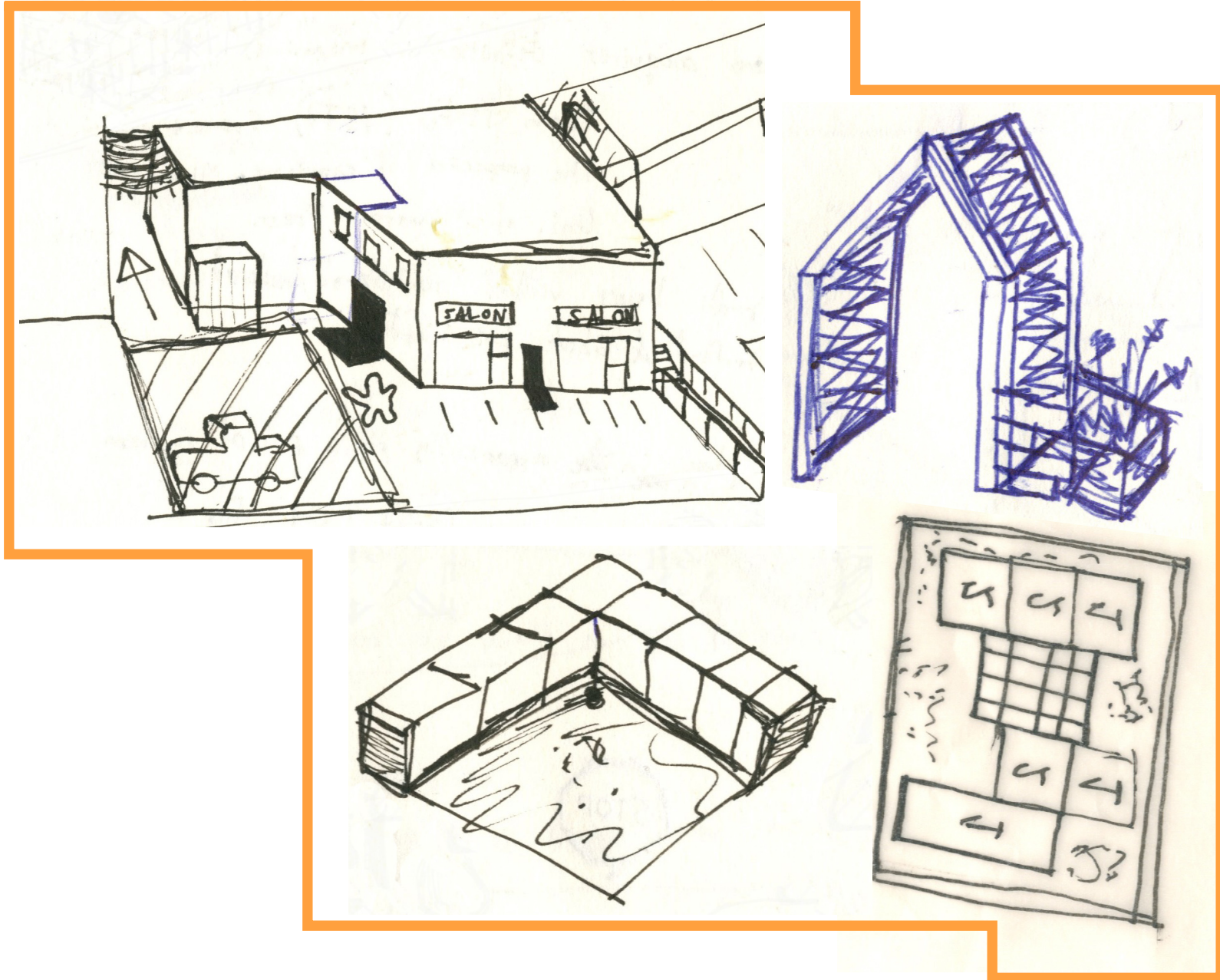

Figure 61. Wooden constructional sketching.

Figure 62. Compilation from the sketching process

Discussion

This project has been set to improve the liveability of an area which has gotten a bad publicity over the last decades and its image suffered because of this. The author is aware that a U-turn in regards to a sites image is a very unlikely occurrence. The idea behind this sort of project is for it to be an initiator of temporary use of open suburban spaces in the neighbourhood. Programs like "Torg í biðstöðu" have managed to introduce the concept of temporary and meanwhile spaces to the inhabitants of Reykjavík but only in a stand-in type of manner. The site of Fellagarðar could become a testing ground for more complex and systematic uses of temporary spaces where experiences are gained from year to year and are applied to the site continuously. Fellagarðar has a potential to be an area similar to the aforementioned Union Street lot. Re-used as a temporary site over and over again the site is re-invented almost annually, adding life and elements of surprise to its neighbourhood.

Quite a lot of improvements have been made to the area of Upper-Breiðholt in recent years as mentioned in chapter 3. They have all been in a very conventional permanent sort of manner although they have all included public participation as a part of their design process. The problem with these improvements is their staleness, they are constructed out of materials that are made to last and probably add class to the area. Their uses are however monotonous and simple. Temporary open spaces could add elements of change and variety to the neighbourhood as an addition to these permanent areas.

The Municipality of Reykjavík has been increasing the number of temporary suburban projects but there has been a lack of enthusiasm in the projects. They are more modest than projects in urban areas and have gotten much less publicity as well. It appears as though the ideology behind the urban projects differs from that of the suburban projects but this has not been stated anywhere by the municipality.

Likelihoods of this project being realised are uncertain. The project is located on a privately owned property but so have other temporary suburban projects in Reykjavík. If the project came to be realised it would most likely be funded by the municipality of Reykjavík, as previously mentioned expected cost was always taken into account during the design process so the construction should be within the budget of other similar projects. The collaboration between the municipality and the sites owners is one of the two biggest question marks regarding the projects realisation. The other being the upcoming local government elections being held May 31st. The outcome of these elections might set a mark on the policy of improving Breiðholt, set by the now controlling parties. Whether or not this will have an effect, only time can tell.

The fact that the newly published Municipal plan of Reykjavík mentions and promotes temporary uses is a victory in itself for advocates of temporality in Iceland. (Reykjavík City, 2013) This fact illustrates the effect temporary uses have had on the city despite their limited range so far. This is hopefully a good sign of things to come for the life of inhabitants of all neighbourhoods of Reykjavík, both urban and suburban.

On a more global scale there are many cases in which temporary approaches could improve the outcome of plans and actions taken. The common public participation parts of planning with its open meetings and opinions raised by

inhabitants have strict limitations. It can be hard to get feedback from people if they fail to see how the outcome of plans will affect them directly, this can especially be a problem when working on plans with a long time frame. By adding temporary uses to these sorts of plans people can see the affect the projects will have on them immediately and are therefore more likely to have an opinion and take part in these sorts of meetings.

The experimental part of temporary areas is another aspect in which planners could be much more daring. By using temporary areas as testbeds for materials, uses or atmosphere a vast knowledge could be gathered about users, interactions within areas and numerous other things.

There seems to be a rise in alternative methods of planning, more open ended approaches that allow for users to be a part of the planning process by simply using them. Through these sorts of planning methods, not only are the voices of those who speak loudest heard but also the everyday users, whether they are aware of it or not.

The references used in this thesis are the most relevant available today but their researches and conclusions mostly evolve around urban areas. This is most likely due to the temporary cases which they study are mostly urban. But as this thesis has pointed out, temporary areas in suburban neighbourhoods do exists. The lack of published literature on the subject is hopefully something that will improve.

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