

Hyllie, a stone's throw away

From Smart District to Clever Community

Since the 1980s, Hyllie has undergone multiple reimaginings—first as a transport and communications node, then as an entertainment and retail hub, and later as the model for a climate-smart district. Yet despite these ambitions, a strong local identity has yet to fully take root. Hyllie remains a place in transition: an incomplete urban fabric shaped by unrealised plans, fragmented connections, and a sense of distance—both physical and psychological—from Malmö's historic center. But today, it sits at a crucial threshold: physically and mentally fragmented from its surrounding neighbourhoods, shaped by infrastructural barriers, and still in the process of forming its own identity.

Our project, **Hyllie, a stone's throw away**, reframes this ambition. Rather than adding another layer to a long sequence of top-down visions, we propose a shift in focus: from what Hyllie is supposed to become, to what it already is. A place not only of buildings and infrastructure—but of ecosystems, of communities (human and other-than-human), of memory and potential. A place that is still open, still in flux—and all the more powerful for it.

We frame our approach in **Félix Guattari's theory of the *Three Ecologies***—natural, social, and mental—updating it with an other-than-human perspective. We also build on **Richard Sennett's** reflections on openness and boundary-making:

“Whenever we construct a barrier, we must equally ensure the barrier is porous; the distinction between inside and outside has to be breachable, if not ambiguous.”

—Richard Sennett, *Experiments and Disruptions in the City*

We apply this lens both spatially and conceptually. Physical barriers like the railway and Annetorpsvägen are reimagined as corridors of reconnection—border zones where social life, ecological flows, and multispecies encounters can unfold. Rather than treating identity as something to be imposed from above, we see it as something that emerges through use, care, and co-existence.

We believe this porousness—this idea of thresholds rather than borders—is crucial in a place like Hyllie. The current sense of distance from the city centre, for example, is not just spatial but psychological. What if the twenty-minute bike ride became not a commute, but a journey—marked by ten pavilions instead of twenty minutes? We imagine these lanterns along the edge not just as physical landmarks, but as social and ecological anchors—places of gathering, shelter, and seasonal use—co-designed with local communities and rooted in Hyllie's rural and environmental heritage.

This strategy supports a broader shift: from a mono-functional smart district to a relational, open-ended, and living system. Our project identifies all actors on the site and its surroundings—human and non-human—and places them at the forefront of the transformation.

It draws from the climate-smart infrastructure already in place, but reorients it toward shared, everyday use, and towards building multispecies resilience.

The recently launched architectural policy by Malmö City Council reinforces the importance of local identity in new development. While it focuses on architecture, we extend this call to recognise the complexity of place as an ecosystem. We propose six interwoven dimensions:

Identify local actors — human and non-human — and consider them equally in shaping the environment.

Make space for local knowledge and needs — involving communities in all stages of the design process.

Start from the local landscape and climate — working with existing ecosystems and topographies.

Care for what already exists — reinforcing identity through continuity, not replacement. Design in relation to place character — using locally available resources and materials. Activate thresholds — transforming infrastructural edges into places of interaction.

This idea resonates deeply in a context like Hyllie, where roads and railways divide not only land, but also perception and everyday experience. The brief points to the importance of transforming such thresholds from hard edges into **places of interaction**, into **borders where new forms of connection can emerge**—physically, socially, and ecologically.

In this vision, the future of Hyllie is not defined by what it looks like from above, but by how it feels from within: **a community within reach—just a stone’s throw away.**

Regenerative Natural Ecology

A regenerative and locally rooted urbanism emerges when ecological thinking, civic openness alongside Malmö’s aspirational guidelines meet in dialogue. Hyllie is a pioneer on urban sustainability and smart infrastructure. However, our strategy aims to go beyond sustainability into true ecological regeneration where ecosystems are enhanced and reconnected.

Our proposed strategy for a regenerative natural ecology for Hyllie considers the following principles:

1. ‘Empty spaces’ as a design tool
2. Designing ‘productive’ disorder
3. Integrate ‘more-than human’ approach
4. Protect local landscape heritage
5. Foster adaptability and promote collectiveness.

A Surgical Urbanism: Bridging Hyllie Through Precision and Purpose

Following an in-depth contextual and morphological analysis of Hyllie and its surroundings, our proposal deliberately rejects the conventional “total solution” approach—one that flattens differences, fills every void, and attempts to resolve complexity with uniformity by covering the entire railroad with a single concrete platform. Instead, we embrace a surgical mindset:

intervening with precision, intention, and restraint. We do not see design as a blanket to be draped over the site, but as a scalpel—making careful incisions where necessary, leaving space where beneficial, and aiming to achieve maximum spatial and social impact with minimal physical footprint. This is why we chose to use only certain elements and leave the railroad open, opting for green strategies and useful positioning of buildings as a way to reduce noise and wind pressure.

This principle of minimal intervention, maximum effect underpins a strategic framework defined by three inhabited bridges. Each is deliberately positioned to reconnect severed urban fabrics, introducing new layers of functionality and community life. These are not merely infrastructural connections—they are programmatic condensers: buildings-as-bridges, bridges-as-urban-nodes.

The Hyllie Green Market: Inhabited Infrastructure

At the heart of the proposal stands the Hyllie Green Market, a pivotal connector bridging the fractured northern and southern edges of the railway. More than an infrastructural crossing, this is a multimodal urban artery—weaving together pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular flows—while simultaneously serving as a vibrant public condenser of social, economic, and ecological life. Inspired by historical models like Florence’s Ponte Vecchio, it is conceived as a three-dimensional corridor—a dense, performative structure that unites circulation with civic intensity.

Rejecting the conventional model of monofunctional decks over infrastructure, the Green Market introduces a vertical layering of programs: open-air markets, greenhouses, food courts, co-working spaces, micro-logistics hubs, and facilities for light manufacturing and food processing. This stacked configuration fosters a productive urban ecosystem—a hybrid typology that supports both everyday routines and larger flows of goods, ideas, and people. It is a building, a bridge, and a landscape—simultaneously.

A Greenhouse as Spatial and Symbolic Core

The greenhouse is not merely an architectural feature—it is the conceptual centerpiece of the proposal. Designed as a transparent, living structure, it merges environmental performance with programmatic clarity. Here, architecture and ecology visibly converge: its glass envelope showcases the cycles of cultivation, reuse, and innovation at the heart of the project.

Ground Level: A marketplace for local agricultural products—grown in surrounding fields and directly within the greenhouse—activates the base of the structure. This level is integrated with a park-like railway crossing, allowing for intuitive movement across the tracks and creating a seamless green connection between urban quarters. This continuity transforms the act of crossing into a civic experience.

First Floor: A raised cycling lane threads through small recycling stations and collection points, making sustainable behaviors part of everyday routines. These nodes are deliberately compact and accessible, reinforcing the project’s circular ethos.

Second Level: A research and innovation center focusing on cutting-edge technologies in sustainable agriculture, food systems, and recycling completes the vertical loop. This facility invites knowledge exchange, start-up activity, and community education, positioning Hyllie as a regional leader in agri-urban innovation.

Top Level: The uppermost floor houses the main greenhouse, a space of cultivation and contemplation. Part working farm, part public belvedere, it offers panoramic views over Hyllie and the surrounding landscape, serving as both productive infrastructure and urban landmark.

Urban Connectivity as Civic Opportunity

The bridge is not an end in itself, but a connector—binding new and existing districts and creating moments of encounter along the way. A gentle slope extends the bridge toward Hyllie Square and the New Quarter, forming a generous public plaza at its landing point. The surrounding buildings are carefully programmed to support circularity and continuity: restaurants featuring hyperlocal cuisine, shops focused on sustainable goods, and mixed-use buildings with residential units above and co-working offices below. This programming ensures activity across the full daily rhythm, supporting both living and working in close proximity.

A thinner, pedestrian-focused bridge extension to the north offers a quick, scenic route to the heart of the new district. This link doubles as a viewpoint, framing key landmarks such as the greenhouse tower and the public square, and creating a memorable threshold between zones.

On the northern edge, a landscape bridge leads into a broader green infrastructure network—connecting the project to Kroksbäckparken and beyond. Along this route, the landscape shifts from structured urban gardens to more open, rolling terrains—offering variety in experience and ecology. This linear park system supports biodiversity, leisure, and local food production, integrating seamlessly with the urban fabric.

Multimodal Infrastructure and Intermodal Synergy

Near Hyllie Station, the project seizes the opportunity offered by topography. By lifting the platform to the level of the adjacent Vattenparken, the intervention not only extends usable public space but also activates the undercroft: a protected, expanded bicycle parking area and intermodal hub is introduced, offering direct links to trains, buses, and park-and-ride facilities. This slope-based design maximizes spatial efficiency while emphasizing sustainable transit choices.