The Use Values of Green Spaces in the City

A Case Study of Järvafältet, Stockholm

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The importance of green spaces to the wellbeing of people in the city and the ecological values they carry are widely recognised in the field of urban and regional planning. At the same time vast open spaces can also be a challenge to planners since they provide an obstacle for an integrated urban development. This problem is particularly evident in Stockholm where the present form of a segregated urban landscape is increasingly challenged. The Järvafältet green area offers such a controversial space as it separates different suburbs from each other. In light of the expected population growth and expanding urbanisation of the city the desire to build a dense and compact urban form to avoid sprawl requires a new vision for how green spaces should be treated. Integrating the social values of meeting places in the public spaces and the ecological values are paramount in this development. With theoretical background from discussions on public space, green space, and urban sustainability in combination with qualitative research methods, this paper aims to investigate this conflict and provide solutions for a new integrated way of thinking that address the use values green spaces in the city. The findings suggest that accessibility to this public space is paramount and must be improved to provide an environment for social interaction.
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1. Introduction

The functions of green spaces in an urban environment have been extensively discussed in the academia, particularly in Sweden where one can observe a strong identification of people with nature. Moreover, the role of greenery as carrying many social and environmental values becomes particularly apparent in the city where a large population requires spaces for recreation and relaxation. In light of rapid urbanisation around the globe and the popular view in the academia to build dense and compact cities to prevent urban sprawl, the role of open spaces will increasingly be of particular importance.

In addition to the values and qualities of green spaces as public spaces in the city, the problem of spatial segregation also relates to urban form and the presence of open spaces. Open spaces can thus act as an obstacle for an integrated urban development by disconnecting neighbourhoods from each other. The case study I have chosen for this paper, the Järvafältet green space in Stockholm, demonstrates the complicated relationships between social and environmental sustainability. The much debated problem of spatial segregation is particularly apparent in the Swedish capital, and one reason for the segregated urban landscape is the effect of green spaces as barriers to both spatial and social integration. The development of isolated suburban enclaves such as Rinkeby and Tensta as a result of post-war functionalist planning has been widely criticised in the literature. In light of the rapid population growth that is predicted for Stockholm, new visions need to be developed as to how these sometimes called “problem areas” can be improved and made more attractive.

The Järvafältet green space plays a crucial role in this issue of spatial segregation, as the values of quality public spaces as well as natural landscapes need to be addressed and developed. At the same time the effects of spatial segregation, such as social exclusion, that are particularly evident in neighbourhoods with high immigrant populations, need to be reduced and connections between suburbs need to be strengthened. The barrier effect of the open green space thus needs to be replaced by a vision of an integrated urban landscape that offers quality public spaces for a diverse range of people from different neighbourhoods.

This paper thus analyses the use value of green space in an urban environment by looking at the case of Järvafältet in northwestern Stockholm. Moreover, the function of the Järvafältet as a public space that offers meeting places to the residents will be critically evaluated. The particular urban form of Stockholm, as well as the social challenges of a segregated city, further raises questions about combining the efforts of social and environmental sustainability. The three research questions that address these issues are:

1. What is the use value of green spaces in an urban area?
2. To what extent can the Järvafältet green space fulfil the purpose of public space and meeting places?
3. What is the potential to develop the Järvafältet area as part of a more integrated urban landscape that connects the different suburbs in a more socially sustainable manner?

These questions will serve as a guideline during the course of this paper but should be viewed in an integrated manner rather than separately. The theoretical basis for the case study includes theories on the public sphere and public life, different concepts on urban form and
the functions of green spaces, as well as planning theory on the sustainable city. These issues will then be discussed in light of the Järvafältet area case study. The research methods applied are quantitative and consist of interviews with professionals as well as participant observation at location. The aim of this paper is thus to highlight the importance in planning for green spaces that have the potential to offer quality public spaces in an integrated urban environment.

1.1. Research Inspiration

My research inspiration stems from the interest I developed in the importance of green spaces in urban environments. Having spent the last two years in Stockholm, the convergence of nature and the built environment come to mind in everyday life since the city is characterised by its extensive green (the parks, forests and fields) and blue (the water) features. These features have also sparked the decision to assign the European Green Capital Award 2010 to the Swedish capital.

The courses I took prior to starting the thesis also triggered my interest in this field. An excursion to Järvafältet as part of the course Social and Cultural Issues in Planning at KTH particularly started my interest in this part of Stockholm. Finally, a number of conferences I attended in the autumn of 2009 touched upon issues such as green urbanism (Green Urbanism in Albano) and urban form, sprawl, segregation and sustainable cities (Critical Spaces of Tomorrow).

Järvafältet in particular has been chosen since it is currently a much debated area of discussion both in the media and in the field of urban and regional planning. This is due to the critical confrontation with post-war modernist planning that characterises many parts of suburban Stockholm, including the Järva area that is situated to the northwest of the city. The classic modernist suburbs such as Rinkeby and Tensta have been in the focus for several years due to the problems of spatial segregation that are perhaps more apparent in Stockholm than in many other European cities. The particular role the Järvafältet green space plays in the segregated social landscape makes this case of special interest. The area of study will be presented in more detail in Part 4.

1.2. Structure of the Paper

The structure of the paper is as following: Part 2 deals with the topics of public space and public life, green spaces and urban form, and the sustainable city in planning as discussed in the literature. The literature review will therefore highlight the main issues that are of relevance to the case study. Part 3 will present the methods that have been used and critically evaluate the process of the empirical research that has been conducted in the field. I will then lead into the fourth part which presents the area of the case study which is Järvafältet with its surrounding suburbs. This will then lead to the presentation of the empirical findings. Part 5 will bring the results of the empirical research together and combine these with the discussions held in the literature. Finally, I will conclude my thesis in Part 6.
2. Literature Review

2.1. The Public Sphere and Public Space

2.1.1. The Public Sphere and the City

There is a vast literature that discusses public life in the urban context. Before reviewing the main discussions on green space and urban form, I will present the ideas developed by theorists and sociologists including Richard Sennett, Jane Jacobs, Shannon Zukin, Henri Lefebvre and Jürgen Habermas regarding the public sphere. First and foremost it is Habermas who offers a useful discussion on conceptualising public sphere. In his early work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Habermas relates the evolution of a public sphere (Öffentlichkeit) as we know it today to the rise of capitalism in Europe since the 18th century. This public sphere became situated within the bourgeois society, separated from government authorities that had previously shaped public discourse.\(^1\) However he evaluates that with the rise of a modern mass society around consumer capitalism and increasing influence of the mass media shaping public opinion, the public sphere has become increasingly unrepresentative. Nevertheless, Habermas believes in the re-emergence of a “global public sphere” and “cosmopolitan solidarity”. However this requires moving away from individualised passivity and realising a society-wide significance of democracy as a whole, as Johnson clarifies.\(^2\) With his account Habermas provides a context of the public sphere as a basis for understanding and studying the spaces that the public occupies at the smaller scale.

French sociologist Henri Lefebvre contributes to this discussion the dynamics of everyday life that characterise the city as an *oeuvre*, a work of art in which all citizens participate.\(^3\) Public space, he explains, must be understood as a platform offering inclusion of all citizens and is thus inherently democratic. Furthermore, Lefebvre sees city space as a coming together of difference: “Publicity demands heterogeneity and the space of the city” which guarantees “encounters with difference”\(^4\) while stressing that social action produces space through the appropriation of space: how space is used and interpreted, and how citizens develop a feel for a place.\(^5\) Besides Habermas and Lefebvre, one of the most influential authors in advocating the importance of public life in the urban arena is Jane Jacobs, as she demonstrates in her groundbreaking work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* of 1961. She argues that public life is a prerequisite for urban qualities as casual encounters provide “a feeling for the public identity of people”.\(^6\) In terms of design, the public square plays a significant role in providing citizens with public life. Its nature is “to intermix persons and diverse activities” as Sennett evaluates,\(^7\) and this again is an integral part of urban qualities of a place. Lefebvre

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1. Habermas (1976, p.16-18)
2. Johnson (2006, p.100, 107)
7. Sennett (1977, p.12)
and Jacobs thus highlight the irrationality and dynamic nature of everyday life processes in the city. Furthermore they address the qualities of urban life that include factors such as diversity and heterogeneity, identity, and democracy as part and parcel of a vibrant public life for which public spaces offer the stage, and in which the people play an active role in making use of the space.

2.1.2. The New Left and the Decline of Public Life

As much as influential sociologists such as Sennett and Lefebvre emphasise the value of public life in cities, they also offer a more pessimistic account of the decline of a public society. This differentiates them from Habermas who believes that the public sphere can experience a revival in the near future. Richard Sennett particularly stresses in his works *The Fall of Public Man* (1977) and *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (1990) the “erosion of a strong public life”\(^8\): “The physical outcome of this destruction…is that cities deteriorate into places where public life is hardly possible anymore”\(^9\), he adds. Sennett, as a writer of the ‘New Left’, explains this by corporate power that has emerged with the rise of capitalism, and a so-called “new capitalist urban culture”\(^10\) as a consequence.

This fits into a wider critique of the modern city with its problems of alienation of public life, individualisation, and an increasing private versus public division.\(^11\) Joel Garreau, author of the book *Edge City: Life on the new frontier*, even observes the end of public space, thus as a historic artefact.\(^12\) The divide between past and present is particularly emphasised by Sennett who stresses the vibrant public life that existed during the ancient regime prior to the French Revolution of 1789. The current condition in a secular society is thus characteristic of modernism, subordinate to the “modern rule of intimacy”.\(^13\) This intimacy can be further explained by Ferdinand Tönnies’ distinction in secularism between Gemeinschaft, which includes close social relationship at the neighbourhood level, and Gesellschaft\(^14\), which can be symbolised by impersonal places such as shopping mall (or other globally replicable ‘non-places’, as Augé terms it, such as the parking lot or the airport). To summarise this present condition, Sennett captures that “our urban problem is how to revive the reality of the outside as a dimension of the human experience”\(^15\), since the “two perverse consequences of the search for refuge in secular society” are “an increase in isolation and in inequality”.\(^16\)

Shannon Zukin observes the emergence of the western capitalist society as she targets increasing corporation, economic liberalisation and privatisation, correlating these to how public life is taken from American city parks. In this process, she argues that “privatisation marks the erosion in terms of two basic principles: public stewardship and open access”\(^17\)

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\(^8\) Sennett (1977, p.xviii)  
\(^9\) Sennett (1977, p.xix)  
\(^10\) Sennett (1977, p.16)  
\(^11\) Mitchell (2003, Chapter 1)  
\(^12\) Mitchell (2003, p.142)  
\(^13\) Sennett (1977, p.126)  
\(^14\) Sennett (1990, p.23-24)  
\(^15\) Sennett (1990, p.xiii)  
\(^16\) Sennett (1990, p.29)  
\(^17\) Zukin (1995, p.139)
This is based on Lefebvre’s argument that “the logic of the market has reduced...urban qualities to exchange and suppressed the city as oeuvre.”\(^{18}\) Jörg Sieverts also observes wider societal developments such as changing habits, increasing individualisation, privatisation and new technologies: “This is also why the social significance of public space as a meeting space for people has declined so much over time”.\(^{19}\) With regards to those trends, public life becomes of heightened importance with increasing privatisation of space.\(^{20}\)

While it must be said that this statement is widely generalised and confined to Western societies, this process has been widely observed throughout critical accounts of modernist planning in the literature, particularly in the New Left. To achieve a revival of the public sphere, Habermas evaluates that the pitfall lies in that the more participants lead to “degeneration in the quality of discourse” but due to democratic system of today, “it is impossible to progress today by going back to an elitist public sphere”.\(^{21}\) Philosopher Immanuel Kant however offers a different view on to the crisis of public life described by the New Left: “In a nutshell, a public sphere adequate to a democratic polity depends upon both quality of discourse and quantity of participation.”\(^{22}\)

2.1.3. The Right to the City

A further dimension and a spatial expression of increasing commercialisation is the fortification of public space aimed at “enhancing the quality of urban life” and improving the attractiveness of space but at the cost of some groups in society.\(^{23}\) Zukin calls this “the aestheticisation of fear”\(^{24}\), addressing the exclusion of marginalised people such as the homeless in urban parks as aesthetic values are favoured to produce a safer environment. The urban landscape thus leads to a passivity of citizens without any possibility for appropriation of space. As Sennett observes, this is part of allowing freedom of movement with ease which is an important part of western civilisation, however “such freedom of movement is only possible by denying other the same right”\(^{25}\), marking the exclusionary nature of so-called public spaces. Lefebvre analyses that difference, such as the perceived anti-social behaviour of homeless people in public spaces, threatens public order. Thus homogenisation is intended by planners to absorb difference and install order.\(^{26}\)

Social exclusion therefore emerges as another characteristic in the loss of public life in the modern city that is increasingly dominated by commercial interests, and obsessed with keeping order in the public realm. Do we experience a decline in public life? As presented by authors of the New Left the trends that occurred during the 20\(^{th}\) century prove to be strong signifiers, however it is also emphasised that citizens need to struggle for public space to achieve a democratisation of public space.\(^{27}\) Lefebvre’s principle of production of space is achieved through a struggle for the right of the city, leaving citizens as the main actors in producing public life. The conceptions of what is public are constantly redefined in a struggle.

\(^{18}\) Lefebvre (1996, p.19)  
\(^{19}\) Sieverts (2003, p.22)  
\(^{20}\) Mitchell (2003, p.34)  
\(^{21}\) Calhoun (1996, p.3)  
\(^{22}\) Calhoun (1996, p.2)  
\(^{23}\) Mitchell (2003, p.4)  
\(^{24}\) Mitchell (2003, p.191)  
\(^{25}\) Mitchell (2003, p.189)  
\(^{26}\) Mitchell (2003, p.140)  
\(^{27}\) Mitchell (2003, p.4-5)
in which public space must be understood as the “collective right to the city”. However, this active empowerment of people does not mean that the focus should be drawn away from planners, as Mitchell points out: “public space requires visibility, and public visibility requires material public spaces”. Sieverts captures the debate, putting forward the challenge of contemporary urban spaces: “how can cities pass the test between achieving competitiveness on international level and retaining social and cultural individuality on local and regional level?” Clearly, planning and designing for public space plays an important part in solving this conflict and can help to define democracy and a public sphere in the city.

2.1.4. The Postmodern Critique

More recently, writers of the postmodern critique have also addressed public life in the city. As a response to the modernist paradigm regarding “the damage it has done to the environment, to community, to cultural diversity, and to the human spirit”, Sandercock looks upon the globalised city of pluralities with multicultural characters as an opportunity for living together in urban spaces. For public life this means that a “rise of organised civil society” can bring shared spaces back to people in a democratic process, thus providing a more positive outlook on democratic spaces than observed by the New Left. This relates back to Habermas who also believes that a new public sphere is emerging. Furthermore, the postmodernists emphasise that multiple publics exist, differing from the New Left discussions on a single public sphere. Sandercock thus criticises Sennett’s failure to account for diversity and difference, saying that “a multicultural city cannot have a common civic culture”. Sandercock's central question in her work *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21st Century* thus revolves around segregation: “how can we manage our co-existence in the shared spaces of the multicultural cities of the 21st century”? Her discursive response is a paradigm shift from “metropolis to cosmopolis”.

Urban planner Nan Ellin agrees in blaming modernist architecture for the lack of “quality public spaces, local character, multifunctional places…and integration of the built and natural landscapes”. Public spaces more particularly can serve as an element that binds together and thus must be integrated in the overall urban landscape. Another distinct postmodern discourse Ellin applies is the synergy of city and culture through an understanding of time and space contexts, promoting a multidisciplinary approach to understand the dynamics of urban life. As an alternative to these functionalist outcomes that are manifested in urban sprawl, Ellin presents the Integral Urbanism paradigm that encompasses hybrid models between ecology and new Information Technologies (IT) and emphasises sense of place and uniqueness. However developing on her 1999 work *Postmodern Urbanism* she later in her book *Integral Urbanism* of 2006 not only criticises modernism for “the machine as model”...
concept but also postmodernism for “cities of the past as model”, referring to the neotraditionalist elements of the historic European town that are often sought to replicate by postmodernist planners and architects. She thus distances herself from being a writer of the postmodern critique by driving ahead the discussion by focusing on contemporary urban issues. Both authors however agree that the vibrant and inclusive city that focuses on socio-cultural rather than economic relations is a useful paradigm in challenging modernist notions of order, rationality and uniformity.

2.1.5. Social Inequality and Segregation in the City

The importance of social inclusion in the context of public life in the city has already been touched upon. I will now summarise the literature on the issue of segregation that is of great concern in what can be called the contemporary postmodern city. Mitchell states the problem: “Imposing limits and controls on spatial interaction has been one of the principle aims of urban corporate planners during this century. The territorial segregation created through the expression of social difference has increasingly been replaced by a celebration of constrained diversity.” With constrained diversity the author refers to the emergence of a shopping culture based on product choice. To modify segregated urban enclaves that characterise the many contemporary urban landscapes of segregated urban enclaves, Moussawi believes that planners need new ways of thinking revolving around “multifunctionality, hubs, interactions, hybrids, ambivalence, schizophrenia, and energy flows” in the city as a whole. The bigger picture of the urban system should involve an understanding of everyday life, including factors such as work, leisure, trade and housing, as a prerequisite to build integrated urban environments, Cars suggests. This is mainly based on Lefebvre’s theory on everyday life and social dynamics in the city. As part of today’s planning aim to “decrease social and spatial distances”, public spaces should be seen as a potential to work against segregation, Lilja points out. Contrary to highlighting the negative connotations of public space revolving around difference, fear and lack of perceived safety, public space should thus encompass a positive approach that not only triggers a democratisation of urban space but also fosters social integration.

2.1.6. Segregation in Stockholm

In the Swedish context, segregation is also a highly contested topic. The increasing urbanisation of Stockholm and the increasing segregation of the urban landscape make Stockholm one of the most segregated cities in the world, as Moussawi expresses. A published document on housing segregation by the City of Stockholm addresses these issues, stating that social integration is strongly related to spatial segregation, whereas in Sweden mostly class and ethnic segregation can be accounted for. The neighbourhood effects of suburbs with high immigrant population can potentially have the effect of impoverishment

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40 Ellin (2006, p.1)
41 Mitchell (2003, p.140)
42 Åman et al (2004, p.43)
43 Åman et al (2004, p.50)
44 Lilja (2010, p.100)
45 Åman et al (2004, p.121)
46 Lilja (2010, p.93)
47 Åman et al (2004, p.43)
48 Regionplane-och trafikkontoret (2007a, p.5-7a)
and higher unemployment. Andersson considers improving public space as a prerequisite in breaking segregation. Lilja elaborates on the important role of public space in creating meeting places that heightens the relation between people and physical surroundings. The emergence of modernist suburban islands during the post-War period in the Swedish capital not only produced geographic and social barriers between both the inner and outer city as well as between different suburbs, it also increased the mental or perceived distance between inhabitants. Lilja summarises this great paradox of the modernist planning discourse in which the goal to have “physical requirements for integration and community” resulted in the opposite outcome, namely social segregation.

This discussion points to a strong correlation between the way the physical environment is planned, and how social and cultural divisions relate to segregation. The urban landscape of Stockholm which is characterised by green wedges, cutting through the built-up areas thus is widely believed to serve as a barrier to integration and can thus heighten the effect of social segregation. These so called green barriers will be looked at in more detail in the second part of the literature review.

2.1.7. Planning for Public Life

After reviewing theories on how public life is discussed in the context of modern and contemporary urban space I will now present how ideas of urban design can bring solutions to fostering a public life in the city as discussed in the literature. Gehl and Gemzøe name three functions of the city that relating to their historical roles which are the city as a meeting place, a marketplace and traffic space. However a conflict of those uses emerged in post-war planning so that “uses that had been in balance for centuries were now in open conflict”, as Gehl and Gemzøe criticise. They consequently argue for the reconquering of city centres in particular that have been negatively affected by the rise of private modes of transport.

One significant contribution over the last few decades in relation to design has come from the New Urbanism movement. Architects and urban designers such as Calthorpe and Plater-Zyberk have developed ideas on how make a break from modernist planning, and stress the importance of neo-traditional design elements, emphasis on public transport, and of community and public spaces. Calthorpe and Fulton identify four elements: civic places, commercial uses, housing opportunities, and natural systems. The proximity of those elements, they argue, result in diversity which serve as a prerequisite for community life.

Although a distinction between theories on community and on public life must be drawn, there are some overlaps that are particularly emphasised in the New Urbanist paradigm, such as diversity. The idea is therefore that designing public spaces can be a way to bring a diverse population together which can then foster a sense of community and revive a democratic space. Calthorpe’s work on The Regional City further emphasises that the city should be seen as a more complex geographical area of integrated and interconnected nodes. This is

49 Regionplane-och trafikkontoret (2007a, p.5-7b)  
50 Åman et al (2004, p.29)  
51 Lilja (2005, p.134)  
52 Lilja (2005, p.134)  
53 Lilja (2009, p.92)  
54 Gehl & Gemzøe (2006, p.10)  
55 Gehl & Gemzøe (2006, p.13)  
56 Calthorpe & Fulton in LeGates & Stout (2003, p.334)
particularly important when discussing segregation. Contemporary planning thus increasingly needs to have “the focus...on the city as a whole and upon public spaces as means to create social life”\textsuperscript{57}.

The critical question that is raised in the literature however is whether New Urbanism can really change public life through design. Sharo believes that the equation of density resulting in an increased feeling community is too simplified\textsuperscript{58} as there are a wide range of social, cultural and economic issues that play a role in the creation of a public life in the urban space. Sennett criticises the obsession on planning for public life from another point of view. He suggests that too much planned intimacy by planners, by designing dense neighbourhoods, can lead to sterility in public life that was unintended in the first place.\textsuperscript{59} He believes that there is a paradox as “urban planners have yet to learn...that people can be sociable only when they have some protection from each other”.\textsuperscript{60} Furthermore, he states that “people are more sociable, the more they have some tangible barriers between them, just as they need specific places in public whose sole purpose is to bring them together.”\textsuperscript{61} This suggests that solutions for planning for public life can often be too simplified, ignoring the complex patterns of social behaviour of different groups of people, or what Lefebvre would call the dynamics of everyday life. The planning ideals that are put forward are thus challenged, and to be evaluated whether the design theories related to New Urbanism can be successfully implemented in the urban space in fostering public life and diverse communities.

In concluding the literature on public life and designing public space, it can be said the consensus is based on a critique of post-war modernist planning that concentrated on a functional approach, traffic separation, and a general favour of private modes of transport over a pedestrian city life. The latter however is argued to be an important factor of public life, as Jacobs in particular believes, while New Urbanists add that sustainable transport modes such as public transit, walking and cycling are not only environmentally friendly but also foster public life and thus have significant social values. The public square, as investigated by Zukin, Jacobs and others, has the primary function of bringing citizens together in the urban arena. My paper will concentrate on the particular role and function of green spaces as public spaces as a means to integrate neighbourhoods and to provide a space in which all citizens can come together. Thus the next part of the literature review will focus on definitions and theories of green spaces in an urban and suburban context.

\textsuperscript{57} Lilja (2010, p.100)
\textsuperscript{58} Sharo (2008, p.68)
\textsuperscript{59} Sennett (1990, Chapter 2)
\textsuperscript{60} Sennett (1990, p.311)
\textsuperscript{61} Sennett (1990, p.15)
2.2. Green Spaces and Urban Form

2.2.1. Dominant Planning Discourses

Several planning theories have been developed in the 20th century that discussed how living conditions could be improved in the modern city. The most prominent models that were developed include Le Corbusier's Radiant City, Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City, Lewis Mumford's Grid City and Ebenezer Howard's Garden City. These prominent concepts in the history of planning and urban studies are often connected to the era of Modernism that was popular prior to and especially after World War II in both North America and Europe, and revolved around functional design and city planning for automobile traffic. The most relevant theory with regards to green spaces is developed in Howard's *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (1902). The author looks at London's fast urbanisation process and regards this as a problem, claiming that people will need more space outside the city to pursue higher quality of life. He argues for the colonisation of rural land to escape the polluted and crowded industrial city. This suburbanisation accompanied with predicted population growth would also be economically more profitable. In terms of urban form, Howard believed that a green belt around the metropolitan area would contain sprawl.\(^62\) These ideas were put into practice at the start of the 20th century in the Garden City of Welwyn near London, while other cities worldwide have followed the Garden City principles, such as the inner city of Adelaide.\(^63\) In Stockholm, the legacy of Howard can be seen in suburbs such as Bromma and Enskede that were developed at the start of the 20th century. Despite critical views, including concerns about transportation, Howard's legacy is still of great significance when discussing greenery and urban form.

More recent theorists have developed more relevant concepts related to the contemporary context, such as the Compact City, sustainable urban form, Garreau's Edge City, or Sieverts' Zwischenstadt. Kevin Lynch (1961), an important American urban planner, conceptualises urban form, distinguishing five metropolitan patterns: sprawl, galaxy, compact, star, and ring form.\(^64\) While in today's planning categorical concepts of such kind are generally disfavoured, these five terms are important when thinking about urban development and green spaces. Sprawl in particular is a concept that stands in the limelight in contemporary discussions, especially with regards to social and environmental sustainability of cities, including segregation and transport. Lynch also defined a more general idea of what he called Good City Form which, he states, should be “a fine mosaic of public and private places.”\(^65\) More particularly, urban areas should be socially homogeneous at the neighbourhood level to improve social cohesion, through a mix of people in close proximity to each other “within a matrix of democratic, public space.”\(^66\) Lynch's definition of the Good City is a good starting point when discussing urban form, and the role of green spaces within the city.

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\(^{62}\) Hall & Ward (1998, p.12)  
\(^{63}\) Hall & Ward (1998, Chapter 3)  
\(^{64}\) Kühn (2003, p.19)  
\(^{65}\) Luymes (1997, p.201a)  
\(^{66}\) Luymes (1997, p.201b)
2.2.2. Use Values of Green Spaces

Green spaces in Sweden and other Nordic countries play a significant role in the planning process, more so than in continental Europe where cities and regions are generally more densely developed. The strong identification with nature is manifested in the Swedish Right to Public Access (Allemansrätten) which is a law that entitles anyone the right to access public land, meaning that land can be owned but is not private. Consequently, there is a vast literature in Swedish that has discussed the use values of green areas, first and foremost by Ulla Berglund and Patrik Grahn. As Grahn points out, people have a physical and psychological need for green space, allowing not only for outdoor activities but also for spontaneous public contact\footnote{Grahn (1986, p.29)} while Berglund and Jergeby assess that in Sweden green spaces are generally the most popular places of social contact, casual encounters, and meetings\footnote{Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.27)}. Furthermore, findings from their research conclude that people define the city or the town not only as the built-up area but also include everyday spaces such as forests, the outdoors, and green spaces\footnote{Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.8)}.

Parks and green areas have a wide range of both social and environmental functions and thus form an integral part of the urban landscape. The ecological value of linking local green infrastructure such as parks, squares, and trees with the regional green structure, in addition to the absorption of CO2 by trees and plants, interacts with social qualities since green spaces merges the ecology with the social sphere.\footnote{Borgström (2009, p.44-55a)} With regards to social factors, everyday life is reflected in leisure time, recreation, as well as the aesthetical values\footnote{Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.13)} of the nature experience that can produce positive psychological side-effects to people such as stress relieve.\footnote{Borgström (2009, p.44-55b)} The quality of life in cities and towns can thus be strongly correlated to the availability and experience of greenery. Andersson names five functions of parks: contact with nature, possibility for physical recreation, educational and cultural functions, possibility for personal contacts, and establishing meaningfulness to greenery through a 'mental map'. Integrating these functions in one space makes for a well-used park, Andersson argues.\footnote{Andersson (1991)}

Due to these social and ecological values, Grahn and Sorte (1985) put forward the argument that a fair assessment and evaluation of how green spaces are used before designing parks and exploiting the landscape are necessary. One important aspect to consider is how different groups take advantage of open green spaces as certain age groups use parks in different ways at different times.\footnote{Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.58)} In Grahn and Sorte’s study on how different groups use greenery the authors find that nature-style parks are generally the most popular amongst all groups, while more generally a higher need for a dense network city parks in bigger towns is necessary to avoid long distances and healthier lifestyles. This would be beneficial especially to physically disadvantaged groups such as the elderly or the disabled.\footnote{Grahn & Sorte (1985, p.84)}

As poor planning in the past has lead to segregated areas such as suburban enclaves in Stockholm, Berglund and Jergeby highlight the outdoors as an important arena for social contact. Building for diversity to attract diverse groups of people requires a good mix and a
variation at different scales of green open spaces and the built environment.\textsuperscript{76} This could be achieved by including people’s experiences, values, feelings and knowledges “for more democratic planning of our cities”.\textsuperscript{77} Again, the authors emphasise the social significance of public green spaces that not only provide a wide array of qualities not only for individuals and groups, but can also help to produce an integrated urban landscape.

2.2.3. Parks

One feature that is part and parcel of the urban landscape is parks. While these functions generally overlap with the already mentioned qualities in the previous part, the city park is particularly valuable as it often stands in direct contrast with the dense and busy inner city. Jacobs’ chapter on city parks criticises modernist planners that considered parks as a “self-evident virtue” in their function of providing a green area in the crowded inner-city.\textsuperscript{78} But these spaces are often home to the marginalised, and having more open space creates environments more prone to crimes and exists as a “bad vacuum”.\textsuperscript{79} This questions what the perception and image of green spaces is, as Berglund suggests that parks could be both spaces for recreation but also spaces of fear.\textsuperscript{80} Moreover, Jacobs states that “far from automatically uplifting their neighbourhoods, neighbourhood parks themselves are directly and drastically affected by the way the neighbourhood acts upon them”.\textsuperscript{81} Thus she considers park perimeters as important spaces that “should be calculated, not as rims shutting off a park but as spots of intense and magnetic border activity”.\textsuperscript{82} In addition to increasing the attractiveness of bordering areas, green spaces should be well-connected to each other. This would form a better interaction between the built environment and the park, Jacobs stresses.

The importance of integration of parks is further highlighted by Pincetl and Gearin: “The difficulties regarding a paradigm shift from thinking of a park as a place for urban recreation to the notion of parks and open spaces as part and parcel of the urban fabric, are multiple. They involve moving beyond parks as the designated zone for nature and recreation in the city, overcoming the emphasis on auto mobility so as to transform alleyways, streets, and sidewalks into multiple-function zones”.\textsuperscript{83} This entails a break from the modernist planning ethos of functional divisions in the landscape.

However Kühn believes that this trend has changed: “The duality of city and landscape is such a powerful notion that it shapes the cultural images of many present urban and landscape

\textsuperscript{76} Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.69)
\textsuperscript{77} Berglund & Jergeby (1998, p.77)
\textsuperscript{78} Jacobs (1961, p.99)
\textsuperscript{79} Jacobs (1961, p.279)
\textsuperscript{80} Berglund (2010, p.277)
\textsuperscript{81} Jacobs (1961, p.111)
\textsuperscript{82} Jacobs (1961, p.280)
\textsuperscript{83} Pincetl & Gearin (2005, p.380)
\textsuperscript{84} Berglund (2010, p.277)
planners in Europe”, while “the grade between city and countryside is gradually levelling off by an increasing mobility within the metropolitan region”. Similar to Sieverts, who speaks of an urban-rural continuum rather than a strict separation between what is city and what is countryside, a more dynamic landscape is described that merges urban and rural attributes. Again, the increasing demand of land in metropolitan areas due to processes of urbanisation and the connected pressure on natural areas should be regarded as an opportunity rather than a problem in future planning and urban development. Instead of strictly talking of problems or qualities confined to the inner-city, “we must seek new forms and spaces for urban-ness”, as Sieverts concludes. The main issue according to Grahn is whether it benefits the people: “What is the ideal park? An ideal park is a park which means something to you.” Addressing the needs and requirements of residents is thus paramount when designing green spaces.

2.2.4. Green Corridors and Green Wedges

Green corridors and green wedges are usually two terms describing the same phenomenon: “linear routeways (that) comprise environmental open space in which people can be free to move without aggravation from noise, pollution, danger or other harmful side-effects”. Since green corridors characterise Stockholm’s urban landscape, I will pay particular attention to this form of open space. It should be noted that in the following part and in relation to the Stockholm example I will use these two terms interchangeably. While the Swedish literature generally refers to Stockholm’s ‘gröna kilar’ (green wedges), the international literature more frequently uses the term green corridors. One slight distinction could be a wedge refers predominantly to the width, while the term corridor highlights the connectedness and uninterrupted form.

Groome identifies five roles of green corridors: escaping from urban environment by providing environmental functions (such as reducing air pollution); offering recreational facilities; building a framework for industrial and environmental improvement; providing a perimeter or edge function as a border space; providing links between town and countryside to “offer a close relationship between built-up areas and open spaces”. While the perimeter function mostly relates to the maintenance of urban ecology and biodiversity, possibly the most important function in a social context is for the green system to link the city and the surrounding countryside, Gaddoni stresses. Berglund agrees that urban landscapes should be considered that exist at the intersection of human activity and the natural environment. This is necessary to avoid the homogenisation of landscapes that can threaten social diversity. As such, open spaces can not only connect city and landscape, but also take the role as connectors between different neighbourhoods. In fulfilling this role, Stähle and Caballero point out that by connecting green wedges to the built-up area the “determining

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85 Kühn (2003, p.20)
86 Kühn (2003, p.21)
87 Sieverts (2003, Foreword)
88 Sieverts (2003, p.23)
89 Grahn (1991, p.40)
90 Groome (1990, p.383)
91 Sörenson (2009, p.6)
92 Groome (1990, p.384)
93 Gaddoni (2010, p.14)
94 Berglund (2010, p.274)
factor...becomes the width of the wedges when the city grows”.95 Nordic cities such as Copenhagen, Helsinki, and of course Stockholm are planned according to this urban form. The result is what Newton calls a corridor city96 with urban growth along corridors with a high dependence on public transport.

2.2.5. Stockholm’s Green Wedges

Tracing back the modern history of Stockholm’s urban form, the city’s satellite suburbs emerged along the new underground lines in the 1950s, according to the Markelius Plan of 1952.97 The term ‘green wedge’ was first used in Stockholm planning documents in the 1970s and carried positive characteristics of good access to nature for a majority of the population.98 However, Grahn and Sorte assess that despite generous green space dedicated in functionalist planning, isolated suburban islands emerged. Interestingly, Andersson argues that the intention of the urban structure was to create separate urban enclaves so that the proximity of open green spaces in the suburbs became only a side effect.99 During the 1980s a star-shaped form of the metropolitan area emerged along transport corridors, “separated by belts of open land containing the major national highways”.100 The green structure today exists in four different scales “where ten green wedges constitute the basic morphological characteristic of the capital”101, one of them being my field of study, Järvakilen. The Regional Planning and Traffic Authority describe each wedge as part of a functioning wider network of big, connected green spaces. Of particular importance are the green wedges narrower than 500 metres and this connection needs to be maintained in terms of access to the built-up area that is growing and becoming denser.102 The green connection therefore must be maintained for ecological values, while the linking of built-up and green space needs to be strengthened. Berg points to the strategic value of the boundary zone between the green and the built-up area103, since accessibility is important for a synergy of city and nature.

Recently however the existing green structure has produced a lot of criticism in the literature. Hall and Ward assess that physical segregation was fostered by local green belts, and this structure would not only help to give each suburb a definite identity but would also separate them from each other.104 Berglund also questions the problem of social segregation that is produced by the green wedges acting as barriers.105 Söderlind is critical towards this star-shaped city form with green corridors, as he believes this has low land-use efficiency.106 Due to the centralisation of economic activities in the city-centre, which is apparent in Stockholm, the existence of large green spaces as corridors are not necessarily sustainable, he continues. This is because green wedges lead to what he calls “development islands” that are

95 Ståhle & Caballero (2008, p.193)
96 Newton (2000, p.46-53)
97 Hall & Ward (1998, p.95a)
98 Andersson (2009, p.174)
99 Andersson (2009, p.166)
100 Hall & Ward (1998, p.95b)
101 Berg (2010, p.194)
102 Regionplane- och trafikkontoret (2007b, Foreword)
103 Berg (2010, p.197)
104 Hall & Ward (1998, p.93)
105 Berglund (2010, p.280)
106 Söderlind (1998, p.111)
disconnected from each other by spatial form, and that is similar to Mumford’s concept of
neighbourhood planning.\textsuperscript{107}

With focus on Stockholm, Söderlind alternatively offers that instead of “green wedges”,
“green islands” and a new urban structure with “city links”,\textsuperscript{108} with city parks instead of open
fields, could be more sustainable for the metropolitan area as a whole in terms of breaking
segregation, decentralising economic activities and potentially reducing travel distances.\textsuperscript{109} Berglund also suggests that compacting suburbs and plans for man-made parks could work
against segregation effects and help connecting the urban landscape of Stockholm.\textsuperscript{110} Furthermore, it becomes clear again that the relationship between open space and the built-up
area is at the centre of the discussion in the literature.

\subsection*{2.2.6. Green Spaces as Public Spaces}

Another aspect is the relation between the private and public sphere and the border areas
between them. Similar to Jacobs, Grahn suggests that green spaces should be well-defined
public spaces. He claims that “one of the most common mistakes of planning the outside
space is that the borders between private and public open spaces are not accentuated”.\textsuperscript{111} With
this he means that more designated public space in greenery would lead to more social contact
and public life. Combining the virtues of a well-used park or green wedge such as its
recreational values with the benefits of a vibrant public space can thus add to a high quality
neighbourhood. Ellin points to these border areas as critical spaces in the city: “It is along
these borders and edges that our great dilemmas reside as well as our greatest opportunities
for resolving them”.\textsuperscript{112} These border areas can include both the spaces between public and
private land as well as between the built-up and the natural environments.

In the words of Danish architect Jan Gehl, the focus should thus be on the social qualities of
places, the use of open spaces, and the urban experience instead of seeing greenery as
separation that carries a lack of social life.\textsuperscript{113} More concretely, Ellin presents that boundaries
can be undone by designing new networks with ‘attractors’ such as hubs, nodes and
connectors for quality public spaces.\textsuperscript{114} These could be in the form of landmarks or social
activities. While the functionalist expansion of the post-War era “forgot people’s needs for
natural meeting places”\textsuperscript{115} as green spaces served as barriers, more attention must be given to
the role of green spaces to accommodate the public sphere.

As Berglund points out, “greenways, parks and preserved nature are as important as streets for
a liveable and attractive city”.\textsuperscript{116} Furthermore, the city should be a compromise between
different interests\textsuperscript{117} including environmental and social sustainability. In addition, Pincetl
and Gearin conclude that “much attention has been paid to preserving land at the urban fringe,

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{107}{Söderlind (1998, p.48)}
\footnotetext{108}{Söderlind (1998, p.206)}
\footnotetext{109}{Söderlind (1998, p.209)}
\footnotetext{110}{Berglund (2010, p.280)}
\footnotetext{111}{Grahn (1986, p.56)}
\footnotetext{112}{Ellin (1999, p.4)}
\footnotetext{113}{Berglund (2010, p.279)}
\footnotetext{114}{Ellin (2006, p.50)}
\footnotetext{115}{Kallstenius & Pemer (2005, p.16)}
\footnotetext{116}{Berglund (2010, p.285a)}
\footnotetext{117}{Berglund (2010, p.285b)}
\end{footnotes}
and to the negative effects of sprawl and its costs. There is increasing recognition that enhancing green, public open spaces in cities provides a strategy to make those cities more sustainable, more liveable, and more equitable.118

2.3. Planning the Sustainable City

2.3.1. The Sustainable City Concept in Planning

I will commence this part by briefly summarising the discussion in the literature on the sustainable city concept in planning theory. The importance of sustainability in the urban context is stressed by Radovic who considers cities “as reflections of social relations” hence a sustainable way of life can be exemplified in the urban space.119 The concept of sustainability can be considered both with regards to the environment as well as the social sphere, however both should be integrated in the same planning goals. The WWF definition of 2008 captures this, stating that cultural (social) sustainability should aim at “improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting eco-systems”.120 Moreover, Grant finds that “history reveals that the key factor in the decline of many cities is ecological unsustainability”,121 again highlighting the integrated nature of the social and the environmental spheres. Sustainability factors as listed by Grant include the maintenance or improvements of existing infrastructure, environmental impact assessment on the landscape, as well as quality of life for residents.122 Finally, Adams assesses that factors such as density, mixed use, connectivity, adaptability, local character and a high quality of public realm, which are recognised as driving urban liveability, are identical to those that are responsible for environmental sustainability”.123 While the literature thus generally agrees on the concept of the sustainable city, Sidh reminds us that “the specificities of each city have to be integral to the trajectory of the city’s sustainable future development”.124 Overarching concepts, theories and discourses must thus be carefully applied to the social dynamics and environmental conditions of each locale.

Williams et al point out that there is no one single urban form to achieve this purpose, instead they present some sustainable urban development characteristics: user friendliness, energy efficiency, and a place for quality living.125 Jill Grant considers several sustainability factors such as maintenance and improvements of existing infrastructure, environmental impact assessment on landscape, and quality of life for residents.126 She further highlights the environmental aspect, as “history reveals that the key factor in the decline of many cities is ecological unsustainability.”127 Newman and Kenworthy name four ways to achieve the sustainable city: revitalising the inner city, development along the existing rail system,
discouraging further urban sprawl, extending the public transport system, and building new urban villages in suburbs.\textsuperscript{128} These characteristics highlight the importance given to transport in the discussion on sustainability. Others such as Guy and Marvin argue that sustainability can only be reached beyond thinking about urban form, as other factors such as energy consumption and sustainable lifestyles are important\textsuperscript{129} that require a change in the people’s attitudes. They summarise that we need to work with the existing structure, stating that “we need to develop an enlarged conception of the styles of sustainable urban management that can shape resource flows along existing infrastructure networks without solely relying on the re-ordering of the physical fabric of the city”.\textsuperscript{130} This argument is once again discrediting sprawl as a major threat to unsustainable cities, while urban intensification is considered as a solution to this problem. Williams adds that efficient land use does not automatically mean sustainability as we need place-specific strategies that include the local context.\textsuperscript{131}

2.3.2. Relationships between City and Countryside

Accelerating urbanisation and population growth in cities around the world are putting increasing pressure on the land and nature. The key question in this process, as defined by Alberti, is how to manage urban growth without impacting on ecosystems\textsuperscript{132}. Existing green spaces play a crucial role in this trend, as they provide cities and citizens with the much needed relief of dense and sometimes overcrowded neighbourhoods. This part of the literature will therefore deal with the important relationship between human impact and the natural environment. This conflict has frequently been termed as a binary relationship between culture and nature. However Ellin has observed a the trend towards a more integrated postmodern understanding: “ecology has become a model for understanding culture, as anthropologists and cultural theorists are increasingly regarding culture as a part of nature rather than in opposition to it”.\textsuperscript{133}

In traditional geography, such as in the colonial discourse, a strict division was made between what is civilised and what is not, or belongs to culture and what belongs to nature.\textsuperscript{134} In modern city development thus, Hubbard observes a division: “nature is thus held up to be the antipode of civility and culture”.\textsuperscript{135} This binary, he continues, is strongly bound up in notions of modernisation, order, and progress.\textsuperscript{136} The modernisation discourse that was dominant throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} century has left a powerful legacy in today's cityscapes. We can often observe this in the strict division between functions, such as areas designated to housing, others to traffic, and others to recreation and green spaces. This is a particular characteristic of Stockholm with its suburbs structured along corridors. However, Watts stresses that there are many alternative views on the relationship between nature and culture. He states that there is 'traffic' between the two, while there are other conceptualisations such as environmental determinism (nature impacting on people's behaviour), or Actor Network Theory (ANT)\textsuperscript{137}.

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\textsuperscript{128} Williams et al (2000, p.115)  
\textsuperscript{129} Williams et al (2000, p.11a)  
\textsuperscript{130} Williams et al (2000, p.11b)  
\textsuperscript{131} Sorensen et al (2004)  
\textsuperscript{132} Alberti (2000, p.84-96)  
\textsuperscript{133} Ellin (1999, p.3)  
\textsuperscript{134} Watts (2005, p.150)  
\textsuperscript{135} Hubbard (2006, p.151)  
\textsuperscript{136} Hubbard (2006, p.152)  
\textsuperscript{137} Watts (2005, p.167a)
We should thus, he continues, consider more pluralistic views, such as the multiple meanings of natures and cultures, and think of networks and hybrids instead of binary oppositions.\textsuperscript{138} 

Furthermore, each phenomenon is time and space contingent. This argument is popular with postmodernist theories, and also has an impact on planning. Swyngedouw regards “cities as networks of interwoven processes that are simultaneously human, natural, material, cultural, mechanical and organic”.\textsuperscript{139} Alternatively, an integrated vision can consider a “metropolis built in the nature” with green space surrounded by the city instead of vice versa, as Angelidakis puts forward.\textsuperscript{140} 

Parallel to the changing perceptions of the nature-culture relationship, a new wave of urban ecology has emerged that puts urban biodiversity at the forefront of what Hubbard calls the ‘hybrid’ city.\textsuperscript{141} While in Sweden a strong identification with nature and high degrees of preservation have always been strong, there is a growing international literature on environmental sustainability and its significance to cities. Ståhle stresses the need to see “open spaces as a part of the cityscape”,\textsuperscript{142} while LeGates and Stout highlight the infusion of nature and urbanity in the urban environment.\textsuperscript{143} The ecological identity of the city, in which green spaces can take the function of commons of the region as Calthorpe and Fulton consider,\textsuperscript{144} is an important discourse in New Urbanism planning. New Urbanists Duany and Plater-Zyberk point out that “the corridor is at once the connector and the separator of neighbourhoods and districts”,\textsuperscript{145} while green space also needs to be regarded as an urban element, “defined by its adjacent districts and neighbourhoods” and providing entry to them.\textsuperscript{146} Furthermore, Duany and Plater-Zyberk emphasise that corridors need to be of civic nature and “can integrate natural environments and man-made communities into a sustainable whole”.\textsuperscript{147} 

This highlights the complex relationship between built-up area and nature in the city. Jacobs was the first to criticise modernist planners for producing “massive single uses in cities” that “form borders, and borders in cities usually make destructive neighbourhoods”.\textsuperscript{148} With the challenges of urbanisation we are facing today, we need to understand the complex interrelationships and interdependencies between urban and rural areas, and between the natural environment and people living in cities, and consider an integrated whole in order to achieve more liveable urban areas. 

2.3.3. Urban Sprawl 

The contemporary city and urban form are widely discussed in the literature. The relationships between urban sprawl, open space, urbanity and density are considered in this context, as these form key variables that define the metropolitan landscape. Sprawl is often 

\textsuperscript{138} Watts (2005, p.167b) 
\textsuperscript{139} Hubbard (2006, p.154) 
\textsuperscript{140} Åman et al (2004, p.34) 
\textsuperscript{141} Hubbard (2006, p.155-160) 
\textsuperscript{142} Ståhle (2008b, p.113) 
\textsuperscript{143} LeGates & Stout (2003, p.164) 
\textsuperscript{144} LeGates & Stout (2003, p.336) 
\textsuperscript{145} LeGates & Stout (2003, p.211a) 
\textsuperscript{146} LeGates & Stout (2003, p.211b) 
\textsuperscript{147} LeGates & Stout (2003, p.211c) 
\textsuperscript{148} Jacobs (1961, p.271)
dismissively talked of by social scientists for its land-consuming development that cause a wide range of both social and environmental costs, as Bengtson and Youn point out. Social costs include “higher costs for provision of public infrastructure, more vehicle miles travelled, less cost-efficient transit, and a variety of negative quality of life impacts”. Environmental costs can include habitat loss for endangered species, removal of agricultural land, and sustainability in general.149

In urban planning, sprawl and the formation of what Garreau calls ‘Edge Cities’ are thus widely considered to be harmful in many ways, and alternative ways of expansion of the metropolitan area are considered, such as more dense and compact forms. But there are also other approaches to the notion of sprawl, such as Jörg Sieverts who claims that “instead of talking dismissively about urban sprawl, we could recognise that there is a fine-grained interpenetration of open space and built form and see the open space as the building element, with its new creative potential”.151 Sieverts puts forward this argument in his alternative development plan called the Zwischenstadt, which uses the spaces in between the large conurbations to create a more polycentric model. This leads to blurring boundaries of what is urban and what is rural landscape. Sharo also states that we need a more positive conception of landscape, especially with regards to sprawl: “it has become difficult to appreciate suburbs for what they provide: comfort, room and open space”.152 These examples show that it would be too simplified to dismiss the emergence of sprawling cities and suburban developments as these areas also feature many attributes that are of value both socially and environmentally, such as proximity to nature. However more importantly, these alternative conceptions highlight the need for a more complex and specific understanding of what urban form is needed instead of arguing for an overarching and universally applicable model for sustainable urban development.

In order to develop the idea that we need to see “open spaces as a part of the cityscape”, Ståhle looks in detail at how these spaces are perceived and used. His study results from research on urban sprawl in Stockholm include that perceived open space is greater in the inner-city, while the size of the green space is not the single explanation of attraction.154 In terms of accessibility, Ståhle identifies four major factors that affect green spaces: surface area, use values, orientation, and range.155 He stresses that high access is important in using those areas, which supports Jacobs’ finding that park perimeters are important in integrating built-up areas and open spaces. In order to combine the interests of urbanists that favour density and environmentalists that protect green spaces, Ståhle states that we need better “land use efficiency and green space distribution equity”.156 Ståhle summarises that “in the end, much can be gained if the common opinion of open space and ‘green’ changes from a static to a dynamic urban entity”.157

149 Bengston & Youn (2006, p.5a)
150 Bengston & Youn (2006, p.5b)
151 Sieverts (2003, p.49)
152 Clements et al (2008, p.76)
153 Ståhle (2008b, p.113)
154 Ståhle (2008c, p.157)
155 Ståhle (2008c, p.164)
156 Ståhle (2008c, p.167)
157 Ståhle (2008c, p.167)
2.3.4. Urbanity

Urbanity, urbanness, or citiness are part of the popular terminology that can be found when talking about new planning discourses. Radovic’s concept of the urban responds to people’s needs, is culturally sensitive and dynamic in its definition. Ellin also places the people at the focus that are connected to the city through culture, defining urbanity as “that aspect of a place which illustrates its identity, memory, conflicts and changes while expressing and nurturing its inhabitants’ lifestyles and aspirations”. We must be careful however whether this discourse can produce more liveable cities, and whether urban qualities that for example are implemented in suburbs can solve problems such as segregation.

Coming back to the Swedish capital that is often criticised for having “too little city and too much suburbs”, the traditional European city is becoming increasingly the ideal with its density, variety, and quality public and green spaces, such as described in the Stockholm Regional Development Plan (RUFS). More concretely, this can be done by focusing on peripheral and border areas to provide more connected urbanity and highlight the values of green public space by increasing accessibility. The concept of connectivity as described by Adams “improves land values, reduces vehicle emissions, encourages walking, improves natural surveillance and provides greater choice of movement” thus emphasising urban qualities. Söderlind supports the idea of bringing urbanity to the suburbs by focusing on local thoroughfare roads to revive public life that reminds of Jacobs’ ideas. However, he considers two obstacles to Stockholm’s development: the prioritising of greenery over ‘urbane’ in local planning policy to maintain the green wedge structure, and the consideration of streets primarily as transport links instead of public space function. While the urbanity discussion is widely popular in contemporary planning literature, it is especially relevant to the case study of this paper.

2.3.5. Compact Form and the Dense City

As I have already pointed out, sprawl is widely regarded as a negative trend that opposes the development of sustainable and liveable cities. To counter the development of urban sprawl, many urbanists believe that cities need to be built in a dense and compact form, using the existing space within the metropolitan borders instead of expanding to the countryside. Burton identifies advantages of compact city form: sustainability including sustainable forms of transport, better access to services and facilities, and revitalisation of inner city areas. In addition, he identifies from a study in the UK some relationships between compactness and social equity indicators, including access to green space, social segregation, and public transport. It further seems that compact form highlights what Jacobs believes are positive features of the city such as vitality, diversity, and density.

158 Ellin (1999, p.54)
159 Lilja (2010, p.93)
160 Johnson (2005, p.55)
161 Johnson (2005, p.20-21)
162 Andersson (2005, p.105-115)
163 Adams (2009, p.43)
164 Söderlind (2005, p.116-125)
165 Burton (2000, p.19)
166 Burton (2000, p.19-29)
The debate on the densification of suburbs, particularly apparent in Stockholm, revolves around the qualities of green and open public spaces. Already in the 1980s Grahn and Sorte observe the planning trend of densification of the built-up spaces that puts increasing pressure on open space.\(^{167}\) Sorensen et al evaluate that increasing population pressure means that “cities will still sometimes need to be built on green land”.\(^{168}\) Hall and Ward capture this as the danger of “town cramming”\(^{169}\), which can only be avoided by protecting green spaces.\(^{170}\) Often used parallel in the discussion on compact form, density is considered an alternative to sprawl.

While the feel for green spaces and people’s perception of proximity to green areas are important,\(^{171}\) it is difficult to measure and should be discussed mainly in specific local contexts. A denser integrated urban landscape with a mixture of uses in the city would also foster social diversity, Jacobs suggests.\(^{172}\) “City diversity itself permits and stimulates more diversity,” and a critical mass of people from both the neighbourhood and outside areas that are attracted by a variety of shops is necessary to produce diversity.\(^{173}\) More concretely, Jacobs argues that diversity can be achieved through multiple functions, short housing blocks, building variety, and dense concentration of people.\(^{174}\) This would add to social sustainability to counter trends of increasingly segregated cities.

Ståhle argues that the use value of open spaces must be increased. In planning the dichotomy between ‘green’ and ‘dense’ needs to be undone in order to achieve this.\(^{175}\) As such, he considers a co-existence of green and dense, with more attractions to people, more access, more use value and improvement of the open spaces.\(^{176}\) The main argument of his PhD work is thus that quality not quantity matters when thinking about green spaces in the city.

Grahn and Sorte agree that densification must encourage a better link between people and nature to achieve the bigger picture of sustainability, and this can be achieved through better access to open spaces despite sacrificing land for recreation.\(^{177}\) The challenge to achieve compact sprawl is thus to densify the inner city areas and inner suburbia.\(^{178}\) This includes the area of study of this paper, the area around Järva fältet in northern Stockholm. In Sweden however this sacrifice of green space is regarded as difficult by both Söderlind and Ståhle due to the protection of greenery by both ecologists, the so-called ‘green force’ in Stockholm city planning, and NIMBYs (=Not In My Own Backyard, local residents opposing developments).\(^{179}\) Kallstenius and Penner thus appropriately summarise that the concept density is both a threat (to the green space) and a blessing (more sustainable urban form) to Stockholm.\(^{180}\)

\(^{167}\) Grahn & Sorte (1985, Introduction)
\(^{168}\) Sorensen et al (2004, p.9)
\(^{169}\) Hall&Ward (1998, p.117)
\(^{171}\) Ståhle & Marcus (2008, p.236)
\(^{172}\) Jacobs (1961, Introduction)
\(^{173}\) Jacobs (1961, p.157)
\(^{174}\) Jacobs (1961, p.162-163)
\(^{175}\) Ståhle (2008c, p.167)
\(^{176}\) Ståhle (2008a, p.67-70)
\(^{177}\) Grahn and Sorte (1985, Introduction)
\(^{178}\) Ståhle & Marcus (2008, p.216-217)
\(^{179}\) Ståhle (2005, p.174)
\(^{180}\) Kallstenius & Penner (2005, p.11)
While the compact and dense city is generally favoured in the literature in order to combat urban sprawl, Ståhle also acknowledges that the relationship between those forms and the use value of green spaces is complex. At the same time, other factors such as public life and social equity cannot be directly correlated to dense and compact urban environments, although these are believed to have some indirect impact. Public spaces are therefore increasingly on the planning agenda to develop a compact, dense, and polycentric city, Centilini concludes.  

2.4. Summary of the Literature

The importance of public space in urban areas has recently become a popular issue in urban planning in developing the sustainable city. Habermas and Lefebvre provide the theoretical background on the importance of public life in the city as part of a democratic society while Jacobs looks at the local scale to highlight the values of public life. While there is of course no overarching solution to planning for public life, it is widely understood in the literature that the modernist planning agenda that dominated in the post-War decades not only in the US but also in Europe was harmful to what is often referred to by New Urbanists as the traditional city with its vibrant public life.

The values of green spaces in contributing to the revival of more public life are significant, and relate to a complex debate about urban form. While compactness and density are widely argued to be two solutions to the problem of sprawl, the question of which urban form is most advantageous to both the people and the environment remains unanswered and greatly depend on local contexts, however with regards to Stockholm there is widespread criticism nowadays of the Corridor City that we see today. Most importantly in this discussion, the built-up spaces and the open greenery should not be seen as standing in conflict with each other but should rather be regarded as an integrated concept to avoid further sprawl and to achieve social and environmental sustainability. Seeing the city as an integrated landscape can help us understand the complex dynamics of the city and can combine efforts of social and environmental issues. This is necessary in order to achieve the goals of the sustainable city.

As Berglund summarises, the discourse among planning professionals revolves around developing the ideal form which is “the dense, beautiful, lively and economically vibrant city”. These attributes are believed to be the basis for social and environmental sustainability which is challenged by contemporary trends of urbanisation. In the end, a more differentiated and locally specific view is necessary to assess the relations between urban form and sustainability, and between built-up and green spaces.

I have therefore chosen the Järvafältet area in northern Stockholm to study the role of green spaces in a European capital city that within the next decades faces significant population growth and thus new challenges with regards to providing quality public green space while not sacrificing environmental values. Before presenting the case study and the findings of the empirical research in detail, I will discuss in the following chapter the methodology of the study.

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181 Gaddoni (2010, p.180)
182 Berglund (2010, p.285)
3. Methodology

3.1. The Case Study Method

My thesis uses a case study to demonstrate a topic in the field of urban planning. By drawing on a “real world” example I will attempt to make a link between the underlying theory on the topic and a case in practice.

When using a case study the issue of generalisability is widely debated as to how far one example can reflect a pattern that is found elsewhere. While the problem of subjectivity of case study research is often critiqued, Bent Flyvbjerg argues that one the other hand “the strategic choice of case may greatly add to the generalisability of a case study”, thus legitimating the relevance of the empirical research. The choice of my case study will be explained in more detail in Part 4. At the same time Flyvbjerg challenges the notion that generalisations are really desirable in social science research, as it is important to keep the case study findings open to interpretation of the reader, he argues. An open narrative rather than a closed normative one can be used to produce a more postmodern knowledge construction with multiple meanings. As such “the goal is to allow the study to be different things to different people”.

Besides Flyvbjerg, Burawoy also argues that context and situatedness matter when doing research. Burawoy proposes “a reflexive science that takes context as point of departure but not as point of conclusion”. These “reflexive methods are better attuned to studying everyday social interaction”. This “context-dependent knowledge” that is produced is valuable as it reflects real-life situations that include complex power relations in the decision-making processes, as Flyvbjerg experiences from his own case study on planning politics in Aalborg, Denmark. He finds out that “only because of experience with cases…one can at all move from being a beginner to being an expert”, as the case study accounts for real practical experience of the researcher. However Flyvbjerg also points to the role of the researcher who has to prove the value of the case study by validating their work through putting the results in a context and a paradigm, and to link theory and empirical findings. The justification of the research is thus made important through a good narrative, he claims. The context of social science research thus makes the results valid due to a proximity to real-life situations, while a good case selection validates the significance and relevance of the work.

183 Flyvbjerg (2004, p.423)
184 Flyvbjerg (2004, p.430)
185 Burawoy (1998, p.13)
186 Burawoy (1998, p.30)
187 Flyvbjerg (2004, p.421)
188 Flyvbjerg (2004, p.421)
189 Flyvbjerg (2004, p.428)
3.2. Qualitative Research Methods

For my paper I have chosen to apply qualitative research methods that include intensive fieldwork through participant observation, three interviews with experts in the field of study in addition to a wide range of secondary data relevant to the case study. Before going into more detail of the specific methods, I will present the arguments that highlight the value of qualitative research techniques in the methodology. First of all, qualitative research aims at studying human environments and experiences within certain conceptual frameworks with concern for either social structures or individual experiences.\(^{190}\) While qualitative methods are typically intensive rather than the extensive collection of quantitative data, one of the advantages of targeting selected research objects is that “individuals experience the same events and places differently.”\(^ {191}\) We can thus select an environment for the case study in which one targets representatives of certain groups in society to collect data that reflects certain phenomena. Hay further points out that qualitative research tends to be inductive, meaning that theory informs data.\(^ {192}\) However he also mentions the role of the researcher and the researcher’s bias that informs data. Consequently there are dynamics that the researcher should be aware of which can be best coined in the terms subjectivity, positionality and self-reflexivity. These need to be considered in the intensive collection of data when applying qualitative methods.

As Dowling discusses, awareness of the interrelations between society (the structure in which the case study is situated), the researcher, and the researched is necessary as there are ethical issues to consider related to power and subjectivity.\(^ {193}\) Subjectivity include a personal bias and opinions and expectations that the researcher carries with them, while intersubjectivity includes meanings, interpretations (such as through language), ethnic background and other characteristics that can influence the relation between the research subject and object.\(^ {194}\) Critical reflection is thus necessary for an ethically sound practice, as Kearns establishes.\(^ {195}\) While conducting fieldwork Dowling considers the term critical reflexivity which describes “a process of constant, self-conscious, scrutiny of the self as researcher and of the research process”.\(^ {196}\) Cloke et al present a number of issues as part of being reflexive, including questions on relationships and values, the sources of knowledge and how these inform behaviour in the field, who we are writing for (or the value to academia), the relationship between thinking and actions, and the power relations in the field.\(^ {197}\) In addition the authors point out that by being self-reflexive and questioning your own work, the relevance of the results is demonstrated while the credibility and validity of the single case is strengthened.\(^ {198}\) More specifically to the fieldwork, Cloke et al point out that the research must relate to research topics, networking of people, how people react to the researcher, building relationships, changing circumstances and breakthroughs, and the role of data construction such as techniques being used in the field.\(^ {199}\) In sum, it is important to note that the positional

\(^{190}\) Hay (2005, p.5a)
\(^{191}\) Hay (2005, p.5b)
\(^{192}\) Hay (2005)
\(^{193}\) Dowling (2005)
\(^{194}\) Dowling (2005, p.24)
\(^{195}\) Kearns (2005, p.192)
\(^{196}\) Dowling (2005, p.22)
\(^{198}\) Cloke et al (2004, p.149)
\(^{199}\) Cloke et al (2004, p.199)
and the intersubjective relations have an impact on the data collected in qualitative methods, hence the need for careful consideration of these issues during the research process.

3.3. Interviews

In order to gain detailed information on the planning side of Järvafältet I conducted three in-depth interviews with professionals that engage with this particular area of Stockholm. The position of the researcher to the interviewee needs to be considered when analysing the results. As Cloke et al point out “the strengths of using interviews lie in the very acknowledgement of intersubjectivity which permits a deeper understanding of the who’s, how’s, where’s, and what’s of many aspects of human geography research”. In my particular case this method allowed me to obtain valuable details of planning and politics that have a significant effect on how the green space is perceived both by professionals as well as residents. As Dunn adds strengths of this method include the empowerment of the interviewee to express opinions, while he notes that the best technique is to keep a rapport between interviewer and informant.

In order to achieve this I had a set of questions, issues and points that I wanted to raise during the conversations, however I tried to keep the flow of the interview going without structuring the progress too much. The ability of the interviewee to tell their own narrative remains important as Burawoy suggests, stating that “one can standardize the question but not the respondent’s interpretation of the question”. I had the following issues in mind that I wanted to go through during the conversations: the efforts made by the City Planning Administration in developing the area such as the Järvalyftet programme and the Culture Reserve (these will be presented later in more detail); the changes relating to public space and activities on the field; the needs and the opinions of the residents; the conflict between developing the area and protecting the environment.

The first interviewee was an urban planner and ecologist at the Stockholm City Planning Administration (Stadsbyggnadskontoret) and the main person working with developing plans and ideas for the Järvafältet area. This provided a good starting point for receiving information from the planner’s perspective. The second interview was conducted with the Democratic and Office Services Manager at the Rinkeby-Kista District Council (Kanslichef Stadsdelsförvaltning Rinkeby-Kista) who provided me with more detailed information on the local perspective on this part of the city of Stockholm. Finally, the last interviewee was a representative from the Environmental Authority of Stockholm (Miljöförvaltning Stockholm) who offered the viewpoint of the environmental concerns of the area and their role in the planning process. Altogether, these three interviewees allowed for a balanced perspective and represented the main interest groups in the professional realm concerning both the green space and the suburban area as a whole.

All interviews were conducted in the respective offices of the interviewees. While the first two were held in a separate room ”behind closed doors”, the third one was conducted in the

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200 Cloke et al (2004, p.150)
201 Dunn (2005, p.83)
202 Burawoy (1998, p.12a)
The setting of an interview can play a significant role to the behaviour of the two parties. As Burawoy states “the interview is a social context, embedded in other contexts, all of which lend meaning to and are independent of the question itself” and can thus have effects on the questions asked as well as the responses. It can be generally said that the settings of the conversations allowed for a comfortable situation for the respondents as they took place in their familiar environments. The setting of the third interview, not being held in a separate room, did not greatly affect the questions asked nor the responses since there were no people in the corridors or in the kitchenette that could have disturbed or interfered with the conversation. Furthermore it needs to be considered how my role as a researcher and master student and non-Swedish person could have influenced the answers.

While some responses could have been disclosed I generally felt that the respondents were very open and honest in their behaviour. Most importantly however language issues needed to be considered. Since the interviews were held in English which greatly facilitated the situation for me and in which I am much more comfortable than in Swedish, the respondents were naturally limited in expressing themselves by having to respond in a foreign language. This could have both limited the information flow but also benefited the level of honesty and straightforwardness of the responses. Language can thus be considered as an important context effect between the researcher and the researched and part of the “embeddedness of the interview in a wider field of social relations” which would also include the student/professional or outsider/expert binaries that are part and parcel of the intersubjective relationship between researcher and respondent in this particular case.

3.4. Ethnography

Despite the in-depth information obtained from my interviews, my empirical research was complemented with other methods in order to receive detailed knowledge and to answer my research questions. Evans considers limits in interviews as a method due to its structured format that “often removes the researcher from the ‘flow’ of everyday life in both time and space”. Furthermore, Kearns adds that “developing a geography of everyday experience requires us to move beyond reliance on formalised interactions such as those occurring in interviews” for which ethnography is a suitable method. The experience of “being there” and of getting a feel for a place is particularly noteworthy in the process of ethnography. While not discrediting the validity of the interviews, it is important to use a combination of different methods for a more rigorous discussion.

Ethnography, or “people-writing”, is a qualitative research method that includes taking notes, conversations, and taking photographs. Participant observation is a form of ethnography that engages with everyday life practices and puts the people at the object of study. “In

203 Burawoy (1998, p.12b)
204 Burawoy (1998, p.7a)
205 Burawoy (1998, p.7b)
206 Kearns (2005, p.195a)
207 Kearns (2005, p.195b)
contrast (to interviews), the goal of participant observation is developing understanding through being part of the spontaneity of everyday interactions”, as Kearns evaluates\textsuperscript{209}, and can thus complement interviews in accounting for these issues. Kearns provides a variety of definitions and conceptualisations of this research. Firstly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines observations as the “accurate watching and noting of phenomena as they occur”.\textsuperscript{210} Kearns considers a range of activity from complete observer to complete participant\textsuperscript{211}. My role as a researcher would be positioned more towards the complete observer, having made extensive first-hand observations on how the green space is being used and what kind of activities take place at different times of the day both on weekdays and on weekends. This was complemented and aided by field notes that were kept in a field diary, as well as photographs that I took during my observations. Moreover I conducted casual conversations with local residents both on Järvafältet as well as the bordering suburbs of Rinkeby and Kista. I was thus given a chance to engage with the local people to get insights into their everyday activities and the role the green space plays in them, with regards to leisure, as a passageway between the suburbs, and other functions of the area.

However Kearns also argues that “ultimately all observation is participant observation”.\textsuperscript{212} Going back to his scale one could imagine being a complete participant as someone spending a continuous stretch of time with a community, taking part in their day-to-day activities. I will thus go by Kearns’ conceptualisation and position my research as part of this method. As Kearns suggests “The intent (of participant observation) is to gain added value from time ‘in the field’ and to provide a descriptive complement to more controlled and formulated methods such as interviewing”\textsuperscript{213}.

3.4.1. Observations in the Field

With regards to my particular case I went to the Järva area on ten different occasions to make observations and talk to people. This was done both on weekdays as well as on weekends during the second half of April and the first half of May. With Stockholm spring arriving particularly late this year (the snow had just melted in early April) this was the earliest time I could go out to make observations on how people use the green space in springtime. The days I went out were mostly sunny or at least fair. On the first Saturday of May I explored the whole Järvafältet area by bike which allowed me to gain a bigger picture and to notice the range of activities offered. This was a particularly warm day (25 degrees and sunny) which combined with the fact that it was a weekend meant that there were a lot of people out and a lot of activities taking place. This day was probably the best indicator for how Järvafältet would be used during the summer months. The observations were complemented with detailed notes that I kept in a field diary as well an extensive series of photographs that I took. These techniques allowed me to memorise the observations that I made and differentiate and categorise between different places within the green space.

\textsuperscript{209} Kearns (2005, p.195c)
\textsuperscript{210} Kearns (2005, p.193)
\textsuperscript{211} Kearns (2005, p.196)
\textsuperscript{212} Kearns (2005, p.192)
\textsuperscript{213} Kearns (2005, p.193)
3.4.2. Informal Conversations

I conducted a series of short casual chats with local residents enquiring what their perception of Järvafältet is, how they use the space and whether they would like to see some changes made to the green space and the connection to the suburbs. The questions were aimed at finding out about people’s patterns and rhythms of everyday life and the role the green area plays in this. Altogether I interviewed around 30 individuals or groups of people (I approached both individuals as well as groups of people who often expressed the same opinions). These informal conversations took place predominantly on the footpaths throughout the southern end of the field (between Rinkeby and Kista) or the bordering paths between the built-up areas and the green space, but also on the main squares of the suburbs of Rinkeby and Kista. With this I aimed at receiving a balanced range of responses at different locations from people who potentially use the green space more than others.

The interviews were held in Swedish which I figured would be the language the people would be most comfortable with. I approached the respondents by saying that I was doing a study on the Järvafältet area and the values of the green spaces to people, then asking them about their opinions and to what extent they visit and use the area. It must be noted that the majority of people I talked to were of migrant background and had a mother tongue other than Swedish. I noticed that this was a significant limitation to this method as a lot of people acted in a shy manner and did not express a lot, possibly due to language difficulties. At times when I talked to a group of people they would discuss the questions I asked in their mother tongue before responding. At times responses were kept very short. Of course the limited amount of information given by some respondents also had other reasons than language, possibly scepticism of my position as a researcher and of my research as such. Again the intersubjectivity of the encounters as well as the power relations between me as a researcher and the respondents as research objects are necessary to consider. One possible way I could have been perceived by residents is the role as an outsider, a researcher that is not from the area of Kista-Rinkeby, while another way I could have been perceived by respondents with migration background could have to do with my ethnicity of a male white, possibly perceived as Swedish.

On the other hand it can be generally said that I received the most detailed information by people who had Swedish as their mother tongue (around eight respondents), thus supporting the claim that language plays a major role in the quality of responses. Again their perception of me as a researcher would have been different as they would have noticed my imperfect Swedish. This however should have not influenced their responses. Altogether I used this method to complement my field observations; however, I noticed the difficulties to receive detailed information from these casual chats.

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214 Cloke et al (2004, p.130)
3.5. Secondary Data and Discourse Analysis

Finally, I included a wide range of secondary data in my analysis which consisted of various sources by the City of Stockholm from both their websites and hard copies that were given to me by the three interviewees. The latter included, besides maps of the Järvafältet area, the results of two questionnaire surveys that were conducted by the City of Stockholm (Utrednings- och Statistikkontor, USK för Stadsbyggnadskontoret), one in 2001 about the use values of Järvafältet for the residents, and the other one in 2009/2010 about safety in the area. Moreover official documents such as the Vision Järva 2030 document as part of the Vision Stockholm 2030 campaign, the associated Järvalyftet campaign, and the Regional Development Plan 2010 (Regionala Utvecklingsplan för Stockholmsregionen, RUFS 2010) were used for discourse analysis in addition to various sources from the City of Stockholm website (www.stockholm.se).

3.6. Limitations of Methods

Finally, some factors need to be considered that could have limited the acquisition of the data. One issue to consider, as with most research projects, is the limitation in time. For a master thesis that lasts one semester it can only be expected to acquire a certain amount of data. More importantly in my case, the time of year mattered greatly. As I am writing on the use values of a green space as a public space I decided to look at how this public space is used during the warm half of the year. Due to the long Swedish winter which was particularly the case in 2010 this meant that I had to start my fieldwork later than planned, in mid-April. While I also visited Järvafältet in March to get an impression of what it looked like in snow, I did not consider winter activities such as skiing or tobogganing in my analysis. It needs however be considered in this particular context of green spaces in Sweden that people also use outside spaces during the long winters. At the same time the moderate temperatures in the months of April in May, mostly between 15 and 20 degrees, do not set the same conditions that the warmer months of June, July and August provide. It can thus be difficult to say how much busier the area is during these months. Again, only an extensive fieldwork covering different times of the year would be necessary to entirely grasp the range of qualities that open public spaces offer. However, I believe that in particular the warm days of May I visited the area reflect a valid picture. Time and space are thus to be considered. Nevertheless, due to the combination of methods that I used the rigour of the results and observations is strengthened.
4. The Case Study: Järvafältet

4.1. Location of Järvakilen and Järvafältet

I will now present the location of my case study. It is important to start at the larger scale of the Greater Stockholm Region to understand the location as well as the role Järvafältet plays in the wider context of the urban area and the surrounding nature. Like other northern European capital cities such as Copenhagen and Helsinki, Stockholm expanded along fingers of development parallel to the main transport corridors – roads, train lines and underground lines. In between are gaps of greenery that benefit not only the ecology due to the uninterrupted paths for animals and flowers, but also mean that all residents are in relative close proximity to unspoiled nature and open land. The urban form of those cities fits into notion of Scandinavian people having a close relationship to the nature. Remarkable in this context is also that Stockholm has developed from one of the dirtiest cities during the 19th century to one of Europe’s healthiest at the beginning 21st century, as Fuehrer points out.\(^\text{215}\) The existing green (the open space) and blue (the water) values are widely recognised and manifested in the decision to hand the European Green Capital Award 2010 to Stockholm.

Below are two maps of the Stockholm metropolitan area, Figure 1 showing the different municipalities and Figure 2 showing the ten so called ‘gröna kilar’ or green wedges that characterise the urban structure of the Swedish capital. Number 1, Järvakilen, stretches all the way from the Urban National Park on Djurgården in the inner city out towards Upplands-Bro in the northwest. My focus however is on a part of this green wedge called Järvafältet which is located within the municipal boundary of the City of Stockholm, about 8 km northwest of the city centre. It lies between the suburbs of Kista, Husby and Akalla on the north and Tensta and Rinkeby in the south, and is bordered by the two roads 275 and 279 to the west and east respectively, as shown on Figure 3. The total size of Järvafältet is 260 hectares.\(^\text{216}\)

\(^{215}\) Fuehrer (2009, p.184)
\(^{216}\) Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.1a)
Figure 1: Map of Stockholm
Source: Google Maps

Figure 2: Stockholm’s Green Wedges
Source: Regionplane- och trafikkontoret
4.2. History of the Area

The postwar era can be broadly described as a period of intense population growth within the Stockholm area. The growing requirement for housing meant that in the Modernist paradigm a lot of units had to be built efficiently and cheaply. This was encapsulated in the Million Homes Programme (Miljonprogrammet) put forward by the Swedish government between 1965 and 1975 when a million housing units were to be built around the country. The area around Järva was also affected by this urban expansion. Previously used as a military field, the state decided in 1962 to exploit the large open space in the northwestern part of the City of Stockholm. Following the development of a General Plan for södra Järva (the southern side of the field) the City then bought off the land in 1966 which had previously been owned by the State, and building of the new suburbs Tensta and Husby started the same year and were completed in 1972, with the first residents already moving in in 1967. The third suburb on the southern side, Rinkeby, was built between 1968 and 1971 while the

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217 Stockholms Stad (2009, p.9a)
218 Stockholms Stad (2009, p.9b)
General Plan for Norra Järva provided the basis to build the suburbs north of the field, Husby, Akalla and Kista, between 1972 and 1980.\textsuperscript{219} The six suburbs which collectively can be called Järva was thus built between 1966 and 1980, containing 60,000 inhabitants divided into 25,400 apartments, 700 private houses, and 221 row houses.\textsuperscript{220} In addition there are 31,000 people working in the area, predominantly in Kista.\textsuperscript{221} Järva can thus be divided into three parts: Norra Järva (Akalla, Husby and Kista), the Järva open space in the centre, and Södra Järva (Hjulsta, Tensta and Rinkeby).\textsuperscript{222} Connecting and integrating those three parts with each other is one of the biggest planning challenges in this area of Stockholm.

The suburbs of Järva typically represent the modernist architectural and planning styles that were fashionable at the time. This is characterised by a strict separation of traffic functions, monotonous architecture, and physically separated suburbs with their own central squares and provision of main services. In addition, the extension of the underground (tunnelbana) to the suburbs means that good public transport infrastructure exists. Hall and Ward stress that the final extension of the tunnelbana during the 1970s was a necessary response to the unexpected population growth of Stockholm at the time, accompanied with further decentralisation of jobs as well as housing.\textsuperscript{223}

4.3. Social Characteristics of Järva

As stated by the City of Stockholm the Järva General Plan of 1964 stressed that the aim of this new residential area was to create a safe city environment through the combination of inner city qualities, such as concentration of services and order, as well as urban fringe qualities, with proximity to greenery and open space.\textsuperscript{224} However today it is widely questioned whether these modernist goals were achieved as the urban landscape of Stockholm is characterised by increasing social segregation due to separate suburban islands that are divided from each other by open space. The ‘space left over for planning’ (or SLOAP), as Söderlind calls it, has now become under scrutiny of planners since it is considered to be a major element in causing segregation.

While northern Järva is of more mixed use with work and housing, southern Järva is characterised by high unemployment. Moreover, social and economic deprivation particularly in southern Järva is apparent and suburbs such as Tensta and Rinkeby are widely considered as ‘problem areas’ of Stockholm. With regards to the social structure, the residents of Rinkeby-Kista are of 77% foreign background, compared to 28% in the City of Stockholm. In terms of housing, Rinkeby-Kista has 37% of public housing which is also well above the city average.\textsuperscript{225} The majority of residents with immigrant background come from non-European Union countries, especially the Middle East.

\textsuperscript{219} Stockholms Stad (2009, p.9c)
\textsuperscript{220} Sustainable Järva (2009, p.2)
\textsuperscript{221} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.IIa)
\textsuperscript{222} Stockholms Stad (2009, p.23)
\textsuperscript{223} Hall & Ward (1998, p.95)
\textsuperscript{224} Stockholms Stad (2009, p.31)
\textsuperscript{225} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2009)
4.4. The Kista Science Cluster

Stockholm is expected to grow by a possible 800,000 people within the next 30 years or 15,000 to 20,000 each year, which means a rapid urbanisation process for a European city. Due to these developments and the debate in media, politics and academia many believe that Järva in particular is one of the most important development areas in Stockholm in the near future. From an economic perspective the area is also of great importance. As proclaimed in the Stockholm Vision 2030 and the Regional Development Plan (RUFS), the Kista Science Cluster that is currently one of the world’s five leading IT clusters will increasingly take a leading role in the city’s polycentric economic development, with multiple development centres across the Stockholm metropolitan area. This means that a more decentralised polycentric economic growth should relieve the city centre as the main point of congestion in terms of labour and transport, and pursue a more regional development along growth corridors. The IT sector and other knowledge economies are already concentrated in Kista and this process will be further encouraged. The Stockholm Vision 2030 states that with population growth and pressure on land, there is a need for more urbanity, quality public space and integrated urban environment in more suburban parts of Stockholm, including the area around Kista.

Due to its economic growth potential Kista thus needs to be integrated as part of the urban landscape of Stockholm to prevent the North American Edge City phenomenon where new business districts evolve near highway links but far away from central urban areas. This densification strategy is thus favoured in order to reduce further sprawl which would increase commuting times and exploit virgin land. It is thus paramount to offer an attractive surrounding to the expanding labour pool in the Järva area, including accessibility to Järvafältet as a quality public space, as well as better connections to surrounding suburbs such as Rinkeby in order to share the economic growth as evenly as possible. At the same time the green values must be maintained and developed. The strategic importance of Järva and the role Järvafältet as a green space plays in this will be discussed in the following part, in which the results from the empirical research will be presented in detail.

4.5. Empirical Findings

As already pointed out, my findings come from various sources, including both primary and secondary data. The interviews together with my field observations, taken down in a field diary and many photographs, offered many insightful perspectives on the use value of Järvafältet as well as the potential for development. This was complemented with a number of official documents by the City of Stockholm as well as results from questionnaire surveys carried out by the City Planning Administration. In this part I will thus present the main findings.
findings that relate to the discussion of the paper and the research questions I have put forward:

1. What is the use value of green spaces in an urban area?
2. To what extent can green space at Järvafältet fulfil the purpose of public space and meeting places?
3. What is the potential to develop the Järvafältet area as part of a more integrated urban landscape that connects the different suburbs in a more socially sustainable manner?

4.6. How People Use Järvafältet

The open green space of Järvafältet is the dominant feature of the whole Järva area and is thus of great value both in terms of social and environmental factors. The proximity to the greenery is thus considered as the greatest quality of the area, as expressed both by politicians and residents that I talked to. The results from the questionnaire survey of 2001 reflect that nature, forests, greenery, the activities these offer, as well as the presence of animals are considered the most valuable qualities to residents. In terms of social values, the quietness and the relief from everyday life that this open space offers were mentioned by some respondents during my empirical studies. From an ecological perspective, due to its uninterrupted and connected green corridor running along approximately 50 kilometres from Djurgården in central Stockholm to Sigtuna to the northwest, the area offers good conditions for biodiversity and wildlife. These values were strengthened by the decision in 2006 to create the so-called Igelbäcken Culture Reserve, named after the brook that runs through Järvafältet. The brook contains a rare fish species (the Grönling) which due to this decision is protected from disturbances as no building developments are permitted within the Culture Reserve. Figure 4 shows the demarcation of the Reserve, emphasising that the border runs very close to the residential areas. In addition to the Reserve, the creation of three ponds on the field helped to preserve native bird and frog species (Figure 6).

The reason of the wording Cultural Reserve rather than Nature Reserve implies that in addition to these ecological values, the old cultural landscape of the area is named as its greatest value today. The area contains remnants of many historical periods dating back to 1000 years of human settlement across the Viking Age, the medieval times as well as early farming activities. The project Tidernas Väg offers to inform people on the history of these activities present on Järvafältet. As such the aim for the decision to make it a Reserve was to preserve both the heritage values and the biodiversity, but also the recreational values.

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231 Serdén (Interview II, 2010b)
232 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.14)
233 Stockholms Stad (2010)
234 Egerö (Interview I, 2010a)
235 Stockholms Stad (2010)
236 Egerö (Interview I, 2010b)
237 Serdén (Interview II, 2010c)
238 Serdén (Interview II, 2010d)
239 Egerö (Interview I, 2010c)
Figure 4: Igelbäcken Culture Reserve (demarcated by white dotted line)  
*Source: Stockholm City Planning Administration*

Figure 5: Hang Gliding on Hästa Klack  
*Source: photo by Patrick Skoniezki*
4.6.1. Activities on Järvafältet

Crucial in my analysis is the question which activities are offered and performed by people on Järvafältet. The importance of activities in open spaces with regards to their attractiveness has also been discussed extensively in the literature part. Activities can draw residents to this public space and by doing this can significantly increase the quality of life in this part of Stockholm. In addition to existing activities, many proposals are under scrutiny by the City Panning Administration and politicians with regards to future developments in the area. Again a conflict can be found as human activity has an impact on the environment. As the representative from the Ecological Department expresses in an interest to protect the nature from further developments, “we want to show that there are a lot of activities already in the area: we have frisbee golf, we have hang gliding (see Picture in Figure 5), and the koloni areas (allotment gardens), Eggeby gård, Hästa gård, Akalla by.”240 I followed this up by my own observations on different days of the week (both weekdays and weekends) to find out which places are most popular and how people use the green space. I noticed that Järvafältet, particularly the area between Rinkeby and Kista where I predominantly conducted my observations, was used for walking, cycling, walking the dog, and exercising. During a visit in early March I noticed cross country skiers using the area.

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240 Einarsson (Interview III, 2010a)
In addition from the people I talked to I found out that many residents of Rinkeby walk across
the green space to go shopping at Kista where a big shopping centre (Kista Galleria) offers all
kinds of commercial and recreational activities. The questionnaire survey supports these
findings with the same activities scoring highest in the responses. A discrepancy, however,
between the suburbs of southern and northern Järva become clear both in the survey as well as
in my empirical work. The study shows that 42% of residents of Södra Järva residents use the
field to get across as opposed to 27% from Norra Järva. This suggests that the northern side
is generally considered the more attractive one, which can predominantly be explained by the
popularity of Kista Galleria as the main place to go shopping in Järva, and thus as a popular
meeting place.

4.6.2. Meeting Places

My observations support the latter point of the different perceptions of the two sides along
Järvafältet. The smooth transition from the housing area in Kista and Akalla to the open field
is noticeable as opposed to the barrier effect of the E18 motorway that divides Rinkeby and
Tensta from Järvafältet. Consequently meeting places for what Jacobs calls “casual
encounters” exist predominantly on the edge zones of the northern suburbs with attractive foot
and bike paths, a dog park, a football pitch, playgrounds and a kindergarten all found in Kista
at the perimeter of the field. On a sunny Saturday in May when I rode my bike through the
area I noticed the social activities on the northern side. Barbeque shelters offered ideal spots
to enjoy the greenery and serve as meeting places of the residents of the area. Akalla by
contains a small animal zoo which is a popular activity for families with children to visit.
Hästa gård has a café with outdoor benches with views over the open field. These certainly
offer meeting places of high quality during the summer months and underline the social
values of greenery in the urban or suburban landscape.

Consequently it must be done in the central parts of Järvafältet in
order to attract visitors from both sides of the residential areas in order to create integrated
meeting places that include diverse groups of people of different ages and ethnicities. In one
interview this concern was also expressed:

“But I know it's difficult because it's such a large open space. I mean there is no squares, no
reason to go there other than recreation and enjoying the nature.”

241 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.53a)
242 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.53b)
243 Einarsson (Interview III, 2010b)
244 Serdén (Interview II, 2010e)
The survey conducted in 2001 actually evaluates that Eggeby gård and Igelbäcken are the two most popular attraction points among the Järva residents, both being located in the centre of the green space. However, these findings were not shared by my own observations having visited the farm of Eggeby gård and walked along Igelbäcken on several occasions. The farm contains a café that is open from 11.00-16.00 hours on weekdays; however it was empty the three times I visited. In addition there were no visitors, only some people walking or cycling past. Some cultural and children activities were posted on the notice board, including a festivity on Valborg night (April 30th). In addition there was an information board on the history of Järvakilen.

The farm as a potential meeting place for residents of all of Järva due to its central location thus needs to be developed in attractiveness. One suggestion would be to sell farming products from the area, something that is already done in the other farm, Hästa gård which is located further west. The farm could also be made more accessible with more footpaths connecting to the suburbs. So far only one major footpath exists that leads to Kista in the north and the small green space between Rinkeby and Tensta in the south.

There are eight allotment gardens spread across the Järvafältet area, three of which are located between Kista and Rinkeby. These are semi-private spaces used by the owners of the individual plots. These are popular in summertime and create a meeting place for residents of all suburbs of Järva. Furthermore the concept of allotment gardening strengthens people’s perception of the environment through food production in an urban semi-urban surroundings, providing a good example of creating a synergy between people and nature. In central Stockholm these plots are extremely popular and waiting lists often extend over several years to obtain a plot. However I noticed in my observations that they were in poor condition and rubbish was lying around the plots.

The lack of quality public spaces such as a central square, with a fountain for example, that allow for casual meetings and sitting areas must thus be noted as a significant shortcoming of Järvafältet. Instead my observations concluded that these spaces exist predominantly within the built-up areas. While it can be said that the modernist planning concept of drawing the residents of the suburbs to a central square where most facilities are located has been successful in suburbs such as Kista and Rinkeby, it also demonstrates the lack of those quality public spaces in other areas, predominantly in the open green space. It thus reinforces the isolation of the different suburbs in the area and is a barrier to social integration in the area. This has been widely criticised in modernist planning of the post-war era, and can also be observed in the Järva area. The Järvafältet green space at present fails to bind places together and thus acts mainly as a social barrier. However this image needs to be undone as the numerous values this open space carries need to be maximised to their full potential in order to offer an attractive living environment.

\[245\] Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.26)
\[246\] Serdén (Interview II, 2010f)
4.7. Safety on Järvafältet

Safety is an important issue when talking about an attractive green space as Jacobs already established. The 2010 study shows that districts of Spånga-Tensta and Rinkeby-Kista have safety concerns that are double the numbers of the Stockholm average.\textsuperscript{247} This reflects the general image of these suburbs as problem areas and social hotbeds, born out of relatively high unemployment figures and social disadvantages. Safety concerns on Järvafältet that were expressed by people in the study include vandalism, unauthorised car traffic on the footpaths, dark areas due to poor lighting, and disturbances by youth groups.\textsuperscript{248} Eggeby gård and Rinkeby hage were named as particularly unsafe areas,\textsuperscript{249} while it is noted that nine out of the respondents feel safe during daylight with only four out of ten feeling safe during night time.\textsuperscript{250}

Regarding gender differences, safety was generally not an issue during daytime as I observed many women walking by themselves and respondents not expressing any concerns. However one woman expressed that she was being picked up on several occasions by her husband by car from Kista Galleria to drive back to Rinkeby at nighttime. Other female respondents also complained about the lack of lighting on the footpaths. The production of spaces of fear that are discussed in the literature by Jacobs and Berglund thus need to be avoided and are an important factor that reduces the attractiveness of the green space.

Figure 7: Present Underground Pedestrian Passage from Rinkeby onto Järvafältet

\textit{Source: photo taken by Patrick Skoniezki}

\textsuperscript{247} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.4)
\textsuperscript{248} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.5)
\textsuperscript{249} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.6)
\textsuperscript{250} Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.40)
Figure 8: Järvafältet and Kista
Source: photo taken by Patrick Skoniezki

Figure 9: The E18 between Rinkeby and Järvafältet
Source: photo taken by Patrick Skoniezki
4.8. The Traffic Situation

The current traffic situation around Järvafältet is certainly one of the most debated issues. The map shows that the existing E18 motorway along the suburbs of Södra Järva acts as a barrier between the residential and the green area. This is a result of careless functionalist planning of the 1970s that produced a separated traffic system and favoured the car. To overcome this separation of functions that not only concerns different modes of transport but also views housing and greenery, or urbanity and open space, as separate entities. The contemporary planning doctrine that is also manifested in the RUFS 2010 envisions a more integrated urban fabric with smooth connections between places and interaction between humans and nature.

Modernisation of the E18 is underway and expected to be ready in 2015 after the construction of two tunnels started in March 2009. The road tunnel between Rinkeby and Järvafältet will be 300 metres long and new housing projects will cover the road, allowing for better accessibility to the green space with new foot and bike paths being constructed. In addition a new surface street between Hjulsta and Rinkeby that runs parallel to E18 is being built and should relieve traffic from the busy motorway, why stimulating activity in the suburbs. This could be particularly vital for local shopkeepers to induce commercial and economic activities and street life which are important factors to create a sense of urbanity, such as offered by Sveavägen in the city centre.

Further projects to modernise the two main roads crossing Rinkeby, Rinkebystråket and Rinkebyallé, are underway and work towards these goals of inducing more public life into the area. In the current condition the area of Rinkeby “is disconnected from other built up areas. The E18 road (70 km/h) outside the built area creates a strong barrier effect and rather high noise impacts from car traffic. The absence of through-traffic generally creates poor prerequisites for shopping, services, public spaces etc.”

From my observations I concluded that the E18 motorway is the single most important factor in the accessibility of Järvafältet and thus the availability of a quality public space to the residents of Järva. Therefore the decision by the centre-right government to only partly cover the road with a few access points is inconsequent and imperfect. As an interviewee expressed this was done due to the high costs of tunnelling the whole motorway along Tensta and Rinkeby which was suggested by the opposition (Social Democrats and Greens) in the local government. It remains to be seen whether this half-hearted approach to raise the attractiveness of Södra Järva will be successful. The poor existing condition is reflected on Figure 7 which shows the southern access point from the residential area of Rinkeby to Järvafältet.

Besides improving the road network, the extension of the tramway (Tvärbanan) from Alvik in western Stockholm to Kista could help to induce more urbanity to the area, reduce traffic congestion from cars, and also attract more visitors from other parts of Stockholm to Järva. Considerations to lead the tram through central Rinkeby and then across the field to Kista.

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251 Söderlind (2006, p.136)
252 Söderlind (2006, p.66)
253 Serdén (Interview II, 2010g)
were rejected due to environmental concerns. Instead the tramline will run parallel to Kymlingelänken between Rinkeby and Ursvik and then into Kista. This is a major setback considering a tram line through Rinkeby could have attracted visitors, instilled commercial activity and thus created urbanity in the neighbourhood.

More controversial than the tram link is the debate about a new bus link to connect Rinkeby and Kista. The suggestion to build a road only for local bus traffic right across Järvafältet was rejected by the Environmental Office after assessment due to the disturbances to the biodiversity. As the representative from the Environmental Agency expresses:

“My personal opinion is that we don't need a bus link, but our politicians didn't want us to take it away.”

She further expressed that this link would not significantly reduce travel time while the connection could easily lead around the field along Kymligelänken into Kista. The local planner however believes that a direct bus link would not only reduce travel time but also improve the mental link between the two sides. He states:

“I can see the arguments for having buses this direction. But then the green corridor is disturbed in some way...it's a dilemma.”

This issue thus demonstrates again the conflict of interest that exists between integrating the Järva area and protecting the environment and cultural values. The existence of the Culture Reserve generally favours the ecological arguments that have a strong say when it comes to providing guidelines and influencing political decisions.

Altogether traffic is perhaps the most controversial and most debated issue in the development of the Järva area. Due to the barrier effect of the E18 the flow between the housing areas of Rinkeby and Tensta to the open space is very limited, emphasising not only the physical but also the mental disconnectedness. Accessibility to public space has thus been affected by poor traffic planning which reinforces the social differences between the suburbs of Järva. The results and impacts of the renewal of the traffic systems with regards to accessibility to the field remain to be seen and evaluated. Overall, the current traffic separation that is apparent as a result of functionalist planning must be overcome in order to make not only the open space but also the suburbs more accessible and attractive.

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254 Enarsson (Interview III, 2010f)
255 Enarsson (Interview III, 2010g)
256 Serdén (Interview II, 2010h)
4.9. Suggestions for Future Developments

4.9.1. Järvalyftet

The project Järvalyftet, instigated by the City of Stockholm as part of the long-term Vision Stockholm 2030 programme, started in the autumn of 2007 with participants from businesses, organisations, and residents of Järva. The latter were involved in a study conducted by the Swedish Public Housing Office (Svenska Bostäder) in 2006 to capture ideas and attitudes of residents. The suburbs involved are the ones around Järvafältet: Akalla, Hjulsta, Husby, Kista, Rinkeby and Tensta. Four main areas or goals have been identified by the participants which are good living with mixed urban environment, everyday safety and the modification of the strict traffic separation, education and language, and more jobs and businesses in the area.

More concretely, nine themes in physical planning have been proposed. These are:

1. To activate Järva open space and strengthen links to the suburbs
2. New buildings in strategic locations
3. Connect suburbs to each other
4. Link road network where necessary
5. Develop the central roads
6. Respect and develop existing values
7. Break traffic separation where necessary
8. Update pedestrian paths
9. Use new buildings to strengthen suburbs’ identity

The topics tackled by the project thus reflect the main concerns the area has experienced ever since its functionalist-style development began. They all work towards the goal of creating a more integrated urban environment with better connections between the suburbs and a maximisation of the Järvafältet open space. The project has been approved in spring 2009, but is not terminated and flexible in its outline. At the start of 2010 a public hearing has been organised in the City Hall which attracted a large number of residents that had a chance to express their opinions. Despite these efforts to improve the quality of life through the Järvalyftet project, the main problem of the area has been expressed in one of the interviews I conducted:

“You know the Järvalyftet, in order to make better conditions for the residents, new houses, and new buildings with people owning their own flats, and higher level infrastructure. But then we have this problem, this connection (across the green), I don't know how to…and this connection also, because you have green areas surrounding Rinkeby as well.”

The barrier effect of the green spaces, in particular Järvafältet, is thus referred to. Furthermore, the form of Rinkeby as a suburban island disconnected from other neighbourhoods is described in this statement. The main challenge for planners and politicians is thus establish connections and to maintain nature values and responding to people’s needs and desires. A new vision in which the green space is viewed as a connector

257 Stockholms Stad (2009, p.5)
258 Stockholms Stad (2009, p.7)
259 Stockholms Stad (2009, p.24-28)
260 Serdén (Interview II, 2010i)
261 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.IIb)
of the neighbourhoods rather than a separator is required. Furthermore, a balance between development and ecology is needed in light of the increasing pressures on virgin land and green spaces in different parts of Stockholm, including Järva.

The need to improve the overall quality of the suburbs around Järva, especially on the southern side, is evident. One interviewee expressed these negative experiences of living in the area:

“But the problem is...if I exaggerate, a little, those areas, especially Rinkeby and Husby, are tending to be kind of refugee camps because most of the refugees coming to Sweden and the Stockholm area, they have relatives living in those areas, and then they will get places in Rinkeby and Husby. And those who are making social careers as fast as they can, they move to other areas. And those living on social benefits, they can't afford to move from these areas.”

The point here is that these suburbs do not seem to offer an attractive living environment in a city that is generally considered to have a very high standard of living compared to other European cities. This is despite the already mentioned proximity to the green space that is regarded as very valuable to residents. It further reinforces the segregation effect that only people that have no choice of residence move to this area, and they generally arrive directly from countries outside Europe.

The outcomes of the Järvalyftet project are to be evaluated in the coming years since the major developments, such as the traffic connections are currently underway. The first step however, which is to identify the problems and challenges of the Järva area by addressing the residents, has been done by initiating Järvalyftet.

4.9.2. Further Suggestions

When thinking about installing new features on the field, the main area to look at is the space that separates Kista and Rinkeby. Here, Järvafältet is at its narrowest with about 300 metres separating the two suburbs. This means that it has the most potential to make sustainable connections and create meeting places that attract residents from both sides. The arrow on Figure 6 addresses the most direct link and was suggested for bus traffic or foot and cycle paths. Further north (further left on Figure 8), the field widens and the land is used for more agricultural activities serving the farms (Eggeby gård and Hästa gård). Rinkeby and Kista and the green space between thus was particular focused on in my empirical work. As already pointed out, due to the strict demarcation of the Igelbäcken Culture Reserve the edges along the existing built-up areas have the most potential for development.

It was expressed both in the 2001 survey conducted by the City Planning Administration as well as from my own fieldwork that there is a lack of activities, attractive features and meeting places available in the area, especially to the residents of Södra Järva. The goal as expressed by the City Planning Administration is consequently to offer more attractive and accessible meeting places like cafés, benches, barbeque shelters and family activities which would attract more visitors and consequently make the area safer and more popular to visit.

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262 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.Ib)
263 Serdén (Interview II, 2010j)
264 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.7)
Moreover there are plans for the building of a multicultural cemetery on the northern side of the field near Hästa gård. This would address the culturally diverse residence population from all surrounding suburbs and could therefore act as a shared public place that stimulates exchange between different population groups and help integrating and connecting the whole area.

4.9.3. Water Activities

One feature that was widely popular with residents as found in the 2001 survey was a public swimming pool and water activities in general. Some people I talked to also expressed that it would be good to have water activities for children during the summer months. Due to the low income neighbourhoods surrounding the field many families cannot afford a summer house like many Swedes, while many families have foreign backgrounds and spend most of their summers in their home countries. Providing attractive features such a swimming pool would thus not only increase the use value but also potentially foster integration between the residents of the suburbs. One suggestion put forward by the Planning Administration thus was the creation of a man-made or natural lake, a mixture between a swimming pool and a lake that is accessible to people for swimming.

The location however is debated and politicians have yet been reluctant to provide the financing for this project while the favoured site would be Eggeby gård which would be appropriate due to its central location. A bigger swimming pool with more adventure activities such as a water slide has been rejected by the Environmental Agency due to high noise levels through people and possibly car traffic that would threaten the animals. This shows once more the conflict between social and ecological values in the area and the political inability to find a solution to incorporate the two.

265 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2001, p.18)
266 Egerö (Interview I, 2010c), Einarsson (Interview III, 2010c)
267 Einarsson (Interview III, 2010d)
268 Einarsson (Interview III, 2010e)
4.10. Summary of Findings

My empirical data attempts to cover both the political and planning discussions as well as the opinions of residents regarding the Järvafältet green space. The former was done through interviews and analysis of secondary data, while the latter was achieved through intensive fieldwork on the site. The question of how the green space is used is central to the discussion of offering a quality public space and integrating the urban landscape. The results show that first and foremost an integrated way of thinking of establishing relationships between the suburbs and the open public space is necessary to make improvements that benefit the whole area. Activities and meeting places need to be developed in order to attract more people to the field, while the environmental and cultural values need to be maintained or strengthened. The conflict becomes evident when looking at the limitations to develop the central space of the field. Due to the existence of the Igelbäcken Culture Reserve the focus must therefore lie on the border areas between the built-up and the open spaces. Accessibility and connections between those two spaces must be strengthened in order to promote the use and thus foster the values of the public space. The present barrier effect of Järvafältet that separates Södra and Norra Järva becomes visible in the current traffic situation which affects first and foremost the neighbourhoods of Södra Järva, Rinkeby, Tensta and Hjulsta. Breaking the segregated urban landscape thus needs to be achieved by establishing connections across the field, and a collaborative effort between different political and planning institutions is necessary for this. The following part will accommodate the theoretical discussions and the empirical findings by referring to the research questions.
5. Discussion

This paper attempts to give an integrated perspective of the role of green spaces in an urban environment and the implications they carry. Moreover, this paper highlights the relationships between different issues such as segregation, urban form, green spaces, and access to public space. The relevance of Järvafältet as a case study is demonstrated by the fact that green spaces perform a wide range of social as well as environmental functions that have been discussed both in a more general context in the literature as well as through the empirical work conducted in Stockholm. Altogether the findings and results demonstrate the importance of considering green spaces in urban and regional planning.

The biggest quality of the suburbs which is the proximity to the nature should thus be seen as an opportunity and need to be maximised to its full potential. This would raise the overall attractiveness of the Järva area. Improving the southern neighbourhoods (Södra Järva) is possibly the biggest challenge for planners and politicians with regards to the future development of Järva. The existing inequality between the two sides in access to the field reinforce the feeling of spatial segregation social exclusion.

I will now go back to the research questions presented at the beginning of the paper in order to conceptualise the relevance of this case study. The three questions were:

1. What is the use value of green spaces in an urban area?
2. To what extent can green space at Järvafältet fulfil the purpose of public space and meeting places?
3. What is the potential to develop the Järvafältet area between Rinkeby and Kista as part of a more integrated urban landscape that connects the different suburbs in a more socially sustainable manner?

The questions will be addressed in the following sections by bringing together the theoretical discussions and the empirical findings of the case study.

5.1. The Use Values of Järvafältet

A key discussion on Järvafältet in the academia, lead by urban planner Jerker Söderlind, surrounds the question of whether this green space should be developed more into something like a city park. At present it certainly appears more like an open field in which large spaces are devoid of residents using the space. This is mainly due to the agricultural activities taking place as well as the lack of attractive features, landmarks, and a well-connected system of foot and bike paths. The prerequisites for an attractive urban green space as outlined by Jacobs and others can at present not be found at Järvafältet. As already established in the literature part the green wedges of Stockholm are consequently criticised for having a barrier effect to an integration of the different suburbs with different population characteristics.
Furthermore it is reinforced by the modernist design of the suburbs themselves that were built as separate ‘islands’ disconnected and isolated from each other. Altogether these features do not allow any feel of urbanity coming to this suburban part of Stockholm. A lack of street life that also reduces the potential for shopping activities in Rinkeby and Tensta can be noticed. This could have been fostered by the building of a tramline through Rinkeby, but the decision was rejected. Pedestrian activity as an integral part of an urbane feel lacks predominantly as a result of modernist planning with separated traffic systems and limits the attractiveness for visiting these neighbourhoods. A relationship exists between this condition and the disconnectedness to Järvafältet and surroundings housing areas.

Interestingly, and in contrast to the opinions that are found within the academia, my empirical studies as well as the surveys carried out by the City of Stockholm show that residents value the existing condition with the expansive untouched nature. The City Planning Administration thus expresses:

“There is a lot of opposition. And there is a lot of opposition from those who want more development, have it more like a city park. I try to stand somewhere in between, I try to make everyone happy.”… “A city park where you choose other kinds of trees and bushes, we don't think that's the kind of arrangements that would make the people feel like it's closer. We know that if there is a lot of things to look at, then people experience a shorter distances than if it's rather the same all the way.”

Results from group discussions in the 2010 survey show that people want to keep the nature values that they are against park areas and new buildings but instead would like to see pleasant and visitor-friendly environments to create meeting places, to interact with nature and animals and agricultural activities. The establishment of the Culture Reserve further protects the area from development and thus rule out the emergence of what could be called a city park that could incorporate a more organised layout of the green area with more footpaths and no agricultural activity on the fields:

“So we are not talking in terms of city park. It will still be cultural landscape, but with a lot of activities.”

The growing development cluster emerging around Kista there is need to inject some more urbanity and public life to the Järva area that is envisioning a dense urban development to respond to the estimated rapid population growth. This would allow Kista to be not only a workplace but also an attractive place of residence.

Nevertheless, in order to provide a vibrant growth area around the Kista Science Cluster which will also attract many new residents to Järva, a new way of thinking will be needed. Rather than the existing condition of having isolated suburbs surrounded or bordering large open space, an inverse way of thinking of parks being surrounded by built-up area would give the suburbs a more “urbane” feel and thus increase their attractiveness. Again, this should of course not come at the cost of the ecological values but rather stresses the argument for a higher quality green space rather than higher quantity. The increasing population growth in Stockholm and the required densification requires planners to think about alternative ways.

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269 Egerö (Interview I, 2010f)
270 Stockholms Stads Utrednings- och Statistikkontor AB (2010, p.52)
271 Egerö (Interview I, 2010g)
the context of Järvafältet this does of course not mean that the green space should be
developed with housing areas. It is rather the border areas between the existing housing space
and the open green space that needs to be looked at, as well as orientation points and meeting
places on the field. Furthermore it follows Jacobs’ argument that the neighbourhood and the
park should act upon each other in a two-way relationship. In addition, a quality public space
should be an integral part of the dynamics of everyday life as described by Lefebvre.

For now Järvafältet feels more like an open field than a well used green space in a (sub-)urban environment. The vast openness of the area hinders casual encounters in a vibrant public space, thus restricting public life mainly to the border areas in close proximity to the housing areas on Norra Järv. Improving the use values by not only focusing on border areas but also on connections across the field is necessary. The area between Kista and Rinkeby is of particular interest due to the relatively narrow strip of greenery.

The values of Järvafältet that are social, environmental, and cultural, need to be strengthened. While the green values of Stockholm’s corridors are widely recognised and the benefits to local flora and fauna out of question, it is now up to planners to focus on the social values. Most importantly however is to see the bigger picture of an integrated understanding of these three factors. An integrated perspective such as described in Hubbard’s ‘hybrid city’ allows for smarter decisions being made with regards to developing and preserving the area to the benefit of both the nature and the people that inhabit and interact with each other in this space. This is important in a more general context of thinking about the urban landscape in which green spaces always play an important role both socially and ecologically. By focusing on only one of those values or on each factor separately planners and politicians run may ignore the bigger picture. This conflict of interest is particularly visible in the case of Järvafältet, as I will demonstrate, as well as other areas of Stockholm. A new way of thinking is needed that not only considers the quantity of green spaces, which is currently given in the larger Stockholm area, but more importantly the quality of those open spaces.

5.2. Järvafältet as a Public Space and a Meeting Place

Following these observations the key issue is thus to integrate the green space into the urban landscape in a manner that strengthens the ecological values while at the same time attract more people to use the space. As Berglund and Jergeby assess green spaces needs to serve as integral places of everyday life and spontaneous encounters. With regards to the Järvafältet case this could be done by creating better connections for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Due to the attractiveness of the Kista Galleria shopping space the field is frequently used as a transitional zone between Södra and Norra Järva. Strengthening this connection across the field can be complemented by further meeting places along the main passageways. As it was mentioned in the interview quote (at the top of page 52) visual landmarks would shorten the mental distance on the field and break the monotony of the field.

Zukin criticises the exclusion of certain groups in public space. Safety plays an important role in this discussions, and the empirical findings show that safety is a major concern for residents. To allow for a safer environment all population groups have to be considered to avoid conflict. Meeting places and attractors should thus serve children, teenagers,
and elderly and allow for diverse uses. These could include a swimming pool, a summer stage for different events as well as playgrounds for children that attract visitors from both Södra and Norra Järva.

The social importance of public space as a connector of the urban landscape has been extensively discussed in the theoretical part. Lefebvre stresses the collective right to the city as an integral part of a democratic society. The right to public space is manifested in Sweden with the Right to Public Access. However the question of accessibility is crucial in the case of Järvafältet. The border effect of the E18 road between Södra Järva and the field strongly restricts accessibility and thus limits the opportunity for residents to use the green space to its full potential. This border effect is not only physical but also mental as it reinforces the isolation effect of the modernist suburban islands that are separated from each other. Changing this condition is today widely regarded as one of the biggest challenges for planners and politicians in Stockholm.

The ideal of mixing together people of different backgrounds in the city that is described in Sandercock’s diverse ‘Cosmopolis’ that is characterised by difference coming together in the city cannot be observed in the segregated urban landscape of Stockholm. While the Swedish capital as a whole has a very multiethnic and multicultural population a mix cannot be experienced in the urban landscape. Instead many suburbs are characterised by containing certain population groups that share the same cultural values but that have little contact to other neighbourhoods. The urban form of the city and the relationship between built-up and open space play an important role in creating this segregation effect. Therefore the social realities and the place specific characters of the suburbs such as the ethnic backgrounds need to be addressed in the planning for public life. With the suburbs of Järva accounting for a large Muslim population the creation of the multicultural cemetery could strengthen social integration.

Jacobs’ theoretical background that looks at the smaller scale of the neighbourhood stresses the potential of quality public spaces to not only provide urbanity but also to bind different neighbourhoods together. A vibrant public life that is shaped by the residents is needed to fulfill this purpose. What is needed as a prerequisite is good accessibility as well as meeting places. This is a major shortcoming of Järvafältet as the empirical findings and the analysis of the Järva demonstrate. The function of the public space thus needs to work not only against the disconnected urban landscape in spatial terms, but also in social terms. A more multicultural society can be fostered by the coming together of diverse groups of people and shared uses in the public arena. Furthermore, as Zukin stresses public space should be inclusionary, meaning that all groups of people should play an active role in making use of and shaping the space.
5.3. An Integrated Urban Landscape

The Järva area has good prerequisites for becoming an attractive part of Stockholm. New Urbanist writers Calthorpe and Fulton identify the four elements that characterise a liveable neighbourhood which are civic places, commercial uses, housing opportunities and natural systems. These can all be found in and around Järva fältet. Planning with a holistic approach that sees those factors at once is however necessary to maximise the potential of those elements. The modernist paradigm of single-function thinking that is criticised by Jacobs and Duany and Plater-Zyberk needs to be replaced by a multi-use approach. Integrating the values of environmental and social sustainability with smoother links between different places, such as proclaimed by Ellin and other postmodernist theorists, can stimulate the evolution of a hybrid or network city approach.

With the Kista Science Cluster becoming of increasing economic importance to the whole greater Stockholm region, the development of knowledge intense industries should include and involve all residents. The emergence of an isolated Edge City phenomenon of a single function entertainment and work area described by Garreau needs to avoided by strengthening the role of Järva fältet.

The leisure facilities provided by Kista Galleria attract residents from the nearby neighbourhoods as well as visitors from other parts of Stockholm and serve as important social factors. The added social values of the entertainment space in addition to the qualities of the green space need to be strengthened. However there are no pull factors on the other side of the field that would attract visitors to Rinkeby and Tensta. The results are perceived social disadvantages to residents of Södra Järva. The large number of work commuters and students that come to Kista add to the social diversity of the resident population. These groups need to be attracted to the open space as an arena for leisure activities and meeting places. Raising the awareness of Järva fältet as a quality public space that is smoothly connected to the suburbs would benefit the whole area and reduce the effect of social isolation. Altogether there needs to be more interaction between people as well as between people and nature to achieve the goals described in the Vision Järva 2030 as part of a new vision for the whole of Stockholm.

Altogether the suburban character of the area needs to be replaced with a more urban feel. Johnson’s critical description of Stockholm having too little city and too much suburbs becomes evident in Järva. Urbanity can be injected through better connectivity and networks between the neighbourhoods, as well as between the built-up and the open space.

Most important in this process is providing accessibility to the green space from both sides, Södra and Norra Järva. The barrier effect of the E18 road prevents more activity both on the field and within the suburbs. The modifications of the traffic system with the tunnelling of some parts of the road and new access points from the south onto the field remains questionable as to whether it can drastically improve the current situation. The differences between north and south in terms of accessibility will most likely prevail. Deviating from this discussion it can be said that accessibility is perhaps the single most important factor for a successful and well-used public space of Järva fältet and an integrated urban landscape at Järva.
6. Conclusion

This paper investigates the role of a green space in an urban landscape. This has been done by a holistic approach that includes not only social and environmental values, but also establishes a strong relationship between the built-up areas and the open space. The barrier effect of Järvafältet to social integration thus needs to be undone and replaced by an integrated vision of the neighbourhoods and the field. More concretely, an integrated vision can be achieved by the working together of the different authorities and actors within the City of Stockholm. Politicians, environmental authorities, planners and private developers must find a common ground to envision an improved urban landscape in this dynamic part of the Swedish capital.

The empirical findings particularly highlight the importance of border areas between the built and the natural environments in producing a quality public space. Border spaces and perimeters between the built-up and the natural spaces play a major role in this relationship as these spaces attract most visitors and are most accessible. Accessibility is particularly noteworthy given the discrepancies between accessing the open field from the southern and the northern suburbs. These differences strengthen the perception of spatial isolation and are thus a barrier to social integration. The issue of social integration also stresses the importance of social values of open spaces in the city. Järvafältet must thus act as a connector rather than a separator.

Combining urban elements such as a vibrant public life with the recreational values of open green spaces is paramount in achieving an integrated urban landscape. Focusing on new meeting places on the field can raise the attractiveness of the green space but should not harm the existing ecological values of the area that are of great importance to the native flora and fauna. Plans for development put forward such as the multicultural cemetery or a natural swimming pool must be successfully put into practice to strengthen social and environmental values. The results of the modernisation of the traffic system, particularly with regards to the E18 road, remain to be seen but will hopefully significantly improve accessibility to the field and reduce the barrier effect.

While acknowledging the relevance of this case study to a wider context, the particular circumstances of Järvafältet and its spatial context must be noted. The specific urban form of the green wedges that characterises the urban landscape of Stockholm, combined with the rapid population growth that is forecasted for the region and the importance of Kista as a growing science cluster, makes the Järva area of particular interest to study. In addition, the extensive discussions in the Swedish academia on the failures of modernist planning and segregated suburbs as well as the strong identification with nature in Swedish culture are to be noted. The results must therefore be seen in the time-space context in which the study was conducted and by no means present overarching solutions to a specific planning problem. Nevertheless, the discussions can be related to a wide range of urban planning issues in other time-space contexts.

While many cities face the challenges of segregation and social isolation, the particular context of this Stockholm case shows the role of green spaces in shaping the social landscape of a city. The challenge to planners lies in reducing the impact of green spaces as a border to integration, and instead maximise the potential of this public space to include all residents of the bordering neighbourhoods. The importance of planning in this case thus implies that
through improving the attractiveness of both the open space as well as the suburbs, better connections can be established. The integrated visions of the built-up and the green areas as discussed in the literature can be traced in the case study and should be pursued by actors. Furthermore this vision should include a positive approach to the green space, acknowledging its values to the people and the natural environment while at the same time maximising its potential. This includes the need for a quality public space that offers natural meeting places and that stimulates the interaction between people and the environment.

The case study has also demonstrated the difficulties in combining efforts of environmental protection and social improvement which is required to make the area both environmentally and socially more sustainable, while minimising the effects of urban sprawl in favour of developing a dense and compact city. At the same time political factors play a great role in implementing changes in urban and regional planning, such as the financing for a new traffic system or new attractions on Järvafältet.

Finally, this study aims at stimulating further discussions on the role of green spaces and their function as public spaces in the city. With regards to Järvafältet and the surrounding suburbs in particular, it will be interesting to see how this area will develop in light of the many changes and modifications that are currently underway.
7. References and Sources

Books, articles and documents


**Interviews**


**Maps**

Figure 1: Google Maps. http://maps.google.be/maps?q=stockholm&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-a&gl=be&hl=nl&um=1&biw=1440&bih=765&ie=UTF-8&hq=&hnear=Stockholms+1%C3%A4n,+Zweden&gl=be&ei=nLZiTNMjtMpCl0wTBzmYcQ&sa=X&oi=geocode_result&ct=image&resnum=1&ved=0CCsQ8gEwAA. [Accessed: July 28, 2010].


Figure 4: Stockholm City Planning Administration.

Figure 10: Stockholm City Planning Administration.