

Marie Moskou.

Toestand,
Place Marie Janson, St Gilles

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Intro

For the last two years Toestand has been at the square Marie Janson testing its use through small infrastructures. This privileged position enabled us to observe and listen to the square, its users, politicians and communal services of Saint-Gilles.

At this point we have been asked to share what we believe should be the key elements that will define the future square. This document is intended to put forward these elements selected by our team and based on our presence and experience on site.

The aim of these key elements is to design a square in line with present and future uses and needs of this currently undefined space.

Passing by

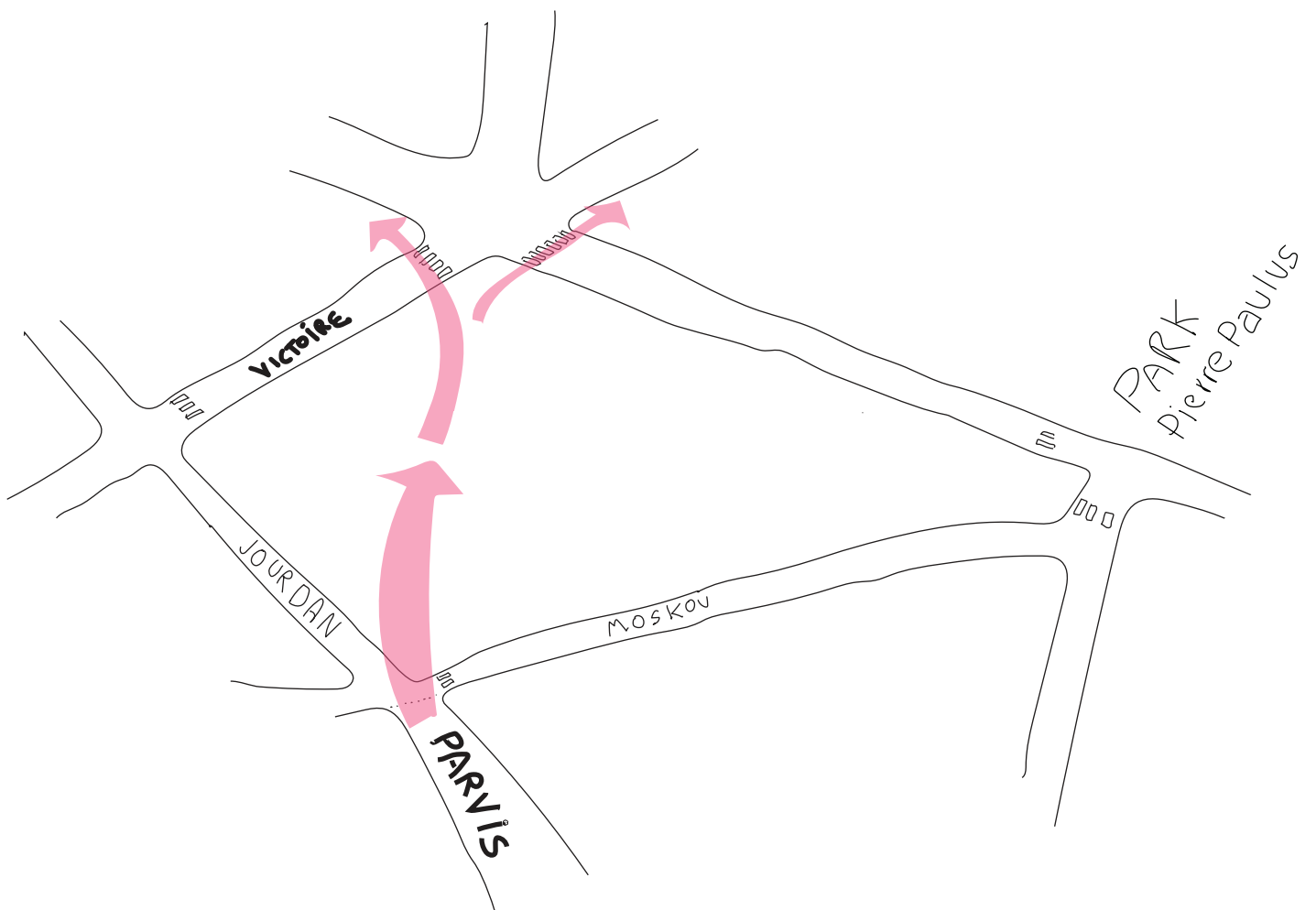
Most of the individuals that come to the square are not there to stay. They are just passing by.

We noticed that many individuals complain about the irregular flooring of the square, some don't even feel secure crossing the square and prefer to go around.

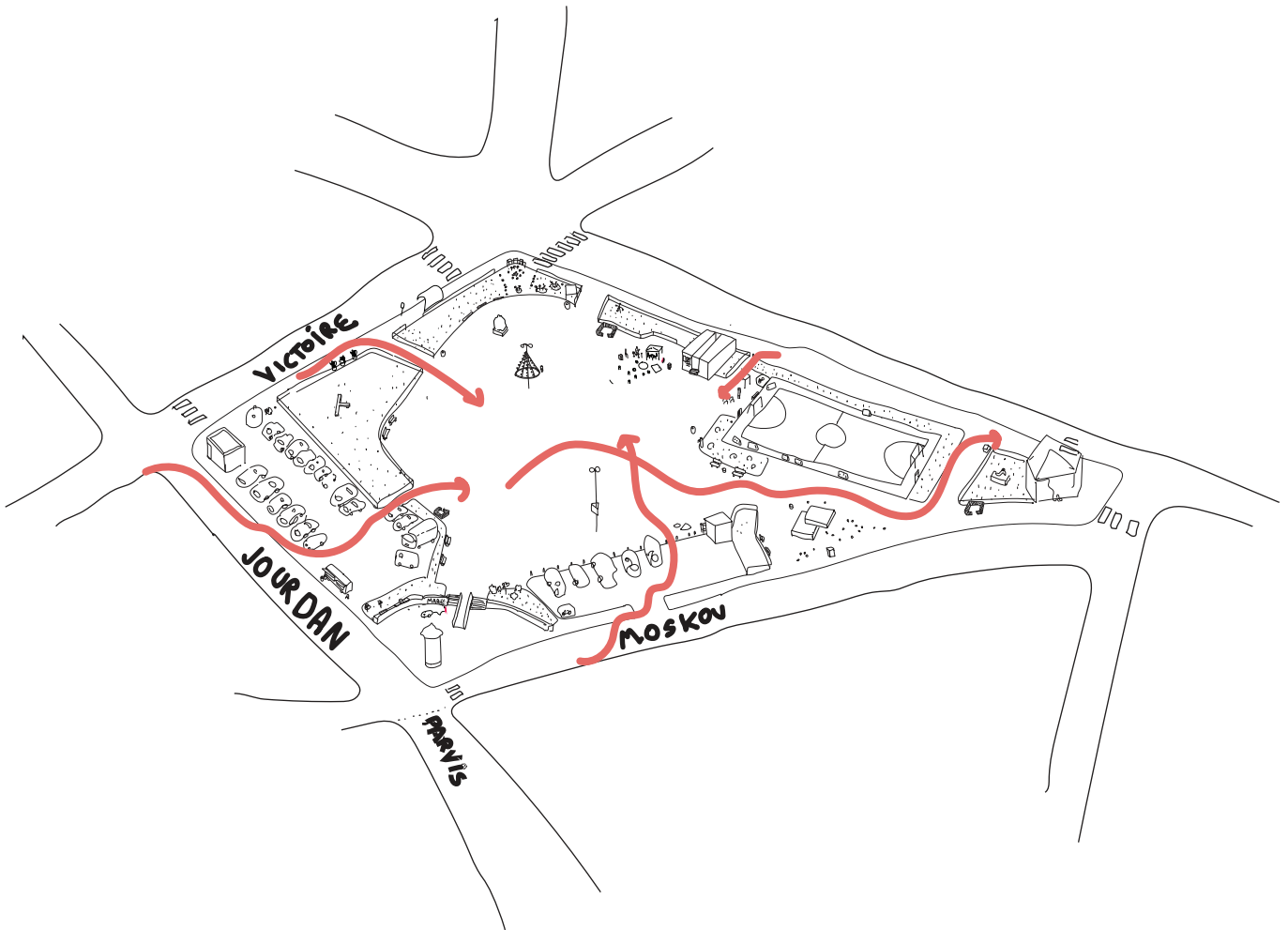
(Though this is also related to the quality of the lighting).



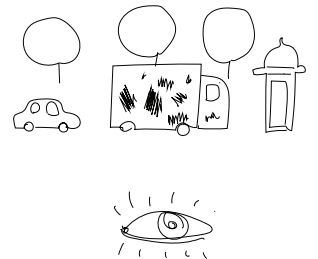
The main flow goes or comes from the Parvis though this is greatly determined by the current design of the square.

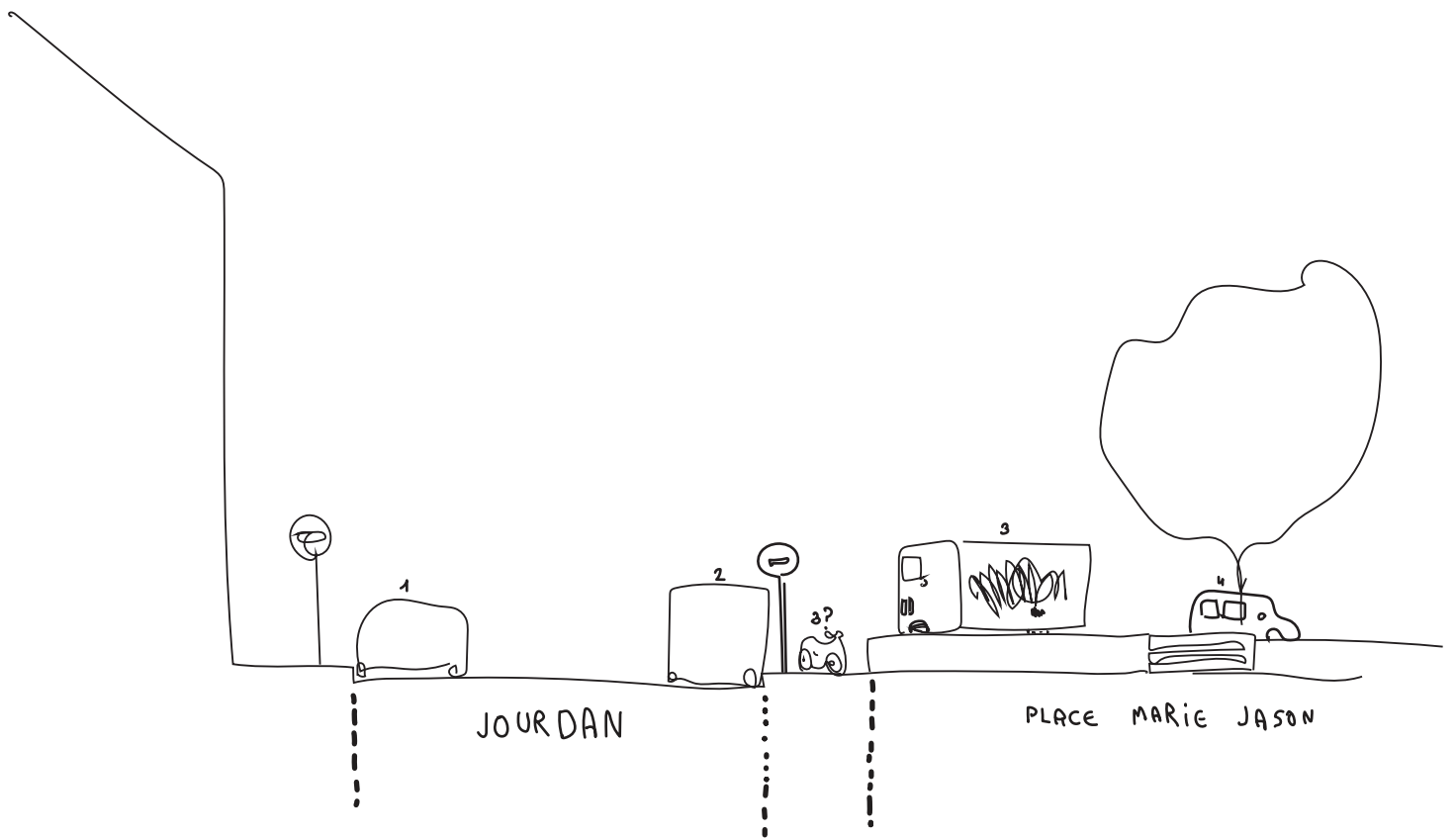


There are many architectural barriers and vehicles that complicate access.

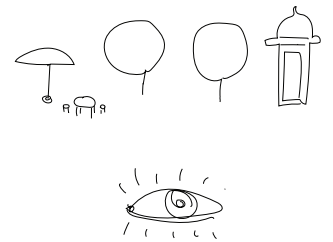


In the current situation, we find at the Rue Jordan approximately 4 lines of cars (situated in the street and parking) between the houses and the square. This creates a great division between the street and the park.





Continuity of the floor, elimination of architectural barriers, reductions of parking and car limitations are the key to connect the square.





JOURDAN

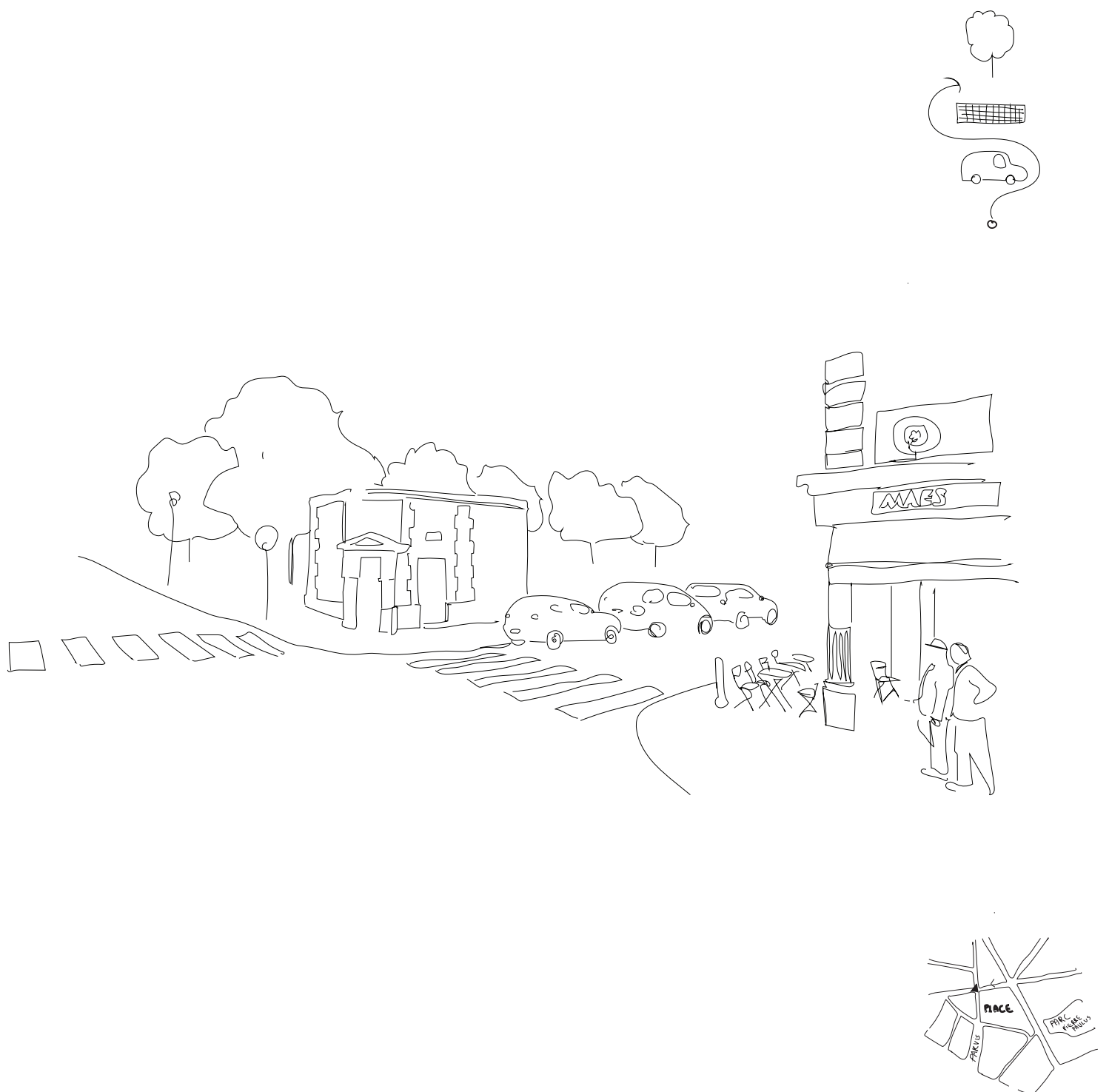
PLACE MARIE JASON

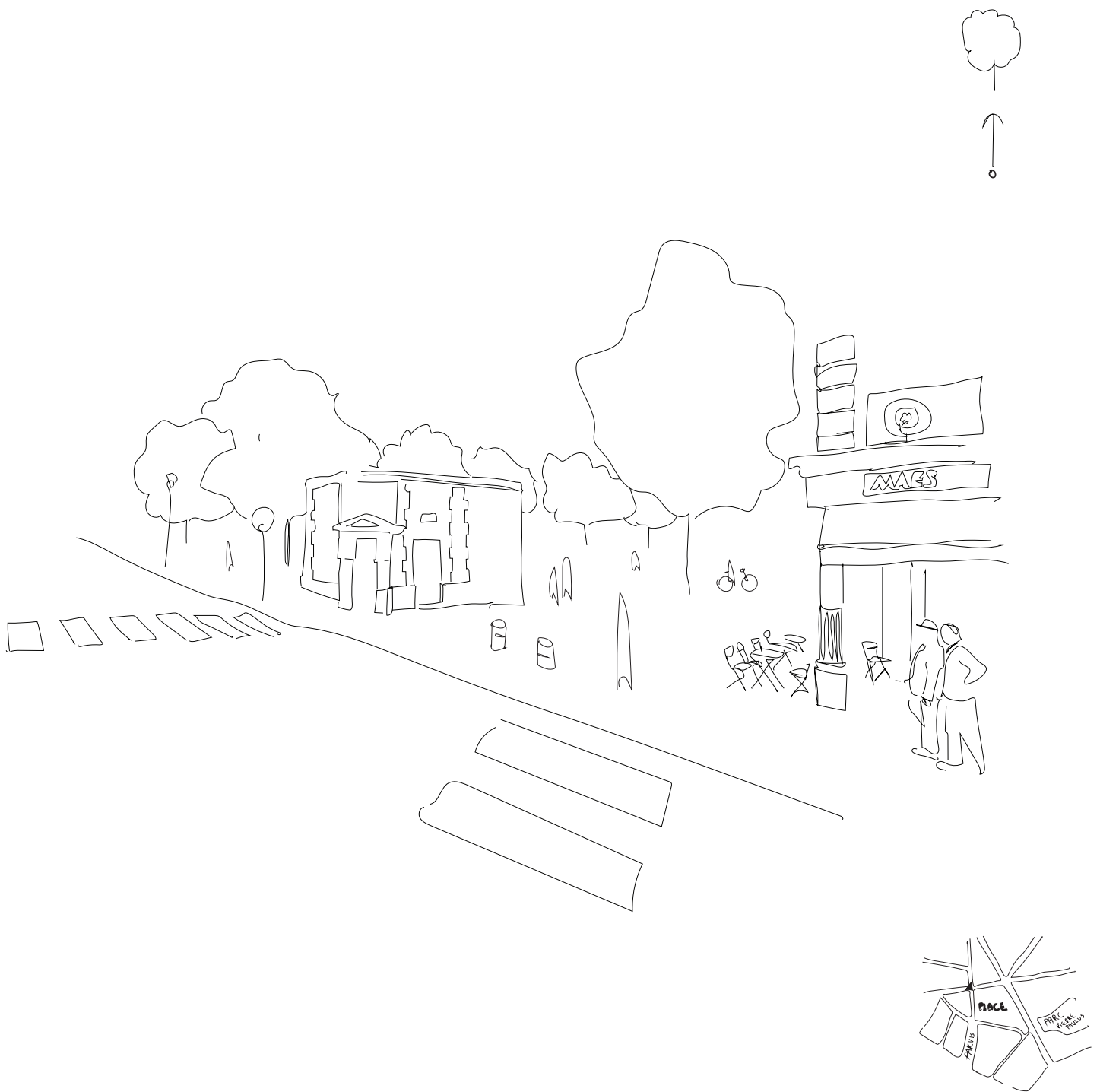


view Rue Moscou from the Parvis

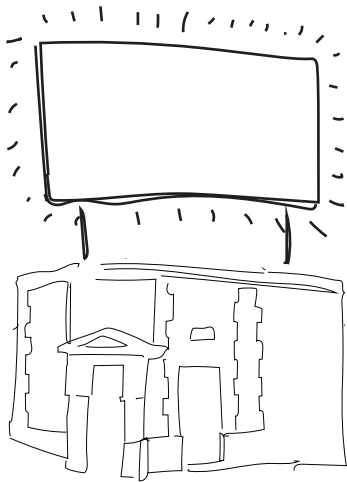


projection, view Rue Moscou from the Parvis

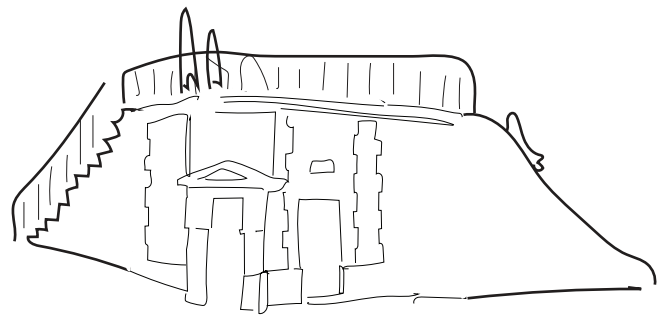




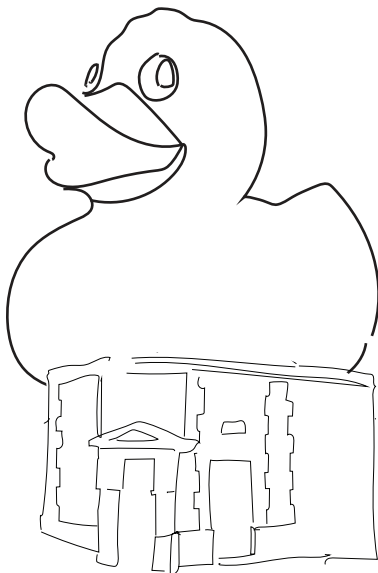
This volume situated in the norther corner of the square is a remain from the old factory of “La Monnaie”. Now used by Sibelga. If conserved, it would be interesting to create a dialogue with the rest of the project.



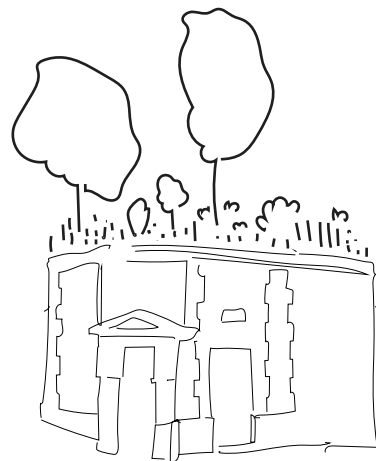
communication



belvedere

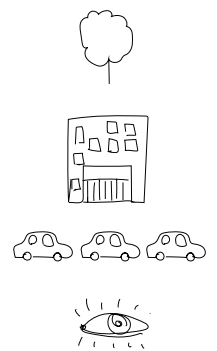


art

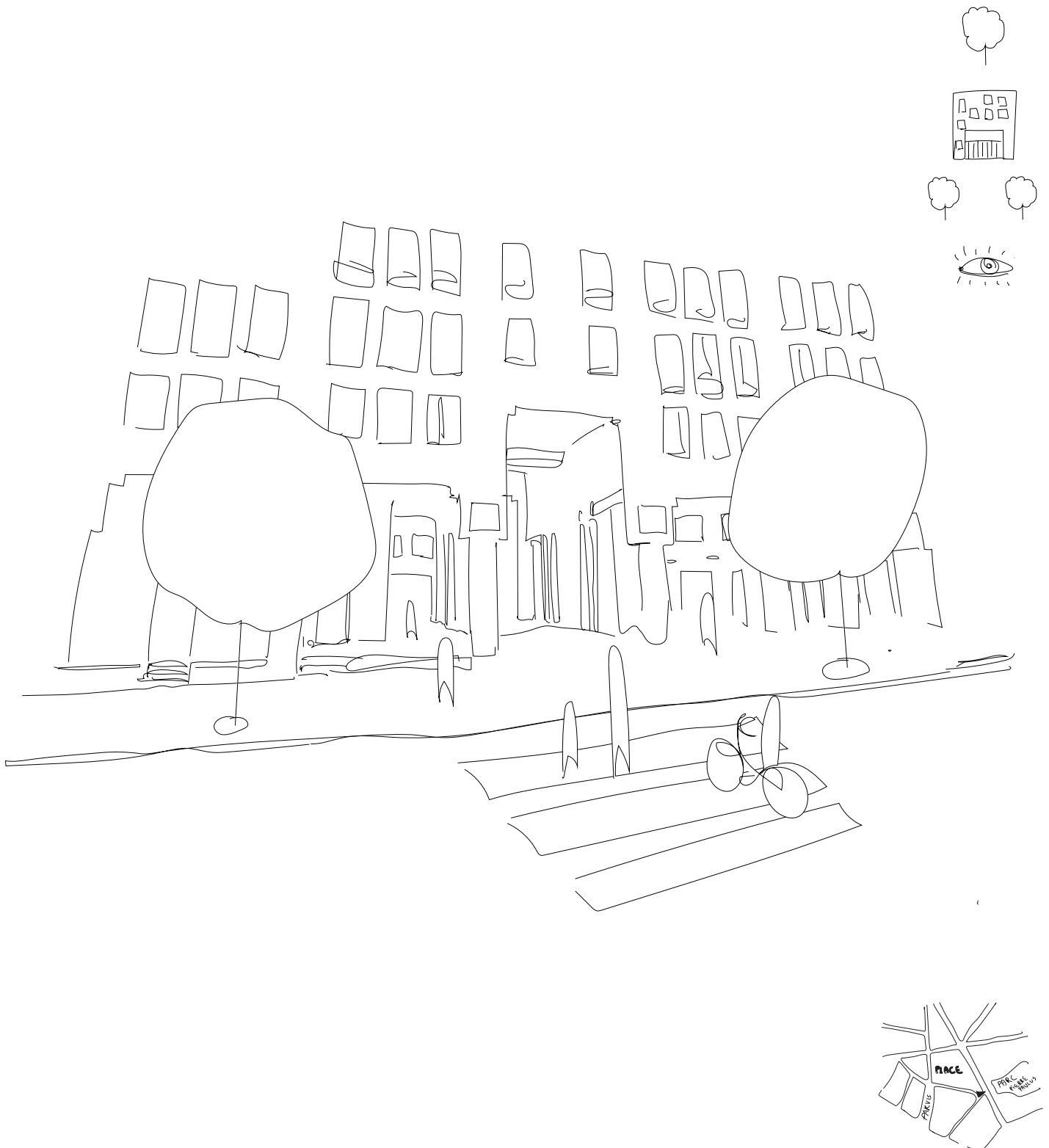


protected area

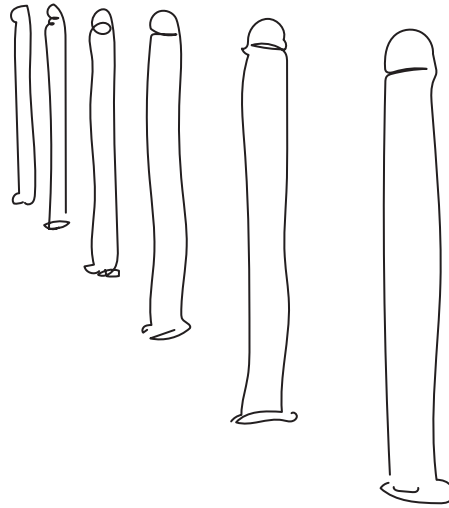
The Parc Pierre Paulus is almost invisible from the square....



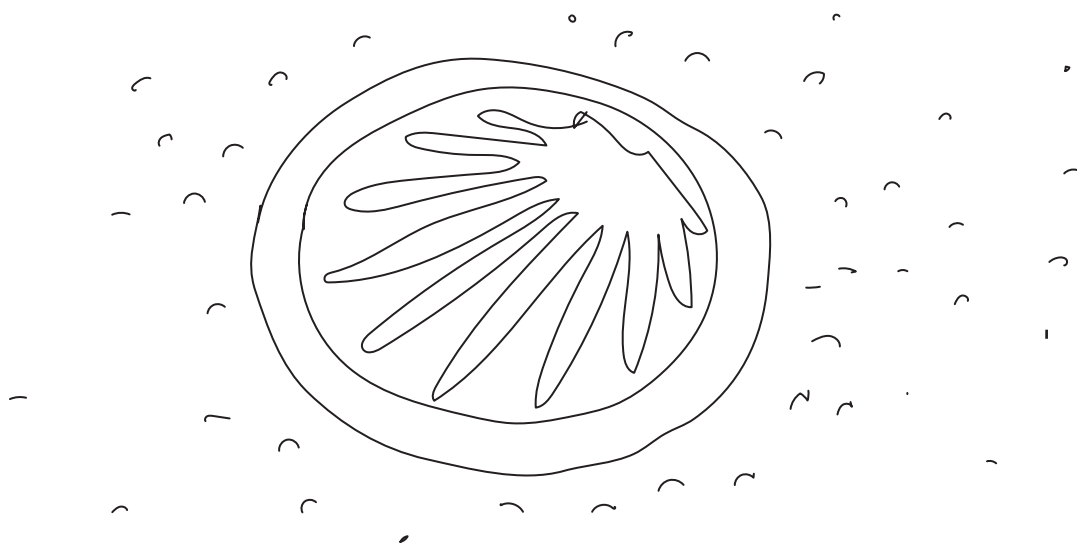
...this connection should be valorised and facilitated.



When possible, introduced non invasive signalitic.



traffic pole



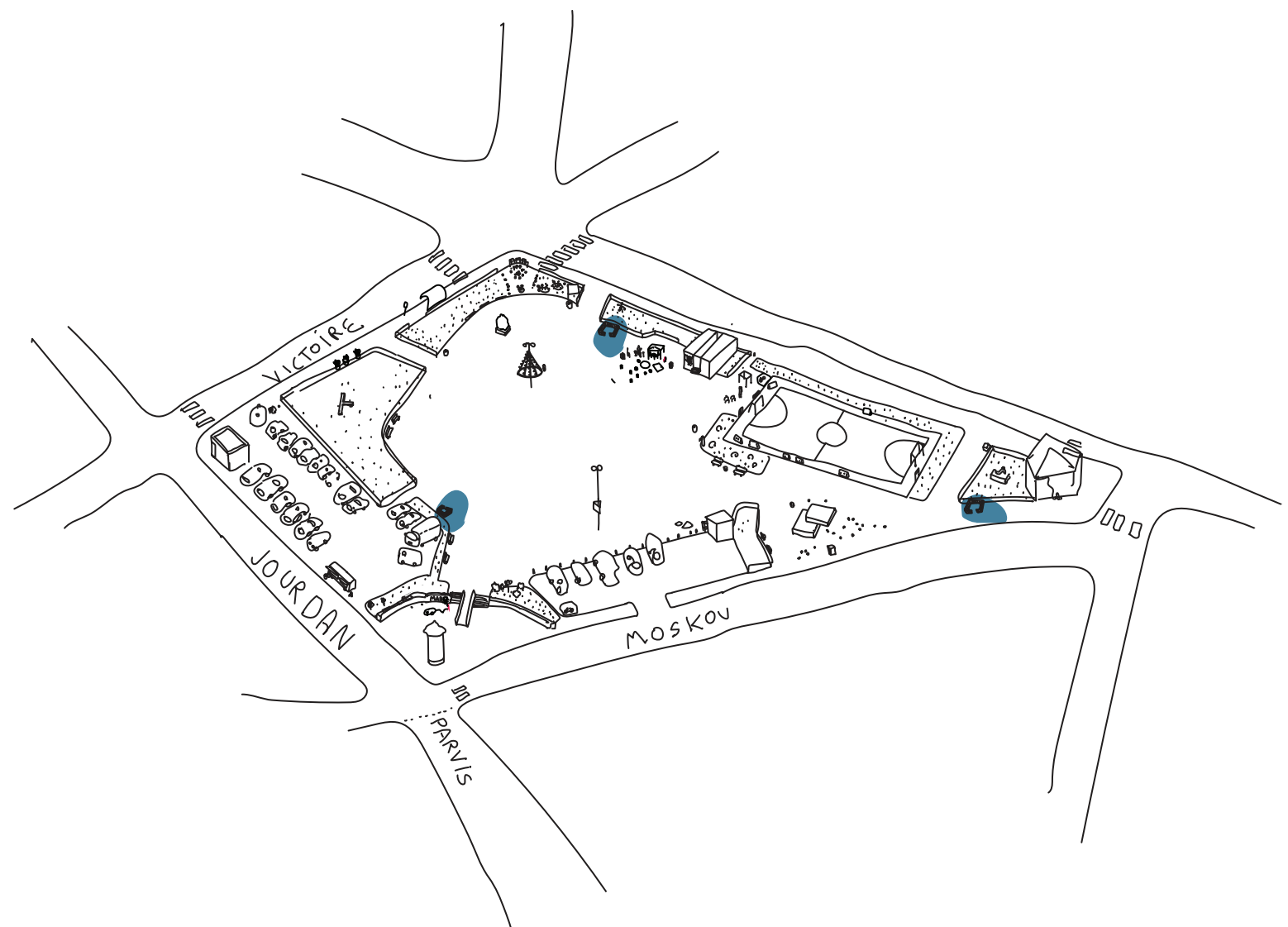
ground sign

Dog walker

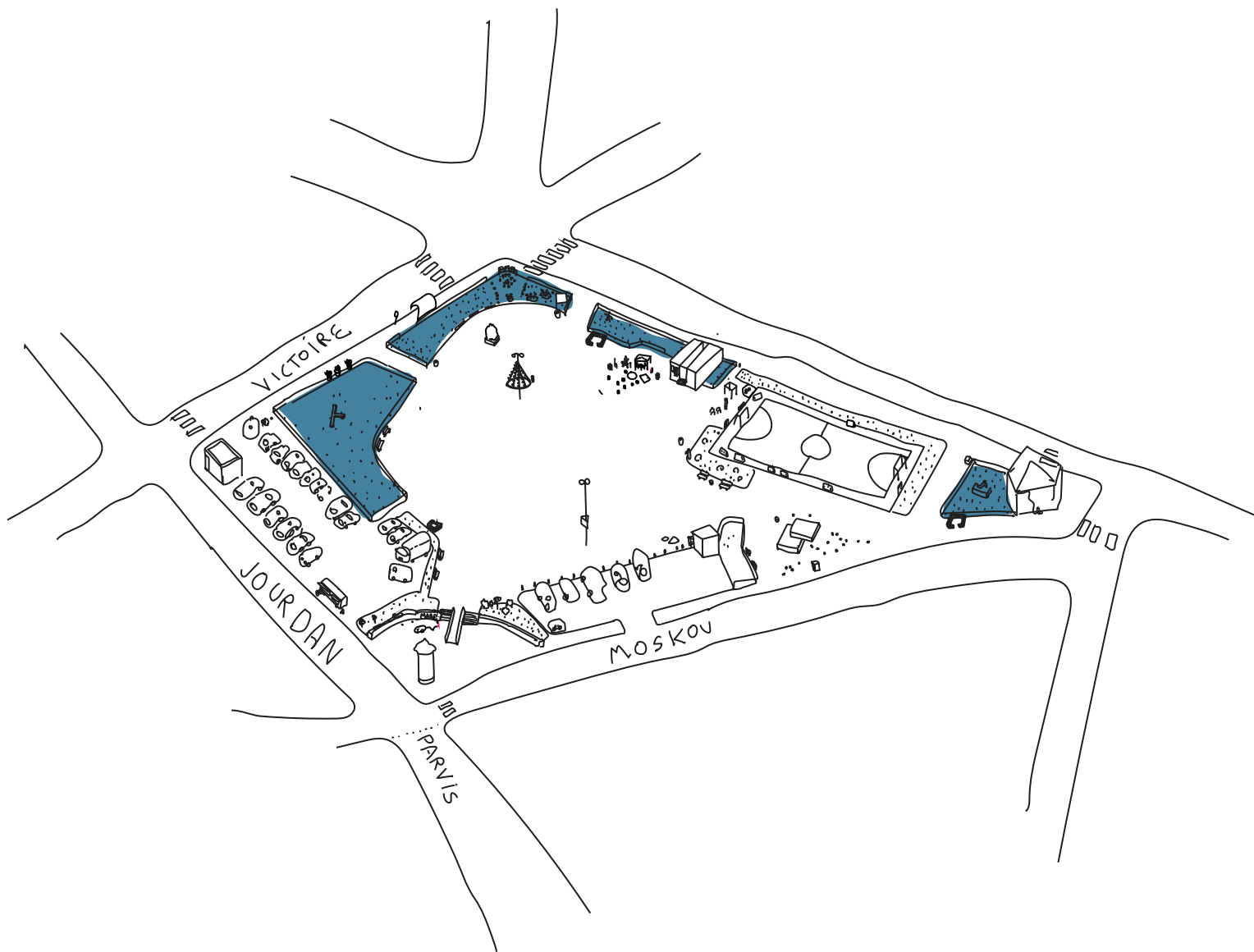
Dogs are a big thing at the square. Plenty of users come daily as it apparently is “the only place in St Gilles” (user comment) where they can let their dogs out. The dogs are present early in the mornings till late at night.



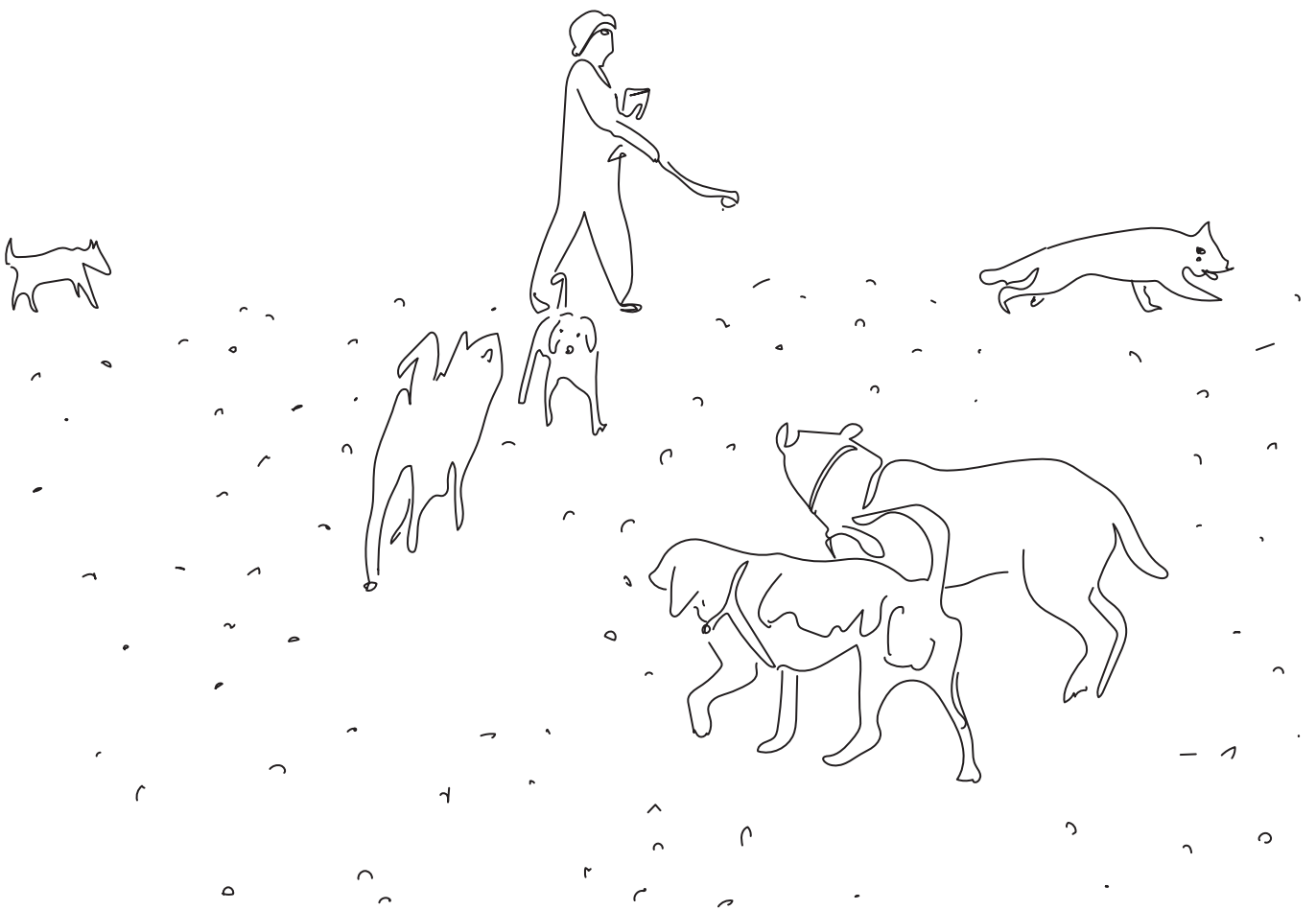
At the square there are some formal spaces where dogs are allowed to go. Small spaces of approximately 9 m².



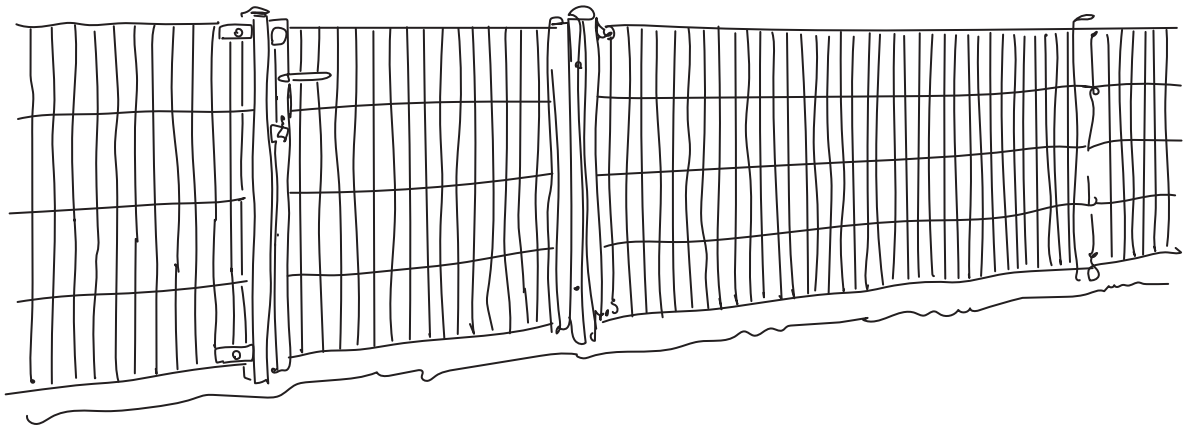
Unfortunately dog walkers prefer to use the enclosed grass areas that are not designed for this type of use. These areas allow them to release the dogs and dogs can play with each other.



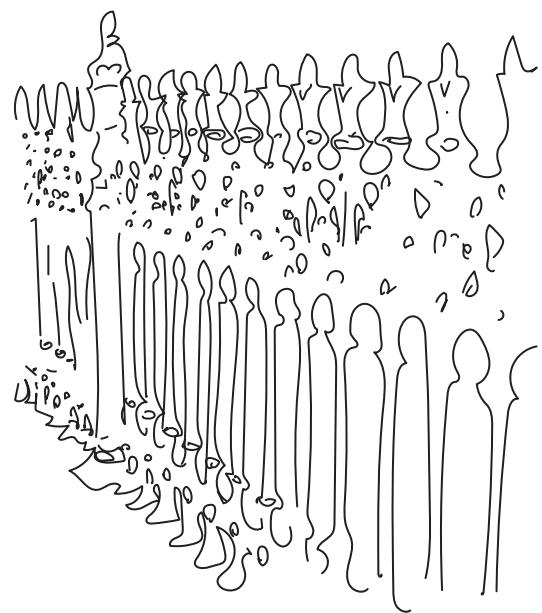
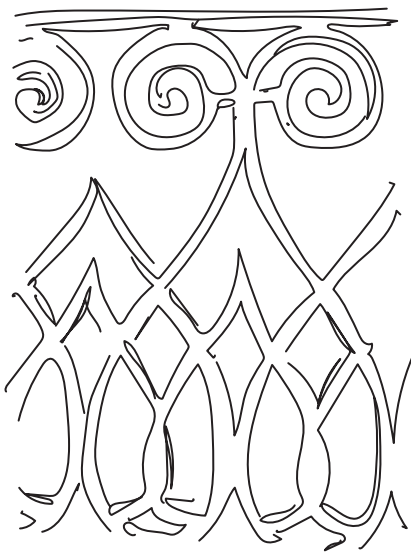
We would suggest to introduce two spaces for dogs: a generous one for the dogs as well as their owners where they can sit and chat, and a smaller space for those walking their dog in hurry.



(The current fences at the square were an economic instead of functional or sustainable choice. We would strongly suggest to introduce more qualitative fences / objects that can resist vandalism and shocks. (particularly if vehicles may circulate around).



currently use in the square



better designs

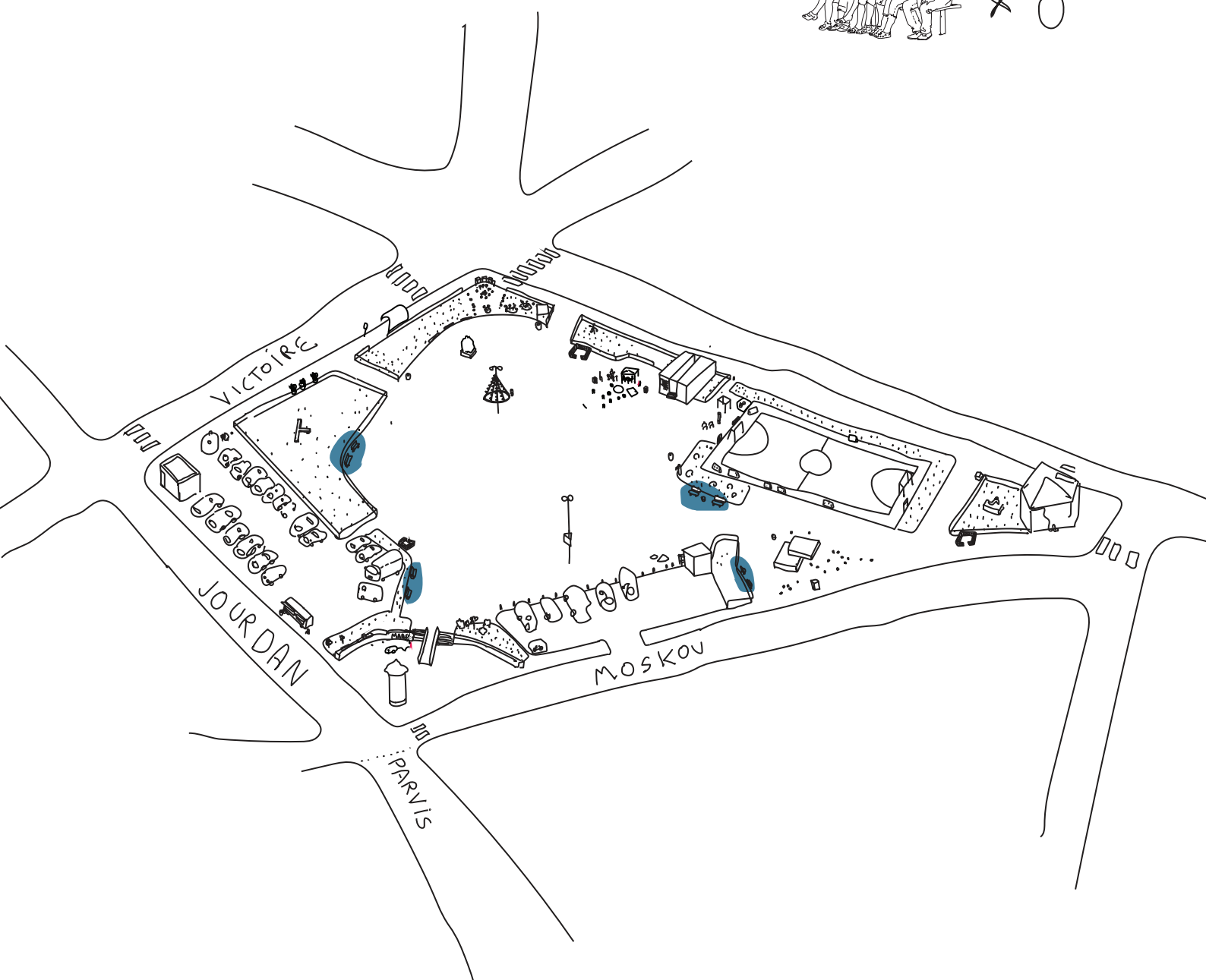
Sitting around

“ I have been living in the neighborhood for 5 years and this is the first time I sit in this square. ”

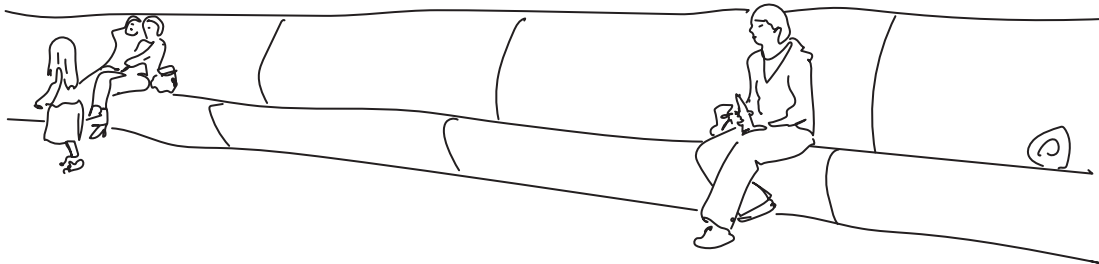
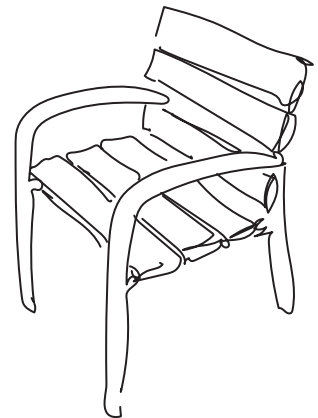
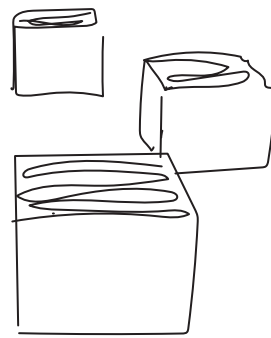
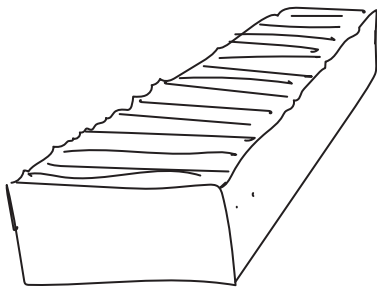
User comment after the first chair installation.



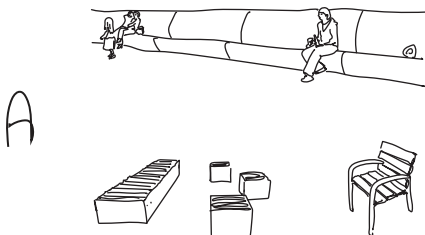
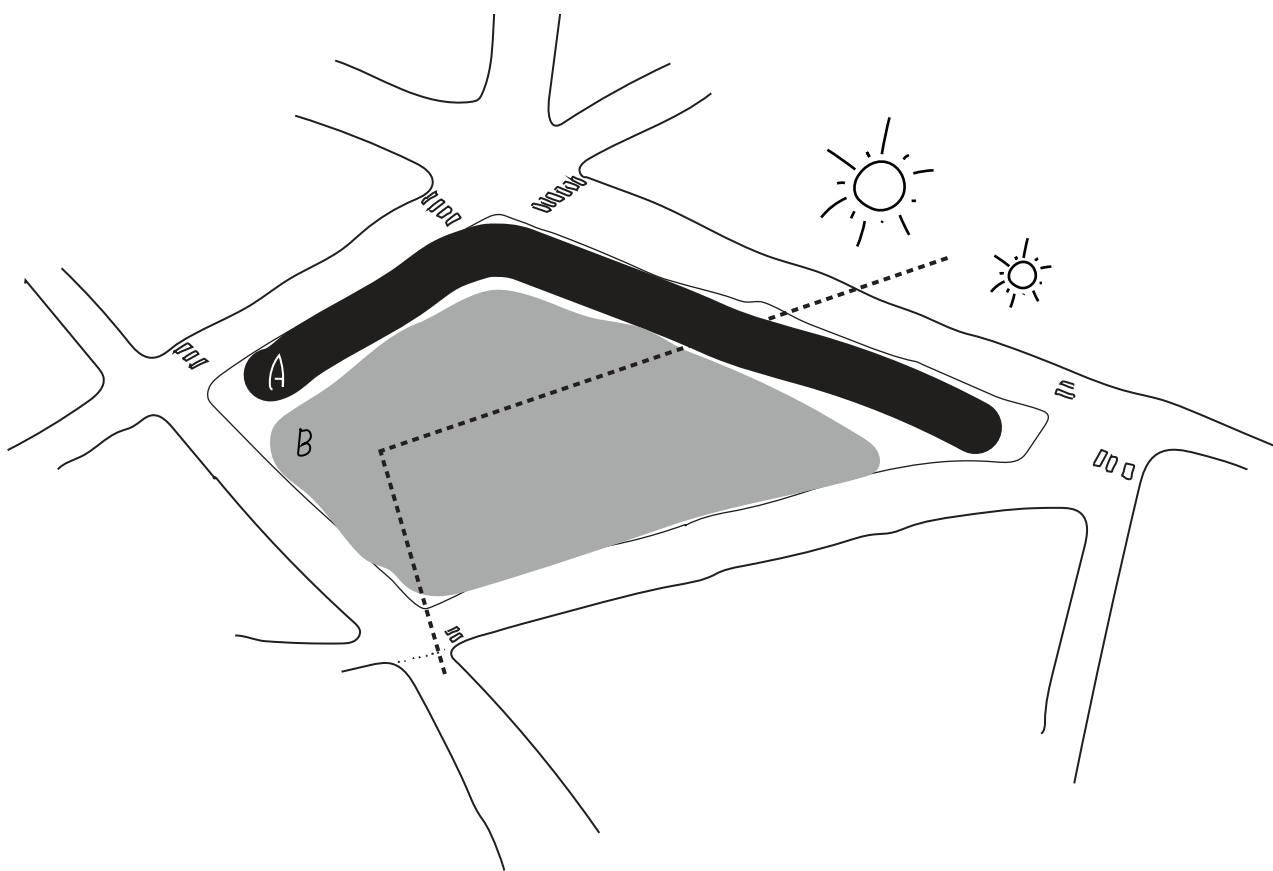
There are few benches at the square, yet there is a great demand for them. All of them placed on the outskirts of the square and there is only one type of bench.



We believe with confidence that introducing more sitting places as well as diversifying the types of benches, new/more public will be attracted to the square.

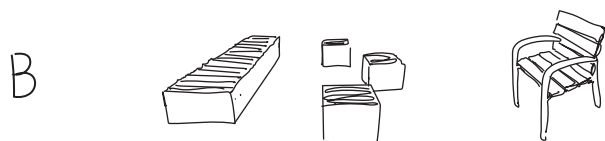


We would suggest two zonings: the central area with low density of seating's, place in clusters and isolated (B) and a high density area with a bench in the perimeter, isolated chairs and cluster (A).



A

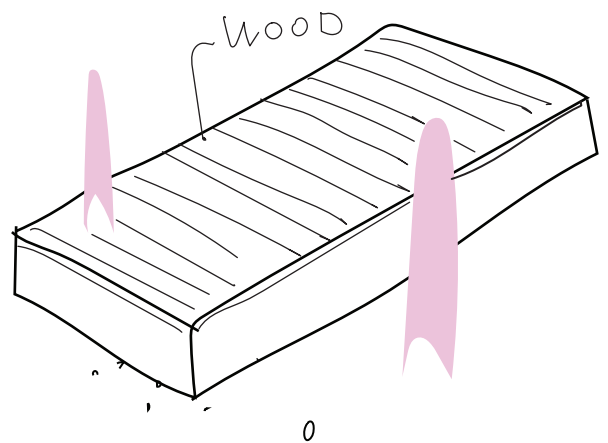
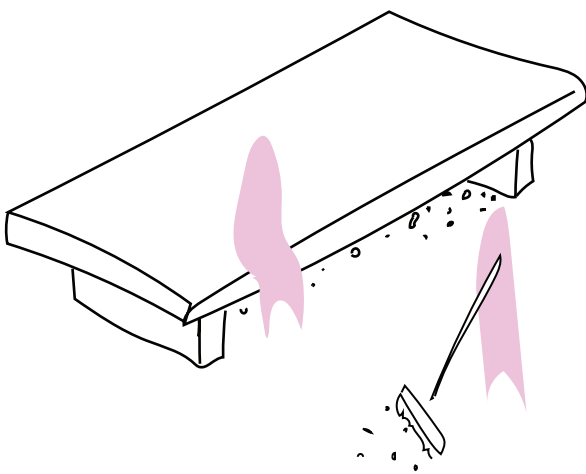
line / clusters / isolated



B

clusters / isolated

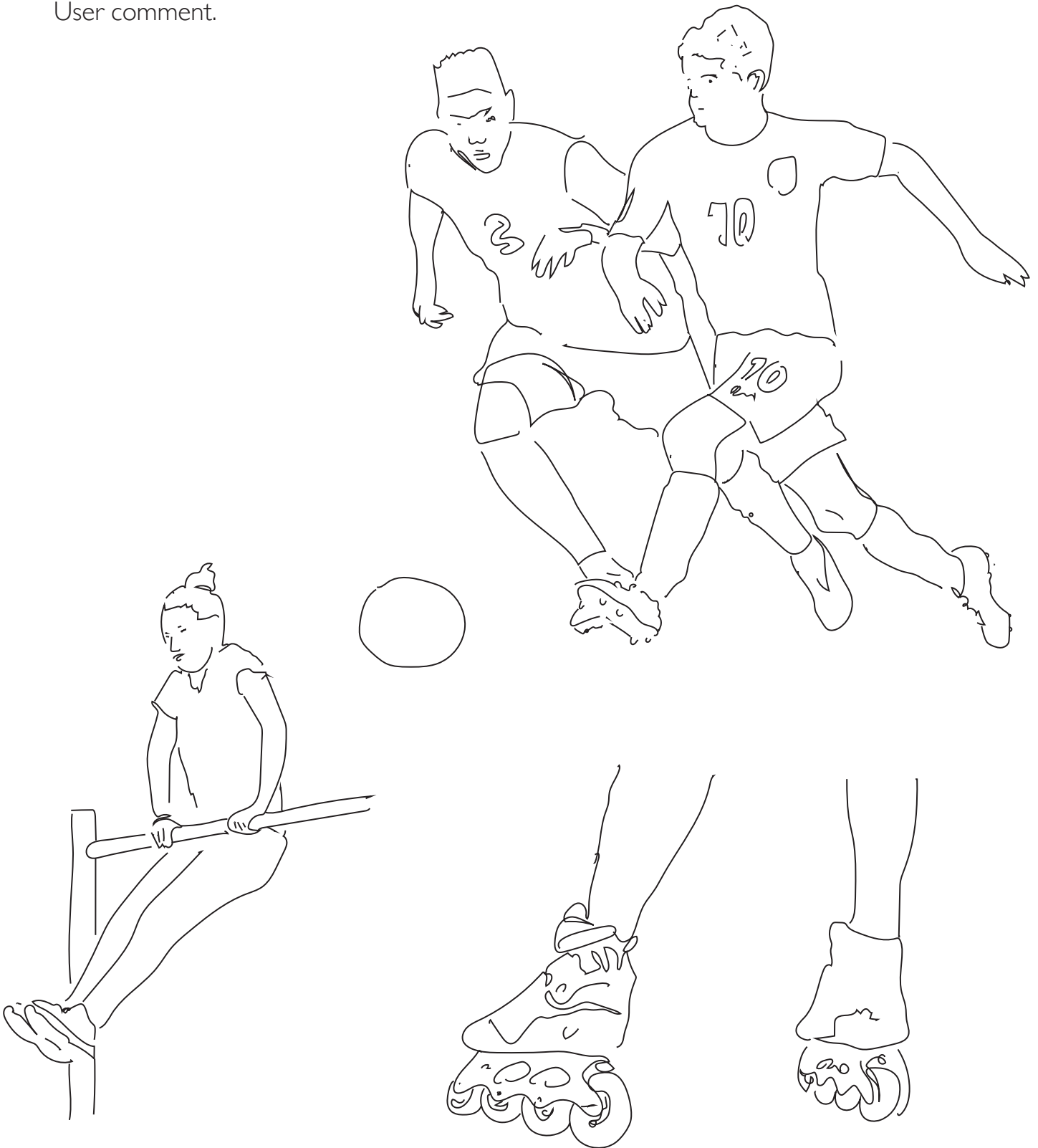
(When selecting the urban furniture, we should be attentive to maintenance and the work this requires.



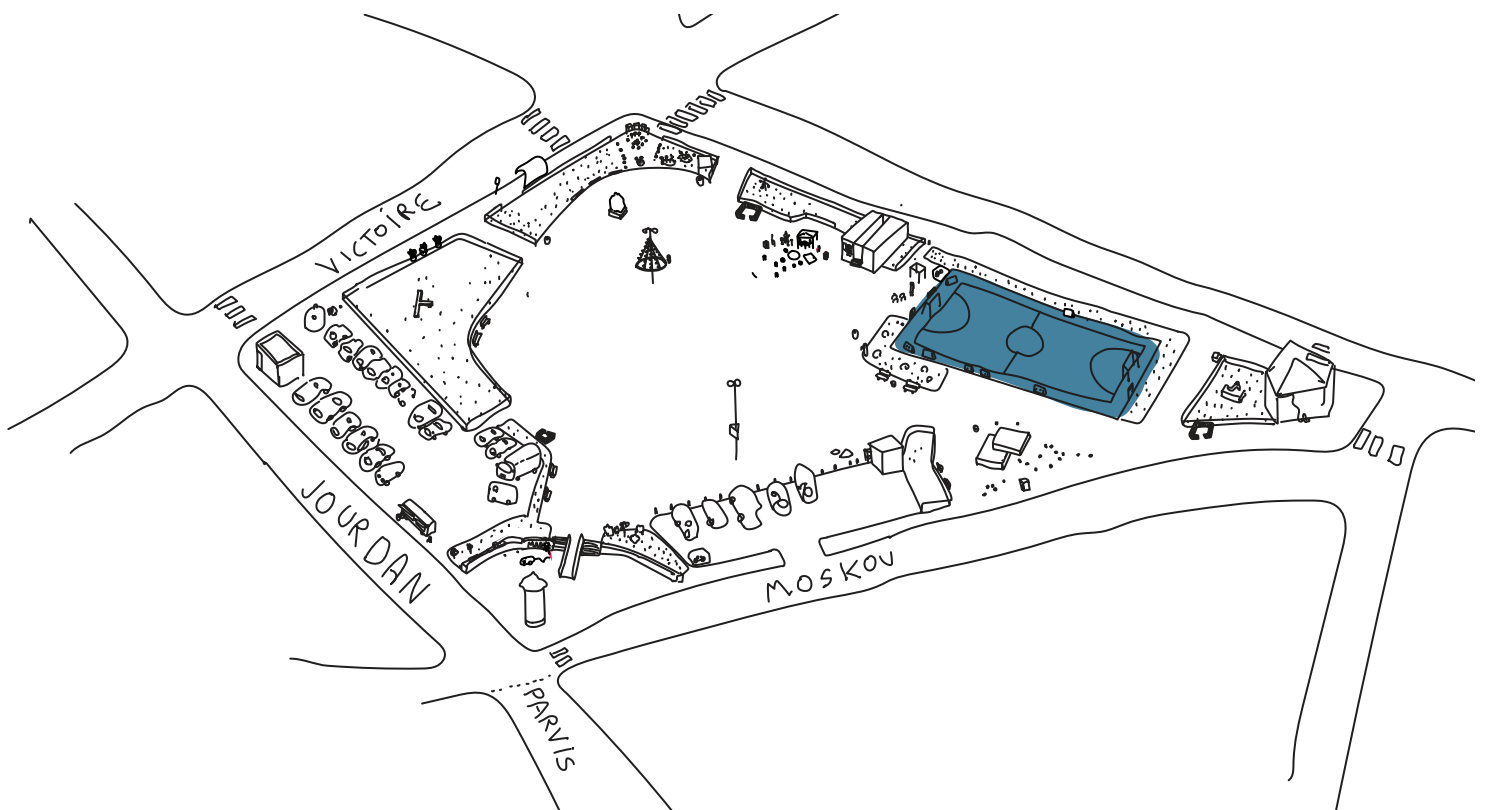
Sportive

“If you take it seriously, you come to Marie Janson”

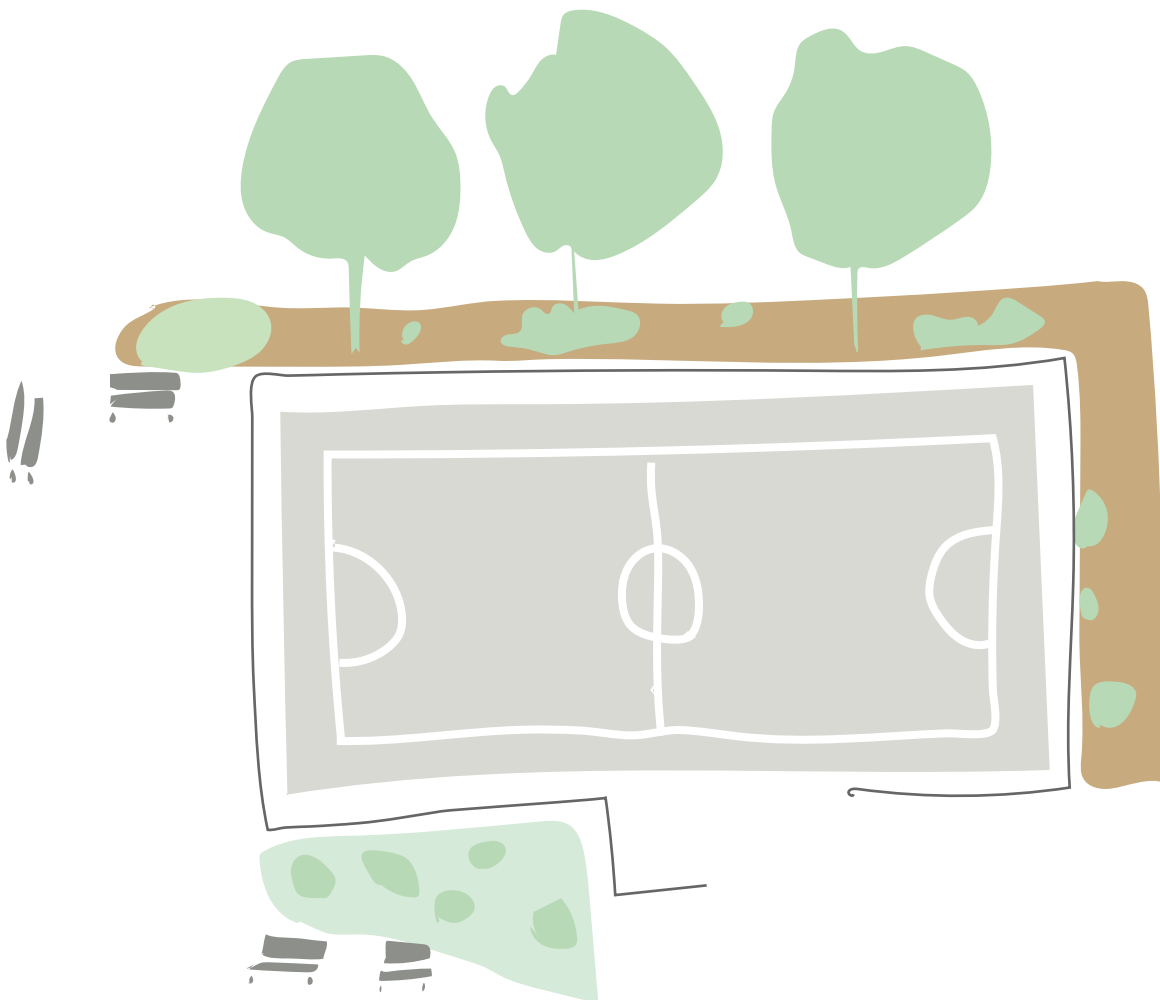
User comment.



Marie Janson has a great affluence of public because of its football field.



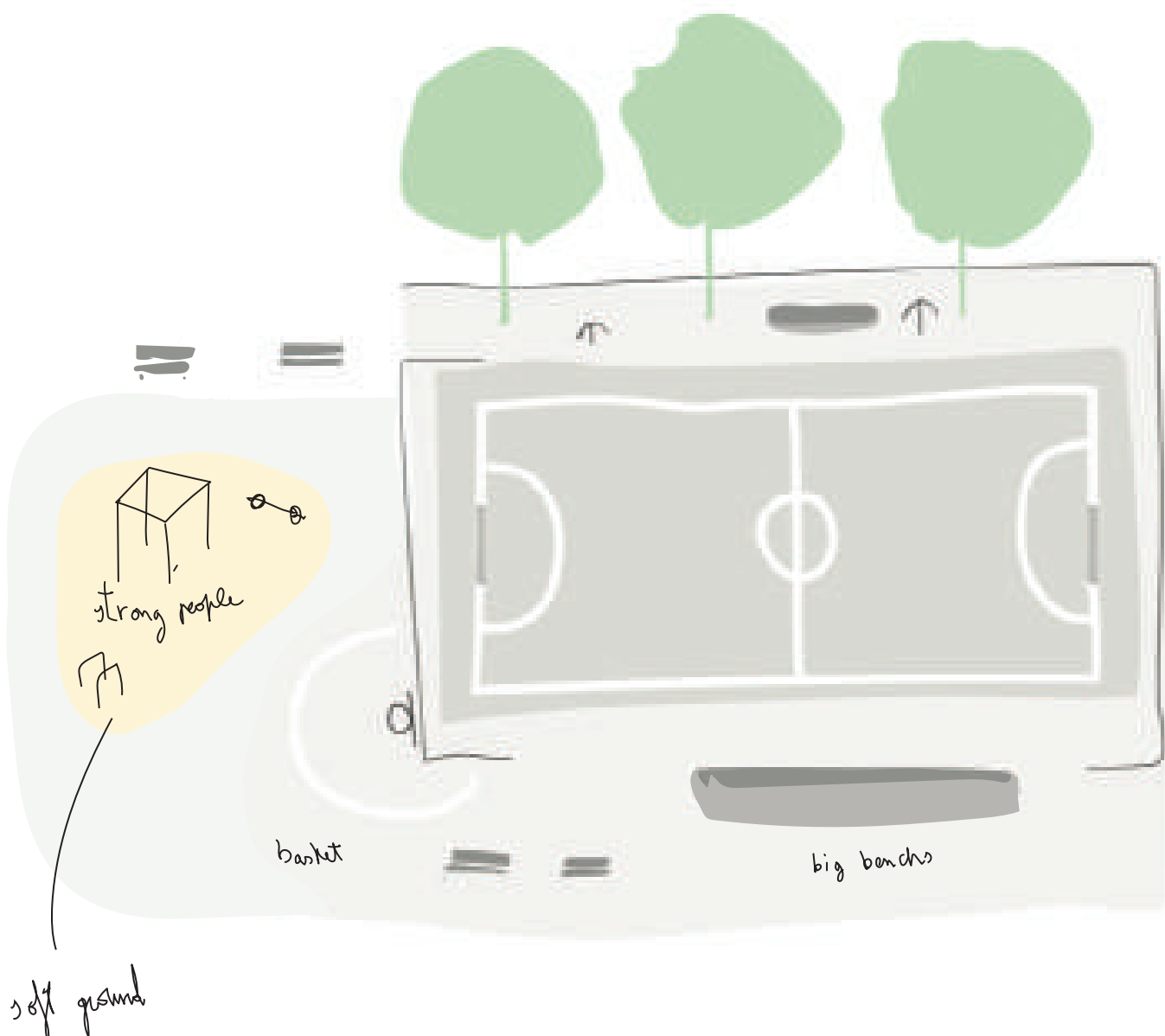
Very isolated visually and with little connection to the rest of the square (a big cage all around it).



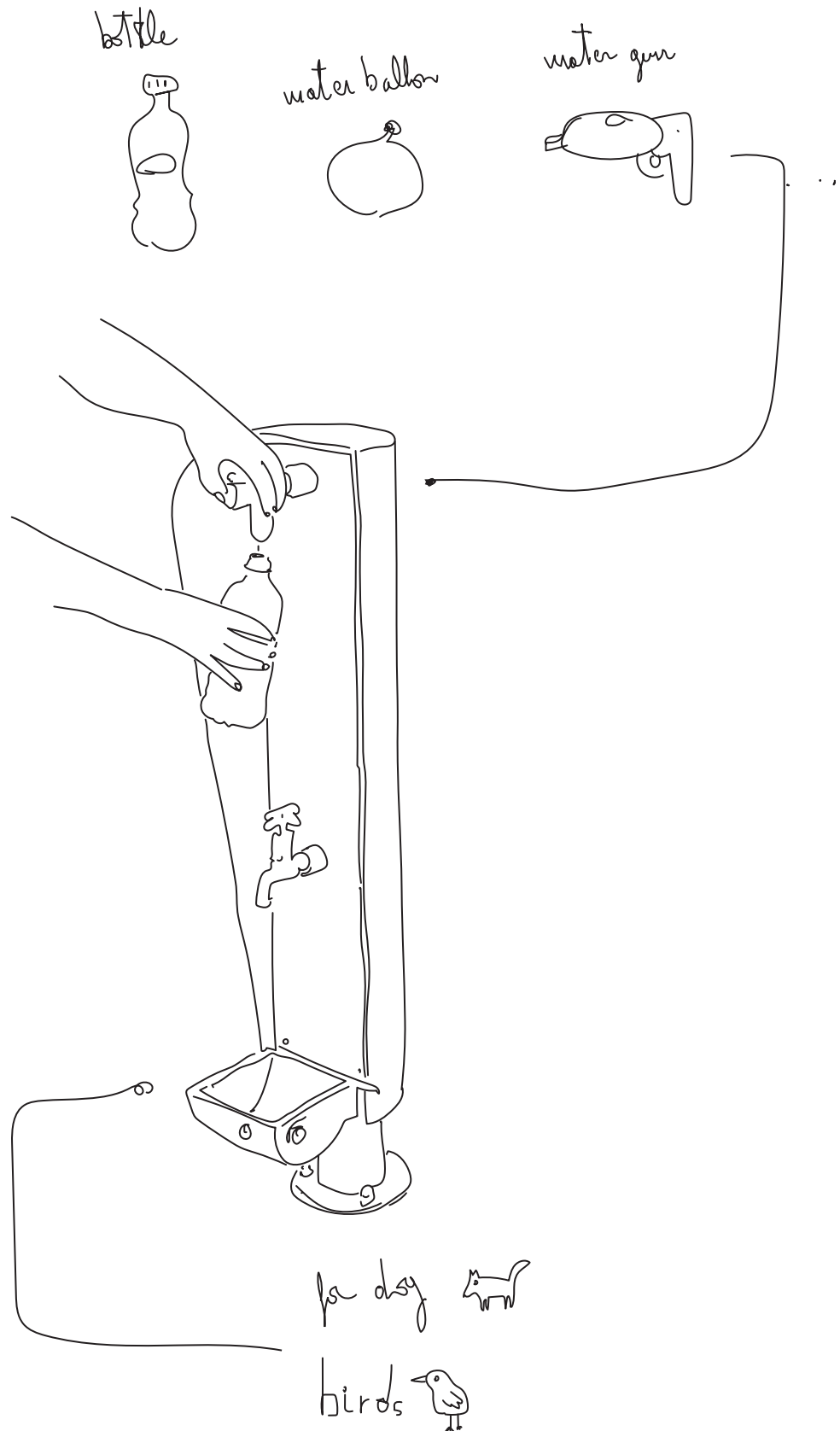
We profit from the energy of its users to improve this space. We opened it up a little to the rest of the square, introduced benches, a fitness area ...

Users were very enthusiastic with these additions and modifications and hopefully we will find them in the future project.

We would suggest to try to make this space as permeable as possible as well as visible, improving in this way the connection with the square.



There is no water point at the square. Installing it near the sportive area seems the right way forward.

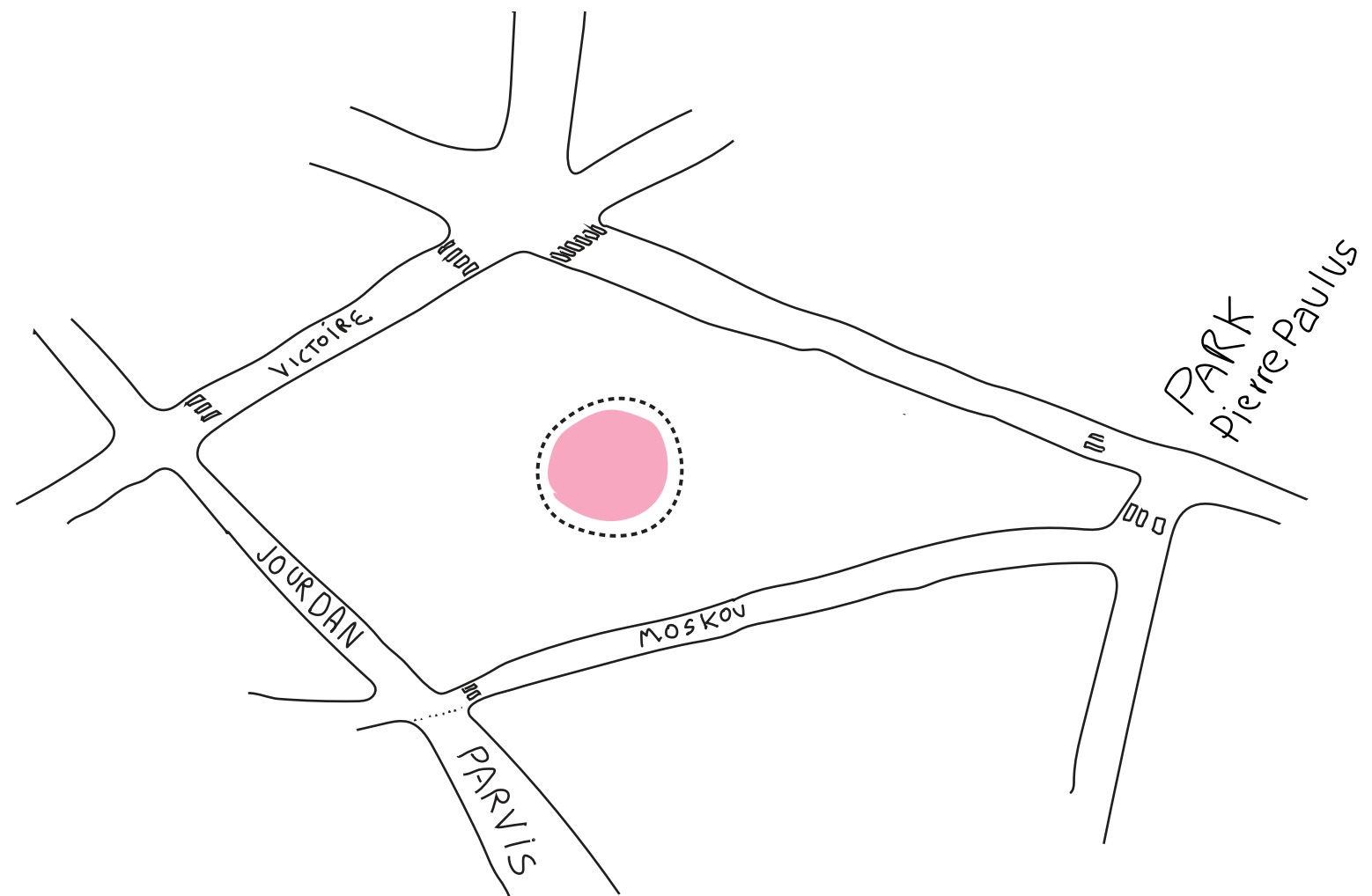


Kids games

Il est impératif de faire en sorte que la Place soit adaptée aux enfants et d'installer des équipements pour eux.

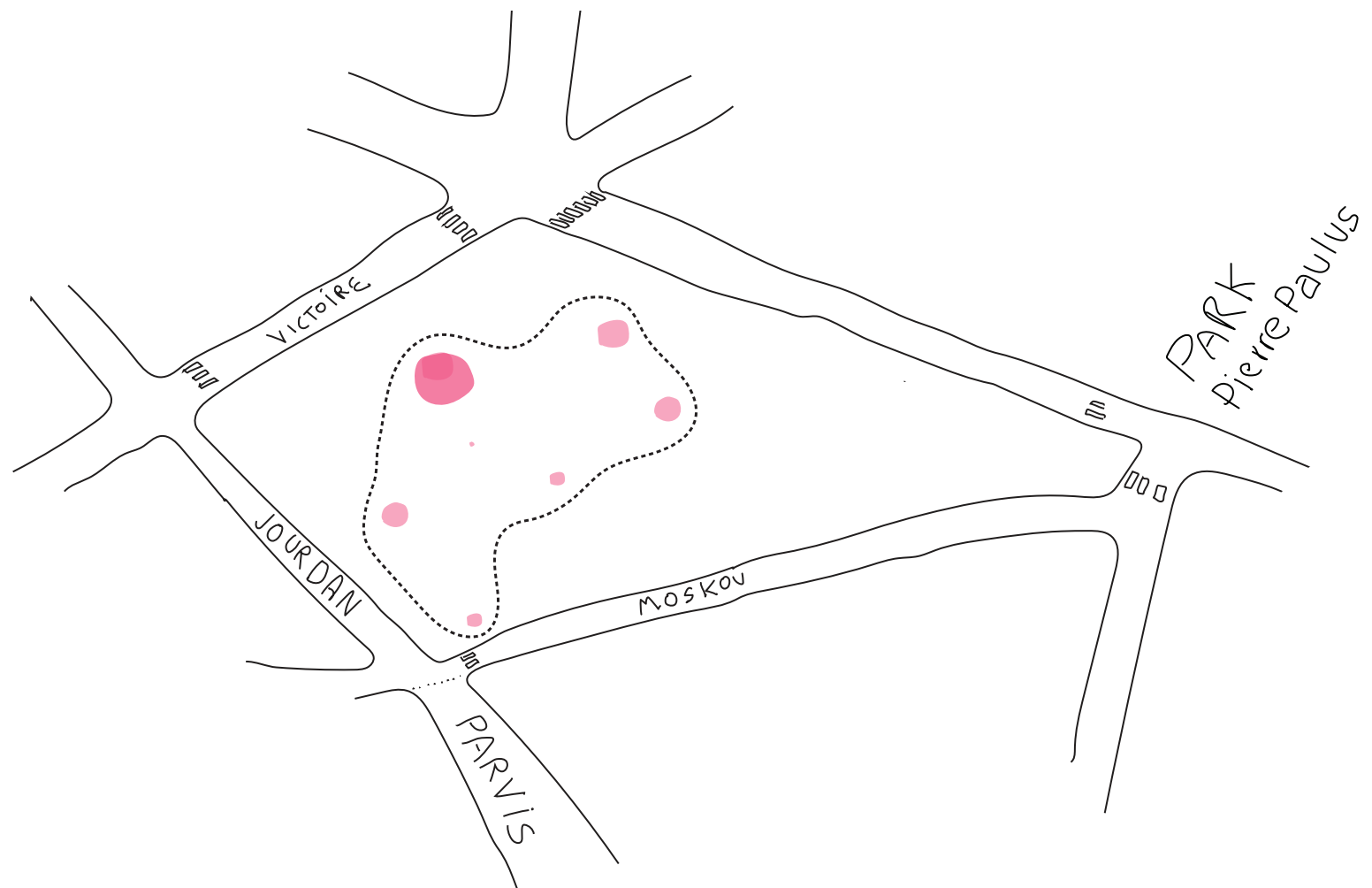


Instead of creating a unique limited area ...

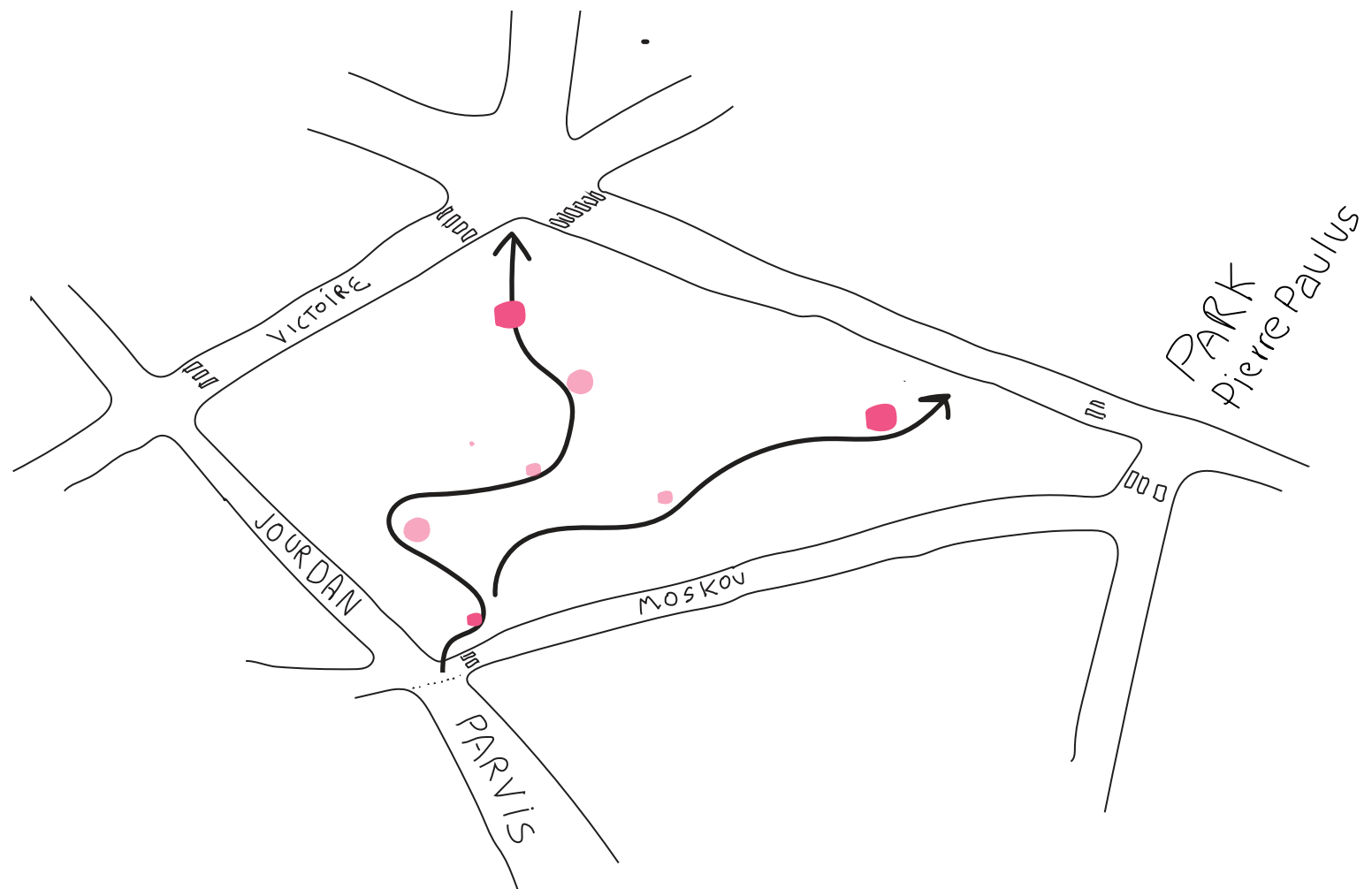


We suggest to imagine what the kids would need to appropriate the square. An idea is to introduce relatively small elements around the square that are an invitation for the kids to play in a way that they can move freely in between these small zones and eventually appropriate the entire square.

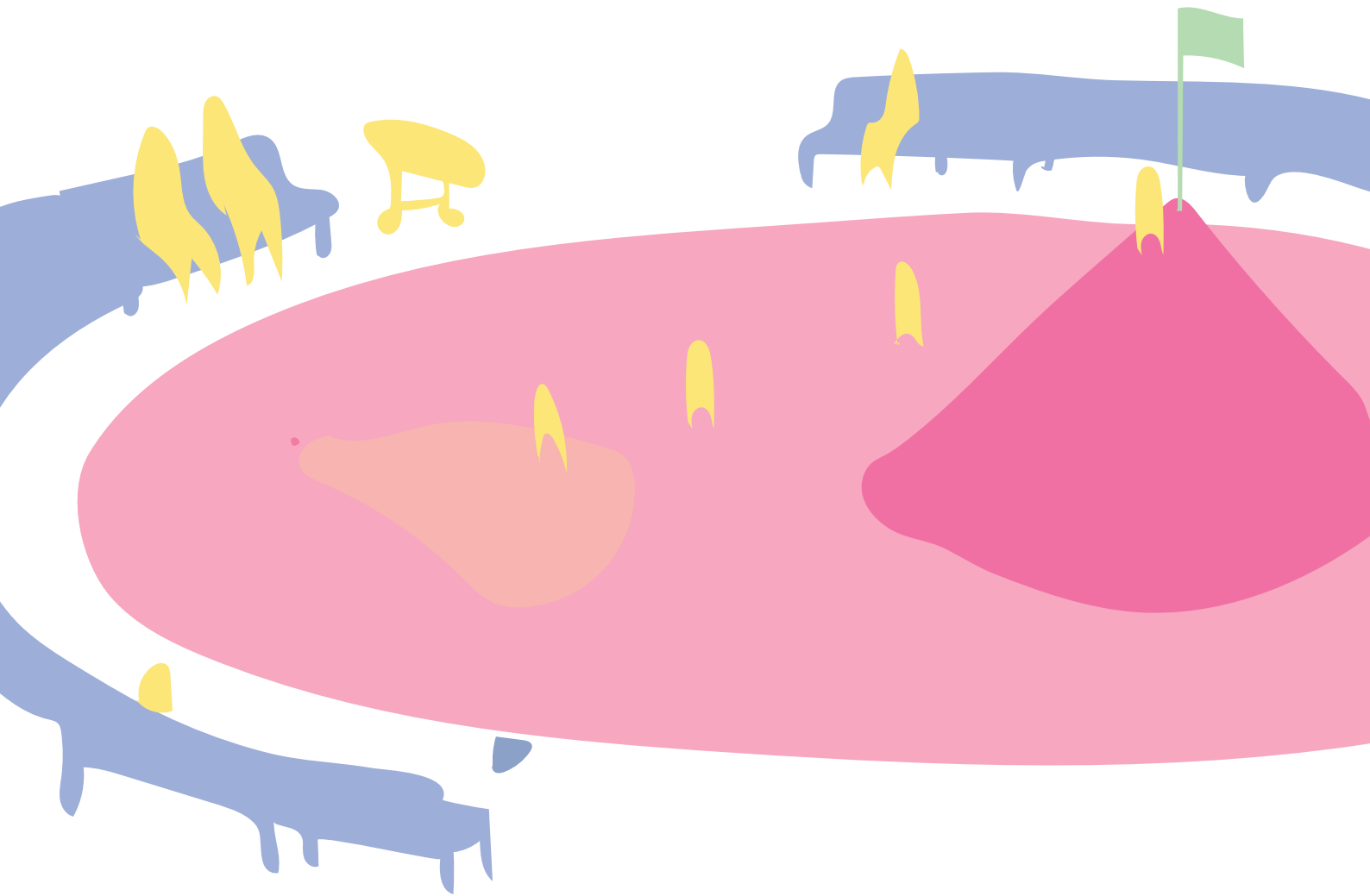
It may be an interesting option to densify a single kids spot and then have other small zones elsewhere.



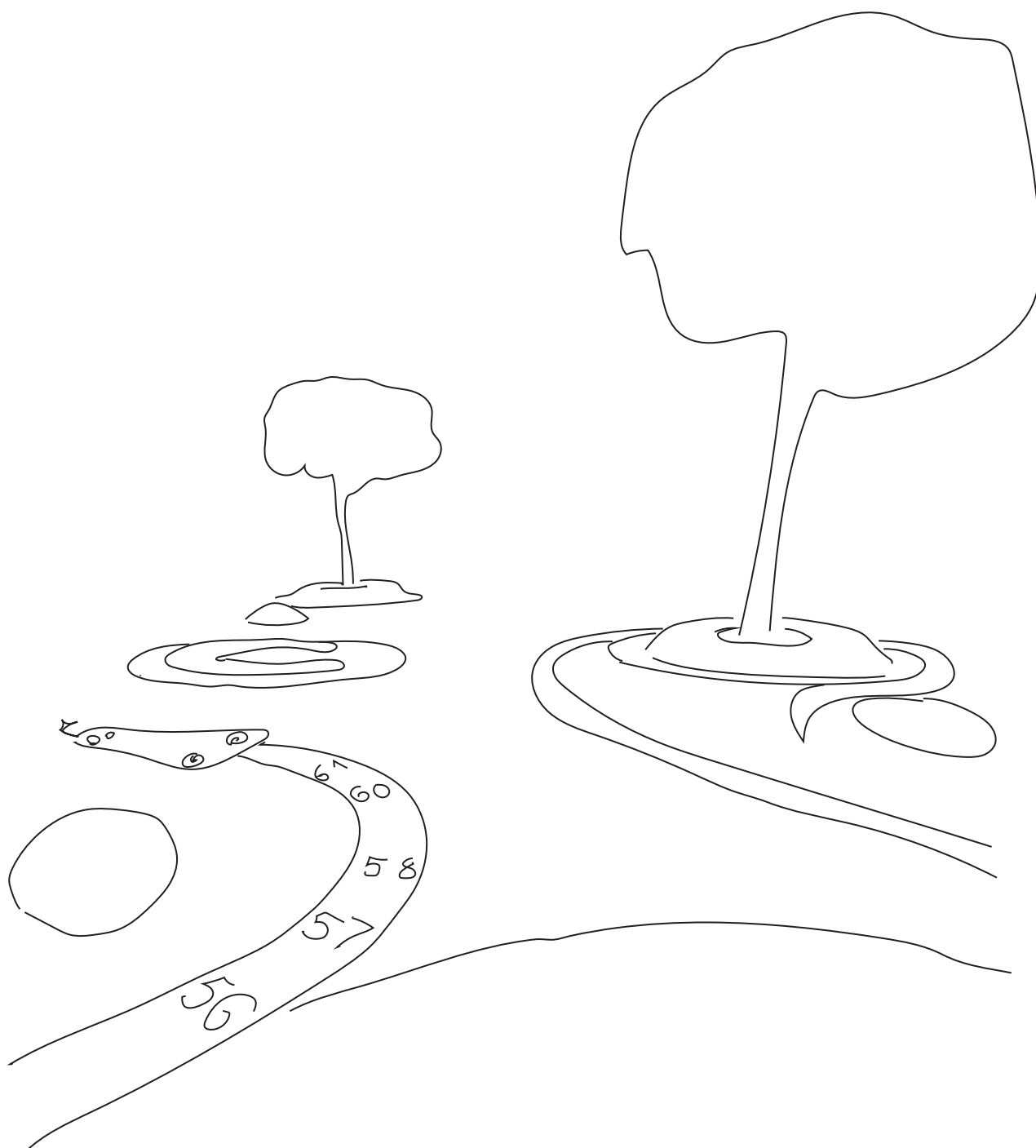
Introducing small elements could create a route through the square, making it a fun parkour for the kids.



On the other hand, a bigger playground would be a place where parents can sit down as well.



We are particularly fan of designs that work with ground topography rather than introducing objects.



Vegetation

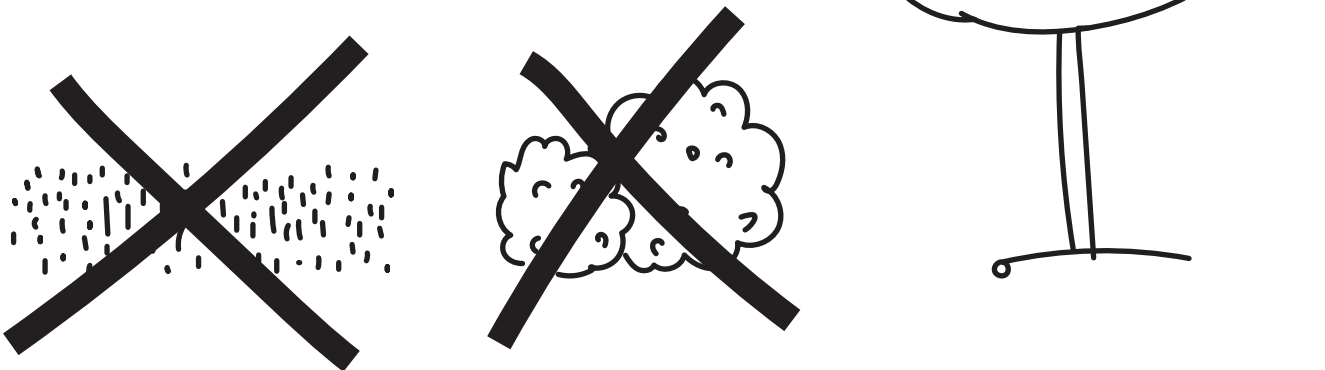


Within the actual context of the square, we would discourage the introduction of grass or bushed areas. These areas are in a terrible state at the moment, mostly because of the difficulties in maintenance by the communal services.

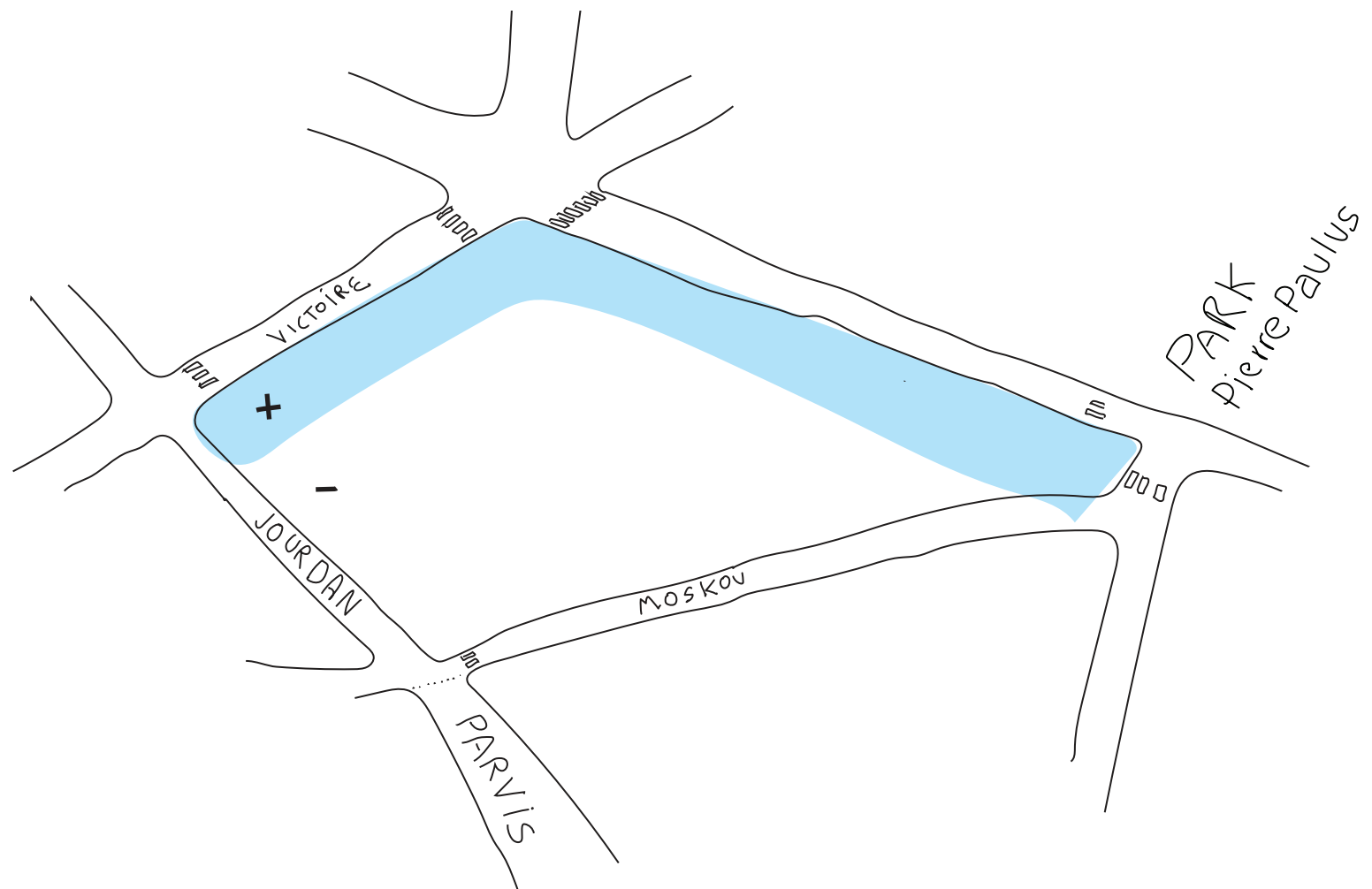
The Park Pierre Paulus (just next door) is protected from main traffic and flows of people, making it a place for relaxation. A reassuring place that invites the users to lie-down in the grass.

Marie Janson on the other hand is an open park (24/7) with a high intensity of users and uses, and with high intensity traffic around it. We do not believe that necessary conditions will be meet to welcome the users to lie-down in the grass and relax.

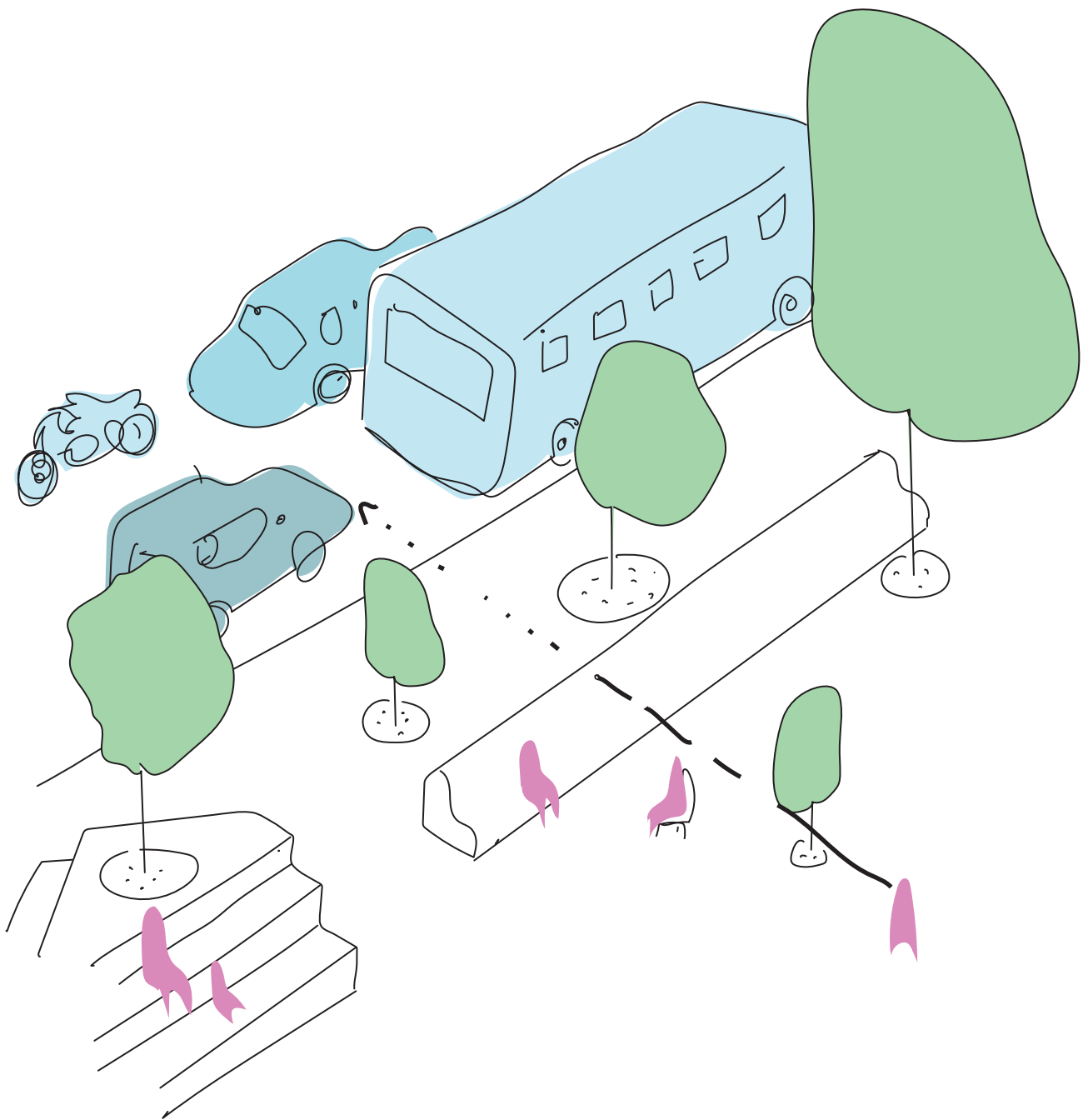
We believe that a mineral ground is more appropriate, as it is easier to appropriate (more potential uses) and easier to maintain.



We would propose to densify the vegetation in the connecting street, Rue de la Victoire and Rue Hotel de Monnaies. In order to filter acoustic and visual contamination and bring more light to the central area.

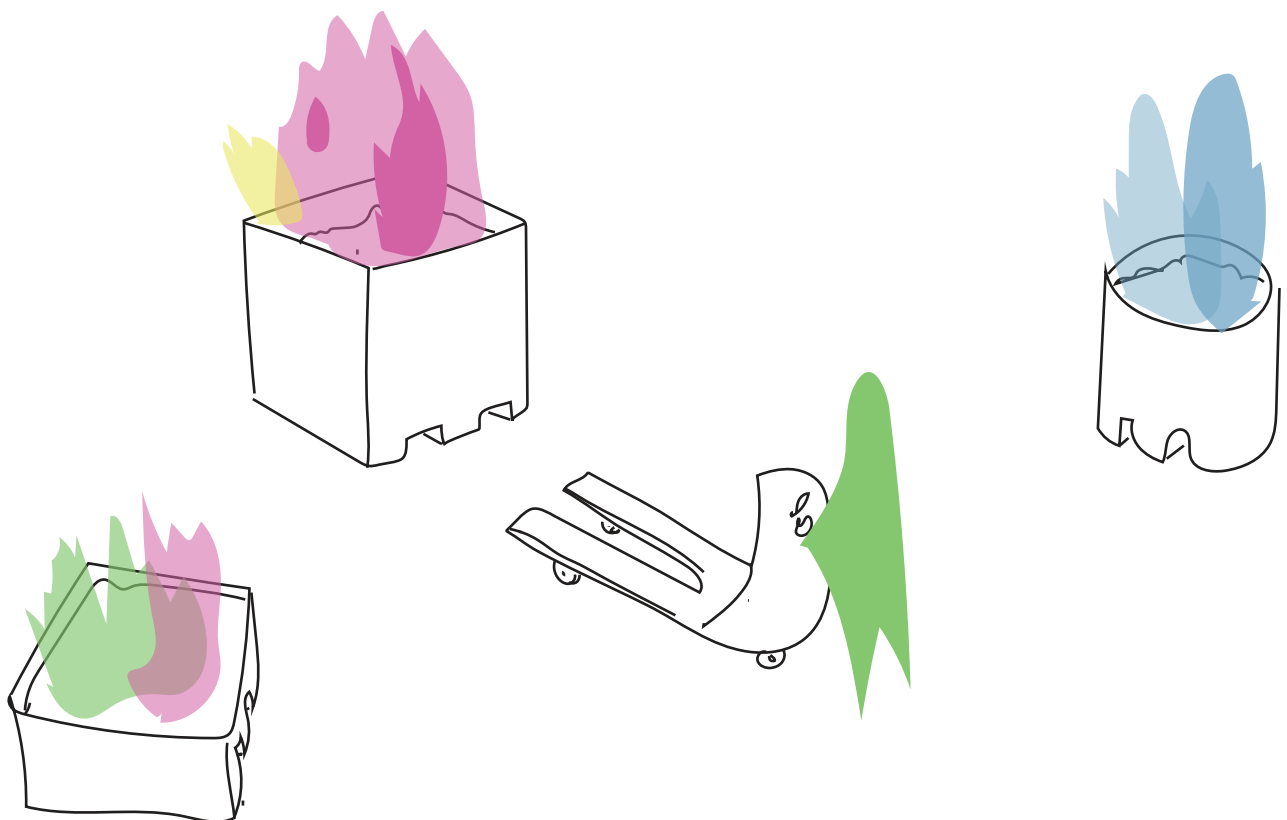


Filtering the view would be good to introduce trees that are smaller than the existing ones, such as cherry trees and almond trees. Some urban furniture can help to isolate the square as well.

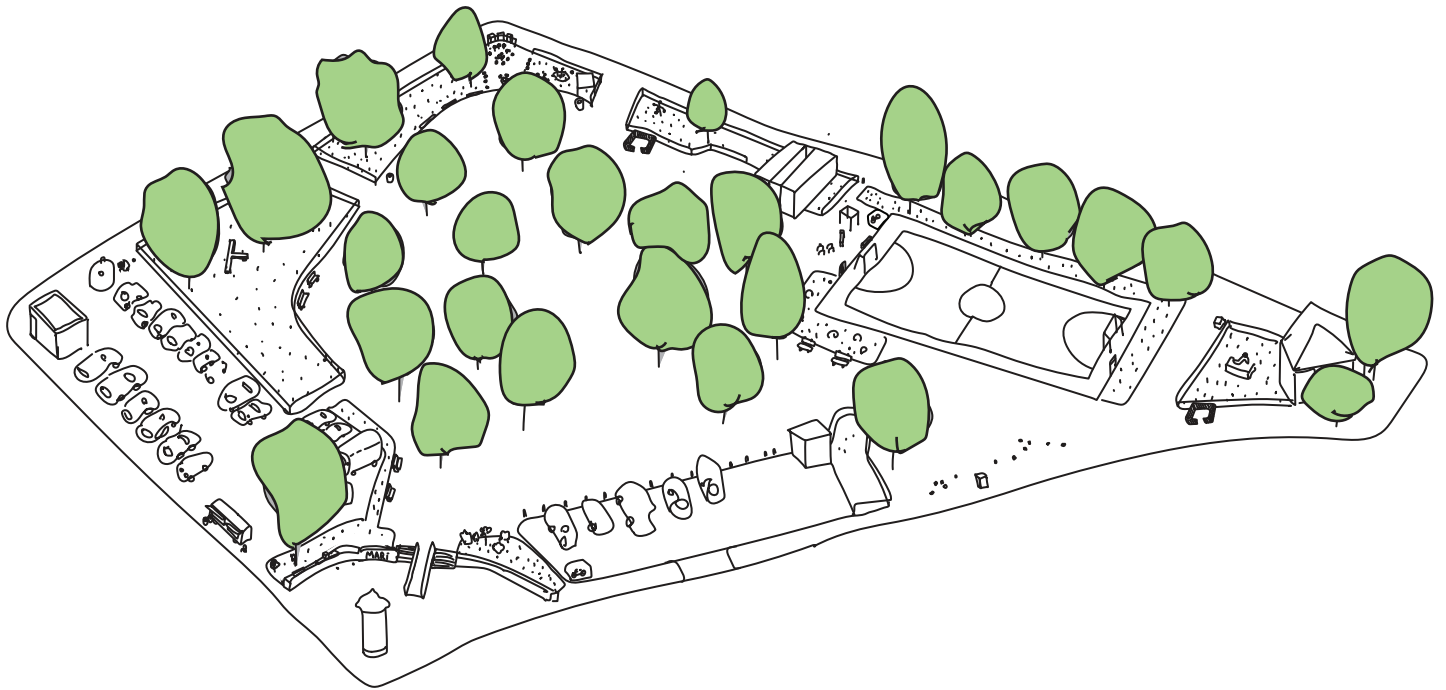


(During the first year of the interventions at the square we had the opportunity to introduce many pots , in many sizes. The square became a sort of clumsy Italian garden.

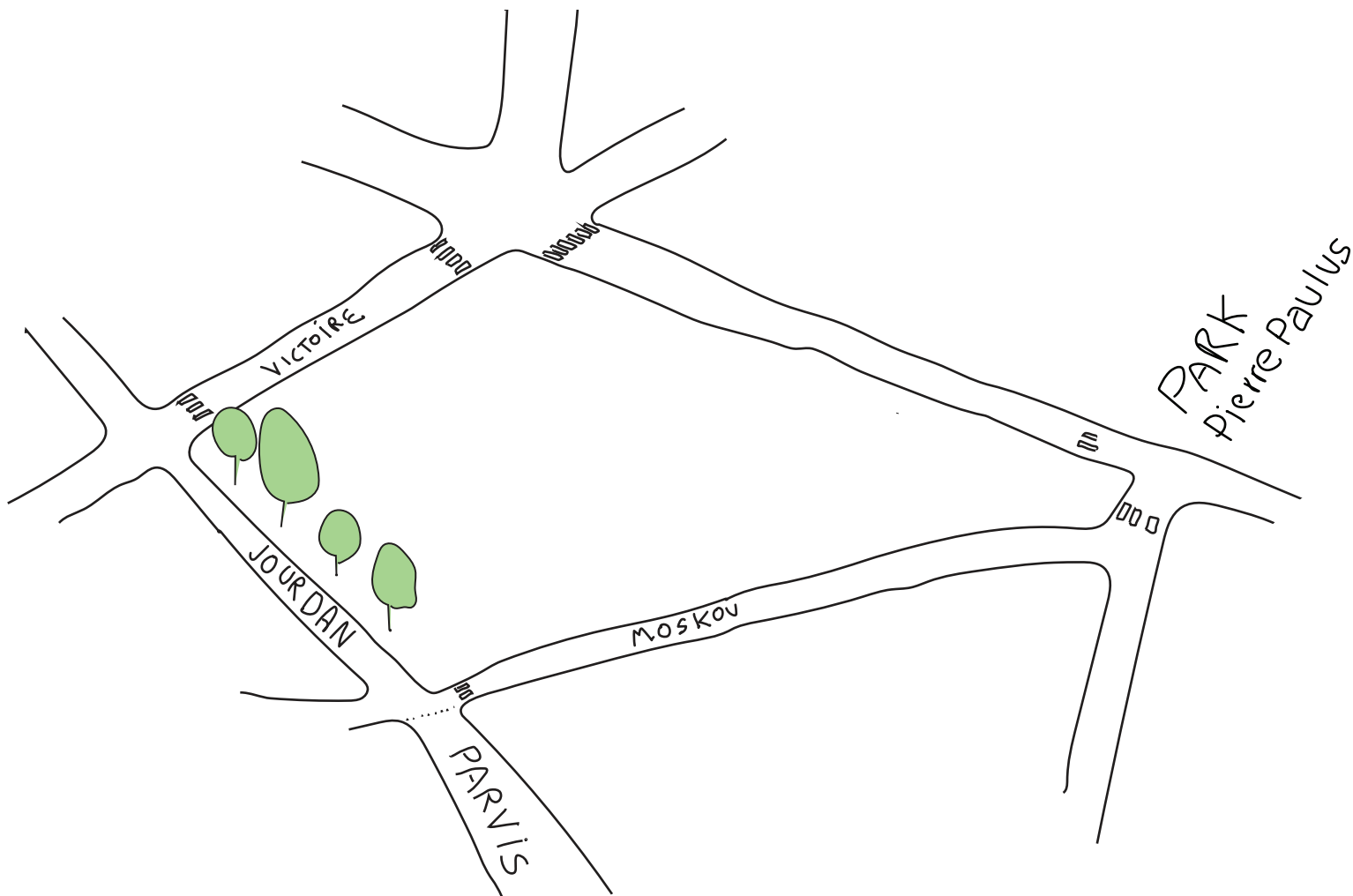
Suddenly amateur gardeners started to look after these pots and plants and created new configurations. People who never stopped at the square, now had a good excuse to stop and look around. Introducing mobile pots could be a way to diversify the types of vegetable elements. Making them mobile would allow the creation of different configurations.



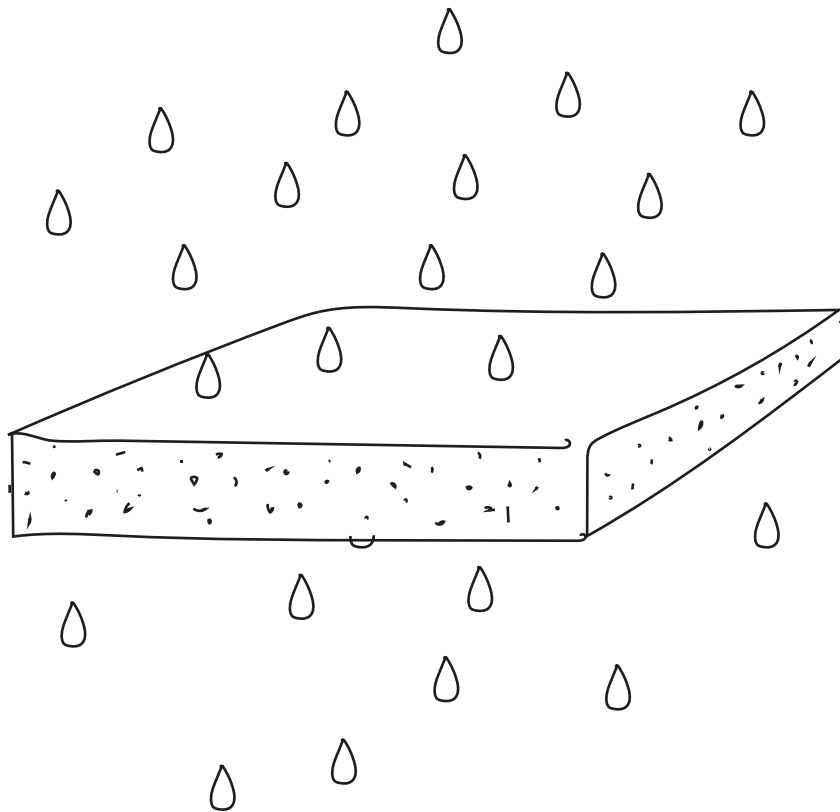
The inhabitants of Saint-Gilles like their trees **a lot**. Planting more trees will definitely be a great plus.



(There is a political will to recreate a connection with the Parvis with a line of trees on the Rue Jordan



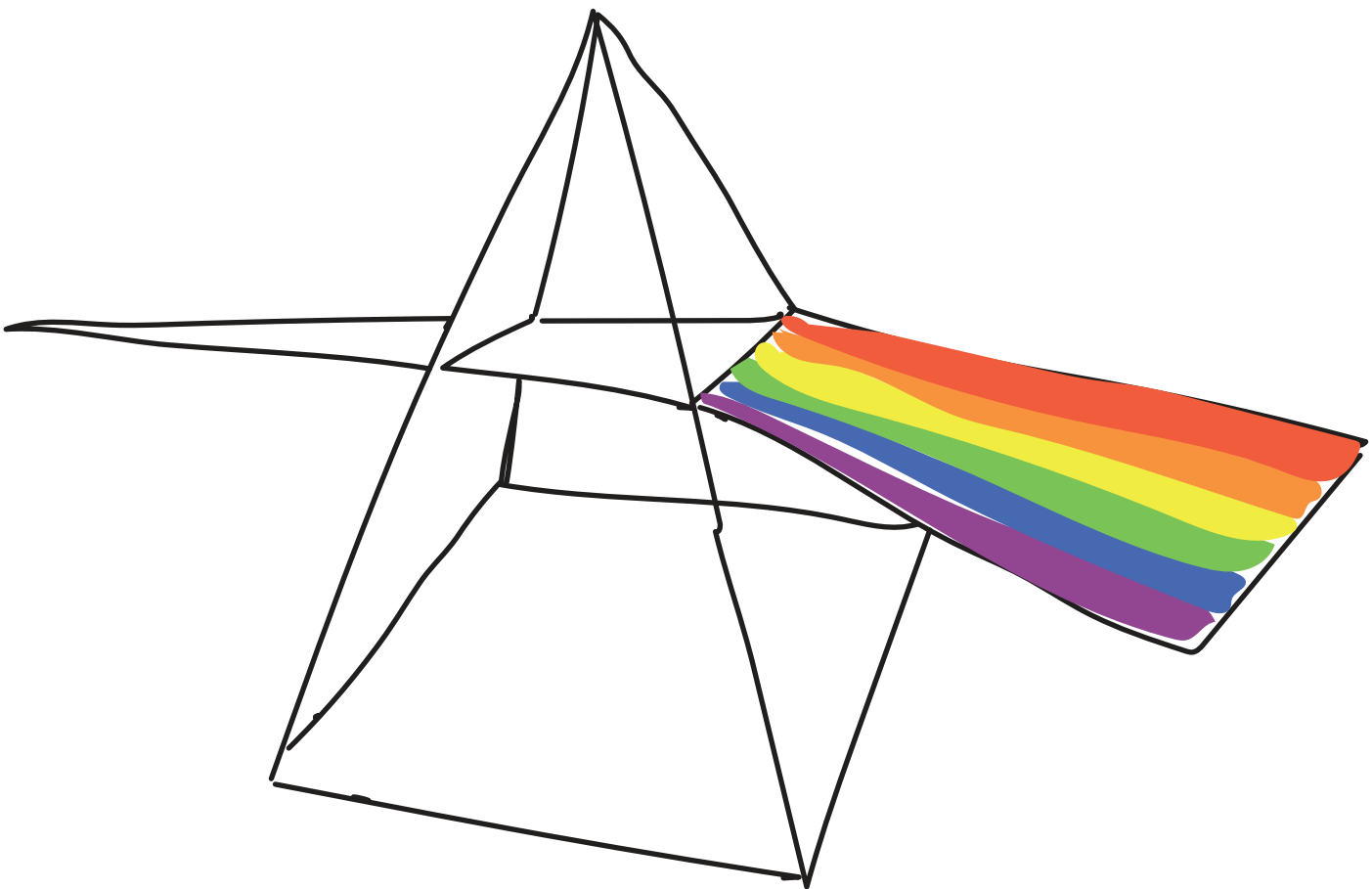
A mineral ground is a plus but it should be permeable too.



Polifacetico

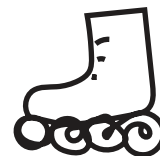
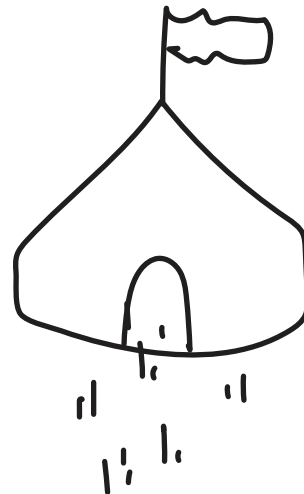
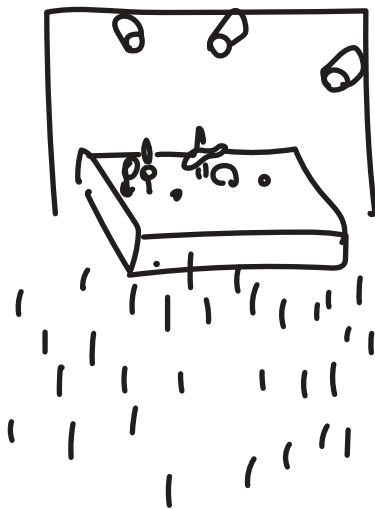
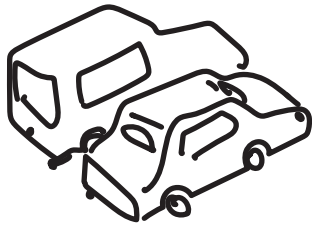
The Parvis gets really crowded during summer time, and crazy crowded when during events such as projections, concerts, etc. Marie Janson should be able to help the Parvis, by hosting those events. Marie Janson is a better place to organise events and has a better accessibility, it can host a greater public and if necessary can be evacuated faster than the Parvis

A continuity of the floor, homogeneously, without architectural barriers is essential for a successful relation between the Parvis and the square.



The square would change a lot during such events depending on the use and number of public. The capacity of the space to adapt to the different uses is essential for a successful project.

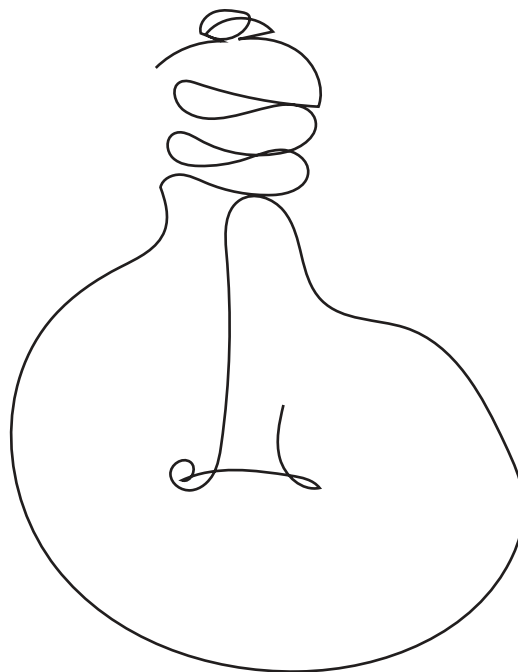
For example :While for logistic reasons an empty square would favor the market setting, It is important to put benches and chairs in the central area.

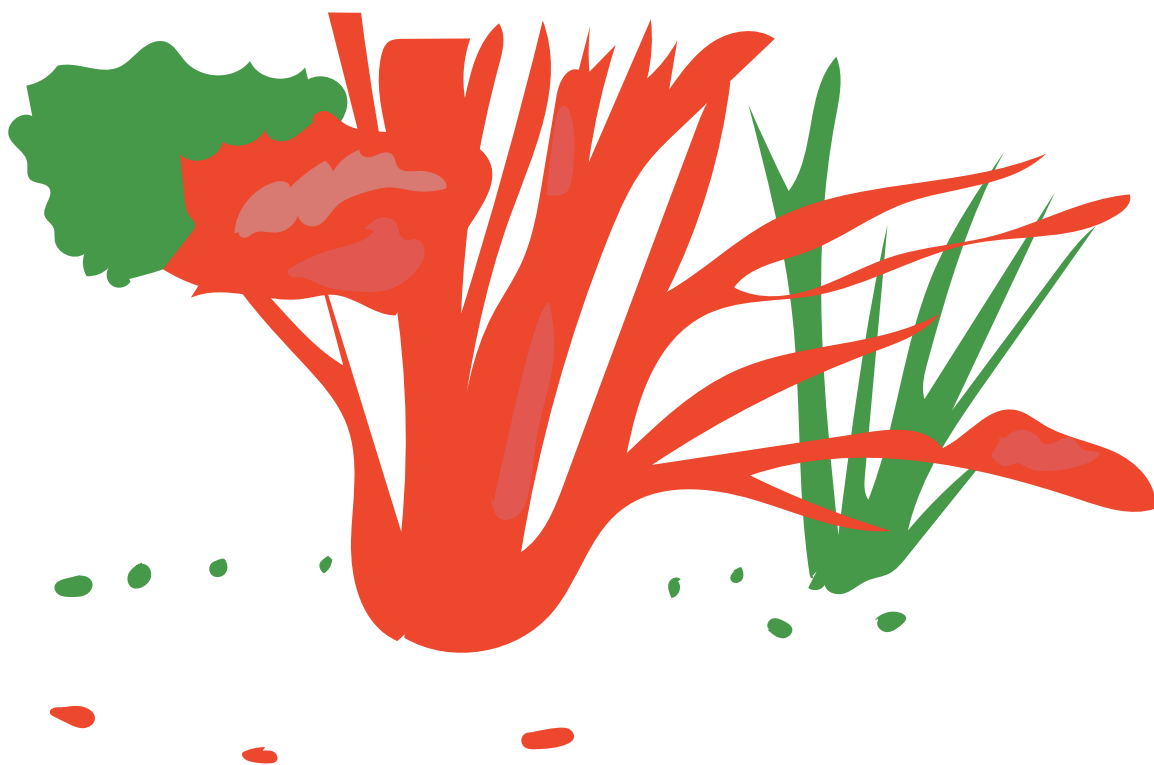


Lighting

There's little lighting at the square and it is not very qualitative nor intense at the moment. It would be necessary to create a "plan lumière" and the lighting should not only be functional but also decorative / festive.

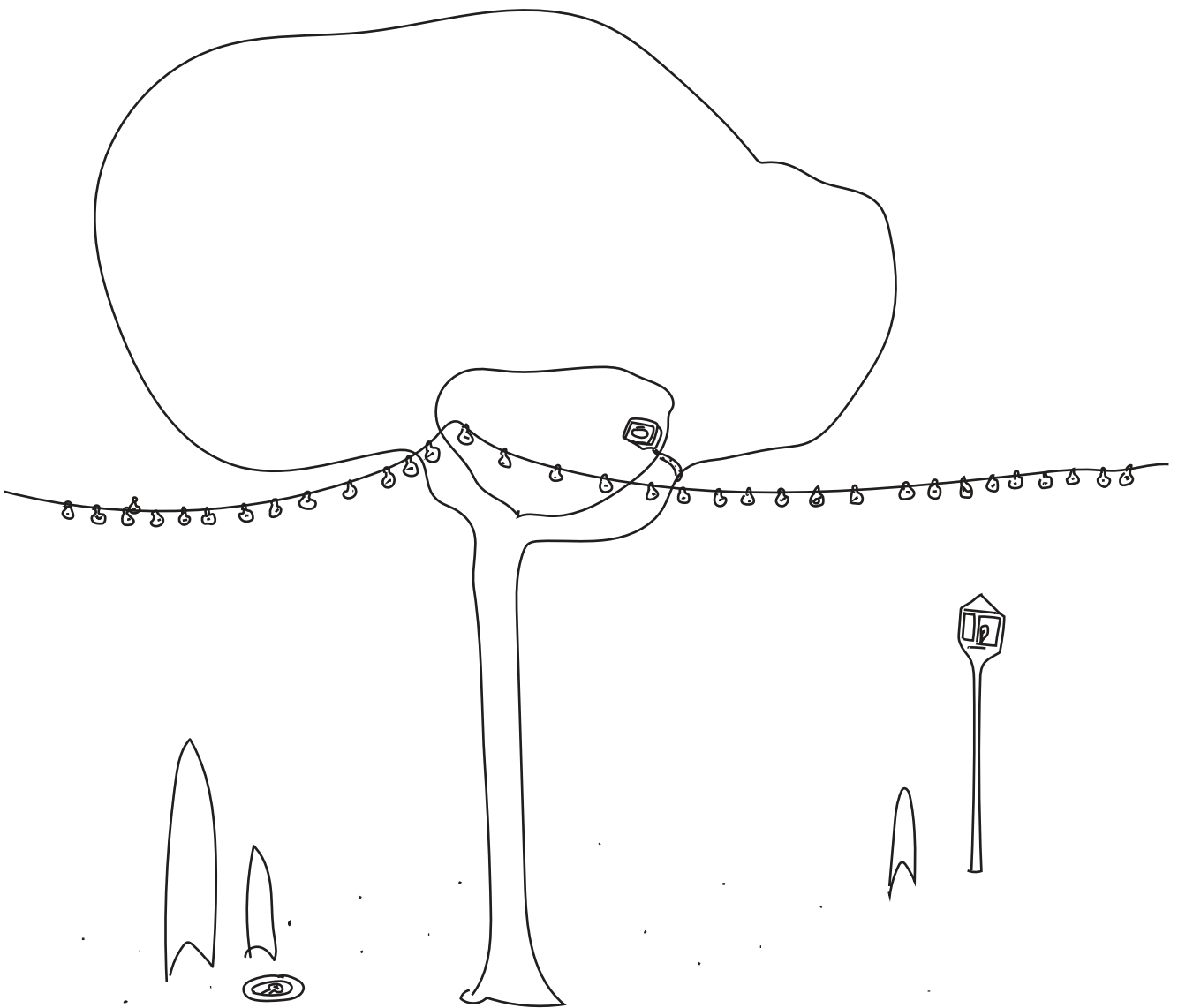
During the winter period, when the use of the square it is little, we think that light can be a good way to keep the square appealing and dynamic.





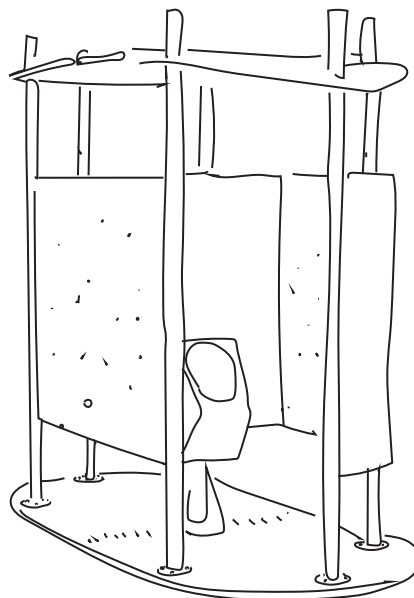
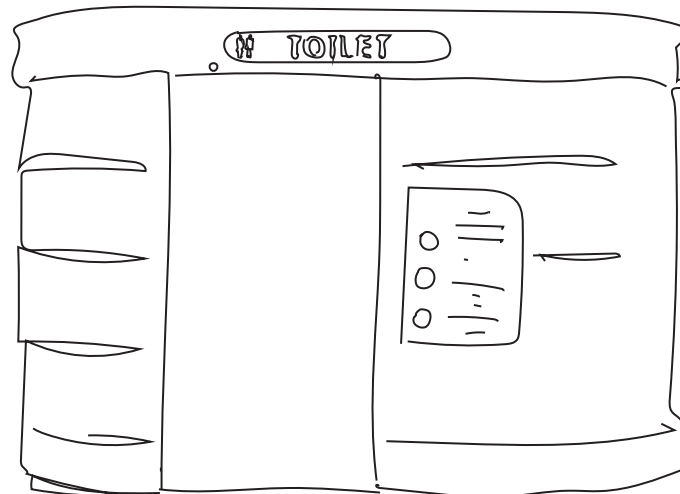


(We wonder what type of lighting system will be the most effective and easy to maintain...

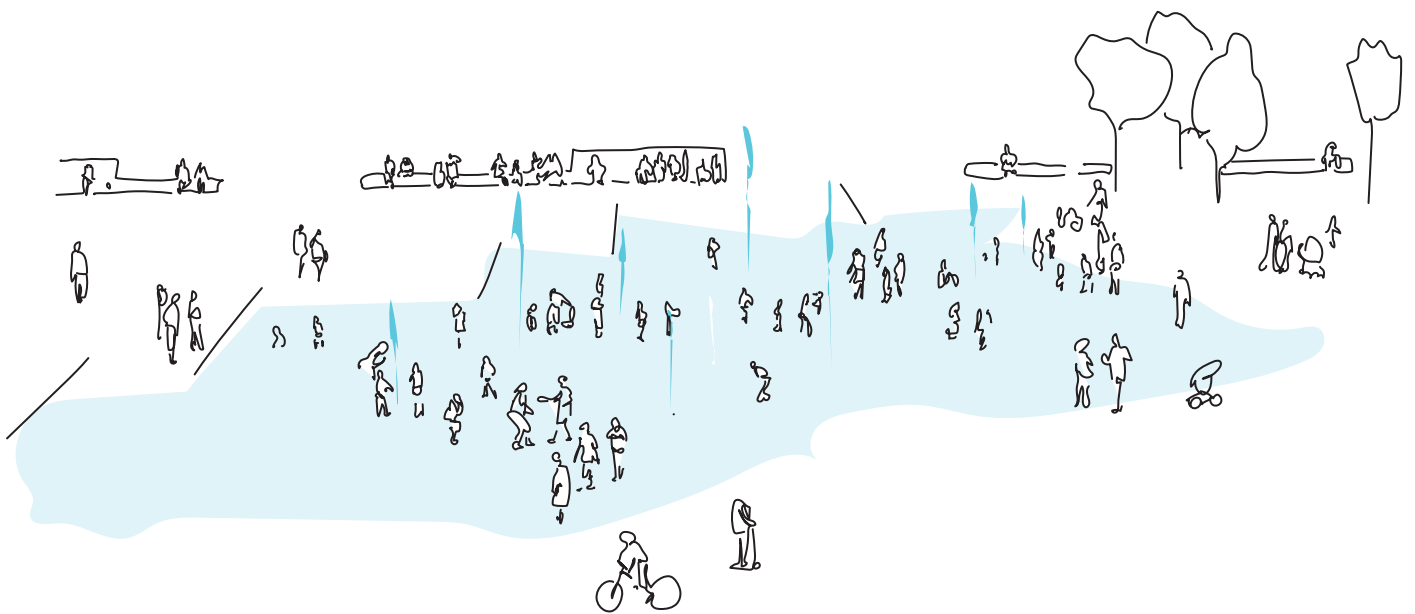


WC

This type of equipment does not exist at the square. We heard about the idea to create a public toilet on the Parvis, this would for sure help to improve the current situation that in some occasions has been border line. In any case (not being aware of the running cost of such an equipment) it would be important to add a “pisoire” and a wc in the future project.

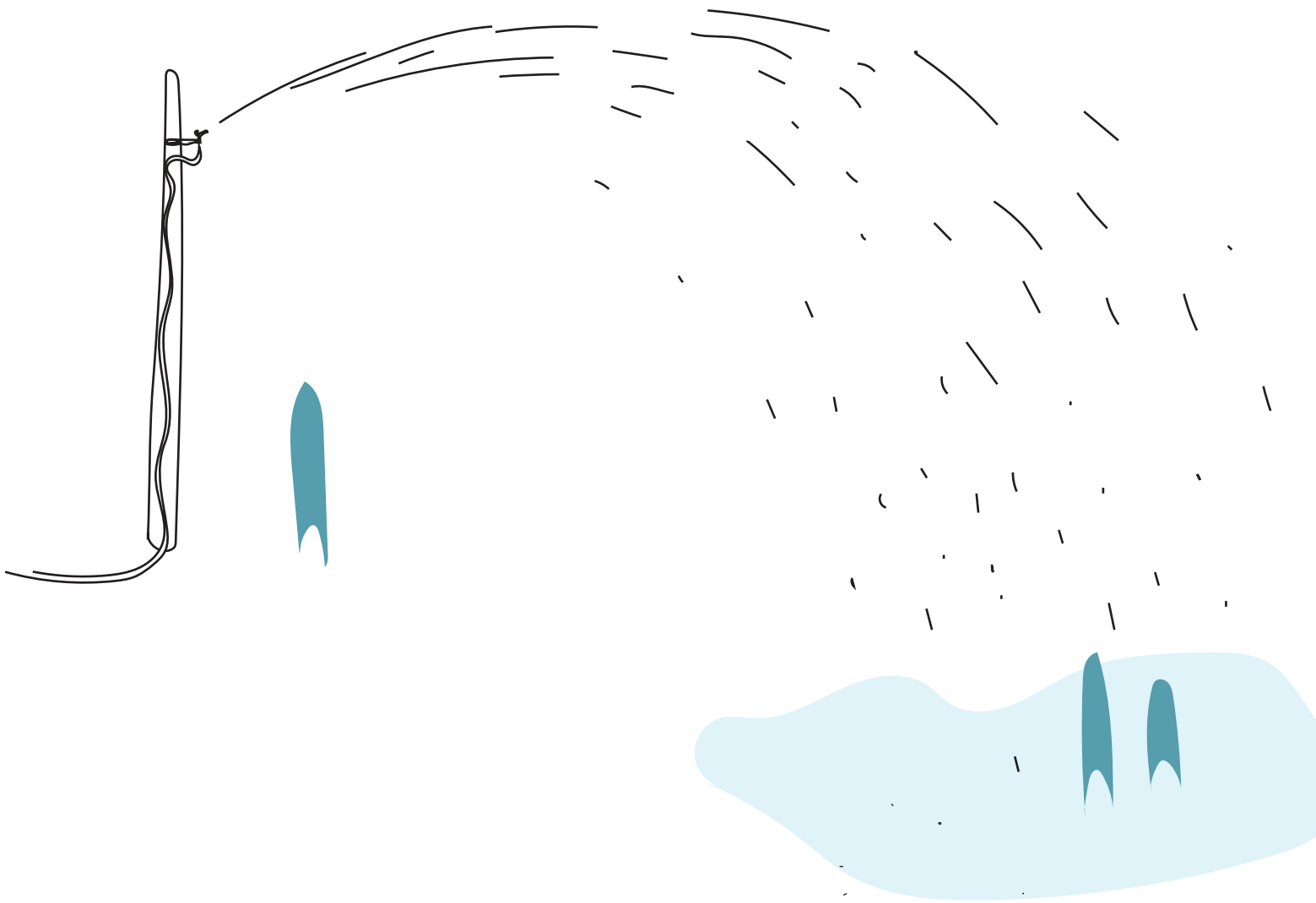


Water games ?



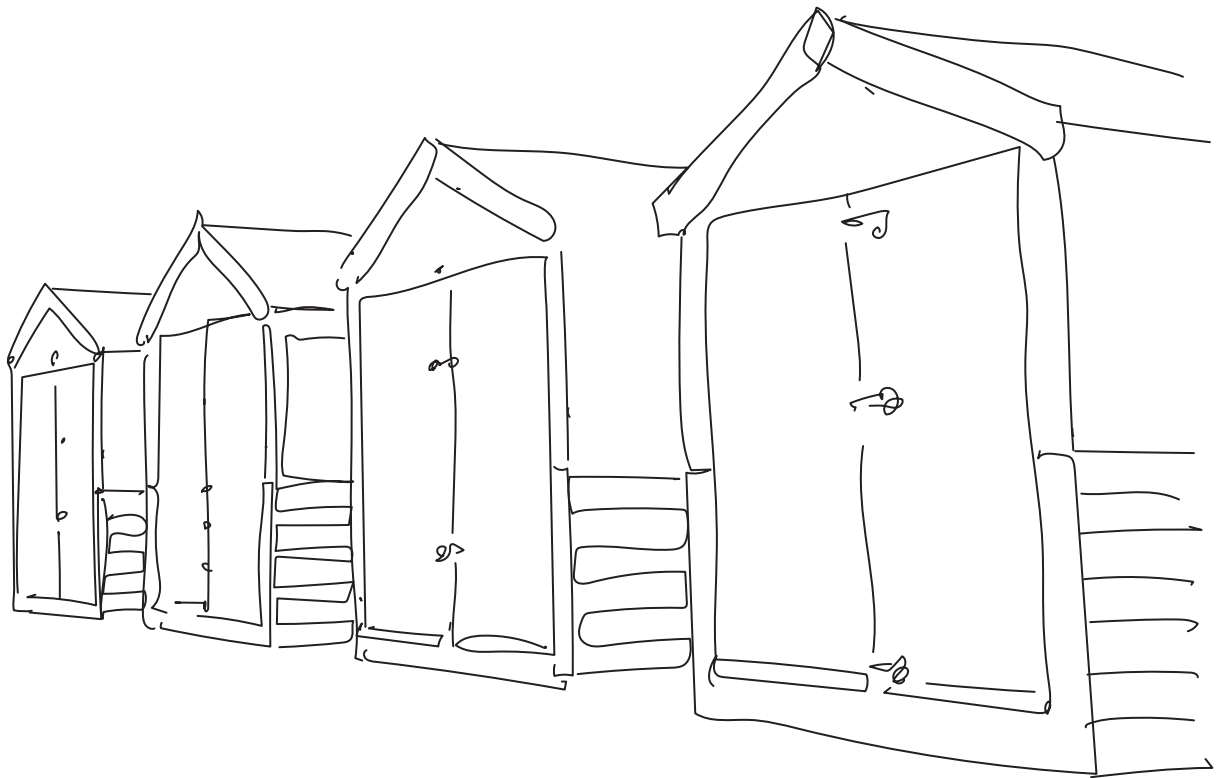
Last summer we installed a 4 meters high sprinkler (affordable and easy to install). It was an effective way to refresh the square and the people passing by.

We believe such an equipment or something similar should have a place in the future project.



“Storage.”

Associations are in need of storage space in order to leave materials at the square. Such a space would be a catalyst for an appropriation of the square by associations. Running projects would be able to find a place in the future project as well.



Statue

Behind the football field there is a statue. There is a political desire to find a more adequate place for it in the future project.

