

# HILL(s)

## Movement Generates Landscape — Landscape Generates Movement

### *Breathing and Moving Landscape*

The title HILL(s) refers not only to the iconic ridges of Salpausselkä, formed by ancient glacial movement, but also to layered landscapes of motion — physical, ecological, cultural, and historical. These hills carry the memory of geological epochs and the energy of present-day movement: skiing, gathering, growing and evolving. Just as the Salpausselkä ridges were born from slow, powerful flows of ice and melt-water, so too does this place emerge from the layered interplay of natural and human forces. HILL(s) is an acronym of sorts: Habitat, Infrastructure, Layers, Life(s) — a site where all of these converge and regenerate through movement.

*Where skis carve lines into snow,  
where footsteps wear paths into earth,  
where wind reshapes the treeline — the land is always moving.  
And when land moves, people follow.*

This is not just a place for sport. It is a terrain of transformation — where materials circulate, stories are exchanged, ecosystems shift, and time flows in layers. This is a living landscape, regenerated by memory and motion. It learns from what has come before and invites what is yet to emerge.

Ecological, material, social, and temporal movement — these threads weave together a choreography of a place. This is a design that doesn't seek to dominate the land, but to collaborate with it. It is a concept rooted in circularity, in connection, and in care. From the deep memory of past championships to the vision of future neighborhoods, this site becomes a threshold: between what has been and what could be.

*A landscape that listens.  
Structures that remember.  
A city that moves — and is moved.*



*Movement - physical*

The design embraces movement as a guiding principle, not only physical motion, but ecological flow, social interaction, material circulation, and temporal continuity. These principles are made tangible throughout the project: physical movement is visible in skiing, sledding, cycling, climbing and walking. Ecological movement appears in pollinator corridors and dynamic vegetation zones. Social and material movements emerge through festivals, gathering spaces, reused materials, and modular structures. Temporal movement underlies everything — from seasonal shifts to architectural continuity. The result is a space that listens, adapts, and renews itself.

*Movement - time*

Preserving the existing natural and built environment plays a central role in honoring this principle. Existing buildings are reused and restored, while trees and their associated ecosystems are preserved along with the carbon they store. The use of recycled materials, such as paving stones and soils, as well as the idea of a seed bank in the ground, further deepens the commitment to circularity. During the refurbishment of the existing buildings or deconstructing old buildings, materials are re-used when possible. The existing seed bank will flourish through the usage of local soil from the building site.

Historical movement is also embedded in the project, seen both in the geological formations of the terrain and the pines, and in the cultural heritage of the site — from the sports facilities and their associated architecture to the former railway and industrial layers of the area. These layers are not erased but instead embraced as part of a continuous and visible narrative, with new layers integrated thoughtfully alongside the old. The National cultural historical value is embraced rather than diminished, the new buildings and infrastructure is designed to highlight the existing concrete buildings that are part of the Nationally Significant Built Cultural Environment (RKY).

**Social Rhythms – The Commons in Motion**

Movement also lives in the social body: in gatherings, in encounters, in everyday rituals. This is a landscape layered with use: sport and rest, spectacle and solitude, celebration and care. The site encourages encounters across scales. Architecture here is not an object but an invitation to dwell, to move, to meet.

*This is not only a venue, it is a neighborhood in motion.*

The Central Piazza, Kisatori, with Hill Pavilion, is designed as a flexible space hosting large events and also everyday activities. During summer movable basketball courts and skating ramps. HILL pavilion is used as seating steps, cafe/shop and also lounge terrace. During winter Kisatori is used as ice skating and Hill Pavilion as sledding hill and also as terrace. The Hill Pavilion acts as both a lounge terrace and a sledding slope during winter events, with integrated viewing terraces to watch on-going skiing competitions with a glass of wine. The Hill Pavilion and the modular structures are thought to be built from recycled materials.

The Periscopic Observation Tower serves as an accessible landmark and Geopark gateway, offering 360-degree views and inclusive experience via periscope. The Periscopic Observation Tower introduces a periscope function for inclusive accessibility, and highlights Salpausselkä's UNESCO Global Geopark status with exhibits on glacial geology and regional history. The tower is located at the immediacy of Central Piazza. During events the tower is used as a viewpoint. Sunny habitat vegetation will be placed on the roof of the tower which will allow biodiversity to grow and develop at very different levels of the design — Central Piazza is not a gathering point for humans only but also for other species.

Modular stands, wooden seating integrated with summer plantings, and recycled materials such as. Modular structures (e.g., wooden kiosks, seating) activate plazas throughout the year. Event lawns, seating terraces, and shaded gathering spaces adapt to both everyday use and large-scale events.

New viewpoint is designed to enhance access and appreciation of the site's topography and cultural significance. Pedestrian connections are improved near the ski jumps, including in winter, and a forest path with a viewing point down to the depression is created. The path will serve visitors throughout the year. Building the new path will require some reshaping of the existing ground.

The stands at the stadium and the "Monttu" area are developed to support both competition and informal year-round use, including new seating solutions and modular extensions. A new firepit will be placed in the "Karpalo Monttu" area and it will serve visitors throughout the year, even during the major events. It offers a possibility to cook with fire, eat and relax in the heart of the new event hub but still so close to nature. This will offer visitors a forest-like Finnish nature experience but will also integrate the planning area to wider outdoor opportunities in Salpausselkä area.

Salpausselänkatu will be transformed into a green Boulevard where dynamic vegetation with curving walls, existing trees and movable outdoor game tables will create a new urban environment. During events, the game tables will be set aside and replaced with modular stands. The boulevard will serve as the imposing main entrance route to the area. A new "Slide Sculpture" resembling the movement and speed of skis and snow will be placed at the entrance. The sculpture is made of recycled plastic, which is internally lit and resembles snow and skis. Satamaradanpolku and Veikko Kankkosen raitti provide straight-line pedestrian and bike paths referencing historic railway alignments, linking with Vesijärvi, Sibelius Hall, Hämeenlinnantie, and potentially the Mytjäästen depot area.

Hiihtäjä Outdoor Gym will serve both visitors and everyday users. The outdoor gym incorporates kinetic energy equipment, generating electricity through movement. Exercising will produce kinetic energy which could be used to light street lights or screens. Siiri Rantanen Park is a green heart of the area. It is open year-round, features a skiing and movement themed playground and picnic areas. The area serves especially families visiting the area during events but also brings a new play service for people living close by.

**All major public spaces support multiple functional modes:****Summer Events:** festivals with movable stages, modular stands, and Hill pavilion as seating stairs and terrace**Summer Everyday Use:** movable basketball courts and skating ramps, movable outdoor gaming tables, outdoor pool, periscope access**Winter Events:** sledding on Hill Pavilion, modular stands, periscope access**Winter Everyday Use:** sledding, park leisure, and cafés open year-round, ice skating at Kisatori.**All year around:** playground (Siiri Rantanen Park) and outdoor gym (Hiihtäjä Gym), Hill Pavilion as café and fire pit.

Parking areas are located in front of the Expo Hall and Isku Arena (330 spaces total, divided across two areas). Media area 8000m<sup>2</sup> during major events is split to two open areas. During every day use the area is used as a parking space. A new bus stop is proposed along Svinhufvudinkatu near the "Hiihtäjä" Hotel for easy pedestrian access to the sports core.

*Phasing*

The first phase includes the central area — escalator, observation tower, vegetation of the main plaza, and the arrival sequence with pedestrian improvements.

**Natural Flows – The Landscape That Breathes and lives***Geological history as a ecological design tool*

The site rests on ancient glacial foundations that are carved by retreating ice, shaped by wind, water, and time. We respond not by reshaping the land, but by reading it. We let the ground and foundations breathe. The topography itself becomes the framework for ecological movement: absorbing, filtering, guiding. The landscape pulses with life and rhythm, offering habitat and resilience in equal measure.

*Nature and vegetation*

Here, nature is not a decorative element, it is the primary infrastructure. This ecological approach includes maintaining the pine-dominated natural character of Salpausselkä, allowing vegetation to develop and transform within ecological boundaries. The network of trees is preserved, and features like the Hill Pavilion become ecological corridors during summer, while sandy slopes evolve into dry meadows. Modular benches integrate seasonal plantings, enriching the environment especially in summer. These interventions respect the Salpausselkä landscape and allow natural processes to shape their own path.

The vegetation strategy for the planning area is a direct reflection of the overarching design theme: movement. While movement is clearly visible in the athletic purpose of the site, it is also present in more abstract layers in the flow of people, in seasonal rhythms, in the circulation of materials, and in ecological transitions. The vegetation concept embraces this theme by translating movement into biodiversity, spatial structure, temporal change, and experiential rhythm.

At its core, the vegetation strategy is rooted in biological diversity, not only as a means of supporting local ecosystems, but as a way to express dynamic change. To ensure ecological resilience and avoid the risks of monoculture, the plant selection follows a strict guideline: no more than 30% of the plants may belong to the same botanical family, no more than 20% to the same genus, and no more than 10% to the same species. This layered diversity supports a broader range of wildlife and reduces vulnerability to pests, diseases, and climate extremes. The result is a resilient, evolving plant community that visually and ecologically embodies constant variation — a living metaphor for movement.

The concept also seeks to balance the use of native and non-native plant species in a meaningful way. Around 70% of the selected plants will be native to the Lahti region or to similar climate zones, ensuring compatibility with local soil and weather conditions while supporting specialist species that depend on native flora. The remaining 30% will consist of carefully selected non-native species that are non-invasive but offer valuable ecological or aesthetic functions. These may include species that extend the flowering season, provide food for generalist pollinators, or add contrast and rhythm to the overall planting design.

Spatial complexity is another key principle of the vegetation strategy. Rather than uniform plantings, the design incorporates a multilayered structure that mimics natural ecosystems. Groundcovers, herbaceous perennials, grasses, shrubs, understory trees, and canopies are layered together in spatially rich compositions. These layers not only offer a wide range of habitat types for different species, but also generate a visual sense of rhythm and flow, from small-scale textures to large-scale massings. The spatial arrangement invites motion, both by guiding human circulation and by hosting the ecological movements of insects, birds, and small mammals.

Movement is also interpreted in terms of time. The vegetation design follows and celebrates the strong seasonal cycle of Finnish nature. In spring, early-blooming bulbs and shrubs provide resources for emerging pollinators. In summer, staggered waves of flowering species support peak biodiversity. In autumn, plants bearing fruits, berries, and seeds feed migratory birds and prepare for dormancy. Even in winter, the landscape remains expressive and ecologically valuable: seed heads, evergreen species, and structural grasses provide both habitat and visual interest when the rest of the environment is still and dormant. The design recognizes that nature is never truly static — it rests, transitions, and prepares for the next phase.

In terms of experience, vegetation is used to create a visual and spatial rhythm across the site. Plantings shift in density and height, opening and closing views, creating pockets of calm or movement, and subtly guiding the flow of people. Color palettes, textures, and plant forms are choreographed to generate moments of contrast, repetition, and surprise. These experiential qualities mirror the dynamism of sports and physical activity, allowing the user to move through the landscape as if following a rhythm — sometimes fast, sometimes slow, sometimes immersive, sometimes open.

Finally, the vegetation concept addresses the need for functional resilience. The planning area will experience fluctuating visitor volumes, varying maintenance resources, and shifting climatic pressures. The plant palette is therefore selected for durability and low maintenance: drought-tolerant, salt-resistant, and robust species are prioritized where appropriate. Vegetation also functions as a soft boundary — creating edges, defining zones of activity, and helping to manage movement without hard infrastructure. Over time, the plant communities are expected to evolve through ecological succession, maintaining their vitality and adaptability even as external conditions change.

In summary, the vegetation strategy for the planning area transforms the abstract idea of movement into a tangible, living framework. Through botanical diversity, seasonal rhythms, spatial layering, and visual flow, the planting concept supports ecological life and human experience alike. It is not merely a decorative backdrop to sports activity, but an active, responsive system that breathes with the site — a constantly moving landscape.

### The Architecture of time

This is a material commons, a palette drawn from what is already present, and a cycle that allows everything to return in another form. Rather than building monuments, we design for transformation. Each intervention anticipates its next role, its next site, its next context. The time is constantly visible in the architecture of the area. The newest level of architecture comes from the wooden pavilion and tower. For now, they will be part of the venue but perhaps in the future they serve a life elsewhere as a part of another story.

In a place that honors movement, permanence is not the goal, adaptability is. This principle is embodied in the refurbishment of existing buildings, such as the historic outdoor swimming pool and its facilities, which are restored to include saunas, a café, and terraces with sun-loving vegetation. The facilities will be refurbished keeping its history in mind.

The Teivaanmäki Culture and Event Center transforms an industrial building into a vibrant social space with concerts, studios, recreation spaces and sport places bouldering arena for example. Old Silo to multipurpose space for art exhibition or event and party venue. Old concrete ruins are suitable for independent art and event space.

The New Multifunctional Arena builds upon old structures and redefines their architecture. It will be built on the same premises with the Expo Center using old structures and building materials if possible. The facade of the refurbished building will be transformed by building it higher and architecturally ambitious. The Hotel and Travel Center “Hiihtäjä” will be refurbished with the same architecturally ambitious style but the old brick facade will be saved to combine the historical aspect with modern interests. The ISKU-arena will be refurbished and existing structures are used.

All the buildings will be refurbished with preserving the high cultural historical value. Combining glass or other reflective light materials with robust concrete and brick will highlight the historical buildings in the area. The reflective materials will also bring light to dark nights but also reflect the vegetation making the unique and rich nature even more visible in the area.



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