


RAJAJAHAT

KOLKATA

EAST SIDE STORY





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PART 1: A NEW EAST

location



what is rajarhat?



structure of rajarhat



planning organisation



time line







LOCATION

**Kolkata the international gate for West Bengal
Rajarhat the product of a divided metropolitan area
A city moving eastwards
The location strategy**





INDIA

BANGLADESH

DACCA

KOLKATA

100 km



KOLKATA THE INTERNATIONAL GATE FOR WEST BENGAL

Kolkata, former Calcutta and second city of the British Empire was strategically founded 1690 by members of the British East India Company. Located at the Hooghly River, one of the main distributaries of Ganges in the river delta, some 90 km up from the Indian Ocean, it allowed easy shipping, defence and gave good access to the whole country. Kolkata is in the area of West Bengal, apart from Dacca the capital of Bangladesh, the only big city with the function of an international gateway for a whole region. Kolkata grew in this centre and linking function so that its metropolitan area has nowadays a population exceeding 15 million and is India's third-largest city and urban agglomeration. The continuous growth causes the city's uncontrolled expansions. Rajarhat is as a planned big city expansion on the east side of Kolkata and the try to let the city grow controlled.



KALYANI
GAYESWER
KANGH
RABARA
MISAPUR

HOOGHLY
CHINSURA
CHANDANNAGAR
MUNICIPAL
CORPORATION
BHATPARA

BEADRESWAR
BARUI
CHAMP
OANI
BAIDYABATI
NORTH
BARRACKPORE

BARRACKPORE
SERAMPUR
LITTACHIN
RISHRA
KHURDAH

BARASAT
MACHHANSRAM
PANIHATI
LITTA
PARA
KAMARHATI
NORTH
DUM DUM

SOUTH
DUM DUM
RAJARMAT
GOPALPUR
BALLY
BARANAGAR
DUM
DUM

HOWRAH MUNICIPAL
CORPORATION
SEE SAN HABER
DUALI HALL CITY

ULUBERIA
MAHESHTALA
KOLKATA MUNICIPAL
CORPORATION
BUDGE
BUDGE
BUDGE

BONHARPUR
RAIPUR
BANSIPUR

kolkata metropolitan area
planning authorities

10 km

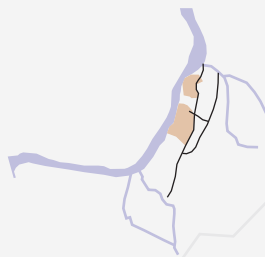


RAJARHAT THE PRODUCT OF A DIVIDED METROPOLITAN AREA

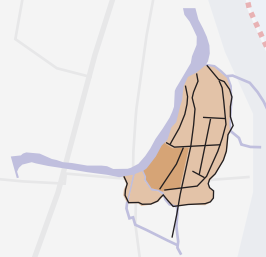
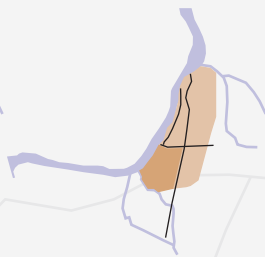
The Kolkata metropolitan area is a river divided area, only three big bridges connect the the two sides. Further the two sides of the metropolitan area belong to different municipalities, Kolkata and Haora, with different political course and ideas. Rajarhat as a new town development planned by the government of Kolkata negates the western side as possible location for a strategic discursive city development. Rajarhat gets located at the eastern borders of the Kolkata metropolitan area, on the disconnected side to West Bengals hinterland.



1700



1800



1900

A CITY MOVING EASTWARDS

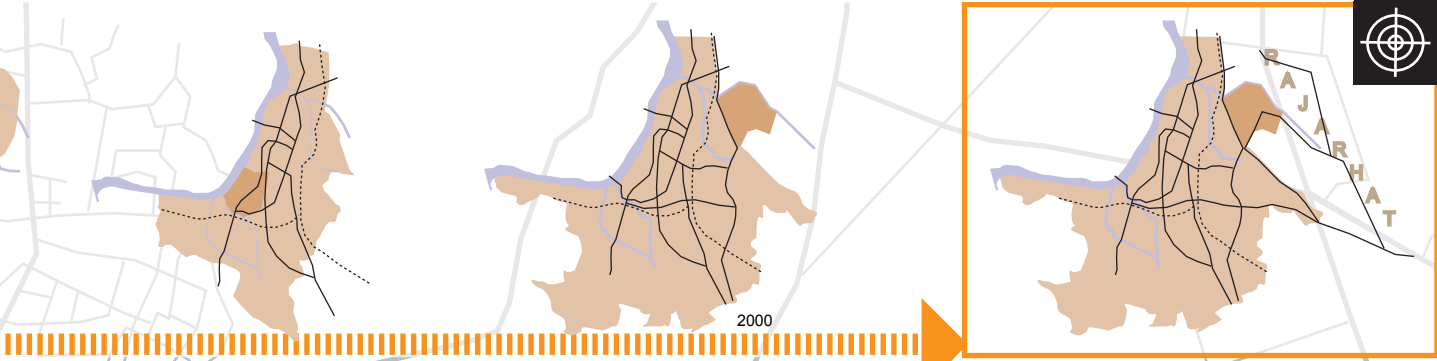
Based on the first settlements and using the river as natural protection from the hinterland the city was strategically founded and fortified on the east side. First the city grew northern and eastern of the fort, divided as black and white town. Further expansion led the city the eastern border of the canal system, overlaying them the city grew rapidly in the late 19 century to north, south and east. The east Kolkata wetlands as a natural border initiated a more south eastern growth of the metropolitan area as in the time after the Independency a huge immigrants flood overwhelmed the city.

howrah bridge

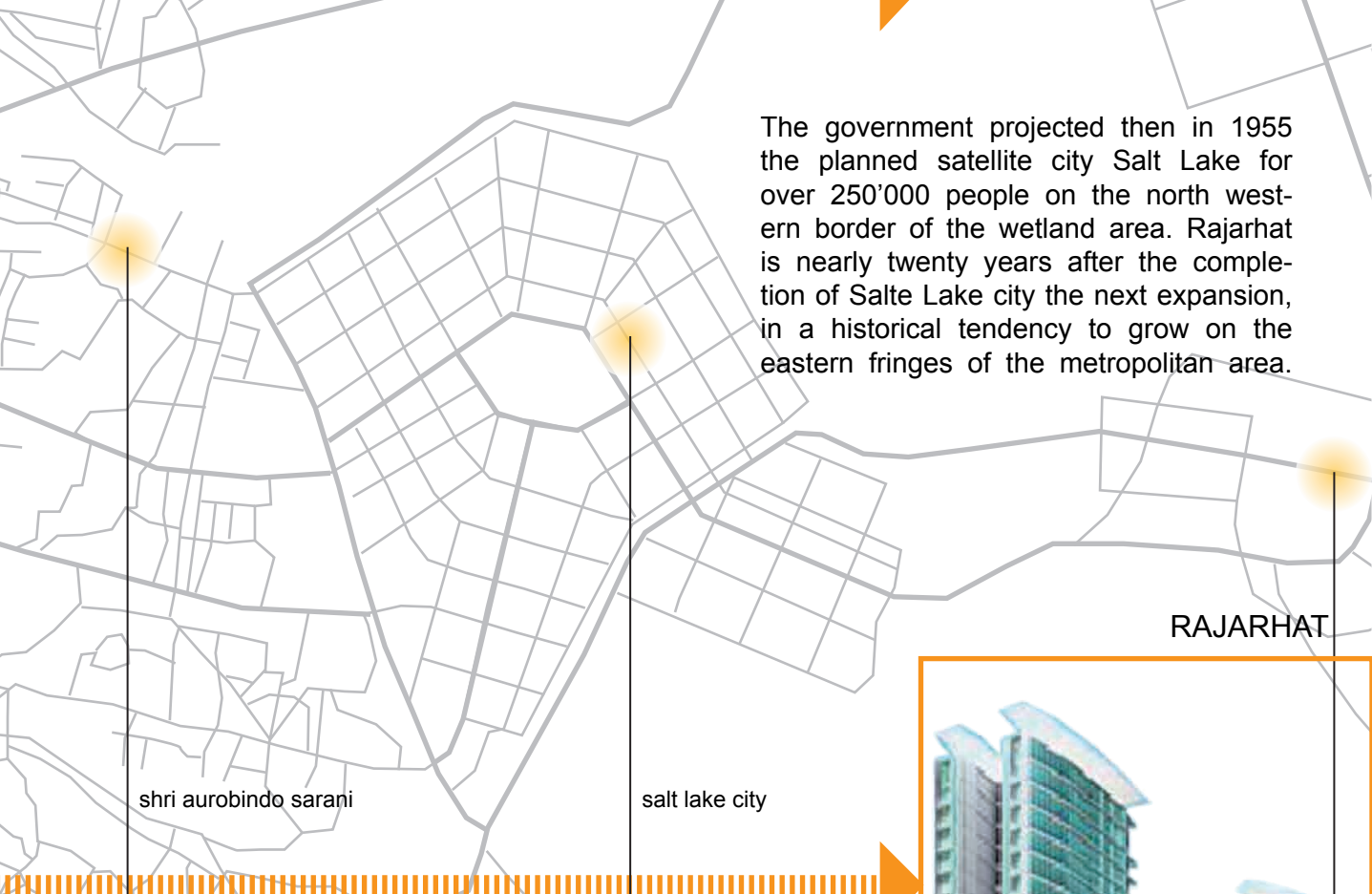
bidhan sarani

black town





The government projected then in 1955 the planned satellite city Salt Lake for over 250'000 people on the north western border of the wetland area. Rajarhat is nearly twenty years after the completion of Salte Lake city the next expansion, in a historical tendency to grow on the eastern fringes of the metropolitan area.

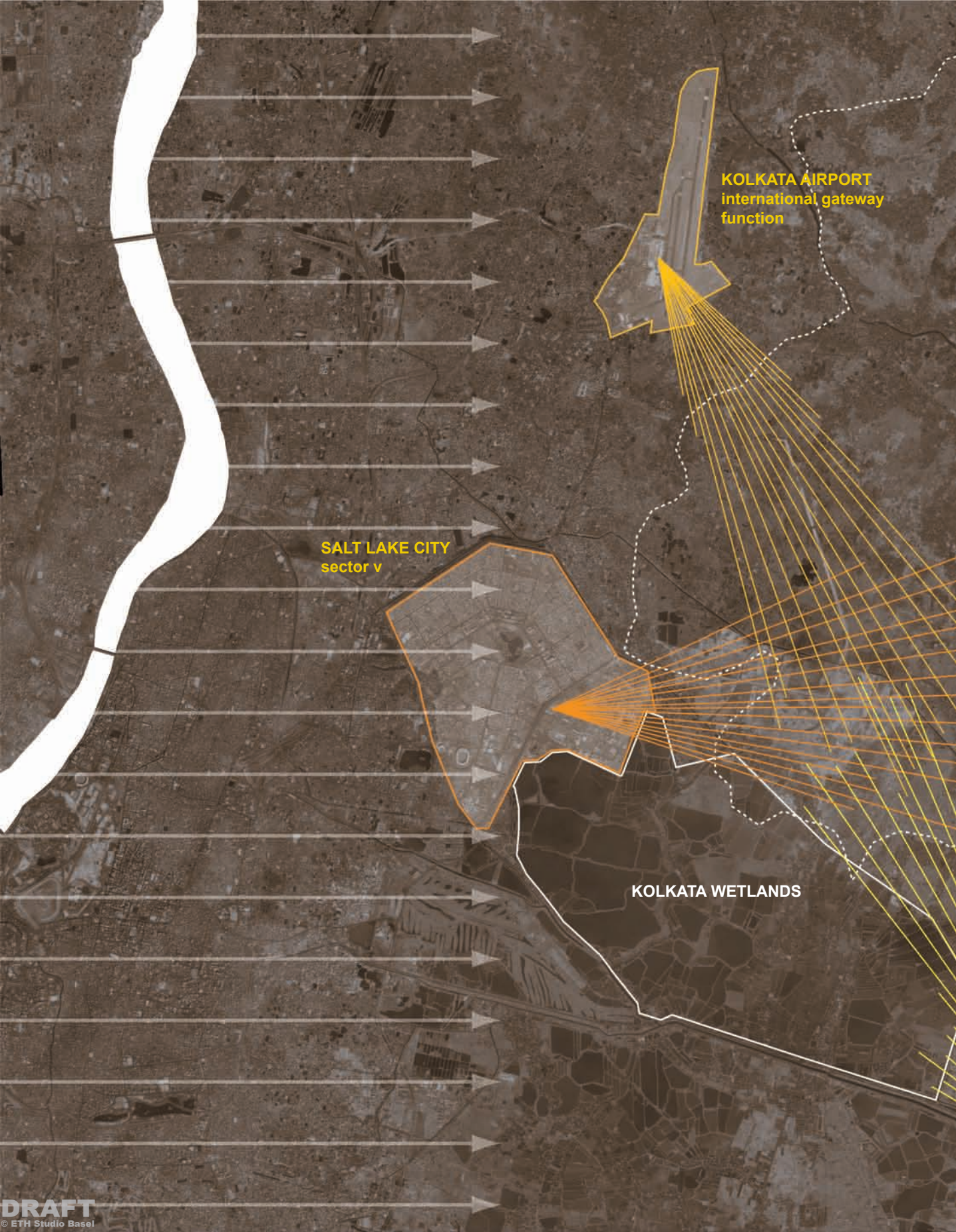


RAJARHAT

shri aurobindo sarani

salt lake city

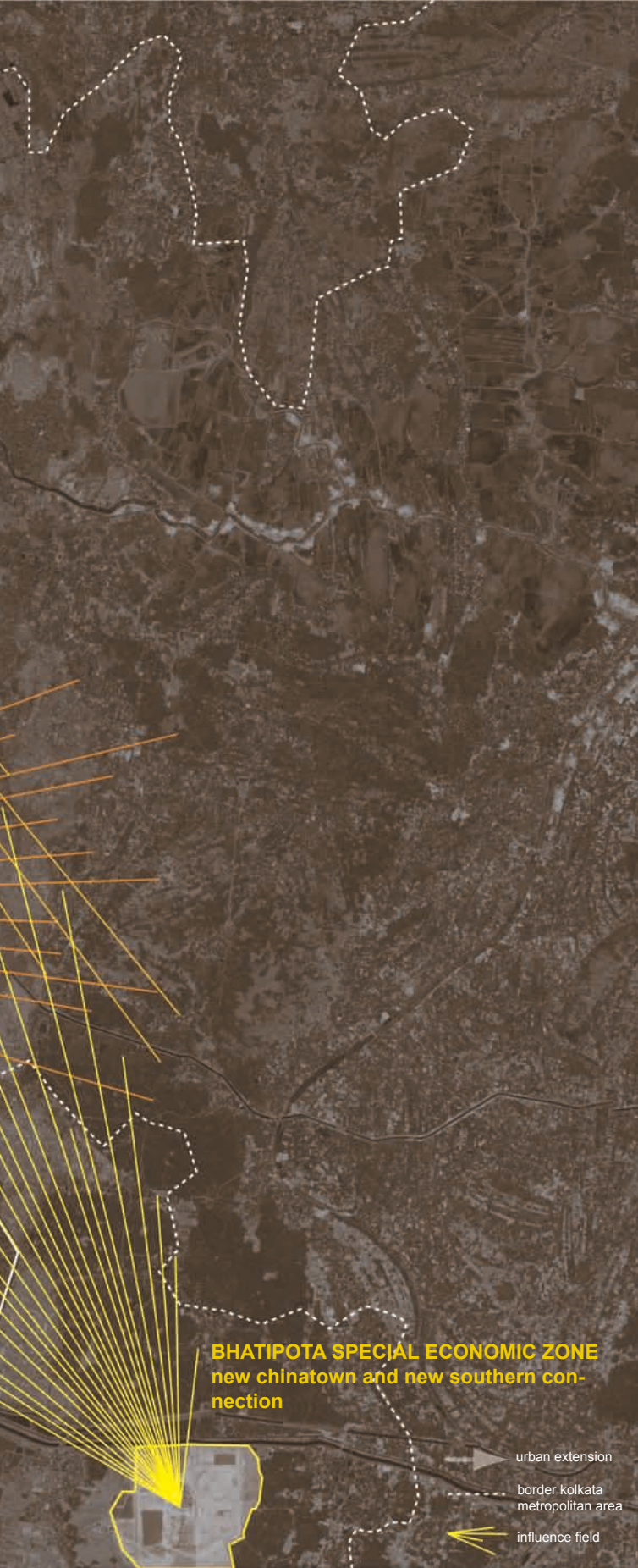




KOLKATA AIRPORT
international gateway
function

SALT LAKE CITY
sector v

KOLKATA WETLANDS



THE LOCATION STRATEGY

The main reason according to the planners statements for the decision for this location is the spare population on the area of Rajarhat, that it is the nearest free space to the city and that all infrastructure is in the surrounding. Actually Rajarhat is developing in between tree poles. Directly at the northern end there is the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport. For Rajarhat and the international ambition of the government of Kolkata behind this new town development, this is the main factor for the location of the new town as it links Rajarhat to the rest of the world. The western end marks Salt Lake, as existing city and its new Sector V, a Special Economic Zone with a lot of workstations. To the south west the East Kolkata Wetlands do mark as a big green whole the border for the Rajarhat development. In the south the government defined a new special economic zone and a created huge industrial zone including a new Chinatown, as border for the development. And the eastern border marked by some existing settlements is free for new incorporations...





WHAT IS RAJARHAT?

Rajarhat a short definition
the housing shortage - neoliberalism as a chance?
Kolkatas resurgence as a big economic player





RAJARHAT A SHORT DEFINITION

Rajarhat, also called Kolkata New Town, is a growing planned city in the eastern kolkatan metropolitan area 10 km away from the centre of Kolkata. In a first step covering 3075 Ha new developed land and constructed on former swamp an cultivable lands, Rajarhat is going to be new home for approximately 1.5 million people, large industrial technology hubs and central business districts by 2015.

The ideas behind the new town development lead primarily to the shortage of housing in the kolkatan metropolitan area and to the vision of rejuvenating the kolkatan economy. Rajarhat should be the initiating element for the repositioning of Kolkata in the national and international context. Rajarhat should modernize and resurrect Kolkata to former importance by giving an example of its potential.



THE HOUSING SHORTAGE - NEOLIBERALISM AS A CHANCE?

1986 Perspective Plan 2011 ->housing requirement for 1.3 million people (2500 acre)

->Annual housing need of **70'000** dwellings units/ per annum and relating **800** Ha of new developed land /per annum

Average annual house built **15'000-20'000** dwelling units
->**extreme housing shortage**

1990's implementations of liberalizations policies

->advanced miss of available land for growing it industries and newly resurrecting manufacturing industries

- administrative consolidation of metropolitan area of Kolkata
- intervention in land market of Kolkata in starting new township developments (master plans, zoning, land related regulations, developing the transport network)
- increase of land supply for housing by using of the new easy accessible private capital through Private-Public-Partnerships (PPP)



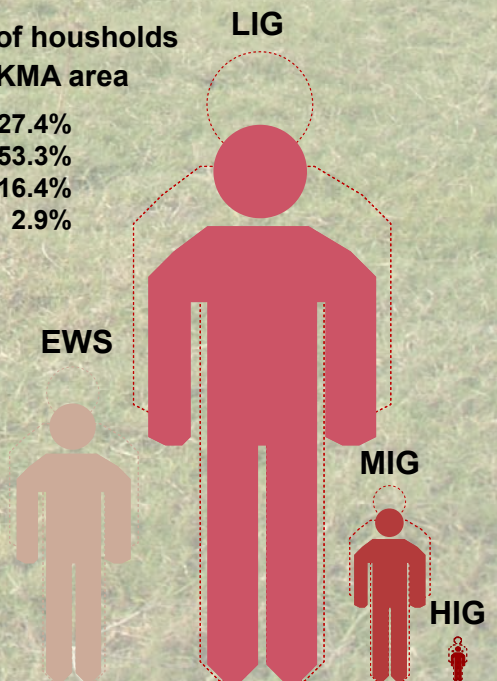
Distribution by monthly household income in Kolkata Metropolitan Area (KMA)

Economic	monthly household income in INR	% of households in KMA area
Economic Weaker Section (EWS)	>2000 INR (>57\$)	27.4%
Low Income Group (LIG)	2000-5000 INR (57-142\$)	53.3%
Middle Income Group (MIG)	5000-10000 INR (142-285\$)	16.4%
High Income Group (HIG)	<10000 INR (<285\$)	2.9%

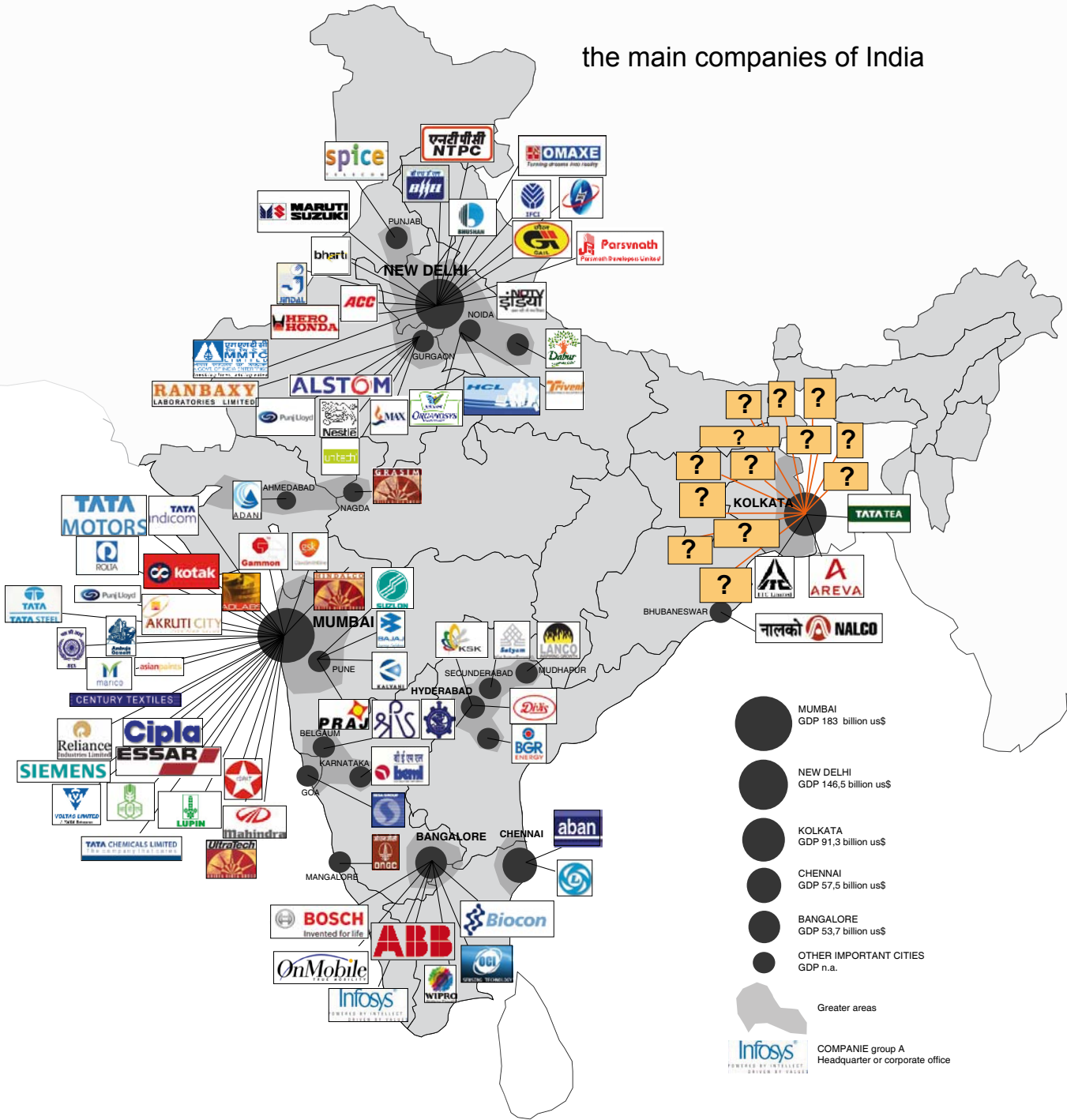
Population Growth of KMA 2001-2015

two million people growth related to economic groups
 2001: 15 million people 2015: 17 million people

■ 2001
 □ 2015



the main companies of India



KOLKATA'S RESURGENCE AS A BIG ECONOMIC PLAYER

Once a century ago during the British Raj, Kolkata was an economical flourishing city and a centre of modern education. With the shifting of capital of British India to Delhi in 1911, as reaction of the political riots, Kolkata's descend was marked. The loss of many main companies and out of it many international connections as result of the emigration of the British population **was hard knock on Kolkata's economy**. The independency of India and the through partition of Bengal caused flood of immigrants coming from East Pakistan brought further imbalance to the still new roots searching city. Economic stagnation and intense political violence marked the following decades. Finally **Kolkata lost in 1971 a big part of its agricultural hinterland with the birth of Bangladesh as an own country**. The trade port as result got also more and more a shadow of its own. Kolkata is in the beginning of the 1990's, marking the upcoming of **India's liberalization**, with the approval of foreign direct investment, nothing more than the capital and economic centre of the agricultural Indian state of West Bengal.

Even Kolkata traditional communistic government realized that there was the need to handle and to use the new available tools. Planning basics were laid in 1993, then **new space for upcoming industries** was acquired and new special economic zones like **Salt Lake Sector V** were defined. The beginnings of the Rajarhat project fall in this time. While Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru Hyderabad already had started their expansion through new industries, Kolkata overslept the opening through years, to begin in around 1999 to spur economy. The same year the construction of Rajarhat begun and was followed by the **renaming of the city from Calcutta to Kolkata** as further symbol of new definition of the city. The education has as one of the main threads, out of the historical context a revival and the in the economy the information technology is focussed as **new economic power**. Space for local industries is created in the outskirts to free the city from its burdens. Rajarhat plays a big role in this new setting of the city, as symbol and producer of the space and the infrastructure for the **global players**, which should overwhelm and stay in Kolkata, to lead it to old bloom and make it a force in India from new.







STRUCTURE OF RAJARHAT

water structure
existing settlement
the form
action areas
commercial part
residential part
it /industrial part
public institutions
green spaces
transport



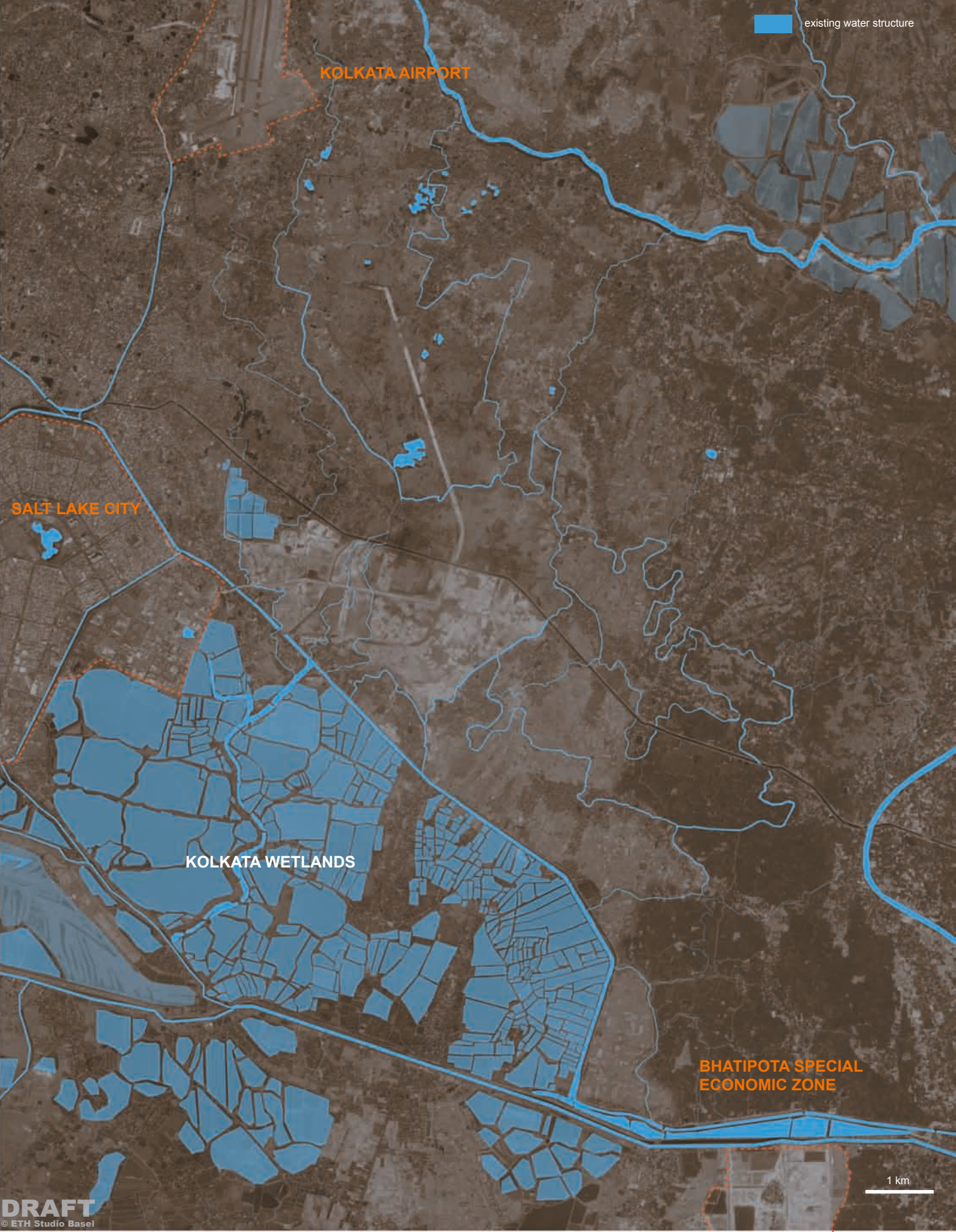
KOLKATA AIRPORT

SALT LAKE CITY

KOLKATA WETLANDS

BHATIPOTA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

1 km





EXISTING WATER STRUCTURE

The Rajarhat area is mainly swampy land nerved by hundred of small rivulets, a few still water bodies and some rivers leading to the surrounding rivers and canals. The East Kolkata Wetlands in the south west are a protected ecological recycling area and borders to the Rajarhat development with a artificial existing canal. At the bigger meandering rivulets in the Rajarhat area and at the surrounding rivers there is agricultural water use visible. The water structure has the double function of supporting the area with fresh water, but also to dissipate the water of flooding during periods of strong rainfall. There is a delicate balance between absorption and flowing through.



water body in east Rajarhat



- new water structure
- existing water structure

KOLKATA AIRPORT

SALT LAKE CITY

KOLKATA WETLANDS

BHATIPOTA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

1 km



THE NEW WATER STRUCTURE

The existing water structure is extended by three main central canals and some additions as connection to the existing canals and rivers. The primary function of these elements is the drainage of the surrounding land later for water regulation. Further for the water supply two big lakes at the extremes of the development are created and another two existing are enlarged for the water supply, as distributors of the booster stations and finally the water towers. A lot of smaller water bodies are left or created as decoration of the residential zones. The new water system structures the area strongly and divides it in different sectors.



main canal in middle Rajarhat

existing settlement

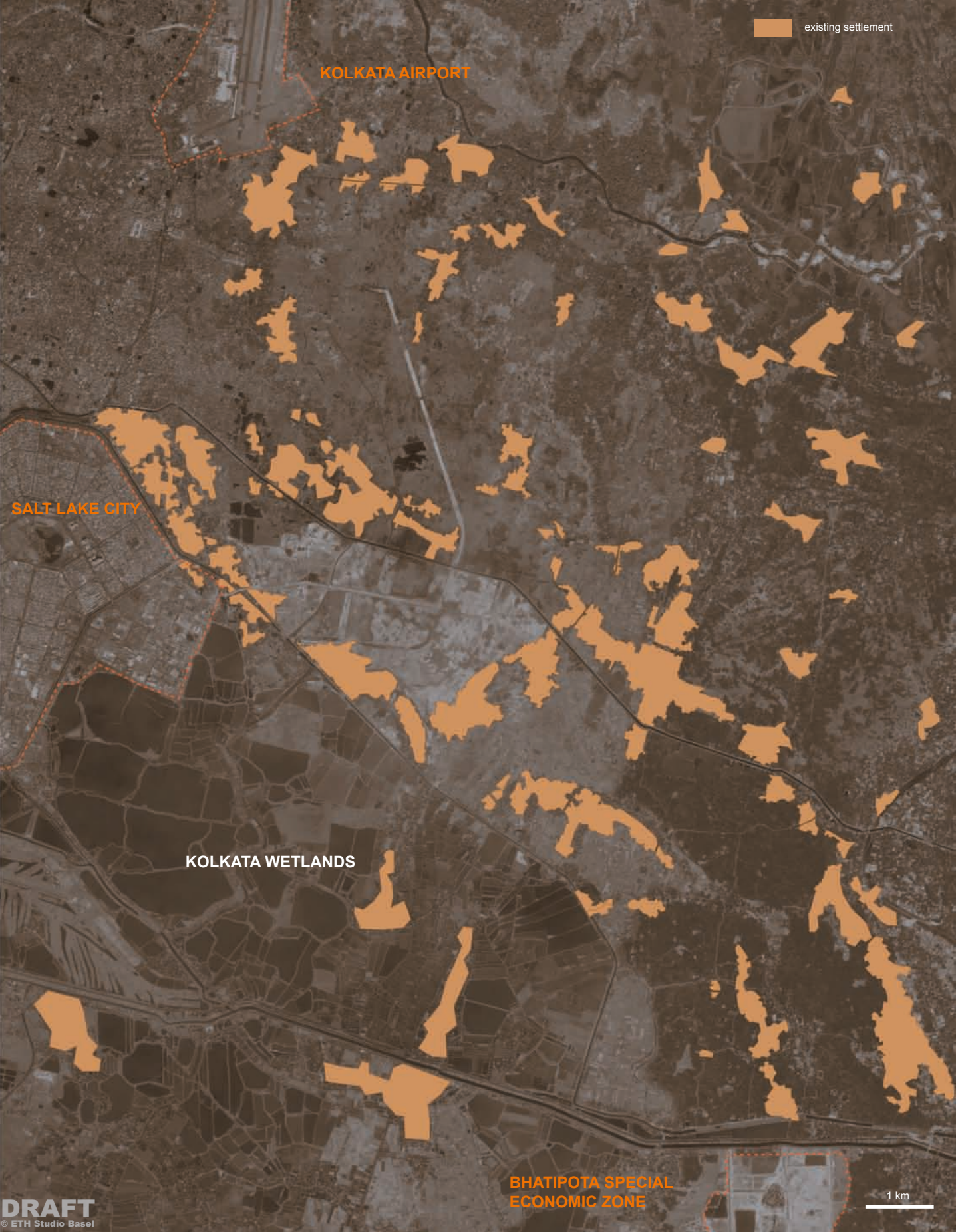
KOLKATA AIRPORT

SALT LAKE CITY

KOLKATA WETLANDS

BHATIPOTA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

1 km



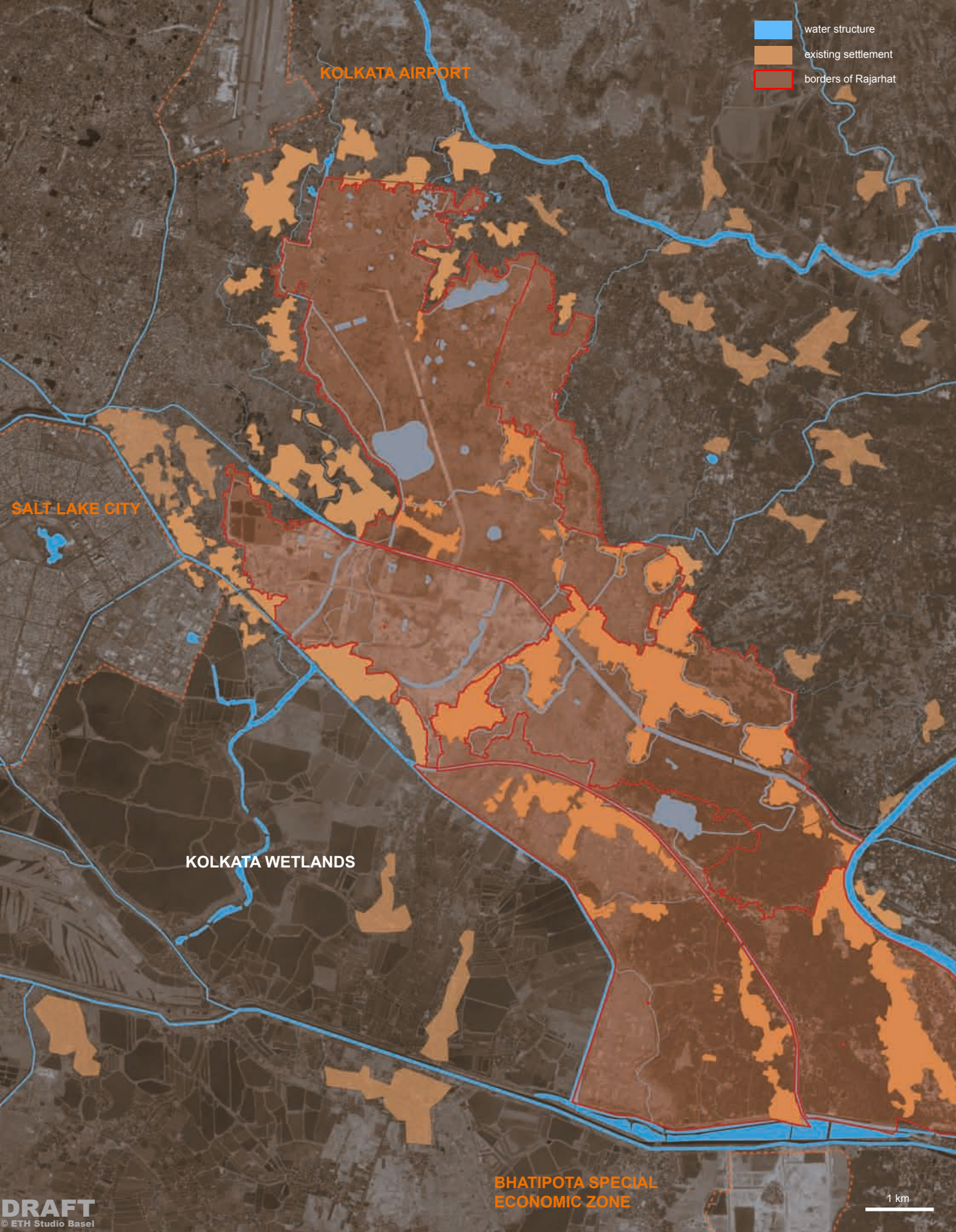


THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT

Most of the people living in the Rajarhat area used to be small farmers or agricultural labourers. The small settlements are usually located next to the old water structures. The organic form of the settlements comes out of the built structure and its relation to the forests in which the settlements normally are implemented. It is visible that they had a certain direction giving influence on the canal planning and that they further are zoning the area like frames.



existing settlement next to
central cbd action area 2



- water structure
- existing settlement
- borders of Rajarhat

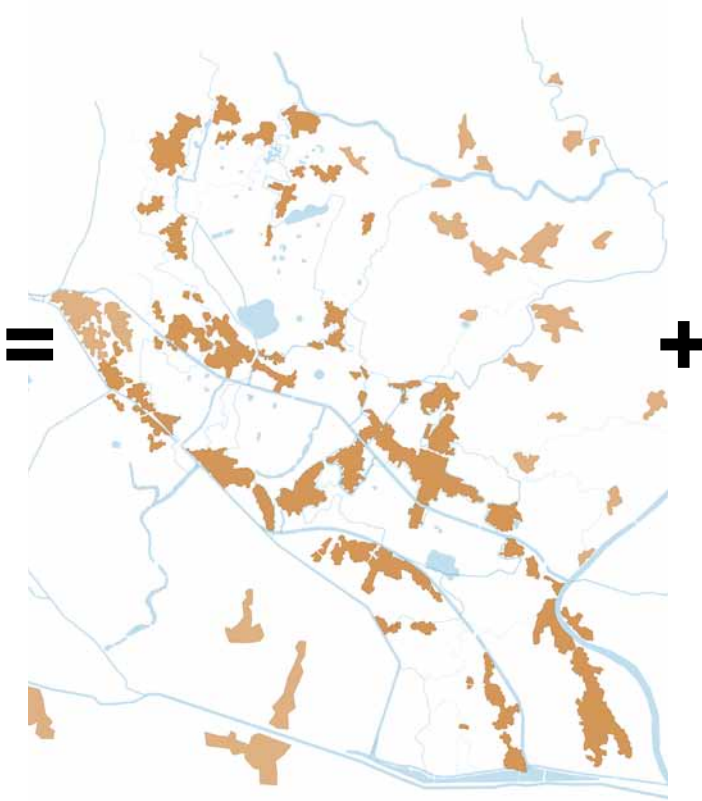
KOLKATA AIRPORT

SALT LAKE CITY

KOLKATA WETLANDS

BHATIPOTA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

1 km



water structure and existing settlement



the location strategy (see pages 16-17)

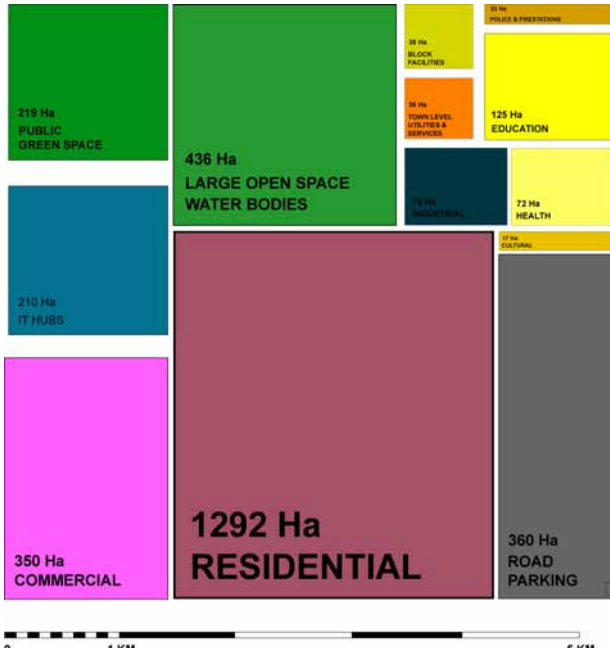
THE FORM OF RAJARHAT

The borders of Rajarhat are a product of the defined influence field of the airport, the western bordering of Salt Lake Sector V, the wetland whole, the southern industry complex and the surrounding existing water structures with the related existing settlements. The organic shape seems to adapt the contextual aspects to find an ideal and nature related form. Actually the definition which rivulet no is going to mark the border and is going to be extended is by far not a conclusive manner of bordering, its more a question of interpretation and principally or the result of land acquisition and ownership.



ACTION AREAS

Rajarhat is according to the existing structure divided in six action areas. The numbering of action areas is related to its construction start in the time line. The action areas are given concrete size and a functional repartition. The functional repartition is not balanced and relates to its situation in the whole project. The new towns programmatic constitution and its ambitions behind get very clear in this diagram. Related to the primary function of housing the it-hub part requires with 210 Ha a lot of space and the educational compared to it well proportioned.

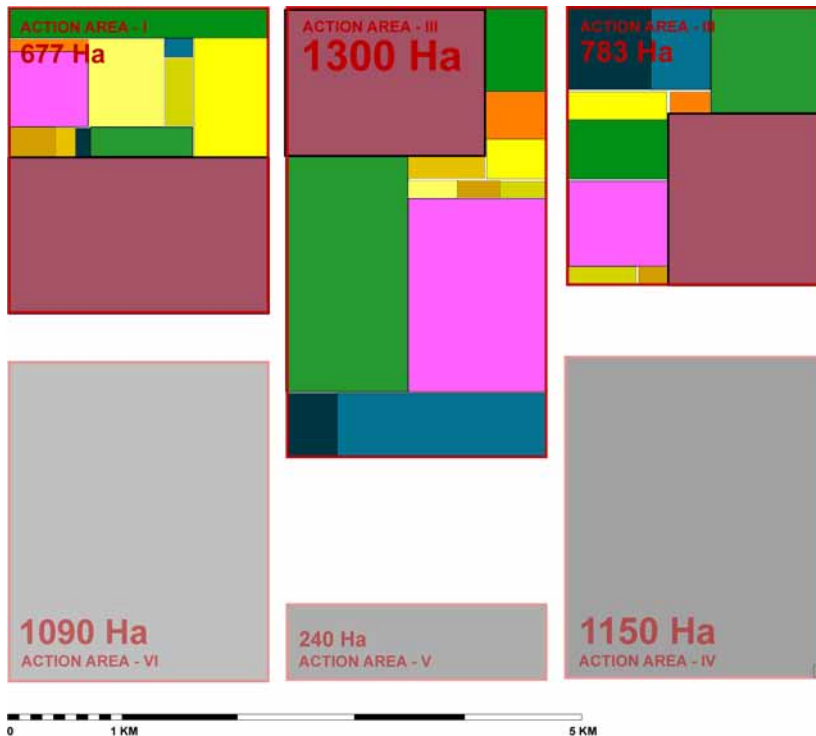


FUNCTIONS:

- commercial 350 Ha (pages 38-43)
- residential 1292 Ha (pages 44-55)
- it hubs 210 Ha (pages 56-59)
- industrial 70 Ha (pages 56-59)
- education 125 Ha (page 63)
- police & firestations 23 Ha (page 63)
- health 72 Ha (page 63)
- cultural 17 Ha (pages 62-63)
- public green 219 Ha (pages 64-65)
- large open spaces 436 Ha (p. 64-65)
- infrastructure 360 Ha (pages 66-73)

functional repartition for action areas 1-3

functional repartition in action areas 1-3





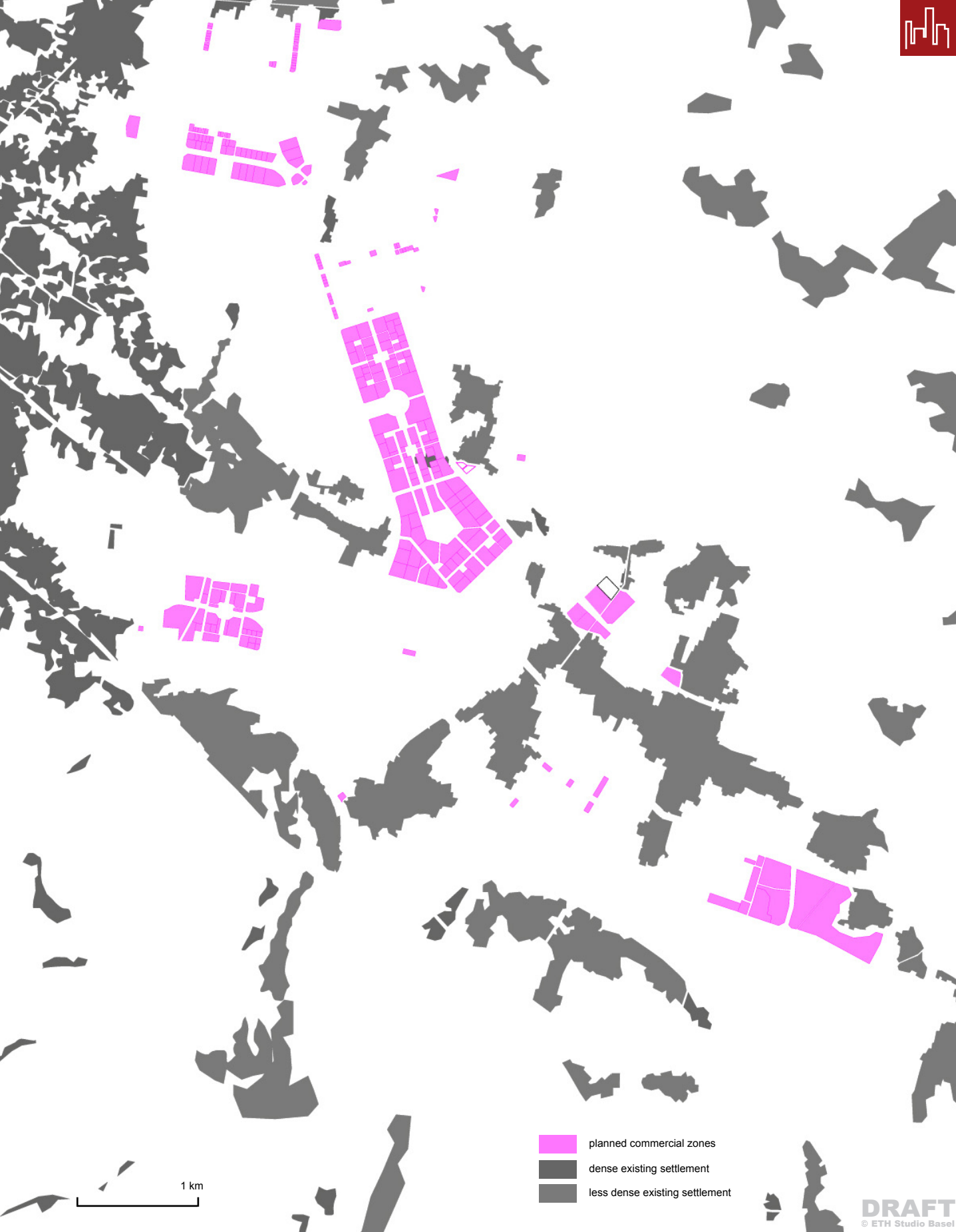
Axis BENGAL PEERLESS HOUSING DEV. CO. LTD.
THE MALLS COMPLEX
bphoto@bengalpeerless.com | axis.kolkata.com






COMMERCIAL

The commercial part, programmatically Rajarhat's second largest component, manifests in little commercial distribution streets in the residential areas, but principally in the three sub and one main central business district along the major arterial roads. The sub CBD's divided in a few big plots and equipped with big free space around for car parking lay the concept of multifunctional shopping mall near with overall function as local centre. The main CBD with its plot constitution suggest a different denser more city like built structure with side walks and some marking office towers. Interesting will be in how far the informal commercial sector which normally spreads at locations with certain centrality is going to develop and been threatened in such a big scale context.





1 km

-  planned commercial zones
-  dense existing settlement
-  less dense existing settlement





COMMERCIAL TYPES

In this built functioning part of Rajarhat around the DLF IT Centre the main commercial types are observable. On street scale hawkers offer meals and food and compete with the local small supermarkets which are connected to bigger gated complexes. In the distance of about 1000 m along the major arterial road there are growing the future shopping malls as the Axis Mall with all kind of further entertainment in addition.



big shopping malls





RESIDENTIAL

Rajarhat is mainly connected with the image of skyscrapers as the new form of housing. Actually another form of housing will cover the larger space of the residential area in the upcoming new town. According to the plot sizes and the building rules, thousands of 4 to 5 storey apartment houses and hundreds of single family houses will be the dominating housing types in the Rajarhat area. Its only that masterplan hides this areas behind the strip facade given by the little skyscrapers of the gated complexes, some cooperative towers and the big shopping areas. The gated complexes are normally situated at preferred locations at the borders to the green or at central positions. Relatively new for Kolkata are the township projects constructed in the Rajarhat area. As cities on their own this projects are the climax in an for Kolkata unusual residential housing form. The residential part for the economic weakest sections is reduced to very few areas over the bordering canals, blanked out, with little infrastructure and defined for settlement on their own.





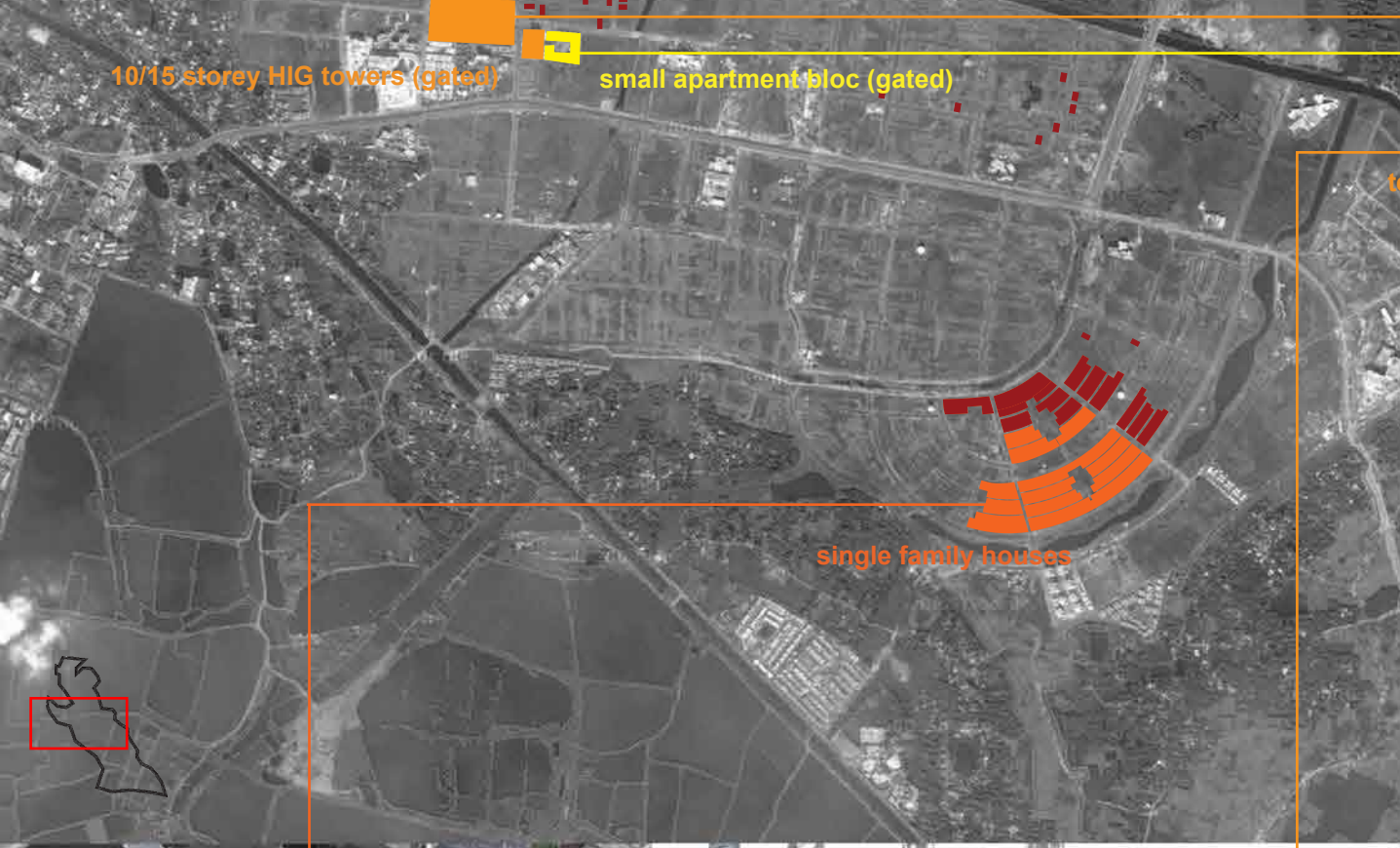
- planned residential
- planned gated areas
- dense existing settlement
- less dense existing settlement
- planned structure

1 km

DRAFT
© ETH Studio Bas



4/5 storey apartment houses

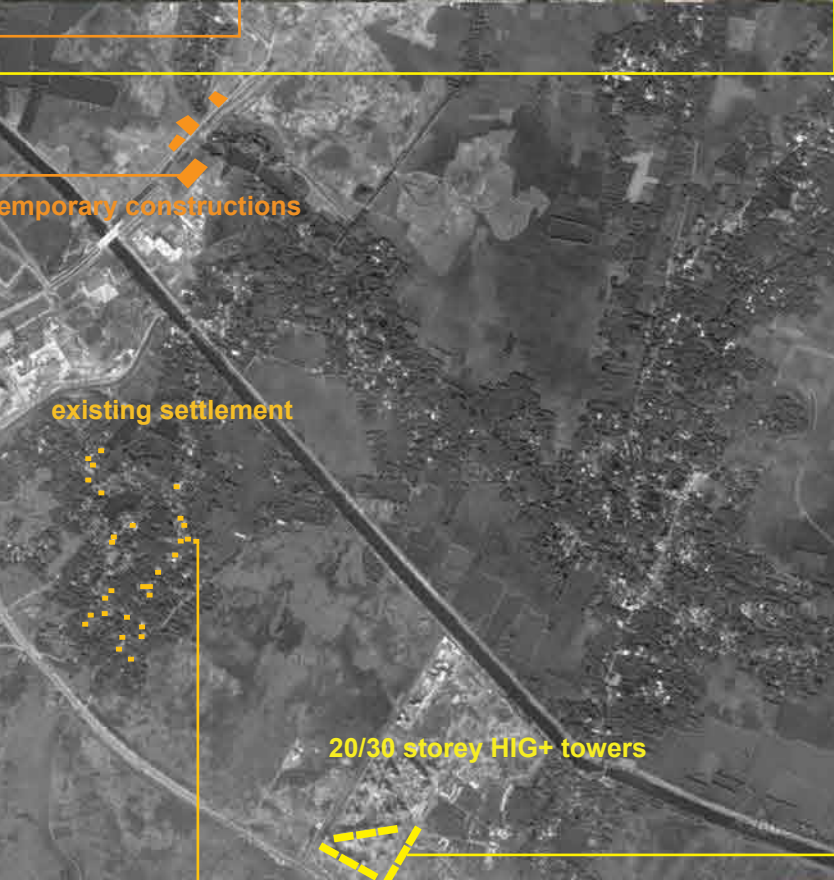


10/15 storey HIG towers (gated)

small apartment bloc (gated)

single family houses





RESIDENTIAL TYPES

The overview shows all the main types of existing and upcoming housing types in the Rajarhat area. The existing settlements are conglomerations of little permanent one or two storey cottages with hut-additions. As Rajarhat is going to be under construction for decades the temporary constructions will be as a housing type an inherent part of its image and development. The dominant, to low and middle income group related, all over the residential areas constructed 4 to 5 storey apartment houses, competing with the small apartment blocs in the gated complexes are the dominant typology. Further the single family houses for the upper middle and high income group are a favoured type. In the residential tower structure the two different types are, the gated complex 10-15 storey HIG towers and the 20-30 storey HIG+towers as larger brothers in the township areas as high end price segment for NRI's.





- income class 1
- income class 2
- income class 3
- income class 4
- income class 5
- income class 6
- other plots

*museum of modern art /
convention center*

sport city

250 m

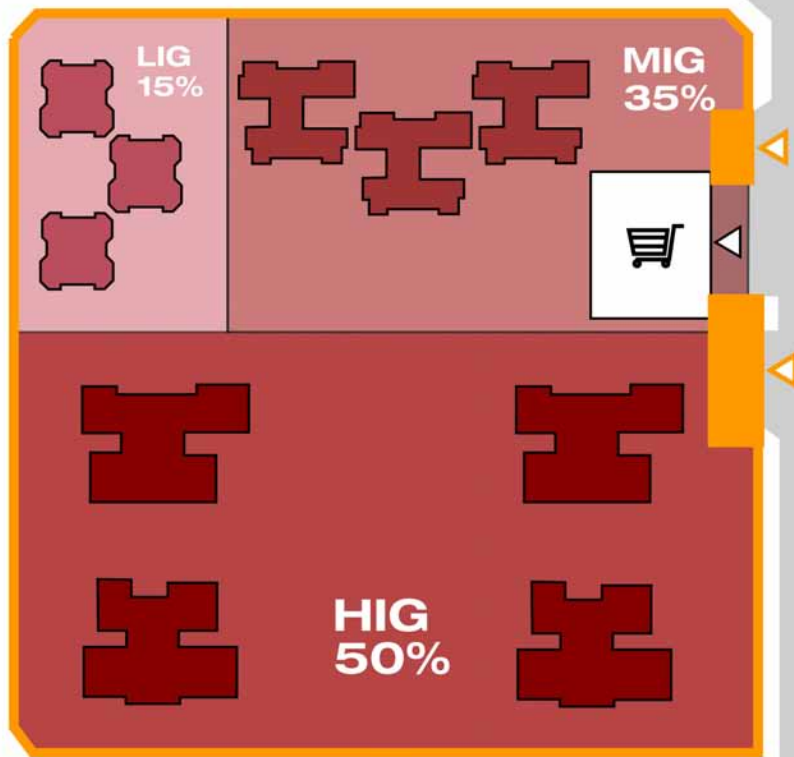




INCOME CLASSIFICATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL PLOT AREA

The individual housing plot areas for the apartment houses and family houses are divided by plot size and location in different price segments. The classification strategy is the transformation of the idea to create a social heterogeneous city. The idea of an income class related distribution is tried to be realised by a subsidizing system, in which more expensive and bigger plots of better location do finance the cheaper plots for the low income group. The income class marked example shows a residential area of action area two and its classification principles. Low income group plots are mostly at street bordering locations while high income group plots are in the inner areas of the housing cluster by the green spaces ore at preferred sites near the sports city or the coming museum of modern art (MOMA).





example of gated areas

gate

- LIG: Low Income Group
- MIG: Middle Income Group
- HIG: High Income Group

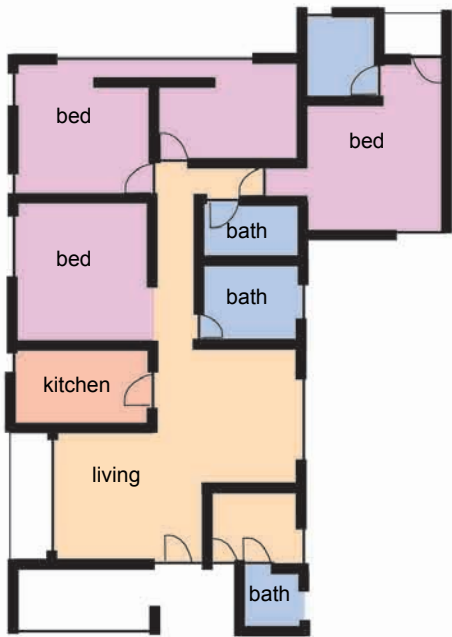




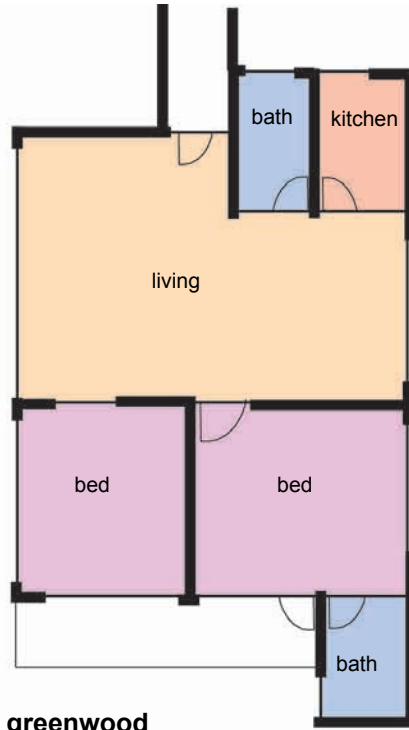
GATED AREAS

The gated areas in Rajarhat are a for Kolkata relatively new phenomena, especially in this new quantitative appearance. The gated areas will consist in the upcoming new town of all kind of gated complexes but the gated housing complexes will be the most present type. This type of residential housing is subject of restrictions by the building rules. The same principle of subsidisation that is installed by the individual plots exists hear also. The developer companies of these larger plots are forced to construct at least fifty per cent middle and low income apartments which have to be in a certain defined price ratio, while the other half can be used for high profitable high income class apartments. The question whether this system or a low income apartment once sold, doesn't get subject of speculation isn't clear answerable.

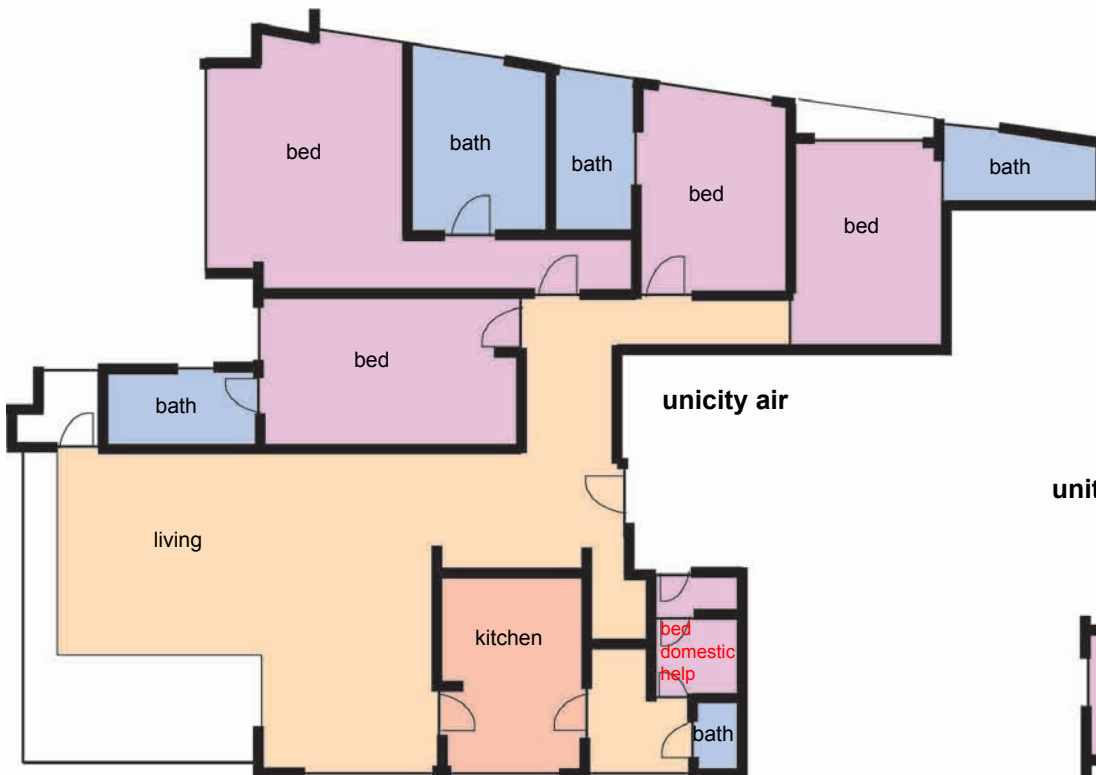




greenwood



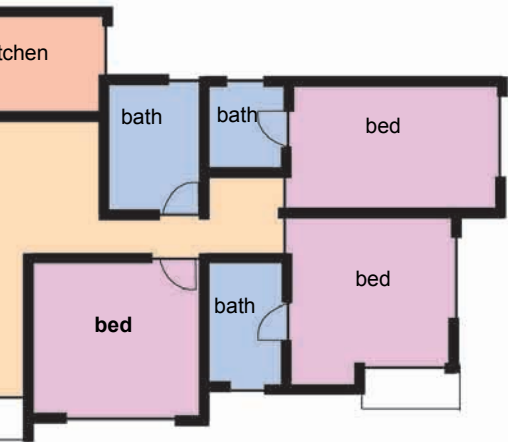
greenwood



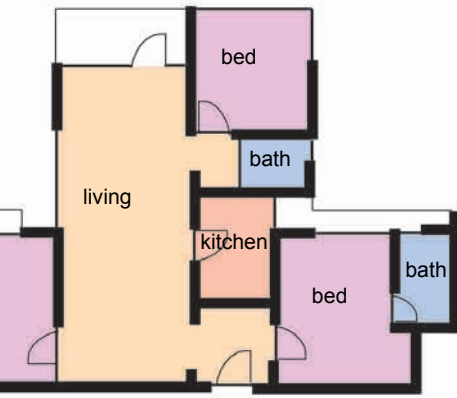
unicity air

unitec harmony

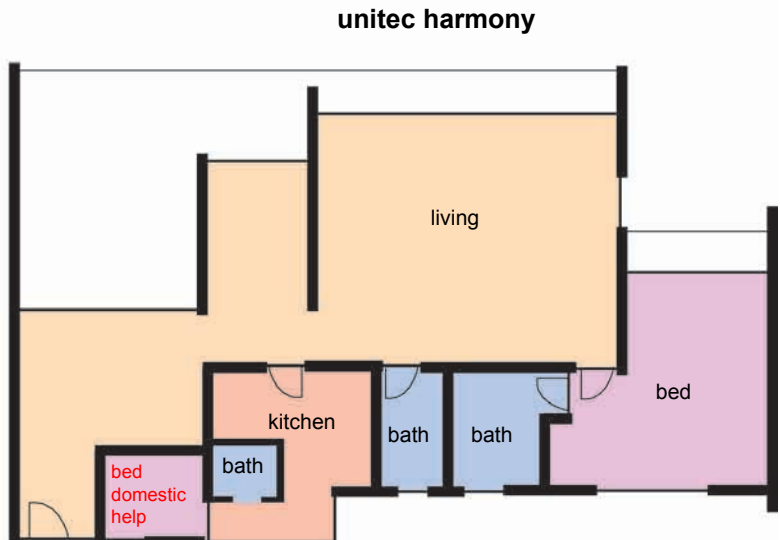
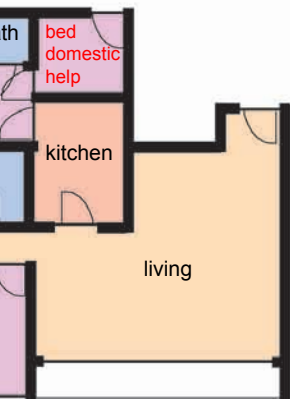




maniresidency



sunrisesymphony



unitec harmony

A NEW SCALE OF APARTMENT HOUSING

The floor plans of this gated complexes and townships projects go along with the tendency of scaling the living room and the diversification of the rooms as symbol of growing wealth of an upper media class. In the class upper high class segment there is observable that there is beside the immense spatial dimensions, disproportional many bathrooms and a new always a servant unit integrated in the apartments. The group of buyers which expresses this demand is widely belonging to the non residential Indians (NRI's), hardly present and rarely in the year using it. This leads a bit to the question in which relation the whole supporting poor and the rich will stay in this different, anonymous, wide and big scale context.








INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HUBS AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Rajarhat's ideological and also projected economic backbone the information technology is measured large pieces of the master plan area. Located at the borders and at intermediate zones of the defined territory of the development, there are growing the hubs for a whole sector. In direct neighbourhood to large scale green areas there are created attractive workstations.

The industrial areas are a small component of the program and shifted to the extremities of the developing town area. In the action area I, III, V and VI, industry is a very rare or inexistent part. Only at the eastern fringe of action area II with the Tata centre the industrial production gets in little contact with other functions. The Leather Complex in the southern fringe of Rajarhat marks the location for the new towns production site through its neighborhood. A large big piece of land, in the in planning process hanging action area IV, is there defined for the industry.





-  planned IT areas
-  planned industry areas
-  dense existing settlement
-  less dense existing settlement
-  planned structure





PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS


The institutional part of Rajarhat is attached a lot of importance as the project wants to set an example for the city of Kolkata. The institutional program consist of schools and universities, health centres and hospitals, police and fire stations, block and town facility centres. The whole cultural part seems to be led into the hands of private companies and holds therefore little importance in the governmental engagement, apart from the participation on th modern art museum project. Generally the government makes more use of public private partnerships for the realisation of the ambitious institutional program, especially in the educational part. The Dehli public school as leading school realisation is an example for these new policies.

convention center

museum of modern art






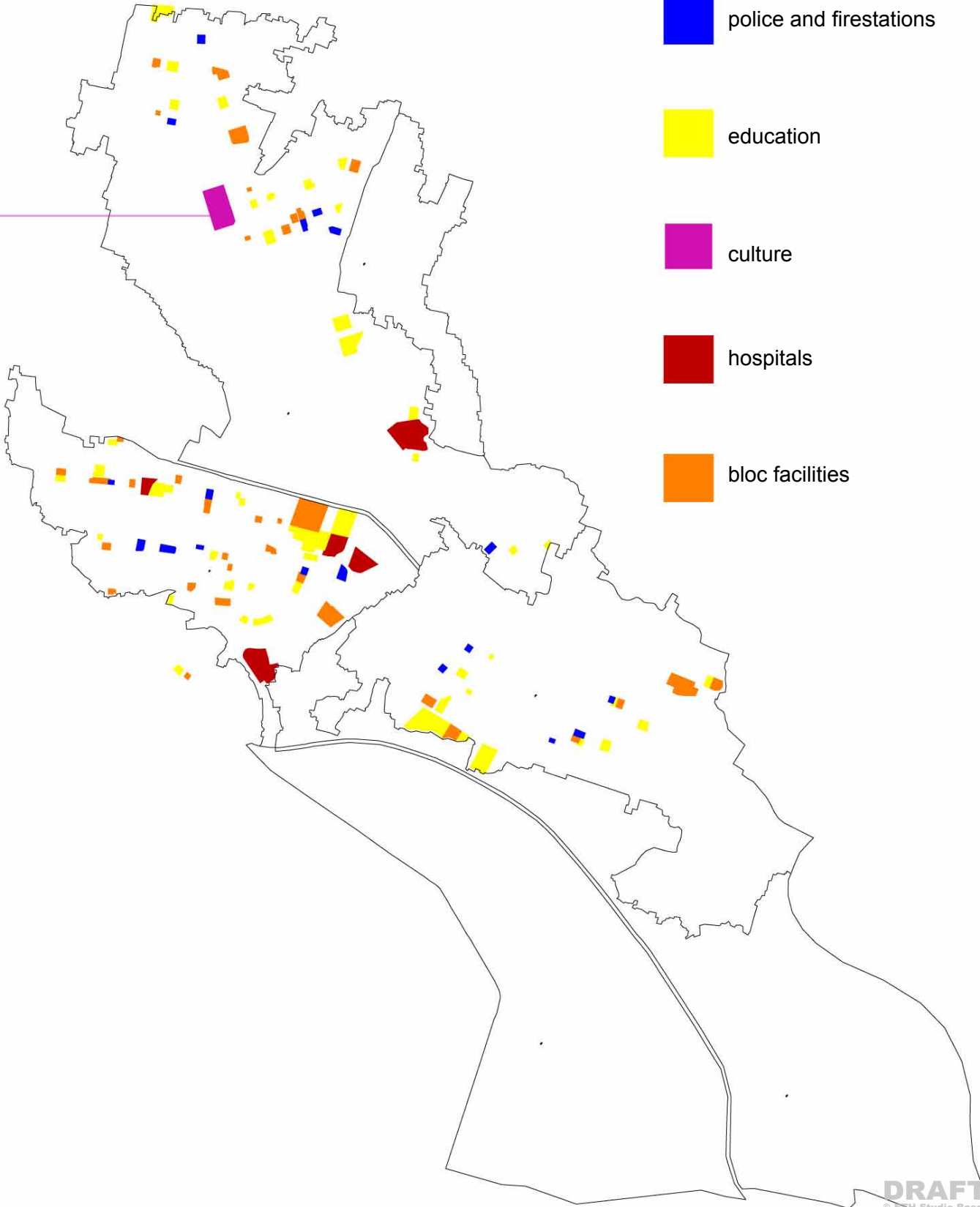
 police and fire stations

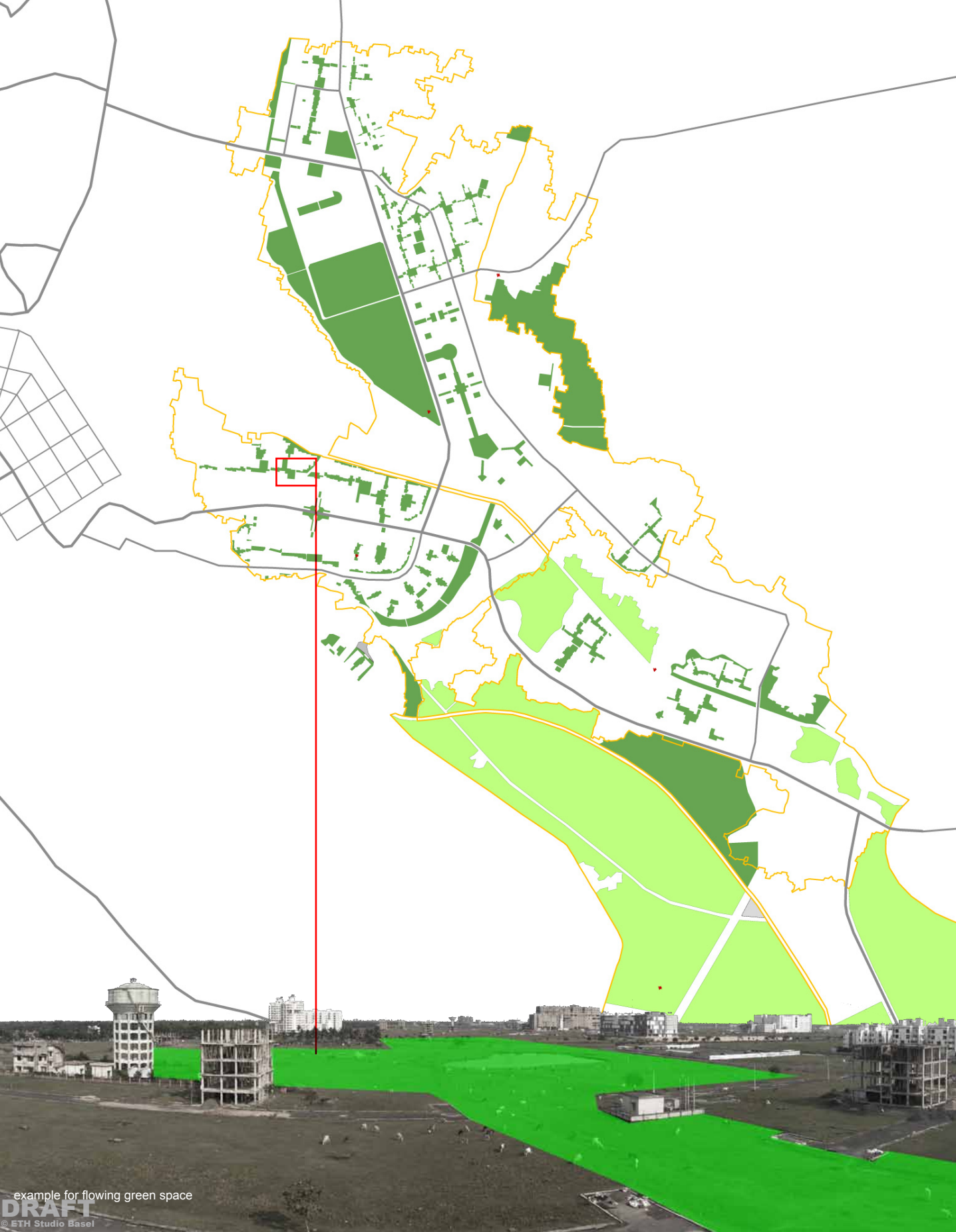
 education

 culture

 hospitals

 bloc facilities









PUBLIC GREEN SPACES

The green space concept bases on large open green spaces and on continuous public green spaces flowing through the residential areas. The large scale green spaces are designed as park areas, built out for sports facilities use like cricket, or left in its natural condition for the moment. The continuous public green spaces as an alternative concept to the individual block park interlinks the housing clusters in between the crossing roads and creates a really available recreation space for all the people.

-  planned public green spaces
-  planned large open spaces







TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Rajarhat is planned as a strip city, accordingly to this a car oriented city with relatively big distances in between the centres; few but wide central arterial roads pass through the new town and are connected to the city transport system. The inner road system is good dimensioned only at the cross points within the area the current situation produces certain question marks, as there no line separating system for the distribution for the upcoming big traffic and a proportionally small roundabout should rule the distribution.

The public transport system mainly is principally basing on a bus terminal structure spread over the whole Rajarhat area. Beside the bus lines, there are the caps as individual means of transport and for the inner circulation there will be in near future for sure motor rickshaw and bikes. The acting of the traditional hand rickshaw in this new big scale context as means of transport can be excluded as the wide road structure negates its existence. In a further future there should pass the metro line 2 through action area I and II, leading to the international airport, the Howrah station and connect Rajarhat very strong with the city.



delhi road

airport

howrah station

city center

calcutta university

football stadium

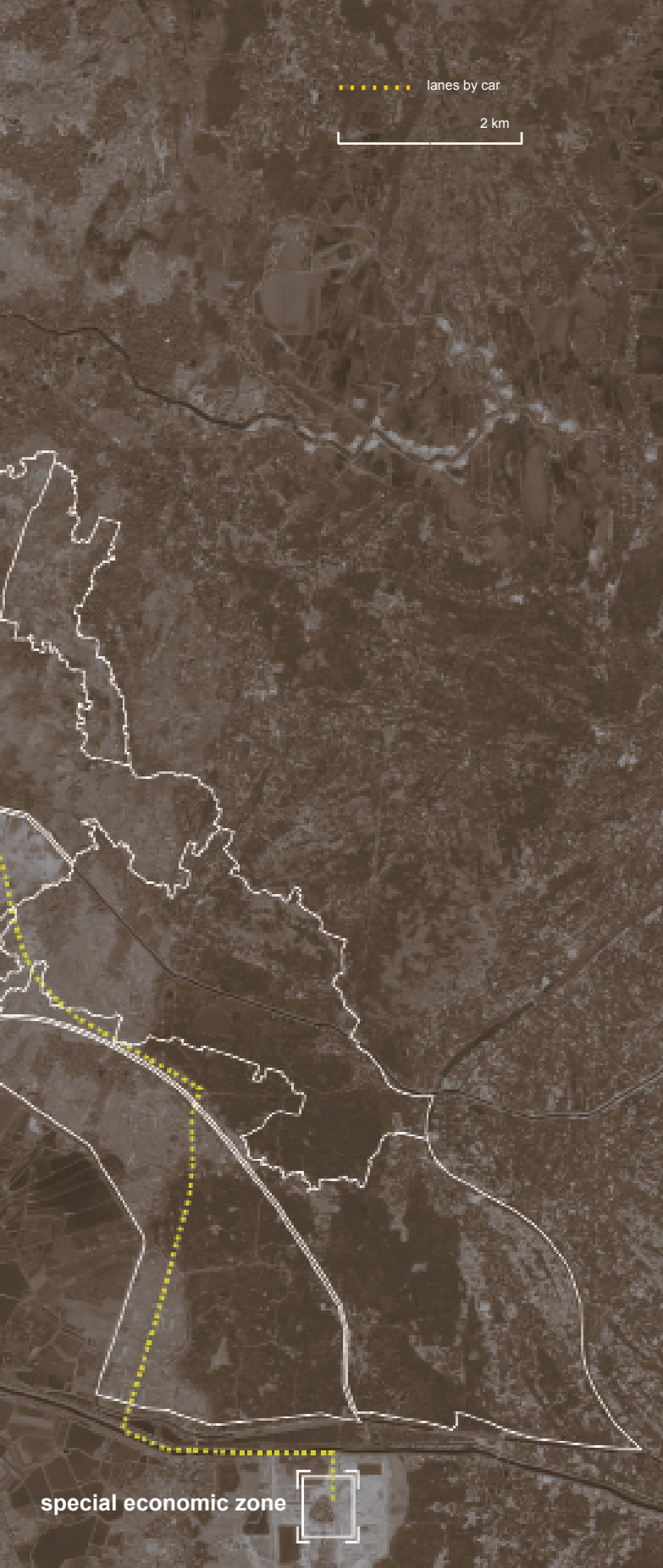
cricket stadium

park street

polo stadium

south city

univ jadavpur



CONNECTION TO THE CITY BY CAR

In the moment there are only two entranceways to the developing area, the main entrance from Salt Lake Sector V and the one in prolongation of the airport. In further future there will be an additional access from the south and a sub entrance from the western side through Sector V. The main problem to be watched in the following years will not be the quantity of the connections to the cities linking lines, its going to be the quality of the connection. At the northern side the freeways are continuing out of Rajarhat and are finally flowing into the, with the Rajarhat budget realized East Metropolitan Bypass, which links Rajarhat and Kolkata with its airport and leads out the city in direction to Delhi. On the western side, the more frequented side leading to all the main points of interest marked in the map, the freeway ends in passing Salt Lake Sector V as a normal two-lane road, finally splitting of into different directions, at the western canal of Salt Lake, at a complicated intersection. The traffic already today jams there in the rush hours to a high degree and only a little part of Rajarhat is constructed till now much less in use.



delhi road

airport

howrah station

city center

calcutta university

football stadium

cricket stadium

park street

polo stadium

south city

univ jadavpur



CONNECTION TO THE CITY BY METRO

The Kolkata Metro was the first underground built in India starting its service in 1984. Since the completion of the line 1, one of the main nord-south connections in the public transport system of Kolkata, the underwater metro plan, with the idea to create a new connection between the west and the east, were discussed. The last proposal of the line 2 has in a first step 18 stations and goes from Howrah station under the river through a tunnel crossing the existing line to Salt Lake. The 40 billion INR East West Metro project has been cleared by the central government and is expected to be started in 2009. The completion of the first part of the line 1 is targeted at 2014. Because the Rajarhat area is part of the line 1 prolongation in direction to the international airport, the access can be expected earliest 5 years later, even if developers like Shracchi do promote this important linking to the city nowadays in their advertising campaign, as if it would be under construction.

special economic zone



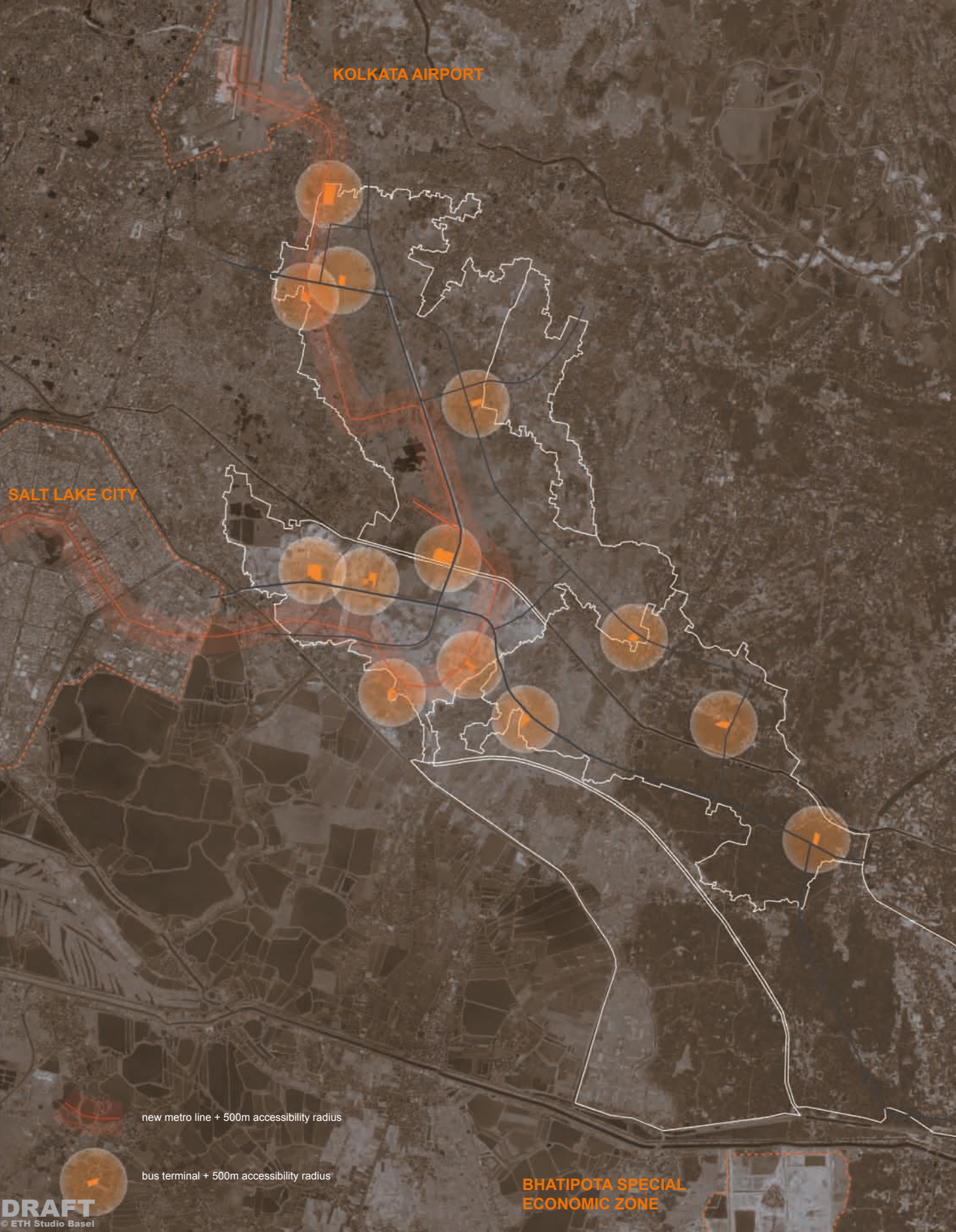
KOLKATA AIRPORT

SALT LAKE CITY

new metro line + 500m accessibility radius

bus terminal + 500m accessibility radius

BHATIPOTA SPECIAL
ECONOMIC ZONE





PUBLIC TRANSPORT AVAILABILITY IN RAJARHAT

The distribution of the bus terminals, Rajarhat's only public transport system for a long time, is very irregular. The spreading defines preferred areas at the upcoming central business districts let various residential areas nearly unattended and reduces its density noticeable in action area III, where big residential areas are planned. The probably upcoming metro line 1 doesn't improve the bad situation of the southern area. It is to be said the planning of this areas still are ongoing and not even the main roads in this area are finished. Generally it can be stated that the public transport structure isn't dense enough to initiate a change in the mobility thinking. On the contrary Rajarhat with its financial potential society and out of the wide city structure will go the way of individual mobility.







PLANNING ORGANISATION

planning structure
a city of islands
developer islands



Government of Kolkata
CPI (Communist Party of India)

INVESTMENT

WBHB
West Bengal
Housing Board

LOCATION EVALUATION
LAND ACQUISITION

INVESTMENT
CONTROL

HIDCO
Housing and Infrastructure
Development Corporation

51 % 49%

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
LAND DISTRIBUTION

MAINTENANCE AUTHORITY

60%
Individual release
& cooperatives

CONTROL

BRADA
Bhangor Rajarhat Area
Development Authority

MONITORING

REGULATION
OF SURROUNDING
DEVELOPMENT

INVESTMENT

PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT

bulk residential
40%

RAJARHAT DEVELOPMENT

Investors

National Housing Bank
Punjab National Bank
HUDCO Housing & Urban
Development Corporation
...

INVESTMENT

Developers

DLF
UNITECH
GREENWOOD
...

INVESTMENT

Individuals

PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT



PLANNING STRUCTURE

The Kolkatan Metroploitan Development Authority made the first proposal of for the Kolkata New Town in 1993 in its Concept Plan. Ten expansion zones were purposed and the government commissioned the West Bengal Housing Board WBHB to evaluate the surrounding areas. The plane table survey stated little loss of productive farmland and sparely existing settlements in the Rajarhat area. In the following the government felt the decision for Rajarhat, as the location for the realization of its vision of a new town development. Then the land assembly process in the new town area was organised by the same institution and restrictions on land transfer were imposed. The establishment of the WBHIDCO followed after the program definition. The project financing was arranged through low interest loans of investors to be participated on the planning and administrative institution WBHIDCO. Further first parts of the defined bulk residential areas were sold to accumulate capital.

A CITY OF ISLANDS

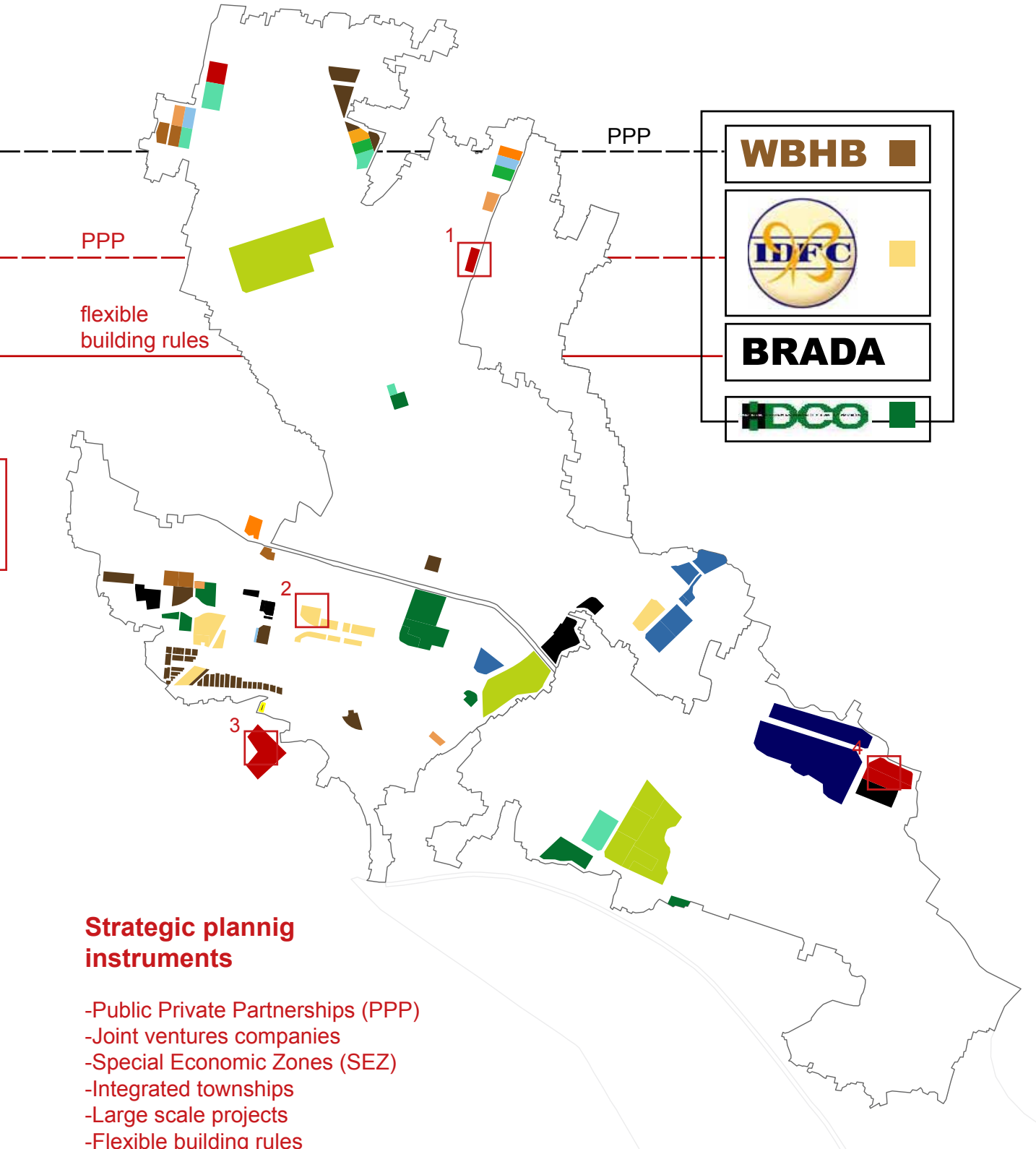
The distribution of the 40% bulk residential area and the large scale plots, primarily to joint venture companies and to a few individual big companies, leads to the result of the nowadays visible island structure. This is going to stay the image of Rajarhat during the whole first leg of its construction process. The middle and large scale housing project plots, are developed in faster manner then the small individual and cooperative housing plots, which depend on a working daily use structure and workstations.

This islands manifest mostly in high rise structures that keep their recognisability as islands anyway and created beside an easy orientable space. Significant is that this bulk residential areas and large scale plots are located at green border of the Rajarhat planning area or at preferred central situations.



Development types

- 1 Sunny Fort
Cooperation with other developer
- 2 Sankalpa
Cooperation with government developer W.B.I.D.F.C.
- 3 Sanjeeva Town - The Duplex Estate
Out of border development->Cooperation with BRADA
- 4 Elite Graden Vista
one company large scale housing project



DEVELOPER ISLANDS

New Town Height
DLF

Uniworld City
UNITECH



Sunrise Point
Sureka Group

Sankalpa
W.B.I.D.F.C | NK Realtors



Uttara
Bengal DCL

Green Field Amb
NK Realtors



ghts



Unitech Infospace
UNITECH



Elite Garden Vista
NK Realtors



Sunrise Greens
Sureka Group



tion



Rosedale
Shrachi Realty



DRAFT





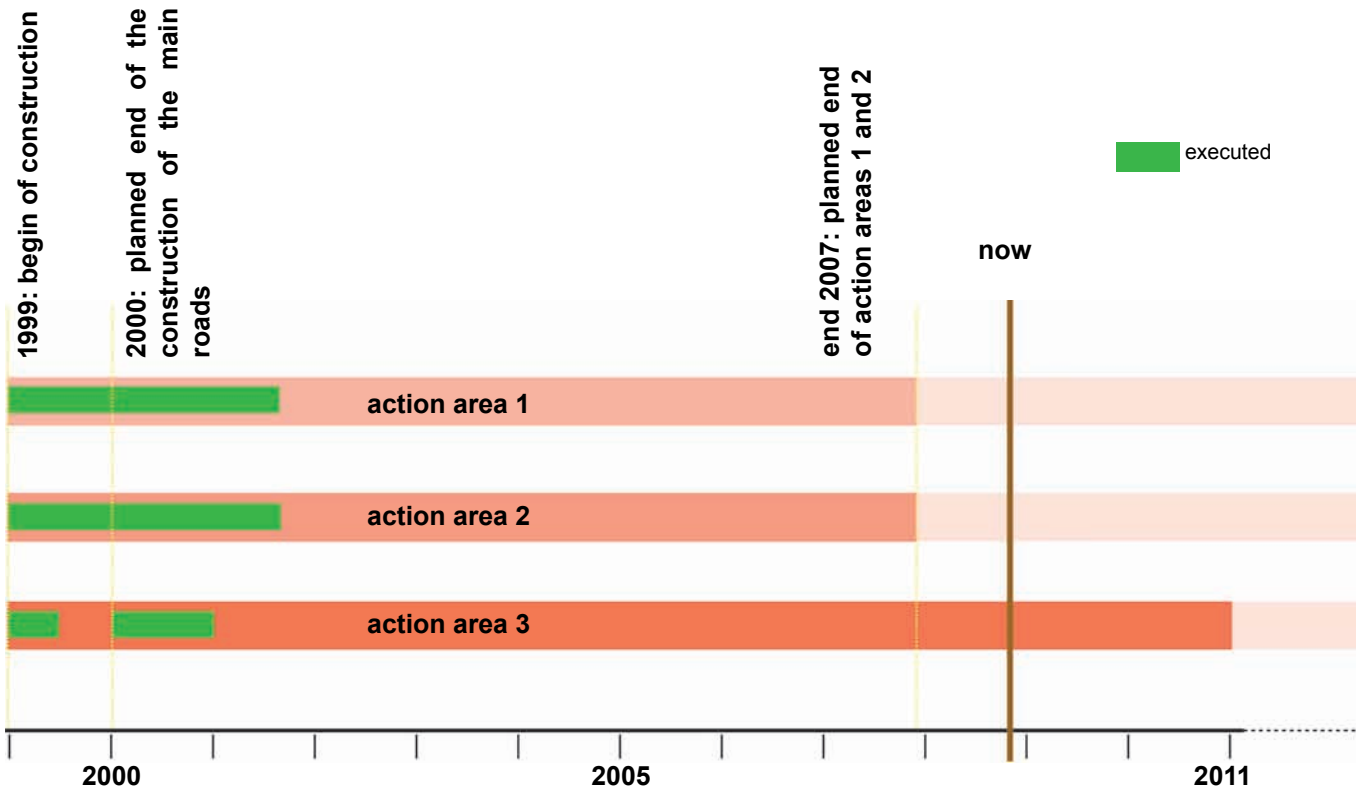
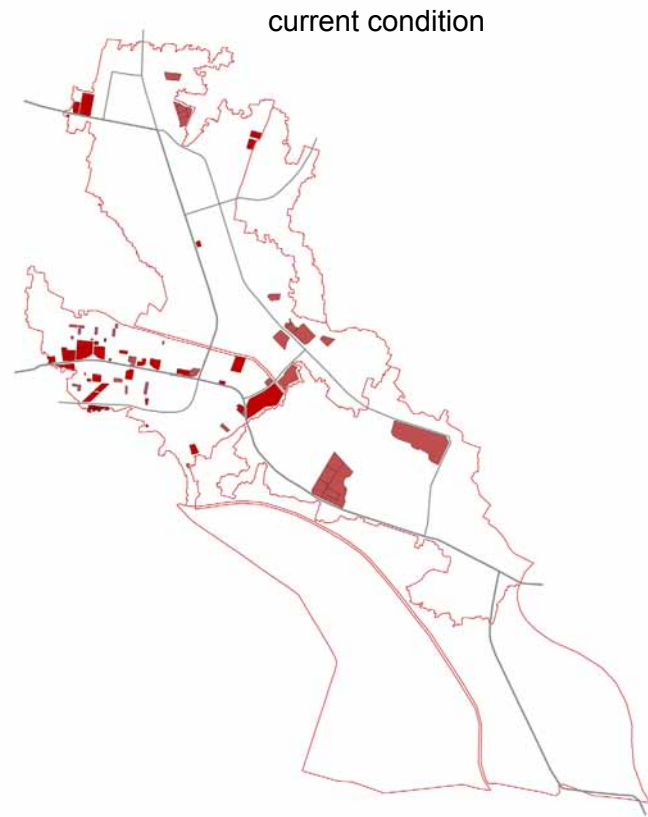
TIME LINE

a painted time line
slow development
a fast example



A PAINTED TIME LINE




The timeline was defined in 1999 by West Bengal Housing and Infrastructure Development Organisation the operating planning office of the Rajarhat development. It was intended to lay the main infrastructure, primarily the roads to make the first three action areas accessible within one year, so that further development could take place directly in the following. The delay the project has today according to its schedule is caused first by the slow drainage process, therefore delayed infrastructural setting and an inert bureaucracy which braked the constructions from realisation in the initial phase. In the last years the development took a bit more dynamic, but still the individual small plot areas haven't started growing, as main institutional components are lacking in the area, therefore only the directly to Salt Lake and to Dum Dum bordering area are developing well. Out of the current situation and the slowness of the individual housing development, as seen in the history of Salt Lake, only a completion date around 2035, for the tree first action areas, is realistic.

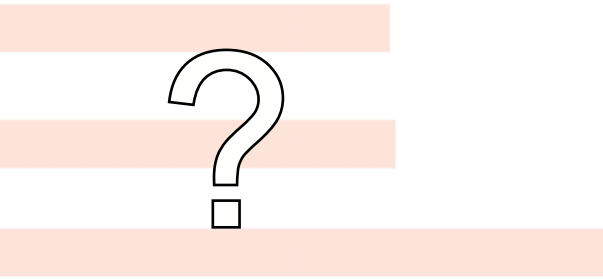




final condition

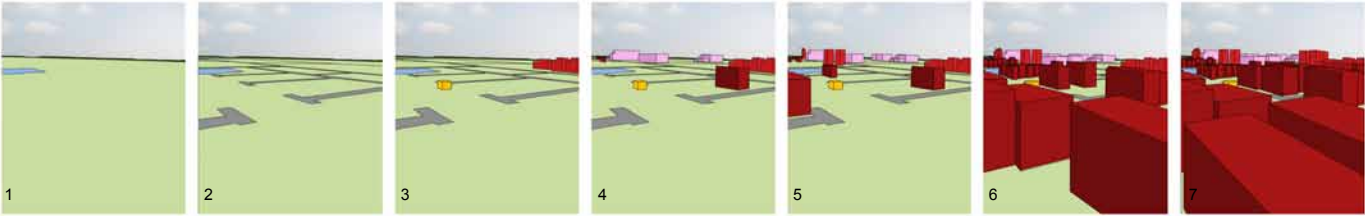


-  build
-  under construction
-  not build



2040?

SLOW DEVELOPMENT



ROSEDALE, SHRACHI

DLF IT PARK, DLF

DLF IT PARK, DLF

UNITEC INFOSPACE, UNITEC

GREENFIELD HEIGHTS, BENGAL





- roadsystem
- infrastructure
- commercial
- residential

MAGAS BENGAL, BENGAL

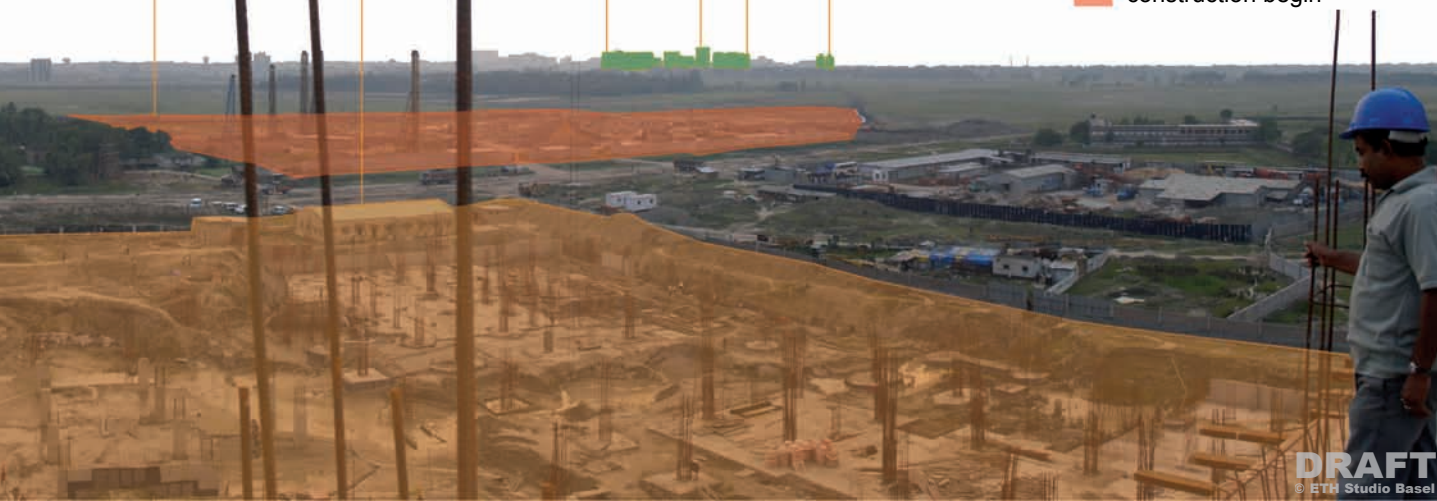
ECOSPACE BUSINESS PARK, AMBUJA

DLF GRAND MALL, DLF

BENGAL SHRACHL, BENGAL

BENGAL DCL, BENGAL

EASTERN HIGH







1200 WORKERS

for construction site of 2 Ha

working from **6 a.m. to 11 p.m.**

working day of **17 HRS**



A FAST EXAMPLE: THE ECOSPACE BUSINESS PARK

The construction of the Ecospace business park is realized by Bengal Ambuja one of the leading developer of Kolkata and partly to the state belonging, as the WBHB is a main partner. The workers are mostly agricultural people coming from the suburbs of Kolkata and the further region of West Bengal, while the construction site management is a mixture of different Indian origin, but nationally experienced through the involvement in big forerunner projects like in Delhi. The calculated construction time for the four working blocks is two and a half years and according to the information of the members of the construction site management this is relatively slow, compared to other cities, principally because of the less experienced workers.







PART 2: THE LEGEND OF RAJARHAT

rajarhats dream



ecological impact



social impact



the unique rajarhat



rajarhat had a dream







RAJARHATS DREAM

the glamour of rajarhat
better than salt lake...
a diverse strip city?
rajarhat vs kolkata
public opinion







THE GLAMOUR OF RAJARHAT

Rajarhat is seen as the symbol for Kolkata's big leap forward. Rajarhat will lead Kolkata in a bright modern future. Rajarhat will by doing everything better than the past, show the city the way out of its chaos and economic stagnation. The ideological background of the new town development of Rajarhat provokes big expectations and through this, strong and partly very kitschy images. The way, Rajarhat and its developments are promoted, are the manifestations of this big created dream, now living peoples heads. Rajarhat is painted as a city without disorder, pollution and traffic jams, full of greenery, one whole continuous open space, with glimmering skyscraper architecture, as witness of the grandeur of its town.



PROJECTED IMAGES OF RAJARHAT



Elite Gareden Vista





TECH Air

Heights

apartment



PS Aatghara Centre



Bengal Tower



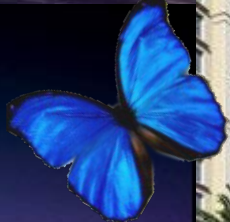
Rosedale Gardens



UNITECH Infospace



DLF New Town Heights



DRAFT © ETH Studio Basu

ADVERTISSMENT IN KOLKATA









BETTER THAN SALT LAKE...

Salt Lake as direct neighbour, older brother and to the city linking element, is an important reference for the new town planning of Rajarhat. The ideal form of Rajarhat, with its rigid street system and the small, individual sold, block structure, is mostly a residential area. Only a few institutional areas and a small centre do loose up the programmatic uniform small scale housing areas. The individual developed houses produce a convenient atmosphere in the area, but the house diversity can't break the monotony. A Further problem of Salt Lake is the lack of public spaces and free accessible green spaces. The slow development of Salt Lake, an unplanned result of the 999 years plot leasing system, produced a big financial deficit for the state as the subleasing was problematic in terms of house sharing. Rajarhat is really sold and the ownership system is more flexible for sharing systems what should lead to the fact that lower income groups also can afford houses. Rajarhat should become a diverse city in program and also in population. The most important instrument for the realisation of this vision is the system public private partnerships which enters big funds for the development.

RAJARHAT SHOULD BECOME

...financial successiv

...programmatically diverser

6x larger than Salt Lake

(Salt Lake 880 Ha | Rajarhat 5500 ha)

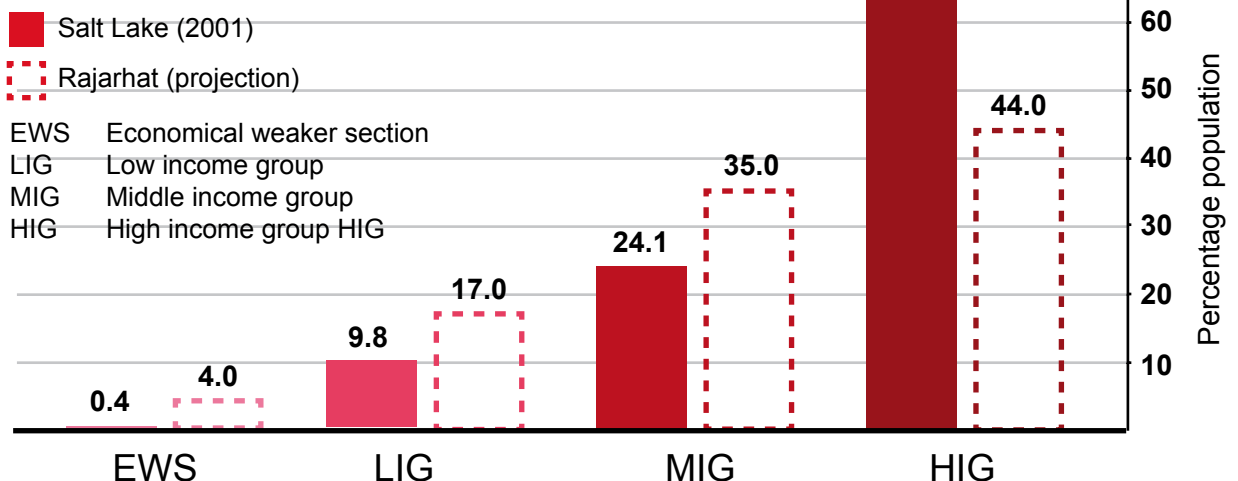
11x Bigger by population of Salt Lake

(Salt Lake 180'000 | Rajarhat 2'000'000)

...denser and public space oriented

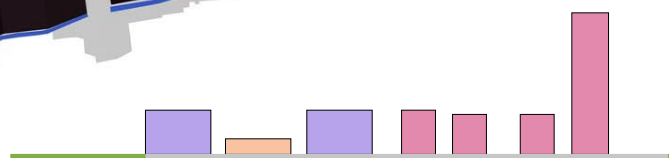
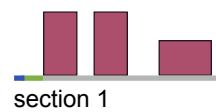
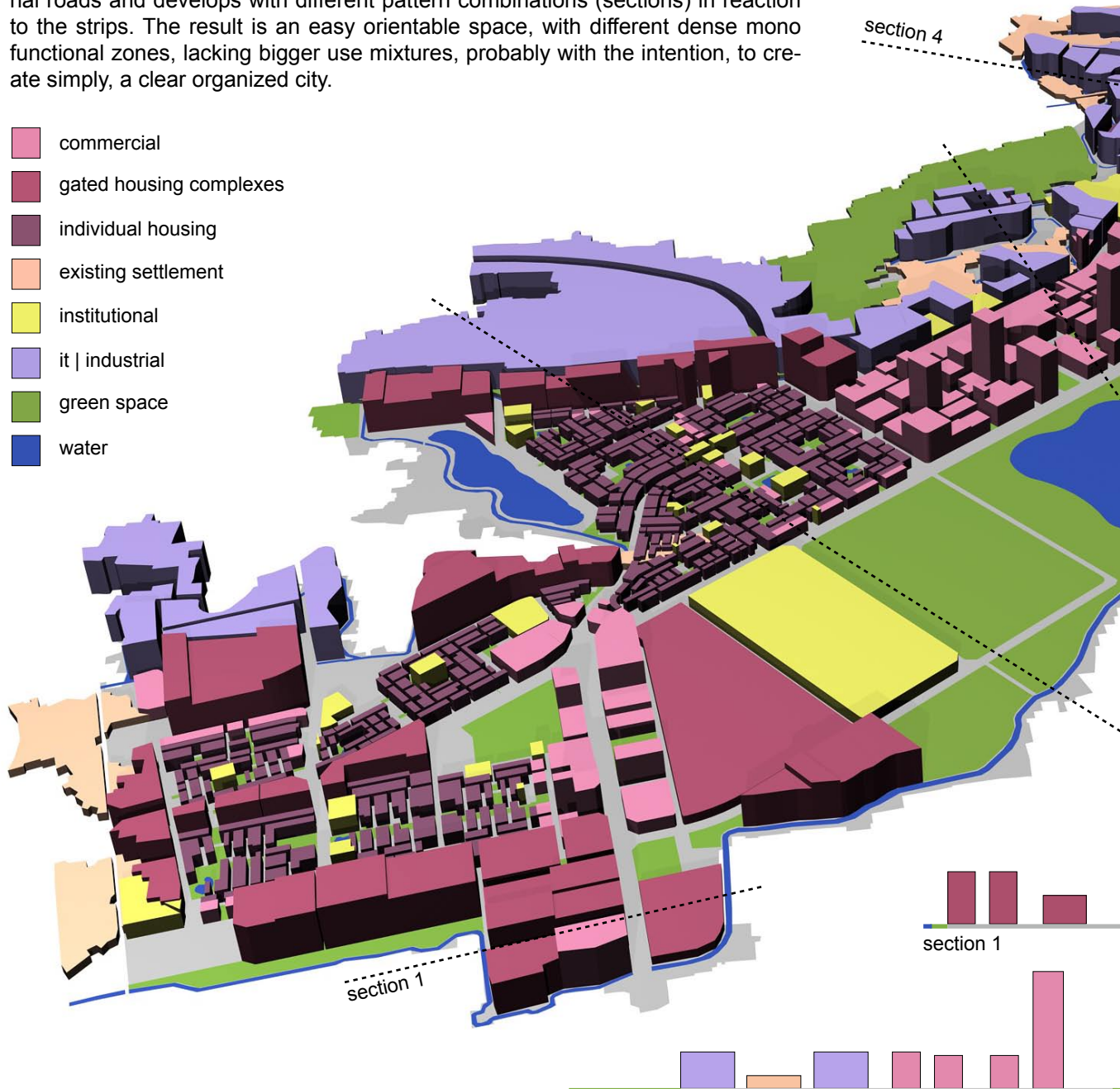
...better mixed by income classes

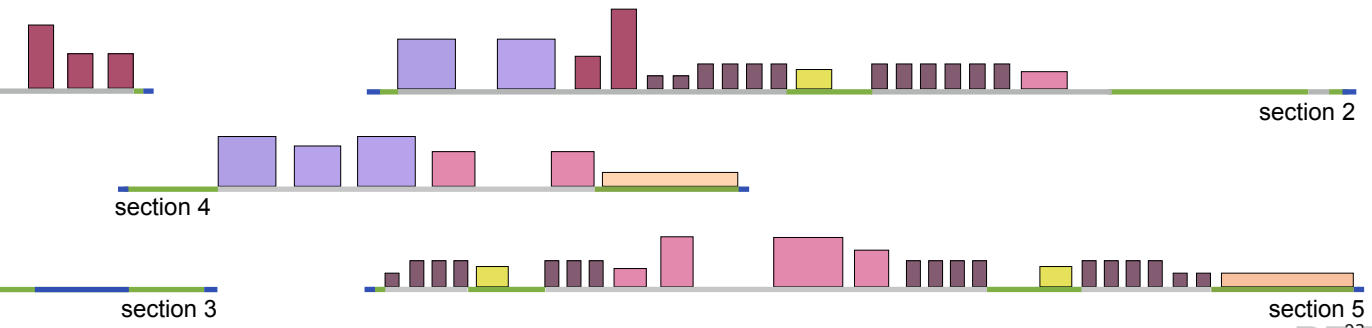
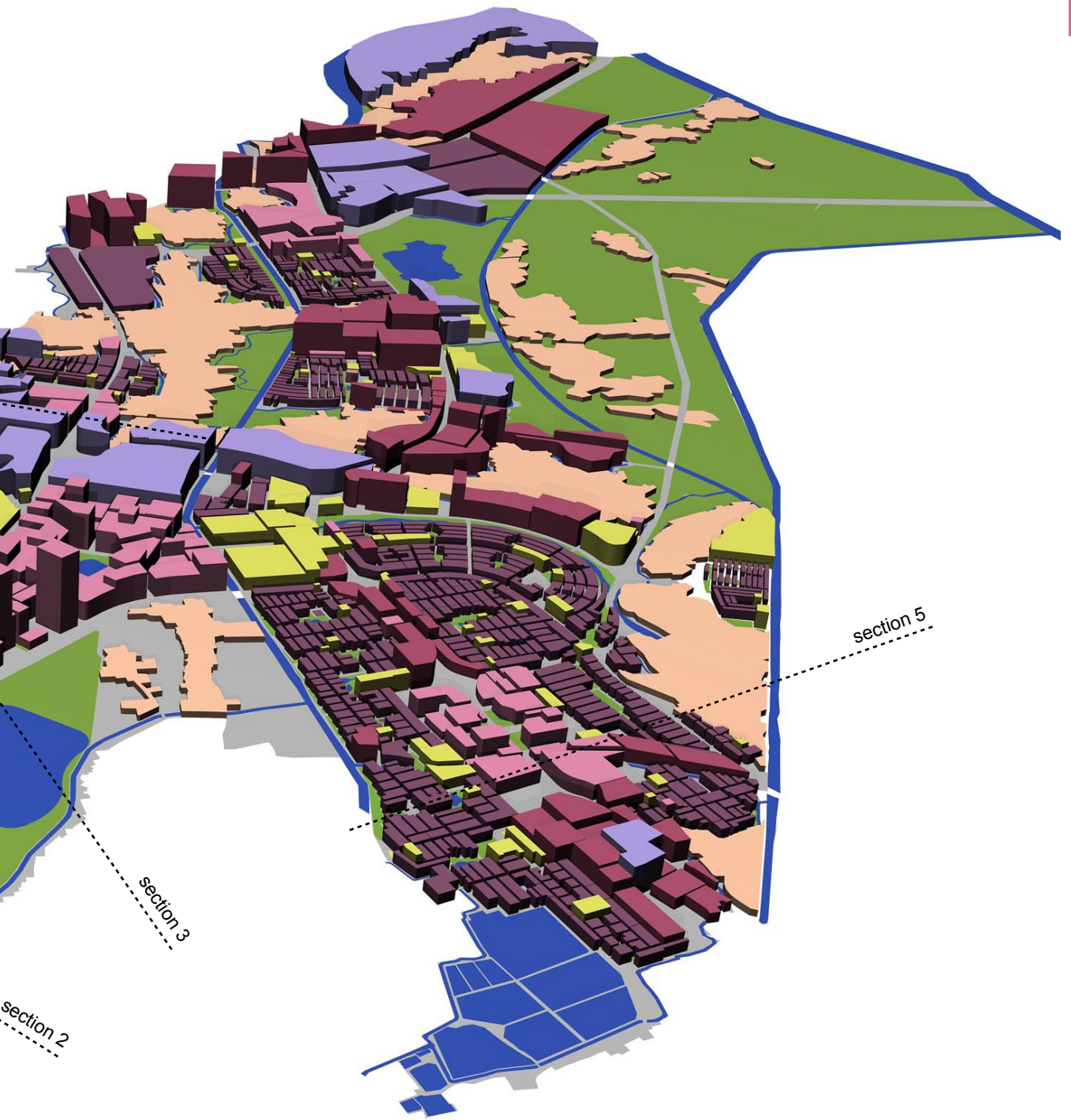
Share of different income group in Salt Lake upcoming Rajarhat



A DIVERSE STRIP CITY?

The projected city, developing out of the flexible building rules, the plot distribution and partition, together with the economic principles, will manifest in a manner like the illustrated visualisation. One main aim of Rajarhat was to create a diverse city. This intention seems to be realized, as there are in the new town planning different patterns in scale and structure visible. The different patterns are clear dividable out of their scale, but stay in space forming relations of core (commercial), filling (individual housing and institutional) and casing (it | industrial and gated housing complexes). Therefore it can't be spoken of heterogeneity in particular, as well as of fluently transforming city spaces. The master plan is orienting on the main arterial roads and develops with different pattern combinations (sections) in reaction to the strips. The result is an easy orientable space, with different dense mono functional zones, lacking bigger use mixtures, probably with the intention, to create simply, a clear organized city.

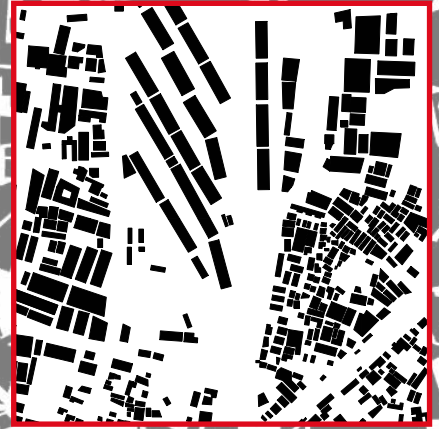




RAJARHAT VS. KOLKATA

The black and white plan of Rajarhat shows a new pattern in the cities context. The strip orientation is very clear and a density loss in direction of to the major arterial road is visible. Certain patterns in Rajarhat seem to have clear references, like the individual housing areas of Salt Lake or the gated area complexes in the southern part of the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass. Other patterns of the city, like slums structure example of Howrah, could probably in a further future develop on the bordering canals of Rajarhat.

Chitpur



Howrah



Salt Lake City



Colonial Centre



Rajarhat (estimated building structure)

Eastern Metropolitan Bypass

PUBLIC OPINION

We will be wanting a place where we can spend our retired life without much chaos and pollution..If Rajarhat can provide that

These kind of area definitely leads to decay of culture.

This will add a new dimension towards the modernisation of the city.

It is quite important because as there is scarcity of place in West Bengal, Its actually

The development should take place in a more brisk place.

I am not in favour of what's going on in Rajarhat because its only for privileged sector of the state

There should be all facilities to serve the basic diurnal needs. At the same time it should have the arrangements to live a

It has all the potentials to be the next big thing.

Rajarhat will solve the problem of housing deficiency and provide employment to many.

It will be a stepping stone towards the continuous modernisation of Kolkata

Besides solving the problem of housing , it would also be a symbol of the new “devolping and progressing Kolkata”

The location of Rajarhat is in one corner of the state .People from the outside of Kolkata would have to travel long distances to

This project is very important for the state as far as the development

It would certainly bring us into the household and bring more revenue to Bengal.



then why not. But I really have doubt whether Rajarhat can meet these expectations.

It would help Kolkata and West Bengal to develop and lot of unemployed people would get work.

I see it as a it hub having very modern buildings and well connected roads.

a delight to have a empty place. Many future it offices, restaurants, resorts are being developed in Rajarhat for good.

It really has a great future. I am eagerly looking forward to it.

completely ignorant of the poor masses which contribute to a major percentage of our population.

lavish, fast life which is the talk of the town among the present day youth .

and west Bengal.

reach Rajarhat.

and industrialisation is concerned.







ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

**fertile rajarhat
infertile rajarhat
a former greenery
a disturbed ecological balance?**



ANTINEOLIBERALIST POSITION

Sanhati



FERTILE RAJARHAT

20-25 %

of crops, vegetables, fruits and milk
in kolkata and suburbs are from rajarhat

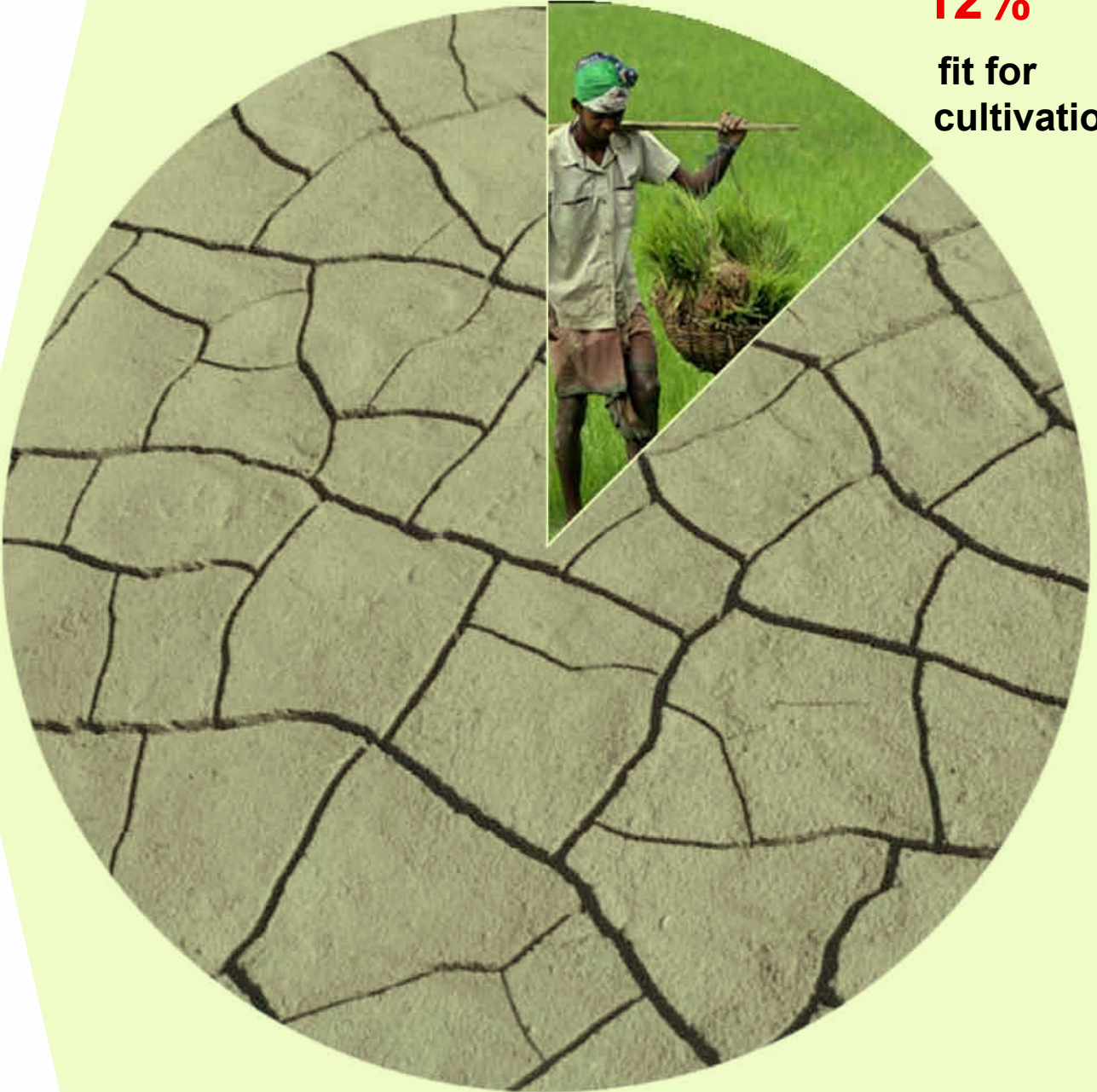


GOVERNMENTAL POSITION

WBHB_west bengal housing board

12%

**fit for
cultivation**



64% agricultural land

88% deemed unirrigable

INFERTILE RAJARHAT

1999




A FORMER GREENERY

The developing area of the new town Rajarhat is mainly swampy land with few larger water bodies and some dry fields and forests often occupied by the local farmers. This zones principally used for living, are partly built zones and the only ground covering elements in the whole over 5500 ha big space, of the upcoming 6 action areas. The land is only used for livestock farming and different kind of tillage. There is ecological balance of the water in the soil with its continuous movement defined only from the rainfalls and the tide.

The project of Rajarhat is going to drain and seal a huge part the area as visible in the map. The drained ground will have a different characteristic, than the former absorptive ground what rises the question, how the area will react to strong rainfall quantities. In contrary the water bodies were extended for the water supply of Rajarhat. That are big ecological impacts without having brought up the theme Rajarhat as a biosphere. What will rest once of Rajarhats green nearly untouched wideness, are a few green lines and at the borders large artificial green spaces.

2040



-  green spaces
-  water spaces
-  construction

2000

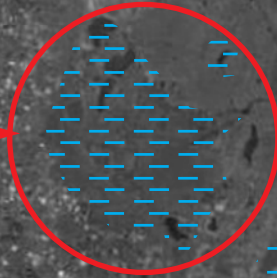




2008

A DISTURBED ECOLOGICAL BALANCE?

DRY



ENLARGE



--- marshes

..... lakes

DRAFT
© ETH Studio Base





SOCIAL IMPACT

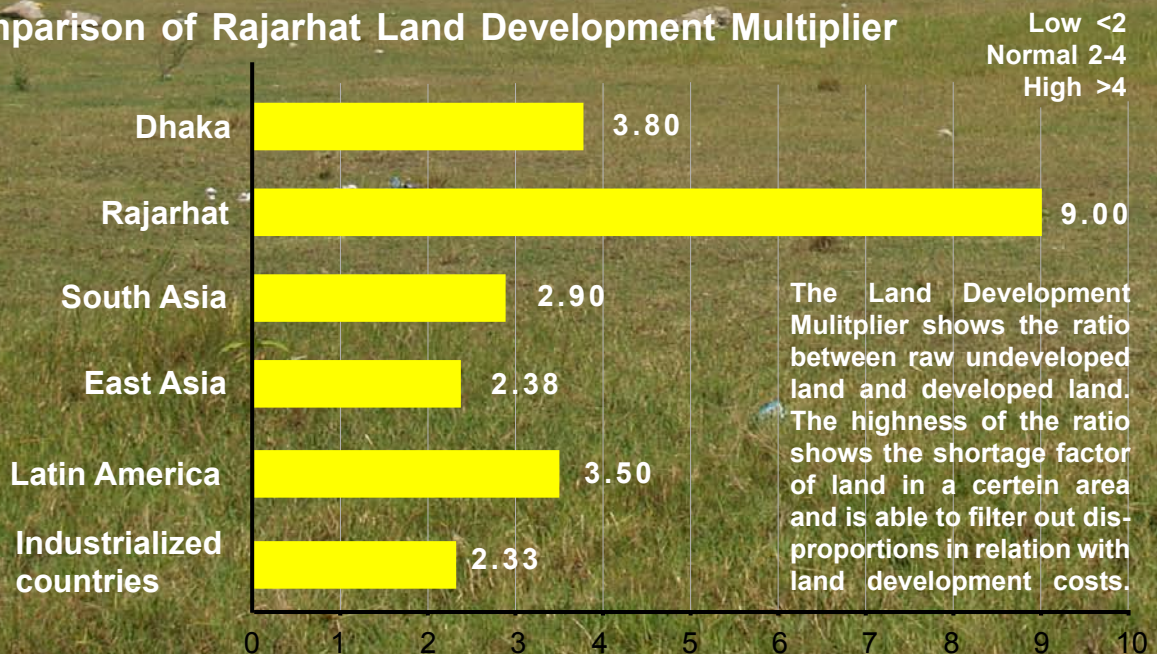
plot lottery
whats happening to the existing settlements
injustice of land aquisition
rajarhat an 2nd nandigram
non solving of the housing problem
planned as open realised as gated



FROM PLOT LOTTERY, AFFORDABILITY PROBLEMS AND THE GREED OF GAIN

There is a lack of low income group land in the Rajarhat area, as seen in previous statistics. Culminative an intransparent, not to income group related plot lottery makes the availability of land even worse. Where there were **over 30 applications per plot** in HIG the segment, the LIG plots had much more applications, because they were easy affordable, also for the HIG group and therefore an **interesting speculation object**. There were made big errors in the distribution system, as the application inscription not included an income group filter. Another problem was the financing model, which wasn't adapted to the low income group possibilities, so there was a 20% deposit and only four separate instalments, what discouraged a lot of the low income group, to apply for a plot.

Comparison of Rajarhat Land Development Multiplier





The comparison shows that Rajarhat has incredible high land development multiplier of 9. Fact is that the average acquisition cost of **179 INR per m² for raw land** were low and the average **final sales prices of 1600 INR per m²** stand in no relation, when we add the approximately **650 INR per m² development costs**. It gets that there must be monopolistic practices in land acquisition and a lot of speculation. It is not surprising as the mayor governmental land acquisition organisation the West Bengal Housing Board is inhibiting participation of small and medium players in this processes.

An further argument are the huge amount of permissions (development, environmental, building,..) and transfer regulations (over 40 clearances) with its **stamp duties of between 8-15%** and **registration fees of 6 %** which do rise the cost immensely. And as this process is very time intense it advances the speculation of final developed land.



final sale prices are **9x** the raw land prices

price of **55'000 INR (1570 \$)** per Kottah (**69 sqm**) for **LIG cooperatives**

->Affordability problem for low income group

with a **monthly household income between 2000 and 5000 INR (57-142\$)**



..... building land
..... existing settlements



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE EXISTING SETTLEMENTS?

According to official reports, **only 200 household have been affected by project**, which were integrated in a rehabilitation plan, including state normed resettlement packages for 1'000 peoples. For the rest of the local population there was saved space to live by defining **new borders according the existing settlements**. The resulting organic island structure of settlements in the forest, stays resisting the new high building zones around, unconnected to its former agricultural space, simply historical islands. The question rises what stand behind this contextual town planning evoking image.

THE INJUSTICE IN THE LAND ACQUISITION PROCESS

Initially the land acquisition process of the of the governmental organisations made use of a special clause of the Land acquisition act from 1894, which allows acquisition of land for public purposes in direct buy from the owners. Early prices of 3000 INR per Kottah were paid until the farmers equity critic came strongly up and the WBHB later as reaction made a setting of land prices for acquisition up to 20'000 INR Per Kottah. The incredible injustice gets visible by the difference between farmers compensation and the governmental organisation profit. The lack of transparency in the land acquisition process is one main problem, as there is no information what happens with the profit and that there is no word, about the excesses with the local farmers which came public.

Farmer compensation

3'000 INR/kottah

1.25 \$/sqm

Infrastructural development cost

45'000 INR/kottah

18.60 \$/sqm



LAND ACQUISITION

2.5%

RESERVE

41.0%

LAND DEVELOPMENT

SPECIMEN

80'000
INR/kottah

70'000
INR/kottah

60'000
INR/kottah

50'000
INR/kottah

40'000
INR/kottah

30'000
INR/kottah

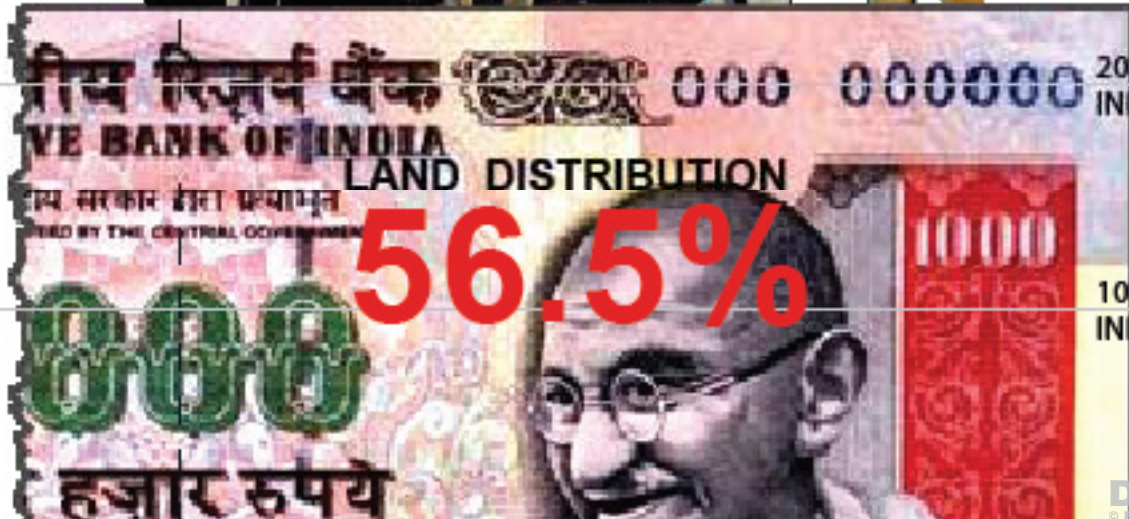
20'000
INR/kottah

10'000
INR/kottah

Costs
kottah
sqm

WBHB selling profit

62'500 INR/kottah
25.90 \$/sqm





He should have been killed
alive immediately.



He had not yet completed 18 yrs.



Land Revenue office...



those others that remained were
injured by sticks, rods...bullets...



RAJARHAT A 2nd NANDIGRAM ?

Contrasting to the official state versions giving the picture that Rajarhat's land acquisition from the mid 1990's onwards has been peaceful the version of the Chhatra Chhatri Sanhati Mancha, an anti neoliberalism platform, shows a brutal land acquisition process with a lot of excesses and even homicides. First the whole **affected population amounts to 250'000 people** as they all depend on their agricultural work. Further the designed ownership situation was much more complex than finally handled.

The riots started as reactions of the bad compensations in the direct acquisition long before the official start of the land acquisition in the months of april | may 1999.

'CPI (Communist Party of India) goons were going around Rajarhat forcing people to accept the notice at gunpoint'.

As a reaction the farmers unified to form 'Rajarhat Krishi Roksha Committee' to resist. The governmental organisations tried to bait the resisting farmer with attractive plot offers and possible employment opportunities, showing the positive economic impact of the Rajarhat new town development.

The majority didn't cooperate and raised the voice for their birthrights and were in the following terrorized by CPI thugs and a huge police presence with the idea of intimidate the people. **The little strong resistance remaining fighting for their ancestral home disappeared or got killed by presenting it as suicide** by the non cooperation of the police.

The Sanhati Mancha brought out a **list of 13 murdered people** by the CPI forces during the land acquisition process out of non cooperation

◀ **Nandigram, a rural area on the south bank of the industrial city of Haldia, located about 70 km south-west of Kolkata, were in 2007 the West Bengal government decided to allow to set up a chemical hub under SEZ (special economic zone) policy. The land acquisition process led to resistance by the villagers resulting in clashes with the police that left 14 villagers dead. Big accusations of police brutality were made as the story came in the public media and provoked demonstrations.**





THE NON SOLVING OF THE HOUSING PROBLEM


Two of the main aims of the Rajarhat development were to emerge a real estate boom by supplying new land and to use the new land with efficient planning to redistribute it more related to the economic group. The government glauts about the fact, to have achieved the aspired diversity of economic groups and to have rerailed the solving of the housing shortage. If we watch on the relation of build space for the income groups to the percentage of economic groups in the city (page 23), it gets obvious that there is a very asymmetric relation. The Rajarhat development is nothing more than a drop on a hot stone and in its bigness a missed chance to solve the citys housing problem.

'to generate areas for absorbing future metroplotitan growth by creating residential areas for the people from various income class according to the need of the city' (HIDCO,1999)

Residential land share of different income groups in the Rajarhat development

% Residential area
in masterplan

2008: adjustments by substitution of residential with IT and institutional areas (culture, education,health)

50.5%  2001

38.0%  2006

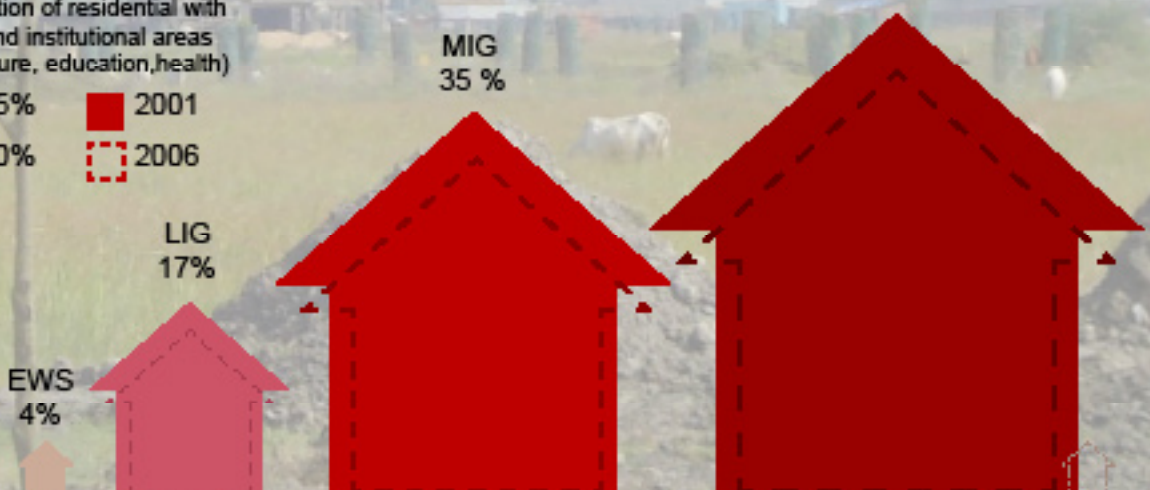
EWS
4%

LIG
17%

MIG
35%

HIG
44%

LIG (Low income group)
MIG (Middle income group)
HIG (High income group)



PLANNED AS OPEN REALISED AS GATED

Rajarhat is nearly everywhere promoted as an area full of high standard skyscraper and mall complexes. The renderings paint a world of continuous green spaces going through the living complexes, a system without borders and surrounding buildings. The built reality speaks another, complete different language, marked by an isolated island landscape trying to simulate nature in the border of the complexes. Open public room is a sparely good in the upcoming Rajarhat and is an other time more reduced nearly to the sidewalks.





SHREE BENGAL DCL







3. THE UNIQUE RAJARHAT

rajarhats little brothers
the uniqueness of rajarhat
which one is rajarhat

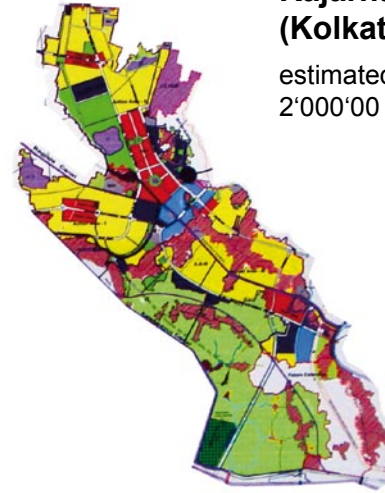


THE UNIQUENESS OF RAJARHAT; OR THE NEW NEOLIBERALISTIC FORM OF INDIA'S NEW TOWNS

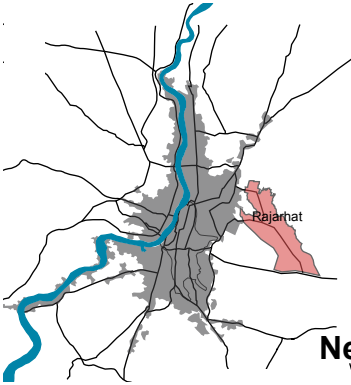
The Rajarhat development logically isn't a special case in a country with an annual population growth of over 15 millions. But it could be thought that Rajarhat in its hugeness and programmatic consistence something particular. In reality Rajarhat is only one of 100, by a nationwide program conceptualized and provided new town developments, in new neoliberalized India, in the time horizon till 2021. Remarkable is that nearly all the planned and partly realized new towns have a very similar location, near the airport and or important connecting corridors, at the outskirts of the main city. This relates to idea of exonerating the main city in its monocentric constitution, by creating satellite towns incorporating the new IT sector and industries.

The master plans of these new planned satellite towns do speak a very similar language. First the programmatic distribution is very similar; there are central business districts, often surrounded by large housing areas and as further elements IT hubs, industrial patterns and large green spaces. The organic form seems to be a manifestation of the new neoliberalism in India and its town planning. The assimilation to a specific context, in following natural borders and to existing settlements as shape giving elements for the master plans, is observable as a big theme in all this examples. In reality the master plans are the output of the pragmatic land acquisition process, which is giving through the ownerships (often related to natural borders) the shape of the projects. For this aspect speaks the argument that the master plans are always changing during the realisation. The uniqueness is reduced to a not designed, nearly randomized and finally hardly recognizable form.

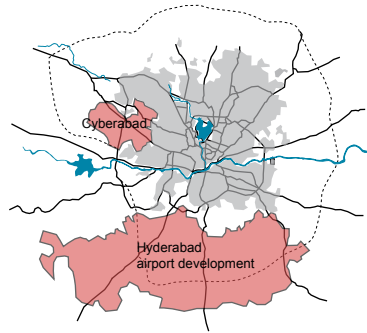
**Rajarhat
(Kolkata)**
estimated
2'000'00



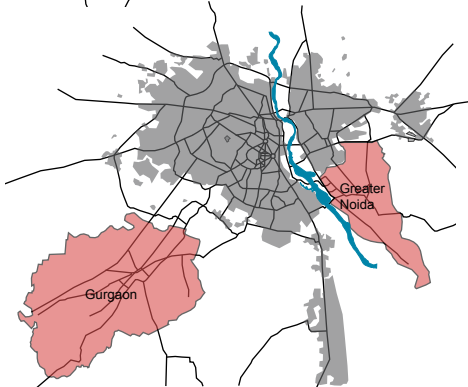
Kolkata



Hyderabad



New Delhi



**Nagpur
airport development**

estimated population
125'000 people

New town
developments
Existing city

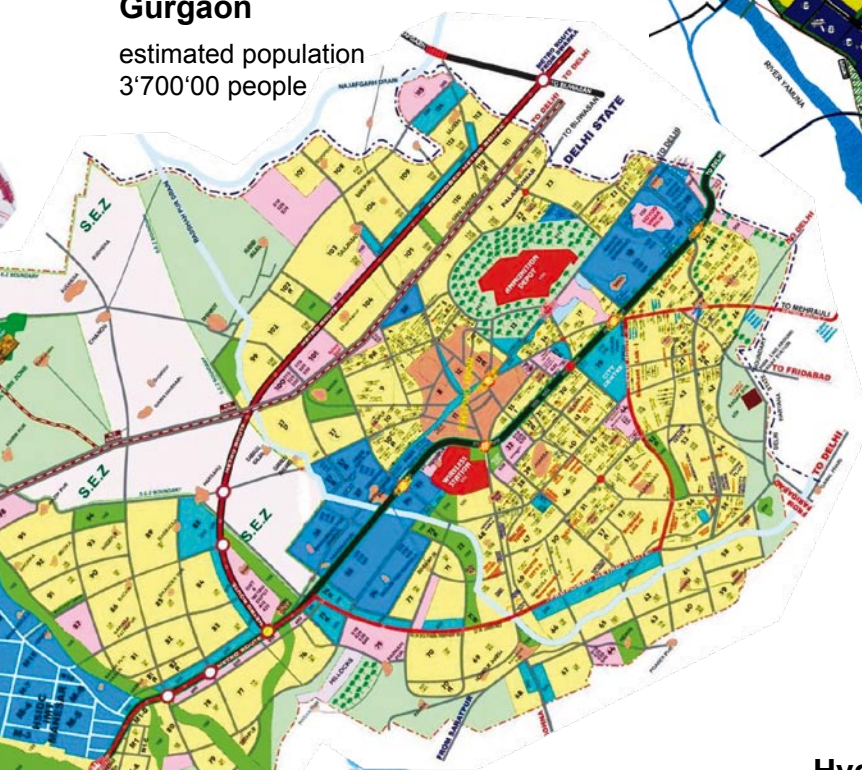
2 4 6 8 10 20 30 km

at
(a New Town)

d population
people

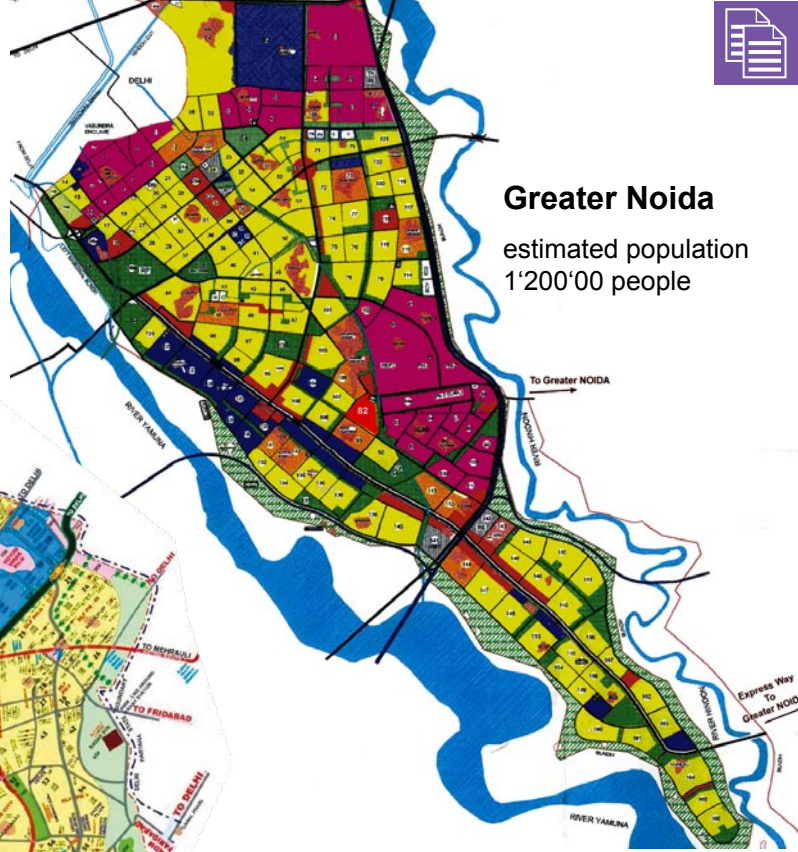
Gurgaon

estimated population
3'700'00 people



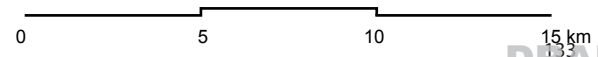
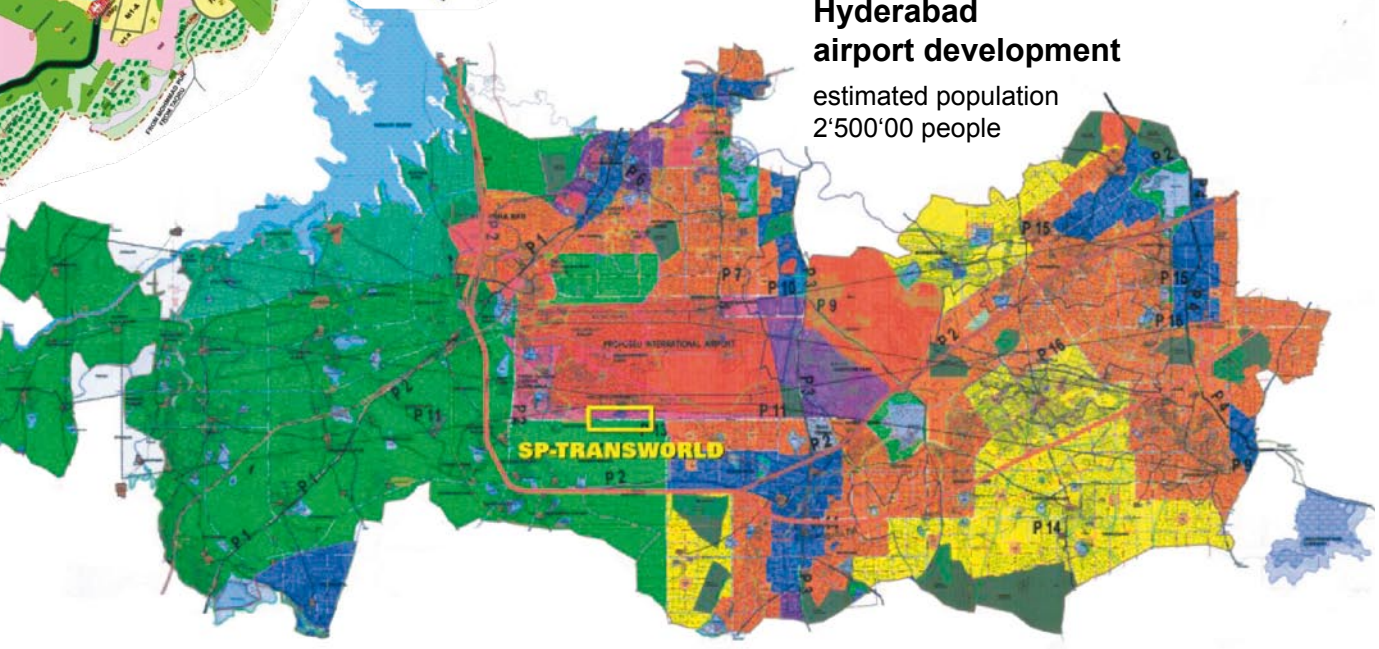
Greater Noida

estimated population
1'200'00 people



Hyderabad airport development

estimated population
2'500'00 people



WHICH ONE IS RAJARHAT?



Noida



Czberabad



Rajarhat



Gurgaon



Gurgaon



Rajarhat





RAJARHAT HAD A DREAM

conclusion







RAJARHAT
HAD
A
DREAM
...





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Howrah to get international airport

30 Oct 2008, 19:22 hrs IST

Print | Email | Discuss | Share | Save | Comment | Text: ☐



KOLKATA: The West Bengal Government has said that it is planning to set up an airport of international standard in Howrah, to reduce the passenger rush at the Netaji Subhash International Airport.

"There has been a considerable increase of passengers at the NSC Bose International airport and so it was necessary to develop another airport and Howrah was the appropriate place for the purpose," Transport Minister Subhash Chakraborty said at a function in Howrah on Thursday.

Laying the foundation stone of a bus terminus at Ramrajatala in Howrah,

Chakraborty said, "at present a consultancy agency deputed by the state government is doing the work of survey and once they give the report, the whole project will be finalised."

Chakraborty said there was land, belonging to the Eastern Railway, beside the Kona Expressway, "but there is some dispute with the land and so we are thinking of some other land."

"We have directed all the MPs and the MLAs of the district to look for land and once they give a report, we will finalise it," Chakraborty said.

From Times Online

November 7, 2008

In association with
BRITISH AIRWAYS

British Airways to reduce Gatwick services, cut Kolkata and Dhaka routes

Airline will reduce overall capacity on its network by 1% next summer

Mark Frary

British Airways is to cancel a number of its services from next spring. The airline says it will end services between Gatwick and Dublin – where it competes with Ryanair – next March. A spokeswoman said: "The route is not profitable and is not being helped by the Irish government's decision to put a €10 departure tax on each passenger from next March. We will codeshare with Aer Lingus on this route when our service ends."

The airline has also announced today that it will end services between Gatwick and Zurich and between Heathrow and both Kolkata and Dhaka from the start of the summer 2009 timetable.

The airline is also reducing domestic shuttle services from Gatwick: Edinburgh from six to four, Glasgow from five to four and Manchester from seven to five.

The spokeswoman said: "In total we will still fly 24 times each



Marketwatch

What's happening with money and shares around



... THAT ITS LOCATION MAKES SENSE!





**... THAT IT SHOULD BE REALISED IN AN
ECOLOGICAL BALANCE!**





**... THAT IT SHOULD SOLVE THE HOUSING
PROBLEM!**

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(05.12.2008)

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