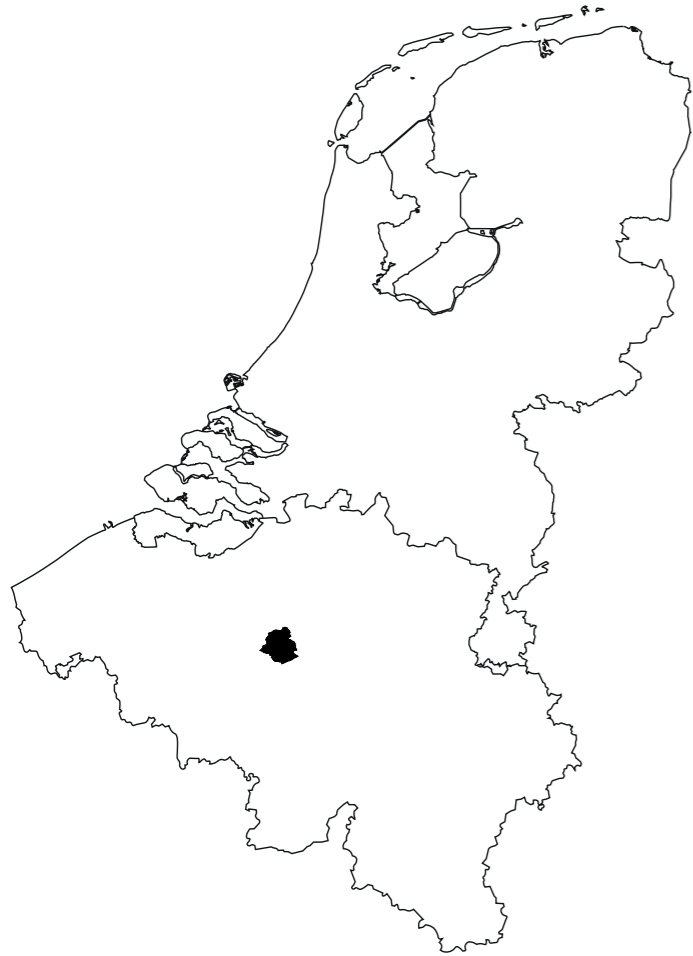


BUILDINGS FOR A PARK

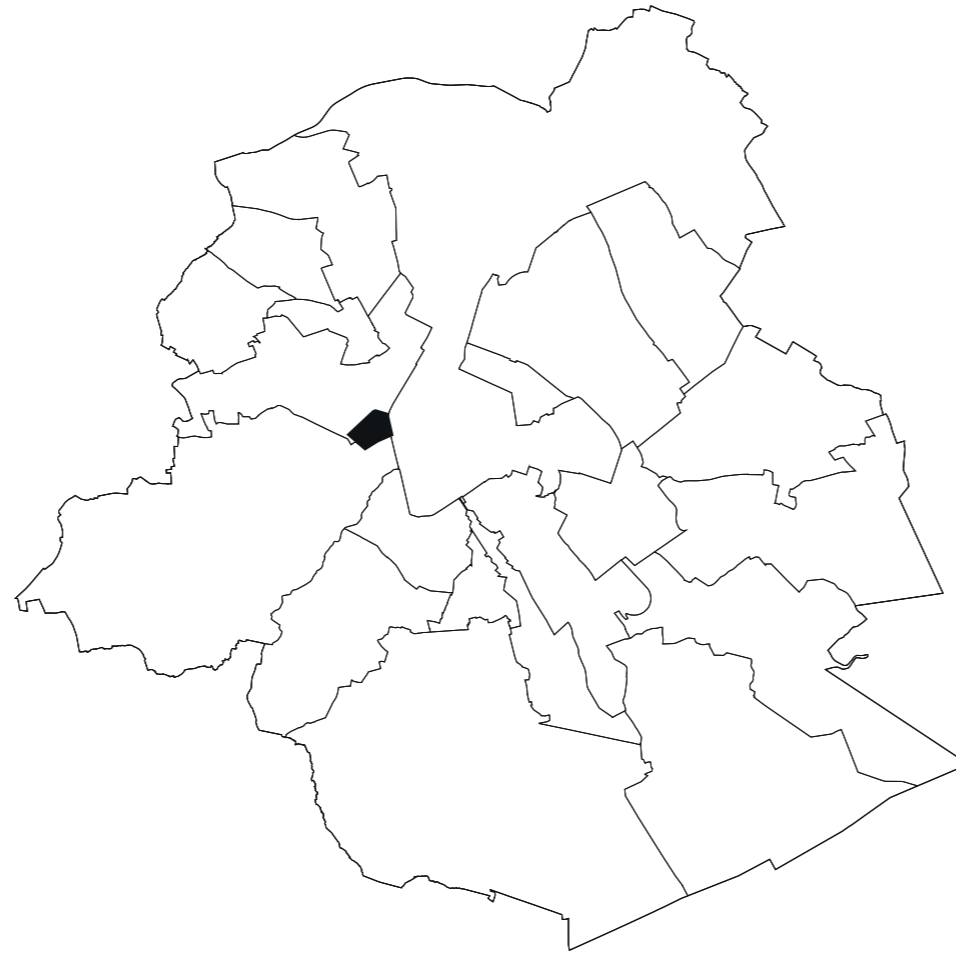
Transforming the Urban Block through Opening, Connecting, and Grounding



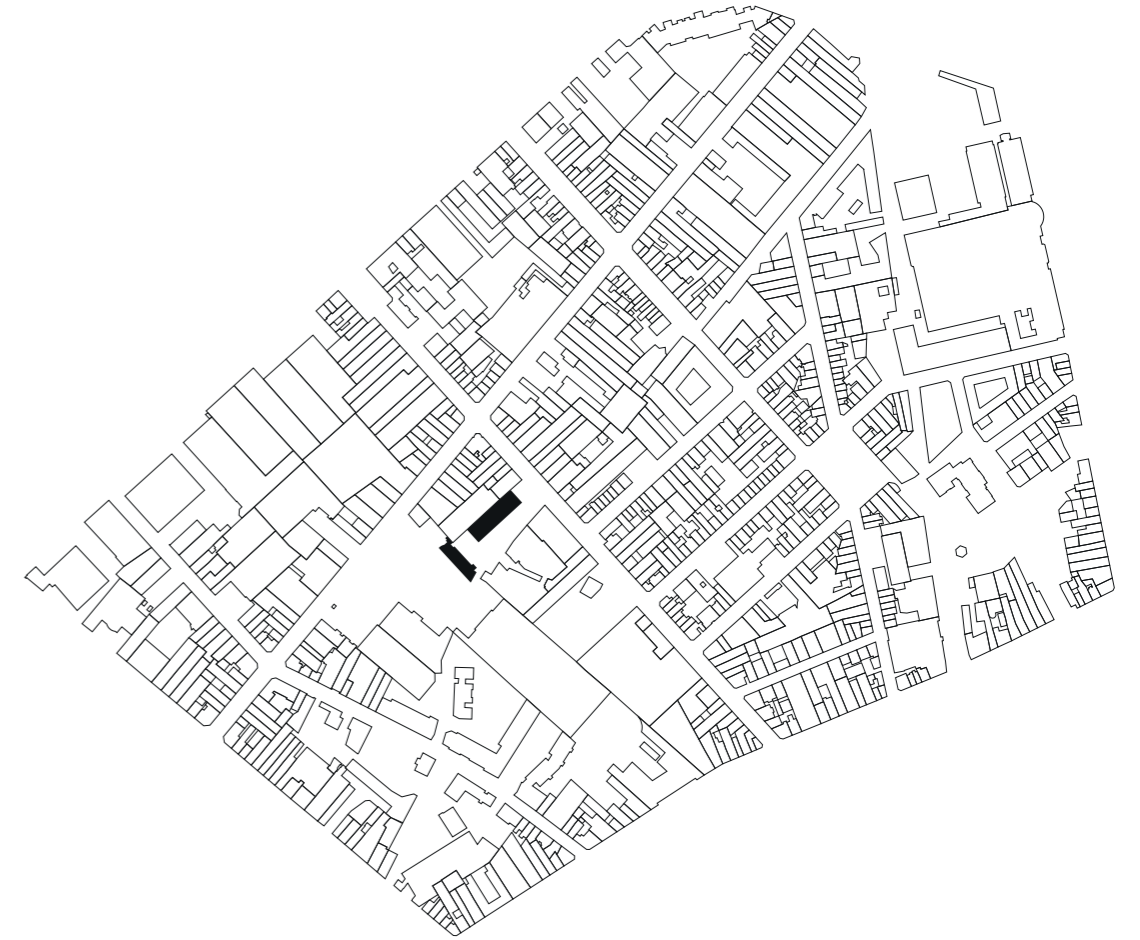
Location



Belgium



Brussels



Heyvaert quarter

First impressions



A peek inside





And deeper

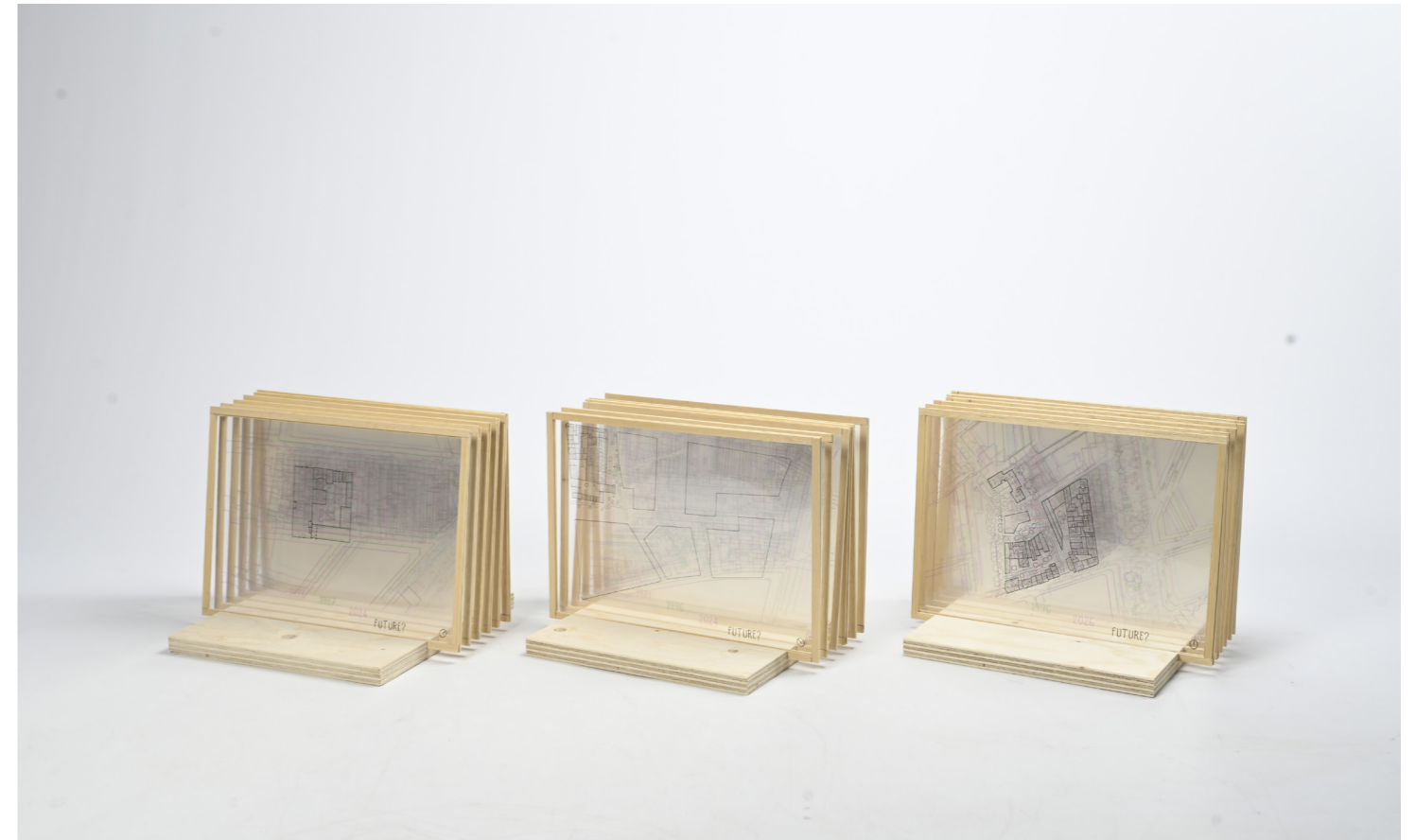


What is happening there?



DEEP SPACE

Voor ons is Deep Space een reeks ruimtes die zich geleidelijk ontvouwen door te kijken en te bewegen. In plaats van alles in één keer te zien, verschijnen binnenhoven, doorgangen en verborgen plekken stap voor stap, waardoor een gevoel van diepte en ontdekking ontstaat. Het gaat niet alleen om afzonderlijke ruimtes, maar ook om de relatie ertussen en de overgang van openbare straten naar meer private plekken.





Risks of Deep Space

Lack of accessibility, difficult to enter or to use.

Lack of visibility, hard to see what's happening.

Illegibility, hard to understand and read.

Disorientation, easy to get lost.

Isolation, can feel lonely and empty.

Unsafe spaces, hidden places may feel unsafe.

Reduced collective use, fewer opportunities for gathering.

Monofunctional, supports only one activity.

Reduced green spaces, less nature and vegetation.



Qualities of Deep Space

Curiosity, makes you want to explore.

Encounters, helps people meet each other.

Overlapping functions and activities.

A journey through interconnected spaces.

Discovery, surprise, and exploration.

An immersive spatial experience.



43b rue de Liverpool

MIND THE CORNER

At 43b rue de Liverpool, set back from the street, is a five-story industrial building connected to a pavillon that extends to the road and inhabits a small church.

A man enters the driveway, and we approach him. He's a carpenter, and his workshop is in the building. He also lives in the neighborhood, directly across the road. He finds the proximity between his workplace and home too short, but he likes the area. He tells us about crime, including a knife murder that took place in his yard three years ago in broad daylight. Contrary to what the newspapers say, he tells us that the nights are rather quiet here.

He mentions the group of Guinean men who spend their days on his street. They don't live in the neighborhood but come here because it used to be a collection point for undocumented day laborers. Now there's no more work, he says, but they still come back every day. He's heard about the future Sennette Park, which will run alongside his workshop in a few years. He won't be there anymore, he assures us. He explains that the city has decided to terminate the operating contract with the car dealerships starting next year and that in 8 to 10 years it will have raised the necessary funds to buy back the land for the future park.

According to his information, the city tried to relocate the used car sales to the north of Brussels a few years ago, but only two dealerships moved.

He's also already seen some architect's proposals for converting the premises he rents, and the current plan is to set up offices there by keeping the concrete structure and replace all the brickwork by glass facades.

© How now at the future office building
Chicago, Illinois

Notes, Logbook

3 december 2025

My group members encourage me to go inside the building. I feel a little hesitant and ask if they could join me. Looking back, I'm glad they went inside with me.

We walk towards the door where we had seen two women enter the building a moment earlier. When we enter, we arrive in a small white hallway. There is no signage to guide us, the only way forward is up the stairs. After walking up a few floors, we reach a level that feels more open. We see two people wearing work clothes. A woman (I estimate she is around 30 years old) walks towards us. I explain that we are students and that we are very interested in learning what they are doing with the building. She recognizes my story. Apparently, someone from our Urban Architecture studio had already called before.

The tone of her voice is not very warm. She is critical of us. With some reluctance, she tells us the following things:

- She does not like projects like those of ours.
- Any initiative for change should come from the residents of the neighbourhood, not from higher authorities.
- She and the other volunteer organizations do not have to pay rent, but they do have to pay for the transformations they make in the building themselves.
- There are multiple volunteer organizations in the building, including a free bike repair space and a woodworking space on one of the upper floors. She herself works on rooms that will, in the future, provide free care for people who need it. I ask whether this is specifically for people from the neighbourhood. She explains that it is for anyone who is in urgent need of free care.
- She is very clear that she is against gentrification. From her tone, it sounds as if she sees us as part of the problem.
- She starts talking on her own initiative about the police action that took place a few days earlier, stating that it should not have happened and that its impact on the community has been huge.
- She tells us that the municipality wants to get rid of cars, but she thinks this is neither a good idea nor possible, and that cars should stay. In her view, they are part of the neighbourhood and the community.
- She is very frustrated about the fact that they did not receive any funding from the municipality for the transformation of the building.

The conversation leaves me a bit shaken. Her tone and the way she speaks make me feel as though I should not be there, as if I am part of the problem. I do not explain that I want to learn how to design bottom-up. Instead, I keep my thoughts to myself. I do not want to provoke her any further.

PROJECT

Existing situation



A new park: Petite Zenne Park



A dead end



Opening up, by demolition

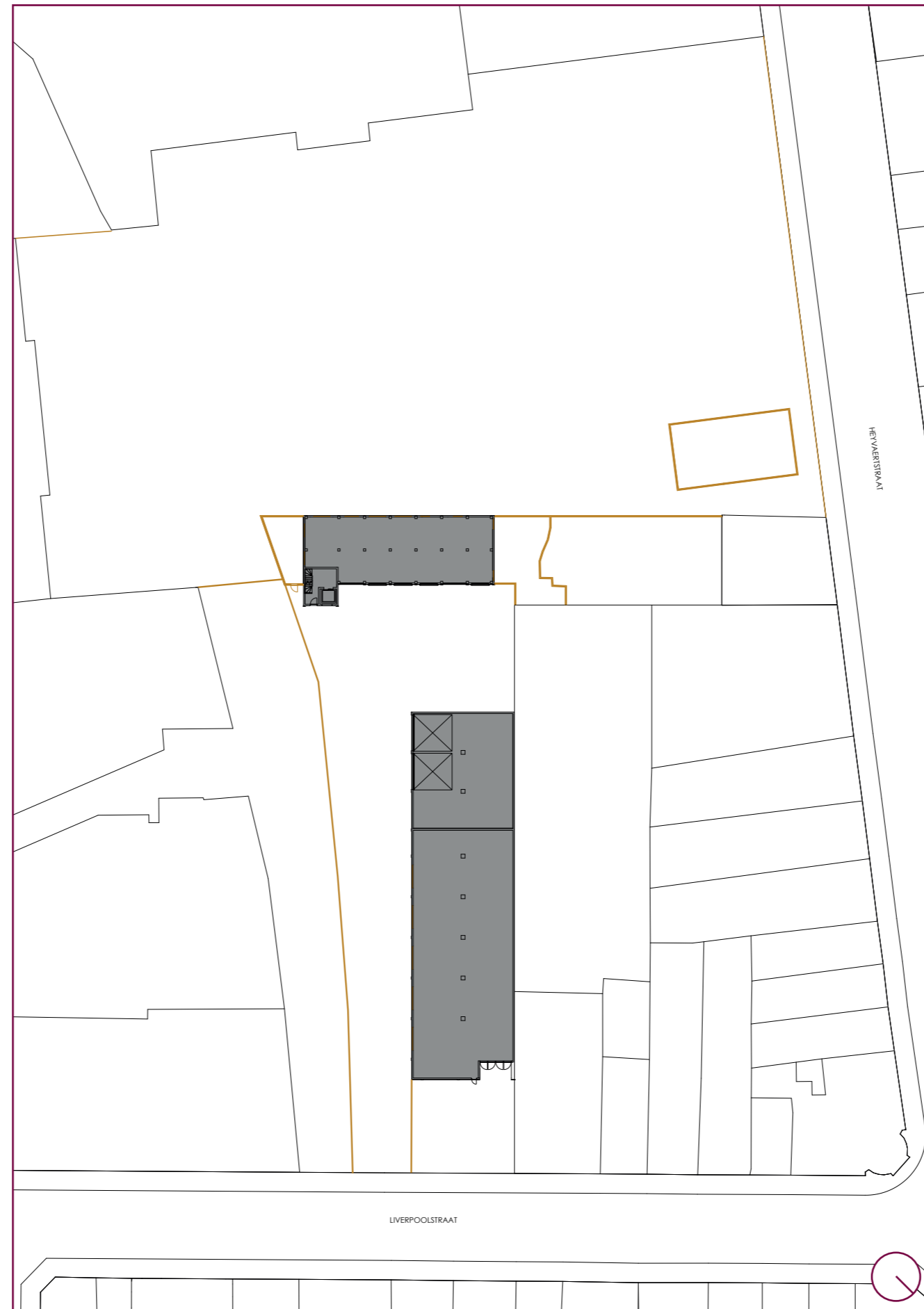


A smaller urban block





Existing & Demolition



An ensemble of buildings



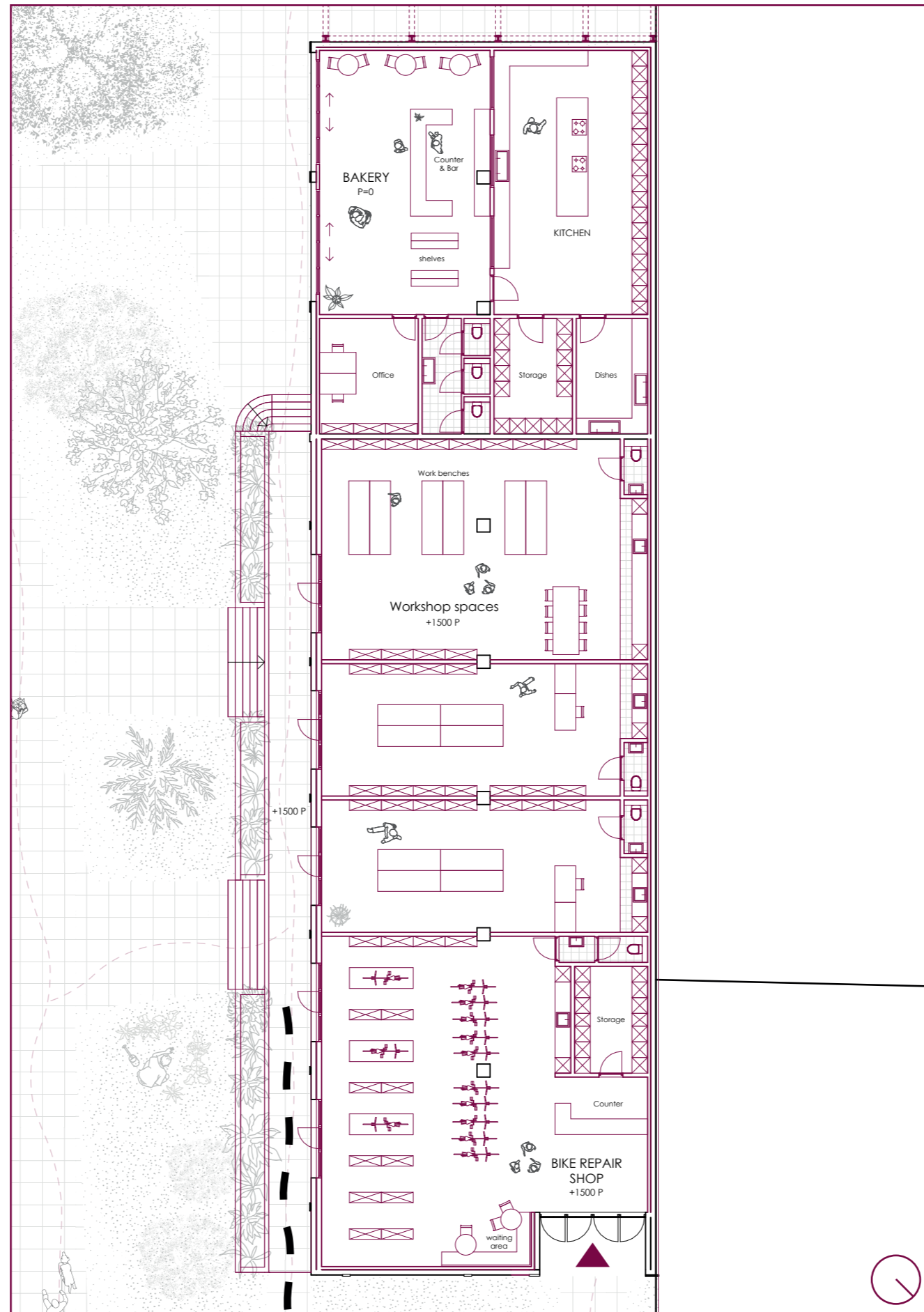
From Liverpoolstreet to Heyvaertstreet







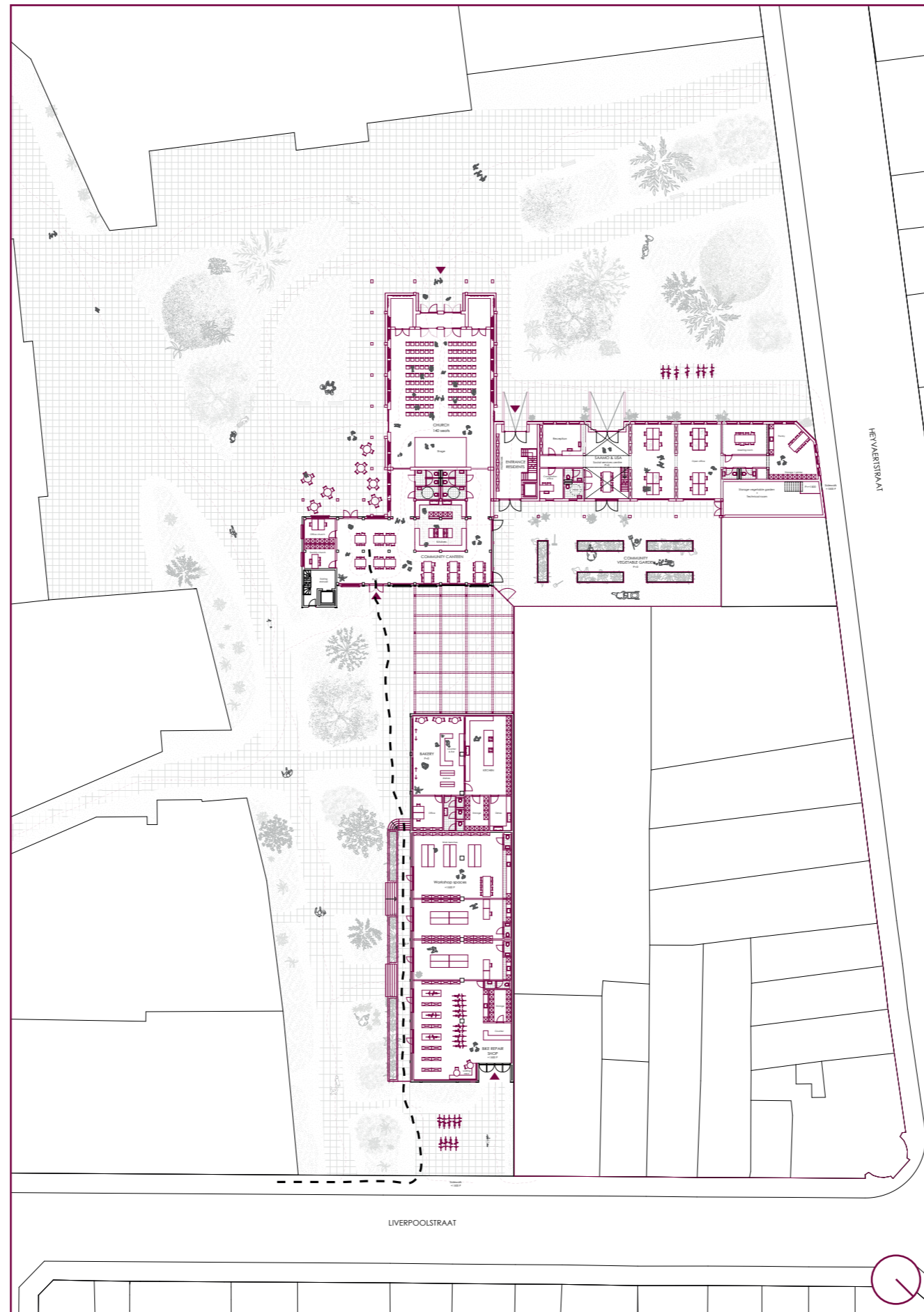
Productive spaces



A welcome entrance to the park

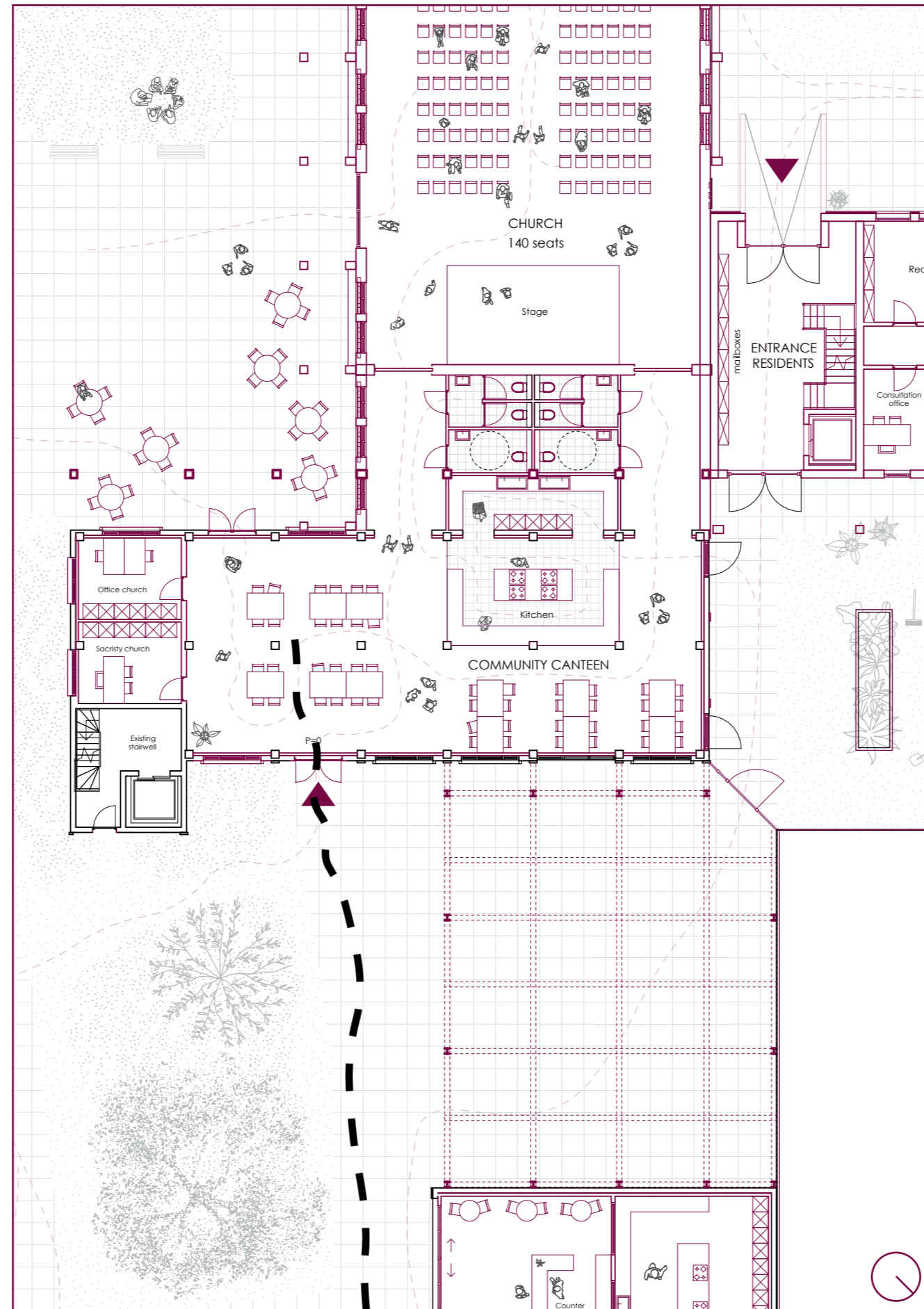


From Liverpoolstreet to Heyvaertstreet





Community canteen



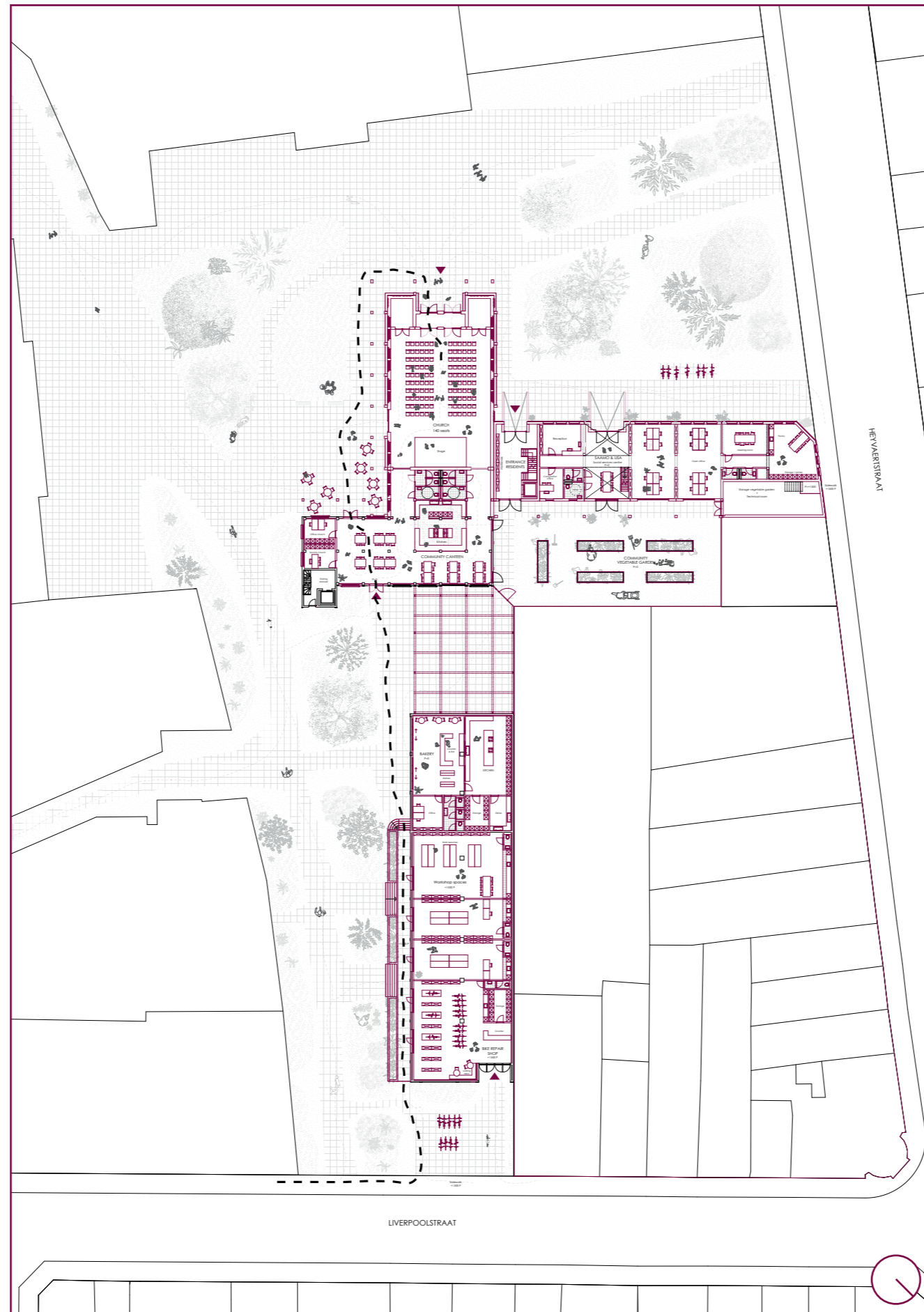
Current back facade



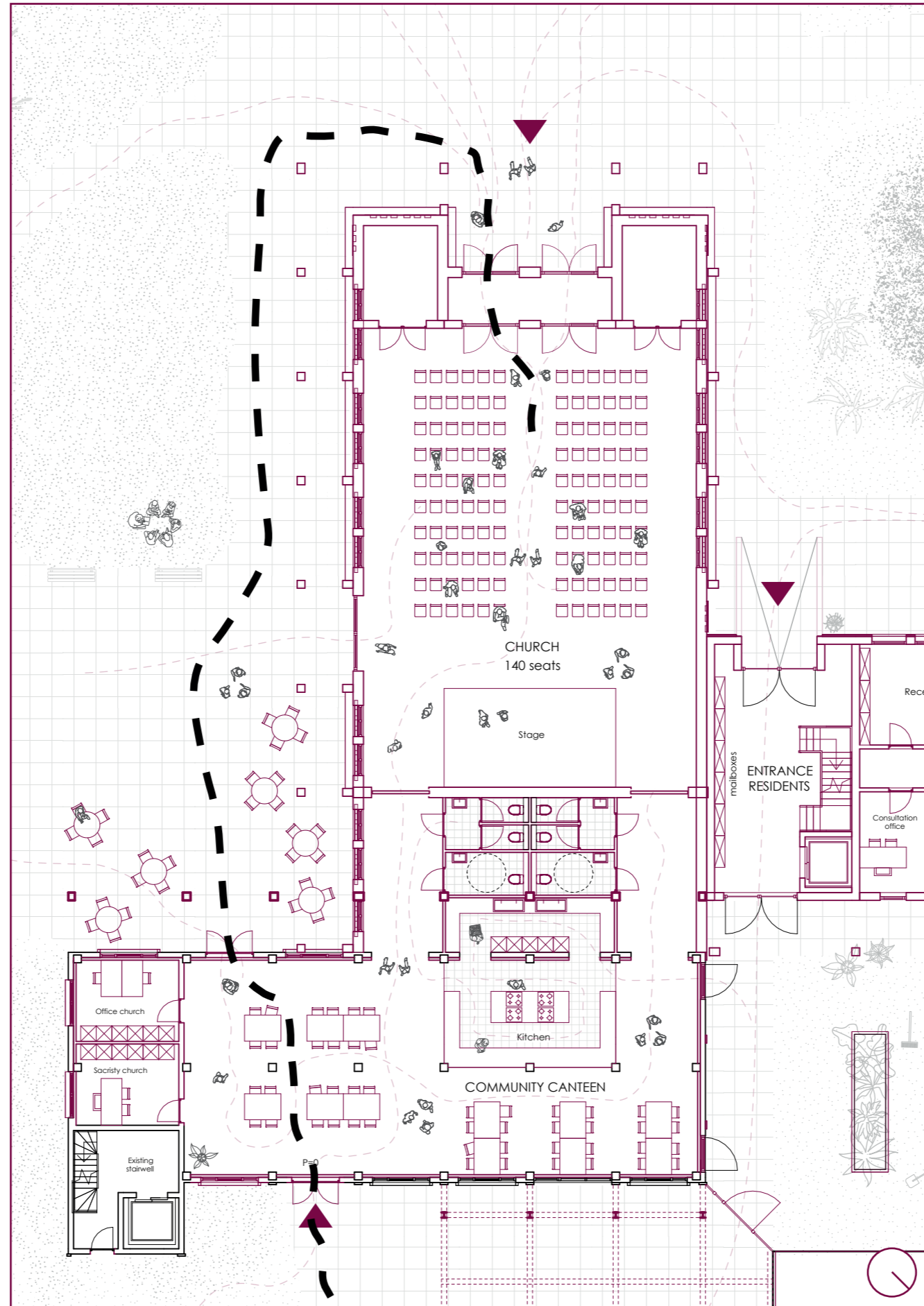
New facade along the new Petite Zenne Park



From Liverpoolstreet to Heyvaertstreet

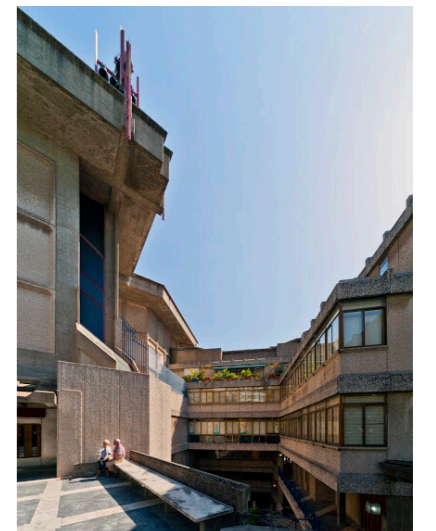
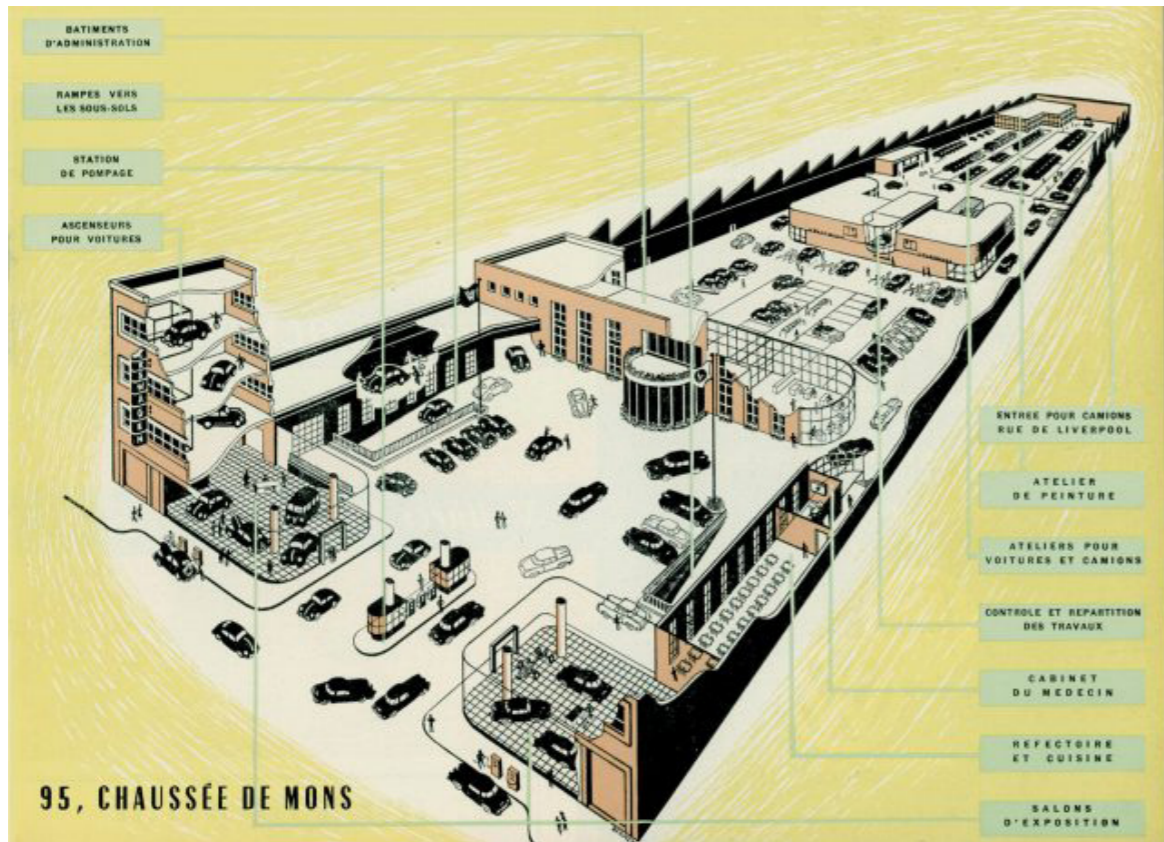


Church





&



Church

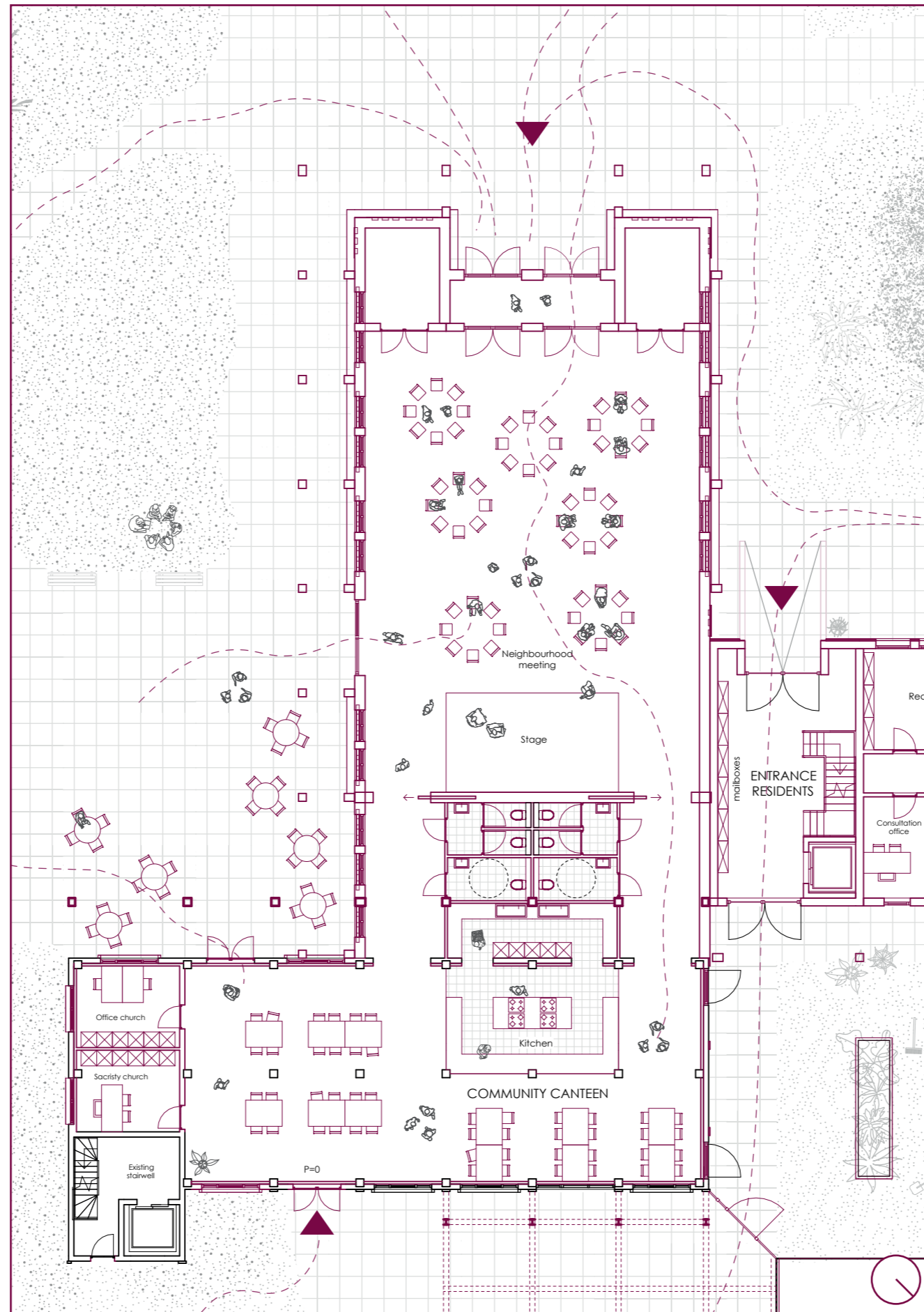


A place to linger





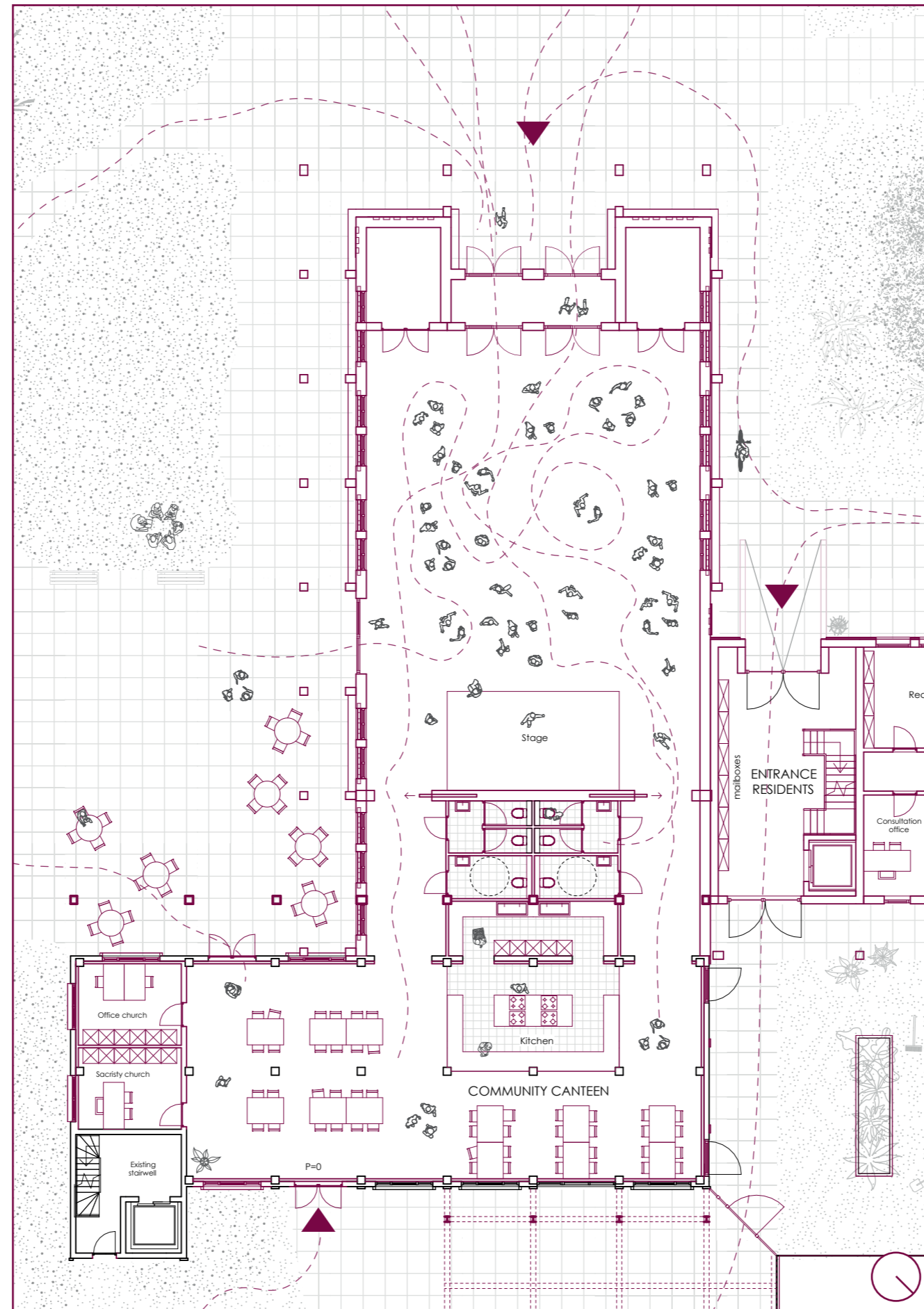
Or (neighbourhood) meeting space



Or exhibition space



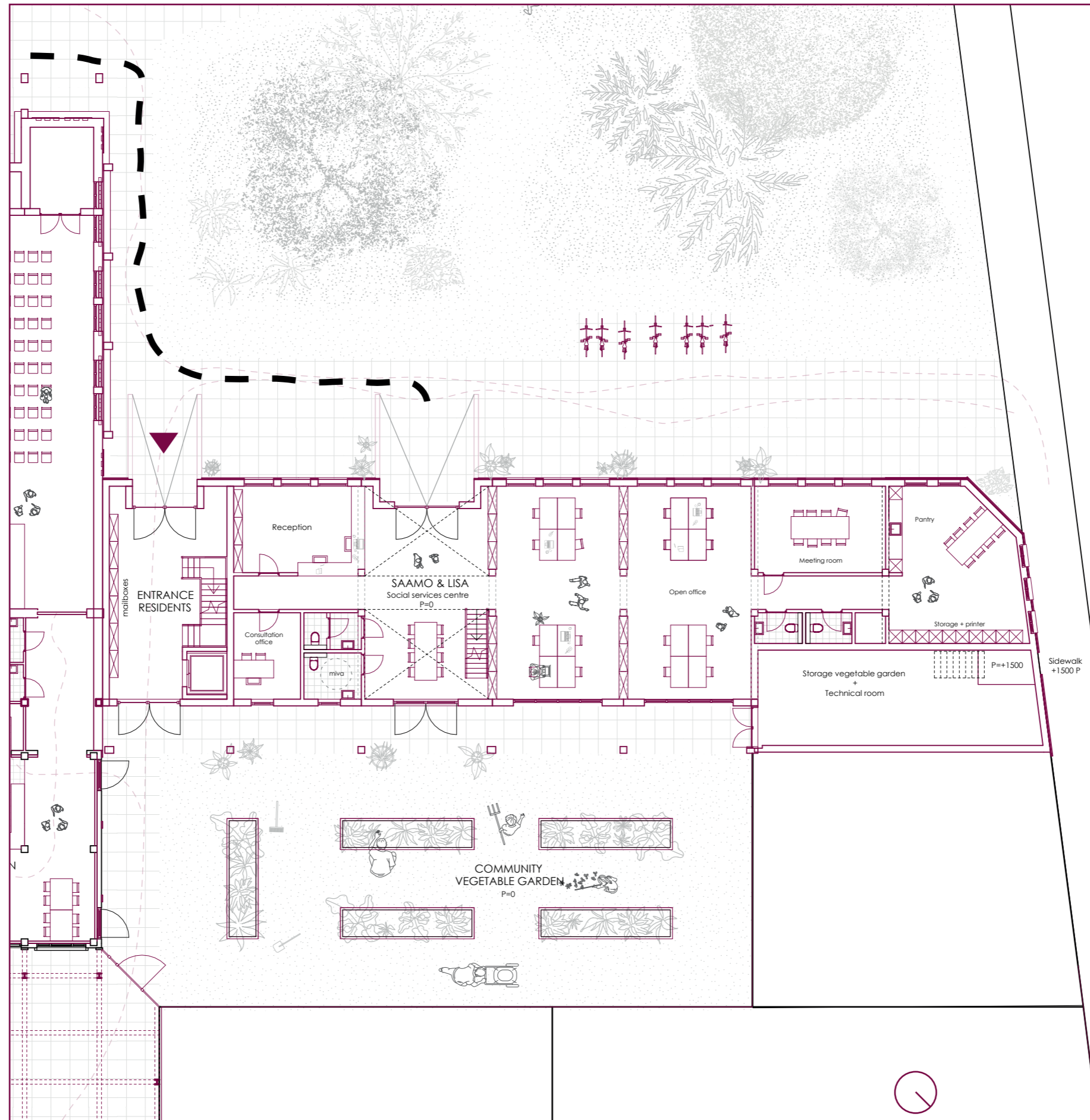
Or party space



From Liverpoolstreet to Heyvaertstreet

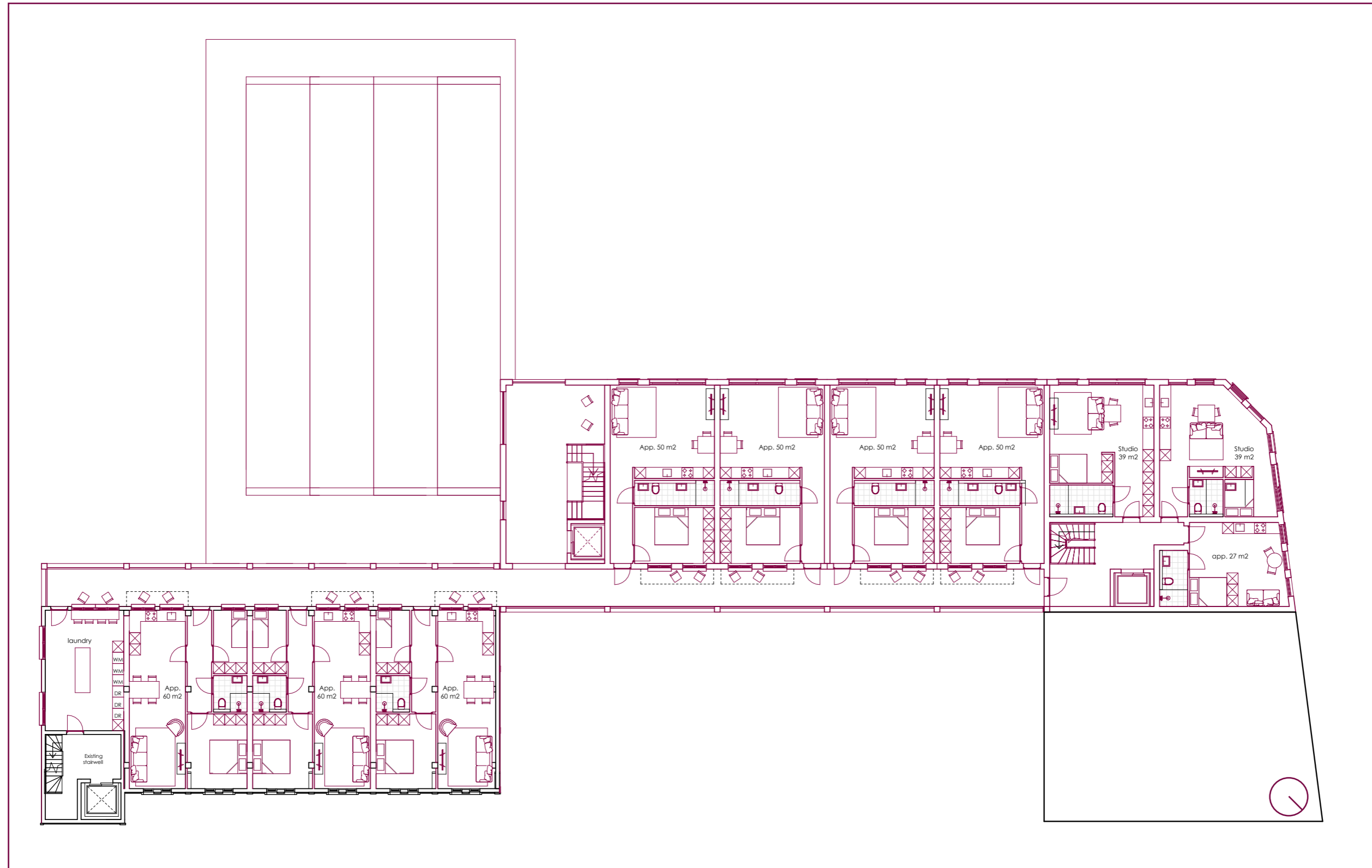


Office space (for SAAMO & LISA)

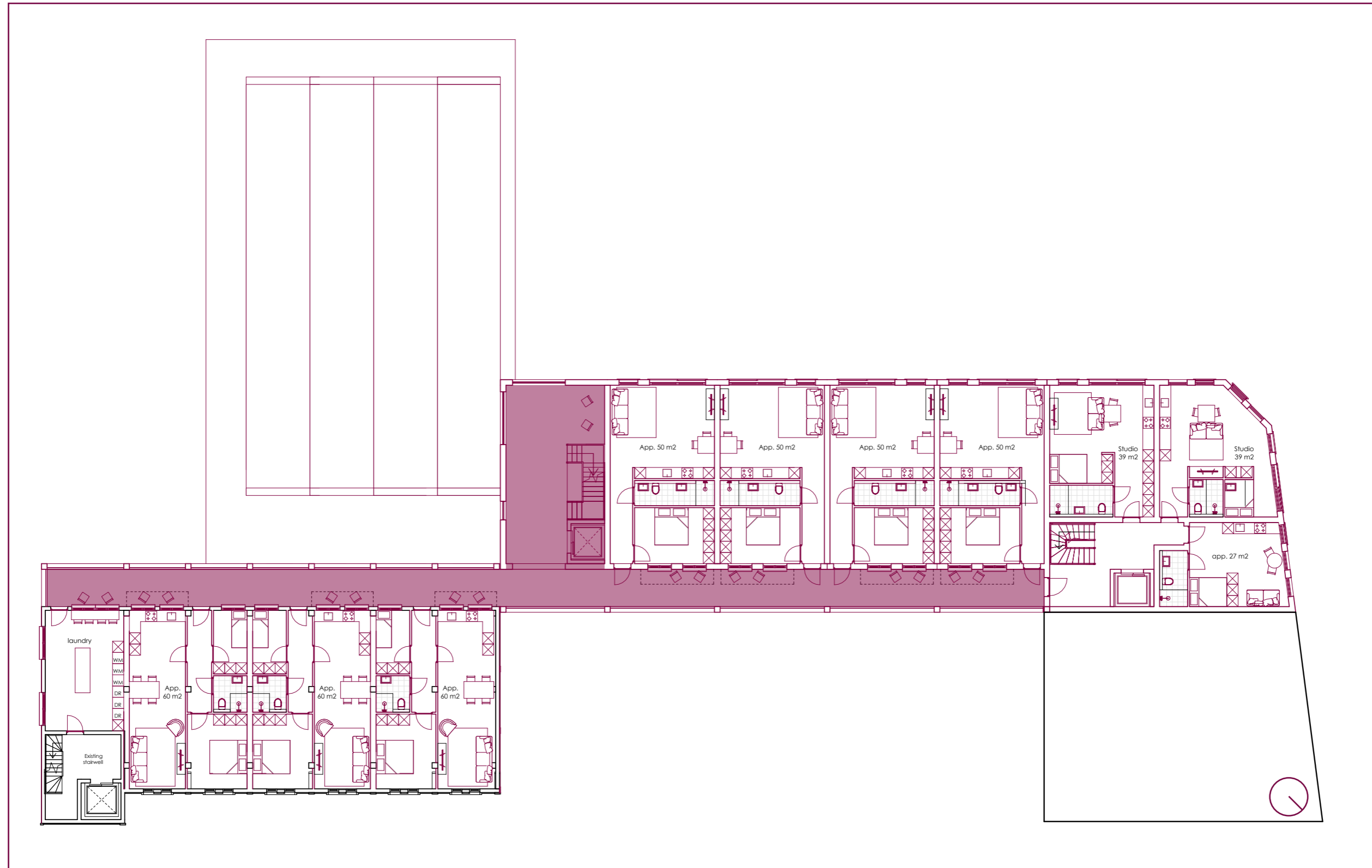




Second, third and fourth floor



A connecting spine



Gallery between the old building and the new building



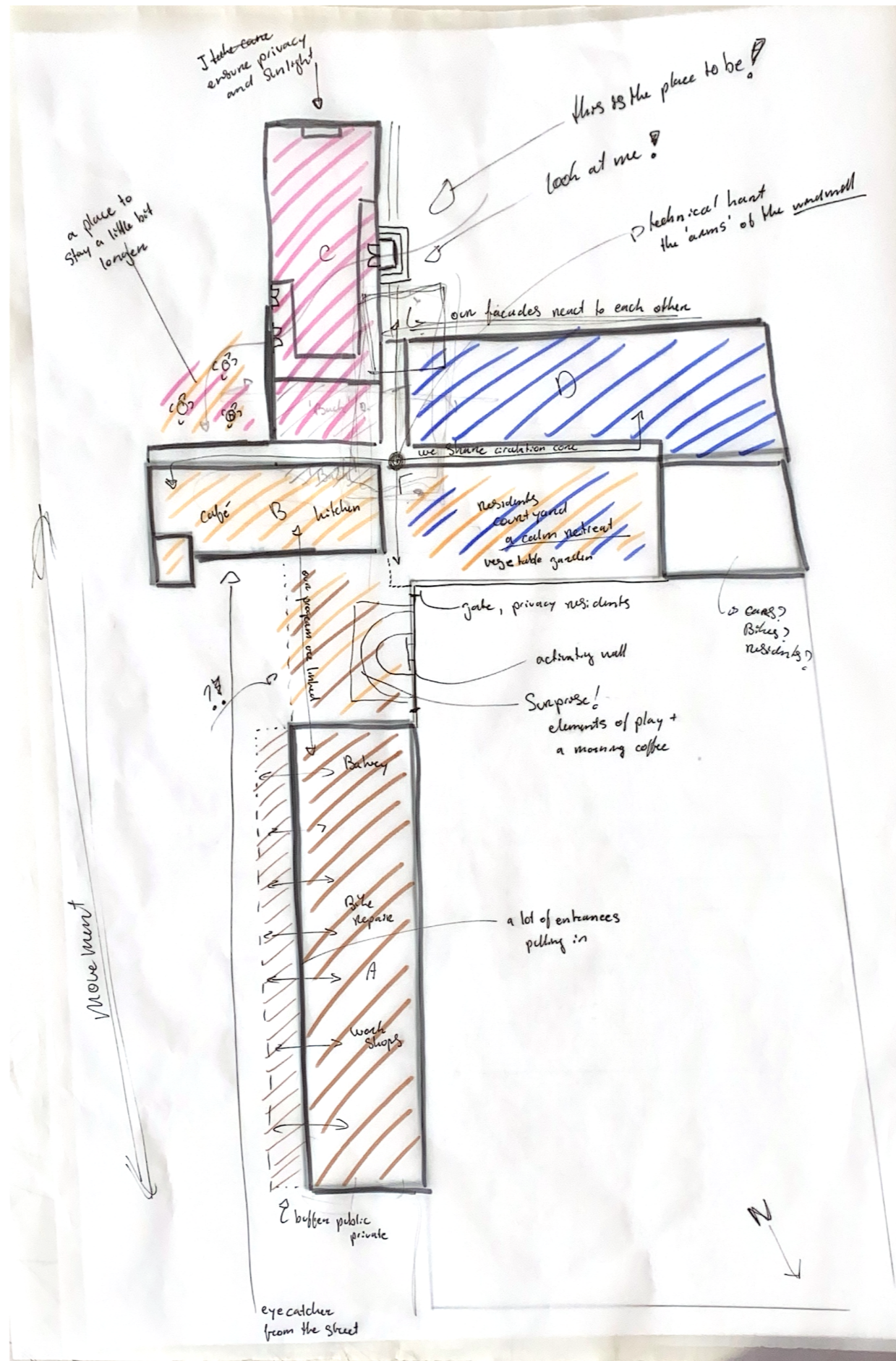


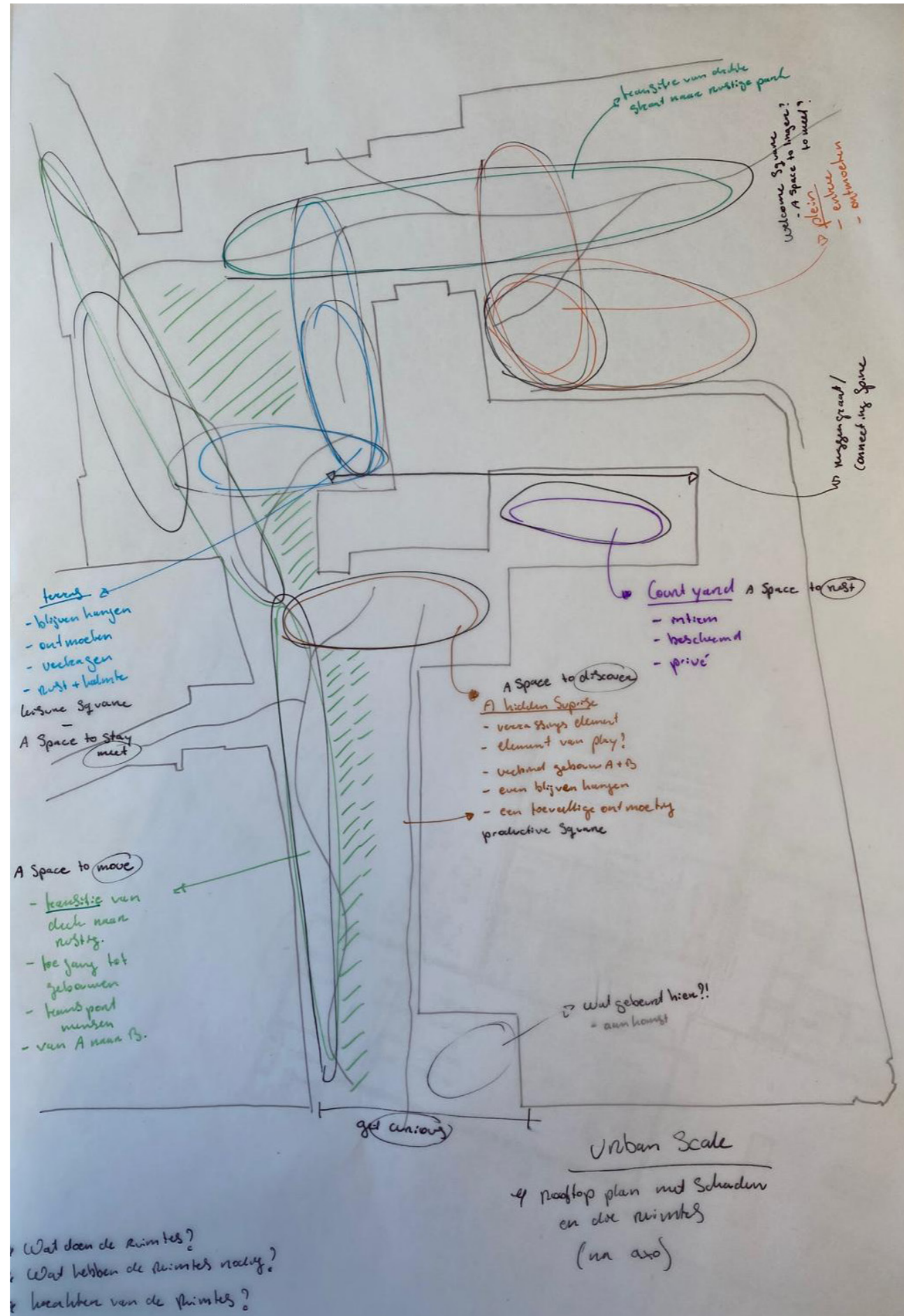


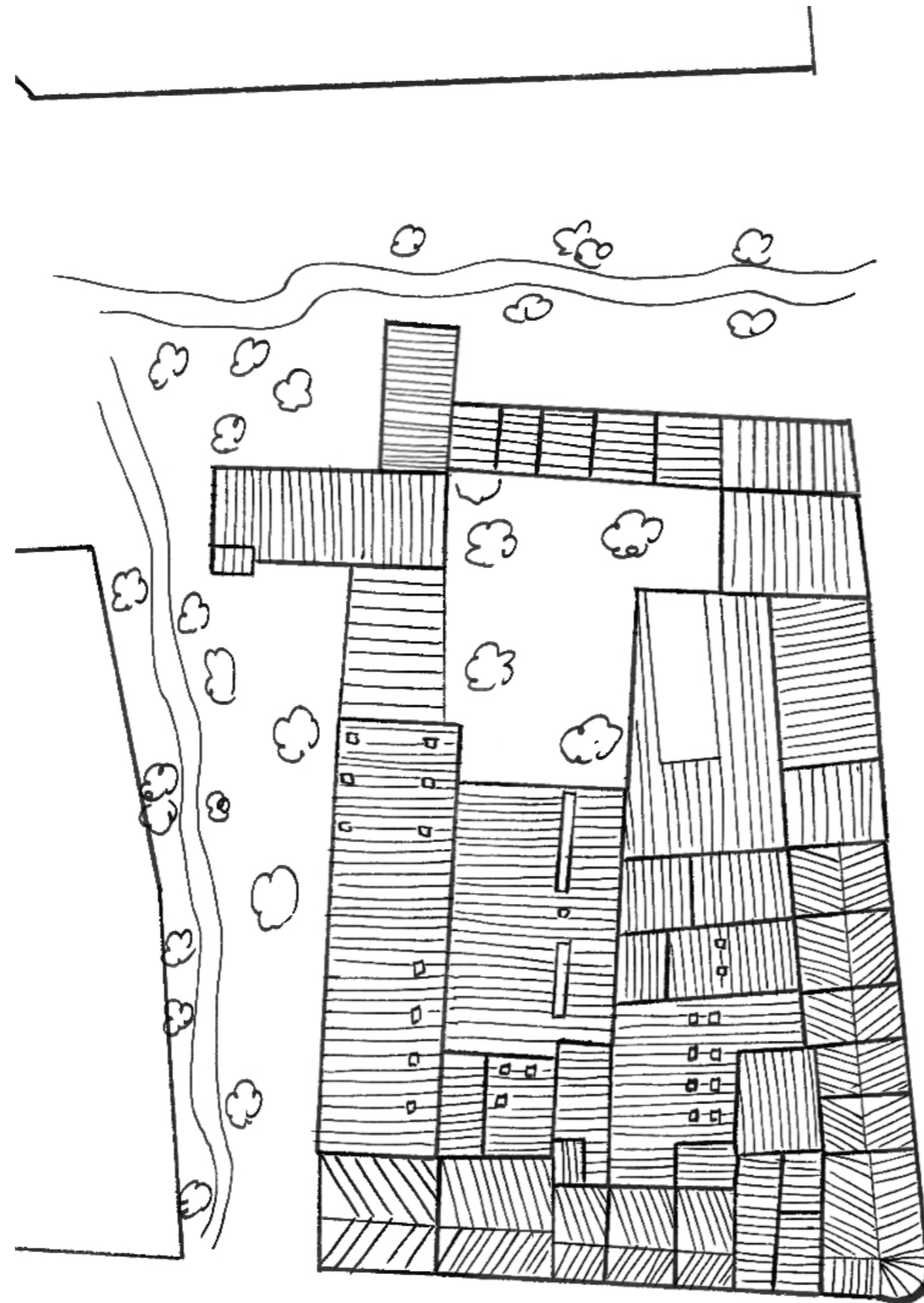
THANK YOU.

First 1.200 sketch

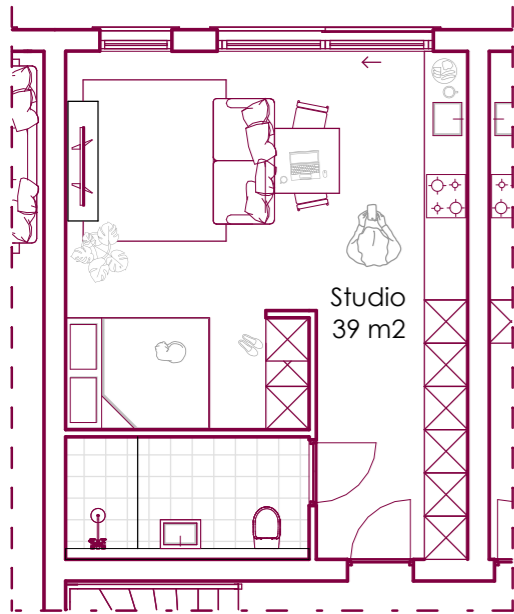




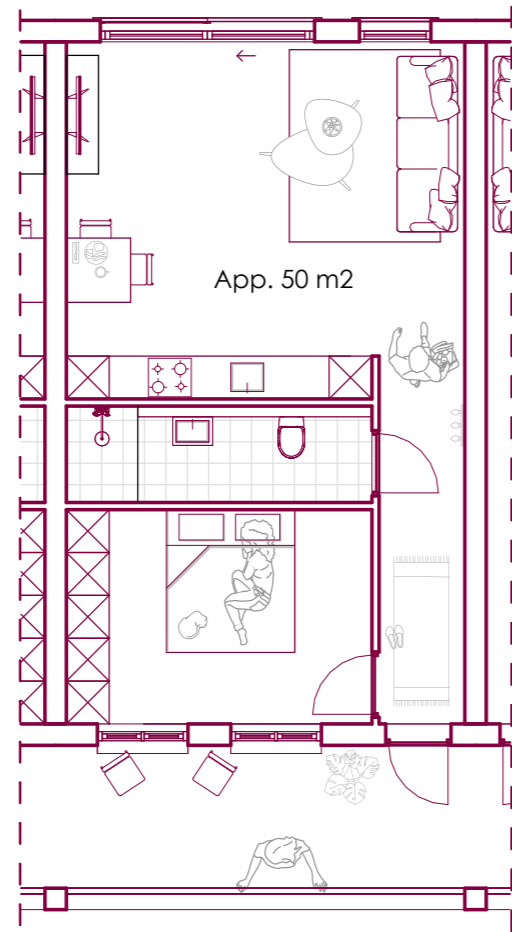




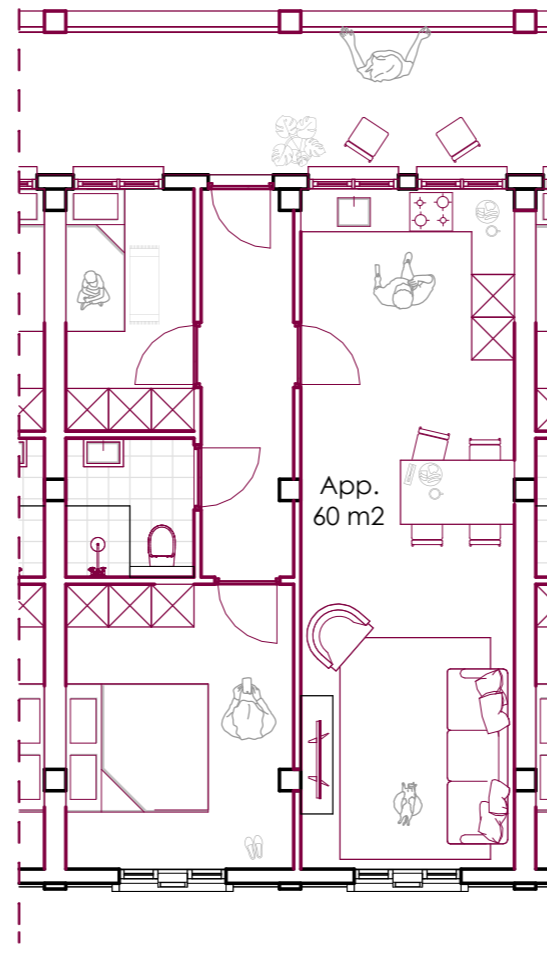
Apartments types



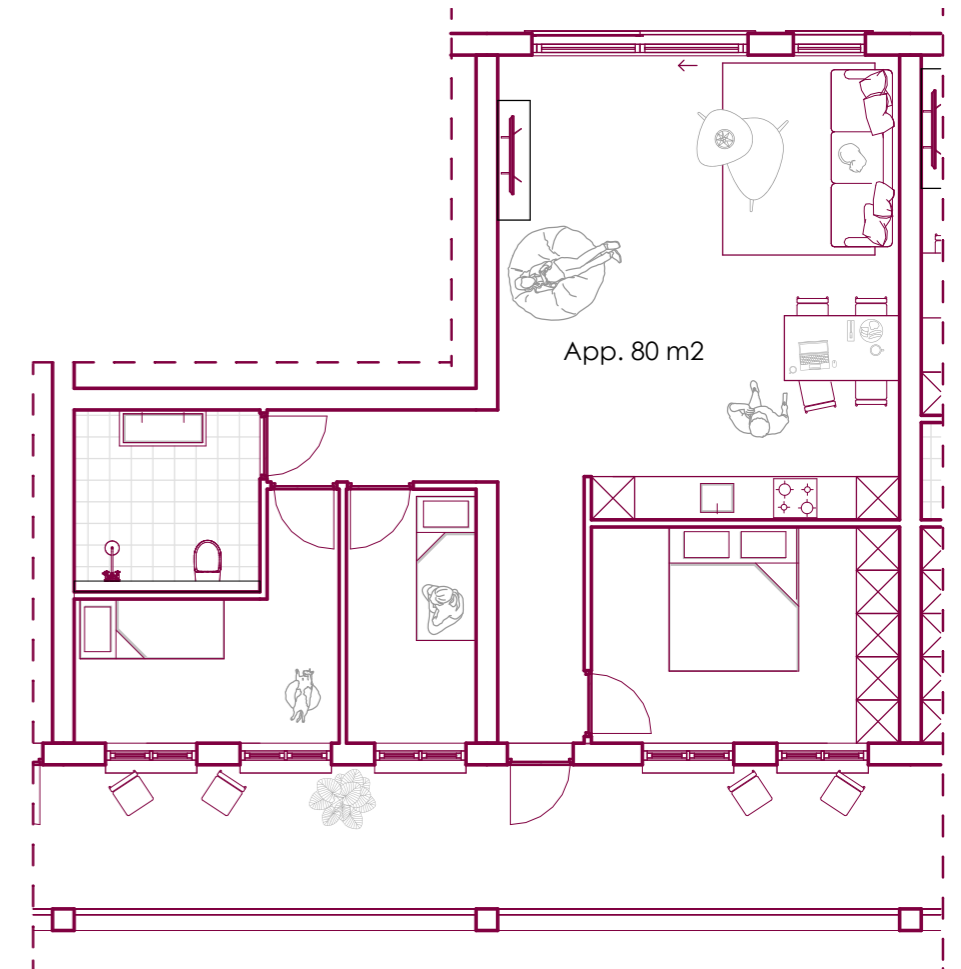
Studio apartment



1 bedroom apartment

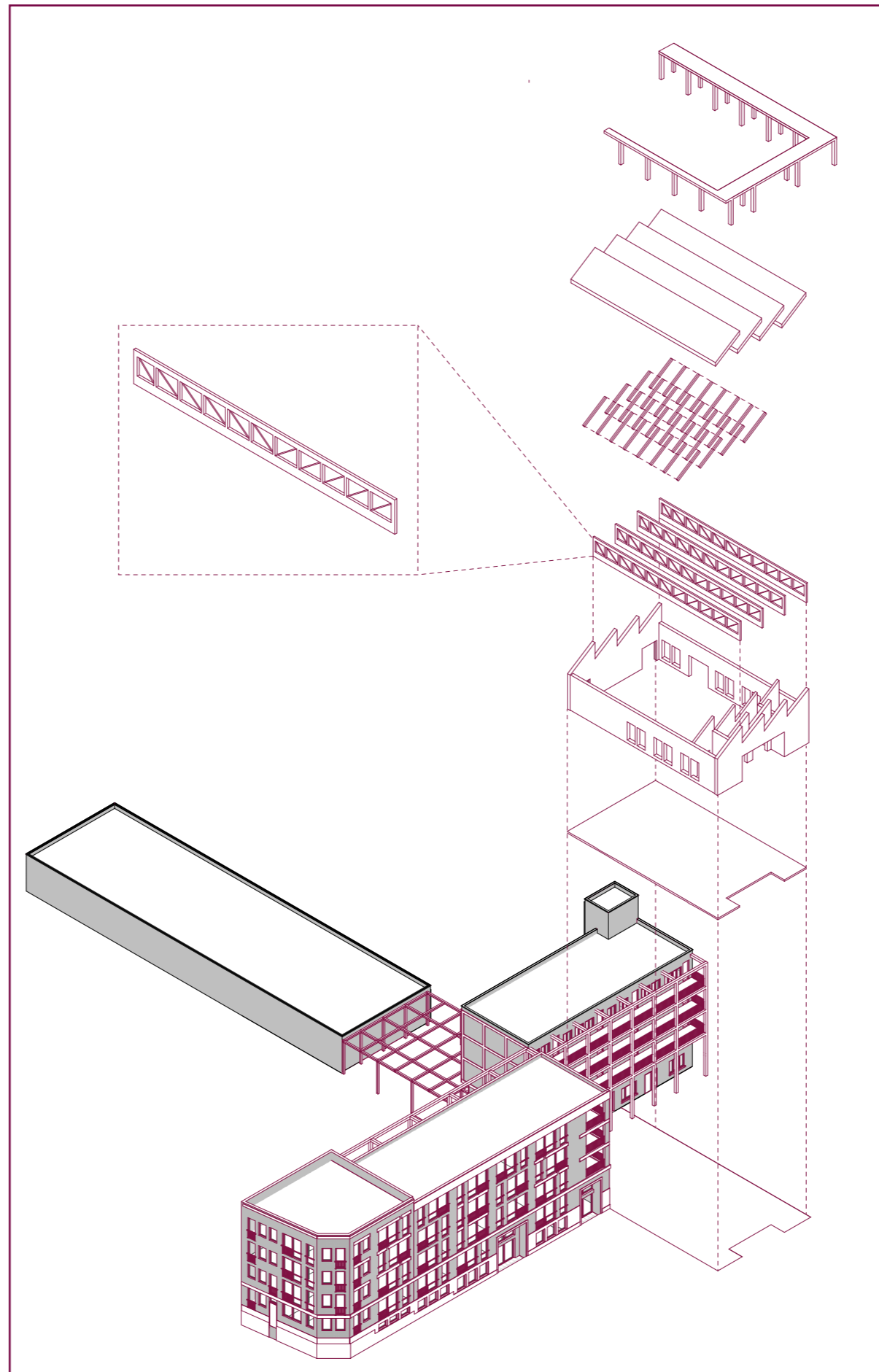


2 bedroom apartment

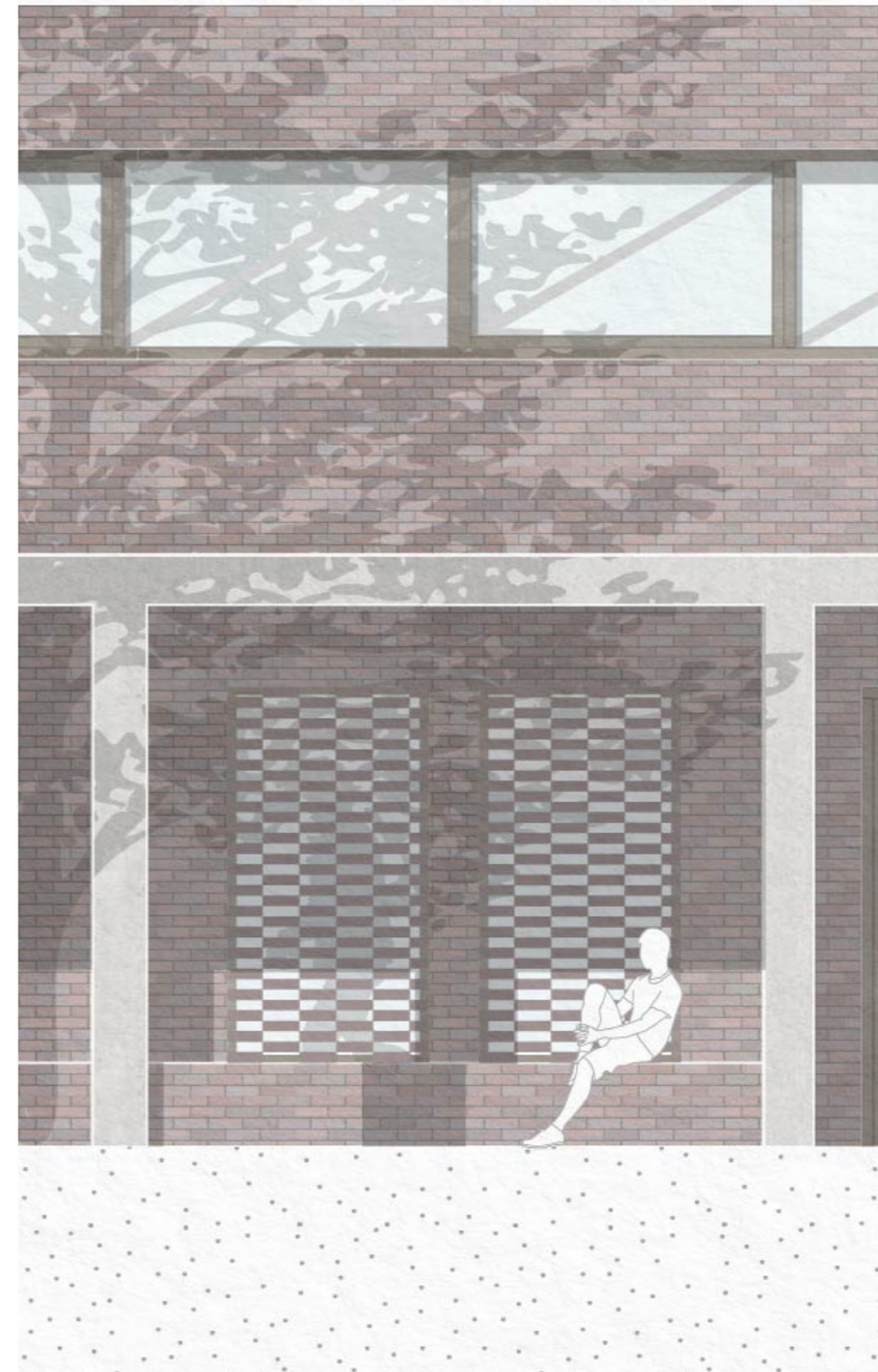
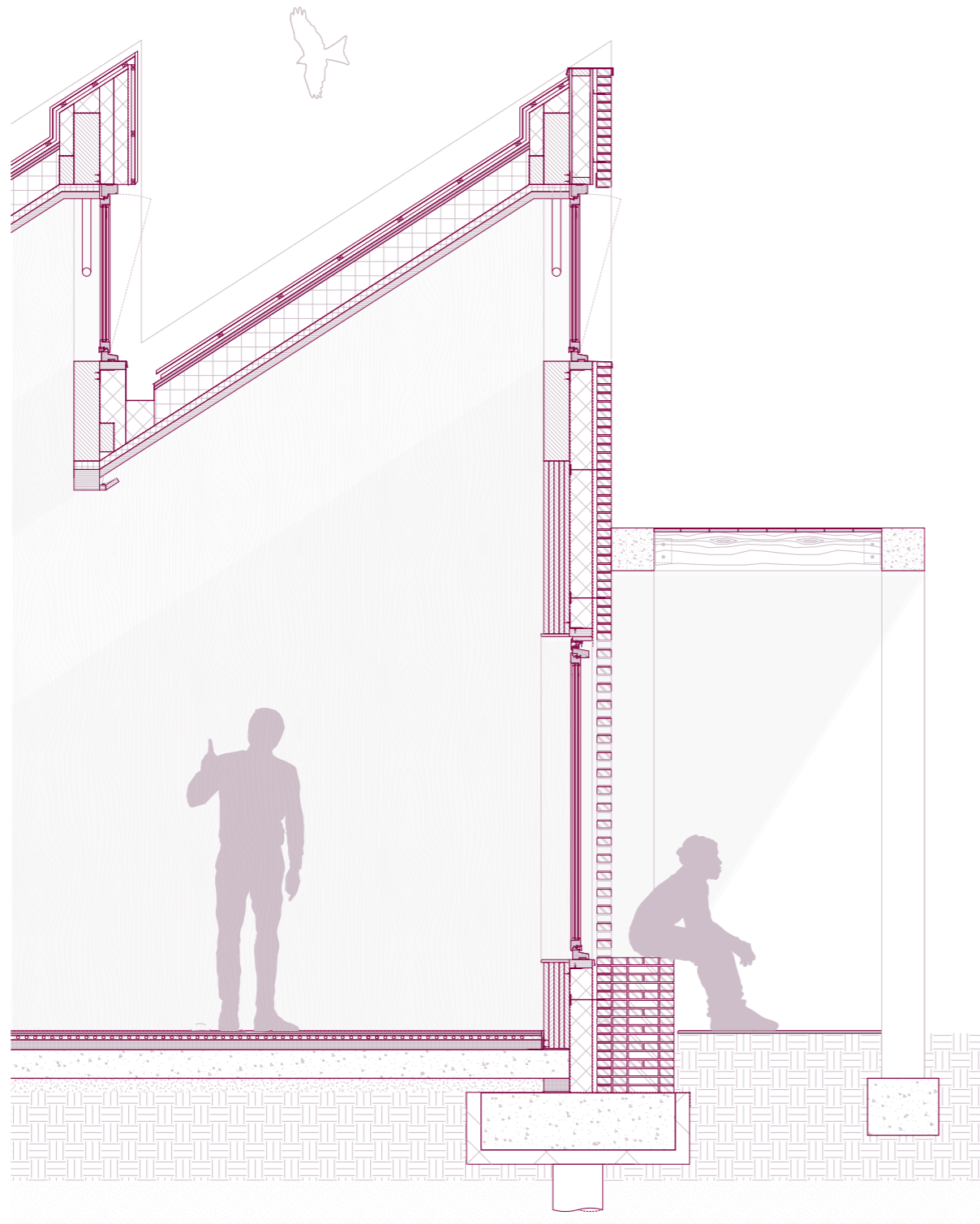


3 bedroom apartment

Structure principle



Facade Fragment

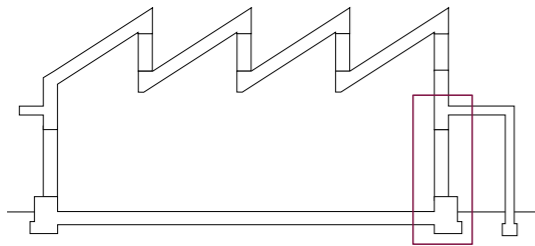


VERTICAL DETAIL 1

Floor construction

From inside to outside
Scale 1:10 (rescaled)

- Floor Finish, oak boards
- Fermacell 2 x 12.5 mm
- insulation board 30 mm with under floor heating coils
- Kingsplan theramaafloor 70 mm insulation
- 200 mm suspended concrete slab
- 100 mm sand, compression layer
- Cause Aggregate
- [Inward-opening tilt-and-turn window with trickle vent]

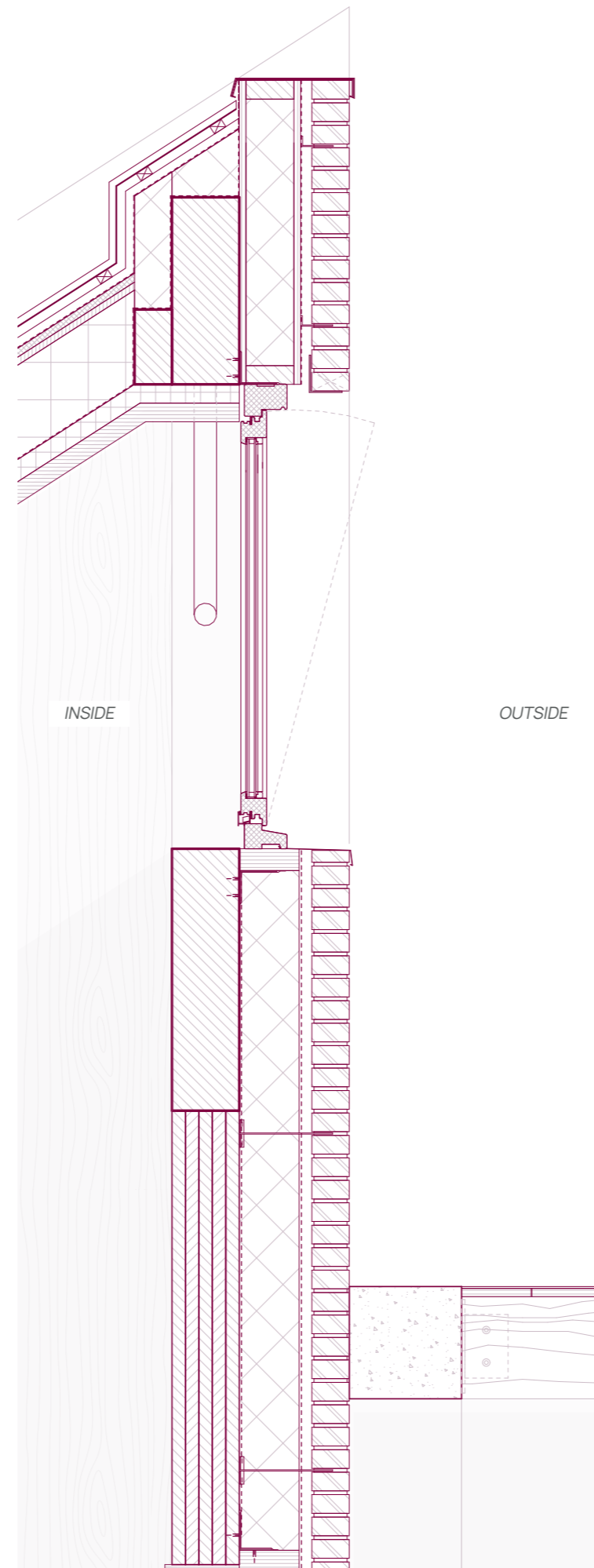
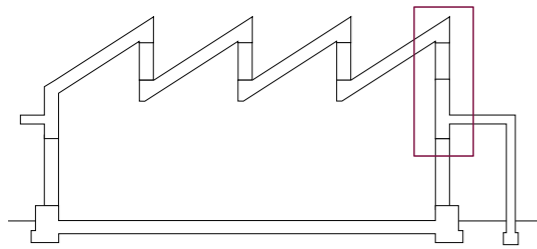


VERTICAL DETAIL 2

Wall construction

From inside to outside
Scale 1:10 (rescaled)

- 5-layer cross-laminated timber panel
- Vapour barrier
- 160 mm Insulation
- Breather membrane
- 35 mm continuous air gap
- 100 mm brickwork

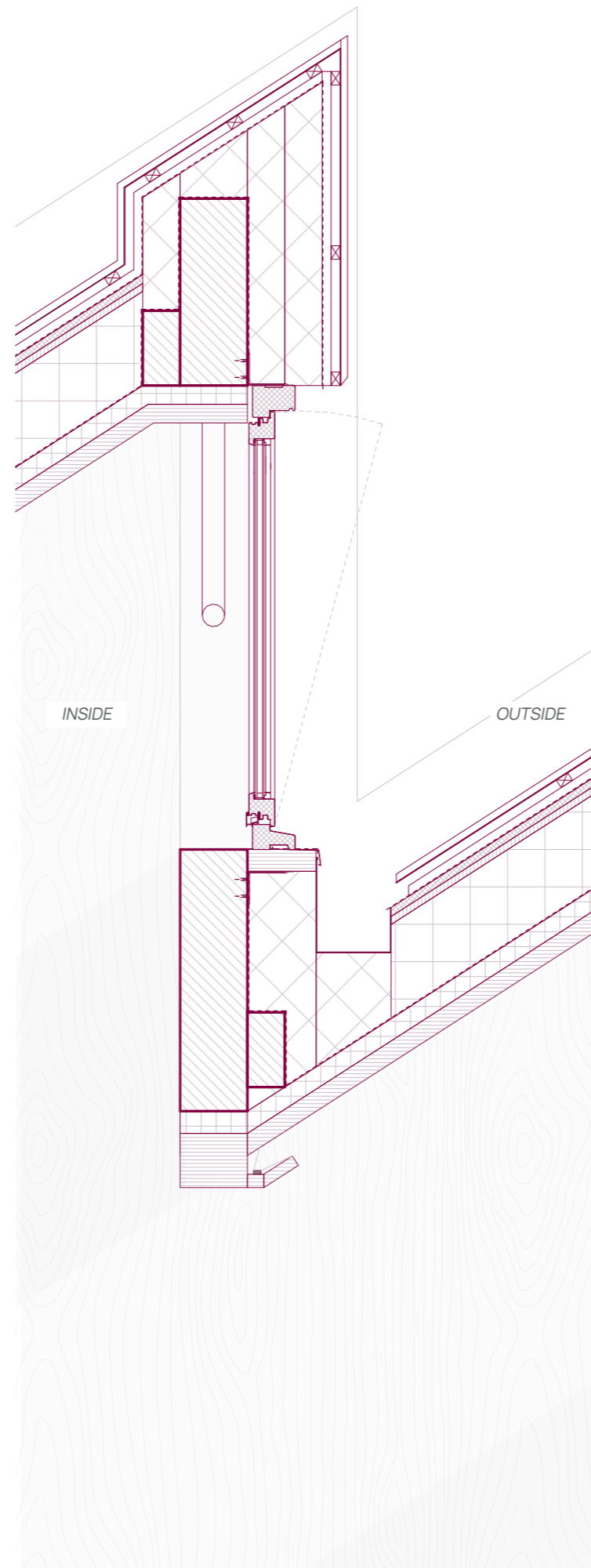
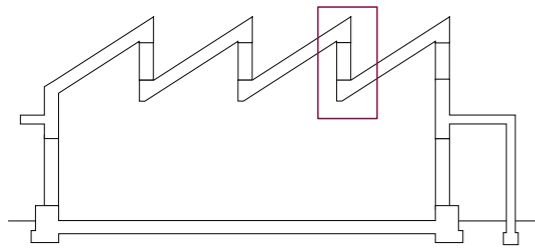


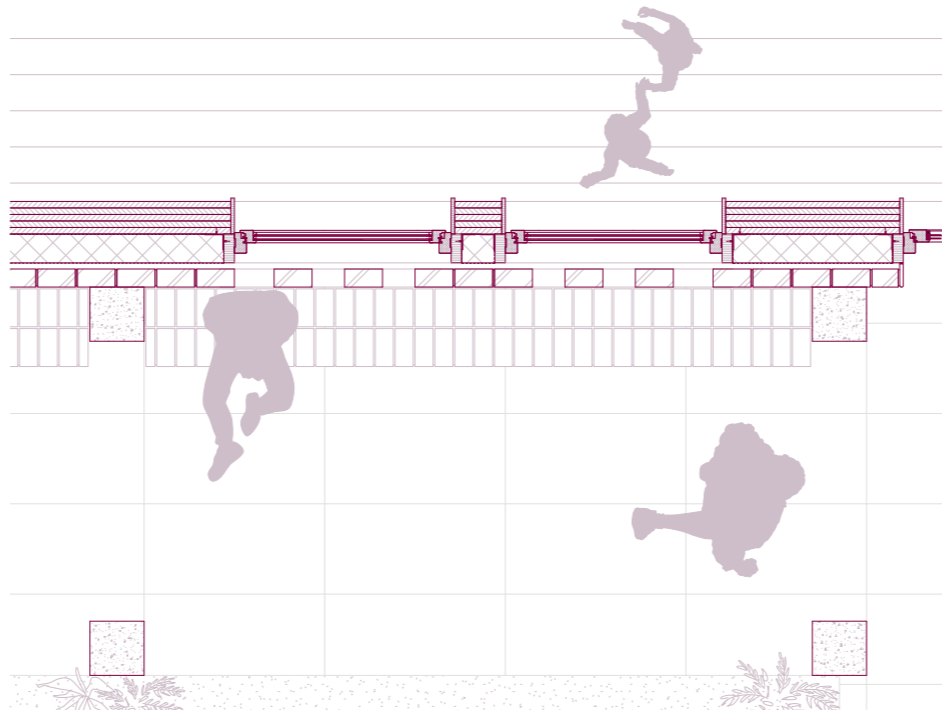
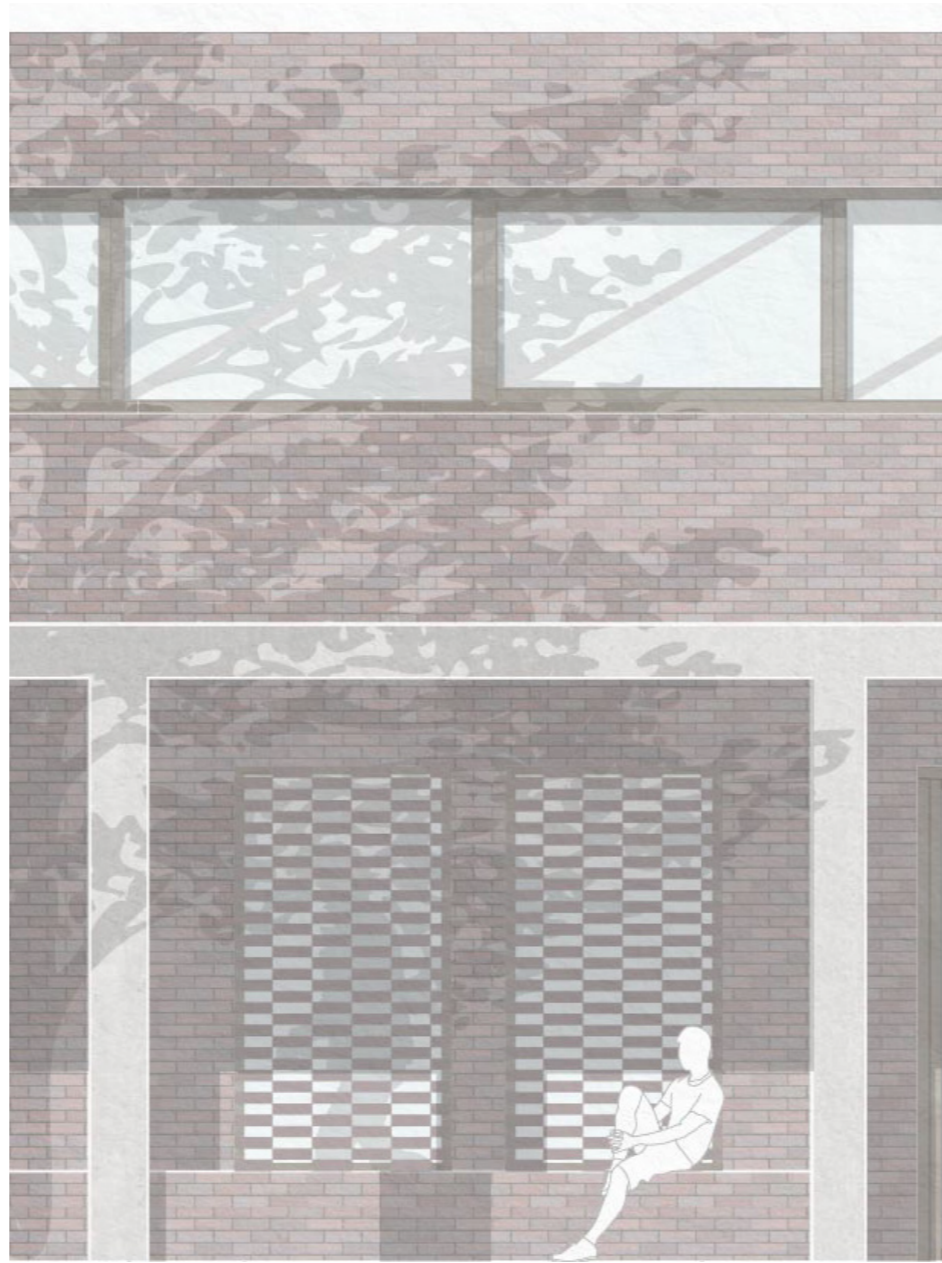
VERTICAL DETAIL 3

Roof construction

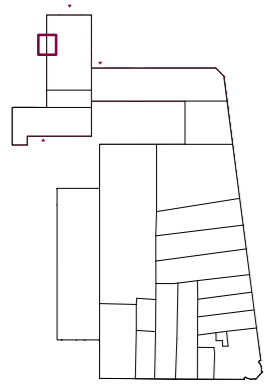
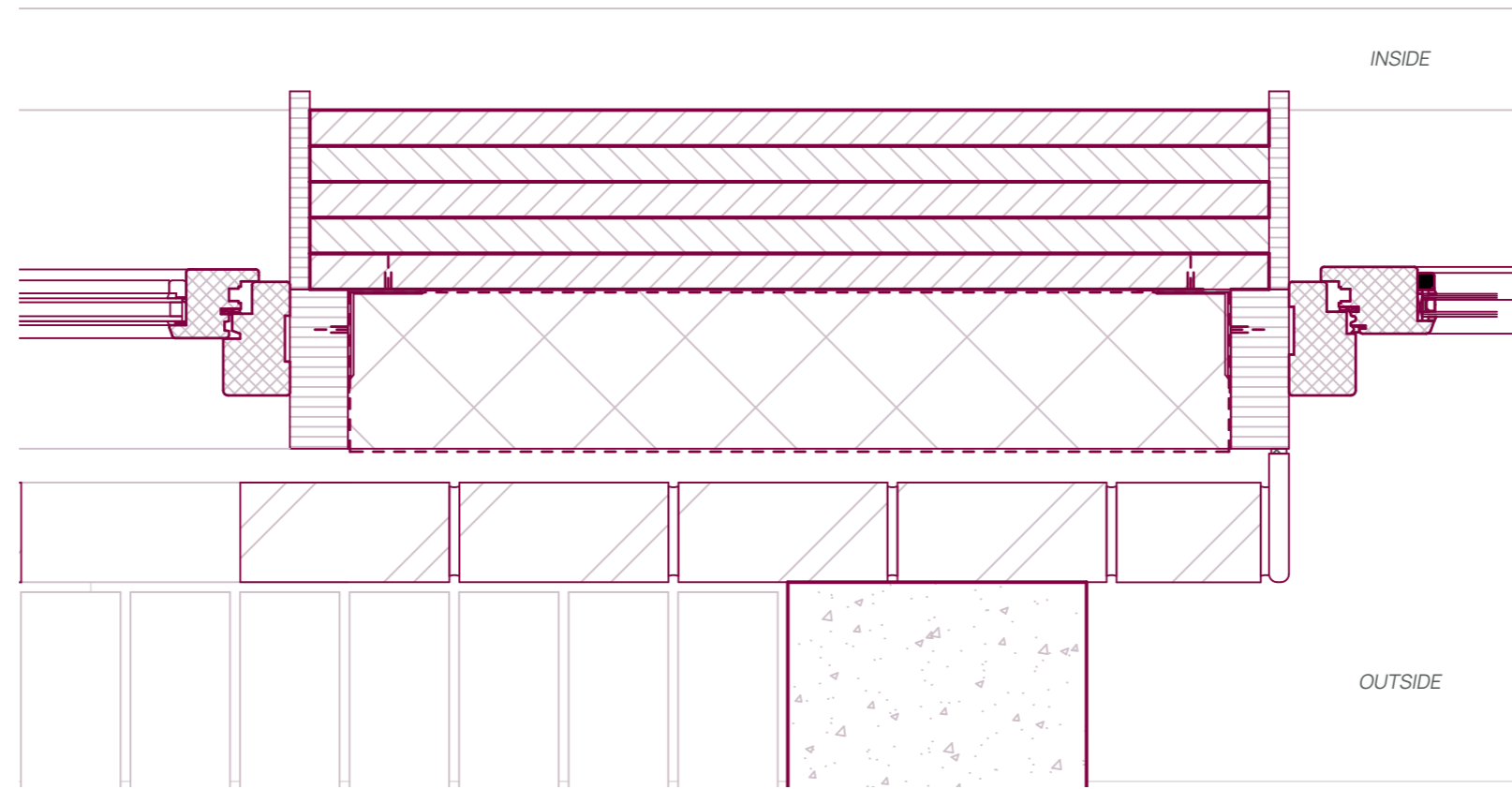
From inside to outside
Scale 1:10 (rescaled)

- Acoustic panel
- Vapour barrier
- 250 mm insulation between purlins
- OSB
- Insulation
- Breather membrane
- 24 mm timber battens on counter battens
- 1 mm zinc aluminium standing seam
- [Outward-opening tilt-and-turn window]





Horizontal detail



Wall construction

From inside to outside
Scale 1:10 (rescaled)

- 5-layer cross-laminated timber panel
- Vapour barrier
- 160 mm Insulation
- Breather membrane
- 35 mm continuous air gap
- 100 mm perforated brickwork
- [Inward-opening tilt-and-turn window]

A surprise around the corner

