

THE FUTURE OF INFORMAL PATHWAYS

Reinforcing the identity of public spaces in hilltowns

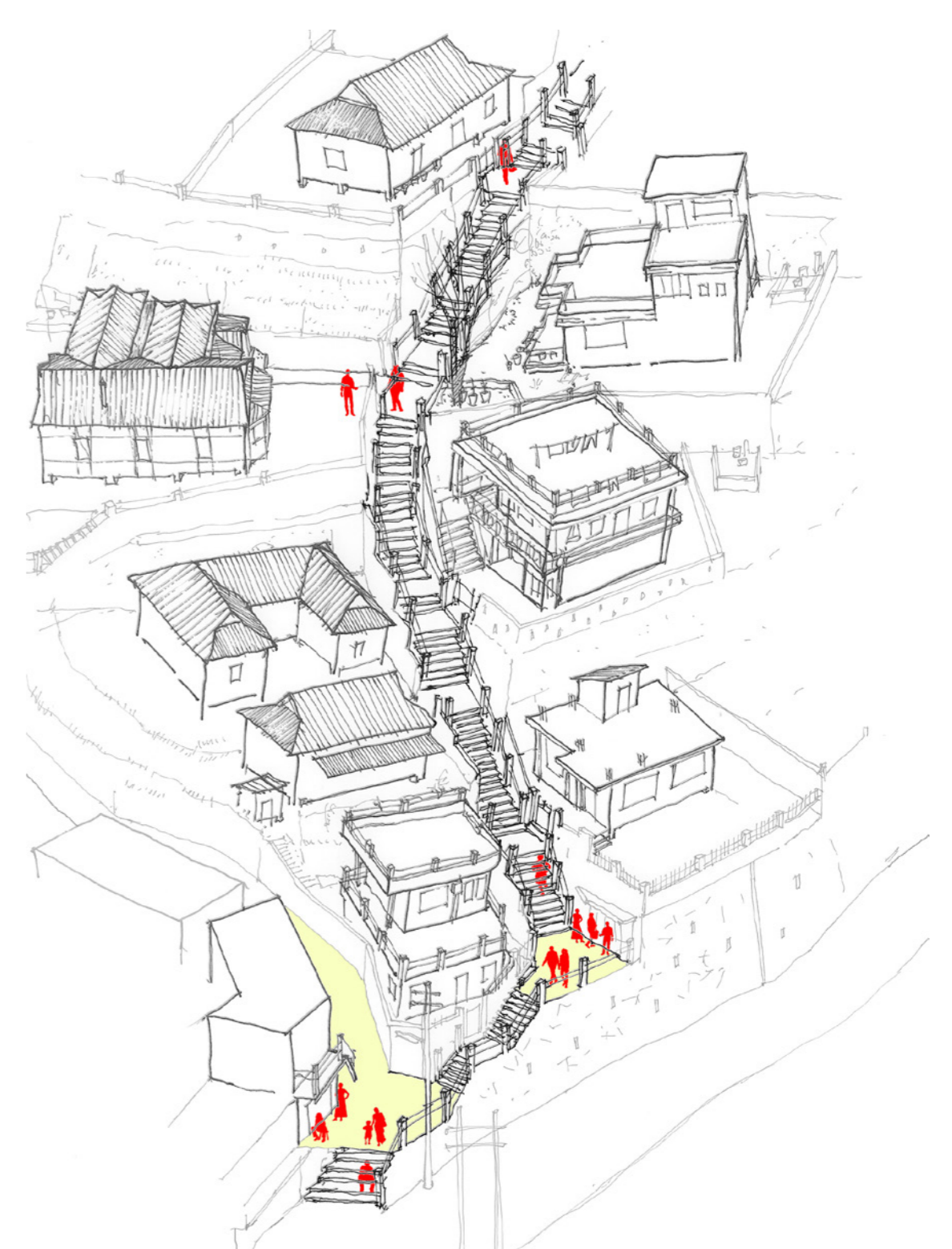
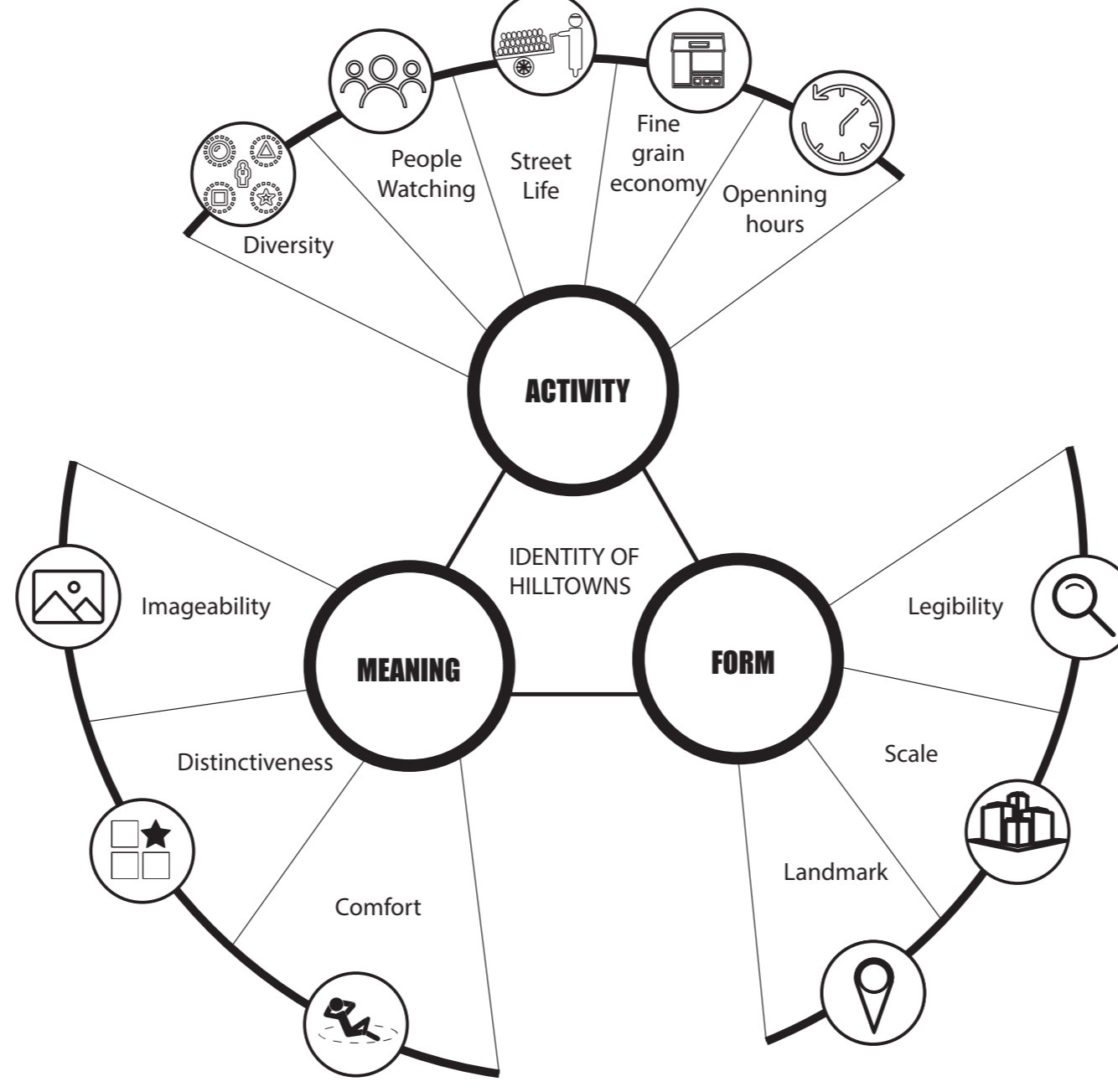
Problem
The rapid pace of unplanned urbanization trends in the hill stations of India has resulted in the degradation of the quality of public space networks of hill stations which are of primary importance to the structure and quality of the urban environment.
Due to change in building typology from the low-rise bungalow typology to the midrise apartment buildings which now graze the skyline of the neighbourhood this shift has seen a neglect in the urban infrastructure (movement networks) which provide accessibility as well as behave as a public realm. This neglect has been noticed in the rise of unsafe neighbourhood streets. This thesis aims to identify aspects of the urban environment, both tangible (physical) and intangible (mental and social), which contributes to the making of urban identity. It aims to provide a strategy, based on the qualities of urban identity, for one of the oldest townships of Shillong city which had seen a gradual decline in the quality of the network of public space structure which exists in the neighbourhood in order to bring back life to the network of public spaces in order to make them safe and also provide a better living environment for the residents. The aim is therefore to revive these streets as the public realm of the people and bring back a sense of community to these neighbourhoods

Research question
How do we propose a regeneration strategy for the older city neighbourhood of Shillong, India by strengthening the characteristics of public space networks in order to reinforce the identity of hilltowns?

Method
Urban identity is a concept which entails a certain quality of life for the urban residents and can be used as a tool for maintaining quality of life in the face of rapid urbanization. Form, activity and meanings are the aspects which contribute to sense of place and it is these aspects which contribute to identity of a place.

Conclusion
Reviving old functions and activities along the informal pathways will help reinforce the place making of these pathways. Revival of these water taps allows us to bring back the importance of the pathways themselves as a very vital part of the community.

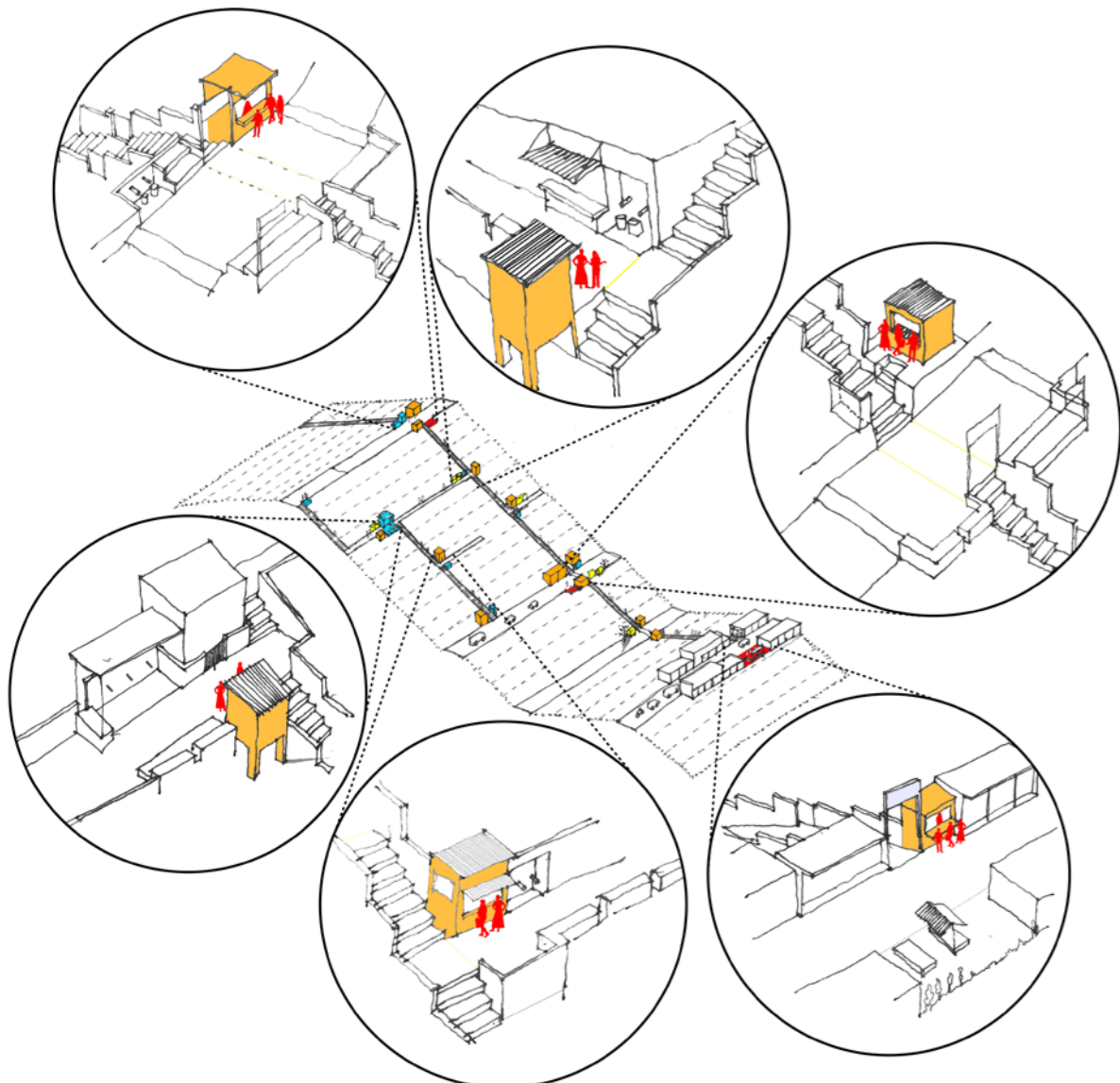
IDENTITY FRAMEWORK



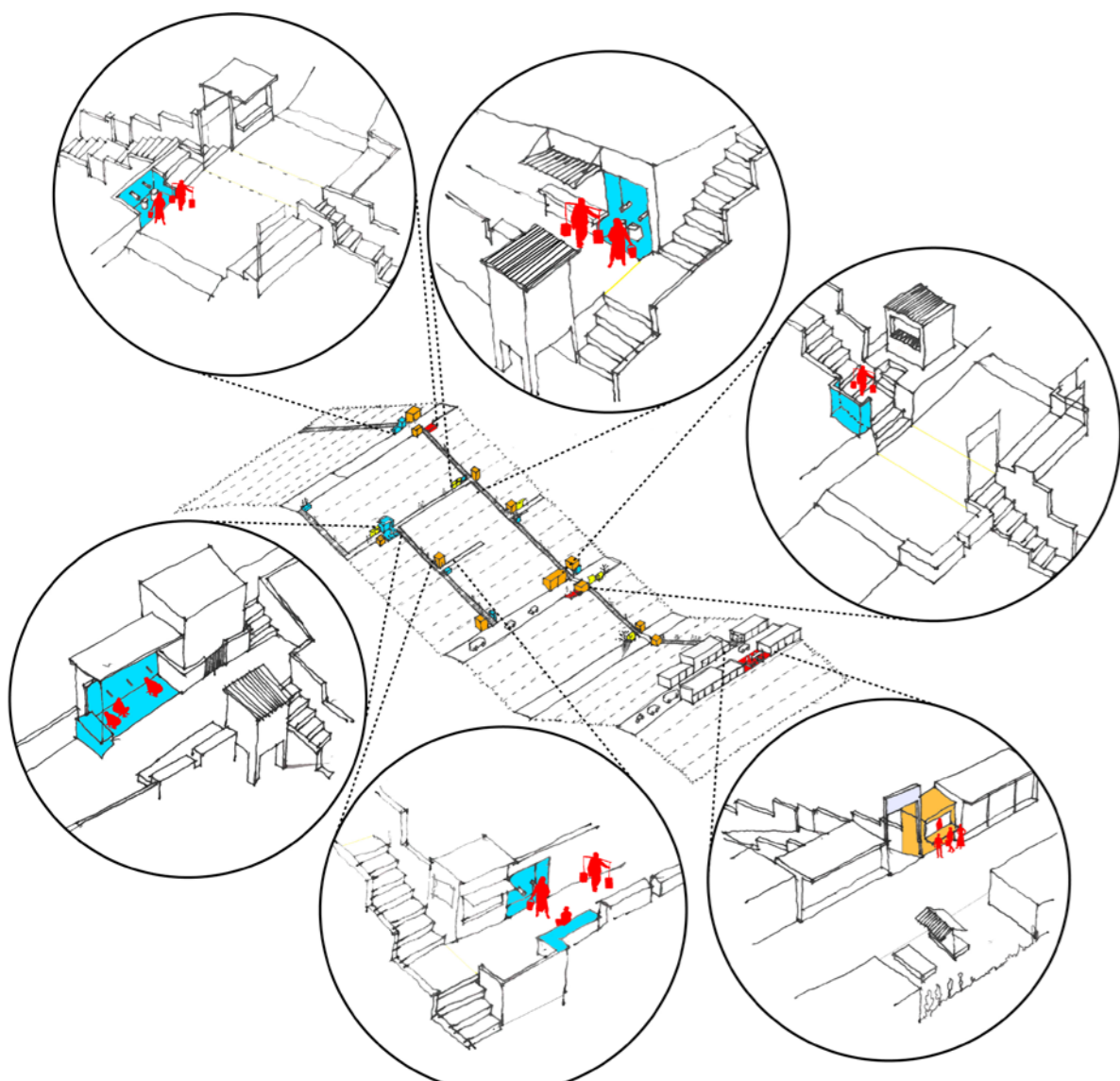
Defining tangible and intangible aspects of the informal pathways

SOCIAL

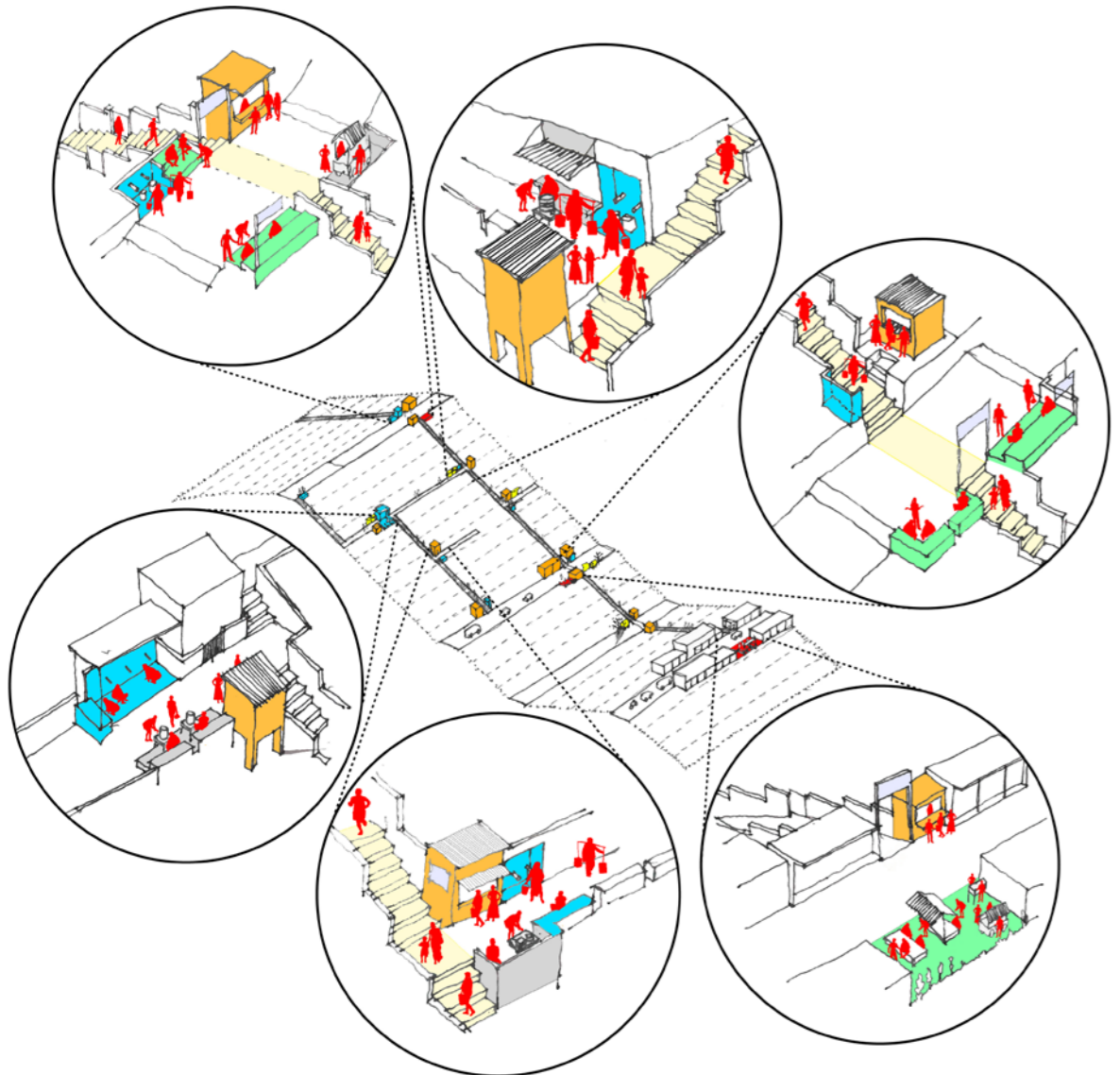
These pedestrian pathways are transformed into the social public realm of hilltowns with hubs of activities occurring at various points on the pathways



These amenities located along the line of the pathways will fulfill the purpose of not only aiding in providing basic necessities to the residents but can also add to the **liveliness of the street life**



Reviving old functions of the public water taps because they serve as **social spaces for interactions**. They have a physical presence, are associated with a domestic activity and have a social meaning attached to them



mixed functions which include local amenities shops, local taps and rest areas for informal food joints to pop up which contribute to the placemaking

SPATIAL

The urban green infrastructure is a way of **bringing back green into the city** and giving the informal paths a new meaning



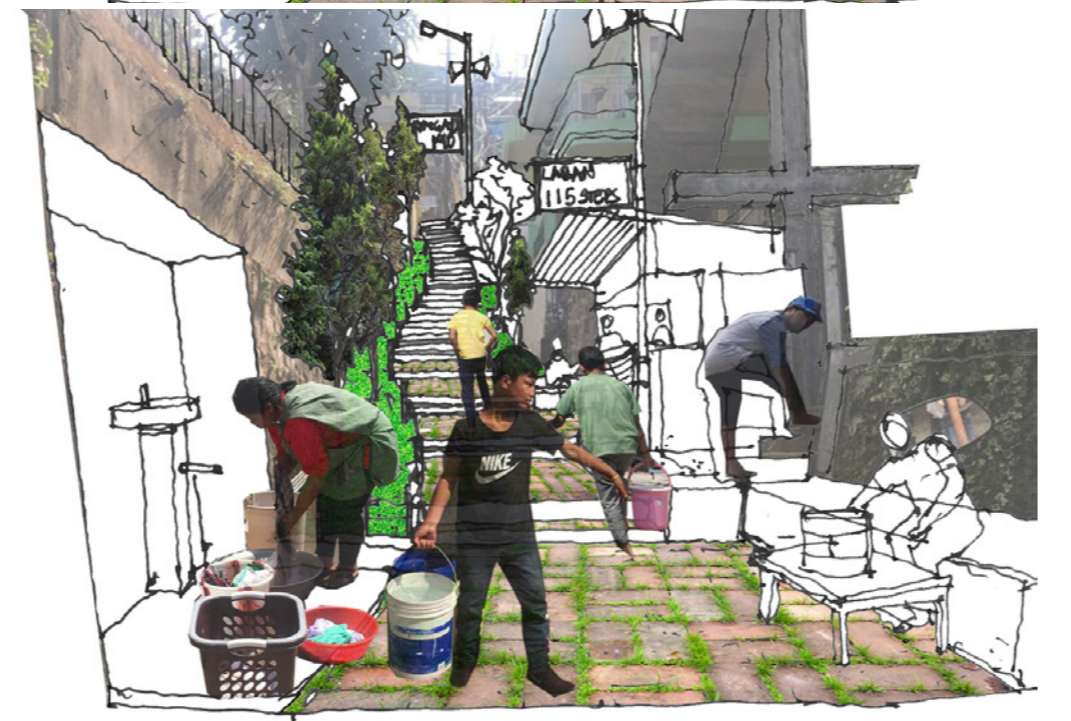
We meet with our neighbours to discuss about the local news, sports and other domestic activities



I need places to rest while climbing up all these steps



When I come home from work I enjoy trying the local street food



These local street shops also acts as the eyes on the streets which makes for an active street life



TECHNOLOGICAL

The green and blue networks to as a means for **storage and recharge of ground water** for domestic non potable use

