weaving matter


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Anderlecht, located downhill from the city centre of Brussels, was an important industrial centre where meat was processed, and textiles were spun, woven, and dyed. Today, the remaining vast industrial lots are used as hangars for storage and reselling businesses. A stream of incoming goods deposits waste into the Heyvaert quarter, creating a residue of material sediment on the streets. These remnants offer cues and traces of the ongoing choreographies of production, exchange and everyday life that shape the neighbourhood. A collection of *objets trouvés*, gathered during fieldwork in Anderlecht, formed the basis for understanding the site.

This thesis approaches the city as an *objet trouvé*. A covered passage, a worker's impasse, a steel structure, a hidden tower, these form the starting point of the project. The architectural interventions come from arranging and reworking these, making an assemblage. The site itself is a composite of former industrial buildings, workers' houses and warehouses. Through their assemblage, the limits between buildings, properties, and users become blurred, creating a different relationship between city, block and room.

With careful interventions of cutting and removing, an open space is carved out to connect the covered passage and the workers' impasse. A new canopy links these interior streets and disparate buildings, while a central garden becomes the collective room of the ensemble. Stairs are used to bring fragmented pieces together and become the heart of the two collective housing units of the project. Hemp insulation redraws the boundaries of the buildings and loops them together to create vast working halls for the textile laboratory.

Rather than proposing a complete and autonomous object, the project understands architecture as a fragment within a larger urban fabric. By rediscovering urban features, it transforms an enclosed industrial enclave into a porous ensemble that reframes living, working and the collective within the city.



I
objets trouvés 1
II
assemblage 9
III
paper/fabric 17





I objets trouvés


This book is made in the format of a zine. It is an A0 poster as well as 8 A3 pages.
I

The project began with group research. The approach we took guided my later personal design process. Research and design will be explained alongside each other, through these three phases and methods: the *objets trouvés*, the *assemblage*, and the paper or fabric.

Brussels's sloping terrain has guided how neighbourhoods developed and related to one another. Differences in elevation seem to have shaped daily life: the city's grandest buildings, such as the Palais de Justice and the Royal Palace, are located on high ground, impressively overlooking the lower districts. Downhill, along the river Senne and, later, a parallel canal, lies Anderlecht, which formed the basis of Brussels' industrial development. Much like the river Senne deposits clay downstream as the current slows down, a stream of goods deposits waste into the Heyvaert quarter, creating a residue of material sediment on the streets. While in most parts of the city these processes remain hidden or are cleverly disguised, in Anderlecht, the reality has settled. The excess of matter is not hidden behind closed doors or in the deep plots of the Heyvaert quarter, it is part of the daily choreographies of the city. These materials offer cues and traces of the choreographies of Anderlecht (p.1).

On Wednesday, 10 December 2025, together with Koen and Anna, we gleaned the streets of Anderlecht for these leftovers. The trash we picked up, a random collection of *objets trouvés*[1], formed the basis for our understanding of the site (p.2).



Duchamp (1913), Roue de vélo.

A wheel cover, a box of a car part. Export papers to Lebanon. A crate of dates (p.3).
Over time, productive activities gradually moved out of the city, leaving behind large plots and contaminated soil. Fertile soil, though, for businesses which require a lot of space for their activities. Around the Abattoir of

[1] An objet trouvé is an "element of the real" found in everyday life and assigned a new symbolic value or meaning through the artist's creative choice (Schwarz, 2006). Linked to the Surrealist movement, the practice discovered beauty and worth in what was commonly seen as worthless (Ades, 1995).



Brussels, the Heyvaert quarter, car export companies and wholesalers flourished, turning this neighbourhood from a factory into a stockpile. A stock of cars, food, packaging, building materials, and second-hand textiles, all sitting there waiting to be distributed in bulk.

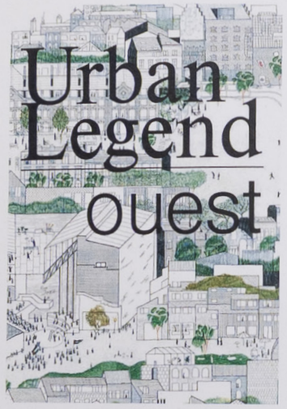
A flyer of Recyclart. A Walloon child's Dutch homework, notes in Arabic of a French class (p.3).

All the while, some of the wholesale businesses in Anderlecht see their market disappearing, new types of businesses focusing on collecting second-hand materials and redistributing them are starting to appear. Beyond Brussels being a bilingual city wrestling with a language barrier, Anderlecht is also an arrival city for many struggling to find their way and learn a language. Anderlecht is a neighbourhood shaped by this multiplicity of activities, backgrounds and languages. In his book Building and Dwelling, Ethics for the City, sociologist Richard Sennett argues that cities should embrace complexity, density, and difference rather than order and separation. Mixed forms of use invite mixed users (Sennett, 2019). Reintroducing productive activities into an urban fabric that is historically shaped for it is therefore essential to support the different groups of residents of Anderlecht and create a more inclusive city.

Referencing Curegem's heritage of spinning, dyeing and printing, the site will house a textile lab where weaving techniques are developed, and textiles are produced on a small scale (p.4).

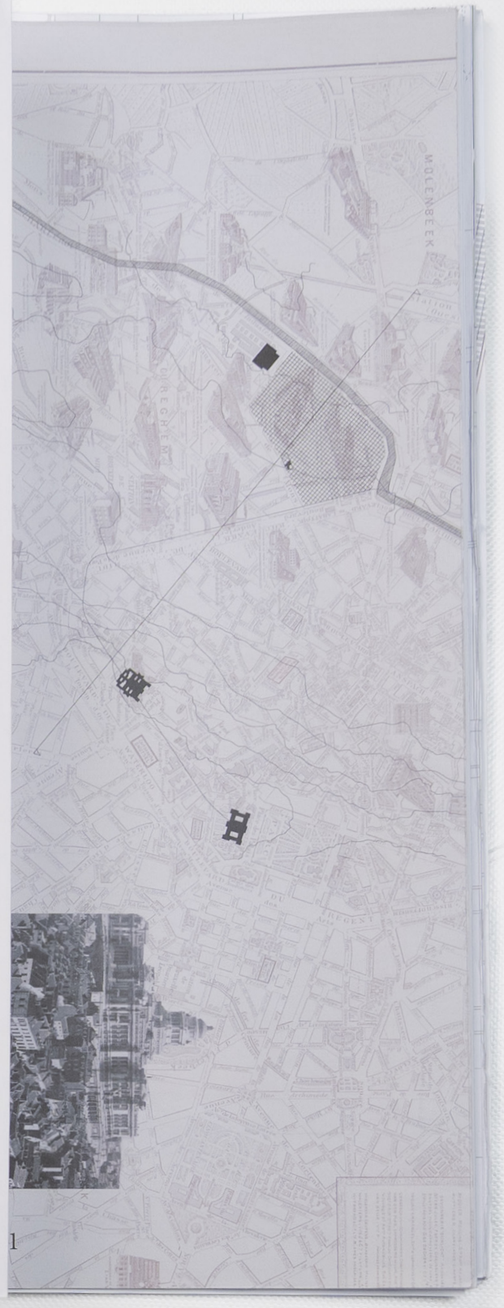
A covered passage, a worker's impasse, a beautiful steel structure in three, a little hidden tower.

In the Heyvaert quarter, buildings resemble palimpsests, overlapping layers of time are left apparent (p.4,5). The Brussels architecture firm Ouest finds that urban projects can be understood through the lens that everything is already there: the city is constantly built and rebuilt, renewed and restored. Rather than a contrast between old and new, the city is an endless reworking of its own fabric, never fully complete (Damsin & Haerens, 2025).



Damsin & Haerens (2025). Urban Legend.

The *objet trouvé* exemplifies this idea of rediscovering what already exists. The word "invention" itself comes from the Latin invenire, meaning "to find" or "to uncover." Invention, therefore, is not an act of pure creation, but the ability to offer a new interpretation of what is already there (Schaerer, 2015). The architectural approach of the city as an *objet trouvé* thus means carefully engaging with the existing, looking for qualities, sometimes lost and waiting to be rediscovered, and participating in this ongoing dialogue. The covered passage, the worker's impasse, a steel structure, the hidden tower, these *objets trouvés* will form the starting point of the project (p.6,7).





1 Hymans, H. (1910). *Palais de justice Bruxelles.* H. Laurens. https://archive.org/details/bruxelles00hymauoft/page/114/mode/1up

Verwest (1910), *Nouveau plan de Bruxelles industriel avec ses suburbains.*

Krikke, A. (2026). *Map of Brussels' sloping terrain 1.15000.*

2 Google Earth, (2025). *Aerial photo of the Heyvaert quarter.*

Debonnet, E. (2025). Trash collection in Anderlecht 10 december 2025.

3 Krikke, A., Weber, K., & Debonnet, E. (2025). *Heyvaert in paper.*

4 Rijksmuseum archief, (1694). *De wever.*

Krikke, A. (2025). *Broyèrestraat.*

5 Debonnet, E (2025). *Palimpsest.*

Weber, K. (2026). *Worker's housing.*

6 *Archival plans Bergensesteenweg 61.* (1966)

Weber, K. (2026). *Impasse migerode.*

7 *Archival plans Broyèrestraat 8.* (1898)

7,8 *Hand drawing urban block Anderlecht*



1 Hymans, H. (1910). *Palais de justice Bruxelles*. H. Laurens. https://archive.org/details/bruxelles00hymauoft/page/114/mode/1up

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7 *Archival plans Broyerestraat 8*. (1898)

7,8 *Hand drawing urban block Anderlecht*









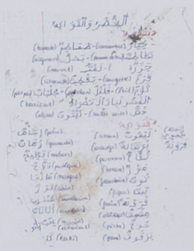


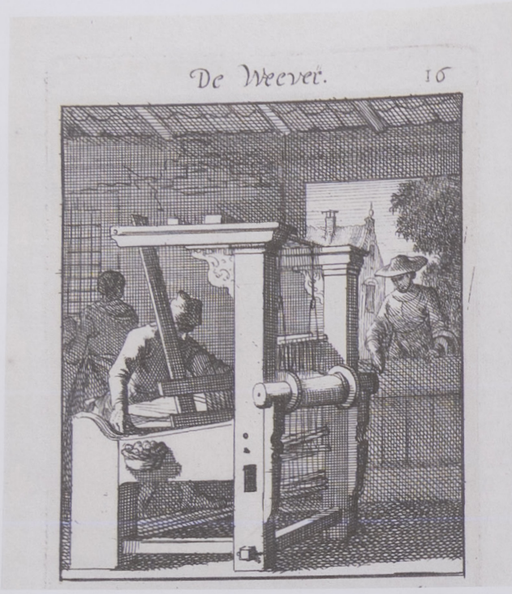

RECYCLART


Original GKN Automotive Parts
Original GKN Automotive Parts

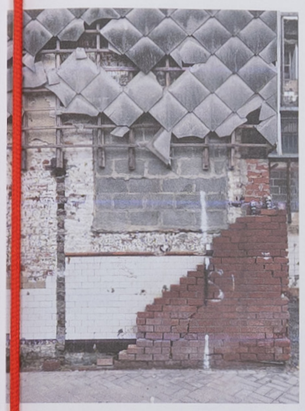

PERFECT
WHEELCOVERS
WIELSIERINGEN
ENJOLIVEURS
RADBLENDEN



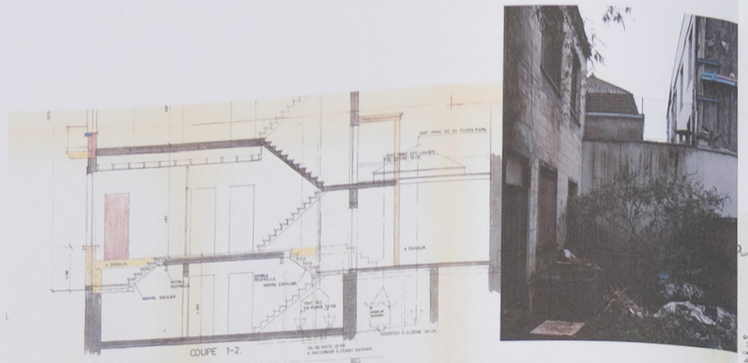



De Weever. 16

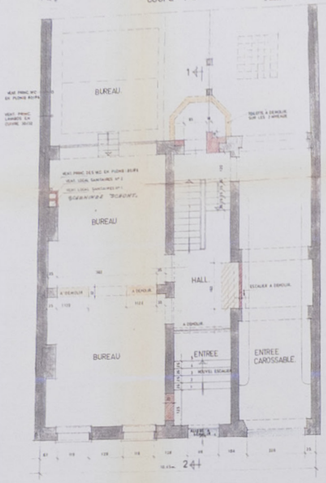


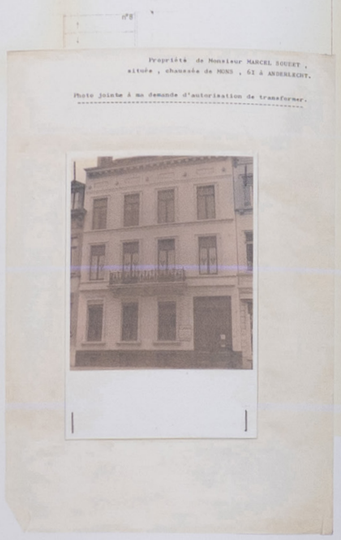


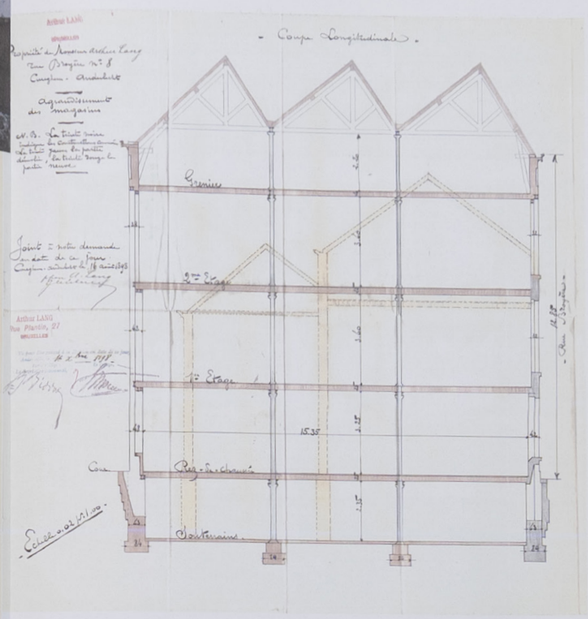




COUPE 1-2

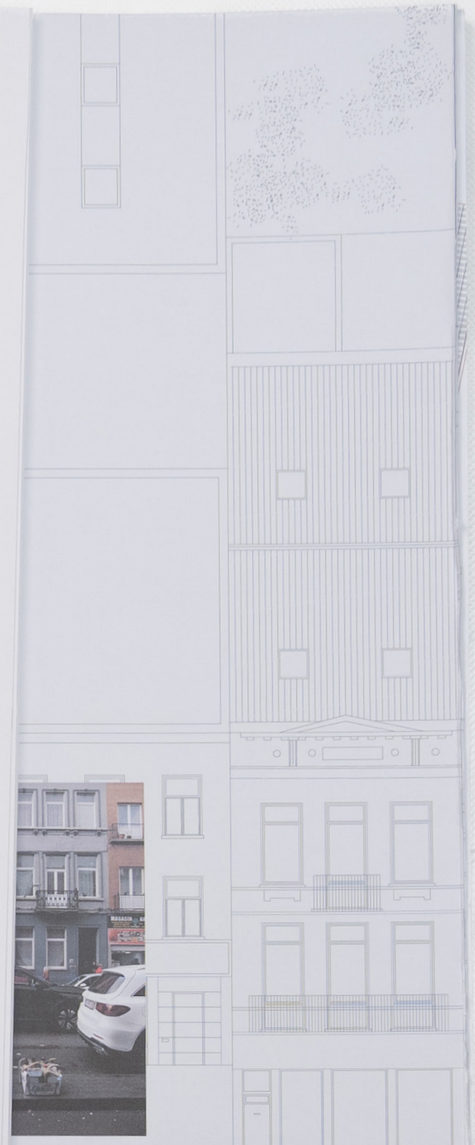

BUREAU
HALL
BUREAU
ENTREE
ENTREE CAROSSABLE
24
REZ DE CHAUSSEE MODIFIE.


Propriété de Monsieur MARCEL SOUET ,
située , chaussée de MONS , 61 à ANDERLECHT.
Photo jointe à ma demande d'autorisation de transformer.


Coupe Longitudinale
Arthur LANG
Agrandissement des magasins
Joint à notre demande
Arthur LANG
Rue Plantin, 27
BRUXELLES
Grenier
2e Etage
1er Etage
Rez-de-chaussée
Souterrains



assemblage

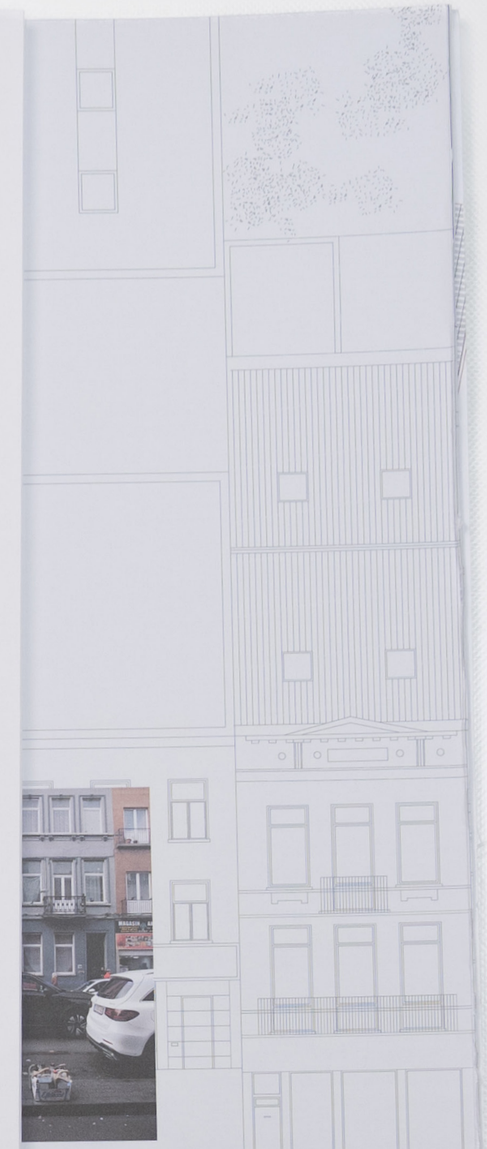


assemblage











slender wooden panelling (p.3). Their unity is merely hinted at by the new gates and signage elements, made out of a metal grill, but articulated differently according to the level of privacy required. Modest interventions, sometimes as small as replacing a thick door with a transparent gate (p.10), can have a social significance for the surrounding city: creating the possibility of invitation.

Carving
By untangling some of the knotted threads, breathing room is created within the tight-knit fabric. Removing certain built parts: a hall in between the two industrial buildings and the edge of a storage hall uncovered a connection between the workers' impasse facing one street and the covered passage facing another (p.10-11). This gesture was inspired by the *traboules* in Lyon that we visited with our studio. They are semi-private passageways that intersect the building blocks for quick access to fresh water from the river. Later, they also became an architectural tool used to bring light into the deep plots, where housing is stacked one behind the other. Carving out space unveiled a central garden (p.10). To define this newfound outdoor space, a delicate roof is added. This covered passage defines the new main wayfinding thread, connecting the big industrial halls and linking them to the outdoor impasse. The indoor street reframes the chaos that once was.



Debonnet (2025), Traboules Lyon

Glueing
Stairs bring fragmented pieces together. The three small workers' houses are repositioned as the impasse is now an accessible backstreet (p.11). The third formerly hidden façade now becomes visible. A new communal entrance is added facing the impasse to reinforce their unity (p.12). The three modest houses together form a generous co-housing ensemble through the addition of a staircase, connecting the communal rooms on the ground floor to the bedrooms on the upper floors. What was formerly a back room, the garden, is now a central communal space.
A staircase, as a mirror of the existing one, is added to the industrial hall (p.13). It links the upper floors, an artist-in-residence co-housing, to the street as well as the rooftop terrace, making it independent from the weaving halls. The staircase becomes the central collective space as the kitchen and the living room are stacked on top of each other, around it. It is made from a metal grill and serves as a light well, with a skylight on the upper floor bringing light to the lower floors (p.15).

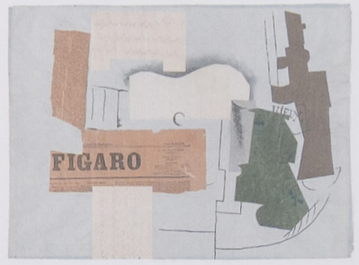
Redrawing
An insulation line redraws the boundaries of the buildings. To adapt these simple structures made of brick walls, insulating hemp walls are added. These new walls define the new borders of indoors-outdoors-, heated-unheated space. A patio is formed to access the new staircase. A semi-indoor space ensues, as an extension of the covered street. It serves to separate the two halls and provide natural light (p.13). The industrial building and the one-storey hall next to it become one through the hemp insulation layer extending outward, reaching out to loop it together as one (p.13). The hemp walls sometimes cover the brick but also skirt around, leaving the materiality of the existing brick wall apparent. The walls and their texture or level of finish reflect the climate of the space and the activities that take place.





The next step in our group research was to assemble our collection of *objets trouvés* into a book. Organised by street, we catalogued everything we found. An index at the back provides an overview. The design task merely began with the discovery of these *objets trouvés* and unfolded through many attempts at their *assemblage*.

As Rowe and Koetter describe in their book Collage City, the *assemblage* makes use of the "left-overs of the world". By combining this reality with interpretation, the *collage* brings together elements that do not naturally belong together, producing unexpected results (Row & Koetter, 1978/1995, pp. 142–143). Pablo Picasso, one of the "inventors" of the *collage*, was the first to transmit artistic value to compositions assembled through elements of no value. *Collages* and *assemblages* transmit their message through the juxtaposition of different materials (Seitz, 1961). The meaning does not come from the object itself, but from its placement and context, how it relates to the other elements, and from the harmonious discord that ensues.



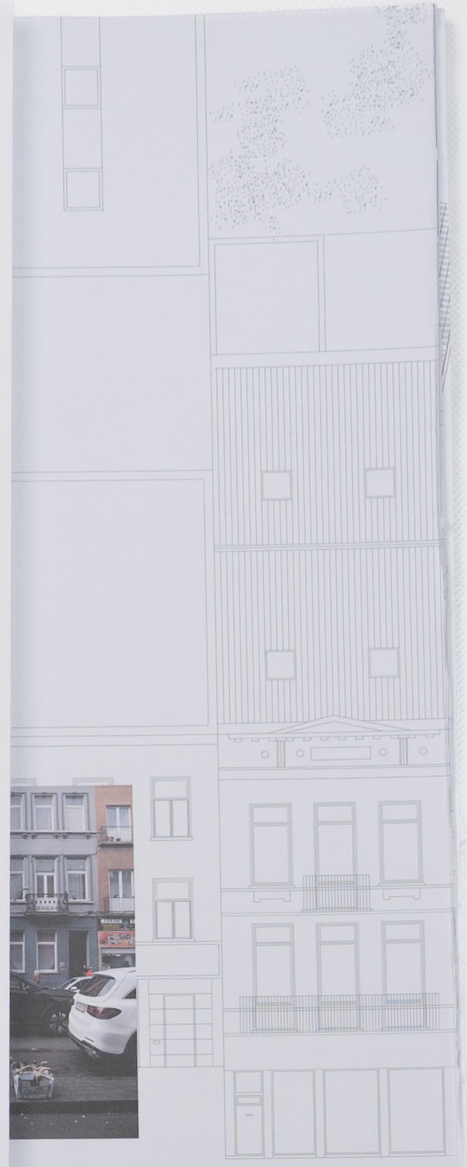
Picasso (1912), Bottle of Vieux Marc, Glass, Guitar and Newspaper

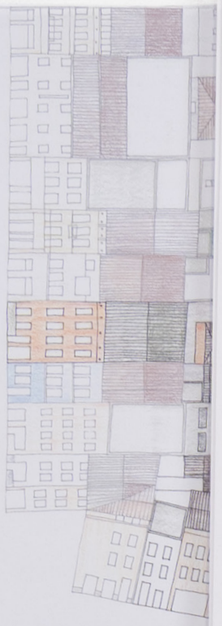
The idea of *assemblage* has always been central to the design project, even in the choice of plot. As it is uncharacteristically small for the neighbourhood, the site is a *collage* of different buildings: two former industrial buildings, an office along the Bergensesteenweg (p.1) and a hall along the Broyèrestraat, three small workers' houses along the Habermanstraat, some storage halls in the centre of the plot, a little tower and a large one-story storage hall along the Broyèrestraat. Through their *assemblage*, the buildings no longer function as separate islands. The limits between properties, buildings, rooms, and users become blurred, creating a different hierarchy between city, block and room.

I will address some of the steps I took to craft this *assemblage*.

Sewing a thread

The site is a triptyque, with three facades opening to different streets. Each offers a mere hint of the bigger, hidden world that unfolds behind it. The facades keep their individual character, and ad hoc solutions to close certain openings are found that match each façade's expression. Sometimes it is blue stone cladding (p.2), sometimes it is







9 Weber, K. (2026).*Bergensesteenweg*.
CAD drawing facades Bergensesteenweg.

10 Hand drawing mirrored façade Bergensesteenweg 6.
CAD drawing ground floor plan scale 1.100, facades Bergensesteenweg and roofs of neighbouring buildings.

11 CAD drawing corner Bergensesteenweg and Habermanstraat.
Weber, K. (2026).*Worker's housing*.
Weber, K. (2026).*Habermanstraat*.

12 Hand drawing facades along the impasse Migerode scale 1.100.
CAD drawing corner Habermanstraat and Broyèrestraat.
Weber, K. (2026).*Impasse Migerode*.

13 CAD drawing ground floor plan scale 1.100, hand drawing mirrored facades Broyèrestraat, roofs of neighbouring buildings.

14 Wasserbäch, M. (2025).*Broyèrestraat*.
CAD drawing facades Broyèrestraat.

15 CAD drawing section A-A' 1.100.
Fragment model scale 1.33 .

16 CAD drawing section A-A' 1.100.

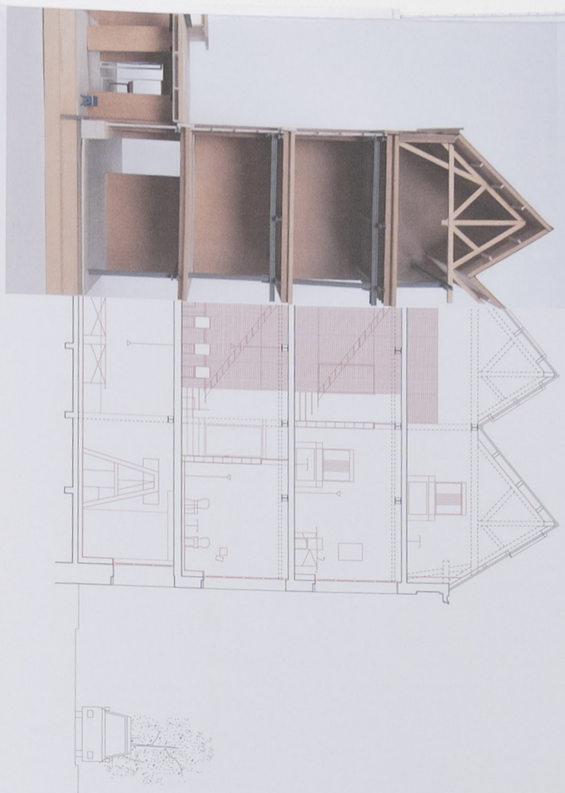




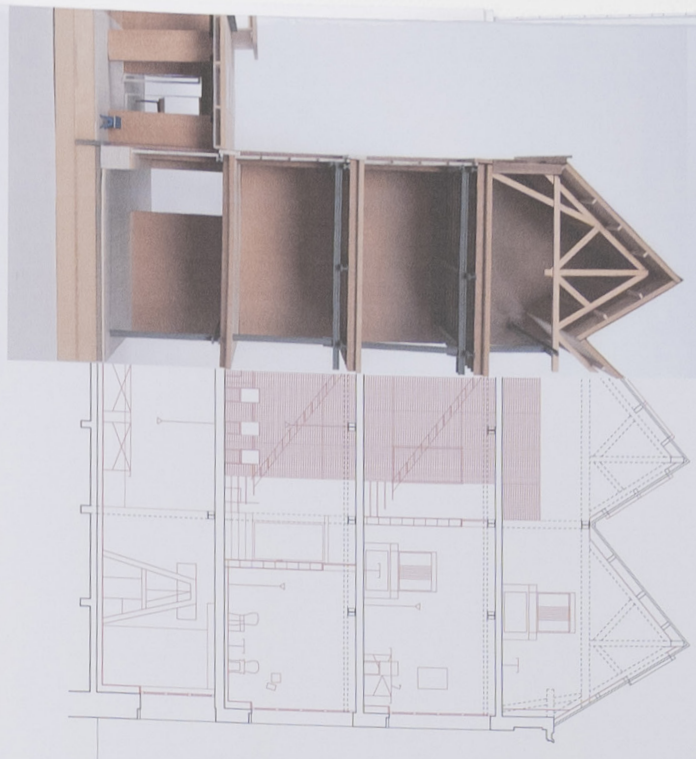

GECO.
KALI





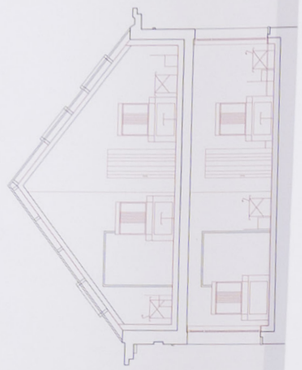






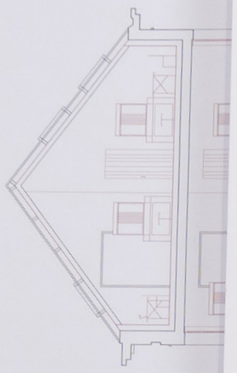












As the final step of our research, we made paper out of the *objets trouvés*. It serves as a metaphor for our view of the site. The process of paper making is similar to sedimentation: paper is created by sieving through a watery mixture to collect a thin layer of wet pulp. The result is a material that has a colour, grain, texture, feel and atmosphere. Tactility plays an important part in the project





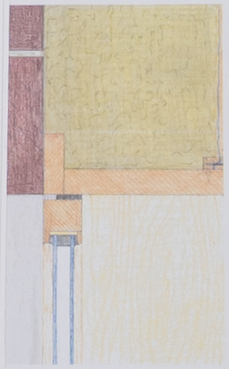


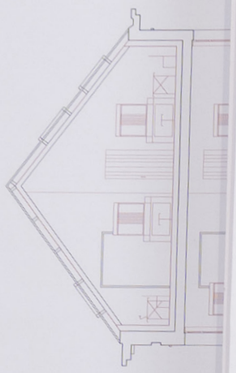


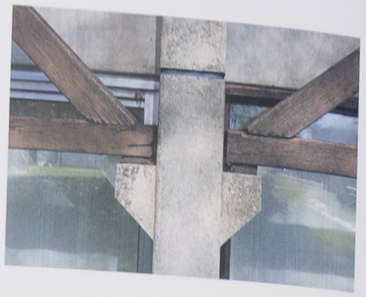
Debonnet (2025), Papermaking

Hemp is used for its technical properties, as an insulating material that is porous and can stand on its own. The constructive simplicity of the hemp and timber walls draws a parallel to the simple industrial buildings on the site (p.17, 18, 19, 20). Similarly, the bags filled with rubble, stacked and bound together, originate from a technical necessity (p.22). Hemp, due to the capillary rise of moisture, can't stand on the floor. This matter-of-fact approach is inspired by the "as found" material aesthetic of Alison and Peter Smithson. They are proponents of using materials as they are. It allows architecture to remain more closely linked to its material reality. Hemp and piled bags have a *hairy* quality, as described by Pauline Lefebvre in OASE's issue *Ecology and Aesthetics*. This unconventional look is evocative of a stance against the current construction systems of most buildings: air-tight and impossible to untangle. Alison and Peter Smithson similarly use the idea of ugliness to counteract the rhetoric of classical architecture and beauty (Moravánszky, 2018).









Gardner Building, St. Hilda's College, Alison and Peter Smithson, 1972

The weight of the hemp and the piled bags contrasts with the delicate structure of the outdoor roof (p.20,21). The metal grill here is used to filter the light. Similar to the metal grill staircase, letting light through from the upper floor skylight. This material seeps all the way through back to the gates and signage elements facing the street. The grid pattern is a subtle hint to the warp and weft of the textile that is being produced behind.

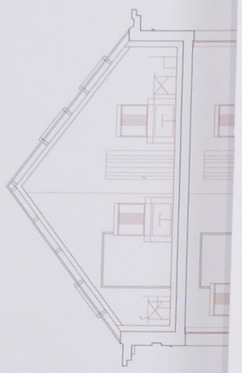
Textile is used to wrap the inner sides of the hemp walls, as they tend to crumble (p.17). It is a nod to Semper. As explained by Ákos Moravánszky in Stoffwechsel: Materialverwandlung in der Architektur, Semper sees the history of architecture not as a series of inventions but a continuous thread of transformations, where the memory of an original material remains imprinted in a new substance. A famous example is the influence of textiles on patterns in architecture. Semper theorised that as the textile wall was the original spatial boundary, memory of this craft survived in brick patterns, mosaic floors, or painted decorations. Textile here re-enters architecture but with a humorous interpretation, as it has a pattern of a generic 15 by 15 tile woven into it.



Herdleinen textile samples, to clad the hemp walls and bind the bags filled with rubble

The pattern of warp and weft is scattered throughout the project: from the cross shape of the ensemble, the intersecting outdoor path, the grill that seeps from the roof of the canopy to the gates of the entrances and finally the visible warp of the textile-clad walls.







17 Material list

18, 19 CAD drawing axonometric section B-B' scale 1.33.

20 CAD drawing axonometric (horizontal) section B'' scale 1.33.

20, 21 CAD drawing axonometric section B'-C scale 1.33.

22 Hand drawing detail scale 1.5.

23 CAD drawing axonometric section C-C' scale 1.33.

24 Hand drawing (horizontal) detail scale 1.5.











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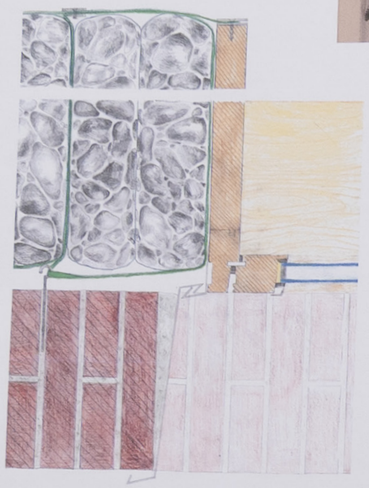
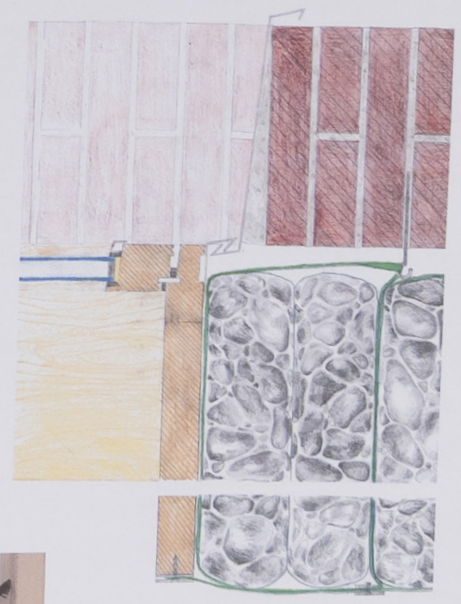










ction scale 1:33

of construction:
of tiles
ood rafters
ooden sheathing - 30 mm
ooden beams- h= 160 mm
eathable underfelt
aid wood fibre insulation - 140 mm
apour barrier
ineral bonded wood wool board- 18 mm

oor construction:
ooden flooring - 30 mm
ooden beams- h= 160 mm
aid wood fibre insulation - 140 mm
ineral bonded wood wool board- 18 mm

ew interior walls:
SO hemp bricks 300 x 140 mm- 200mm
ortar bed -20 mm
aling tape
lay based plaster finish
kirting/ services channel

indow/ door:
5 x 450 mm blue stone lintel
nsulation glazing in Douglas fir frame
lue stone sill

5
accessible roof:
300 x 300 mm cement tiles - 40 mm
tile kusports - 32-45 mm
roofing - 5 mm
insulation - 100 mm
vapour barrier
LIGNATUR surface element (LFE), - 160 mm with 50 mm of insulation
mineral bonded wood wool board - 18 mm

6
insulated ground floor:
polished and grouted cement tile - 40 mm
wood fiber sound insulation - 20 mm
floor heating element - 18 mm
insulation - 90 mm
poured concrete floor - 200 mm

7
insulated ground floor:
polished and grouted cement tile - 40 mm
wood fiber sound insulation - 20 mm
floor heating element - 18 mm
insulation - 90 mm
wooden flooring - 30 mm
wooden beams- h= 65 mm
vaulted brick floor with steel I-beams - 160 mm

8
150 x 700 mm CLT beam

9
window:
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame
50 x 200 mm Douglas fir reveal
30 x 300 mm Douglas fir reveal
textile bags filled with site rubble stacked and bound together - 600 mm

10
canopy:
skylight 900x 900 mm
zinc roof covering, seam every 900 mm
plywood sheathing - 40 mm
wooden beams 40 x 70 mm
I-beams 130 x 100 mm
600x900 metal grating - 30 mm

11
insulation existing wall:
woven fabric finish
hempline insulation - 300 mm
wooden frame work 300 x 40 mm every 800mm
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame

12
door:
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame

13
window:
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame
50 x 200 mm Douglas fir reveal
30 x 300 mm Douglas fir reveal
textile bags filled with site rubble stacked and bound together - 600 mm

14
existing outdoor structure:
brick wall
I-beam
zinc roof covering

15
canopy:
skylight 900x 900 mm
zinc roof covering, seam every 900 mm
plywood sheathing - 40 mm
I-beams 130 x 100 mm
600x900 metal grating - 30 mm

details scale 1:5

p.17
horizontal:
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame
40 x 300 mm wooden stud
in situ poured hemporete - 300 mm
textile stretched around wooden frame (20 x 20 mm) screwed to wooden profile
(20 x 25 mm) before hemporete is poured

p.22
vertical:
insulation glazing in Douglas fir frame
30 x 300 mm Douglas fir reveal
textile bags filled with site rubble - 600 mm
stacked and bound together with textile straps screwed to the reveal using a metal plate and
attached to the brick wall with an anchor

details legend



weaving matter







Elise Debonnet
Urban Architecture
River, ghost park - back as front
Project Journal
2025-2026

PLOTS?

















EXPOSITION TENTOONSTELLING EXHIBITION

URBAN LEGEND

Bozar

A+
ARCHITECTURE
IN BELGIUM

OUEST

15.10.25 – 04.01.26

URBAN LEGEND

FR Dans l'exposition *Urban Legend*, Ouest partage sa fascination pour la ville en adressant différentes thématiques qui en révèlent la richesse et la complexité.
La ville y est présentée comme la scène de relations humaines, comme un organisme vivant, à la fois réel et fictionnel, porteur de nombreux récits. Elle permet de composer avec l'inachevé, de penser l'urbanité comme un système poreux, d'explorer les interdépendances qui sous-tendent les dynamiques urbaines, et de cultiver l'ambiguïté comme outil de projet.
Afin d'interroger les conditions du vivre ensemble en milieu urbain, Ouest développe son approche de la ville en empruntant des outils et regards propres à d'autres disciplines telles que l'urbanisme, les sciences sociales, la littérature ou encore le cinéma.
Ces réflexions entrent en résonance avec la présentation de cinq de leurs projets d'infrastructures culturelles construites ou en cours de construction en Belgique.

NL In de tentoonstelling *Urban Legend* deelt Ouest zijn fascinatie voor de stad aan de hand van uiteenlopende thema's die haar rijkdom en complexiteit verkennen. De stad wordt daarbij getoond als het toneel van menselijke relaties, een levend organisme, tegelijk fictie en realiteit, en voedingsbodem voor talloze verhalen. We kunnen er werken met het onvoltooide, op zoek gaan naar een poreuze stedelijkheid, de onderlinge verbanden en dynamieken van de stad verkennen, en ambiguïteit als ontwerptool ontwikkelen. Om de condities van het stadsleven te onderzoeken, maakt Ouest gebruik van tools en inzichten uit andere disciplines zoals urbanisme, sociologie, literatuur en film.
Deze reflecties vinden hun weerklank in de presentatie van vijf cultuurgebouwen die het bureau in België heeft gerealiseerd of momenteel in aanbouw zijn.

EN In the exhibition *Urban Legend*, Ouest share their fascination with the city by addressing several themes that show the city's richness and complexity. The city is presented here as a stage for human relations, a living organism, at once real and imaginary, and the setting for a great many stories. The city enables us to work with the unfinished, to think of urbanity as a porous system, to explore the interdependencies that underpin urban dynamics, and to cultivate ambiguity as a design tool.
To explore the conditions of city life, Ouest uses tools and perspectives from other disciplines, such as urban planning, sociology, literature and cinema.
These reflections resonate with the projects on display: five cultural infrastructure projects in Belgium that have either been built or are under construction.

22.11.25

24

OUEST

FR Ouest est un bureau d'architecture bruxellois. Fondé en 2009 par les architectes Stéphane Damsin et Jan Haerens, il compte aujourd'hui une dizaine de collaborateurs et collaboratrices.
Ouest privilégie une pratique contextuelle, au service de projets aux typologies variées : logements unifamiliaux, équipements collectifs et infrastructures culturelles de plus grande envergure. Leurs projets s'ancrent dans le tissu urbain existant, dense et hétéroclite, que l'équipe aborde avec enthousiasme. Leurs propositions visent à renforcer les dynamiques urbaines et la vie en société.
Intervenant principalement sur des bâtiments existants en ville, le bureau développe une expertise en matière *d'adaptive re-use*. À travers une approche respectueuse, engagée et non dogmatique, Ouest s'attache à révéler les qualités intrinsèques des bâtiments et leurs contextes, contribuant ainsi à la revalorisation durable du patrimoine ordinaire.

NL Ouest is een Brussels architectenbureau, opgericht in 2009 door Stéphane Damsin en Jan Haerens, en telt vandaag een tiental medewerkers. Het bureau hanteert een contextgevoelige ontwerpaanpak en werkt aan een breed palet van projecten: van eengezinswoningen tot collectieve voorzieningen en grootschalige culturele infrastructuur. De projecten zijn verankerd in het bestaande stedelijke weefsel met zijn hoge bevolkingsdichtheid en diversiteit, en spelen daar enthousiast op in. Hun ontwerpen zijn erop gericht de stedelijke dynamieken en het gemeenschapsleven te versterken.
Ouest richt zich voornamelijk op ingrepen in bestaande stadsgebouwen en heeft daardoor een sterke expertise opgebouwd in *adaptive re-use*. Vanuit een respectvolle, geëngageerde en niet-dogmatische benadering tracht het bureau de intrinsieke kwaliteiten van gebouwen en hun omgeving naar boven te halen. Op die manier dragen hun projecten bij aan een duurzame herwaardering van het alledaagse erfgoed.

EN Ouest is a Brussels-based architecture firm founded in 2009 by architects Stéphane Damsin and Jan Haerens. Today they have a staff of around ten. Ouest develops a context-based practice, geared towards various types of projects, from single-family homes and community facilities to more large-scale cultural infrastructures. Their projects are rooted in the existing urban fabric, which is characterized by high population density and diversity, and which they take on with enthusiasm. Their designs aim to strengthen urban dynamics and life in society.
Working mainly on existing buildings in urban environments, the firm has become an expert in adaptive reuse. Taking a respectful, committed and non-dogmatic approach, they seek to reveal the intrinsic qualities of buildings and their surroundings, contributing in the process to the sustainable revalorization of ordinary heritage.

'The city is presented here as a stage for human relations, a living organism, at once real and imaginary, and the setting for a great many stories.'

Lara Molino

25

C-04

1735 m²

RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL

BUSY STREET FRONT
EXISTING BUILDING(S)

1, 5, 6, 7

OPPORTUNITIES & PROGRAM PROPOSAL

-facade on a busy street (Bergensesteenweg) -> ground-floor uses (shops, services) could activate the street level, while upper floors can be used for housing
-dual character of the plot- one side facing a busy commercial street, the other bordering a quieter, more residential back street- gives flexibility to design a mixed-use program that accommodates both public/commercial and private/residential functions
-warehouse from 1898 with triple gabled roof adds architectural character and strong potential for adaptive reuse (education, workshops, culture, crafts).
-smaller sheds and low-quality one-floor structures can be removed to create a shared courtyard/garden
-the mix of residential and industrial buildings allows a flexible mixed-use program (housing + productive/creative uses).
-existing family workshop could be kept as a local productive anchor, maintaining neighbourhood identity.

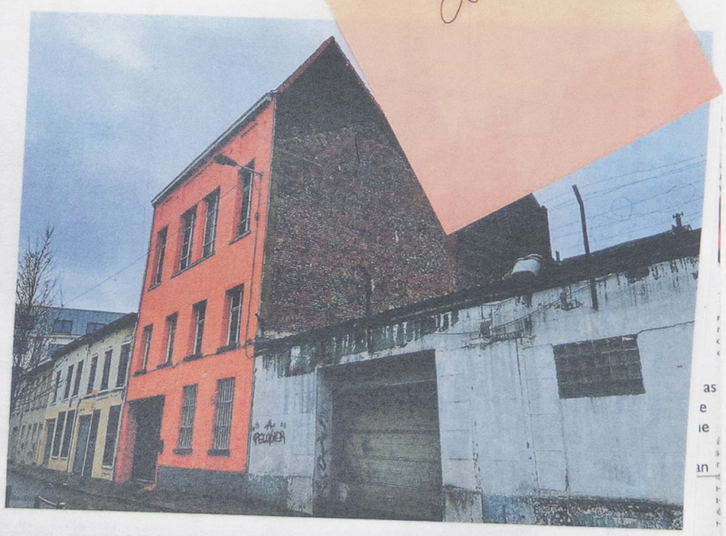
CHALLENGES

-the plot is made of multiple small buildings with different floor levels -> difficult to integrate into one coherent project
-multiple owners across subplots increase complexity for coordinated redevelopment
-inner buildings are hard to access, complicating circulation, logistics, and daylight, as well as research
-large industrial programs are not feasible due to scale
-mixing residential with productive uses requires control of noise, safety, and nuisance.









Plot market results

Else 1

Transcript of an informal interview with two car salesman

On 4 December at 17:09, Heyvaertstraat 30

Elise We are quite curious, you have like a lift in the back, what does it mean that this was always used for car storage?
Car salesman Long time I don't use, we use for car, yes, we have four cars of, when he sell put it down and after we don't use this.
Elise And before, do you know what happened here?
Car salesman Before we buy here, this garage have pieces for car, he put the pieces in the lift and he put it up, he put it down, because you have car down, some place down also, he go down, he go up, now we work, we need two person to work, somebody make it from up and somebody from down. Like this we don't use it, now one year we don't use this.
Elise Ok, because it was a car repair shop then before, because you say car parts?
Car salesman We put, before we buy this garage, the old owner, he have pieces here, pieces for car, yes, door, motor, no repair, no, only sell pieces, this I tell you from 20 years ago. Ok, very long time ago. Because it is very high for storage, yes. This lift can take from, for I think 1500 kilo. Yes, yes. Like this new one, before, when I use it, we put only the small car, because big car we don't take it. Too heavy. Interesting. Ok? Yes, ok.
Elise And the, you have like numbers on the cars and like green stickers, does that, the green stickers mean all the cars are sold?
Car salesman No. This, one day we have control from police here, and he check all the car, when he put the green, the car is ok, no problem, no steal, everything is ok. If you put red, the car is not. Ok. He check, he check all the car.
Elise Oh, wow, everyone.
Car salesman No, yes, motor, motor, big control here. He come here, he check, he look all the car here, and he put this. Yes, interesting.
His phone starts to ring. He exuses himself and goes outside the office. The second car salesman sitting in the office approaches us.
Elise So, can I ask, how long have you been here?
Salesman 2 This garage is here from 1997.
Elise And you always work here?
Salesman 2 From 1997. No, this garage is for the cousin, but he is not here today. He is from 1997.
Anna Ok, yes.
Salesman 2 Where did you study?
Anna In the Netherlands.
Koen Ah, close to Rotterdam.
Salesman 2 Four days before, other student...
Elise : I know, they told us that you were friendly and you spoke English. Yeah, yeah. So, if you are friendly, beware.
Salesman 2 Small English, yes. From 1997. I think. Before, it was only one floor. Oh, ok. And my cousin, he... He added them. He added seven floors. He separated.
Anna Interesting. Gets a lot more space.
Salesman 2 It's all family that works here.
Koen Family business. Ah, that's nice.
Elise You are related, and you know each other.
Yes. And... I don't really know how this works, but so, all the cars you buy, you buy them individually? Or you buy like a lot of...
Salesman 2 No, individually. Individually.
Elise And is this people coming to you to sell them their own cars?
Salesman 2 It depends.
Elise And is it then mostly from Belgium, the cars?
Salesman 2 All cars from Belgium
Elise Yeah, ok. There are enough cars.
Salesman 2 All cars from Belgium. All cars from Belgium.
Elise And then, where do you export them the most to?
Salesman 2 It's mostly from Belgium. Also.
Anna And people come here to shop also? So, people buy here?
Salesman nods yes.
Elise Also, it's quite different than what you do from other businesses. Because a lot of other businesses, they export to Africa. And you know?
Salesman 2 Before, yes, but now from 4 or 5 years, most of the sales are for Belgium.
Elise And why did this change?
Salesman 2 I don't know. The market. The market every time changes.
Anna Yeah, I can imagine.
Salesman 2 For export, it's not easy, you know. It increases. Shipping after Corona is very expensive. And now, in Africa, most of the cars come from America, I think. From Canada and from China.
Before, it was interested, but now it's not really interested forAfrican cars. Interesting.
I think you will change the tarifs between African, I don't know, and Euro. It's more interesting to buy from America, because you can see in America, it's easy to find cars bigger and the petrol.
Anna Oh, right.
Salesman 2 Like Canada, they like petrol also. And Africa, like petrol, it's more easy to repair and to fix it.
And it's less problem also. Than diesel, yeah.
Anna So do you think the business industry will change to selling their cars here, locally?
Salesman 2 No, most... Also for Africa, but it's very different from if we compare it five, six years before. Much less. It's not easy now. It's difficult, yeah. It's difficult to do business with...
Anna Yeah, exactly.
Salesman 2 Now China stays in the market of Africa.
Elise Yeah, of course. And do you collaborate

then with other car sellers in the neighborhood? Because it's quite...
Salesman 2 Some collaboration goes here and many representatives of shipping companies. Many people bring cars to the street and after shipping the representatives of shipping companies take it and drop to the port of Antwerp.
Elise So that is something that you don't have here?
Salesman 2 No, no. We only buy and sell.
Anna Yeah, yeah. That's nice. And do you know if the other businesses, the cars that they have, do they also only come from Belgium or do they come from other countries?
Salesman 2 From other countries.
Anna In Europe?
Salesman 2 Most of the cars are not from Belgium. It's from other countries.
Anna Do you know what countries are popular?
Salesman 2 Some cars from the Netherlands, not so much. Because in the Netherlands I think there is not... There is most of the cars are Benzene. And there's a lot of people who like Japanese cars and in Africa Japanese cars are the most easy to repair and it's more strong also.
Anna Okay, that's interesting.
Salesman 2 I don't.
He struggles to find his words.
Salesman 2 That's okay.
Elise Do you have then quite a niche because there are a lot of car sellers, but if I understand right is this then quite a niche sort of car dealership you have because you sort of buy and sell to Belgians? Or like you're... Are you the only one doing then the buying and the selling in Belgium in the neighbourhood?
Salesman 2 For Belgium 80% of sales is for... 70% is for Belgium and 30% is for other countries.
Elise Oh. Yeah, yes, yes.
Salesman 2 But the other ones are... I think 80% for Africa.
Elise So your garage is then quite different from...
Salesman 2 Yeah, because it's not easy to find the... the... the car for Africa because other garages bring cars from other countries from Netherlands, from Denmark, from Sweden, from Norway, from Poland, from Latvia, from Estonia, from... They have connections. They have connections. Here in Belgium, you know, most of the cars in Netherlands and west of Europe is young cars. And African people don't have too much money. They need old cars. Yeah, yeah. And east of Europe and Scandinavian countries like Norway, like Finland also.
Anna Yeah, because we also noticed your cars are quite beautiful and new. Yeah, compared to the other cars, they're not older. Yeah. Yeah. Okay, nice. Well, thank you. Yeah, thanks a lot.
Salesman 2 You're studying architecture?
All 3 Yeah.
Salesman 2 And you do some business also?
Anna No, not really.
Elise We are doing some projects in the neighborhood and also because there is this new urban plan for a park.
Salesman 2 Yeah, yeah, yeah. Exactly
Koen Its in the back here right?
Salesman 2 Before, there were many people on the street. Yeah? Especially African people come from Africa to buy too much cars. Too much cars. Oh, okay. No, you don't see any people here before. All the time, people come. Too much people before. Yeah. And now it's very quiet.
Elise Yeah, in the street you mean.
Salesman 2 All the shops are in the street.
Elise Yeah, because of the raid on Monday. Why? Because of what happened on Monday?
Salesman 2 No, no, no.Because of the market. People are busy. Yeah, yeah. Yes, it's different here before. I don't know why. Because before, it was most easy to have a visa to come to Europe, I think. I don't know. In Europe, it was cheaper than now. And there are many cars also from Belgium to business is different. Yeah. And before, China was not very representative in Africa. Now, they are in Africa and most cheap than in Europe. Yeah, yeah. Many, many factors.
Koen Do you think it will get less and less? Yeah, yeah.
Elise Did already a lot of them close? Or not yet? Yes, why?
Salesman 2 Because this city of Brussels don't need all the time trucks come because here we are near the center of Brussels. And this area was semi-industrial area. Yes, yeah. And the government of Brussels don't need all the time trucks come and get this car.
Elise Yeah, okay. So that's also a reason why...
Salesman 2 It's a big reason. Yeah.
Anna Maybe one last question. Do you know if the people who work in the neighborhood also live in the neighborhood? Do most people who work in the streets also live here? Or do they live in other parts?
Salesman 2 No, I think most of them live in this area. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
Anna That's also how they get to know the businesses.
Salesman 2 But most of African people live in this area. Yeah.
Elise Because then you don't? You don't live here?
Salesman 2 No, I don't live here. I don't live here. They lived here before. Now we have many... It's not easy. It's very dangerous. Many dealers. Yeah. They propose you if you want something to smoke. Before it was not like that.
Elise Okay. Did you used to live here then? And then moved? Did you live here before and then moved? Or have you always lived somewhere else?
Salesman 2 We don't know for the moment. Okay. We don't know for the moment. Yeah.
Anna Thank you.
Salesman 2 And good luck for your studies.
All 3 Thank you.



material ser

5.12.25

a test of the collage technique to document our fieldwork

collage tests





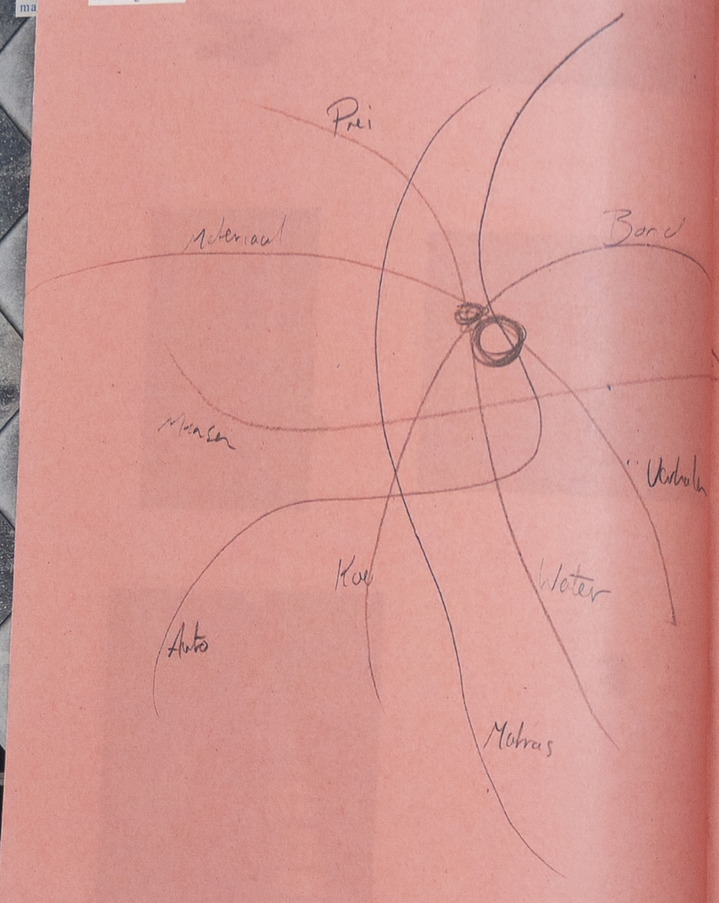












Een pak papier. maken en verkopen.



HOW DOES MATERIAL ACCUMULATE IN ANDERLECHT?

WHY IS ~~NUDETE~~ DO WHOLESALES CLUSTER IN ANDERLECHT?

WHY IS NUDERLECHT A PLACE OF FIRST ARRIVAL?

WHY IS ANDERLECHT SEEN AS THE PATHOLE OF BRUSSELS?

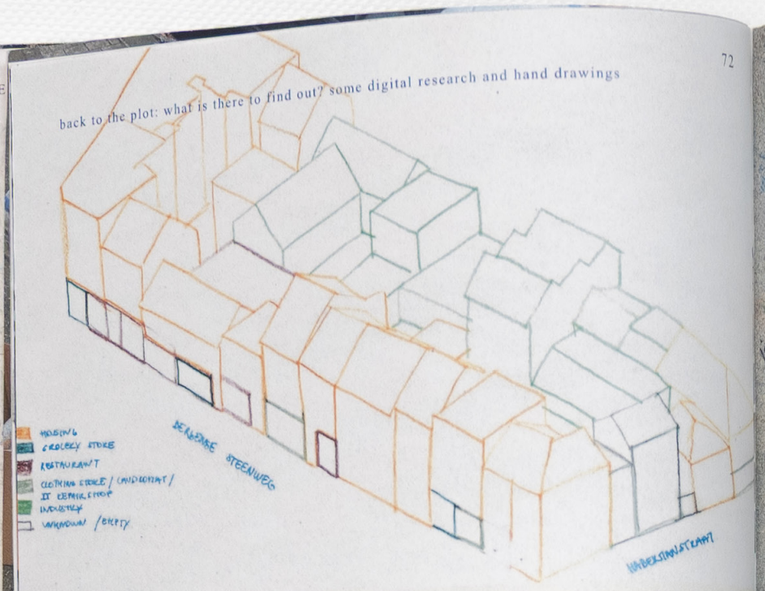
Personnages / perspectieven

- de markt
- mens
- kot
- bord
- prei
- tegel
- auto

SLAGER
CROSSISTE
KOOKMET
circulerium
—



back to the plot: what is there to find out? some digital research and hand drawings



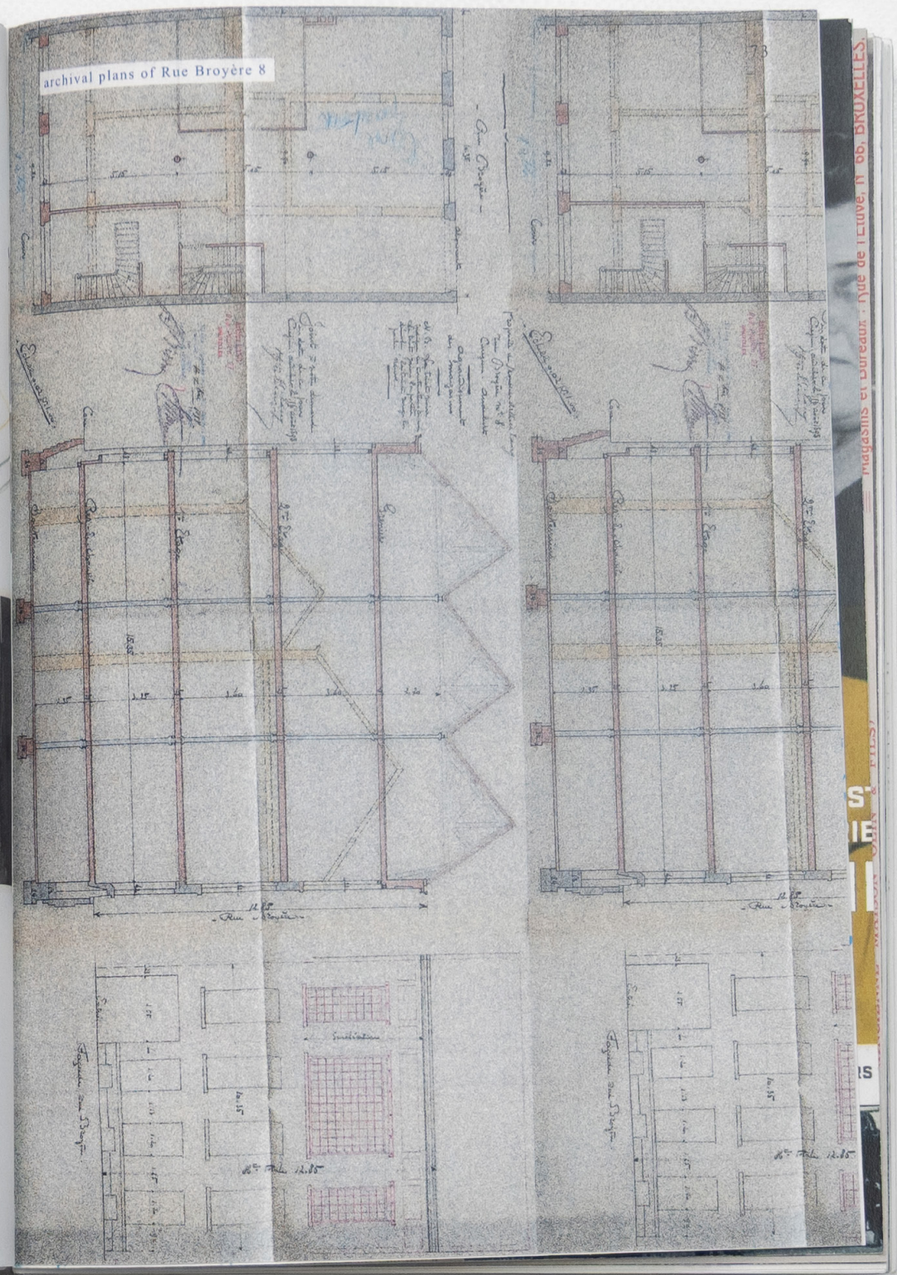
Migerodegang, Broyèrestraat 2 tot 26, Habermanstraat 2 tot 10, in 1974



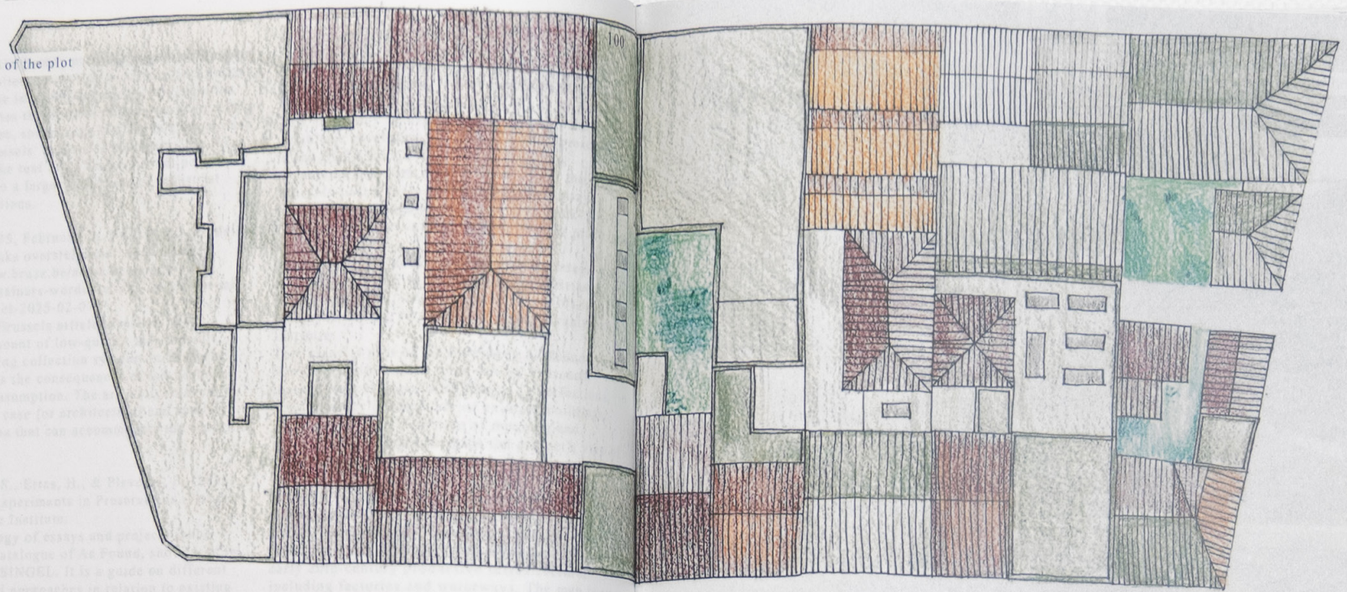


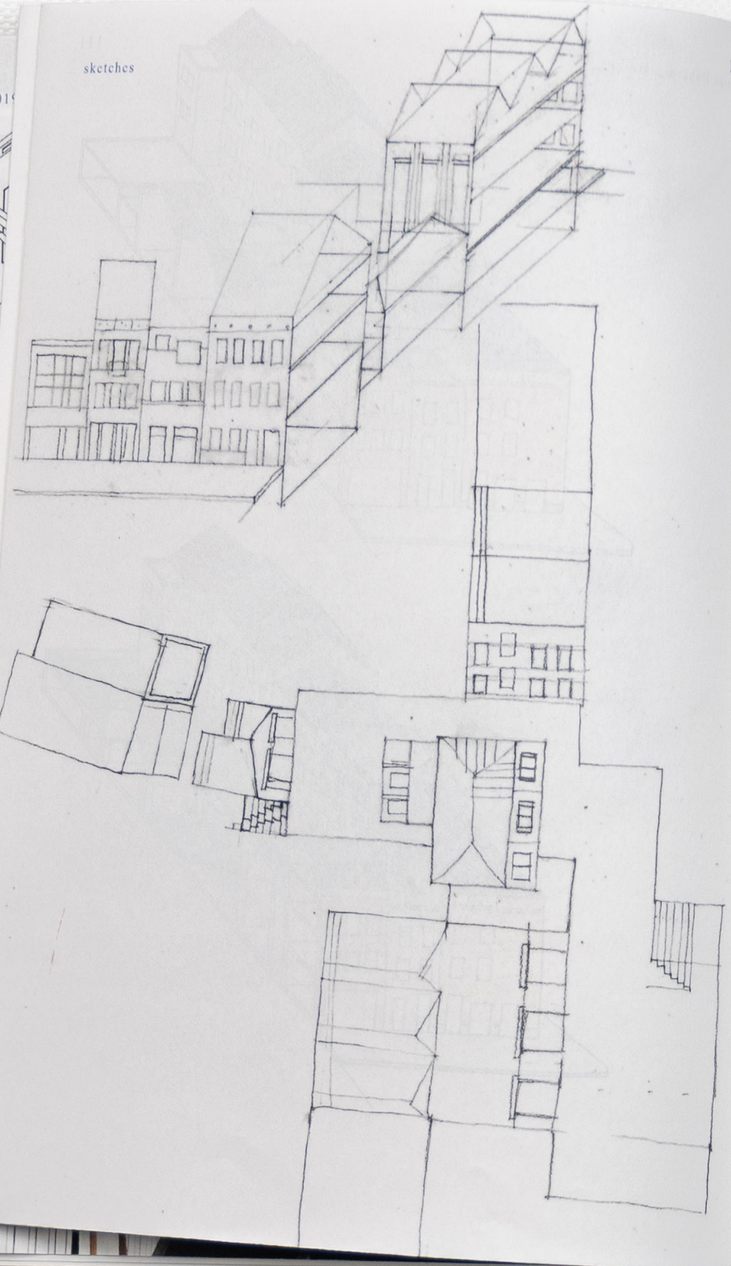


archival plans of Rue Broyère 8



roof plan of the plot







- area. test. manufact. & process.
cotton text.
- plan. tradition in BE. of communities
sharing. loom.
- interesting. ref.

- 1. see. prog
lying in between.
* architect. fact
enthusiast. workshop
- new. techniques
require. research
- craft. accompanied. atter.
funct.
(more later)

III/ woven. matter.

- similar matter sedi. streets,
build. palimsests.

- city fabric of Molenbeek, Heyvaert q.
- plot. loc along busy street.

- tightly. built urban. block.
- eclectic. mix of
- either. housing. room.

challenge will be:

- idea. to create new ensemble
- piecing. together. diff. build.
- current. build. env.
- 3 facades, 3. diff. st.

- few. ideas. make. sense of. interwoven.

- above busy. street. & create. ultra.
towards. under.
remains. of. and. create. high. working. space.

- H. st. narrow. build.
piece. together. with. connecti. staircase.

- rue Brogniez. transf. hangar.
into a. garden.
opportunity. behind. facade. — new. urb. facade.

- combining. assembling.
creates. new. opport.

- transf. paper. storage. into. qualitat.

- way of. looking at. dense. urban. block.
in build — looks. interstitial. sp. — linking.
- a lot. of. duct. fabric. / floor.
connect. hugh. into. rooftop. garden.
commercial. space.
make. public. access. intersect. block.
schaerbeek. Lyon.
- gesture. gives. back. after. inhab.
allows. for. reintegration. fragmented. urban. fabric.
turn it. again. towards. city.

- what. rooftop. ideas. do. to. existing. built. fabric.

programme
- combine. idea. with. public. funct.
teaching / workshop.
exhibition. room. + cafe / canteen.

ongoing renovation project

floor and sawtooth-roof

PROPRIETE DE MONSIEUR M. SOULET.
CHAUSSÉE DE MONS N° 61.
À BRUXELLES.

TRANSFORMATION.

PLANS, COUPES, FAÇADE. échelle : 2°/₀
SITUATION. échelle : 1:1750
IMPLANTATION. échelle : 1:200

DOSSIER N° T. 342.

PLAN JOINT À LA DEMANDE D'AUTORISATION DE BATIR EN DATE DU 30/7/1956

LE PROPRIETAIRE.

PLAN DRESSÉ PAR L'ARCHI JEAN DE WIT 75 AV. DE L'ARAUCARIA BRUXELLES 7 TÉL.: 783195

VU, LU ET APPROUVÉ L'ENTREPRENEUR.

VENT. PRINC. DES WC. EN PLOMB 80/85

COUPE 1-2.

SITUATION

MONS N° 61.

BUREAU

BUREAU

BUREAU

HALL

ENTREE

ENTREE CAROSSABLE

NOUVEL ESCALIER

A DEMOLIR

ESCALIER A DEMOLIR

TOILETTE A DEMOLIR SUR LES 2 NIVEAUX

rue Broyère

n° 8

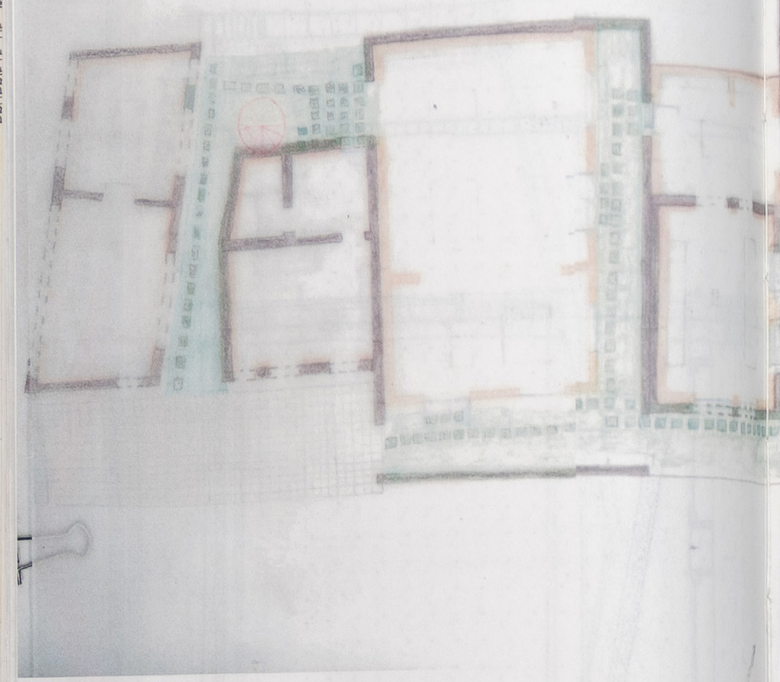
n° 61

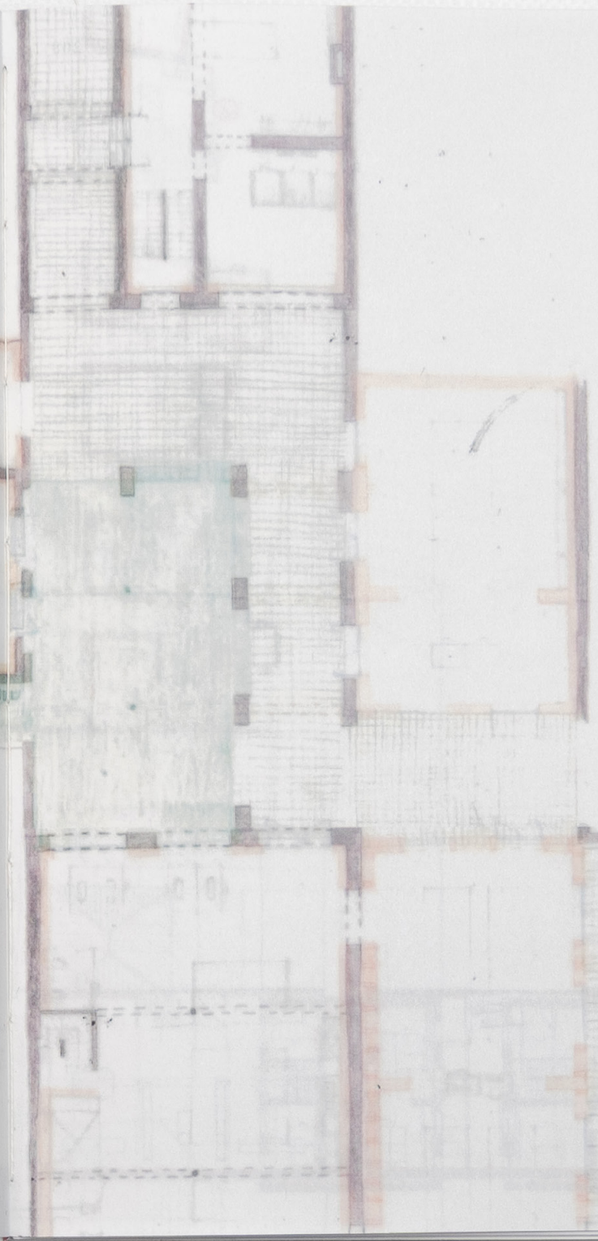
chaussee de Mons

177

archival plans of chaussée des mons 61, received from an architecture office

floorplan groud floor



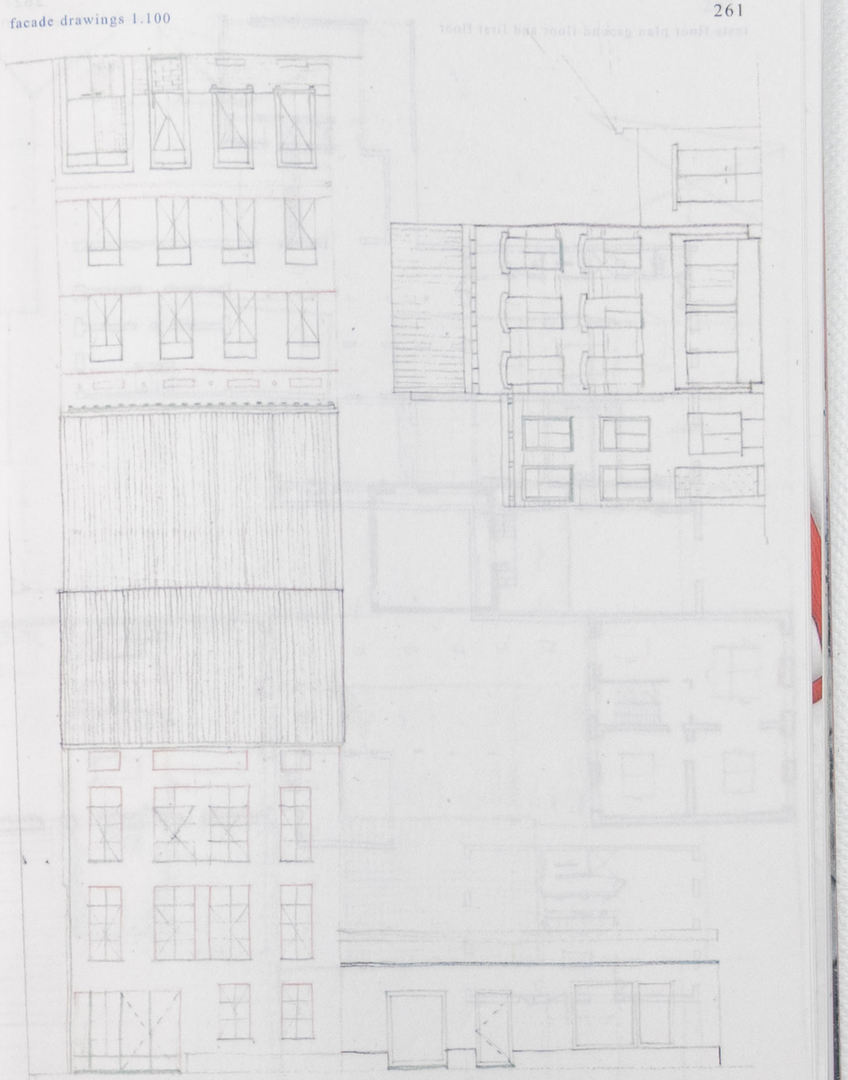



model 1.33

WEEK 2, 1
20.04.26

facade test

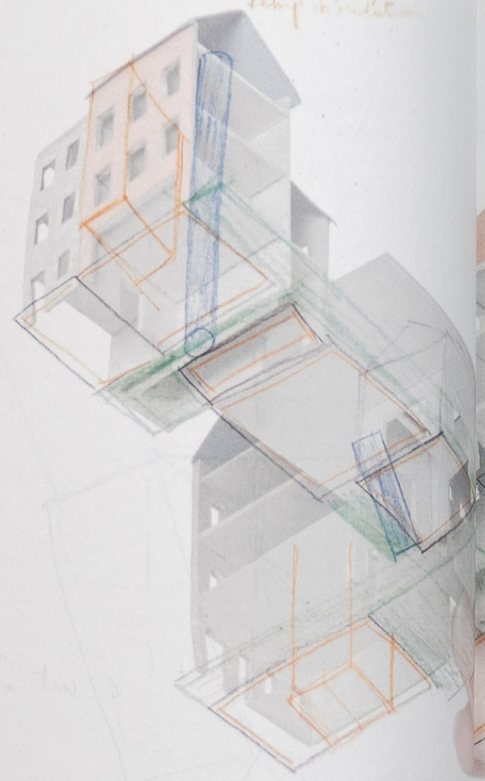
facade drawings 1.100



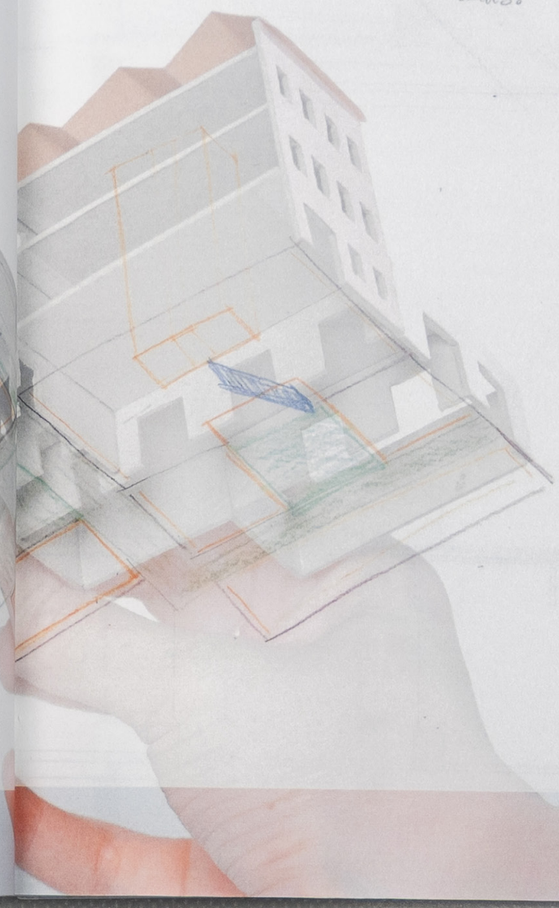
outdoor
staircases

new service cores
+ shafts

new boarder /
temp insulation



strategy:
- reduce area heated space
- circulation outdoors.
- new service cores with shafts.
- redraw the spaces with insulating walls.



3/99

collage of collected trash in Anderlecht



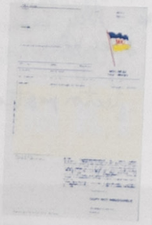




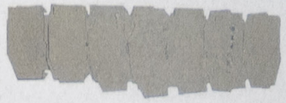
















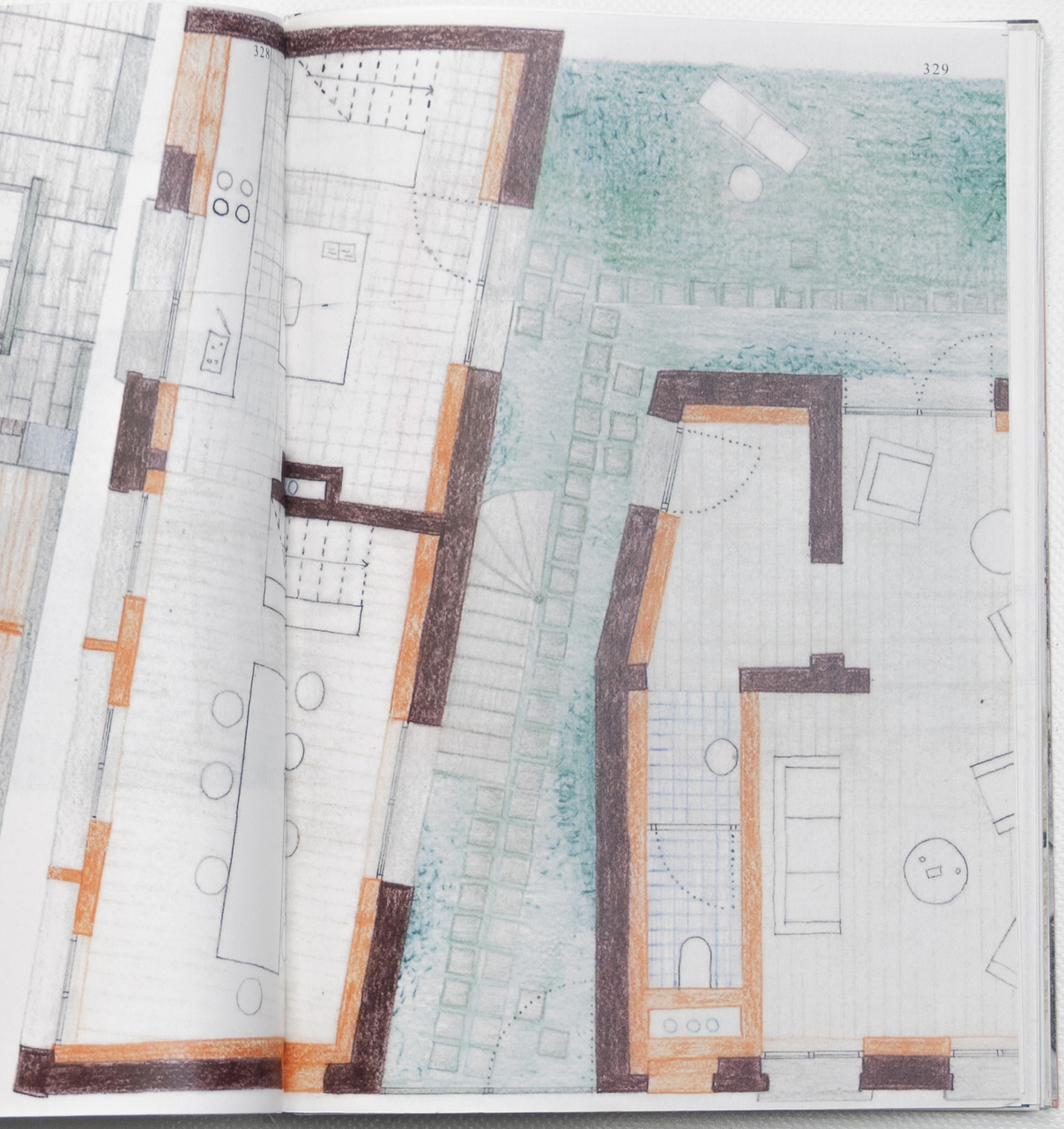









hand drawing of the worker's housing





drawing of the canopy and garden



This book is a compilation of everything that has inspired the project, all the drawings, sketches, models and site pictures. It is the opposite of a curated book. It is a scrapbook of all the failed attempts and messy scrabbles.

Weaving matter - Project journal
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Graduation project TU Delft 2025-2026
Urban architecture - River Ghost Park, back as front

