

Social space in Maastricht

Seeking for communal places

Research and Design Process Booklet

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Urban Architecture Graduation Studio
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the paper house

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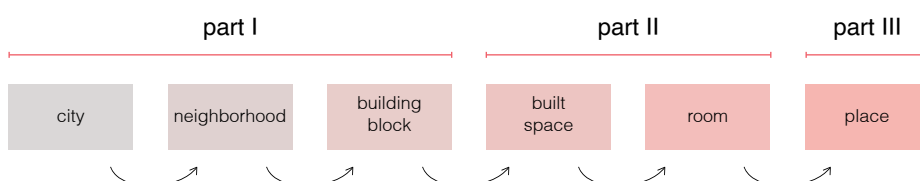
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Introduction

This thesis explores the notion of social space by searching for ways of how architectural elements can encourage social behavior in the public domain. Both spatial planning and architecture offer us places for encounters, freedom and creation. Architecture has therefore an important social task, it gives meaning to a place and can stimulate certain activities. An architect should be aware of designing architectural elements to provide a framework for social interaction, vibrancy and attraction and also ensure the identity and image of this urban space.

The theme of the studio is 'Les glaneurs et la glaneuse'. It is the title of a documentary by Agnes Varda which shows different ways of gleaning in the field and in the city. Gleaning in this sense can be seen as actively looking for leftovers, such as food, furniture and materials, in order to use it for the same purpose or for new purposes. Besides that, gleaning could also be interpreted as collecting information or material very thoroughly. This can be translated into the role of the architect, where the architect collects all the physical or conceptual information from the site, research, people, observations and own experience in order to gain insight and knowledge and seek for potentials to transform this into a design with a new and more meaningful purpose for future practices.

This thesis is structured in three parts which all influence the project and all operate on different scales. These parts are experienced in daily life, together they form and influence the everyday life and create an order of enclosure. The first part will explain the city of Maastricht, how it is perceived and used today and the historic events that changed the identity and appearance of the city. The second part will focus on the building scale, the transition from the city to a building, the level of public and private and the sequence of spaces in buildings. The last part will show the human scale in and around buildings. It will clarify the way people use spaces, their behavior and the places where people intersect and interact. Each of the parts influenced the design which started from city level until the elaboration of materials. In this way, the outside of the building, the inside of the building and everything in between represent the three parts of this thesis.



This booklet clarifies the development of my journey of the research and design process, where both the research and the design are explained. I see this as two separate parts that are inextricably linked and influence each other. Sometimes they operate separately in the process and sometimes one is necessary for the other in order to come to certain conclusions. Both research and design reinforce each other and will be intertwined in this thesis.



Where it started...

In the summer evenings, groups of people often hang out on the beach of Scheveningen, leaving behind cans of soda or beer. I took these cans home, cut them open, smoothed them out and used them as the base for the triangle-shaped planter. An extra can forms the water reservoir, a plastic bag makes the planter water resistant and a cotton thread is used for the capillary moisture transport. The striking advertising makes people aware of the fact that this new object has been reused. The object can also be turned upside down and serve as a tea light holder.

This first assignment can be seen as the start of my interest in social space as it all started at the beach, a scene which constantly changes during the day and where people demarcate their own space. Different kind of activities take place at the beach and therefore it attracts a diverse range of people. The cans are the leftovers of a scene and can be used for something more meaningful, but for a certain amount of time it was part of the landscape of the beach.



Manifesto

The city of Maastricht in the south of the Netherlands has experienced many changes over time which has led to the city of today. Because of its location, where the Meuse river runs right through the city, Maastricht has been an important industrial city in history. It is a complex and heterogeneous city that exists of different layers in time and appearance. Layers from the past until the future describing the chronological change and growth of the urban fabric and layers in the identity and diversity defined by the different architecture, functions, (local) cultures and demographics. This is why Maastricht has several strong identities that can be found at different locations within the city, differing in urban tissue, identity and architectural language. By walking through the city the differences in atmospheres and vibrancy of each neighborhood can also be experienced. The vibrant historic centre is aimed at shopping and you mainly observe tourists and (international) students, while the newly build Ceramique district is very quiet, it is mostly inhabited by seniors, and traffic dominates the area. The southern influences with which the neighborhood was designed cannot be found in everyday life. The neighborhoods appear to be very different in the streets. This led to the start of this thesis; how the built environment shapes social life, how users socially create meaning in public space and the settings these two can provide.

Urban space can be understood as a place where you can meet and interact, with the freedom to act or not. Urban space, architecture and humans are inextricably linked. Interesting public spaces attract different groups of people. The surrounded buildings demarcate and enclose the public space and the public plinth of a building, its scale, program and materialization express the pleasantness of a certain public space. A neglect of the public space means a neglect of attention to what connectedness does to people socially and psychologically. Good public spaces are therefore of economic, social and psychological importance. Social cohesion arises mainly where people are united for common interests. Spatial conditions for these social structures are therefore very important, as architecture has the task of accommodating the gathering of people and enabling physical communication and thereby enhancing the sense of community.

In society you can find a clear polarization of individuality on the one hand and collectivity on the other, while it should be about human interrelation, aiming at the relationships and involvement between individuals and collectives. Therefore, this thesis can be seen as an approach of utilizing the potentials of human interrelations within the public domain.

Due to the pandemic, the social impact of public space is even greater than before and people are more aware of its great importance. On

the one hand, the activities took place more outdoors which made the community feeling stronger. People met more often, even though it was outside, and there was more social interaction. On the other hand, there was a decline in the everyday contact and people have started to live even more individually and isolated. More activities took place within their home that previously took place in public space. As a result, loneliness, health issues and socio-economic inequality increased and our society has changed. Therefore, it is of great importance to create nodes for social cohesion in the city to bring people together and fulfil the need for communality. Consequently, this thesis will focus on exploring different ways of how architecture can contribute to encouraging social interactions and encounters of everyday life in the public domain.

Research

This thesis investigates how social and physical elements of the built environment can stimulate social interaction and encounters in the public domain. The first part will focus on urban spaces in Maastricht by observing the activities and behavior of people, if they act in a group or by themselves and what elements are used in order to perform such activities. The second part will focus on human behaviour and activities in cultural buildings linked to architecture by focusing on materials, dimensions, colors, daylight and the sequence of spaces. By doing so, the reciprocal link is established between anthropology and architecture and thus between social life and the built environment.

Research methods

This research is based on a precedent study, literature research, observations and own experiences. During the process, different types of activities, the atmospheres, sensory stimuli and the social, physical and spatial characteristics of several spaces were observed, experienced, captured and examined. The conducted research can in certain ways be implemented into the design of a public building. This new building will function as a hub for social interaction in the Sphinxkwartier, by offering places for meeting, sharing knowledge, playing and learning. Nevertheless, the results are not exhaustive and no ideal solution for social interaction will be given.

Studio site

The Sphinxkwartier is a post-industrial area in the north of Maastricht, where currently only the paper factory 'Sappi' is still producing. The factory occupies a large part of the designated site. Over the course of 150 years the factory site has expanded significantly, which led to a range of buildings designed based on their function, instead of

focussing on a design that fits in its context. The enlargement of the site, the scale and appearance of the factory buildings and the footprint of the industrial district have resulted in many isolated urban spaces due to both social and spatial shortcomings. Although the location of the site has a lot to offer, close to the city centre and within the fortifications, it felt to me that these urban spaces are not fully utilized and it seemed that locals do not come here often or walk through these urban spaces. New proposals are currently being made to upgrade this part of the Sphinxkwartier and make it more accessible to the public. As a result, it is needed to find ways of integrating the new urban area with the public spaces of the city and integrate it into the urban fabric, so that more nodes of social cohesion are created and the new location becomes a vibrant place where the visitors and residents of Maastricht want to go to.

Part I.

[the city]

Exhibition

We started this year with the collective research into architectural histories of urban renewal. As a group we decided to examine three different case studies that are unique when it comes to the time when they were executed and tell us more about the identity of Maastricht. This paragraph will describe a short summary of our research and case studies. The case studies all represent a certain moment in time when different circumstances create extraordinary conditions. We chose to focus on three building blocks that all mainly accommodate housing, because this function determines the characteristics and atmosphere of a neighborhood. Sometimes the case studies are very contrasting when it comes to how the urban designers or architects reacted to the existing and how the collectivity was coming together. They examine long-standing habitats or industrial sites and project new ideas, resulting in more radical gestures or subtle approaches.

The research is presented as the contextual physical model and the moving frames shown in sequences, gradually introducing the architectural language behind each project. The contrasting reactions of the speakers tell the stories, whereas the image is a rather non-authoritative point of view.

As the intent for each project varied, the results of the renewal and resulting consequences for the city also differed. While the renewals at Stokstraat and Ceramique were successful in creating architecturally impressive structures and attracting recognition, the existing social dimensions on site were sidelined in the process, whereas at Hoogfrankrijk the social dimension, social spaces, and the existing fabric of the area of intervention were equally important in the renewal process.



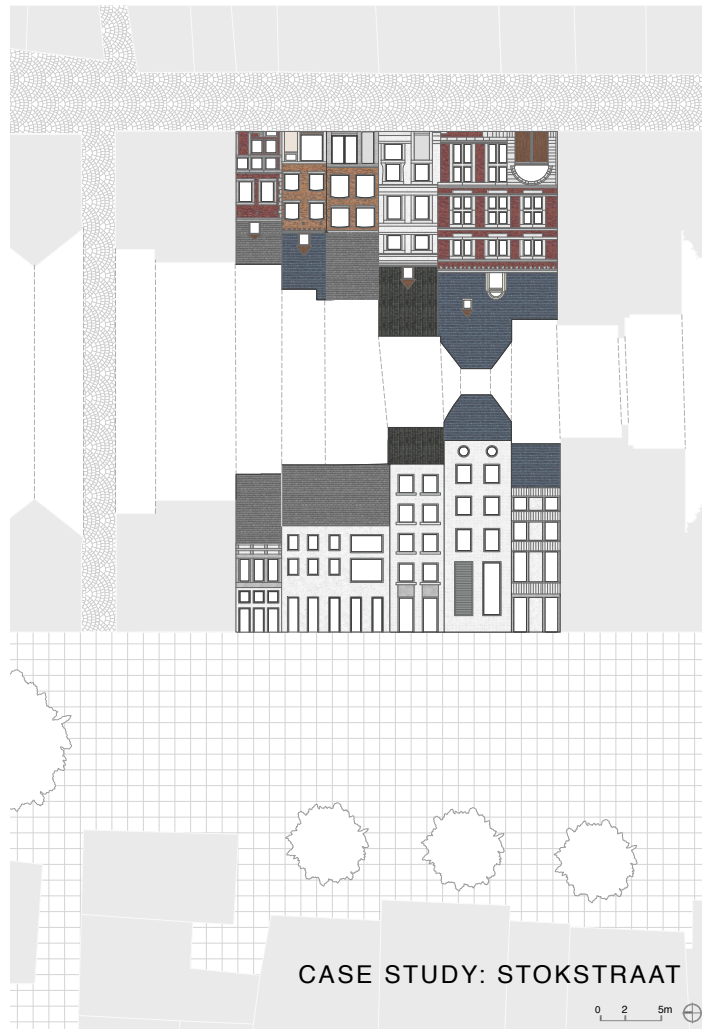
Stokstraat
renovation



Hoogfrankrijk
insertion



Stoa
rebuilding



Restoration

Jacques van de Venne and Bob Sweering
1972

The Medieval Stokstraat is the oldest street of the city and is located in the city center. It represents a renewal where the aim was to keep the medieval character of the city. The bad reputation of the street in the 1950's, when these buildings were seen as slums, has led to bring order to the 'architectural chaos'. The Stokstraat was a restoration of historical facades. Fronts of the buildings were treated like a mask, whilst the insides of the blocks were excavated and the usage of the buildings was completely changed. This resulted in a luxurious shopping district with a new courtyard and on the upper floors apartments and offices.

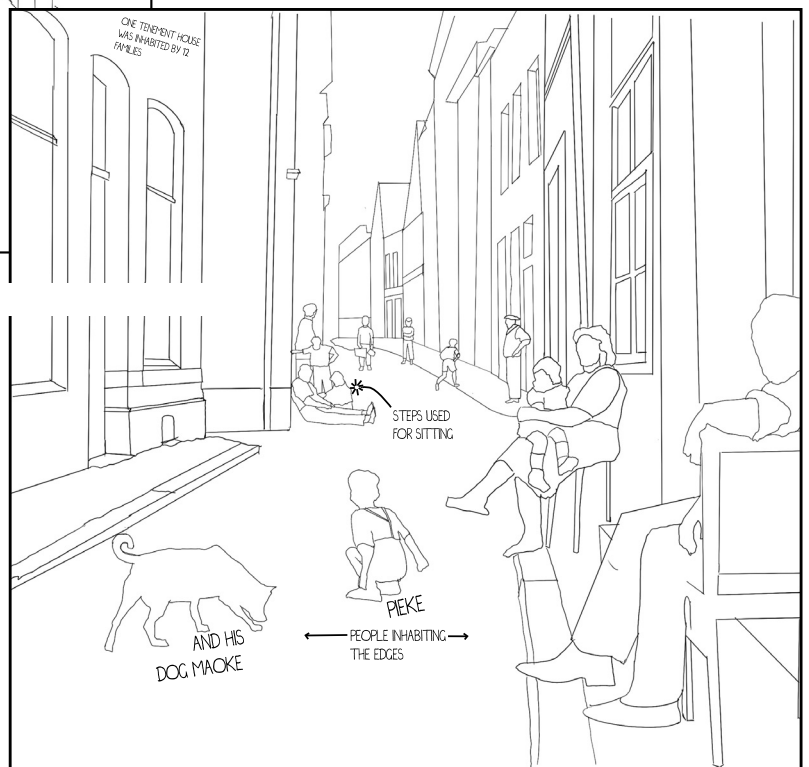
"A friend of mine grew up above the shop of his parents in the Stokstraat. He always talks about a community in the sixties when he was a child. Every shop owner was living above the shop."

Fred Humblé

S T O R I E S

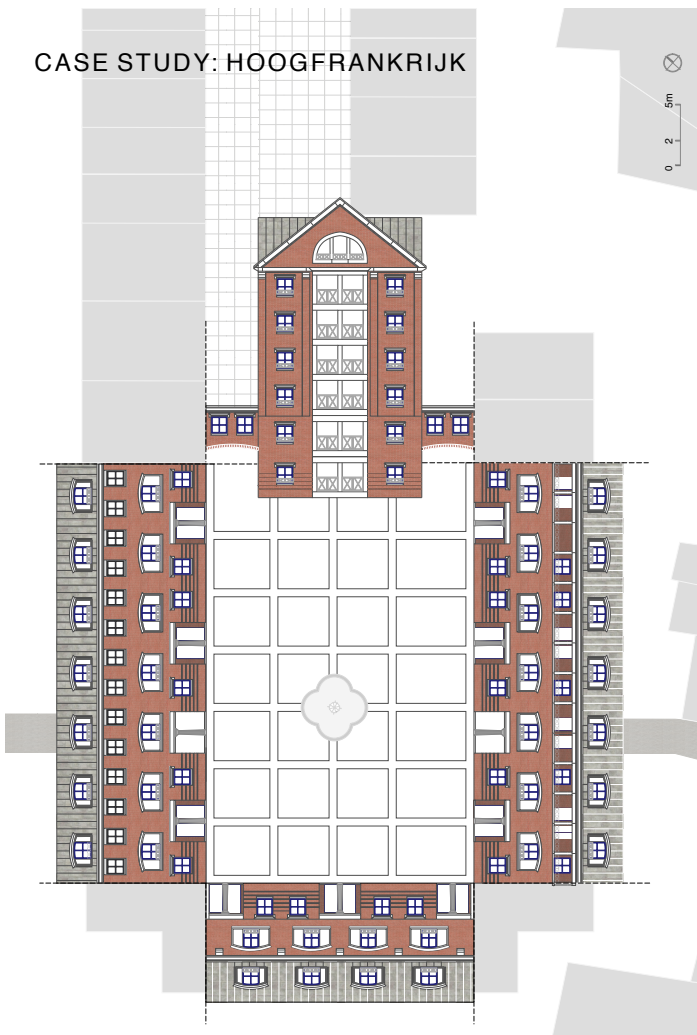


STOKSTRAAT, 2021



STOKSTRAAT, 1950's

CASE STUDY: HOOGFRANKRIJK



Insertion

Charles Vandenhove
1993-1994

In the center of a renovated building block, old garages and storage were demolished to create a new housing project, containing both social and private housing. Instead of closed building blocks in the urban fabric, this renewal aims at open, accessible, non-privatized spaces. Charles Vandenhove found a way of creating a public courtyard and private gardens in the dense city fabric, achieving an engaging new public interior. The houses can be accessed from the courtyard and are drawn into the urban fabric through two gateway buildings.



“This kind of project, it fits the structure of Maastricht, the idea of Maastricht. A city that is very much layered, there is always something to discover.”

Ninke Happel

S T O R I E S



HOOGRANKRIJK 32, 2021



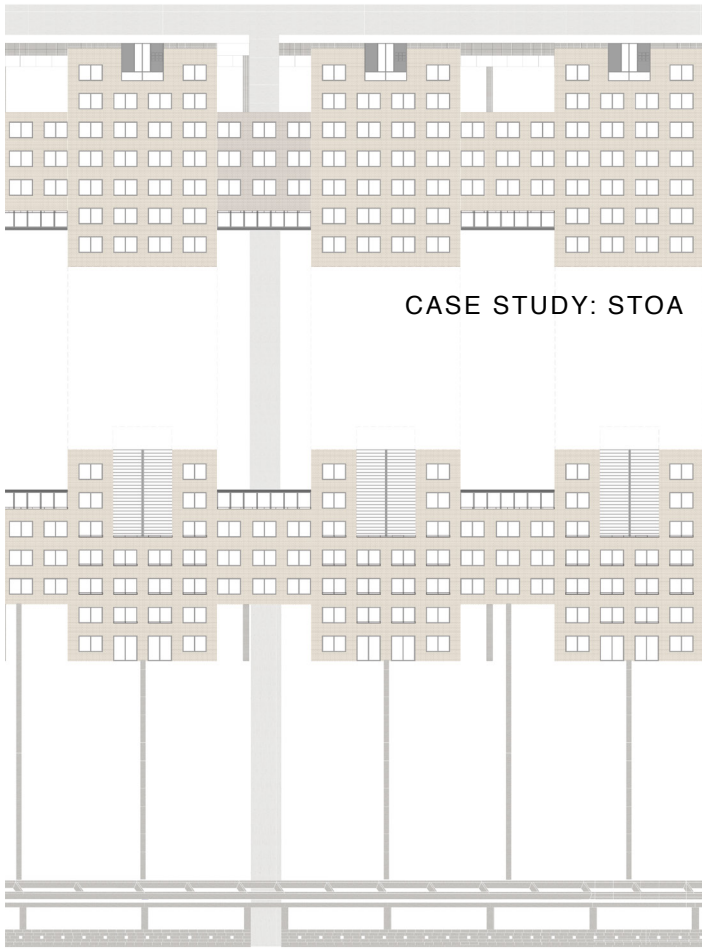
HOOGRANKRIJK 32, 1962

Rebuilding

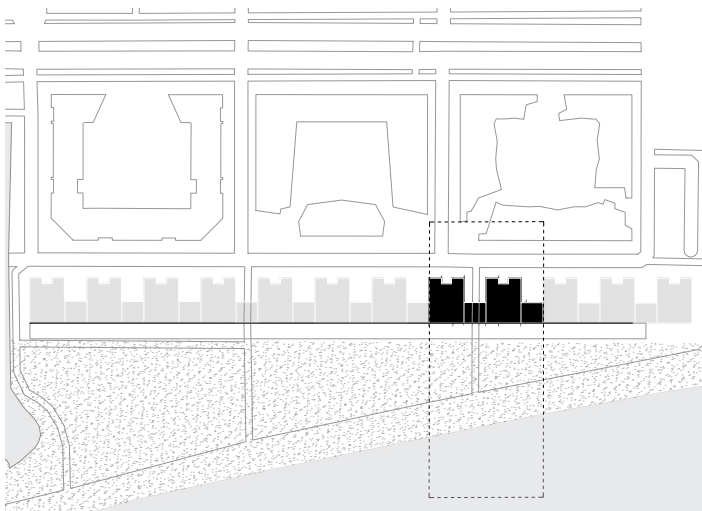
Luigi Snozzi

1993-2002

The former industrial site of Céramique, occupied by the Sphinx factory until 1987, was transformed into a mixed-use urban district for high-quality living and working. Ceramique involved rebuilding, where the old factories that occupied the former industrial site were demolished and new development took its place. A highly conceptual master plan was conceived by Jo Coenen and various notable international southern architects were invited to work on different buildings in the neighbourhood. One of the great impacts in the new urban fabric is the Stoa building, a radical building that resembles the industrial scale and forms a wall between the neighborhood and the park along the Meuse river. The Swiss architect Snozzi was challenged by building a second city 'fence' on the other side of the river. He managed to integrate the building with the left bank principle of greenery between the river strip and the residential area.



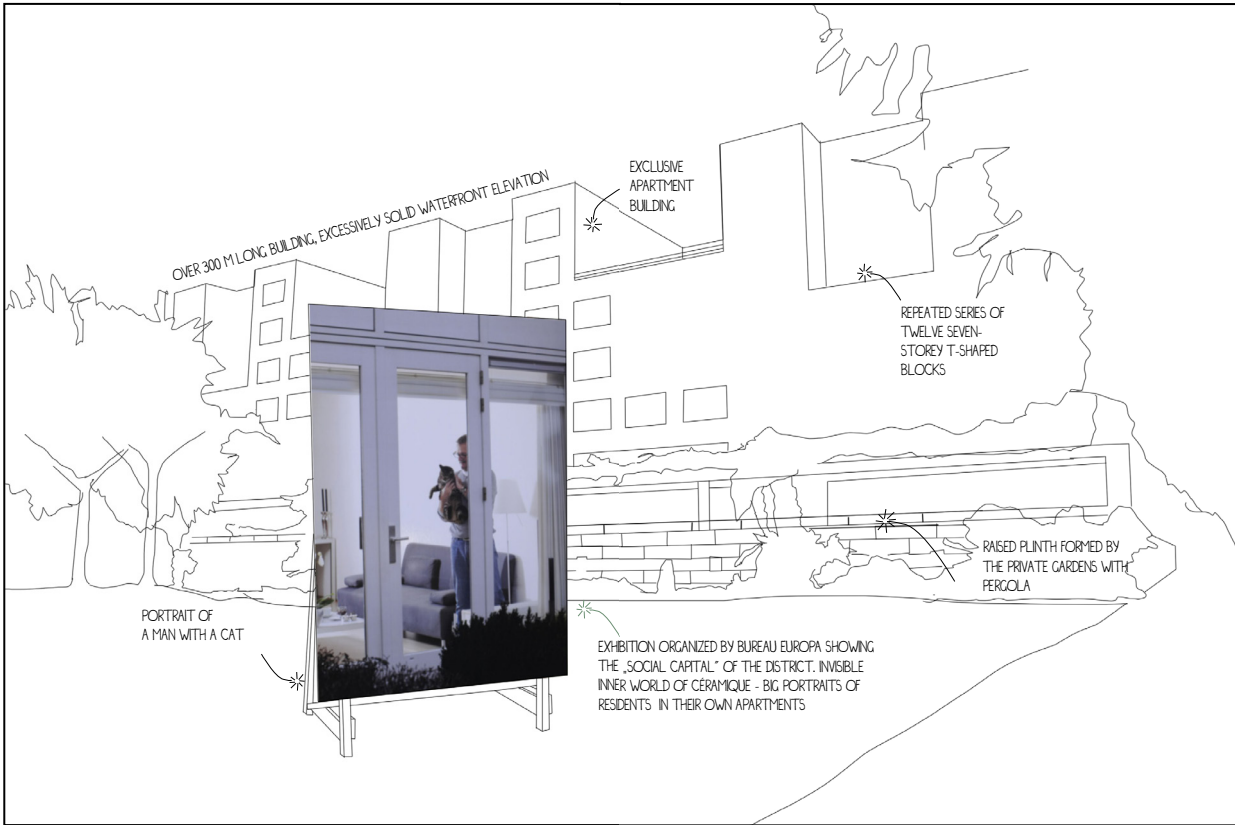
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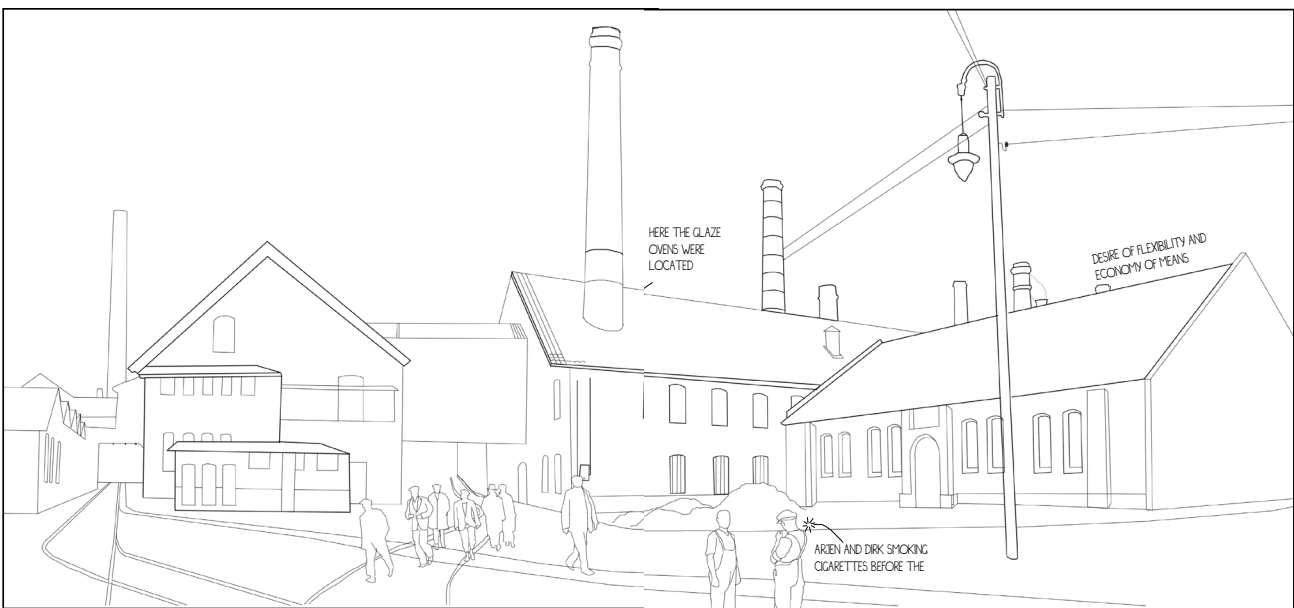
“There is always critique about the Avenue Ceramique. The only critique you can have is that it is all apartments, which makes the ground floor in the streets very closed.”

Fred Humblé

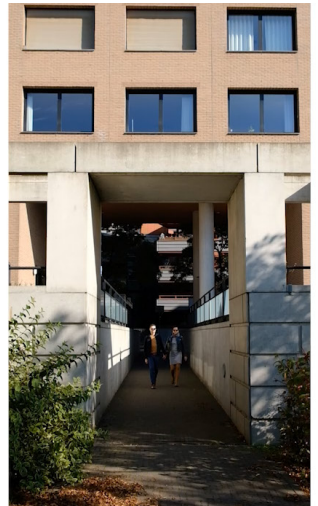
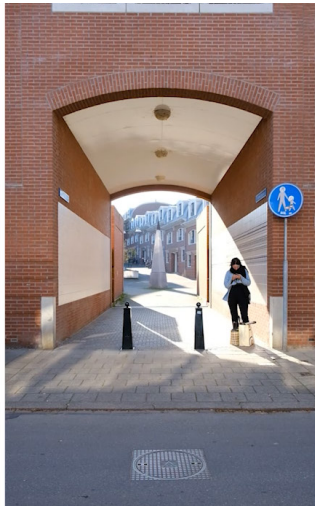
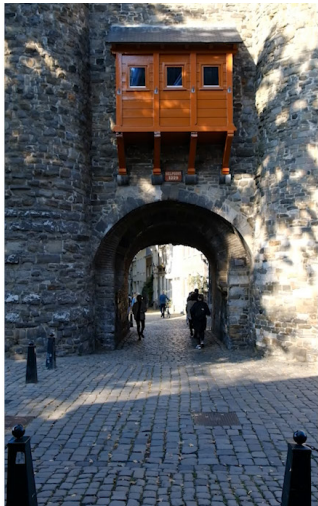
S T O R I E S

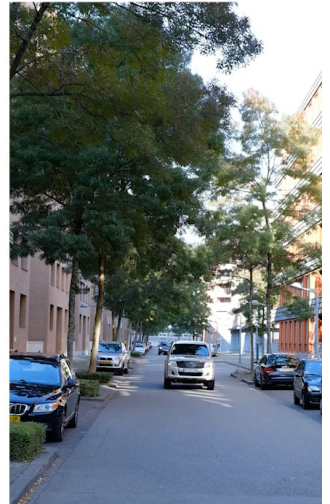


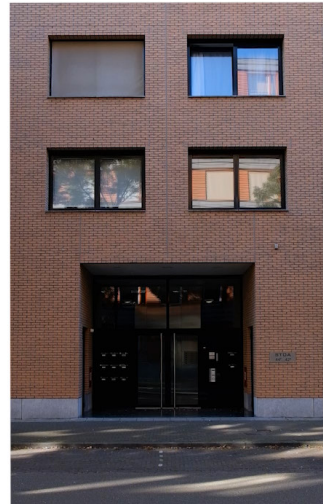
STOA RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, CERAMIQUE DISTRICT, 2010



THE POTTERY BUILDING IN SOCIET CERAMIQUE AROUND 1920







History of the Sappi site

As mentioned in the research of the architectural histories of urban renewals, Maastricht is a heterogeneous city with different layers. This also appears in the history of the site of our studio, namely the Sappi site in the Sphinxkwartier.

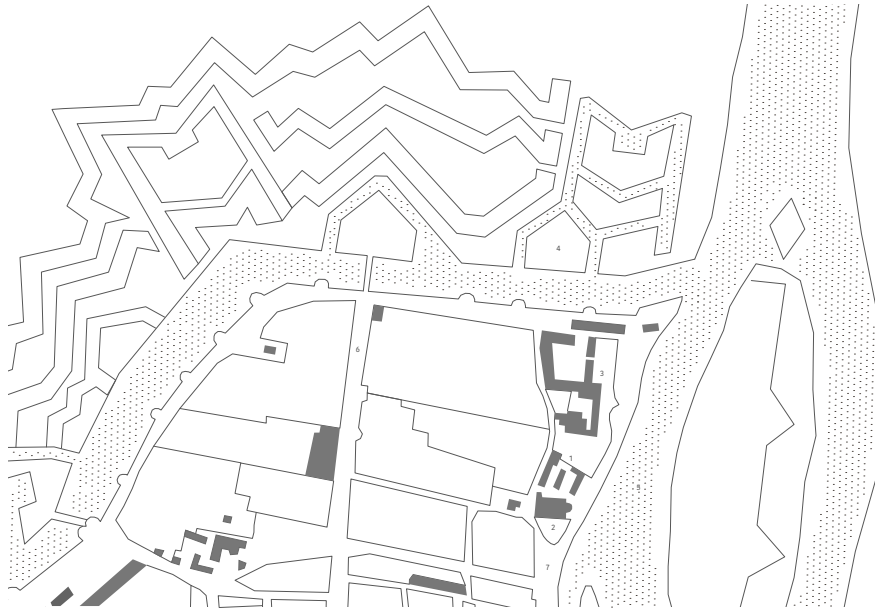
The Sphinxkwartier is a post-industrial area within the fortifications of Maastricht, where currently only the paper mill 'Sappi' is still producing. The scale of the Sappi is significant compared to the city center and the site is very dense compared to the building blocks of the neighbourhood.

In the following paragraph, the development of the site is described based on plans of the area. This research was conducted by another group who investigated the topic 'city and factory'. This paragraph will contain a summary of their findings.

The Sappi site originates from the Middle Ages of which only traces can now be found in the landscape. It is located on the edge of the fortifications, where many industrial changes have taken place and where many plans for the future are currently being made by the municipality.

The growth of the built environment says a lot about what the area is now and what it can become in the future. The arrival of the paper mill has changed the area significantly. This becomes clear when considering the growth of the road network, waterways and train tracks. Furthermore, the growth of the paper mill also caused the shift of borders, territories, public and private, which are clarified in the following paragraphs.

1750



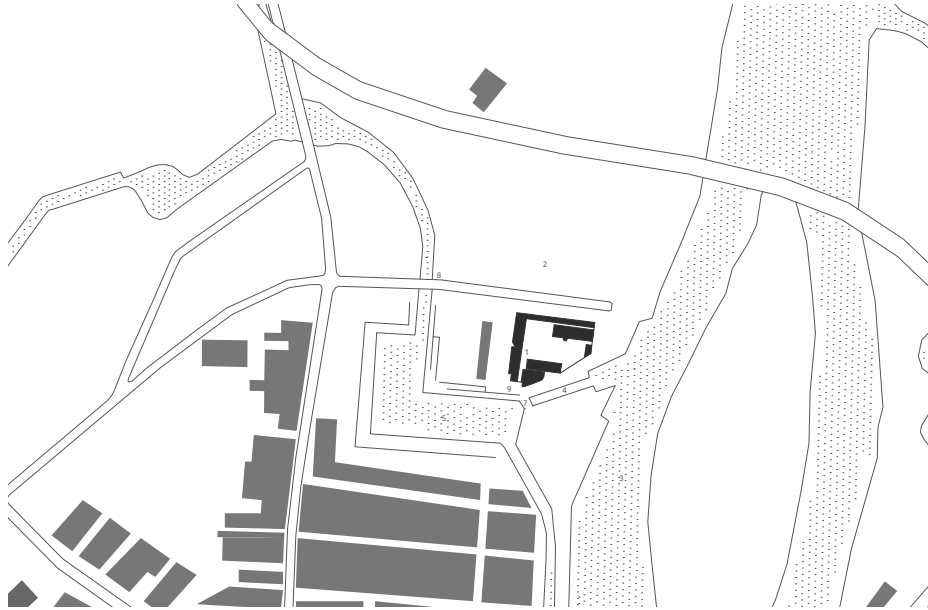
On the south side of the site, where the paper mill is currently located, were the monastery (1) and the church St. Anthony (2) situated. In the far corner, within the fortifications, the commandery Nieuwe Biesen was situated (3), which had been at this location since 1360. The city wall with its fortifications (4) and the Meuse river (5) formed a distinct border. The Boschstraat (6) and the south sides of the site (7) were bounded by walls. The borders could easily be crossed because of the open function of the church, which was in strong connection with the city.

1861



The Bassin (1), the Zuid-Willemsvaart (2) and the Affuitenloods (3) were built around 1827. Today, the Affuitenloods is a municipal monument, as it is a former military building for gun storage. The paper mill was established in 1850, when the production started with two machines. In 1861, the paper mill (4) had been in operation for eleven years and was growing steadily. The white painted factory building (4) can we still see today. The paper mill is bordered by the Meuse (5), the lock (6), the Bassin (1) and the defence wall (7). The site could be entered by the lifting bridge (8) at the lock, via the wharf cellars (9) at the Bassin, and via the bridge (10) over the Zuid-Willemsvaart, which is now called the Fransensingel.

1875



The site of the paper mill (1) was fully built up. In 1867, Maastricht stopped being a fortified town, and the defence walls and fortifications were destroyed. This provided space to expand to the north (2). The Meuse (3), the lock (4) and the Bassin (5) remained the same. The demolition of the former largest and highest border, the defence wall (6), resulted in a connection between the factory site and the vacant land in the north (2). In addition, the two bridges (7,8) and the wharf cellars (9) continued to function as nodes.

1935



The paper mill was growing rapidly. This led to an expansion of the site, whereby the Affuitenloods was bought by the paper mill and transformed into 23 workers' housing (1) in 1878. Paper machines PM1 and PM2 (2), and a new storage building (3) were added. The site expanded towards the vacant space in the north (4). The border shifted to the railroad in the north (5). The Meuse (6), the lock (7), the Bassin (8), and the Zuid-Willemsvaart (9) did not change. Due to the relocation of the border, a new node (10) was created under the railroad. Furthermore, the wharf along the Meuse (11) also functioned as a new node, from where goods were brought directly to the new storage building (3).

1951



The paper mill was enlarged by a new and large paper machine PM5 (1). The Affuitenloods (2) became a storage, and on the adjacent island the construction of the Landbouwbelang building (3) started in 1939. The Meuse (4), the lock (5), the Bassin (6) and the railroad (7) remained the borders of the site. The road network expanded, which led to a new connection (8) with the terrain. The old southern part of the site was no longer in use, because of the new PM5 (1). This made the wharf cellar lose its function as a node. The bridge over the Meuse (9) and the bridges (10,11) remained important access routes.

1962



The area expanded tremendously to the north with the construction of the new paper machine PM6 (1). The older buildings on the north side had been demolished for construction. The site now extended northward to the Voedingskanaal (2). The site bordered the Meuse (3), the lock (4), the Bassin (5), the Zuid-Willemsvaart (6), and the railroad (7). The lifting bridge (8) and the bridge over the Zuid-Willemsvaart (9) were connected by a new publicly accessible road along the paper mill buildings. A new channel (10) was created to connect the Bassin with the south.

1986



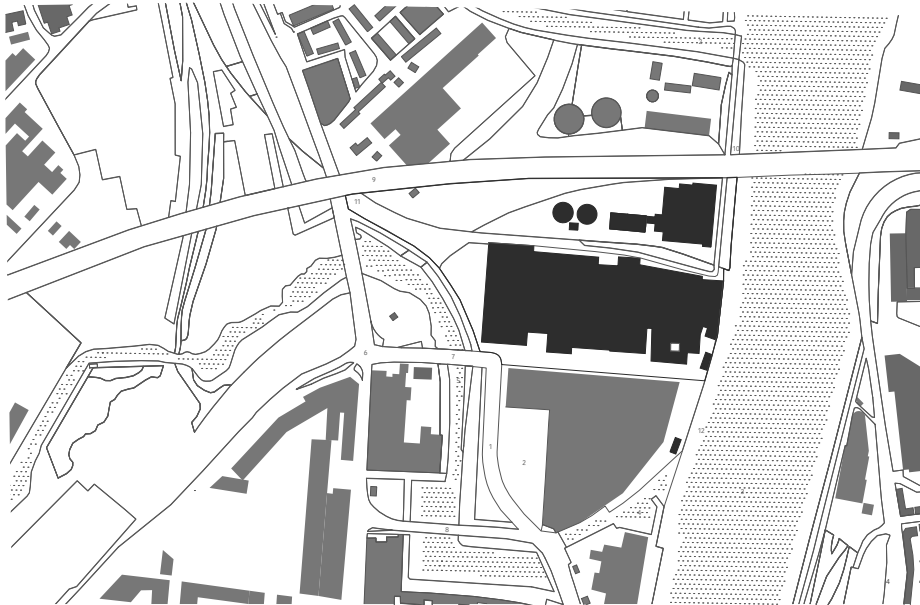
The site of the paper mill continued to be built up and expanded on the north side. The border of the site moved to the west (1). The site bordered the Voedingskanaal (2), the Meuse (3), the lock (4), the Bassin (5) and the Zuid-Willemsvaart (6). Because of the expansion of the site, the railroad no longer functioned as a border. The site could be accessed from the bridges (6,7), the road network (8,9), and from the Meuse (10). Two new stops of the railroad (11,12) increased the accessibility of the site.

Present



The entrance of the site has been moved from Fransensingel (1) to the Commandeurslaan (2). A new highway (3) runs through the area, and the site is further built up on the north side. The Voedingskanaal (4), the Meuse (15), the lock (6), the Maasboulevard bridge, the Bassin (7) and the Zuid-Willemsvaart (8) are still functioning as the border of the site (9). A new node is the direct connection with the highway (10). The railroad is not in use anymore. The routes via the road (11,12), the two bridges (13,14), and the Meuse (15) are still being used.

2040



The southern part of the paper mill has been sold to the municipality. The factory buildings at this location will be demolished, and a new road (1) will be constructed. A new housing project (2) along the Bassin and Zuid-Willemsvaart will be part of the development of the site. The borders change significantly on the southern side. Where the Bassin used to be the border between the site and the surroundings, in the future a new road (1) will form the border. The other borders will not change: the Voedingskanaal (2), the Meuse (3), the lock (4), the Maasboulevard bridge (8) and the Zuid-Willemsvaart (5). It is unclear whether this transformation will create new nodes with the Sappi site. The bridge of the Fransensingel (7) and Maasboulevard bridge (8), the highway (9), the smaller roads (10,11) and the Meuse (3) will remain nodes.

Public space and everyday life

During the collective research I was intrigued by the different views of the developers, designers, residents and the reality. When experiencing the three different locations myself I found out that the functions of the buildings determine how vibrant that part of the public domain is as the building blocks all created a new public space around it. A vivid shopping street during the day changes into an almost secluded street at night depending on the opening hours of the shops. The newly built Céramique district was mainly deserted during the day because of the residential function and sometimes a public plinth. Also Hoogfrankrijk felt like a deserted place. The case studies show the disadvantage of mainly having one single program in an area and show the hard partitions of public and private, inside and outside. I wondered how daily life will be influenced when several functions come together. This reinforced my interest in the importance of how the built environment shapes social life and vice versa. As an architect you have to find this balance and have to make assumptions of what social life can do with a (newly) built environment by creating a built environment that offers places for social interaction and encounters. From this interest and perspective, I searched for places where multiple functions can be found in or around an urban setting. Using elements and atmospheres related to activities that are already there and promote and stimulate social interaction and encounters in a new area is where I see my opportunity as a gleaner and designer.

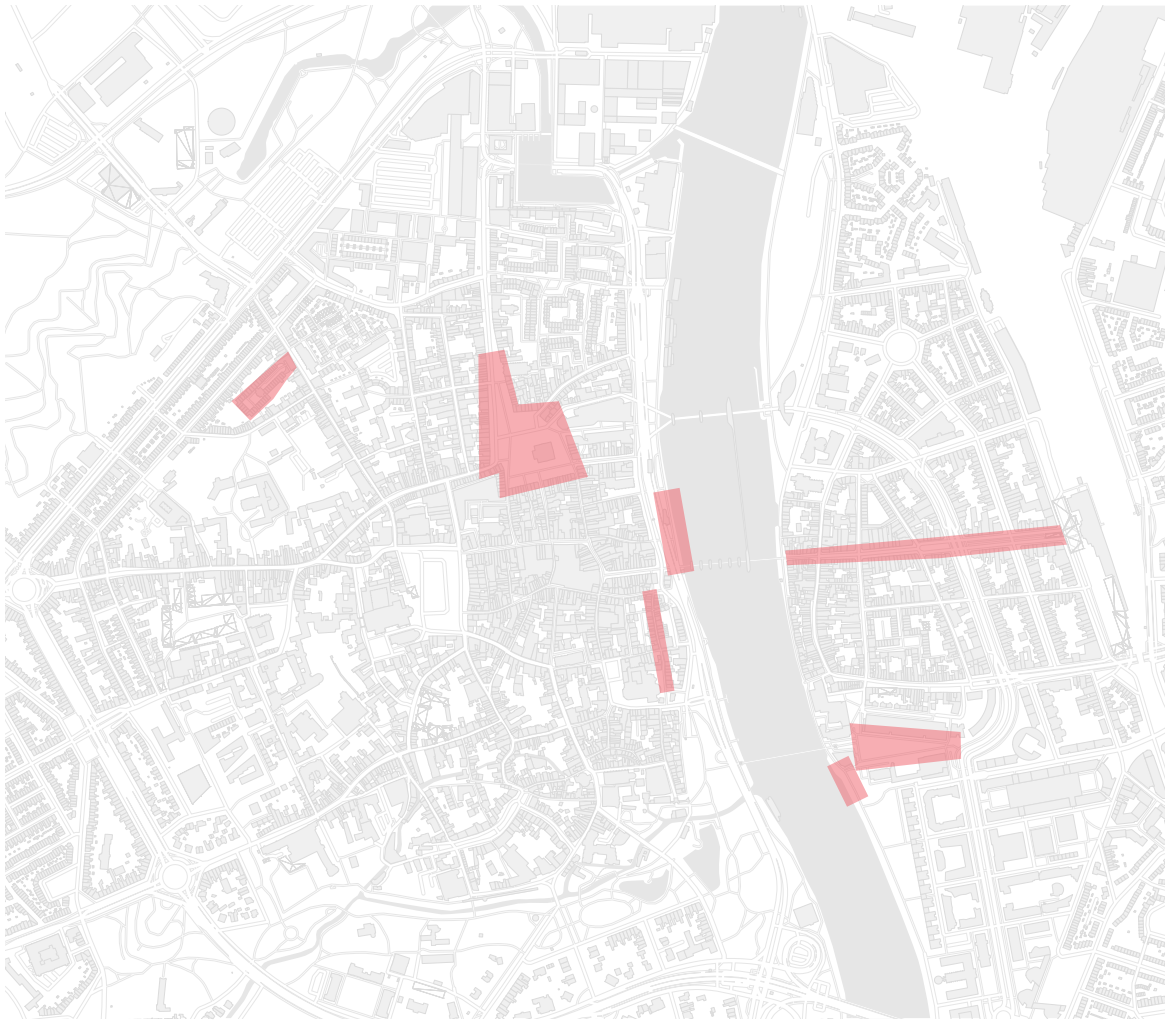
William H. Whyte studied human behaviour in urban settings. He identified several architectural and urban elements that create vibrant public spaces in the city. He focussed on urban squares in New York in the seventies. One of the main conclusions about what determines the vibrancy of a place was the proportion of groups, where most used squares have a higher proportion of pairs and triplets than less used squares. Next to that, the most social spaces in the city have the greatest number of individuals. Another conclusion concerns the activities that take place as these urban settings. A diverse range of activities, such as eating, reading, playing games make attractive open spaces. The most seen activity is people looking at other people and the use of space is mainly dependent on the amount of sittable space.

As I wanted to research different public spaces in Maastricht, I had to find a way of how to observe people and connect this to architecture. I read the book *The meaning of the built environment* by Amos Rapoport (1982), namely fixed-feature elements, semifixed-feature elements and nonfixed-feature elements. Fixed elements are the architectural elements, streets and buildings. Elements that are fixed or rarely change. Semifixed elements change easily or quickly, such as furniture, plants and decorations. Nonfixed elements are related to the

human occupants, their actions and nonverbal behavior. These physical elements are directly read as indicators of social characteristics and can therefore set the scene for social encounters. Besides that, I also wanted to focus on the invisible but phenomenal layer, namely the atmosphere to visualize the understanding of space. In this research I also understood this as a semifixed elements, because of its changing character over the day and year.

I observed several public spaces in Maastricht on a human scale by studying human behavior in a certain context. I picked these locations because each spaces attracts different kinds of people and can be defined as successful social spaces. As William H. Whyte also declared, social space is mainly formed by individuals. That is why I will look at non-verbal communication in order to see which elements in architecture and urban planning are used to stimulate certain actions and/or behavior. I focussed on different urban settings in different neighborhoods which represent Maastricht, which are a square, street, waterfront and courtyard. With this information I gained a better understanding in the language of Maastricht, its (unexpected) everyday life in the public domain and how these two layers are linked to each other.

The observations are divided in stationary activities and dynamic activities and are translated into perspective sketches and maps. With the perspective sketches I gained a better image of the human scale, as it shows visual signals, observations and the context. The maps show the context, different flows and movement, position of elements, entrances and locations of people. I analysed the scenes based on the activities, number of people, non-fixed, semi-fixed and fixed elements and the type of urban space. The observation is a snapshot, a captured image, on which the findings are based.

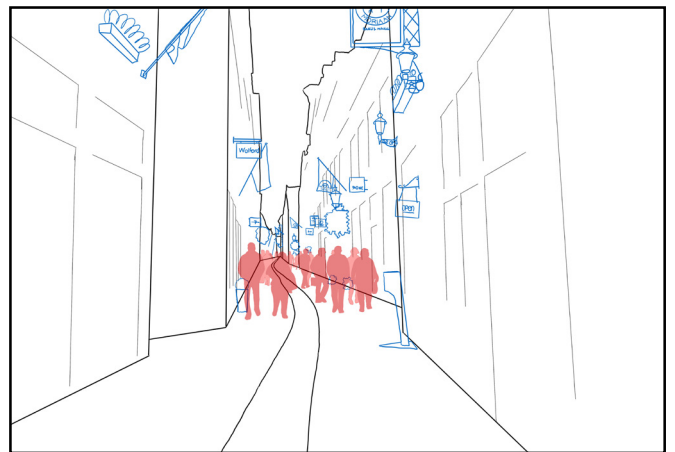
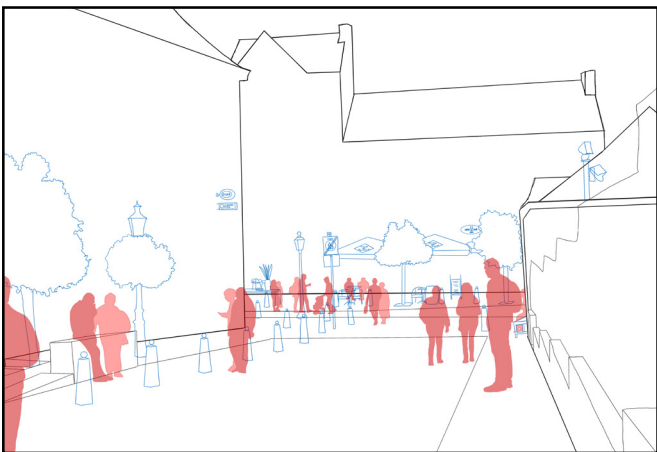
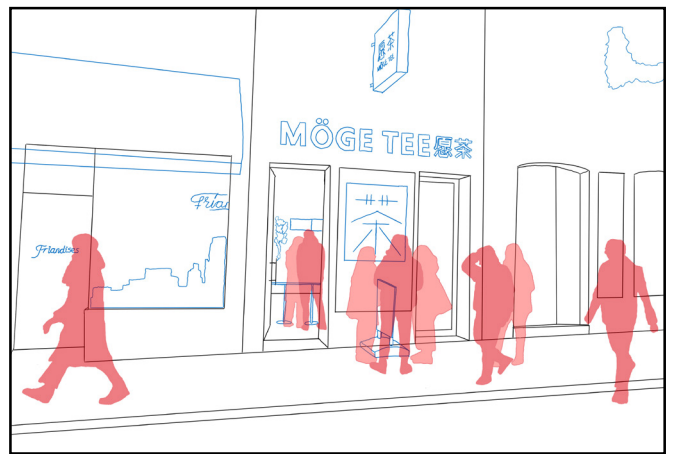
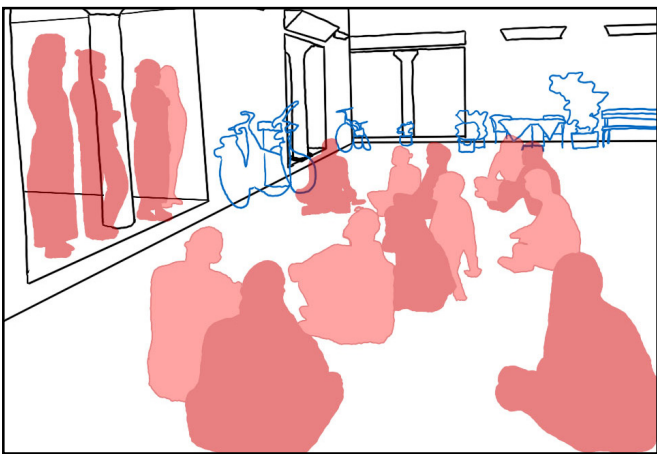
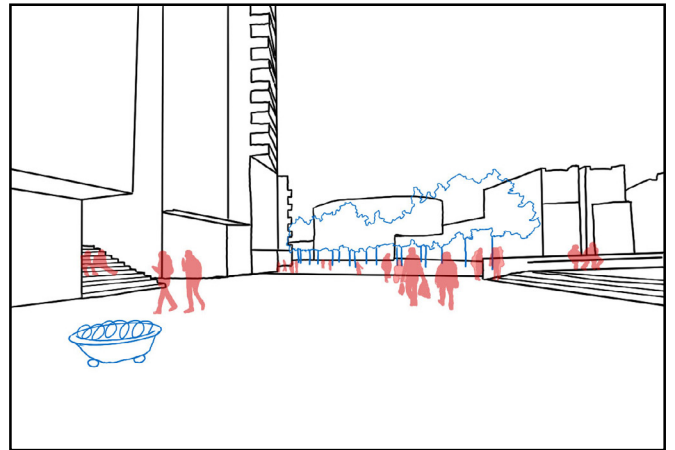
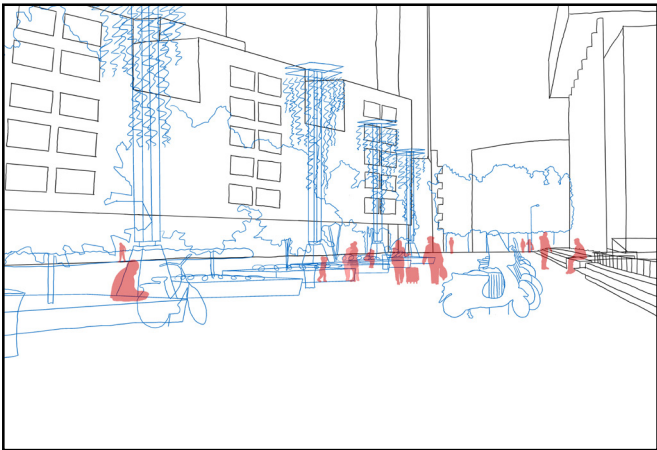
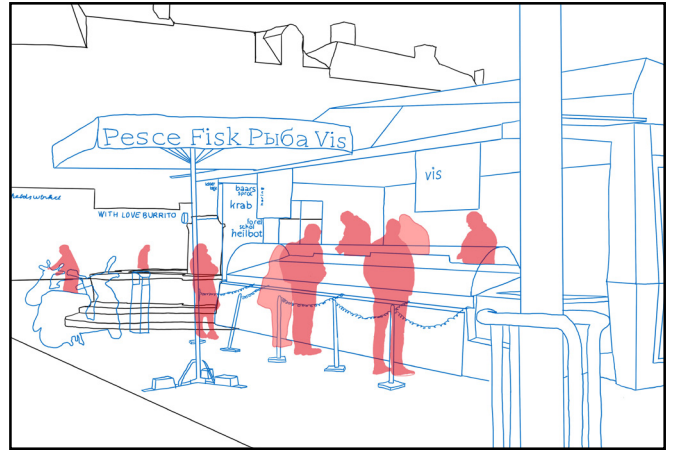


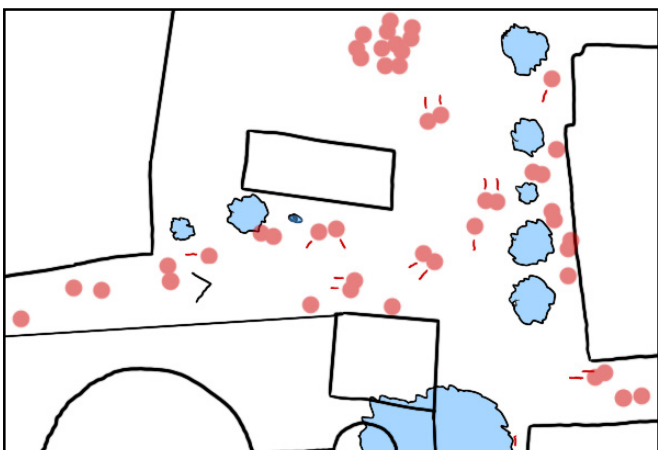
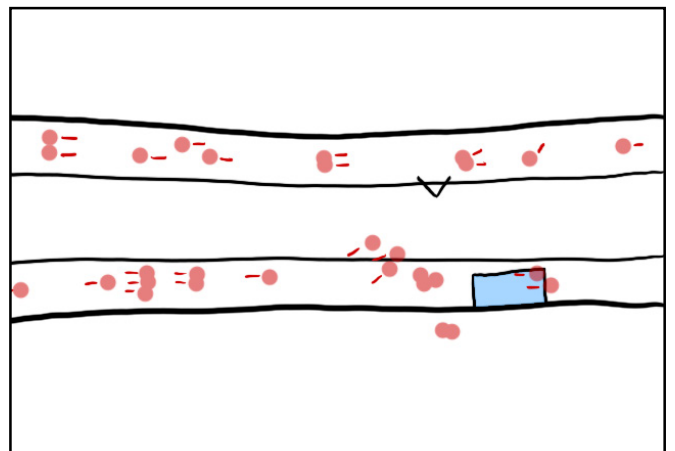
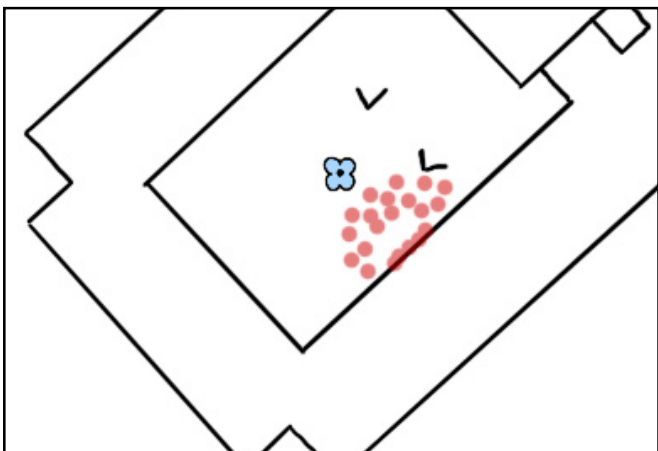
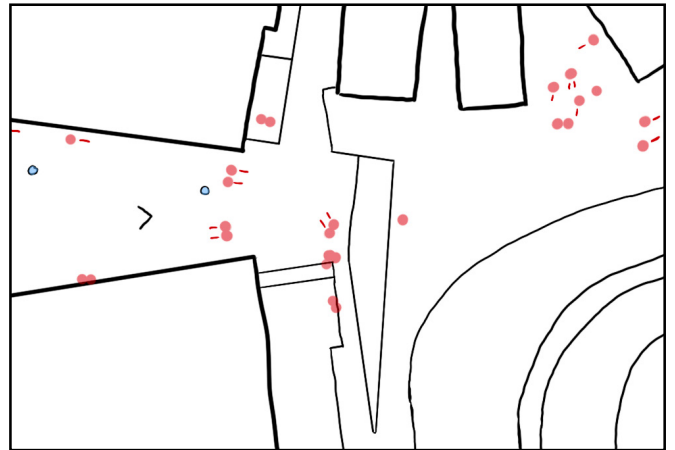
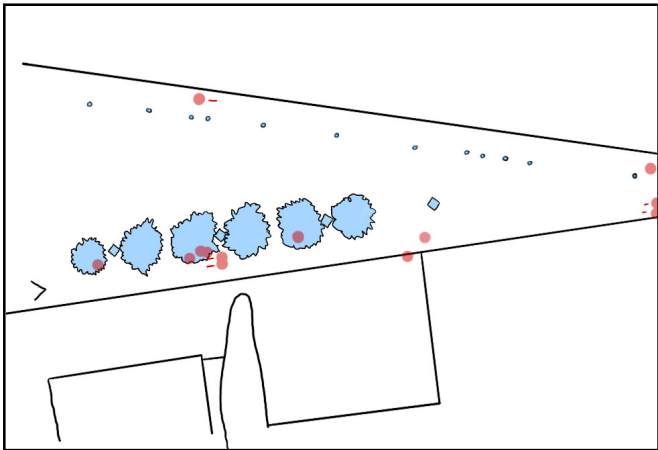
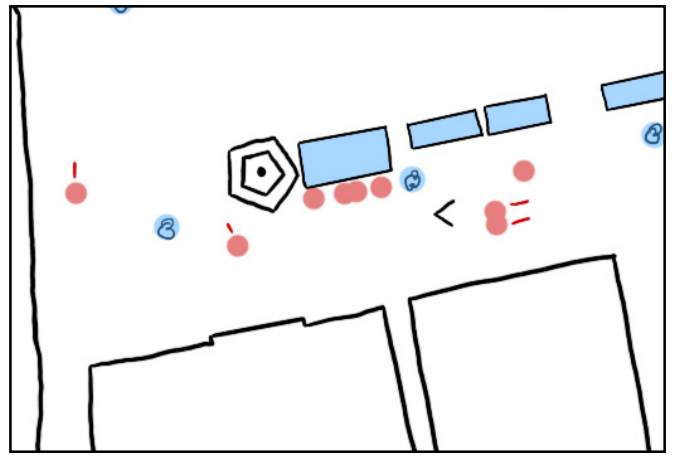
Wijk
Stationsstraat

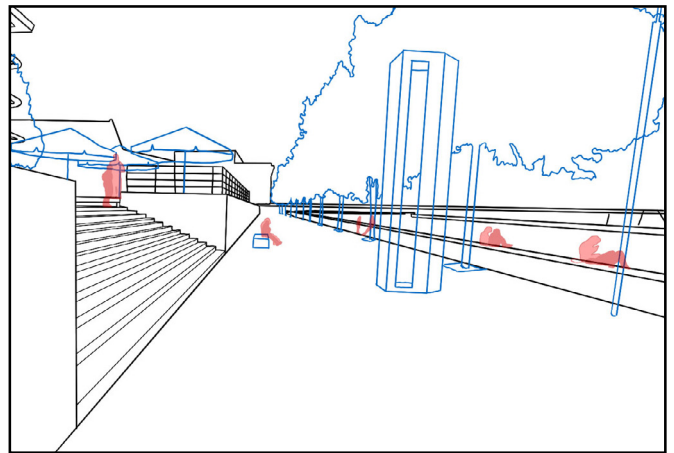
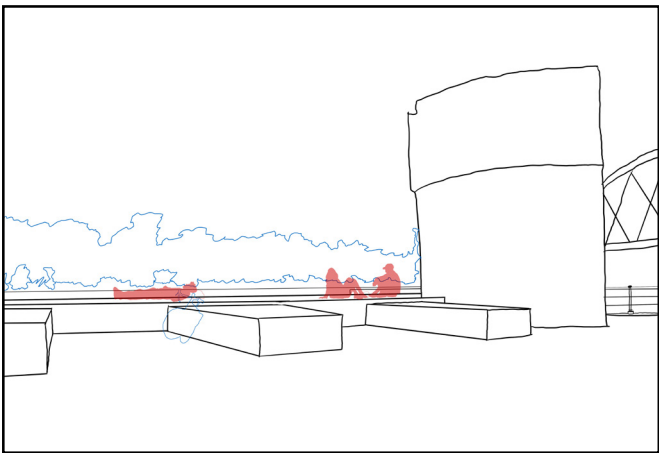
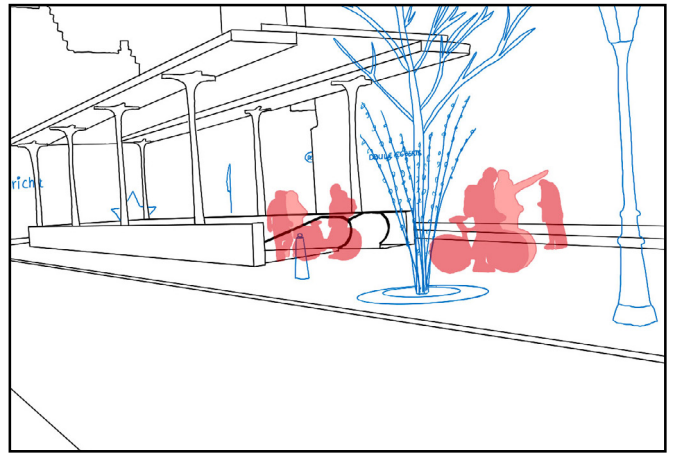
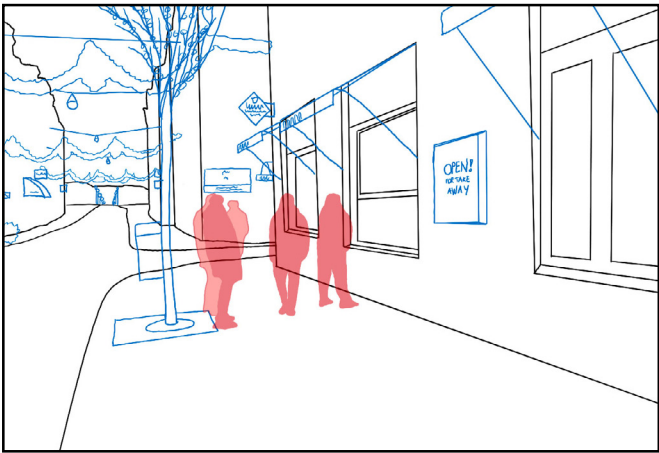
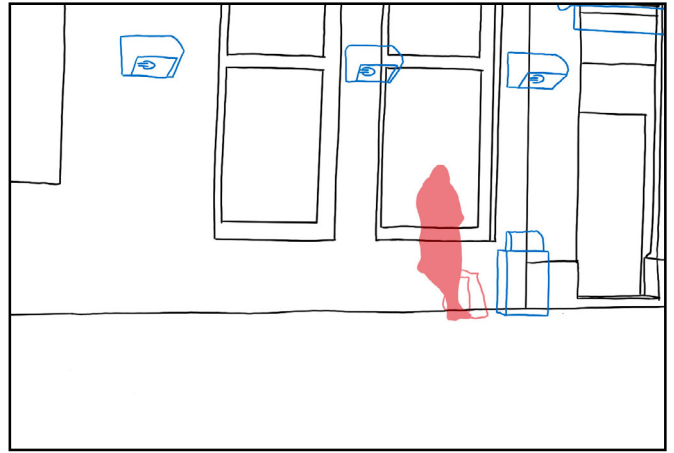
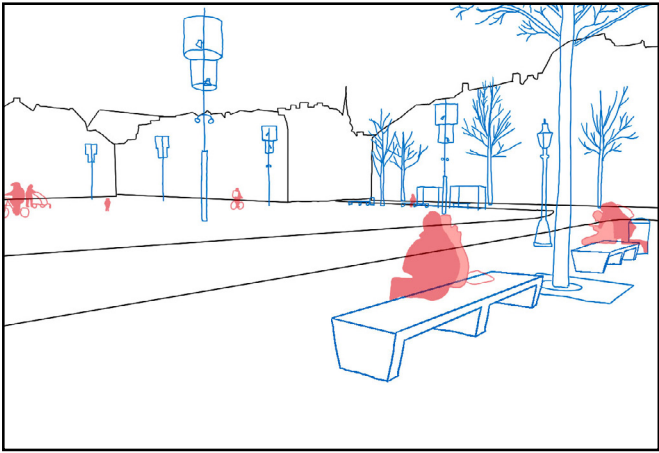
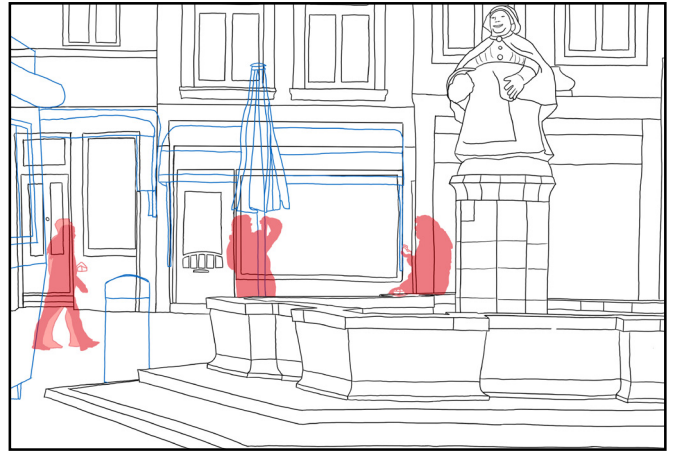
Ceramique
Plein 1992
Waterfront

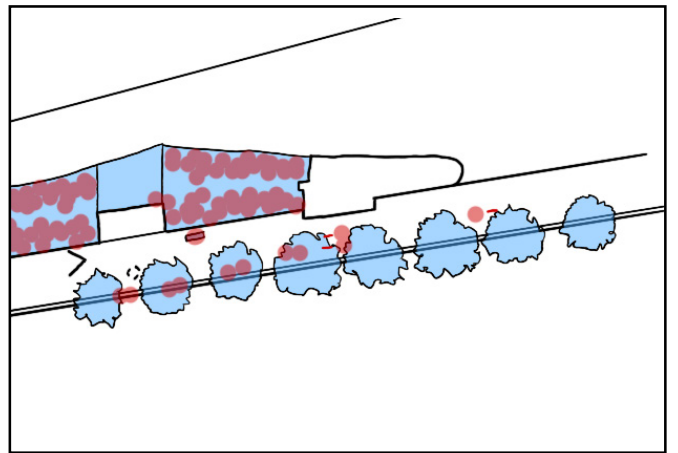
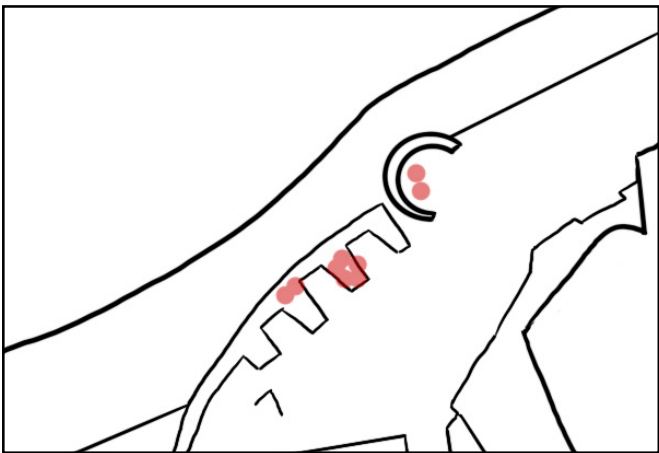
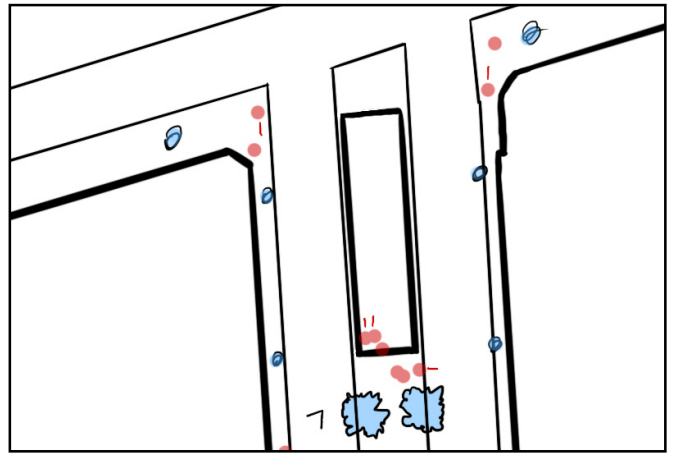
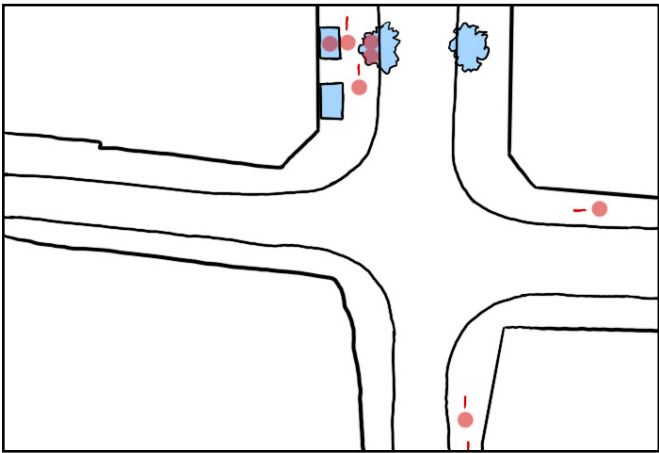
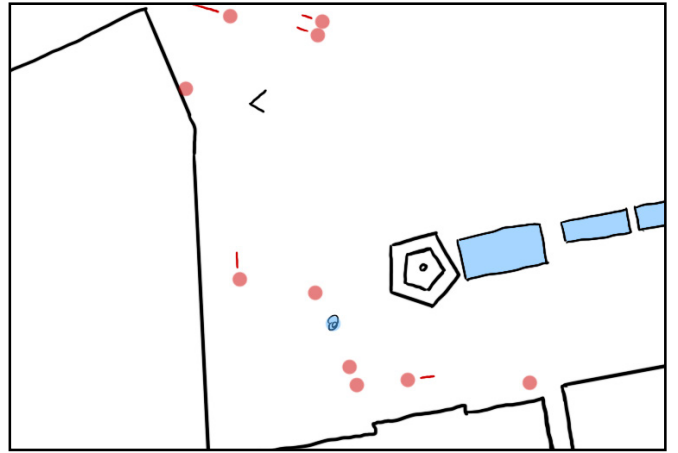
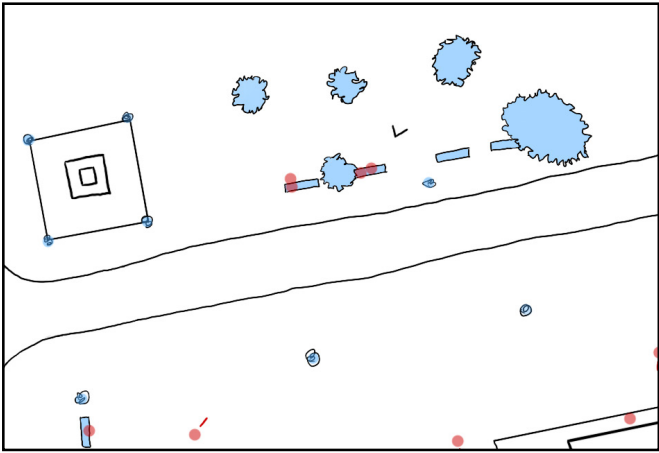
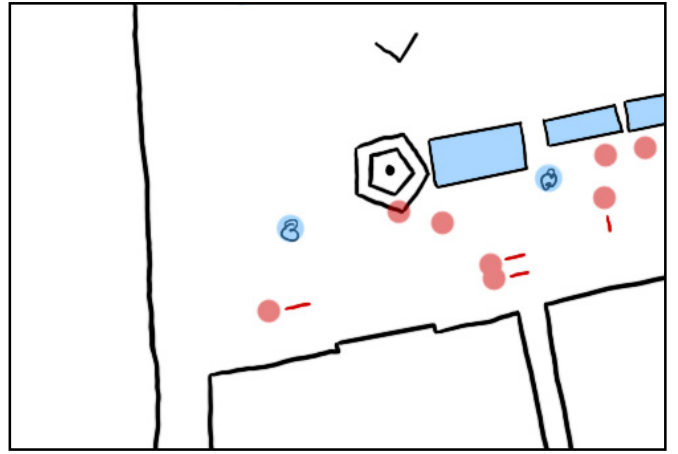
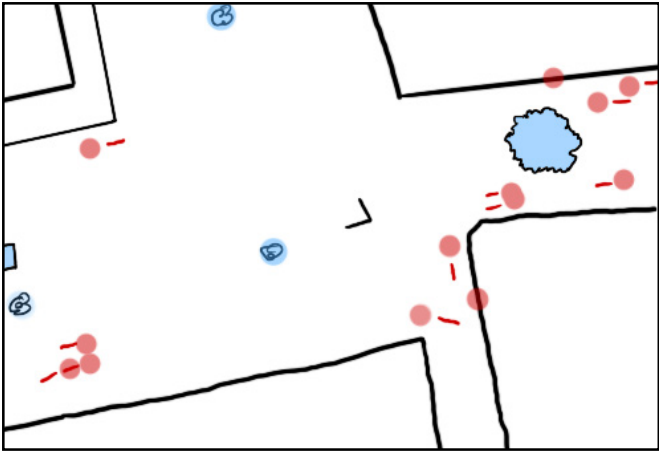
City Center
Markt
Stokstraat
Waterfront

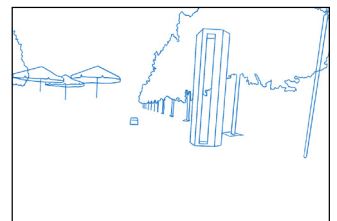
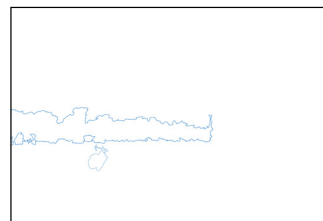
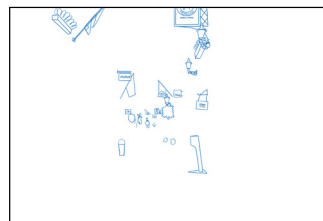
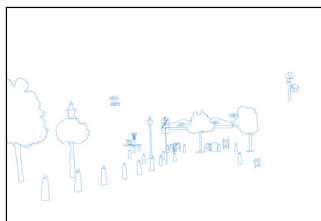
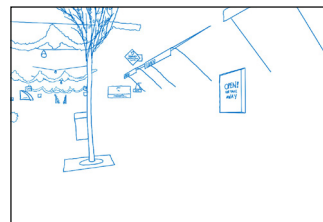
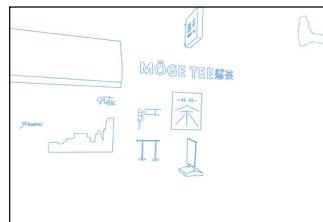
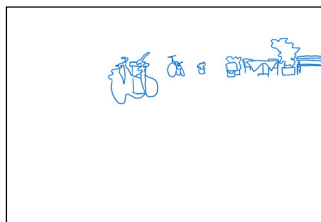
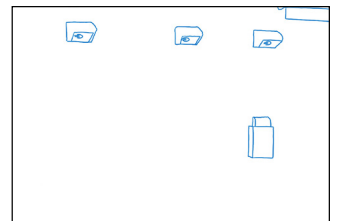
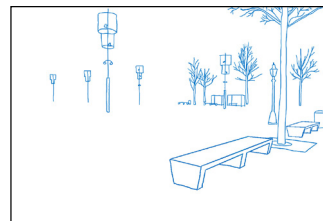
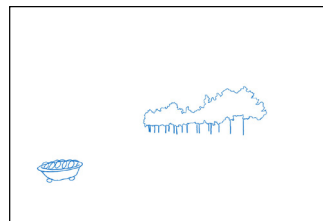
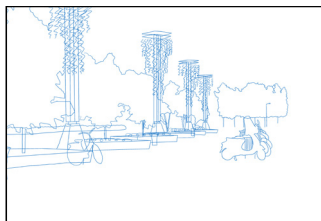
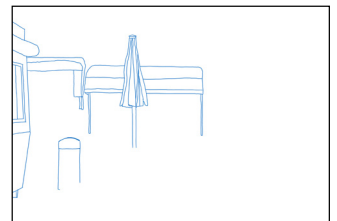
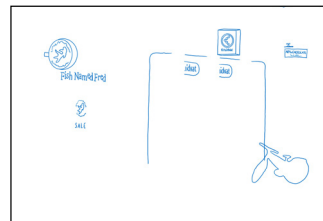
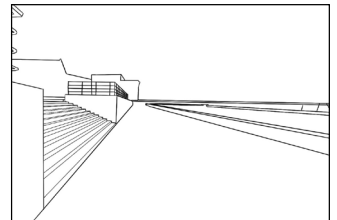
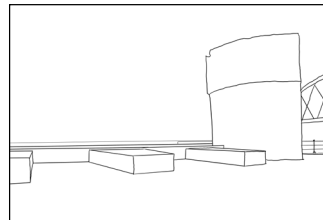
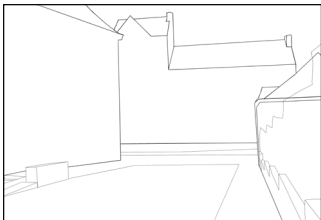
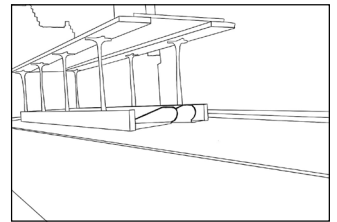
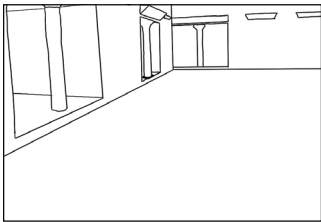
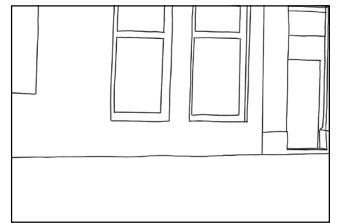
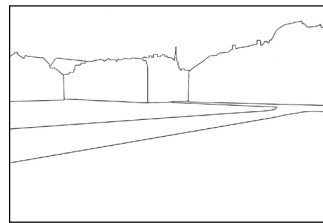
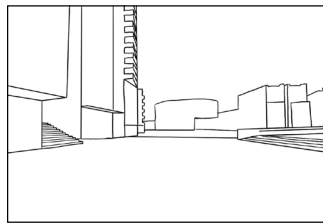
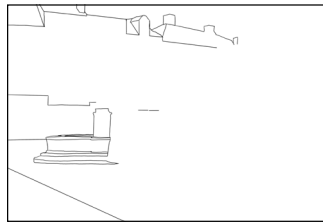
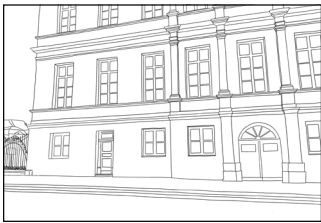
Statenkwartier
Hoogfrankrijk

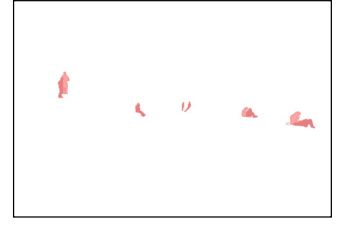
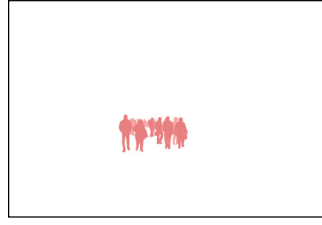
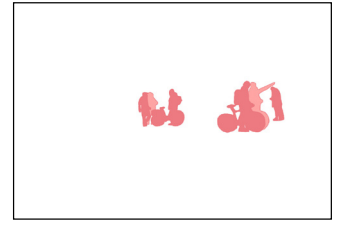
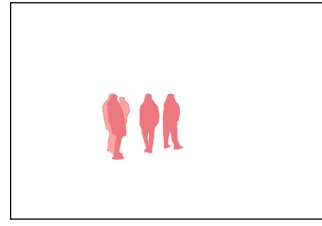
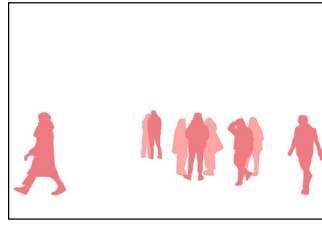
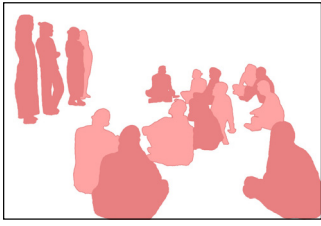
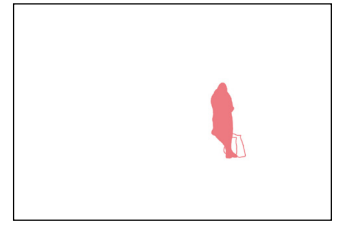
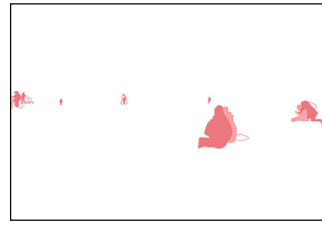
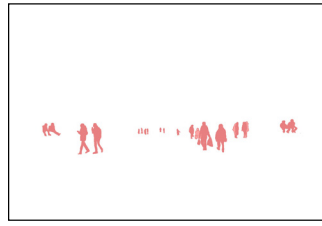
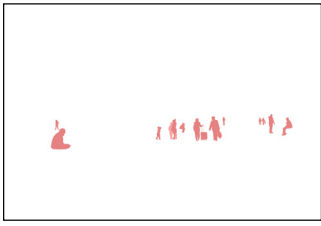
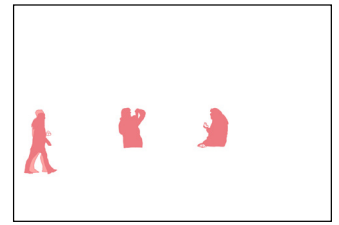
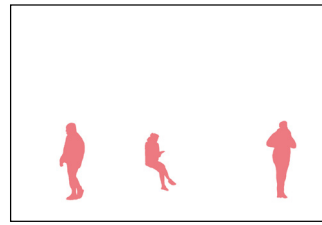
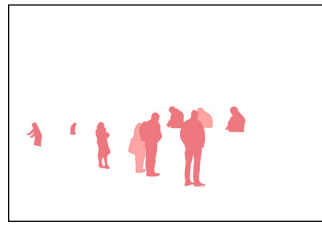
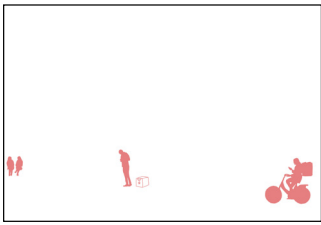












central
 historic
 privacy
 detailed facade
 elevated surface
 landmark
 view
 edges



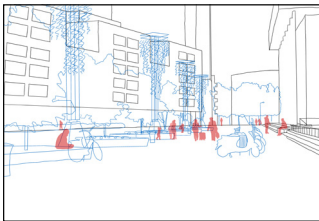
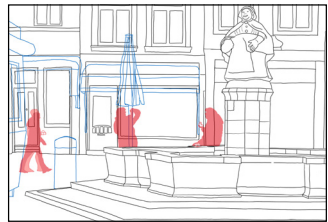
international
 advertisement
 colors
 shelter
 slow down
 trade
 interaction
 fish
 fish smells



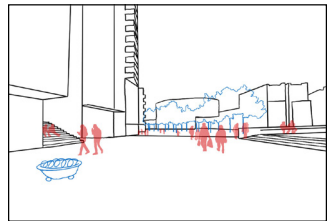
detailed facades
 edges
 cobblestones
 shops
 natural stone
 clear views
 enclosure
 seclusion



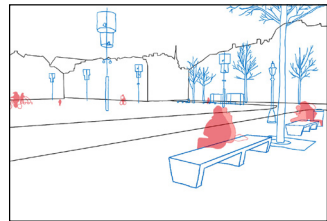
closed shops
 and cafes
 food smells from
 market stalls
 grey stone
 historic
 fountain
 statue



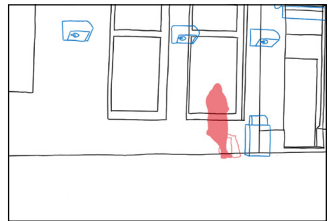
repetition
 levels
 sitting area
 clear views
 open
 triangular
 lines
 two zones
 trees and plants



levels
 elevated square
 lines
 wide
 trees
 heights
 shelter

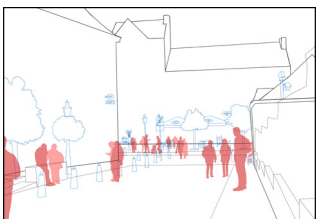


different activities
 detailed landscape
 cobblestones
 clear views
 wide
 covered
 bare trees

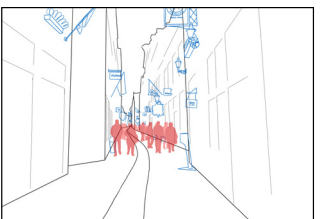


edge
 empty shop
 cobblestones
 clear views
 seclusion
 empty facade
 privacy

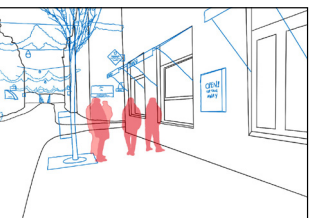
cobblestones
 details
 dwarf walls
 clear views
 historic
 food & drinks
 smell
 demarcation
 sitting areas
 different zones



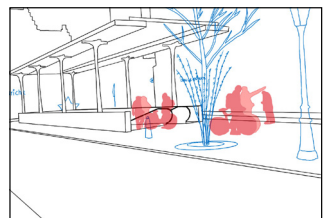
strolling
 expensive
 signs
 historic
 narrow
 intimate
 overwhelming
 one way,
 two ways
 colors
 details



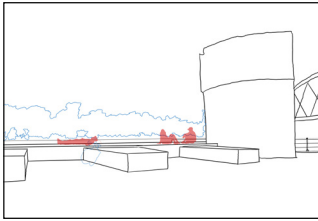
bright sign
 consuming
 blocking sidewalk
 bright interior
 small building
 details
 foreign cafe
 many pedestrian
 flows // rushing
 twilight



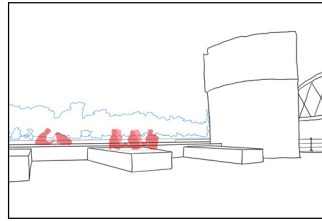
awning
 details
 take away
 twilight
 signs
 corner cafe
 many pedestrian
 flows
 cosy
 consuming
 lights



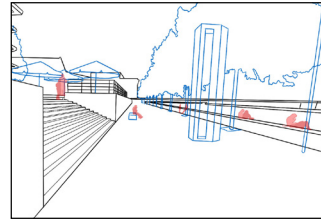
threshold area
 shelter
 twilight
 many pedestrian
 flows // rushing
 traveling
 entrance bike park
 meeting point
 modern and historic
 lights



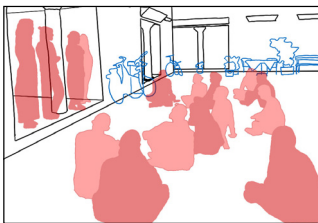
water
 elevated blocks
 sun
 relaxation
 afternoon setting
 less noise
 peaceful
 escaping crowd
 viewpoint
 historic landmark



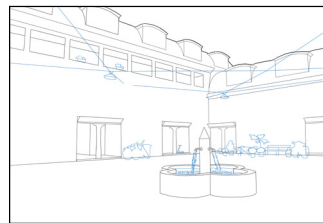
elevated blocks
 twilight
 evening setting
 historic landmark
 social
 groups
 drinks
 viewpoint
 trees at other side of water



two levels
 viewpoint
 city bustle raised space,
 peaceful quay
 dwarf wall
 trees
 sitting areas
 food & drinks
 smell
 asphalt
 covered



performance
 bricks
 zinc
 classical elements
 enclosure
 layers
 audience
 elevated platform
 gate
 embossed facade
 peaceful
 acoustics



running water
 lights
 bricks
 classical elements
 geometrical
 enclosure
 acoustics
 hidden
 arcade
 calm
 embossed facade
 layers
 recessed entrances
 zinc

Findings

Observations per activity

Stationary activities

What is striking is that most people use the fixed elements when sitting or lying down instead of the available seats. There are especially a lot of couples sitting in public space. The seating areas are often sheltered or at the edge of an open area. The seats are surrounded by plants or trees. At the Markt I found most individuals standing. The majority of the people who stand in public space are alone. Standing is most often done when waiting, this is especially present in the Stationsstraat. People are usually waiting to get food or drinks.

Dynamic activities

From the people who are moving, most of them are couples or individuals. The difference in pace was visible by comparing the Stokstraat with the other parts of the city. The street has a lot of decoration, advertising, signs and architectural details, which makes it attractive to walk slowly through it to look around. Most people walk across the square without stopping here. This is probably because the adjacent restaurants and cafes were closed during the observations.

Observations per urban element

Square

The most varied range of activities take place on squares. Squares are made attractive by the division in smaller parts, which all offer a different setting with multiple options for its users. The squares all offered different places for movement, seats, sun, shade, view and shelter. The people mainly used the fixed elements.

Street

In streets, the semi-fixed elements bring out the interior which attracts people to have a look or buy something. In addition, people mainly walk or wait.

Waterfront

Waterfront settings give the opportunity to look out from a higher level. These places change in atmosphere during the day from individuals to groups.

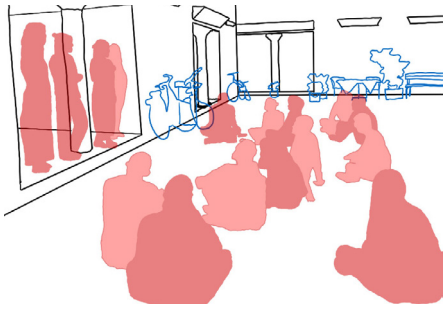
Courtyard

Courtyards in Maastricht are about the unexpected, the intimate character, the tranquillity that prevails and the acoustics. Few places have been found in Maastricht where a lot of life actually takes place in the courtyards.

Entrances

The most notable key element of transitions is the public domain is the entrance of a building. In Maastricht I found many height differences, thresholds, stairs and platforms in and around buildings. The shop entrances are often recessed, or can be entered via a threshold. Besides the urban settings I also observed the transition of two scenes in Maastricht, namely the residential building block Hoogfrankrijk and the public library Center Ceramique. This is translated into a section, where all the findings are displayed. Center Ceramique has a very transparent and less conspicuous entrance on a platform, while Hoogfrankrijk is characterized by its recessed entrances with a threshold, which is similar to the Medieval buildings in the city center.

Performance



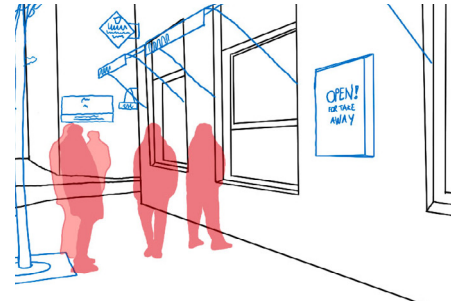
Imagine this as a scene from a performance, an intimate and quiet place where one tells a great story on a platform and you no longer pay attention to what is happening outside this room ...

Reading place

Imagine this as a scene from a reading place, in between two spaces, offering a place with the understanding of silence, no distractions, and provide a setting for overview and security ...



Indoor street



Imagine this as a scene from an indoor street where people are stimulated to explore and are encouraged to meet other people ...

Urban analysis

In order to draw up an urban plan, we as a group first of all started re-searching the demographics, built environment, landscapes and other useful information that has or could influence the proposal. This section describes the most striking findings identified in this study.

Greenery

The inner city consists of very little green. The trees are 'man-made' and are situated along the infrastructure. The only green in the area is also man-made and is located in the North side of Maastricht but barely enters the area from the top along the water.

Borders

The area consists of strong borders around the water, which makes the water not accessible. Another strong border is the fence around the industrial area. In the inner city there are many car stoppers to make the area pedestrian friendly.

Mobility

The city of Maastricht is well connected on all sides. The car roads are mostly on the edge of the city, and drivers can only enter the city on certain places. However, there are many dead-ends, even though it is well connected.

Functions

The map shows the division of the different functions in Maastricht. As can be seen, there is a variety of functions spread out over the area, but there is little mixed use.

Public and private

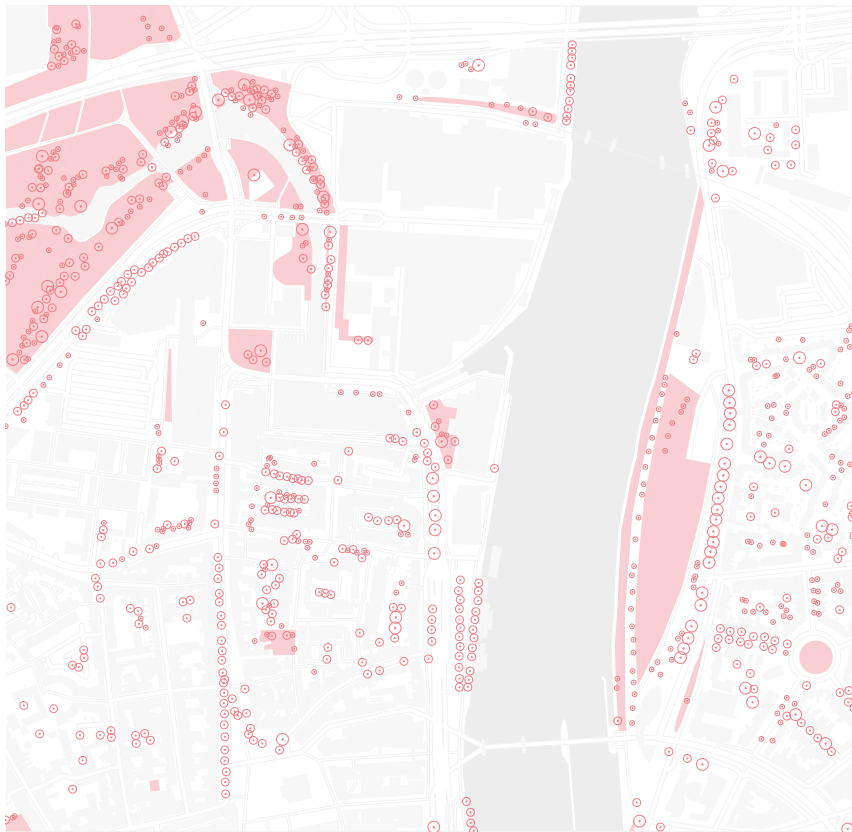
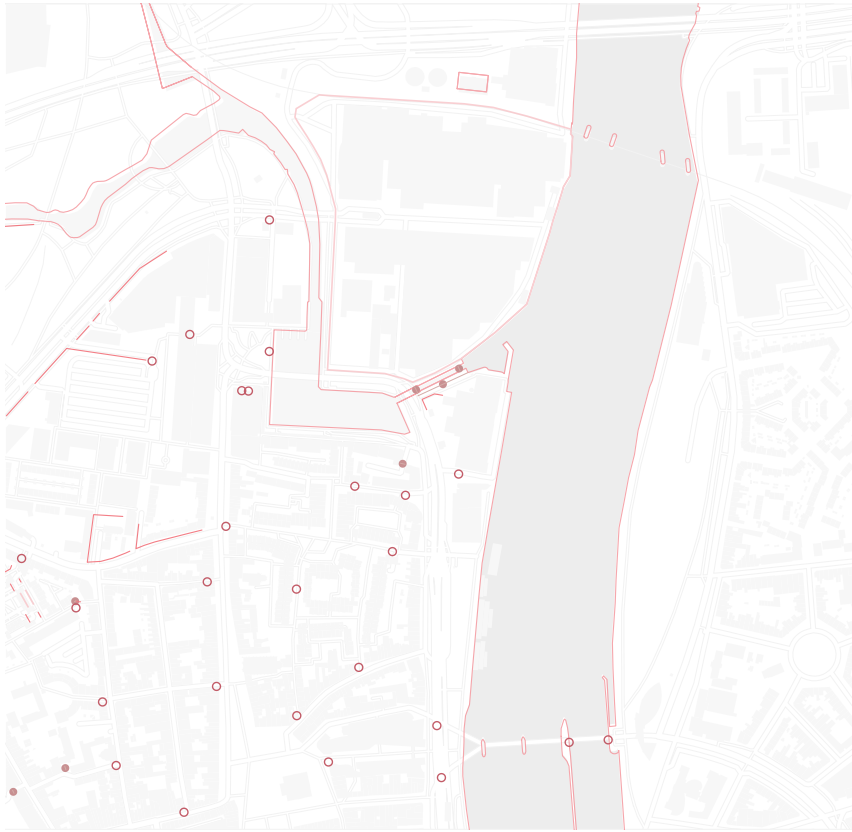
This map shows the public and private functions of Maastricht. As can be seen, the public functions only evolve around the infrastructure while the private functions are more hidden or enclosed by a large fence.

Public space and connections

This map shows the public spaces of Maastricht and their relationship and connection with each other. As can be seen, there is a lack of public buildings in the north of Maastricht. The current public routes run to the center and do not connect the northern public buildings with either the main street or the waterfront.

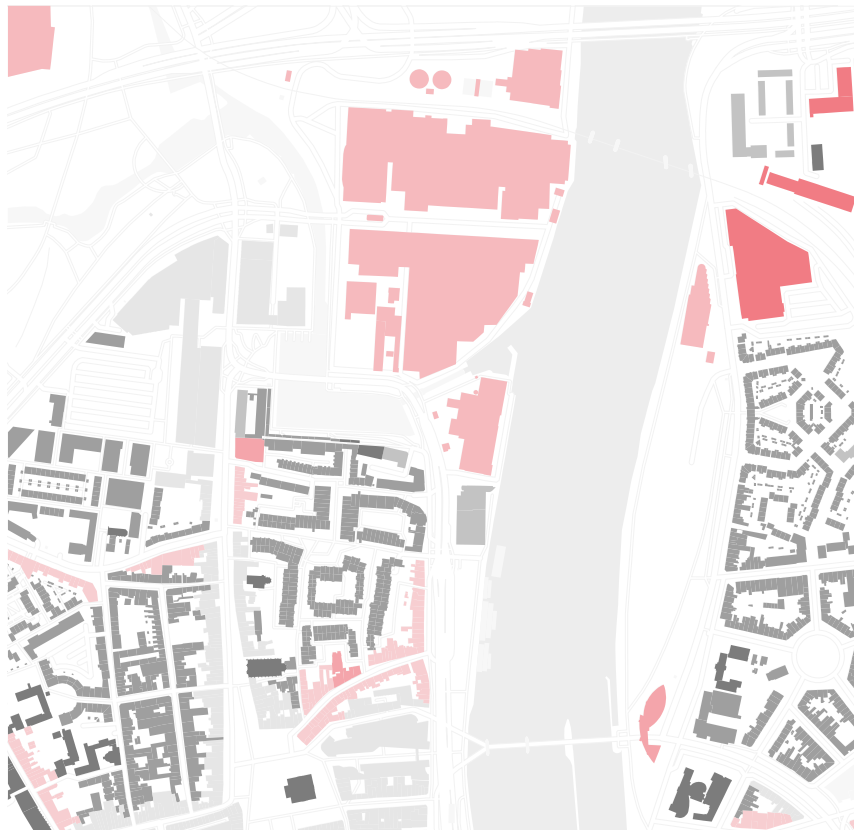
Population pyramid

There is a large division in Maastricht which is different from other Dutch cities. In the pyramid it can be noticed that there are more women than men. The age distribution of the population in Maastricht is unbalanced. Twenty percent of the population is within the age of twenty to thirty.

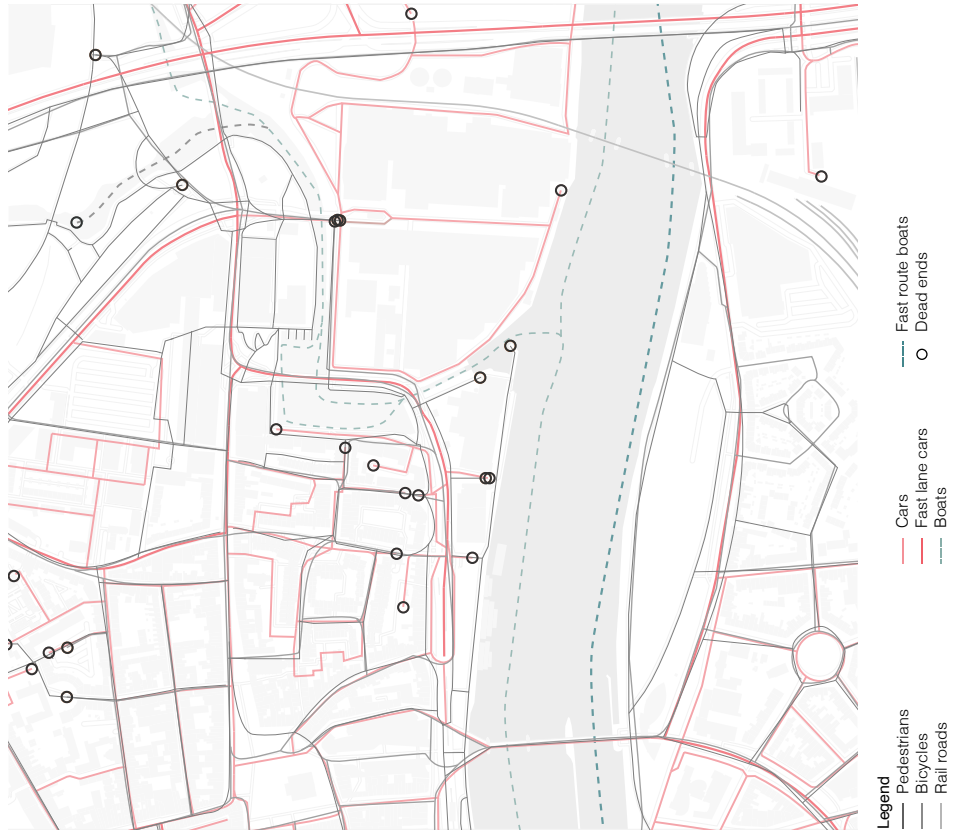


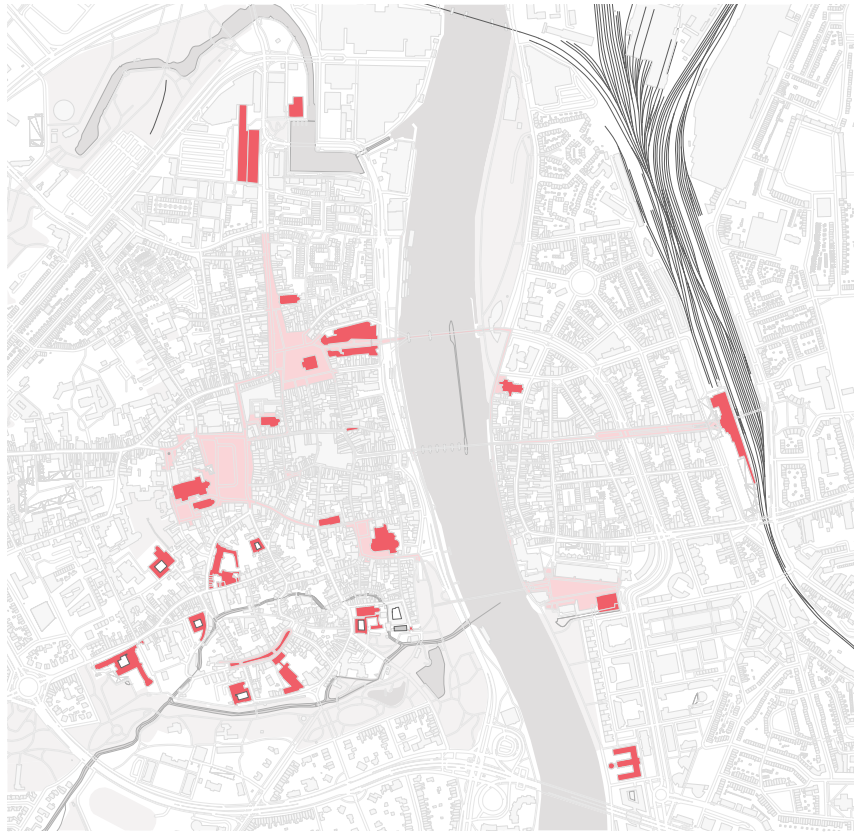


Legend
 Private function
 Public function



Legend
 Restaurants & hotels
 Culture & leisure
 Retail
 Center
 Mixed use
 Business
 Offices
 Dwelling
 Social





- Legend
- Public space
 - Public building

Vision of the municipality

Based on various documents, a webinar and presentations by several people from the municipality of Maastricht, I was able to get a clear picture of the expectations, plans and ambitions of the municipality.

Since 2013, around 100,000 square meter of industrial heritage has been repurposed in the Sphinxkwartier. On and around the former factory complex of sanitary manufacturer Sphinx, a new urban district is being created where people live and work and where the emphasis is on culture, housing, students, retail and catering. Moreover, the district borders the Frontenpark, which is a green walking area with a rich history.

It is important for the municipality that students will stay longer in the city. Therefore, an attractive and broad program in the area is needed to create a diverse offer that connects to a wide audience. According to the municipality, the new Sphinxkwartier with the monumental buildings should obtain a similar kind of atmosphere as Westergas in Amsterdam and Strijp S in Eindhoven. Connecting the pedestrian paths and creating sufficient places with greenery are very important starting points.

The Bassin is seen as the picturesque part of the Sphinxkwartier. It has been an essential place when it comes to industrialization and is also the starting point of the Zuid Willemsvaart. A cinema, music venue, museum for urban planning and architecture and a number of restaurants are currently located along the quay, which activates a part of the Bassin. For the municipality, the Bassin is a very important quality of the area, as they intend to remove a part of the Maasboulevard bridge in order to increase the amenity value of the Bassin.

Combined with the Meuse, the Bassin forms the boundary between the Sappi site and the rest of the city. This industrial area is the focus part of this research. The municipality has proposed a new plan for part of the Sappi site. The southern part of the Sappi site has been sold and is being prepared for a parking garage with housing on top, aimed at both renting and buying.

In this research I assume that a larger part of the factory site will be sold and thus a larger urban plan should be created to make a coherent proposal with a diverse program for a new vibrant area, taking into account a possible expansion to the north. To the south of the Sappi site, located on the Meuse, is the Landbouwbelang. This is an important location, because it forms the connection between the center, the waterfront and the Sappi site. The municipality intends to create a place that is focused on living and meeting.

Opposite the Sappi site, on the other side of the Bassin, the large Eifel building can be found. This building is almost 100 years old and was

the place where the toilet bowls were made. Currently, the building has been transformed into lofts, a student hotel, creative companies and a restaurant. The history is still clearly visible in these spaces and besides that, is exhibited in the 100 meter long passage of the building.

The municipality indicates that the nationally listed buildings in the area need a good future-proof function in order to maintain the building. According to them, this is one of the most sustainable actions that can be done for urban renewal and development.

Part II.

[the buildings]

Social space and buildings

The public domain can be seen as a constitution of areas in a city in which individuals tend to be strangers to one another or who only know one another in terms of nonpersonal identity categories. It is distinct from the private realm and is a form of social space. When you once leave a private space, you move into a world full of biographical and cultural strangers. Its existence is what distinguishes the city from other settlement types. The public realm is therefore the social territory of the city (Lofland, 1998).

Over the course of the centuries there has been a constant shift in the use of public space. Until the nineteenth century, buildings were only exceptionally public. The access of these 'public' buildings was limited and depended on the willingness of the building owners. Thus, the public life was mainly outside.

The development of public space flourished in the nineteenth century, with architectural and spatial means being used to increase the invitation to entry. During the industrial revolution huge masses were opened up as a market. The acceleration and scaling up in distribution and production systems led to large covered buildings, which evoked the mobility and subsequently the tourist industry. This led to the main trigger for social exchange, trade. In all forms of society, much of it takes place in the most public space of the city, the street. This is a significant and fundamental enlargement of the public domain. At the end of the sixties, the society opened up even more. Buildings were made more accessible and open and the street revived vigorously. As a result of mass housing, there was a need to reduce the accessibility of buildings, emphasizing the private domains, which resulted in a decrease of the public domain. The increase in democratization therefore not strengthened the common, but instead an enlargement of the private domain as it offered more freedom. Today, we can see the potential of the public domain, in all forms, and also the different programs that accommodate a communal world. Thus, there has been a shift in the use of the public domain for a long time. In addition, the pandemic makes it essential to accommodate places of social encounters and intersections, now more than ever before (Brinkgreve, 2021).

Social space is inseparable linked to place. According to Lofland (1998), this has to do with the emotional and local attachment. The essence of this lies in the intention of the unconscious that place defines as a profound centre of human existence. The association of a certain place is a vital source of both individual and collective identity. It refers to meaningful pieces of space that are well known or known about. This is also reflected in the motivations and arguments of Aldo van Eyck and Herman Hertzberger. They strive for architecture that takes

relationships between people as a point of departure and stimulates encounters. This is also known as structuralism. Structuralism is a typical Dutch movement and goes against functionalism, where the city must be functional and work, living and leisure are separated from each other (Haan, n.d.). According to the structuralists, this separation of functions hampered the opportunities for encounters. They therefore focused fully on the in-between spaces, the common spaces and the places where the participation and meeting of users is promoted. Key features are the human scale, experience of space and freedom of the individual. It concerns the relationship between people and between people and their environment. A space should therefore create a certain setting where social interaction is possible. In architecture, this can be expressed in many forms, such as a bench or a plinth. It provides places where people can observe, meet or relax.

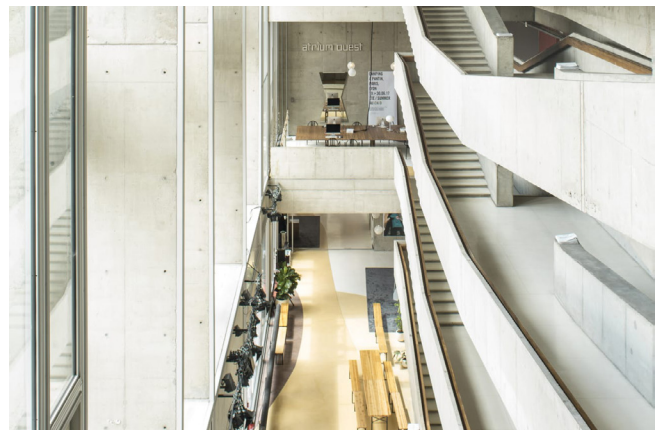
It is therefore also important not to design all spaces, but to leave space blank to the users of such a place. This offers a creative space that is determined by the wishes and needs of the users, making that local and emotional attachment visible. Social spaces should regard the collective needs and individual needs as equal and dependent on each other (Hertzberger, 2013).

Two examples can be found in Paris. One designed space within a new program still functions as an indoor circulation area while provoking different encounters by connecting the stairs and ramp at the heart of the building. Another example was the public library, where the glazed facade functions as a mirror which is used as a platform for performance. This is an activity that was not intended, but arose from the actions of people.

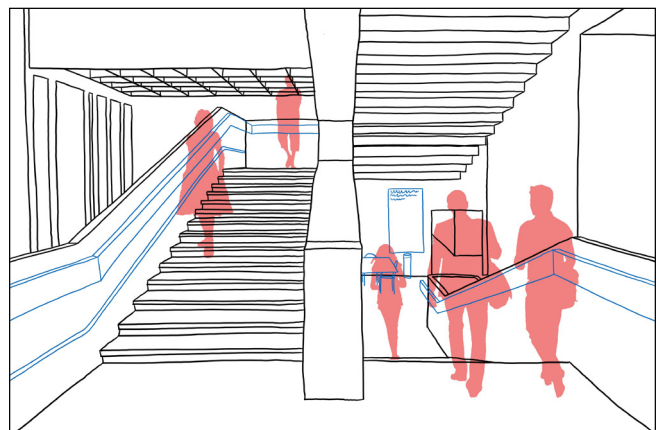
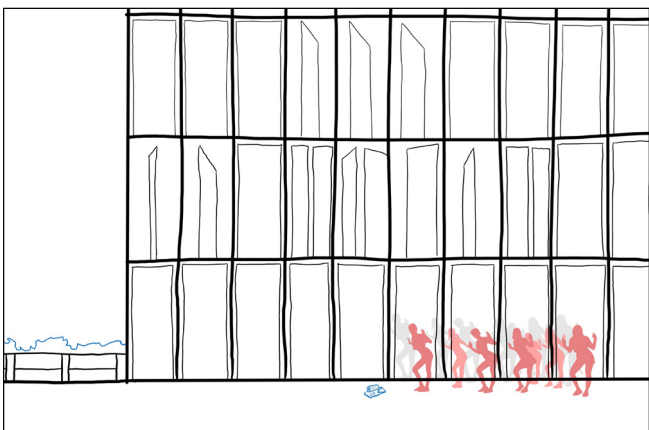
Within a building there are different elements that can express the degree of human connection. The form arises from dimensions and is materialized and designed. This stems from the spatial relationships that make the activity possible. A common area in buildings can therefore be regarded as a public area in the city. Van Eyck and Hertzberger both talk about the experience of people and the way architecture can influence people's feelings and well-being. They both speak of the inbetween area, which they call the threshold area. This area provides a setting for transition and connection of two areas with different territorial claims and forms the spatial conditions for the establishment of these areas (Van Eyck, 1982). It should not be seen as a border, but a territory and is the architectural translation of hospitality. The threshold area helps to soften an abrupt division between inside and outside and provides an opportunity for accommodation between adjacent worlds. It is the place in the public domain where the building meets the city. It is an area which meaning changes over time and differs within a space and the perception of people in that space.

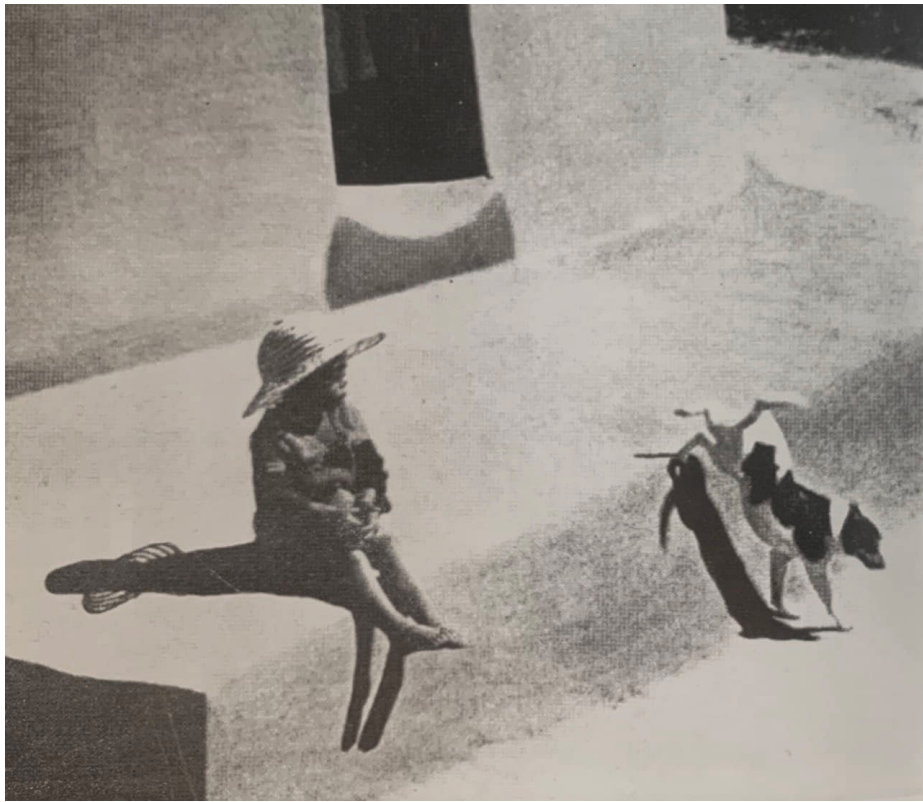


National Library of France
Dominique Perrault



National Dance Center
Jacques Kalisz

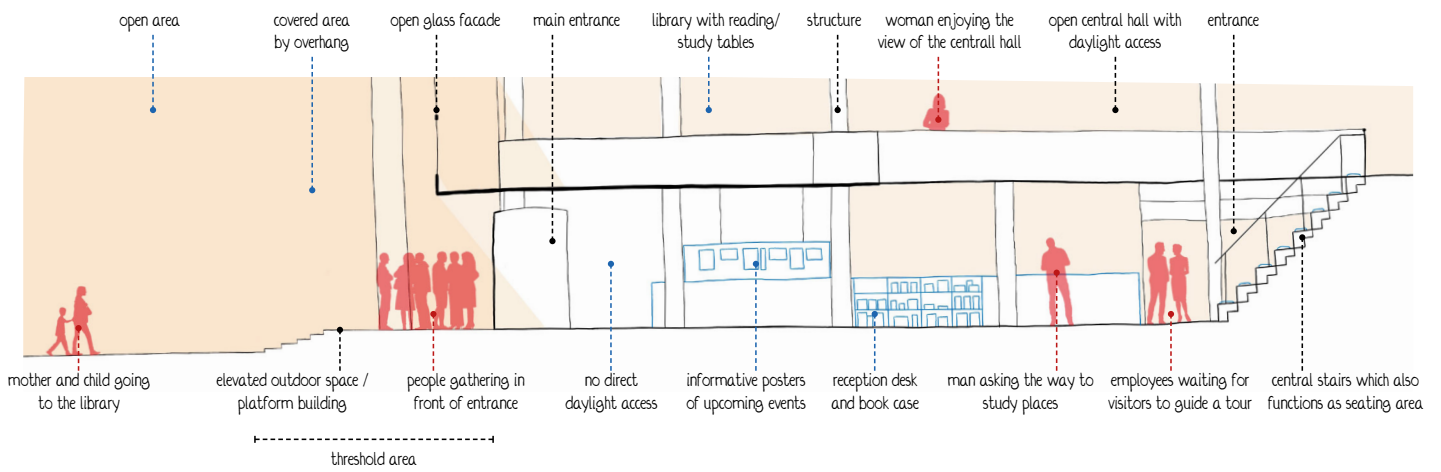




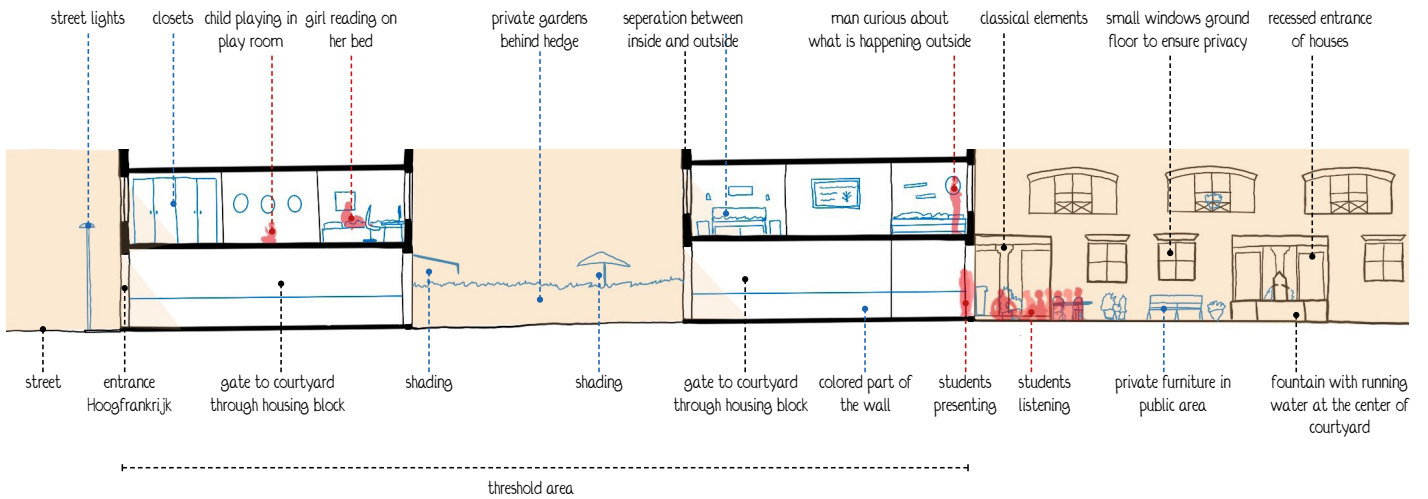
Threshold area

Aldo van Eyck, 1982

Plein 1992 // Central Library Maastricht



Street // Hoogfrankrijk // Courtyard





“A strong tension exists between the scripted and unscripted uses of the city and its architecture...”

Angel Muñoz, december 2016

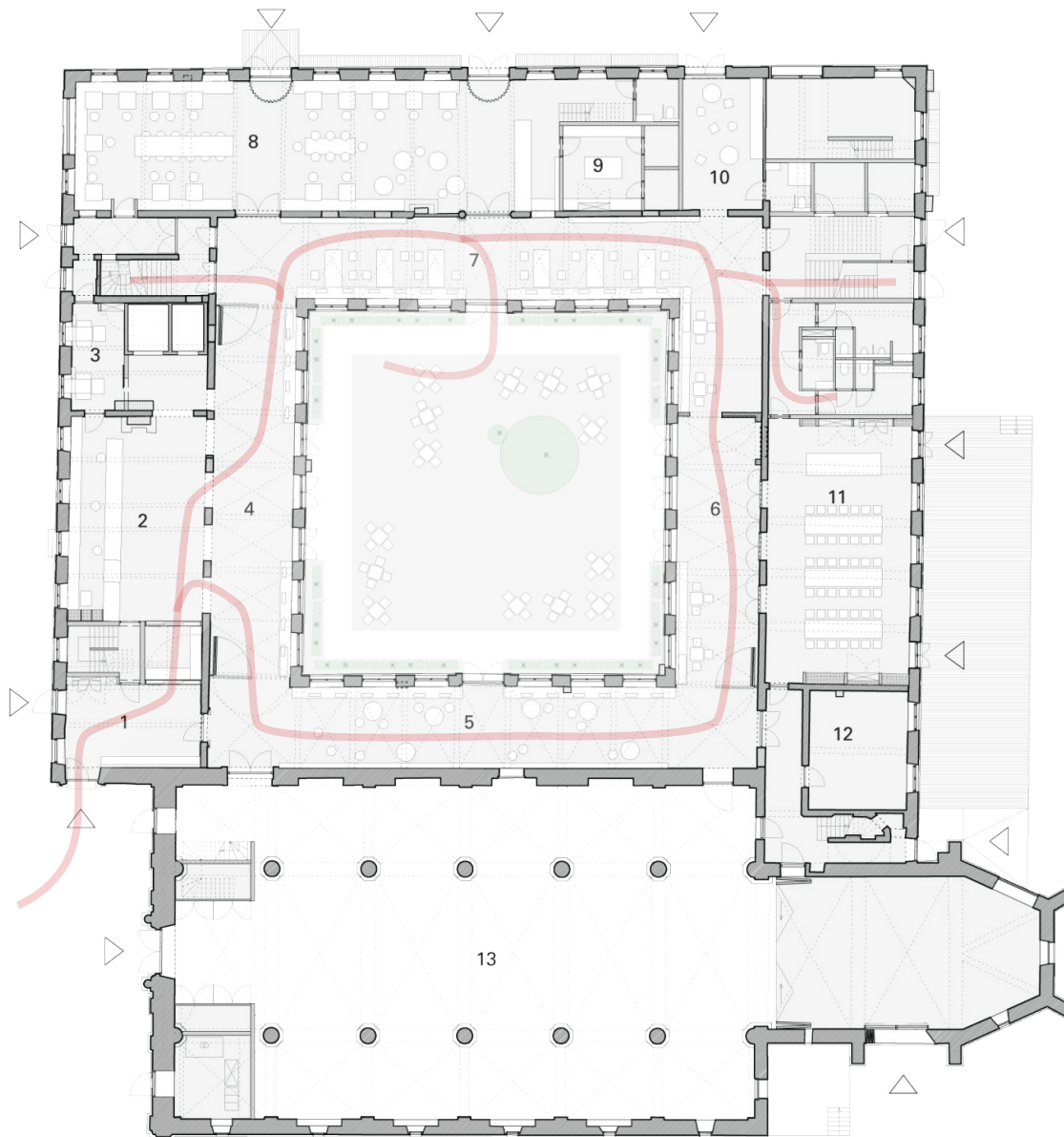
Where the previous chapter discussed the public spaces in the city, which mainly took place outside, this section focuses more on the transitions in the public domain, from outside to inside, from public to private, from collective to individual and from large scale to small scale spaces. The transitions are perceived by moving, which is why it is important to look at the sequence of spaces and how these spaces are different from others based on the dimensions, materials, colors and the incidence of light. These are all tangible features, derived from order, territory, accessibility and degree of publicness, that determine the spatial qualities and are linked to the human senses. I investigated how buildings function and searched for elements that play a role by creating social space. I experienced many social spaces this year which all provided another atmosphere expressed by the features of the space and by the activities of the people.

This part is focused on the narrative of two cultural buildings I observed. The first building is Predikheren in Mechelen, Belgium. It is a transformation of an old monastery to the city library with meeting rooms, exhibition spaces, a restaurant, café and courtyard. The second building is the Lochal in Tilburg, the Netherlands. The industrial hall functioned as a workplace for locomotives and is transformed into a cultural building with a library, café, exhibition spaces, workshop spaces, co-workspaces and auditorium.

I captured my journey through these building by taking pictures and writing down the different elements of the spaces that, in my opinion, contributed to the atmosphere of the space. I merged these into the sketches you can find here. I mainly paid attention to the legibility of the building, the materials, dimensions, light and colours.

Predikheren, Mechelen

On a sunny Tuesday in April I traveled to Mechelen in Belgium where Predikheren is located. I started my journey in front of the building where I reached the entrance of the building via four steps. Despite the many openings in the facade, the building felt closed from the outside. This is mainly due to the fact that there are few openings at eye level. Once inside, I arrive at the information desk via a draught lobby, after which I stand in the corridor of preachers. The corridors lead around the courtyard and have a special incidence of light. The addition of the wood as paneling by the architect is a subtle but warm addition to the space and fits well with the historic character. The natural stone floor also stands out, which ensures that you can hear people coming from around the corner. The silent workplaces are on the first floor. These are perpendicular to the aisle, so people are easily distracted and look up when I walk by. The small cobblestones give a feeling of being outside. Despite the impact noise, this does not disturb. The room acoustics are good because of the bookcases and wood panelling. The paneling also ensures that seats and bookcases are integrated into the interior and do not feel like separate elements. On the top floor, the historic roof is particularly displayed with an intimate character. The skylights near the ridge give a warm atmosphere and light up the construction. A linoleum floor finish has been used, which reduces the sound of walking people and sliding chairs. I notice that I cannot put my belongings on a table near me when I want to leaf through a book, which makes me move quickly around the floor. I come across a few remote workplaces that do not look to be used much. Then I continue the journey to the courtyard. Then I continue the journey to the courtyard. Here I pass the cafe where the sound of the cups reverberates through the room. There is a lot of reverberation in the courtyard, but nevertheless there is a nice and calming atmosphere here. I sat downstairs for a while with a book on the bench incorporated in the building. On the one hand, this gave a feeling of openness and exposure, while the light was pleasant and you can observe the building and life in the building well.



begane grond

- 1 inkomzas
- 2 inkomhal met lockers
- 3 dropbox
- 4 informatie /zelfuitleen / aanwinsten
- 5 cyberzone
- 6 loungeruimte
- 7 leeszone kranten
- 8 café
- 9 keuken café
- 10 peuter- en kleuterzone
- 11 refter met keuken
- 12 sacristie
- 13 kerk/agora



Predikheren, Mechelen
Korteknie Stuhmacher Architecten



Approach



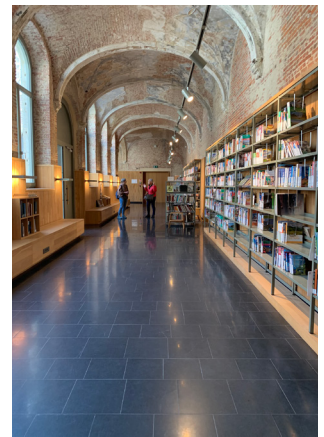
Threshold area



Entrance



Entrance hall



Library



Library / study places

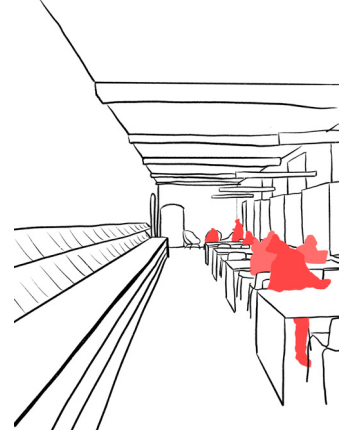
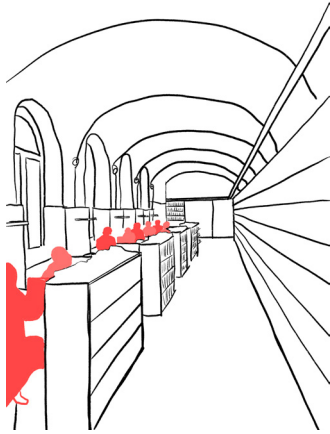
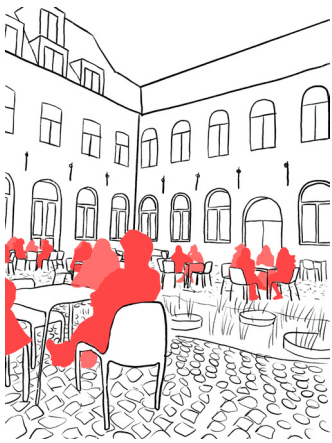
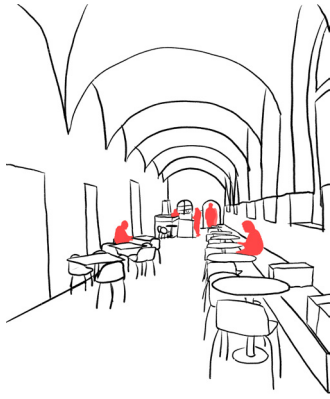
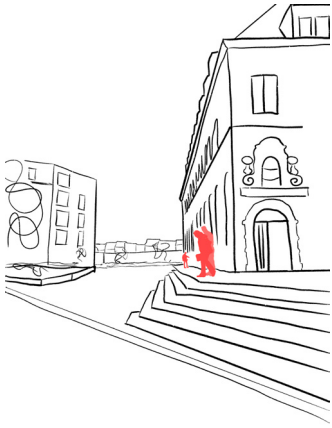


Library



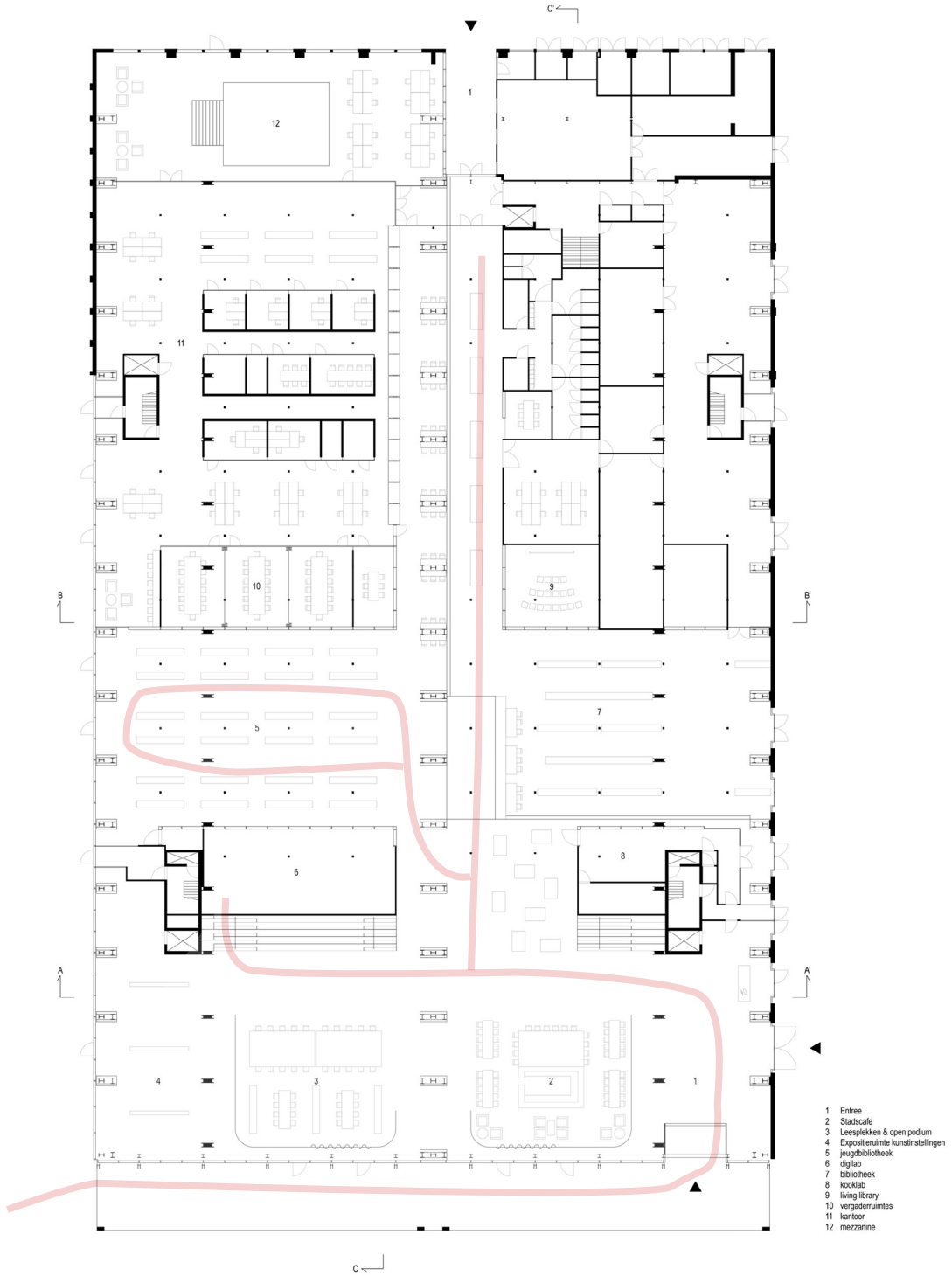
Meeting point



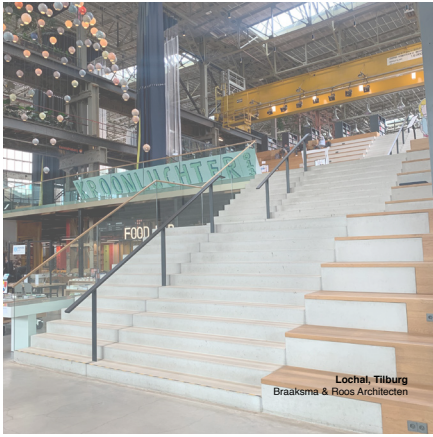


Lochal, Tilburg

Two weeks after visiting preachers, I visited the Lochal in Tilburg. This was also on a sunny day around lunchtime. From the train station I walked towards the new industrial area where many buildings are being upgraded. I found the exact entrance of the Lochal difficult to find because the entire facade was the same. Once inside I went through a draught lobby to the main hall. I entered a huge hall where many areas were immediately visible. The most public functions are located downstairs and the most private functions and the children's department are located under the prominent staircase or on the upper floors. Because of the large storey height on the ground floor, the chairs and tables are also raised. Via the stairs you walk past a variety of workplaces, on the stairs and along the railing. On the first floor you will find the many rows of bookcases, the various meeting rooms. The second floor offers people workplaces which are situated around the large void. The workplaces are focused on the large void and ensure a sort of enclosure that you are not immediately distracted by passers-by. It instead offers a look on the large curtain that separates the space below the void from other spaces. It is striking that there are few quiet places and more meeting places. The small study rooms can only be rented and are spread over the second floor. The publicly accessible spaces are all in open connection and there are few soft materials used, which means that there is a lot of reverberation in the building. The floors are finished with linoleum, which makes the spaces feel spacious and light and makes the interior stand out more. I also experienced glare from the direct incident light in the workplace. Despite this, there were many people in the building, which made it a vibrant place. The steel bookcases are spacious and the building is logically arranged. Similar to Predikheren, you also walk around a room, so you can come back to the starting point in one direction.



- 1 Entree
- 2 Stadscafe
- 3 Leesplekken & open podium
- 4 Expositieruimte kunstinstellingen
- 5 jeugdbibliotheek
- 6 digilab
- 7 bibliotheek
- 8 kooklab
- 9 living library
- 10 vergaderruimte
- 11 kantoor
- 12 mezzanine



Lochal, Tilburg
Braaksma & Roos Architecten

Approach



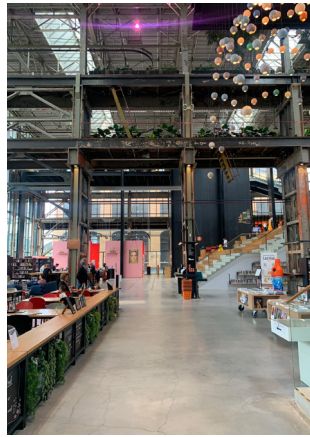
Threshold area



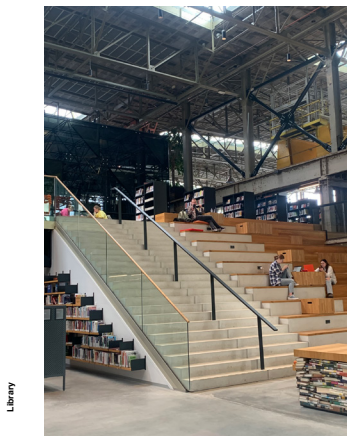
Entrance



Entrance hall



Meeting point



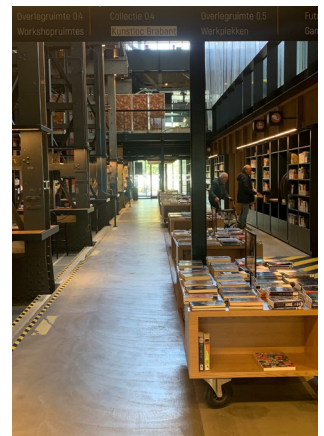
Library

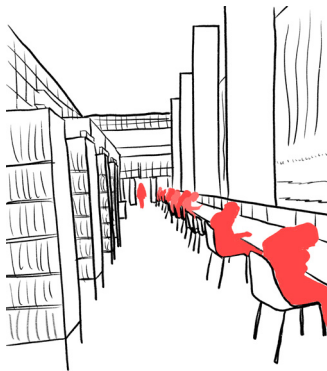
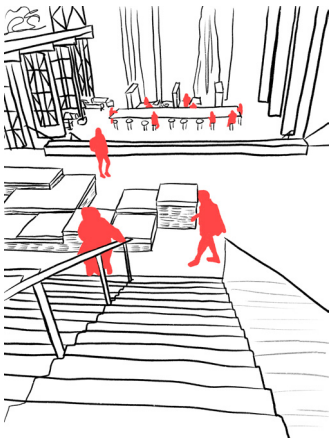
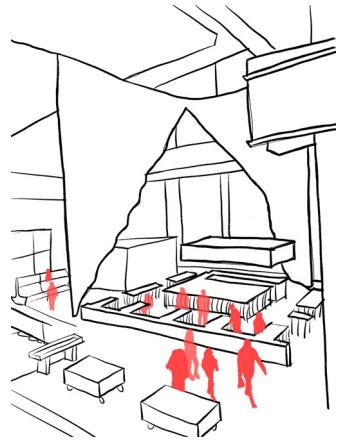
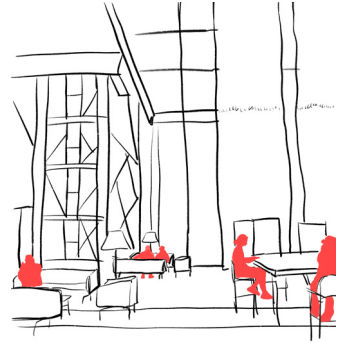
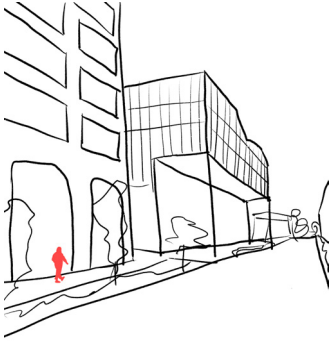


Library / study places



Library





*“Maastricht ... [is] a city that is very much layered,
there is always something to discover.”*

Ninke Happel, 2021

Urban Plan

For the urban plan we were divided in groups of three. Until this moment we collected a lot of data of the city, by experiencing it ourselves, studying the city's history and the associated zeitgeist, the city of today and the vision for the future, taking interviews with different architects, observing people and analyzing the built environment. This allowed us to form a good picture of the current situation and the qualities and shortcomings of the site. The conclusion from the analysis of the city can be drawn that a new environment had to be created where the population is more mixed in every way and a new public space should be connected to the rest of the city.

The site is the transition zone between the historic city center, the industrial area and future residential districts in the north of Maastricht. It felt like an isolated space where scale and density determine the atmosphere and the Maasboulevard bridge functions as a border between the site and the rest of the Sphinxkwartier. I identified several negative spaces, which I understood as places where there is no visual accessibility and connection to the surrounded urban spaces. I saw the benefits of the location, but also the challenges to solve this issue in obtaining a new vibrant area for local residents in a secluded area.

As a group, we wanted to make the area more accessible for public life, and thus to connect it with the city center. In order to make this happen, in this transition zone, the Maasboulevard bridge has to be reconsidered, as this is currently a border between the two districts. We immersed ourselves in the plans of the municipality and looked for improvements and possibilities of the current infrastructure and mobility issues. Despite the fact that the Sappi factory is a striking element in its environment, the current infrastructure and the density of the site form a barrier to actually approach the area. The size of the Sappi factory is as large as an adjacent historic building block in the city center, but it has no permeability, no streets nor courtyards. In addition, this area is one of the few places in Maastricht where the Meuse also enters the land, nevertheless the water offers little quality with its current use. To reactivate the area, we used the water to improve the quality of life and accommodation and make this identity of Maastricht stronger. Finally, we wanted to make use of what is already there, by utilizing the historical quality of the area. We did this by focusing, among other things, on negative spaces. These are spaces that are not used at all or are not used efficiently. This is both on an urban scale, but also at building level, where spaces are empty or not fully utilized. On the site, these spaces are the vacant buildings of the Sappi factory, of which

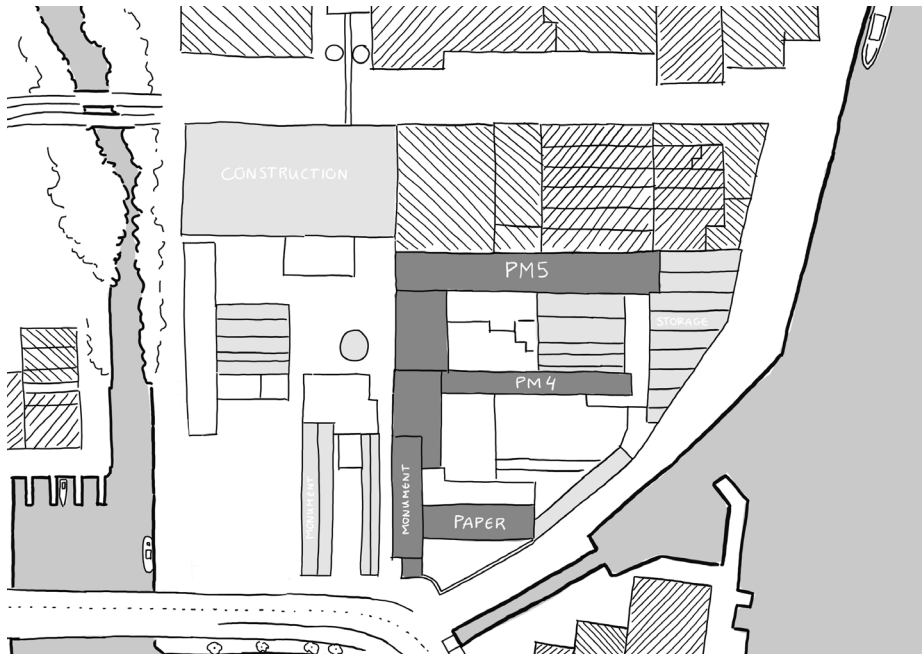
some are used as storage spaces and the parking lot. The new area will respond to future uses of the Sphinxkwartier and an expansion of the city.

We wrote down our observations, which in our opinion should be revitalized, and developed some rules for the urban plan which led to our proposal. We were aware that the sun is the key factor for people in determine where to sit, that around the flows of people there should be great spaces and that open spaces should have more layers, for example adding steps, edges, corners, different types of landscapes and sheltering, to make an area pleasant and interesting.

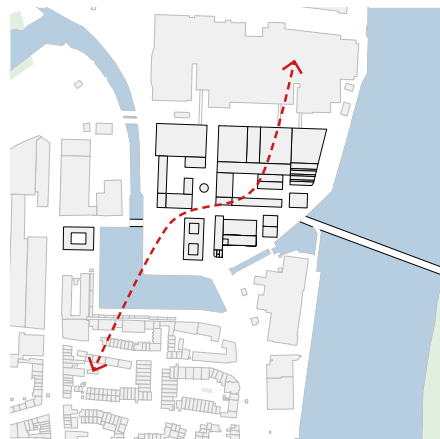
Our proposal contains an improvement of the infrastructure by diverting the cars to the main roads and designating the site as a car-free zone. As a result, the Maasboulevard bridge can be demolished and the site will be visually connected to the city. Next to that, the accessibility is increased by substituting the Maasboulevard bridge by a bridge near Lumiere that connects the east and west side of the Bassin and a bridge over the lock to introduce a walking loop along the water.

We determined the quality of each of the buildings and proposed in order to inventory which buildings should be preserved and which may be (partially) demolished in order to optimize the quality of the public space. We used the differences in height of the landscape and introduced an urban park along the water, resulting in a great public space.

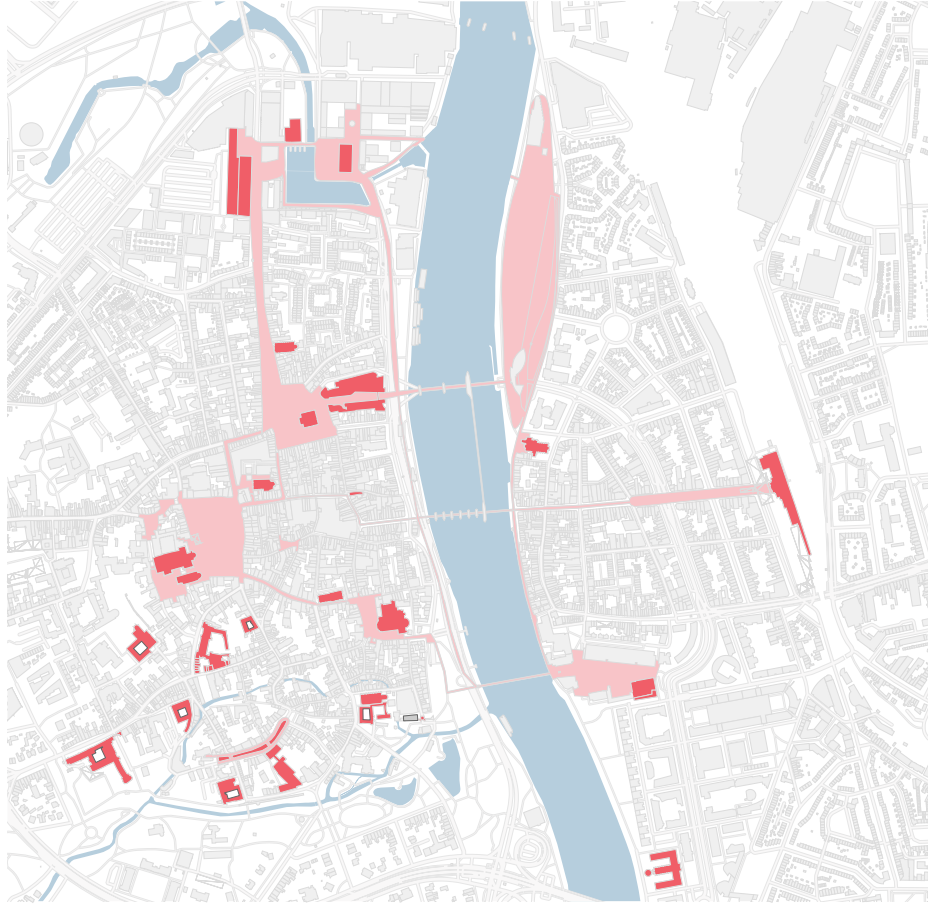
The proposal is built around two designed public axes, which are formed from place to place and in this way represent a clear routing system in the area. These axes will lead the people from public space to public space, which all offer another program. We focused on a mixed-use program related to culture, technology, innovation, education and sports come together, with courtyards, gates, squares and places to discover, which are elements that fit Maastricht. All these squares and public buildings are connected to the other squares of Maastricht, to create a better and more fluent transition of the historic city center and the industrial area.



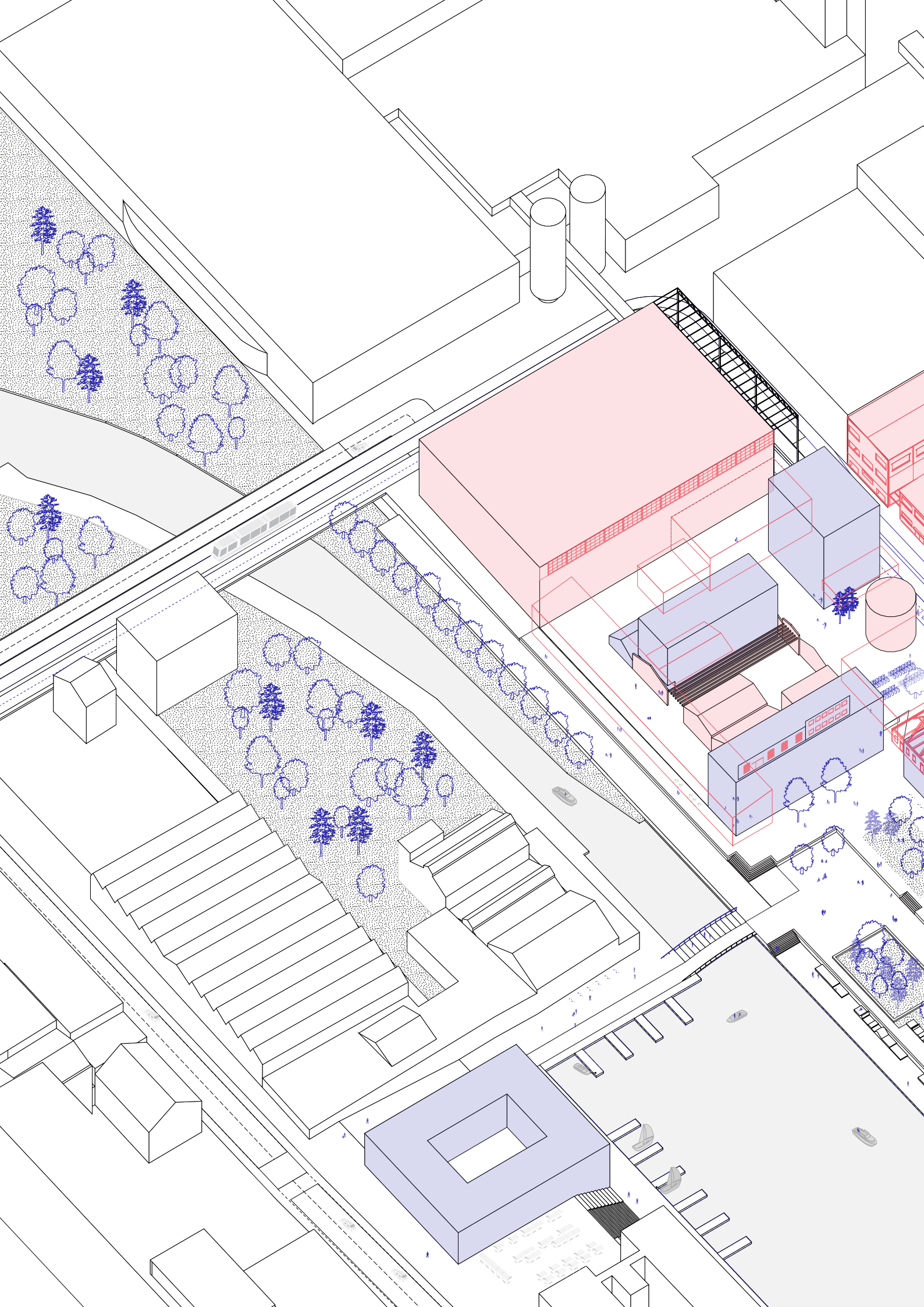
Site urban plan

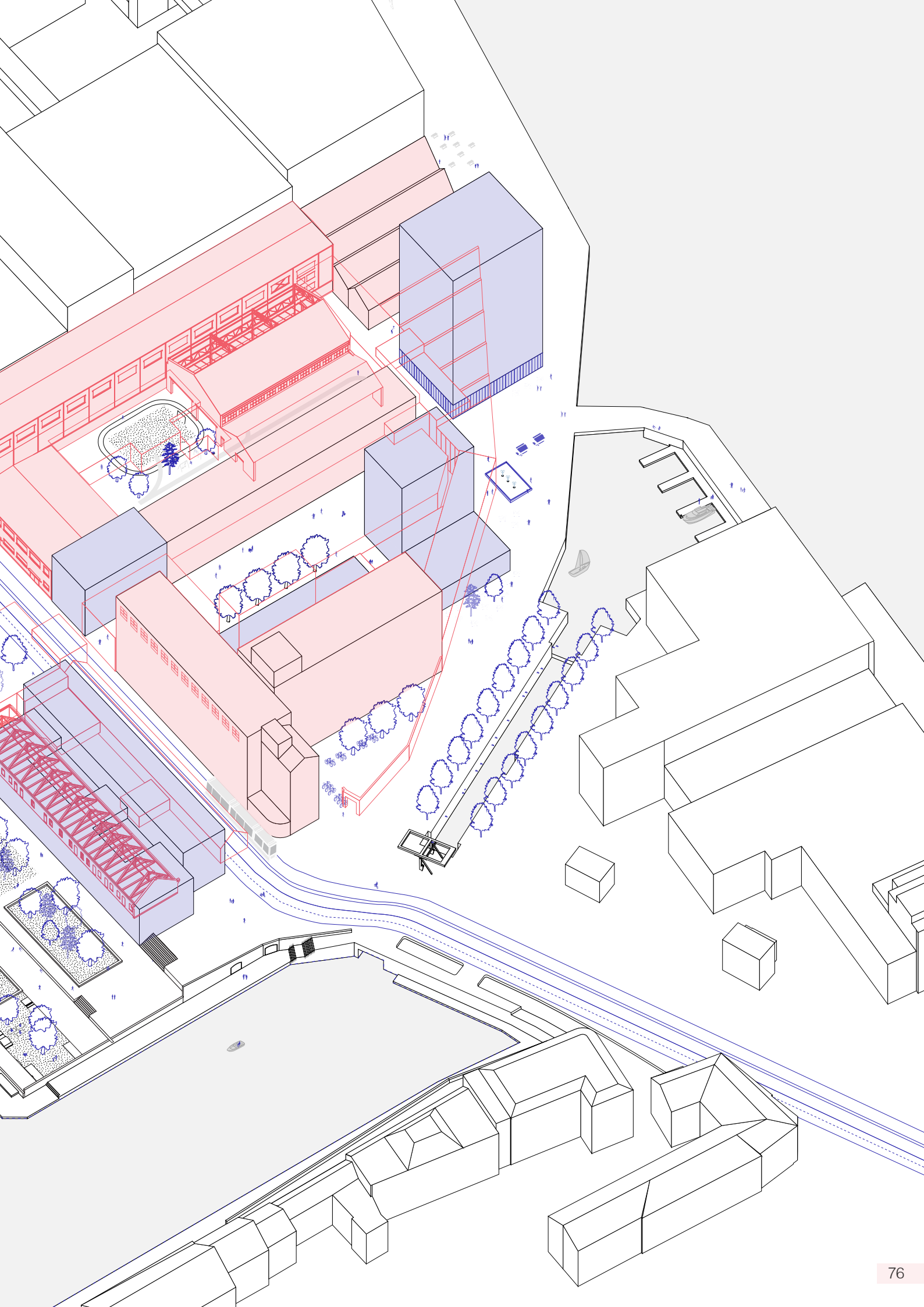


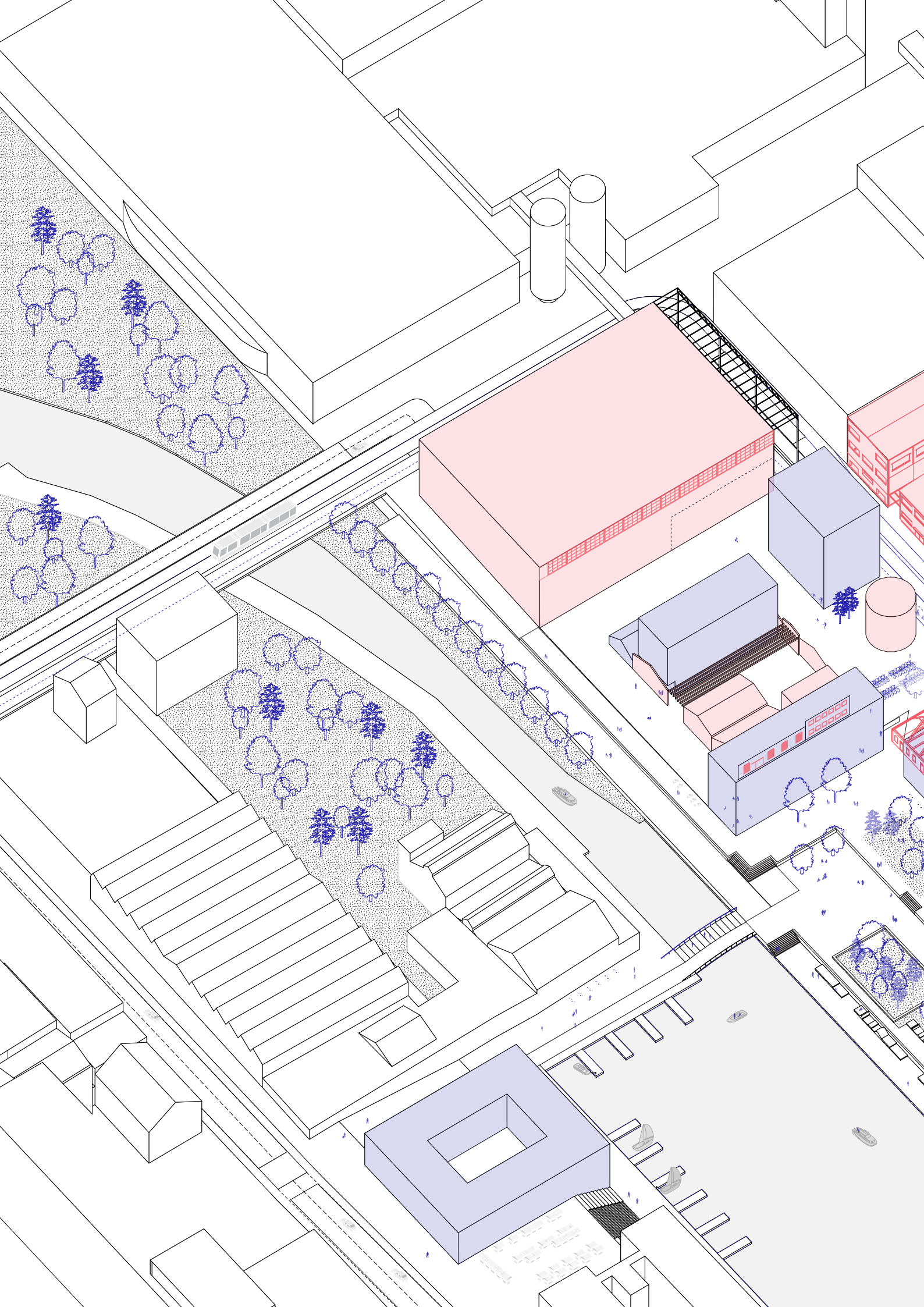
Transitions of urban proposal

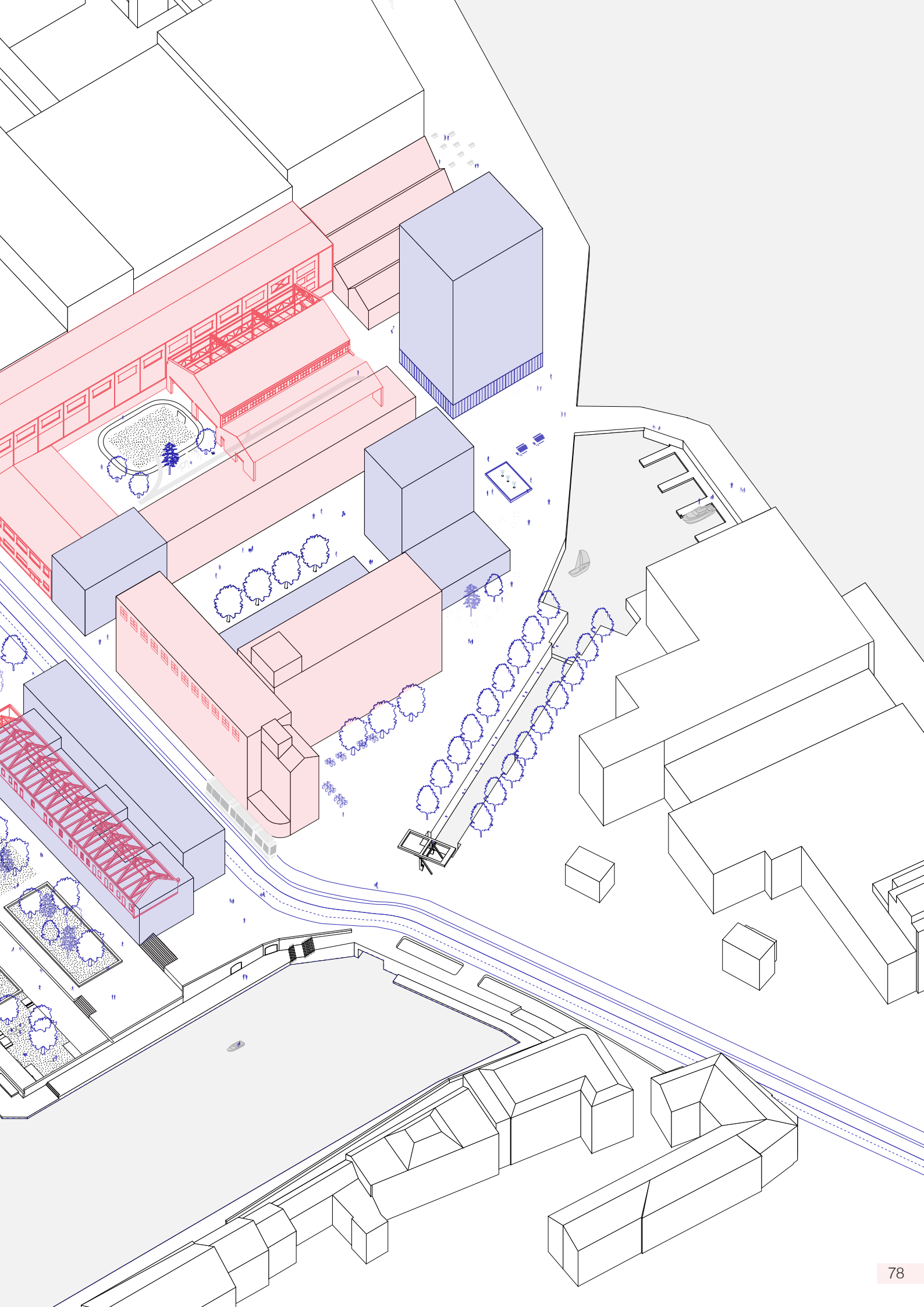


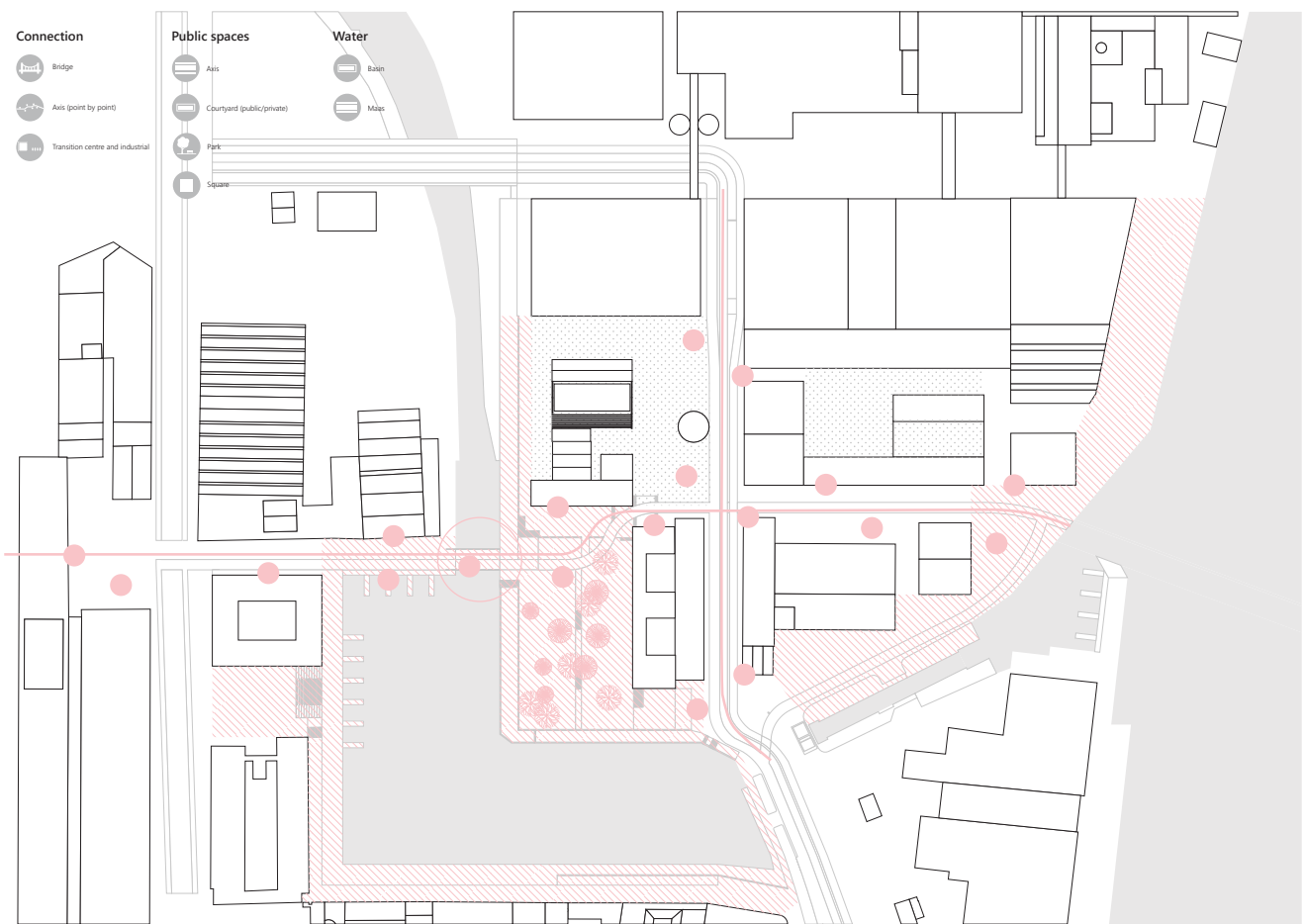
Connecting the public domain



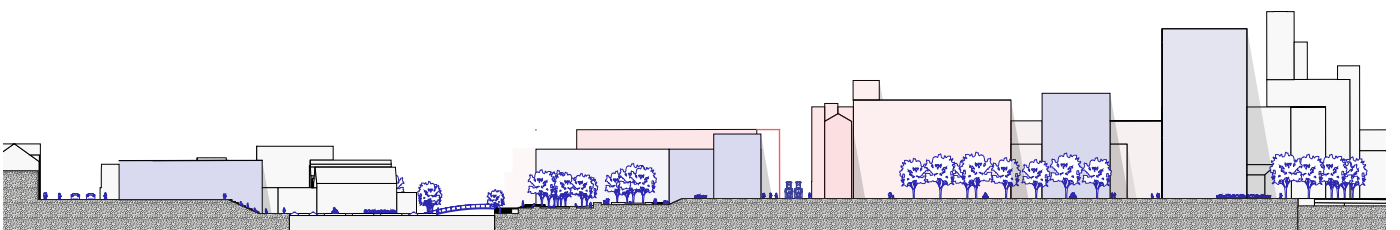
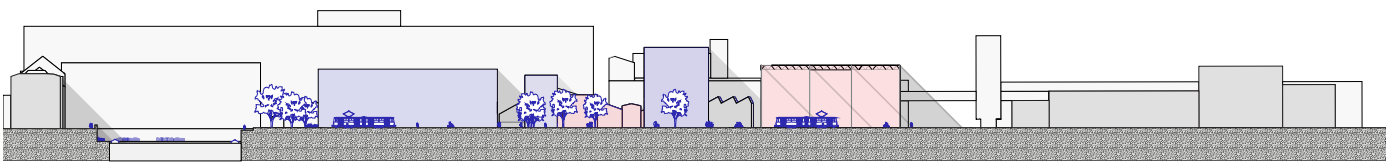
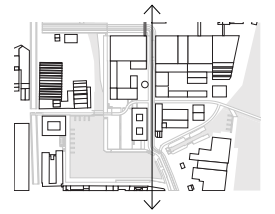
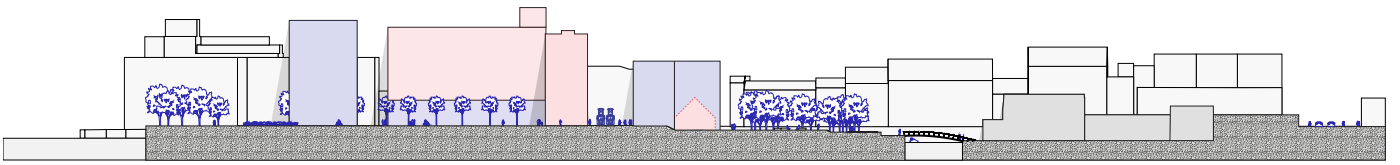








Themes of the urban plan



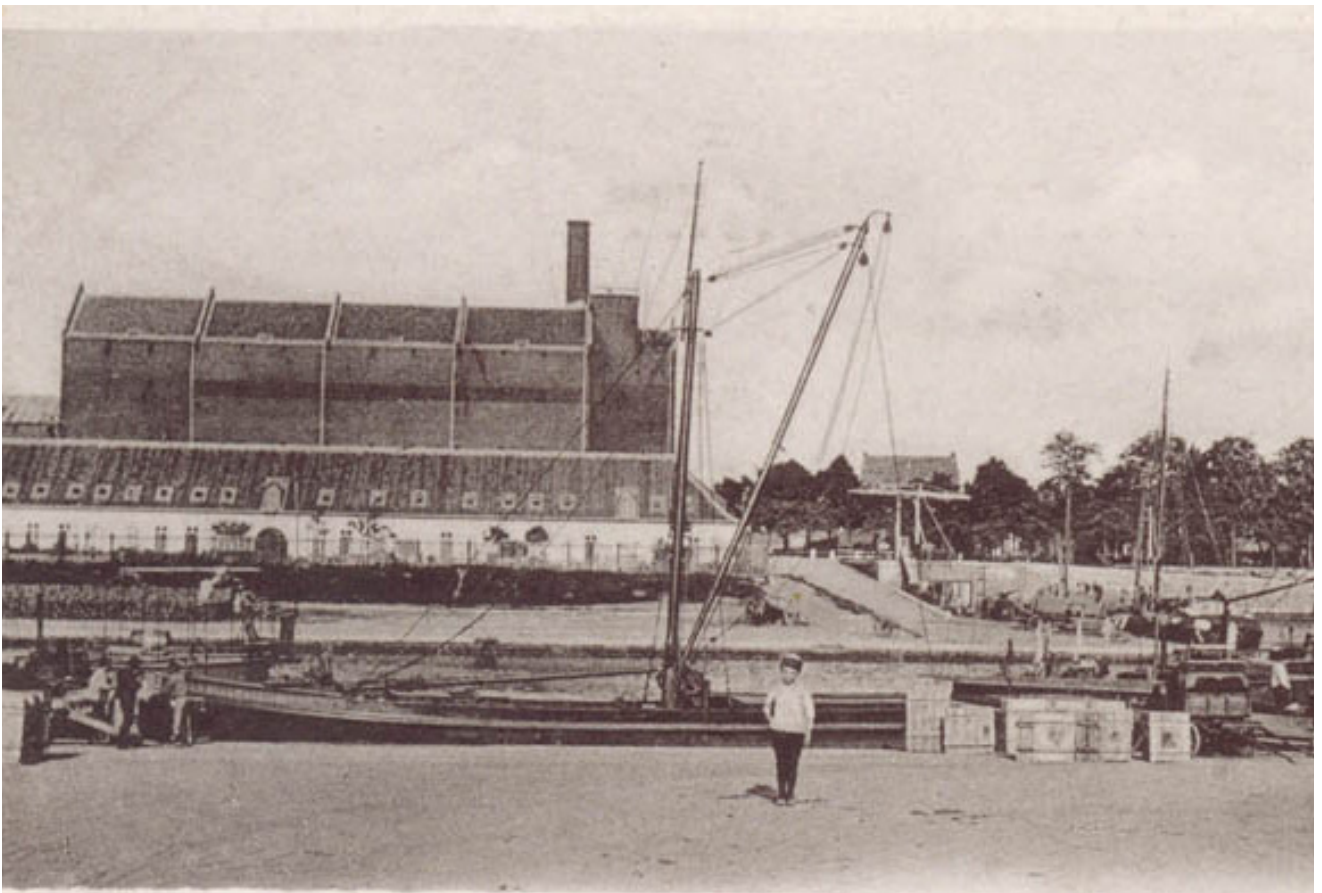
Affuitenloods

The Affuitenloods is the oldest building at the Sappi terrain and has a rich history. It was built as a warehouse of gun carriage in 1827. In 1878, it was sold to the paper factory and transformed into 23 workers' houses. Extra openings were made to let daylight in and offer the workers private entrances. In 1941, it has been used as canteen and space for gymnastics training. A large arched gate was added in the west facade as the building was intended for a larger public. In 1976, two elongated office buildings were built in front of the Affuitenloods, which was partially used as a back storage for the offices. In 1979, the largest adjustment on the building took place, where the south end of the building was cut off in order to make room for the construction of the Maasboulevard bridge. The pitched roof on the end was cut off and closed off by a solid wall.

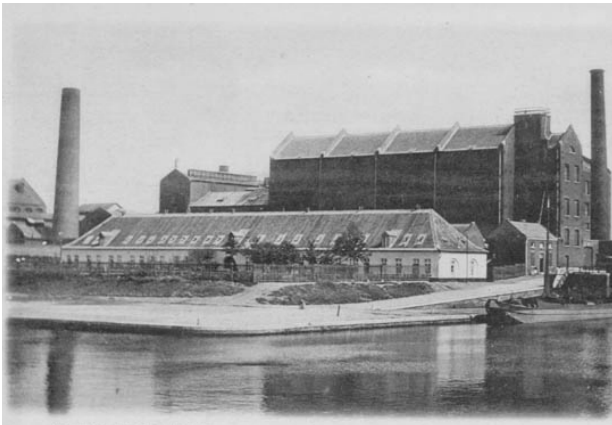
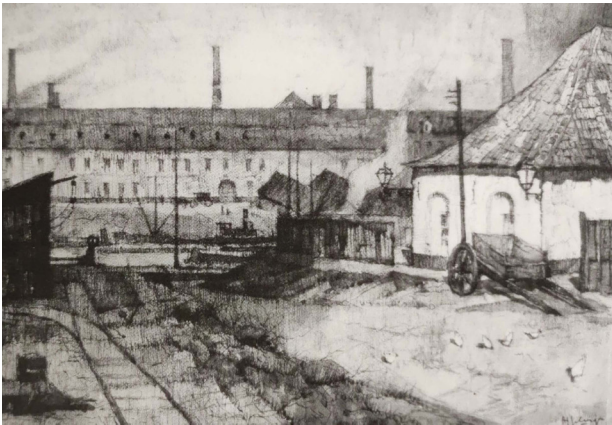
The Affuitenloods is an elongated brick building painted in white, with wooden trusses and a pitched tiled roof. In about 200 years of time, the Affuitenloods was continuously in the state of changing, including its direct surrounding landscapes, its function and the building shape. The Affuitenloods has stayed recognizable while also unfamiliar after going through different stages of modifications. In the new master plan of the municipality, they decided to demolish the Affuitenloods. In their value assessment of the building they stated that the Affuitenloods has already lost its original values and characters after the modifications that have made it increasingly unrecognisable.

It can be argued that the Affuitenloods experienced some major changes which nowadays cannot be observed. The existing situation contains traces of the more recent modifications of the building. The original wooden trusses are still visible today. The north end of the building has been built with a series of extensions. Some openings are replaced with larger ones and some are closed-off with panels or filled with bricks. There are also steel sheets attached perpendicular to the building for further spatial divisions.

The transformations that have taken place in the ground of this part of the site is also something unique. The height differences in the landscape originate from the fortifications. The Affuitenloods was built on top of an elevated platform which was a part of the fortification. These height differences have been simplified later for the construction of new buildings and the Maasboulevard bridge. Currently, the southern part of the Affuitenloods has its floor in line with the surrounding ground plane while the northern part is sunken, with newer constructions built on a higher ground.



Historical photos of the Bassin and the Sappi site from the city archive.



Historical photos of the Bassin and the Sappi site from the city archive.



Historical photos of the Bassin and the Sappi site from the city archive.



The Bassin and the Sappi site we can see today.



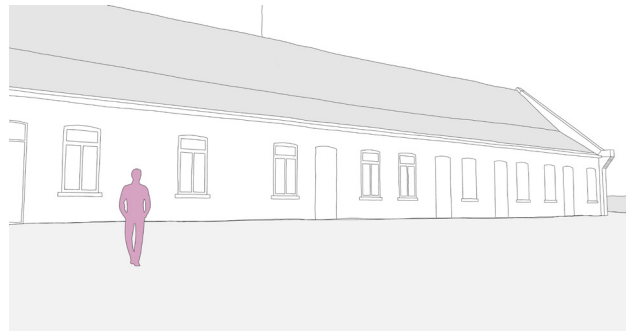
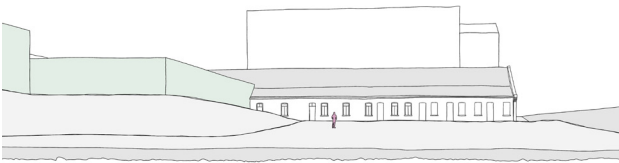
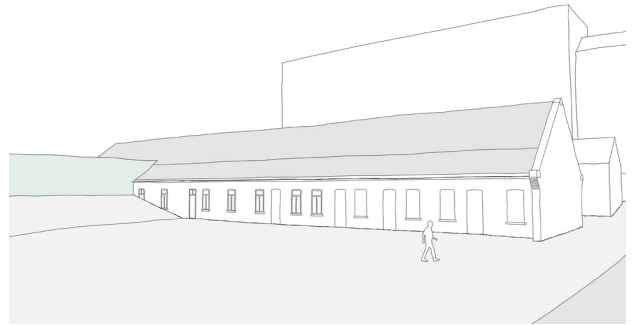
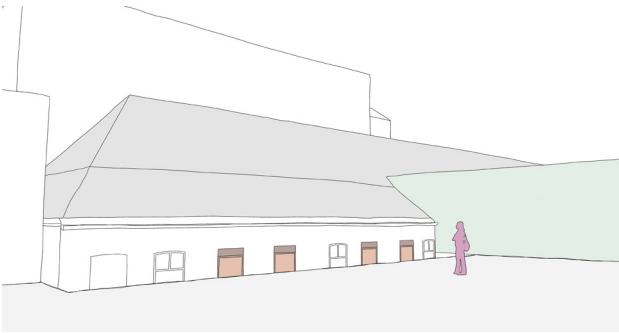
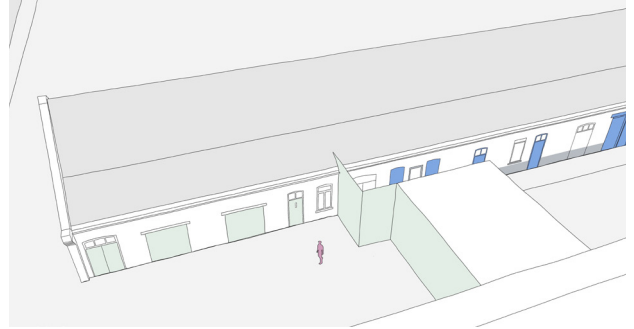
Arrival at the Affuitenloods.



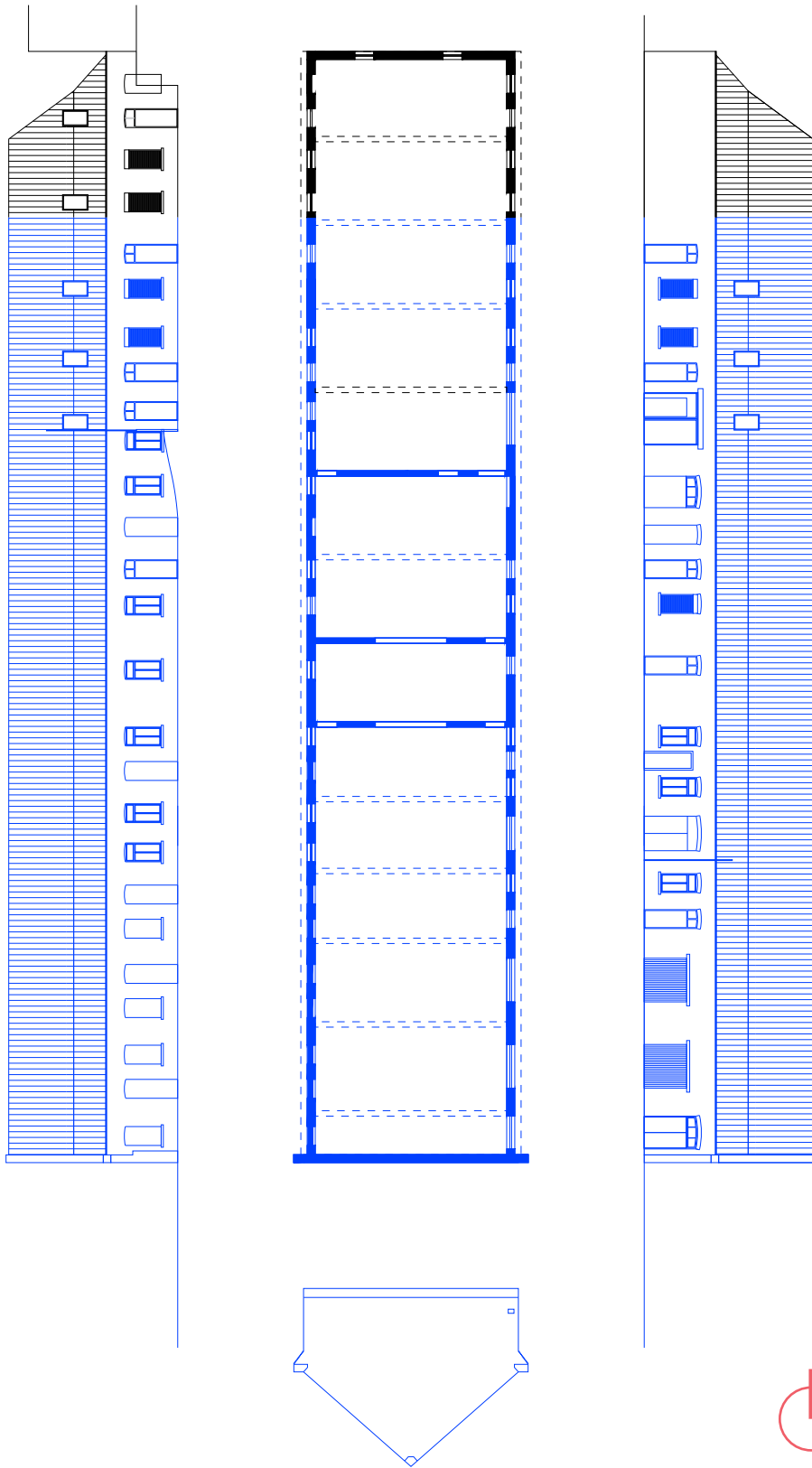
The Affuitenloods we can see today.



Elements of the Affuitenloods.



Perceiving the Affuitenloods from different heights in the existing landscape.



Drawings of the Affuitenloods.

Part III.

[the human scale]

Program

Although the new urban plan for the site takes into account a mixed program and the scale of both industrial area and city centre, it does not yet ensure that a completely new urban area is integrated into the urban fabric and at the same time also be a lively place where communities interact.

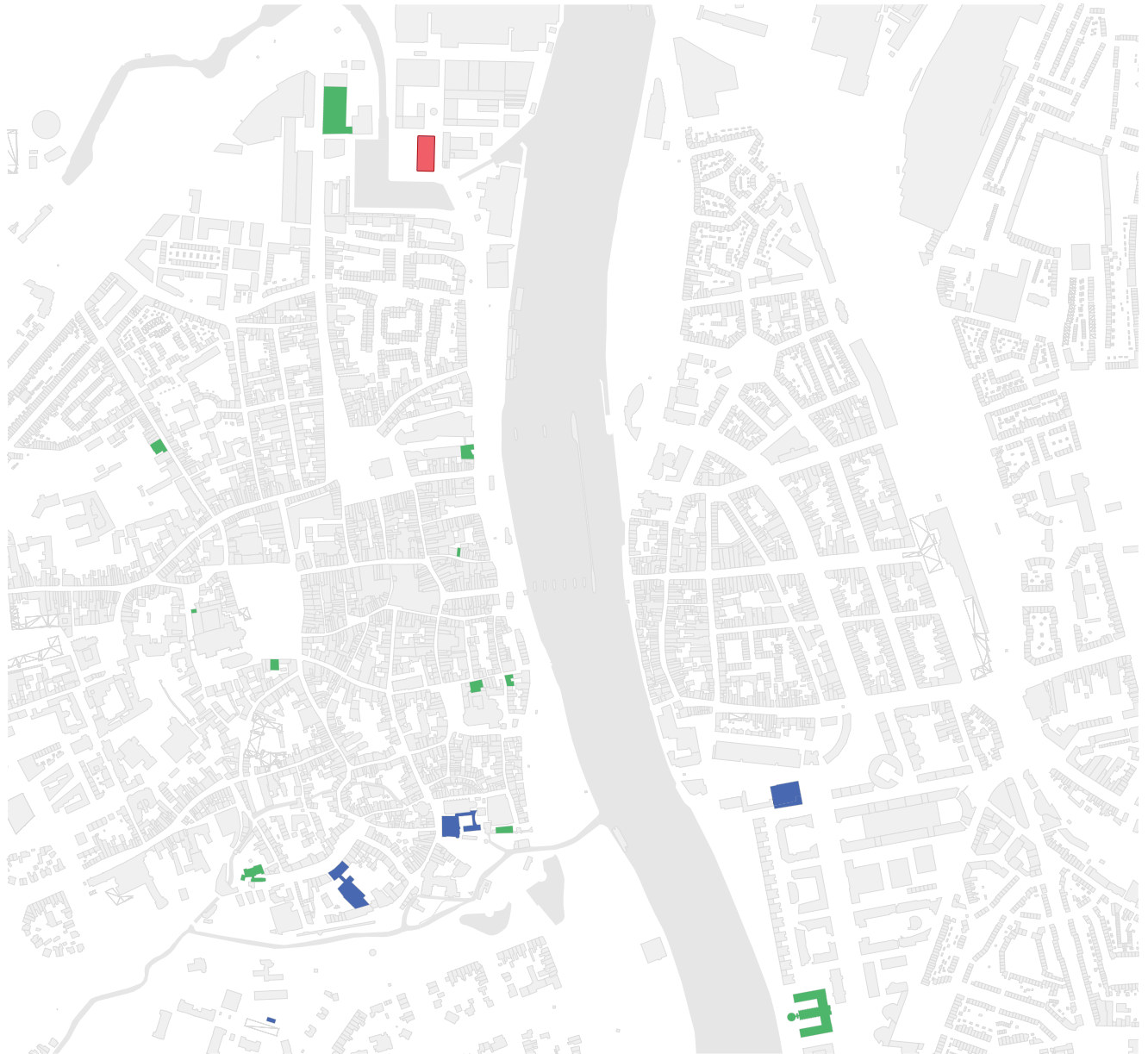
The plot I decided to work on is located in the center of the urban plan, near the intersection of the two axes and is connected to the urban park and Bassin. Because of its prominent location, we chose that this building should fulfil a public function. During the urban analysis I noticed there is a lack of public buildings in the north of Maastricht. I therefore propose a cultural building, which offers the diversity of functions for a diversity of people in one single building. I see this as a place for staying and lingering, where you can find social spaces and which is in open connection with the surrounded urban space. It embraces the scale of both community and the individual by creating a variety of spaces and facilitates an environment for people to meet, interact and intersect, whether casually or intentionally. The mixed-use building provides places where activities of common interest take place. Furthermore, the characteristics of the building will therefore be shaped by the different needs, demands and spatial qualities.

Within this building, you will find, among other things, a library and museum. These are very interesting functions because they change over time in appearance and function. As a result, a degree of flexibility should be added to the design. In addition, the interpretation of these functions can also be determined based on different studies into what is needed for a cultural building in Maastricht.

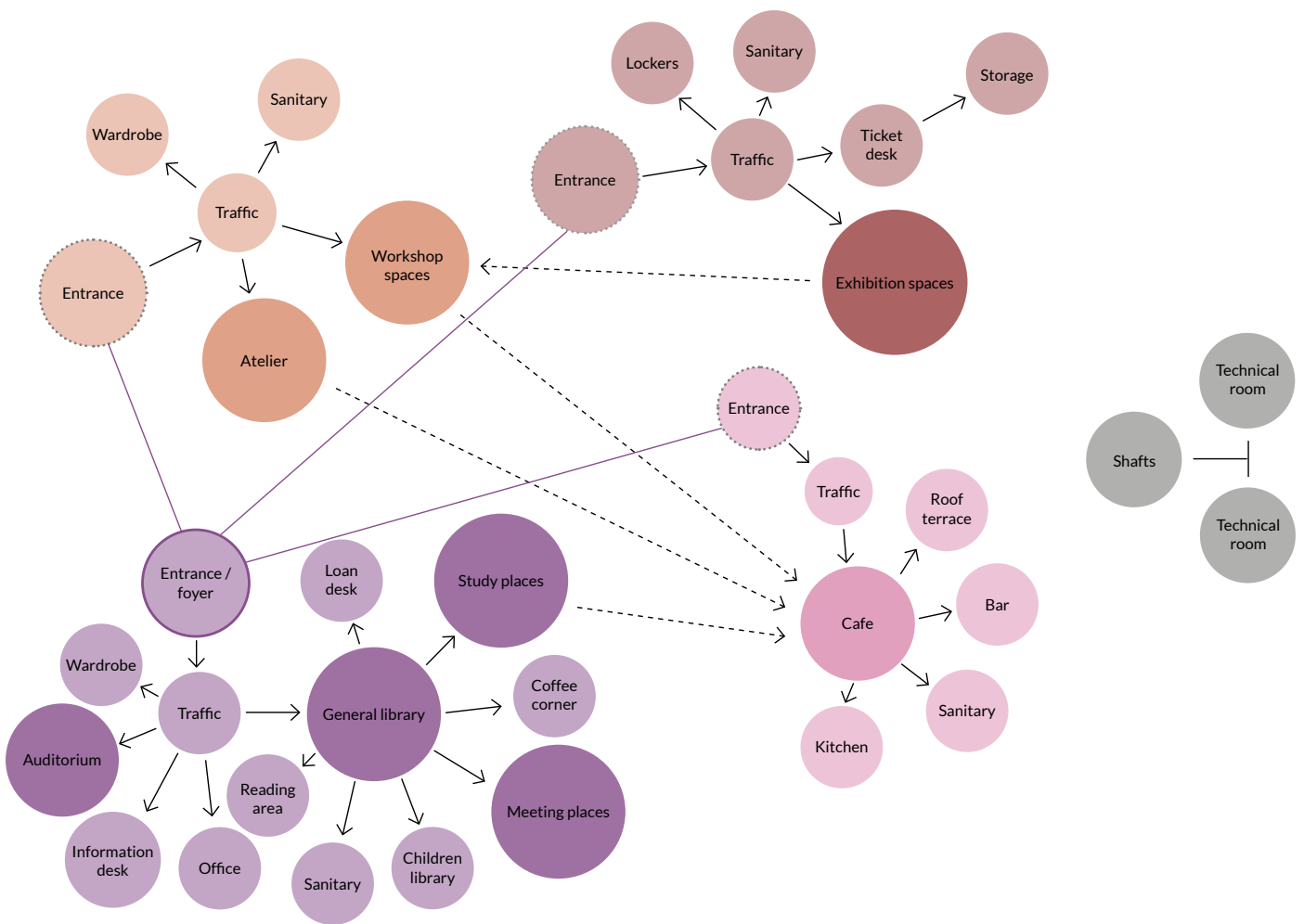
The cultural building is designed through the eye of the different future users in terms of flows through the building, sequence of spaces, physical and visual connections, dimensions, perspectives, indoor climate, et cetera. As a result, a logical structure is generated with a variety of spaces ranging from very public to very private. Furthermore, extra attention is paid to the communal spaces as these spaces offer social nodes. This also includes the circulation spaces, which will not only function as circulation spaces, but also as meeting points. In addition, attention is paid in finding a balance between designing space and leaving space, so that interpretation by the user also remains possible. In this way, the human scale was the key factor of the design. Moreover, the existing Affuitenloods, which will become part of the new building, has also been taken into account. The new building

will incorporate the Affuitenloods as a space within a space. On the one hand it will be included in the program and thus become part of the everyday life that takes place in and around it. On the other hand, the building is observed, whereby the user cannot touch the building, but can only perceive it from a distance. The Affuitenloods will form the center of the building and will encourage and stimulate curiosity by the users or passers-by.

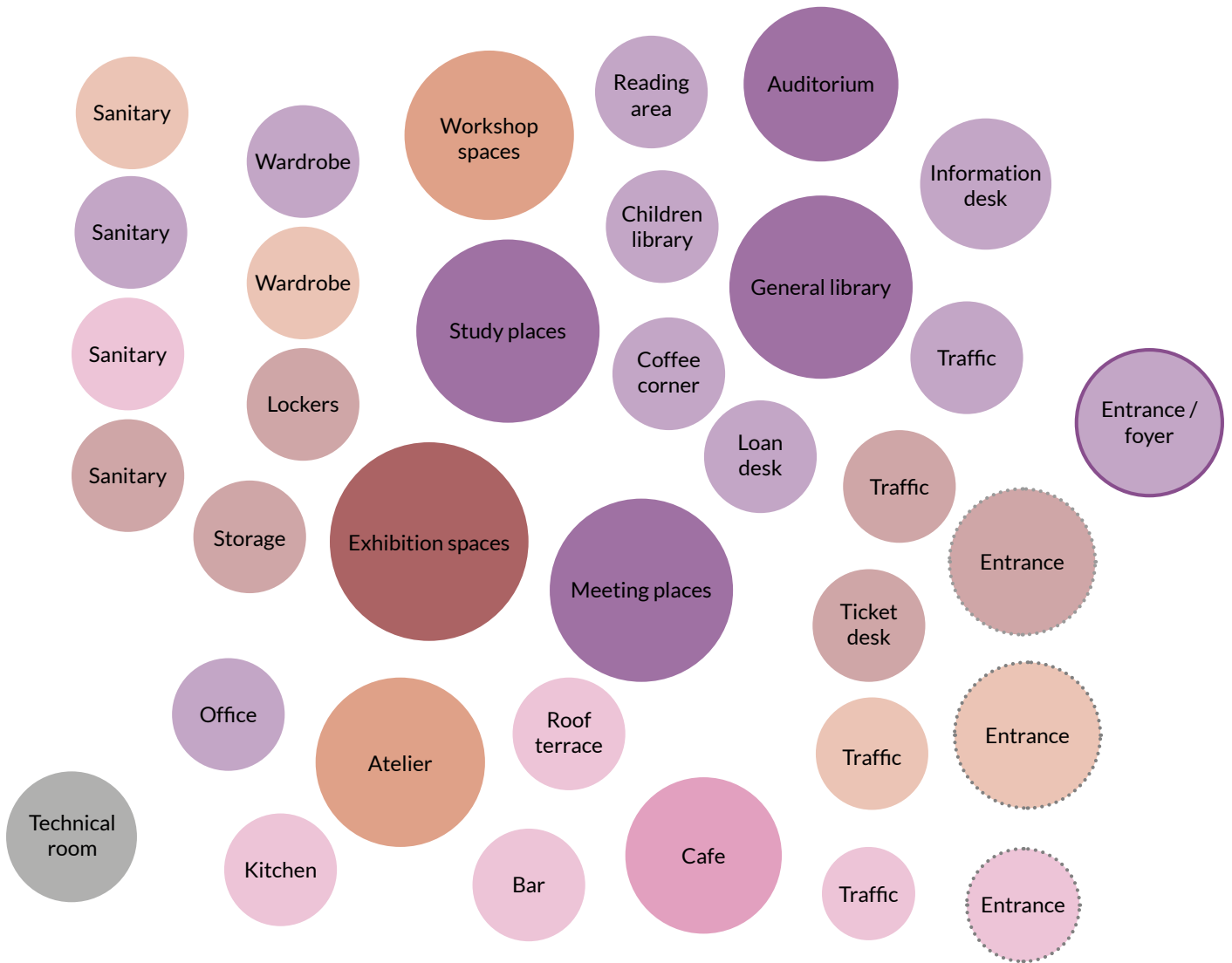
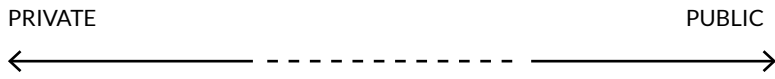
I endeavour to approach architecture from a social perspective, where the actions and attitudes of communities and individuals can contribute to creating an attractive new neighbourhood. The public building I am designing is aimed at trade, which is the trigger for social interaction and intersection. I am focussing on a cultural building, because this is the place for different target groups, offering different facilities and different ways of accessibility. It will give a place for all people to learn, relax, meet, share, study and perform. The building is designed by looking at the common values to increase the connectivity of people. The building will house a library, museum, workshop spaces, atelier and cafe.



- Legend
- Libraries
 - Museums
 - Plot design



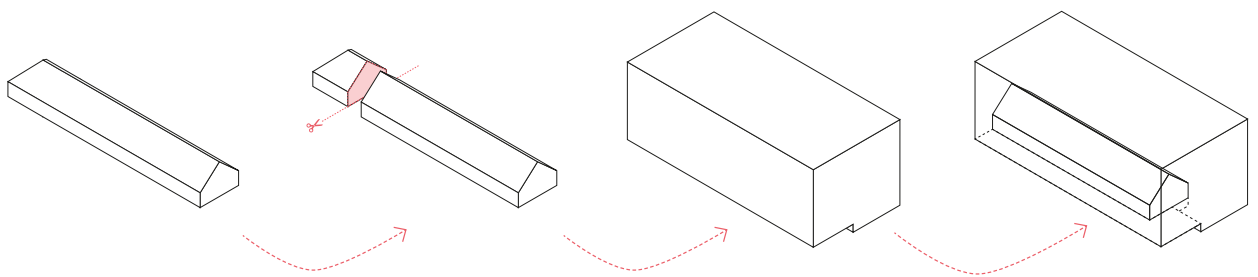
Drawings of the Affuitenloods.



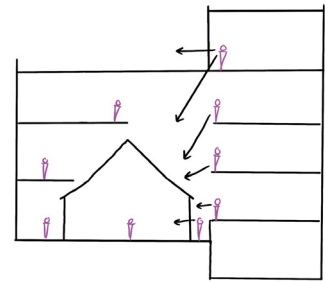
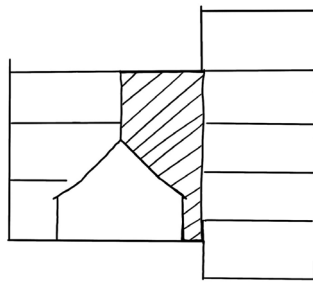
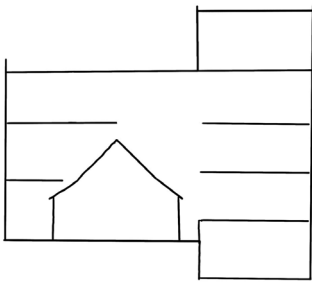
Degree of Accessibility.

Elaboration

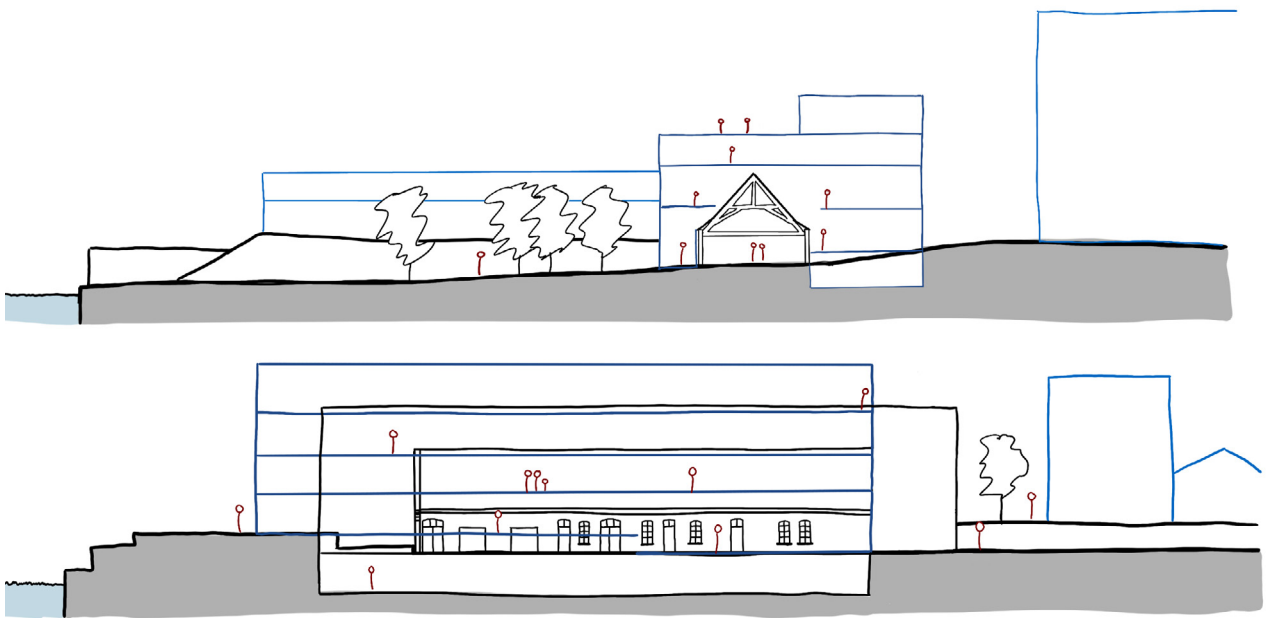
In the future, the Sappi terrain will be transformed into a mixed use area. Because of the very unique and perfect location enclosed by two sides of the Basin, a new purpose for the (location of the) Affuitenloods is highly needed. With the rich history of the Affuitenloods a new proposal should be considered to what possibilities there are to improve this site. In my proposal I decided to keep the Affuitenloods and use it as a starting point for a new and bigger building with a cultural function. The new building will function as part of the enclosure of the great urban space and will form the transition between the urban park and the monumental white building. After all adjustments to the building, it is a logical step in the new urban plan to reuse the building and also to create more volume to the location. Therefore, it will undergo a change on the north part of the building, which is similar as what has been done on the south in 1979. Nine meters of the building will be cut off to improve the quality of public space. This results in a large opening on the north side which, unlike the south side, will not undergo any further change, but will function as the main entrance of the building. The entrance hall is the place which connects all functions and is the main transition zone between outside and inside and between Affuitenloods and the rest of the new building. From here, the circulation areas follow the length of the Affuitenloods and all living areas can be accessed in perpendicular direction. In addition, everyone can walk along the Affuitenloods, which creates many meeting places. The public character of the ground floor makes it function as an extension of the outdoor public space.



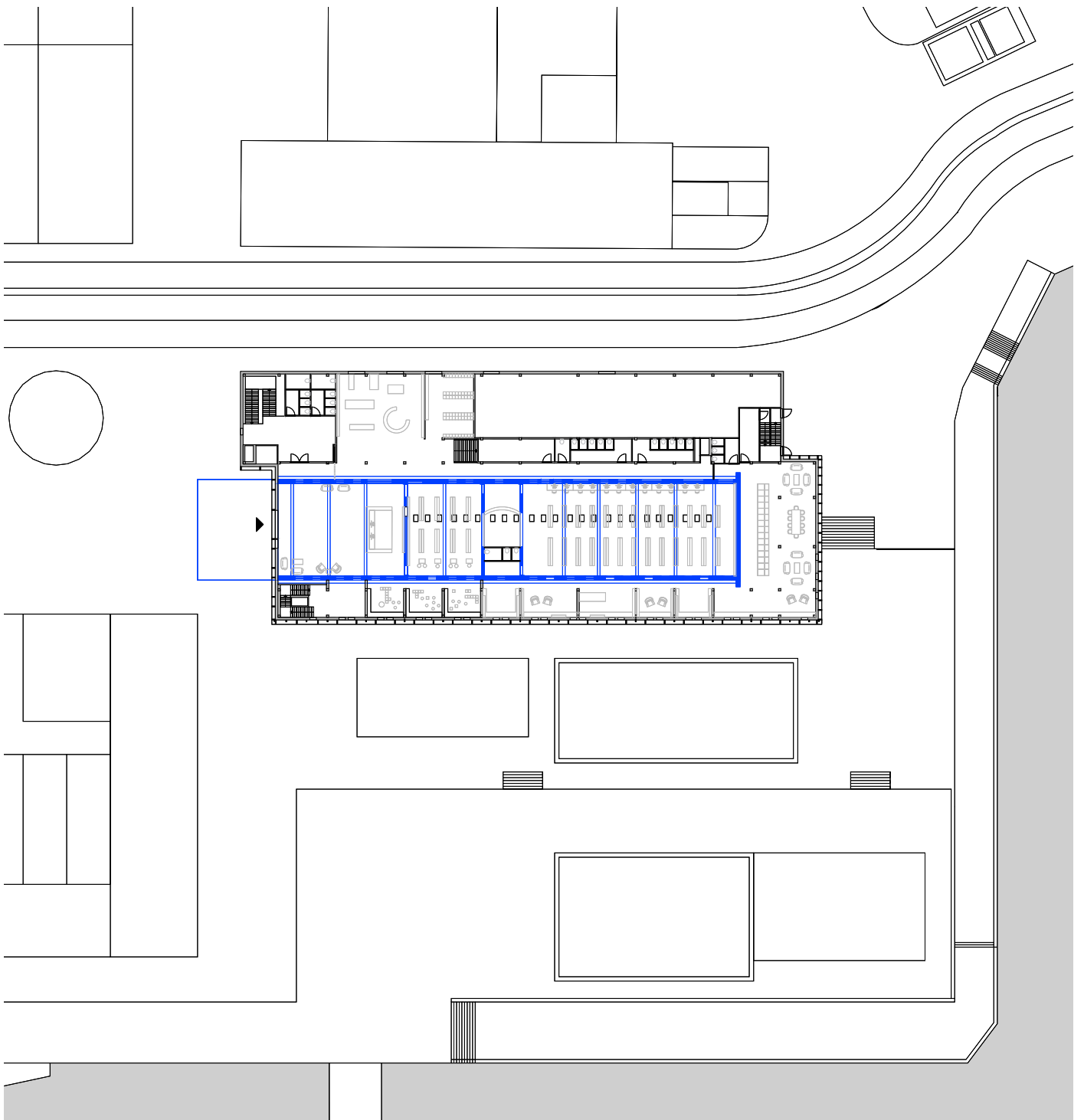
Conceptual elaboration.



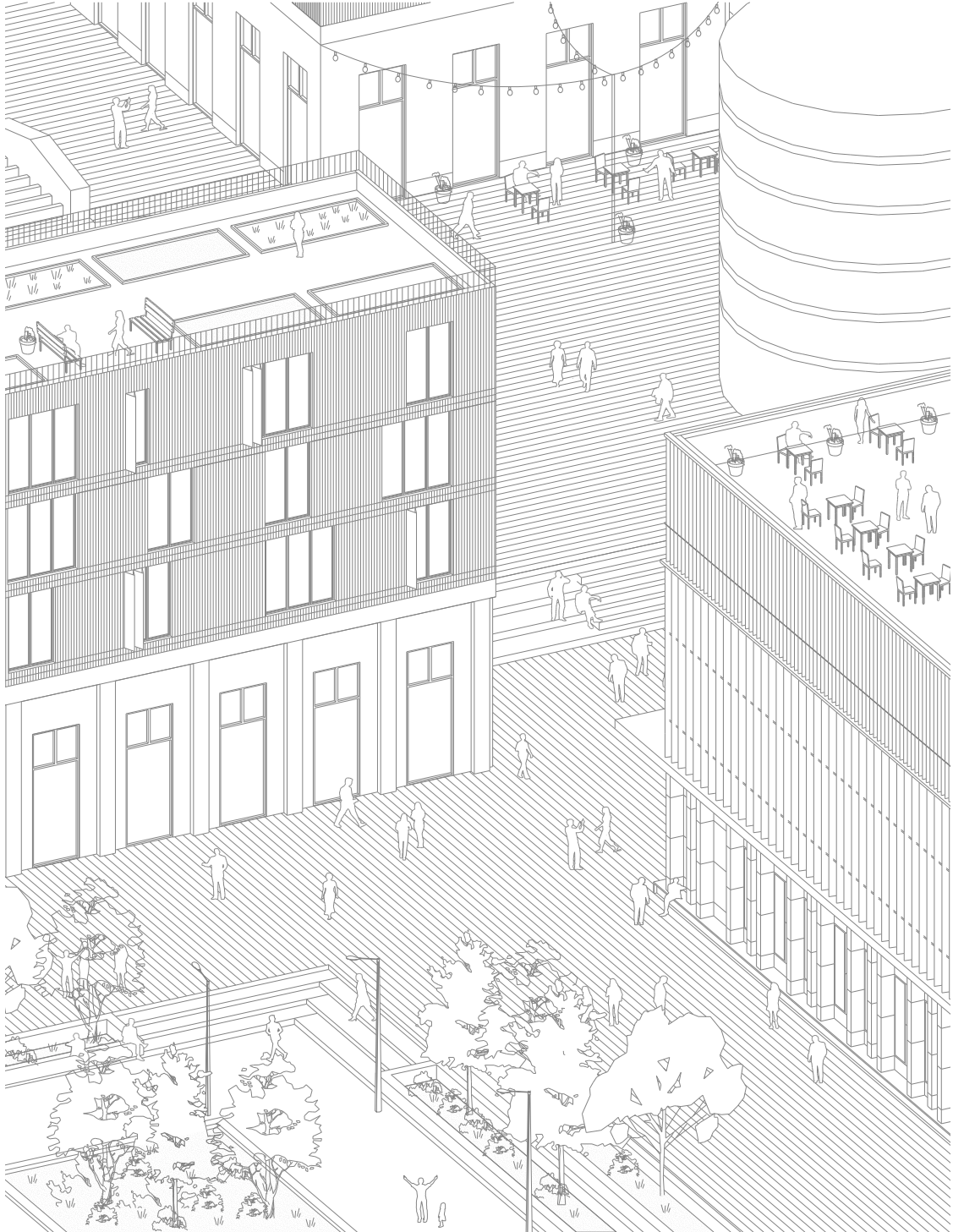
Conceptual elaboration.



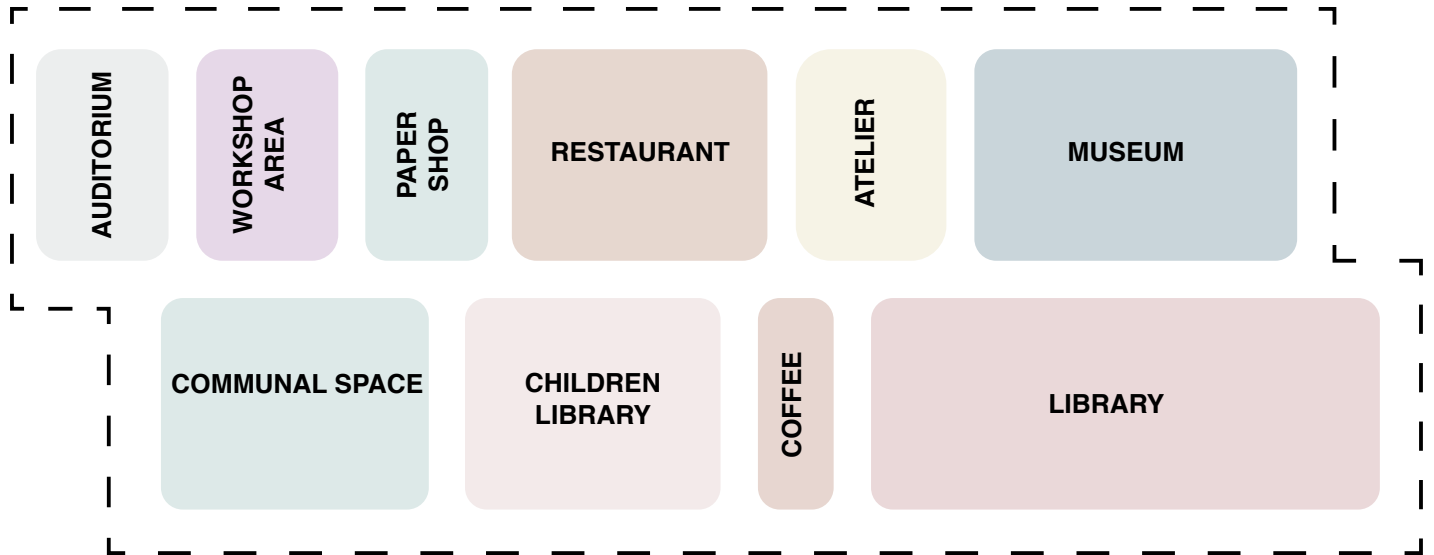
Observing the Affuitenloods in a new environment.



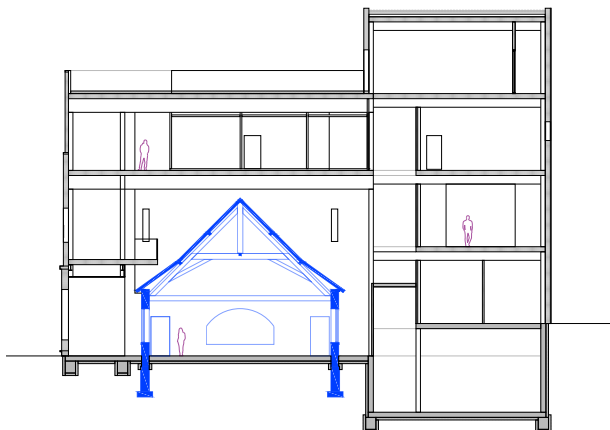
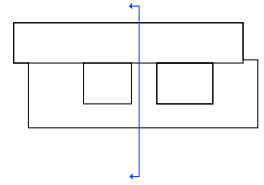
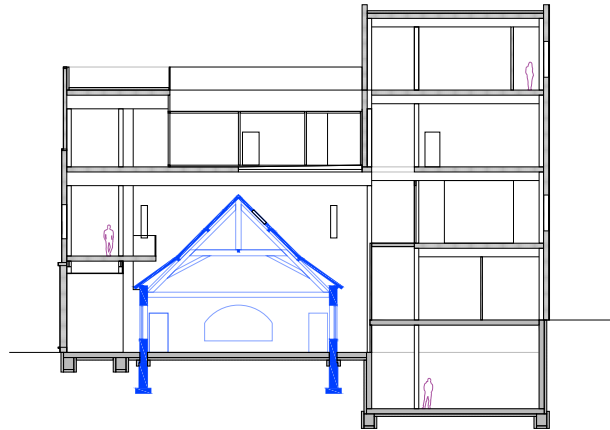
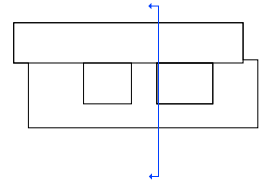
The Paper house in its environment.



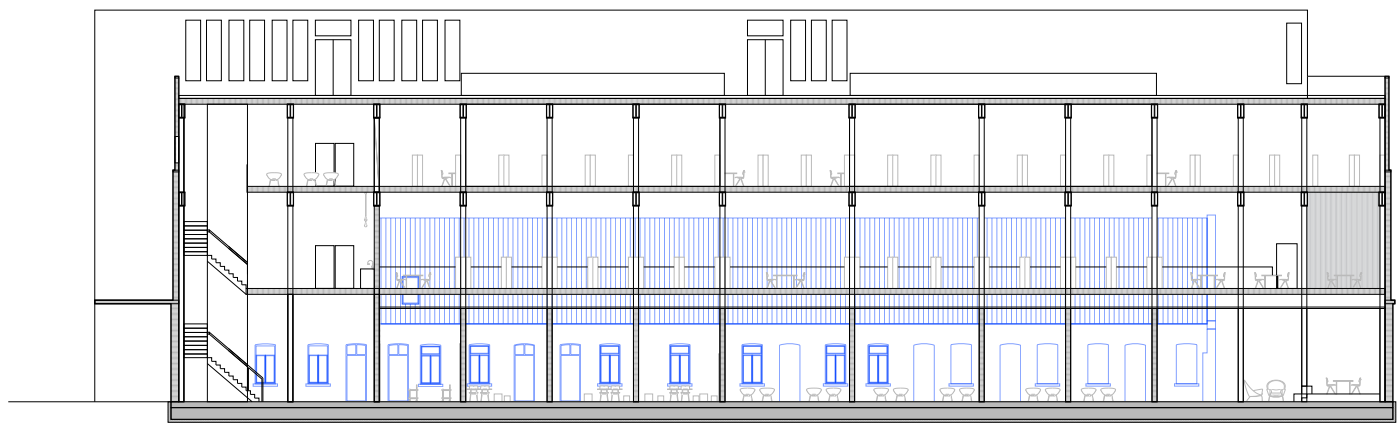
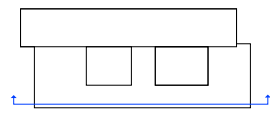
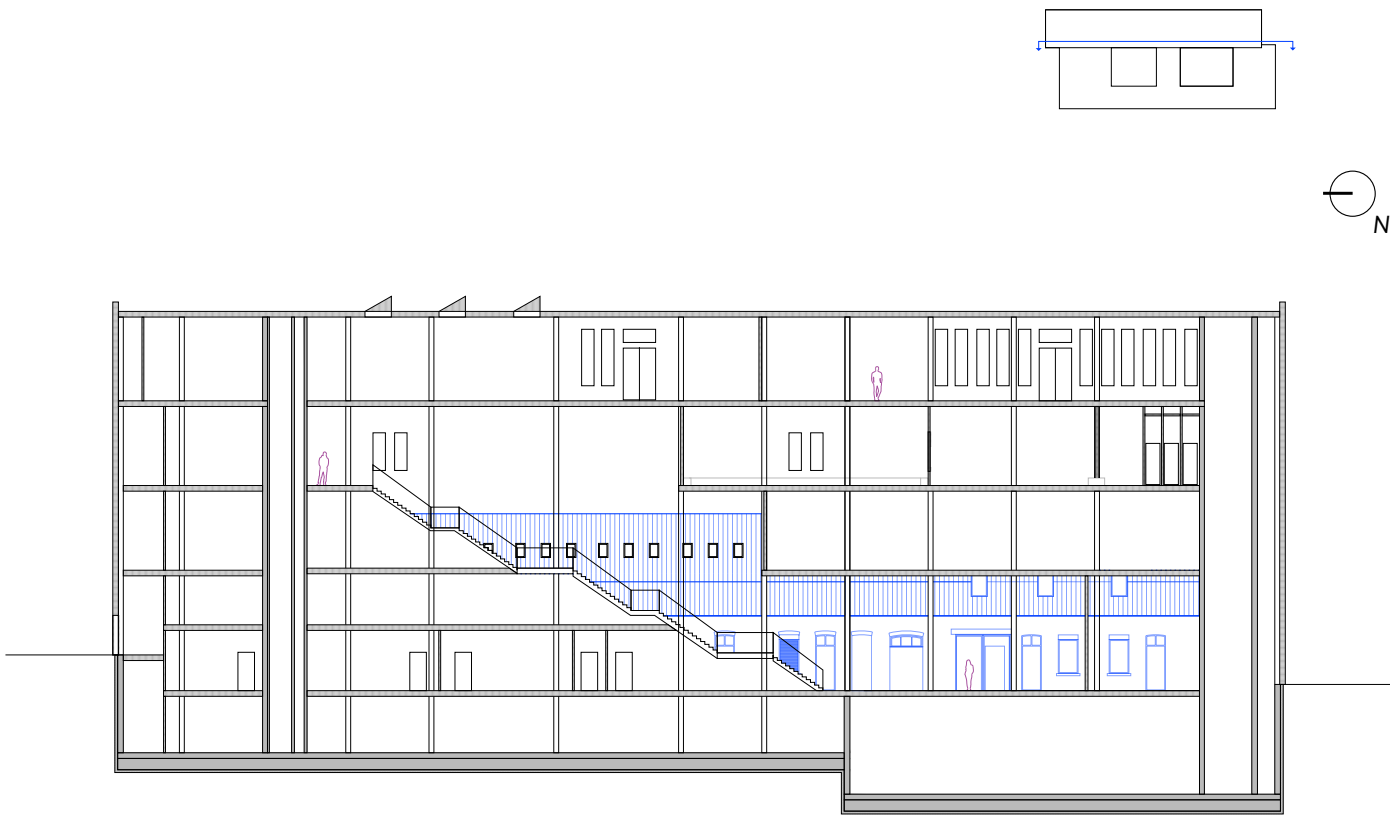
Connecting the public domain.



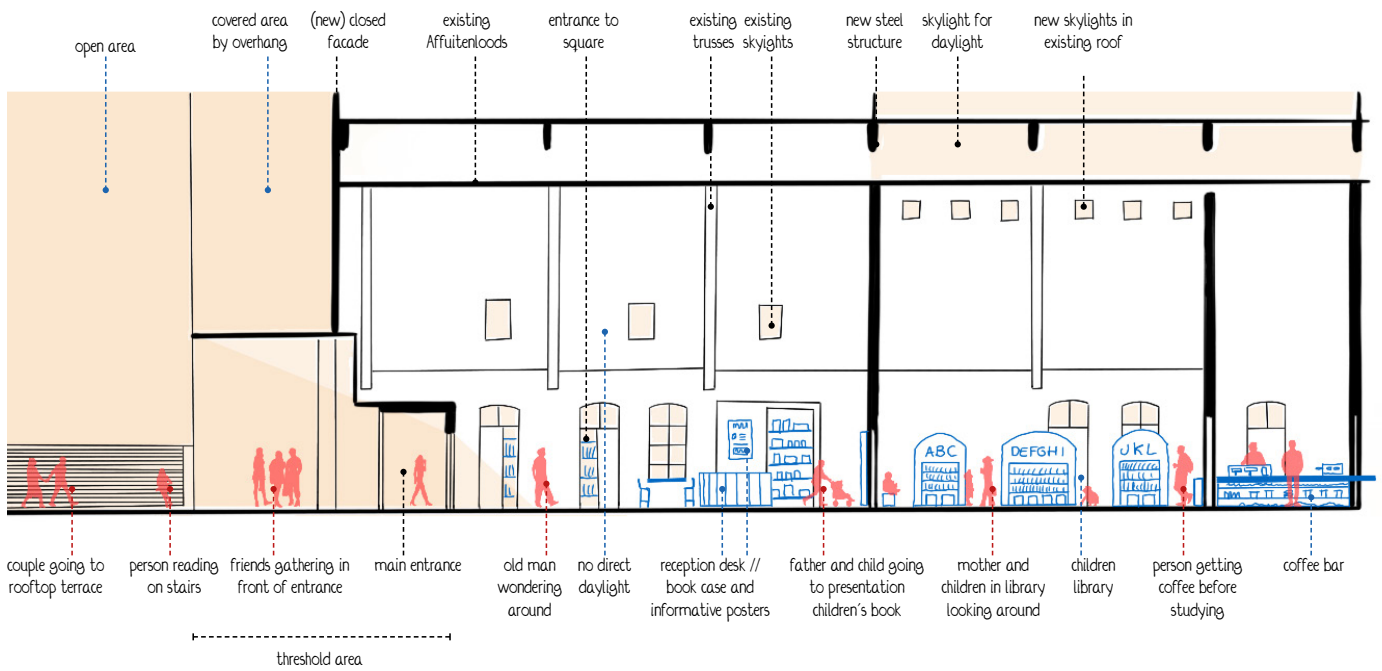
Functions and connections within building



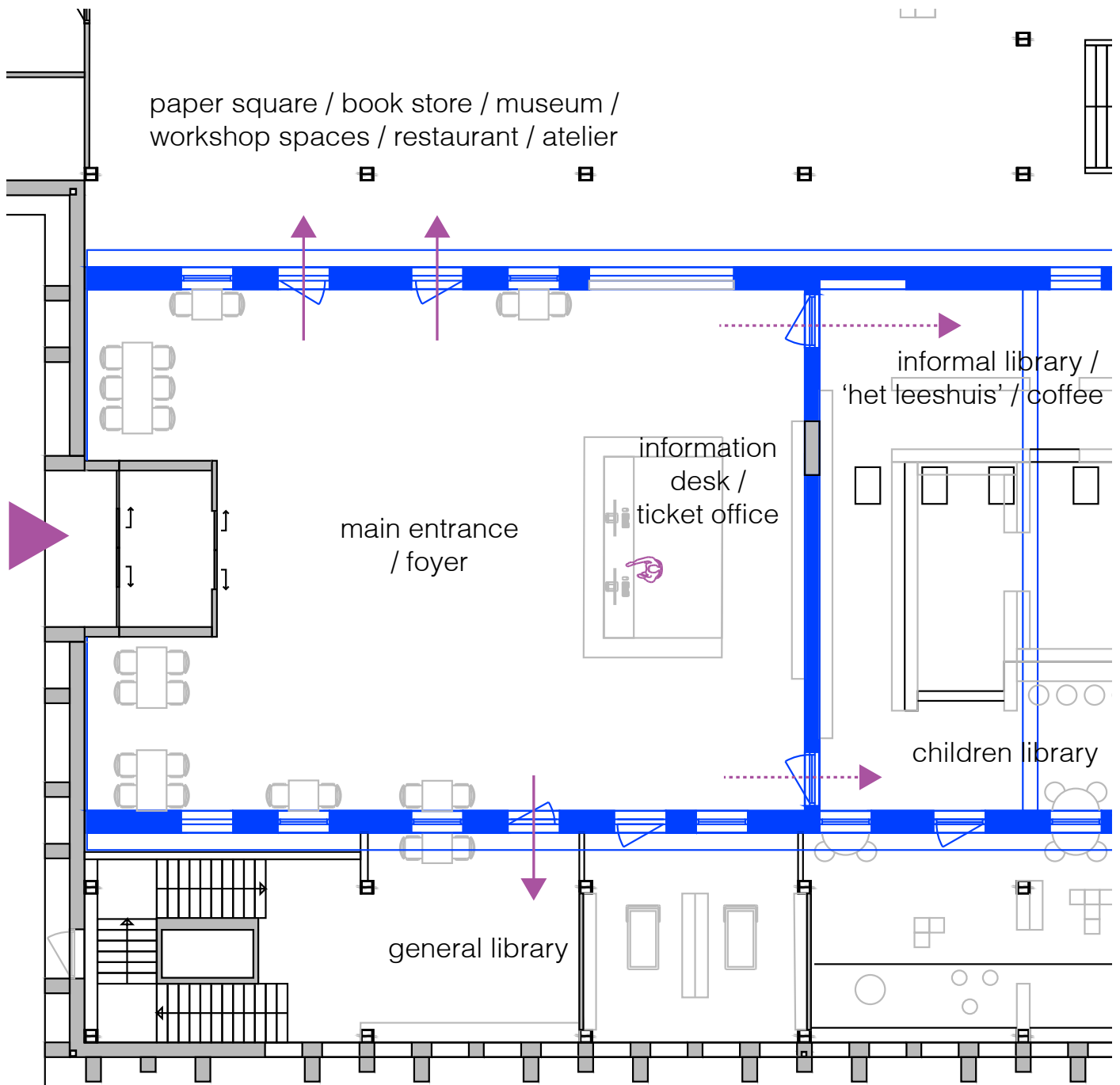
Visibility of Affuitenloods from within the new Paper house.



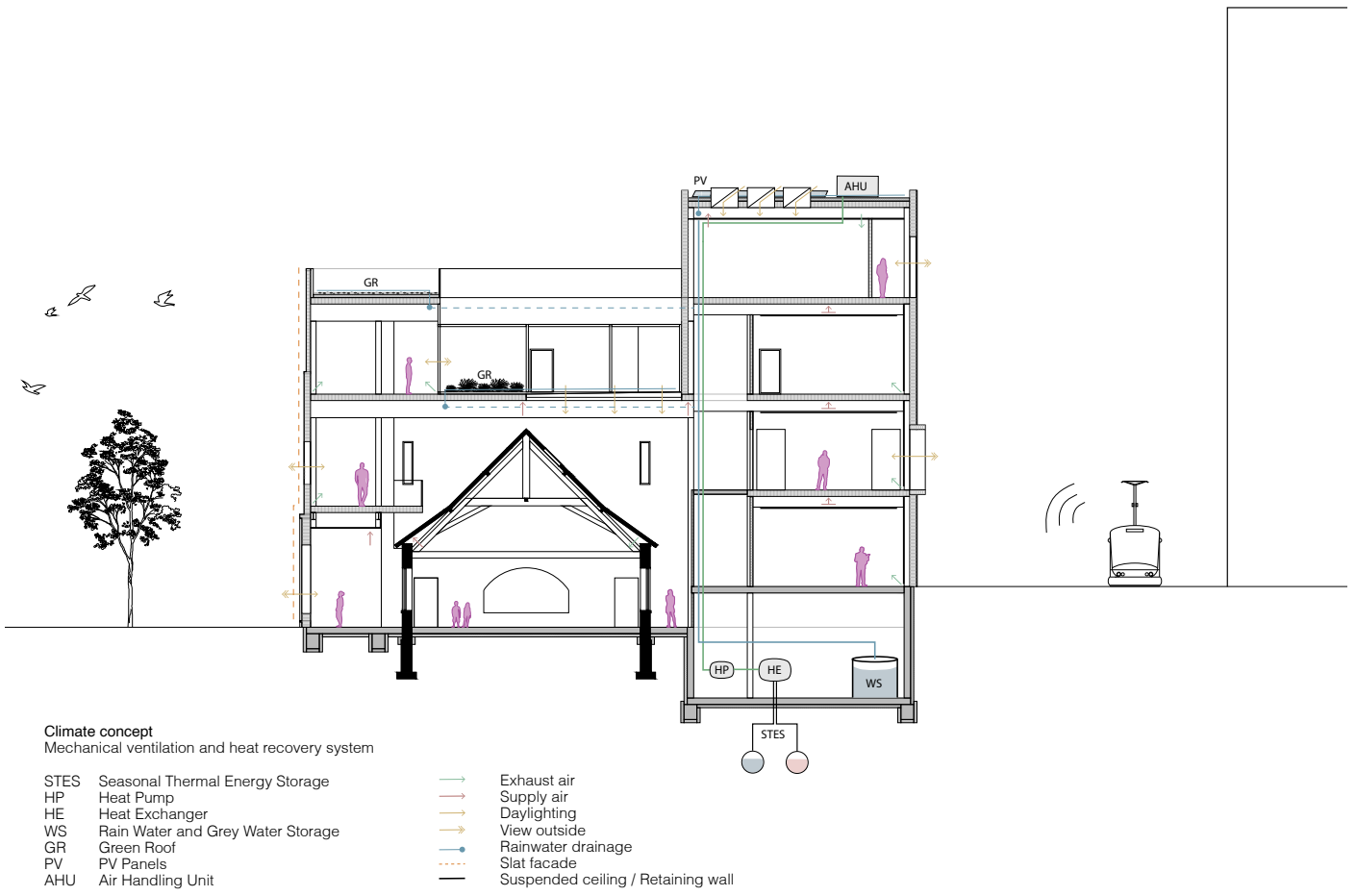
Visibility of Affuitenloods from within the new Paper house.



Transitions from outside to inside.



Entrances.



Climate concept.

Journeys

This paragraph will focus on the spatial, social and physical qualities of each of the spaces in order to demonstrate the layout of the facades, the characteristics and atmosphere of each of the defined spaces and the connection with the research. Besides that, this tangible clarification distinguishes the functions, target groups and type of activities, so that this can be translated into a technical elaboration. The Paper house is a very surprising experience. Each of the spaces is different, but together they form a unity.

Het Leeshuis & the children library

These spaces are highly characteristic because of the location in the Affuitenloods. The history can still be found in the spaces, because only small adjustments have been made. The original wooden trusses, dating back to 1827 can be perceived in each room and the openings in the façade are all intact. From the inside of the Affuitenloods the spaces are wide, like when it was used as a warehouse. A new experience to the Affuitenloods is added by the small skylights in the pitched roof. Daylight from the skylight of the new volume will enter the Affuitenloods, resulting in a small gesture of highlighting the wooden roof and height of the building. If you go through the openings in the west facade, you enter the verandas, where the width can be traced back to the original workers' houses. The verandas all offer a wide view on the park. The high windows and the seats in the windows make the connection to outside even stronger. The verandas provide a place from which visitors can experience the world around it. On the veranda you can sit and relax, with a cup of coffee from the coffee corner and a nice book from the informal part of the library 'Het Leeshuis'. This place should be the living room for the city.

Library, work and meeting places

When you enter the building and go to the right, you will walk to the staircase which leads you to the first floor. This floor offers a great and impressive view on the roof of the Affuitenloods, which is a very extraordinary experience. In addition, from this point you have a view on the entire building which is lightly illuminated via the two skylights of the new building. Next to that you will find a lot of bookcases, oriented perpendicular to the Affuitenloods and the west façade. The west facade has long and narrow openings and vertical louvers on the outside, offering a focused view of the Bassin while still protecting the bookcases from direct sunlight. In addition, a narrow raised table has been incorporated into the bookcases, offering a possibility of social interaction and of temporarily relieving the book finder from carrying

books to make it more pleasant to find more books or to open one. Between the bookcases, several big tables can be found which will be used as reading and meeting tables and will promote or stimulate social encounters and interaction. Furthermore, there is one main circulation line which will move to the other staircase. This floor will have sufficient acoustic absorption to prevent reverberation and echoes in and around the Affuitenloods, as it is in open connection. Nevertheless, the floor finish is made out of natural stone to accentuate the liveliness of this floor. Acoustic absorption is incorporated in the ceiling and locally in the panelling of the wall.

Library study places

The second floor of the library will offer a complete different experience, focusing on silence and a serene atmosphere. The west side of the floor is provided with bookcases, while the east side is equipped with study places around two big patios. These patios are the only source of daylight on this floor and still offer a small connection to the Affuitenloods via the skylights above the Affuitenloods. The interior of this floor reflects the function it possesses. The slightly reflecting linoleum floor subtly extends the light from the patios and at the same time mutes the sound of walking people and moving chairs. The room acoustics is very important on this floor in order to achieve a peaceful and quiet environment. Absorption will therefore be incorporated into the furniture and ceiling. The openness of the patios increase the amount of view lines to other functions within the program.

The paper square

East from the entrance hall, people can enter the paper square. This is an open space which connects the entrance hall to the museum, workshop area, auditorium, restaurant and atelier. Its open appearance make it feel like a meeting point where people can start their journey. A paper store is located in the paper square and offers different products of paper, related to the museum, atelier, library and workshops. The paper square is a constantly changing place as it is directly connected to several functions with limited opening hours. After 17:00 the museum will close and at 21:00 the paper store is closing while the restaurant, auditorium and workshop area are still open. It is therefore important to have a social space from where all these functions can be accessed, which is also recognizable in public squares in the city.

Museum

The museum is located on the east side of the building and is spread over four floors. Visitors can enter the paper square to have a look at the paper store, store their personal belongings in the lockers next to it or

use the restrooms across the Affuitenloods. The journey of the museum starts at the bottom of the staircase. With a length of 24 meters, the staircase reaches a height of about 15 meters. During this walk visitors can experience the Affuitenloods from all heights, offering an unique observation and image of the Affuitenloods that can only be perceived from the stairs. The first floor of the museum has the same height as can be found in the surrounded landscape. From now on, each floor has a height of 4,5 meters. Opposite the entrances at each floor a big protruded window is placed which give the visitors one framed image of the white building across the street. The second floor has the largest floor area. A corner window offers a nice view over the Bassin, facing Landbouwbelang, the Meuse river and the city center. When arriving at the upper floor, visitors can catch a glimpse of the patio and the serene library. A part of this floor is set up for workshops. These spaces can also be accessed from the museum. The different floors of the museum form a unity, because they are expressed in the same materials and have the same structure in facade openings. In front of the facades, a retaining wall is placed that is slightly raised, creating a space where the air supply can be admitted. The rooms have a wooden lowered ceiling that does not reach the side of the wall on the stair side, creating space for exhausting the air. The lighting and sound absorption are incorporated in the suspended ceiling. The floor finish is also made of wood, generating an attractive warm character.

Workshop area

The workshop area is located on the second floor of the east side. This is the place where people will work with their hands. It is divided in two spaces with different size to offer workshops for different groups. The workshop spaces are also possible for rent for local businesses. The spaces are therefore accessed from various points. Upon entering, one enters a communal area that is also shared with the users of the library and forms a social node. The communal area offers visitors the opportunity to use the sanitary facilities, store their belongings in the lockers, get a coffee or sit quietly. In addition, there is room for the display of certain elements that can be integrated into the program of the workshop. Each workshop space has with three large windows, offering a view towards the adjacent white building and over the two axes. The floor finish is made out of linoleum, offering a light reflective surface that is distinctive from the furniture.

Atelier

The atelier is situated on the upper floor and can be accessed via an indoor street. This 56 meters long street is provided with a lot of windows, which opens up the space. the wall opposite the facade is

designed in such a way that the work of the studio can be exhibited here. At the height of the restaurant, it is possible to rotate the wall parts, so that the street opens up towards the square, the restaurant. The atelier space is equipped with nine skylights towards the north to ensure a sufficient amount of natural light coming in without direct sunlight coming in to create a controlled indoor climate.

Restaurant

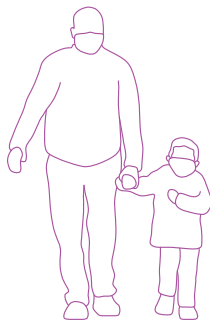
The restaurant is a completely different experience. The wall opposite the east facade does not extend all the way to the ceiling, so that the light is reflected from the ceiling towards the restaurant. In addition, these walls ensure that the restaurant is connected to the inner street at the back. As a result, the studio and the restaurant are connected to each other, while they can also function separately from each other. The west facade has an open appearance where the façade is connected to the roof terrace, which physically and visually connects the restaurant with the outside. From the restaurant you access the roof terrace, which offers an overview of the entire area, including the city center, the Sphinxkwartier, the Meuse and the Frontenpark. This is the place to be for extensive contact with both city and nature.

Auditorium

The auditorium can be seen as an almost hidden space as it is located in the basement of the building. From the paper square visitors are invited to move to the basement. The paper square will act as a foyer after the presentation. The dark space contrasts with the open character of the paper square and therefore provides a unique experience. The finishing of this space is warm and gives a feeling of connection and security. A combination of natural wood and light grey felt is therefore chosen, which also allows great acoustics and gives the room a layered appearance.



**Busy student
going to study in
the library**



**Father and child
going to the library
for a reading**

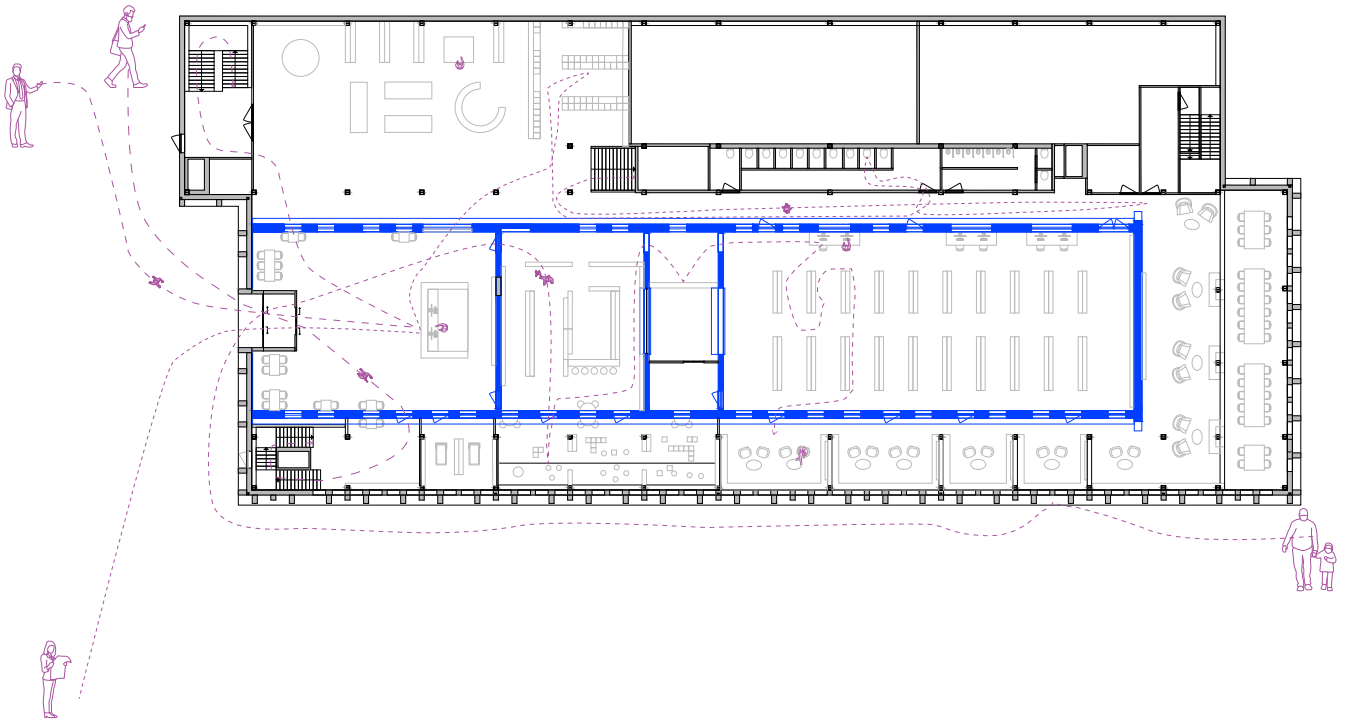


**A man going
to give a
presentation**

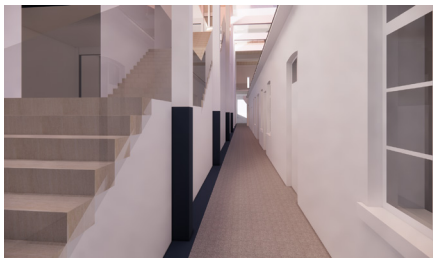
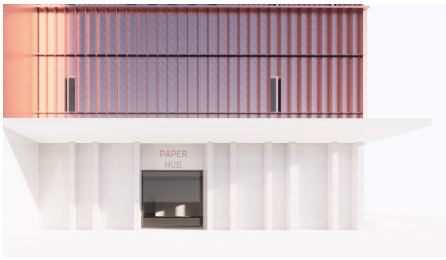


**A woman eager
to learn more
about paper**

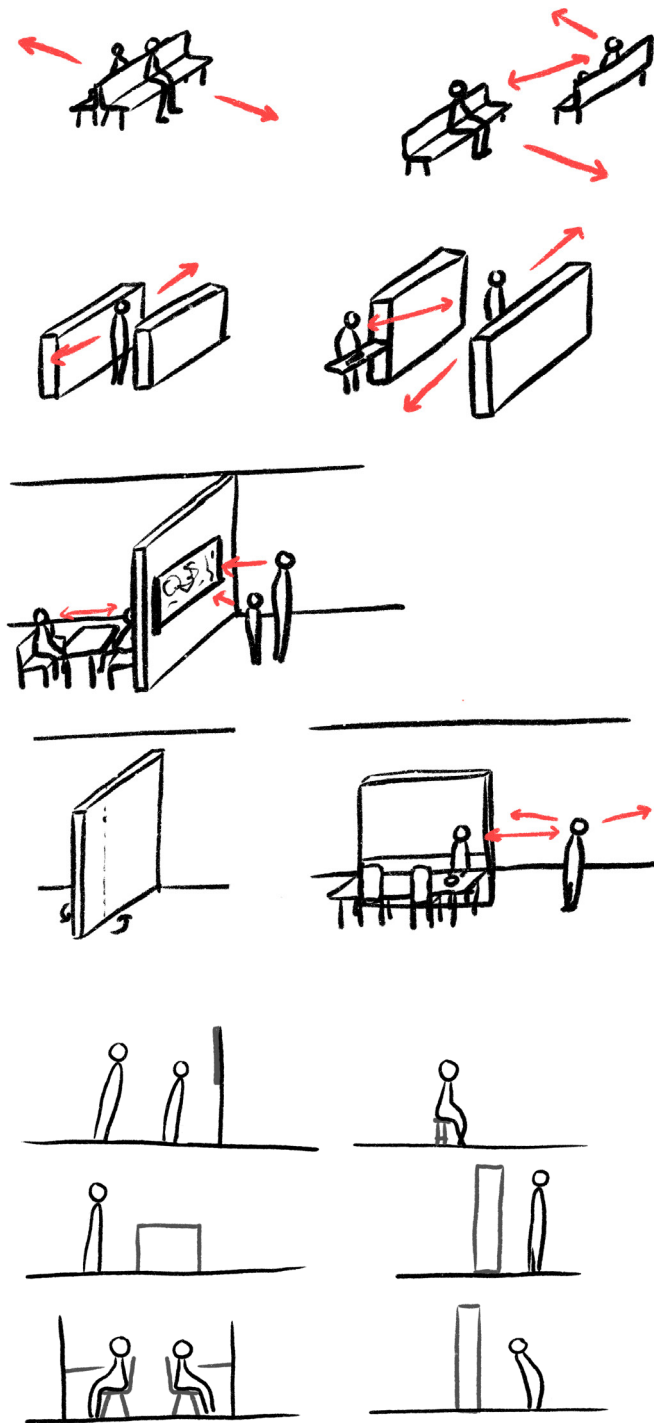
Journeys through the ground floor of four different users.



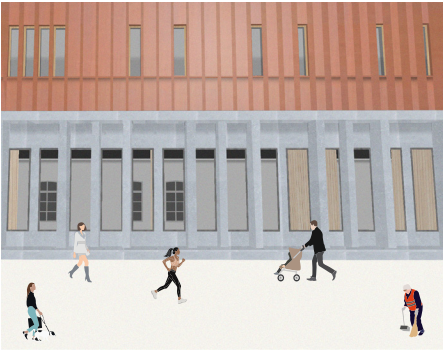
Journeys through the ground floor of four different users.



Impressions of the new Paper house without people.



Schematic display of implementing ways of interaction and intersection.



Early morning



Late morning



Lunch break

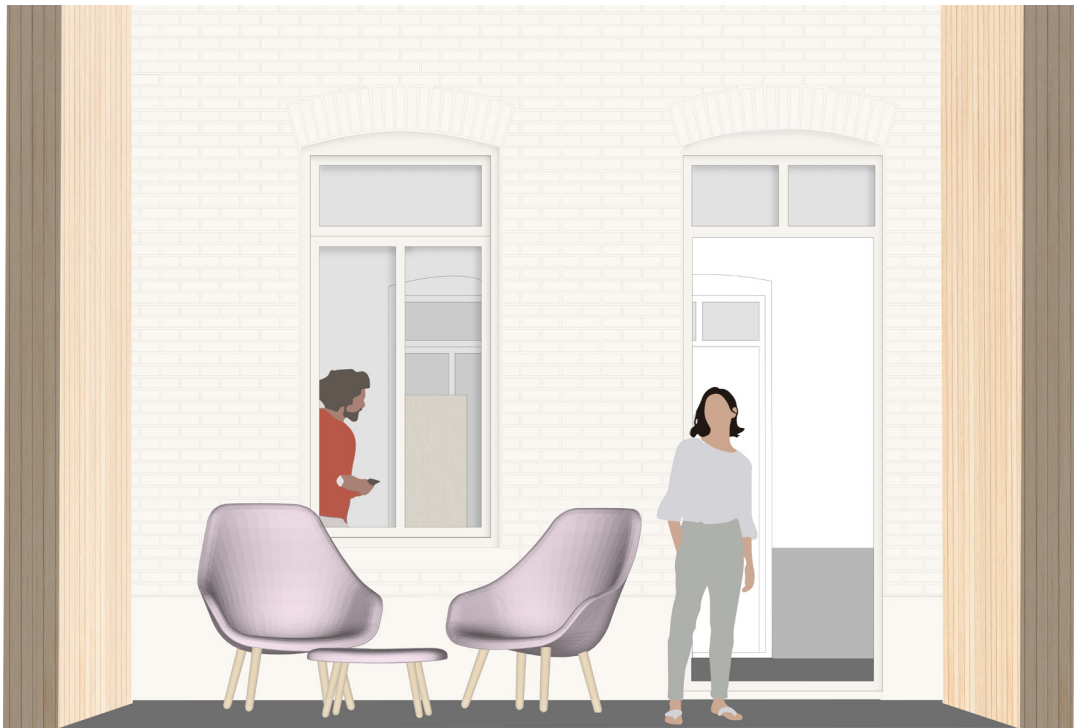


Late afternoon



Evening

Scene of west facade facing park on an ordinary day.



Impression veranda.

Reflection

The Urban Architecture Graduation Studio was an opportunity for me to fully develop and integrate my skills of research, design and technical elaboration in a different environment in the Netherlands by working with these three domains on the broadest scale to the most detailed scale. I wanted to explore the potentials and challenges designing brings when working with an existing site and with an existing building. I was challenged to dive into the different perspectives and taking into account the cultural, ecological, social and political impact of an intervention in an urban setting.

The theme of the studio is 'Glaneurs, Glaneuses', derived from the documentary by Agnes Varda called 'Les glaneurs et la glaneuse'. This documentary about 'gleaners' made me realize the understanding and meaning of it. In this documentary you see people as gleaners looking for leftovers in the field or in the city, such as food, materials and furniture, to use for themselves for the same or new purposes. For me, it was a completely different approach of looking at reuse. Besides that, gleaning could also be seen as collecting information or material very thoroughly. This can be translated into the role of the architect, where the architect collects all the physical or conceptual information from the site, research, people, observations and own experience in order to gain insight and knowledge and seek for potentials to transform this into a design with a new and more meaningful purpose for future practices.

This thesis focusses on the notion of social space by exploring the effect of architectural elements on the social behavior of people in the public domain. An architect should be aware of these elements to provide certain settings, whether or not for a specific purpose, to gain an understanding on how (local) people will use these spaces in order to design a new area or a new building. To do so, this research started by an in depth research into the history of Maastricht and the different urban renewals that have been executed and changed the identity of the city. Therefore, I see Maastricht as a complex and heterogeneous city, as it experienced many changes over time and is one of the oldest cities of the Netherlands. Besides that, the city also exists of layers in appearance describing the diversity and identity per neighborhood, determined by the program, policies and people. Our collective research on the architectural histories of urban renewal explored this by investigating three different locations in the city that represent the most significant developments in the urban tissue and thus show a different approach to urban renewal. This research gave me more information about the identity of the city and its changing image over time, where

various circumstances create exceptional conditions.

During the collective research I was intrigued by the different views of the developers, designers, residents and the reality. When experiencing the three different locations myself I found out that the functions of the buildings determine how vibrant that part of the public domain is. A shopping street changes like day and night depending on the opening hours of the shops. The newly built Céramique district was mainly deserted during the day because of the residential function and sometimes a public plinth. This reinforced my interest in the importance of how the built environment shapes social life and vice versa.

While the collective research was aimed at three representative case studies of housing blocks, we collected a lot of data of the city. At the same time I focused on our studio site, the Sappi site in the Sphinxkwartier. The site is the transition zone between the historic city center, the industrial area and future residential districts in the north of Maastricht. It felt like an isolated space where scale and density determine the atmosphere and the Maasboulevard functions as a border between the site and the rest of the Sphinxkwartier. I identified several negative spaces, which I understood as places where there is no visual accessibility and connection to the surrounded urban spaces. I saw the benefits of the location, but also the challenges to solve this issue in obtaining a new vibrant area for local residents in a secluded area.

The next step was to work on the urban plan of the Sappi site in small groups. We started this process by making a comprehensive analysis of the city of Maastricht to gain insight in the demographics, built environment, landscape, local history, sustainability and infrastructure. We also recognized the large scale, the lack of public space and the lack of activating the waterfront of the Sappi site and saw existing qualities that in our opinion should be utilized to reactivate the area. We focused on finding solutions for the infrastructure to make the area both physically as visually accessible. Besides searching for new resources we also saw an opportunity as gleaners and found ways of using the history of the area, making conscious discussions in what to demolish, what to reuse, what to add and what to upgrade.

The ROTOR workshop covers the notion of gleaning very well. Gleaning in sense of using the existing elements, the lines of the current landscape, searching for local, whether or not reused, materials and the impact of demolishing. What qualities does the urban proposal offer to justify all the demolished buildings and bridge?

I started my individual research by dividing it into two sections, namely the history and use of urban spaces in Maastricht and the use, prospects and socio-spatial barriers and benefits of the Sphinxkwartier. These two sections were researched based on desk research and observations. With this knowledge I wanted to gain insight in the image, or social qualities, and identity, or spatial qualities, of different public places in Maastricht in order to improve the public space of the Sappi site in the Sphinxkwartier and thus to create a revitalized area.

During the collective analysis I noticed there is a lack of public buildings in the north of Maastricht. Moreover, the age distribution of the population in Maastricht is unbalanced and twenty percent of the population is within the age of twenty to thirty. Therefore, a new environment had to be created where the population is more mixed in every way. As we envisioned in the urban plan to focus on a program related to education, technology, innovation, sports and culture, I wanted to focus on a cultural house. For me, this is a building where people come together to meet, interact or share knowledge. I also wanted to combine the most private and the most public functions in one building to create a building which functions 24/7. Initially, the cultural house accommodated a museum, library, book shop, café and housing. During the process I researched the functions separately in order to find out the requirements each needed and the balance between those that was needed. Next to that, I was also working on getting a coherent story of the mixed program. Eventually, I decided to remove the housing function and book shop, because it did not match the reasoning I had. Besides that, it was hard to find a way of creating many different circulation areas with no physical connection and the many entrances it required to have in one building. I started to focus on functions that were all related to paper, namely a library, museum, workshop spaces and an atelier. Next to that, I wanted to create a publicly accessible café on the top floor offering a wide view over the Sphinxkwartier. I made conscious choices regarding the arrangement of spaces, the locations of functions and the atmospheres the spaces should have. It was a challenge to find a good vertical circulation system for all functions. I saw how relevant this was and tried to fully understand the consequences it could have. It really helped me to think in the sequences of spaces starting at the entrance of the building and moving to the most secluded space. This was also linked to the research I conducted.

During the process of my design I had to value the existing, meaning the Affuitenloods as a whole and the different elements of it. Its rich history, major changes and location were food for thought. There were several moments during the design process where I found it difficult to

deal with its values and its relation to the surroundings. When do I have to integrate it in the new building and when should it be distinguished from the rest? As the Affuitenloods is the oldest building of the site, it also has had the most different settings and adjustments. Starting from a gun storage, transformed into workers houses while the industrial site was expanding into the sports spaces you can still find today. It was a challenge to find the right shape of the new building over an existing building. What is the value of an existing building in a new building? I had to find a balance between treating it as a showpiece and ignoring it. I decided to use the existing landscape as starting point of researching what parts of the building you perceive while walking, sitting or standing from different angles. This formed the base of my design.

At the beginning, I struggled a lot with matching the information that was provided and the expectations I had myself. I like to know what awaits me and what is expected from me. It was the first time when this clarity was not given, which could have made it hard to find a structured way of working while keeping the overview. Especially with a project where time is key, this could have been difficult and resulted that I had to make a big catch up to get back on track. I did learn a lot from this experience and started to find my own way of producing what I intended to show per week with having in mind the big scale of the project and the limited time. This also made me aware of what should become the most relevant aspects of the design that I want to focus on and what I want to develop technically.

This is also apparent when I was told that the elaboration and planning of my research was not sufficient for carrying it out the rest of the year. This was completely unexpected for me and took me time to process in order to move on. In retrospect, I understand better what the expectations were and especially why my broad intentions of the research set up did not match with what was asked or feasible. I have therefore worked hard to ensure that this fits well with all the components that I have been working on over the past year. This way I can now look back on something I support, where I can see all the aspects of research, design and building technology coming together in one project.

I explored how architecture can contribute to stimulate social interaction and encounters in the public domain. I started the research by observing settings of people in public spaces in Maastricht. Furthermore, I analysed and observed different public buildings in an urban setting that all offer a different approach of enhancing and accommodating the practices of everyday life. Besides that, I studied several different views on how to look at social space. At first, I researched the social side of the built

environment by investigating the motives of William H. Whyte and Amos Rapoport. Subsequently, I looked into the motives, ideas and buildings of Herman Hertzberger and Aldo van Eyck. Studying these different motives made me realize the social importance of creating a balance between designing spaces and spaces that will be formed by its users and also the interrelation between individuals and communities. A social space is permanent, but should offer a place for people where they can express their own temporal interpretations of such space. In that sense, the architect creates the framework, the spatial conditions, a grid and a possible function, while the users can decide what to do with this space.

At the same time this also influenced my design. How to create something tangible and specific from an abstract idea? I went back to the main program and started to think about the spatial conditions of a library and of a museum. For what purpose will people come to such public function and what kind of activities take place? How can you influence the well-being and behavior of human beings? My ideas of these functions were transformed into specific conditions. I had some trouble finding the right size for each of the spaces. I made a computer model, but this did not give me a good impression of the real dimensions of a specific space. I started to make models of the most important spaces and the bigger spaces to get a better feeling of what dimensions were needed and what kind of activity that specific space could offer. Furthermore, I worked with models to find the right location for the façade openings and the impact to the indoor environment.

As a result, the abstract form got dimensions, light, color and materials, which stems from the spatial relationships that enables certain activities. Besides that, I looked into the configuration and accessibility of such spaces to create a coherent layout and started to rethink when spaces should be isolated, connected or related to each other. I saw the effect of the inbetween in architecture, which creates the transition zone between two worlds and enables the experience of the users and perception of space.

This thesis aims to find architectural solutions for social interaction in the public domain. We currently are very much aware of the effect of a pandemic. For the last two years people mainly stayed at home and the public domain in cities was many times deserted. This resulted into an increase in loneliness and health issues. The benefits of creating space for social encounters and interaction is therefore more important than ever before. For me, this was a very intriguing contemporary problem which triggered me to explore different ways of how architecture can be part of encouraging social cohesion in the public domain.

I believe it is very relevant to see the potential of an architect as a 'glaneuse', by actively searching for ways of finding value in anything from a large scale to the smallest scale and in something abstract or something specific. This year I learned how to do this by exploring ways of finding new social spaces in Maastricht. I learned how to value an existing building in response to a new building and how to make use of the existing layered landscape. Furthermore, I found new ways of looking at space, how to design or not to design space and how to work with the sequences and configurations of it.

The weekly tutoring sessions really helped me to get a grip on my design and the integration of all the aspects. It triggered me to look for new possibilities or to articulate my own motives more strongly. Both one-on-one as group sessions helped me grow in finding the right reasoning. It was also really helpful to talk to other students at least once a week, to evaluate the tutoring sessions and hear their opinion, problems, process and ideas.

I experienced that I tend to compare my work a lot with other students, which could make it hard to believe in my own design. I learned that I should not be influenced that easily by looking into other designs and should, in contrast, see what information I can get out of this. How can I convey a certain message and with what products? This really helped me with making decisions that fit the limited time frame during the last part of the project and with creating a good narrative for the P4. I am now working on the facades, floor plans and technical elaboration to show the integration of the different aspects. After P4, I will finalize the project by focusing on a sequence of spaces where Maastricht, architecture and people meet each other. These products will show the implementation and elaboration of the project in reality.

To conclude, I have always been fascinated by the relationship between human behavior and well-being and the role architecture can have in this. In the two years of my master I have studied the impact of spaces, the visible or invisible separation between private and public, bringing people together and the impact of daylight on the indoor environment. I chose the studio to delve into this even more and to assess it from multiple angles. In addition, the studio also offered me an environment to investigate the impact of reuse and the existing, to put this in relation to the new, while also taking into account the different levels of scale. I never realized how complicated and interesting the urban environment is and how interventions can make a significant difference on urban scale, building scale and/or material scale. I found it difficult to constantly switch between these levels when making decisions. It was also a

challenge to maintain an overview of both research and design process. The research has come to a standstill at times, making it difficult to integrate it back into my schedule. Once I finally made some important decisions and got ahead with my design, I could also continue with the research. Next time I would like to have more control over my planning including more moments of decision making, which could give me more structure and guidance.

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