

Logbook

GATHERING GROUNDS:

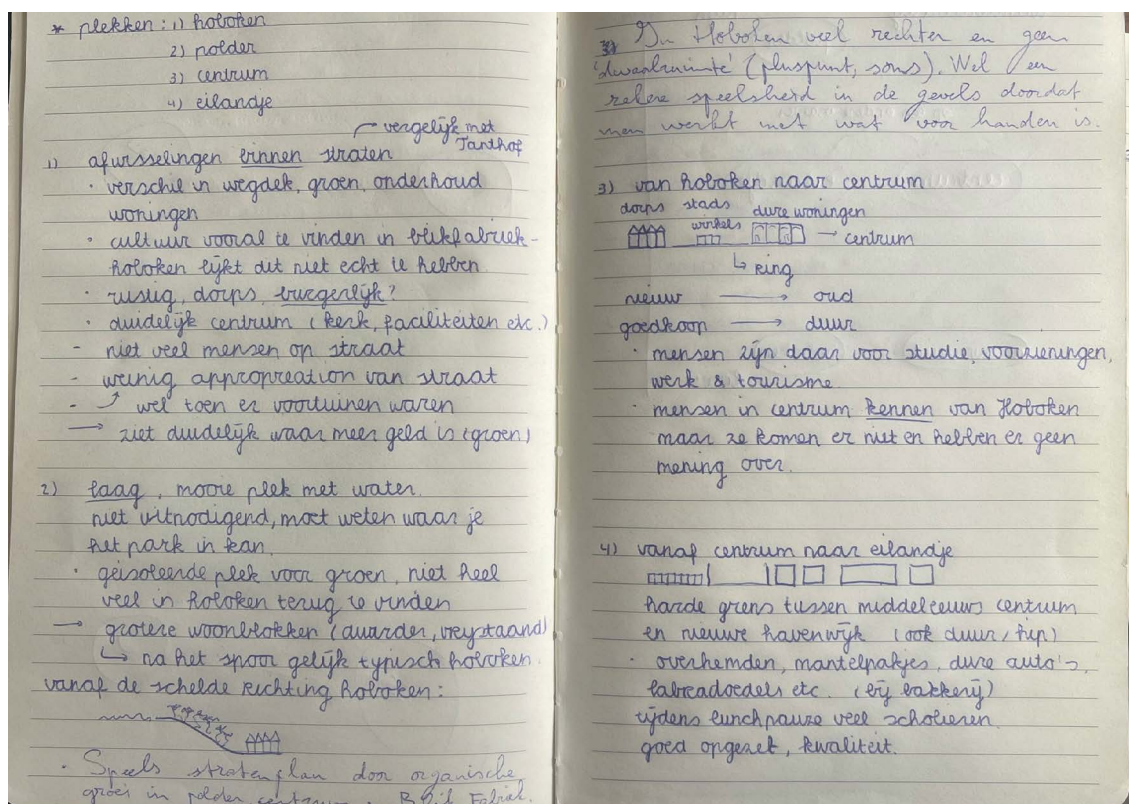
The Architecture of Invitation



Family dinner (photograph supplied by author)

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**GROUP RESEARCH
- UNTIL P1**



Group insights after the first site visit - Low High Up Down



Visualisation of group insights through the use of collage

BLIKFABRIEK

Located on the former Crown site in Hoboken, between the Lage Weg and Krugestraat, a 30.000 m² area has been temporarily repurposed into what is described as a "creative pole of attraction" (Blikfabriek, 2018). This space hosts a diverse range of commercial and socio-cultural activities, including an indoor skate park, a dance studio, indoor soccer and padel courts, and artist studios (Blikfabriek, 2023).

Joris Goorden, the Blikfabriek's project manager, has emphasized the initiative's focus on circularity and sustainability. The building itself exemplifies adaptive reuse, as an old structure is repurposed for new purposes. This principle of sustainability is consistently applied within the Blikfabriek, where materials are salvaged and reused by both visitors and the organization to maintain the facility.

While the site is expected to undergo redevelopment in the coming years, it continues to serve as a creative hub for artists and makers in the Antwerp area. However, there are notable discrepancies between the current users of the space and the local population. The majority of the Blikfabriek's visitors are white Belgian creatives, while Hoboken is characterized by a more multicultural demographic. The Blikfabriek's management has acknowledged difficulties in engaging the non-Belgian residents of Hoboken, citing a disconnect between their creative offerings and the interests of these communities. Additionally, the cost of services at the Blikfabriek is perceived as prohibitive for much of the local population.

As a result, despite its self-proclaimed commitment to sustainability and inclusivity, the initiative appears to fall short in addressing social sustainability and inclusivity.



Both sites share an industrial past, though the Blikfabriek has ceased its original operations and now adopts a new role centered on providing space for creativity and sustainable and circular use of materials. This approach aligns with the vision of Blue Gate, which aims to foster an industrial area with a focus on sustainability, circularity and creativity. Relating this to the concept of "High Low Up Down", the shiny new image of Blue Gate places the business park at a higher esteem compared to the wily-wacky character of the Blikfabriek. However, despite both emphasizing these interests, it is evident that the Blikfabriek places a greater priority on the values through its nonprofit model. In contrast, Blue Gate, while promoting itself as an "eco-effective" business park, comprises companies that are interested in sustainable practices but still prioritize profit generation. Furthermore, Blue Gate is a project financially supported by the European and Flemish governments, therefore becoming dependent on performing within the interests of these parties. This automatically decreases the importance of the sustainability aspects and shifts the focus on pleasing the investing parties.

KENNEDY

The Kennedytunnel is an important tunnel running underneath the Scheldt at the south of Antwerp. The tunnel was opened in 1969 to accommodate the increasing amount of traffic and consists out of four separate tubes: two for cars, one for trains and one for cyclists and pedestrians. It was expected that the Kennedytunnel would provide a solution for the increase in traffic, however 15 years after the completion of the tunnel this proved to be insufficient. A new tunnel, the Liefkenshoekentunnel, was completed in 1995. The municipality promoted this tunnel as an alternative to avoid traffic, however it was hardly used since people had to drive an extra 25km and pay tolls to use it. A new solution was proposed in 1995, the "Oosterscheldebinding". Due to a lot of protests concerning the possible development of infrastructure, especially the planned bridge, so close to the city center the project was put on hold. In 2023 the municipality and Antwerp test groups came to an agreement, a new tunnel underneath the Scheldt in the north of Antwerp. (Vrt Nieuws, 2019)



A clear distinction in quality emerges when comparing the two tunnels. The Sint-Annatunnel, frequented by both locals and tourists, feels welcoming and safe, while the Kennedytunnel appears uninviting and largely unused. The stark contrast in their physical condition helps explain their differing levels of use. The Sint-Annatunnel, with its well-maintained features and functioning escalators, offers a sense of security, whereas the Kennedytunnel, with its lack of escalators and questionable staircases, gives off an impression of neglect and lower quality. Although both tunnels are physically similar in terms of elevation, the perception of the offers significantly. The Sint-Annatunnel is viewed highly, while the Kennedytunnel is perceived as very low.

HOBOKEN

Hoboken originally developed as a rural region primarily composed of farms and agricultural land. The name "Hoboken" is derived from the Dutch term "Hoge Beuken", meaning "high beeches", a reference to the beech trees that remain visible in the district today. In addition to the agricultural landscape, Hoboken was home to approximately 25 small estates in the 17th century, owned by wealthy residents of the city center. Of these estates, four remain: Broijderberg, Geversloot, Meerendael, and Sijpeveldt, the latter currently serving as the district's administrative house. Despite some industrial activity along the Scheldt river as early as the 16th century, Hoboken transitioned from a rural village to a densely industrialized area only after 1870. This transformation was largely driven by the liberation of the Scheldt in 1863, which facilitated industrial expansion. With the development of the port, Hoboken's population grew, and several new neighborhoods were constructed. Eventually, Hoboken was fully integrated into the city of Antwerp, becoming one of its districts in 1983 (Agentschap Onroerend Erfgoed, 1975).



Despite their close proximity, the two neighborhoods of Nieuw Zuid and Hoboken could not be more different. In a literal sense, Nieuw Zuid represents the "high", while Hoboken embodies the "low". The towering buildings of Nieuw Zuid overshadow Hoboken's modest two-story homes, creating a stark physical contrast. However, it is not just the height of the buildings that sets these neighborhoods apart; public perception also reflects a divide between them. Hoboken is often seen as a quiet, village-like area within Antwerp, while Nieuw Zuid is viewed as a modern, up-and-coming district, representing a new wave of urban development.

Another key difference lies in the element of time. Hoboken has developed organically over decades, giving it a sense of history and continuity, whereas Nieuw Zuid is a recently planned and meticulously designed neighborhood. The difference in their growth leads to distinct atmospheres: Hoboken exudes a traditional, lived-in feel, while Nieuw Zuid offers a sleek, contemporary environment.

KIOSKPLAATS

The Kioskplaats marks the center of Hoboken, located near the Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-van-doelenplein. Rather than a traditional square, the Kioskplaats is more of a street, offering a few services such as a kiosk, some bars, and a "Frietkot" (Belgian fries shop). On most days, the Kioskplaats is quiet and almost deserted, with the exception of market days. Every Monday morning, a market takes place, featuring both food and non-food stalls. Based on a single visit to this market, the audience appears to be primarily composed of a small group of elderly people (aged 65 and over) who visit regularly. After knowing the market, many of these visitors gather at one of the two local bars, where, even as early as 10 a.m., they start their first beer and engage in weekly gossip with their peers. By noon, the market stalls are packed away, and the square empties out.

Despite the cold and rainy weather, this experience seems far from unique. As Van Aert (2023) writes in Het Nieuwsblad, "The glory days of the past are forever gone." In his article, he attributes this decline to several factors, including the lack of interest in the market from younger generations and the inadequate public transport in Hoboken, which discourages residents with mobility challenges from attending.



Both the Groenplaats and Kioskplaats are central landmarks within their respective areas, each attracting visitors in distinct ways. While Groenplaats enjoys international recognition, largely due to the presence of the iconic Onze-Lieve-Vrouw cathedral and the adjacent Hilton hotel, the Kioskplaats remains a more locally known space, serving the community in Hoboken. Despite both locations being considered prominent within their districts, Groenplaats is clearly held in higher regard. It attracts visitors from across the globe, whereas Kioskplaats primarily draws local residents. This difference is also reflected in the functions of these spaces: Groenplaats is a hub of commercial activity, filled with restaurants, shops, and tourist services, while Kioskplaats is more residential, offering a quieter, community-centered environment.



INDUSTRY



INFRASTRUCTURE



DWELLING



PUBLIC LIFE

BLUE GATE

Blue Gate Antwerp is a sustainable business park located in the southern part of Antwerp, within walking distance from the Blikfabriek. It aims to attract companies focused on innovation, eco-friendliness, and circular business models. One of the flagship projects, BlueChem, commenced operations at the Blue Gate site in May 2020 (BlueChem, 2020). The site is designed with sustainability as its guiding principle, providing space for businesses that prioritize environmental responsibility, resource efficiency, and minimizing their ecological footprint. The park is often described as "eco-effective", reflecting its mission to integrate industrial growth with sustainable practices (Blue Gate Antwerp, 2023).

At first glance, the business housed at Blue Gate appears committed to sustainability, circularity and innovation. However, a closer examination raises concerns about the actual practices of some companies. For instance, DHL, despite its active pursuit of sustainability and setting ambitious environmental targets, remains heavily reliant on fossil fuel for air, sea and road transportations, while its global scale of operations makes the elimination of their environmental impact nearly impossible (Stepper, 2023).

In addition to these corporate inconsistencies, the BlueChem project itself, which cost approximately 11 million euros, is funded by both the European and Flemish governments (BlueChem, 2024). This heavy reliance on external funding raises questions about the project's long-term viability and its ability to fully promote its sustainability objectives.

ST ANNA

The Sint-Annatunnel, also known as the "Voetgangerstunnel" (Pedestrian Tunnel), was opened in 2023 to provide the residents of Antwerp with a convenient connection between the city center and the Liefkenshoek. Although primarily intended for pedestrians, cyclists are permitted to use the tunnel, provided they adhere to a speed limit of 5 km/h (Gis near Antwerpen, n.d.). The tunnel remains widely used by the public, both residents and tourists. The city of Antwerp actively promotes it not only for the views it offers of the city's skyline, but also as a way to appreciate this historical landmark at the heart of the city's urban identity. Most parts of the historical bridge and tunnel remain their original features, including the warning signs and gates, preserving its historical character (Visit Antwerpen, n.d.).

NIEUW ZUID

Nieuw Zuid is a neighborhood still in development, located to the south of the city center. The neighborhood is meant to be a showcase, promoting sustainability and new innovative technologies being used in Antwerp. The project includes the development of around 2000 new homes, many facilities for both the neighborhood itself and the city of Antwerp, green public spaces, district heating and sustainable technologies and ICT as a focus (Antwerpse Regio, n.d.). According to Nieuw Zuid's Masterplan, the neighborhood also plays a key role by making new connections with big public spaces within the city. The neighborhood will serve as a bridge between Zuid and Nieuw Zuid and connect to the Zuidersloot located in the city center. It will also connect the new park a park located to the south of Nieuw Zuid with the Kaai, which is done by using streets or lines that connect to the neighborhood is based on. The neighborhood could also connect pedestrians to Ant and Hoboken, by the possible development of the apartment complex (Studio Associate Sectis-Vigant, 2012).

The terrain of Nieuw Zuid was bought by the private developer Triple Living, who, in collaboration with the city of Antwerp formed a vision for the new neighborhood. The masterplan was made by the Italian firm Studio Associati Sectis-Vigant, with the design for the public space and park made by Architectural firm Bureau Bas Smets (Antwerpse Regio, n.d.). The buildings itself are designed by a multitude of acclaimed architects, as stated by Triple Living (Triple Living, 2023). Work on the neighborhood started at the end of 2013 and is still ongoing.

GROENPLAATS

In the historic center of Antwerp lies the Groenplaats, one of the city's most requested squares. The square has a traditional rectangular shape and is surrounded by restaurants and shops. Overlooking the square is the towering Onze-Lieve-Vrouw cathedral, which attracts many tourists. In addition, the statue of Peter Paul Rubens at the center of the square provides a popular spot for students to relax, particularly on sunny days. As Groenplaats is located at the end of Antwerp's bustling shopping street, the Meir, it often serves as a natural endpoint for pedestrians. Visitors can sit on the benches around the square or enjoy a drink on the terraces (Van Zundert, 2023).

Although the Groenplaats does not host a weekly market, it does have a flower market where locals regularly purchase flowers. Groenplaats also houses a popular indoor fresh market called Cru. Despite the market's presence, Groenplaats is set to undergo a significant redevelopment. This project will include a modernized entrance to the underground area, a double row of new trees, and updated seating arrangements (Van Zundert, 2023).

In addition to these future developments, there are ongoing initiatives aimed at improving the square's current state. Antwerp's mayor, Bart De Wever, has noted that "the disturbances on the Groenplaats last summer were simply unacceptable. A persistent group of troublemakers used the square as nothing more than a public dumping ground and toilet." In response, an allocation has been implemented this year for the square and the surrounding streets to address these issues (Ecopoint, 2024).

Creating comparisons between the city centre and Hoboken

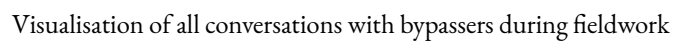
Research question

How is the urban landscape experienced along different routes and transportation modes from the Blikfabriek to a selection of centers within 'Archipelago Antwerp'?

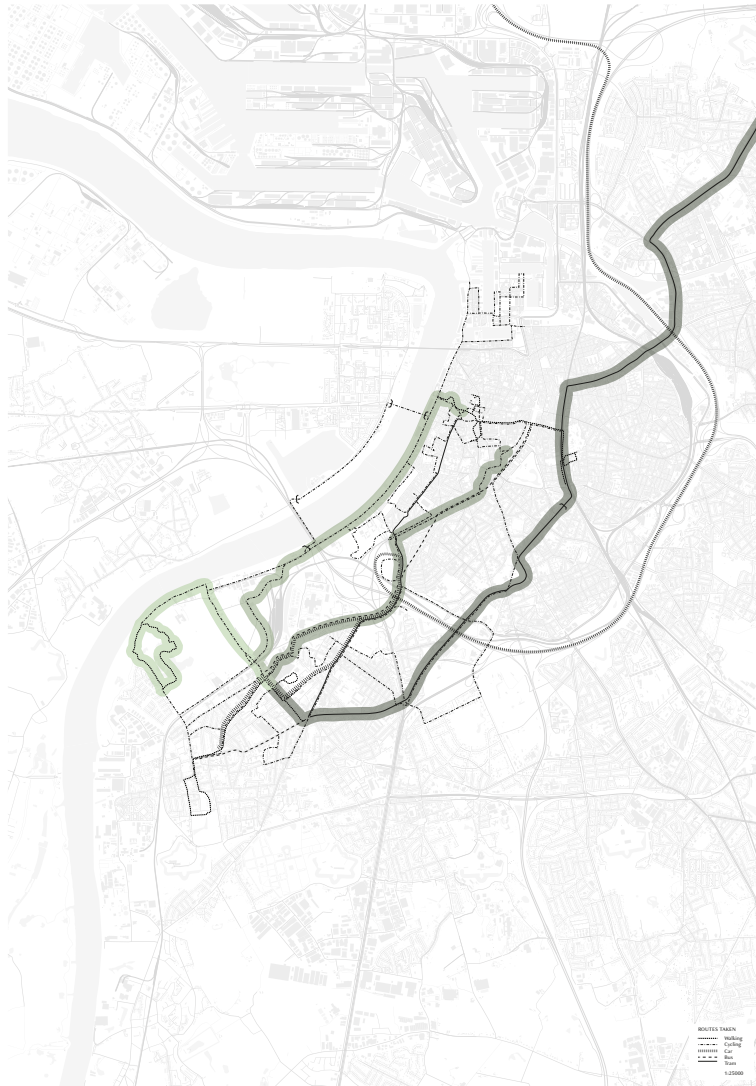
After receiving feedback from the tutors we decided to instead of focus on the route from the Blikfabriek to other centers, to switch the direction and focus on the route from other centers to the Blikfabriek.



Visualisation of all routes taken during fieldwork



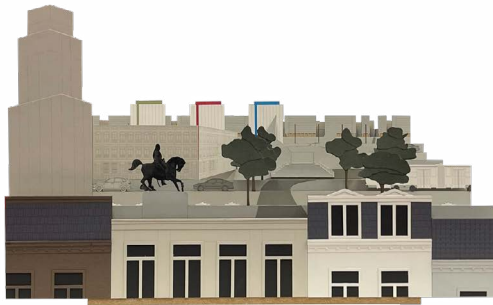
Visualisation of all conversations with bypassers during fieldwork



Visualisation of interesting routes for elaboration



Exposition 'Open Oproep' by Gosia Olchowska
Used as reference for end product containing all group research



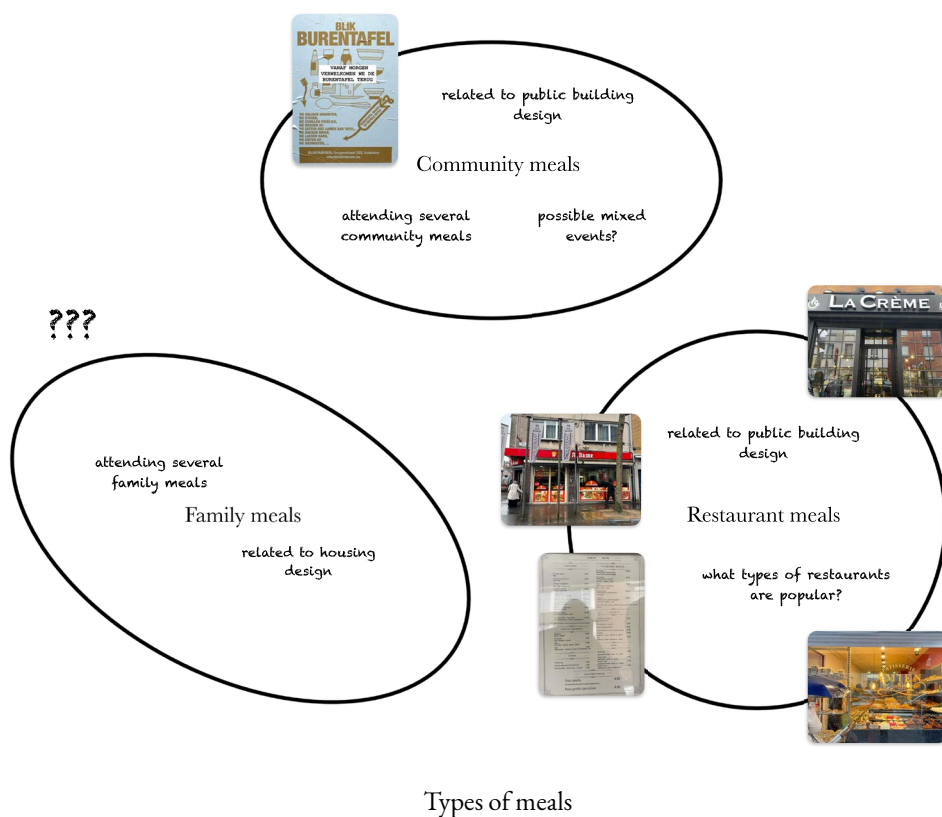
End product for P1 - three dioramas representing the transitions experienced along different routes to the Blickfabriek

**INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH
- UNTIL P2**

Hungry City

“Throughout history, the table has been where people have learnt to share, to socialise, to converse without equal as a place to become culturally attuned and civilised.” -

After noticing a general lifelessness at the Lageweg site I decided to look into the most vibrant place I could imagine: the dinnertable. More inspiration was drawn from ‘Hungry City’ by Carolyn Steel





Participant observation - dinnertime at home with my mother and grandmother. During the interview after dinner I encouraged them to write down or draw whatever they could think off relating to their 'eating' routines

Vertel jouw verhaal

aan tafel



Deelnemers gezocht!

Hallo! Mijn naam is Robin de Wilde, en voor mijn afstuderen aan de TU Delft ik ben bezig met een bijzonder onderzoek naar de levens van mensen in Hoboken en hun rituelen rondom eten. Ik geloof dat elke maaltijd een verhaal vertelt, en ik wil graag jouw verhaal horen!

Ik zou graag bij jou thuis langskomen, of in je favoriete restaurant, voor een gezellig gesprek. Tijdens ons gesprek kun je vertellen over:

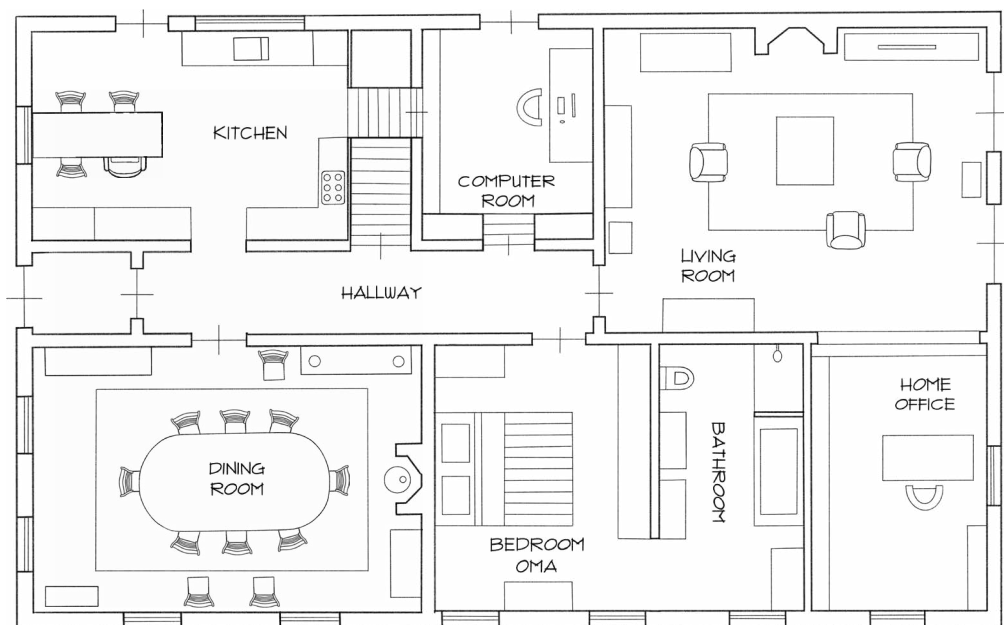
Wat eten voor jou betekent. Herinneringen of tradities rondom eten die je graag wilt delen.

Bij interesse, neem contact op met mij via onderstaande e-mailadres

After the interview at home, I aimed to do the same interviews with people in Hoboken. I distributed these flyers around Hoboken, but there were no responses



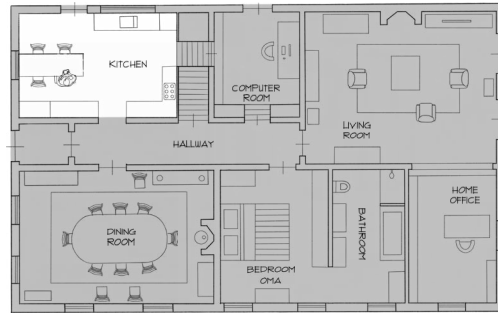
After reading Georges Perec's 'Ruimten Rondom', the element of space became more into focus



I decided to dive deeper into my own experiences, starting with visualising the space



07:00 // 09:00



09:00 // 17:00



17:00 // 19:00

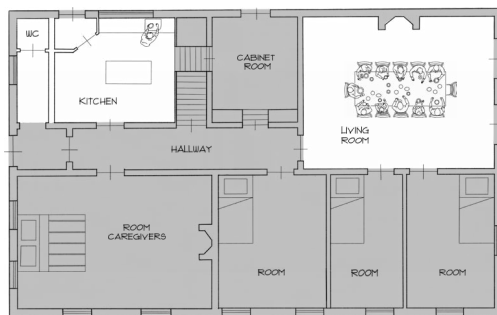


19:00 // 22:00



22:00 // 07:00

I started visualising the use of space throughout the day



17:00 // 19:00 - 1968

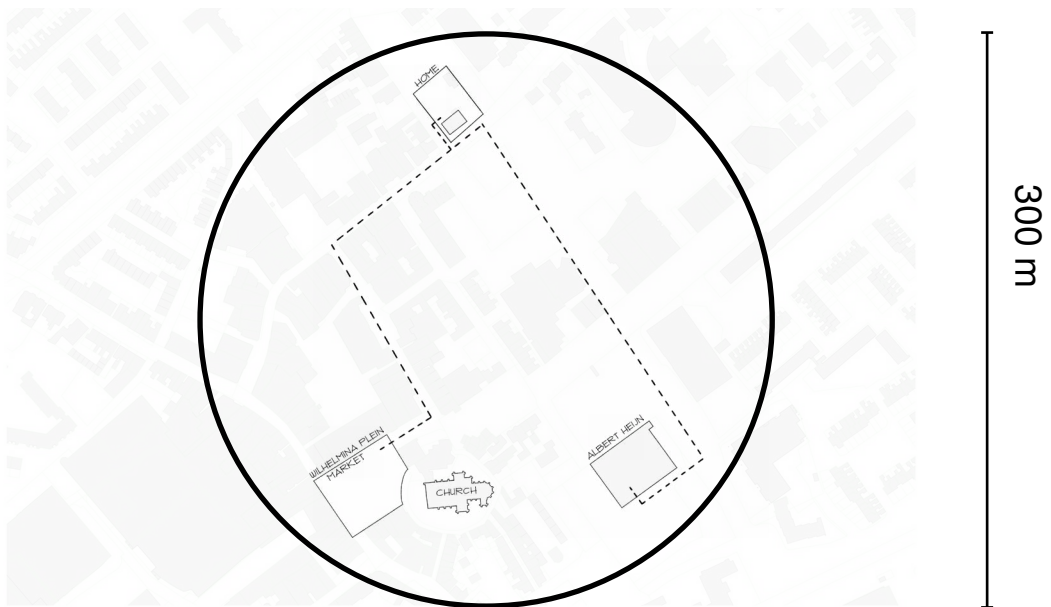


22:00 // 07:00 - 1968

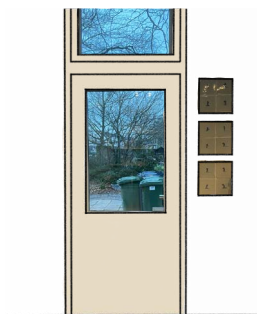
I also started looking back in time, to when the space was used by 15 elderly residents



The use of space also exists of transitions between spaces. Therefor I started visualising these transitions between the rooms

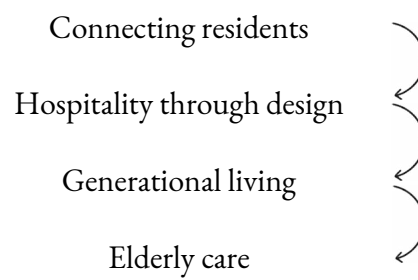


The daily routine of my grandmother is secluded within a circle of 300 m,
where different transitions exist between places

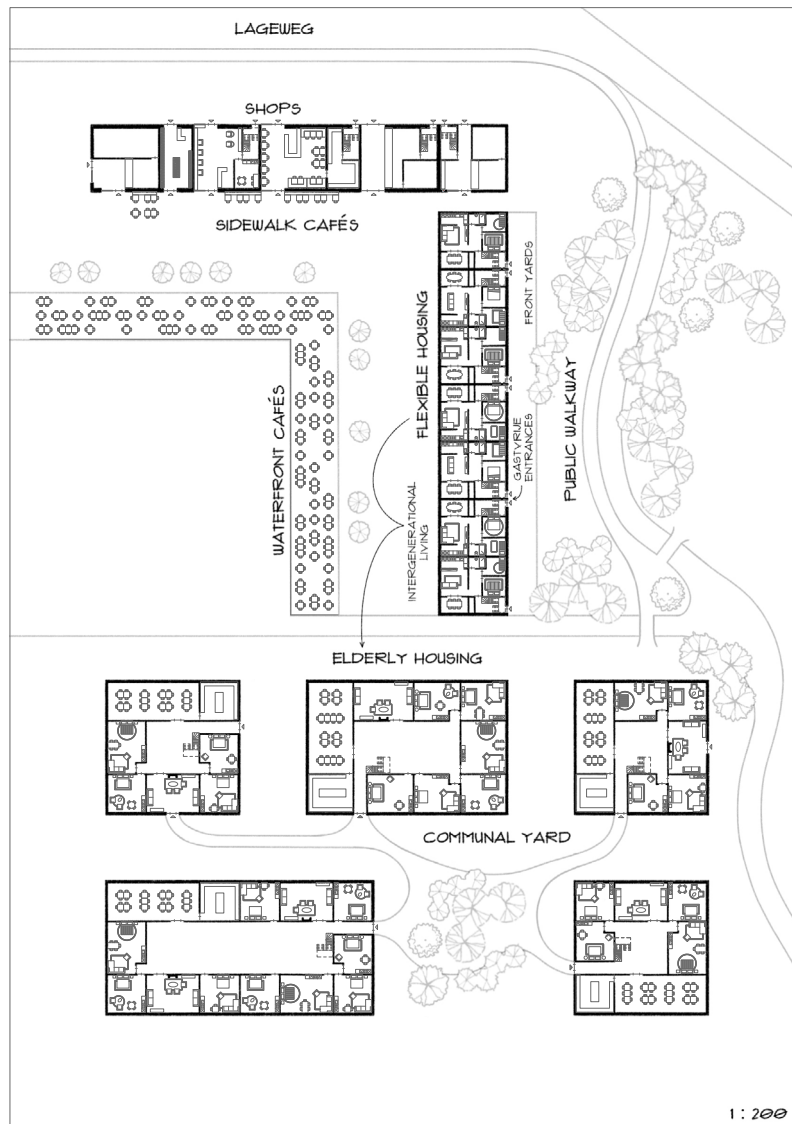


I visualised these transitions as well

Principles

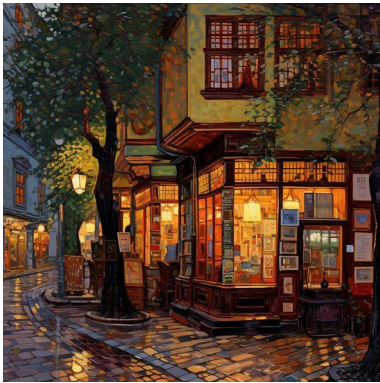


Diving deep into the daily routine of my grandmother and how space is connected to the daily experiences, I created a list of principles which would be the starting point for the design



1 : 200

All of these principles were then implemented into the chosen project location. It consists of an existing industrial building transformed into office spaces and public services, a new building with housing units for different generations, and elderly housing. However, the size of the project would be too big for this assignment, therefore I decided to mainly focus on the office building and the housing units

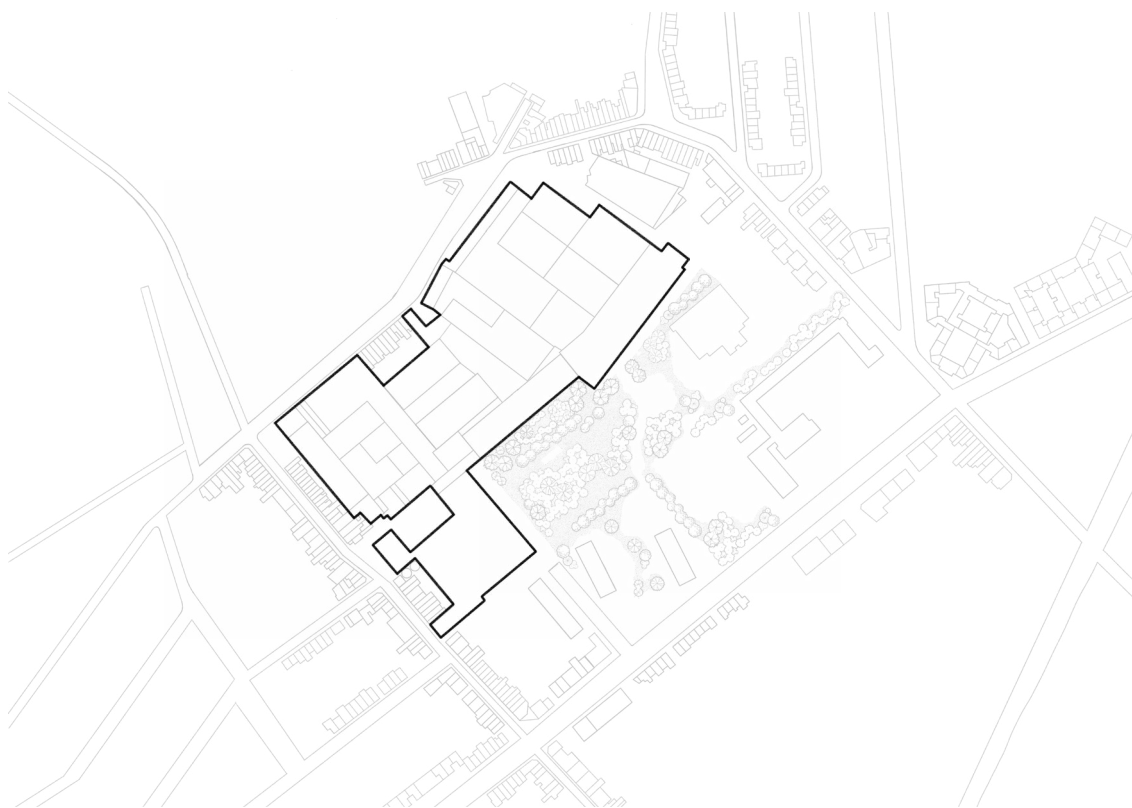


The atmosphere of the plan was based on drawings like these

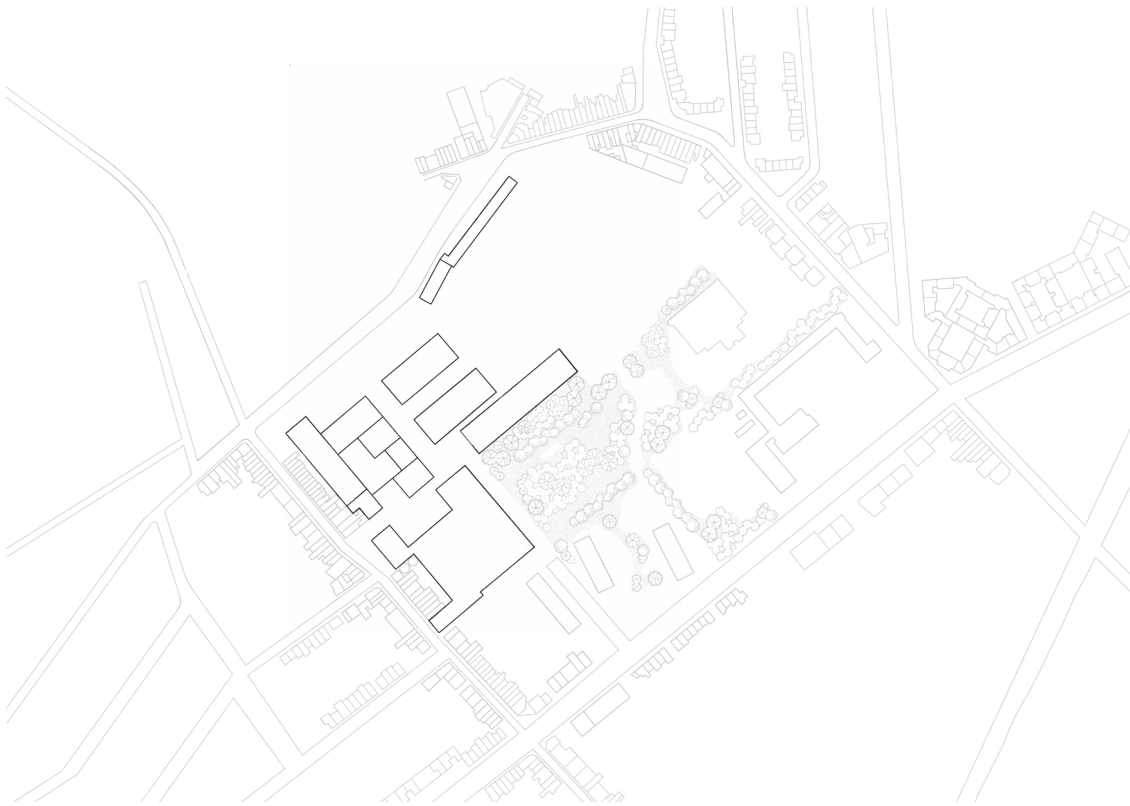
**GROUP RESEARCH
- MASTERPLAN**



Initial on site research led us to a few insights: the site is very closed off - a barrier, but there are some areas where we can break through this barrier and create a new downtown (in pictures)



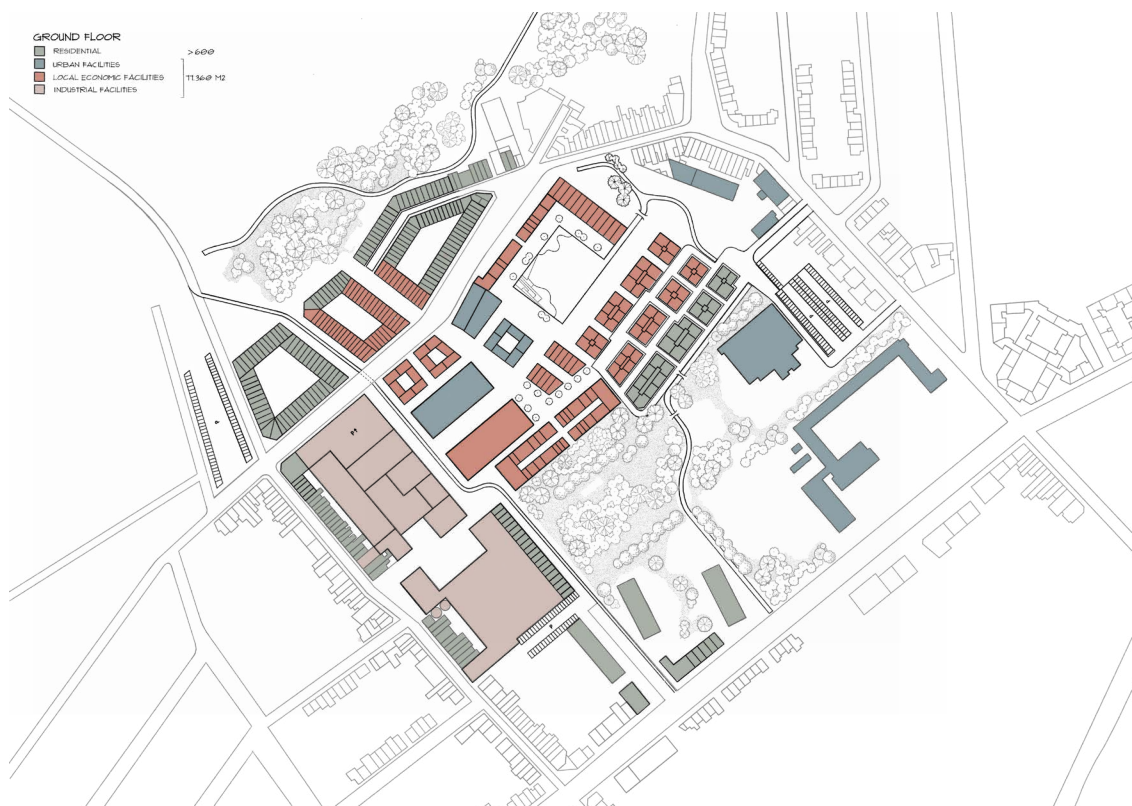
Current site - barrier



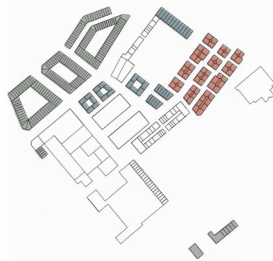
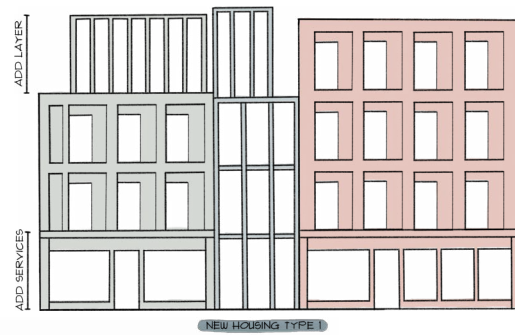
This led to the demolition of some of the industrial buildings in order to
create these new openings



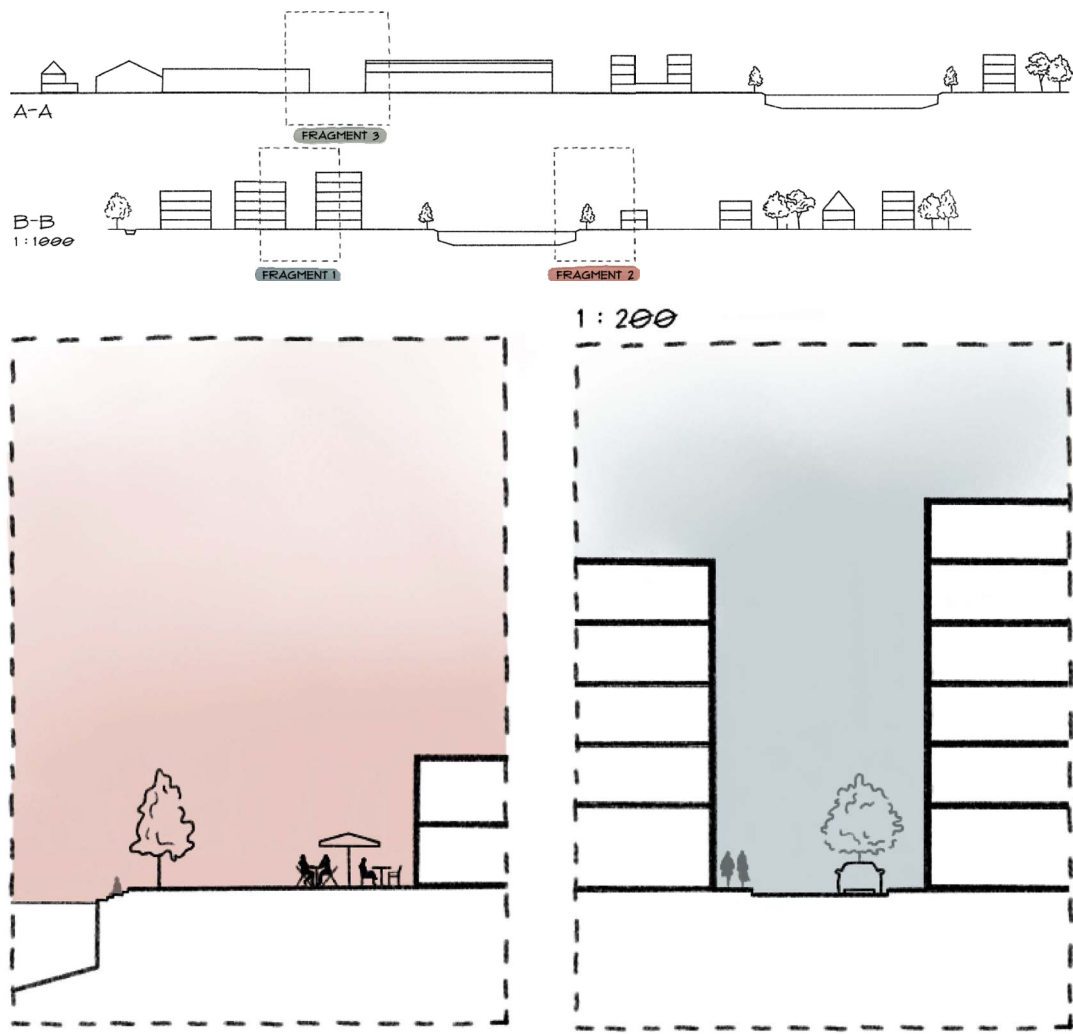
The new open plots were then filled in with new typologies, axis regulate circulation



The brief for the new masterplan led to a new neighborhood filled with houses, public spaces, small businesses, and small scale industry



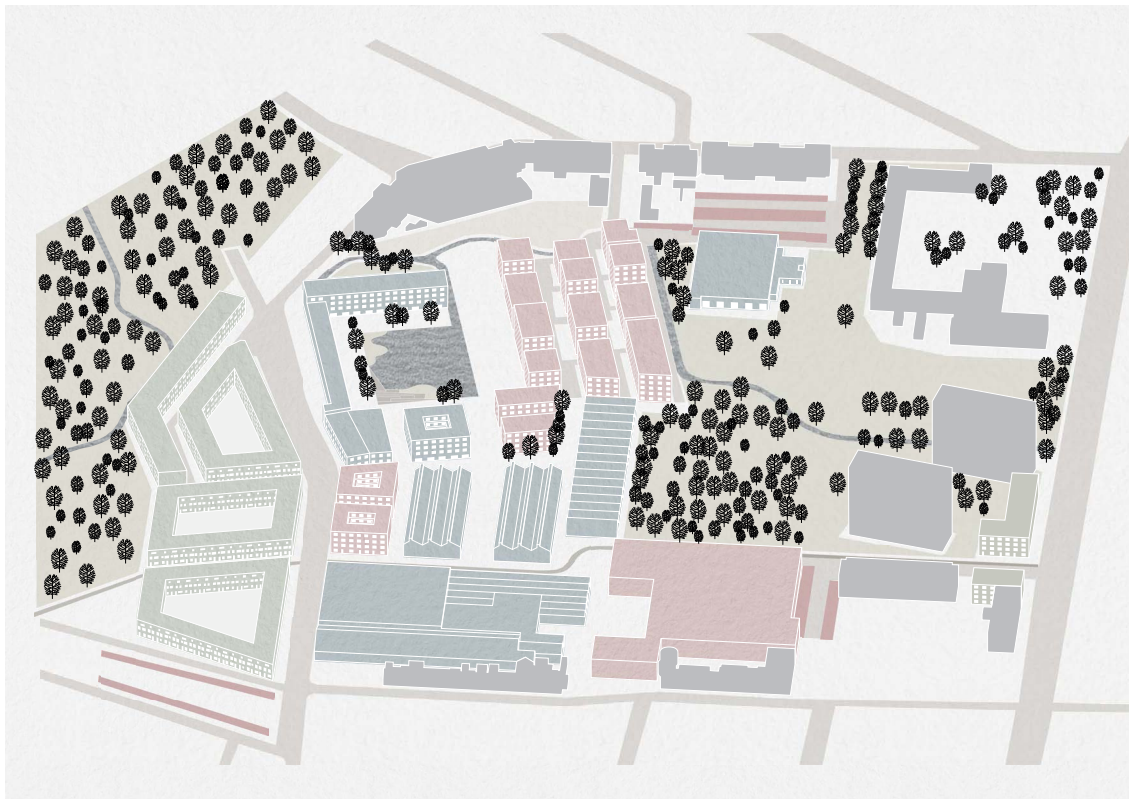
The new typologies are based on the existing housing types surrounding the Lageweg site, keeping heights relatively low and density relatively high



Sections show the general atmosphere between the buildings and the public space

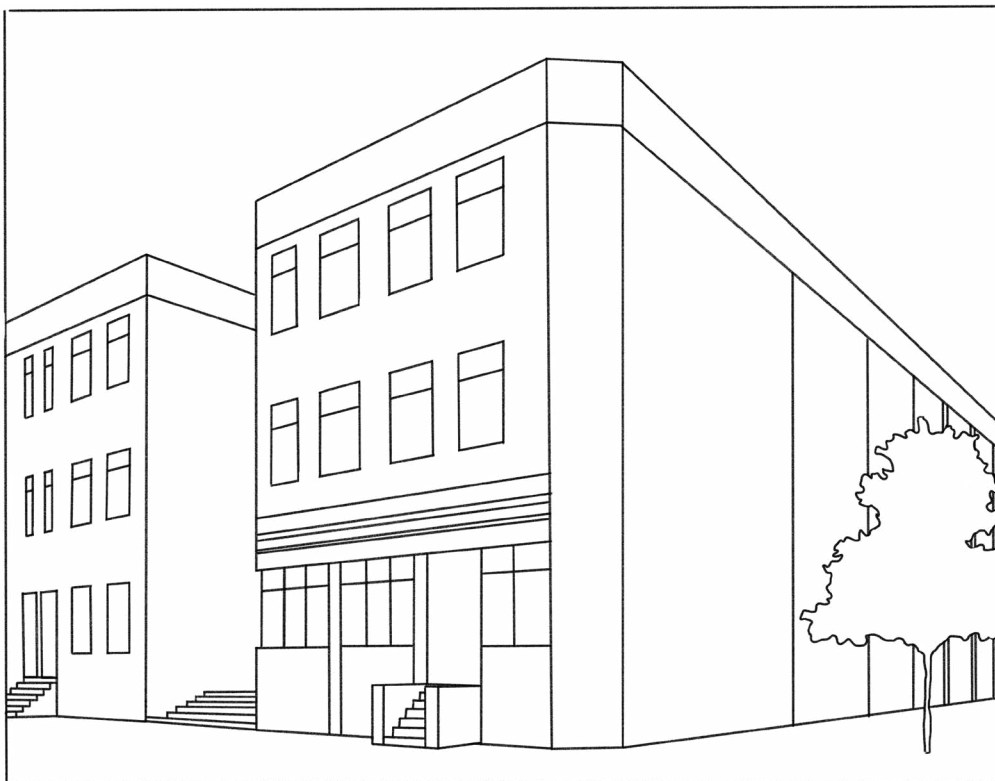


This new masterplan was then visualised through perspective drawings

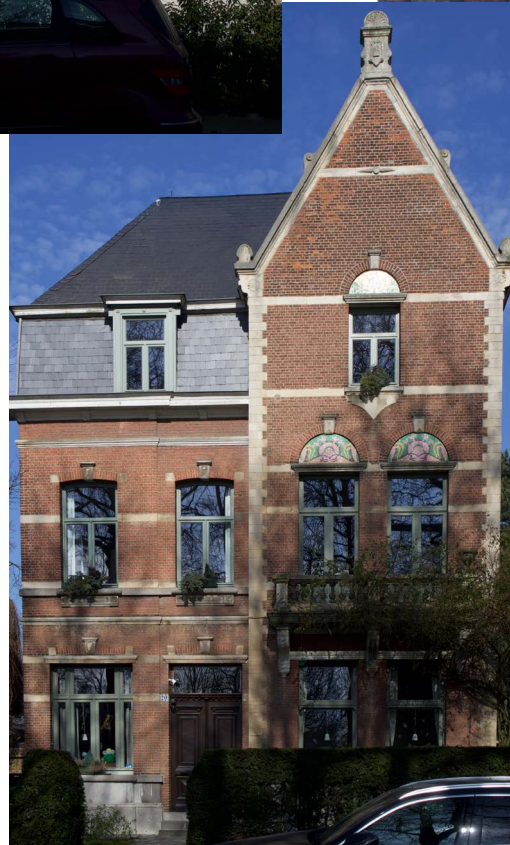
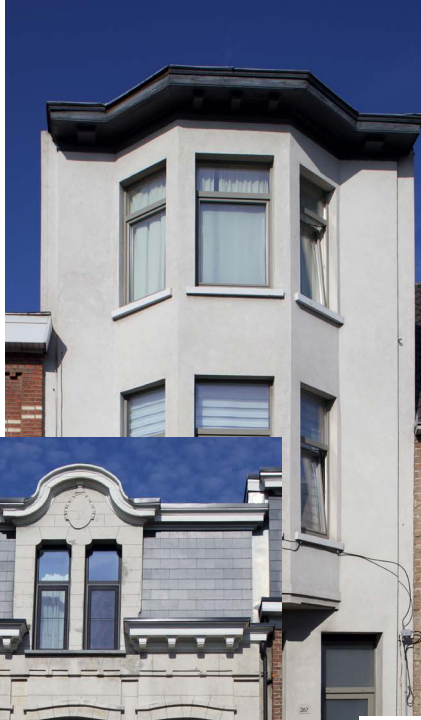


Total masterplan

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH
- AFTER P2



First step of creating a new facade for the existing building and the new building. How do I create a inviting facade?





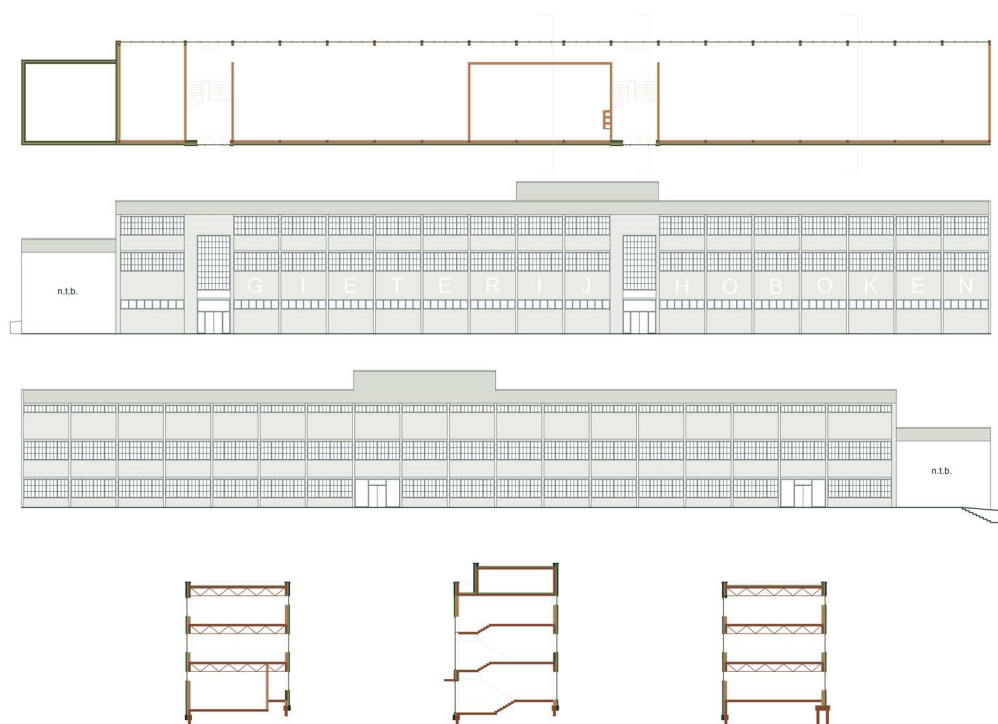
After P2, the research was pushed more towards the location of the site. I started creating a catalogue of facades I captured during a walk starting at the site and moving towards the centre of Hoboken. These facades contain elements that peek interest as well as invite people in. Another conclusion from this catalogue was that recognizability in houses is a quality that is not only beneficial to the residents, but also to visitors



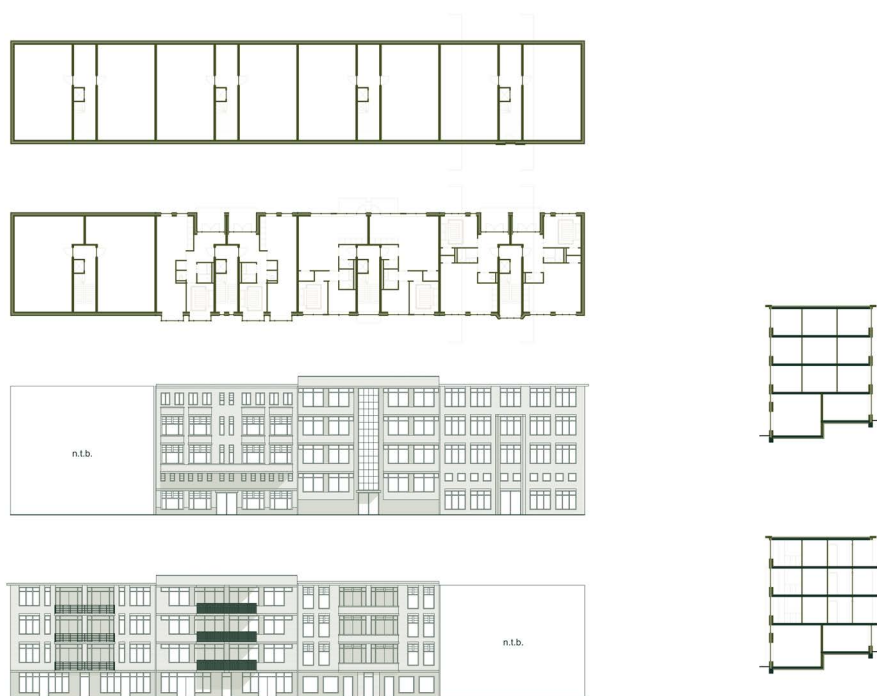
I applied this recognizability within the facades of the design



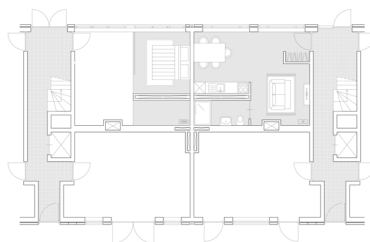
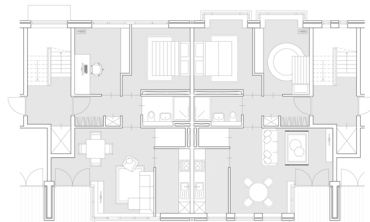
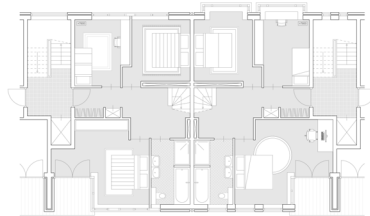
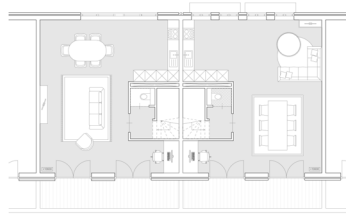
After the recommendation from my tutor to keep coherency by not changing colors within the facade, I created the 1:33 model for the P3 presentation



After receiving feedback from the P3 presentation about the existing building now looking too much like the new housing building, I decided to keep the facade of the existing building more close to the current appearance.

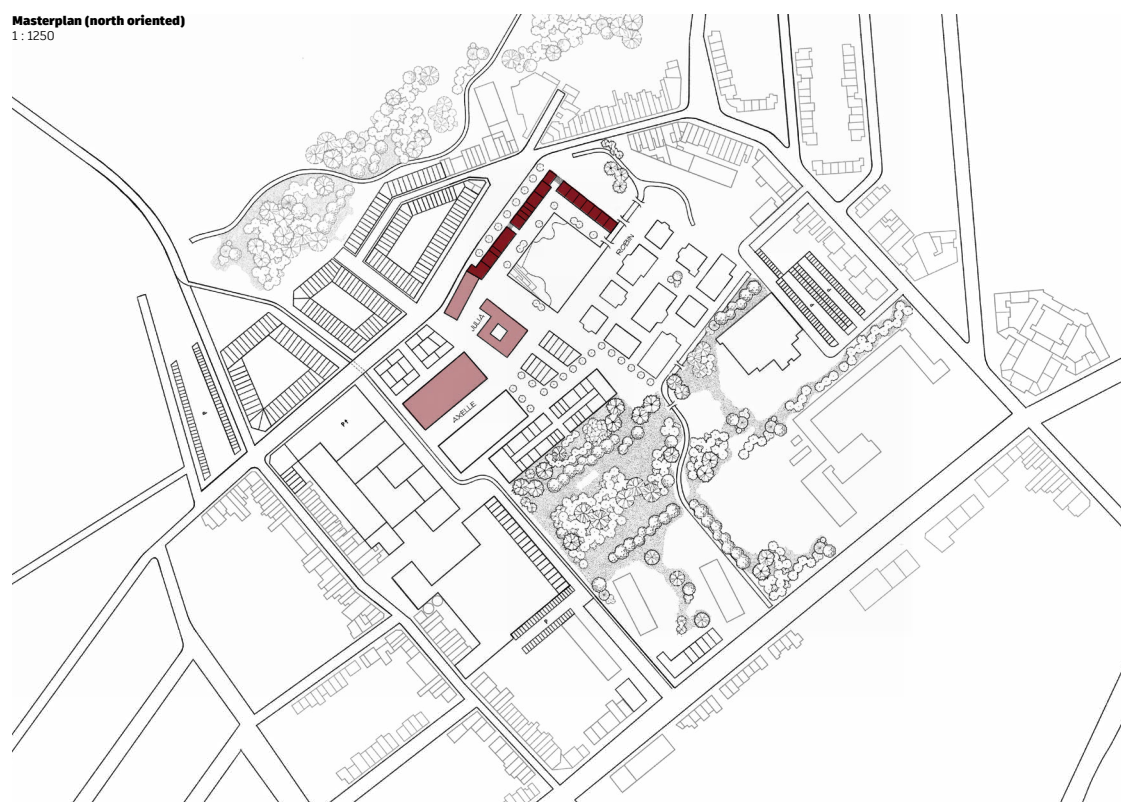


The differences between the facades of the housing building were increased in order to create more recognizability, as well as individuality for the residents of the units.

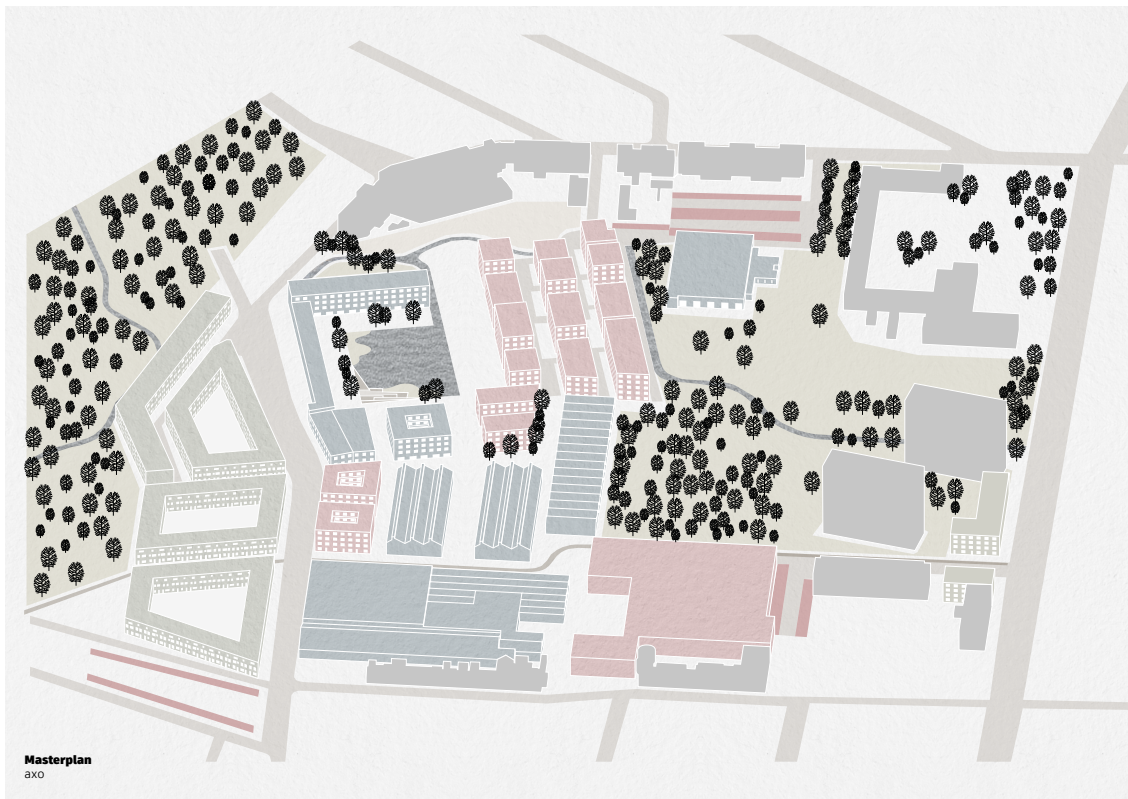


This sense of individuality also was put into the plans, creating different types of plans for different types of residents. The ground floor existst of studios for either starters or singles, the first floor consists of appartments for elderly, couples or small families and the second and third floor contain maisonettes for families

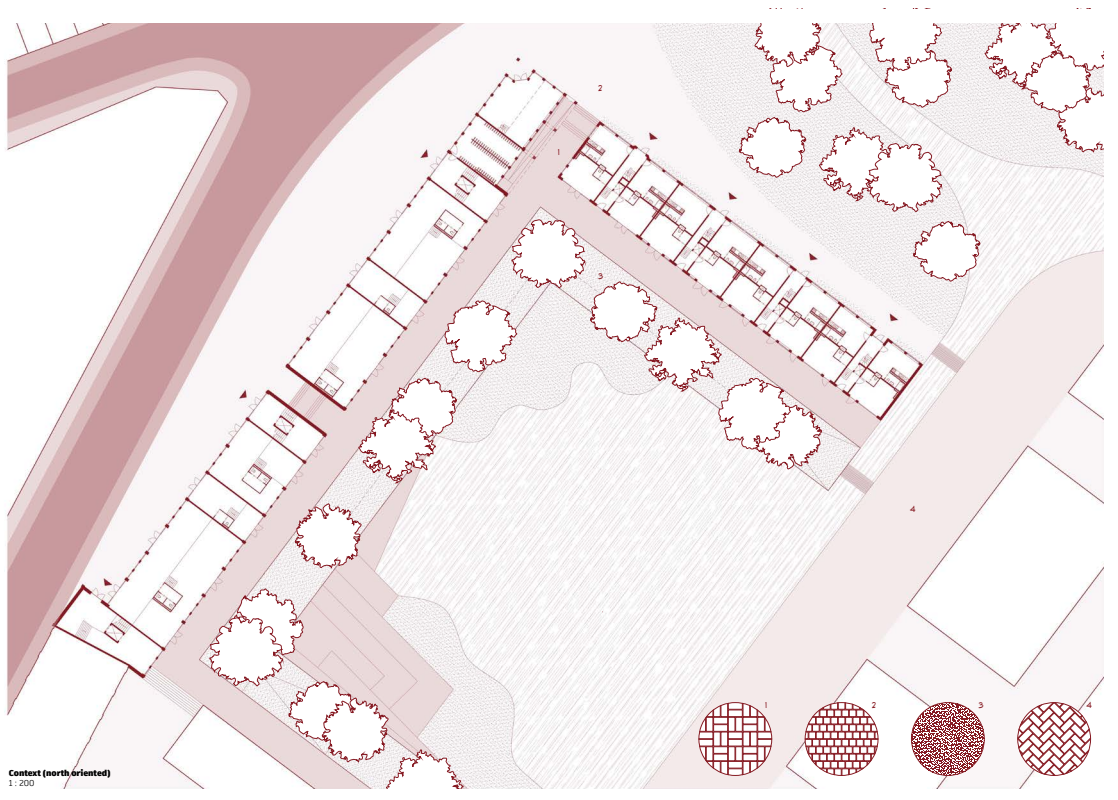
FINAL PRODUCTS



Masterplan drawing, showing locations of masterplan group



Masterplan axo, showing the layout of the new Blikfabriek site



Context drawing, showing how the two buildings are set within the masterplan. Also showing the surrounding elements, such as the water square, the public park and the differences in paving



Elevation
1 : 100

Facade drawing, showing the differences between the two buildings, as well as their similarities

SOUTH SIDE
water square

NORTH SIDE
public park

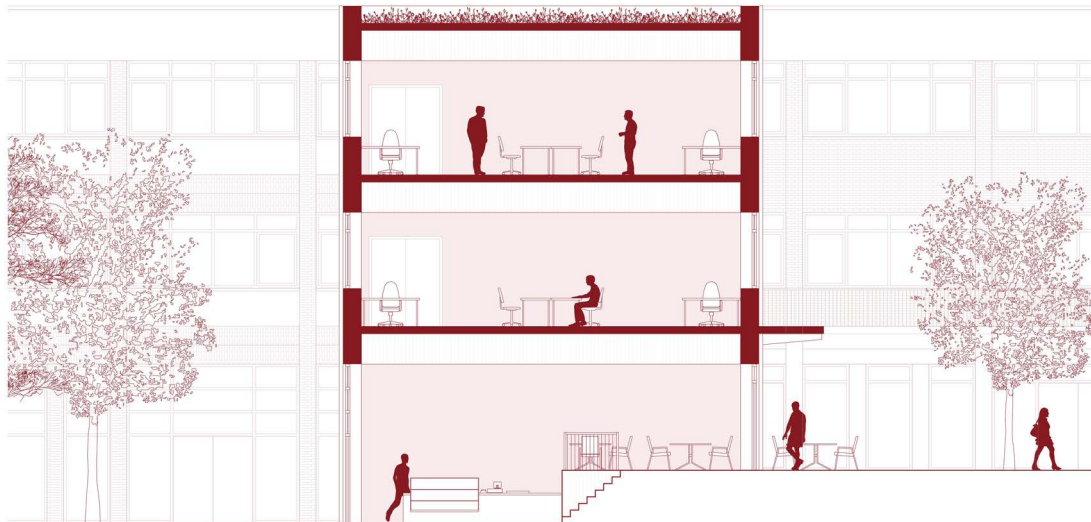


Housing section
1:50

Housing section, showing differences between the layers and the connection to the outside

NORTH SIDE
lageweg

SOUTH SIDE
water square



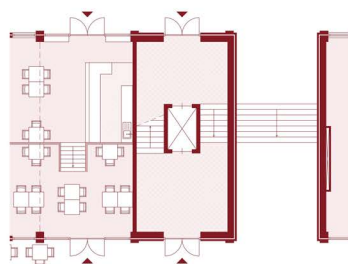
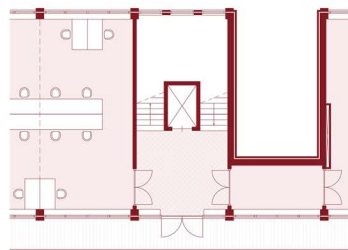
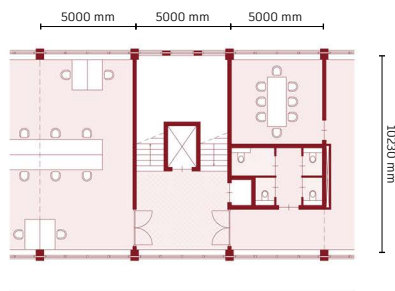
Office section
1:50

Office section, showing differences between the layers and the connection
to the outside



Housing plans
1:100

Housing plans, showing the differences between the different layers



Office plans
1:100

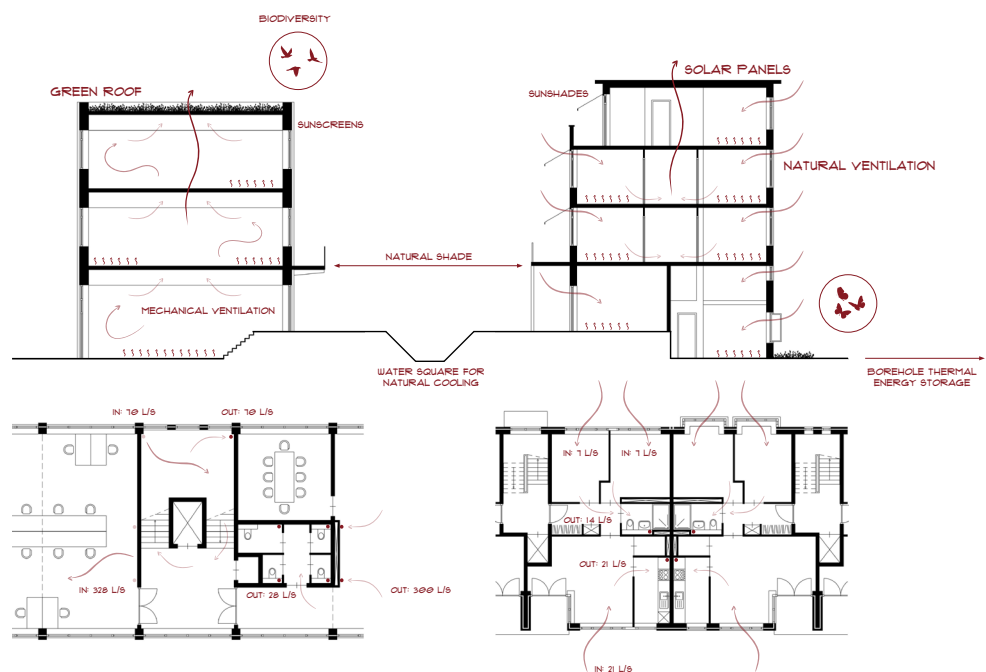


Office plans, showing the differences between the different layers

NORTH SIDE

SOUTH SIDE

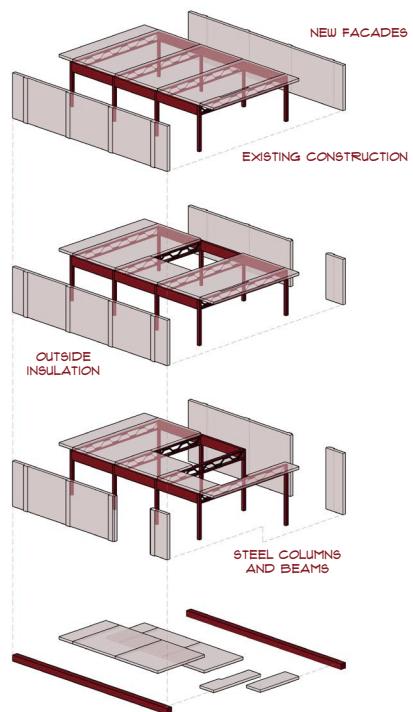
NORTH SIDE



Climate principles
1:100

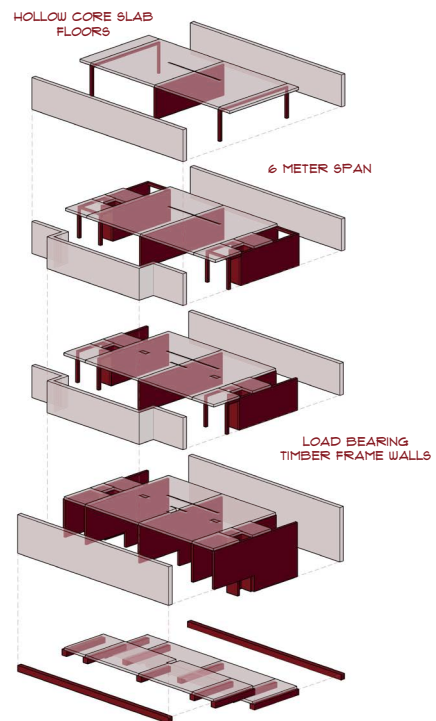
Climate principles, showing how temperature and ventilation can be controlled and in what ways the buildings are sustainable

Office



Construction principles

Housing



Construction principles, showing how the two buildings differ in construction, and what types of materials are used



Housing fragment, showing the technologies used for the construction of the building



Office fragment, showing the technologies used for the construction of the building