MAKING THE LINK: THE MAKING OF
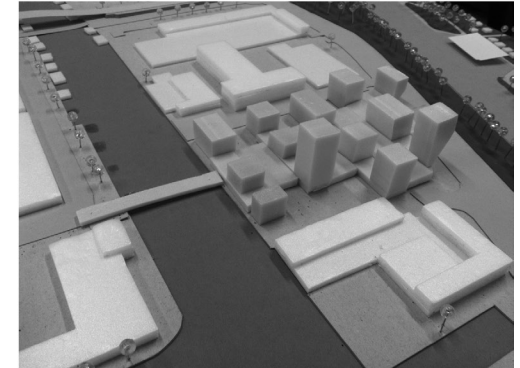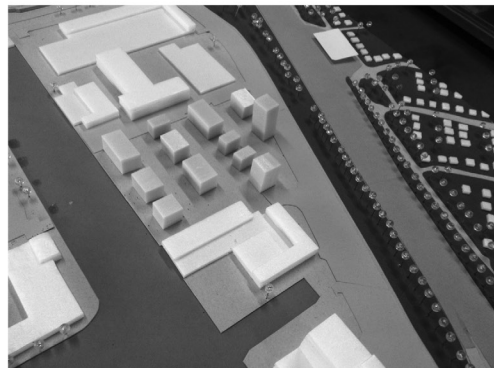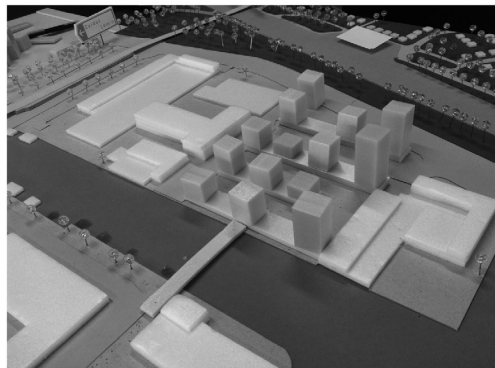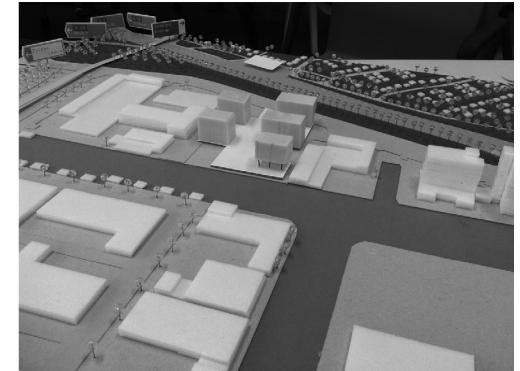
Note: All sketches are arranged more or less chronologically.

STEP 1: COLLAGE
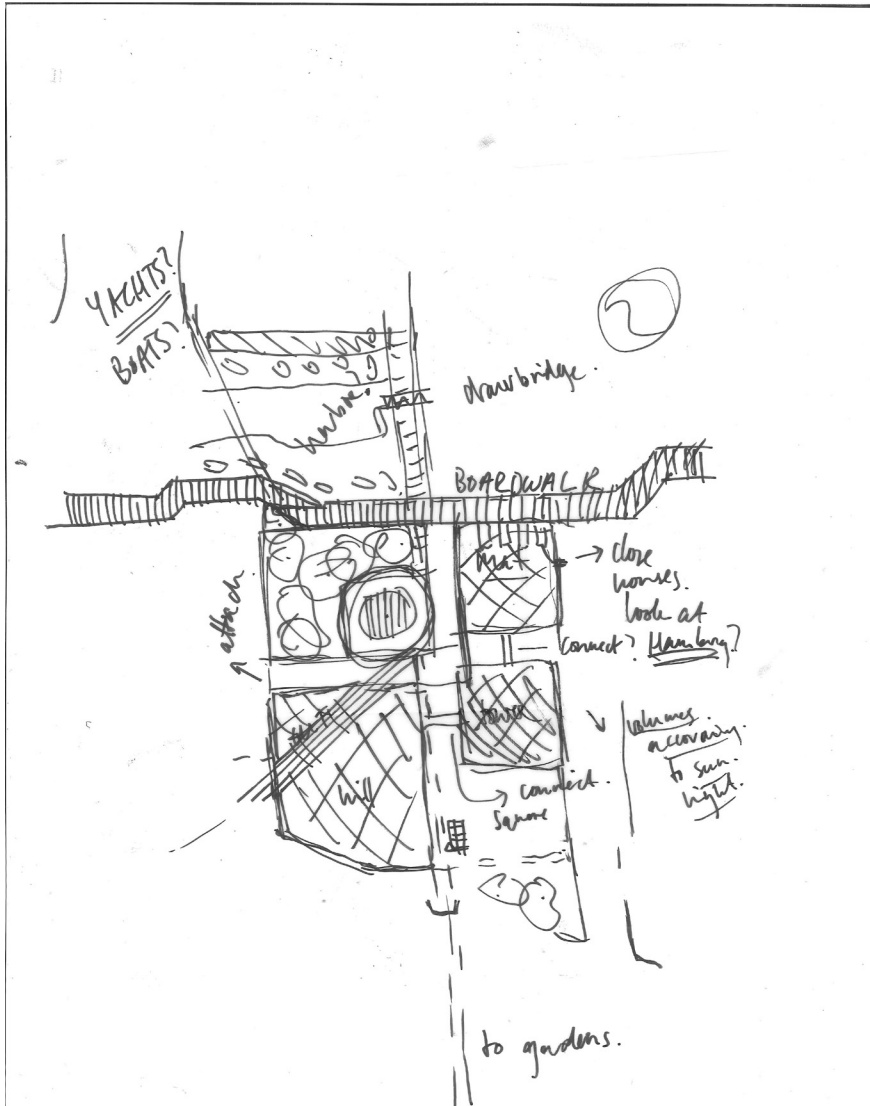
Due to the collage-like nature of the urban condition, I held a belief that a collage of building types that links and creates public space between themselves might be a valid approach to create diversity. This research was pursued from P1 on.
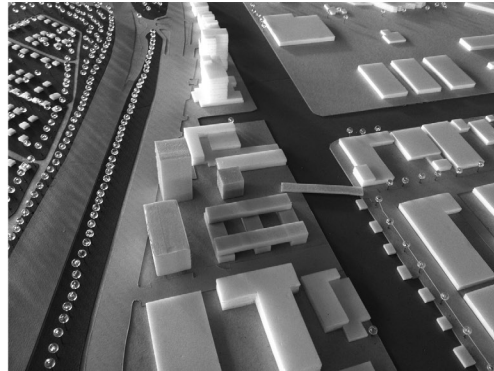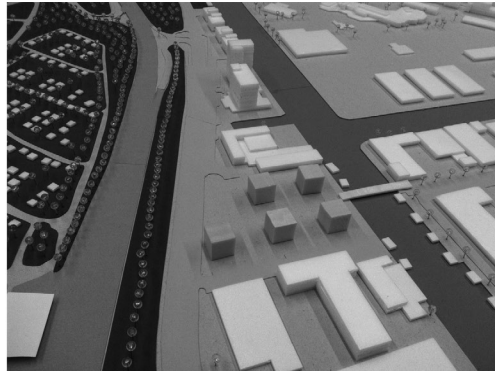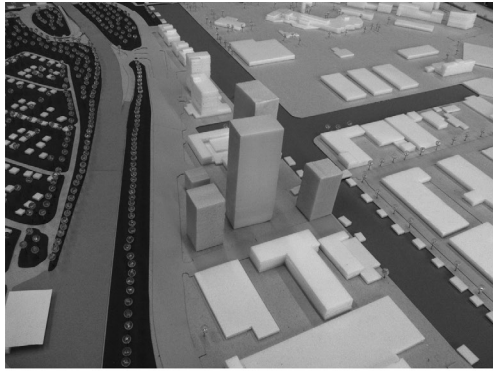
STEP 1: COLLAGE
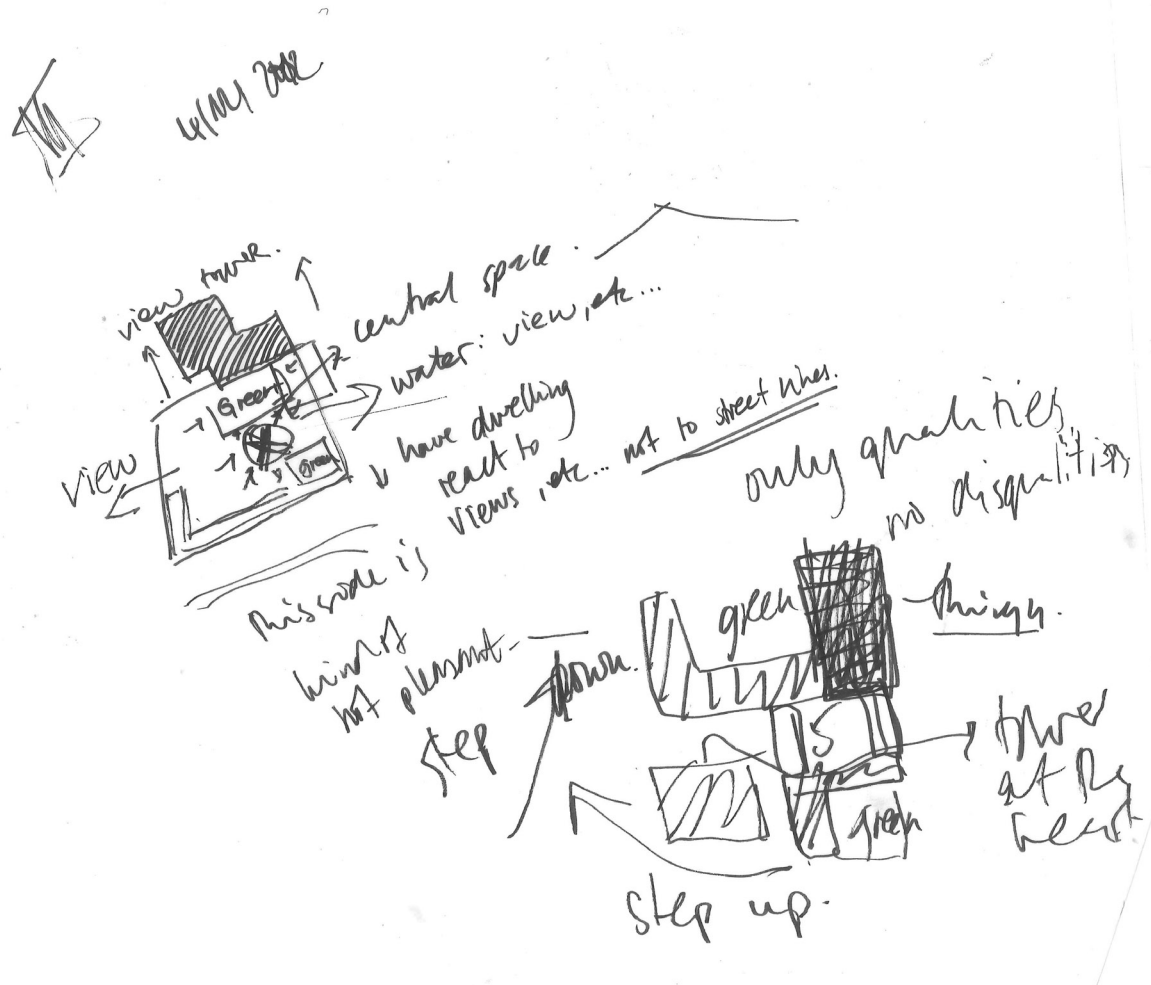
Preserving a notion of meeting space, at least in spirit. The organazing system for the urban ensemble had become independent of the context: instead of trying to react to every side individually, try to find a system which allows this.

STEP 1: COLLAGE
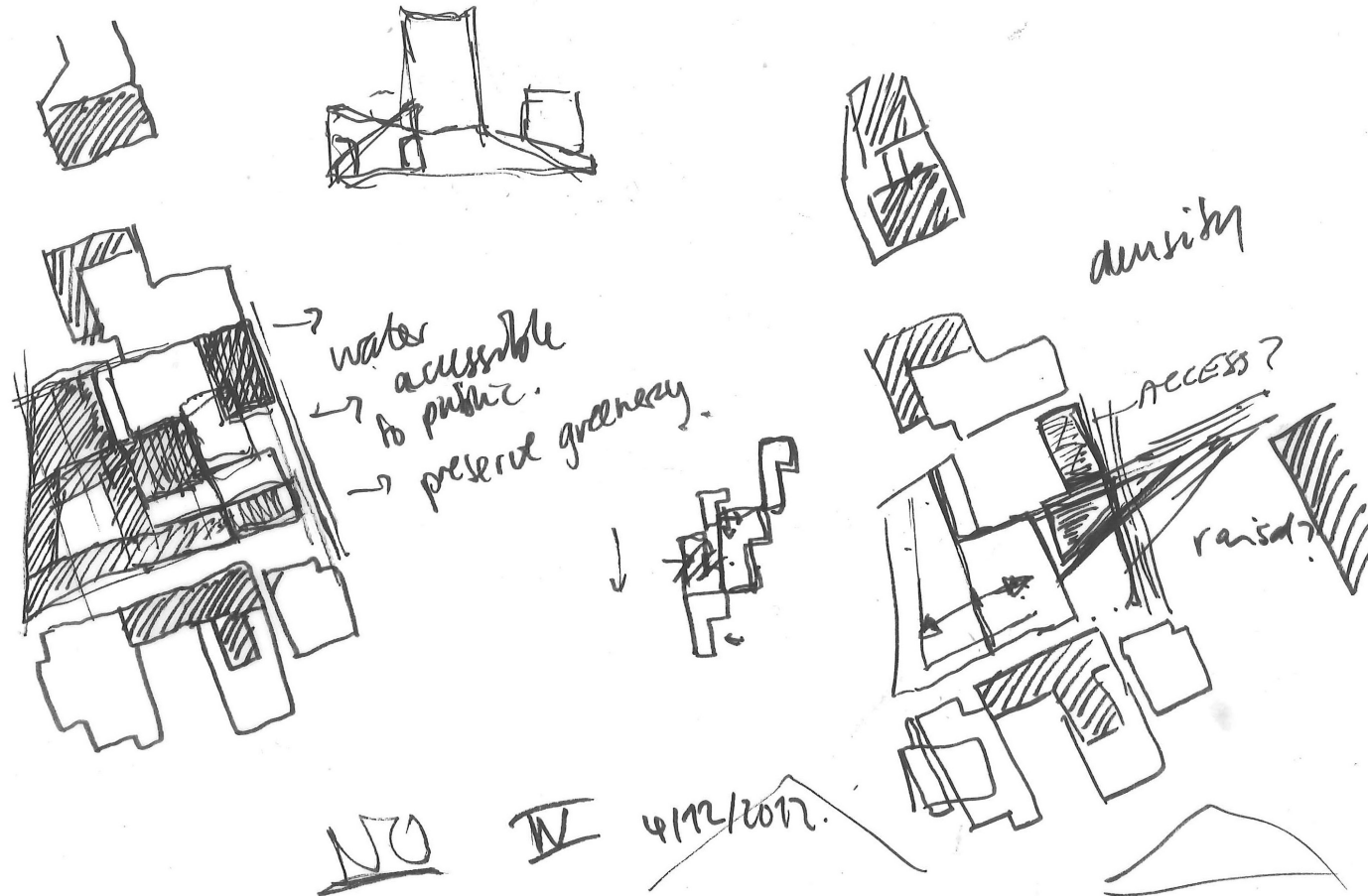
Preserving parts of the existing greenery had been a sort-of unspoken goal of mine. I have an irrational love of birch trees.

STEP 1 COLLAGE
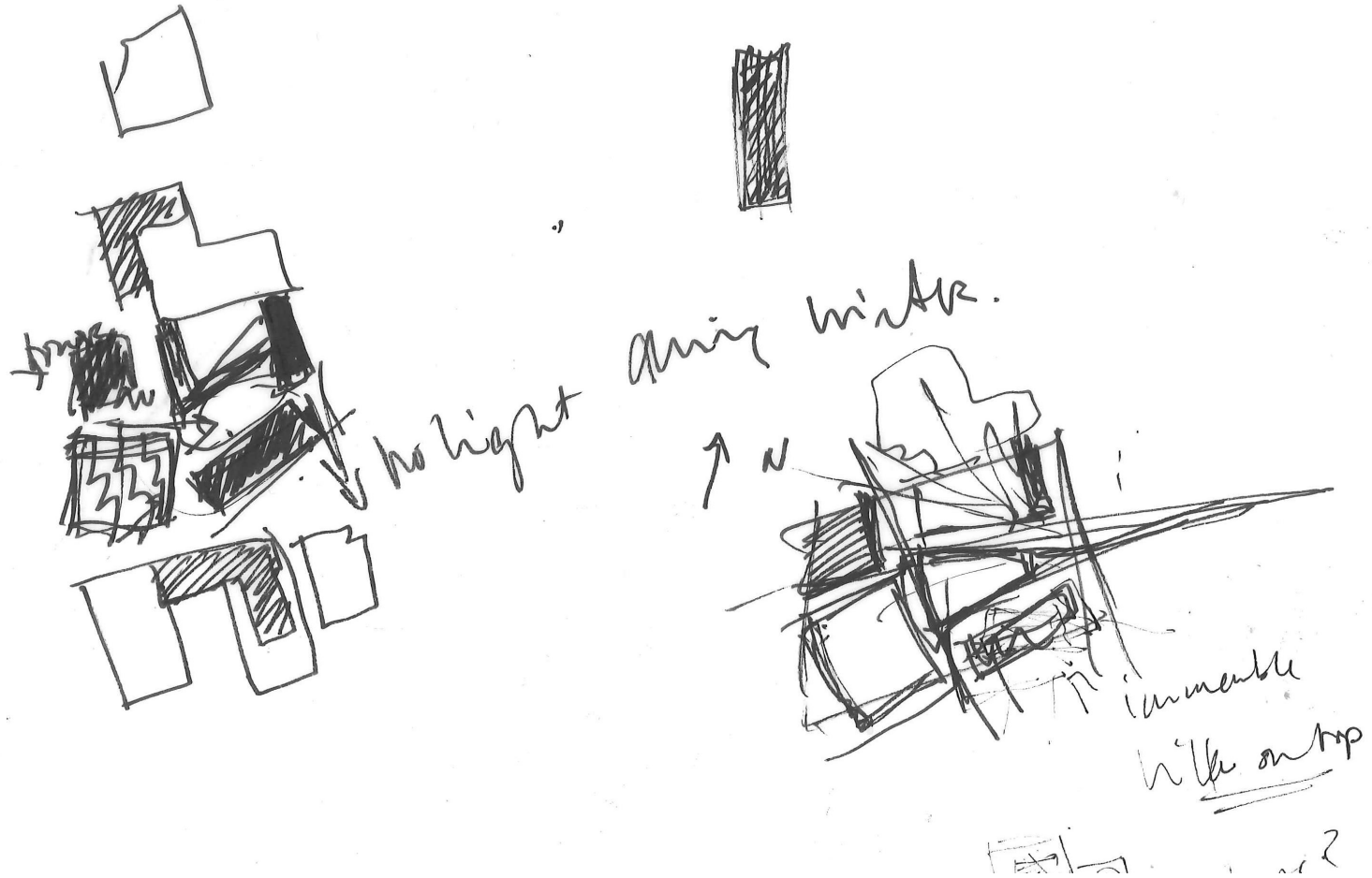
Even possible types had been experimented with: a tower, a Unité, a terraced dwelling and a fragment of a perimiter block.

STEP 1: COLLAGE AND BEYOND
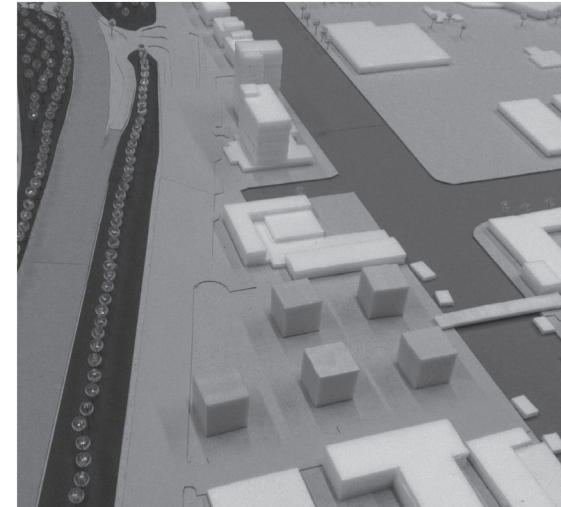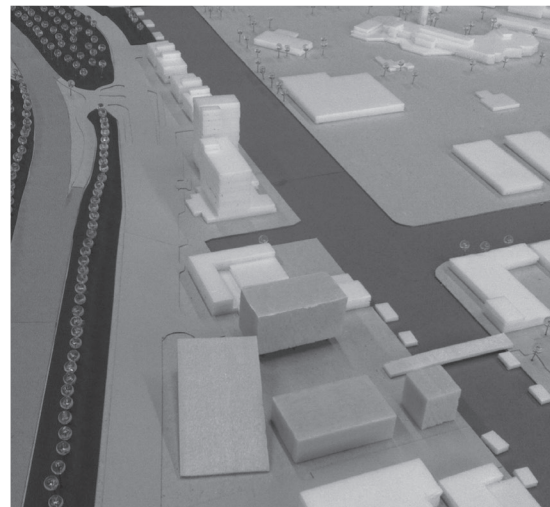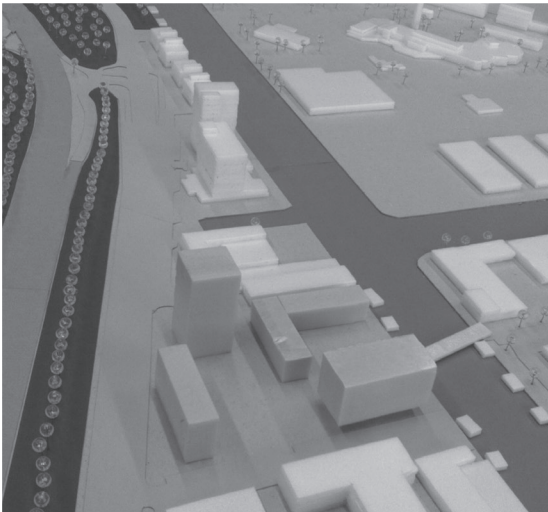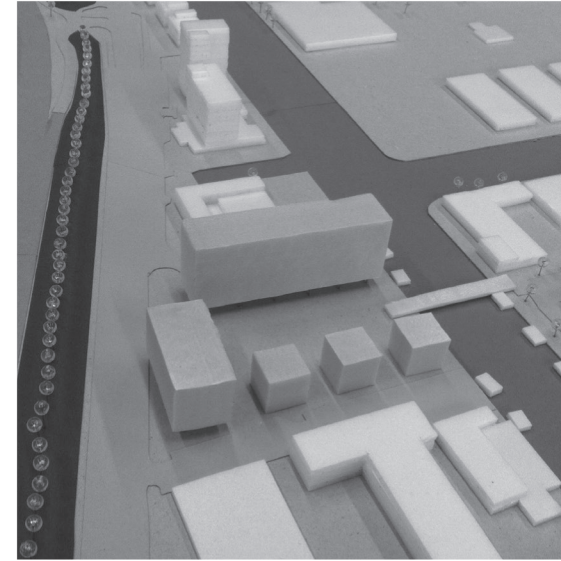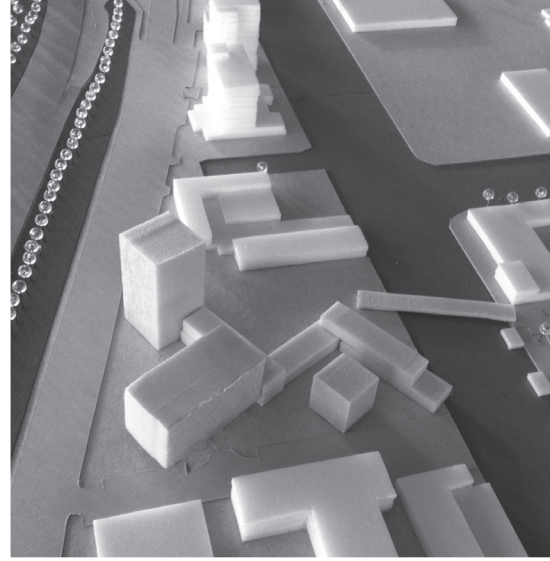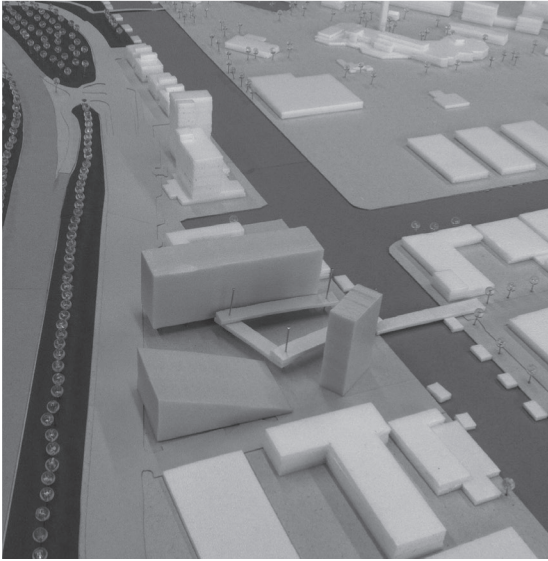
The solutions were also tested in foam models. During the process, more ordered form have started to appear. Perhaps this was an alternative way forward

STEP 2: GROUP FORM I

options
→ utopian fragment (a- contextual)
→ reclaiming the city (assumes future).
→ edge urbanity (what does that even mean?).

reclaiming the city.

fanciful.
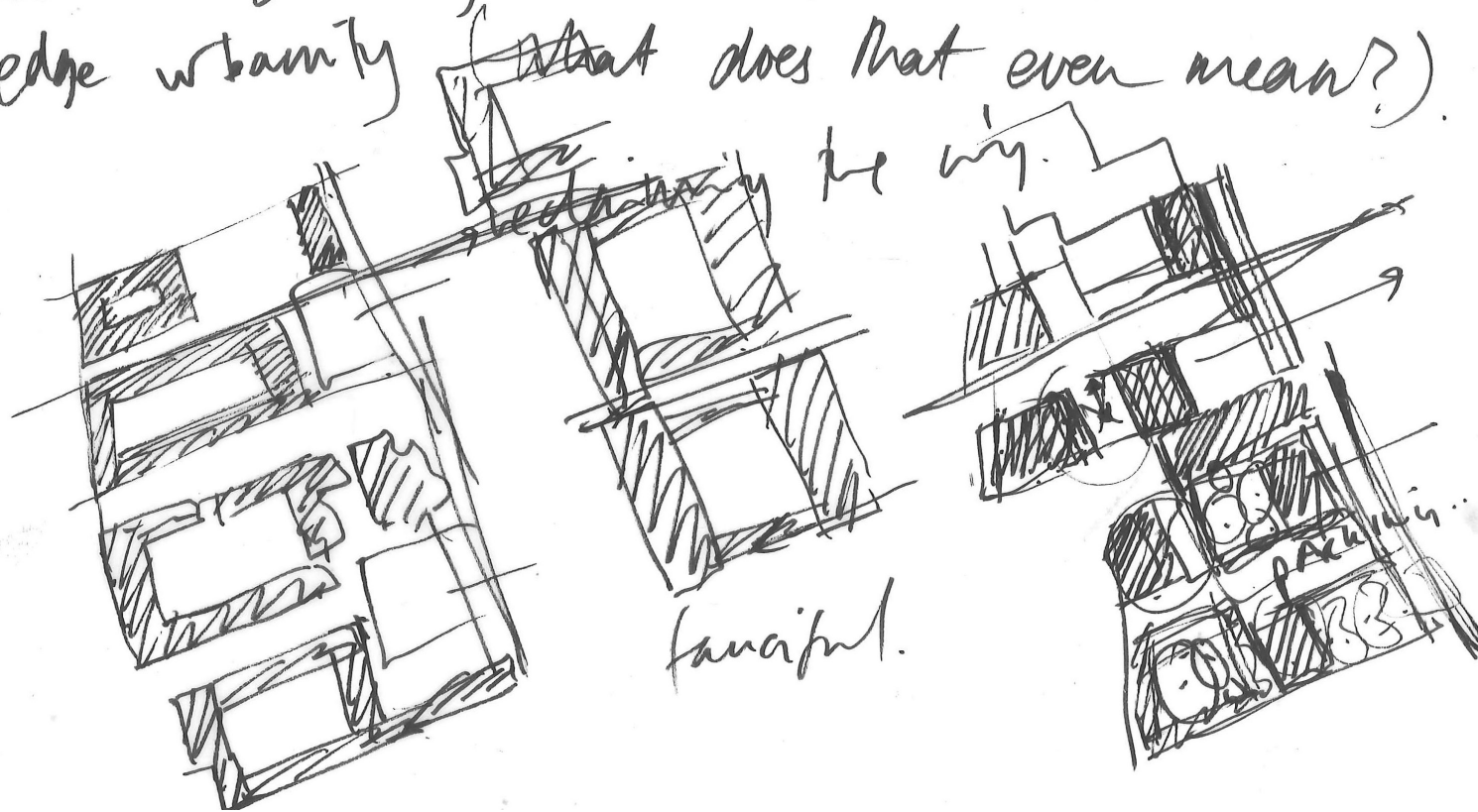
While I didn't call it "group form" at the time, the idea that a more structured, less artful approach might be appropriate to achieve my goals came to being during massing studies. More questions arose.

STEP 2: GROUP FORM I
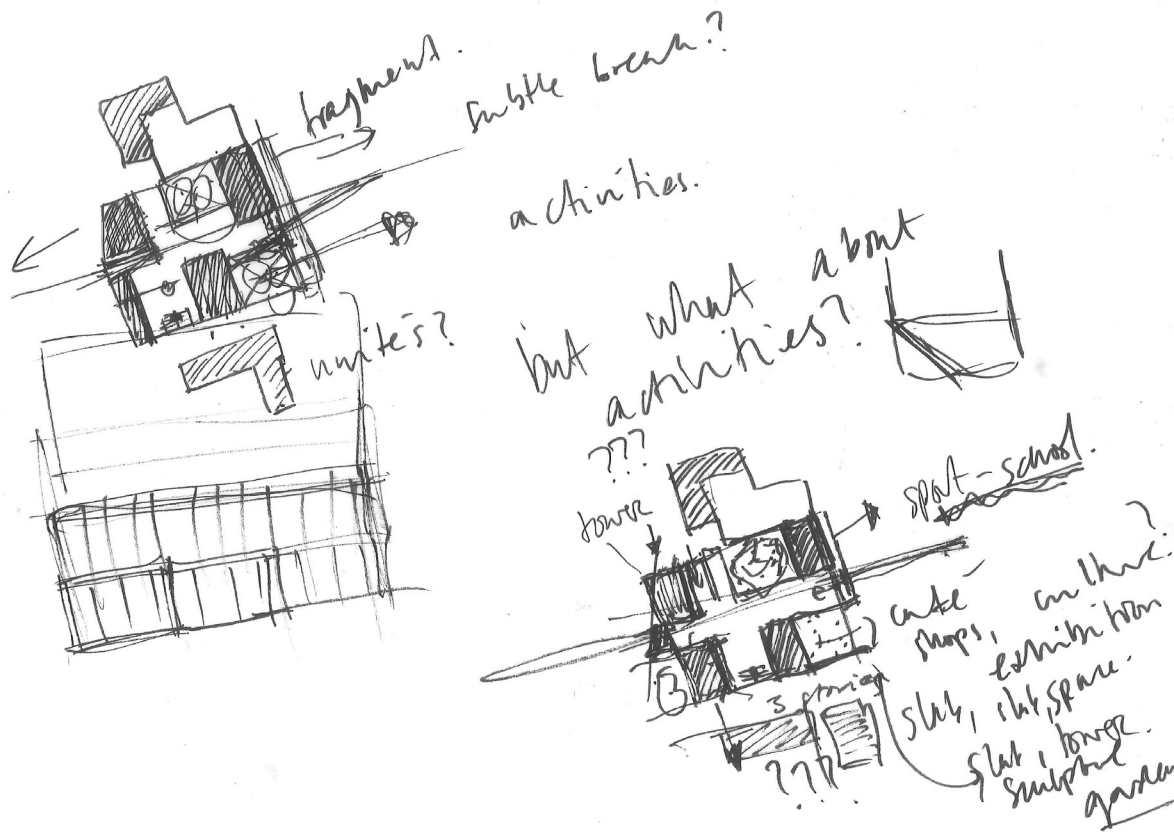
First facade(?) appears, structuring of public space becomes easier, but still too many compromises are given to the context. The density is low, not enough to define its own public space.

STEP 2: GROUP FORM I
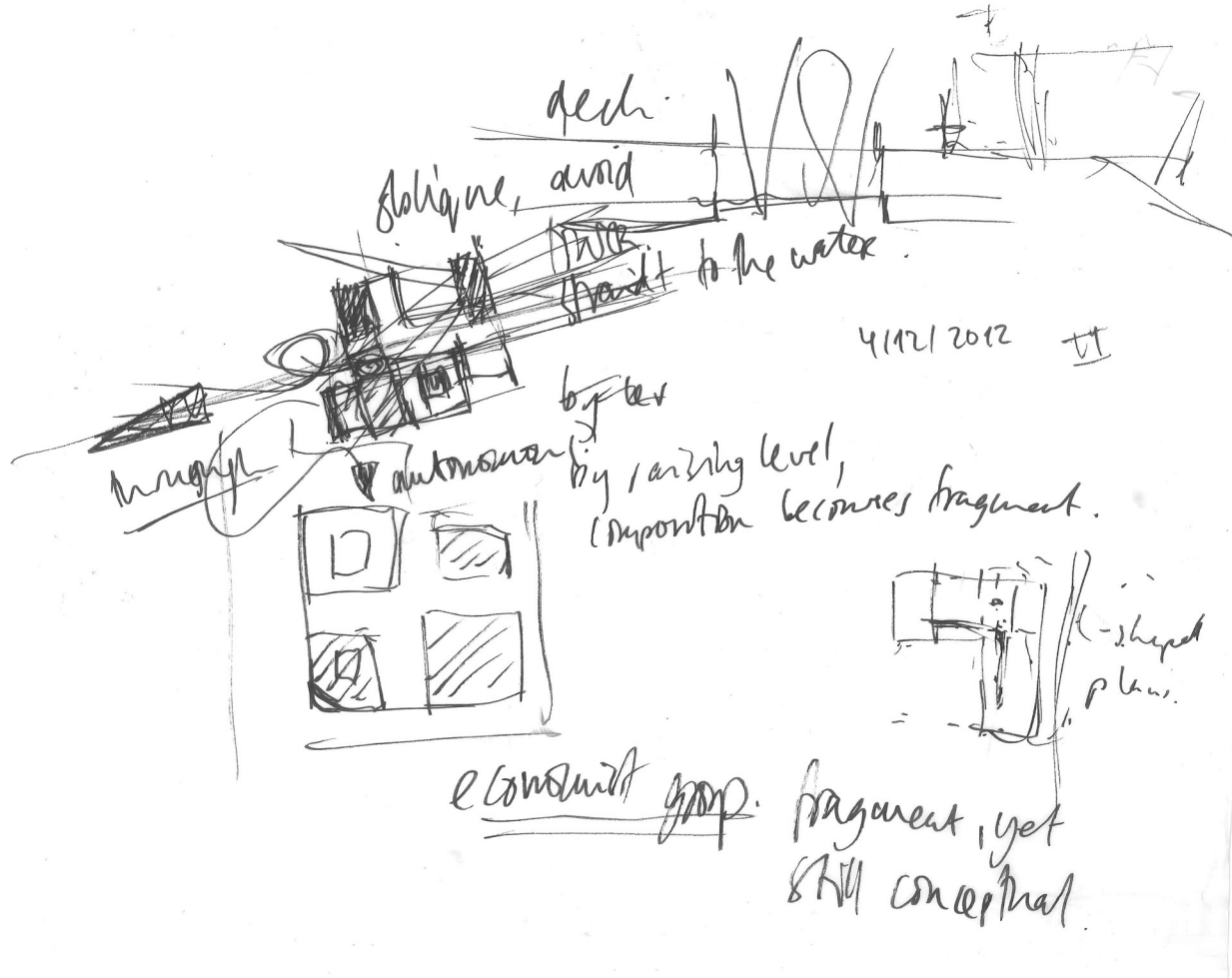
By this point, a reference to the Economist Group, the deck and the ensemble as a self-contained fragment (yet strangely attentive to the context) have all been pointed out.

STEP 2: GROUP FORM 1
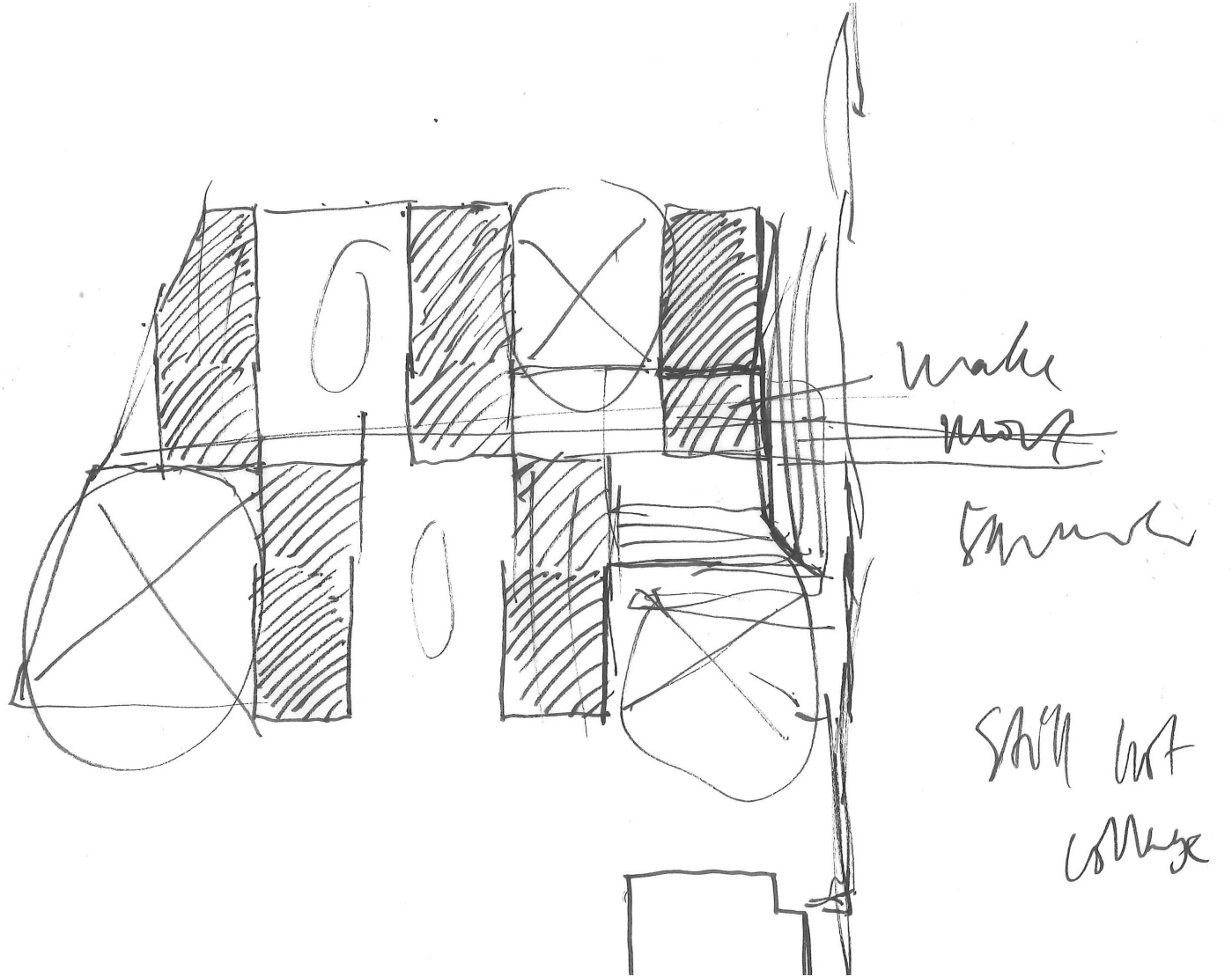
I felt that this excercise, while rigorous, was becoming increasingly bland.

STEP 2: GOUP FORM I
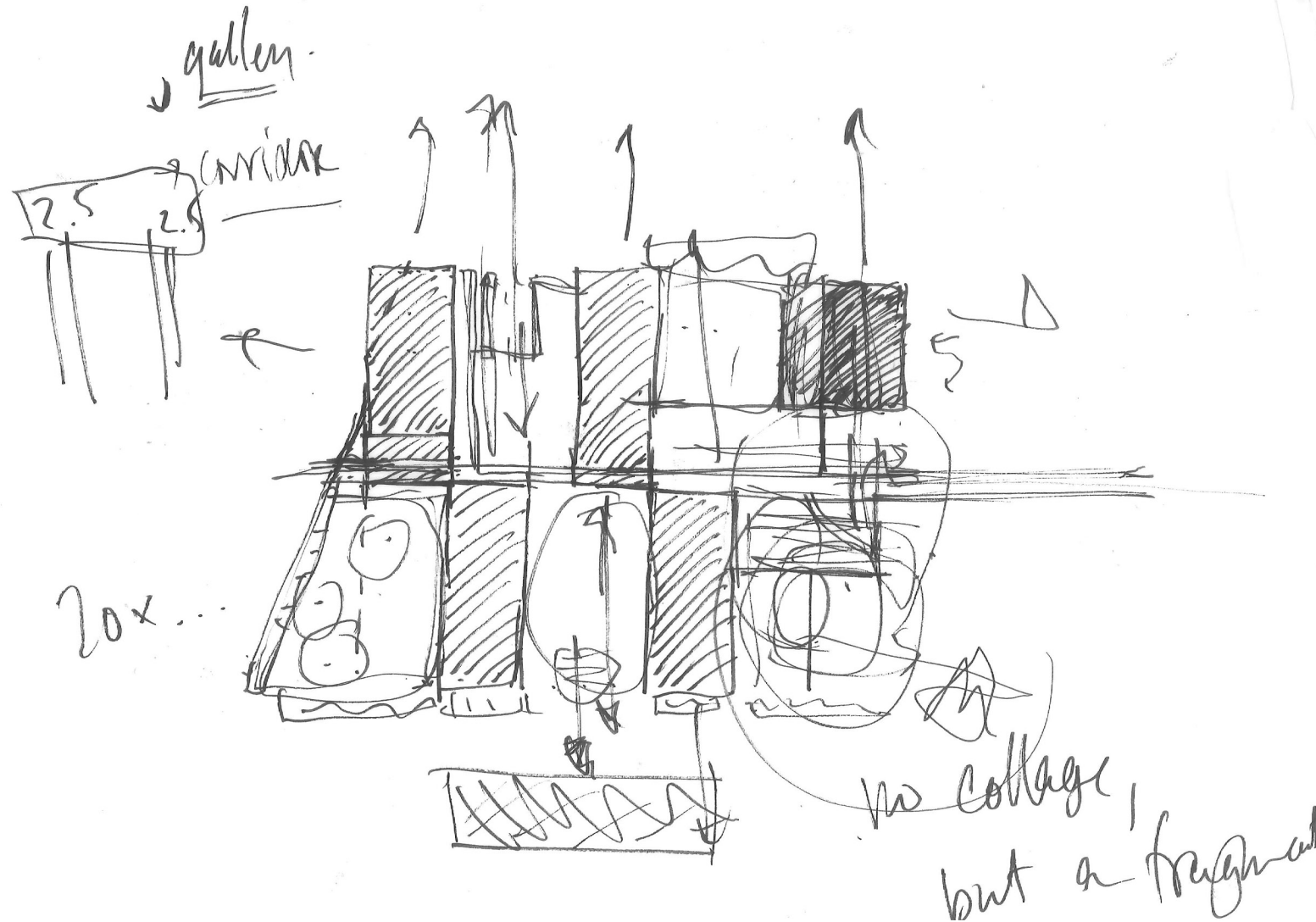
Furthermore, I felt that this approach would not reflect the collage of Omval. The obvious answer was to not create a mini collage, but to add a new fragment to the existing one.

STEP 2: GROUP FORM I AND COLLAGE
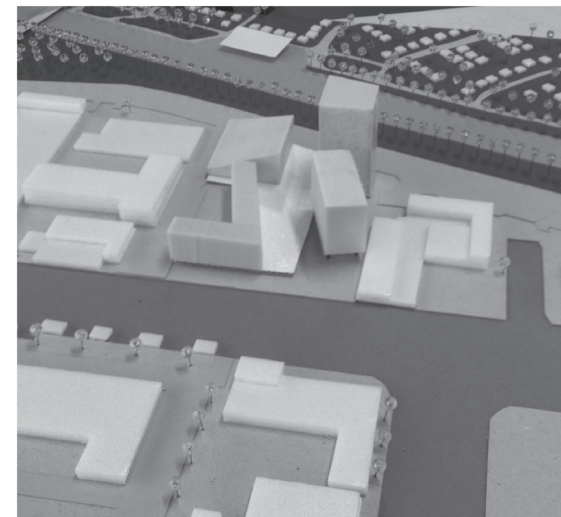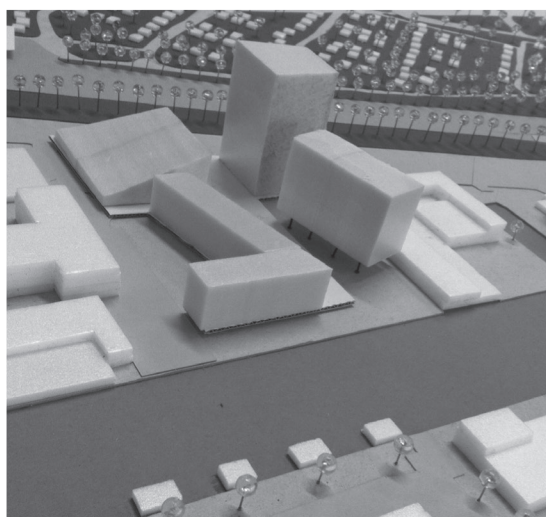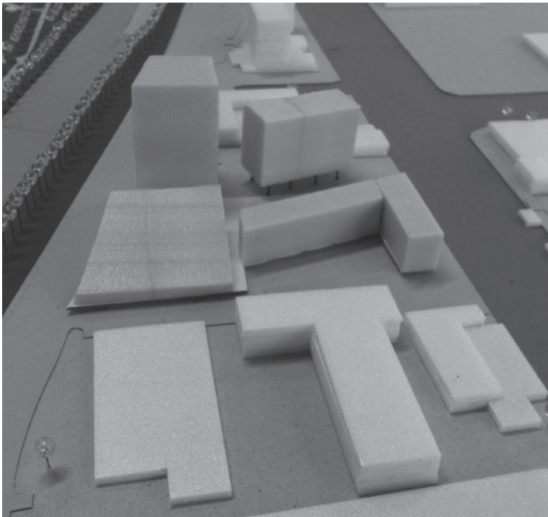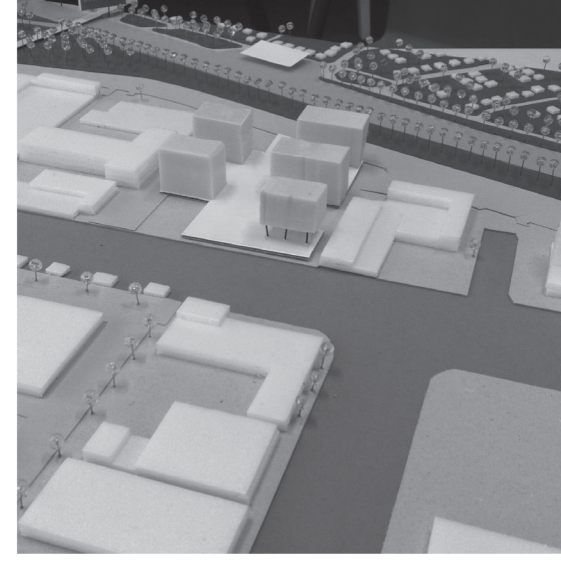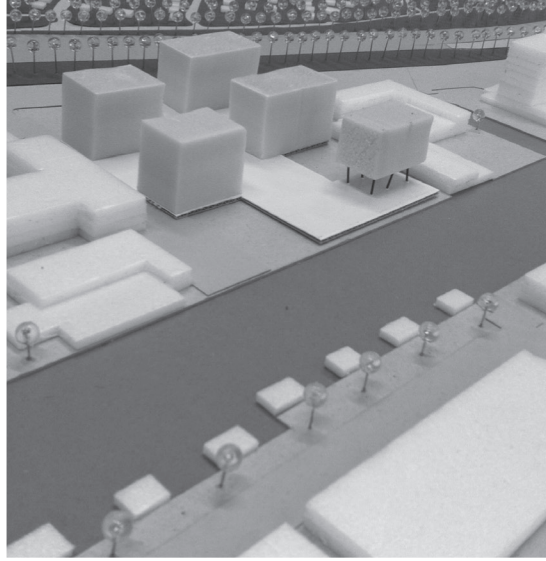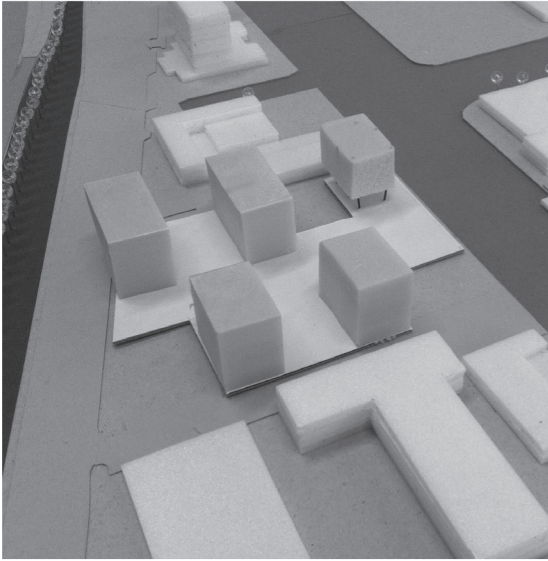
The group form design took mainly place on paper, but at the beginning of December I had made two urban models: one collage, the other one more ordered. An interesting proposition came from my tutor: why not try to combine them somehow. Ordered diversity and diverse order?

STEP 3: A STEP BACK
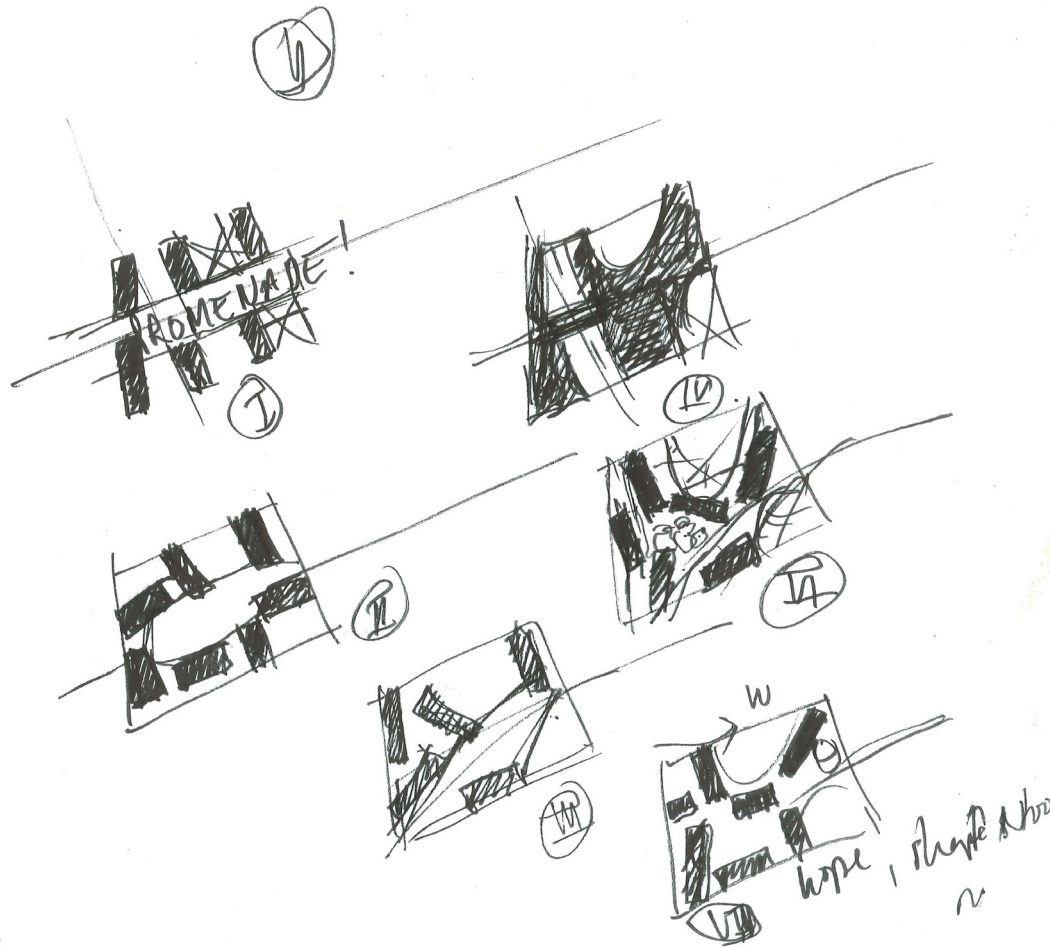
With new reference (City of Justice in Barcelona by David Chipperfield) and a renewed enthusiasm, I quickly found out that combining collage and a more ordered composition might be more difficult that it seems. Cleare sense of routing had been lost.

STEP 3: A STEP BACK
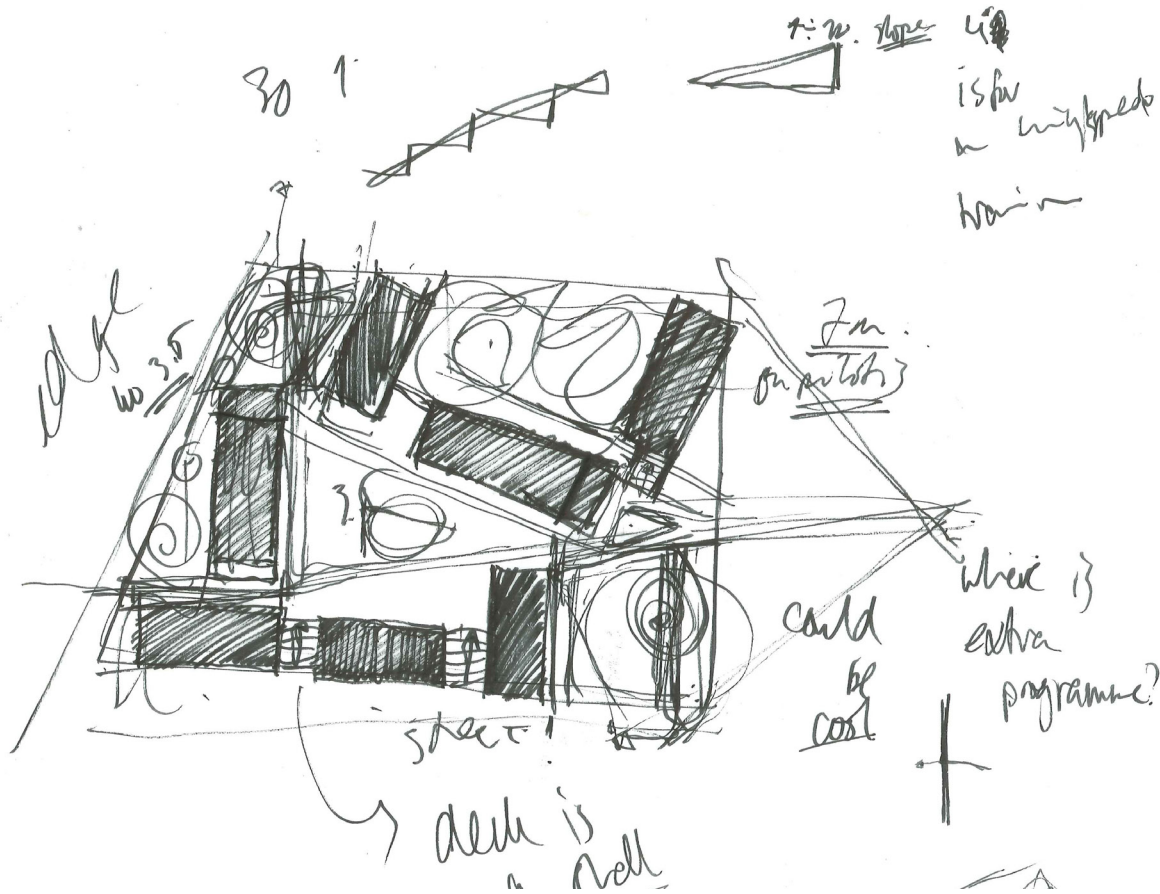
This was not going anywhere new...

STEP 3: A STEP BACK
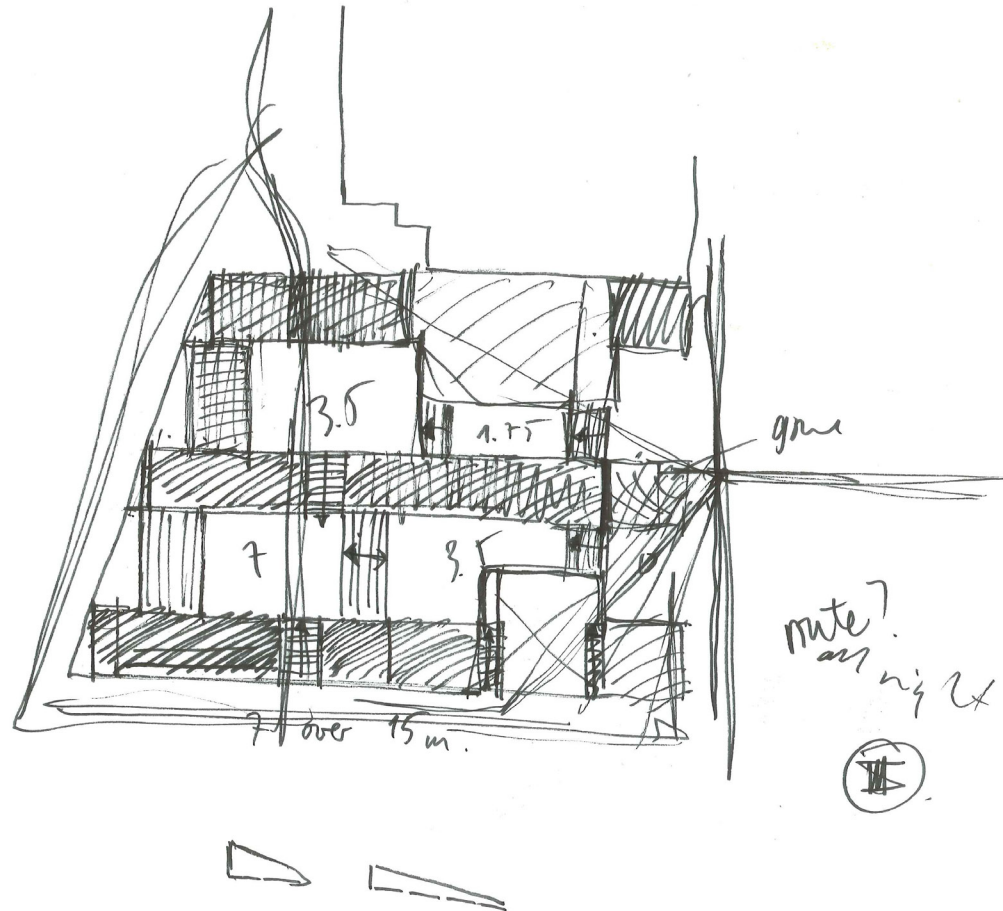
As a last attempt before the pre P2 I tried to add all that I thought I wanted into a new kind of ensemble. The result was less than spectacular.

STEP 3: A STEP BACK
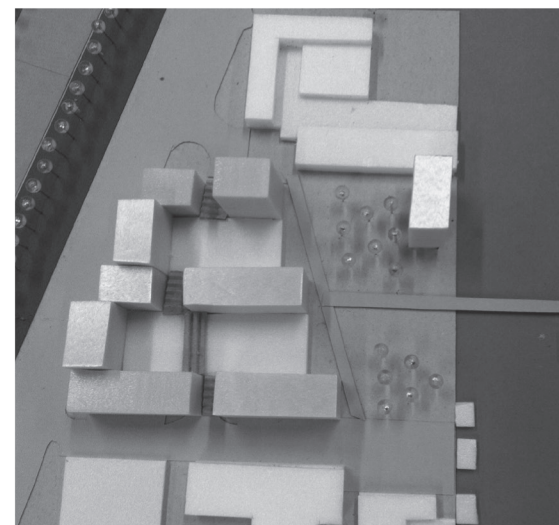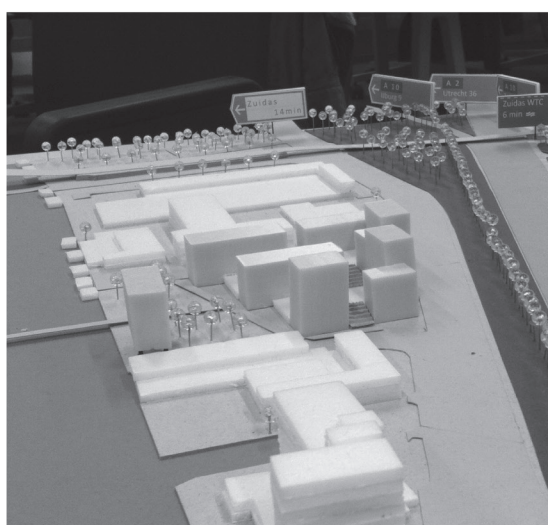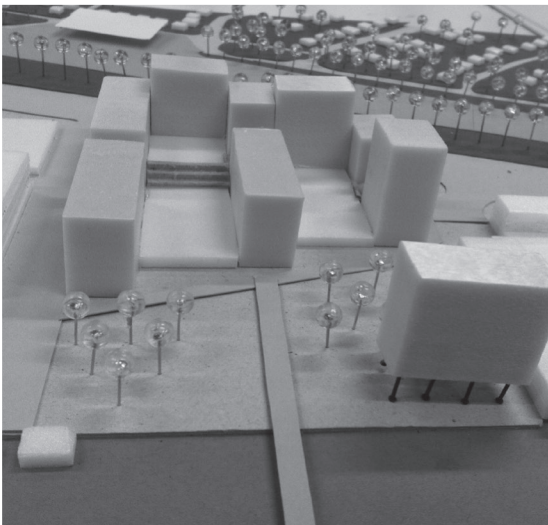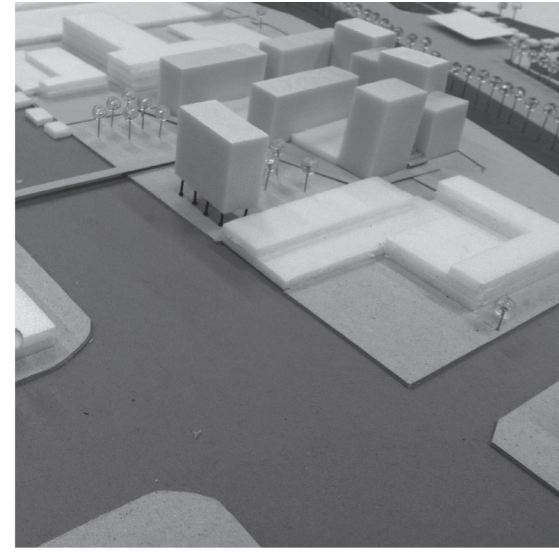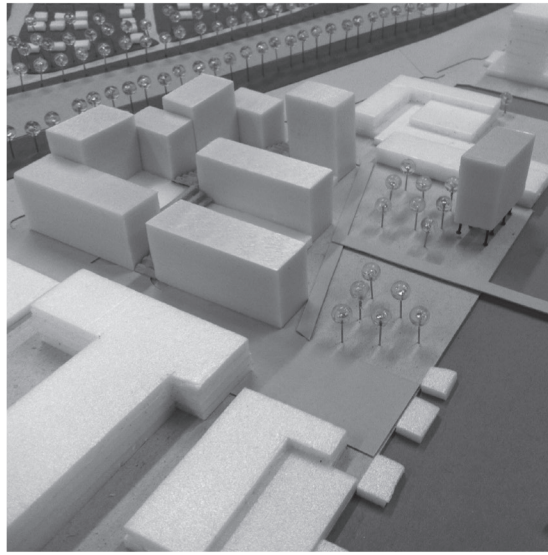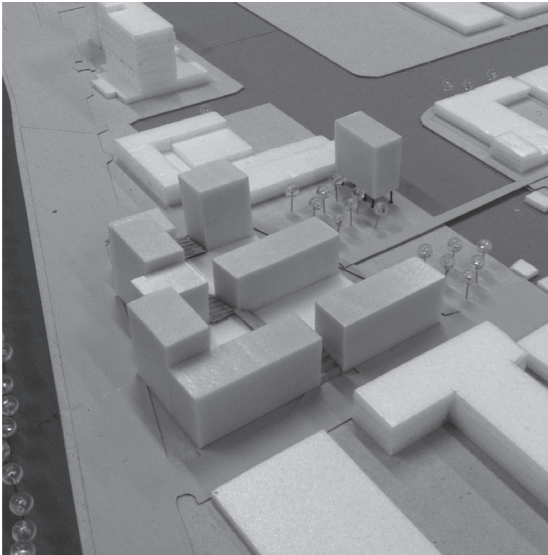
Neither a group form nor a collage, this configuration created more problems than it solved. A new approach was needed. And fast.

STEP 4: GROUP FORM II
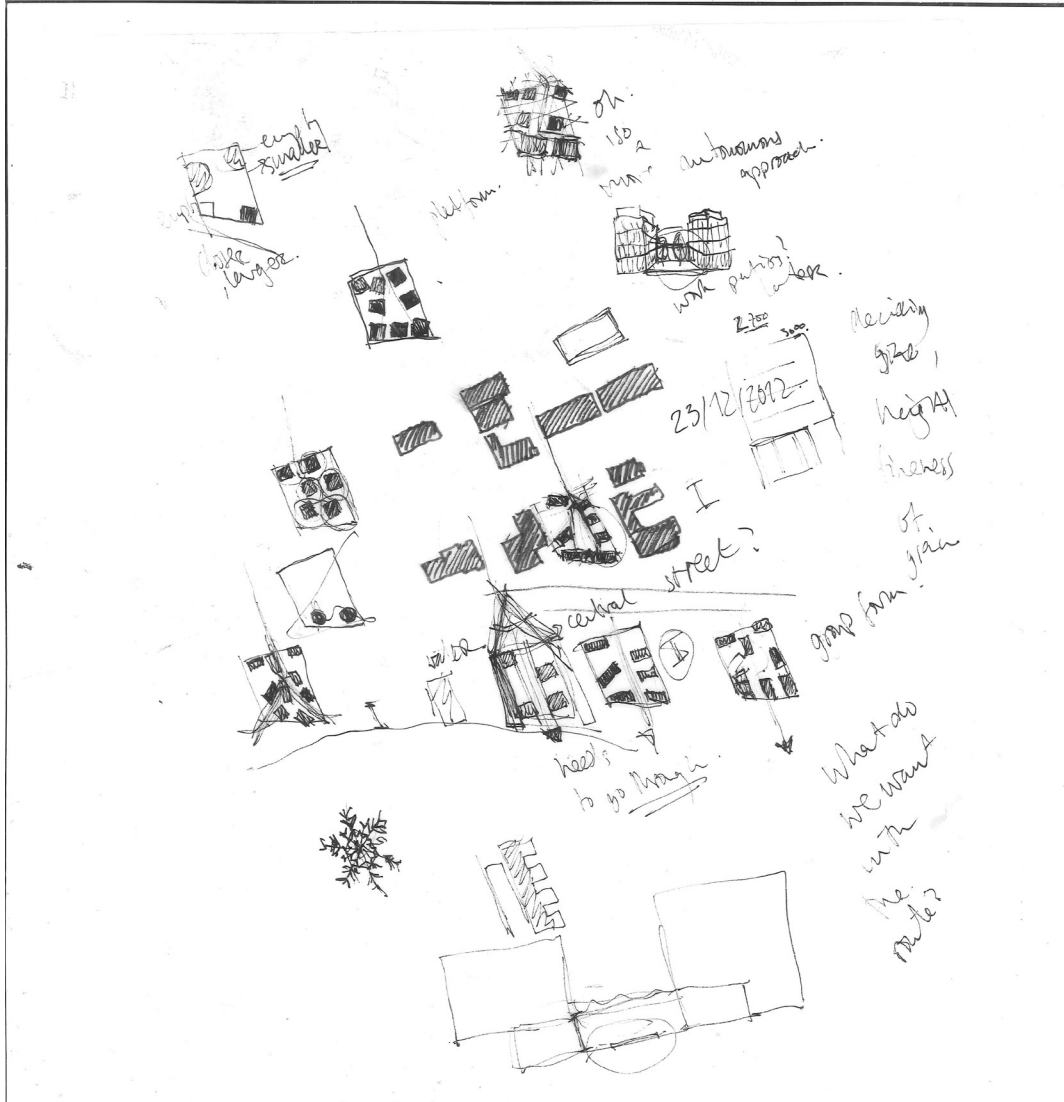
The day before Christmas, I was still puzzling. The top right sketch already suggests strips and the little perspective sketch might in hindsight be seen as an unconscious answer to the question.

STEP 4: GROUP FORM II
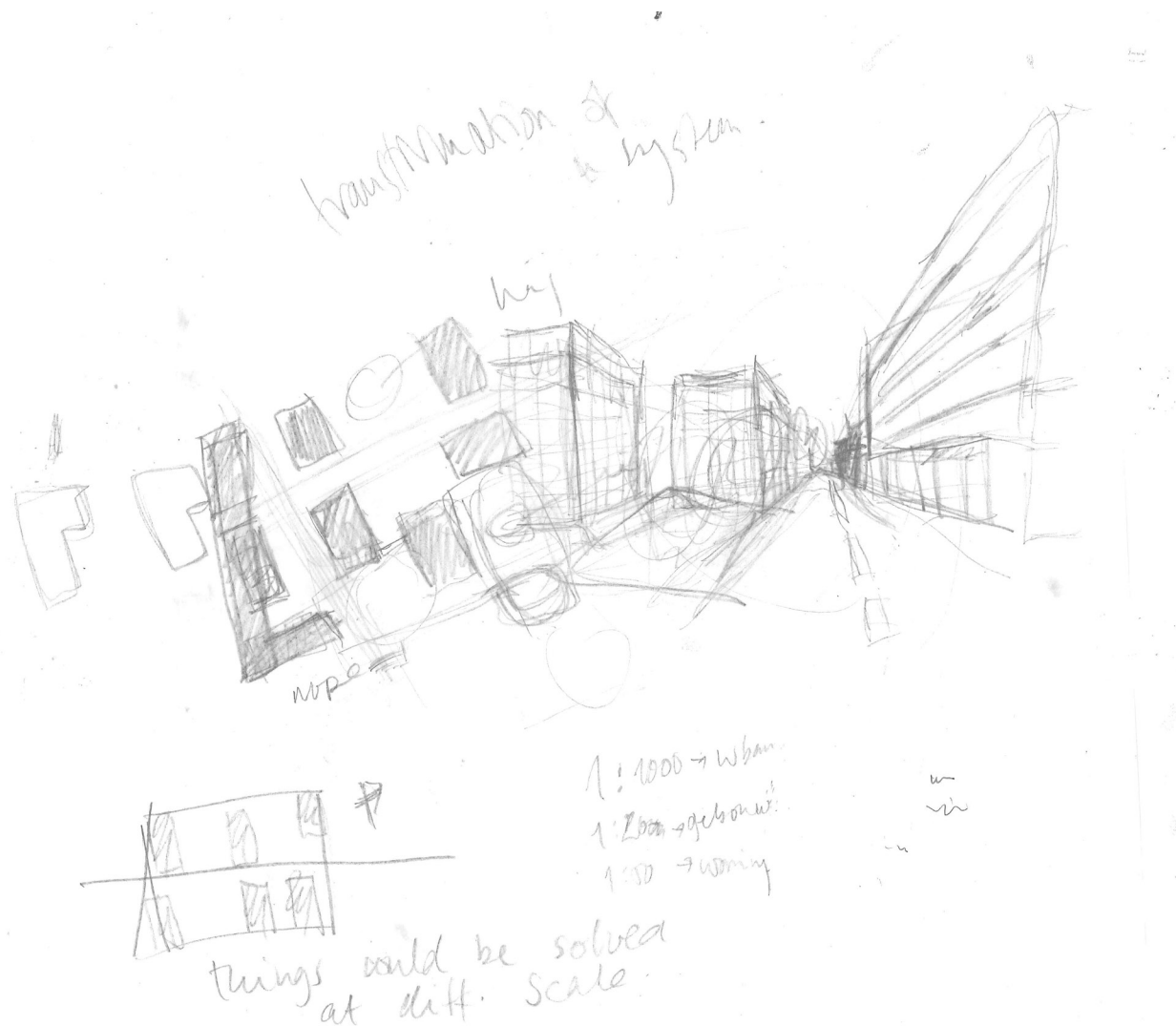
In January, the sketching was done mostly in pencil. I've gone back to the beginning. The persepctive of the street by our site is similar to what I have now. But first a system which allows for this view needs to be found.

STEP 4: GROUP FORM II: GRIDS AND STRIPS
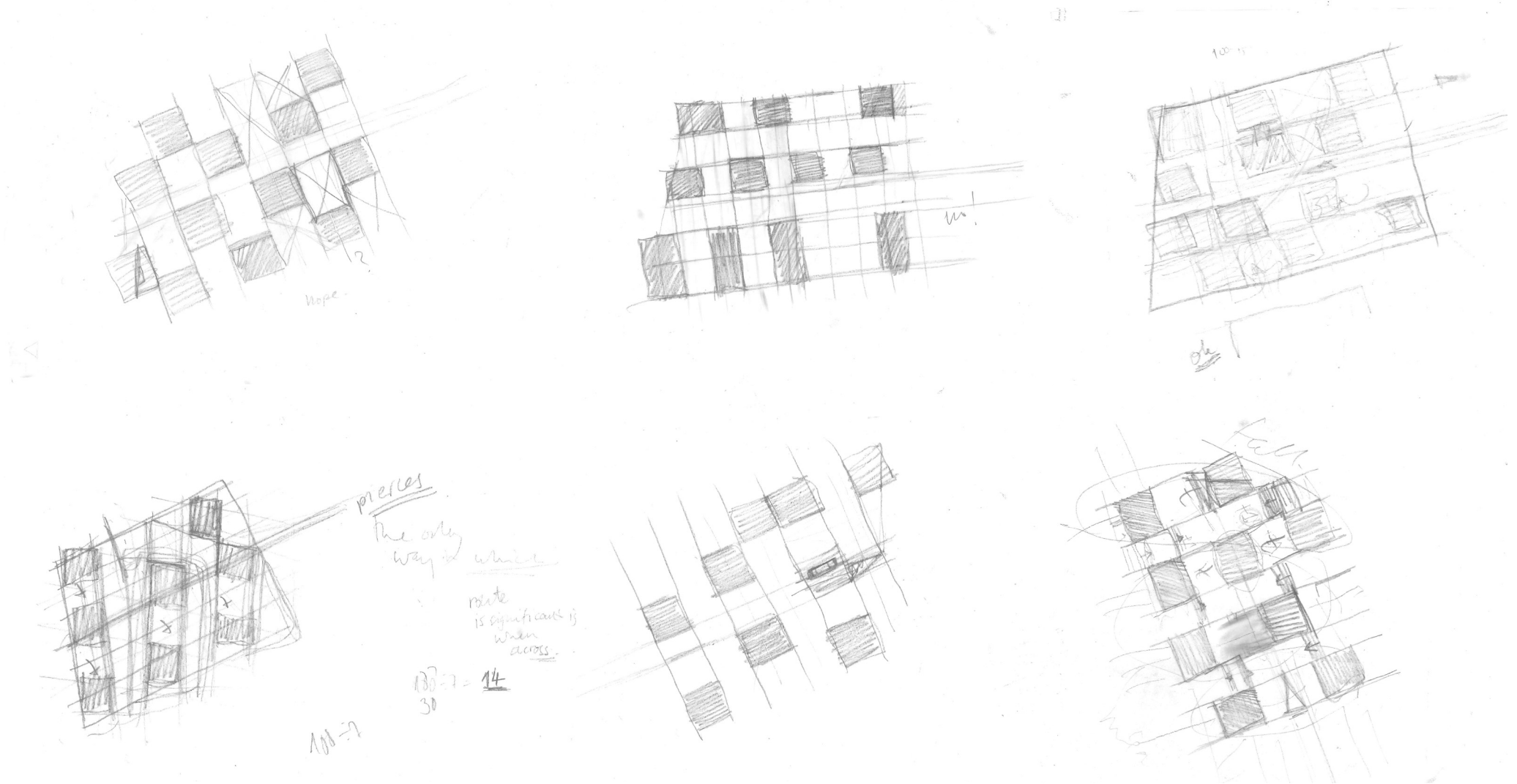
After seeing a reference project in which buildings were organized in strips, I began to experiment with this technique, trying out different sizes, directions and consequences this had on the scheme.

STEP 4: GROUP FORM II
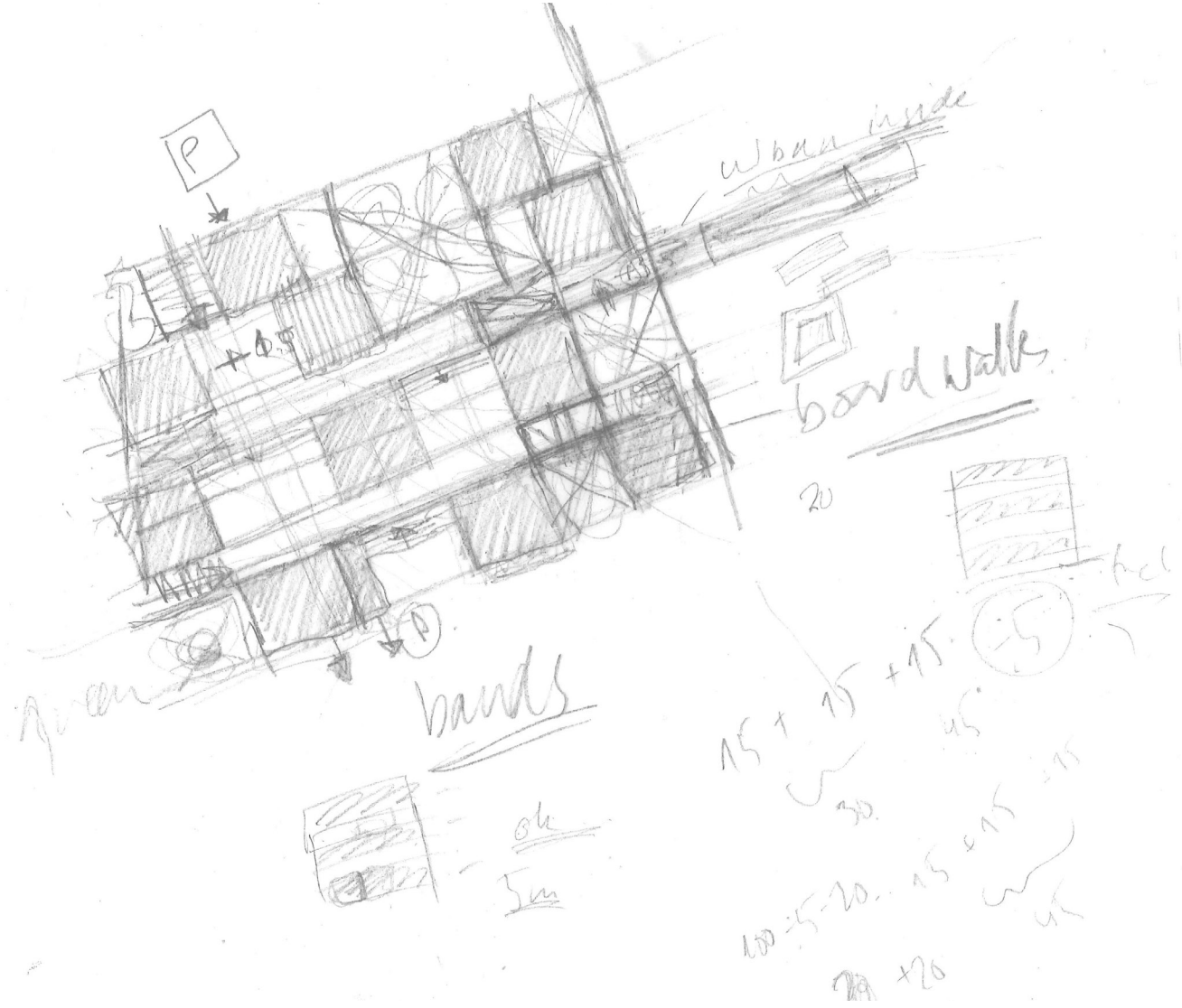
This configuration produces too narrow a strips. Similarly, there is a clear hierarchy, one of the strips is the connection. I did not want this.

STEP 4: GROUP FORM II
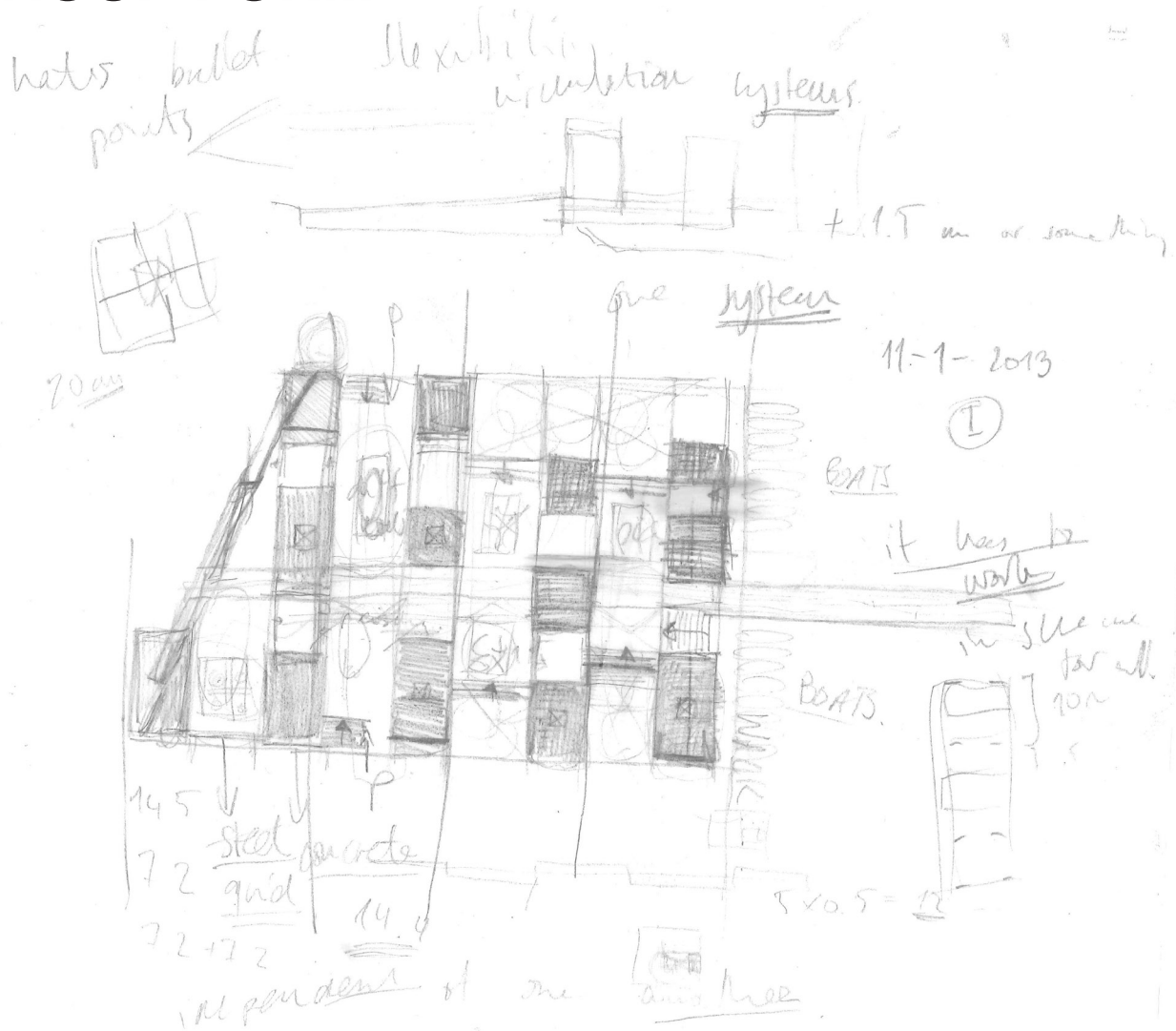
In this configurations, the strpis connect across the site, while the connection is an autonomous elelement connecting the strips. The dimensions are just right. The system can react to the site without losing its integrity.

STEP 4: THE GROUP FORM II
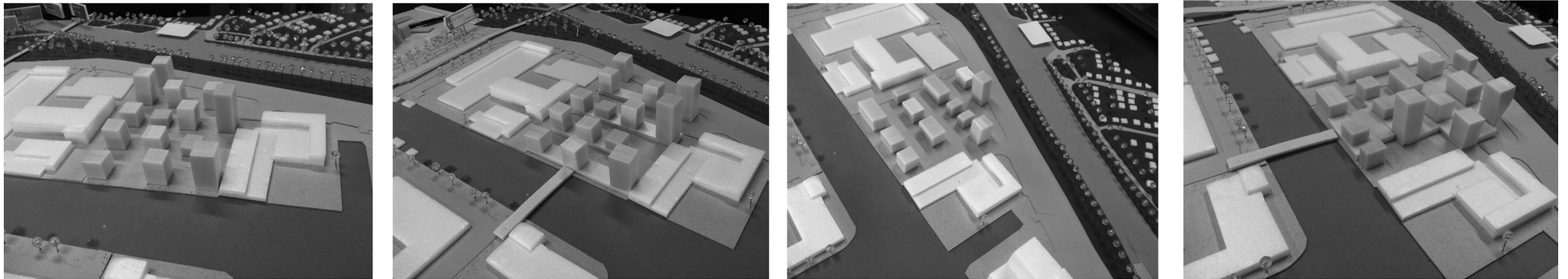
Parallel to this, model studies have been conducted to best determine the precise height and shape of the strips, their relationship to each other and the site.

STEP 5: BEGINNING ARTICULATION
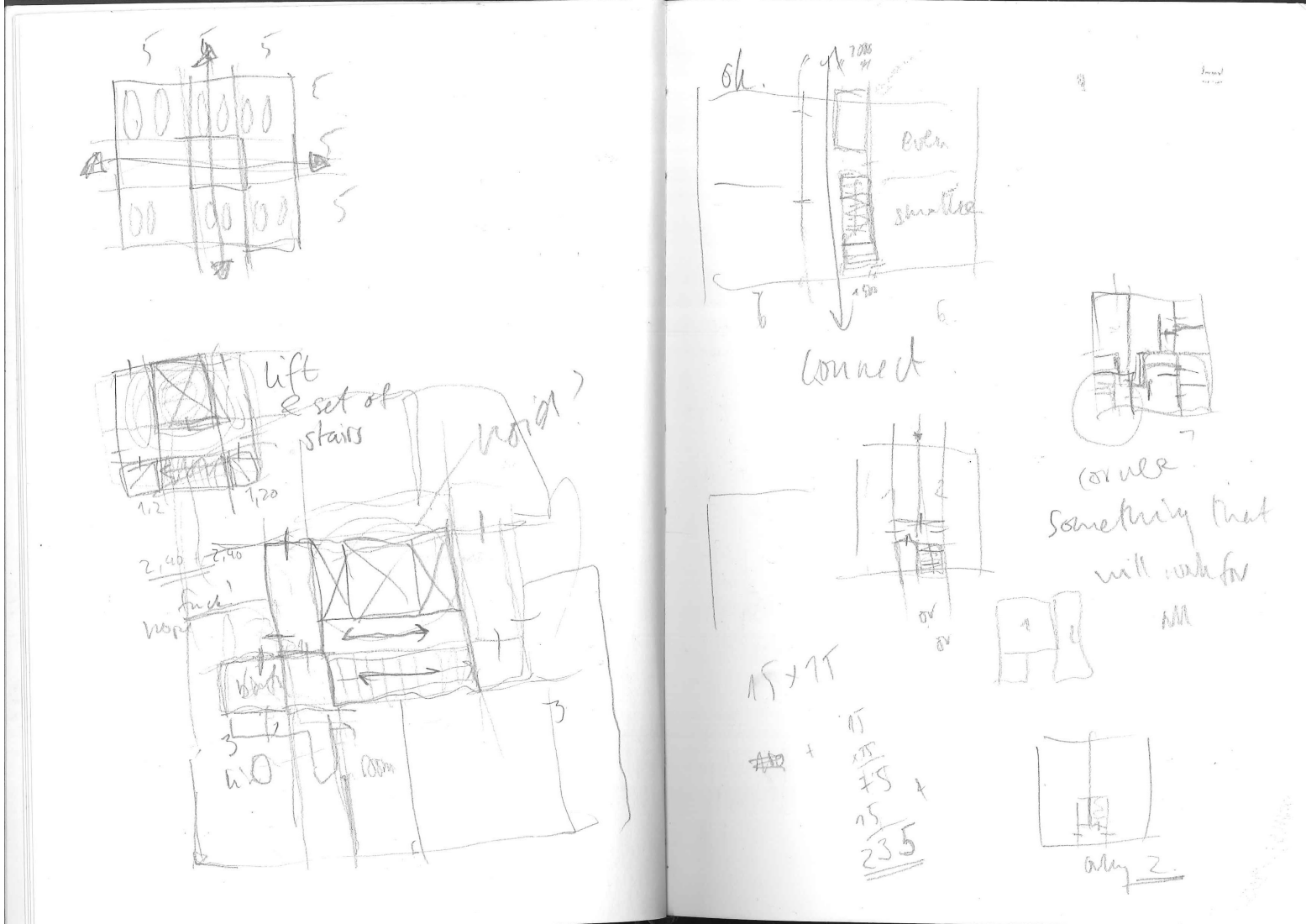
With the concept and intentions clear, the articulation could begin. It was about time!

STEP 5: BEGINNING ARTICULATION
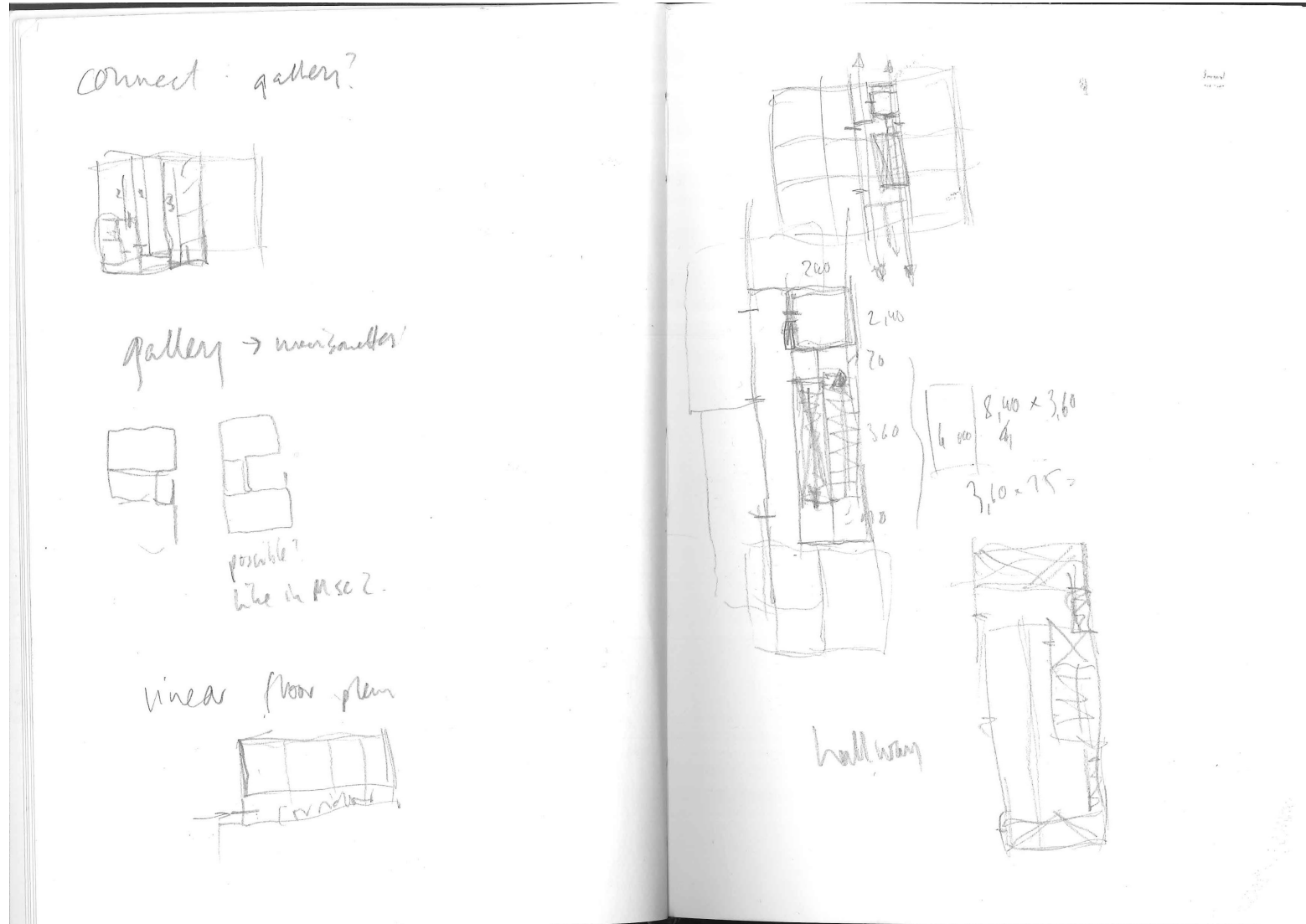
Various circulation systems were considered, but we needed one principle (to keep with the concept of group form or family of buildings) that could connect 15x15m towers as well as 30m long blocks.

STEP 5: ARTICULATION

2.4

2.4   6.3

12.6
= 6.3

6.3 x 7.5

6 x 7.

47.25 m²

94,5 m²

94,5 m² &

85 m²

2.5
x3,5
125
75
9,25
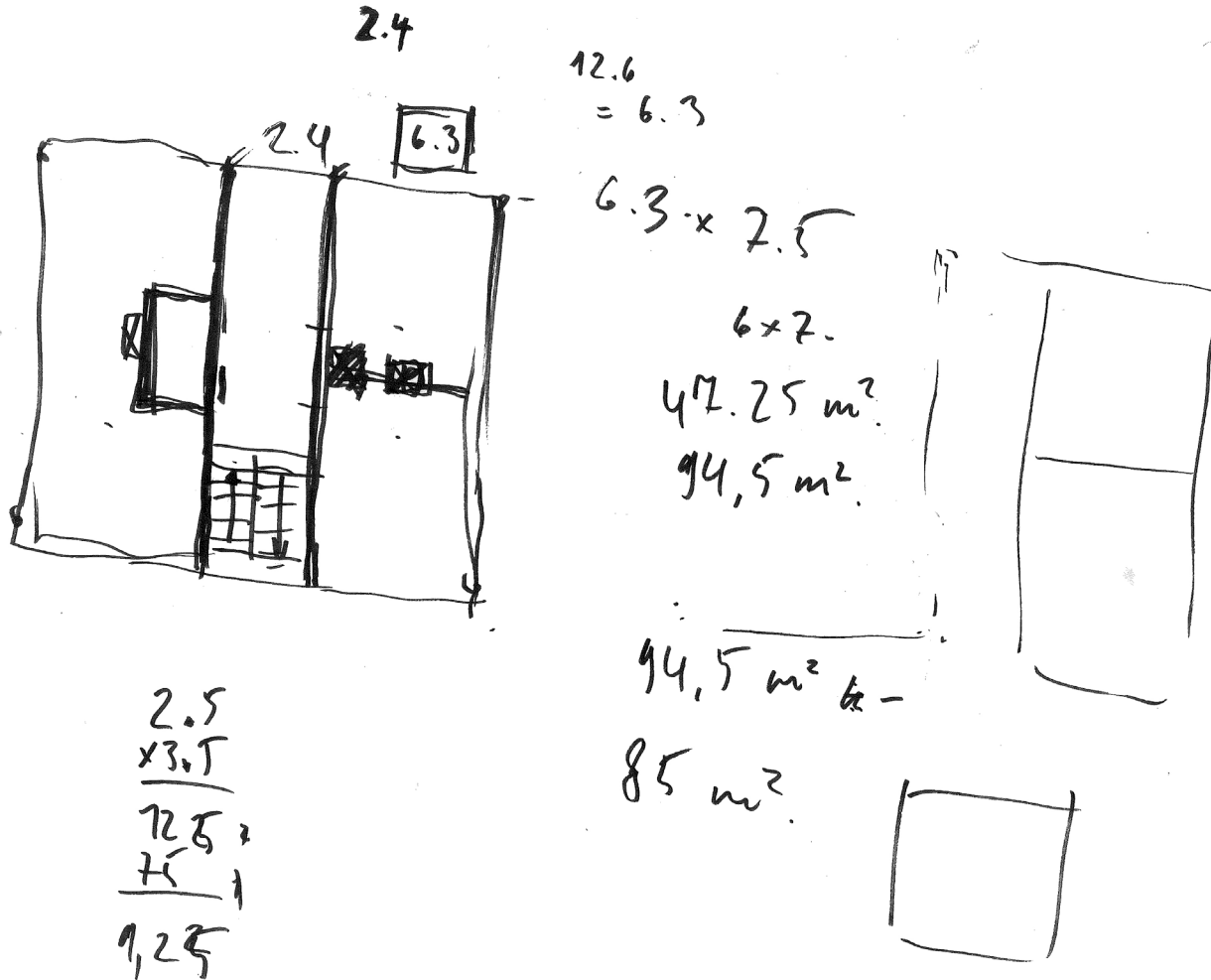
The circulation was designed first as the important connecting element

STEP 5: ARTICULATION

Facade concepts and capacities were also sketched. The dwellings were designed within this support.

AFTER THE P2: MOSTLY SKETCHING

So I passed the P2...

MODEL
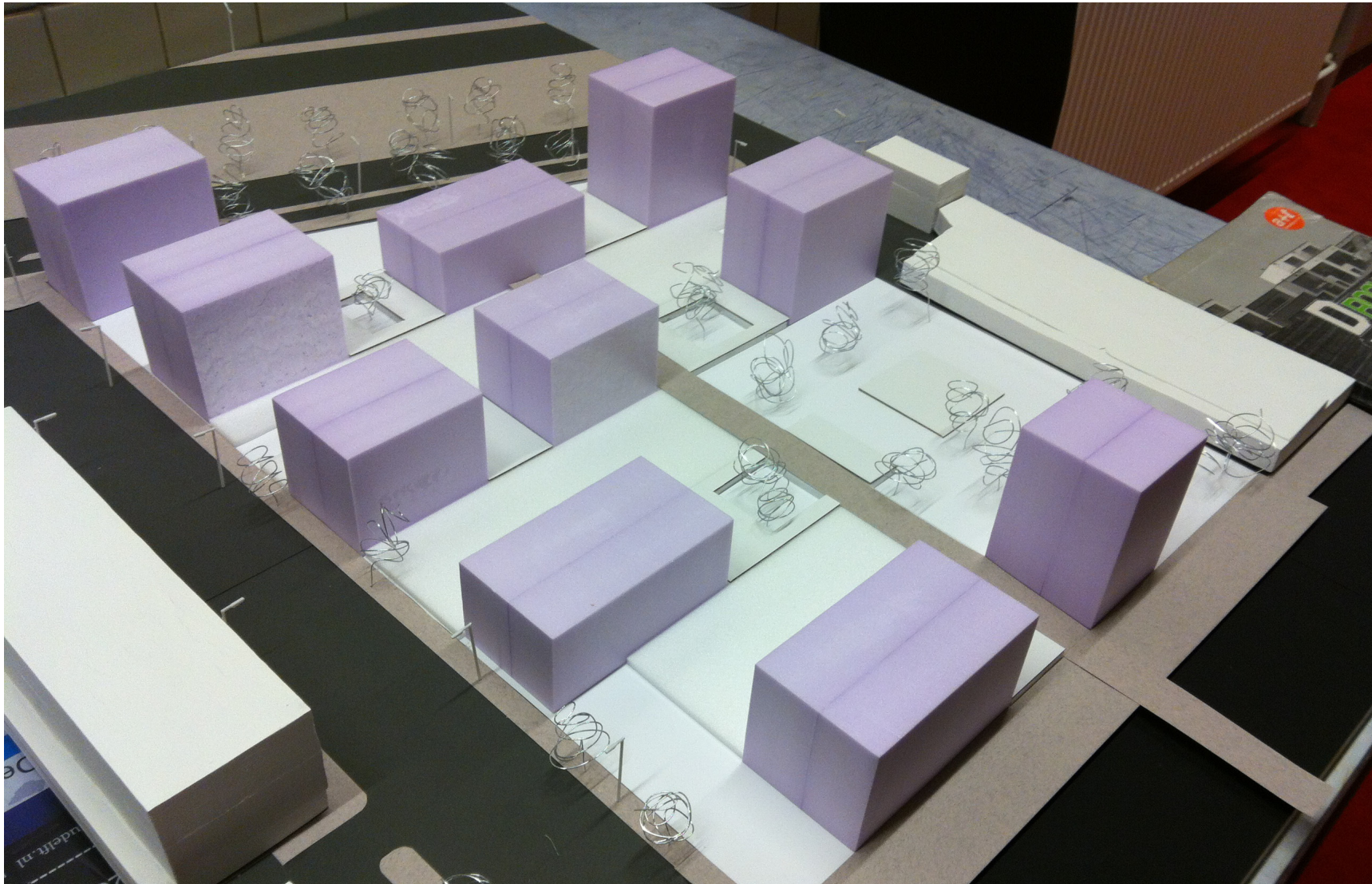
In the first week, I attempted to build a 1:200 Model of the site. Very abstract. I haven't used it since. My wallet wept, but at least I became aware of the problem: too much of the same thing.

MODEL II
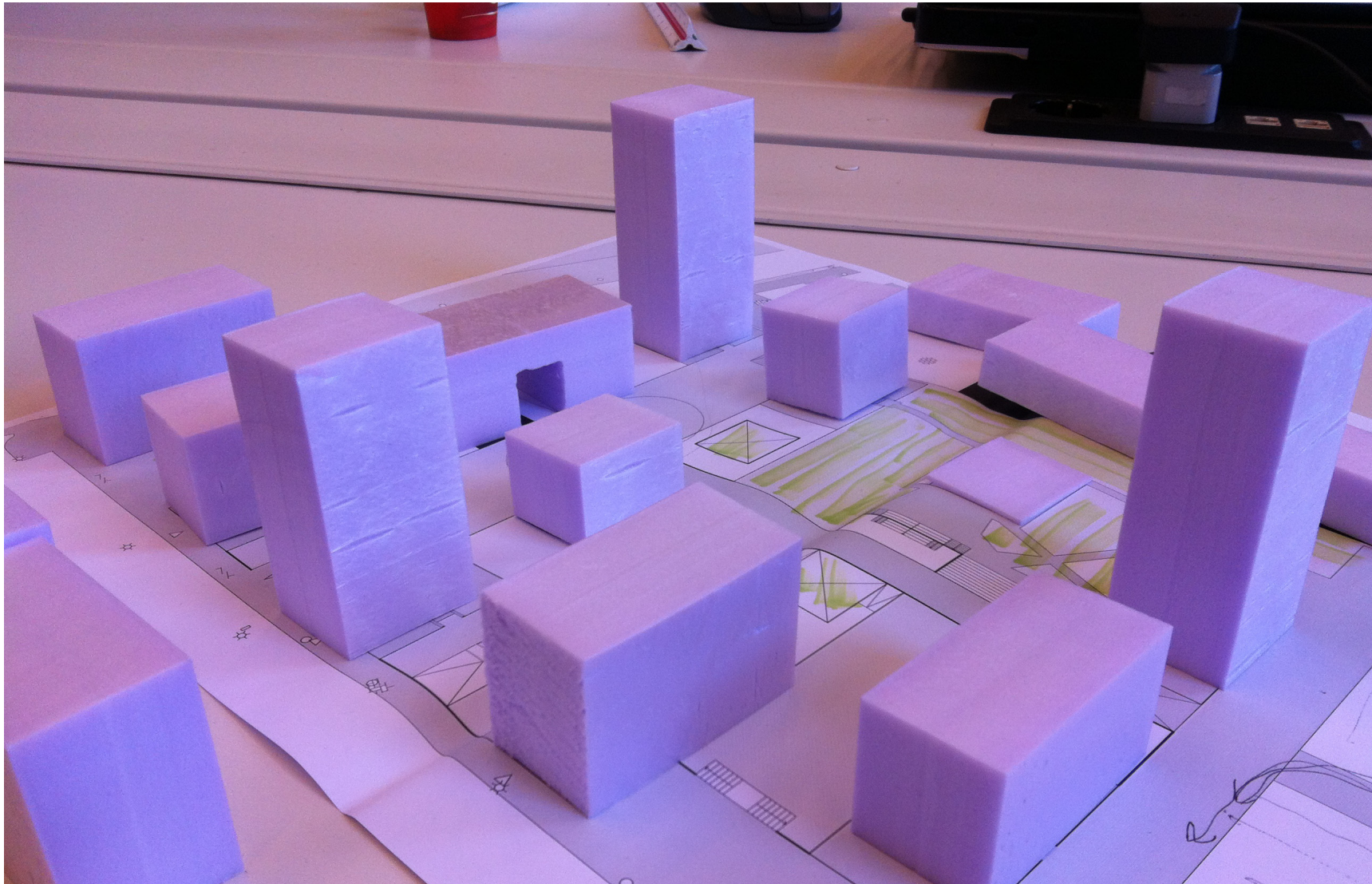
A 1:500 hundred model was much more useful when figuring this out.

TYPOLOGIES

Now that the urban massing was more or less settled, all I had left to do was fill up the typologies. Easy?
Not at all. I struggled between keeping the onenes and allowing for different type of access and different kinds of dwelling units. At least the towers started to make sense.

TITLE

Dwellings in Towers, cubes, slabs.

~30 m
15 m
"16 m!"

~15 m
15 m
"16 m"

15 m
27 m
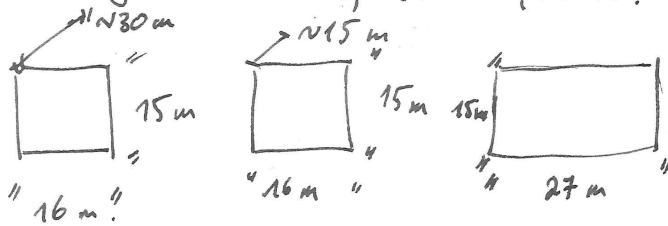
Tower: advantage: high view.

disadvantage: distance from ground
→ views not necessarily 360°
→ limited contact with neighbors
   (3 flats per storey max).
→ voyeuristic. → distribution of powers
   & allow "guardians"
   multiple viewpoints.   of the area
→ smaller plans: allow for
→ flexibility around fixed core
   ↳ show in stacking, plans, etc...

plan
I | II
section | plan
section

III | IV
II | I

plain
ol' boring
1 floor flats.

penthouse on 10th,
Compact core   in a "crown"
max 3 apts per storey. capitol!
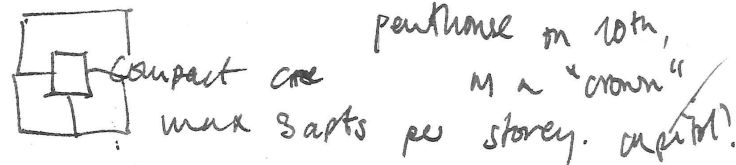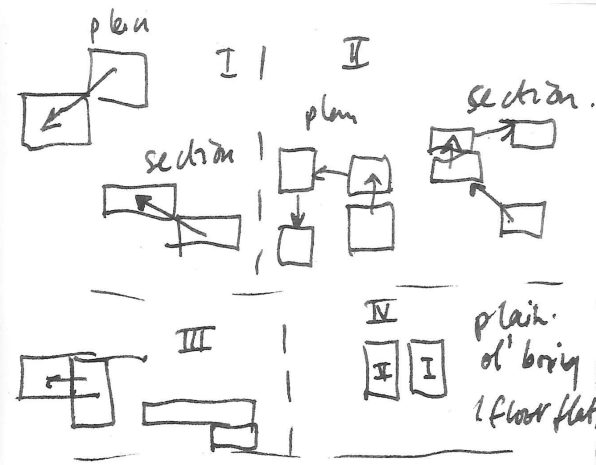
lower floors perhaps for families, etc...
esp. overlooking park, more sheltered for
views in
higher floors → for voyeurs. haha.

half plinth for
lobby, resident's
functions etc...   concept facade.
commercial space limited (small office?)   max 9 floors.

Different principles were investigated, in form of hort notes and quick sketches. Most of them didn't get me anywhere.

TOWER
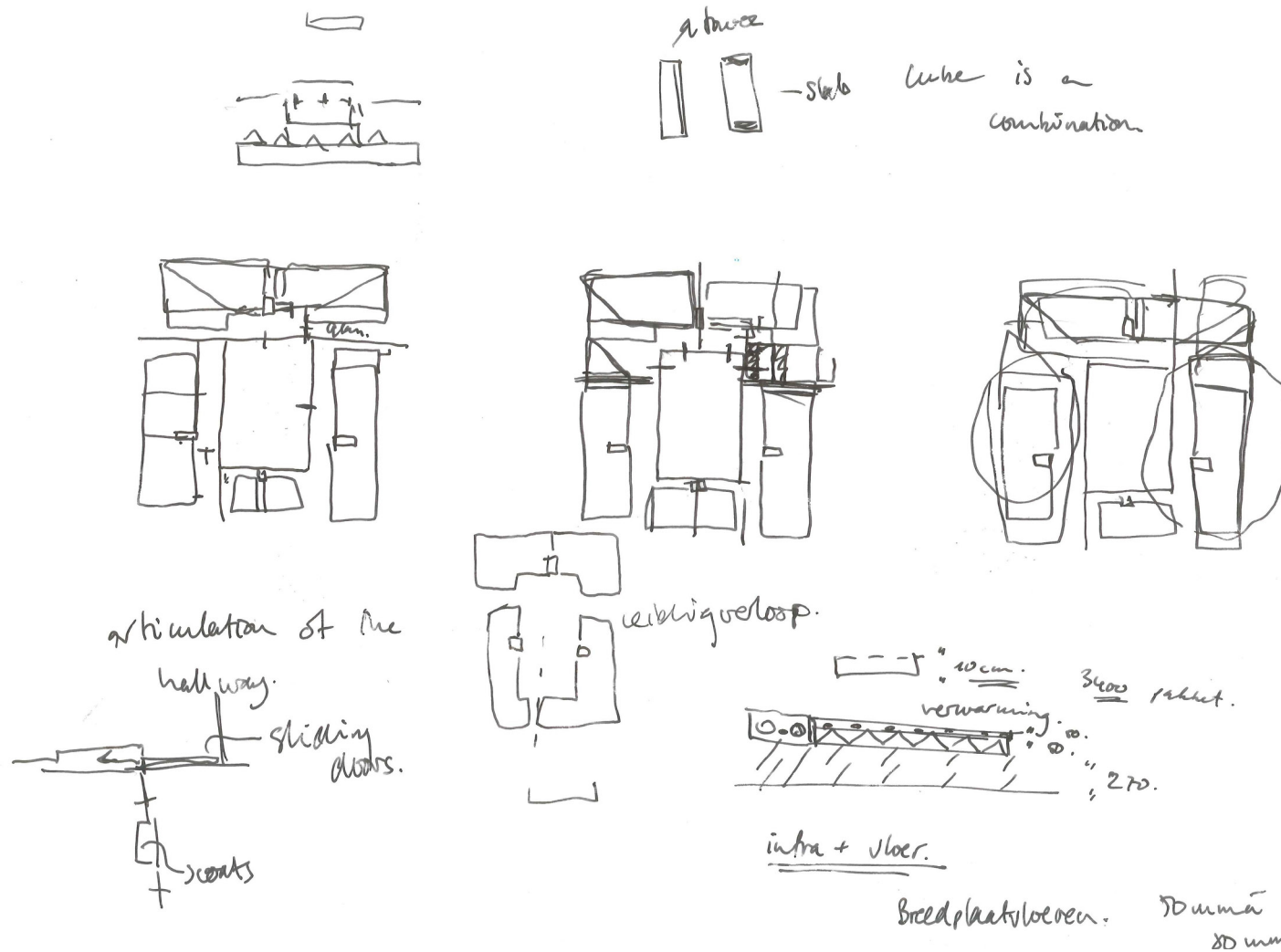
The tower soon became a kind of testing ground for everything else. Most of the principles of installations, structure, facade, etc. that were developed with the tower in mind were then applied (at least in the way of thinking) in the other types.

WORK IN PROGRESS: EVERYTHING AT ONCE

Rooie donders,
Liesbeth v/d Pol.

5,4 m

5 m
5 m
5 m

~ 5,4 m.

or.

variable.

maar ook.

gbm floor.

the 5m grid
issue
or less
merging.

300
1800
150   +1800
        +300
        +2100
        +300

1800
300 300

90 mm   1800   3600
300
       3300   90 mm
       3300   90 mm
            1800
            90 mm   1800

1800 + 1800 = 3600.

300   300   300
    300
3600   = 2600 or 2100.

    1800   2000

    3600 + 300 + 300
        = 4500 + 900.

+300

300 + 1800 + 300 + 1800 + 300 =

3600 + 900
    = 4500.

Without lift.

300
1800
150
1800
300
2100
300

15

6 550

Of course there were studies and small researches bahind every step, but It was kind of overwhelming to realise everything had to be figured out. Like emergency stairs and cores.

TOWER II
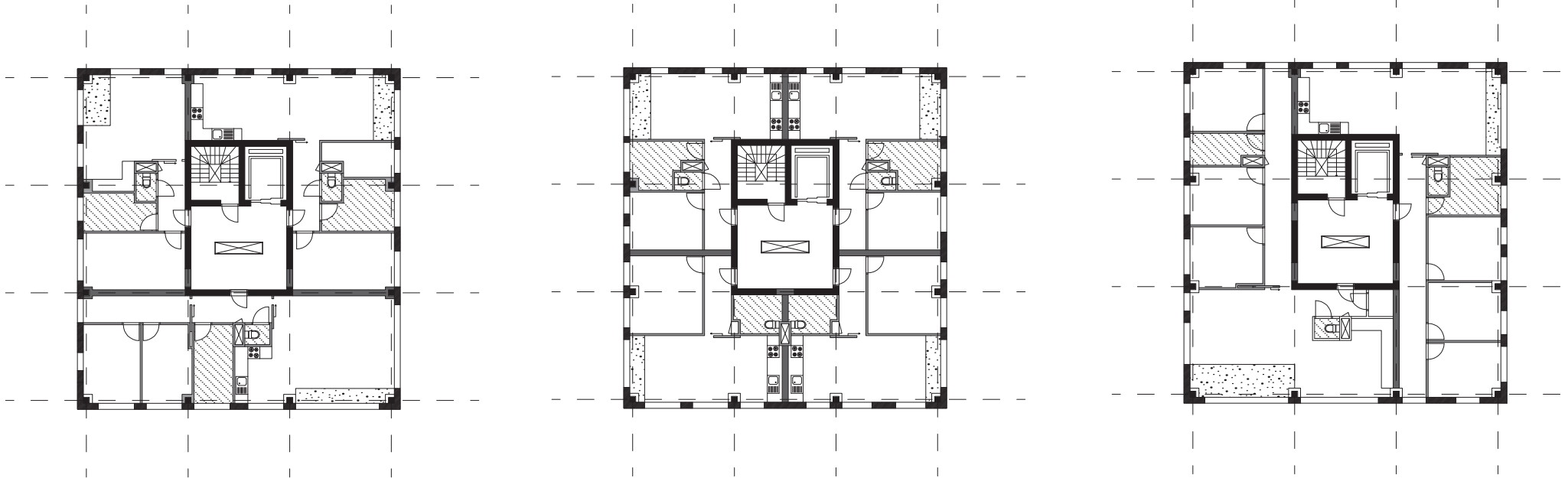
So much so that the apartments in the tower were pretty much the only things that were set by the time P3 rolled in (end of April 2013)

SLAB
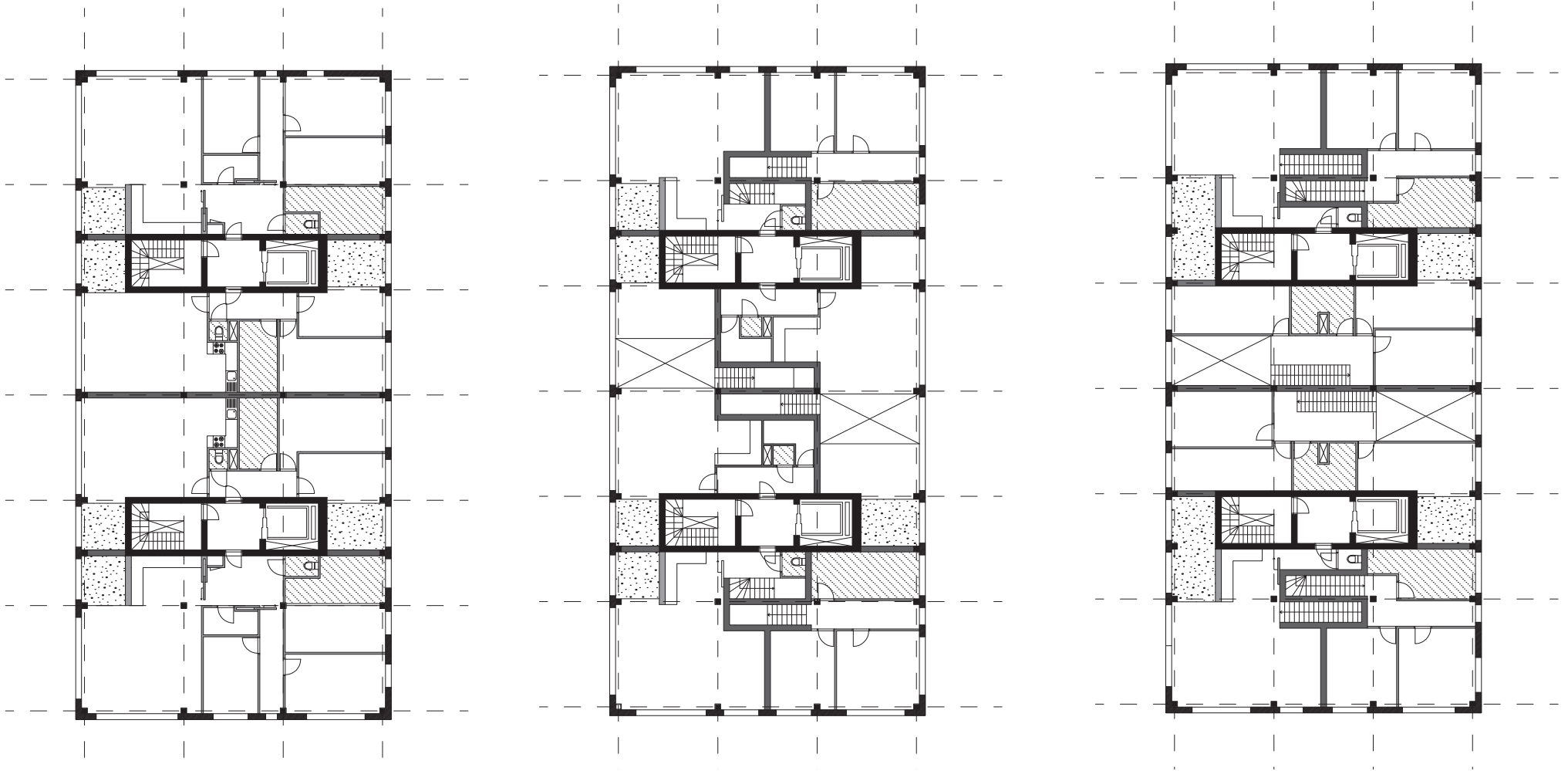
The Maisonettes in the slab were awkward at best and not really consistent with anything

THE CUBE AT P3

That wasn't there yet.

THE CUBE IN REAL LIFE

But the cube progressed along, and anyway, many of the researches were independent of the precise minutiae of the plans.

FACADES

Gevel / Façade.
↳ prefabricated.   Ideas.

possible materials.
→ even stone.
nung from facade.
→ ease of uncoupling?
→ discoloration through time.

precedent.

sandwich panel.

matrix vloer.

- wat vloeren moeten doen.   → in prefab denken.
- kies systeem (also mogelijk).

what I want.
• Integrate suncontrol system in facade.
→ prefab system, different size panels.

Fibre cement sheets as 'cladding'.

Onderzoek : temperatur knstal.
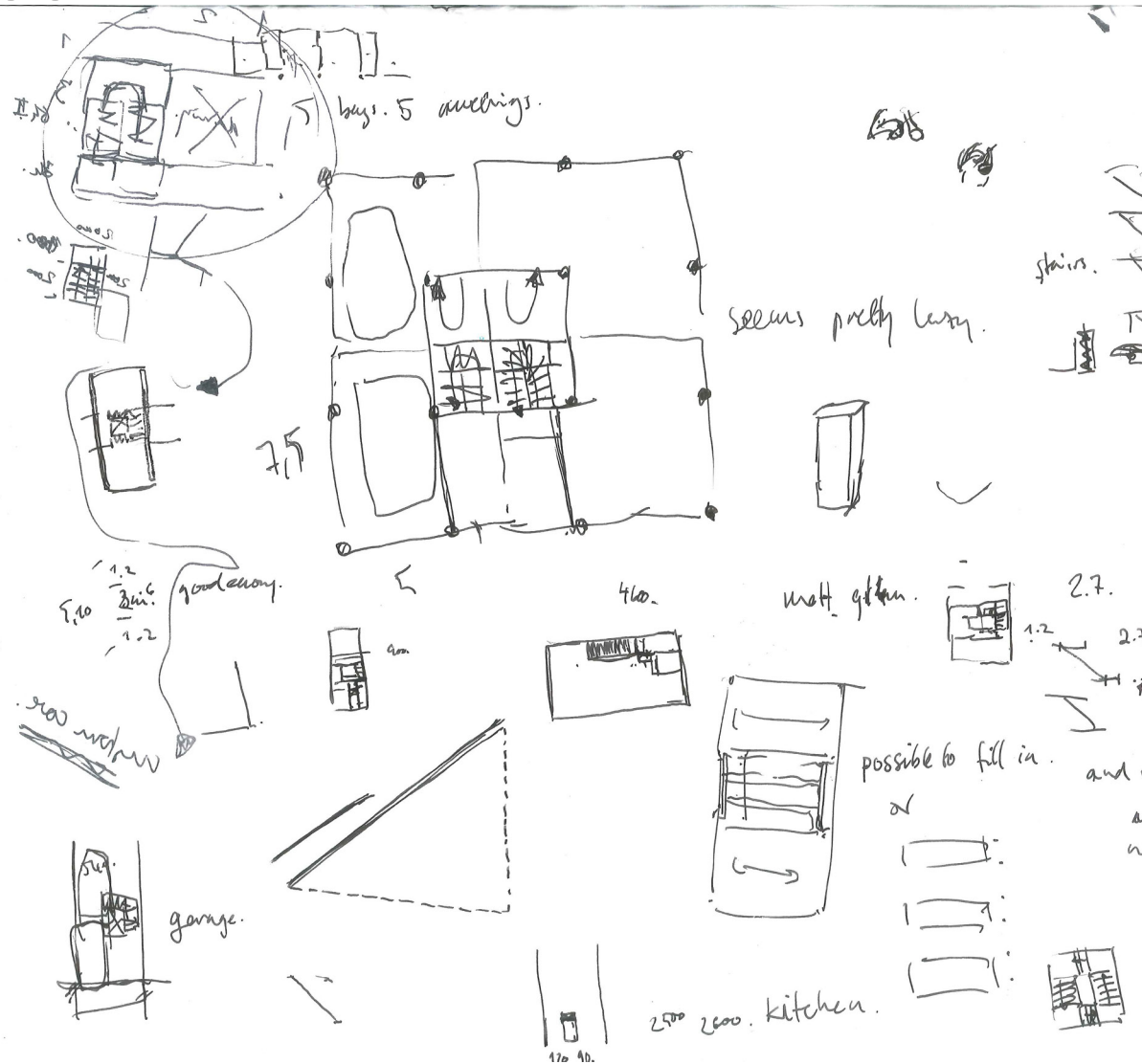
→ low onderhoud / maintenance.
→ decoupling.
→ different widths, different infills.

→ window different material (possible)
→ integrate ventilation in windows.

4 A:0 → 1:500
idea
1 op 200.

twee of drie muten.

noch wordt "standaard" opgelost.
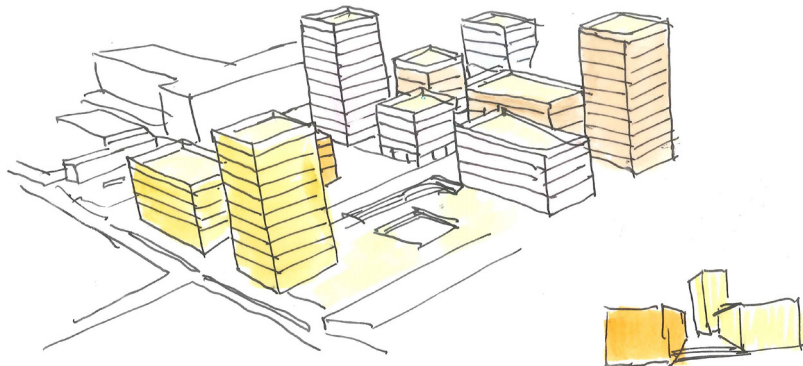
Such as the facades. An early version, a week or so before the P3 tells a story of trying to bring a method to the madness. Out of personal interest, I also took out two books about colour from the library, because I remembered that the building types and the public space should be differentiated.

TITLE

concept: each strip its
own colour

works better: coordinate a palette.

concept:

Too much.
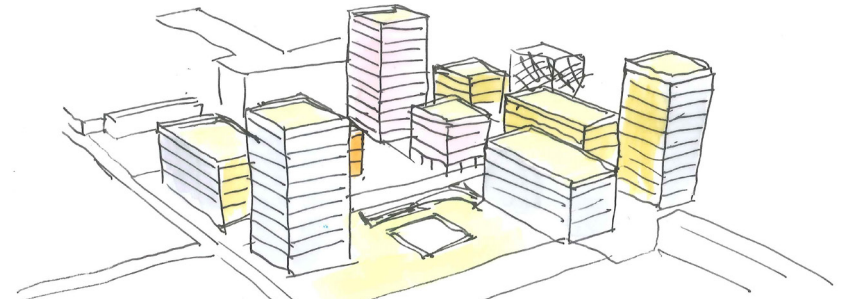
one colour perimeter.
each strip its own inside
colour.

Mainly books were used to deal with the issue of colour. Through some quick sketches, in which colour was applied to the plan, the point soon proved to be irrelevant. The limited scope, coupled with clear typology meant that different colours were no longer needed to provide identity.

WHY NOT ROW HOUSING?
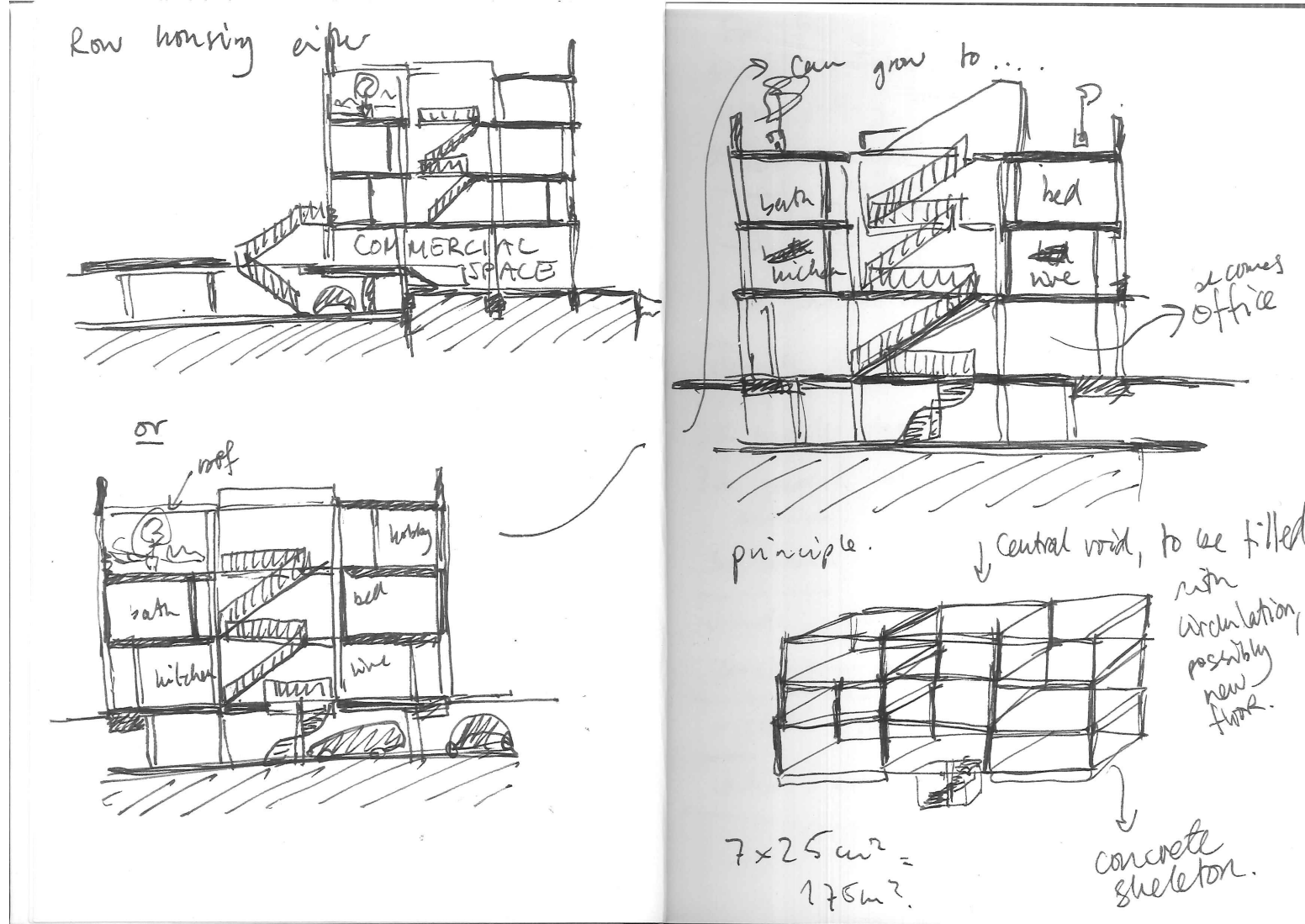
At the P3, my tutor suggested I should maybe consider row-housing as a typology for the slab. A 15m deep row-house... If air doesn't cost anything, it can make beautiful architecture. And keeping with the concept too. The process for this was fast and not always rational. Keeping the even levels was a default decision (so that architecture of the slab fits in with the rest), the void a practical (light into a 15m deep dwelling), as well as a personal one (I like voids).

CUBES FIGURED OUT

3 types

tower

slab

cube

platform.
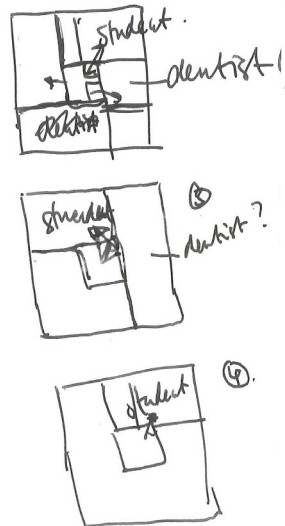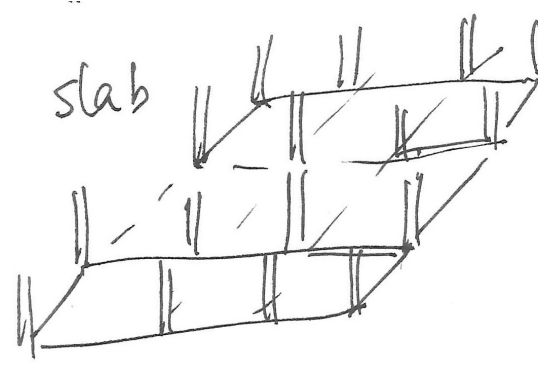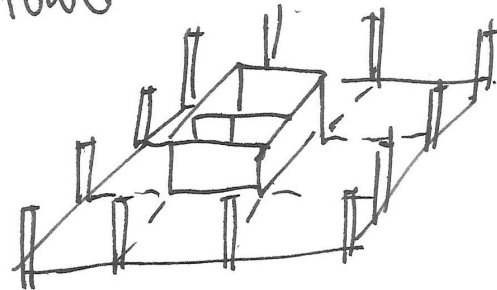
Somehow, things stared falling into place. The acess, the types...

FACADE: THE FINAL PUSH

facade
variations.

facade.

Which facade is better, more appropriate?
→ assemblage.

eeh....

Even the facade was being designed with a sense of rationality and purpouse. References, sketches, materials.

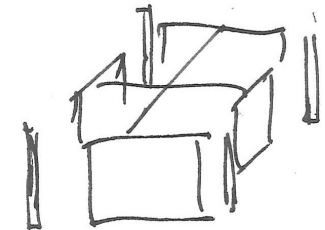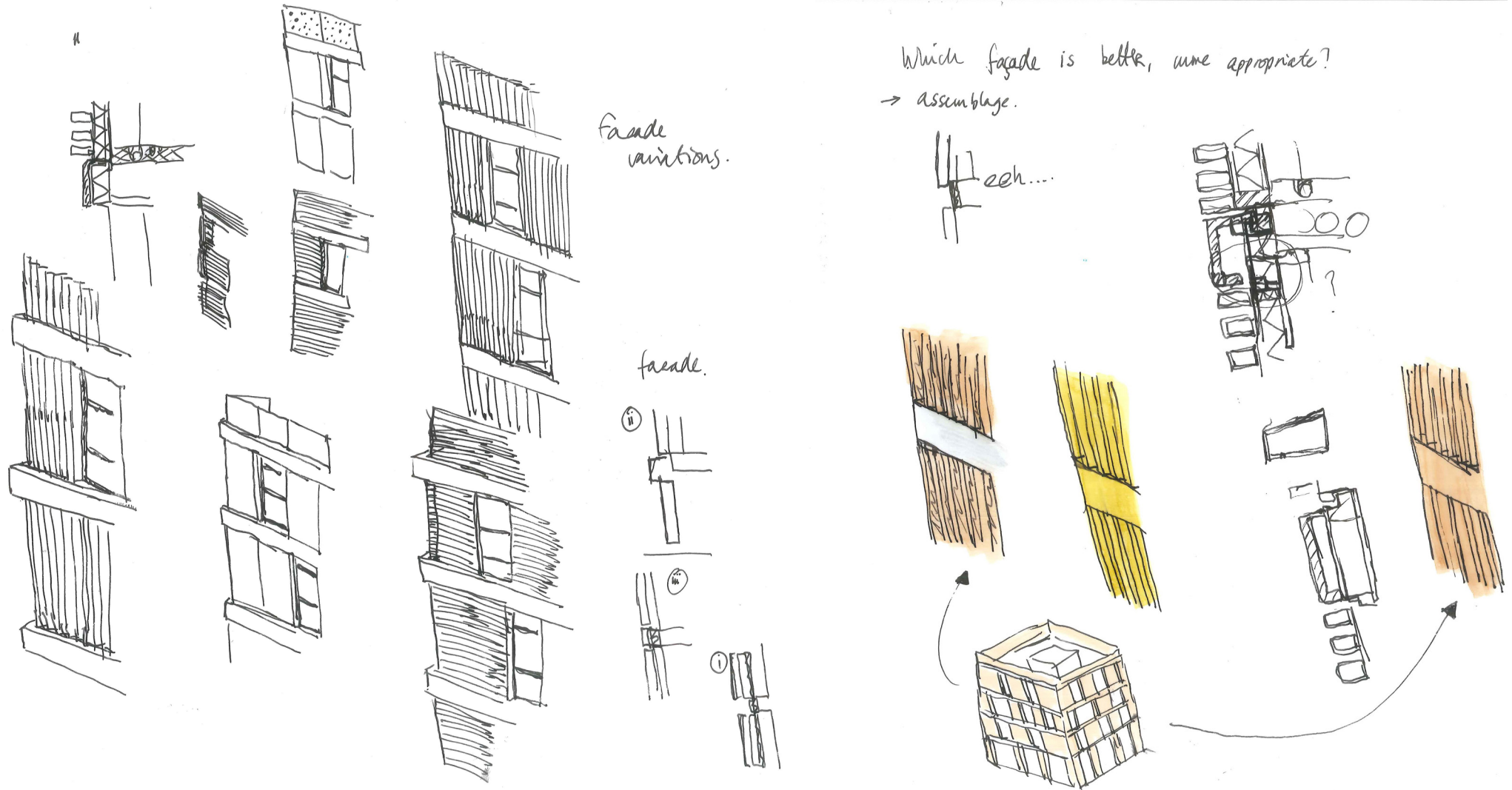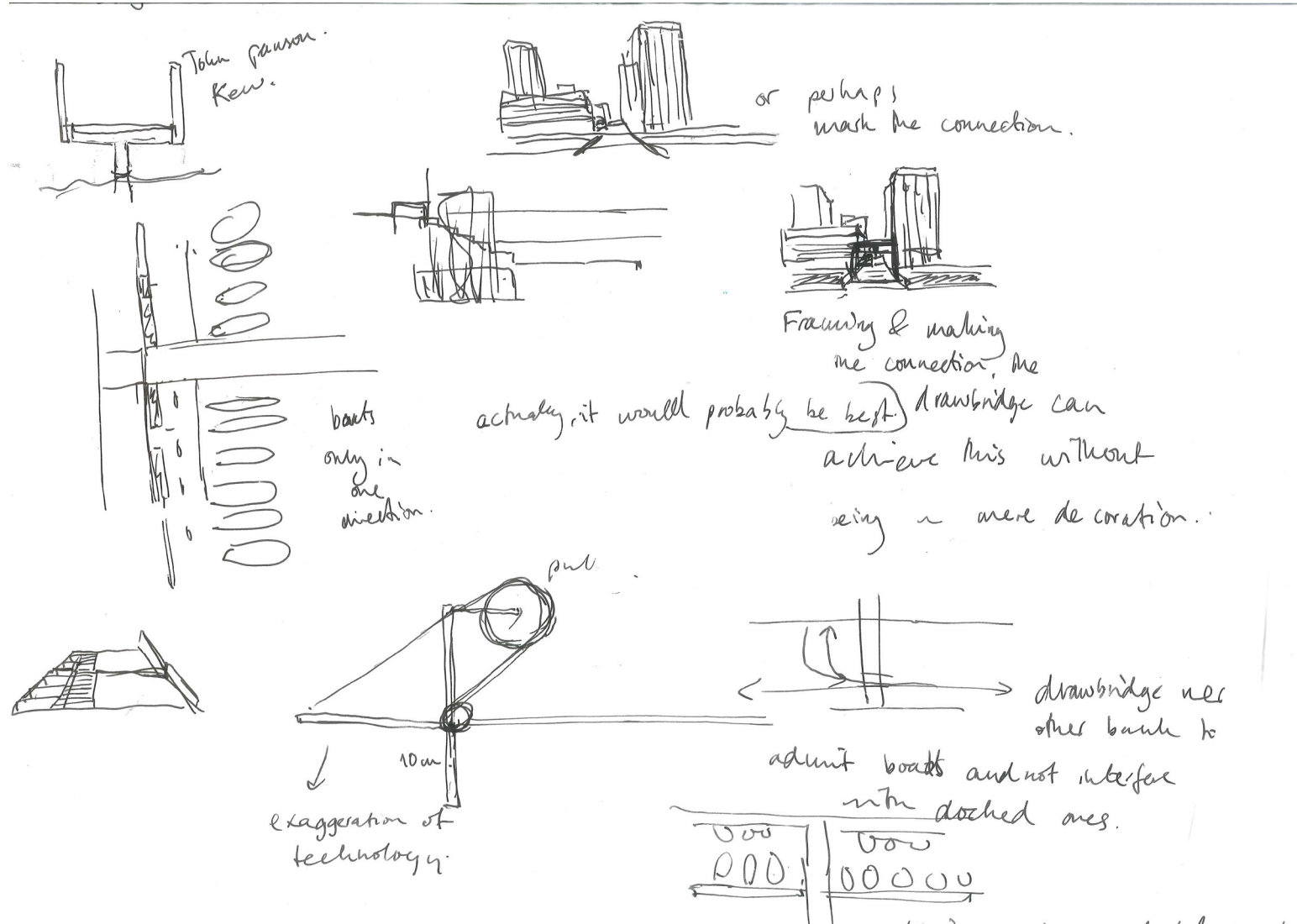# THE COMMUNAL SPACE AND PARK

John Pauson.
Kew.

or perhaps
mask the connection.

boats
only in
one
direction.

actually, it would probably be best

Framing & making
the connection, the drawbridge can
achieve this without
being a mere decoration.

pul.

10m

exaggeration of
technology.

drawbridge near
other bank to
admit boats and not interfere
with docked ones.

Considering how the scheme was supposed to provide high quality open communal space to its inhabitants, the design of this space also took off rather slowly. The park was enlarged from what it formerly was. The bridge and the waterfront were first: The drawbridge can serve as a first gateway to the project. A classic Amsterdam type does the job just fine. (About two weeks after P2). Decided to add a berthing place for boats along the waterfront.

WATERFRONT
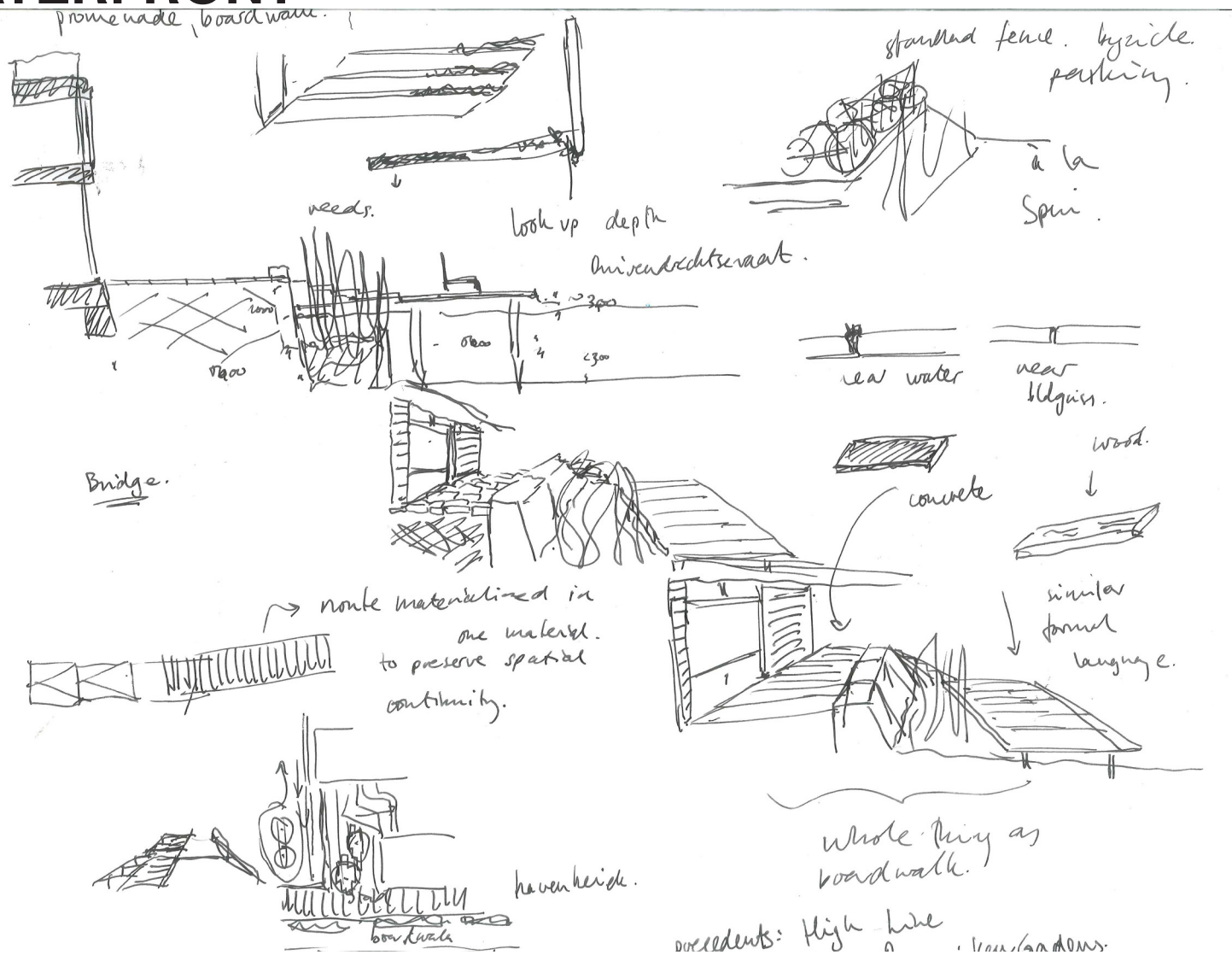
Is it strange that after the bridge, I continued inland? One of the students from the "MSc5" group had a split-leve waterfront. The idea appealed to me, it would create a more gradual descent towards the water. The form, divorced from any of her original reasoning, seemed fit for a gradual and more gentle connection to the water. A formal copy.

PARK

continue strip logic

good place for play ground?

wholly organic.

maybe too much?

rope.

the straight line approach is better

tartan grid?

patches of green?
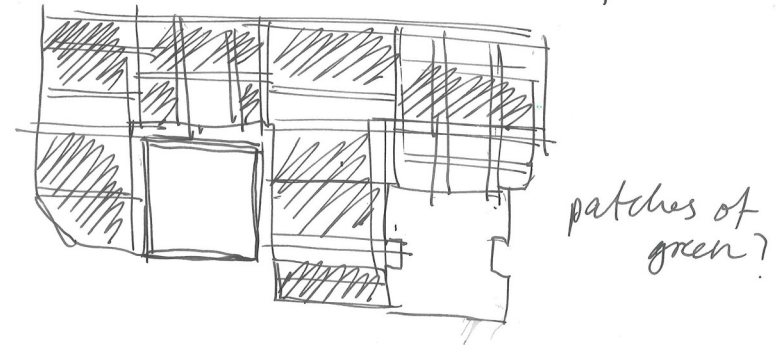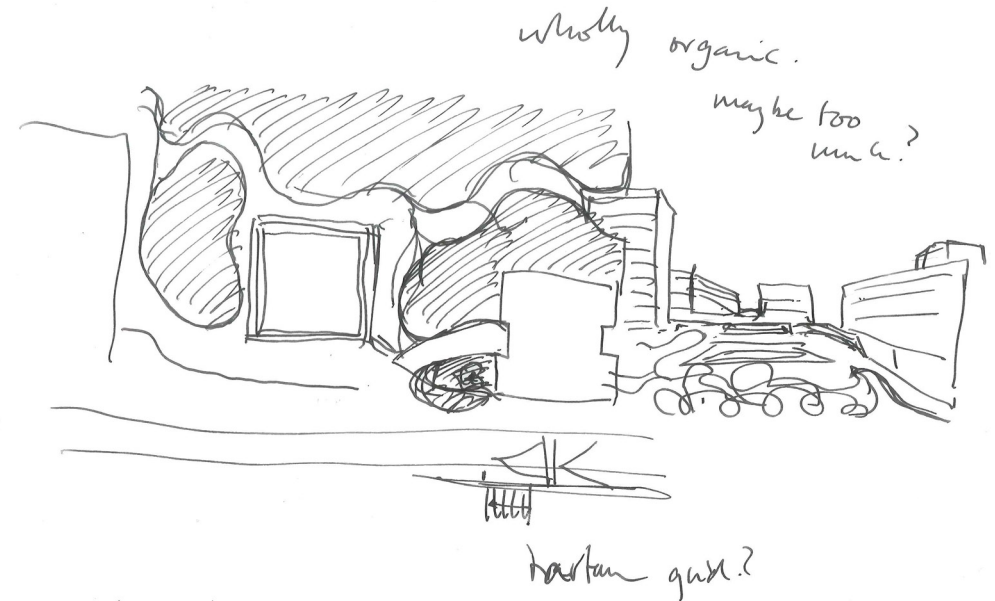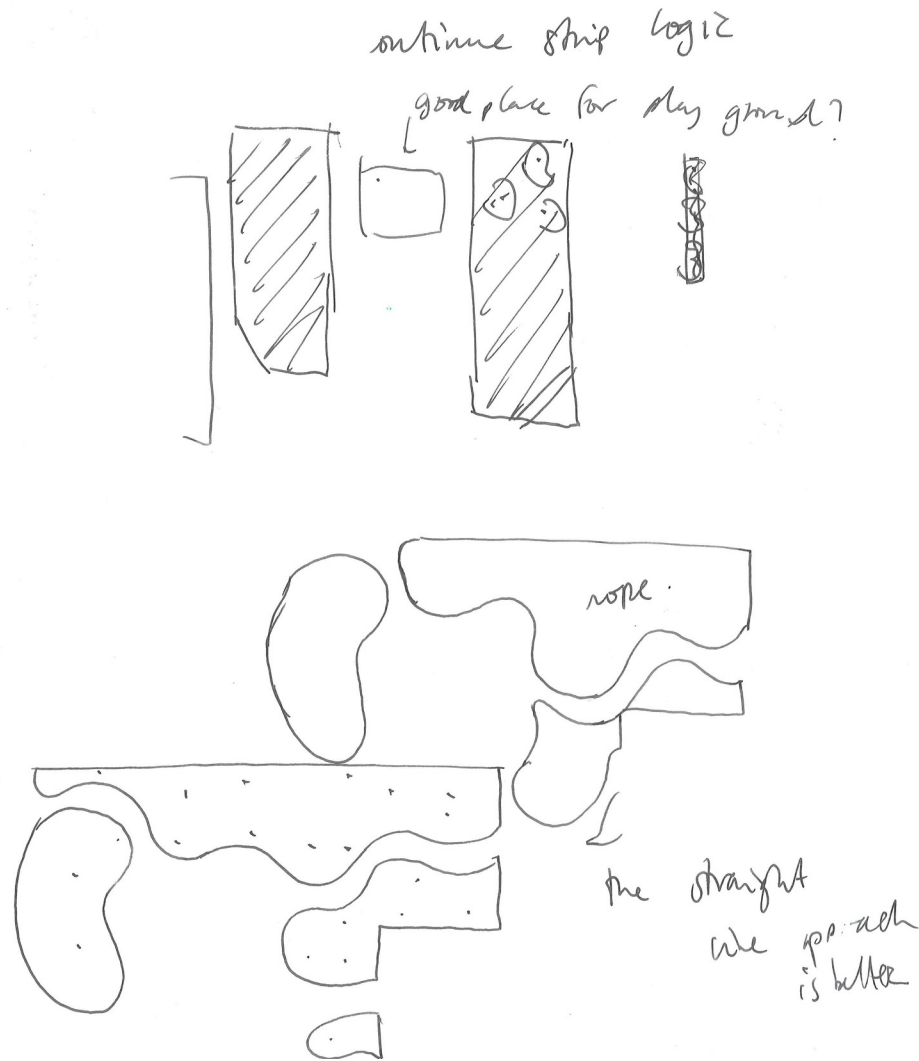
The park was a place to break free from the orthogonality of the scheme. But how free is too free? All of this is happening after P3.
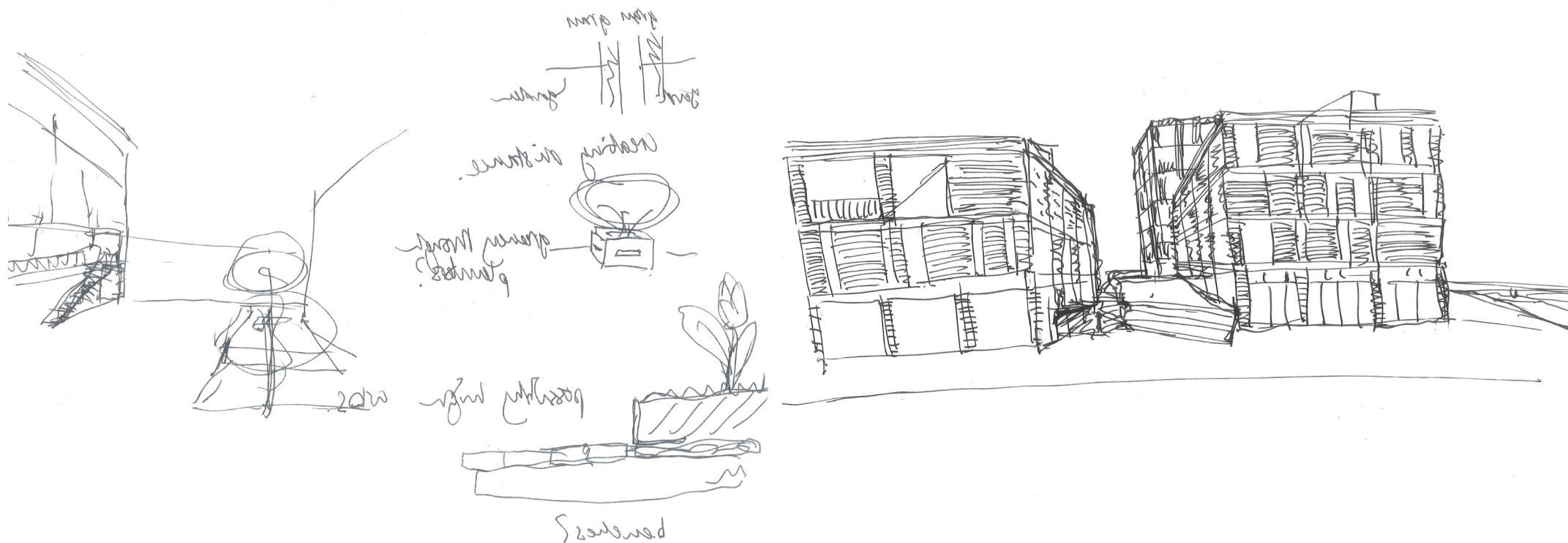
PARK: THE FINAL PUSH

Park?

We used 3D sketches, along with plans to figure out the layout of the pocket park.

PODIUM/PLATFORM

More thorough studies were needed. Luckily, I did them about two weeks before now, in order to establish a more grounded articulation of the connection between the buildings and the platform.
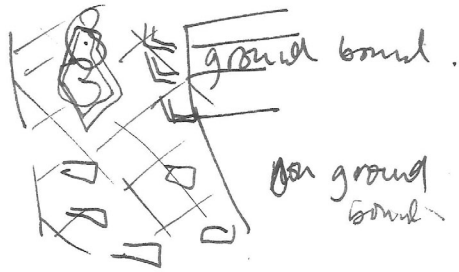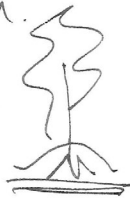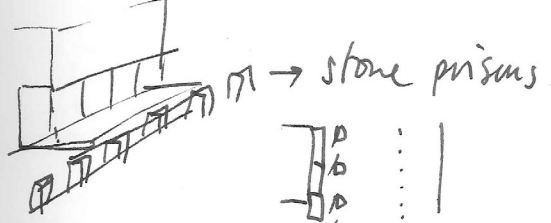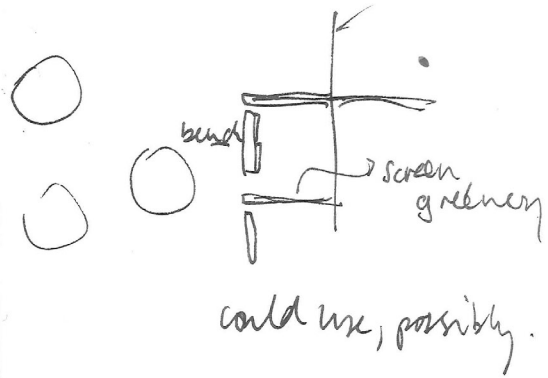
PLATFORM

NL Architects.

both sides ground bond.

Loos Architects

ground bond.

on ground bond.

wood   Bastiaan
        Jongerius

stone

Van Hek & de Klein.

→ stone prisms.

extra buffer

HVDN architecten: steal detail!
Het kasteel.

bench

screen greenery.

could use, possibly.

Devices:

path
trees, lawn.
Dick van Gameren.

90   10   90

in the ramp.
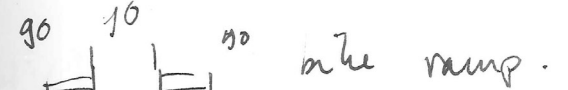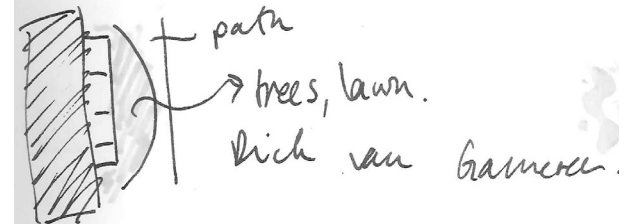
LEVS.

possibility ground — NIX.
bound

unconnected dwellings.

Studying and diagramming principles of communal courtyards and how dwellings connect onto them. The last phase of design articulation.

P5: PRODUCTION

The period between P4 and P5 was focused exclusively on production. Design remained unaltered.

P5: PRODUCTION

Presentation material was adjusted, or, in the case of collage-renderings, created anew.

CONCLUSION

Even though I use other means to make my design decisions, sketching always comes back as a way in which I try to organise and test out any alternatives. These alternatives do not always have a rational source, but sketching renders them accountable to reasoning.
(first sketch of Ronettenterrein as-is, September 2012)