Terdelt's [Entropic] Backgarden

Research Booklet

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WITH & AGAINST ENTROPY

Ch.1_Lost in time

Genesis

As time passes, everything changes. Lines blurs and possibilities are born. Matter degrade and merges together to create a uniformity. In a sense, that is entropy. Physical and cultural system are vulnerable to it. With time they are subject to decay, change or dissolution.

Entropy appears in stark contrast with modernisms' idea of timeless architecture as architecture is subject to entropy. The idea of modern architecture has now transitioned. Its rigidity and manifestos, eroded. Who still designs with Corbusier 5 points? Even the timeless villa Savoye was dilapidated after world war 2.

The degradation is inevitable, an idea is subject to its holder's memory and to being combined with new ideas. Once outside the mind, the idea becomes subject to its different stakeholder. Eventually, when/ if built, the physical object becomes subject to wear and tear, to the rain and many other forces which cannot be predicted.

As such I ask myself, being an architecture student, maker of models, designer of buildings, draftperson, holder of idea, how can the inevitability of entropy enhance my work and process?


Fig. 1.0
Derelict Villa Savoye
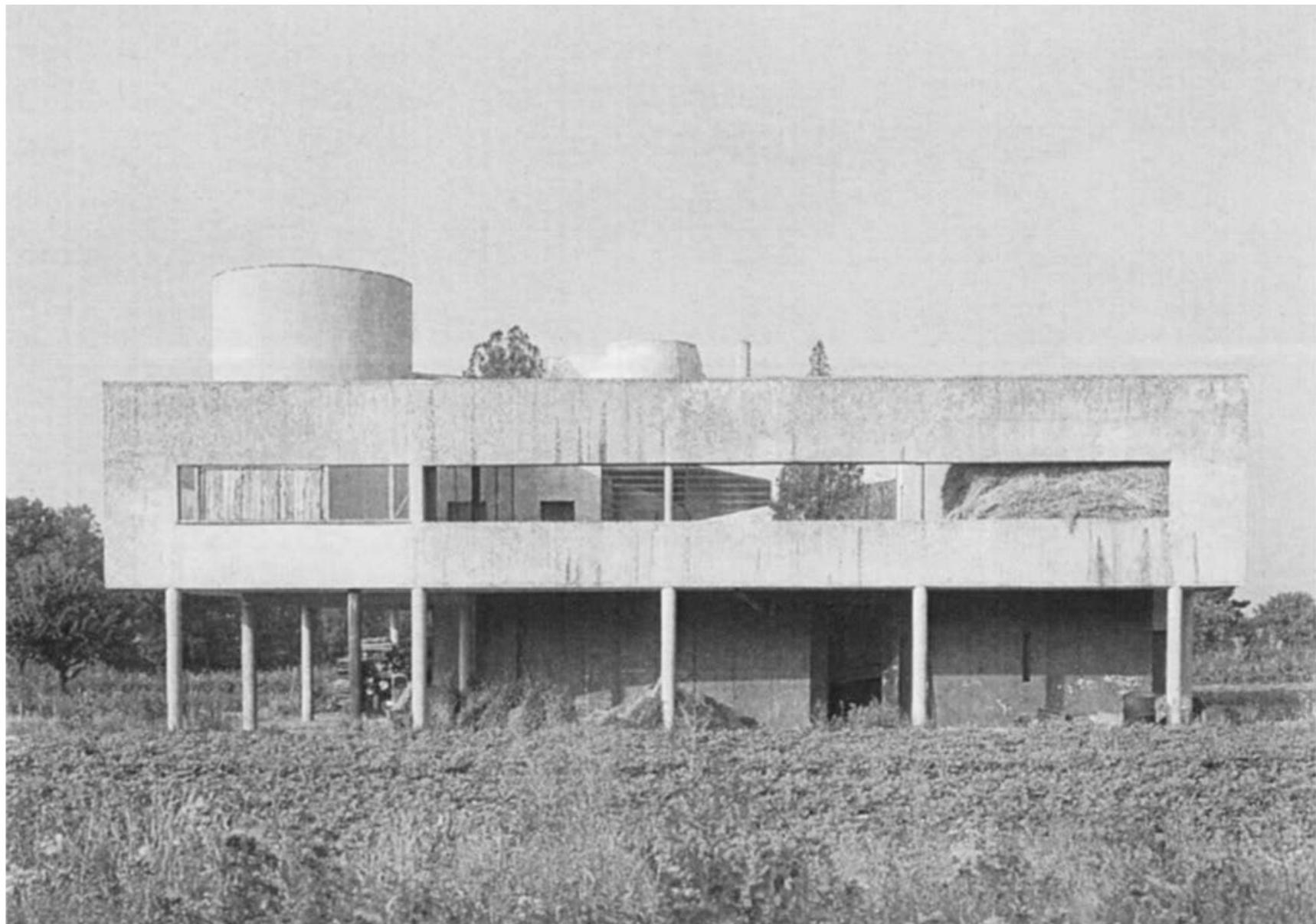
Inescapable Entropy
_Spiral Jetty, Robert Smithson

Entropy can be technically defined as a measure of potentiality within a greater system. The higher the entropy the higher the potential arrangements. As such, less constraints creates more entropy.

In his work, Spiral Jetty, Robert Smithson built a landscape on the sea. As his work was complete and left there at the mercy of external elements, something happened. As Smithson predicted, changes which could not be predicted occurred. Spiral Jetty is an expression of the landscape's erosion/ decay. Smithson believed that ideas themselves undergo entropy. As such what is the spiral jetty? Art, human or nature? For Smithson that was the intention to blur the line.

External forces acted upon the landscape or perhaps started to contribute to Smithson's work. Or maybe Smithson was just the contributor and not the creator, I am not so sure anymore.

Fig. 1.1 (below)
Robert Smithson

Fig 1.2 (right)
Smithson's sketch of Spiral Jetty
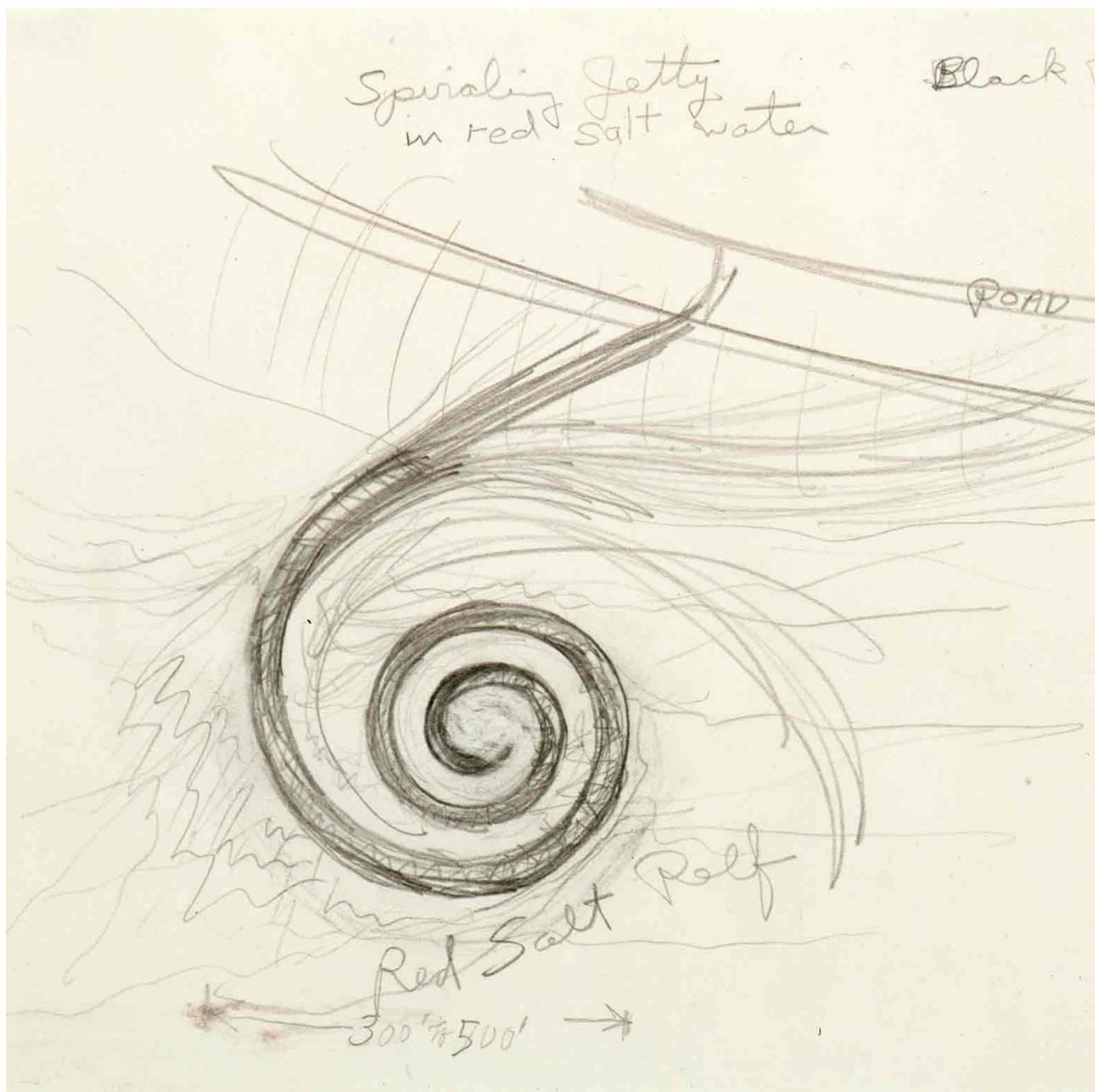
Smithson was drawn to the site - The Great Salt Lake - due to its red tinted water. The construction of the Spiral jetty happened at a time where the water levels were low

Fig. 1.3
Spiral Jetty 1970

After a period of time, the lake was submerged. However, due to droughts in 2002, the jetty became visible again. The water from water evaporated causing salt to appear on the jetty, thus alternating its appearance.

Nature, art or man-made?

Fig. 1.4
Spiral Jetty's reappearance 2002

Was the spiral jetty ever finished? Or is it in a constant process of being finished?

Personally, I see it as a piece which is in a constant flux of change. Its lack of timelessness, due to the later, paradoxically gives it timelessness as it becomes something which one is always curious about its existence. The tension between the jetty and its environment creates an interest which is quite timeless - at least until its destruction.

Fig. 1.5
Spiral Jetty 2003

Reconstruction
_Act of a maker

In this model, I act as time carrying out the changes which happened to the site. In a sense its an examination of the landscape what affects it. Similar to what Smithson argued, sediment in nature accumulate in layer & so does the landscape of the Friche.

This method develops an understanding of the site's growth and the forces acting upon it. The act of model making helps to de-abstract time's processes into understandable forces. Elements of the site have to be understood and re-created, giving them all an importance - not only to their presence but also their creation. After all, I need to understand it to re-create it.

This section is further expanded in its own chapter further on in the book.

Fig. 1.6-1.14
Landscape reconstruction
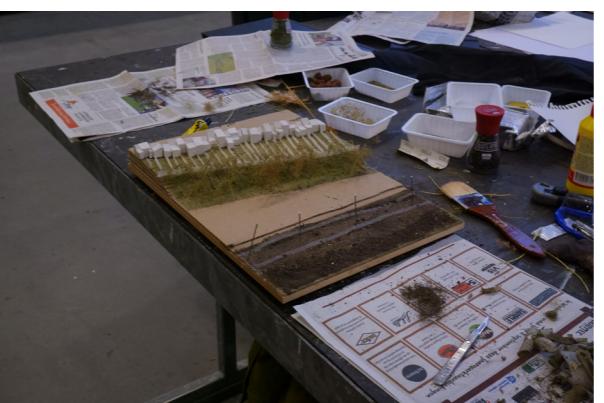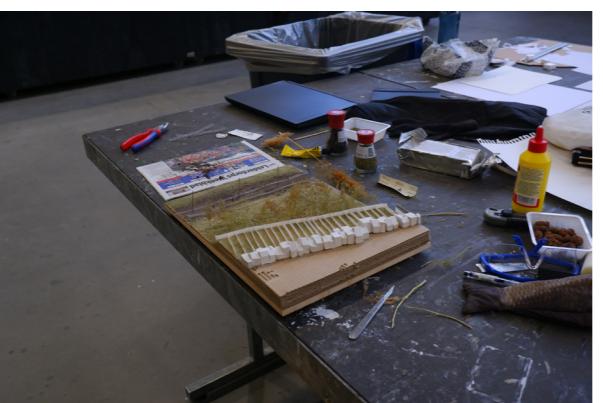
Fig. 1.15-1.25
Landscape reconstruction

In Conversation w. Others
_Affect Architecture

Going back to my parent's place, I took the opportunity to examine my old home. While in the physical model of the site, I used model making as a way to understand how the site developed with time, my examination of home was to use my memory and feelings to grasp how time affects. While the previous research was speculative, this research relies on memories and my deep understanding of this site. Using those two contrasting methods, allows me to gain a layered understanding of time.

This section functions as a summary of the incoming chapter 2 which deals the ideas introduced here in more depth.

Fig. 1.26 (below)
Dust, earth & algae altering paint

Fig. 1.27 (right)
Time recorded on a bark

Fig. 1.30 Tree

Fig. 1.32 Flower

Fig. 1.34 Fallen Branches

Fig. 1.29 Fallen Leaves


Fig. 1.31 Growth

Fig. 1.33 Rotten Fruit

Fig. 1.35 Outside/Inside

Fig. 1.28 Shadow

Architecture affect, to be affected and to affect. The removal of a rock reveals a piece of soil in between the grass. The act of removal affects the landscape and it turn this blank space affects me. The landscape is affected and affecting.

In a similar fashion, architecture itself is vulnerable to various forces, such as rain, dust and sun amongst others. Those affect a building and it turns the traces that they leave, the aesthetic that they create affects us. It gives the building age and makes us wonder how said element came to be and came to look as it is.

Fig 1.36
Scattering of greens

Ruin Lust
_The Architecture of Ruins

In art, ruins are often perceived as a symbol of the passage of time. It has the ability to evoke a sense of nostalgia while showcasing the subliminal beauty of time. Those ideas are often apparent in the work of Romantic artists where ruins becomes a symbol of nature's force over human.

Those paintings shows us the ruins blending in and becoming part of the landscape. The forces of time have soften the hard edges of the building merging it into the context. It softens into a smooth harmony with the land.


Fig 1.37
Joseph Mallord William Turner,
Landscape Composition with a
ruin on a cliff.

The abbey has lost its roof but its wall still remains. They have been taken over by greenery. The colour of wall is washed almost merging with that of the ground. The building looks like an extension of the earth, framing the sky.

Buildings erodes and so do system. While a building is often looked upon as a very man-made thing, what is a ruin?

Fig 1.38
Joseph Mallord William Turner,
Tintern Abbey: The Crossing and
Chancel, Looking towards the East
Window (1794)
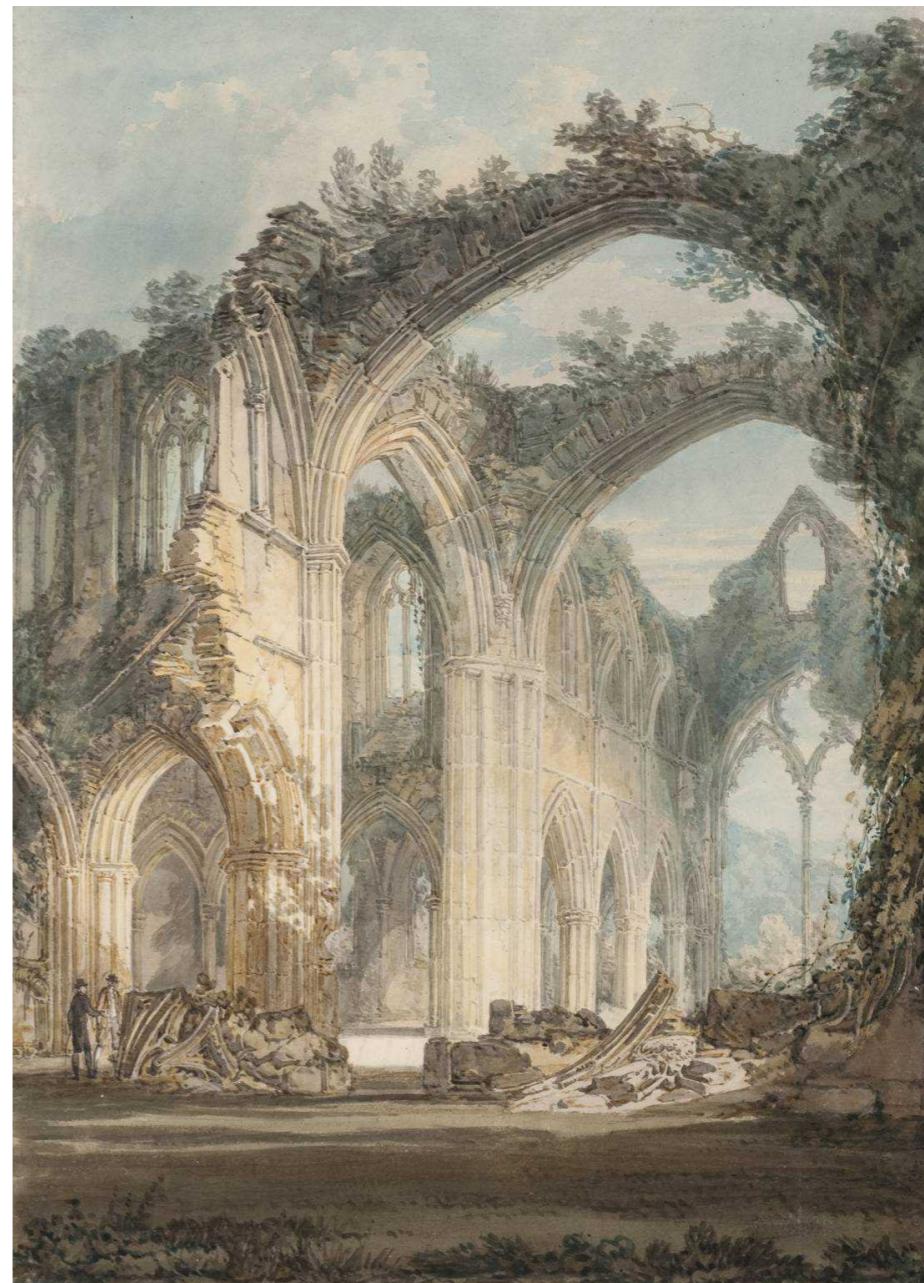
The castle in the shadow merges with the landscape. It somewhat looks like a big piece of rock placed on the top of the cliff. A man made mountain

Fig.1.39
Joseph Mallord William Turner,
Dolbadern Castle (1800)

Maintenance
_Against Entropy

Maintenance is a way of maintaining time, keeping a building static. Without maintenance, the building ages. Physical reality cannot avoid entropy. In this case, aging. The glass facade dirties and dust accumulates. Maintenance becomes the force which opposes the undesirable affects of time on a building, entropy.

This process, in the case of OMA's Seattle library creates extraordinary events such as window cleaning, where bodies are dangling through space.

As such in order to keep the building as it was conceived by its maker maintenance happens. It materialises itself through this event where the building is brought back to its original state - somewhat. Yet, it can never evade entropy.

Fig. 1.40 (below)
Cleaning of RCA building

Fig. 1.41 (right)
Cleaning of OMA's Seatle library

Fig. 1.42
Still from 'Le baiser'

Sometimes the event of maintenance manifests itself in the form of scaffolding. The latter lasts for years, thus , making me wonder

Is architecture really static even when it is kept in time?

Fig. 1.43
Canterbury Cathedral Renovation

Sometimes the scaffolding becomes architecture which itself becomes a attractive creation. However, is this scaffolding going to stay forever or be removed as initially intended. If it stays, is it really scaffolding? What even are scaffolds?

Fig. 1.44 & 1.45
Mackintosh Hill House + Carmody
Groarke's Intervention
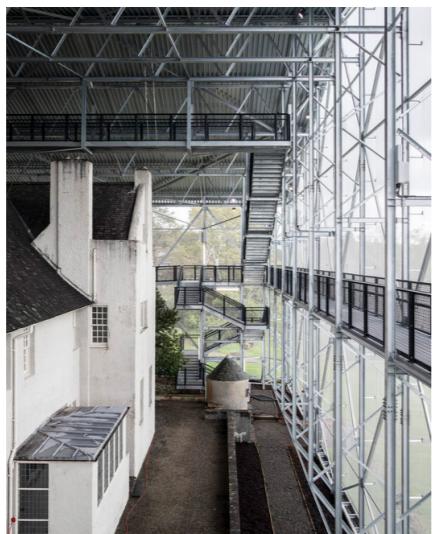
Transnatural
_A line is a blurry space

Trans-natural ... as that which is always questioning & undoing the natural as a thing or a category, and that which is emerging beyond the natural but still in relation to it'- Shilah Krupar

In Sedimentation of the mind, Earthworks, Smithson argued that cultural system are themselves prone to entropy. In a sense his work of landscape demonstrate that. As their lines become blurred. As they errode and start collaborating with non-human forces, the land art becomes something which is not quite human anymore yet it is also something which would not exist without human intervention.

The latter is now being placed within a new system, transnatural. But all system are vulnerable to entropy, and I would guess that so is the idea of transnatural.

Fig. 1.46
Smithson Broken Circle

Maya Lin's wave field is a landscape exploring both physically and conceptually the idea of waves. Using scientific notion the landscape was designed to give the viewer the idea that they are in a wave.

The earthwork here is a human creation with the tactilitiy of the grass and that of hills evoking the beauty of a wave.

Fig. 1.47
Maya Lin, Wave Field at Storm King

A line made by constantly walking on the same path in a landscape.

Fig 1.48
Richard Long, A line made
by walking

Paul Smith London
_Materialising Rain

The sinuous pattern of interlocking circle cast onto the face created a play with sunlight and shadow. The surface is brought to life through the marks of its makers casting and the natural aging of the cast iron facade.

The pattern also creates an interesting relation with rain. Water moves at different pace throughout the facade reacting with the cast iron. The velocity of the rain affects the facade and leave its mark. Its manifestation becomes what gives the building its unique identity. Traces of rain are loved and kept rather than being removed.

Fig. 1.49 - 1.50
6a Architects
Paul Smith London
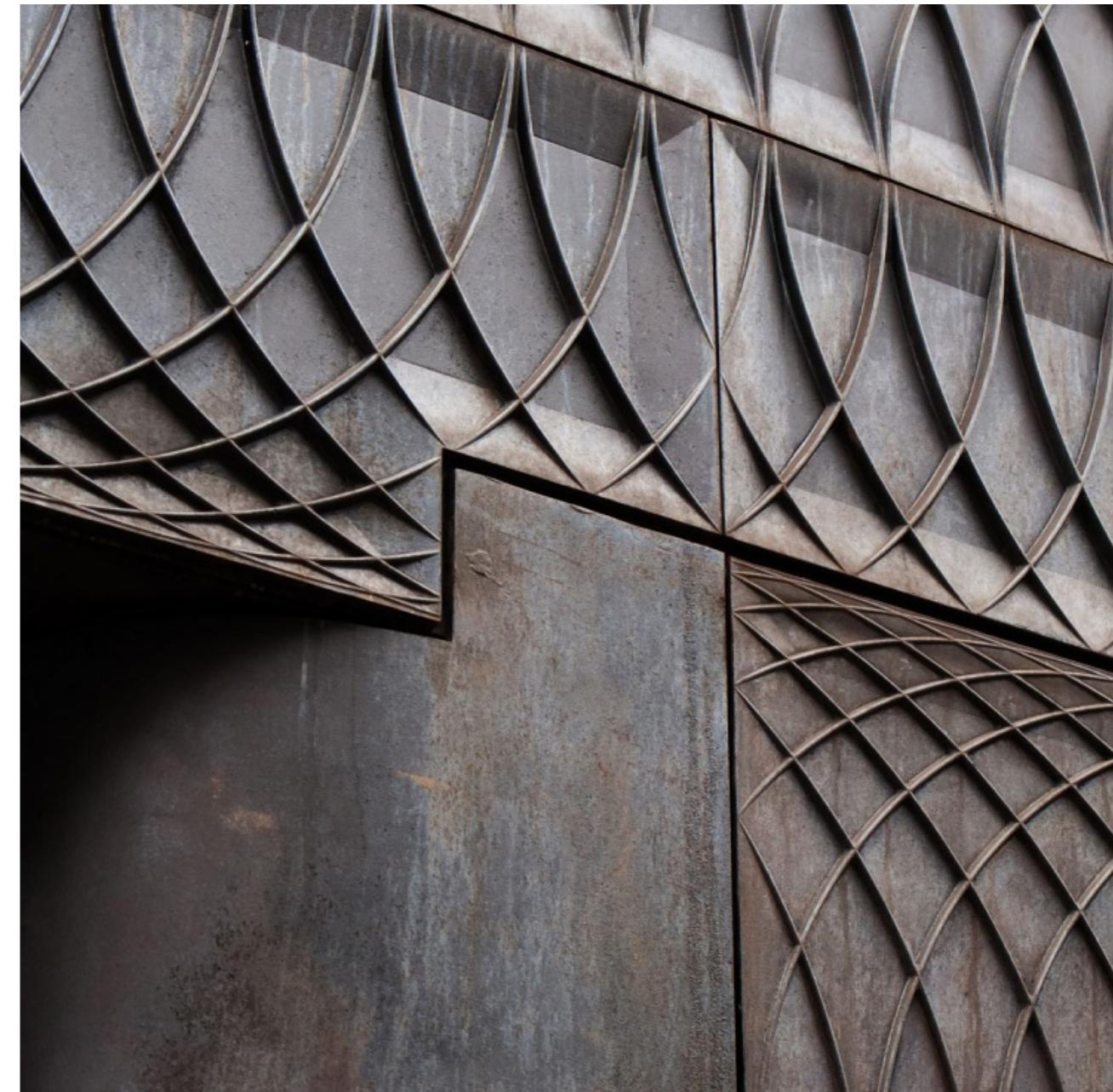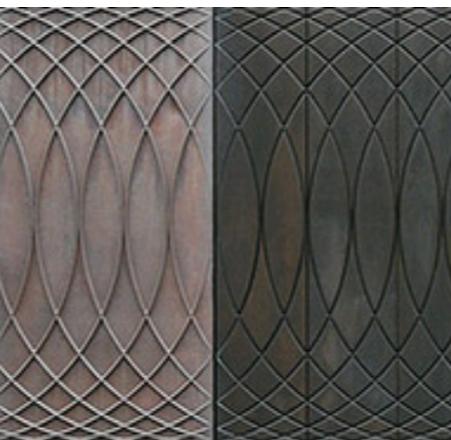
Fig.1.51
6a Architects
Paul Smith London

Traces in time
_Making Randomness

There is a certain type of randomness and beauty which can only be captured through organic means. Studio Ossidiana's work captures the effect of movement on the ground surface. The imperfection which can be related to the concept of wabi-sabi produces an effect of randomness one which only happens through the ins and out of life's forces.

Similarly, the work shown from Tom Emerson's studio brings the mundane into an art. The random pieces becomes like a patchwork or perhaps groundwork. A uniqueness which can only be produced by time and its effect becomes the highlight while also contrasting the smooth and clean finish of machinery.

Fig. 1.52, 1.53
Studio Ossidiana Wandering Field

Surfaces are ever evolving. As time passes they change. The age that it acquires, gives it its own characteristics and its own charm. It makes it look mature and old. Somehow the lack of permanence creates the affect of permanence. Because it has been present for so long as seen through its age, the latter feels comfortable and permanent as it will probably be present for much longer. Eventhough, not it the same form.
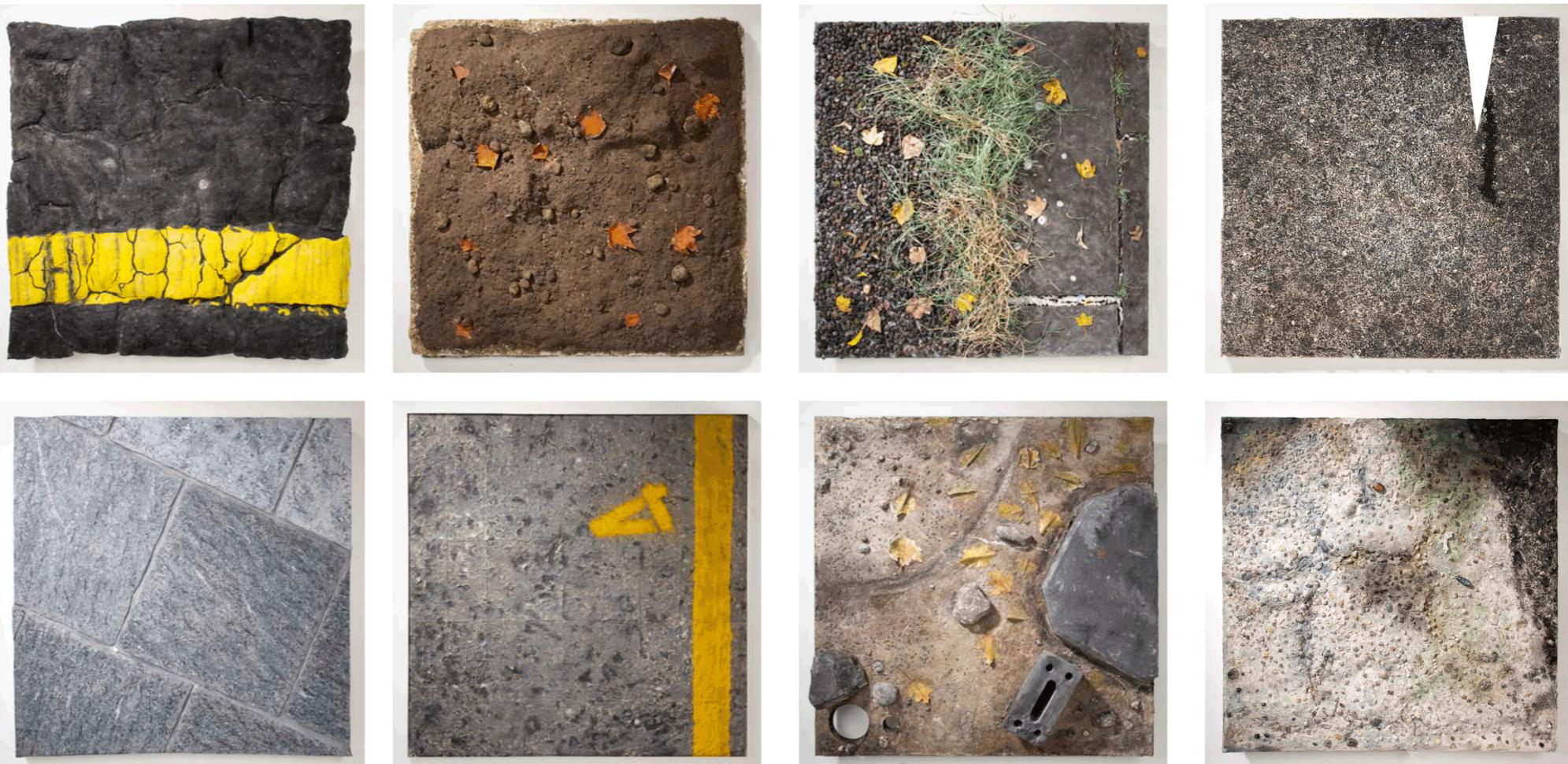

Fig. 1.54
Studio Tom Emerson
Patchwork of the ground

Architecture in time
_Multiplicity of time

Architecture, as demonstrated, is not static it is very much something which is dynamic but slow. As such architects are often left with the question of how to demolish, to let a building, to maintain or to renovate. Each different approach highlights a different relation to time.

Robert Smithson's Kent State campus in Ohio fulfilled the latter's desire to bury a building and see its decomposition. The building undergoes a decomposition unaffected by human intervention for the most part. This showcases a flow of time where the building flows from assembled to decomposition. The slow decomposition runs its course without human intervention.

Although human intervention did happen. A sign was left on the building in protest of a shooting which happened. The sign on the building made it controversial encouraging authorities to desire ridding the building faster. In a sense social entropy happened.

Fig. 1.55
Drawing of the building after earth
was placed on it

Fig. 1.56
Kent State Campus crumbling
under the load of the soil upon it`

Would the preservation of Orford Ness ruin its ruination - which is one its most iconic quality? When to make changes and adapt. Things can become somewhat new again with renovation but is it always worth it?

However, non intervention will one day become crumbles. So does the building have to be maintained as a ruin? Those are question within the domain of heritage architecture.

Fig. 1.57
Orford Ness

Fig. 1.58
Battersea Art Centre

The Battersea arts center highlights a multiplicity in the way time can be approached within the domain of architecture.

The first layer is the existing building which can be seen as the building being a ruin. The patina and texture of the ruin is kept giving it a unique character.

The second layer is the new. A clean slate, a new addition highlighting the old through the contrast of clean finishes. The new additions are mostly made with this aesthetic.

Lastly the third layer is the renovated layer. A new is added to replace the old. This new is made with the same design as what was previously there but with a contemporary spirit. The multiplicity of layers creates different yet equally evocative thoughts of time.

It remains to be seen how the building will be maintained and react with changes. Will the architecture be frozen and maintained to attempt to keep it as is? Will the new eventually becomes ruin. Only time will tell

Fig. 1.59-1.62
Battersea Art Centre
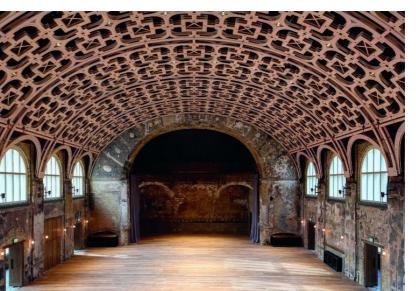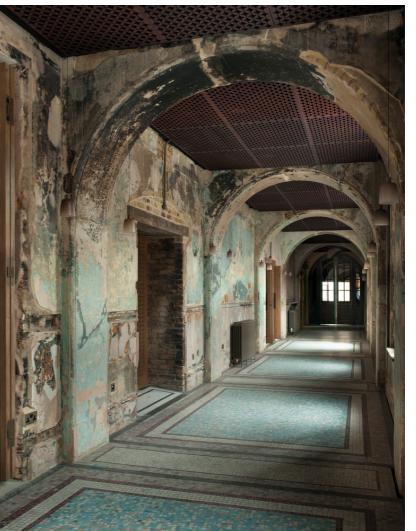
IN CONVERSATION W. OTHERS

Ch. 2_Architecture Affect-

Preface

With the exception of the poem & the postface, this chapter has been designed with the intention of being viewed as a photographic essay. All of the text acts as addition to the image.

Going back to my parent's place, I took the opportunity to examine my old home. My examination of home relied on memory and feelings to grasp how time affects.

*All the photographs in this chapters' are authors images

The tree needs work
It needs to be tended
It's fruit to be plucked
As such, it is kept
as much work as my dad
can carry out

Were it bigger
Pests & noisy bats would come
Wreaking havoc & dropping fruits
- How uncivilised

That is why we maintain
To keep the straight line straight
To prevent fruit from splattering
On my dear clean wall
Yet in small crevices
Too obnoxious to clean
Another story is allowed to happen
Time is allowed to progress
& not reset according to plan
or the plan

Every time i walk on the corals
I destroy the perfect arrangement
Crush it to dust - albeit a little
With years, those changes take form
Yet in a day
It can all be new - somewhat

Once every year, for a couple of days, the cherry tree bears its fruits. To collect it, my dad brings the ladder in the yard. The tree used to be bigger and yielded much more cherry, however, as it was mostly my dad taking care of the harvest he had the tree trimmed - reducing the amount of energy needed to properly tend to the tree.
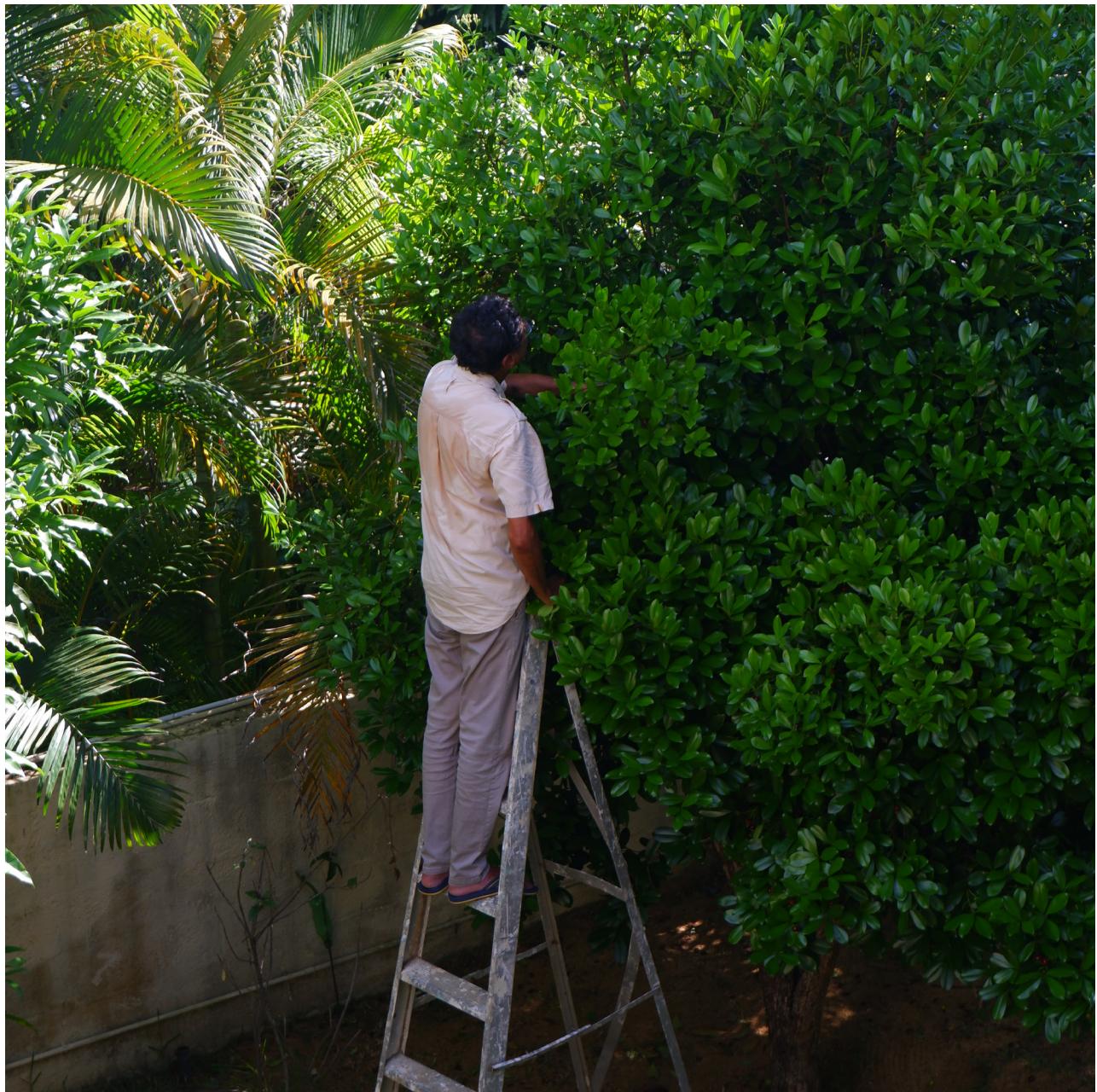
A bench or a bed? Just the one of many sleeping places
of our cat.

My dad designed this table and had it made. Its top is an engineered wood covered with a wooden veneer on which a large piece of glass has been placed.

With time the table decayed. Water from the rain penetrated the tiny gap between the glass and the wood. Thus the glass always had to be removed after the rain to wipe the table. The glass sheet is quite big and requires two or more people to move it - with a lot of care. The hassle of this process discouraged us from maintaining it often and so the water affected the wooded and it began to rot.

One day when moving the glass to clean the table, an accident happened. Now the glass is cracked.

When first installed, the border between this wooden pallet and the landscape was harsh and pronounced. Now, not so much - soil has blurred the pallet's outer boundaries and found its way inside the gaps. The blend of the two creates a particular aesthetic. One where the ground blends with the human intervention, perhaps quite similar to post-industrial landscape. However, nothing is static. Left to its own device the grass will eventually take over.

The irony of those two element's interplay lies in the elements' maintenance required to keep the aesthetic - a form of violence against the ground to prevent it from taking over. The grass grows and obscures the wooden pallet, the human force removes the grass and allows the pallet to be visible. In between this to and fro, a lived-in and harmonious effect is created.

This terracotta looking pot is quite heavy. Not only is it big but also full of soil. Quite heavy as one can imagine. It houses a tree whose roots have outgrown the pot. The latter cracked the pot resulting in the visual beginning of its destruction. In order to maintain the pot the tree was cut down. However the damage was already done. The crack is a vulnerability allowing sun, rain and other plants to take advantage of it. With time the pot will eventually crack. Or will it? Perhaps an intervention could help bind it together - Labour becomes a force acting against the other agencies.

At first glance it appears that soil has stained the wall, however, upon closer inspection, it is not the case. According to my dad those are most likely lichen which have settled on the wall. Lichen is a composite of fungi and algae amongst others, in this case its colour is similar to that of soil. It gives the impression of soil climbing on the building.

It is interesting to see the presence small living organism as well having a say over the aesthetic of building. The wall becomes a surface capable of housing various organisms. My dad speculates that this happens because of the texture of the wall creating a favourable condition for lichens to inhabit.

The photo on the right is a close-up of a hanging flower pot. The pot is a thin metal structure which contains a straw like material holding soil. The straw-like material used to be neatly woven into a clean object which is no longer the case. It was observed that birds picked the material to make their own nest leading to the dispersion of the straw.

As the bird builds its architecture, something somewhere else was being destroyed. Construction does not happen in a vacuum. It requires some sort of destruction somewhere else. The hanging flower pot is mostly likely a result of the harvest of straws from a field. The metal was extracted from a quarry - mined - breaking stone. The construction of the bird nest and flower pot are both results of a destructive process.

This wall is an old wall which was always present in the yard. It used to be part of the old boundary wall. Now it is just a free-standing wall. It often acts as an anchor point in the yard where activities happen. Somehow there's something extremely appealing about this old stone wall which has withstood the test of time.
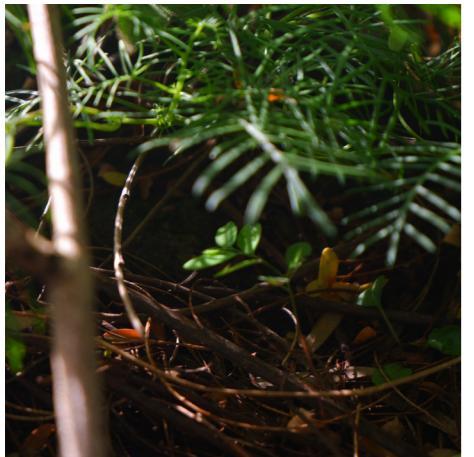
Behind the old stone wall lies a hidden space. Somewhere we rarely see, somewhere we rarely go. This area has become a place of decay. It is where all the stuff with no place go goes to. In there is a complete mess.

A little jungle of mess.

Soil tends to become muddy when it rains, and so when we walk on it sometimes splashes. It seems that in this photo, that those splashes of mud created a cladding for the flower pot. What was once black has become brown and textured - not by mistake but rather by time.

'Any object is nothing more than a system of continuous transformation'.

When I was a kid, the water tank used to be white.
A very sharp white contrasting with everything
It highlighted its very pleasing circular geometry
There was something very Corbusian about its shape

Now it has this sandy texture
Plants have started to grow around
Its geometry is not as pronounced as before
It fades into the decor
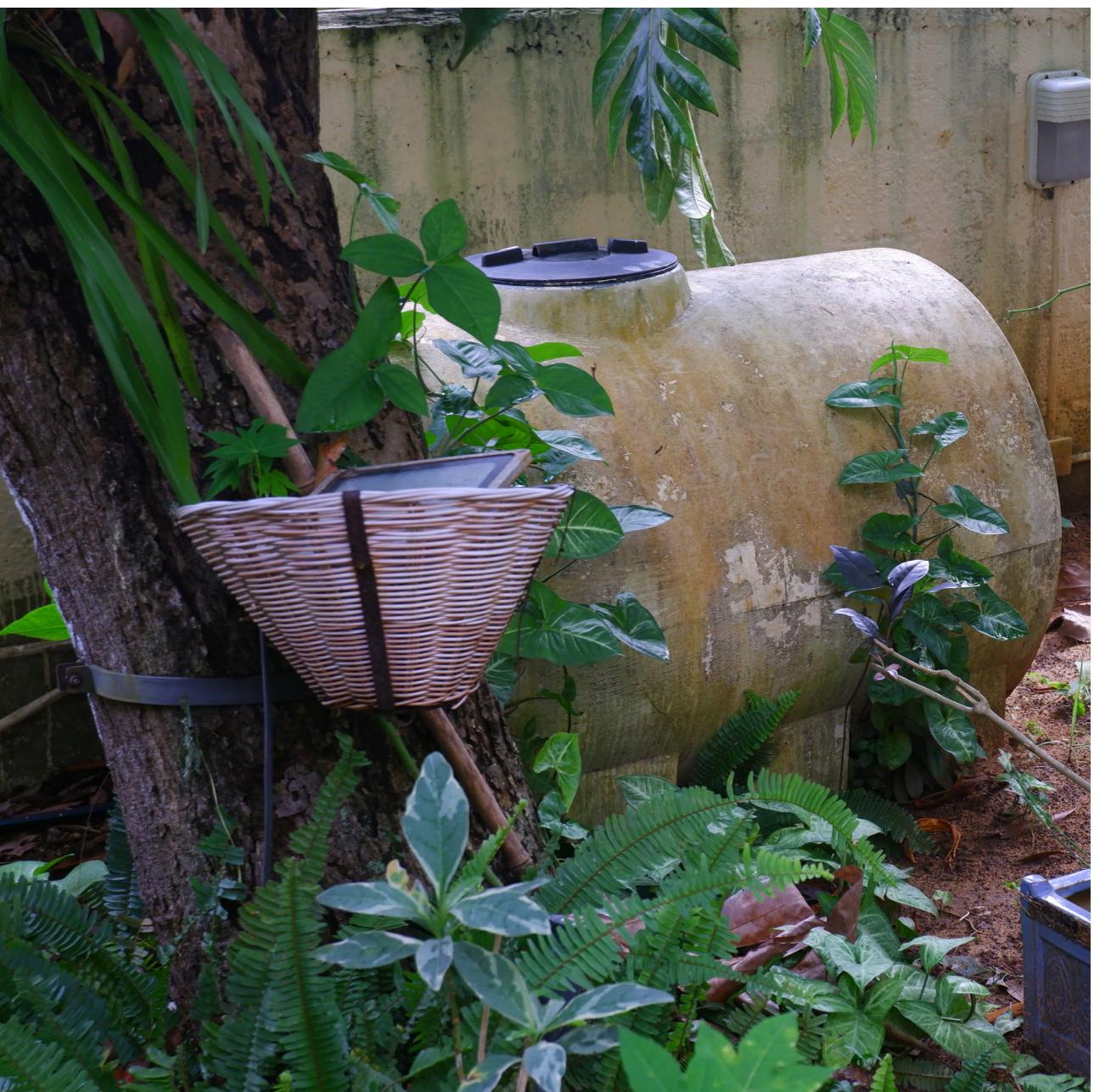
Similarly this little closet to the sewer used to be much more pronounced before. Eventually its boundary was blurred and now its entirety is being taken. But perhaps this violence is an opportunity to let those not very pleasing thing disappear.

Mess allows for more mess

An old block becomes the house for some of the
gardening tools.

Can destruction be designed?

There used to be a small drop between the ground of the carport and the coral level. With time as the car drove through, the edges cracked and the latter carries the coral into the carport. The edge between the two blurred into a gradient of bigger to finer object. The used to be mortar interface between the tiles and corals yielded with the passing of time and of the car.

In practice, I was taught that such boundaries should not be a 90 degrees drop but a smooth slope to prevent such damages from happening. While it was most likely an oversight, the design of the carport highlights the certain tension that is present between the car and the two surfaces.

The drives on what used to be a coral alley. Eventually all the corals where the tyre would drive were pushed aside clearing the way. Furthermore the weight of the car also crushed a lot of the corals turning them into dust. Eventually one day the shrub of flowers in the middle was planted. Its height does not need to be trimmed, the car takes care of that.

While the height of the shrub is maintained by the action of the car driving over, its depth is another story. The greenery is extending gradually reconnecting the different patches together. If let be, surface will change. Currently it is a mixture of corals, plants and the hard surface that was there before. The surface of the ground gives shape to those various stories and processes which happened through time.

Tim Edensor - Waste Matter
'processes of decay and the obscure agencies of intrusive humans and non-humans transform the familiar material world, changing the form and texture of objects eroding their assigned function and meanings, and blurring the boundaries between things '

There used to be shrubs in this section of the yard. Have they been removed or tended to? Regardless new ones are staring to grow.

 Life is confident and patient
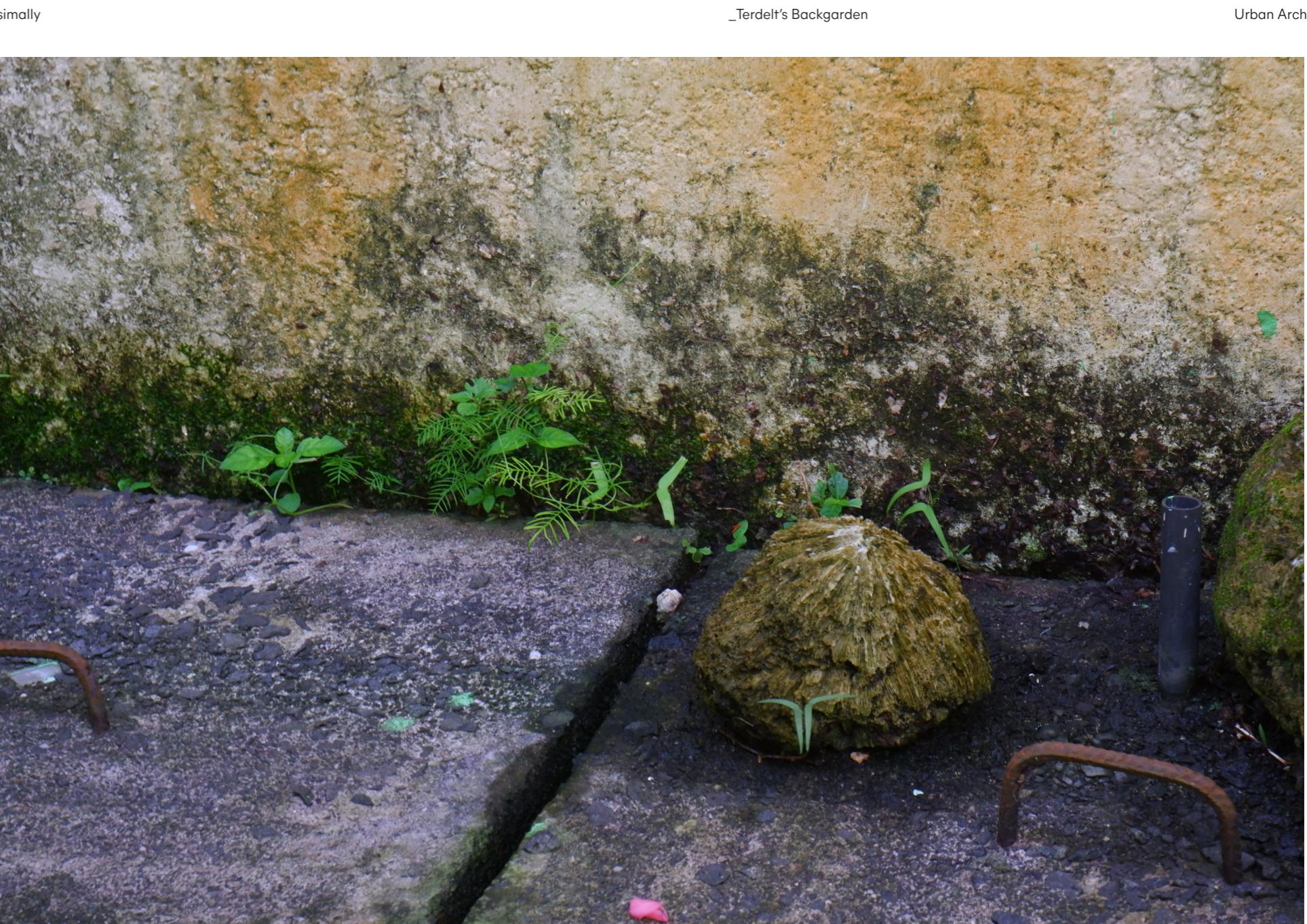
The accumulation of dust combine with rain affects the
wall leaving its own traces.

What does it mean when lines meet?
Where the line of the building
Intersect with those of the trees
The collision creates an interaction
This interaction creates an accumulation of leaves`

There are various textures in the yard: stones, corals of varying sizes and greenery. Initially all of those had their own space. The various textures were separated and contained neatly in their own region. However, with time, movement and activities a scattering occurred. They all merged together creating a more homogeneous texture on the ground. Borders have evolved naturally and while there are zones of higher concentration, the ground has becomes a rich tapestry of textures unable to be created only by human or non-human agencies.

At certain places, we see recent changes where the harsh lines between textures are still present. With time this will probably change too. However, there is something quite pleasing about this contrast of homogeneous and striated textures.
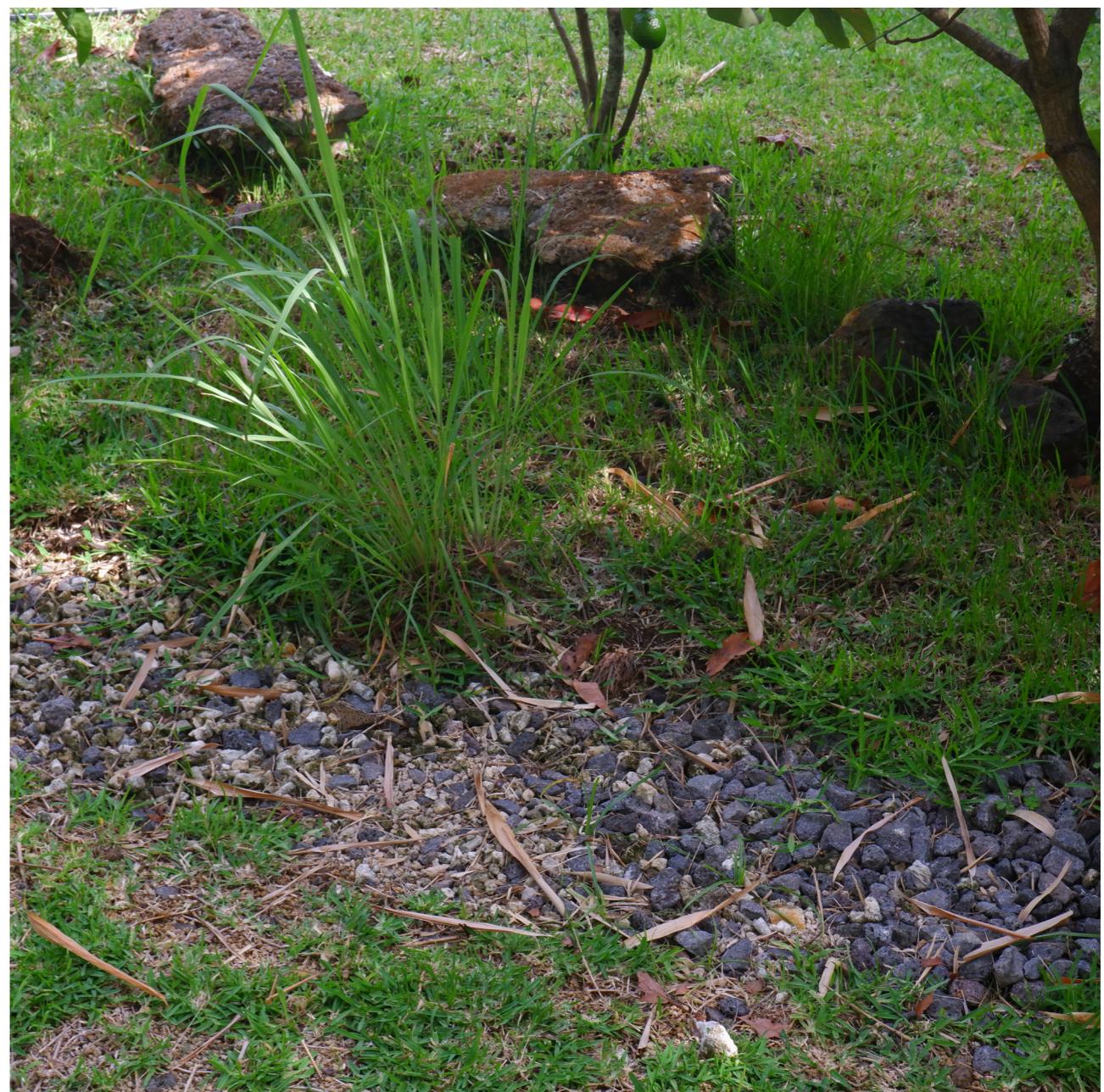
Not everything is being cared for and kept clean. Not every single detail is planned and perfect. The randomness is its own aesthetic and this aesthetic allows for a more spontaneous and carefree life.

Sometimes the outside is brought inside. The placement of plants and other objects usually found outside, forges a connection between the two. Reflections, balcony, veranda and the shape of shadows - all help communicated the external world for the people inside the building.
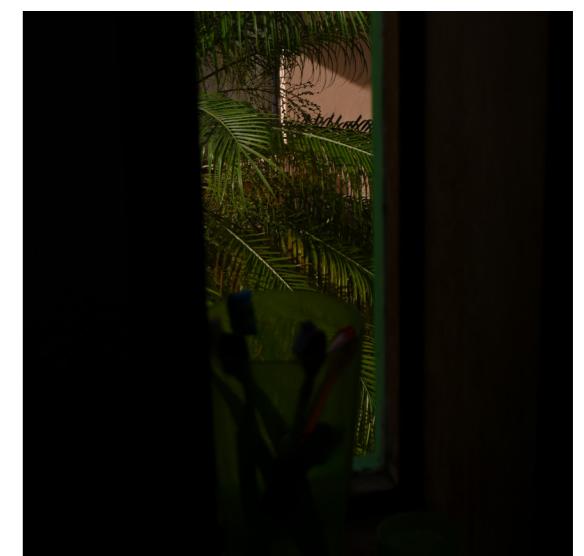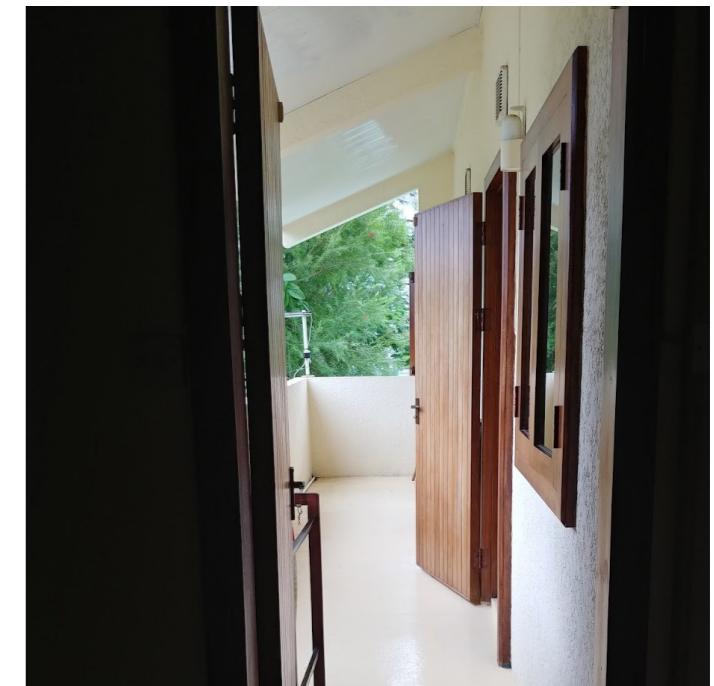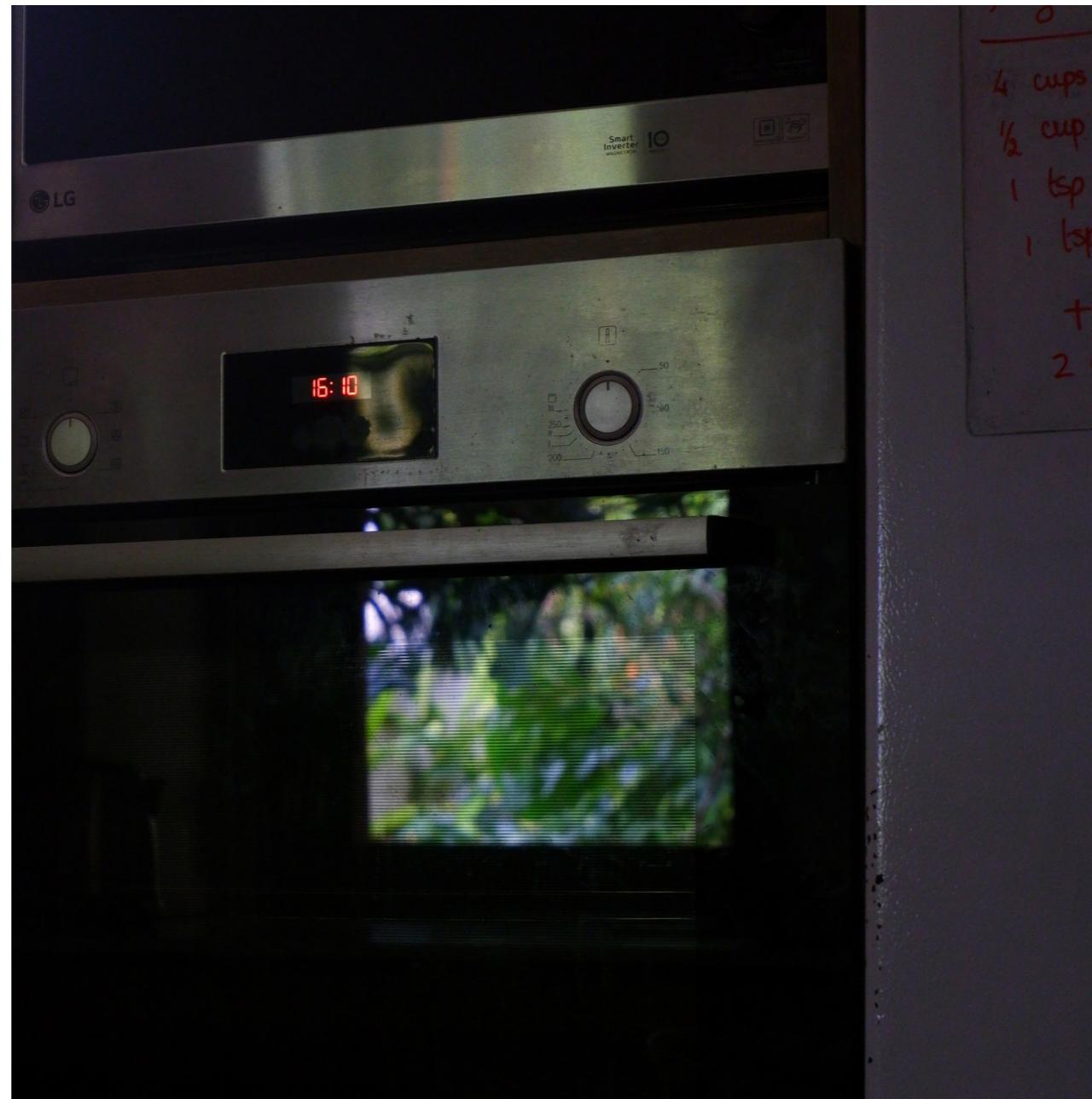
…and sometimes the external world can come and find life inside the building much to my annoyance. Insects are coming inside and eating the wooden door in my room.

Postface

Architecture affect, to be affected and to affect. The removal of a rock reveals a piece of soil in between the grass. The act of removal affects the landscape and it turn this blank space affects me. The landscape is affected and affecting.

In a similar fashion, architecture itself is vulnerable to various forces, such as rain, dust and sun amongst others. Those affect a building and it turns the traces that they leave, the aesthetic that they create affects us. It gives the building age and makes us wonder how said element came to be and came to look as it is.

THE GARDEN
& THE CITY

Ch. 3_Terdelt to Brussels

Introduction

The starting point of the design is the research on the garden city of Terdelt. In this research, Hania Adamczyk, Prajwal Gaikwad, Anniek Kloosterziel, Longyi Zhou & myself - Salman Cassimally have collaborated to examine and interview the inhabitants of Terdelt.

The examination, lead to the formation of methods to approach key themes such as agency, affects and how forces leave traces on their greater environment. Those themes became a big part of the work later on. They helped create a language that could approach the topic of 'Nature' without being limited to said words and being narrowed down into a semantic discussion of its boundary. Nature was somewhat de-abstracted to create the leading ideas of the design. Moreover, the research brought out ideas such as texture and scale which becomes important sub themes of the design.

*All the photographs in this chapters' belongs to the before-mentioned Terdelt garden city research group

Fig. 3.1 - Garden City Group
Hania Adamczyk, Prajwal Gaikwad, Anniek Kloosterziel, Longyi Zhou & me

Human and the Garden City
_A garden city in Brussels - Terdelt

The relationship between humans and nature is a dynamic connection which is constantly evolving. From a hunter-gather society to our contemporary one, our interactions with nature showcases our ability to shape and be shaped by it.

Garden cities, a concept popularised through Sir Ebenezer Howard's book 'Garden Cities of To-morrow' showcases a particular view of the human - nature relationship. One where people can benefit from access to nature and city life. However, with time and different people - theorist, governments, planners, and residents amongst other - gained agency over the project, we wonder how the human - nature relationship has been morphing itself.

As we wondered through the streets of Brussels, and especially those of the garden city of Terdelt, we encountered various distinct human-nature connection special to this place. Our inteviews, observation, comparative study and desk research yielded us a greater understanding of human-nature relationship in Terdelt and how it compares to other part of Brussels.

Note: The text is from the 'Living w. Nature, Garden City - Compendium' - Co-created by Hania Adamczyk, Prajwal Gaikwad, Anniek Kloosterziel, Mr Zhou Longyi & yours truly

Fig. 3.2 & 3.3
Being(s) in Terdelt

Walking around Brussels
_Relating to the greater environment
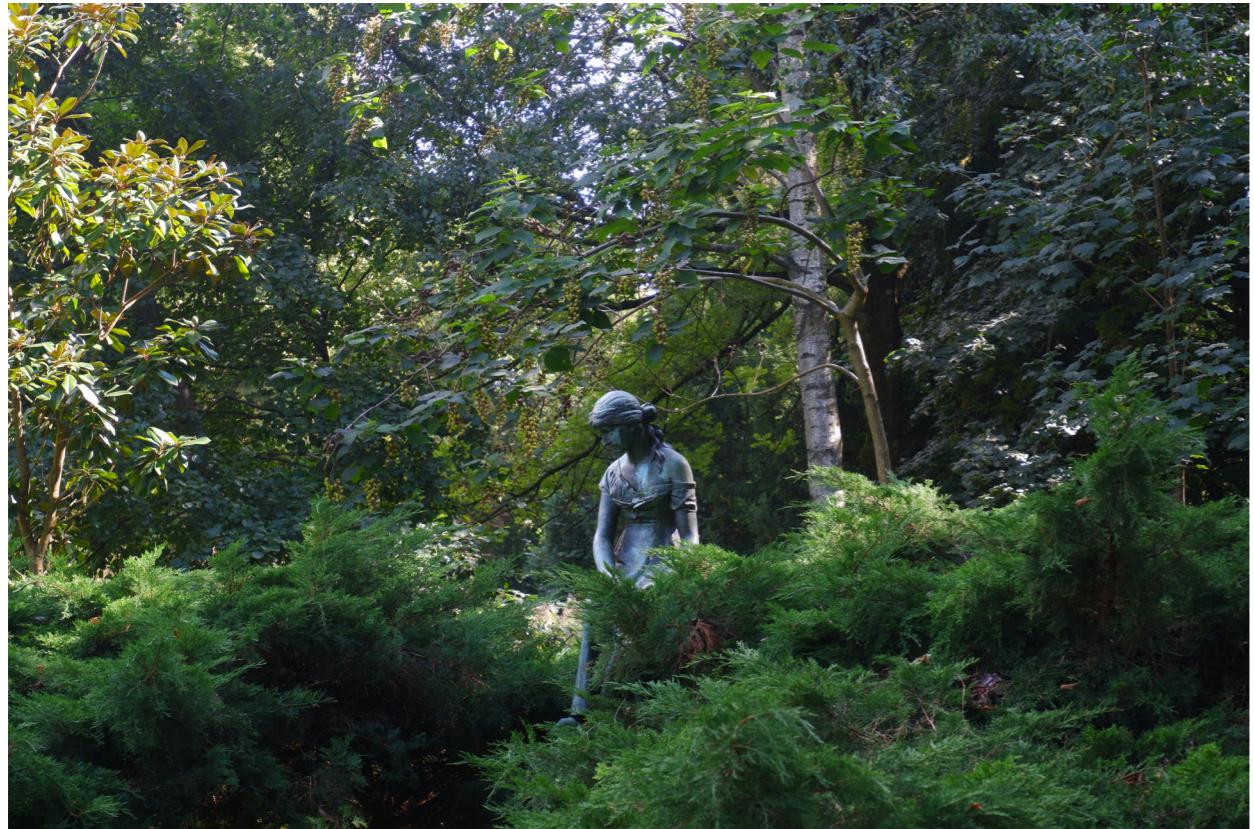
Fig. 3.4

Copper Statue at the mercy of the park

Fig. 3.5

City Bordered from Park

Fig. 3.6

Trimmed Greenery ready to be discarded

Fig. 3.7

Rabbit/Hare statue - a signifier of rebirth
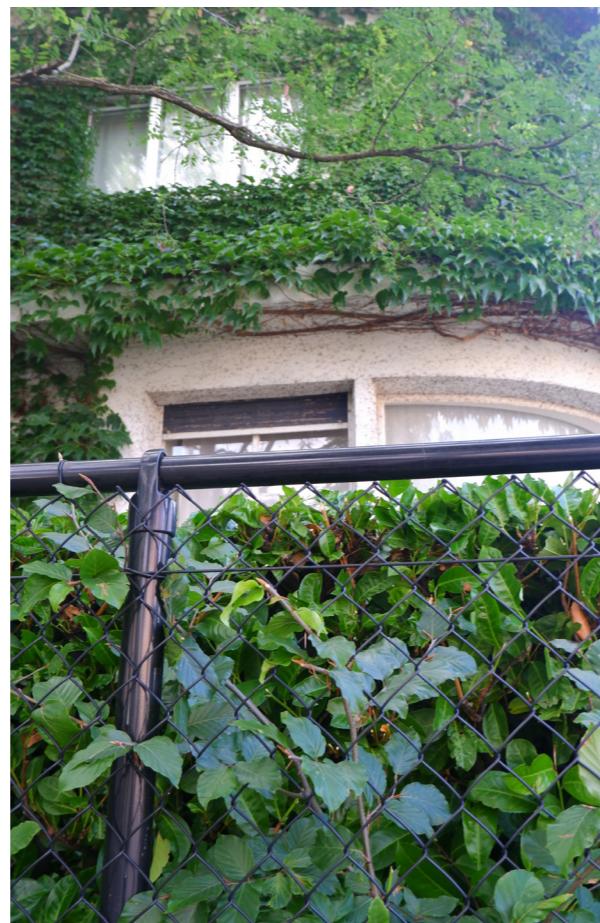
Fig. 3.8

A park on a wall
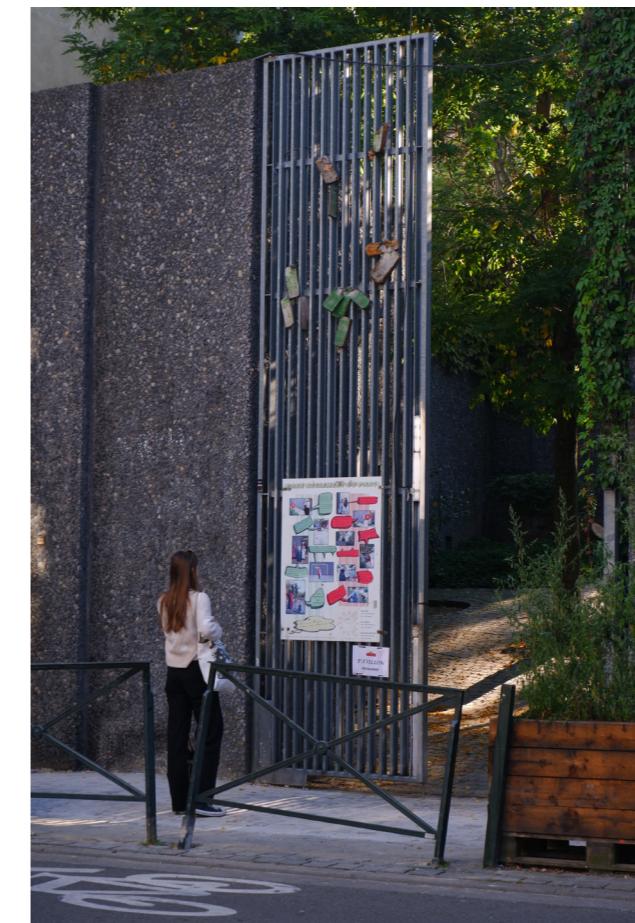
Fig. 3.9

A park behind a wall

Into the backgarden
_A house visits

After the approval of the wife and subsequently invited through the front door *(after jokingly asking us whether or not we were terrorists)*, the backgarden is immediately visible to us. The front and backdoor are aligned and connected with a straight corridor, while the living and dining room are both on the left.

The dining table tells us they have meals in the winter garden. Looking over the green, they can see birds landing in the garden, and listen to sounds of rain over their heads, beating on the plastic roof panel.

The back garden shows clear boundaries of man-made elements and green. The lawn is pushed back by a retaining stroke, leaving a neatly tiled zone with chairs and table. Inside the lawn, a semi-circle zone of soil is revealed to leave room for aubergine, courgette, and tomato plants. Most objects are out of sight in the shed. What we could see were insect hotels, birdbaths, birdhouses, and the symbolic decorations such as angels and gnomes.

*Note: The text is from the 'Living w. Nature, Garden City - Compendium' - Co-created by Hania Adamczyk, Prajwal Gaikwad, Anniek Kloosterziel, Longyi Zhou & me

with the exception of the important information in italic

Fig. 3.10
House Visit

Fig. 3.11
Front Facade

Fig. 3.12
Interior
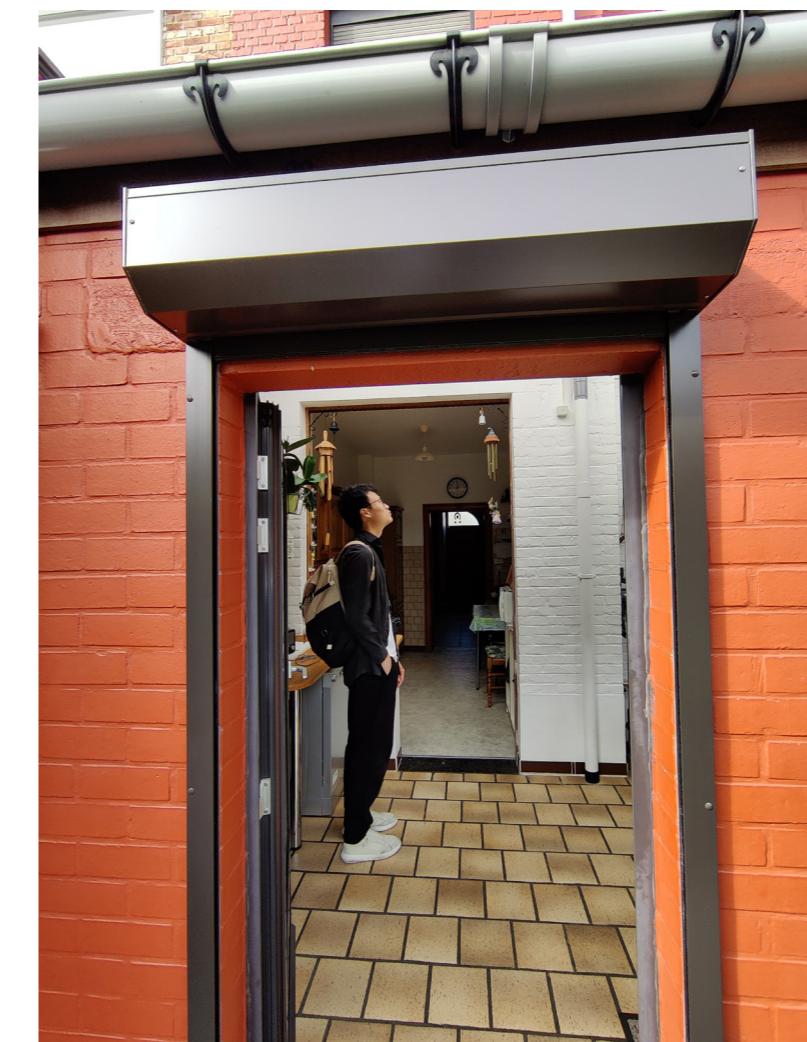
Fig. 3.13
From front to back door

Fig. 3.14 & 3.15
Backgarden
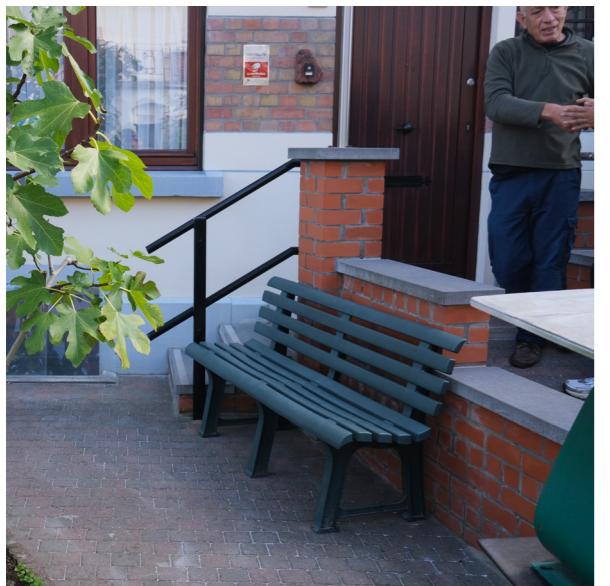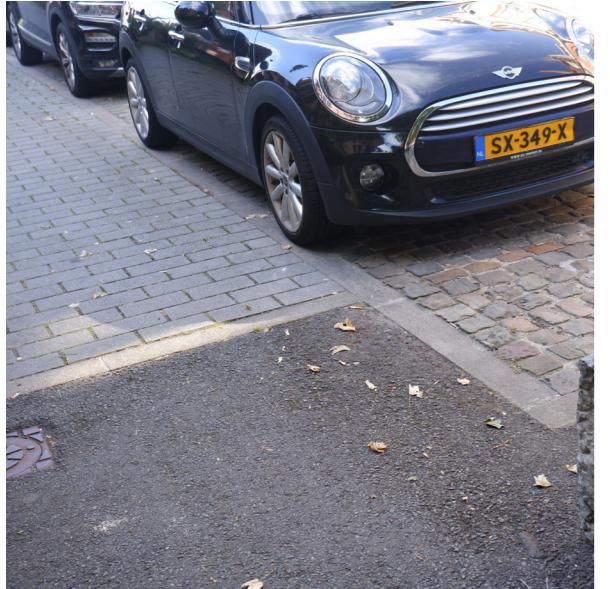
Fig. 3.16 - 3.20
Front Garden
Artefact

Fig. 3.21 - 3.24
Back Garden
Artefact
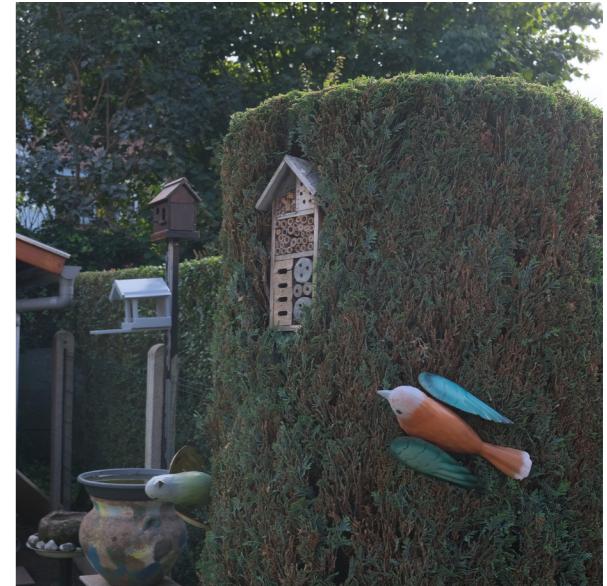
# Garden Reconstruction
_From drawings to models

A few plants, too small to hide anything from the public

Closed curtain regardless of the presence of front garden

Clear border

Regularly cut lawn

Neighbor's hedge blocking sunlight of the vegetables

Tomatos/aubergines/courgettes

Insect hotel/Birdhouse

Material differentiation indicating parking

Mailbox with stickers of political message

Organic trash, likely trims from the backgarden

Fig. 3.25
Italian couple's house section

Fig. 3.26, 3.27
Front Garden

Fig. 3.28, 3.29
Back Garden
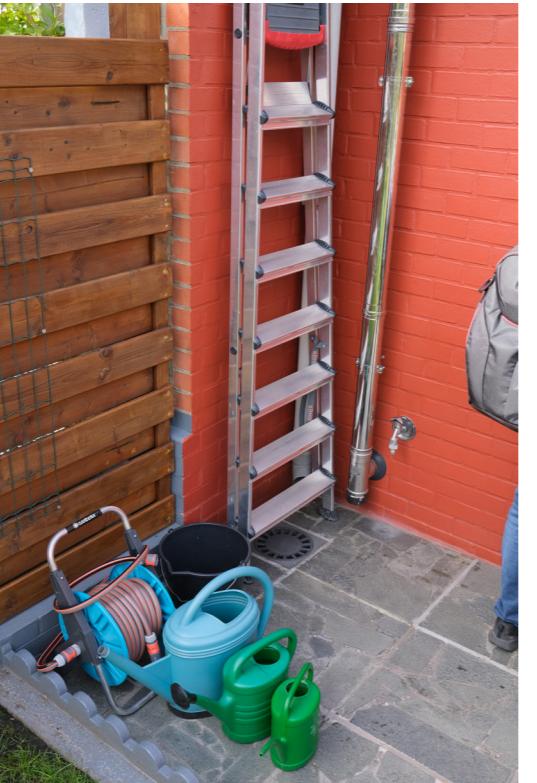
Fig. 3.28, 3.29
Tools

Fig. 3.30, 3.31
Vegetable Garden

Fig. 3.32, 3.33
Shed

Fig. 3.34, 3.35
House & Garden

50:1 Scale figure
_Conundrums of model making

Model making has an uncanny way of imitating reality. An action we make to construct the model parallels to one which happens in real life. The issue of gravity forces us to question how different element are joined together. It places us in the shoe of a builder asking himself how does this wall stand or how is this light bulb connected to the ceiling. However, as architects we usually model architecture - the built. What happens when we model nature?

As such begins the idea of 50:1 scale model making. What if the scale the figure was the real person and I am the plastic printed object. How would the scale figure perceive the situation?
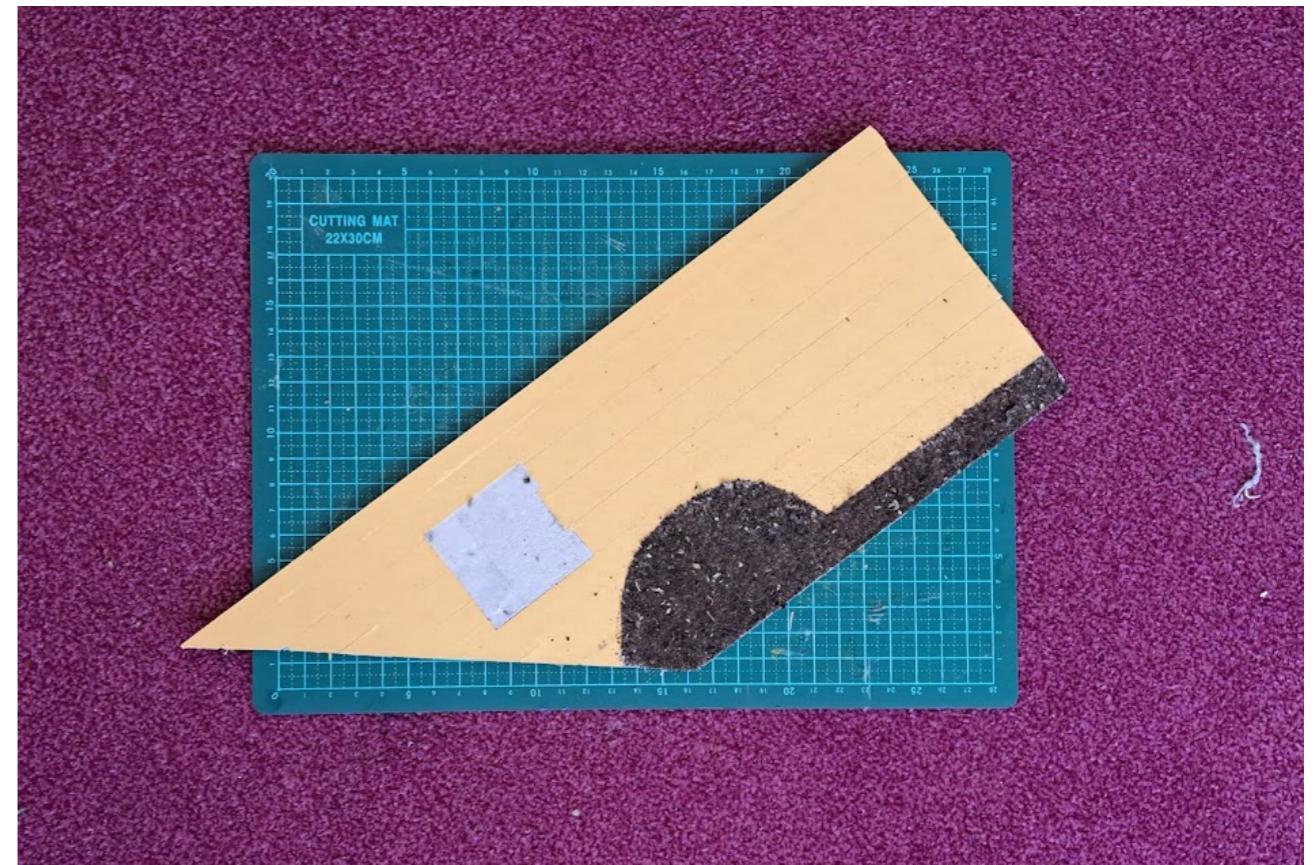
Sweep

Fig. 3.36

clean (an area) by brushing away dirt or litter.
''Babe, I've swept the floor. May I watch TV now?''
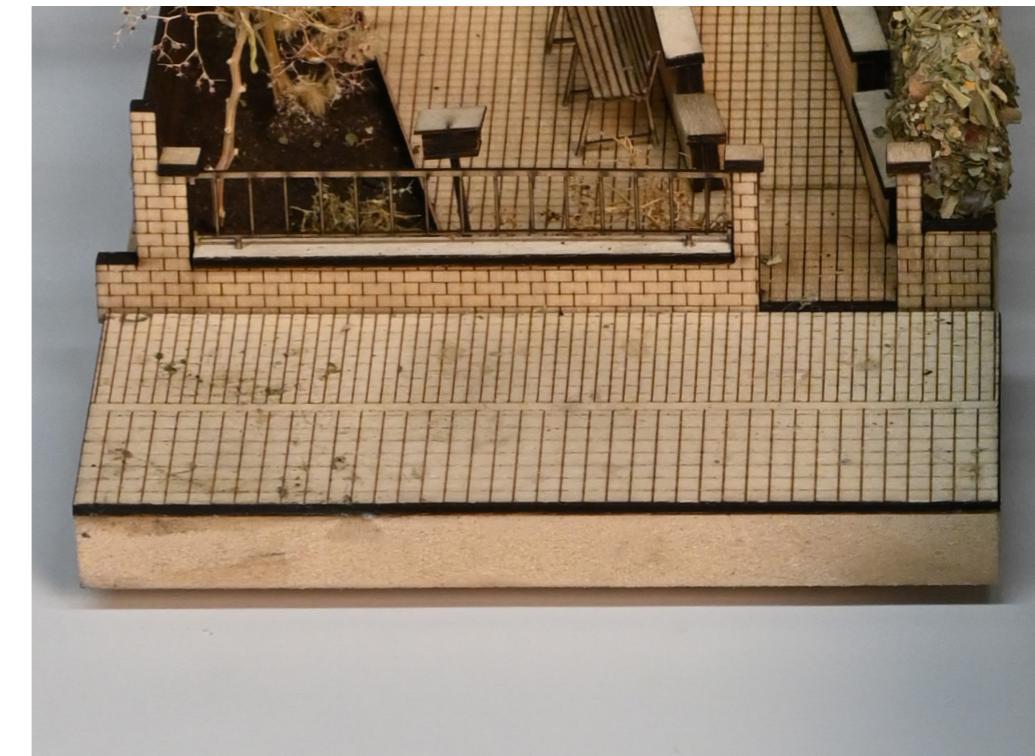
Agency

Fig. 3.37

placing soil (crushed tea) on the physical model, a
mess was made. The soil had a mind of its own

Soil Formation

Fig. 3.38

Soil forms continuously yet slowly from the gradual
breakdown of rocks throughout weathering

Who am I?

Fig. 3.39

I am the one who weathers the rock

Pruning

Fig. 3.40

I trim and cut away the dead or overgrown branches
or stems

Am I God?

Fig. 3.41

A superhuman being, having power over nature or
human fortunes; a deity

Planted & died on the same day

Fig. 3.42

RIP TImmy. Perhaps I am not god since even I cant prevent this plant from dying

Human

Fig. 3.42

Places the bench, trims the hedge.
But I am more than that in the context of this model
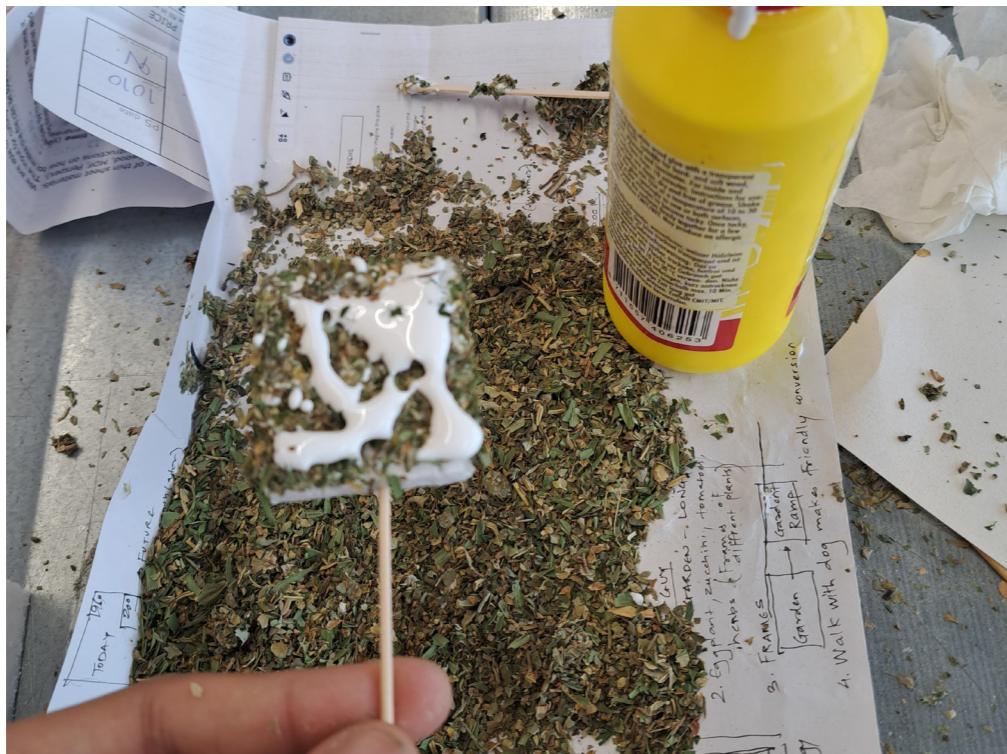
Alchemy

Fig. 3.44

Model making, alchemy or lollipop

Keeping the lawn clean

Fig. 3.45

As the model is moved, as we interact with it, as forces greater than us act on it, the grass changes. Its texture is as much a creation of mine and all the other forces which acts upon.

Maker

Fig. 3.46

Model making, alchemy or lollipop

Universe

Fig. 3.47

The act of modelmaking turns me into a greater than life force, a 1:50 scale figure and a minuscule soil grain at the same time. As I fluctuate between all of the theese, it becomes questionable which one is acting or if all of them are acting at the same time. In the end, I am simply embodying all those realities to act as one.

Other houses visited
_Pictorial Journey

We initiated conversation with this sweet old lady in her front garden, after noticing her wandering aimlessly around. She just chatted with other neighbours. The slightly raised front garden made her comfortable enough to be in her own 'territory', and we comfortably rested our arms on the stone fence - perfect height as we stood quite close to each other. Her home is messier than the previous one we visited. We journeyed into the house to reach the back garden; objects constantly peaking our curiosity.

The winter garden has a translucent roof, which is blocked by various layers to keep out the heat. We were astonished by the array of little plants. There is also a kitchen in the winter garden, despite having a pantry in the house already. Everything tells us, including her age and mobility, that she mostly stays in her self-made 'garden', in and around the winter garden.

*Note: Text is an edited excerpt from the 'Living w. Nature, Garden City - Compendium'

Fig. 3.48

Fig. 3.49-3.56
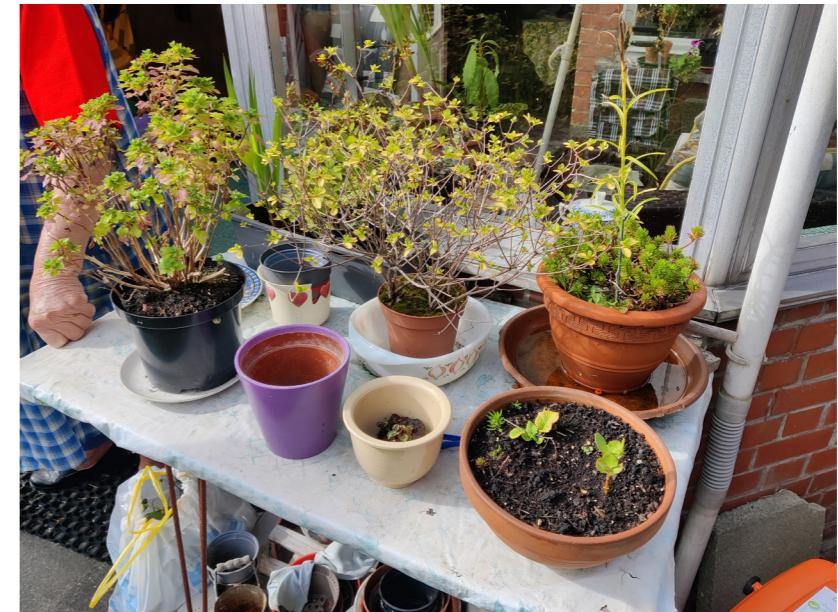
Merely a doorstep seperated the sidewalk from the front door. This border is heavy yet small and so we rang the door bell. A young man opened the door; ecclesiastically answering our questions about life in the neighbourhood and how he relates to nature - which in was mostly through his dog. The reason for upkeeping his garden, his dog. At some points he was growing vegetables in the latter, but with the end of Covid and his mother's leaving the household, the garden came to an end.

The garden is a big, empty space of grass with one tree, and a shed for storage. Judging from the toys laying around the garden, the garden was mostly used by the dog. It is slightly messy, with stuff sitting in an unorganised manner under a tree,. The tree shelters the unused. There used to be fruit plants in the garden, but the dog ate them. When we asked him about future developments, he said none. To him the garden is perfect

*Note: Text is an edited excerpt from the 'Living w. Nature, Garden City - Compendium'

Fig. 3.57

Fig. 3.58-64
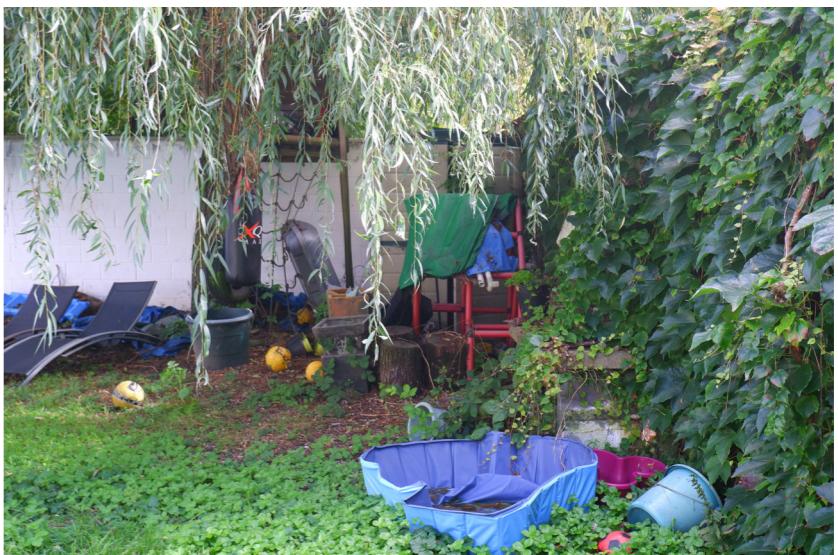
Unlike the others, this house has a long front garden with the house set further back than the others. It is almost invisible behind the foliage of the tall trees. We lingered around the front gate, unable to decide if we should enter this seemingly private property. The owners saw our hesitation through their window and approached us. The entry gates were a set of two narrow gates, each leading to a distinct adjacent house. One with dense shrubbery which belongs to the old couple and the other to their son - with an underground parking. Entering the premises through the narrow gates, we stood under the shade of the tall trees, on a concrete pedestal next to seats and a pizza oven. An unfenced border separated the homes of the couple to their sons'. It was clear that the modifications such as the underground parking and the outdoor pizza oven on the sons' side were new. The couple enjoyed a wilder and more chaotic garden scattered with tools, outdoor ornaments and decorations.

*Note: Text is an edited excerpt from the 'Living w. Nature, Garden City - Compendium'

Fig. 3.65
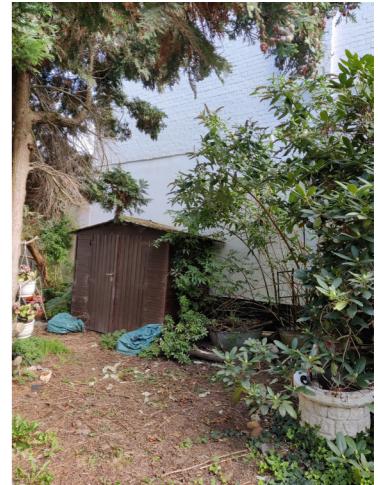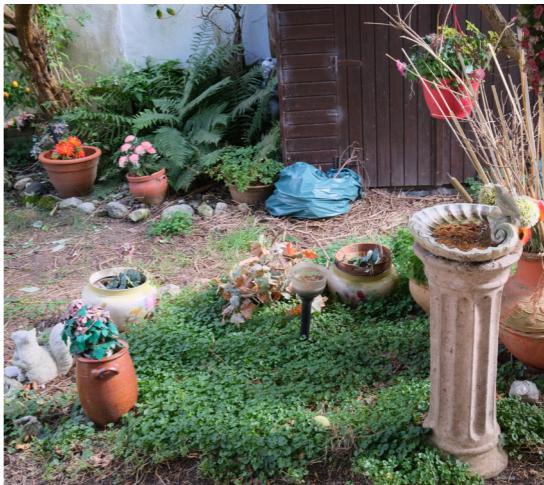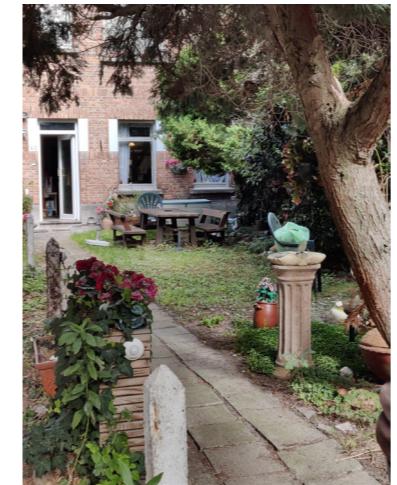
Fig. 3.66-73

Traces of actors
_A compilation of textures
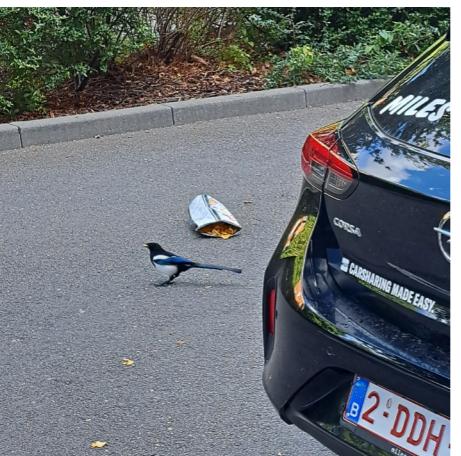
Fig. 3.74-79
Animals in Brussels leaving their own traces in the city
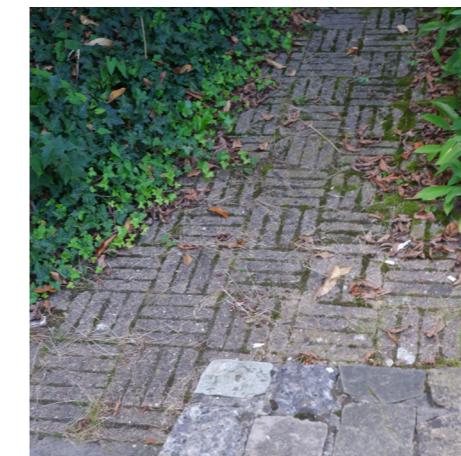
Fig. 3.79-84
Plants and greenery appearing in unexpected places. Sometimes even obscuring the border that was suppose to keep them at bay
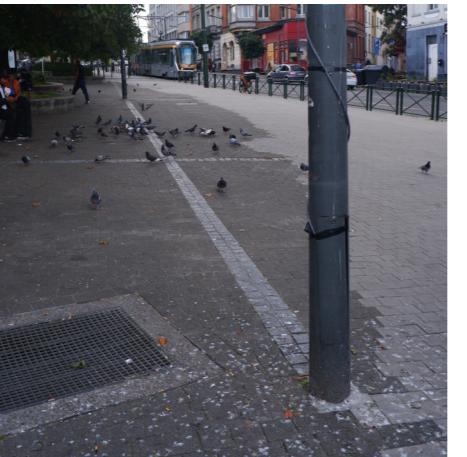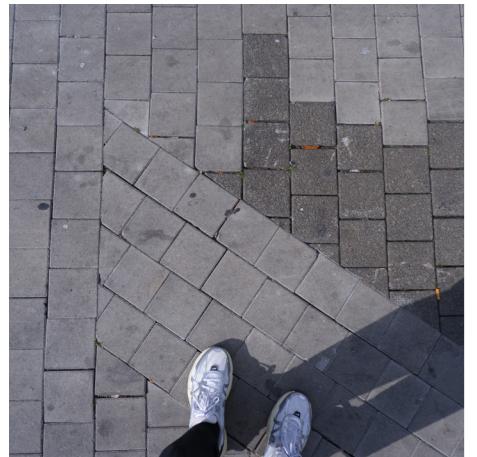
Fig. 3.74-78

Overlapping tiles of different colour and size. Are those layers of time or just a layman having too much fun
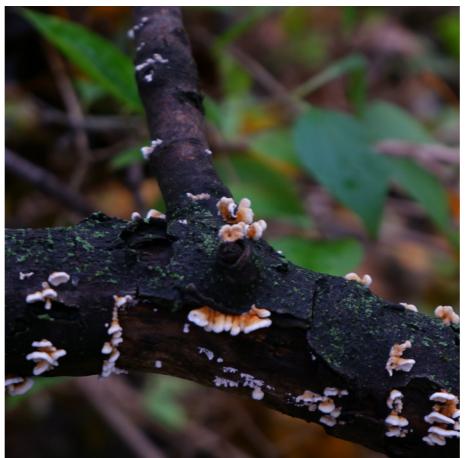
Fig. 3.79-83

Textures on La Friche Josaphat

How big is a Friche
_Lost in scale

Fig. 3.84
Friche in the pavers

In between walls
Where no one looks
Left to its own device
A tiny bit of magic happens

Greenery appears
Water falls
Sunlight reaches

Life happens

Yet all around
Human roams

In this ecosystem
All those forces roam
Forming a new balance
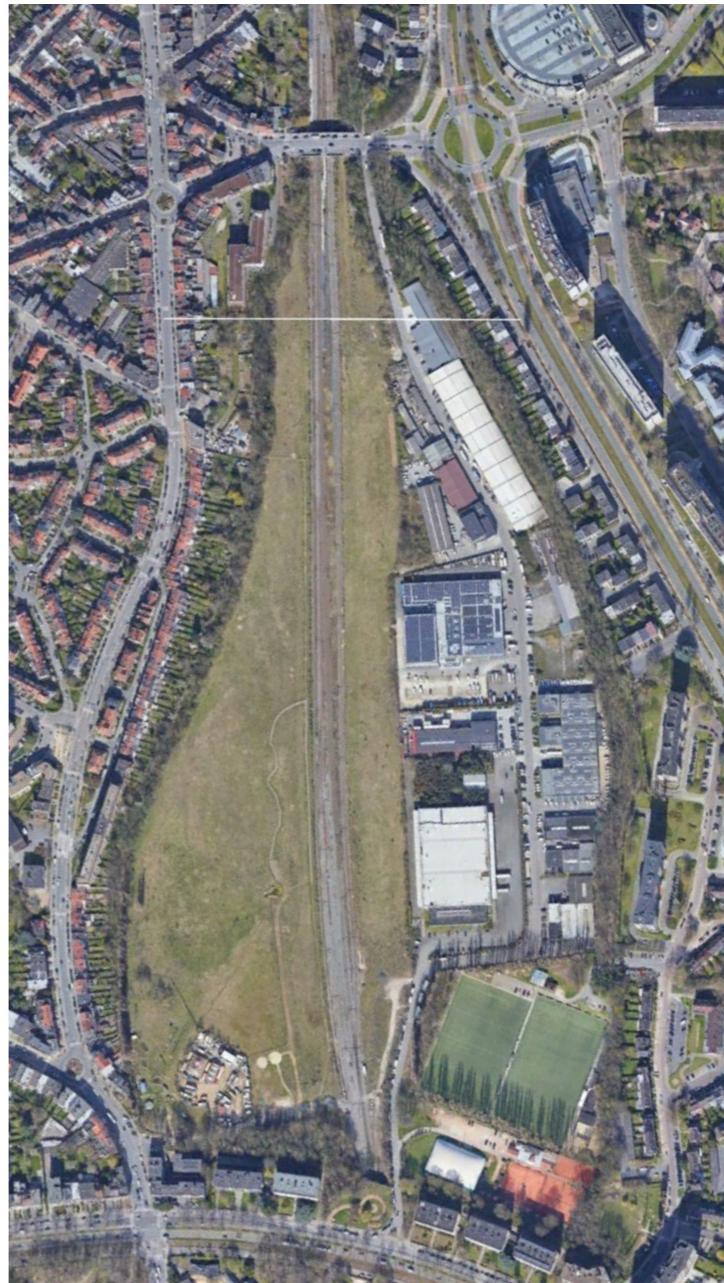
Fig. 3.85
Friche in the city

Exhibition
_Work in context

Fig. 3.86, 3.87
Exhibition of research at
TU Delft

Sectioning human relations
_Unfolding the typology of Brussels
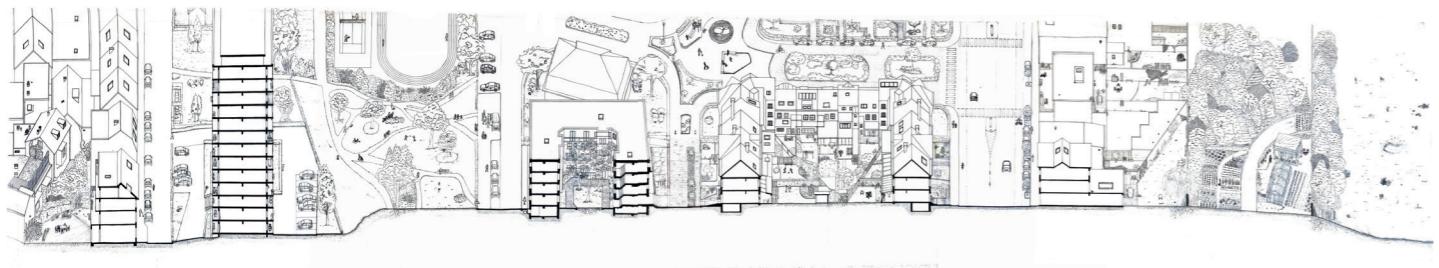
Fig. 3.88, 3.89
Fictional section of existing typologies
of Brussels

[Blank]   [Blank]

AN ACT OF
THE MAKER

Ground Zero (part 1)

While the previous research, affect architecture relied on memories and an intimate understanding of the site. This one focusses on a hands-on approach where I carry out changes which happens to the site. In this model, I act as time carrying out the changes which happened to the site. This method develops an understanding of the site's growth and the forces acting upon it. The act of model making helps to de-abstract nature into understandable forces.

Throughout the act of model-making, where I was acting as time, time itself was acting on the model. My actions had unintended consequences on the model. The model has unintended consequences on my mind. The fragility of the clay to make the houses became apparent as the herbs used for grass started to get stuck on it. Similar to real life the building is never fully protected from changes executed upon it by external forces. Similar to my mind ideas emerge through the dilapidation of old ones.

*All the photographs in this chapters' belongs to the author

To begin my investigation, I modelled the ground of the site. The aim is to build up the model to the 1930, the point in time where I have records of the site.

For now I model the site speculatively with the understanding of how the latter came to be as it is in the 1930s'. From then, I use existing satellite image to make the model evolve to current day.

Grass grows on the site. A sprinkle of a herb mixture, herbs of different colour and of different size gives the grass its own texture. The texture is not uniform, its scattered and somewhat random. Just like real grass

Eventually a trainline is built on the site. This trainline would allow for material to be quickly carried to Terdelt.
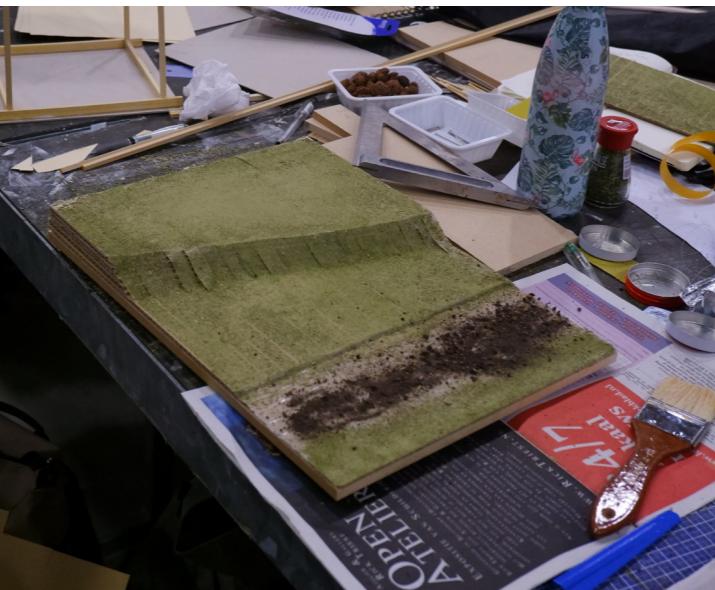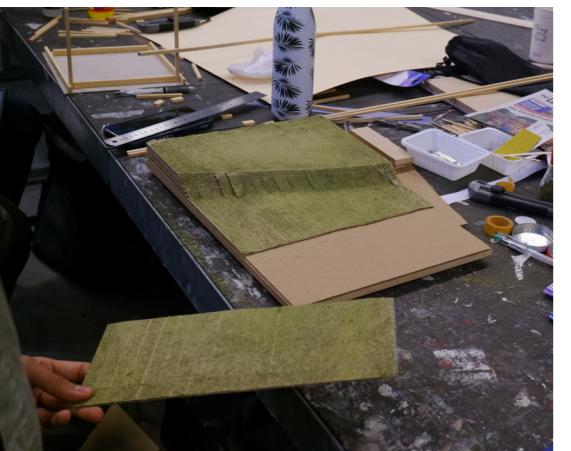
A plan for Terdelt was made, the trainline made it easy to built a residential area. Imagination turns to reality. Layers of the ground is removed to add houses and roads
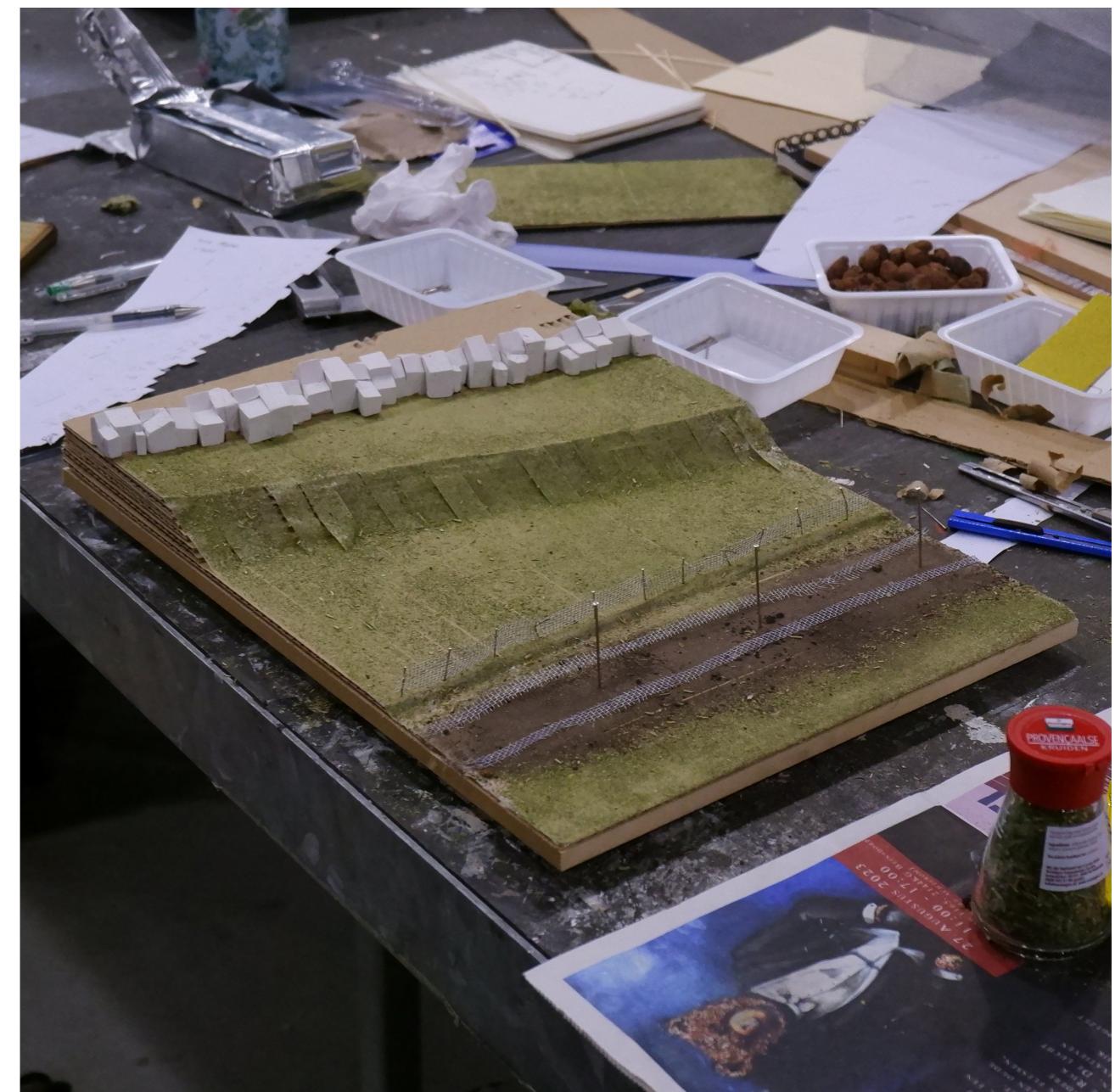
And houses come with their walls fences and backgarden. The making of the backgarden, the slicing of cardboard and insertion of paper which represents walls affects the grass. The movement and vibrations causes the herbs to unstick to the tape. The making of the walls in itself resulted in the taming of the greenery for the backgarden. Construction affects the land around it

At some point trees must have grown on the cliff. Although, that probably happened before the houses were built... oops

Paths start to form on La Friche, and landscape grows

The train becomes more important and the trainline grows. More earth is seen on the landscape. With the movement of goods. Some toxins have infiltrated landscape. Those are still present today.

The landscape was polluted, to remedy that, the grass and earth was removed and replaced. The constrast between the new and the old becomes extremely apparent.

With time the grass grows again. A path is formed on the
site due to people's usage of it

and so, the model is made. Time converges, and through sedimentation the model is formed. Not as a static thing but rather as the sedimentation gestures which brings the site to what it is today.

Eventually, the site model became a 1:500 model for my intervention. With time the grass changed colour and the plasticine for the house had dust stuck on it. The function of model changed. It evolved from a study model into a site model.

Even the model cannot escape entropy
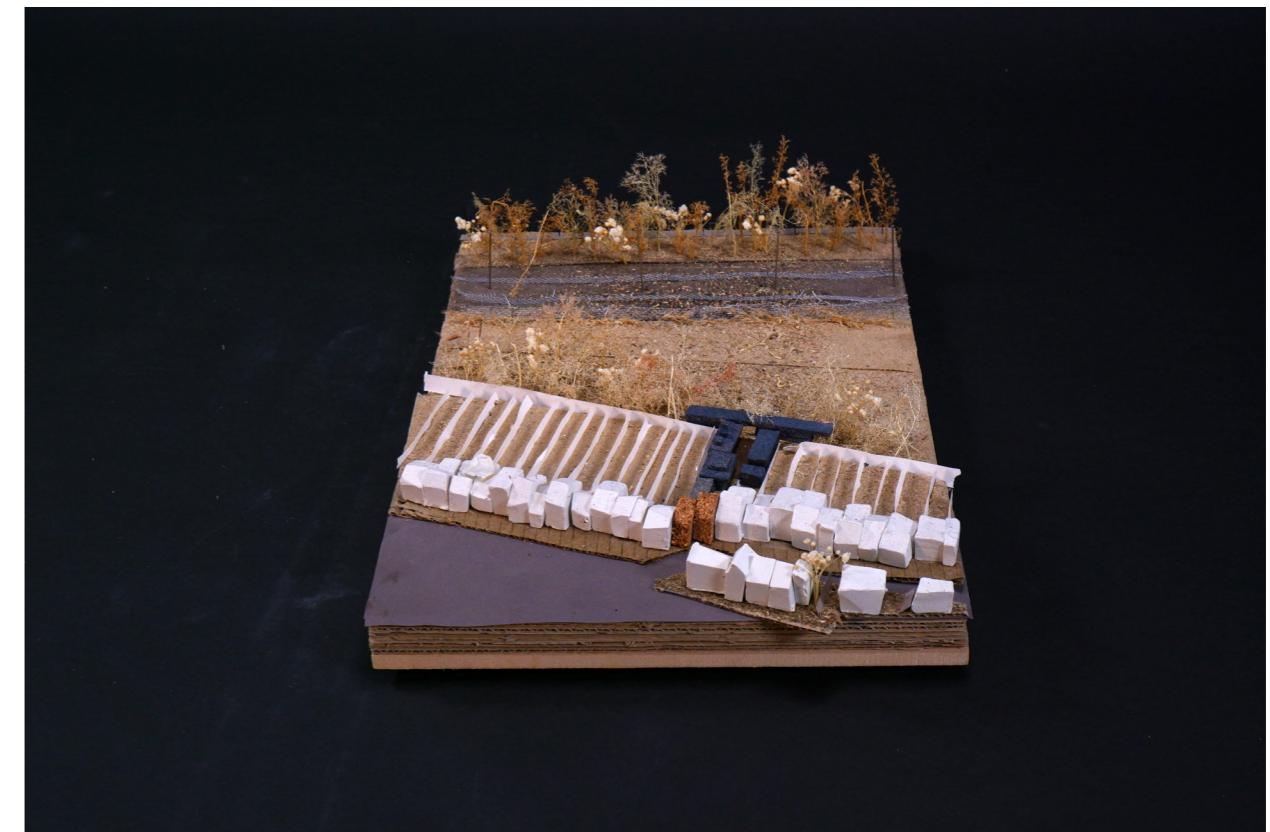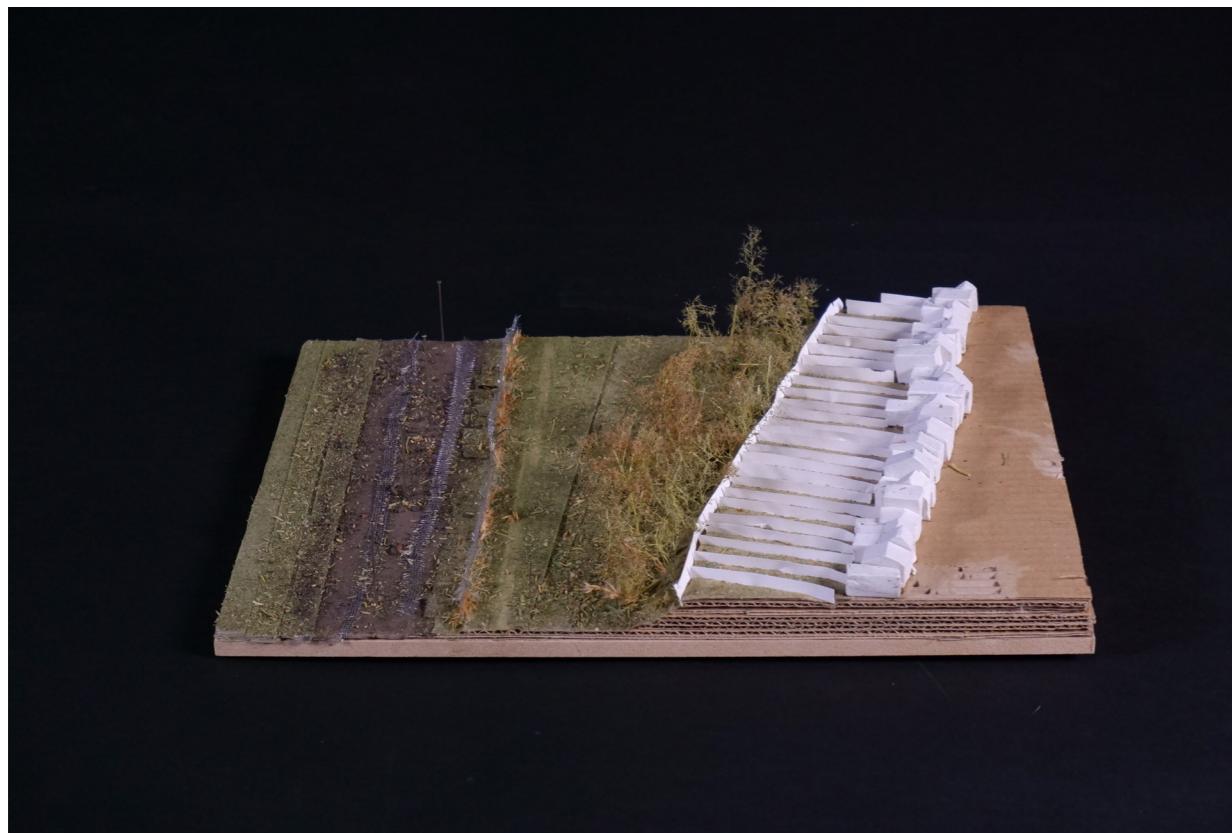
In order to demonstrate the relationship between the intervention, Garden City of Terdelt and La Friche Josaphat, I did an extension of the site model. It is interesting to look at the new model side my with the old one. Made about 9 months apart, the colours and texture of the extension looks much more alive in comparison to that of La Friche.

'The earth's surface and the figments of the mind have a way of disintegrating into discrete regions of art. Various agents, both fictional and real, somehow trade places with each other—one cannot avoid muddy thinking when it comes to earth projects, or what I will call "abstract geology."One's mind and the earth are in a constant state of erosion, mental rivers wear away abstract banks, brain waves undermine cliffs of thought, ideas decompose into stones of unknowing, and conceptual crystallizations break apart into deposits of gritty reason. '

Robert Smithson - A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects - 1968
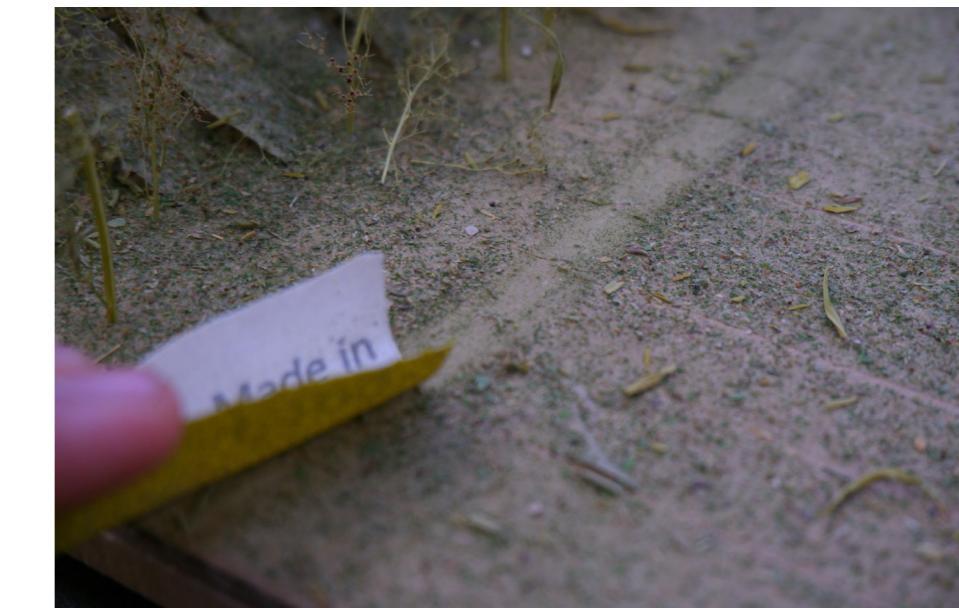
Ground Zero (part 2)

Throughout the making, what have I made - if not my undoing? Am I looking at a model, time or another reality? As I glance back, the model decays. As I immerse myself, my footing is lost.

What is this landscape of mine - a result of my actions? At points, I embodied each element—a human walking, a path, the train - innocently intoxicating the land, the architect. And elements I know not of.

As asked before, refer to chapter 3 - 50:1 scale model human; who am I in the context of this model? Or rather simply, who am I? The embodiment of various forces and realities? My brain rots. The model's decay mirrors a reality of forgotten maintenance. This parallel reality within the model holds beauty. Tension becomes pleasing - a landscape of ideas, unconstrained from its maker.

Independent yet interconnected.

The landscape which emerged from me - now its own. Buildings I designed, now outside my control. The contractor messed up the stairs.

Speaking of those buildings, they will eventually require a fresh layer of paint. Through the choice of materials, ones which are malleable to time, the artist/maker decays. Just like in buildings. The maker is embedded in the model. This distorted reality exists outside of the maintenance which happens in reality - obviously - as I never watered the lawn or gave the buildings a fresh layer of paint. Yet in its rot, there is beauty, in its dilapidation - a flower. Decay subtracts to add - forms emerge beyond design. Rubble of new shape materialise while neglect flourishes.

My brain rots. Oh, who am I? Personal entropy, the more I think, the more I decay. I embedded myself in you, my landscape. My actions mingle with your decay until we are indistinguishable and yet, you leave me to be free. Regardless, you are within me. And I hope in your vastness, I'll exist.

What will a rotting brain produce? If a landscape in decay can be productive, then surely so can a rotting brain.

No structure, no manifesto, no dogma - paradoxically that shall be my dogma.

In the friche of my mind, a back garden will emerge. New landscape - independent, dilapidated with sweet beauty in its decay. And yet I painfully know - whether through thought, decay or disinterest - you too, however dearly I hold, will leave me one day. Similar to holding sand, a tight grip only fastens its loss. But in every wall, every train, every house and every single particle of grass, we remain - or so I hope. Loss completes us; broken fragments layered in sediment, quietly accepting whatever life will sow.

DILAPIDATED BRAIN \
IN THE FRICHE

Ch.5_Entropy within

Self Referential Entropy

In the beginning, entropy was defined as the inevitable movement of systems toward chaos. Yet now, entropy itself is in chaos. What shall rise in its decay?

The decay of entropy does not erase its definition; it enriches it. Like an organism, it sediments the ground. The flower of entropy does not bloom forever, but gives rise to a field of flowers—each at the world's mercy, only to die in its tender embrace. This sedimented ground, rich in history and temporal beauty, embodies a dynamic evolution, timelessly in flux. Entropy transforms, rising anew from its ashes, only to be caught, once again, by itself.
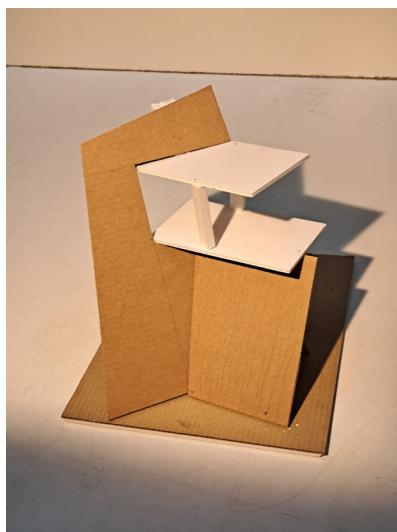
Fig. 5.1
First model of intervention

Brain Rot, Flower Flourish

There is an entropic quality to modern and minimalist structures. The clean lines and smooth surfaces when subject to deterioration makes entropy more visible. Empty clean white surfaces becomes ground for a fresco to exist. It gives way to textures, grit, decay, time and maintenance

Coincidently or not so, those were the themes explored previously. Logically, one would assume that this should be starting of the design. The design being a community program happening in the back-garden of some house bordering La Friche Josaphat and Terdelt.

But with the idea of brain rot as a method, a field is made, one where I have to accept the decomposition of certain ideas to let unrelated thoughts seed themselves. The soil is rich and in its sedimentation, design can thrive.

Ground Figure

A ground figure is more than just a blacked out space. It is the figure that one see from the ground. It creates a programmatic arrangement but also a spatial one. It sets up how transitions from one space to another. In a building situated in between vastness of the friche and enclosed garden city how can one mediate the perspective.

A building is also a geometry which is exposed to sun and rain. The ground figure creates shadows which in turn affects the soil. All of those affect the design. It determines which plants can be grown where. It also demonstrate the direction which water will move. Understanding those movements and conditions as such are key. For in the absence of texture, ground figures determines its corrosion. For if you look around, you notice that facade which faces the wind patinas faster.
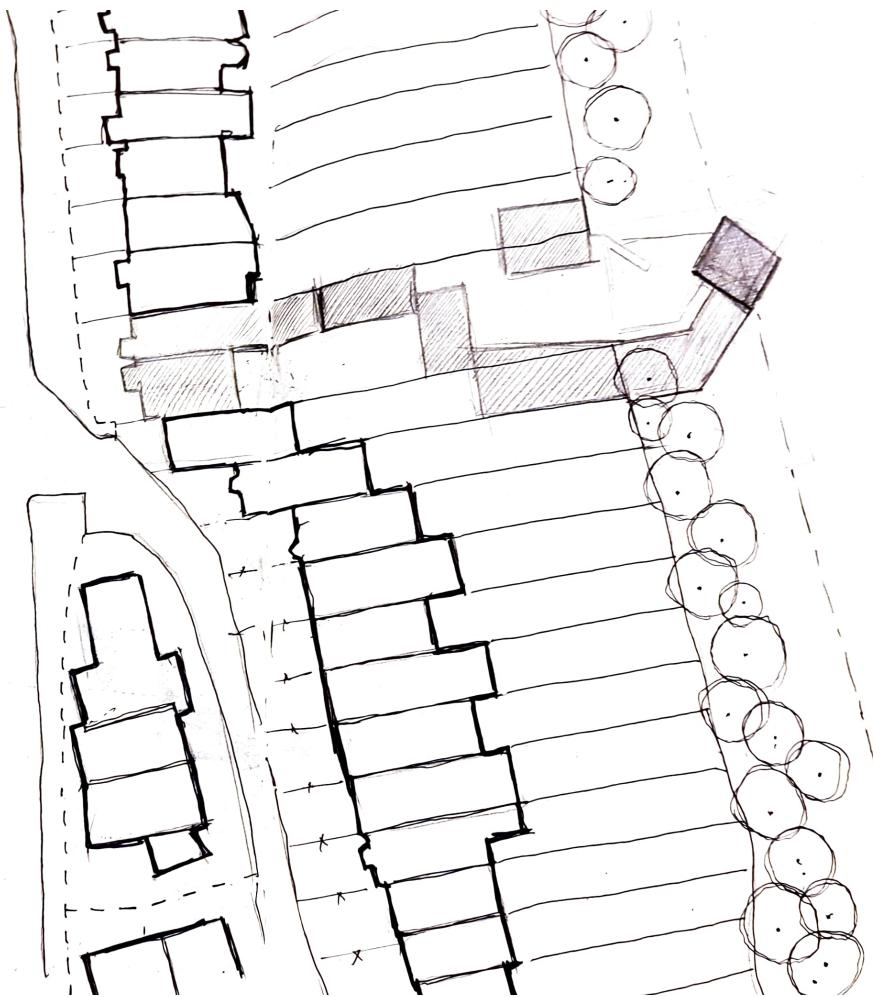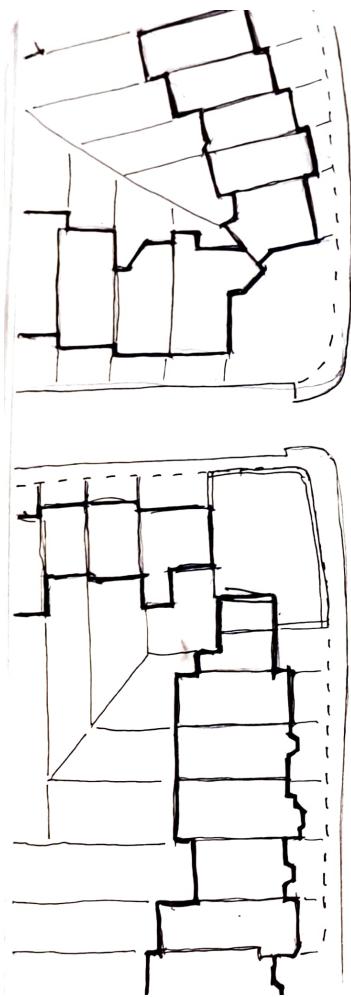
Fig. 5.2
Sketch of ground figure
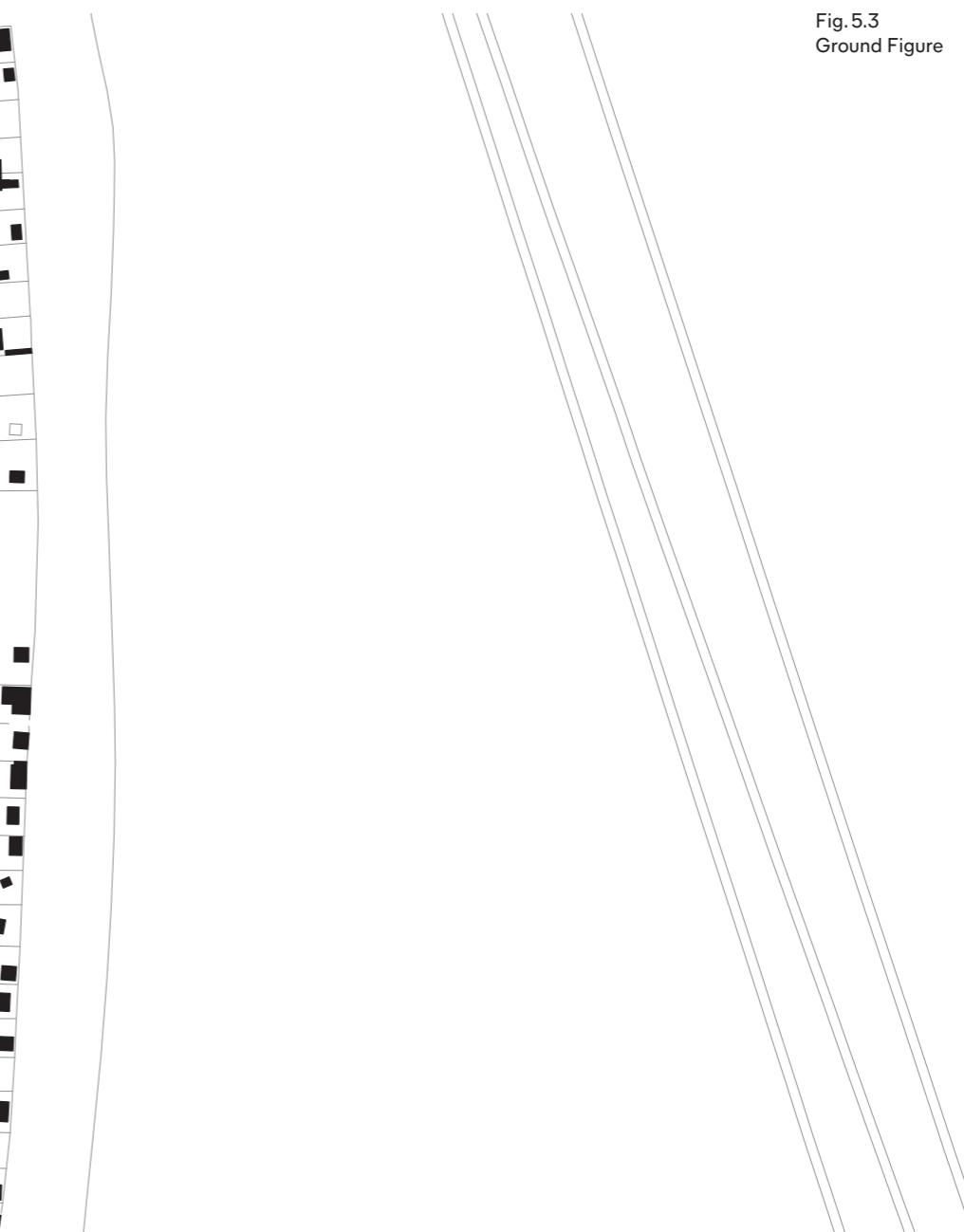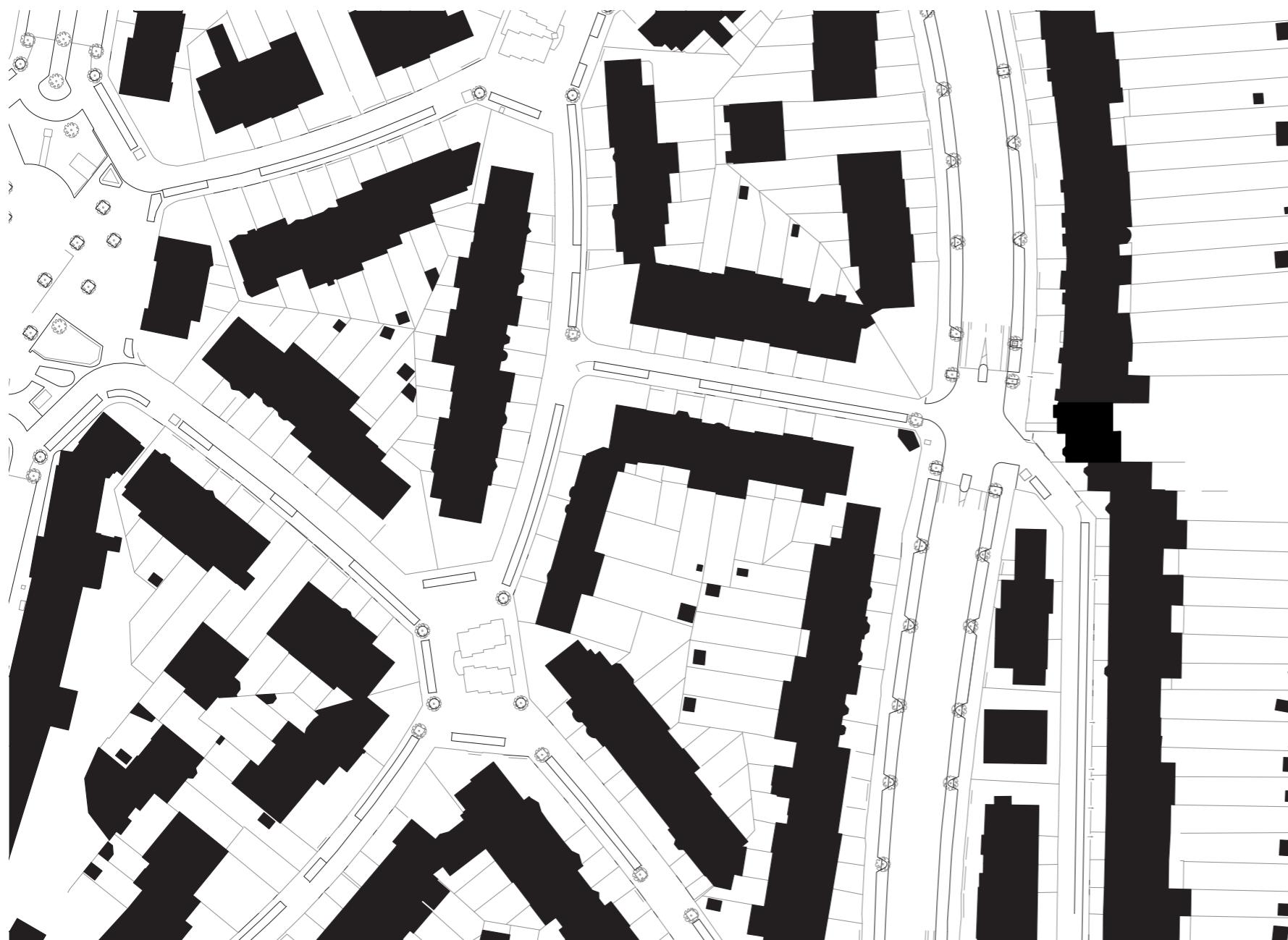
Fig. 5.3
Ground Figure

Due to its curvilinear roads and arrangements, being in Terdelt, one always feels safe in its enclosure of building. As a garden city there was always a sense of unfolding perspective as one moves through it. This brings forth new discovery a every turn. It was very much influence by the arrangement of medieval British towns

Fig. 5.4-5.6
Perspective of Terdelt

So I decided to look at perspectives that I enjoy and understand their ground figure. Perhaps they could help inspire how I can reveal my building in Terdelt and how the later can manage the reveal of the Friche.

The view of the bus from outside presents us with a tall wide window which is framed by the opening of the door. The wall on the plane which contains the door itself has windows, but still the complete wide frame view of the landscape can only be properly once one enters the bus.
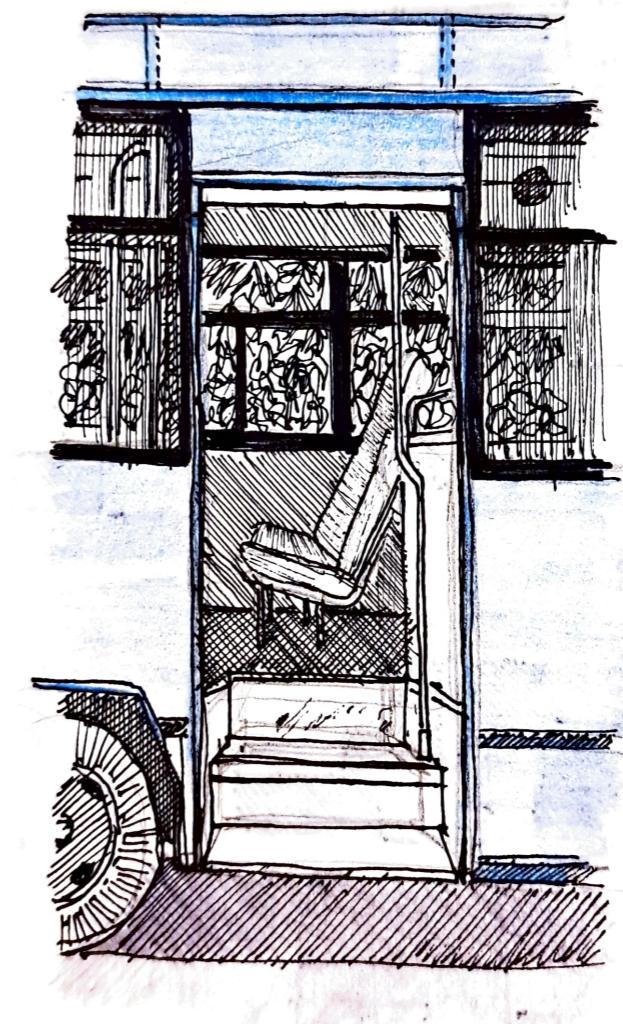
Fig. 5.7 - 5.8
Perspective & Plan of a
Mauritian bus
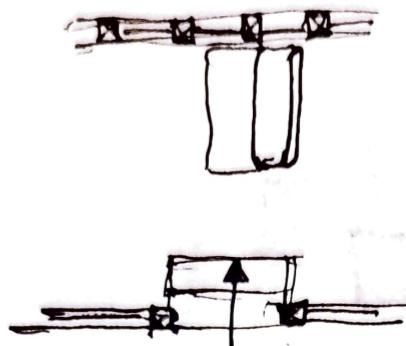
The canopy frames the view of La Friche. It is a stretched vertical plane which runs behind the building. As one moves further in the back-garden, the view of La Friche slowly reveals itself.

Fig. 5.9
Perspective from central part of the design
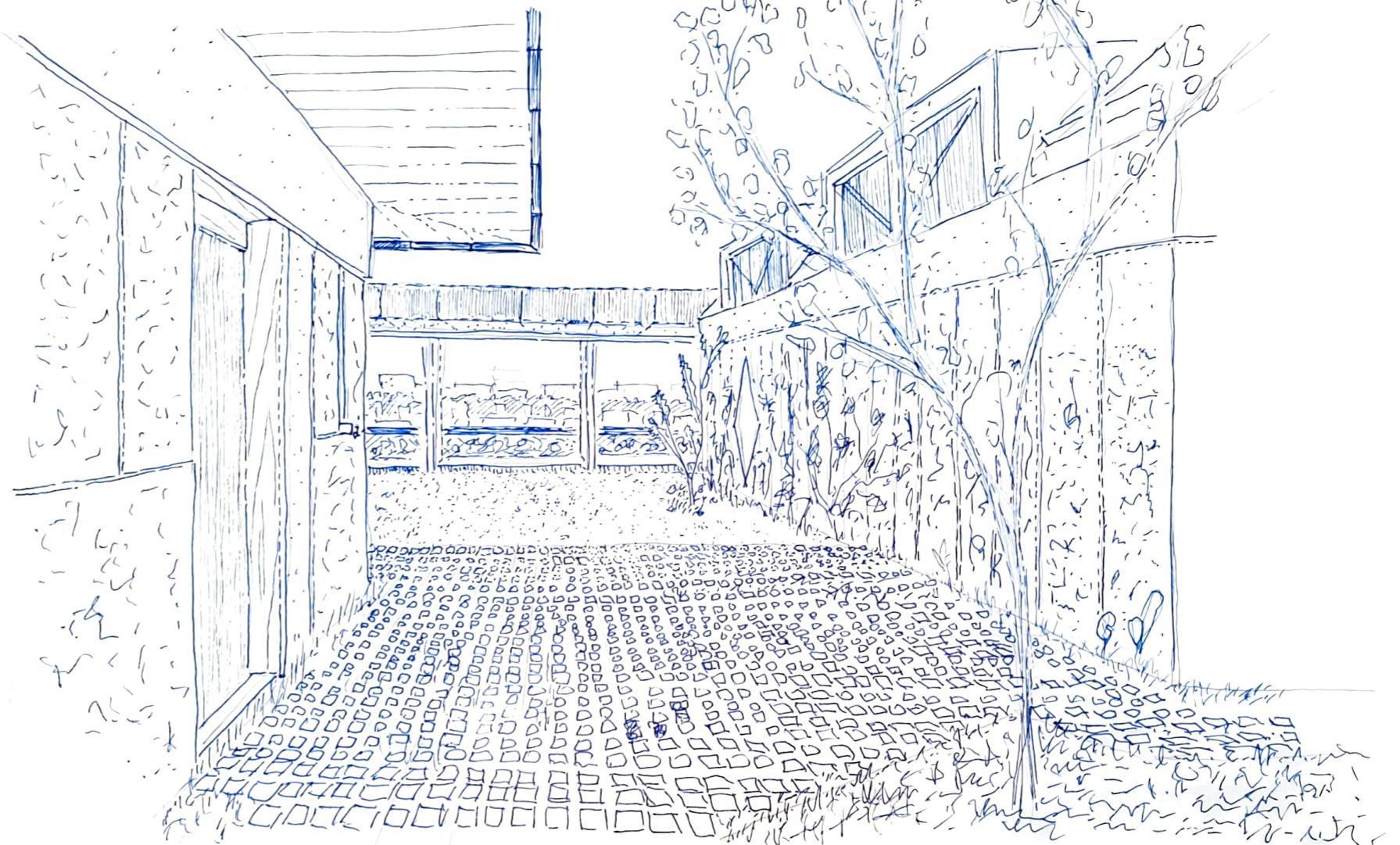
The building which is in the front has a pitch roof which appears when looking at it. This gives the latter a certain visual weight within the arrangement of the buildings. The building behind it runs parallel to it appearing as an extension to the main volume

Fig. 5.10
Perspective of an abandoned
industrial estate in Mauritius
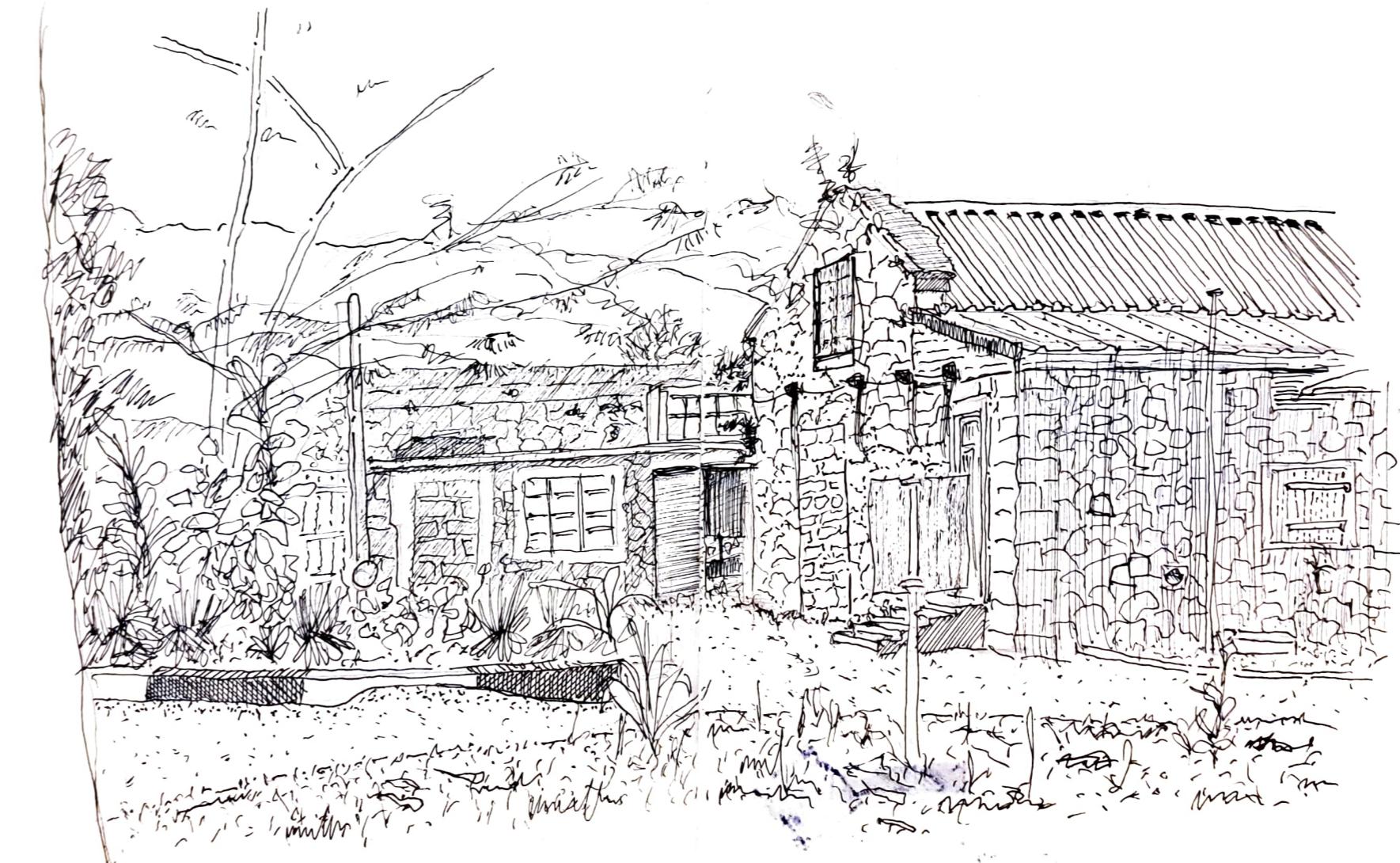
The central part of the building which pushes in front has a big skylight which relates to the shapes of chimney and dormer window present on the roof of existing buildings in Terdelt. The big skylight gives the building a sense of weight in the composition acting as a visual interest within the composition.

Fig. 5.11
Central building of Terdelt's
back-garden
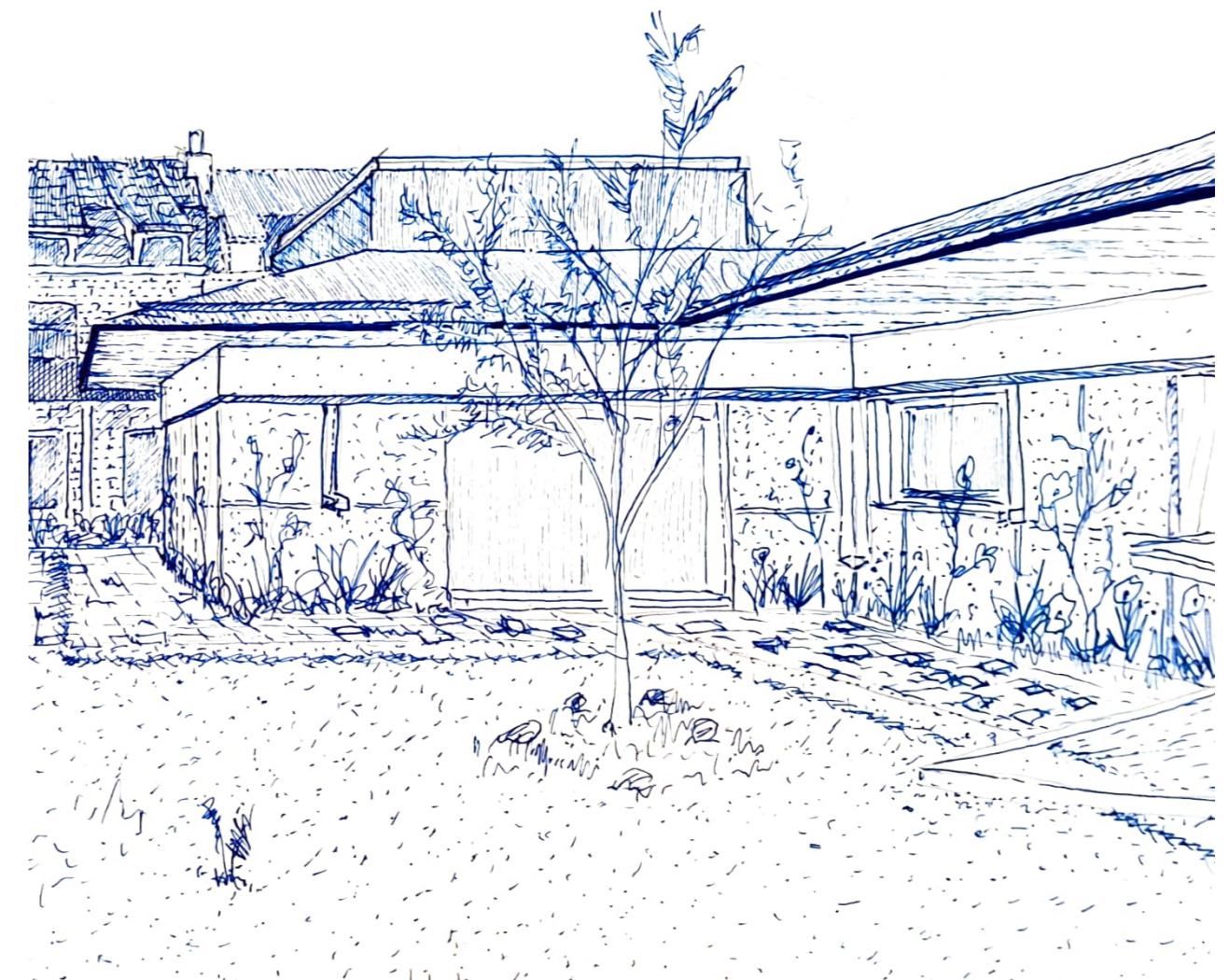
In both of those images, we see planes being arranged in a scattered way behind each other. This arrangement only presents a glimpse of the view ahead but also creates anticipation. One has to walk through the site for the view to unfold.

Fig. 5.12 & 5.13 (Middle)
Plan & Perspective of a building in
renovation in Terdelt.

Figure 5.14 & 5.15 (Right)
Plan & Perspective of Louisiana
Art Gallery
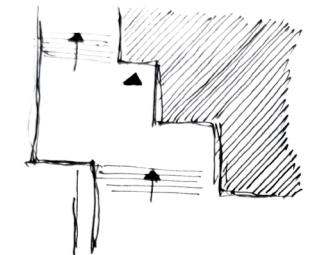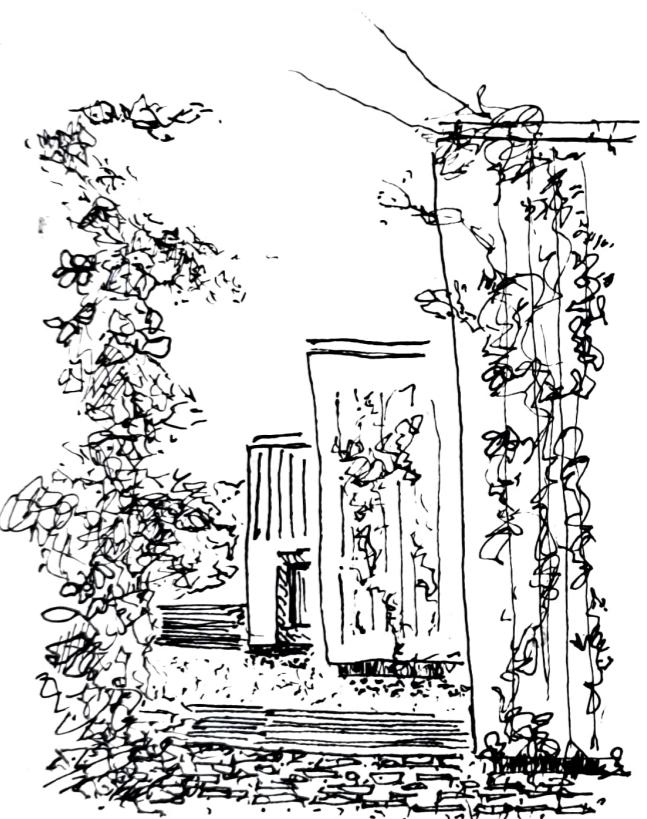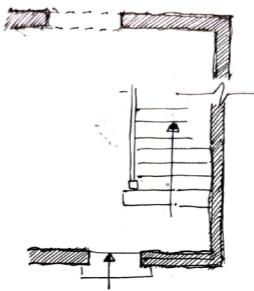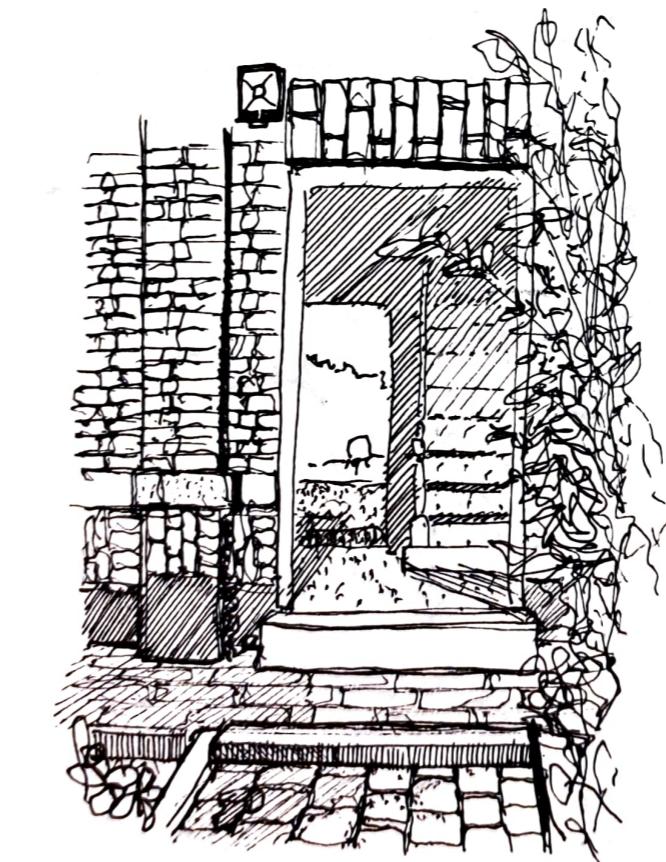
Planes are arranged at angle from each other to block what is ahead. The latter can only revealed once one crosses the next threshold. Blocking helps to create intrigue in the design

Fig. 5.16
Perspective from Classroom
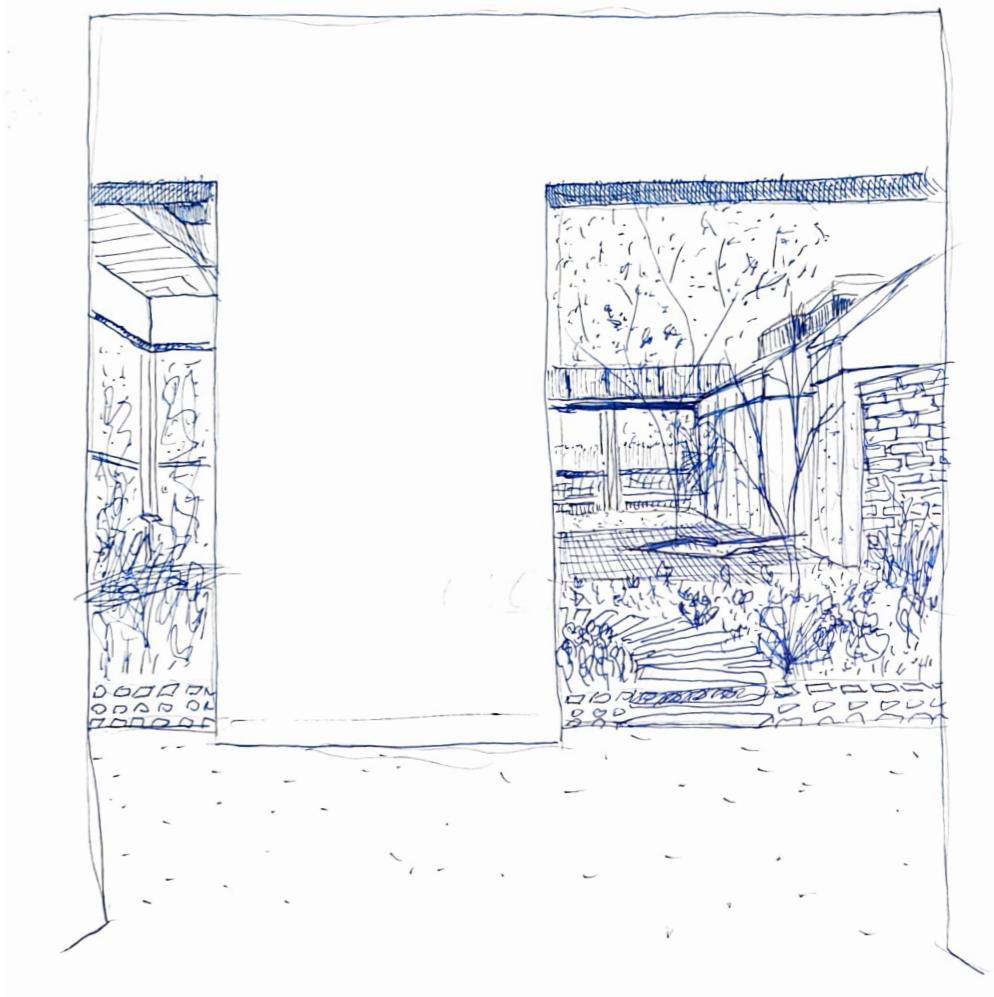
With time the ground figure evolves. Old ides decay priming the ground for newer ones. Sometimes they come back to modify new ideas. Here is a series of iteration of ground figure drawings of the design
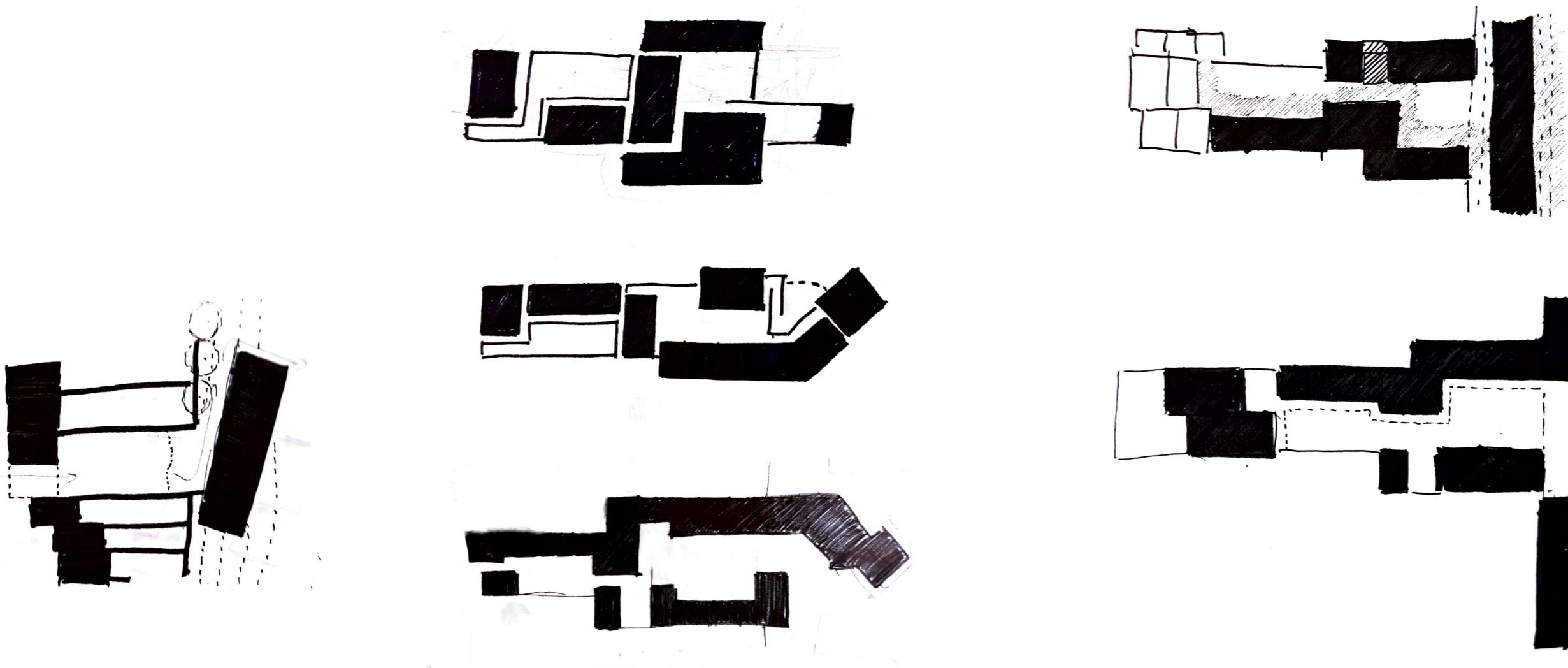

Fig. 5.17 - 5.22
Ground Figure drawings of the design

Blank Space

The emptiness is revealing and so is the empty model. In the absence of texture and tactility, they grow louder. The model's clean lines and surfaces deteriorate—not only physically but in my mind as well. The unsatisfied mind disintegrates them: plants thrive on the brown cardboard, and white foam collapse, overtaken by soil. I see it, yet it isn't here; in a moment it'll rot, so does my brain.

Within the rotting brain, nothing can exist for too long—only glimpses. Blank space nurses ideas within an accelerated time scale. The model provokes without answering, holding both past and new thoughts. The model's constant shift gives it a life of its own. Pure ideas way to degradation, while failures erode, a sedimentation the ground for complexities in the field.

Fig. 5.23
3d Sketch of the design
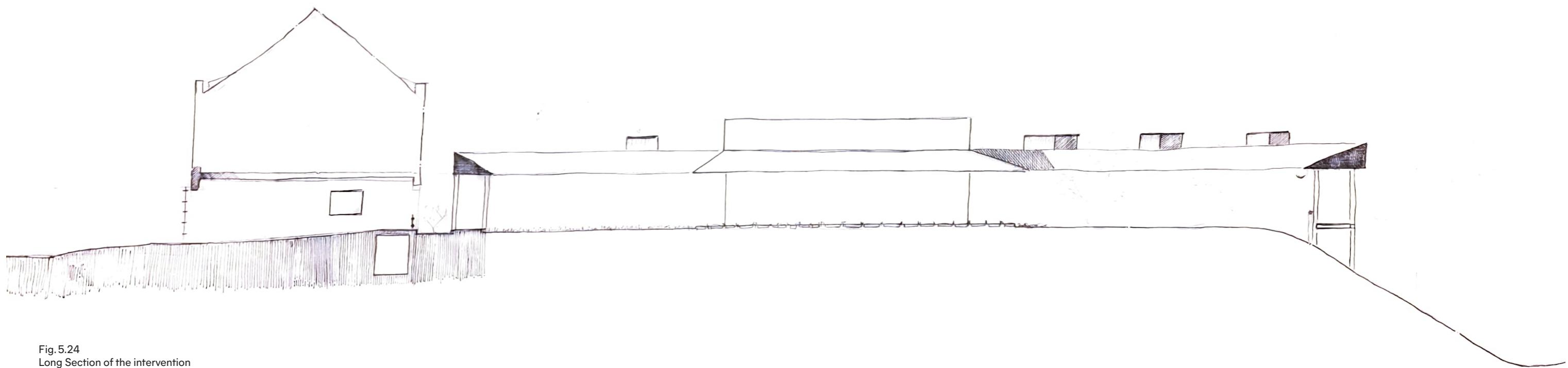
Fig. 5.24
Long Section of the intervention

The fall of the tower

In the tension of La Friche and Terdelt a serie of complexities exists. As such, only good ideas can exists. What tries to force its way on the ground is rejected and collapses. The tower was never to be - never to be as a tower. But its design gives birth to the rhythm of the facade.

My brain rots and so does the idea of a resolution as an end goal. Like a piece of copper, ideas react and gain patina. Their traces carry through other parts of the work. No idea is fully absolute but its existence is never futile.

The design of the tower evolved to blend with the trees on the cliff. However, the fundamental incompatibility of the ideas at play allowed the tower to fall, giving form to a new building. One which could live to the expectation of its predecessor and surpass. It blends with the trees and nourishes the ground as a tree would.

Fig. 5.25
Initial sketch of the tower
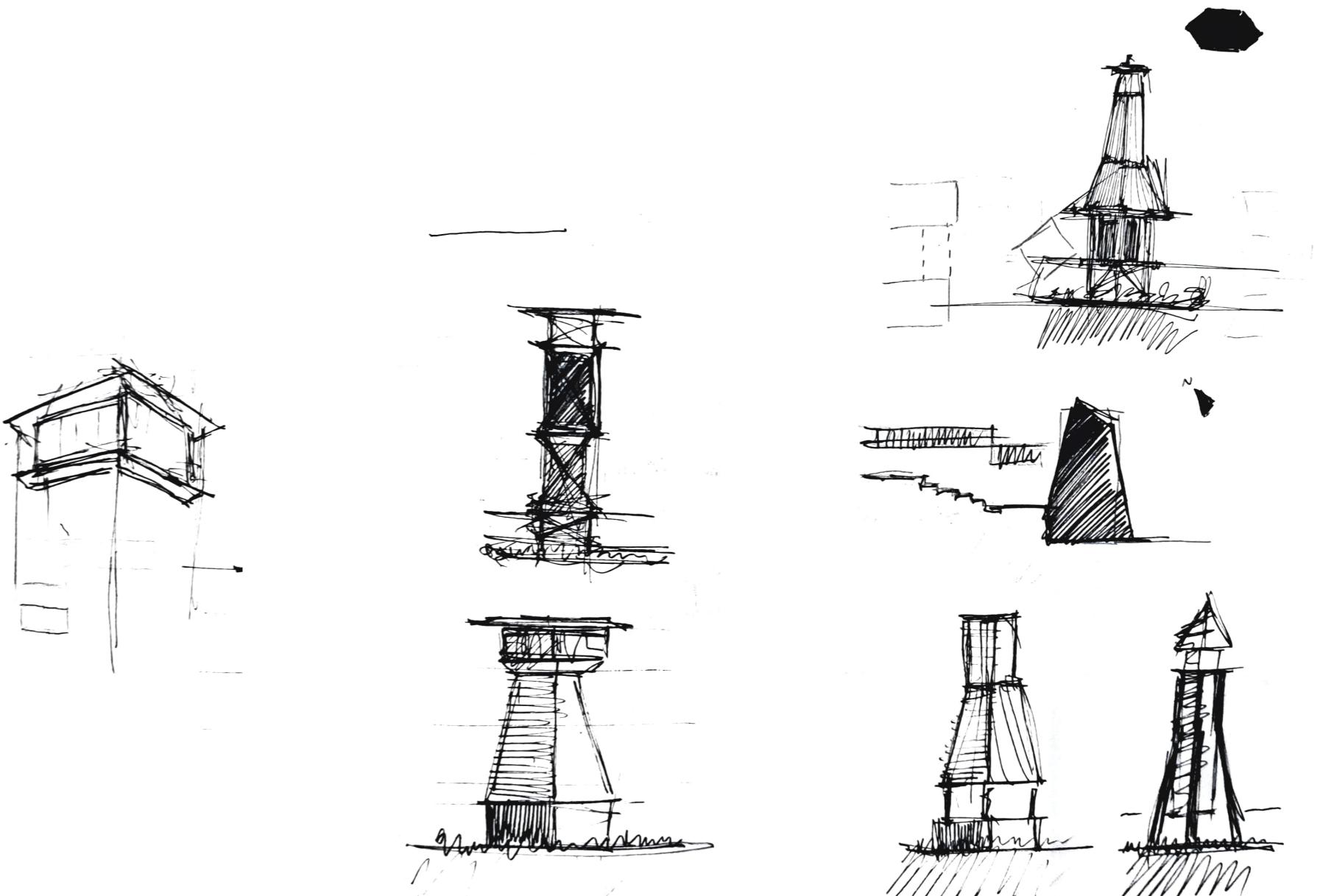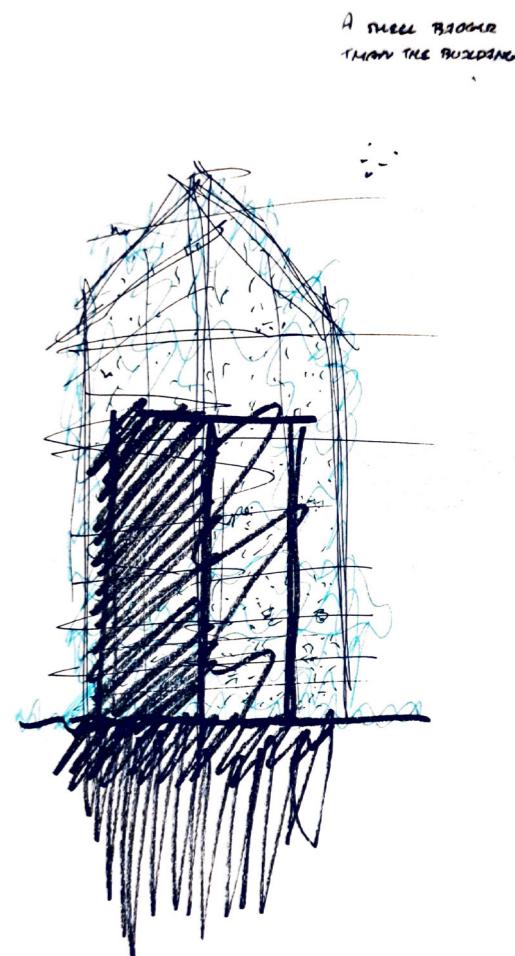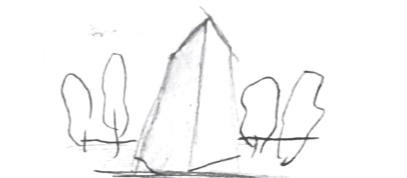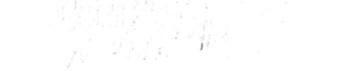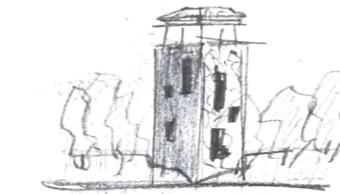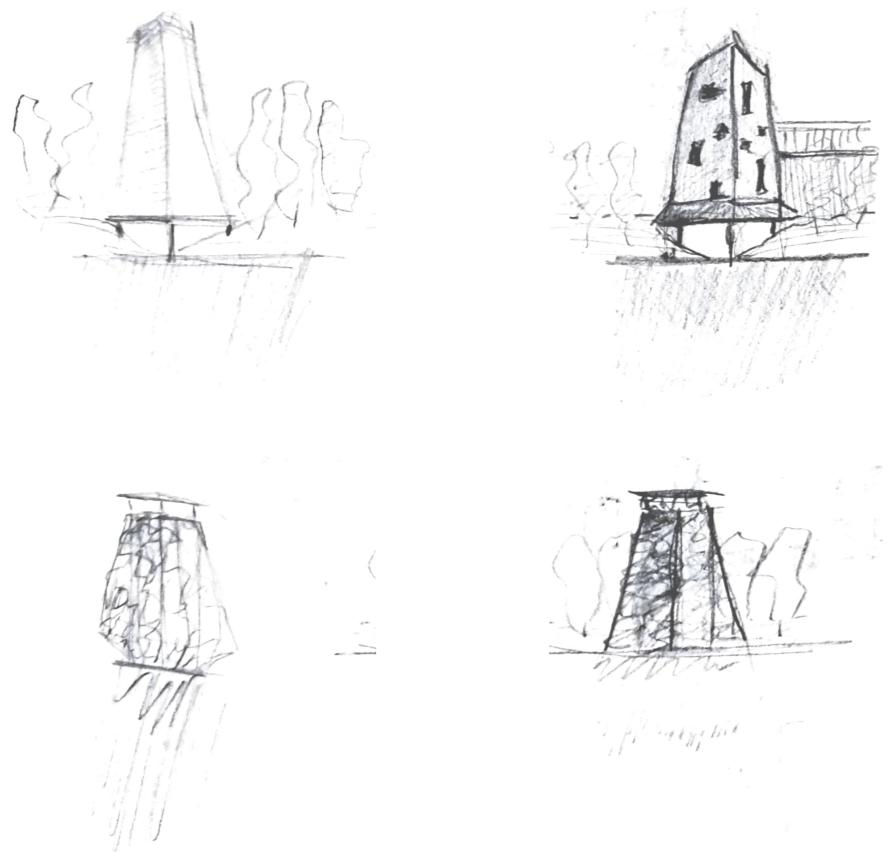
Fig. 5.26 (left)
Development sketch of the tower

Fig. 5.27 (above)
Final Sketch

Once the design transitioned from sketch to scale drawings, a problem proved crucial. The building was meant to be slim and tall. Barely touching the ground while being unobtrusive. However, from both a elevation and plan perspective that proved to not be possible - at least not for my imagination. The tower stole the show from the friche, It's size made it look clunky and chubby. It never could quite capture the idea.
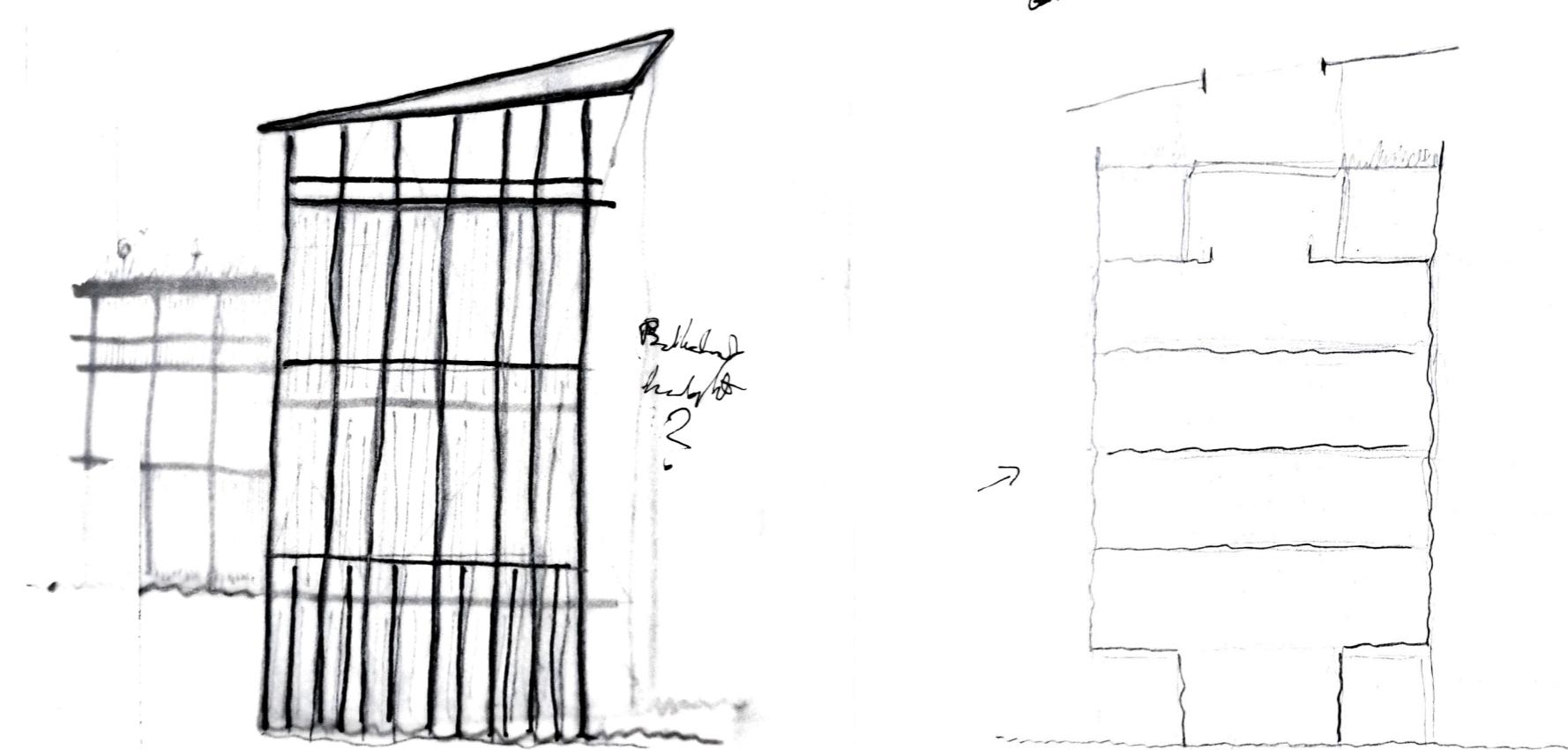
Fig. 5.28 & 5.29
Elevation and Section of the tower

and so it fell. Into horizontal slab on the edge of the cliff
of La Friche.
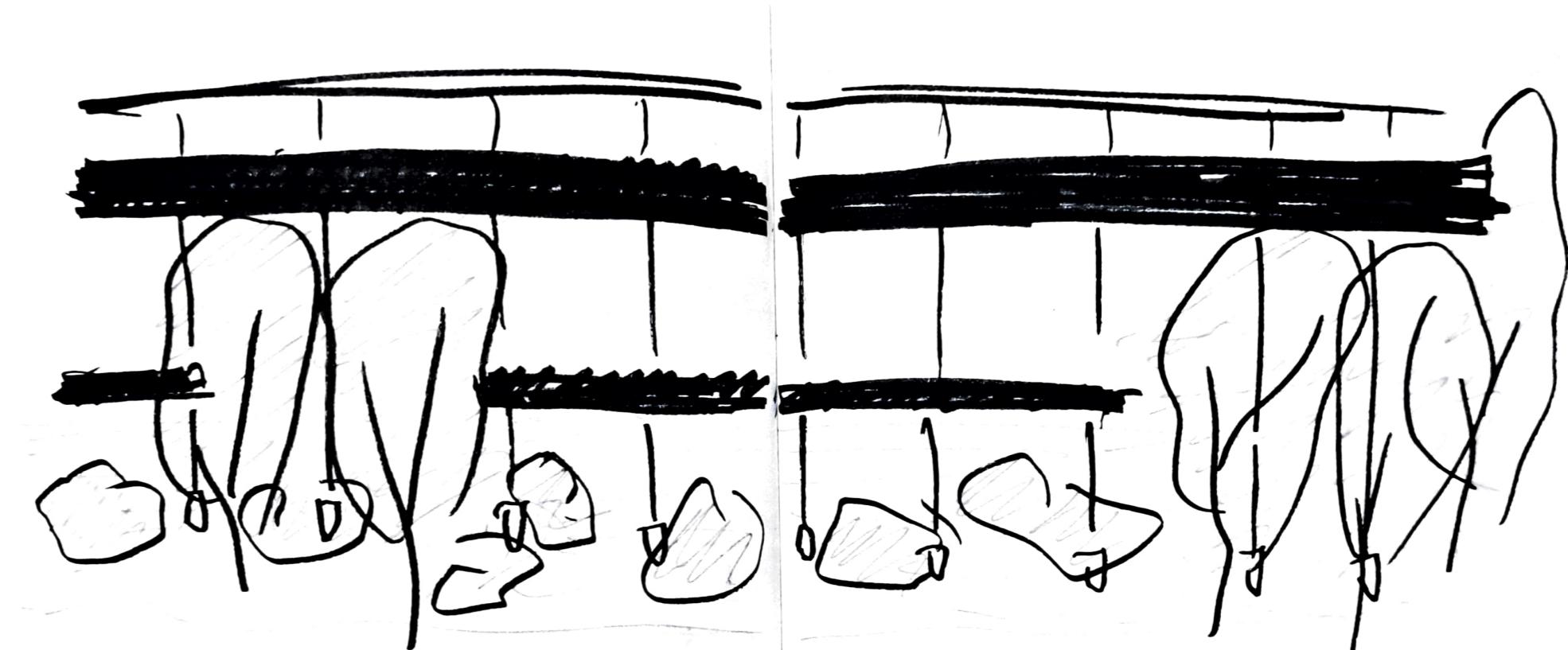
Fig. 5.30
Elevation Sketch of 'tower'

The blank drawing gains detail

Fig. 5.31
Elevation of 'tower'

The design for the tower -the vertical one - also lead way for a series of exploration regarding panels and how they can be placed. This idea flowed to rest of the building. This resulted in the creation of a system of assembly which would shape the design language of the entire buildings.

Fig. 5.32
Panel rhythm of Courtyard
Building
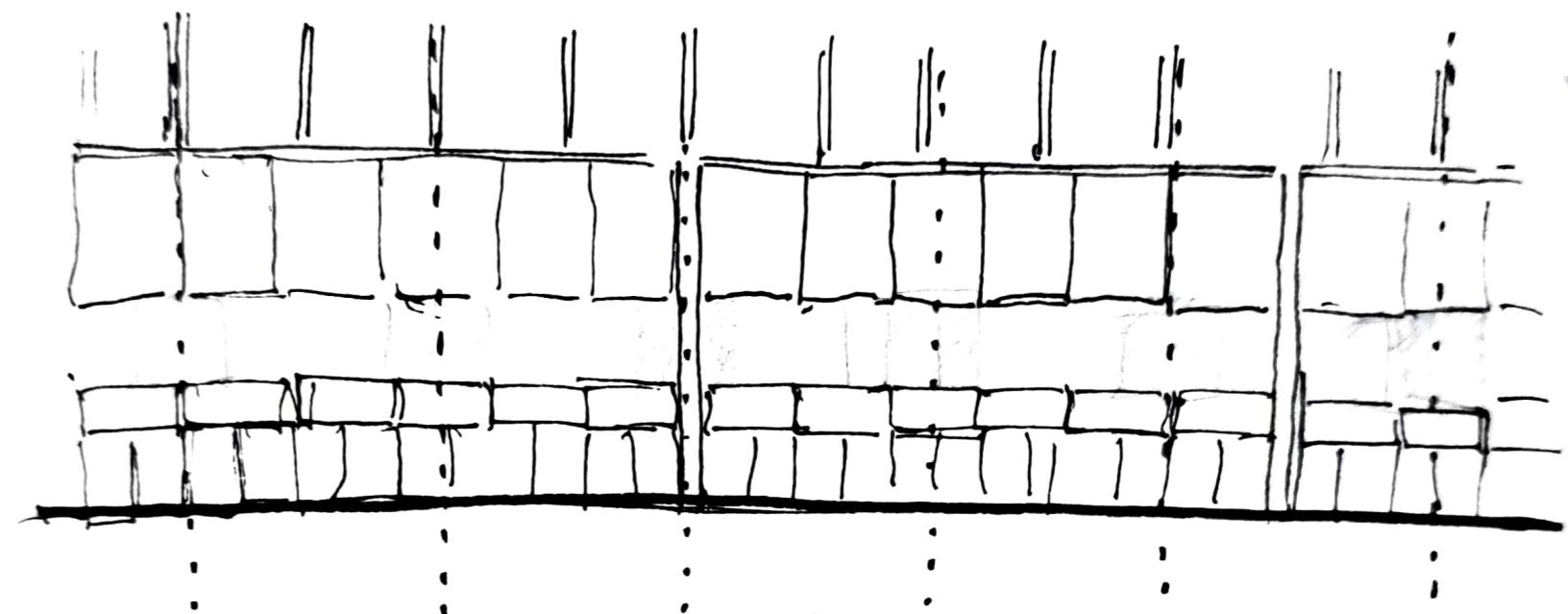
Textures at dead-end

Through a series of exploration of using CNC, stains and various assembly method of the material, I made a set of sample which explores the potentiality of Cork. However, non of the panel reigned supreme. They all had their quirks but I could not find a strong reason why one panel would be better than the other. I was still unsure how to make the panels age.

While we are now at what felt should be the starting point of the design. The materiality was not yet to reconcile with ideas of texture and patina. However, that is the nature of entropy. Ideas are sometimes best left buried in the subconscious of the brain - especially one which rots. Time allows a new version to rise, one which is fed by its buried predecessors.

Fig. 5.32
First test of the Courtyard building

My readings, and observation led me to the conclusion that rough surfaces have a bio-receptive qualities to them. Similarly a roughened up cork panel would give way vines to grip on it and lichens to appear.

Combining cork with a CNC machine could result in creation of a panel which emulates the qualities of a bark. One which can hosts organism and micro-organisms in its cracks

Fig. 5.33
Tree bark with organisms

Fig. 5.34
Greenery growing on cork panel

Fig. 5.35
Model of a roughed up cork panel

At some point by looking at copper statues, I became aware of the acid rain stain. The latter is the process through which the patina of the copper would transfer on another material - giving it a stain. I replicated this experiment by using salt and vinegar to mimic rain.

After a series of experiments which where inspiration were found from unexpected places, the material connected to theme of patina and texture.

Fig. 5.36
Patina as stain
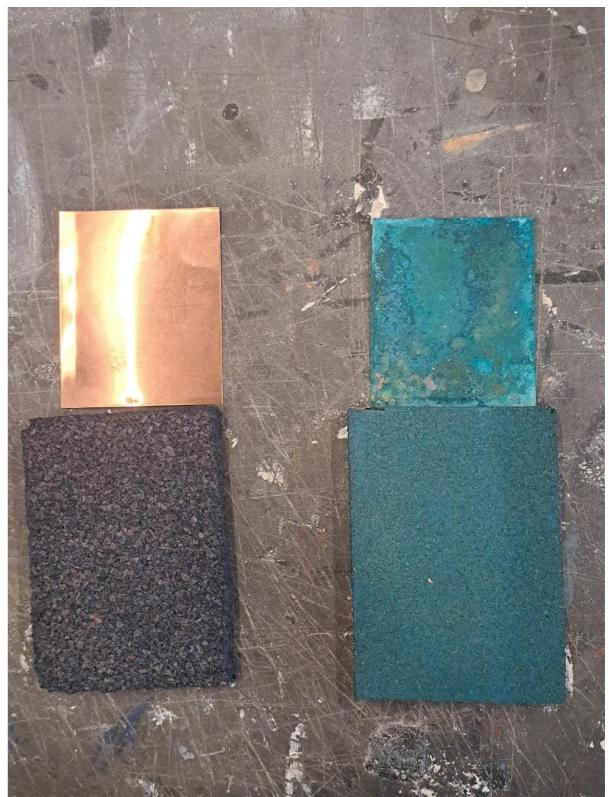
Fig. 5.37
Change in material

A voluntary misrecall

With the ground primed for a model, the field shifts once again. Instead of diligently following the outlines of my drawings, I allow my memory guide the process. Looking at the model in front of me, it starts breathing its own life within the design. The decay of the drawings within my rotten brain allowed for only its essence to survive in the making of the model. The brain rots with along with the drawing allowing blank space to appear. Within the space, the complexities of the situation takes over, unexpected connection bloom. As such as my hand moves, and materials are coincidentally placed next to the model, the initial drawing fades for the next iteration to spring.


Fig. 5.38(above)
Except Site Section

Fig. 5.39(right)
Fragment model

Fig. 5.40
Mixing of fragments to
formulate the interior

Fig. 5.41
Iteration of entrance to
workshop

Fig. 5.42
Iteration of entrance to
workshop

Entropic Synthesis (for now)

As the shifting landscape stabilizes, the design is complete—temporarily. Ideas have grown, transformed, disintegrated, and regenerated. At points, they've left the ground to join the sky. Each exploration accepts its own impermanence and regeneration. We become accustomed to the entropy of:

- The philosophy   - The design journey
- Drawings and models   - Ideas
- Memories

Their ability to undergo transformation underpins the method of brain rot, which continuously erodes to give way to new information and ideas.

The imagery accompanying these reflections documents and mirrors the layered process of design—a frozen moment within the ever-changing field of entropy. Ultimately, this collection attempts to capture entropy not only as an end goal but as a practice. One that does not cling tightly to the process but embraces its fleeting nature in a productive fashion. Without integrating entropy into the design process, how can it authentically permeate the final outcome?
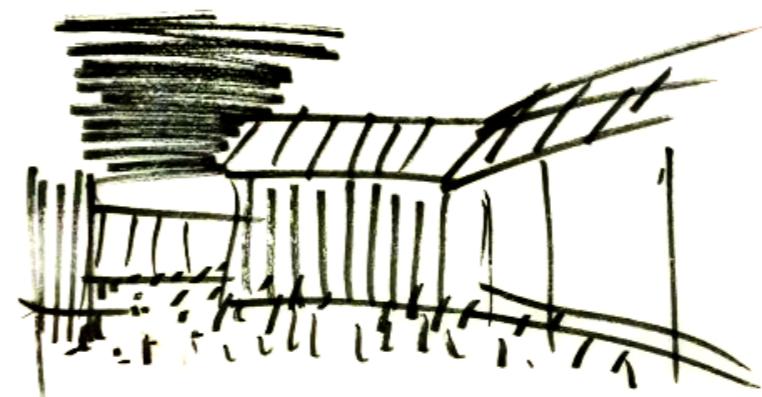
Fig. 5.43
Preliminary Sketch
Perspective
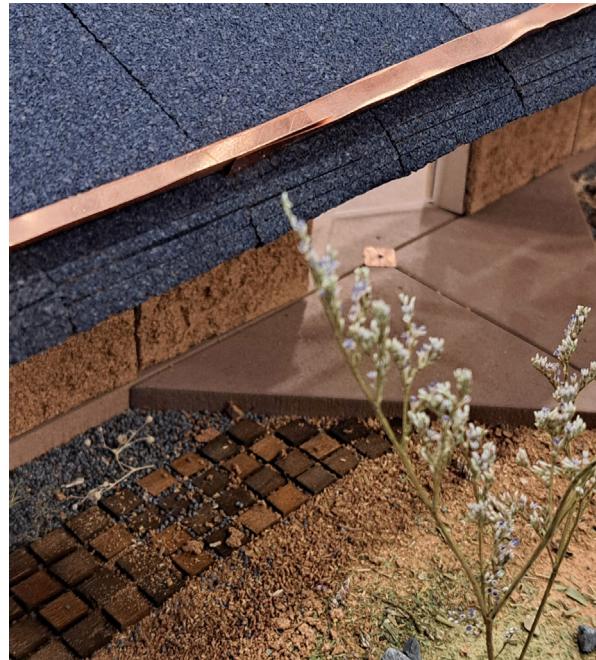
RUNNING THROUGH
THE FIELDS

Ch.6_Walkthrough

Entropic Architecture

Transitioning from the procedural field to this back-garden in Terdelt/the site, our examination shifts to the ways through which architecture as a 'finished' product can embody it. The latter happens through the rejection of seeing the building as a finished product but rather as a building left to finish.

Through an exploration of material transformation, integration with landscape, evolving functionality & cultural resonance, the design explores the dynamic of the building between its user and the greater world.

While walking in the city, suddenly within the row of houses, something different softly appears. A front garden with open arms, containing wood chips on the ground. A building out of cork with copper accents and a blue roof.

The landscape invites me to stop with its benches.

A variety of textures different from the streets of Terdelt are now in front of me. Yet the shape is still somewhat familliar.

With time the copper cannopy changes colour. It records the trace of rain which falls on it and leaves it on the ground. Blue speckles can be found on the ground right below the canopy after rain. However, as people move around, they merge with the landscape.

The canopy creates an inviting entrance. It is framed by plants on the ground and framed by plants on the wall. A wiremesh structure is attached on the wall allowing for plants to grow on it. In itself it becomes a way of tracking time. Not only do they get taller with time, but during spring and summer, it flowers.

The chimney on the roof is coated with wax which strengthens its corrosive resistance to water. Time occurs at a different scale on the canopy and chimney. However, eventually it will also give way to entropy.

The entrance corridor is a darker spot which frames the light at the end of the tunnel. Inviting the visitor to see the landscape on the other side.
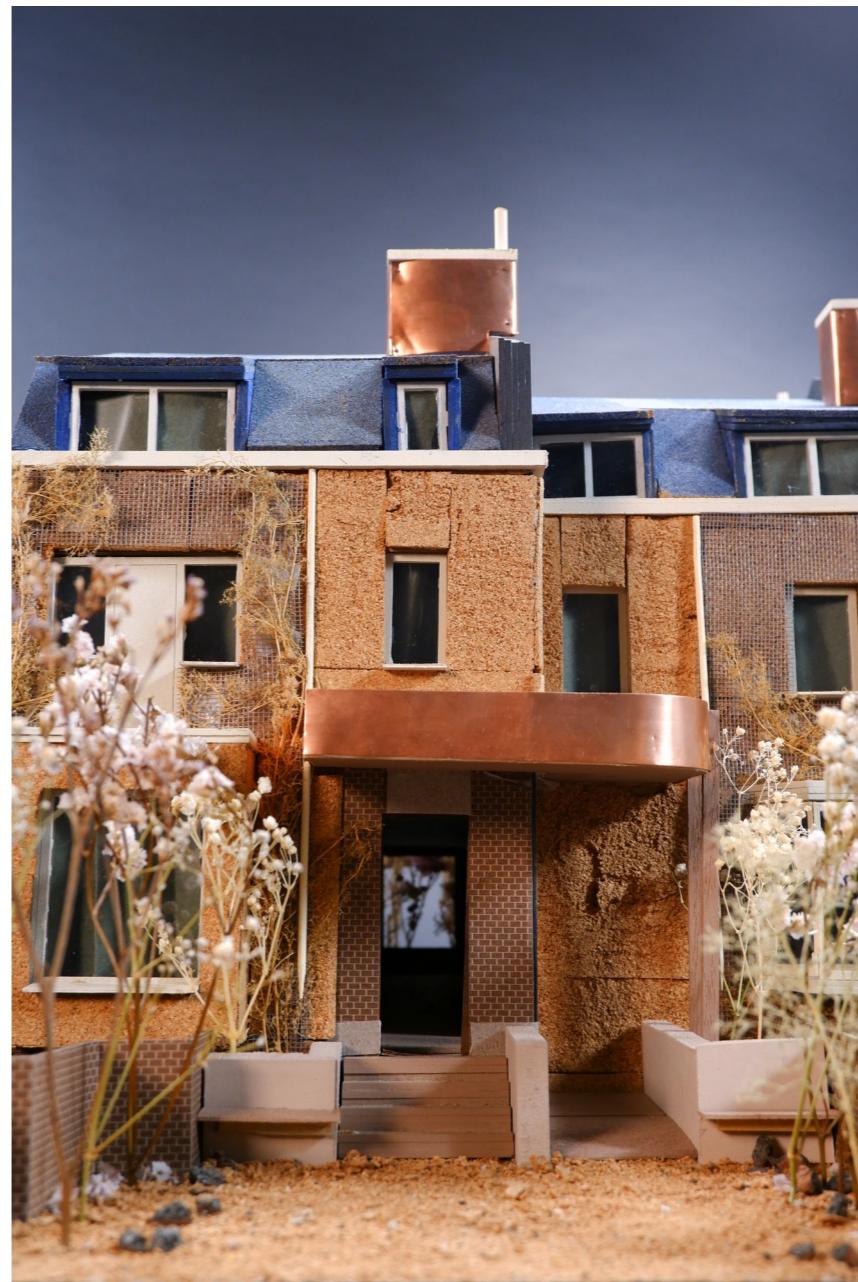
Around the entrance, the cork and canopy frames the brick wall. It becomes a moment where the previous and new design interact with each other. With time the building obtained a cork skin, but at points the old brick wall can still be seen.

As one tranverse through the corridor, they find themselves present in a brick corridor which reveals the age of the building.
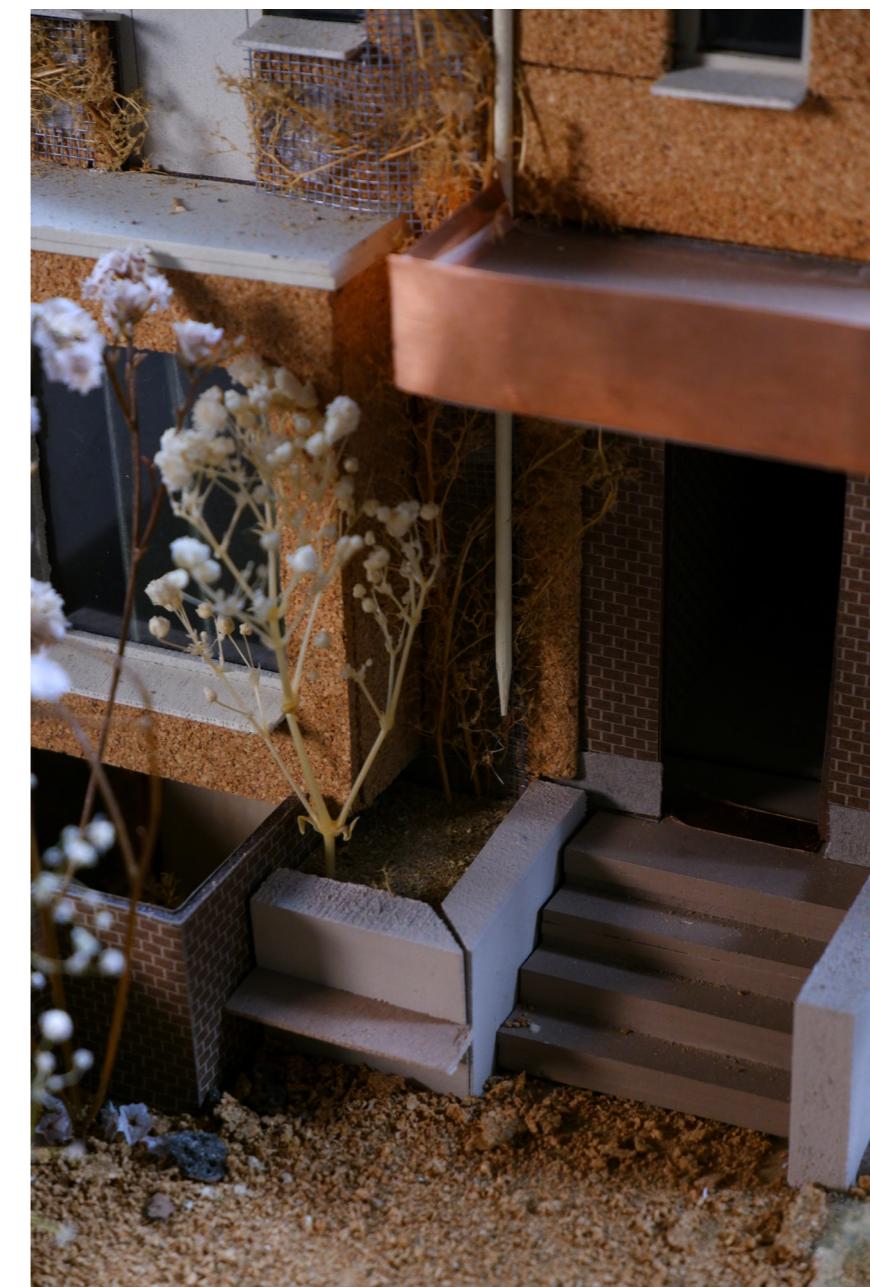
Looking around the courtyard presents itself. However
there are clearly layers behind it. In this moment one
can glimpse through the various landscape present but
cannot fully comprehends them until they get closer.
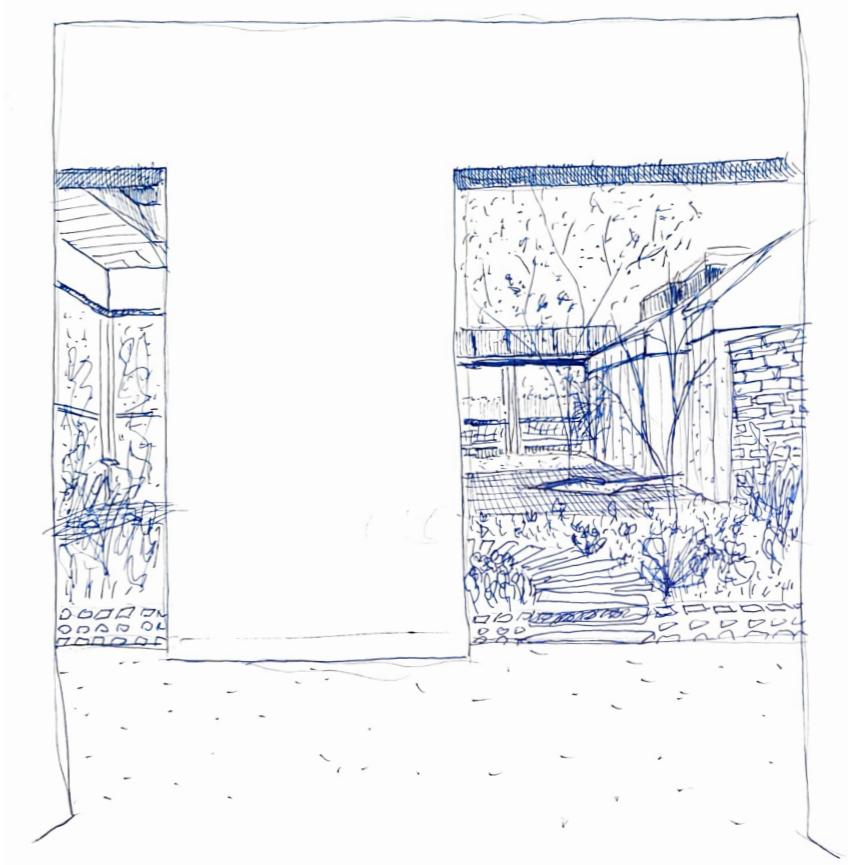
A change of scale happens as one gets into the backgarden. The roof lowers itself. We are no longer within the clean woodchip front, but a messier meadow full of textures and colours growing organically.

Ground and sky seems to connect as the various textures blend into each other.
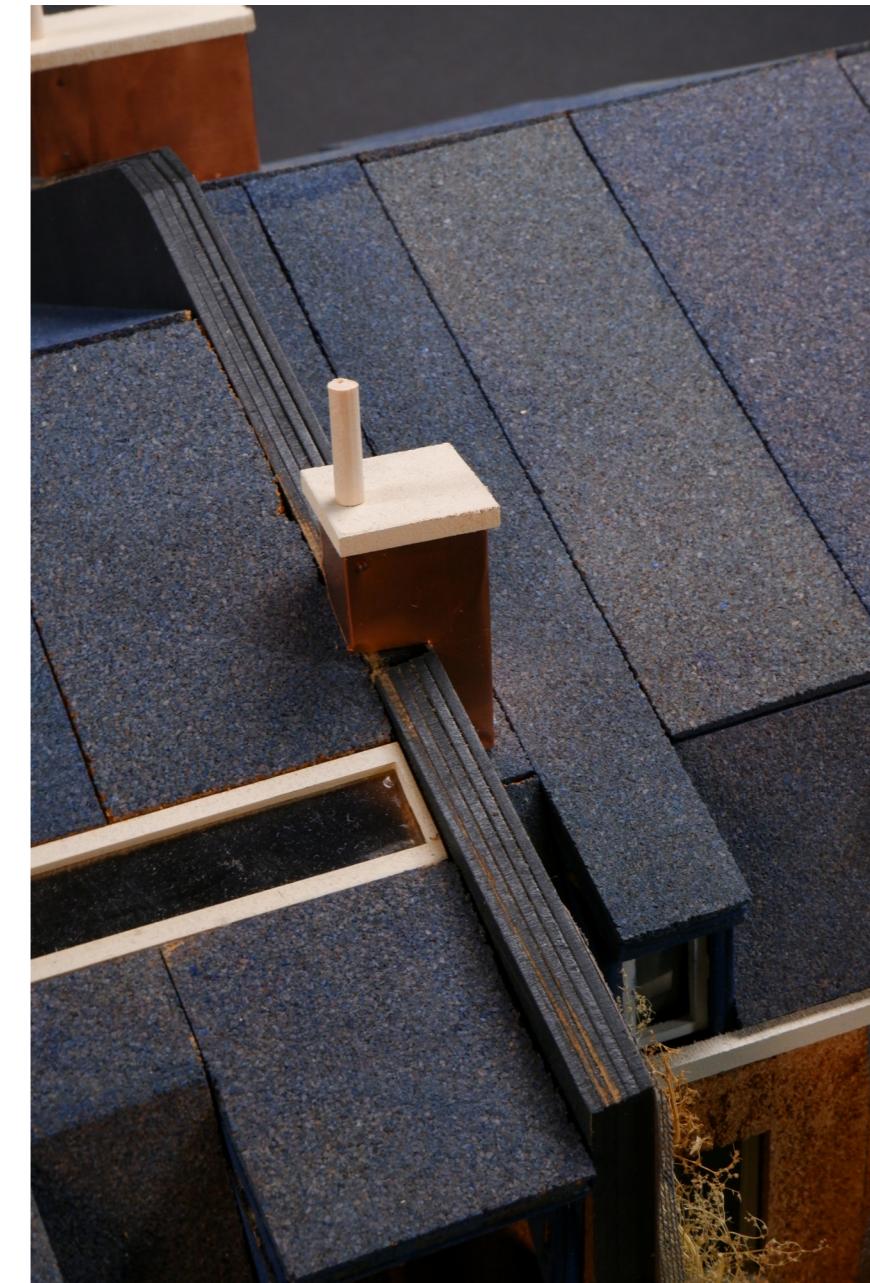
As one looks up the juxtaposition of familiar and new
shape becomes apparent. The visitor feels at ease in its
comfort yet intrigue by the unknown

As we move to the middle section, the landscape of the friche becomes more visible. Its horizontal nature aligns the views of the landscape, the canopy and the friche into various parallel layers creating a pleasing unravelling as one walks through it
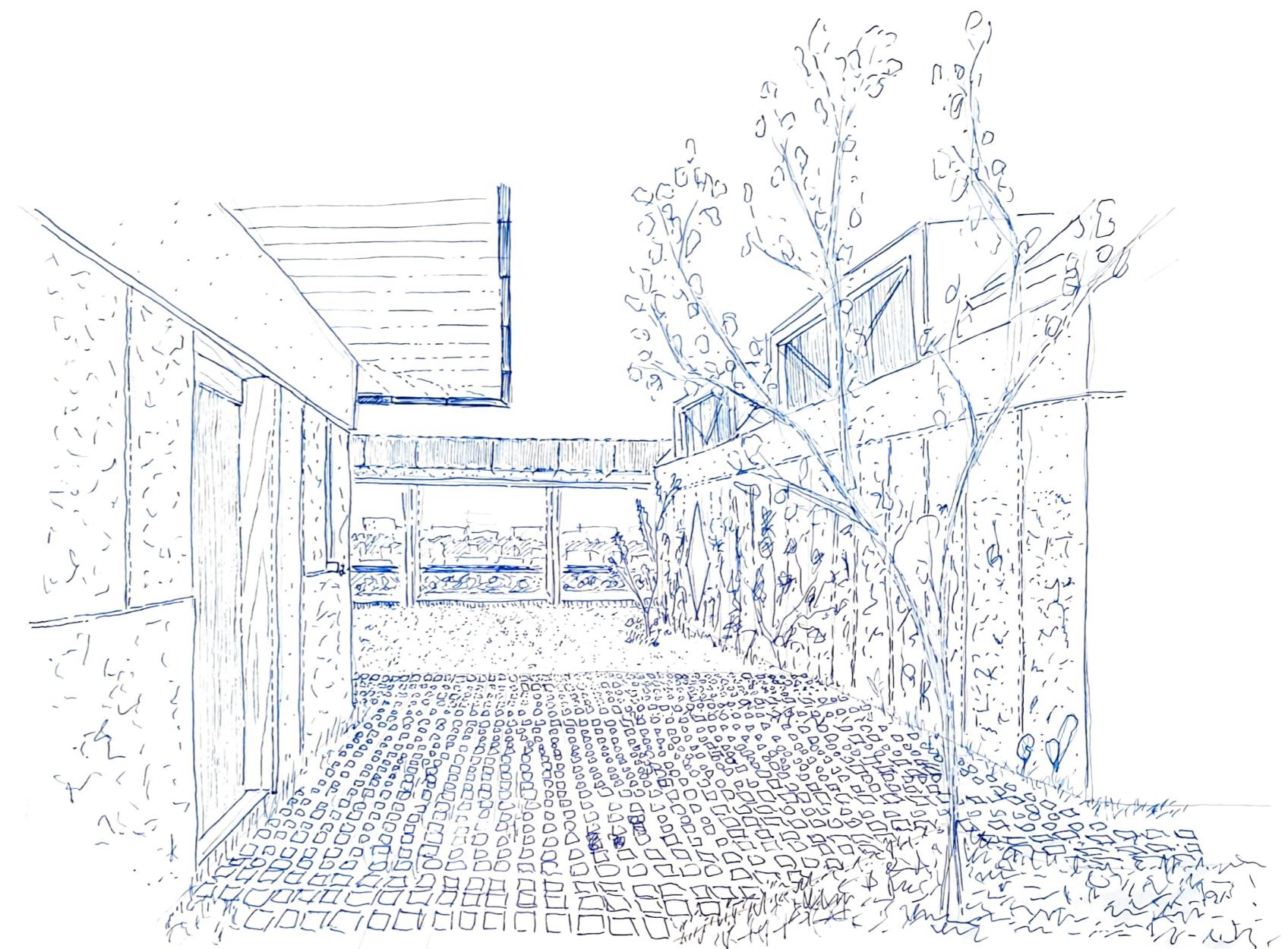
The final courtyard becomes a moment where the canopy which has been guiding us truly gets to shine. It creates a frame for the sky ground anchoring them both together as one. Small details such as the roofs blue cork appearing at the end of the canopy makes the framing even stronger.
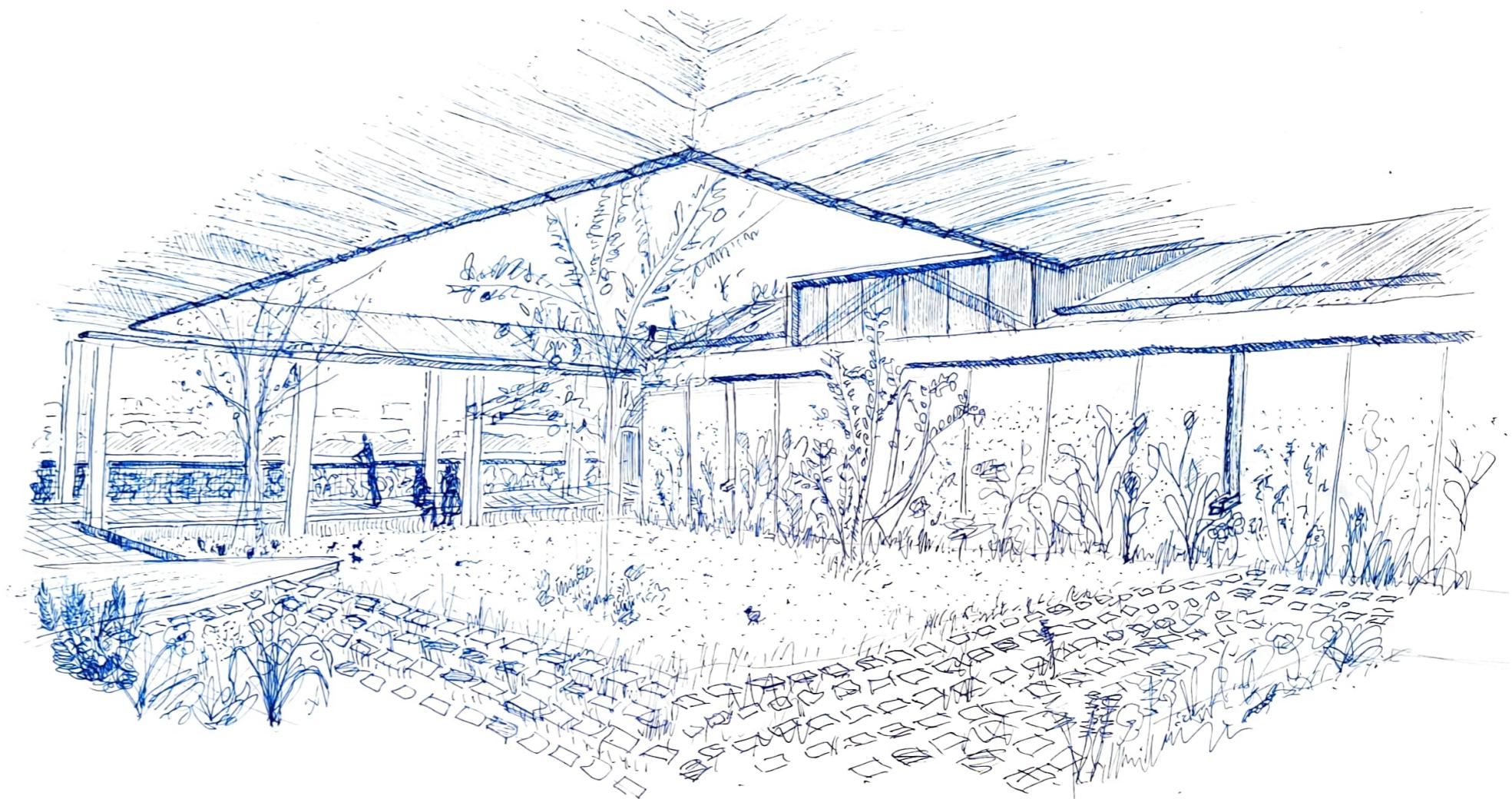
The entrance to the workshop is another key element of the design. The internal floor extrudes outside create a space which connects the two. The floor becomes a stage for activity and events to occur.

The copper skylight by the entrance provides a warm hue to entrance accentualing the warmth of the sun

As one looks back while walking on the canopy, the section which bridges the intervention and La Friche, they get to experience the landscape again but this time from another direction.

Looking Back
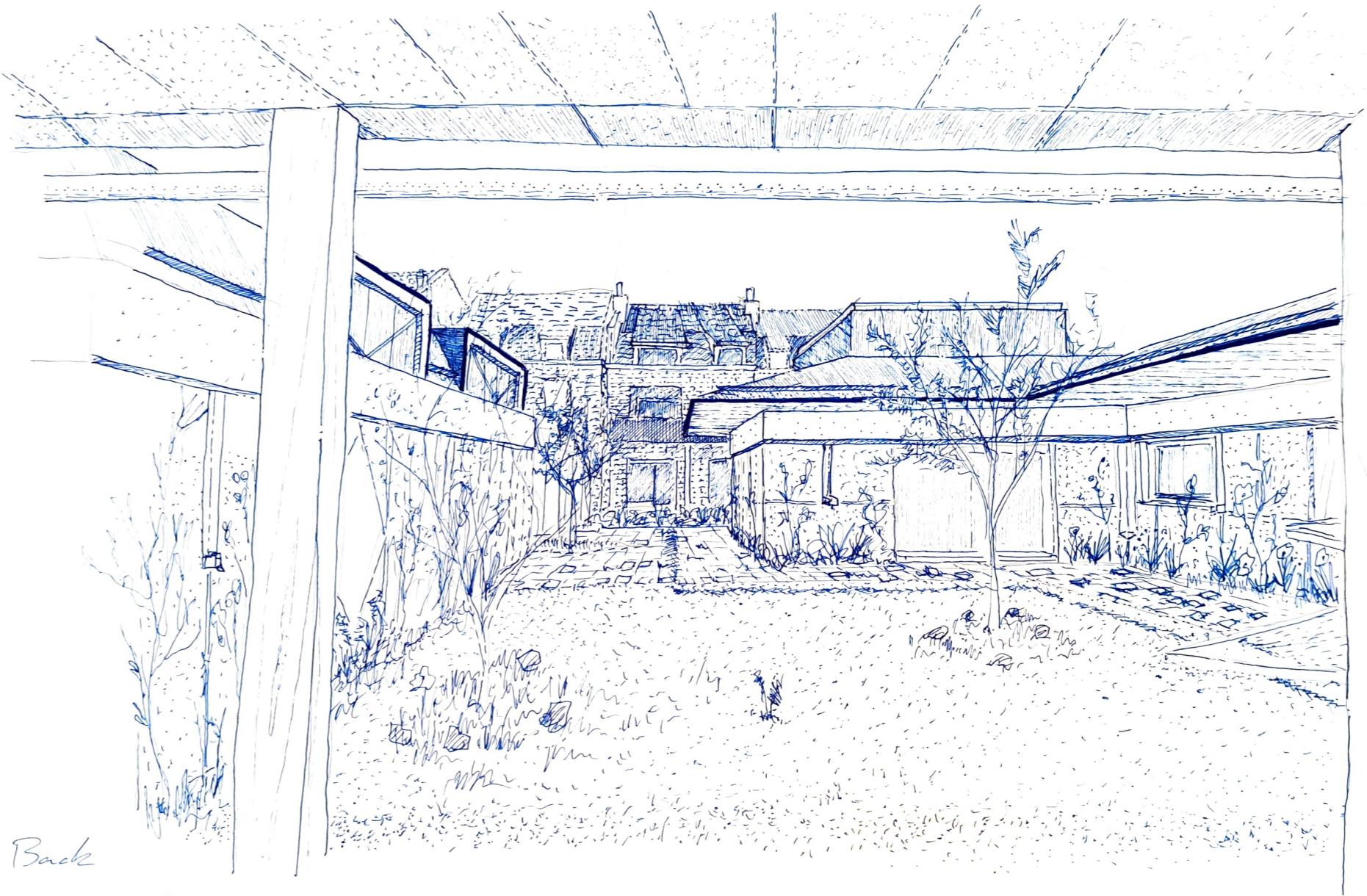
Fragments hold meaning outside their designated form. Copper, cork, plants and land itself grows and blossom field of never ending decay & renewal. The design is never a static ideal. Instead every fragment contributes to a living environment. This project, in all its fragments - booklet, model, method & figurative building - holds an ecosystem thriving on change. It invites us to embrace the flower - entropy as a source of fleeting yet lasting connection and creativity.
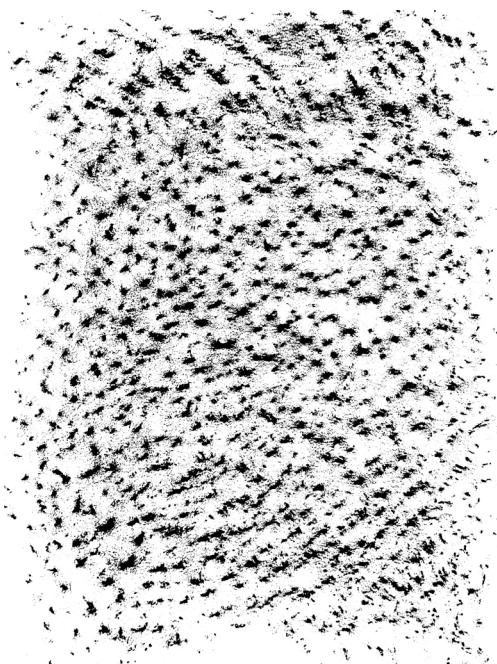
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Ch.7_Reference

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Figure List

Note: Most of the images are authors'. As such only images which do not belong to me are referenced

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centre

3.1 - 3.89 Images belong to the garden
city research group

5.4 - 5.6 Google Maps

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Project
Urban Architecture
Terdelt's backyard _left to Finish
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