

Catalogue
of socio-spatial practices

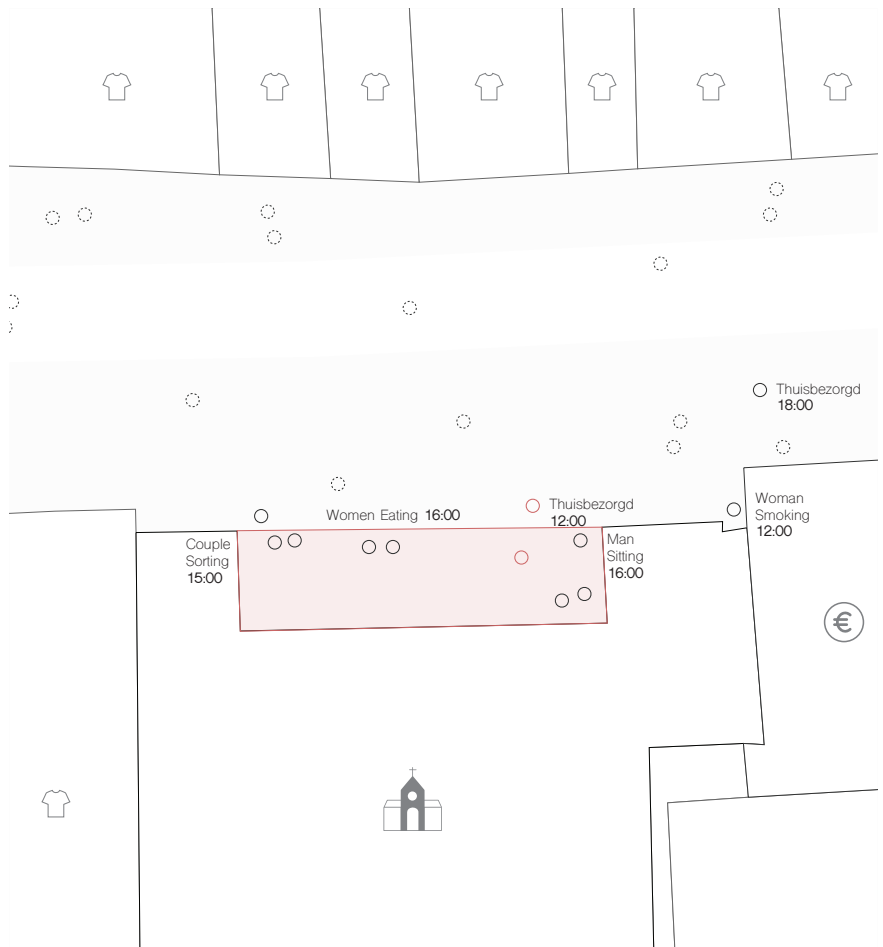
2020/2021
Urban Architecture - Studio Bricolage

Introduction

The 'Socio-Spatial Practices of Nijmegen' catalogue was born from a shared interest that lies within the intimate scale at the intersection between human behaviour and anatomy, and the urban fabric. We questioned why things are built and shaped in a certain way, and what behaviours and actions spark as a consequence. Viceversa, we were interested in understanding how human practices have shaped the built environment.

This body of work analyses a series of actions observed in Nijmegen's public space during site visits at different times of the day and the year. The methodology started by capturing photographs of ordinary moments and scenes within the city. It is important to note that we were consciously not looking for the "unexpected", but, on the contrary, we were striving to record the ordinary, the routine, the seemingly normal and unspectacular. From the photographs, a process of sketching, extrapolating and decomposing the scenes took place in form of a plan noting the position of the scene within the city, an eye level drawing and annotation of the scenes and its material, temporal and tangible qualities, and an exploded axonometric perspective to extract the fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed elements in the space that provided the affordance for such action. The actions illustrated and captured include playing, smoking, sitting, waiting, meeting and eating. The temporal nature of these actions has also been considered as we documented the time, date and weather conditions of each observation in our analysis.

Waiting

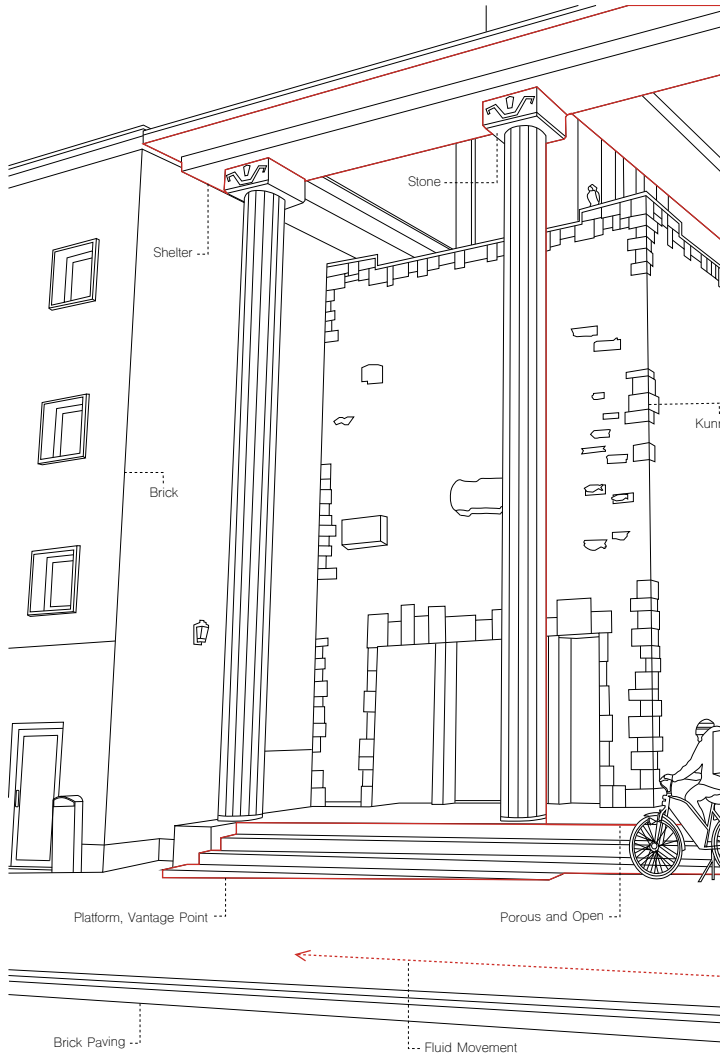


Petrus Canisiuskerk Plan
Ethnographic Observations

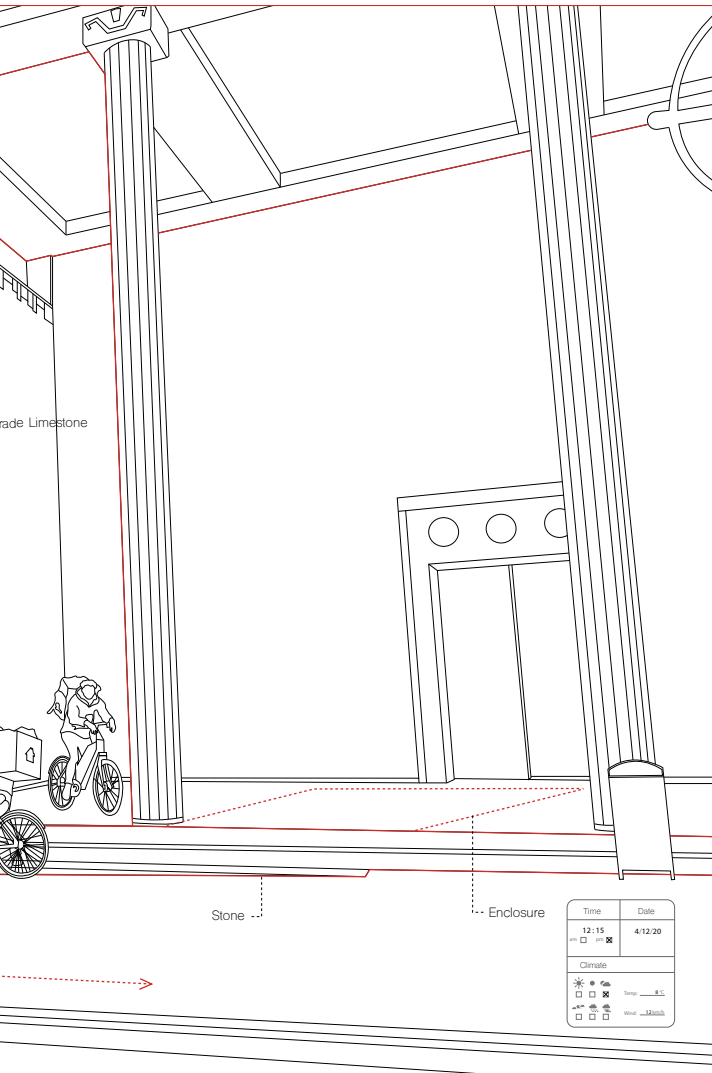
Waiting



Petrus Canisiuskerk Cloister
Thuisbezorgd Employees Waiting for Work



Waiting



Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

roof

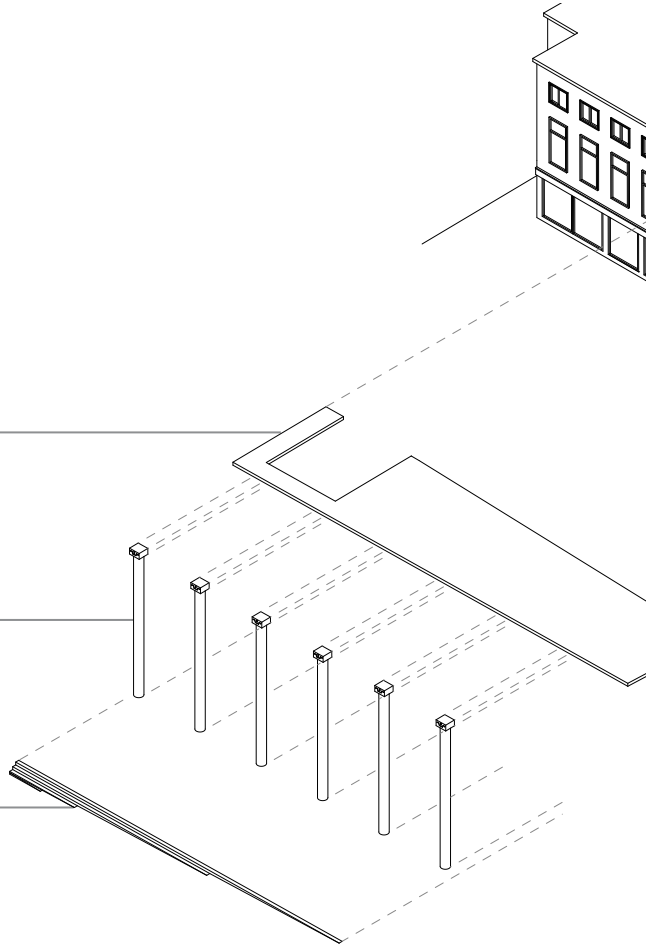
shelter and protection from the elements
fixed element

columns

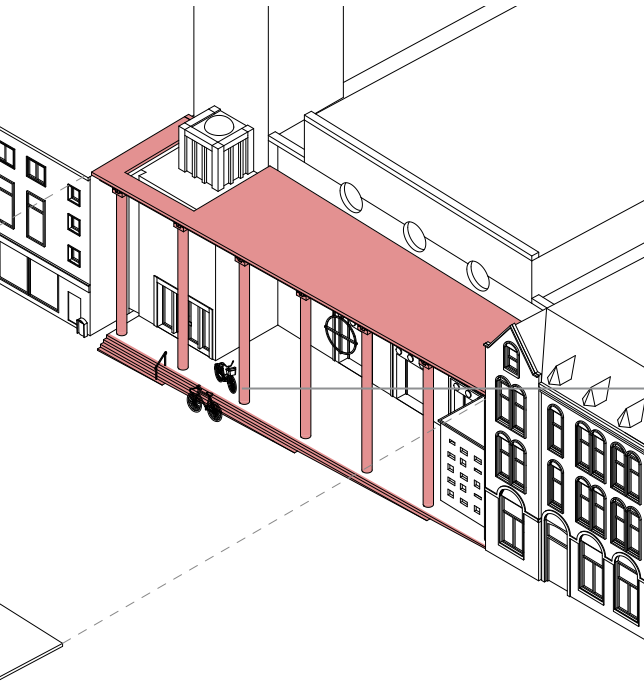
sense of protection from the street
fixed element

stairs

provide elevated platform/vantage point
fixed element



Waiting

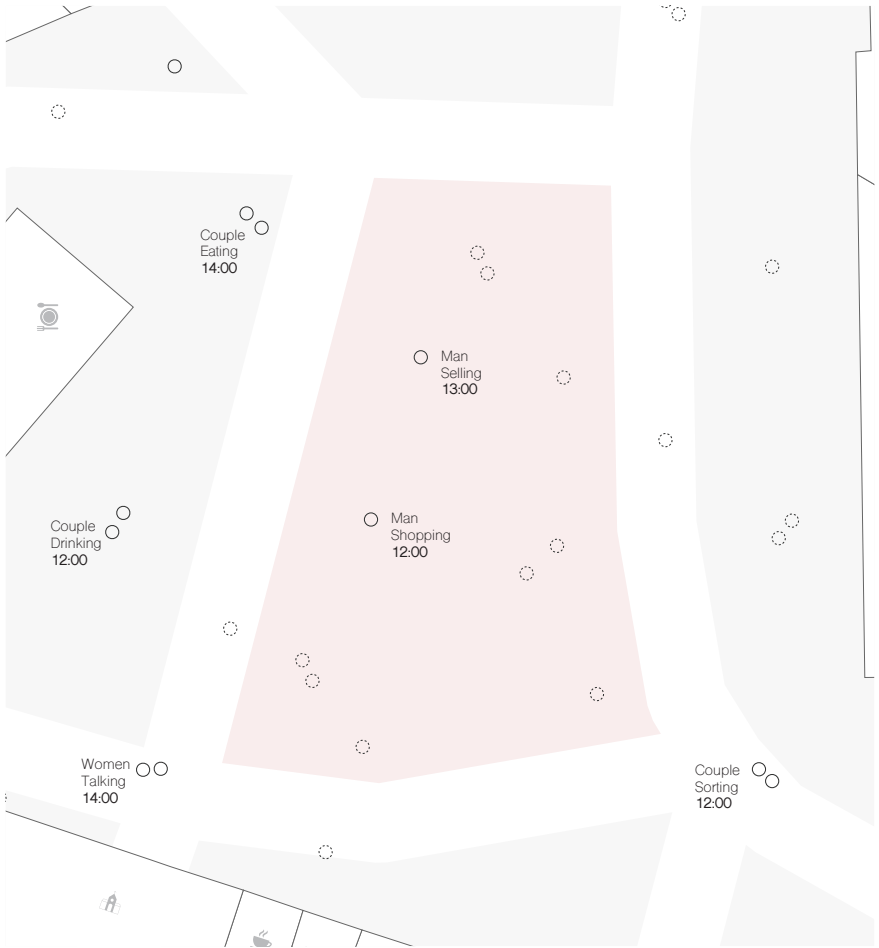


bicycles

transport for thuisbezorgd employees
non-fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Raised Height, Platform, Vantage

Selling



Selling



Grote Markt
Monday Market



Grote Markt
Gathering Space

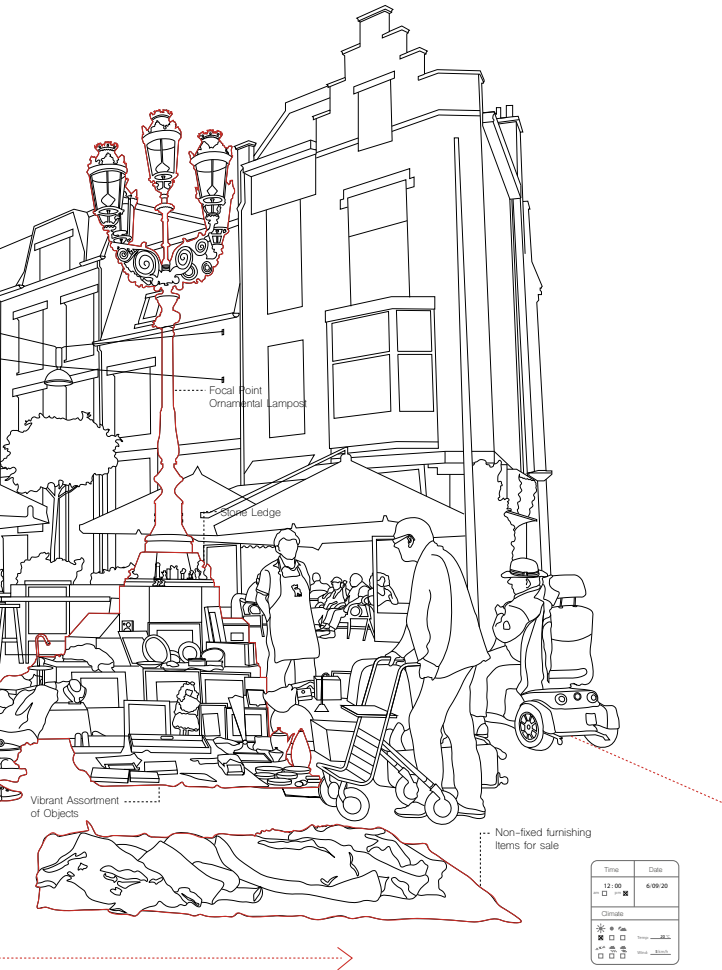
Audience

Stone Paving

Fluid Movement



Selling



Time	Date
12:00	6:00:30
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Climate	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☀	<input type="checkbox"/> ☁
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☔	<input type="checkbox"/> ❄
<input type="checkbox"/> ☁	<input type="checkbox"/> ❄

Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

paintings, pictures and statuettes

exhibited on the lamp post for visibility
non-fixed element

crockery, clothes, pots and other objects

exhibited on the floor
non-fixed element

plastic crates

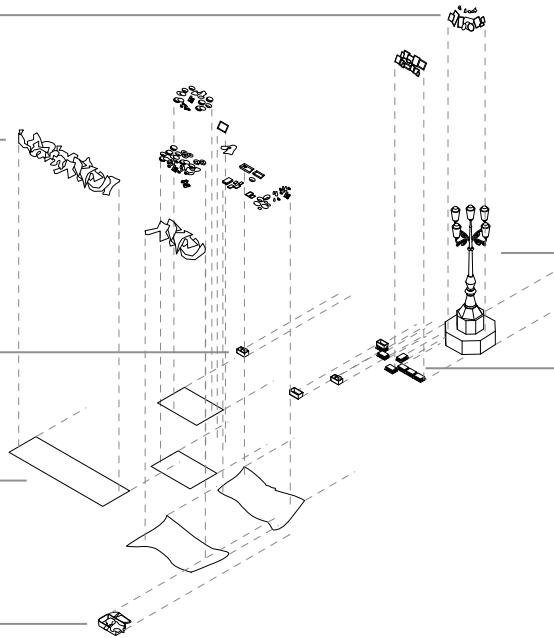
used as containers for goods
non-fixed element

carpets

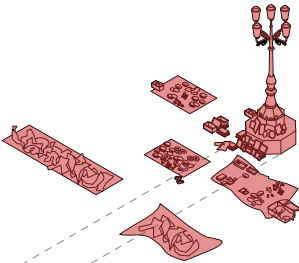
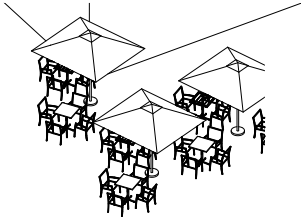
prevent goods from touching the ground
non-fixed element

open suitcase

used to showcase goods and as storage
non - fixed element



Selling



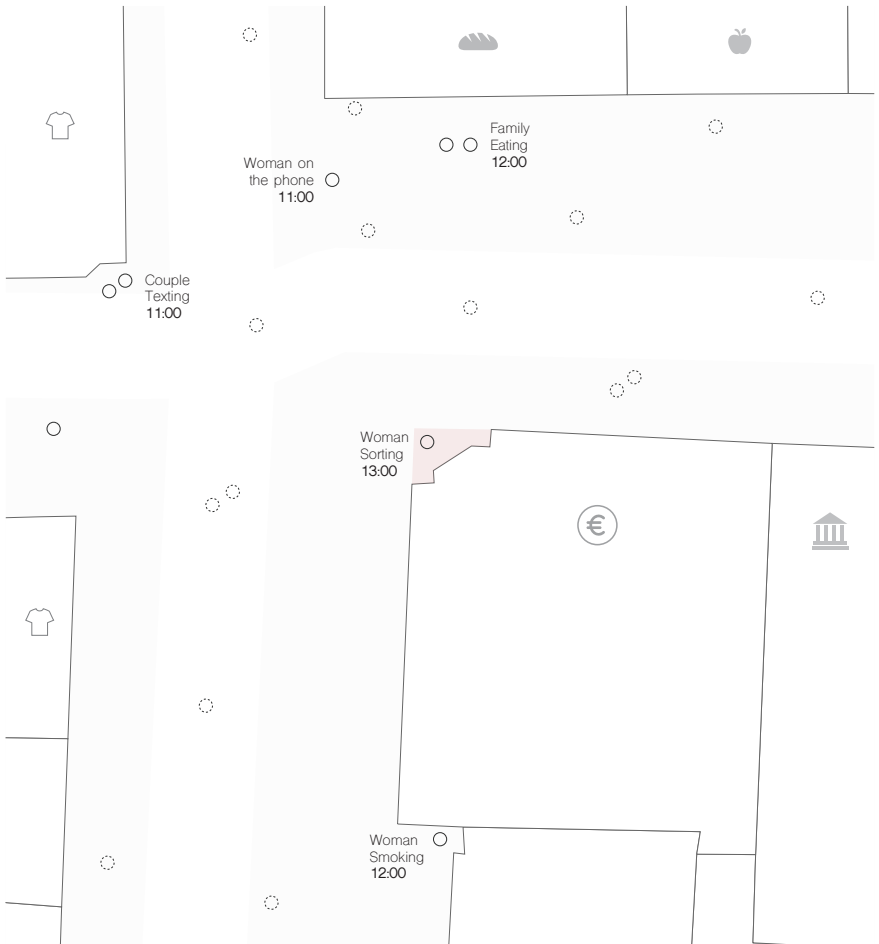
lamp post

focal point in the square, used as table to exhibit objects
fixed element

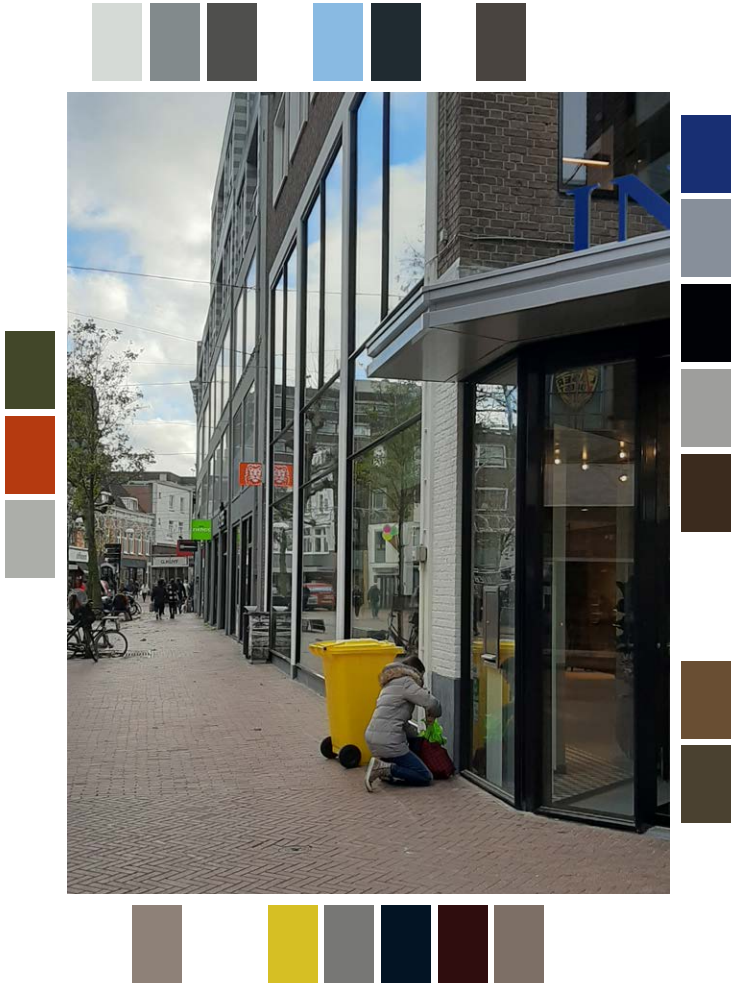
supermarket baskets

used as stands and tables for goods
non-fixed element

Sorting

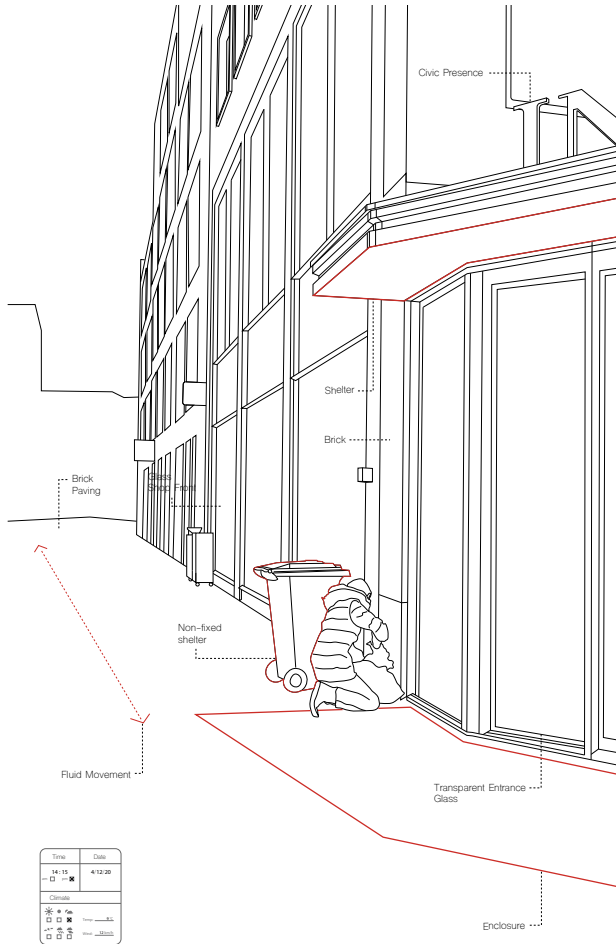


Sorting

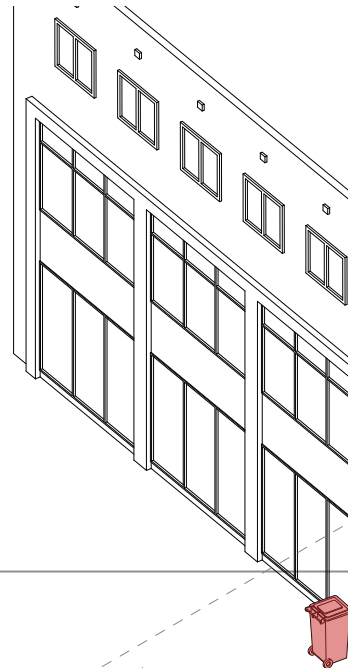


Molenstraat /Ziekerstraat Corner
ING

Sorting

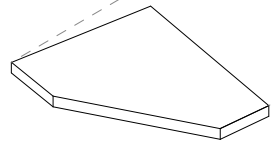


Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour



blank wall

used to lean things against it, a break from transparent glass
fixed element

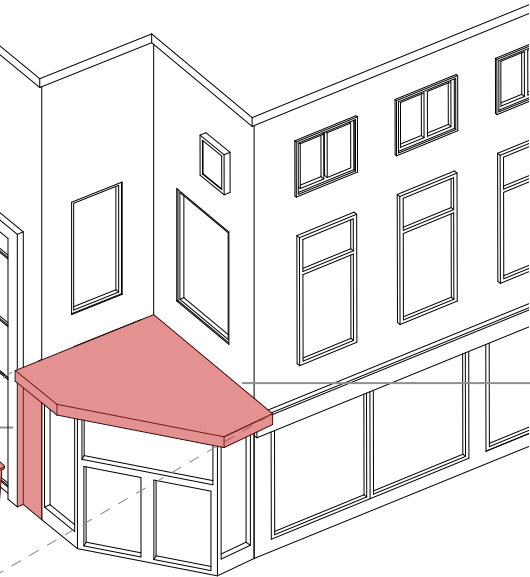


trash bin

provides privacy
semi-fixed element



Sorting



overhang

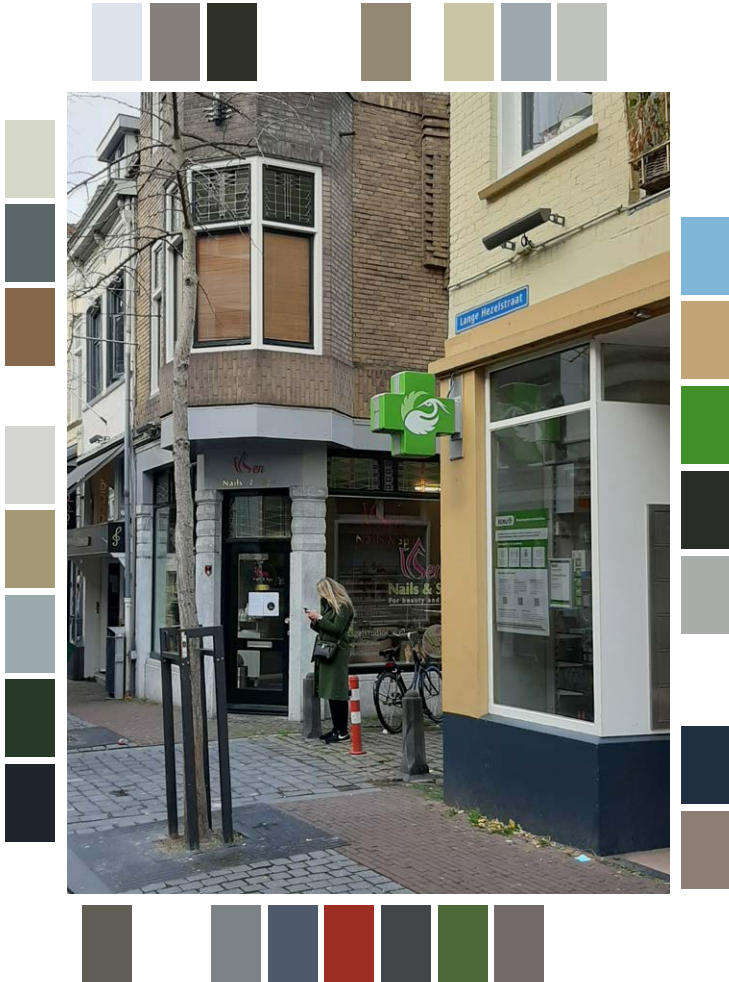
shelter and protection from the rain, threshold
fixed element

Texting



Lange Hezelstraat Plan
Ethnographic Observations

Texting



Lange Hezelstraat / Begijnenstraat Corner
Woman Texting

Texting

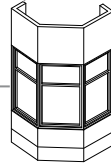


Time	State
14:00	☀️ 4:12 PM
Climate	
☀️	☀️
☁️	☁️
☔	☔
❄️	❄️

Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

overhang

sense of shelter and protection from the elements
fixed element



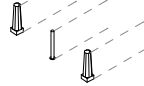
parked bikes

people visiting the surrounding buildings
non-fixed element



trees

framing the street, providing shelter
semi-fixed element

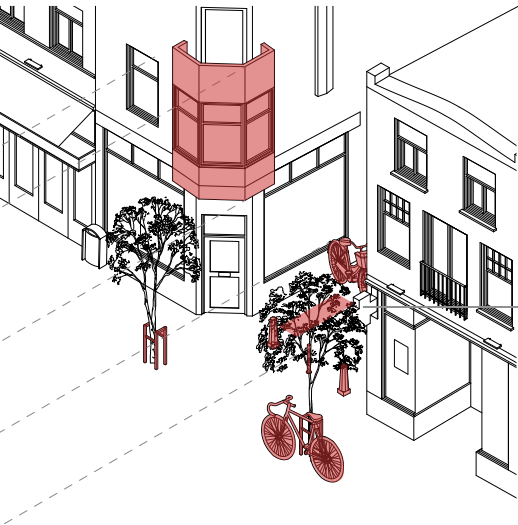


parked bikes

people visiting the surrounding buildings
non-fixed element



Texting



junction

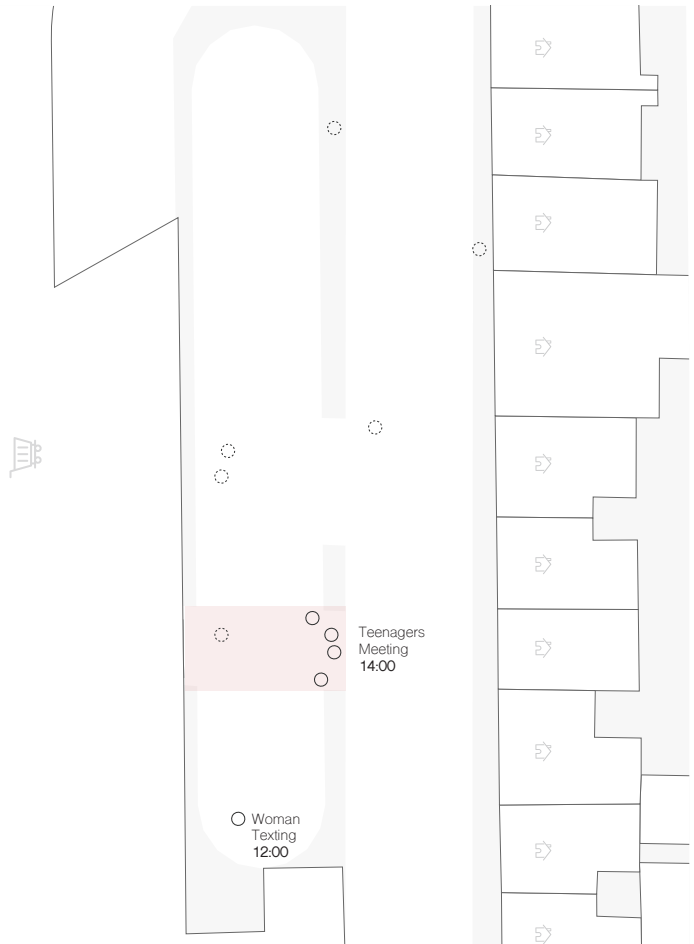
end of the secondary street before joining a busier pedestrian street, opportunity for pause

tree stands

provide a frame to chain bikes onto
fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Intersection, Threshold, Protection

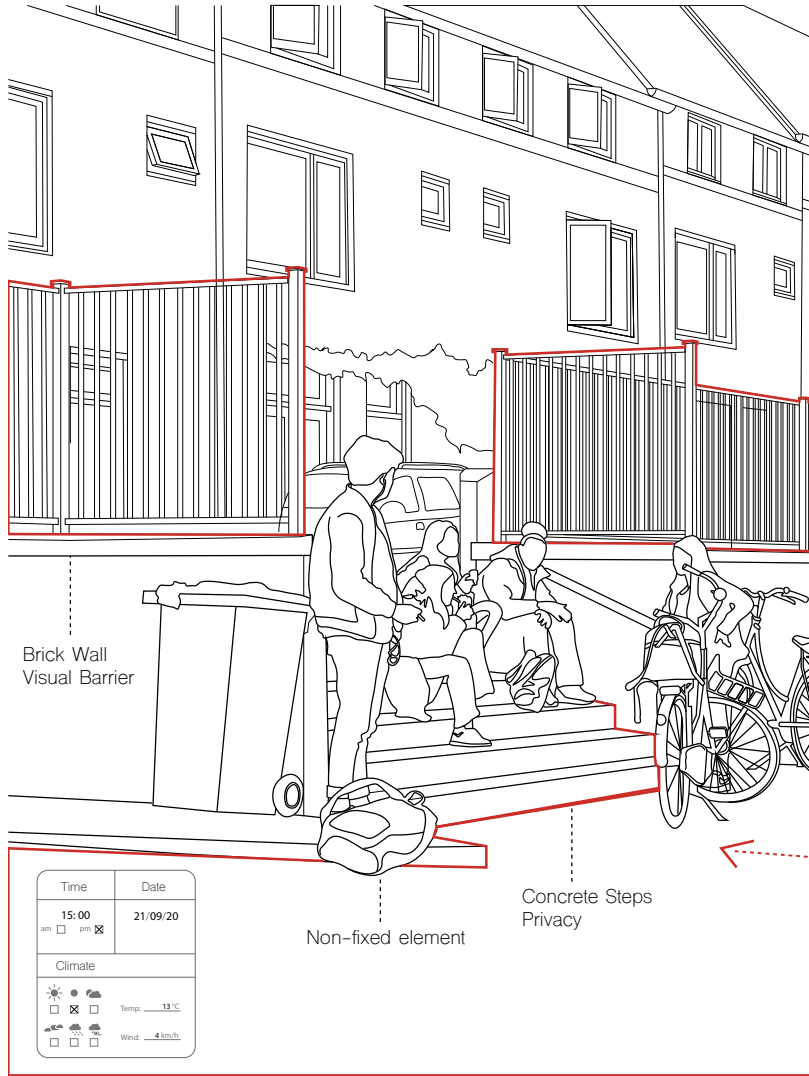
Meeting



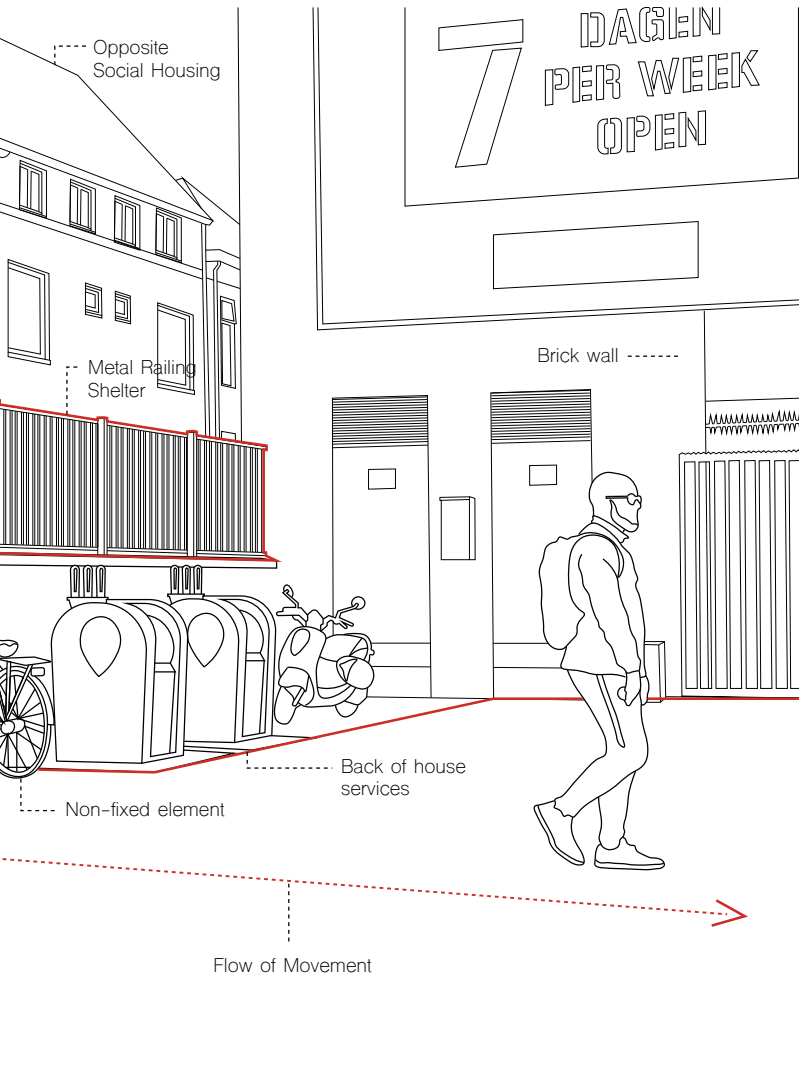
Meeting



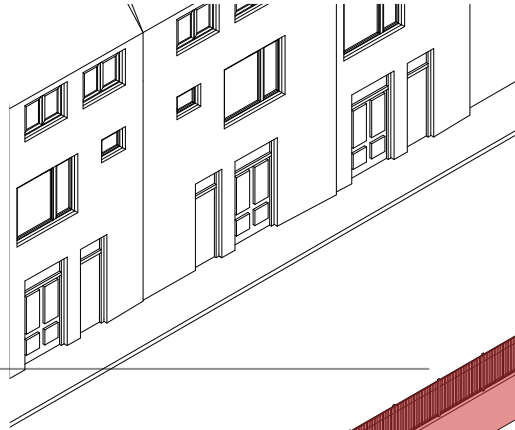
Molenpoort Delivery Bay
Teenagers hanging out



Meeting

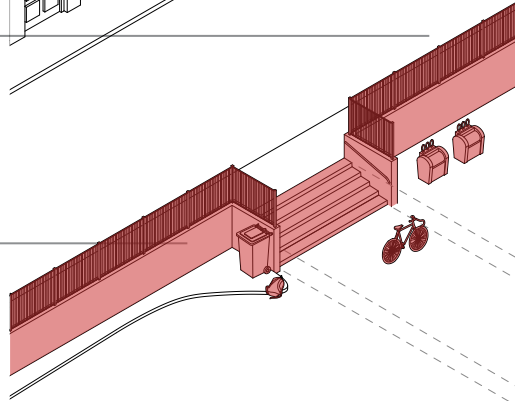


Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour



roof

shelter and protection from the elements
fixed element



wall

visual barrier, place to hide
fixed element

stairs

provide a sunken seating or an elevated platform
fixed element

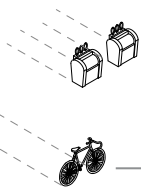
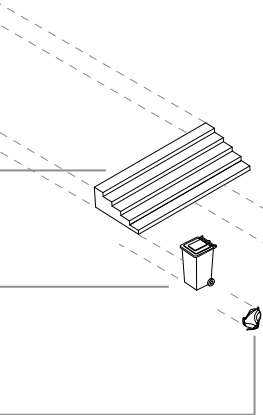
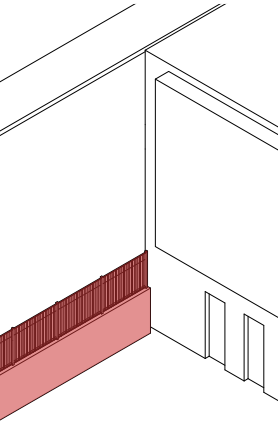
wheely bin

indicates back of house area
semi-fixed element

backpack

to carry things, placed on the floor
non-fixed element

Meeting



fixed bins

for residential use
fixed element

bike

belonging to the young people,
placed as a barrier
non-fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Lowered Height, Platform, Backspace

Meeting

Meeting



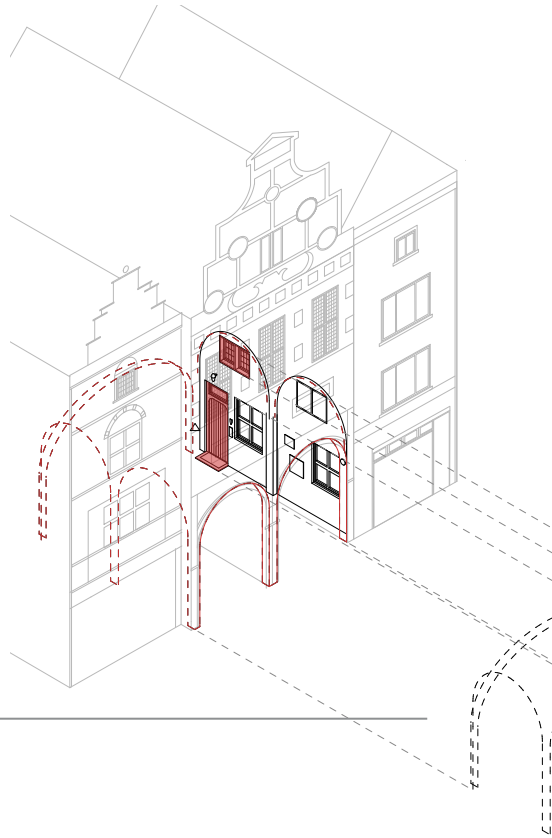
St Stevenskerk Archway
Friends chatting



Meeting



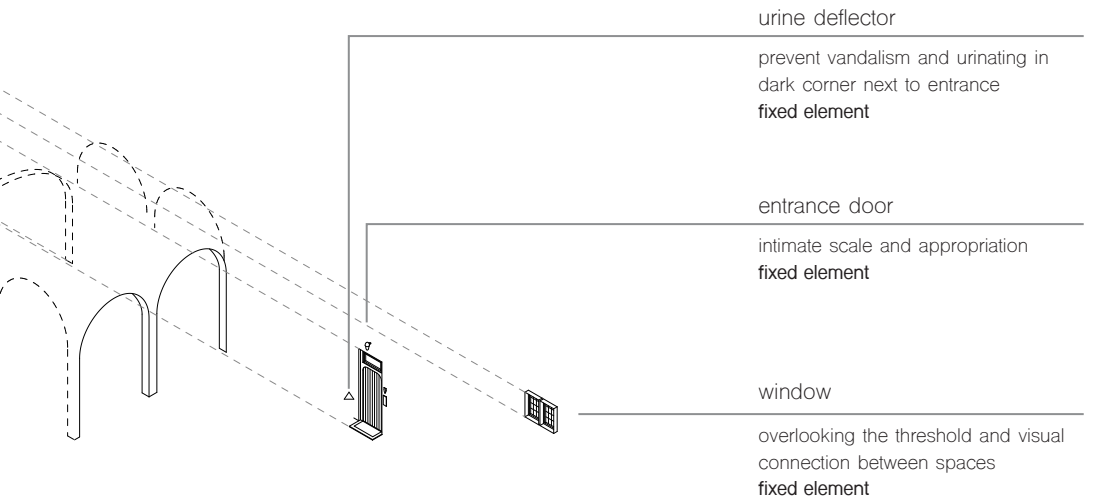
Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour



arches

threshold between square and church courtyard,
protection and intimate scale
fixed element

Meeting



Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Intimate Scale, Threshold

Eating



Eating



Vietnamese Food Vendor
People Eating on Plein1944



Back

Canopy
Metal Roof

Advertising Display Unit

Neon Lighting

nese street food

Advertising Display Unit

Shelter - Fabric
Waterproof Canopy

Light Filing
Warm Light

Window Display
Advertising Products

Temporary Structure

Food Stall
Transportable Unit

Garbage - Non-Fixed

Eating



Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

light fittings

to light up food, produce and counters

fixed element

food and produce

goods to be sold, displayed orderly

non-fixed element

stall signage

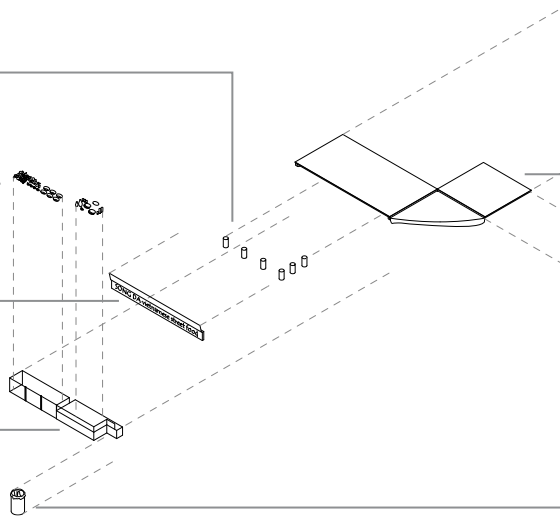
in neon lighting, to attract attention in dark

fixed element

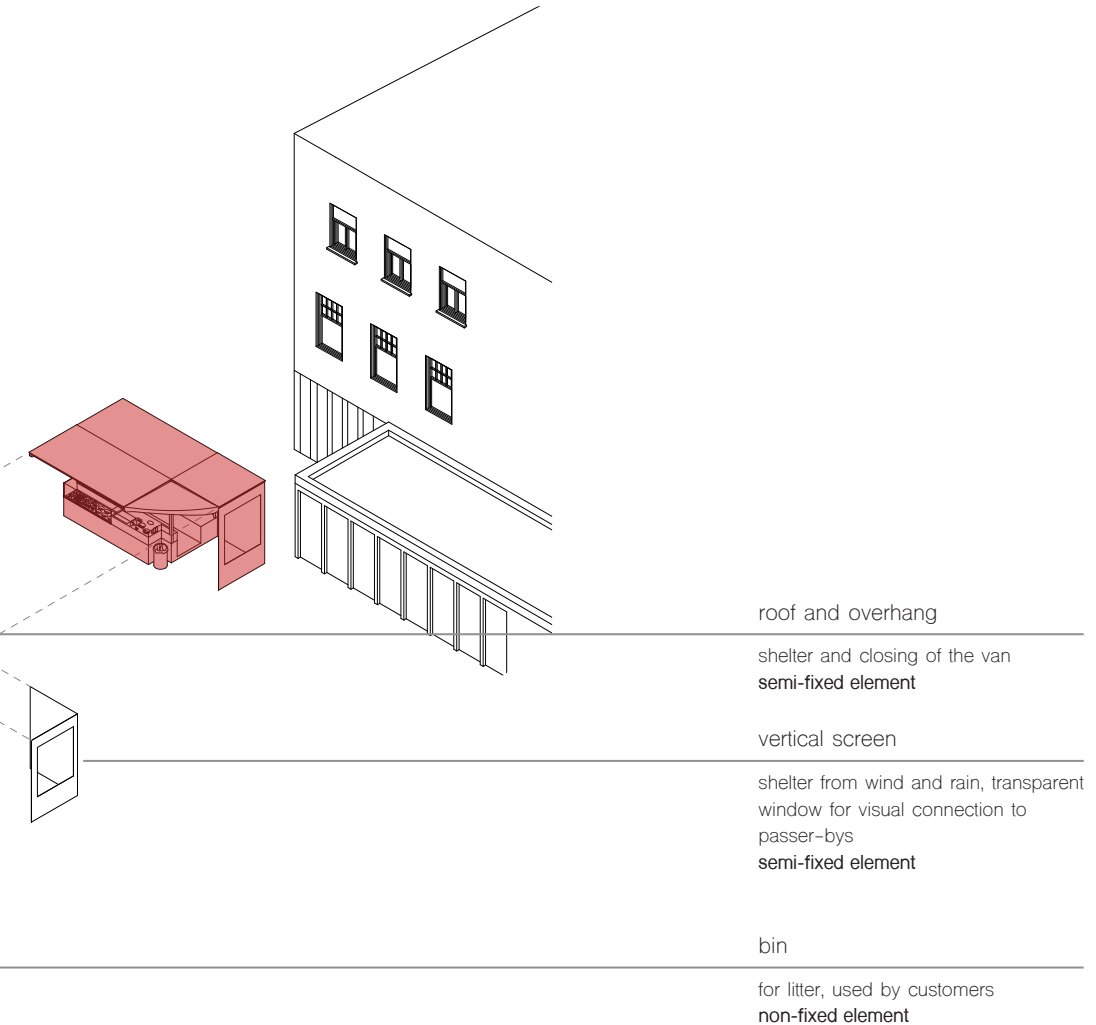
glass screens

to expose produce and food

fixed element



Eating



Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Light, Exhibition

Eating



Eating



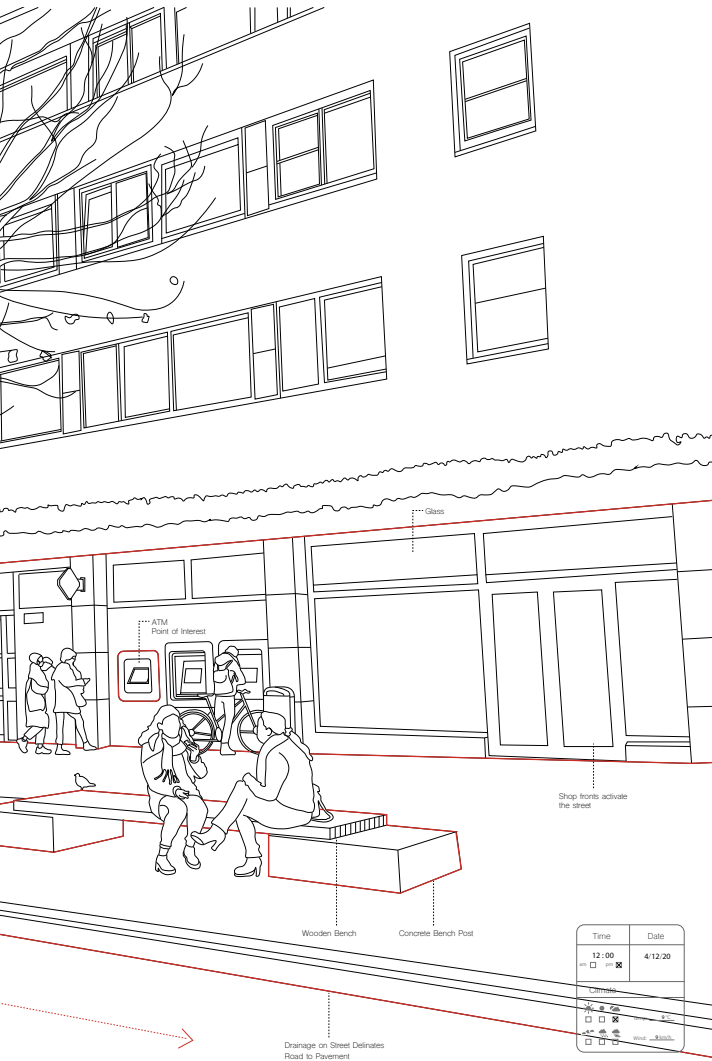
Molenstraat Bench
Mother and Daughter Eating



Tree Provides
Shade and
Protection

Fluid Movement

Eating

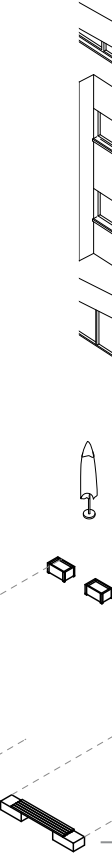
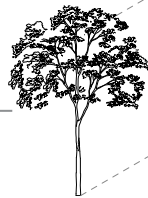


Time	Date
12:00	4/12/20
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Climate	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

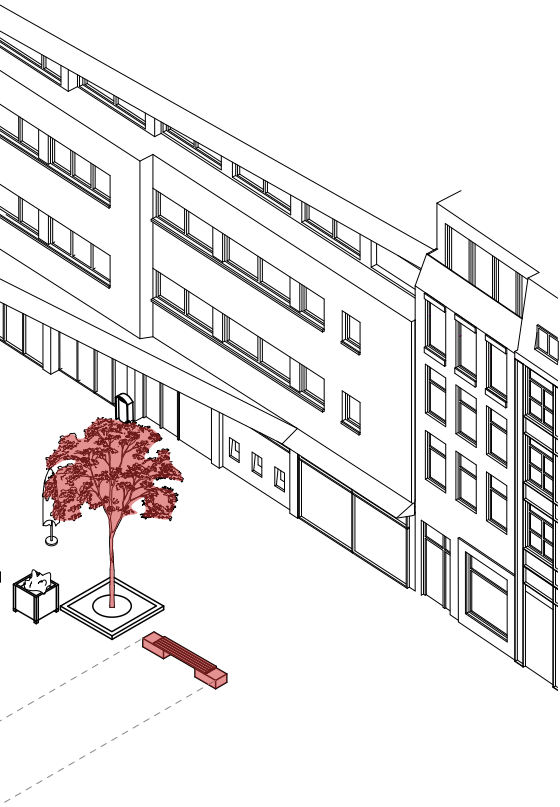
Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

planted tree

provides shelter and sense of protection
semi-fixed element



Eating

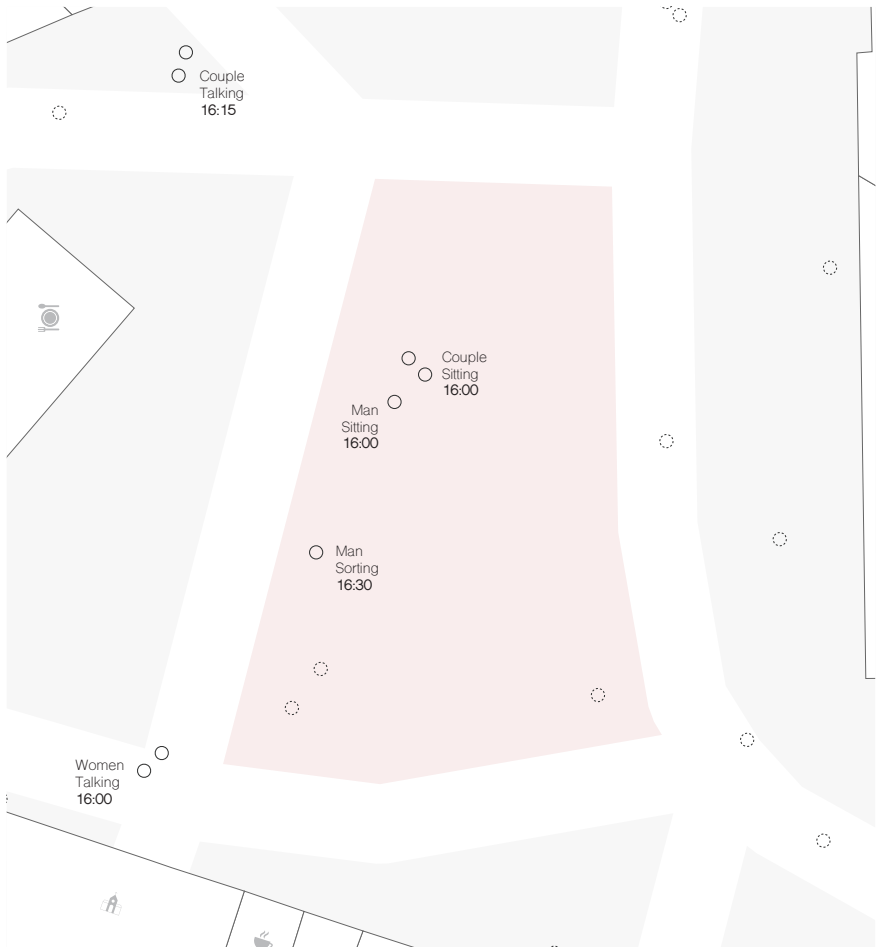


fixed bench

for seating, moment of pause
fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Seating and Pause

Sitting



Sitting

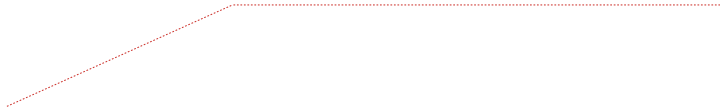


Grote Markt
Couple Sitting on Lampost



Monumental yet Intimate
Backdrop to the Scene

Unavailable seating
Traces of the old square



Stone Paving



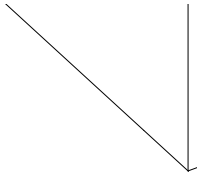
Fluid Movement

Sitting



Time	Date
17:00	4/12/20
Climate	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☀	Temp: 15°C
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☁	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 🌧	Wind: 2 m/s
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 🌨	

Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

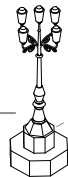


bar/restaurant chairs

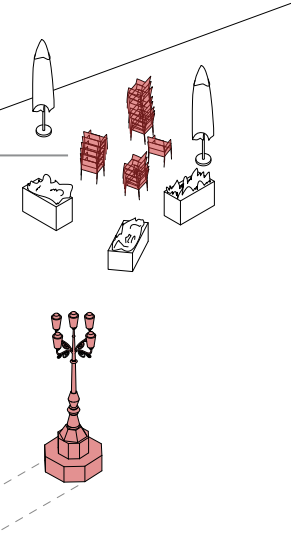
stacked and put aside, for people not to sit on them
non-fixed element

lamp post

focal point in the square, used as seating
fixed element



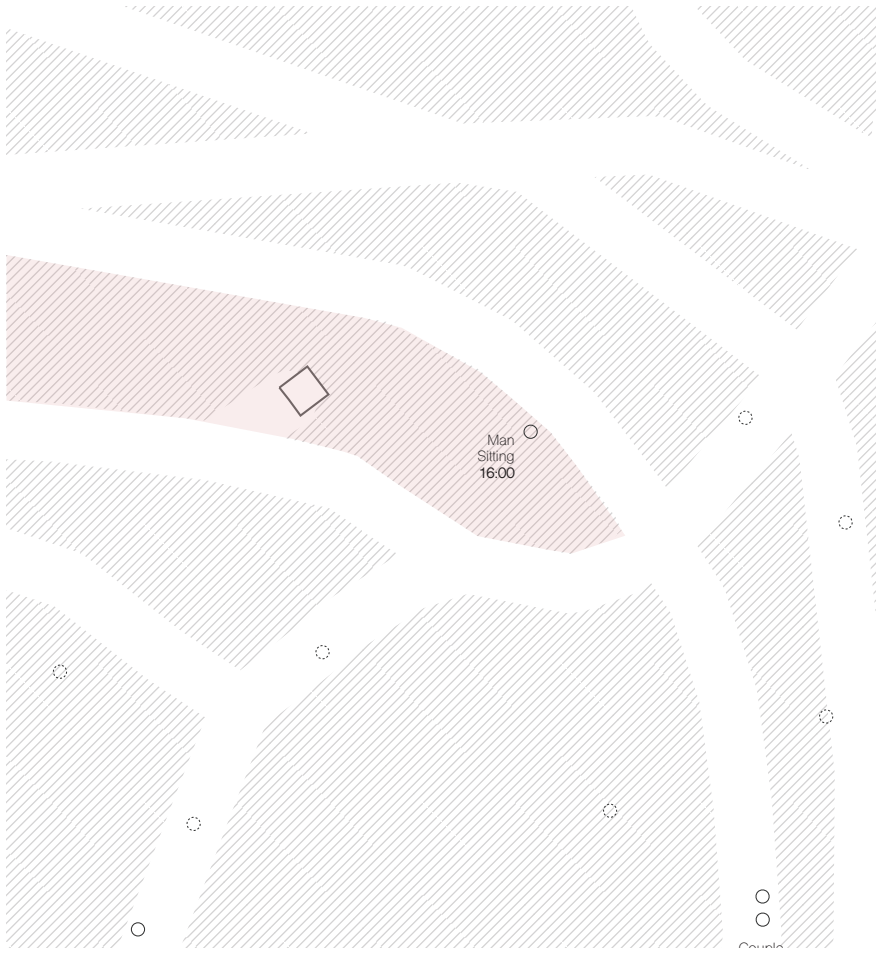
Sitting



umbrella bases

piled up and put aside, not in use
non-fixed element

Sitting



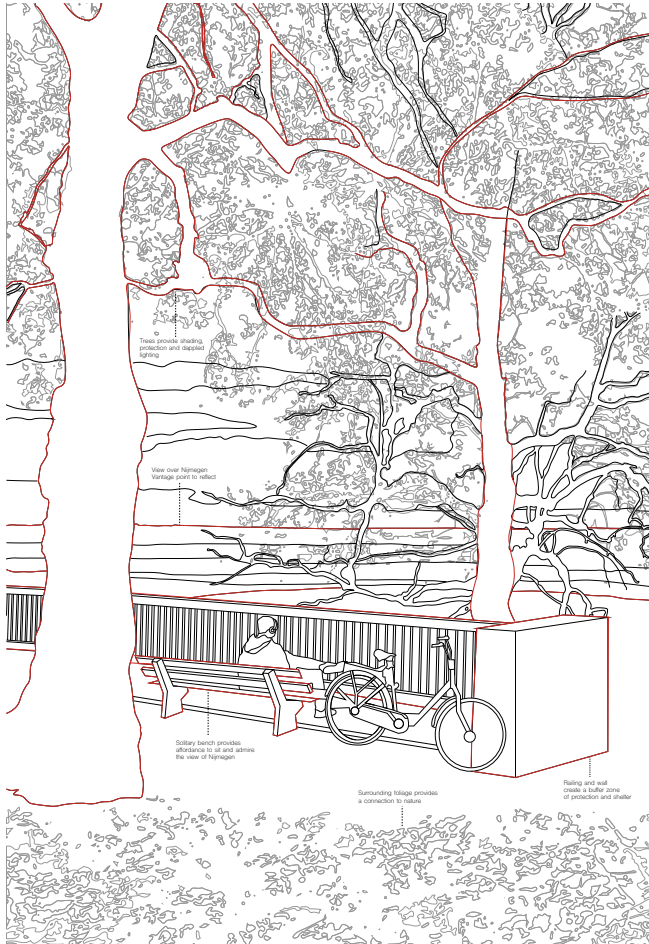
Valkhof Park Plan
Ethnographic Observations

Sitting



Valkhof Park
Man sitting on bench admiring the view

Sitting



Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

metal fence

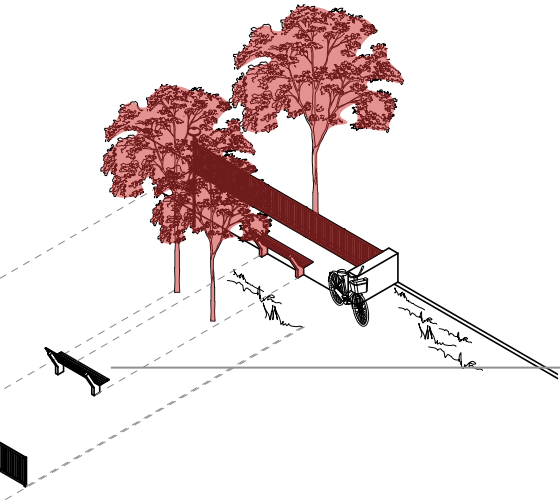
provides protection and allows through vision
fixed element

trees and shrubs

provides shelter, shading and natural enclosure
semi-fixed element



Sitting



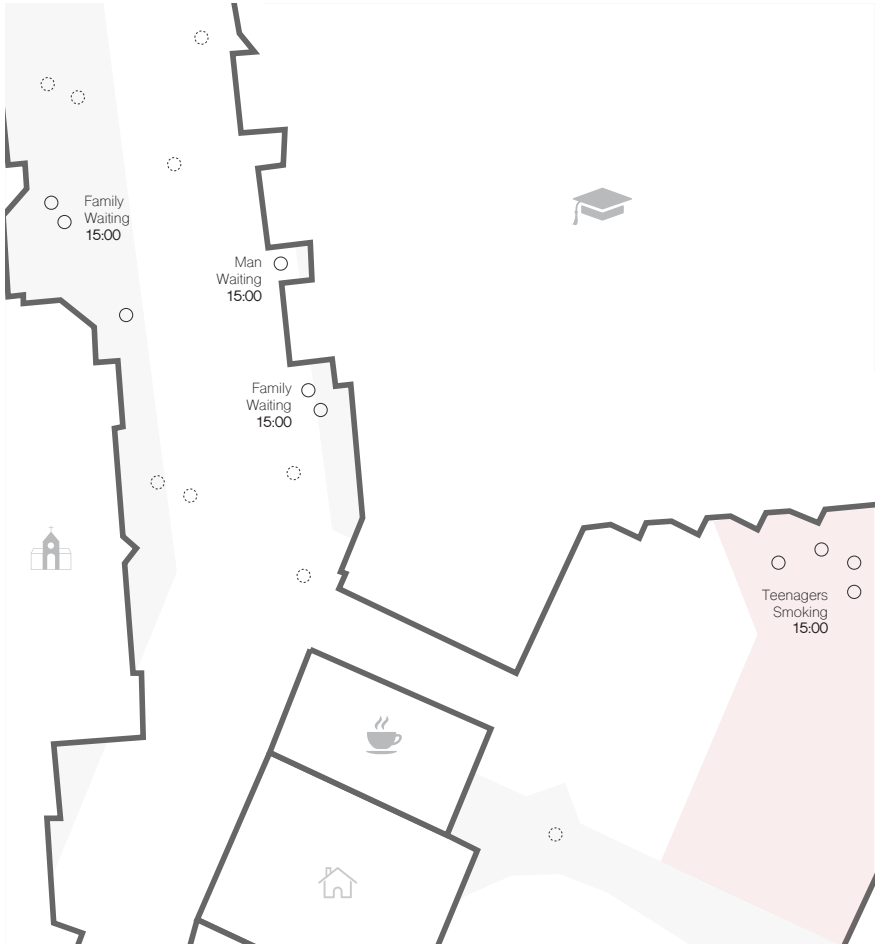
fixed bench

for seating, moment of pause, facing
the horizon

semi-fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Shelter, Nature, Seating and Pause

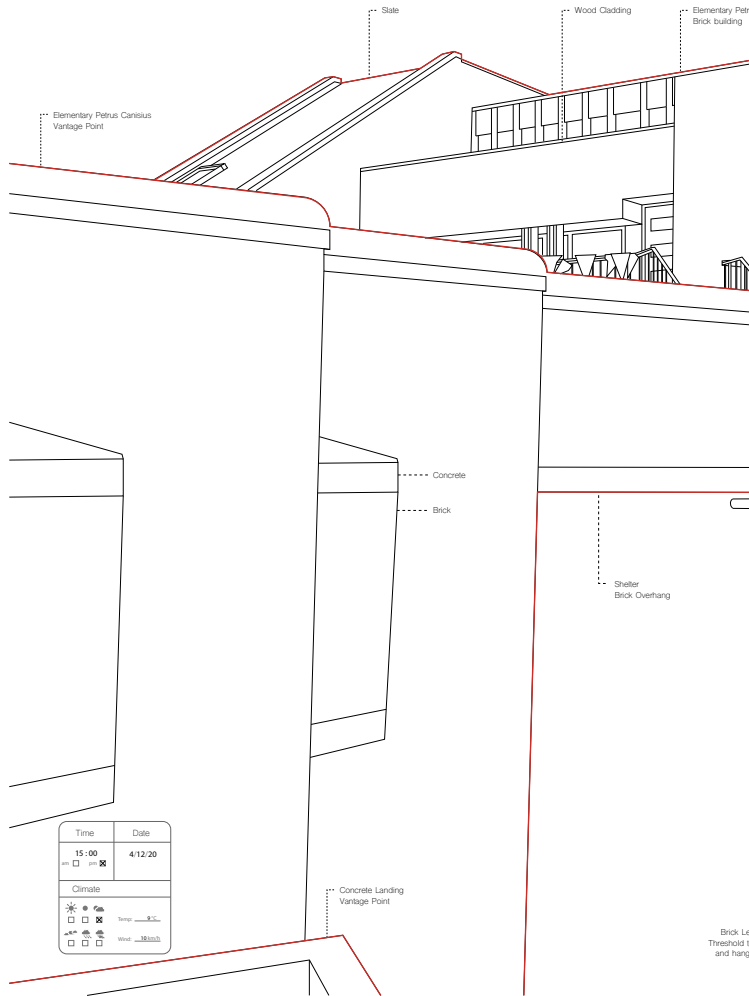
Smoking



Smoking



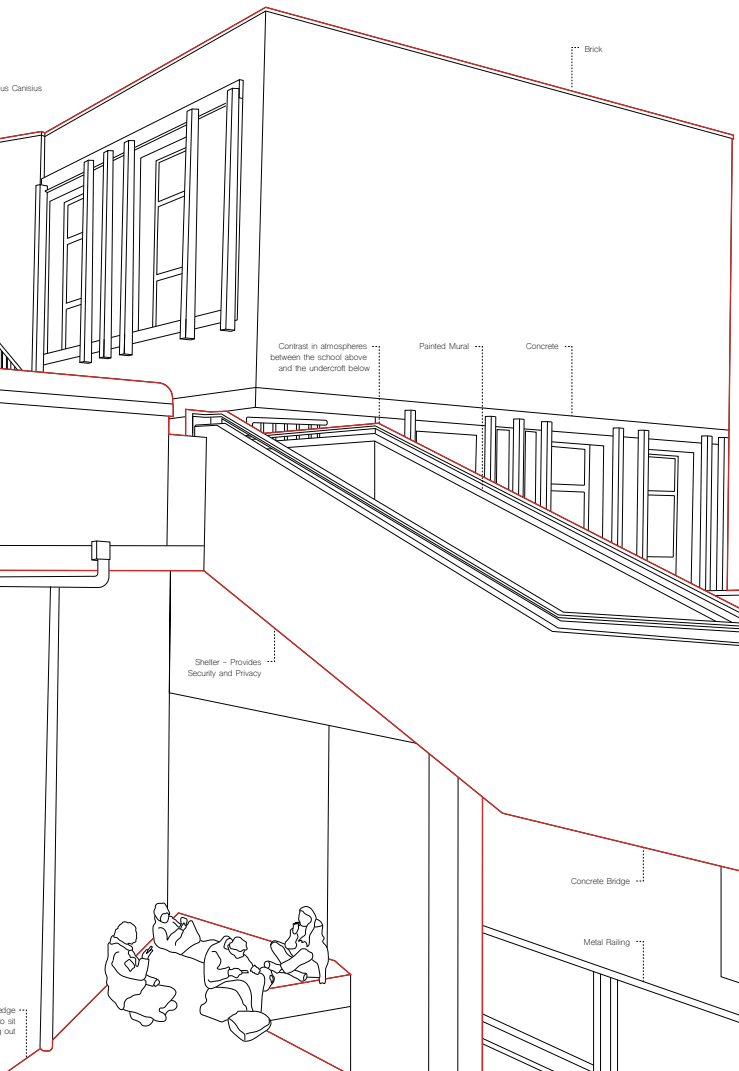
Elementary Petrus Canisius
Teenagers smoking underneath elementary school



Time	Date
15:00	4/12/20
<input type="checkbox"/> ☀ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☁ <input type="checkbox"/> ☔ <input type="checkbox"/> ❄	
Climate	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☀ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☁ <input type="checkbox"/> ☔ <input type="checkbox"/> ❄	Temp <input type="text" value="32.0"/> °C
<input type="checkbox"/> ☀ <input type="checkbox"/> ☁ <input type="checkbox"/> ☔ <input type="checkbox"/> ❄	Wind <input type="text" value="18.0"/> km/h

Brick, L
Threshold and hang

Smoking



Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

slab

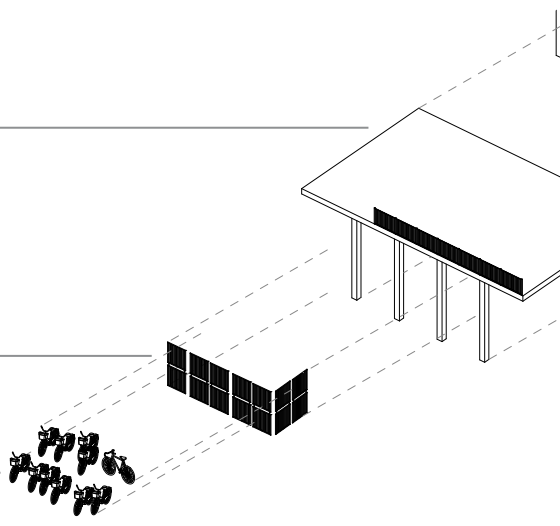
shelter and protection from the elements, playground
fixed element

railings

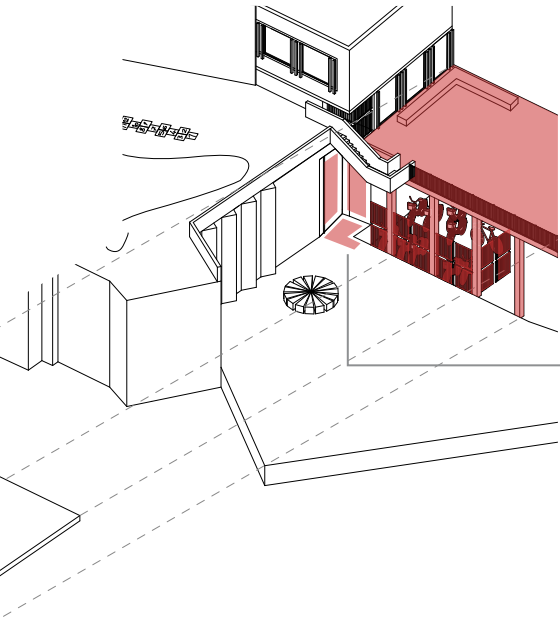
to enclose parked bicycles
fixed element

bikes

parked, belonging to residents and staff
non-fixed element



Smoking

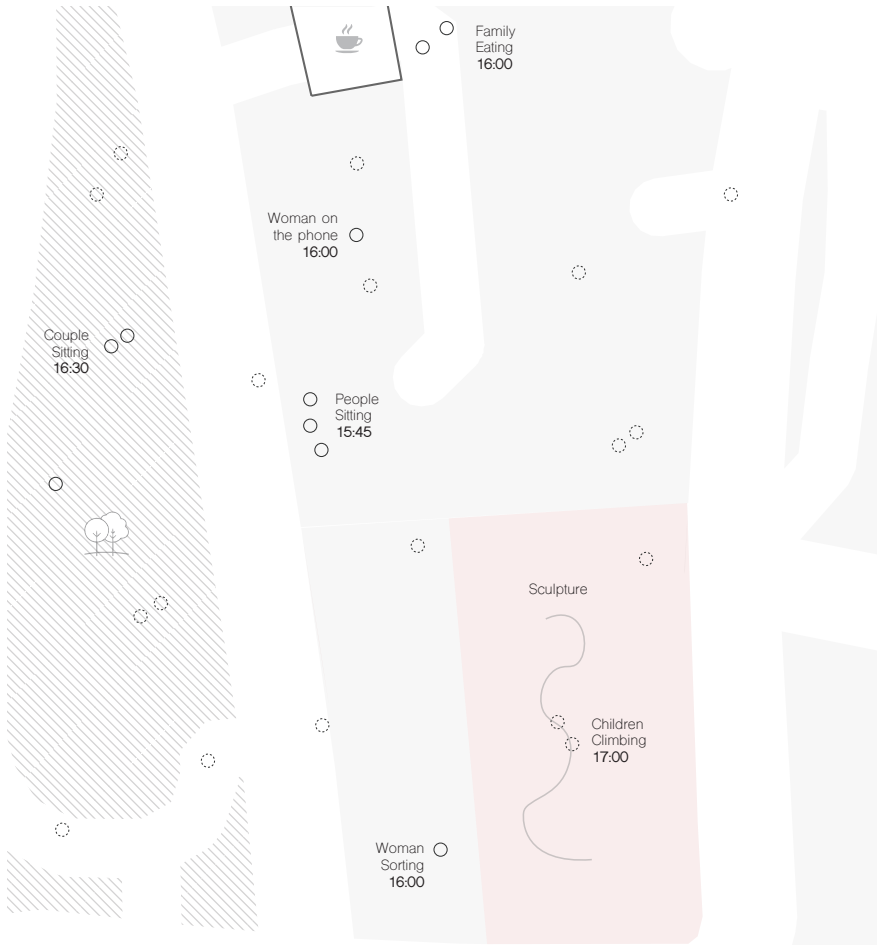


dark, sheltered, hidden corner

for "anti-social" behaviour or for hiding
fixed element

Architectural Elements Analysed
Darkness, Shelter, Privacy

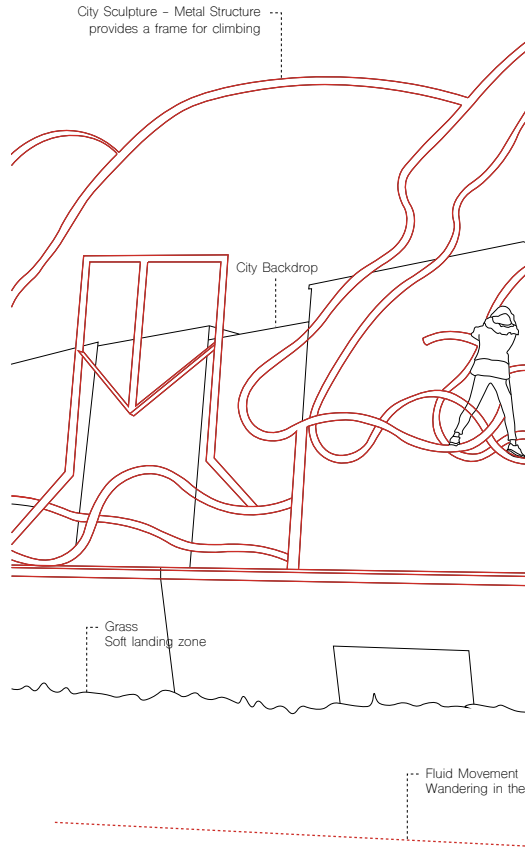
Playing



Playing

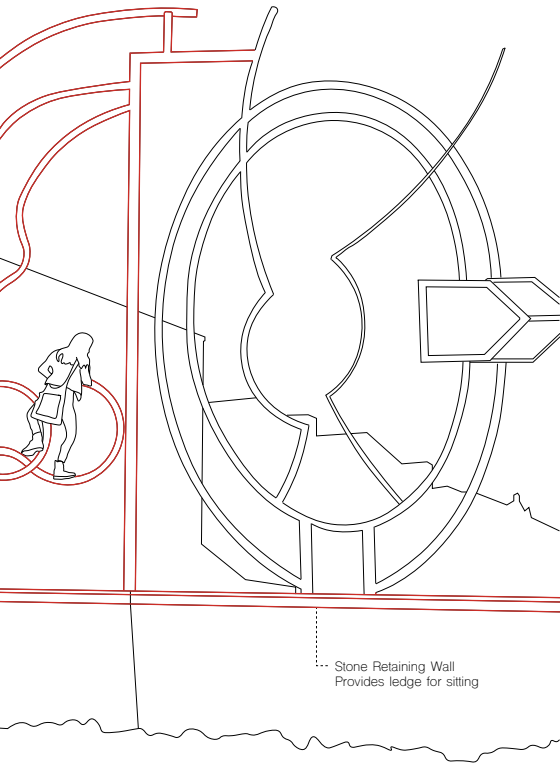


Valkhof Park
Children climbing on sculpture



Time	Date
17:00 PM ☐ PM ☒	4/12/20
Climate	
☀ ☁ ☔ ☕ ☘	Temp 8°C
☁ ☔ ☕ ☘ ☑	Wind 9 km/h

Playing



Stone Retaining Wall
Provides ledge for sitting

Park

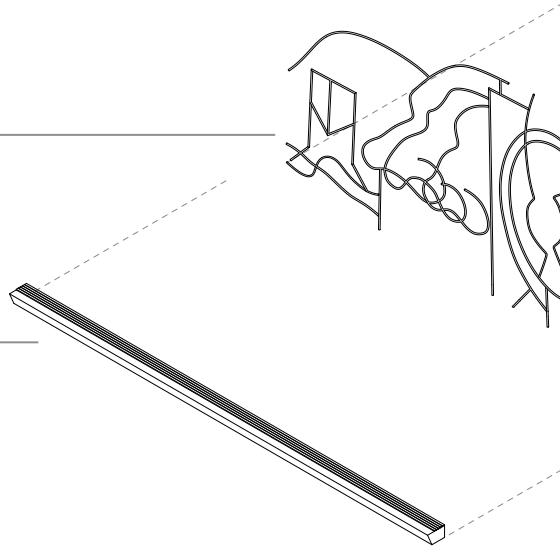
Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

sculpture

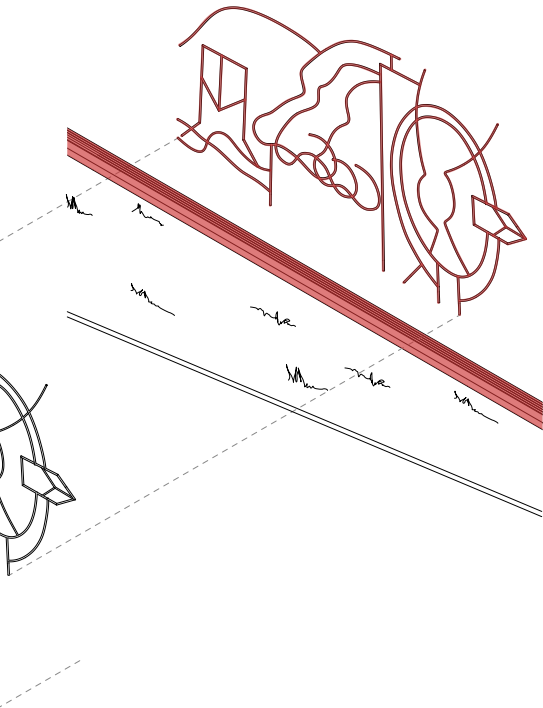
artwork for the square, climbing structure for kids
fixed element

bench

barrier to the main street
fixed element

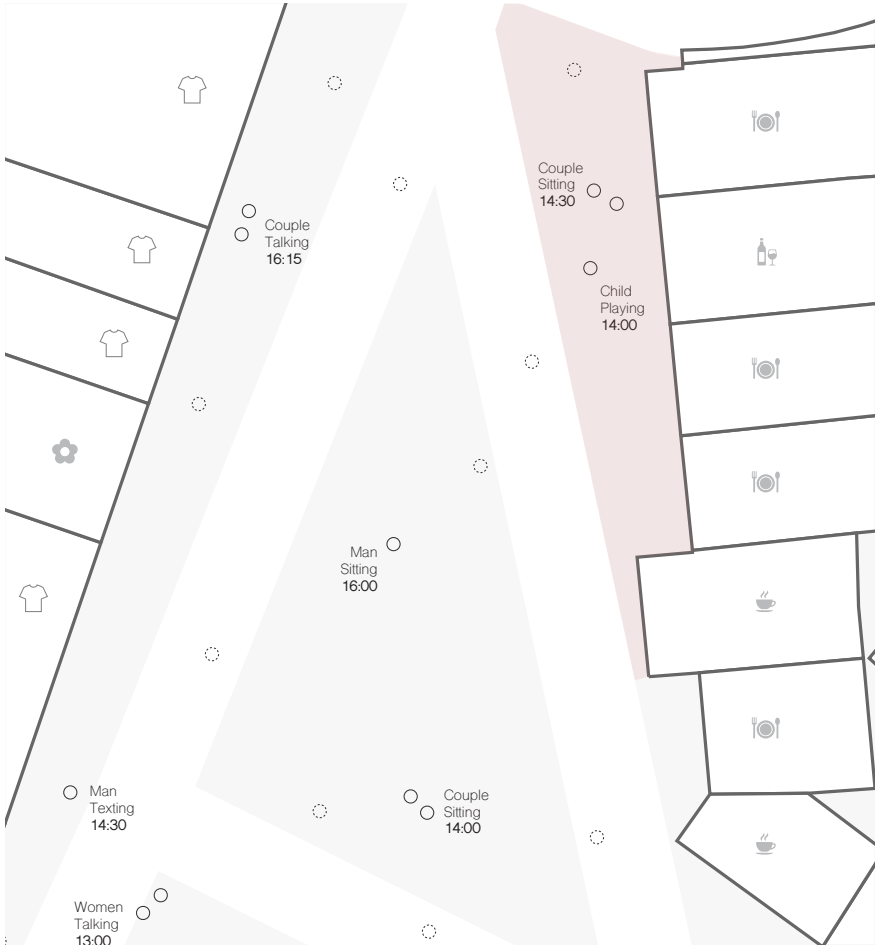


Playing



Architectural Elements Analysed
Play, Fixed Structure, Height

Playing

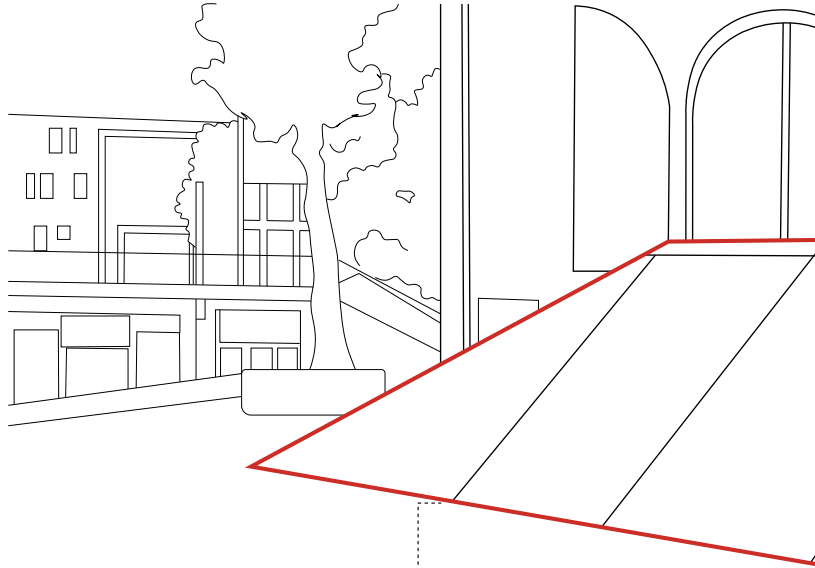


Playing

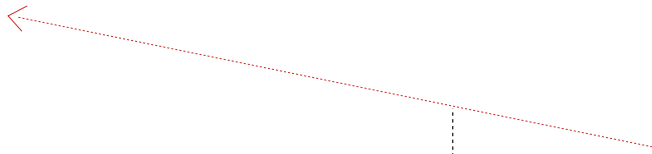


Marienburg Restaurant
Child sliding down stone ramp

Vantage Point for se



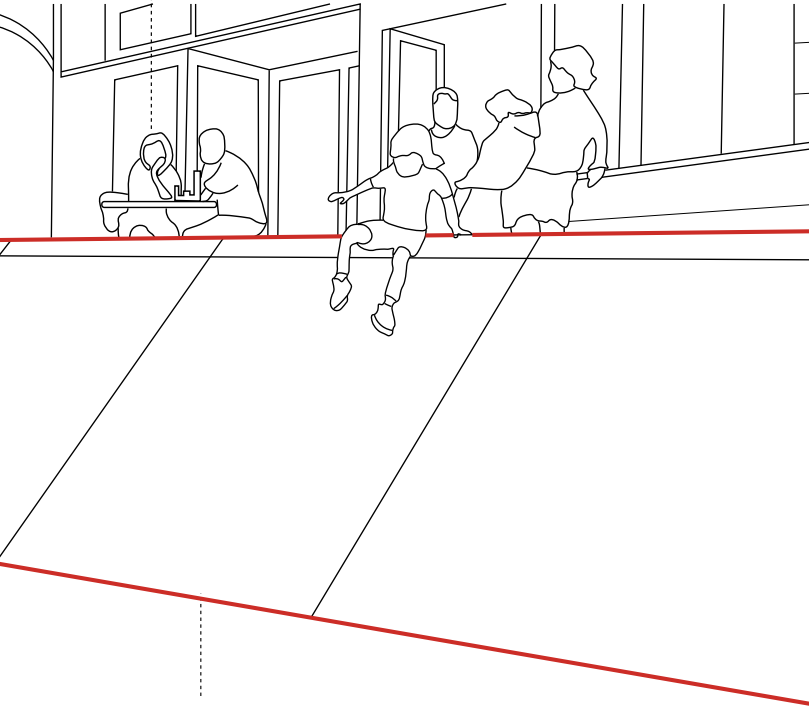
Ramp set apart from street
as a place to dwell



Fluid Movement of pedestrians

Playing

ating- audience



Stone Barrier Utilised as slide

→

Time	Date
14:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18/09/20
Climate	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☀ <input type="checkbox"/> ☁ <input type="checkbox"/> ☔	Temp: 13 °C
<input type="checkbox"/> ☁ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ☔ <input type="checkbox"/> ☀	Wind: 9 km/h

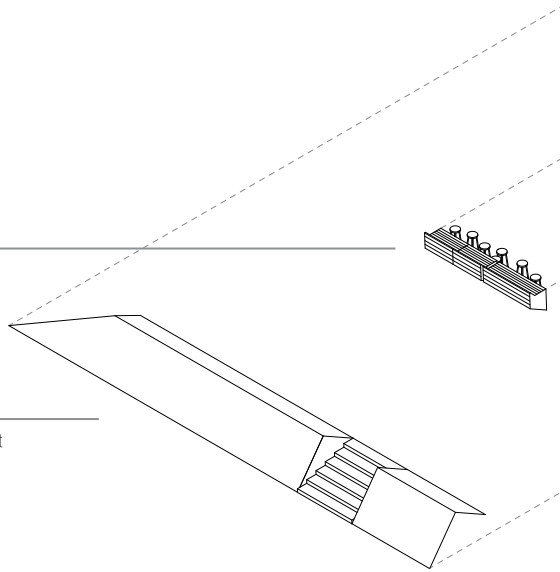
Scene Analysed
Climate, Temporality, Material Culture, Behaviour

bar seating and tables

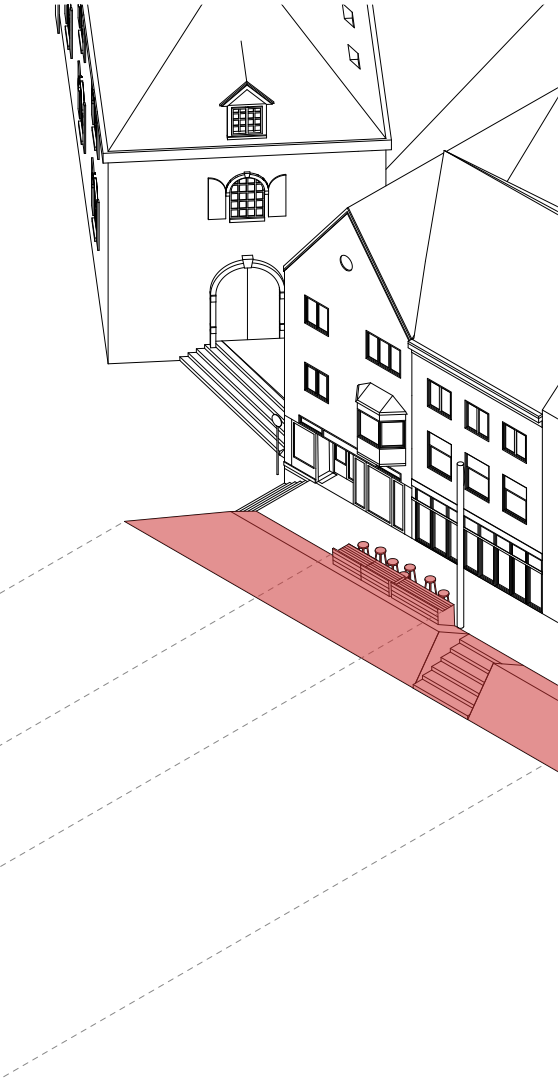
vantage point for users, overlooking the square
non-fixed elements

ramped edge

to adapt to natural topography, providing vantage point
fixed element



Playing



Architectural Elements Analysed
Play, Lanscaped, Geometry

Conclusion

From this body of research we learned how the cultural gestures of everyday are influenced by the built environment, and, in turn, how the urban fabric is shaped by its cultural practices. This analysis has formed a strong basis for our designs to develop upon, designing directly from our observations of the local context. Although hesitant when designing, we understood that certain scenes were intrinsically connected to the context, morphology and urban scale of Nijmegen, even if the action itself could also be found in other cultures and places. Our hope is that this specificity can be translated into our own designs, reflecting the traits of the city through a new found sensibility.

When moving from this body of ethnographic research to design, we were hesitant to project our assumptions of what the space should or could be used for as we observed that the most unexpected uses of space were the most vibrant. This led us to question the role of the architect in designing public space. Therefore, in our designs we have interrogated the degree to which we should choreograph our spaces for certain actions, or leave them unprogrammed to allow for unexpected use.

