

United in diversity: shared social housing in today's Anderlecht

A curative project that reacts to the individualized society,
striving for a reconciliation of the fragments of Brussels
and mediation of the collective in social housing.

Research Report

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Urban Architecture MSc 3 2019/2020

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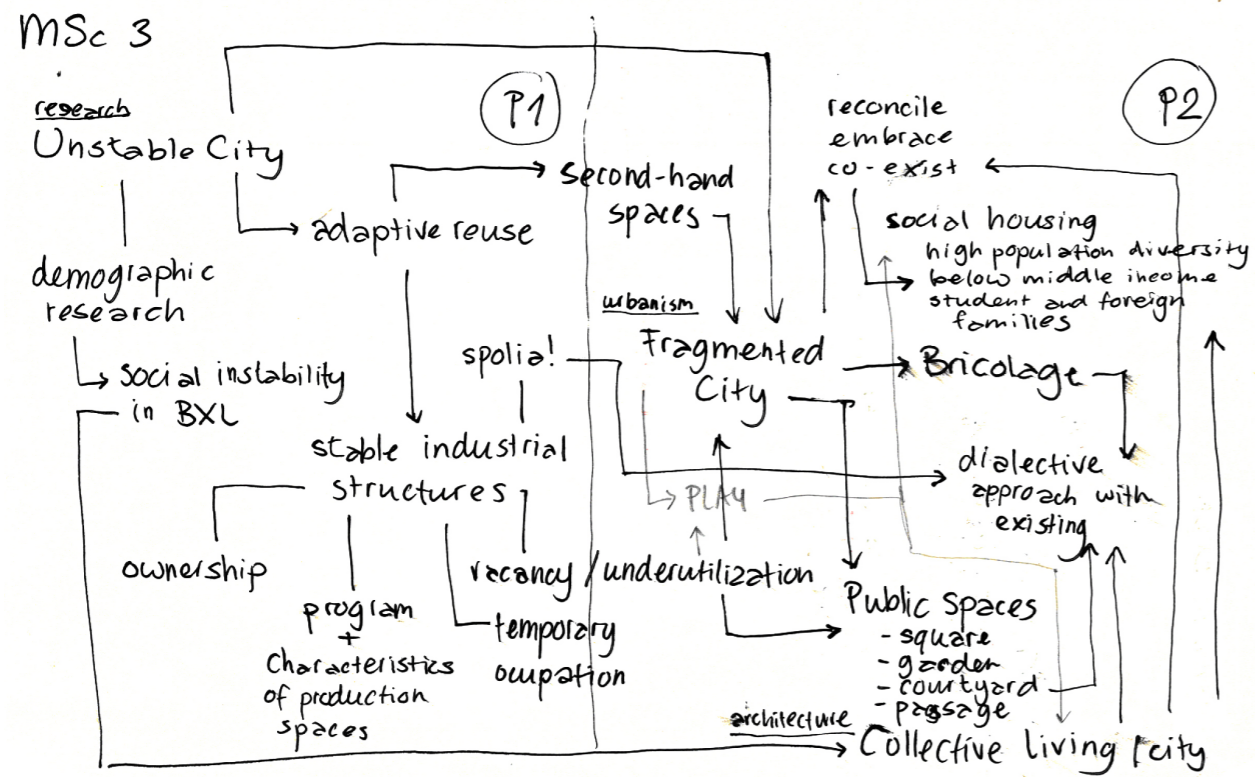


Figure 1: research process

Introduction

This research report by Trang Phan is depicted as a logbook of process during MSc3 of the graduation studio Spolia (Chair of Urban Architecture). The booklet can be read in two ways as it is build up as a twofold: on the one hand the research process and on the other hand the design process. Since these two processes worked parallel, meaning it went hand in hand, it did not make sense to separate it. Therefore, the research and design results are interwoven throughout this booklet and this distinction can be recognized by the highlighted color: whereas red stands for research and blue stands for design.

What makes this booklet comprehensible is the different directions of browsing. When one opens the booklet, browsing from left to right will show you the design process. Similarly, browsing from right to left will show you the research process.

part 1

the Unstable city

Redefining the theme

As one of the five research themes, the Unstable City is considered as a description of the researched part of Anderlecht. The studio points out that the chosen site looks more like a yard of fragments rather than a considerate composition (Handout UA, 2019). The site consists of four fragmented elements.

Firstly, the former chocolate factory that offers cheap space for tenants as ROTOR among others. The plot has a remarkable shape as it was formed by the river Zenne and the spoliated facade of the old cheese factory is still present in the outdoor space. This fragment gives a hint to the industrial past of the area.

On the other side of the plot, there is the social housing slab from the 70's that stands out prominently in the neighborhood (Image 1). The proportions of this high-rise building intrigue and raise questions about the residents and how this structure

has an effect on the surroundings.

Besides that, one can also find houses with backyard workshops facing the northwest street of the site. After demolishing, partly of the adjacent houses are rebuilt. However, on the backside, a fenced park happens to be the replacement.

Lastly, the covered river Zenne has left behind its traces on the site in terms of old industrial activities and the morphology of the urban plan, or rather, unplanned development.

To comprehend the Unstable City, it was necessary to find out the individual position towards this topic to get a deeper understanding of the definition. This is necessary to create a framework and get a clear image of the lens that will be looked through during the process.

Image 1: Les Goujons, social housing



What does unstable mean when it occurs in the city?
Does a city ever become stable? And how do you deal with instability in the city? In what ways do buildings contribute to the instability? And what about public space?

A lot of questions when it comes to this subject. Firstly, the generic definition of instability according to the dictionary is:

1. the condition of being likely to change, especially unexpectedly *;
2. uncertainty caused by the possibility of a sudden change in the present situation*;
3. and some synonyms of 'unstable' are insecure, uncertain, unpredictable, unsettled, unsteady **.

Recurring terms that could give a supportive meaning to the 'Unstable City' are change, unexpectedly, uncertainty, unsettled, unpredictable. I find these terms burdened with negative charges, therefore I started the research on the potentials of instability in a city.

In the book **Spaces of Uncertainty** *** several experts talk about the same topic and share their ideas and approaches to unstable cities such as Berlin. For instance, the

main author **Cupers (2002, p. 16)** stresses the importance of instability in the city to maintain its character. He states "the urban public sphere can be based on a model of confrontation and instability, as it is characterized by encounters and confrontations between people. Public spaces are (...) places where the individual and the community can, openly and insecurely, meet. (...) the highly structured, programmed, and controlled spaces in the contemporary city mean to threaten the city's crucial characteristics - namely, openness and unpredictability." (Cupers, 2002). According to **Margaret Crawford (2002)**, this instability is not only important, on the contrary, it is even unavoidable. She describes in her essay called 'Making Sense of Change' that cities are never static, but constantly transform themselves. She continues "new populations arrive, relocate, and depart." "No matter how partial or contradictory our information, it is almost impossible to avoid

* <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

** <https://www.thesaurus.com/>
<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>

*** collaborative publication by two architects, Cupers and Miessen, that presented urban research and a photographic essay on the life of leftover spaces in Berlin. An international exhibition continued this investigation with Brussels as one of the case studies.

reading change as directional, demonstrating progress or decay and, psychologically most important, good or bad."

After the literature research on what experts state about this topic, I created a Venn diagram on how I interpret the value of instability (Figure 2).

The term temporary does not refer to temporary architecture that is already known in antiquity for structures that were used for short-term events (Chabrowe, 1974). In this case, temporary concerns the change of use of the building.

Dynamics of the city declares the ongoing movement of people entering, leaving and through the city. The dynamics of expanding and shrinking, but also the tension and development of old and new cultures.

Flexibility not only covers the extent of adaptability of buildings to new programs. It also includes the adaptability on social aspect: so how new inhabitants can integrate in the

current society. And moreover, how the contemporary city can adapt to the changing society.

An Unstable City constantly deals with (unexpectedly or unpredictable) change that one can interpret as a form of uncertainty in the urban environment. However, the Unstable City simultaneously offers spaces of exploration to put flexibility, temporary and dynamics in architecture into practice.

Figure 2: Venn diagram



Four case studies on adaptive reuse

After restructuring the research group existing of 6 students, three units ended up differing in pace of instability. The slow pace that deals with city experience of people and typology, the medium pace that deals with building structures and the fast pace that deals with borders and its side activities.

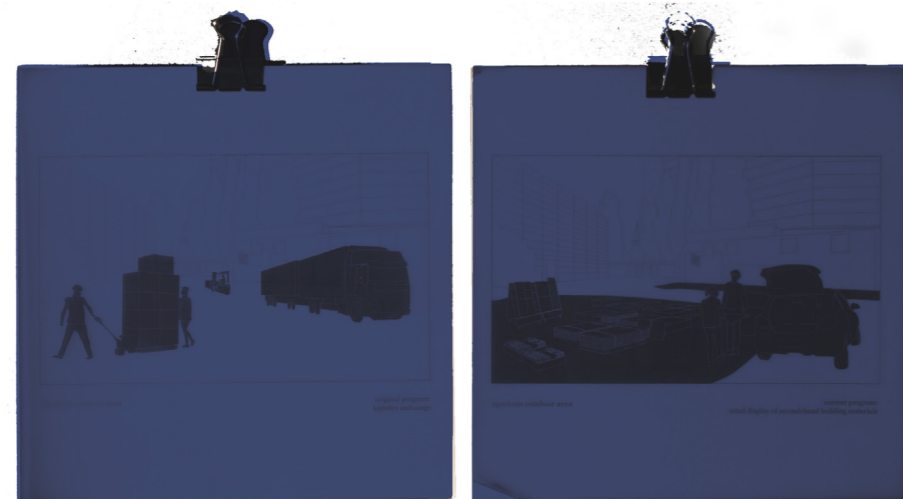
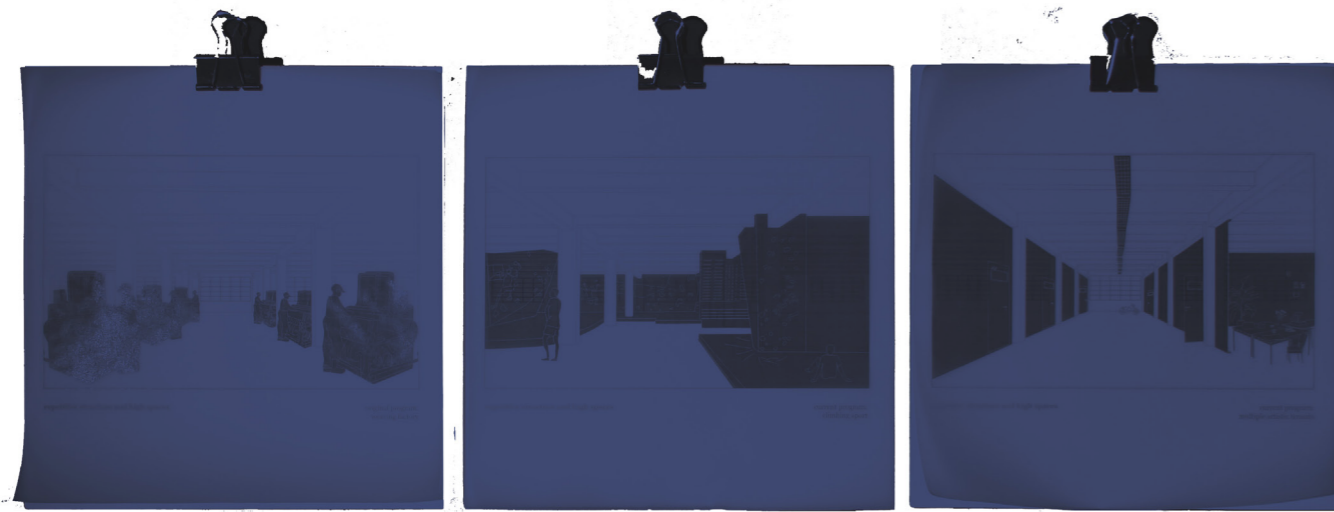
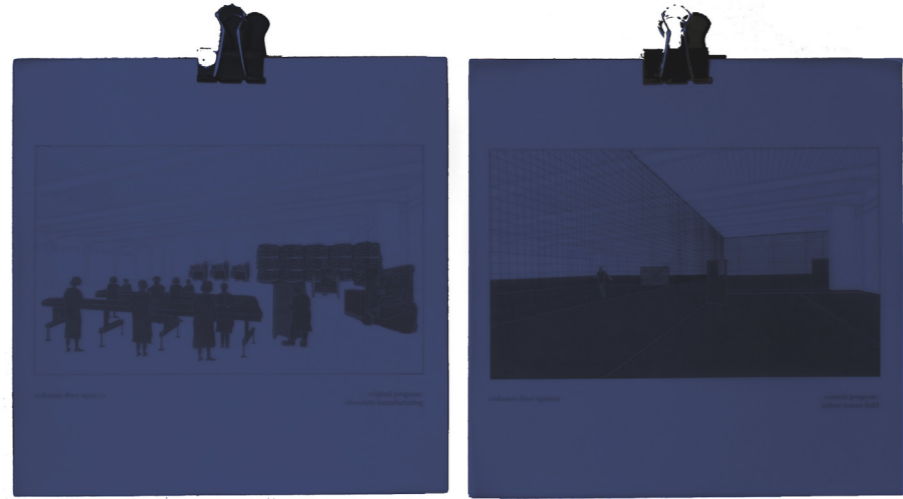
One of the research unit was formed to conduct research on a building level. Around the assigned design location four projects have been detected on adaptive reuse (Figure 3). This leads to the main question:

How do these stable structures accommodate unstable programs?

Within this, subquestions derived and in-depth research was done on the transition between the original and current program and the spatial qualities that allowed this transition to second-life.

Figure 3: Stable structures

1. TicTac
2. Davi
3. Leonidas Factory
4. Studio Citygate



Heuristic of communication

Hernández (2018, p. 93), who did a talk during the Lecture Series Research Methods on heuristics, explains in his dissertation that the codification of the information acquired from, and used to define the built environment constitutes the communicative heuristic. In other words, a way of communicating architectural knowledge. The instrument that is used to communicate the architectural knowledge during the P1 exhibition is a diptych* and the method consists of visual layering (Image 2) whereby the existing structures and the change of program with the associated human appropriation of the spaces are distilled. The “hinge”, that relates these two images with each other, took the form of adaptive reuse.

Diptychs, that originated in the Roman and Byzantine times, introduce a visualization and reflection on the meaning of components presenting in the pictures. Photographer John Bernhard enhances the meaning of the images’ interplay, which often produces ambiguous feelings**. **This tool of communication is used to invite the viewer in an interactive way by adding a transparent layer, but also to invite the viewer to establish a personal connection through the subtle pairing.**

* This is a two-dimensional graphic work with two images, which are related to each other formally and/or substantively by a distinct “hinge”.

** John Bernhard is a Swiss American photographer and devoted his book ‘Diptych’ to this visual communication.

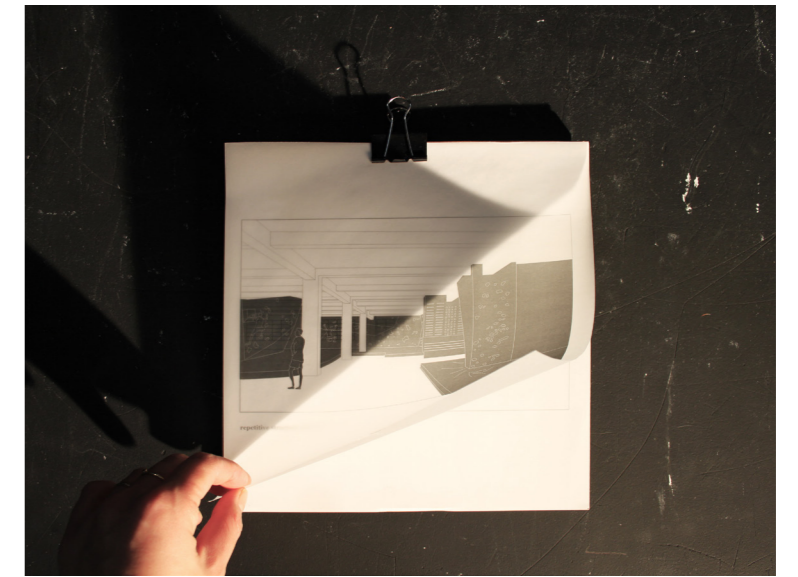


Image 2: visual layering (right)

Figure 5: a serie of one triptych and two diptychs (left)

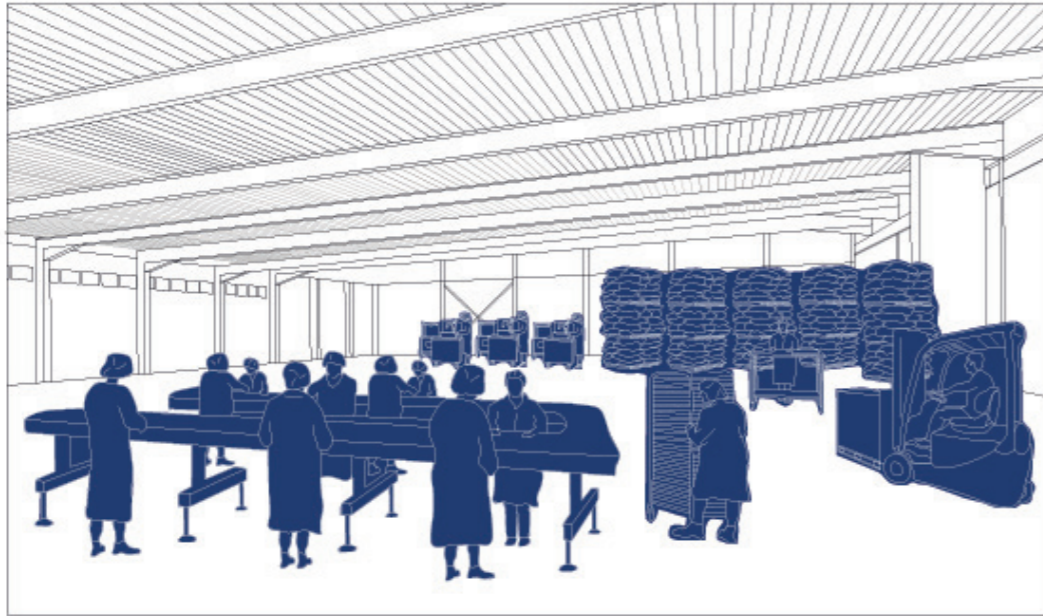
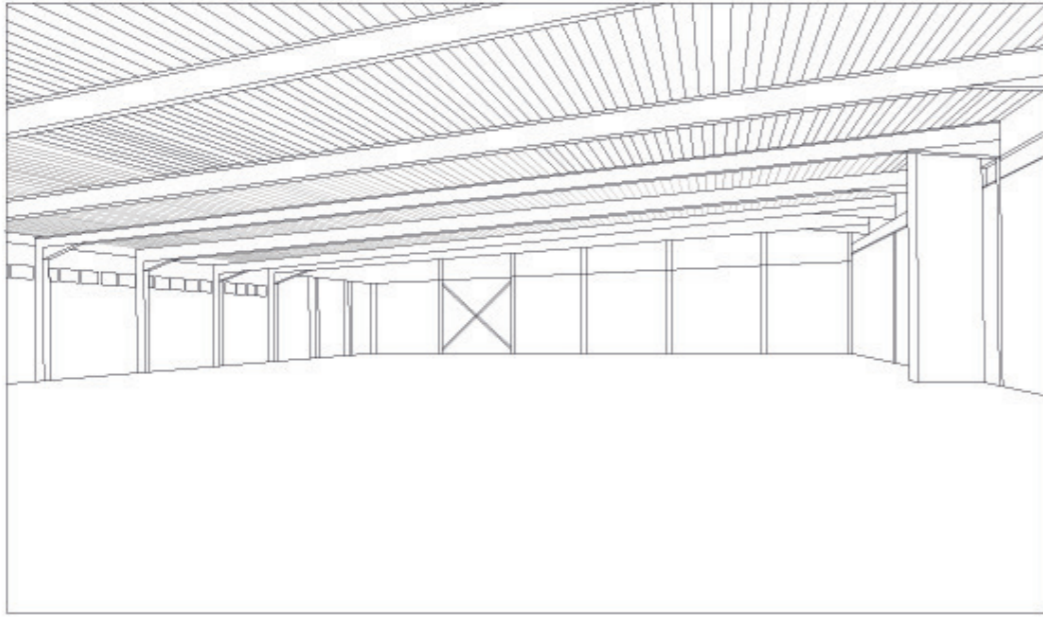


Figure 7: column free spaces

Figure 8: original program,
chocolate manufacturing

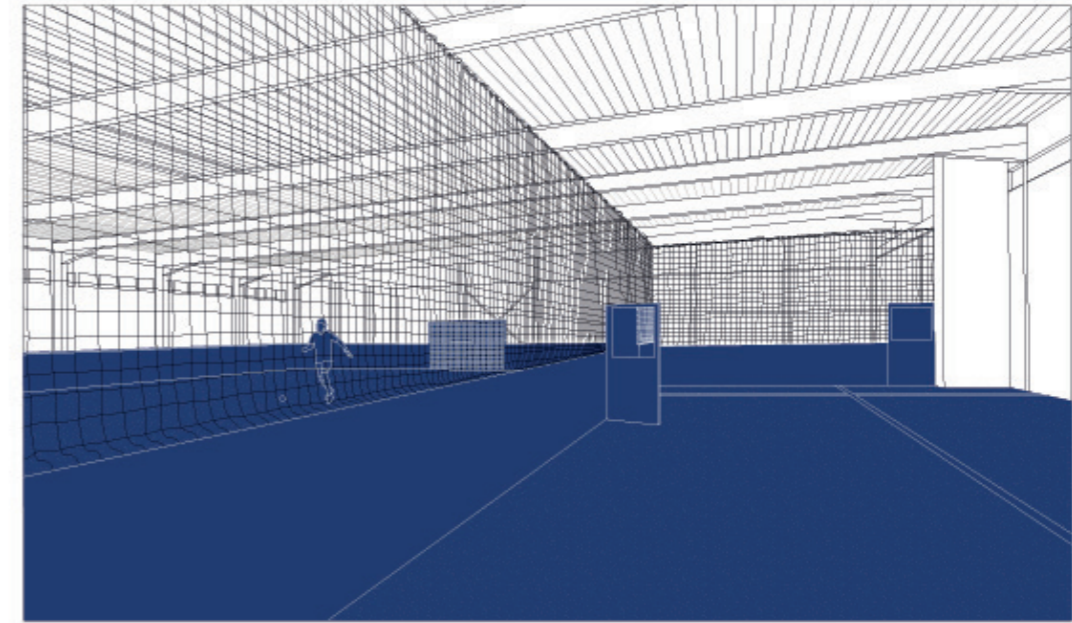
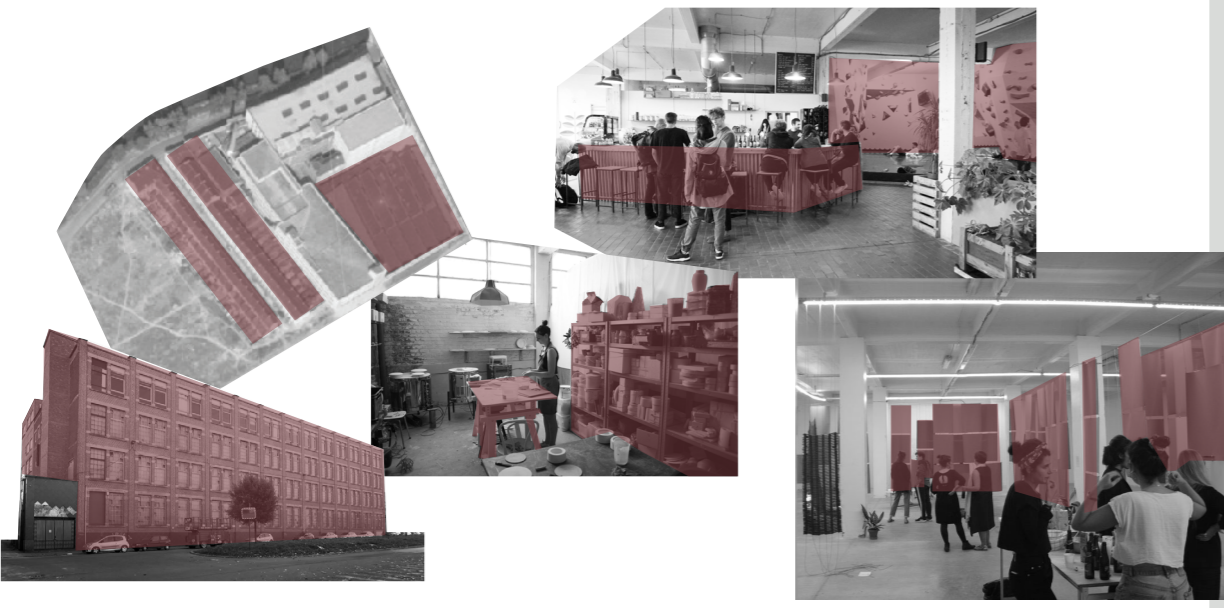


Figure 9: current program,
indoor soccer field



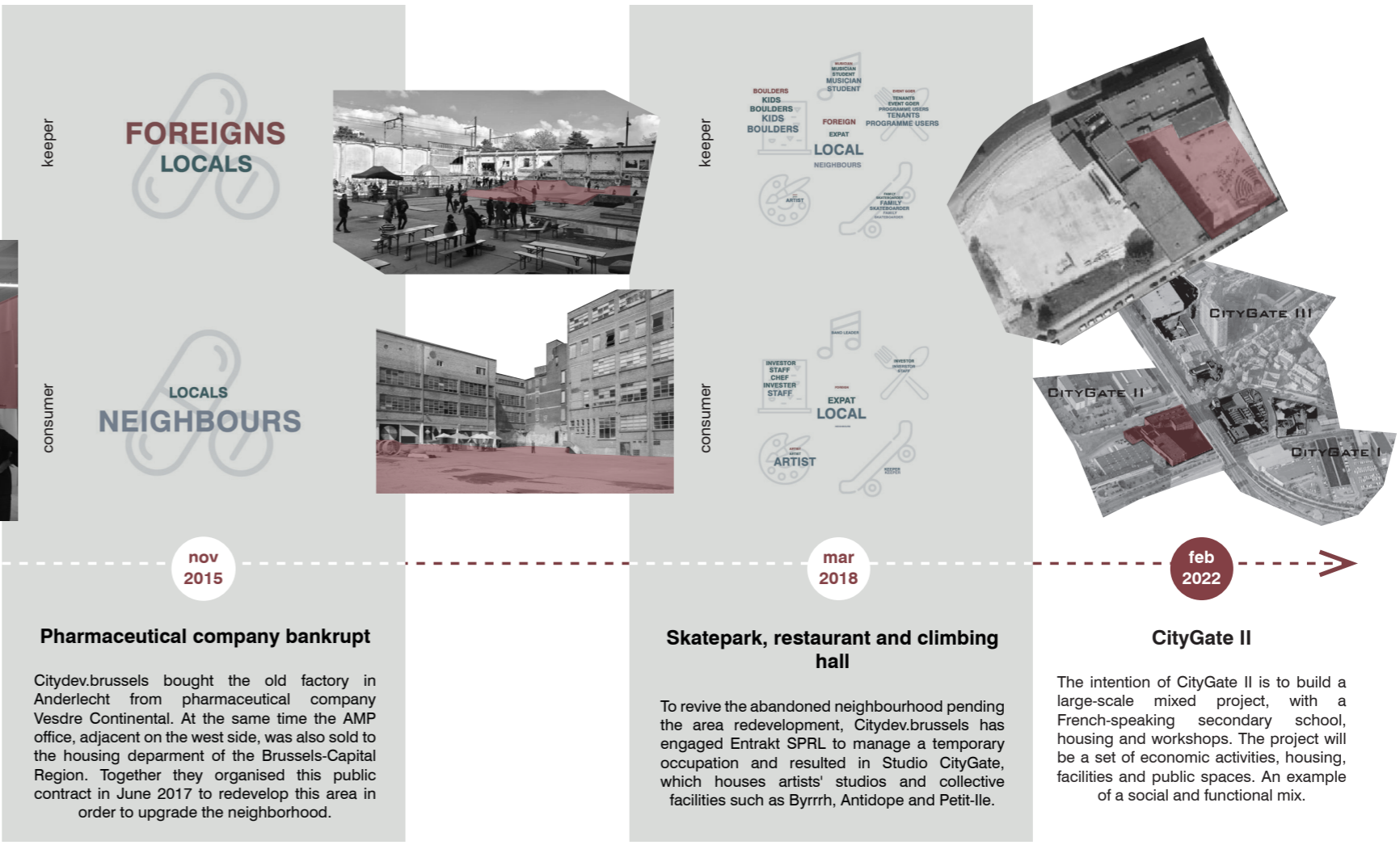
Grondelsstraat 152

1912

1953

Weaving factory designed by J. Rosschaerts

In 1912 the designer Jean Rosschaerts created the building that accommodated a weaving factory called Le Vesdre. The factory was provided with 42 worker's houses. In the beginning of the 70s a courtyard enclosed by the railroad appeared due to the demolition. Later this building was adaptive reused by a pharmaceutical company.



nov 2015

mar 2018

feb 2022

Pharmaceutical company bankrupt

Citydev.brussels bought the old factory in Anderlecht from pharmaceutical company Vesdre Continental. At the same time the AMP office, adjacent on the west side, was also sold to the housing department of the Brussels-Capital Region. Together they organised this public contract in June 2017 to redevelop this area in order to upgrade the neighborhood.

Skatepark, restaurant and climbing hall

To revive the abandoned neighbourhood pending the area redevelopment, Citydev.brussels has engaged Entrakt SPRL to manage a temporary occupation and resulted in Studio CityGate, which houses artists' studios and collective facilities such as Byrrrh, Antidope and Petit-Ile.

CityGate II

The intention of CityGate II is to build a large-scale mixed project, with a French-speaking secondary school, housing and workshops. The project will be a set of economic activities, housing, facilities and public spaces. An example of a social and functional mix.

Studio Citgate

From the early 20th century, this building (20.000 m²) is one of the largest temporary used buildings in Belgium. Originally it was built for a weaver factory (Figure 12) with 42 workers' houses neighboring the factory on the west facade. After a while, one part of the building got demolished and a courtyard, enclosed by the railway, building facades, and street, emerged from

this. The building is divided in Wing A and Wing B. Both wings have their own entrance and core of stairways. However, the program and tenants are mixed up through the building. In 2017 Citydev.Brussels bought up the plot and hired Entrakt to manage the interim period. Throughout the whole building, you will find concrete columns, high spaces, and elevated windows.

Figure 10: Timeline
Grondelsstraat 152 / La rue des Goujons 152

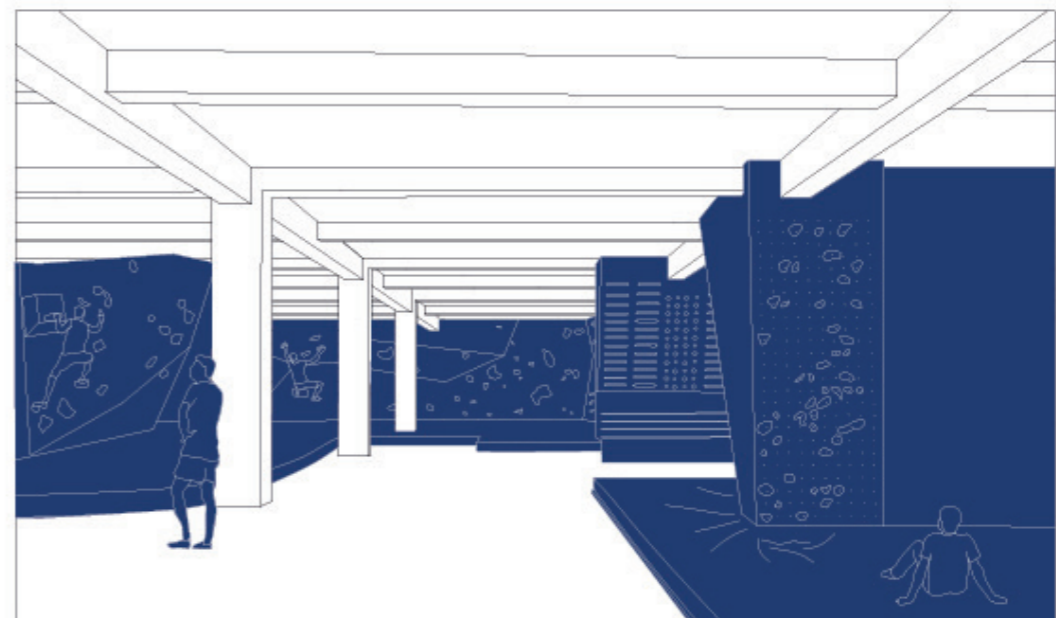
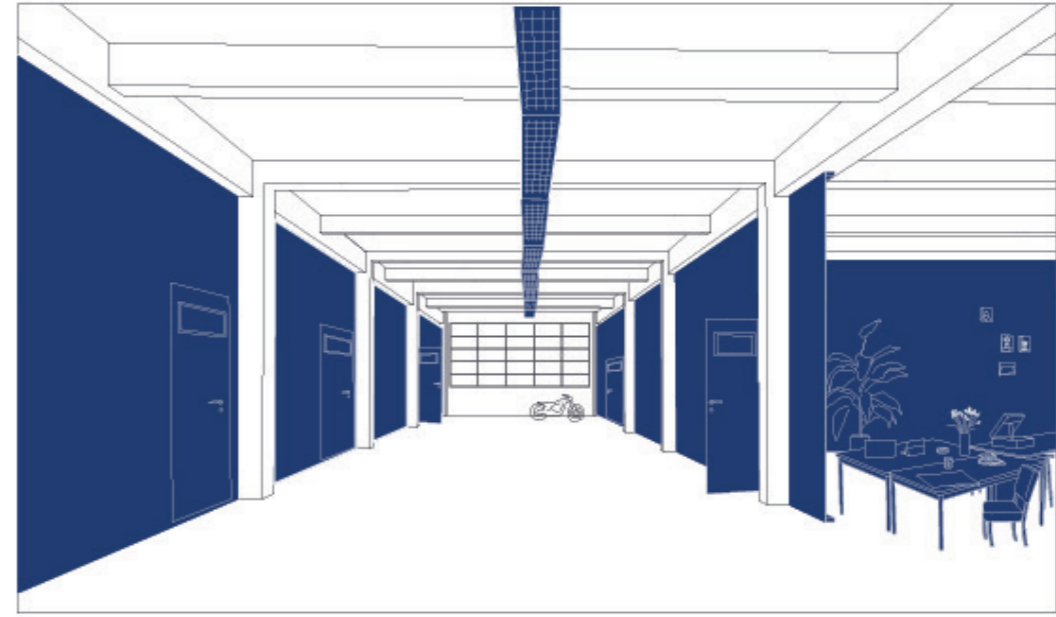
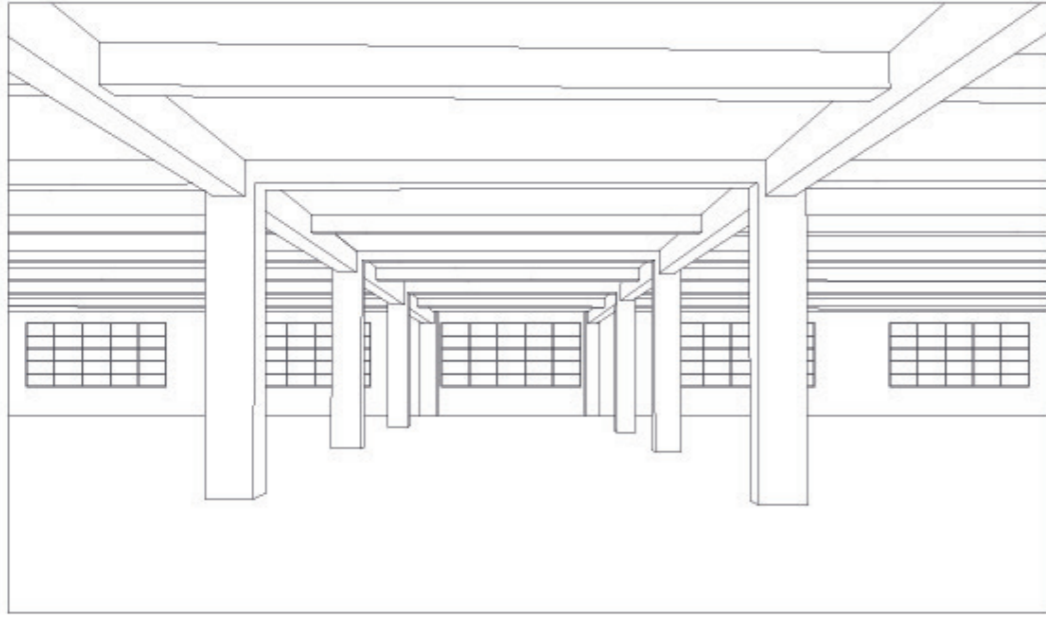
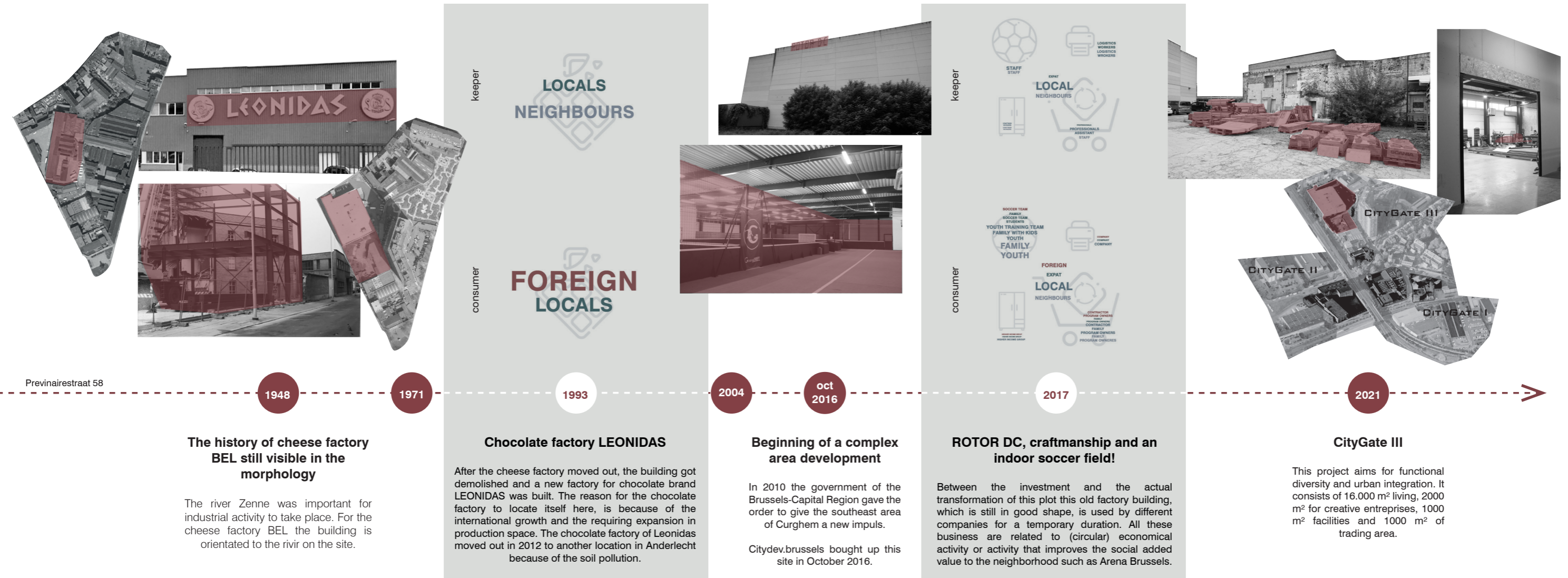


Figure 11: repetitive structure and high spaces

Figure 12: original program, weaving factory

Figure 13: current program, multiple artistic tenants

Figure 14: current program, climbing sport



Former Leonidas factory

After the cheese industry was demolished the orientation of the plot shifted to the street instead of the river Zenne. This blue steel structure of the 90's is wrapped with corrugated sheets and steel plates. Now, most parts of the building and plot are occupied by Rotor DC (Figure 18) and few smaller businesses and cabinetmakers are located on the ground floor. The first floor has a public indoor soccer field

(Figure 9) that can be rented every day, almost the entire day. Each of these three groups have their own entrances, which makes the building fragmented into multiple parts. All the tenants are for an interim period settled, afterward, a large area redevelopment will occur. The building has a closed facade with only a few elevated windows. The steel structure allows large spaces to be column-free.

Figure 15: Timeline
 Grondelsstraat 152 /
 La rue des Goujons 152

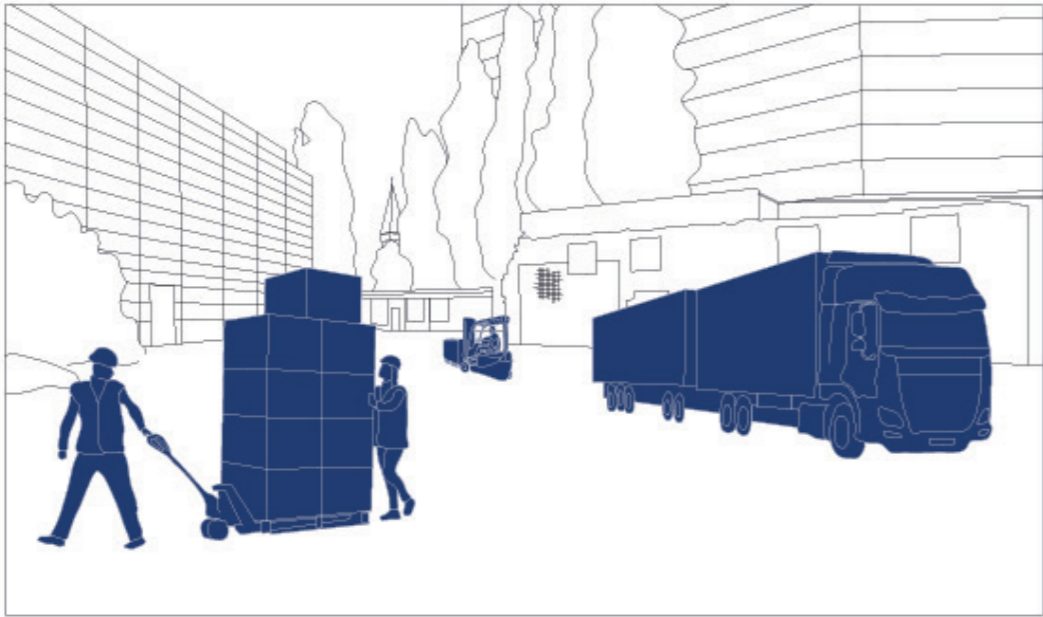


Figure 16: spacious outdoor area

Figure 17: logistics and cargo

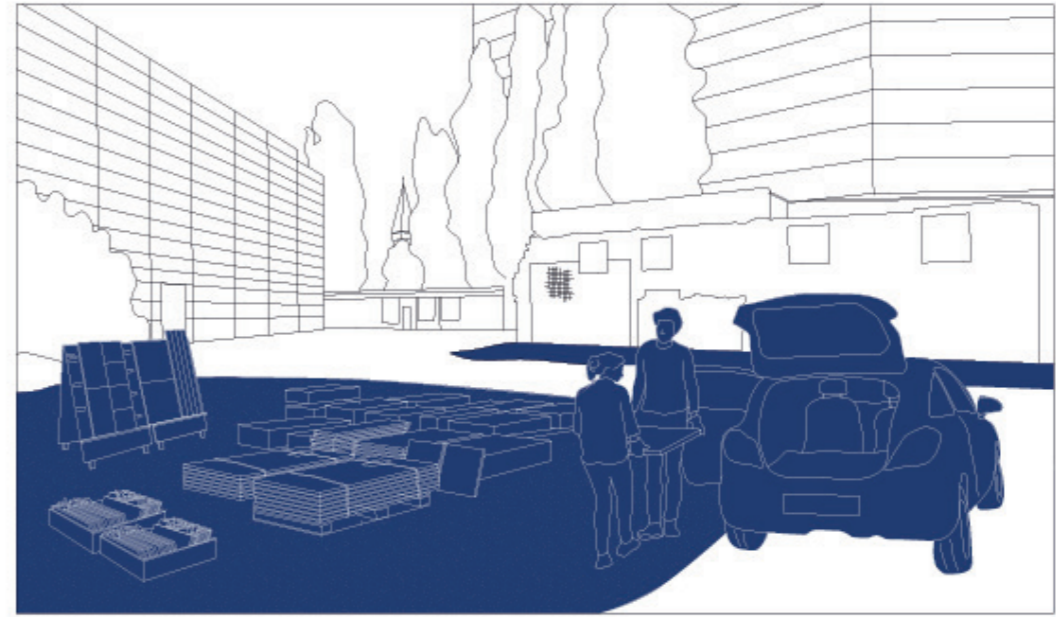


Figure 18: current program, retail display of second-hand building materials

RESEARCH METHODS

Literature research on Unstable City

Field research - 30th of September 2019

Praxeology

Case studies on Adaptive Reuse

Typological research

Reading of historical maps

REFERENCES

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part 2

Embracing the fragmentation

Ungers' Archipelago City

The idea of the Archipelago City was written by Oswald Mathias Ungers (1977) and this literature has been influential for the second part of the research. He discusses Berlin as a fragmented city or in other words the *cities in the city* (*Städte in der Stadt*). However, his theory on changing society and thereby the public space in the city could also be applied to other European metropolises. He stresses the contemporary city where the changing society desires for individualization (Hertweck&Marot, 2013). While the traditional public spaces in the historical center are rather offering cohesion and sense of community. In his text, he sets up the archipelago city as an antithesis against the urban design theories of the unified city (Schrijver, 2006).

To conclude this in the case of Brussels, four abstract maps will be discussed. So aside from the institutional fragmentation, these maps will depict the fragmentation on different urban scales.

City in the City (1977)
 ↳ thesis + antithesis
 (eenheids (archipelstad) stad vs stedenbouwkundige theorieën)

(p. 29)
 totaliteit van onvoorwaardelijke toegankelijke open bare ruimte

↑
 ↓

zuivere intimiteit van de individuele ervaring

HET COLLECTIEF
 archipelago city accommodates the contemporary structure of society. (individualized with different needs, desire and ideas)

Figure 19: The collectivity in between the traditional division of public and private

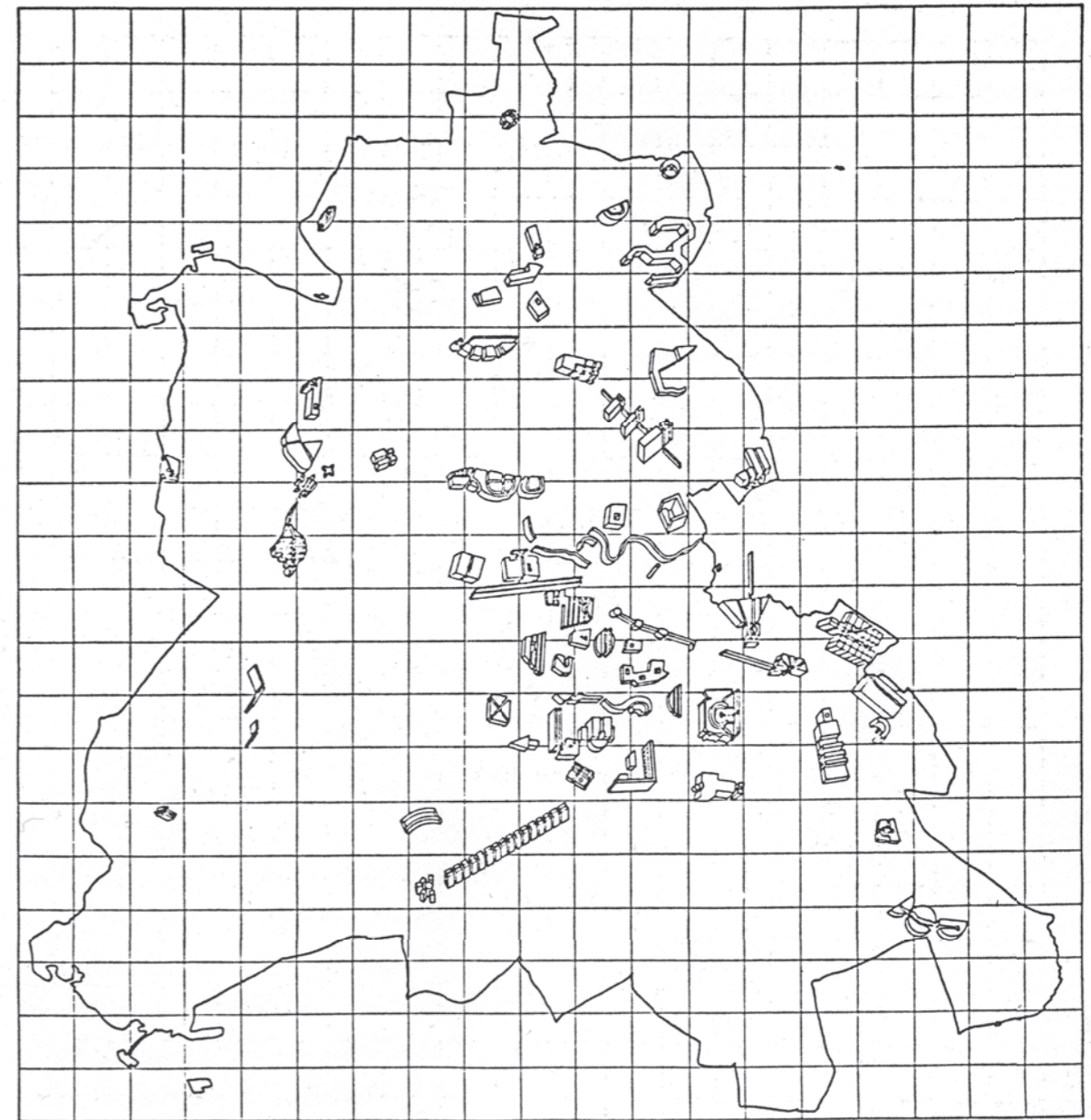


Figure 20: OASE #71 Urban Formation and Collective Spaces

Fragments of Brussels through scales

Firstly on the city level, Brussels has a striking division of average income when it comes to the city map. The design plot falls within

the poor sickle, which is the area spread around the west side of the city's center with the lowest average income (Figure 21).



Figure 21: City Brussels
Scale 1:100.000

Secondly, the municipality of Anderlecht has many characters varying from the industrial area between the railroads and the canal to the rural area on the border of

the agglomeration. Between those opposing characters, there are the garden cities as Goede Lucht, Moortebeek en het Rad.



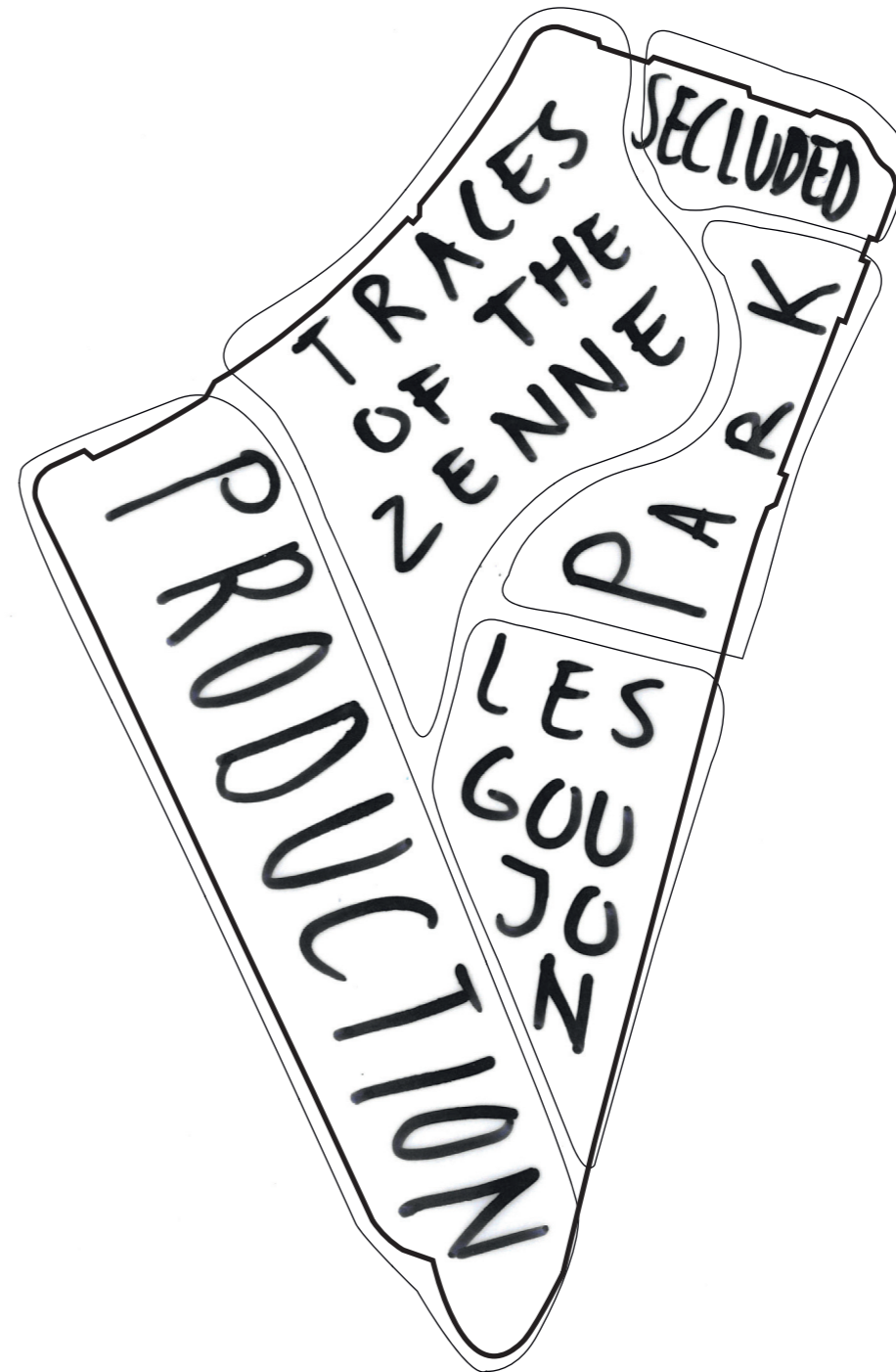
Figure 22: municipality
Anderlecht
Scale 1:40.000



In the eastern part of Anderlecht, the neighborhood of Kuregem is situated close to the city center. However, this ideal location in

the city does not contribute to the liveability of the neighborhood. The design plot is isolated as an enclave between the canal,

Figure 23: neighborhood Kuregem Scale 1:10.000



the railway of station South, the industry and the residential district of Kuregem (Figure 23).

Hence, the design plot doesn't belong to any of the fragments. This is noticeable when you look at the characters of the

site (Figure 24). It contains four distinctive fragments in terms of program, typology and morphology. However, all of these differences are important for the narration of the location's history.

Figure 24: design plot Scale 1:2000

Reading of the existing situation

The research on the Unstable City, the second-life of vacant structures and voids around the area and the fragmentation on the design site resulted in my approach towards the masterplan and architectural project. The strategy of healing the existing situation is applied. 'Embracing the Fragmentation' is a masterplan that aims to create a pleasant neighborhood for the residents and the starting point for the urban design is the fragmentation of typologies.

In order to comprehend the masterplan proposal, further clarifications on the four characters are necessary (Figure 25):

1. the Productive City that varies from the manufacturing industry to small-scale craftsmanship and garages;
2. the Peculiar City with the social housing slab as landmark due to its deviating scale. In combination with the solid structure material, the orientation of the site is anchored in this typology;
3. the Salvaged City in which archaeological traces of the Zenne

can be found in the bricolage of housing with workshops at the rear sides;

4. and the Lonely City where the head of the site consists of a single apartment block that has balconies overlooking on all sides but does not react onto the context or belong to a larger fragment.

Every typology contributes to the city as a whole and requires specific solutions when designing public space. The urban plan prioritizes public space for the neighborhood with street corners as threshold to a series of urban rooms, each with its own identity in response to the fragments.

Every typology contributes to the city as a whole and requires specific solutions when designing the public space. The urban plan prioritises public space for the neighbourhood with street corners as threshold to a series of urban rooms, each with its own identity in response to the fragments.

Figure 25: Fragmentation

- a. Productive City
- b. Peculiar City
- c. Salvaged City
- d. Lonely City

1. former Leonidas factory (Image 5)
2. small industry; garages
3. Les Goujons (Image 6)
4. community restaurant
5. event hall in a former candle factory (Image 3)
6. 20th century apartments
7. sanitary company
8. retail shop
9. apartment block from 1990's (Image 4)



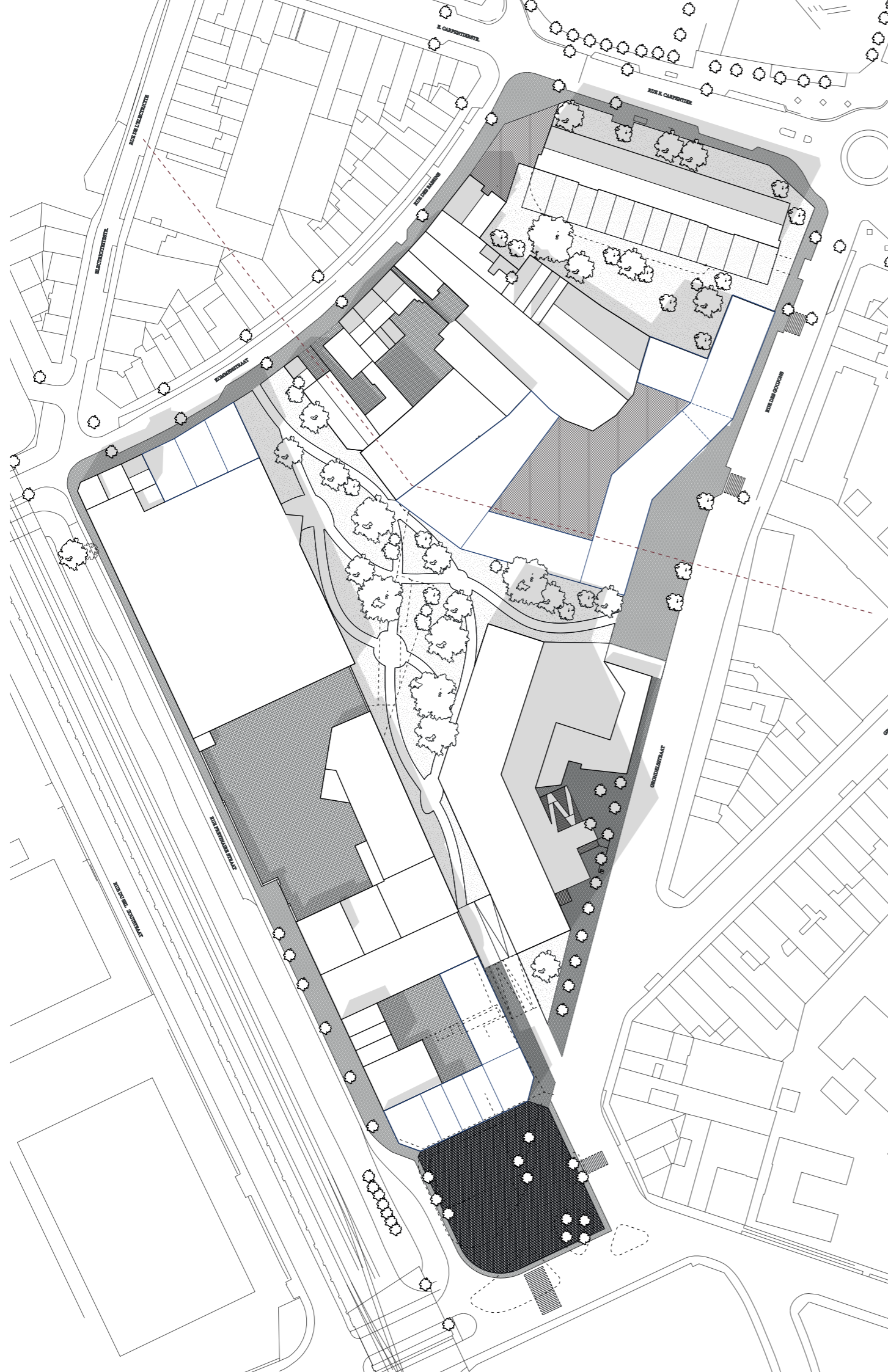


Image 3: the Salvaged City (left)
 Image 4: the Lonely City (right)

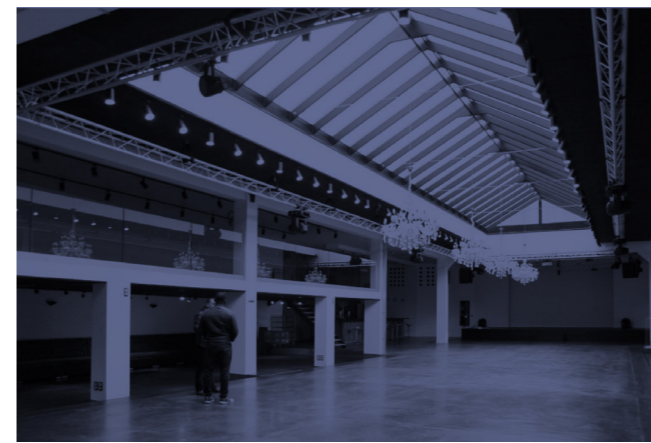


Image 5: the Productive City (left)
 Image 6: the Peculiar City (right)



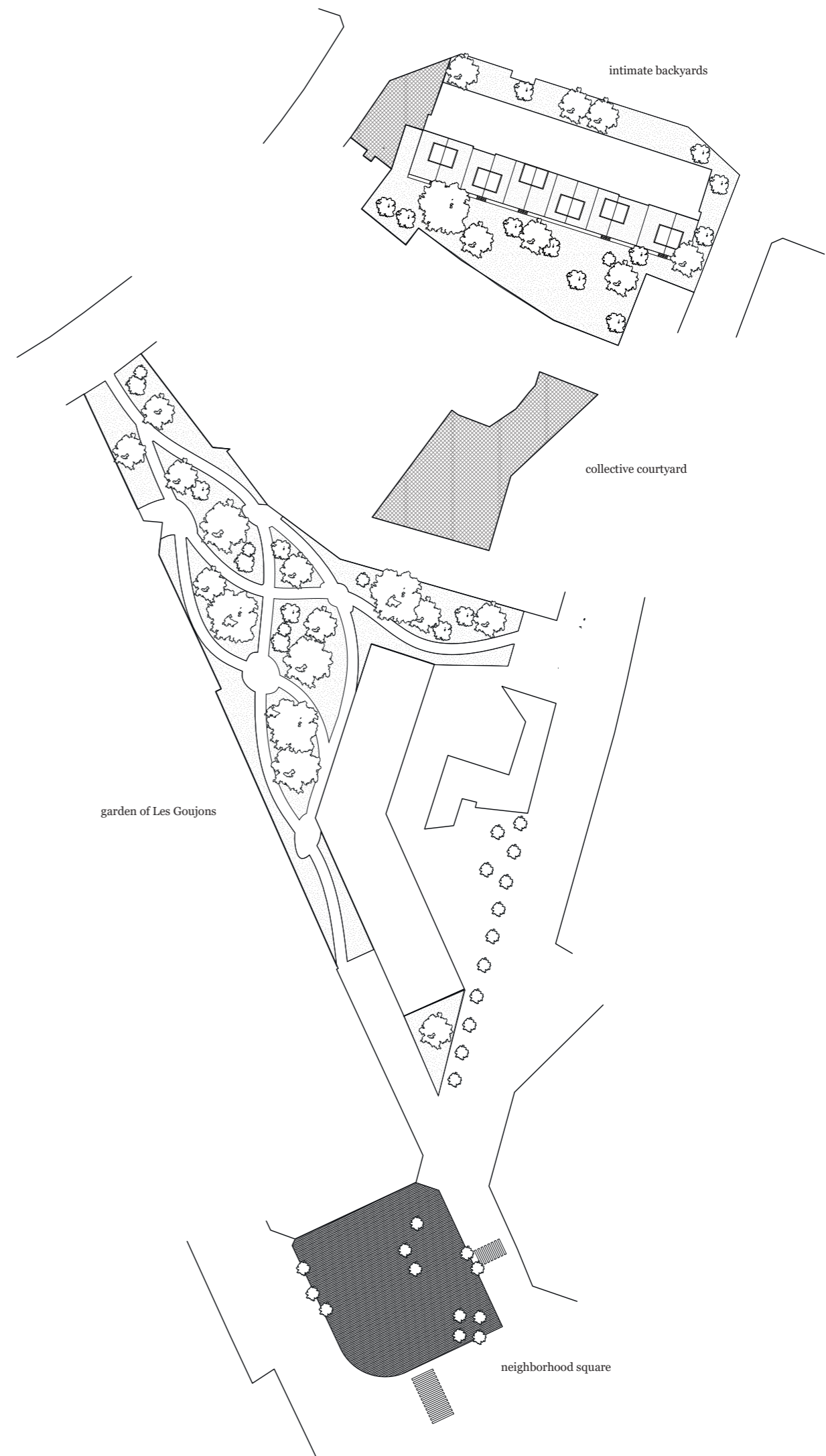
Urban plan and spaces in Anderlecht

The third field trip was focused on visiting urban spaces such as squares, gardens, passages, and courtyards around and mostly in Anderlecht. The goal was to understand how people of Anderlecht perceive those spaces. Attention was paid to human interaction and appropriation of these public spaces, the transition between private and public with potential collective space in between. And from these findings, lessons were learned and reapplied afterwards in the design proposal.

“I have seen lots of fences, that give options to close off spaces. The square at Aumale metro station was a striking place, where I have seen the sidewalk been used as collective space during the prayer. Another thing I have concluded is that closed walls are not always bothering or acting as a harsh border. In some cases, it even contributes to the quiet and calm sphere of a public space. Art paintings and greenery are being used in the case studies.”

Figure 28: Urban spaces

1. Neighborhood square
2. Garden of Les Goujons
3. Collective courtyard
4. Intimate backyards



1. Neighborhood square

According to BISA (Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis), the region of Brussels has 248 public squares of which 62 are located in the city of Brussels. On the third place, Anderlecht contains 22 public squares, four important cases are highlighted and researched during a field trip. There is paid attention to the transition of public to private, the interaction between people and the embedment in the urban fabric.

The distances between the squares vary between 300 meters and 800 meters. They all have similar proportions in size. Each researched square has its traits, such as form, orientation, and function.

Alexander (1977) states in his book *A Pattern Language* that each town needs public squares and calls them the largest most public rooms. However, when they are too large, they look and feel deserted.



Baraplein

One can recognize Baraplein from far due to the high South Tower that is situated at the foot of this square. This crowded traffic junction is located very near the city's pentagon and almost next to the South train station in Brussels. On the map, one can notice two forms in plan, namely a triangular pavement and an oval pattern that is followed by a row of benches. The traffic around the square is loud and people are mainly crossing by without stopping. Baraplein has a certain formal character rather than a neighborhood sphere.

Image 7: Baraplein 58 x 62 m (left)

Image 8: Raadsplein 55 x 55 m (middle)

Image 9: Verzetsplein 62 x 53 m (right)



Raadsplein

Raadsplein lays in the center of the neighborhood Kuregem and the importance is highly noticeable due to the town hall on the west side. Raadsplein contains many elements such as benches, car parking, trees, and water elements. The square is bordered by two car streets and the third street with tram rails is crossing it in a curve. Raadsplein enforces acknowledgment with its natural stone materialization, good maintenance, and orientation towards the town hall. Besides that, the square also serves as the core of the neighborhood where each corner and edge is the beginning of a network of streets. Interaction between people is seen at children playing with the water fountains and people waiting for public transport.



Verzetsplein

The Verzetsplein blends in well in the urban fabric. This is because of two edges that are formed by the car streets and the square itself, which continues as an extension of the blocks on both sides. Those same sides are occupied by gastronomy and their terraces on the square. The interaction on this square is minimal at the moment of researching. Mostly, the traffic at both edges are dominant in noise. Besides that, there was also a food truck with an air extractor fan that caused a noisy buzz on the square. Assuming that this fact could be the reason for no interaction or the cold weather, the square seemed unoccupied by people.



Image 10: Plan Aumale metrostation



Image 11: Aumale metrostation 74 x 25 m



Image 12: Dentist practice



Image 13: Residential building on the square



Image 14: Urban furniture

Aumale metrostation

This case study is not yet recognized as an official square, since it does not have a name. The square could also rather be seen as an extended pavement of the urban block. What is striking about this square is the adjacent buildings: three-story residential buildings (Image 13). Only one public function, a

dentist practice, is recognized in the plinth (Image 12). So the transit between private living and the public square is short. The square has two distinctive lines. One runs parallel to the building line and the other one meanders next to it like a gutter with two water taps as the source. Besides that, several urban furniture are present.

“After staying at this square for a while, I noticed men running in one direction. After observing this I found out that there is a mosque around the corner and that these men were too late for the prayer. Some of them even brought their own prayer rug. The mosque was overloaded with people, which resulted in an appropriation of the pavement: many men were praying outside in front of the mosque and even

outside the mosque fences (Image 16). The praying women are not visible, because they have their own prayer room. However, in front of the entrance, there are a few women present who are there to beg. After the prayer men stayed on the square and before the chats, they shake the hands of each other (Image 17). Besides that, they also used the urban furniture to put on their shoes again (Image 15).”



Image 15: use of public furniture



Image 16: during the prayer



Image 17: square after the prayer

Image 18: view from square

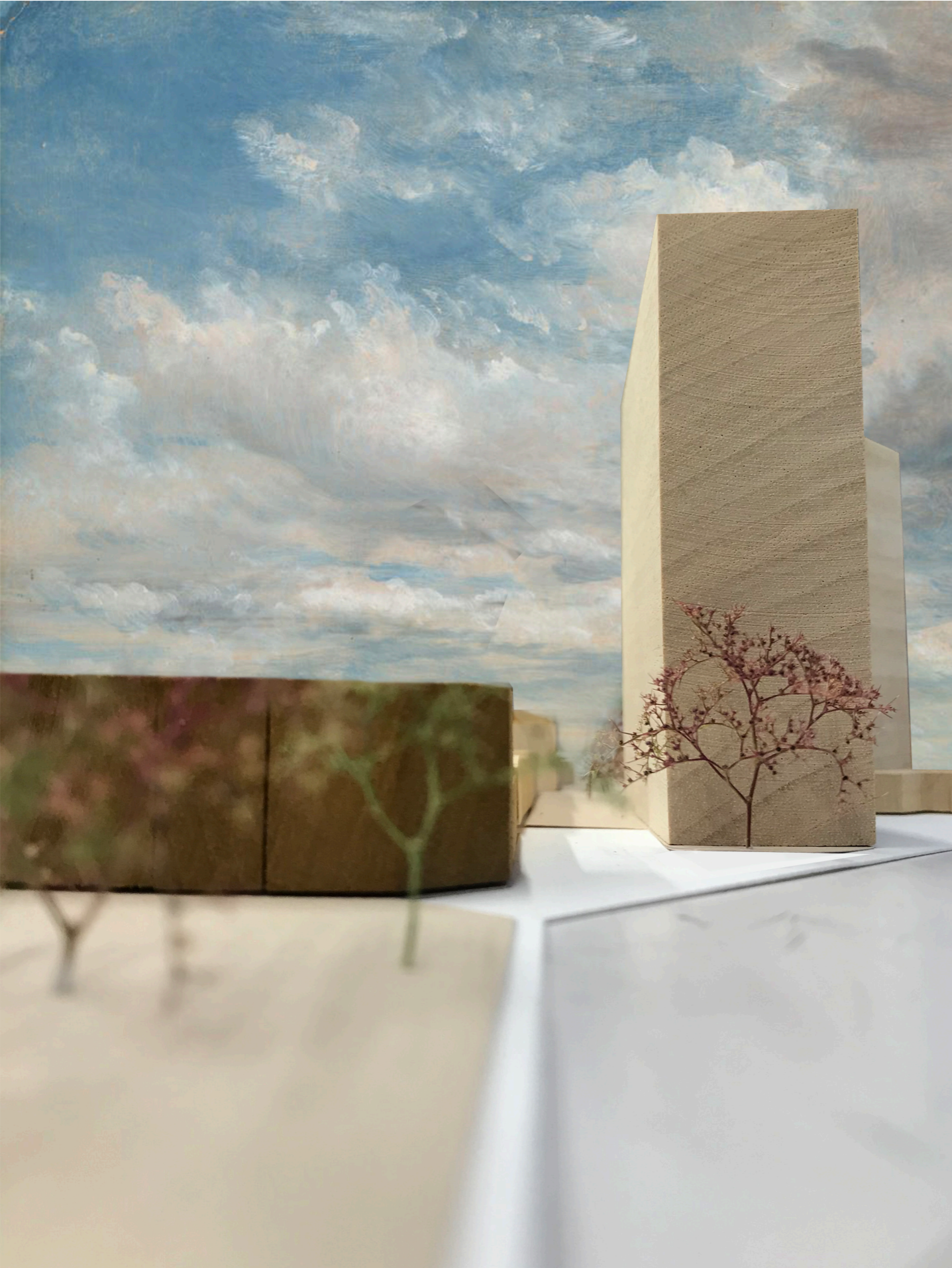




Image 19: Bussenbergpark (above)
Image 20: Zintuigentuin (below)

2. Gardens of Anderlecht

In Kuregem there are not many green spaces present. So for this case study, it was obliged to look outside Kuregem in Anderlecht. Why a garden instead of a park?

The relevant difference is the purpose and appropriation of the space. A park provides a space for activities such as sporting, walking through or playing, while the purpose of a garden lays more on the cultivation of the place as the human activity. With this being said, it is also self-evident that a park is relatively more public and open. On the contrary, a garden is maintained by a certain person or community, so protecting it from the outside world as vandalism is a thoughtful choice.

The garden of Les Goujons endeavors to give back public space to the residents, but also to open up as a park during daytime for the neighbors, who will be the guest whilst the visit.

These two case studies are interesting examples with regard to gardens because both are introverted. The shape of the streets and the adjacent building blocks are decisive for the green spaces' form. An important difference is that the Zintuigentuin has fences and therefore opening hours, while the Bussenbergpark is open any time. Despite this difference, one could say that both green spaces have a public identity. When the Zintuigentuin is open, it is open for everyone. The same for when it is closed, no exceptions are made. So no exclusion of society groups.



Image 21: Dauwpark plan (above)
Image 22: Adjacent apartment blocks (below)

Image 23: Youth in Dauwpark (above)
Image 24: Closed walls as border (below)

Image 25: Entrance Zintuigentuin (above)
Image 26: View of park (below)

Image 27: Entrance Bussenbergpark (above)
Image 28: View of park (below)

Dauwpark

Although this place is presented as a park, Dauwpark is not characterized by its greenery. Besides some trees, there are play elements for children and many rear sidewalls are facing the park (Image 24). A few of them are generously painted. In the urban fabric, the park doesn't feel like a courtyard framed by building nor a coherent piece of green space where people would stay. It is rather a green passage through a dispersed block in the neighborhood (Image

21). However, the park does have a core with play equipment and long limbs to the streets, that bridges the deep building units. During the site visit, many locals of all ages were using this park as a way of crossing. Solely, some youth were hanging out at this spot (Image 23). It was clear that the park is well maintained and the blind walls express at one side a quietness, but also a desolation of the area.

Zintuigentuin

The Zintuigentuin is an initiative of the municipality of Anderlecht in 2012. It's devoted to partially sighted people, so the garden is designed in a way that is well accessible for them. The signs are provided with braille writing. The fences of this garden could be declared by the fact that the Zintuigentuin has only one entrance, so it is a dead-end courtyard. The rear-sides of the buildings are not bothering, but even enhancing the peacefulness of this place. There are hedges at the height of walls that separate the Zintuigentuin from the private gardens. In the same way, these hedges transform the neighboring blind wall of the car garages into a less harsh border.

Bussenbergpark

The Bussenbergpark has two clear openings to the street and the third entrance is indicated as a tunnel through a residential block on the north side. This park seems like a quality for the surrounding residents since they have a view on this green space and a place to leisure in their backyard. Despite the physical bordering of the building blocks, the Bussenbergpark is still accessible for the whole neighborhood, which makes it a case in between a garden and a park.

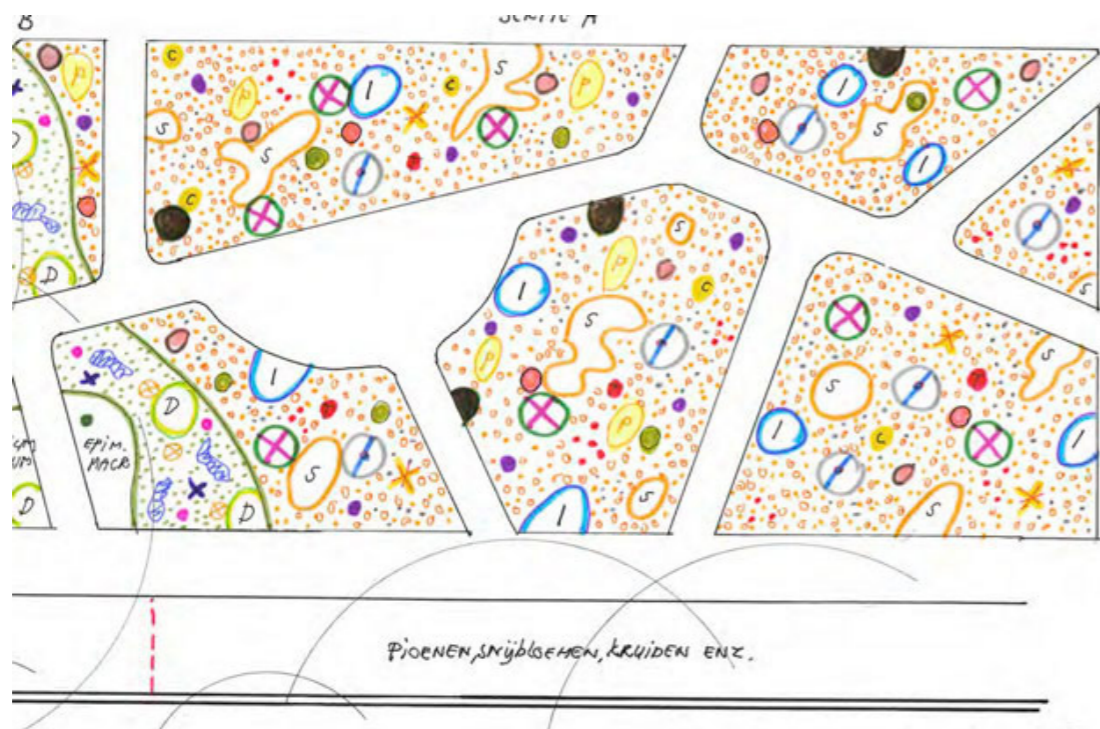
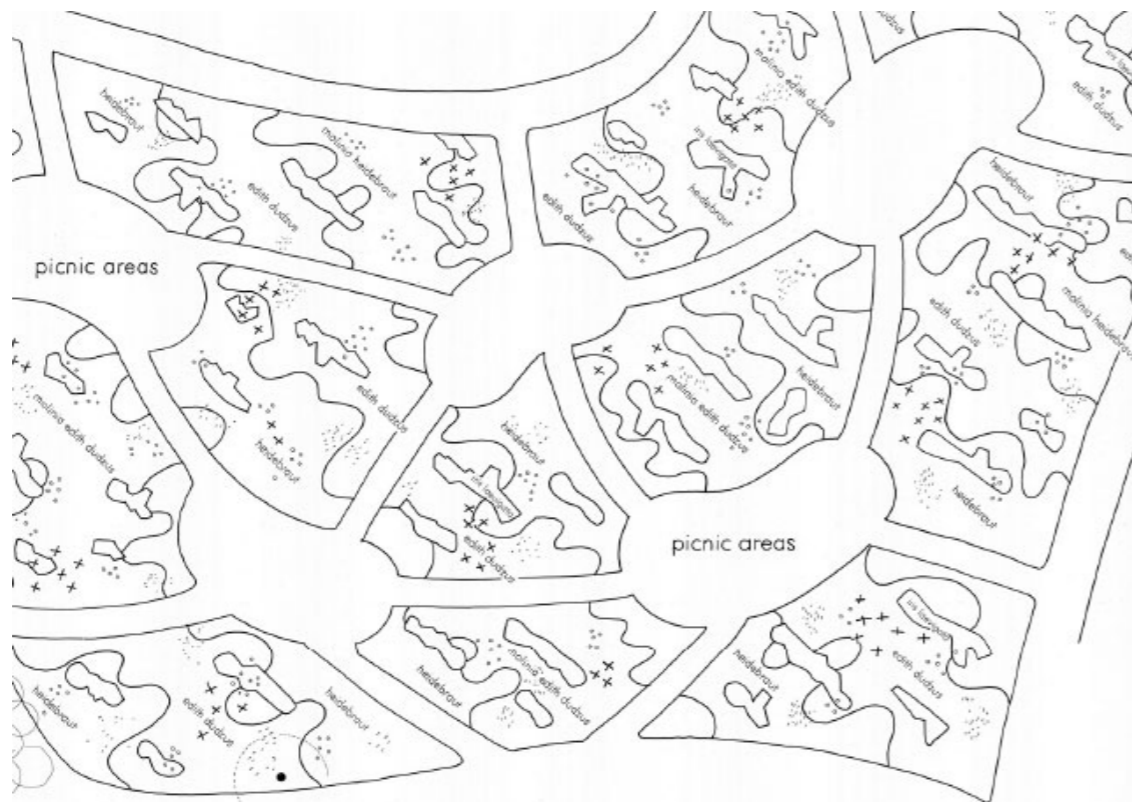
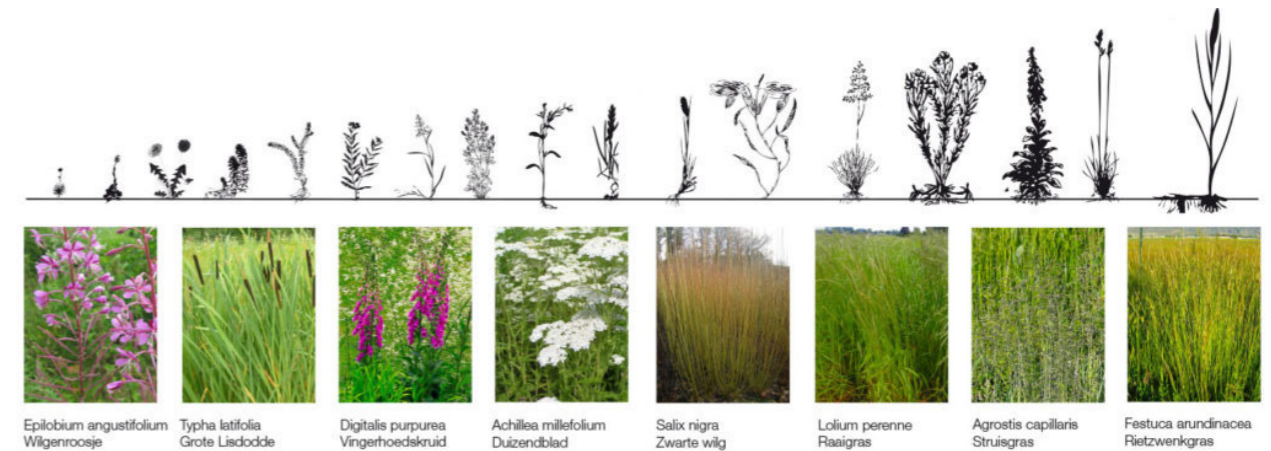


Figure 29: Piet Oudolf Garden drawings



This project in the North of Amsterdam is located on an old berth of ships. Therefore, the soil is polluted with chemicals of the shipyard. The initiators planted

greenery as flowers and plants that contribute to the healing process of the soil. This similar concept can be used on the design plot to recover the pollution of the Zenne.

Image 29: de Ceutel, Amsterdam

Image 30: view of garden



3. Collective courtyards

According to Wieërs (2019) collectivity can not be spatially defined and the collective activity is not generated by the spatial condition. He, therefore, divides it into two categories; organized and casual collectivity.

Organized collectivity is based on a common interest or concern, where a spiritual or virtual collective space is the outcome. On the other hand, casual collectivity can be exemplified by a common problem that brings a group of random people briefly into a collective of community.

Following this, a collective courtyard is somewhere between these two forms of collectivity. It wavers between chance and choice of the people Wieërs (2019).

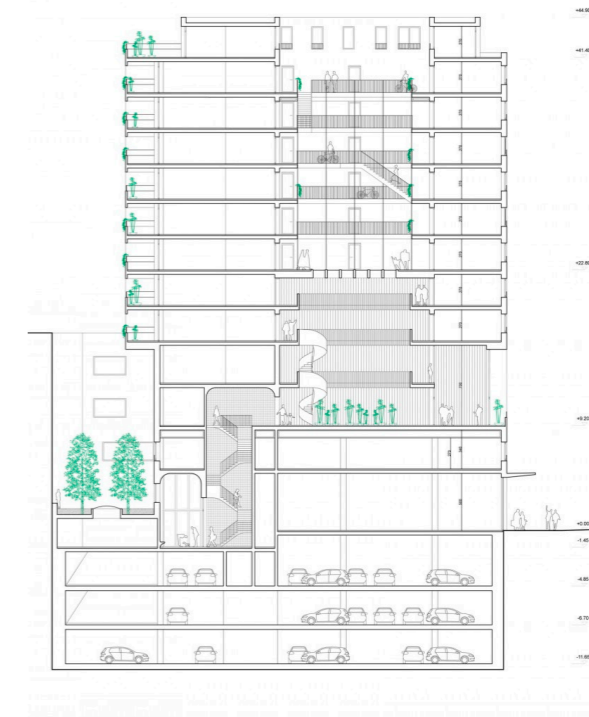
Many of the visited courtyards in Brussels showed different functions such as a parking space, an entrance to an adaptive reused factory, gardens and playgrounds. Almost all of them were fenced and shared by others. It's an intimate outdoor space that takes one away from the city and offers quiet and bright indoor spaces that overlook the court.

What is strong about these case studies is that the collectivity goes beyond the courtyards. It resonates with the program inside and the cohabitants.



Casa Viva

Casa Viva is a solitary housing project in an existing office building, devoted to vulnerable elderly and young families with or without migration background. The project consists of 12 housing units with 25 residents in total. The rent prices are adapted to low-income tenants and the design of the complex is partly adjusted to people with mobility problems and on the ground floor, there is a local service center. This center is from the same organization (LD³) as Brutopia's. The concept of collective living aims to create a social safety net for one another. One of the first proposals from the architect was to transform the old court in the back (Image 31), which used to be the warehouse, into a collective inner garden (Lampaert&Vermeulen, 2018).



Dockside

The project Dockside contains two collective courtyards: one that serves as an atrium with an indoor climate for the first six floors and the second as an outdoor space for the upper eight floors (Figure 30). A glass floor is separating these spaces. Moreover, the building also offers other collective spaces as a library on the top floor and wide galleries as streets. This building gets a village-like character (T'Jonck, 2019). The lower courtyard is shared with the offices on those floors and the commercial ground floor is dissociated with everything that happens above to blend in the context in the area.

Image 31: Casa Viva by La Verte Voie (left)

Figure 30: Dockside by Trans, MSA and V+ (right)

Brutopia

The plot of Brutopia faces two streets that meet each other a few blocks further in the south. This project consists of two apartment blocks, four and five floors, with a communal garden interior (Figure 31). This garden was an important asset for the project (Totté, 2019). All the housing units (29) have direct views on and some also have their balconies overlooking this courtyard. Residents use this space to barbecue, to play and meet, to cross to the collective living room or laundry room. The ground floor is filled with these collective programs for the residents together with an architecture practice and a local service center to give something back to the street (Image 32).

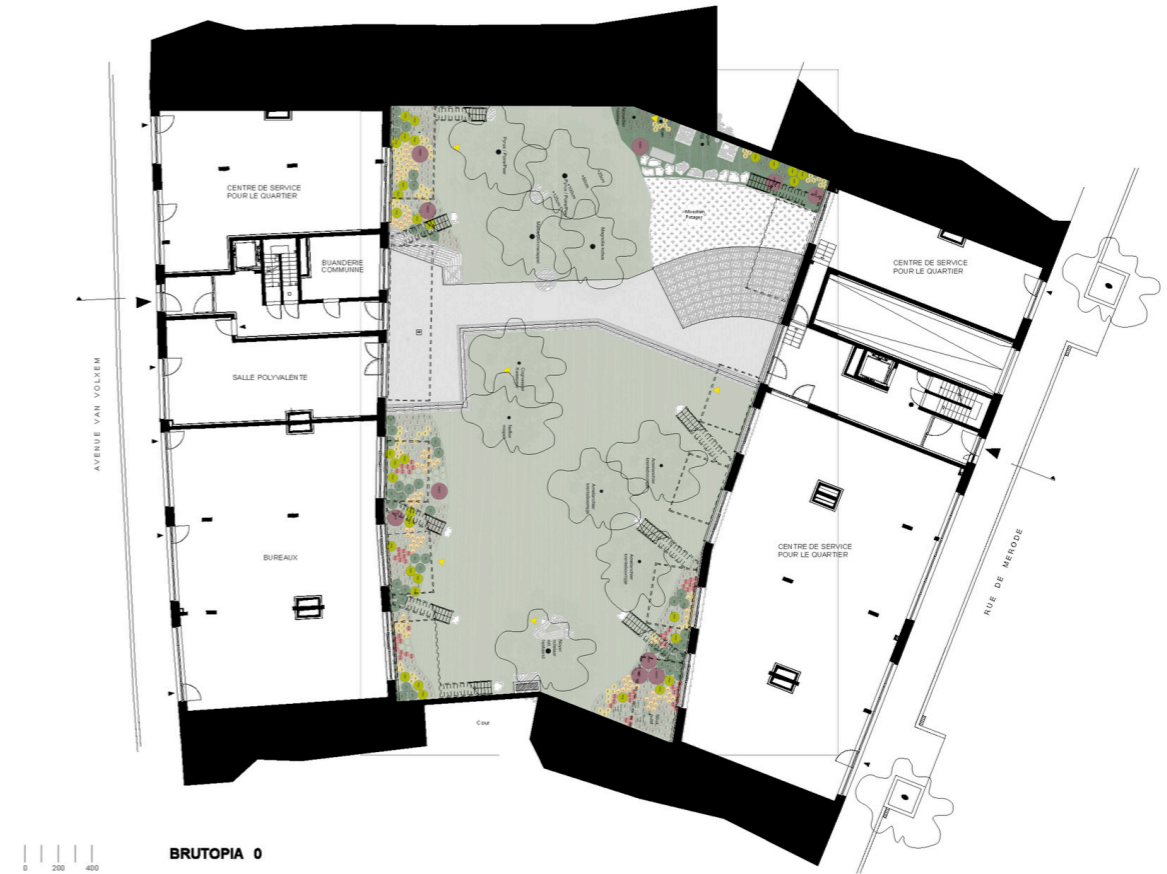


Figure 31: Brutopia plan (above)
Image 32: Brutopia by Stekke + Fraas architects (below)

Heizenholz project

One of the project's characteristics lies in the combination of experimental social housing with the concept of collective living. For this, Swiss cooperatives have been good examples to look at, since they are progressive on this topic. Not sincerely collective living, but on

creating affordable or non-profit housing with high quality of living. During the second semester, the line of collectivity can be experimented with: from a more extreme version to a more accessible way of collective living within one project. This is also done at this project by Adrian Streich.



Image 33: Eating with the neighbors



Image 34: Collective courtyard



Image 35: Collective corridor with entrances

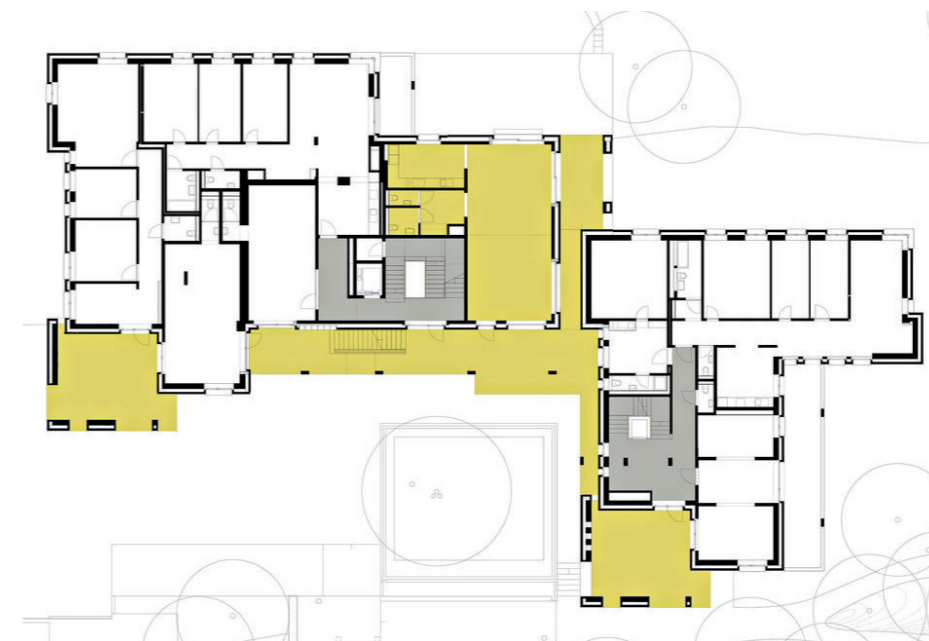


Figure 32: Plan with collective circulation highlighted in yellow

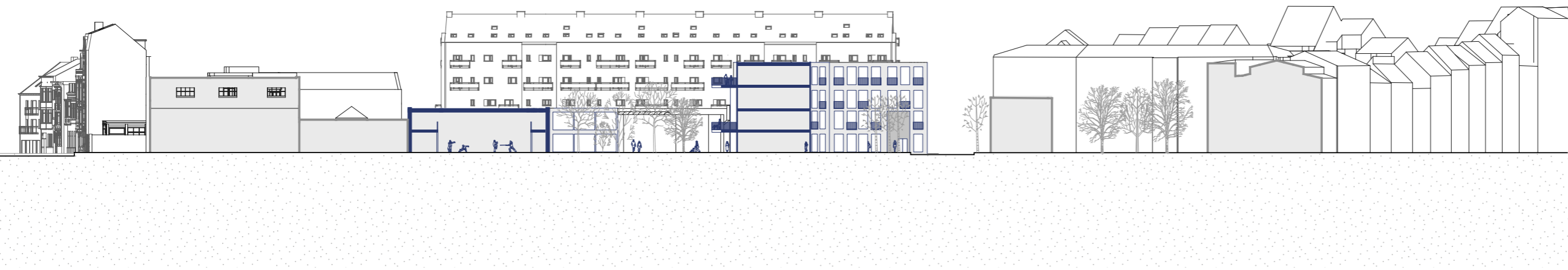


Figure 33: concept sketch
(above)
Figure 34: section courtyard
(below)

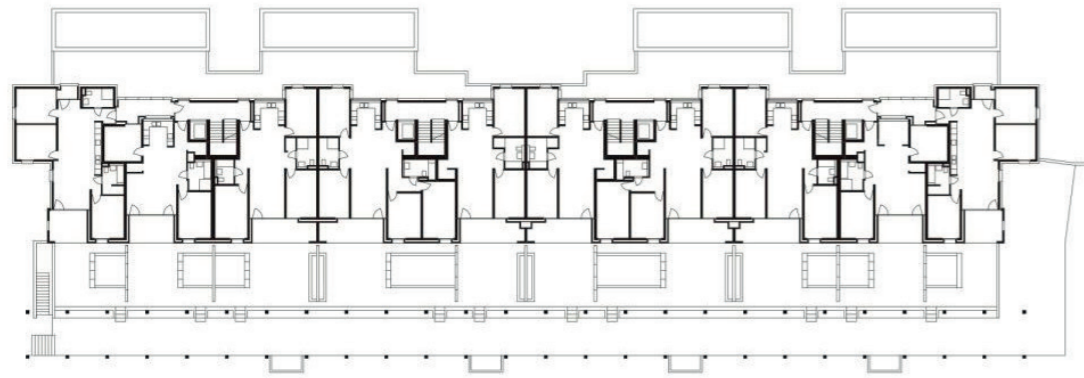


Figure 35: plan ground floor



Image 36: Im Gut Zürich by Peter Märkli



Image 37: transition between private, collective and public



Image 38: Existing passage behind the apartment block

4. Backyards

This fourth exterior space connects the Kommenstraat to the existing park. At day time this space is used as a public passage, but at night time the fences are closed. The apartment block and the passage are separated by a sunken parking space.

If the Les Goujons' Garden will function as the new public passage between the two sides and the existing park makes room for a new social housing project, the current exterior space loses its purpose.

The exclusion of the apartment block is maintained by the parking space and the passage. Instead of this, the goal is to include the stand-alone building to the rest of the site by redefining this space more like the backyard. Rethink the publicness in this exterior space is essential.

“The aforementioned annex buildings contain communal usages, while on the south side, towards the park, the consecutive layout of private gardens, semi-public pergola, and public greenery results in an interesting spatial sequence.”*

* <http://www.architecture.eu/Architekten/Schweiz/>

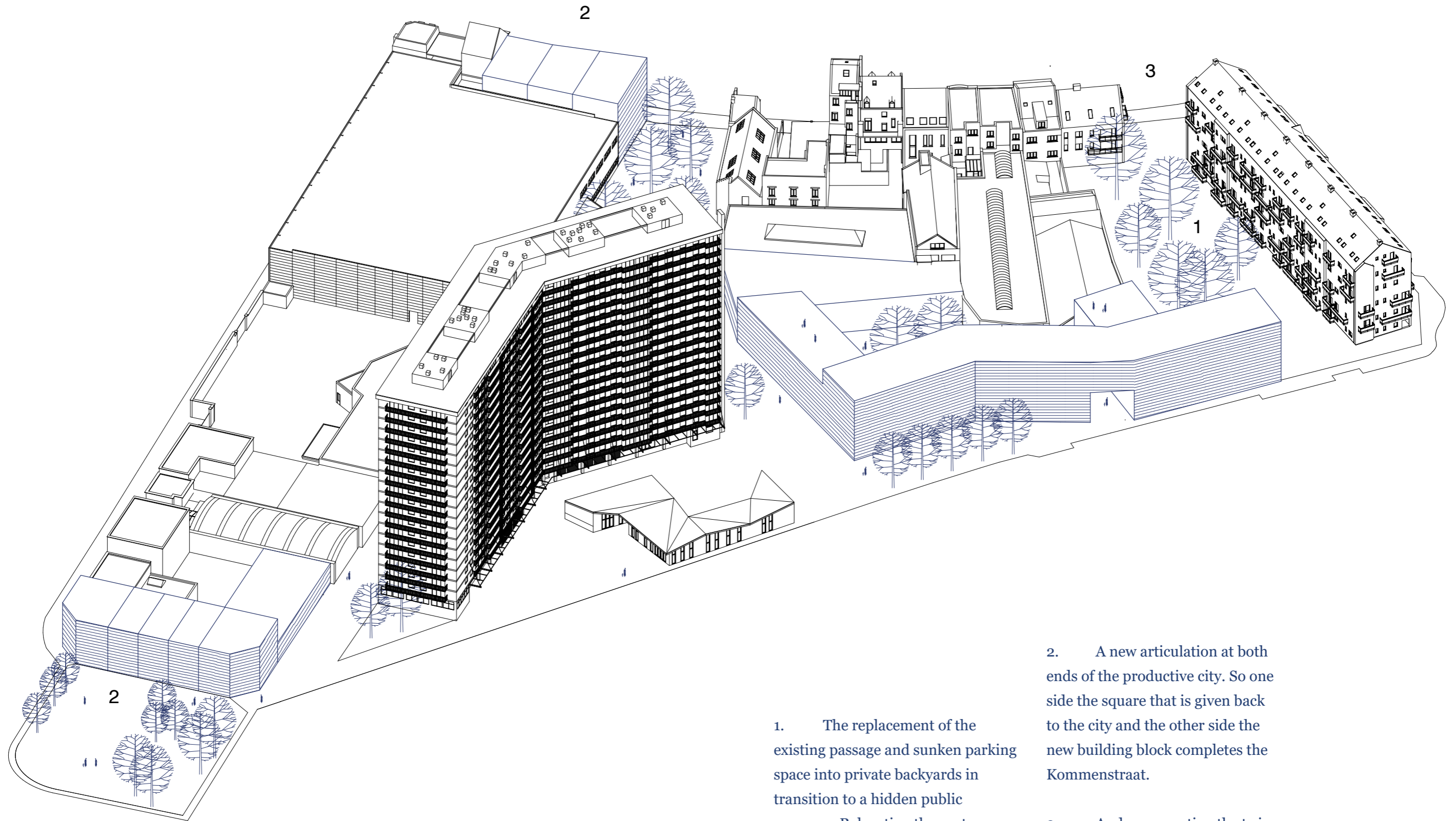


Figure 36: axonometric view

1. The replacement of the existing passage and sunken parking space into private backyards in transition to a hidden public greenery. Relocating the route through the new park.

2. A new articulation at both ends of the productive city. So one side the square that is given back to the city and the other side the new building block completes the Kommenstraat.

3. And reconnecting the twin buildings on the corner.

Regarding the urban scope, this project does not take the form of an overall plan, but is expressed as an archipelago of site-specific interventions.

All of these interventions are made as a response to the four fragments and to respect their characters: so the European tradition of neighborhood squares, the idyllic idea of a garden in the city and the contemporary of the collective courtyard.

The urban conditions in the design proposal are the diversity in spaces, program, and people. This will be the strategy to reach unity. This leads to the second condition, that to create a unity in an amorphous environment by reinforcement of the individuality of the fragments is required. The aim for this masterplan is to come to a reconciliation of the existing environment.

Image 39: axonometric view



RESEARCH METHODS

Literature research on the Archipelago City

Field research - 20th of December 2019

Case studies on urban spaces

Model making

Urban mass study

Drawing and sketching

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part 3

The Dialogue as Spolia

Mirroring the bricolage

The starting point of the architectural design was to use the bricolage as a mirror and conduct a dialectic discourse (Figure 37). Thereby a tension was sought between existing and new and what to copy and what to reject.

Thesis 1: Plinths and windows are mostly closed. However, when the garage size doors open it has an inviting feeling. Although sometimes it was only an invite to peak what was happening inside.

Thesis 2: The material use of bricks and the height of 3 stories were prominent present in the façade. This contributes strongly the street identity, especially with the similar opposite street.

Thesis 3: Parking spaces in the courtyard and some entrances are shared

Antithesis 1: The openings are gated, which decides and limits the

possibility to enter

Antithesis 2: The facades are concealing the activities behind. There is no transparency until the back of the plot

Antithesis 3: The shared spaces are only for short-term moments. This means there is no reason for interaction to happen.

Synthesis 1: Openings could have gates, but it should be consistent. For example, open gates at day time and therefore public to the neighborhood and closed at night time for the safety and quietness of the residents. However, the invitation needs to be triggered.

Synthesis 2: Similar material and structures work well, but aim to avoid a unilateral identity when the content is not.

Synthesis 3: More shared spaces are desired and interactions of residents in the long-term are preferred.

DIALECTIC FRAGMENT OF BRICOLAGE

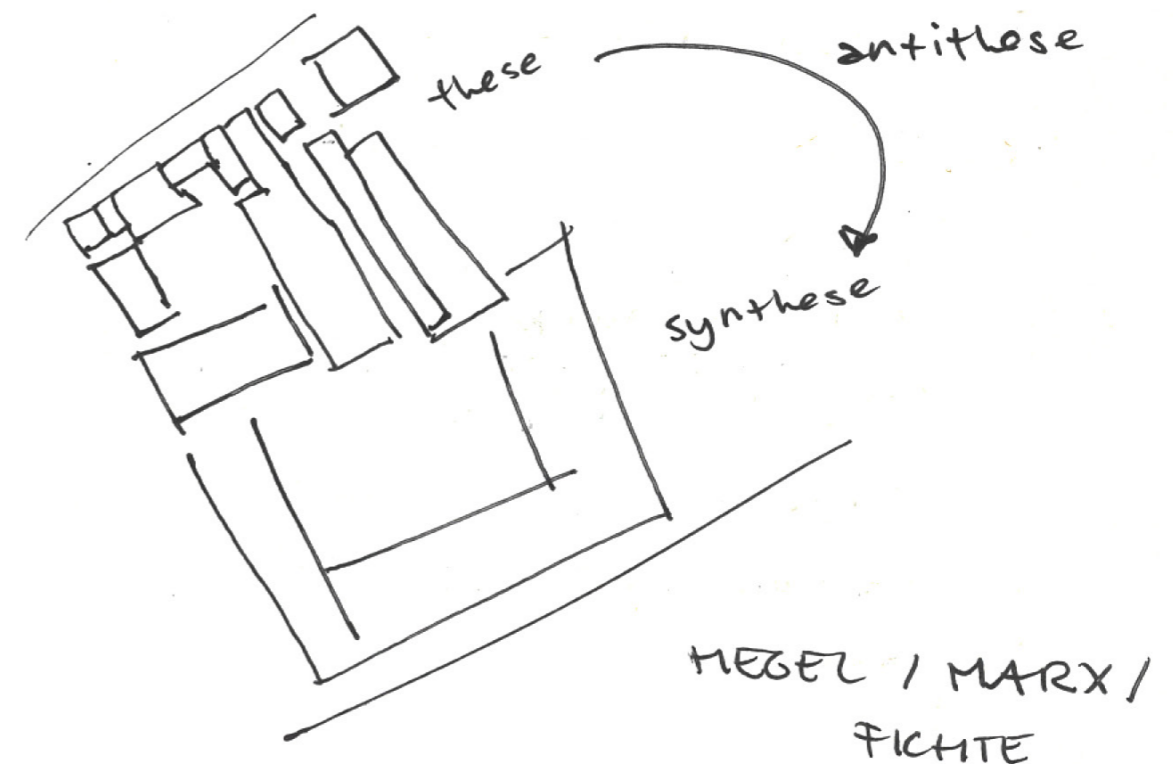
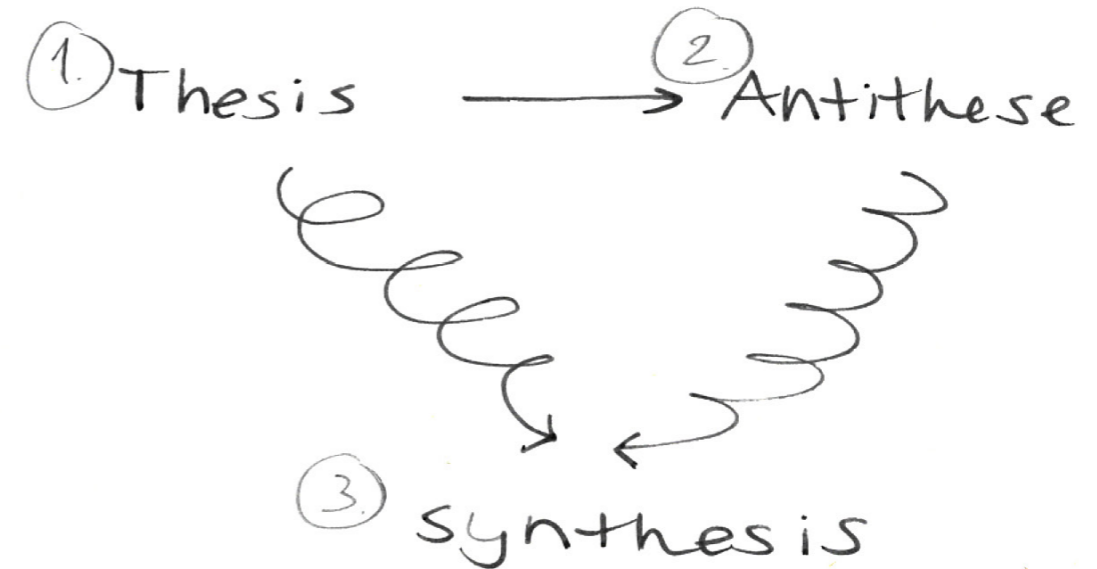


Figure 37: sketches on mirroring



In the architectural design, there are a few elements mirrored as the spolia.

1. The courtyard is expanded, where more activities can take place beside (bicycle)parking. The new building has two main core of entrance and vertical circulations. These are located on the corner and each collective share their own core.
2. The building in the back differentiate itself from the rest in typology: form and use. It has a similar industrial size and therefore it's flexible in use. Not only for now, but also for in the future. This is makes it a great

- addition to the main building
3. There is one way to enter the courtyard from the street. This opening shows the division of the two collectives and the tapered shape leads one to the corner of the courtyard, which saves the privacy of the collective outdoor space. But at the same time, the opening is remarkable and triggering an invitation. However, this entrance is most likely to be fenced and the opening hours are negotiable with the residents.
4. The backyard of the autonomous apartment block is enclosed in the same way as the existing situation.

Figure 38: architectural project in context

Social housing

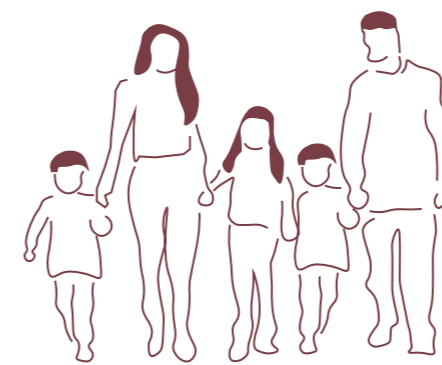
The notion of Ungers on the individualization and the traditional separation between private and public introduced the idea of collectivity. Collectivity admits the individualization of society, but at the same time pleats for a coherent frame. The project's ambition is to break the stigma of the individual and in this case in Brussels. And the social matter that is taken into account is providing the increasing society of affordable and qualitative housing. And collective living can be a good solution for this, also in space efficiency.

During the third fieldtrip some of these collective living projects were visited such as Brutopia and Casa Viva. The important difference lies

in the users of the building: whereas Brutopia is initiated by wealthy cooperaters, Casa Viva is a social housing project for the vulnerable people of society.

This latter example is desirable for the residents of the new building. So large families with or without migration background, but at the same time these big apartments can also accommodate students that like to share flats or in the future the apartments can be broken up into cluster apartments(Figure 39). The idea of social housing derived from the fragmentation that is analysed earlier on scale of Brussels and Anderlecht.

Figure 39: target users



large families with and without migration background



elderly in need for home care



flat-sharing students

Image 40: urban model 1:500





Local Service Centre

LD³ is aiming for a care and participation within neighborhoods, in general focusing on seniors *. But besides that, it also serves as a spot that can unlock other similar

purposes. For instance, Anker also adopted two other non-profit organisations: Pigment and Bambou Vert. The first one is pleating for the poor to have more right to speak and the second one are focussing on helping vulnerable women.

Figure 40: Local service centres in Brussels

* <https://ld3.be/missie-en-visie/>



Martial Arts

Martial Arts is popular in Brussels and shows many of them located in Anderlecht (Figure 41). The program of the architectural design proposes different kinds of Martial Art because of the the spiritual background of the discipline that suits to the neighborhood.

Figure 41: Martial arts in Anderlecht

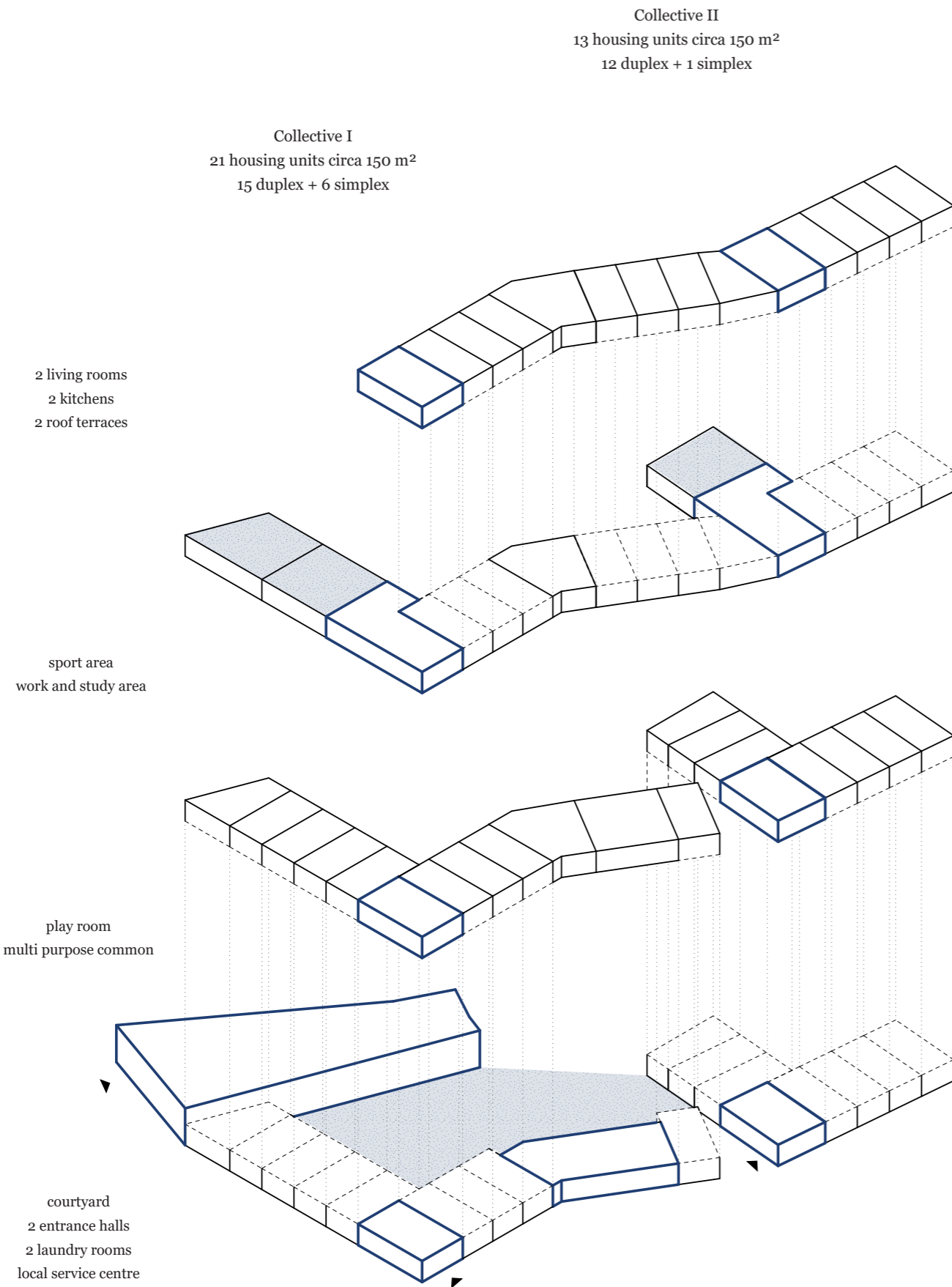


Figure 42: exploded view per floor

Me, us, them

As mentioned before, collective living can answer social issues. In his master thesis, Hoet (2015) points out some frictions in Flanders including the individualization of the society and the housing crisis in Brussels in particular, which the latter is caused by a high unemployment rate, increasing gap between the poor and the rich and the rising prices on the real estate market. I align myself with Hoet (2015) because I think that collective living can be an interesting alternative of creative space use inside buildings and especially in the time when there is a shortage of space, collective living can be the solution.

The building consists of two collectives, one with 21 units and the other one 13 units. All with approximately 140 m². In the corners the vertical circulation is located together with the shared functions as large living rooms with kitchens, laundry room, work out space with mirrors (so it's also available for dancing classes), common working/study room, roof terraces and possibly also a

playroom for the kids.

On the ground floor, a Local Service Centre is located. This will be focused on educating people of all ages. So there will be a small library for the neighborhood and space to have dinner twice a week with each other. On the other days, there will be language class and tutoring classes such as homework support. This will be the fourth LD³ location.

In the industrial size building on the rear side, Martial Arts can be practiced. However, the flexible construction also allows other programs in the future.

One clear architectural theme is the collectivity, where the aim is to create a building that can accommodate the contemporary structure of society. In other words the individuals with different needs, desire, and ideas. I share the same ideas as Ungers that even in a fragmented city the connections within and the role of architecture can remain vital. So, this is a topic that I like to proceed during further research on private, collective and public in practice: me, us, them matter. And thereby find these lines inside the building.

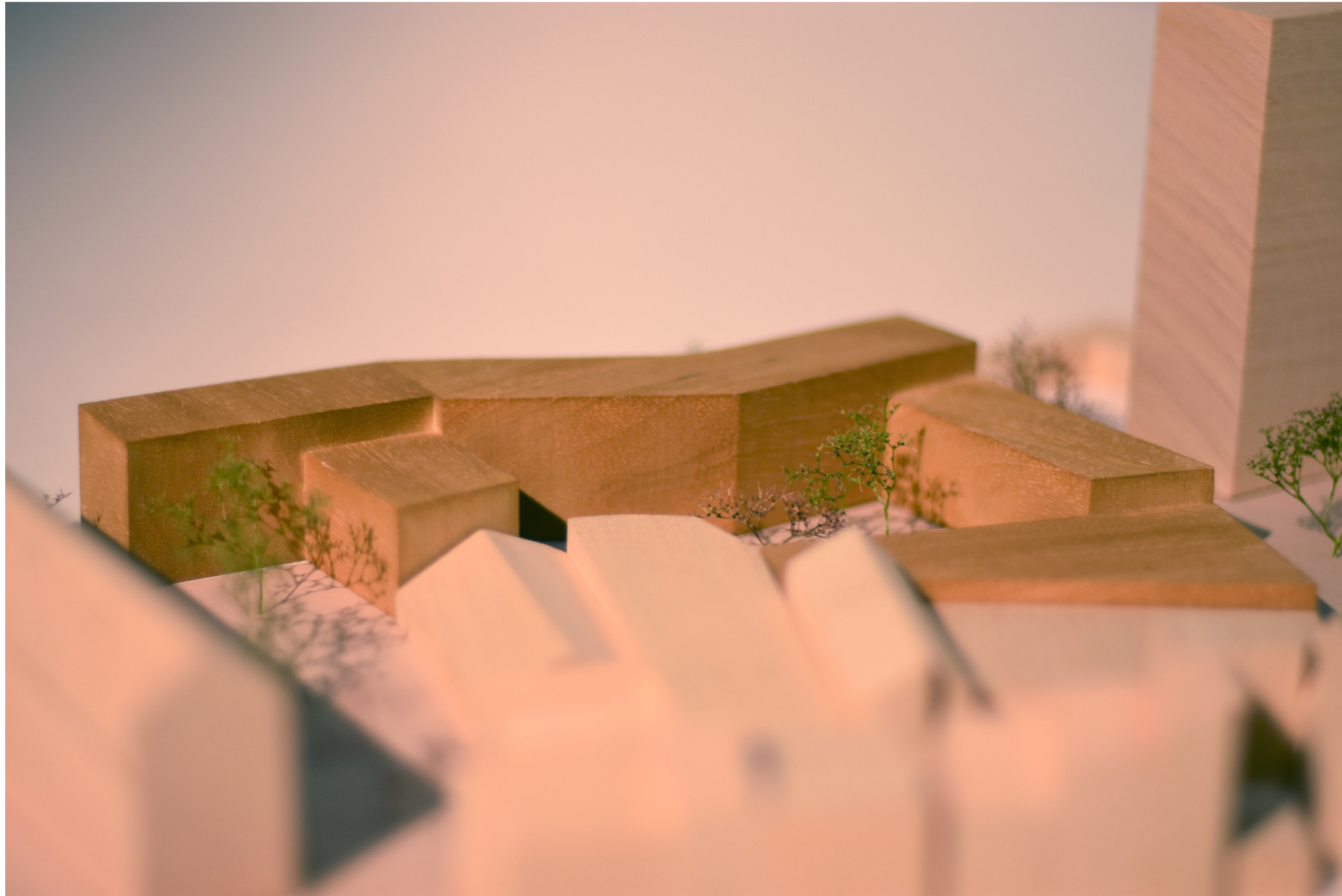


Image 41: urban model 1:500

External - Internal

The building strives for an intimate internal facade with lively balconies, collective corridors that are wide enough to make it a place to stay rather than just a space to pass by. Whilst the facade towards the street is more reserved with many windows and French balconies.

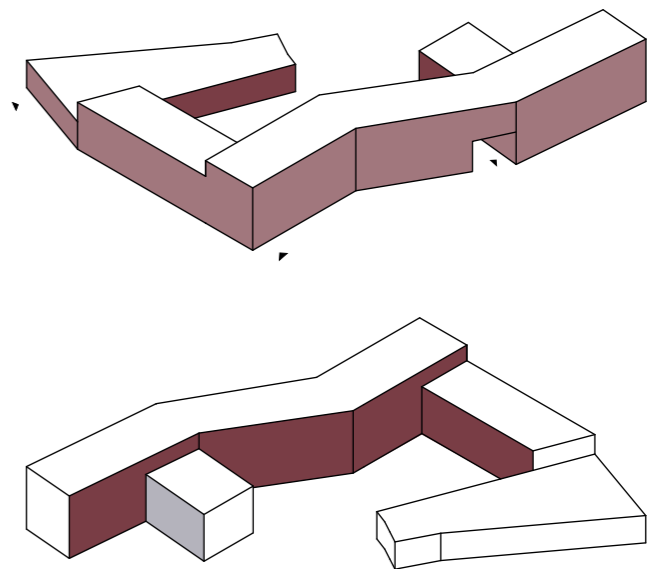


Figure 43: facades

Image 42: around the corner



RESEARCH METHODS

Literature research on collective living

Demographic research

Field research - 20th of December 2019

Case studies of collective living projects

Model making

Building volume

Drawing and sketching

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- Figure 32.** <http://www.adrianstreich.ch/werkliste/>
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