From a Wall to An Emergent Patchwork

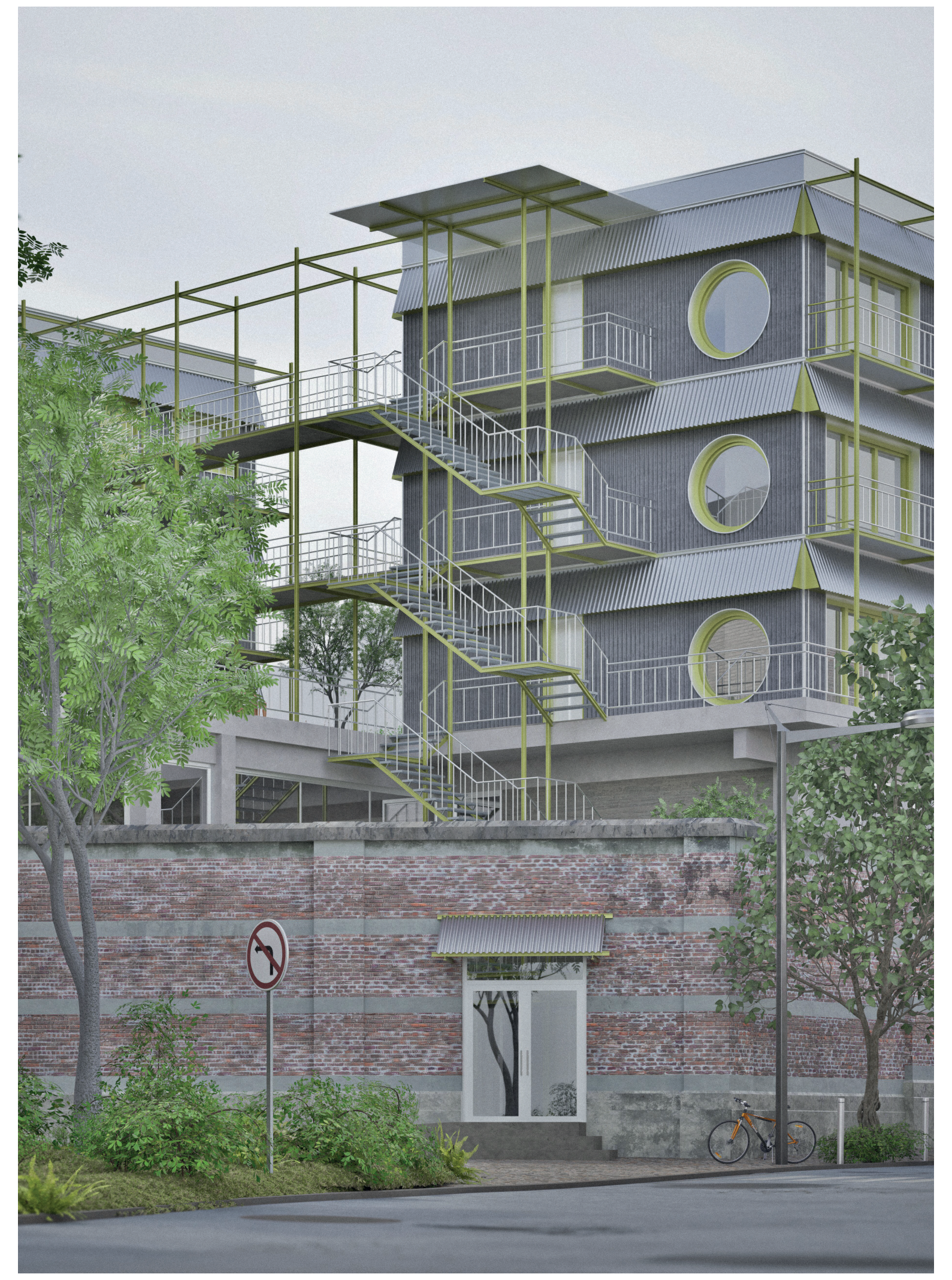
The Transformation of an Industrial site in Heyvaert…

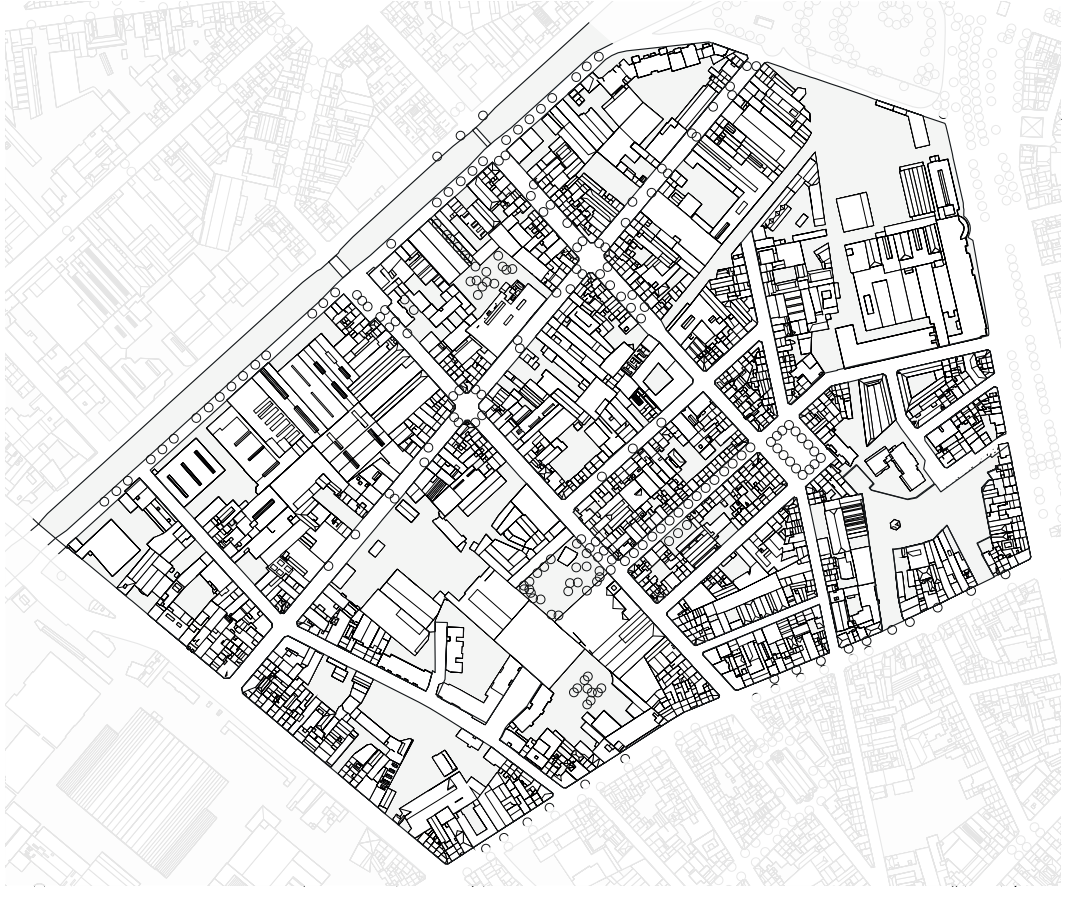
n the Brussels neighbourhood of Heyvaert stands a wall, a stoic structure closed off from its surroundings shaped by vibrant street life, trade, and cultural diversity. It is part of a building that has quietly endured many changes. This project engages with the structure's critical transformation, recognising that to open it up is to expose the building to the social, spatial, and economic forces that shape the neighbourhood.

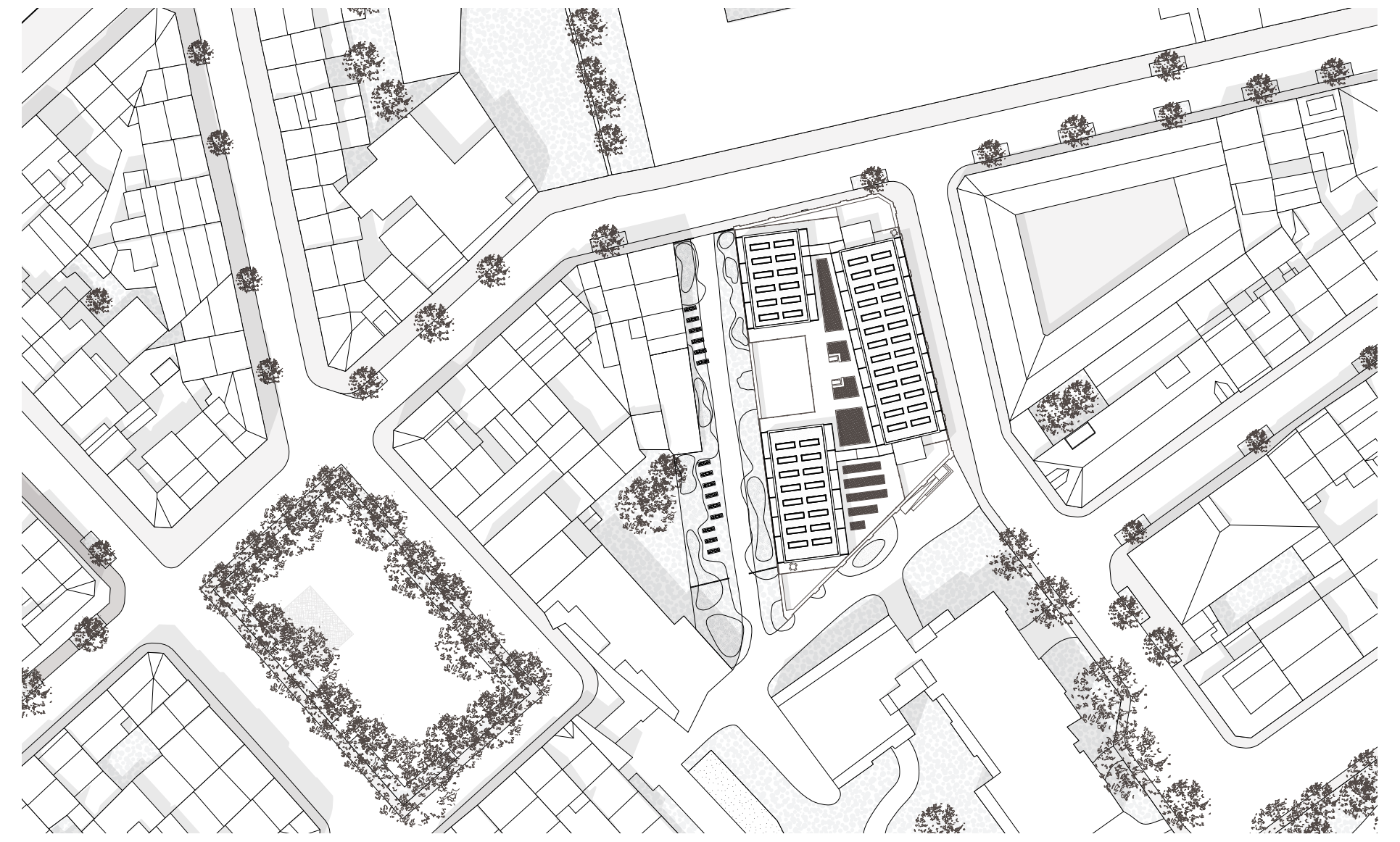
As the neighbourhood faces change through the disappearance of the car trade, its streetscape, informal economies, and existing ways of living will be fundamentally altered. Based on the "Drivers of Change" research, the project understands these transformations not as isolated events, but as part of an ongoing urban evolution shaping the future of Heyvaert. This proposal responds to these shifts by offering stability and support. Seen as another chapter in the development of Heyvaert, the building adds to the emergent patchwork that makes up this complex urban situation.

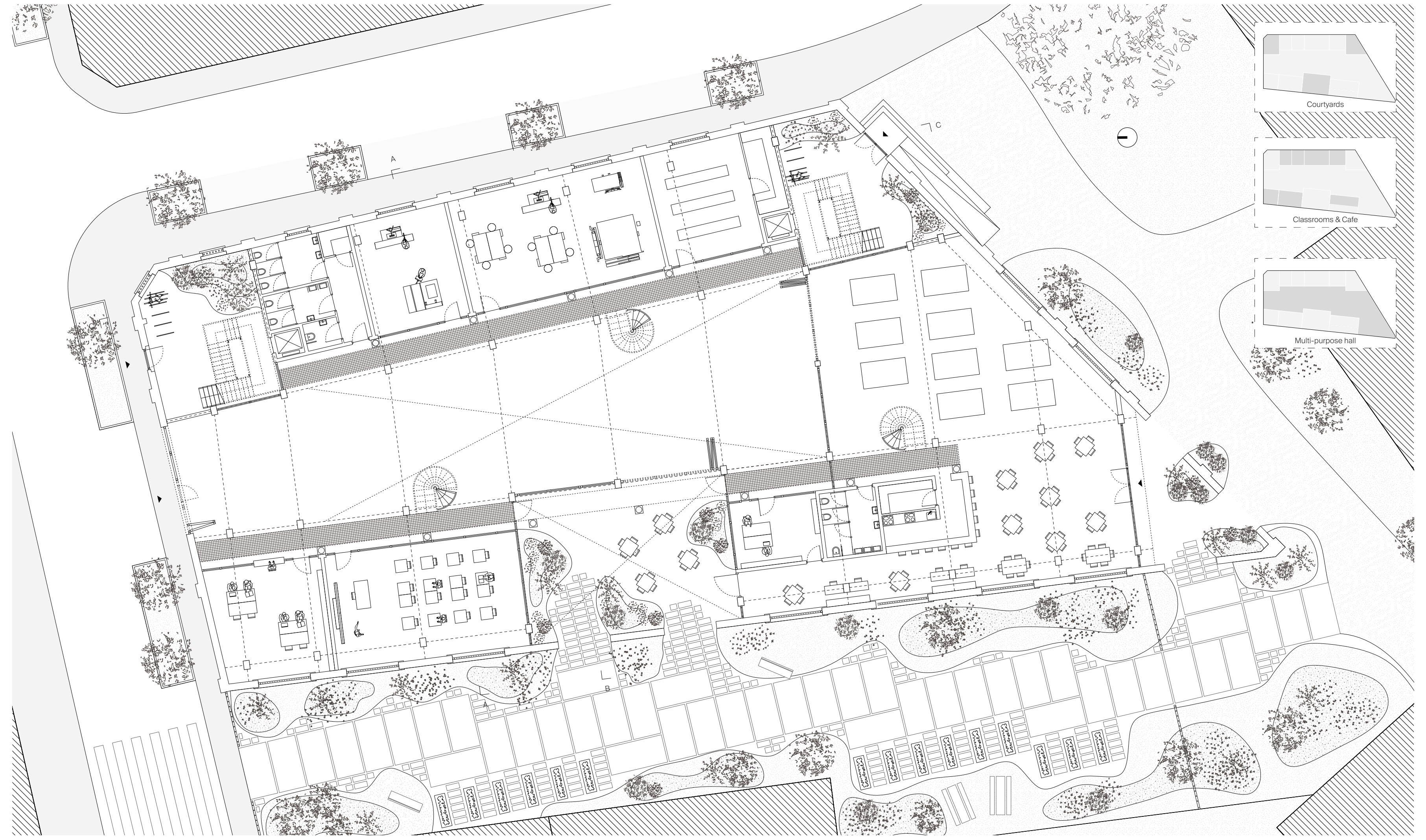
The building is vertically extended, adding openings within the old walls, and a new structural logic that builds upon the existing. Three stepped-back housing volumes are positioned above a productive and educational plinth, creating a softer transition towards the surrounding streetscape and the adjacent linear park. The project seeks to make ongoing change less disruptive and support the local residents most affected by it, through introducing spaces and shared areas tailored to the needs of the existing community. Through its facade composition, material choices, and integration of collective spaces, the project aims to remain socially anchored within the neighbourhood.

In contrast to profit-driven redevelopment, the proposal explores an alternative approach rooted in the needs of residents, everyday urban life, and the careful transformation of what is already there — positioning the architecture not in a way that is imposing towards its surroundings but carefully balanced within the existing urban fabric.

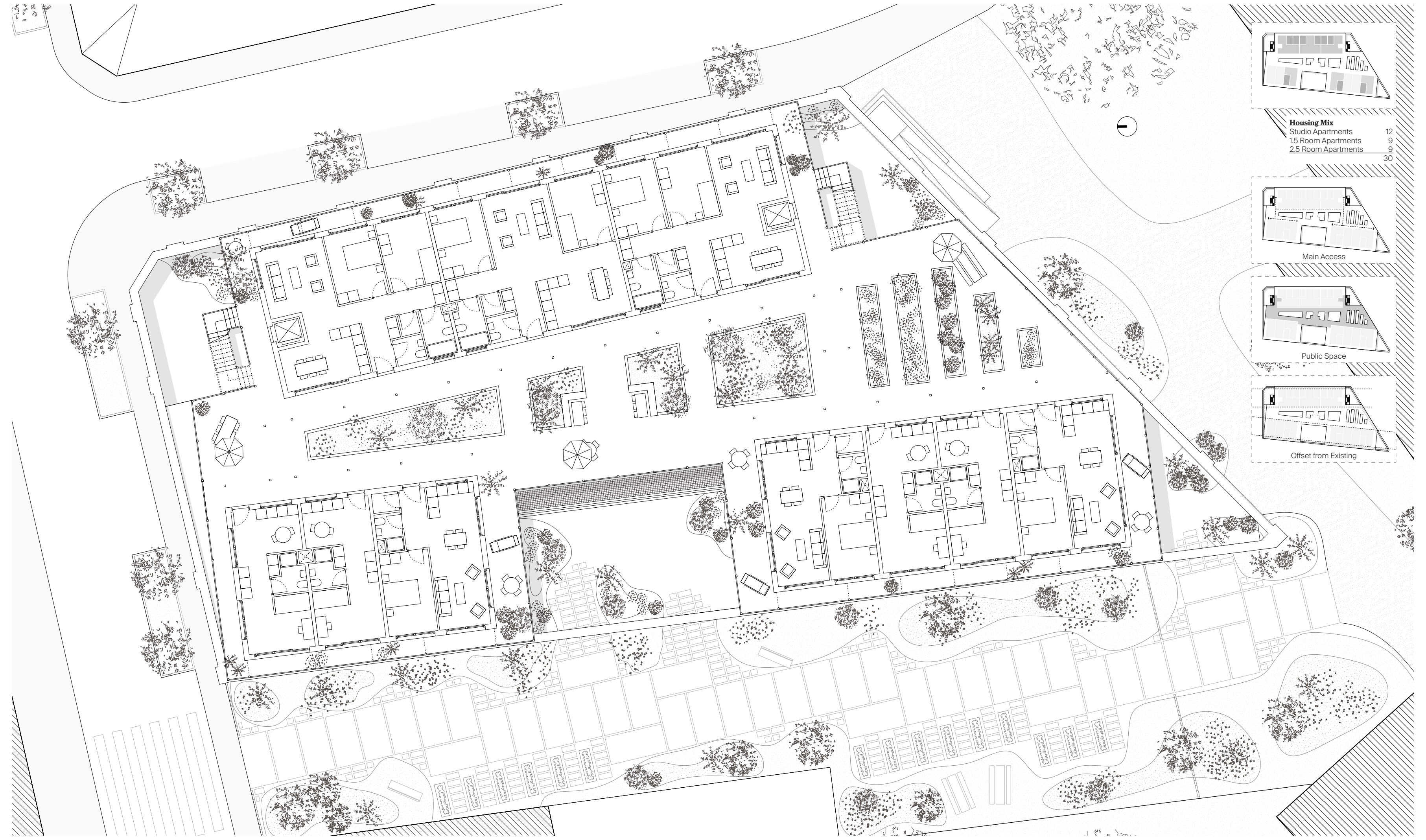

Visualisation Housing Entrance
The Addition Growing out of the Existing


The Neighbourhood
1:3000

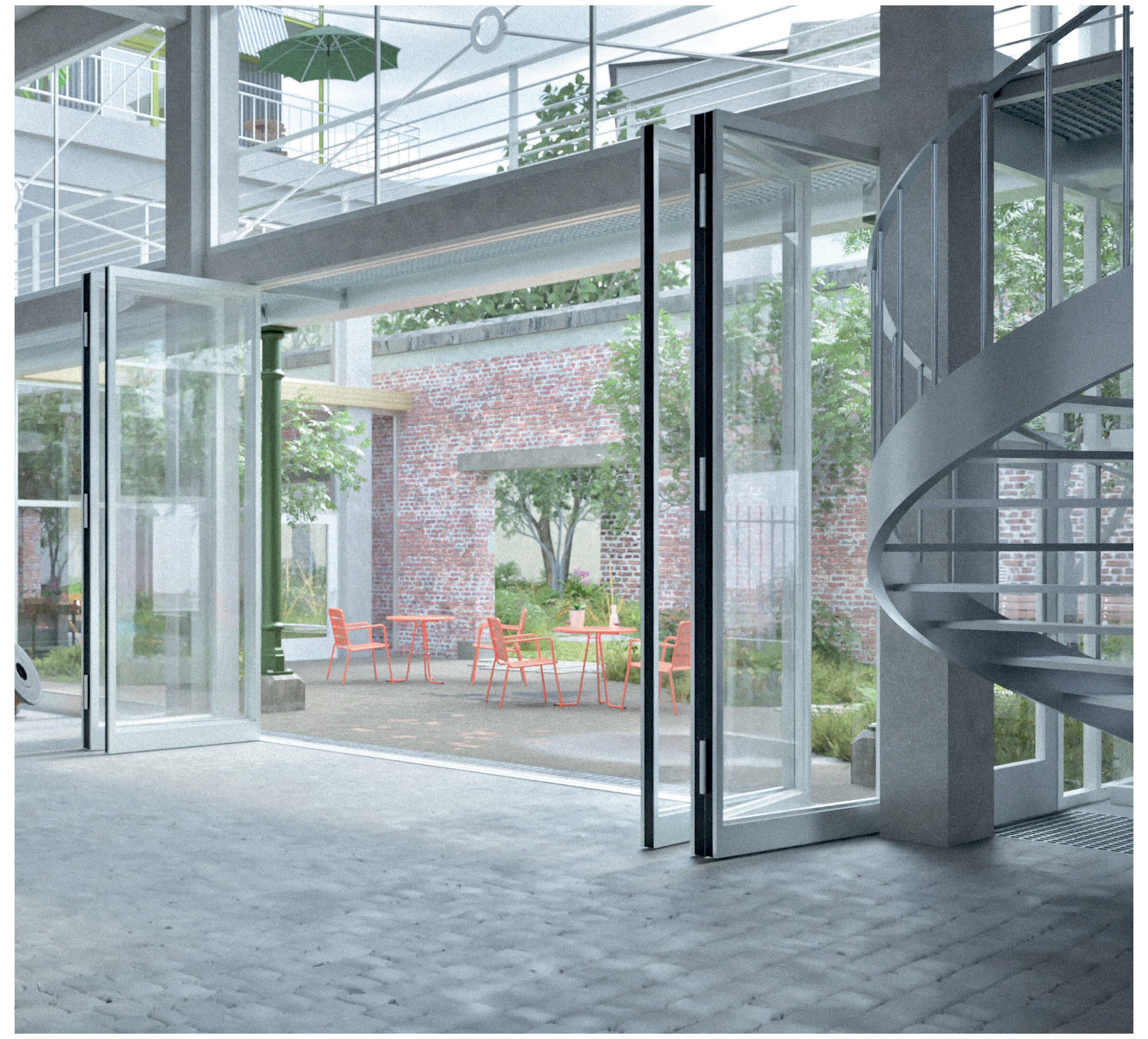

Site Plan
1:500

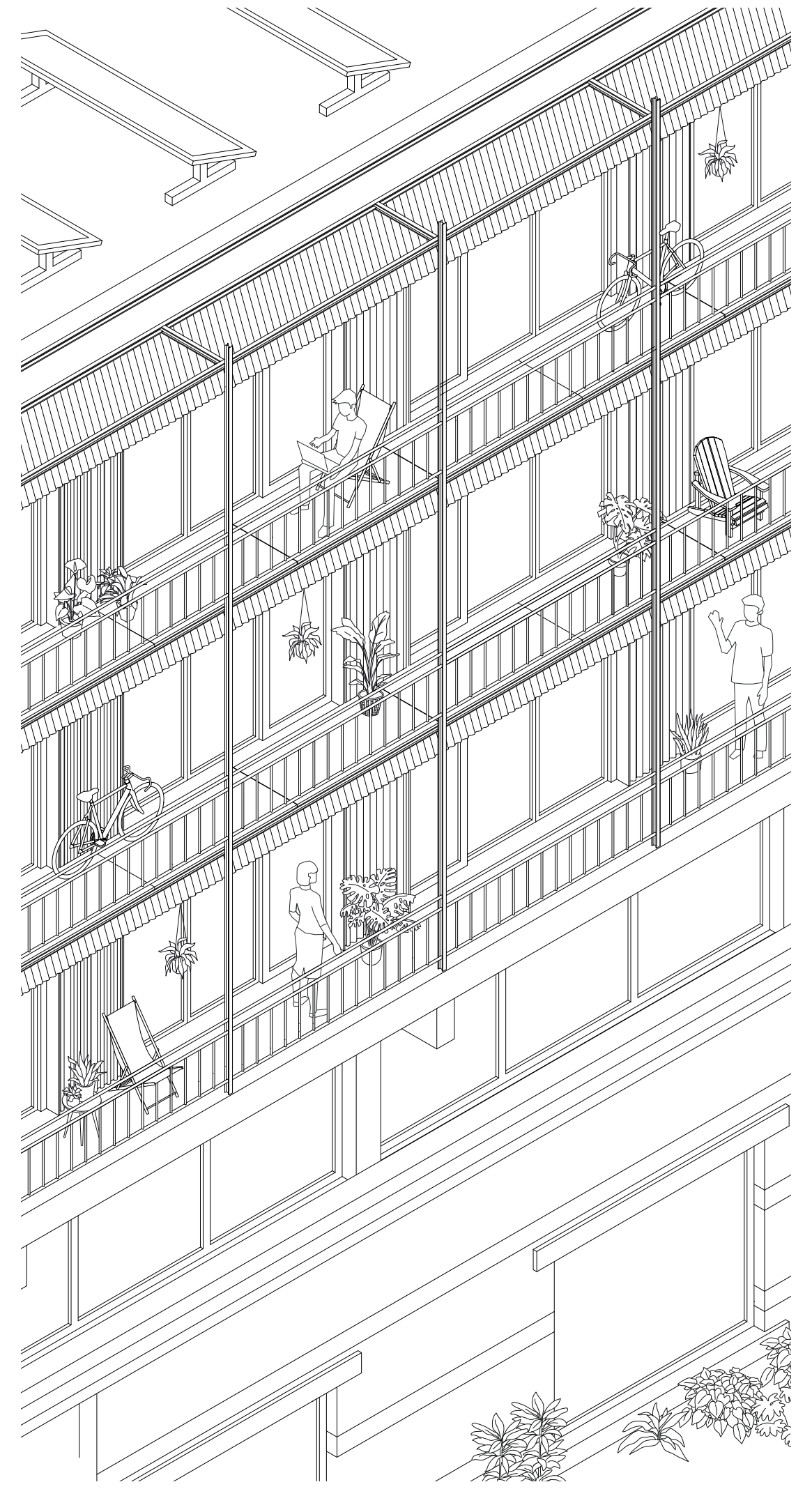


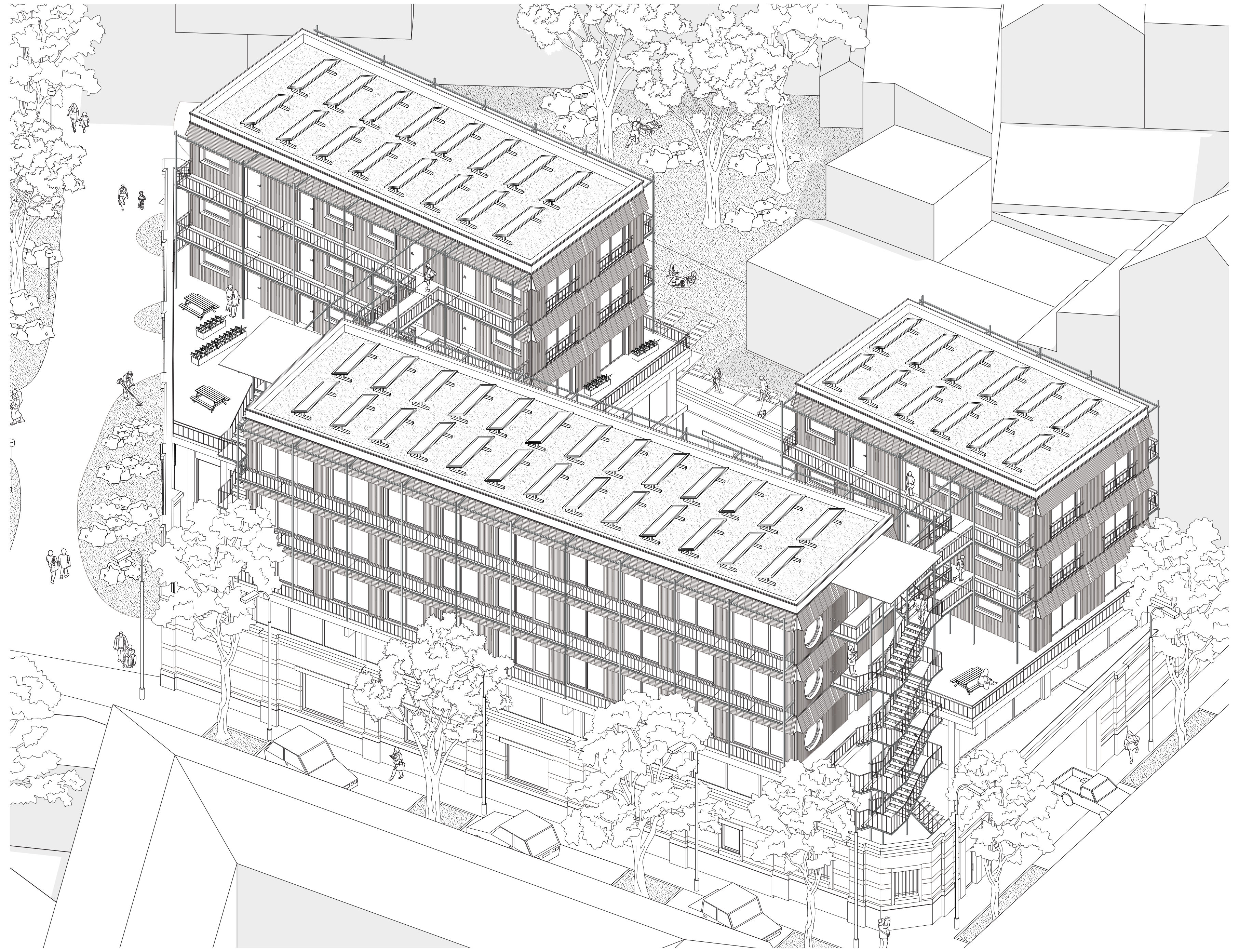
Ground Floor
1:100

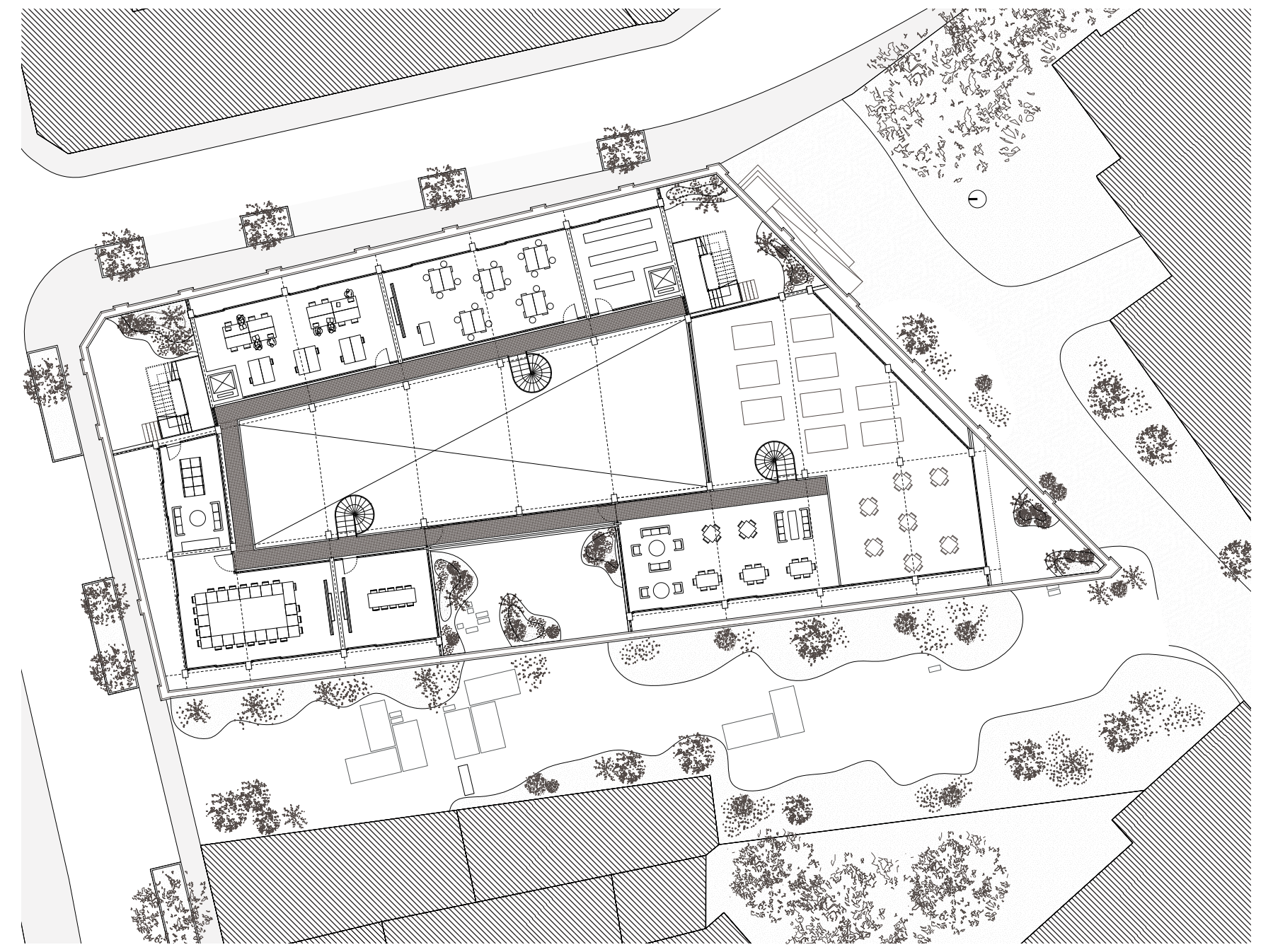


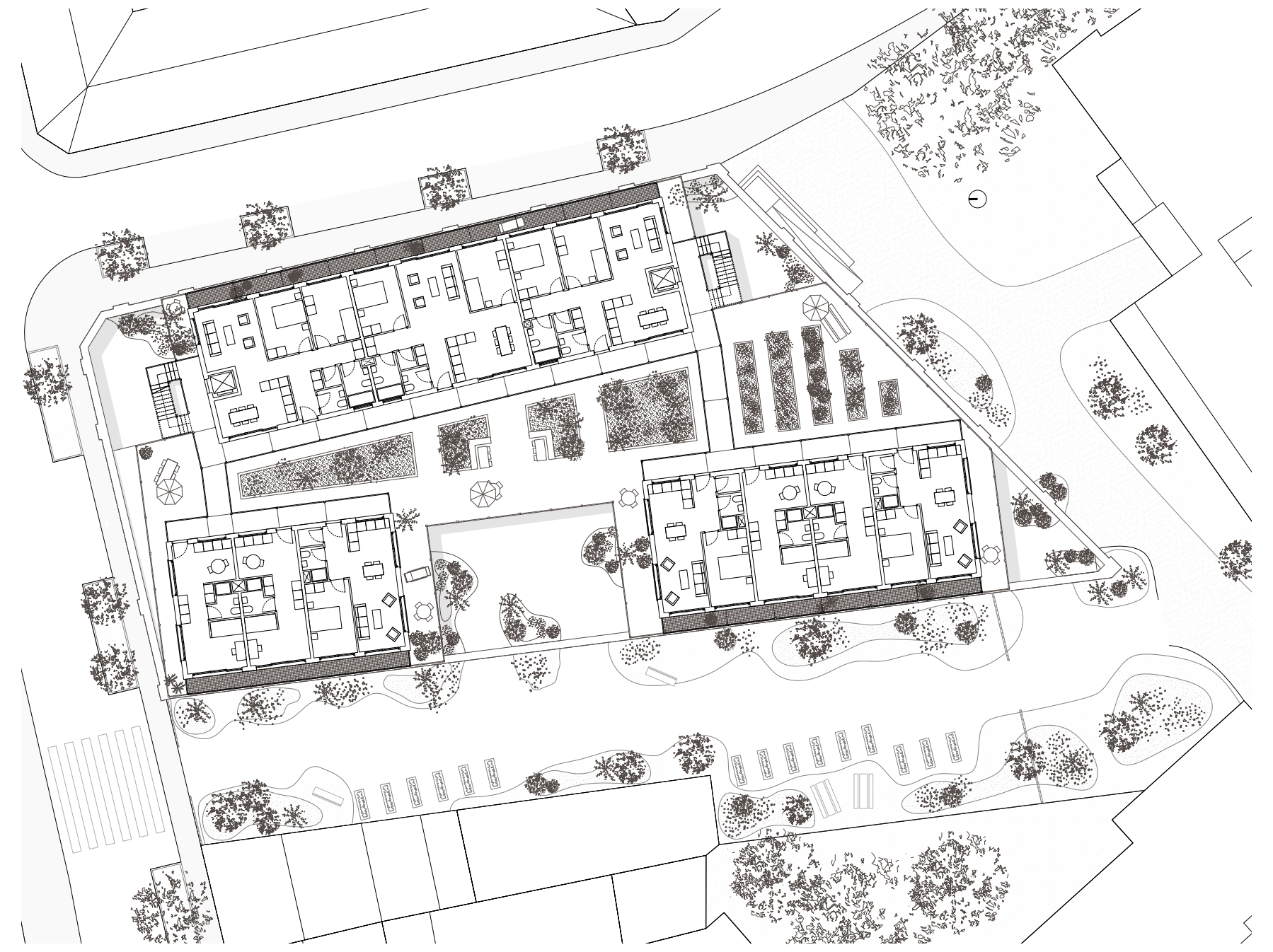
Plinth Floor
1:100

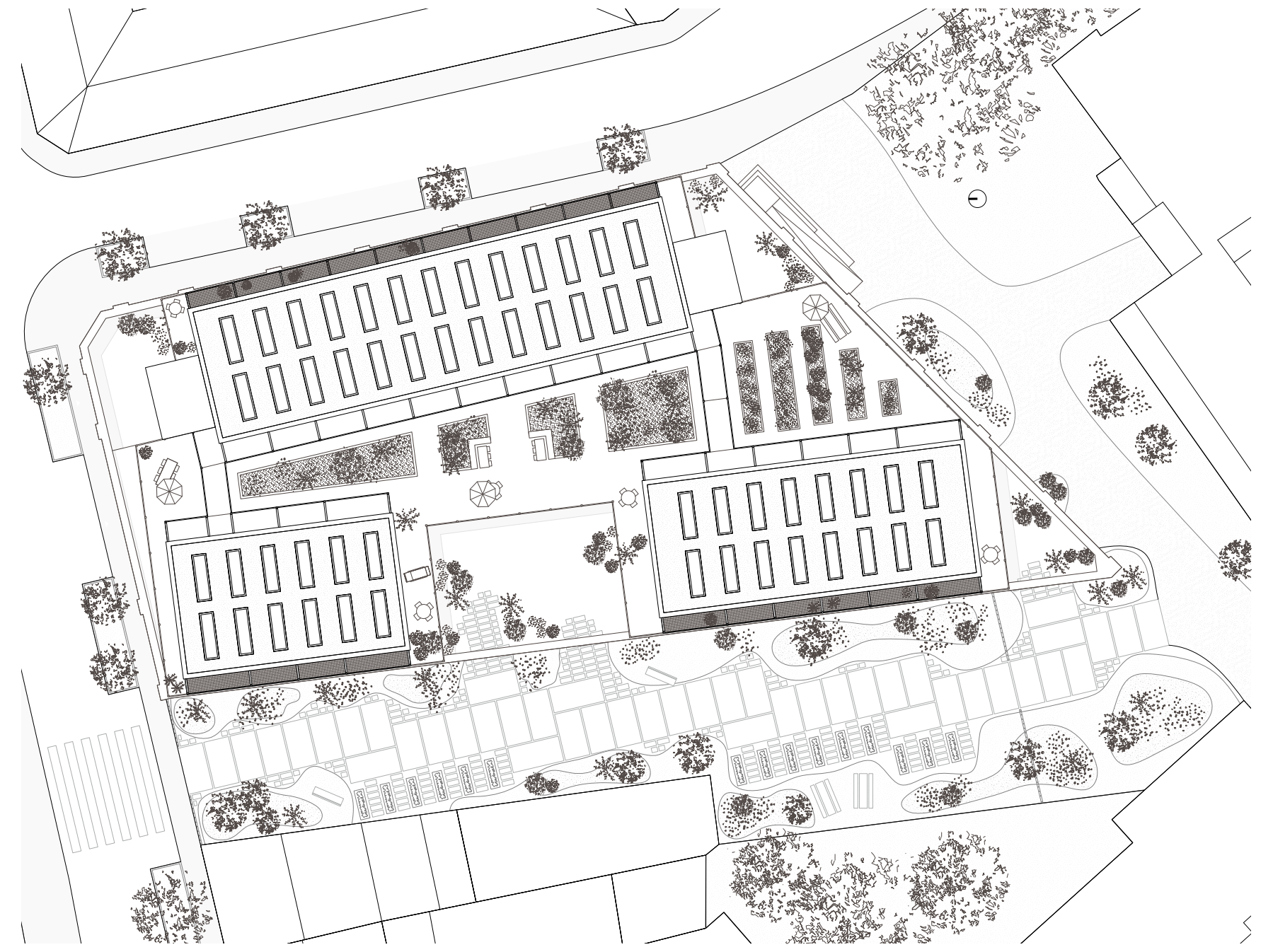

Visualisation Working Hall
Showing the scale and use of the space

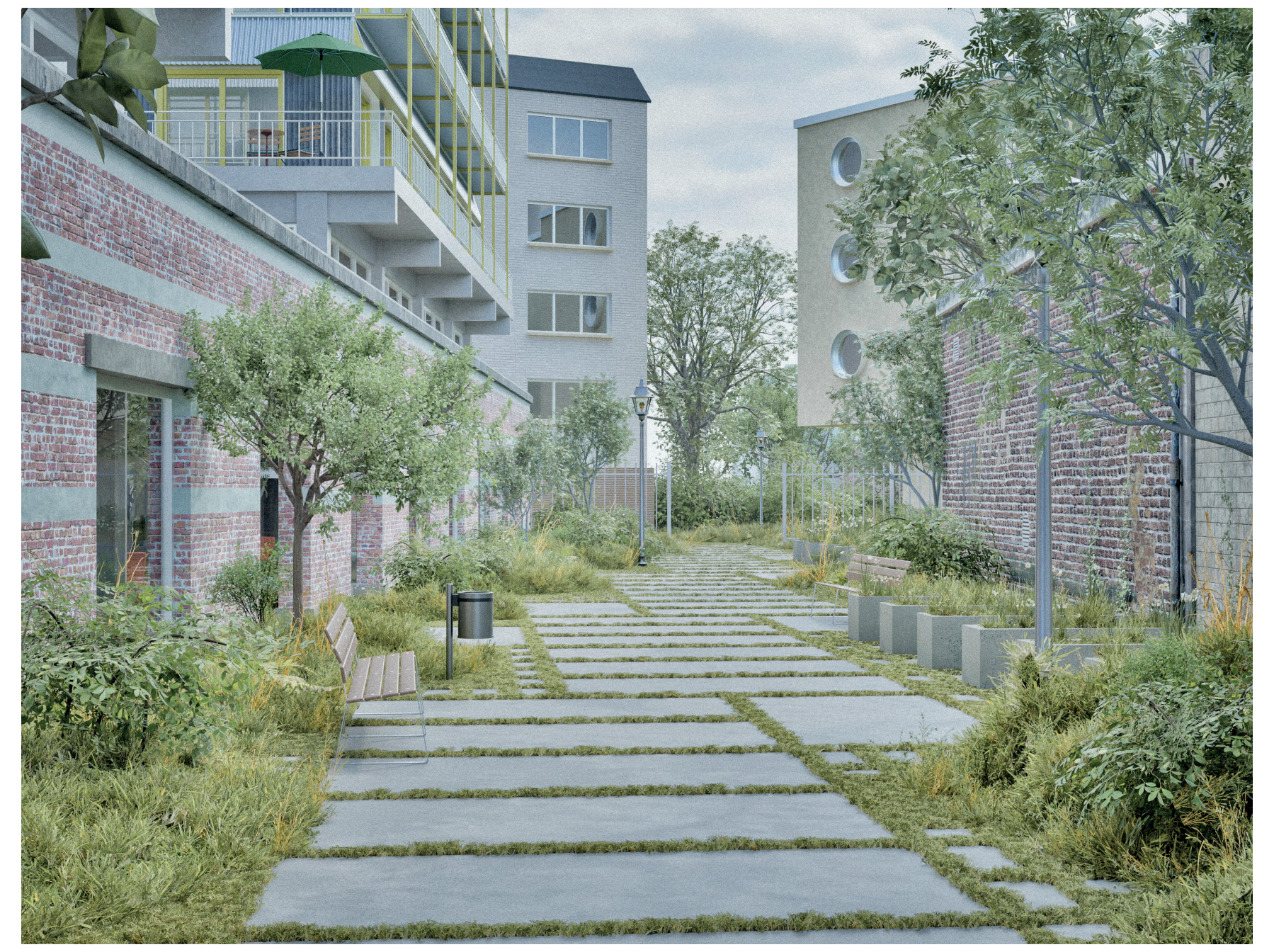

The Balconies
As a social tool

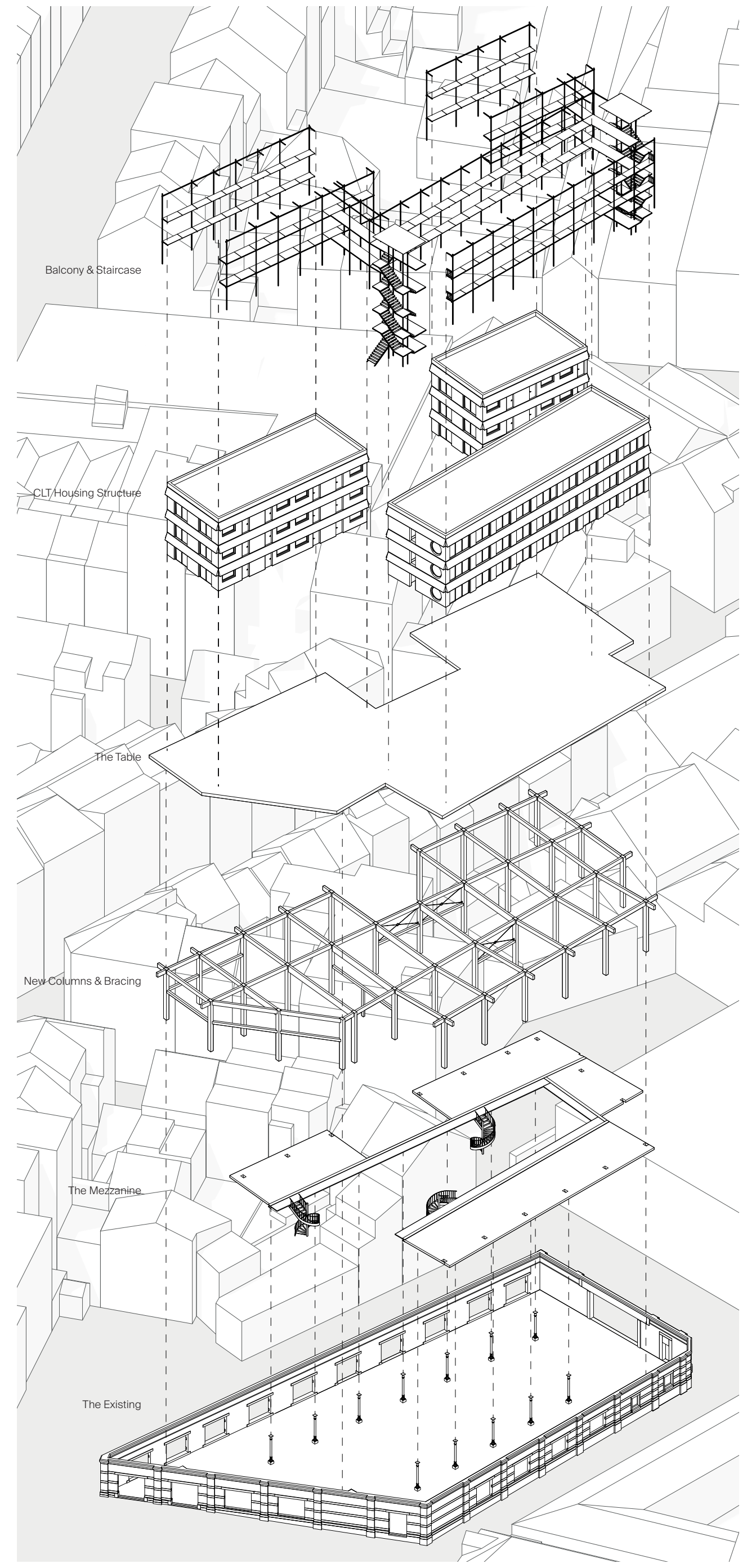

Axonometric Area
The Building and its surroundings


Mezzanine Floor
1:200

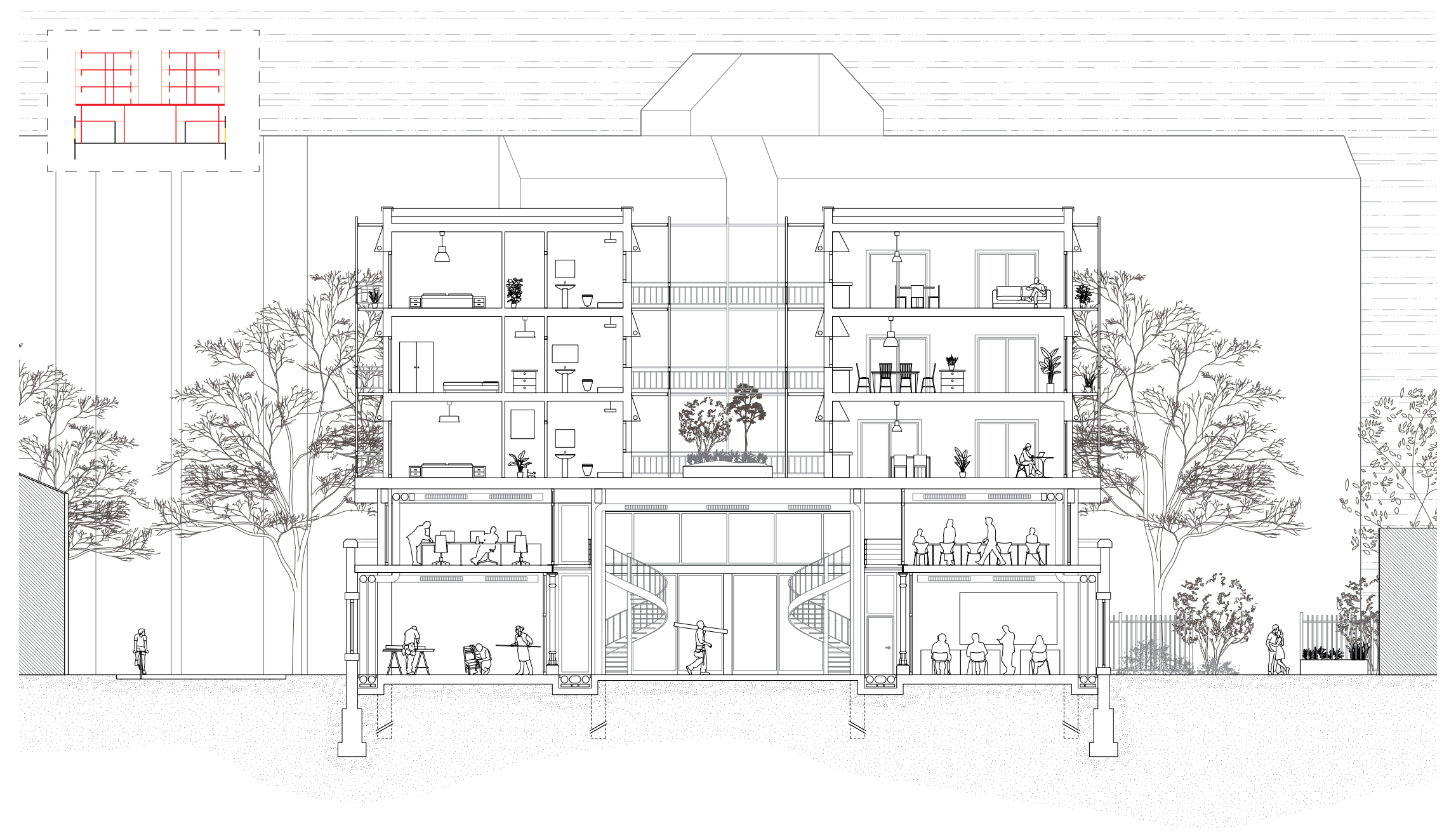

Standard Housing Floor
1:200

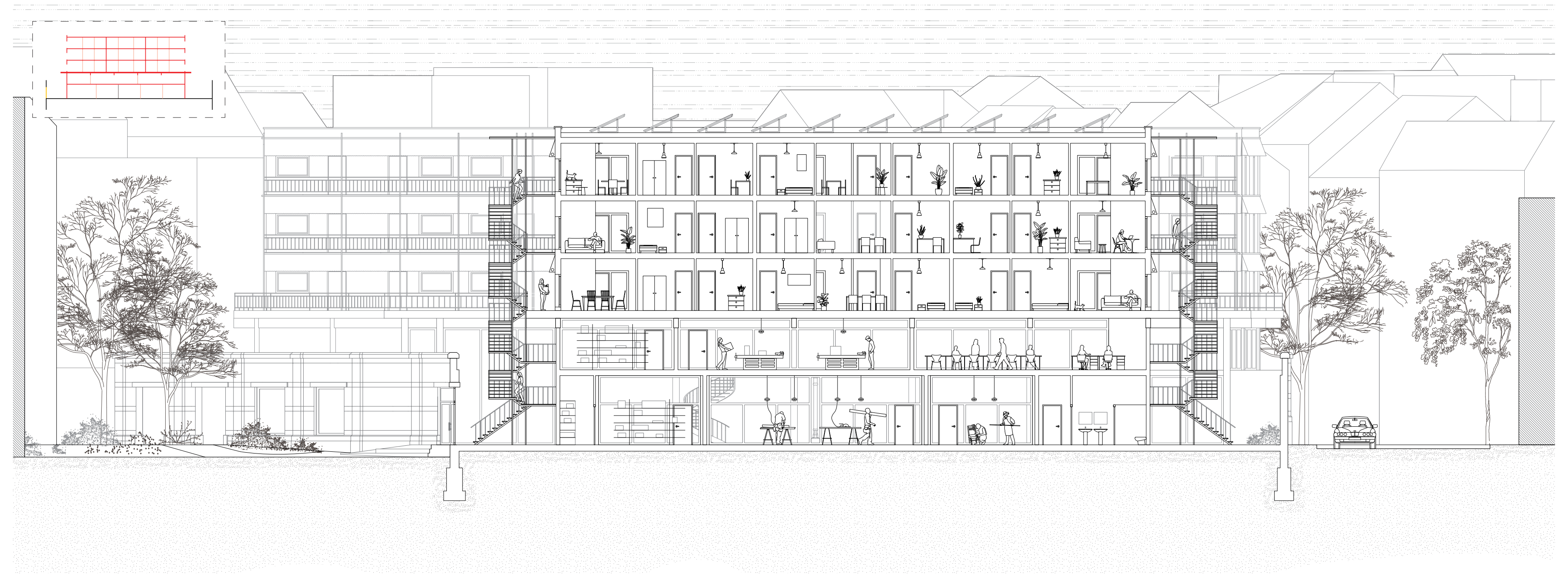

Roof Plan
1:200


Visualisation Linear Park
A free Layout without fences



Axonometric Construction


Section AA
1:100


Section CC
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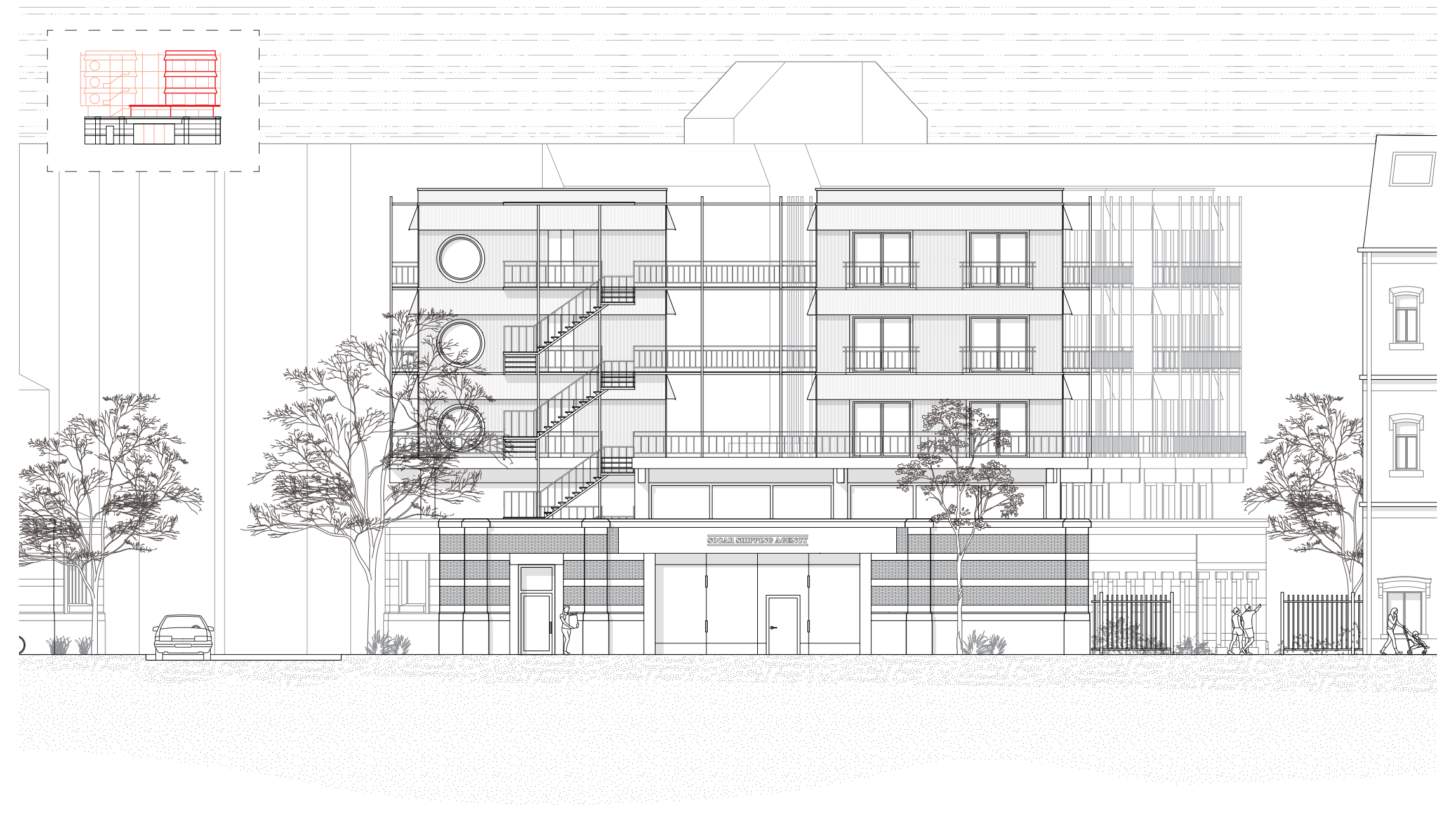
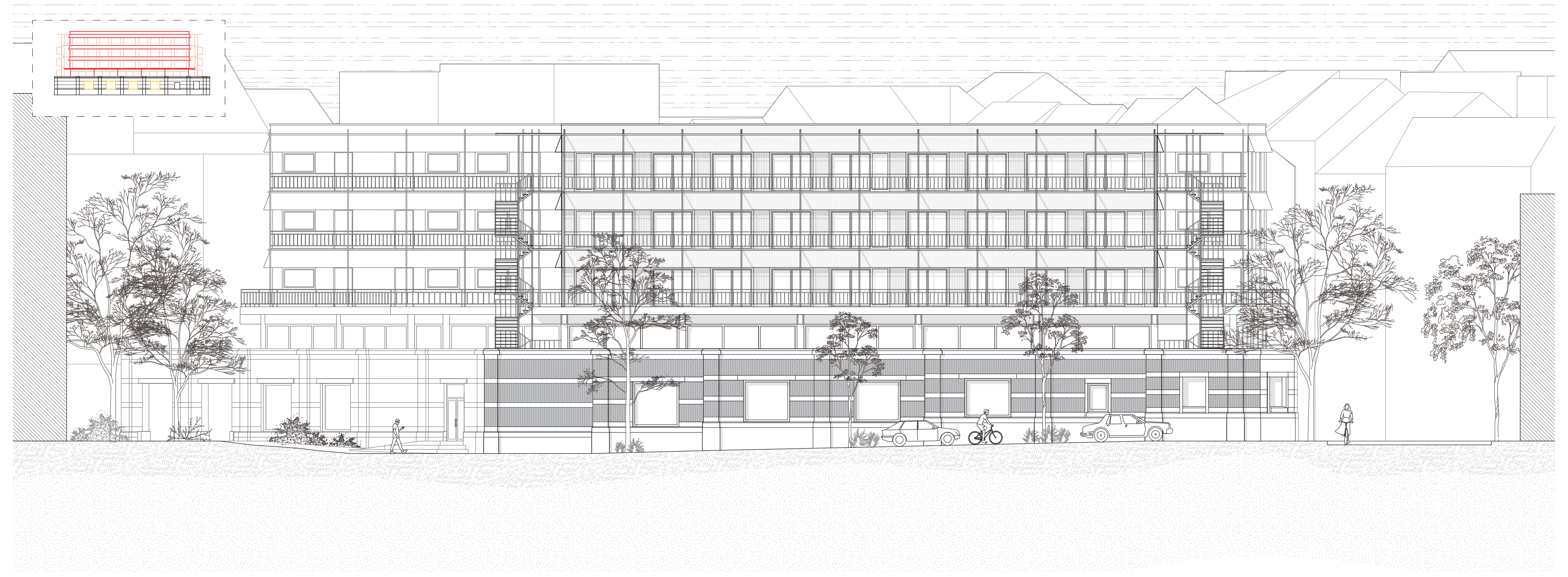
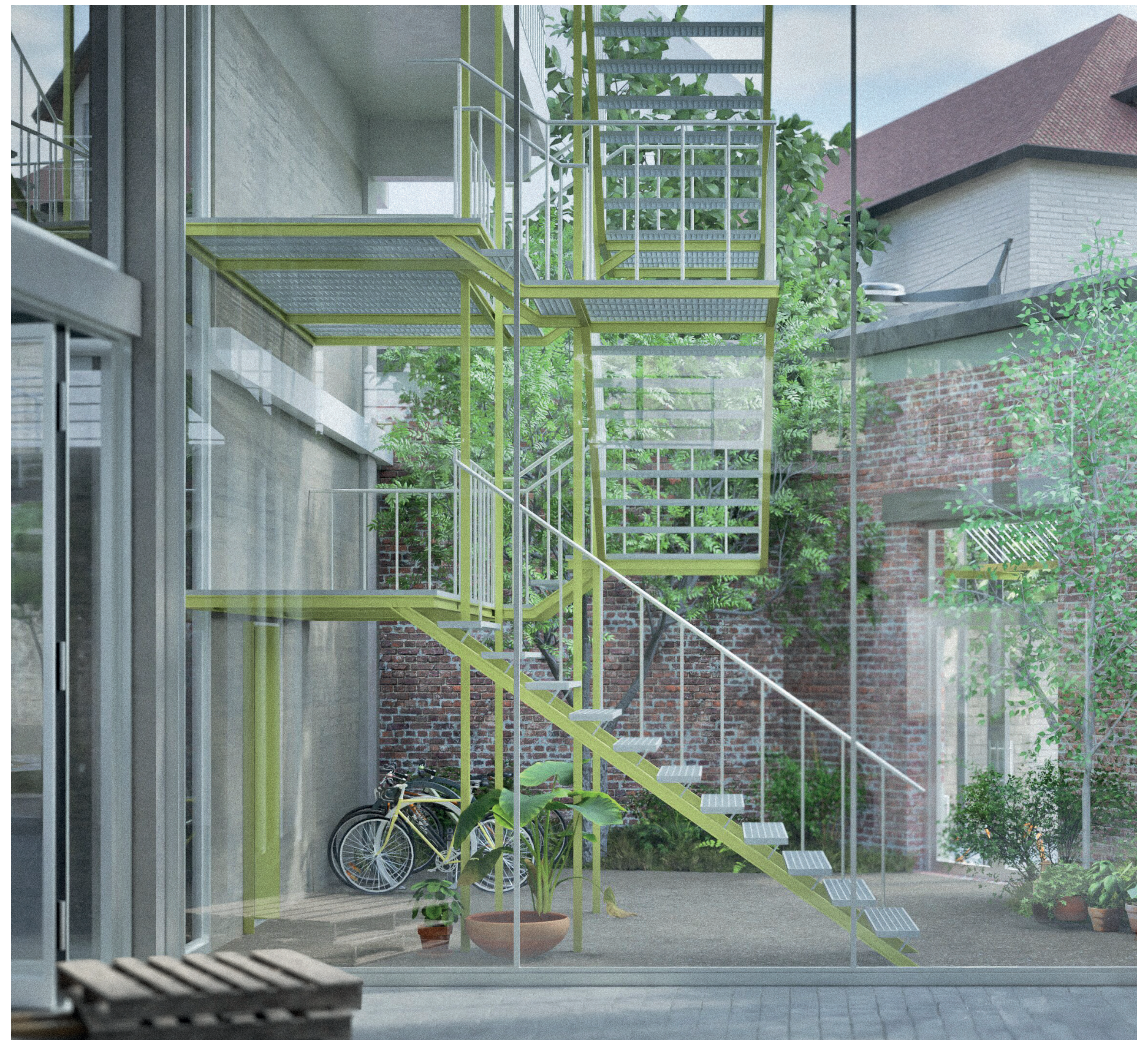
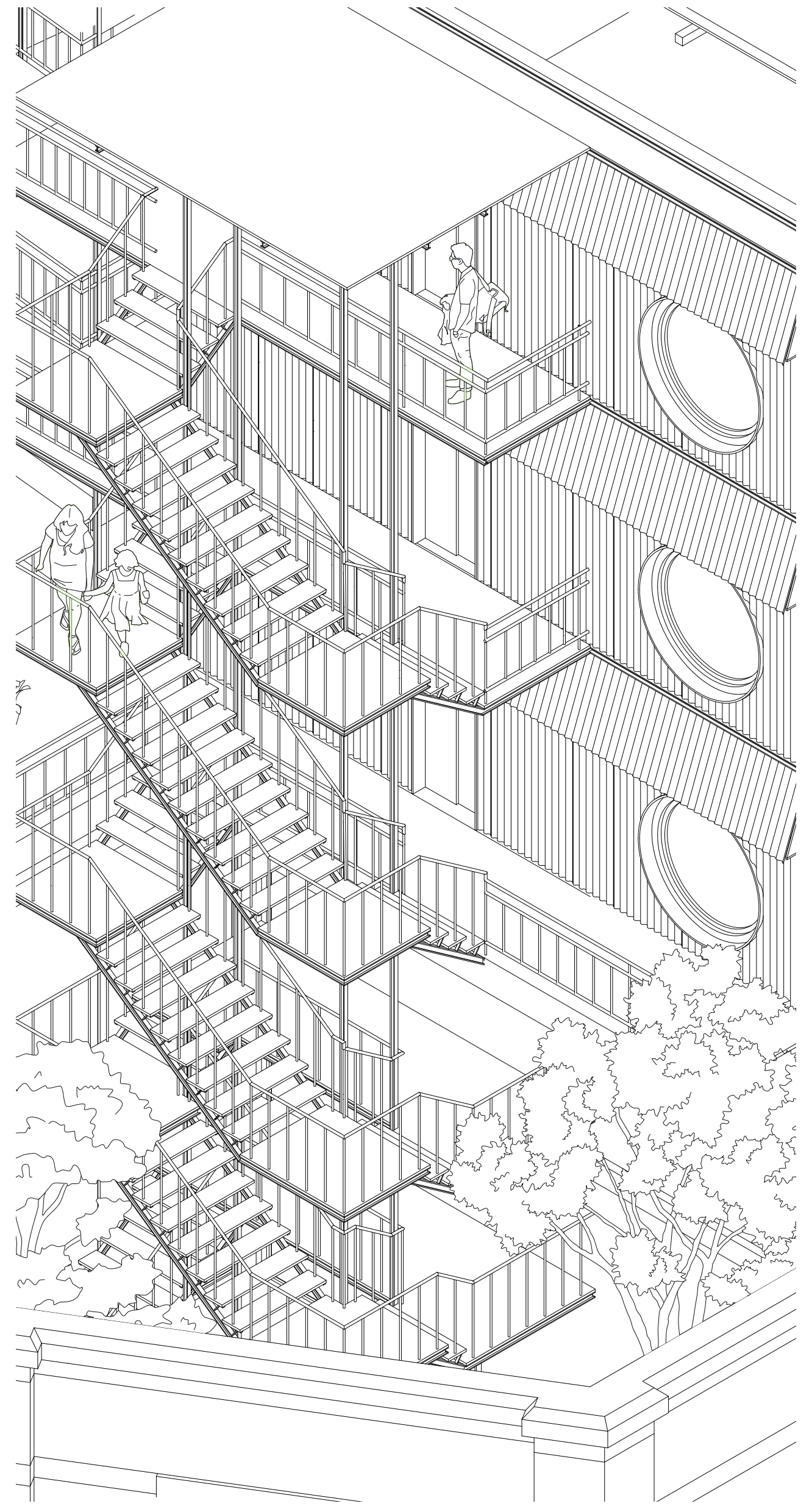

Elevation North
1:100

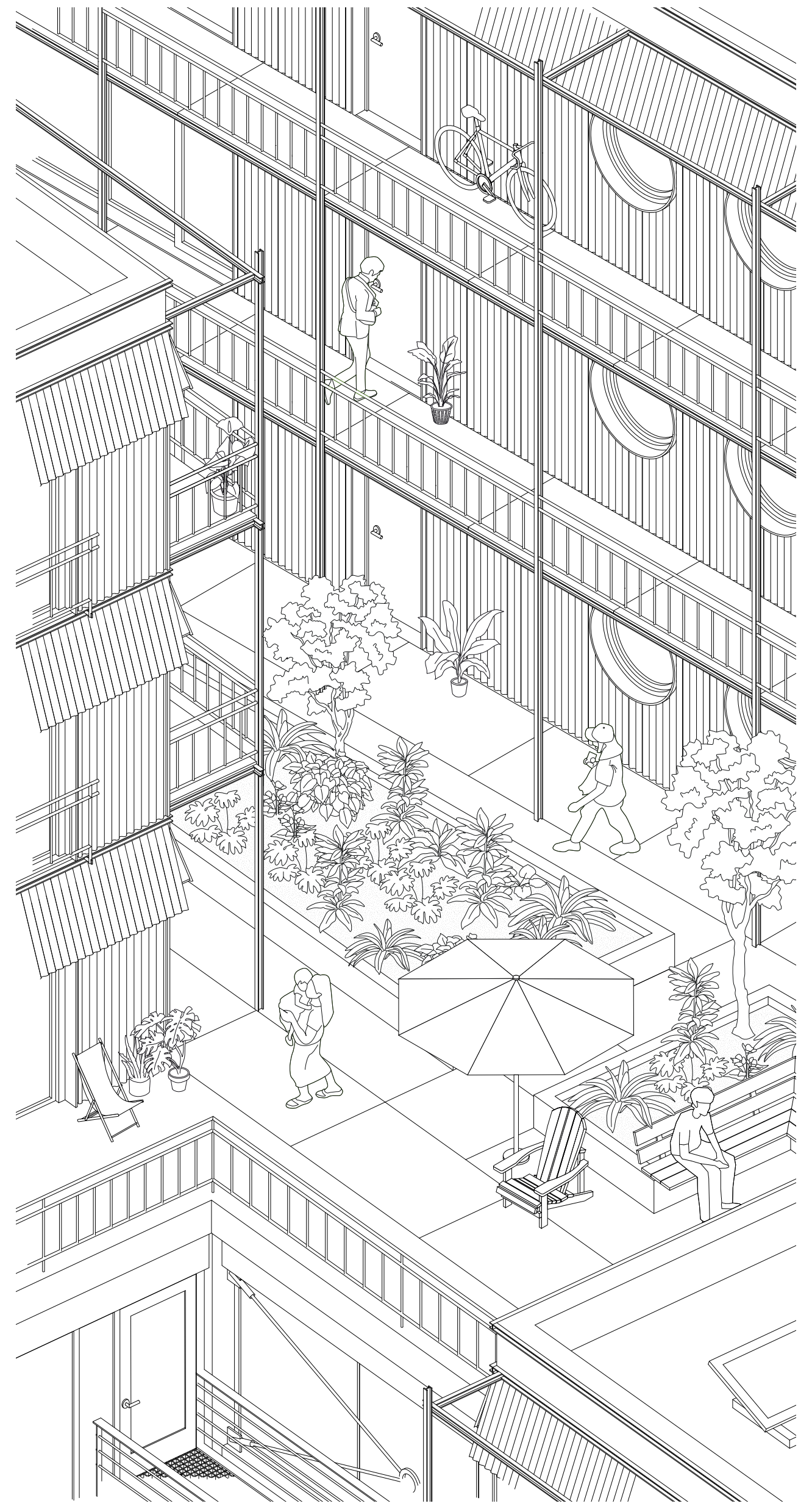

Elevation East
1:100



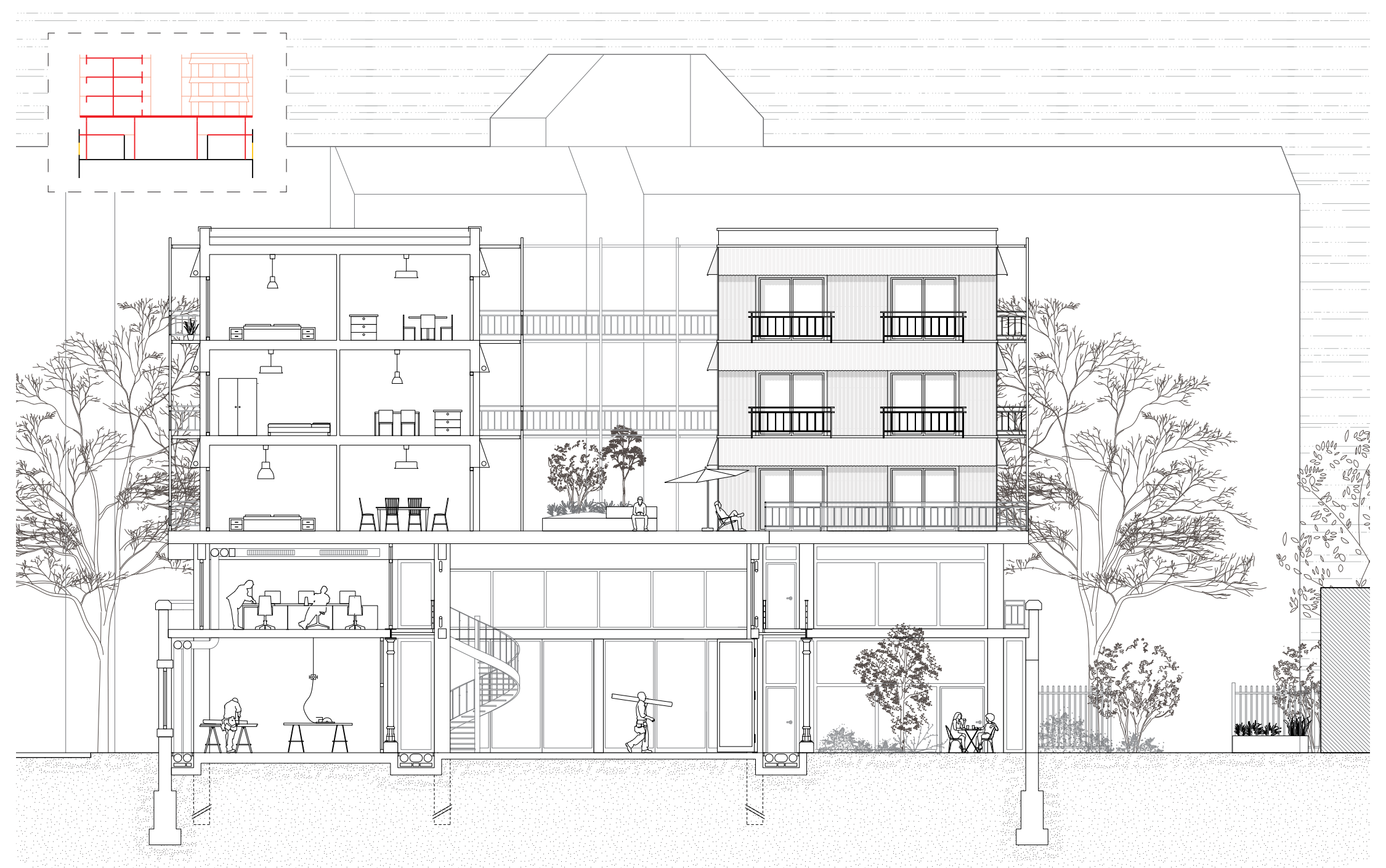
Visualisation Staircase Housing
As seen from the Hall the Connection between the two becomes visible



The Staircase
As a social tool

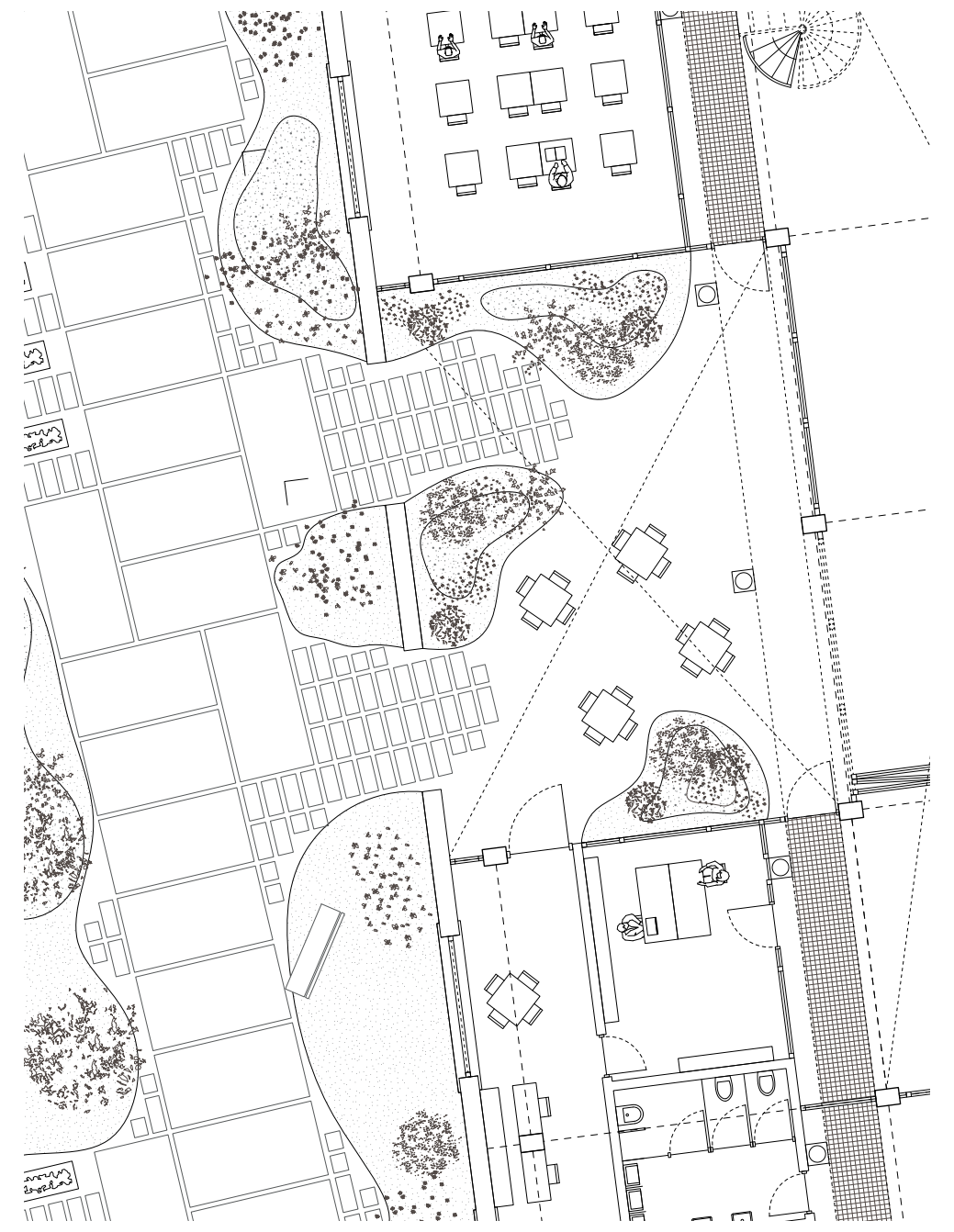


The Balconies
As a social tool

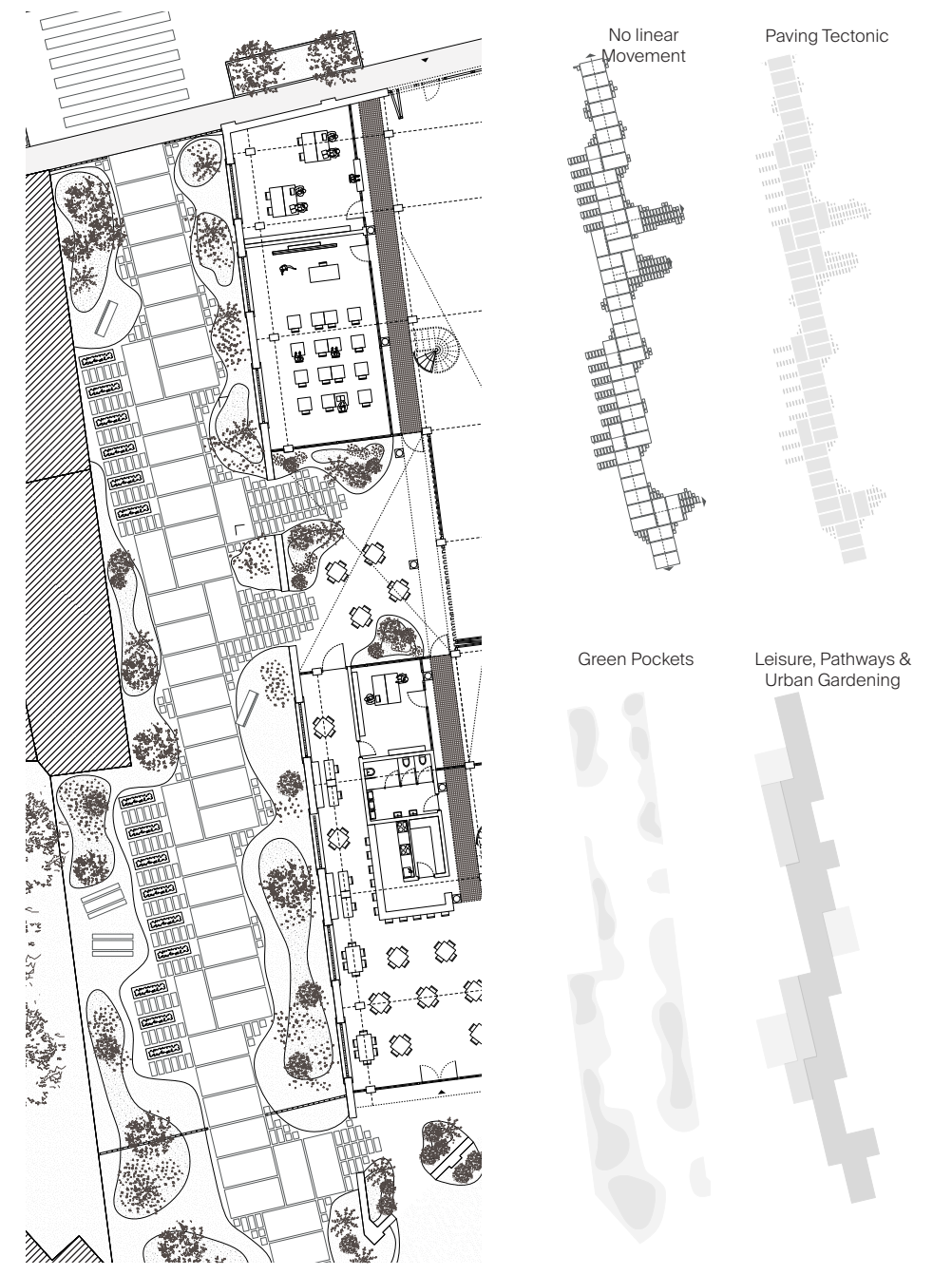


Section BB
1:100

Visualisation Linear Park
The building on the edge of the Park



Floor Plan Park & Courtyard
Showing the soft transition between the two



Linear Park
The new logic of the Linear park

Residential:

Heating

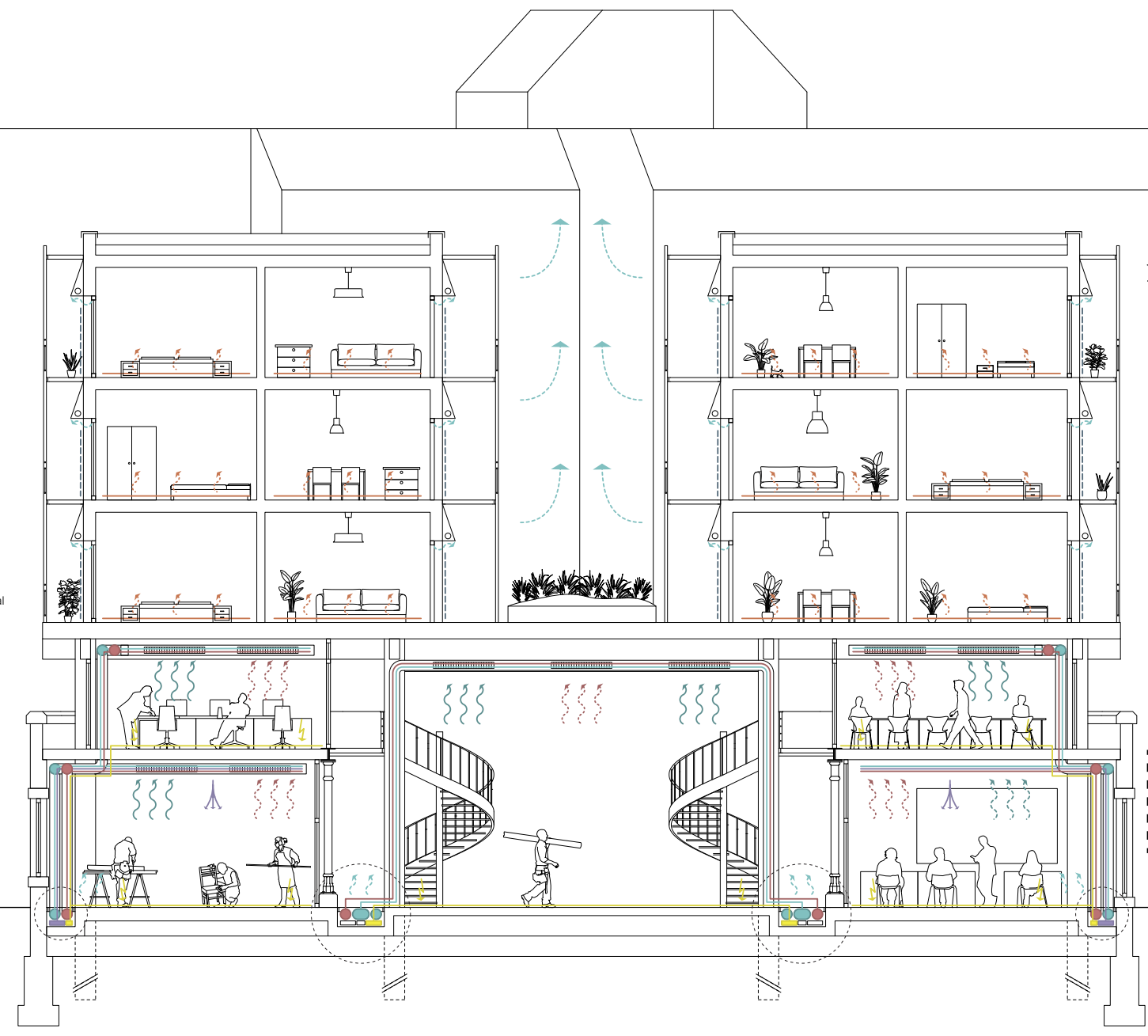
Uses dry underfloor heating panels integrated within the floor build-up to provide low-temperature radiant heating.

Sun Shading

Integrated fabric roller blinds within the facade regulate solar exposure while maintaining daylight and outward views.

Ventilation

Provides fresh air through facade-integrated overflow vents and natural cross ventilation across the central void.



Workshop:

Electrical Loop

Distributes energy across the building and connects productive and residential spaces through a shared electrical infrastructure.

Process Extraction Loop

Extracts heat, dust, and fumes from workshops to maintain healthy and controlled working environments.

Compressed Air Loop

Provides shared pneumatic infrastructure for flexible and adaptable production spaces.

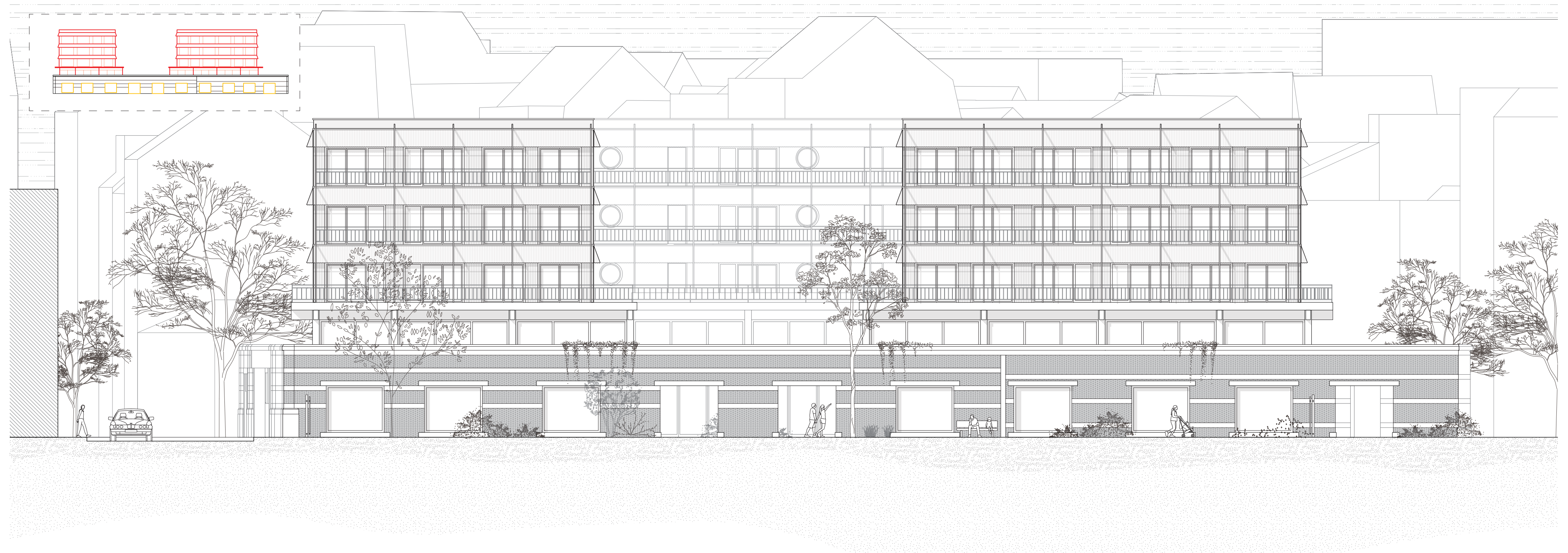
Workshop Ventilation Loop

Supplies workshops/halls with pre-tempered fresh air through a hybrid system combining courtyard ventilation and mechanically supported air distribution.

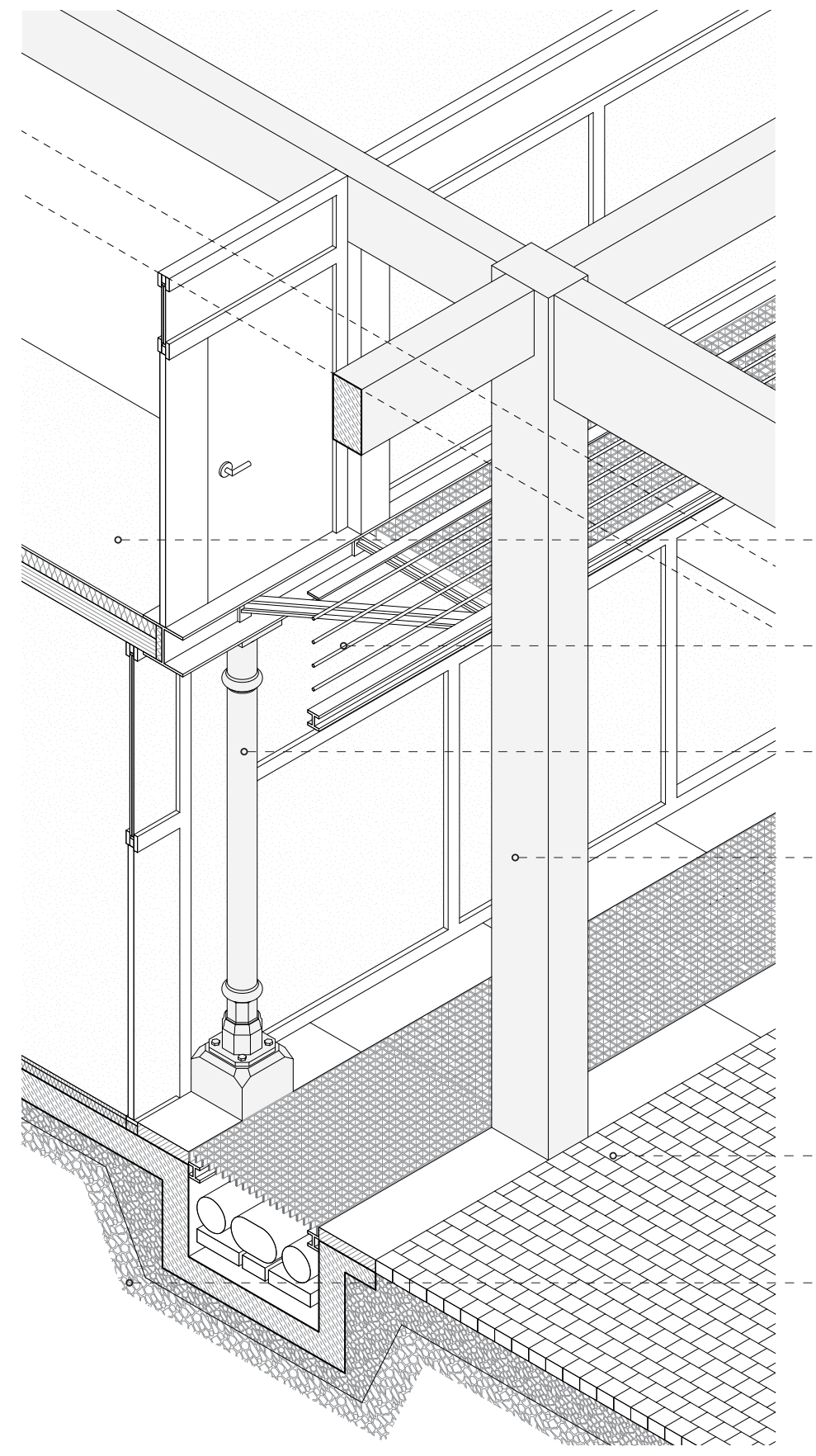
Service Trenches

Integrated floor trench distributing electrical, compressed air, water, and technical infrastructure across the workshops and productive hall.

Climate Diagram
Loops and Strategies

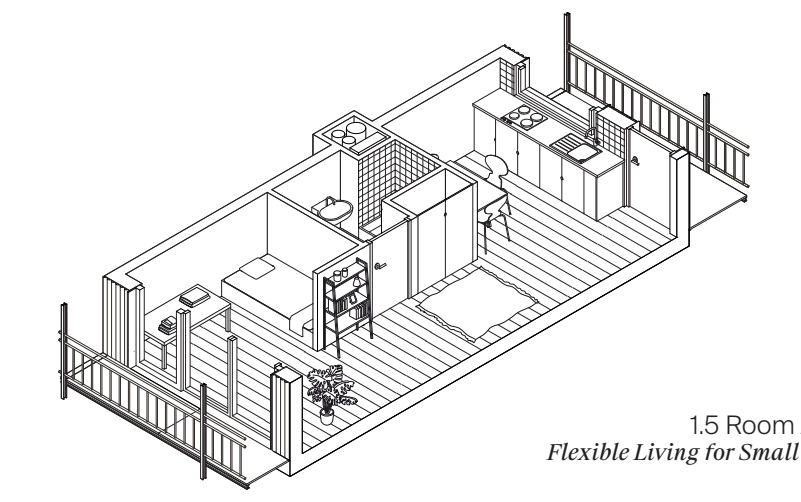


Elevation West
1:100

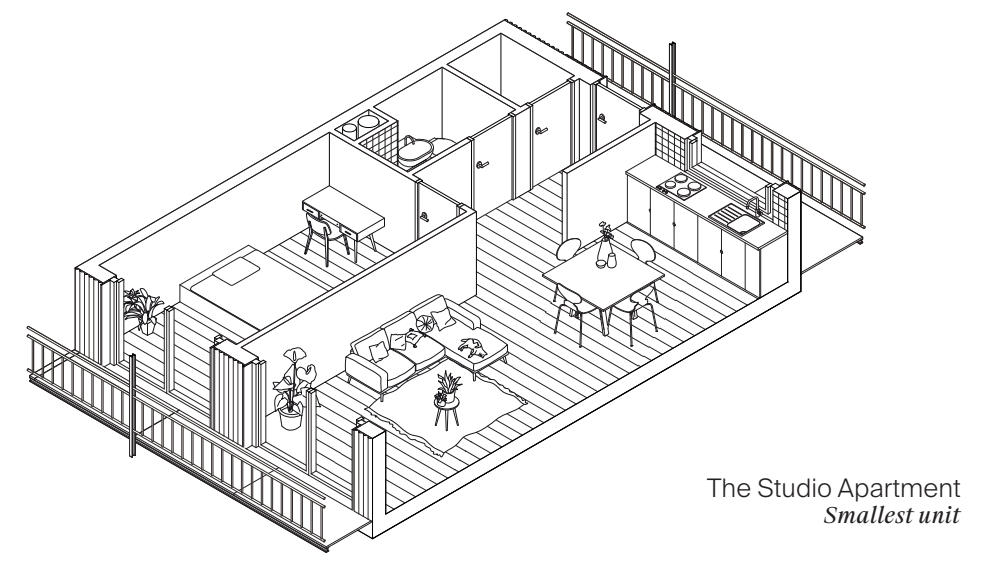


- New mezzanine level
- Walkway spanning old & new
- Existing Cast-iron Columns
- New Columns Holding the Table
- Existing Flooring kept in the Hall
- Services running underneath

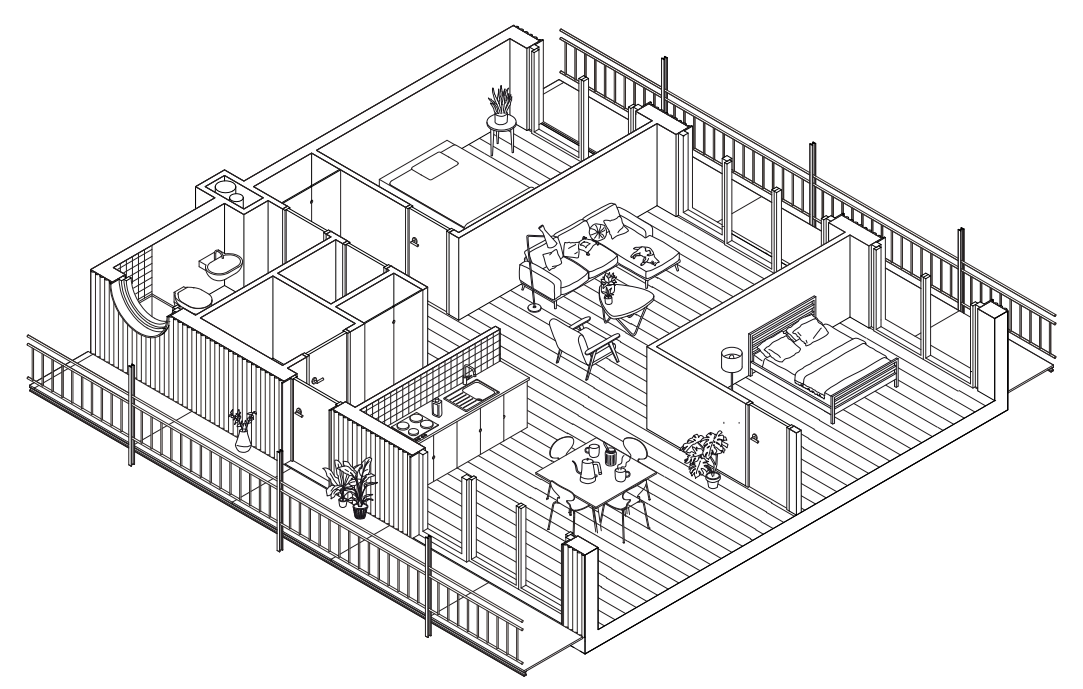
The old and the new Construction
Constructive Parts



1.5 Room Apartment
Flexible Living for Small Households

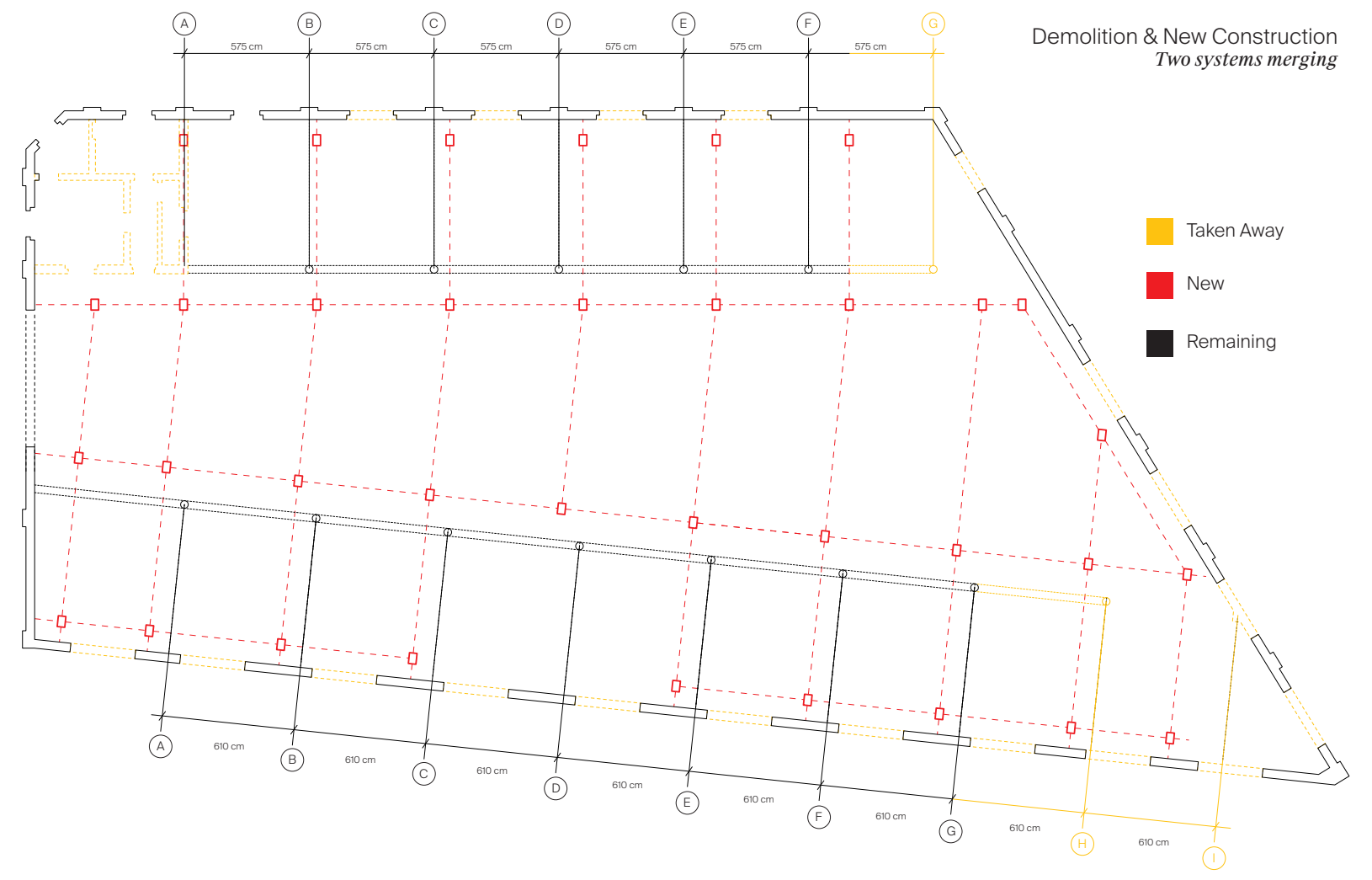


The Studio Apartment
Smallest unit



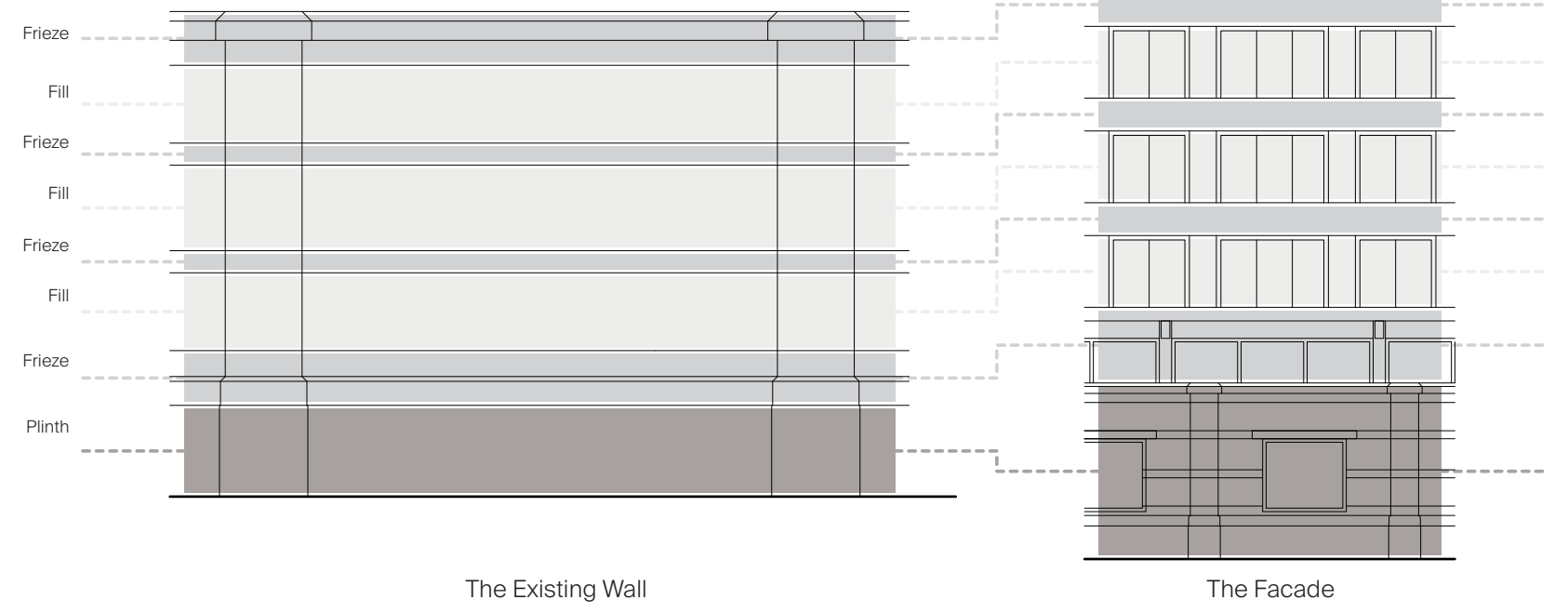
2.5 Room Apartment
Extended Living Uni

Demolition & New Construction
Two systems merging



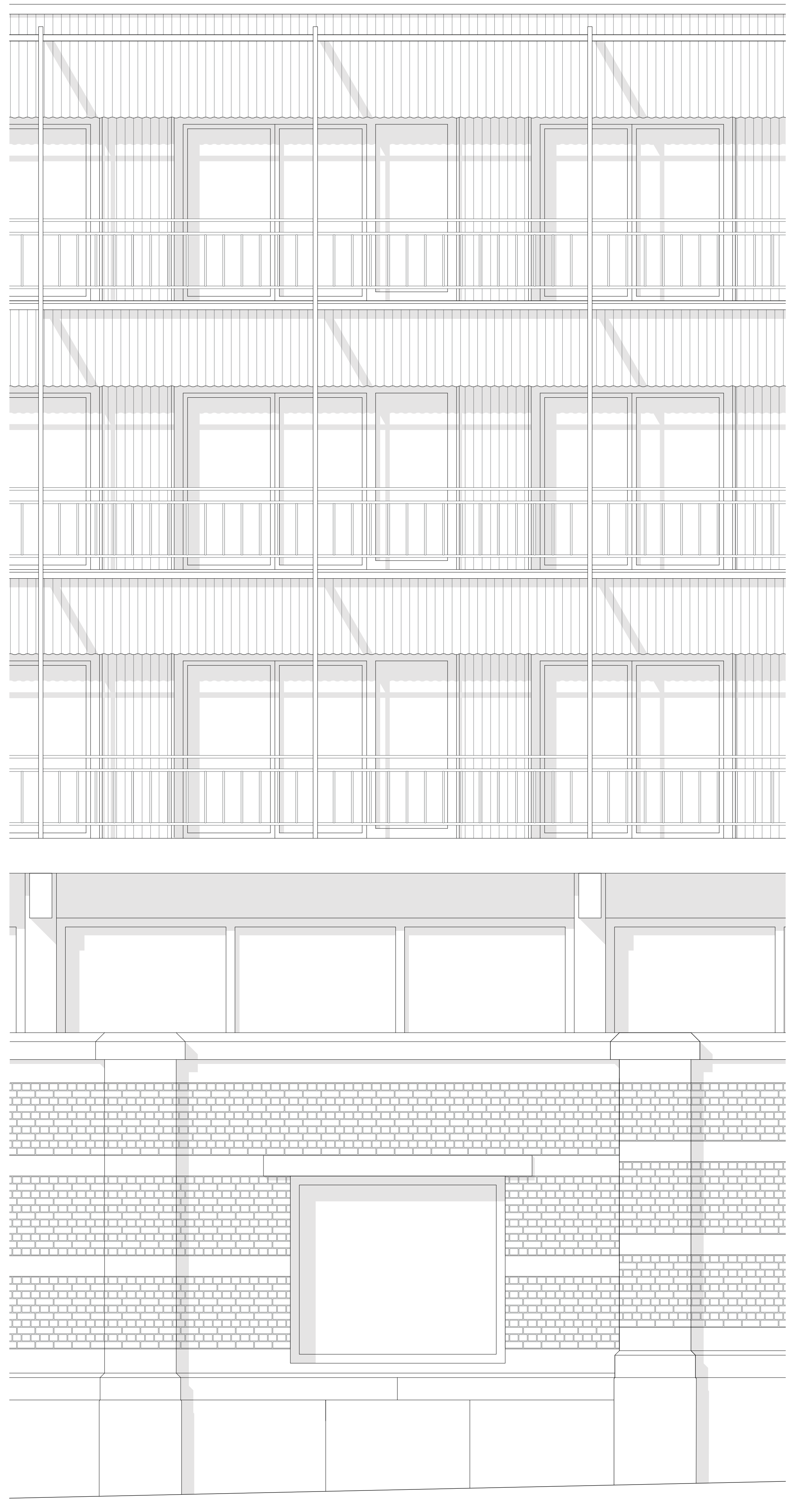
- 🟨 Taken Away
- 🟥 New
- ⬛ Remaining

Facade Composition
Correspondence to the Existing

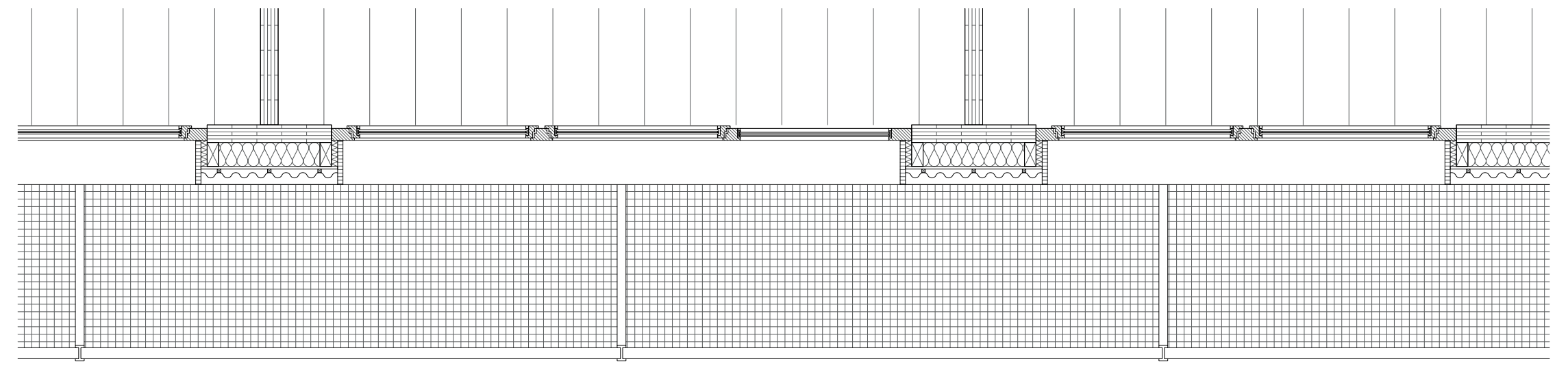


The Existing Wall

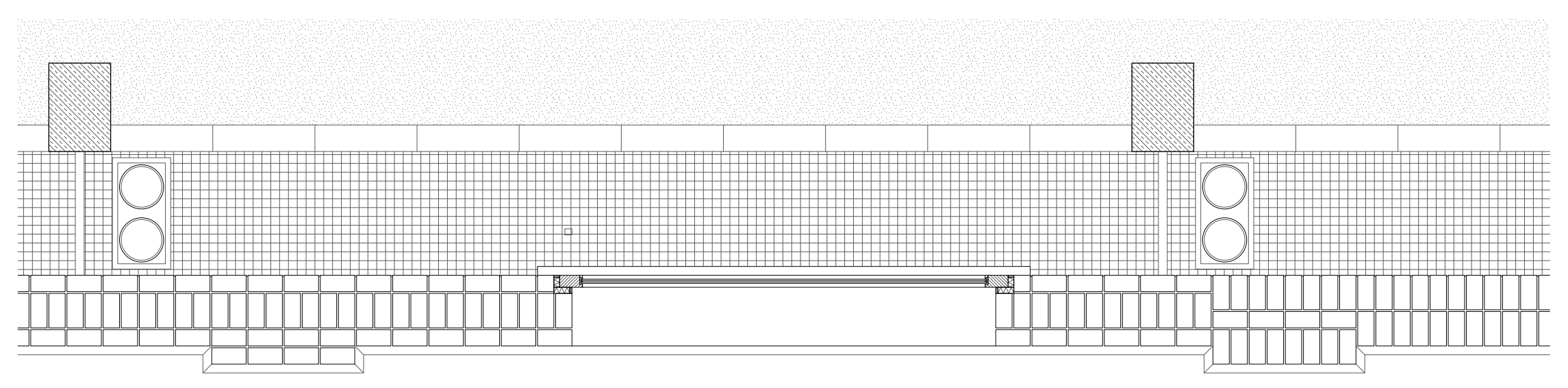
The Facade



Facade Elevation
1:20



Horizontal Section Housing
1:20



Horizontal Section Ground Floor
1:20

Roof:

Gravel ballast layer	50 mm
Bituminous roofing membrane	10 mm
Waterproofing membrane	5 mm
Two-layer rigid thermal insulation	240 mm
Cross-laminated timber (CLT) slab	150 mm

Exterior Wall:

Corrugated metal sheet cladding	50 mm
Ventilated cavity	30 mm
Cement fibre protection board	20 mm
Breather membrane	2 mm
Mineral wool insulation	140 mm
Cross-laminated timber (CLT) panel	120 mm

Typical Residential Floor:

Engineered timber floor finish	20 mm
Routed wood fibre panels (With integrated underfloor heating)	40 mm
PE separation membrane	1 mm
Acoustic impact insulation layer	20 mm
High-density rigid floor insulation	80 mm
Cross-laminated timber (CLT) slab	150 mm

Residential Plinth Floor:

Engineered timber floor finish	20 mm
Routed wood fibre panels (With integrated underfloor heating)	40 mm
PE separation membrane	1 mm
Acoustic impact insulation layer	20 mm
High-density rigid floor insulation	80 mm
Reinforced concrete floor slab	300 mm
Downstand beam	300 x 500 mm

Mezzanine Floor:

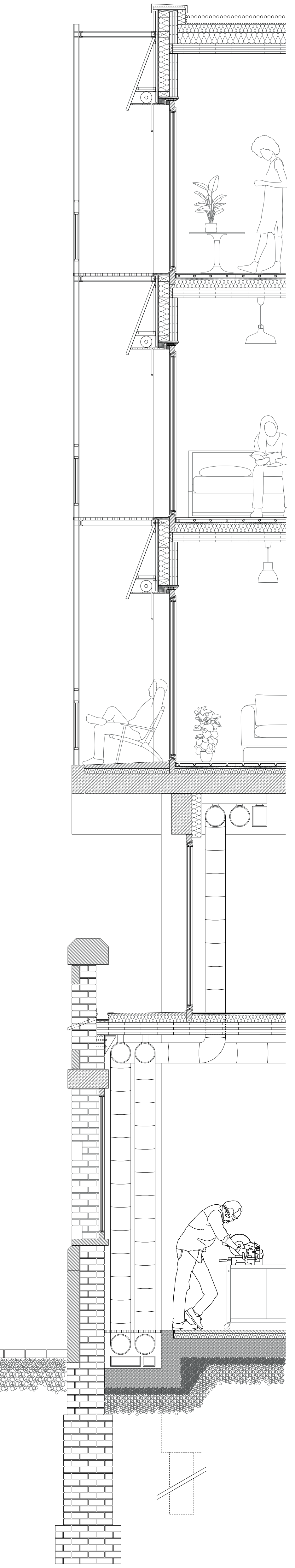
Engineered timber floor finish	20 mm
Acoustic impact insulation	20 mm
High-density rigid floor insulation	90 mm
Cross-laminated timber (CLT) slab	17 mm

Workshop Floor:

Polished cast concrete screed	35 mm
Separation membrane	5 mm
High-density rigid floor insulation	60 mm
Cast in place concrete slab	230 mm
Fine gravel levelling layer	150 mm
Lean concrete blinding layer	250 mm

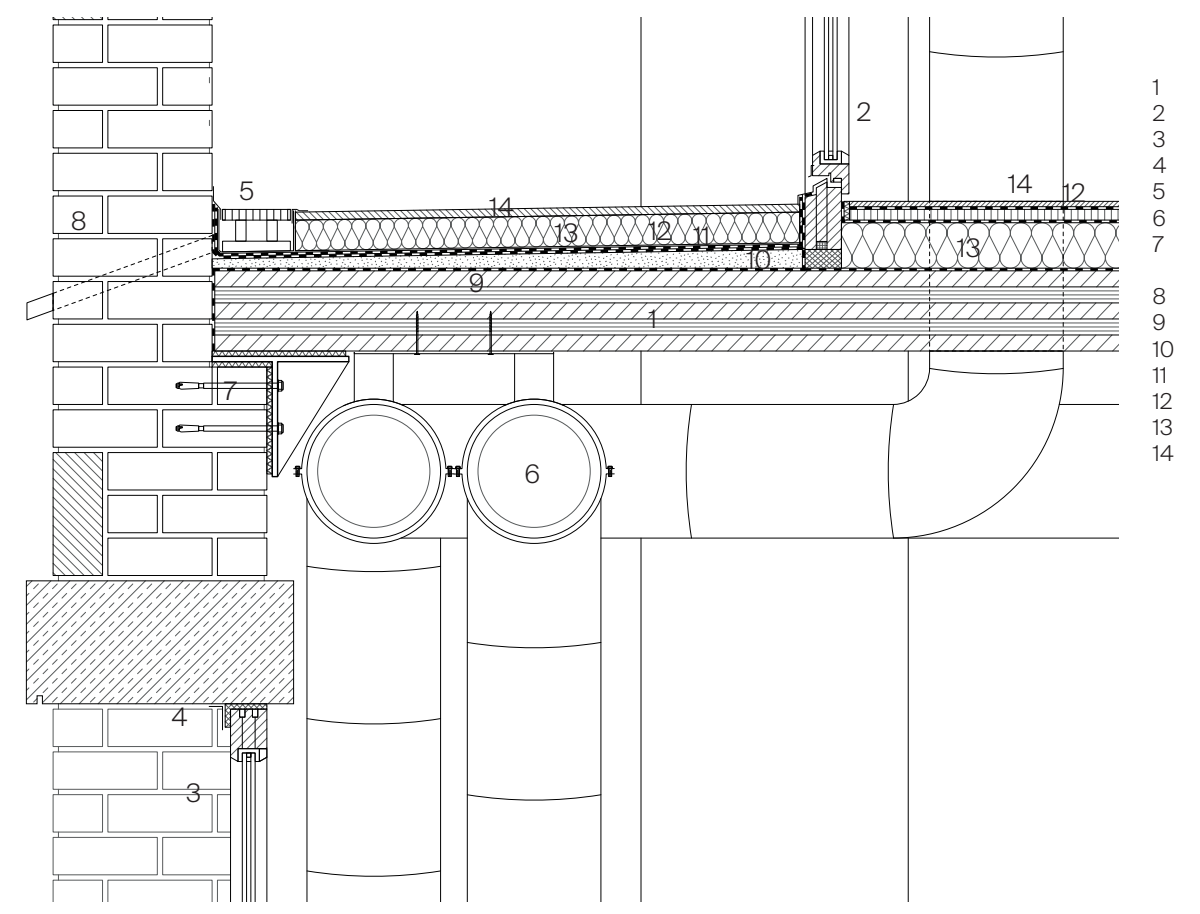
Existing Structure:

Existing solid brick masonry wall	380 mm
Existing industrial stone paving	150 mm
Existing gravel sub-base	ca. 200 mm



Facade Section
1:20

Detail Connection Old/New
1:10



Parts:

1	CLT Slab
2	Window Frame (Opening inside)
3	Window (Solid glazing)
4	Plaster stop bead with sealing strip
5	Drainage Channel
6	Supply and extract air ducts
7	Bearing extension fixed with masonry screws
8	Existing masonry wall
9	Sloped screed
10	Waterproofing membrane
11	Separation Layer
12	Drainage Sheet
13	Rigid insulation
14	Cement screed