

BLENDED-USE

of Existing Buildings

The Synergy Hub: a model for the case of Palazzo Raspanti in Treviso, Italy



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Man is by nature a social animal
~ Aristotle

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Abstract

This research examines the emerging Blended-Use concept, an evolution of traditional Mixed-Use development, and explores its design implications. It then applies its design principles to Palazzo Raspanti, a 16th-century building in the center of Treviso, a medium-sized Italian city. Unlike mixed-use development, which typically has a more static quality, blended-use recognizes the temporal aspect and the dynamic, evolving functions that can exist within the same space over a short period. The goal of this research is to expand the architectural understanding of blended-use by adopting a more comprehensive perspective that includes both spatial and temporal theories, as well as integrating circularity and sustainability concepts. After reviewing existing literature, case studies, and conducting expert interviews, this study aims to clarify the relationships among the concepts of fourth place, hybrid-use, blurred-use, and blended-use at the building scale in the short term, proposing a new framework to define these ambiguous terms. Consequently, it introduces a new term: the Synergy Hub, a concept to describe blended venues that combine living, working, and leisure activities in a circular and holistically sustainable manner. Using insights from the initial research phase, a design phase will visualize potential future functionalities and pedestrian flow within Palazzo Raspanti. The thesis will focus specifically on the future design of its ground floor, garden, and surrounding areas. The study will conclude by suggesting directions for future research to improve multiple aspects related to blended-use, especially in connection with the case of Palazzo Raspanti.

Keywords: *Blended-Use, Mixed-Use, Adaptive Reuse, Treviso, Heritage Building*

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Preface

AMS Institute Connection

This is a thesis for the master's degree in Metropolitan Analysis, Design and Engineering (MADE), taking place at the AMS Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions in Amsterdam (AMS Institute, n.d.). The thesis relates to the urban challenges of **circularity in urban regions** (and partially metropolitan food systems).

The blended-use of a historic building brings efficiency in space use, decreasing the need to build new while contributing to a circular urban model. It brings circularity in the short- and long-term, bridging urban needs and space allocation. The research addresses circularity not only in the material flow but also in the social aspect.

Moreover, by incorporating local and organic food initiatives in the design of blended-use spaces, the project suggests supporting local producers and creating healthier, fairer food environments. This approach deals with urban food systems and discusses their contribution and placement within the topic of the research.



1

Introduction

With the progress of humanity and technology, we have evolved in our way of living, but we have always retained some inherent characteristics as human beings, which we have carried for centuries. **“Man is by nature a social animal,”** said Aristotle centuries ago. With the Enlightenment, we decided to divide our lives into boxes, creating boundaries for specific categories and sectorizing knowledge (F. Messori, personal communication, April 10, 2025). This is reflected in how we design spaces, with houses having rooms designated for particular uses, like a bedroom used only for sleeping. This rapid progress has resulted in higher living standards, along with an ever-present desire for more. In the past, the social fabric was stronger because meeting basic needs was sufficient, and social bonds held greater value and prominence in daily life. However, this acceleration of progress has led to a misguided sense of efficiency; we keep designing and constructing places that are sectorized by enclosed systems, improving **efficiency** at the cost of reducing the **flexibility** of how spaces can be interpreted. Today, we are moving toward a lifestyle that consolidates everything into a single space, largely due to the rise of the internet, an invention that allows us to work in the same room where we sleep or watch movies on streaming platforms projected on the wall, creating a home theater. As this continuous growth and change in our way of living occurs, coupled with urban expansion and the need for a more circular and sustainable lifestyle, blending spaces and people could be a solution for building a better society. Overall, there is a need to rethink our entire society and make sacrifices in the name of altruism (F. Messori, personal communication, April 10, 2025).



sacrifices in the name of urbanism

Introduction to Mixed-Use Development

The New Urban Agenda was presented at the Habitat III Conference of the United Nations in 2016, where the directions to make urbanization an opportunity rather than a problem have been laid out (United Nations, 2016). It is possible to read that the UN is committed to improving mixed-use developments in the urban spatial frameworks, as one of the solutions to enhance resource efficiency, urban resilience, and environmental sustainability. In addition, mixed-use spaces are becoming more and more popular in cities due to space constraints and grow-

ing square meter costs (Sandal, 2021). Mixed-use development comes as the solution to the problems of **zoning planning** in the 60s, especially in American cities, where big parts of the cities were built and planned for single purposes (residential, office, retail, etc.). This single-use planning led to a car-dependent lifestyle to address long commutes, resulting in empty areas of the city based on the moment of the day or of the year (F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025). The direction of the urban development strategies is clear, and more and more mixed-use developments are finding

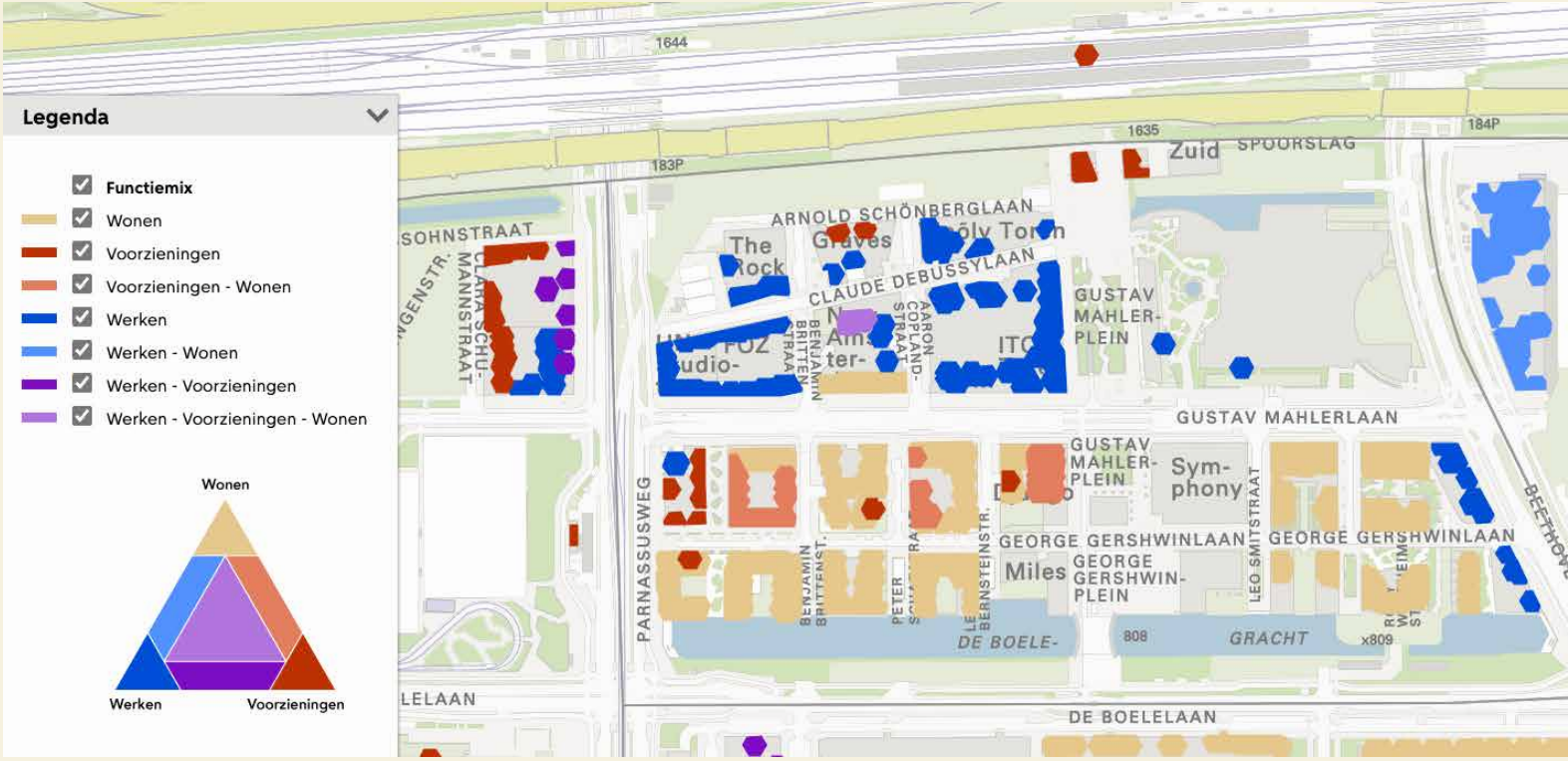


Figure 1 - Screenshot of the Zuidas-Zuid Functiemix showing a mixed-use neighborhood (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d.) – 24th May 2025.

funding to be built in new urban areas. The mixed-use of the land, which has substituted the precise city zoning principle in residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas, forms the foundation of the contemporary high-quality urban environment concept, building vertical cities to address space efficiency (Generalova & Generalov, 2020).

Mixed-use can therefore be divided into a bigger **neighborhood scale** and a smaller scale at the **building level**. Concrete examples can be seen in Figure 1 showing the mix of functions at a neighborhood scale in the *buurt* of Zuidas-Zuid in Amsterdam, and in Figure 2, showing the mixed-use at the building scale, situated in the Zuidas *wijk*, focusing on the famous building *Valley* designed by the Dutch architecture firm MVRDV.

Mixed-use development isn't a new concept. Our built environment has included mixed-use developments for centuries, but without giving it a specific name. Just think of the palaces and castles where people could live, eat, trade, attend events of the noble families, and more. In a more recent period, following a period of absence from 1910 to 1950 as a result of contemporary zoning and land use practices, mixed-use was taken into consideration by academics during the 1960s after Jane Jacobs' masterpiece, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in 1961. In the 1970s, mixed-use returned as a means of urban revitalization, while on a smaller scale and with an emphasis on heritage preservation, the mixed-use approach was taken back in the 1980s and became a crucial component of transit-oriented development in the 1990s (Clough, 2023; Grant, 2002).

Generalova & Generalov (2020) explain that multipurpose buildings can play a significant role in resolving a

number of 21st-century global issues in an increasingly urbanized world. Especially when developing mixed-use high-rise buildings that align with the idea of three-dimensional urban infrastructure development, when different ground-level urban functions are actively developed vertically.

On the other hand, as needs and society are evolving, old concepts should be questioned and critically analyzed to look for possible improvements and updates. Therefore, as mixed-use is already a dated concept, it might need a revision to innovate its framework and adapt the approach to new urban settings. In the following chapter, the research will give more context on the reason why mixed-use might need an update to today's lifestyle.

Problem Statement: The Temporal Dimension

Single-purpose spaces will likely become less prevalent in the future due to changing design techniques and the growing population density in urban regions. Therefore, in order to maximize space use and reduce expenses and energy consumption, both private residences and public buildings will become more flexible in the future (Sandal, 2021). There is a need for a mixed-use solution that goes beyond the simple stacking of residential and commercial functions, that considers the spatial and functional integration (Farhady & Nam, 2009). Clough (2023) shares the vision of $1+1=3$, a way to better support multipurpose journeys and evolving consumer behaviors, where the introduction of additional forms and functions is examined holistically and the development experience is reexamined.



Figure 2 - Valley, mixed-use building by MVRDV located in Zuidas, Amsterdam. (MVRDV, n.d.).

Due to this trend, current developments should evolve toward that vision of a more **flexible urban environment**. Mixed-use developments lack fluid transitions and mutual reinforcement between living, working, and leisure functions, especially when considering both the three spatial dimensions and the fourth dimension of **time**, at the building scale. Mixed-use development has traditionally overlooked the temporal dimension, focusing its principles on **space** optimization, without considering how different functions blend over time and space (Hoppenbrouwer & Louw, 2005).

At the same time, while the urban population is increasing, buildings are used on average 50 hours a week and are empty for about 70% of the time (D/DOCK, n.d.-a). Space is becoming a scarce and valuable resource; therefore, it is necessary to use space more efficiently. The solution is already there, but the framework needs to be adapted to future scenarios.

Pelsmakers et al. (2020) explain how, even though buildings might be designed to accommodate resource or climate demands, that is not sufficient. The physical realm needs to look at the intangible one; otherwise, the building fails if it cannot adapt to changes in user needs that occur over long periods of time, as well as in **cyclical, short-term** ways. Generally speaking, most buildings are still constructed without taking linear or cyclical time into account. Designing buildings with a main ecological adaptability focus might overlook the spatial adaptability in the medium- to short-term (Pelsmakers et al., 2020).

Emerging Concepts: Fourth Place, Hybrid-Use, Blurred-Use, and Blended-Use

To reflect on the problem statement of the research, this thesis will analyze different emerging concepts in the architectural realm and try to understand their differences and similarities, trying to give a new overarching and holistic vision on the innovation of mixed-use spaces. To do so, the concepts of Fourth Place, Hybrid-Use, Blurred-Use, and Blended-Use are studied, with a special focus on Blended-Use, the least treated by academics and in the literature.

Starting with a more theoretical perspective, the concept of **fourth place** finds its place. While the first and second places represent, respectively, the home and the workplace, and the third place is where people gather primarily to enjoy each other's company, the fourth place is described as the combination of elements of the first, second, and third places in new social environments (Morisson, 2017; Simões Aelbrecht, 2016).

Moving to the more practical side of multifunctional use, future large-scale real estate developments in urban areas are probably going to be hybrid structures (Sandal, 2021). Apartments, offices, business spaces, and restaurants are typically separated into different sections of a building due to the current trend of mixed-use development. The various areas, services, and functions will be seamlessly connected to one another in the new **hybrid-use** buildings (hybrid buildings), making it impossible to separate them without endangering the whole (Sandal, 2021).

In a similar field, **blurred-use** solutions are typical for those who want to overcome the temporal challenge and

space efficiency, especially in Amsterdam, where it's widely adopted. With blurring, the space and time blur the line that divides them, merging realms using the same time and space. It is a way to mix uses without needing defined borders, having a mix of people and activities (Russell, 2022).

Taking a lens with a focus on the time dimension brings into the framework the concept of **blended-use**, widely addressed by the Amsterdam-based design firm D/DOCK (D/DOCK, n.d.-a). Looking at the building scale, with the emergence of the sharing economy, which emphasizes the sharing of services and products, the concept of blended-use evolves with it. Blending has spread to office buildings because of real estate market volatility. That's where the experimentation starts, designing the possibilities of blended-use (D/DOCK, n.d.-a). Federica Buricco (personal communication, April 1, 2025), architect and urban designer at HKS in London with over 18 years of experience on mixed-use projects, suggests that "spaces for the new economy have a variety of uses at different times of the day; from a yoga studio in the morning, a pop-up shop in the afternoon, to a gallery space at night" (Clough, 2023).

It is clear from a first look at the definitions that these concepts have similarities and overlapping approaches. It is through the integration of mixed-use theories and the concept of the fourth place, along with the applied time dimension of emerging design solutions, that innovative urban challenges can be addressed.



Research Aim

The overarching aim of the research is to identify **design principles** for the implementation of the blended-use concept and understand its **possible configurations**. The design principles are being operationalized and tested through the case study of a **historic building in Treviso**, a medium-sized Italian city.

After analyzing the concept of mixed-use and its development over the years, the research aims to improve mixed-use developments using the blended-use concept as a starting point, implementing a holistic approach to study space usage in four dimensions, including the temporal one.

The research addresses a **gap in the literature**, as the concept of blended-use hasn't been widely considered by scholars. Moreover, this thesis aims to **bring together all the concepts** that innovate on mixed-use development, aiming at creating a clear overview of the current terminologies.

In addition, on a time perspective, the use of short-term cycles, such as day-night, weekday-weekend, and seasonal use of a building, that dictate its activities and "life" at regular intervals, is largely understudied in architecture (Pelsmakers et al., 2020).

Several studies on mixed-use development have been conducted, and only a few critical approaches have been introduced in the discussion about whether mixing functions has been done properly. However, when addressing blended-use and incorporating a time frame in the design of spaces, there is a gap in the literature that this research aims to fill, or at least, to suggest the start of more comprehensive research.

The research aims at **informing practice** by putting together a replicable framework strengthened from theoretical concepts and design principles, for redeveloping buildings into multifunctional cultural hubs that make efficient use of space and time.

Backed by theory and design frameworks, this research applies the knowledge to the spaces of Palazzo Raspanti in Treviso, suggesting blending space and time, enabling spaces to shift throughout the day while fostering community engagement and respecting heritage constraints.



Research Question

What are the key design principles that enable the successful implementation* of blended-use principles in historic buildings in urban regions?

*Successful meaning optimization of space and efficient/effective use of it, integrating the time dimension in the design framework. Moreover, a successful implementation is considered when ethical dilemmas are addressed in the design process and a sustainable approach is used.

Sub-Research Questions

Blended-Use definition and analysis

How can Blended-Use be defined compared to other similar concepts, and in a specific scale and time frame?

Framework for the holistic implementation of Blended-Use

What does a framework for sustainable blended-use solutions that considers economic feasibility, social justice, environmental impact, and cultural preservation look like?

Palazzo Raspanti

Having the case of Palazzo Raspanti, how does the flow of people and functions look in space and time when implementing the framework of blended-use solutions?

Scope

The research aims to study Blended-Use and its related topics on a general basis. On the other hand, as the Blended-Use definition was given by D/DOCK, and in Amsterdam it is possible to see how this is being implemented, most of the case study research is focused on **the Netherlands**. The knowledge acquired aims at being international, while the lessons learned from real-life applications are mainly Dutch.

In addition, the research wants to translate the findings into a framework that is applicable to an **Italian historic building**; therefore, the design solutions will be shaped by its structure.

This research treats blended-use at the **scale of a building and its internal spaces**, together with the **outer space** of the building, as well as the **surrounding** urban environment and program. It doesn't consider bigger urban scales, to have more targeted research, also due to time constraints for this thesis project.

Moreover, due to the nature of the building under consideration, the research focuses on the application of blended-use approaches in **existing buildings**, matching the sustainability requirements where not building at all is more sustainable than building sustainably.

In addition, an important scope to mention is the time frame, as this thesis considers the **short term**, meaning **daily or weekly**, to target the research on the medieval building, as in a longer time frame, the considerations are more related to the adaptability of buildings to future needs.

This research scope has the limitation of not studying the topic from a wide international perspective, not considering the needs of completely different cultures compared with Italian, Dutch, or similar ones. It is important to consider the **cultural applicability** of this research, which focuses on the trends and needs of cultures close to the Central European one; therefore, the results might not be applicable to other buildings in other cultural settings.



2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

When dealing with mixed-use concepts, different aspects come together, as the definition of multifunctionality suggests. In this thesis, a clear conceptual division is presented, approaching the research through theories connected with **space** and **time**. In the intersection of space and time, multifunctionality lays its peculiarities.

To holistically approach the design of blended-use spaces, **circularity and sustainability** are studied together with **design theories**, being intrinsically part of the blended-use definition, to highlight the importance of addressing space design through environmental, economic, social, and cultural perspectives.

To better understand the different concepts and try to find the correct name for each setting, multiple **emerging concepts** will first be analyzed and compared.

The theories later presented lay the abstract basis on which to build the actual places that embody the theoretical approach of this research. This thesis studies how to merge the theory of fourth place with concepts of hybrid-use, blurred-use, and blended-use, to build a framework applicable to Palazzo Raspanti.

This thesis will focus on the **building and room scale**, considering the merging of functions within a building, taking into account the **building's surroundings**, such as its open space and the nearby urban environment.

Blended-use could be applied even at the smallest scale of furniture, taking, for example, a table that could be used for an office or a restaurant, which could even turn into a bed. On the other side, blended-use could also be treated at a city scale, looking at different neighborhoods and how blended-use could change and be itself the identity of a district, influencing the infrastructure and transport system, moving people in a different way. It could completely change the way we design cities (T. van Leeuwen, personal communication, March 25, 2025).

In this research, as explained in the scope, the focus will be on the **building and room scale**, in the **short term**, to be able to apply the results to the case of Palazzo Raspanti.

Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Buildings

As the scope has a focus on existing buildings, and the research aims at renovating and innovating a medieval building, it is important to mention in the theories presented the importance of **adaptive reuse**. Sustainable buildings are interesting solutions for the environment, but the most sustainable way to build a building is to not build it at all. Heritage buildings can be converted into usable and accessible spaces through adaptive reuse, which also has the added advantage of regenerating a space sustainably (Bullen & Love, 2011). Even though it is not always too expensive to demolish a building, there are other factors that should be considered, such as social and cultural ones (to not mention that if a building is ancient, it cannot be demolished as it is under the protection of cultural heritage institutions). Buildings are present not only in space but also in the memory of people and in the culture of an area. They give a **sense of belonging** to the residents and a **home feeling**. This is why, even if the building could look “ugly” or outdated, it is preferred to keep the building and readapt it to host new functions (F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025).

This whole approach matches entirely the concept of **circularity**, not building new, not using new materials, and adapting spaces to circulate functions and people. It is also highly connected with the **emotional connection** between people and places, the importance that imperfection and social bonding have in blending spaces.

On the other hand, challenges might arise when dealing with **economic sustainability**, as adapting functions to existing spaces comes with adaptation in the business model and optimization of spaces (Bullen & Love, 2011; F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025; Yung &

Chan, 2012).

To not mention the complications related to **policies** and **regulations**, which are stricter and more complex when dealing with heritage buildings. Yung & Chan (2012) found out in an interview that “the cost of dealing with regulatory agencies adds an additional 30% to the cost of construction and doubles the time needed for project completion”.

Even though it might sound more complex and inconvenient, adapting spaces is the most sustainable solution, and new business models are needed to adapt not only spaces but also the realities that live within their walls. It is the basis for implementing blended solutions with a holistically sustainable framework.

Multifunctional Use and Dynamic Use

Before considering the practical concepts, it is important to explain two terms that describe the usage of spaces and their fluidity.

Multifunctional Use is, by definition given by the *Cambridge Dictionary* to “multifunctional”, “having several different uses” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.-d). It is evident that, at a building level, mixed-use can be considered as multifunctional use, as there are multiple functions implemented in the overarching use of the building. On the other hand, multifunctional could be in space but also in time. This is why this research sees multifunctional use as the overarching concept that embodies all the terms mentioned following this.

As a subgroup of it, **Dynamic Use** has a more specific definition, as it talks about dynamism. According to the

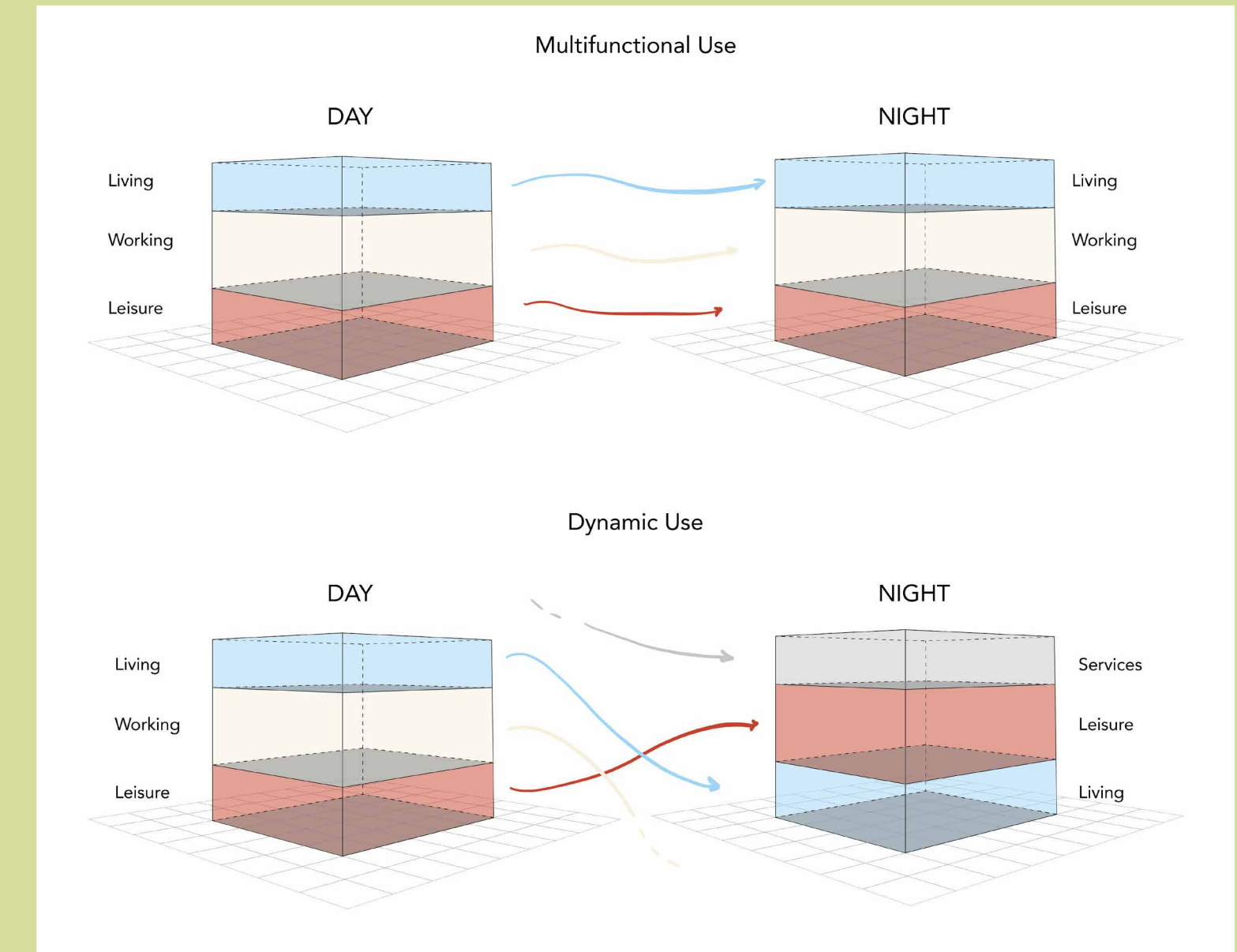


Figure 3 - Multifunctional Use and Dynamic Use.

Cambridge Dictionary, the “dynamic” is defined as “continuously changing or developing” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.-a). It is seen as a subgroup because the multifunctional use can be static, as seen in mixed-use developments, or dynamic. By definition, dynamic use has space and time involved; therefore, it is evident that, when looking at the short term, mixed-use development cannot be defined as dynamic, as its functions are defined within space boundaries regardless of the time dimension. To understand the differences between these two uses, a schematic representation is shown in Figure 3.

This said, all the practical emerging concepts involved are considered dynamic, a characteristic required to address the problem of space scarcity in the city, as described in the introduction, and to consider the temporal dimension.

Fourth Place

It is important to start understanding the theory and how it mixes with the more practical terms explained after this, due to its position in the literature, being an innovative overarching concept.

As explained in the introduction, the **fourth place** comes as a merging of first, second, and third places. But before analyzing the fourth place and its peculiarities, it is important to give a general overview of the other three.

The **first** and **second places** are quite easy to define, as they are places where people respectively live or work. **Third places** are those places that stand for leisure, which could be coffee shops, bars, beauty parlors, general stores, and community centers. When blending these

places, innovative configurations are presented to facilitate networking and knowledge exchange (Morisson, 2017).

When combining the first and second places, **Co-living** spaces are born (Morisson, 2017). The concept of having roommates is evolving into new forms of co-living arrangements where little is owned, and almost everything is shared with others. Co-living is gaining popularity as housing costs rise in metropolitan areas, while young people’s salaries often fail to keep pace with the increasing cost of living. Co-living is seeing a surge in popularity, and several co-living services are now readily available (Sandal, 2021).

The combination of second and third places instead is a merge of working and network, the **Co-working** spaces (Morisson, 2017). A shared physical workspace for the knowledge economy, where synergies between individual and non-individual workers are possible. A huge trend that keeps rising, bringing the concept of flexibility to the work environment (Yang et al., 2019).

Finally, when merging the first and the third places, this new place is a **Co-mingling** space. A space where its residents can enjoy the opportunities of networking and having social interactions within their living places (Morisson, 2017). A good example of such spaces are the hostels.

Therefore, when combining all these places, the fourth place becomes the intersection (see Figure 4), fostering networking, mingling, and collaboration in a place where knowledge is exchanged in all its forms (Morisson, 2017). While these singular places were once divided, with the new trends, they are overlapping more and more.

The fourth place framework is therefore highly connected

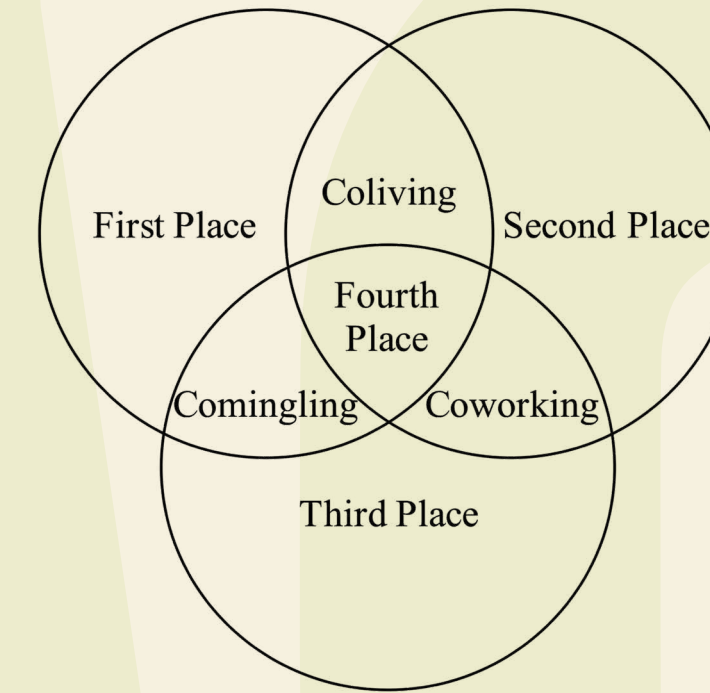


Figure 4 - Map Fourth Place. (Morisson, 2017).

with blended venues. Blending functions means bringing together different users and different ways of exchanging knowledge in the same space. Even though the fourth place definition doesn’t explicitly talk about a space scale, when translated into the building/room dimension, it fits and merges with blended-use.

One main characteristic of fourth places is their great sense of publicness and the spatial, temporal, or managerial ‘in-betweenness’ (Simões Aelbrecht, 2016). The theory of ‘in-betweenness’ will be described later, as it is an important element in the general framework.

In terms of social and behavioral traits, their inclusion and

their separation from the routines of home or work, fourth places are a form of informal social space that is closely related to ‘third places’. Their settings, activities, and spatial conditions are marked by ‘in-betweenness’ and considerable publicness, but in every other way, they are significantly different; they are more mixed relational localities, having that new uses can be filled in these new spaces (Simões Aelbrecht, 2016).

In the academic definition, fourth places are highly connected with the ‘in-betweenness’, defining them purely as **public**. On the opposite note, it could be argued that fourth places, taking the definition of the blending of first, second, and third place, can be seen as **semi-private/semi-public** spaces, where the ‘in-betweenness’ can be found in the blending of functions even within a building or a single space.

Simões Aelbrecht (2016) is very clear in its definition and the connection with publicness, contrasting the privateness of ‘third places’, which are owned by individuals or businesses. Fourth places are seen as anonymous and public, but when shaped within a blended venue, the characteristics of fourth place are still present. This is why, when translating the fourth place into blended venues, it is possible to notice a slight transition from public to semi-public/semi-private environments.

Having shaped fourth places on a less public lens, a practical example of fourth place is Zoku (n.d.), first founded in Amsterdam and now expanding in the main European capitals. It is a form of fourth place as it’s a building where it is possible to sleep, work, eat, and connect culturally with events and art. It is the perfect example on a large building scale. On a smaller scale, it is possible to see the connection with blended-use. Taking into consideration

the case study of DB55 (D/DOCK, n.d.-b), the headquarters of D/DOCK, it is possible to define it as a fourth place, as people come to work, to eat, to socialize, but most interesting also to sleep, as the place has also the residential permit, having tables that can be transformed into beds (see Figure 5). Even though it is not the best option for good sleep, it is possible to spend the night in the same space where people work and have their lunch break or dinner event (T. van Leeuwen, personal communication, March 25, 2025).



Figure 5 - Table-bed in DB55, photo by the author.

Hybrid-Use

It is important to remember the scope of this thesis regarding the time frame, as hybrid-use has different definitions when talking about the short term or the long term.

Hybrid buildings are referred to in the literature as spaces that allow “different functions to overlap and to be shared by extending or entangling the boundaries of functions and private-public levels”. It is a way to blend functions within the same place. In order to celebrate the interplay

between the intimacy of private life and the sociability of public life, as well as their typically disparate time cycles, hybrid buildings combine living, working, recreational, and cultural amenities (Pelsmakers et al., 2020). It is seen as the evolution of mixed-use when bringing the cyclical time dimension into the framework.

Conducting a further analysis of the literature, it seems that there are **different perspectives** regarding the definition of hybrid-use, as Love (2017) talks about hybrid buildings just like mixed-use buildings. In his definition,

he talks about “hybridization of uses” and the challenges connected to it. He brings in the concept of functional flexibility, but with a long-term vision, talking about flexible ground floors and possible column configurations to permit multiple functions. Moreover, Love (2017) has an approach to hybrid-use which considers a scale between the building and the district. It studies the flows of people also outside the building, while in other literature, the scale is smaller, with a focus on the building or room scale.

Encountering these differences in the literature strengthens the importance of stating clearly from the beginning the scale and time frame used for the analysis and definitions.

In addition, Sandal (2021) brings the terms hybrid-use and mixed-use spaces next to each other, defining them as two different concepts, one the evolution of the other. In the article, it is shared that apartments, offices, business spaces, and restaurants are typically separated into different sections of a building due to the current trend of mixed-use development. Given this implicit definition of the term mixed-use, the article continues explaining that soon, the various areas, services, and functions will be seamlessly connected to one another in the new hybrid buildings, making it impossible to separate them without endangering the whole. This suggests that the author sees a more blended space in the new hybrid buildings, but still, the time dimension doesn't seem to be taken into proper consideration.

It is unclear in the literature what the definition of hybrid-use is, as it has been used in different ways. It could be argued that a hybrid building is a building that brings different functions in the same space, without considering whether it is in the short- or long-term. Therefore, it can

be useful to have a definition for those spaces that are adaptable in both the short- and long-term, that blend space and time, and that have a holistic, sustainable approach in their design and usage.

This research, using the building and room scale and the cyclical time frame, to give a clear framework on the different terms, adopts the definition that Thomas van Leeuwen (personal communication, March 25, 2025), founder of the design firm D/DOCK, specialized in blended-use, gave during an interview. He studied for years the concept of hybrid-use, and now he's studying blended-use, and he explained that hybrid is a synonym of two, therefore, a hybrid building is a building which merges **two functions**, meaning that in the same space, there are two different functions in two different moments in the short term. Therefore, the definition comes from the meaning of the word “hybrid,” which, as defined also by the *Cambridge Dictionary*, is “combining two different things” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.-c).

An example of a hybrid building that changes the way it is lived during the day is Karper K (see Figures 6 and 7), a co-working space designed by Studioninedots, that at night becomes a space for parties and events. This is a borderline example, as the spaces where the offices are located don't have a second function, while the hybrid-use is focused on the hall next to the office space, an area that during the day serves as a meal break or meeting space, and at night as an event space.



Figure 6 - Karper K hall space during the day, photo by the author.



Figure 7 - Karper K hall space during the night. (Pintos, 2023).

Blurred-Use

Another term that can be used is **blurred-use**. It is easier to understand and is currently applied in Amsterdam, even if still with some challenges and limits (Russell, 2022). Blurred-use is when multiple functions **coexist** in the same space. An example could be a hairdresser that sells coffees and beers, or a restaurant that is an art gallery with artworks on its walls (T. van Leeuwen, personal communication, March 25, 2025). While the hybrid-use concept includes the time dimension throughout the whole day, the

blurred-use one considers it partially. The functions are happening at the same time, in the same space, therefore, this concept doesn't optimize the use of a space when the primary user isn't there, it enriches the audience and reaches a more different amount of users providing different services, but daily, the spaces aren't used efficiently. A blurred space usually is a big space where different uses are blurred, removing clear **physical dividers**, where the space line is not clearly defined, especially when talking about blurring the interior with the exterior (F. Buricco,



Figure 8 - Cinema and book shop Giunti Odeon in Florence, Italy. (Gabbrielli, 2023).

personal communication, April 1, 2025).

An example of blurred-use is shown in Figure 8, a former cinema/theater that has been recently renewed, incorporating a book shop within the spaces of the cinema. The functions of cultural and commercial facilities are blurred, and the division line between the book shop and the cinema is lost, having both worlds lived at the same time in the same space.

Blended-Use

Having cleared the differences between hybrid-use and blurred-use, **blended-use** can be introduced properly. Blended-use is a topic that already finds practical implications in current buildings. As mentioned earlier, D/DOCK is working to make this shift in the real world, being themselves based in a blended-use building, the DB55 (see Figure 9) (D/DOCK, n.d.-b; Morris, 2023). More details and analysis of this project can be found in the case study analysis later in this thesis project.

Blended-use can be defined as the process of having a space with a **primary** function, and then, when the primary users don't need the space, it can be used by **secondary** functions and users. In this way, in contrast to blurred spaces, which don't need a primary function (even though there could be one), a clear hierarchy is present. It could treat functions without giving a primary one, but in the current society, it is easier to understand spaces when given a clear definition, so that they can be put in a box. For example, it is easier for people to understand that a place is an office, and that during other moments it is something else, rather than saying that it is a blended space with multiple equal functions (T. van Leeuwen, personal

communication, March 25, 2025).

On another wider perspective, Federica Buricco (personal communication, April 1, 2025) sees blended-use as a mix of different functions in the same space at the same moment. Even though this may seem at odds with the definition provided by Thomas van Leeuwen, it shows that blended-use is an **umbrella term** for all those possible combinations of multiple functions at the same time or in different moments. It is clear now that hybrid-use and blurred-use are two **subterms** of blended-use, as they are partially blended spaces, but not holistically.

Blended-use can be seen as a way to have multiple functions at the same time, that change over the day with other functions. Somehow, it can also be seen as a combination of hybrid-use and blurred-use, without limiting the number of functions. Nonetheless, the number of functions is limited by the viability and harmony of their co-existence at the same time and in the same space, and co-existence in the same space at different times.

Stepping aside from the practical definition, there is a need for a more **philosophical** one. It is important to understand the principles behind an architectural configuration. Blending relates to imperfection. Nowadays, architecture, technology, and design want to control and plan everything instead of leaving room for the unknown and informality. As humans, we aren't naturally connected with perfection; imperfection gives us freedom to define and interpret the spaces, bringing social life and connections. An example of a blending environment is the outskirts, areas that lost their identity and stay in an imperfection of interpretation, where gentrification and design firms haven't made interventions yet, leaving the ownership to the people living in those spaces. When talking about blend-



Figure 9 - Open Space at DB55, headquarters of D/DOCK, photo by the author

ing, most of the interventions needed are **cultural** and **social**, rather than technical. It is a matter of giving back to the community, listening, and being imperfect. "To blend is to leave space for self-organization," letting the emotional connection between places and people be created. On the other hand, there is the problem that "people aren't generally educated about nice places, community empowerment, and beauty." Today's average people are used to ugliness where capitalism is ruling, and material money-saving solutions in projects have priority. "It is needed to sacrifice part of this to favor altruism and social bonding." On an abstract level, blended-use is therefore **trust** and **responsibility**, an exchange of material and immaterial things between people living in the same space. Blended-use is a fluid process open to **serendipity**, open spaces that people can make alive (F. Messori, personal communication, April 10, 2025).

Even though blended-use is promising and innovative, it comes with **challenges** related to its implementation in today's spaces and communities. Thomas van Leeuwen explained in an interview with Frame conducted by Morris (2023) that there are three main challenges to overcome in order to adopt blended-use more quickly. First of all, it is important to find legal solutions to decide how **ownership** is divided between the different functions. Secondly, the **zoning plan** defines which functions are allowed in a specific place, and in conclusion, the **technical** side of implementing blended-use solutions. On the other side, even if these challenges are substantial, the most important relates to **psychological change**. As explained before, people need to have definitions, and having a primary use in blended spaces helps to temporarily solve the psychological challenge. In the long term, there is a need to have a society that can think in a different way

through different models (Morris, 2023). In a more recent interview conducted for this research, Thomas van Leeuwen (personal communication, March 25, 2025) explained that currently, the challenge of ownership is still present, but is being addressed by understanding future models and special agreements that divide the responsibilities over the spaces. Over the zoning, even if new policies haven't been released, D/DOCK found a solution with the primary use, as the municipality of Amsterdam would refuse a space that has equal different uses but can approve the permit of multiple functions as long as one of them is the primary one. On the technical side, he explained that there are already a lot of design studios that realize blended furniture.

Another big barrier, which comes originally from mixed-use development, is that **investors and real estate** are specialized in different functions, which could be retail, residential, offices, etc. When asked to bring these functions together in one building with mixed-use, they enter an unexplored area, and they are reluctant to invest in unknown business models. Even more in blended-use, where the mix of functions is even more complex, and the businesses involved could also be bothered by merging their functions with others in the same space. It is one of the main challenges to find investors who are willing to finance these emerging concepts (F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025). And even if investors are convinced, it is necessary to find solutions to **merge different users** in the same space. In theory, cross-pollination is good for businesses and society, making people move and blend in spaces, but in reality, each function needs different spaces and has different users. Merging them can be challenging and complex, especially for businesses that could influence each other's presence

in the same space (F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025).

Despite it might sound like an innovative concept, blended-use was already in the way of thinking of people. Already during the **Renaissance**, there were big palaces, for example, Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence (Palazzo Medici Riccardi, n.d.), that were both the residence of nobles and a place for artists and merchants to exchange knowledge and work. There has always been the **bottom-up** initiative of creating blended spaces, already in the house, where you study where you eat, and where you socialize where you sleep. The bottom-up approach is already in the right spot, while the **top-down** initiatives and supports are lacking; there is a need to have concrete help in terms of regulations and proposals of initiatives to allow the implementation of such spaces through bottom-up approaches.

Before diving into the theories connected with these definitions, in Figure 10, the general overview of these concepts is presented. Reminding the building scale and the cyclical time frame, the various definitions are described as intersections with each other. While everything is under the lens of multifunctional use of spaces, the evolution toward the dynamic use is seen as the evolution of current mixed-use spaces into these new forms of designing spaces both spatially and temporally. Fourth places are dynamic places that bring together living, working, and leisure, partially defined also as transitional public spaces; therefore, the fourth place takes up a small part outside the dynamic use, within the multi-space area. When framing this in space design, blended-use is partially inside the fourth place concept, as blended-use can also be limited to living and leisure, no working, or other possi-

ble combinations. For example, a restaurant that at night is a nightclub can be seen as a hybrid space, a partially blended venue, but not a fourth place, as it is not a place to work or to live. This is why blurred-use and hybrid-use are defined still inside the blended-use concept, but they are not seen as fourth places. The transition from public to more private spaces within the fourth place concept leads to the innovative blended venues such as DB55 by D/DOCK. Spaces that are multifunctional, dynamic, including living, working, and leisure functions, in a single space that merges realities both at the same time and in different moments. This is intended to be the leading case study to apply blended solutions at the case of Palazzo Raspanti in Treviso, Italy. As the graph suggests, having a terminology for those places that resemble DB55 could be useful for academics to lead clear research.

Key Design Theories and Concepts

When talking about space design, there are multiple perspectives. In this thesis, the design theories analyzed are different but interconnected, to enrich and enhance the already existing concept of blended-use. These theories are connected to the 'In-Betweenness', Harmony, Adaptability, and Flexibility.

When evolving in multifunctional spaces, the merging of functions and uses suggests the integration of the **theory of the 'in-between'**. Having spaces that lose their limits and boundaries, and functions that don't stick to time or space, has a direct influence on the intersection between these functions and the people who live them. The concept of space integration replaced the division of space based on function at the architectural and urban levels

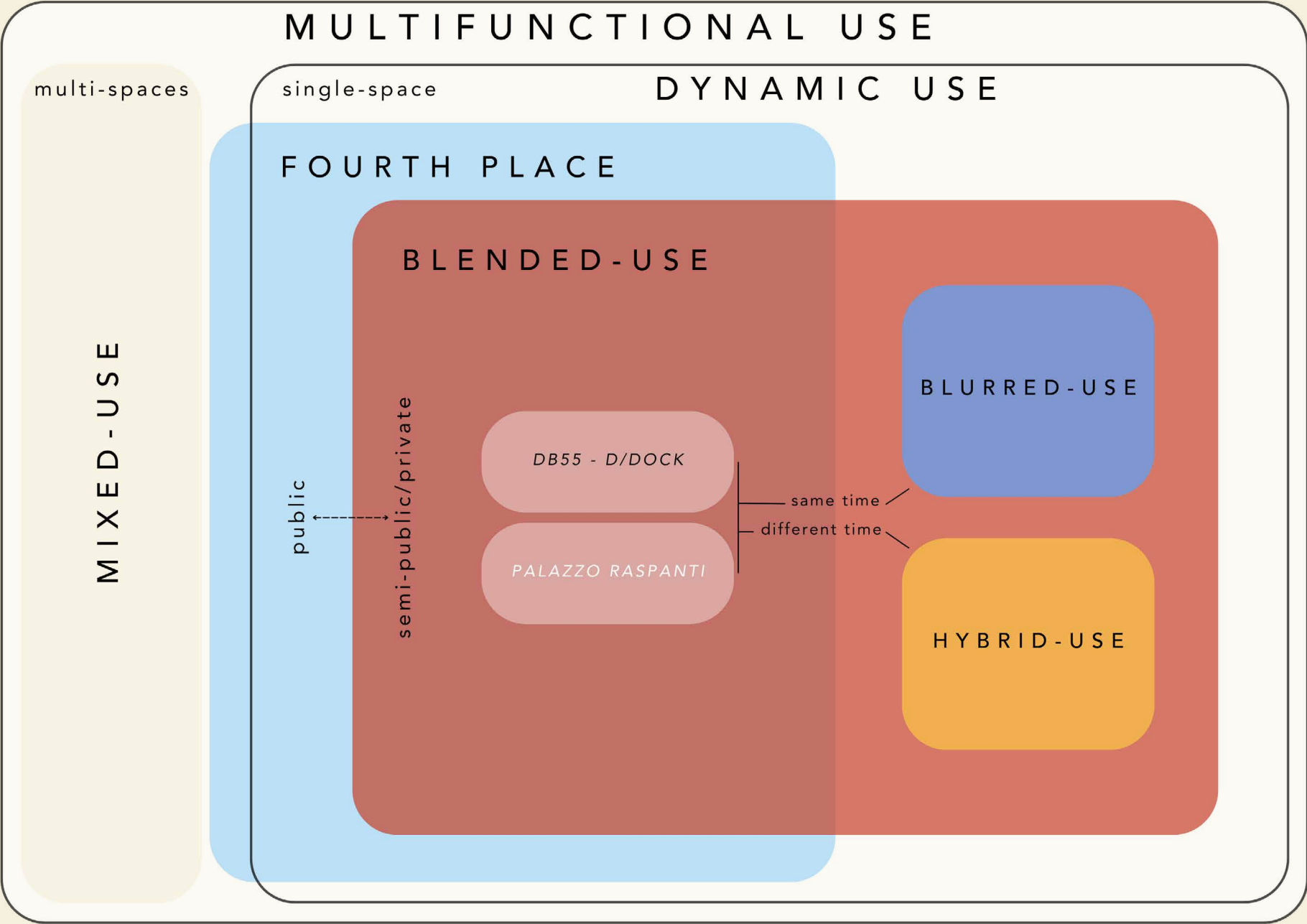


Figure 10 - Map of existing and emerging concepts in multifunctional use of space at the building scale in the short term.



(Farhady & Nam, 2009). Moreover, with the separation of human activities started by the homogeneity of modern architecture in terms of space and time, the evolution led to a more practical assessment of the variety of human activities in relation to space and time (Farhady & Nam, 2009). The space and time between entities can be envisioned as this 'in-between' that plays the role of a transitional place and moment. It is a concept mentioned in multiple architectural approaches; the 'in-betweenness' can be shaped in terms of behaviors to facilitate the "variety and adaptability of uses at different times" (Simões Aelbrecht, 2016).

In the aforementioned concept of fourth place, the 'in-betweenness' becomes a key feature, as it is a way to implement informal social use in a space that merges different users and ways of living a place. It is a zone suggesting unpredictable meetings and happenings through flexibility and adaptability of uses, and the uncertainty of form and function. Not only a zone, but the 'in-between' is also a moment, it can frame situations of temporal 'in-betweenness' where the functions merge and develop outside of planned moments, and the time transition between uses is filled with the indetermination of the between itself (Simões Aelbrecht, 2016).

The 'in-betweenness' is a theory featuring most of the work of the architect **Aldo van Eyck**, who studied the theory and its philosophical reflection on human culture and relationships with forms and individuals. It is a way, at a structural level, to merge the twin phenomena studied by van Eyck, making an overlap of the two opposites till an indeterminate point (Farhady & Nam, 2009).

The theory has also been studied in the Far East by **Kisho Kurokawa**, talking about symbiosis in parallel to the twin

phenomena by van Eyck. According to the Japanese architect, the 'in-between' "creates a dynamic relationship between contradictory elements while allowing them to remain opposed. Such a relationship can be achieved by interpolating a spatial distance (neutral zone) or a temporal space (cooling-off period) between them" (Farhady & Nam, 2009).

Through the theory of 'in-betweenness', it is possible to enrich the blended-use approach and how it develops the mixed-use one. Blended-use is all about blending people and activities; therefore, having a point of blending means having a space or time between two or more opposites that translates the transition from one to the other. Studying this translation means understanding the possibilities of blending places.

The concept of **Harmony** is well addressed in the theories of **Dom Hans van der Laan**, Dutch Benedictine monk and architect, where he shares the idea that, through the Plastic Number ($\frac{3}{4} = 1,325...$), spaces can be designed in a harmonious way that helps humans to inhabit them and perceive them positively (van der Laan et al., n.d.). Without going deeper into his theory, this wants to be a suggestion that, when designing spaces, the perception of the space and its harmony are important, and they shouldn't be overlooked. Designing spaces so that functions can merge and that look beautiful isn't enough. Harmony helps humans to feel at peace in the space and connect more with it. In the specific, the Plastic Number is shown in practice in Figure 11, highlighting how harmony, in architecture, relates to proportions.

Next to harmony, the concepts of **Flexibility** and **Adaptability**, which bring intrinsically in their definition the time dimension, can be addressed through the theories

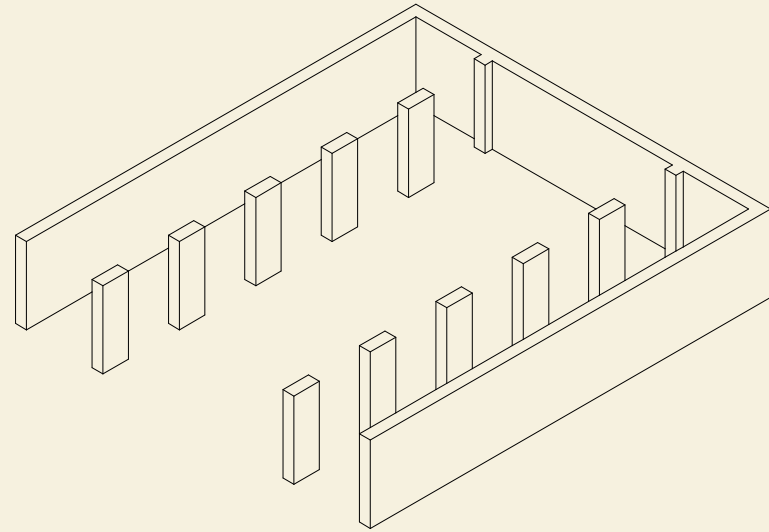


Figure 11 - Superposition of space-cells to keep relating to human scale. (van der Laan et al., n.d.).

of **Polyvalence** by **Herman Hertzberger**, which can be applied to spaces that look for flexible interpretation and free function modeling based on the users' needs (Hertzberger, 2014). Hertzberger (2014) shares that to have effective space, it "needs to be flexible, organic and open to interpretation, fit for purpose in an increasingly dynamic and uncertain world".

This goes in contrast with the thought that less is more, refusing its extreme of not designing at all. In the vision of polyvalence, it is shared that architecture should not be merely stripped of all its characteristics and meanings, leaving only a blank canvas, without being designed, to have the ability to both accept and reject all those characteristics and meanings. Architecture must always have the ability to respond to every new circumstance through meaningful and thoughtful design (Hertzberger, 2014).

The goal of polyvalence is to introduce as many **spatial conditions** as possible that can be applied to any situation, regardless of the function, and that can be used with ease on every new occasion (Hertzberger, 2014). This can be translated as a combination of flexibility and adaptability.

As it could be confused with multipurpose, it is important to explain the difference. Hertzberger (2014) makes it clear saying that "the difference between multipurpose and polyvalence is that in multipurpose the design is deliberately made to suit the different predetermined ends, whereas the notion of polyvalence is where it is not established beforehand how a form or space will act in unspecified situations, in effect providing it with a competence to be able to handle unexpected applications."

Polyvalent spaces can be envisioned as repeated space units creating an adaptable pattern, which recalls the Plastic Number in which Dom Hans van der Laan (n.d.) explains the harmony in the repetition of units at the building scale (see Figure 11).

Blended-use brings space and time under the same frame. It approaches space by questioning the co-existence of functions **at the same time**, and approaches time by studying the way multiple functions can adapt **in the same space**.

When talking about the intersection of space and time, the concept of **spatial adaptability** discussed by Pelsmakers et al. (2020) is categorized in the building's potential to be physically transformable or to be multi-usable. In the former, it is mentioned as flexibility, while in the latter as polyvalence. It is a matter of the scope undertaken, and in this research, **flexibility** comes together with **polyvalence**.

Flexible and **multipurpose furniture** can accomplish multi-usability in workspace and learning environment design by enabling temporary spatial changes to accommodate a range of social activities throughout the day (Pelsmakers et al., 2020). In his thesis, Reisacher (2020) explores the possibilities that flexible furniture can give to space to help the adaptability in the short term. Most of the research highlights the power of movable furniture through wheels, both on the ground and on sliding systems at any height. Moreover, many solutions come from the usage of hinges to fold furniture and elements and reshape the spaces. All this is called **demand-responsive kinetic architecture**, helping entire rooms to unfold and recreate more space, a solution to more efficient use of space. These mechanisms in moving systems are drawn in Figure 12, showing the basis to optimize space and enhance the flexibility of spaces in the short term.

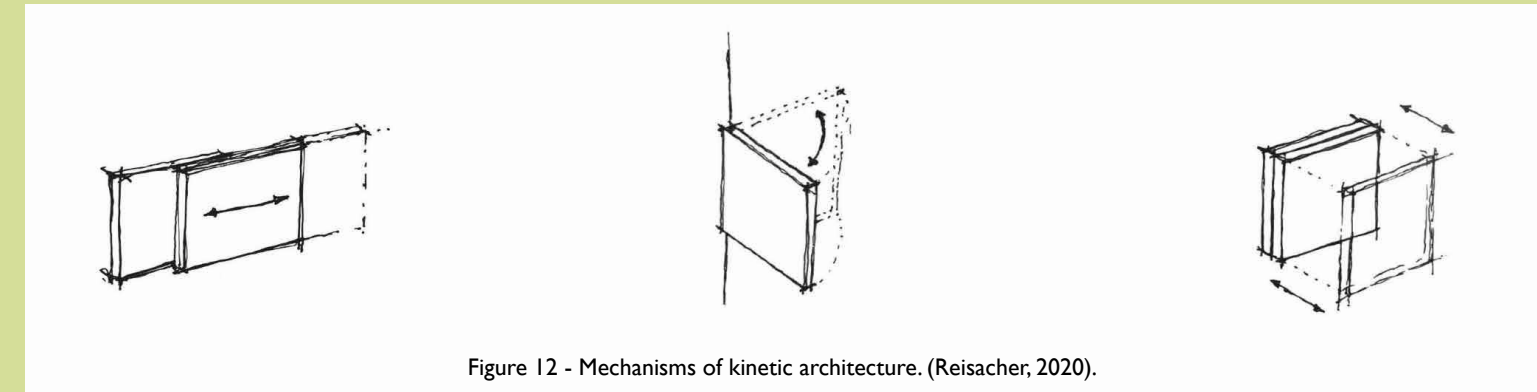


Figure 12 - Mechanisms of kinetic architecture. (Reisacher, 2020).

Circularity & Sustainability

Blended-use, as mentioned by Francesco Messori (personal communication, April 10, 2025), architect and designer at the forefront of blended-use research, co-founder of D/DOCK, is mainly about cultural and social development and analysis. Even though blended-use could sound promising and sustainable by its own definition, it is important to consider the possible unsustainable implementations. Blended-use, as defined in this research, doesn't consider the **reutilization of existing buildings**. A blended venue could also be built from scratch, going against the principles of building less. Moreover, a blend-

ed venue, even if it aims at gathering people, strengthening the sense of community, could have a negative impact on the **social setting**, depending on each specific case, as every social environment has its own peculiarities and needs. In addition, implementing a blended solution doesn't bring in its definition that it has to be **environmentally sustainable**.

As said multiple times, one of the goals of this research is to study blended-use holistically and to understand its position within the circularity and sustainability framework. Given these concerns over the possible **unsustainability** of blended venues, it is important to expand the blend-

ed-use definition with **circular** and **sustainable** concepts, in order to give blended-use a **holistic perspective**.

Circularity is a theme strongly related to waste and materials in the building sector. In academia, “a circular built environment is a designed system aiming to close resource loops at different spatial-temporal scales to enable the society to thrive within the planetary boundaries” (TU Delft, n.d.). Nonetheless, when circularity is approached with the previously mentioned full sustainable perspective, it embraces multiple cycles, also in the social sphere.

A sustainable approach should be fully adopted to provide resilient solutions for local communities. A fully sustainable approach is envisioned in the list of the **17 SDGs**, considering multiple perspectives of sustainability, not the environmental one alone (United Nations, n.d.). Thus, innovative spaces that enhance space usage and improve environmental and economic sustainability should also consider social and cultural aspects to be effective spaces in addition to being efficient. Therefore, the **new vision of Circular Economy (CE)** brought by Calisto Friant et al. (2024) gives a holistic perspective on the sustainability approach, which isn't merely economical or environmental, but also includes social and cultural elements. It presents an expansion of the concept of circularity to address the new challenges of sustainability in the twenty-first century.

The interconnection of the different cycles of circularity and sustainability is visible in Figure 13, showing that these cycles are all connected and shouldn't be viewed separately.

The research focuses much on the **cycle of care**. People share love, affection, energy, and time with their family, friends, communities, and ecosystems daily, resulting in essential cycles of care. Usually carried out by women,

racialized individuals, ethnic minorities, and other historically marginalized groups, these cycles of care are frequently unseen and undervalued in contemporary societies (Calisto Friant et al., 2024). It is therefore important to address the aim of this thesis through a lens of circularity that embeds the social sustainability of it. This approach implements the architectural-design concept of blended-use, enriching its framework of space-time configuration with **social circularity**.

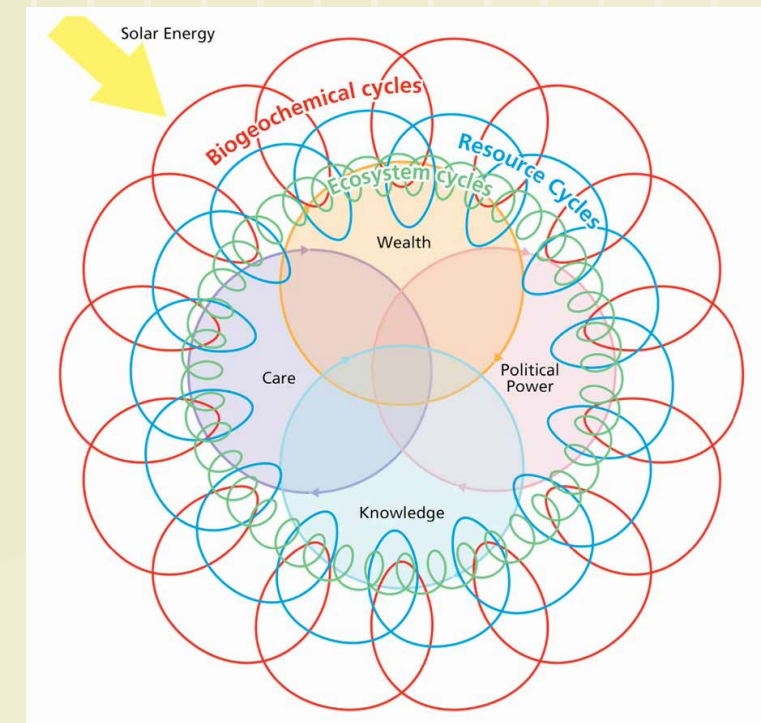


Figure 13 - Seven key socio-ecological cycles (the red, blue, and green loops around the figure represent bio-physical cycles, while the four circles in the middle represent social cycles. All the cycles intersect one another to reflect their multiple interconnections, interdependencies, and interactions). (Calisto Friant et al., 2024).

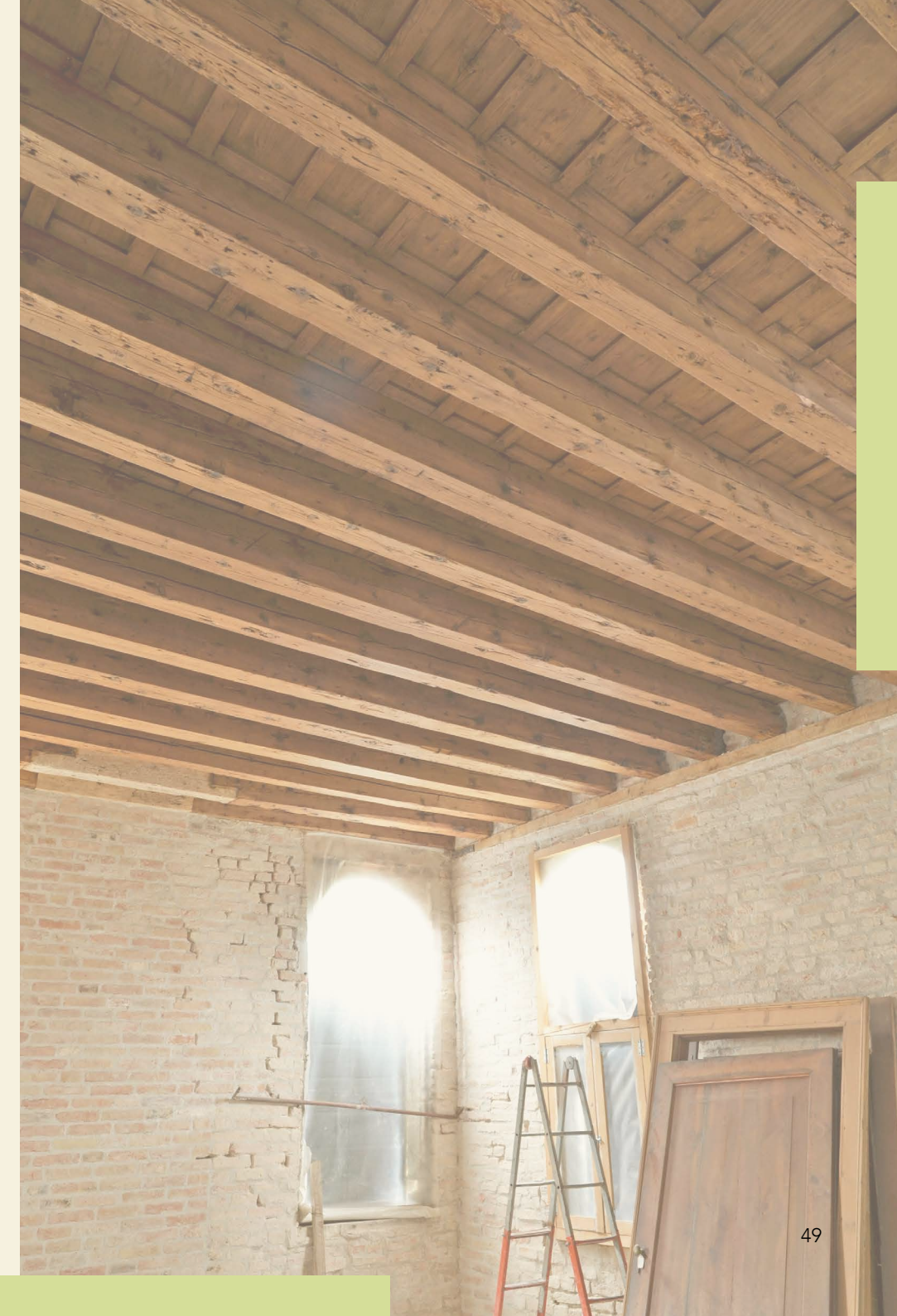
The emerging concepts listed before are all aiming at innovating the building sector, working on space and time constraints. It is important to consider that innovation is more effective when it is at a localized level, like the innovation districts in urban areas, and even more when it includes in its framework the **sense of place** (Davis & Wagner, 2024). Sense of place is something that generates a connection between the place and the people living it. It is something that goes beyond the physical realm, being a producer of creativity and community strengths (Davis & Wagner, 2024), shaping the social circularity in this thesis's framework.

The sense of place enriches the blended-use framework. Together with the adaptive reuse, that brings with its definition the connection between a place and the people that live it, it suggests a holistic approach to sustainability, where creating blended venues isn't only about material reuse, space efficiency or environmental impact, but it's mainly about community engagement, ownership stimulation, and identity creation. Blended-use as a design approach isn't enough alone; it needs empowerment by the social realm (Davis & Wagner, 2024).

Theories for a Holistic Blended-Use

In Figure 14, the **framework** that merges the above-mentioned theories within the Blended-Use concept to enhance it holistically is visualized.

In the center stands the holistic perspective on the concept of Blended-Use, which has been given the name *Synergy Hub*, explained in the following chapter, as an evolution of mixed-use being an interpolation of *space* and *time*. Being shaped by a holistic approach to *circular*



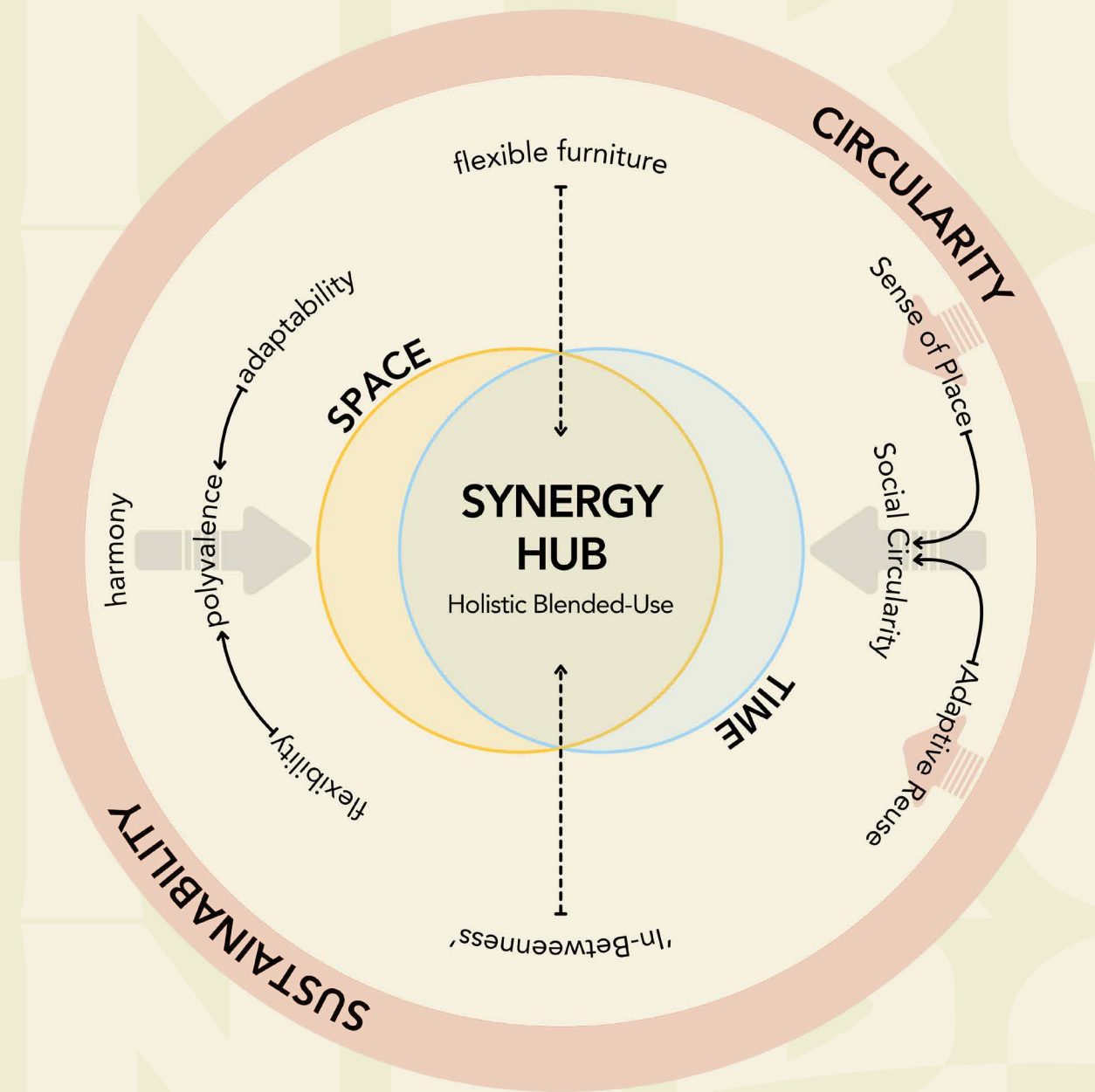


Figure 14 - Synergy Hub [Holistic Blended-Use] Scheme.

ity and sustainability, the concepts of the *sense of place* and *adaptive reuse* shape the social sphere in the time dimension, to introduce the *social circularity*, which is key to enhancing the current blended-use approach. On a spatial side, theories of *harmony*, *flexibility*, *polyvalence*, and *adaptability* shape sustainable perspectives into space design. Together with the practical implications of *flexible furniture* and the theory of the 'In-Betweenness', both related to space and time, the framework becomes complete and presents the theories and approaches as an enhancement of blended-use design.

Synergy Hub

Having the theories gathered to enhance the design principles of the blended-use, it is now possible to give a name to those blended venues that meet all the social and cultural needs, bringing together living, working, and leisure activities. Indeed, even Francesco Messori (personal communication, April 10, 2025) confirms that the nomenclature is missing for those types of places. There is a need to expand the blended-use definition, bringing in the social sphere together with the previously listed design theories and concepts. On this basis, this thesis aims to introduce a terminology to define those venues that are blended, and holistically embrace circularity and sustainability: the **Synergy Hub**, an intersection of **blended functions in space and time**, which addresses **circularity and sustainability holistically**, creating **multifunctional cultural places to enhance the local urban social fabric**. It is a way to see a holistic application and study of the blended-use, within the fourth place sphere, as it aims at considering living, working, and leisure, at the same time, in the same space.

The Synergy Hub suggests sustainable fluid transitions in time and space while addressing circular and sustainable matters in the building sector. This new concept finds its place in the map of existing and emerging concepts in the multifunctional use of space at the building scale in the short term. See the updated version in Figure 15.

When giving a name to something, it means giving an identity and changing the way things are seen and perceived. It is important to study the words "synergy" and "hub," their origin, and etymology.

According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, "synergy" is "the combined power of a group of things when they are working together that is greater than the total power achieved by each working separately" (Cambridge University Press, n.d.-e). It is the union of living, working, and leisure activities that together generate that synergy, in a way that things flow together as if they were only one. Moving to "hub," the *Cambridge Dictionary* defines it as "the central part of a wheel into which the spokes (= bars connecting the central part to the outer edge of the wheel) are fixed" (Cambridge University Press, n.d.-b). It is the central point where everything flows and converges, the meeting point where everything happens.

Their combination suggests a place where serendipity, indetermination, and imperfection are owners, a place where there are possibilities for generating unpredictable settings blending different worlds.

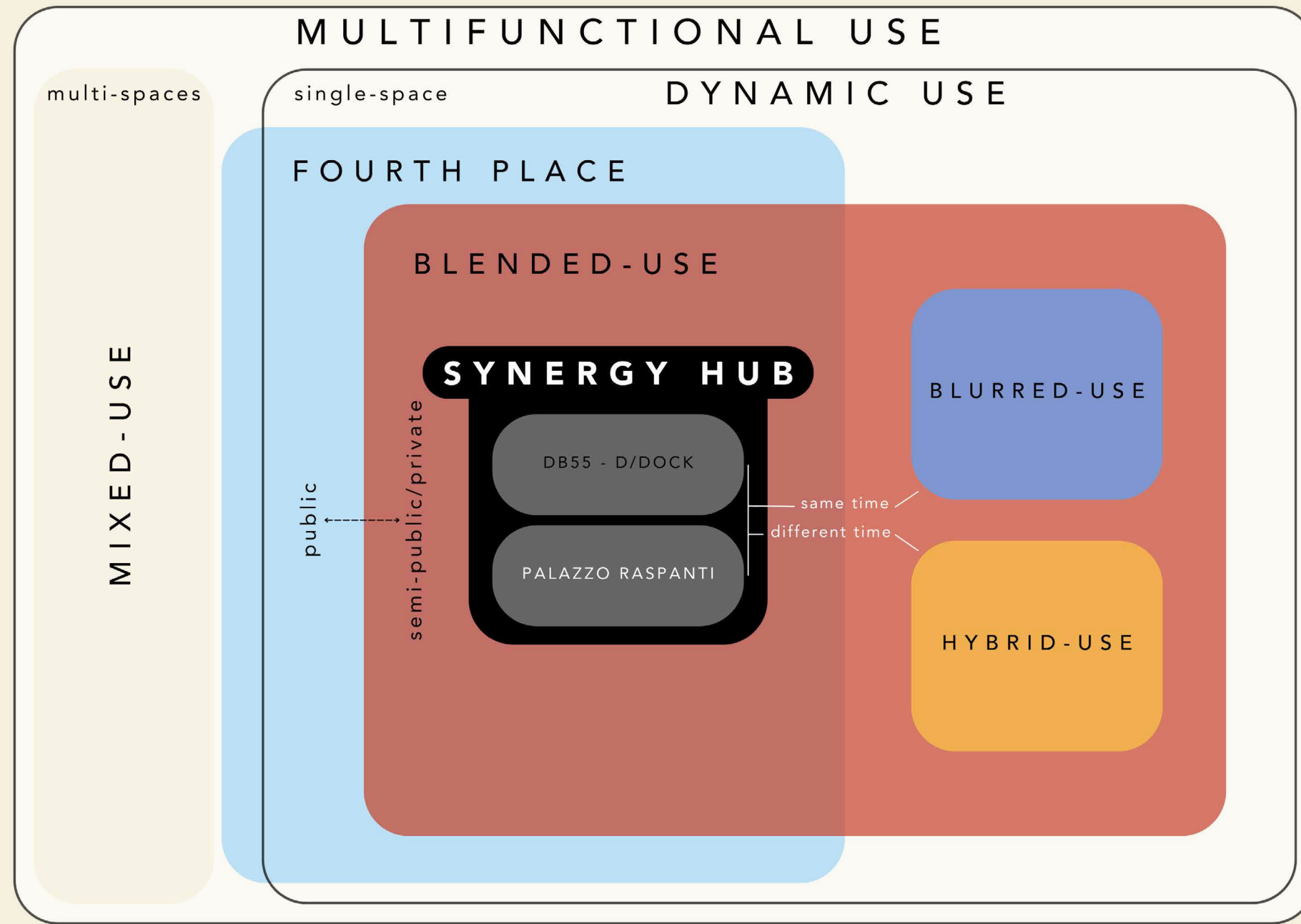


Figure 15 - Map of existing and emerging concepts in multifunctional use of space at the building scale in the short term, with the Synergy Hub concept placed.



The thesis has a dualistic approach, bringing **research** and **design** together. The research analyzes the possibilities of implementing the gathered knowledge through design in a real case. It analyzes the current literature, state-of-the-art of blended-use, and case study background. It analyzes information gathered through field research and expert interviews. After researching connected topics, the thesis will approach the implementation of acquired knowledge with a **design methodology** providing visualizations of how the blended-use concept is envisioned in the case of Palazzo Raspanti.

3 Research Methodology

Methods

Literature Review

To begin the research, extensive literature was reviewed on topics concerning space and time, related to mixed-use and its critical perspective. Research on blended-use highlights the gap in the literature and exploration of the several theories connected with it. Moreover, additional research has been done on the concept of circularity and sustainability, to understand how these thematic can be implemented into the proposed framework.

Expert Interviews

To strengthen the literature, expert interviews have been held to better understand the topic. Experts from architecture and sustainability have been interviewed to know the position of the academic and working community on blended-use. Expert interviews were held ethically, asking participants to sign consent forms and recording the interview to properly understand the treated concepts. Questions have been prepared in advance and have been shared with the interviewee before the meeting. In-person interviews were favored over online meetings. More details on the three interviews conducted for this research can be found in Appendix B.

Case Studies

To support theory and literature, the research will list a series of case studies that can support the idea behind Synergy Hubs. Case studies mainly from the Netherlands and Italy have been analyzed based on the design and their

approach to multifunctionality. To conduct a structured case study, a series of values and indicators was decided beforehand, creating a table to help the analysis.

Below is the list of the case studies under analysis:

Cà dei Carraresi, Treviso (IT)
<https://fondazionecassamarca.it/immobili/casa-carraresi-ca-brittoni/>

DB55, Amsterdam (NL)
<https://www.ddock.com/cases/db55-amsterdam/>

Giunti Odeon, Florence (IT)
<https://giuntiodeon.it/it>

Karper K, Amsterdam (NL)
<https://studioninedots.nl/project/karper-k/>

Field Research

As the research has been conducted partially in Amsterdam (NL) and partially in Treviso (IT), field research helped the reliability of the research. Innovative case studies have been analyzed in the Netherlands, being an example of a progressive approach to architecture, studying their functionality in the field. In Treviso, the case of Palazzo Raspanti has been studied, conducting research in the building and in the surrounding areas.

Design

To bring the research into visually pleasing and easy-to-understand results, the thesis adopted a design method to shape the applied theory into visuals, images, and diagrams. The goal of the thesis is, through a research by

design approach, to show the possible results for a future Palazzo Raspanti, which applies the information gathered during the research.

Methodology

To address the whole research and answer the research question(s), the thesis aims to be useful for practical implementations, showing how to bring the theory to practice. As the main topics are architecture-design related, the thesis will adopt a Design Thinking methodology. Design Thinking is a solution-based methodology employed to address problems, particularly those that are complex, ill-defined, or unknown. When mentioning “solution-based”, this means that the design will propose a possible solution for the case targeted; it doesn’t mean that it will propose the only possible solution with

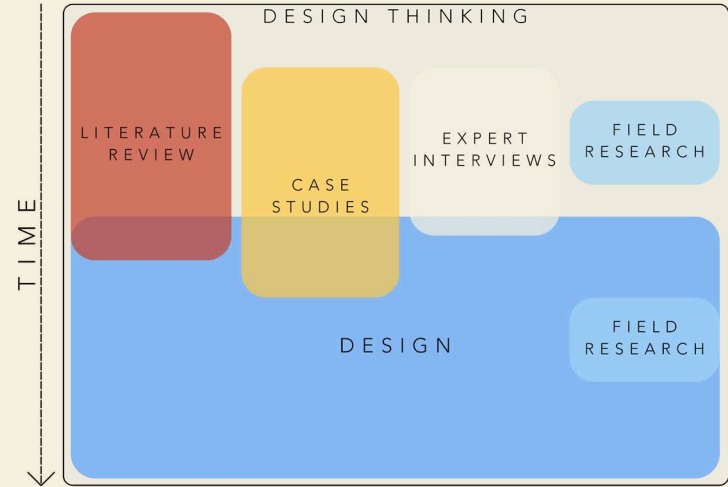


Figure 16 - Methods and Methodology during the research

an engineering approach. The thesis applies the re- search in a way that proposes a solution to explain how to translate the findings into practice. This approach in- volves understanding human needs, reframing problems in human-centric ways, generating multiple ideas through brainstorming sessions, and adopting a hands-on ap- proach through prototyping and testing. The stages in Design Thinking can be outlined as empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. Due to time constraints, the last two steps won't be executed, but a prediction of the possible results will be held and presented in visualiza- tions (Taimur et al., 2023). Moreover, as Love (2017) sug- gests, when approaching these concepts that merge dif- ferent elements together into a "synthesized building" or space, a design thinking approach is important to obtain useful results to show concrete implementations.

In Figure 16, the process and usage of the different meth- ods during the time of the research are represented in a temporal graph, having the methodology always present as a background approach to the research.

Looking back at the sub-research questions, each of them has been answered with a combination of different meth- ods.

The first sub-research question, which focuses on defining blended-use, has been answered by reviewing literature and asking experts about its definition and peculiarities.

Moving toward the second sub-research question, the conceptual framework gives an answer to how blend- ed-use is placed within the other typologies, and how they relate to each other. To do so, literature review, ex- pert interviews, and case studies have been analyzed.

Lastly, the sub-research question regarding the future of Palazzo Raspanti has been answered using all the meth- ods of this research, taking examples from case studies, going in loco to analyze the space and the surroundings, and designing the possible solutions for a future blended Palazzo Raspanti.

A more schematic representation of how each sub-re- search question has been answered is visible in Table 1.

Table 1 - Methods used to answer each sub-research question

	Literature Review	Expert Interviews	Case Studies	Fields Research	Design
SRQ1					
SRQ2					
SRQ3					

Case Study Analysis

4

In this chapter, the different case studies will be presented and compared to get learnings from real-life contexts.

After considering the **size** of each case study and giving a **description** with some overall information, the **functions** inside the building will be listed. It is interesting to study the **division of spaces**, looking at the floor, how it changes, if there are barriers and dividers, and if colors define different uses (F. Buricco, personal communication, April 1, 2025). Next to that, **time** is considered a key aspect in the analysis; the way the spaces use time to merge different functions is studied. One more paramount topic is the **social** aspect, backing all the theoretical framework built for the research (see Figure 14), underlining the importance of social sustainability when talking about sustainable architecture and blended-use. In addition, the case studies will be associated with the different **types of use** analyzed in the emerging concepts. The analysis ends with **learnings** collected from the case studies, leaving a last column for **other** important considerations.

Next to a more narrative analysis, it is useful to visualize and analyze, through a design thinking approach, the way spaces have been shaped in each case study and how they relate to time. Following each case study, useful plans and pictures with sketches to better understand their importance in researching blended spaces are presented.

NOTE: Before looking at the visualizations realized to present the analysis of the case studies and the results of this research in the following chapter, it is good to understand the color coding of the images. Here, a small explanatory table:

Table 2 - Color Coding Visualizations	
Color	Function
	Movement & Flows, People
	Design Elements
	Food
	Utilities
	Work
	Living, Sleeping
	Art & Culture
	Information & Highlights

Casa Dei Carraresi

Treviso, IT

Year construction: ~1200 | Year last renovation: 1987
~3000 sqm; Area of interest: ~900 sqm

Description

The center for art and culture in the city center of Treviso. It is the center for conferences and expositions of Fondazione Cassamarca, the main art institution in the city (Fondazione Cassamarca, n.d., 2014).

Functions

Museum | Book Shop | Wine Shop | Restaurant

Division of Space

The ground floor has minimal barriers, integrating multiple functions, having the restaurant seating tables in the same room where a book shop and a wine shop find place. The space is totally blurred, as only the columns and minimal variation of the floor suggest the division of space.

Time

The restaurant opens at 10:30 for lunch and dinner till 23:00, with a closing break in the afternoon between 15:00 and 18:00. On Wednesday, it's closed. The wine shop and the book shop have both a continuous schedule every day from 10:00 to 23:00, Wednesday from 10:00 to 19:30.

Social

As a place that brings together different users, it is possible to find at the same time very different people. It is a symbol for the city, being one of the most important museums in the city center. It brings several events and art enthusiasts. The restaurant brings socializing moments, while art exhibitions bring expressions of cultural identity.

Type of Use - BLURRED

It brings in the same open space the entrance of the museum (which continues on the upper floors), a book shop, a wine shop, and a restaurant, blurring the lines between them. The functions coexist mainly at the same time, with moments where the restaurant isn't active.

Learnings

Space doesn't need to be physically divided. Especially in old existing buildings, where columns can often be present, they can be used to define space and divide it. Moreover, the way the pattern of tiles is broken by a different orientation but with the same material suggests another way to divide open spaces without creating physical barriers. In addition, the restaurant, which tends to be a noisier activity compared to the shops, can easily coexist with the book shop and the wine shop.

Other

The chairs of the restaurant have wheels (see Figure 18), but the tables do not. As during the afternoon that space is not lived, the chairs could be easily removed and the tables left, for example, for workshops that the museum could host for kids in the afternoon. Moreover, on Wednesday, the restaurant is closed; therefore, more space would be available for new projects and ideas (using the kitchen of the restaurant for cooking classes).

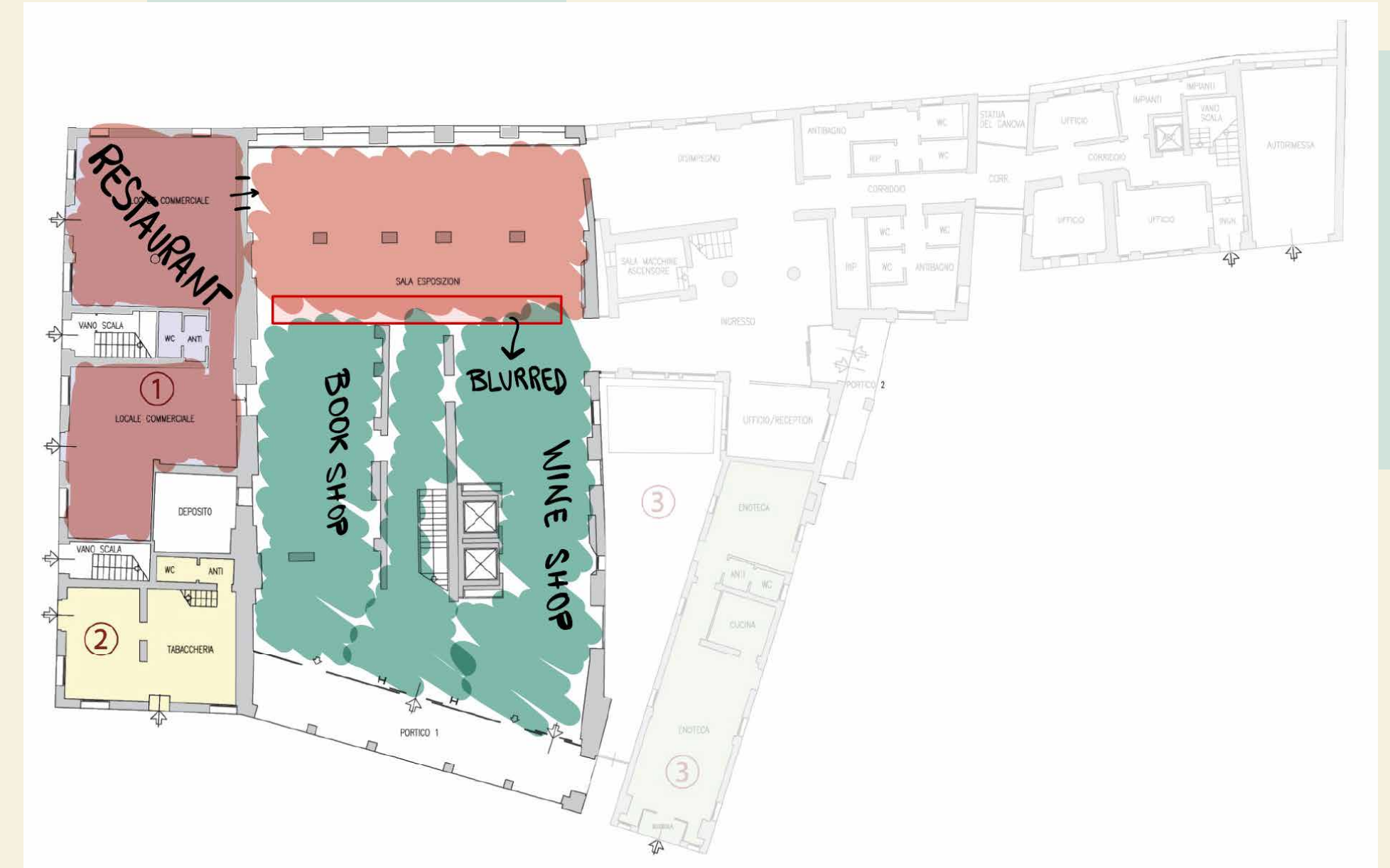


Figure 17 - Ground floor Casa dei Carraresi, sketches by the author. (Fondazione Cassamarca, 2014).



Karper K

Amsterdam, NL

Year construction: unknown | Year last renovation: 2023

~1000 sqm

Description

Office space that brings together different businesses in the creative and design industry. It offers a makerspace and a kitchen for the people working there, together with wide spaces easily adaptable to new ideas. It is "a place for unexpected and unpredictable combinations". The large hall, entirely open in terms of shape, purpose, and usage time, is called "Free Space." The character of the space allows it to support a range of night activities, material experiments, and cultural events and exhibitions (Karper K, n.d.; Pintos, 2023).

Functions

Office | Bistro | Club

Division of Space

Walls that are both solid and movable. A way to create a barrier for the night to separate the expensive furniture of the office from the party area, with a window to see what is on the other side, keeping a connection between the two spaces. In the office space, division is made with green walls made of plants. A soft barrier to divide different realities.

Time

During the night, part of the office can turn into a club. During the day, it's a mix of different businesses under the same roof. This use of time gives more moments to enjoy the space in different ways.

Social

It is a space that brings together workers of different offices, but also, at night, it takes people into another social level above the working environment. It is a co-working for companies, where knowledge is shared and interactions happen constantly. The switch to the night configuration brings a different social environment to exchange emotional connections over working ones.

Type of Use - HYBRYD

The juxtaposition of work environment and party area gives the space two main functions that alternate.

Type of Use - BLURRED

During the day, the division between the bistro space and the working environment isn't clearly defined. The corridor that turns into a club at night also hosts work meetings.

Learnings

Giving accessibility to other functions can also be done only on an emotional level. Placing the walls with a circular window to let people experience the working environment also during the nighttime gives more room to the multiple interpretations of the place.

Other

The proximity of the bistro to the wide tables brings challenges to the soundscape of the hall. Transparent sound barriers could be improved around the bistro to bring quietness to the surroundings. An interview for a different project was conducted here, and the soundscape negatively affected the interview in the hall.

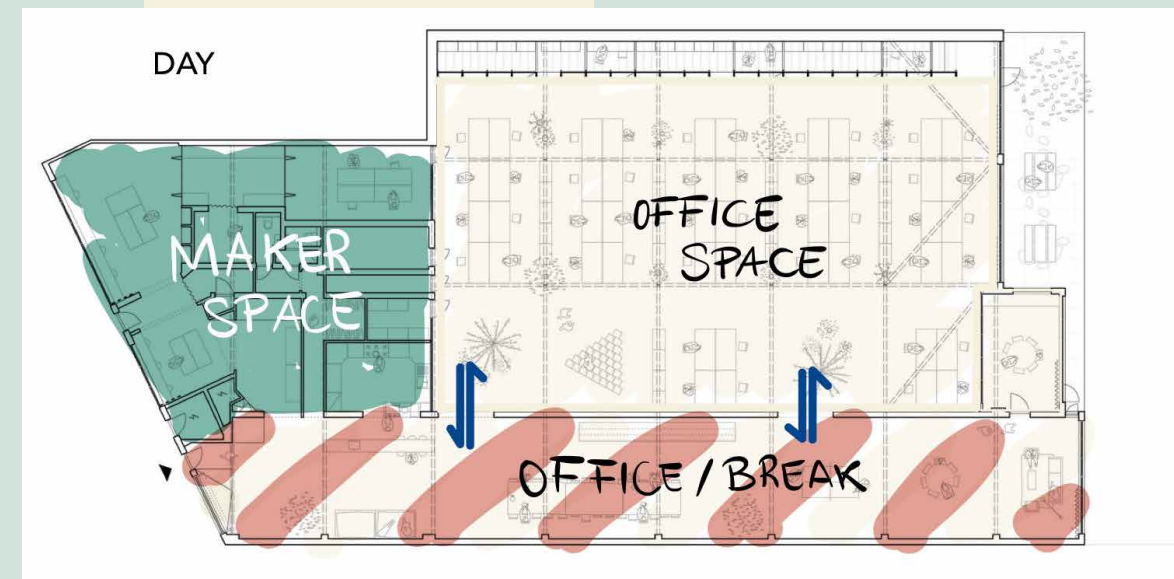


Figure 19 - Ground floor Karper K during the day, sketches by the author. (Pintos, 2023).

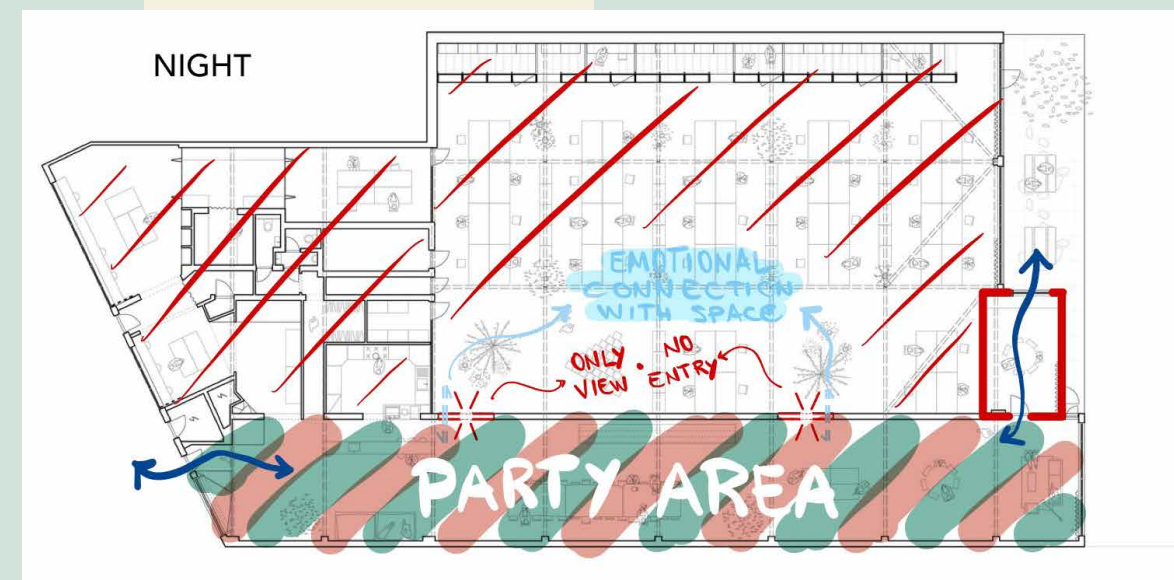


Figure 20 - Ground floor Karper K during the night, sketches by the author. (Pintos, 2023).

Giunti Odeon

Florence, IT

Year construction: ~1450 | Year last renovation: 2023
~1500 sqm

Description

A multifunctional cultural center that hosts a book shop, a cinema, and a restaurant. The peculiarity lies in its restoration from an old building to an innovative space that is open from 8:30 to midnight, merging three different functions. Even though the normal cinema is open by 21:00, the screen is used during the book shop’s opening hours to show documentaries and cartoons for kids. Reading, browsing, unwinding, learning, or working may all be done in this building all day long (Gabbrielli, 2023; Giaume, 2023; GiuntiOdeon, n.d.; GO – Giunti Odeon, n.d.; Usa la Valigia, 2023).

Functions

Book Shop | Cinema | Theater | Bistro

Division of Space

The book shop and cinema are divided by floor levels. Even though they are in the same space, the seats of the cinema stand on the first and second floors, while the book shop is on the ground floor at the same level as the big screen and stage. It is a division based on height and not on clear divisions like walls and doors in the restaurant.

Time

This renovation allows the cinema to be used for 2/3 of the day, having only the night as a possibility to expand its opening to 100%. It is open 7/7 days, from 8:30, when the bistro opens, till the end of the shows around midnight. It overlaps the cinema/theater function with the book shop, giving documentaries and exhibitions during the opening time of the book shop.

Social

It is defined as a multifunctional cultural hub, a place where people can come together for studying, reading, or working both alone and in groups. It is a place that hosts cultural symposiums to enhance interaction between people, a way to live culture together. Thanks to its opening times, it allows everyone to live this space whenever they can.

Type of Use - BLURRED

It is divided into two main bodies, the bistro and the cultural area, with a normal division based on doors, in a mixed-use way. When entering the cultural area, the book shop and the cinema are perfectly merged without barriers in a blurred environment that spans two floors.

Learnings

Big halls with high ceilings favor the implementation of blended configurations. The soundscape of this configuration shows how different functions can overlap. The documentaries and movies speak and tell stories to both the customers of the book shop and those who are there to enjoy the theater. Sound overlap isn’t always a challenge; it can also be an opportunity.

Other

Improvement could be done by making the bookshelves movable with wheels (see sketches in Figure 23), so that the space can be available also after 9 pm when the book shop closes, or before 10 am as an expansion of the restaurant. To enhance the movie experience during the opening hours of the book shop, wireless headphones could be provided to enjoy the movies, isolating them from the eventual noise of the book shop and bistro during their opening hours.

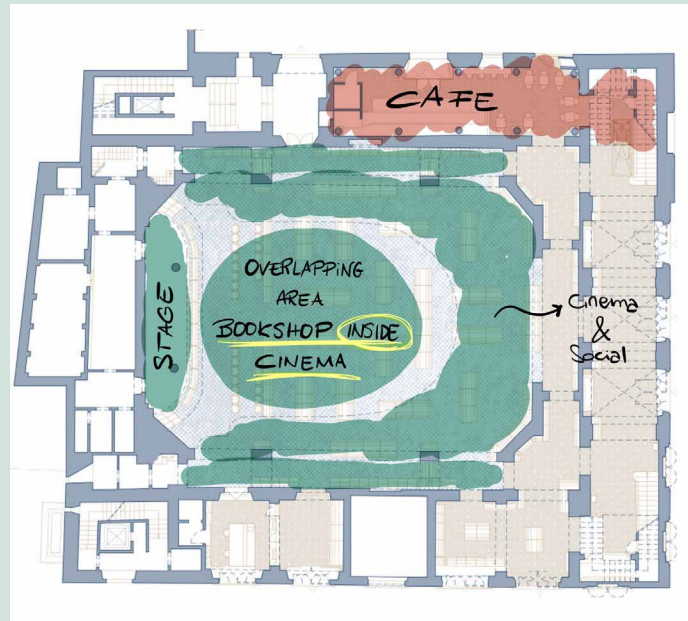


Figure 21 - Ground floor Giunti Odeon, sketches by the author. (GO – Giunti Odeon, n.d.).

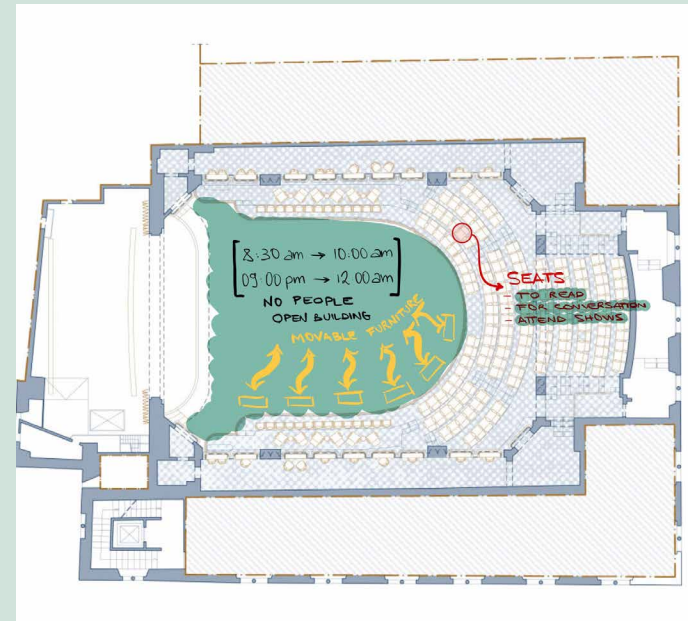


Figure 22 - First floor Giunti Odeon, sketches by the author. (GO – Giunti Odeon, n.d.).

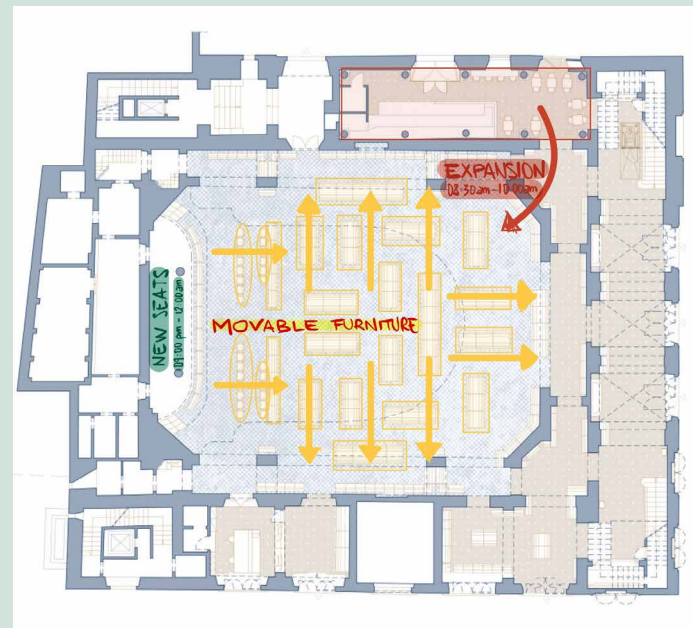


Figure 23 - Ground floor Giunti Odeon, sketches by the author (suggestions). (GO – Giunti Odeon, n.d.).

DB55

Amsterdam, NL

Year construction: unknown | Year last renovation: 2021

~1100 sqm

Description

The circular headquarters of D/DOCK, therefore primarily a workspace. A blended venue in a former timber warehouse, distributed over three floors. The structure is dynamically optimizing the space, reinventing it to fit new functions and activities. Threw the obtainment of several permits, DB55 isn't just a workspace, but also a cultural and social venue, in addition to a place to sleep and rest (D/DOCK, n.d.-a, n.d.-b; Morris, 2023).

Functions

Office | Restaurant | Cinema | Theater | Event Venue | Residence

Division of Space

The heights are kept free for maximum flexibility. The floors are all connected by the open space, which gives a view of each floor, giving more transparency. The rooms, as well, are open with wide windows that allow one to see what happens inside. A big high curtain divides the restaurant area from the wooden stairs, which transform into a cinema in the evening for those who want to enjoy a movie night. The floor is a continuous element both in material and color that goes in the open space, in the kitchen, and in the rooms. Carpets are often used to suggest an area where people can gather, especially in the space near the main entrance, which hosts a relaxing area with couches. Curtains are also used for the small areas on the last floors that turn from tables to beds, in order to give privacy based on the needs.

Time

During lunch time, the tables on the ground floor transform from working tables into dining tables, same for dinner events and restaurant activities. Thanks to the wheels on each table leg, it is easy and quick to rearrange the space based on the activity that is hosted. This building has a special characteristic of having the potential to never stop and being

open 24/7. Even though the cabins that have the table-beds aren't used continuously, Thomas van Leeuwen (personal communication, March 25, 2025) himself experienced the night at DB55, doable thanks to a kitchen and a shower on the ground floor. Movies can be displayed in the open space, while the other rooms can still be used for other purposes based on the noise requirements.

Social

At night, with the permit for commercial use, the office turns into a restaurant that brings social life into the neighborhood, which is a big renovation of an industrial area. The building has been a new gathering point for the surroundings, an area which was once a harbor, and now it's mainly residential. It's an open space in the literal meaning of the word, as everyone is welcome and can explore its blended characteristics.

Type of Use - BLENDED

The blended venue by definition, built and designed to be an example of this new archetype. Taking back from the literature over the fourth place, at DB55 it is possible to live, as it hosts table-beds, it is possible to have a meal or just a coffee, and it is the head office of a design firm, hosting many other realities that collaborate under the same roof.

Learnings

This venue is the example for future implementations in Palazzo Raspanti. Important requirements to have a blended venue are a shower and a kitchen. Having these, many combinations are possible. Movable furniture is the key on the ground floor, with curtains and wheels that help to reshape the ground floor into a new place (see Figure 25). Creating a place like DB55 positively influences the surroundings, being a social and cultural venue that strengthens the community around it, and proposes activities of any kind.

Other

Challenges might arise when dealing with the soundscape of the ground floor, having the speakers that rule over the functions allowed in the space. In Figure 24, a bed is shown, in a space on the second floor, which nowadays hosts a working space. If the bed were foldable against the wall, as well as the desks, the flexibility could be raised to a daily basis.



Figure 24 - Stable bed second floor DB55. (Morris, 2023).

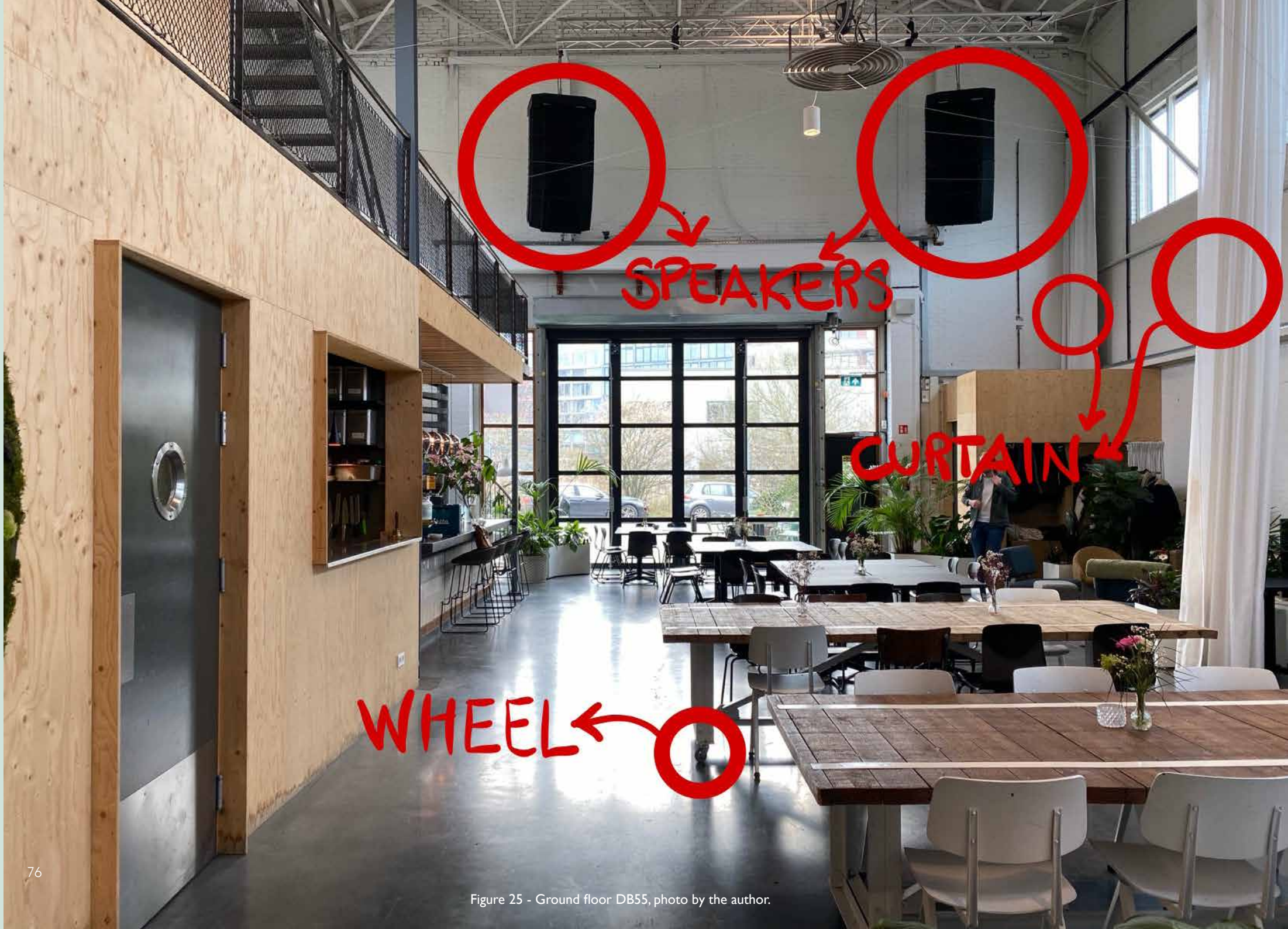


Figure 25 - Ground floor DB55, photo by the author.

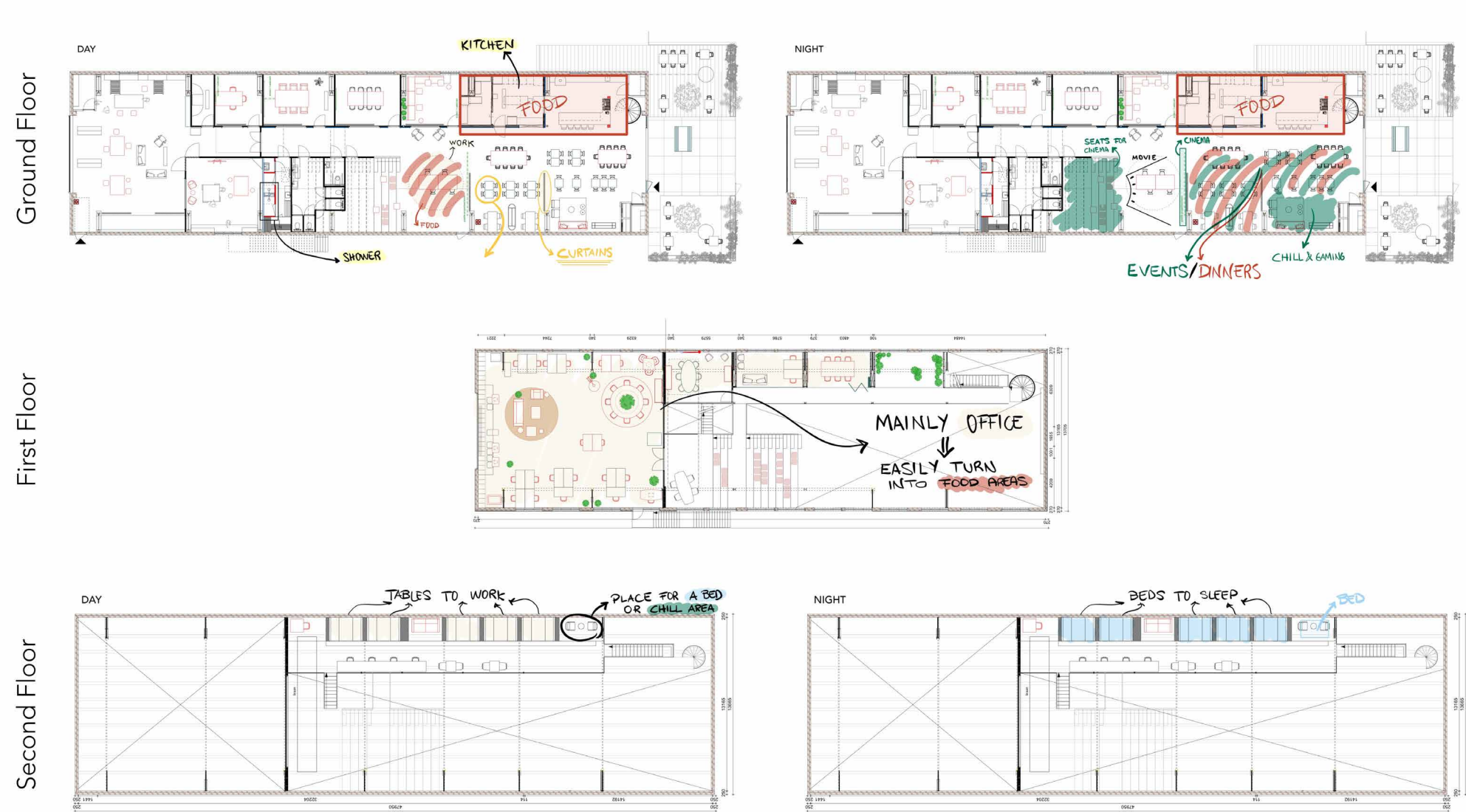


Figure 26 - Analysis floor plans DB55, sketches by the author.

Conclusion Case Studies

Thanks to a detailed analysis of these four case studies, real-life examples help to realistically shape the future of Palazzo Raspanti. Multiple learnings are collected following the analysis and can be rearranged into the main ones to inform the design principles of this research.

Something overarching is the **soundscape**. In all the cases, the sound within the space has been discussed, in some examples with positive results, in others with negative feedback. This highlights the important role that sound has in blended spaces, considering that when designing spaces, the flow of sound is as important as the flow of people.

Furthermore, the **social** aspect has a paramount role in these cases as well as in the whole thesis. All the analyzed places connect with social functions and act as gathering points for interactions. Blending venues have the power of creating a social environment that spans between the inside and the outside (surroundings) of the place itself, being a positive influence in the whole area where located.

On a more physical sphere, **furniture and space design** play a more evident role, where examples of flexible furniture, transparent barriers, and floor design give unique characteristics to the blended venues.

From these learnings, the main design principles have been highlighted, namely **permeability**, **adaptability**, and **flexibility**. In the case studies, elements of flexibility were prominent in the furniture, and the concept of permeability between the inside and the outside of the space was mentioned multiple times, for example, in the DB55, defining it as a space accessible to anyone who wants to live that space. Adaptability goes together with flexibility, as explained also in the conceptual framework, and, just like Karper K shows, remarks the importance of having spaces and moments that can adapt to the needs of the people present in that place at that specific time.

In the next chapter, the theory and the design previously analyzed will be applied to the building related to the aim of this research, Palazzo Raspanti.

5 Blended Palazzo Raspanti

This chapter presents the research findings, illustrating how the conceptual framework and learnings gained from the case study analysis apply to **Palazzo Raspanti**. It begins with an overview of Palazzo Raspanti and Treviso, the city in which it is located. The discussion then moves to the surrounding environment, including the city market and the area around the building. After exploring the potential development of the nearby streets, the chapter introduces design elements that help the implementation of blended-use in existing buildings, supported by sketches for clarity. Finally, it reimagines Palazzo Raspanti's ground floor and garden as a **Synergy Hub**, illustrating future development, along with the flow and interaction of people and functions.

NOTE: In this chapter, there will be mainly hand sketches over precise ones, as a recall of what blended-use should be. Something not strictly defined and accurate, something that is mutable. The way this thesis wants to communicate and the design technique used during this research suggest uncertainty and openness to unknown and possible interpretations, resembling the way blended-use should be implemented in existing buildings.

Palazzo Raspanti, a 16th-Century Building

This research is focused on looking at the advantages of blended-use and its design principles, and how they can be used to shape multifunctional cultural hubs that are fluid in time and space. The results of the research will then be implemented in the case of **Palazzo Raspanti** (see Figure 27).

Palazzo Raspanti is a 16th-century medieval building, whose first owner was the merchant *Johan Raspanti dal Saon*. It is located in the historic city center of Treviso, Italy. With its 1200 sqm divided into five floors and 1000 sqm of private garden, it is a unique heritage building within the ancient medieval city walls. Nowadays, it is home to a tourist lease on the last two floors, while the rest is still uninhabitable and needs renovation. The building has historical significance as it was the house of the Venetian painter **Lorenzo Lotto** for three years in the first half of 1500. It is a symbol of art, and its location together with its elegance make it a possible landmark for the urban fabric of the city (Palazzo Raspanti Treviso, n.d.).



Figure 27 - Main façade Palazzo Raspanti.

The Context: The City of Treviso

Treviso is a city in the North-East of Italy, in the inland of the region Veneto, only 30km away from Venice. It is home to almost 90'000 citizens, while the whole province of Treviso counts almost 900'000 residents (ISTAT, n.d.). Palazzo Raspanti is located in the **historic city center** of the medieval city, as shown in Figure 28, next to the city market that every Tuesday and Saturday morning brings together merchants and stands of every type, from flowers to meat, from clothes to fruit and vegetables. It is 500 meters away from the previously analyzed case study of Casa dei Carraresi, a short distance that could connect cultural hubs in the city.



Figure 28 - Aerial image of Treviso: in black (1) the border of the city center, in red (2) the city market, in green (3) the case study Casa dei Carraresi, and in the white circle (4) Palazzo Raspanti.

The Market: An Extension through Via Stangade

The city market of Treviso has been a landmark for the city for years, and it's a point of social gathering on **Tuesday and Saturday mornings**. Due to the proximity of the Palazzo to the city market, there are opportunities to transform the area around the Palazzo together with what will happen inside, having a permeability that gives unclear borders to let people flow inside and outside of the hub.

An idea of the market environment is given in Figures 29, 30, 31, and 32, showing the mixed typology of stands and how the market reshapes an area that serves as a parking lot except on Tuesday and Saturday mornings.



Figure 29 - Market Treviso, Piazza Matteotti, photo by the author.



Figure 30 - Market Treviso, Borgo Mazzini, photo by the author.



Figure 31 - Market Treviso, food stands, photo by the author.



Figure 32 - Market Treviso, clothes stands, photo by the author.

The Palazzo can be seen as an ending/starting point of the **city market**, as illustrated in Figure 33. The yellow bordered areas are places that need development to become a connection path. It would become a corridor that promotes innovation and welcomes people to gather in the synergy hub that Palazzo Raspanti aims to become. From the entrance points to the city center toward the market (blue arrows in Figure 33), the flow of people suggests a convergence toward Palazzo Raspanti, or vice versa, a spread from the Palazzo to the city market.

Moreover, the **square** just **outside** the Palazzo is a perfect junction point between the hub and the corridor, and then the market. It is a place that suggests resting and waiting, and could be a green spot for relaxation and reflection, before entering the realm of Palazzo Raspanti.

A schematic representation is shown in Figure 34, depicting the site plan of Palazzo Raspanti surrounded by the buildings (gray), water bodies (light blue), and green areas (light green). Next to it, the areas of interest are highlighted, namely the outside square (yellow) and the city market (two red shapes), together with cultural and social environments (dark green). This wider look at the area shows the position of Palazzo Raspanti within cultural amenities and a few green spots. Due to the lack of public green space in the area, having Palazzo Raspanti as a **public green spot** for the city should be a necessity over an opportunity.

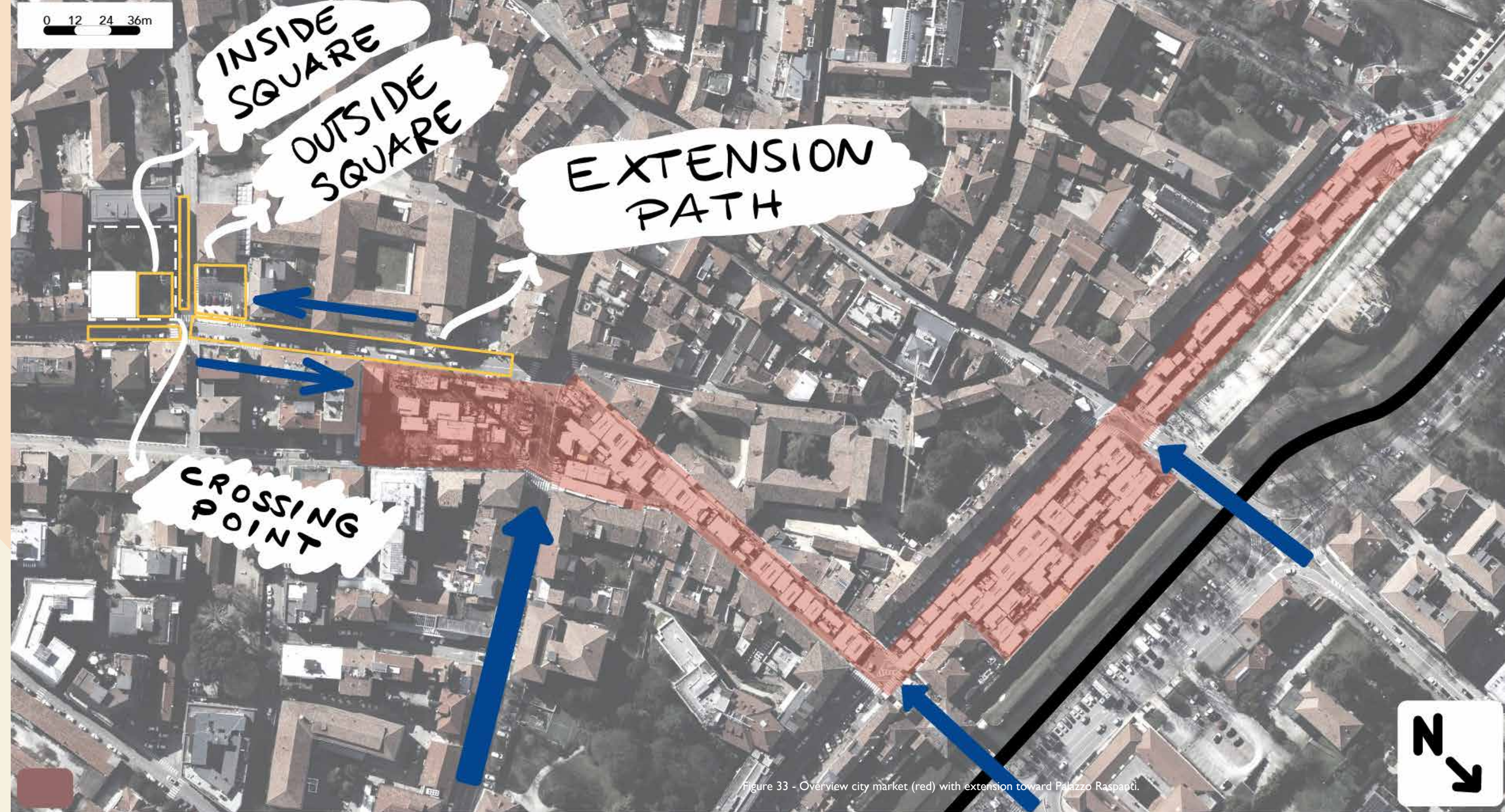


Figure 33 - Overview city market (red) with extension toward Palazzo Raspanti.

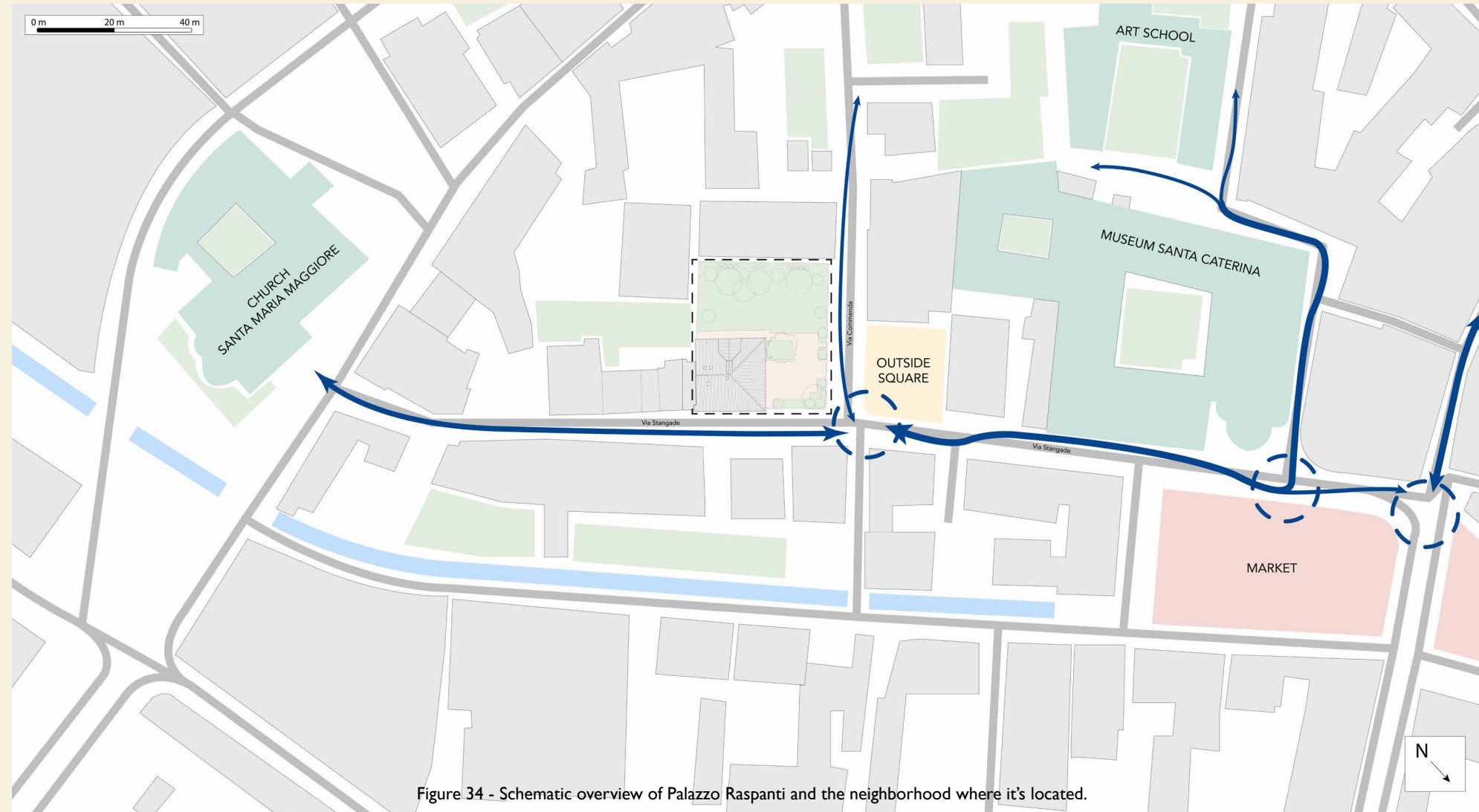


Figure 34 - Schematic overview of Palazzo Raspanti and the neighborhood where it's located.

With a closer look at the extension path, it is possible to better understand what the **flow of people** would look like in a possible future scenario, and how the streets that lead to Palazzo Raspanti can be the introduction to its environment, having Palazzo Raspanti not ending at its walls,

but being a sphere of influence also on its **surroundings**. In Figure 35, a first impression of how the street would transform is given, helping the understanding of the concept with sketches on pictures of the streets in Figures 37, 38, and 40.

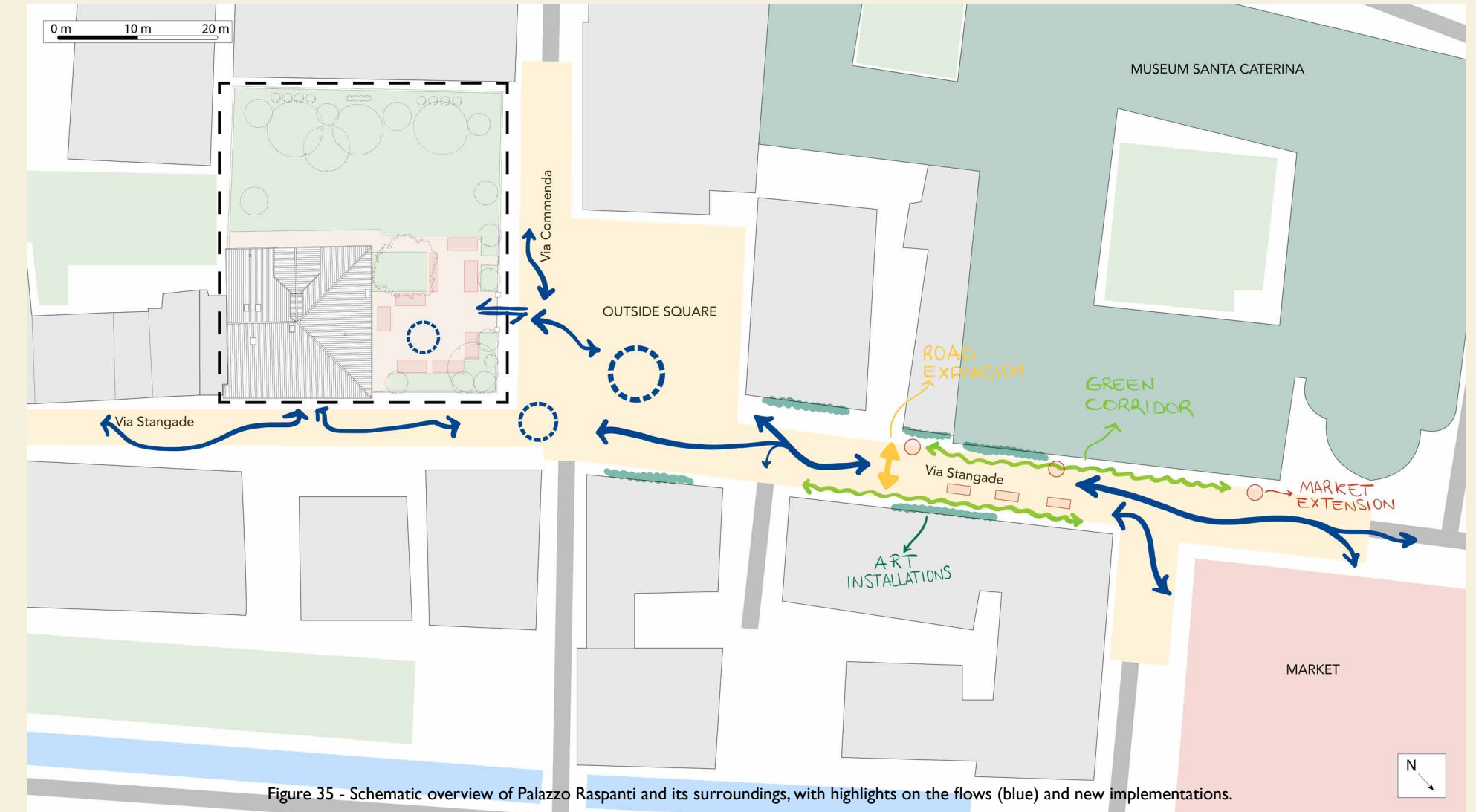


Figure 35 - Schematic overview of Palazzo Raspanti and its surroundings, with highlights on the flows (blue) and new implementations.

The street that connects the Palazzo with the market in *Piazza Matteotti* (also known as *Piazza del Grano*) is named **Via Stangade**. It is possible to see a visualization of its suggested development in Figures 37 and 38. In Figure 39, a collage gives a better idea of how the street in the

future could look as an extension of the city market. The street nowadays is owned by cars, which take almost the whole width, leaving few meters for sidewalks on the sides. In the suggested future scenario, the parking lots are removed, and a unique road is created, taking exam-

ples from the recent urban developments in the Netherlands (an example in Figure 36 shows the recent renovation along the *Herengracht*). To give a sense of **continuity** to the width of the street, the asphalt could be substituted with cobblestones, also known as “sampietrini”, typical of Italian city centers, located indeed in the streets of the inner part of Treviso’s city center. An example pattern is shown at the bottom of the image in Figure 37 and in the collage in Figure 39.

Art is a way to create a sense of place and emotional connection (Marques & Richards, 2013). In this proposal, art is seen as the means to connect people with the corridor and the Palazzo through a sense of **permeability** between the inside and outside of the hub. A permeability that is given with art being a bridge between the outside and the inside.

Moreover, in this proposal, *Via Stangade* aims to become a **green corridor**, suggesting a connection with the garden of Palazzo Raspanti, helping the sense of permeability with the outside.

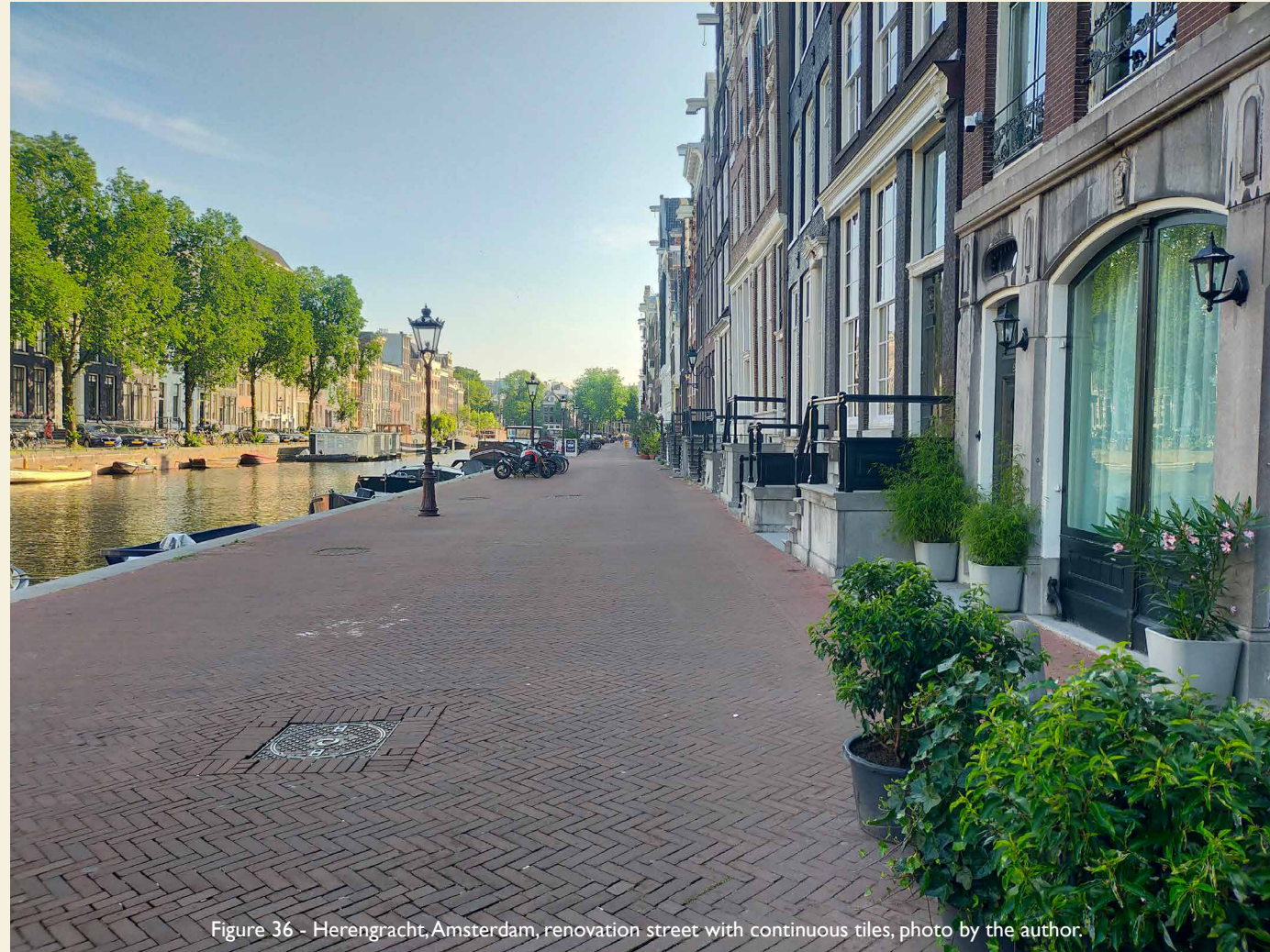


Figure 36 - Herengracht, Amsterdam, renovation street with continuous tiles, photo by the author.



Figure 37 - Via Stangade possible development – Perspective I.

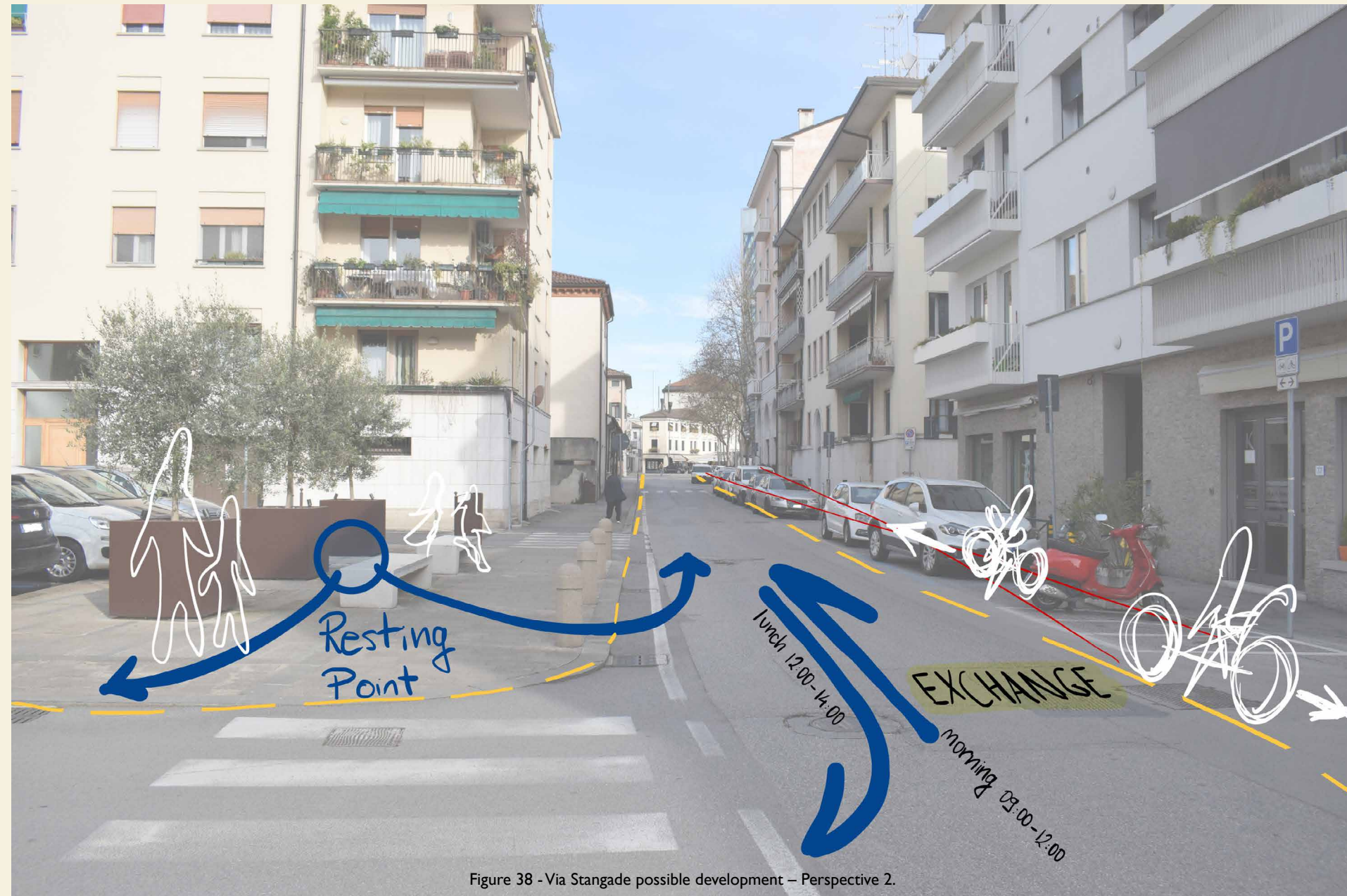
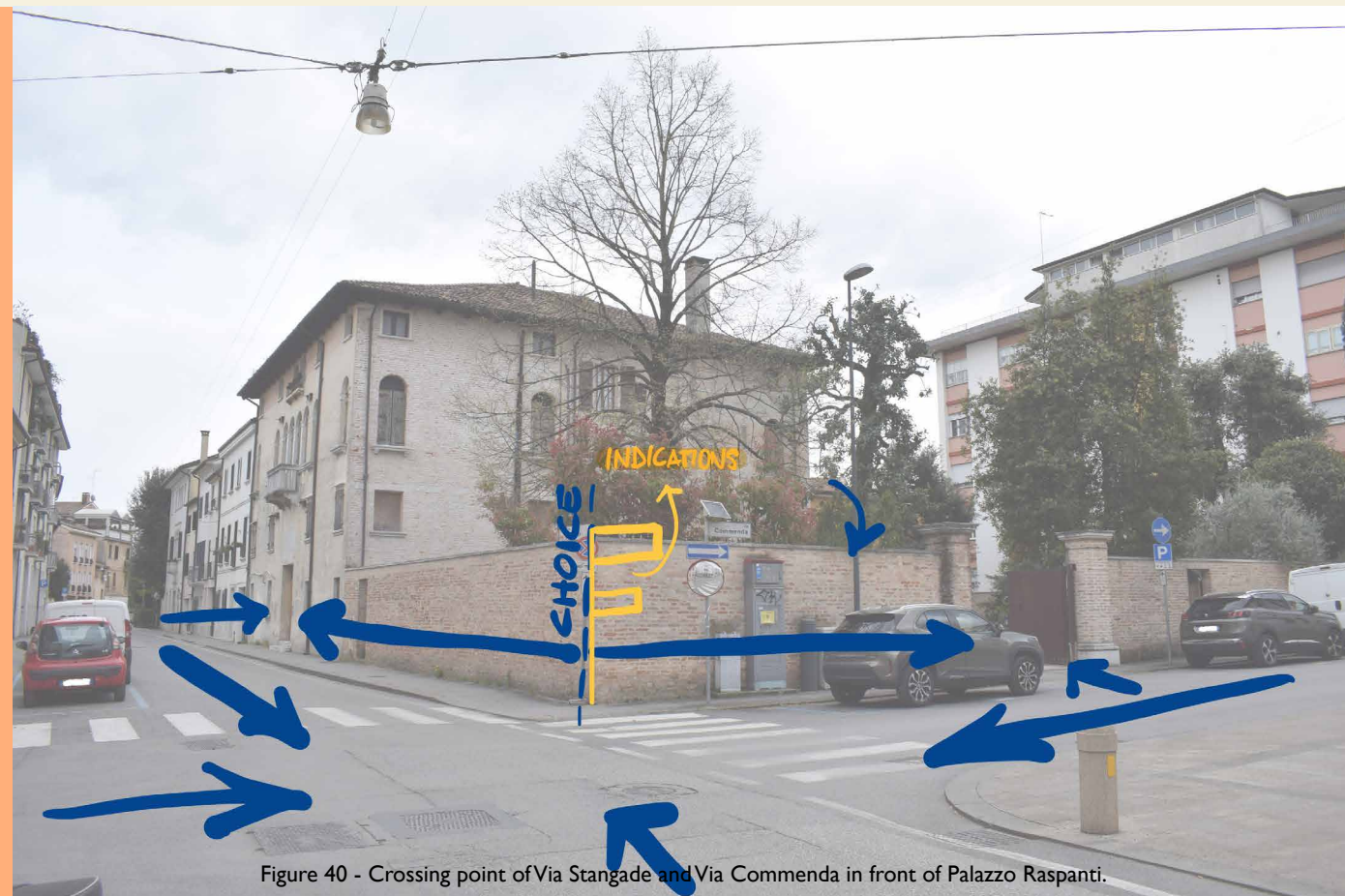


Figure 38 - Via Stangade possible development - Perspective 2.



Figure 39 - Via Stangade, future vision collage.



Once reached Palazzo Raspanti from *Via Stangade*, there is a choice moment suggested by the crossroad (see Figure 40). People converge at that point and could choose the **main entrance** in *Via Stangade*, directly entering the building and accessing the activities happening at that moment, or the **gate** in *Via Commenda*, facing directly the farmer's market inside the garden of Palazzo Raspanti. The gate wants to be as transparent as possible, also when closed, having a gate that allows you to see through. Merging this concept of **transparency** with the one of permeability, it is possible to make a place less elitist, allowing everyone to feel **ownership** over the place. The best option in this case would be to completely remove the wall, but from a realistic perspective, this would turn complicated in the nighttime for security matters.

When choosing the gate (Figure 41), a *Plaza* welcomes its visitors, with stands serving local products and creating a socially inviting environment for everyone who wants to connect through food.



The Ground Floor of Palazzo Raspanti: a Blended-Use Experiment

Given the introduction to the building and the surrounding area, and taking the theoretical knowledge and design principles related to blended-use, it is now possible to suggest a new vision for Palazzo Raspanti, focusing on its **ground floor**. This focus has two reasons: firstly, there is a time constraint, as the time available for this research project isn't enough for a complete analysis of the whole building and the other floors. Secondly, the ground floor has a paramount characteristic, as it is located at the level of the street and the city. Many architects, such as Francesco Messori (personal communication, April 10, 2025), suggest a new way of designing cities, opening the ground floors of the buildings to the people, having an even more connected environment that facilitates people's flow and interaction. Therefore, Palazzo Raspanti aims at opening its doors and letting people flow inside and outside, bringing and taking, in an exchange of knowledge and social contact with others.

Since various users, points of entry, public, private, and legal boundaries must all be taken into consideration early on, **different design solutions** are needed from the beginning of a project in order to accomplish this short-term cyclical change between different functions. Additionally, preventing disputes and disruptions between users and functions while honoring the need for privacy are all crucial design factors (Pelsmakers et al., 2020). In this research, due to time constraints, only a few design solutions will be presented.

Clough (2023) writes that, in blended projects, there is a need for a "fully-integrated team from day one whose focus is on knitting together every space, creating inten-

tional and unexpected friction points between uses, and crafting a story that users can see and feel throughout their journey". Therefore, in future research, it is highly recommended to study the whole building and all its legal and technical constraints to create a more realistic vision for Palazzo Raspanti.

This vision takes inspiration from D/DOCK's experience with DB55. The founders of D/DOCK were looking for a new venue for their company; therefore, they decided to ask the employees what their needs were. In this internal survey, almost 90 percent of the needs for the characteristics of a new office were overlapping. The workers needed a workplace where they could also not work. A place connected with **nature** and designed **circularly**, which hosts everyone in a **friendly and hospitable** environment (Morris, 2023).

These elements, such as the need for a place where it is possible to do **multiple things**, and the elements of nature and a friendly environment, give a suggestion on how to think about the future of Palazzo Raspanti. A place that allows multiple things to happen, in contact with green and nature, hosting everyone.

Before going into the new idea for Palazzo Raspanti, some design elements are introduced, being the result of the research conducted during this thesis, as suggestions on how to implement blended-use in existing buildings.

The Design Elements

Folding & Movable Furniture

Flexibility and Adaptability go together with foldable and movable furniture. From the interview with Thomas van Leeuwen (personal communication, March 25, 2025), it was clear that these design solutions are the key to implementing blended-use in existing spaces. Elements such as wheels, hinges, pulleys, and other technical systems that can help to vary objects' motion, enhance efficiency in space usage, and multiply the functions a space can host.

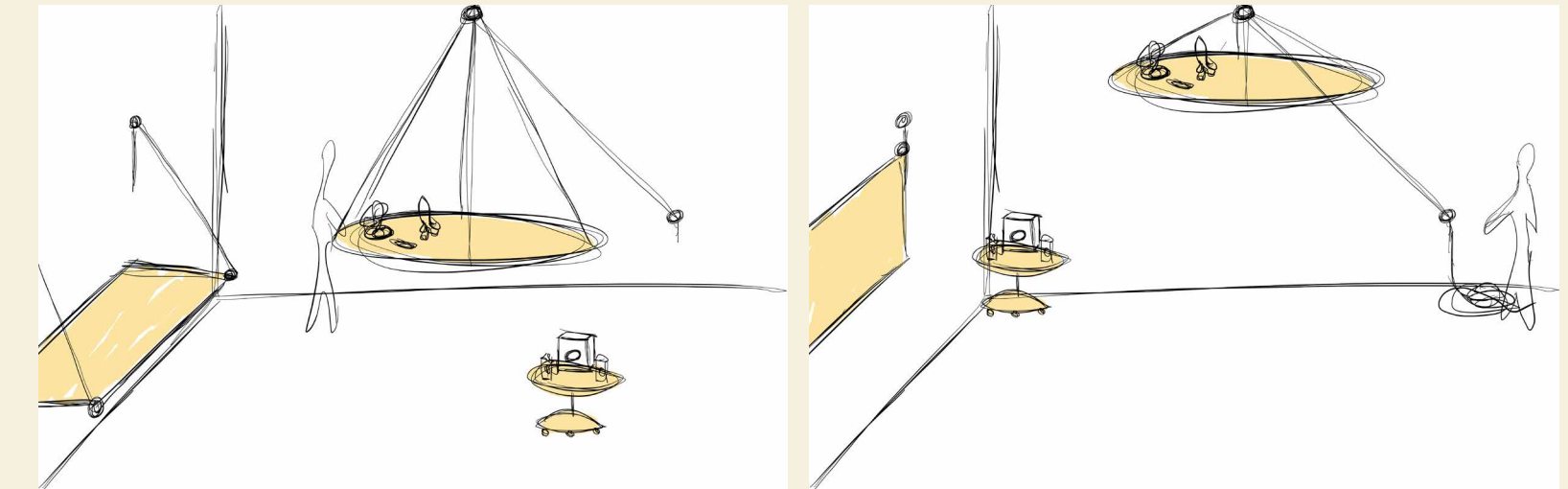


Figure 42 - Folding Tables with Pulley System and Wheels.

Examples from the DB55 venue can be found in the Case Studies chapter in Figure 25.

The Amphitheater: Movable, Foldable, and Multipurpose.

As visualized in the previous figures, this design element aims to be an example of what blending can be in a space that has its own boundaries, as it was designed centuries ago for a totally different purpose. As shown in Figure 43, this element aims to be a main element in the space, being multipurpose and flexible. With its wheels and a folding-sliding mechanism, the Amphitheater can move in the space and adapt to the needs. In this specific configuration, it can be used as an extension of the seating area of the bistro, but once the tables are removed, they can be stored inside the Amphitheater and a new function can take over.

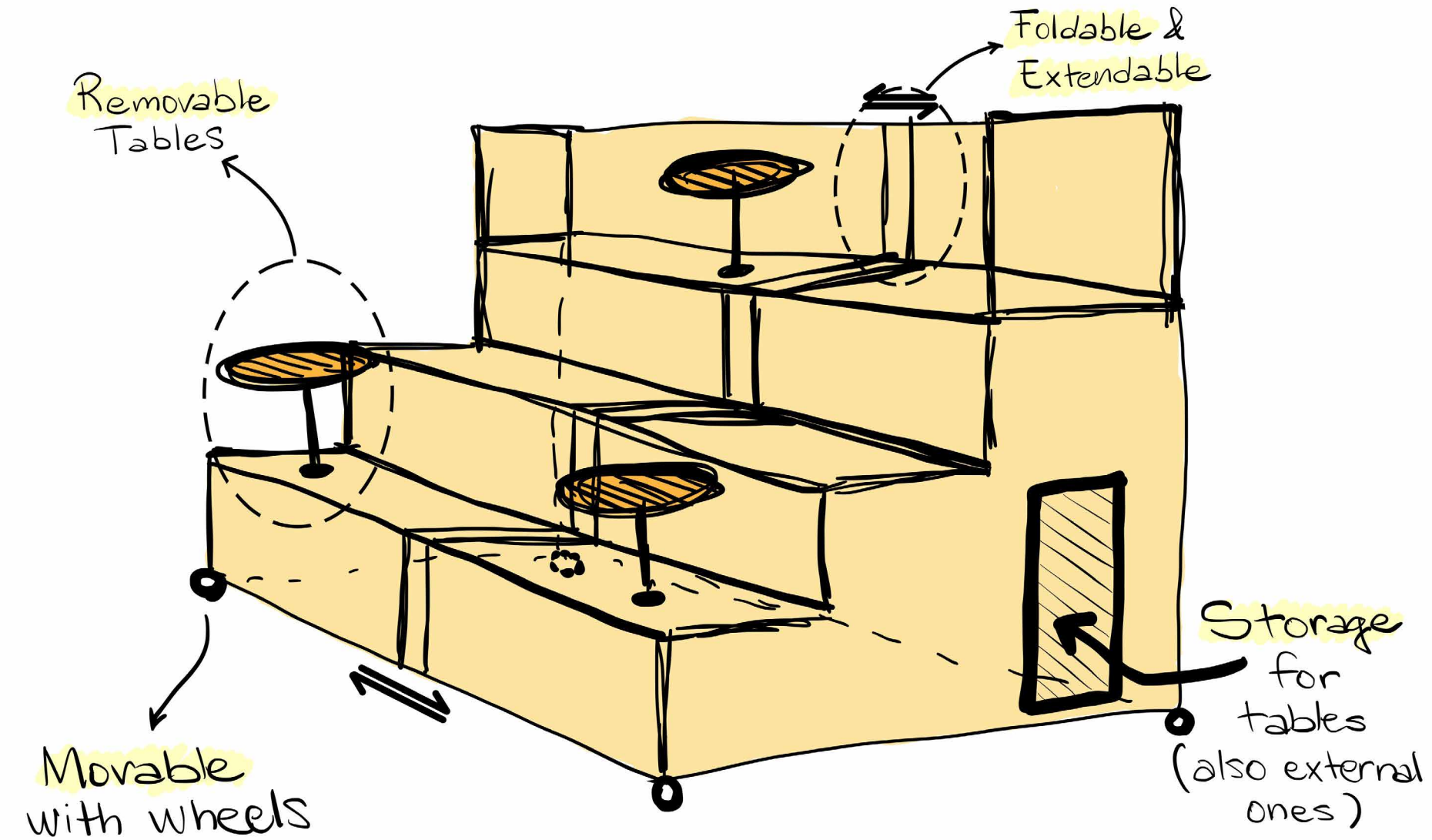


Figure 43 - Amphitheater, flexible design element.

Changeable Floor in Open & Closed Spaces

The floor is like a bass in a band; you don't really notice it, but when it is not in the right tone, it is evident that something is wrong. When entering a space, the floor tells us something about it; it defines functions and borders without placing barriers. During the interview with Federica Buricco (personal communication, April 1, 2025), she suggested studying the way the floor was designed in multifunctional spaces, mentioning these wide rooms where multiple realities co-live without barriers, but with the floor defining where a function ends and the other begins. An example is the duty-free shopping areas and corridors in the airports, where multiple brands sell their products, having the floor delimiting their space (see Figure 44).

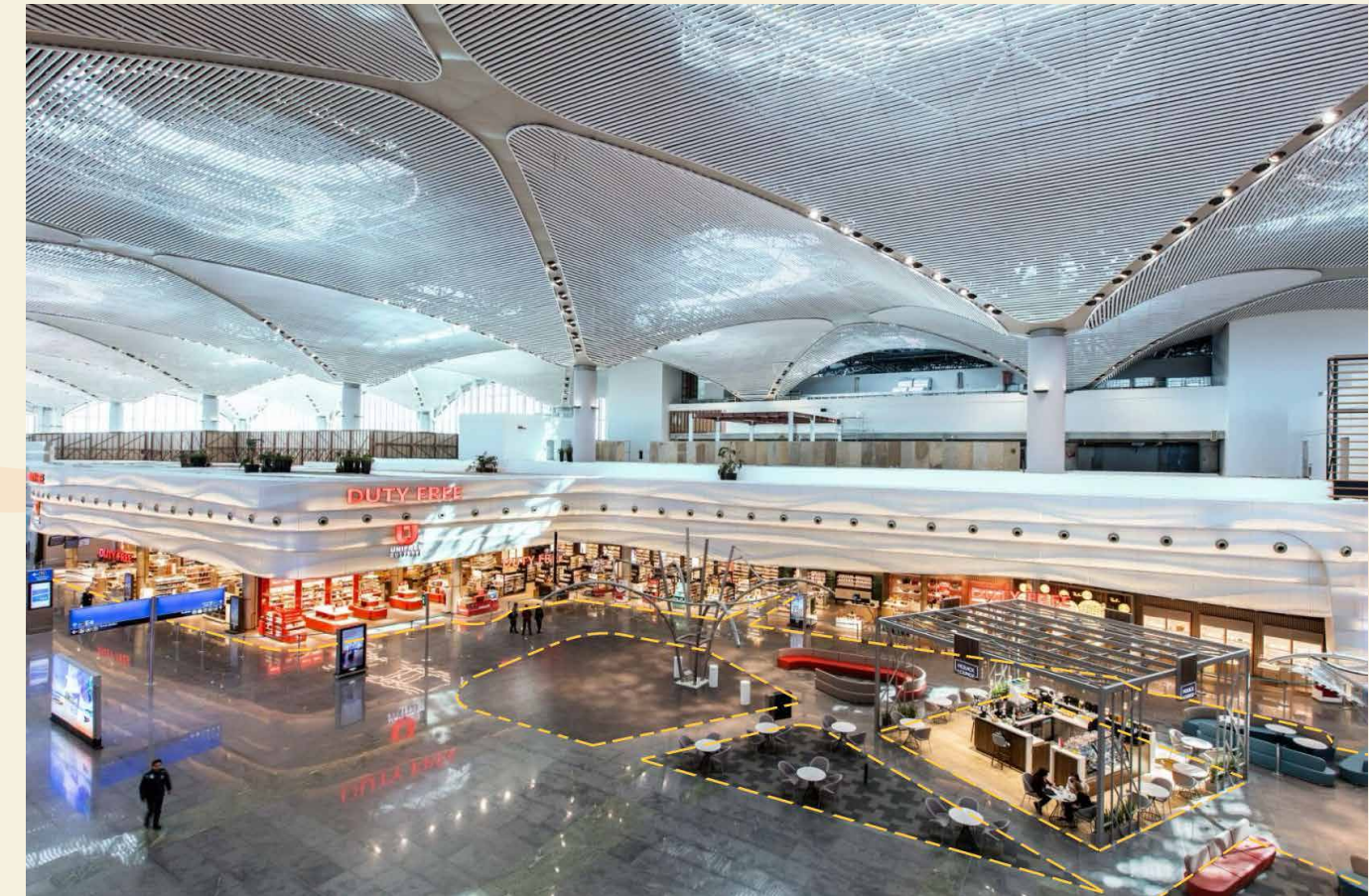


Figure 44 - Floor variation inside an airport hall. Original image from Aviation Business Middle East (n.d.). Sketches by the author.

Given the importance of floor design, in a blended space, it is clever to design changeable floors, like carpets or wood pieces that can easily be placed and removed. In both indoor and outdoor spaces, the floor can change. Just imagine in a garden a wooden stage that can be quickly dismantled and assembled based on the needs and events (see sketch in Figure 45).

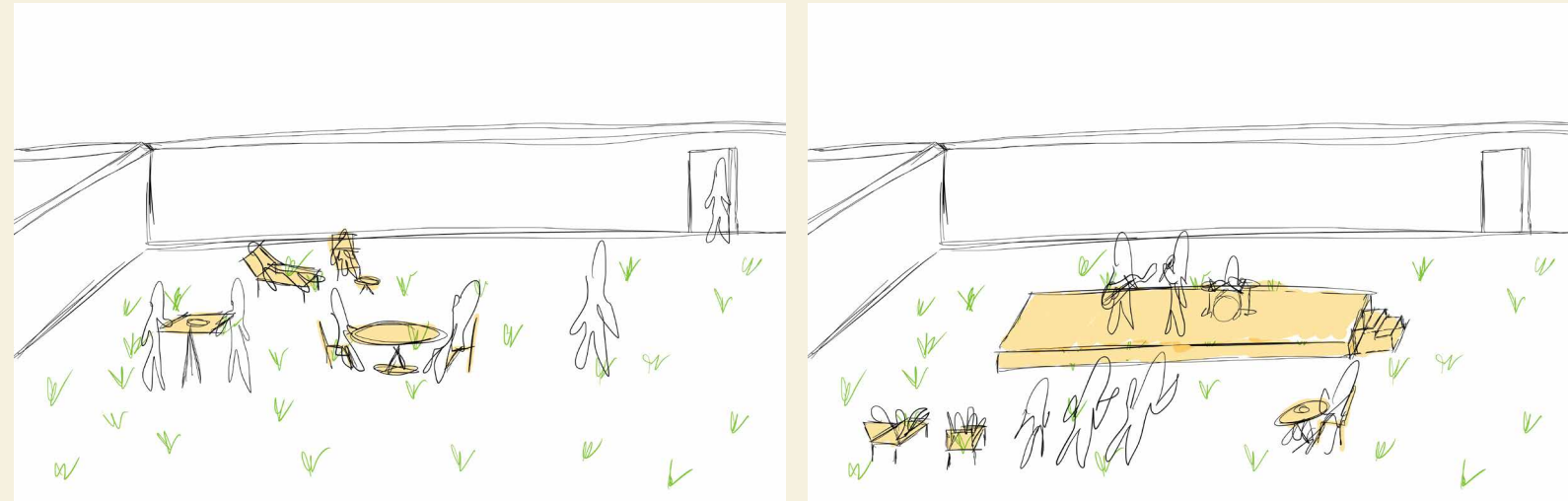


Figure 45 - Mountable outdoor floor.

The Curtain: moving vertical elements

Curtains are elements that we are used to seeing every day in our homes as a way to screen from the sun or to get some more privacy from the outside. Not so often, however, are curtains seen as elements to define a space. The Dutch designer Petra Blaisse spent her whole career with a special focus on the power of curtains, their functions as semi-permeable interior walls, and how they can be an art and design element of main importance in a space and in its landscape (Pagliacolo, 2017). Curtains' technical function is to "exclude natural light and absorb sound to and from its surrounding, acoustically isolating the space from the rest, and creating a more intimate and smaller alternative" to the larger architectural spaces where the curtain is placed, creating a new flexible and adaptable space within a few seconds (Blaisse, n.d.).

Moreover, in the projects of Blaisse, harmony comes together with the natural shapes of curtains, a wave that suggests softness against the harshness of concrete walls.

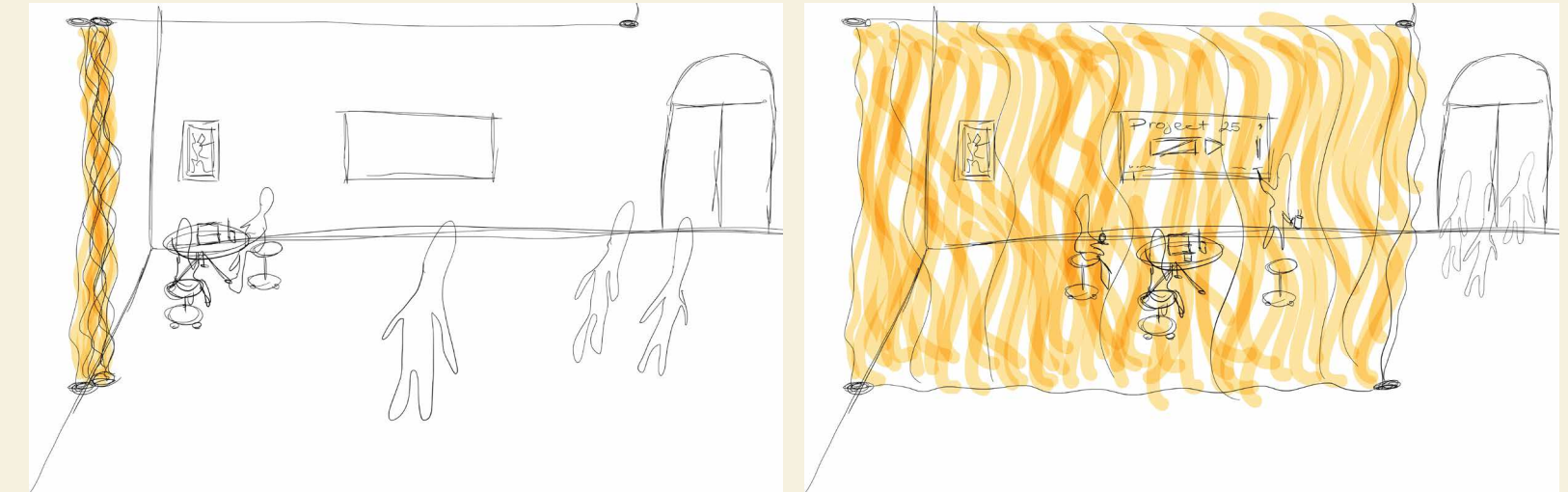


Figure 46 - Curtain creating a new space within a bigger one.

Permeability & Accessibility Inside-Outside

Even though this isn't a specific design element, it fits into this section for its relevance and possibility to translate this concept into objects and shapes in the built environment. As the whole research suggests, blending is not complete if it doesn't consider social sustainability. Blended spaces are alive only when people are welcome and can live those places, creating an exchange of emotions and knowledge. As Francesco Messori (personal communication, April 10, 2025) underlined in his interview, most of the interventions to transform a space into a blended venue are social rather than architectural. It is paramount to have inviting elements that suggest a free flow of people, so that everyone can feel a sense of place and ownership over a public element. To help this flow, it is important to consider the surroundings of the project, creating green and art corridors that facilitate the permeability from the outside to the inside of this environment, and vice versa. Moreover, where possible, it is suggested to avoid any physical barriers and promote a city's ground floor that is public, permeable, and accessible (concept sketch in Figure 47).

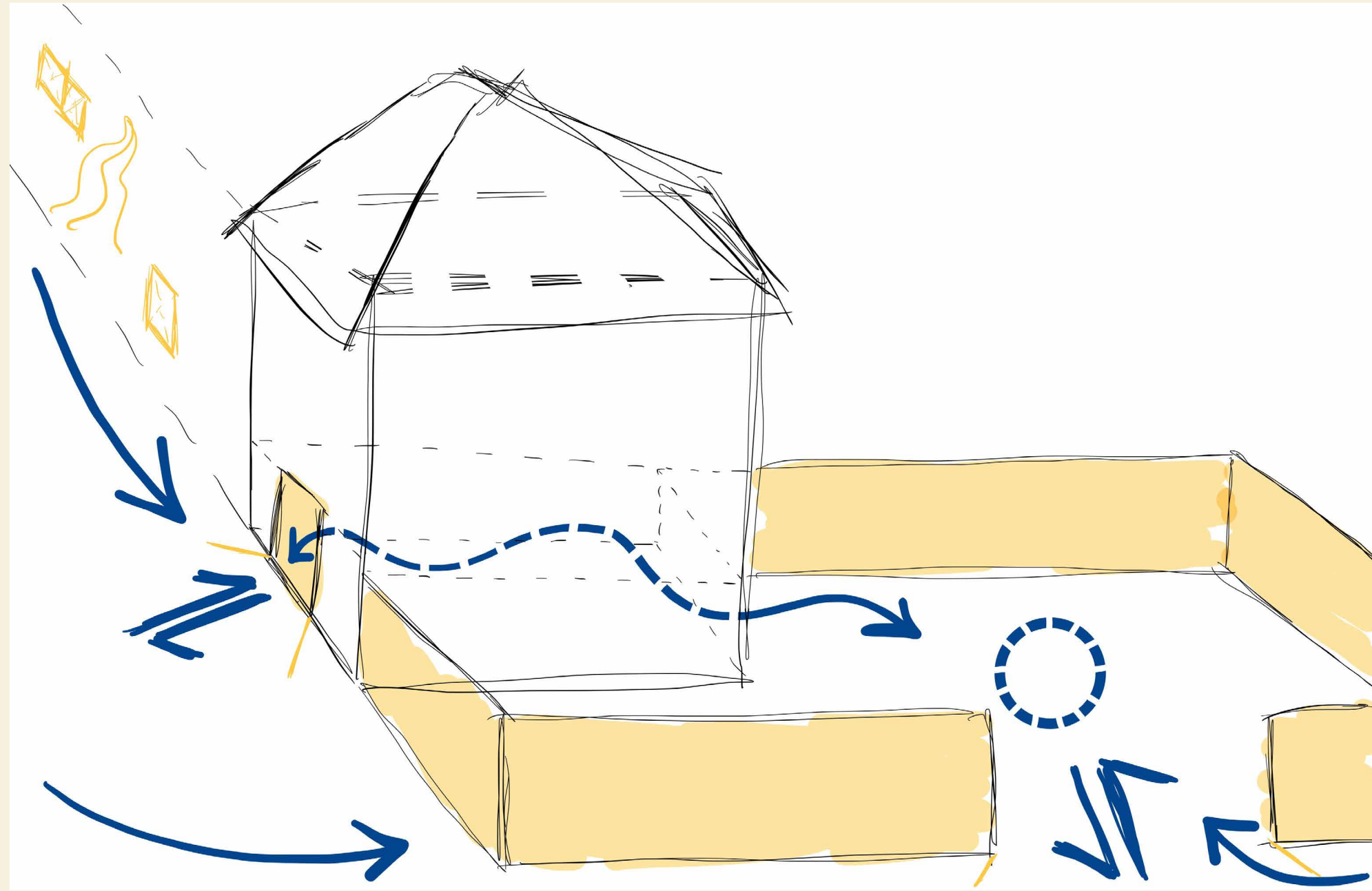


Figure 47 - Permeability & Accessibility at the Ground Floor.

The Flow and Vision of People and Functions

Given the overview of the design elements used to implement blended-use in Palazzo Raspanti, it is possible to visualize how the ground floor of Palazzo Raspanti and its garden would look in different moments of the week. This distinction is necessary for the purpose of the research, to highlight how time and space are interrelated, giving a visual interpretation of what blended-use can be in existing buildings.

The following visualizations are distinguished between **weekday** and **weekend**, and differentiating between **morning** (08:00), **evening** (23:00), and **night** (03:00). The afternoon hasn't been considered because it could have similar settings compared with the morning, and due to time constraints with the research, it won't be included in the visualizations. Moreover, the nighttime will be considered only during weekdays, as it could look similar to the weekend. The time for the different moments of the day is indicative and considers a couple of hours around that moment.

After the interview with Francesco Messori (personal communication, April 10, 2025), a moment to co-design followed, and the architect envisioned in Palazzo Raspanti a place to implement spaces for artists in residence, a foundation, and a cafe. Having the possibility of hosting is very important, as on the last floors of Palazzo Raspanti,

there is already a space for hospitality. Messori suggested bringing in the municipality for events and exhibitions, workshops for kids, organized dinners, and more, all depending on the permits that are possible to get. But most importantly, the main focus should always be on creating a community around Palazzo Raspanti that feels a sense of place in the environment and takes care of it. Doing blended projects requires efforts for 80% on a cultural and social level, and 20% is technical. Therefore, on a technical level, the design elements previously introduced help the success of that 20% within the blended project (F. Messori, personal communication, April 10, 2025).

To start, Figure 48 highlights the vision for Palazzo Raspanti on a **weekday at 8 am**. The design elements, such as folding and movable tables, curtains, and the amphitheater, are placed on the ground floor. The flow of people is highlighted by the blue arrows, and food-related functions and elements are depicted in red. Notice that this could be a Monday morning due to the small size of the market. This could be the spot for products of the bistro or the atelier, or for occasional stands that would like to show their products in this environment.

The amphitheater is placed on the corner to function as seating spots for the bistro, with circular tables placed on top of the steps. Placed in that area of the main hall, doesn't disrupt the flow and visibility at the ground level, increasing the density to place people on multiple height levels.

NOTE: All the visuals aim to give an impression of what the future of Palazzo Raspanti could look like; therefore, they are not architecturally precise (this is not an architectural thesis). Therefore, some elements can be repeated in other areas, or other areas could fit more or fewer people. The only purpose of these visualizations is to give an impression of the design concept.

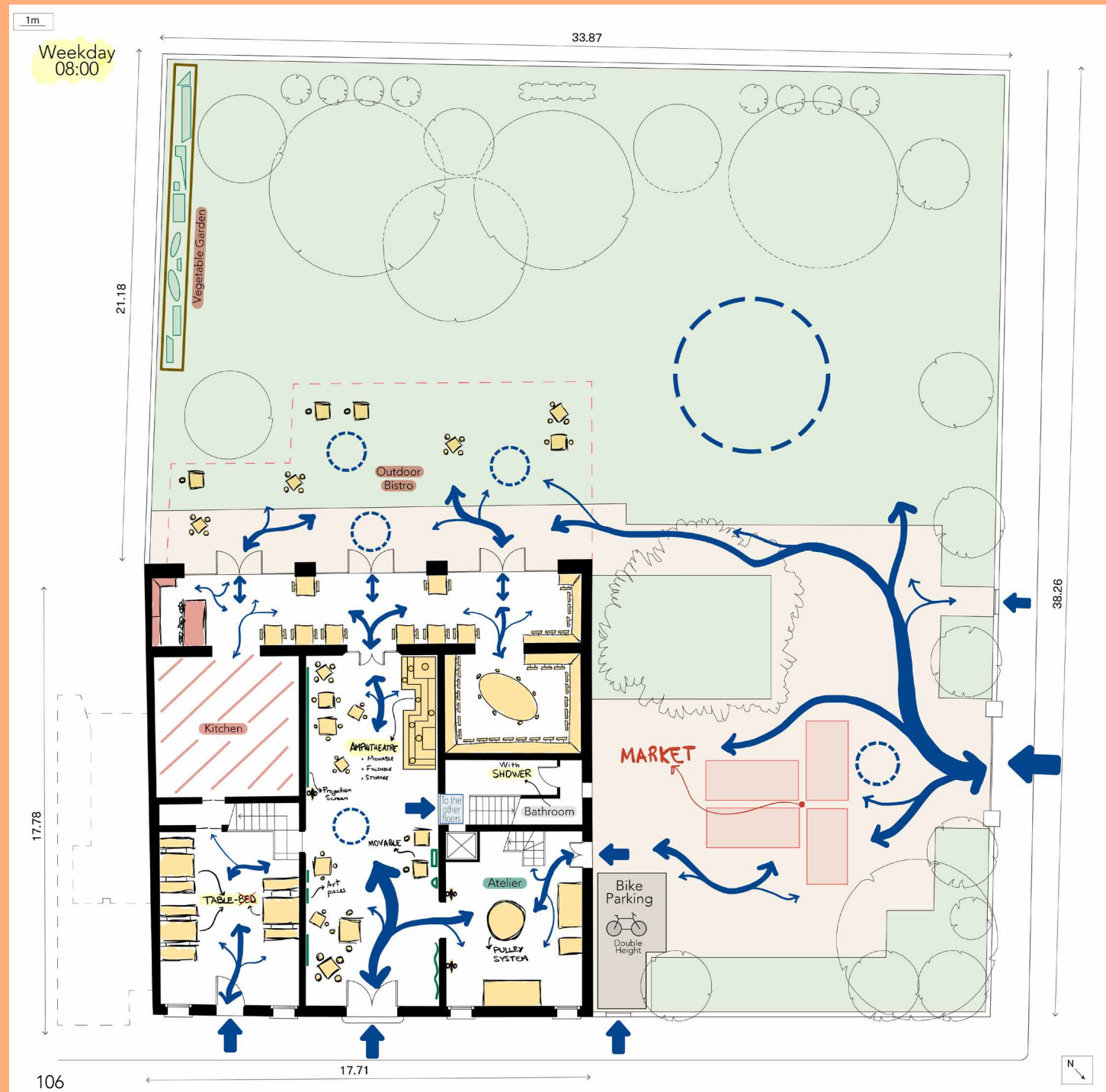


Figure 48 - Palazzo Raspanti on a Weekday at 8 am.

It is important to notice that on the ground floor, both a kitchen and a bathroom with a shower are available. As suggested by Thomas van Leeuwen (personal communication, March 25, 2025), when in a space there are both a kitchen and a shower, many interpretations of that space are possible.

An example of how this moment of the day inside the main hall could look is envisioned in Figure 49, featuring a collage depicting the amphitheater at the corner. The curtain is closed on one side to create an open space in the hall, where people are enjoying breakfast. An atelier is located in the room on the right, and an artistic sound-absorbent panel is placed on the ceiling.



Figure 49 - Entrance hall of Palazzo Raspanti, weekday at 8 am, future vision collage.

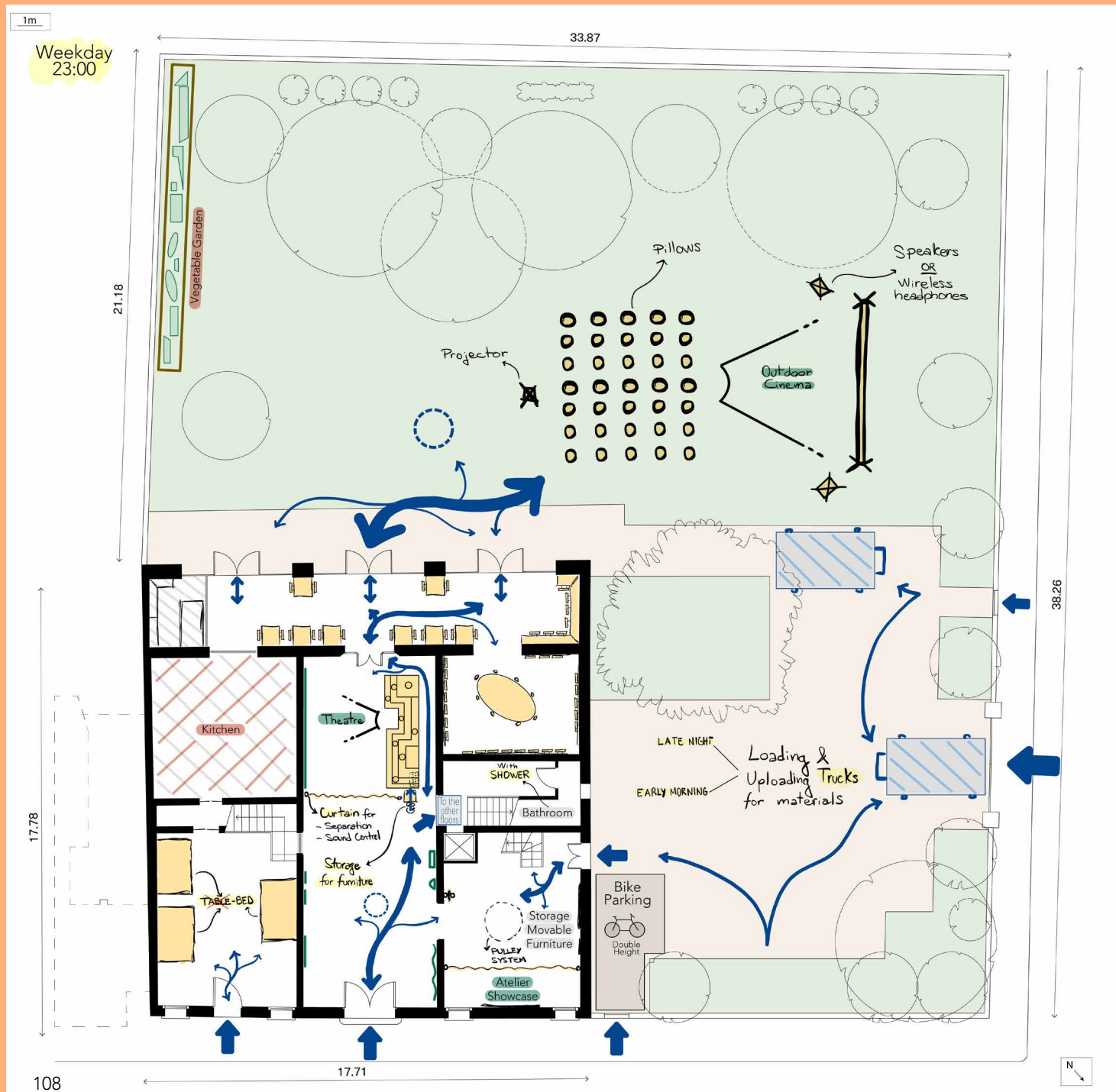


Figure 50 - Palazzo Raspanti on a Weekday at 11 pm.

With the day moving toward the **evening** on a quiet **Monday** (Figure 50), the functions at the ground floor change, the bistro closes, and the hall can host a small inside theater, moving the amphitheater a bit toward the opposite wall where a projection screen can display movies. The view isn't interrupted by the tables from the morning, which have been stored inside the amphitheater. The curtain is open, creating an enclosed space within the hall to isolate the cinema area visually and acoustically. The room on the bottom left has tables that turn into beds; therefore, this room could be used for renting as a hostel, hosting travelers who need to quickly stop for the night. The tables in the atelier have been folded, and the space can be used as storage. A curtain separates the inside from the window, creating a showcase for the products of the atelier.

The garden is still accessible, and the little square inside can be used for trucks to move goods. The green space can host an outdoor cinema in the warm season. An idea of how the garden could look on a weekday evening is shown in Figure 51. On another setting, the garden could also host a small jam session or a piano concert, placing a wooden stage in the garden using the design concept of flexible flooring. An idea of how this could look is visualized in the collage in Figure 52.



Figure 51 - Garden Palazzo Raspanti, weekday at 11 pm, future vision collage – Perspective 1.



Figure 52 - Garden Palazzo Raspanti, weekday at 11 pm, future vision collage – Perspective 2.

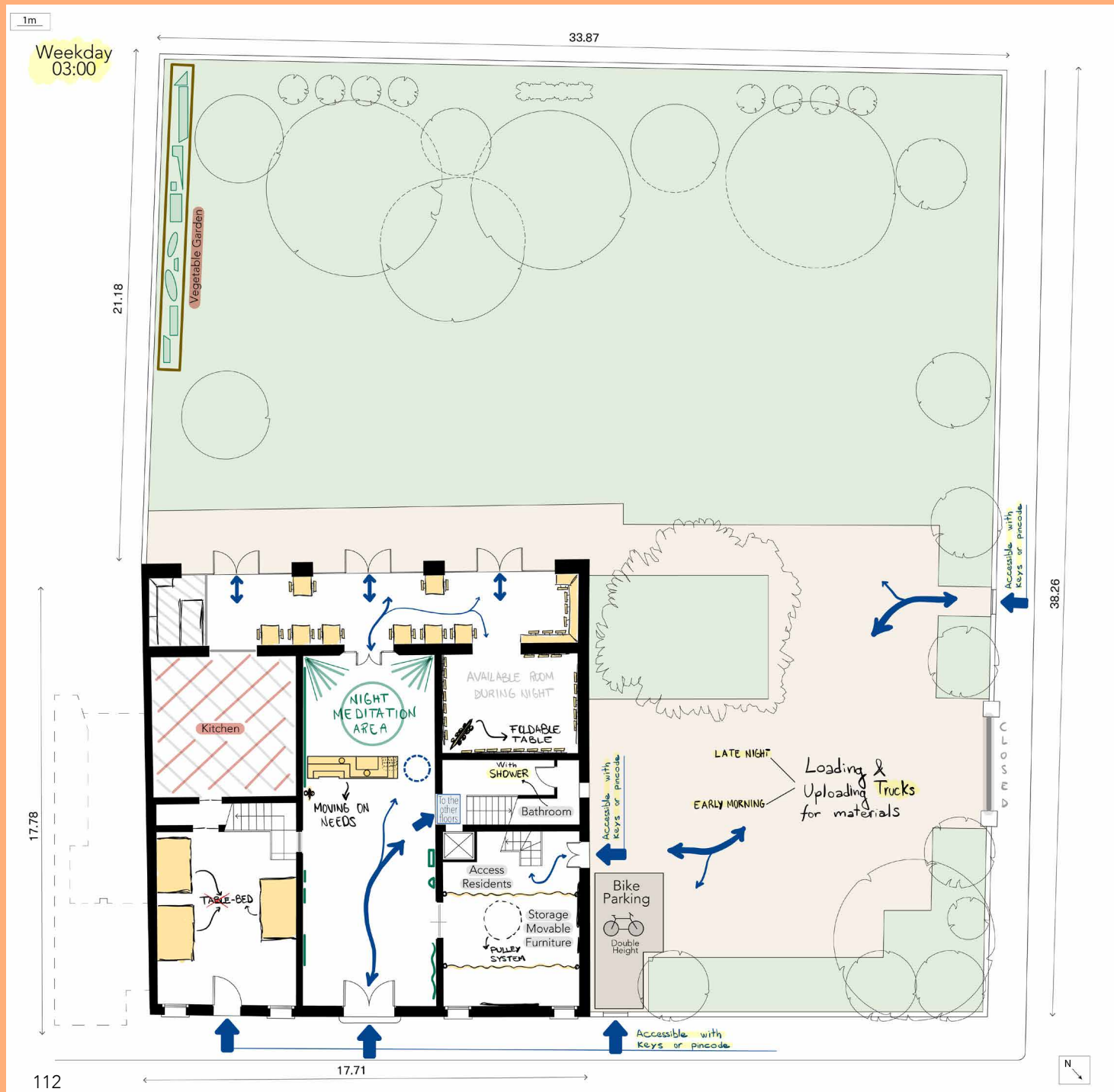


Figure 53 - Palazzo Raspanti on a Weekday at 3 am.

Shifting toward the **night** on a **weekday**, but also similarly on a **weekend**, the ground floor becomes quieter, but still alive. In Figure 53 it is shown how the room on the bottom left is still used for sleeping, and the one in the bottom right as storage, while the hall transforms into a meditation space, using the speakers at the corners of the ceiling to create a space for those that could struggle with sleeping or would like to unwind at night. To give a different setting to the area, the amphitheater is placed horizontally and slightly folded, to allow people to easily move aside from it. The kitchen is closed for safety reasons, and the room at the top right is still accessible to anyone who needs to work till late. The garden will take a break during the night, letting the green and the soil breathe. The storage is locked, and one more curtain separates it from the residential entrance, from the door facing the garden.

It is interesting to study the **differences between weekdays and weekends**, as different customers and ways of living apply. On the weekend, it is possible to have more leisure functions, there is more movement, and the possi-

bilities to implement new social environments are higher. In the neighborhood, there is a lack of social leisure environments. The south-eastern part of the city center isn't a popular area; it is more residential. This is an opportunity to implement more lived environment also during the night, to give a new bright face to this part of Treviso.

In Figure 54, an example of what a **Saturday morning** could look like is represented. The flow of people is bigger, and the market is expanded around the inside square and toward the garden. The bistro is fully active both outside and inside, and the amphitheater is placed in a different corner to give another setting and perspective to the hall. The room on the bottom right can change function and become a place for workshops and small events, which could be connected with the work of the atelier, or not. Here, kids could learn to paint canvas, or adults could take a history class. Example of the atmosphere of the outside garden is given in Figures 55 and 56, showing the food stands on the gravel and on the grass, and the bistro on the other side of the garden, with people socializing, but also gardening or just resting under a tree.

flexible

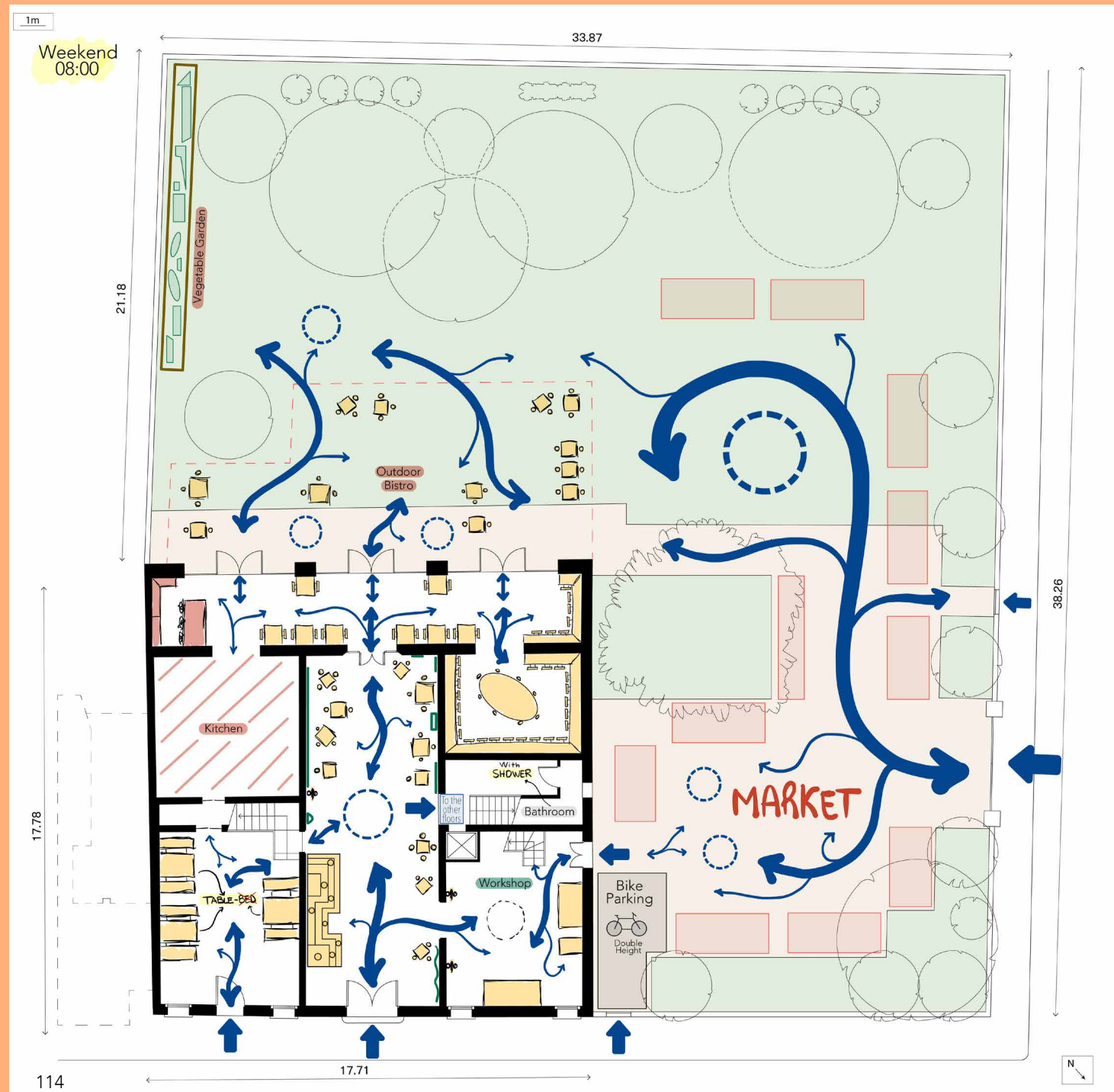


Figure 54 - Palazzo Raspanti on a weekend at 8 am.



Figure 55 - Garden Palazzo Raspanti, weekend at 8 am, future vision collage - Perspective I.



Figure 56 - Garden Palazzo Raspanti, weekend at 8 am, future vision collage - Perspective 2

As the **evening** comes, **Fridays** and **Saturdays** become the moment for experiencing art and social life. Figure 57 shows the functions and flow of people in a disco setting inside the hall and outside in the garden. The amphitheater plays a major role, being at the center of the main hall as a spot for the DJ set and for people standing on top of it to dance. The art pieces at human height on the wall are covered with a transparent case in order to protect them, but still making them visible, while the art elements, which in the morning were placed on folding wall-tables, are safely stored and the tables folded to not clutter. The whole ground floor is alive, and the rooms of the bistro are used for dancing or for social interaction. An idea of the main hall in a club setting is envisioned in the collage in Figure 58.

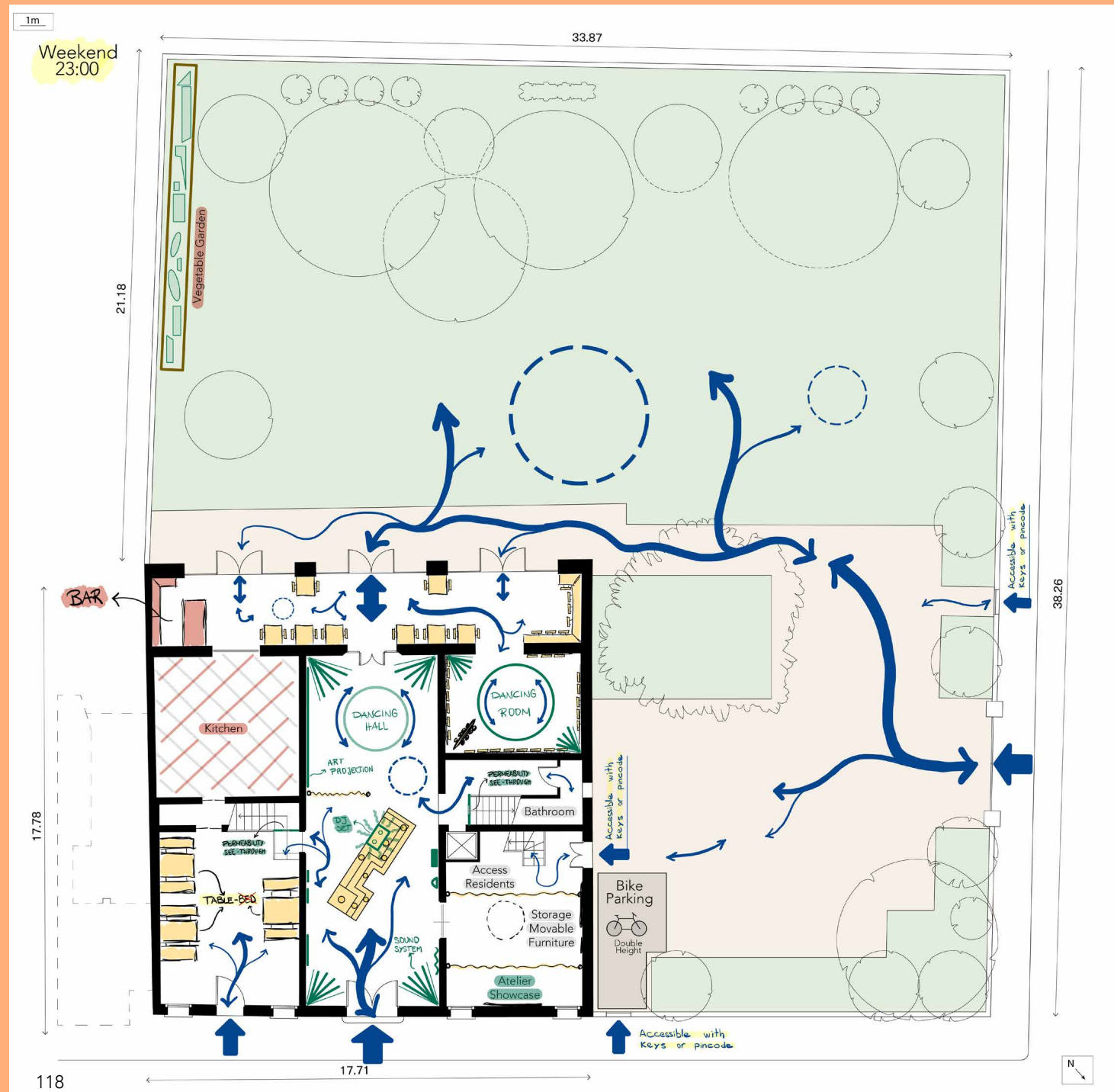


Figure 57 - Palazzo Raspanti on a weekend at 11 pm.



Figure 58 - Entrance hall of Palazzo Raspanti, weekend at 11 pm, future vision collage.

After presenting the results of this research, some considerations must be discussed. This thesis process lasted four months, starting from topic selection, moving through literature review and other analyses, and concluding with the design of a blended space implementation in Palazzo Raspanti. Due to the limited time, the significant gap in existing literature, and the complexity of both the topic and the historic building studied, several research limitations must be highlighted. Given these limitations, the results will be summarized and translated into the implications of this research. A broad reflection on the topic and the research process will help understand the author's experience in writing this thesis. Finally, some ethical dilemmas will be mentioned, along with future research directions to guide and suggest where to focus next steps in implementing blended-use in urban centers.

6

DISCUSSION

Research Limitations

This research focused on the design elements and the visualization of what the space could look like when implemented, but it didn't conduct research in the neighborhood to understand the **needs of the community** surrounding Palazzo Raspanti. This thesis could be used to start a conversation with the stakeholders involved in this project, explaining what implementing a blended venue means, highlighting the importance of its social sustainability characteristics.

Francesco Messori, in an interview with Morris (2023), explained that "once you break the physical presence between people, you need to reconnect them. This is one of the biggest challenges now that companies are considering; how you can retain the cohesion and the interaction between the community".

It is paramount to introduce the design of areas at the social level, too. Having places that physically blend perfectly is useless if the users aren't blended too in a merged community. This research focused mainly on the 20% of the project, the design aspects, and how to blend functions. The bigger part of the effort should focus on the social aspect, conducting research in-site and understanding the needs of the community and how to create a sense of place before creating a blended venue.

In addition, this research has been conducted by a student without a career in architecture; thus, the results might be revisited by someone aware of the **architectural scene in Treviso**, knowing master plans and regulations. This thesis aims to be a suggestion on how to look at our historic buildings with a different lens, sparking the beginning of a conversation on such an innovative topic in a medium-sized Italian city like Treviso.

Implications of Research

With this research, the possibilities of crafting a space for social cohesion and vitality in the city of Treviso are suggested in a simple way. From an academic perspective, the new conceptual framework, a result of the analysis at the beginning of the thesis, can help understanding in the short term, at the building scale, the different configurations a space can adopt. This overarching perspective can help design studios and urban planners to **communicate** on the same level and could suggest a new way of approaching **regulations** based on the typology of use.

With this research, the author wants to highlight the importance of studying blended-use both at a practical and theoretical level, remembering that the social aspect should lead the research of the topic.

With the suggested design of the ground floor, this could be the starting point to look for architecture firms and investors who believe in the project, and it could be a means to approach the municipality to find support at the institutional level. Making Palazzo Raspanti a synergy hub would positively affect the local economy and could create a state-of-the-art environment in a medium-sized city, helping bigger cities in the surrounding area to spread tourism.

Reflection

During the design phase, some reflections have been done. Even if blended-use is an innovative solution to space efficiency and social bonding, this doesn't mean that it comes without its challenges and cons. If a building becomes a synergy hub, it could be possible to do almost





everything there, sleeping, working, eating, and many other things, based on the design (hair salon, bike repairing, etc.). This could lead to creating buildings where an individual could stay inside without needing to go outside in the city. It is important to consider this aspect and keep the **exchange of people in a short term**, to enhance the interactions. Having everything in one place doesn't mean that people are supposed to stay in one place without moving. Blended-use wants to be a solution to space efficiency and social bonding at a district level.

Ethical Dilemmas

When approaching the research from an ethical perspective, dilemmas could arise regarding **gentrification** (Glass, 1964) and **socioeconomic exclusion** of local and diverse communities if the renovation is primarily intended for wealthy or touristic consumers (García-Hernández et al., 2017; Marcuse, 2015).

Moreover, as the specific case application is about a medieval building under the protection of the superintendence, criticism could arise on the correct use of the building where **heritage conservation** faces modern adaptation (Yung & Chan, 2012). To reduce these dangers, it becomes imperative to make sure that local opinions and stakeholders are heard during the planning phase.

Future Research Directions

Having this thesis as a starting point, many directions are available for where to focus. Starting from the **ethical dilemmas** just mentioned, research should be done in loco to understand what the community surrounding Palazzo Raspanti and Treviso thinks about this project and what their thoughts are regarding creating a place that could increase the flow of people in the area.

With a more academic perspective, this research based some results on the outcomes of three expert interviews. It could be suggested to conduct specific research looking for **opinions of multiple people** dealing with space multifunctionality and social design. Results could be put together and studied with an analysis of the data collected.

In the case study analysis and later in the results, the theme of the **soundscape** has been mentioned several times. Its importance in relation to blended venues is evident. In the design solutions, speakers, curtains, and sound panels have been placed on the ceiling, to shape the soundscape of the indoor areas. New research could be conducted studying the sound interaction between multiple functions in the same space and understanding if there is a pattern or framework applicable to find design solutions that create a space where sound flows harmoniously without disturbing the functions happening.



A major future research direction specific to this case study is to approach the **whole environment concerning Palazzo Raspanti**, including the upper floors. Adding space to the blended venue multiplies the possibilities for interpretations and interactions. The bistro could expand upstairs, and the living spaces could merge vertically. Art could embrace the totality of the Palazzo, being itself the connection point between functions. In addition, **safety** and **security** measures should be considered, especially when many people flow inside and outside the building, where art is exposed and people are living.

Next to this, all the **economic feasibility** studies should be done, understanding if and how a synergy hub can be economically sustainable. Research could be specific to flexible furniture, understanding if the investment would be repaid in the future, increasing the use of the space throughout the whole day (for example, the table-beds are probably more expensive than a simple table, but they give possibilities for different income). This research direction could be approached to enhance the possibilities of finding investors to actualize the project.

Good to mention is also the role of **art** in the synergy hub as a way to communicate in the inside and in the outside environment, giving a sense of permeability to the environment. Further research could include co-design sessions with artists and social experts to understand how art could shape both the indoor and outdoor space.

With this research, the importance of blended-use in addressing space scarcity in urban areas has been highlighted and explained. Mixed-use is still a valid approach to design neighborhoods and create diverse environments, but at the building scale, perhaps we overdesign spaces, and there is no room for blended-use approaches. With the blended-use, it is possible to generate in the building sector social environments that let people flow and merge in a unique synergy.

The transition from a zoning plan at the beginning of the 1900s toward the blended-use nowadays shows how spaces change based on human needs, and this trend suggests that more will come, and probably also blended-use will evolve into new forms of designing our environments.

With this research, the conceptual framework gave a clear understanding of the correlation between the different types of uses and could be replicable in all the environments defined in the short term and within the building dimension. The methodology focused on the design approach helped the analysis of the spaces on a practical level and included opinions of literature and experts in shaping the way case studies were approached and analyzed. This methodology, together with the conceptual framework, can be applied to other historic buildings, and further research could try to apply the framework to different settings in other cultural environments. The case study analysis helped shape the future of Palazzo Raspanti and can be an example of how to take inspiration from real contexts to design solutions that are realistic and backed up by previous experience.

Given the concept of synergy hub, and with the example of DB55, Palazzo Raspanti has the characteristics to lead the urban innovation in Treviso, given its history, its location, and its unique features, such as the openness on each façade and the private garden. The research question sparked an analysis that led to a visualization of what a synergy hub could look like in a place that nowadays needs restoration and functions only on the residential level. Understanding the possibilities and advantages that the implementation of a synergy hub could bring on both a social and economic level, together with the environmental one, opens the path toward the study of blended-use also in medium urban settings. Once Palazzo Raspanti is studied in its totality, it could become a pillar for the city of Treviso, a place for social life, a landmark fostering sustainable urban development.



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Appendices

APPENDIX A - AI use

For this research, minimal AI tools have been used to support the work conducted. **ChatGPT** (<https://chatgpt.com/>) has been used only to learn to use the software Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop, as the author wasn't familiar with them.

To help with the grammar correction of the text, the desktop app of **Grammarly** (<https://www.grammarly.com/>) has been used only to fix minimal grammar or syntax mistakes.

All the collages have been produced by the author, using the **Adobe** package software, which includes AI tools to implement the workflow. These tools have been used minimally, for example, to remove the background of images or to remove objects inside a picture.

APPENDIX B - Q&A Interviews

Thomas van Leeuwen

25th March 2025 – 10:00

DB55 | Danzigerbocht 55, 1013 AM Amsterdam

- 1. Present myself, MSc MADE, and Thesis Project
- 2. What is Blended-Use?

Similar to dynamic use (space functions change during time), blurring (two functions at the same time), hybrid (two functions), multifunctional use (very broad)

Blended use, you have a space with a primary function and then you have secondary ones that can be integrated when the primary isn't there. It could be an equal matching without a primary one, but people need to know what things are and put them in a box, so it is easier for people to understand if you say that a space is an office but also something more.

- 3. How do you see Blended-Use being shaped in the different scales, namely neighborhood, public space, building, and room?

Smallest scale could be even at the furniture scale, like a table that could become a bed or more. So let's say 1 sqm.

Building scale

Also city scale, because the impact of blended-use in cities could be huge, it will for sure affect the infrastructure and transport system. This could be a completely new way of designing cities.

Could there be a switch on the identity of a neighborhood, that for example it is the business district, then the identity becomes the blended one.

- 4. Could you tell me your interpretation of Fourth Places and the similarities and differences with Blended-Use?

Fourth place looks like there should be everything, all together, while blended use doesn't require to blend everything possible. the fourth place means basically you can do everything. However with blended use it doesn't need to be everything. Blended-use is very location specific. It's very location specific, that you think about what things could you do in a space very much driven by its architectural boundaries, by its location, by the need and the neighbourhood. So it doesn't need to be everything. So give it a flexibility within boundaries.

"Hybrid buildings are referred to as spaces that allow different functions to overlap and to be shared by extending or entangling the boundaries of functions and private-public levels" (Pelsmakers et al., 2020).

- 5. What are the differences with Hybrid Buildings?

Hybrid is two functions, blended is more. Hybrid is a subgroup of blended. Hybrid is too much confined to two.

"There are three major things to overcome. One is owning the owner structure – legal ownership offices and other functionalities don't always match. The second is what zoning plan you're in. And the third is technical side of things. [...] The most important part is the psychological change."

6. Have you found practical solutions to these challenges (legal, zoning, technical)? Did you encounter new ones?

People are knowing DB55, so it's easier to change the perception of people.

Legal challenges, there are no new policies, you just have to say that there is a main function and then secondary and that's possible. So we have user agreements for the users of our space. Everybody basically takes responsibility for their own stuff. Things could be stolen or broken, but no issues so far, maybe when it will become bigger it will be a problem and rules should be found.

Technical there are a lot of studios working on blended furniture

7. Which functions best work together?

If you need to change the setting every time it's a hassle. The functions should be similar without needing to change many things. TRANSITION BETWEEN FUNCTIONS.

Type of events and functions that you want to match, for example a makerspace couldn't match an office because dust isn't good for computer. Also regarding sound, how people arrive to the place and exchange with the new users.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PRACTICALITIES

You could actually sleep in DB55 but it's not very nice, then if, to blend, you need to have lower quality, question whether it makes sense.

If you have a kitchen and a shower with toilet, you can multiply the possible functions in a space

8. What are the roles and benefits of local food systems in blended-use venues?

Food is a great way to make people know your space. It's a community driver. It's an identity builder.

PROBLEMA?: Il problema è che chi sviluppa questi grossi progetti di solito fino ad ora sono stati dei developers o delle imprese di costruzione che sono molto specializzati ad investire in un settore solo chi costruisce grandi palazzi di residenza lo fa da 10/20/30 anni e sa fare quello, sai esattamente qual'è il modello economico sai esattamente quant'è l'efficienza dell'edificio cosa deve costruire conoscere le regolamentazioni delle local authorities e sapere il suo lavoro quando tu dici al loro "ah, aspetta il tuo edificio" o "su questo pezzo di terra che tu compri devi costruire un po' di residenziale ma anche un po' di uffici e ma dare anche un hotel" loro sono fuori dalle loro acque e poi non sanno come funzioni finanziariamente un hotel non sanno come funziona il business e quindi non si trovano investitori per creare questo mix of uses e questo è il mix use, sono le challenges del mix use.

NON si trovano investitori che siano disposti a investire in soluzioni di cui non hanno esperienza. Investitori molto specializzati in specifiche funzioni, mixed-use è fuori dalle loro acque, modello economico che non conoscono.

3. Cos'è il Blended-Use?

Differenza principale tra mixed-use e blended-use è la scala.

Il blend use invece è quello che riguarda più usi in uno stesso spazio. investitori capiscono la forza dell'interazione delle attività.

Blended-use visto come blurred use a diverse scale.

Blended-use visto come mix di funzioni nello spazio, nello stesso momento. (in contrasto con definizione D/DOCK!!)

Nella teoria, cross-pollination di attività è sempre buona, porta movimento e serve a tutti. Regola principale del retail è di attrarre persone e farle muovere nello spazio. NELLA PRATICA, però, ogni funzione ha bisogno di spazi diversi e investor non vuole.

ALTRA CHALLENGE, funzioni che stanno vicine, sfida per trovare chi è ok con l'avere di fianco al proprio caffè uno che fa il parrucchiere etc. DIVERSI USERS da mixare.

Challenge non è psicologica da parte dell'user ma da parte dell'investitore e gestore. BARRIERA FINANZIARIA DEGLI INVESTITORI.

CHALLENGE mixing pubblico e privato. Sono in contrasto.

4. Come vedi interagire e sovrapporsi i temi del blended-use e adaptive reuse?

Adaptive reuse SOSTENIBILITÀ, edificio migliore è quello già costruito, a volte costa di più demolire che ricostruire. INOLTRE edificio sono nella memoria delle persone del luogo, da senso di appartenenza a chi vive là, homefeeling maggiore. Adaptive Reuse anche su edifici "brutti".

CHALLENGE su sostenibilità economica dell'adaptive reuse, qua interviene il blended-use per portare sostenibilità economica, ottimizzare spazi.

Altra sfida poiché stanze alte non sono adattabili a tutte le funzioni, ceiling height ha molta importanza.

5. Sto cercando di portare chiarezza tra vari termini utilizzati in letteratura. Quali definizioni dai a Mixed-Use, Hybrid Building, Fourth Place, e Blurring?

Mentre mixed-use è la soluzione dello zoning in larga scala, Hybrid building ha più funzioni ad esempio gli stadi, e dipende anche nel tempo, specifica dell'edificio. Blurring è un grande spazio in cui gli usi uniscono e vengono sfumati. Linea degli spazi che non è ben definita, ad esempio tra interni ed esterni. (differenza in scala) IMPORTANTE DEFINIRE LA SCALA E IL TEMPO.

6. Per fare una case study analysis, quali aspetti valuteresti al fine di analizzare il livello di blended-use dei diversi spazi in questione? (es. mq, funzioni, persone, orari di apertura, etc.)

Natura della suddivisione degli spazi, controllare il pavimento che può essere moquette, legno, etc. quando cambi pavimento cambi come ti comporti.

Guardare partiture, come spazi sono divisi.

Concept Stores sono negozi che offrono diversi servizi. Esempio libreria che vende caffè e mobili di design.

Guardare come hanno fatto a separare gli usi, a volte con i colori, séparé.

7. Quali sono le strategie chiave di design, che consentono di implementare con successo i principi del blended-use nella creazione di nuovi poli culturali multifunzionali nei quartieri urbani?

Bisogna considerare floor-to-ceiling high per capire fattibilità di determinate funzioni.

Importante considerare l’illuminazione degli spazi, molto importante ad esempio per galleria d’arte che ne vuole poca, o per residenziale che ne vuole tanta.

COME DIVIDERE GLI SPAZI

Ci sono un sacco di soluzioni, cucine che spariscono e diventano librerie, letti che diventano tavoli etc.

imperfetti, lasciare cose incomplete e lasciarle all’interpretazione di chi li vive. Posti sono fortemente legati alle emozioni delle persone e all’in-terazione esperienziale; blending è lasciare metà pagina bianca all’imperfezione e all’auto-organizzazione, ma problema è che la gente si abitua al brutto e non è educata al bello, tutto è monetarizzato, bisognerebbe sacrificare qualcosa per l’altruismo.

Blended è fluidità e serendipità, cose inaspettate che possono accadere. Bisogna lasciare luoghi aperti che nonostante l’inestetismo delle per-sone, possono essere belli.

Alla base ci sono FIDUCIA e RESPONSABILITA’, uno scambio tra chi condivide gli spazi.

3. Spazio e tempo: il mixed-use porta più funzioni nello stesso edificio ma con spazi diversi, il blended-use porta più funzioni nello stesso spazio in diversi momenti. Come si definisce quando si hanno più funzioni allo stesso tempo? (parrucchiere con caffè)

Intanto cambiare termini USARE e FUNZIONI, perché usare significa non appropriarsi delle cose emotivamente.

Chronos e Kairos, viviamo in società focalizzata e progettata su chronos e non su kairos.

Ibrido è una cosa rigida, due funzioni che si alternano.

Dando dei nomi alle cose, gli dai un’identità e cambi anche come sono visti.

Synergy Hub: cercare etimologia, sinergia e hub è il centro della ruota dei raggi.

Non c’è una parola che definisce questi spazi come DB55.

Mostra il Palazzo e il contesto

4. Quali funzioni vedi mescolate in uno spazio come questo?

Una fondazione, artist in residence. Avere possibilità di ospitare, il caffè, unire il comune, spettacoli anche per bambini, spazio espositivo. Cen-acoli, dipende dai permessi. Serve creare una comunità che la gestisce

6. Quali potrebbero essere le soluzioni tecniche per unire più funzioni in uno spazio come questo?

USARE OGGETTI MOBILI

1. Presentare me stesso, MSc MADE e il progetto di tesi.

2. Che cos’è il Blended-Use?

“abbiamo creato una società in cui abbiamo diviso tutta la vita umana in settore”

Casa è ancora con stanze inutile dove si dorme e basta. Illuminismo ha portato dignità di vita per tutti ma ha settorializzato.

Nel passato c’era grande socialità e bisogni limitati, lo strato connettivo era molto forte e aiutava ad andare sopra le necessità.

Continuiamo a costruire luoghi che sono settorializzati attraverso dei sistemi chiusi. Abbiamo aumentato l’efficienza sacrificando la possibilità di interpretazione degli spazi.

Blending imperfetto, che lascia grande possibilità di interpretazione e porta vita sociale.

La periferia è un grande blending environment perché ha perso identità e non ne ha ancora raggiunta una. Gentrification non è ancora arrivata, sono posti in cui puoi sentirti padrone del posto.

Piani terreni dovrebbero essere tutti della comunità, della città.

Maggior parte degli interventi del blending sono culturali, l’architettura strutturale non può risolvere questi problemi. Bisogna ascoltare ed essere



BIENNOBIO-USE

