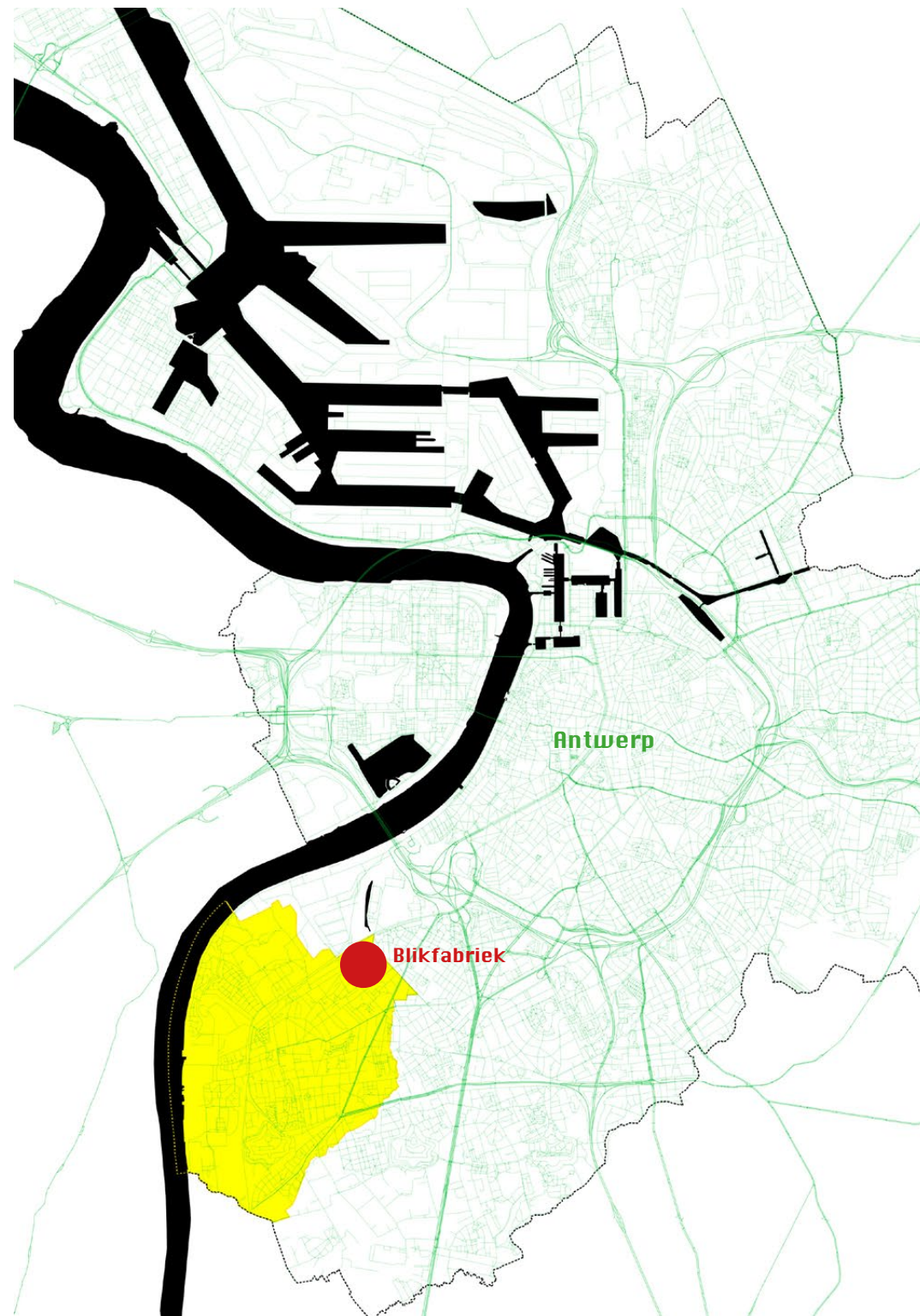
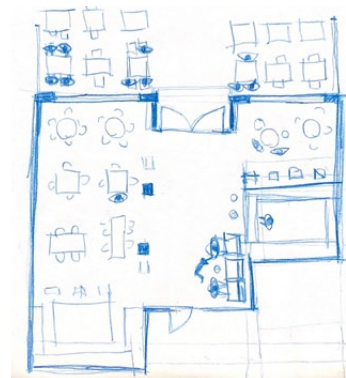
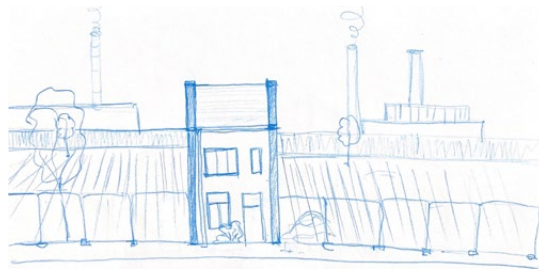
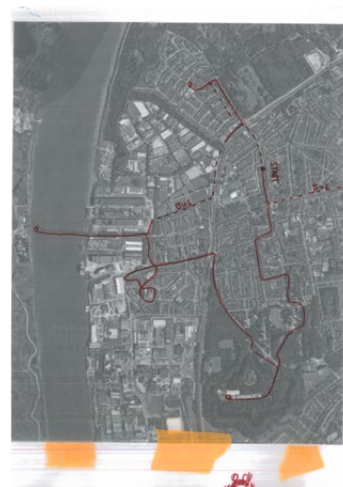
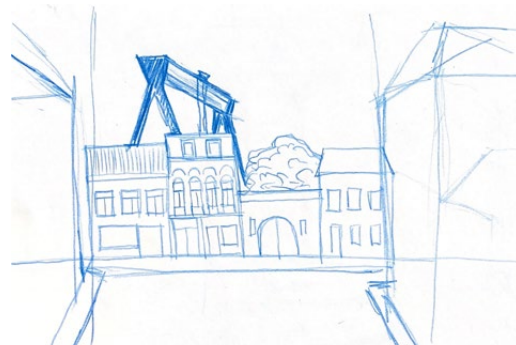


the search
learnings from the past





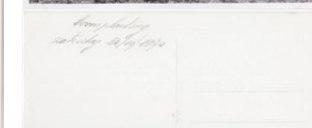
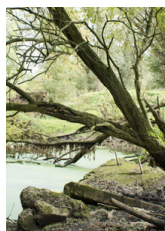
Find the river

„The Belgian singer and filmmaker Tom Barman says: “Antwerp is not a city because you can’t get lost in it”.

This studio aims to challenge that idea.Hoboken has lost its river. The halfway city, as it appears in the lower part of Antwerp, seems to develop without reference or connection to the available water sources.Getting lost is part of life and is necessary for discovering new things. Acknowledging the unknown is an integral part of acquiring knowledge.Your stories will unfold without a predetermined script or prescribed ending.

Travelogue

We take the invitation to be lost. Our first instinct is to find the actual river and with that we started a walking journey through Hoboken. We capture our journey and go on several different excursions.



#untitled 1

Our explorations through Hoboken reveals the duality of spaces that we find. The natural reserve of the Hobokense Polder, next to shiny silver oil pipes. A single chimney, a lonely house, a massive titan crane watching over the houses. How is this all coming together?

postcards from Hoboken throughout the centuries

While we start to dive into the online and physical archives that give us clues about Hobokens past we stumble upon various postcards, originating from different time periods. They depict proud moments to share stories from Hoboken all over the world.



Two sides of Hoboken's history

A fictional depiction of a fair in Hoboken by Bruegel (1559)

The flamish painter Pieter Bruegel shows us the vibrant and chaotic townlife of Hoboken in the 16th century.

#untitled 2

This story of this photo can represent the development of Hoboken. The Moretusburg property next to the Scheldte river grew from a little farm to a representative pleasure house in the 17th century, to become purchased by the thriving industry in the late 19th century and finally to be demolished to make space for growing land-demands of industrial activities. Today only the last chapter of that story is visibile in the urban fabric. The chimney as the last remnant of the past.



On how to tell a story

the play

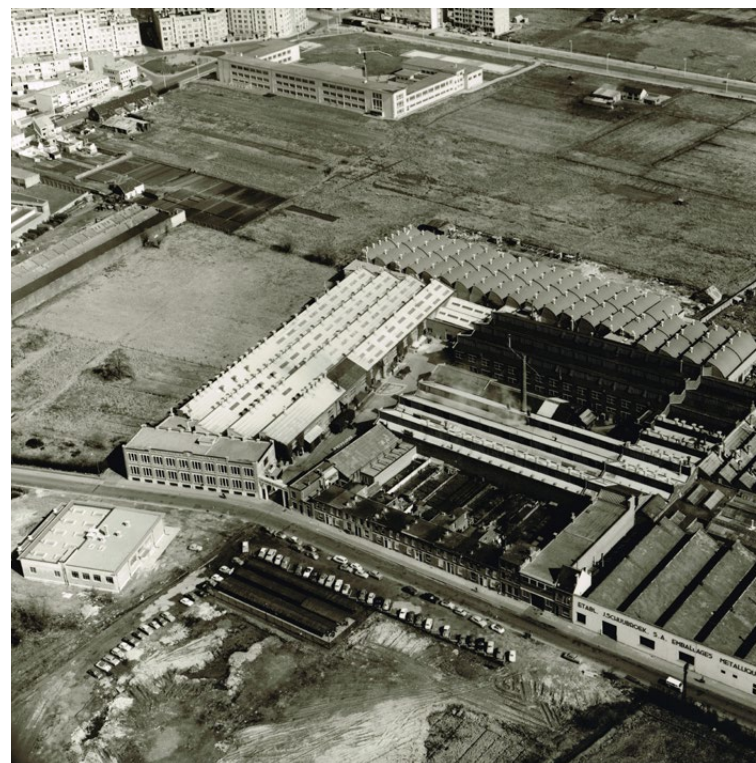


A lost culture

With the decline in industry, also resulted in the loss of Hobokens bar and restaurant culture. Many of them relied on the workers as regular customers. So with the closure of the factories, many of them followed which led to a missing supply in the area. In the peak of industrial activity, the Kapelstraat was a lively street with many bars. Today you can only look into empty store windows.



P1 exhibition, oct. 24



1962



blikfabriek, sep. 24



1980s

A play

The search river was the start of our journey. We understood the influences that shaped the city as tides, creating a tidal river, that brings in and takes out but always leaves behind immaterial and material remnants. Having to tell a story about movements we reinact the story ourselves.



The development of the site

























It is 1924. Schippers Podevyn opens the tin factory at the Lageweg. Rapidly growing a new office and production space is needed. Sturdy brick structures bear the load of hard labour. Production activities increase and the one story house is extended with an additional floor in the 1950s. The strong concrete skeleton allows for such an addition. In the style of the existing groundfloor the additional story blends in seemingly. No eye can tell a difference between these 30 years.

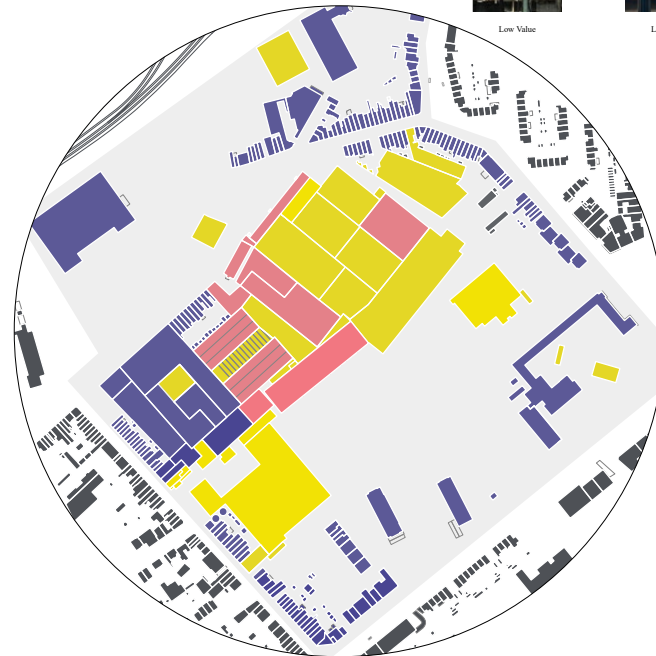
Fast forward to 1965: the rapidly growing economy asks for an expansion of the site. The free adjacent land offers space. The existing building follows the direction of the street. However the new addition makes a turn. The factory halls and office building as the new face towards the Lageweg are following parallel the direction of the halls. This results in a hinge that mediates the angles between the two buildings. The hinge functions as the new main entrance and staircase.

Crisis 2008:

the factory closes its doors. for good. the buildings are left behind. empty and obsolete. no function. New users: vandals. Destruction of the building begins.



 1 Steel 430m² Flat Roof Skylights High Value	 2 - 7 Steel 8900m² Flat Roof Skylights High Value	 8 Unknown 320m² Flat Roof Medium Value	 9 Steel 460m² Slanted Roof Skylights Very High Value
 10 Steel 2400m² Pitched Roof Skylights Very High Value	 11 Steel 2700m² Flat Roof Skylights Very High Value	 12 Steel 1200m² Slanted Roof Skylights Very High Value	 12 Concrete 800m² Slanted Roof Skylights Very High Value
 13 Steel 4900m² Flat Roof Skylights Very High Value	 14 Concrete 600m² Flat Roof Very High Value	 15 Concrete 500m² Flat Roof Skylights Very High Value	 16 Concrete 700m² Vaulted Roof Skylights Very High Value
 17 & 19 Steel 4200m² Slanted Roof Skylights Very High Value	 18 & 21 Steel 1300m² Flat Roof Medium Value	 20 Concrete 3700m² Vaulted Roof Skylights Very High Value	 22 Steel 800m² Flat Roof Medium Value
 23 Unknown 280m² Flat Roof Low Value	 24 Steel 1400m² Slanted Roof Skylights High Value	 25 Steel 1400m² Flat Roof High Value	 26 & 29 Concrete 2300m² Flat Roof Very High Value
 27 & 28 Steel 6000m² Flat Roof Skylights Low Value	 30 Steel 5200m² Flat Roof Skylights Low Value	 31 & 32 Steel 5200m² Flat Roof Skylights Low Value	 33 Concrete 4900m² Flat Roof Skylights High Value



Patches of Hoboken

Hoboken is a patchwork of spaces shaped by time with its intrigue found in layered diversity.

Rather than forcing coherence, our masterplan aims to reveal and nurture what already exists. By peeling back history's layers and honouring the DNA of Blikfabriek, we protect its artistic and cultural soul while opening new paths for connection and belonging. Pockets of public space invite spontaneous encounters, and new infrastructure ensures resilience and connection.

Mapping value?

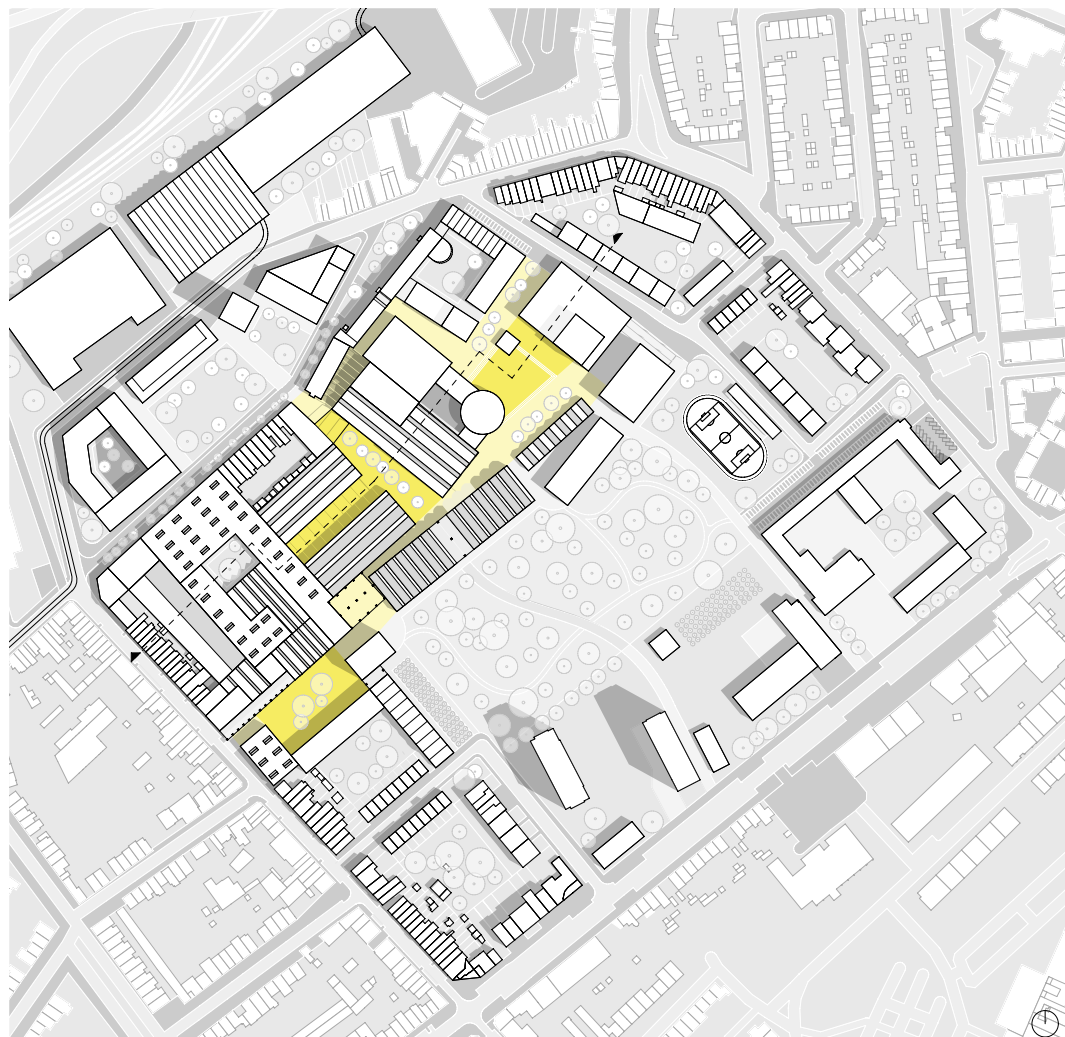
The analysis of the existing structures and creating a value catalogue to know what to keep and what to demolish.

Resulting in: blue what we preserve, pink what we transform, yellow what will be demolished. This can be seen in the before and after in the Model.

Improve the connection: The lageweg is moved to the north to reduce noise disruption for the residents. Onto the new lageweg, a tram depot is implemented to connect the site better to the city.

New functions implemented:

The programm is diverse, combining living, working, arts and education. A continuation, a new neighborhood anchored in the existing community.



A masterplan

When we are looking at the current situation. We see a mixed urban fabric of different patches that can be seen as distinct islands forming together the city. We acknowledge this diversity as a strength that should be maintained.

Issues that we see:

We're aware that a big issue in Hoboken is the lack of public spaces for teens and young adults, but also the lack of green areas in the area. Another issue that we want to tackle is the connection. At the moment, the site is very enclosed and disconnected. We want to open it up through attractive entry points towards the site.

First steps:

Peel back layers of time to analyze and understand existing conditions

Open up the site through a network of intimate public spaces

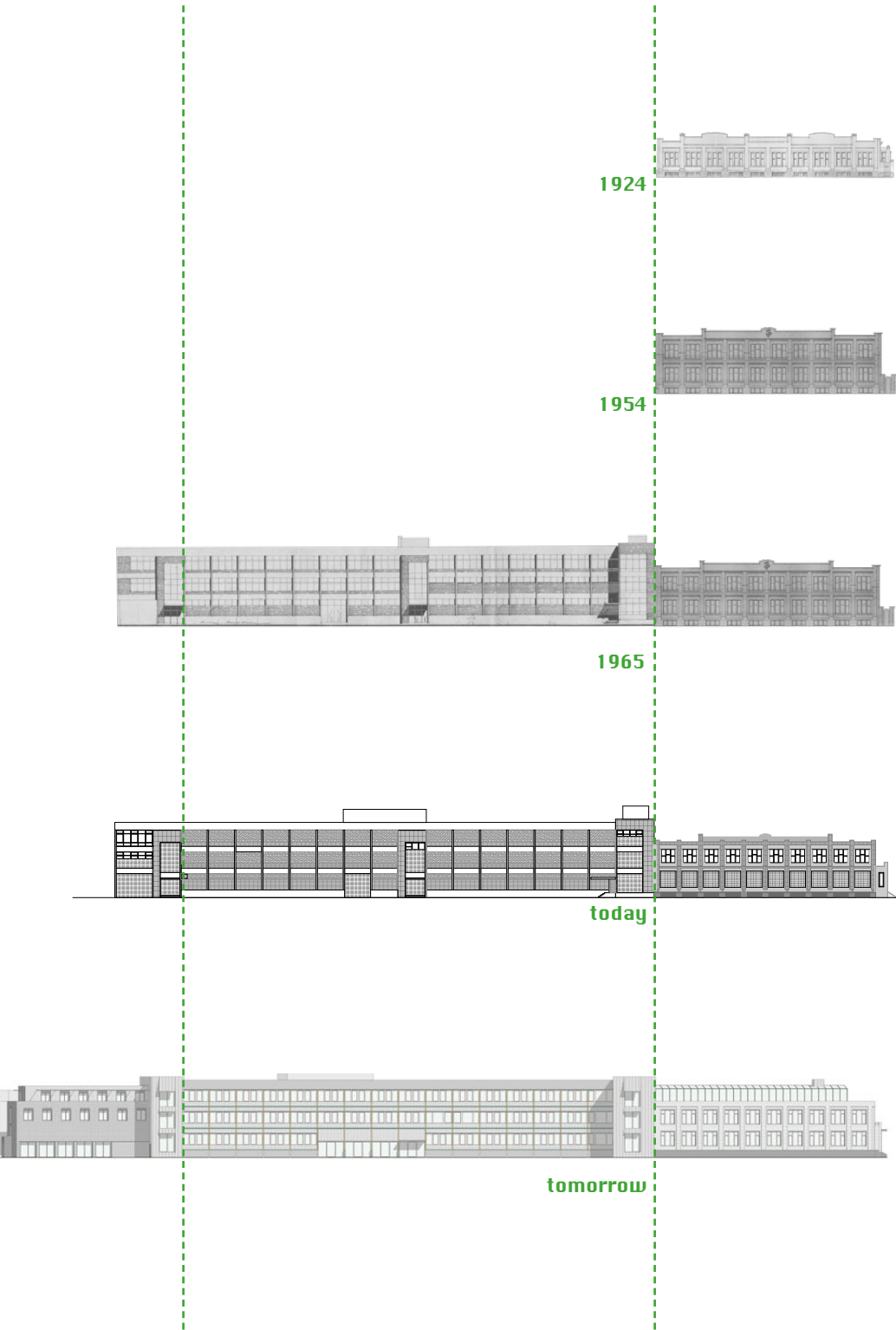
Blend existing elements with new developments to maintain vibrancy



1965: archival photo



2019: photo by GVA



1924

1954

1965

today

tomorrow

The building

For almost 17 years this building is in a state of vacancy and exposed to vandalism. Profit orientated investors wait for the best proposal and moment to development.

Antwerps city council calls this state a useless decay and even worse: **the endless cancer of Hoboken.**

People started dumping trash and rioting and destroying the buildings. „No beautiful view for one of the entrance gates of Hoboken.“

The factory has become obsolete. It's past function is over.

Cutting through time

The first floor of the old entrance building was erected with the start of industrial activities on site in 1924.

30 years later, it has been given a new floor. This was done in such a respectful way that today it's barely visible.

In 1965 the whole industry was booming, so that factory needed expansion. Therefore many new halls were erected together with the new office building to the Lageweg. This new building is directly connected to the old one with a new shared staircase volume.

Ever since there have been no architectural interventions to these buildings. Except the attempts to protect the buildings from further vandalism and destruction by fully closing all windows and blocking the entrances with new brick walls.

Looking into the possible future of the project,
I suggest continuing the movement of the building by giving it a new head.