

MODULATING MONUMENTS

AR4MET110 | FALL 2025
A MATTER OF SCALE - TALLINN
GRADUATION STUDIO

METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND IMAGINATION, TU DELFT

Yan Kiu Lam | 6189830

01
CONTEXT -
"OVERSIZED" TALLINN



PHOTOGRAPH -
LINNAHALL

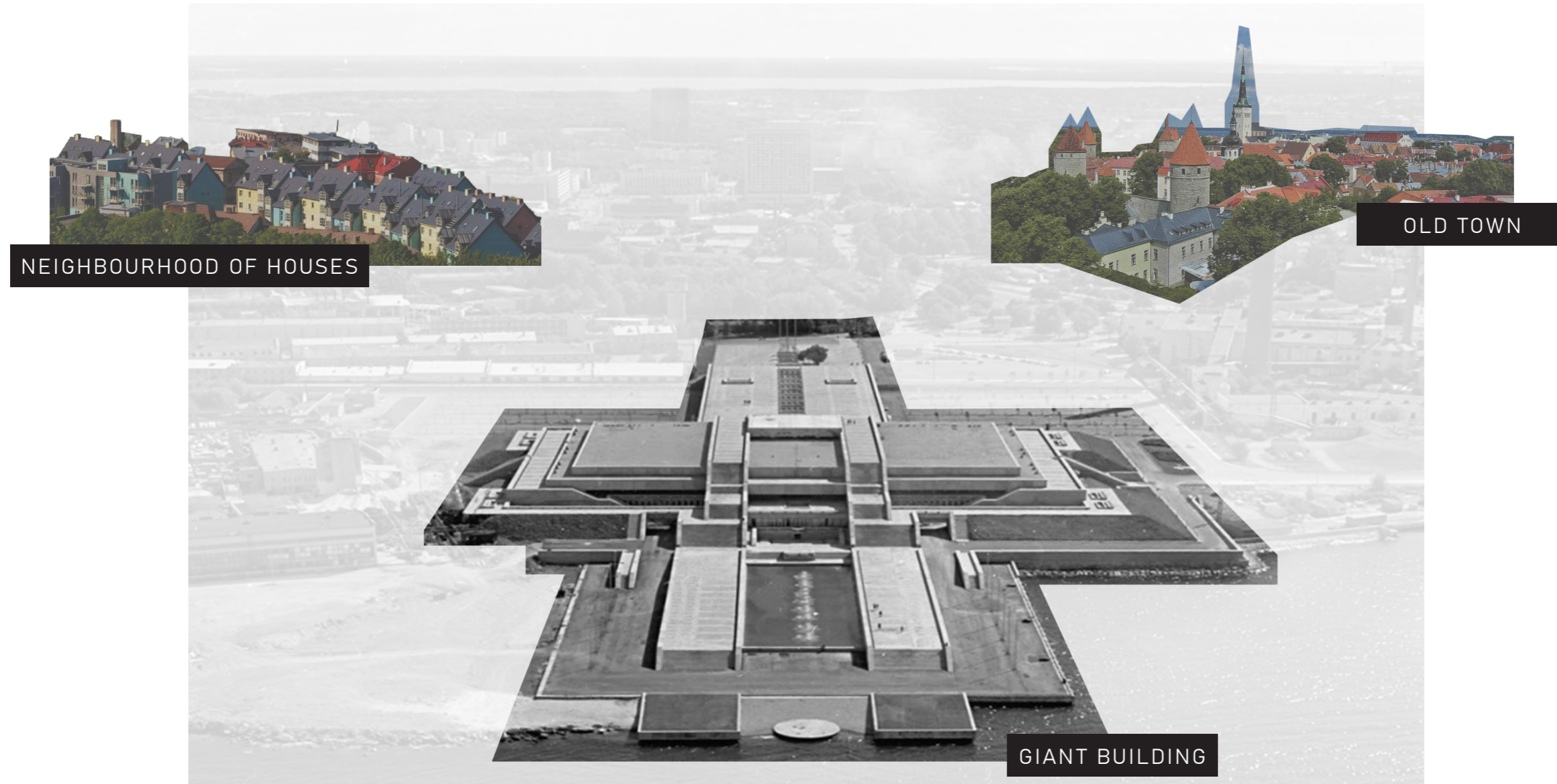
My initial fascination lies in a ultra-macro lens. Tallinn as a small city, is house to many ginormous buildings, buildings that feel out of place and out of scale.

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COLLAGE -
DIAGRAM MODIFIED FROM POSTER BY GUSTAV KLUTSIS (1928)

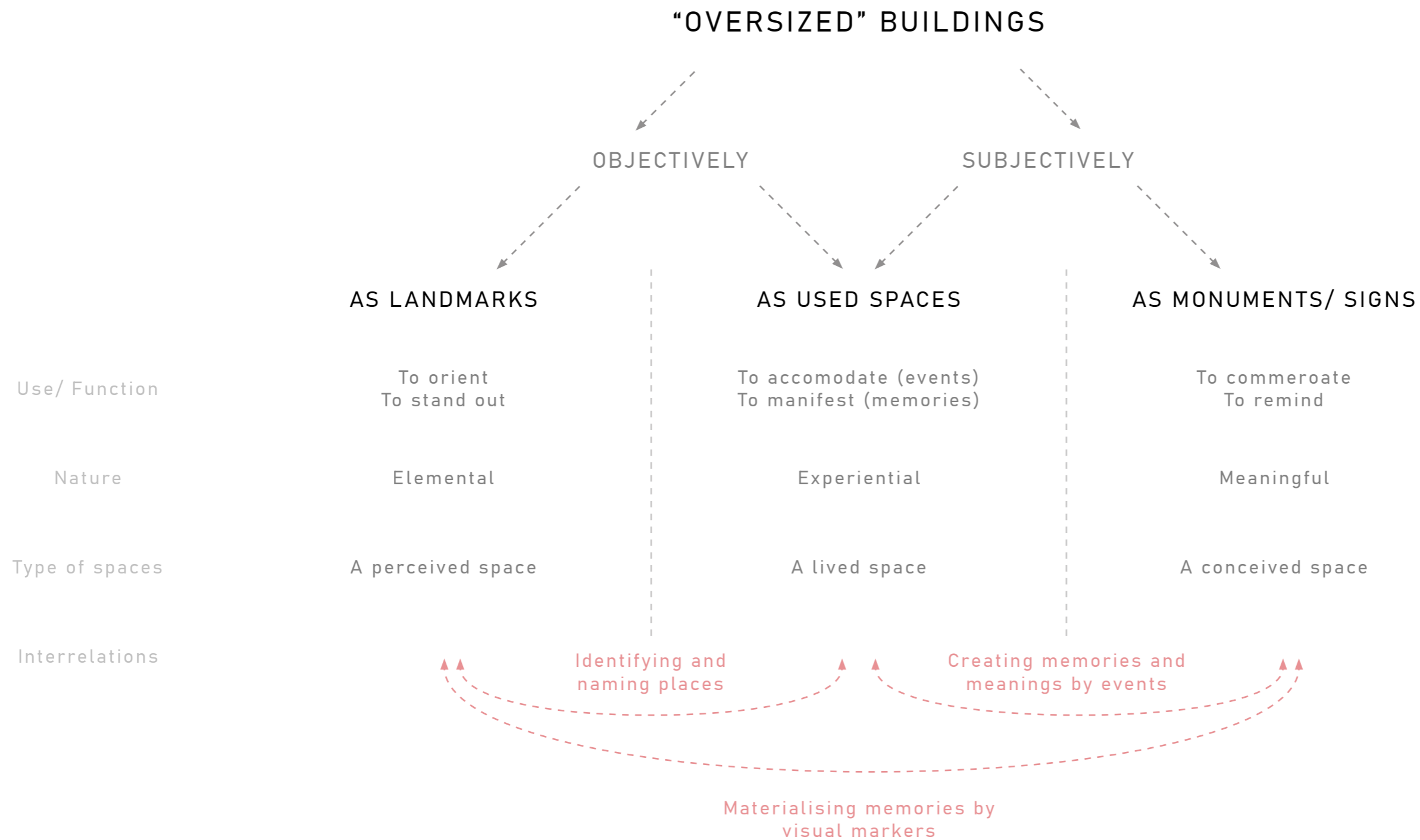
How do we **"dive"** into the scales of these **"oversized"** buildings?
And how do human **perceives** the size of these buildings of it **at different scales**?

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How do we **"dive"** into the scales of these **"oversized"** buildings?
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XL SCALE
DIAGRAM OF CONCEPTS

Given each of these overseized buildings are so different,
how do we **define and read** into the concept of **"oversized"**?

"OVERSIZED" BUILDINGS

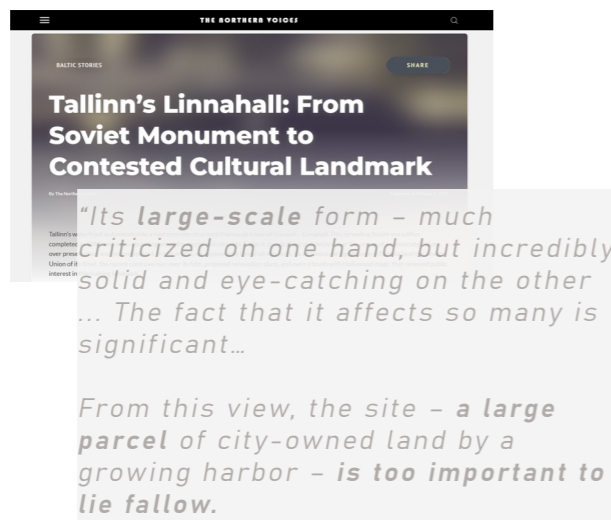
OBJECTIVELY

SUBJECTIVELY

AS LANDMARKS

Landmarks perceived as huge become contested objects within Tallinn

Problems



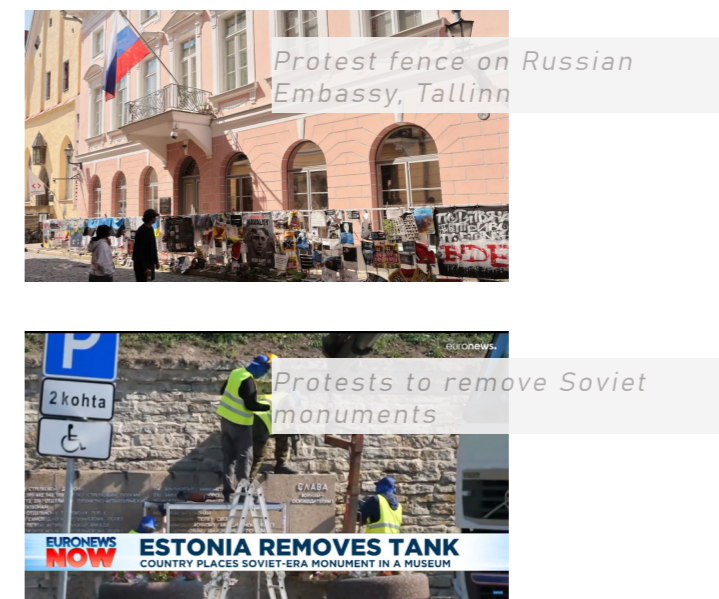
AS USED SPACES

Places become stigmatised, partly due to the previous establishments and social policies



AS MONUMENTS/ SIGNS

Conceived meanings of monuments not aligned with Estonian sentiments



XL SCALE
DIAGRAM OF PROBLEMATIZATION

What are the **problems** with these "oversized buildings"?
Why should we explore the **relationship and procession** between these three notions?

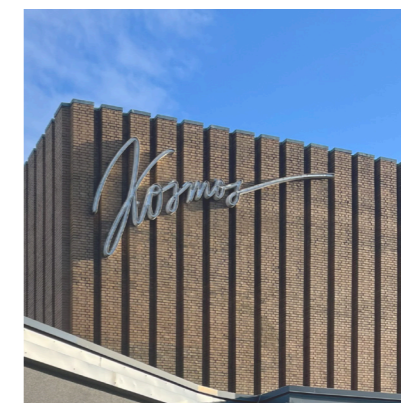
01
CONTEXT -
"OVERSIZED" TALLINN



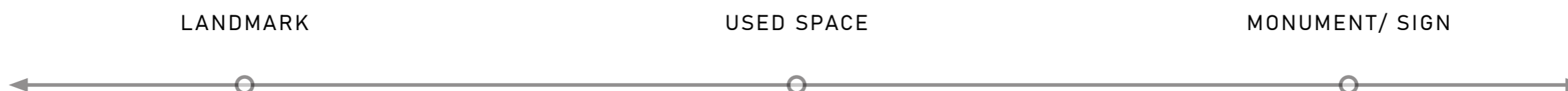
SCALE L -
FAHLE BUILDING FROM
AFAR



SCALE M -
INFORMAL USE OF
STAIRCASE IN NOMME



SCALE S -
"KOSMOS" SIGNAGE IN
SOVIET TIMES



LANDMARK

USED SPACE

MONUMENT/ SIGN

Scale

L

M

S

Subject(s) of
study

Visual uniqueness to its
surroundings

Events

Spatial motives and signs

Question

How are the buildings visually
identifiable?

Who are the users and what
are the encounters within?

What meanings do the building
create or exert?

Drawings

Impression from distance

Objects and traces of use

Signs and timestamps

Timescale of
experience

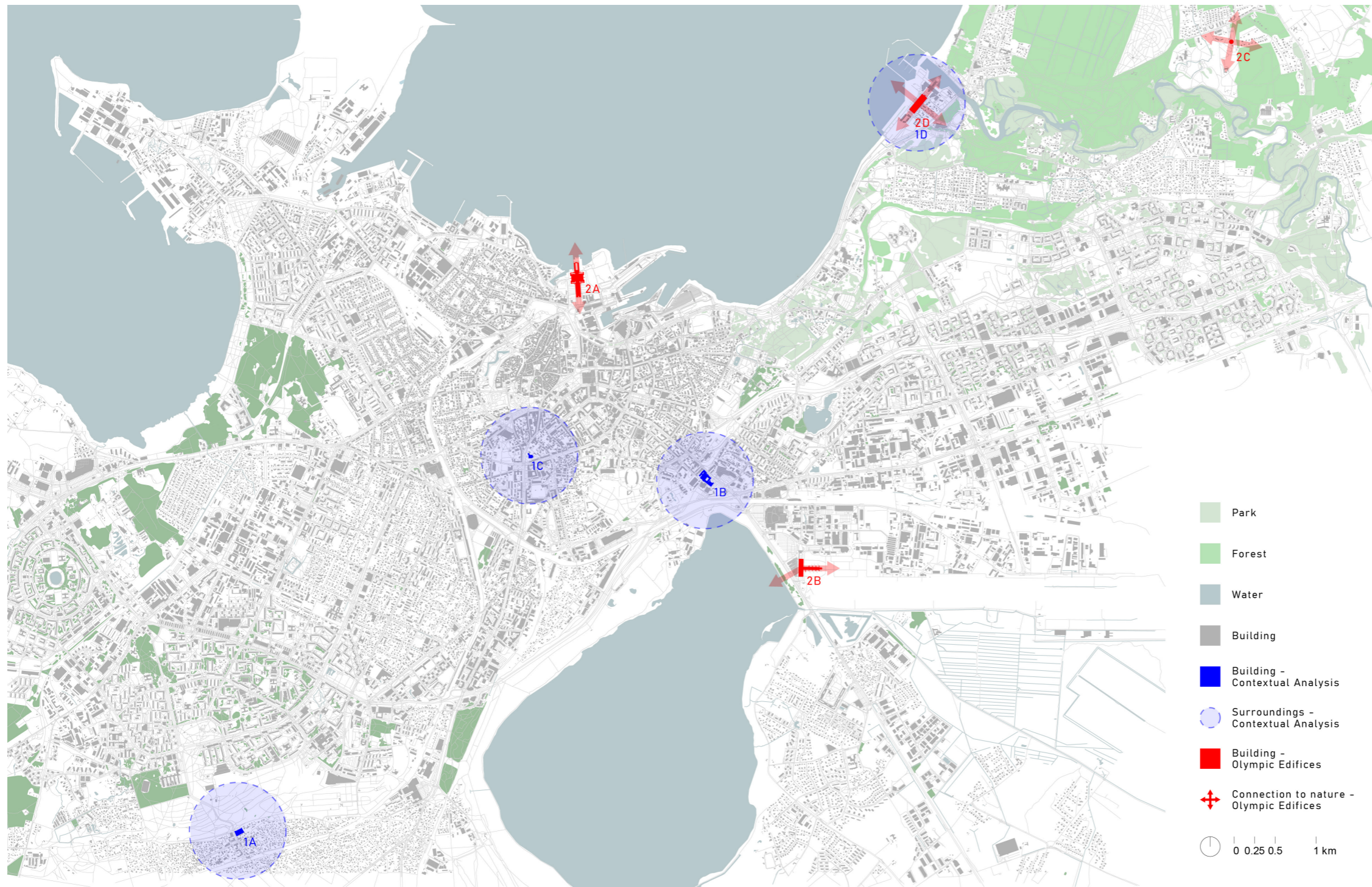
In the present

In the making
(meshing past, present and future)

In the past

A. To converge -
Oversized buildings are **abstracted and compared** in their existence as
'landmarks', 'monuments' and 'places'

01
 CONTEXT -
 "OVERSIZED" TALLINN



1A
 NÕMME MARKET

1B
 FAHLE HOUSE



1C
 KINO KOSMOS



2A
 LINNAHALL



2B
 TALLINN AIRPORT



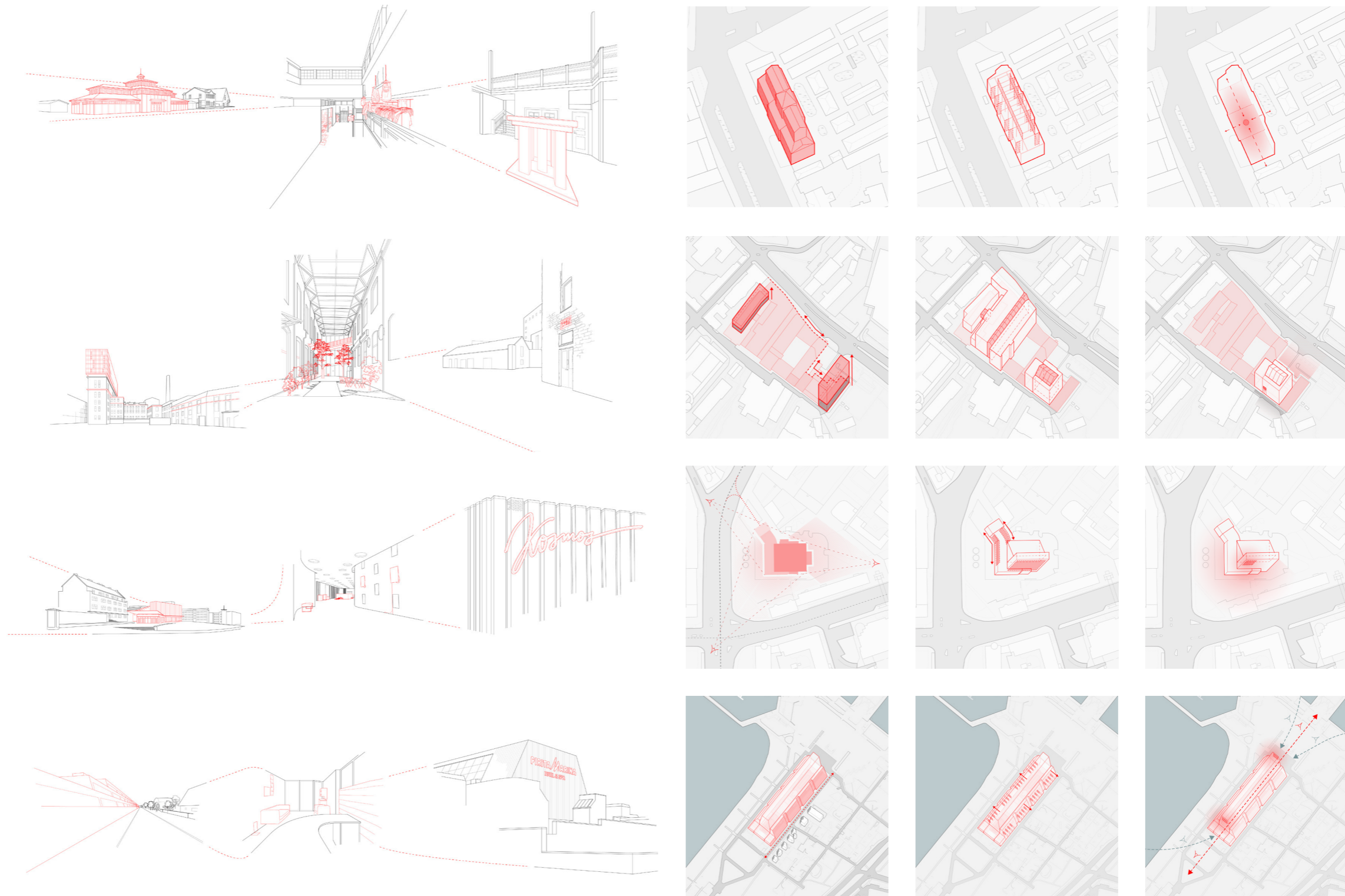
2C
 TALLINN TV TOWER



1D/2D
 OLYMPIC YACHTING CENTRE

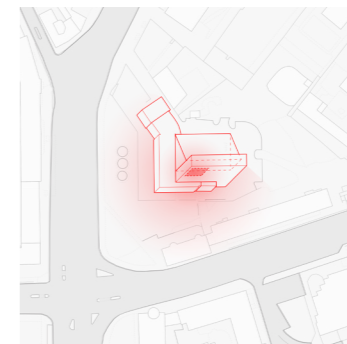
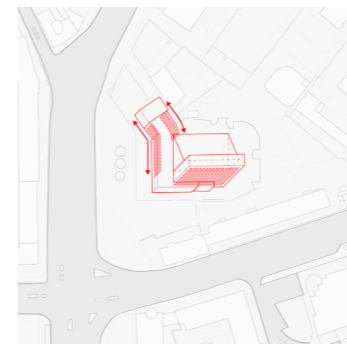
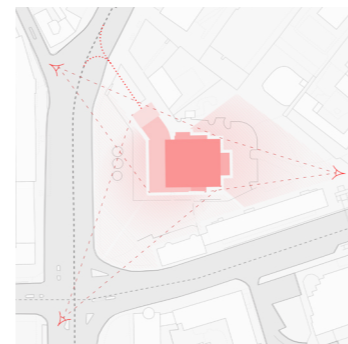
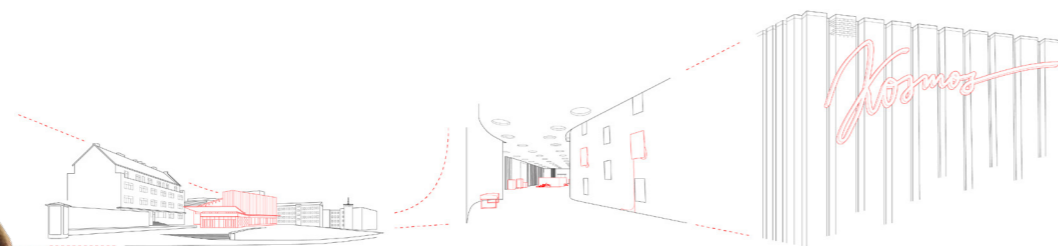
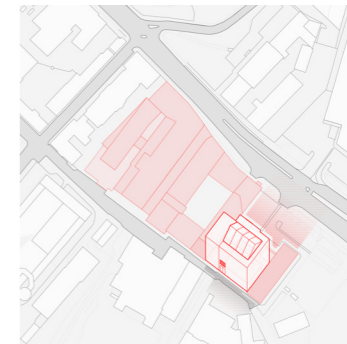
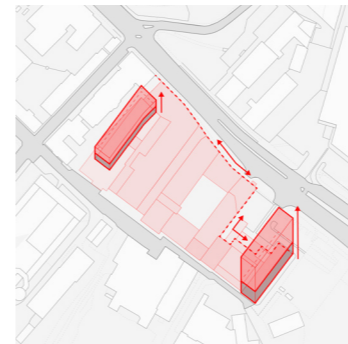
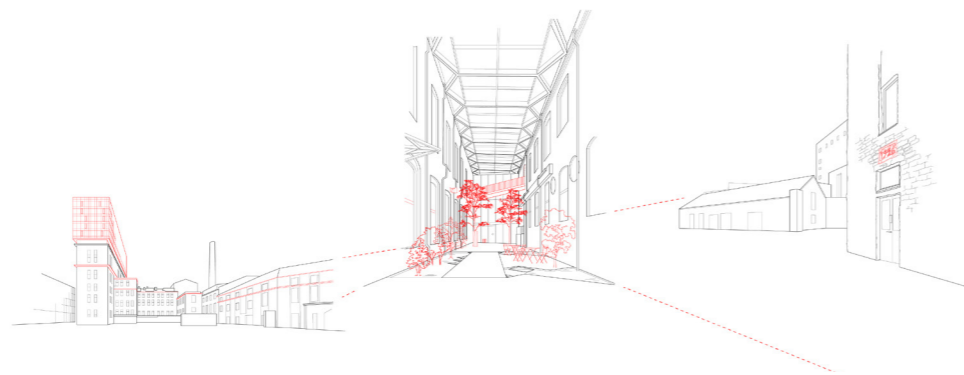
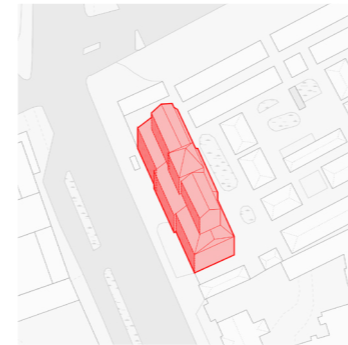
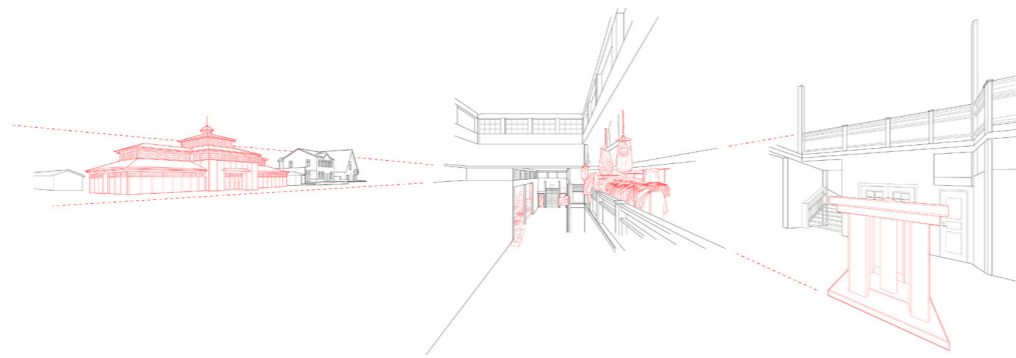
B. To diverge -
 Multiplicity of oversized buildings and Olympics monuments

01
CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS -
"OVERSIZED" TALLINN



C. Palette Study -
Studying modes and mechanisms of "oversized buildings"

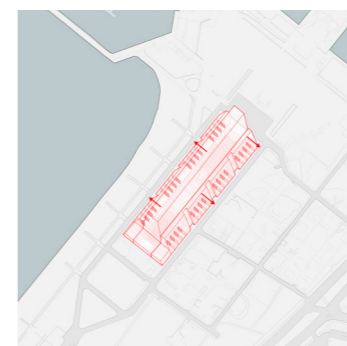
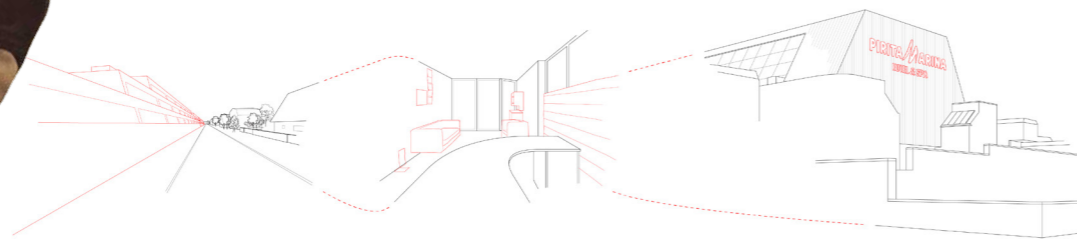
01
CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS -
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SELECTED
SITE TO DIVE
INTO!!!

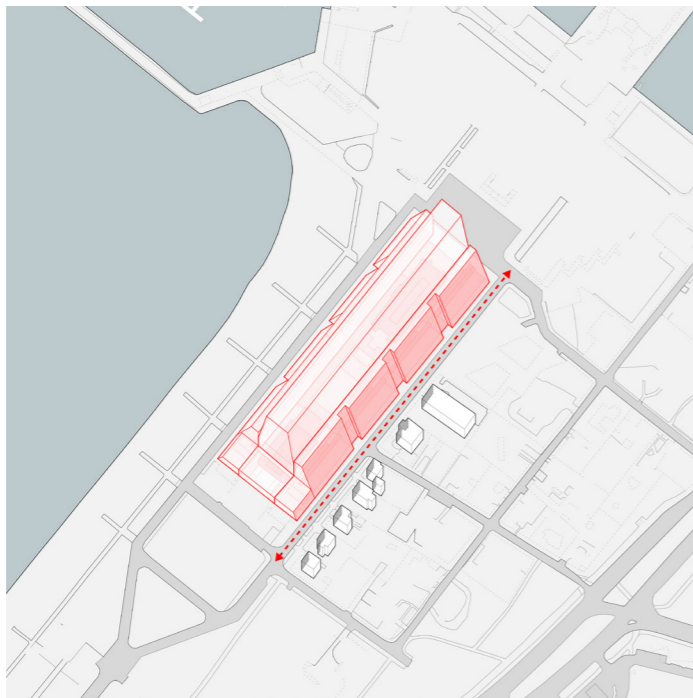
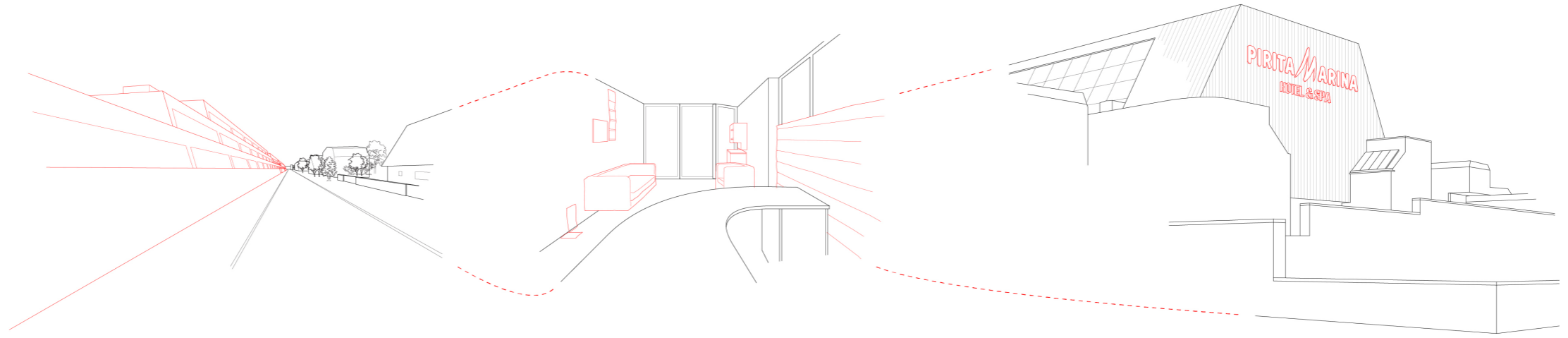


OLYMPICS YACHTING CENTRE

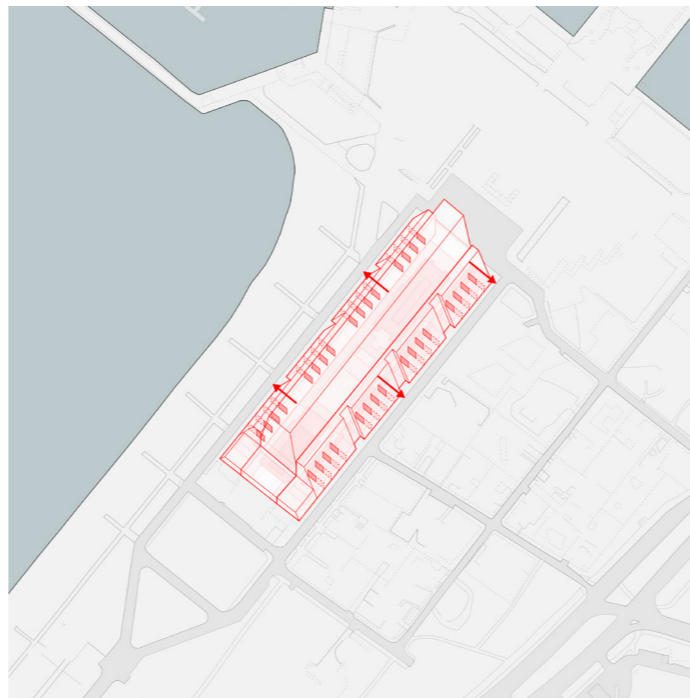


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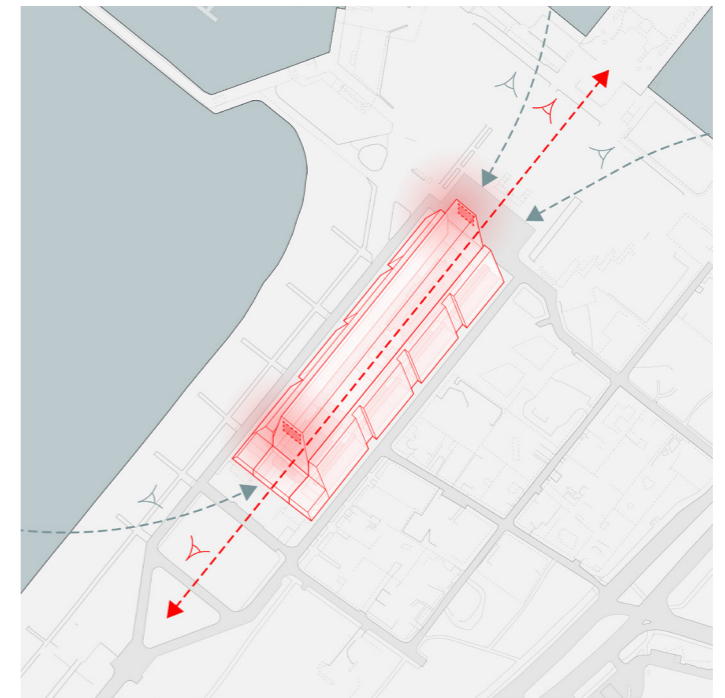
01
CONTEXT -
SITE



L -
AS LANDMARKS



M -
AS USED SPACES



S -
AS MONUMENTS/ SIGNS

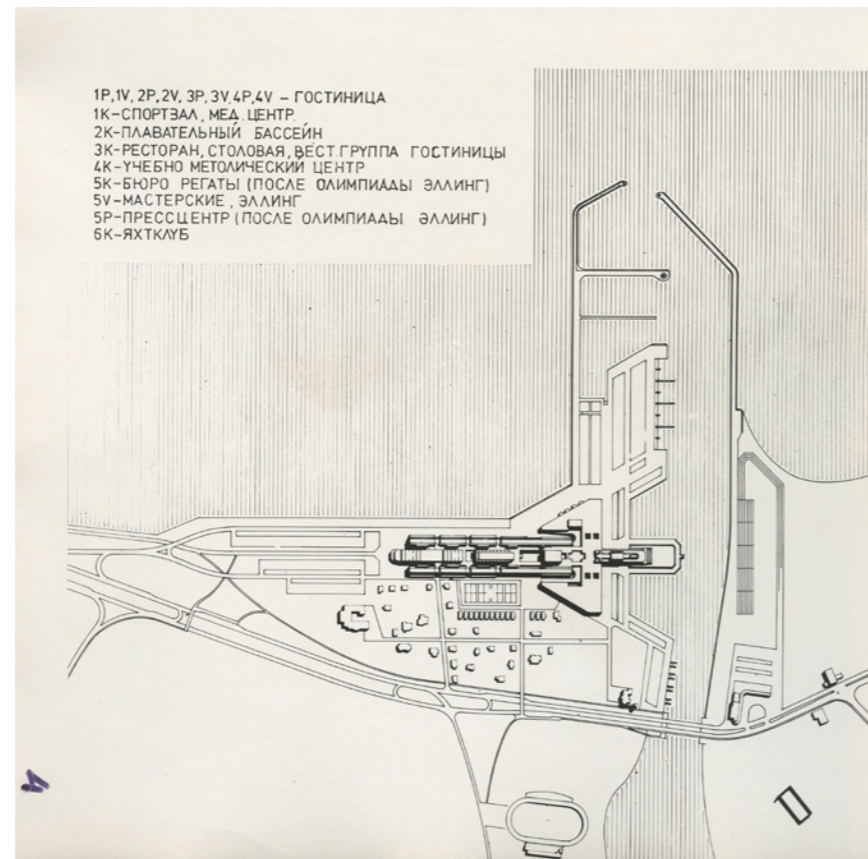
Understanding the building at different scales

01
CONTEXT -
SITE



Where?

At the junction of Pirita River and Pirita harbour;
longitudinal axis parallel to the Northeast stretch of Tallinn's coastline



Pirita hotel due for refurbishment to close doors earlier than planned

NEWS

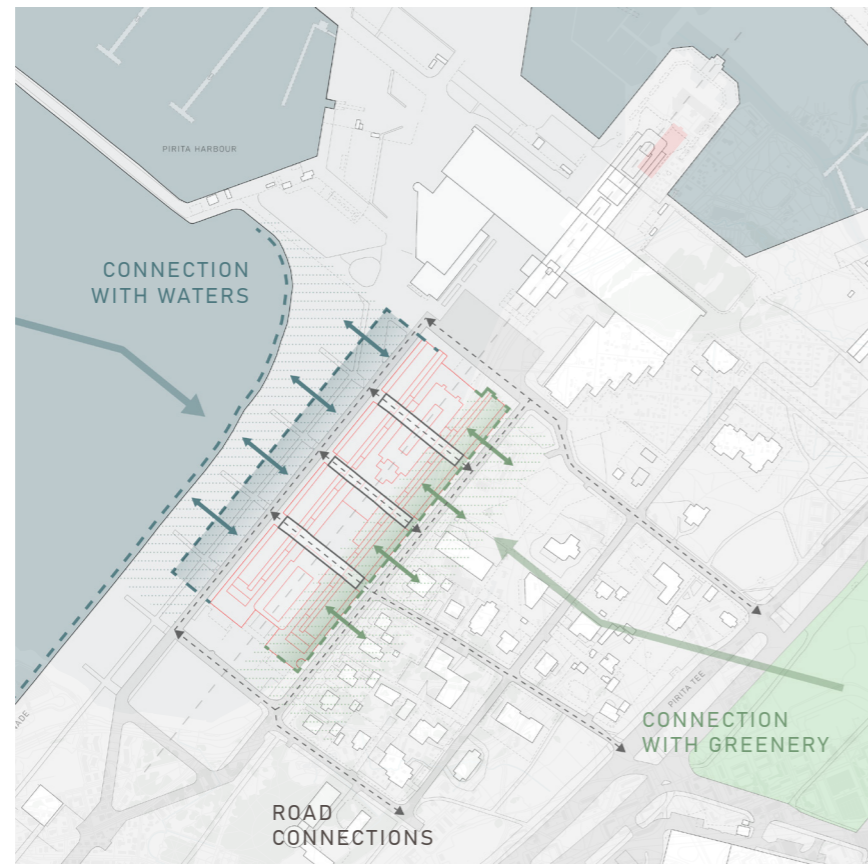
ERR, ERR News
24.09.2022 15:25



When?

Built in 1980 Moscow Olympics,
Closed its doors for renovation since 2022, vacant for now

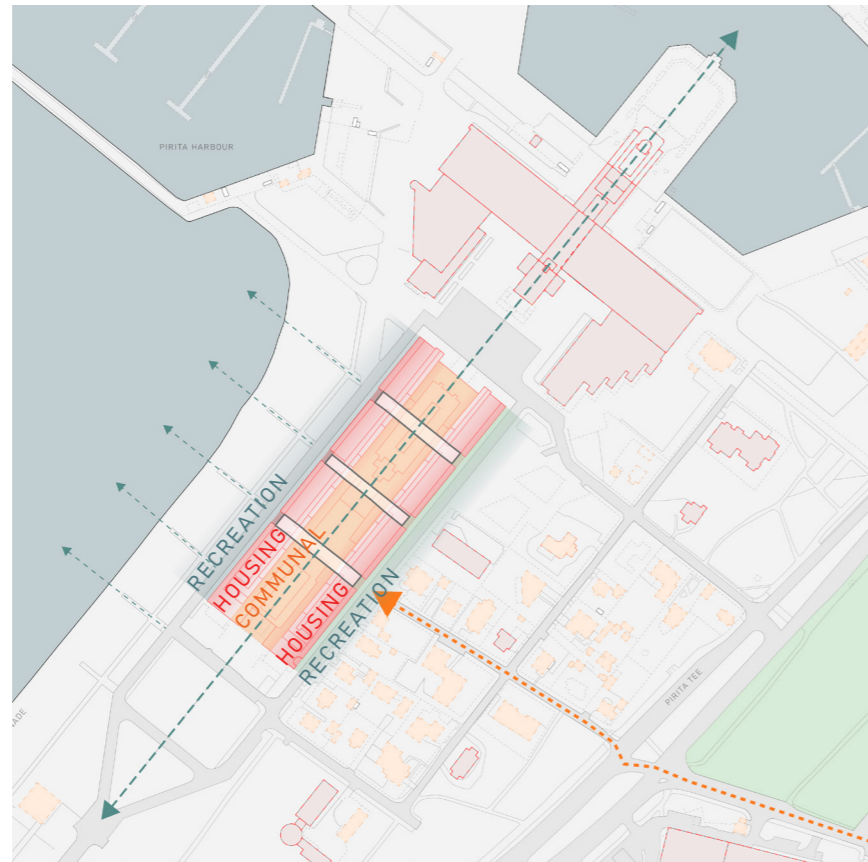
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01
CONTEXT -
SITE



OFFICE WORKERS AS POTENTIAL
RESIDENTS



RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY IN
VICINITY



CONNECTION WITH PIRITA
PROMENADE

Who?

- S - Housing - for people who work in Pirita
- M - Communal - for the Pirita community
- L - Recreation - for all people in Tallinn



Back to the scales -

**What are the intended spatial operations
to rebrand and reactivate these obsolete Olympic landmarks?**

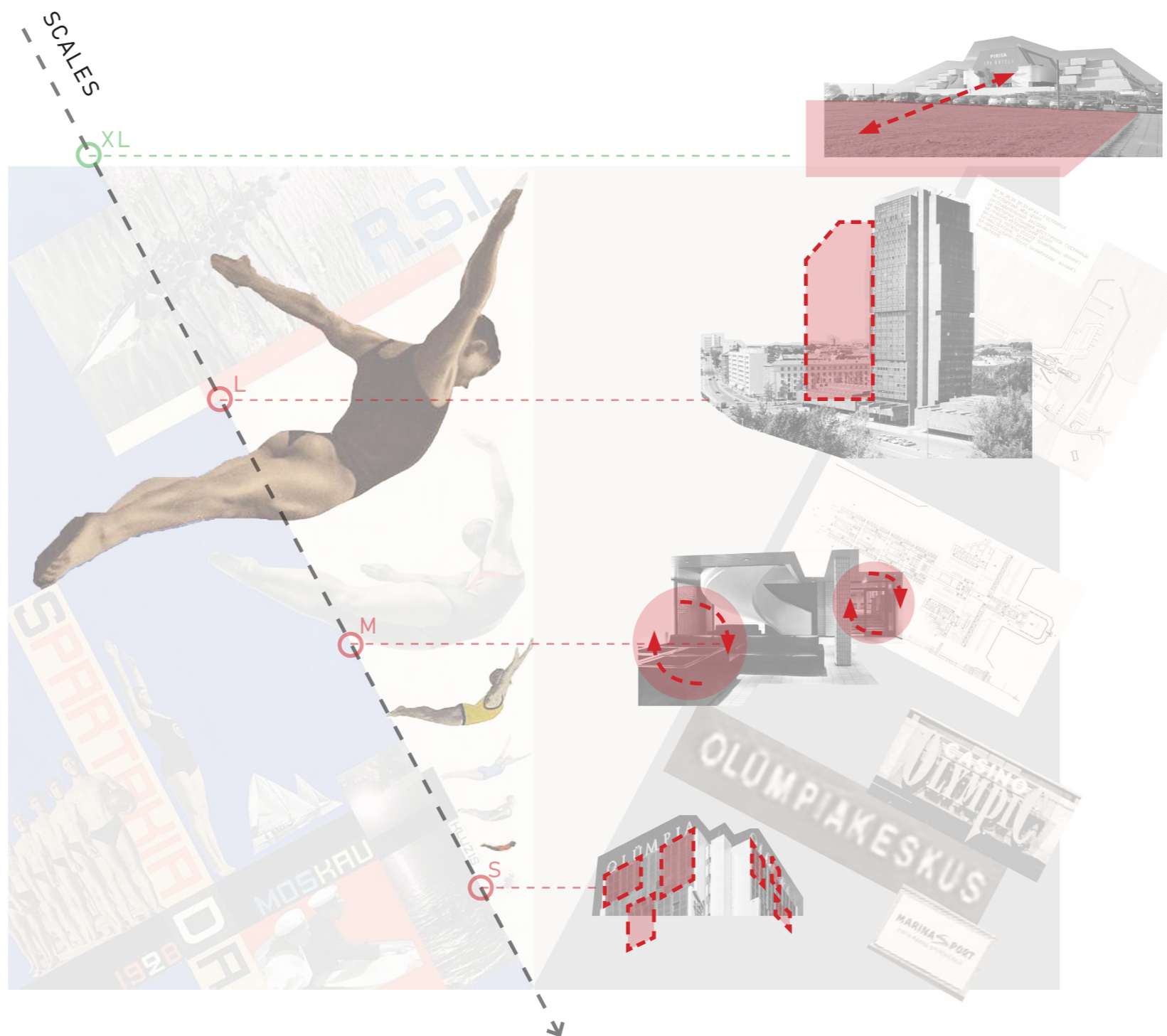
THE INTERVENTION IS...

TO CONNECT

TO COMPETE

TO CONVERT

TO CONTRAST



AS PARTS OF PIRITA
LANDSCAPE

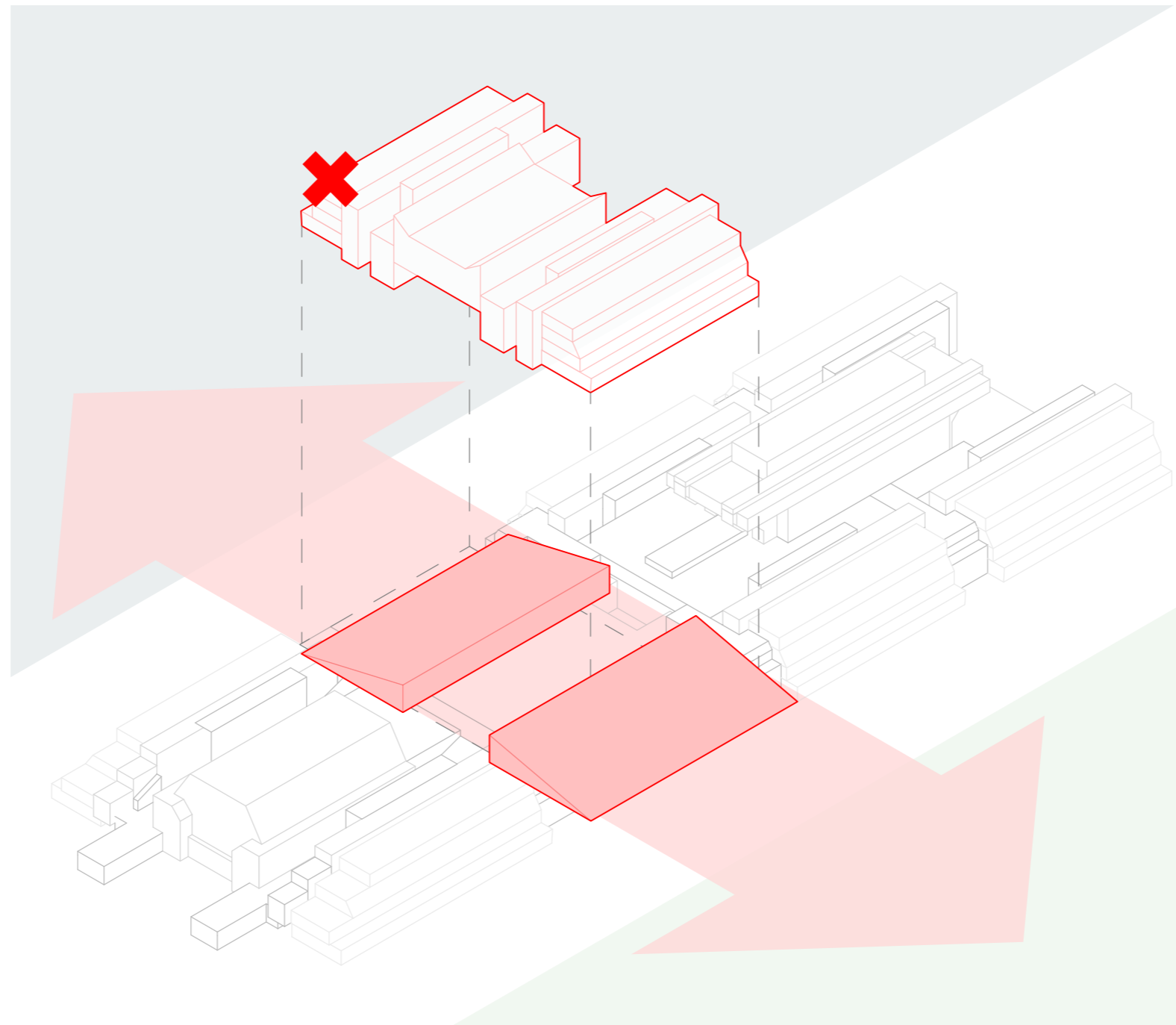
AS LANDMARKS

AS USED SPACES

AS SIGNS

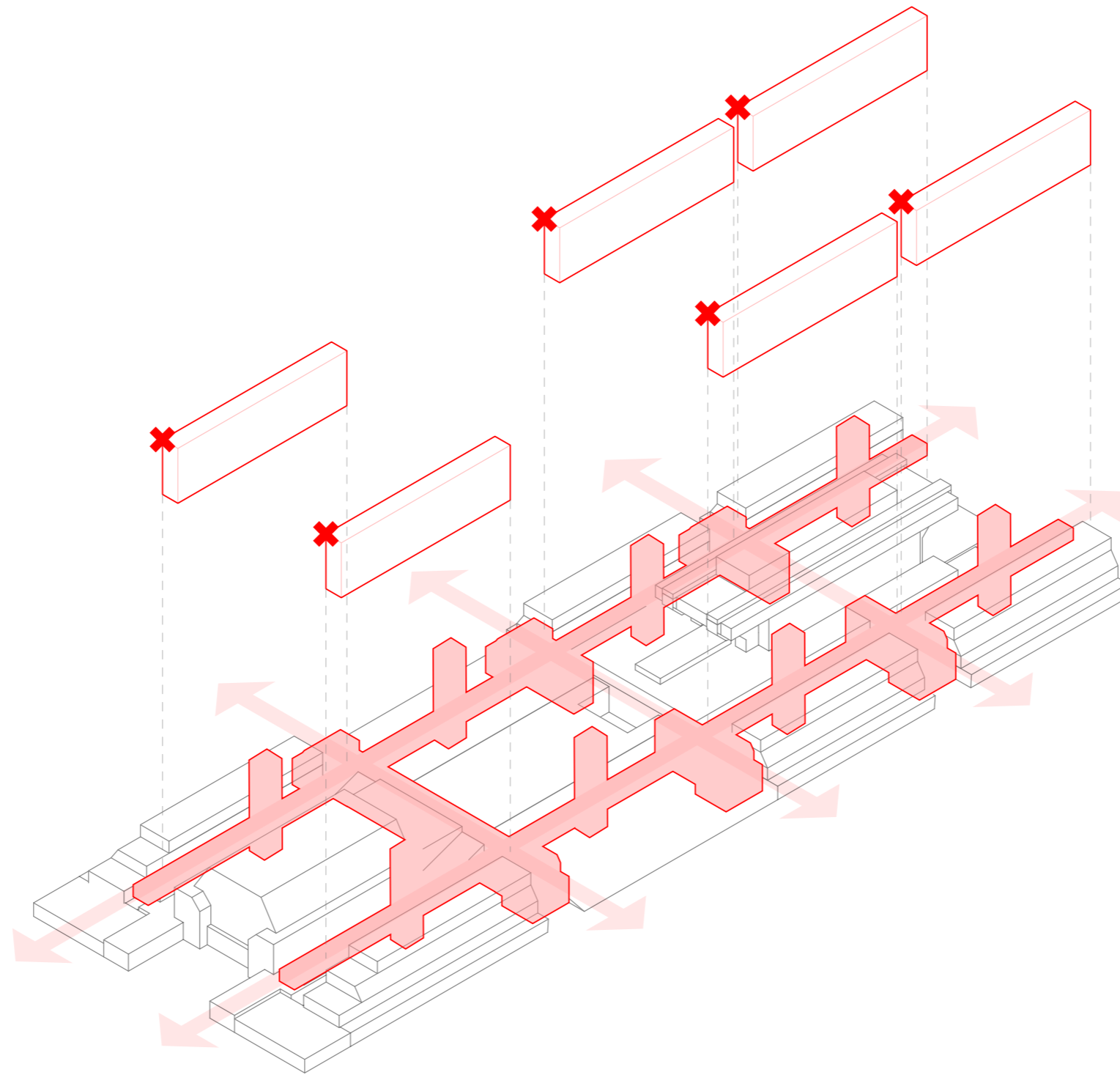
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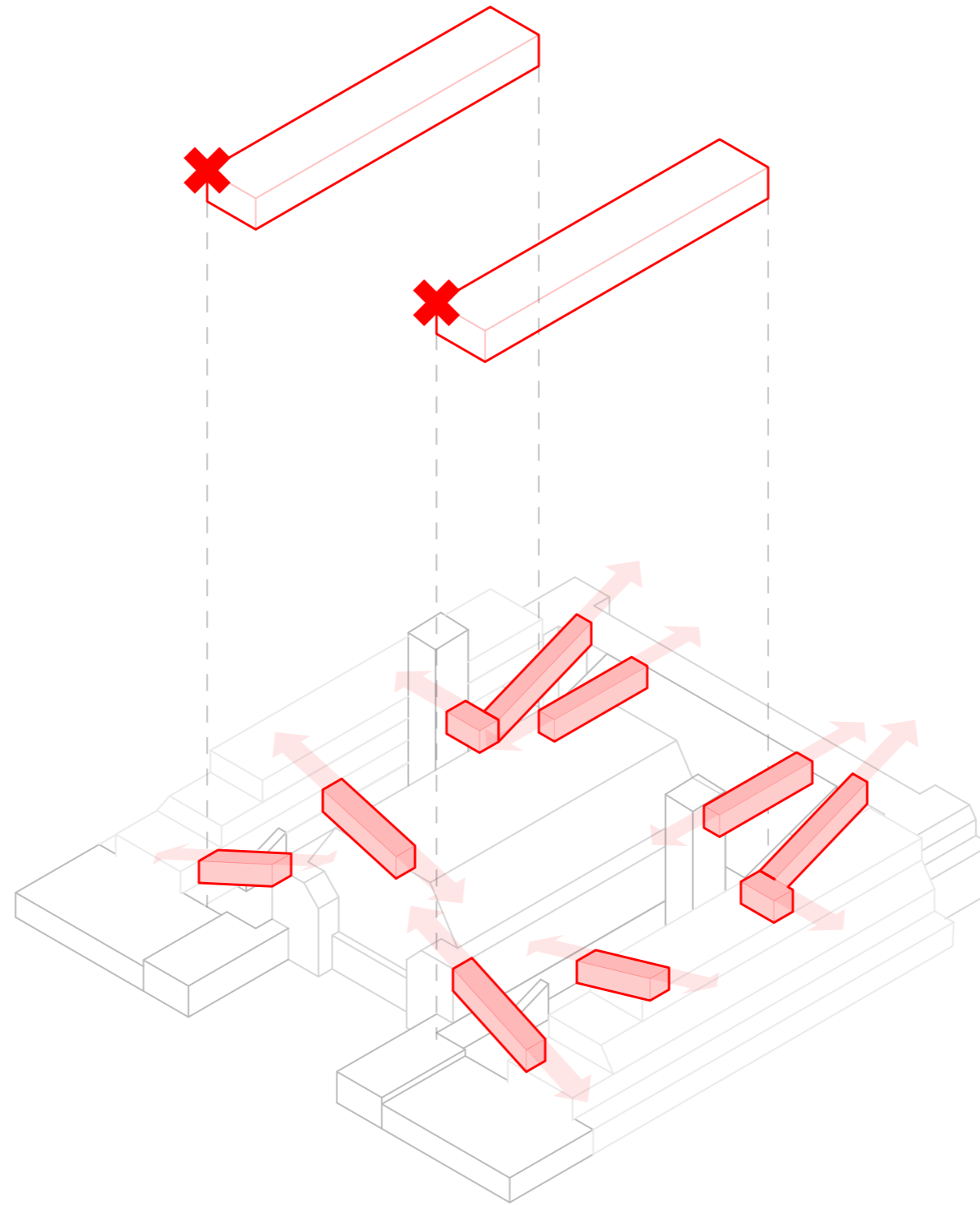
XL Scale -

Connecting the building with the Pirita Landscape



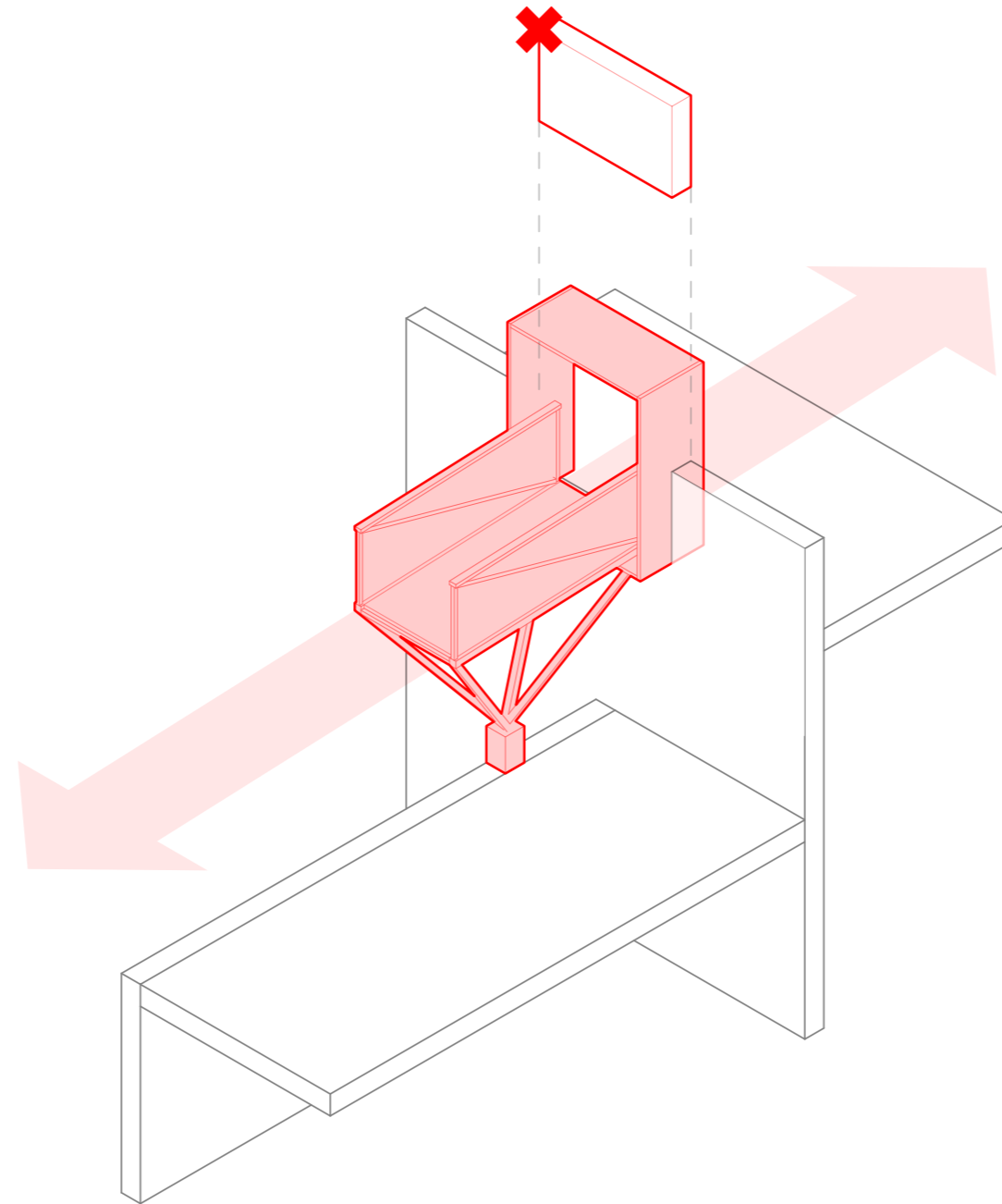
L Scale -

Superimposing walkway and liftcore as wayfinding visual mark



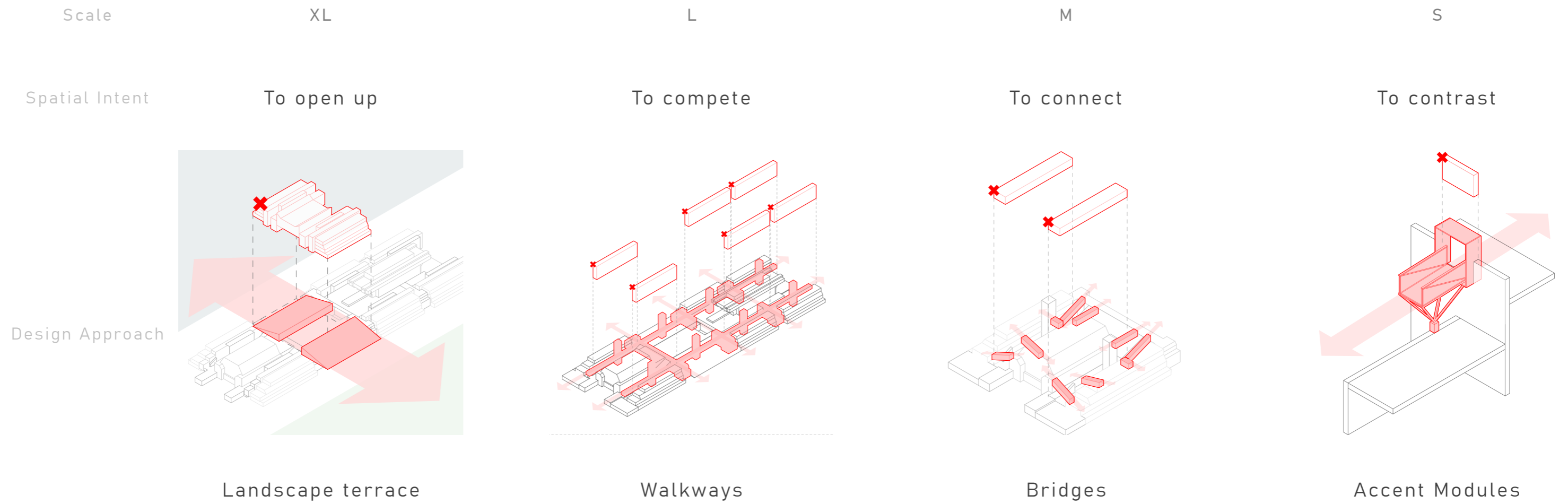
M Scale -

Bridging access between different building blocks



S Scale -

Juxtaposing existing monolith by modular structures



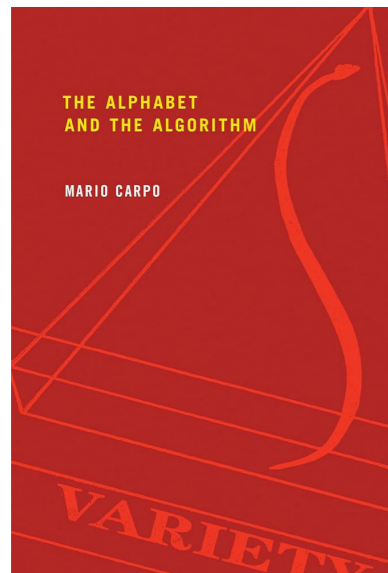
Overview of strategies



COLLAGE -
HETEROTOPIC LENS TO VIEW AND OPERATE THE YACHTING CENTRE

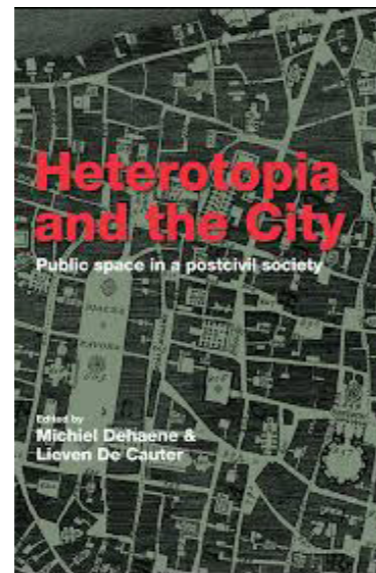
How can we activate oversized Soviet Olympic establishments in Tallinn to reconcile historical narratives with contemporary use?

-> Methodological research



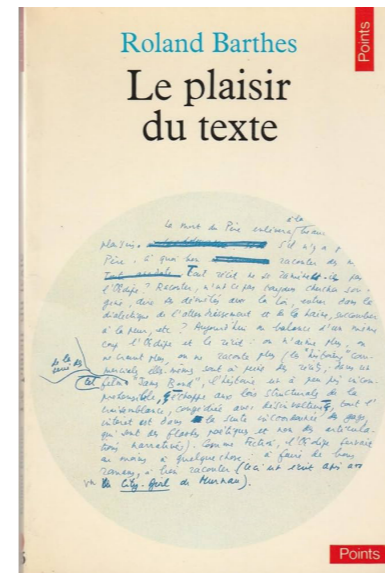
CARPO, M. (2011). VARIABLE, IDENTICAL, DIFFERENTIAL. IN THE ALPHABET AND THE ALGORITHM,

Framing and keying of architectural elements



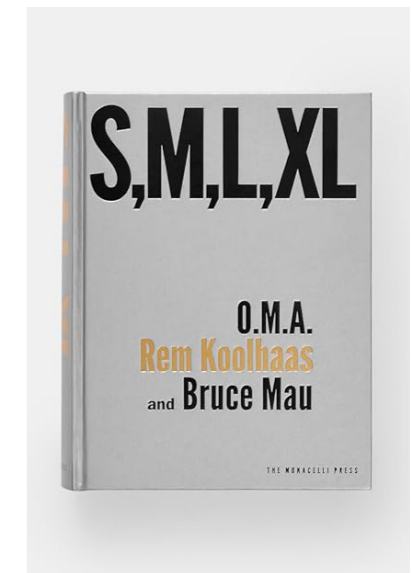
DEHAENE, M., & DE CAUTER, L. (EDS.). (2008). HETEROTOPIA AND THE CITY: PUBLIC SPACE IN A POST-CIVIL SOCIETY.

Olympic edifices as Heterotopia Now and Then



BARTHES, R. (1975). THE PLEASURE OF THE TEXT (R. MILLER, TRANS.)

Olympic edifices as texts for re-read/ re-write/ re-interpret

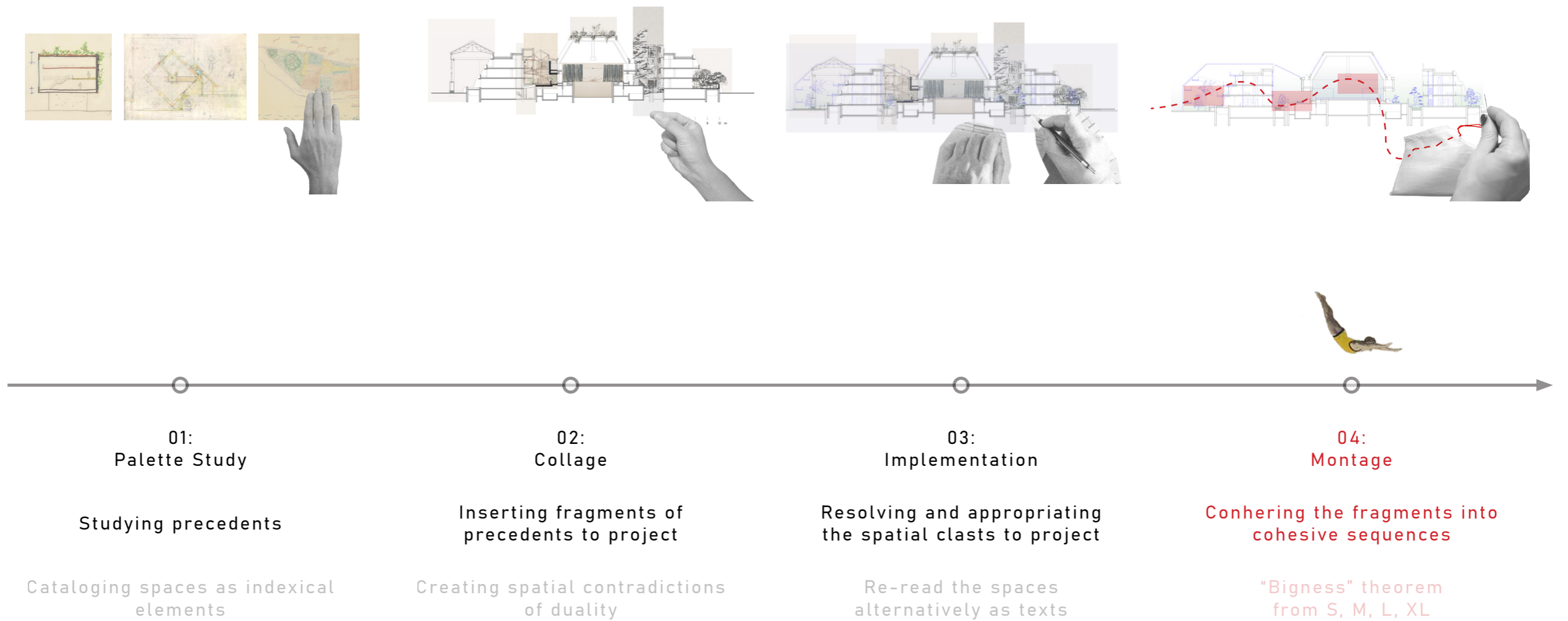


KOOLHAAS ET AL, OMA, (1998) S,M,L,XL

"Bigness" of Olympic Edifices

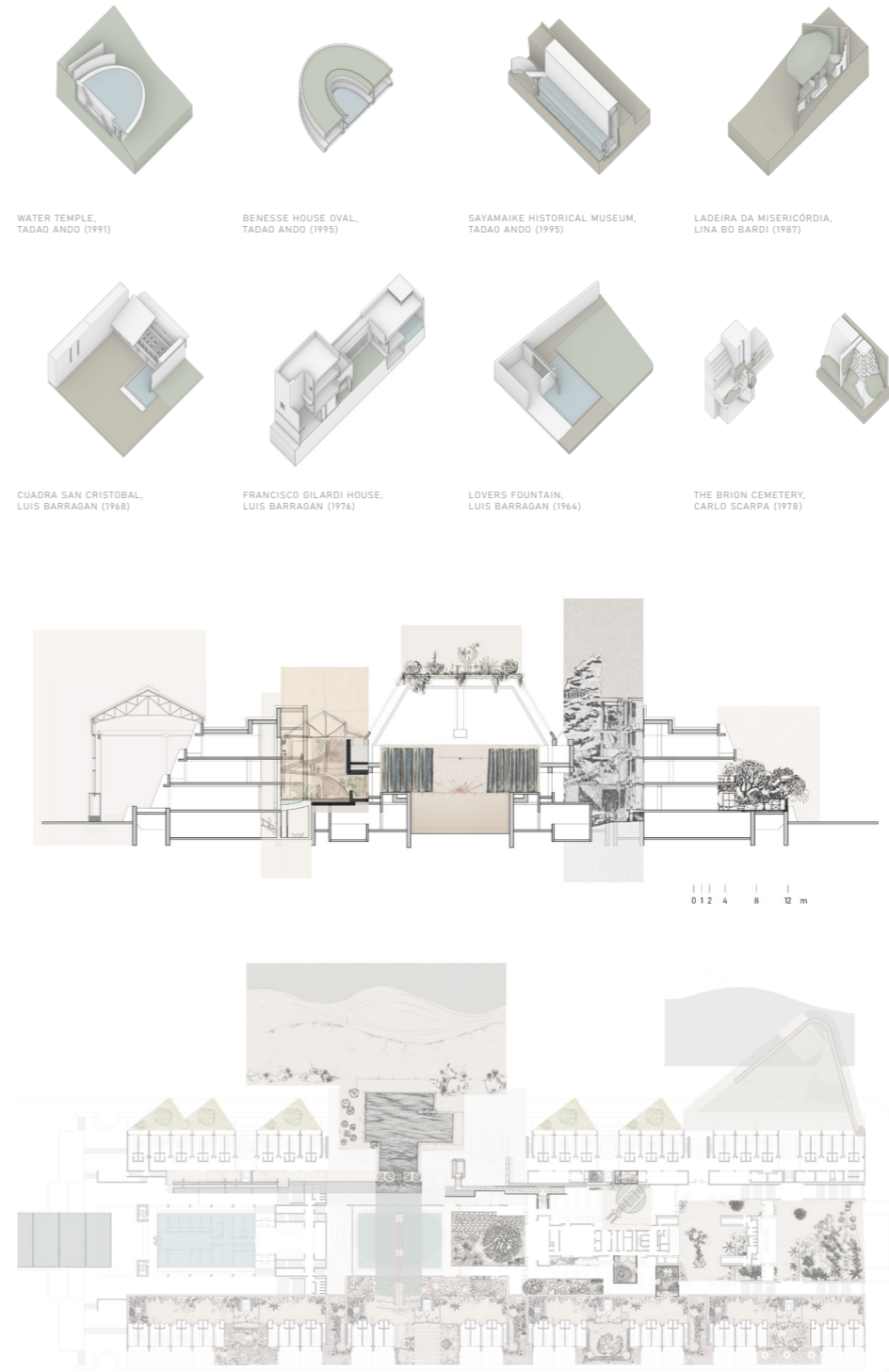
Theoretical framework -

A "textual" framework that deciphers and connects architecture across multiple scales



Methodology to facilitate superimposition-

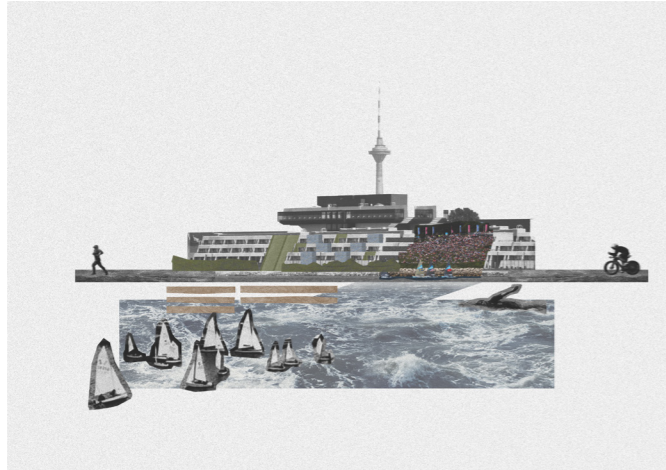
Fragment - collage - modulate - **montage**
To cohere spatial modulations



Detailed process workings to be found in booklets



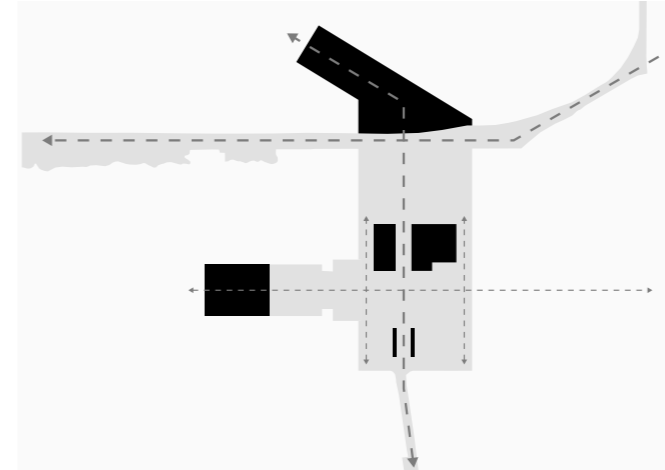
EVENT



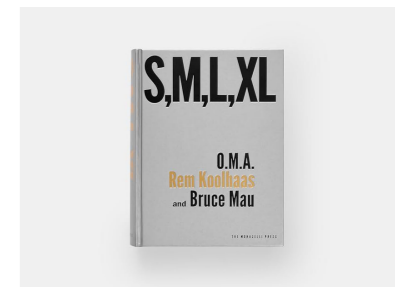
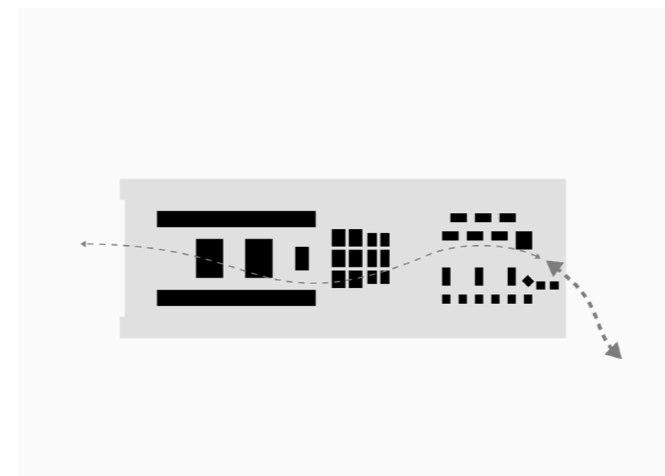
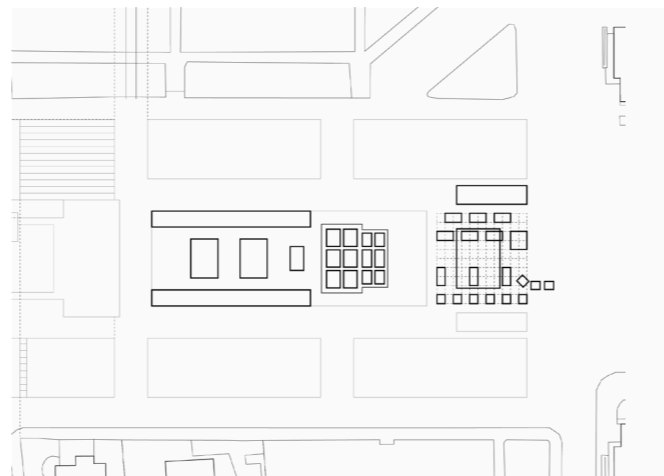
BUILDING



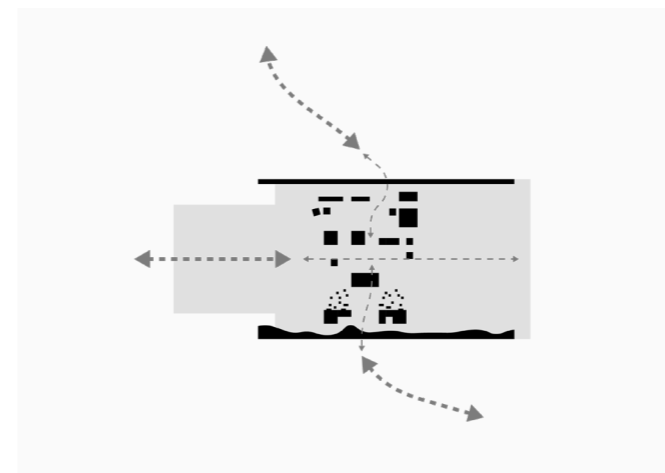
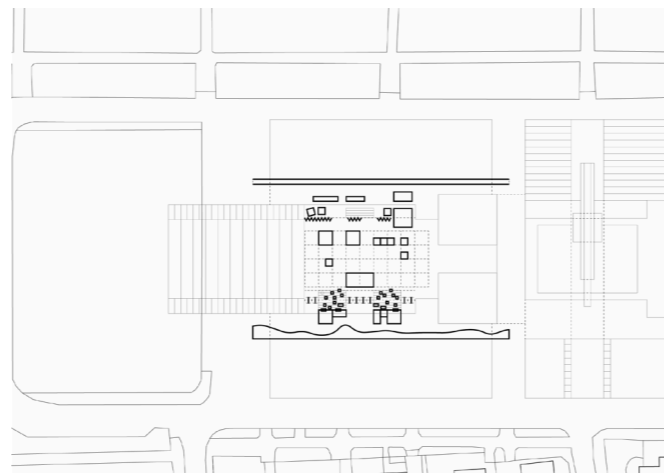
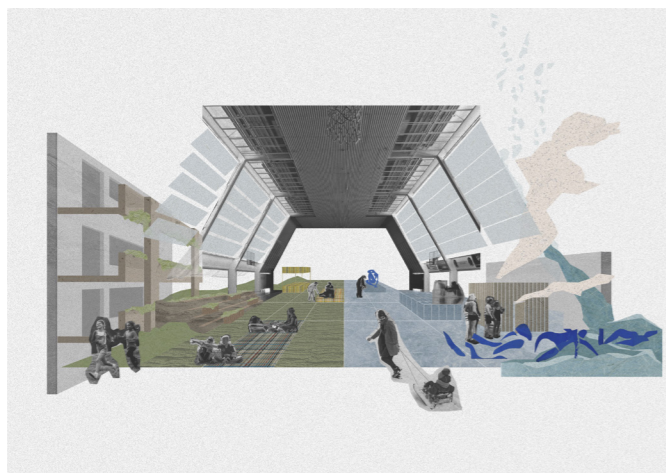
CONNECTION



REFERENCE -
YVES BRUNIER'S COLLAGES



REFERENCE -
OMA, S,M,L,XL

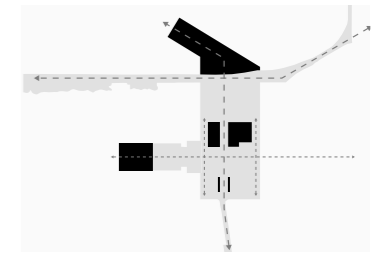
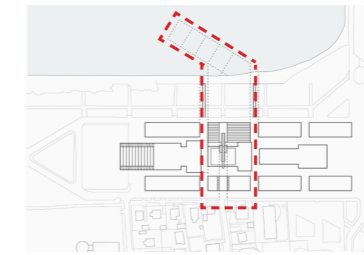
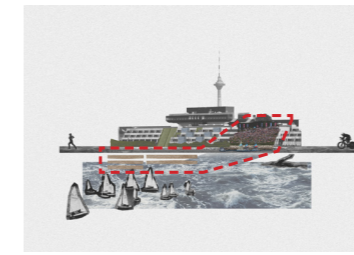


REFERENCE -
BERNARD TSCHUMI, THE
MANHATTAN TRANSCRIPTS

04: Interscale montage matrix -

To introduce the event and programme from the aforementioned spatial strategies

03 METHOD

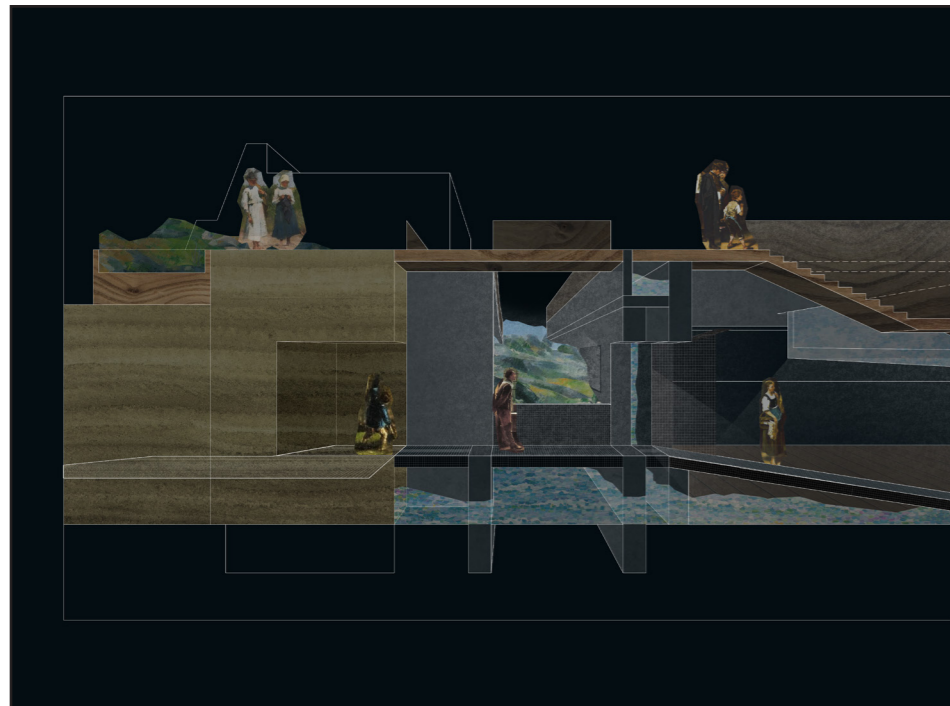


SCOPE OF SEQUENCE

R1 - Ascending the timber steps, lush greenery and cultivated herbs intertwine with weathered concrete, where new growth and lingering traces of the past revive the once-vacant space.

R2 - Descending beside the water, the pool park offers a quiet retreat where sound fades and earth-bound spaces create a moment of stillness and reflection.

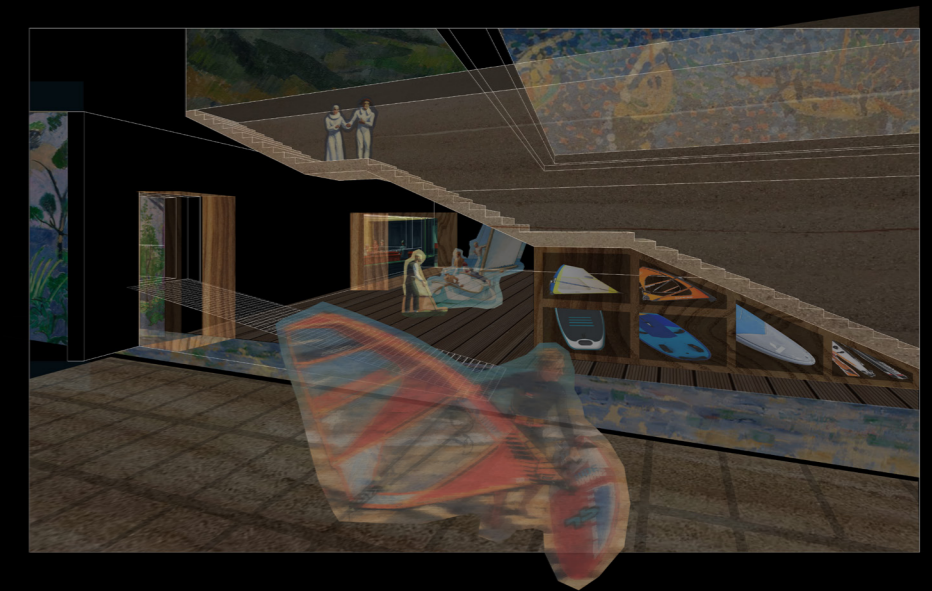
R3 - Looking up through the frosted glass beneath the pool, diffused light and flowing water guide a quiet transition toward the harbour, where movement and life unfold in a calm, intimate atmosphere.



G1 - Moving through a carved slice of earth, one passes between concrete portals and shifting green courtyards, where mass and void, light and shadow unfold as a lived architectural section.



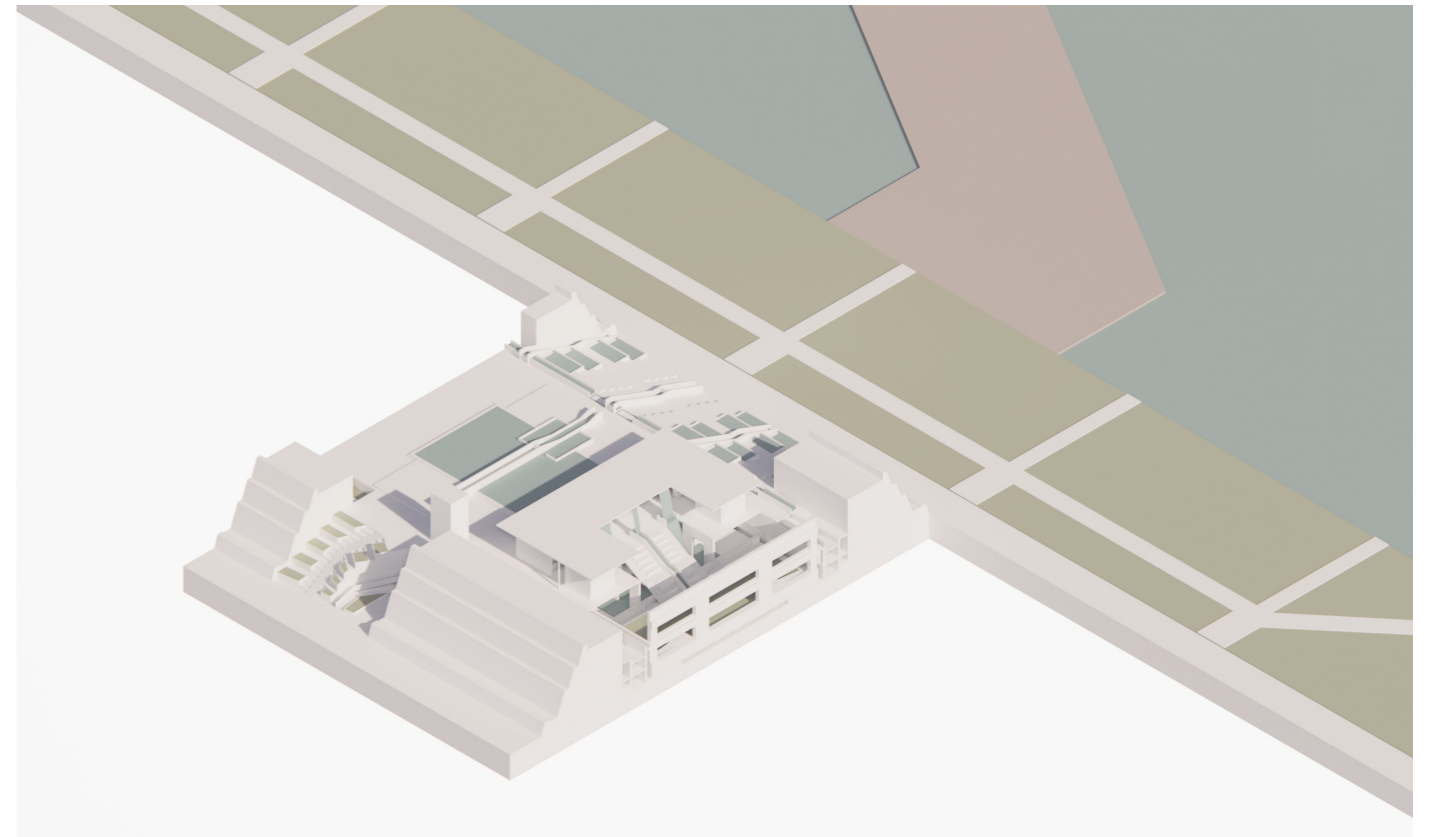
G2 - Heading toward the waterway, shifting atmospheres of heat, mist, and spray blur enclosure into openness, as the body is held in a quiet dialogue between water, air, and warmth.



G3 - Approaching the seaside, windsurfers and sailors animate the horizon as the sounds of repair and dining intertwine, creating a lively rhythm where labor and leisure converge.

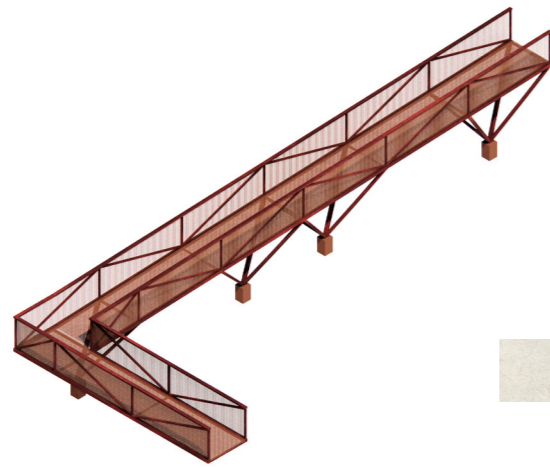
04: Intrascale montage sequence

Perspectival montages to capture movement and experience of events

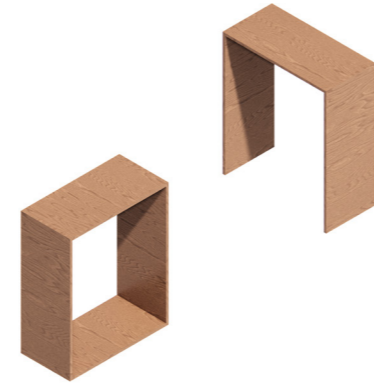


04: Intrascale montage sequence

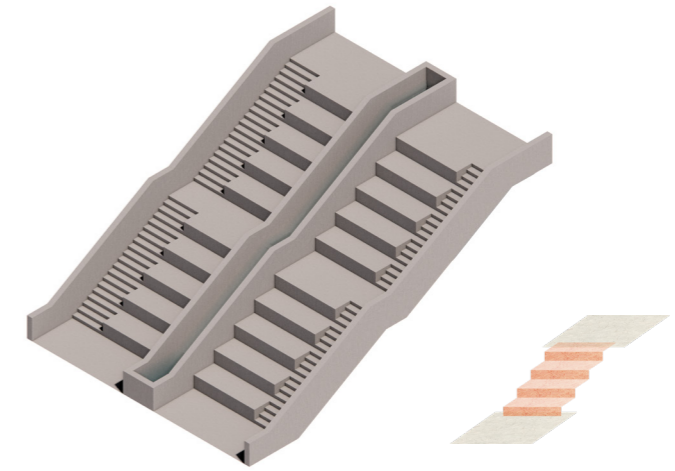
Implementation of montage into spatial design



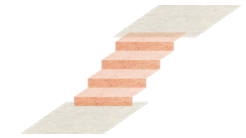
PLANAR STEEL FRAME WITH WITH
TREE-LIKE FOOTING



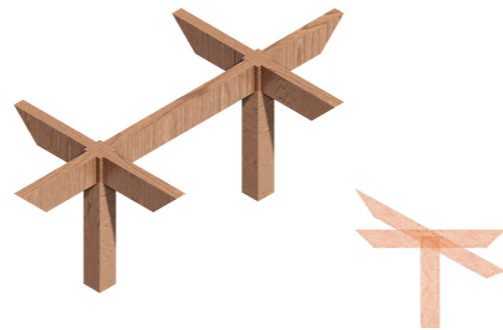
TIMBER PORTALS



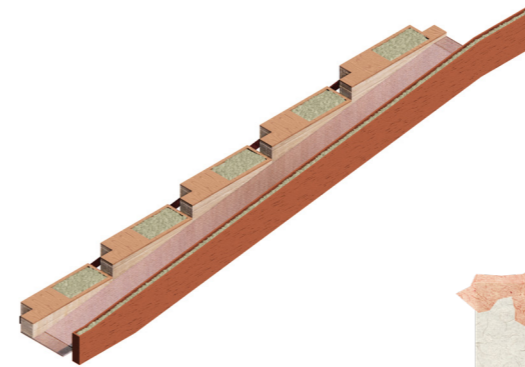
STEPPED SEATING
(WITH NATURAL ELEMENTS)



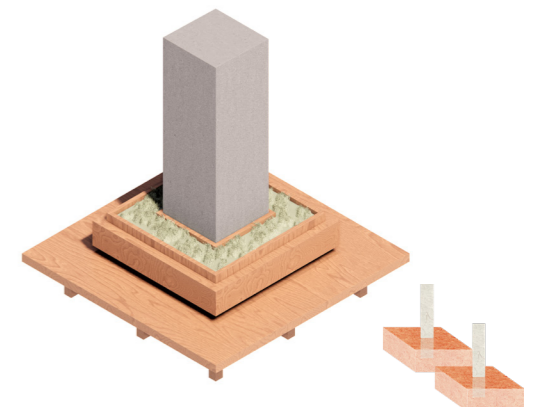
SPIRAL COURTYARD



TREE-LIKE TIMBER STRUCTURE



PLANT-INTEGRATED
ELEMENTS



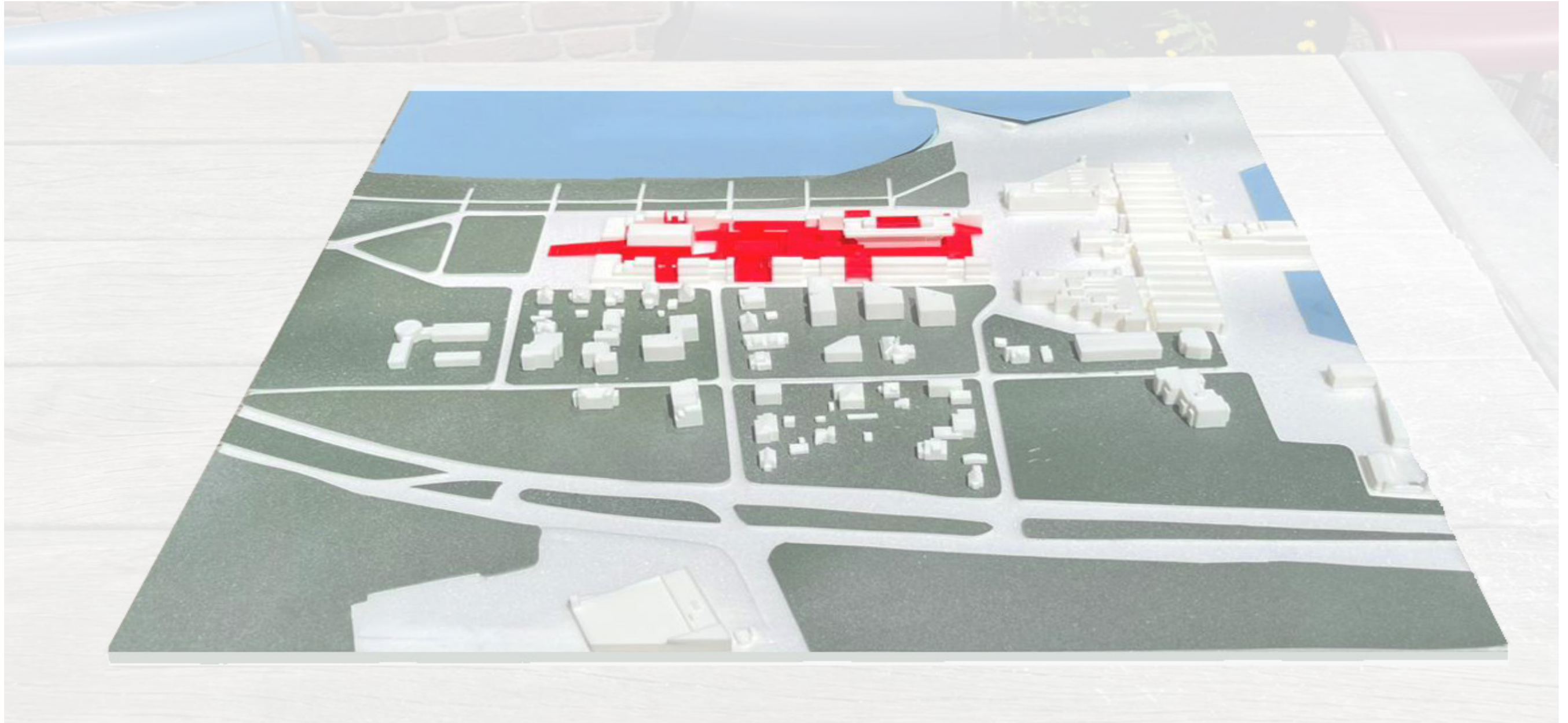
PLANT-INTEGRATED
ELEMENTS

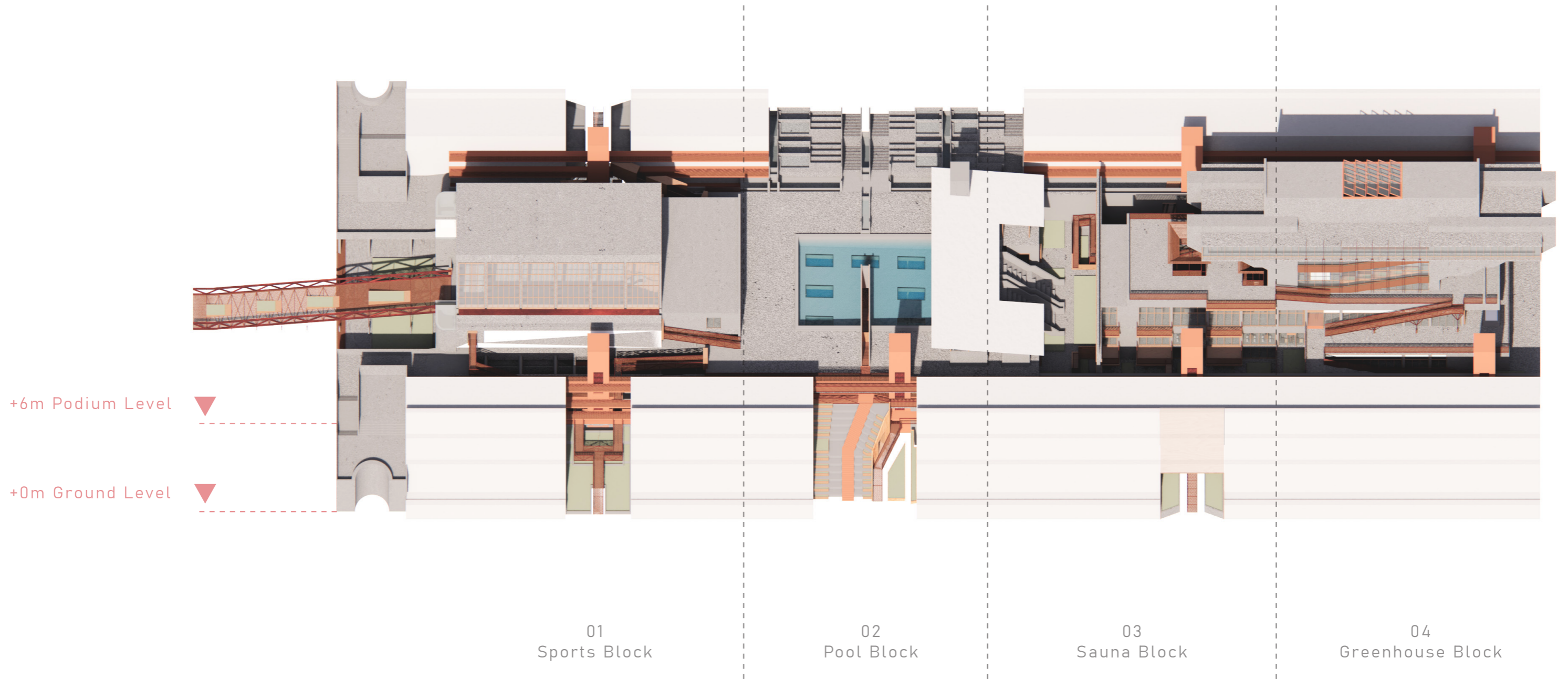
04: Technical montage

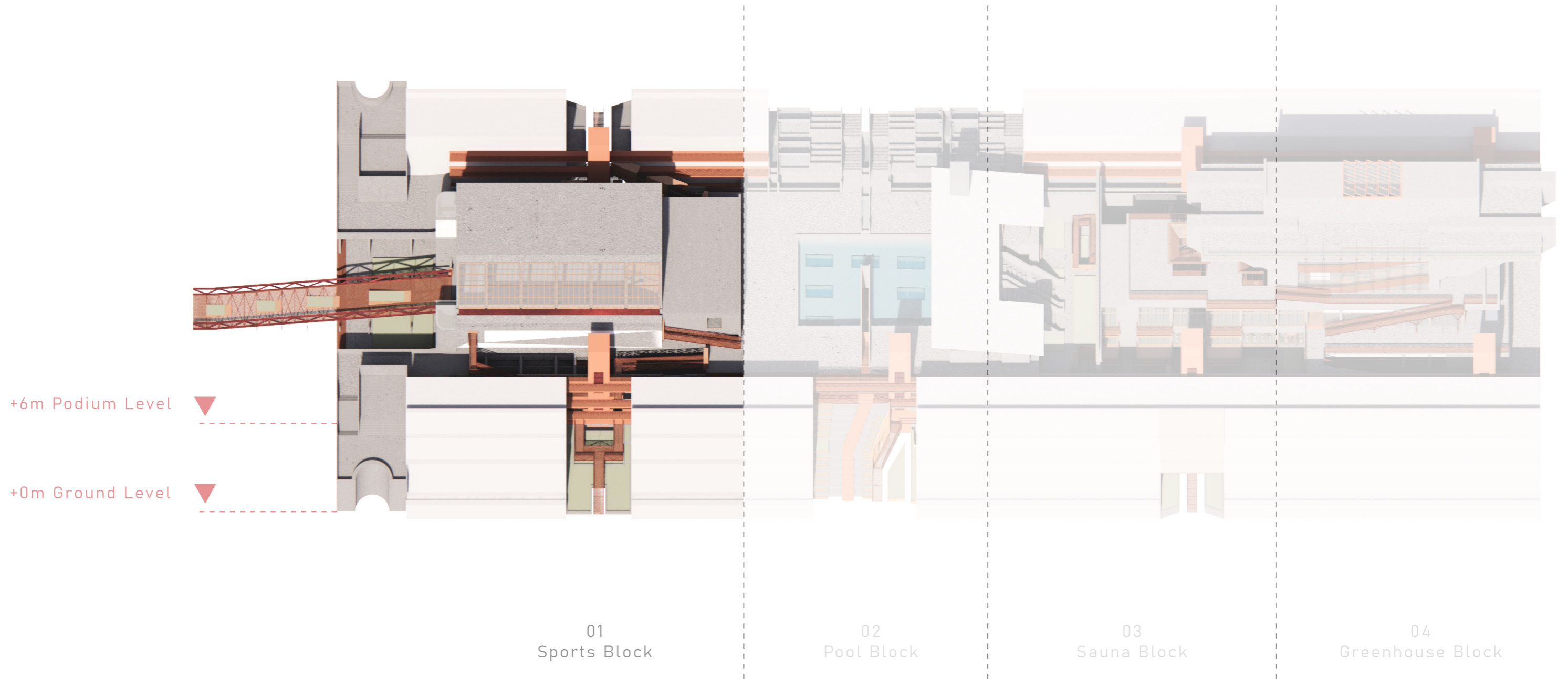
Creating coherence between space by
adopting uniform material palette and spatial languages

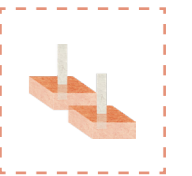
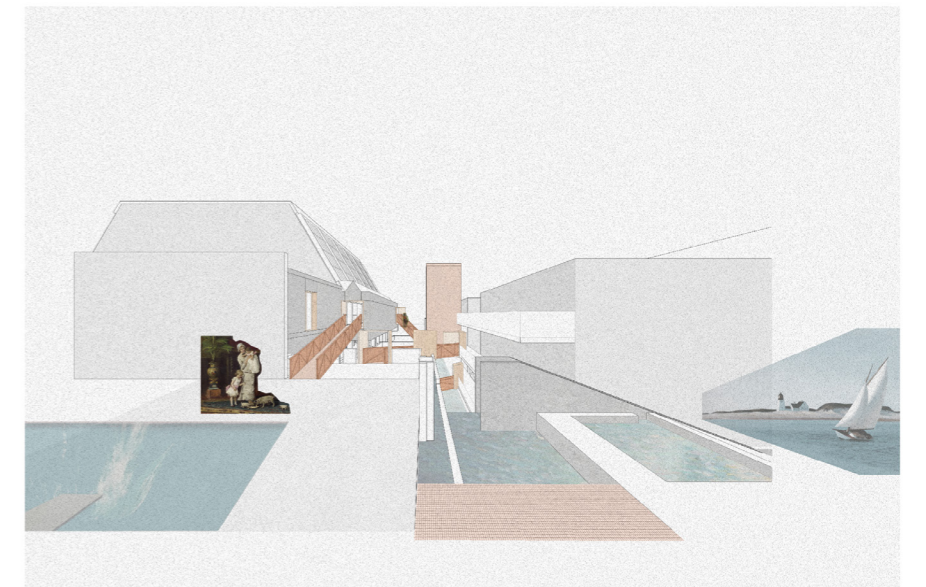
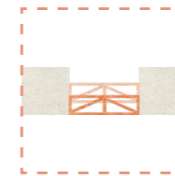
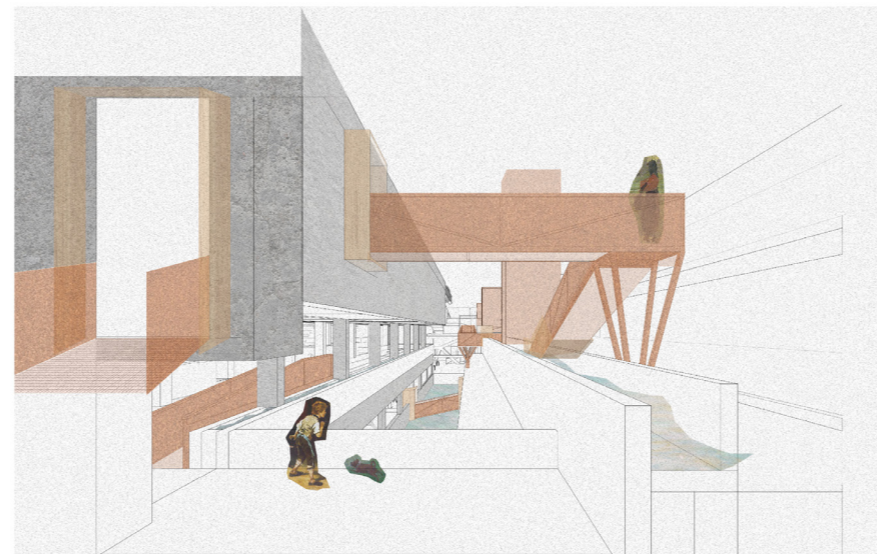
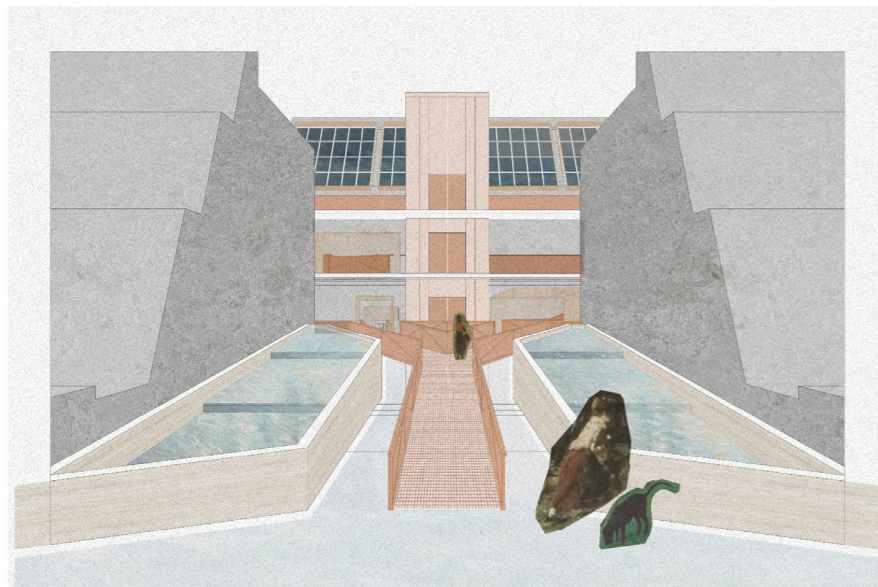


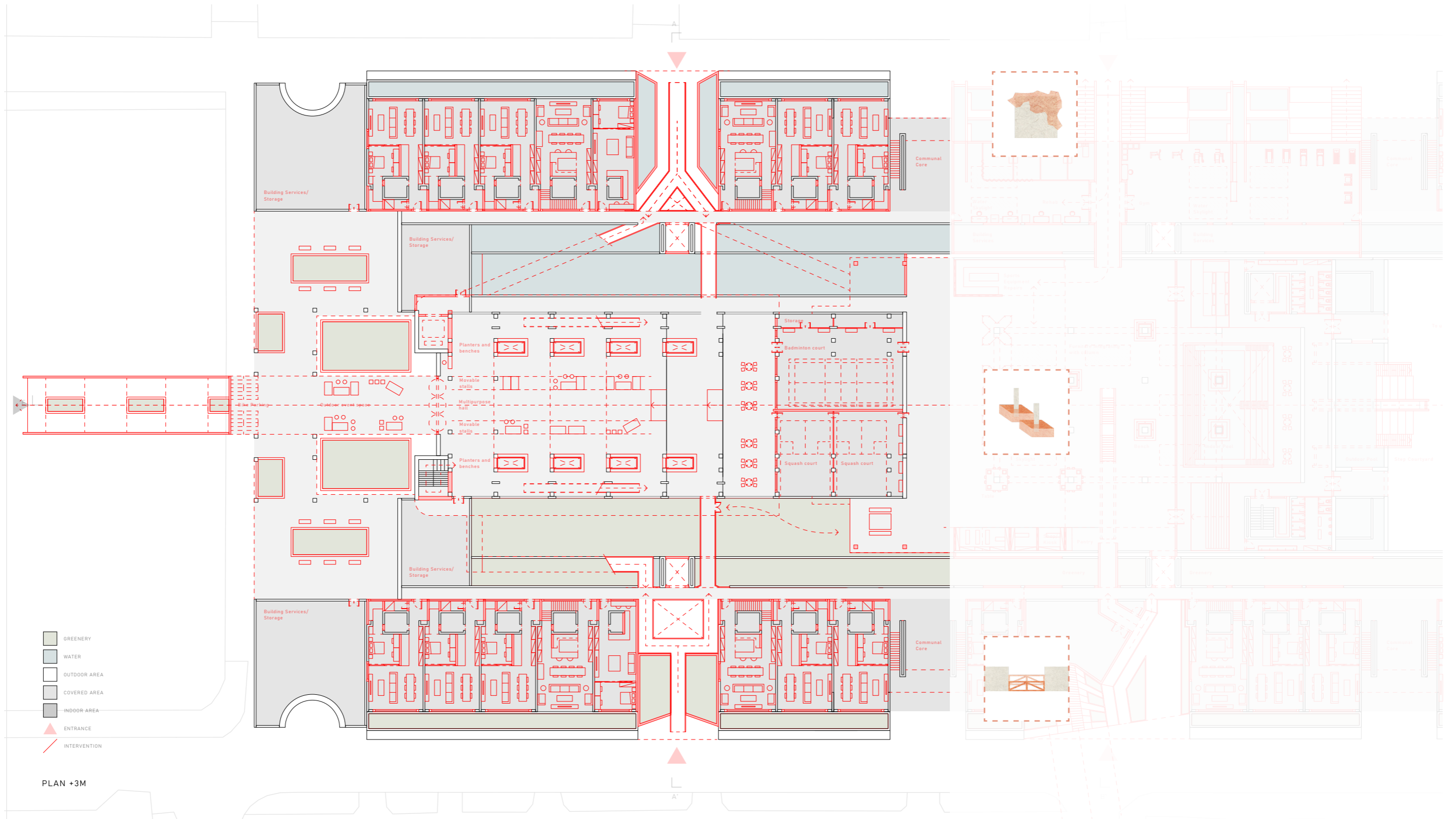
MODEL PHOTO - OVERVIEW OF DESIGN



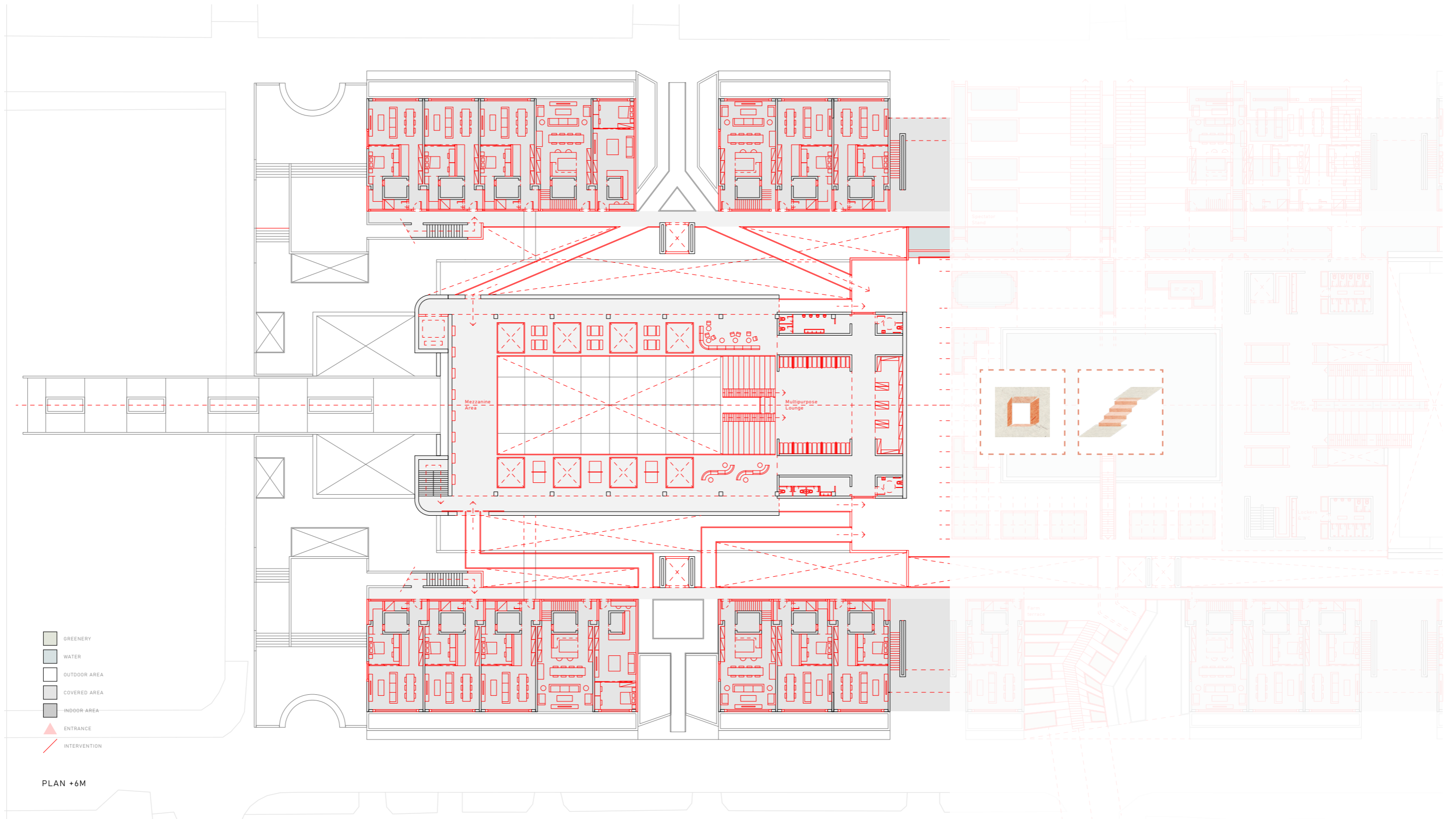




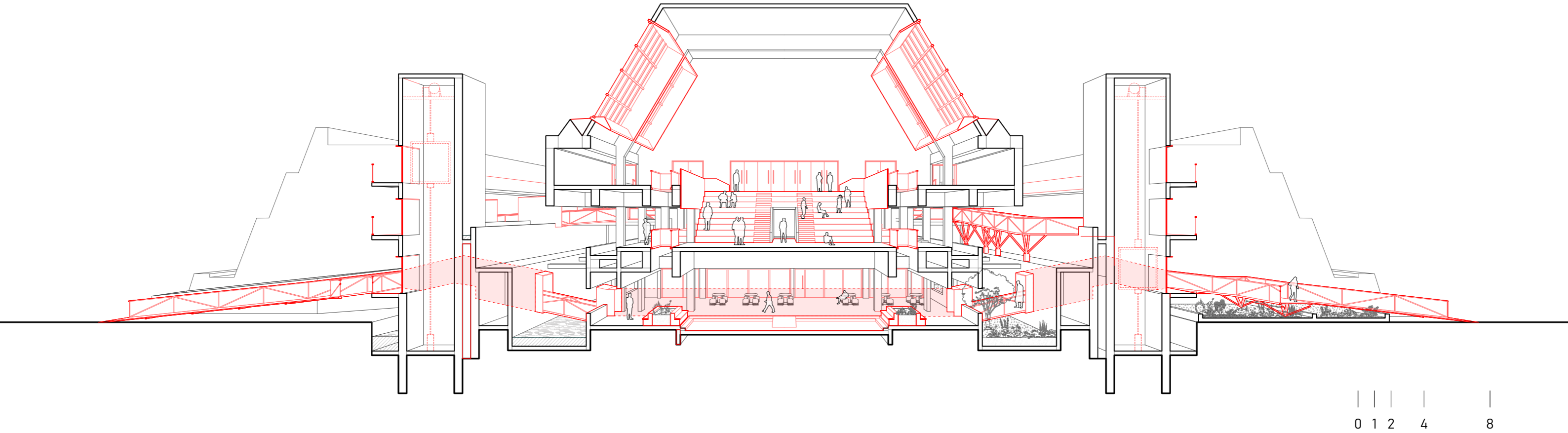




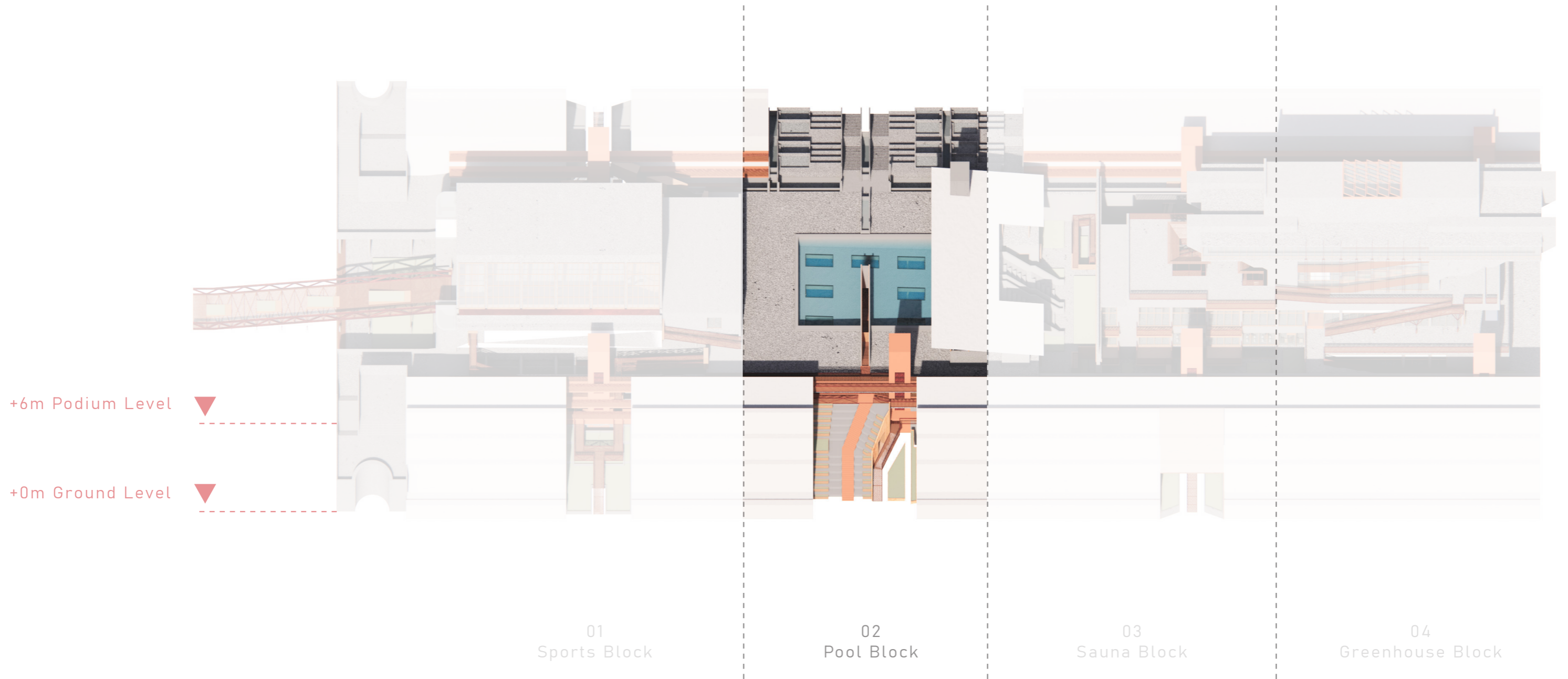
Nature - Access - Modulate

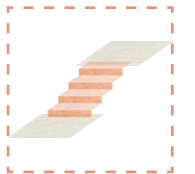
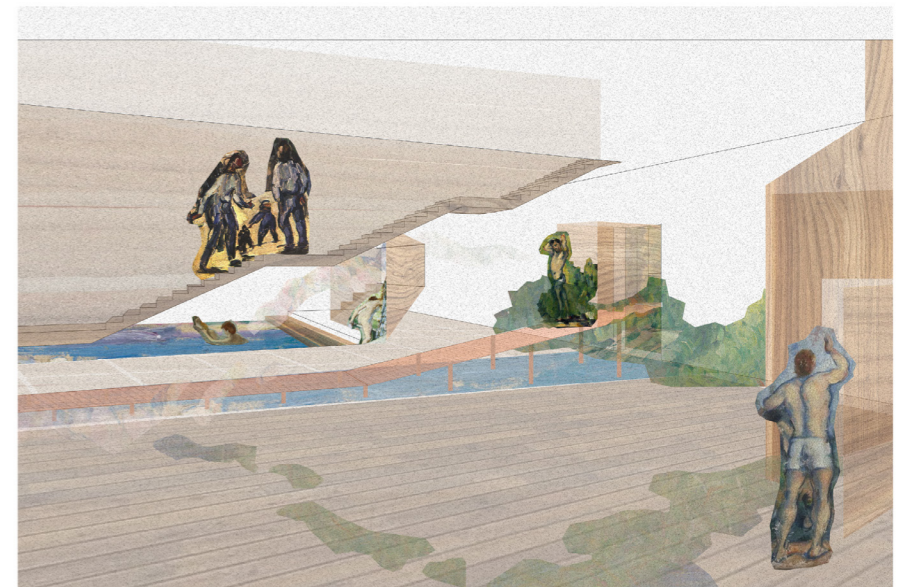
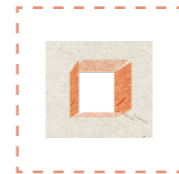
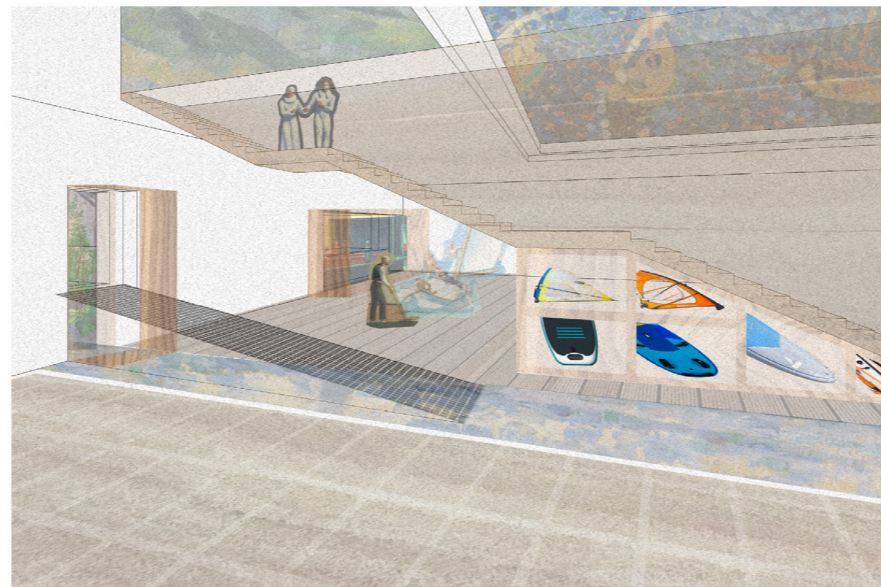


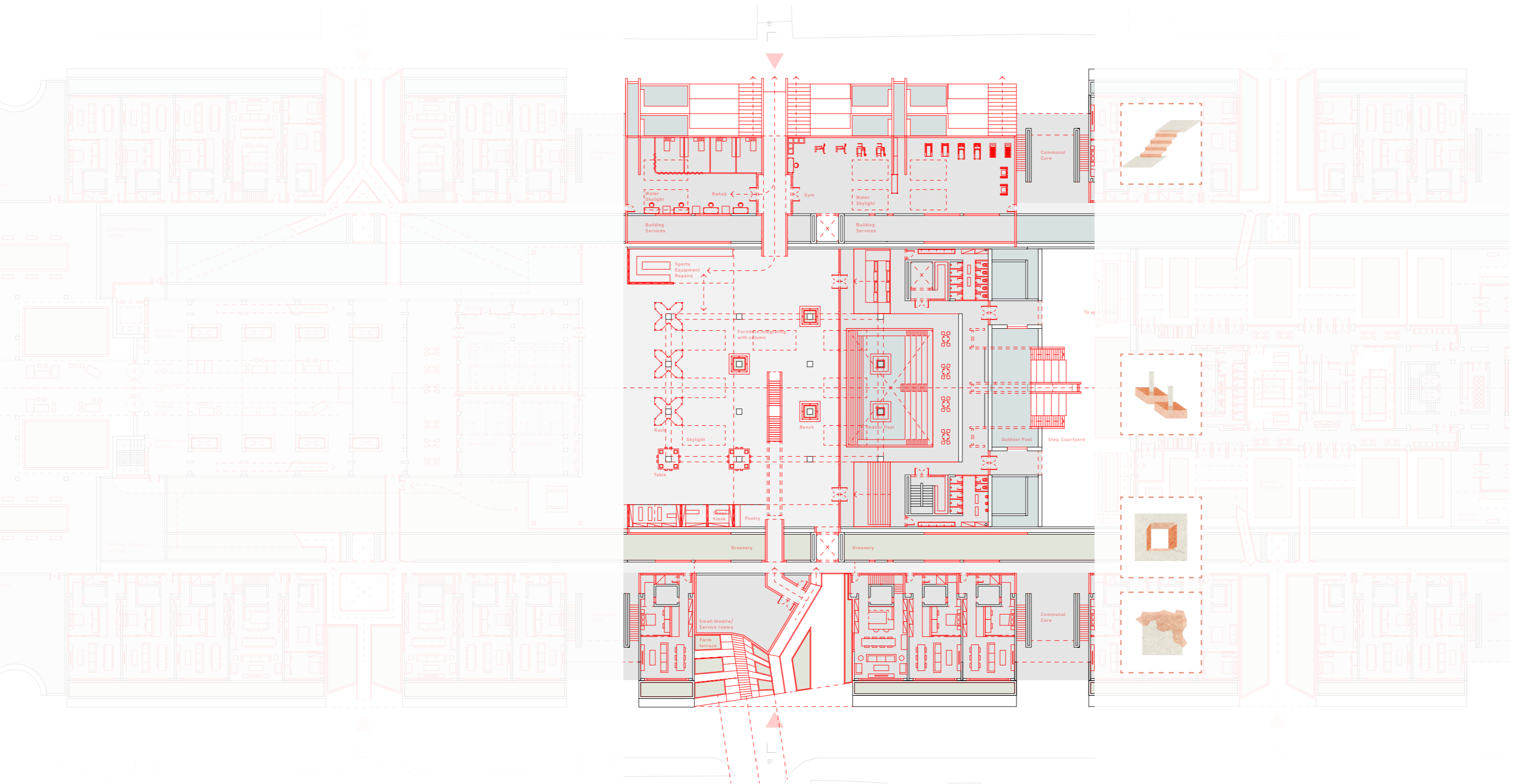
Puncturing and stitching vertically



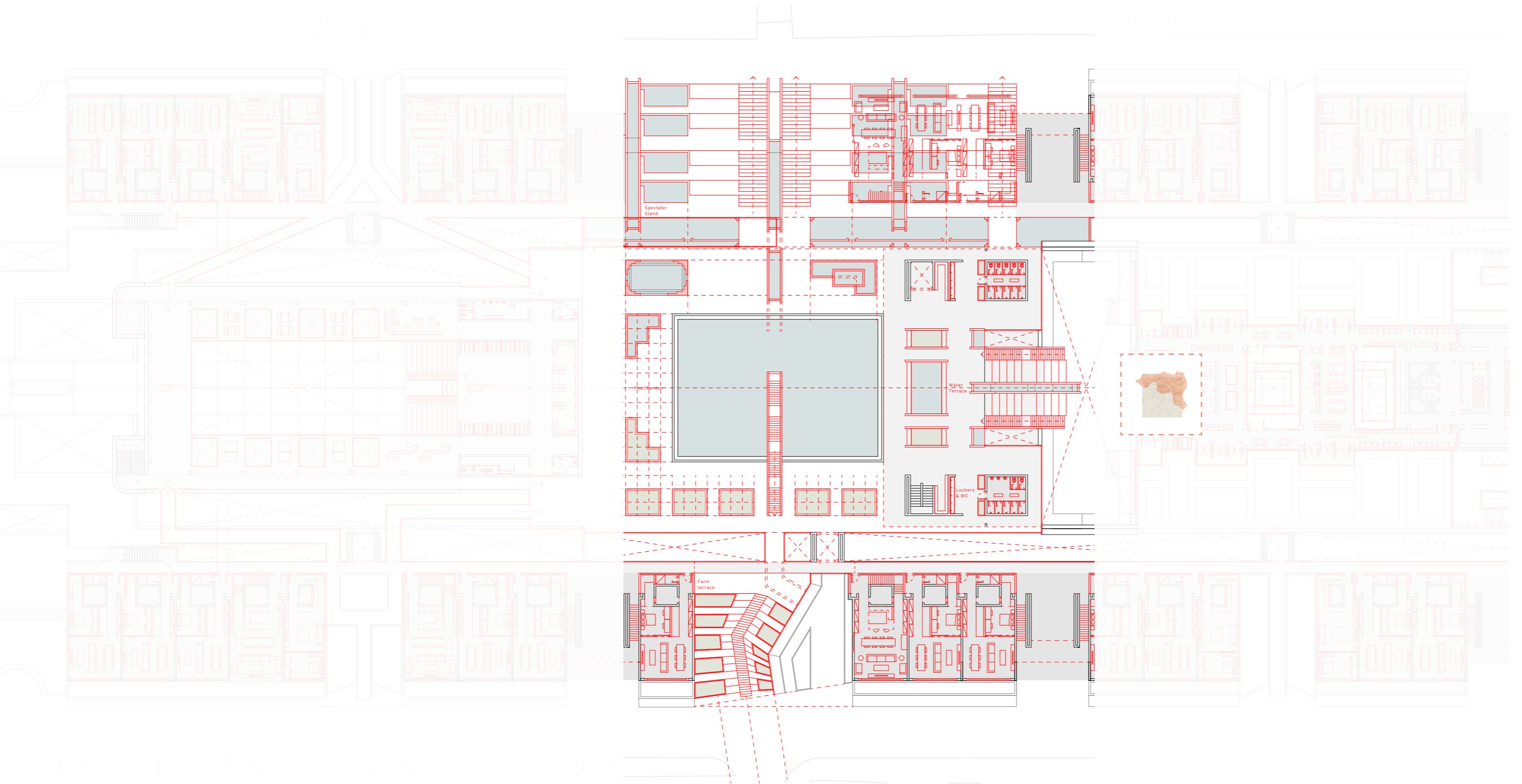
Spatial, programmatic, visual connections



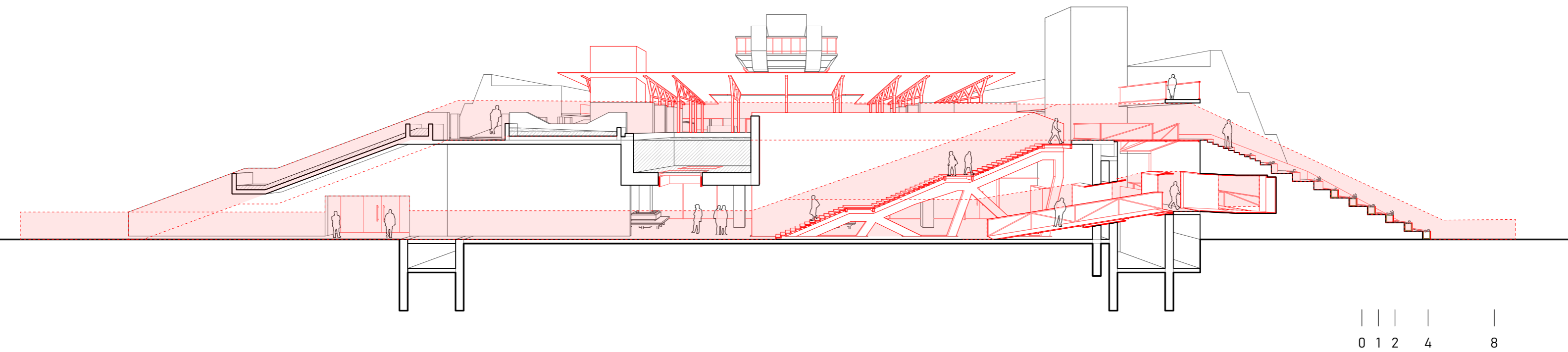




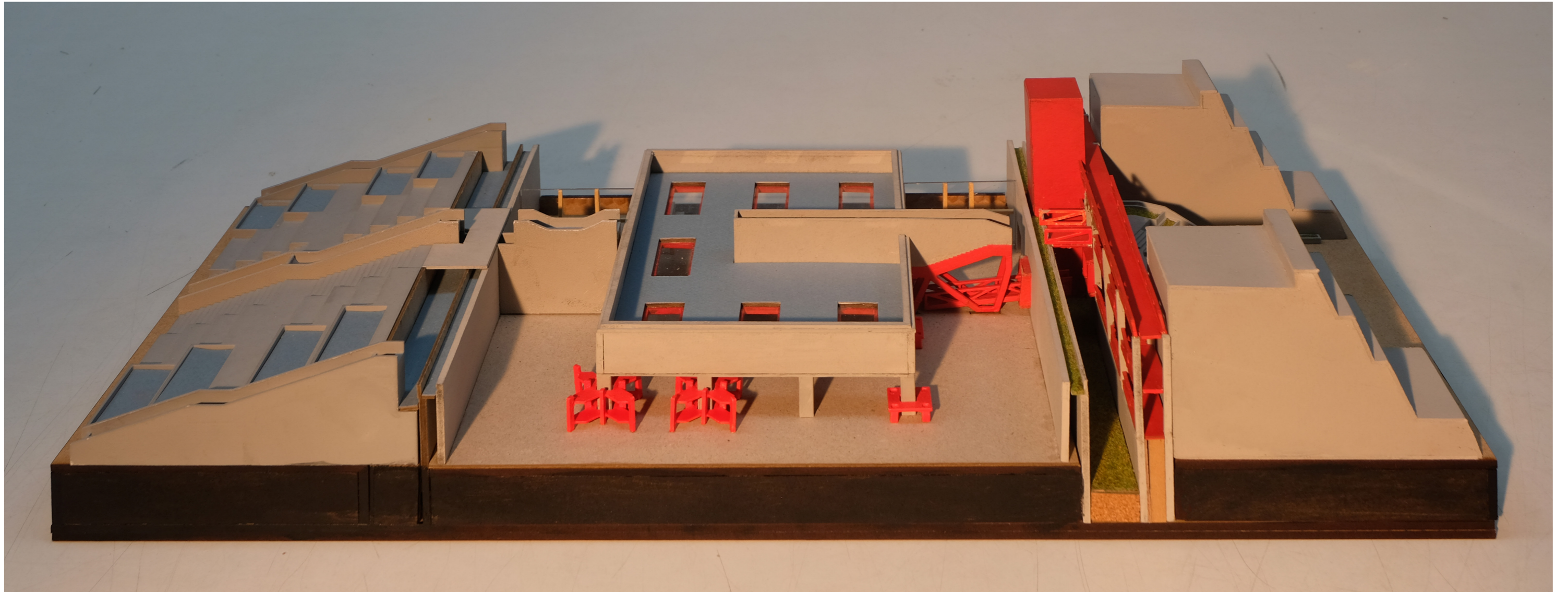
Nature - Access - Modulate - Puncture



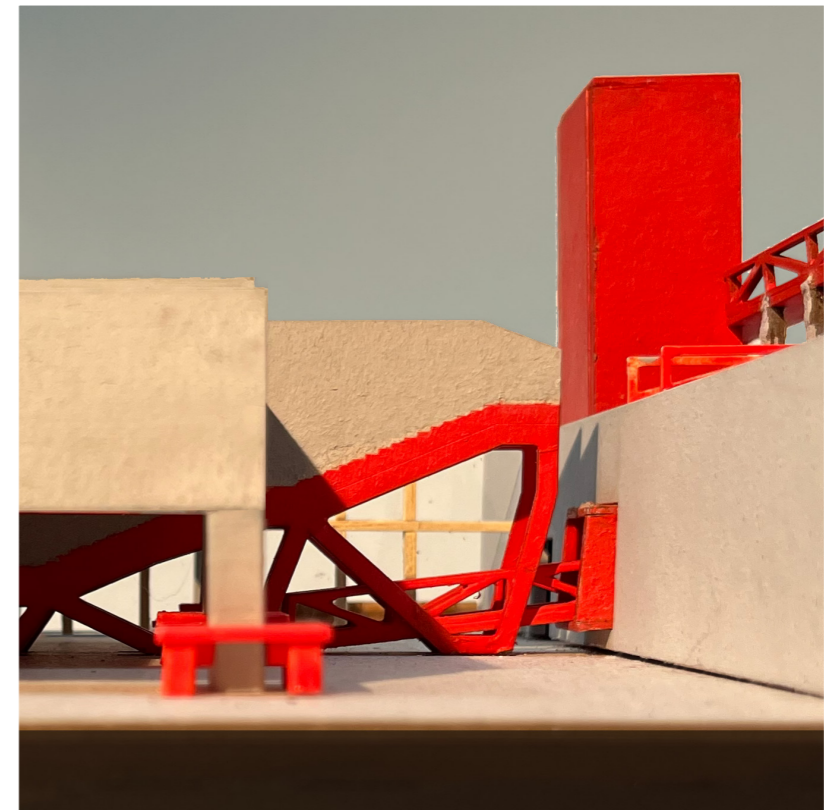
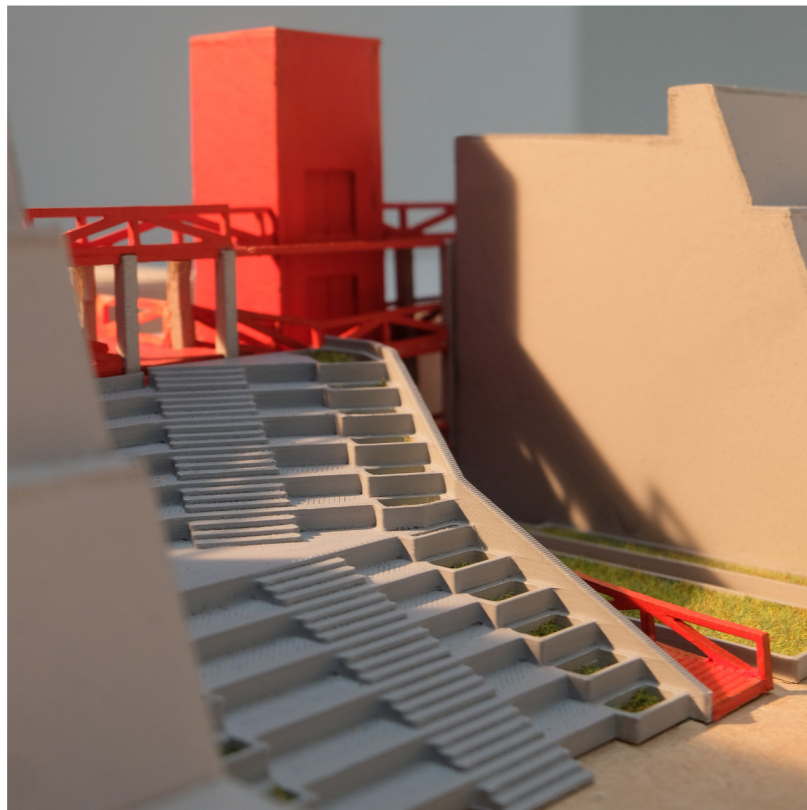
Blending natural elements into spaces



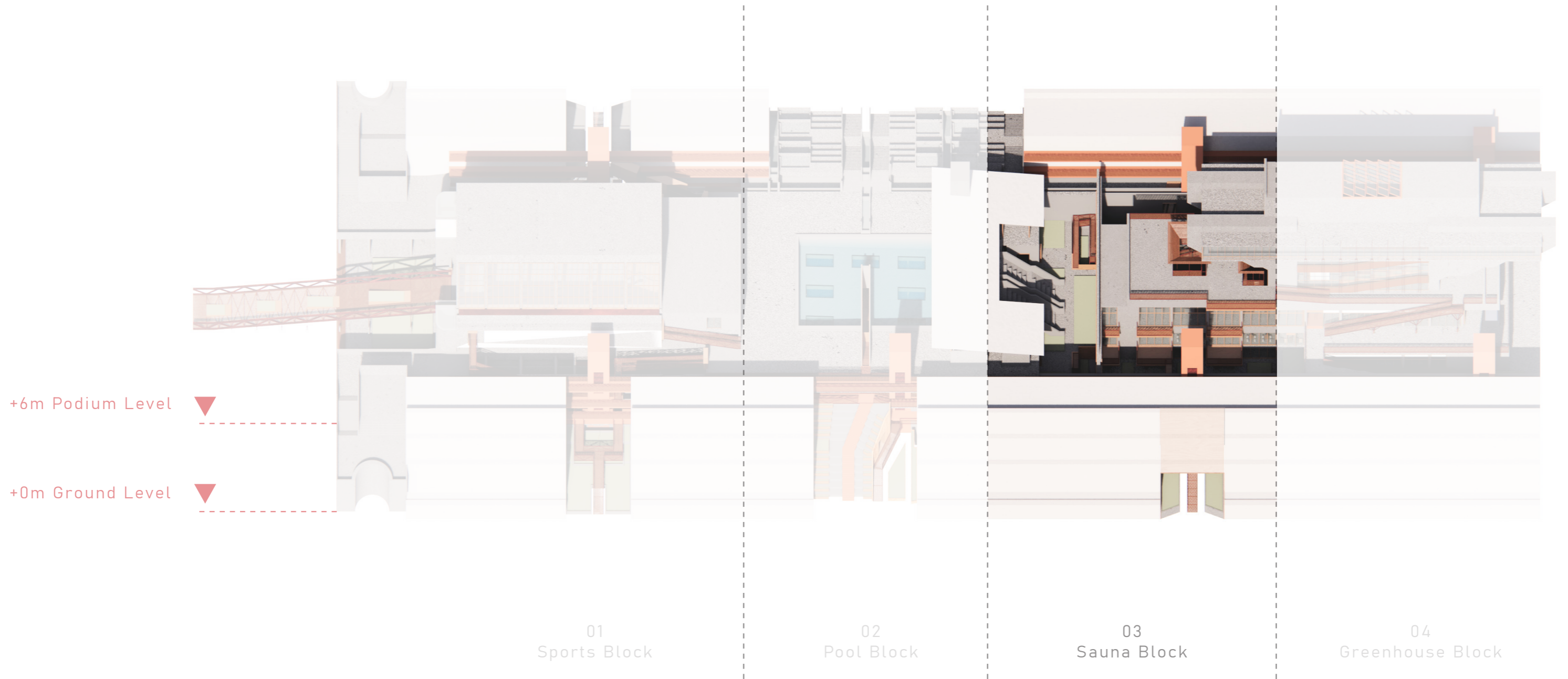
Diverse circulation experiences integrated with nature

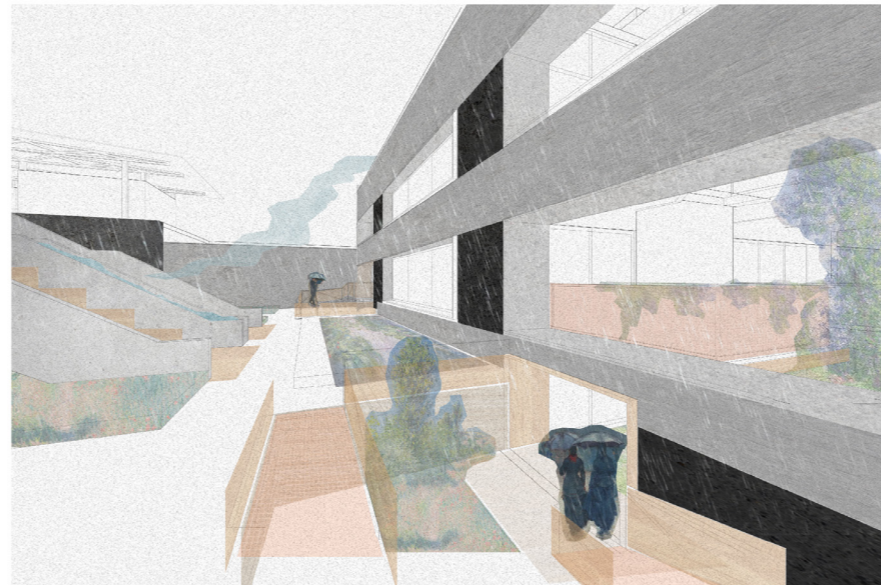
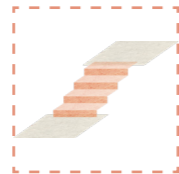
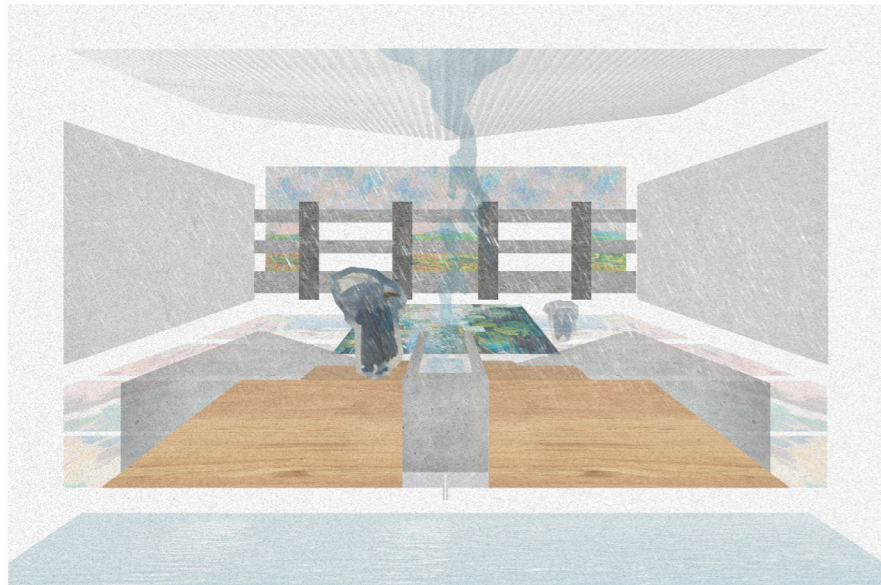


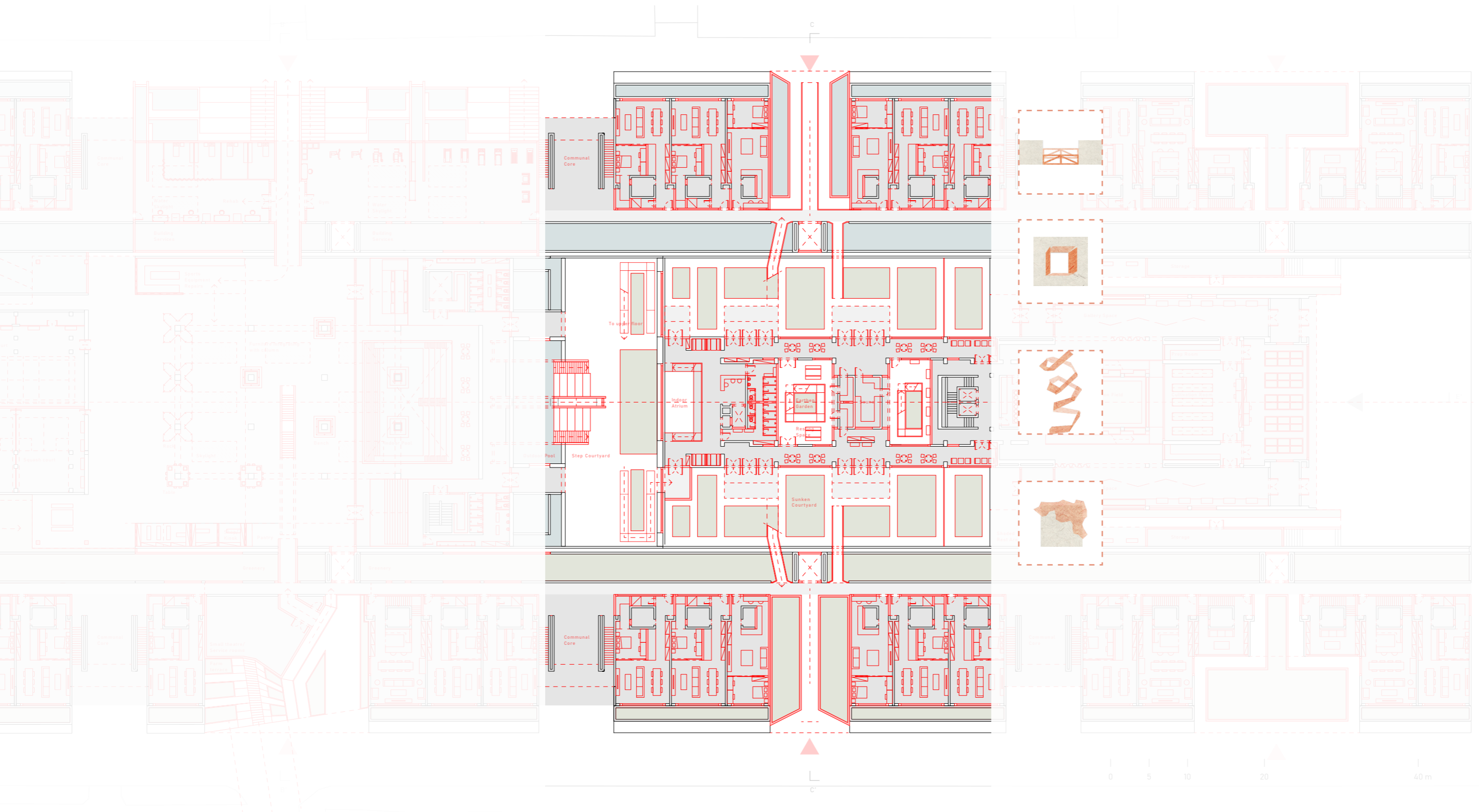
Diverse circulation experiences integrated with nature



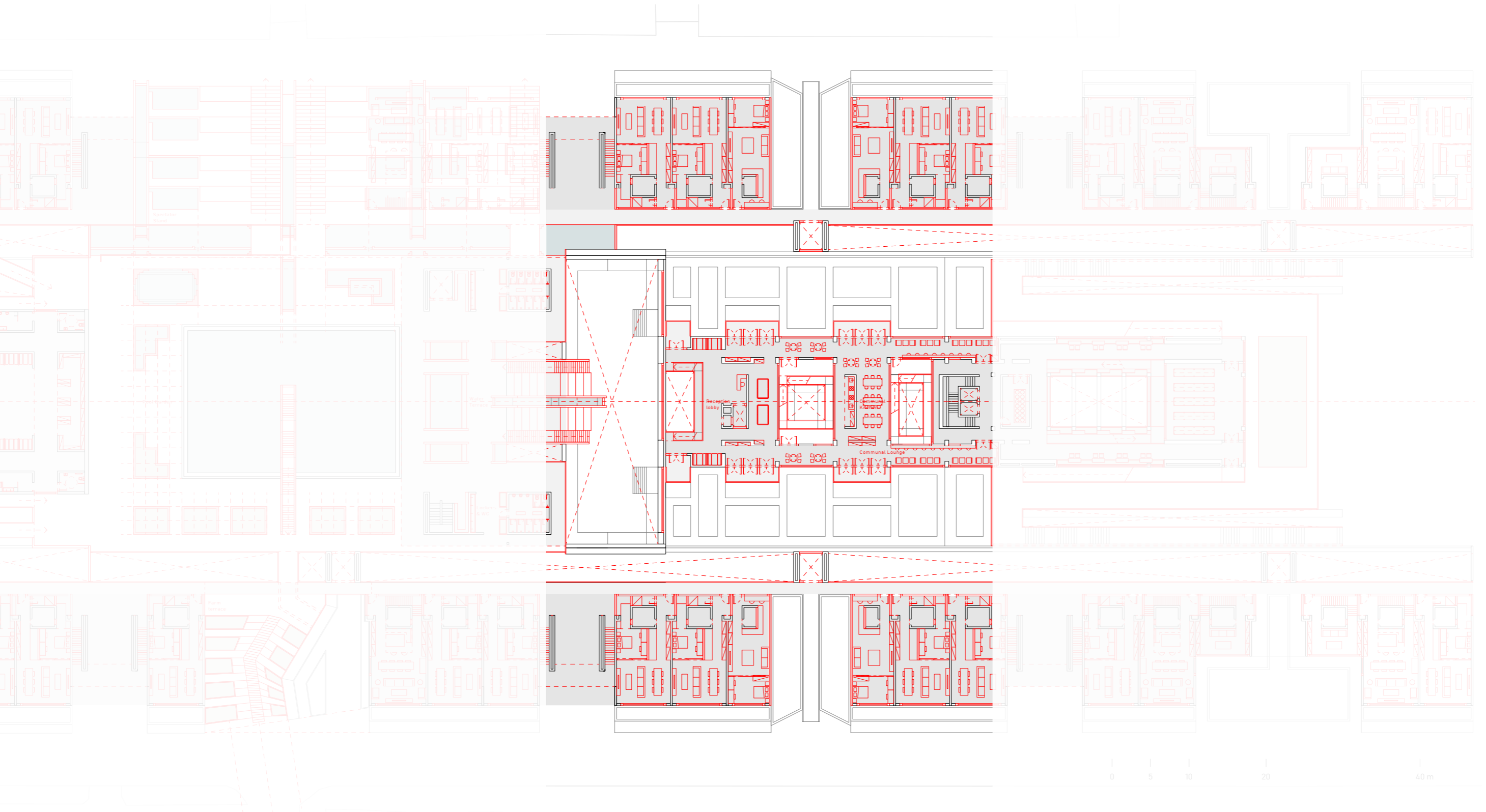
Diverse circulation experiences integrated with nature



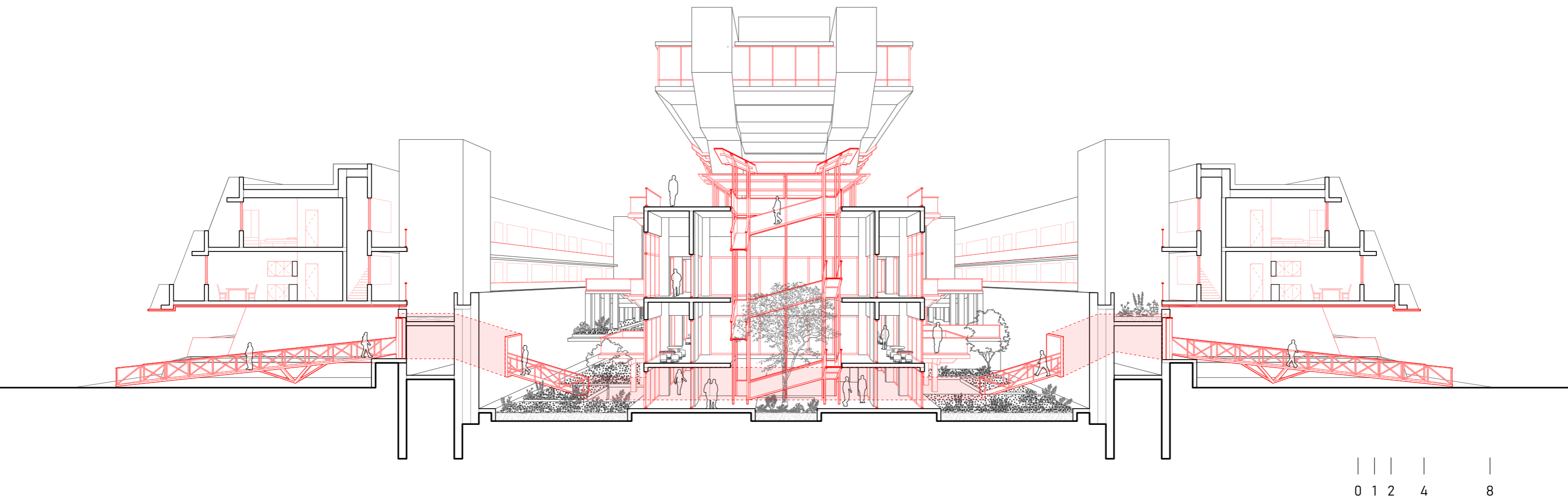




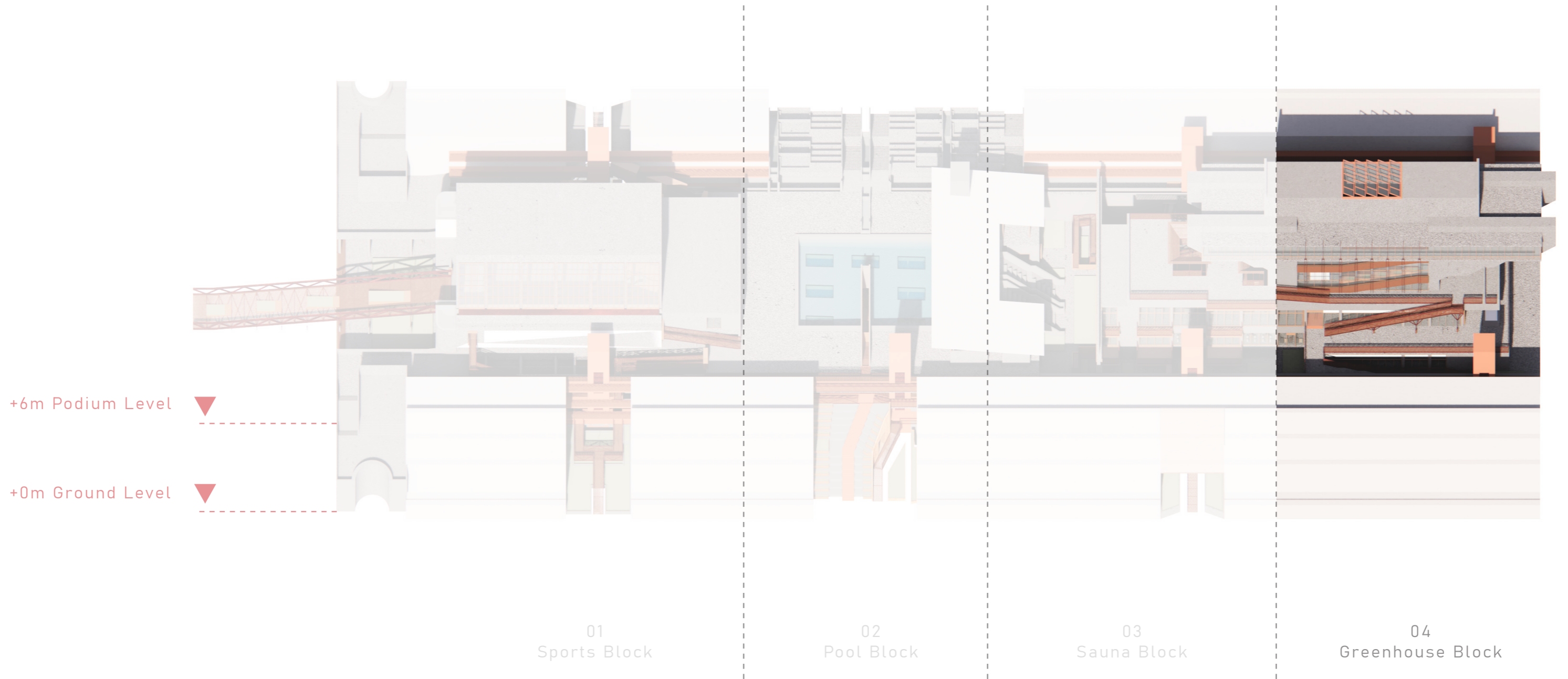
Nature - Access - Modulate - Puncture

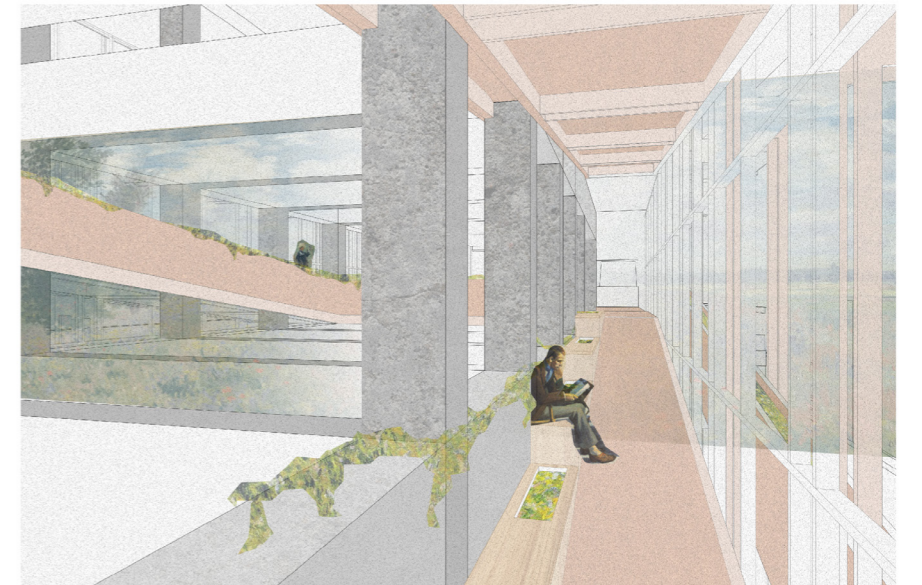
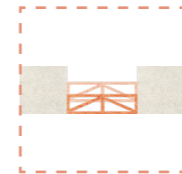
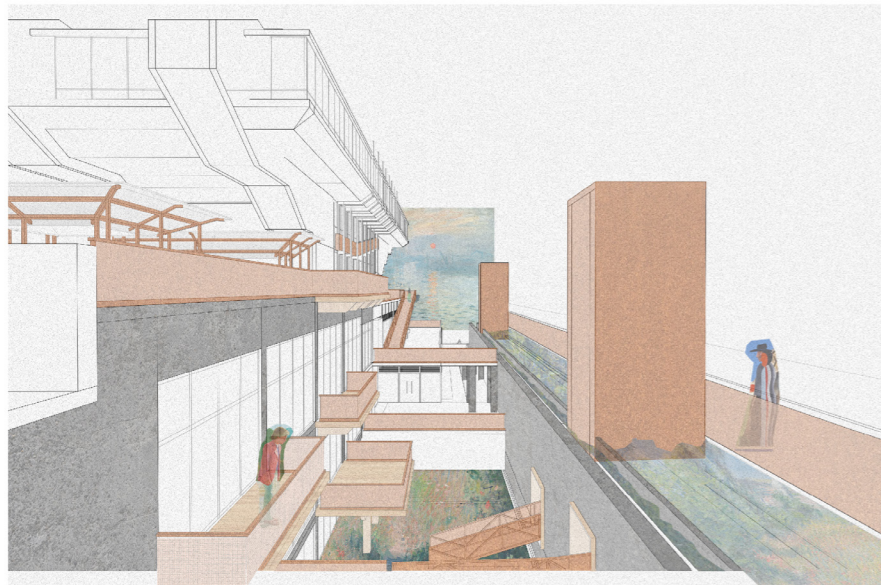


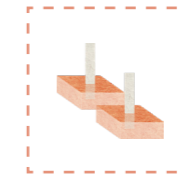
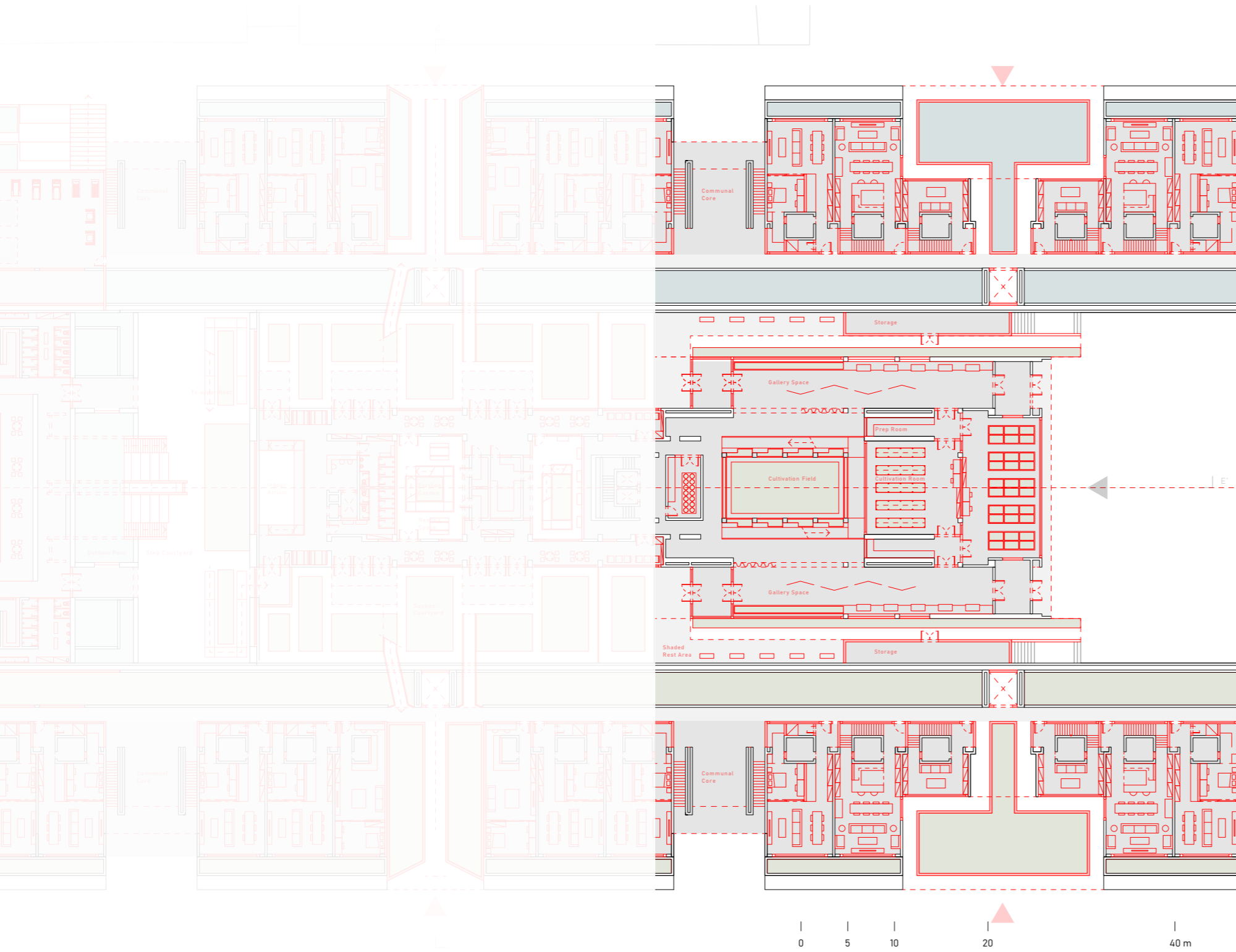
Programmes inviting habitation



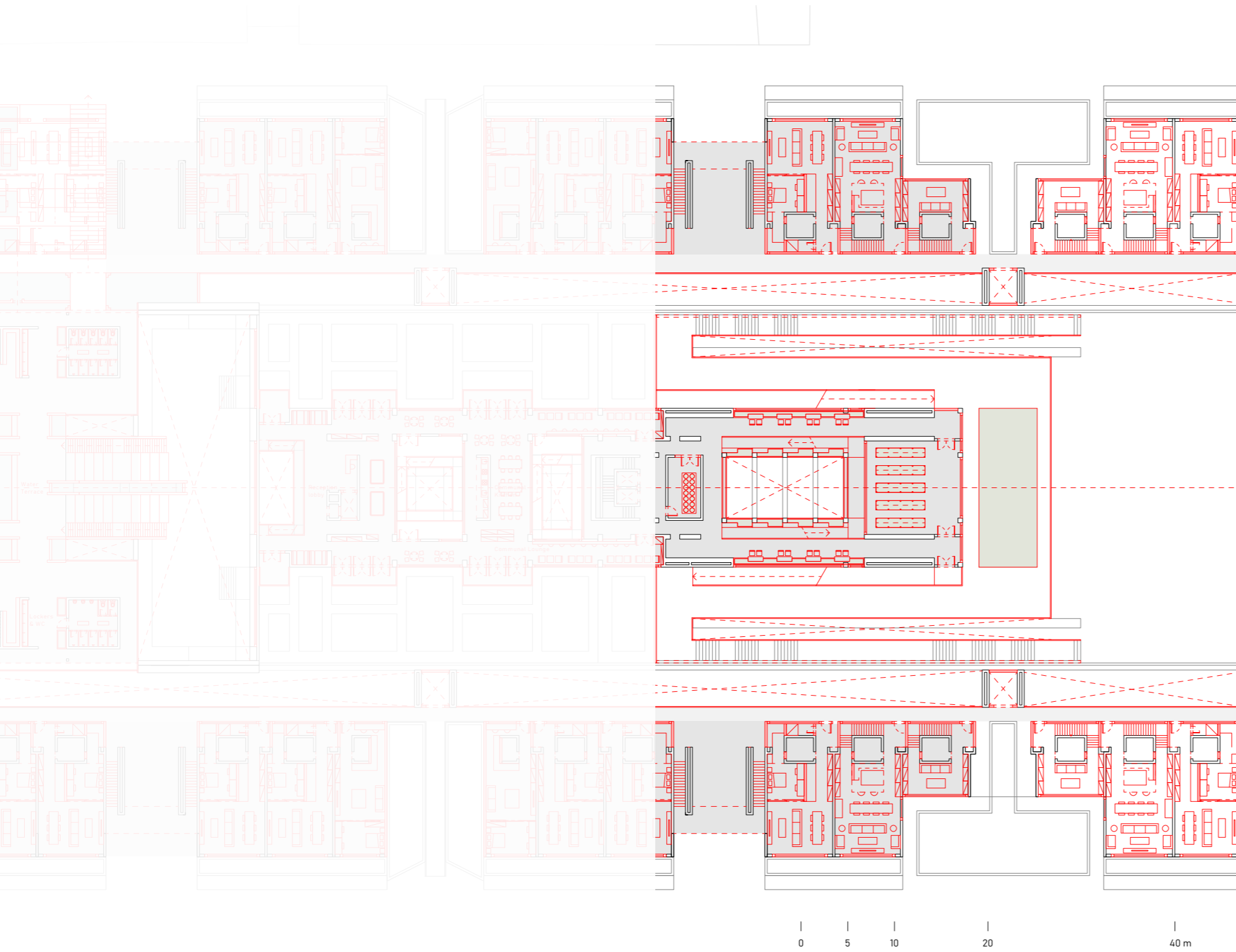
Sunken experience with nature



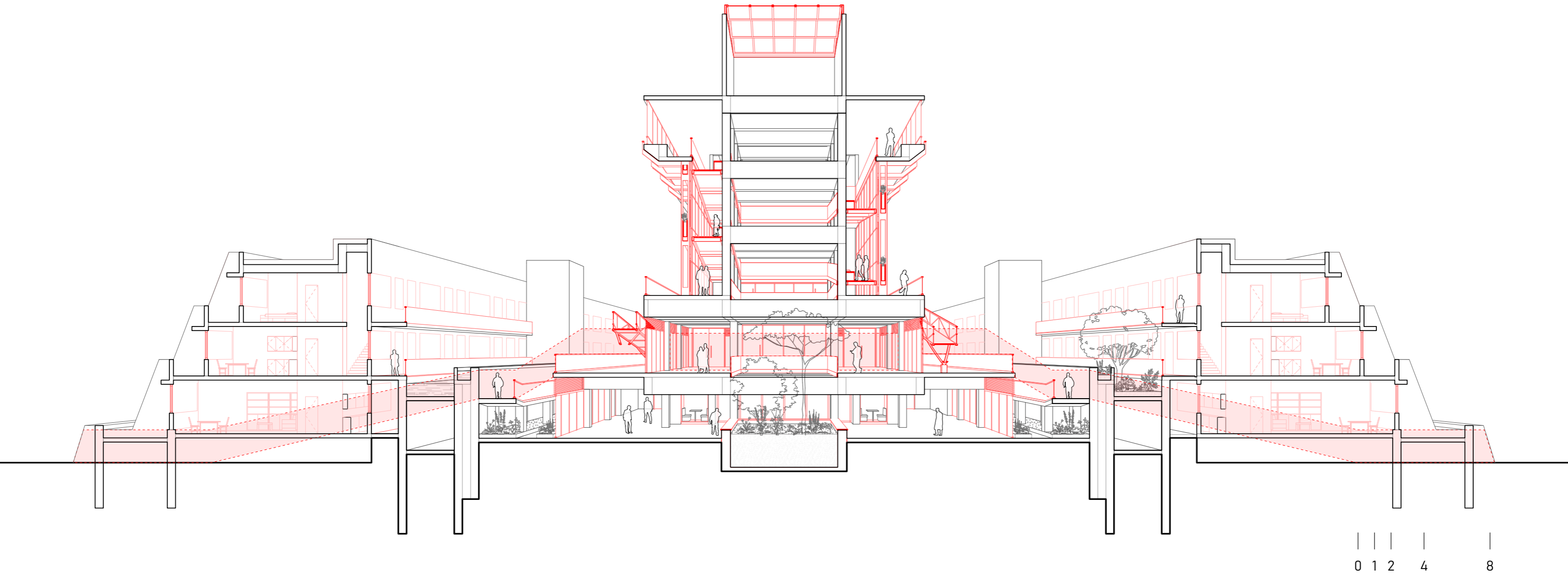




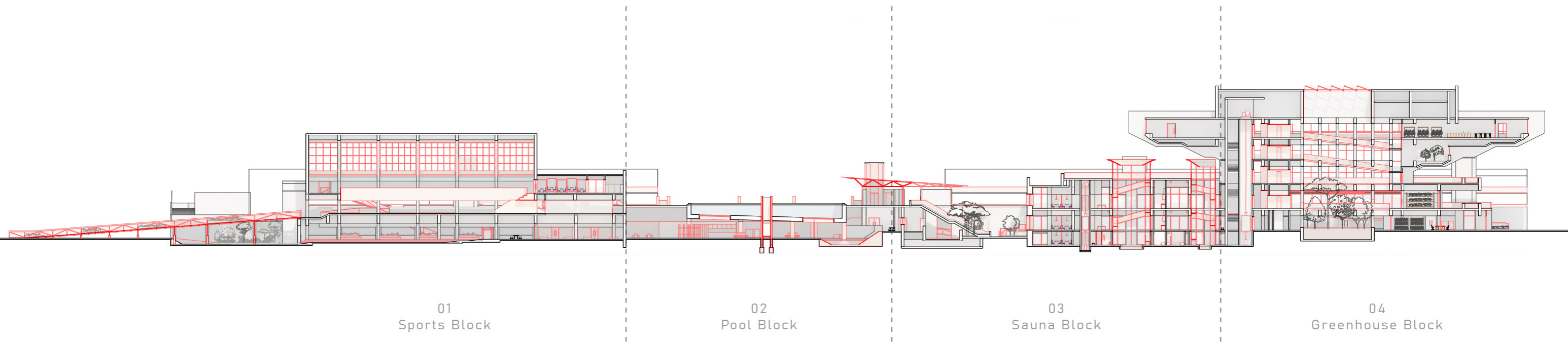
Nature to puncture - Access around nature



Nature to puncture - Access around nature



Experience with nature at different altitudes

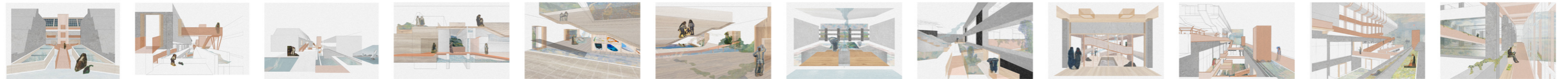


01
Sports Block

02
Pool Block

03
Sauna Block

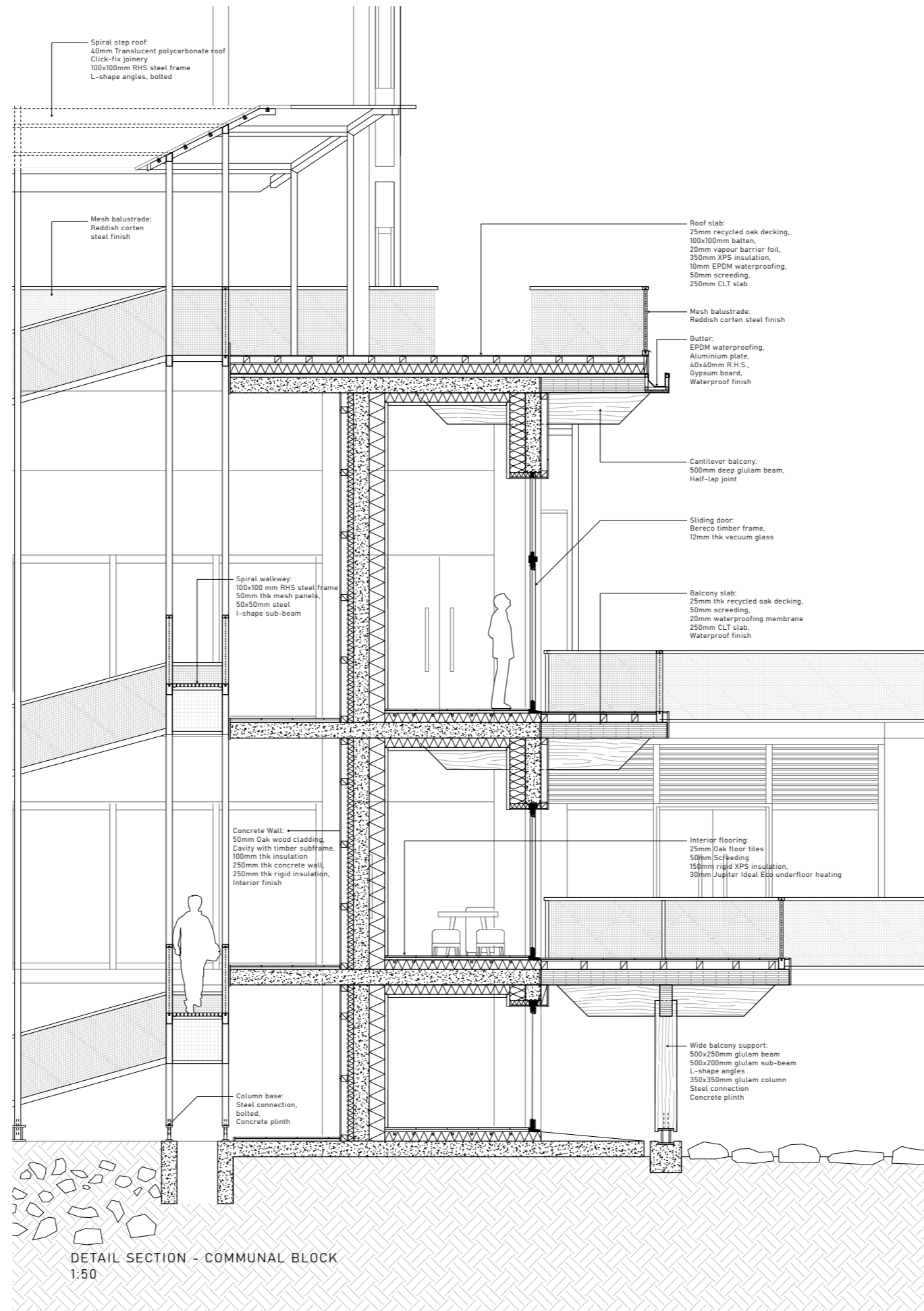
04
Greenhouse Block



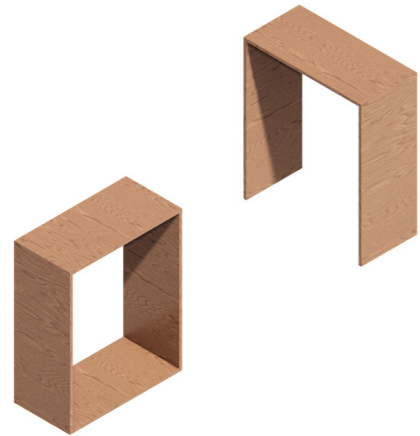
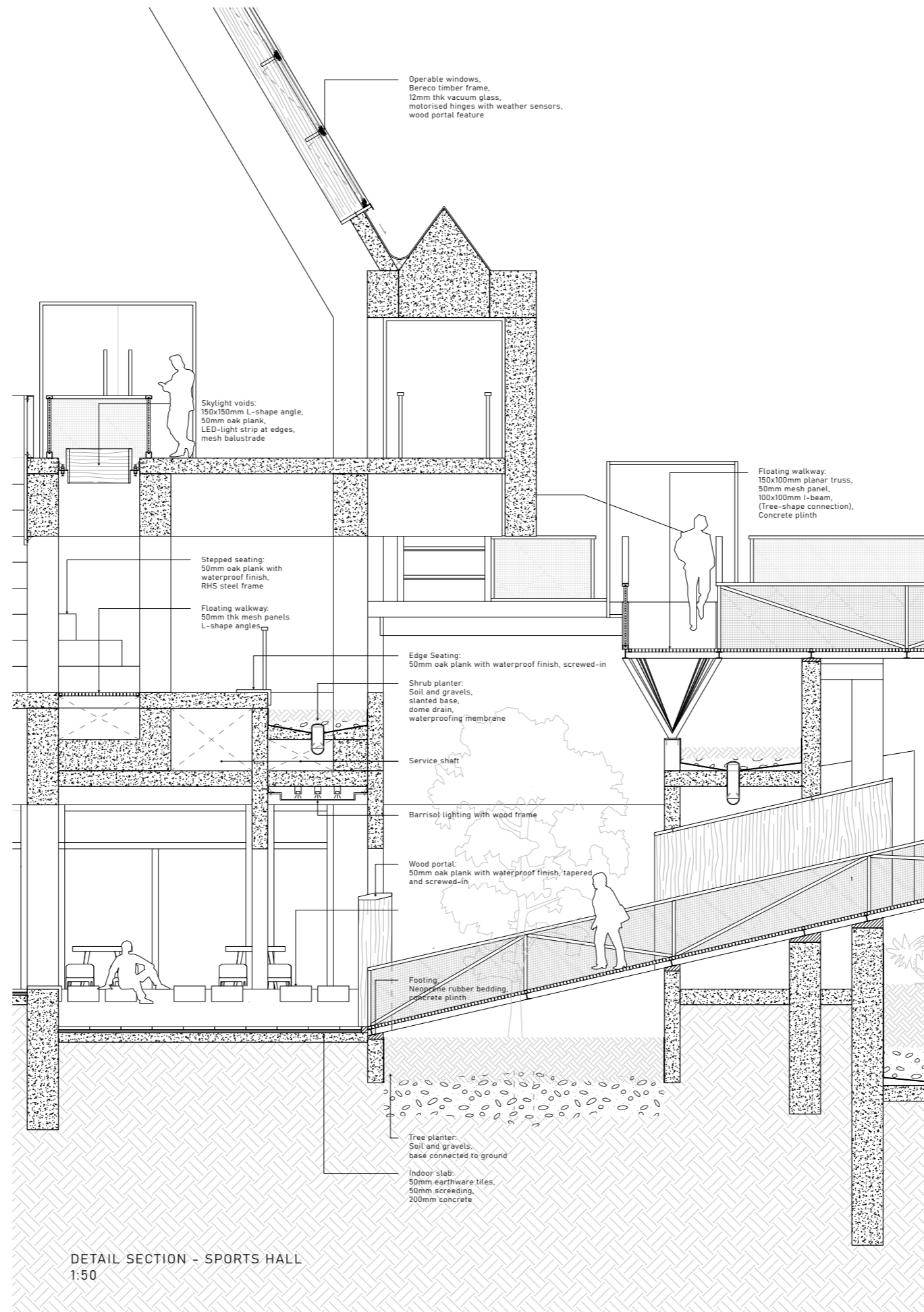
Connected and programmatised podium and ground



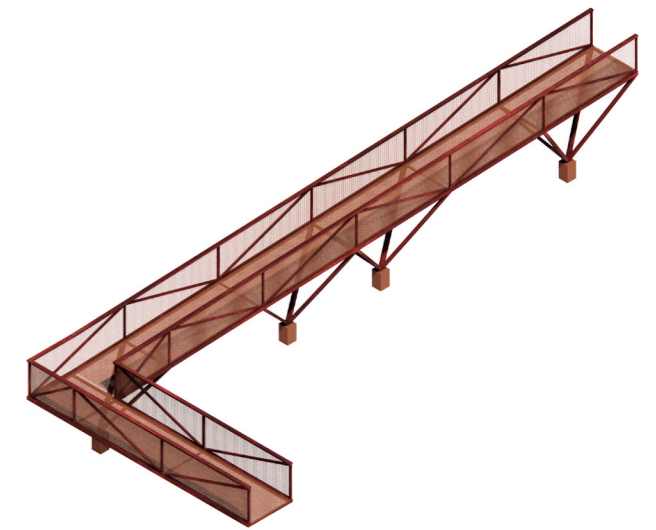
SPIRAL COURTYARD



TREE-INSPIRED CANTILEVERED
BALCONIES



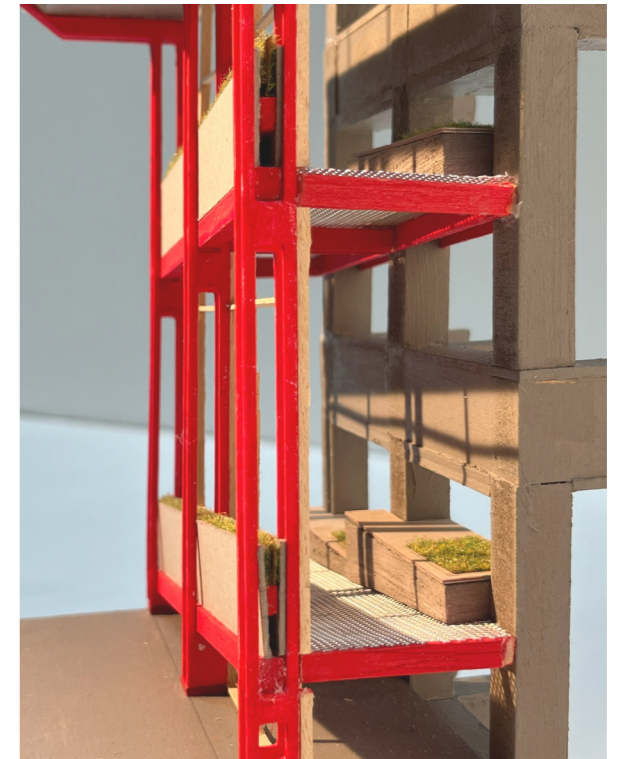
TIMBER PORTALS



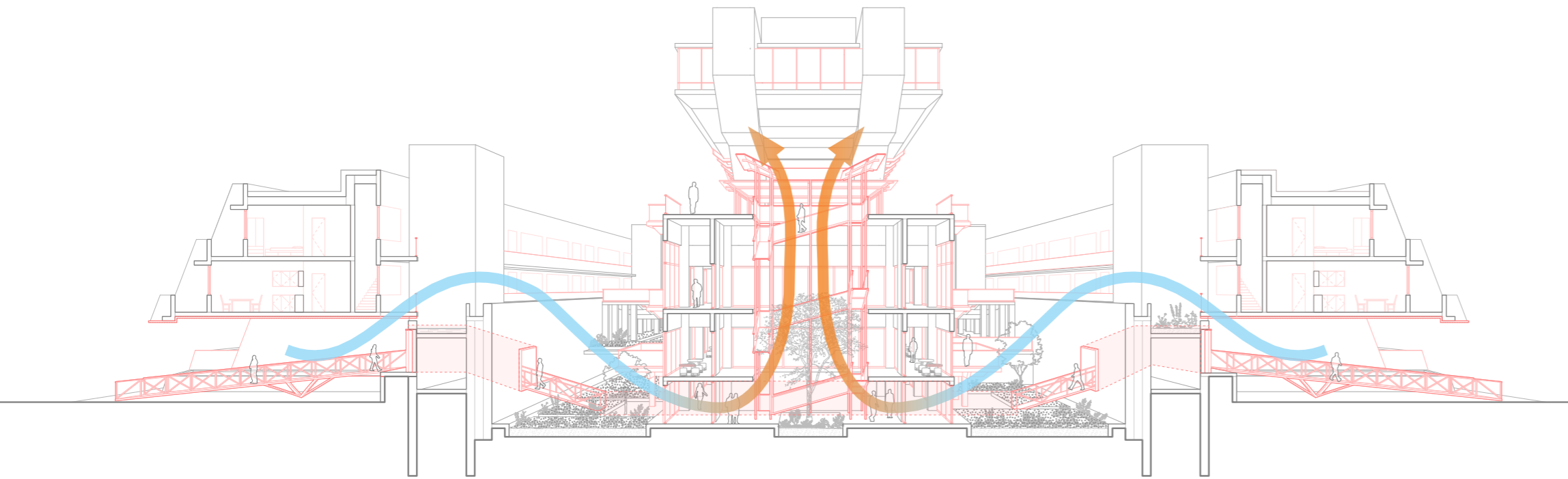
PLANAR STEEL FRAME WITH WITH
TREE-LIKE FOOTING



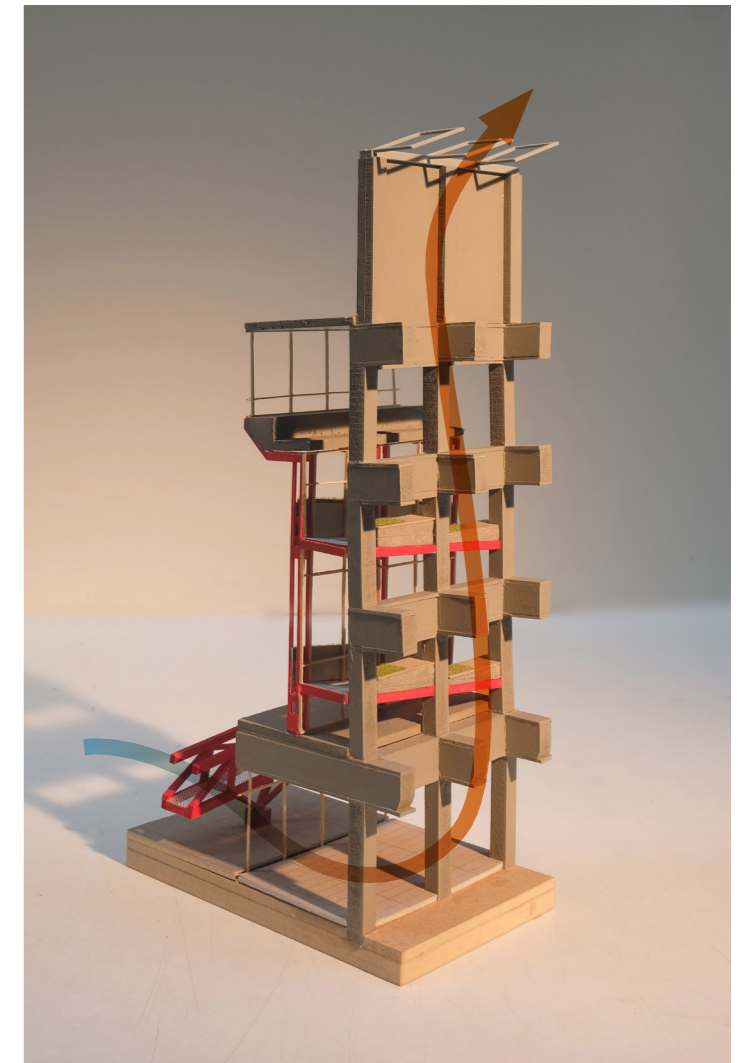
FACADE ARTICULATION



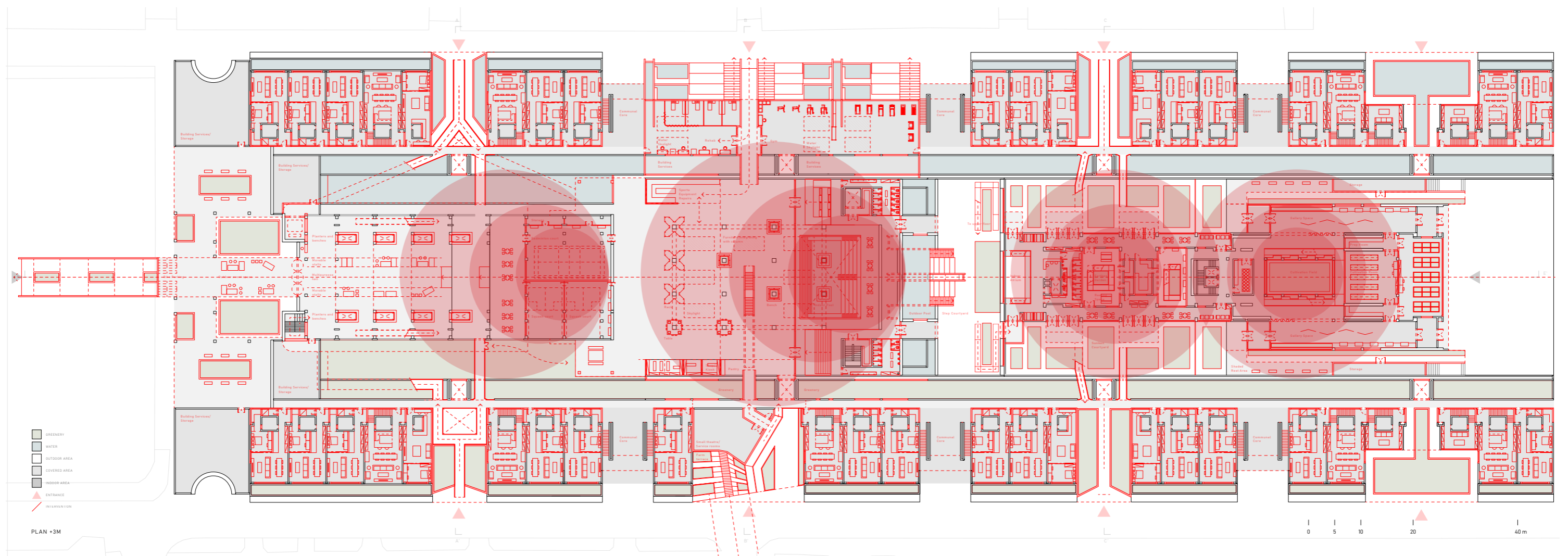
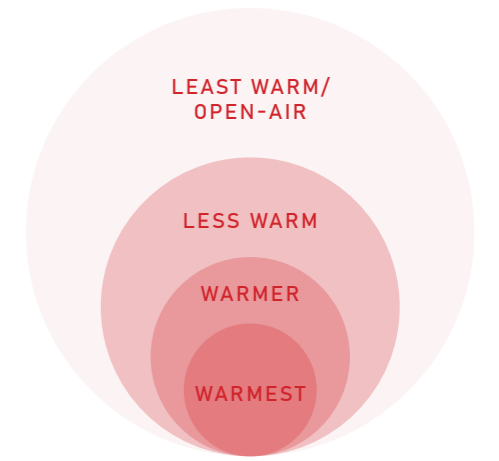
PLANT-INTEGRATED ELEMENTS



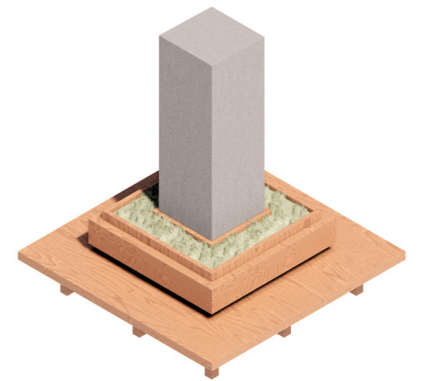
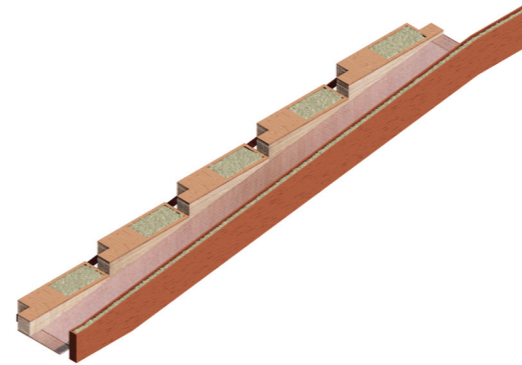
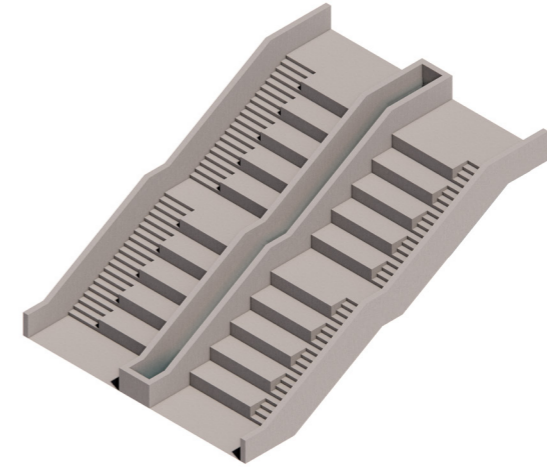
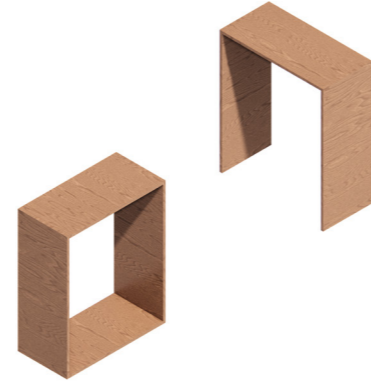
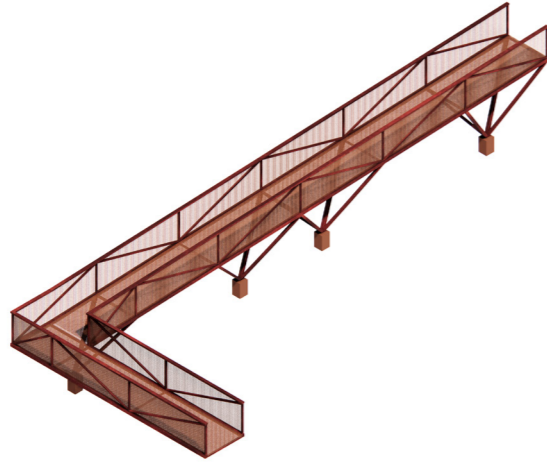
SECTION - SAUNA BLOCK



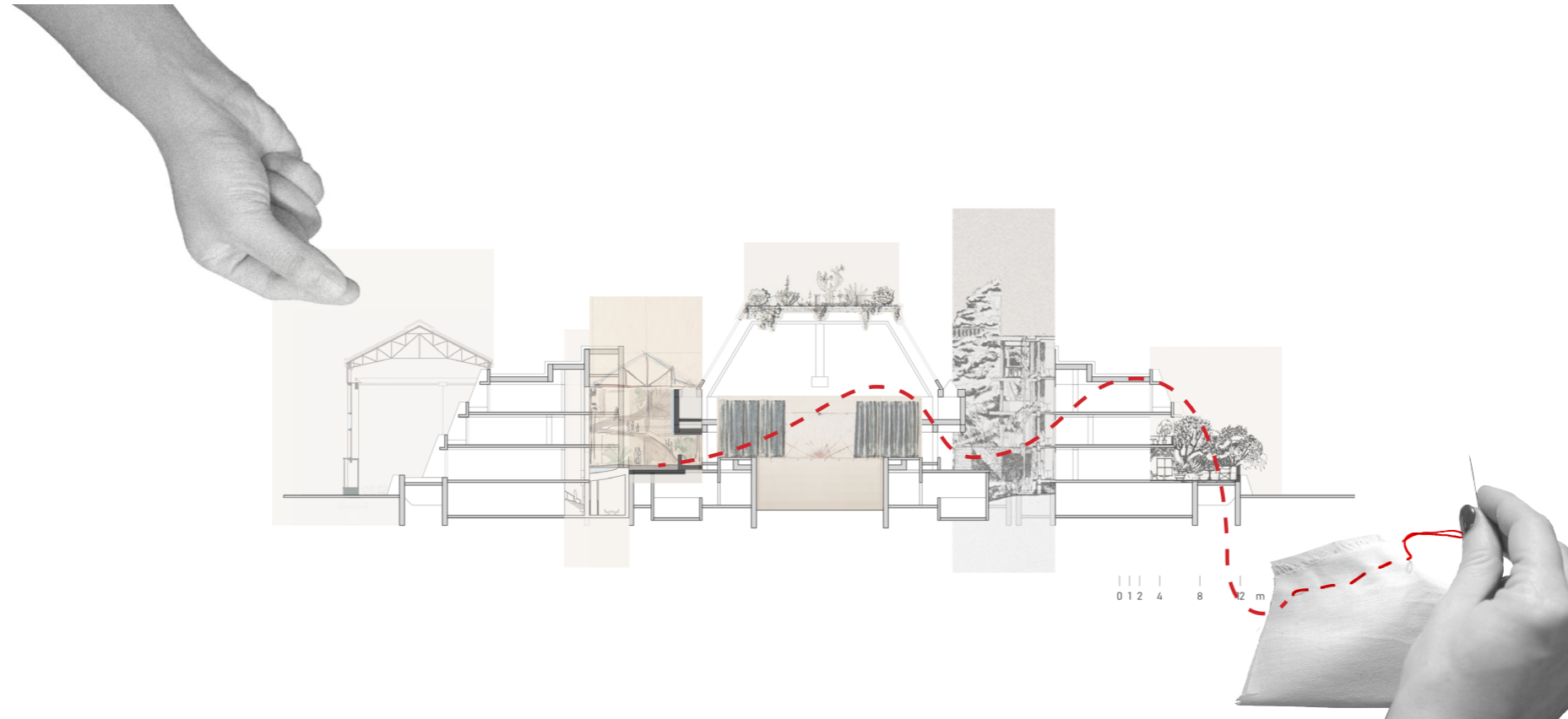
MODEL - GREENHOUSE BLOCK



“Onion” layering of programmes based on needs for heating



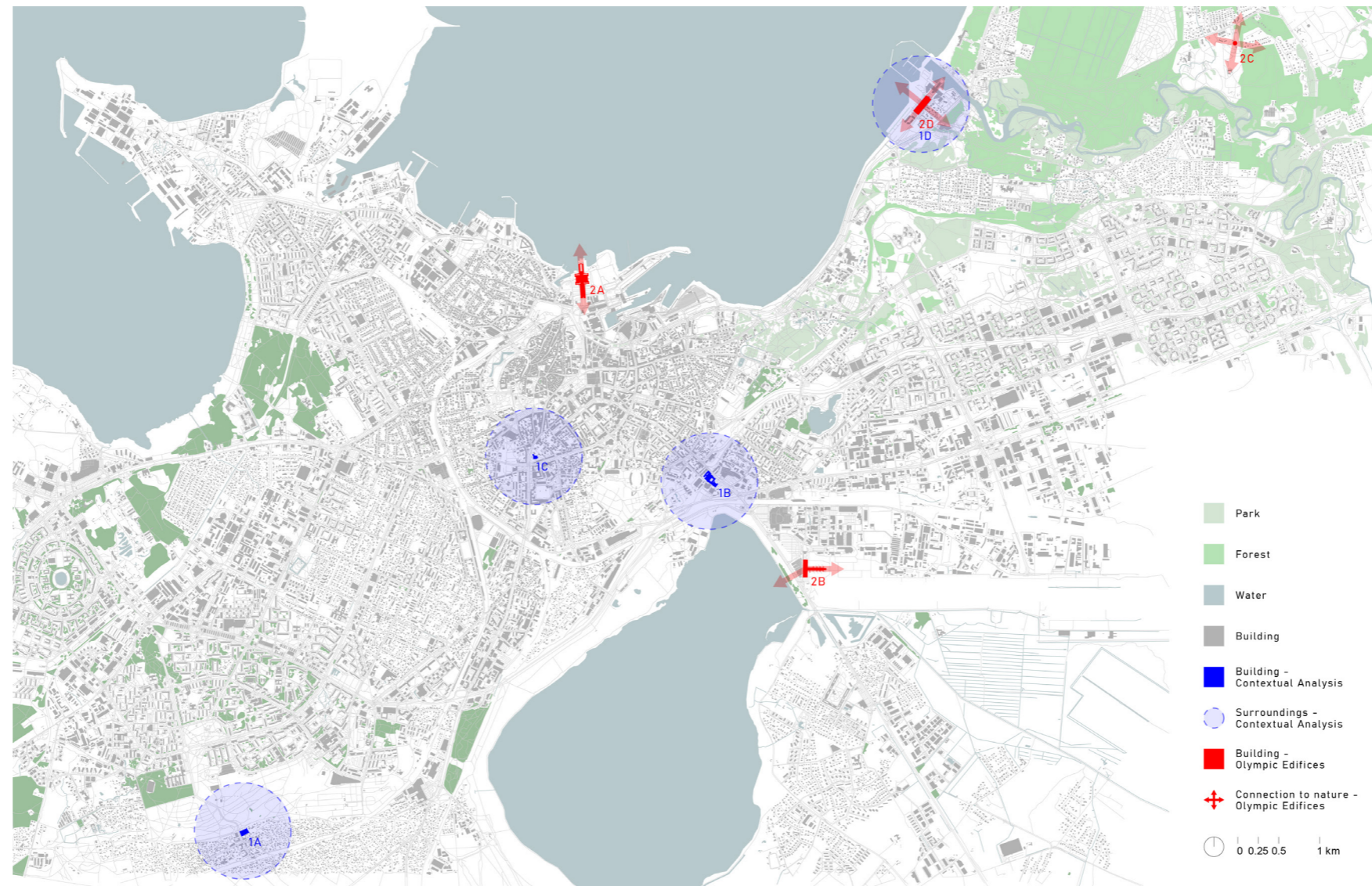
A scalable kit-of-parts...



developed from technique of collage and montage...



to modulate monumental big buildings...



2A
LINNAHALL



2B
TALLINN AIRPORT



2C
TALLINN TV TOWER



1D/2D
OLYMPIC YACHTING
CENTRE

within Tallinn's oversized Soviet edifices

Owners looking for new solution for Pirita TOP building complex

NEWS

ERR

13.02.2026 15:28



TOP area in Pirita. Source: Siim Lövi /ERR

A new purpose and architectural solution are being sought for the sailing sports center, but it is currently unclear whether reconstruction of the protected complex could begin.



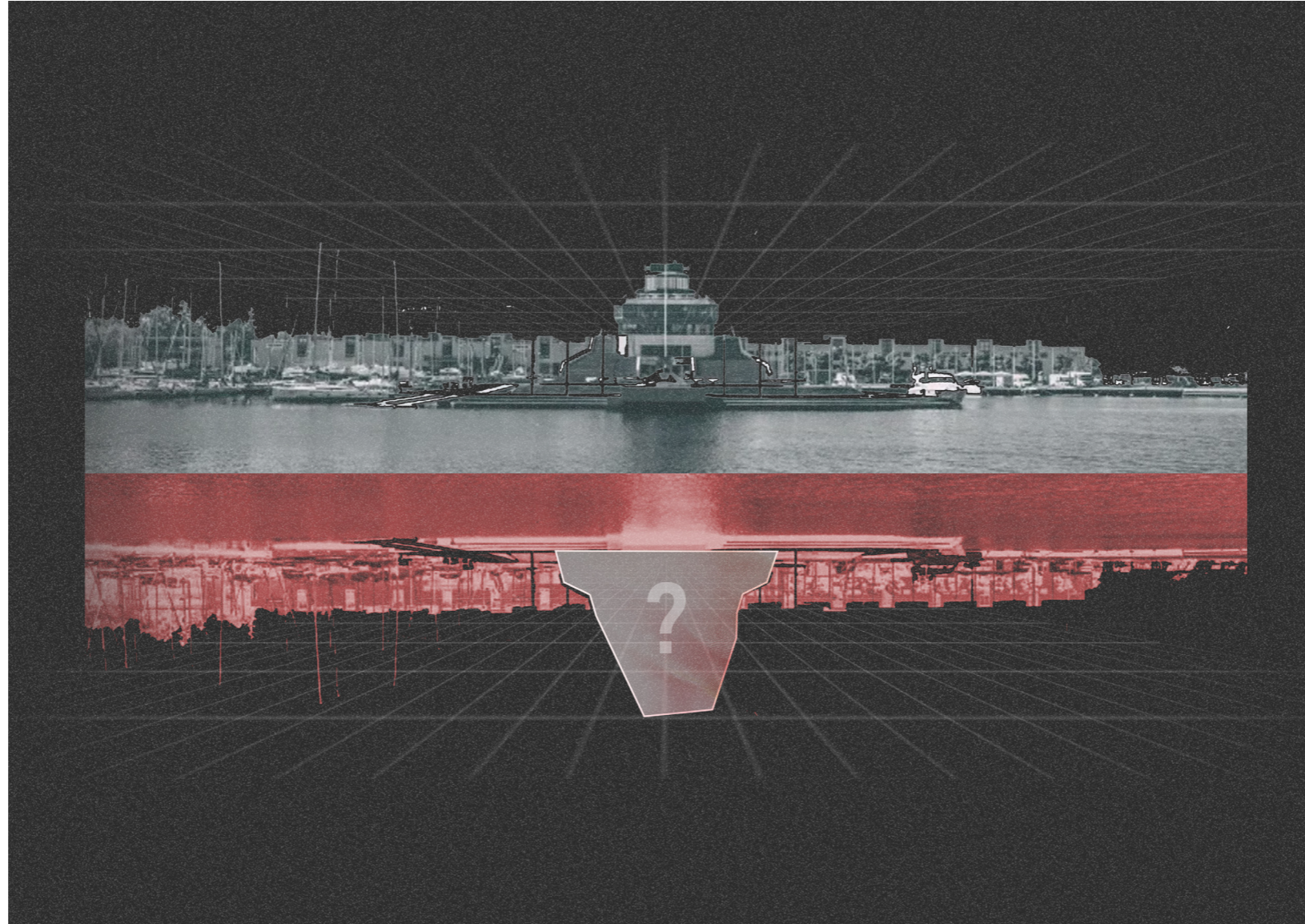
However, the owner company, Tallinna Olümpiaspordikeskus (TOP), has submitted a proposal to initiate a detailed plan for the seaside section of the complex. The proposal seeks to redesign the building solution set out in the current plan, organize an **architectural competition and construct** — based on the winning design — a spa hotel of up to four stories on the property, which would also include residential units.

In addition, the area is intended to feature **a public city square and promenade.**

Tuulberg said that because TOP is a historic Olympic sailing center and an important part of Pirita's seaside area, further discussions will proceed from the principle that the site should retain its sports- and leisure-oriented character and fit into the surrounding environment.

"The idea collection is being carried out in cooperation with the Union of Estonian Architects and the Tallinn Cultural Heritage Department in order to map out possible directions and assess the suitability of different solutions," he said.

What's next for the Yachting Centre?



COLLAGE -
HETEROTOPIC LENS TO VIEW AND OPERATE THE YACHTING CENTRE

Question Time!