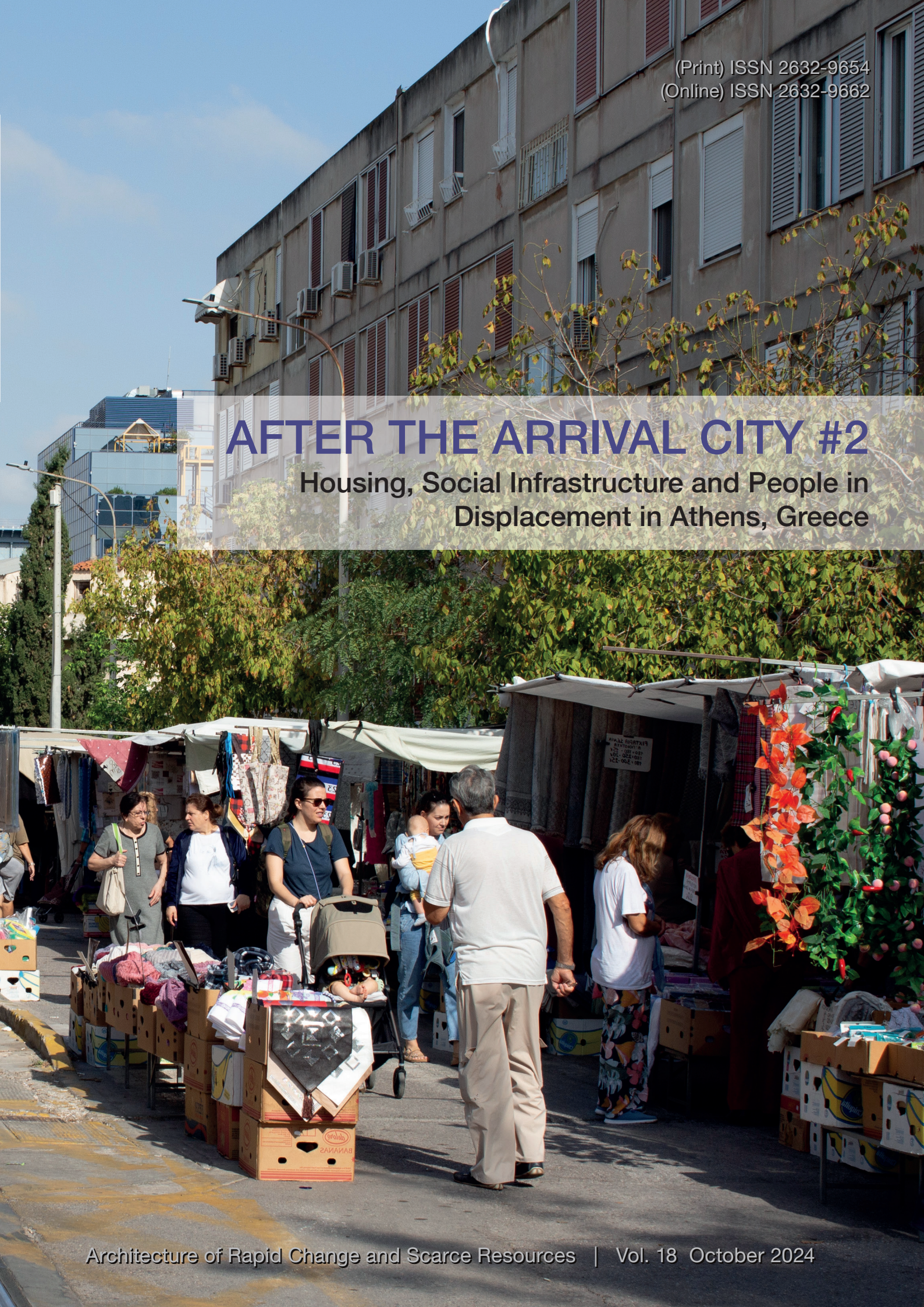
(Print) ISSN 2632-9654
(Online) ISSN 2632-9662



AFTER THE ARRIVAL CITY #2

Housing, Social Infrastructure and People in Displacement in Athens, Greece

Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources | Vol. 18 October 2024

AFTER THE ARRIVAL CITY #2

Housing, Social Infrastructure and People in Displacement in Athens, Greece

October 2024

Vol. 18 October 2024
Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources
MArch Unit 6 | School of Art, Architecture and Design
London Metropolitan University

Published by London Metropolitan University as part of the Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources (ARCSR) journal series.

Volume 18 - October 2024 Editors: Bo Tang and Sara Golnabi
Cover image by Arun Kowcun

ISSN 2632-9654 (Print)
ISSN 2632-9662 (Online)

© ARCSR

www.arcsr.org

Suggested citation:
Bo Tang and Sara Golnabi, After the Arrival City #2: Housing, Social Infrastructure and People in Displacement in Athens, Greece, Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources Vol. 18 October 2024 (London: London Metropolitan University)

Contents

Acknowledgements & Credits	05
Foreword	07
Preliminary Project	10
Introduction	11
Facade Studies	12
Neos Kosmos, Athens, Greece	20
Introduction	21
Neos Kosmos Market and Tramline	22
Dourgouti Bauhaus Prosfygika	24
Abandoned Courtyard	26
Civic Square	28
Mural Painting	30
Social Infrastructure	31
Industrial Sheds	32
Local Voices	34
Waste Recycling	35
Thesis Proposals	37
Calabria Residency	80
Introduction	81
Wheelbarrow Bench	82
Spinetto Sinks	84
Thesis Proposals	87
Athens Residency	98
Introduction	99
Refugee Week Greece 2024	100
Refugee Week Greece 2024 Events	102
Community Picnic at Kapaps Park	104
Athens Pride Parade	106
Candle Making Workshop	107
Tavros Passivhaus	108
PhD by Project	112
Catalyst Childhood Design	112
Glossary	117

Acknowledgements

With special thanks to

London, UK

The Water Trust (ARCSR), and all our visiting consultants, invited critics and productive workshop guests.

Athens, Greece

YMCA Neos Kosmos
Thimios Coffee Shop
Anna's Cafe
The People's Clinic
Annika Grafweg

Calabria Residency

The 'Turetta ladies': Franca, Antionetta, Gabriela, Marcella and Maria
Belmonte municipality

Refugee Week Greece 2024

Dina Ntziora and the organising team, and to all the participating organisations.

Sponsors

The Athens and Calabria residencies were generously supported by the The Water Trust (ARCSR) and The Turing Scheme.

Credits

Editors

Bo Tang
Sara Golnabi

Staff

MArch Unit 6 |
Bo Tang
Robert Barnes
Shamoon Patwari
Jane McAllister

Students

MArch Unit 6 |
Aikaterini Pitsi
Arun Kowcun
Benjamin Howells
Daria Serhiienko
Joshua Trainor
Luka Morris
Madalina Podgoreanu
Neil Palmer
Nok Yi Leung
Oussama Erraqiq
Teun Staal
Thien Hee Tey

PhD by Project | Hosn Houssami


To the Acropolis
Dourgouti
Bauhaus
1
2
3
4
Neos Kosmos
Metro station

Foreword

ARCSR

The Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources (ARCSR) is a studio-based, teaching and research area within the practice and academic discipline of architecture. It examines and extends knowledge of the physical and cultural influences on the built environment, focusing on situations where resources are scarce and where both culture and technology are in a state of rapid change.

Suspicious of the tendency of strategic and large-scale policy planning to distil out rich but fragile local interactions, the studio encourages students to work outwards from the observed fragment of lived experience. ARCSR aims to explore how the urban landscape is inhabited, made and remade through personal and collective acts, events, memories and experiences; attempting to cut through the surface to expose the undercurrent of silent issues that constitute the everyday.

Since 2006 the School of Art, Architecture and Design at London Metropolitan University has been offering studio modules for its 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th year architecture students in this research area which have involved direct, on the ground, cultural and physical surveys of marginal urban settlements in India, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Athens and London. Latterly MA by Project and PhD by Project courses have also been run in this research area. Study is by project and has included live projects involving the construction of a number of schools and water and sanitation projects.

This year, Unit 6 students based their work in Athens, continuing ARCSR's three year investigation of refugee housing, social infrastructure and people in displacement.

We focused our study in the Dourgouti neighbourhood area of Neos Kosmos (New World) located just to the south of the Acropolis - a historical place of 'arrival' and settlement for refugees and migrants for over a century. The neighbourhood's diverse housing developments, which includes Bauhaus-style prosfygika (refugee housing), reflect the evolving processes of city building and urban integration in Athens since the early 20th century.

The year began with an in-depth exploration of the polykatoikia building typology, characterised by its concrete frame and various infills. This architectural form shaped the modern aesthetic of Athens, responding to socio-economic realities, construction constraints, and the demanding Mediterranean climate. Students proposed and reassembled individual design elements into new facades, crafting a new context for construction.

This preliminary project was followed by a field trip to Athens, a transformative city on the eastern edge of Europe with a rich cultural history. Students worked collaboratively to produce a detailed study map of the Dourgouti neighbourhood and wider Neos Kosmos area. Engaging closely with local residents through hands-on activities, they gathered first-hand insights that fuelled meaningful architectural discussions, with each student developing personal responses to contemporary issues deeply rooted in the realities of this specific area within the city. The trip also gave students direct exposure to architectural and construction examples in the field.

This body of work was undertaken with optimism, aiming for a creative interplay between students' energy and the ongoing act of dwelling by local residents. The result was a valuable architectural dialogue that addressed engagement with the civic opportunities and responsibilities embedded in this urban landscape.

Beyond the October 2023 field trip, students were offered a further opportunity to join a fully-funded month-long research residency in Athens in June 2024, supported by the Water Trust (ARCSR) and The Turing Scheme. Four students braved the summer heatwave to continue the unit's work, actively participating in Refugee Week Greece 2024.

Bo Tang, Robert Barnes & Shamoon Patwari
July 2024

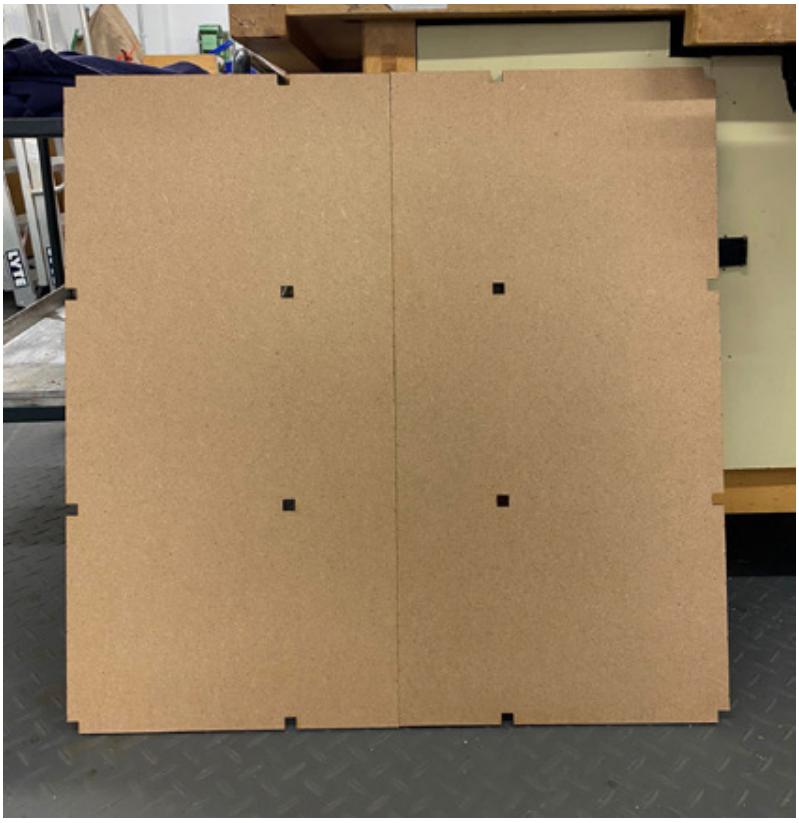
Left
Area of study: Dourgouti Bauhaus, Neos Kosmos, Athens

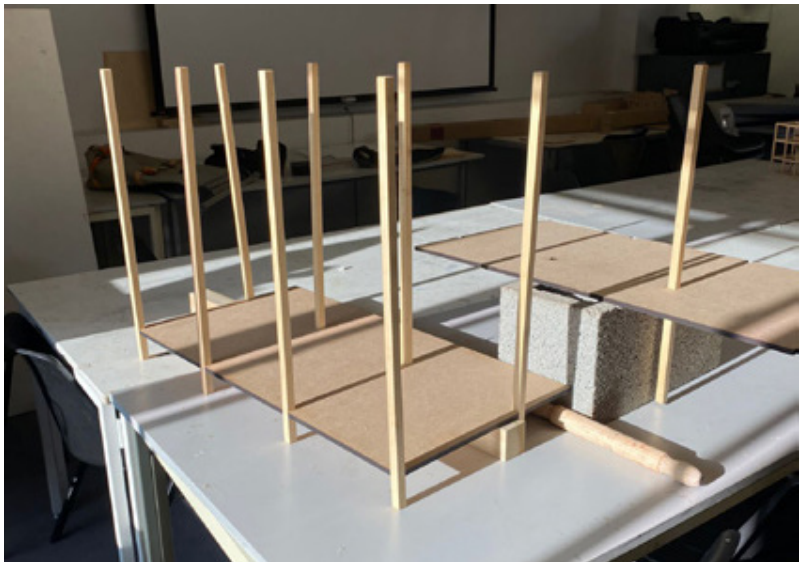


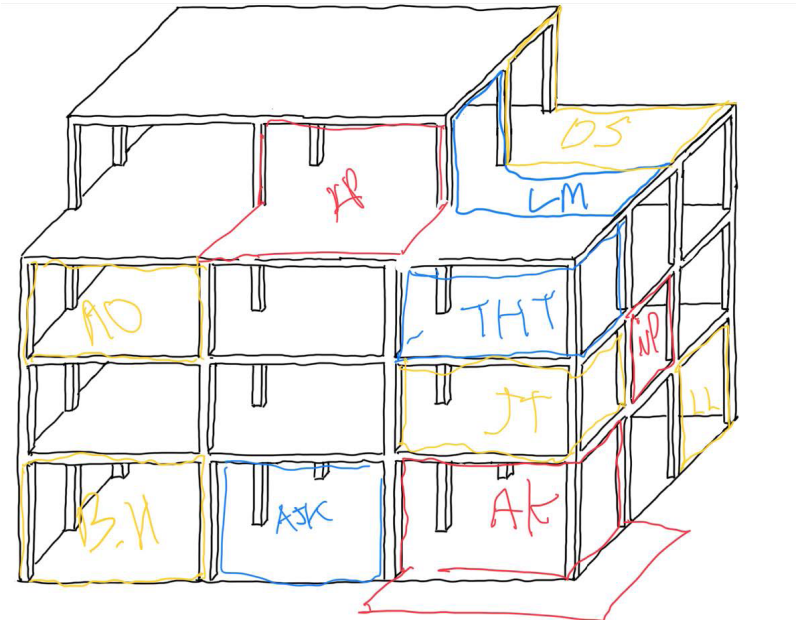












Preliminary Project

Introduction

Unit 6 began the year with a four-week preliminary project focused on designing a new façade element. The brief emphasised large-scale detail studies, encouraging both model-making and precise technical detail drawings.

Students were introduced to the polykatoikia (multi-residence) building, a key architectural typology in Athens, drawing on Le Corbusier's Domino frame and the Greek antiparochi building system. To deepen their understanding and to gain further context, they watched the documentary, *Builders, Housewives, and the Construction of Modern Athens*. Working together as a group, students constructed a 1:20 scale model of a typical polykatoikia frame, including essential structural elements like frame openings, columns, and slabs. Each student then selected a specific part of the external frame - such as a corner, ground level, or mid/upper level - as a focus for their individual facade designs.

Individually, students designed new façade elements for the polykatoikia, that considered factors such as climate, energy, sustainability, materials, glazing, ventilation, shading, and overall aesthetics. These designs, which could infill or extend the frame, were modelled at 1:20 scale and integrated into the group's frame model. Additionally, students produced detailed technical drawings, including plans, sections, elevations, and axonometrics, to further develop and refine their façade elements.

The project concluded with a group photography workshop, led by Manuela Barczewski, to document both the collective frame model and the individual design elements. These images, along with the technical drawings and representations, were compiled into a collaborative reference booklet, which became a shared studio resource for the unit throughout the year.

Facing Page Top
Polykatoikia frame - 1:20 scale model (Thien Hee Tey)

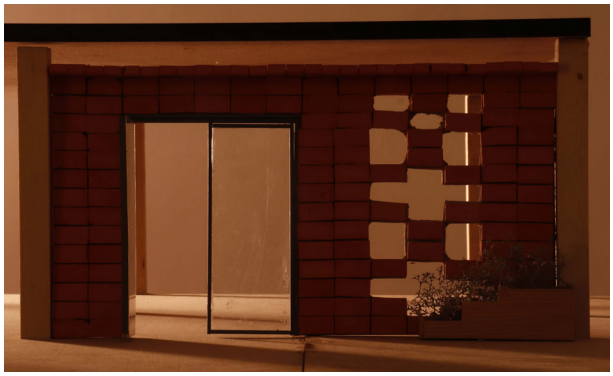
Facing Page Bottom
Polykatoikia frame infilled with individual facades (Oussama Erraqiq)

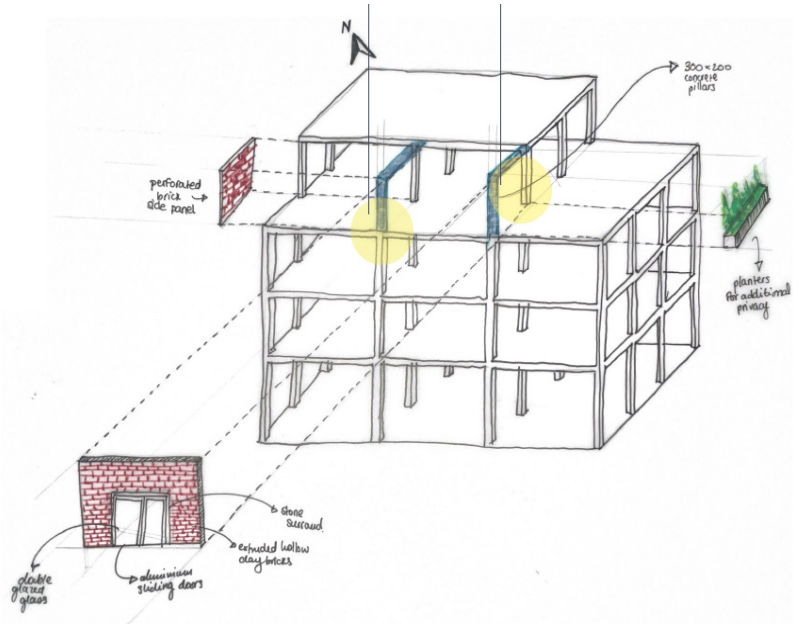
This Page Top to Bottom
Model floor slabs in construction (Thien Hee Tey)
Model frame construction (Thien Hee Tey)
Allocating specific 'bays' to each student (Bo Tang)

Hollow Clay Bricks

Aikaterini Pitsi

The main structure of the polykatoikia frame is reinforced concrete. The proposed facade is an infill consisting of hollow clay bricks, typical in Greek construction. The air cavities within the hollow bricks provide additional insulation, minimising the need for extra insulation and creating a more sustainable solution.





Stone and Brick

Arun Kowcun

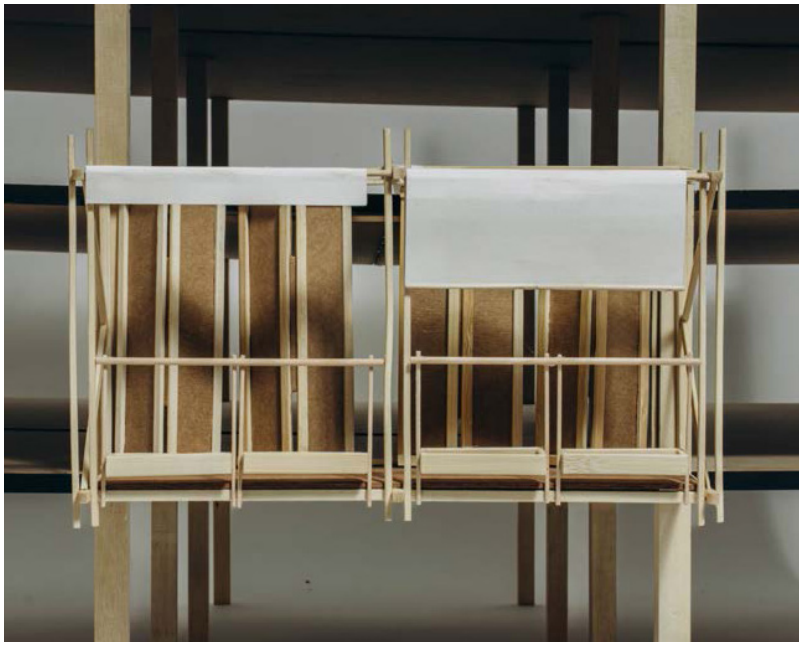
Photographs of Athens show stone as a regionally suitable material due to its availability and thermal mass properties in a historically arid climate. However, recent floods suggest that provisions will need to be made for changing climate conditions.



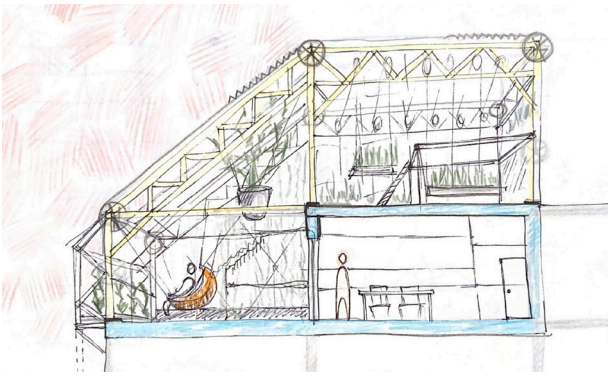


Lightweight Timber Frame

Daria Serhiienko

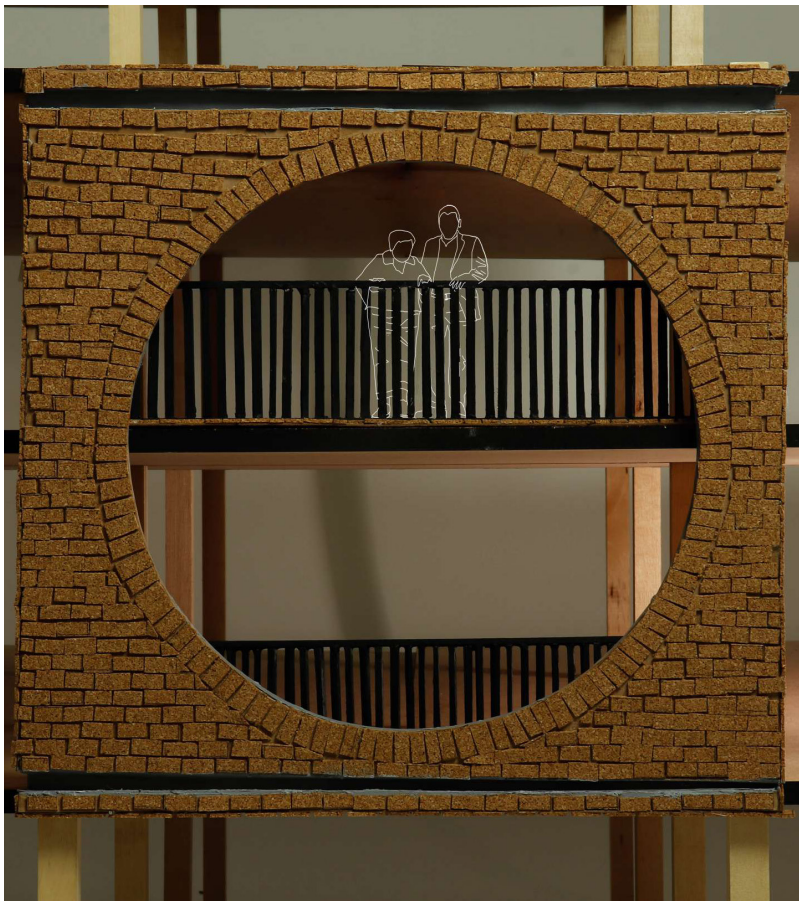


This project adds a new structure to an existing residential building in Athens: a balcony featuring vertical planters. It serves as both an outdoor retreat and a green space, offering residents a place to relax and grow plants. The planters provide natural shading while promoting sustainability and community well-being in the urban environment.



Earth Brick

Nok Yi Leung



"Even a brick wants to be something. A brick wants to be something. It aspires. Even a common, ordinary brick wants to be something more than it is. It wants to be something better than it is. That is what we must be."... "You say to a brick, 'What do you want, brick?' And brick says to you, 'I like an arch.'"

Louis Kahn

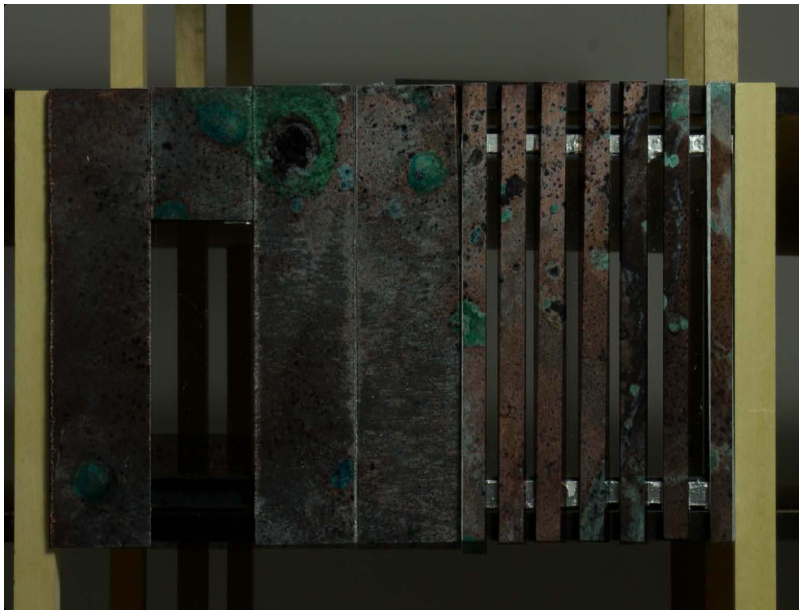


Steel

Oussama Erraqiq

In the experiment exploring the transformative effects of time on various materials, a range of substances—including metal, copper, fabric, and aluminium—were subjected to agents such as vinegar, bleach, and lemon juice. Through careful observation, the differing responses of each material to these elements were documented, showcasing the dynamic interplay between chemical reactions and physical changes.

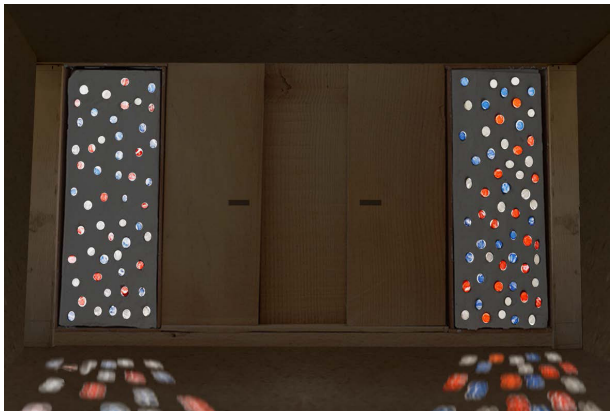
The gradual evolution of forms and textures, from corrosion to patina, drew parallels to the neglected state of Athens. This experiment became a poignant metaphor for the city's lack of maintenance, underscoring the urgent need for revitalisation. Inspired by the observed transformations, a creative exploration began, envisioning a reversal of decay in Athens' architectural landscape. This journey led to the consideration of innovative facade design approaches, proposing a restoration from degraded old qualities to new, vibrant expressions of the city's cultural identity.

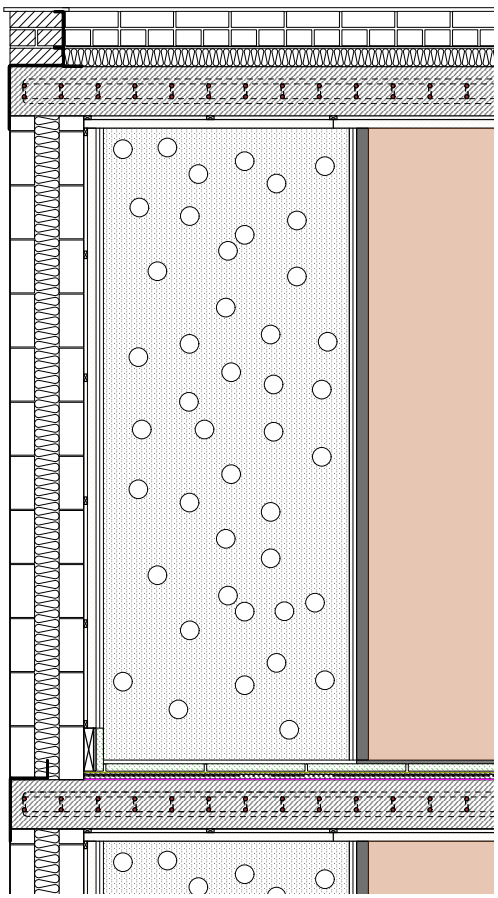


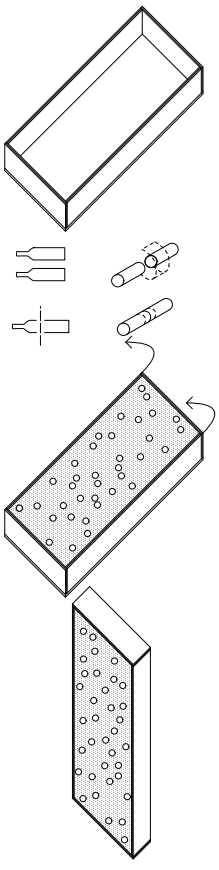
Timber, Lime Mortar, Glass Bottles

Luka Morris

The wall, constructed from reused glass wine bottles set in lime mortar and paired with reused timber framing, is aesthetically playful, thermally efficient, and environmentally responsible. This approach provides a holistic solution for sustainable building in Athens, seamlessly integrating visual appeal, functionality, and eco-conscious design.



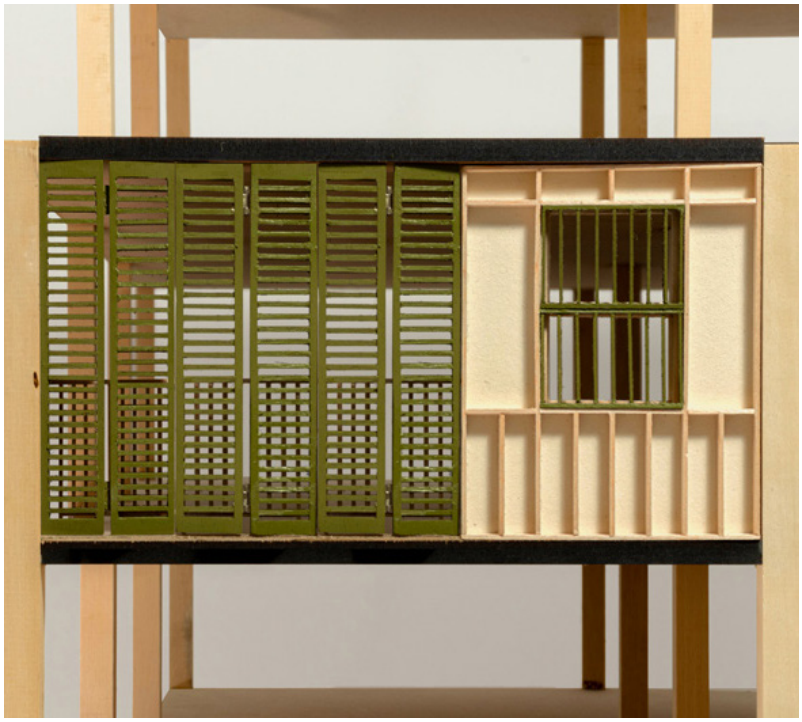




6

Timber Frame Panels

Thien Hee Tey



The decision to use timber as the primary material for the facade stemmed from its dual appeal of being both lightweight and sustainable. By juxtaposing the lightweight nature of timber with the perceived weightiness of the concrete structure of the polykatoikia, the design aims to create a visual dialogue within the facade.



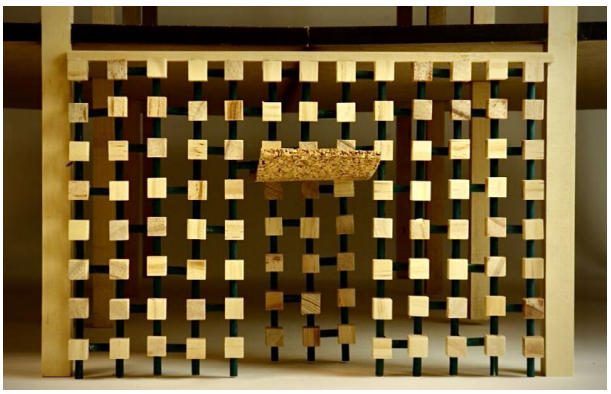
Bamboo and Cork

Ben Howells



Initially, the design featured a bamboo ‘tree canopy colonnade’ facade element. The intent was to use a material that local craftspeople could easily work with, offering a low-carbon option and a form that would create interesting, changing shadow patterns throughout the day.

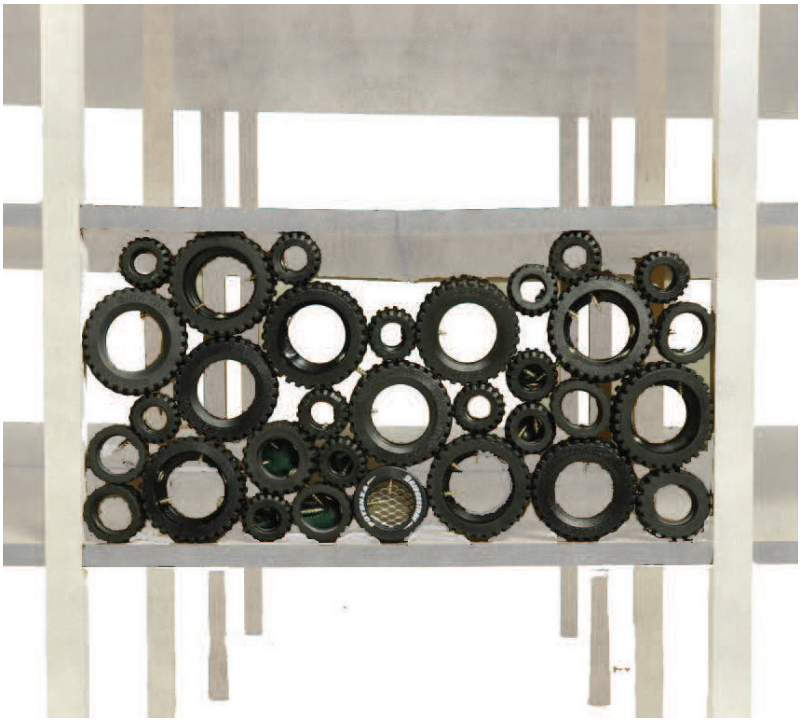
The second facade design built upon the original intent of creating a facade that would positively impact people. This design, a cork curtain wall, emphasised cross ventilation and shading as methods for cooling the space. While distinguishing between open and sheltered areas, the facade aims to blur the boundary between indoor and outdoor spaces. Cork was chosen for its water resistance, acoustic properties, and low carbon footprint.



Rubber Tyres

Joshua Trainor

To create a strong, rigid structure using the elastic, bouncy rubber tires, the design explores the potential of the negative space between them. The proposal suggests using a series of steel or timber elements to fix the tires together. This method would form a rigid wall, as the circular shape of the tires provides inherent strength, and the fixings transform this strength into a cohesive web.





Bamboo and Recycled Concrete

Neil Palmer

The models demonstrate the fluid approach to creating a layered facade within the residence, highlighting benefits such as enhanced privacy, shading, and a watertight envelope.

In some original Greek apartments, where space was limited, laundry facilities were located on the roof, allowing residents to wash clothes and hang them to dry in the sun. Over time, as some of these buildings became abandoned, the laundry facilities and concrete sinks found new uses within the neighbourhood. Reusing these existing elements aligns with the proposal's theme of a circular economy.

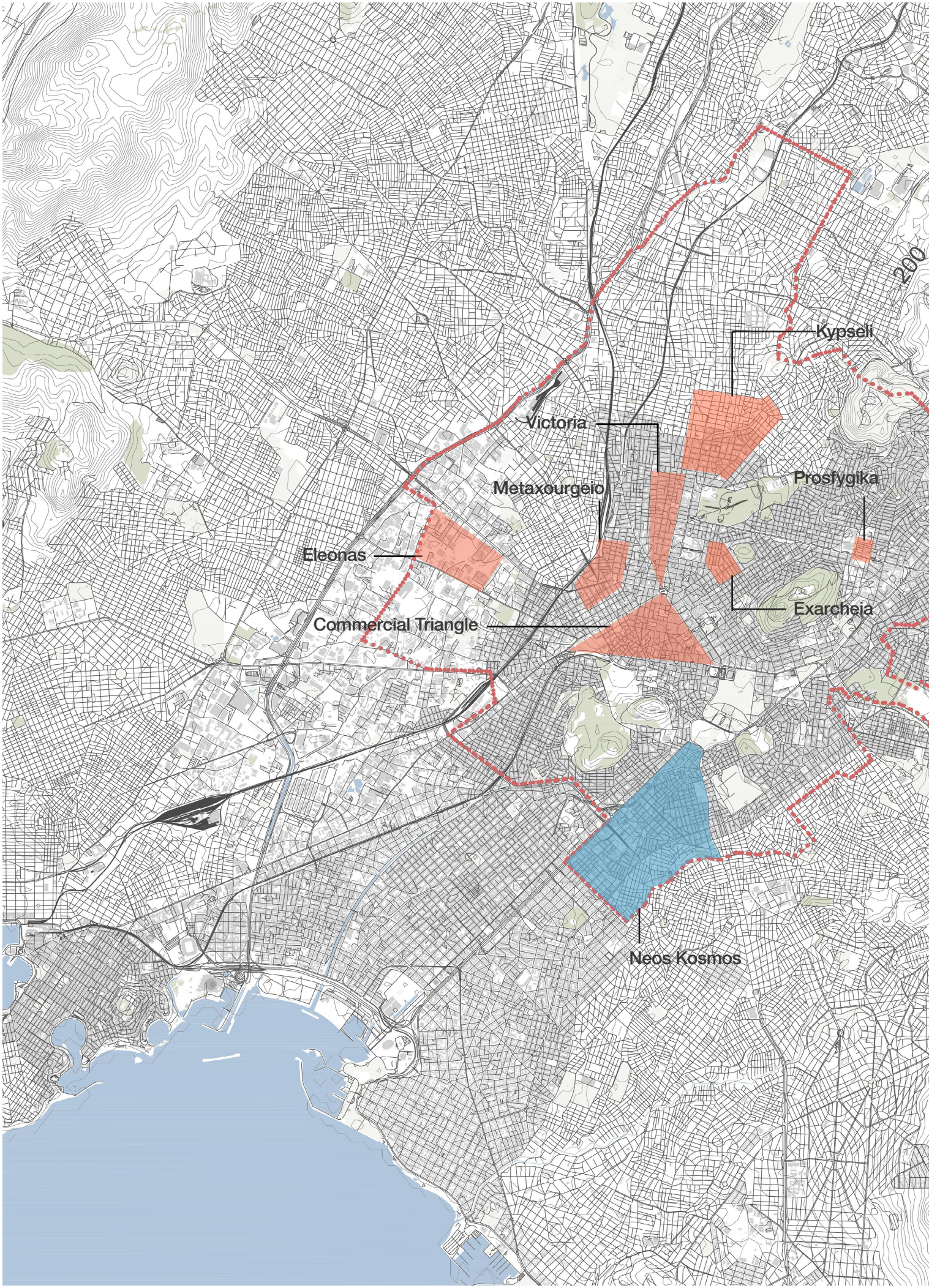
During the cooler winter months, the facade design aims to utilise zoned heated areas to conserve energy and maintain warmth. The Kotatsu table, a heating device that fosters social interaction by bringing family members together to share its warmth, is integrated into the design. Concentrating the heat in one area improves energy efficiency and reduces power consumption.

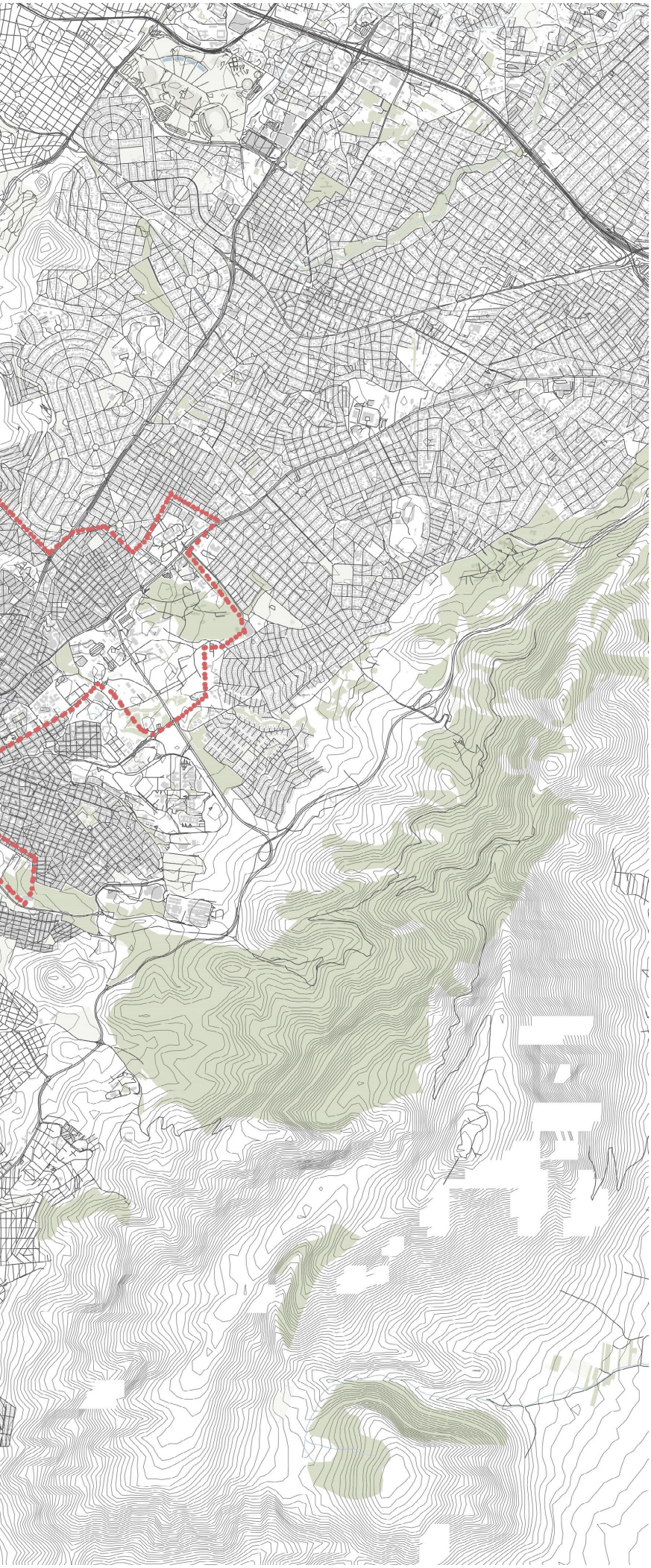









200
Kypseli
Victoria
Metaxourgeio
Prosfygika
Eleonas
Exarcheia
Commercial Triangle
Neos Kosmos



Neos Kosmos

Athens, Greece

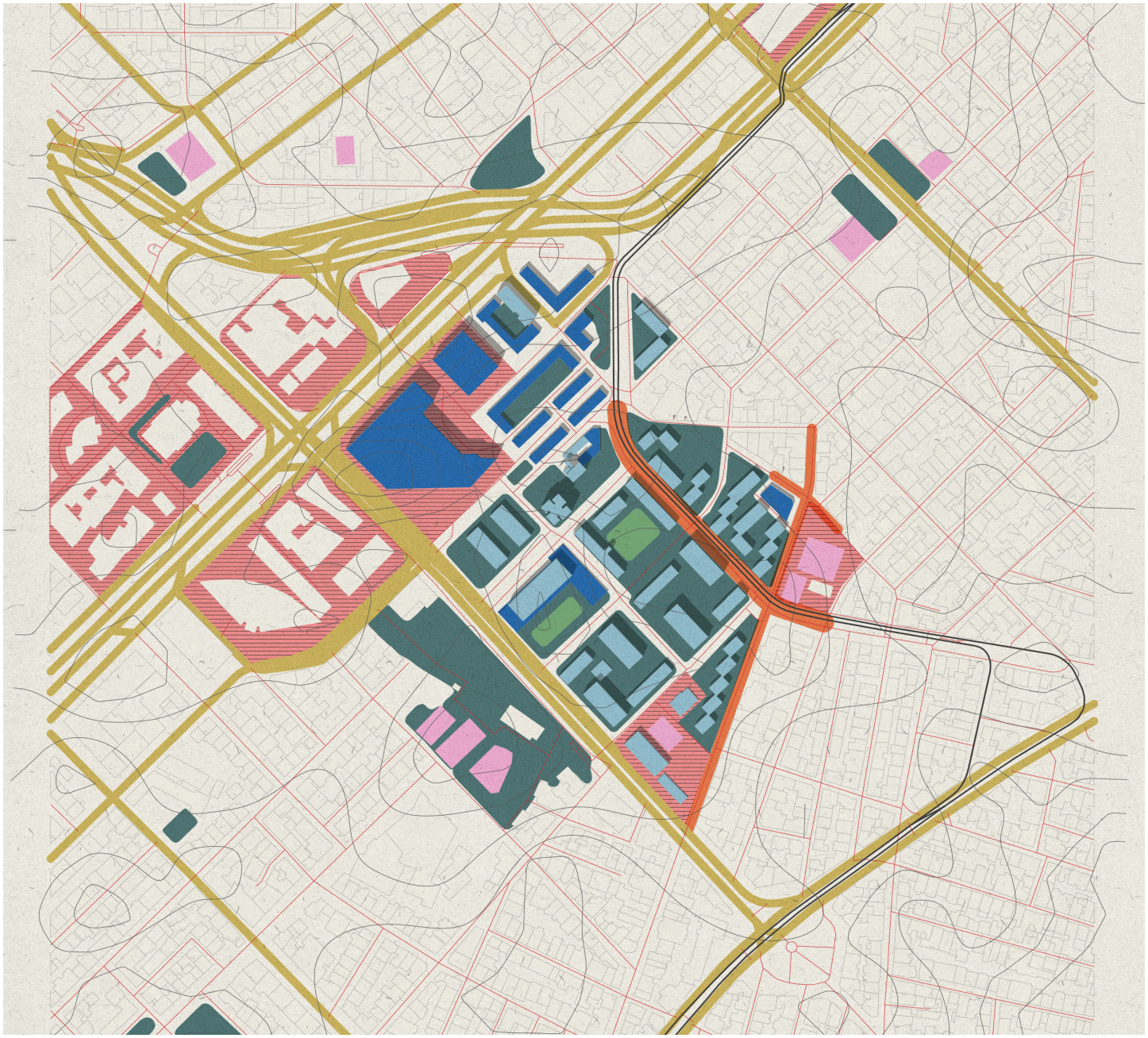
Since 2016, ARCSR has focused on migration and refugees, place-based architecture, and homemaking in Athens, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of 'arrival' residents and their support networks to imagine and transform the context in which they live. Building on previous fieldwork by ARCSR students in various neighbourhoods of Athens, Unit 6 students this year investigated themes of migration, urban development, housing and social infrastructure in Neos Kosmos.

Neos Kosmos features a mix of diverse physical and social infrastructure, including historical refugee housing, flea markets, Armenian churches, community gardens, and polykatoikia blocks. The area also offers amenities such as a clinic, sports courts, and elderly and youth centres, situated among tram lines, parks, public gardens between buildings, and motorway edges. The Dourgouti Bauhaus estate is defined by a combination of official and unofficial boundaries.

2016 - 2023 Investigation Areas

Current Investigation Area, Neos Kosmos

Left
Unit 6 sites in Athens, Greece (Sara Golnabi)



- Accessible Roof
- Inaccessible Roof
- Play Space
- Non-Residential
- Green Space
- Major Road
- Market Street





The Neos Kosmos tramline is a vital part of the neighbourhood's transportation network, linking it to the broader city of Athens. Running through the heart of Neos Kosmos, it provides convenient access to central Athens, coastal suburbs, and major landmarks, facilitating mobility and enhancing the area's urban character. The tramline passes alongside parks, markets, and residential blocks, blending with the local environment and offering a scenic route that reflects the balance of modern development and historical significance. Its presence supports sustainable transportation and strengthens connectivity within the neighbourhood.

The Neos Kosmos market, held every weekend, transforms the typically quiet streets into a bustling hub that attracts locals and visitors alike. Vendors offer a diverse range of products, including fresh produce, local delicacies, clothing, and handmade crafts, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with the sounds and smells of the marketplace. Beyond serving as a shopping destination, the market fosters a sense of community, allowing residents to gather, socialise, and engage in cultural exchange. With its mix of traditional Greek foods and modern offerings, the market reflects the neighbourhood's rich character and heritage while significantly contributing to the local economy.

Together, the Neos Kosmos market and tramline play essential roles in shaping the neighbourhood's identity, enhancing community spirit, and facilitating engagement within this dynamic area.

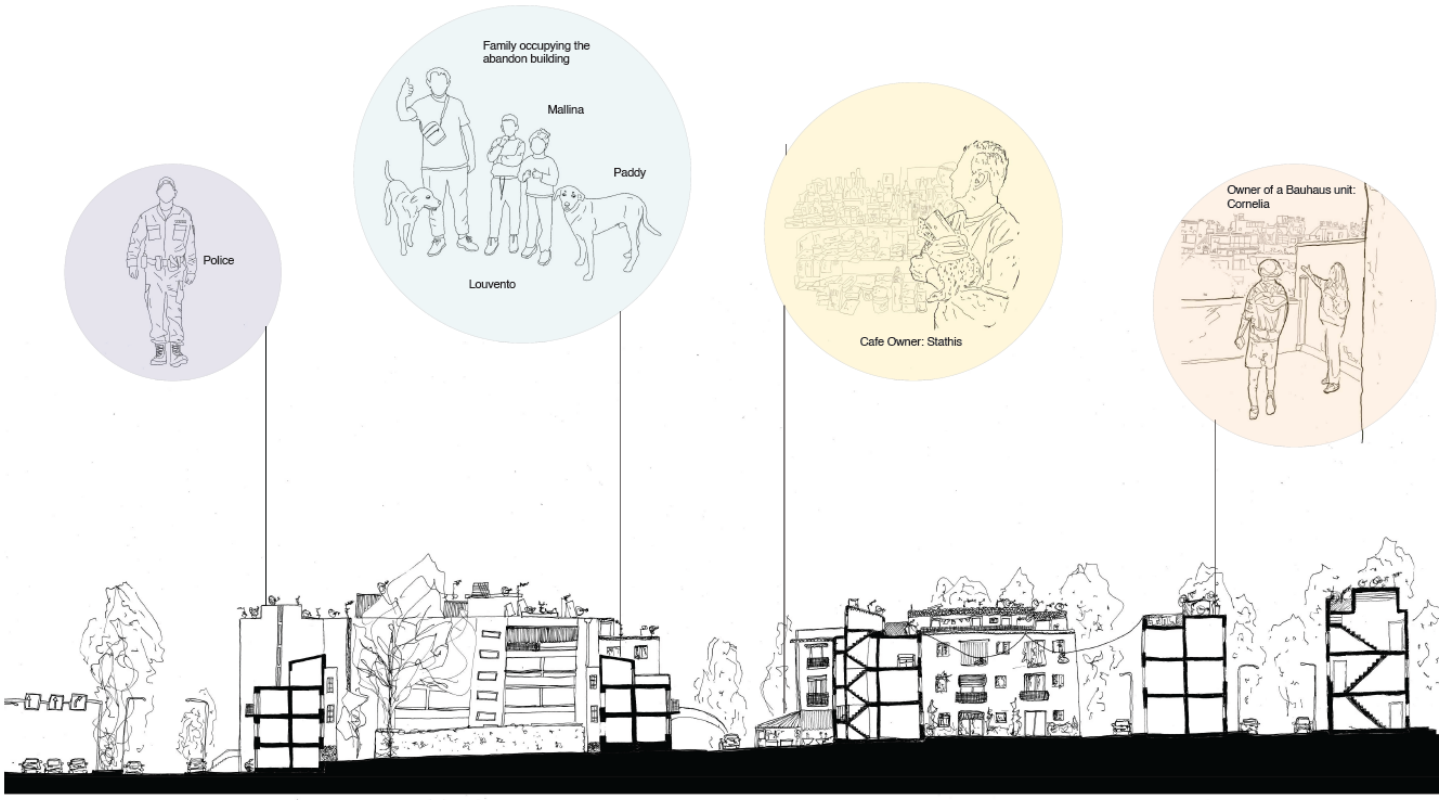


Facing Page Top
Plan of Neos Kosmos (Thien Hee Tey)

Facing Page Bottom
Neos Kosmos market (Arun Kowcun)

This Page Top
Neos Kosmos tramline (Arun Kowcun)

This Page Bottom
Neos Kosmos on market day (Daria Serhiienko)


Police
Family occupying the abandon building
Mallina
Paddy
Louvento
Cafe Owner: Stathis
Owner of a Bauhaus unit: Cornelia


Buna ziua
Γειά σου
привет
你好
Ciao
Hello
أب حرم
Merhaba
Bonjour



The Dourgouti Bauhaus prosfygika is a unique historic architectural complex in the Neos Kosmos district of Athens, originally built in the 1930s to house refugees from the Greco-Turkish War.

Inspired by the Bauhaus movement, the buildings embody modernist principles of functionalism, simplicity, and the integration of design into everyday life. Characterised by clean lines, flat roofs, and practical layouts, they aim to meet social housing needs to a minimal space standard, while promoting a sense of community. The design includes communal spaces like courtyards and gardens, encouraging social interaction among residents.

Today, the Dourgouti Bauhaus prosfygika sits adjacent to a large international hotel, bank headquarters, and a local police station. This complex reflects a crucial period in Athens' history, representing both the city's adaptation to social changes and the resilience and adaptability of displaced populations.

Students met Cornelia, the owner of a Bauhaus unit. Cornelia works in hotels on the Greek islands and resides in her flat only during certain seasons. She showed the students her recently refurbished flat and mentioned that she once had a view of the Acropolis, now obstructed by mature trees.



Facing Page Top
Conversations on the site (Nok Yi Leung)

Facing Page Bottom
Mapping of fruit trees and local languages spoken (Nok Yi Leung)

This Page Top and Bottom
Inside two of the Dourgouti Bauhaus apartments (Nok Yi Leung)


ΑΥΤΟΚΙΝΗΤΑ
ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΕΙΟ
ΚΕΒΟΡΚΙΑΝ
ΚΕΝΤΡΙΜΕΤΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΩ
ΑΥΤΟ
*TSIRIS
...WA!



Abandoned Courtyard

Nok Yi Leung, Neil Palmer



The front lower ground of the courtyard belonged to an abandoned, dilapidated garage adjacent to a police station. Despite its condition, the building was not secured and remained easily accessible, with signs of drug use and evidence of squatting on the first floor.

The courtyard appeared to connect with the buildings to the east but vanished from view at the front. The surrounding bank and Intercontinental Hotel dominated the streetscape, while the courtyard blended into the background. Overgrown and neglected, it felt like a hidden, almost magical garden, offering a quiet escape from the city.

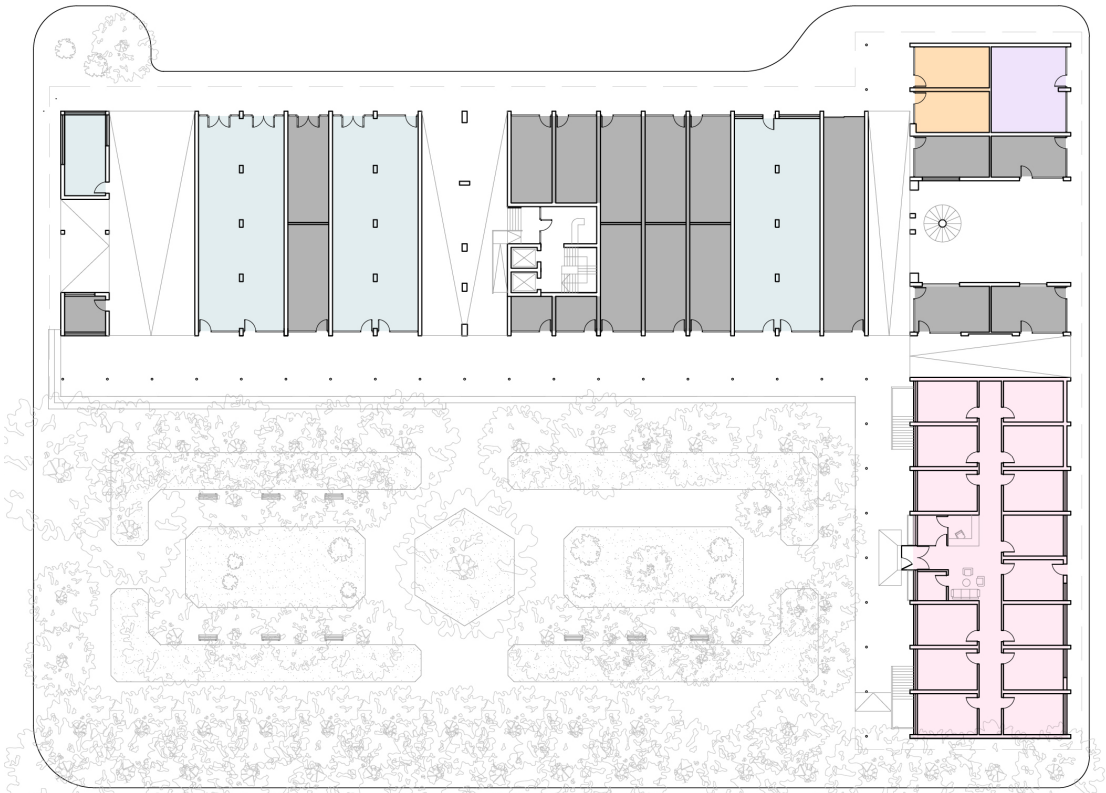


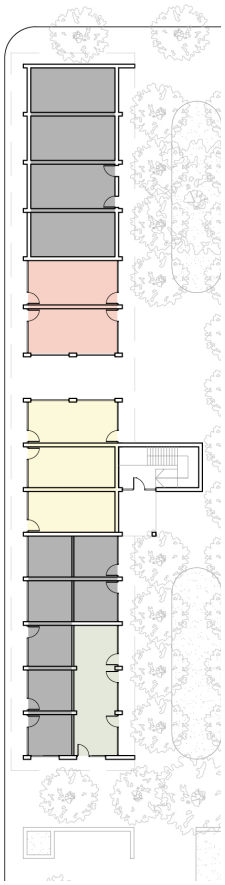
Facing Page Top
Sketch of abandoned garage facade (Neil Palmer)

Facing Page Bottom
Photograph of the abandoned courtyard (Nok Yi Leung)

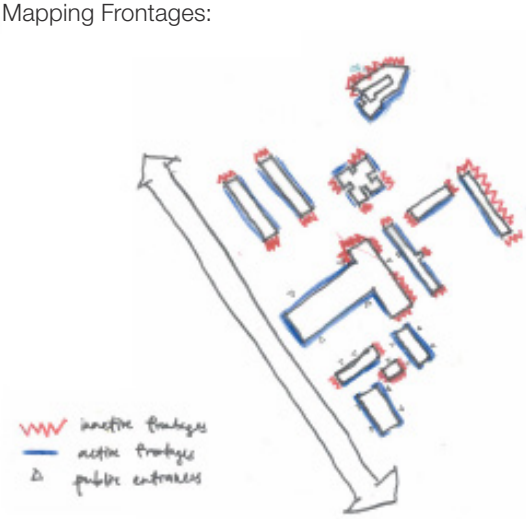
This Page Top
Sketch of the abandoned garage (Neil Palmer)

This Page Bottom
Interior view (Nok Yi Leung)

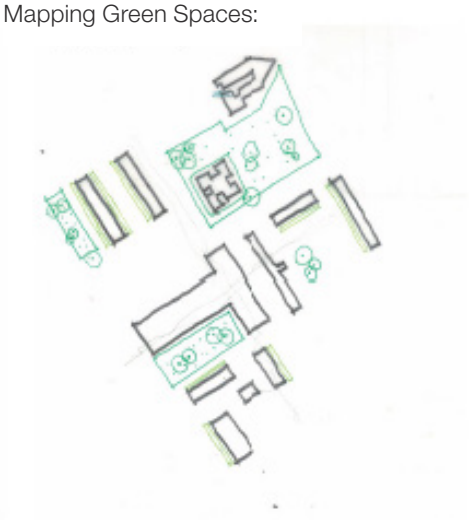




Mapping Frontages:



Mapping Green Spaces:



Mapping Seatings:



Mapping Undercrofts:



- Underused Unit
- Clinic
- Restaurant
- YMCA
- Community Club Room
- Pottery Workshop
- Pharmacy
- Office

Civic Square

Thien Hee Tey, Aikaterini Pitsi

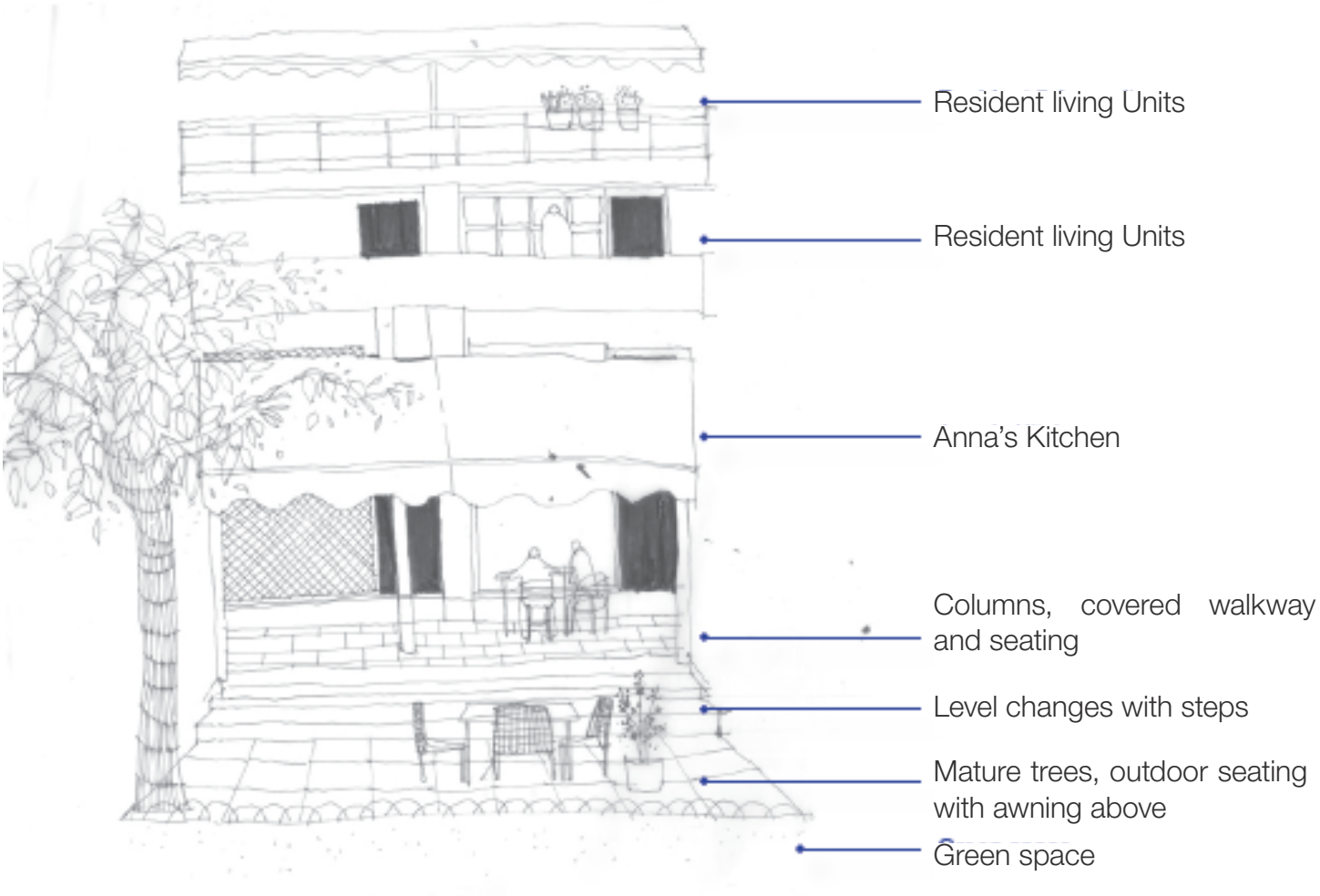
A group of students chose to investigate the housing blocks in the main civic square in Neos Kosmos. Although the ground floor had some public amenities such as cafes and restaurants, and a clinic, there were a significant number of empty shop units. Many of these were locked up with security shutters, whilst others were being used as storage spaces. This under utilisation underscored a broader issue of urban inefficiency and missed opportunities for social and economic development at the site.

Students mapped the block's spatial elements: frontages, green spaces, staircases, seating areas, and undercrofts.

Facing Page Top
Mapping ground floor use (Thien Hee Tey)

Facing Page Bottom
Mapping spatial elements at neighbourhood scale (Thien Hee Tey, Aikaterini Pitsi)

This Page
Vertical analysis of the block (Thien Hee Tey)



Mural Painting

Thien Hee Tey, Nok Yi Leung

The students took breaks during their fieldwork at a local coffee shop, opposite the 1950s refugee housing. The owner had a vision for the appearance of the drainage outlet near the cafe entrance, and asked the students to use their artistic skills to bring it to life.

Whilst painting, students were able to talk to regulars at the cafe, including local architects and artists, about Neos Kosmos and the nearby sites.





Facing Page
Sketches of people and social infrastructure in the housing blocks (Thien Hee Tey, Aikaterini Pitsi)

This Page
Students painting a mural for the local coffee shop (Nok Yi Leung, Thien Hee Tey)

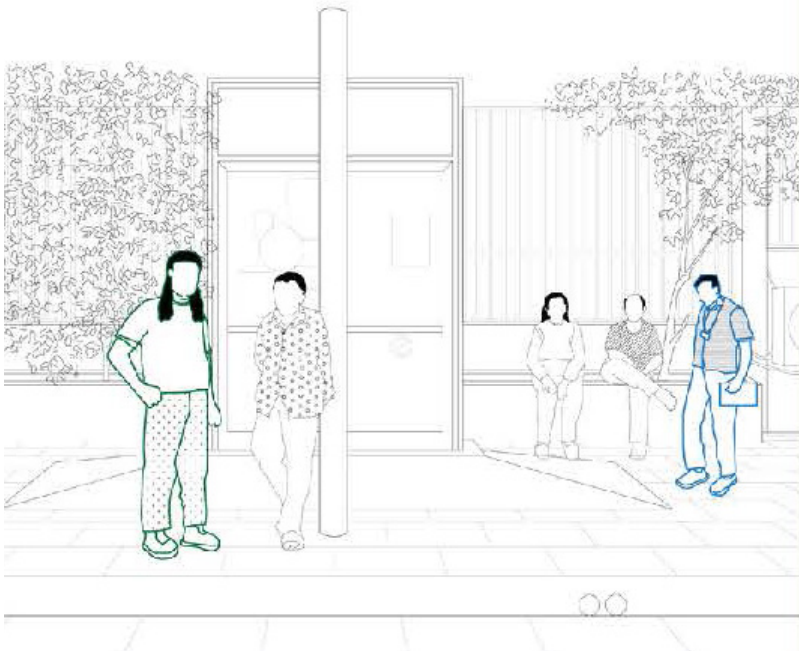
Thien Hee Tey, Aikaterini Pitsi



YMCA

Nota and Anastasia are two volunteers for the YMCA charity shop unit in the corner of our site. The space was given to them by the Municipality of Athens just a year ago. Prior to that space, hey occupied a larger space in the centre of Athens but it was converted to apartments so they had to relocate.

They separate the things they collect, and a few are given out, while other are sold at the two annual bazaars (Easter & Christmas) to generate income for food. The food is distributed to the people who need it. In order to verify who really needs help, they require a tax statement. They consider income and family situation. They more commonly get: refugees, unemployed young people, unemployed mothers with young children.



Thimios Coffee Shop

Anna is the owner of Thimios Coffee Shop. Originally from Albania, she has a 23-year-old daughter and has lived in the area for over 25 years. Renting her shop from the council at over 1000 euros per month, she expressed struggles with profitability.

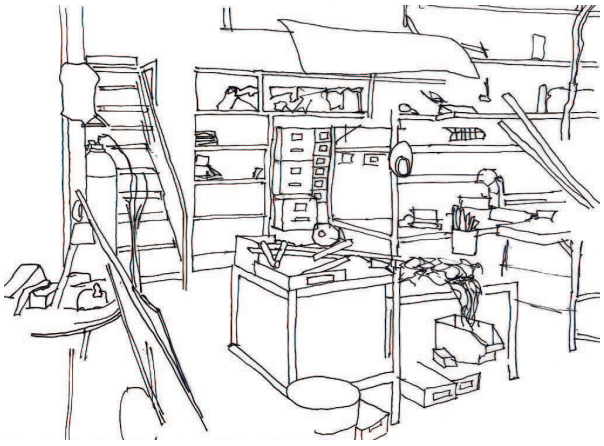
Anna expressed disappointment in the limited support offered by the council regarding the refugee situation. Despite this, she finds solace in the green spaces, which attract children and older residents.



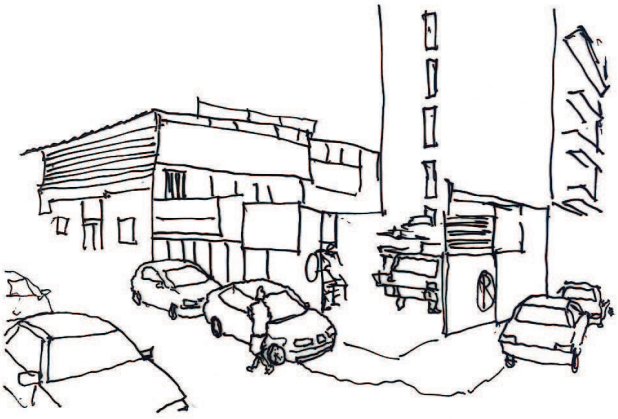
The People's Clinic

Panagiotis and Stelios shared the site's history with us. Originally, the area was filled with refugee camps made of timber huts during an influx from Asian Minor. Reconstruction began in 1956, initiated by the former Prime Minister of Greece, George Papandreou. The ground floor was rented out for local trades for years before being transformed into a clinic in 1988.

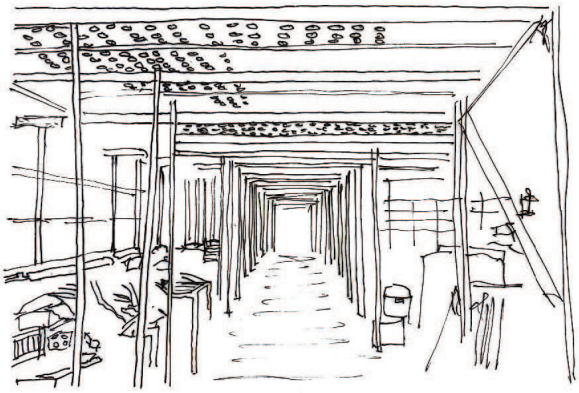
They also mentioned that the clinic serves a significant number of unemployed refugees and disabled individuals. Interestingly, only around 20% of the area's residents are refugees, with the rest mainly consisting of locals from Greece, Albania, and Armenia.



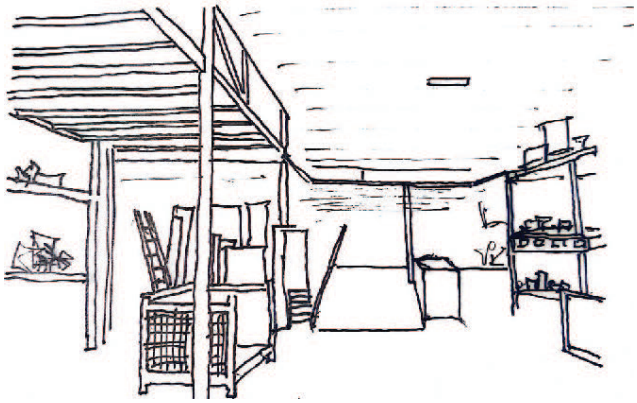
1. The Repair Shop



2. The Repair Depot



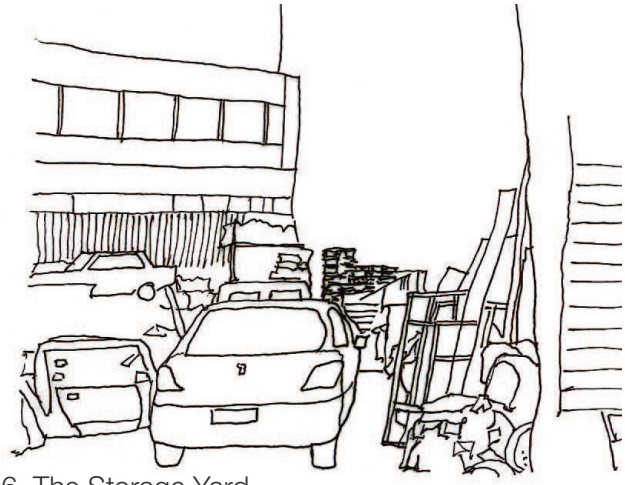
3. The Depository



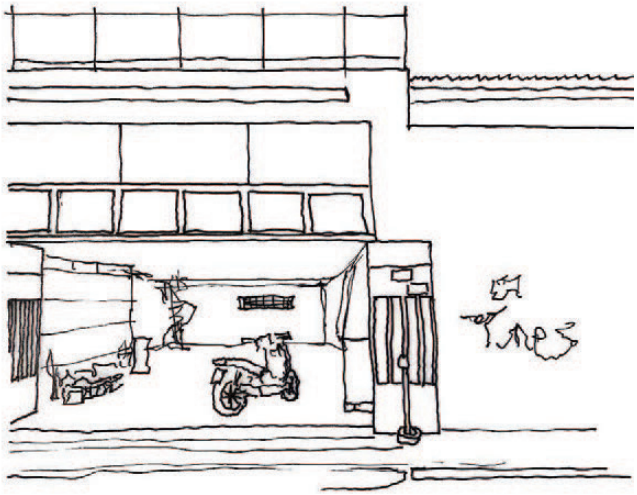
4. The Loading Bay



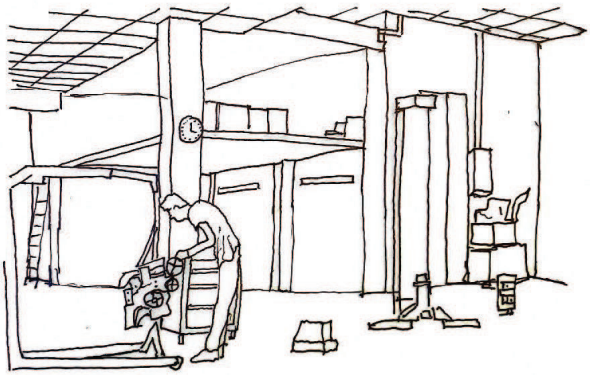
5. The Headquarters



6. The Storage Yard



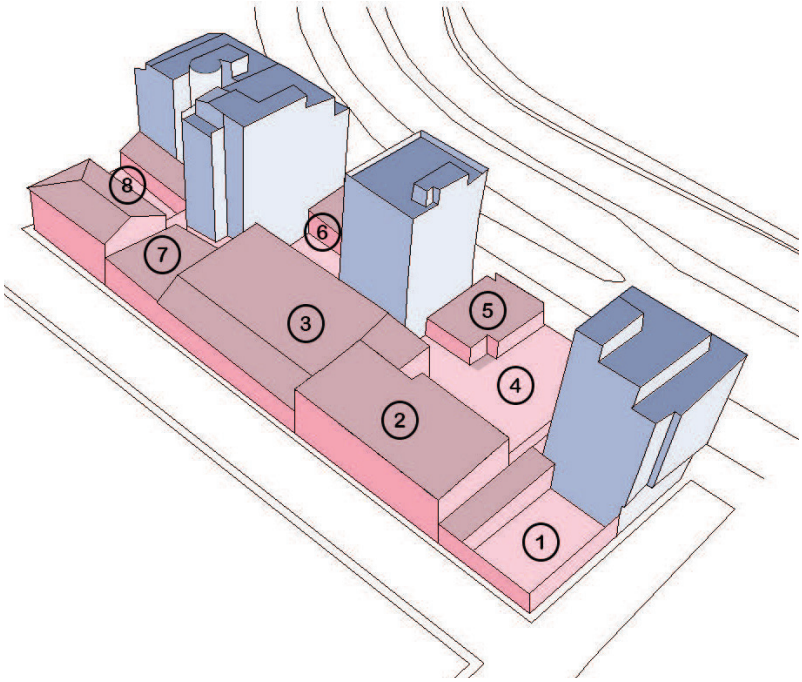
7. Electrical Repairs



8. The Spray Shop







Industrial Sheds

Joshua Trainor

A group of students focused on an area dominated by industrial sheds, where numerous mechanics operated. The mechanics often used the streets as extensions of their workshops, creating lively street scenes filled with activity. Despite appearing to be competitors, there was a noticeable sense of mutual connection and cooperation among the businesses.

A large sign on the northwest facade reads, 'G. Samonas: The Biggest Car Parts Dealer in Athens.' Historical photographs found at the site depict the construction of the tramline, which seemed to have significantly influenced how the buildings functioned over time.

Facing Page
Sketches of the eight parts of the site (Joshua Trainor)

This Page Top
Street by the industrial sheds site (Joshua Trainor)

This Page Middle
View into the industrial sheds site (Arun Kowcun)

This Page Bottom
Key to the sketches (Joshua Trainor)

Local Voices

Daria Serhiienko



You know, this place was known as Garazoupoli (meaning "garage town") because of the crazy number of car shops in the area."

Demitri is owner of Streetart Gallery, a small gallery, but you can feel the love for what they do.
He told us about local artists and the growth of art in Neos Kosmos in recent years. Delirium Athens is the only Urban Art Gallery that directly approaches and exhibits Greek street art, pop surreal, dark art and the urban scene in general.

"I used to practice yoga and dance back in Syria. It brought me peace, but finding classes here has been a struggle."

Mohammed, a Syrian refugee who recently settled in the neighbourhood. As we shared stories, Mohammed talked about the challenges he faced making connections and finding places to pursue his interests.





"Neos Kosmos used to be a place where everyone knew each other's names. Now, it feels like we're just passing strangers in the streets."

I chatted with Kostas, a local who loves Neos Kosmos. He remembered how lively it used to be, with busy streets and fun events bringing people together. But now, he said sadly, things are different.

The places where people used to gather have disappeared, and the neighbourhood isn't as close-knit anymore. Kostas worries about what's going to happen next and thinks it's important to keep Neos Kosmos special, even with all the changes happening around it.

"You know, it's tough for these people. They want to be part of our community, find jobs, make friends, but it isn't easy."

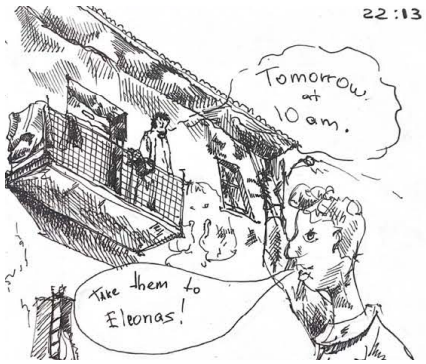
Maria spoke with a mix of empathy and frustration, highlighting the need for language classes, job opportunities, and just a friendly hand to help them navigate daily life.



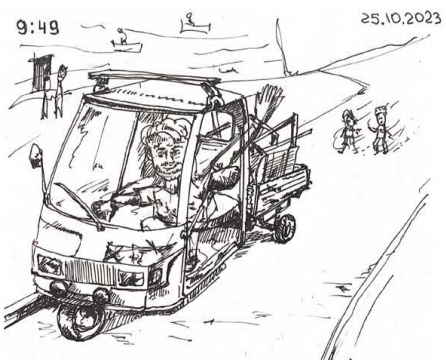
This Page
Local voices around the industrial sheds (Daria Serhiienko)

Facing Page
Visit to the recycling centre in Eleonas (Daria Serhiienko)

Daria Serhiienko



A man from a café calls out to a man from the balcony of a shabby house to ask him to give us a tour tomorrow.



In the morning, we hurried to his tuk-tuk (car).



We got into his tuk-tuk and set off.



Josh rode on the scrap metal in the back. We drove through the whole of Athens.



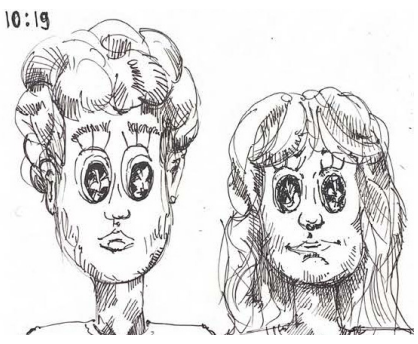
When we finally arrived in Eleonas, everyone was looking at us very surprised.



The cranes have started to operate.



The workers unloaded the small metal manually.

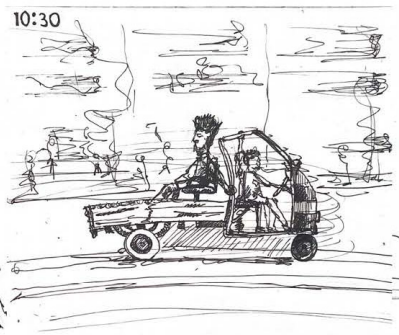


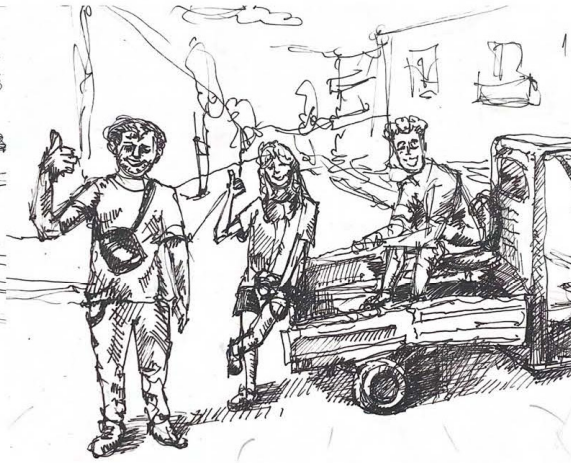
When we saw the scale of the scrap metal, we were surprised.



Metal, old equipment and many different things filled literally all the rooms







Havi
mon
get b


INTER CONTINENTAL
ENTRANCE



Thesis Proposals

Neos Kosmos, Athens, Greece

Unit 6 Tutors:
Bo Tang, Robert Barnes, Shamoon Patwari

Students began their fieldwork by dividing into groups and exploring the neighbourhood freely. Based on their initial observations, the cohort split into four smaller groups for the remainder of the field trip, each drawn to particular buildings or public spaces, forming within four distinct areas for investigation.

Students developed their own briefs from their cultural and physical investigations of the site. Proposals addressed issues including social exclusion and isolation, well-being and strengthening livelihoods, along with environmental issues such as water infrastructure and urban greening.



Facing Page
Abandoned prosfygika building with polykatoikia behind (Nok Yi Leung)

Inset Image
Areas of investigation:
1 Dourgouti Bauhaus Prosfygika
2 Mechanics' workshops
3 Civic Square
4 Sports Court

The (Un)inhabited Courtyard

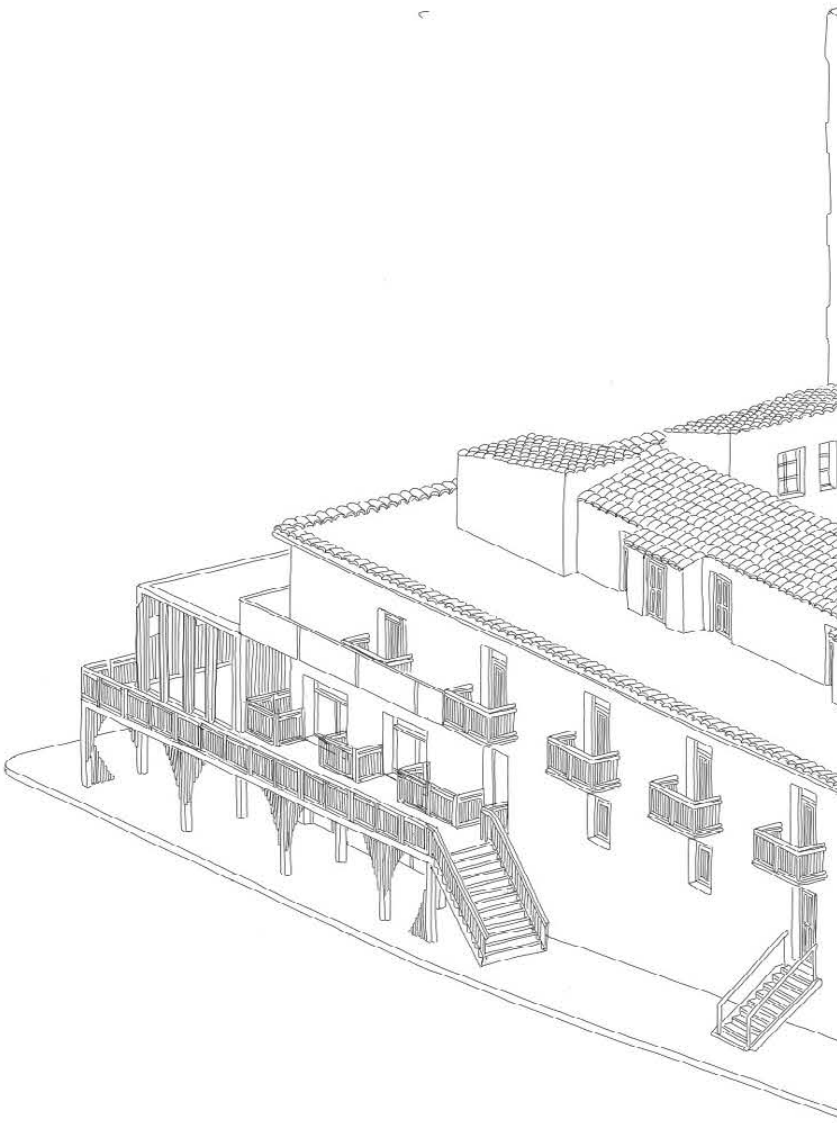
Neil Palmer



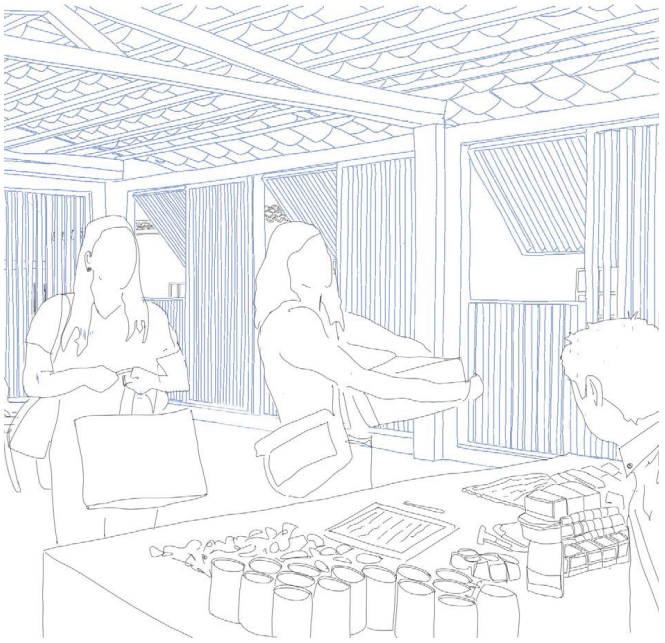
The design strategy emphasises reuse and enhancing accessibility to the courtyard and surrounding area. Physical interventions, such as creating openings and restoring the courtyard, aim to rekindle its former charm while facilitating interaction between residents and the broader community. This shared garden space offers a safe haven for communal activities, fostering personal connections and providing respite from urban life.

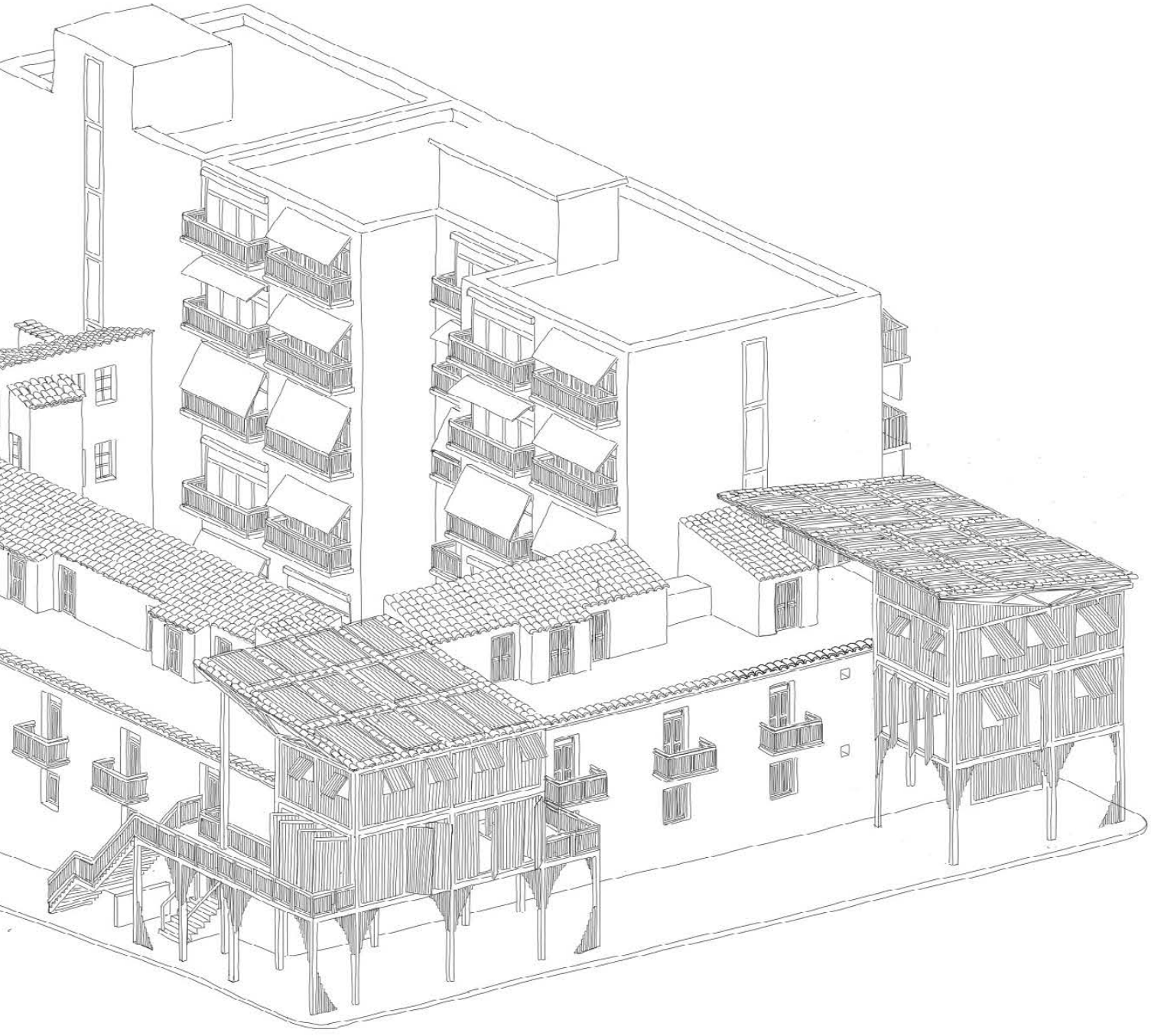
Through the renovation of existing buildings, the project aims to accommodate 22 families while prioritising environmental sustainability. Internal spaces are refurbished with climate considerations and a material palette aimed at minimising carbon emissions and operational costs. Shared amenities like a market, repair hub, and social area promote skills exchange among residents, with the repair centre serving as a versatile space for community-led workshops on various repair techniques. The social hub doubles as the main office for the Chamomile Housing Project and hosts educational classes in the evenings, focusing on digital literacy and providing a relaxed learning environment.

Adhering to a realistic construction timeline, the project emphasises off-site fabrication to ensure efficiency and adherence to budget and safety regulations. Phased construction strategies accommodate local health, safety, archaeological, and historical codes, ensuring a rigorous yet smooth implementation process.



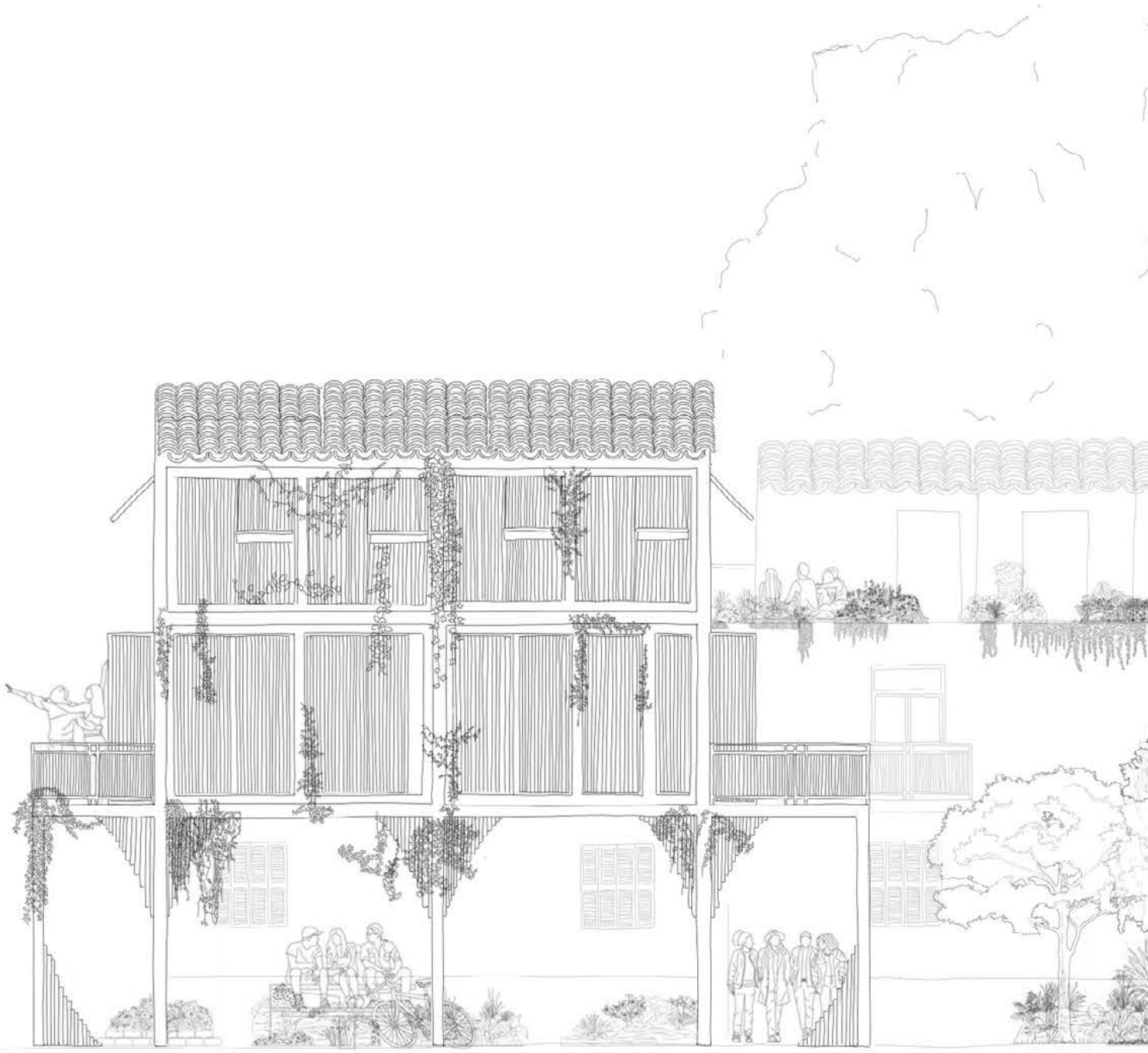


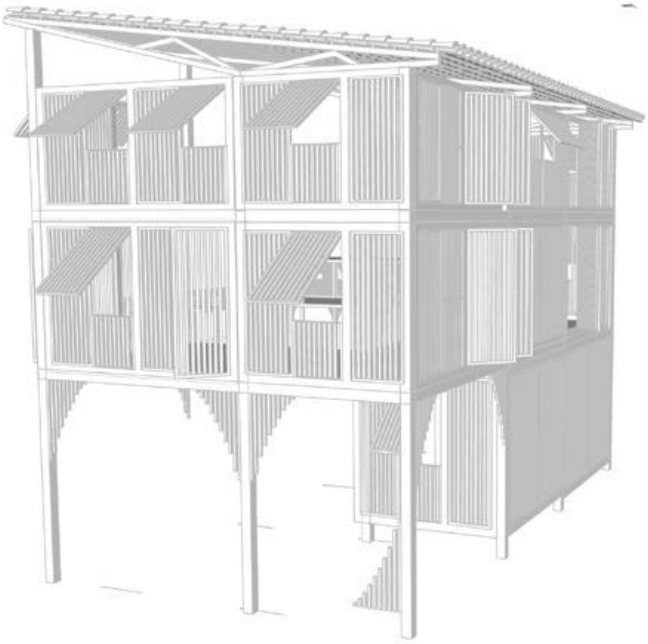


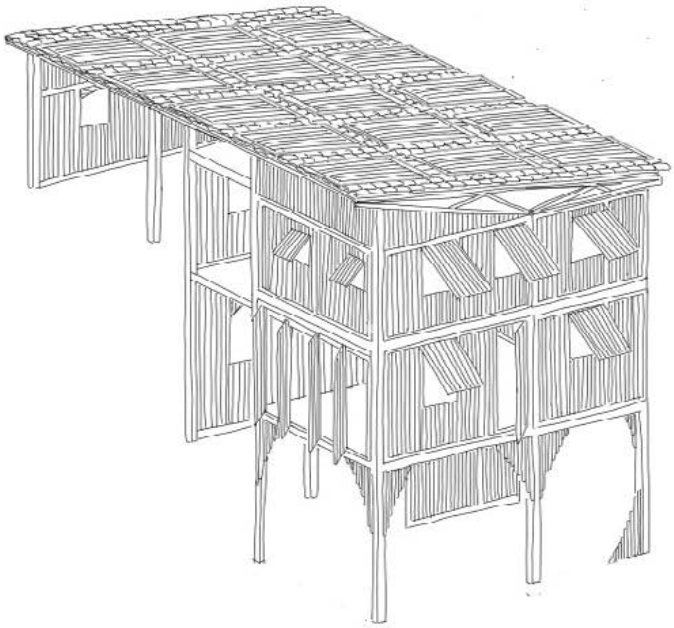




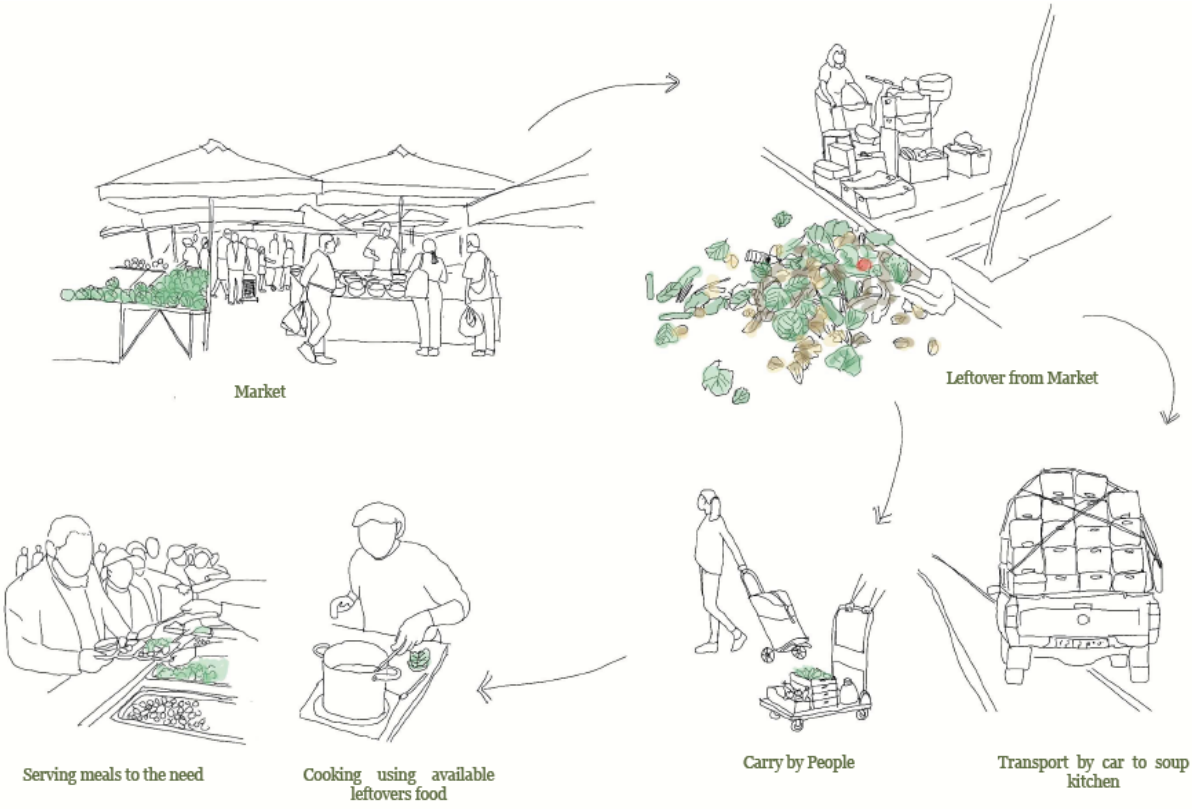




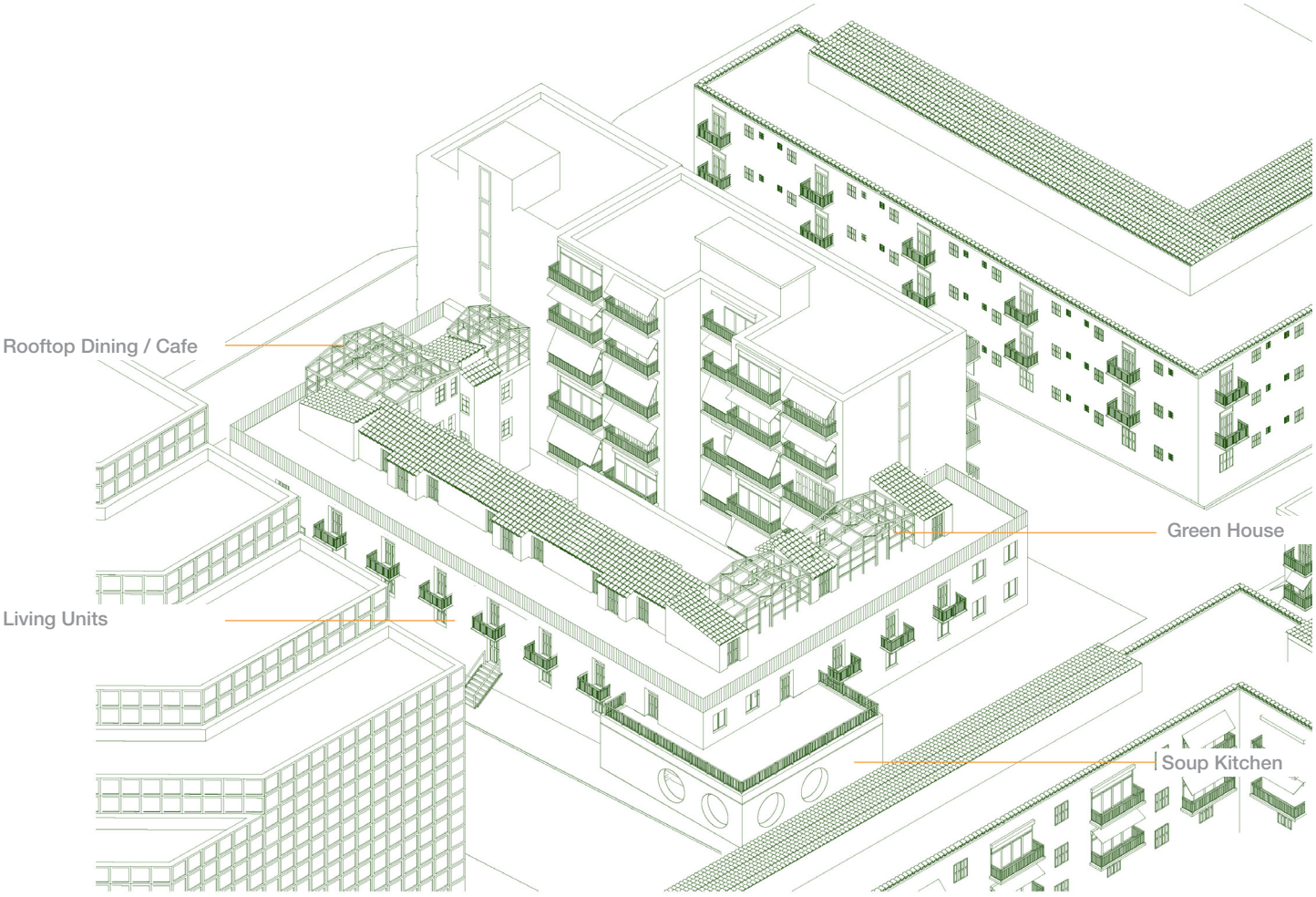








Collection ---------- Delivery ---------- Process





Growing



Cooking



Living



Working

A Drop of Life

Nok Yi Leung

Blop' a little light green oval fruit hit my head while I was sketching on a street in Neos Kosmos. I looked up and found chains of young olives hanging from the tree. A thought popped into my head at that moment, what do olives taste like when they are fresh from the tree? I stood on my tiptoes and reached for the biggest olive. The olive was overwhelmingly bitter and tingly, nothing like anything I had tasted before. However, from this experience, I started to notice how lively and edible the streets of Neos Kosmos are. There are lemon, bitter orange and olive trees everywhere.

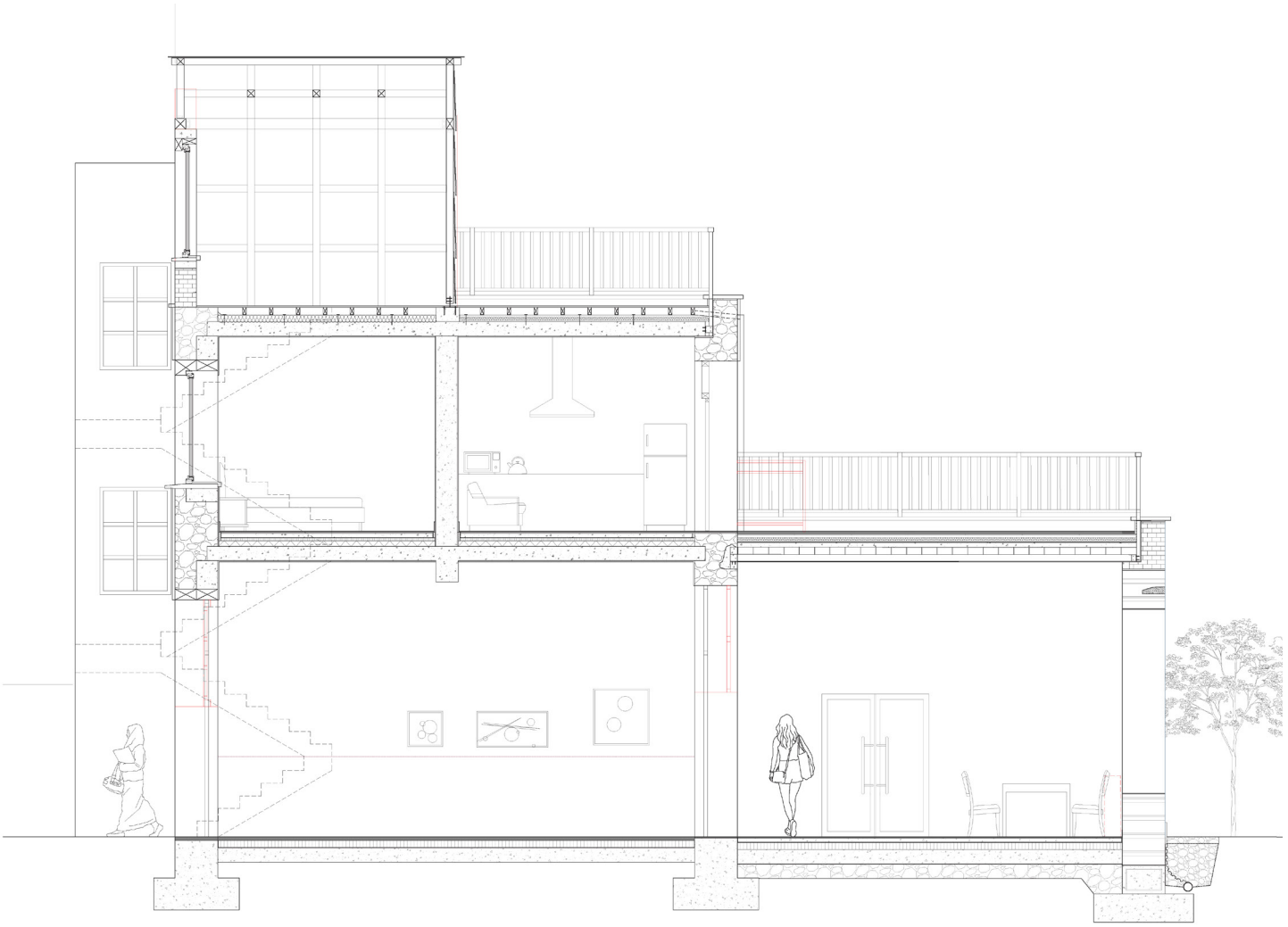
The next few days I started to notice, unlike other areas within Athens, most of the fruit trees in Neos Kosmos are planted behind the fences of residential buildings. These trees which provide shading for the suspended balconies, define a soft boundary for the ground floor apartments and separate the public and private spaces quietly. It is interesting how they use plants to express their ownership of spaces. The scheme is to gather local residents using city farming as a channel.

The wider idea is to create an edible landscape and connect the wider neighbourhood. During my time in Neos Kosmos, I met Muhammed, a Syrian refugee who lived here for 5 years. I was fascinated by his emphasis on 'Language is very important, it changes the way you think!'. As in his experience, Greek people are more open and approachable if a person can speak their language. The conversation with Muhammad made me realise how important language is in bridging connections between people in a social and cultural context. I wish to investigate and incorporate this into my future scheme to ensure that migrants can settle into Neos Kosmos better.

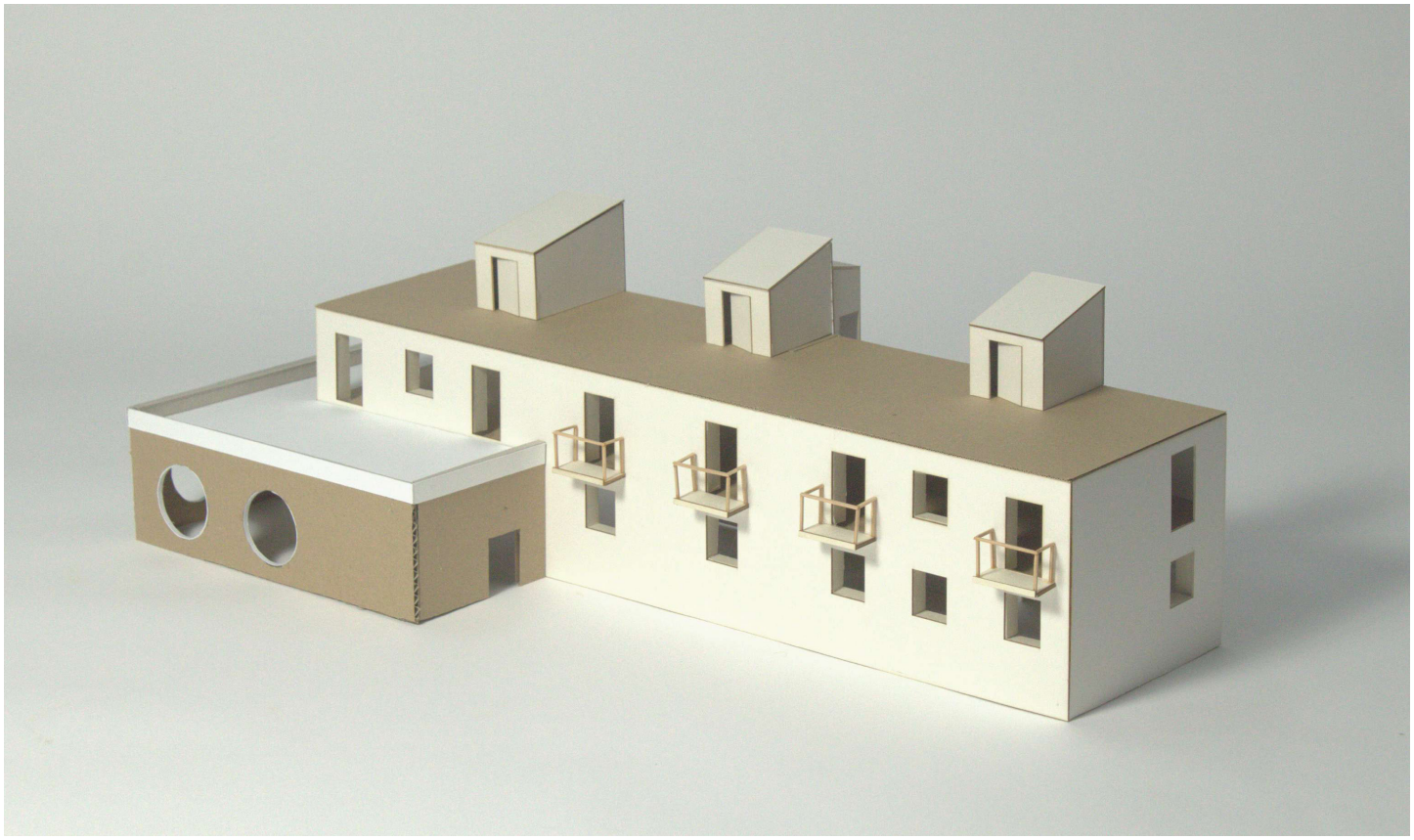






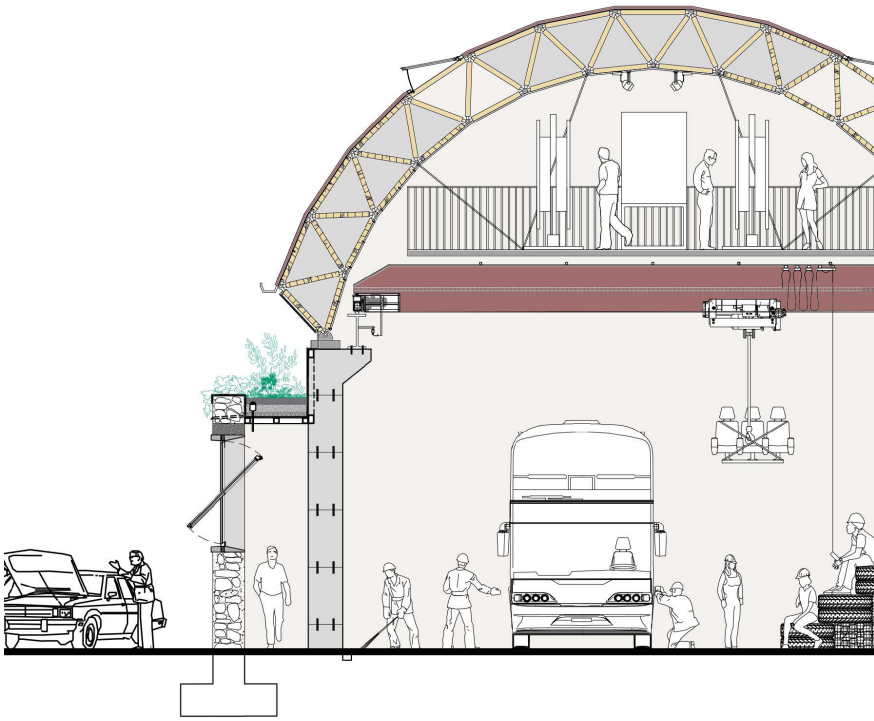




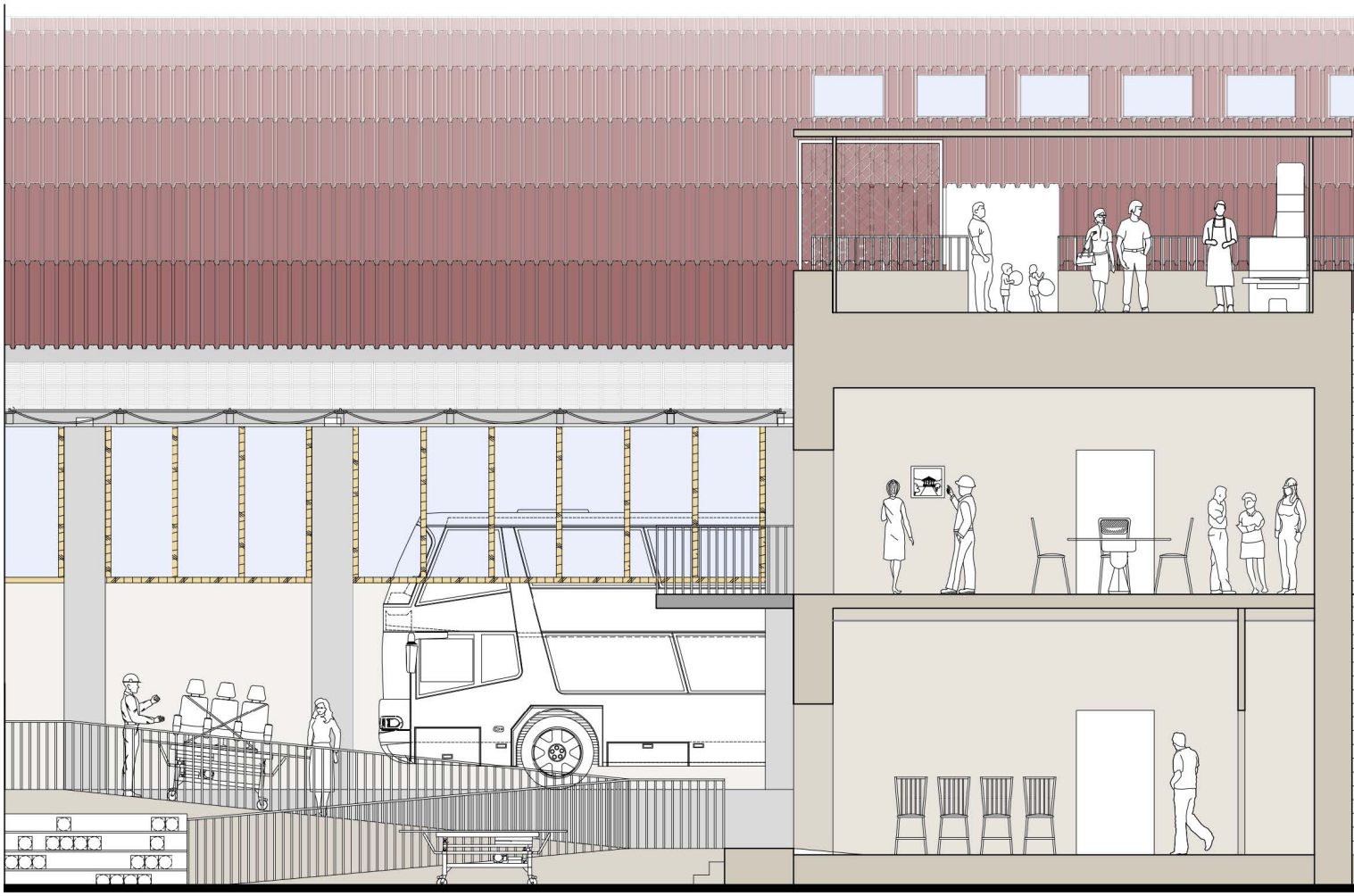


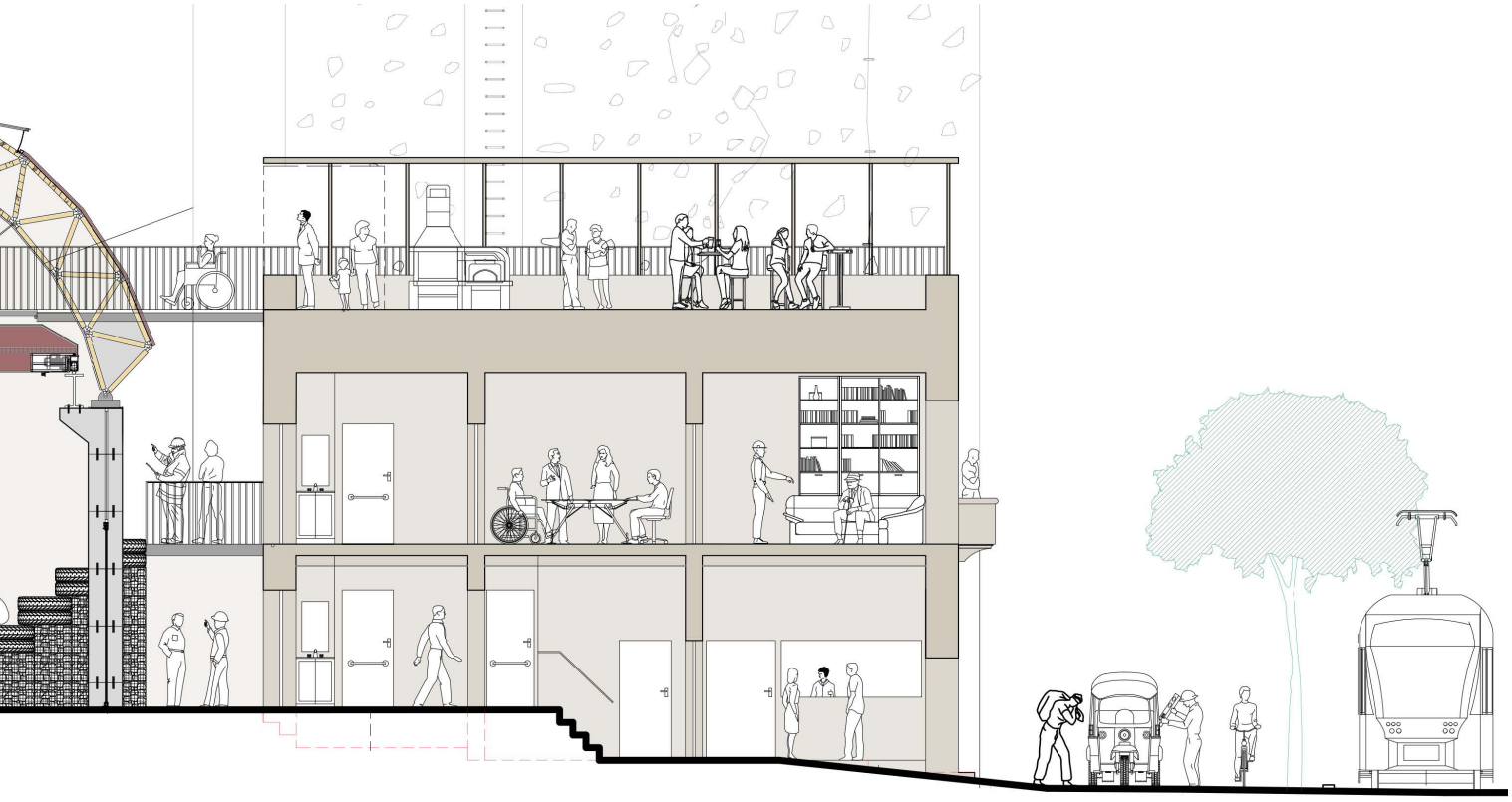
Separate, but the same

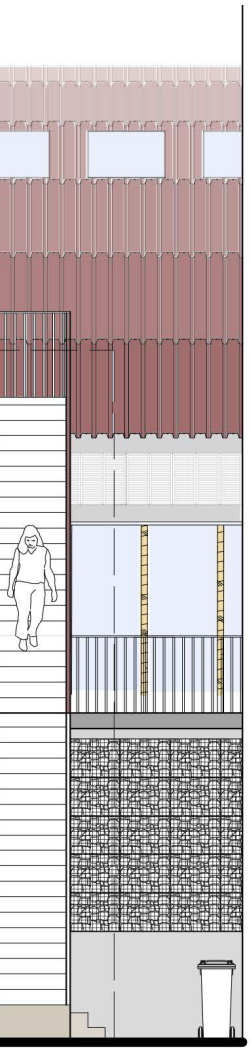
Joshua Trainor

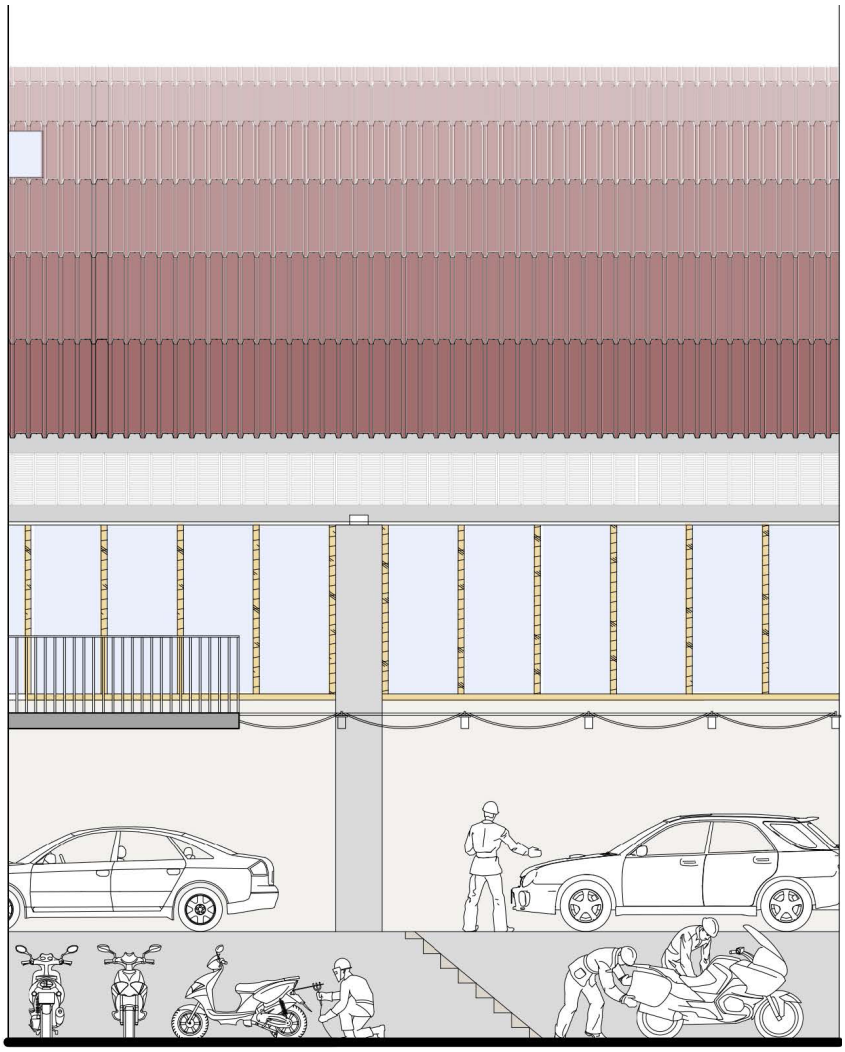


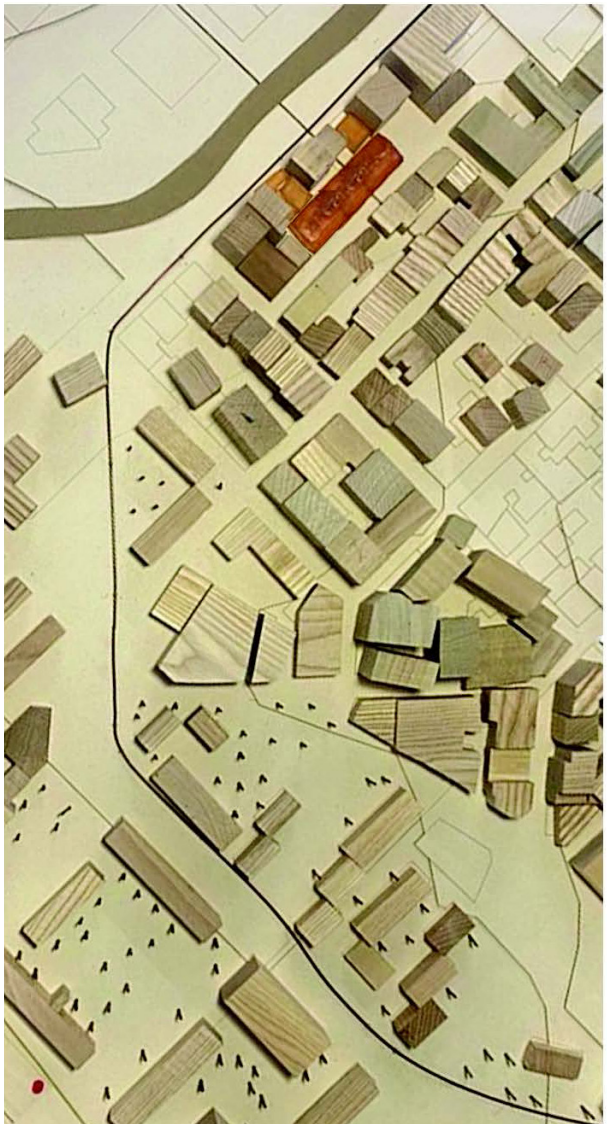
Separate, but the same,
A link connects the chain,
A journey to another place,
A lift, a crank, a crane.
Another chance, another life,
Another trip, another drive,
A better day, a better price,
With better pay, comes better nights,
A brighter spark, a shift in gears,
No need to go, we've got it here,
So take the wheel, its time to steer,
Use your voice and lend an ear,
Take some time, communicate,
Ease the clutch, release the breaks,
Share the skills, regenerate,
The time is now, its not too late,
A place to learn, a place to laugh,
A place to build, a place of craft,
A place that show that good things last,
A place of new, despite the past,
A place of solidarity,
Prosperity and charity,
With new found similarities
To new familiarities.



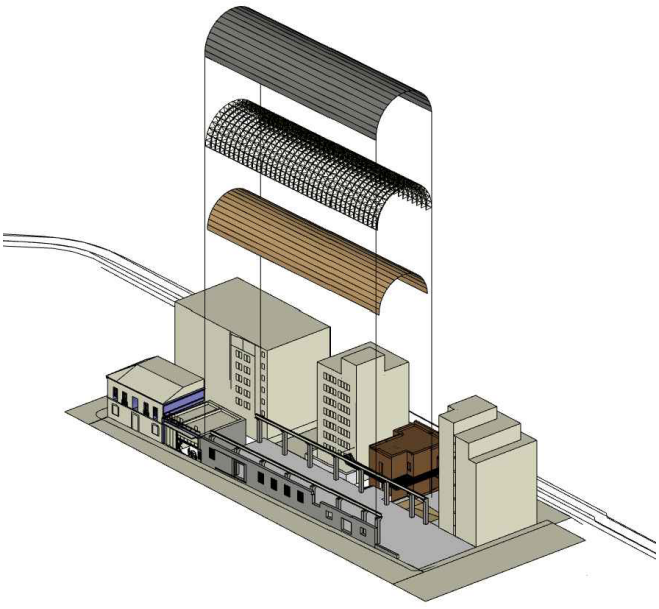


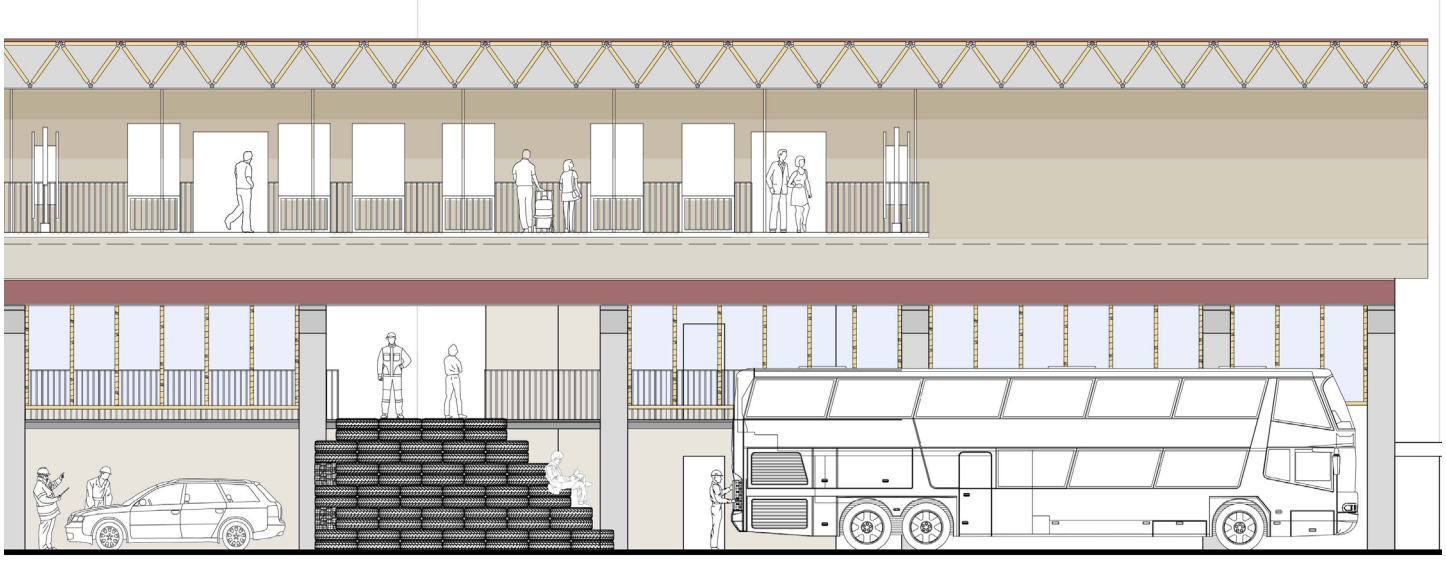




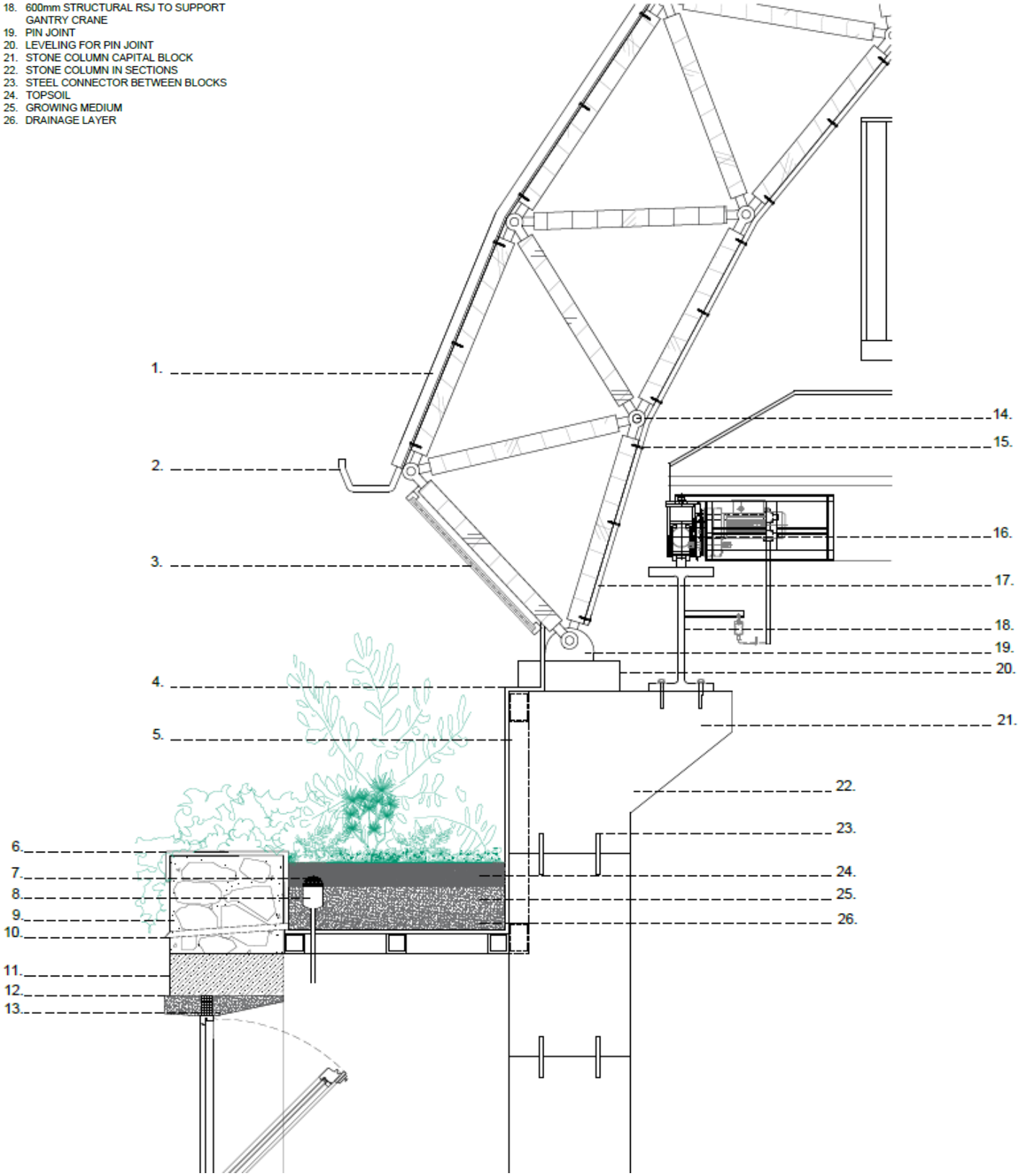








1. 0.7mm CORRUGATED GALVANISED STEEL SHEET ROOFING.
2. 2mm STEEL GUTTERING PROFILE
3. VENTILATOR IN STEEL FRAME
4. GALVANISED STEEL FLASHING
5. 1mm GALVANISED STEEL UPSTAND
6. 1mm GALVANISED STEEL PLANTER
7. PERFORATED DRAIN COVER
8. HOPPER TO RAINWATER HARVESTING TANK 15,000L IN BASEMENT
9. EXISTING STONE WALL
10. 40mm WEEP HOLE
11. EXISTING STONE LINTEL
12. PRE-CAST CONCRETE EXTERNAL WINDOW SILL WITH DRIP
13. PRE-CAST CONCRETE INTERNAL WINDOW SILL
14. STEEL NODE (SEE DETAIL 11)
15. 6mm STEEL SCREW
16. OVERHEAD GANTRY CRANE MOTOR
17. JUTE FABRIC LINING
18. 600mm STRUCTURAL RSJ TO SUPPORT GANTRY CRANE
19. PIN JOINT
20. LEVELING FOR PIN JOINT
21. STONE COLUMN CAPITAL BLOCK
22. STONE COLUMN IN SECTIONS
23. STEEL CONNECTOR BETWEEN BLOCKS
24. TOPSOIL
25. GROWING MEDIUM
26. DRAINAGE LAYER





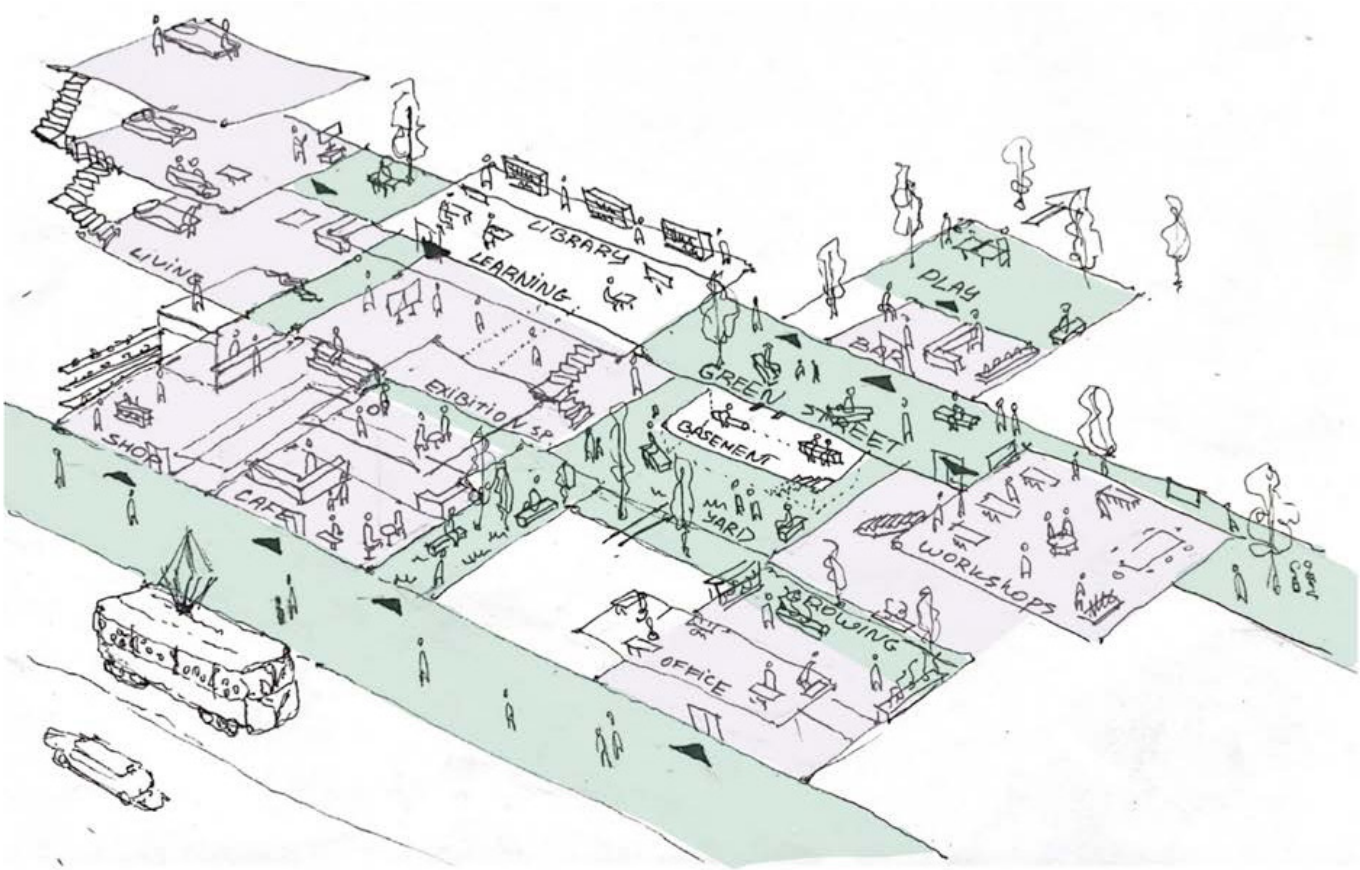

CMG

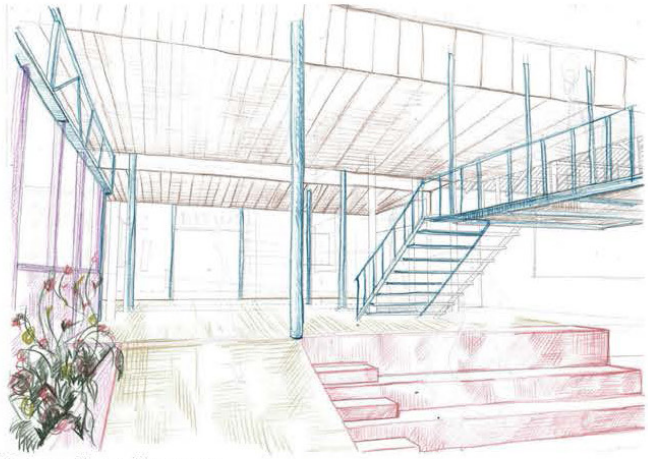
Daria Serhiienko

City
Enhancing landscape connectivity through multifunctional green infrastructure corridor. The street next to the building will be repurposed into a pedestrian green space that enhances the local environment, improves quality of life, and encourages community engagement. This transformation not only provides a safe and attractive space for residents and visitors but also encourages sustainable urban development.

Users
This space is designed to accommodate refugees from around the world, offering a safe and welcoming environment where they can learn the local language and traditions. It provides opportunities for refugees to create and sell products that reflect their cultural heritage while sharing their traditions with others. This approach aims to facilitate a gradual and positive transition into the new environment, fostering mutual understanding and connection with the local community.

Structure
By creatively reusing and repurposing the materials and structure of the abandoned building that used to be a car repair and storage space, the new facility can be efficiently transformed into a vibrant, functional, and sustainable environment for refugees. This approach not only preserves the character of the original building but also creates a new structure that is sustainable.





① Entrance. View on library space



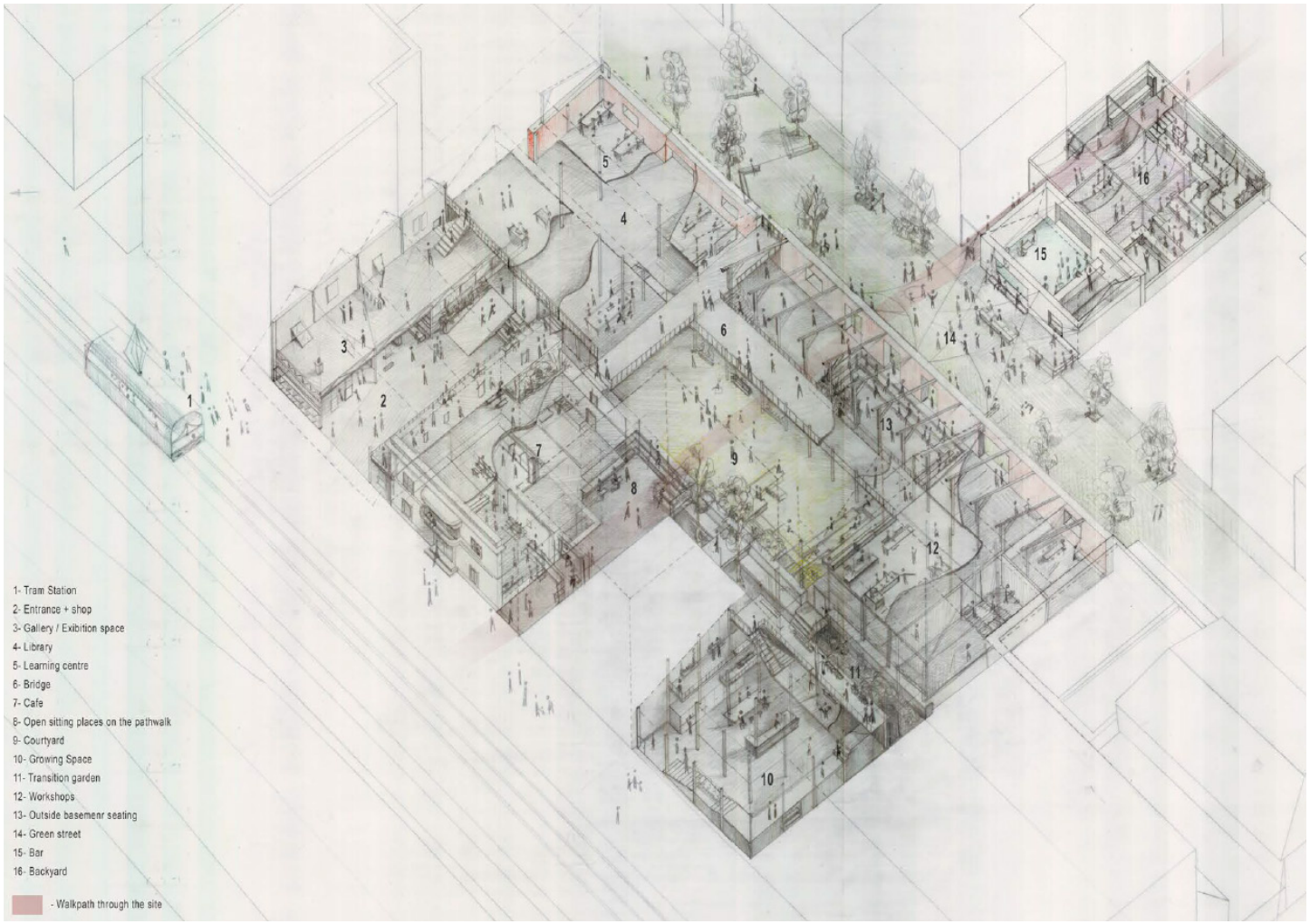
② Walk throught neoclassical building to courtyard



④ Courtyard/ View on the basement



⑤ Courtyard. View from the basement

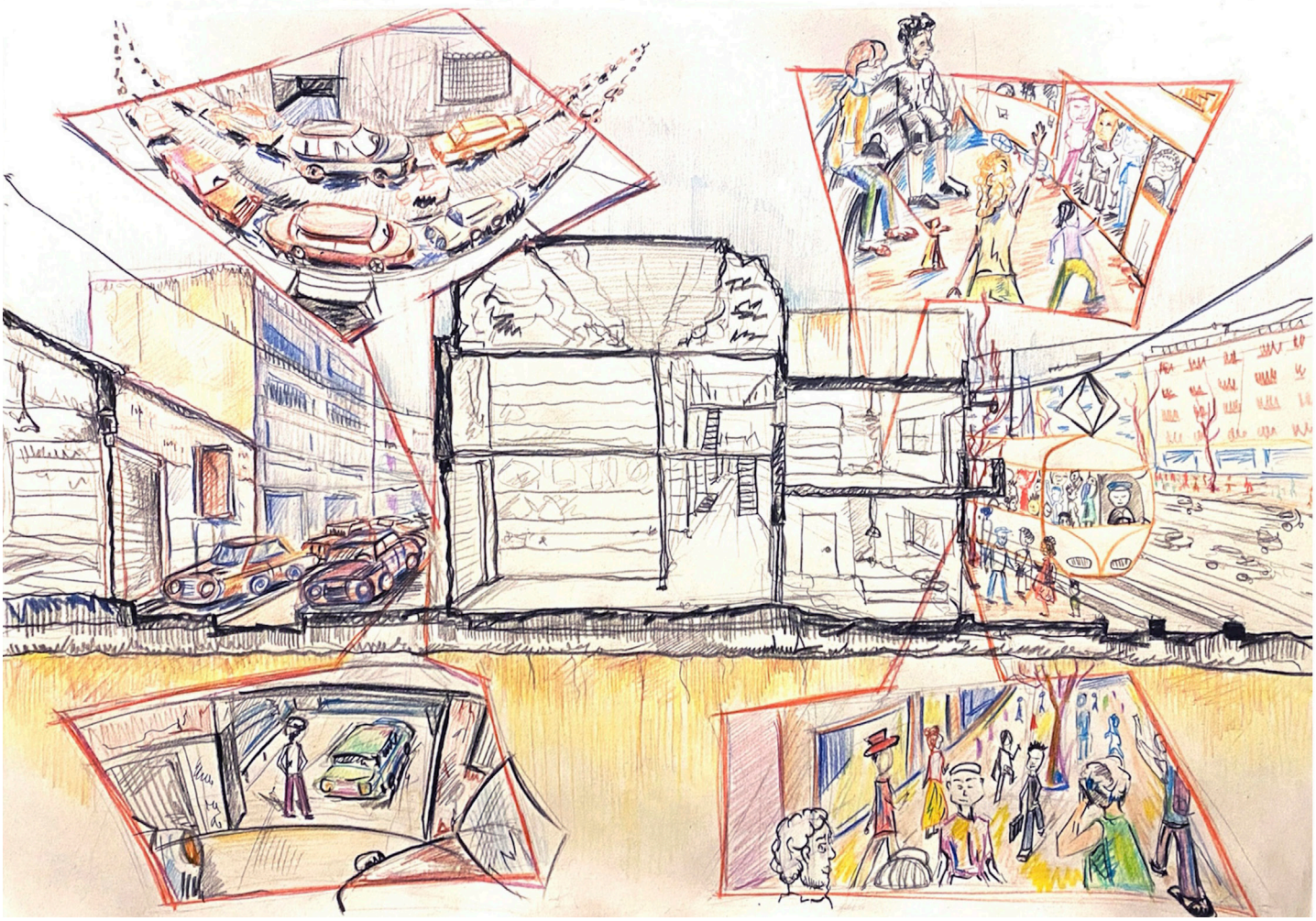




⑦ Transition yard beetwen workshops and growing spase



⑧ Inside of the growing spase



The Nexus Platform

Oussama Erraqiq

In the lively streets of Neos Kosmos, Athens, I embarked on a journey of exploration, my senses heightened by the sights and sounds of urban life. Amongst the vibrant chaos, my attention was drawn to the silent but vital presence of metal and waste pickers navigating the city's landscape, their industrious endeavours often overlooked. Yet, it was a neglected site within Neos Kosmos that truly captured my imagination. Here, amidst a sea of abandoned metals and car scraps, lay the potential for transformation.

As an architecture student, I envisioned breathing new life into this forgotten space, envisioning a platform that would serve as a light up of opportunity for those who toiled among the leftovers from society that have been thrown away. Inspired by the values of empowering communities and promoting sustainability, I imagined a range of workshops, ateliers, and learning units rising from the remains, offering a space where individuals could gather, collaborate, and create. From the clang of metal against metal to the buzz of creativity in the air, this envisioned space would be a testament to the power of architecture to uplift and inspire.

Through my proposed initiative, I aimed to bridge the gap between urban neglect and communal resurgence, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose amongst those who often go unnoticed. In Neos Kosmos, amidst the shadows of forgotten scrap, I saw a chance to create something meaningful a place where hope could thrive despite the remnants of the past.

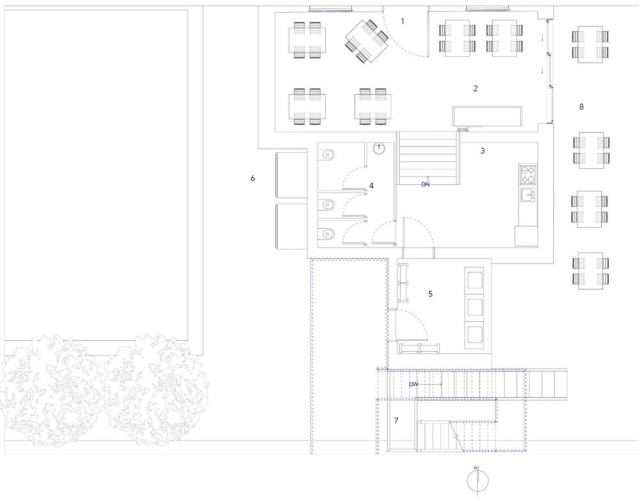






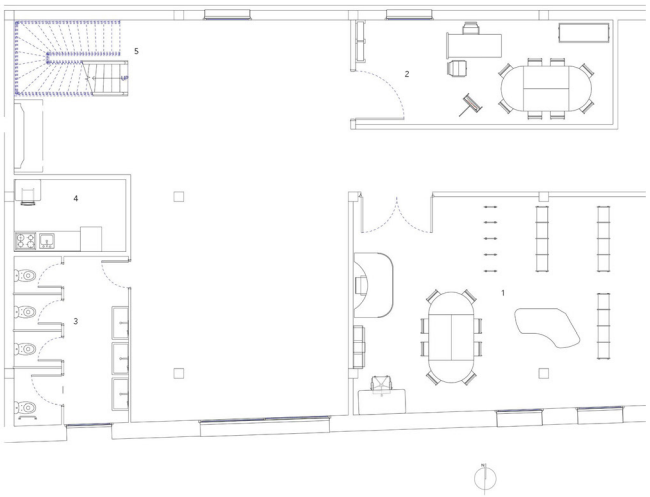






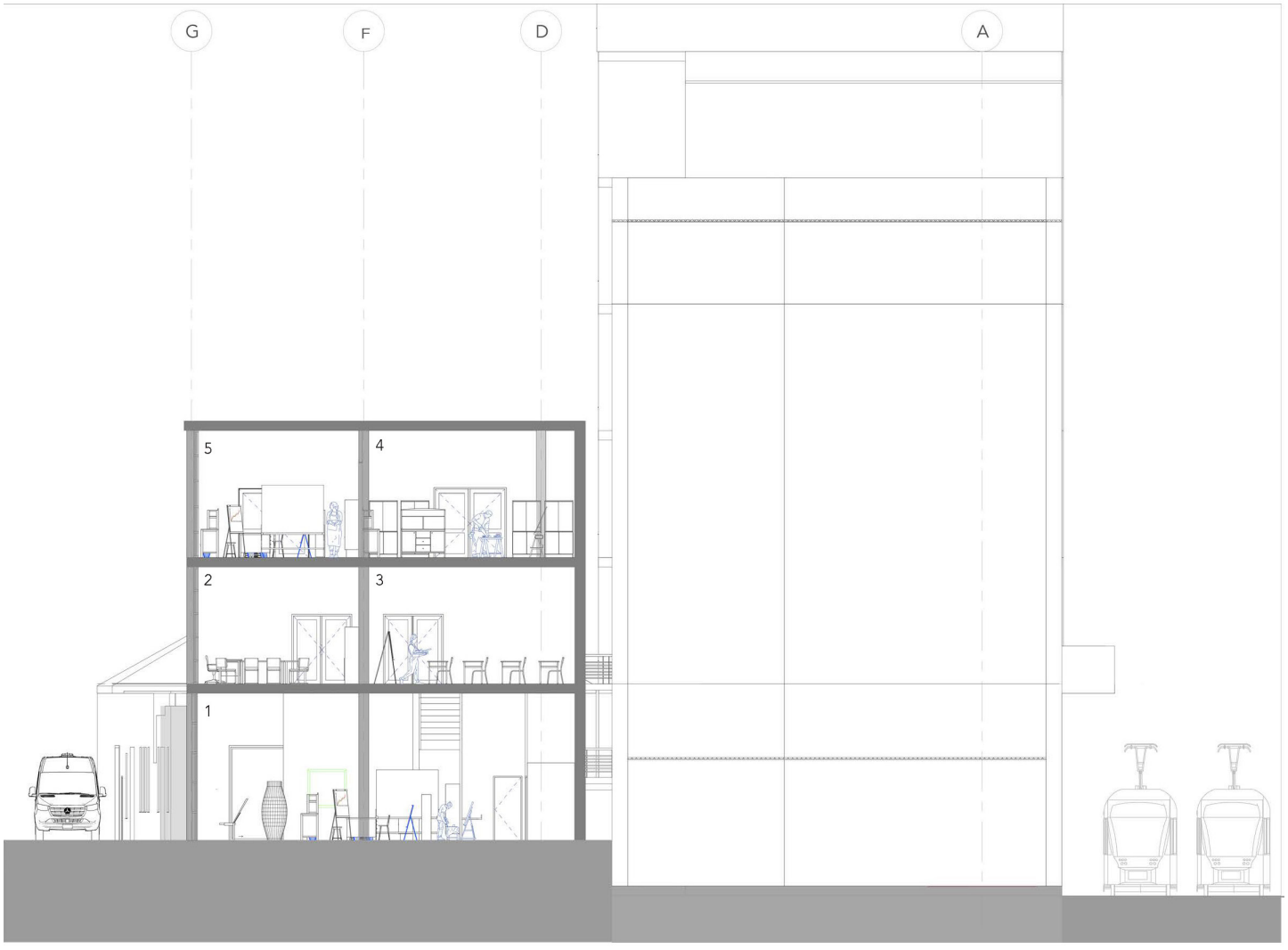
KEY

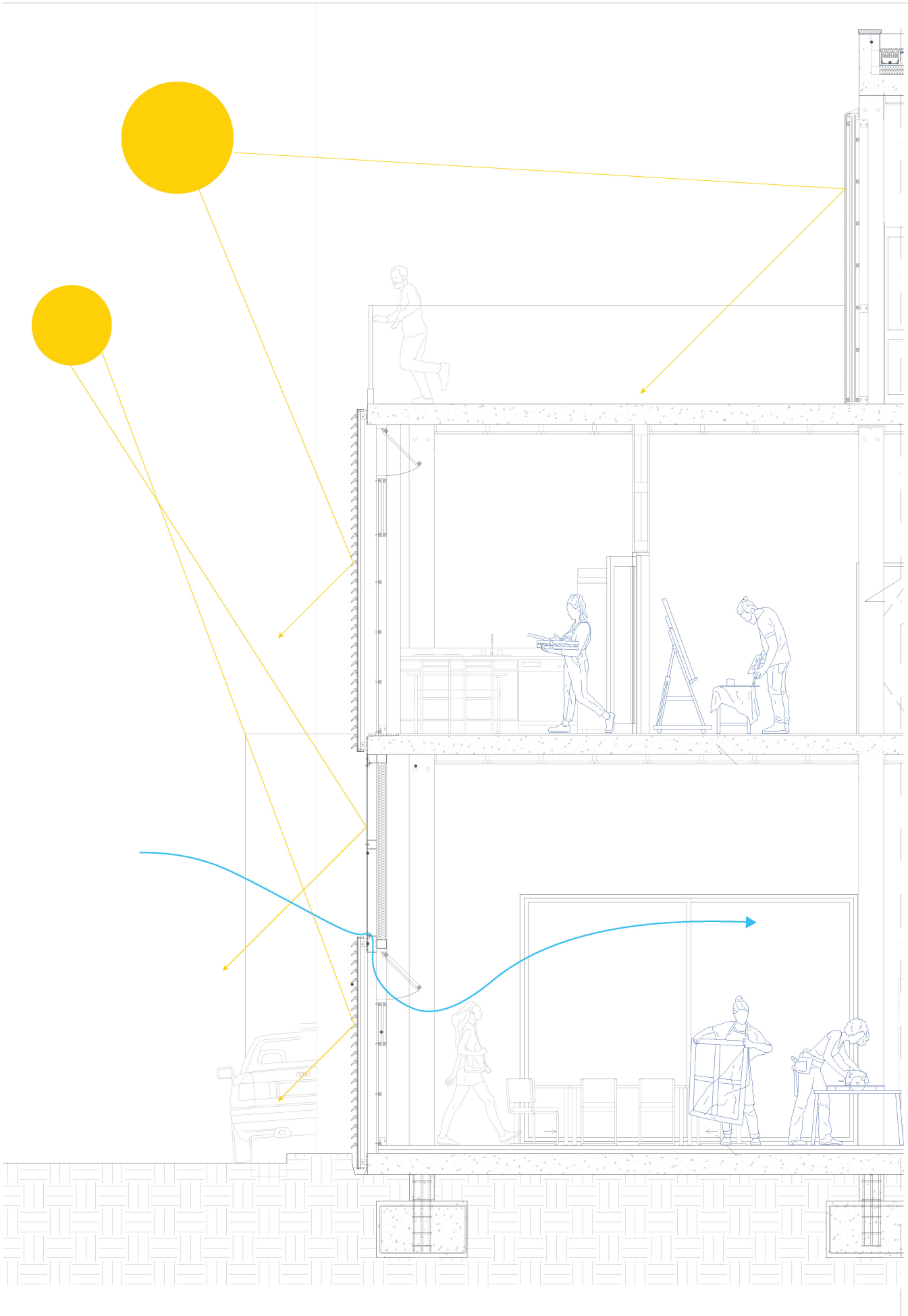
1- Entrance
2- Restaurant
3- Kitchen
4- Toilet
5- Storage
6- Recycling
7- Stairs
8- Outdoor space

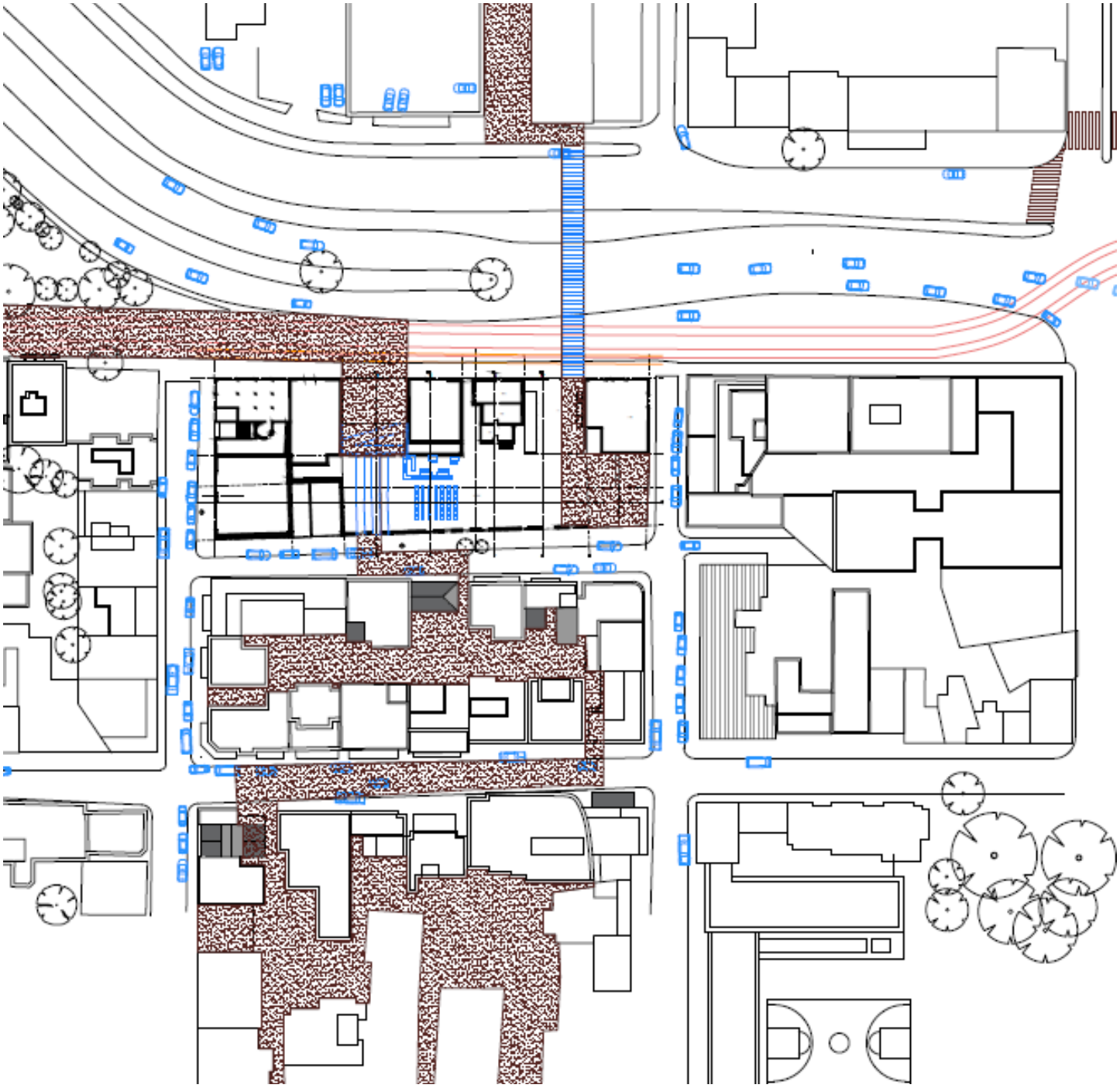


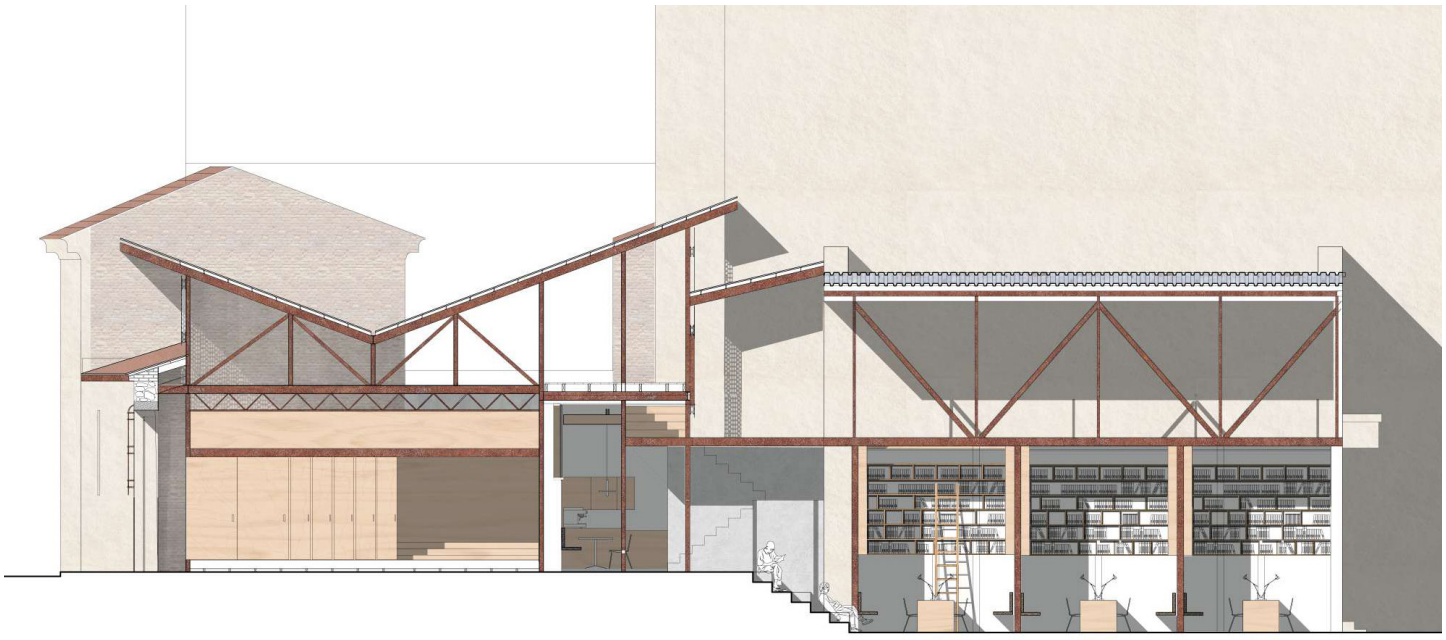
KEY

1- Library
2- Conference room
3- Toilets
4- Kitchenette
5- Stairs



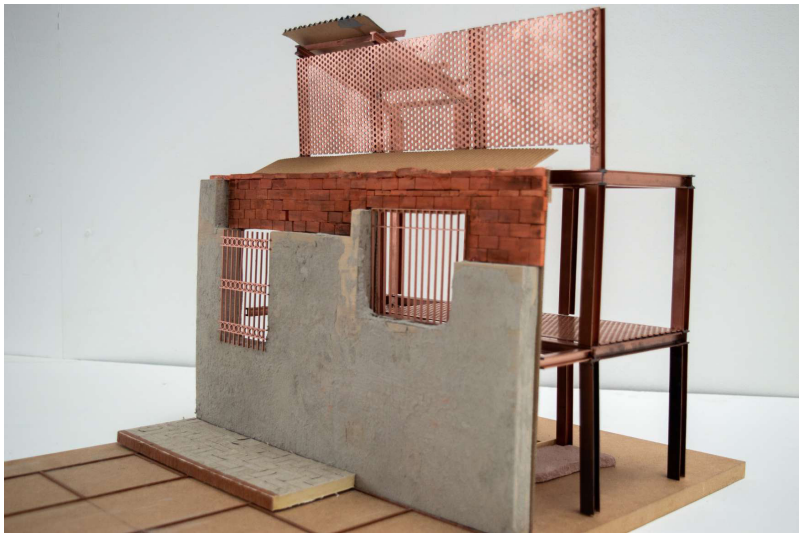


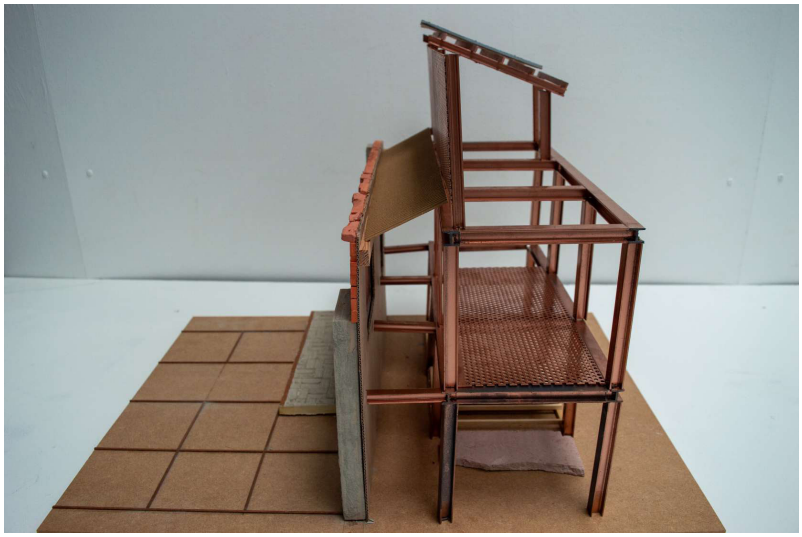




Reclaim and Reignite

Arun Kowcun







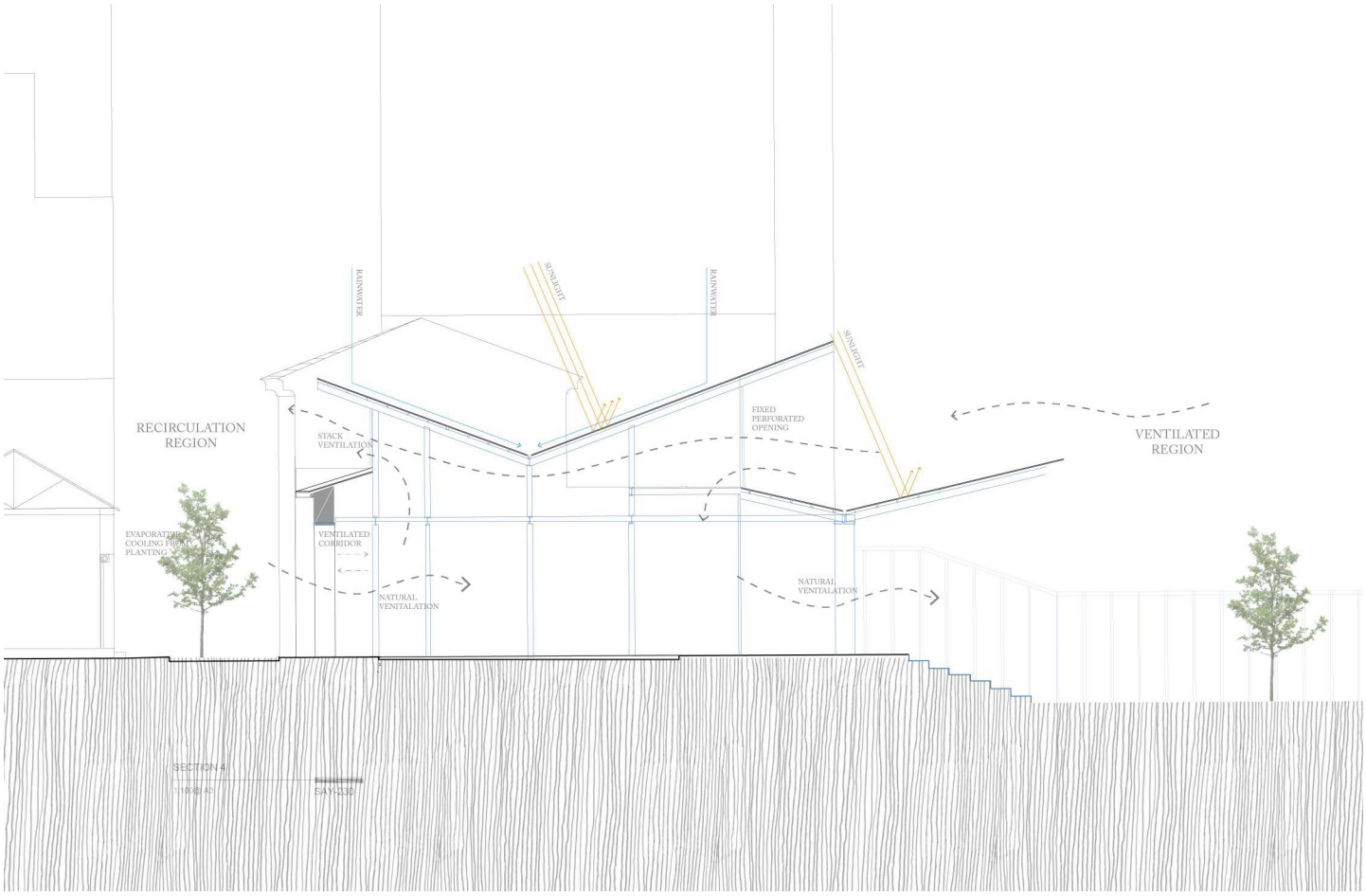
Athens is both breathtakingly ancient and modern at the same time. Walking through the historic centre, the physical sensation beneath one's foot of marble borne smooth by the passage over thousands of years, by millions of passengers gives the city a unique aura and vivid timelessness. The Acropolis, the High City, stands guard over the low, uniform passageways that permeate the valley as though part of the natural geology, yet the patchwork of Athens' urban fabric was stitched from reinforced concrete within the past fifty years.

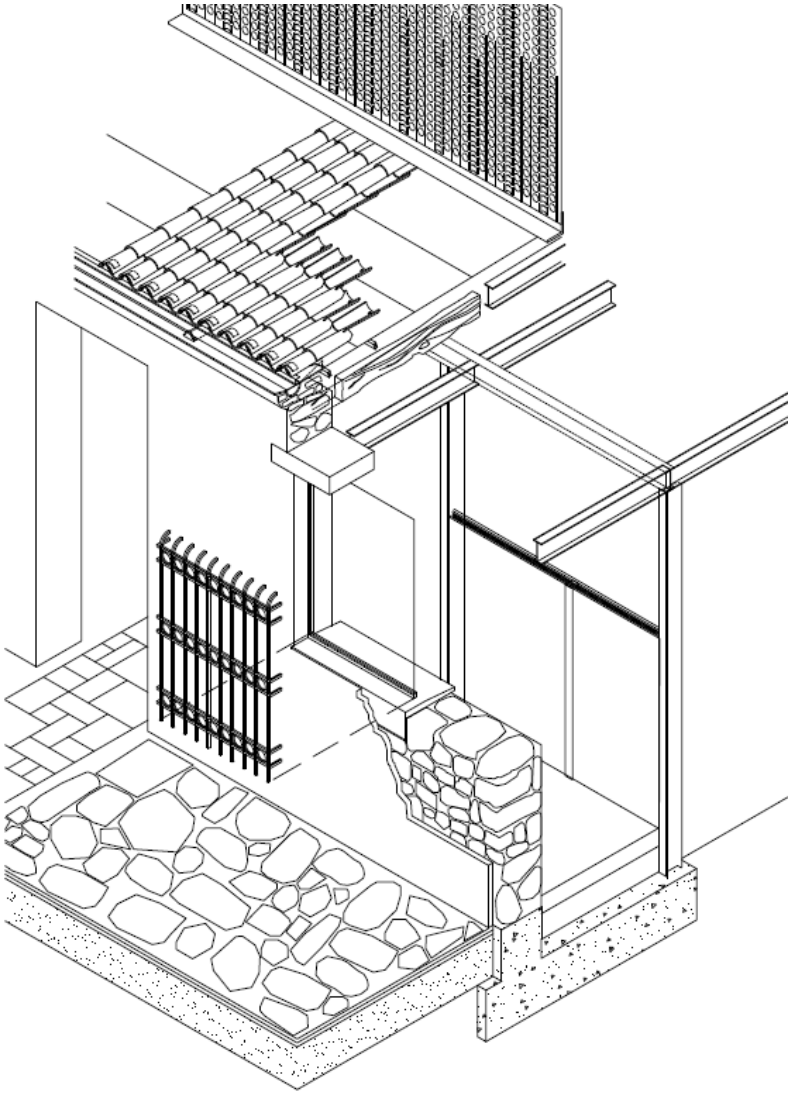
Thus, for a traveller wondering through the streets of Athens, most immediately visually striking is the modular array of façades, each stacked above and beside four others, like a jigsaw cut with regular pieces so that they fit seamlessly but contribute to no coherent image. Rather it is within the particular aspect of each piece that one finds a portrayal of human activity.

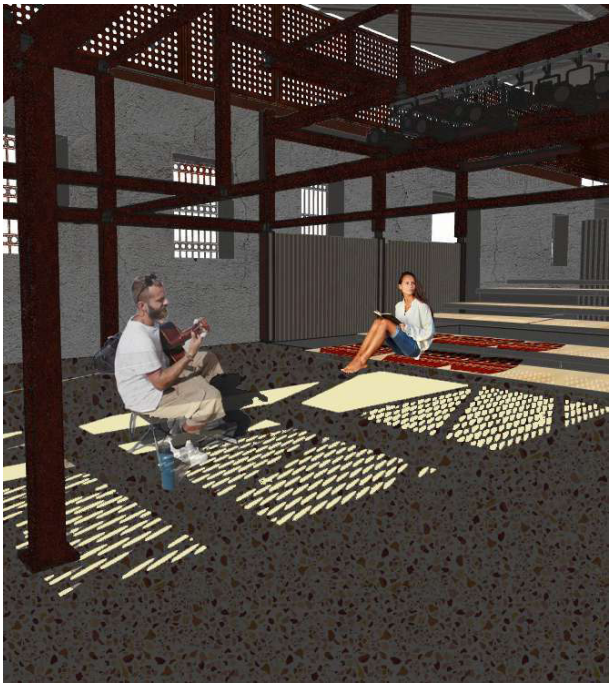
This puzzle of the polykatoikia extends almost throughout every corner of the city, and yet, contrary to the heralds of soullessness that critics of uniformity are so quick to chant, it is exactly the regularity that facilitates a unique degree of pragmatism in the ordering of material elements.

Though fitted into square structures, the façades are staggered to permeate light, air and layers of human activity. One can see in a single apartment block, laundry, chairs ,coffee cups, gardens over-spilling with rich vegetation or the light of the television set or an open refrigerator leaking onto the terrace beneath.




RAINWATER
SUNLIGHT
RAINWATER
SUNLIGHT
RECIRCULATION
REGION
STACK
VENTILATION
FIXED
PERFORATED
OPENING
VENTILATED
REGION
EVAPORATIVE
COOLING FROM
PLANTING
VENTILATED
CORRIDOR
NATURAL
VENTILATION
NATURAL
VENTILATION
SECTION A
SAY 2.5%



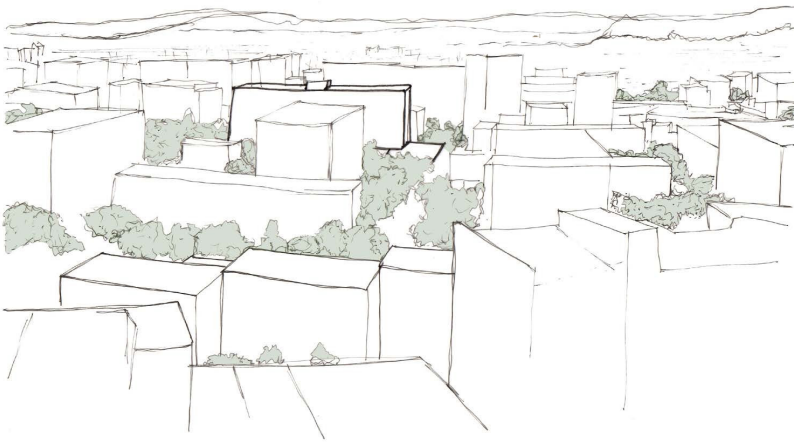




Urban Exodus

Aikaterini Pitsi

On a busy skyline, of overlapping balconies and windows, the ghost of what could have been appears. A haunting dance of forgotten dreams where abandoned concrete structures are standing as silent testaments to architectural aspiration. The enigma behind the beauty of the decay, have unfinished edifices become relics of suspended narratives?



Suspended hopes of a bygone era, hollowing out the dense urban tapestry. The exodus of the community, a departure that echoes through the abandoned corridors and deserted roads. Yet, a slight head move, and a few seconds away, lays a vibrant Athens.

As the lens shifts, the contrast between the two becomes a lyrical interplay, a harmony of juxtaposed stories. Who called these spaces home? A community in motion, interweaving architectural form and the transient footsteps of those who walk the city.





Ground
- Impermeable 100%
- Permeable 20%
- Permeable 60%

Above Ground
- Impermeable 100%
- Permeable 40%

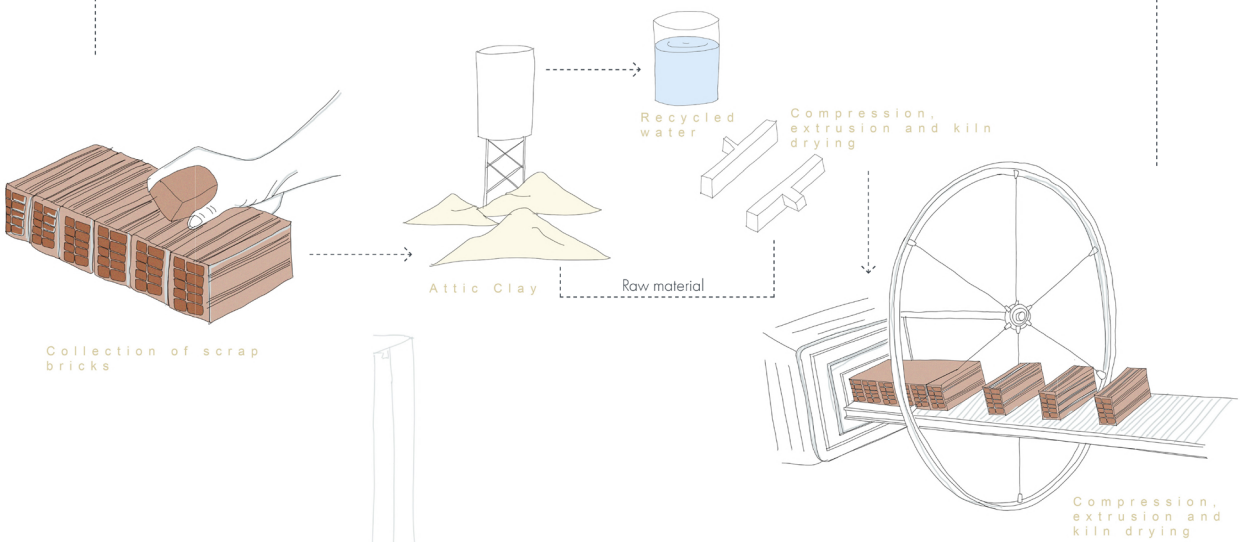


Ground
- Impermeable 100%
- Permeable 20%
- Permeable 60%
- Permeable 80%

Above Ground
- Impermeable 100%
- Permeable 40%
- Permeable 50-70%



Material sourcing and production
Extruded Clay Bricks





Proposed Hydroponics Farm

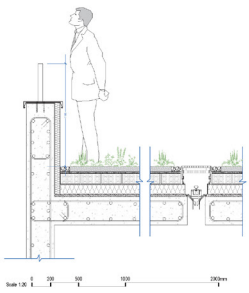
Water Demand and Produce

Small to medium plants - 0.002m^3/day
Daily demand per unit - 0.56m^3
Total daily demand - 5.04m^3

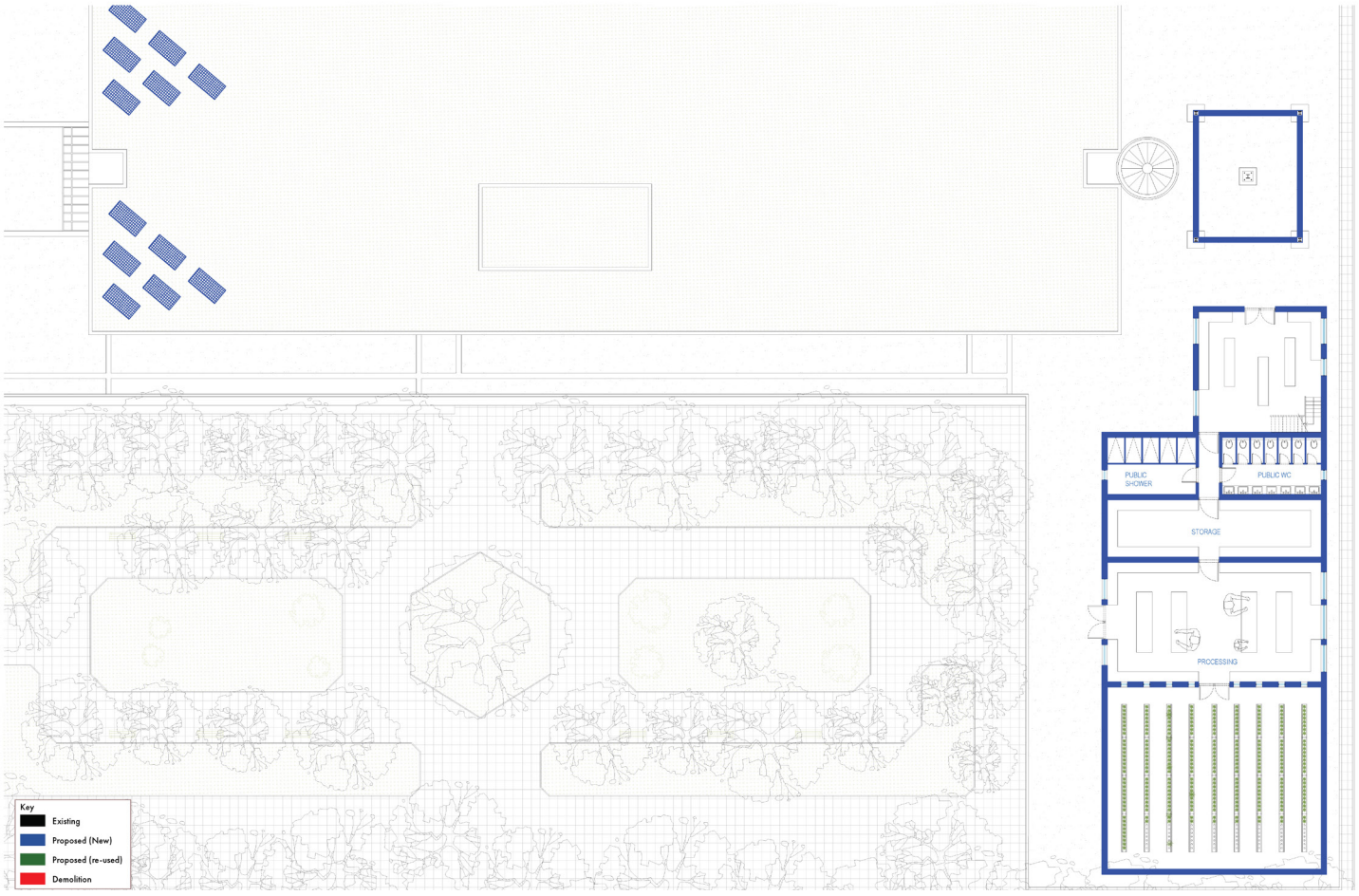
Annual Water Collection (from polykatoikia and proposed roof) - 402m^2

Annual production Volume

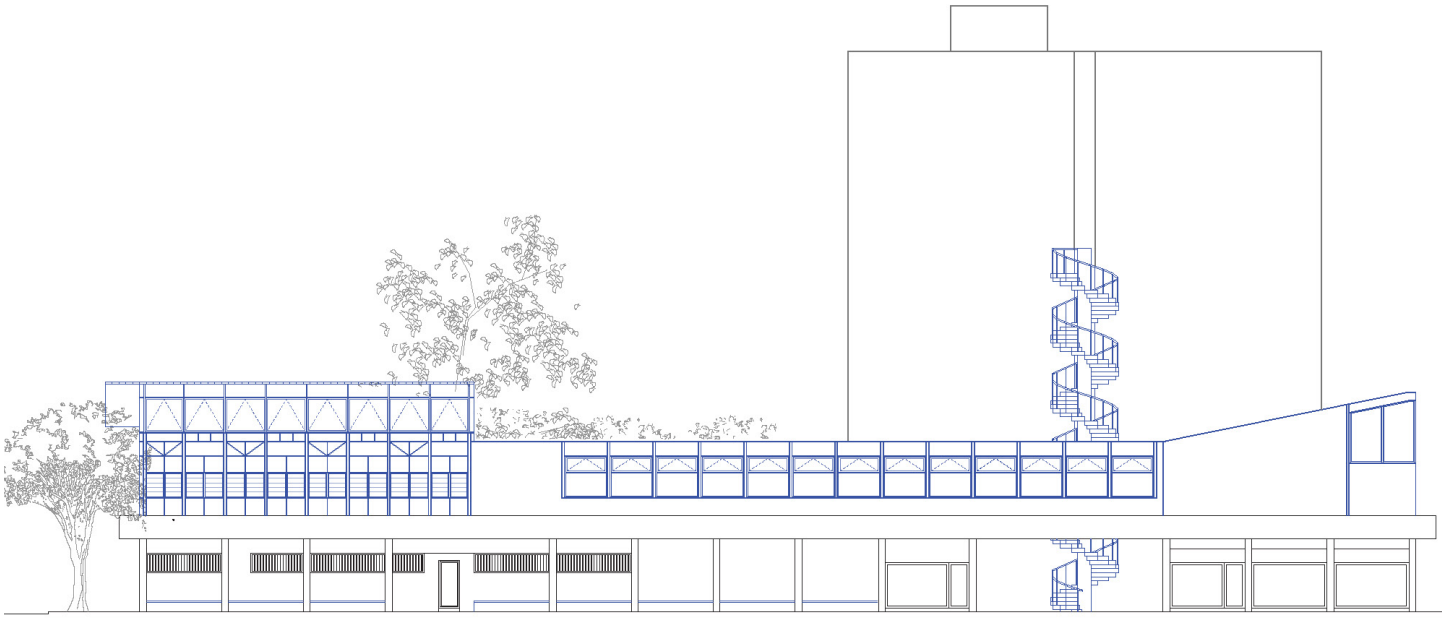
Lettuce - 3204kg
Spinach - 1533kg
Strawberries - 2663kg
Tomatoes - 13632kg
Herbs - varies/ based on fresh or dried

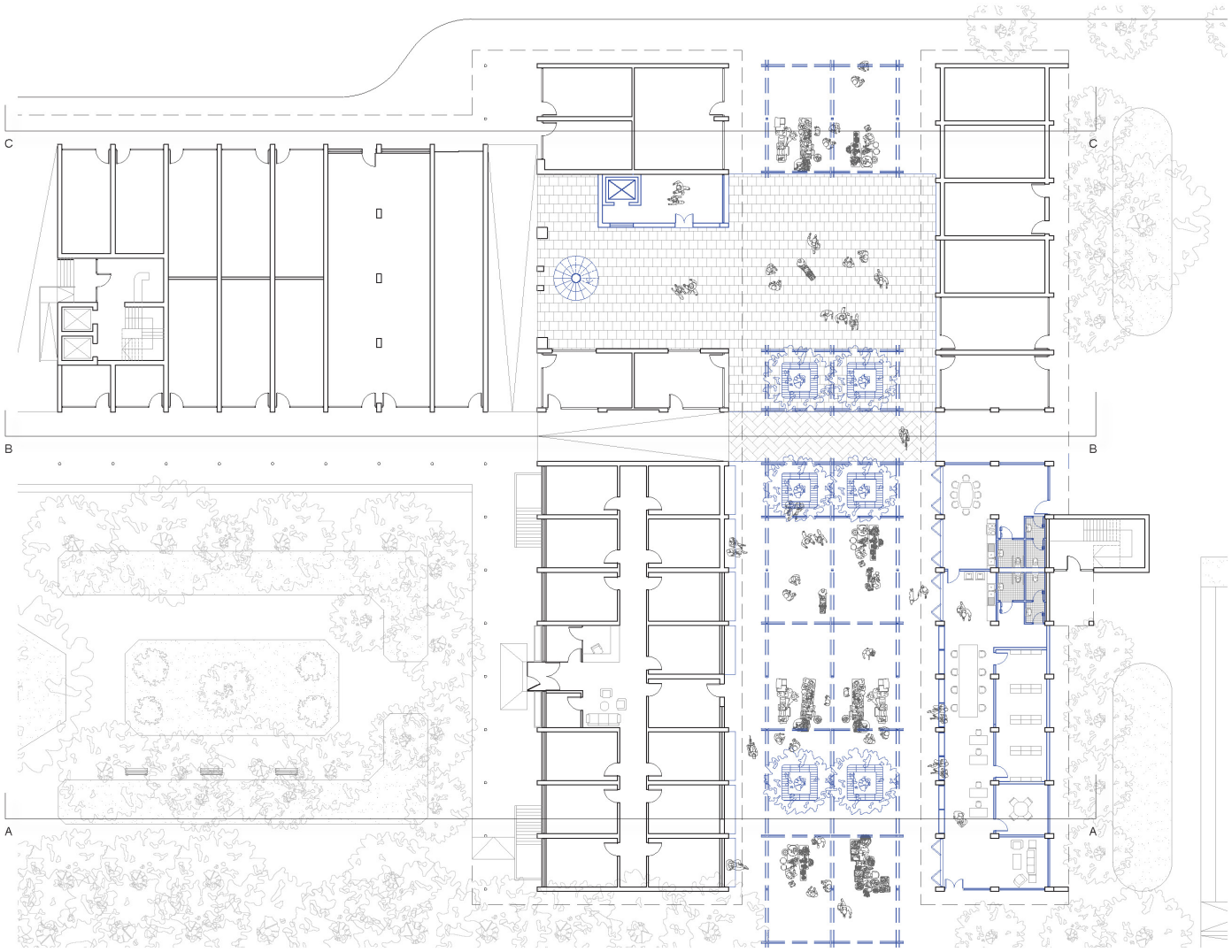





PUBLIC SHOWER
PUBLIC WC
STORAGE
PROCESSING
Key
Existing
Proposed (New)
Proposed (re-used)
Demolition


Key
Existing
Proposed (New)
Proposed (re-used)
Demolition




C
C
B
B
A
A

Above and Below

Thien Hee Tey



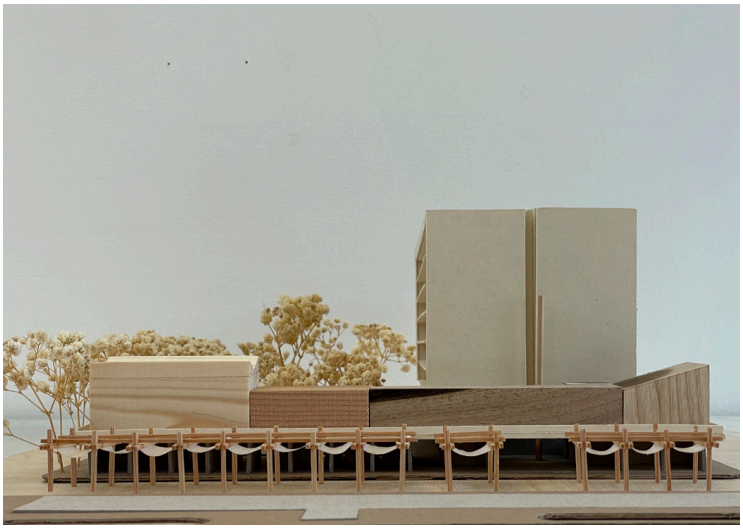
The weathered polykatoikia bear witness to the personal stories of the resilient residents. Within the site, there exists an essential (through under-resourced) social infrastructure: a medical clinic, a pharmacy, a YMCA shop, a public garden, an amphitheatre, a community sports club and a pottery workshop.

During my site visit, multiple spatial issues were identified. These included shuttered shops along covered walkways, inactive under-crofts and a clinic's underused rooftop. Along the covered walkway the elderly descendants of refugees from Asia Minor were corralled whilst the modern cafe next door buzzing with the youthful energy of younger generations: two disconnected worlds, sharing the same space.

Based on my narrative survey, I have noted a lack of adequate social care provision within the area. I am keen to explore the reasons behind this. Specifically, I want to explore the relationship between the existing spatial structure and its role in collective well-being and social cohesion. From the street level to the rooftop, the currently neglected spatial resources provide exciting opportunities to re-activate the elevations of the area. My proposed programme will implement a bottom-up approach, bringing the local actors and stakeholders together, in response to a fully supportive system of social infrastructure.

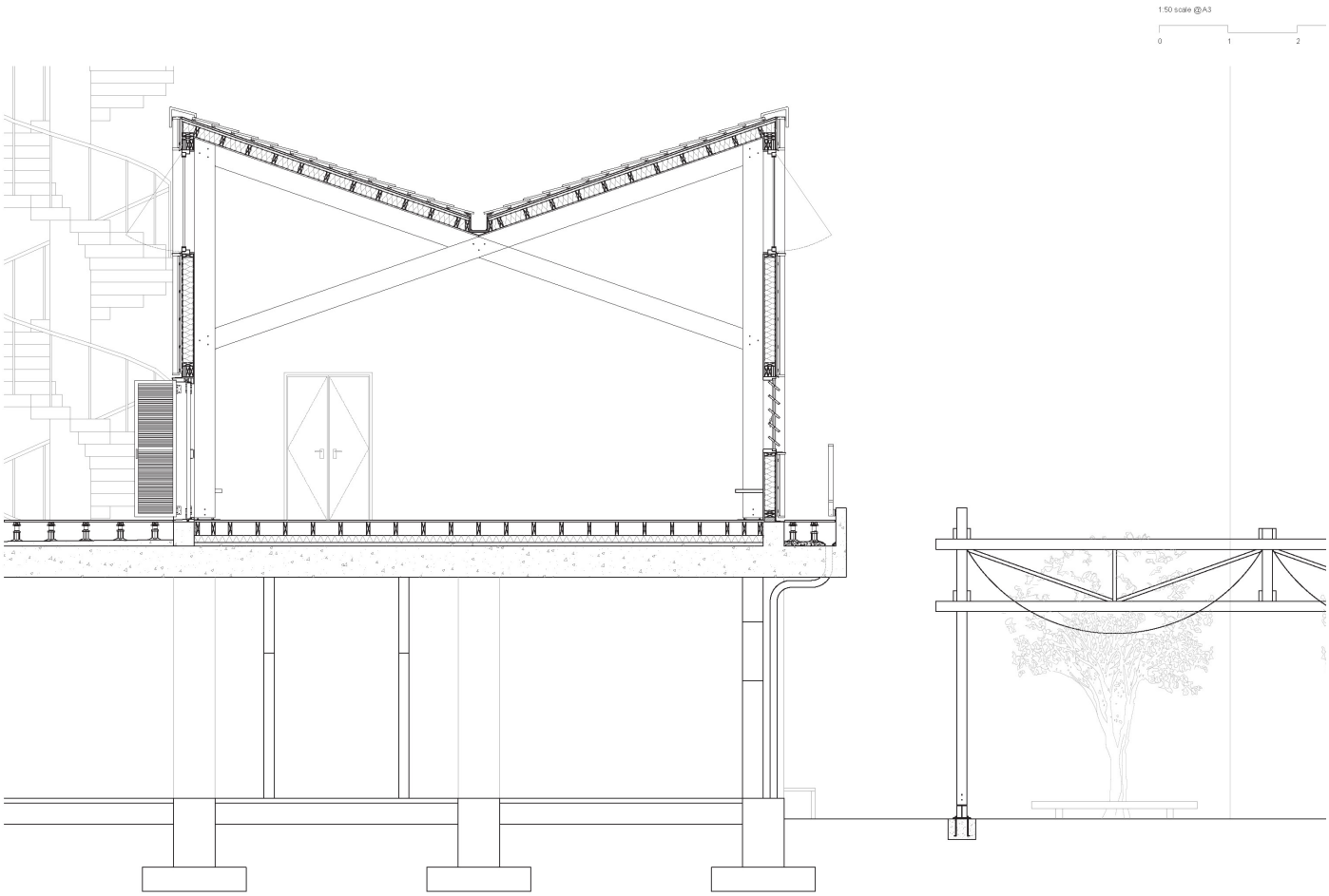











1:50 scale @A3
0
1
2



Neos Kosmos City Gymnasium

Luka Morris

Alvar Aalto's Imatra master plan (1947-53) emphasised integrating buildings with natural surroundings, prioritising human-centred design, and fostering community cohesion. Inspired by these principles, my design for the Neos Kosmos City Gymnasium focuses on:

Integration with Environment:
Seamlessly connecting indoor and outdoor spaces with green natural areas and natural light.

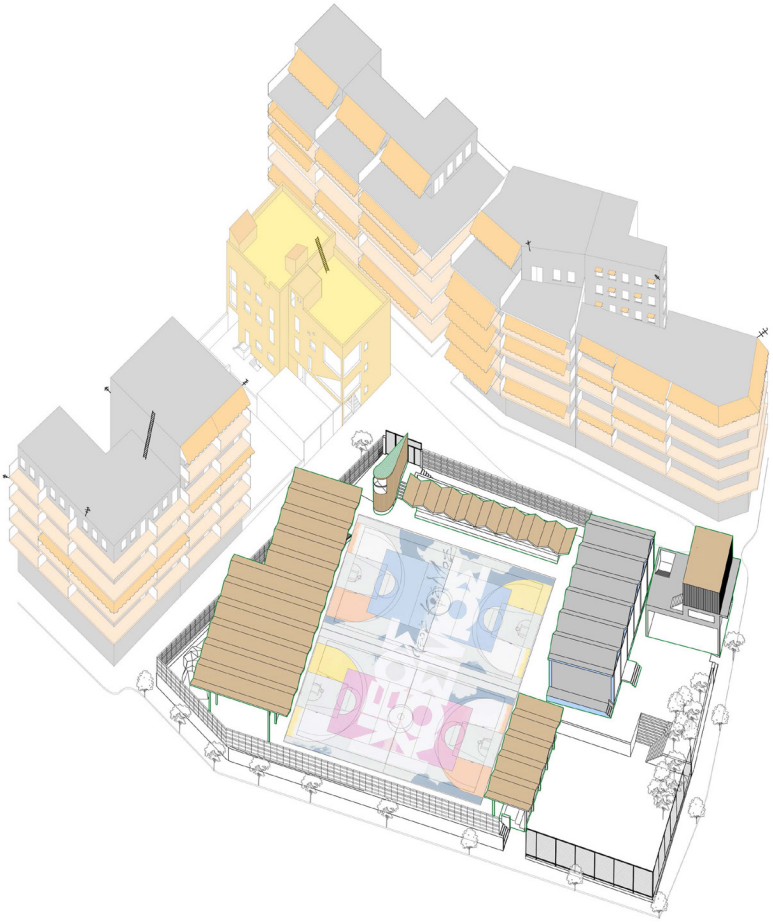
Human-Centred Design:
Ensuring functionality and comfort with versatile spaces for various activities and social zones.

Use of Natural Materials:
Utilising sustainable materials like wood and stone for aesthetic appeal and environmental sustainability.

Community and Accessibility:
Creating an inclusive, accessible layout that encourages social interaction.

Holistic Wellness:
Including facilities for mental and emotional wellbeing, such as meditation rooms and cultural event areas.

These influences aim to enhance community quality of life and promote a holistic approach to urban development.



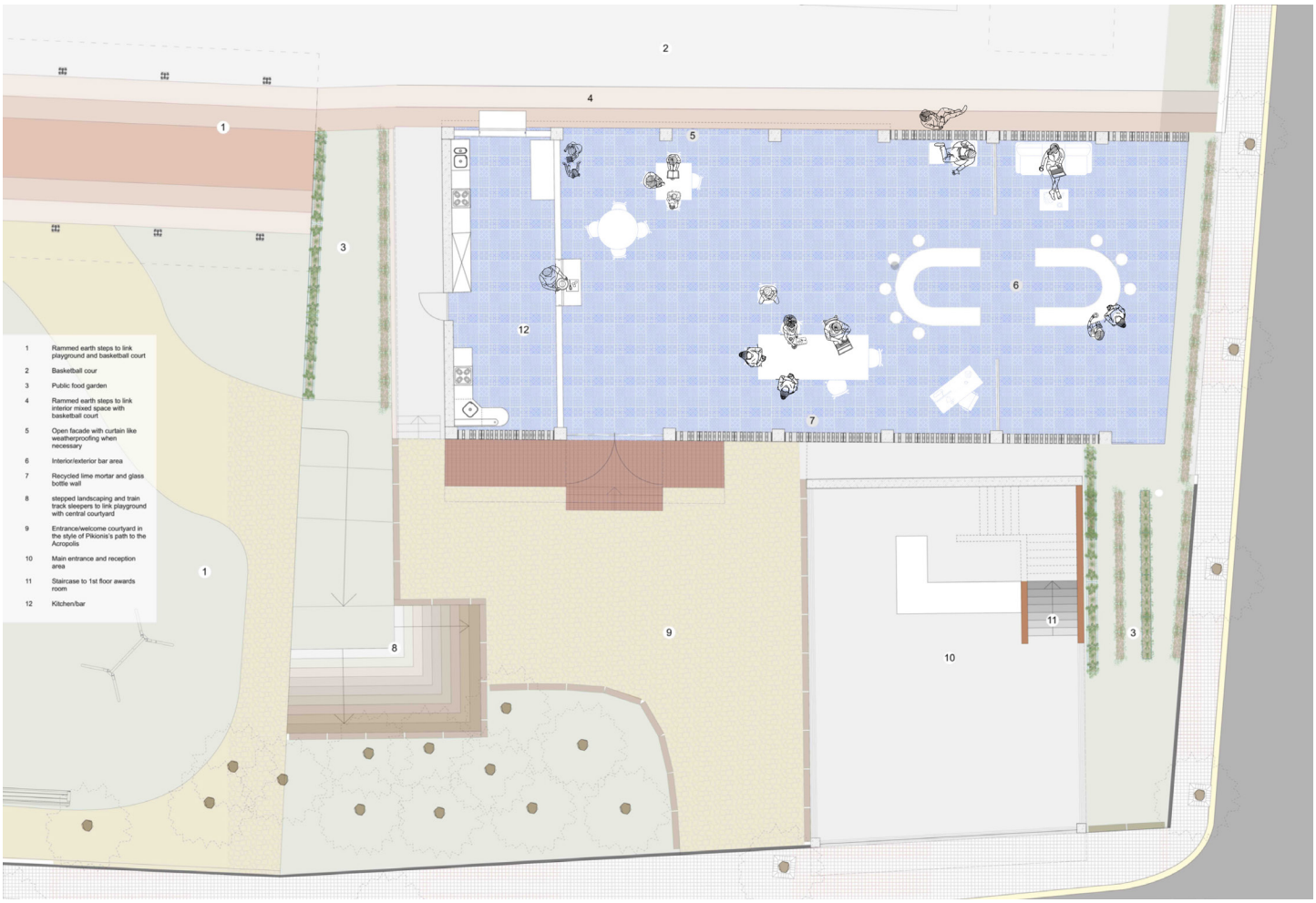




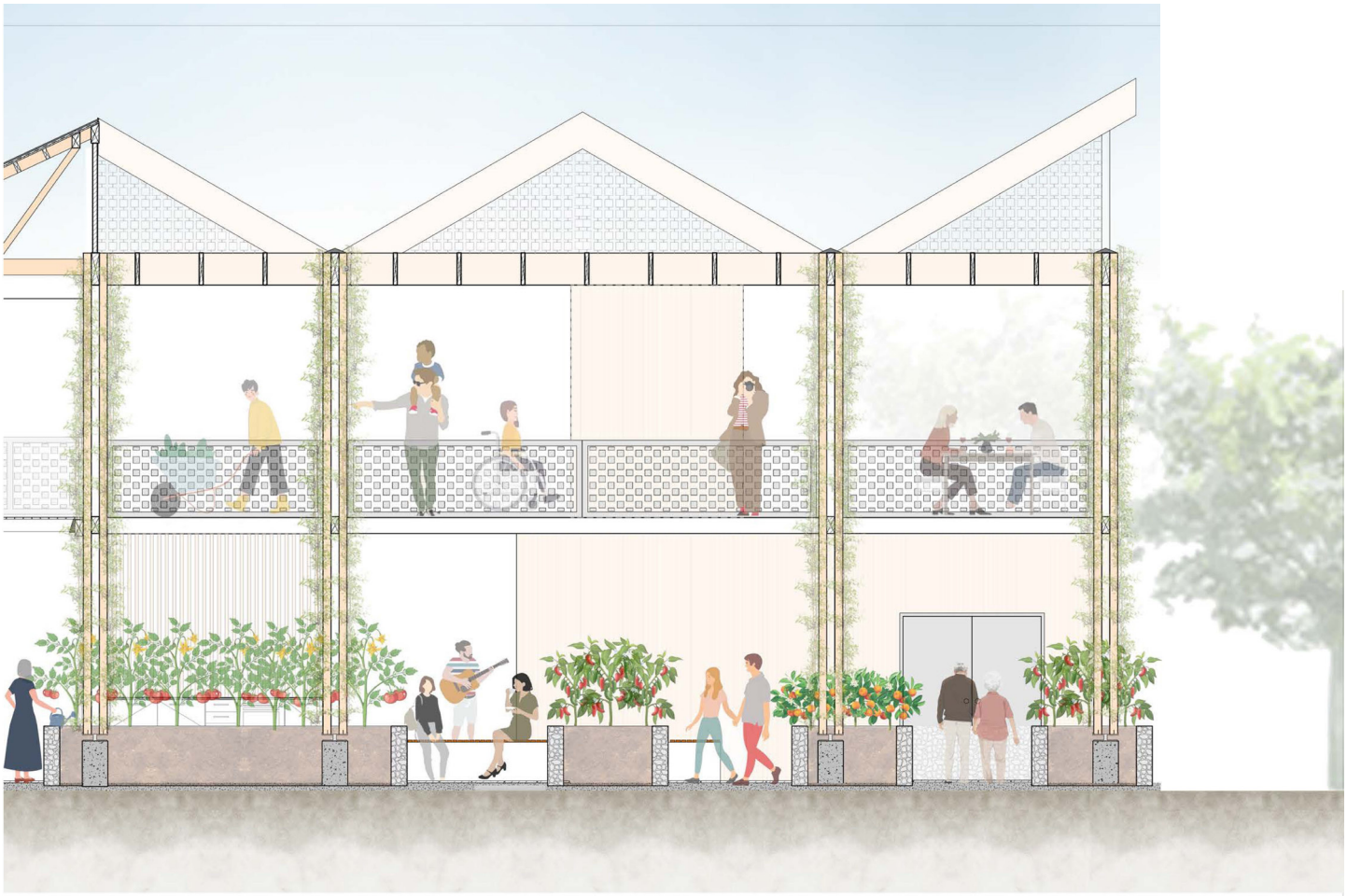







1 Rammed earth steps to link playground and basketball court
2 Basketball cour
3 Public food garden
4 Rammed earth steps to link interior mixed space with basketball court
5 Open facade with curtain like weatherproofing when necessary
6 Interior/exterior bar area
7 Recycled lime mortar and glass bottle wall
8 stepped landscaping and train track sleepers to link playground with central courtyard
9 Entrance/welcome courtyard in the style of Pikionis's path to the Acropolis
10 Main entrance and reception area
11 Staircase to 1st floor awards room
12 Kitchen/bar



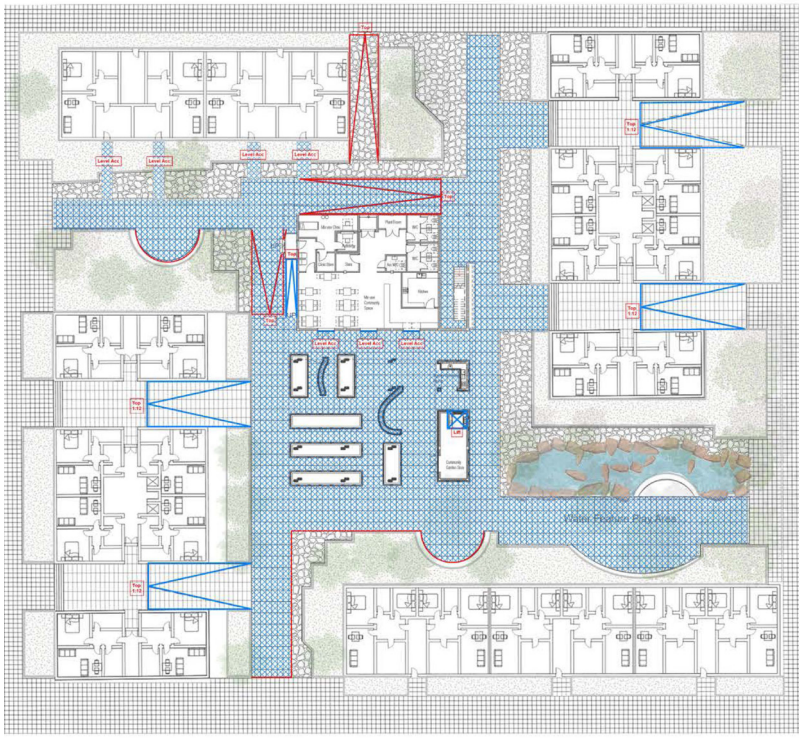




The Vibrant Corner

Ben Howell





Neos Kosmos, where history resides,
Ancient ruins and modern strides,
During the early 90s, waves of immigrants sought hope and peace,
Residing in wooden shacks at the heart of Greece,

As cultures merged, leaving nobody behind,
Neos Kosmos was redefined.
Today, the modern architecture tells a story of charm,
From the Acropolis to the bustling market alongside the tram,
Neoclassical houses, vibrant and grand,
With balconies and facades that command,
Colours, patterns, formal and repetitive,
Personal touches all so decorative.

Lack of funds halters construction. Cranes stand still,
Unfinished structures, a hollow void to fill.
Glimpses of new buildings so sleek and new,
Glass facades reflecting the sky's blue.

The streets of Neos Kosmos, a canvas of art,
Where ancient and modern worlds impart,
A tapestry of cultures, expressions are caught,
In architecture, diversity is sought.

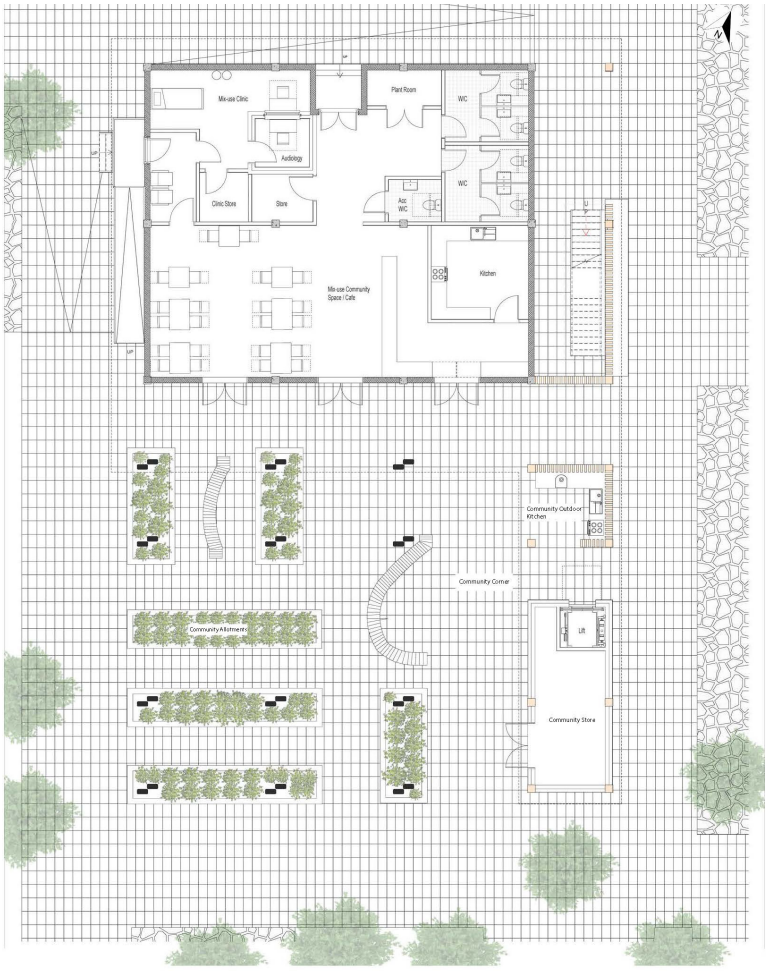
Isolation echoes through the aging population,
Spaces designed without full, consideration,
Broken streets form pathways to the community,
Obstacles and barriers to equal opportunity.

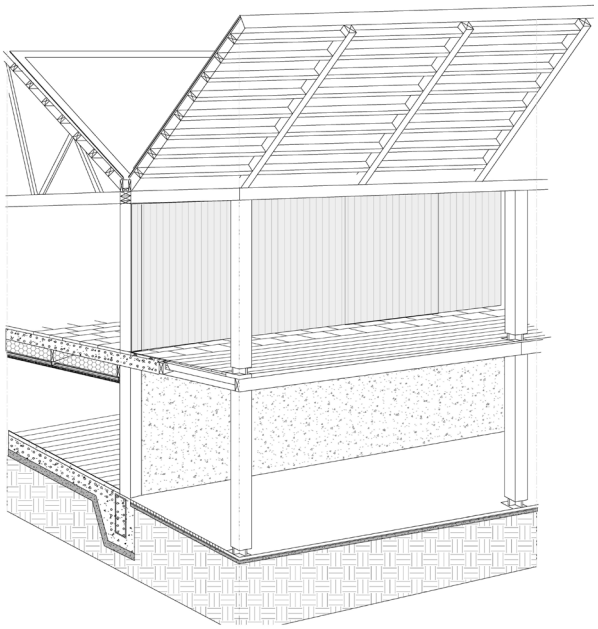
So let's break down those walls of neglect,
And construct opportunities to reconnect,
A space for activities like song, dance and art,
A place that has health and wellbeing as its beating heart.

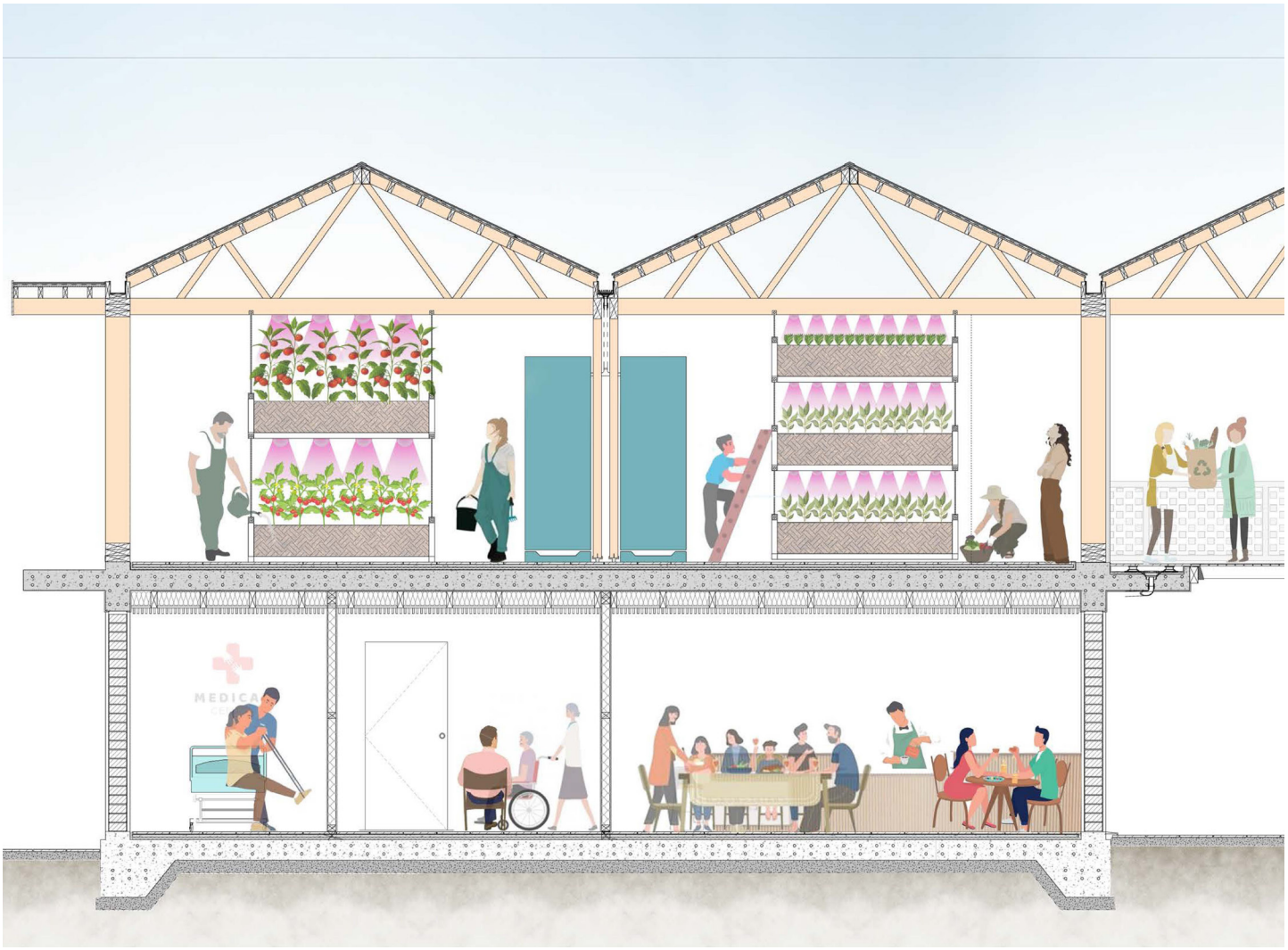






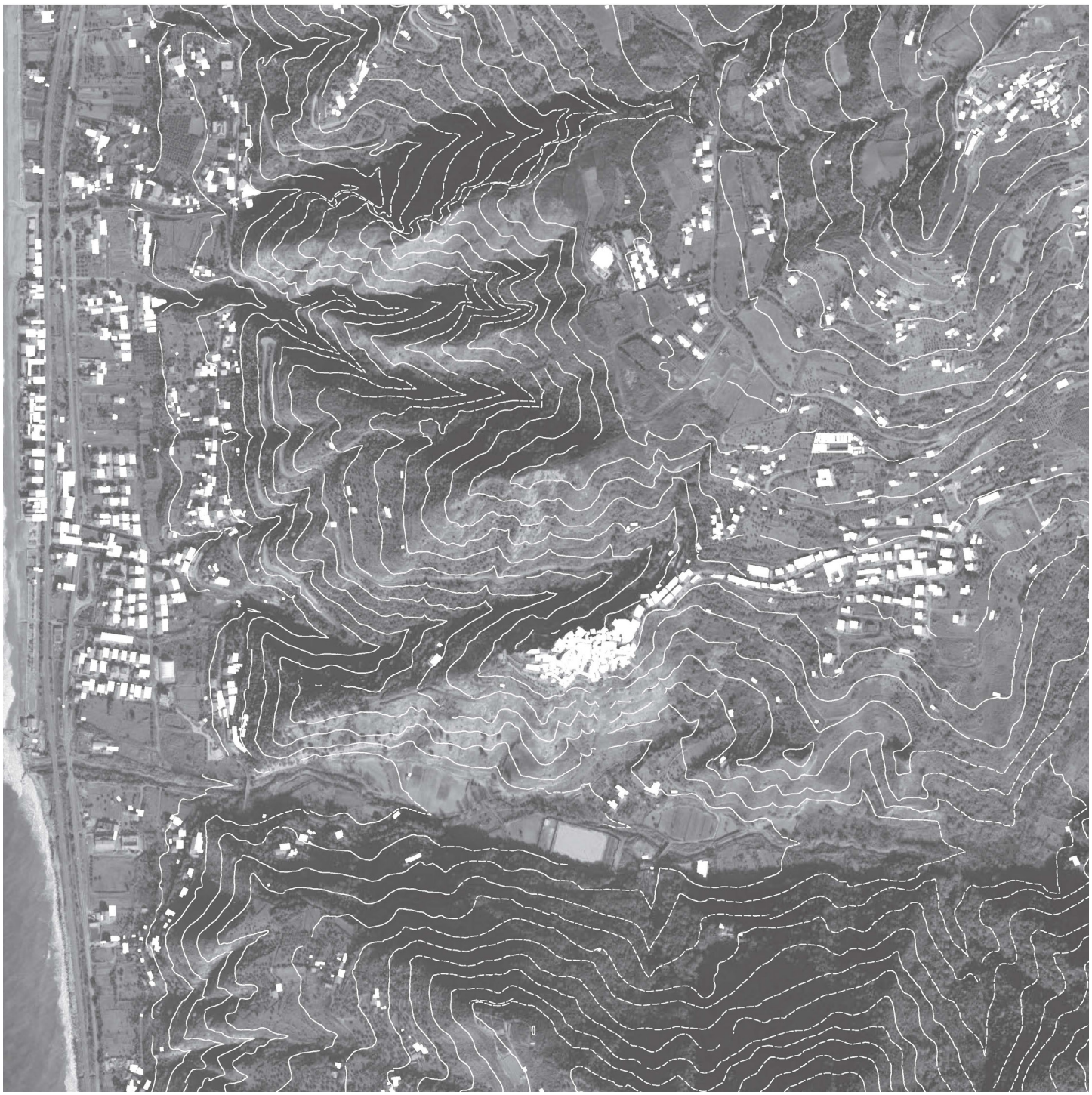

Mix-use Clinic
Plant Room
WC
Audiology
Clinic Store
Store
Acc WC
WC
Kitchen
Mix-use Community Space / Cafe
Community Outdoor Kitchen
Community Corner
Community Allotments
LR
Community Store

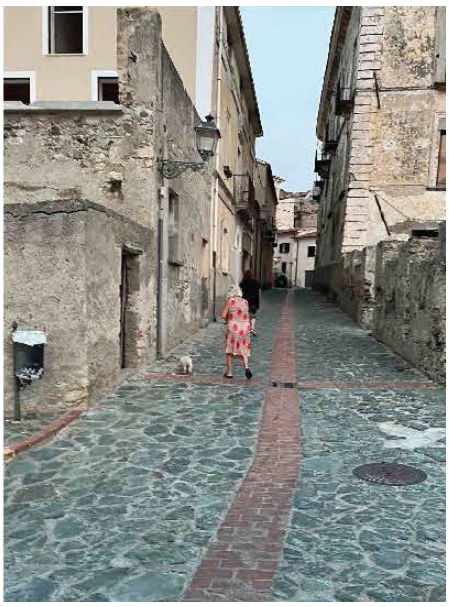





ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ
ΤΡΙΓΩΝΑ ΠΑΝΟΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ















Calabria Residency

Introduction

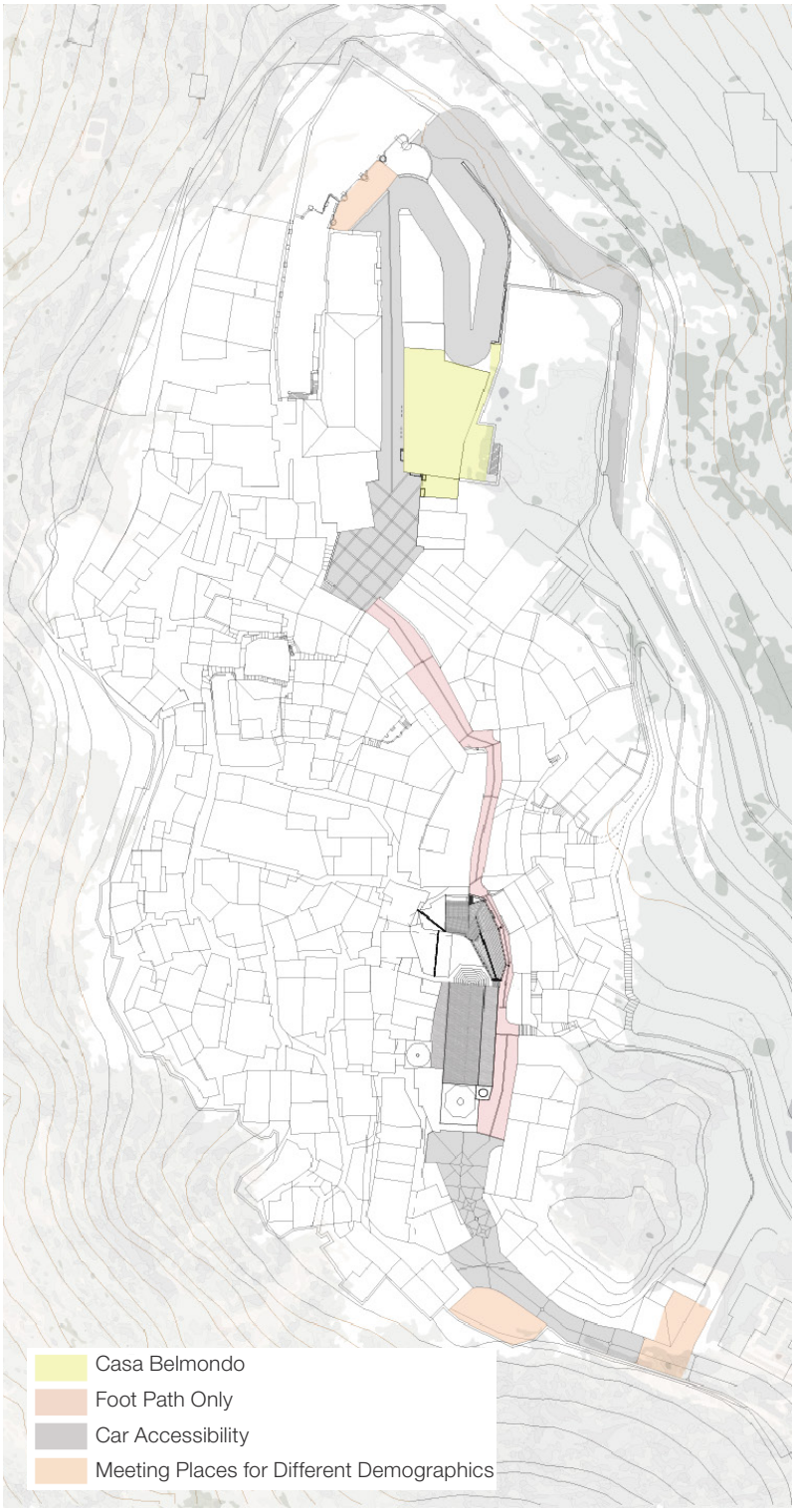
Madalina Podgoreanu, Teun Staal

In September 2023, two MArch Unit 6 students, along with four undergraduate students, attended a residency in Calabria focused on 'The School of Everyday', exploring methods for preserving and learning from local crafts and traditions through storytelling and site research.

Belmonte, Calabria encompasses a total area of 24 Sq.km with a population of 1,850 residents. The town is segmented into 20 fractions, with the historic Old Town situated on a hill at 260m above sea level, serving as the central hub. The old town is transversed by a single narrow street, significantly limiting vehicular access and thereby restricting the accessibility of residents to local amenities.

Through site research and conversations with residents, the students identified a need for more public seating, which had gone unheard by the municipality. They designed a 'wheelbarrow bench', - a lightweight, movable bench made from available materials. The students placed the bench for public use and tracked its movement around the town, providing insight into where there is a greater need for public seating.

The residency was supported by The Water Trust (ARCSR) and The Turing Scheme.



Facing Page Top
Context Map of Belmonte and the Valley (Teun Staal)

Facing Page Bottom
Photos Taken During Walks in and Around Belmonte (Teun Staal)

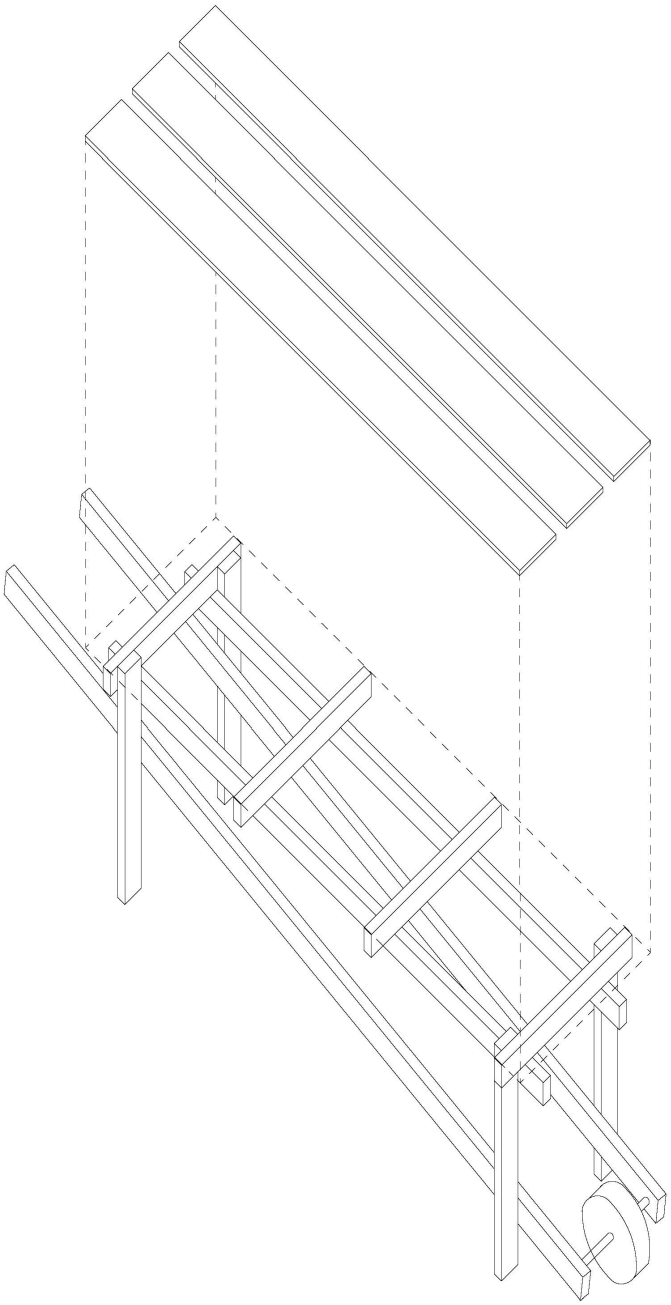
This Page Top
Site Location Plan (Teun Staal)

This Page Bottom
Mapping Belmonte's Meeting Places (Madalina Podgoreanu)









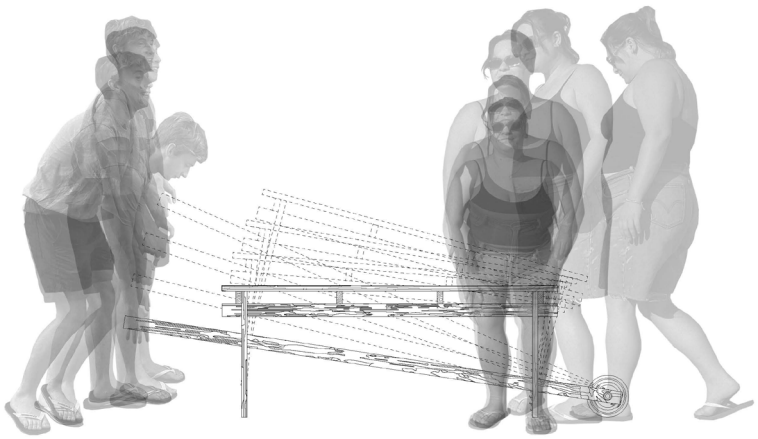
Wheelbarrow Bench

Madalina Podgoreanu, Teun Staal

After discussing the need for more seating with the 'Turetta ladies'—Franca, Antionetta, Gabriela, Marcella, and Maria—the students designed the 'wheelbarrow bench.' This lightweight, mobile seating solution with a single wheel was placed throughout the town after a brief chat with the mayor, addressing immediate needs while providing insights on where more permanent seating might be required.

Constructed entirely from scrap wood, the bench's design was shaped by the materials available, with simple joints allowing for quick and easy assembly. Presenting the bench to the ladies forged an immediate bond; the gesture showed an interest in their lives, encouraging them to share their stories. The bench quickly became a valuable tool for the students' research, delighting the women who no longer had to carry chairs from their homes to the Belvedere.

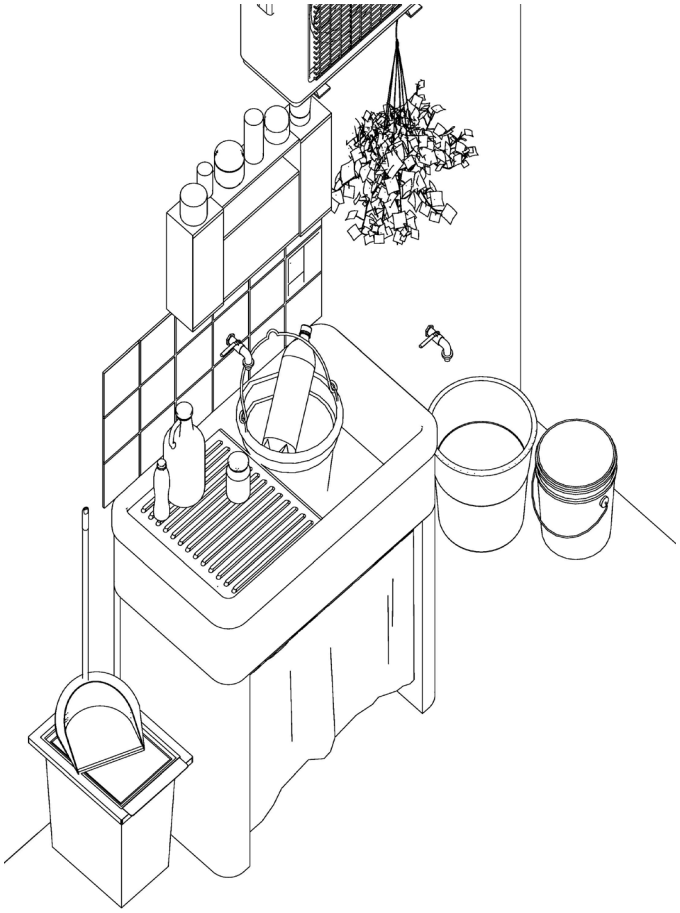
Over the month, the students joined the ladies' conversations more frequently. Initially, the discussions focused on the town—its past, the changes over the years, and visions for Belmonte's future. Gradually, the conversations grew more personal, touching on themes of love, loss, happiness, and pain. What began as a way to learn about the community had evolved into a bridge to friendship.

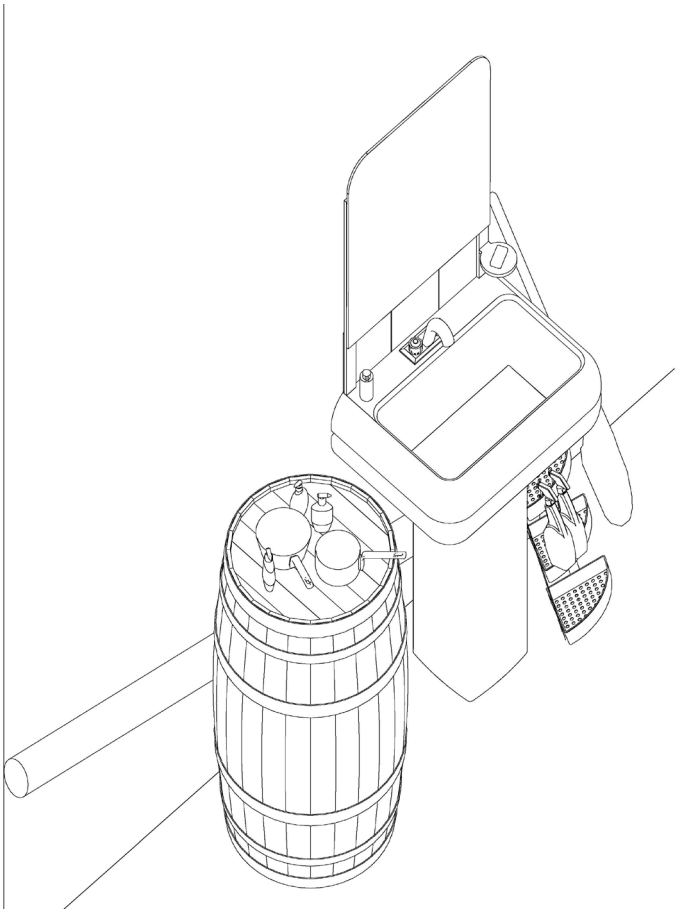


Facing Page Top
Meeting the 'Turetta Ladies' (Madalina Podgoreanu)

Facing Page Bottom
Wheelbarrow bench photos (Madalina Podgoreanu)

This Page
Exploded axonometric drawing and illustration of use of wheelbarrow bench (Teun Staal)



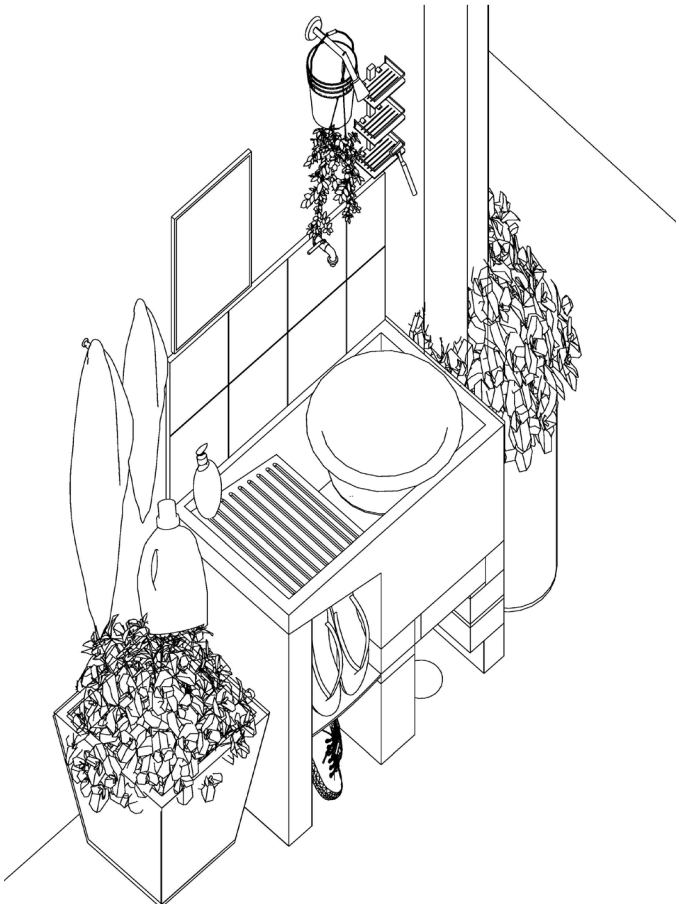



simat



Spinetto Sinks

Teun Staal





One of the walks led to Spinetto, one of Belmonte's Frazioni. We had heard about this town because of a woman who still makes traditional Calabrian baskets. Upon arrival, we were immediately welcomed by a man we initially thought was a restaurant owner. He greeted us, offered coffee, and invited us into what we later realized was his home. We accepted, and he led us through the front door into a small kitchen and dining room. After some small talk and coffee, we thanked him and set off to explore the town.

As we walked, we noticed some houses had outdoor sinks, which revealed the many aspects of daily life that revolve around water—items for personal care like razors, toothbrushes, medicine, and soap, alongside tools for working the land, such as shovels and chemicals.

All these items converged at this singular outdoor water source, where the morning ritual of getting ready for the day became a public performance. A daily performance act of personal upkeep.

All Images
Axonometric drawings and photos of Spinetto Sinks (Teun Staal)


BARBIERE

Thesis Proposals

Belmonte, Calabria



Unit 6 Tutors:
Bo Tang, Robert Barnes, Shamoon Patwari, Jane McAllister

Two fourth year students chose to continue the unit's ongoing relationship with the setting of Belmonte in the Calabria region of Southern Italy.

The physical topography and mountainous landscape has had a major influence on the development of Belmonte and it is now split into a timeline of regions, the modern Marina, the old town and the small villages known as Frazioni (fractions). Lack of work or opportunities has led the majority of the younger population to leave for larger cities with the remaining elderly population largely still focused on agriculture. Lack of local labour and opportunities for exporting produce has led many of these farms decreasing in size or falling into disrepair. The region is in need of new life and ideas to revitalise and return to the thriving community that lived there previously. The student projects this year sought to address these issues on sites in the Old Town and adjacent agricultural valley dotted with abandoned mills.

Students developed their own briefs from their cultural and physical investigations of the site. Proposals addressed the rejuvenation of the Belmonte Old Town through the creation of a new 'high street'; and a community sawmill to address the invasive tree species taking over the valley landscape.

This Page
'Ricurdi Bellimuntisi: Memories for a Future High Street' (Madalina Podgoreanu)

Rediscovering the Walkable Landscape

Teun Staal

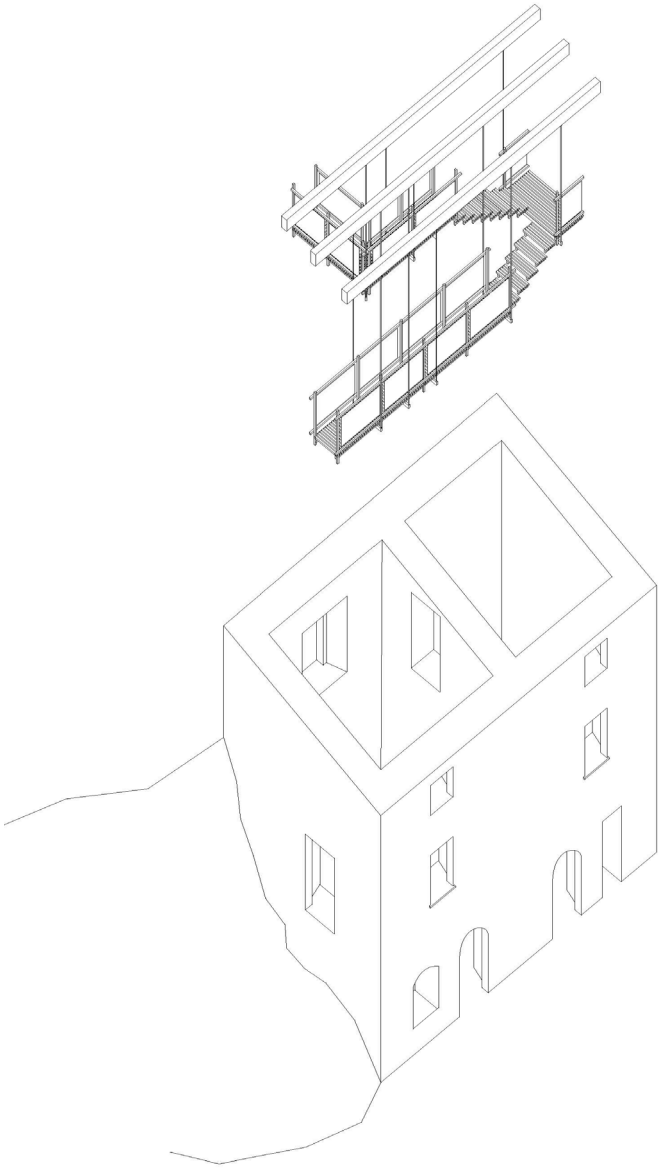
In the back of Franco's car, after a long walk through the valley, up the river to the mill, he recalls his memories of the place. The path, now overgrown with brambles, was once well traversed and well-trodden by children sent by their parents into the valley to fetch flour. As a treat at the destination, fresh frittata, made from the eggs of feral chickens, awaited them.

For Franco and other locals, the valley serves as the backdrop for many memories. But as the population continues to age these recollections are under threat of fading away. The mills and farmhouses, once full of life, now sit crumbling under the weight of time. Where agricultural efforts have been abandoned, invasive trees now dominate. Paths once walked by many now sit overgrown and abandoned. Cars unable to traverse many of these paths have forced the remaining agriculture down to the flattest parts of the valley.

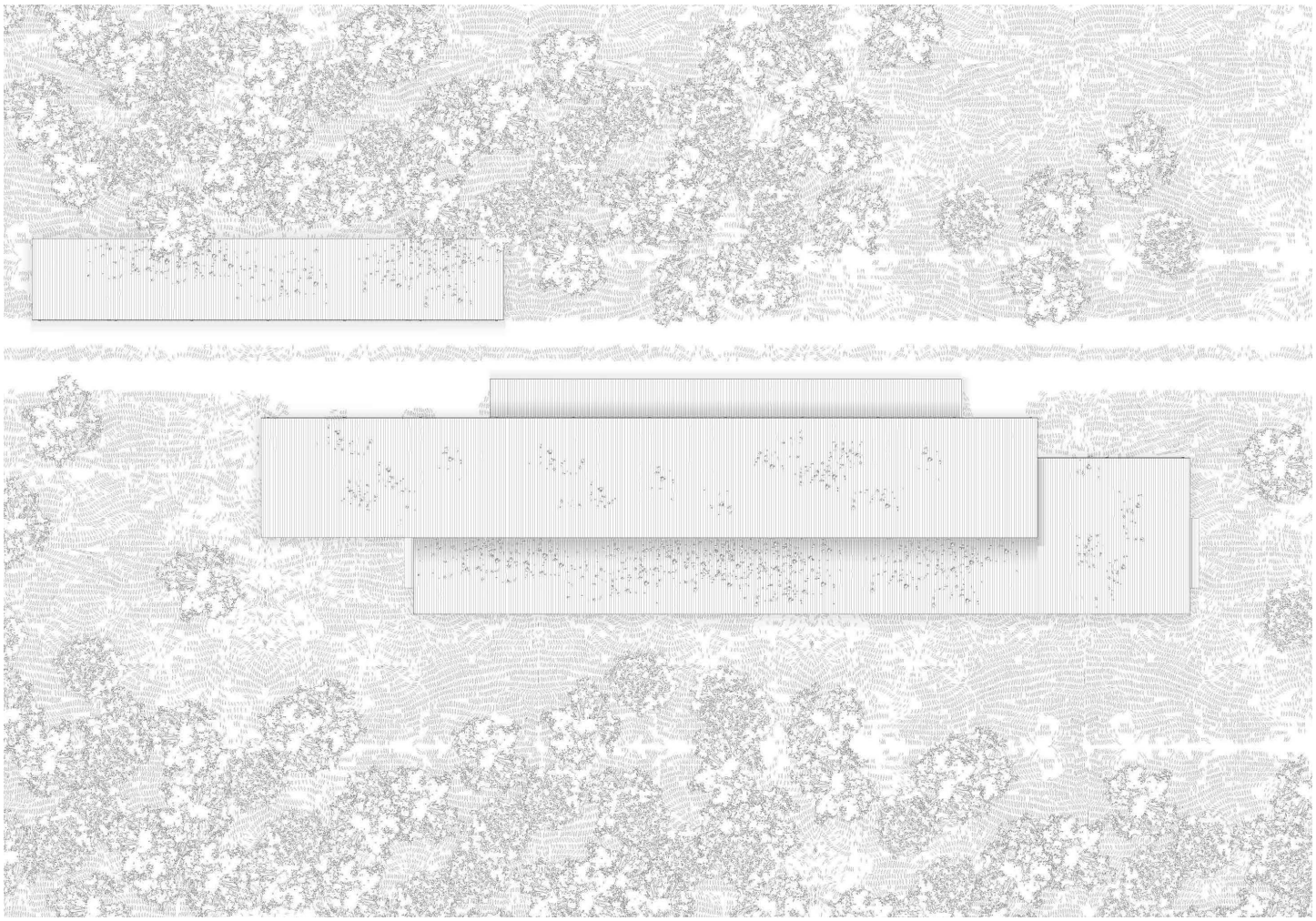
What future lies ahead for a valley of largely small-scale farming in a world dominated by industrial-scale factory farming? How could these fading memories inform a future approach to re-inhabiting the Belmonte valley?



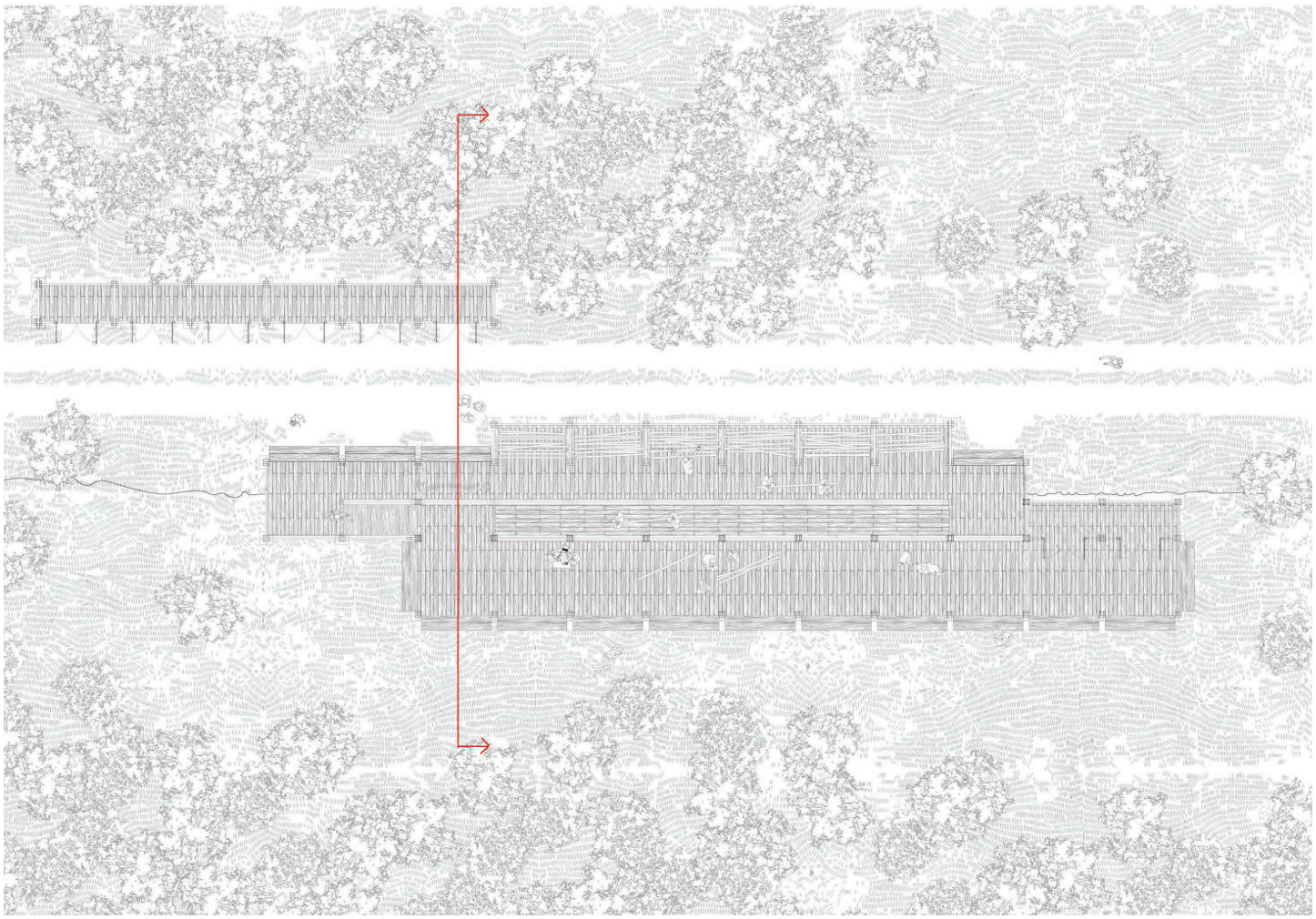


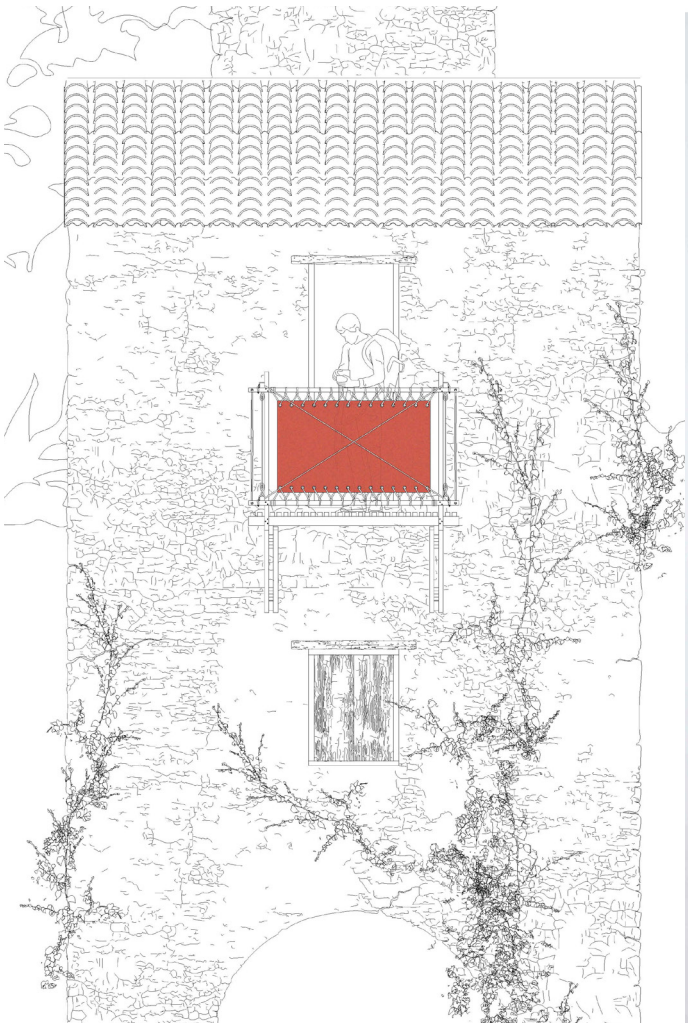






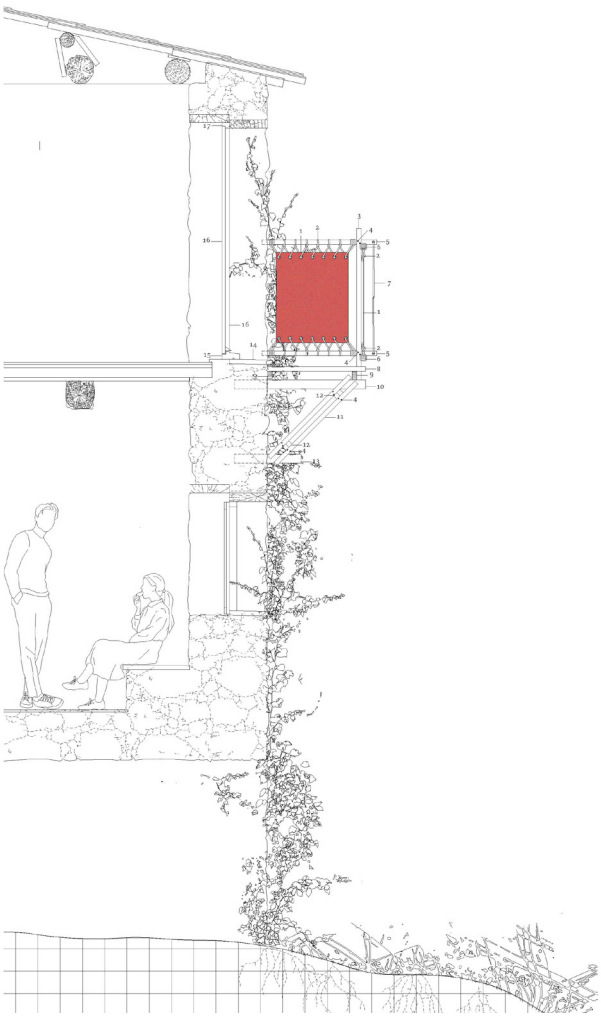




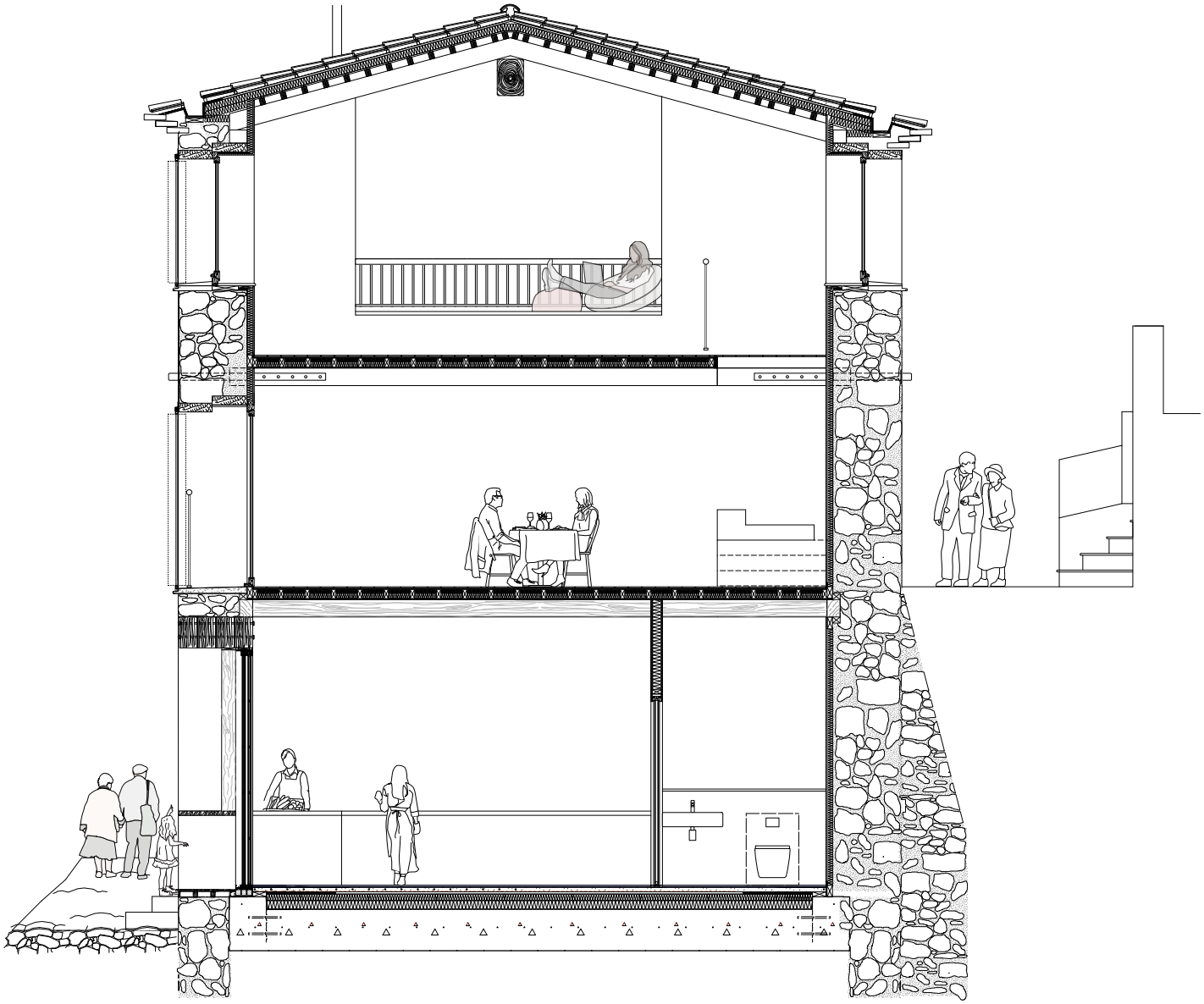


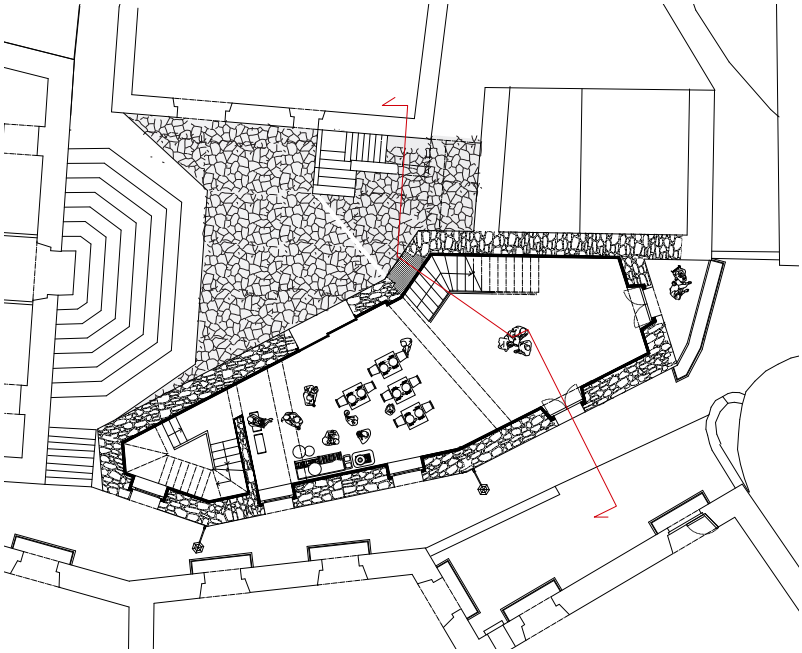


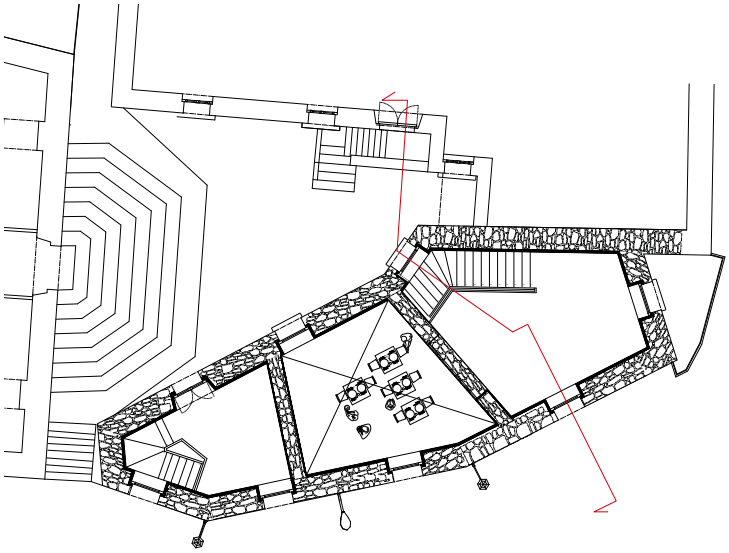


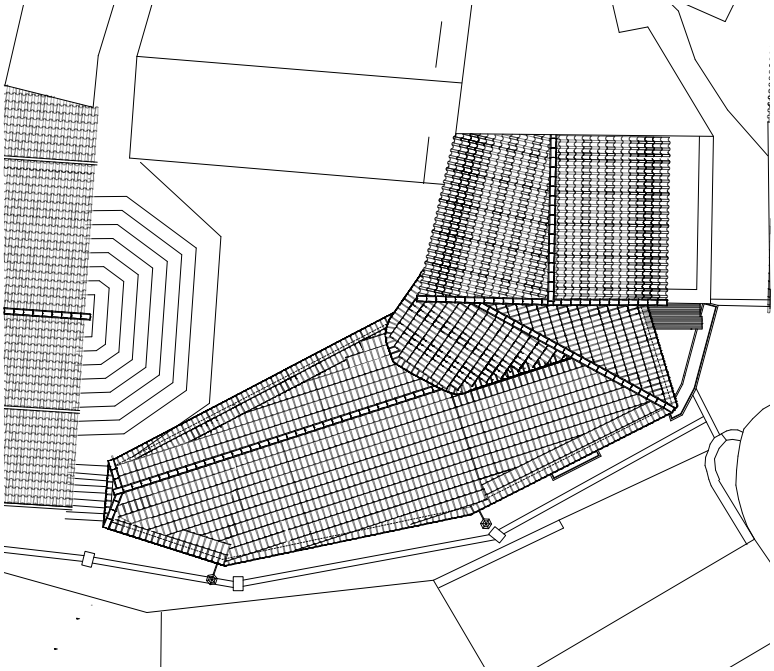



Canyard +97450
EX RFL MS1.1+95800
EX RFL MS1.2 +95385
EX RFL MS1.3 +94980
EX RFL MS1.4 +94625
EX RFL MS1.5 +94300
EX RFL MS1.6 +93920
RFL MS1. SF
RFL MS1. FF







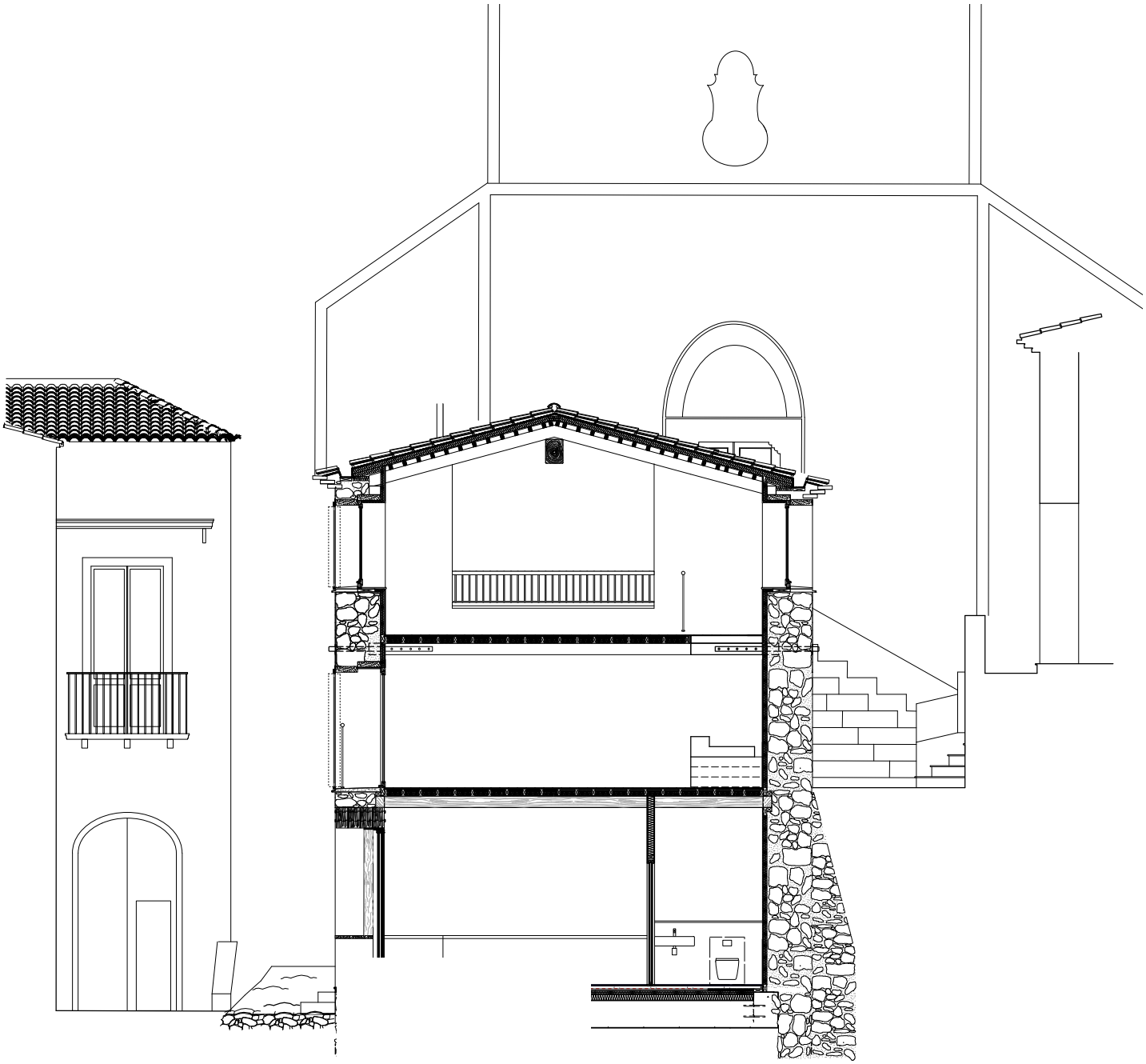


Memories for a Future High Street

Madalina Podgoreanu

The project aims to weave the stories and memories shared by the residents of Belmonte into the design, creating a meaningful connection and bridging the town's past and future. By focusing on the renovation of abandoned buildings along the town's narrow spine, the proposal envisions transforming this area into a vibrant 'high street'. This revitalisation effort seeks to rejuvenate the area, with plans to potentially reopen historic establishments, like a traditional panificio. These changes aim to improve accessibility and enhance the town's economic vitality. Incorporating local narratives into the design process ensures that the revitalised high street reflects the community's heritage while creating new opportunities for growth and engagement.

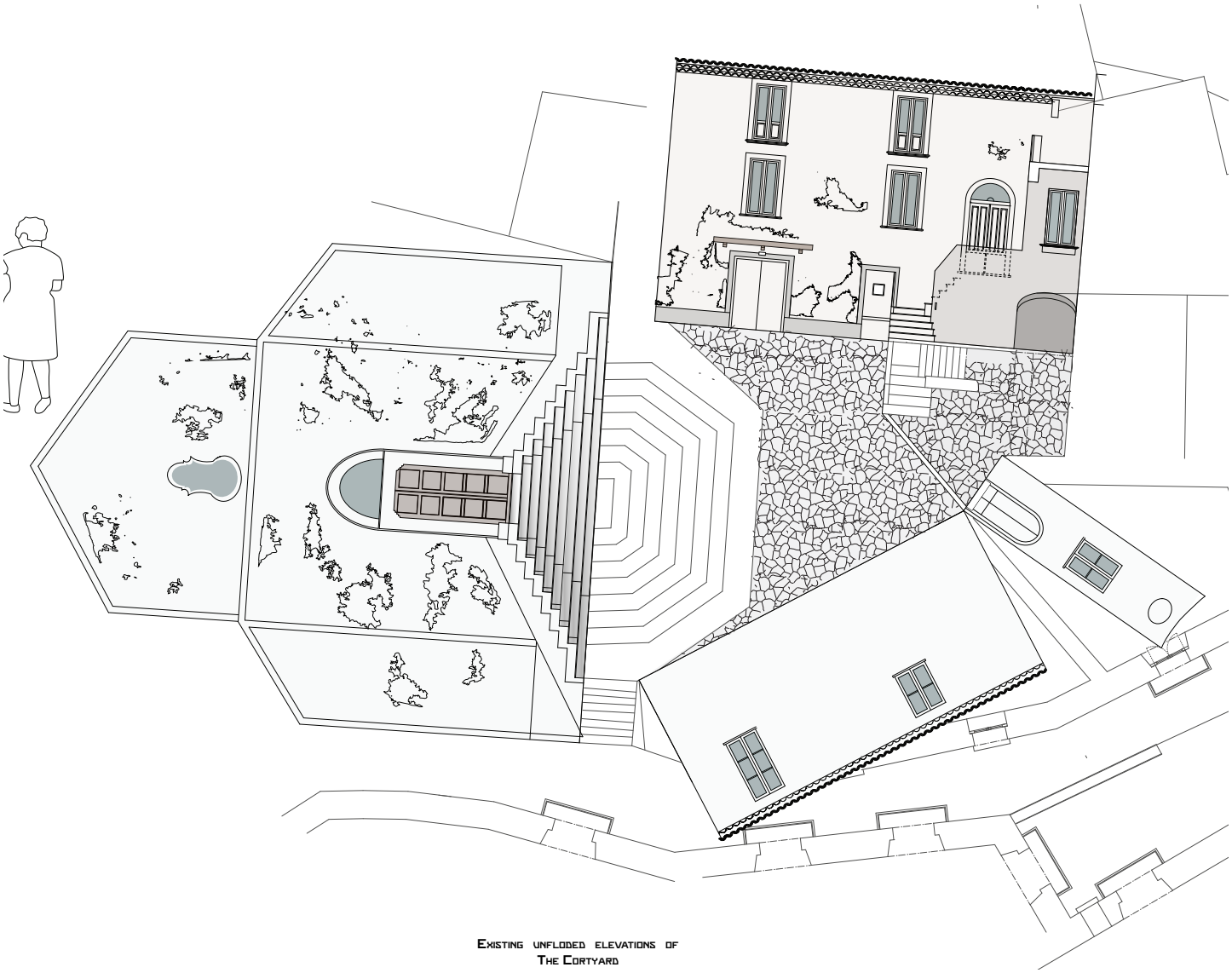












Existing unfloded elevations of
The Cortyard






Refugee Week Greece

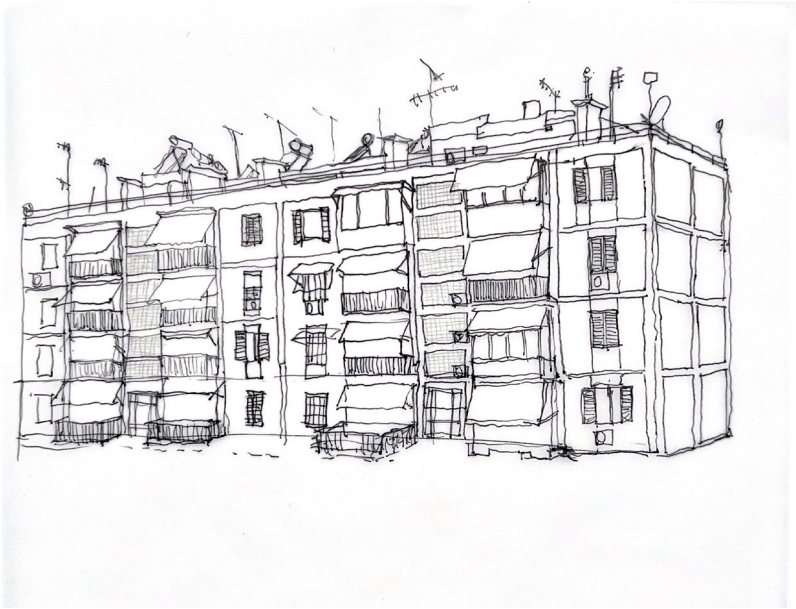

Ayat



Athens Residency

Introduction

Arun Kowcun, Nok Yi Leung, Daria Serhiienko, Joshua Trainor





Four Unit 6 students took part in a transformative exchange residency in Athens in June 2024, focusing on the intersections of migration, urban development, housing, and social infrastructure for displaced populations.

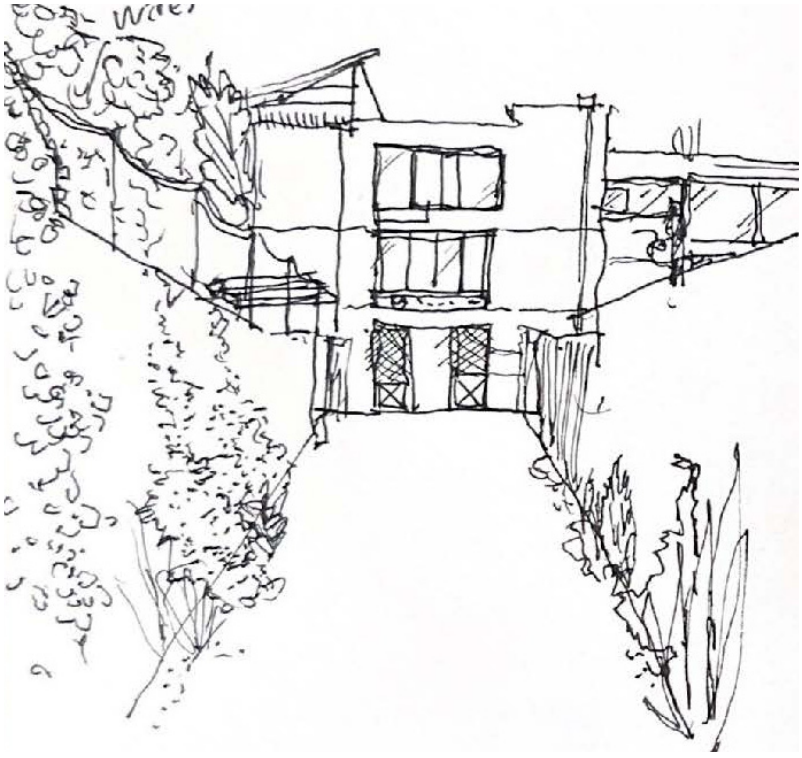
The residency focused on shared city-making practices from the bottom up, engaging students as active collaborators in investigative practices both within historic and newly-established migrant neighbourhoods. This approach aimed to foster a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities in these communities. Through hands-on research and participatory activities, the students visited various local projects and initiatives led by grassroots organisations supporting displaced people.

The residency was supported by The Water Trust (ARCSR) and The Turing Scheme.

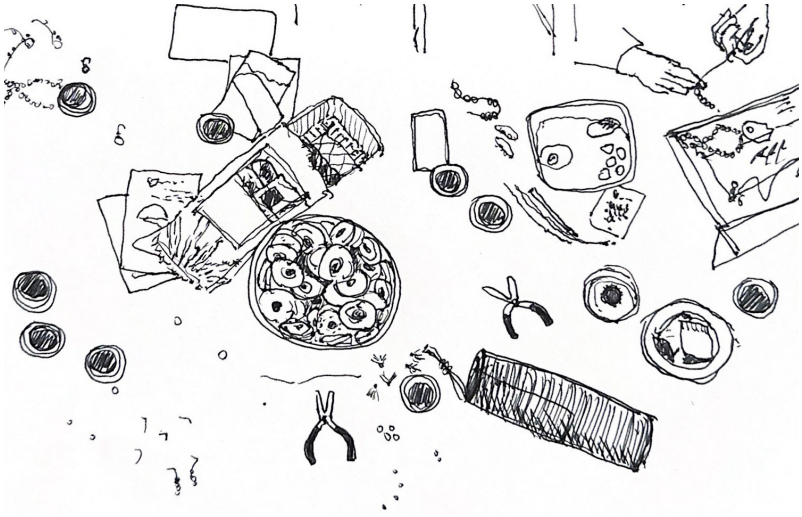





AKRON
YAMAHA
MARCH 2024







Refugee Week Greece 2024

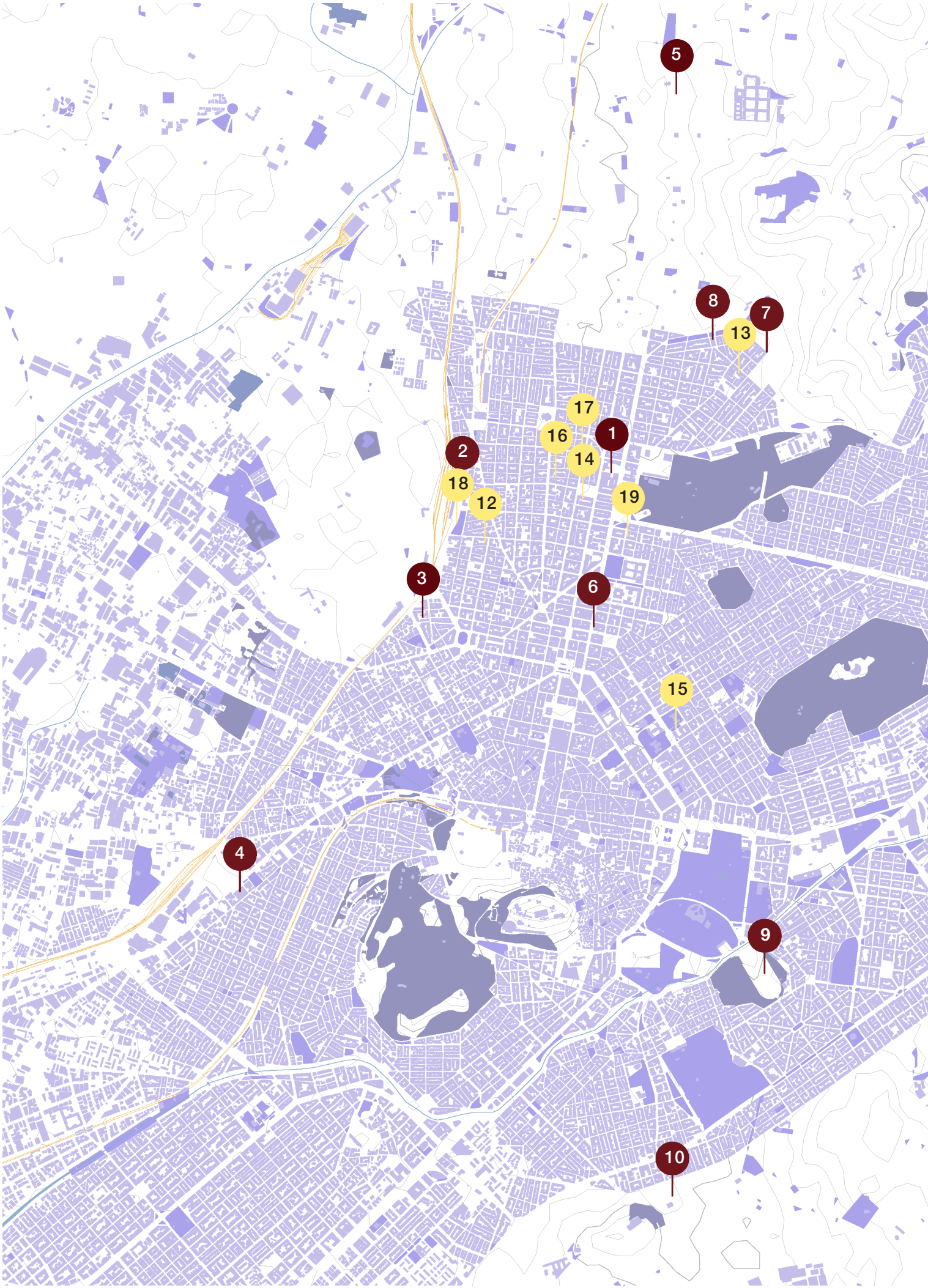
A key highlight of the month-long summer residency in Athens was the students' volunteer work during Refugee Week Greece 2024.

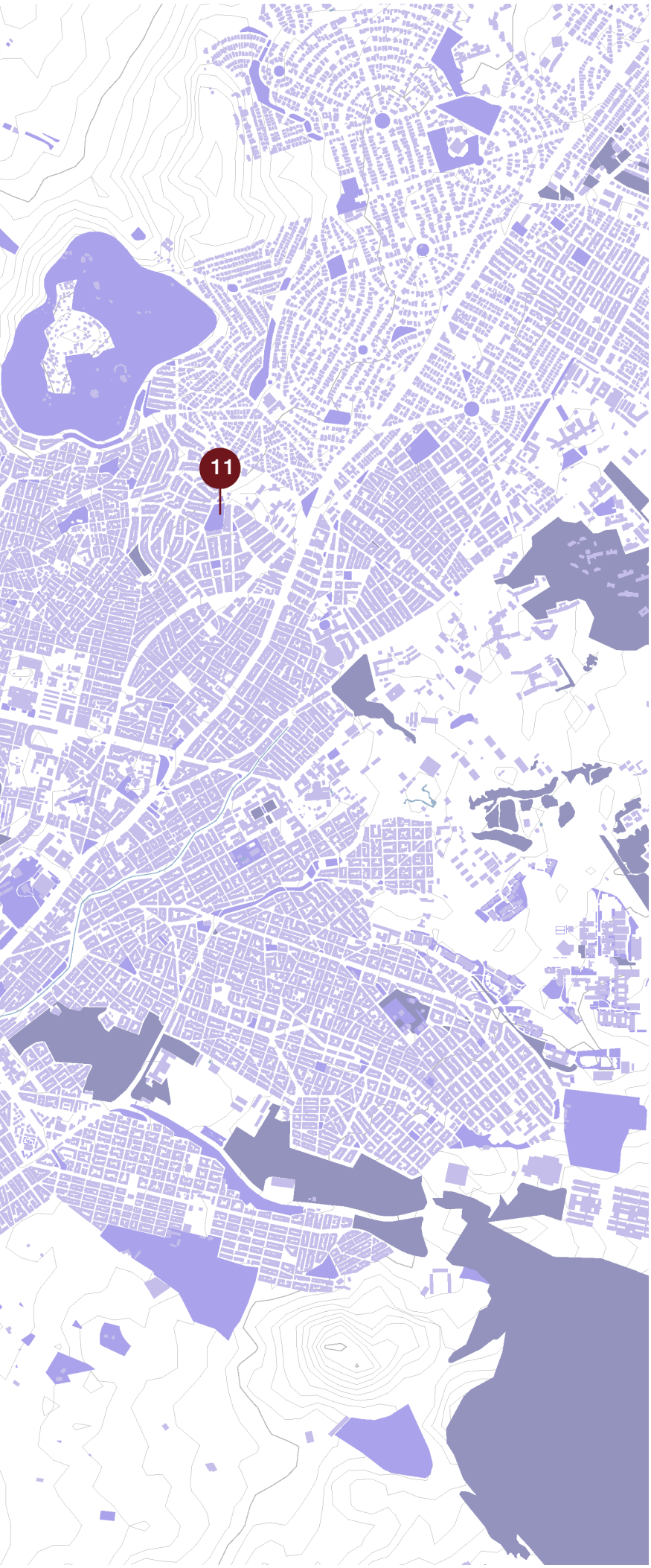
The festival, themed "Our Home," ran from 17th to 23rd June and brought together a diverse array of local, civil society, and international organisations, such as Inter Alia, Athens Solidarity Centre, and the Failte Centre, dedicated to supporting displaced people in Greece. The week-long series of participatory events took place across Athens, fostering a sense of community and solidarity among participants. Events explored themes of home, family, belonging, and community, and activities were designed to involve and empower displaced individuals through community art projects, cultural exchange sessions and film screenings.

The week culminated in a vibrant community gathering at Kapaps Park in celebration of World Refugee Day. This event showcased cultural performances, exhibitions, and food from diverse refugee communities, highlighting their contributions to the city's cultural fabric.

ARCSR students volunteered in various capacities, assisting with event set up, facilitating workshops and exhibitions, and providing logistical support. The group documented the festival through drawings, photographs, and narratives, and reflection on their experiences.

The participation of ARCSR architecture students in the Refugee Week Greece 2024 festival not only enriched their academic and professional experiences but also contributed to the communities they engaged with. By combining research with practical involvement, the students were able to address pressing issues of migration and urban development, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities within displaced communities in Athens.


5
8
7
13
17
16
1
2
14
18
12
19
3
6
15
4
9
10



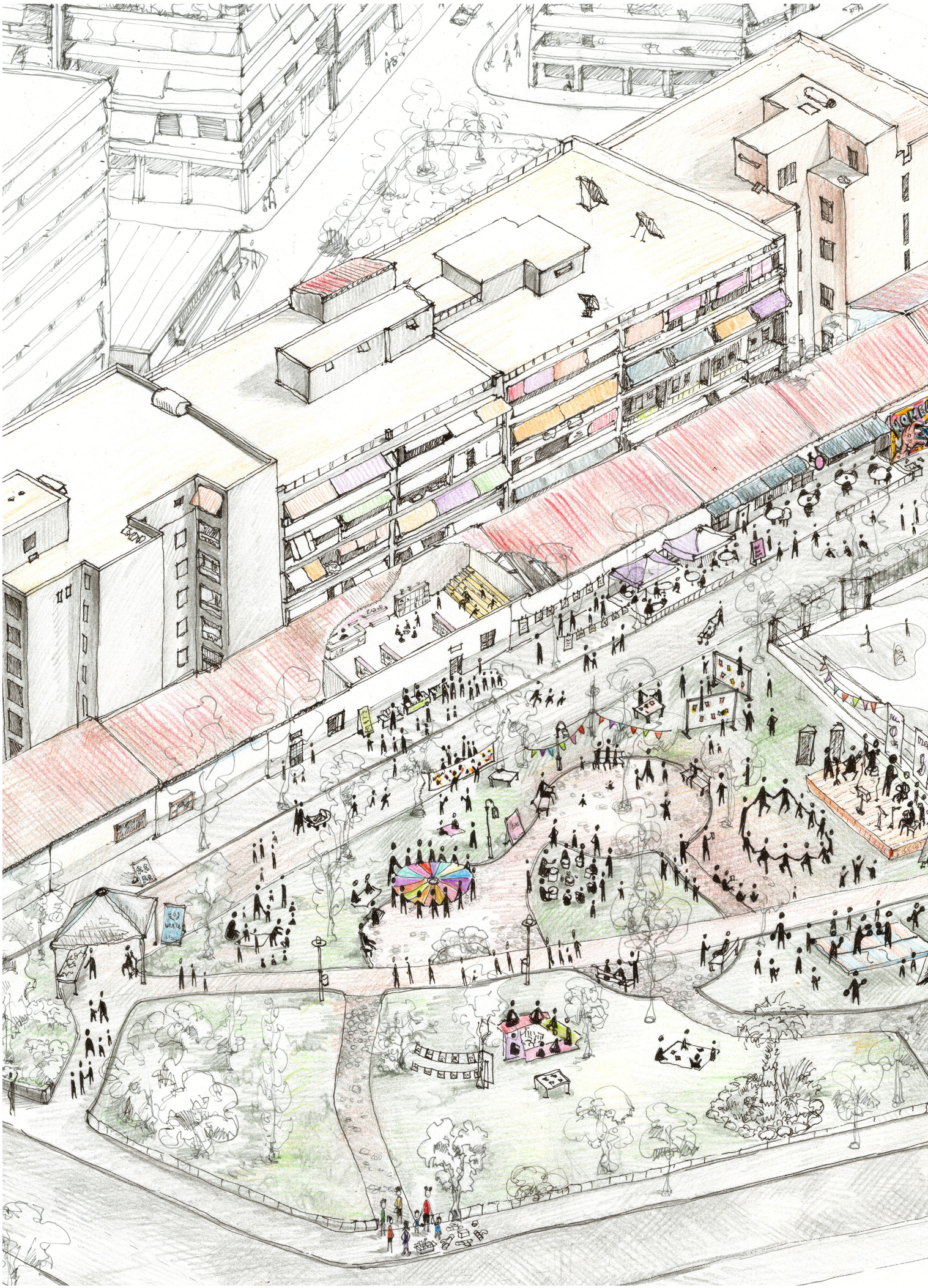
Refugee Week Greece 2024 Events

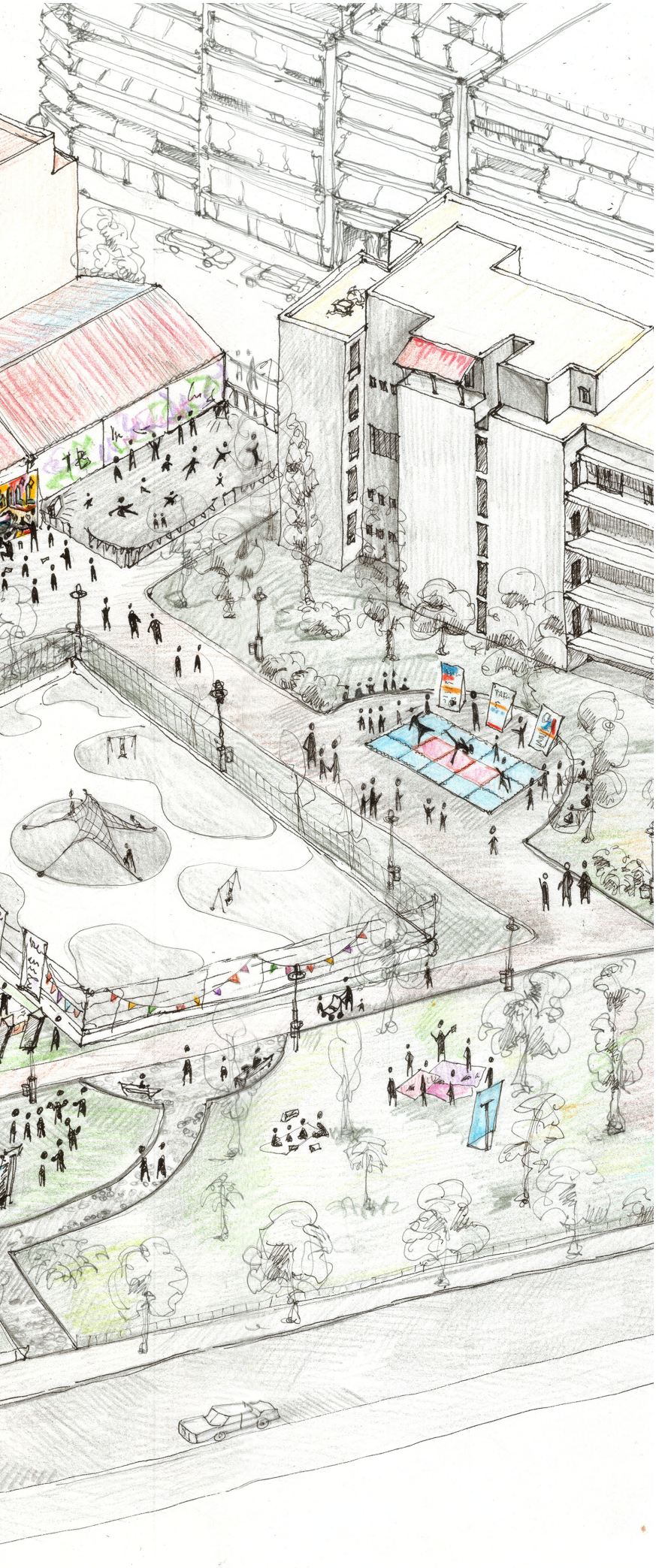
Events Attended by ARCSR Students:

1. The Swimmers Film Screening & Discussion - Counterpoints
2. HOME – Beyond the Threshold - SolidarityNow
3. Music Workshop - Failte Centre
4. “Caring for our common home”, “Nature inspires”, Photo exhibition – The earth, our common home, ‘Home is where I belong’, ‘Bloomin along, blooming across’ - Caritas Hellas
5. Crossings Film Screening - Pixida Films
6. The “home” in and on us - KMOP
7. Brushstrokes of Home - Love Without Borders for Refugees in Need
8. Utilising rhythmic expression with refugees and asylum-seekers for an encounter with oneself and the other, ‘Our common home’ - Babel Day Centre/Syn-eirmos NGO of Social Solidarity
9. Together in Sport - METAdrasi, the Hellenic Olympic Committee, the Hellenic Taekwondo Federation (ELOT), the Olympic Museum of Athens and the High Commission of The United Nations for Refugees (UNHCR)
10. Photo exhibition: Athens through the eyes of Ukrainian Women - PhotoWalkers (also exhibited at Kapaps Park - 11); Net Making - Ukrainian House
11. Picnic at Kapaps Park - ACCMR together with 35 organisations and We are Community

Other Events:

12. Our Everyday Life! - SolidarityNow
13. Do I have the right to tell a story? - Greek Council for Refugees
14. Movie at Home - Amurt- Amurtel Hellas
15. Feeling home, feeling safe – Including those with experiences of violence. - PMS “Global Health-Disaster Medicine”, School of Medicine, EKPA, Doctors Without Borders - Hellenic Department, Hellenic Council for Refugees, METAdrasi, Babel Day Center/Co-Eirmos AmKE Community Solidarity (with the support of the SNF), Hidden Goddess
16. World Refugee Day event at the Victoria Community Center
17. From Many Places, One House
18. We Eat Together
19. Collection Day at Outcast Europe - Inter Alia





Community Picnic at Kapaps Park

The main event of Refugee Week Greece 2024 was the community picnic gathering at Kapaps Park in the Girokomeio neighbourhood, held on World Refugee Day. It brought together 35 organisations offering workshops, exhibitions, sports activities, and food. Around 1,500 people attended throughout the day, with the peak crowd from 17:00 to 23:00. The gathering provided a valuable opportunity for organisations to connect and strengthen community ties.

Exhibitions:

Photo exhibition (Solidarity Now)
Poster exhibition (UNHCR Network for Children's Rights)
Postcard exhibition (ACCMR, Greek Forum for Refugees, Greek Forum for Migrants, Ritsona Camp photography exhibition (Art Workshop of Challeida)
Live graffiti painting (DYNAMIExpression Project)

Workshops:

HipHop dancing (HipHop4Hope)
Skateboarding (Free Movement Skateboard)
Self-defense & yoga (Yoga & Sports with Refugees)
Taekwondo & wrestling (METAdrasi & Hellenic Wrestling Committee)
Creative writing (OPANDA Adolescent Library)
Meditation, slam poetry and environmental awareness (Diversity United)
Pot planting (Organisation Earth)
Paper houses (University of Athens Department of Disaster Medicine and Global Health)
Recording workshop (Solidarity Now)

Food:

Food sharing (Baklava, tea) by Kinsep Pigi
Free food bags (Myrtillo Cafe in collaboration with #WithRefugees Cooking Festival, UNHCR)
Dolmades cooking and fruit souvlaki workshop

Live Music:

Polyphonic performance with Aggeliki Toubanaki
"For Women, Activism" project ensemble
"REVMA" African percussion
Natalia Lampadaki polyphonic song group
"Profania" Group

Athens Pride Parade

Athens Pride drew a large crowd of over 20,000 people to the rally, which started and ended in Syntagma Square, near the protest hub of Exarcheia.

The event showcased strong solidarity between the LGBTQ+ community and displaced or vulnerable populations, with prominent displays of Palestinian support. Many banners highlighted this connection, including one that read “Stop pinkwashing the genocide,” a critique of the Zionist entity’s strategy of portraying itself as progressive on LGBTQ+ rights to divert attention from the ongoing genocide against the people of Palestine.











Candle Making Workshop

KMOP, one of Greece's oldest civil society organisations, provides services such as education, social support, research, and advocacy for displaced individuals. The Safe House, a center in central Athens dedicated to women and their children, hosts weekly activities and workshops every Friday to encourage socialisation, without requiring any personal information to be shared.

Following their participation in KMOP's Refugee Week Greece 2024 events, two ARCSR students helped plan and conduct a candle-making workshop at The Safe House. Building on relationships formed during the festival, the students had the opportunity to continue engaging with local women through shared creative activities.

Tavros Passivhaus

The concept for a Passivhaus apartment block in Tavros was developed as a pilot project in the area by Passivista, a volunteer-lead organisation with the goal to provide passivhaus solutions across Greece.

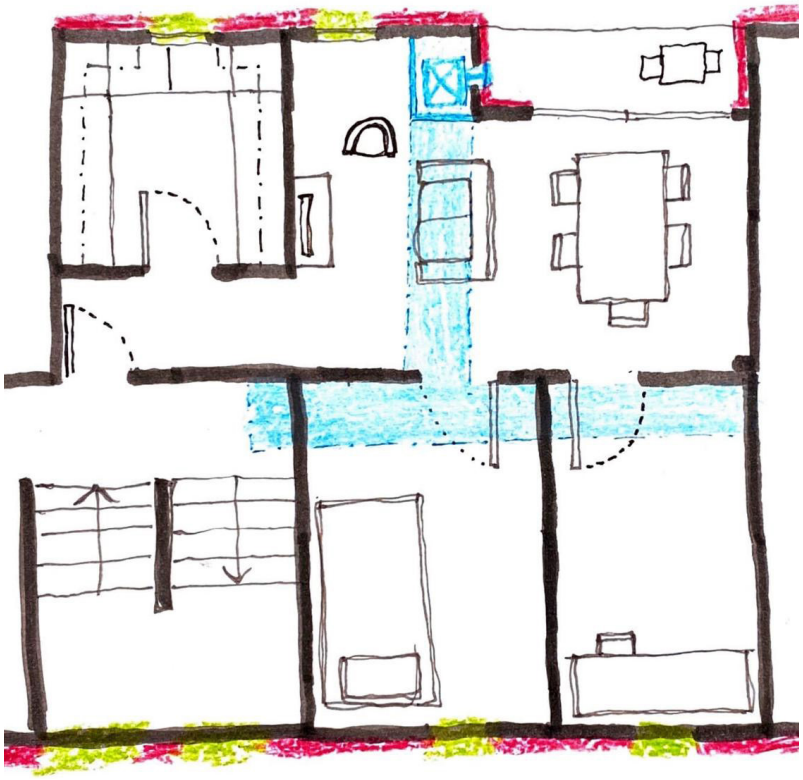
The project is not a traditional 'architectural makeover' and thus does not aim to provide any internal rearrangements, their goal is simply to improve the performance and the quality of life for the residents.

They first approached one of the younger residents living on the top floor of the 1968, 750 Sq.m housing block by the main road in Tavros as they were aware that the couple were in the process of applying for aid from the municipality.

The old concrete frame social housing blocks, which are characteristic the area, display poor thermal performance, especially in winter. Passivista found that before the renovation, the internal temperature of the blocks could reach temperatures as low as 10-12 degrees.

The residents reported that after the renovation was complete their energy bills had reduced significantly and they now had enough money so they were able to visit the theatre for the first time! Following the successful improvement of the first apartment, they began to approach and garner support from the residents of the remaining 7 units.





- THERMOCHROMATIC GLAZING
- MECHANICAL VENTILATION WITH HEAT RECOVERY
- EXPERIMENTAL BIO-BASED INSULATION

Funding

Funding was provided by the climate group RINNO, who budgeted €200,000 towards the works so long as Passivista fulfilled their three requirements:

- To use an experimental bio-based insulation material.
- To use thermochromic glazing.
- To use building integrated photovoltaic panels (BIPV).

Passivista requested help from additional sponsors in the construction industry who could supply materials for the renovation. Their banners can be seen on the face of the scaffolding netting.

Many of these companies could only supply small amounts of materials (not enough to cover the needs of the entire building) and so the project has become a mish-mash of similar products. For example, all eight of the mechanical ventilation heat recovery (MVHR) systems are from different suppliers.







Labour

Volunteers from universities in Athens and ‘anyone with relevant skills’ were invited to provide their labour under the supervision of trained technicians. These were jobs that did not require participants to engage in tasks which required them to be on the scaffolding (for health and safety purposes). A group of mechanical engineering students helped fit the 8 mechanical ventilation units and specialists from the sponsoring suppliers offered their time and resources.

Passivista requested the help of employability platform ‘Odyssea’ to reach out to refugees and migrants for help with building work. Odyssea aims to ‘bridge the gap between talented job seekers and hiring companies’ by finding employment opportunities for migrants who had papers and were looking for work. Unfortunately this scheme was unsuccessful due to the unconventional nature of the building work and barriers for training in techniques required to fulfil passivhaus standards. Many of these workers went on to other jobs which required tasks that they were more familiar with.

Future

The Passivista team have gained a lot of attention from the municipality and recently hosted an event at the site where mayors from different municipalities could attend and find out more about the project and engage with the various sponsors.

Passivista adopts principles of ‘always open data’ so they aim to share their results and raise awareness for the project. Thus, once complete, the residents have agreed to provide access to their homes for open days and visits, so the building acts as a ‘living lab’. They are also working on a documentary which will showcase the benefits of the project.


SOLIDARITY NOW
This is our common ground
Safeguarding dignity
Embracing diversity
Reducing injustice
www.solidarity-now.org
SolidarityNow
@Solidarity_Now
Solidarity_Now
Solidarity Now
ΔΗΜΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΩΝ
ΚΑΤΙ ΠΟΥ ΘΑ ΠΑΡΩ ΜΑΖΙ ΜΟΥ ΟΤΑΝ ΦΥΓΩ
SOMETHING I'LL TAKE WITH ME WHEN I LEAVE


ΚΑΤΙ ΠΟΥ ΜΕ ΒΟΗΘΑΕΙ ΝΑ ΗΡΕΜΩ ΟΤΑΝ ΦΟΒΑΜΑΙ
SOMETHING THAT HELPS ME CALM DOWN WHEN I'M SCARED
ΚΑΤΙ ΠΟΥ ΜΟΥ ΘΥΜΙΖΕΙ ΚΑΠΟΙΟΝ ΠΟΥ ΑΓΑΠΩ
SOMETHING
ΚΑΤΙ ΑΠΟΚΛΕΙΣΤΙΚΑ ΔΙΚΟ ΜΟΥ
SOMETHING EXCLUSIVELY MINE




N
Karantina




N
Sabra


playground
6m
phone
OMT





Top
- Photograph from workshop 1
Above
- Planometric sketch of Beirut, with sites
Facing Page
- Workshop 1 - children's maps cross-referenced with real world location maps

PhD by Project

Transformative Lines

Hosn Houssami
Vice-Chancellor's Post-Graduate Research Scholar

Supervisors: Bo Tang, Beatrice de Carli
2021-

Exploring participatory mapping techniques and the consideration of children's spaces in city neighbourhoods, as components of shared urban imaginaries and development planning in Beirut, Lebanon.

Exploring participatory mapping techniques and the consideration of children's spaces in city neighbourhoods, as components of shared urban imaginaries and development planning in Beirut, Lebanon.

When assessing architectural co-production methods and practices, especially in the scope city planning and grander development models, we can often assume the key demographics which are often omitted from the participatory process. While architecture as a practice is veering towards more inclusive processes, increasingly younger demographics are overlooked. This thesis looks towards Beirut, Lebanon as the location of interest for a study focusing on the local populations - focusing on children - perceptions of their home towns and following from this the use of mapping and participatory workshops to draw out their collective aspirations for said towns.

The lack of children's spaces can be noted within most cities, but especially in Beirut, Lebanon. Beirut, Lebanon, is a city that has borne significant physical and institutional changes due to its unique topographical landscape and everchanging socio-economic climate. It is therefore not shocking that in a city that has gone through so many fundamental changes that large parts of the population are overlooked in the little development that is occurring, especially development focusing on children.

The topics of equitable design and the inclusion of children in participatory practices continues to be a part of global architectural discourse. Although there are several countries that have protocols in their development models to account for the needs of children, the direct inclusion of children is often limited. "Listening to young children […] holds particular challenges for the architectural community" (Dudek, 2005: 1) and this lack of inclusion has fostered cities that have not been design with children as occupiers in mind, often leading either vastly unsafe environments for children to dwell in or sometimes the "design process [is] confined by limited budgets and health and safety frameworks. [Which] can limit the quality of the environment, and make it less suitable for young children." (Dudek, 2005: 1)

Equitability as a practice can take many forms, and it is in the assessment of the existing dynamics of a city that we may begin to form an understanding of where the disparities lie. While observation may be used to assess the equitability of the built environment, it lacks the nuances of lived experience and the particularity of distinctive personal interpretations; situated knowledge. Participation and coproduction therefore offers opportunities for interaction with those who have these experiences directly. In saying this, the concept of participatory practice cannot be equitable unless specific approaches are taken to insure the inclusion of a variety of peoples, especially those whom are directly affected by the issues which need addressing. It is for this key reason that the inclusion of children, as not only direct participants but also as primary contributors to data collection is key.

While the perspective of adults has been taken into consideration in different components of the data collection process – especially in the roles of facilitation and barrier negotiation – I decided to limit their input within the thesis to points of comparative analysis against certain data points derived from the interviews and participatory workshops with local children-formed focus groups in Karantina and Sabra. In framing children's experiences at a degree of greater importance than that of the adults of the neighbourhoods, I redefined the parameters set for the study of said neighbourhoods through a vastly different lens, a lens by which only children can offer the most accurate insight. Children thus occupy the role of primary contributors in the analysis of site and collective aspiration.

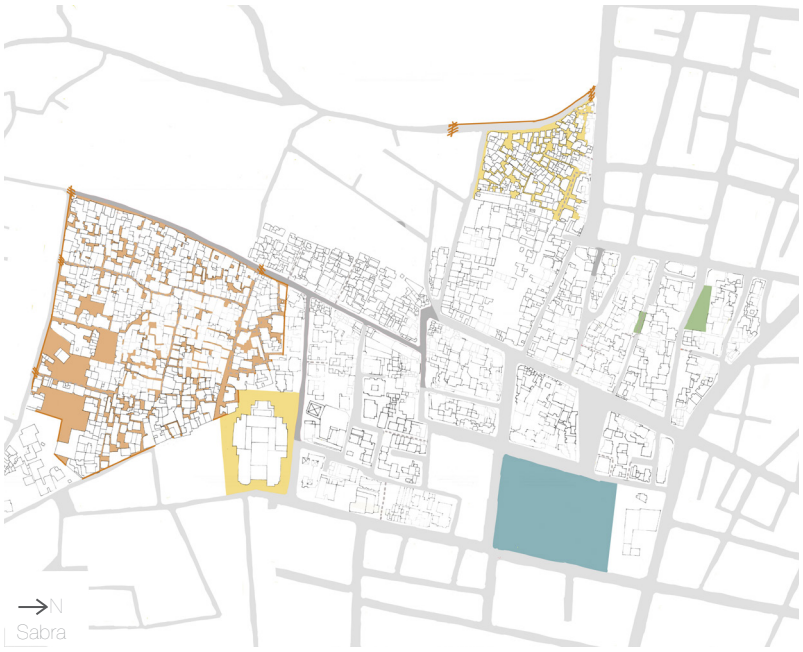
The two focus sites chosen for this project were Sabra and Karantina. The two sites offer an interesting basis of comparison as while both neighbourhoods are home to a large refugee population and are fast developing neighbourhoods, only Karantina has had any forms of architectural social interventions produced specifically with children in mind.

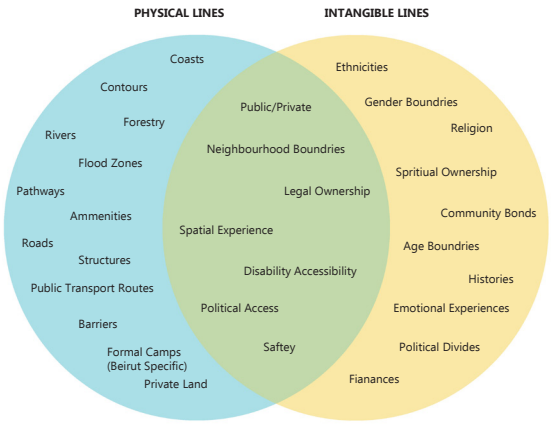
In these sites two distinct forms of data collection approaches were taken; 'Individual Data Collection' and 'Collaborative Data Collection'.

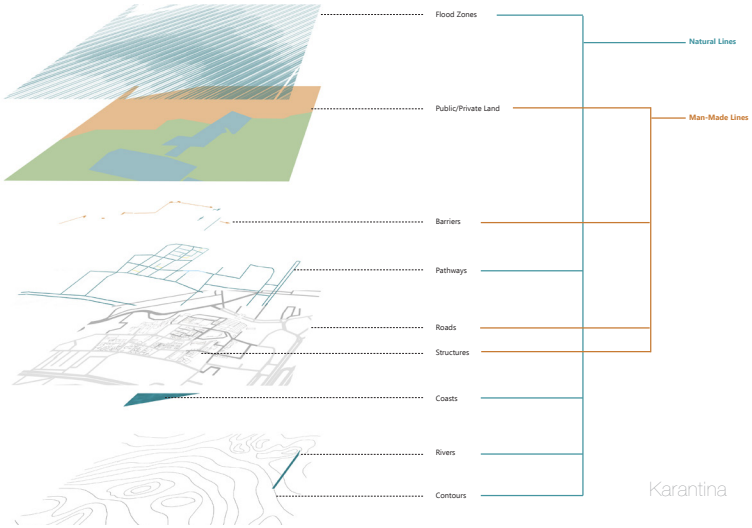
The 'Collaborative Data Collection' mainly compromised of outputs from 3 key workshops ran parallel across both sites. The workshops looked to introduce children to fundamental principles of architecture, help them relate that within the context they already know, and then further from this use there critical thinking and design skills to assess their cities and allow for conversations on aspirations for their city and a potential live build of their design.

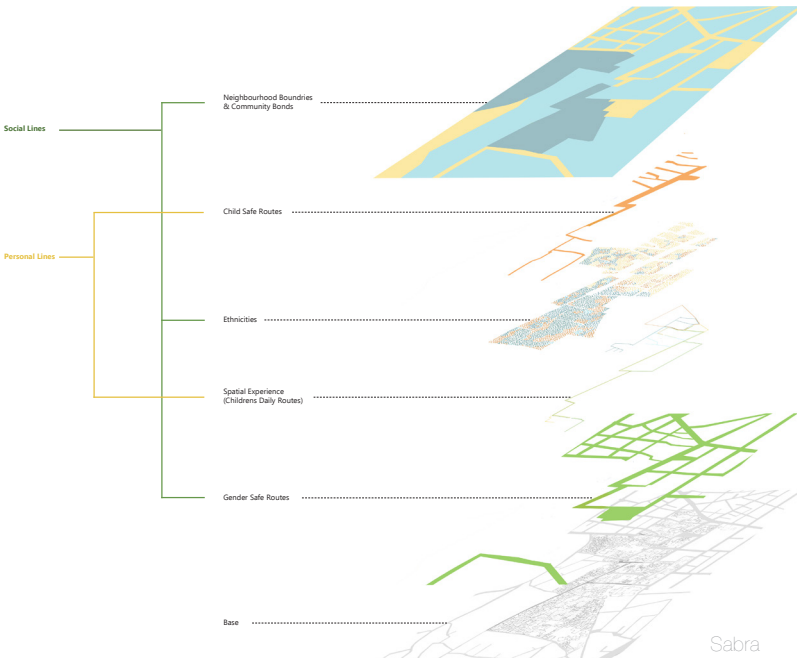
- Workshop 1, Our Town, was a group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process.
- Workshop 2, Our Street, was design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures.
- Workshop 3, Our Space was design activity where children were asked to design a social space.











Further from this, the 'Individual Data Collection' focused more on my role as a researcher and a 'specialist'. I produced sets of maps across both sites, highlighting different contexts, and social, architectural, and topographical features. These would be used in the analysis phase as comparative tools used to assess the outputs from the workshops, aligning the perceptions of the participants with the architectural data collected.

The thesis is concerned with developing methods for seeing, tracing, mapping and representing the physical, cultural, and social lines that connect place.

Through architectural surveying and mapping techniques the identification of 'Physical Lines' and boundaries, both pertaining to the natural (such as coast, contours and rivers) and man-made (such as streets, barriers and structures) are relatively clear to identify without large amounts of local participatory evolvement. However, these maps cannot account for personal experience and can only offer assumptive analysis as to the potential socially-constructed lines, 'Intangible Lines', that may be impacting the way in which residents interact with the city and their own neighbourhoods.

Further from this, while 'Physical Lines' may offer the 'experts' – the law makers, city planners, architects – insight as to what is structurally missing from a neighbourhood, they in isolation cannot offer impactful analysis on the shared urban imaginaries which require insight into not only the 'needs' of a population which experts may be able to identify, but the 'wants' as well. These can only be defined through direct interaction with the communities and it's residents.

These 'Intangible Lines' are the lines which require lived experience and varying forms of access and ownership (sometimes lack-of) in order to identify. It is here that the data acquired through the participatory research techniques offers the greatest insight. Through the various interviews and workshop outputs several distinct Intangible Lines were identified along with their impact of the residents, especially children. These themes include; the gender division of space, rights of occupation as defined by age and ability, levels safety pertaining to different factors, racial prejudices, and even individuals pathways and interactions in their cities and neighbourhoods. However, due to the nature of these lines, they are more akin to a 'snapshot' of the current sociocultural dynamic rather than a constant state of being for the two neighbourhoods of Karantina and Sabra. As these neighbourhoods and their demographics shift it is prudent to assume that these lines will adapt also. Some may even cease to exist.

Top
Physical vs intangible lines Venn diagram
Above
Physical lines exploded axo map of Karantina
Intangible lines exploded axo map of Sabra
Facing Page Top to Bottom
Public/private divide key
Public/private divide map of Karantina
Public/private divide map of Sabra

Glossary

Antiparochi (Greek)
Antiparochi is a Greek land-for-apartment 'mutual exchange' practice where landowners provide their property to developers, who build new apartments on the same site in return. The landowner receives a portion of the apartments instead of monetary payment, while the developer sells the rest. This system helped rapidly address housing shortages and shaped the city's urban landscape post-war.

Polykatoikia (Greek)
Polykatoikia, literally 'multi-residence'; is used to denote apartment buildings in Athens.

Prosfygika (Greek)
Prosfygika means 'refugee settlement' in Greek and refers to the social housing blocks developed in the 1920s-50s to accommodate large influxes of refugees from Asia Minor. The largest one in Athens is on Alexandras Avenue.

Frazioni (Italian)
Translates as 'fractions' in English - it is the Italian name allocated in administrative law to a type of territorial subdivision of a Municipality; practically it is approximately equivalent to localities or districts.

Additional Credits

View of Dourgouti Bauhaus from Neos Kosmos market (pp. 8-9)
Arun Kowcun

Typical building facade in Dourgouti Bauhaus (p. 17)
Bo Tang

Students sharing a meal in Neos Kosmos (pp. 18-19)
Arun Kowcun

Neos Kosmos Market (pp. 78-79)
Arun Kowcun

Looking down the valley around Belmonte (pp. 96-97)
Teun Staal

Photo exhibition at Kapaps Park (pp. 110-111)
Nok Yi Leung

Photographs and illustrations in the Athens Residency section (pp. 99-109) were provided by residency participants Arun Kowcun, Nok Yi Leung, Daria Serhiienko, and Joshua Trainor.

