



# ROOTSTOCK

EXAMPLE IN THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE

SUSTAINABLE  
REVITALISATION  
IN A RURBAN  
CONTEXT



**CHALMERS**  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Raphaëlle PAIRE

Master Thesis Spring Term 2020  
Direction : Building Design for Sustainability

Examiner : Paula FEMENIAS  
Supervisor : Walter UNTERRAINER

Chalmers School of Architecture  
Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering  
Master Programme of Architecture and Planning Beyond Sustainability

Göteborg, SWEDEN

## abstract

Located in the geographical centre of France, in what a low-density zone known as the 'Empty Diagonal', the city of Guéret suffers from a lack of attractiveness for a few decades. The social and urban changes unbalance the human-scale urban fabric making the historical centre empty. A third of the commercial cells in the city centre are currently vacant, as well as numerous lots of housing there. A loss of identity and unwelcoming atmosphere in the public realm represent the primary issues in this urban context.

Despite its negative aspects, Guéret is seen as a lovely historical city with narrow streets, pavements and low-rise buildings made in regional massive stones. The surrounding landscape is largely covered by biodiverse woodlands. The local cultural heritage is also significant due to the local crafts and know-how, the dishes made of agricultural qualitative products.

The issue raised in this Master's Thesis project is a question of the future of a town in a rural context. Framed within the context of the city centre, the study focuses on how sustainable transformation can be a catalyst for the revitalisation of a city previously abandoned in favour of suburbia and major shopping malls.

The Master's Thesis proposes an enhanced public space design in the city of Guéret, including a new promenade in the historical city centre and the transformation of a group of old residential buildings (and their respective outdoor spaces) into new spatial typologies. The goal of these interventions is to breathe life into the city, improve the sense of local identity and restore interest in the city centre. The project also focuses on social inclusion: how design can improve interaction between active elders, students and youth in order to strengthen community ties. This study may be used as both a reference and a tool for civic associations involved in urban design.

Based on an holistic view, the town is considered as a living organism that needs stimulations in specific spaces. The project is led by the assessment on the national phenomena of shrinking cities and by a deep analysis of the city of Guéret.

key words :

sustainability / human scale / local resources / transformation

rootstock, noun,

pl. rootstocks

1. *agriculture*. A healthy and vigorous-rooted plant that is used in grafting, most commonly as a sound base to support a scion that bears desirable fruit in orchard culture.

2. *botany*. a rhizome

3. *by extension*. The necessary basis for something to develop.

## table of contents

<b>introduction</b>	6
<b>I - large scale</b>	7
sustainability in architecture	
introductory notions	8
human scale in urban areas	9
the national issue	
medium-sized cities autopsy	10
<b>II - medium scale</b>	12
department	
la Creuse	13
local resources	14
the city of guéret	
town's status	16
historical centre	18
<i>link to design proposal</i>	
<i>interviews</i>	23
<i>swot analysis</i>	24
<b>III - small scale</b>	25
design proposals & axis	26
urban toolkit	27
rehabilitation project	39
pavilion design	58
<b>conclusion &amp; reflection</b>	66
<b>student background</b>	68
<b>IV - appendix</b>	69
models	70
bibliography	72
interviews	73
references	78

## delimitations

A notification must be made regarding a point : this project is a speculative transformation, it does not take into account the specific ownership of the plot as well as legislative issues.

## research questions

How can Guéret's sense of local identity be strengthened through public architectural interventions?

How can a residential building be transformed into public infrastructure in Guéret's city centre?

How can enhancing the local know-how highlight the potential of the city?

How can social interactions leverage sustainable development?

## method

The theoretical section of the report, which introduces the urban case study, has been guided by literature, conference, podcast recordings, statistics, and archive studies. Interviews and study visits completed the researches and enable to draw an overall view on the city situation combining an historical lens as well as a sensitive one.

The design proposals used explorations methods that are carried out with sketches, mapping and collages.

## introduction

*La Creuse* is the second low-dense department in France. Guéret is the capital city of the territory most of all because it hosts administrative infrastructures. Few decades ago, the employment in administration was reduced and the military storage that employed hundreds of people has been closed. The 1960's-70's generation has pursued their studies elsewhere, finally moved to find a job and never came back. Therefore the city lost educated and rich population.

In addition to that, the expansion of supermarkets in city's outskirts, the high rentals in the city centre dwellings and the higher attractiveness of neighbouring towns made the trade within the city centre difficult to handle. Nowadays, this specific area is suffering from empty shops and most of the buildings are in bad shape. Some consequences of this situation can be summarized as the city is deprived of its human-scale and its countryside-city identity.

This project is the result of a study regarding the potential of constructive and design sustainability for the regeneration of the historical city centre. This study follows a reading grid of three scales. First one, the largest one, focuses on the general concepts (geographical, social and economic situation) that lead to the visible national medium sized cities phenomena. The second one focuses on the local situation of Guéret itself. The third part focuses on the design proposals.



# SUSTAINABILITY IN ARCHITECTURE

## INTRODUCTIVE NOTIONS

### / THE NEED FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The construction domain is the one that produces the most of dioxide waste. More than 40% of the global CO<sub>2</sub> is related to it.

For a few decades the logic was to produce massively without having any reflection on the amount of material spent and its impact on the environment. As the world population is raising, the need to build more dwellings is thus crucial but it is necessary to pay attention to the impact of constructions on the environment. The used resources must be rooted during the whole conception process, from the first drawing to the delivered building's process.

Dwellings are often built in the traditional way, negatively impacting the environment. For example, the concrete, which is regularly used in the construction domain, is composed of sea sand. The sand extraction is a current issue, as this method by raking, destroys the ecosystems but also the food chain and the geological layers.

Nowadays it appears relevant in designing to use bio-based, raw or local materials and to develop the scientific researches in order to combine the innovative and traditional way of building. It is not a retrograde step to use natural material and traditional way of buildings if the scientific researches inject these elements in the innovative quest.

The architects and engineers aimed to forget the natural properties of raw material like stone, straw-bale or compressed earth blocks. Most of the time, those materials have better properties such as inertia, ventilation and better for the health compare to the widely used multi-layers plastic panels. Unfortunately, these methods are

not often chosen, because of old and traditional architectural visions, lack of technical achievements and legislations (and sometimes some lobbies).

The rediscovery of natural materials and their properties could be a relevant solution in the contemporary architecture. The reused and recycled materials complete this logic of sustainability in the construction sector.

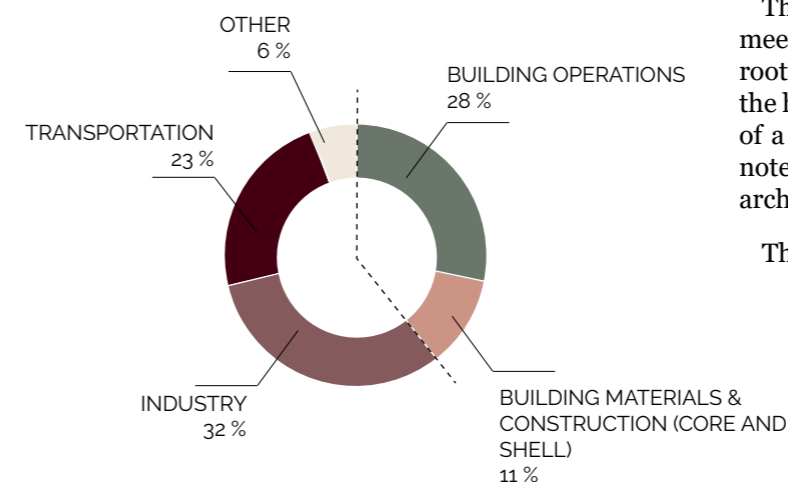
### / THE IMPORTANCE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The social dimension is important when we talk about sustainability in architecture. The social interactions are considered as fundamental for the quality of society's life.

These interactions between all members feed the confidence, the solidarity and the social cohesion. It aims to build a qualitative dynamic for any types of innovations. It appears that the people are more involved when their direct environment is concerned.

The participatory process with the conciliations meetings for the development of a project, must root the design because understanding the stakes, the habits, the relationships and the stakeholders of a specific area are something that need to be noted in the analysis and design process of an architect.

The relevance is to build for and with people.



1. GLOBAL CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS BY SECTOR  
SOURCE : GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION  
2018 GLOBAL STATUS REPORT



# HUMAN SCALE IN URBAN AREAS

*The notion of human scale in urban planning and architecture is a crucial element in the well-being of inhabitants. According to Jan Gehl, it provides lively, safe, sustainable and healthy cities. This scale will be the core alongside the design process in this Master Thesis.*

## / THE ACTIVE MOBILITY

The active mobilities connected to human scale such as walking, biking or skateboarding are not just means of transport. They bring interactions between users and enable to develop not only basic, but important daily scenes of life. Based on the model of antic Roman forum, the open urban spaces such as squares are conducive to information exchanges, talks and events. By according them a great place in the public space, people are tempted to practice them more. Compares to an expanded road that brings more cars, an expanded sidewalk or a pedestrian street attracts more active mobilities and thus, a lively atmosphere.

Some examples show that a simple modification of urban space, like benches installations or trees plantations, changes the urban habits of users. A walker will favour the quickest or the nicest way but will differ depending on the choice to go through a lively and light street with an inactive

and dark one because he is looking for a walk experience.

Therefore, if the streets are not walkable or the common transportations stops are not opportune, the user will certainly opt for the car. Moreover, roads and high traffic are noisy and interfere in the notion of space by shortening the horizon with necessary-so parking lots. They do not have many green spaces on it and create mental and physical barriers.

It exists different types of activities and they can be ranked within the urban spaces. The basic ones are the necessary ones, like going to work or waiting for the common transportations. One other type gathers the leisure activities like reading a book, observing people or enjoying the sun. Most of the activities are linked to these last facultative ones. Indeed those numerous leisure activities show the importance of having qualitative urban furniture, shaded areas during summer times and large safe pedestrian spaces in the public space. For a pedestrian, everything is an obstacle, from a garbage to a badly parked motorbike. Therefore, the functions and uses of the public space should be balanced and well integrated in the space.

## / PLACE MAKING CONCEPT

The concept of the making considers the human scale (local activities, daily life habits and needs) as the starting point of the design process. It promotes the collective work and participatory process of inhabitants into a real urban context.

All types of data are injected in the design like environment and morphology. A lot of urban squares have been drawn with an easy maintenance lens, ignoring the real expectations of locals and urban fabric, but with the aim to produce available square meters.

However, cities need destinations and meeting points that make the identity of the town and attract people like main streets or esplanades where several types of activities can be done. Social inclusion, sustainable development and architectural conception enhance cultural and social diversity. The aim is to create relevant and adequate urban experiences according to the local culture thanks to human scale and interactions.

A hospitable and nice city could be a goal but also a departure point of any architectural project. The social functions like meeting points in urban spaces participate to the development of a sustainable, open and democratic society.

ATTRACTION TO A FACADE IS RATED AN AVERAGE OF 7% HIGHER FOR AN ACTIVE FACADE COMPARED TO A PASSIVE FACADE. <sup>1</sup>



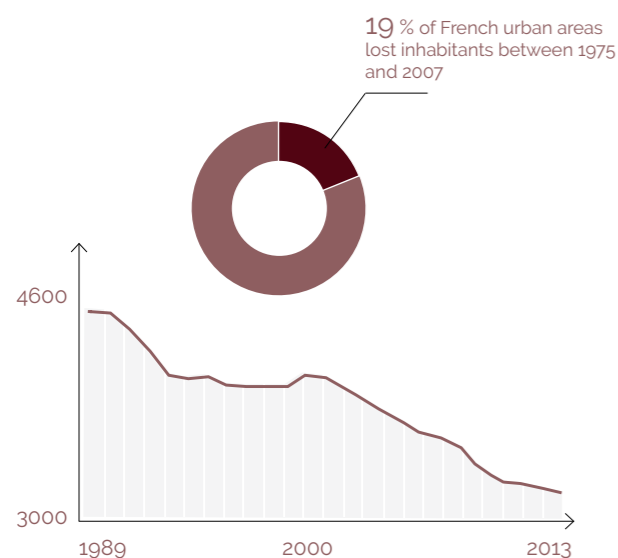
THE DENSITY OF PEOPLE IN A CROWD OR URBAN AREA IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH A LIVELY CITY. LIVELINESS IS DEPENDENT ON THE INTENSITY AND THE QUALITY OF AN URBAN SPACE, AS EXPERIENCED BY THE AVERAGE USER.

1. JAN GEHL, «CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH BUILDINGS», URBAN DESIGN INTERNATIONAL, N°1, 2006, P. 29-47; FIRST PUBLISHED IN DANISH BY JAN GELH, L.J. KAEFER AND S. REIGSTAD, «NAERKONTAKT MED HUSE», ARKITEKTEN, N°9, 2004, P6-21

# THE NATIONAL ISSUE

## MEDIUM-SIZED CITIES AUTOPSY

Over the past couple of decades, hundreds of city centres across Europe have suffered from the desertification process. Citizens have witnessed a significant increase of vacant stores and the deterioration of historical buildings, which had once been the cornerstones of the cities respective identities.



1. EVOLUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRY IN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE

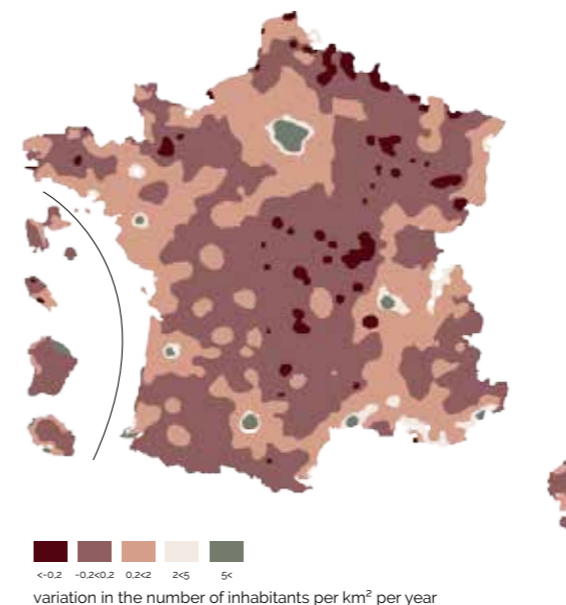
SOURCE : INSEE, MARCHÉ DU TRAVAIL -SÉRIES LONGUES - 2015

### / CHANGING WORKING HABITS : DEINDUSTRIALISATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF DISTANCE PERCEPTION

First, the shrinking cities phenomena is a consequence of the process that has started in the 1980's. Since then, the percentage of the secondary sector has decreased in the French economy, and thus, the percentage of the factory workers has decreased in the whole population, representing now 13,8% (a decrease of 36% since 1989). The coal mines, the textile and the metalworking industries, the paper mills or the electrical devices industries have been moved from France to other parts of the world where the labour force is less expensive for investors. The expansion of tertiary industry, especially in commercial domain and the advent of the Internet did not help in the weakened growth of manual professions.

Therefore, the cities where the main economic resources came from the secondary sector of the economy did not survive to the globalisation. According to the *INSEE (Institut National de la Statistiques et des Études Économiques - French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies)* from 1975 to 2007, 69 urban areas on 354 (19%) lost inhabitants and the spread of suburbs areas did not balanced it.

In parallel, development of high-speed trains and highways changed the notion of distances and the working habits. The inhabitants can live somewhere and work far from their home. As a consequence, they stop contributing to the economic growth of their hometown.



2. VARIATION OF POPULATION DENSITY BETWEEN 1982 AND 2011

SOURCE : © IGN, INSEE, POPULATION CENSUSES, 2014

### / COMMERCIAL MALLS AND MOBILITY DISRUPTIONS

Another aspect is the closure of small shops due to the increasing competition with commercial malls that are covering previous agricultural lands in the suburbs.

Municipalities justified their choices of allowing permits to build supermarkets in saying that it was to "save the city centre" by diversifying the range of products. The reality shows that consumers do not make the efforts to go at the same time both to the commercial area located in the suburbs and to the commercial area of the city centre. The consumers needs are synthesized in those two ideas: saving money and avoiding wasting time.

That is why the mobility is a crucial topic for the medium-sized cities. The prominent use of individual car takes an important part in the urban planning changes. Larger roads and new parkings change the perception of spaces and distances.

The car allows the customer to make only a small effort to reach a supermarket thanks to the presence of large parkings lots and an easy access from the highway.

This scheme divides the cities by parts, 10% of the supermarkets are located in the outskirts

of the city and according to *Procos (Fédération pour la promotion du commerce spécialisé - Federation for the promotion of specialised trades)* 62% of the consumption is made in these shopping malls and only 25% in the city centre. Besides the social and economical impacts, the consequence on the environment are significant due to the carbon dioxide pollution. Moreover, if we take into account the human scale, the cars block the view and disturb the notion of spaces. City is even more noisy because all the natural noises are hidden by cars.

WHEN BUYING OR RENTING A DWELLING, "THE ESTATE AGENCIES ARE TALKING ABOUT MINUTES NOT KILOMETERS" <sup>1</sup> TO ACCESS THE CLOSEST SHOPS.

Of course, some efforts have been made by municipalities to promote active mobility. Bicycles lines have been built, bicycle-sharing system has been setting up, some streets have been pedestrianised, some parkings and roads have been removed along the riverbanks. Since a couple of years, the municipalities switched these decisions back on : the public squares are a parking lot again.

In parallel, the metropolises are continuing the development of active mobilities. Storekeepers and municipalities are mistaken attractiveness and mobility.

A VEHICLE TENDS TO BE PARKED FOR 97% OF ITS LIFE <sup>2</sup>



ONE PARKING LOT COVERS 12,5 M<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>RAMEZON, O. (2019) COMMENT LA FRANCE A TUÉ SES VILLES. RUE DE L'ÉCHIQUIER, L'ÉCOPOCHE.

<sup>2</sup>CEREMA, (2018). RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://VOIRIEPOURTOUS.CEREMA.FR/IMG/PDF/3\\_-\\_LA\\_REGLEMENTATION\\_DU\\_STATIONNEMENT\\_-\\_L.DUPONT.PDF](http://voiriepourto.us/cerema/fr/img/pdf/3_-_la_reglementation_du_stationnement_-_l.dupont.pdf)

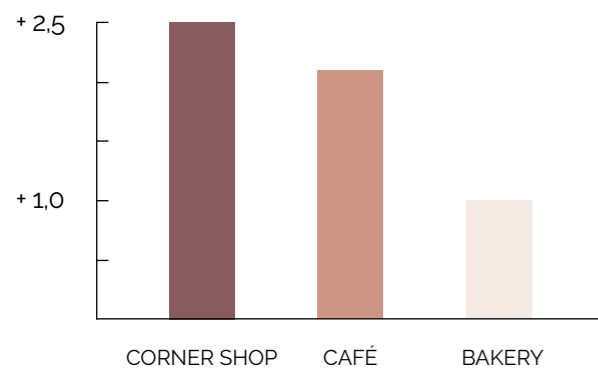
/ THE SMALL SHOPS IN THE CITY CENTRE EMBODY LOCAL IDENTITY

The national and international brands contribute to the loss of local identity since the same restaurants, clothes stores or supermarkets are gathered in numerous cities in the whole country.

Small independent stores like hardware store, shoemaker or *commerces de bouche* (food services) as restaurants, bakeries, *fromagers* (cheesemongers), *boucheries-charcuteries* (butchers, delicatessens) or *traiteurs* (caterers) are disappearing. Therefore, the city centres are not attractive anymore and the shops rentals in there become cheaper for services.

New types of programs such as tattoos or electrical cigaret stores are blooming with the estate agencies, as well as banks and the fast food restaurants. Nowadays, most of the activities in the city centres are tertiary ones.

The inhabitants could feel a abandonment compares to bigger cities. Tensions between governmental authorities and locals can appear. According to *Institut français d'opinion publique* (French Institute of Public Opinion) the final closure of shops contributes to the rise of the right-wing extremism. They estimate the closing of a post office make the extremists parties gain 3.4 points in their votes (a corner shop is 2.5, a café 2.1 and a bakery 1.0).



1. FINAL CLOSURE OF SHOPS IMPACTING THE EXTREMISTS PARTIES (GAIN IN POINTS)

SOURCE : INSTITUT FRANÇAIS D'OPINION PUBLIQUE [HTTPS://WWW.IFOP.COM/](https://www.ifop.com/)

*“La boulangerie ne nourrit pas seulement au sens propre. Elle alimente ainsi la rencontre impromptue, le lieu social.”*<sup>1</sup>

“The bakery does not feed only on the strict sense. It also fosters encounters, social links”.

RAZEMON, O. (2019) COMMENT LA FRANCE A TUÉ SES VILLES. L'ÉCOPOCHE



/ HOUSING RENTALS

Taking into account the causes raised previously the housing rentals in the city centre become cheaper compare to the suburbs. A lot of them are falling apart even the large houses which made the prestige of the city core.

The refurbishment is sometime complicated because of cultural heritage protection and new regulations. The surfaces and the configuration of old apartments did not match with the current demand (students and families). The gardens are often missing as well as the private entrance when a store sets on the ground floor. The housing stock become necrotic and the towns welcome poorer populations. In 2016, the vacant homes in France are estimated around 3,1 millions which is in contradiction with the rate of new buildings and high housing demand.

3 100 000 ESTIMATED VACANT HOMES IN FRANCE

TODAY IN FRANCE, ON 100 DWELLINGS, 82 ARE PRINCIPAL RESIDENCES, 10 ARE SECOND OR OCCASIONAL HOMES AND 8 ARE VACANT.<sup>2</sup>

vacant home : dwelling which is inoccupied pending a rental or a selling; already attributed to someone waiting to be occupied; kept by an employer for a potential employee's need; kept vacant without any precise posting by the owner (for example because the housing is dilapidated).

INSEE, FOCUS (2019) RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://WWW.INSEE.FR/FR/STATISTIQUES/4263935](https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4263935)

/ THE NEED TO ATTRACT NEW POPULATIONS

The attractiveness of the territory has been interpreted by the new projects of public equipments, such as new swimming pools, new sport furniture and multipurpose halls. To attract new inhabitants, this is not only a question of infrastructures but also definitely a question on enhancing social life, jobs opportunities, kindergartens, schools and a performing healthcare situation. The reputation of underdeveloped cities makes the situation more difficult in the collective mind.

The question of accessibility by trains and roads is raised when we look at the cities that are located in rural areas. For economical reasons, some railways lines have been closed making the access more difficult. The ideas for road development are out of time, it is not an “essential lever”<sup>3</sup> anymore, the energy spent should identify the future levers for rural areas.

/ A CITY CENTRE TODAY

The city centre has always had a role of gathering people, it is a place where the community can exchange in terms of social interactions but also trade. Thanks to its architecture - urban fabric and activities - it shows the character of the town, the history and wealth of the region such as wine, art or craftsmanship. It gathers the power entities like town halls and administrations. The centre is the place where cosmopolitanism is the most experienced. Everyone is different but shares the space. The social links are set thanks to the structure of public spaces. City centres are the example of “*vivre ensemble*” (community harmony).

Nowadays, the notion of ‘centrality’ evolves towards the term of ‘centralities’. The centre is smashed and it creates different hubs named ‘centralities’ where technologies, ways of communication and distractions are developing. The activities and the functions are changing and the ones related to the city centre focus on immaterial aspects : the representation, the power, the identity of a region and the social inclusion<sup>4</sup> (new populations and tourists). The centre is therefore a social experience.

<sup>3</sup>RAZEMON, O. (2019) COMMENT LA FRANCE A TUÉ SES VILLES. L'ÉCOPOCHE

/ « ACTION COEUR DE VILLE »

Facing the national medium-sized cities issue, *le Ministère de la Cohésion des territoires* (Ministry for the Territories Cohesion Policy) decided in 2017 to undertake a national strategy plan called *Action coeur de ville*, to revitalise city centres. This plan granted aid to 222 select cities with a budget of 5 billions euros.

This plan is structured by five axis; housing renovation in centres, economic and commercial development, mobility and accessibility, conservation, cultural heritage, equipments and public services. Some partners are involved such as the National Housing Agency (*Agence nationale de l'habitat*).

Following this, another plan has been set up, “Let’s reinvent our city centres” (“*Réinventons nos coeurs de villes*”) that promotes specific calls for projects in the city centres. Some strategical parts of the city centres are abandoned like industries, empty properties or culture heritage to renovate.

<sup>4</sup>BOURDIN, ALAIN. (2019) FAIRE CENTRE: LA NOUVELLE PROBLÉMATIQUE DES CENTRES-VILLES. BIBLIOTHÈQUE DES TERRITOIRES. LA TOUR D'AIGUES. ÉDITIONS DE L'AUBE.



# THE DEPARTMENT

## LA CREUSE

/ AN OLD, POOR AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT

Created in 1790 and geographically located in the centre of France, *la Creuse* is one of the twelve departments that belong to *la Nouvelle-Aquitaine*, a region created during the last French territorial reform in 2016.

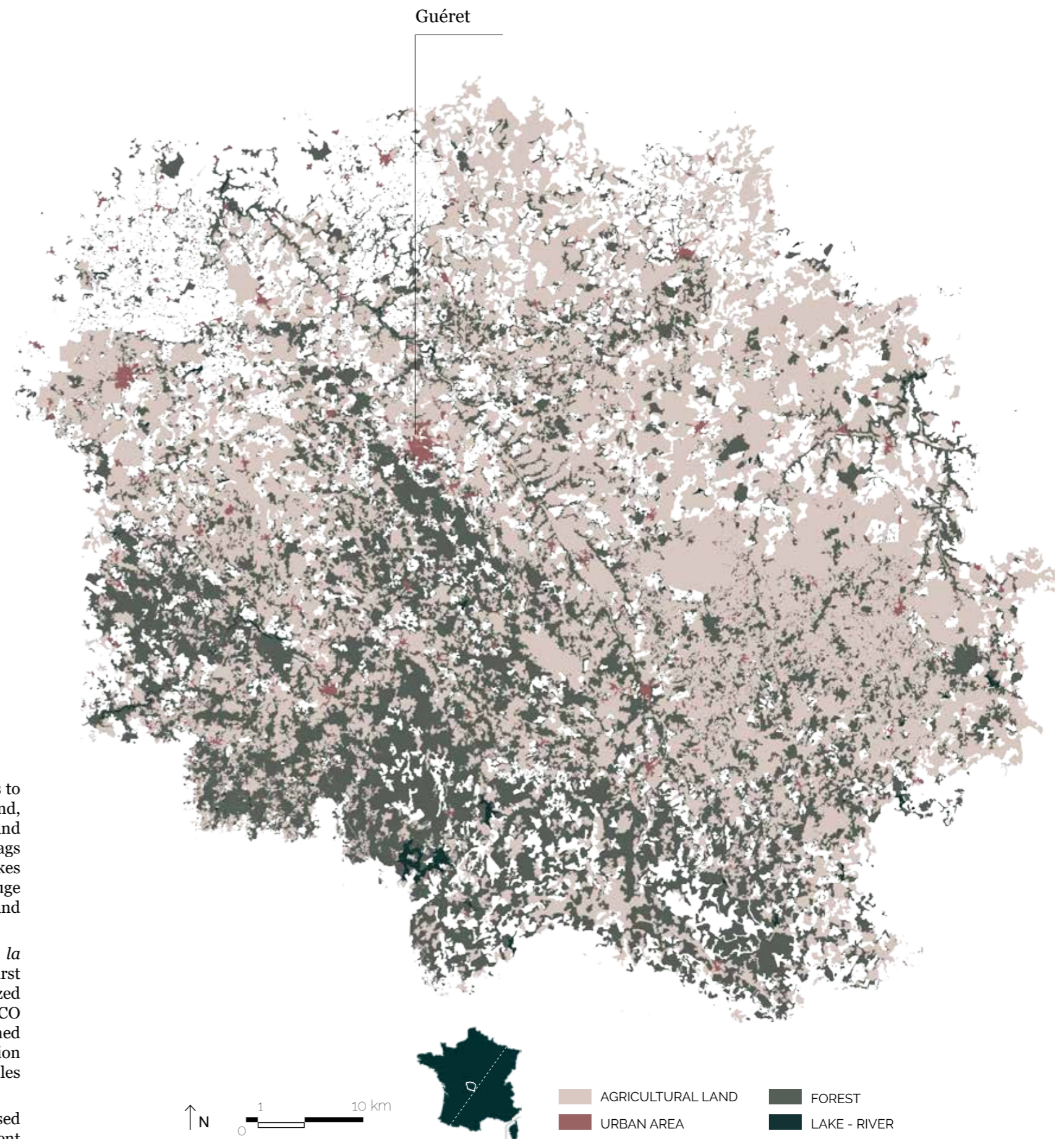
It is one of the poorest departments of France, the unemployment rate is upper than the national one. These last eighty years, the population has decreased of 50%, and the population is mainly composed of elderly people, as one person on seven is more than 75 years old.

More than the half of its territory is occupied by agricultural land, almost a quarter of active worker are linked to this sector. The cattle and dairy farming but also the vegetables and fruits (especially apples) from there are well-known for their high quality. The short local food supply chain is not really rooted but is getting more appreciated by people. The flourishing of small supermarkets specialised in local food is an example of the growing interest about good, organic and local consumption.

The biodiversity of *la Creuse* is rich thanks to deep forests that represent a third of the land, where mushrooms, nuts, chestnuts, plants and flowers evolve with birds, frogs, snails, stags and squirrels. The rolling topography makes the landscapes more valuable. It is also a huge play park for mountain bikes, canoe, hikes and cross-country ski.

Beyond the well-known food products, *la Creuse* is renowned for its craftsmanship. First the tapestry of the city of Aubusson is recognized as intangible cultural heritage from UNESCO and secondly, the stonemasons are renowned artisans. Historically, a lot of them left the region to build huge projects like Le Louvre, Versailles or Paris of Haussmann.

Today, in city of Felletin, a school is specialised in building trades. The students learn different methods of construction.



/ BAD IMAGE OF THE REGION IN FRANCE

As mentioned above, the department is losing its population. *La Creuse* is not getting new workers, but foreign retirees. For example, this rural area is attractive for English who are looking for charming stone farm, to enjoy a secondary house or moving for long term. Since the low cost airlines have been opened, a direct line from London to Limoges (one hour drive from Guéret) in 2002, the number of English families investing in the French countryside has exploded. This immigration from wealthy retired Europeans gives a certain dynamics in local economy, allowing building sector to have work (farm rehabilitation) and little village to gain population. We must have in mind, that this foreigner retirees can live in extremely good conditions and become owner of big properties as real estate is affordable. For example in 2020, the price of a ten bedrooms manor in Creuse is similar to a one bedroom flat in Paris.

*La Creuse* suffers from a bad image of rural area. This aspect is mocked by urbaners. Recently, some articles about this rural situation have been written with a miserabilism lens. The locals are proud and care about their region so they felt distrust and angry about journalists who ignore most of the activities and locals resources.

Obviously the urban activities can not be copied pasted in such a land. Nevertheless, this marginalisation of modernity can, and will be, an advantage in the future.



A MANOR IN LA CREUSE COSTS THE SAME PRICE AS A ONE-ROOM APARTMENT IN PARIS

# LOCAL RESOURCES

## How to define the local resources ?

The term of local resources depends on if we consider the local products as the ones that participate to the economy of the defined territory or the ones produced within a certain amount of kilometers around. Since the administrative region has been rearranged, and attached to other in 2016, the local territory could be extends to the Pyrénées, far from 500 km to it.

For the project, I consider local resources as the ones that are within a perimeter of 100 km from Guéret, therefore it represents approximately the area of the department *la Creuse*.

*” Dans les circuits courts, on produit plus de richesse sociale que de richesse marchande et c’est important.”*

« In the circular network, one produces more social wealth than sales, and that is important. »

MATHÉ, J. (201). 10 CLÉS POUR RÉUSSIR DANS LE CIRCUIT COURT. ÉDITIONS FRANCE AGRICOLE.

## Why favour the local resources ?

### identity

The local resources are definitely taking part to the circular economy. The deposits of raw materials participate to it and also to the local craftsmanship. For example, some particular know-hows like the stonemason ones, depend on the industry of granite, quite widespread in the region. Nowadays, exploring the local resources enables to save professions and qualitative crafts but also maintain the cultural heritage.

### social

With a social lens, buying products directly from the farmers is creating social interactions and guarantees the quality of the product.

### economical

The farmers and the producers who are selling their products directly to the locals inhabitants become independent from the large retailers and reduce the chain of stakeholders. According to Jacques MATHÉ (economist and professor), on 100€ spent on the territory, 60 remain in it (compared to 100€ spent in industries only 5€ are remain). According to a report of Commission of Economic Affairs of the French National Assembly (*Commission des Affaires Économiques de l'Assemblée Nationale*). In 2015, 10€ given to a local farmer generates 25€ that are redistributed in the local economy, 10€ spent in supermarkets generate only 14.



local farm  
10€ → 25€



supermarket  
10€ → 14€

### sustainable

Opting for a local product reduces the transportation from the deposits to the construction site or from a farm to the consumers. According to the Statistical agency of the Ministry of the Agriculture, in 2010 21% of the farmers belong to local food network. It increased since in 2000, they represented only 15,4%.

*local construction materials.*

In *la Creuse*, three quarries of rocks are located in Valaize, Clairavaux and Sannegrand. The old properties around these villages are made out of massive stone, especially granite. The stonemason and stone carver professions are still present and taught in the *Lycée Des Métiers du Bâtiment* (College for Building Professions) in Felletin.

Due to the significant surface of forests (a third is composed of coniferous and two third of deciduous trees), tens of sawmills operate wood. The carpentry and wooden shutters of *la Creuse's* old constructions are in wood. The wooden industry is the second important sector after the agricultural one.

A cleaning farm for wool is located 122 kilometers from Guéret in Souvigny. The farm uses wool from the whole country and cleans it without any chemical product. The wool can be used in the building sector making the insulation as thermal as acoustic. The culture of hemp has started twenty years ago in the south, on *le Plateau de Millevache* (nearby uplands area) the material is used for external or internal insulation.

The local straw cultures are mainly made to feed the bovine breeding. Nevertheless, the straw bales construction is developing thanks to an active association. Conscientious architects and a construction firm are promoting this traditional method. Several projects of this kind of sustainable architecture have been built in Guéret and Ahun.

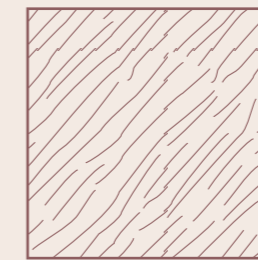
The two slate quarries of Allasac and Travassac are the last active ones in France. This raw material has participated to the architectural identity of the region, indeed some farms around are covered with 200-years old slates. Furthermore, a clay tiles manufacturer is located in Saint-Hilaire-les-Places, 100 km away.

*local social resources.*

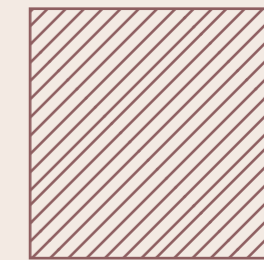
We could expand the local resources, and interpret them also by the local know how.

In *la Creuse*, there is a rich ecosystem of active associations like "*L'outil en main*" where retired people are sharing their handwork activities knowledge with kids. The different formations of craftsmanship in buildings sector, art, culture heritage and territory development are also rooted in the region and well known around the country.

*La Creuse* is also a host territory, for English or even Eastern European people. The social mix leads to some specific projects and special developments.



TIMBER  
( PINE, OAK )



STONE  
( GRANITE )

MAIN LOCAL MATERIAL RESOURCES

# THE CITY OF GUÉRET

## TOWN'S STATUS

### / A TOWN IN COUNTRYSIDE

Guéret is a medium-sized city located in the middle of France in *la Creuse* departement. It is also the main urban area of the conurbation unity composed of 25 municipalities (25 385 inhabitants in 2015).

For a few decades, the town is suffering from a loss of attractiveness, Guéret lost 16% of its population since 1980s and 2010s ( from 15 720 in 1982 to 13 275 in 2016).

#### GREEN SPACES M<sup>2</sup>/INHABITANT



#### < 60 YEARS OLD % OF THE TOTAL POPULATION



#### SOCIAL HOUSING % OF THE TOTAL HOUSING





#### / DECREASING PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS

The first reason of this decrease is that Guéret is the main administrative centre of the department. The public sector is therefore, deeply rooted in the local activities. However, because of financial issues, the government has reduced the number of employment in this domain and has made the employees moving out of the region. Eight years ago, the half of the 11 041 employees in the region worked in the public sector (administration, education, healthcare, etc.).

#### / THE LACK OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The students leave for their upper studies and majority find a job in another city. Nevertheless, we can find about 500 students in Guéret. The formations have a social focus: nursing formation; teaching but also technical formation (home automation). Musical conservatory is also present in Guéret and just twenty minutes drive, there is an art college in La Souterraine.

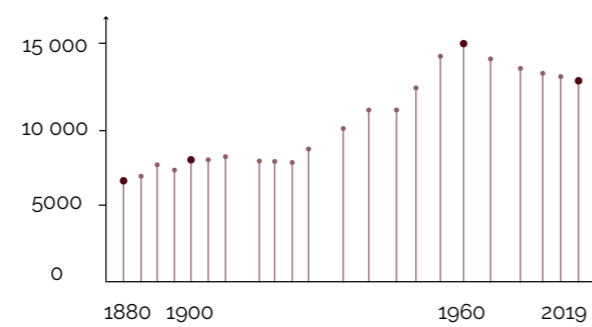
#### / NEW BUILDING VS RENOVATION

The decreasing number of inhabitants could also be explained by the families who want to invest in housing: with a cheaper price, they prefer to build a new house in the neighborhood villages than renovate an old one in the city without garden. They still get access to the main shopping malls around the town avoiding the car accessibility issues in the centre.

#### / A GENERATION LEFT

The ageing population in Guéret is the generation of the previous workers when the city was attractive and active from 1960's until 1990's. A third of the total inhabitants are more than sixty years old.

The majority of their children have moved right after or before their upper studies and have created a family somewhere else, breaking the family schemes of staying in the same city for a few generations. In 2014, one in two households is composed of one singular person. The feeling of loneliness and the importance of social interactions are, thus, crucial to consider.



1. EVOLUTION OF THE GUÉRET'S POPULATION

SOURCE : RETRIEVED FROM <https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gu%C3%A9ret> ( ÉCOLE DES HAUTES ÉTUDES EN SCIENCES SOCIALES AND INSEE)

#### / VEHICULAR AND RAILWAY NETWORKS

Guéret suffers from the policies that the Government has made few decades ago, reducing, or even closing, the main railways lines connecting the West part of France to the South Eastern, from the capital Paris to the South. From the creation of *SNCF (Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français - French National Railway Company)*, in 1938, these lines have been slowly closed but one that was crossing the country from west to east (Bordeaux - Lyon) was still ongoing in the 1990's. In 2017, this latter junction Bordeaux-Lyon has been reopened but because of a lack of interest from the new Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, the line is stopped in Montluçon, making the city, only opened to its new region *Nouvelle-Aquitaine*.

An national highway, named *Route Nationale 145* or *Centre-Europe Atlantique* road, going from west to east, is passing through the city in the northern part. The road carries a heavy load of freight traffic. The larger cities are about one hour's drive from Guéret such as Limoges.

#### / CARS DRAWN URBAN MORPHOLOGIES

Car has been the symbol of the increased level of standard of living. The town was getting richer in the 1960's, and has restructured the streets, making the sidewalks really tiny. In order to park the numerous cars of the inhabitants, the squares were all transformed into parking lots (mainly paid ones) in the city centre.

There are around 1600 parking lots in town, we can count eight parkings nearby the city centre where we add all the parking lots available along the streets. Therefore, the city centre is an entire parking.

#### / NO DIVERSE MOBILITIES

In 2013, the municipality implemented bus lines and a transport service on demand but inhabitants, not used to it, prefer using their cars. It is a renowned feeling especially in medium-sized cities where it is faster to walk than to wait for the bus because distances are not very important. However, last year, the cars have been forbidden in some streets in the old part of Guéret during the day hours making the narrow pedestrian paths nicer.

It is important to mention that the town offers absolutely no bikes lines. No infrastructures have been built for the bikes security even on the newly built roads. The car dependency is then fed with this lack of cycle path.

# HISTORICAL CITY CENTRE

## / TYPICAL FRENCH TOWN

The city centre has a typical medieval French town urban fabric. The mineral narrow streets are charming and the three storeys buildings mark them out. The buildings are built in granite (local stone), their roofs are made out of flat tiles and slate. Formerly, these tiles came from the surroundings like Mortroux, Fursac or Allasac.

The white wood window shutters are definitely a part of the architectural identity of the town. Shops on the ground floor and dwellings on the second and third floors are the typical composition of these buildings. The high attics, built in massive wood carpentry, enable to convert the fourth floor as another apartment.



1. PHOTOGRAPHY OF PLACE DU MARCHÉ (CIRCA 1900)

SOURCE : PLACE DU MARCHÉ GUÉRET, POSTCARD, COLL. CH RIBOULET



2. TYPICAL FACADE IN THE CITY CENTRE

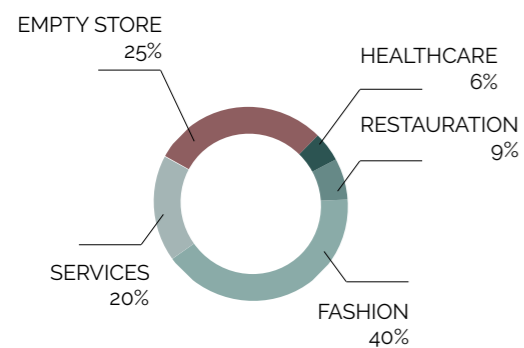
/ COMMERCIAL SITUATION IN CRISIS

When we walk around the streets, we are upset to notice the empty shop front. Some huge fluorescent posters are stuck up and it is written on them “for sale”; “for rent”; “rental for 1€per month for a year”.

When we stare into the upper parts of the buildings, we observe the bad shape of the facades and of the shutters. It tells much about the interior state of these buildings. They are falling into disrepair. Indeed, the inhabitants are getting poorer and the old building are lacking of investment in the maintenance, making the housing almost worn out.

Therefore bad looking constructions do not attract the middle or higher social class. The consequence is that the city reaches a significant rate of unoccupied dwellings: 16%. The ones for sale are not aligned with the current market because they are much more expensive.

Regarding the current ground floor situation, the commercial cells vacancy reaches 25% and about 37% in the main historical pedestrian street, *la Grande Rue*. Those numbers make the city the second worst in France, given after Calais.



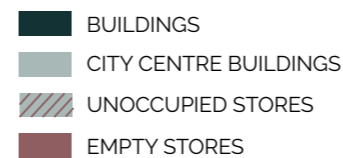
1. TYPES OF STORE IN THE CITY CENTRE

SOURCE : PERSONAL INVESTIGATION



2. a . STOREFRONT IN LA GRANDE RUE  
« PREMISE TO RENT, 1€ PER MONTH FOR A YEAR »

SOURCE : GRANDE RUE, PERSONAL PICTURE, 2019





CITY CENTRE STOREFRONTS

SOURCE : PERSONAL PICTURE, 2019



## / THE SUPERMARKETS

The decay of the city core has several causes.

In the 1950's, the French government wanted to investigate new modern ways of consumption in the region *Limousin*<sup>1</sup> where *la Creuse* was taken part of. We assisted to a multiplication of cooperative supermarkets that create unfair trading against the small stores. In 1972, despite the fear of local stores, one of the first huge supermarket is opened, *Super-Coop*.

In 1985 we count already four supermarkets and the project of building a new one was planned. In a media report from *Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA)* (National Audiovisual Institute) on January 31<sup>st</sup> 1985, the journalist talks about the current debate that exists between users and storekeepers of the potential expansion of one of the supermarket. Indeed, its takings per square meters are three times the national average. It proves that inhabitants were getting into this modern way of consumption, easy to access by car and cheaper than the city centre shops.

According to the report *Action Coeur de Ville*, the projects of these large shopping malls have been accepted to encourage the locals to consume in Guéret and not in the neighborhood cities like Limoges (1 hour drive) and Montluçon (45 minutes drive). The most recent one, open in 2017, is called *Pop'A Guéret* and is the largest commercial mall in the department. Seventeen brands, within some national and international ones, specialised in sports equipment or fashion settle in. This project has created 100 employments.

“

City centre grocer :

” *Ça n'arrange pas les petits commerçants.* “

“ It doesn't help the small storekeepers.”

Journalist :

” *Avez-vous l'impression d'être condamnés à long terme ?*”

“ Do you think you will be doomed in the long term?”

City centre grocer :

” *Si ça continue, la même politique qu'actuellement, alors oui à long terme, on ne va pas rester gros.*”

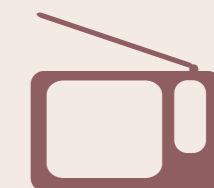
“ If the current political is carried on, yes, we will not be numerous in the long term.”

Butcher :

” *Ils veulent tout avaler. Ils sont bien gentils mais il faut que tout le monde vive... mais bon, maintenant on ne peut rien empêcher puisqu'ils ont tous les droits.*”

“They want to devour the whole market, they are nice but everyone needs to live. For now, no one can stop them because they are above us.”

”



SOURCE : FRANCE RÉGIONS 3 LIMOGES.  
(1985). LIMOUSIN ACTUALITÉS: LA POLÉMIQUE DU CENTRE  
LECLERC À GUÉRET ITV PROGRAMI. GUÉRET, FRANCE : FR3 TELEVISION

<sup>1</sup> COMPOSED OF THREE DEPARTMENTS, LIMOUSIN WAS THE ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF CREUSE BEFORE 2016

/ WHERE IS THE CITY CENTRE ?



1. MAP OF GUÉRET - SQUARES LOCATION



*place du Marché*

The inhabitants consider there are two city centres : the main square *Place Bonnyaud*, framed by the administrative entities and the *Place du Marché* which is the historical centre that derived its name from a covered market demolished in 1972.

We suppose this destruction occurred because of a bad shape condition of the building, or in order to ensure the security of the customers, or even because of the priority at that time was to define spots for the cars. Nowadays, the square is mainly used as a car park, covered with waterproof surface and without any shady area.

*place Bonnyaud*

On the *Place Bonnyaud*, on Thursday and on Saturday mornings are active days thanks to the *marché* (market). Locals producers come to sell a lot of different products. Goat and cow cheeses, meat, milk, eggs, seasonal vegetables and fruits, snails but also crafts are arranged on the stalls. It is not the largest *marché* of the area but many regulars are used to the products and people they meet there (retirees and workers). They do like to come and participate to the local food network.

This is also the square where the municipality places the Christmas tree in Winter and arranges an infrastructure with sand and long chairs during Summer.

/ AGING POPULATION

The aging population needs to be considered in the statement. From 75 years old, the consumption rate decreases by 40%, especially in the clothing sector which is the sector the most represented in the city centre. Most of the elderly do not live around, therefore they do not find the reason why they should make the effort to walk to the city centre without specific goal.

Nevertheless, people from 20-40 years old represent 40% of the total population and, proportionally, cover the half of the city centre citizens. A third of the area is inhabited by students.

/ LOW INCOME

Guéret households have an annual income of 18 941€ (the conurbation, 19 799€) which is inferior to the national income of 21 777€. Almost a quarter of the whole amount of principal residences is social housing, where resident populations has not an important purchasing power.

/ NO INVESTMENT

There is more rentals than owner-residents living in the city centre. They are also getting poorer and the old buildings are lacking of investment in the maintenance making the housing almost worn out. Therefore bad looking constructions do not attract the middle or higher social classes. Indeed, the latter prefer to invest in a big newly built house outside the city to enjoy the landscape and have a significant garden.

/ RHYTHMS OF THE CITY CENTRE

The city centre follows the office hours thanks to the numerous public sector employees that work there. The centre is empty before 8:00 a.m. in the morning and also after 5:30 p.m. in the afternoon. The weekdays lunch time represent 20% of incomes for the shops in the centre whereas the weekends are deserted. On Sundays, the commercial are closed as the majority of stores in France.

## INTERVIEWS

FEBRUARY 2020, GUERET

Interviewing the local stakeholders is necessary to understand and compare their point of view regarding the current situation and the upcoming projects for the city.

The different interviews have been conducted according to a semi-structured template. It means that some questions were prepared but in the course of the conversation, discussion could evolve to more specific and non expected topics.

Six interviews have been carried out for this project, with a large-spectrum regarding the samples, from students to general managers of the town. The scripts can be found in the appendix.

The obvious lack of attractiveness in the city centre was raised throughout the interviews. Among the projects discussed with the interviewees some incite new populations' arrival and some encourage the reinvestment of the shops. These two proposals could be realised through a renewal of urban squares or

even the implementation of a covered market somewhere. The final purpose of these projects could be phrased as such : rethink the flows of the commercial path.

Interviewees talked about two main issues : the lack of affordable food shops for students and the desire to find new public activities. Beside the cinema, no other public infrastructure generates people flows to the city centre. Financial subventions are only given to refurbish private buildings and stores.

Students admit there is no communication between them and the elderly because of the structural difference of their daily life, as they do not match up. They also do not use the market as the students are doing their shopping during the weekend when they come back to their hometown.

The wish of creating an «experimentations house» for sharing skills and develop community garden is led by *Association des Communs* with *Association Recyclabulle*.

“

« Le parcours marchand est prioritaire, Place Bonnyaud et Place du marché. [...] On ne manque pas d'habitat à Guéret. Il faut déclencher des activités complémentaires par les rénovations en centre-ville. »

« The commercial path is a priority between Place Bonnyaud and Place du Marché. [...] There is no lack of housing in Guéret. To incite creation of additional activities, we need to renovate the city centre. »

Pascal GERMAIN,  
Project manager of city centre

« Il y a beaucoup d'attente sur la Place Bonnyaud. Pour la problématique du centre-ville, il y a déjà un travail à faire pour retrouver des espaces publics agréables et ramener du monde en ville par le biais d'aménagement urbain, [...] on n'est toujours confronté à la problématique de la place de la voiture. »

« There is great expectations regarding the Place Bonnyaud. Concerning the city centre issue, the first step is to develop nice public spaces and bring back people by making urban renewal. [...] we are always facing the problem of the car use. »

Elodie BLANC  
General manager of Guéret

« La nouvelle partie du musée contemporaine est un bon projet, c'est la preuve que l'on peut mélanger du contemporain et de l'ancien. [...] C'est peut-être ce qu'il manque dans le centre ancien. [...] Il y a beaucoup d'équipements publics à Guéret mais il n'y a pas d'équipement générateur de flux dans le centre ancien, il reste que le cinéma et le pôle jeunesse. C'est très résidentiel et il y a des barrières mentales et ça ne facilite pas sa revitalisation. »

« The new extension of the museum is a nice project, that is the proof we can mix both contemporary and heritage architecture. [...] It is maybe what we miss in the old centre. [...] There are a lot of public infrastructures in Guéret but they do not generate flows in the centre, it only remains the cinema and the youth centre. It is very residential and some mental barriers do not help in its revitalisation. »

François HAMEL : Department of Housing  
Sandra DOMINGUE : Department of Housing  
Baptiste RIDOUX : Head of «la Quincaillerie»

« Ça serait bien d'avoir un endroit avec des outils mutualisés où on pourrait en plus faire des choses qui nous intéresse et réparer des objets et en plus proposer des formations à gens intéressés. On bute sur le fait d'avoir un endroit où on peut se retrouver et faire des choses, comme une 'maison de l'expérimentation concrète'. Que l'on puisse avoir notre matériauthèque parce qu'on a des quantités de bois, de métal astronomique qu'on va enterrer parce qu'on n'a pas d'autres solution. Il y a des portes en chêne incroyable à retraiter... créer des choses artistiques avoir un showroom et vendre après. »

« It could be great to have a place with shared tools where we could do interesting things, such as repairing objects and offering lessons to motivated people. We struggle to find a place where we can gather and have an 'experimentations house' for concrete things. We could have our material library because we have large amount of wood and metal which are going to be buried because of no other choice. There are wonderful oak doors we can revalue... Create some artistic things, have a showroom and maybe sell them. »

Jérémie VIDAL, Arthur CHAVANEL  
«Association des Communs»

« On habite tous en centre-ville. [...] La question du repas universitaire est vraiment la bienvenue parce qu'on est les plus touchés. Une sorte de cantine accessible universitaire pour nous et un commerce de proximité comme quand il y avait Lidl avant. »

« We all live in the city centre. [...] The question of university meals should be raised as we are the most impacted. Sort of cheap canteen for us and also a convenience store such as Lidl, could be more than welcomed. »

Students association  
Social worker degree - 4 girls of 20-22 years old

« Les premiers consommateurs d'un centre-ville sont les habitants du centre-ville. Le commerce ne fonctionne qu'avec du flux depuis l'Antiquité les commerces ont suivi les flux. Il faut recréer du flux si on veut que ça marche, pour ça il faut ramener des habitants mais aussi favoriser les gens qui viennent avec leurs voitures qui stationnent quelque part. »

« In the city centre, the main consumers are the closest inhabitants. Small businesses only work with flows, since the Antiquity, commercial trade follows flows. We must recreate flows if we want a successful continuation. In order to achieve it, new populations need to come over but also encourage people from outside who come with their cars they must park somewhere. »

Eric DAUBECHIES  
Head of Merchant's association

”

# SWOT ANALYSIS

[LINK TO THE DESIGN PROPOSALS](#)

The inputs of the theoretical research, the city study 'Guéret 2040' and the stakeholders feedbacks have been gathered to establish the swot analysis of the city centre.

The decrease of attractiveness of the city results from the late interest that the municipality had on the situation. The changes of the local society that gets older and poorer, implement transformations in the consumption habits. The mobility and the importance of social interactions unbalance the location of activities in town. Despite the large number of active associations, people still miss spaces to create social sustainability, islands of greenery and freshness in town and infrastructure for youth and students.

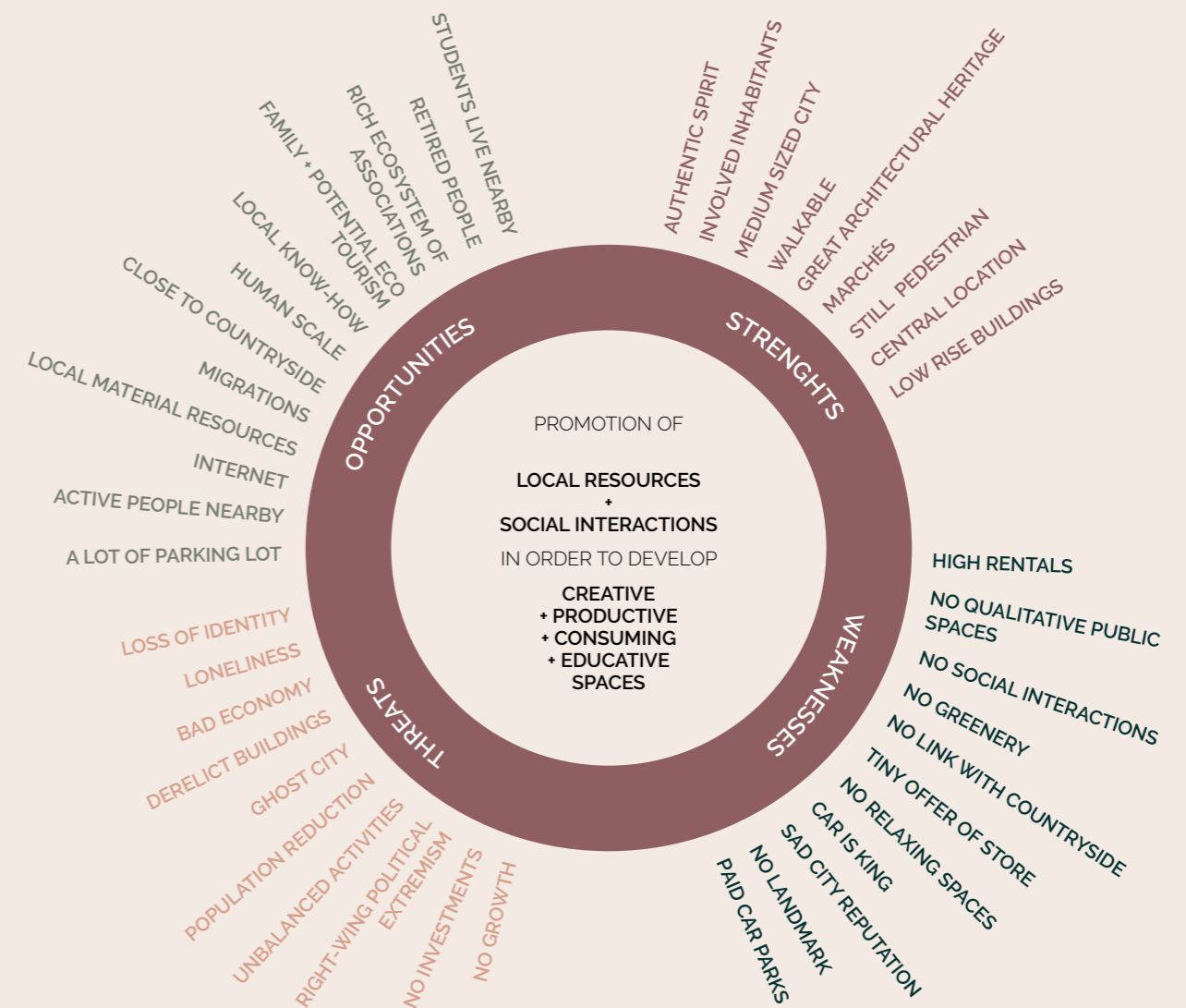
The shops are not matching with current people needs anymore. The accessibility is not good enough in term of topography. It shapes natural slopes and makes the accessibility a bit difficult for the pedestrians and the traffic. High prices rental are not corresponding with the

market and the aesthetic seems to be old and in a poor shape. It does not attract people anymore and it is not pushing them to make the effort to go and consume there. Nevertheless, the streets and the buildings have a human scale, crucial element to enjoy strolls.

The city centre of a town makes its main identity through the architectural heritage. Nowadays, the walkers, the tourists and the locals look at it with a critical eye and a deep sense of sadness. The locals lose self-confidence in their identity.

The project is not intended to attract new populations but aims at focusing on the reclamation of inhabitants to the old part of the centre.

*A SWOT is a method of analysis that identifies strenghts, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a specific area. The below SWOT consists in selecting relevant parts for the projet.*



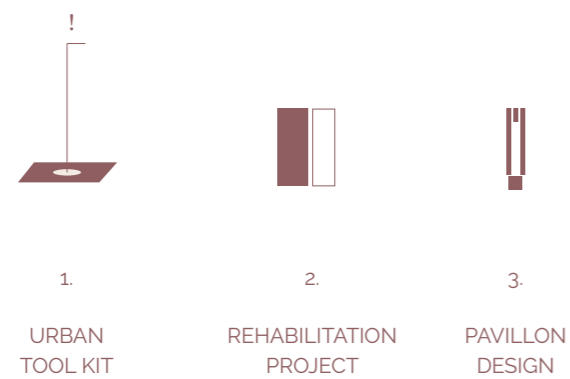




## DESIGN PROPOSALS & AXIS

The design proposals are located along the axis of the historical city centre, more specifically on the main street, to introduce an urban promenade. This street, called *la Grande Rue* connects indeed the two main squares *la Place Bonnyaud* and *la Place du Marché*.

It will regenerate the area thanks to the redesign of the squares using human scale as a tool by renovating a group of old and vacant buildings and their outdoor spaces, as well as creating a pavilion made out of local resources. These projects are using different scales and will try to respond to the weaknesses of this area that have been described earlier.



# 1. URBAN TOOLKIT

The strategies have been established through the SWOT and the analysis on public spaces. Six «urban tools» developed below and the following examples show the specific areas where the strategies are the most illustrated. All of them are based on the creation of social meeting points and the pedestrians' well-being.

That is inspired of the Architectural Acupuncture Theory which combines architecture, urbanism and the traditional practice of Chinese medicine called acupuncture. This theory considers the city as a living organism, where urban transformations, even small ones like the installation of a bench, could rebalance the whole urban fabric in town.

- 01 \_ PLANT IN-GROUND VEGETATION  
to transform the waterproof surface into in-ground vegetation
- 02 \_ ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY  
to promote the active mobilities and secure the pedestrian promenade
- 03 \_ ENHANCE THE HERITAGE  
to re-organise the urban furniture to highlight the architectural and the small heritage and create seats
- 04 \_ DEVELOP TERRACES  
to design spaces for restaurants' terraces, that allows pleasant and animated public spaces
- 05 \_ CONCEIVE FLEXIBLE SPACE FOR POP-UP EVENTS  
to have a special space and infrastructures for the weekly market
- 06 \_ RESPOND TO AN ARCHITECTURAL HETEROGENEITY DIALOG  
to develop a contemporary storefront language in *la Grande Rue*





1. MAP OF GUÉRET IN 1770  
 SOURCE : ARCHIVES DÉPARTEMENTALES DE GUÉRET (1770)

/ THE URBAN PROMENADE  
 - AN HISTORICAL LINK

This map of 1770 mentions the fortifications that used to protect the city. *La Grande Rue* path was already the main axis that connected the main doors from North to South. Today, the fortifications have completely disappeared but we can easily imagine them thanks to the dense urban fabric. Therefore, *la Grande Rue* has an historical meaning and is definitely a cultural heritage.

In 2019, the street has been closed to the cars, making it safer and nicer for pedestrians to walk on.



2. MAP OF GUÉRET TODAY

- P PARKING
- PREVIOUS FORTIFICATIONS
- BUILDINGS
- FOCUSED URBAN AREAS
- HISTORICAL MAIN DOORS
- URBAN PROMENADE





/ THE URBAN PROMENADE  
- NEW SPACES AND NEW ACTIVITIES



The strategy is to link the two squares *Place Bonnyaud* and *Place du Marché* by a green path with in-ground local vegetations. It will guide the promenade in the narrow city centre streets as well as it will promote local biodiversity. Pedestrian areas will be enlarged and one ground material will be used along the path.

- | SOCIAL         | COMMERCIAL         | EDUCATIONAL            |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| SEATINGS       | WEEKLY MARKET      | FRUIT TREES            |
| MEETING POINT  | BUSINESS INCUBATOR | HENHOUSE               |
| OPEN STAGE     | PUBLIC WORKSPACE   | IN-GROUND LOCAL PLANTS |
| CALM AREA      | RESTAURANTS / CAFÉ | NEW BIODIVERSITY       |
| SOCIAL CANTEEN | SECOND HAND STORE  | GARDEN                 |
|                | PARKING LOTS       | ATELIER                |
|                |                    | REPAIR CENTRE          |

/ PLACE BONNYAUD

*La Place Bonnyaud* is considered as the main square in the town. This is the largest one and the administrative entities are surrounding it. *Le marché* sets up there two days a week. Most of the time, the square is only used as a parking (the parking lots in the western part are paid ones).

Most of the square surface is used for cars, that is to say, roads and parkings lots. There is no seating on the square and the fountain is not highlighted. The buildings that are facing it are mainly banks and estate agencies.

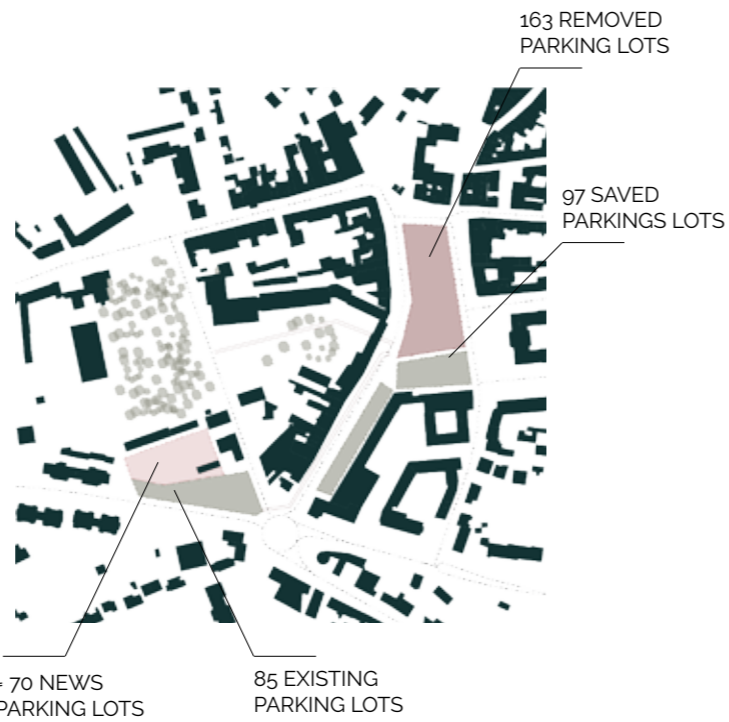
The weekly markets usually sets up in the middle of the square. The stands are grouped.

The map (figure 1.) beside shows the potential new private parking the municipality could get near, as well as existing ones that are not really used. They are at 220 meters from *Place Bonnyaud*, accessible from two paths.



2. PLACE BONNYAUD CURRENT SITUATION

→ NO SCALE  
N



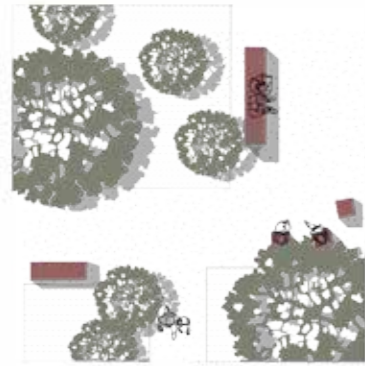
1. MAP OF PARKINGS LOTS RELOCATION

→ NO SCALE  
N

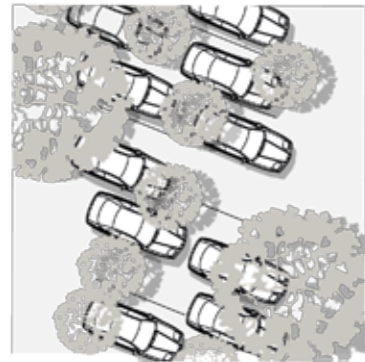


→ NO SCALE  
N

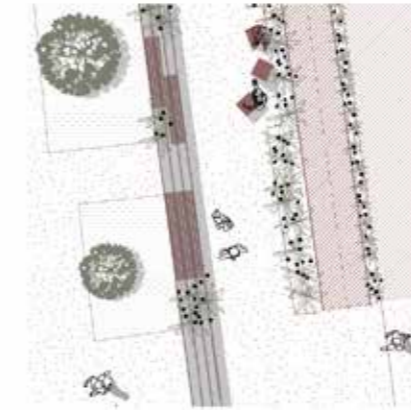
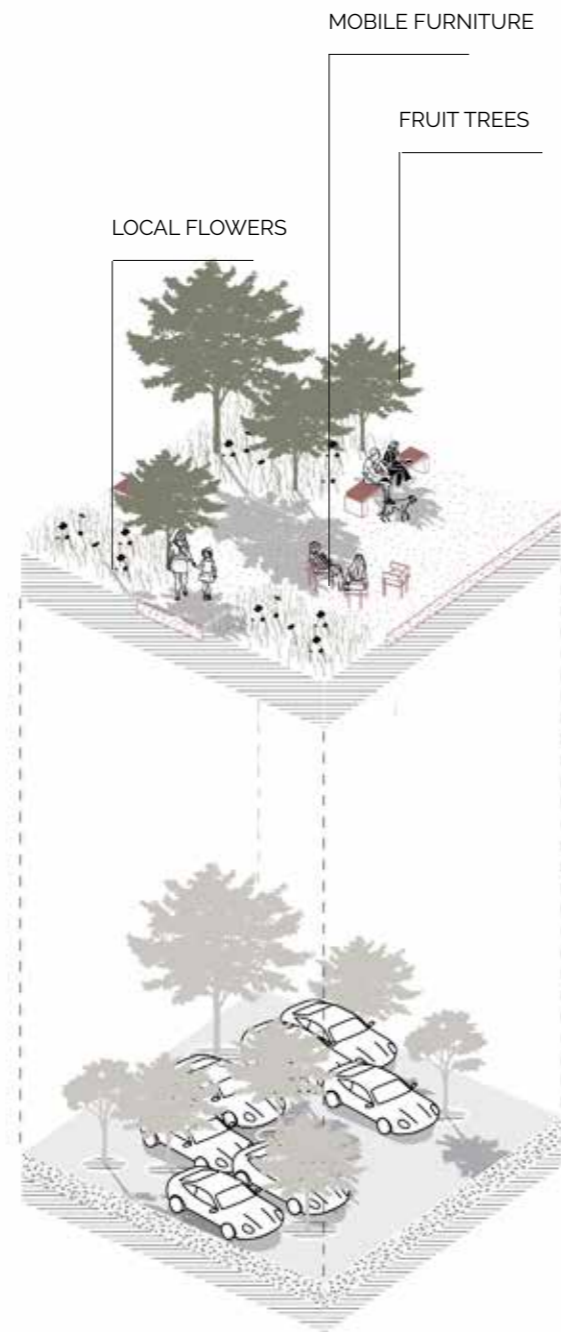
5 10 25 m



B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



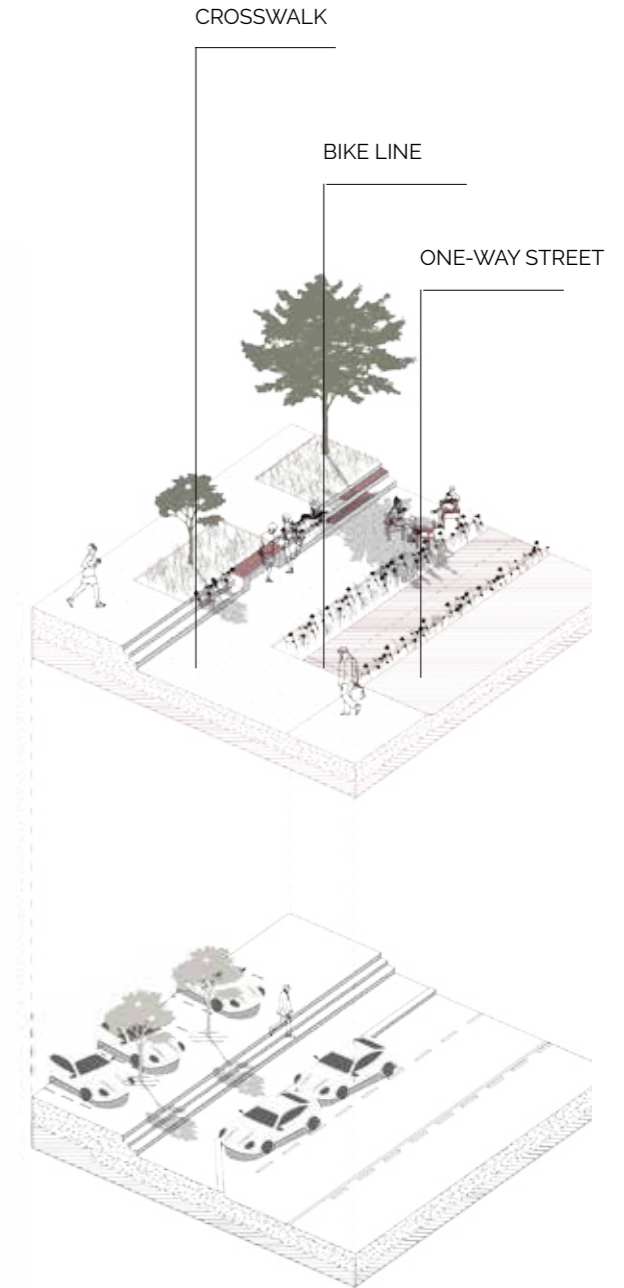
A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN



B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN

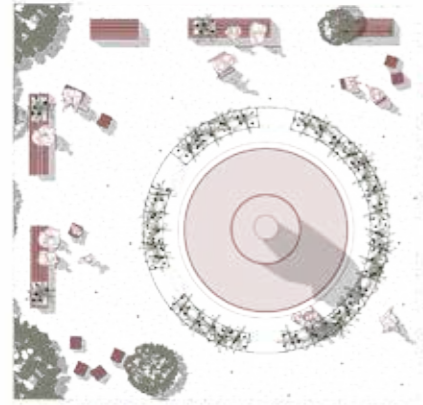


## 01. PLANT IN-GROUND VEGETATION

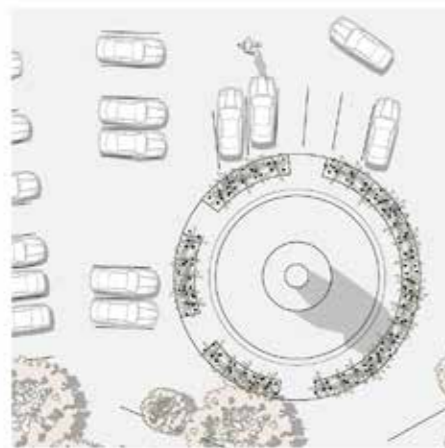
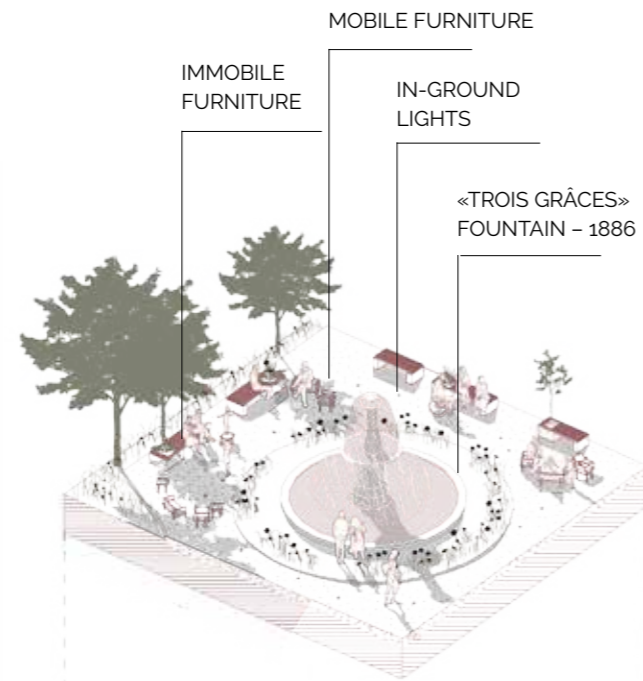
The lack of green spaces is obvious in the centre and reveals some dissonance with the countryside location of the city. Replacing asphalt with soil is an opportunity to put local plants and to promote the region biodiversity. These miniature meadows are establishing a real connection with the suburbs. Fruits trees are also planted to mark small destinations, as well as to create meeting points and interactions with the context.

## 02. ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

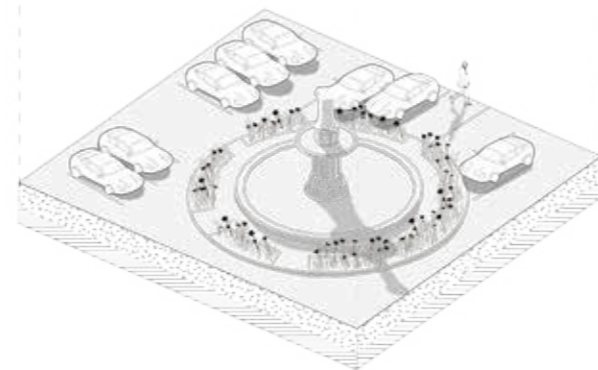
Currently, the car takes precedence in the city. This strategy does not blame this means of transportation but aims to support active mobility like walking or biking as the city has human scales distances. It also encourages strolls which are favourable to social interactions and shopping. The parkings lots are just moved to another place, 220 meters away.



B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN



### 03. ENHANCE THE HERITAGE

The centre has several cultural, architectural and also small heritage (mud scrapper, stone grain measures, etc.) that are not highlighted. They belong to the history of Guéret and its region and sketch the aspect of the town. The purpose of this strategy is to place the seatings oriented to these details in order for the inhabitants to (re) discover their city centre.



## / PLACE DU MARCHÉ

*La Place du Marché* is the historical centre. A covered market has been demolished forty years ago. Nowadays there is a parking lot. The buildings surrounding it have the typical architectural character of the town. Small shops such as a bakery, two cafés, a library and a pharmacy are framing it.

The strategy is to give back the space to pedestrians, in order to create a charming little space with plants and benches. The parking lots are removed but it exists three others around five minute walk.

There is a small fountain in the north of the square, called *Fontaine Piquerelle* made in 1859 where seatings will be installed.



1. PLACE DU MARCHÉ CURRENT SITUATION



2. PLACE DU MARCHÉ (CIRCA 1900)

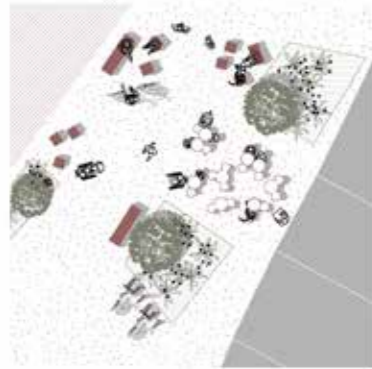
SOURCE : POSTCARD, RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.RIBOULET.INFO/INDEX.HTM](http://www.riboulet.info/index.htm)



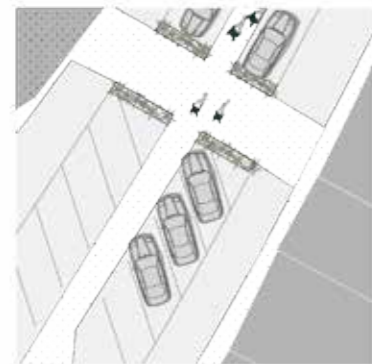
3. PLACE DU MARCHÉ TODAY

SOURCE : RETRIEVED [HTTPS://WWW.LAMONTAGNE.FR/](https://www.lamontagne.fr/)

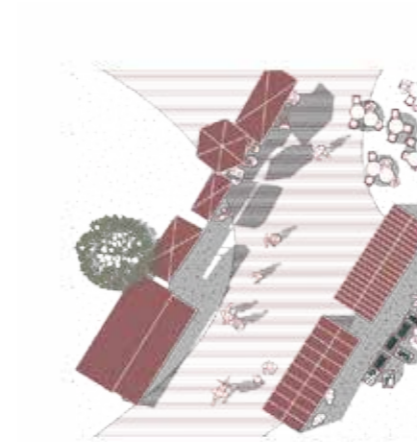
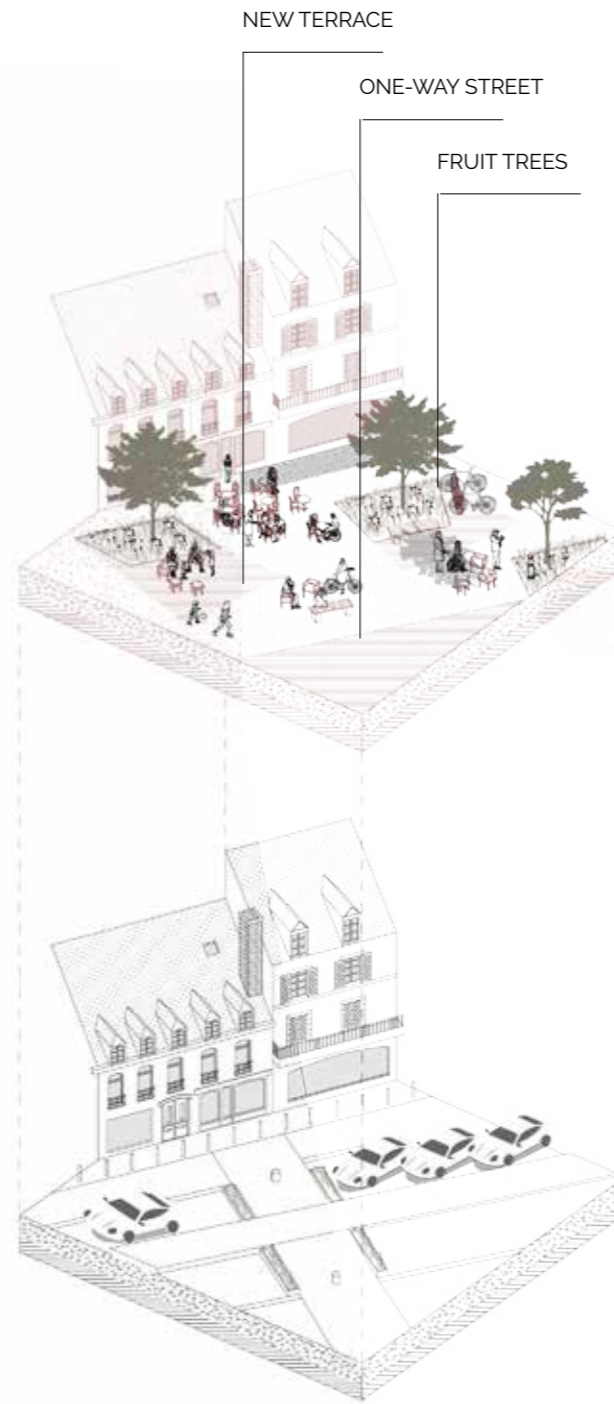




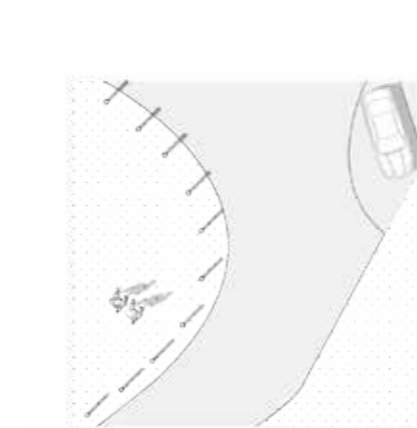
B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN



B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN



#### 04. DEVELOP TERRACES

The outside seating areas of the restaurants or bars are a crucial element to improve the social dynamics in the city centre. Only a few are placed along the sidewalks. The voices of people, sounds of cutlery and children laughs generate cheerful and festive atmosphere especially on tiny places like *Place du marché*.

#### 05. CONCEIVE FLEXIBLE SPACE FOR POP-UP EVENTS

The 'street culture' in France is strong and several times during the week, pop-up events like local markets settle in the public spaces. Seldom garage sale, fairs or village festivals rhythm the city life.

/ LA GRANDE RUE

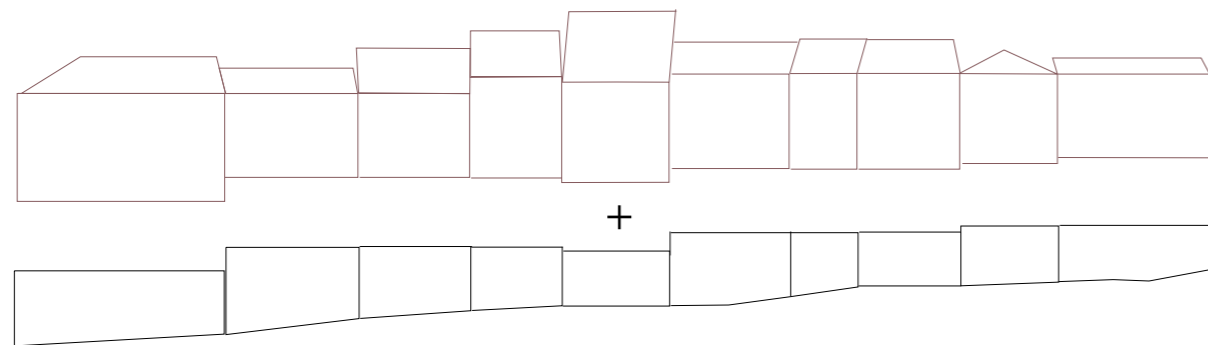
07. RESPOND TO AN ARCHITECTURAL HETEROGENEITY DIALOG

*La Grande Rue* is the main commercial street in the centre since Guéret was surrounded by fortifications. Last century, the storefronts were in wood and their names were hand-painted. It gave a harmony in the city. Nowadays, the strong contrast with the groundfloors and the upper parts of the buildings are due to the bad quality of wall covering (often white) and the lenient urban rules.

The strategy aims to use wood again but in a contemporary way. Wooden columns, thin and long, are aligned with each stores and with a different rhythm. They could have a structural aspect. In-ground plants, new lights and benches are placed in between stores to color and adorn the street and link *la Place du Marché* et *la Place Bonnyaud*. Specific reliefs are made on the ground to guide people with impaired vision.



A. GRANDE RUE ELEVATION



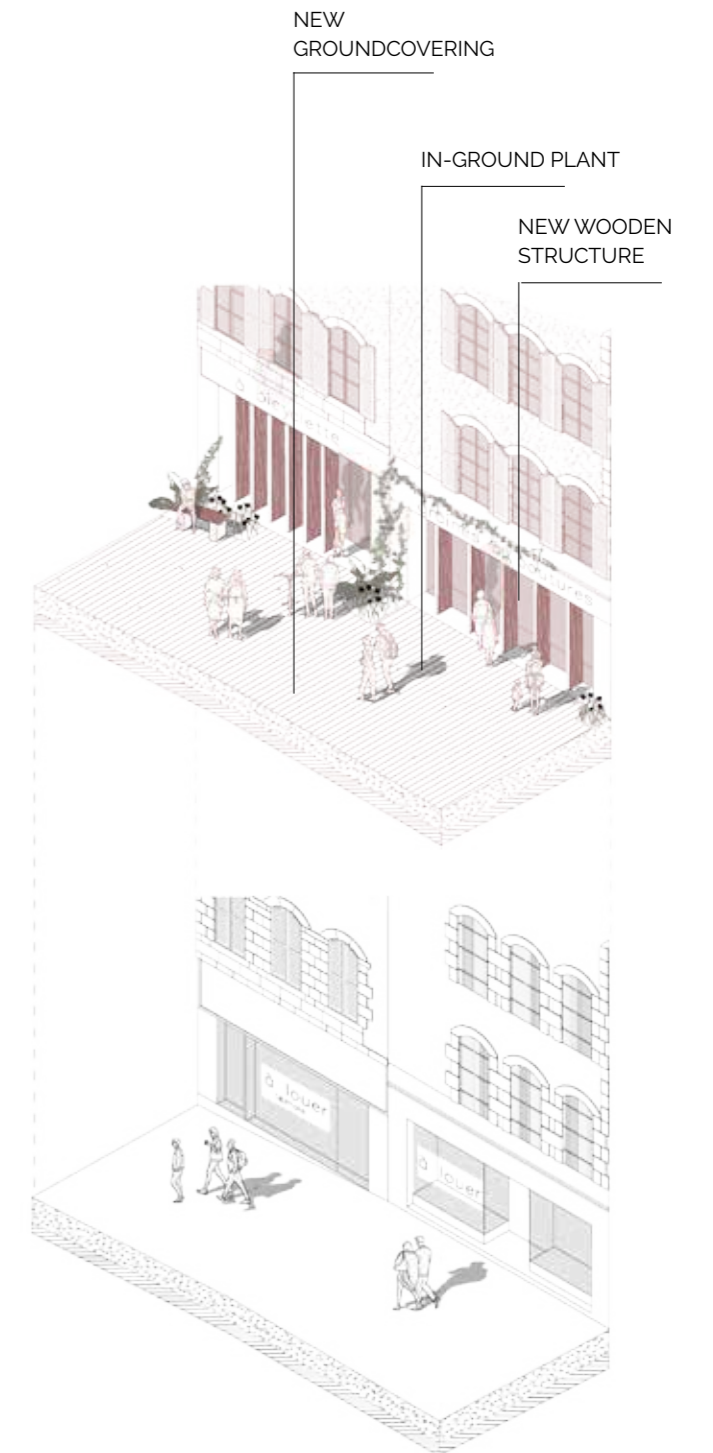
B. FACADES COMPOSITION



B. DESIGN PROPOSAL PLAN



A. CURRENT SITUATION PLAN





1. CURRENT FACADES 1:100



2. DESIGN PROPOSAL 1:100



1. CURRENT FACADES



2. DESIGN PROPOSAL





1. GRANDE RUE ( CIRCA 1905)

SOURCE : ALFRED DE NUSSAC RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.RIBOULET.INFO/G/G\\_CP/NUSSAC/NUSSAC\\_305A.JPG](http://www.riboulet.info/G/G_CP/NUSSAC/NUSSAC_305A.JPG)

On the postcard taken in the beginning of last century, we could see that the storefronts were wood panelled. The shops signs were hand-painted and all shops complemented each others in terms of merchandises, each one sold specific things. They were owned by a family so that we could associate the shop to a family name. This has disappeared with the commercial centres and the new patterns of consumption.



2. GRANDE RUE TODAY

SOURCE : PERSONAL PICTURE, 2019

Nowadays, *la Grande Rue* looks sad, unfriendly due to the unoccupied commercial cells and is aesthetically unappealing as a result of the colorful plastic storefronts. As it is the spine of the city centre, the priority is to give a harmony to them and create a real identity of the centre. As explained before, the strategy aims to reinterpret the storefront's heritage by using wooden columns to each shops. The upper parts of the facades will be enhanced thanks to the opacity that give the wooden columns with perspective.



3. DESIGN PROPOSAL GRANDE RUE



#### URBAN SPACES NIGHTLIFE

Today, the street is dimly lit. At night, the feeling of safety in the public spaces is crucial in the locals' well-being. But it is also an essential aspect when it comes to the definition of what makes the quality of living of a city.

The storefronts light up the street and the timber is thus emphasized.

One of the urban strategy is to guide walkers to both places thanks to landmarks : greenery, new ground treatment and built-in-ground lights. Due to the absence of light pollution in this region - far away from metropolises - we can admire the starry sky. It is the inspiration of the lights installation: a mirror on the ground.

It aims the inhabitants to remind the chance they have to enjoy a great sky view without any light pollution. They can benefit from being closer to the nature in comparison with the urban-dwellers.

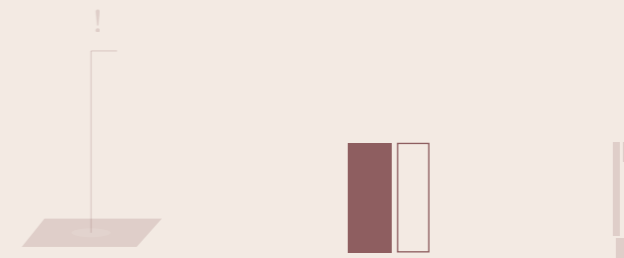
The small in-ground lights are densified near the heritage elements such as fountains or remarkable trees, in order to reveal them and raise the walker's curiosity.

## 2. REHABILITATION PROJECT

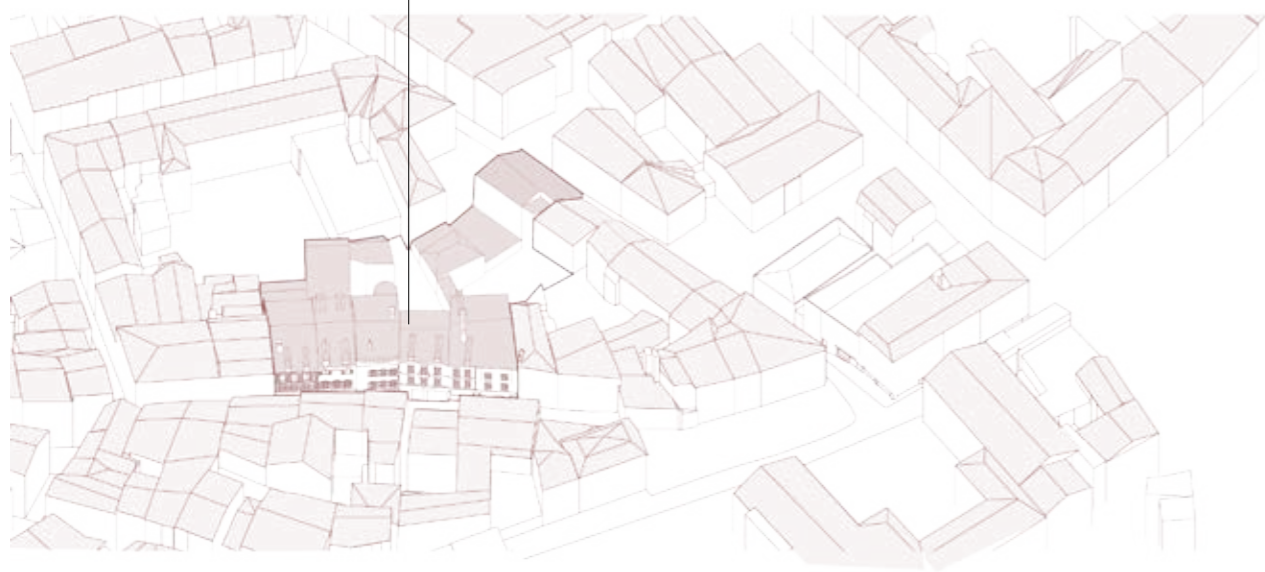
In 2019, a study for Planned Habitat Improvement Operation and Urban Renewal (*Opération programmée d'amélioration de l'habitat, OPAH-RU*) has been led by planners and experts to target groups of derelict buildings in the city centre. The block of Grande Rue belongs to the list of identified buildings.

This block is composed of seven buildings and their courtyards. Today of the seven shops, four are vacant and two were re-opened last summer (2019). According to the study only one dwelling is occupied. That is to say around 75% of the block is empty.

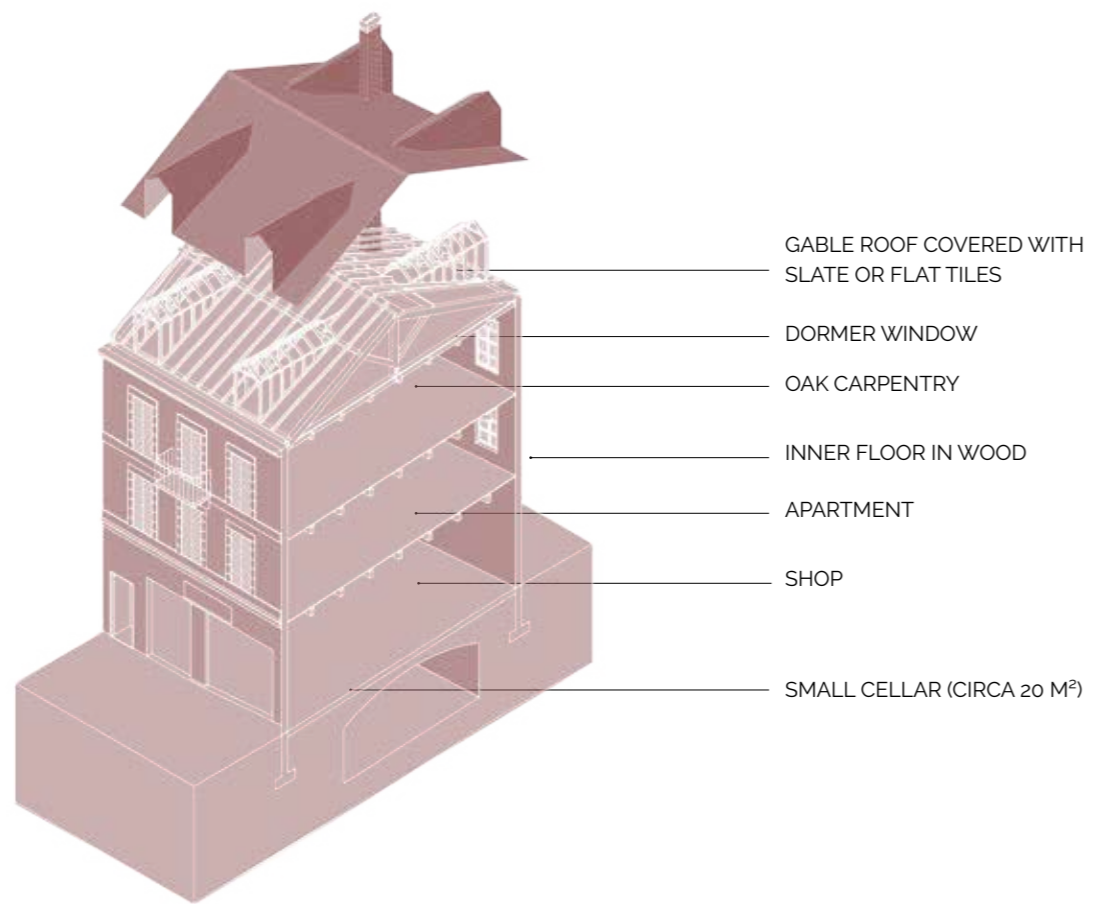
The typical conception of these buildings is : a shop on the groundfloor and apartments above. There is no private access to the housing because the owner of the shop lives upstairs. The norm is: one building has one dwelling. The dormers windows indicate that the attic was also occupied as living rooms.



BLOCK GRANDE RUE



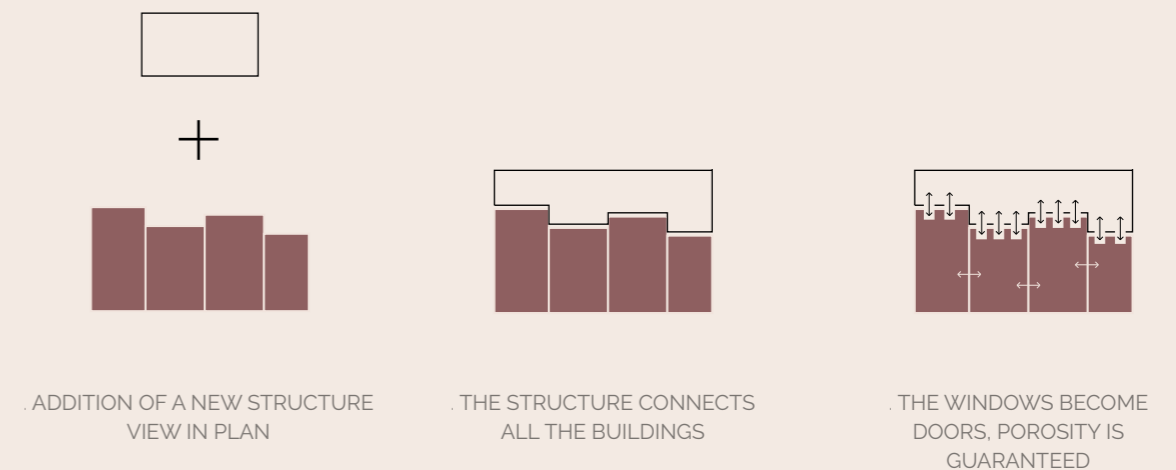
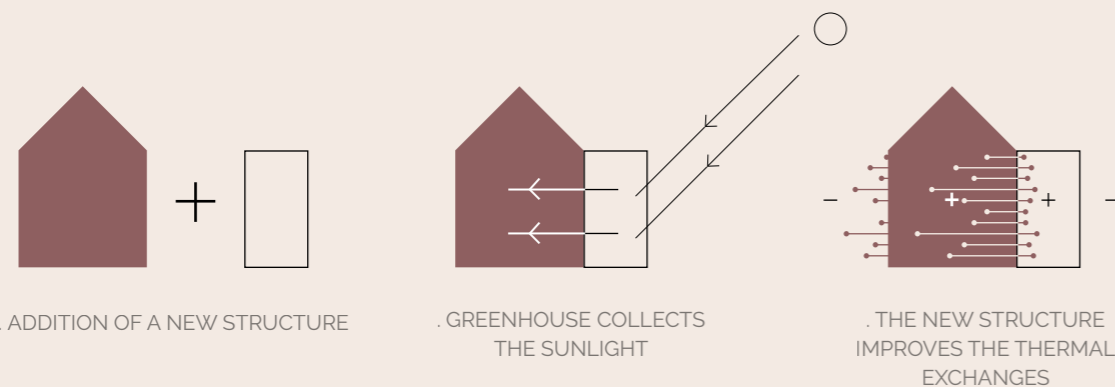
1. BLOCK GRANDE RUE IN ITS CONTEXT



2. TYPICAL BUILDING CONCEPTION







## / TRANSFORMATION CONCEPT

The idea is to match the group of buildings in their appearance (using wooden panels, refurbishment of facade, wooden shutters) but also in term of spaces.

A wooden self-standing structure is designed and is joined to the backyard facades. It links all the buildings with simple circulations but it also helps the energy efficiency. In winter, the old part has bad thermal exchanges. As the structure is facing East and is in glass, the structure improves the energy and the comfort. During summer, together with the roofwindows, a cross ventilation is possible.

The structure is simply joined to the facade, heavy structural changes are then avoided.

The main vertical circulation is carried out by the spiral staircases in massive stone. Those staircases have a strong identity and the contrast with the new light structure established a dialogue between contemporary aspect (light and transparent) and the heritage's one (massive and opaque). Some of the inner staircases are used for safety and some others are deleted.

## / SPACES USES

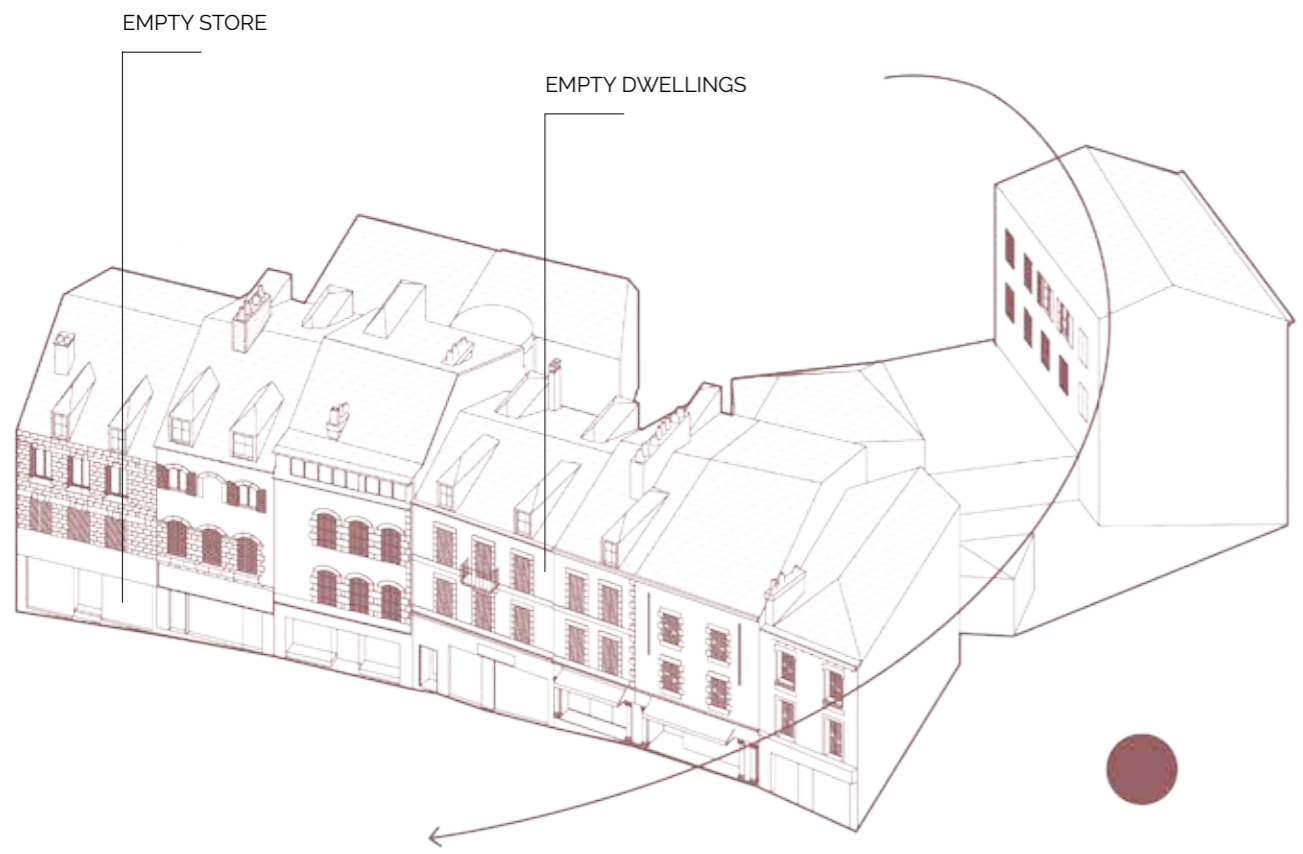
The light structure are adapted to the morphology of the buildings in the backyard.

The horizontal circulations are done by the windows that are enlarged to create doors so the flows are well-balanced in the whole building. The heavy structural walls are sparsely cut to increase the inner porosity in order to create circulations.

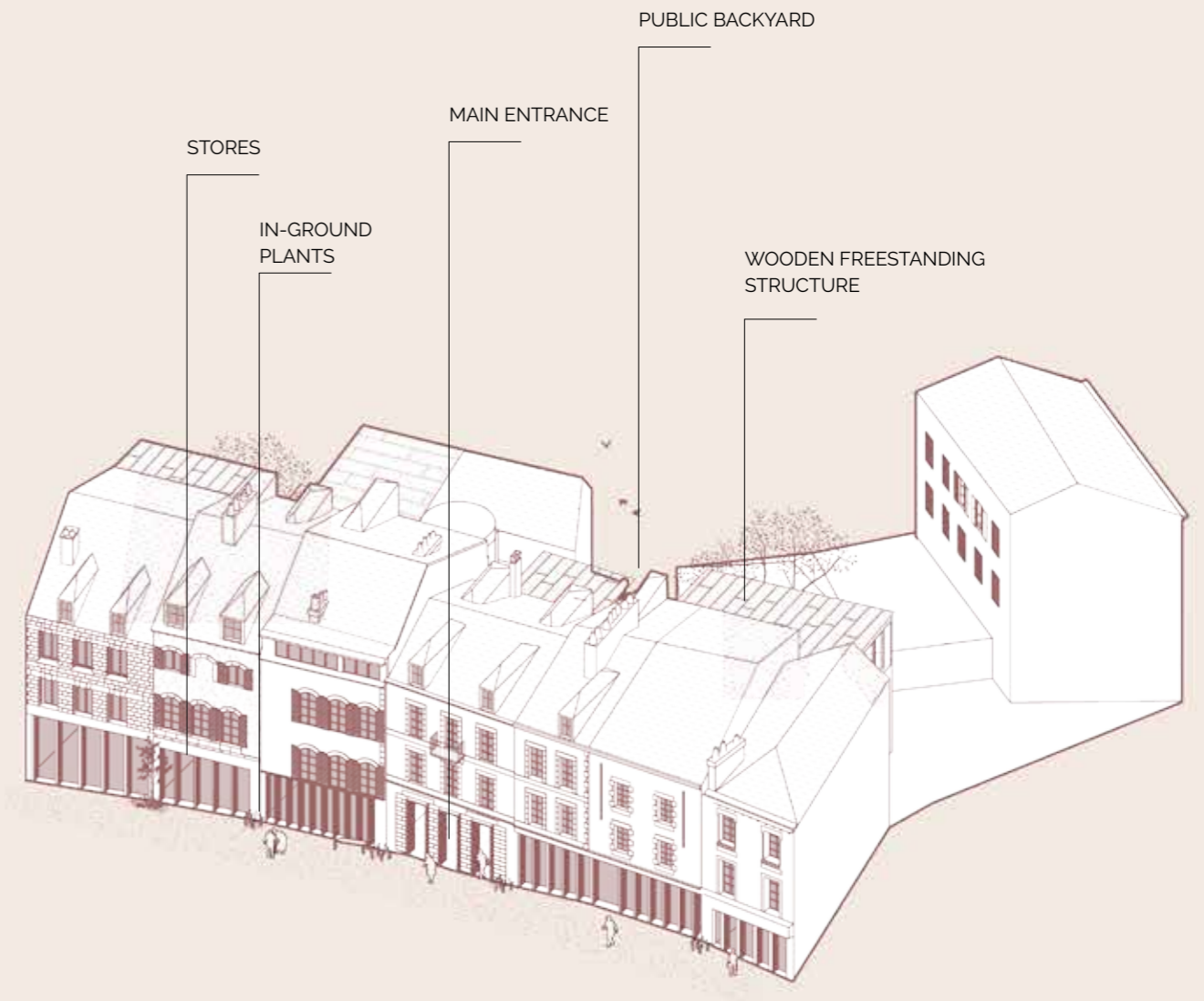
The large windows of the new structure are totally openable, offering then terraces with view on the garden. When they are closed, the spaces

create a winter garden.

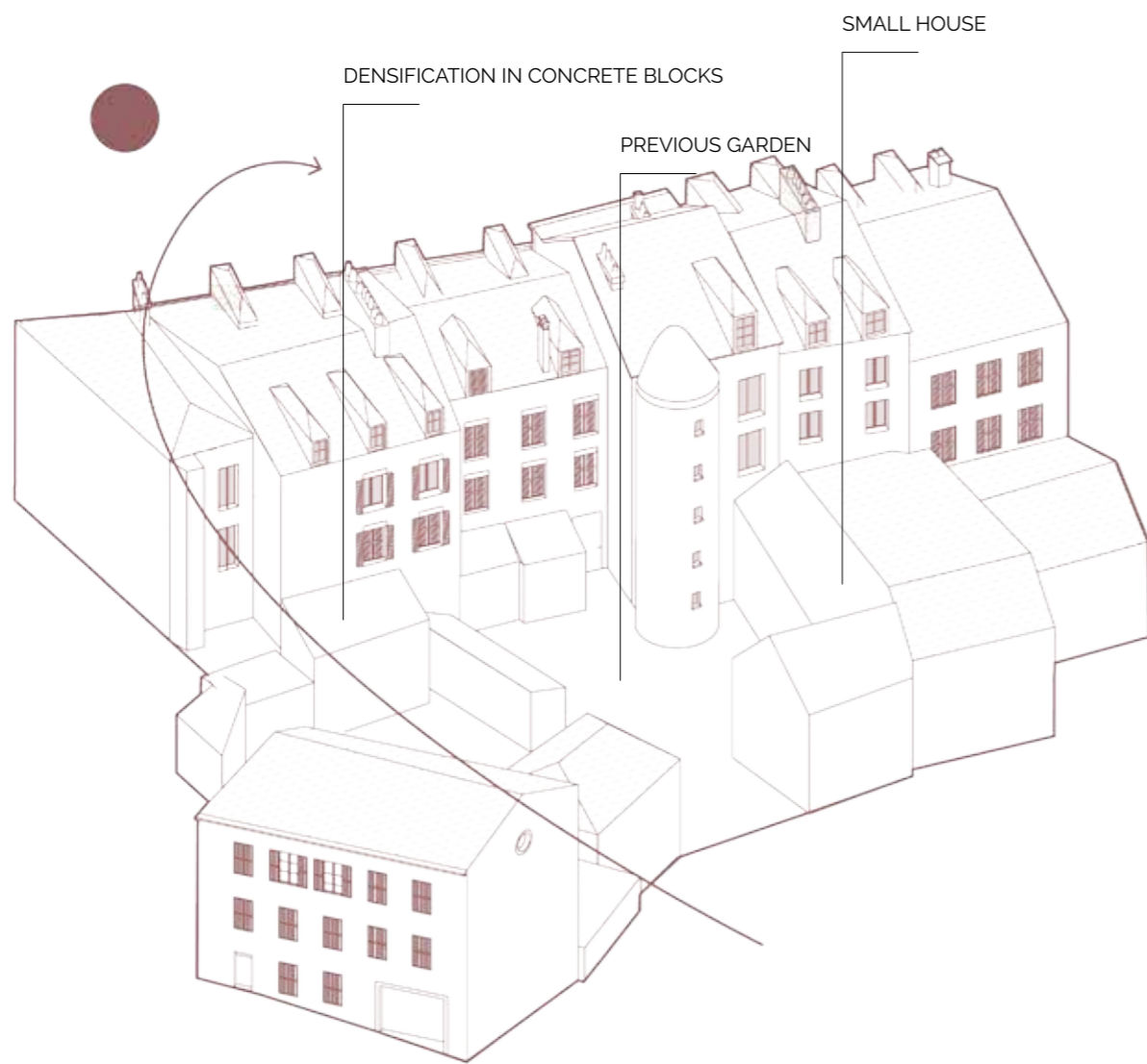
The project is considering the buildings as objects with shells that we break through. Spaces are interconnected inside and from outside, all their architectural characteristics are kept. The notions of inside-outside are also explored thanks to this new structure that acts as a buffer zone.



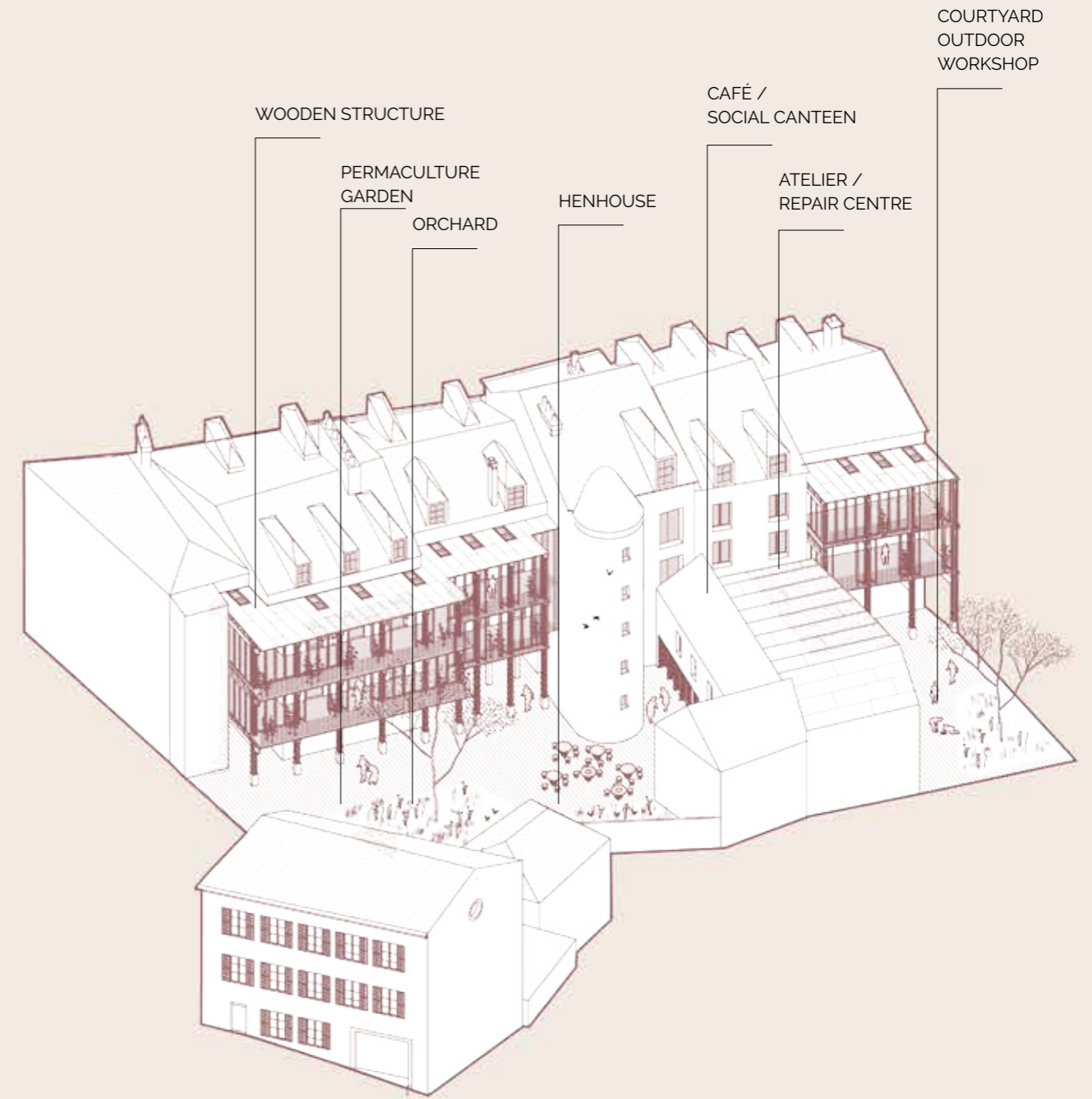
1. FRONT AXONOMETRY  
- TODAY



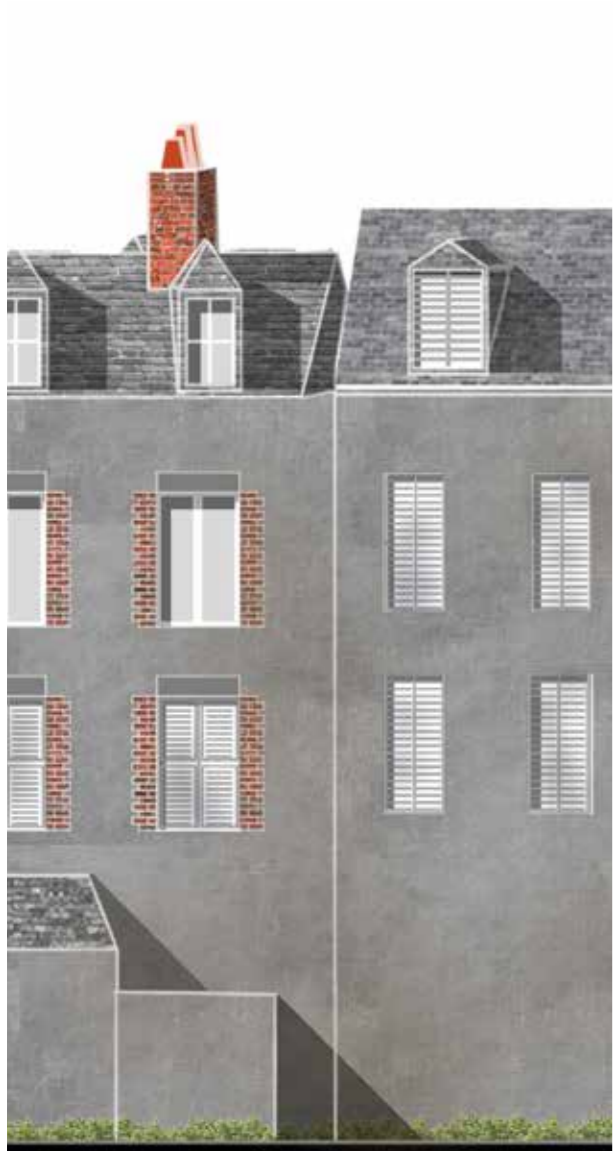
2. FRONT AXONOMETRY  
- DESIGN PROPOSAL



1. BACKYARD AXONOMETRY  
- TODAY



2. BACKYARD AXONOMETRY  
- DESIGN PROPOSAL



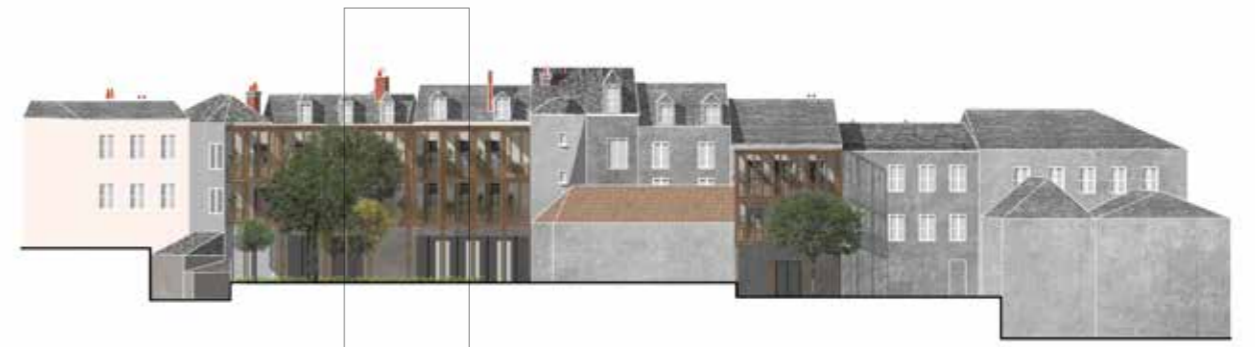
1. CURRENT FACADES 1:100



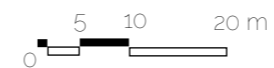
2. DESIGN PROPOSAL 1:100

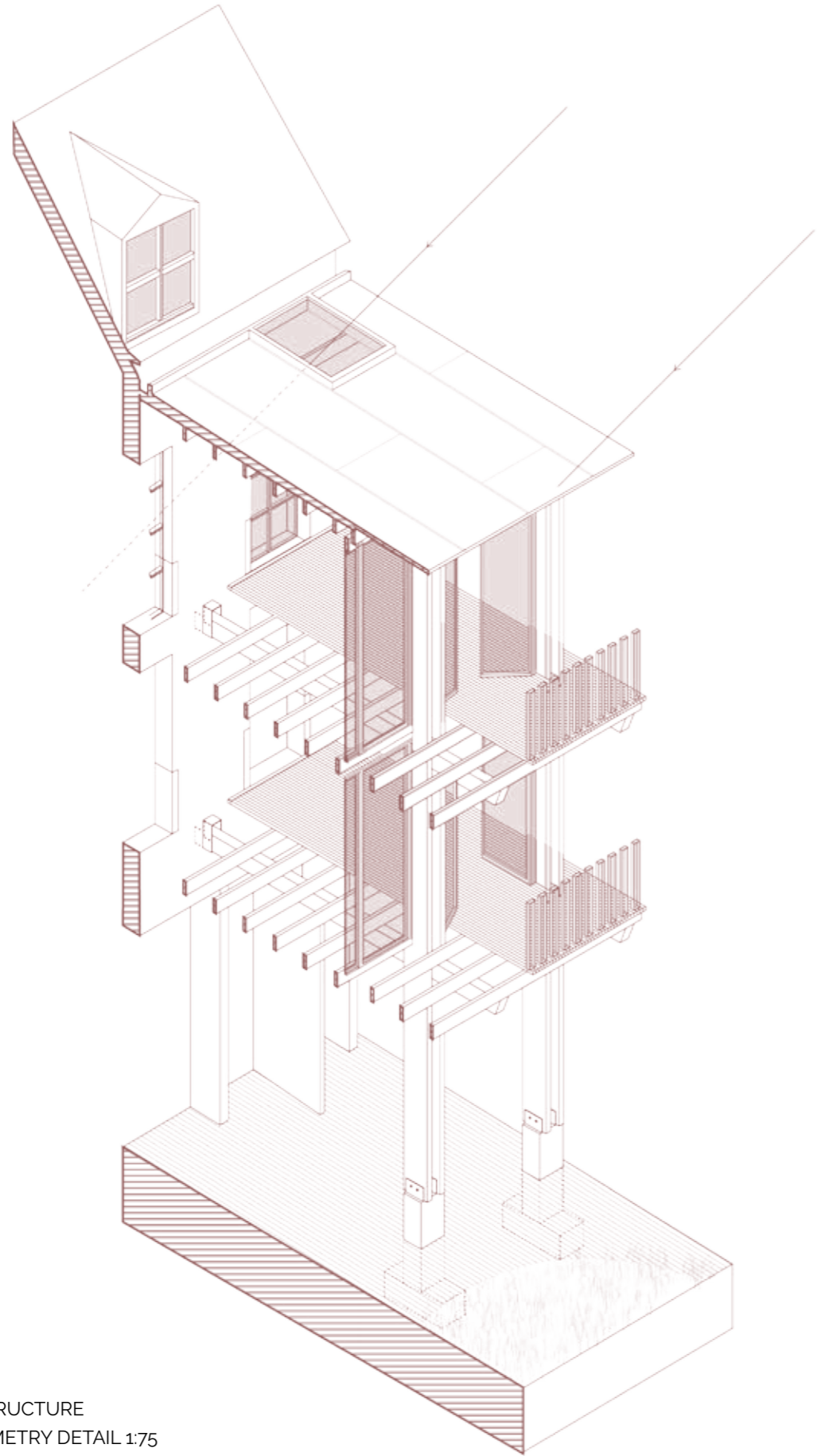


1. CURRENT FACADES



2. DESIGN PROPOSAL

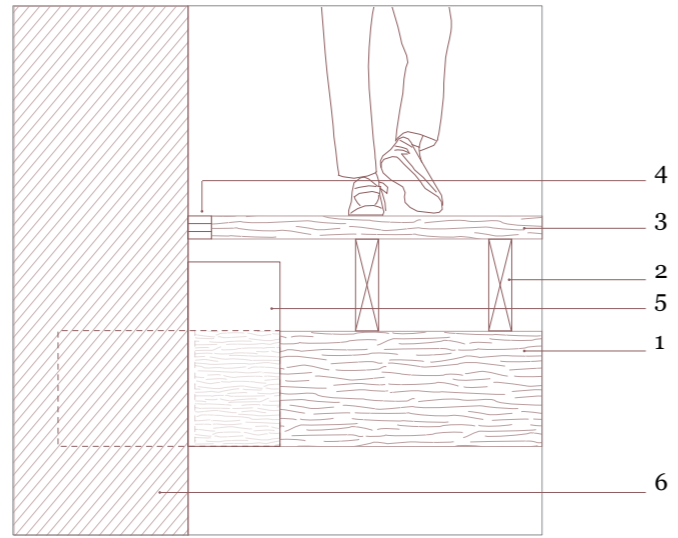




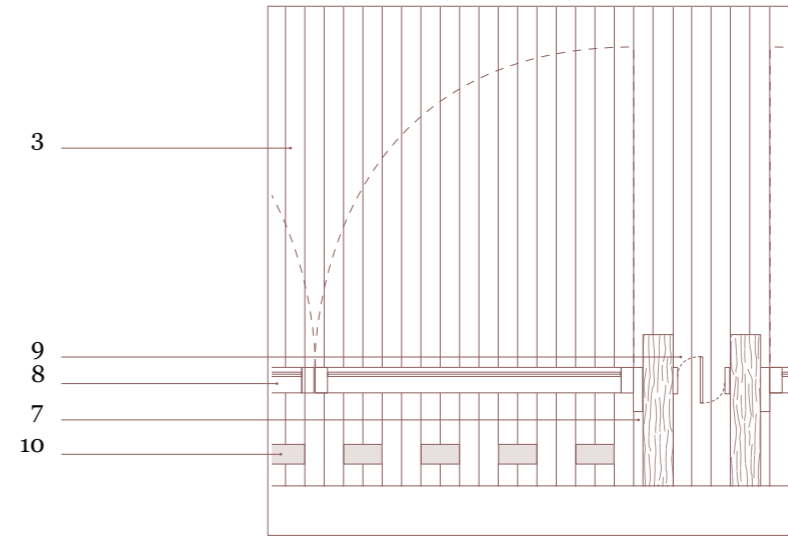
NEW STRUCTURE  
AXONOMETRY DETAIL 1:75



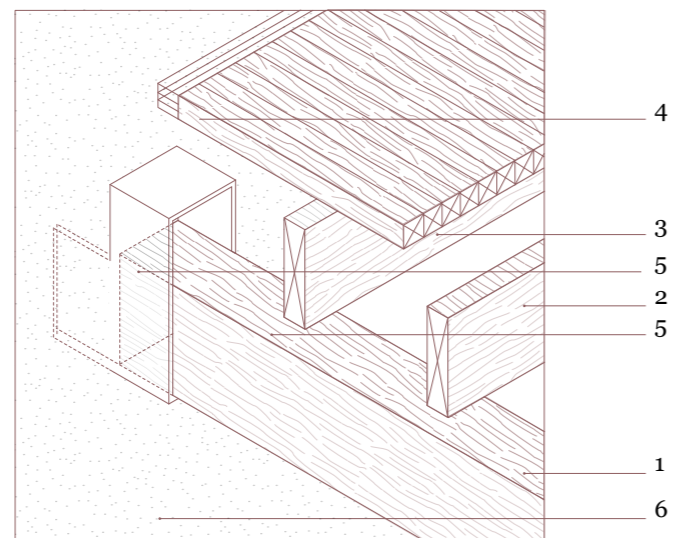
EAST FACADE  
ELEVATION DETAIL 1:20



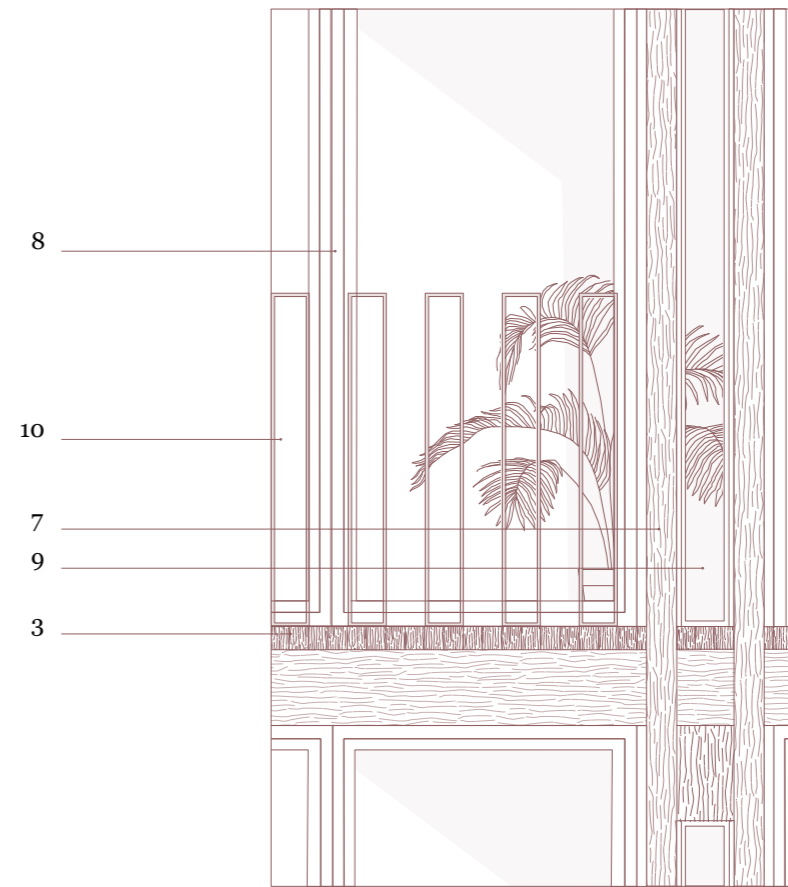
INNER FLOOR  
SECTION DETAIL 1:20



INNER FLOOR  
PLAN DETAIL 1:20

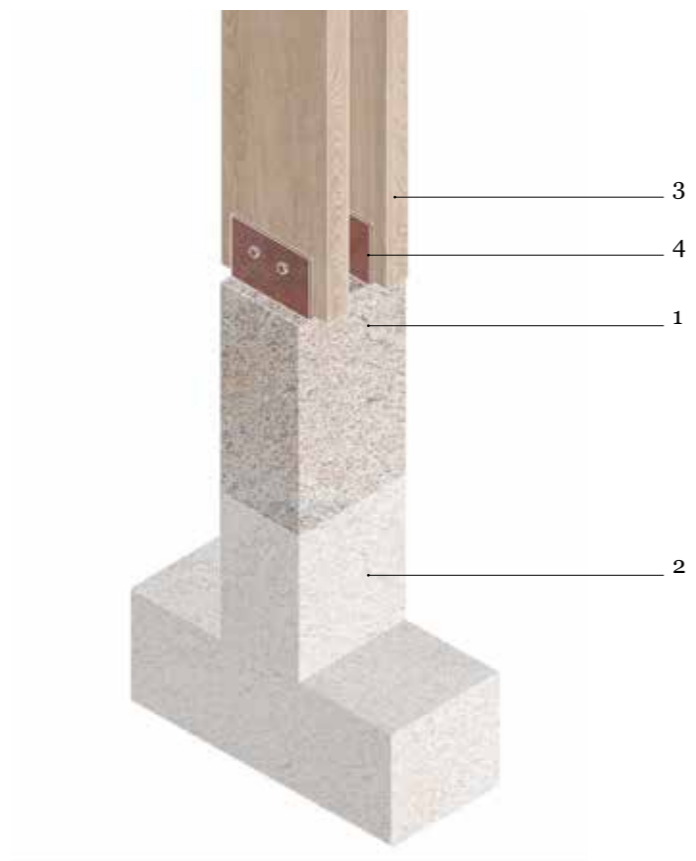


INNER FLOOR  
AXONOMETRY DETAIL 1:20



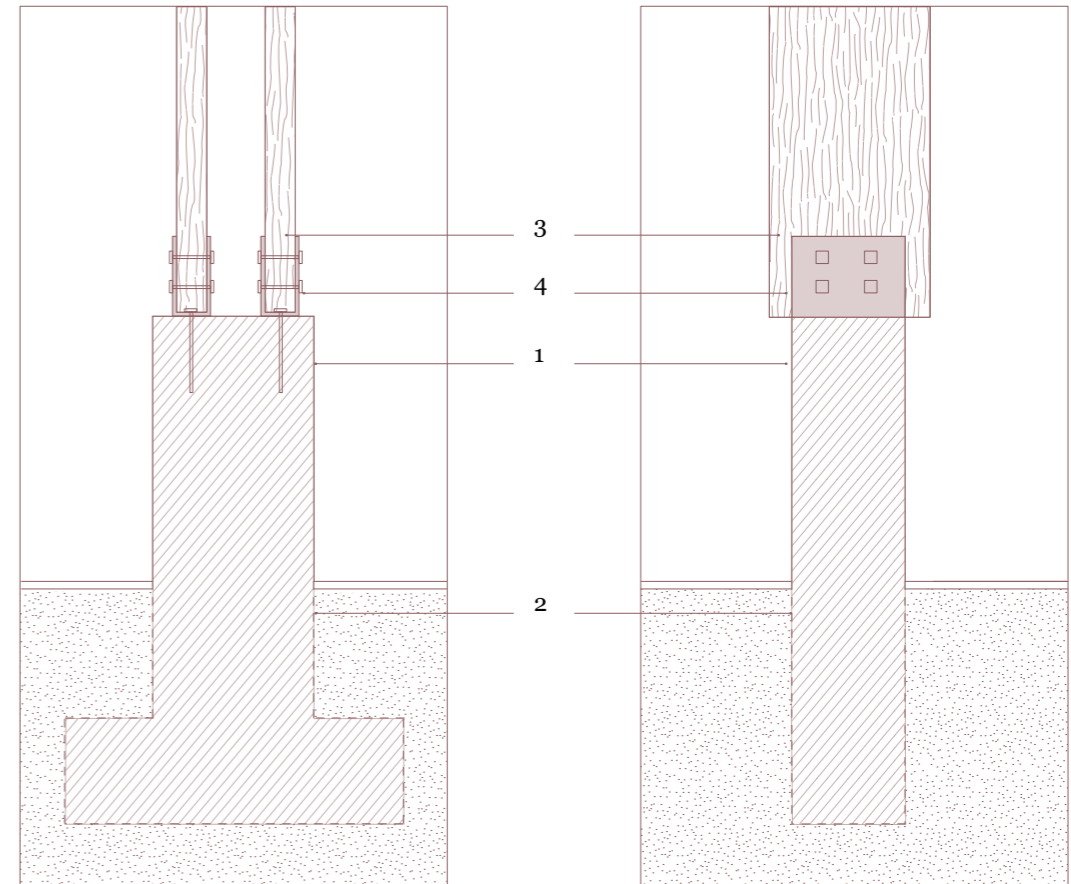
FACADE  
ELEVATION DETAIL 1:20

- |   |                               |    |                            |
|---|-------------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 1 | beam (oak) - 150 x 250 x 5100 | 6  | existing wall in stone     |
| 2 | joist (oak) - 50 x 200 x n    | 7  | pillar (pine) 80 x 400 x n |
| 3 | flooring (oak) - 50 x 50 x n  | 8  | openable windows           |
| 4 | detail in glass - 50 x 50 x n | 9  | vertical pivot window      |
| 5 | built-in wall metal piece     | 10 | railing (steel)            |



PILLARS  
AXONOMETRY DETAIL 1:20

- 1 stone (granite) 400 x 300 x 700
- 2 foundations
- 3 wooden pillards (pine) - 80 x 400 x 3400
- 4 metal piece (steel)



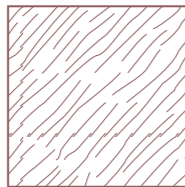
PILLARS  
SECTION DETAIL 1:20

DETAIL PILLARS  
ELEVATION 1:20

## THE MATERIALS USED



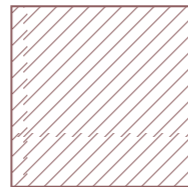
OAK AND PINE  
LOCAL TIMBER



This material is reminiscent of traditional building techniques, such as the wood work found in the attics. These varieties of wood are strong and sustainable: they sequester carbon and have the potential to be reused in the long term. Local builders are expected to be commissioned to build the new structures. The light color of the chosen wood reflects natural light and contributes to a lovely interior atmosphere.



GRANITE  
LOCAL STONE



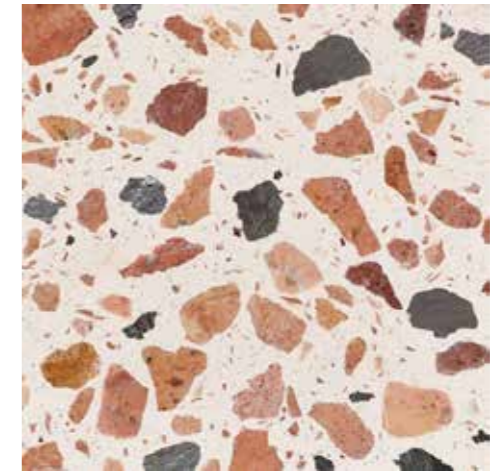
The region is characterised by massive construction. We can find several quarries nearby Guéret. In combination with the oak, the granite will establish a contemporary dialog with the heritage of the surroundings. Huge blocks of stone support the light structure, like a metaphor of 'building from heritage'. It keeps and enhances the local masonry business.



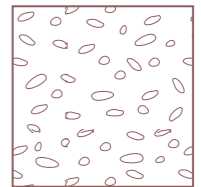
WEATHERING  
STEEL  
METAL JOINS



Wood and stone are linked by thin details in steel. This material constitutes the contemporary aspect but is treated to have a rough surface like the bio-based ones. The hierarchy of material is important, that is why the steel is only used for the joins and the small elements like the railings.



TERRAZZO  
FROM  
WASTE MATERIAL



The transformation project of the buildings in *La Grande Rue* implies a renovation of the old tiles and slates of the roofs. These amounts of materials considered as waste, are to be smashed into small pieces to composed new type of material, the terrazzo. It will be used for the floor covering and some furniture surfaces like tables and benches. The realisation can be a participatory process with inhabitants, in order for them to learn and be involved in the centre city's renewal project.

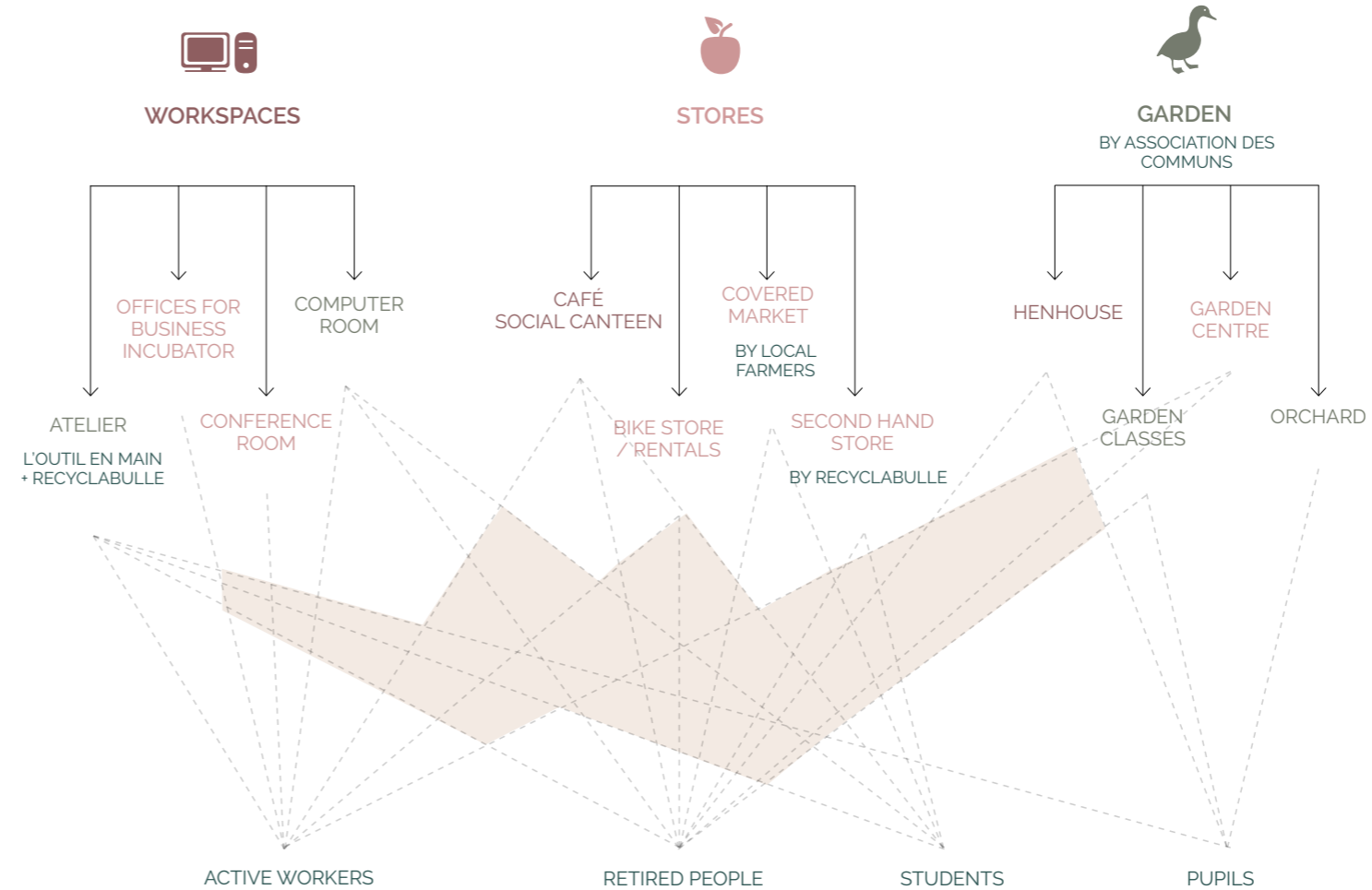


# PROGRAMS

The programs are developed from the SWOT analysis and the interviews. The results pointed out that some activities are missing in the centre like a grocery shop, greenery spaces for freshness or a canteen for the students. The associations are not really visible in the town so the project offers them workspaces shared with new entrepreneurs allowing proactive collaborations in order to create a business incubator.

As the social mix is lacking and the local resources are rich, the programs intend to gather them to create social interactions between elderly, workers and students thanks to the atelier, the workshops, the winter garden, the permaculture garden, the social canteen, the different classes and events and also thanks to the henhouse that enables to have a link between the agriculture - identity of the region - and the city. It gives life and is favourable for talks.

All of the programs are gathered in this rehabilitation project and all of them are interacting with each other, creating a real synergy.



## 1. PROGRAM INTERCONNECTIONS

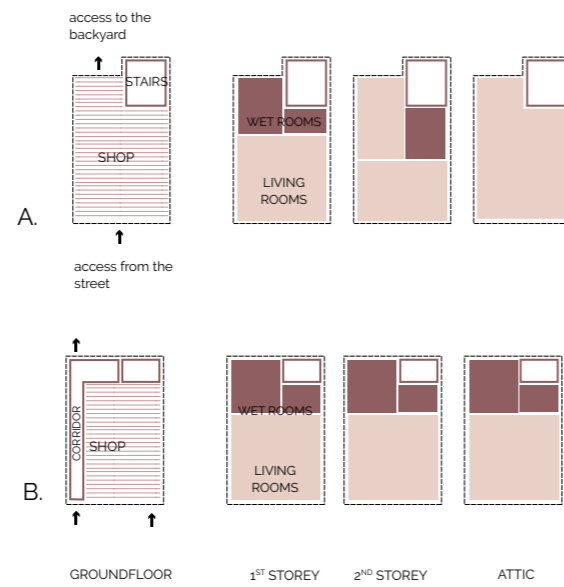
STAKEHOLDERS   SOCIAL   COMMERCIAL   EDUCATIONAL

## THE GROUND FLOOR

Nowadays, the buildings are inaccessible since they are empty for decades. Nevertheless, thanks to the pictures, the historical books on the typical constructive methods in the region, the plans on site and the land register, the groundfloors can be re-drawn.

According to Planned Habitat Improvement Operation and Urban Renewal (*Opération programmée d'amélioration de l'habitat, OPAH-RU*), one building corresponds to one dwelling as there is no private entrance from the street.

Therefore, in the overall layout, staircases are pushed to the bottom of the volume whereas the storefront is aligned to *la Grande Rue*. On the upper floors, the living rooms overlook the street, the wet rooms (kitchen and bathrooms) face the backyard.



1. DIAGRAMS OF INNER LAYOUT  
NO PRIVATE ENTRANCE (A)  
WITH A PRIVATE ENTRANCE (B)



2. GROUND FLOOR CURRENT PLAN  
↖ N 1,300

## NEW PROGRAMS FOR THE GROUND FLOOR

The new plans for the ground floor are commercial ones. They are cheese dairy shop, fish shop and a greengrocer's shop (sells the backyard crops) because there is currently none of these in the centre. The new bakery is specialized in the manufacture of the traditional cake of the region, *le creusois*. This bakehouse is open, in order for people to see the steps of the recipe.

Near the entrance, a garden centre sells the seeds and cuttings of plants from the permaculture garden in the courtyard. A lot of inhabitants have their own tiny crop and usually buy seeds in the large supermarkets. The permaculture will be lead by *Association des Communs* who promote the gardening and the social sustainability. Their offices can be settle upstairs. Garden classes could also be organised as well as small workshops to learn the local biodiversity of the region. Local farmers can come and explain their job to have more interactions between them and the inhabitants.

A bike store is also established here, to buy or to rent for a short period. There is no bike store in the centre, but four are located in Guéret. This one is connected to a community atelier where bikes can be repaired as well as small objects for free, organised by *Recyclabulle*, an association

who revalues old objects. *Recyclabulle* is located outside the city so the premises next to the atelier can be their showroom. The association *L'Outil en Main* who organised DIY classes between retired people and pupils can use this large space. The small outdoors space could be used as a summer workshop. The local students learning the building trade can share their skills with the public.

The small café offers traditional dishes in a contemporary way with the local products. The cooks can benefit from social reintegration and customers could discover typical food from all around the world.

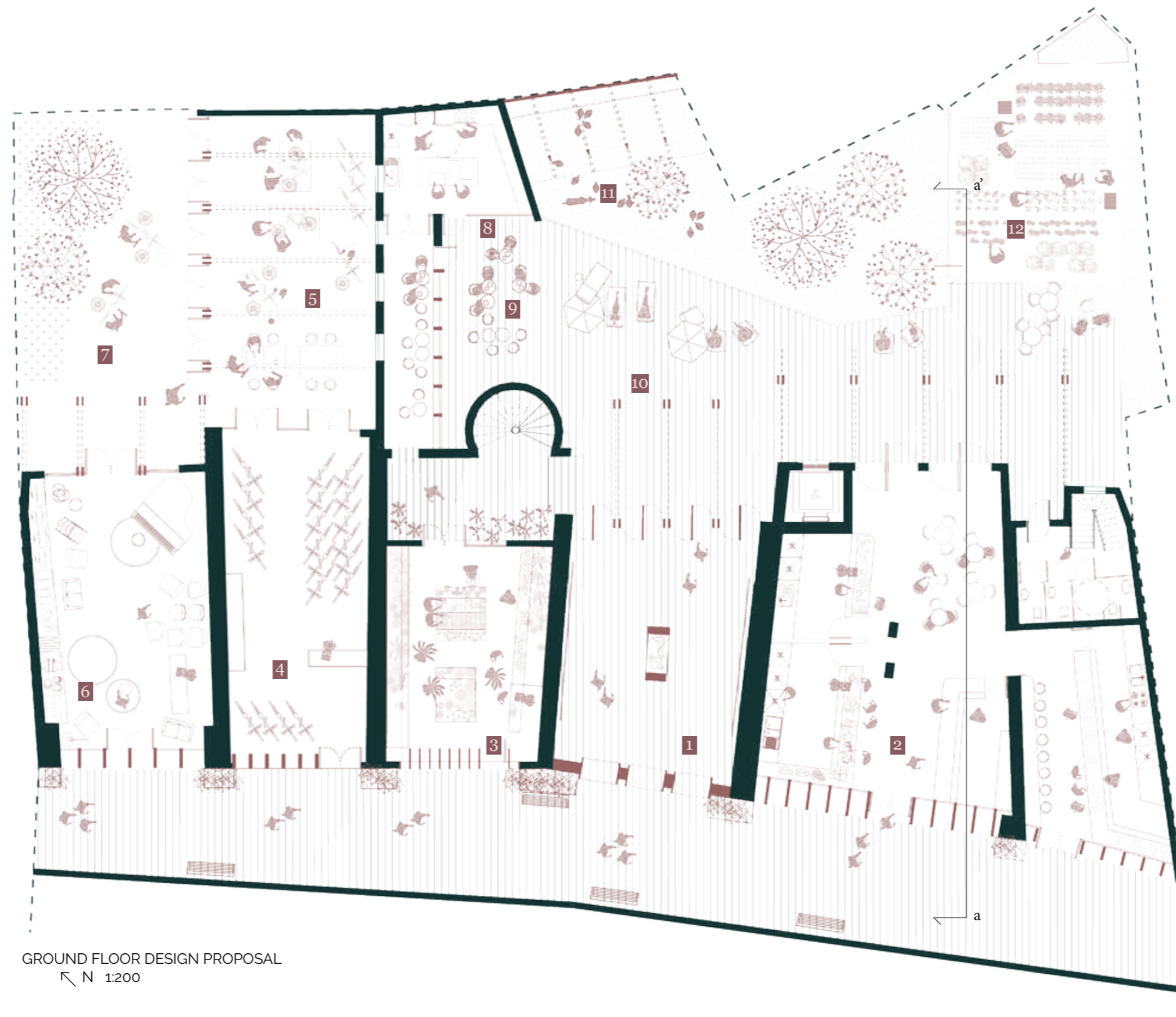
The terrace is facing the henhouse where a few fowls raises curiosity and makes a link with the local agricultural heritage. We can sunbath in the backyard, eat small lunch or *pâtisseries* and enjoy vegetation freshness during warm summers.

The main entrance is a porch with temporary art exhibition and historical informations about the city centre. Artificial lights from the solar panels on the roofs will highlight them and be designed to create a peaceful atmosphere.

This courtyard is public with a free access to the garden and floors.



VEGETABLES HARVESTING  
IN THE PERMACULTURE GARDEN IN THE BACKYARD



GROUND FLOOR DESIGN PROPOSAL  
 ↖ N 1:200

- |   |   |    |  |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | main entrance - art exhibition                                      | 7  | summer workshop area                                   |
| 2 | covered market  | 8  | (shared) kitchen                                       |
| 3 | garden centre store   | 9  | café   |
| 4 | bike store  | 10 | public terrace   |
| 5 | workshop - community atelier ( <i>L'outil en main association</i> ) | 11 | henhouse   |
| 6 | second-hand shop ( <i>Recyclabulle showroom</i> )                   | 12 | permaculture garden ( <i>Association des Communs</i> ) |

## NEW PROGRAMS FOR THE UPPER FLOORS

Today, the apartments are unoccupied. As the housing market is not saturated, there is no need to refurbish the dwellings to create new ones. In this way, the upper floors are transforming residential spaces into indoor spaces open to everyone.

On the first floor, a canteen is open to the students and to anyone in need thanks to the affordable food prices. The meals are cooked with local and seasonal products. The new offices of *Association des Communs* is next to it as well as computer rooms. IT classes are organised, printers and scanners are also available.

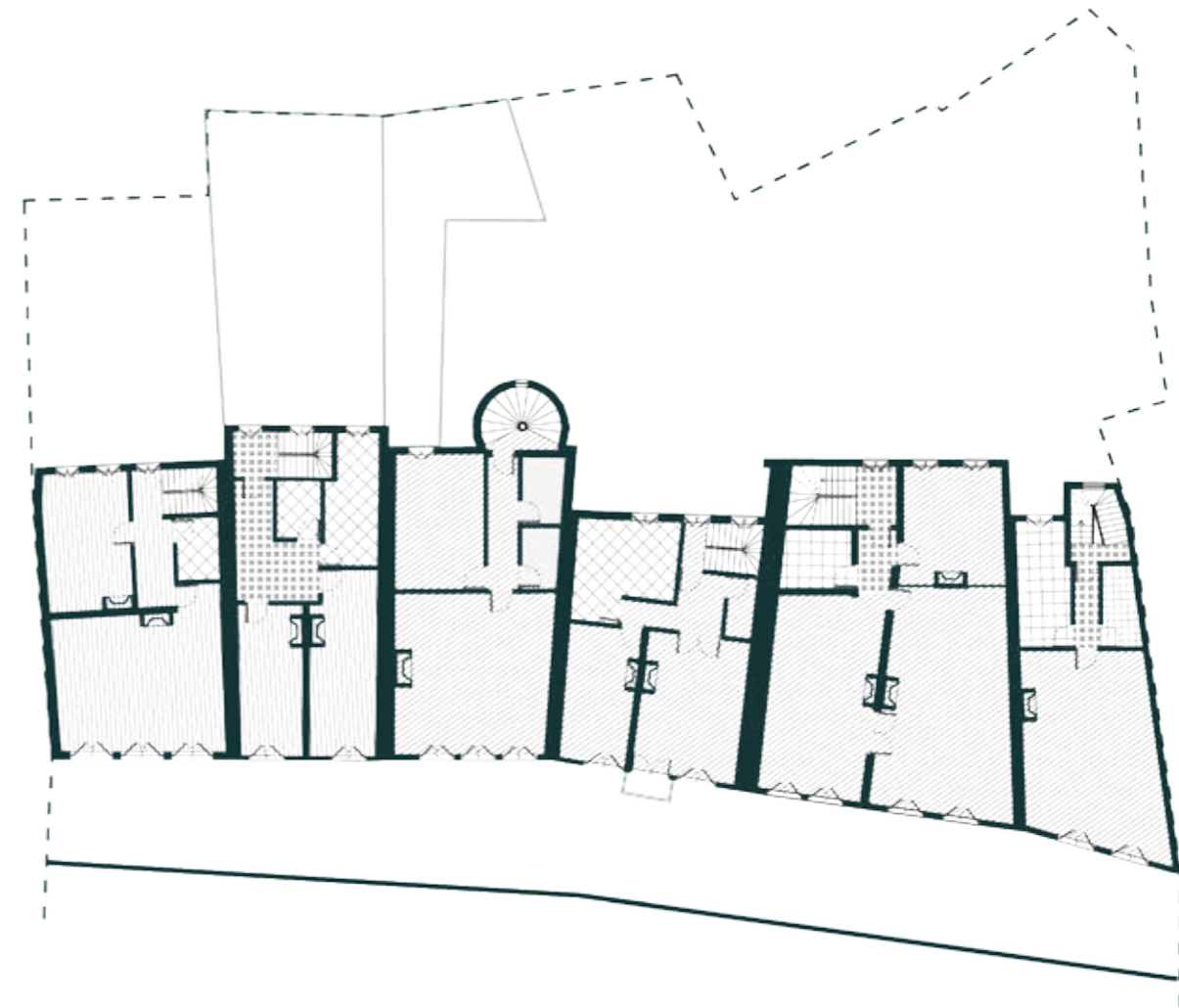
On the second floor, a public workspace is available with a wifi connection. Anyone can come and work from its computer during an unlimited period. Business incubator offers low rental workspaces for start-up. New entrepreneurs can enjoy experts support with economical

and business plans courses. The high-speed connection allows them to reach a national influence and be in relation with big cities. It also promotes the teleworking.

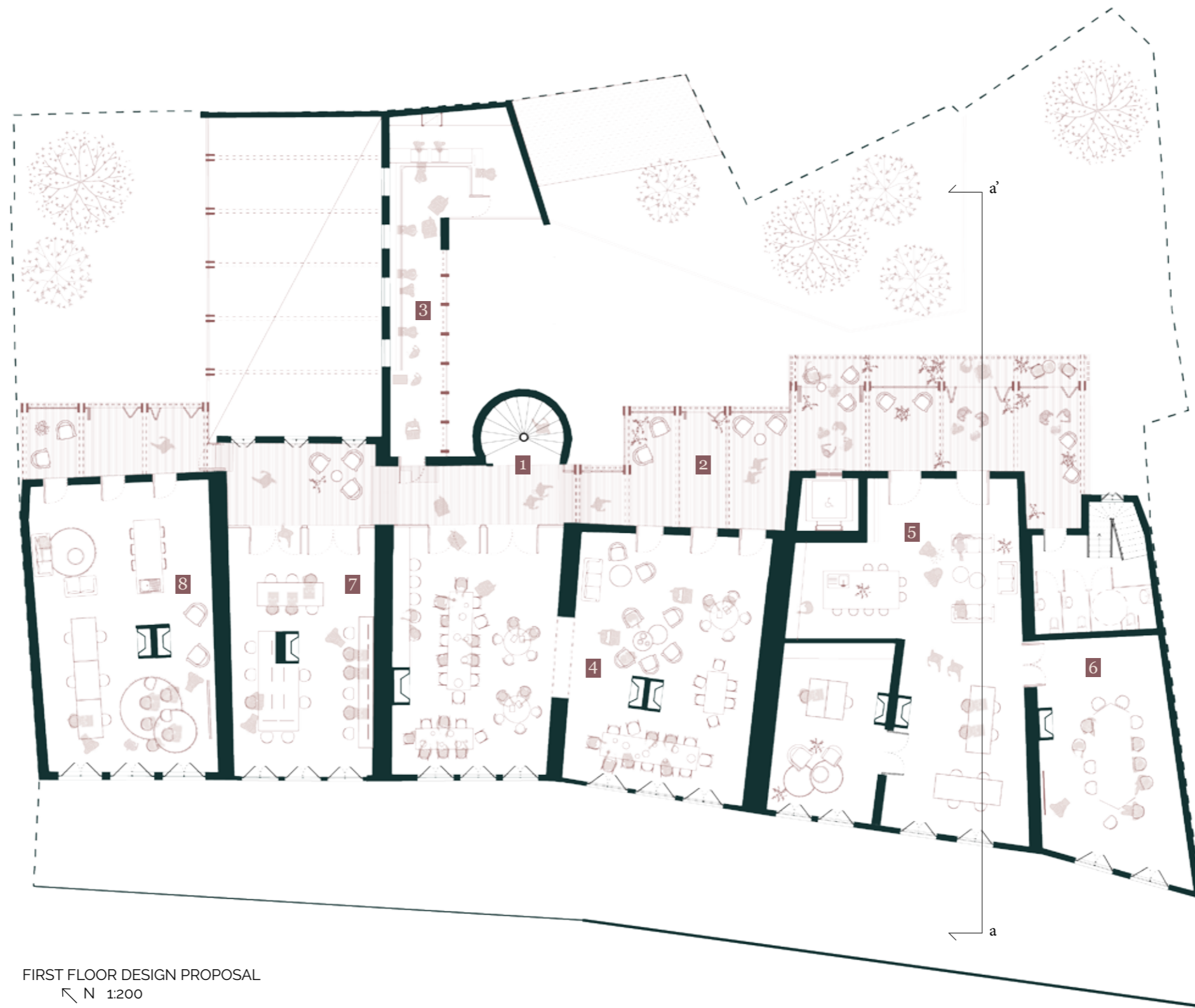
A small kitchen and shared café for the workers are located on the second floor. A conference room can be rented.

The wooden structure offers relaxing spaces with couches and plants. This is real social meeting points where public can come and have a coffee, enjoy the sun and the view on the garden. The facade is made out of wooden panels that can be totally opened. Therefore, the workspaces can be transformed as terraces.

The elevator uses the new construction for the accessibility to all rooms.

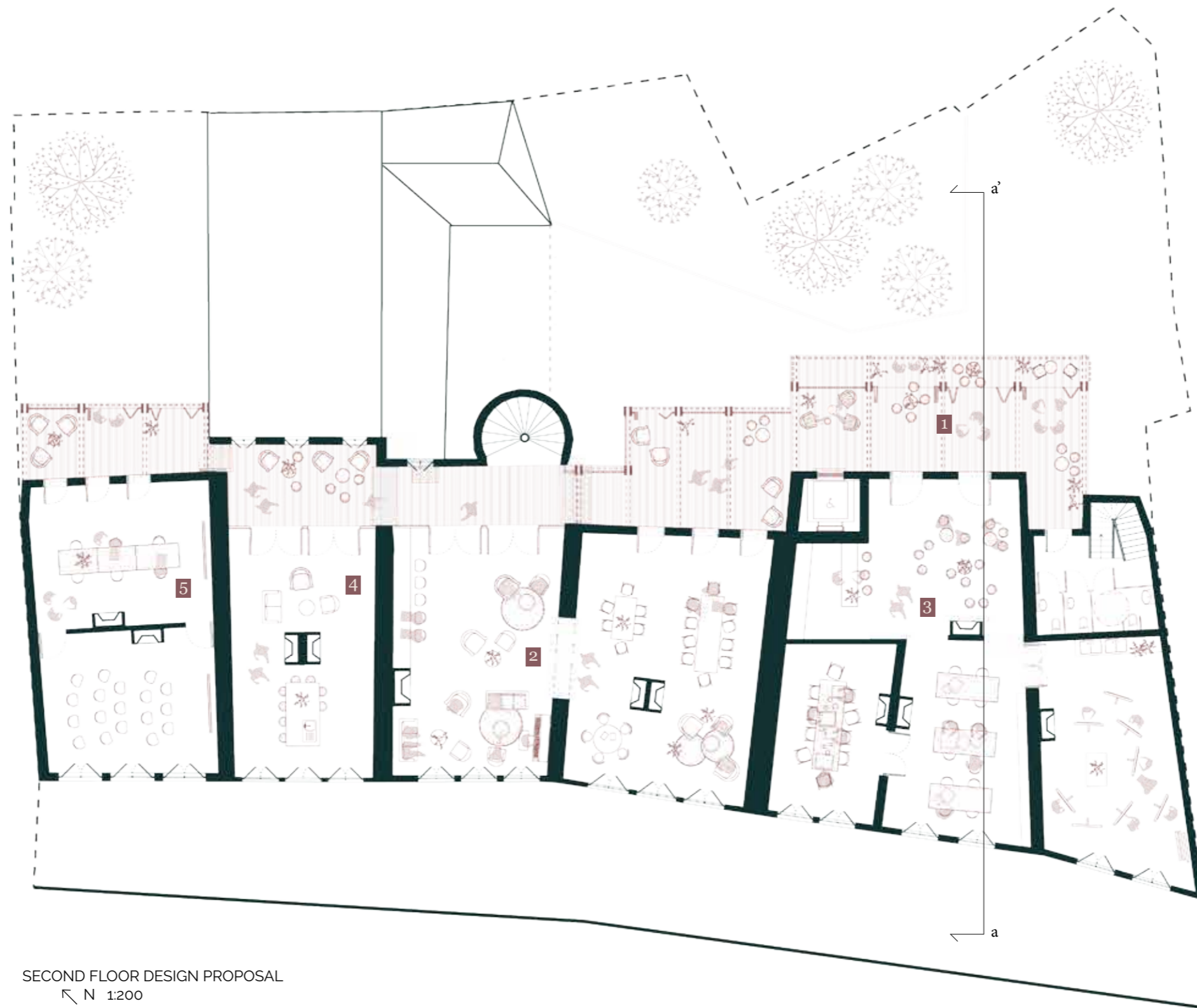


2. UPPER FLOORS CURRENT PLAN  
N 1.300



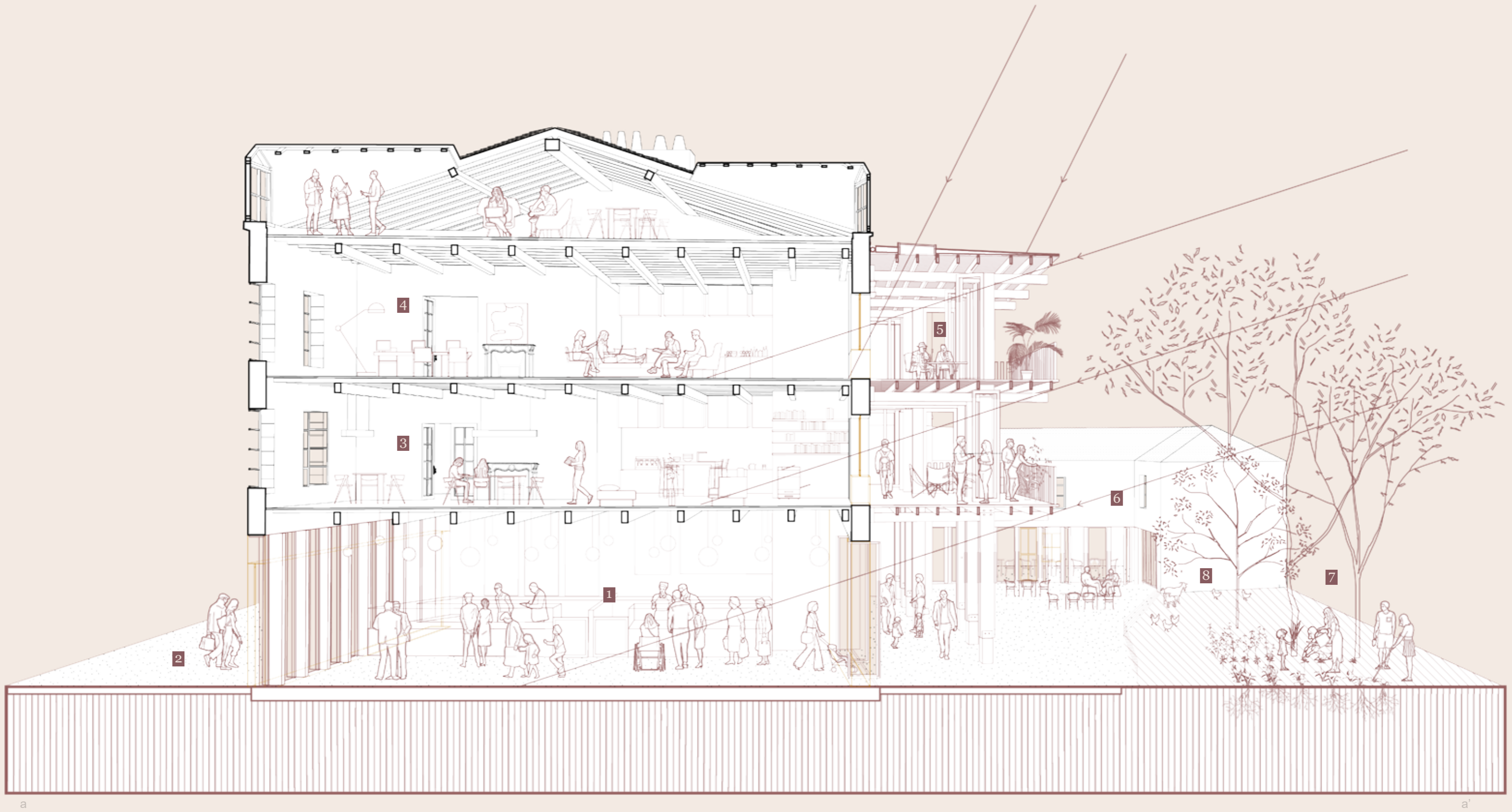
FIRST FLOOR DESIGN PROPOSAL  
 ↖ N 1:200

- |   |                                   |   |                                       |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | main staircase - heritage element | 5 | <i>Association des Communs</i> office |
| 2 | new structure - winter garden     | 6 | conference room                       |
| 3 | student self-service restaurant   | 7 | public computer room                  |
| 4 | refectory                         | 8 | business incubator workspaces         |



SECOND FLOOR DESIGN PROPOSAL  
 ↖ N 1:200

- 1 new structure - winter garden
- 2 public workspace - high speed connection
- 3 art school
- 4 business incubator lounge
- 5 business incubator workspaces



DESIGN PROPOSAL  
 PERSPECTIVE SECTION 1:100

EXISTING  
 DEMOLISHED  
 NEWLY BUILT

- 1 covered market
- 2 *La Grande Rue*
- 3 *Association des Communs* office
- 4 art school
- 5 new structure winter garden
- 6 café
- 7 permaculture garden
- 8 henhouse





DESIGN PROPOSAL  
1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR FROM THE NEW STRUCTURE

### 3. PAVILION DESIGN

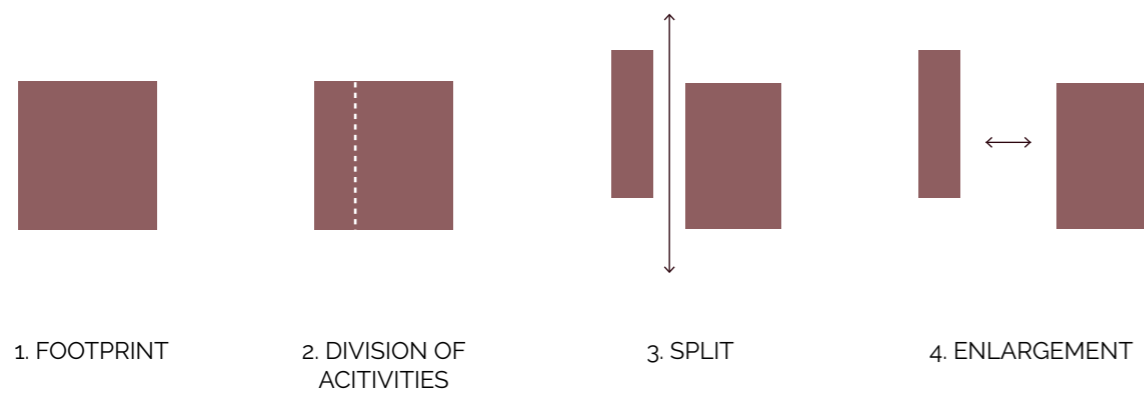
*La Place Bonnyaud* is currently used as a large car park. Twice a week, le marché (free market) takes place in the eastern part of the square, near the fountain. *Le marché* is well appreciated by the inhabitants as it sells local products like fruits, vegetables, meat and craftsmanship's. These weekly events promote the short food supply chains and generate social interactions.

The idea is to design a small flexible multipurpose structure that could be used as a covered market but also used for all types of year-round events (open stage, children theatrical performance, public or political meetings, etc.). The constructive system goes together with the rehabilitation projects. A stone sole on which wooden pillars rest. The rhythm that gives the reliefs of the facades pillars erases senses and the surroundings are reflected on the glazing filled the in-between the structure. The lights built-in the ground enlighten the square and the inside at night to highlight the structure and make a safe and contemporary public space.

A small café (with small lunch) is designed next to it in order to prolong and diversify the activities. Its location is central and the prices are affordable so anyone can come for lunch (students, townhall employees, etc.). The terrace is facing the East and the West allowing people enjoy the sun all day long (a coffee after shopping the mornings and facing the fountain during a concert on the open stage the evenings).

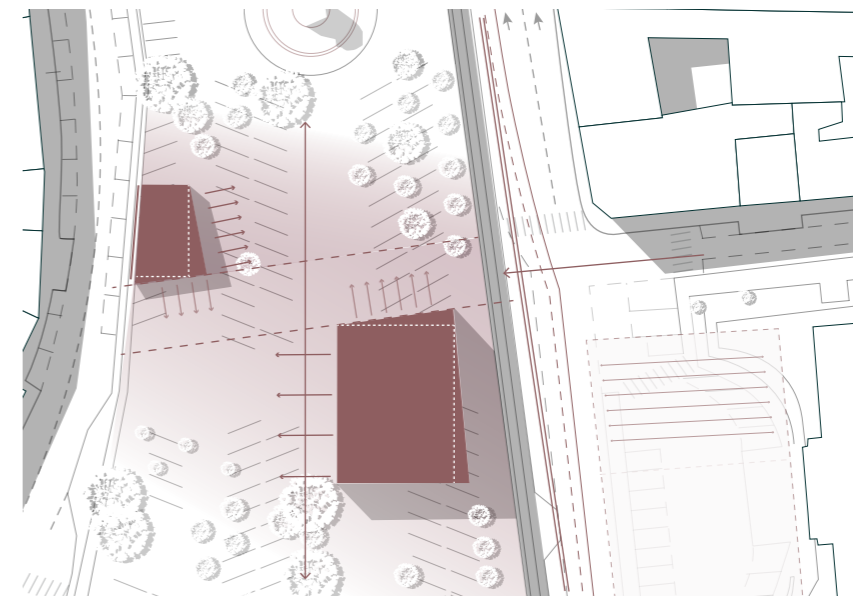
These new small infrastructures aim to develop intimate appearance spaces and complete each other's. They create a real synergy in an oversize square where nothing used to happen.





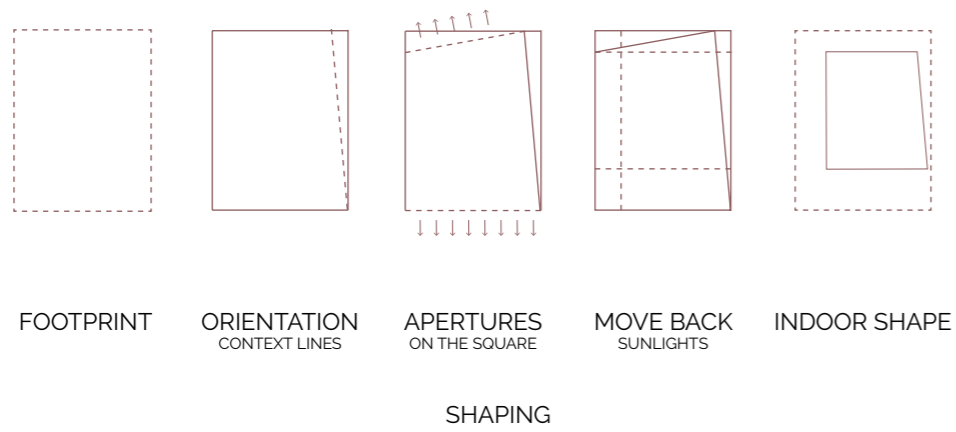
/ IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

*La Place Bonnyaud* is really vaste. The reflection has been conducted through the analysis of the flows, the views and the accesses to the square, as well as the buildings that frame it. The starting point is the footprint that is divided for the two activities : the multipurpose hall and the café. The volumes are thus split and the in-between spaces are enlarged.



OVERALL SHAPES

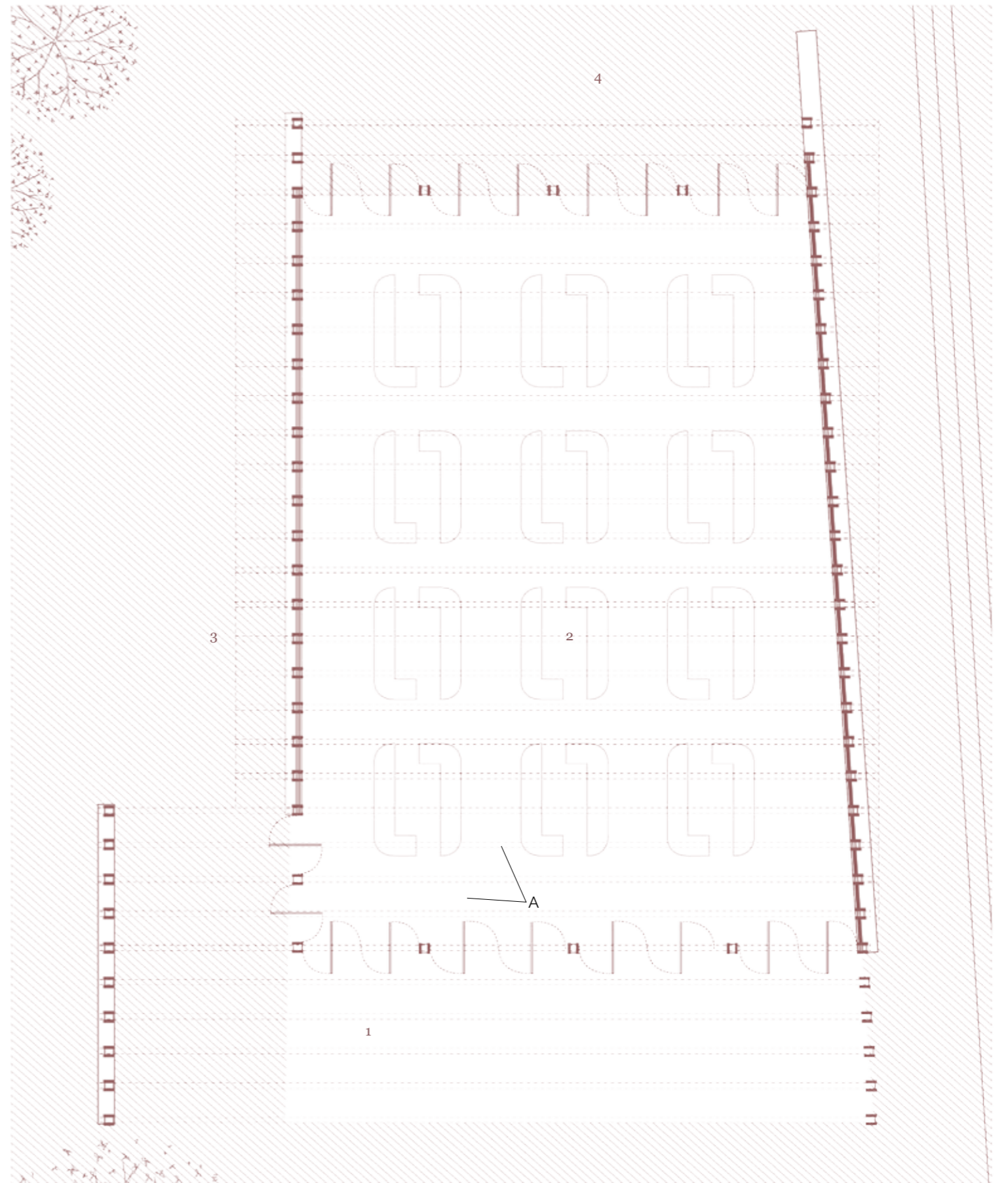
Both small constructions occupy the area and contribute to the creation of a synergy. Indeed, the buildings shapes are open thanks to the structure: the activities will be spread outside them. The facades fit in with the boundaries of the square, and they angle to the strategic areas. It is like a new destination on the oversized square



NORTH ELEVATION  
FROM THE STREET

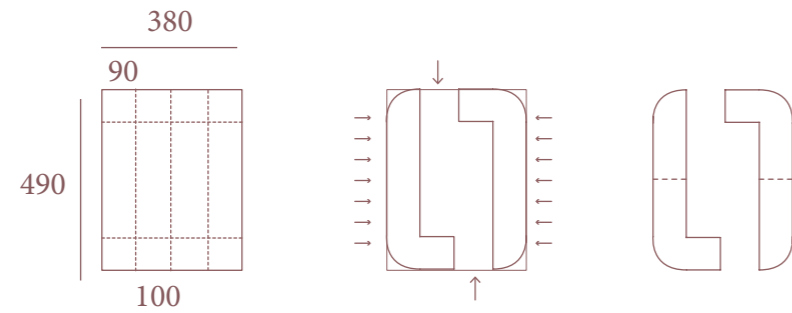


SOUTH ELEVATION  
FROM THE SQUARE



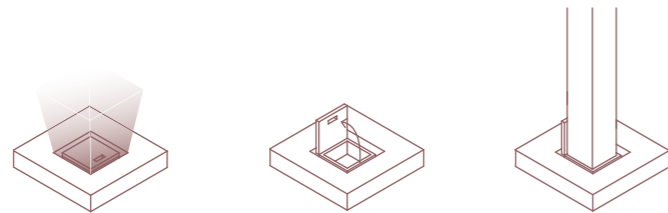
MULTIPURPOSE HALL PLAN  
1:50 N →

- 1 sheltered area
- 2 indoor space
- 3 esplanade
- 4 space opened to the fountain



STALLS DESIGN

The ergonomic design of the market stalls enables efficient use. The clients face the long edges, the entrances for merchants are the short ones. The capacity of this stall is four merchants.



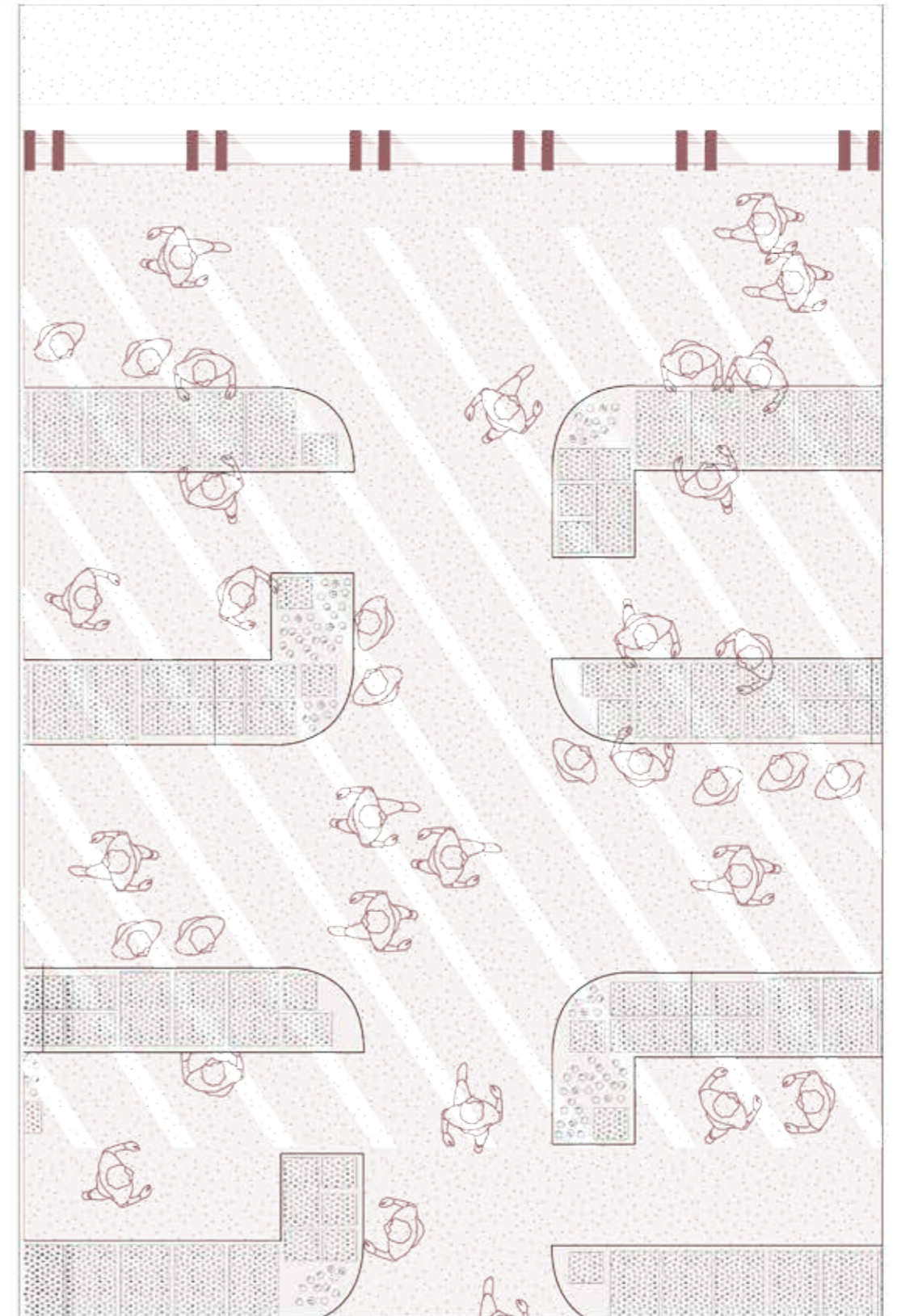
BUILT-IN DETAILS

Some holes are built in the ground to quickly secure the stalls legs. When they are not used, they draw a pattern on the floor in daytime and light-up the environment during the night according to one of the urban tool.



AISSLES CALCULATION

The plan has been designed from the dimensioning of the stalls and the circulation.



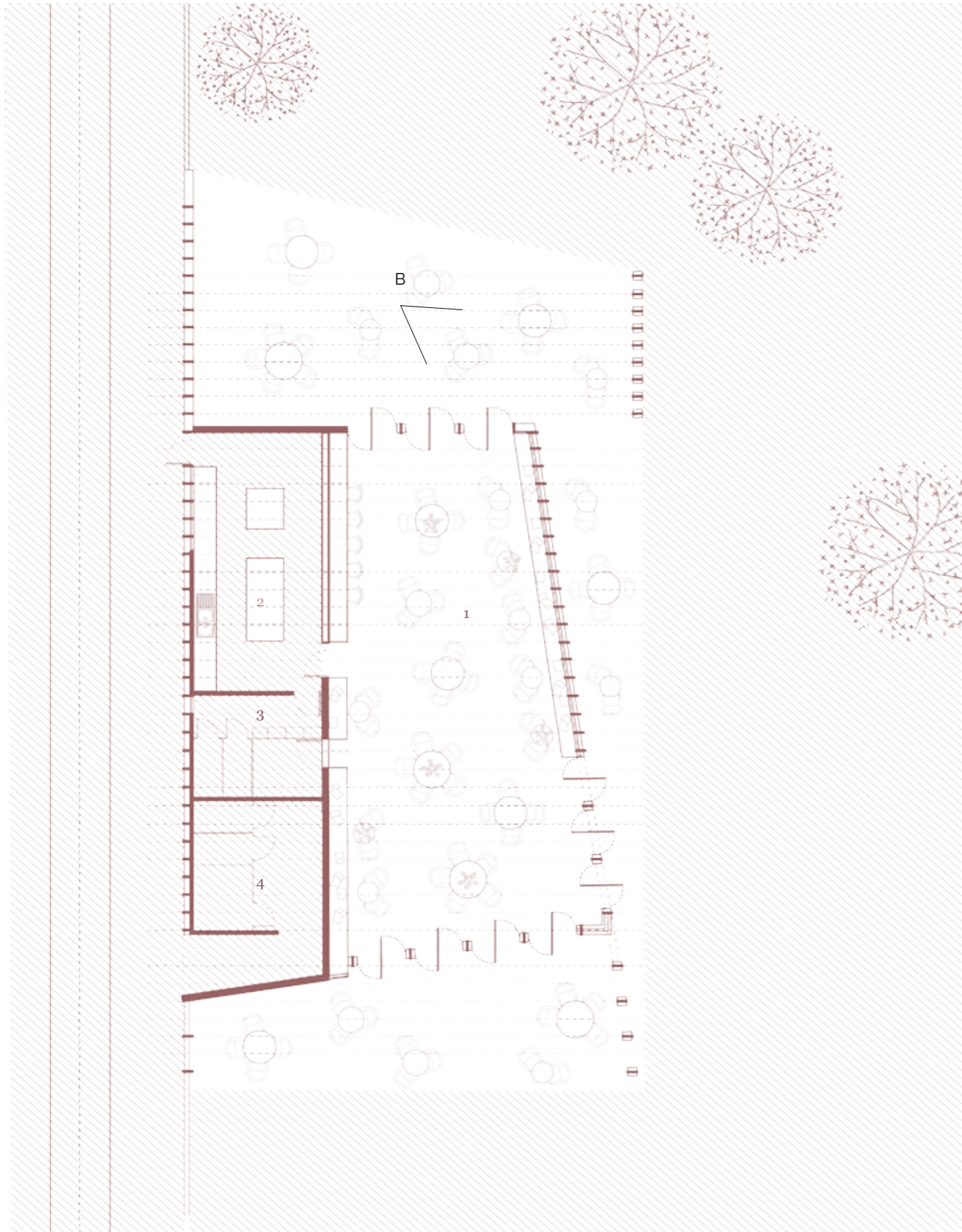
FOCUS ON A MARKET EVENT  
PLAN 1:50 ↓N



VIEW A  
FROM THE INSIDE OF THE MULTIPURPOSE HALL

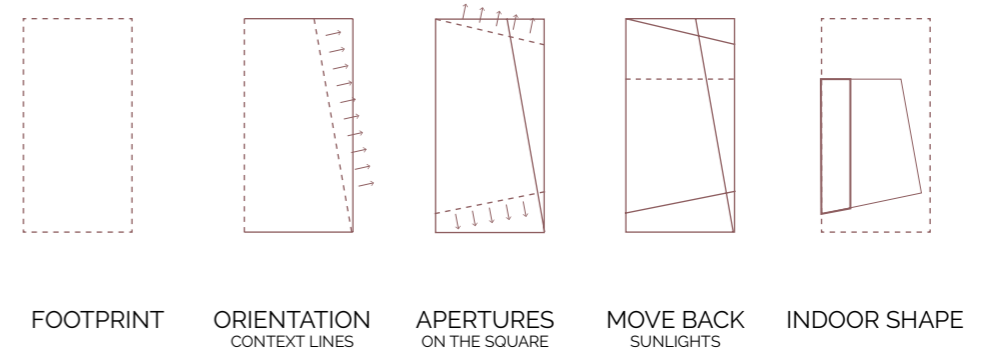


FACADE  
FROM THE SQUARE



CAFÉ PLAN  
1:50 N →

- 1 indoor space
- 2 kitchen
- 3 employee locker room
- 4 public wc



SHAPING



SOUTH ELEVATION  
FROM THE STREET

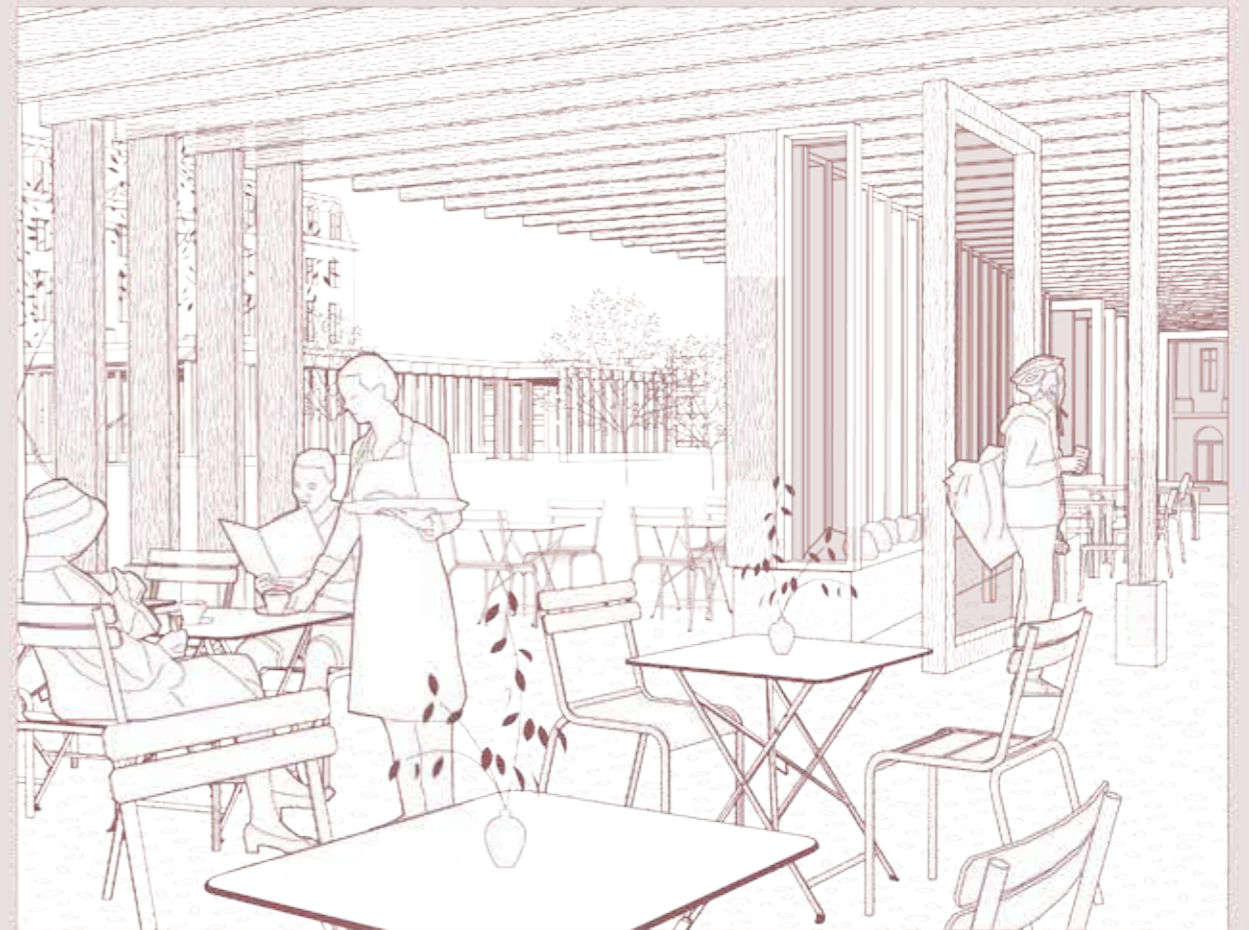


NORTH ELEVATION  
FROM THE SQUARE





FACADE  
FROM THE SQUARE



VIEW B  
FROM THE WESTERN TERRACE





## conclusion

Guéret has this great advantage to have a human scale in its urban fabric. The city centre, composed of 200-year old historical buildings, formulates the identity of the town and must be preserved and highlighted. Once said, the urban spaces must be developed by combining both technical and social aspects.

The project focuses on the active mobility along the city centre spine, *la Grande Rue*, that is crucial for the attractiveness of the area. The design of two new destinations, the rehabilitation project *Rootstock* and the Pavilion on *la Place Bonnyaud* will root the path and create a link between them along the promenade. As the city centre is a very mineral area, the integration of in-ground vegetation intends to cool the heat islands and create nice social gathering spaces. These meetings points have urban furniture that are partially movable and oriented so that the small heritage could be rediscovered by locals. Walkers well-being lies in the pedestrian priority to ensure safety and encourage leisurely strolls.

This architectural rehabilitation project is based on the agricultural definition of rootstock : graphing a vigorous element to support a basis that bears qualitative outputs. The main purpose using three scales for the design proposal can be understood according to the botanical definition: a fertile structure that connects and feeds all elements together to create a sustainable and healthy growth of the whole fabric.

The renewed interest of the inhabitants about the city centre will be provided by this synergy coming out from the new activities and infrastructures based on local resources (social and material). They will be the breeding ground of sustainable development and renewed social interactions.

## reflection

The project proposals intend to provide architectural and urban suggestions on how to modify the empty spaces of shrinking cities that create overstretched social interactions. The design does not pretend solving the existing issues, but presents a bunch of solutions based on a context evaluation.

Working in a very specific area compels the designer to accomplish a deep analysis of the context by studying the history of the site and by understanding the inhabitants' habits and needs. Giving importance to any types of elements such as small heritage is the key for a sustainable development. The driving force of the design was the local resources. The study of the potential resources (social, materials, economic) of the site stimulated and fed the design process. The whole was supported by a three-scale analysis (urban, architectural, detail) that ensured the continuity and the relevance in the different steps of the conception.

The appreciation of the city as a living organism has changed my personal interpretation of urban spaces. Any singular modification in the public space has an impact on its closest environment and could unbalance the rest of the urban fabric, creating positive or negative change. Modifying the urban spaces in a relevant way could empower a city to achieve sustainable development.

To me, architecture makes sense only with people who, continuously, reinterpret spaces. That is why creation of synergy and qualitative spaces cannot be made without social sustainability.

## acknowledgements

This thesis could have not be completed without the  
wise guidance of

*Walter Unterrainer & Paula Femenias.*

Thank you for giving me shrewd advice and  
constantly pushing my work in the right direction

.

Thank you to

*Guéret's inhabitants*  
who kindly cooperate

*DREEM Arkitekt*  
who always eased me to combine  
student and intern life

.

*friends and family*

who made my studies in architecture fulfilling  
and continuously support me during my work

RAPHAËLLE PAIRE  
RAPHAELLEPAIRE@LAPOSTE.NET  
+33 6 65 47 97 94

## ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

2017-2020

*Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden*  
Master Programme of Architecture and Planning Beyond Sustainability

Building Design for Sustainability  
Planning and Design for Sustainable Development in Local Context  
Sustainable Architectural Design  
Crash Course Beyond Sustainability  
Gender and Norm Critical Design  
Architecture and Urban Space Design  
Sustainable Development and the Design Professions

2014-2017

*École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Lyon, France*

## PRACTICE

2016-2020

DREEM Arkitekter, Gothenburg  
Barrault Pressacco, Paris  
ExNdo, Lyon  
Enet Dolowy Architectes, Nantes





MODEL 1 : 50  
FACADE FROM LA GRANDE RUE

EXISTING PARTS (BLACK FOAM BOARD 5MM)  
DESIGN PROPOSAL (WHITE CARDBOARD 2MM)



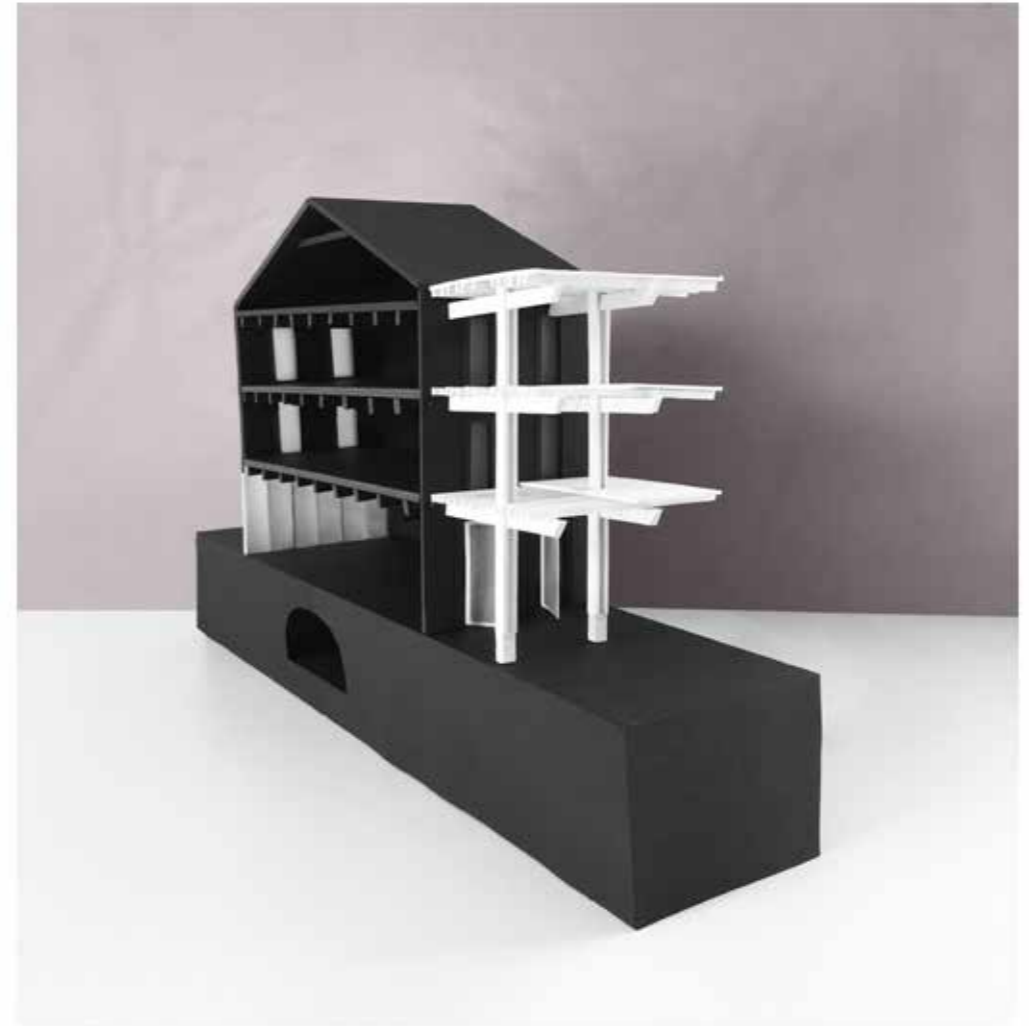
MODEL 1 : 50  
SECTION FROM LA GRANDE RUE

EXISTING PARTS (BLACK FOAM BOARD 5MM)  
DESIGN PROPOSAL (WHITE CARDBOARD 2MM)



MODEL 1 : 50  
LONGITUDINAL SECTION

EXISTING PARTS (BLACK FOAM BOARD 5MM)  
DESIGN PROPOSAL (WHITE CARDBOARD 2MM)



MODEL 1 : 50  
SECTION FROM THE BACKYARD

EXISTING PARTS (BLACK FOAM BOARD 5MM)  
DESIGN PROPOSAL (WHITE CARDBOARD 2MM)

## LITERATURE

Ardillier-Carras, Françoise. (2008) 'L'immigration britannique en France : le cas du Limousin'. *Population & Avenir*, no. 690 15–17.

Ballet, Jérôme. Dubois, Jean-Luc. Mahieu, François-Régis. (2011) 'La soutenabilité sociale du développement durable : de l'omission à l'émergence'. *Mondes en développement*, no. 156: 89–110.

Boucher, Michel. Furic, Joëlle. (1984) *La Maison Rurale En Haute-Marche*. Editions Créer. Les Cahiers de Construction Traditionnelle. Nonette.

Bourdin, Alain. (2019) *Faire Centre: La Nouvelle Problématique Des Centres-Villes*. Bibliothèque Des Territoires. La Tour d'Aigues: Éditions de l'Aube.

Choppin, Julien, Nicola Delon, (2014) *Encore heureux, and Pavillon de l'Arsenal (Paris)*. Matière grise: matériaux réemploi architecture. Paris: Pavillon de l'Arsenal.

Carnis, Julie . 'A Guéret, la misère entre les murs'. *Libération*, 2013. Retrieved from [https://www.liberation.fr/societe/2013/11/17/a-gueret-la-misere-entre-les-murs\\_947661](https://www.liberation.fr/societe/2013/11/17/a-gueret-la-misere-entre-les-murs_947661).

Carlisle, Stephanie (2020) 'I've Been Polluting the Planet for Years. I'm Not an Oil Exec—I'm an Architect'. *Fastcompany*. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90435650/these-are-the-last-years-of-design-as-we-know-it>.

Druelle-Korn, Clotilde. Boulesteix, Aurélie. (2015) 'L'installation de la grande distribution en Limousin (1955-1990)'. *Atlas Historique du Limousin*. Retrieved from <https://www.unilim.fr/atlas-historique-limousin/2015/11/23/linstallation-de-la-grande-distribution-en-limousin-1955-1990/>.

Gehl, Jan (2012) *Cities for people*, Island Press.

Magne, G. (2001) *La Maison et Le Village En Limousin*. Société d'Ethnographie du Limousin et de la catégorie beaux livres.

Magne G. Conserver (2006) *Restaurer et Valoriser Le Bâti Creusois Ancien*. Conseil Général de la Creuse, Conservation départementale du patrimoine. Guéret.

Palermo, Pier Carlo, and Davide Ponzini (2015) *Place-Making and Urban Development: New Challenges for Contemporary Planning and Design*. Regions and Cities. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Project for public spaces. (2013) 'Place Making, What If We Built Cities around Places?'. Retrieved from [https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5810e16f876cec6bcbd86e/5b71f88ec6f4726edfe3857d\\_2018%20placemaking%20booklet.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5810e16f876cec6bcbd86e/5b71f88ec6f4726edfe3857d_2018%20placemaking%20booklet.pdf).

Razemon, Olivier. (2019) *Comment la France a tué ses villes*. Rue de l'échiquier. l'écopoche.

Reeves, Dory, Bonnie Parfitt, Carol Archer. (2012) *Gender and Urban Planning: Issues and Trends*. Nairobi: United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Savourey, Cathy. (2018) *Guéret 2040...une ville oxygène*. Atelier d'Urbanisme éphémère, Ville de Guéret, A.U.C.I.

Souchon, René. (2017) *Ruralité, Quel Avenir? Citadins, Cela Vous Concerne Aussi!* Bibliothèque Des Territoires. La Tour-d'Aigue: Éditions de l'Aube.

## OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires. (2019) 'Plan Particulier pour la Creuse'. Paris. Retrieved from [https://www.cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2019-06/2019-04\\_dp\\_Pacte-Creuse\\_o.pdf](https://www.cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2019-06/2019-04_dp_Pacte-Creuse_o.pdf).

Communauté d'agglomération du Grand Guéret. (2019) 'OPERATION PROGRAMMEE D'AMELIORATION DE L'HABITAT RENOUVELLEMENT URBAIN (OPAH-RU) DU CENTRE ANCIEN DE LA VILLE GUERET'. Expert assessment. Guéret, 2019. Retrieved from [https://www.agglo-grandgueret.fr/sites/default/files/documents/convention\\_opah-ru\\_gurret\\_v4.pdf](https://www.agglo-grandgueret.fr/sites/default/files/documents/convention_opah-ru_gurret_v4.pdf).

Lilas Demmou.(2010) 'La Désindustrialisation En France'. Documents de Travail de La DG Trésor Cahiers, no. 2010/01 : 52.

Gérard-François Dumont, Jean-Marie Guilloux. (2018) *Développement des territoires ruraux, expérimentation prospective dynamique dans le département de la Creuse* [Research work] Agrobiosciences INRA. 2018 pp.1-102

## CONFERENCES

'La fabrique du patrimoine rural comme objet patrimonial'. Conférence. Institut National du Patrimoine. Accessed February 19th 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.franceculture.fr/conferences/institut-national-du-patrimoine/le-patrimoine-rural-n-est-pas-un-petit-patrimoine?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_](https://www.franceculture.fr/conferences/institut-national-du-patrimoine/le-patrimoine-rural-n-est-pas-un-petit-patrimoine?utm_medium=Social&utm_)

Simon Teyssou. *Pratique réflexive en territoire ordinaire*. Paris: Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine, 2019. Accessed February 20th 2020. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMrfiB4I6x8&t=3585s.Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3d8xQvEFzTXWd5O7qTw3TqqoVT2soAEjzs1pgK7B7HOX8T\\_Y97d5vSDqQ#Echobox=1582198008](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMrfiB4I6x8&t=3585s.Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3d8xQvEFzTXWd5O7qTw3TqqoVT2soAEjzs1pgK7B7HOX8T_Y97d5vSDqQ#Echobox=1582198008).

## WEBSITES

'Institut National de la statistique et des études économiques'. Statistics, <https://www.insee.fr>.

'La Montagne'. Medias, <https://www.lamontagne.fr>.

## PODCASTS

France Culture. (28/05/2019) 'Economie de l'alimentation (2/4) : Le modèle du supermarché en fin de course ?, Tiphaine de Rocquigny'. Entendez-vous l'éco ?, Retrieved from <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/entendez-vous-leco/entendez-vous-leco-emission-du-mardi-28-mai-2019>.



# INTERVIEWS

FEBRUARY 2020, GUERET

THE TEXTS BELOW ARE CUT PARTS OF THE INTERVIEWS. THEY HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED ACCORDING TO A SEMI-STRUCTURED TEMPLATE.

PASCAL GERMAIN  
PROJECT MANAGER OF THE CITY CENTRE  
01 : 10 : 04

« Un des enjeux est d'enclencher le travail structurel de fond qui est la seule voie qui fera qu'on arrivera vraiment à améliorer fortement la situation dans le centre-ville : aménagement urbain et habitat. Traiter des îlots problématiques dans lesquels on a beaucoup de vacance pour pouvoir accueillir plus de population en hyper centre et essayer d'ouvrir un peu plus le panel de population. Le parcours marchand est prioritaire, Place Bonnyaud et Place du marché.

[...] On ne manque pas d'habitat à Guéret. Déclencher des activités complémentaires par les rénovations.

[...] On vend un terrain déconstruit prêt à construire parce que sans ça les promoteurs iront à Limoges et pas à Guéret.

[...] Sur l'îlot Grande rue, il y a des problèmes d'accès. Sur tout l'îlot, il n'y a que deux couloirs. Largement vacant, l'idée est d'aborder tout ça pour essayer de voir comment on peut recréer des cheminements, des dessertes des étages et réhabiliter l'ensemble en éventuellement restructurant les étages. Reconquête des étages: parce que le délabrement des étages a un impact sur les commerces. »

« - One of the issues is to initiate a fundamental structural work, the only way for a strong amelioration of the situation, in city centre. We must deal with problematic of vacant buildings so that we can accommodate more people in very centre town and try to have all social classes represented. Absolutely prefer pedestrian paths (Place Bonnyaud - Place du Marché).

[...] We do have housing in Guéret. We must bring on more activities thanks to renovations.

[...] We sell build able lots otherwise property developers don't stay in Guéret but go to Limoges.

[...] The access to the block *Grande Rue* is very problematic because there are only two corridors. The idea is to see how to recreate them, how to serve floors, how to rehabilitate the whole building in particular the floors because their state of disrepair is bad for shops.»

ERIC DAUBECHIES  
HEAD OF MERCHANT' ASSOCIATION  
00 : 41 : 29

- « Il faut favoriser le covoiturage, il y a un site internet spécialisé. L'article le plus lu sur notre site de l'Association des commerçants est l'article sur l'agglabus. Il ne marche pas bien mais il peut être amélioré, notamment la taille des bus, plus petits. On n'a pas de pistes cyclables ni d'attaches, il n'y a qu'une piste mais elle est en zone commerciale donc on ne peut pas y aller en vélo. Le problème est le côté financier mais il faudrait en faire quelques-unes pour initier les déplacements de nos enfants vers les écoles, en les sécurisant. Le vélo à assistance électrique peut tout à fait permettre une évolution de la ville vers plus de vélo.

[...] Il y a un taux de vacance très important en centre-ville de Guéret. Les gens ont fui parce que les impôts ou la taxe d'habitation étaient trop élevés. Les premiers consommateurs d'un centre-ville sont les habitants du centre-ville. Le commerce ne fonctionne qu'avec du flux depuis l'Antiquité, les commerces ont suivi les flux. Il faut recréer du flux si on veut que ça marche, pour ça, il faut ramener des habitants mais aussi favoriser les gens qui viennent avec leurs voitures qui stationnent quelque part.

[...] Je pense qu'il y a une prise de conscience déjà sur les circuits courts. »

«- We should encourage carpooling through the dedicated website. The city bus is the most read article on the website of shopkeepers Association. It doesn't work but it could by simply reducing its size. There are no bike lines or just one in the commercial area, too far from the centre. There are even less fastening systems in the city. Financial aspect is the main issue but we should create a few safe ones on the ways to school to educate our children. Electrically assisted bicycles could be developed to give a push for the use of cycles in town.

[...] Housing vacancy rate is very high in city centre. People left because of discouraging local taxes. The main consumers in the centre are the closest inhabitants. Trade does work only with flows, since the Antiquity, commercial exchanges have been following them. We must recreate flows if we want a successful continuation. For it, new population needs to come over, but we also need to encourage people from outside to come, with their cars they must park somewhere.

[...] Local trade is already in all people's minds.»

ELODIE BLANC  
GENERAL MANAGER OF GUÉRET  
00 : 53 : 42

« Il y a beaucoup d'attentes sur la Place Bonnyaud. Pour la problématique du centre-ville, il y a déjà un travail à faire pour retrouver des espaces publics agréables et ramener du monde en ville par le biais d'aménagement urbain [...] on est toujours confronté à la problématique de la place de la voiture. Il faut savoir qu'on est en milieu rural, il y a beaucoup de gens qui arrivent en voiture [...] on n'a pas une densité pour les transports en commun, on est des territoires où la voiture sera plus présente que dans le milieu urbain. La population est aussi âgée et la mobilité est différente en fonction de l'âge de la population, ça il faut l'avoir en tête dans ce que l'on va proposer. On était toujours confronté à 'cet aménagement- là, ça supprime encore des places de stationnement, il y avait toujours une montée au créneau des riverains et commerçants'

[...] On s'est mis d'accord pour réaliser un projet *Guéret 2040*, que l'on a co-construit avec la population, il y a une assistance à maîtrise d'ouvrage avec Cathy SAVOUREY qui a animé la méthode. Donc on a lancé en 2016 des ateliers d'urbanisme qui associaient élus, habitants, techniciens. Est arrivé après le dispositif national Action Cœur de Ville, donc nous étions prêts puisqu'on avait déjà réfléchi sur la stratégie que l'on voulait. On a fait le square Jorrand, en même temps des études, et le projet Place Bonnyaud. Il faut trouver des places de stationnement de

substitution, ce qui est en cours en ce moment. La taille de la place n'est pas du tout à l'échelle de la ville, le risque est d'avoir une place vide où il ne se passe rien, ce qui ne serait pas favorable à l'attractivité et au flux que l'on voudrait avoir.

[...] Il y a du monde en ville mais étrangement on ne le voit comme les jeunes, il y en a, à l'échelle de Guéret ça fait beaucoup, pour une population de 13 000 habitants et on ne les voit pas quand on se promène, on ne s'en rend pas compte. L'espace public a été dimensionné pour la voiture, forcément on arrive au fait qu'on se dise qu'il n'y a personne alors que à l'échelle de la mairie, il y a du monde.

[...] La réflexion urbaine à avoir c'est comment on relie, quelle identité on donne au centre-ville parce que ça, on a jamais tranché où est le centre-ville, pour certains c'est la Place Bonnyaud, pour d'autres c'est la Place du Marché et effectivement il y a deux centre- villes différents. La première est, je dirais, plus administrative et l'autre plutôt commerciale. Comment on arrive à connecter les deux sachant que l'on a un nœud aux anciens remparts. A pied, cela ne fonctionne pas, les gens qui ne connaissent pas Guéret, ils ne savent pas qu'il y a un centre-ville plus loin, le premier enjeu est d'arriver à dénouer ceci. »

« There are great expectations regarding *la Place Bonnyaud*. Concerning the city centre issue, the first step would be to restore pleasant public spaces and bring back people by making urban renewal. [...] How to deal with the place of cars? We are in a rural area, most of people use their car to come there. Cars will always be more present in our territories than in urban places. [...] a point is that human density is too low for public transports. Another point is elderly people and we must consider that the way to move is different according to the age of people. Urban development which would reduce parking lots has always been strongly disapproved by residents and shopkeepers.

[...] So together with the population a project was born : "*Guéret 2040*" managed by Cathy SAVOUREY who animated the process.

It has been launched in 2016 with elected local politicians, inhabitants and technicians in workshops on urban planning. We have developed a strategy and we were ready when the national framework *Action Cœur de Ville* has been proposed.

*Square Jorrand* was born, studies have been made, as well as the project *Place Bonnyaud*.

Our current preoccupation is to find substituted parking lots. *Place Bonnyaud* is too big considering the size of the city. There is the risk to have an empty place where nothing happens.

There would be no attractiveness and few people.

Strangely enough, there are many people in the centre, even young people, but we don't fully notice their presence.

[...] For a population of 13,000 inhabitants, they represent an important proportion.

Public spaces have been thought for the use of cars and according to us, there are many people there.

[...] The question is to know what we call the city centre : it is not decided yet.

It is *Place Bonnyaud* for some people and it is *Place du Marché* for others.

Indeed, there are two different city centres, an administrative one and a commercial one.

How to connect both, knowing there is a node with the ancient ramparts ? We have to find a solution.»

« - La question du stationnement, il faut la regarder par rapport à son usage et par rapport aux différentes personnes qui vont les utiliser.

- L'idée serait de désengorger une partie du parking de la Place Bonnyaud pour en faire quelque chose de sympa, de vivant avec l'expérimentation qui a été menée « Place en terrasses », Cathy Savourey voulait expérimenter avant d'amener un gros projet.

- On aura toujours la problématique de la circulation autour de la Place. Même si les troquets voulaient faire des terrasses, il faudrait traverser la route.

- La nouvelle partie du musée contemporaine est un bon projet, c'est la preuve que l'on peut mélanger du contemporain et de l'ancien.

- C'est peut-être ce qu'il manque dans le centre ancien. [...] Il y a beaucoup d'équipements publics mais il n'y a pas d'équipement générateur de flux dans le centre ancien, il reste que le cinéma et le pôle jeunesse. C'est très résidentiel et il y a des barrières mentales et ça ne facilite pas la revitalisation du centre ancien. Les commerçants se plaignent du flux, ils évoquent le fait de laisser passer les voitures pour ramener du flux mais c'est peut même pas suffisant même avec des stationnements gratuits. Cette question revient systématiquement mais il y a énormément de stationnements si on les dénombre.

- Difficile de se projeter dans 15,20 ans...

- On n'a pas de projet d'aménagement, derrière on a des outils pour résorber l'habitat insalubre mais pour se faire financer, il faut avoir un projet de réaménagement de la place et de création de logements.

- Il y avait une demande de consommation

autrement, ce sont des tendances. Aujourd'hui la question est que recrée-t-on dans les centres anciens, comme nouvelle vie ? Je pense que ce ne sera jamais la même, les commerçants ne voudront pas forcément vivre au-dessus de leur commerce, mais peut être que d'autres gens oui. [...] Il y a aussi cette envie de nature et on amène un peu de stationnement résidentiel derrière, il y a des choses à montrer que nous on voit parce qu'on travaille dedans mais que plein de gens ne voient pas forcément et qu'ils n'ont pas envie de voir non plus.

- Des personnes viennent de l'extérieur et font un tour en ville, les gens ne sont pas choqués de la dégradation des bâtiments.

- Il y a un vrai potentiel ici et les Guérétois sont critiques mais les gens extérieurs sont plus indulgents.

- On se questionne beaucoup sur nos besoins en termes de logements est-ce qu'on a des besoins pour les jeunes, plutôt pour les personnes âgées avec des logements accessibles ?

- De façon générale, le règlement du PLU (*Plan Local d'Urbanisme*) n'est pas bien respecté, il y a du PVC blanc installé partout. C'est avec des propriétaires volontaristes qu'on y arrive aujourd'hui.

- Pour résumer, il ne faut pas dire qu'il ne se passe rien, alors ce n'est peut-être pas toujours coordonné, on va vers une meilleure coordination mais il y a quand même encore du travail, se projeter sur le long terme, tous travailler ensemble, ce qu'on a mis en place depuis le contrat de ville.

- Il n'y a pas d'itinéraire ni de petits bouts de section vélo.»

« - We have to think about parking lots and see with their users.

- The idea is to remove a part of *Place Bonnyaud's* parking lots to make something nicer.

Cathy Savourey initiated an experiment called «Place en Terrasses» (The Place with Terraces) to see if it could be possible, before bringing a larger project.

- The problem of traffic around the Place will still remain.

Waiters would have to cross the road if they opened terraces on it.

- The contemporary expansion project of the museum is very interesting. The mix of contemporary and heritage is quite possible.

- That is maybe what is currently missing. We have public infrastructures but no facilities to attract people (cinema and Youth Office only).

- There are mainly residential buildings and due to mental barriers, the revitalization of the city centre is not easy. Shopkeepers want to keep traffic flow to bring them customers but it is not even sure that free parking lots would be the solution. It is the recurrent topic. In fact, if we count them, they are a lot of parking lots.

- It's difficult to plan beyond 15 or 20 years.

- We do not have any renewal project but we have the capacity to reduce unfit housing. To have financial support, we must have an urban project and housing one.

- It has appeared new consumer trends.

What can we imagine nowadays in old centres part? Perhaps people would like to live above shops when shopkeepers themselves wouldn't want it anymore. [...] There is a wish for Nature

too. It could be possible to have a private parking lot nearby, it's up to us to make people discover what they can't see.

- After a walk in the city, external people have not been questioned concerning buildings deterioration.

- City dwellers are critical about that but external people are more indulgent.

We are wondering if we need housing for young people rather than accessible housing for elderly.

- Typically, the *PLU* (Local Town Planning) rules are not respected, there are white plastic windows frames everywhere but a few owners feel concerned to it.

- In a few words, we move forwards, we go to a better coordination but there is still much coworking to set up. It has already begun since the City Contract.

- No roads or small bicycles lines at all.»

« On est plusieurs, on sait faire différentes choses, dans le groupe on a des gens qui sont très bons en réparation de vélo, un soudeur, une électricienne, des gens juste contents de travailler dans la nature et dans l'agriculture. On a mis en commun ce qui nous manquait puisqu'Arthur et moi sommes arrivés à Guéret en 2018. On s'est demandé s'il y avait des jardins partagés. On peut se dire en 2018 dans une ville moyenne qu'il y en a. On s'est renseigné et il n'y en avait pas forcément.

- Travailler la réappropriation des biens communs qu'ils soient physiques ou intellectuels, de la connaissance et du savoir-faire matériel, de la terre, des ressources. On travaille en tant que communauté.

- Ça serait bien d'avoir un endroit avec des outils mutualisés où on pourrait en plus faire des choses qui nous intéressent et réparer des objets et en plus, proposer des formations à des gens intéressés. On n'a pas de local, on a commencé avec les vélos puisqu'à Recyclabulle, ils avaient une montagne de vélos donnés. La personne qui s'occupait de ces vélos n'était plus là et nous dans l'association, on avait deux personnes compétentes qui tenaient déjà des ateliers vélos à Bruxelles. Ils sont professionnels. Donc on a relancé une filière vélo et c'est devenu un vrai atelier de réparation. On a fait un prototype de charrette à vélo avec le soudeur parce que les personnes dans les quartiers et

dans l'hyper-centre sont en galère pour aller faire leurs courses. Le but est de se demander comment nos ambitions alternatives peuvent se développer et comment ça peut intéresser d'autres gens. On peut proposer des ateliers sur la Place Bonnyaud toutes les semaines pour que les gens apprennent à réparer aussi. On aimerait bien développer des formes nouvelles que les gens n'ont pas l'habitude de voir, comme des dômes géodésiques. Au jardin il y a une place tellement grande et c'est tellement pollué définitivement qu'on ne peut pas faire quelque chose d'alimentaire, donc on va développer plus quelque chose d'environnemental et social et développer des choses qui marchent et les planter dans des endroits précis à Guéret. Il faut aussi animer et organiser des ateliers. Il n'y a pas trop de partenariat ni de soutien. On bute sur le fait d'avoir un endroit où on peut se retrouver et faire des choses, comme une maison de l'expérimentation concrète. Que l'on puisse avoir notre matériauthèque parce qu'on a des quantités de bois et de métal astronomiques qu'on va enterrer parce qu'on n'a pas d'autres solutions. Il y a des portes en chêne incroyables à retenir... créer des choses artistiques, avoir un showroom et vendre après. »

« We are some people with different skills, one can repair bikes, another can weld, another is an electrician. We just enjoy working in nature and agriculture. Arthur and I arrived in Guéret in 2018. We wondered if there were any community gardens because nowadays, we could suppose that for such a city size we can find them. We made inquiries and they were just a few.

- We put all our intellectual knowledge and skills in the community like a team.

- We would like to find a place with shared tools. We would do more things we like, we could repair objects and provide workshops for interested people. Currently we have no working space. We began to repair bikes which were given to Recyclabulle. The person who was in charge of that left, but two members of our team were already experts in Brussels so this is how the repair shop was born. They are professional. We have given a new impulse for the bike sector and it has become a real repair bike centre.

We have manufactured a bike wagon prototype with our welder to help people living nearby and in very centre town do grocery shopping.

How can people be interested in our alternative ambitions ? We could propose each week workshops in *Place Bonnyaud* so that people can learn how to repair things. We would like to develop unusual shapes like geodesic domes.

Gardens are so polluted that we can't produce food. We will develop environmental and social things in specific places in Guéret. We need to run workshops. We have not much partnership or support. We struggle to find a place where we can gather and have an 'experimentations house' for concrete things. We could have our material library because we have large amount of wood and metal which are going to be buried because of no other choice. There are wonderful oak doors we can revalues... create some artistic things, have a showroom and maybe sell them.»

« -C'était un choix de venir à Guéret car je viens de la campagne, l'ambiance m'avait vraiment plu, je ne voulais pas aller dans une grande ville. Je suis plus attachée aux gens qu'à la ville.

- J'ai beaucoup appréhendé d'être ici quand j'ai vu que j'étais acceptée mais je n'ai pas eu le choix. En arrivant, je me dis 'Oh, je suis loin, donc si ça se passe mal, comment je fais, car je n'ai personne'. Beaucoup d'appréhension mais au final beaucoup de bonnes surprises.

- C'est compliqué d'aller toucher les autres formations, c'est quelque chose qui prend du temps, tous les ans, on repart de zéro. Tous les liens qui ont été tissés se brisent, les étudiants sont là pour deux ans. On n'est pas trop soutenu par l'administration non plus, on n'est pas représenté, il n'y a que nous qui faisons la communication. J'ai découvert énormément d'associations, mais il faut le savoir ce n'est pas évident.

- Il y a pas mal de concerts, au bar de la Poste.

- On fait tout à pied, même pour aller en boîte de nuit. C'est ça qui est cool.

- La problématique pour les étudiants, c'est pour ceux qui n'ont pas de voiture parce que c'est loin. Il y a une solidarité qui se crée, on s'emmène les uns les autres, on fait les courses tous ensemble. Mais sinon dans le centre-ville il n'y a que le Monoprix et les prix ne sont pas super accessibles.

- On habite toutes en centre-ville.

- On ne ressent pas la population qui est âgée, vu qu'on a notre famille étudiante ici et même si on reste les week-ends, on reste entre nous. On est 500 étudiants et quand on sort, c'est les

horaires où les jeunes sortent et les dimanches on ne verra personne. Mais le samedi matin pour le marché, il y aura beaucoup de personnes âgées. On ne peut pas faire le marché parce qu'on rentre les weekends.

- On va pour les petits prix à Pop'A à Guéret. En tant que Guéroise, j'aimerais voir ça dans le centre-ville mais ça apporte un petit plus. J'ai grandi ici et j'ai vu la dégradation, je ne suis pas attristée comme pourrait l'être ma grand-mère, mais ça a bien changé, c'est attristant.

- Même nous qui ne sommes pas de la ville, on trouve ça dommage, des fois on pourrait se dire, allez samedi après-midi on va faire les magasins dans la rue piétonne, boire un petit coup après mais au final c'est vite fait et les magasins ferment tôt.

- Quand il fait beau on se retrouve à Courtille, on y va en voiture. On va les uns chez les autres ou voir les matchs de sport des copains.

- Il y en a qui font des sorties au Maupuy. On ne prend pas le temps d'aller en forêt ou chercher des champignons.

- Je ne pense pas que les étudiants soient au courant des expositions qui se passent en ville. Je ne sais même pas s'ils sont intéressés par aller voir ce qu'il s'y passe.

- On travaille ici ou chez les uns-les autres, c'est difficile des fois on n'a pas de grands appartements. Et on se retrouve à la Quincaillerie pour les projets tutorés. Mais la plupart travaille ici, vu qu'on a les moyens de réserver des salles.

- La question du repas universitaire est vraiment la bienvenue parce qu'on est les plus touchés. Une sorte de cantine accessible universitaire pour nous et un commerce de proximité comme quand il y avait Lidl avant.»

« - I come from a rural area and I have chosen to come to Guéret, I like the atmosphere. I didn't want to go to a big town. For me, social relationships are more important than town itself.

- I was anxious when I have been admitted to the course here but I had no other choice. I told myself "Oh, I'm far from my family so I was afraid to feel lonely." Happily, once arrived in Guéret everything has been fine.

- It's difficult to have a relationship with other study programs because it takes time and we have to start again each year, students stay only two years. No help of the administration to communicate, no representatives, we cope on our own.

- I discovered a lot of associations but it wasn't so easy to find them.

- There are many concerts in *Bar de la Poste*.

- We can do everything on foot even go dancing. That's really nice.

- Some of us have a car so we help each other for grocery shopping, since shops are far. The only little grocery Monoprix in city centre is too expensive.

- Each of us lives in city centre.

- There is no social mix with elderly, we are 500 students here and have a different lifestyle than them. We won't see anyone in the streets on Sundays. A lot of old people do their shopping at the weekly market on Saturdays but students have already left to come back home.

- We go to Pop'A commercial centre because of our tiny budget. I really would prefer to see those shops in city centre. I grew up here in Guéret

and I saw the degradation of the situation. I'm not as sad as my grandmother but nonetheless I'm sad.

- Even for us, who didn't grow up there, we find it too bad not finding shops in pedestrian streets. We could go for a walk on Saturday afternoon and then have a drink. In fact, it is quickly achieved and anyway, shops close early.

- We drive to Courtille<sup>1</sup> to hang out when the weather is nice. We hang out at each other's places or we go and see our friends sport matches.

- Some of us drive to Maupuy<sup>2</sup>. We don't take the time to go into forest not even to pick mushrooms.

- I don't think students are aware of exhibitions. I am not even sure they are interested in local events.

- We try to work together but it is not easy because our apartments are so small.

We meet up in *la Quincaillerie*<sup>3</sup> for tutorial but most of us work here in a booked classroom.

- We would really enjoy to have a university cafeteria and the reopening of a small supermarket like Lidl before.»

1 . nautical base

2. a hill around Guéret

3. third place, free access to computers, classes and social meeting point

# REFERENCES

THE REFERENCES BELOW GUIDED THE REFLECTIONS ON THE DESIGN AND ALSO ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PROGRAMS.



## URBAN PROMENADE

CHALLIERS  
ATELIER ROUGET ARCHITECTES  
DELIVERED IN 2014

The small village Chaliers (France) sits above a river, along a road. The project is divided into tiny landscape interventions to requalify three small squares.

The keys of the projects lie in the using of the stone as a tool to draw space hierarchy. It emphasises the landscape by small platforms and it gives importance to any changes even to the garage shelter.



SOURCE : ALAZARD B. (2015) REQUALIFICATION DES ESPACES PUBLICS – CHALLIERS (ONLINE IMAGE). RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.ATELIERARCHITECTURE.FR/REQUALIFICATION-ESPACES-PUBLICS-CHALLIERS/](http://www.atelierarchitecture.fr/requalification-espaces-publics-challiers/)  
SOURCE : ATELIER DU ROUGET - NICOLAS LAMOUREUX (2015) REQUALIFICATION DES ESPACES PUBLICS – CHALLIERS (ONLINE IMAGE). RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.ATELIERARCHITECTURE.FR/REQUALIFICATION-ESPACES-PUBLICS-CHALLIERS/](http://www.atelierarchitecture.fr/requalification-espaces-publics-challiers/)



## SIMILAR SCALE PROJECT

MANDAILLES-SAINT-JULIEN  
ATELIER ROUGET ARCHITECTES  
DELIVERED IN 2019

This project combined three interventions in the countryside in France :

- a rehabilitation of an old farm next to the townhall for the covered market (pictures);
- - the transformation of the previous school into a short stay building for the local athletes and for the tourists;
- the renovation of public spaces and a new pedestrian path far from the road.

The buildings have a shared dialogue and create a synergy around the village.



SOURCE : ALAZARD B. (2019) STATION DE PLEINE NATURE, MANDAILLES-SAINT-JULIEN (ONLINE IMAGE). RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.ATELIERARCHITECTURE.FR/STATION-DE-PLEINE-NATURE-MANDAILLES/](http://www.atelierarchitecture.fr/station-de-pleine-nature-mandailles/)

# REFERENCES

THE REFERENCES BELOW GUIDED THE REFLECTIONS ON THE DESIGN AND ALSO ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PROGRAMS.



## PROGRAM, SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

LA FERME DU RAIL  
GRAND HUIT ARCHITECTES,  
PARIS, FRANCE DELIVERED IN SEPTEMBER 2019

*La Ferme du Rail* is the winner of the Call for Innovative Urban Projects «*Reinventer Paris*», launched in November 2014 by the City of Paris, on the plot located at *2 bis rue de l'Ourcq*, in the 19th arrondissement. Following the wish of locals the desire of locals (residents and associations) to develop a place that combines urban agriculture and solidarity, *La Ferme du Rail* aims to integrate precarious people in the construction.

The project proposed the construction of an integrated agri-urban space, including:

- housing: a housing for precarious people and social reintegration centre with 15 units; and a student social residence with 5 units
- an agricultural holding: greenhouse with vegetables, mushroom farm and several cultivated outdoor areas, such as permaculture, aquapony and agroforestry;
- a restaurant: open to the neighbourhood, with a devant affordable cuisine that expresses itself in a few words: «Eating well, living better. Good products, local suppliers and love».

Materials are reused, bio based and local (regional straw, artisanal know-how, reused tiles, soil pollution solved by a layer of compost,...).



SOURCE : PERSONAL PICTURE, 2019



## PROGRAM, SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

LES GRANDS VOISINS  
AURORE, YES WE CAMP, PLATEAU URBAIN.  
PARIS, FRANCE 2015-2020

Temporary occupation of the former Saint-Vincent-de-Paul hospital in Paris

- 600 beds for people in vulnerable situations;
- 250 associations, startups, artisans and artists to deploy their activities in a new environment;
- Café-restaurant *l'Oratoire*: healthy and cheap catering, service and cooking are partly provided by people in reintegration. Catering middays and evenings. Fresh, local and seasonal products + «caffè sospeso or suspended meals»
- *Lingerie*: bar offering snacks, a party room with free programming and a cultural and convivial place open to all.



SOURCE : LES GRANDS VOISINS, L'ORATOIRE – RESTAURANT COMMUN [ONLINE IMAGE]. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://LESGRANDSVOISINS.ORG/LES-LIEUX-OUVERTS/BAR-ET-RESTAURANT/LE-RESTAURANT-ORATOIRE/](https://lesgrandsvoisins.org/les-lieux-ouverts/bar-et-restaurant/le-restaurant-oratoire/)



# REFERENCES

THE REFERENCES BELOW GUIDED THE REFLECTIONS ON THE DESIGN AND ALSO ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PROGRAMS.



## PROGRAM, CONSTRUCTIVE SYSTEM

MARKET HALL  
MILLER & MARANTA

AAREU SWITZERLAND DELIVERED IN 2002

The shape of the building follows the boundaries of the plot, which was a large open space in the centre of the Aarau after the supermarket's demolition 20 years ago. The building is an open-air market built in a wooden structure lying on a concrete podium. A real dialog is created between the medieval facades and the pavilion due to the low-rise scale of the surroundings and the narrow alleys. The program is not fixed, the building offers a large covered surface for year-round use of diverse types of events like markets. We can look through the hall and glimpse the forecourt with trees ideal to relax.



SOURCE : WALTI R. (2015) [ONLINE IMAGE]. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://DIVISARE.COM/PROJECTS/304602-RUEDI-WALTI-MILLER-MARANTA-MARKET-HALL-IN-AARAU](https://divisare.com/projects/304602-ruedi-walti-miller-maranta-market-hall-in-aarau)



## PROGRAM, CONSTRUCTIVE SYSTEM

HALLE DE SAUTRON  
CHOUZENOUX ARCHITECTURE

SAUTRON, FRANCE 2014

The vertical panels are a metal structure covered with wood cladding. They can be completely opened to have a perfect continuity between the public spaces and the park on the other side for the market. The hall can also be closed for specific events. The market hall is flexible in terms of programs thanks to the vast surface, concerts and exhibitions could take place. The pipes are hidden by a wooden ceiling and a roof window composed of solar panels lights up the inside with colorful glazing. No artificial light is needed during the day. The timber has a sustainable label and the rainwater is collected for the hall maintenance and to water the park.



SOURCE : CHALMEAU, S. HALLE COUVERTE DE LA LINIERE [ONLINE IMAGE]. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://WWW.AMC-ARCHI.COM/PHOTOS/CHOUZENOUX-ARCHITECTURE-HALLES-COUVERTES.384/VUE-D-ENSEMBLE-HALLE-COVERT1](https://www.amc-archi.com/photos/chouzenoux-architecture-halles-couvertes.384/vue-d-ensemble-halle-couvert1)  
SOURCE : CHOUZENOUX-ARCHITECTURE, [ONLINE IMAGE]. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTPS://WWW.CHOUZENOUX-ARCHITECTURE.FR/PROJETS/EQUIPEMENT/HALLE-DE-SAUTRON](https://www.chouzenoux-architecture.fr/projets/equipement/halle-de-sautron)





**CHALMERS**  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY