

48 Rue de Meaux

Transformation of a vacant Parisian Hôtel Meublé into social housing through an exploration of its inherent values



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Abstract

Paris is facing an ongoing housing crisis, with thousands of people experiencing homelessness at the same time as a large portion of the building stock is vacant. A type of hotels, “Hôtels Meublés”, have historically functioned as a housing solution for individuals struggling to find permanent housing, but the number of such hotels have rapidly declined during the mid 20th century due to demolition or transformation into tourist hotels. This thesis argues for transforming the remaining Hôtels Meublés, many of which are in very poor condition, into social housing, and does so through a case study of an 1863 vacant hotel located in Paris’s 19th arrondissement.

An assessment of the building’s condition, together with a discussion on its inherent values is conducted. The values are discussed in relation to the building’s age, its social function, its monetary worth, and its connection to the city, drawing on the terms “Age Value”, “Use Value”, “Exchange Value” and “Locus” from writings by Alois Riegl (1903/1982), Aldo Rossi (1966/1984), and Henri Lefebvre as interpreted by Purcell (2002). This analysis leads to the choice

of Facadism as a transformation strategy. A distinction is thereby made between the preservation of the facades, and the adaptation of the interiors to contemporary standards.

Interior access to the building is not granted by the current property owners, which is why a video interview published by Le Parisien in 2022 is used to study the interior spaces. The existing is approached from a perspective of adaptive reuse with the objective of reconfiguring the interior spaces to achieve a higher standard of living. The project results in a total of 15 fully equipped apartments as well as shared facilities for cooking, washing and socialization.

This thesis addresses the housing crisis on a building scale and does not claim a solution to homelessness. It does however intend to show an example of how the transformation of one abandoned building can contribute to the continuation of a building type characteristic of Paris, while also filling an important function in a city with a seemingly endless demand for housing.

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01 Introduction

To have a home is a right stated as part of article number 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). However, the number of people experiencing homelessness is on the rise in most European countries (FEANTSA & Fondation pour le Logement des Défavorisés, 2025), which show that the right to a home, for many, is not fulfilled. Paris, which is the most densely populated city in the European Union (Eurostat, 2020) shows a rise of homelessness since the end of the Covid 19 Pandemic (APUR, 2025, p.7). At the same time as the level of homelessness is high, empty buildings are a familiar sight in the city.

In Paris's 19th arrondissement, on the corner of the crossing between Rue de Meaux and Rue de Bouret, lies a five story building with the word "Hotel" written on a large sign fastened on the corner balcony. This building used to be a so called "Hôtel Meublé" (Furnished Hotel), which during the 19th and 20th century became a common housing solution for the working class, migrants, or other individuals that struggled to secure long term rental contracts (Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme,

2011, p. 37). The building located at 48 Rue de Meaux has been abandoned since 2023 and the exploration of how it can be transformed into housing is the main subject of this thesis.

If we start to see vacant buildings as assets that could be transformed and reused as housing, we could have a part of the solution to the housing crisis in front of us. Adaptive reuse of vacant buildings provide a possibility for the preservation of local identity and cultural heritage, support for the greening of the building stock and the reduction of demolition waste while contributing to the housing production (Remøy et al., 2025).

The building is approached with a curiosity for how care, repair and reuse of existing materials and building elements, even though they are in a deteriorated state, can be maintained, can be used as a tool to save resources while creating architecturally interesting and qualitative spaces. The building is also examined on a broader scale, and its role and value within the urban context is analysed.

02 Framework

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how the existing building stock can offer opportunities for new housing in a time of severe housing shortages. It further aims to explore how prioritizing other values than monetary value can lead to new approaches to the relationship between new and old in a transformation project.

Through spatial and material exploration, the project investigates how preserving and reusing existing elements, together with the integration of new materials and elements, can revitalize a building type historically associated with poor and unsafe housing conditions.

On a theoretical level, the project explores how recognizing the inherent qualities of buildings often considered as obsolete can support their preservation and reactivation while conserving resources and contributing to solutions for the housing crisis.

Thesis questions

How can a deteriorated building from 1863 be transformed to accommodate contemporary housing while preserving its historical identity?

How can existing building elements be preserved and reused to contribute to the creation of new housing?

Delimitations

This project does not claim a solution to homelessness, nor does it intend to undermine the complexity of the issue. It rather seeks to explore how more housing can be created by using the existing building stock as a starting point.

The current property owners were contacted at the beginning of the project in an attempt to gain interior access to the building. Access was not granted as they did not respond, which is why video material from a news report published by the newspaper Le Parisien is used as the main source for studying the interiors of the building.

This has shaped the scale and the level of detail at which the project has been carried out. It is also the reason why assumptions regarding for example materials and their condition have been made in some cases. Whenever this occurs, the assumptions are clearly stated.

Technical examinations of for example

the structural soundness and the building's energy performance have not been conducted. Nor has the economical feasibility of the project been assessed, although economic awareness in interventions have been a guiding principle for design choices.

Use of AI

AI has been used during the work of this thesis to help translate and explain certain words using ChatGPT. This was mostly used to double check my understanding of certain french vocabulary and expressions that I had not heard before. An example of a prompt used was: What is meant with the word "juteuse" in the expression "L'affaire est juteuse?".

03 Method

An abandoned hotel located at 48 Rue de Meaux in Paris's 19th arrondissement was chosen as an object of study for the thesis. The building's history was examined through the study of available drawings and associated text documents found at the Archives of Paris. The building's historical context and social function was understood through literature studies focused on Hôtel Meublés, Paris's architectural history and news coverage on the chosen building. Broader research on the themes of homelessness, Social Housing in France, adaptive reuse of buildings and architectural theory were also conducted through literature studies.

The exterior of the building as well as the surrounding neighborhood was studied and documented during several site visits through photography and drawing. The interior of the building was studied via video material published by the newspaper Le Parisien. Interior elements, materials and the overall current condition was documented through drawings and the collection of images from the available video material. The mapping of the existing building resulted in the identification of

several areas for interventions which were: Floors, Windows, Fireplaces, Mirrors and Transparency, and Storage Solutions. An iterative design process was then carried out where different design options and material treatments were tested. Finally, a proposal for transformation of the abandoned hotel into social housing was conducted based on the design iterations.

04 Background

Housing crisis in a Parisian context

Homelessness is a severe issue in Paris with thousands of people sleeping under harsh conditions in the streets (APUR, 2025, p.7). During the 19th and 20th century, Hôtels Meublés, furnished hotels rented out on a weekly or monthly basis, became a housing option for those struggling to find permanent housing (Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme, 2011, p. 37). In the 1930s, there were more than 15 000 Hôtel Meublés in the city, a number that fell drastically during the 20th century with only 665 remaining in 2000. The last official study on the remaining stock of Hôtels Meublés show that although their number have declined, their reception function has become more diversified with the housing crisis and the number of families in precarious situations that are accommodated at Hôtel Meublés has increased (Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme, 2011, p.38).

The profiles of people living at Hôtels Meublés are varied and includes among others, elderly and isolated migrants who have lived in France for a long time and are employed or have a pension or disability benefit, women with children fleeing from abusive homes, and recently arrived migrants with unstable financial resources. The buildings are often very degraded and unfit for housing, and most of those that have disappeared over the years have done so due to either demolition

or transformation into tourist hotels (Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme, 2011, p.38).

The hotel at 48 rue de Meaux is no exception as it, after having remained in the same family for a century (Droit au Logement, 2022a), was sold in 2021 to a property developer with the intention of refurbishing it into a hotel for tourists and resell it shortly thereafter for financial profit (Le Parisien, 2023)). The building was featured in the press in 2022 after the housing rights group Droit au Logement brought to light that the building's residents faced eviction due to the property transaction (Droit au Logement, 2022a). At the time, 29 residents lived in the building, some of which had lived there for more than 20 years, and many of them were elderly and ill. Only one of the residents had another housing option sorted at the time of eviction, showcasing the resident's vulnerability. The inhumane living conditions in the building were revealed in the light of the case receiving attention in the media. A video documentary segment published by the newspaper Le Parisien (2022) on the residents fight against their impending eviction shows tiny rooms in a very deteriorated state, no kitchens and only one toilet per floor and one single shower for all residents to share (Le Parisien, 2022).

Despite the poor conditions of their

homes, the residents at 48 Rue de Meaux fought hard against being evicted as they had nowhere else to go. In Le Parisien's video segment (2022), the at the time Deputy Mayor of Paris in charge of housing and emergency accommodation, Ian Brossat, expressed disdain over the situation and said that the municipality planned on repurchasing the building to transform it into social housing. At the time of writing this thesis, approximately three and a half years after the video report with Brossat's statement was published, the plan of transforming the building shows no signs of being underway. The building has instead been sealed up with bricks and is left to fall into disrepair, creating an urban void in the neighborhood.

This thesis sees the valuable function the building historically has played in providing housing for people lacking other options, while recognizing its current inhabitable condition. It therefore denounces both demolition and transformation into a tourist hotel, and instead seeks to examine the third option: transformation into social housing.

Social housing and “Un chez soi d’abord”

In France there are several systems and strategies in place that aim at ensuring housing for its residents. One of them is Social Housing which all French citizens or foreigners with a valid residence permit that fall within set income limits can apply for (City of Paris, 2026). The housing is divided into four categories with different income limits and rent rates that vary between regions. In Paris, 71% of residents are eligible to apply for some category of social housing (City of Paris, 2026). The Social Housing system is managed by public or semi-public organizations and financed through state subsidies and loans relying heavily on savings from private citizens through the french public financial institution Caisse des Dépôts (Vie-publique, 2019). Local authorities are often guarantors for the loans, enabling lower borrowing costs by reducing financial risks.

France also has a program implemented to help people in precarious housing situations or direct homelessness to stable housing and a better life called Un chez soi d’abord (Housing First) (Délégation interministérielle à l’hébergement et à l’accès au logement [DIHAL], n.d-a). The concept was launched in New York under the name “Housing First” in the 1990s with successful results, and adopted as a pilot project in France in 2011. Since 2016 the French version of “Housing First”; “Un Chez-

Soi d’Abord” has been more widely implemented as a strategy to mitigate the homelessness crisis.

According to DIHAL (n.d-a), homeless people live on average 30 years shorter lives than the average population, and a third of those living on the streets are suffering from severe psychological illnesses. Un Chez-Soi d’Abord is built on the idea that housing is a fundamental right and that rapid access to permanent housing is a prerequisite for the reintegration of people in precarious life situations back to a functioning life (DIHAL, n.d.-a). Other than providing housing, the program also involves personalized care and support for as long as necessary. In its aim to provide longterm, permanent housing, the program naturally opposes the idea of shelters and temporary housing solutions. Un Chez-Soi d’Abord has proven to be beneficial in several ways; after five years of the program being implemented in France, the wellbeing of the participants had increased at the same time as the program had entailed savings of public money (DIHAL, n.d.-b).

In his book “Designing for the homeless: Architecture that works” (2004) architect and author Sam Davis discusses experiences from his professional career, largely dedicated to projects relating to housing for the homeless. He emphasizes that

architecture should do more than provide homeless people with shelter: it must sustain their hope and dignity. He also claims that architectural elements have the power to signal that a building is a dignified and important place, and that by association, so are its residents. Davis also discusses the importance of aiding socialisation for people recovering from homelessness by working with spatial interventions that help foster a sense of community. Similar ideas can be found in the “Un Chez-Soi d’Abord” program, as one of the program’s objectives is to combat isolation by facilitating contact with family, friends and neighbors (DIHAL, n.d.-b).

(Adj. - G. N° 5189.)

DESCRIPTION DE L'IMMEUBLE

Rue de *St Louis* N° *48*
angle rue Bonnet N° 34

LONGUEUR DE FAÇADE <i>13.90</i>	11.90	NOMBRE DE COURS	1
PROFONDEUR <i>12.00</i>	14.70	COURETTES	1
SUPERFICIE <i>180</i>	174.93	NATURE DU SOL DES COURS	<i>Ciment</i>
ENTRÉE { 1 ^{re} porte charretière	ouvrant sur un vestibule	COURETTES	<i>8 m</i>
2 ^{de} porte bâtarde		une allée	
NOMBRE DE CORPS DE BATIMENT	1	NATURE DES CONSTRUCTIONS	<i>En milieu de constructions</i>

Mode d'écoulement des eaux	INTÉRIEUR		EXTÉRIEUR		OBSERVATIONS
	ÉVIER dans les logements	PLUMB D'ÉTAGE devant les bûtes des bûtes habitées	CANIVEAU COUVERT	BRANCHEMENT d'égout (10)	
		<i>7.3</i>	1	1	<i>2 p. 2 can. Canal tout commun dans les courtes</i>

Nombre et nature des systèmes de vidange	FOSSÉS		SYSTÈME		ÉCOULEMENT		AÉRÉS DIRECTEMENT	AÉRÉS en SECOND JOUR
	FIXES (1)	MOBILES (2)	DIVINCA (3)	DIRECT (4)	particuliers	communs (11)		
	1						4	

Nombre de chutes 1
 Nombre de ventilateurs 1

Eaux de source (6)	USAGE ALIMENTAIRE	USAGE INDUSTRIEL	NATURE DE L'ABONNEMENT		OBSERVATIONS
			COMPTEUR	JACQUE	
de rivière (7)	1		1		<i>une fontaine couverte</i>

Nombre de logements.

1 ^{er} corps de bâtiment	R. de ch.	1 ^{er} étage	2 ^e étage	3 ^e étage	4 ^e étage	5 ^e étage	6 ^e étage	Sur cave ou sur terre-plein
		<i>10 ch</i>	<i>7 ch</i>	<i>7 ch</i>	<i>8 ch</i>	<i>12 ch</i>		
<i>Rue de Meaux angle Bonnet</i>								<i>Cave</i>

Établissements Industriels (16) *Coiffeur, Vins, Boucher, Blanchisseur*

Nombre d'habitants *41*
 - de boutiques sur rue *3*
 - de pièces habitées prenant jour sur des courtes (8) *10*

Époque de la construction de la maison *1863* Le *10 Novembre 1894*
93-7-10

Fig. 1 Part of documentation from 1921 indicating among other things year of construction (1863), number of rooms per floor as well as number of boutiques (3).

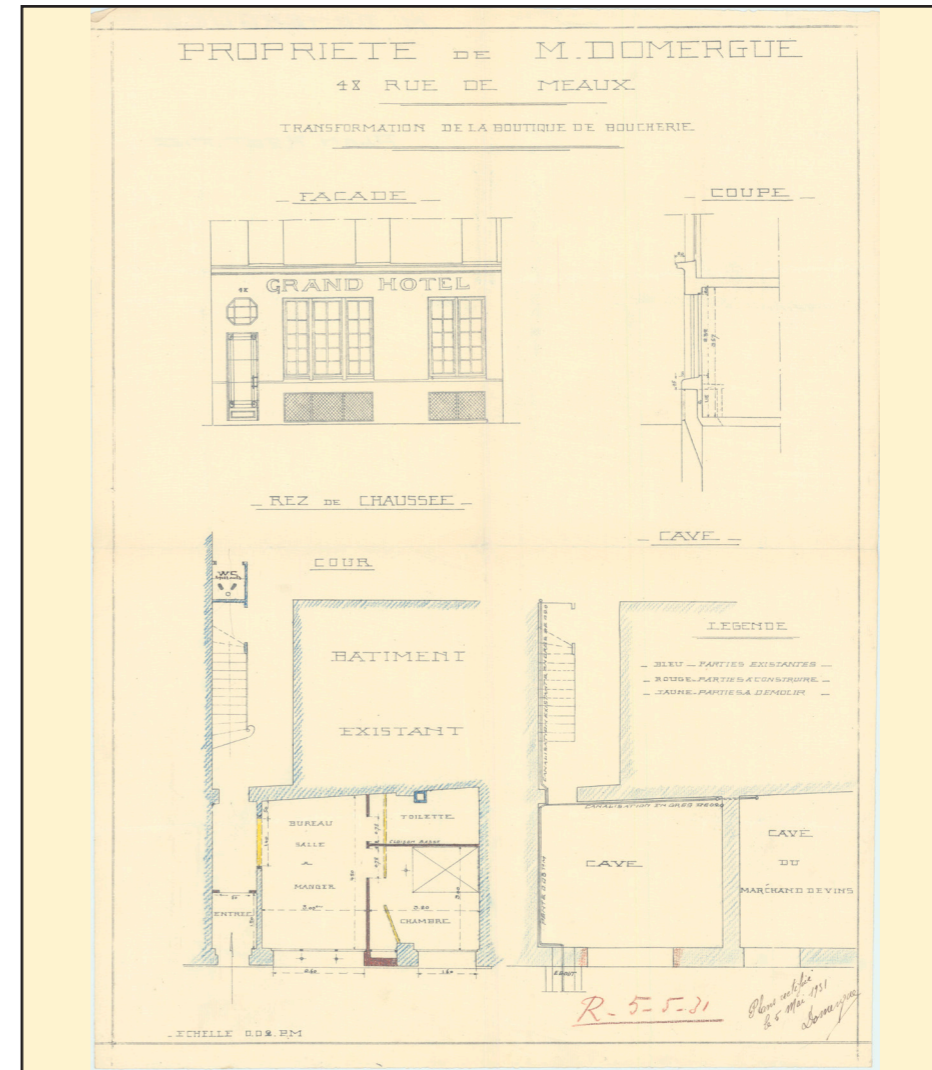


Fig. 2 North-west facade, detail section and plan drawing of the ground floor and cellar shows the 1931 changes.

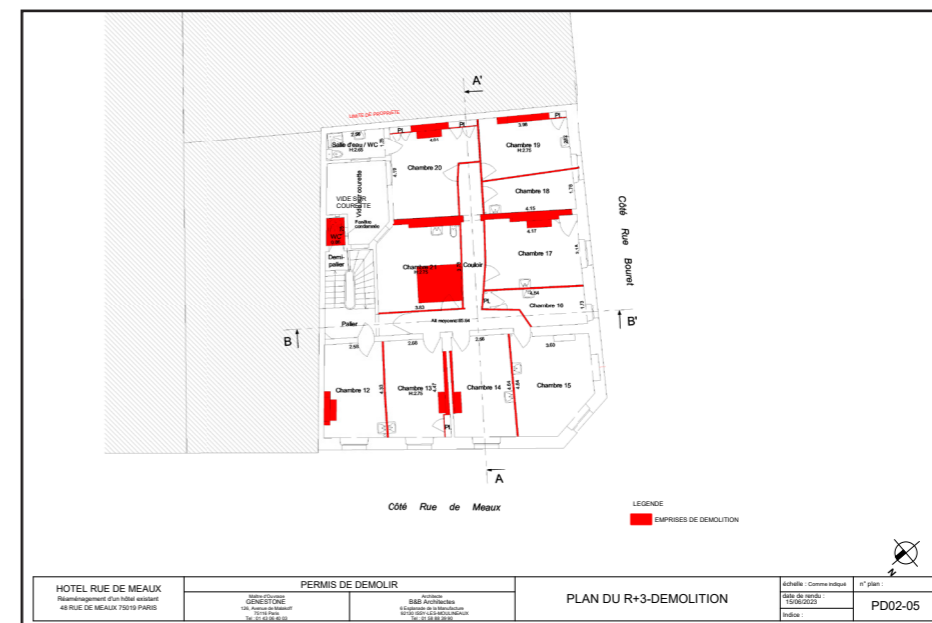
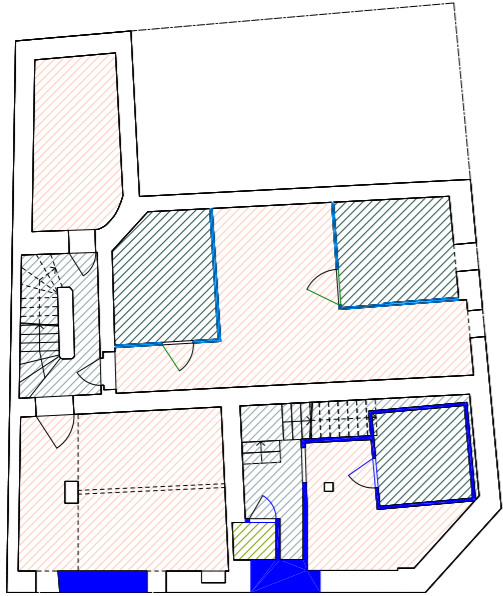


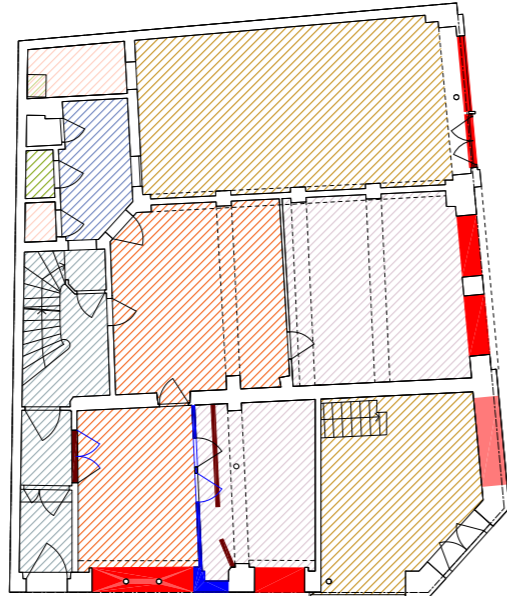
Fig. 3 2023 Plan showing existing building with planned demolitions marked in red. Part of a document "Permis de Demolir" (Permit to Demolish).

Archive Findings

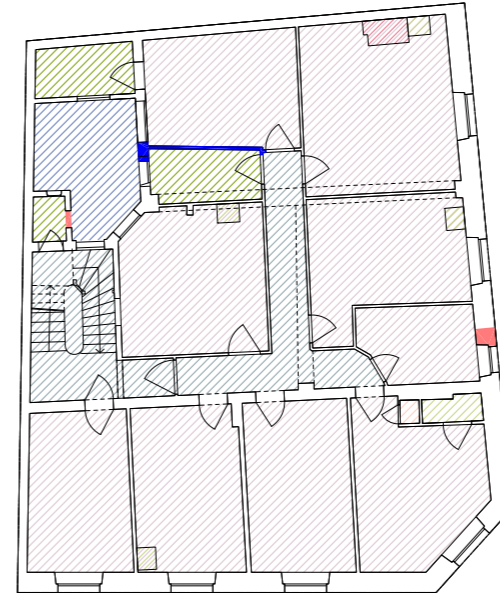
Plan -1



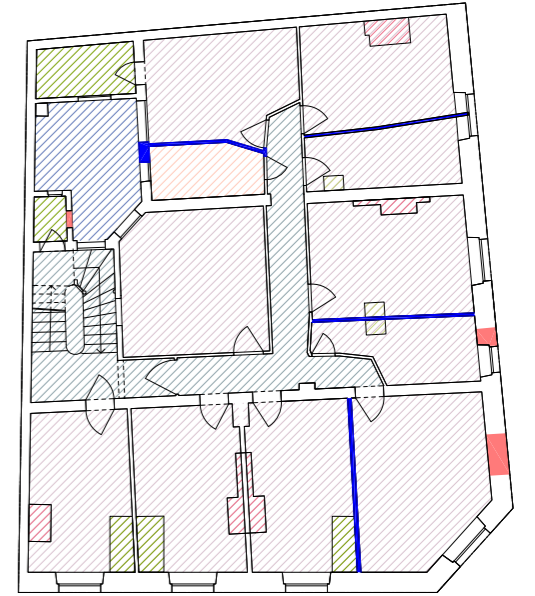
Plan 0



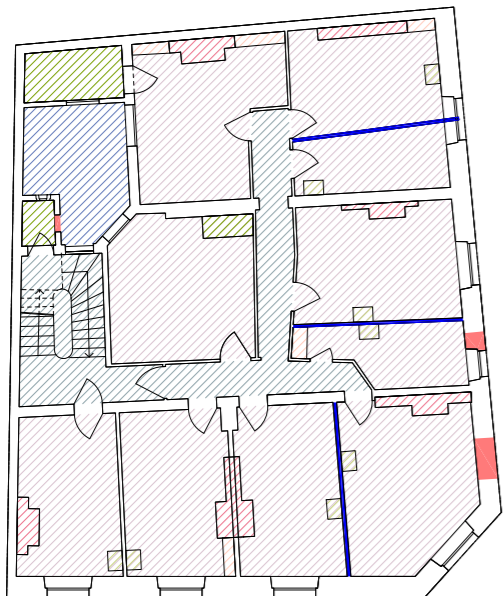
Plan 1



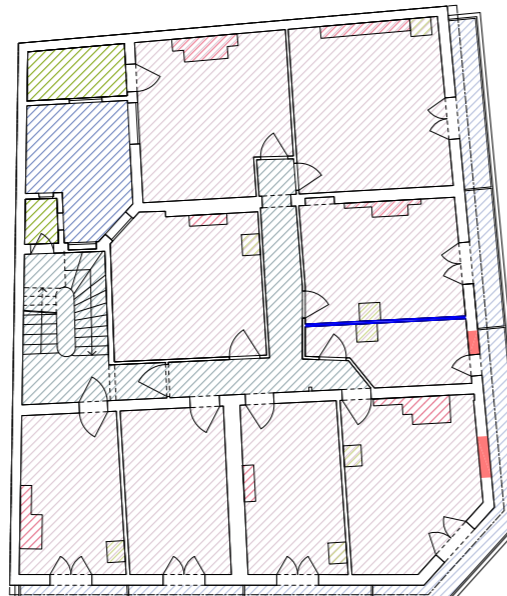
Plan 2



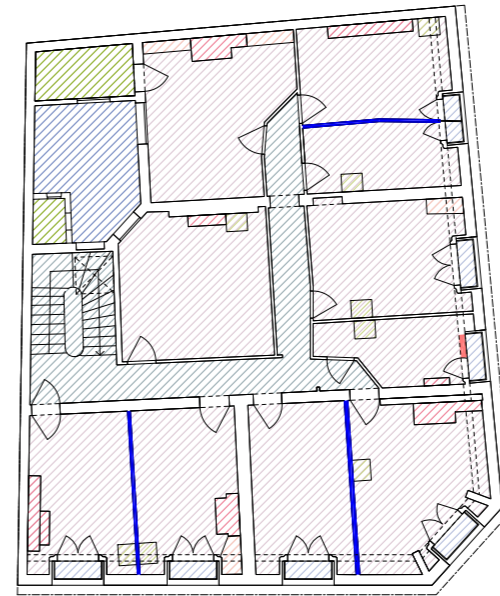
Plan 3



Plan 4



Plan 5



Room Functions in 2023

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| Room | Fireplace |
| Bathroom | Commercial |
| Sink | Office |
| Circulation | Balcony |
| Courtyard | Technical |
| Storage | |

Historical Changes

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Added after 1921 | Removed in 1921 |
| Added after 1931 | Removed after 2022 |
| Original | Removed unknown year |

Historical Context

Studying the façades of 48 Rue de Meaux and its details, offers a glimpse into a bygone era.

The building can be categorized as a faubourg building, a faubourg being a term describing the new, often working class areas that were built in the outskirts of Paris when the city grew during the 18th and 19th century (Loyer, 1988). Today, many of the faubourgs are centrally located neighbourhoods as a result of the city's intense expansion at the time.

The façades of 48 Rue de Meaux show influences typical of 18th-century timber-framed houses, as well as the desire for regularity and order typical of architecture from the restoration era, while also showcasing elements associated with the Second Empire.

Typically, the chimneys in faubourg architecture are aligned with the gable walls of a building as these were the main load-bearing elements of the structure in comparison to the rest of the walls which were of a lighter timber structure (Loyer, 1988). Together with the high lateral façades, the clay flues formed a homogeneous and distinctive skyline

easy to recognize as Parisian.

During the reign of Louis XIV, regulations regarding the relationship between street width and building height were firmly set and remained unchainged until 1859 (Loyer, 1988). For streets wider than 9.75m, the building height was set to six stories of 2.92m, resulting in a high degree of uniformity. 48 Rue de Meaux was built a couple of years later, in 1863, but is following a similar logic.

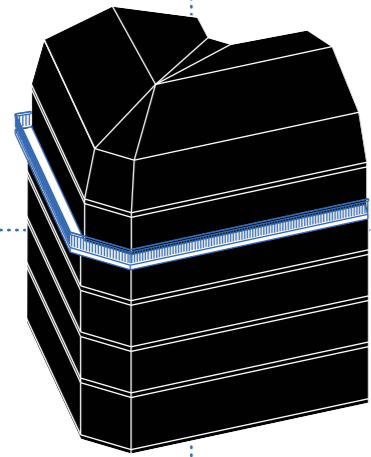
In large, the hotel could be categorised as a restoration building, with restrained facades absent of decorative features. Defining elements of a restoration building, also apparent at 48 Rue de Meaux, are tall, rectangular sized windows uniform in size and alignment as well as cornices, horizontal decorative bands intended to create visual separation between floors (Loyer, 1988). One single connected balcony running along an upper floor, as seen on 48 Rue de Meaux, is also a typical feature of restoration architecture. As building height and floor height were often similar between adjacent structures, wrought-iron barriers were required to separate apartments from

each other. Wrought iron was also used as window ornamentation as seen in the volute design at 48 Rue de Meaux.

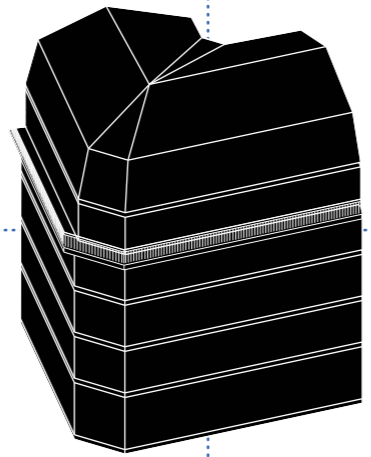
As a contrasting feature to the otherwise rigid and similar-looking façades, wooden exterior shutters were frequently used to break up the facades from the late eighteenth century and onwards (Loyer, 1988). The cut corner found at 48 Rue de Meaux however goes against the taste for simple geometry in restoration architecture, as it is an element that was introduced on corner buildings built after 1840 as a way to soften the transition between perpendicular facades. Around the same time, mansard roofs which had been out of fashion reappeared, now clad in the increasingly popular material zinc which replaced clay tiles as a more affordable alternative. The recessed top story, also found at 48 Rue de Meaux, became popular during the restoration as well.

A diagrammatic study of the building elements of 48 Rue de Meaux in relation to its historical context is showcased on the next spread.

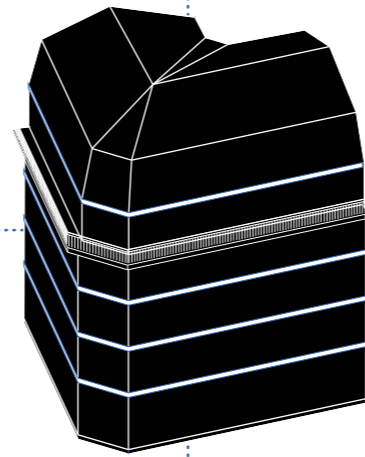
Historical Typological Diagrams



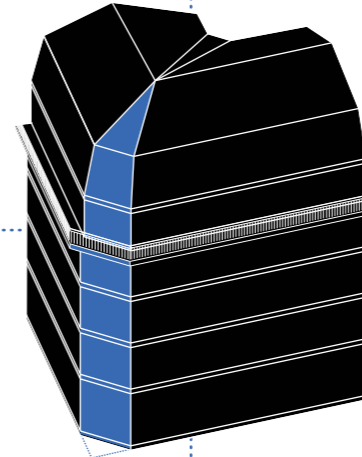
1:200
Continuous Balcony



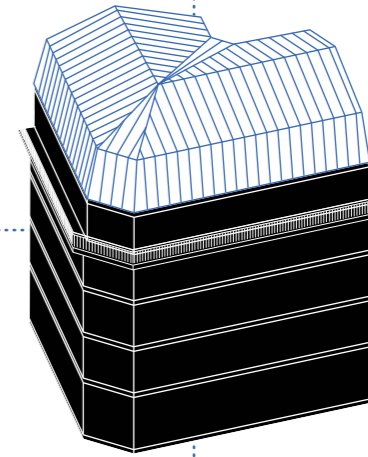
1:200
Building Height



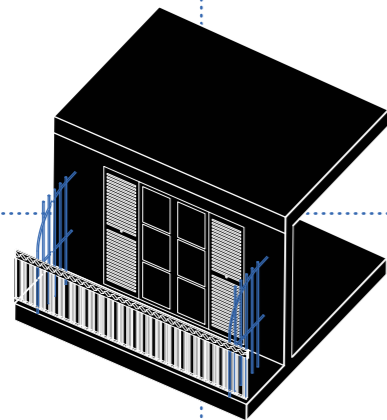
1:200
Cornices



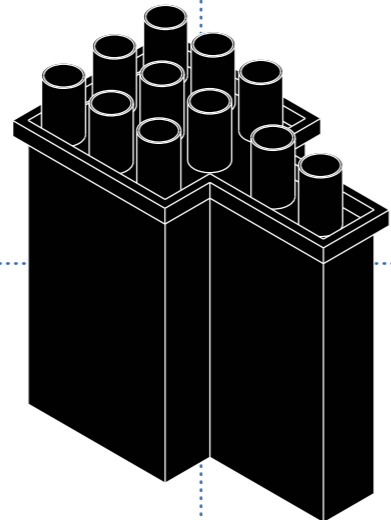
1:200
Cut corners



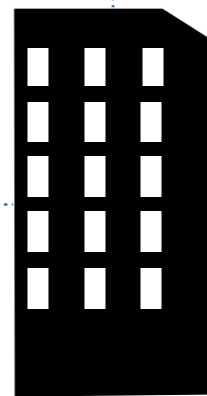
1:200
Mansard Roof



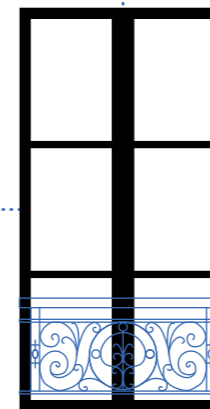
1:50
Wrought Iron Barriers



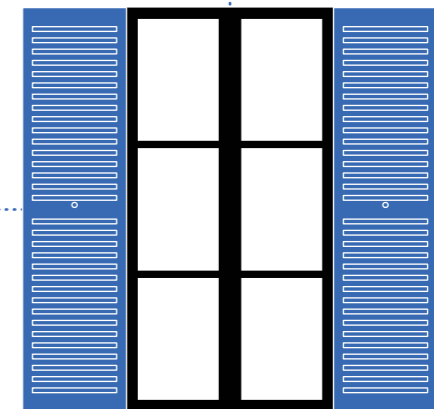
1:20
Chimneys



1:200
Window Regularity



1:20
Wrought Iron Window Ornamentation



1:20
Window Shutters

05 Value theories

This thesis departs from the notion that, in the context of the climate crisis, limiting resource use is essential to mitigating the construction industry's impact on the climate. Transformation is therefore established as the natural point of departure for the project, rather than demolition and new construction.

However, as a way to assess both the potential extent and possible approaches to transforming the building at 48 Rue de Meaux, different understandings of its inherent values will be examined. These will form the basis for identifying which qualities the design interventions should preserve and develop further.

French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre differentiated between the terms use value and exchange value (Purcell, 2002, p.100). The use value relates to the lived and social function of space while exchange value treats architecture and urban space primarily as a commodity. According to Lefebvre, the use value aspect of urban space must be the first priority when making decisions that produce urban space (Purcell, 2002, p.103). Prioritizing the use value is connected to the right to appropriation and to produce urban space in a way so that it meets the needs of its inhabitants. While Lefebvre's concepts were originally developed in relation to urban space,

an application of them at the scale of the individual building proves helpful in this project to reevaluate 48 Rue de Meaux. The current situation of the building at 48 Rue de Meaux reflects that the building has been regarded as a commodity, which ultimately led to the eviction of its former residents. Historically, priority has thus been given to the exchange value of the building instead of its use value. A switch in priorities where the use value in the form of spatial, material and social qualities are valued above the building's exchange value would allow new ways of seeing the project.

As shown in the chapter Historical Context, 48 Rue de Meaux strongly reflects the 19th-century faubourg typology that has been important in shaping Paris into the city it is today. Even if the building would not be considered valuable as a sole entity, it can be said to encapsulate value connected to its typology. In the text "The modern cult of monuments: Its character and its origin", Alois Riegl (1903/1982) makes a differentiation between intentional and unintentional monuments. He uses the expression age value to describe the value that buildings that were not intentionally built as monuments possess due to the fact that they are old and therefore have become unintentional monuments of a specific period of time. Aldo Rossi (1966/1984) uses the expression

"locus" to describe the character of a place or city defined by its physical place, history and collective memory. If 48 Rue de Meaux is regarded not only as an isolated entity, but rather as an unintentional monument of faubourg architecture with age value, its preservation can be argued to be important for the continuation of the locus of Paris, as faubourg are a significant part of the city's history. From the typological diagrams, we can conclude that the age value is connected to the building's exterior, as it is the facade of 48 Rue de Meaux that tells a story of a bygone time in Paris's history, which supports the idea of its preservation.

However, the building also carries a social heritage that is more conflicting. While the building can be said to have an important use value connected to its history of providing housing for economically vulnerable residents, its physical condition also reflects a history of overcrowding, neglect, and poverty. A way to strengthen the use value of the building would be to support a continuation of its social function, while allowing substantial interior reconfigurations to ensure better living conditions. A preservation of the exterior fabric to sustain the building's age value, combined with a transformation of the interior space aligns with the transformation strategy known as "Facadism", described by Plevoets and

Van Cleempoel as: "working with the dichotomy of interior and exterior" in the book *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline* (Plevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019, p. 35).

The visual expression of the ground floors of faubourg architecture were historically mostly determined by the aesthetics of the specific shops found there, and less by strict rules connected to the typology (Loyer, 1988). The transformation of the bottom floor can thus be said to be less tied to conventions than the rest of a faubourg facade, which can be used as an argument to allow for a bigger freedom of expression of the ground floor when it comes to the contemporary adaptation as well. Using Facadism as a design strategy to transform 48 Rue de Meaux into Social housing would strengthen the continuation of both its use value and its age value, rather than treating it as an object of exchange value.

07 Mapping

Current state



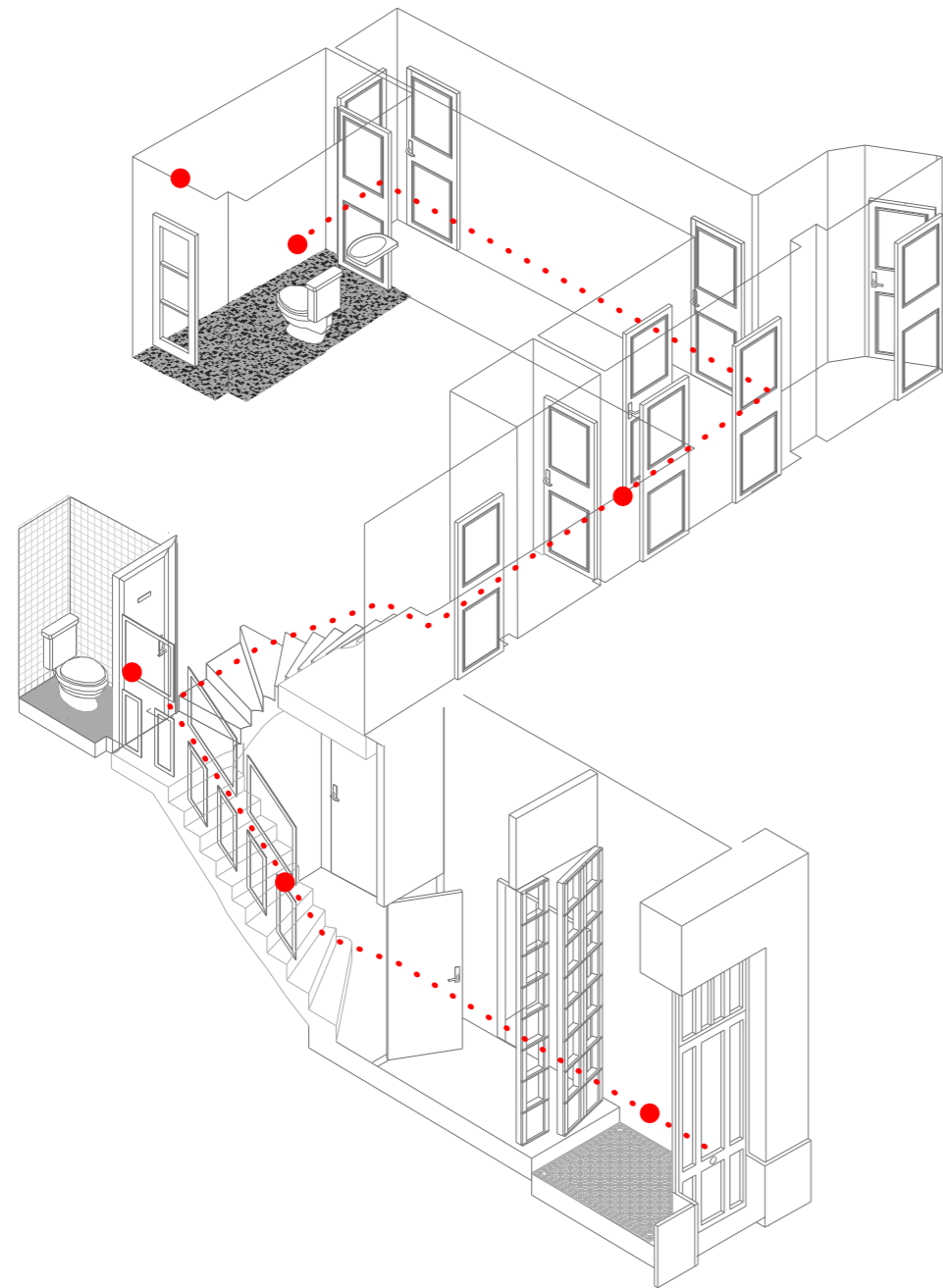
 Closed / Removed

 Broken

Elevation



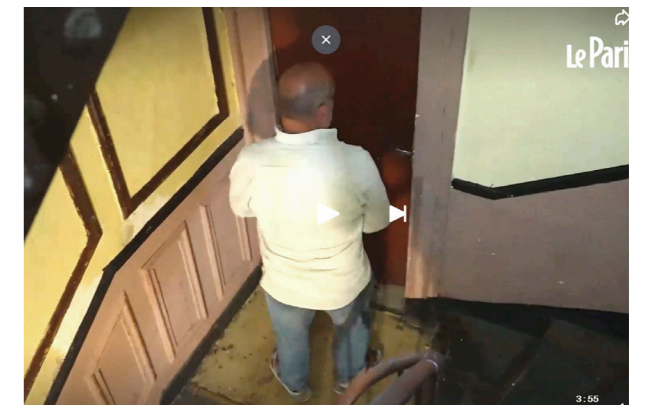
Exterior photographs

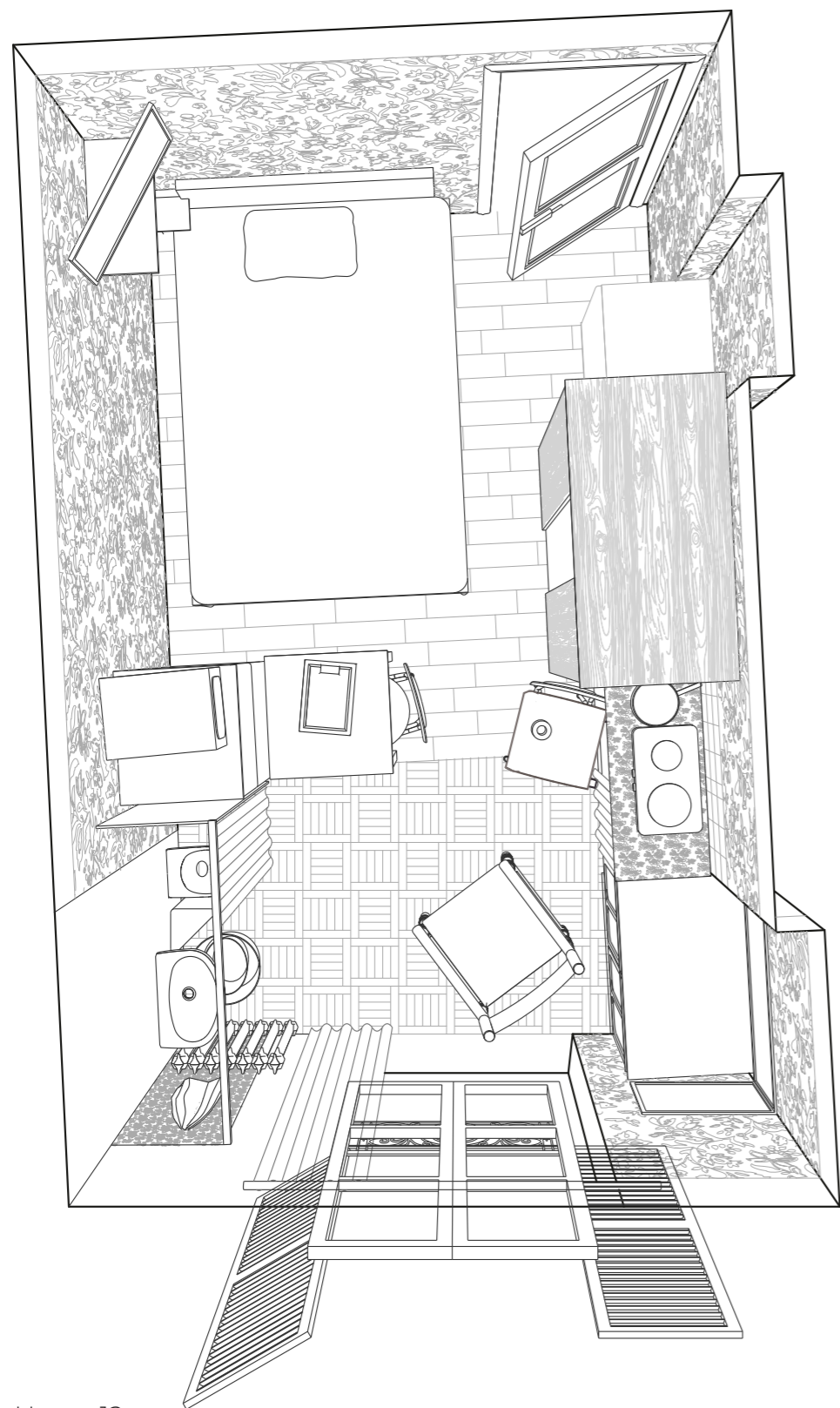


Entrance and circulation area

In the Video interview from Le Parisien (2022), the deteriorated state of the building is showcased. This page shows footage from the shared

spaces as the camera man follows the resident Rabah around who explains the hardships of living under such conditions.



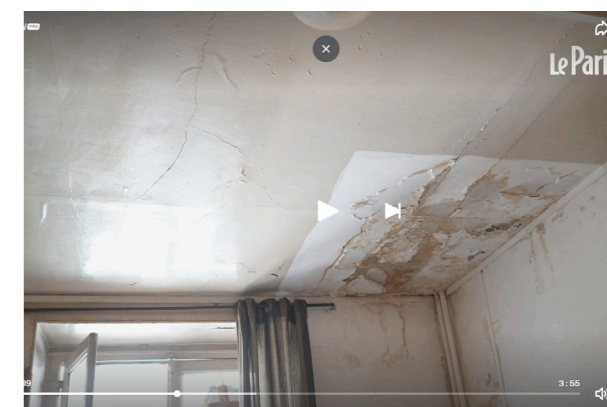
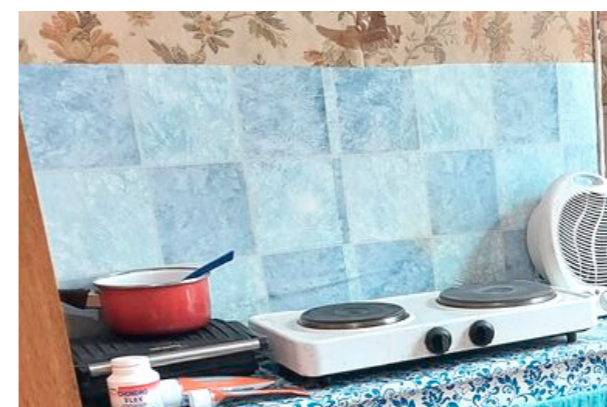
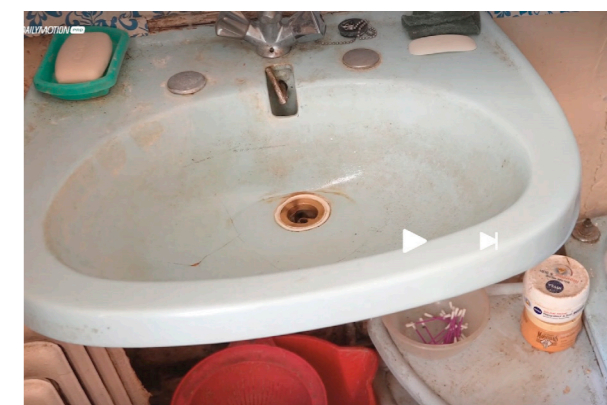
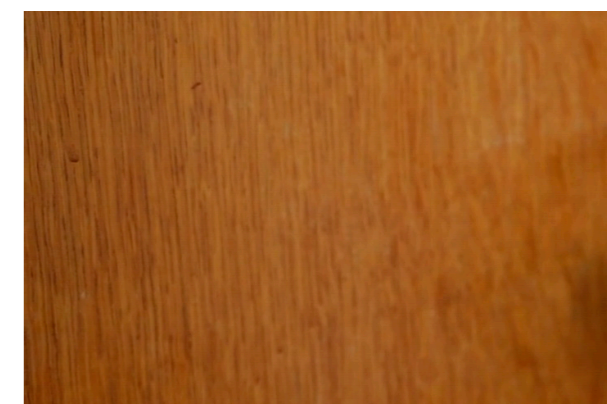


Marcel's Home 12 sqm

Marcel, an elderly man with wet combed hair, welcomes the camera man into his room with a big smile. His room is 12 sqm, a place that he has called home for the past 27 years.

Marcel later passed away on the 9th of February, 2023, at the age of 86 after having contracted pleurisy according to Droit au Logement (2023).

A representative from the organisation claimed that it was "the cold that took him", referring to that Marcel lived his last months without heating or hot water as they were allegedly turned off by the landlord following the eviction in an attempt at forcing the residents to leave.



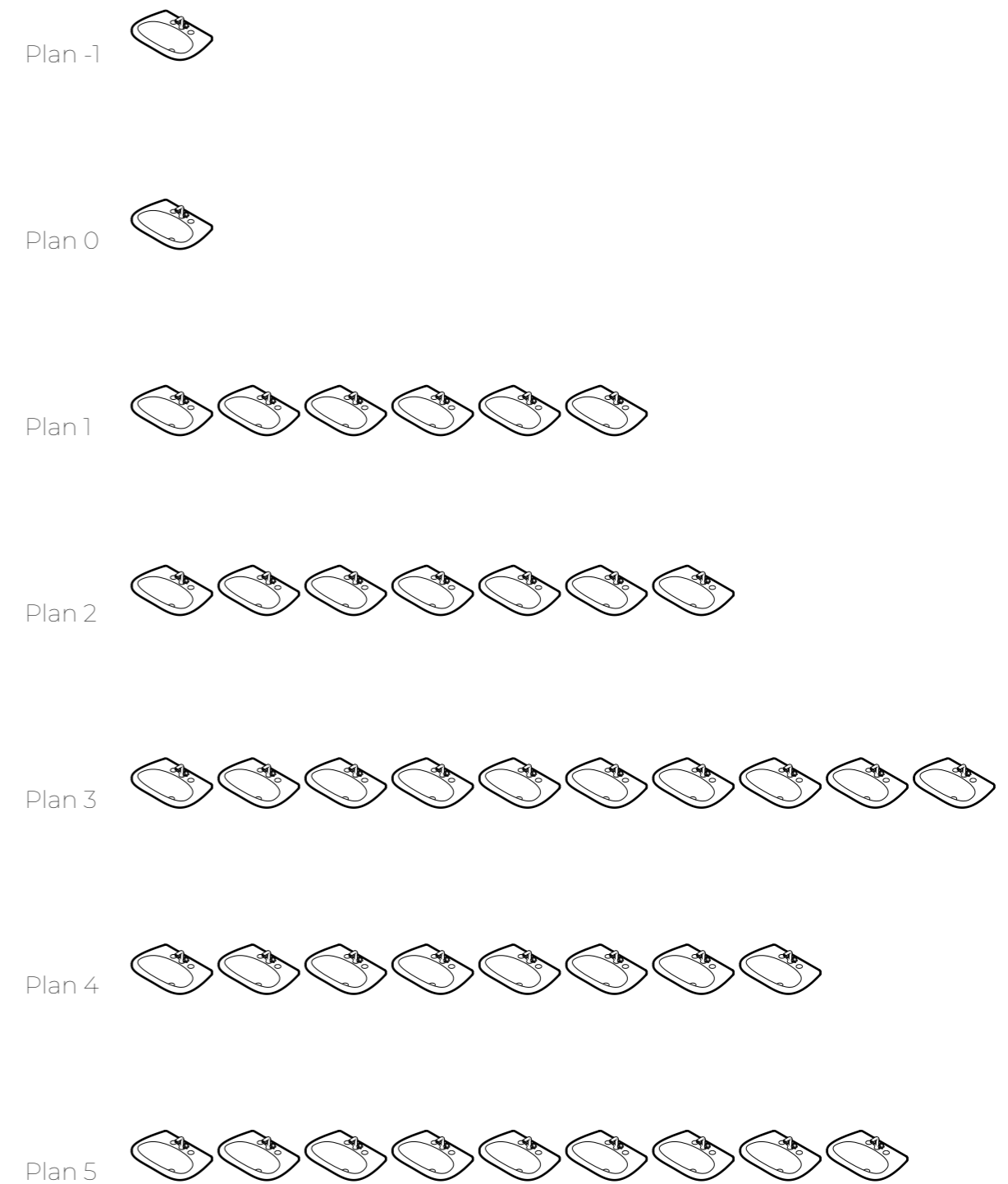
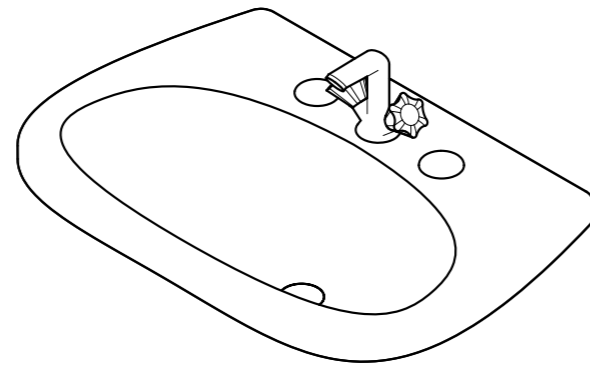
Objects and Materials

In the following chapter, interior objects and materials with potential for reuse are presented.

Sinks

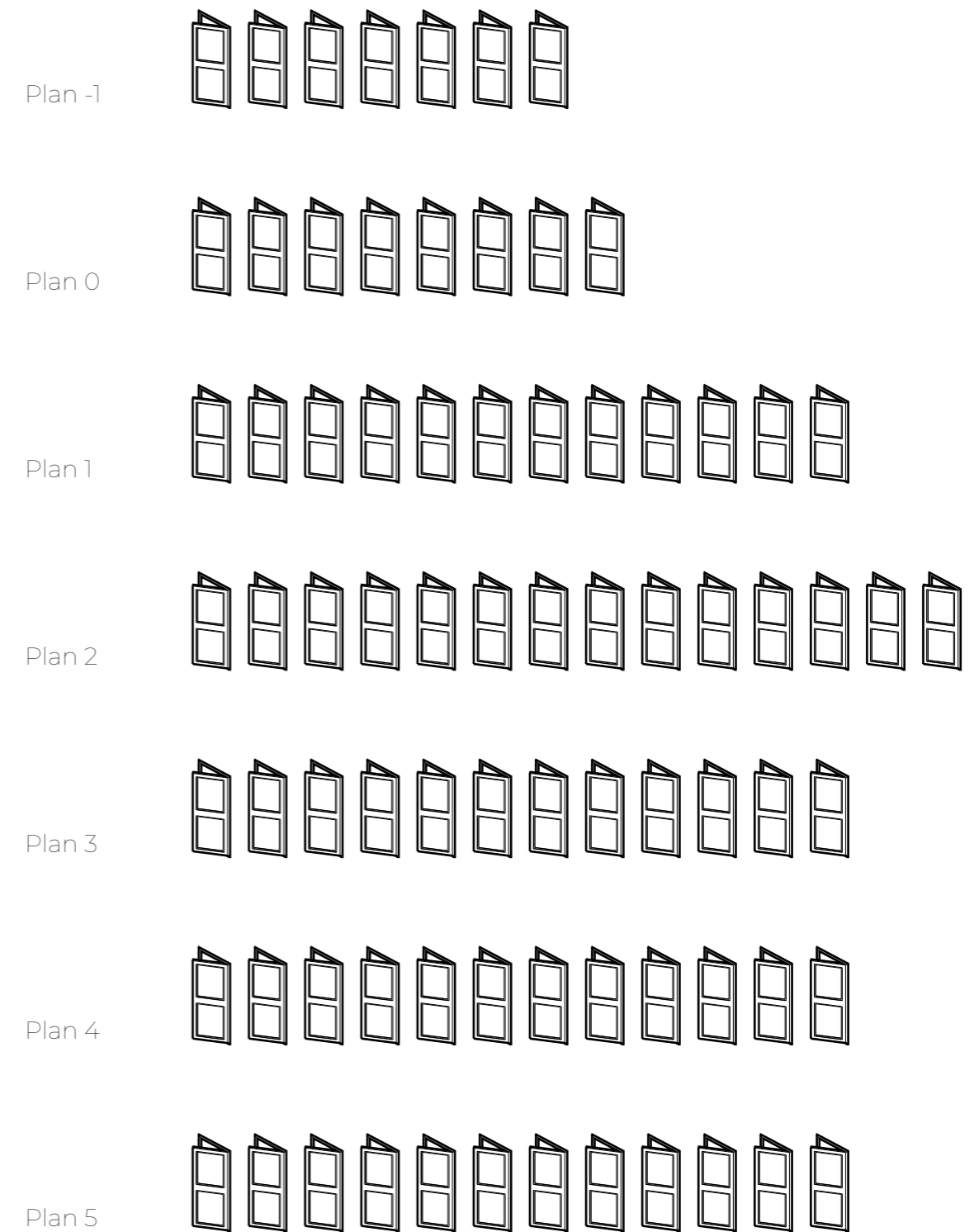
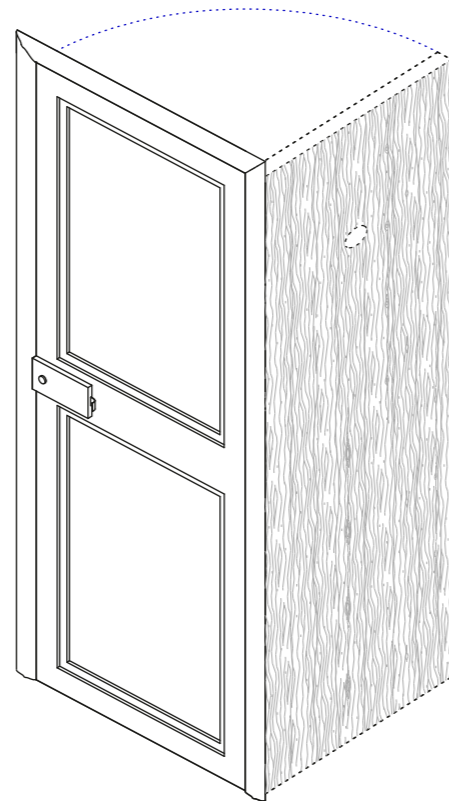
Although lacking proper bathrooms and kitchens, every room has its own sink. As the premise for a Hôtel Meublé is that the rooms are furnished when renting, it is assumed that all rooms have similar sinks. Although the sinks seem to be in great need for cleaning and some repair, they could be reused if functioning and then be a nice addition to the new bathrooms with their blue color, silver faucet and rounded shape.

The diagram on the facing page shows the number of sinks per floor.



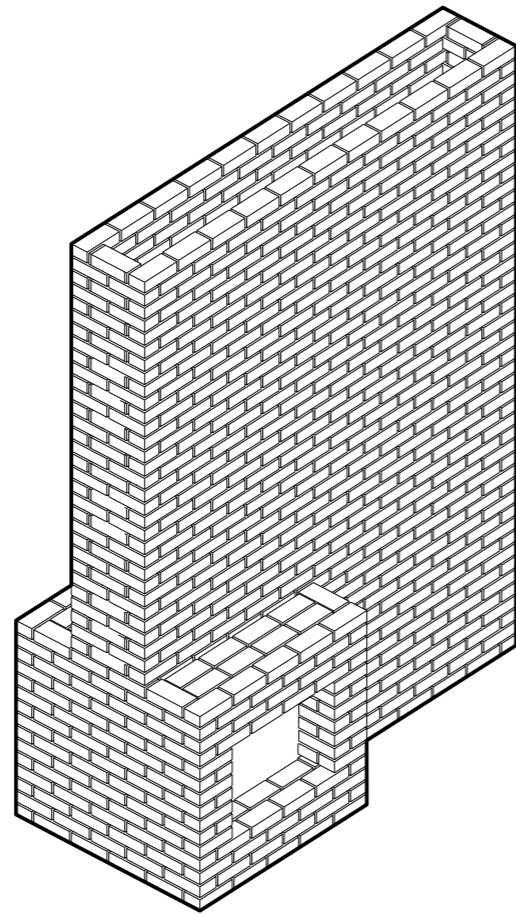
Doors

Due to the small size of the current rooms, a transformation into bigger apartments would entail a need for fewer front doors. Judging from the video material (Le Parisien, 2022) the existing doors seem to be wooden doors in acceptable condition and it is therefore concluded that as many doors as possible should be reused to minimize a waste of resources. The diagram on the facing page shows the available number of doors per floor.

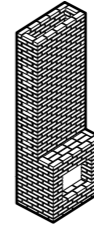


Fireplaces

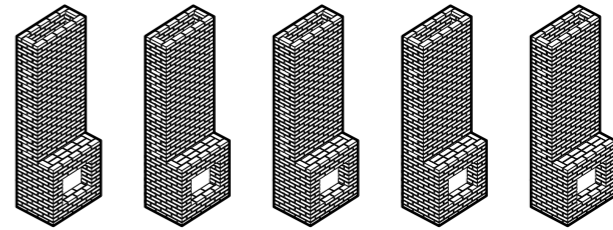
The building has several fireplaces placed along seven chimney stacks. It is unknown what surface material the fireplaces are covered with, or whether they are functioning. Based on the footprint of the chimney stacks and fireplaces in the floor plans, the appearance of the chimneys, and construction techniques typical of the period, it is assumed that the chimneys and fireplaces are constructed of brick masonry. The diagram on the facing page shows the number of existing fireplaces per floor.



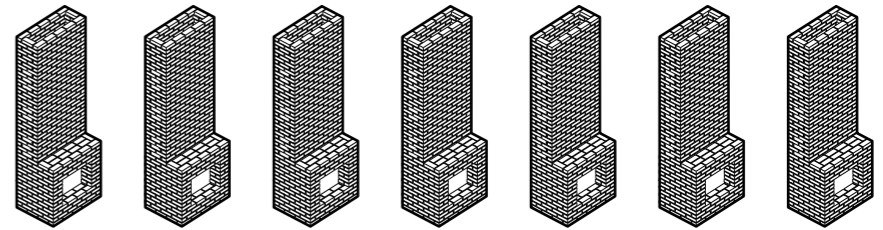
Plan 1



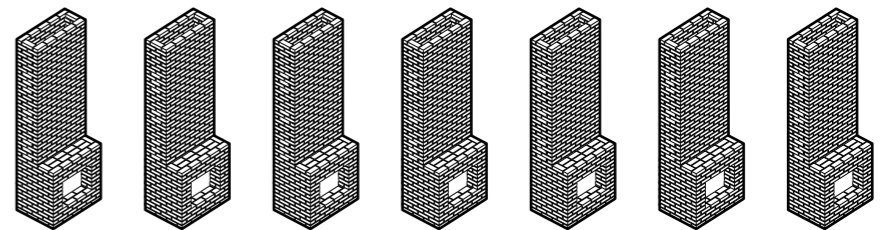
Plan 2



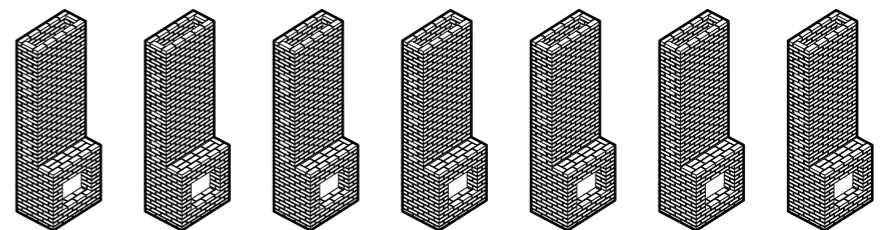
Plan 3



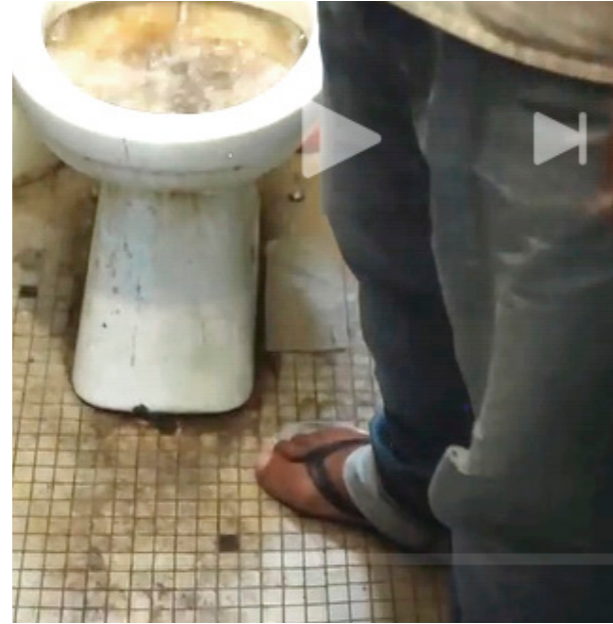
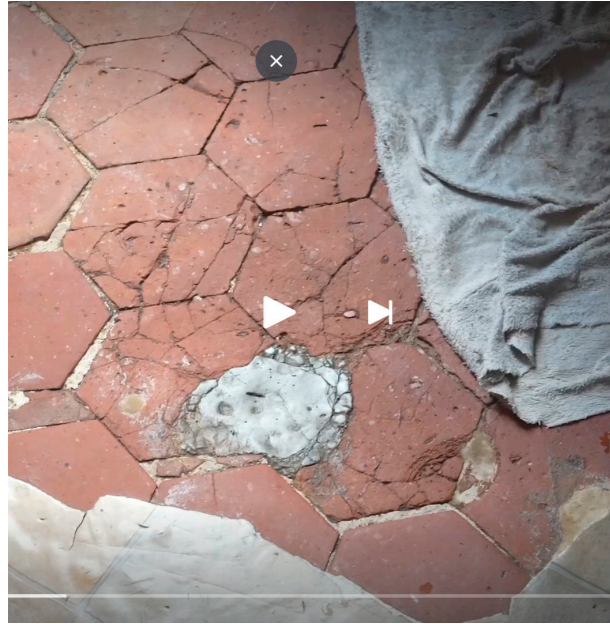
Plan 4



Plan 5



Flooring



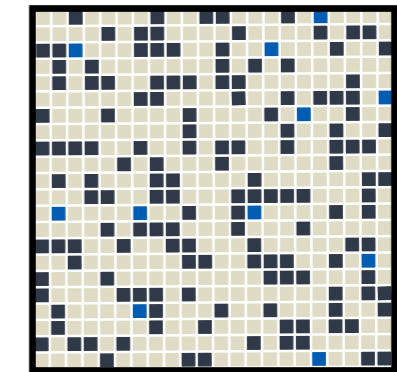
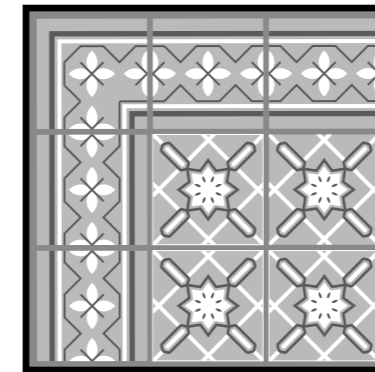
The video material (Le Parisien, 2022) mostly reveals flooring in very deteriorated condition in need for cleaning and maintenance. Many of the rooms have floors covered in what appears to be various types of vinyl, sometimes in several layers. Underneath, a hexagonal terracotta floor can be glimpsed. This floor is presumed to be the underlying

basis in all of the bedrooms, as it is a common type of flooring from the time period.

The flooring in the shared bathrooms consist of small ceramic tiles while bigger tiles are found in the entrance.

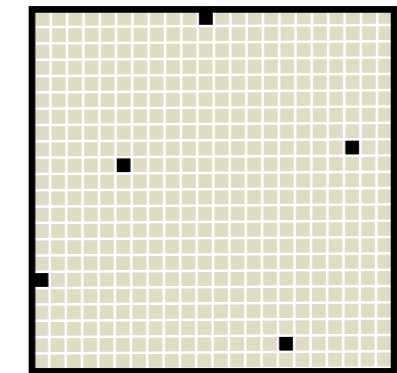
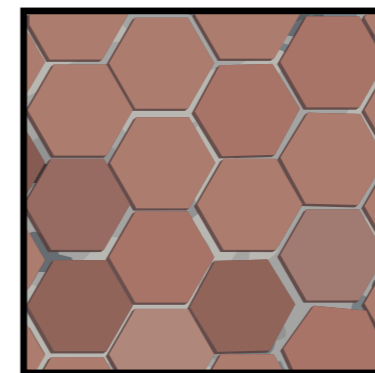
Found in Entrance 1:10

Found in Shared Bathroom 1:10



Found in Rooms 1:10

Found in Shared Toilet 1:10



08 Design Explorations

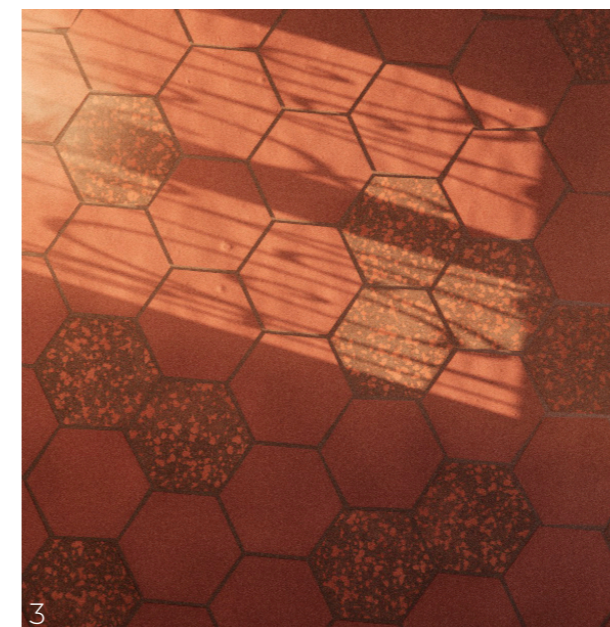
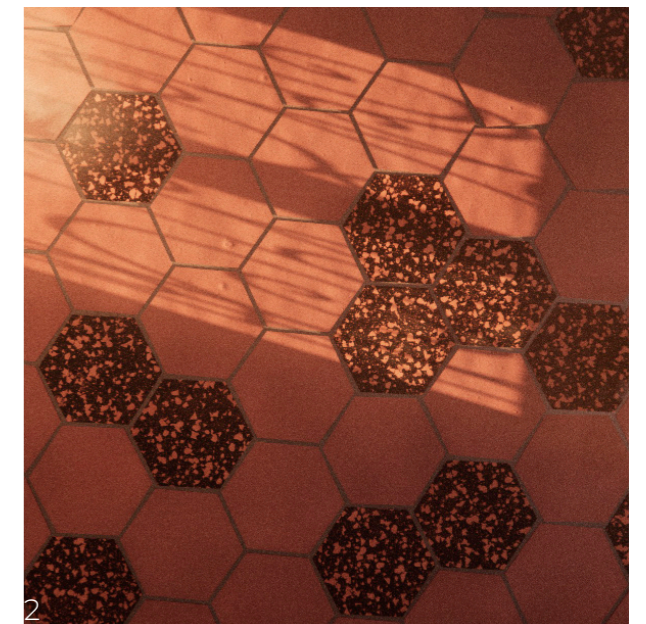
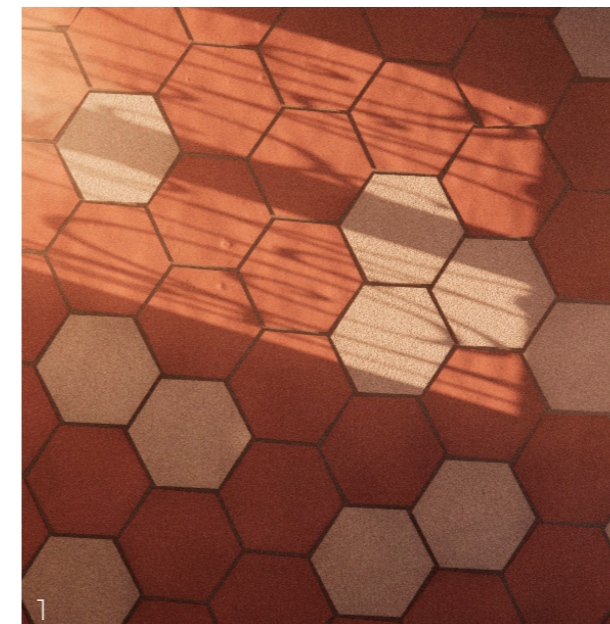
The historical analysis, mapping of the exteriors and interiors and the decision to use Facadism as a strategy to transform 48 Rue de Meaux into Social Housing result in the identification of the following themes for design explorations:

- Flooring
- Window Niches
- Fireplaces
- Visual Expansion of Space
- Apartment Configuration

Flooring

Broken Floortiles are removed and replaced with new tiles, forming an irregular pattern and color variation of the flooring. Different options are

considered such as concrete tiles as well as several options of terrazzo where the broken terracotta tiles are reused as aggregate.



1. Light gray cement tile

3. Terracotta terrazzo with dark gray cement

2. Terracotta terrazzo with black cement

4. Terracotta terrazzo with light gray cement

Window Niches

The window niches are deepened as the exterior walls are insulated on the inside. Plywood is chosen to cover the connection between the old and

the new parts of the wall and an exploration of different options of color staining the plywood is conducted.



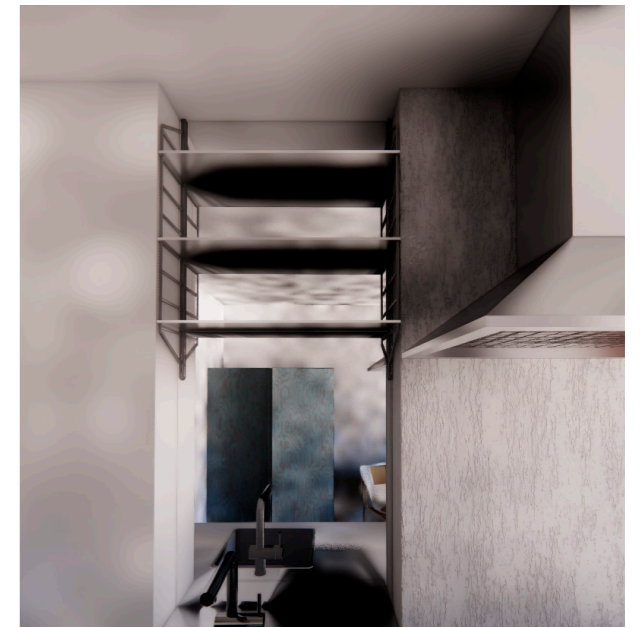
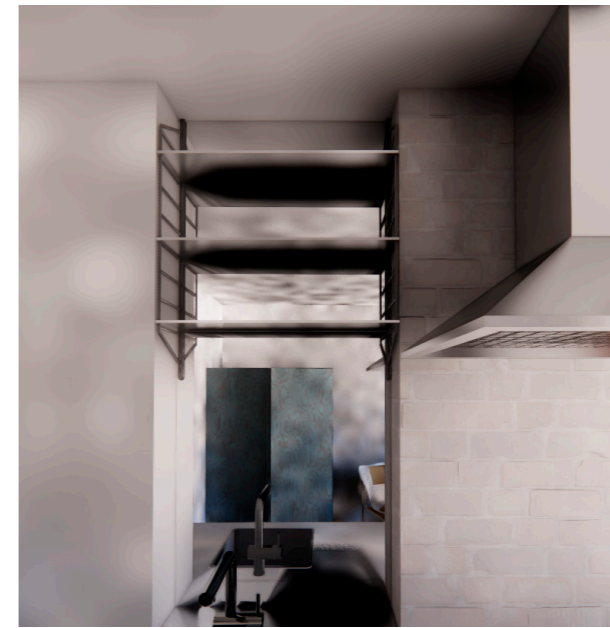
1. White stained plywood
3. Light blue stained plywood

2. Olive green stained plywood
4. Dark blue stained plywood

Fireplaces

Studies of the existing floor plans and the chimneys lead to the assumption that the fireplaces and chimney stacks are brick structures. The bricks

are stripped of their coverage and different surface treatments are explored.



Visual expansion of space

A horizontal shelf system of open shelves with curtains instead of more space demanding doors are used for storage. Material options like plywood,

stainless steel and corrugated steel were explored. Glazed doors and mirrors were tested to make the spaces appear larger and lighter.



Apartment configurations

Based on the ideas of retaining the existing load bearing structure, different apartment configurations were tested. The exploration also took

into account the retention of as many fireplaces as possible. Option number 2, with three apartments was chosen.



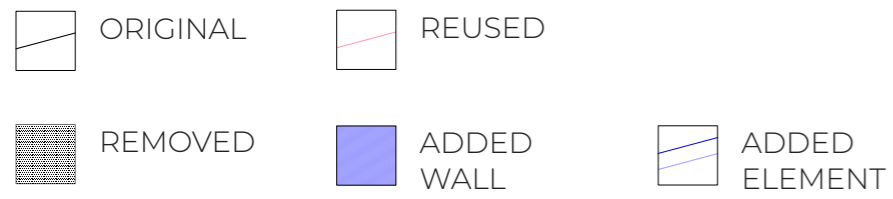
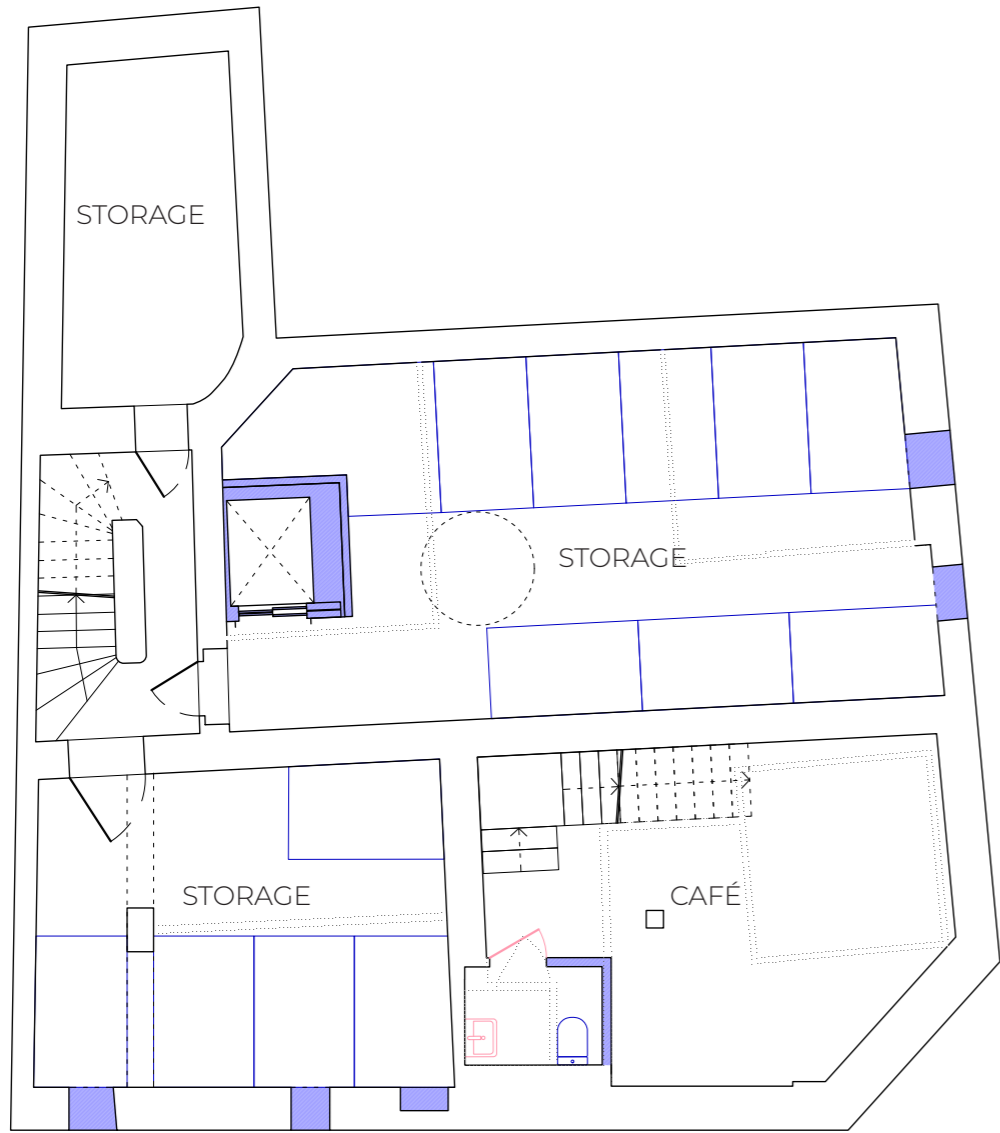
09 Design Proposal



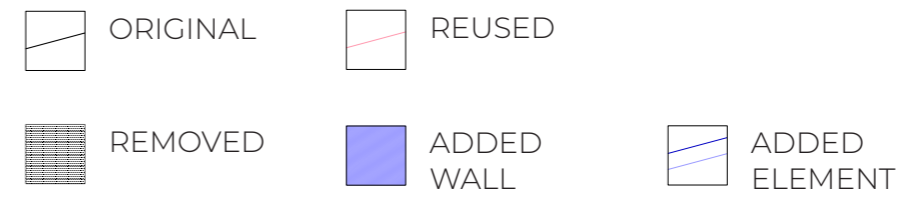
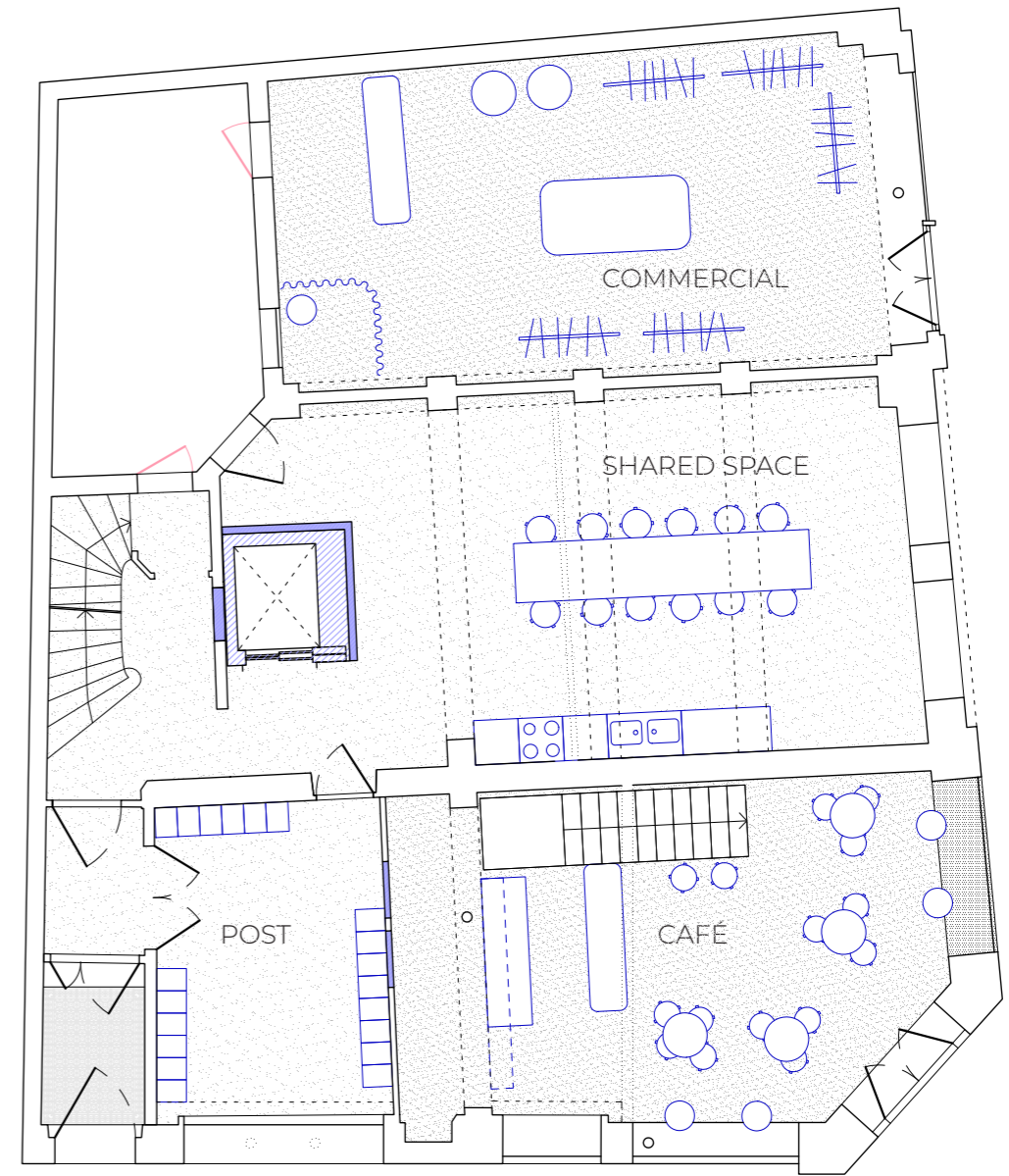
 New

Elevation

Plan -1



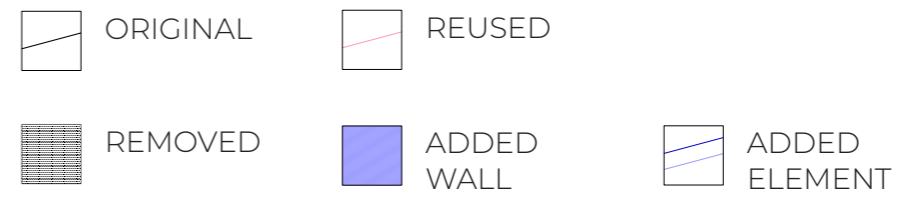
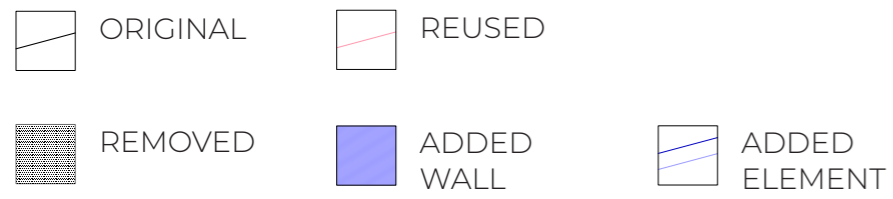
Plan 0





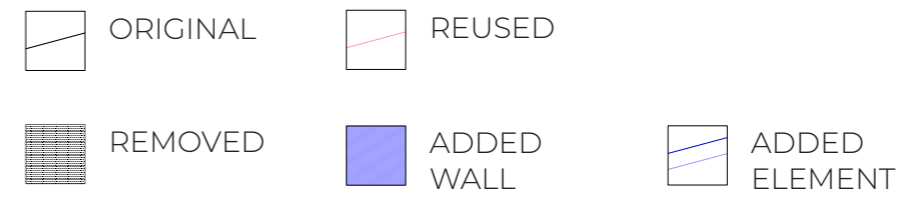
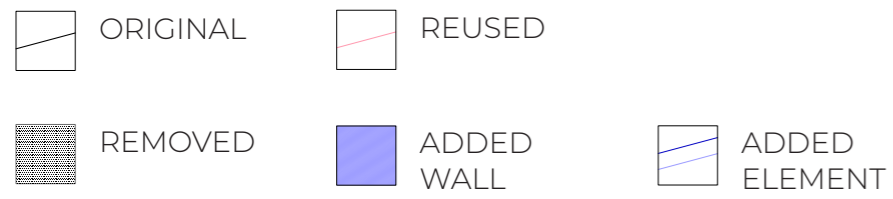
Plan 1

Plan 2



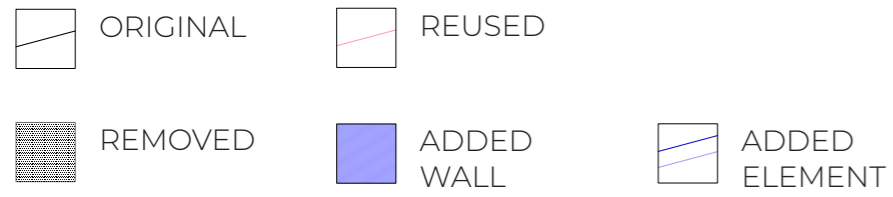
Plan 3

Plan 4

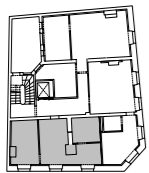




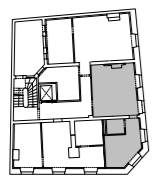
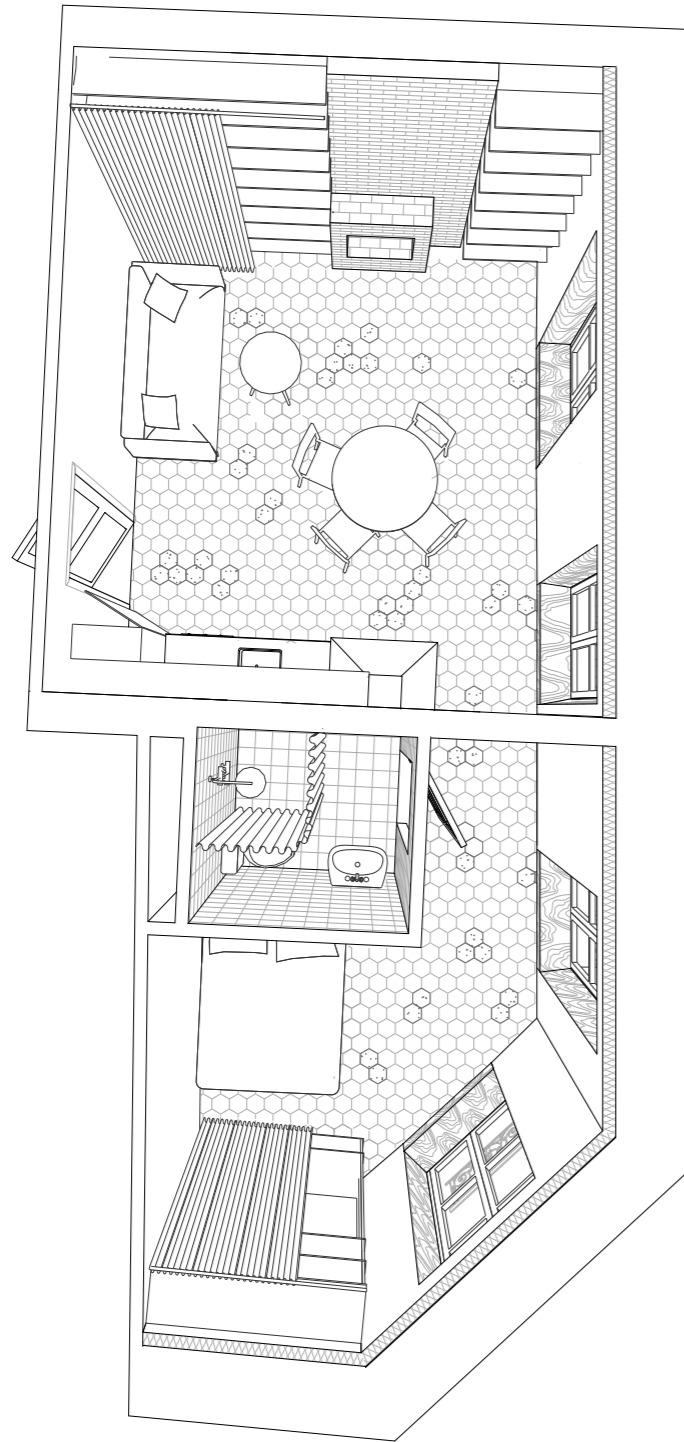
Plan 5



Interior perspectives



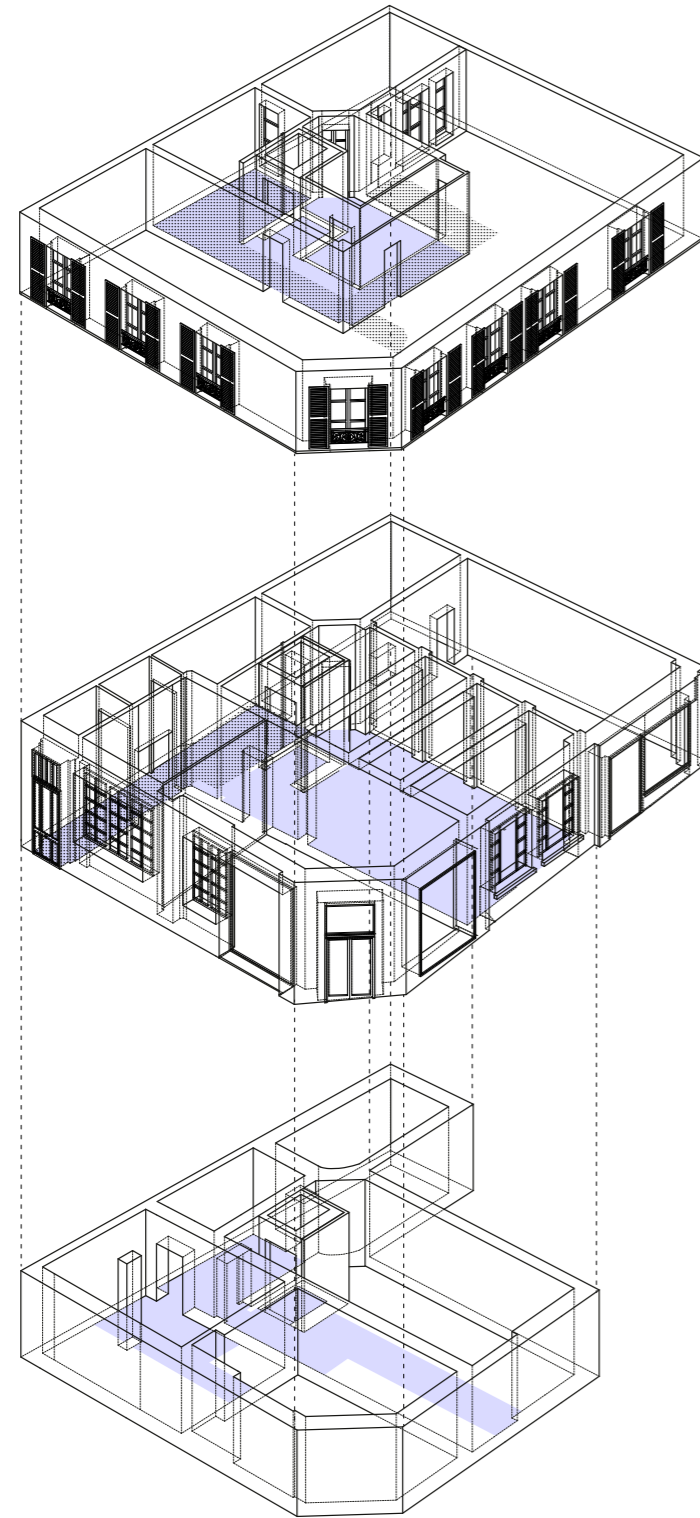
Interior perspectives



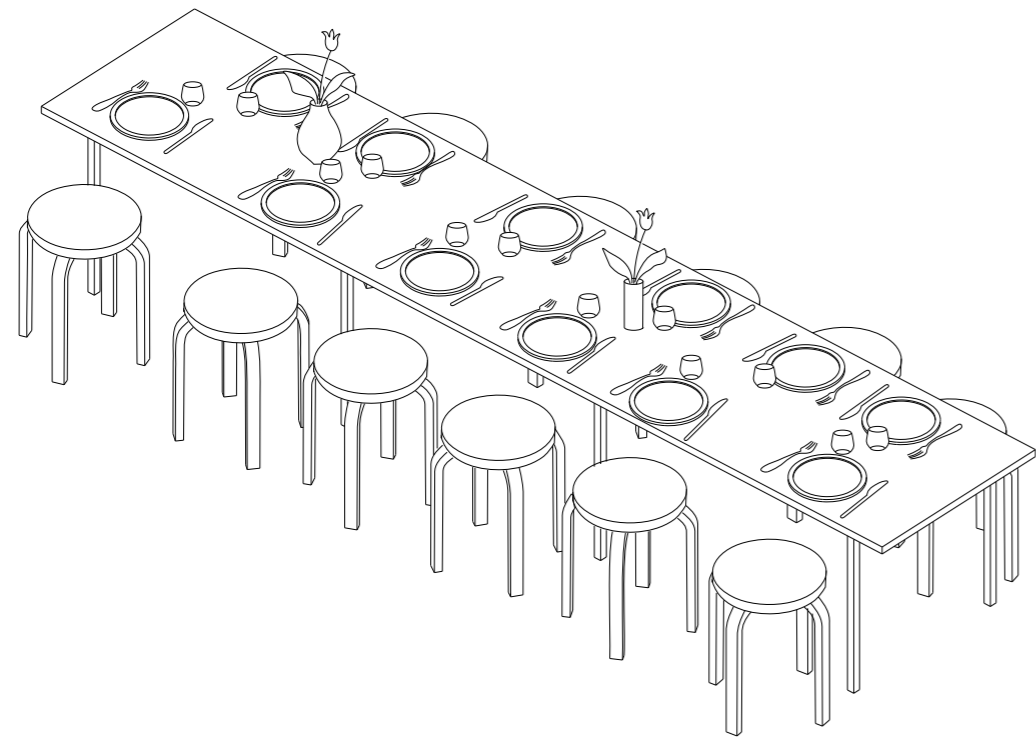
Interior perspectives



Shared Spaces



-  EXISTING SHARED SPACES
-  PROJECT SHARED SPACES



10 Discussion

This thesis has explored the transformation of an abandoned 19th-century Hôtel Meublé in Paris's 19th arrondissement into social housing, as a response to how underused parts of the existing building stock in Paris could be better utilized in relation to the current housing crisis.

By focusing the thesis on a single building, the project does not automatically propose a scalable solution to homelessness, nor to the transformation of all Hôtel Meublés. However, the methodological process of analysing a building through its historical context, and evaluating how it has been valuable, in what ways and to whom, can be beneficial to use on other transformation projects.

That buildings like the one at 48 Rue de Meaux are not just left to decay is important for several different reasons. As the architectural project of this thesis aims to show, 48 Rue de Meaux has the potential to be transformed into new homes for at least 15 people. Although 15 people sounds like a small number in comparison with the number of people that are experiencing homelessness, one must remember that the statistics on homelessness reflect real people with individual life stories and that every contribution changes the situation for the concerned individuals. The small scale might even be beneficial when it comes to supporting the sense of

community within the building as well as in relation to the rest of the neighborhood.

The building at 48 Rue de Meaux has historically played an important role in providing housing for economically vulnerable populations, at the same time as its neglected state and overcrowding also show how its already marginalized residents have been exploited for economic gain. This indicates that generating financial gain was prioritised over the building's other values, which became particularly evident when the building was sold to be transformed to a tourist hotel and its former residents were evicted. Drawing on Lefebvre, Rossi, and Riegl, this thesis regards the building not only as a physical fabric with a high monetary value, but as a carrier of social and historical meaning embedded in the urban context.

The decision to preserve the facade while allowing larger freedom for transformation of the interior spaces is grounded both in practical and theoretical considerations. Facadism is in this case not solely used as a preservation strategy, but rather becomes an answer to how continuity and change can be balanced. While the facade of 48 Rue de Meaux is regarded as a bearer of historical identity, a separation between the treatment of the ground floor to the upper floors is established. By

allowing the expression of the ground floor to adapt to its current activities, the building becomes more closely connected to its active surroundings. Including space for commercial activities on the ground floor can also work as a buffer against the worry often connected to the use of Facadism of buildings becoming pastiches of past eras. A ground floor that can evolve and develop to best suit its current function without impacting the design principles of the rest of the building gives the project an element of adaptability and longevity.

Grounding the intervention in an attempt to enhance the building's use value by improving its functionality as housing is perhaps the best protection against risking the exterior aesthetics to be prioritized before the actual usability of the interior space. The facade is altered and new windows added when deemed important for the quality of the interior spaces, but done in a way that follows the regularity and rhythm of the original facade.

The inability to access the interior during the design process has shaped the project significantly. By not being able to enter the building, many details and materials have not been discovered, and it is hard to foresee how different the project would have become if access was granted. However, the limitation led to that

the materials and objects visible in the video were studied in greater detail than what they likely would have been otherwise, which probably led to a focus and discovery of details and values that otherwise might have been missed.

The design outcome, both in terms of size per unit and in terms of the configuration of each apartment, attempts to balance the need to create as many housing units as possible with ensuring that they are functional as long term dwellings. Separating the bedroom from the living area is a design choice intended to make it easier to receive guests in line with both Davis's (2004) reflection on the importance of supporting a sense of community as well as the objective to counter isolation from the Un Chez-Soi d'Abord program (DIHAL, n.d.-a).

Having a common space for sharing meals and socializing is an attempt to support both planned and spontaneous social interactions among the residents. By ensuring longer hours of activity at ground floor, this space could also have a positive impact on the public realm outside as a lit facade could help enhance the perceived sense of safety and liveliness of the street.

The issue of accessibility is also addressed in the design proposal. Although compliance with

accessibility requirements is not mandatory according to the french building code in a transformation project, it was deemed important to explore the possibility of creating housing accessible for all, especially given the large and unknown variation of needs and abilities within the intended user group. The final result arrived at a compromise, where one out of three apartments per floor can be furnished to be suitable for people with accessibility needs.

Starting from the idea that the existing should be treated with care and maintenance results in a design where the floor is repaired where needed, built-in fixtures like the sinks are mended and reused when possible, and the new floor plans are adapted to support the preservation of as many of the fireplaces as possible. This creates an interior where the old and the new coexist in dynamic dialogue with each other.

The transformation project of 48 Rue de Meaux suggests that an expanded understanding of value within the existing building stock can unlock new possibilities for housing production. It also shows that objectives which initially seem conflicting, such as a need for contemporary adaptation and a wish to preserve a building's historical character, can be compatible and lead to new architectural expressions.

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08.2020 - 06.2023	Architecture and Civil Engineering - Bachelor program Chalmers School of Technology

Work Experience

08.2024 - 08.2025	Architectural Intern 3XN, Copenhagen Denmark
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