

HOME ALONG THE RANGE

Introduction

The H-buurt site poses two difficult questions - how to improve and intensify an area within a large housing estate, and how to introduce productivity into a primarily mono-functional residential area? Before proposing solutions, we studied both the history of the site and its current situation. Home Along The Range hinges on two main observations. The first is that the area has a high turnover and many so-called "social climbers" prefer to leave the neighborhood. The constantly changing residency resulting from this high turnover tends to concentrate poverty and undermine the strength of social and economic networks. The second observation is that the utopian ideas of collective living in Bijlmer, described by Frank Wassenberg as an "experimental garden", have generally not come to fruition. Many residents report a feeling of anonymity and isolation. We attribute the failure of the collective vision to mono-functionality, a lack of diversity in housing types, a lack of employment options within the district, and a lack of urbanity and collective social amenities, among other shortcomings. In response, we propose two main strategies. The first is to provide a variety of mechanisms to encourage people to stay within the area rather than leaving, including the introduction of a vibrant spectrum of housing typologies and productive mixed-uses, such as living, working, and collective city life. These different uses are designed to be mutually-beneficial and mutually-supportive, and existing in close proximity, in order to create productive crossovers. The second is to break the monumental scale of both the public spaces and buildings by introducing new and diverse urban patterns and building typologies that frame a variety of public spaces and introduce mixes and frictions - productive conflicts, negotiations, and city-life.

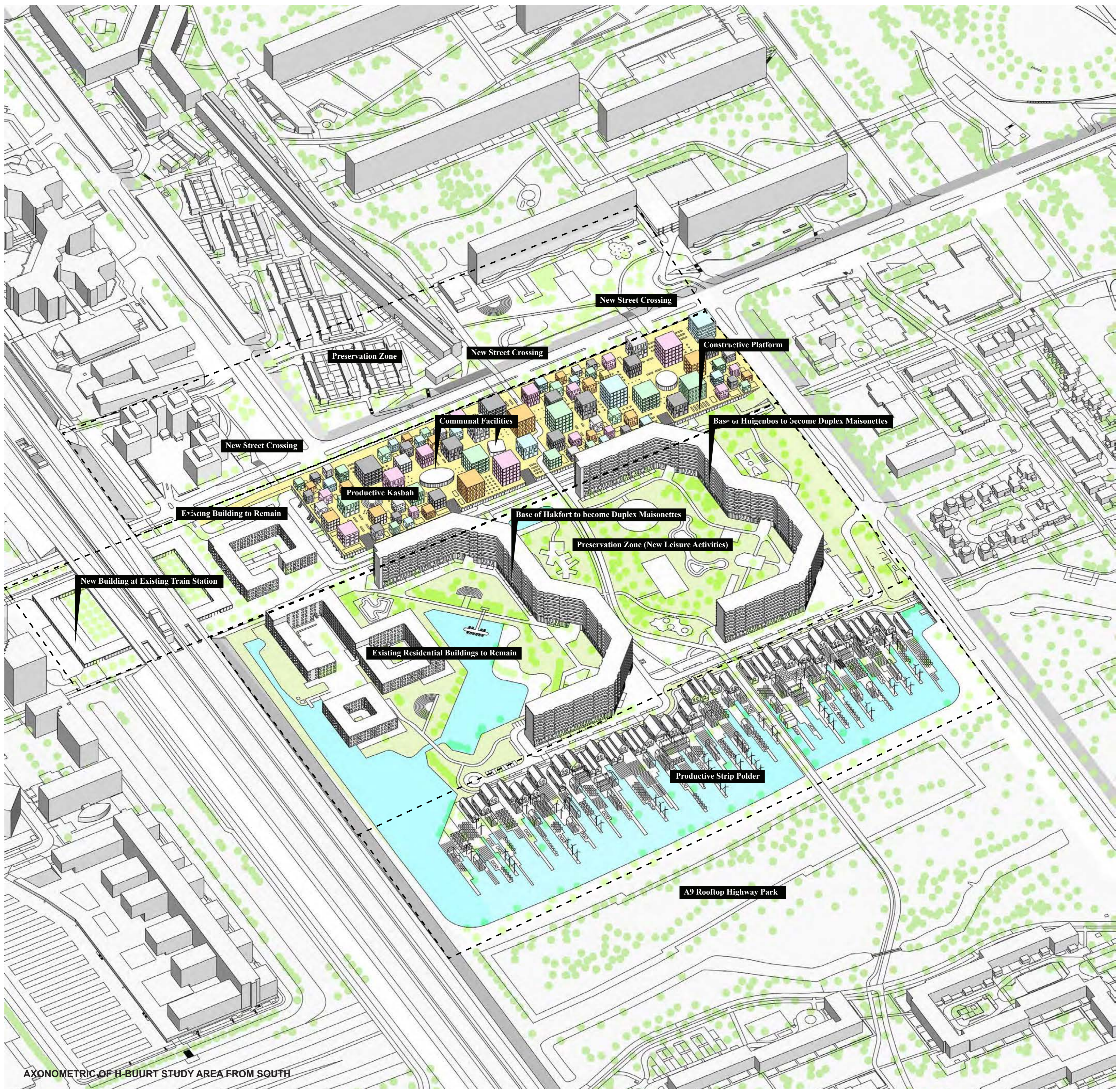
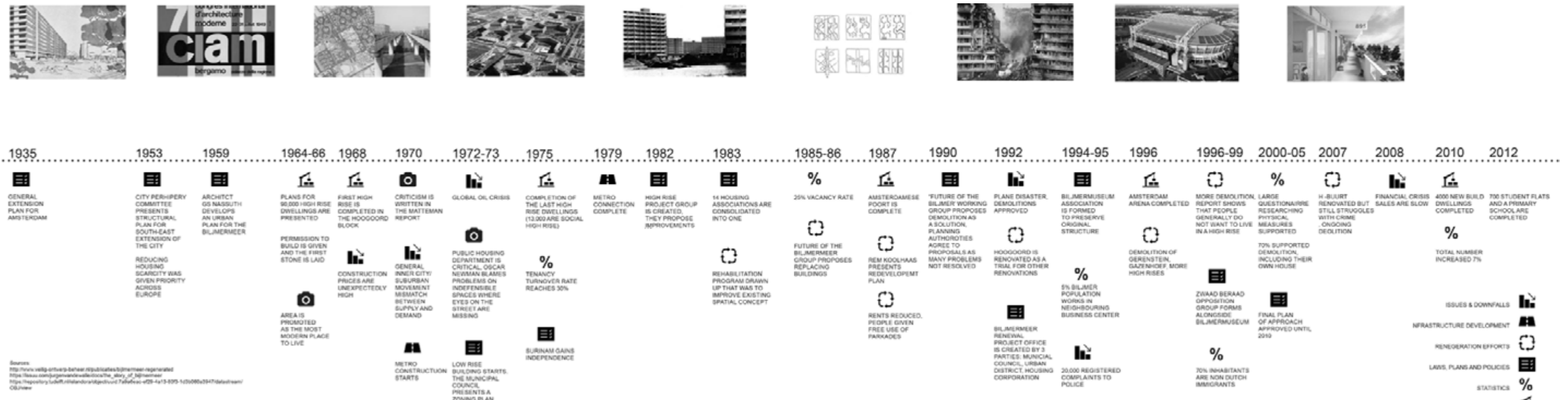
Actors and Processes

Residents and community organizations will be engaged in design activities throughout the process to empower them to take control and ownership of their spaces. The government will be responsible to provide the infrastructure, Constructive Platform, and collective facilities. Once the framework for the project has been created, improvements to existing buildings and the addition of new buildings will be realized by different actors through processes including self-build, community initiated, developer built, and government-provided as well as for different tenures including owner-occupied, market rental, social housing, co-housing, and co-sharing.

Bands of Intensification and Preservation

We propose a two-fold strategy for the site that maintains and improves upon the visionary "experimental garden" of the Bijlmer. In areas where the existing buildings and public spaces are deemed to be suitable for improvements rather than demolition, they will be preserved. Where the site is most problematic or underutilized, we propose radical alteration and intensification. Strategic improvements to existing public spaces and buildings will be implemented to provide leisure activities, site connectivity, programmatic variety, improved semi-public spaces and access circulation, and enhanced thermal performance of building facades. Employing alternating bands of preservation (with mild intervention) and intensification across the study area, the project aims to create a regenerative site that self-supports both the built and human environment.

TIMELINE OF BIJLMER AND AREA



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Existing Buildings and Public Spaces

The bases of the Hakfort and Huigenbos housing slabs will be transformed into duplex maisonettes, with access from both sides and the potential to serve as living spaces, live / work mixed-use spaces, or working spaces. Other potential functions include community services and event spaces. By opening the access points with extensive glazing that face both sides of the buildings, creating a direct visual connection between lobbies and passages, and creating taller and wider passages, the public / semi-public connections, as well as spatial quality and feelings of safety, will be improved. Vertical and horizontal connections to expand units and create different unit types will provide a complex patchwork of typological diversity behind the generic facades. Students, temporary residents such as refugees, young professionals and other newcomers can be housed temporarily in the buildings to keep them from being vacant in the time leading up to their renovation.

Through careful intervention of new leisure spaces and pavilions into the existing public spaces, the large over-extended green lawns of the Bijlmer housing legacy will become limited and framed, thereby becoming more precious. A range of new public amenities will be provided to enhance the leisure green areas, including spaces for music, events, sports, and culture. These include racket sports, football, basketball, skateboard parks, splash park with pool, playgrounds, amphitheaters, picnic areas, beach, paddleboating, ice skating and etcetera.

Productive Kasbah

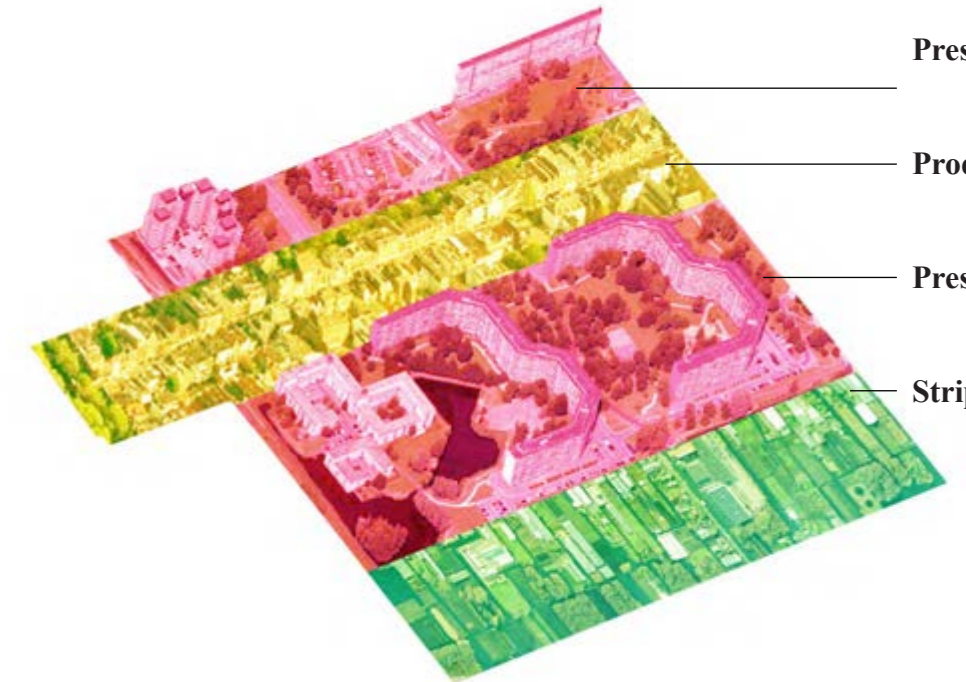
This area leverages the cultural, social and economic strengths already located in and near H-buurt to provide a vibrant mixed-use productive center. Sizes of buildings vary from small (the size of small detached houses) to medium-sized solitaires, with the pattern expanding in scale in response to the surrounding context and to cross-site circulation. Direct and efficient connections through the site and to the Bullewijk metro station are overlaid with a dense pattern that creates frictions between passersby and residents of this portion of the site. Planning rules set by the master plan will determine the pattern from small to large, and are based on a three-dimensional interpretation of Walter Gropius' 1931 Solstudier. Public-

oriented services and amenities and businesses will mostly be concentrated at the Constructive Platform level, however the intent is for living and working to mix fluidly throughout the buildings above the Constructive Platform. By creating a creative, innovative zone, the stigma of the neighborhood can start to be overturned from within, and secondly by visitors drawn by the vibrant spaces, products and activities. Existing strengths in the neighborhood, including existing informal activities as well as businesses and institutions, include arts and design, cuisine, fashion and cosmetics, music, digital and graphic design, as well as occupational and physical / sport therapy. In addition to next economy types of activities, low productivity is included in the Constructive Platform (which can extend into the buildings above, depending on level of noise, pollution, danger and etcetera) such as workshops, auto repair, food production and processing, small-scale manufacturing, recycling, storage and etcetera. By opening these services and production spaces

at the edge of the Constructive Platform, they work together with the redesigned base of the Hakfort and Huigenbos buildings to create a multimodal active street. Buildings on the Constructive Plinth can be self-built or built by a community organization, the government or by developers. In addition to flexibility in programming to allow a range of uses including living and working, these buildings will also differ in appearance, the tenure of tenants, materiality, and in models of living together, including co-housing, co-sharing, individual units, owner-occupied houses, market rentals and social housing. Planning rules will dictate strategies for future flexibility, including tall ceilings, flexible grids to allow reconfiguration at a later date, flexible spaces that invite user-interpretation, and carefully designed circulation and access that accommodates partitioning between different uses and inhabitants in a variety of ways, with a preference to at-grade access of public services where possible.

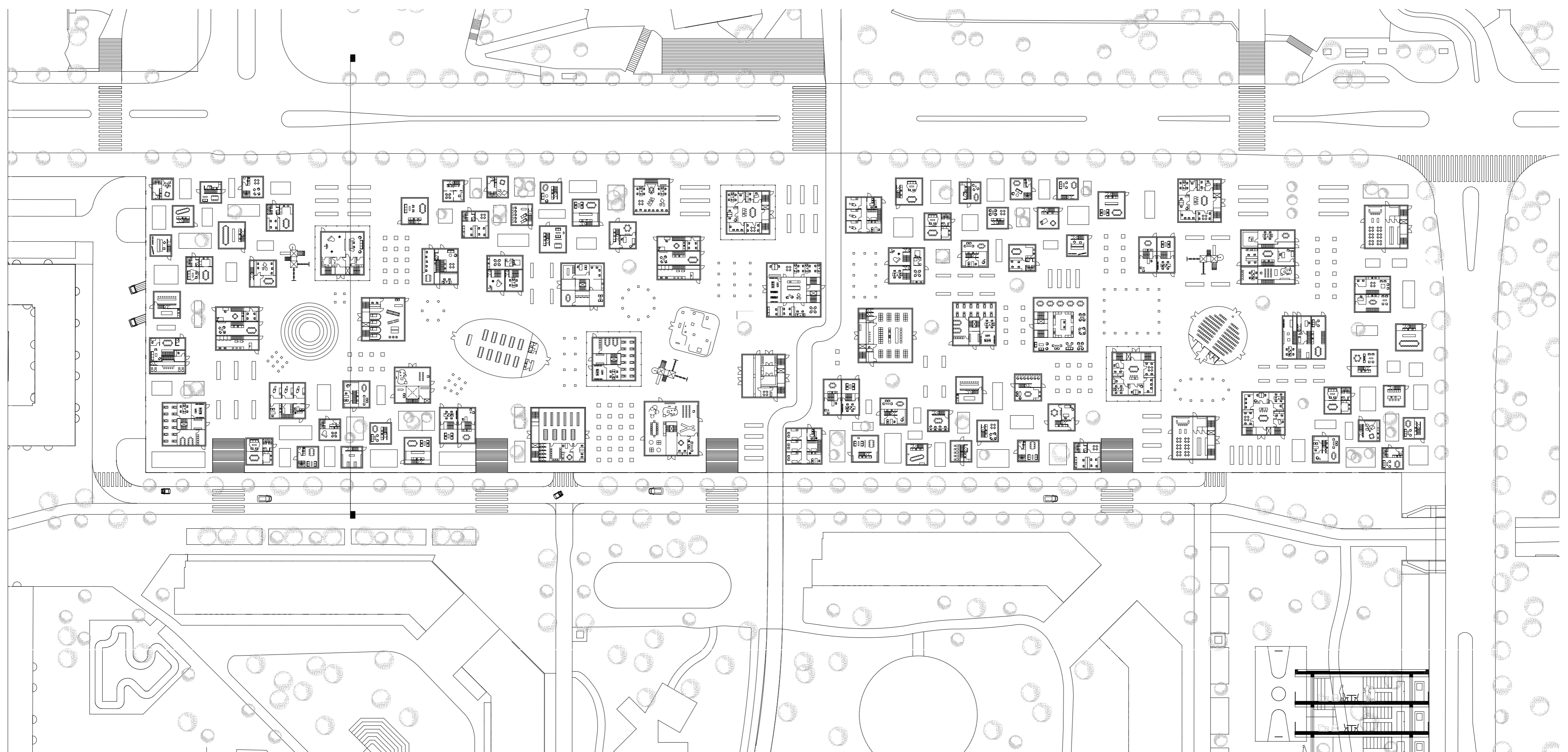


SITE AERIAL - EXISTING



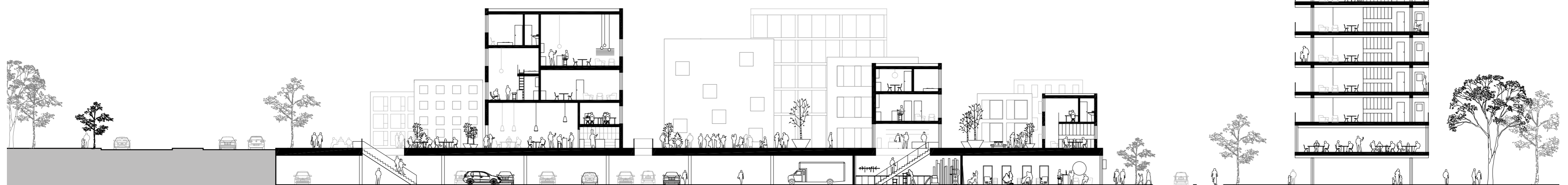
SITE AERIAL - PROPOSED

- Preservation
- Productive Kasbah
- Preservation
- Strip Polder



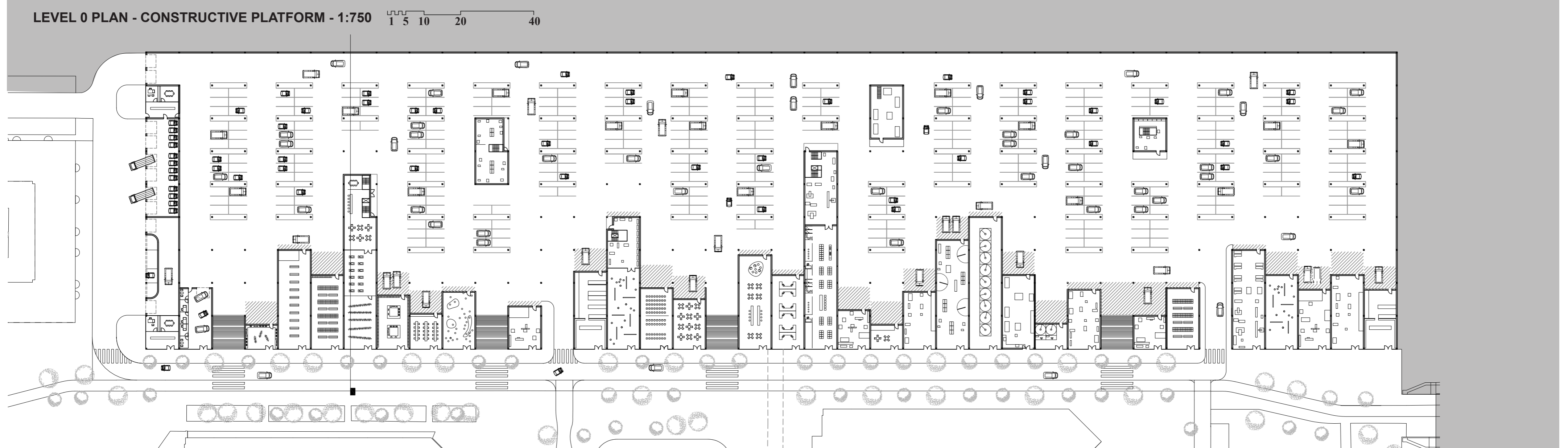
LEVEL +1 PLAN - PRODUCTIVE KASBAH - 1:750

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CROSS SECTION THROUGH KARSPELDREEF, PRODUCTIVE KASBAH, CONSTRUCTIVE PLATFORM, AND HAKFORT - 1:250

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LEVEL 0 PLAN - CONSTRUCTIVE PLATFORM - 1:750

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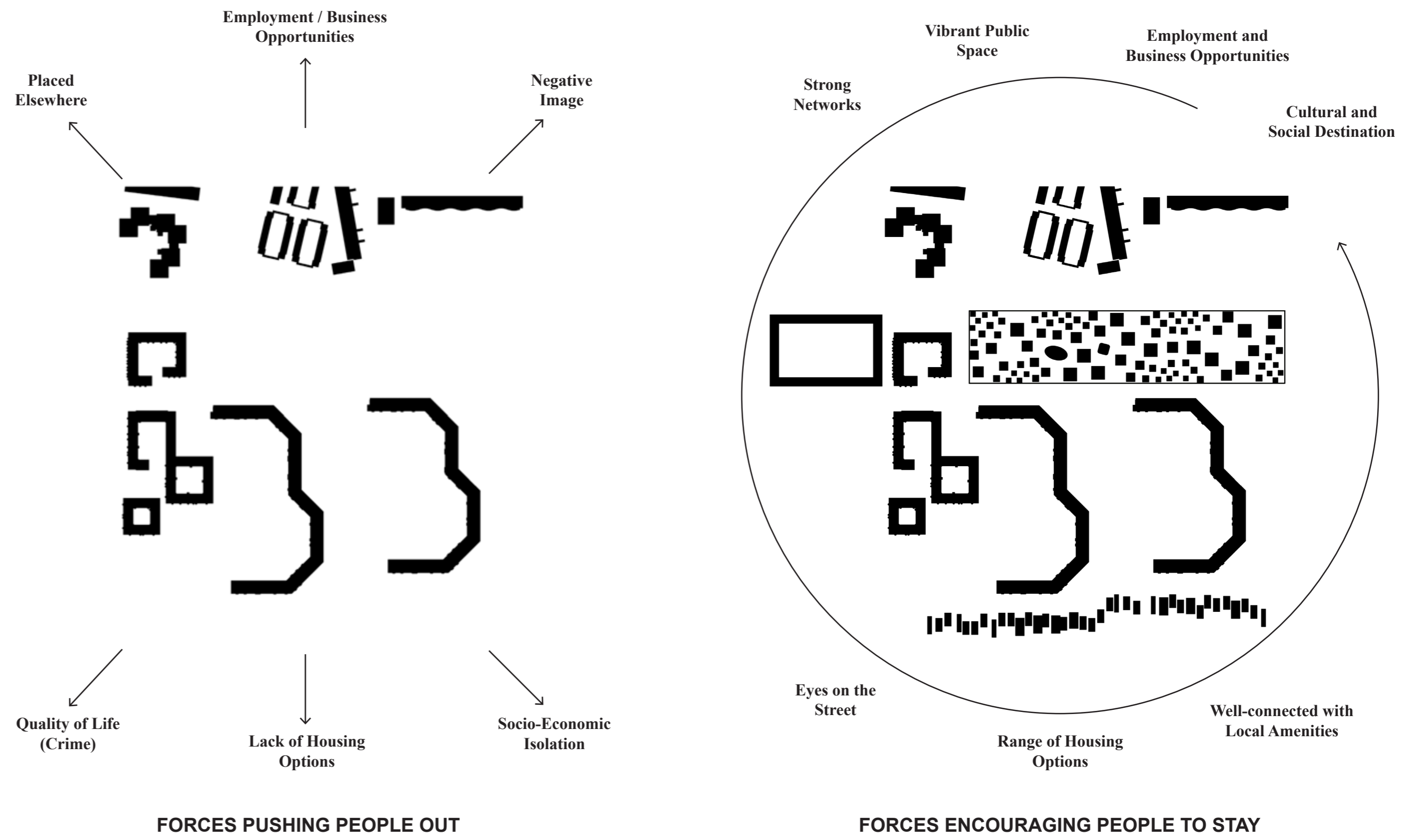
Modularity, unitized construction elements, and prefabrication allow for affordability. Highly efficient facades, and the use of recycled materials (wood, plastic, concrete - from the parking structures and elsewhere, glass, and other materials) for structural and architectural elements will create efficient buildings that also incorporate waste streams from the site and elsewhere in the city. Public spaces will allow for restaurant and bar terraces, object display and prototyping, playgrounds, small leisure activities. Communal facilities are located throughout that will accommodate community events, continuing education (for entrepreneurial support and otherwise), cultural and social activities. These pavilions are the only exception to the gradient pattern - they are located at the nexus of different paths in large public spaces, and are designed to contrast with the surrounding buildings using distinct shapes and orientations.

Productive Strip Polder

At the south edge of the site, inspired by the linear polder farms located to the south-east of Amsterdam and near the project site, are a linear array of productive green spaces. Detached houses will share space with greenhouses, solar arrays, small wind turbines, honey bees, agriculture, workshops, and small-scale manufacturing with a focus on food production. Energy produced in this zone will feed other zones in the Study Area.

Circular Economy

A variety of strategies allow for circular flows of energy and materials. Thermal storage and sharing transfers heat from where it is in surplus to where it is in demand. Materials for structure as well as cladding are recycled from Bijlmer and beyond. The concrete structure and façade panels can be recycled from the former parking structures. Plastic, concrete, glass and wood create unique facades that are also durable, efficient and beautiful, and affordable. Energy production is incorporated into buildings throughout the site with solar panels integrated into façade cladding, and a range of solar, waste processing and wind turbines generate energy in the Productive Polder. Circularity is incorporated within the site where possible, and extended to the city beyond where necessary. Car-sharing will be incorporated at the outset of the project, with a plan to transition to automated vehicles and to slowly replace the parking in the Constructive Platform with additional productive activities.



VIEW OF PRODUCTIVE KASBAH