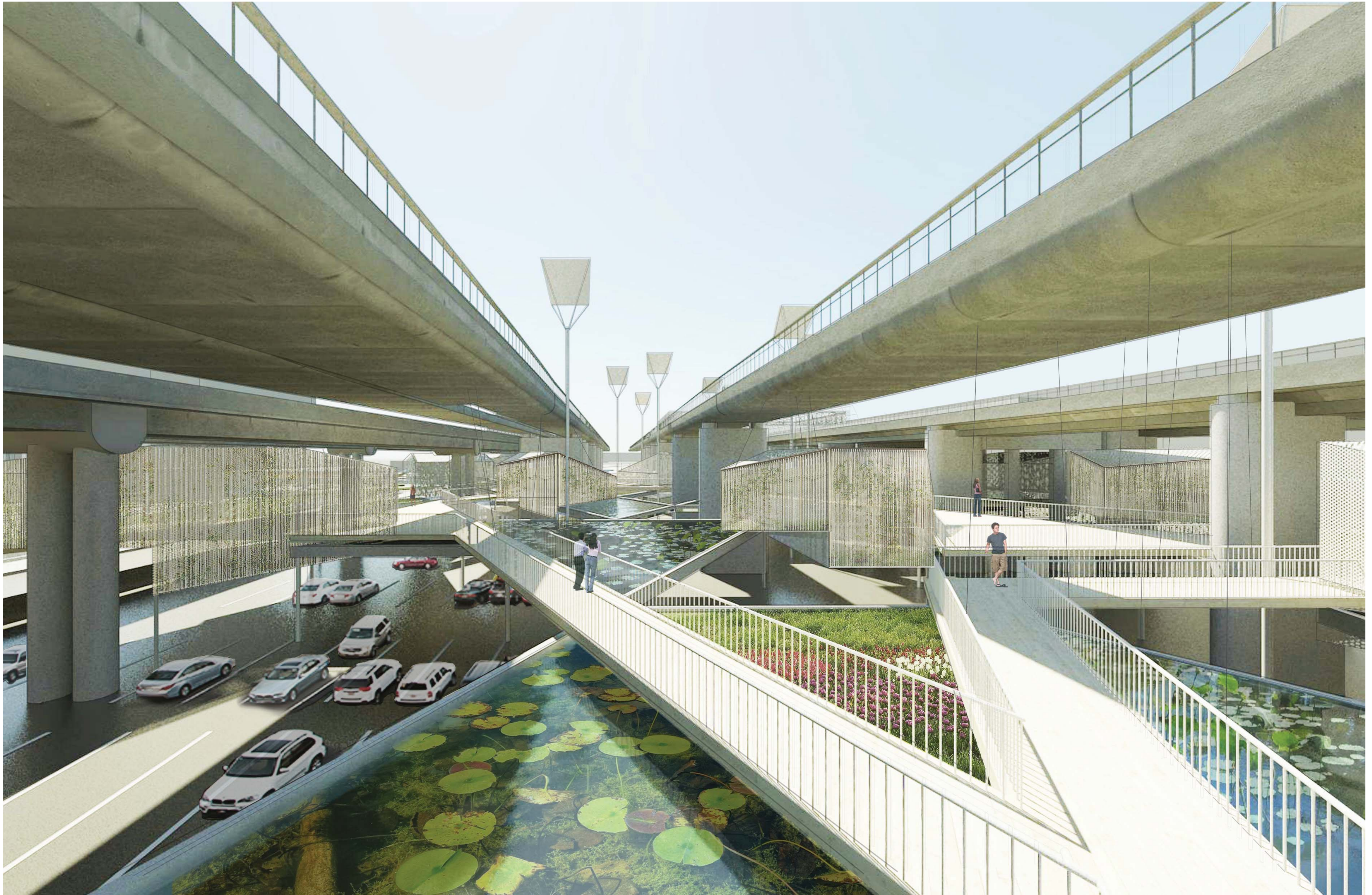


ROOTED LANDSCAPE

An artificial structure which natural elements that transforms a unfriendly area into a lively public space



“A re-examination of infrastructural spaces involves the recognition that all types of spaces are valuable, not just the privileged spaces of more traditional parks and squares, and they must therefore be inhabitable in a meaningful way. This requires the rethinking of the monofunctional realm of infrastructure and its rescue from the limbo of urban devastation to recognize its role as part of the formal inhabited city”
Elisabeth Mossop in “Urbanism Landscape Reader”, 2006.

Rooted landscape proposes the use of unused spaces in the existing and future urban infrastructures in order to give them content and activate them culturally and socially. The project deals with and contributes to the topic of residual infrastructural spaces as an opportunity for life and enjoyment of the city for the sake of a higher urban productivity. The empty space constitutes an input for the development of new complementary uses for public activity, arising from the continuity with the existing urban environment and not from conflict.

In the 20th century, Aldo Van Eyck's playgrounds transformed the empty spaces between buildings in Amsterdam into full-of-life places. In the 21st century, the new empty spaces to conquer emerge from urban infrastructures and create a galaxy of voids in the city: new opportunities for life. Through a detailed and precious treatment of the spaces between the Piarcopein infrastructures, our project aims to offer a new perception of habitability for this non-place. Architecture and public space fuse together to create a new rooted landscape over the existing one.



Amsterdam main infrastructures



aerial view of the intervention area



Rail track. Lower level
Location plans. scale 1/6000

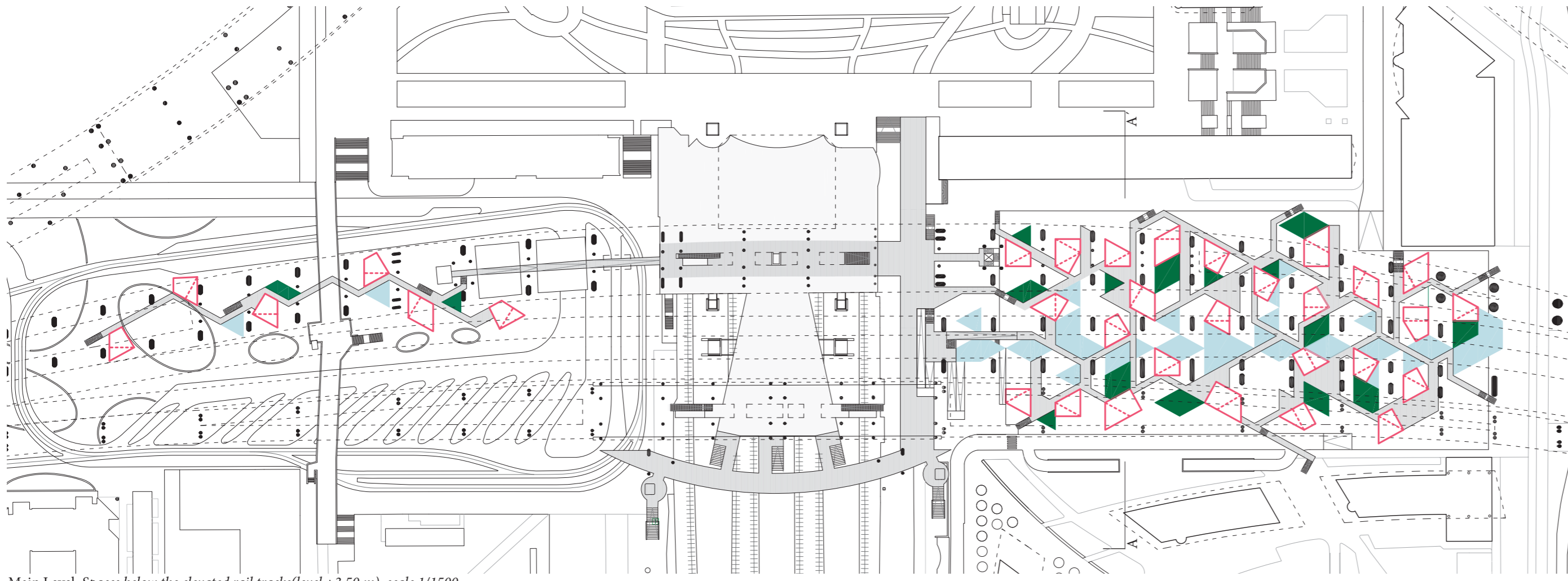
Mobility System

Public space and green spaces system

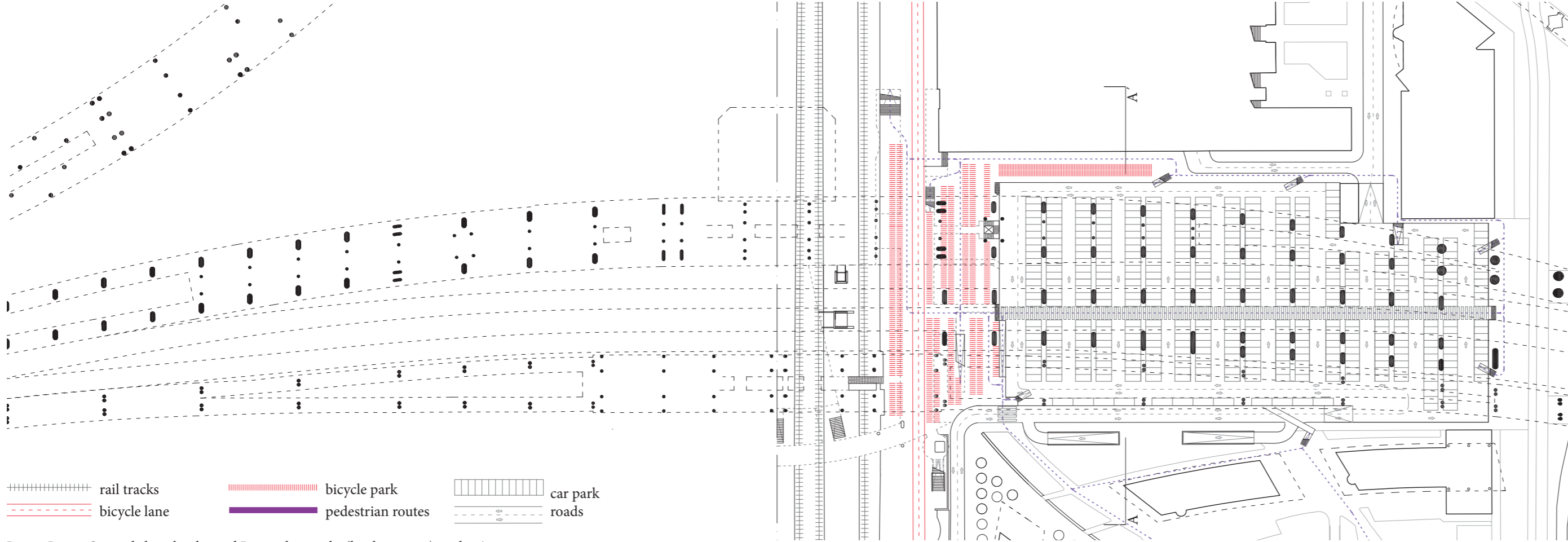
Intervention in New Piarcopein

Elevated Rail Track

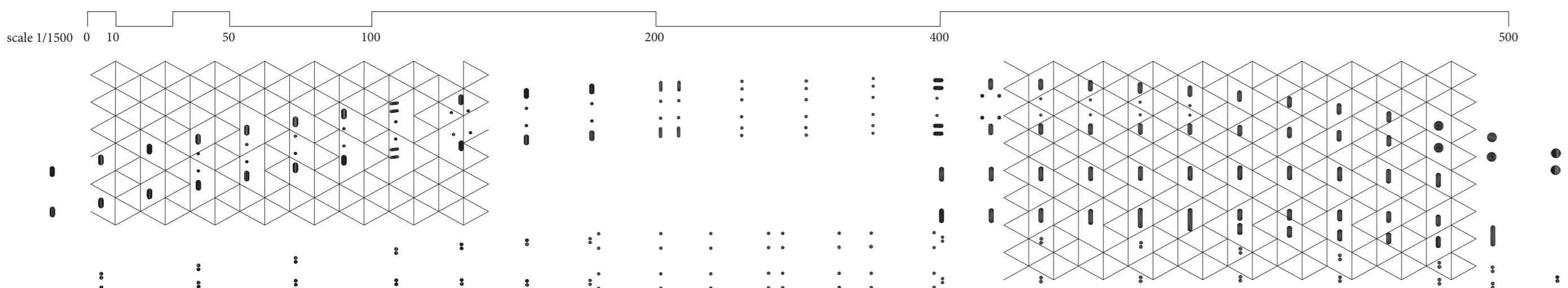
ROOTED LANDSCAPE



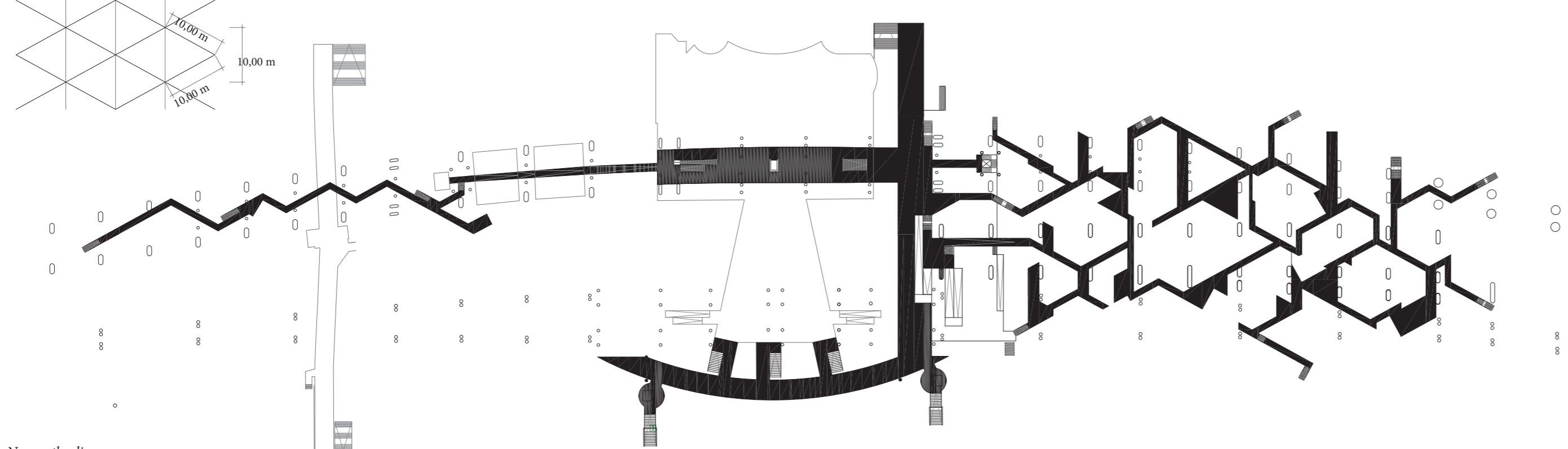
Main Level. Spaces below the elevated rail tracks (level +3.50 m). scale 1/1500



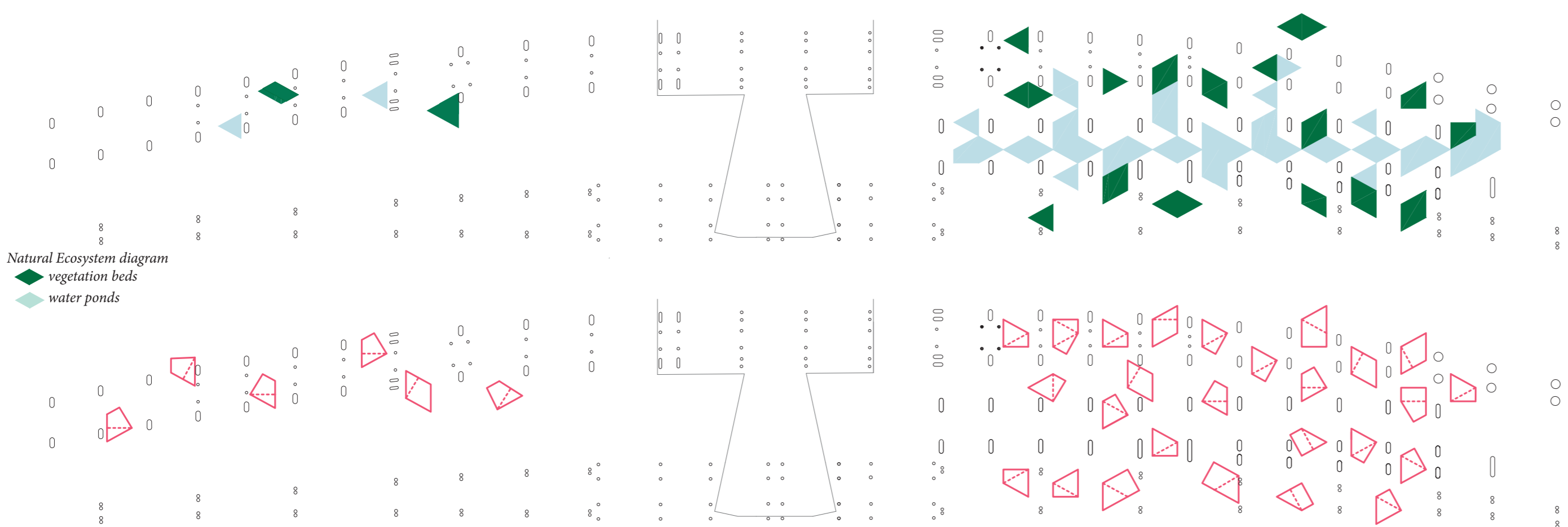
Lower Level. Spaces below the elevated Piarcoplein paths (level +1.00 m). scale 1/1500



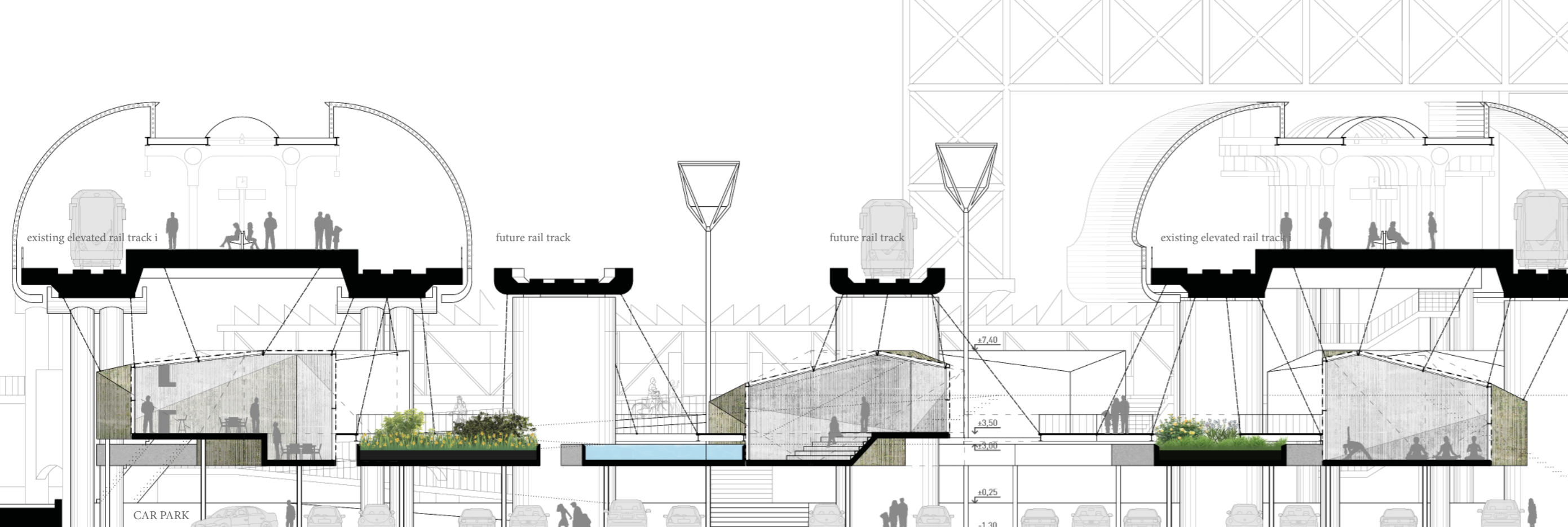
Geometric pattern diagram



New paths diagram



Natural Ecosystem diagram



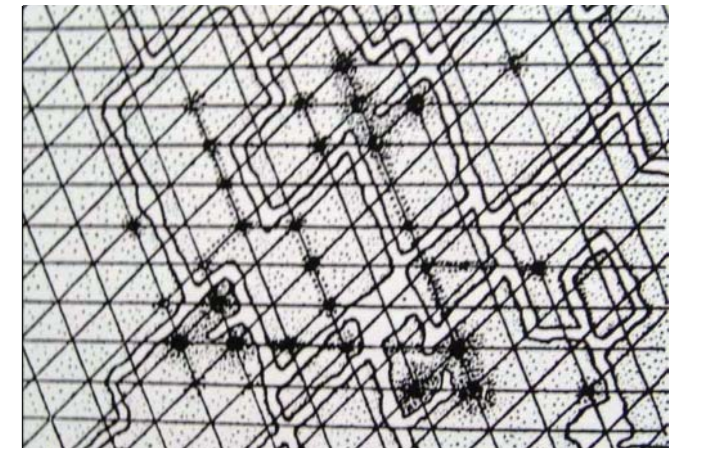
Pavilions diagram



Cross section A-A



Invading Roots



Polycentric network. Galaxy by Kevin Lynch

new continuities / connectivity vs barriers

Piarcoplein is integrated in the network of existing paths throughout the activation of new routes in continuity with the pre-existing infrastructures, streets and public space. New connections for bicycles, cars and pedestrians are added. These consist of platforms, slopes and stairs at different levels conceived to allow greater fluidity of paths between the train station, the car park and the new spaces created for the Piarcoplein elevated square-garden. The new car park level is 1.2 m lower than the original one, of the former parking location. The bicycle parking area is at the same level as the bicycle lane. Above these, there are several platforms which constitute the new access from the train station to the new Piarcoplein. The architectural barriers that used to exist in the original area are removed and communications are eased. The promenade experience along the new footbridges is equally enhanced, as it goes over the ponds, vegetation and the viaducts' concrete columns.

rooted plot / a system out of a common geometric pattern

The new place appears as if it is floating in the air between the viaducts and carpark. The new spaces are developed at levels between 7.5 m and 2 m. The starting point is the optimal functioning of the carpark and the use of the structural features of the pillars and the platform of the viaducts to support or hang part of the new infrastructure. The new system includes both floor-standing elements (water ponds, garden and building foundation), and suspended elements that hang from the existing viaducts. The matrix structure of the whole complex is the result of a geometric pattern which allows the position of pillars and slabs in points not affecting the optimal functioning of the car park. This structure is gradually transformed to integrate the position of the existing and future viaduct pillars, without losing unity and geometric consistency. The new structure is a rooted landscape developed from the main platforms linked to the train station, the car park lots and the adjoining streets by means of convenient slopes and open stairs. The result is a diverse landscape that integrates paths, uses and sensations around a common geometric pattern.

paths diversity / new proposals to enhance the waiting times

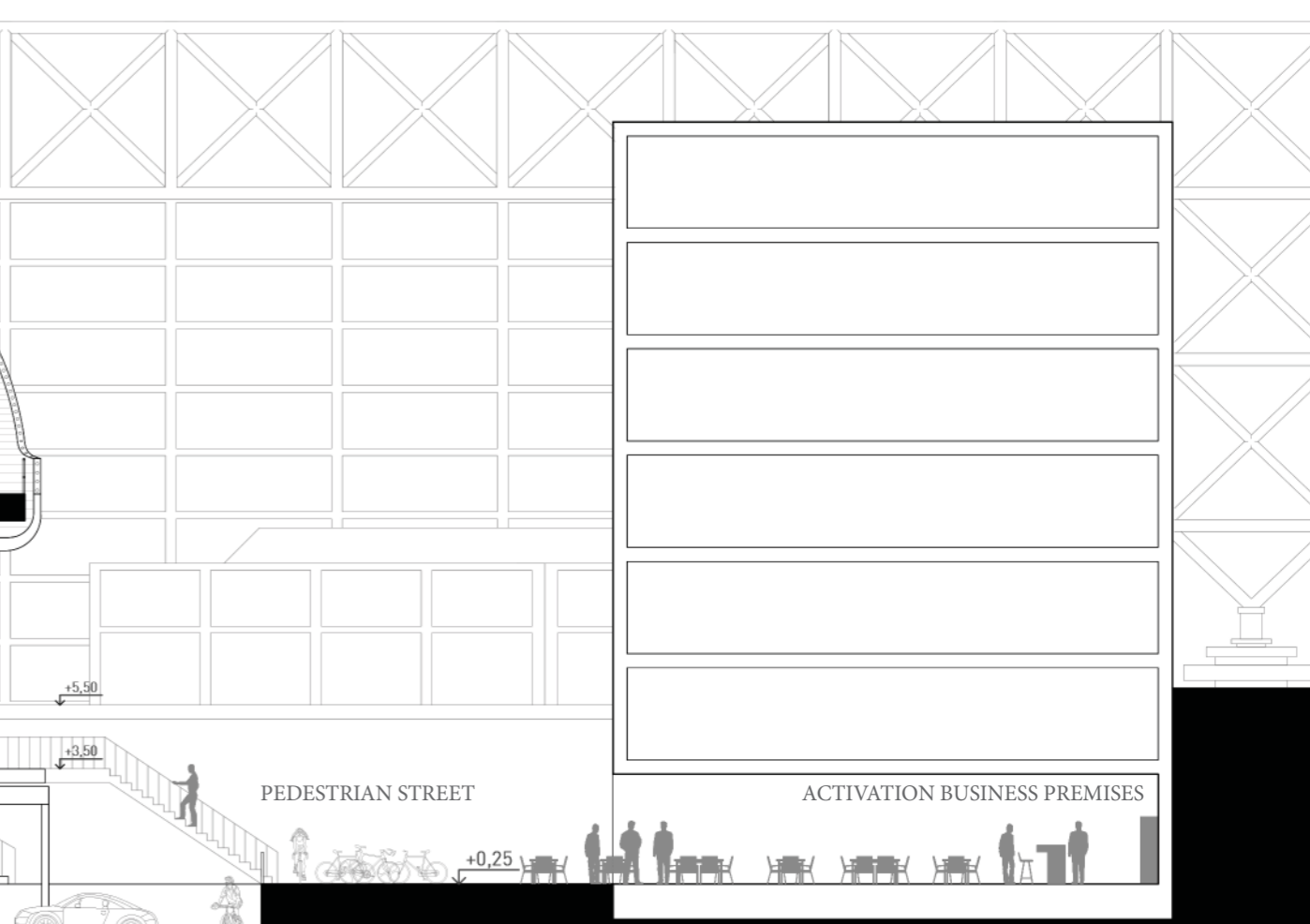
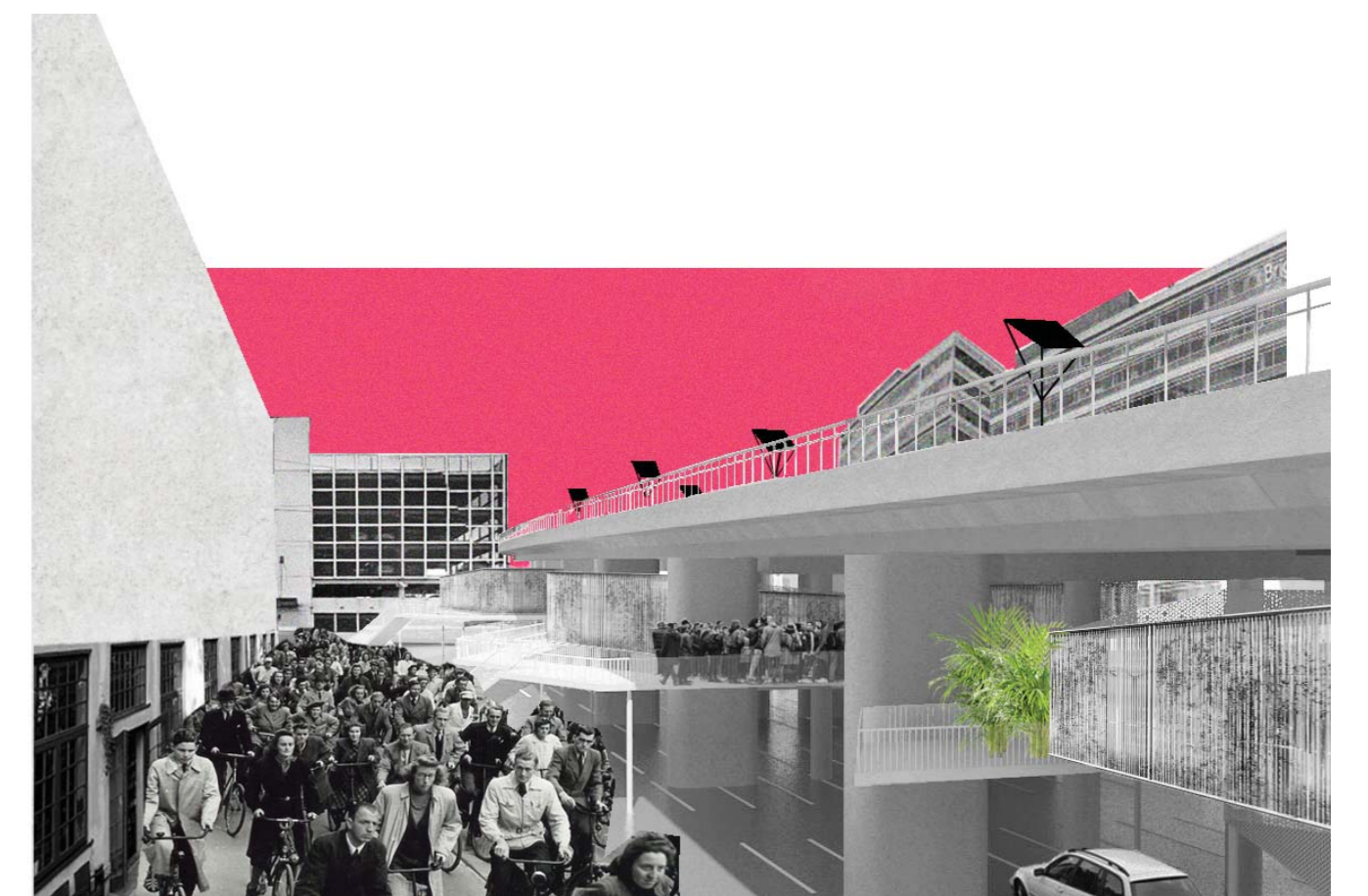
The new Piarcoplein is conceived as a multiuse space. The multiple ways to walk over it offer a chance to embrace the functional diversity and the wide range of experiences the place provides. Piarcoplein is meant to be a garden of endless paths, where the people who are using of the train station and offices workers around will be able to relax during their waiting times and breaks and go for walks inspired by a new man made nature. The network of paths and small squares will either be suspended from or lay on the viaduct structure, as suspension bridges. Their construction will be lightweight and made from metal suspension wire and wooden floors. They will run above the water ponds and the vegetation and they will be linked to the existing network of streets by means of stairs and slopes.

natural-artificial ecosystem

The new Piarcoplein square is an elevated garden covered by four concrete viaducts. The atmosphere is strongly marked by the combination of natural elements supported by artificial devices. Built on a precast concrete structure, the water ponds are the first elements to appear and create a bridge between the natural and man made elements. The ponds stretch along the garden and they will be filled with local water plants, in an fresh and fragrant atmosphere. These water containers are located on the pedestrian walkway that passes across the car park, and they are also used to highlight the main entrance to the elevated garden from the platform connecting the station. At the same level but in different precast concrete containers, we find the elevated vegetation beds, which will host plants, bushes and some trees with shallow roots. These two natural elements will attract animal species that will turn the place into a natural ecosystem coexisting with the new urban ecosystem.

cultural and economic activation

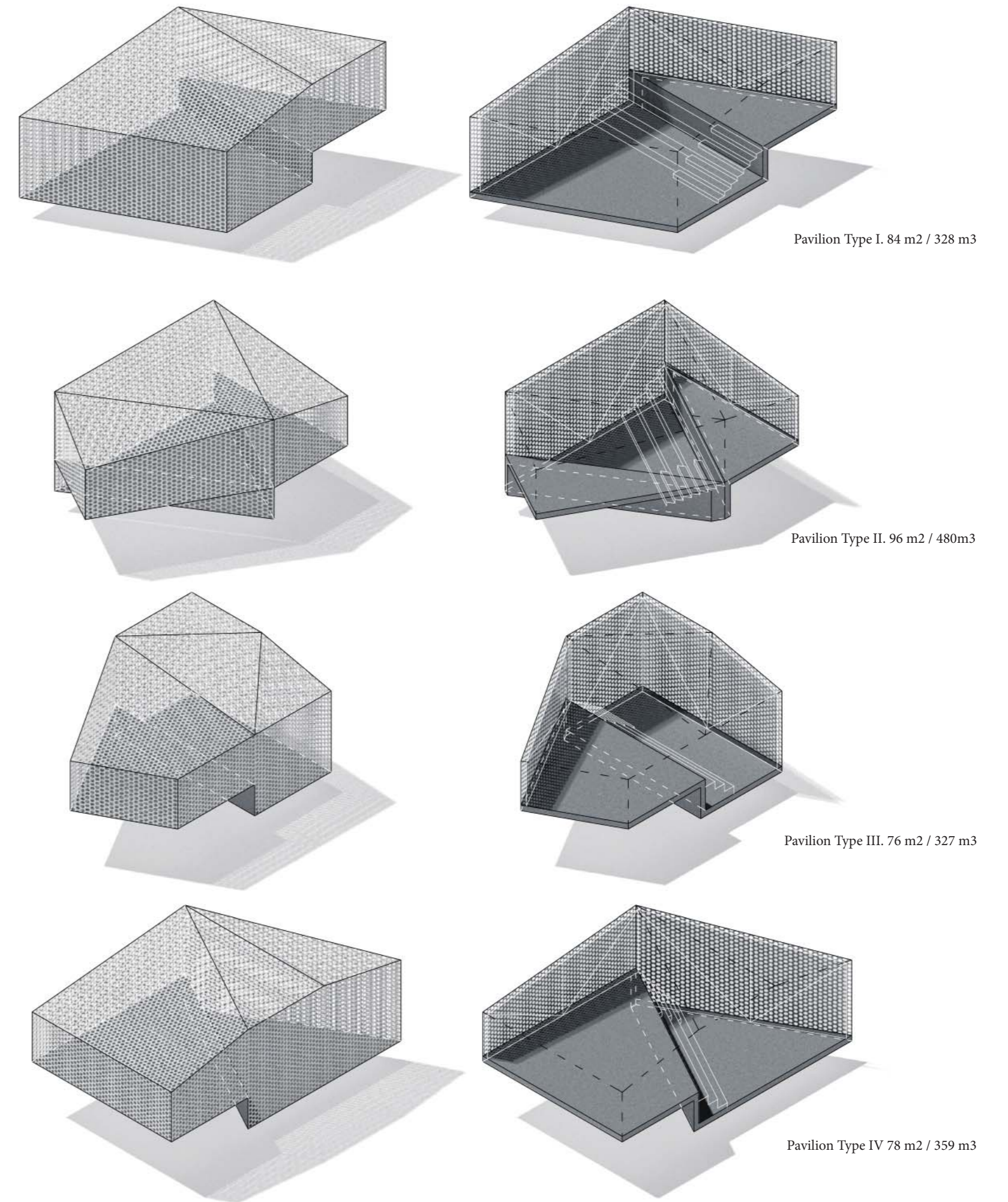
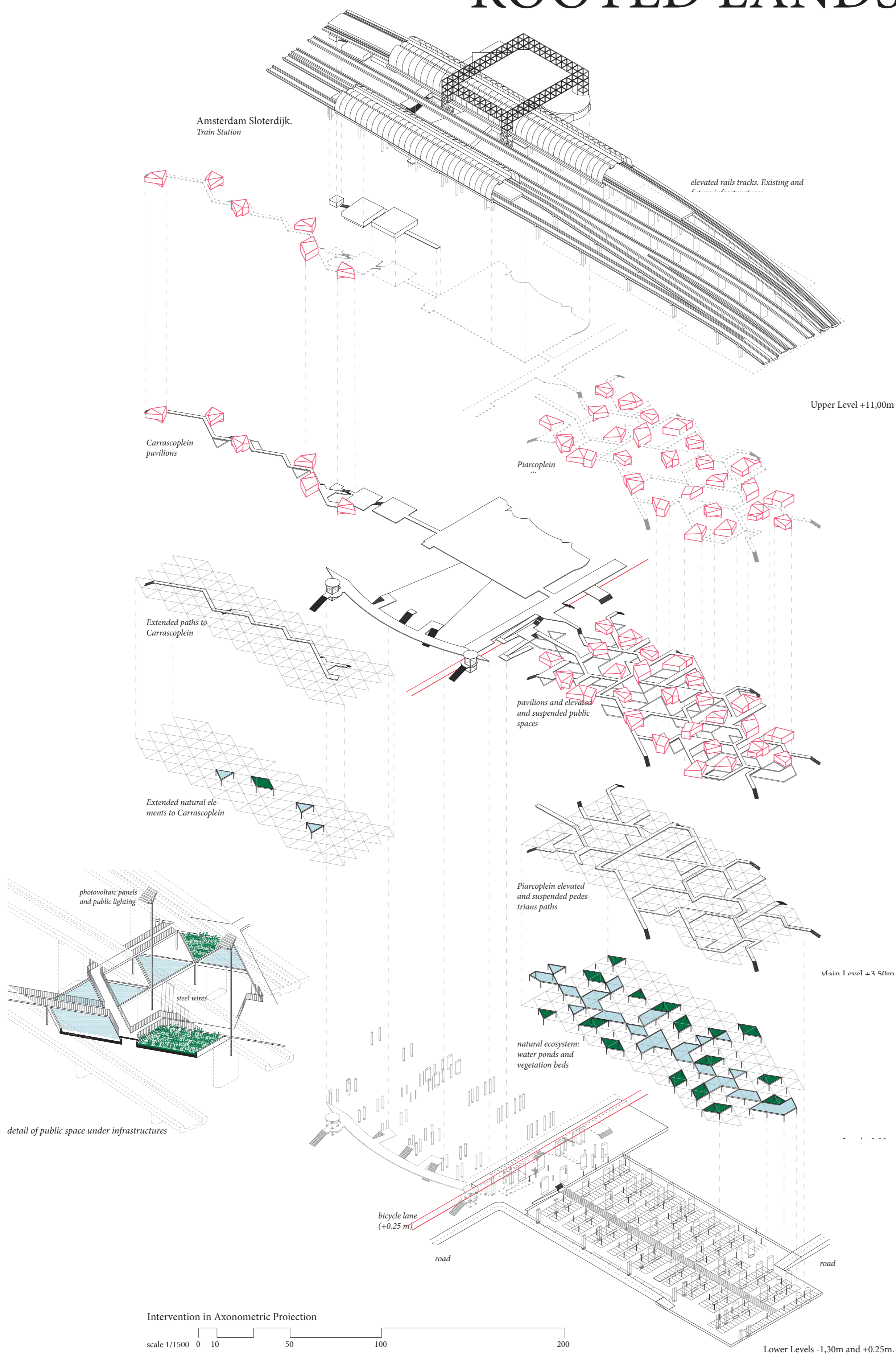
New elevated pavilions appear in an isotropic and balanced way within the new Piarcoplein garden. These are conceived as high quality spaces, available to future users and entrepreneurs from the area. Through the appropriate and proportioned management of the complex, these spaces may be used in multiple ways to complement the enjoyment of the garden. These new uses should interact with the environment in order to enrich the experience and promote the respectful uses of the space: Exhibiting art, producing art, relaxing, eating out, taking care of children, purchasing food and drinks, massage, smoking, indoor sports, yoga... All these activities follow the programmatic logic of the Piarcoplein park or garden at present, as they give the place a new identity and promote new economic opportunities, in a stark contrast to the original space, where there was nothing more than hostility in an inert and cold environment. This cultural and social reactivation of the new Piarcoplein will be enjoyed first by the users of the nearby office workers and people using the train station. At the same time, thanks to the continuity with the station, all the citizens of Amsterdam will have the possibility to enjoy this place. And thanks to its architectural and environmental appeal, Piarcoplein will become a major focus of social interest.



Cross section A-A

scale 1/200

ROOTED LANDSCAPE



"It is important to find out how to give a second role to each environmental element. This duplication allows the reutilization of spatial sub-products. The material is not a given, it is discovered by means of our own use proposals" Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, Made in Tokio 2001

collective and productive parasites / softening urban infrastructures

Even though the place is dominated by public spaces for resting and walking, a series of small pavilions set up to be used in free and diverse ways will emerge alongside the elevated paths, small squares and vegetation and water ponds. The idea is to provide the system with small scale inner spaces, lightweight and simple in terms of construction but with great architectural appeal. Integrated in the environmental and material dynamics of the new Piarcopein ecosystem, these elevated paths, infrastructures and the presence of people will lead to the generation of new productive activities. The design of the nine types of pavilions is once again based on the same geometric pattern. Their body, a metallic floor-standing structure, gets gradually raised to the viaducts' slab level and generates a horizontal overhang. Suspension steel wire hanged from the viaducts' structure are used to balance the bending moment of the overhang. Thus, the buildings emerge to encroach the existing structures, but also generate visual kindness and smooth the rigidity of strictly technological elements. The inner volume of these pavilions changes in height, with two-level floor and sloped roofs. Their skin will be light and transparent, in order to reduce their visual impact in the environment. A first façade will be screened with two wired meshes with different transparency (metal, wood and glass). This level of transparency will ensure the visual continuity of the whole complex, both from inside and outside the building.

energy feedback

The public lighting at the new Piarcopein will be provided by means of a series of photovoltaic panels standing above the viaducts' platforms. These devices will be equipped with lights and stand out as focus points in the infrastructural landscape the suburban areas of Amsterdam. The idea is to create a landscape icon which can be seen from the great distance, a Land-art piece in some way.

