

Enclosure & Exposure
Assisted Elderly Living

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Bachelor Of Architecture

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Cian Deegan and Kieran O'Brien for their help and guidance this year to produce a thesis project I can truly be proud of.

Thanks to the girls who have kept me sane over the years, college would not have been the same without all of you.

Lastly to my family, for their constant belief in me, even when I doubted myself, for this I cannot thank you enough.

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I. Introduction & Origin

This thesis investigation explores the ideas surrounding enclosure and positive exposure in everyday life. Enclosure describes the security, warmth, shelter, refuge, protection, and privacy. While exposure describes the view, the light, the feeling of being in the open, the expansion, the interaction, and the prospect.

Our thesis touchstone this year was *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet* by Angelika Fitz and Elke Kransy. The essays throughout this book describe an architecture of care. As Elke Kransy says “Architecture in its broadest sense provides shelter indispensable to the continuation of human life and survival. This is evidently a form of care.” My initial response to the theme “critical care” was to look at care from a human level. To look at the ideas of caring for the people of the city and catering for their needs. As Joan C. Tronto says in her *Caring Architecture* essay “If some do not see or understand the care that they are receiving, or undervalue it, such caring will not develop”. In order to encourage people of the North East Inner City to look after the area and any future developments, they need to feel as though they themselves are being cared for.

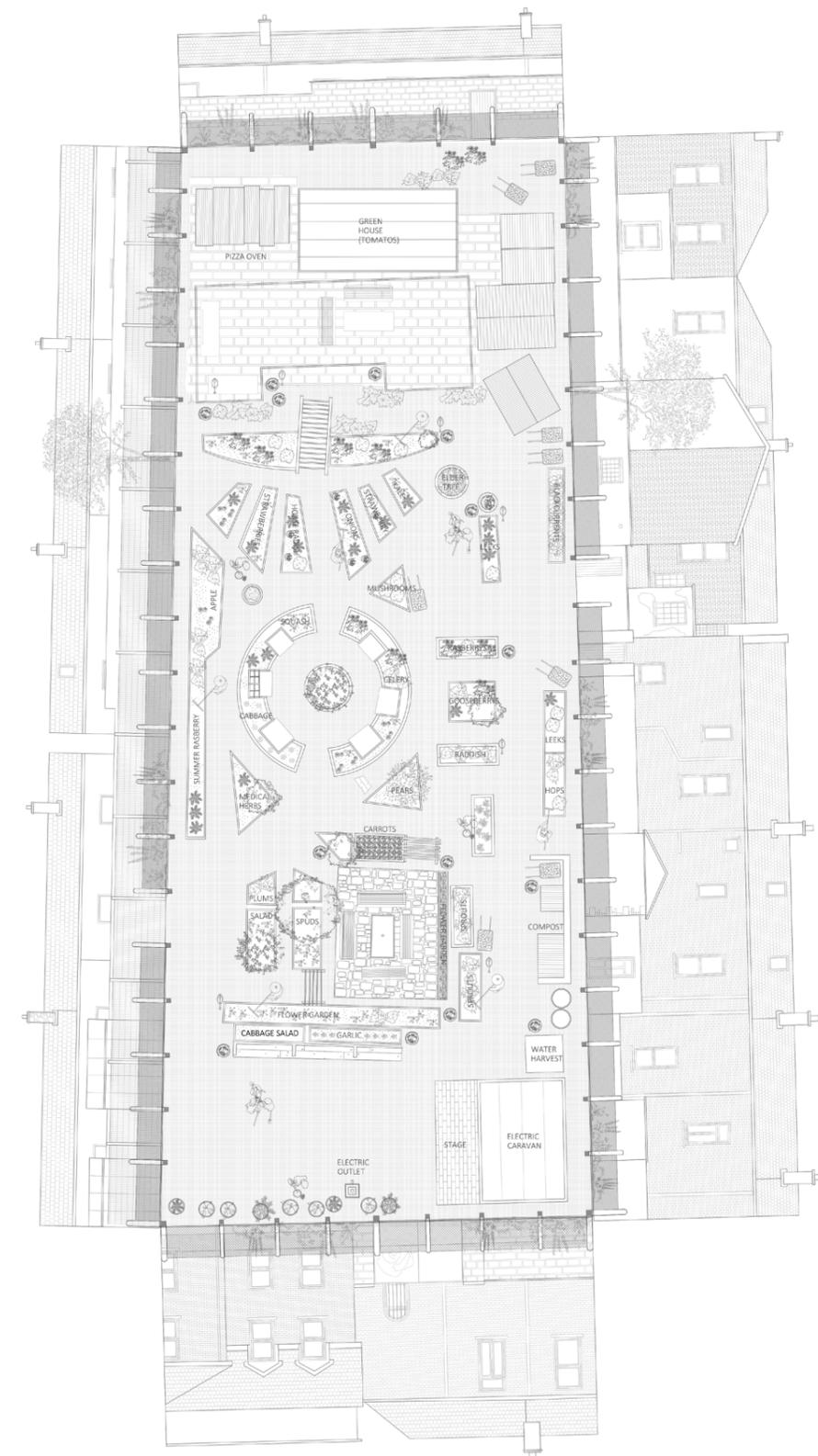
It is through the lens of enclosure and exposure that I attempted to carry out my thesis, by exploring ways the two conditions can work together to create varying degrees of interaction and retreat in the city. Sustainable communities and cities require everyone’s involvement and so need to encourage people to interact and engage with their surrounding community. The focus on community is an important aspect to the project as it promotes the notion that the city only exists as the sum of all its inhabitants and it is our responsibility as inhabitants to create the city we want, a city which caters for all ages along with all levels of ability.

Thesis Idea

This thesis investigation emerged from my semester one recording drawing of “Mud Island”. A small community garden nestling itself just off the busy North Stand Road. The community garden is used by several groups in the area, from traditional trad nights, to pizza making classes with local school children, to the general upkeep of the gardens. The garden contributes to the biodiversity and green canopy in the area, bringing people together within the community, improving the quality of life and health of its members while also giving people a sense of place and identity. The drawing of Mud Island tries to capture the richness of the gardens and the happenings that go on inside of them. While also capturing the enclosure of the terraced houses surrounding the site. The garden appears incredibly enclosed from the outside however once inside you are exposed to its vitality and life. In this way enclosure and exposure work together to create moments of inherent beauty through concealment and revelation. It is with these opposing conditions that I attempt to carry out this thesis.

My re-imagined future for the North East Inner City focuses its efforts on exposing people to the hidden greenspaces of the NEIC. I attempted to do this by creating a NEIC Highline. I identified underutilised green spaces in the NEIC and connected them through a lifted walkway, with the aim of introducing green space and its benefits into people’s everyday lives. This image can be seen on page six.

Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott and Seviney propose that “there are two primary theories to explain the beneficial effects of nature contact on human health: stress reduction theory and attention restoration theory.” (Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott and Seviney, 2017) Stress reduction theory is based on the premise that people who have been exposed to nature recover more quickly after experiencing stressful situations. Attention restoration theory is based on the idea that exposure to nature can impact our concentration levels. “Kaplan suggests that stimuli which capture attention can be characterized by either “hard” fascination (a sports match) or “soft” fascination (watching a sunset).” (Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott and Seviney, 2017) Unfortunately, urban environments like the NEIC have a large amount of “hard” fascinations, which grab our full attention and allow no time for restoration which are important for stress, anxiety and of course recovery. In contrast, “soft fascination draws attention both naturally and effortlessly, providing both distraction and restoration.” (Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott and Seviney, 2017) By exposing people to the benefits of natural environments on a daily basis, it can improve people’s health, wellbeing and overall quality of life.

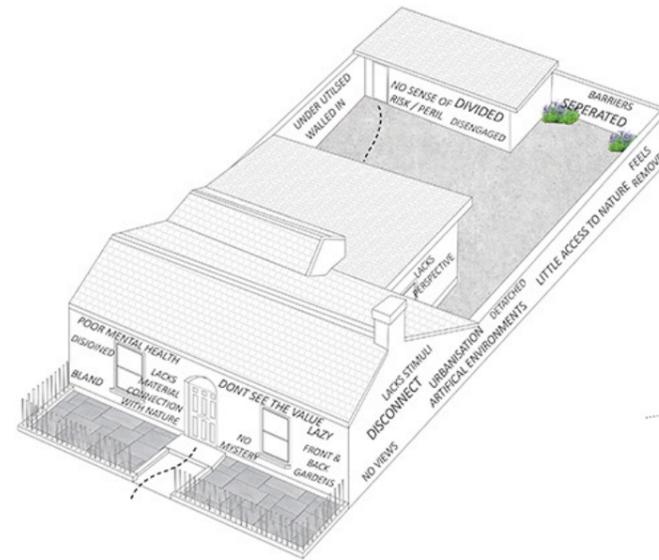


MUD ISLAND





WHERE WE STARTED



CURRENT SITUATION



FUTURE

Shelter

My initial investigation of Mud Island led me to consider everyday life in the North East Inner city. Our current understanding of shelter as an incredibly enclosed space, one which has little connection to its surroundings, similar to the conditions of mud island. There are a growing number of people living in urban environments, the population of the NEIC for example has increased by “seventy-eight percent in the last twenty years” (The NEIC, 2021). There is now a need to address the disconnect between built environments and the positive effects of exposure to your surroundings. These ideas formed the basis of my semester one speculative drawing as seen above. This drawing looks at where we have come from with the ideas of shelter as natural environments providing protection from the elements, with a level of exposure to risk and peril as well as prospect over your surroundings. To our current situation of immensely enclosed spaces with a disconnect from the world around you. Gardens are used as pathways to make your way inside, and once in there is little connection back out. Towards a projected future which aims to foster elements from the two previous versions of shelter and create an environment which we as humans would feel more comfortable in from an evolutionary perspective. As Kenneth Frampton asks “how to become modern and return to the sources”. (Frampton, 1983) This was the catalyst of my thesis investigation, to create a more interactive way of living in an urban environment.

Peter Buchanan talks about the “purposes” of architecture in his book “The Big Rethink”. He explains the psychological necessity for architecture. He explains that “architecture began with not only creating shelter but also to heighten experience and meaning”. (Buchanan, 2015)

This idea that architecture can in fact heighten our experience of the world. Juhani Pallasmaa argues that “architecture is essentially an extension of nature into the man-made realm, providing the ground for perception and the horizon of experiencing and understanding the world.” (Pallasmaa, 1996) Design can help a person locate themselves within the world and reduce the distance between occupants, their surroundings, and the built environment. When thinking of critical care in architecture there needs to be a concern towards the everyday life of occupants living in the environments being created. Providing people with a sense of place and purpose.

II. Brief

“Recognizing the need is the primary condition for design.” – Charles Eames

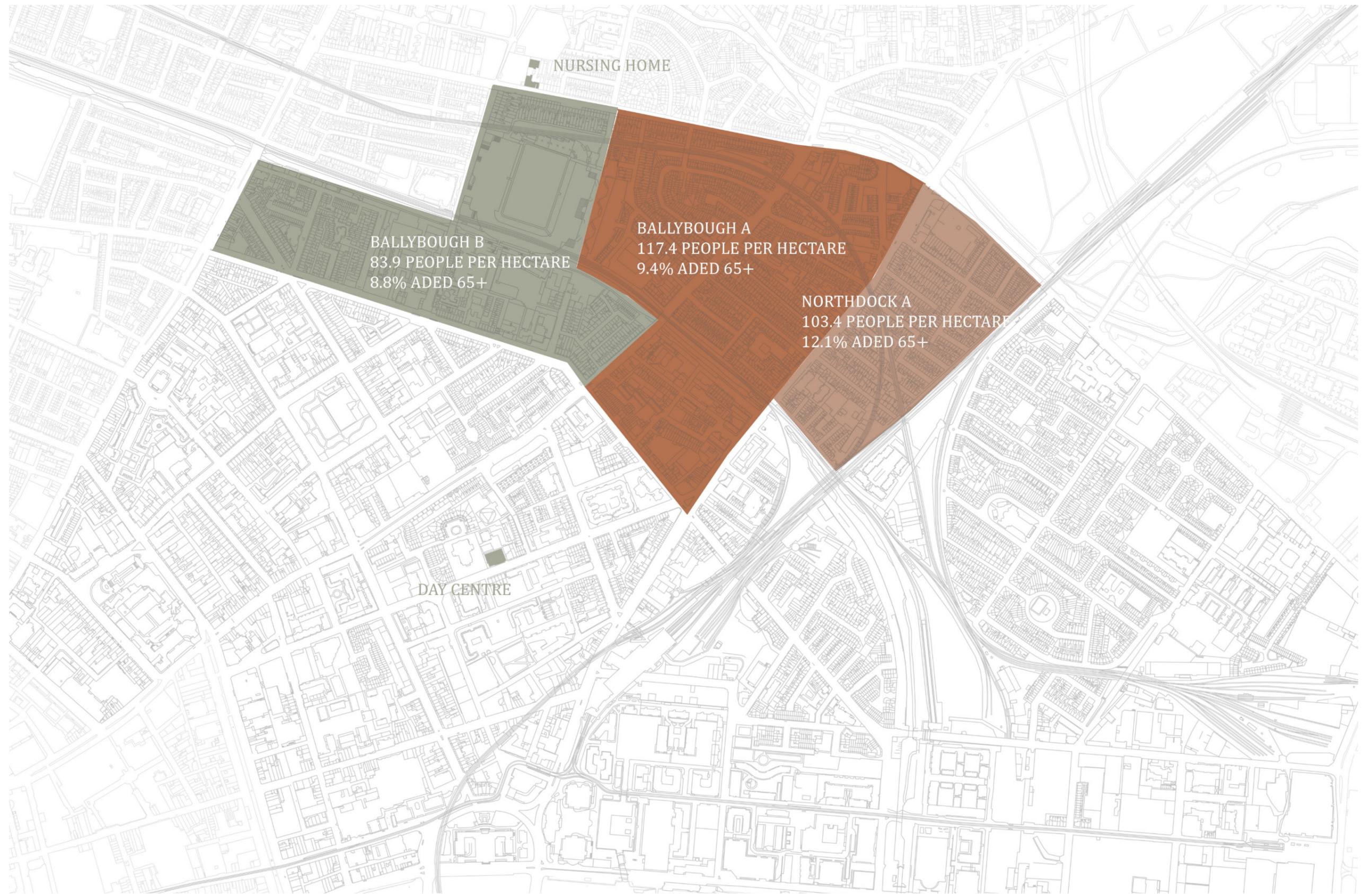
The brief for this thesis project stemmed from a study of the North East Inner City and the discovery that the aging population is set to double its current figure by 2051. This fact accompanied by a lack of elderly facilities in the area sparked the basis for a proposal of an assisted elderly living scheme. There is one nursing home on the edge of the NEIC. Along with a day centre located just off Sean Mc Dermot Street.

“People worldwide are living longer than ever before and this is also true on the island of Ireland.” (Public Health, 2020) As stated by the institute of Public Health it is important that “people can age healthily and maintain independence in old age” (Public Health, 2020) With the elderly population set to double by 2051 there needs to be steps put in place to cater for this ageing population. Unfortunately, at least seven percent of people over the age of sixty-five will need some form of care in their later years. In Ireland there are very few options for people who need assistance in everyday life. These range from aging at home, with the accompaniment of in-home care givers. This option may not be suitable as a person’s mobility deteriorates. To nursing homes with full time care, however you lose a great deal of your independence.

The idea of assisted elderly living mixed with general housing is based on the premise that people of all ages want to feel part of a community. Nursing homes and other elderly housing schemes generally move people away from their current community and place them in an environment where everyone is in the same deteriorating state as themselves. In order to combat this, integrating assisted living with general housing provides opportunities of encounters with a multitude of generations.

The image here was a semester one spatialise study of the project. The housing scheme early in the design stages was quite enclosed and created a world of its own. At Christmas I spoke to residents of the North East Inner City and their views and opinions changed the directory of the design.



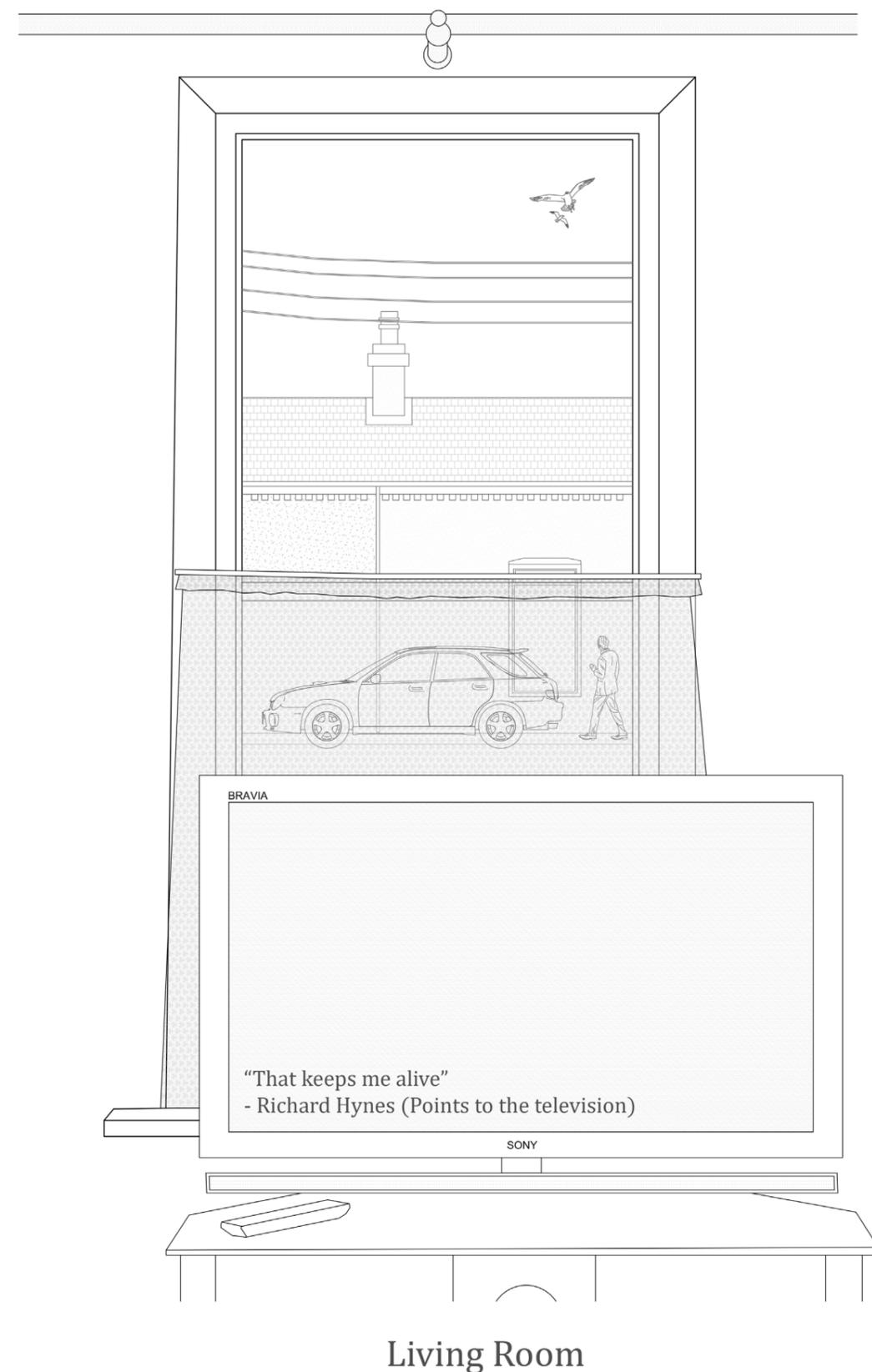


Current Residents

With the brief in mind, I spoke to current residents of the North East Inner City. Anne McLaughlin, a seventy-two-year-old lady has lived on Spencer Street for just over fifty years. She informed me of a morning in her very active life as part of the East Wall community. Starting with a trip to her local shop, followed by Sunday mass in east wall church, to her local gardening club, and finishing her morning with a coffee with friends. Stating that there is a strong sense of community in this part of the city.

I also interviewed Richard Hynes, a ninety-one-year-old man, recently widowed. He has recently stopped driving and since then feels quite disconnected from the world around him. The man discussed the issues of social isolation. This coupled with a deterioration in his mobility, he admits that the chance interactions with passers by out his living room window are the little interaction he has with the outside world on a daily basis. The images that follow document the less than exciting views from his windows.

Helen Mc Cabe aged seventy three, also flagged the importance of people walking by her window on a daily basis. While living alone she noted that the chance encounters she has with neighbours as they passed by her window are a highlight of her day. The threshold space outside some people's homes may provide much needed privacy to some but can act as a barrier for interaction between others.



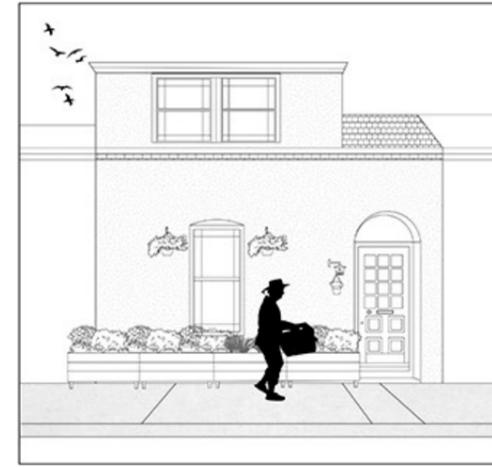
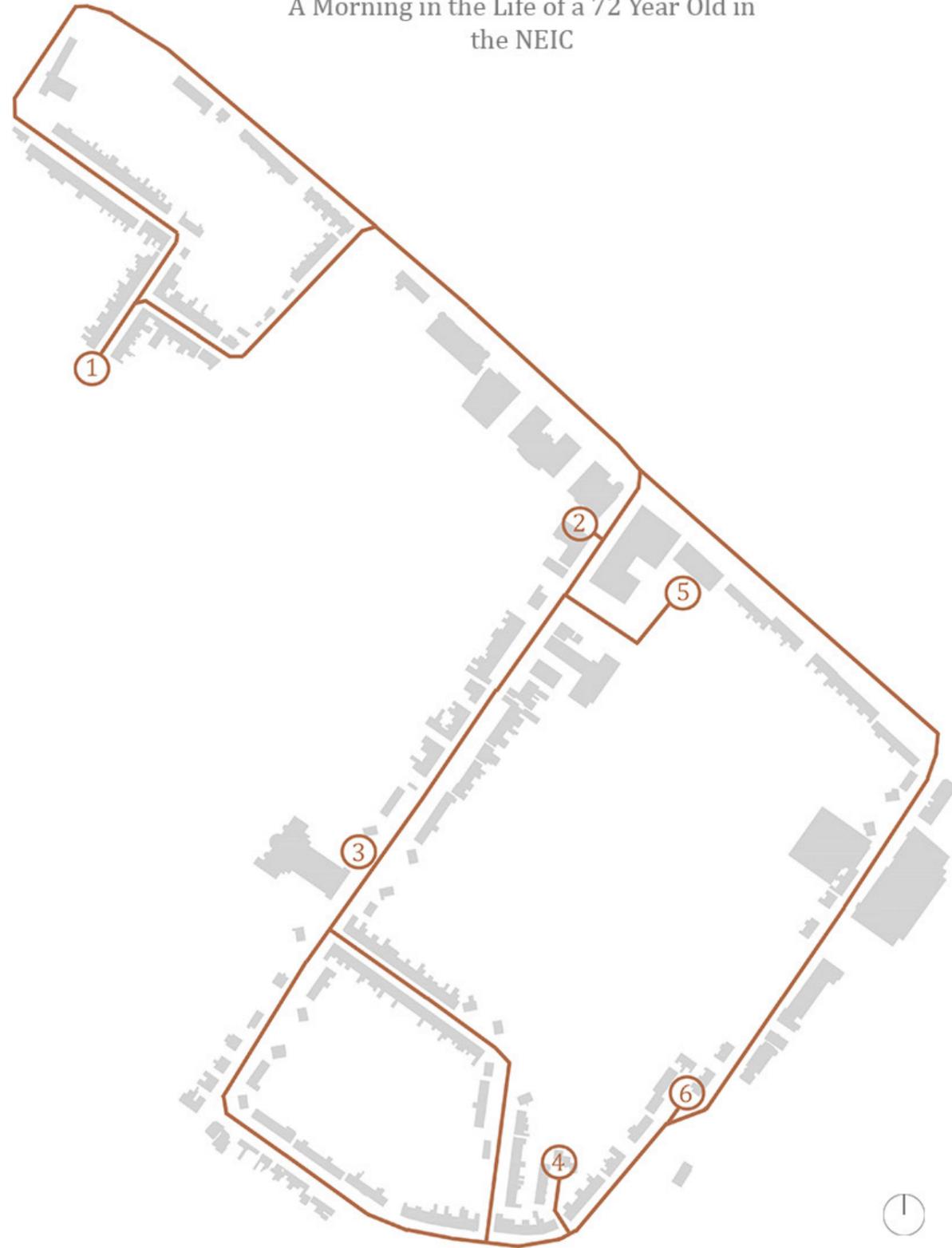
These informal interviews were carried out in the course of site visits. I adhered to best practice in terms of obtaining participants' permission, informing them of the scope and rational for the project, GDPR and storage of the material.



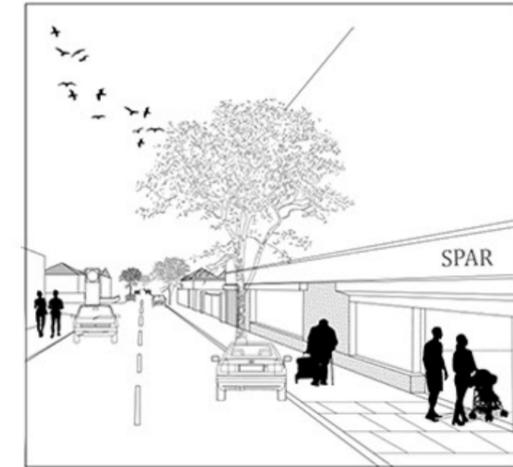
Bedroom Window

How long have you lived here? - "50 Years."
And do you like it? - "No, not now, not since she went"

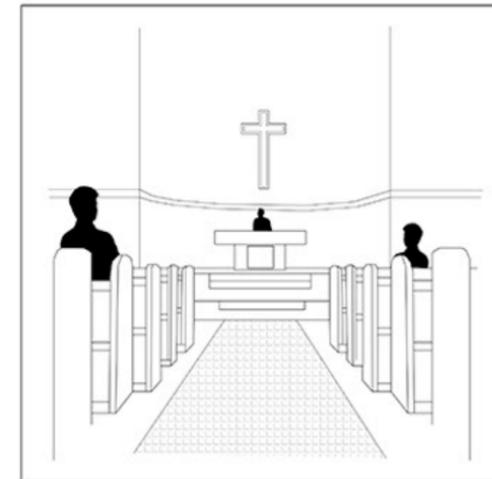
A Morning in the Life of a 72 Year Old in the NEIC



1. Spencer Street



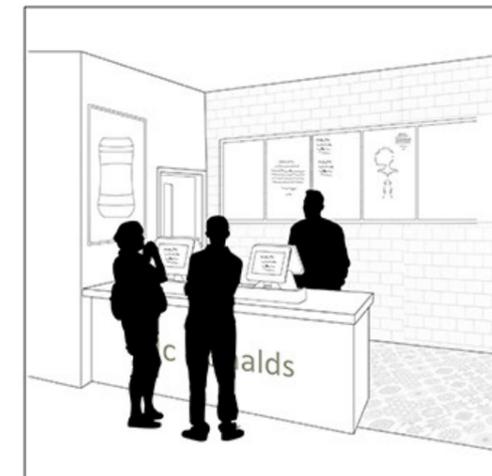
2. Trip to Spar to pick up milk



3. Mass



4. Garden Club



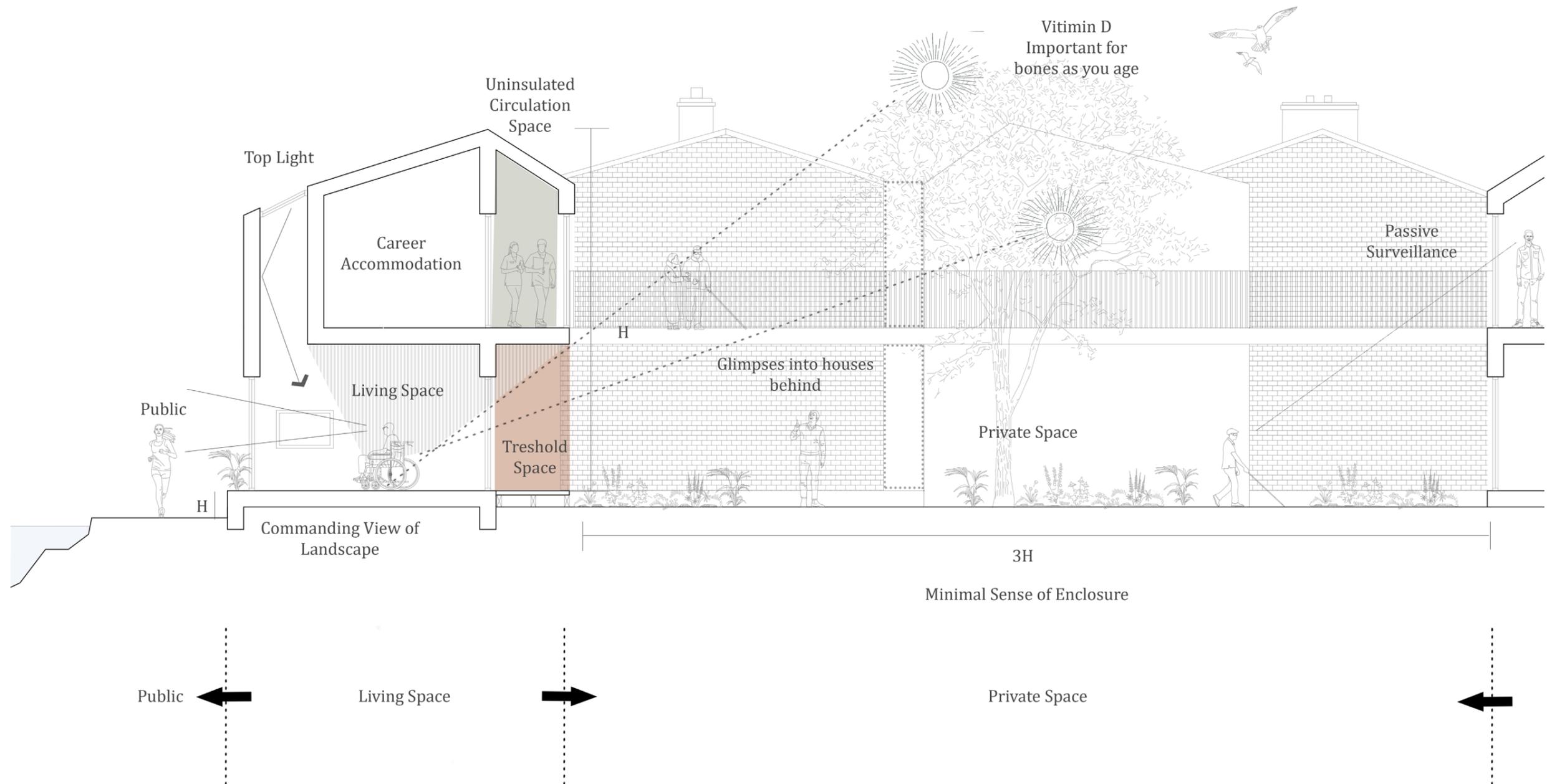
5. Coffee at Mc Donalds



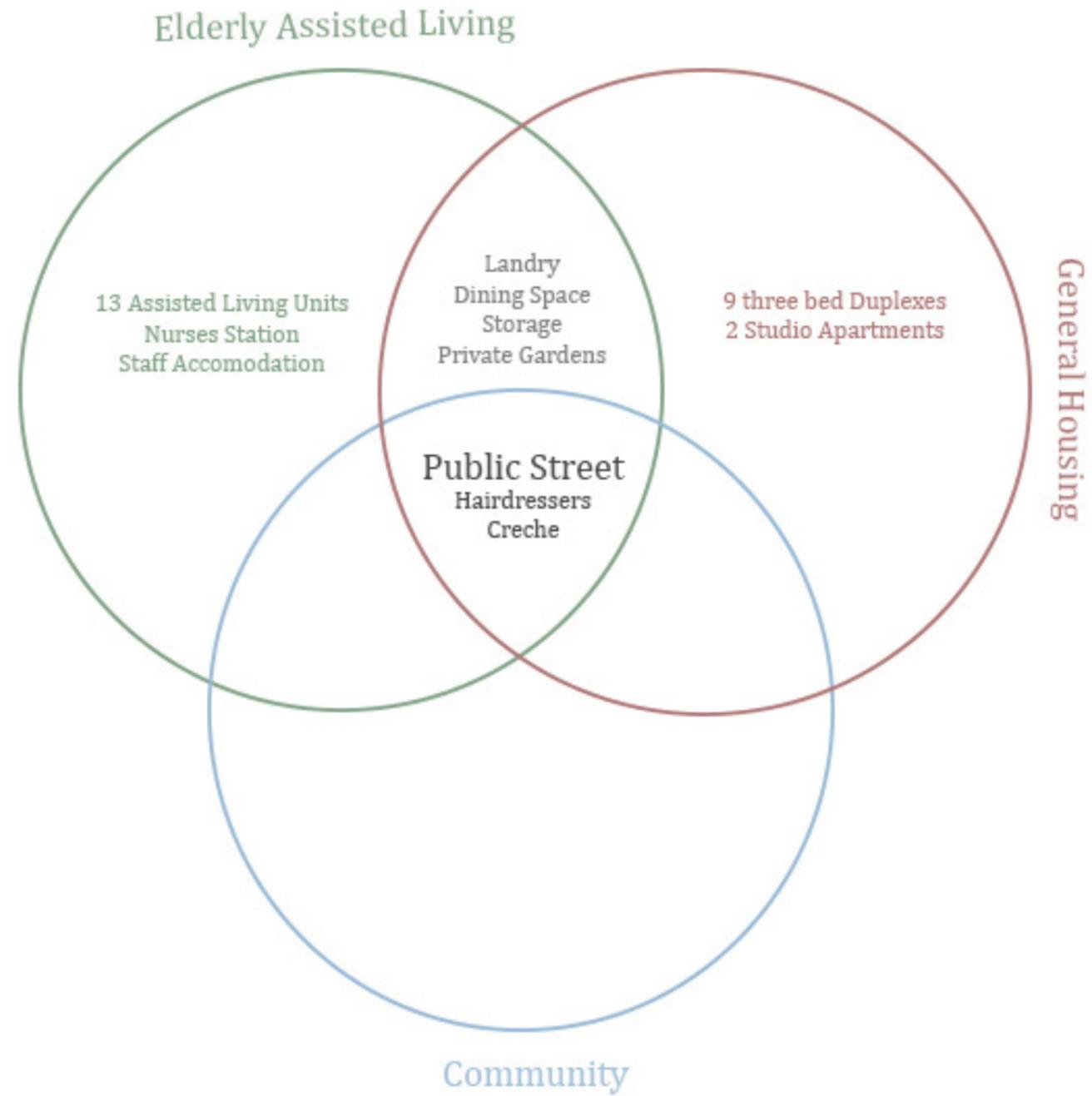
6. Tea at a friends house

The conceptual section below brings together the positive aspects of being elderly in the NEIC. There is a strong connection to the public with houses opening directly onto the street. This provides opportunities for unplanned interaction throughout the day with passers-by, neighbours, friends, and family.

One level units provide a suitable environment for the elderly as their mobility deteriorates. Providing doubled sided units, facing onto a public street and the other facing onto a private shared garden offers opportunities for interaction and retreat. This private space provides the visual and physical connection to nature on a daily basis, while the street side provides those chance encounters with the public, be that a friendly smile or a wave.



The brief for the project came together once I understood the importance of community in the North East inner City. Growing old in a city can be a very positive thing. To preserve this, I proposed an assisted living scheme mixed with general housing to provide a typology that meets people's full lifecycle.



III. Site

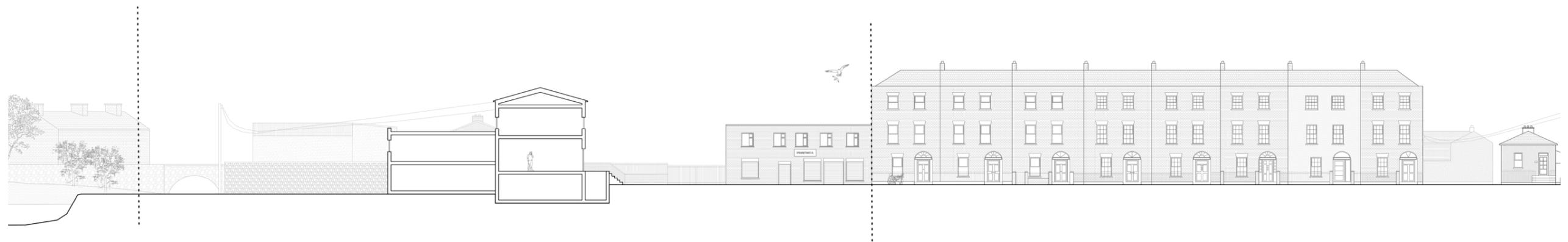
Things I considered when choosing a site were the need to provide a certain amount of comfort and proximity to the city for the elderly users whilst also maintaining a sense of tranquillity. For these reasons the site location I chose was at the end of Richmond Street, along the canal and opposite Croke park. The users have direct pedestrian access to the city and transport links, while also having the view and sound of the canal alongside the site.

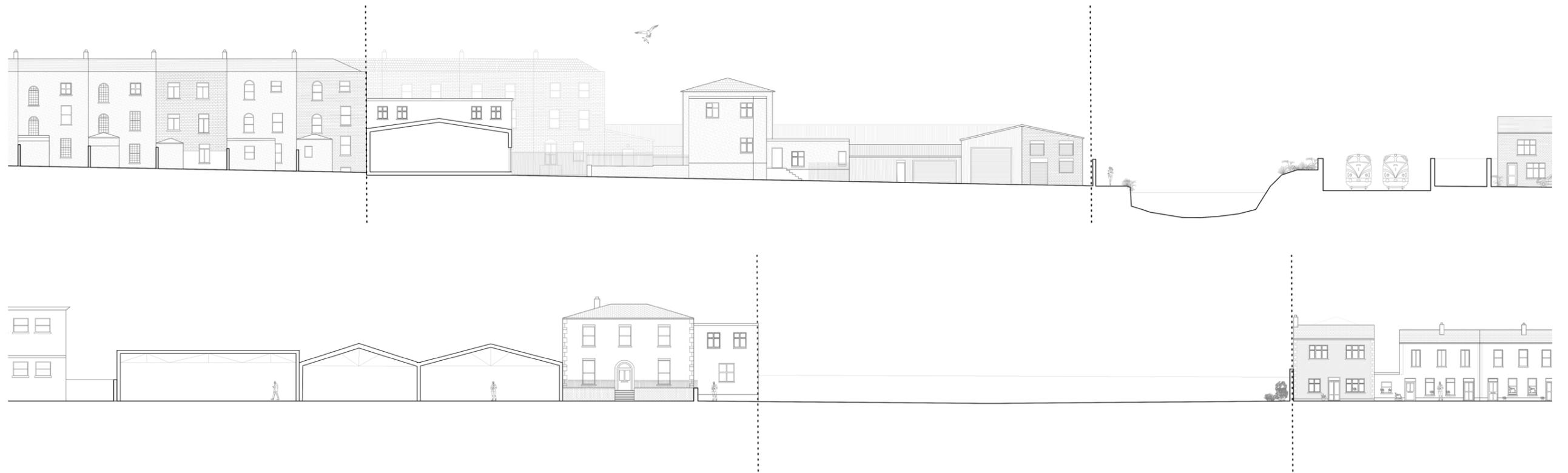
The site currently has one way in and out. There are a number of dead ends onto the site with the potential to be opened up. This offered the opportunity for the project to connect back to the city by creating a new route down to the canal. By opening the site up to the canal passive surveillance could be introduced along this otherwise quiet stretch.

The area is predominantly residential which is an important aspect of the project, integrating the elderly people into an active community. There are also several amenities in the vicinity, from shops to pubs to restaurants and churches. The site is also opposite O'Connell's primary and secondary school, so there is the noise of children laughing and playing nearby. Being a part of an engaging community gives people a sense of place and belonging. This can be particularly important for elderly people who may not be able to see family and friends as often as they once had been.

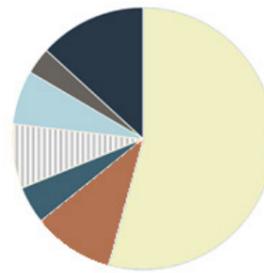


Fig.1

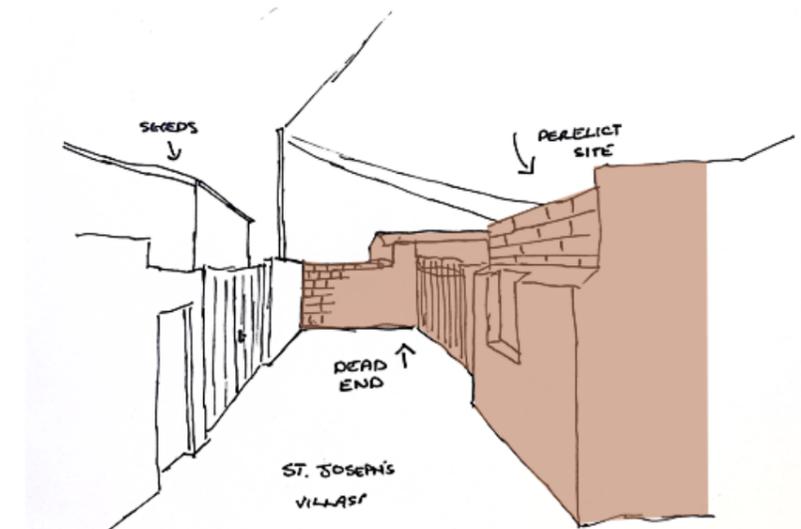
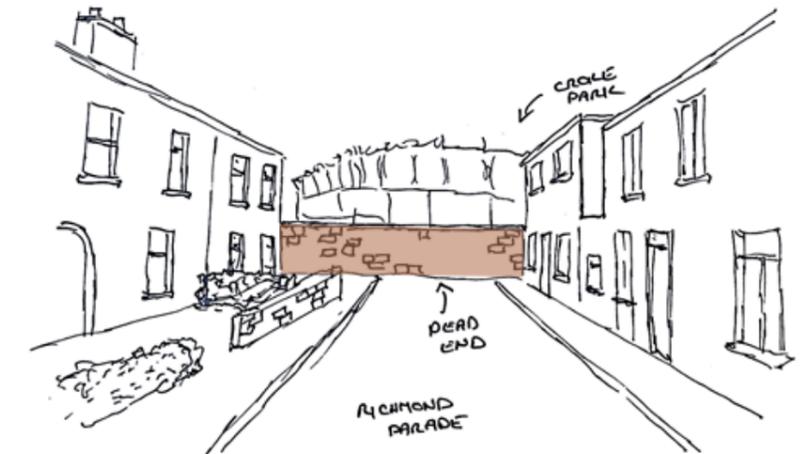
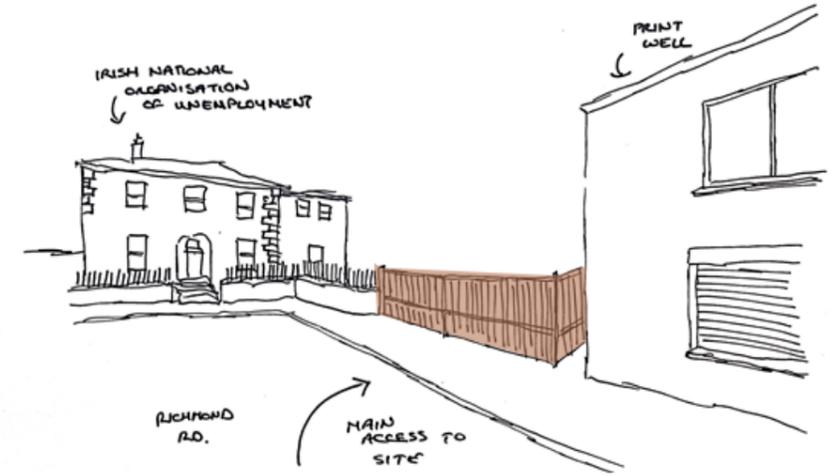




Site Analysis



- SERVICES
- EDUCATION
- FOOD & DRINKS
- RETAIL
- INDUSTRY
- RESIDENTIAL
- SITE LOCATION



Street & Garden

'A city is a human settlement in which strangers are likely to meet' - Richard Sennett

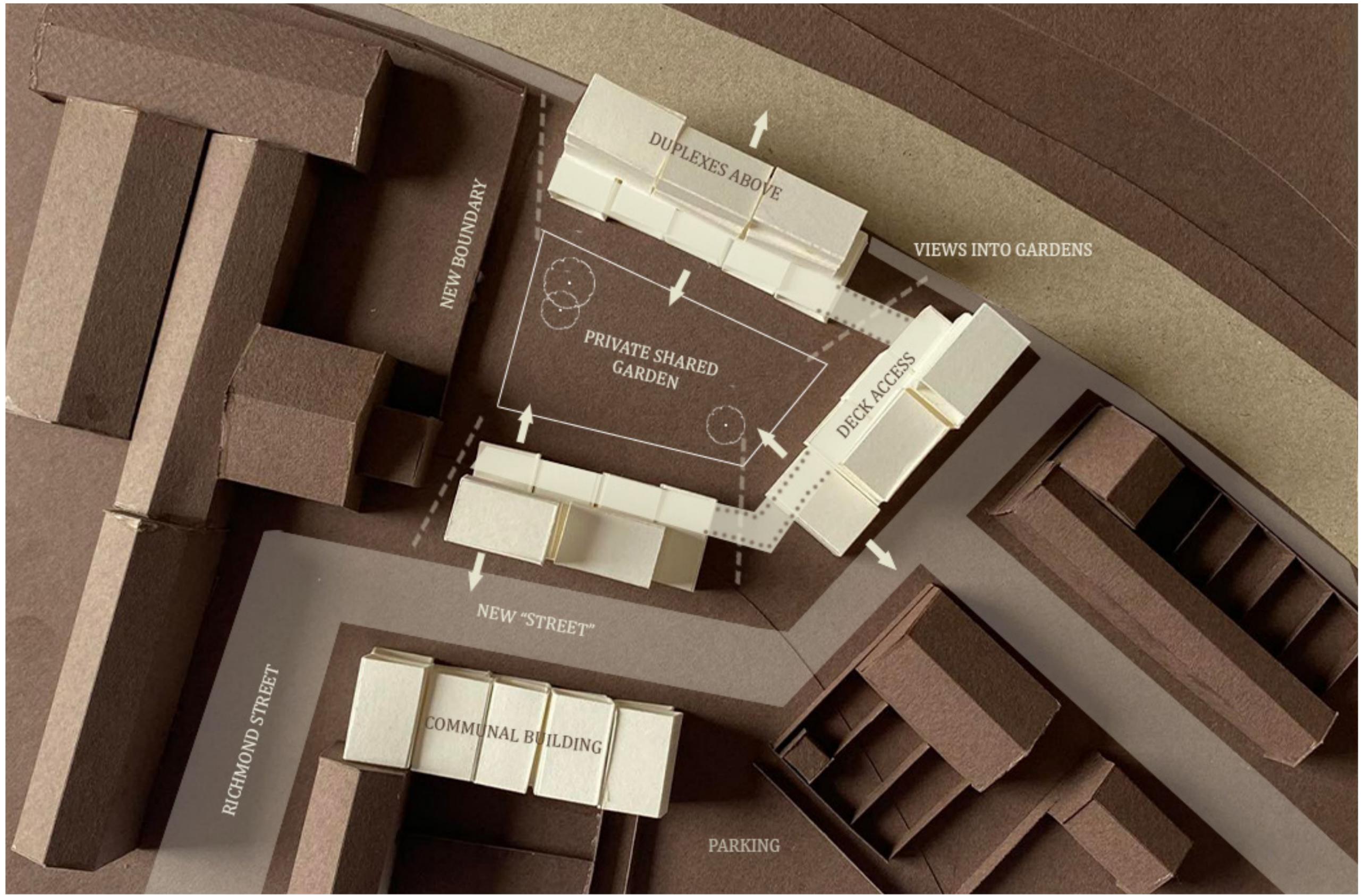
Creating pedestrian streets in cities has been recognised as an effective way to create good public spaces. (Streets as Places, 2022) Giving people a sense of belonging, even when walking alone, being surrounded by other people and activities, can foster a sense of involvement.

The introduction of a new pedestrian "street" leading down to the canal creates a connection between the project and the rest of the city. By bringing people down to this section of the canal the elderly people within the complex have a stronger connection to their surroundings and can engage with the surrounding community. The focus on the community aspect of the scheme is particularly important to combat the issue of social isolation associated with an aging population. The project hopes to create value for the residents and city alike by focusing on the transition from the city to the street to the individual dwelling.

Interestingly, if you are happy in the place you live and have a good relationship with your neighbours you are more likely to look after common spaces. This applies to the street and garden side alike. This can be done by creating a welcoming and hospitable environment for people to meet and interact with each other. Amenities such as public seating, planters and areas for children to run and play can enhance an areas aesthetic and create a sense of sociality in space.

The images here were collages I had produced earlier this year. They give an idea of the type of atmosphere I imagined for these new pedestrian streets. Places that are full of life and activity.

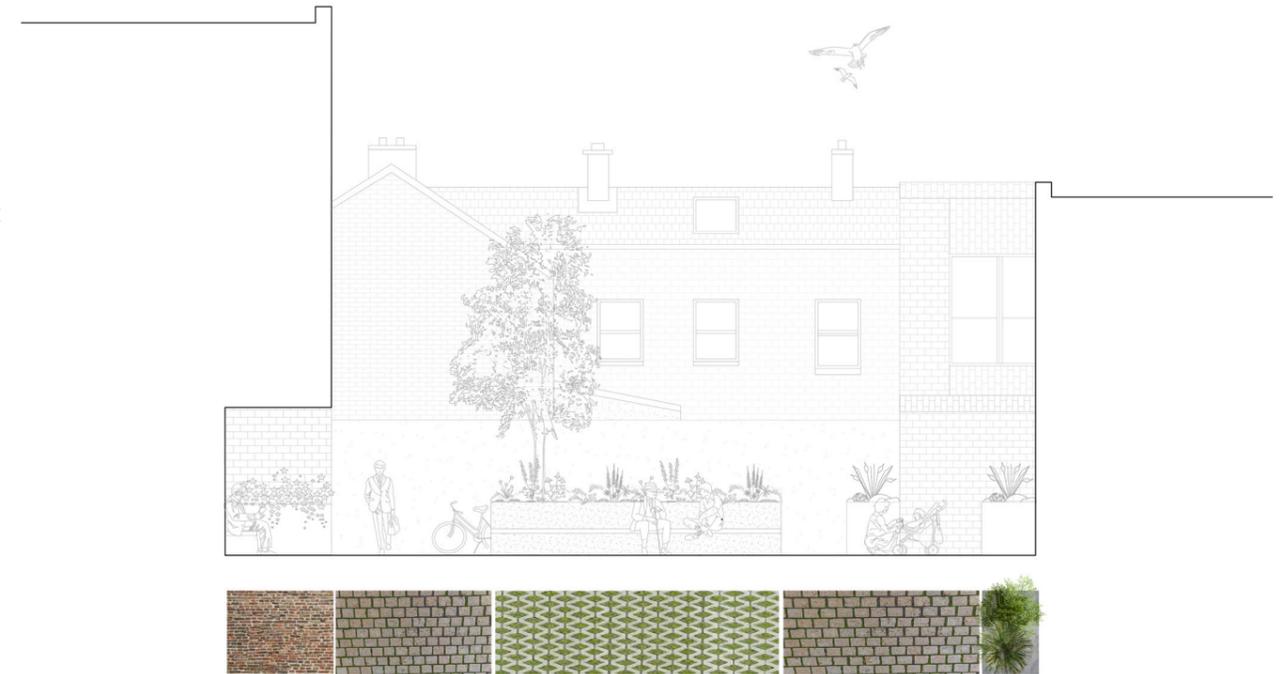




Street & Garden

One of the issues with urban environments is that they are filled with hard ground surfaces that increase the risk of flooding by not allowing rain water run off. With half of the world's population living in urban settings, cities are becoming "important determinants of future sustainability". (Bai et al., 2012)

Open green space has proven benefits to physical health and wellbeing, longevity, and cognitive activity. The World Health Organisation suggests "nine metres squared of green space per person" (United Nations, 2021) for overall good health and wellbeing in cities. However, the North East Inner City has as little as one point five six metres squared of green space per person. This formed the basis of the layout of my street and gardens. Spaces that would generally be associated with hard ground surfaces void of flora and fauna are reimagined. The new "street" hosts permeable ground surfaces, such as grasscrete and pourous paving blocks. The internal gardens are then split into allotments. This allows the occupants to take control of what they want to grow in the garden. This should give the garden a certain character as some patches become over grown and others are filled with seasonal flowers. The evapotranspiration from vegetation should also help with surface water that could build up. The external environments of this scheme are aimed to improve the lives of people in the city, increase the biodiversity in the area and reduces the surface water build up in the area.



IV. Design Development

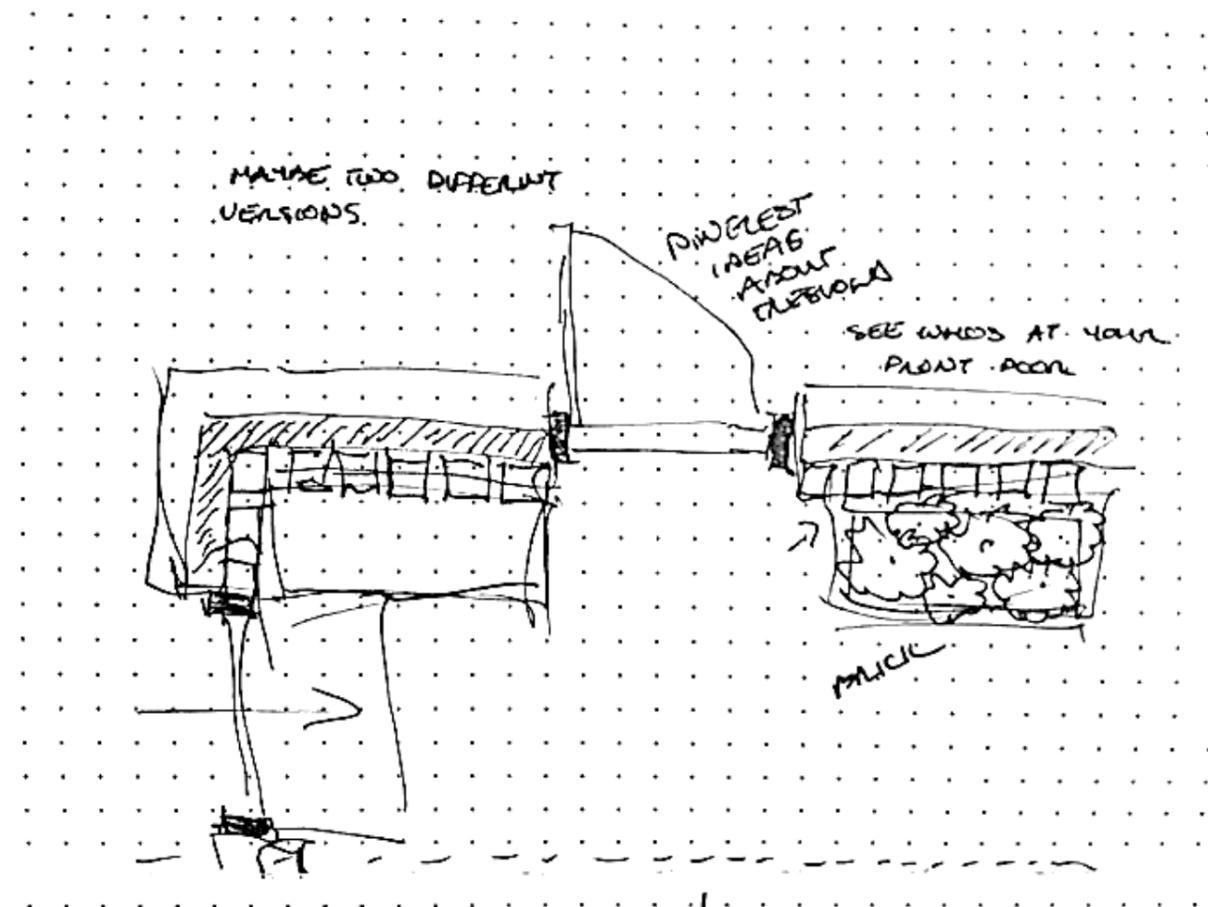
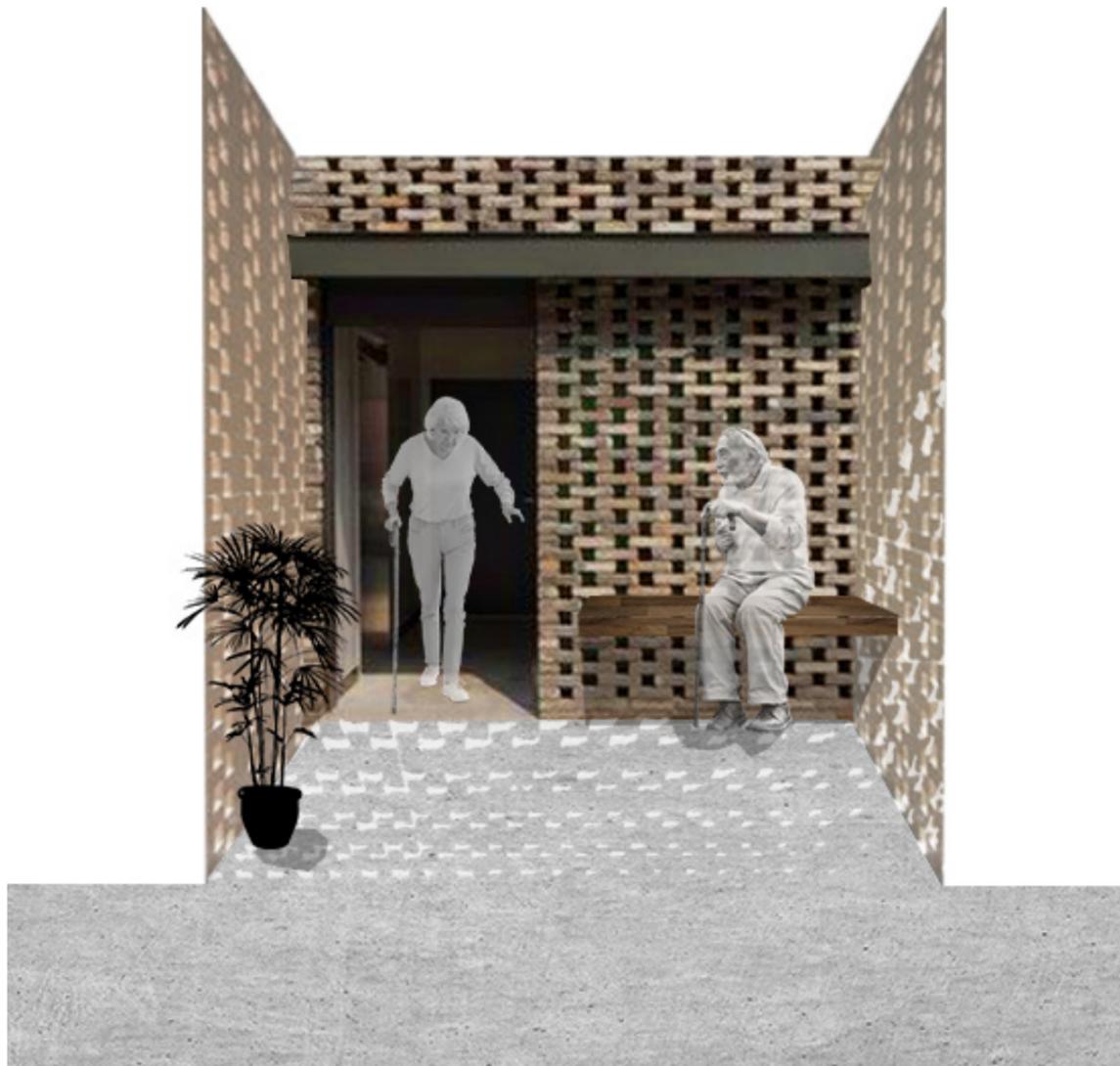
Positive Exposure

I touched on the ideas of exposure previously in my semester one study of our current way of living. Exposure in the Oxford dictionary is described as “exposure (to something) the state of being in a place or situation where there is no protection from something harmful or unpleasant”. However, when I discuss positive exposure, I am referring to our innate attraction to the outdoors and having a strong connection to our surroundings. “Human beings have lived and survived in natural environments for most of evolutionary history” (Zhong, Schröder and Bekkering, 2021) Therefore, being exposed to elements such as light, wind, and views, as well as the less tangible exposure to people and interaction comes naturally to us.

These natural environments had a strong “connection to ... dynamic natural ecosystems” (Altomonte et al., 2020) and “opportunities of exposure to ... rich and mutable stimuli”. (Altomonte et al., 2020) Therefore, if “one were to consider the last two million years of human history as one single lifespan, humans only began to live together in villages around their 69th birthday.” (Brooks, Ottley, Arbuthnott and Sevigny, 2017) it could be argued that we have not yet fully adapted to living in sensorially demanding urban environments like that of the North East Inner City. As a result people need varying degrees of interaction and retreat from their surroundings on any given day. Through this lens of enclosure and exposure I look at methods of design that create this varied degree of the two.

Threshold

One definition of threshold is “a barrier space that is located for separating the volumes”. This is “dictionary definition” of the threshold, but in fact this term can have various meanings according to the different perspectives. A threshold can be physical, psychological, emotional, social, economic, etc. definitions.



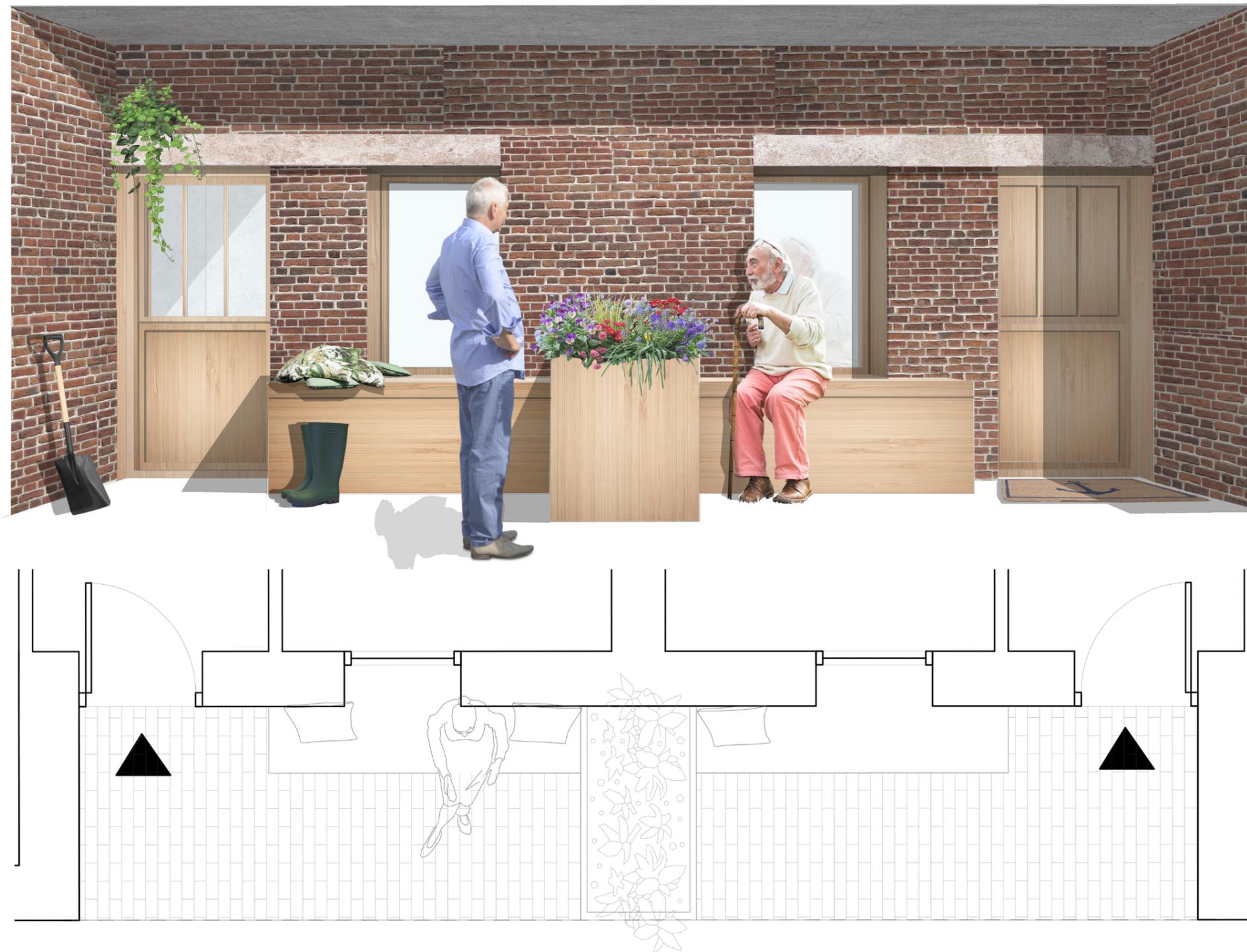
Threshold

Threshold was always going to be an important part of the balance between a measured sense enclosure and total exposure. The threshold spaces of the scheme needed to act as moments of refuge as well as moments of prospect, to allow occupants the choice to interact with neighbours. The entrance to the elderly units on the ground floor needed careful consideration. To create a space that allowed a moment of retreat from the busy new “street” while also allowing a level of engagement with its passers by. A shared entrance space to these units seemed most appropriate to this aim. Allowing occupants to get to know their neighbours, while also not being forced to interact with all the other inhabitants of the scheme.

Another important threshold of the scheme was the moment of change between the public street and the private gardens. The intention was to create a space that signified a change of atmosphere and ownership. A space that felt visually inviting but also announced itself as a new condition completely. The “street” side of the scheme offers an environment full of daily activities and hustle and bustle while the garden side has a more tranquil atmosphere. This change in atmosphere is done with a subtle ground surface change to signify that you are entering a new space. The main entrance almost acts as an outside room. Combining the feelings of enclosure and exposure in one space. The manifestation of this space can be seen on page 25.

Living in a city means living with other people. We share streets, alleys, parks, courtyards, stairwells and roof terraces. All of which can offer chance encounters with neighbours. However sometimes you need a place to retreat. A place to be alone and have a space of your own. The design tries to offer these moments of enclosure for people to retreat when living in a busy city.





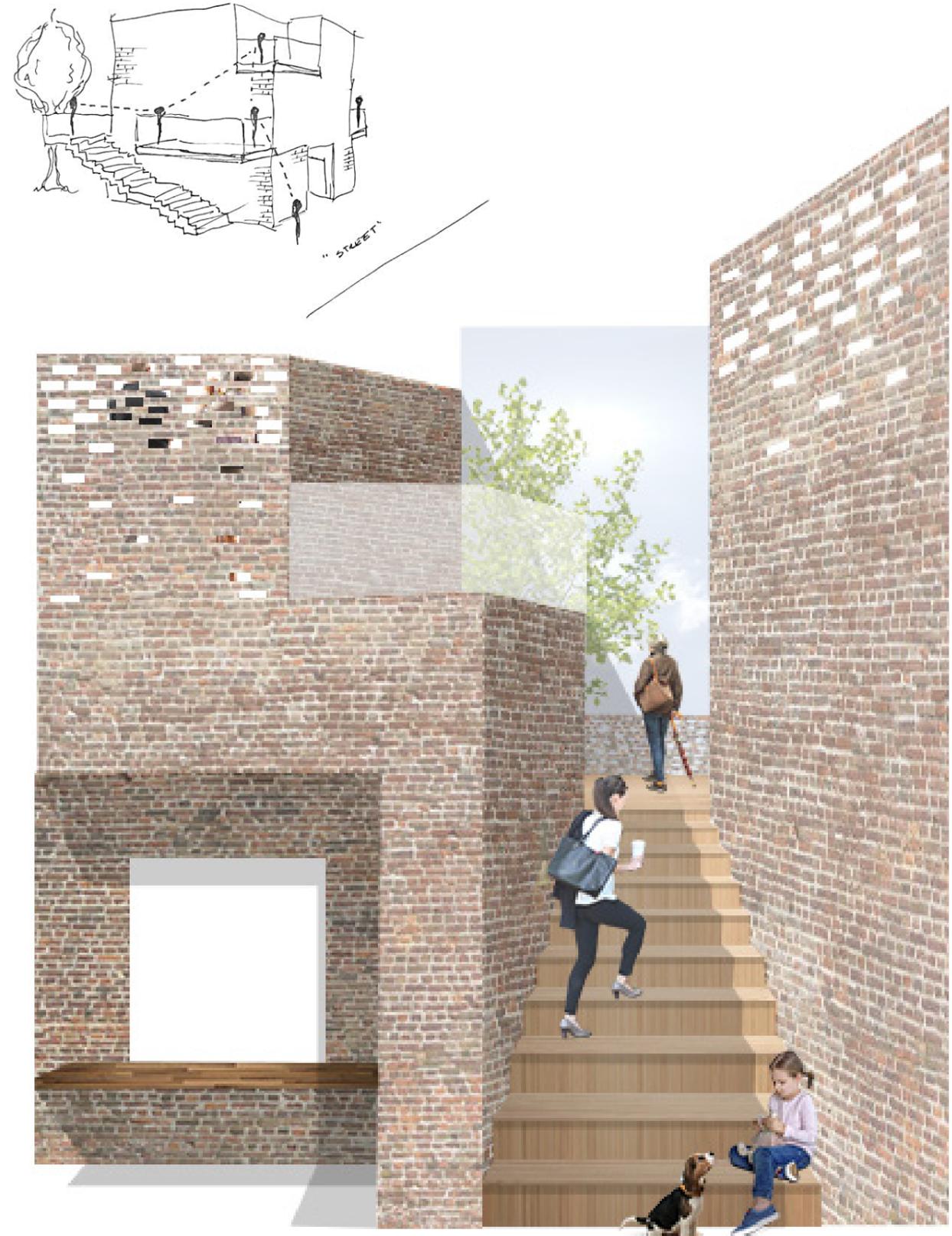
The image above shows how this shared threshold space manifested in the final design. Allowing the two occupants to engage on a daily basis. The planter that separates the space allows for personalisation, to make a space that has its own identity and reflects the occupants personality.



Interaction

Interaction ties directly back to the ideas of exposure. Many housing schemes lack common spaces. Occupants navigate themselves directly inside their home without ever meeting or engaging with their surroundings or their community. By exposing the elderly people of this complex to common and shared spaces on a daily basis you are increasing the number of encounters they can have throughout the day. Again reducing the issues of social isolation that can accompany an aging population.

The stairs to the duplexes above the elderly units also proved to be an important moment of interaction within the scheme. The staircase to the duplex units was therefore located on the garden side of the scheme to activate this space. The stairs offer another chance for encounters between the residents of the complex. This idea of exposing yourself to people and situations you may not encounter living in a standard elderly housing scheme. The stairs were designed as a feature, as a place to sit, gather and interact with surrounding residents. The image to the right was a concept image I had produced early in the semester about the importance of the staircase as a moment of interaction. By providing attractive spaces for people to use, you also provide opportunity for chance encounters and interaction.





The image above demonstrates how the stairs manifested in the design. Creating a direct connection between the elderly units below and the duplexes above. The stairs offer a place to congregate and interact with your neighbours.



Overexposure

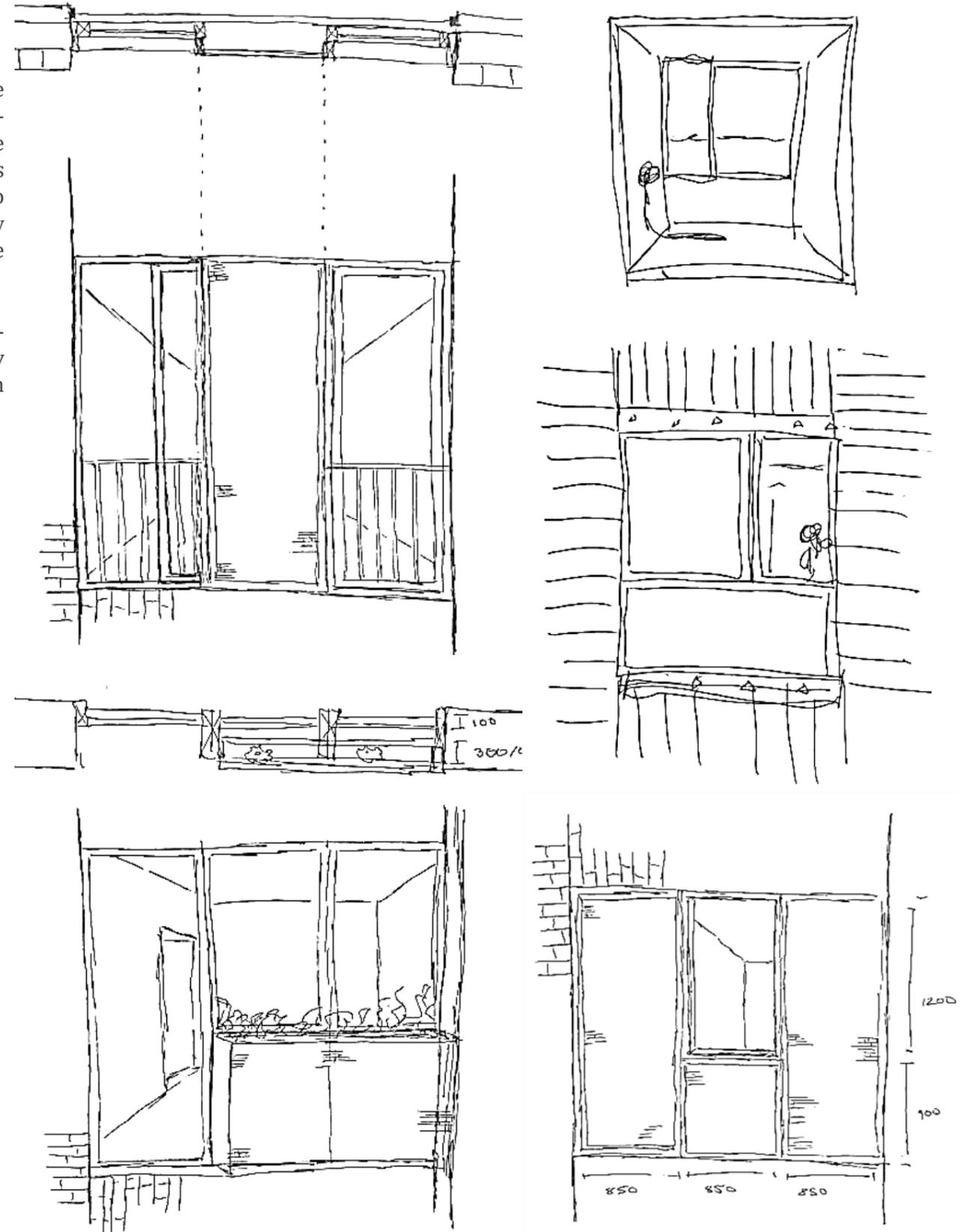
When dealing with the subject of exposure overexposure was always going to be an issue. This was an initial image I had produced looking at the living room of the elderly units opening out onto the garden. However, considering not everyone wants to socialise or interact, I began to consider how such a large pane of glass could leave occupants feeling quite exposed. This informed the design of the window I chose to introduce in the living room of these units, as seen on page 31.



The Window

Architecture is responsible for creating interior and exterior environments. The window therefore sits within the complex position of a threshold space. Windows are essential to buildings for the purpose of light and ventilation however they are also essential to the visual connection between inside and outside. By looking out a window you are able to place yourself within your surroundings. As the project aims to have strong connection to its surroundings, the windows were always going to be an important aspect of this scheme. The images that follow were how I broke down the window and understood how to use the frame and its positioning to create feelings of enclosure and exposure both internally and externally.

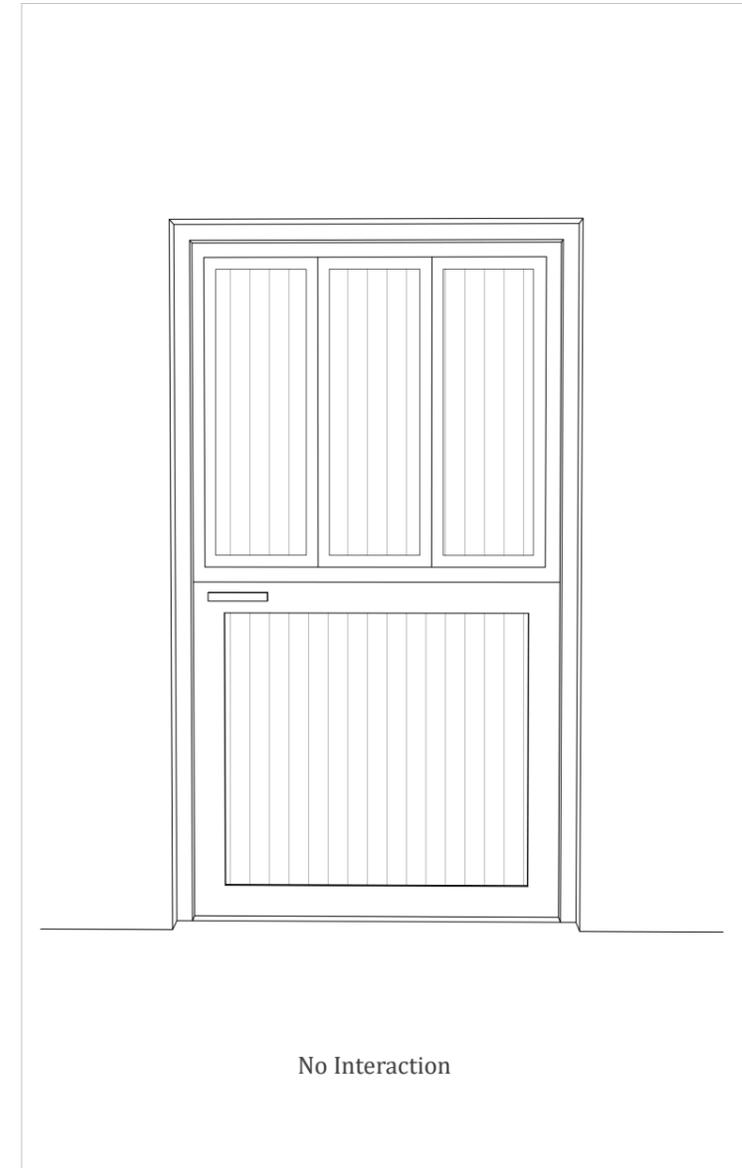
My initial approach to providing a sense of privacy to the units was to introduce screens to the windows as seen in the images to the right. However after further investigations, I decided to also employ the depth of the wall to create depth and threshold internally and externally. These explorations can be seen on the following pages.





Living Room Window

Denise Scott Brown - "Architecture can't force people to connect; it can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers, and make the meeting places useful and attractive."



The half door offers occupants to decide for themselves how involved they want to be with their surrounding community on a given day. The top section when open can offer the opportunity for active social interaction between neighbours. The glazed section allows for passive social interaction, you can wave or smile at neighbours as they go about their day. The fully closed section offers the choice of no interaction.



To carry through the ideas of enclosure and positive exposure, the façade of the complex needs to offer people the chance to screen off their surroundings to a certain extent. Allowing occupants to choose how involved they are in the community on any given day. Louvers or screens could potentially be introduced, along with using the depth of the wall and the positioning of the windows, to create recessed and extruded points within the façade. The sketches to the left look at how the positioning of the windows within the depth of the wall effect the internal and external conditions of a building. The model below captures the depth of the windows to the street side of the scheme and the shadows cast.



A precedent which uses the positioning of the window within the depth of the wall to create different atmospheres is the School in Paspels by Valerio Olgiati. The windows in the circulation spaces are flush with the exterior walls providing a window seat internally. Offering students a place to sit and congregate in the halls. In contrast, the walls of the classrooms are flush with the interior walls. Providing a more intimate teaching space. The different treatment of the circulation routes and the classrooms is then reflected externally in the façade, creating moments of recess and extrusion.

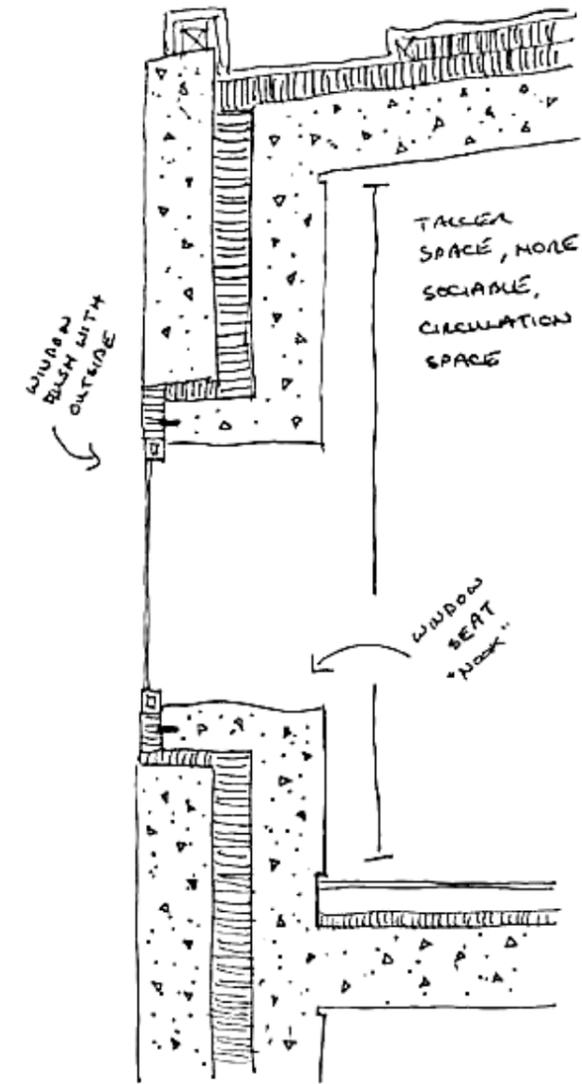
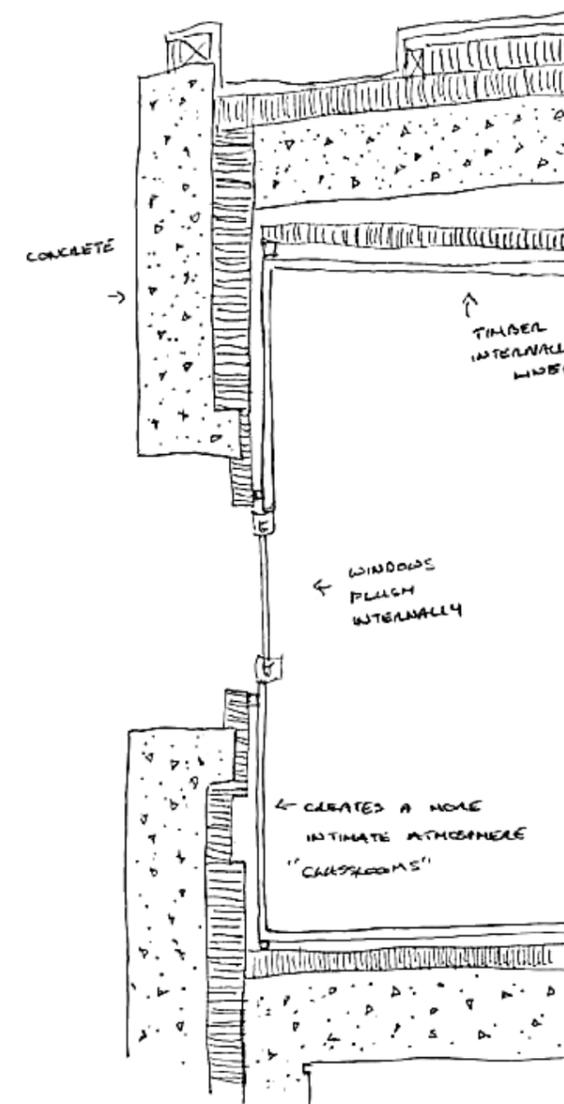
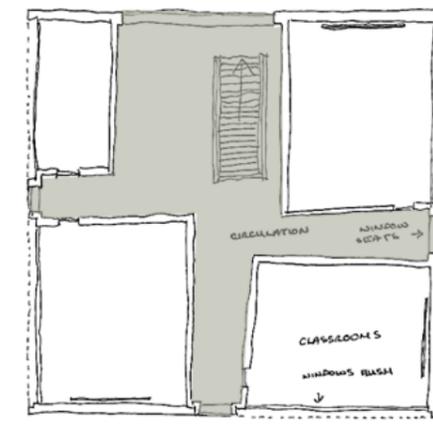
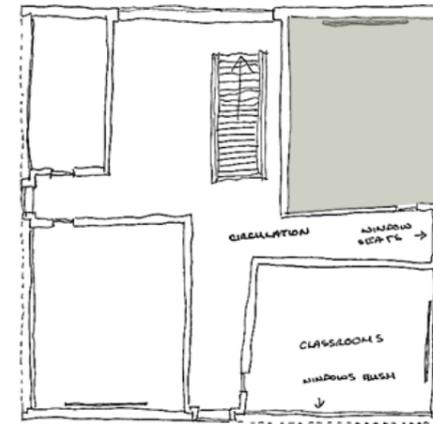
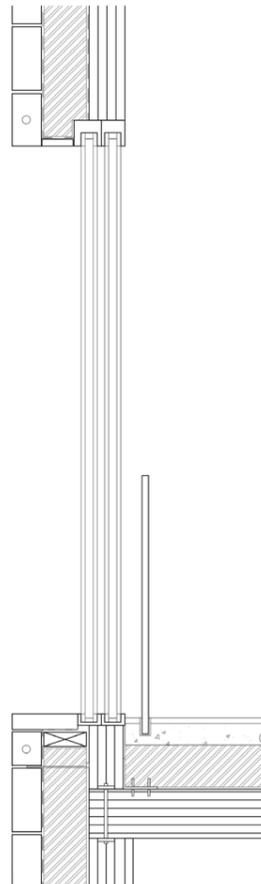
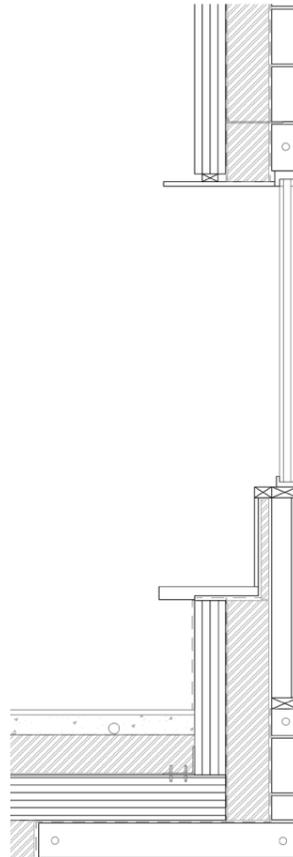


Fig.2



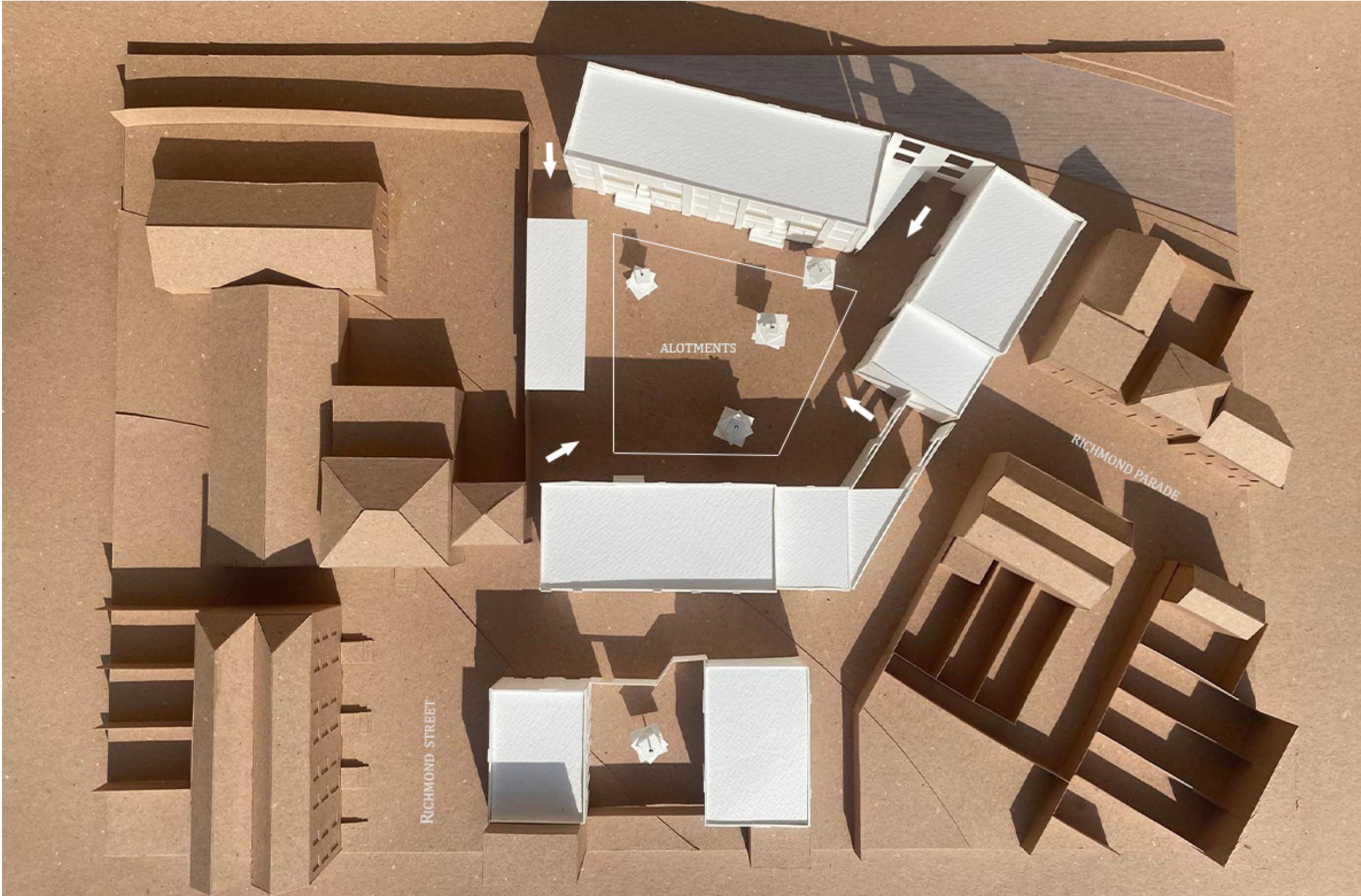
The façade facing the street requires a certain level of threshold between inside and out. This will allow the occupants to engage with the street and its inhabitants on occasion while also having the opportunity to retreat and maintain a certain amount of privacy. For this reason, the windows are positioned flush with the interior wall. This allows the depth of the wall to act as a threshold space. Creating a façade with depth and shadow as the windows retreat back. The lintels were also an important consideration of the window openings. Being a masonry building it was important the lintels were expressed to show the load transfer.

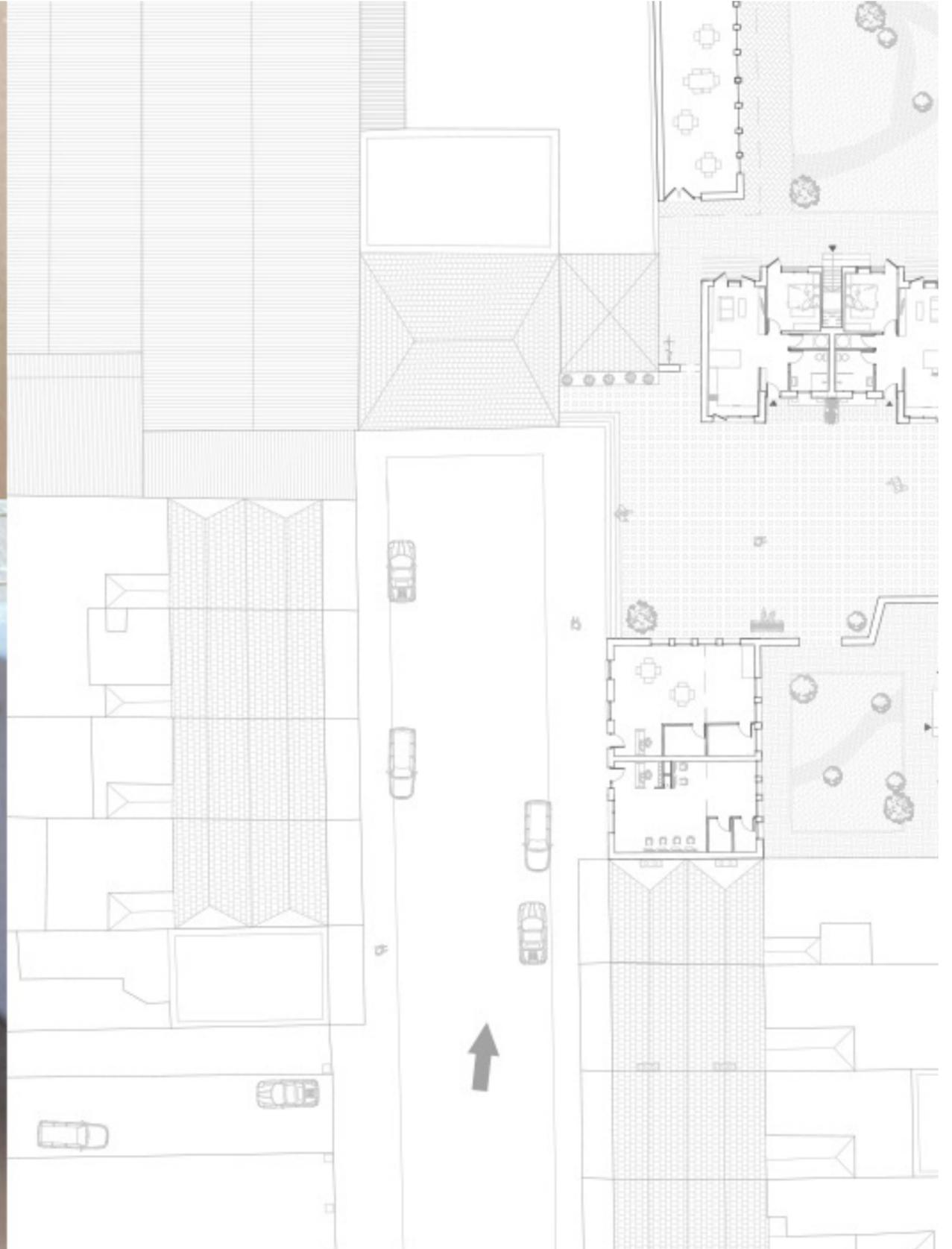


There is then the opposing condition to the garden side of the complex. The windows are flush with the exterior wall. This creates a direct connection between the inside space and the garden. By positioning the window flush with the exterior wall, it offers the opportunity for a window seat to be created within the depth of the wall. Creating a similar condition to the previous example of the School in Paspels by Valerio Olgiati. The images above explore how the positioning of the windows create different environments internally and externally.

V. Resulting Design



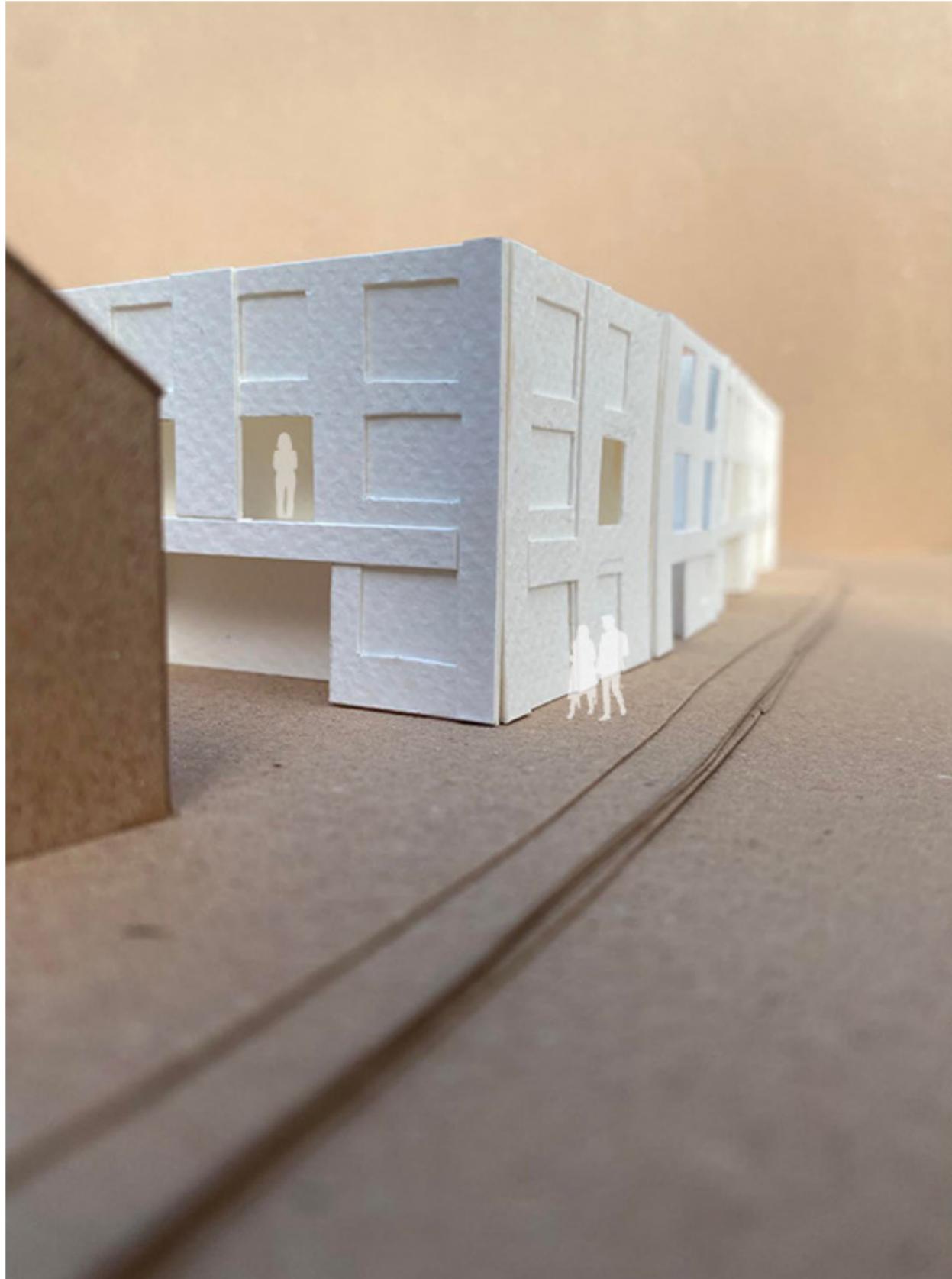


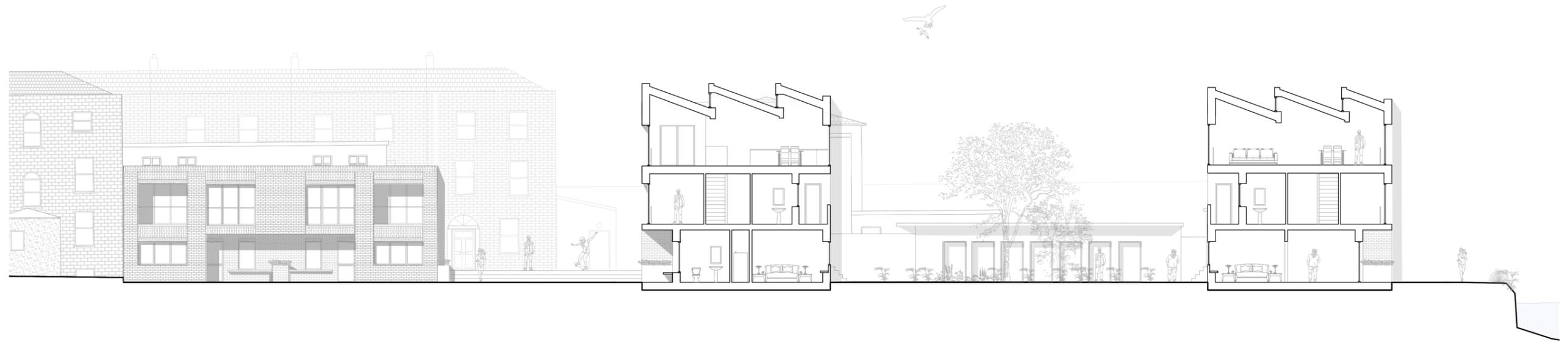


View up Richmond Street North

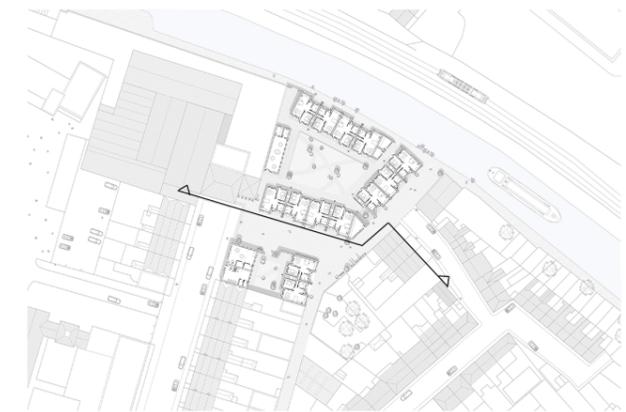


View up Richmond Parade



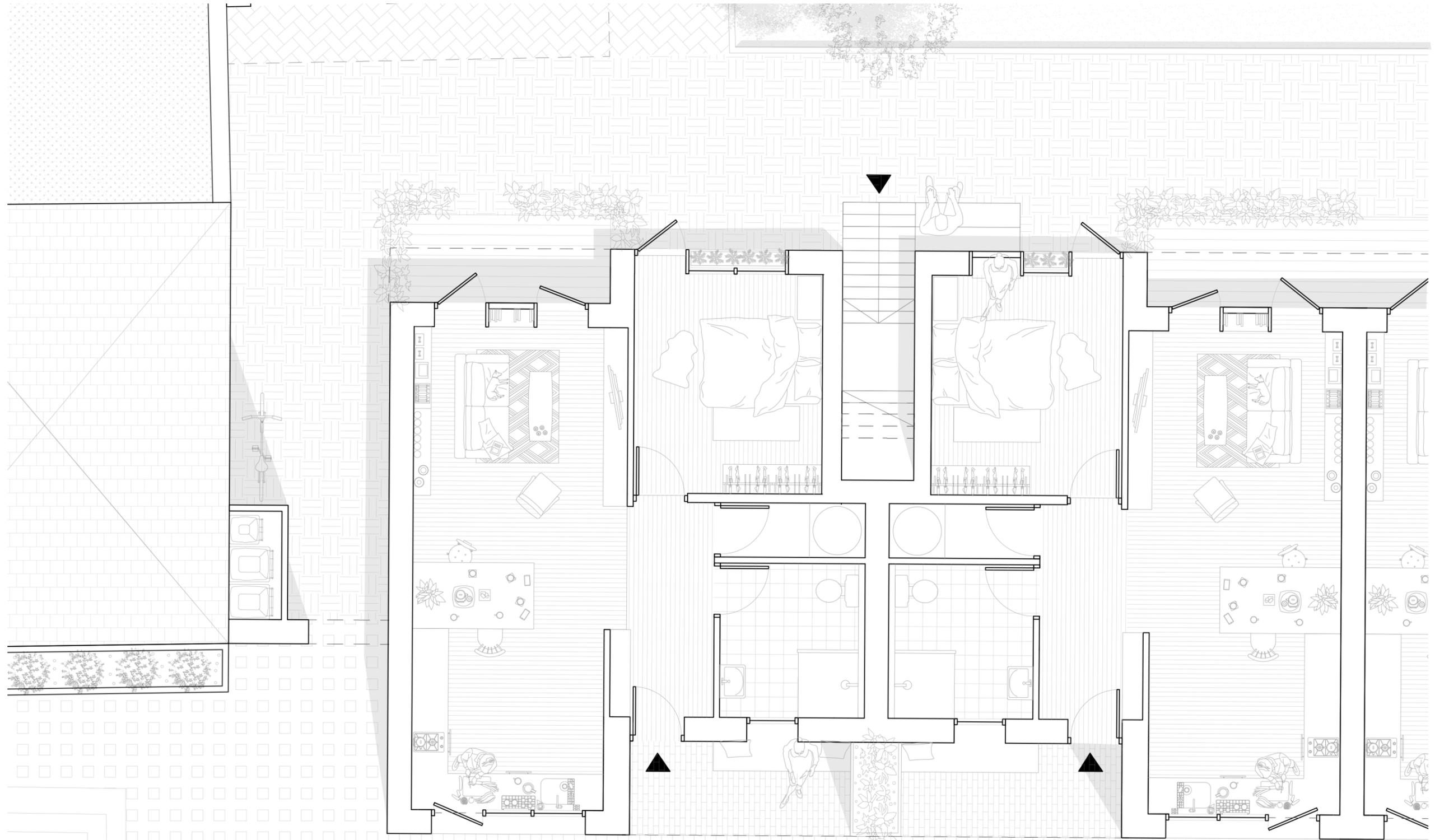


The section above cuts through the public street, private gardens, and canal. The section shows how the scheme works as a whole and how it fits into its surroundings.



Carrying through the ideas of enclosure and positive exposure, the elevation here uses the depth of the wall and the positioning of the windows, to create recessed and extruded points within the façade.

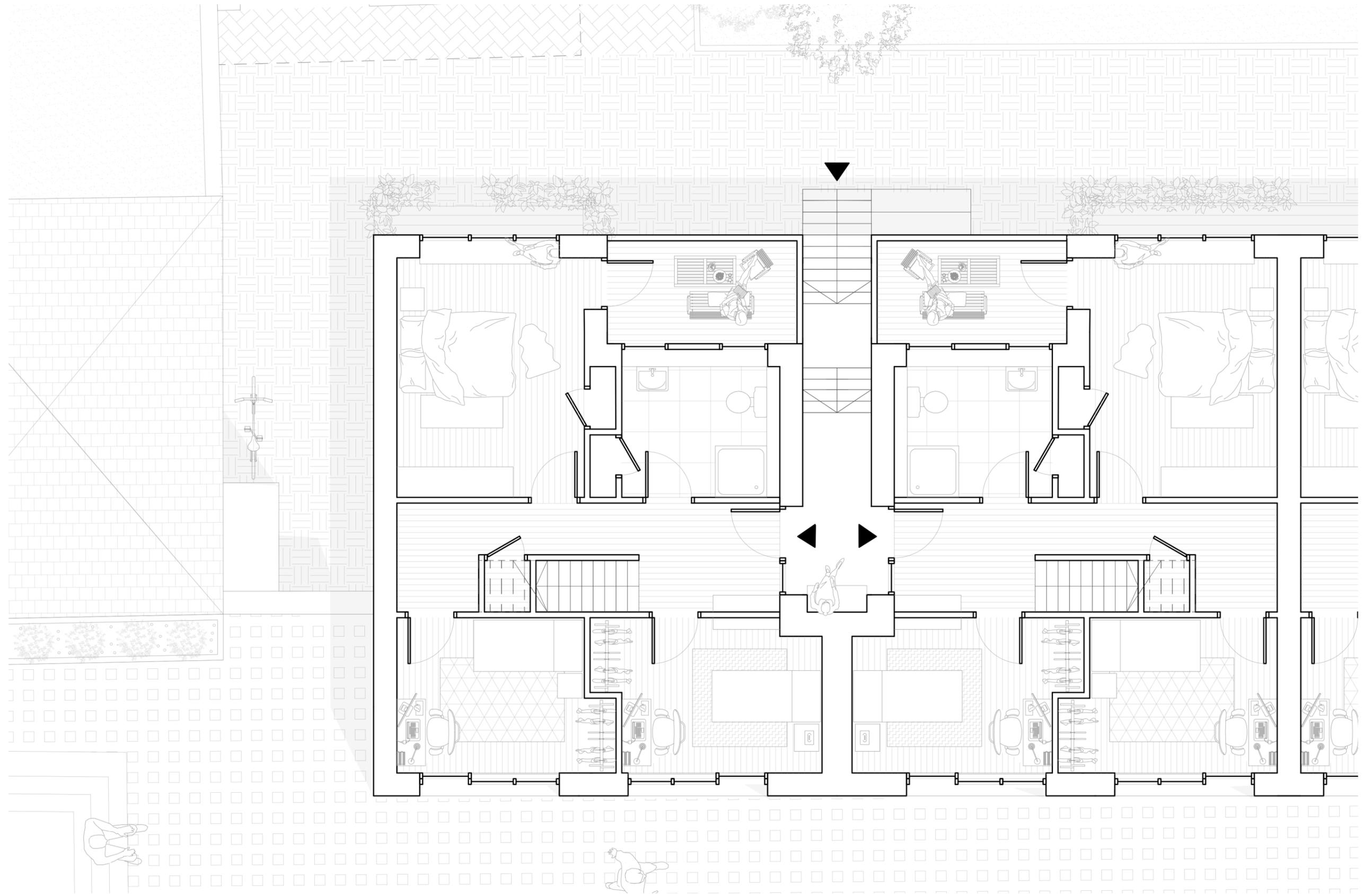




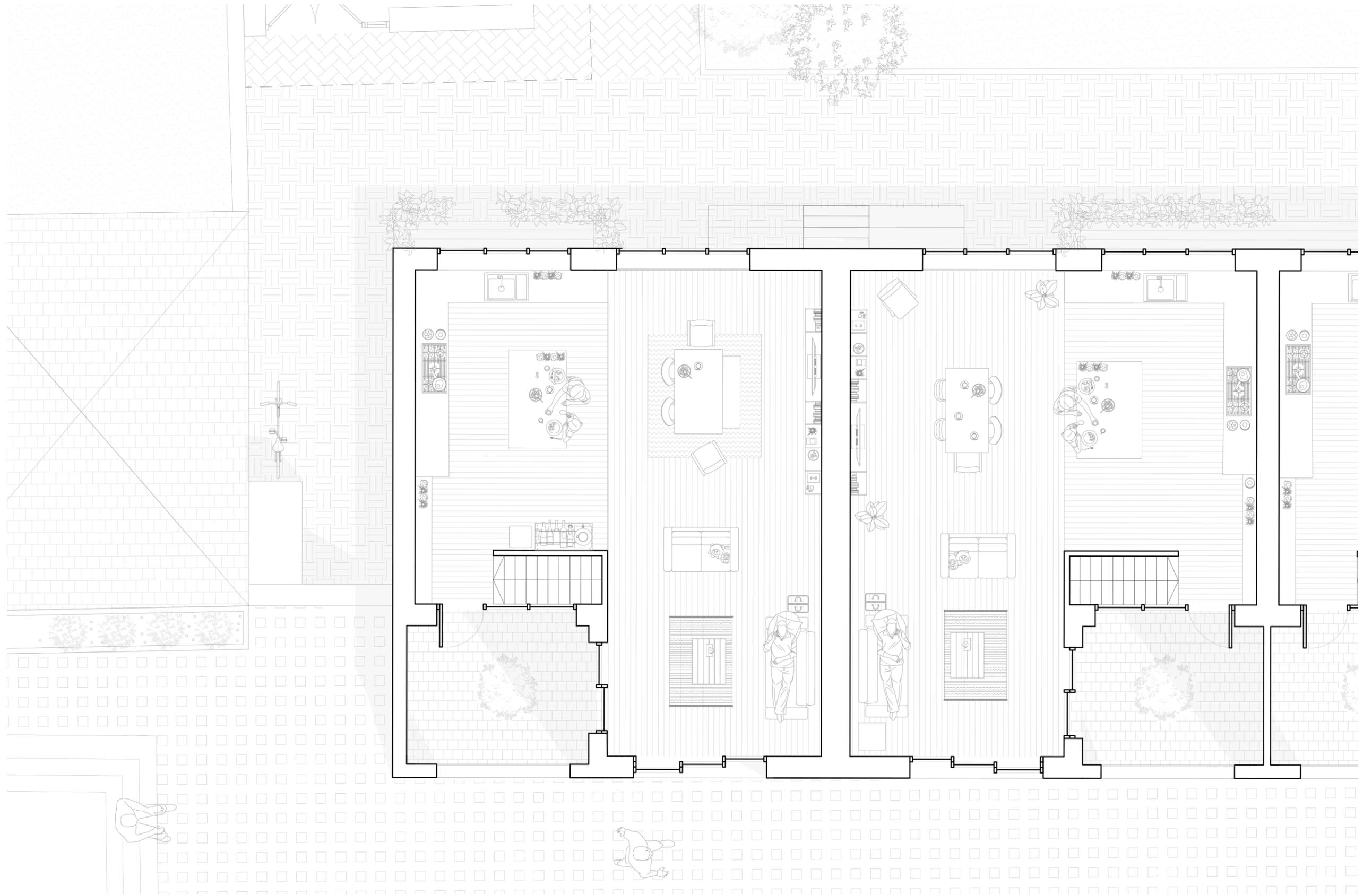
The plan for the elderly units was informed by my earlier interviews with current residents of the NEIC. The living space running through the plan allows the occupant to engage with the street or retreat to the quieter garden side of the scheme.



The image above looks at the kitchen area of the elderly units. The kitchen faces out onto the street. Allowing for chance encounters with neighbours, as they pass by your window and offer a friendly smile or wave. The half door again allows the occupant to decide how involved they are with their neighbours.

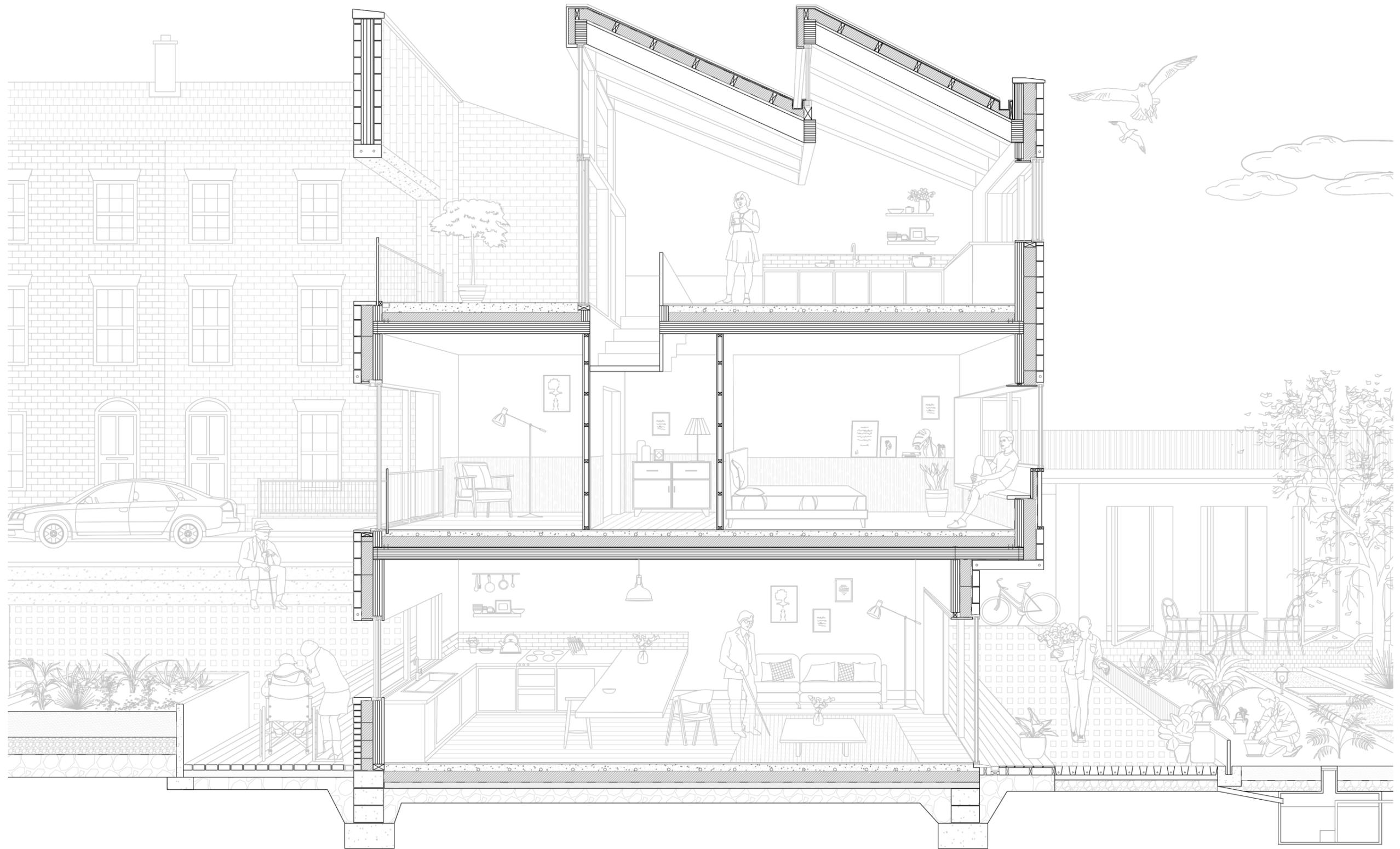


First Floor Plan of Duplex





The image above is a view of the top floor living space of the duplex units. The space carries through the ideas of exposure, as the room is full of natural light, views over the city and prospect over your surroundings.



The detail above shows the CLT panel wall structure and glulam flooring with underfloor heating and brick facade. The image also shows the detailing of the windows on either side of the scheme.



The image above demonstrates how the new pedestrian street through the scheme acts as a meeting place. An opportunity to sit out in the sun and get to know your neighbours and people from the surrounding community.



VI. Final Reflection

The final review brought up a couple of issues I had previously avoided. The units facing the street have been designed in great detail and then replicated across the site. It was noted that the units opening on to the canal have a different “street” condition and therefore should have a different treatment. The sawtooth roofs were also a point of contention. Although they work in the south facing units, I could have looked at applying a different roofing typology to units depending on their orientation.

The next step would be to look at the scheme as a whole. This year I focused in on the small moments where enclosure and exposure could occur, window detailing, thresholds, staircases and so on. I believe it would strengthen the scheme to bring these ideas out in a more holistic way. Bringing the ideas and moments to everyone within the wider community. The landscaping could better bring through the ideas of the thesis, allowing anyone who interacts with the new street or gardens to understand the benefits of positive exposure and retreat in everyday life.

VII. Conclusion

Through this thesis investigation I have come to understand the positives of being elderly and growing old in the North East Inner City. There is a strong sense of community and place here that needs to be preserved. I have identified the need for a new typology of elderly housing. The need to maintain a high level of independence as people's health deteriorates. Integrating assisted elderly living with general housing provides a rich a lively community for occupants to get involved in, watch from a distance or retreat from.

This thesis project employs enclosure and exposure as a design tool to create a housing typology that caters for diverse housing needs, with a strong focus on the creation of places for people to meet and a community to grow. This is done by creating spaces for individuals to interact and engage with their surroundings accompanied by spaces to relax and retreat, allowing people to choose how involved they want to be within the community.

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Images:

Fig.1. Google Maps, Aerial View

Fig.2. School at Paspels, by Valerio Olgiati.

Fig.3. CAODY Architects Proposal for Ready-Mix Site, North Strand Road

IX. Appendix

DCC Submission

Chapter 5: Quality Housing and sustainable neighbourhoods

“With rapid global urbanization, the importance of understanding relationships between the changing urban environment and human health and wellbeing is being increasingly recognized.” (Bai et al., 2012) One of the issues with urban environments is that they don’t provide the correct sensory stimuli and or adequate connections to nature. With half of the world’s population living in urban settings, cities are becoming “important determinants of future sustainability and human health and wellbeing.” (Bai et al., 2012)

Chapter five of the Draft Dublin City Development Plan speaks about “healthy place-making”. The Royal Town planning institute talks about the steps needed to enable healthy place-making. It states that “that by incorporating health needs and impact into the conceptualisation, design and planning of projects, policy makers, planners and built environment professionals are able to influence the development of sustainable communities. Our results strengthen the argument for an upstream shift to address key obstacles to healthy living via plan making.” If quality housing and sustainable neighbourhoods are to work and be the way forward in cities, the design of these places needs to reflect good occupant health and well-being.

Chapter 5 also hopes to “deliver good quality housing to cater for diverse housing needs- mix of tenures and typologies to meet people’s full lifecycle and avoidance of large areas of mono use developments.” With this in mind, in conjunction with the notes on healthy place-making, developments like that proposed for the ready-mix site off the North strand road should not be going ahead. The COADY Architects proposal compiles of 68 Units, providing as little as 34 parking spaces, meaning occupants will park on the already busy Leinster and Hope avenue. The apartment scheme is little different from every other apartment scheme of this scale, proving a number of one, two and three bed units. There is no mix of tenures and typologies. Some of the one bed units only have one side of daylight, which does not support the occupant health and well-being discussed previously. One of the challenges identified in Chapter 5 is the aging population, interestingly these one bed ,one source of daylight units are the ones proposed to be marked for senior citizens wishing to downsize from bigger DCC units. There needs to be a question of if these units are suitable. The development is also proposed to be as tall as 6 stories, completely at odds with the one- and two-story houses that are directly adjacent to the site, and at odds with the ideas of “healthy place-making”. A scheme like this could better support the ideas of quality housing and sustainable neighbourhoods, if purposely built elderly units occupied the ground floors, catering for an ageing population, and incorporated duplexes above for a growing population. The proposed development as it currently sits is at odds with the policy to “strengthen the connection between people and the places they live by building on local character and encouraging an asset-based approach to the location” (DCC, 2022)

If Quality Housing and sustainable neighbourhoods are an important aspect of city life, then occupant needs should be considered throughout the design process. Creating places people can feel at home in and by caring for the wellbeing of each individual, and provide environments which people can thrive in.



Fig.3