Village living.
Exploring local design futures of intergenerational housing in a Belgian village.

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& Social Innovation

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UH Hasselt University
VUB Vrije Universiteit Brussel
RE-ST RE-ST architectuurvennootschap

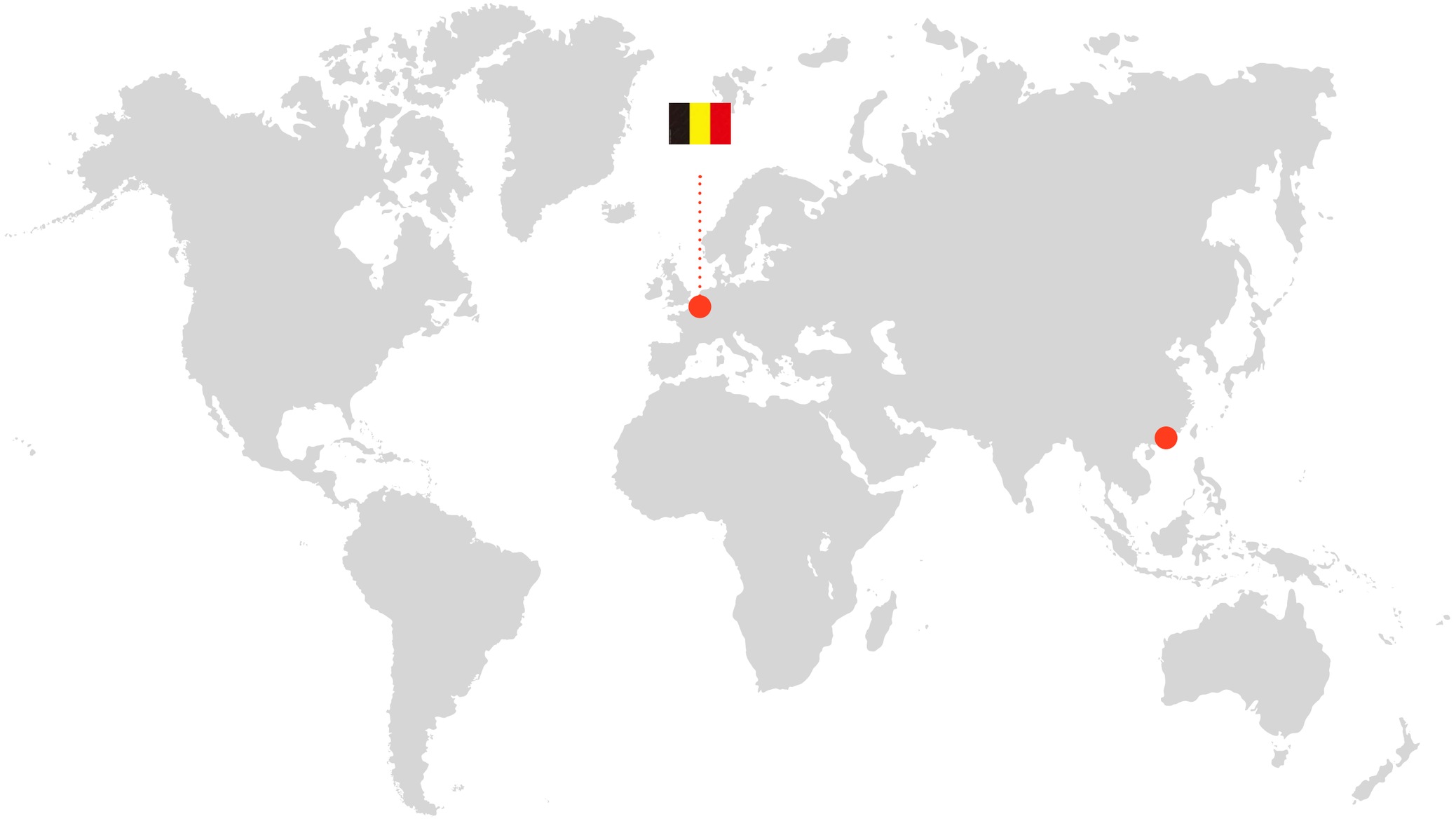
abstract

Belgian housing culture has promoted private ownership of single-family houses after the Second World War. This housing typology has become increasingly problematic when confronted with contemporary societal challenges such as providing housing for an ageing and growingly diverse population, specifically in rural areas. Recent architectural policy has therefore shifted attention from densification in urban centres to densification taking into account the intrinsic qualities of village architecture.

This study explores which alternative housing models can be imagined, taking into consideration intergenerational living, older inhabitants' well-being and village architecture. During one semester, with 3rd bachelor students in architecture, we analysed a specific Belgian village, explored spatial strategies for designated sites and specified housing designs to a detailed architectural scale.

Our results propose typologies for collective intergenerational village housing. The knowledge produced by our design studio is considered as situated design futures which imagine how architecture can promote well-being through facilitating future assemblages of ageing persons, evolving villages and historically meaningful buildings.

1.1 Belgian housing culture



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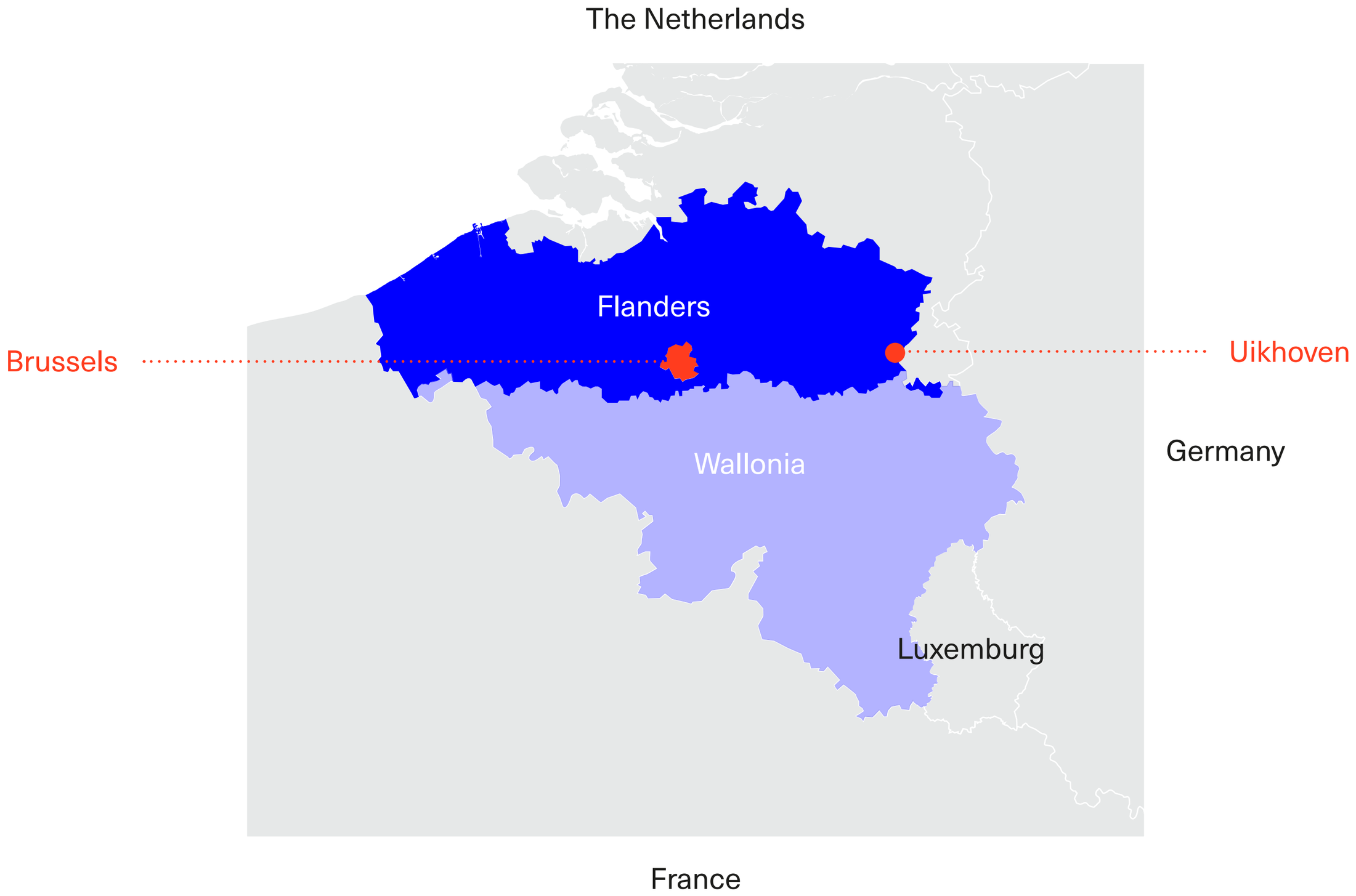

1.1 Belgian housing culture

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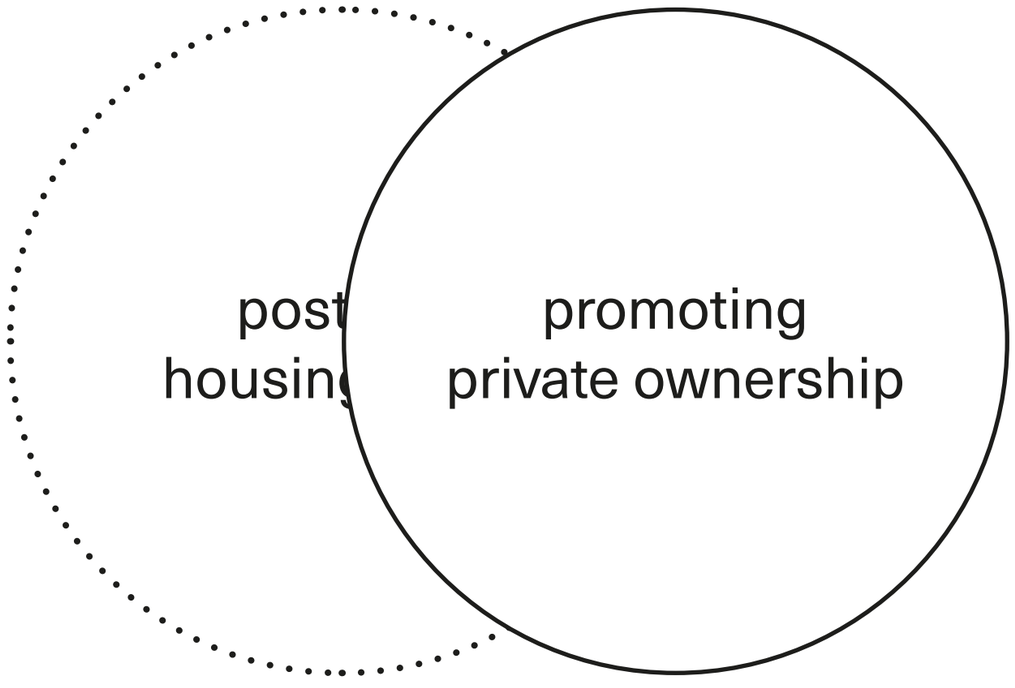
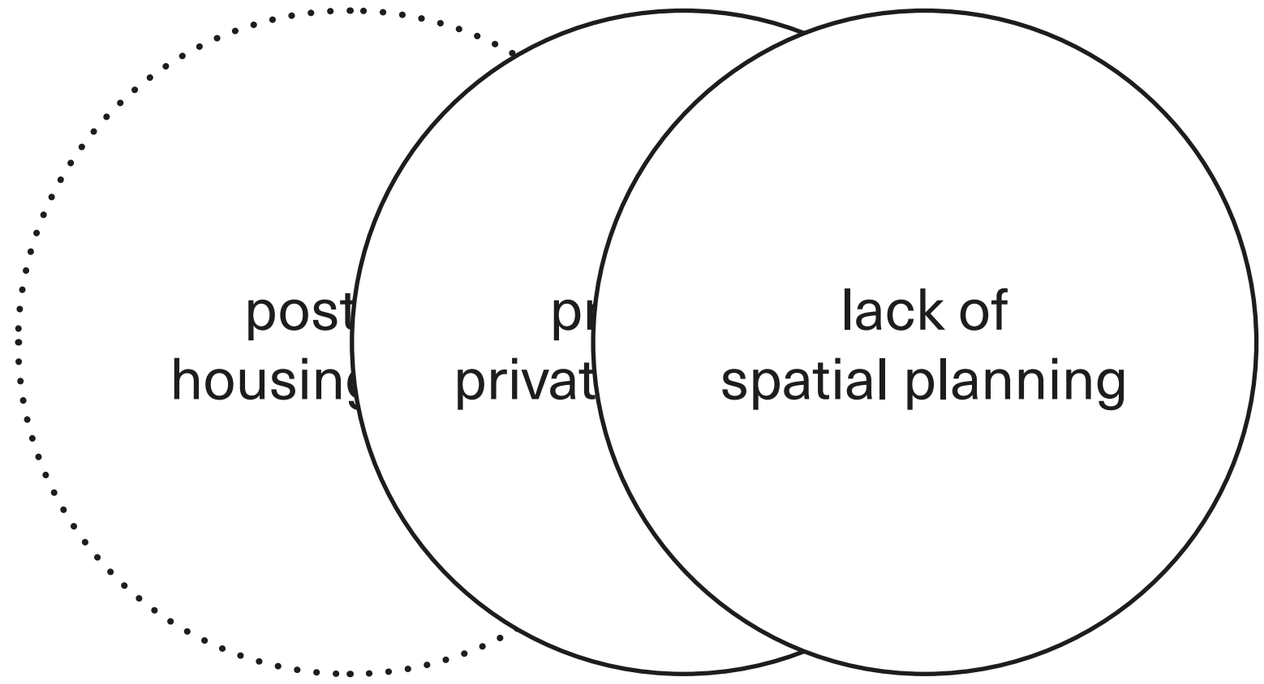
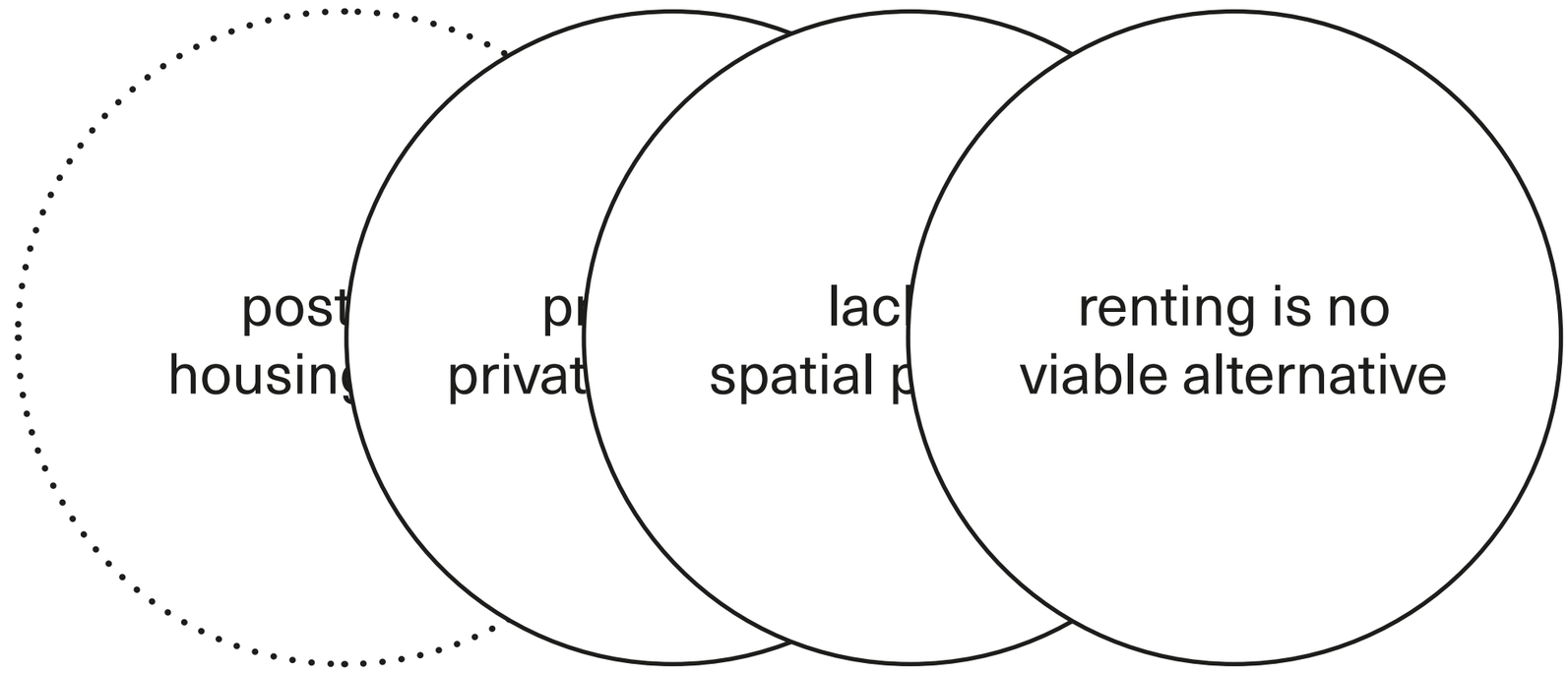


1.1 Belgian housing culture

(Kester, 2018)


post
housing
pr
privat
lack of
spatial planning

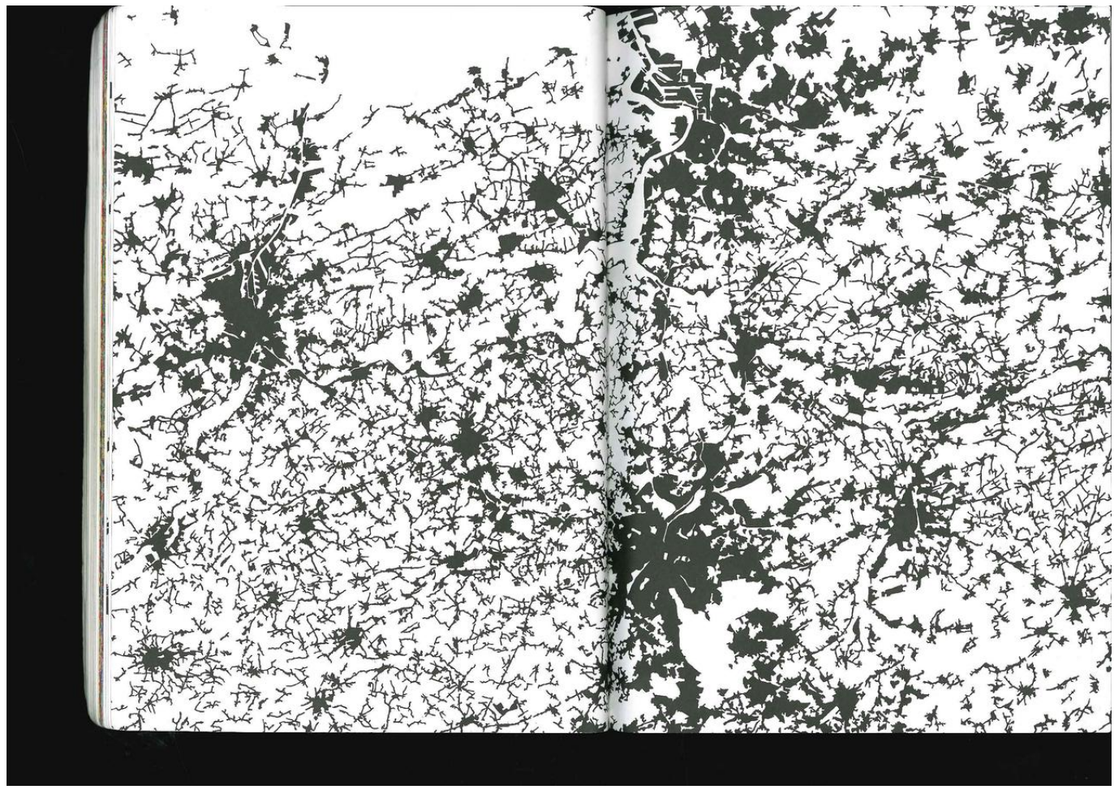
1.1 Belgian housing culture



Published in the magazine ‘Wonen’ in september 1961
(Van Herck and Avermaete, 2006)

[hij zwaait opnieuw naar de vrouw die nog steeds haar hond uitlaat]
(Cleene et al., 2022)

1.1 Belgian housing culture

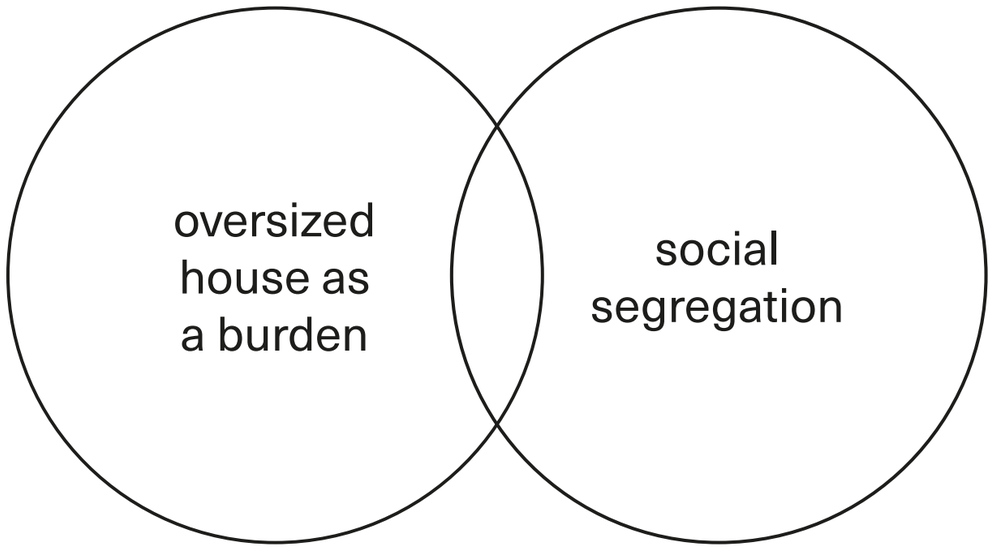


Flanders (Belgium)

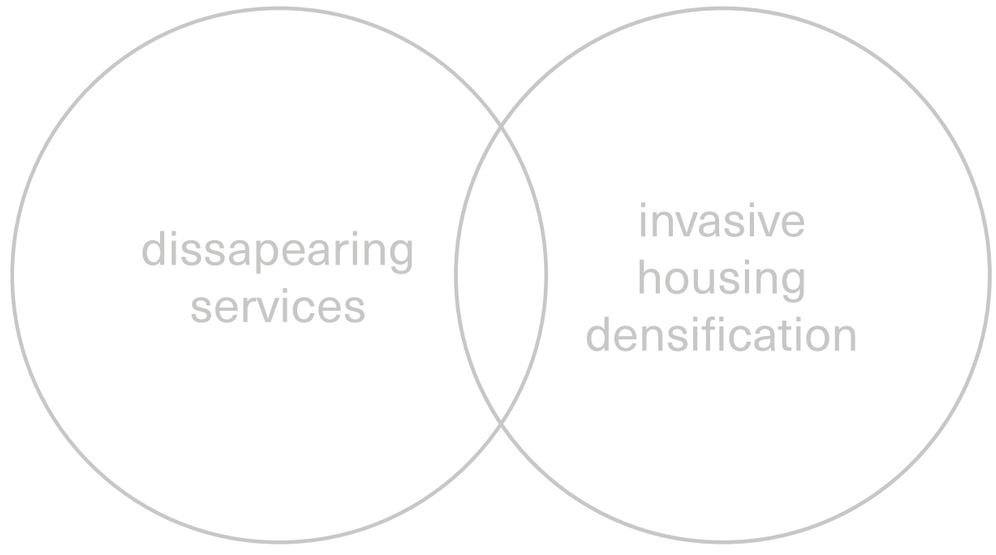
The Netherlands

After-Sprawl: Research for the contemporary city
(Xaveer De Geyter Architects, 2002)

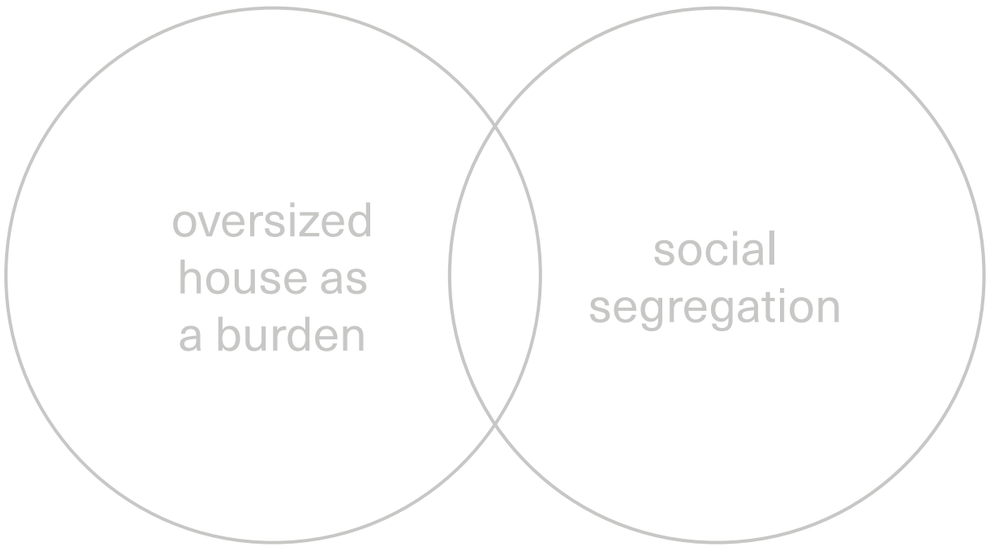
challenges for
older inhabitants



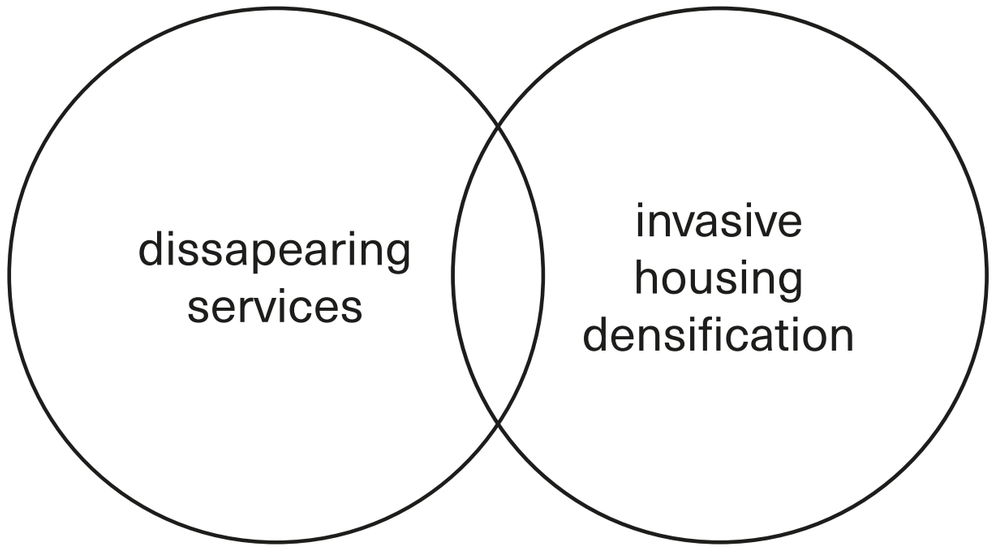
challenges for
villages



challenges for
older inhabitants



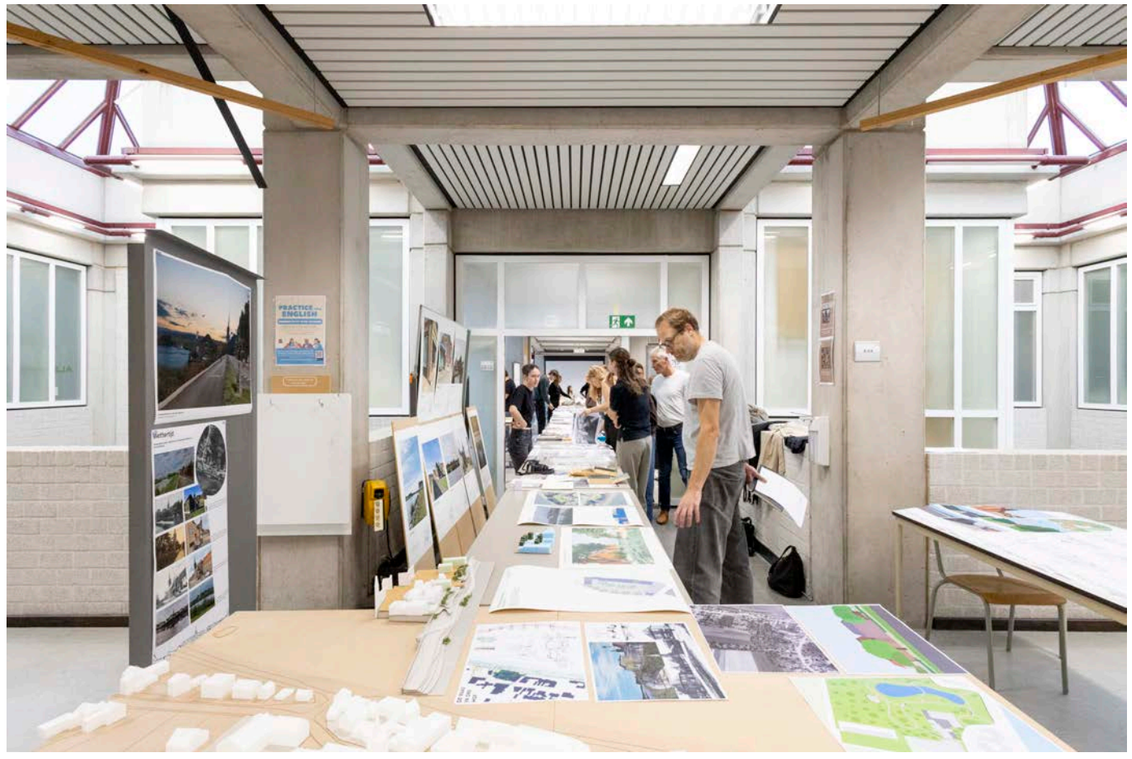
challenges for
villages

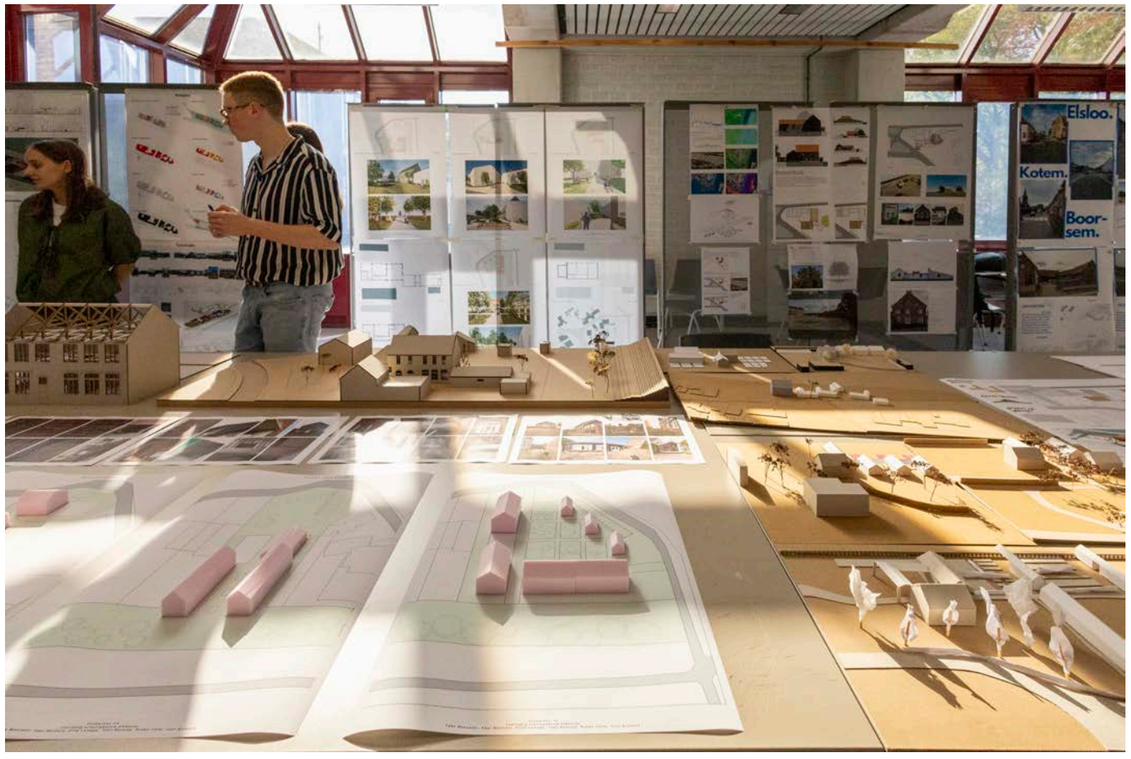


(Verbaekel, 2016)

2 methodology
2.1 research aim

which housing models can be designed in a (specific) Belgian village,
other than the single family house and the apartment,
taking into account older inhabitants’ wellbeing and village architecture?


PRACTICE
ENGLISH


Elsloo.
Kotem.
Boor-
sem.

3.1 analysis of Uikhoven

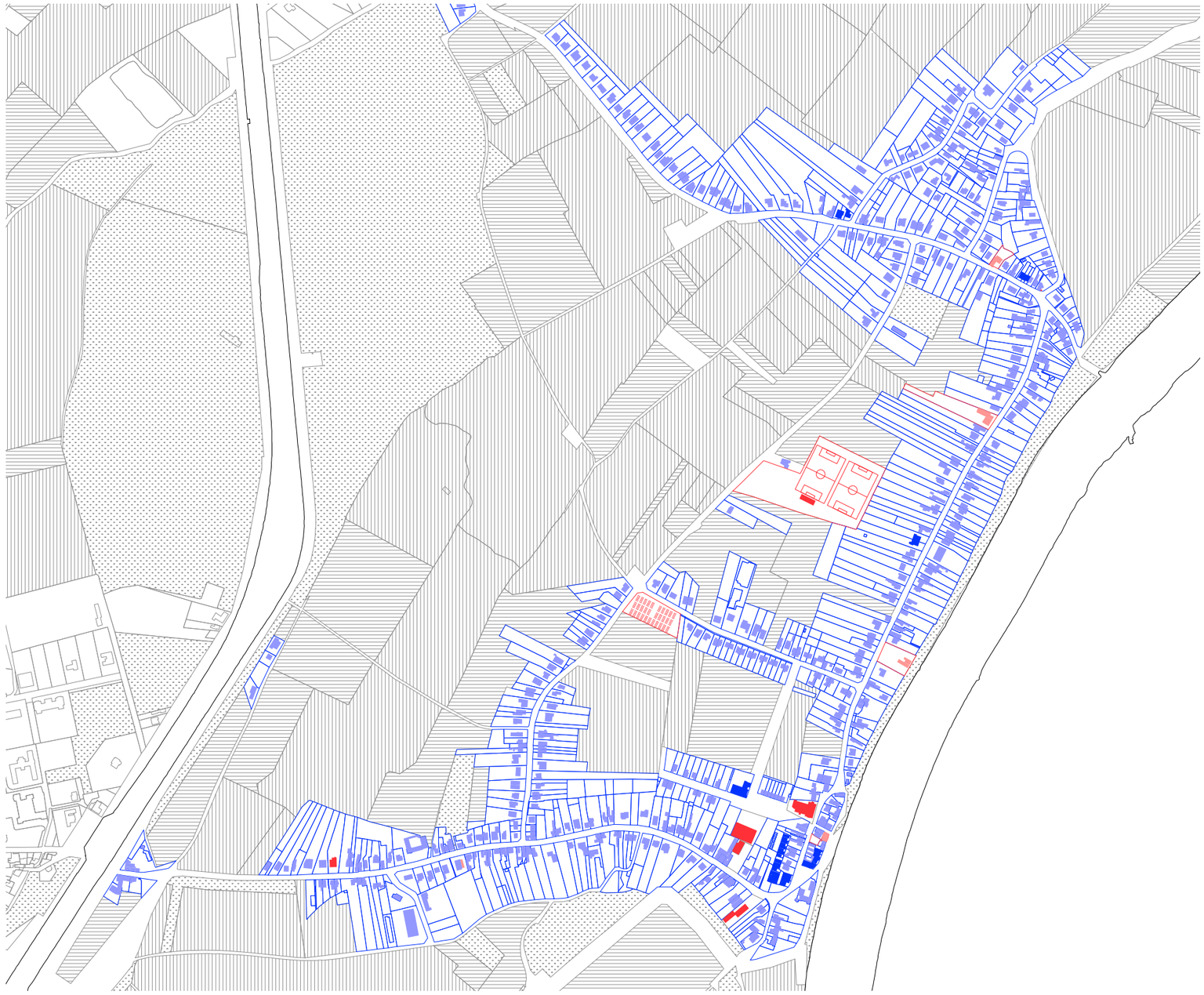
(Vrancken, 2024)

3 results
3.1 analysis of Uikhoven

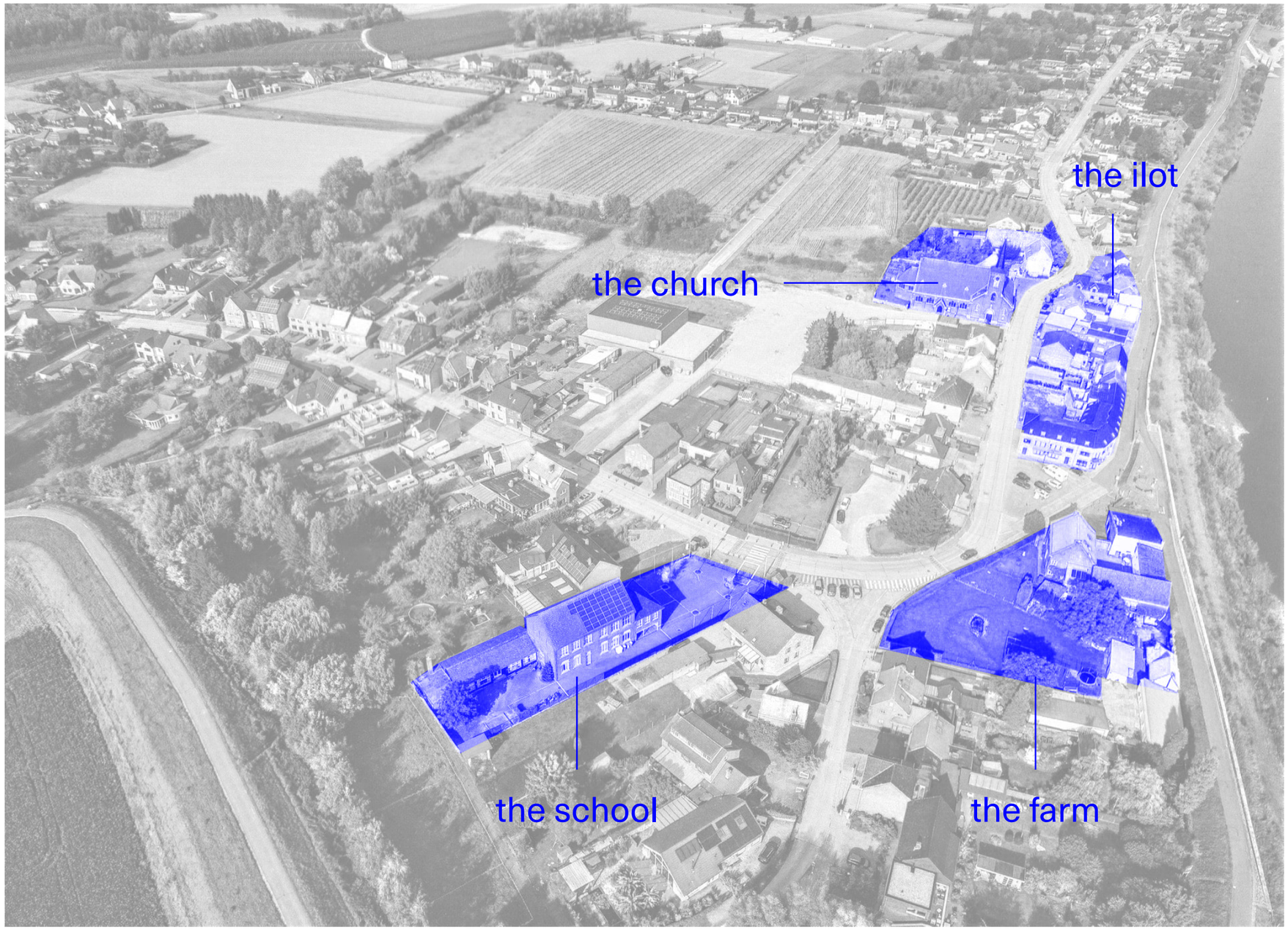
3.1 analysis of Uikhoven

public
commercial

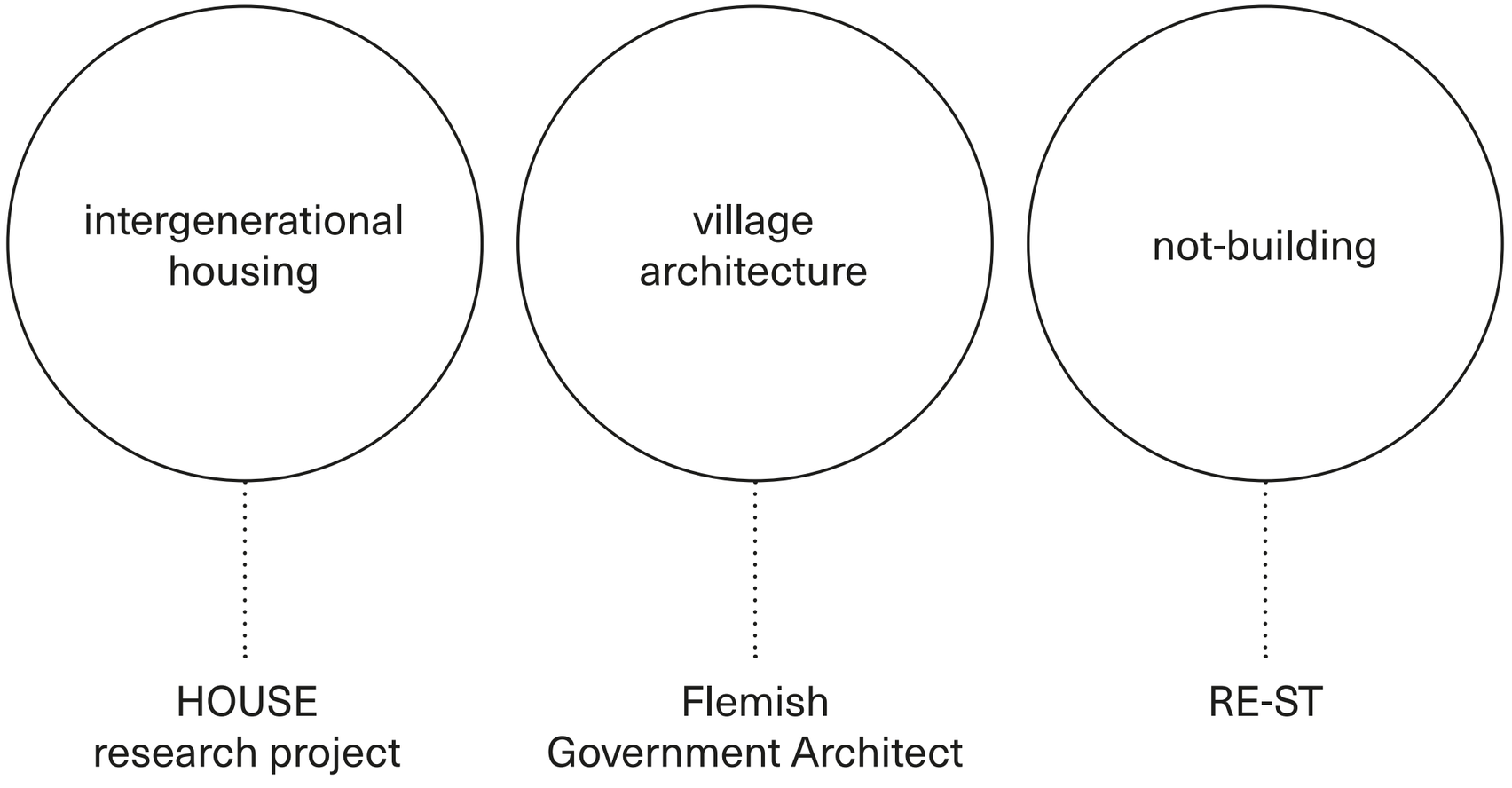
house
housing



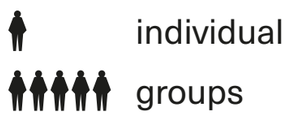
(Conaert JP, 2015)

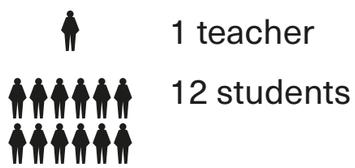

the ilot
the church
the school
the farm

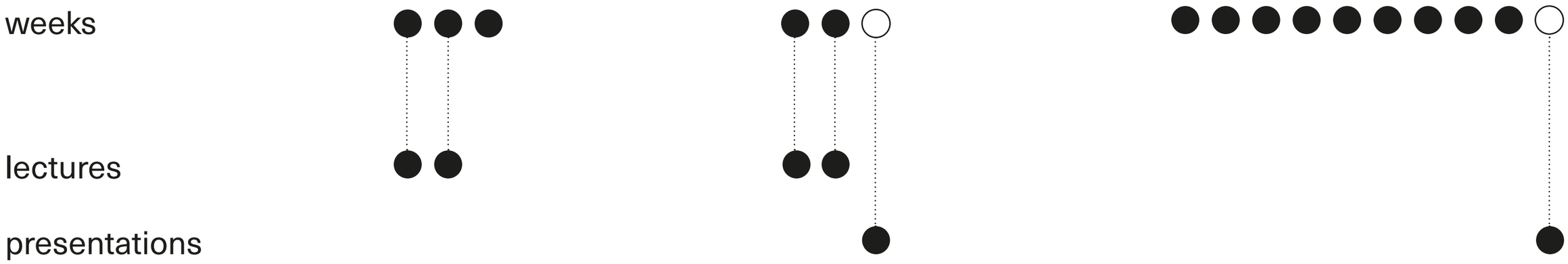
3 themes
guiding the design studio

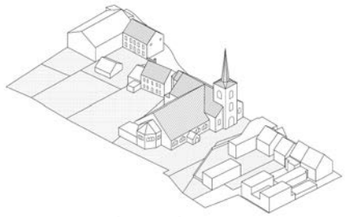


	1. analysis and mapping	2. spatial strategies	3. architectural project
participants	groups 3-5 students	individual or groups	individual

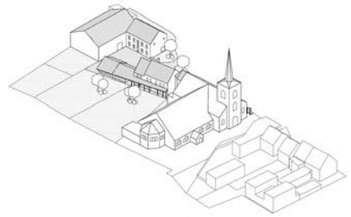




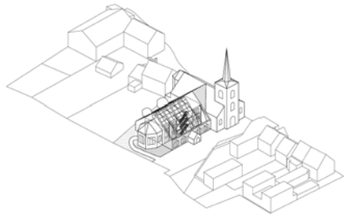




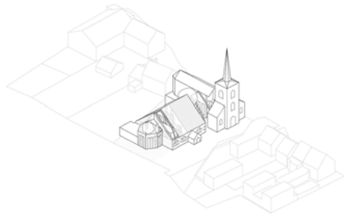
church



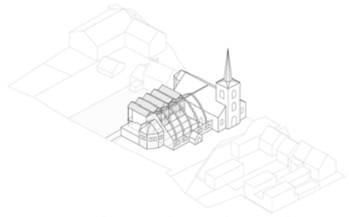
connecting



in the church

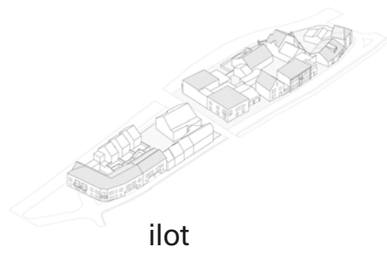


through the church

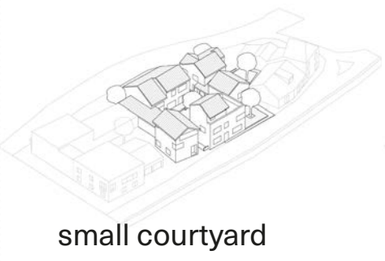


against the church

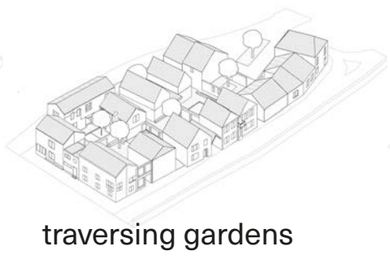
yard housing



ilot

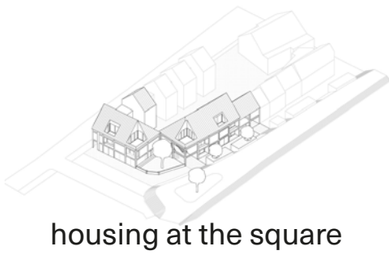


small courtyard



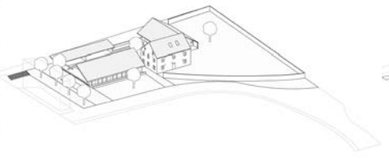
traversing gardens

housing at riverside



housing at the square

farm



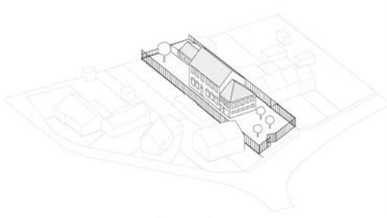
courtyard

double courtyard

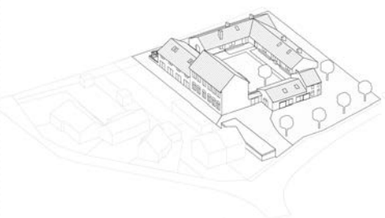
riverside farm

sqaure as yard

transversal farm

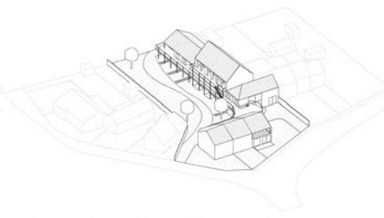


school



courtyard

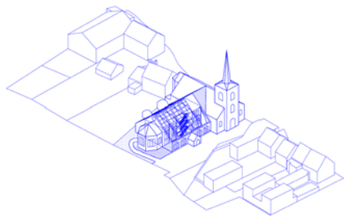
symmetric *beluik*



longitudinal housing

church

connecting

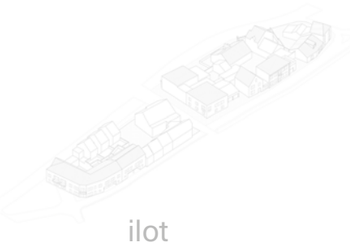


in the church

through the church

against the church

yard housing



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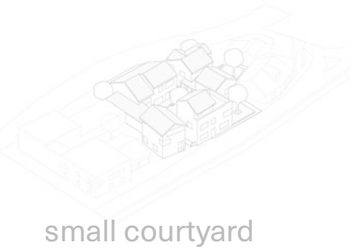
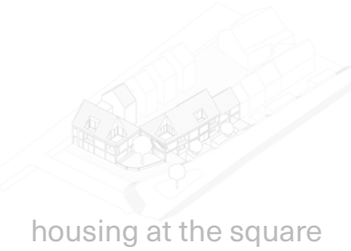


small courtyard

traversing gardens

housing at riverside



housing at the square

farm

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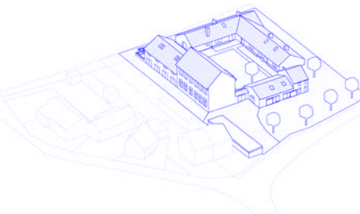
double courtyard

riverside farm

sqaure as yard

transversal farm

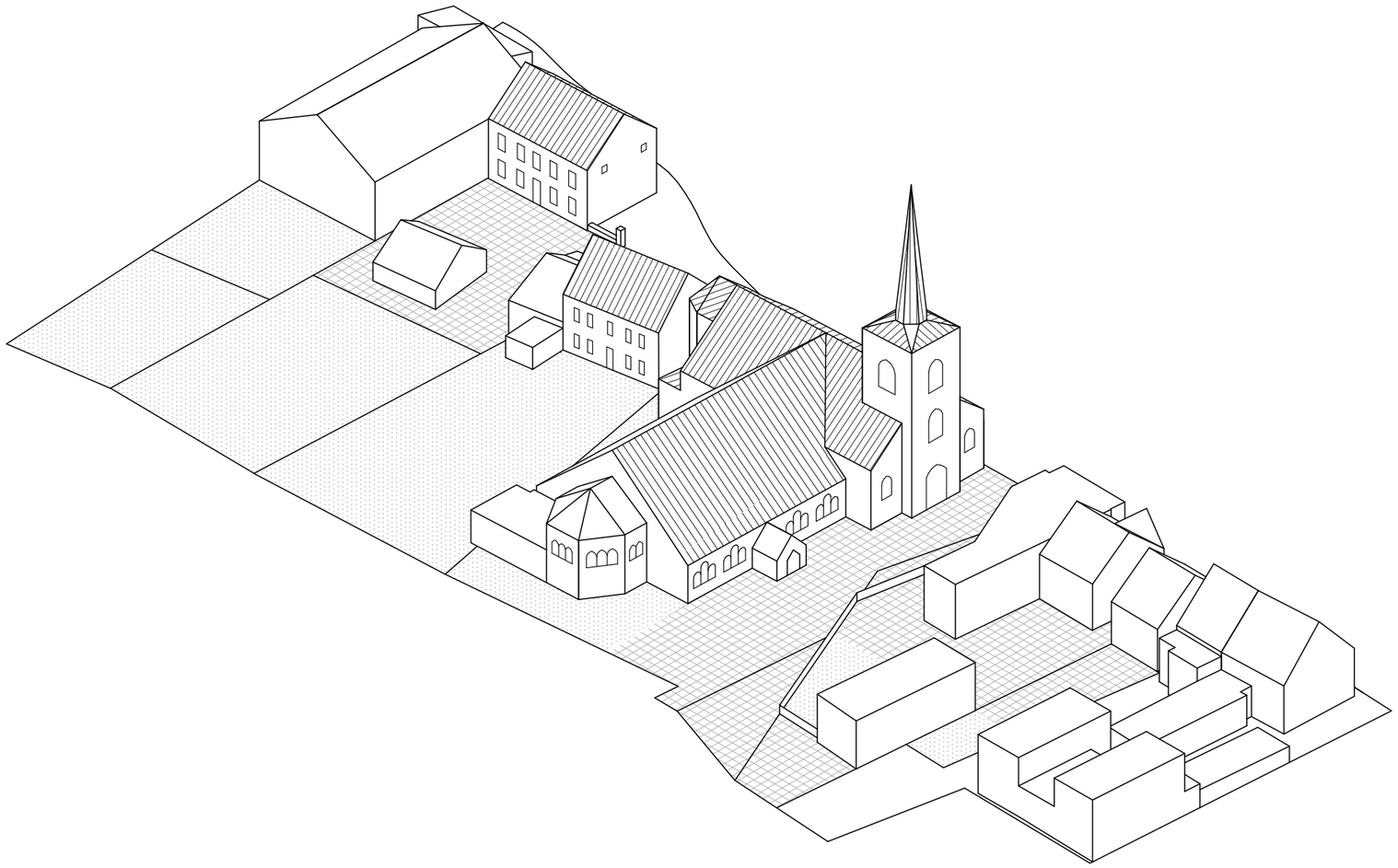
school

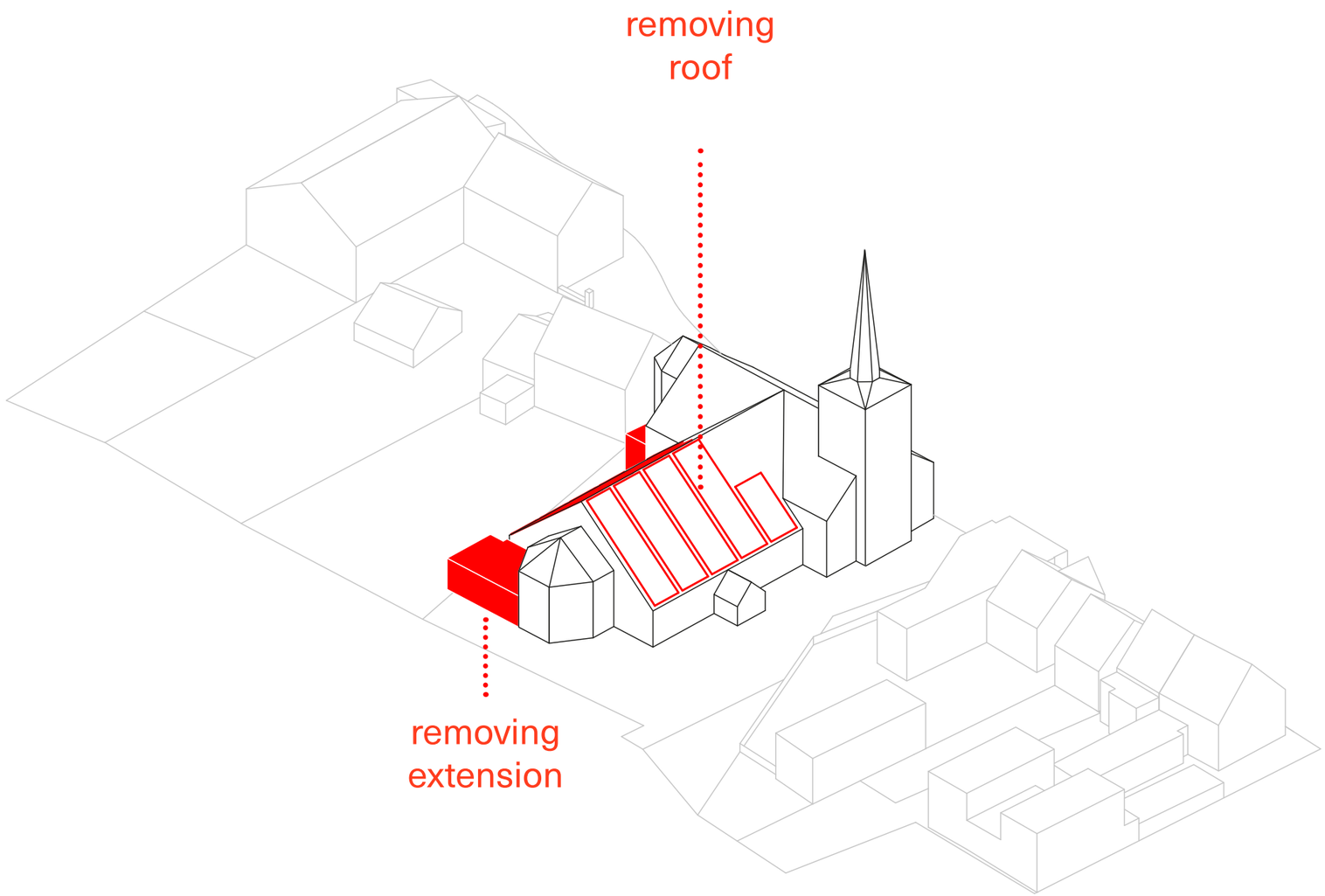


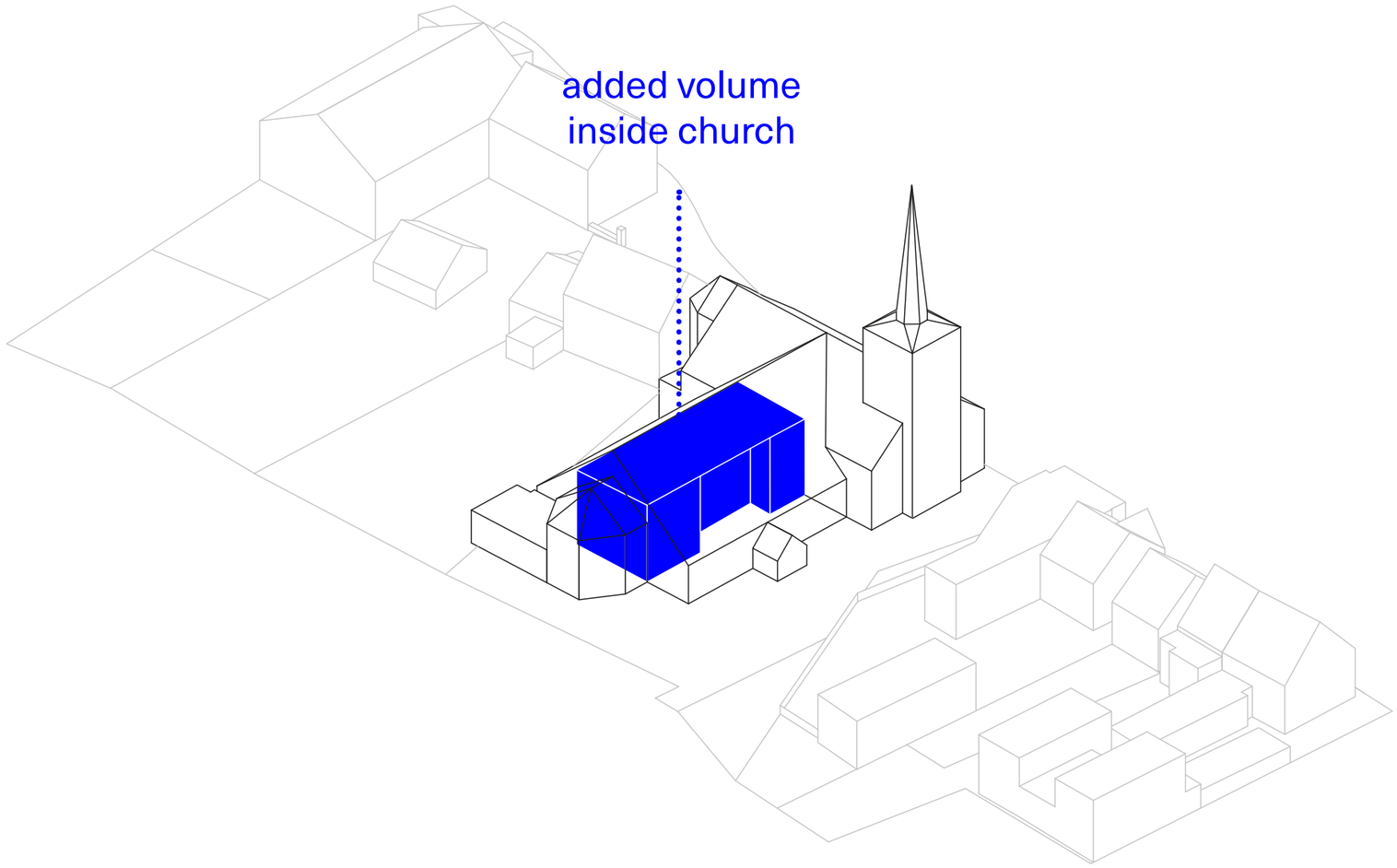
courtyard

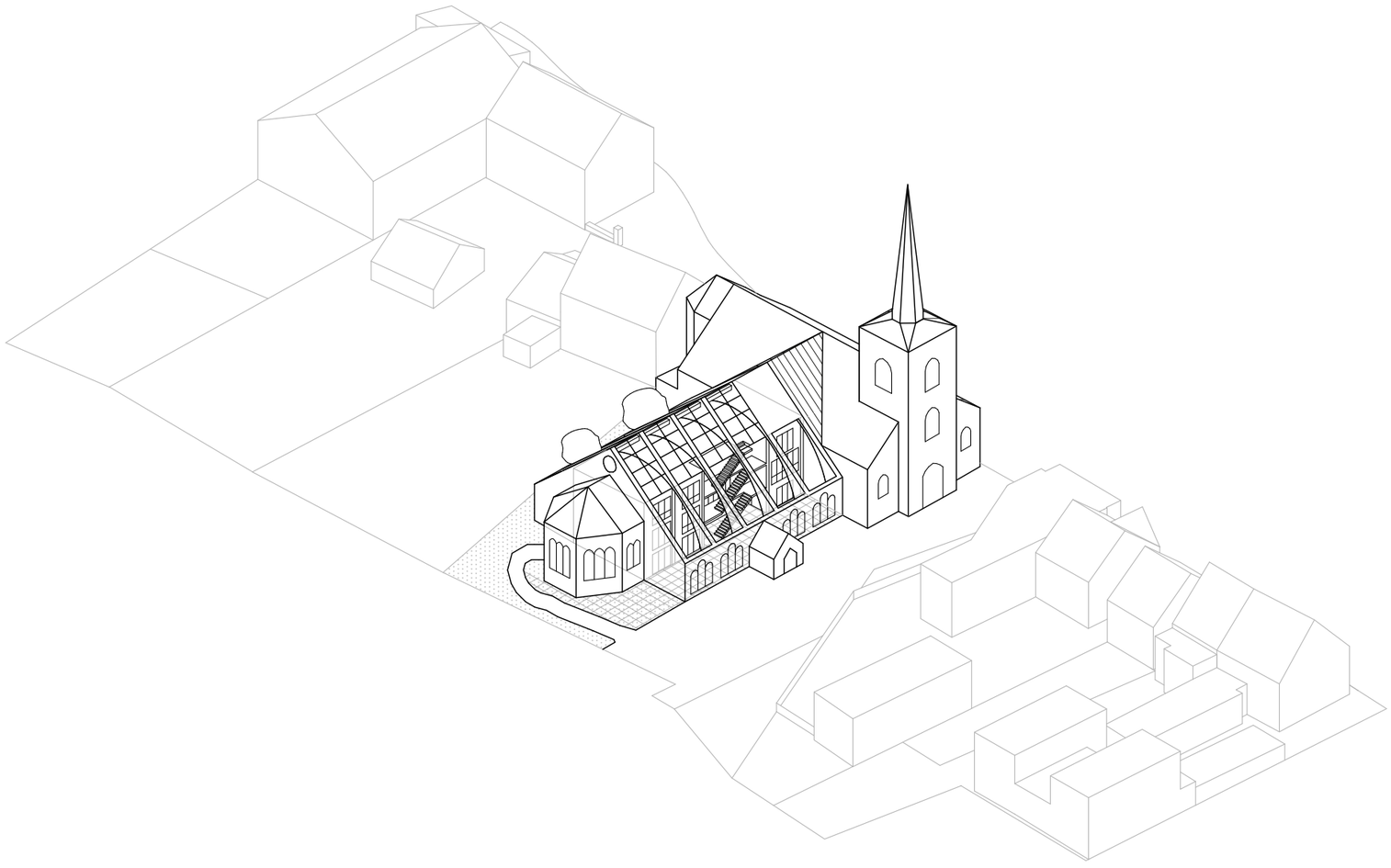
symmetric *beluik*

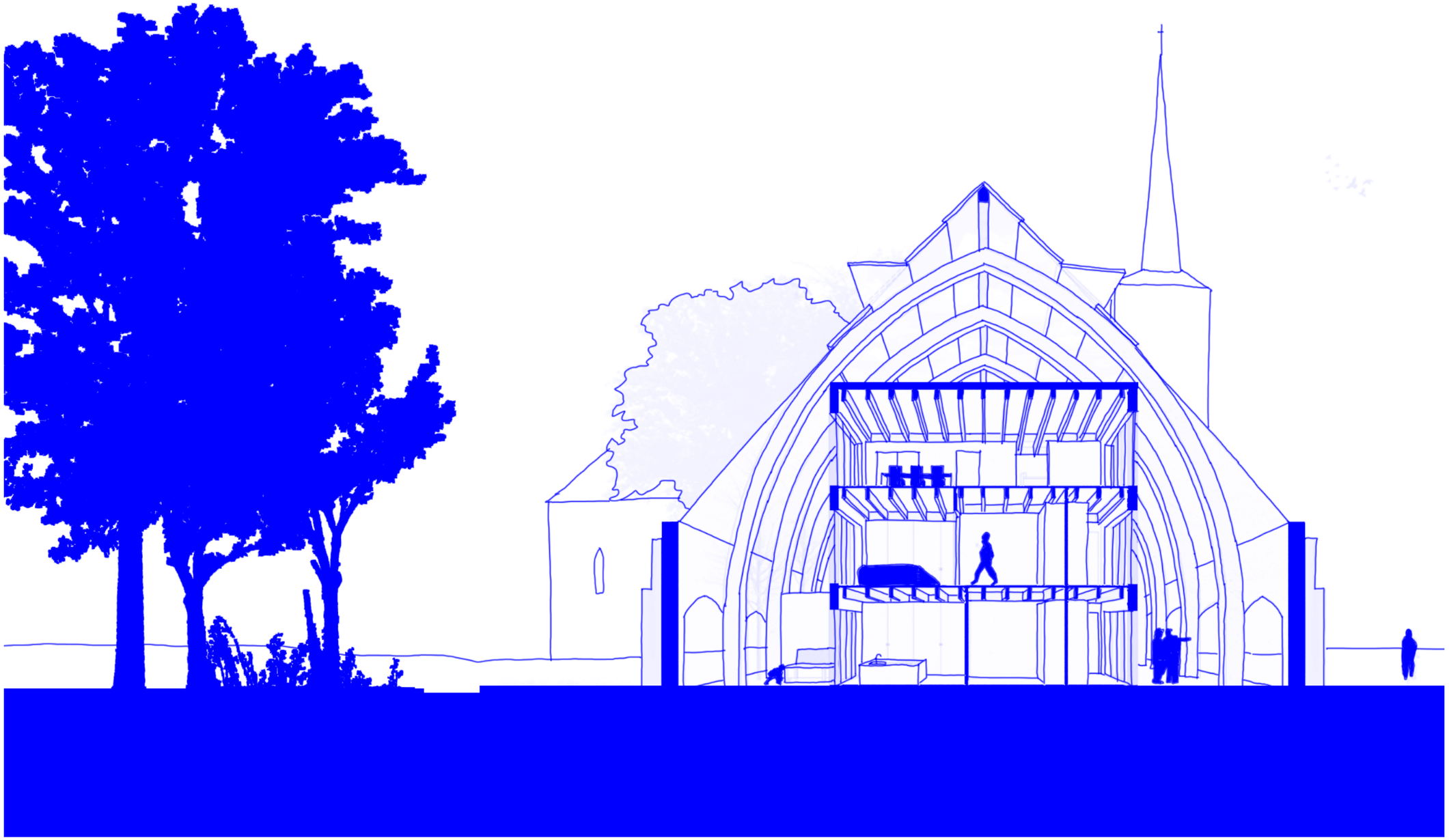
longitudinal housing

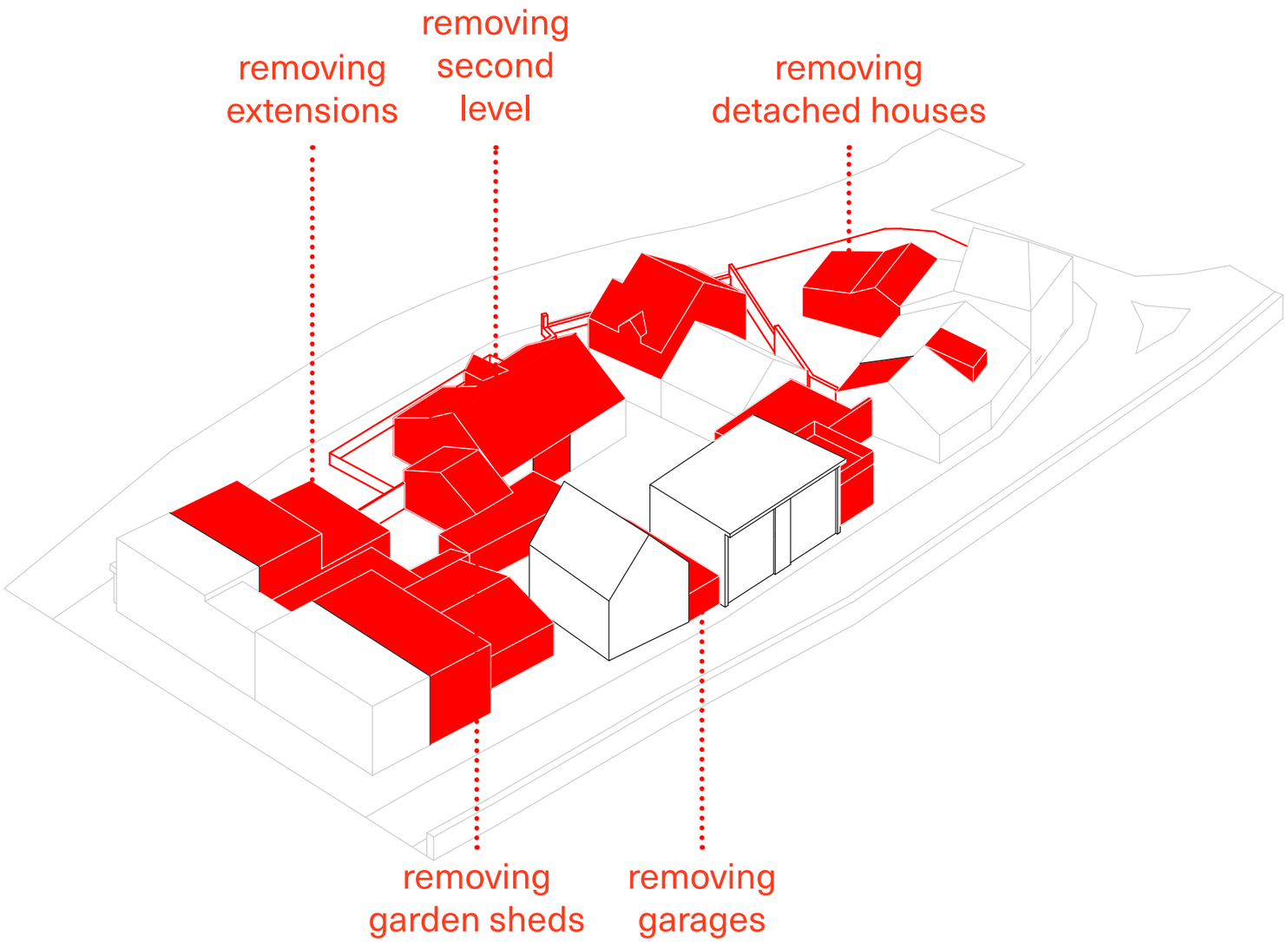


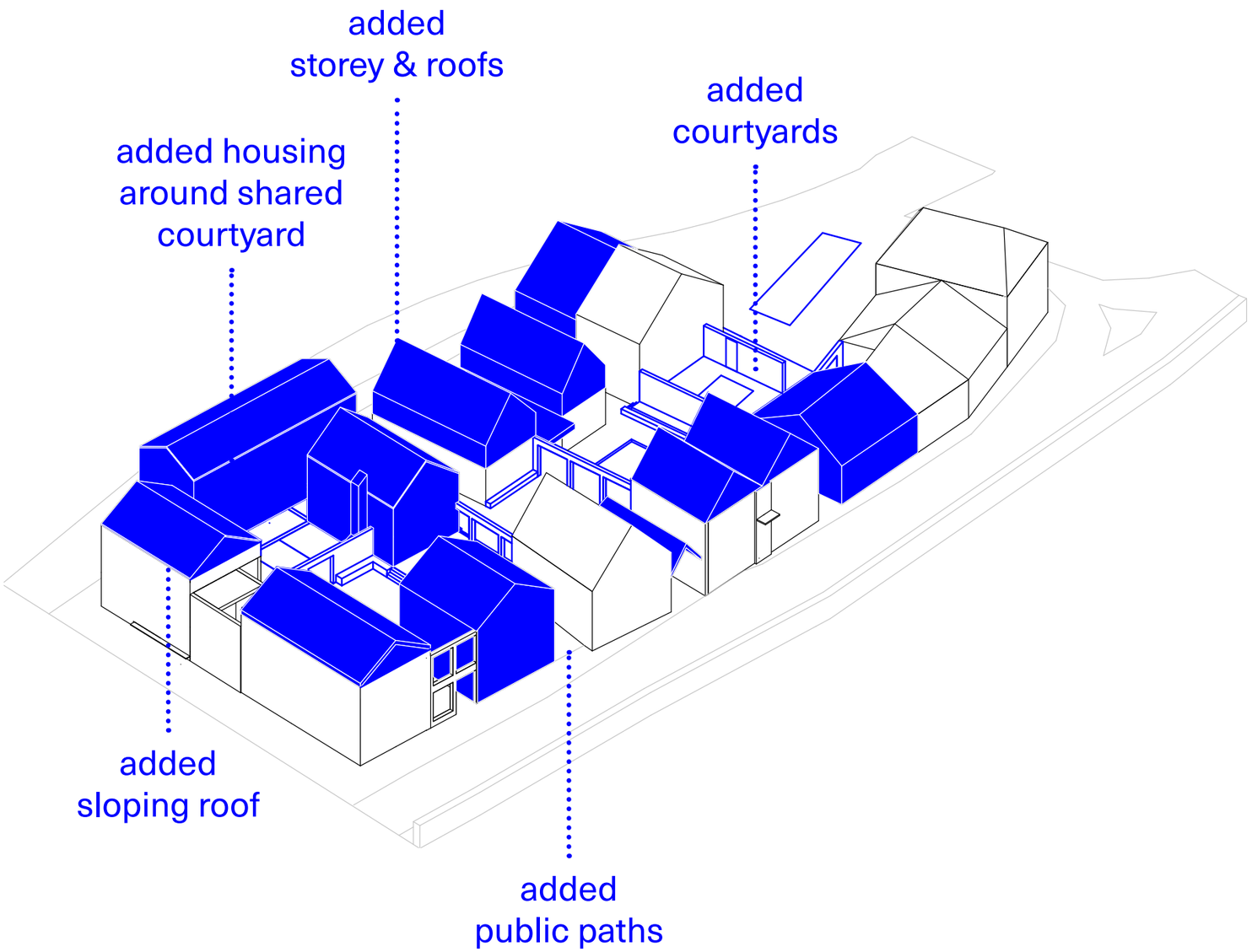

removing
roof
removing
extension

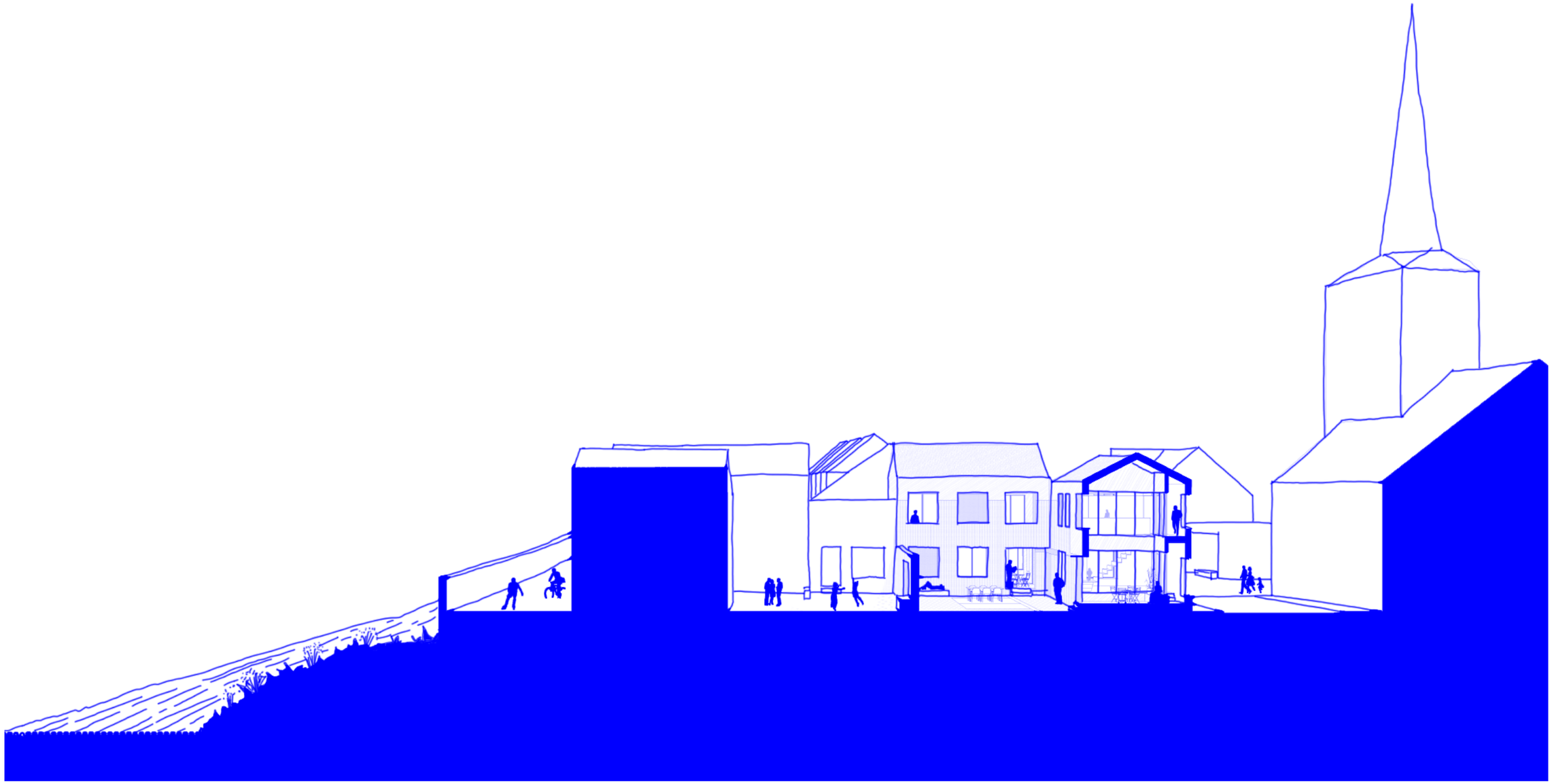

added volume
inside church

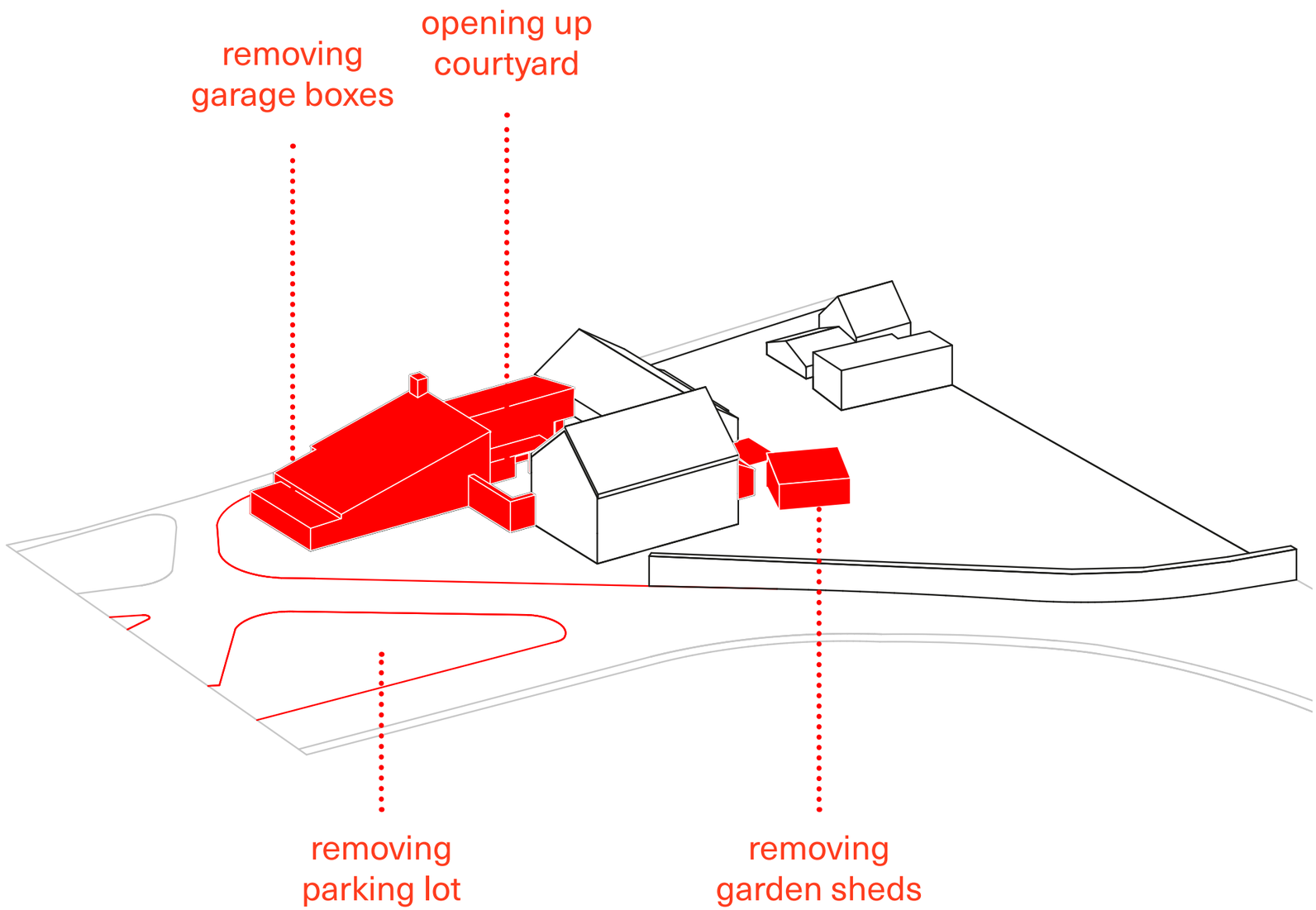


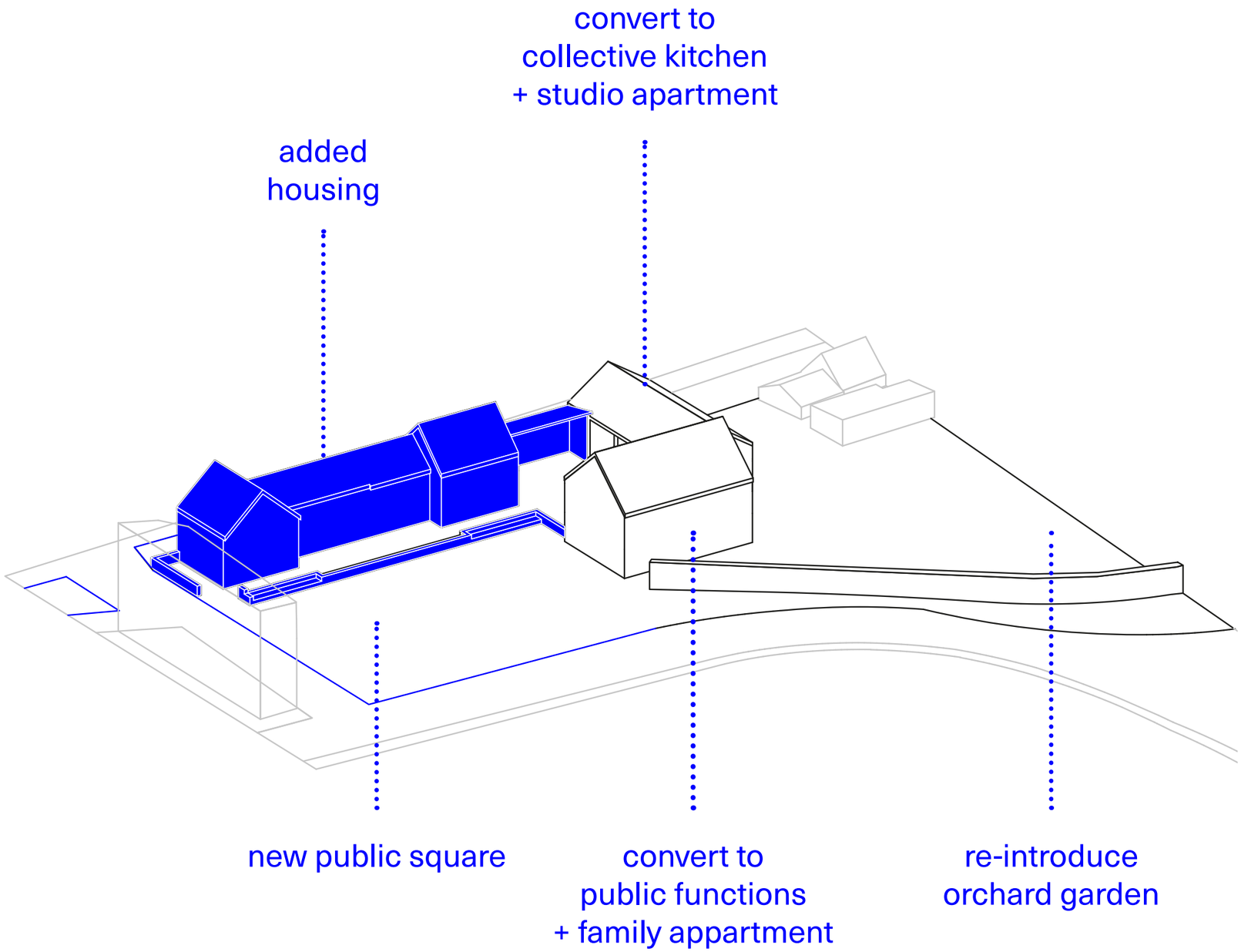



removing extensions
removing second level
removing detached houses
removing garden sheds
removing garages

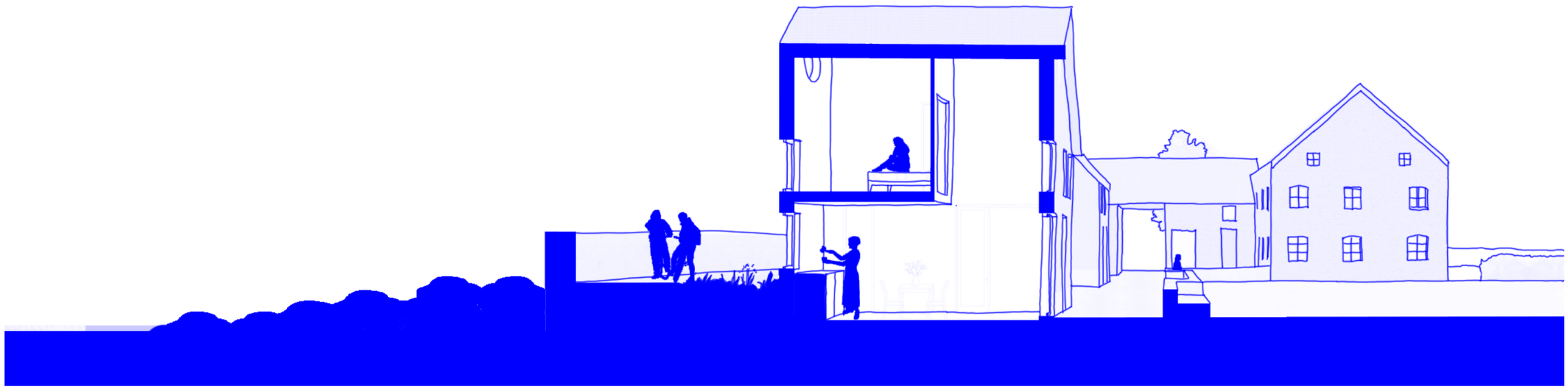

added
storey & roofs
added housing
around shared
courtyard
added
courtyards
added
sloping roof
added
public paths

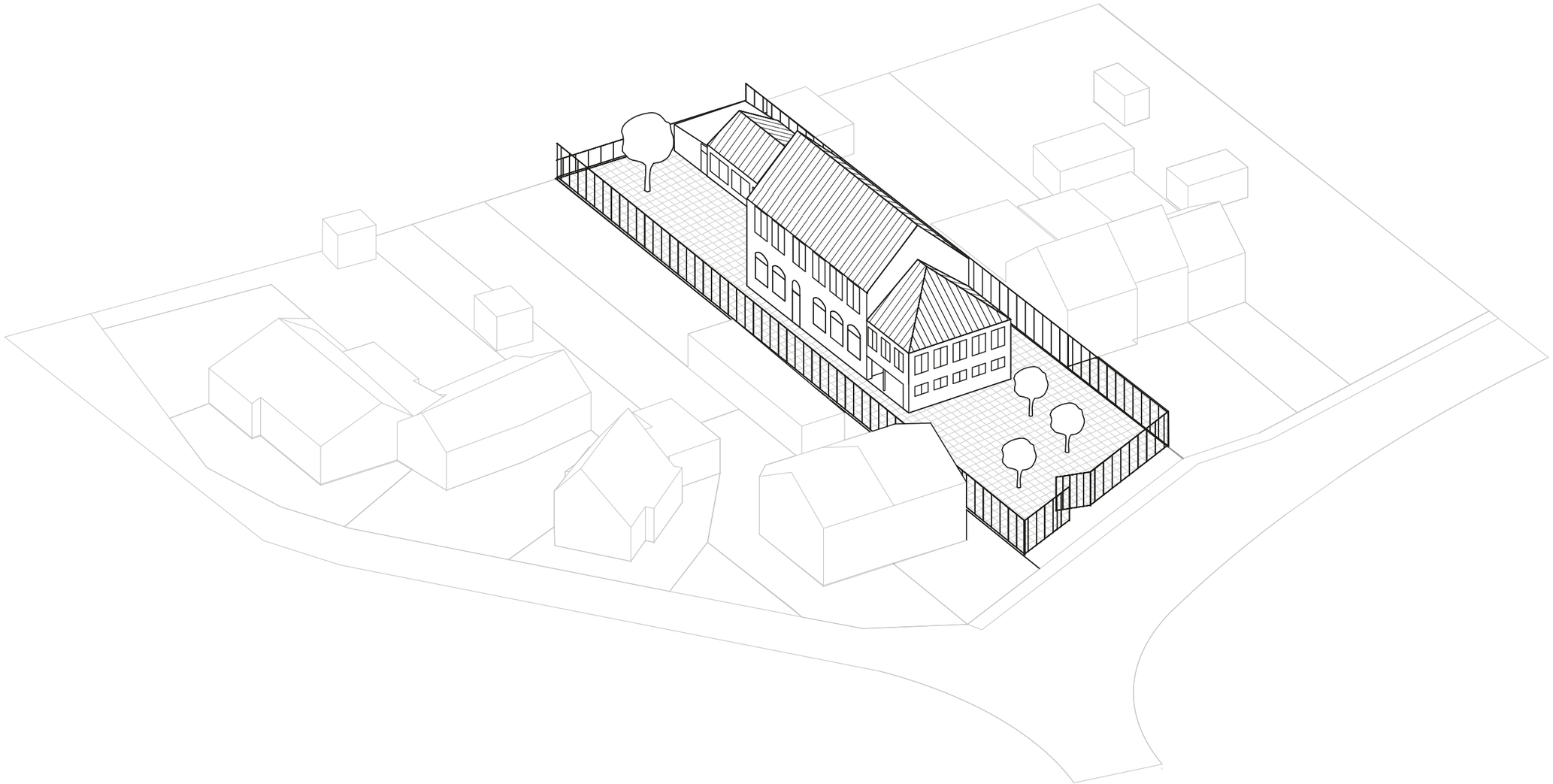


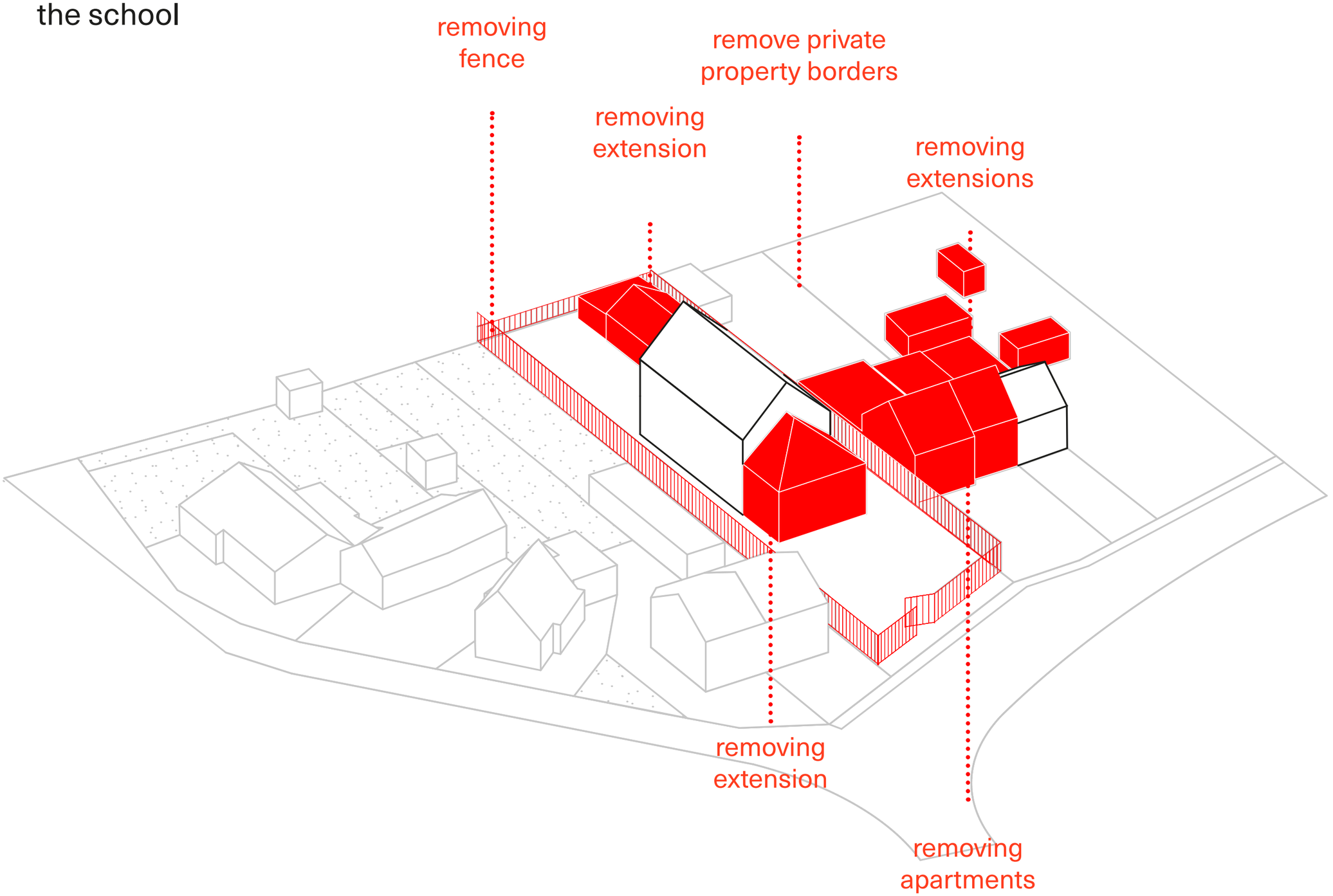

removing
garage boxes
opening up
courtyard
removing
parking lot
removing
garden sheds

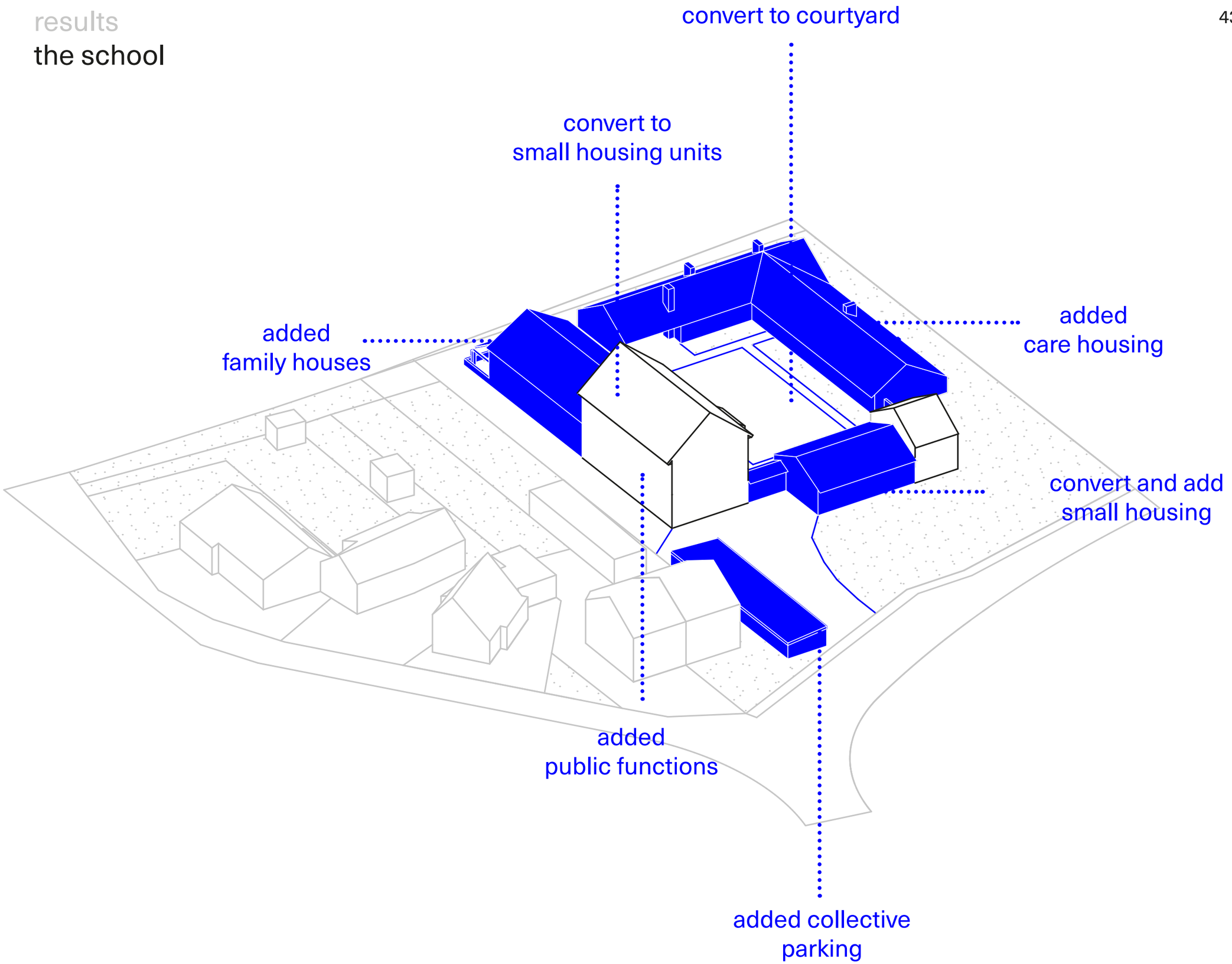

convert to
collective kitchen
+ studio apartment
added
housing
new public square
convert to
public functions
+ family appartment
re-introduce
orchard garden

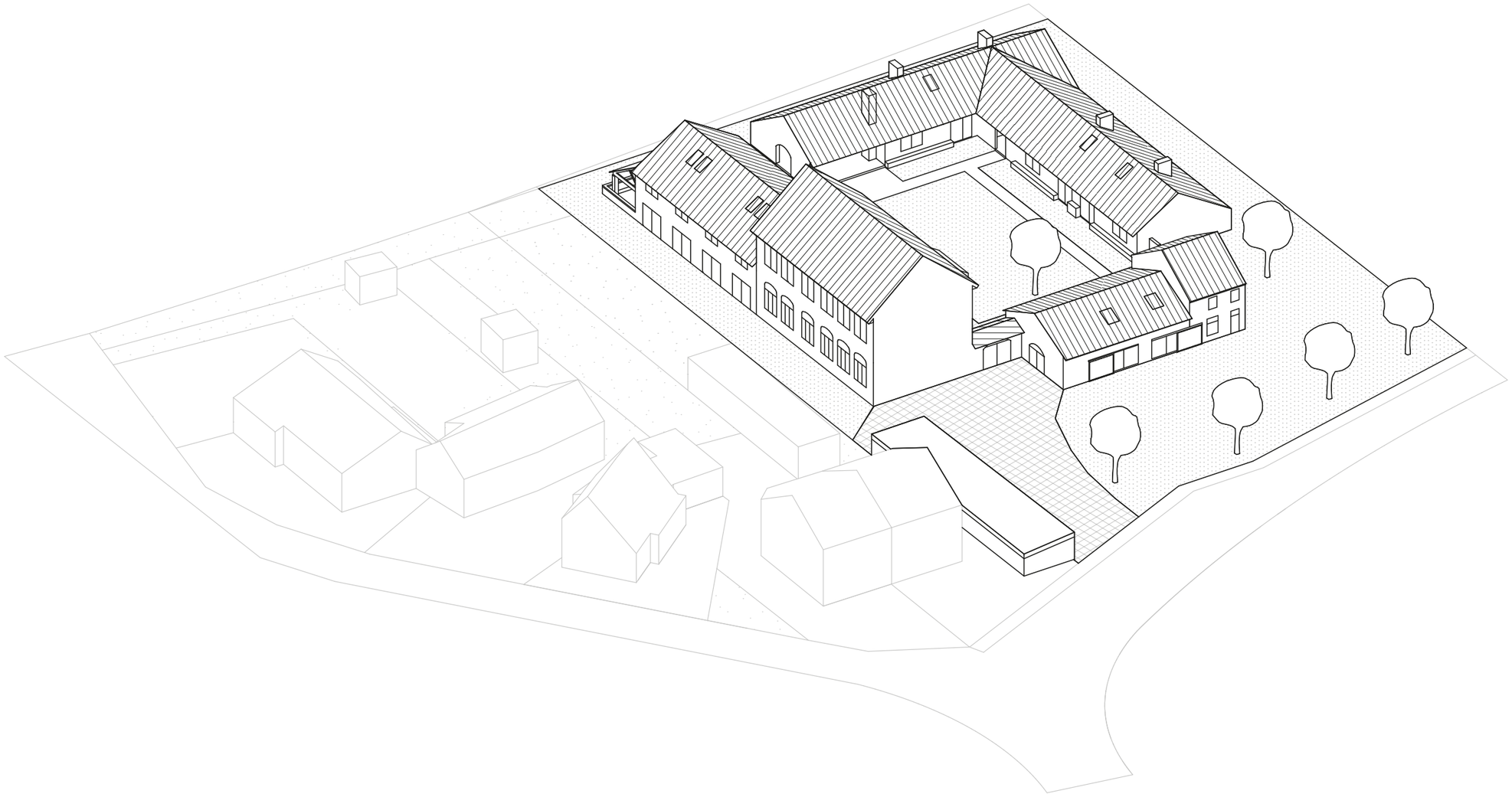
3 results
3.5 the farm



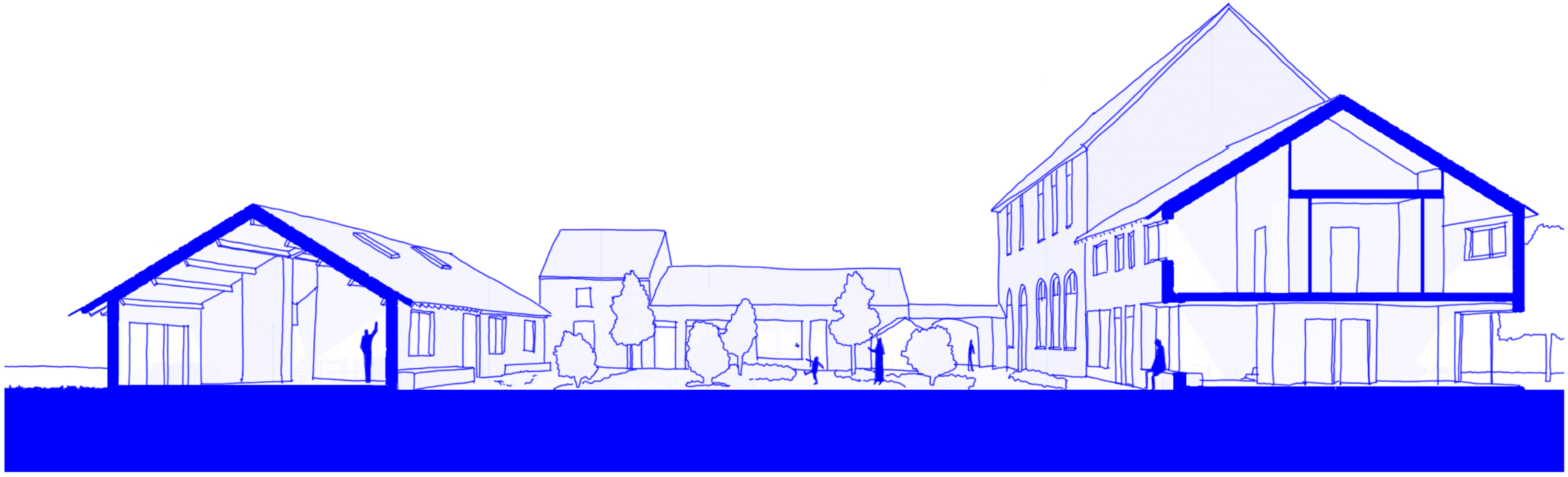



removing
fence
remove private
property borders
removing
extension
removing
extensions
removing
extension
removing
apartments

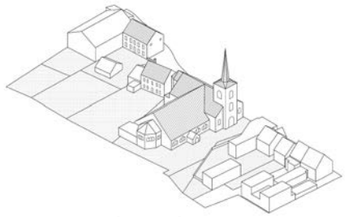

convert to courtyard
convert to
small housing units
added
family houses
added
care housing
convert and add
small housing
added
public functions
added collective
parking



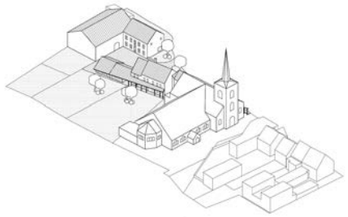
3.6 the school



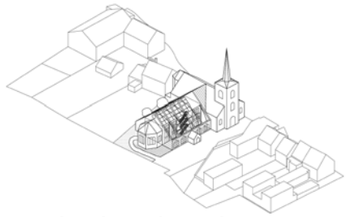
4.1 design strategies



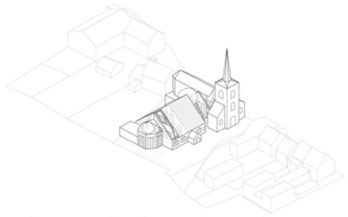
church



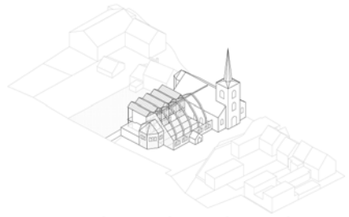
connecting



in the church

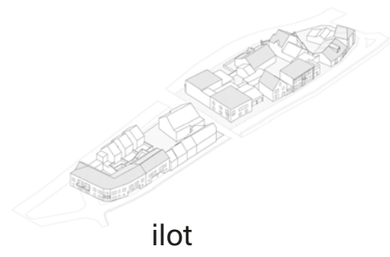


through the church



against the church

yard housing



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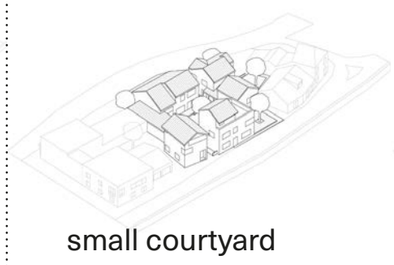
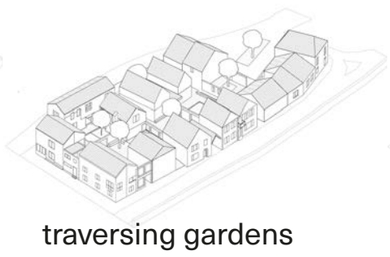
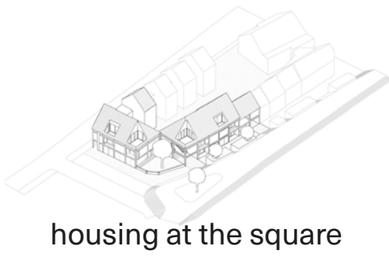


small courtyard



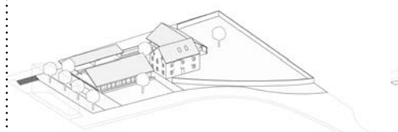
traversing gardens

housing at riverside



housing at the square

farm



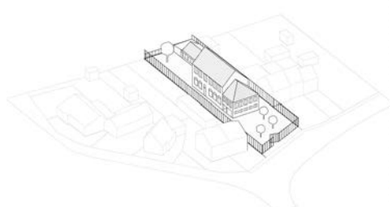
courtyard

double courtyard

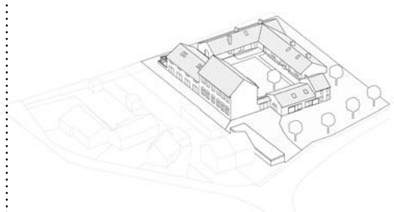
riverside farm

sqaure as yard

transversal farm



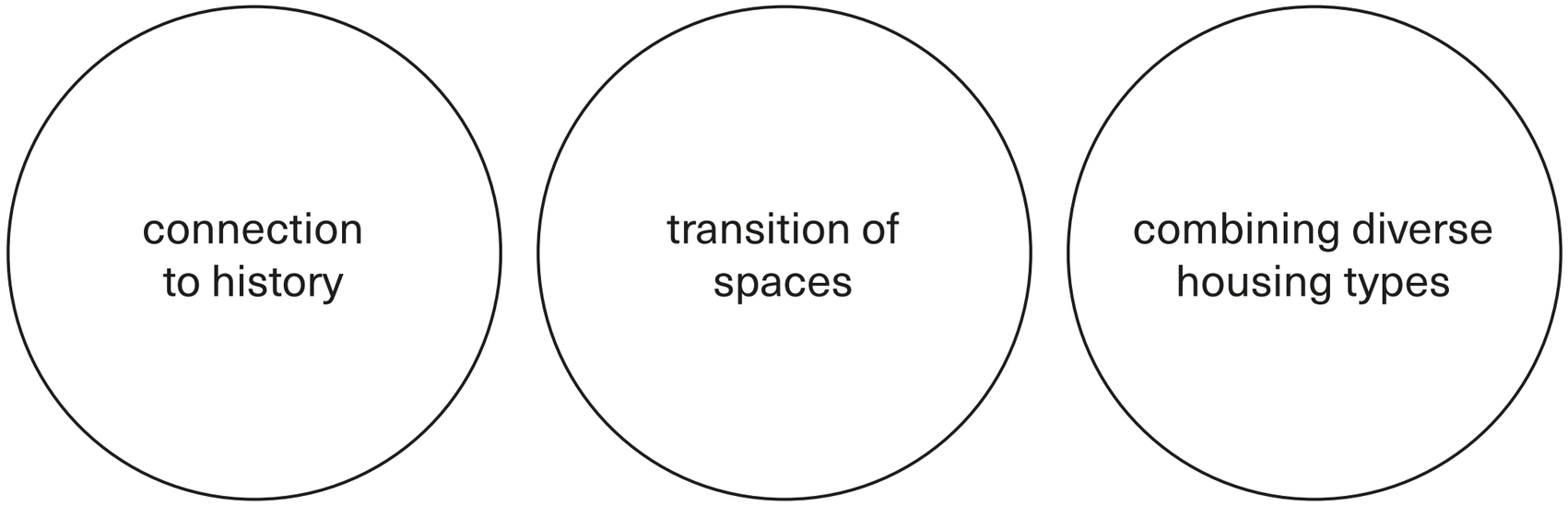
school



courtyard

symmetric *beluik*

longitudinal housing



!
inscribing architecture
in ageing of the place

!
basic amenities
& informal care

!
integration instead of
social segregation

connection to history

in-depth historical analysis as foundation

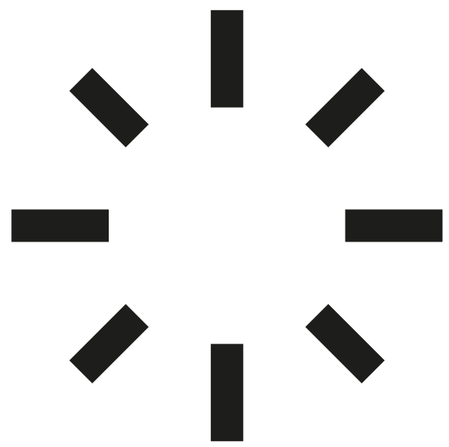
transition of spaces

provide space for public and collective functions

combining diverse housing types

integrate housing for older inhabitants

Het plein als erf
Wonen langs het water
Dubbele Hofhoeve
Hofhoeve



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UHASSELT
KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION

VUB VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL

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HOUSE