

# LITTLE BABYLON

## postfossil neighborhoods

### new babylon



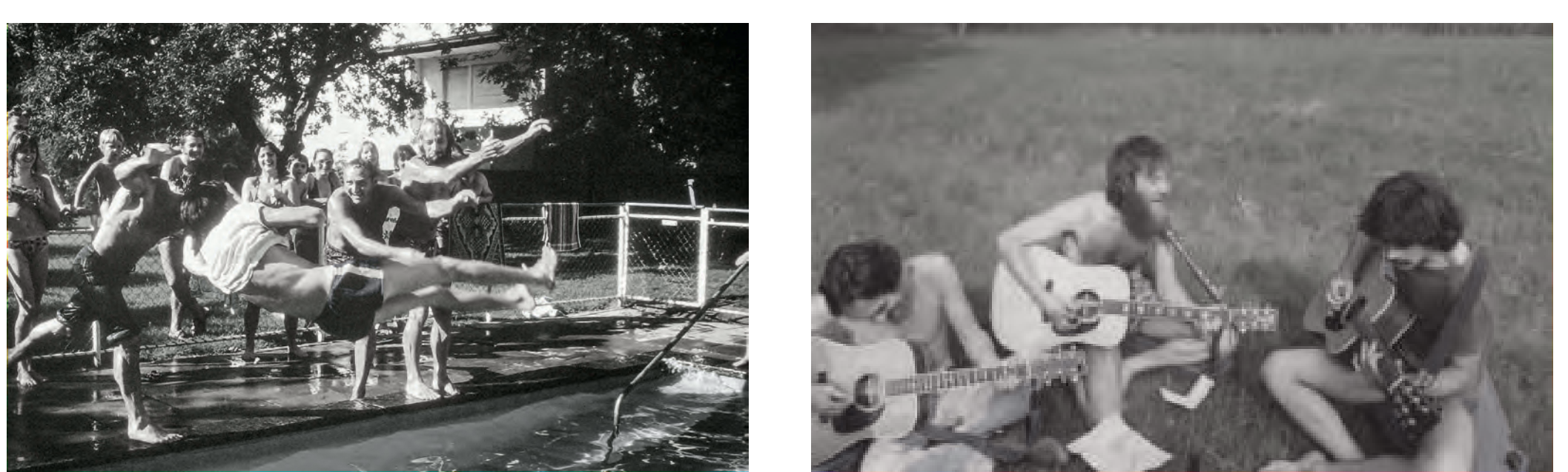
Constant's „New Babylon“ is a post-war vision of an almost complete interconnected society. A large network where everyone could fill in. Driven by the horrible happenings of the second world war, Constant imagined an equal and peaceful future, where everybody is an artist.

Sadly humanity skipped past parts of his vision and didn't really change their inhumane habits. But he foresaw an interconnected society. Not really in the way that he imagined it, via a physical network connecting everything, drifting from event to event, but social media represents the essence of „New Babylon“.

With all that in mind, advanced technology has profoundly transformed human social life. The internet and social media have connected people globally, while smartphones enable constant communication. Remote work has altered the workplace. Technology has also personalized entertainment, offering a wide range of content. The convenience of online shopping is apparent. While these changes bring convenience, they also present challenges in maintaining meaningful human connections. Random interactions with humans have become a rarity, due to the lack of the necessity of leaving the own four walls.

### principles

- 01 Add new activities, programs, living styles without taking away too much from the inhabitants.
- 02 Use local and sustainable Materials.
- 03 Respect the inhabitants current living conditions (open spaces, activities) but also improve them.
- 04 Create different kinds of open spaces, to improve the liveliness and diversity of the neighborhood.
- 05 Leave spaces for the neighborhood to evolve over time or to have flexible uses at the moment.
- 06 Respect the history of the neighborhood by finding new purposes for different areas instead of tearing them down and rebuilding them. Use the current situation as a guide.
- 07 Using Architecture to layer privacy and publicity
- 08 Providing patterns for different kinds of living structures
- 09 Densification in between.
- 10 Make the neighborhood accessible.



**Nefenfeld then**  
Most of Nefenfeld's inhabitants were working at the same institutions. Therefore, colleagues from work met afterwards at the generous open spaces that the neighborhood has to offer, to spend their leisure time together. Nefenfeld presented itself as a lively, interactive and friendly area.



**Nefenfeld now**  
This changed after many of the previous inhabitants were wealthy enough to buy their own single family homes. People came and left over and over again. Friendships and activity groups disappeared. The neighborhood seems empty, almost dead, like a relic from the past.



**contemporary witness**  
Widnau was characterised by agriculture and industry. On a careful walk through Widnau's neighbourhoods, you will find remnants of these times. You'll find old fruit trees that reminiscent of the time where landscape was characterised by orchards. You also find railway tracks, which were important elements in Widnau's industrial history and still are to some extent.



**historic elements**  
In Nefenfeld there are some historical elements such as the pool, a dry stone wall and mature trees and shrubs that characterise the area. They will be retained as witnesses to another era and will be integrated into the new context.



inspiration for rooftop usage, courtyard and community living  
Westhof, Zürich - Conen Sigl



inspiration for atriums, proportions and shared spaces  
Mehr als Wohnen, Zürich - Duplex

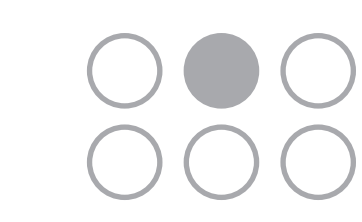


inspiration for rooftop construction  
IKEA, Wien - Querkraft



inspiration for hall living  
Zollhaus, Zürich - Enzmann Fischer





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## the open space concept

The Nefenfeld neighbourhood is embossed by the new urban design of the neighborhood, which also structures the open spaces. The neighbourhood is given a further dimension of open space through the new communal and public rooftops. The rooftops will form a new meeting point for Nefenfeld and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The outdoor space is divided into different areas, creating park situations and courtyards as well as private areas for ground floor residents.

The new neighbourhood park has a park character with many native trees and a tapestry lawn, and there will also be a paddling pool in the centre.

The communal park is characterised by the historical elements, which have been preserved and newly integrated into the context. The sense

of space of the former large lawn area is to be retained, with the generous glass windows around the swimming pool to still providing the view.

Furthermore, open and closed courtyard situations will be created between the buildings. Behind the new commercial centre, two public pocket parks will be created. A large public roof terrace is also being created on the commercial centre, which will be structured with planting islands to create a variety of seating areas.



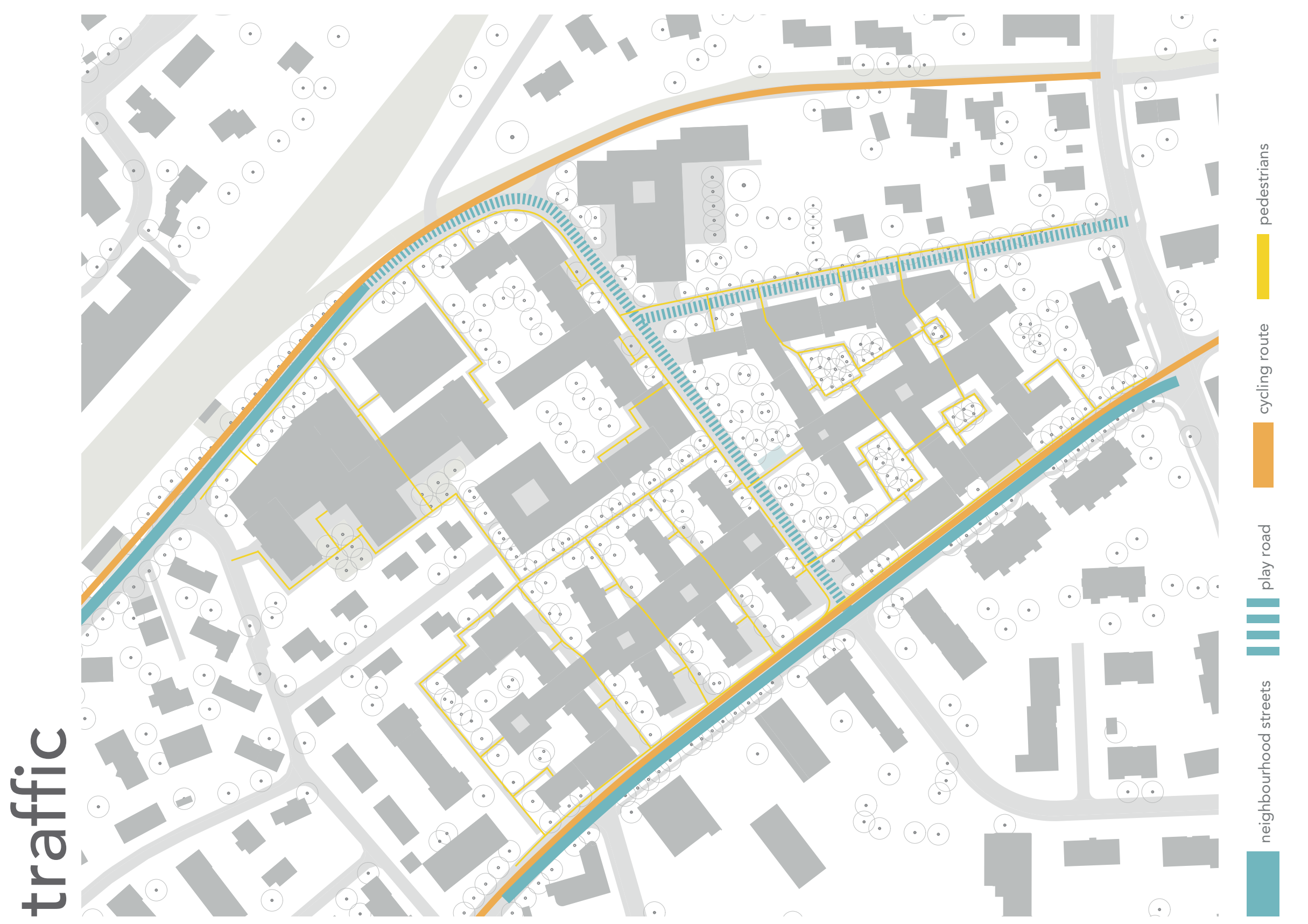
connecting the neighborhood through the third dimension  
Rooftop Catalogue - MVRDV



paddling pool in the neighborhood park  
FZA - Freizeitanlage Rheinwiese, Langwiesen - blum freiraumplanung



Various levels of publicity are being created in Nefenfeld. Public open spaces are being created around and on the commercial centre and the new neighbourhood park. Certain buildings will have private areas that residents can appropriate. Semi-public open spaces will be created between the buildings. The school with its newly created roof terrace will remain institutional.



Nefenfeldstrasse and Schulstrasse will be redesigned as a play street with a 20 km/h speed limit. The cycle axes will be rerouted around the neighbourhood. There will only be pedestrians traffic in the neighbourhood itself.



rooftop sportsground on the school  
Sportplatz auf dem Dach, Kantonsschule Zug  
- new sportsground on the rooftop  
- big open lawn for playing  
- alley to delimit the school to the street



public rooftop on the commercial center  
Hochschulcampus Toni Areal Zürich - Studio Vulkan  
- Seating niches through lush planting  
- gravelled pocket parks behind de commercial center  
- terraces at the back facade



open yard situation  
Wohnüberbauung Sonnentalsstrasse, Zürich - ASP  
- shrubs to emphasise the private spaces  
- trees for intimacy  
- retentions moulds for seeping rainwater



closed yard situation  
Wohnkolonie Zurlinden, Zürich - ORT  
- central tree group  
- trees for intimacy  
- retentions moulds for seeping rainwater



park character, neighborhood park  
Liegewiese, St. Johannis-Park, Basel  
- lawn underneath a tree canopy  
- paddling pool to mark the historic pool which was located there



closed park character, community park  
Josefwiese, Zürich  
- open lawn situation  
- situation surrounded by trees  
- seepage pack to seep away the rooftop rainwater

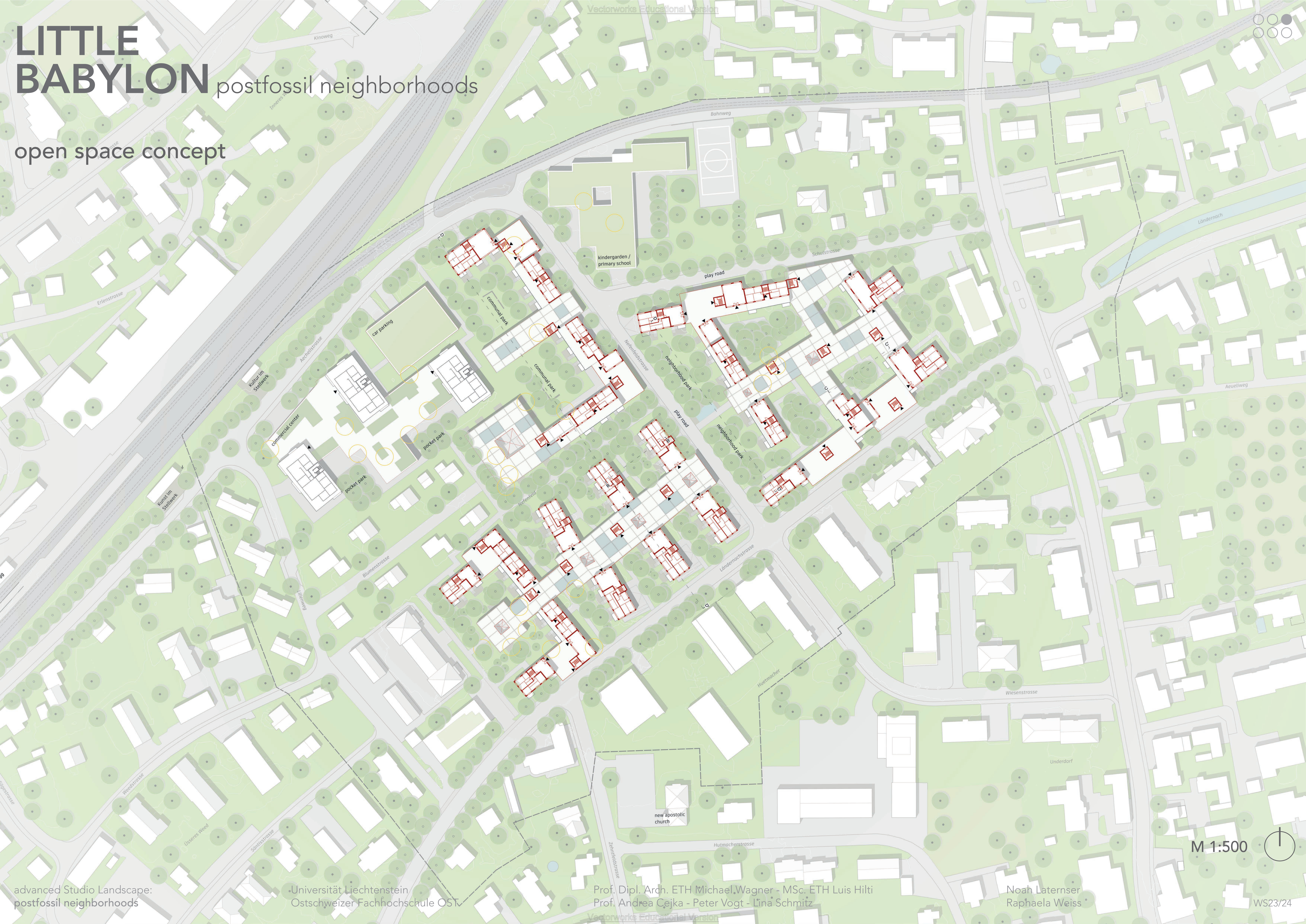




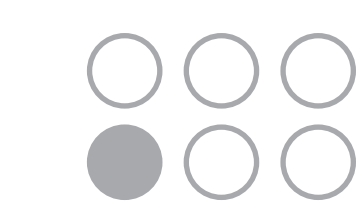
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open space concept

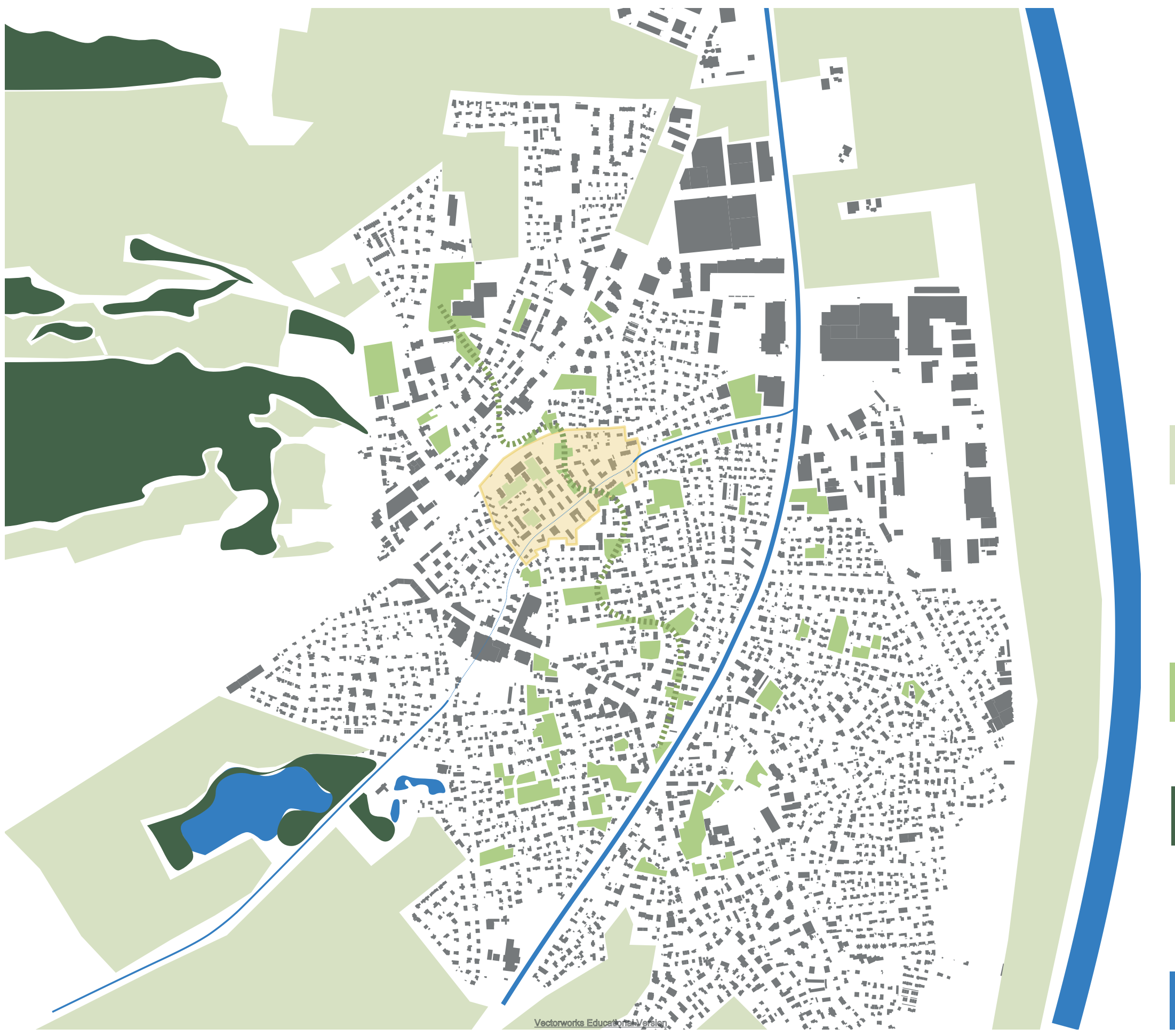






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## blue and green spaces in Widnau



There are still some large green spaces in Au and Widnau which are valuable stepping stones for the local flora and fauna. In the south-eastern part of Widnau, these have already been lost, which is now weakening the exchange and migration between species. It is therefore important that the remaining ones are preserved, as they also make a considerable contribution to the cooling of Widnau and Au. They also form a valuable recreational area for people within the settlement.

## usage

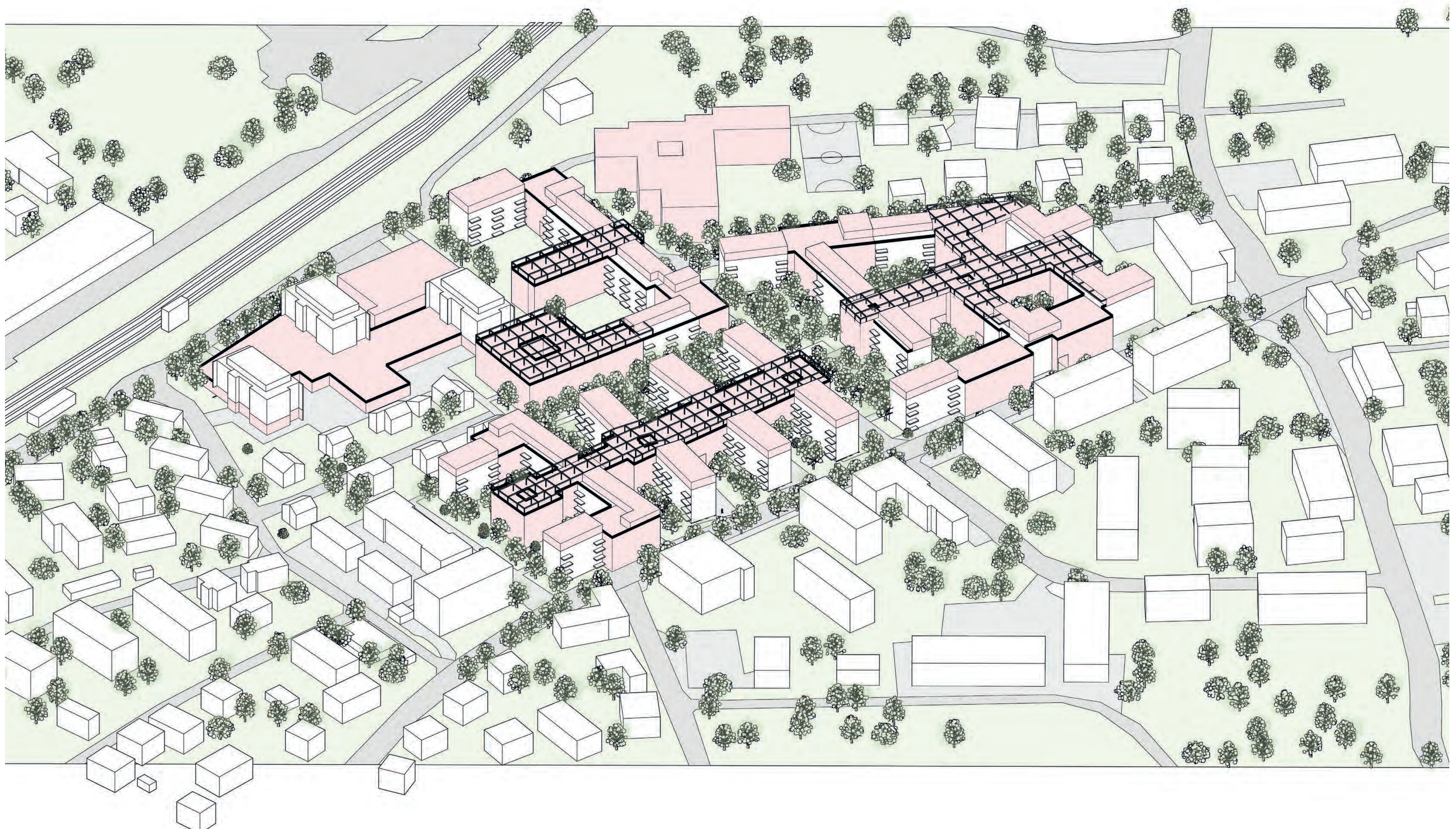


Nefenfeld is, due to its location and history, a well connected neighborhood with access to other neighboring villages, countries or even further travel. This opportunity provides huge potential for the further development of the area. At the moment, parking spaces are the only visible connection- and meetingpoints inside the neighborhood. Apart from some free standing benches. The current open spaces don't offer an interesting function. So, most inhabitants use the central location and leave the area for more exciting spaces. „Little Babylon“ uses architecture to connect the, over the years more and more divided, people living in the Nefenfeld Neighborhood. With a very radical approach of connecting almost every building, creating new, interesting spaces in between and on the roofs, for different uses and activities. The goal is the possibility of more random interactions happening between the inhabitants and visitors that got lost over the course of time and the change in society, to bring the neighborhood back to life. By bringing a bit of the spirit, Constants „New Babylon“ envisioned, to Nefenfeld and physically connecting the Neighborhood, „Layering Levels“ encourages that random interactions will happen more frequently and the lost liveliness will return.

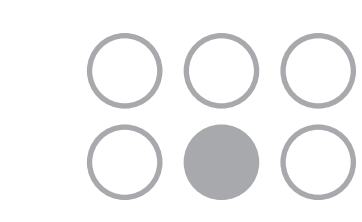
## interconnections in Nefenfeld



The Nefenfeld neighbourhood is ideally located. The railway station is only a few minutes away. The school is also not far away. There are many jobs in the local industry. The shopping street is also within easy walking distance. The motorway can be reached quickly by car, and the Swiss border to Austria is not far away.





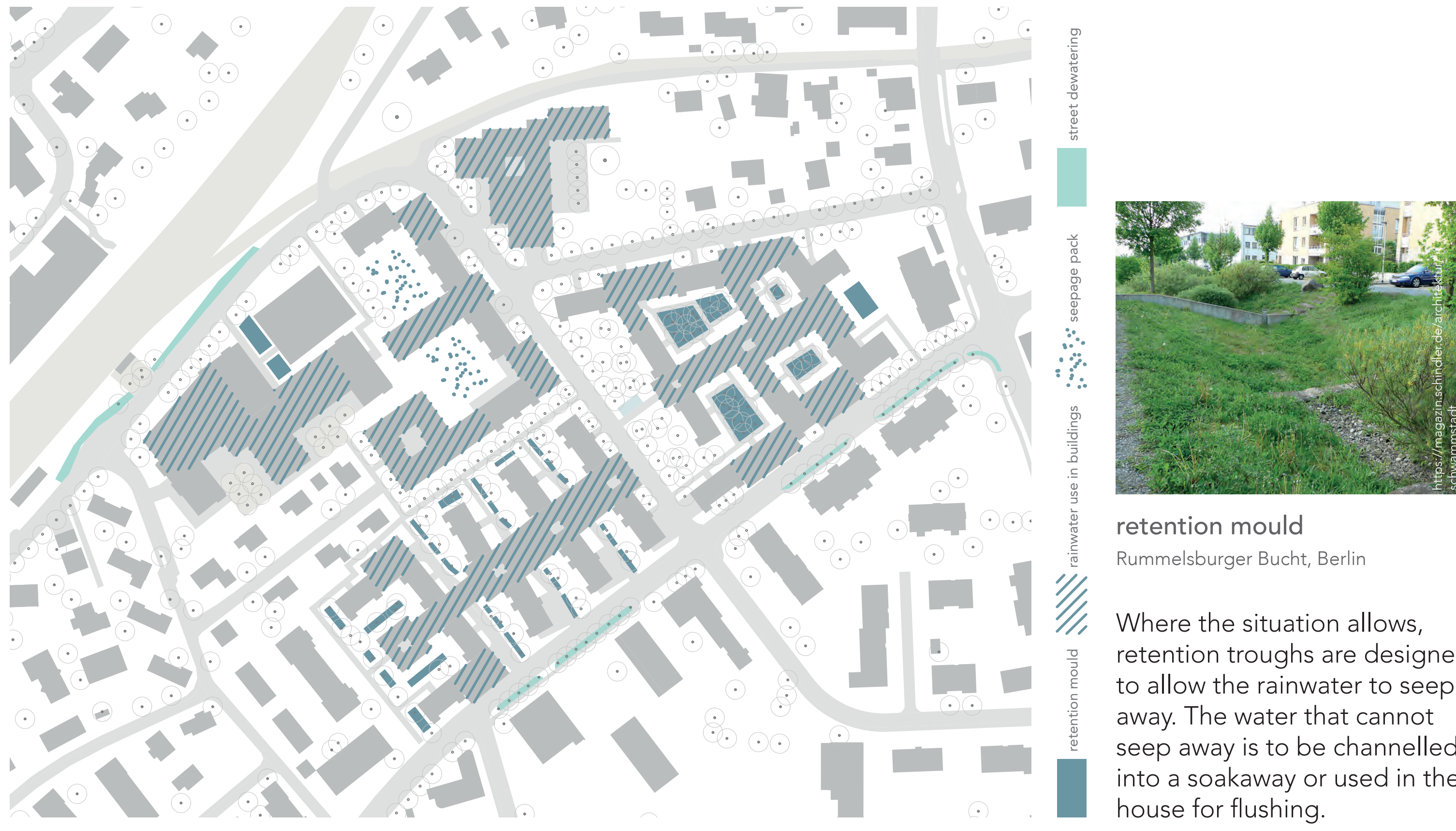


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tree compensation



rainwatermanagement



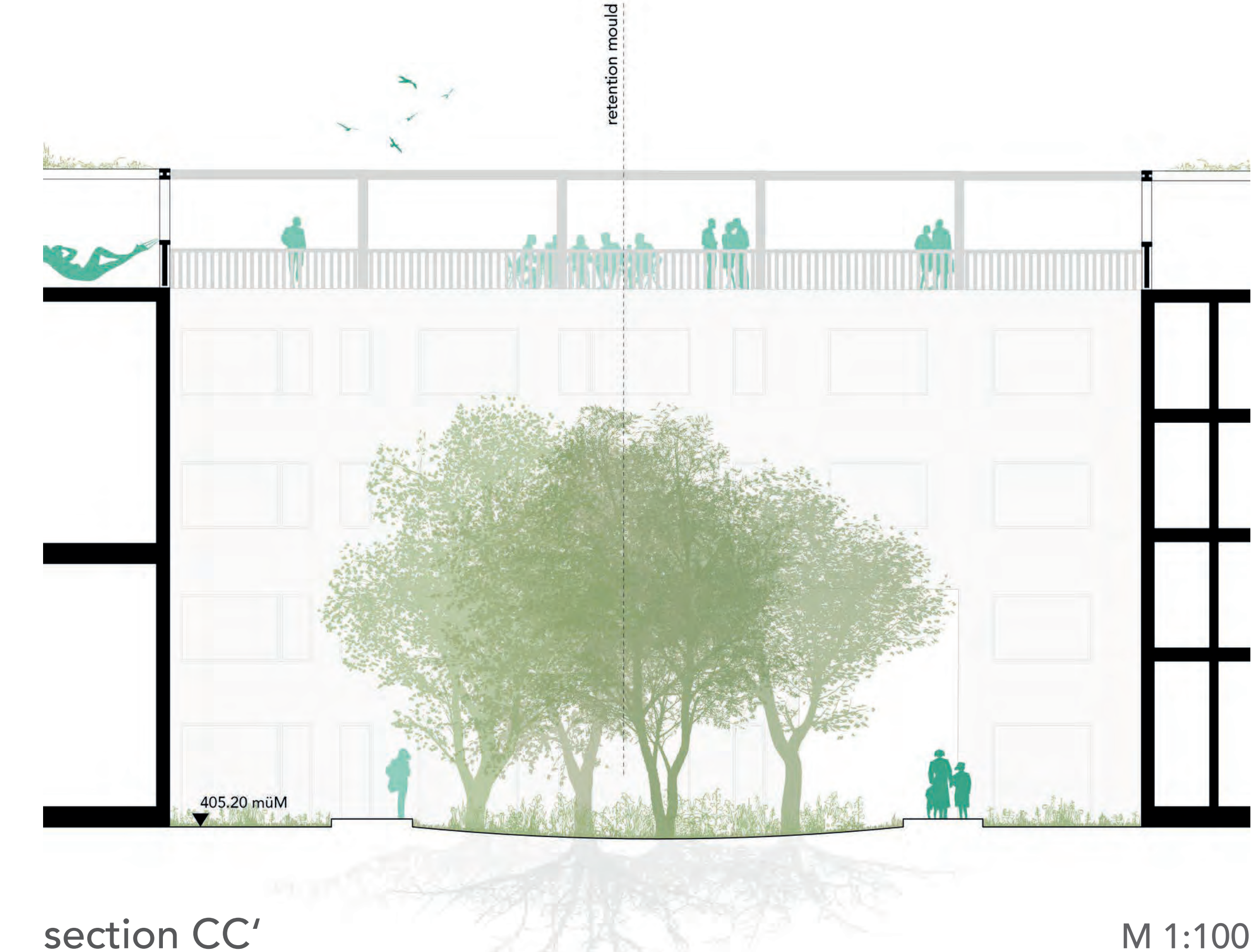
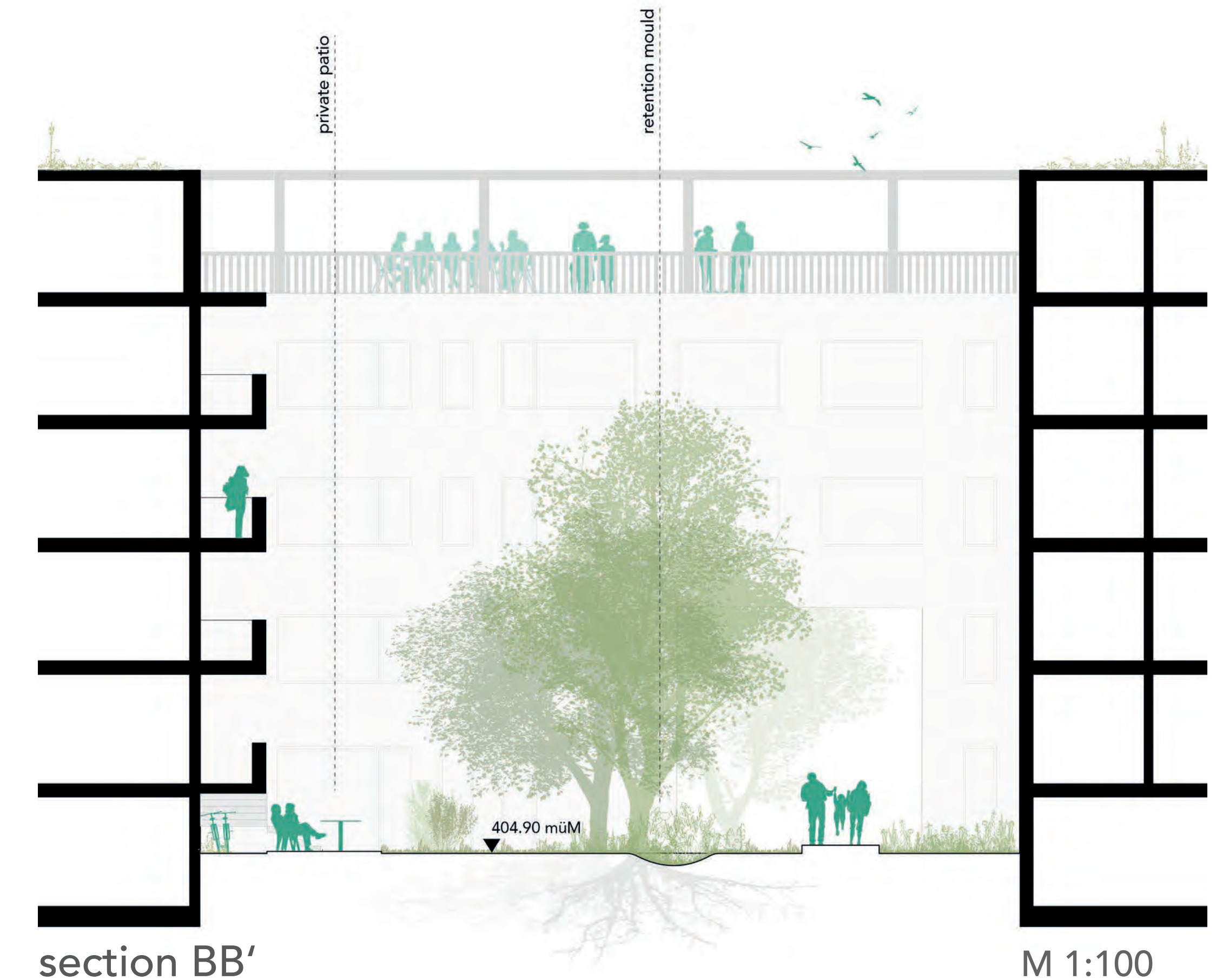
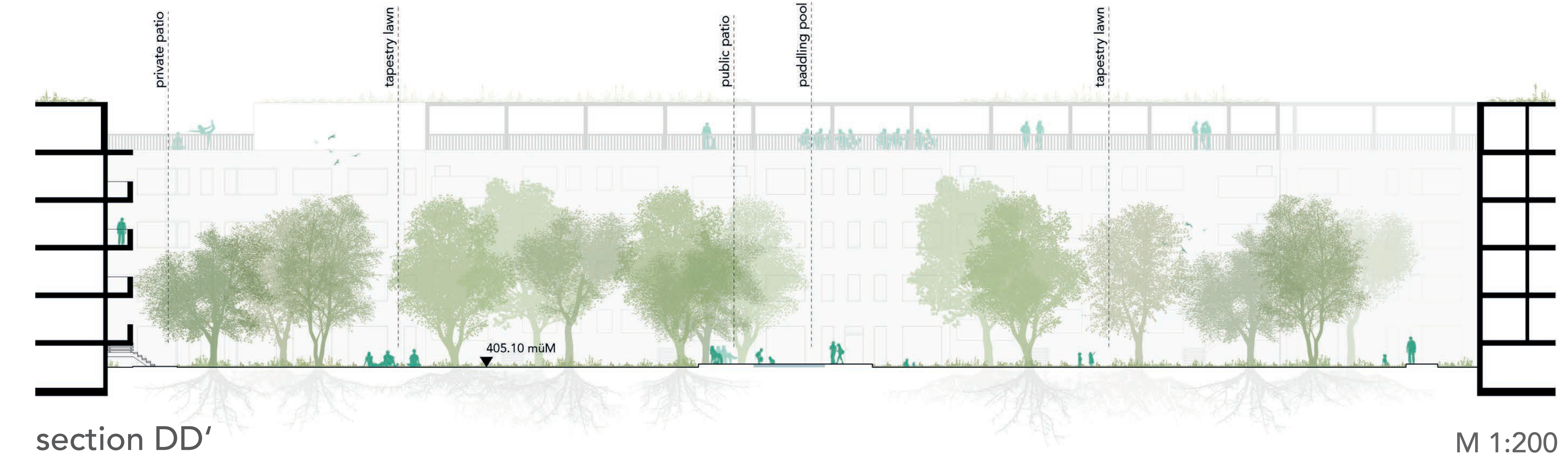
tree concept



The tree concept takes account of existing elements. The flowering trees of the urban axis take up the planting of the Bahnhofstrasse and thus create a connection. The trees on the play road take up the maple-leaved trees that already exist in many places. In the Lädernachstrasse, all the grey foliage will emphasise the culverted stream.

Only trees that can cope with this extreme situation will be planted in the retention areas. To emphasise the private areas, a spatial filter of native shrubs will be planted. Mostly native park trees will be planted in the remaining open areas.

 <b>palmate leaves</b> <i>Acer platanoides</i> <i>Acer monoespessulanum</i> <i>Acer campestre</i> and similar	 <b>flowering trees</b> <i>Crataegus x prunifolia</i> <i>Eriolobus trilobatus</i> <i>Prunus avium</i> and similar	 <b>greyish leaves</b> <i>Alnus incana</i> <i>Populus tremula</i> <i>Sorbus aria</i> and similar
 <b>retention trees</b> <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> <i>Prunus padus</i> <i>Quercus palustris</i> and similar	 <b>native park trees</b> <i>Prunus padus</i> <i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Tilia cordata</i> and similar	 <b>native shrubs</b> <i>Euonymus europaeus</i> <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> <i>Viburnum vulgare</i> and similar





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open space pre project

