

Deformalising Formal Settlements

RE-IMAGINING THE DENSIFICATION OF SUBURBIA

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DESIGN PROBLEM:

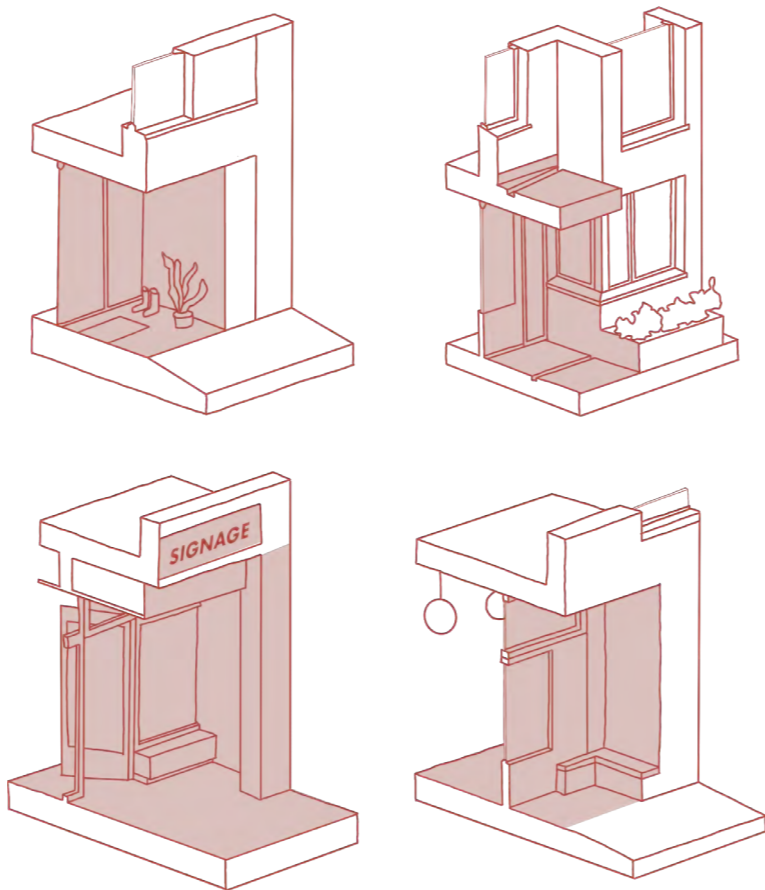
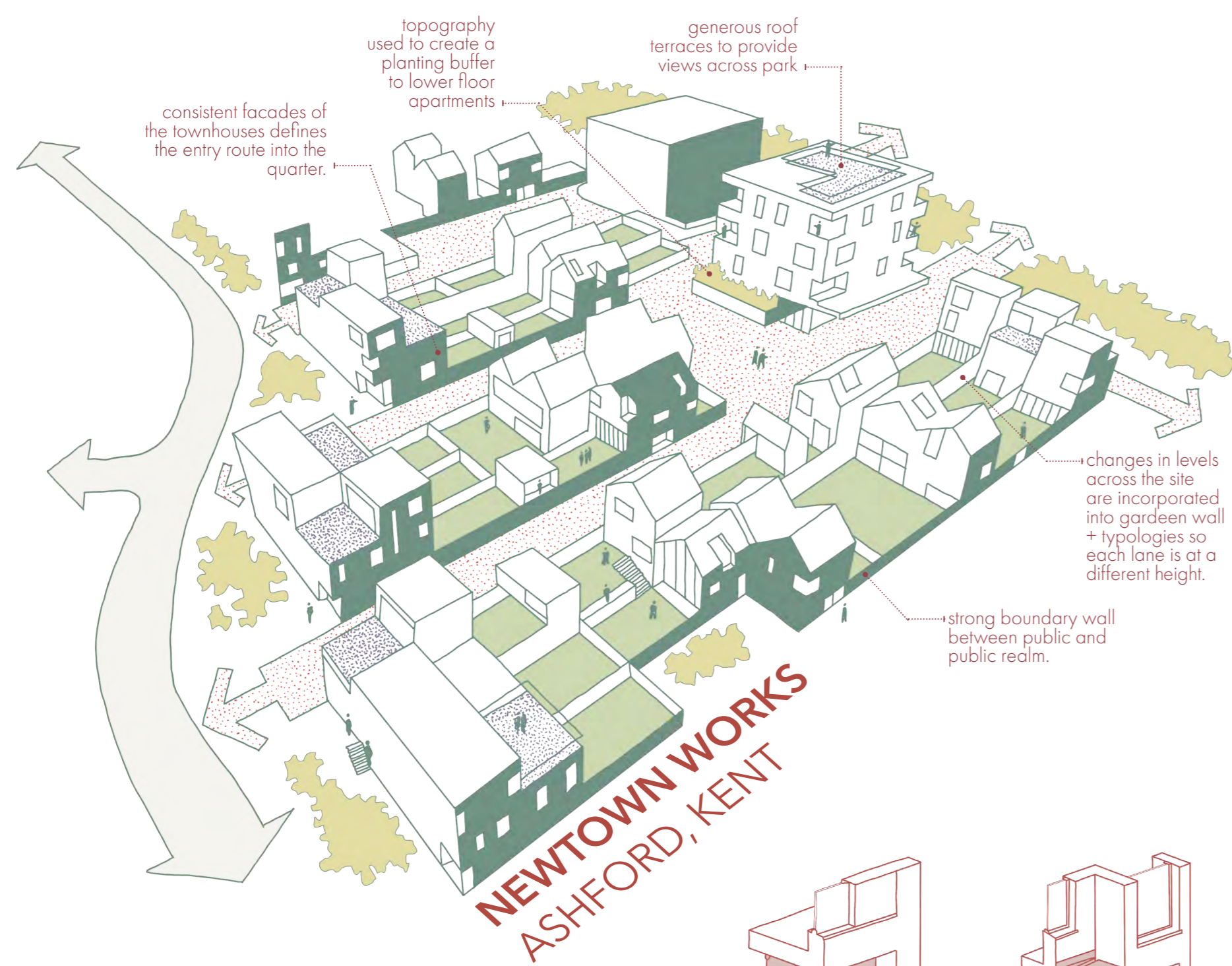
How should interstitial inter-suburban areas be densified while facilitating cultural and socio-economic sustainability in neighbourhoods and communities located in formalised settlements?

PROJECT INTENTION:

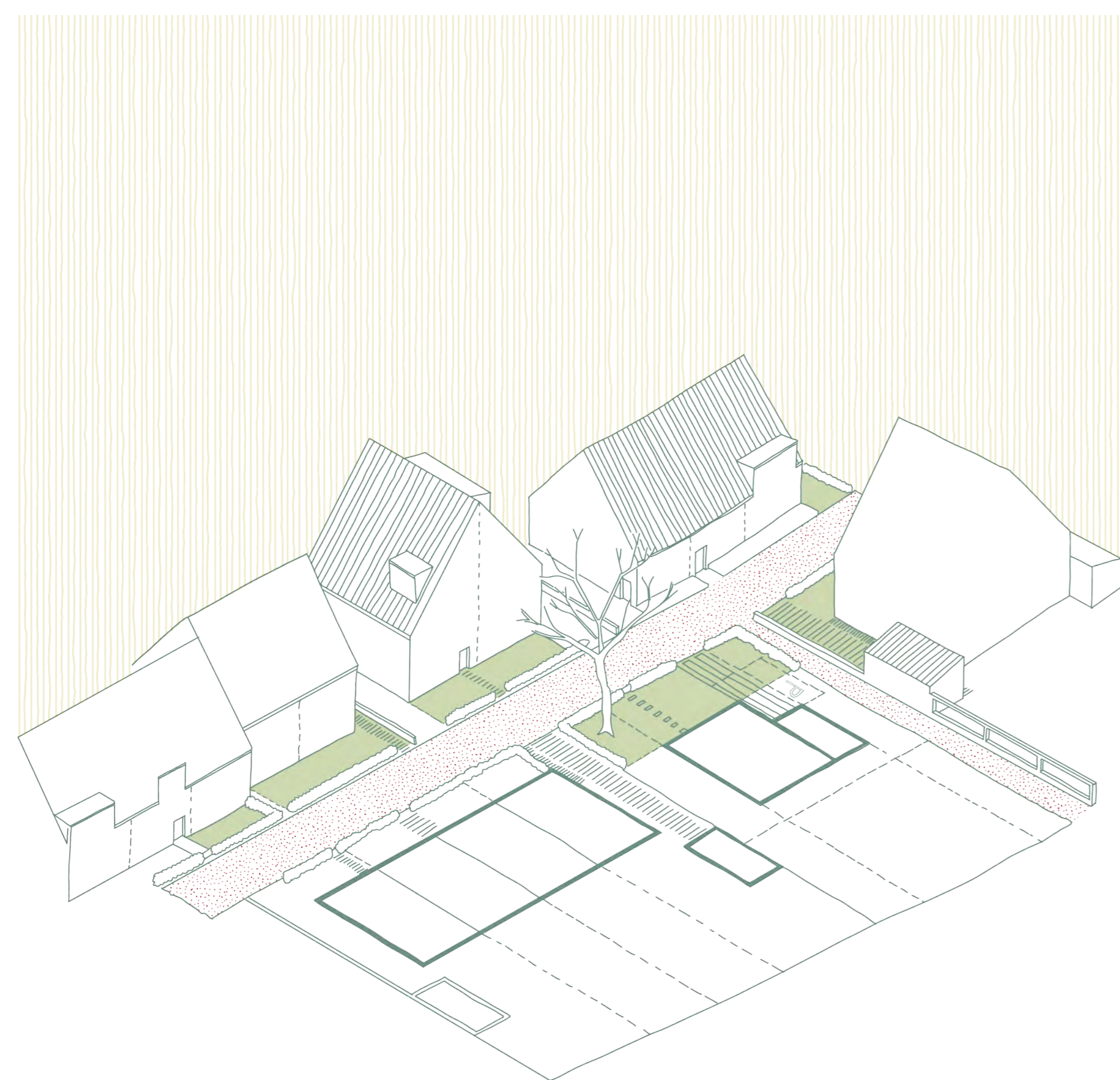
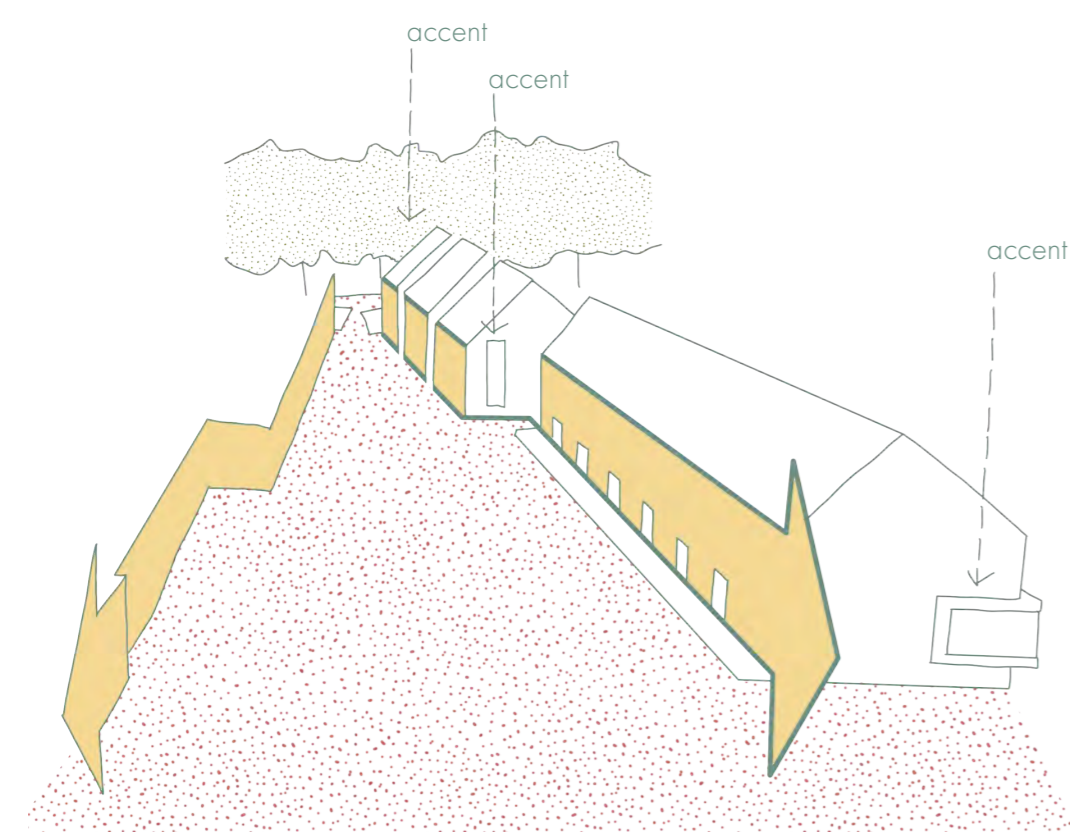
This project serves as a demonstration of the potential to densify and pedestrianise the uniform suburban landscape. It specifically examines residential blocks that predominantly serve a single purpose. The investigation assesses the suitability of these residential blocks to integrate into proposed semi-public and public green networks connecting suburban areas. The design intention is to reimagine suburbia as a focal point for public life, especially in areas lacking communal outdoor spaces.

SOUTH AFRICAN SUBURBIA

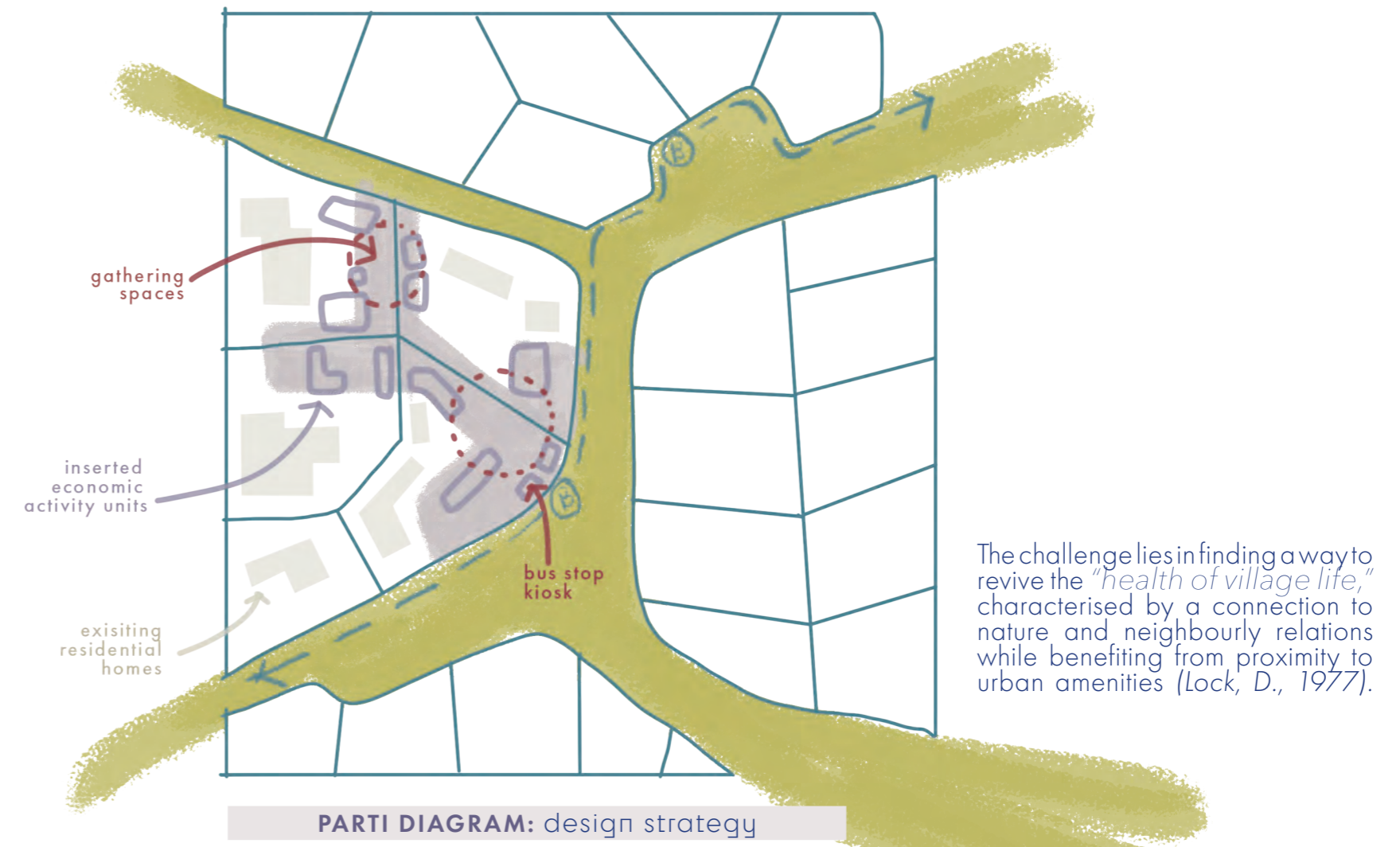
DENSIFIED SUBURB PRECEDENT



Treatments of the entrances and the threshold crossover point between the public realm and the private or semi-private interiors



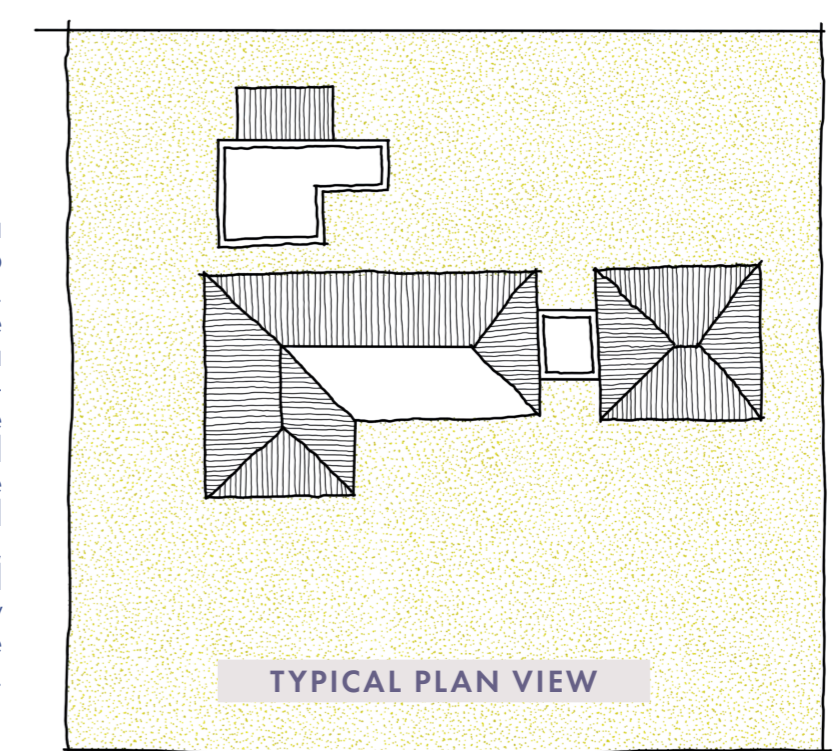
SKETCH OF TYPICAL NEIGHBOURHOOD ARRANGEMENT



The challenge lies in finding a way to revive the "health of village life," characterised by a connection to nature and neighbourly relations while benefiting from proximity to urban amenities (Lock, D., 1977).

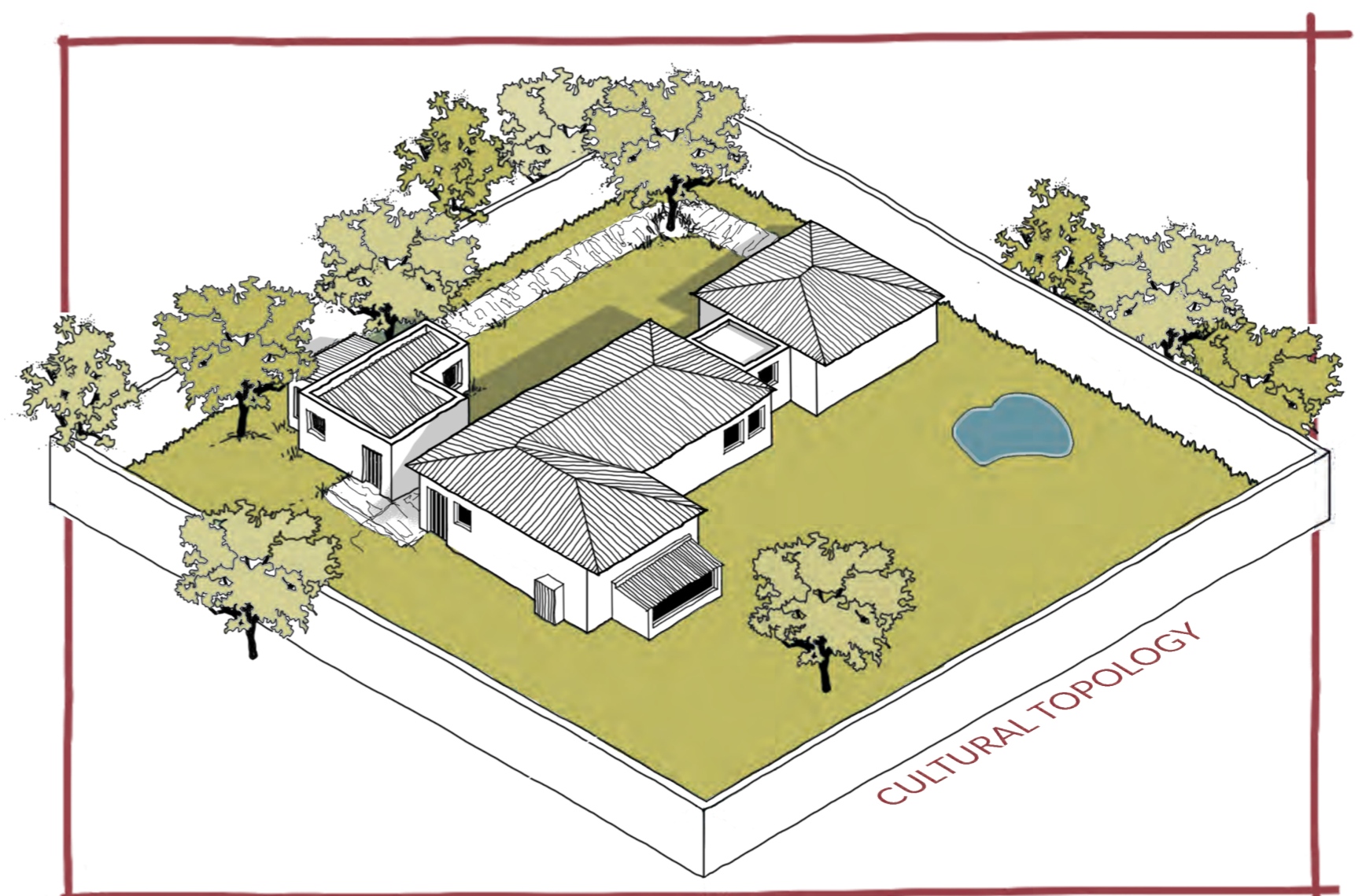


AERIAL VIEW OF SUBURBAN MENLO PARK



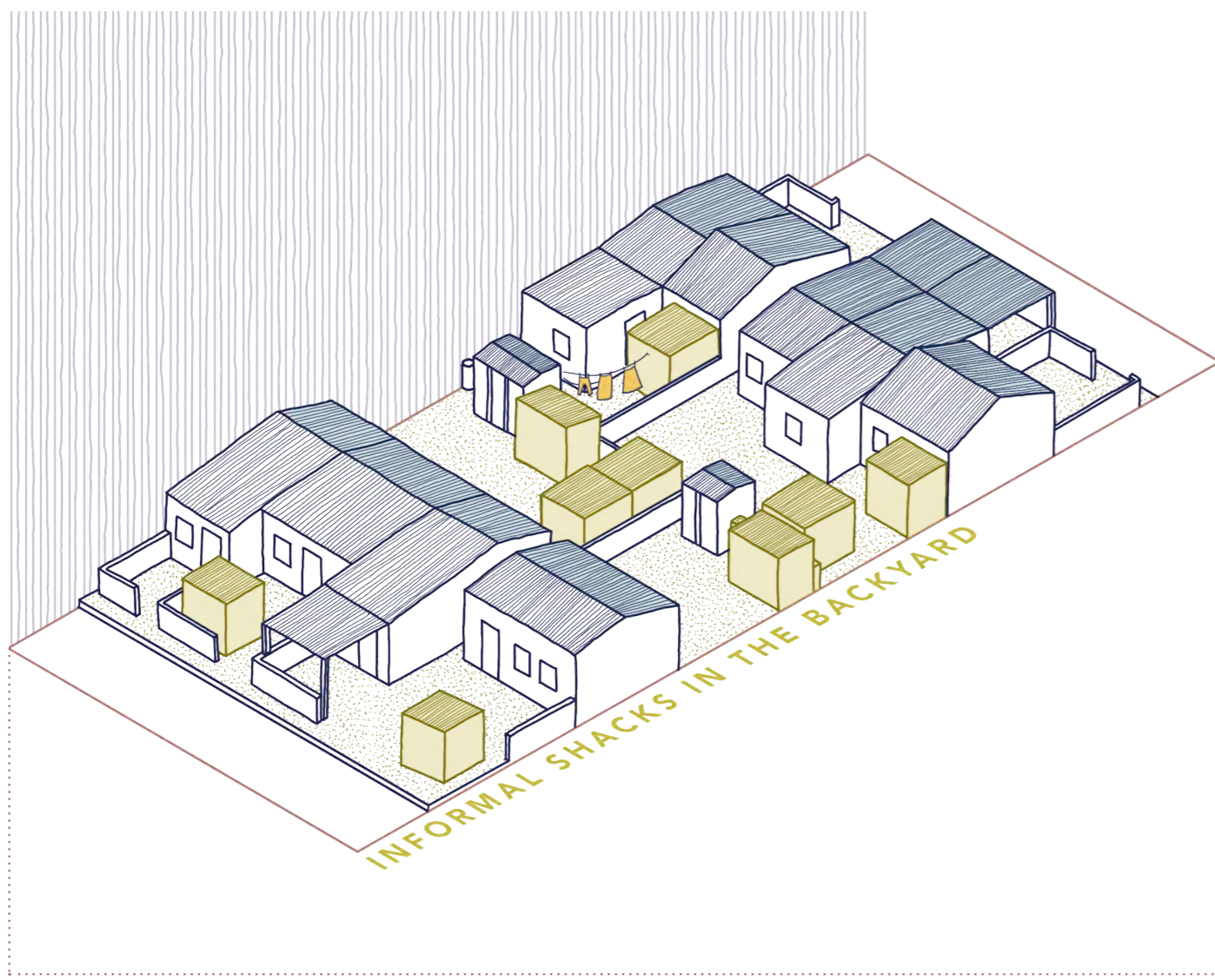
The sketch depicts the arrangement of a suburban house on 28th Street in Menlo Park, evident in older aerial photos. Recent images reveal the complete replacement of the original house with a single apartment block, now housing 15-20 people, a notable increase from the previous 4 to 6 residents. The original house was centrally located on the erf, surrounded by lawns. A substantial portion of the erf remains undeveloped, serving as a garden for recreational purposes. The boundary wall distinctly separates the property, aligning with the typical feature seen in formal settlements.

TYPICAL PLAN VIEW

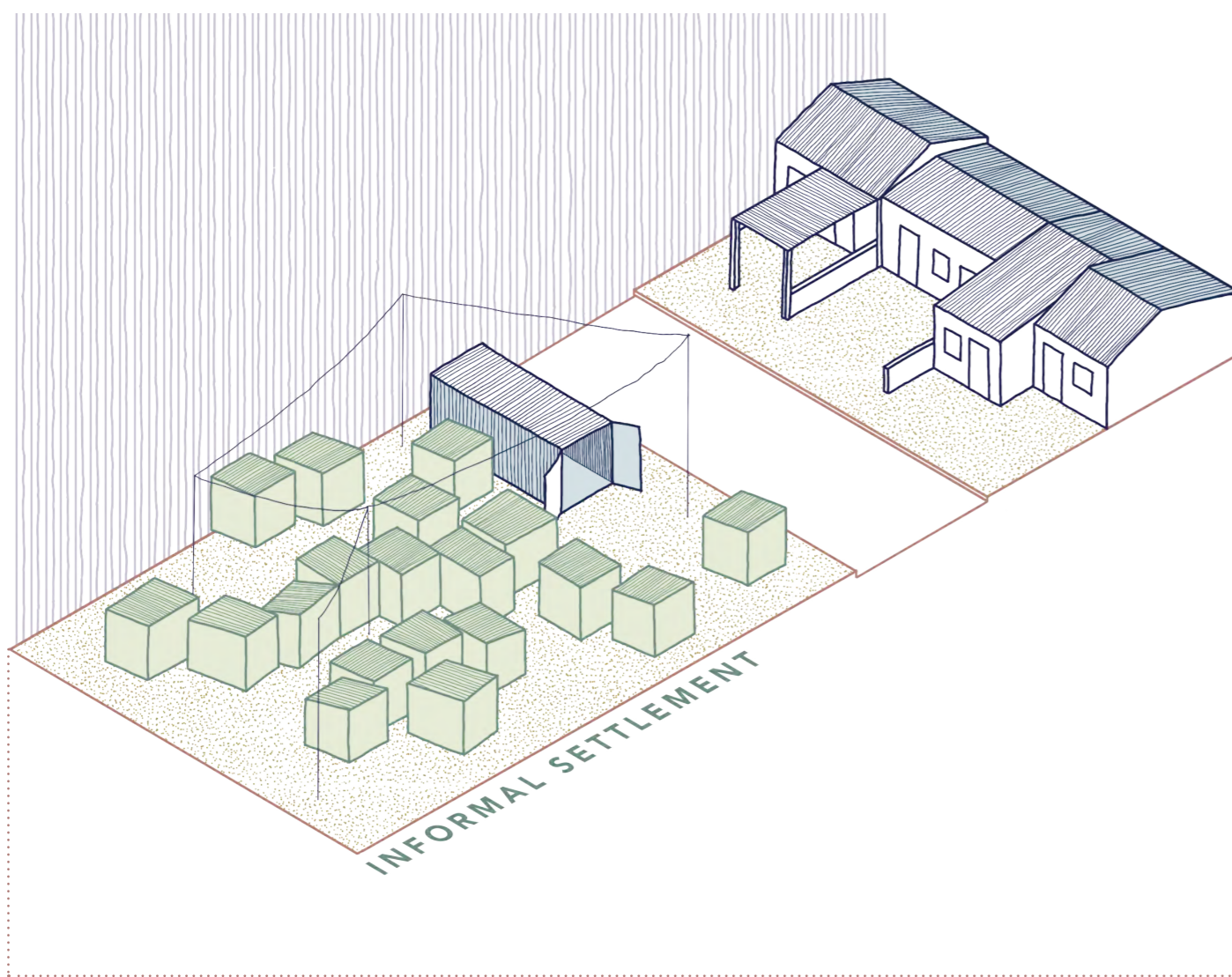


SKETCH OF TYPICAL SUBURBAN ERF ARRANGEMENT

WHY DEFORMALISE?



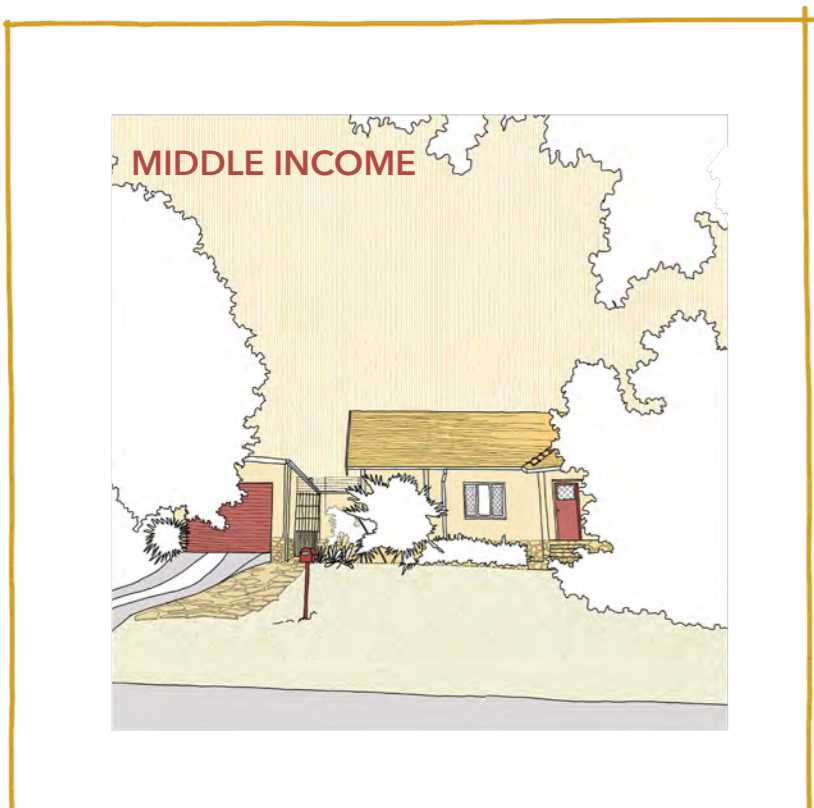
The emergence of informal "backyard shacks" in low-density residential areas as a response to the need for more densified residential areas. This is a rudimentary example of social self-governance employed by the community in response to the issue of low-density living environments.



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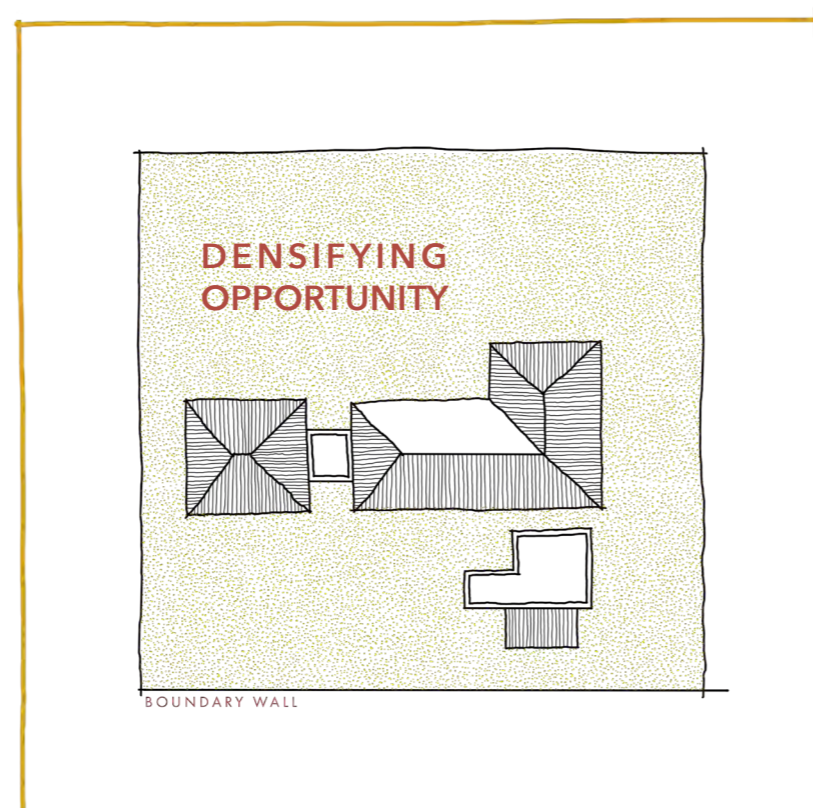


SITE SELECTION CRITERIA



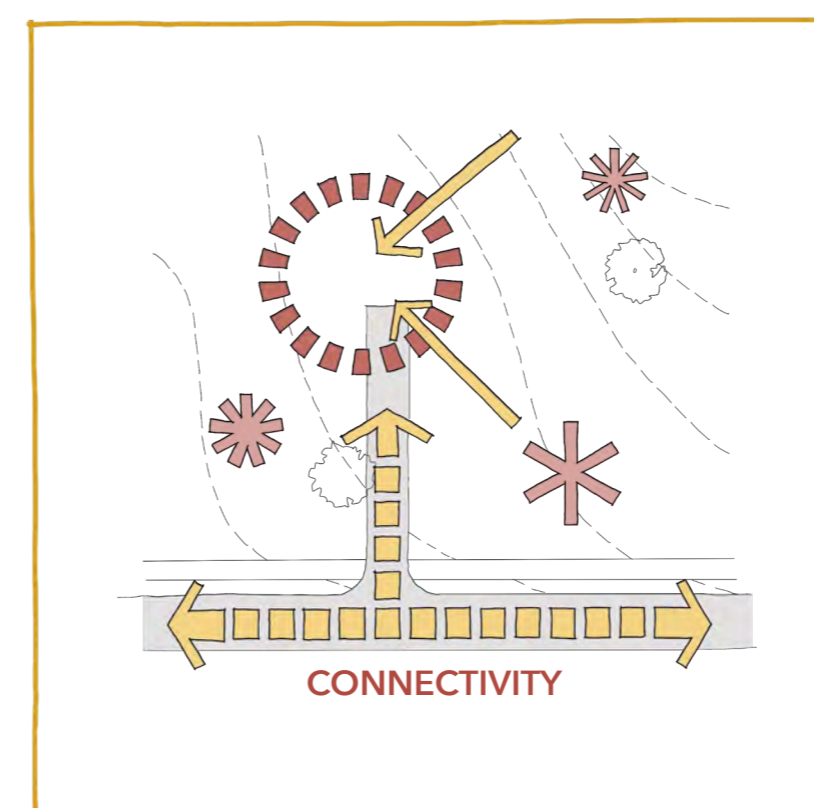
GUIDELINE 1
middle income earning neighbourhood

The location should be situated in a middle-income neighborhood predominantly inhabited by families.



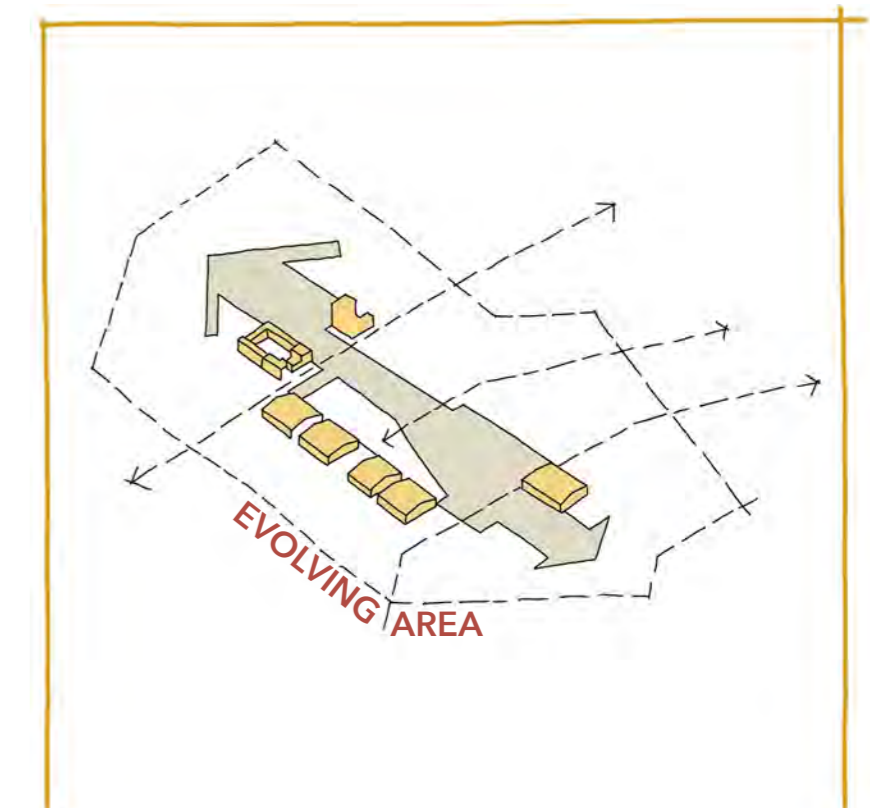
GUIDELINE 2
larger residential erven

The residential properties must have ample space around the primary single-family dwelling to accommodate up to two additional interventions. The residential blocks will be better suited if they are not fully geometric.



GUIDELINE 3
centrally located + well connected

Convenient access to transportation routes, including public transport and vehicular routes.



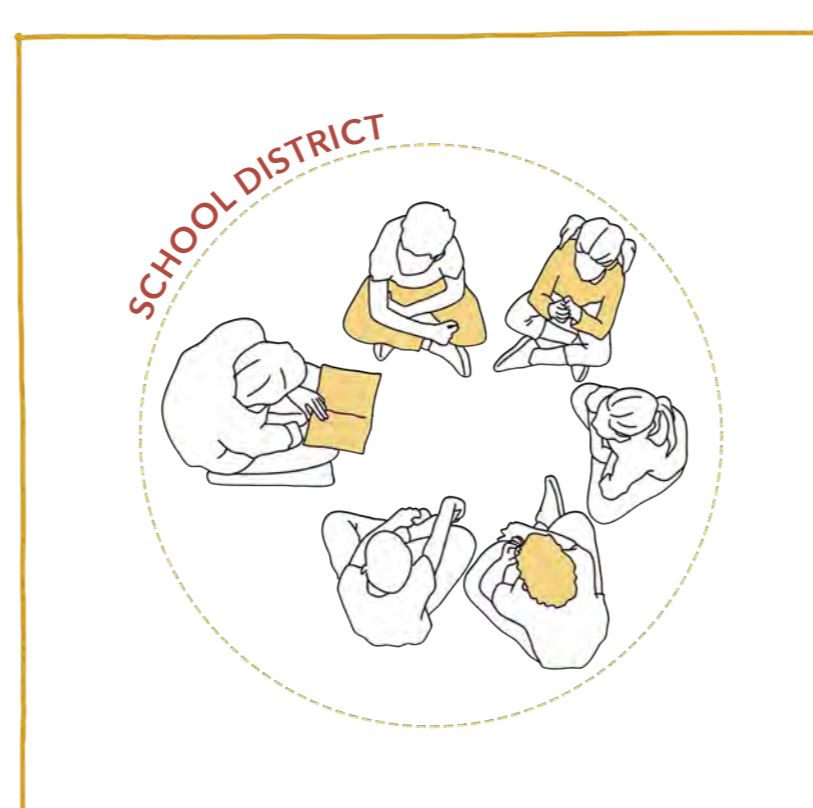
GUIDELINE 4
within an area undergoing change

Close proximity to existing / evolving commercial activities in the area.



GUIDELINE 5
medium to large residential block

The chosen residential block must be of medium to large size to facilitate the integration of a finer-grained pedestrian corridor.



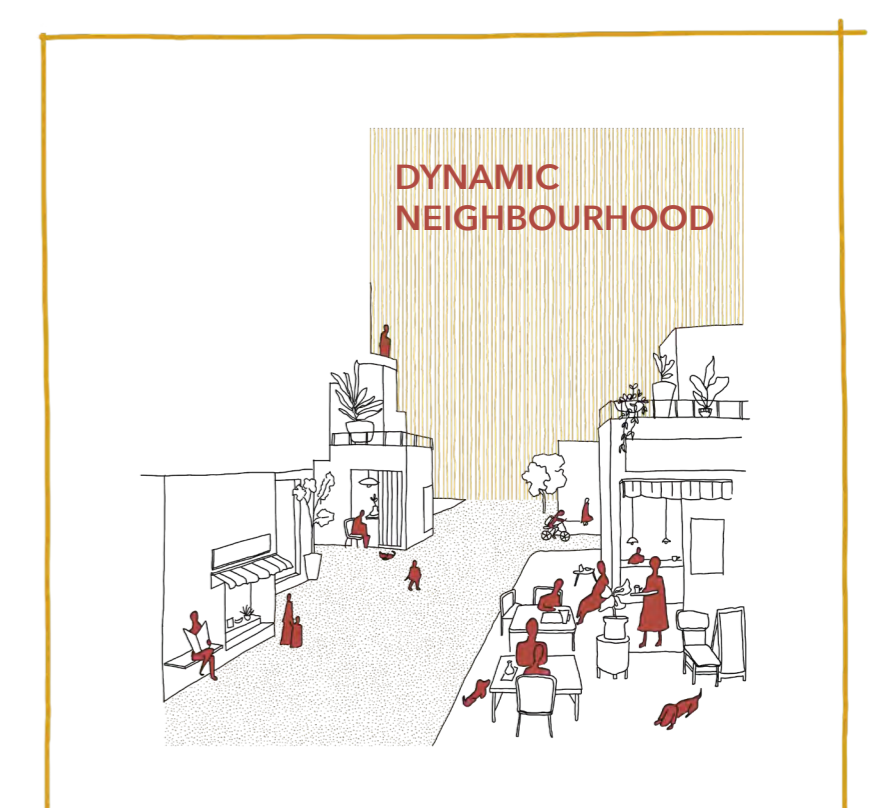
GUIDELINE 6
located within a school district

There's a perception that residing within a school district ensures safer and quieter streets, fostering a sense of community.



GUIDELINE 7
close to public green spaces

In proximity to green spaces, whether restricted or open-access. The new development should serve as a link between the existing green areas.



GUIDELINE 8
within an evolving neighbourhood

A suburb on the verge of transitioning into a mixed-use area, ripe for new ways of development.