

RECONTEXTUALIZING

To achieve a successful revitalization of the building we consider it important to start with two important values. Firstly, we considered an integrative approach that accounts for both the building's scale and the neighbourhood context. Understanding the intricate relationships between the building's scale and the larger urban fabric was crucial for creating a harmonious and seamless intervention. Secondly, a robust sustainability plan was essential. This plan needed to account for environmental, social, and economic considerations, ensuring that the proposed revitalization would be responsible and sustainable in the long term. Emphasizing environmentally friendly practices, community integration, and economic viability laid the foundation for a more resilient and enduring project. The transdisciplinary architectural approach that we followed, results in a proposal that aims to avoid the isolation of the new housing units from local life, mitigating the risks of segregation and integration failure. The two core concepts, the integrative strategy, and the holistic understanding of sustainability, are crucial in creating efficient urban connections and a community-focused project in Eibar.

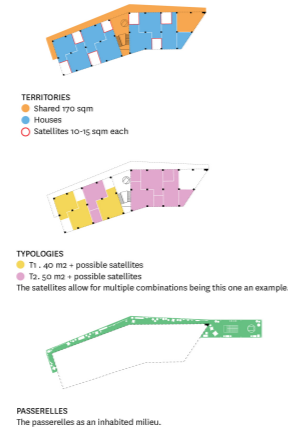
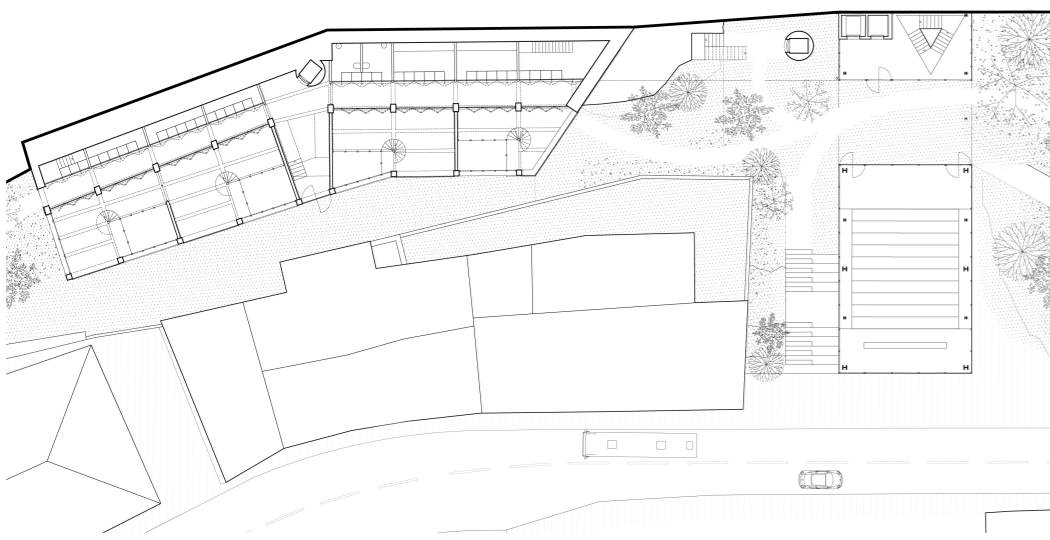
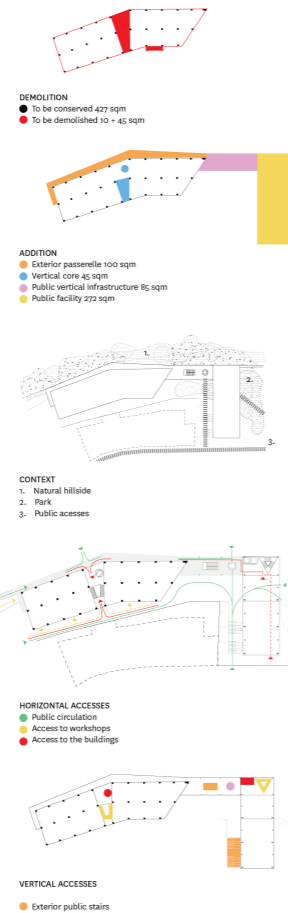
The hinge is an architectural mechanism which allows things to unfold being at the same time in a fixed position. The aim of our proposal was exactly that: to generate an architectural and topographical device that despite being rooted in the ground, generates folds which allow us to solve the multitude of broken connections we identified in the site. On the west side, the urban context, on the east side, the natural hills, evocative of almost a rural environment, and in the middle our abandoned building waiting for a new life, acting as a barrier between these two antagonistic realities. As we see it, only by transforming a barrier into a porous device, vertically and horizontally, can we revert this situation.

ADAPTATION OF THE BUILDING

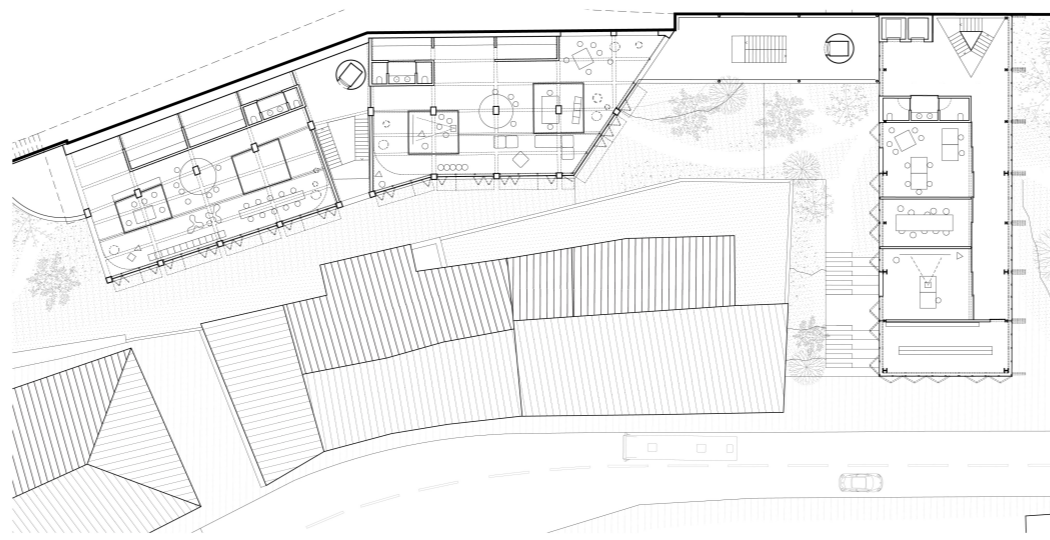
The concrete structure of the AIBE building is maintained and all the non-bearing external and internal walls are removed, serving the grid of columns as the base for the design. The fragmented vertical distribution system of the existing building is replaced by a new single one in the middle, connecting all floors, one that not only facilitates access and circulation but also acts as an effective collective space.

The apartments are placed strategically on the four upper floors (2nd to 5th), in order to receive ample natural light from both longitudinal facades. This design choice promotes cross-ventilation, reducing the overall energy demand of the building. New facades are proposed at all sides of the building, offering an adaptable envelope with foldable panels, that achieves maximum lighting, while providing the necessary shading when needed.

The revitalization strategy focuses on orienting the building towards the natural hill, transforming it into a vivid facade, by adding an exterior passarelle, which gives access to all the apartments and serves as a spacious intermediated communal space. It can be enclosed with foldable panels during winter, maximizing its usability throughout the year, or totally opened on sunny days.



THE HINGE a topographical device



MIXED-USE NEIGHBOURHOODS

We place a strong emphasis on integrating diverse uses within our intervention areas, fostering a vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood that promotes social sustainability and positively impacts the entire city. We have strategically combined housing with public, commercial, cultural, community, and educational spaces to create a dynamic and interconnected environment. On the ground floor, we propose flexible commercial spaces that can serve as workshops or adapt to emerging needs. These spaces can be leased to the residents of the building or opened to the public, generating income for the building's maintenance costs. This unique combination of public housing and commercial spaces not only enables residents to work close to home but also revitalizes currently neglected streets, injecting life and activity into the city.

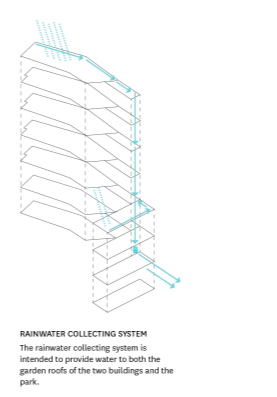
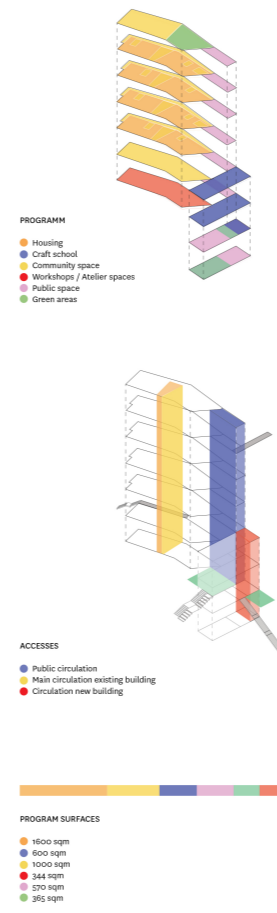
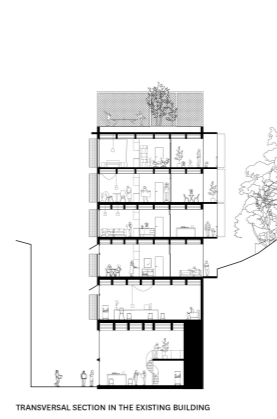
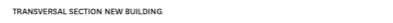
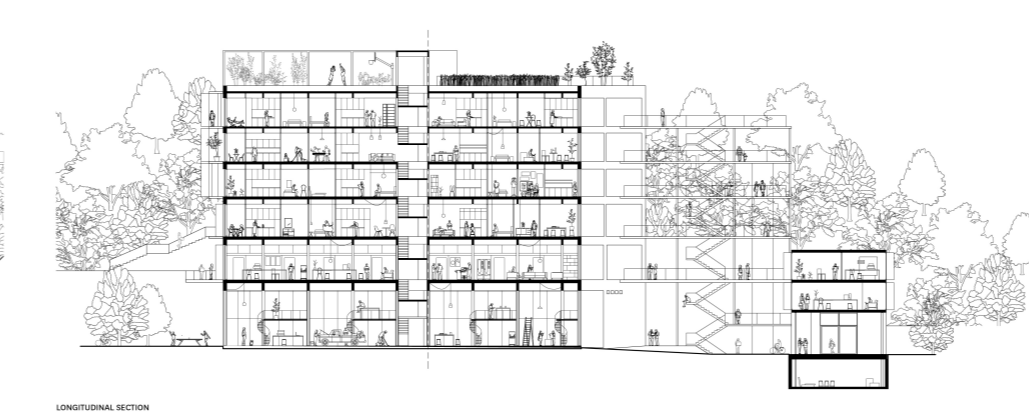
Furthermore, we propose a new public equipment that houses a school of crafts, paying homage to Eibar's rich tradition in metallurgy and craftwork. This decision not only preserves and celebrates the city's existing knowledge but also creates new opportunities for the younger generation by making these skills accessible and fostering potential employment prospects.

A VIVID PUBLIC SPACE

Creating a dynamic and inclusive public space is integral to enhancing the well-being and social interactions of the residents. The project aims to enrich the neighbourhood by adding green and public areas and making better connections with the existing streets and topography, thus, improving the quality of life for all residents. The parking lot is transformed into a park, which includes green spaces, playgrounds, and community gardens. Connectivity has been carefully considered, ensuring seamless connections between the former AIBE building, the new building and the park. The crafts school building gracefully transitions from the street level of fronta street to the level of Gizaia side street. At the ground level, an inviting open green space with a cafe/terrace establishes a direct connection with the neighbourhood. To bridge the 4-meter elevation difference, an external staircase in one side and an accessible ramp on the other are thoughtfully incorporated, ensuring easy access for all. Additionally, an exterior passage crosses the new building, seamlessly linking the AIBE building's level with the park.

CONSTRUCTION PHASES

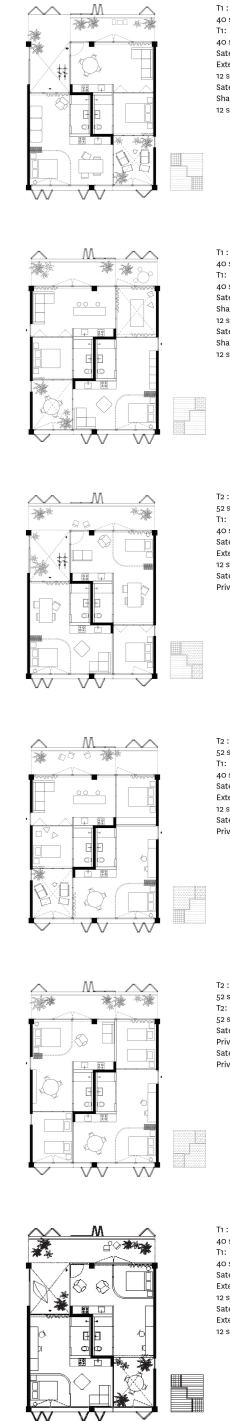
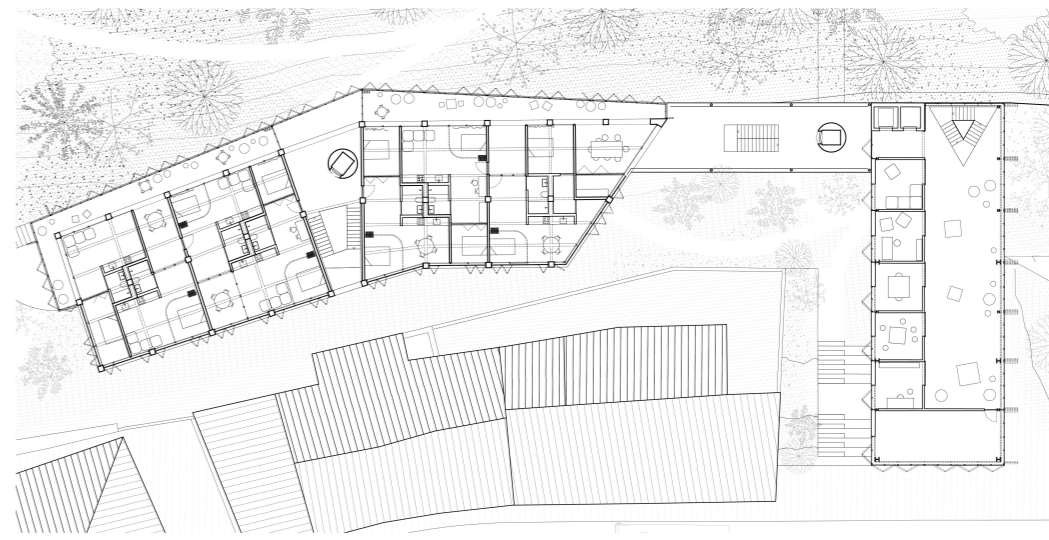
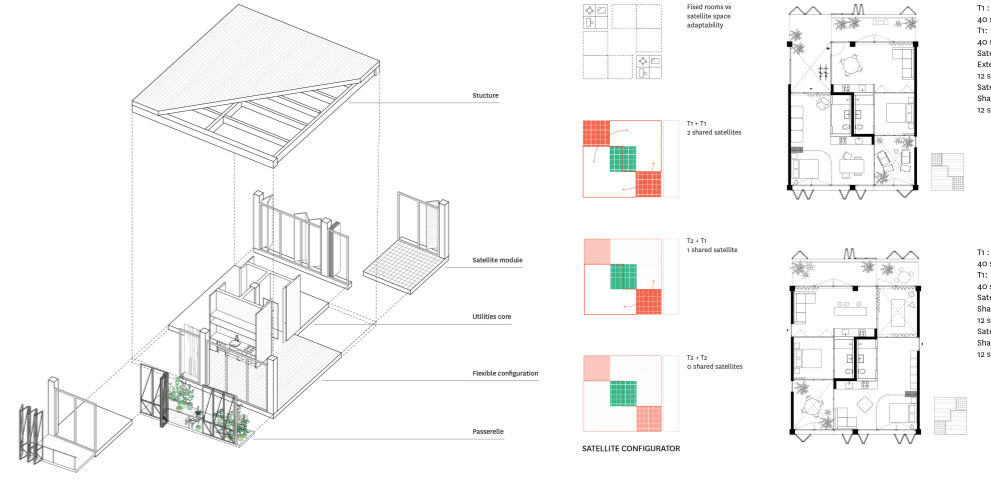
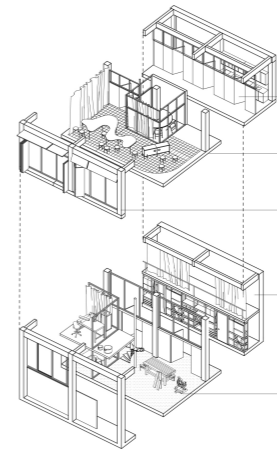
The project is to be economically sustainable can be developed in various phases. The first phase is the adaptive reuse of the AIBE building, so housing can be provided as a priority. Secondly, the new vertical circulation can be added next to the AIBE building, to improve the connectivity of the urban area and the hillside and create a second access point for the housing. Thirdly, the new public facility is added, so that public, educational and cultural uses are provided. We designed this new building also taking into account its ability to be adapted to other programs needed without compromising the desired relationship between interior and exterior on the lower levels.



THE HINGE a topographical device

DIFFERENT WAYS OF LIVING

The dwellings are designed with a system that offers flexibility, providing the residents with numerous opportunities to use their living spaces differently. By emphasizing community engagement, the design incorporates a seamless integration of private and communal areas, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging shared activities among residents. At the heart of each apartment, a central core is established, housing the wet areas -bathrooms and kitchens. This strategic placement grants adaptability and freedom in arranging the remaining space according to individual preferences and needs. Additionally, satellite rooms are strategically positioned between private apartments, serving multiple purposes. These spaces add porosity to the proposal, acting as semi-open, shared spaces if wished by the inhabitants. They have the ability to connect two apartments, providing a common ground for a cosy shared living or working room or any other need. If not, these spaces can be autonomous rooms that function as standalone units, ideal for accommodating guests or supplementing an apartment in need of extra space.



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