

Dublin School of Architecture, DIT, Ireland

HOUSING REGENERATION STRATEGIES DIT student projects for Waterford City, Ireland

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Waterford is Ireland's 5th largest city and is located in the south-east of the country. Founding by the Vikings it is Ireland's oldest city and currently has a population of 66,000 with over 80,000 within a 15km radius.

Though the city has suffered population loss in the economic recession the City Development Plan has the following objectives:

- Provision for a population increase of 30,000 people (57%) by 2020
- Investment for 12,800 new jobs (46% growth) by 2020
- 11,500 new dwellings both north and south of the river.

The design studio for the 4th and 5th Year Architecture Courses at DSA / DIT in 2015 was set in the city around the theme of *Working Life*. These housing projects are examples of the 4th Year Architectural Studio in Semester.

The three sites chosen for the students' housing projects had varied characteristics from that of a wide open river-side aspect to a tight, constrained, sloping urban context.

Students were asked to design mixed housing schemes for a variety of users and to explore how their proposals could help in the regeneration of the neighbourhoods around the sites. Each site was designated for a different demographic group and had to accommodate social and/or commercial usage as follows:

SITE A – North Quays
Young and retired couples (20% social and affordable) and a gymnasium

SITE B – Exchange Street
Families and retired Couples (20% social and affordable) and a supermarket

SITE C – Urban Backlands
Students and families (20% social and affordable) and a crèche

In addition the students' proposals had to be sustainable - economically, socially and environmentally, incorporate group spaces to foster interaction of the residents, comply with the principles of Universal Design and be made from a timber structure.

The student groups on each site also contributed to the Oikonet Habitat Regeneration Strategies, Housing Systems and Threshold Matters Work.

Staff: Peter Crowley, Patrick Flynn, Emma Geoghegan, Paul Kelly (Module Coordinator), Helen Lamb, Jim Roche.

Students: Orla O’ Donnell, Jim Ward, Jamie Flynn, Shelly Ann O’ Dea, Jarek Adamczuk, Alice Clarke, Mark Redmond, Nigel Holmes, David Gondry, Andrew Sterritt, Ailbhe Walsh.



Waterford City



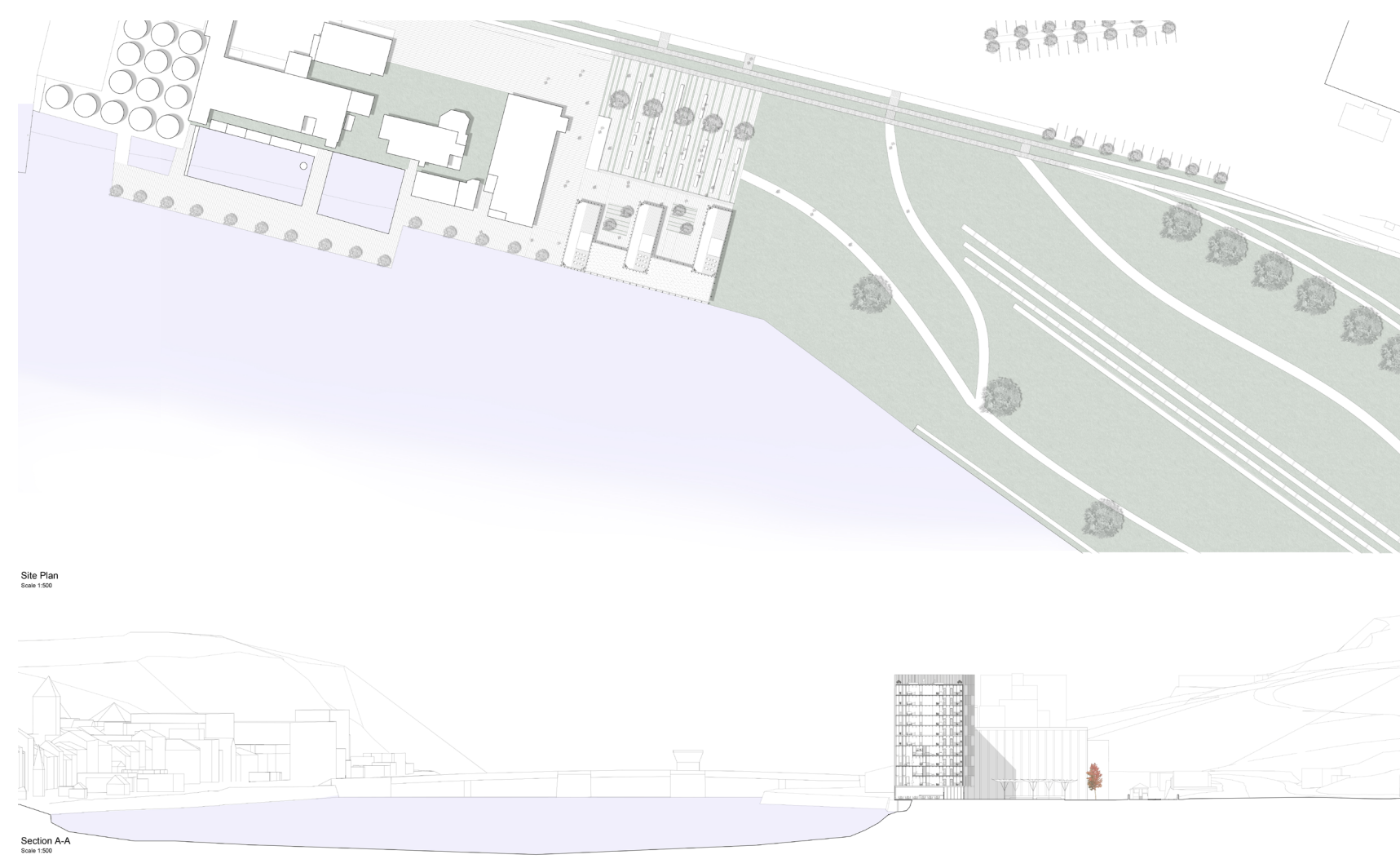
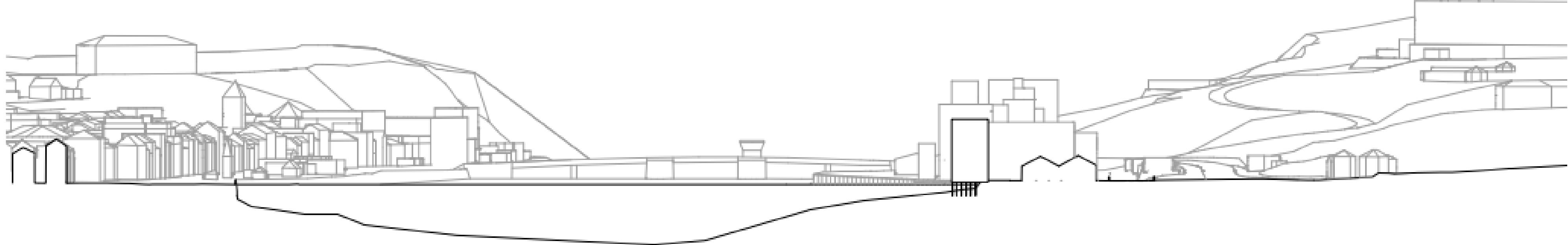
SITE A – North Quays
Young and retired couples (20% social and affordable) and a gymnasium



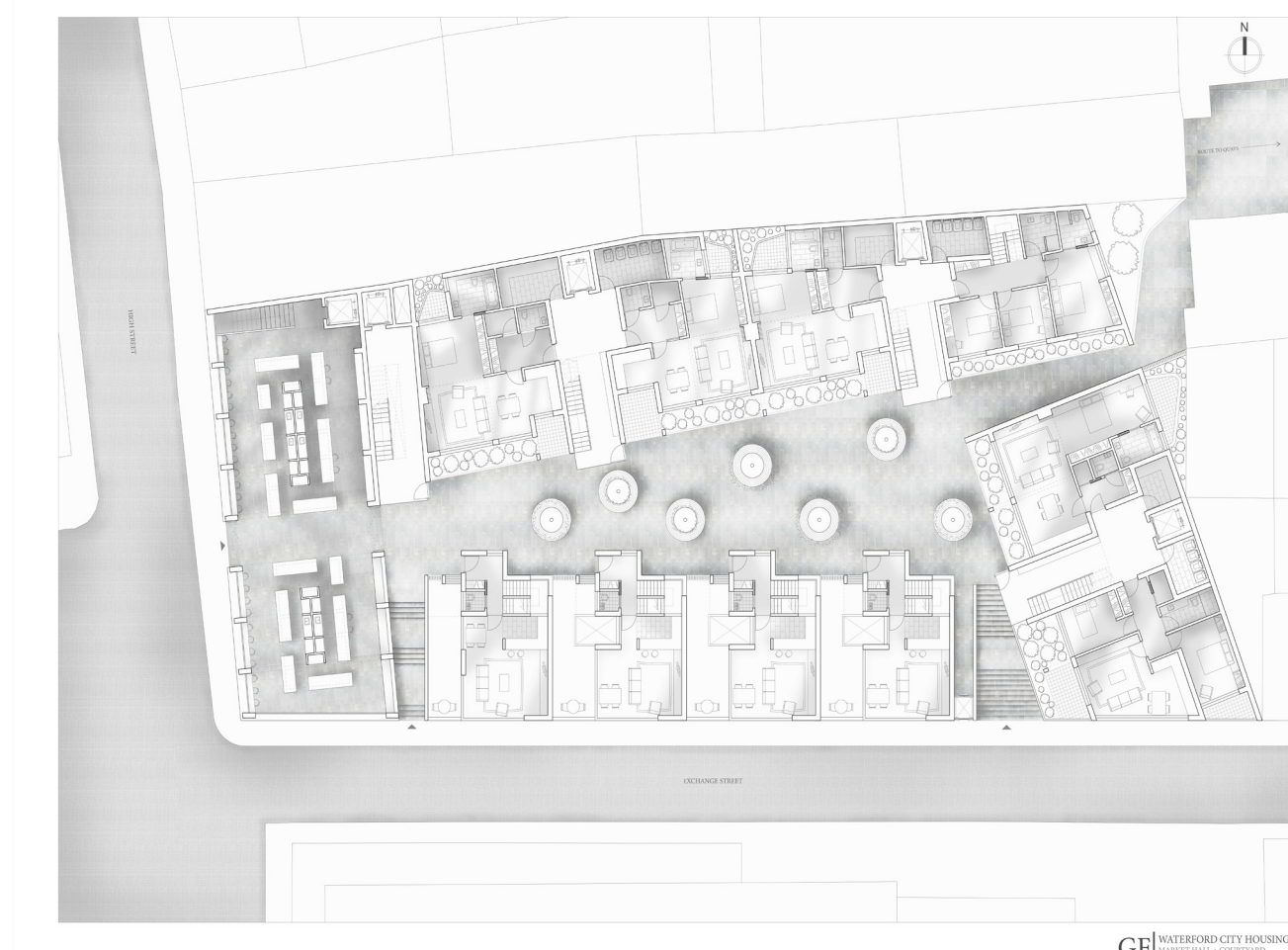
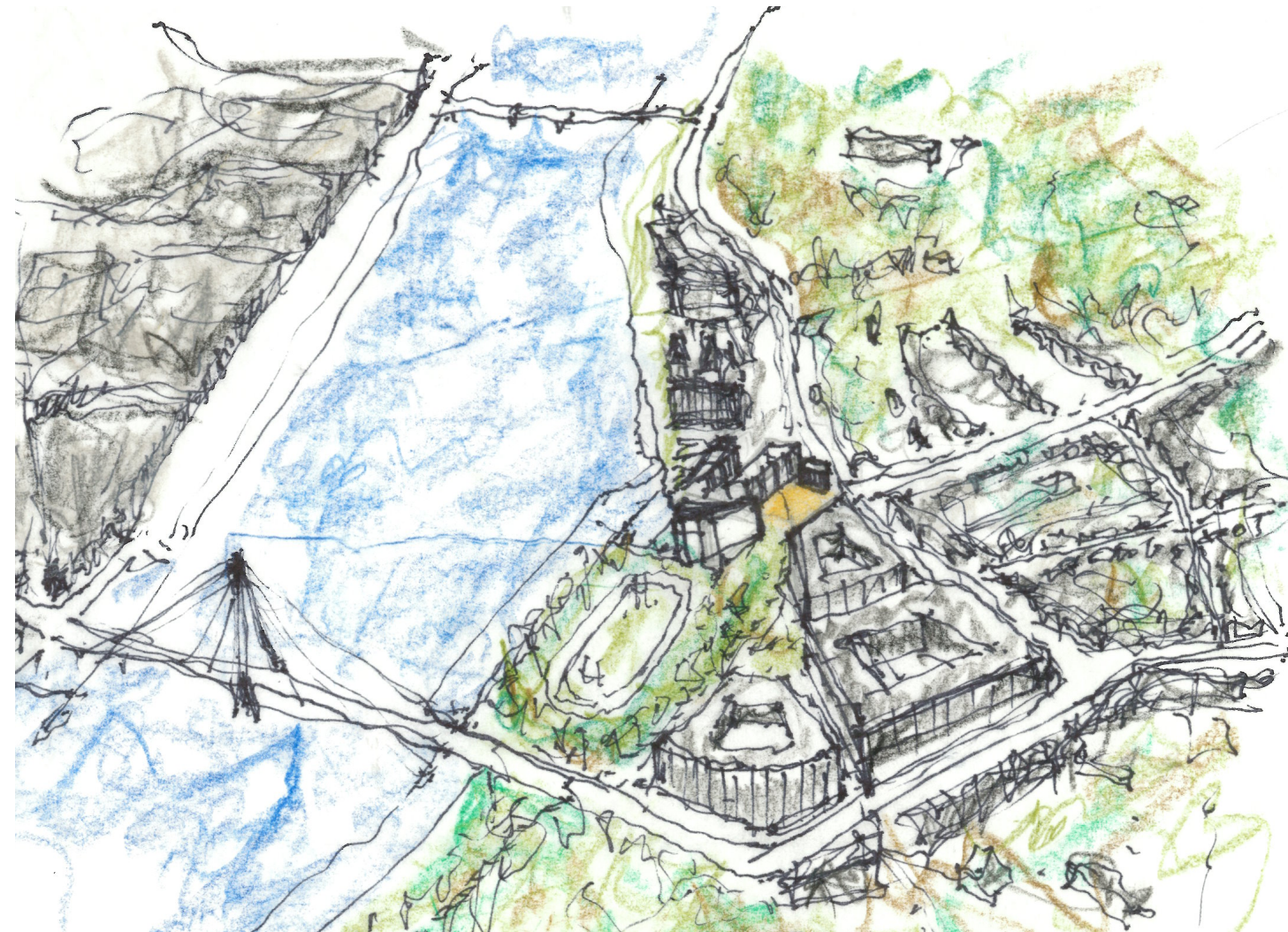
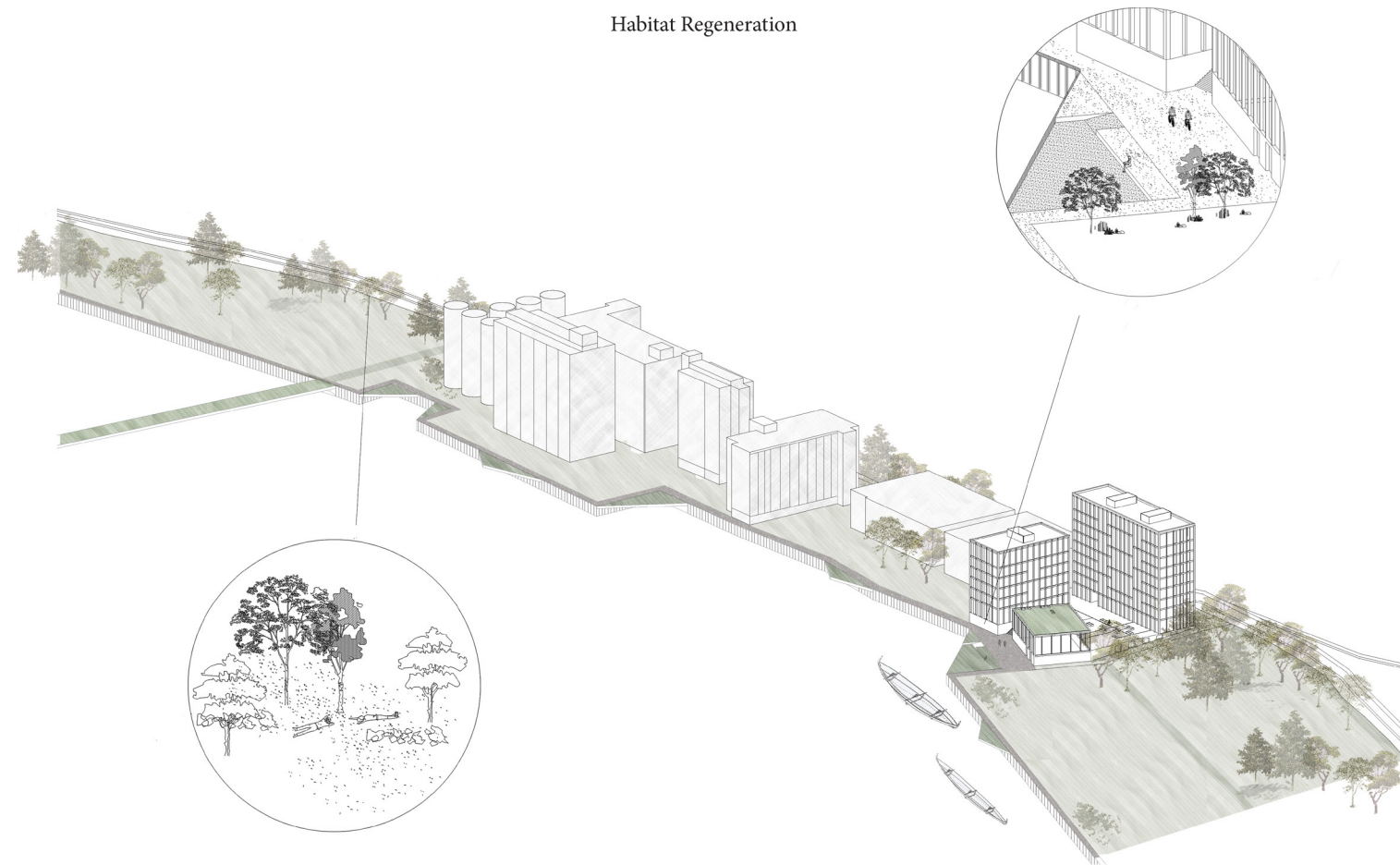
SITE B – Exchange Street
Families and retired Couples (20% social and affordable) and a supermarket



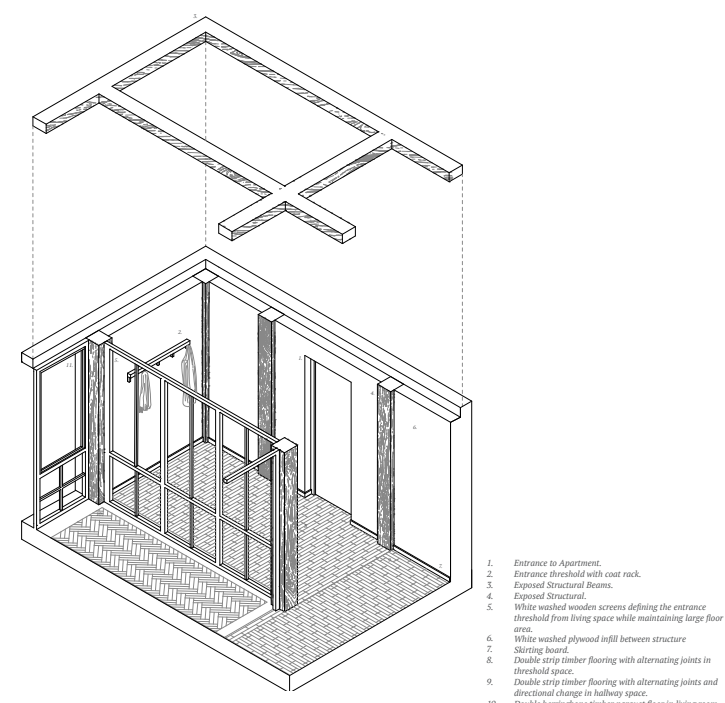
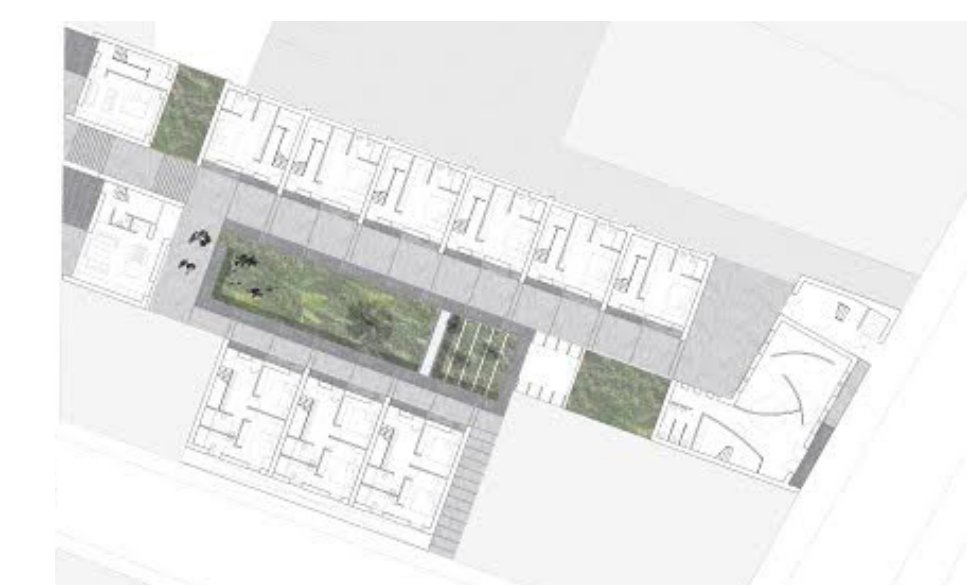
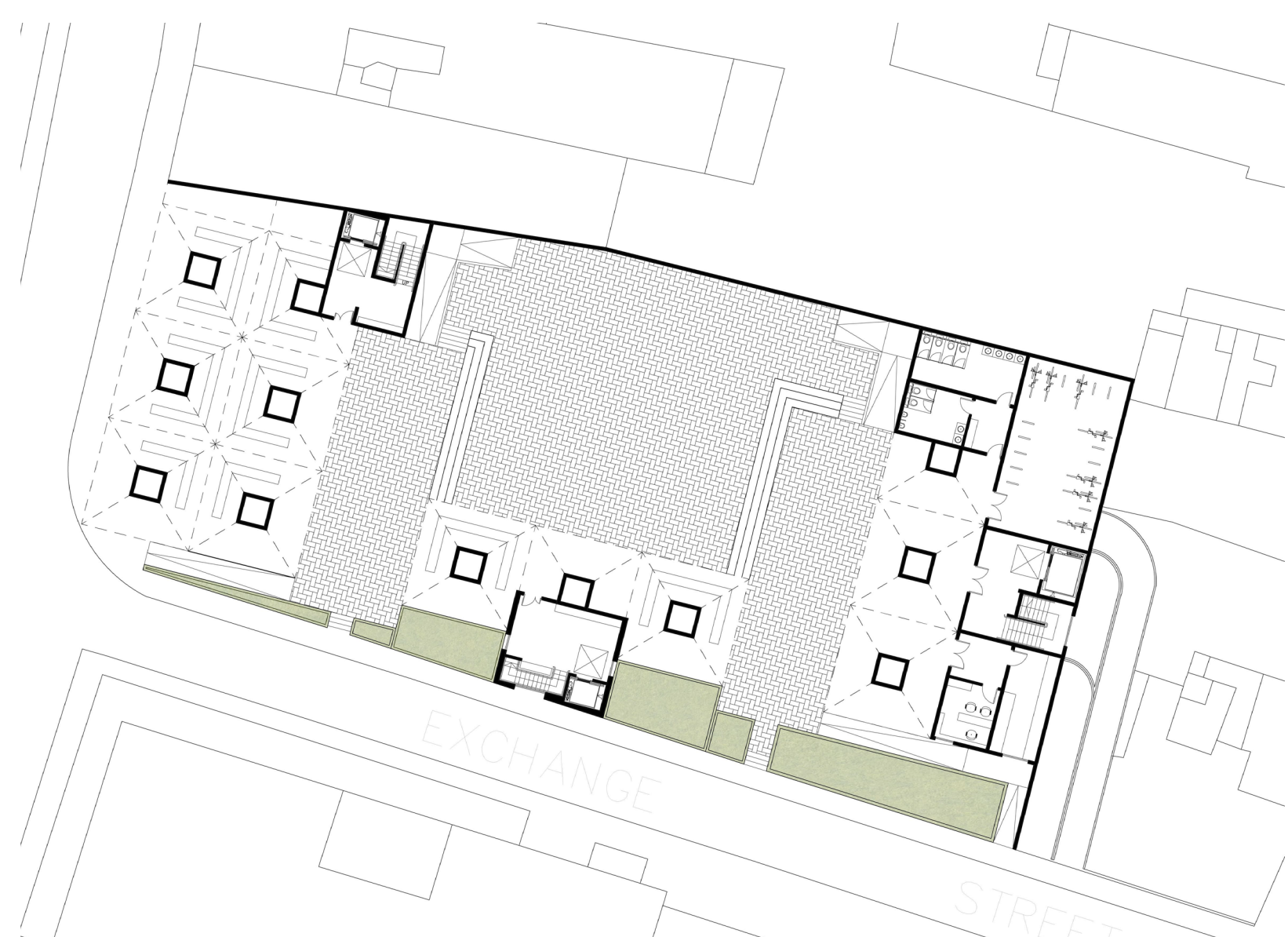
SITE C – Urban Backlands
Students and families (20% social and affordable) and a crèche



The location of the site is on the North side of Waterford City along the river Suir. At present, this side of the quays exists as an enclosed collection of dilapidated, industrial large scale buildings built from concrete mainly, along with steel silo units which are no longer in use, and a large open concrete wharf. The Habitat Regeneration Strategy proposes two new pedestrian bridges connecting the main side of the city across the river. Articulating the site's boundary to be stripped back allows the north side a flowing connection to a landscaped park along the wharf for the north side of the city.



Each unit has a private terrace offering the residents the feeling of an isolated house with a garden in a building of moderate density in an urban centre. The apartments have a primary structure of column and beam, secondary structure of external load bearing walls and the tertiary structure of CLT panels. Located off the main core in each apartment are the bedrooms, kitchen and studies. For the north faced circulation space, a semi-public concept is proposed where the circulation space through spatial organisation can perform as both circulation and informal areas to the apartments. There are a number of voids that allow daylight to filter through while also acting as a greenhouse making it comfortable throughout the year. There is a high degree of flexibility for individual development, the users needs and future changes within these apartments and semi-public spaces.



The threshold experience in this housing scheme was an exploration of the layering and thickness of the wall and our reaction to the issue of boundary. The apartments consist of CLT construction wrapped in a brick screen. The entrance conditions throughout the project are pushed within the envelope, so one would pass through the threshold of the screen before entering the building. Various spaces within the scheme are explored through screening and there are active degrees of privacy and accessibility as well as occupation within these thresholds.