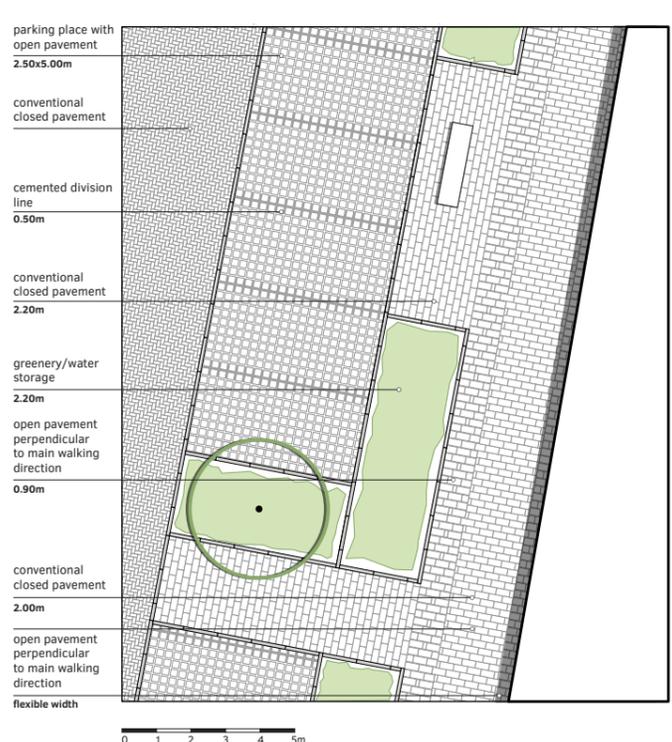
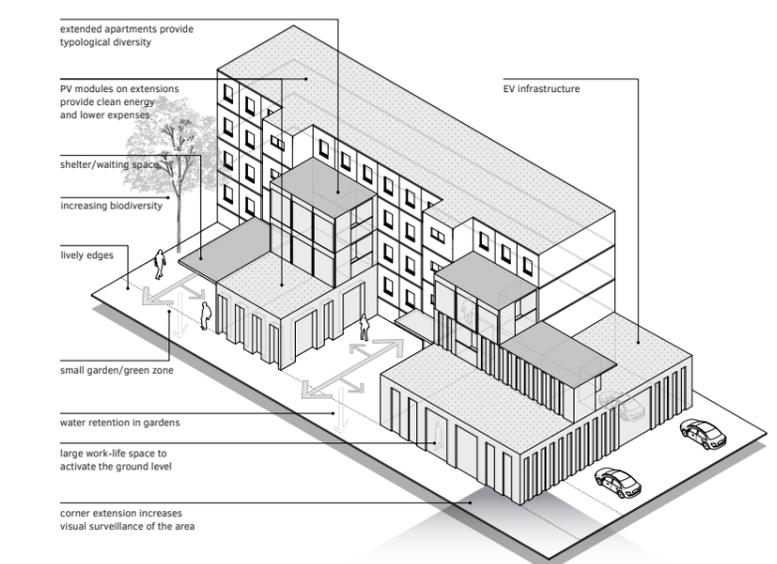
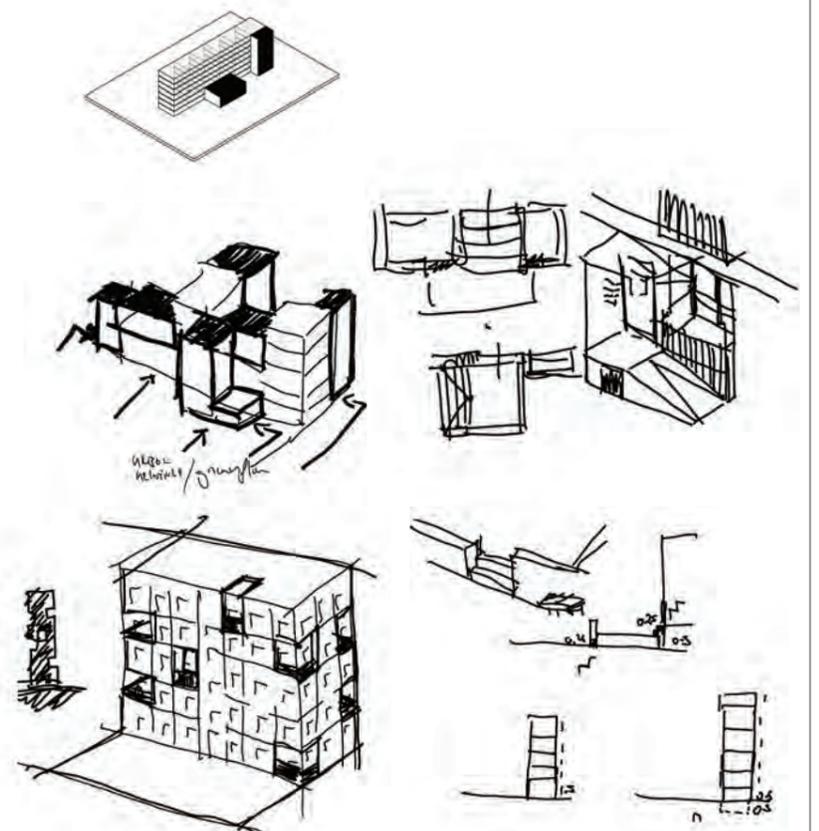
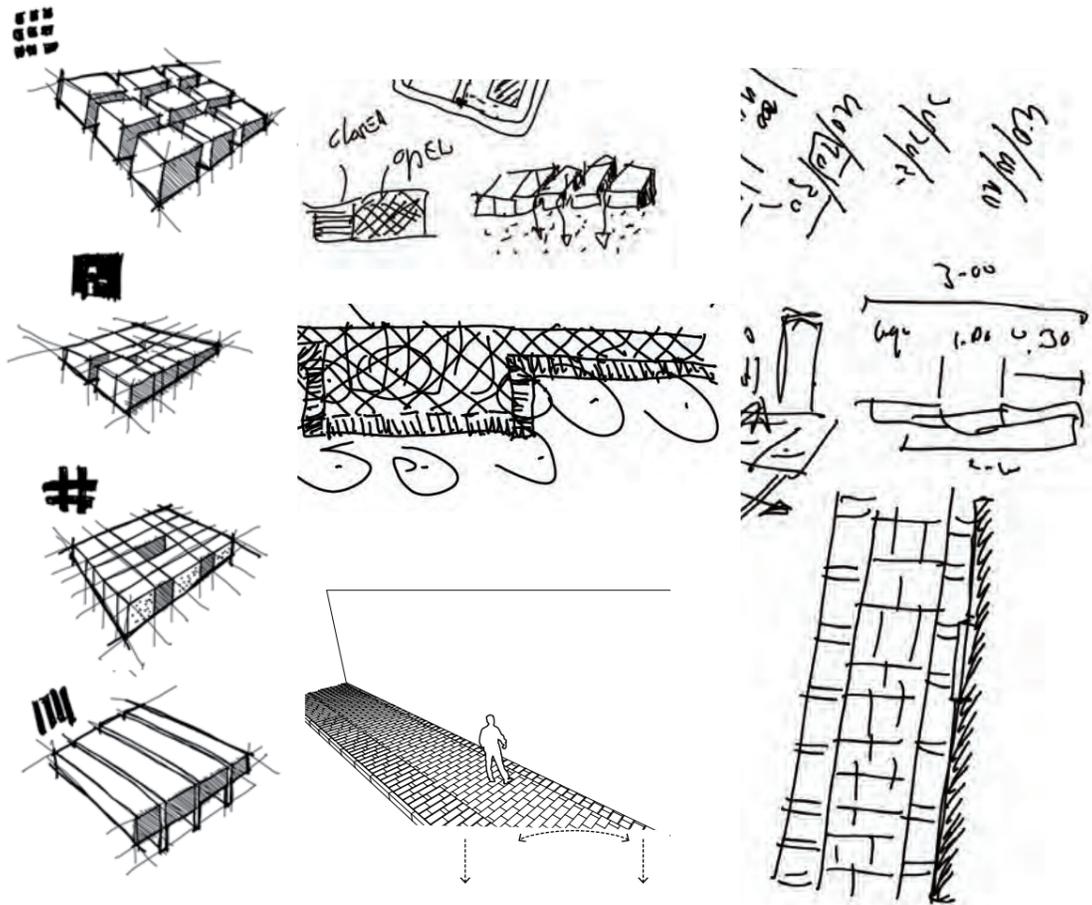




Exploring the Dialectic of Epistemic Reciprocity

The reflection presented in this paper deals with the oppositional interplay between details and totality; large visions and tiny details; structural decisions and local details. This dialectic between the details and their totality can be couched in epistemic terms. Between the two opposites, an emergent effect of “epistemic reciprocity” occurs. Thinking in-between details and totality engenders a purposive co-evolution between them. All elements of a given proposal can be made to cohabitate a new ontological plane – a kind of panoramic vision in which details acquire the same significance as totalities. Not every detail is useful in every stage of the process. Dealing with totalities and details can be done in such a way that different scales of a given proposal reciprocally support each other. Knowledge from one level triggers insights on adjacent levels. Prudently switching between detail and totality enables these moments of “epistemic reciprocity”. The movement of zooming in and out on an idea is not merely useful for defining details but is indispensable for developing parallel tracks of



Knowledge production is not confined to fact-finding but can consist in other forms of insight. These insights are enabled through systematic design experimentation unfolding at multiple levels in parallel. This parallel development is a way to bring detail and totality together in ways that fit a situation. Yet, thoughtful detailing adds – at its own scale level – coherence and intelligible meaning to the totality. Designing, then, develops the many scale levels of a future world in parallel. Overall design ideas (totalities) intersect on user interfaces (details), creating insights that could not be obtained without a multi-level, conceptual process of making.