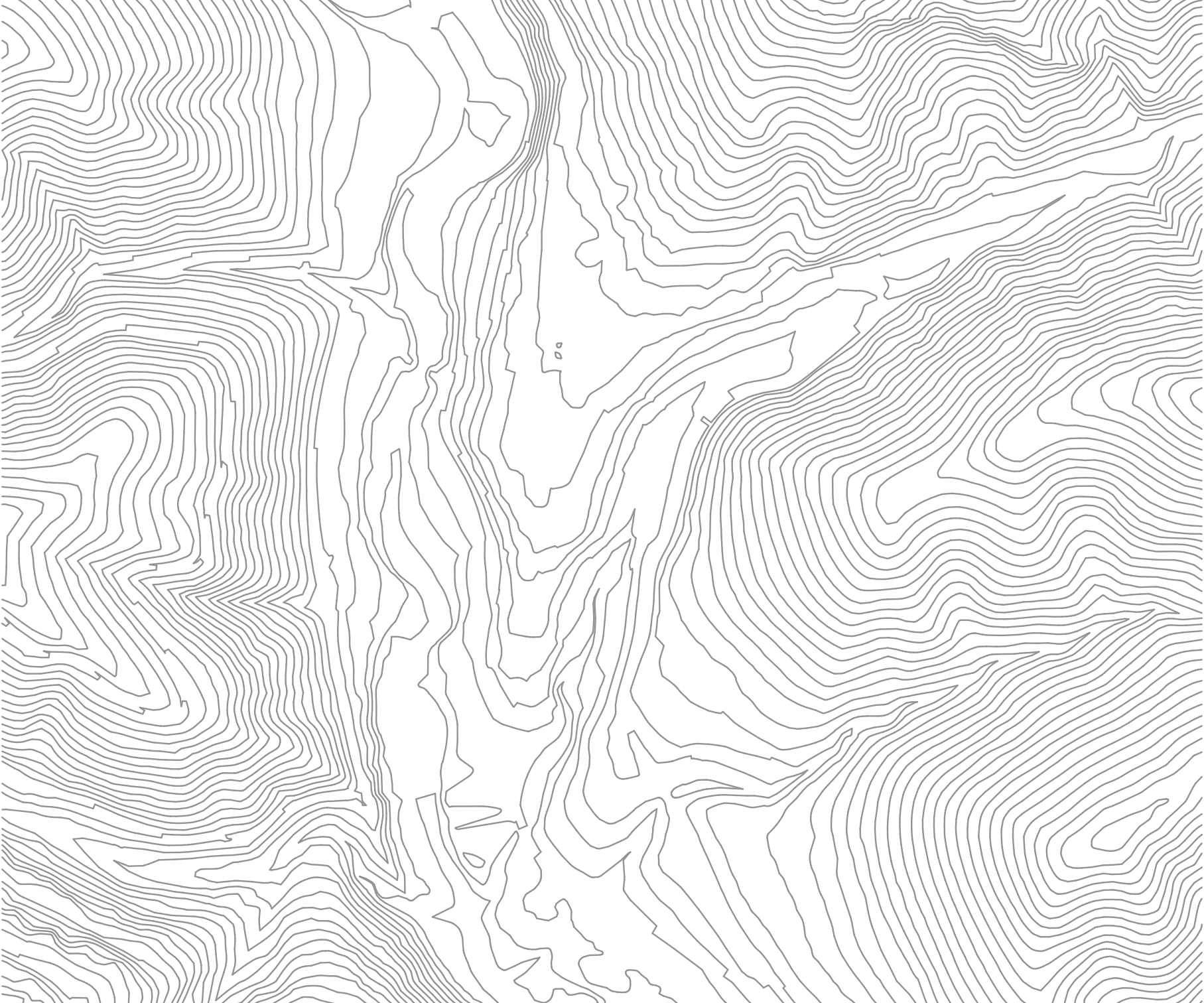




Who cares about Ansó?

Ecologies of Care in the Spanish Pyrenees
Bent Fromke

Who cares about
Ansó?
Part I
Analysis



2024 - 2025

"Who care about Ansó?
Ecologies of Care
in the Spanish Pyreneese"

Master Thesis |
Design Studio "Rural studio:
Supporting mountain communities"

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Abstract

In my master’s thesis, I analyze the Spanish village of Ansó through the lens of care—more specifically, care work. I propose a categorization of five types of care work, which constitute the *Ecologies of Care*: professional, domestic, repair, ecological, and civic care.

These form a network of tasks that overlap and are interdependent, providing the foundation for and sustaining village life in Ansó. These tasks are often invisible, taken for granted, and performed in isolation.

This *marginalization of care work* prompted research into infrastructure that could reverse this trend, eventually informing my design proposal: *a toolbox of 10 interventions* aimed at making care work visible and prompting its communalization.

They range from practical solutions—such as a fountain to assist with cleaning (#002)—to more abstract ideas, such as a system for water reuse (#008).

The proposal also includes an intergenerational day care center (#009) and a repair workshop (#010) that provides indoor space.

These interventions form a scalable and adaptable network of care infrastructure. Furthermore, *they are designed with ease of assembly, cleaning, and repair in mind.*

The village of Ansó in the northern Pyrenees faces a similar fate as the general rural areas in Spain: heavy depopulation and a deindustrialisation that left only agriculture and tourism as viable economies.

During my one week of field work in Ansó, surprisingly, I found myself observing a different economy: a web of activities maintaining, cleaning, repairing and generally caring for the village life – one could see traces of care work being done all around Ansó. These observation prompted this essay, analysing the rural context through the lens of care work. We see that care is a fundamental, yet marginalised web of activities. Talking about rural decline and seeing the challenges Ansó faces, we have to acknowledge that this Ecology of Care is the foundation on which all economic and social activity happens. Once this foundation is eroded it is hard to recover.





1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Ansó lies in northern Aragon, close to the French border, inside a valley of the Pyrenees. It is a historically significant place with its own contemporary problems. While Ansó has as of 2022 about 400 inhabitants, the built structure feels town-like.¹ The village is built extremely densely, with houses nearly wall-to-wall. In between, there is an uneven grid of natural stone paths that highlight the topography.

Looking up from the river, the compact village seems to gather on top of a hill, accessed by steep paths. On a typical November day, one might only see a few inhabitants passing by, and here and there, a tourist taking pictures of the building heritage.

The amenities provided are not to be understated and seem surprisingly plenty: there are three shops selling food, 15 bars and restaurants (with four of them open around this time of year), two campgrounds, a pharmacy, a doctor, a nursing home, a school, two museums, a town hall with its own gym, a library, and a meeting space.²

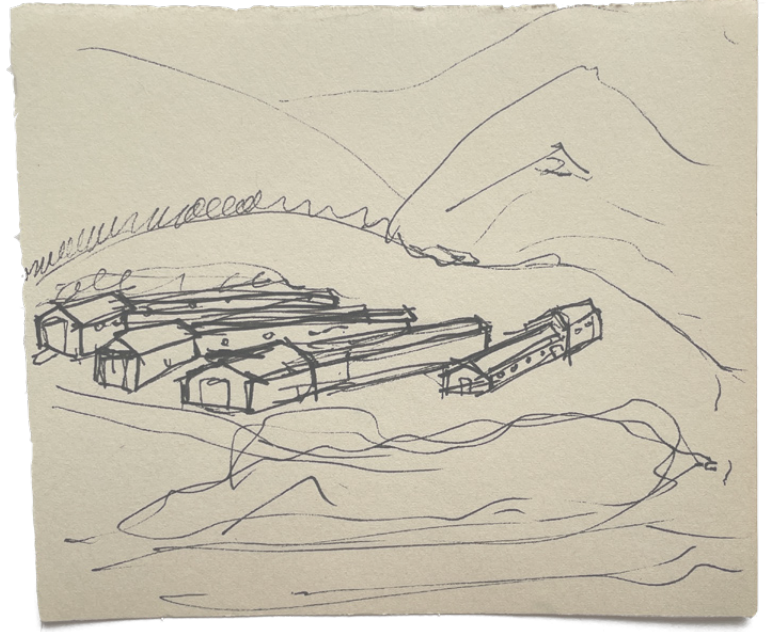
¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.28

² AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.34

With their own mayor representing the 400 inhabitants, the people of Ansó have a sense of agency, unusual for both the countryside and the city alike. During my one-week visit, I explored and observed the village, taking notes and making sketches and photographs. I also had the chance to talk to the mayor and an engaged inhabitant. While I remained an outside observer, some important issues arose during this time, which are shaping Ansó today and in the future.



The dense village structure contrasts the vast landscape surrounding Anso.



1.2 Ansó's Economies

The two backbones of Ansó's economy have shaped the valley. Sheep farming for meat production has been one of the main sources of income for the population since medieval times. The municipality of Ansó reaches far into the mountains, surrounding the village with vast spaces of grazing land.¹ Until today, the vast meadows of the valleys provide employment for a big part of the population and are very visible in the livestock and sheds surrounding the village.

With the rise of tourism, the historical value of the village and the mountainous surroundings have opened up a new perspective for many inhabitants. The sector is nowadays, apart from the local nursing home, the biggest employer.² Walking through the village, the number of holiday houses, tourist signs, and the general mise-en-place for visitors are apparent and have become a central aspect of Ansó throughout the year.

Finally, one can also find about ten businesses in the construction sector.³ While the jobs in agriculture and construction are exclusively done by men, the jobs in tourism and other services are dominated by the women of Ansó. It also has to be remarked here, that while most agricultural and construction workers are self-employed, the tourism industry is dominated by temporary and seasonal working contracts.⁴

³ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.33

⁴ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.34

view on the former woodpellet factory



¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.38

² AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.33



1.3 Seasonality

Seasonality is a key concept in understanding village life in Ansó. Historically, livestock herding has shaped the village environment. During the summer, the shepherds would be up in the mountains tending their sheep, and with the beginning of fall, they would start the long journey south to spend the winter in the lowlands.

Nowadays, the seasonal fluctuations of inhabitants and social life have taken a different form. In addition to the influx of tourists in the summer months many former inhabitants who have moved to bigger towns and cities, have kept their houses as second residences and return to Ansó on weekends or during the summer months. Therefore, the real population size of the village is hard to pinpoint – somewhere between 200 and 600, depending on the season and the weekday.

This is most apparent in the building stock. While some buildings are in bad shape and altogether abandoned, the number of holiday apartments and second residences makes up a significant portion of the building stock and has a weary impact on the village atmosphere during the off-season.

In 2011 nearly half of the buildings in Ansó were either secondary homes or vacant.¹ This is furthered by the disapproval of the remaining inhabitants who, especially during winter, suffer from the loss of village life, and as a result, the closing of shops and restaurants.

¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.39

Top 9 most popular country houses in Ansó
Sort by: Relevance

Casa Rural Paloma
Anso, Huesca
1 reviews 1 Booked 4 times
Full Rental 18 people
10 rooms 6 bathrooms
Match: Holiday cottages Anso
Parking Pets allowed WiFi free

18€
from person and night
Instant booking
Cancellation 14 days before

VIEW DEAL

Casa Turreta
Anso, Huesca
0 reviews
Full Rental 4 people
2 rooms 1 bathroom
Match: Rural houses Anso
Pets allowed

48€
from person and night
Information request
Cancellation 30 days before

Request information

El Pajar de Pierra Casa A
Anso, Huesca
0 reviews
Full Rental 10 people
5 rooms 3 bathrooms
Match: Rural houses Anso
Parking WiFi free

23€
from person and night
Information request
Cancellation 30 days before

Request information

Casa Baretón
Anso, Huesca
0 reviews
Per rooms 12 people
6 rooms 6 bathrooms
Match: Country houses Anso
Parking WiFi free

31€
from person and night
Information request
Cancellation 30 days before

Request information

Casa Mina
Anso, Huesca
0 reviews
Full Rental 4 people
2 rooms 2 bathrooms
Match: Country houses Anso
Parking WiFi free

24€
from person and night
Information request
Cancellation 30 days before

Request information



1.4. Rural Flight

Like many other examples in rural Spain, the steady loss of population since the begin of the 20th century is a major point of concern that the inhabitants of Ansó have been trying to address socially and politically. While the trend has flattened in recent years, it remains a serious issue for the development of the village. There has been a sharp decline from nearly 1500 inhabitants in 1910, but in recent years the number has been quite stable and even raising slightly.¹

Mainly, the supply of services and amenities is at stake here. The aforementioned infrastructure in Ansó is somewhat of an exception and is being justified by an active village community, but also the constant need, as many of the older residents do not have a car of their own. A further decline in population might restart the downward spiral of residents moving away and infrastructure being closed down due to lack of funding and demand.

¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.31

in this part of the village a whole block of buildings was abandoned



The second key point in this development is one of political agency. As Ansó still has its own mayor and town hall, decisions regarding infrastructure and their provision are made locally and in close contact with the inhabitants. A further decline, as seen in other rural regions of the country, will lead to consolidation with other villages into a larger county, which entails a loss of political agency and power, further putting the local infrastructure at stake. The “right to the village” (analogous to Lefebvre’s “right to the city”) is an important part of the current discussions on rural development.²

Rural flight and the loss of political agency are both downward spirals that, once set in motion, are hard to break out of and often lead to a significant decline in quality of life for the remaining inhabitants. The struggle to keep a significant population in Ansó is one of self-preservation and is at the core of the village’s development plans.

² BELINA, 2021, p.407

1.5 The Building Stock

Another issue concerning the future development of Ansó is the building stock itself. As already mentioned, many of the houses are permanently or temporarily abandoned. It is apparently not unusual for a family to leave the village but keep their house as either a second residence or a holiday apartment to rent out.

There are also known cases of property owners neglecting their houses and letting them fall into ruin. This might be to a general unwillingness to bother with the process of selling or the associated costs with refurbishment: because of the historical value and heritage designation, renovating the building stock in Ansó proves to be a challenge. The roof shape and exterior appearance are highly regulated, limiting the types of building transformations allowed.

The regulations become a real, or at least imagined, challenge for homeowners to renovate and resell their houses, leading to a certain stagnation in the housing market. There has been a clear decline in new build houses and renovations in the last 20 years.¹



¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p. 42

Ansó is faced with the paradoxical challenge that new residents have trouble finding rental housing, while a significant portion of the housing stock is either abandoned or underused.² Also the existing houses are relatively big, having to house the extended family in the past. This leads to a lack in smaller rental-apartments, while at the same time an abundance of underused houses.³

² AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022

³ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.40



2. Care

2.1 Care

The fluctuations in village life, the uncertainty of the provision of public services and the idiosyncrasies of Ansó's housing market are openly addressed problems. In their “Agenda Urbana de Ansó 2030” from 2022 the local government has outlined these issues and proposed solutions, such as diversifying the economy through remote work and taking the initiative on developing smaller rental units for themselves.¹

What I aim to offer though is a more critical look on these problems and rural development in general. While current discussions focus on very practical and immediate solutions, I want to step back and question the more underlying assumption of rural life. This perspective focuses on care as a fundamental and constituting part of village life.

While agriculture, forestry, and tourism are typically seen as the primary fields of rural economies², I want to highlight the importance of care work as both an existing pillar and a potential future for rural development. I will consider care work here as both professional work —meaning paid, institutionalized work such as that performed by doctors, teachers, and caretakers—and domestic work, such as child and elderly care carried out by relatives, which is mostly unpaid. This kind of wording is quite common and widely understood, but poses

¹ BELINA, 2021, p. 55ff

² HOLLAND, 2022



also some conceptual problems I will discuss later.³ Both types of labor are fundamental to an economy, but only one is often recognized and valued. Caroline Criado Perez, in her book 2019 *Invisible Women*, proposed an extension of the typical ways used to evaluate and talk about economic development.

For example, the GDP accounts only for the monetary exchange within a country and excludes unpaid reproductive labor. If we were to calculate unpaid housework in monetary terms, it would represent a significant economic sector.⁴ Therefore, our current understanding of economic development distorts our perception of economic power and shapes the way we discuss future development. This realization can be the starting point for a care-focused analysis for rural areas and a way to formulate development plan.

While more systemic and policy-based solutions have also been proposed⁵, I will focus here more on physical traces and infrastructure of care both for analysis and for exploring future possibilities.

2.2 Clarifications on Care

Firstly, I want to clarify the definition of *care*, as the term has different contextual meanings.¹ As it is used here, as a framework for analysis and future design proposals, I aim to explore the different implications of the concept. Therefore, a broader and more abstract definition is employed: Joan Tronto, an American feminist scholar, defines care as

“[...]a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible.”²

This definition opens up the possibility of care for non-human entities, care as a community activity, and care as an ongoing process, overcoming the typical binary of professional and domestic care.³

³ I will be exploring other types of care further in the text that might not fit within this binary and further the division between which tasks are professionalised and which not, varies significantly within cultures

⁴ PEREZ, 2019

⁵ HAUG, 2008

¹ To distinguish between the colloquial use of the term (as in healthcare or taking care) and the concept itself, that I will be talking about in depths, I am going to be marking the concept of care in italic.

² TRONTO, 1994, p.103

³ TRONTO, 1994

By going beyond the typical associations of care – such as a doctor treating a patient or a mother caring for her child – it becomes a more useful lens for understanding the social and built environment, in this case of Ansó. Tronto further emphasizes that “care is both a practice and a disposition.”⁴ – It is especially the practice of caring that I will focus on, as its traces are visible in my observations.

⁴ TRONTO, 1994, p.104



unlike the photogenic facade, the care maintaining the village stays invisible.

2.3 Care and Marginalisation

While care work is something we all do and the well-being of society generally depends on it, it is by no means equally distributed among everyone. Both formal and informal care work is (and has historically been in Europe) primarily performed by women and people of colour.¹ Furthermore, it is hard to overlook that this type of work is systemically undervalued—both financially and socially. It is part of the ideological undercurrent of our society to marginalize care and caretakers.

“Care is Gendered, Raced, Classed. [...] we notice that those who are least well off in society are disproportionately those who do the work of caring, and that the best off members of society often use their positions of superiority to pass caring work off to others.”²

The topic of care is therefore deeply entangled with ideals of social justice and equity. Calls for a focus on care work always imply a call to fight the marginalization that women and people of colour face in their everyday lives, on a structural as well as economic level.

¹ PEREZ, 2019

² TRONTO, 1994, p.112f

Since in rural areas, gender divisions are generally more pronounced^{3,4}, it is especially in this context that an investment in better care infrastructure can pave the way for a more equal and just community.

“For example, in economies for the common good such as repair cafés and upcycling centres, solidarity-based agriculture, or solidarity-based mobility concepts, which particularly benefit women.”⁵

It is no surprise, that young women Europe-wide tend to leave rural areas over-proportionally⁶, contributing to rural decline by not accepting the discriminatory structures in the countryside. This dynamic is clearly visible in Ansó. The work sphere in Ansó follows a quite traditional pattern. 44% of women are unemployed and probably delegated to housework⁷ and the jobs themselves tend to be gendered and precarious as mentioned earlier. The unusual higher share of men in the village⁸ could be explained this way.

³ KLIMKE, 2022

⁴ TUITJE, 2022

⁵ TUITJE, 2022, p.88

⁶ TUITJE, 2022

⁷ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022, p.36

⁸ 49,7 % women and 50,3% men in Ansó, compared to 50,9% and 49,1% in the national average, AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022

Traces of care can be found everywhere, like this house presenting its laundry.



Taking a constructive and forward looking position, Equitable care becomes central to rural development. Furthermore, the societal devaluation of care work has occurred alongside the disintegration of the village community.⁹ It is not far-fetched to propose the re-establishment of care work at the centre of village life as a means to reverse current trend of loss in quality

⁹ FREDERICI, 2004

2.4 Care Work in the Rural Context

Considering the debate on potential perspectives from which rural areas could benefit, I propose focusing on care work, both formal and informal. The relevance of care infrastructure is twofold.

Firstly, it can serve as a source of employment, providing jobs for local inhabitants. Secondly, it is a fundamental contributor to quality of life in the rural context. Its absence and deterioration may lead to further rural flight, while a well-established and high-quality care infrastructure can serve as a reason for former residents to return or new residents to settle.



Particularly, the type of personal and attentive care that a rural setting can offer might be an attractive factor for city dwellers when considering relocation to the countryside.^{1,2}

Women, as the main caretakers especially in the rural context, can profit the most from this focus, as they are presented in the current society often with a choice between having a career (which involves moving to the city) or remaining in their traditionally prescribed role.

“There are two possibilities for [...] women in the sexual division of labor that neoliberal orders continue to depend upon and reproduce. Either women align their own conduct with this neoliberal truth by focusing on their own marketability and abandoning social reproduction completely, in which case the world becomes uninhabitable or women occupy their old place as unacknowledged props and supplements to masculinist liberal subjects as provisioners of care for others in households, neighbourhoods, schools and workplaces.”³

Without overcoming this dichotomy, rural decline might seem inevitable. While this effort involves attracting promising job opportunities to the countryside, more importantly we should distribute social reproduction (care) more equally – between genders but also between individuals and their community. The task of rural development becomes creating an environment, where women who don't want to confine to the traditional role assigned to them, to leave the countryside all together.



¹ BELINA, 2021

² EL NOUR et al., 2015

³ DUNGY, KRINGS, 2024



3. Ecologies of Care

Care can be interpreted in multiple ways. Traditionally, it includes all kinds of domestic work, as well as child, elderly, and healthcare – both paid and unpaid.

Following Tronto's definition, we can expand the concept to encompass a much wider spectrum of care work. By considering care outside the human realm, we can think about care practices for the the build and natural environment. Additionally, Tronto encourages us to consider care as neither "dyadic nor individualistic."¹

This means that we also extend care to groups and even entire societies of people. In this context, the topics of neighbourhood solidarity, mutual aid, and community organizing come to mind.

Confronted with these different aspects of village life, I want to propose the notion of an "ecology" here to conceptualize the relationship between the different types of care. This concept was introduced by a European artist collective, the "Care Ecologies Group," in 2023.

¹ TRONTO, 1994

They suggest that care

“demands paying attention to the maintenance and repair work necessary so that ‘we’ – bodies, organisms, objects, and materials – ‘can live [...] as well as possible.’”²

When analysing social configurations, Ecologies of Care become a helpful metaphor to understand the connections and interdependencies between the different aspects of care.

² CARE ECOLOGIES GROUP, 2022



For example, formal and informal care constantly interact when family members and nurses collaborate to develop solutions for eldercare. Looking at the two spheres separately, as is often done, misses important aspects of the care being provided.³ The practices of care always mean

“[...] being part of a network (like mycelium, like roots) – sometimes we touch, sometimes we thread through and with each other’s processes, and sometimes I’m not sure how we can cross the imposed divides of ‘discipline.’”⁴

It is therefore important to consider that, while I am focusing here on five distinct perspectives of care, they exist within a broader ecology, interconnected and interdependent.

³ BOLBY, MCKIE, 2018

⁴ CARE ECOLOGIES GROUP, 2022





professional care

Ansó has a functioning system of health- and child-care in place, provided by the municipality. There is a doctor, a pharmacy, and a primary school. Furthermore, the town hall provides a recreational room for children to spend their free time, a music school, and the library also offers services directed at children.

These services are crucial to the lives of the inhabitants. For example, many older people, who are unable to drive to other villages, rely on the local healthcare system. This kind of provisions, is indeed a luxury which many other villages in Spain don't have.

But still for more specialised healthcare and middle school or higher education, Ansó's inhabitants are forced to visit the city of Jaca 50 km away. This is a common occurrence in the Spanish countryside: Rural dwellers in Aragon need to travel about 25 km to reach a health clinic or supermarket – leading to one of the worst access to medical care in Europe.¹

Austerity measures after the 2008 financial crisis, have led to a to significant cuts in healthcare funding² and the future of Ansó's facilities is depended on further support from the regional government and a constant population in the village.

Another issue the remaining care infrastructure in rural areas is facing, is a lack of specialised workers as they are looking for better employment abroad³ or in cities and the remoteness of rural areas can lead to unfavourable working conditions.⁴ "long hours, large patient lists, solitude, and lack of peers'

¹ ALLOZA, 2021

² LEGIDO-QUINGLEY, 2013

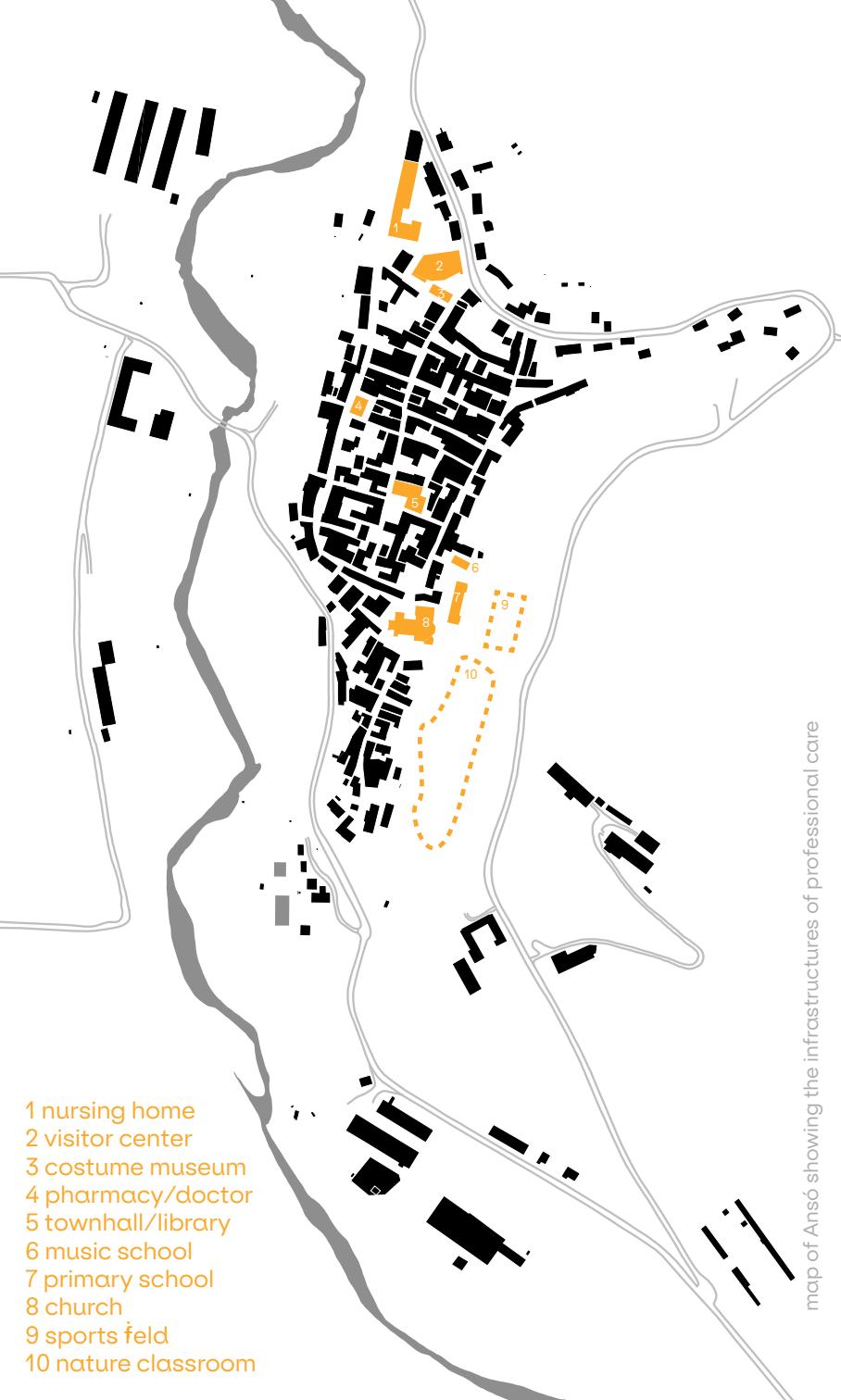
³ „Half of GPs trained in Spain willing to return if working conditions improve“, KRINGOS, 2023

⁴ DUBAS-JAKÓBCZYK, 2024



"Who looks after the kids?", 2025
Ink on Paper, 20x12cm

"Who looks after the kids?" 3/7
6.6.25
Wd Ae



support⁵ are caused by the reduction of access to professional care in the first place, emphasizing the downward spiral, emblematic for rural decline in general.

This offers a clear perspective for future development: presenting (medical) care workers with qualitative working conditions could help disrupt the current dynamics and make the countryside a favourable place to work in the care sector. Of course, these conditions depend generally on financial support, but generous and personalised workspaces and “involving patients and the community in service delivery”⁶, could improve the rural area’s appeal as a workplace. Also technological advancements, such as telemedicine⁷ and mobile healthcare units⁸, can contribute to this goal.

A concrete example of what this might look like, is the current primary school in Ansó: during the conversations with the mayor, the particularity of it was mentioned multiple times. A very engaged teacher, has taken advantage of the specificity of the rural areas and has successfully implemented alternative pedagogy methods into the teaching curriculum.

⁵ DUBAS-JAKÓBCZYK, 2024

⁶ LEGIDO-QUINGLEY, 2013

⁷ LEGIDO-QUINGLEY, 2013

⁸ SCHWARTZE, 2014

The small amount of students allow for very personalised teaching and the rural setting also allowed the school to create an “Aula de Naturaleza” - an outdoor classroom- where open air teaching and hands on projects are possible.⁹ This kind of personal and high-quality learning environment is hard to come by in the city and an exclusive possibility of the countryside.¹⁰

I want to highlight this quality of care on the grounds of rural specificity as a new direction of thinking about the countryside's futures.

⁹ <https://crarioaragon.es/aula-naturaleza-Ansó/>

¹⁰ The former teacher and researcher José Luis Murillo from the same region, has actually published and experimented in the field of alterantive rural pedagogy.



domestic care

As mentioned in the beginning, we tend to draw a hard line between formal or paid care and the informal care often done in the domestic sphere. A care-focused analysis has to keep in mind that it is fundamental to our society and deserves the same attention.

Looking at Ansó in this regard, the lack of information on this topic becomes obvious. While the “Agenda Urbana de Ansó 2030” goes into detail, explaining the different economic sectors such as shepherding and tourism, domestic care as a prerequisite for these activities is left out.¹

An understanding of Ansó’s domestic work has to be brought about through national statistics: as in the other European countries, we can see the clear gendered nature of domestic care work. While women in Spain work nearly as much as men, the main part of house work still lays only on their shoulders.² This double burden is the reality for many women in Spain. Women in Spain are normally

“[...] equally or more educated than their male partners. However, the gendered division of housework and paid work remains one of the most traditional ones in Europe.”³

The fact that 66% percent of women are employed in Ansó, hints at a similar reality. Furthermore, pre-school education facilities do not exist. They are probably provided as unpaid labor by the parents and grandparents. Additionally, eldercare is institutionally provided, but often still depends on the engagement of family members and neighbours.

¹ AGENDA URBANA DE ANSÓ 2030, 2022

² INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTADISTICA, 2021

³ CANZIO, 2020

"Who puts the laundry to dry?", 2025
Ink on Paper, 20x12cm



Who puts the laundry to dry? 2/1
6.6.25
WJ de

This lack of provision and support for informal care is a significant factor forcing older residents and their families to rely on professional services and to leave the village in search for them in nearby larger towns - alternatively it burdens the mainly the women of the village. Care-oriented development in the domestic sphere must address this injustice.

Dolores Hayden proposed already in 1980 a path forward. We must “transform the economic situation of the traditional home-maker whose skilled labor has been unpaid”⁴, solutions such as the “Hausfrauenlohn”⁵ and a general societal

⁴ HAYDEN, 1980, p.176

⁵ Housewife Salary



in the evening the local families gather on the main square in front of the town hall

shift to more appreciation of care work, would be first steps. The second transformation would be to change the way employed women do their housework.⁶

While the rise of appliances as a consumerist solution in the after-war period failed at providing any fundamental change⁷, Hayden sees the need in more communal infrastructure such as day-care centre, laundry service and cooperative kitchens and grocery stores.⁸

“[Employed women] desire, not an end to private life altogether, but community services to support the private household. They also desire solutions which reinforce their economic independence and maximize their personal choices about child rearing and sociability”⁹

⁶ HAYDEN, 1980

⁷ „full-time housewives [would] spent 52 h a week on housework in 1924 and 55 h a week in the 1960s“

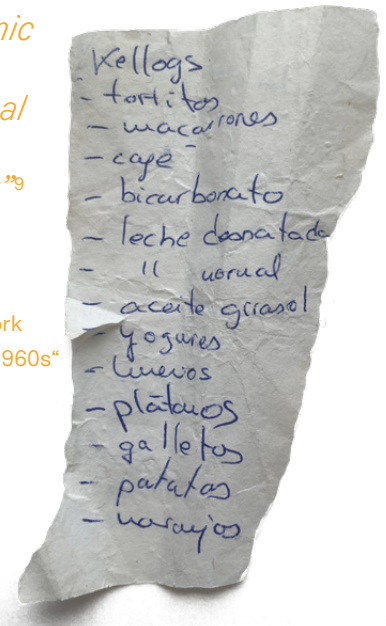
HESTER, 2023, p. 5

⁸ She imagines there to be 4one per 40 household:

For Ansó this would mean 3-4 day-care centers.,

HAYDEN, 1980, p.182

⁹ HAYDEN, 1980 p.181



“Several million [...] women cook supper each night in several million separate homes over several million separate stoves...” HESTER, 2023, p. 5

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repair care

It is a common conception in the field of architecture that a building is “finished”, when the construction is done and the users move in. Sarah Nicols contradicts this notion by pointing to the way a building constantly changes for its whole life time.

Buildings are constantly being cleaned, repaired and updated to changing uses. And even apparently solid materials, such as stone or concrete, evolve over time. The steps of a marble stair, being ground little by little, is a good example here.¹

¹ NICOLS, 2022



through putting up flowers and painting the wall around the windows, the owner of this house fight against the decay of the building structure



"Who puts the flowers in front of their house?", 2025
Ink on Paper, 20x12cm

Who puts up plants in front of their house? 1/7
6.6.25
Mline

Changing this notion plays a key role in a care-forward architectural practice and ultimately in moving away from the extractivism architecture currently entails. As Nicols points out:

“If matter is regarded as inert or lifeless, it legitimises cycles of consumption and destruction. It also undermines the legitimacy of maintenance, care, and stewardship—practices that are frequently disregarded or dismissed in modern architecture and engineering.”²

This of course is challenging. The current industry makes disposal/demolition the norm and is often the easiest way out. Repair on the other hand is often much more complicated as it involves understanding and learning from the existing context.³ Repairing should be understood as a part of care towards objects and physical matter.

Overcoming their “deadness” and focusing on practices that maintain them, can give us an insight into a particularity architectural part of the care-network in Ansó. The problem of vacancy outlined earlier has also led to interesting interventions of care.

² NICOLS, 2022, p. 88

³ VON REDECKER, 2023





During my observations, I found cases of creative reuse—neighbours appropriating abandoned buildings and plots as chicken coops, storage spaces, and vegetable gardens.

At least at first glance, this seems to be done spontaneously and outside official frameworks. Other acts of care can be seen in relation to the historic image of the village, which the inhabitants are trying to maintain.

Acts such as placing flower pots on the streets, repainting, and putting up decorations on their own houses, as well as on the abandoned houses around them, can be interpreted as efforts to make the street facades more welcoming.

However, these actions might also relate to the image of a museumified and picturesque historical village that the inhabitants of Ansó are trying to preserve—not only for the sake of tourism but also, perhaps, to cover up the scars left by 100 years of rural flight.

Concerning the repair and potential renovation of houses in Ansó, conflicting notions of care become evident. While, at an institutional level, the physical building stock and the broader architectural heritage are preserved and taken care of through heritage regulations, these measures may actually hinder local homeowners in caring for their built environment (by maintaining, repairing and renovating).⁴

This is primarily due to financial considerations, but differing preservation strategies and contrasting visions of Ansó's future may also contribute to the conflict.⁵

⁴ Joan Tronto provides this useful framework for conflicts in care: Care comes in different phases such as „caring about, taking care of, care-giving, and care-receiving.“ In modern Bureaucracies the „taking care of“ and physical „care-giving“ are often institutionally separated, leading to various friction points. TRONTO, 1994

⁵ HOLTORF, HÖGBERG, 2020

even though the house is abandoned, the neighbour decorates it with her flowers to make the village appear livley



ecological care

The climate crisis and the huge biodiversity loss have put the care we could take for our environment – More-than-human-care¹ – centre stage in political debate. What the bigger global crises show, is our immense vulnerability and dependencies on a functioning ecosystem. Embracing this dependency opens up the possibility to look at care the other way around.²

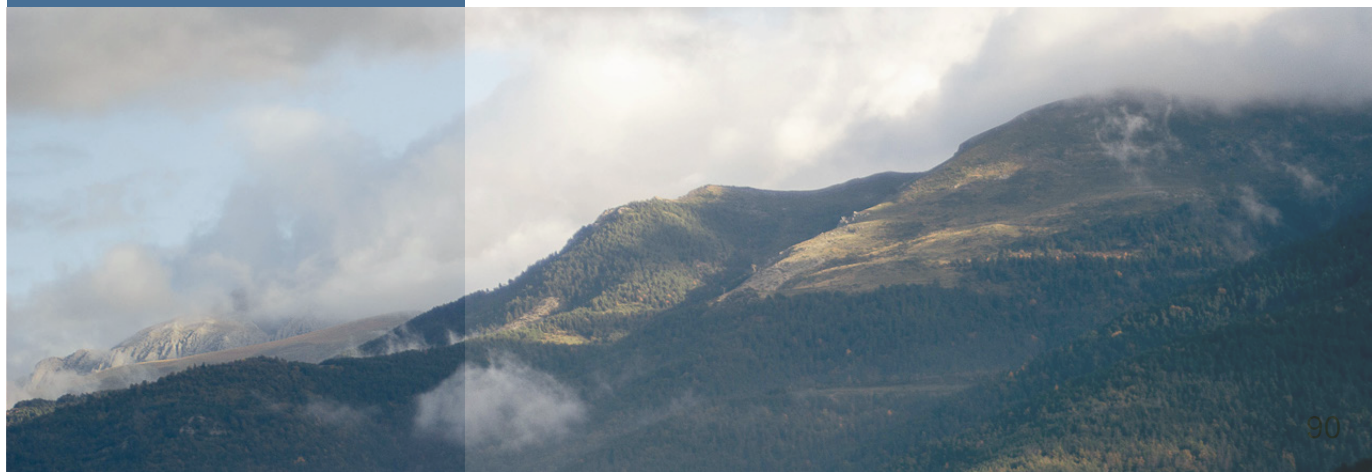
The natural resources face a similar fate as care work in our society. While clean air, freshwater and a functioning ecosystem is crucial to our survival, the value it supplies to us is made invisible.

The care work our planet provides for us, just as the domestic care, is turned into a cheap resource that can be exploited.³

¹ SILBERZAHN, 2024

² ZECHNER, 2022

³ NEHMER, 2022



"Who maintains the hiking paths?", 2025
Ink on Paper, 20x12cm



"Who maintains the hiking paths?" 3/7
6.6.25
Viktor

Ecological care can be conceptualised twofold then: as human practices of maintaining the environment and as the care we humans receive from a functioning ecosystem. As these debates happen on a bigger national level, we can also look at the small scale and local ways, people interact and selflessly care for their ecological surrounding.

An interesting example of care for the natural environment in Ansó is a neighbourhood association, which meets up to maintain the hiking paths.

A more institutionalized example is the nature reserve and the exhibition that informs visitors about it. The employees take care of the infrastructure within the reserve but also try to mediate the relationship between tourists and villagers and their natural environment.

Since historically the main types of employment in the village were shepherding and wood extraction, and since tourism often relates to hiking and other outdoor activities, the mediation of these conflicts involves a specific kind of care.

Shepherding, as the oldest profession in the region, poses an interesting challenge to the concept of care. It can be argued that shepherds are constantly engaged in caring practices toward their flock by guiding them to grazing lands and fending off predators, as well as maintaining the mountain meadows, which are an important part of Ansó's landscape. Additionally, care for various infrastructures essential to shepherding, such as

mountain huts, stone walls, and roads, has been deeply ingrained in shepherding traditions.

On the other hand, the relationship between the shepherd, the flock, and the mountain landscape is often driven by economic considerations. In the case of the sheep, they ultimately pay with their lives for the care they receive, challenging the notion of shepherding as purely caring.

Joan Tronto also emphasizes that protection is often distinct from care:

“Caring seems to involve taking the concerns and needs of the other as the basis for action. Protection presumes the bad intentions and harm that the other is likely to bring to bear against the self or group, and requires a response to that potential harm.”⁴

⁴ TRONTO, 1994, p.105

The care the the village of Ansó receives from its natural environment is much harder to pinpoint. It is embedded in the larger ecosystem of the Pyrenees mountains, but it is not hard to see that the whole traditional primary sector – forestry and shepherding – is depended on natural resources. The forests, meadows and rivers of the mountains have cared for the people of Ansó since its beginning.

the visitor center is warning of invasive species and their impact on the ecosystem



civic care

We often conceptualize care on an individual basis, an act where one person takes care of another person (as in childcare for example) or of one self (like in the many self-care options, offered to us).

But there is also a strong communal component to care.¹

“[...]Issues of care are not just bound up with the intimacy of very close relationships, such as family and kinship. They also take shape in the environments we inhabit and move through – in local communities, neighbourhoods, libraries, schools and parks, in our social networks, and the groups we belong to.”²

Says a British collective of care activists says in their 2020 Care Manifesto. It is about caring for the community around oneself, through mutual aid and investing in structures of collective organising.

But it also involves seeing the traditional acts of care, not as the responsibility of an individual but as a communal effort.³ The Care Collective also outlines four pillars of care for communities: “mutual support, public space, shared resources and local democracy”⁴

¹ TRONTO, 1994

² CARE COLLECTIVE, 2020, p.38

³ „The dyadic understanding also presumes that caring is naturally individualistic, though in fact few societies in the world have ever conceived of child-rearing, perhaps one of the paradigmatic forms of care, as the responsibility only of the birth mother.“, TRONTO, 1994, p.103

⁴ CARE COLLECTIVE, 2020, p.38



"Who helps their neighbour in their garden?", 2025
Ink on Paper, 20x12cm

'Who helps their neighbour in their garden?' 1/3
s.b. 25
Wise

These aspects can be found in Ansó in the past and today. An interesting historic example in Ansó were the commons for shepherding.

In the Pyrenees mountains, the meadows for shepherding belonged neither to any individual or the state, but the use was organized in between the shepherds through complicated social relations in the form of traditions and rituals.⁵

The village communities were taking care of the common meadows, but also some care has had to be expended to uphold and continue these structures of community organizing. The privatisation and expansion of the state might have relieved people of the care for their commons but simultaneously undermined their care for each other.

Civic engagement in Ansó—through museums, reading circles, village events, and political involvement—is present nowadays to a certain extent. It seems that especially retired people have taken an interest in developing social institutions that are involved in local decisions.

⁵ An example of how elaborate this can get, David Graebers in „the dawn of everything“ talks about the basque „Olha“, an intricate system of organising egalitarian cheese making. GRAEBER, WENGROW, 2021



There is the already mentioned association that cares for the hiking paths, but also regular meetings at the town hall and an association to promote remote work, which is quite active and well-connected.

While these institutions take care of the community and environment, the people organising these associations and groups also have to do work such as finding compromises, organising meetings and maintaining the workings of the structure.

a local museum about the traditional costumes of the village
keeps the tradition and historic identity alive



All these examples show that the different aspects of care work are very present in Ansó and, for many, an important part of everyday life. Considering the essential nature of many of these care tasks, they can rightfully be considered foundational.

Therefore, one task of a care-oriented rural development plan would be to support and highlight the already existing Ecology of Care, reinforcing its fundamental nature. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to reflect on the idiosyncrasies of the countryside and develop types of care with specific qualities that are unlikely to be found in an urban context. In this way, we can secure the quality of life for the current inhabitants while paving the way for newcomers to settle.



4. Rural Design for Care

4.1 A Progressive Approach to Rural Development

I want to outline here the approach to the rural context that I have found to be most useful so far: Rather than viewing the countryside as a place of stagnant tradition or an underdeveloped area in need of urbanization, we can approach the rural context as a space of possibility and innovation.

While social innovation is often considered an urban phenomenon, Henri Lefebvre reminds us that rural places can also become sites of centrality, where

“the concentration [necessary for the potential for change], encompassing everything that exists in the world, in nature, and in the cosmos, can occur not only in the city but at ‘any point [...] also at the traditional village fair.’”¹

A social and ecological transformation must consider the particularities of the rural context but can also benefit from its tighter communities, higher levels of agency, and other positive aspects.



¹ BELINA, 2021, p.403

This kind of “progressive ruralism”² invites us to present new visions for the countryside, question current imperatives, and align ourselves with other social struggles. For example:

“on the one hand, pointing out the continuing structural barriers, for example, in public services and public transportation, as well as discrimination in the labor market, and on the other hand, detaching oneself from the primacy of growth-oriented economics in order to reframe the significance of work and, if necessary, engage with the “rural” connotation of discourses and practices”³



² BELINA, 2021, p. 408

³ TUITJE, 2022, p.91



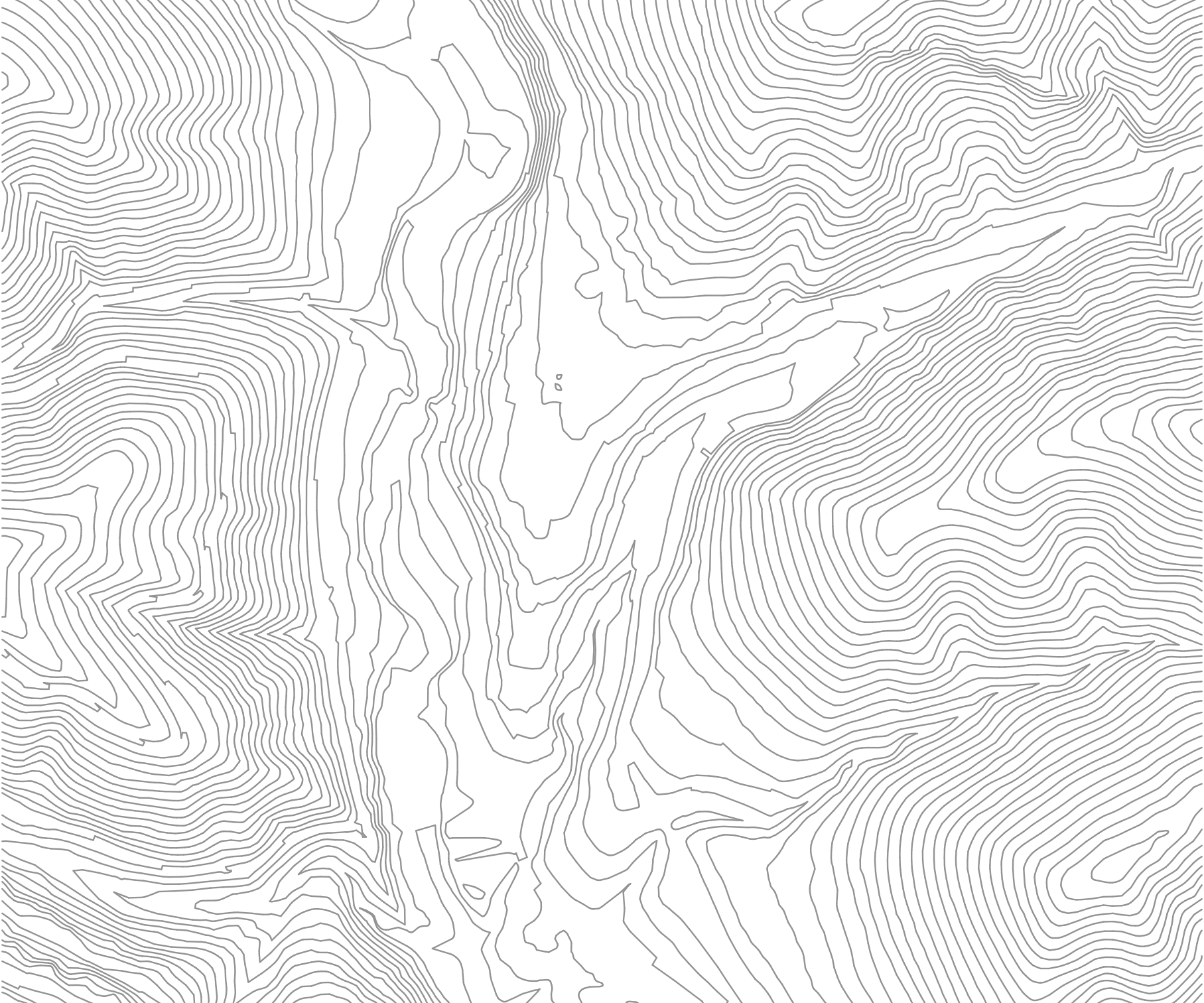
4.2 Outlook

In my master's thesis, I am proposing a perspective for "Care-oriented Rural Development", which consists of two aspects. Firstly, it involves a more collective approach to care work, both for paid and unpaid work, by overcoming its isolation and embedding it in the social life of the village. For the professional care sector, this means involving the community to provide a more reliant and higher quality service. For domestic care, it involves collectivising care to become more efficient and less isolating.

The second part focuses on the quality of care, which can, by using the advantages of the rural context such as denser social networks and more available space, provide a type of particular rural care, that might seem unimaginable in a city.

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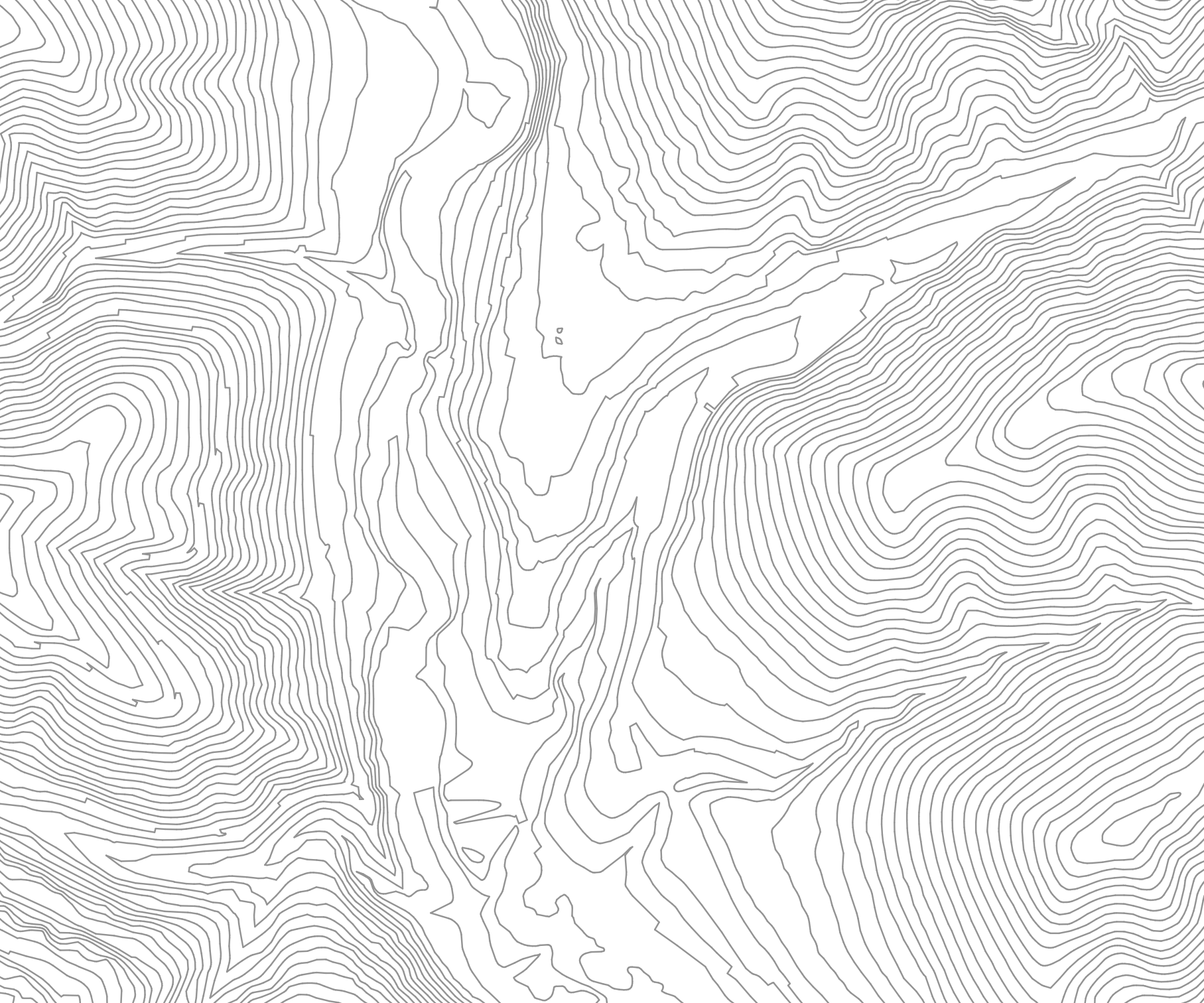
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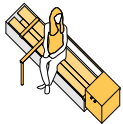




Who cares about
Ansó?
Part II
Design



#001



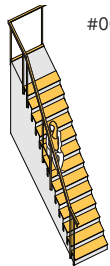
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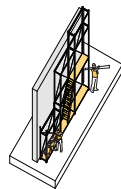
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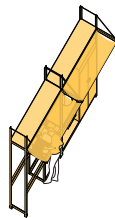
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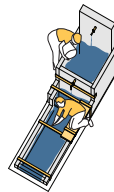
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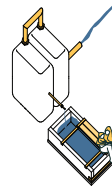
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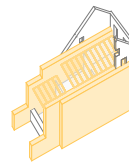
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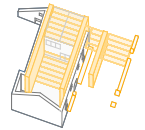
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#009



#010



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1. Designing for Care

1. What could design for care work look like?

The Problem with Care – And the Opportunity for Spatial Design
In addressing care-oriented design, one encounters a particular conceptual challenge: what precisely constitutes the “problem” with care? At first glance as my research shows, care work is very much present. It is being performed, communities are being sustained, and there is no obvious absence demanding an intervention. However, this approach conceals deeper structural issues.

The challenge is not that care is lacking, but that it is systematically undervalued, rendered invisible, and unequally distributed. Even posing the question “What is the problem with care?” might reveal a prevailing societal position toward care as marginal. Care work—particularly domestic, emotional, and community-based care—is treated as a background function, an assumed constant, rather than essential form of labor. It is primarily performed by women and mostly without financial compensation or institutional support.

This labour is essential; without it, social cohesion and everyday functioning would be impossible. Yet, the individuals who provide it are often expected to do so indefinitely, without complaint or recognition, effectively becoming what

has been termed “prisoners of love.” This dynamic is particularly pronounced in rural settings, where young women leave at disproportionately high rates, seeking to escape a dichotomous future of either domestic confinement or an overburdened work life.

This marginalisation is the core problem with care: it is essential, yet obscured. In response, I propose two strategies through which spatial design can intervene: visibility and community. These approaches seek to reposition care from the private and marginal to the public and central, using design to support a revaluation of care work and those who perform it.

1.2 Visibility

Historically, the relocation of care from the public to the private sphere is rooted in 19th-century bourgeois policy and was later reinforced by post-World War II suburbanization and the rise of consumer technologies. Domestic labour, including cleaning, cooking, maintenance, and even waste management, was progressively relegated to the private home, where it ceased to be publicly acknowledged.

This spatial and social shift has had enduring consequences, particularly for women. In rural areas, the fragmentation and privatization of care have contributed to a decline in collective community life, especially in relation to care-related tasks. Although formal gender discrimination may have been legislatively

abolished, the lived reality of a “double burden” persists, largely hidden within the domestic sphere. By bringing care tasks back into the public realm—through shared spaces and the design of communal infrastructures—the perception can shift to care as essential and socially valuable work.

1.3 Community

Alongside invisibility, care has also become increasingly individualized. This trend has led not only to inefficiencies but also to widespread emotional and social costs, particularly for those engaged in intensive care work such as parenting, elder care, or supporting the chronically ill. Critiques of this model are not new: even in the late 19th century, communal solutions such as shared housekeeping institutions were proposed, both as a means of economic efficiency and as a path toward the professionalization of domestic work.

While the cultural and economic contexts have shifted, the underlying value of collectivized care remains relevant. And today, especially rural communities still exhibit some forms of informal mutual aid—such as cooking for elderly neighbors or running errands for one another. These practices reveal a latent potential for more structured, community-based models of care.

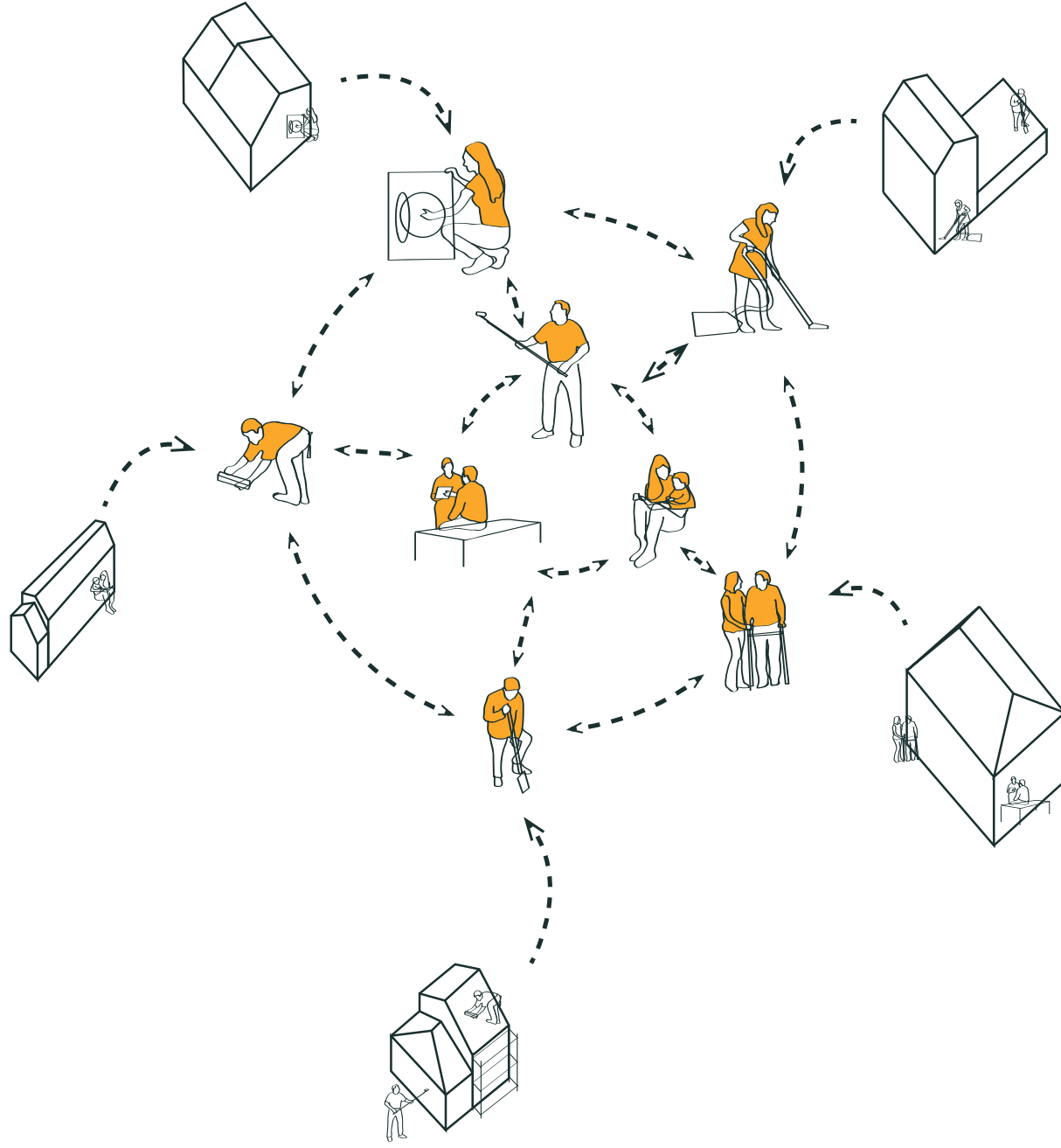
By providing infrastructure and public recognition for these practices, design can support and expand them.

1.4 Re-Centering Care through Design

Care is the foundation upon which most human activity is built. The question, then, is not whether care is taking place, but how—and under what conditions—it occurs. At present, care remains largely privatized, undervalued, and unequally distributed. This is evident not only in unpaid domestic work but also in undercompensated professional fields such as healthcare, cleaning, and community organizing.

The aim of a care-oriented spatial design approach should be to challenge these conditions. By making care visible and embedding it in collective, public structures, design can elevate the status of care work and reduce barriers to participation.

Importantly, care is both a practice and a disposition: it involves physical tasks as well as an ethical orientation toward others. While broader societal change and policy reform are essential to a more equitable distribution of care, spatial design offers a material and immediate path for intervention. Especially in small communities with limited resources, design can play a crucial role.



2. Case Studies

2.1 El Lavadero

The lavadero (public laundry house) has played a central role in the domestic and social lives of rural communities in Spain and France - especially during the 19th and 20th century. Serving as both a space for washing clothes and a site of communal interaction. They were designed to address the practical necessity of laundering, but also functioned as sites of social exchange, earning them the name of “Gossip Central” in French communities.¹

The communal nature of the task created solidarity and a space for emotional and cultural bonding among women. As noted in the historical use of lavaderos, these spaces were typically used for the beating and rinsing of linens, while the actual washing happened at home. The washhouse, while vital for its practical purposes, was also a reflection of gendered labor, designed explicitly as a space for women. The ambiguity of the lavadero's role is notable: on the one hand, it was an important site for solidarity and community life, serving as the only public building designed explicitly for women.

Yet, on the other hand, it was also a tool of social control. These spaces, often separate and segregated, could reinforce traditional gender roles by confining women's work to a designated space, while men enjoyed public leisure elsewhere.² While the social space for men

historical and contemporary examples of the lavadero



tended to be the café or bar – a place of leisure, the communal space for women, such as the lavadero and the fountain – was still place of work. Through a critical lens, the lavadero as a historical and spatial concept offers valuable lessons in the design of contemporary care infrastructure. These spaces can redefine the way we think about domestic labor, in relation to communal responsibility.

¹ MOLONGLO, 2025

² MOLONGLO, 2025

2.2 The River

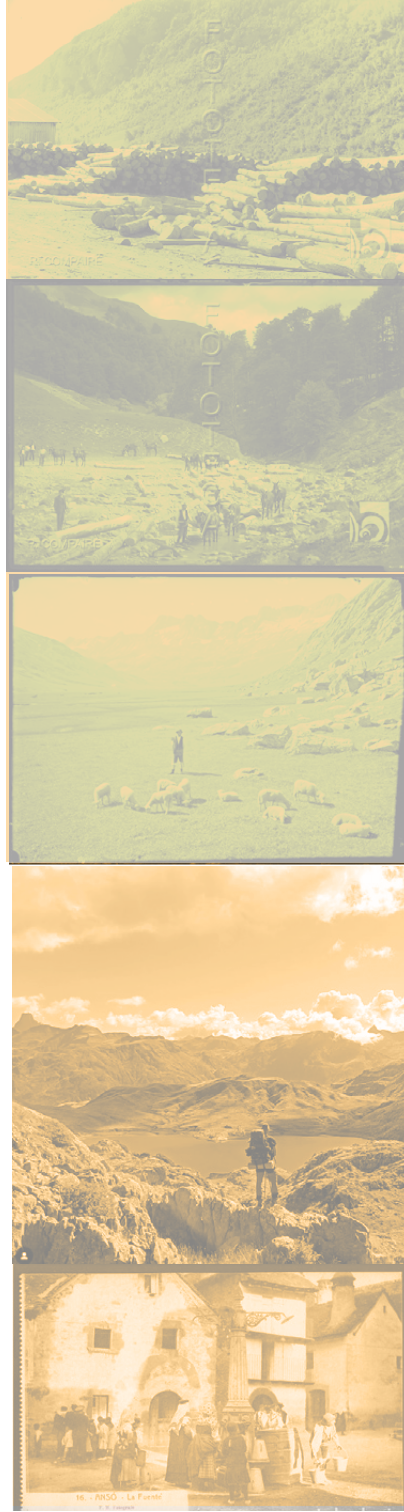
The River Veral runs along the village and plays crucial role in the development of Ansó until this day. As discussed in Part I, environments can care for us too and the river Veral is a great example to explore how natural resources can be interpreted as part of care infrastructure too.

Historically, the relationships between water, care, and a community have been closely interlinked, with water serving as an economic resource but also playing an essential part in daily care and sustaining of life. Many care tasks, such as cleaning, cooking and laundry are linked to water and in the past were unimaginable without the public infrastructure of a village fountain and the aforementioned washhouse.

In Ansó we can also see how the river played a key role in its economic activities. The shepherds use the river to guide the sheeps up and down a mountain and the former timber production needed the river to transport the wood downstream. The presence of water within a community shapes the ways in which people interact with their environment. In Ansó we can see particular architectural features that have developed in relationship to water.

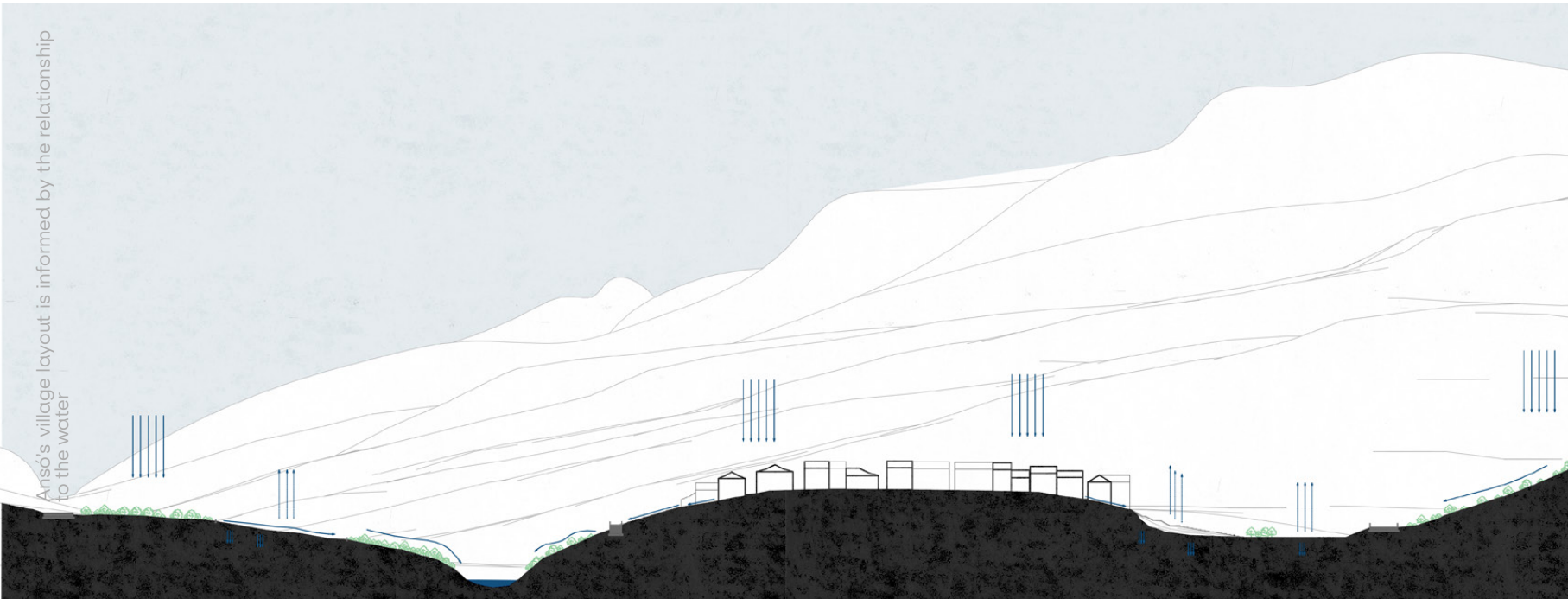
While the river plays a crucial role in the villages economy, the vernacular building typologies focus on shedding the water as fast as possible.

the river and the landscape it formed are to this day the backbone of the productive economy in the valley



The gaps between houses, curved roofs and an elaborate drainage system, are put in place to get rid of any rain and melt water as fast as possible to prevent it from seeping into the shallow foundations. The river and by extension the whole water cycle hold an ambivalent position in the village by being both a potential threat but also the foundation of village life.

Considering the risks of droughts and general water scarcity due to climate change, this position might deserve a contemporary reevaluation.



2.3 Contemporary References

The different types of care work, discussed in the earlier chapter, have already influenced some more contemporary architectural works. The architecture collective LaCol from Barcelona in their housing project La Borda¹, has put the laundry room into the center of the communal areas of the housing block. This recontextualises domestic care work and takes the act of making laundry from the usually remote and hidden laundry rooms into the center of the social life of the inhabitants. The floating university achieves a similar goal, by exposing the water cycles underlying the construction in a quite brutal and DIY way². It becomes overtly clear to visitors where the water they use for the toilet and sinks comes from and where it goes.

In terms of repair care I would like to highlight the German pavilion for the Venice Biennale from 2023³, who consisted of a material depot and workshop to reuse the leftovers from the previous years Art exhibitions.

Finally the work of Caminada⁴ and Sassis⁵, was for me an interesting example of maintaining traditions in terms of civic care. Many of their works refigure the traditional construction techniques into contemporary architecture and effectively encouraging the local construction

¹ LACOL, 2022

² FLOATING UNIVERSITY, 2023

³ SUMMACUMFEMMER, 2023

⁴ CAMINADA, 2020

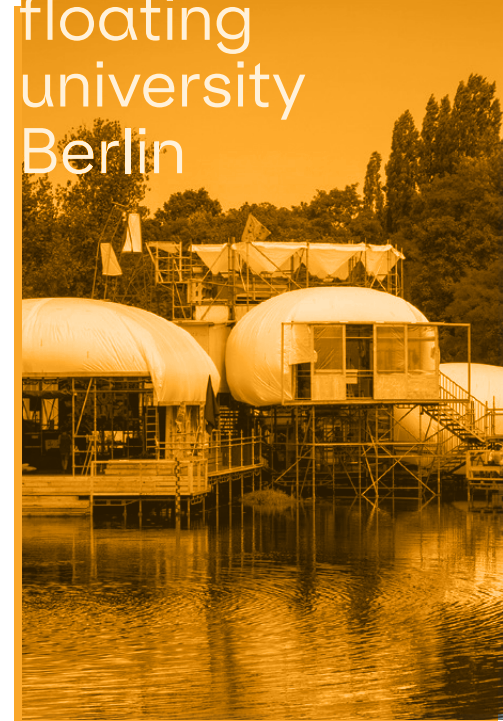
⁵ SASSI, 2021

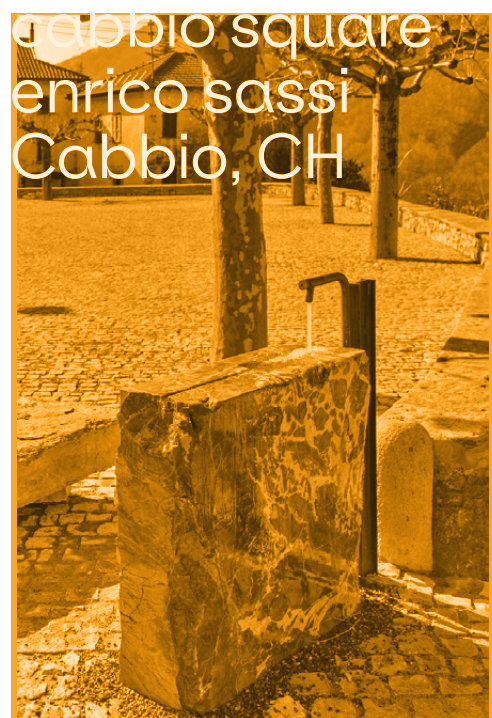


La Borda LaCol Barcelona



floating university Berlin





Also other types of infrastructure have been developed to support the case of visibillity and communalisation of care work. Their position in the ecology of care spans over a wide range and overlaps greatly.

h1 professional

outpatient care /
assisted living



specialized care

PSYCHIATRIC
CENTER by VALLO,
FERRER & RAY
ARCHITECTS
some specialised
medical & social
infrastructure needs
specialised buildings
like this psychiatric
center in Pamplona

accessibility



New Entrance to
Baroque Museum by
David Claessens
this historical
building was
renovated and
made more
accessible through
the integration of a
very visible ramp

h1 civic



open spaces

synthesis
community
hall by Graal
multi-functi-
onal public
buildings can
host all kinds
of activities



after school activity

Club-House in
Dingy-Saint-Clair
by Anthony
Laffargue
the club-house
hosts after school
activities like sports
for the local youth



kindergarden

La Borda by LaCoi
this communal
housing project has
turned their laundry
room into a central
meeting space for the
inhabitants

food cooperative



Community Kitchen of
Terra da Costa by
adrianlab + Colectivo
Warehouse
this open kitchen
infrastructure supplies a
marginalised
community in Portugal
with fresh water and a
place to meet



car sharing

ride-sha-
ring
benches
provide a
fixed
hitchhiking
spot in the
country
side



FabLab

Oodi Helsinki
city library by
ALA Architects
the public
FabLab is free
to use and
open for all

vernacular crafts



repair café



repair
cafes offer
a place to
gather and
repair
broken
items with
profession-
als

h1 repair

laundry



La Borda by LaCoi
this communal
housing project has
turned their laundry
room into a central
meeting space for the
inhabitants

communal canteen



The "Einküchenhaus"
is a space feminist
concept to remove
the personal
kitchen in favour
of a central one
supplying - the
apartment block

care
infrastructures



mountain huts

Brady
bivouac
by BCW
Collective
a mount-
ain
refuge in
Italy

cleaning station



community land
trusts allow for a
type of ownership
beyond the state
and private
actors - like the
Tierra
Martín Peña in
Puerto Rico

Commons



house cleaning

The artist
Sonya Clark
cleans in her
performance
Reversals the
museum
floor using a
Confederate
Battle Flag



gardening

a typical
british
allotment
garden from
the music
video of
Richard
Dawson's
Polytunnel

recycling park



Copenhill by
BIG
a waste-to-ener-
gy plant
combined with
a ski slope

renewable energy



Energiege-
nossenschaft
Strobenburg -
a local energy
cooperative
manages 7
windmills in
their region

material depot



BC materials
production
hall
storing and
reusing
building
materials
requires space

h1 ecological

interventions and their relationship to care work in Ansó

29



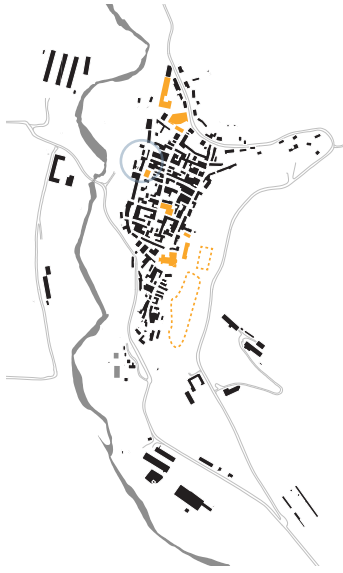
3.2 Location

As an exemplary location, I am choosing an abandoned house in the north-east of the village. It is strategically located near the elderly home and the existing pharmacy.

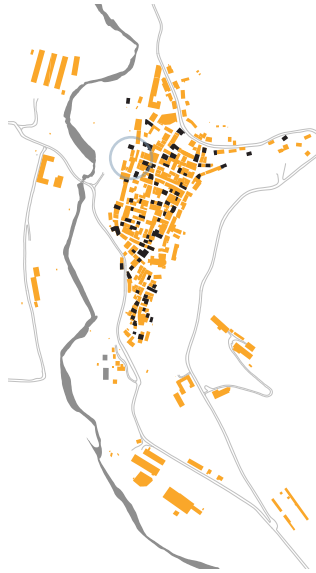
This way the proposed interventions can be integrated into the existing care network, ensuring that they are not isolated but rather contribute to the Ecology of Care.

It also opens up a reuse strategy for the part of the village. Instead of tearing the houses down or letting them decay, this integration into the proposed care network opens up a new future path. This specific location further exists on the border of Ansó. It allows my interventions to mediate the relationship between the dense village and the vast landscape.

While this location is an ideal place to start the implementation of my design, it should be seen as an example to be replicated at other places in the village.



professional care infrastructure



permanently inhabited houses



3.3 Materiality

The material choice is informed by the theme itself. Too often a building is considered finished the moment construction ends, but the tasks of maintaining, cleaning and repairing are neglected. An alternative proposition would be to acknowledge them in the design.

Reuse

With the interventions I am also proposing an alternative relationship to the build heritage. While it undoubtedly important to preserve the historic fabric of Ansó, the building have to be maintained and them decaying because of overly static preservation strategies is missing the goal.

With my material depot I am also opening up the possibility to use the existing building stock as source of building materials for the maintenance of others. Especially the roof tiles and roof timber, can be part of this effort, but also the stones from the natural stone walls that still remain can be reused.

Repair

While the repair workshop is mainly thought as a place for repairing furniture, clothes and other smaller items, I would also like to propose the possibility of repairing and even producing the build elements in the workshop itself. This presupposed building materials that are easy to work with.

1. Steel Profiles

Uniform standardized steel L-profiles can be easily purchased, cut and welded in place. This allows for a certain modularity, which makes assembly and repair much easier. Also especially color coated steel is easy to clean.

2. Rubble Wall

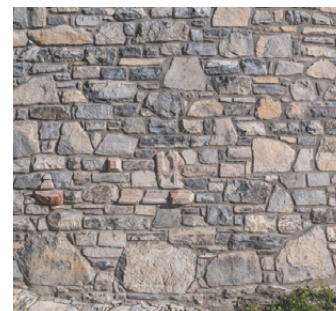
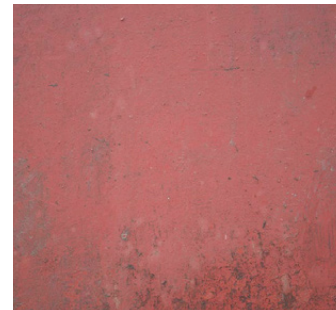
In combination with a lime mortar, the rubble from bricks and stones coming from the abandoned buildings can be formed into new rubble walls. These show well the former history while providing a foundation for something new.

3. local Sandstone

The typical local, gray sandstone comes from nearby quarries. Cut into standardized stone slabs, it is a long lasting building material that need little maintenance.

4. reused Wood Planks

While wood is a renewable material and has the lowest environmental impact, exposed to the elements, it is hard to maintain and decays fast. The wood elements in my design are therefore designed to be easily replaced without the need of any tools. The workshop can precut timber from the material depot into standardized planks and anybody can use them to maintain the wood elements in the interventions



3.4 Toolbox

The proposed design for Ansó incorporates a toolbox of essential interventions that can be strategically spread across the village. Each intervention stands on its own but should be also seen as part of a bigger network.

The drop-off box, cleaning fountain and laundromat support directly the neighbourhood with their domestic care work. The new railings and seating for the many stairs in the village provide greater accessibility for the elderly. A garden kitchen and fountain help with the small scale gardening on the hills.

A material depot for reusable construction material and a water purification system for reusing the runoff water changing directly the material cycles toward a circular system.

An intergenerational day care offers space for pre-school children and the elderly to spend the day supervised and a repair workshop houses the facilities to repair personal objects but also the interventions themselves.

- #001 drop-off box
- #002 cleaning fountain
- #003 self-laundromat
- #004 accessible stairs
- #005 garden kitchen
- #006 gardening fountain
- #007 material depot
- #008 reuse water cycle
- #009 intergenerational daycare
- #010 repair workshop

neighbourhood help



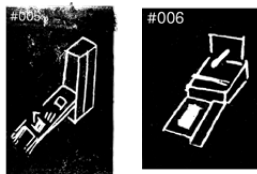
- #001 drop-off box
- #002 cleaning fountain
- #003 self-laundromat

accessibility



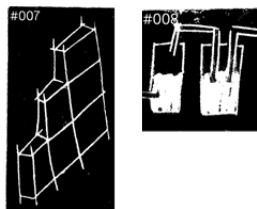
- #004 accessible stairs

gardening



- #005 garden kitchen
- #006 gardening fountain

material cycles



- #007 material depot
- #008 reuse water cycle

daycare

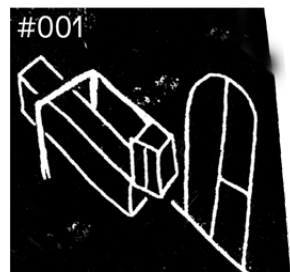


- #009 intergenerational daycare

workshop

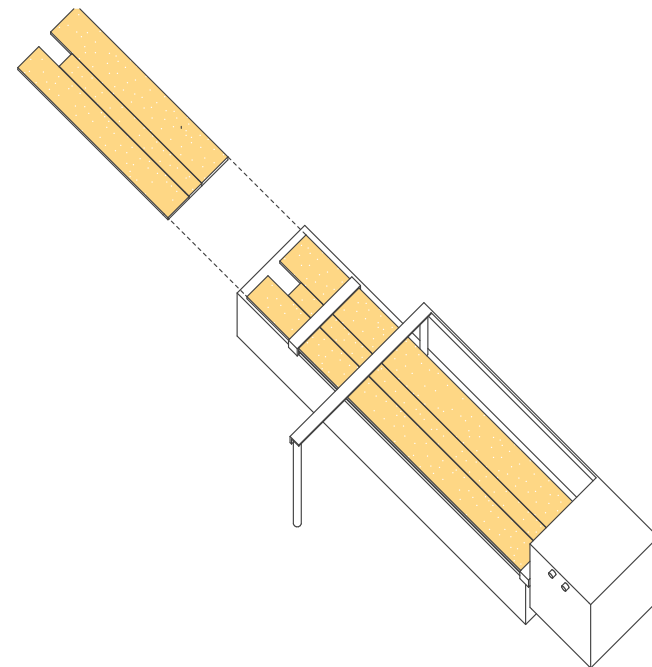


- #010 repair workshop

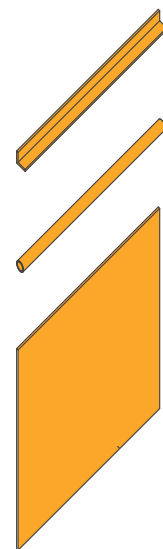


#001 drop-off box

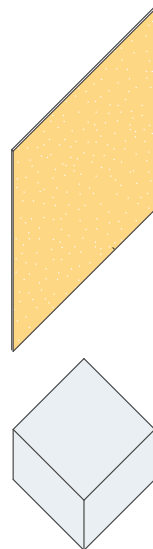
exchanging wooden seating elements



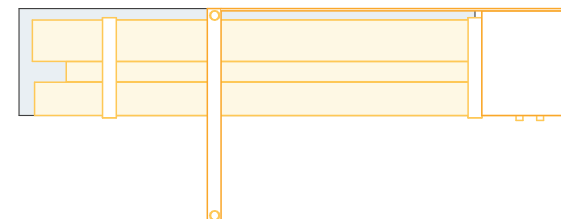
steel profiles



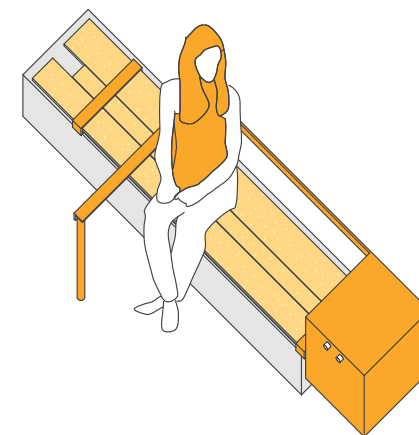
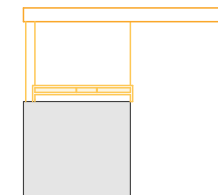
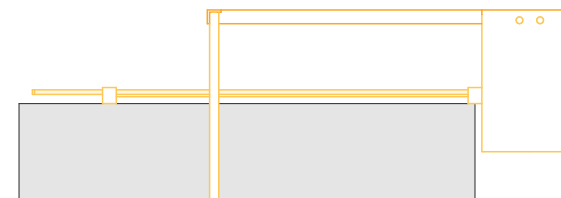
reused timber and stone



floorplan 1:33



sections 1:33



professional care
+ domestic care
+ civic care

Throughout Ansó one can find old stone benches in front of most homes. Their original use of negotiating the relationship with the neighbours has partly disappeared. This steel extension is trying to revive this old tradition: It offers more comfortable seating, a railing for accessibility and a box to drop off groceries for ones neighbour. The construction is made out of coated steel and can be simply placed ontop of the older stone benches. Alternatively new benches can be made out of rubble from the material depot. The seating area consits of wooden planks, which are slid in from the side and can be easily replaced.

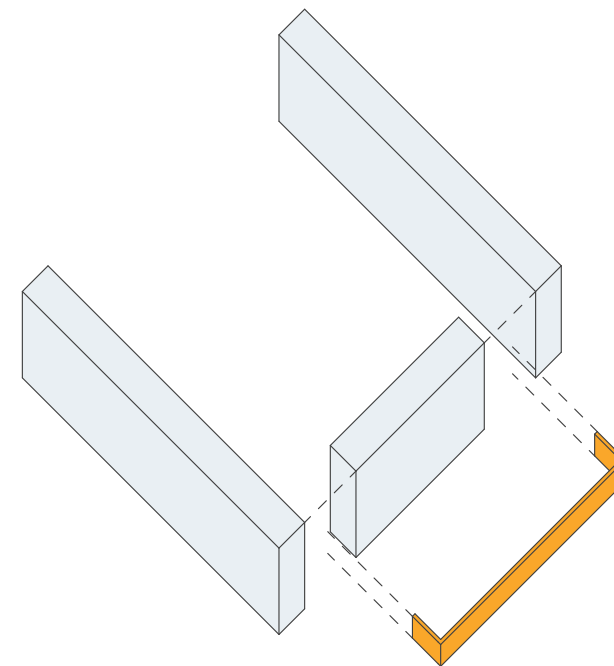
#001 neighbourhood bench



#002

#002 cleaning fountain

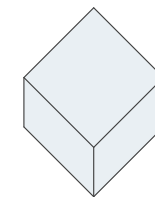
simple assembly



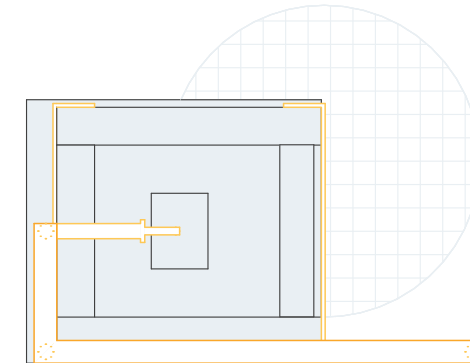
steel profiles



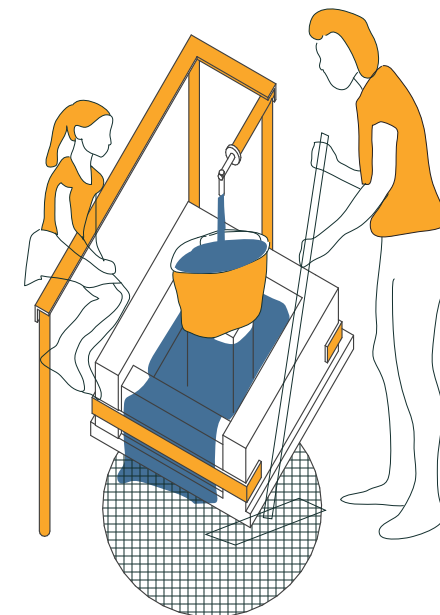
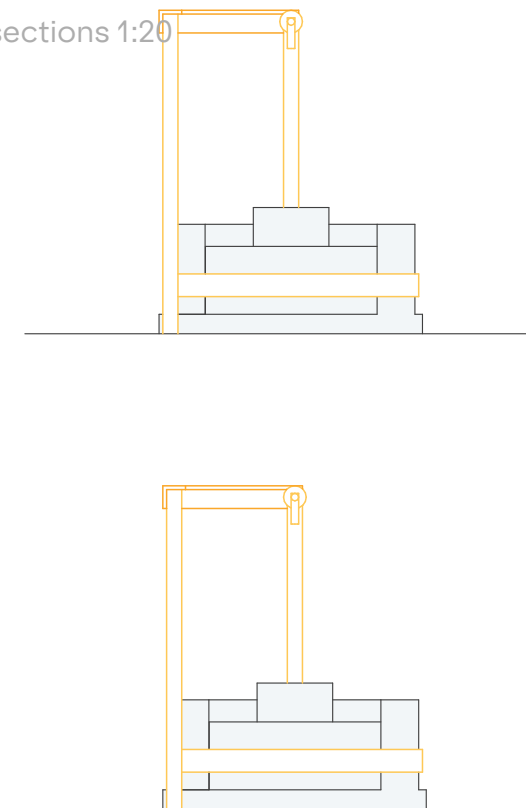
local sandstone



floorplan 1:20



sections 1:20



domestic care
+ ecological care
+ repair care

The cleaning fountain is a small addition to the public street, that allows inhabitants to freely fill up and empty their mop buckets. Apart from this obvious use, it can also become a place for neighbourhood interaction and a playful addition to the street scape. The fountain is constructed out of sandstone slabs, held together by steel bracing. The railing and other elements are made out of coated steel profiles. This way it is easy to clean and simple to replace.

#002 cleaning fountain

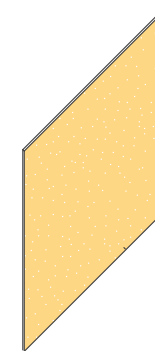


#003 self- laundromat

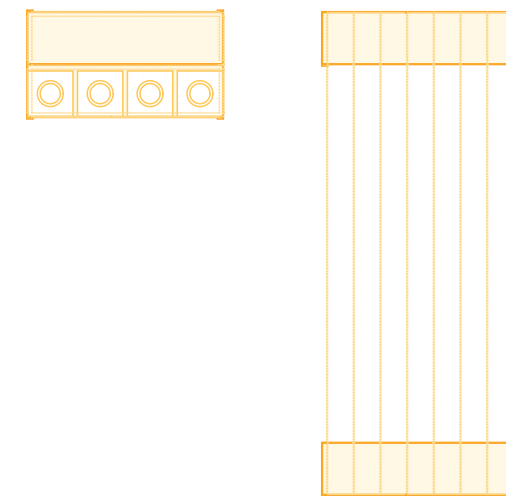
steel profiles



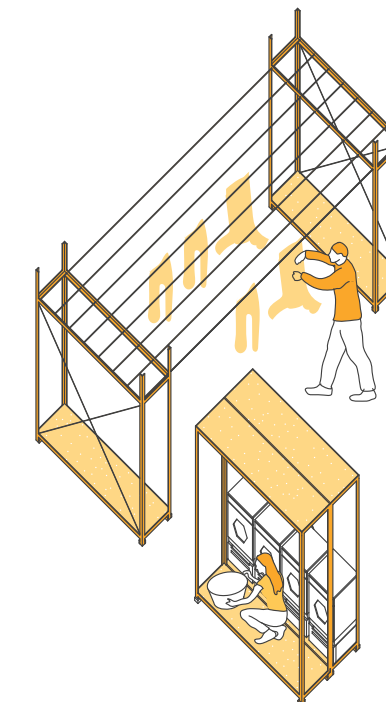
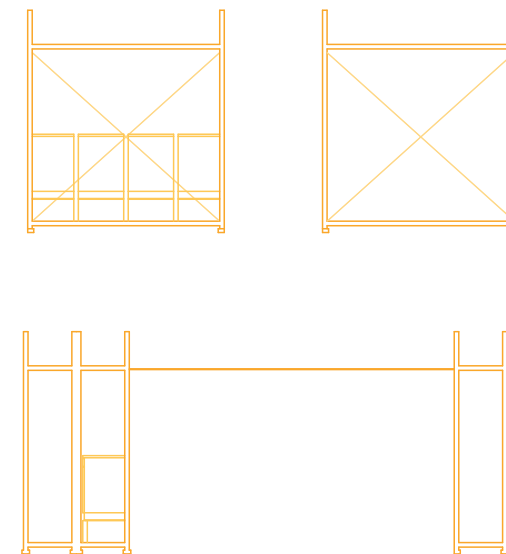
reused timber



floorplan 1:100



section 1:100



domestic care
+ ecological care
+ civic care

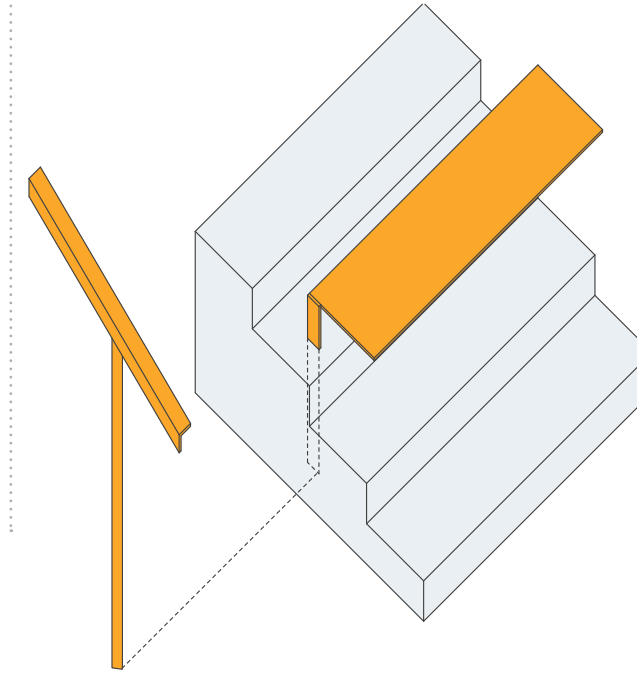
Drying laundry is one of the last signifiers of domestic care visible in the public realm. This structure has the intention of continuing this tradition and offering a financial and ecological incentive by connection the water supply to the reuse water cycle. Also for tourists this kind of infrastructure can become a way to connect to the local village life. The construction follows the same rules as the metal scaffolding of the material depot, discussed later.

#003 self-laundromat

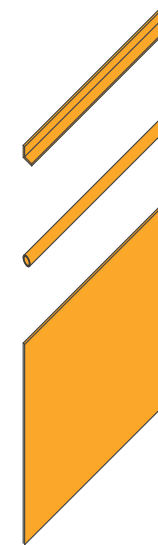


#004 accessible stairs

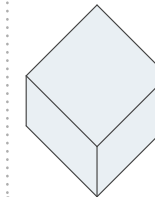
addition to existing stairs



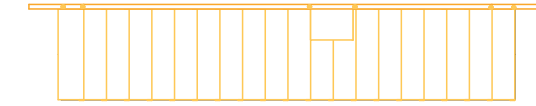
steel profiles



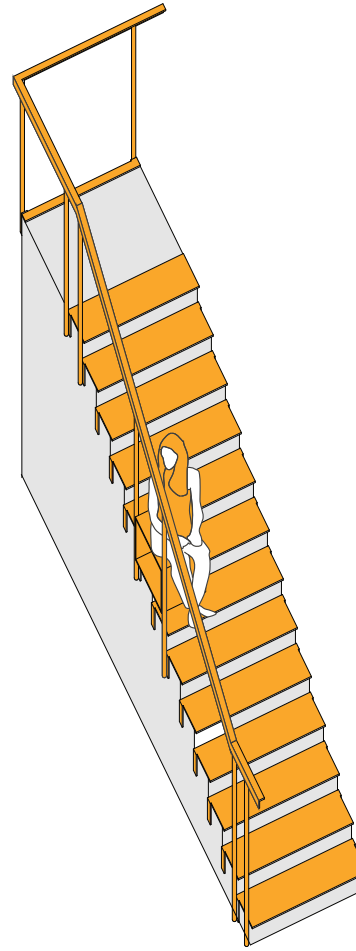
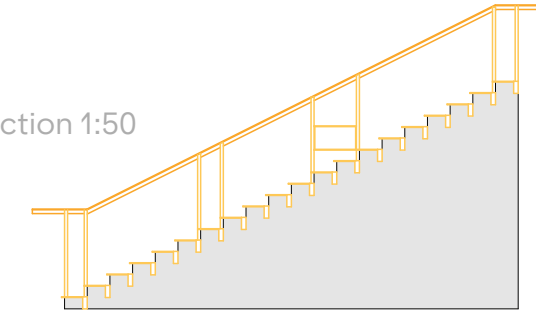
reused stone



floorplan 1:50



section 1:50



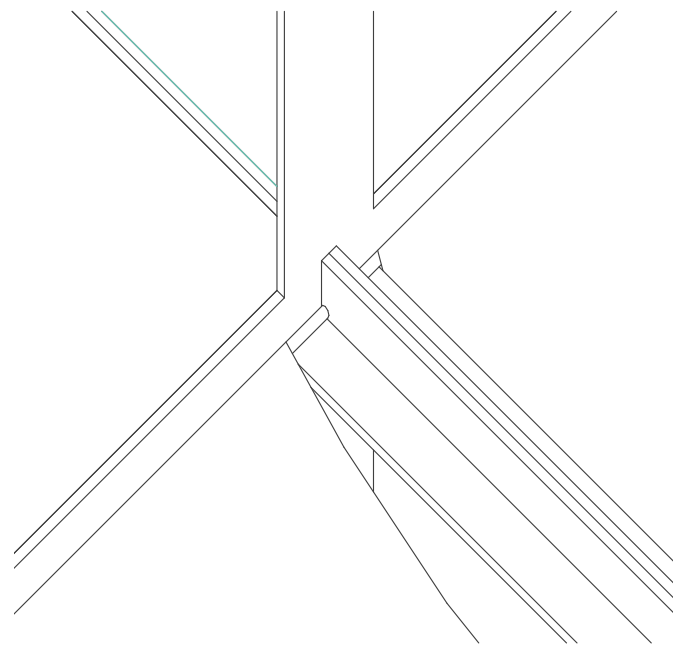
As Ansó's population is getting older, the topic of accessibility is become more pressing. As the village has quite a topography, it becomes for older people with reduced mobility harder to live there and efectivly forcing them to move to a bigger city. While a truly accessible village is nearly impossible, small additions of more elderly friendly infrastructure can help improving their mobility and extending their access to the village. I am proposing here to add additional handrailing to the existing stairs. This handrailing offers also seating opportunities in the middle of the stairs, which can be used for resting. Also new staircases out of rubble wall can be stratigically added. The railing and seating is designed out of the standardized steel profiles for easy assembly and repair.

#004 accessible stairs

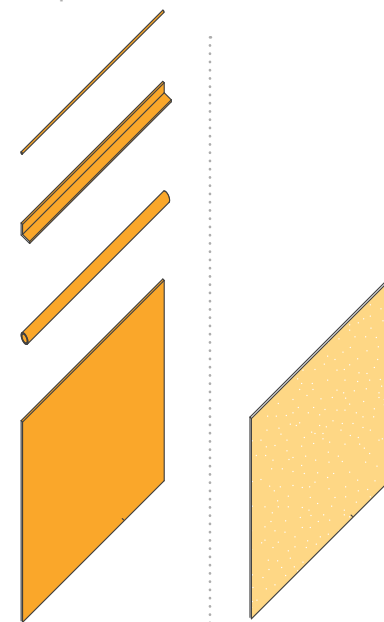


#005 garden kitchen

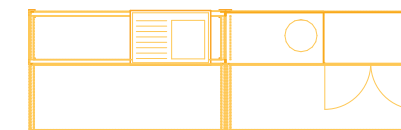
assembled from standard steel profiles



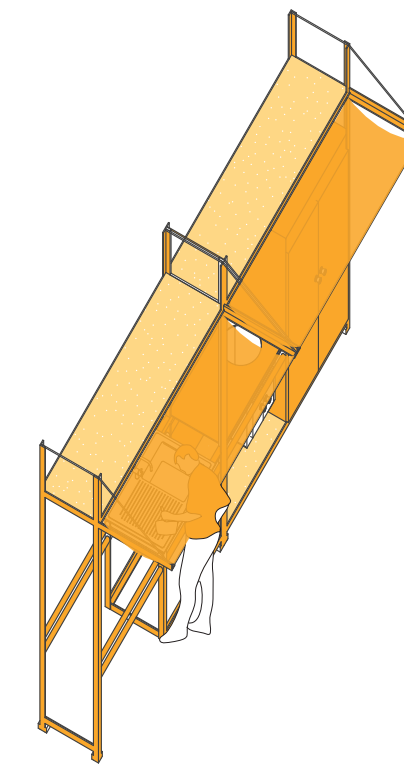
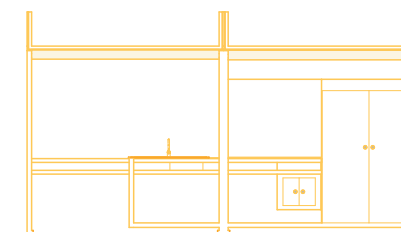
steel profiles reused



floorplan 1:100



section 1:100



domestic care
+ ecological care
+ civic care

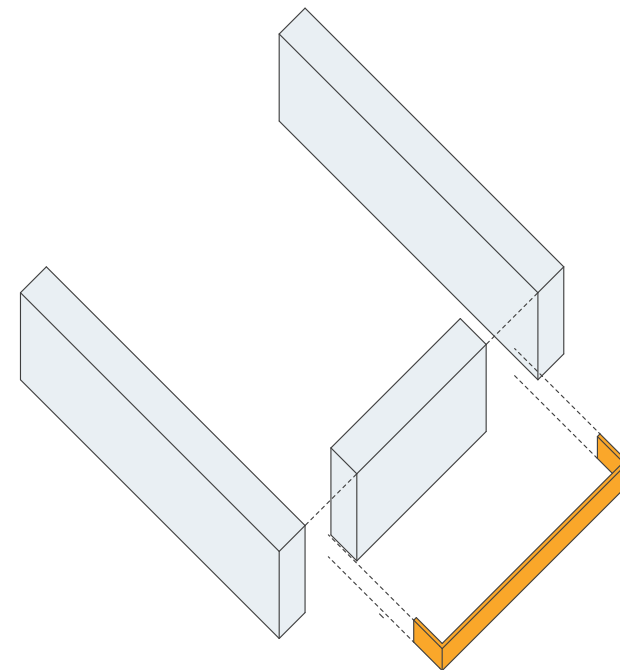
Because if it's remote location, small scale allotment garden are an important supply of fresh produce. This outdoor kitchen offers a sink for cleaning and preparing the harvested vegetables and has an intergrated garden shed to store tools. The construction continues the steel structure of the material depot and offers sundshading for the garden work.

#005 garden kitchen



#006 gardening fountain

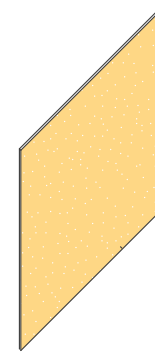
easy assembly



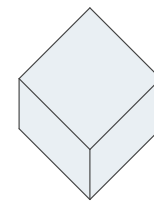
steel profiles



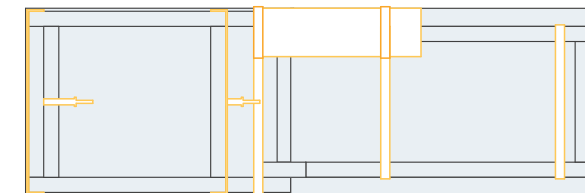
reused timber



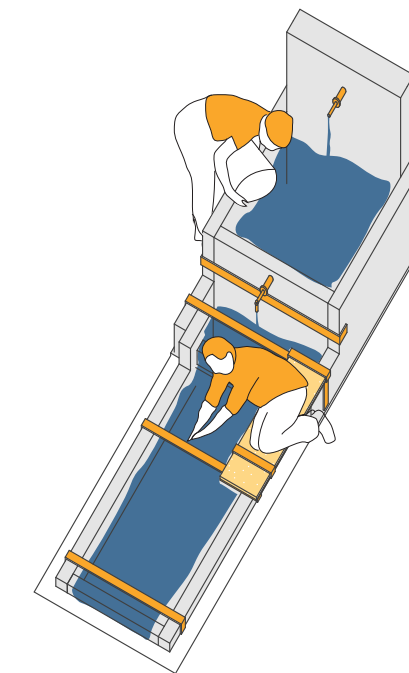
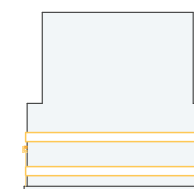
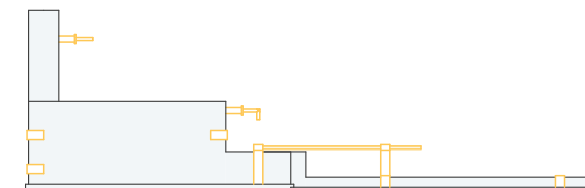
local sandstone



floorplan 1:50



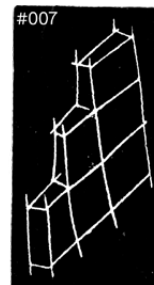
section 1:50



domestic care
+ ecological care
+ civic care

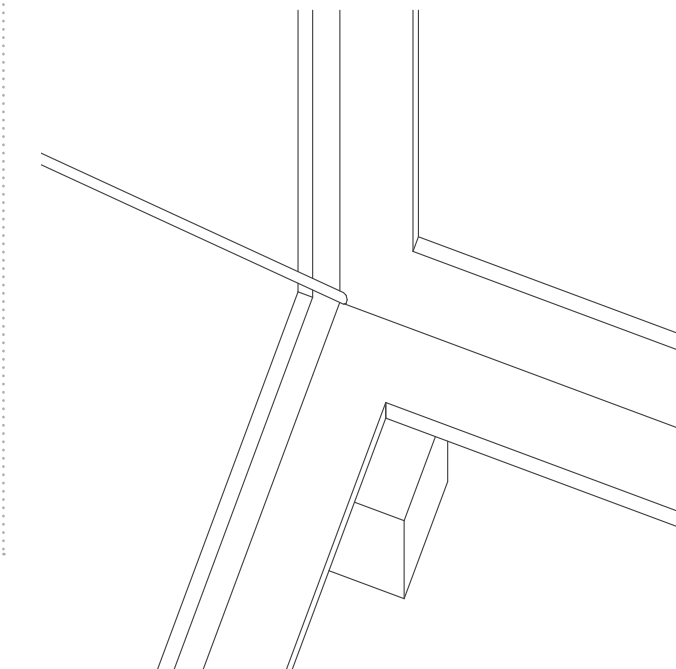
The garden fountain can be mainly used for filling up watering cans and connecting hoes. It also has wide bassin for cleaning tools. As the gardening happens on fairly steep slope, such fountains, when placed strategically, allow for easy access to water. Like the other fountains the construction is a straightforward combination of sandstone slabs tied together using standardized steel brackets.

#006 garden fountain



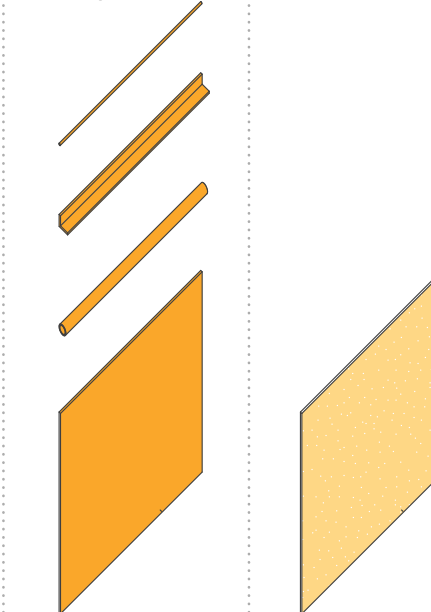
#007 material depot

exchanging wooden seating elements

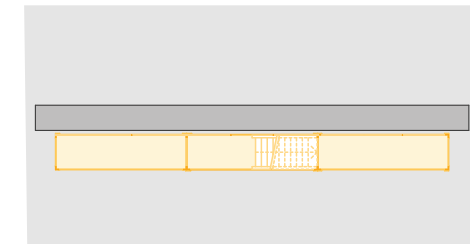


steel profiles

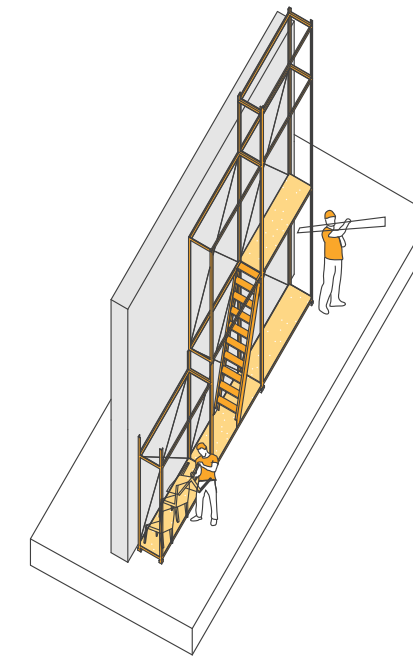
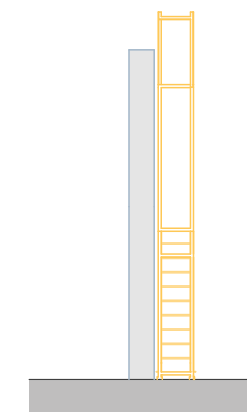
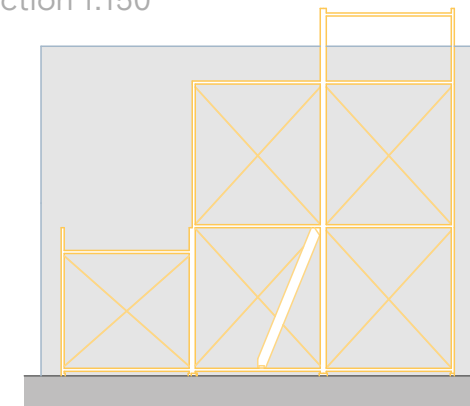
reused timber



floorplan 1:150



section 1:150



professional care
+ ecological care
+ repair care

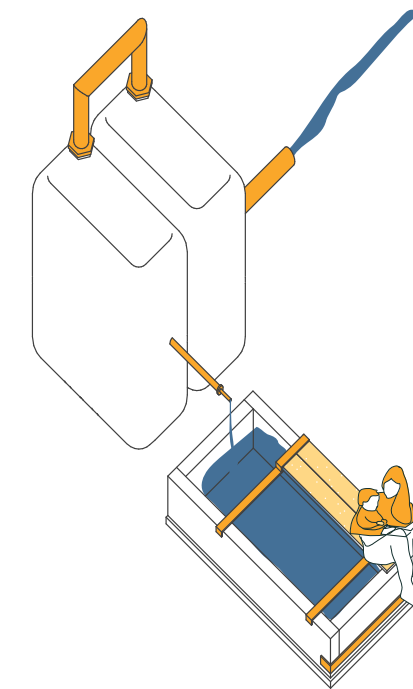
The material depot offers space to store building materials to be used for repairing and maintaining Ansó's building stock. Mainly these materials come from dismanteling the abandonend buildings in decay. The material depot is based on a system of standardized steel L-profiles that can be assembled into a scaffolding system, with steel cables for stiffening. The flooring consits of wooden planks that can be plugged in. This structure can house the materials but also act as structural support for the ruins during dismanteling.

#007 material depot



#008
**reuse
water cycle**

reusing and storing run-off water



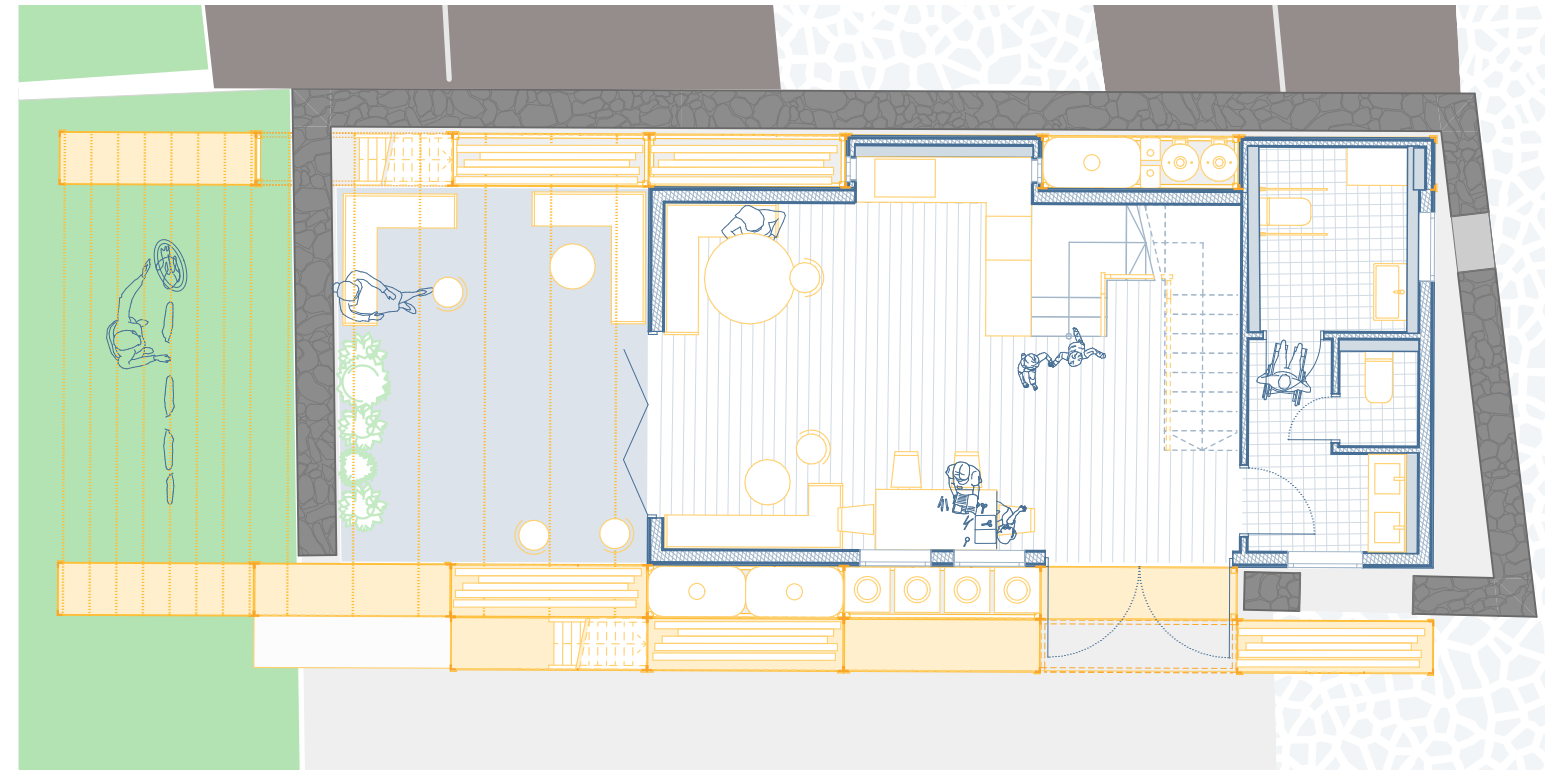
Water is a connecting theme of the different care infrastructures. This intervention might remain more invisible but provides support for the other care acts and also covers a more abstract aspect of ecological care. Currently all the run-off water in the village is collected through over- and underground piping and immediately discharged towards the river. This structure is intervening at this point, collecting the run-off water, filtering it and making it available for grey water reuse such as the laundry machines and the other fountains. The new fountain network and the visible watertank allow to save as a resource but also it invites for a more caring attitude towards the environment.

#008 reuse water cycle

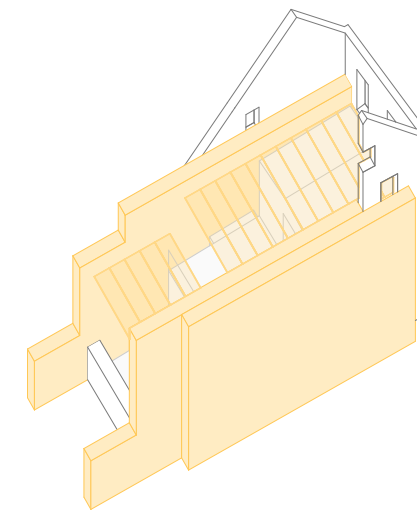
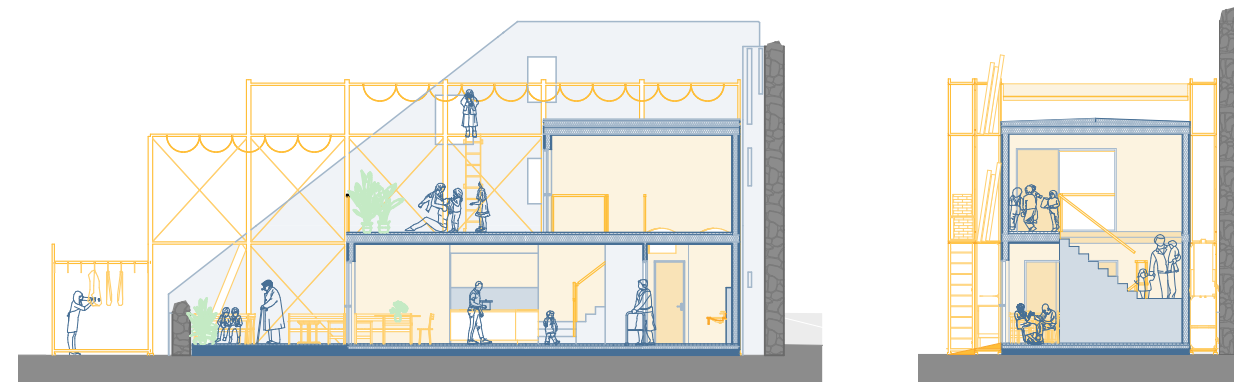


#009
day
care

floorplan 1:100



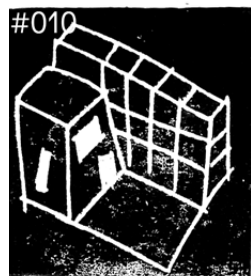
sections 1:200



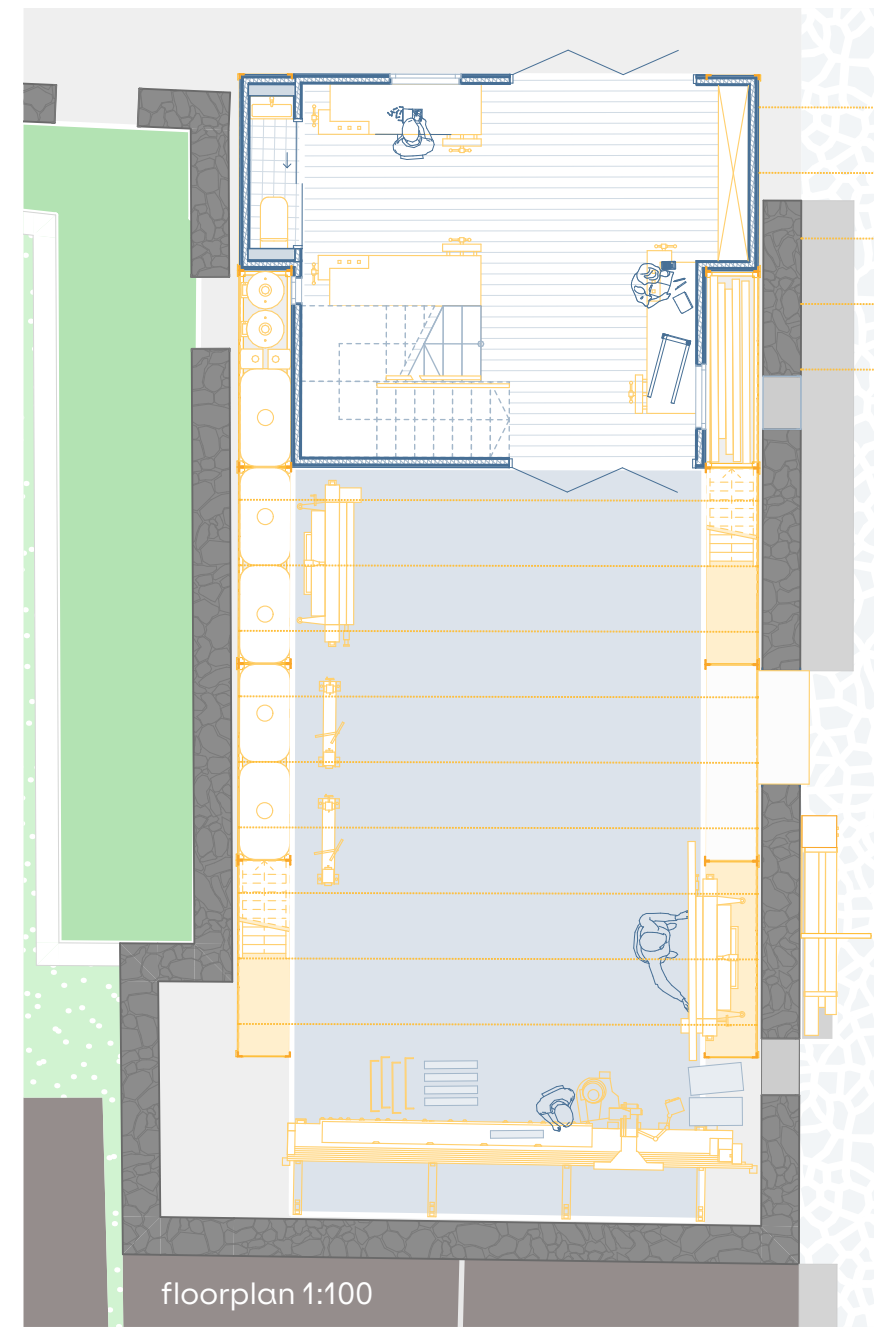
professional care
+ domestic care
+ civic care

The day care center offers a space for pre-school children and elderly people to spend time with the help of one to two professional care takers. This takes time of the parents/family members and allows for an efficient yet communal way of care taking. The structure is build out of insulated wooden panels that use the scaffolding as a load carrying structure. In the groundfloor is an accessible bathroom, a small kitchen and tables with seating mainly for the elderly, while in the second floor offers space for the children to have a private space for sleeping and playing. The spaces are ment to overlap but also offer retreat for the two very different user groups. Both floors offer a generous outdoor terrace covered by sunshading, which opens up towards the mountains.

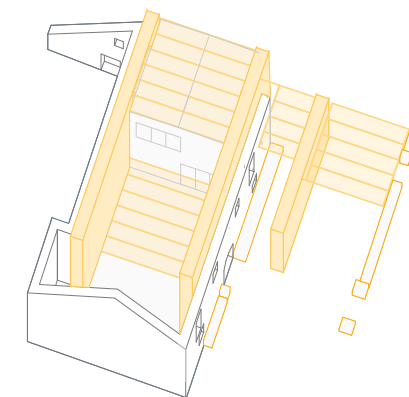
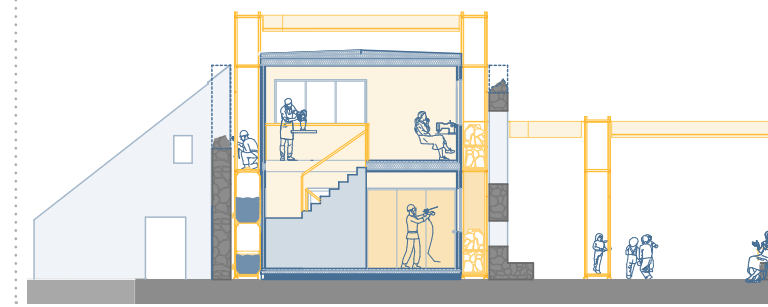
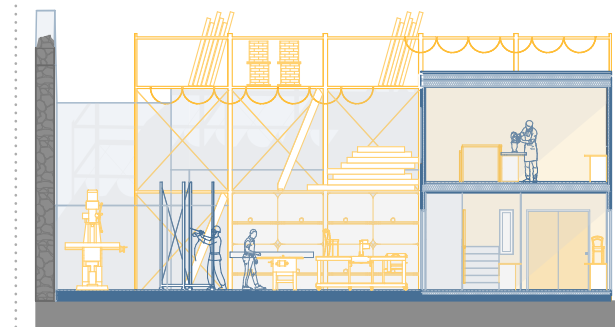
#009 intergenerational daycare



#010 repair workshop

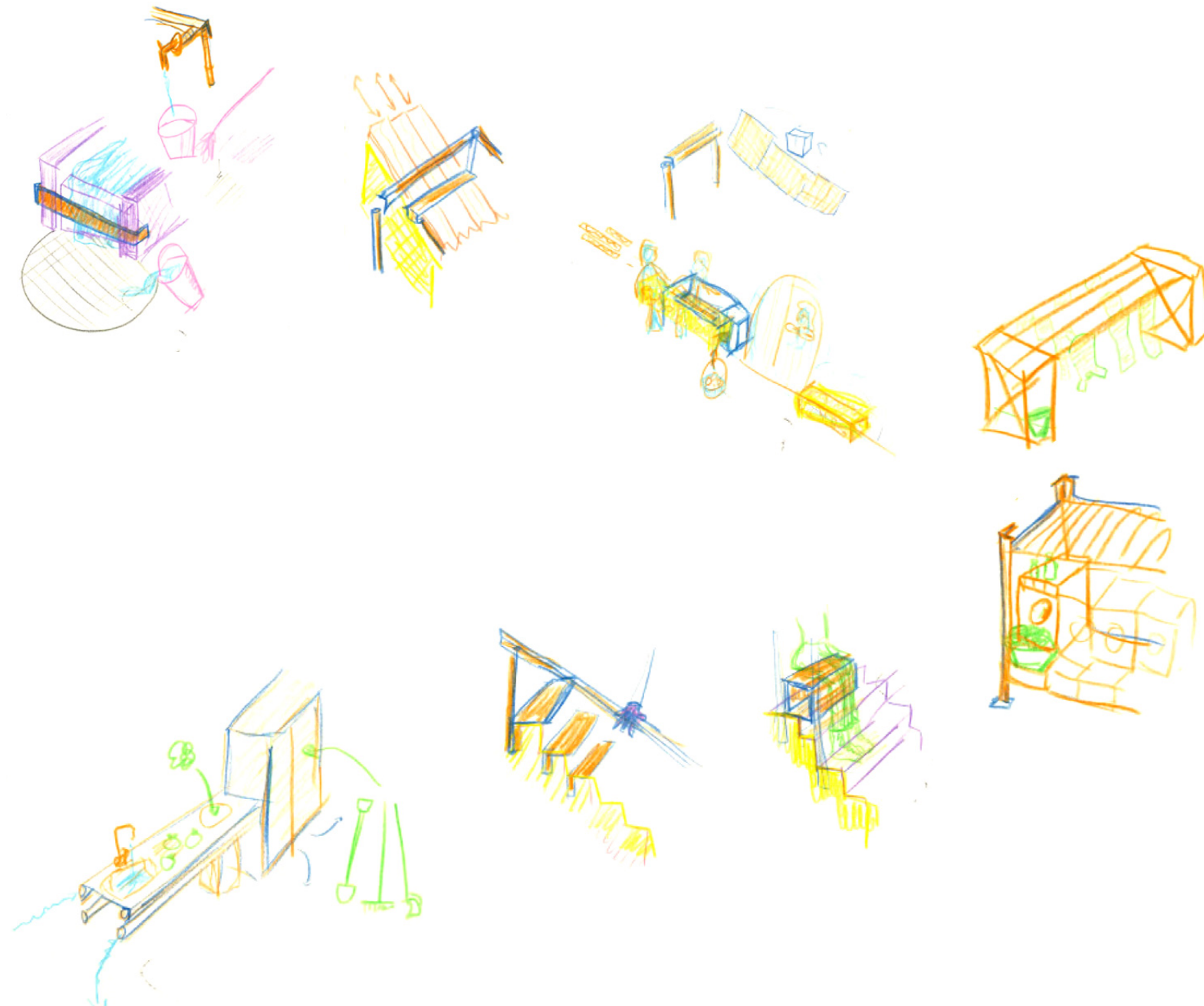


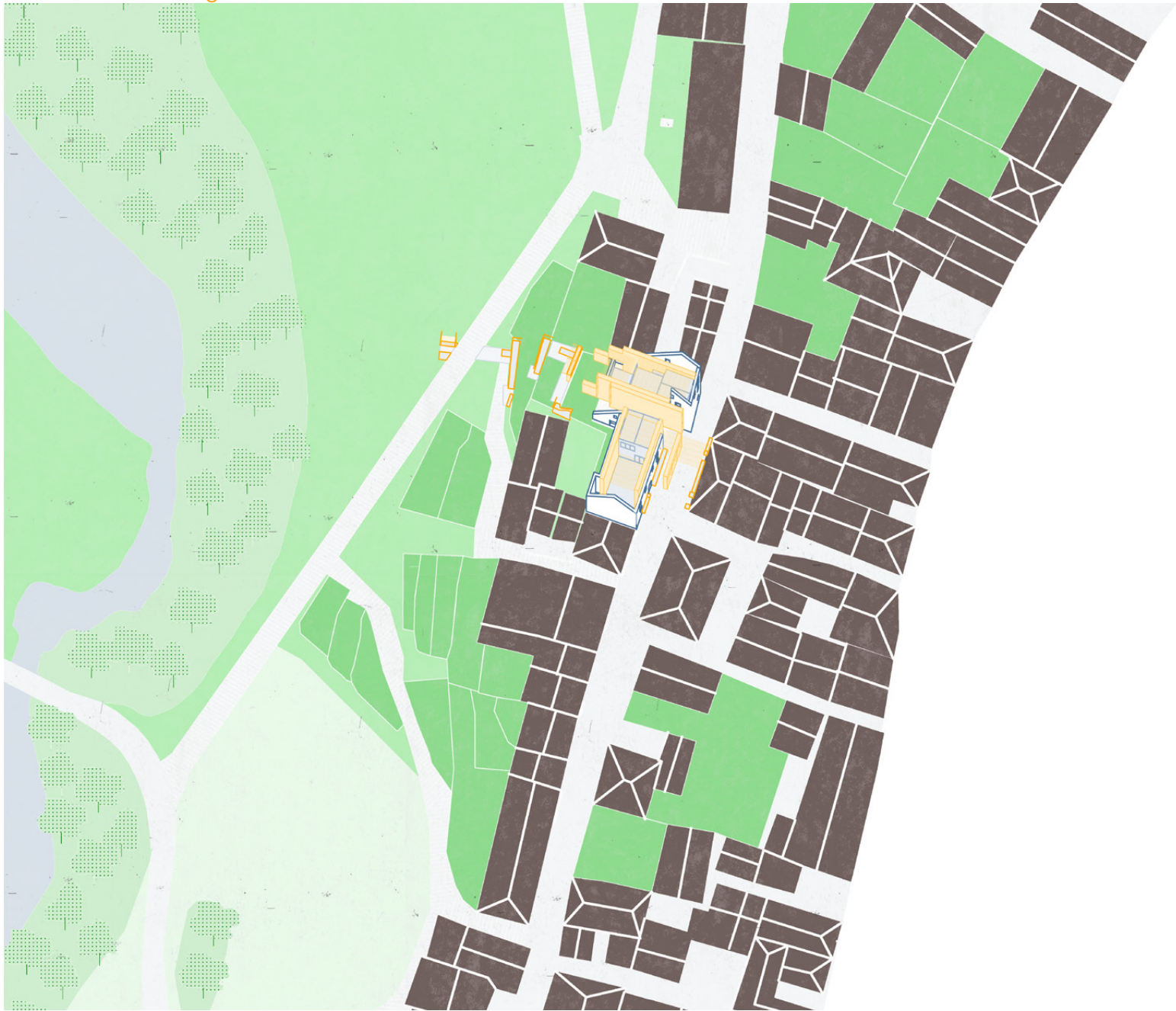
sections 1:200

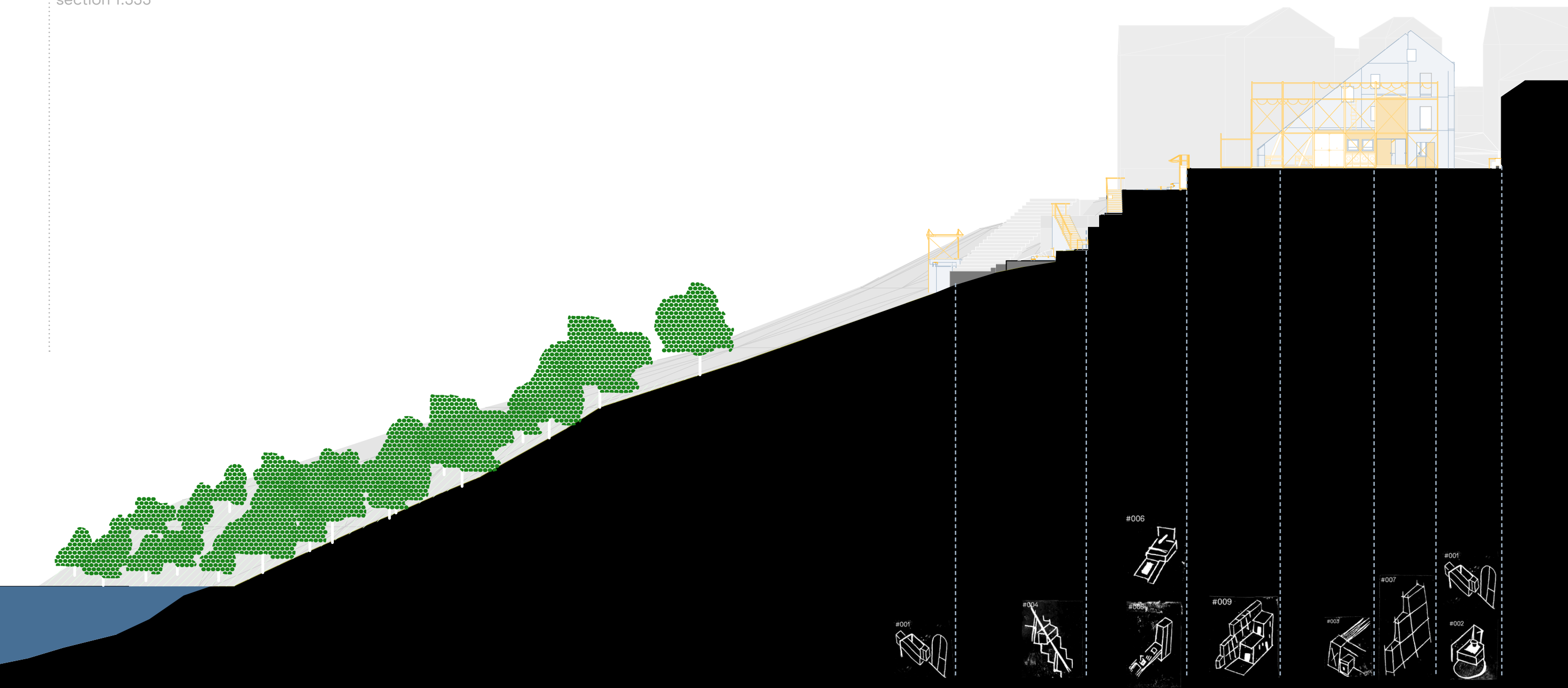


The workshop houses place for crafting and repairing, by providing workspaces and power tools in the ground and first floor. It follows the construction principles of the day care. The ground floor terrace offers space for bigger machines and more work space. The scaffolding structure gives structural support but also houses the grey water filtration system and the ventilation and plumbing for the workshop, maximizing the indoor space. The windows openings are placed in relationship to the openings in the ruin walls. This offers unique vistas on the landscape and village merging with the former structure.

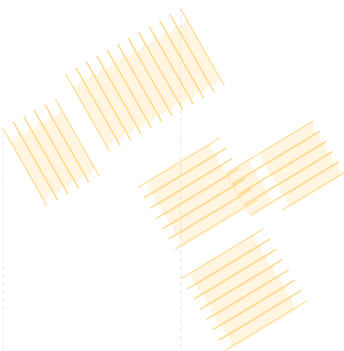
#010 repair workshop



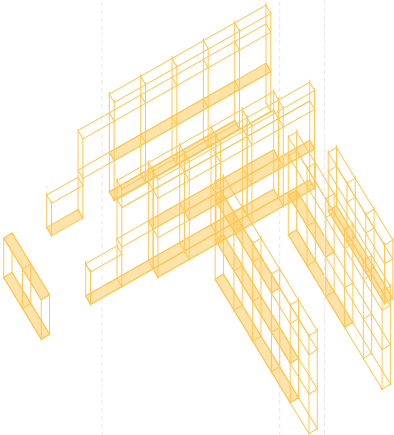




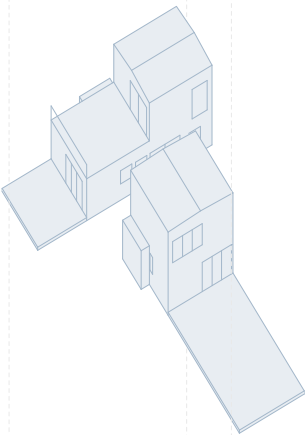
sun shading



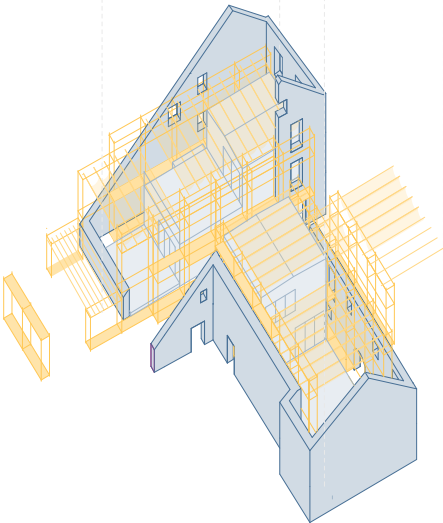
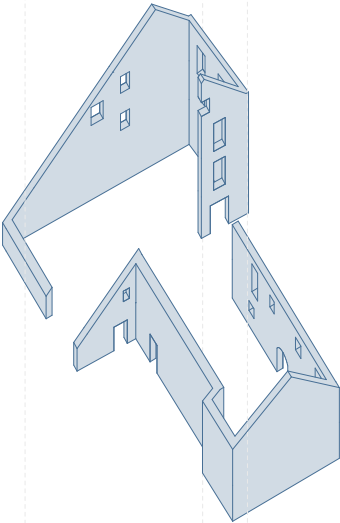
material storage

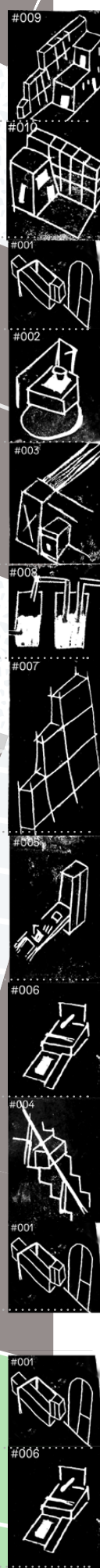
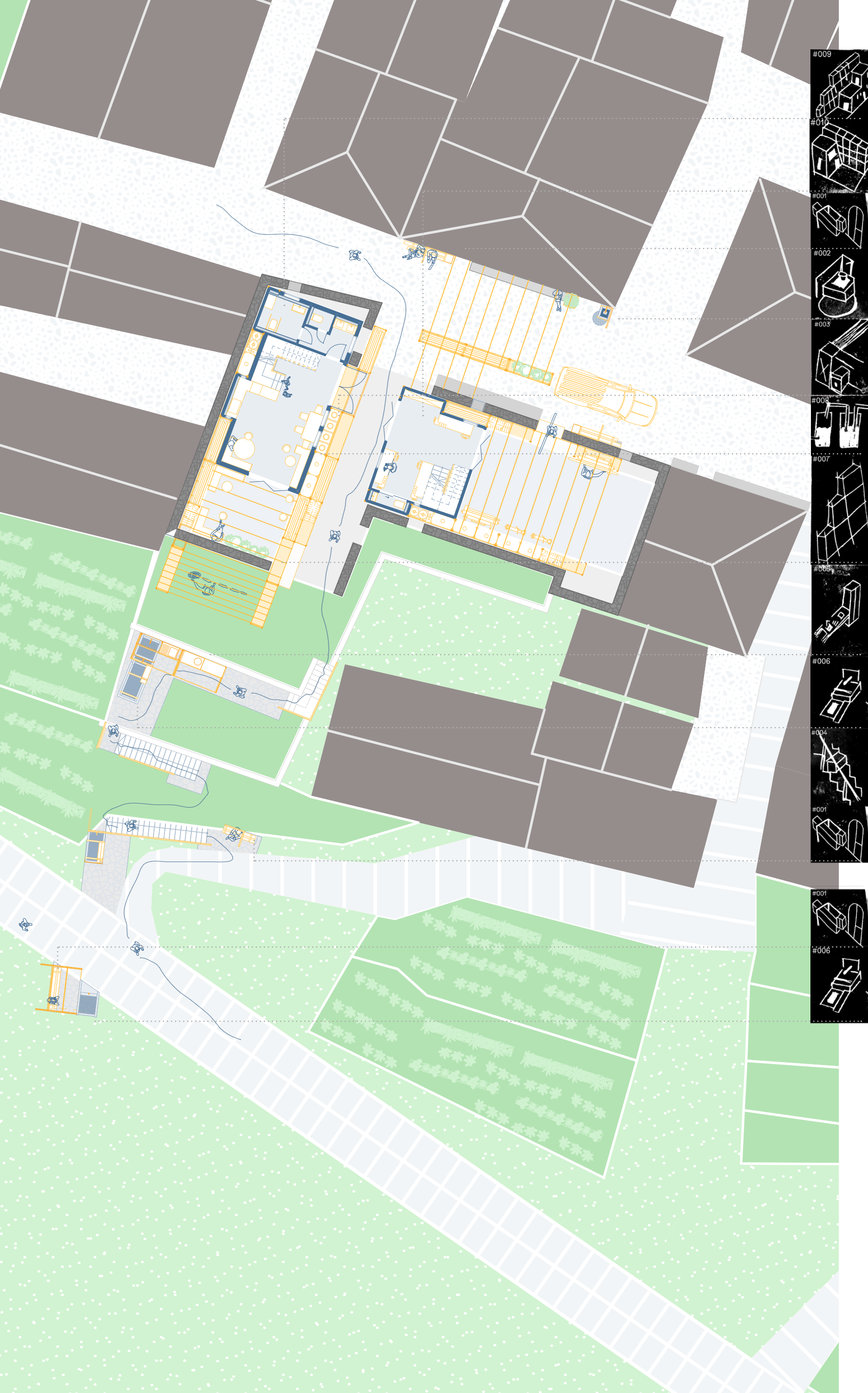


indoor spaces

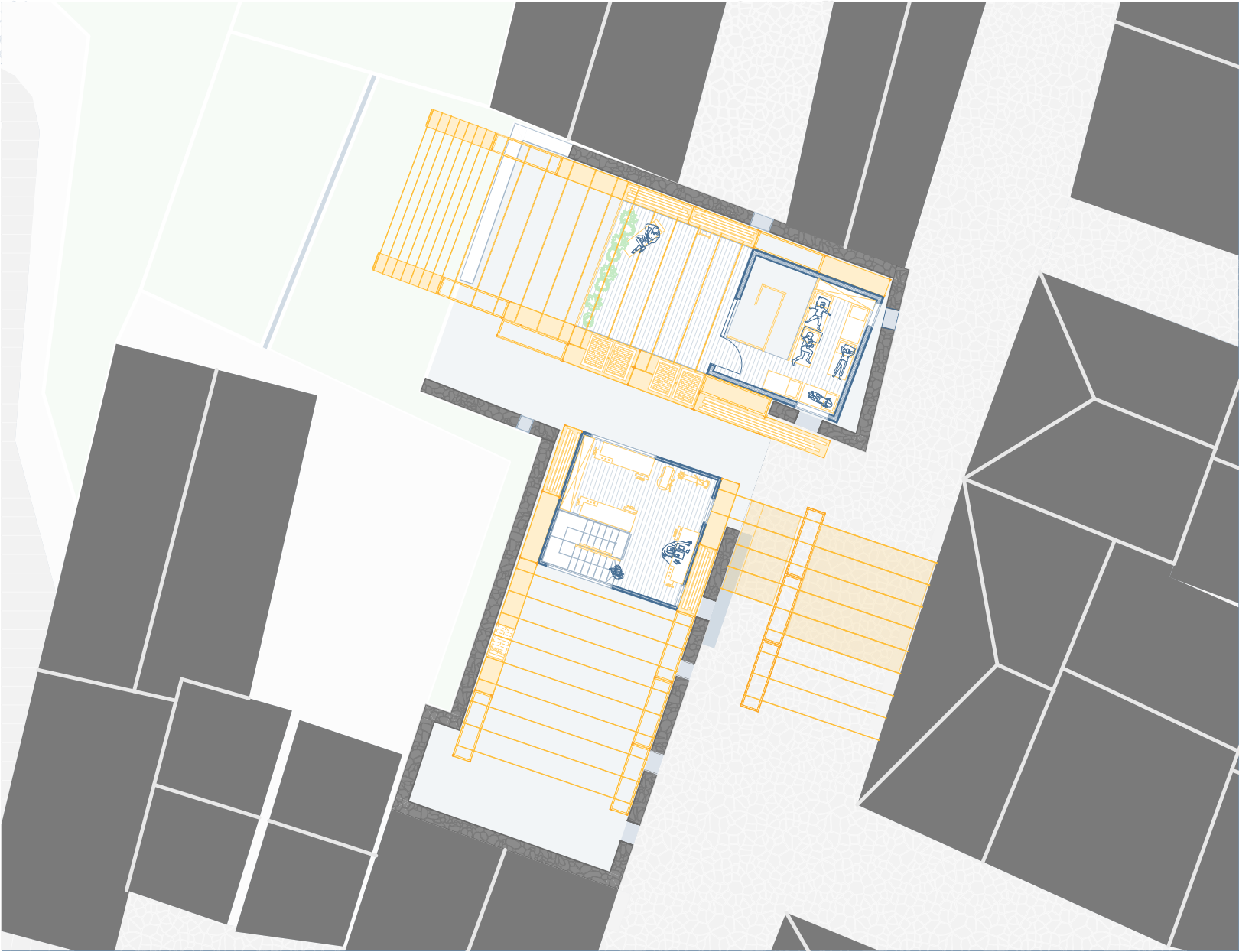


existing structure





floor plan ground floor 1:200



floor upper floor 1:200











