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LIFE COASTING VILLAGE

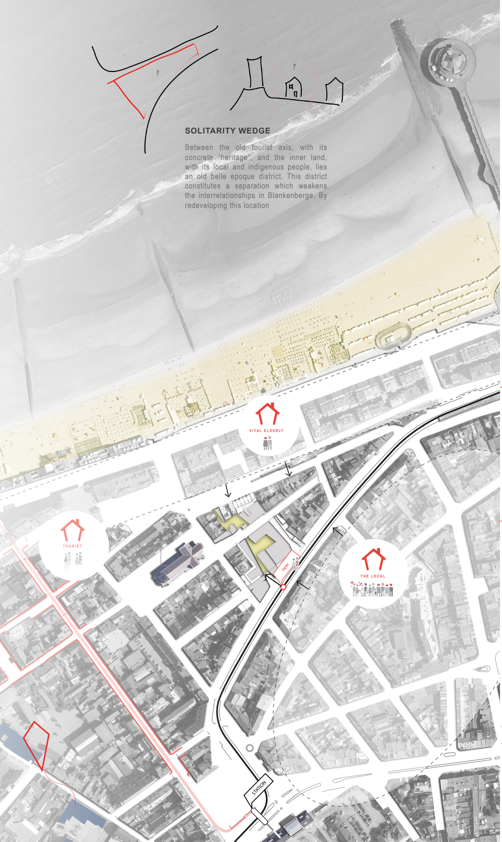
ACTIVATING BLANKENBERGE ON THE BELGIAN COAST

Life coasting! How to create a future-proof established sea resort by facilitating the needs of elderly residents at the coast of Belgium? The separation between young and old (in the Blankenberge case: the elderly at the dike/boulevard and the family houses in the inner land) are not desirable. A city full of elderly people, similar to gated communities found in America, is not desirable for social cohesion in the seaside resort. The way of living after retirement has changed to become a new phase of active life. Retirees want to be triggered, stay active in a vital social environment and from time to time be pampered.

Between the dike and the inner land, an old dilapidated belle époque neighborhood separated the retirees, the locals and the tourist. By giving this area a new meaning with recreational places and private retreats, a new hot spot will be established next to the city centre and extend the existing shopping route.

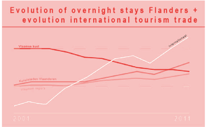
The public space on the ground floor well be separated into two. On higher levels there will be connections to cross over, outside and inside. Behind gates (pivot doors) a semi public spaces is created where facilities for shopping, health care and leisure can be found. These functions close at night just like the semi-public space. A public walkway and series of ramps connect the different floors and create relationships between the various facilities possible. This route makes it possible for elderly citizens with walking difficulties to practice and progressively move between the different levels.

To see and to be seen. 150 years ago, a group of the 'social elite' from the central region of Belgium went to the coast to enjoy the air and sun. They were the owners of a seaside villa, a Belle Etage property. The principle of the belle etage is the relationship between the different levels. You can look up and down from each level to a floor below or above. In the public space, everyone is visible. From the inner areas of the building you can "peek" to the outside world.



SOLITARITY WEDGE

Between the old tourist axis, with its concrete "heritage", and the inner land, with its local and indigenous people, lies an old belle epoque district. This district constitutes a separation which weakens the interrelationships in Blankenberge. By redeveloping this location



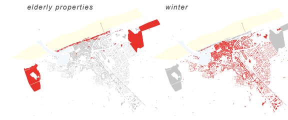
sources are combined : UNWTO & Toerisme vlaanderen

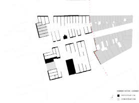
life expectancy

	2014	>>	2050
♂	79,1		85,7
♀	82,8		88,5

retiring age

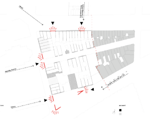
2014	>>	2050
65 years 2months		70 years 3months





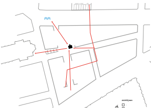
preservation & conservation

Preserving old façades and main structure walls is the basis of the new development



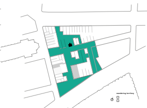
accents

The value of the existing neighborhood is poor. New accents are created to improve the value



visibility fisherman's house

The old fisherman's house is a symbol and a recognizable point. The new urban design makes the fisherman's house visible from outside. A glimp of the fisherman's house attracts passing pedestrians into the neighborhood



wandering territory

A newly designed area to wander around and discover the new shops and health related functions on multi levels

FALLING DOWN & RISE UP AGAIN

Tourism at the Belgian coast decreases. Formerly tourist apartments are now occupied by retirees who have moved from the inland to the coast. Therefore, aging at the Belgian coast is twice as high as in the rest of Flanders and the Netherlands. The area can be treated as a precursor of the issue 'aging'. An ideal pioneer site to experiment with the area issue.

CREATING SPACES AND PLACES

Creating new public and semi-public spaces of high user value the area will be revived. Important is that each space will designed on different stages of aging. The various levels are attractive to created different routes and to wander through the fisherman village. The degree of open, closed and private, public will support the variety of spaces.

LIFE COASTING

New lifestyles of elderly asks for a functional program that support this lifestyle. Functions as health, leisure and knowledge will be combined. Placing stores and boutiques a new space for residents of Blankeberge will support their livelihood. The city Centre prolonged and create new horizontal routes instead of the vertical (from the sea off) routes

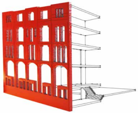
BELLE EPOQUE

Dike

Wall of grandeur, villas decorated
with colonnades, loggias, verandas.
To see and to be seen,
show on the balcony,
drunk with prosperity, high, proud,
the richesse in a golden age settled.

Villa les lilas, Les Orchidées,
Jeanne, Alice and Louise:
the names mentioned
for flowers and children,
built in the prime of life again,
as houses of gods.

Frederick Lucien de Laere

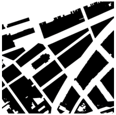


belle epoque villa connection wander area

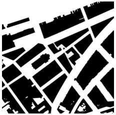
LANDERS

ctor elderly x2 on coast

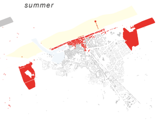
years of retirement	2014	>>	2050
♂	13,11		15,4
♀	17,6		18,2

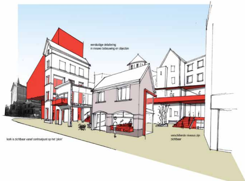


existing urban plan

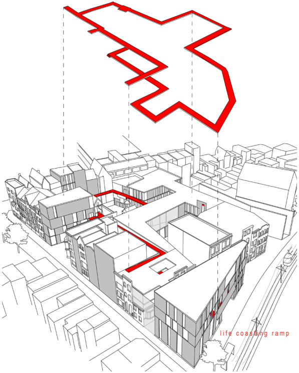


new urban plan

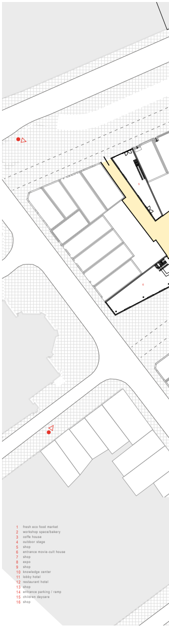



eenduidige detailering
in nieuwe bebouwing en objecten
kerk is zichtbaar vanaf centraalpunt op het 'plein'
verschillende niveaus zijn
zichtbaar

vision



life coasting ramp



MAKING PLACE FOR RETIREES

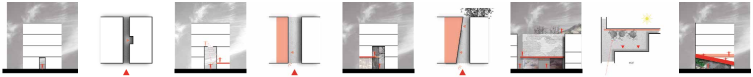
The terms 'summer town' and 'winter town' were until recently well-known phenomena. Now retirees inhabit the summer area (or summer town). This results in permanently inhabited temporary tourist apartments. A new quality for living in a coastal area can be reached for this target group. They are still wealthy and at the beginning of a new phase in their lives.

NEW FRAME CITY

sunpath

A path with sheltered spots in the sun

TOOKIT || CREATING SPACES AND PLACES



secret .01

narrow passage with a secret entrance, for example the clubhouse entrance for elderly

passage .02

new relations, creating walkways on multi levels and make them visible for social safety

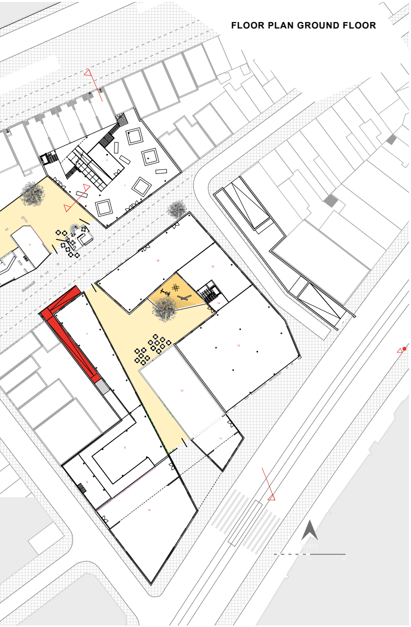
passage .03

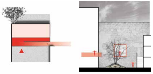
playing with the mind by putting the walkway in perspective, at the end of the passage their will be a new "spot", which will lead through the area

square .04

sitting in the sun without wind, creating a new micro climate

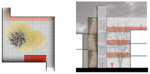
FLOOR PLAN GROUND FLOOR





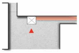
passage .05

a ramp guides to new functions



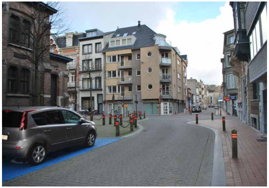
courtyard .06

hidden garden, to enter at different ways and levels



view .07

all plots can't be bought at the same time - a growth model can be introduced - an optimal model will be realized driven by demand

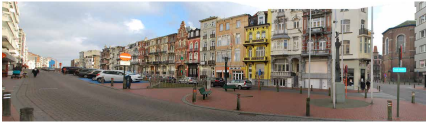


view 01. || before

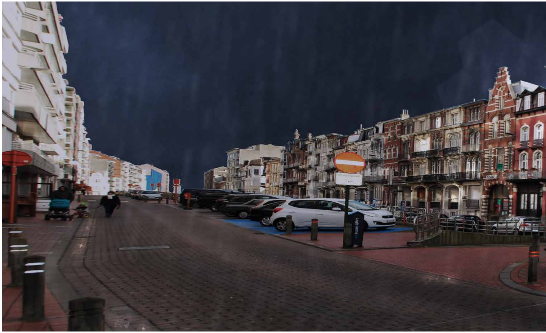
ENTRANCE BUILDINGS

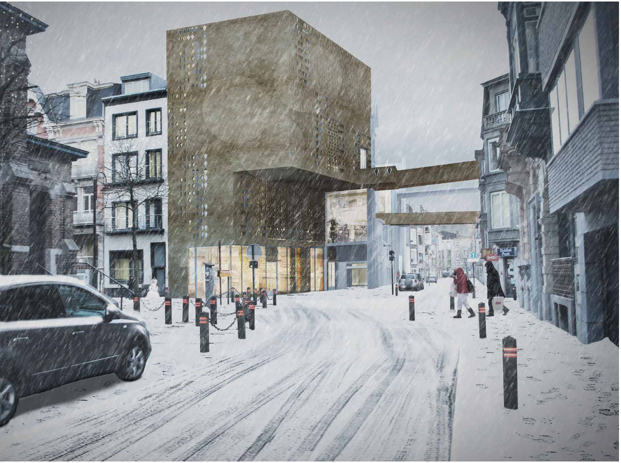
A clear mass in contrast with the existing buildings. It is simple in terms of details. The masses are the nodes in the route to the town, sea and the train station of Blankenberge.

view 02. || before

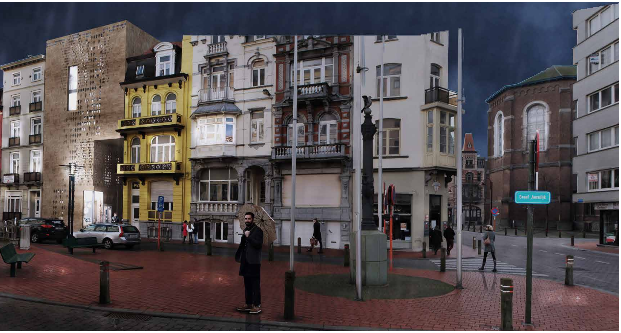


view 02. || after



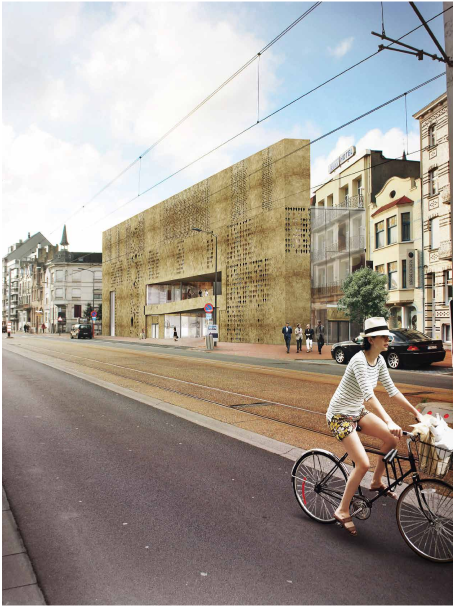


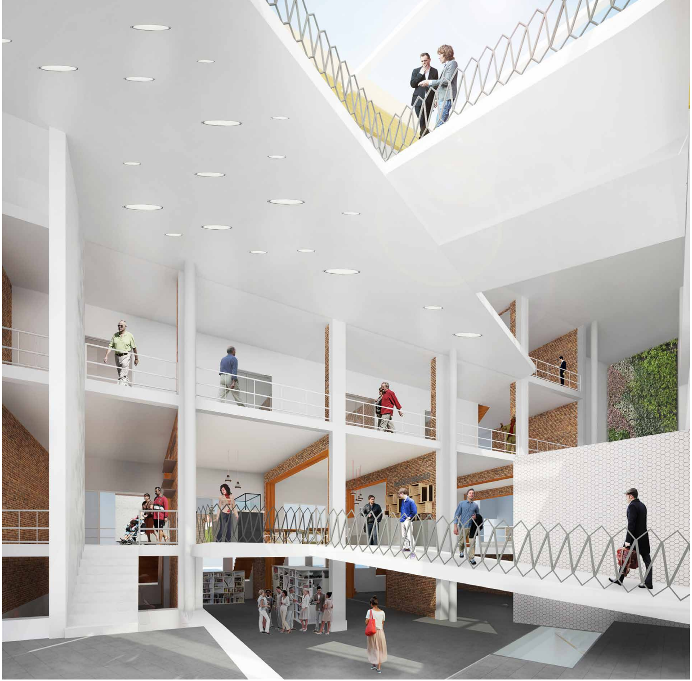
view 01. || after



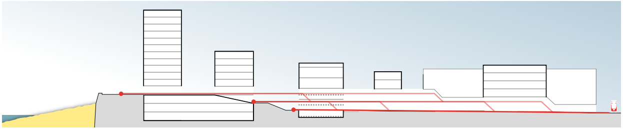
view 03. || before

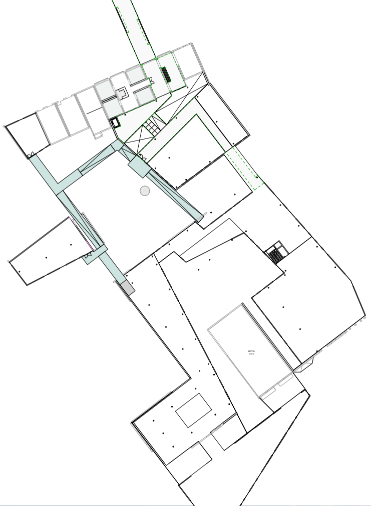
view 03. || after

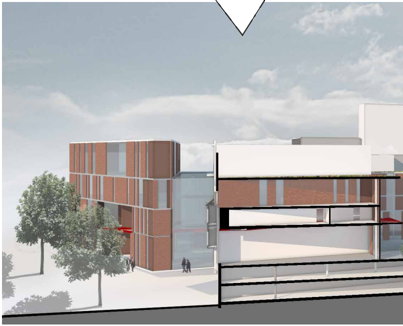


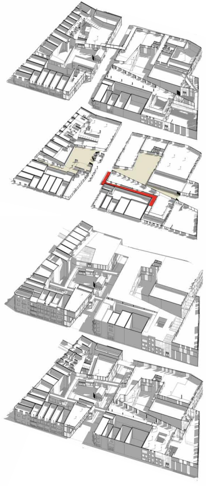


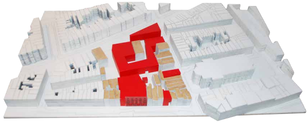
view atrium

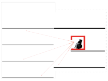












EXTROVERT VS. INTROVERT

The facades of the existing belle époque building are recognizable by the many details and the profusion of decorations. This is the result of them displaying their wealth during the industrial revolution. During that time a new product was introduced in the build sector: ornamental ceramics. Not only were the floors covered with decorative floors tiles but also walls and arches above the window were gracefully enriched. The extrovert outer façade showed their status in society. The interiors where the opposite of the exterior, soberly decorated.

I wanted to reserve the context of extroverted and introverted in the new to build part of the plan. The exterior of the new buildings will be reserved and simple, in contrast to the existing buildings. The facades of each building are similar in character to create continuity across the whole of the new development.

Newly formed building will accentuate the new routes in the area. Their physical lines match the ratios and proportions of the existing buildings.

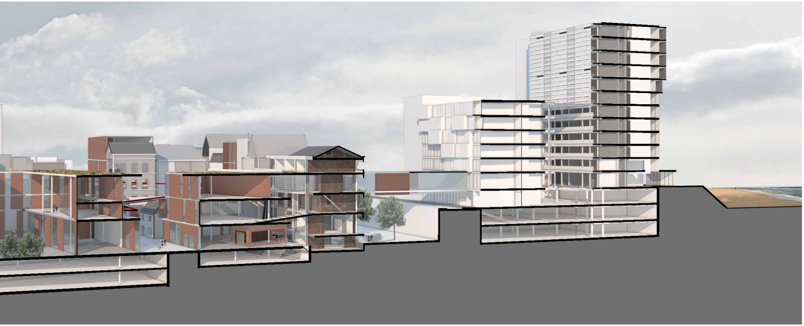
The main target group, the elderly, will stay in spaces in several buildings. These indoor spaces should stimulate an active life. The different atmospheres in the interior provide each functions its own identity.

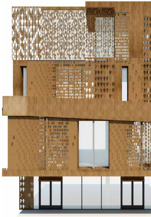
CONNECTIONS OLD AND NEW

The relationship between old and new should reinforce each other. The aesthetical subtly of the material is important. An aluminum façade is created in an earthy tone. The print and the open/close proportion creates variety in aesthetics.

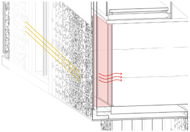
GATES AND RAILINGS

The accessibility of the semi-public space is controlled by pivot doors. In a closed state, the print in the aluminum will make the outdoor spaces behind the door visible. The railing are uniform in both the old and new buildings. This enhances the recognition of the entire project as a whole. The design is inspired by old materials such as cast iron, which are then applied in a modern way.

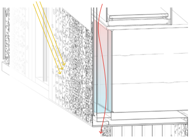




HEAT BALANS

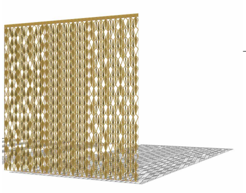


winter



summer

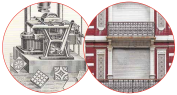
PIVOT DOOR



front view

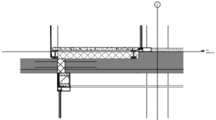
shadow inside

KITE



patron from ceramics

DETAIL



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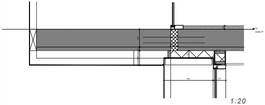

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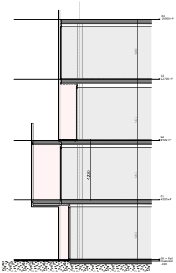

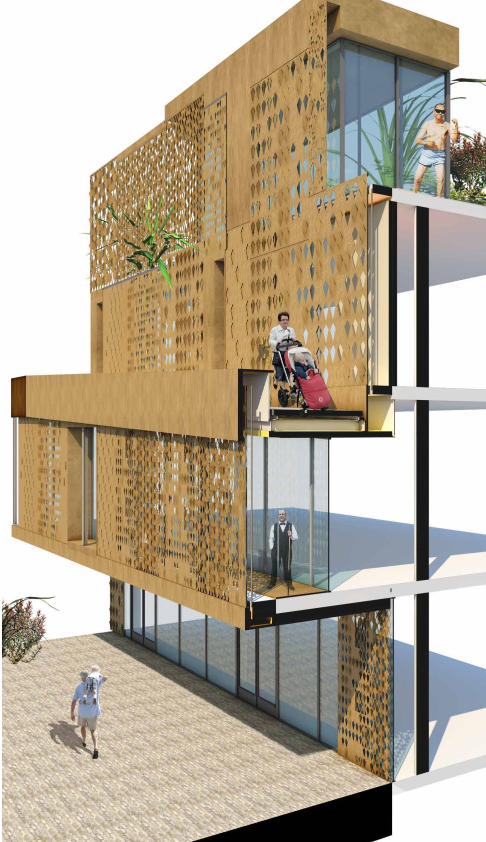1:100