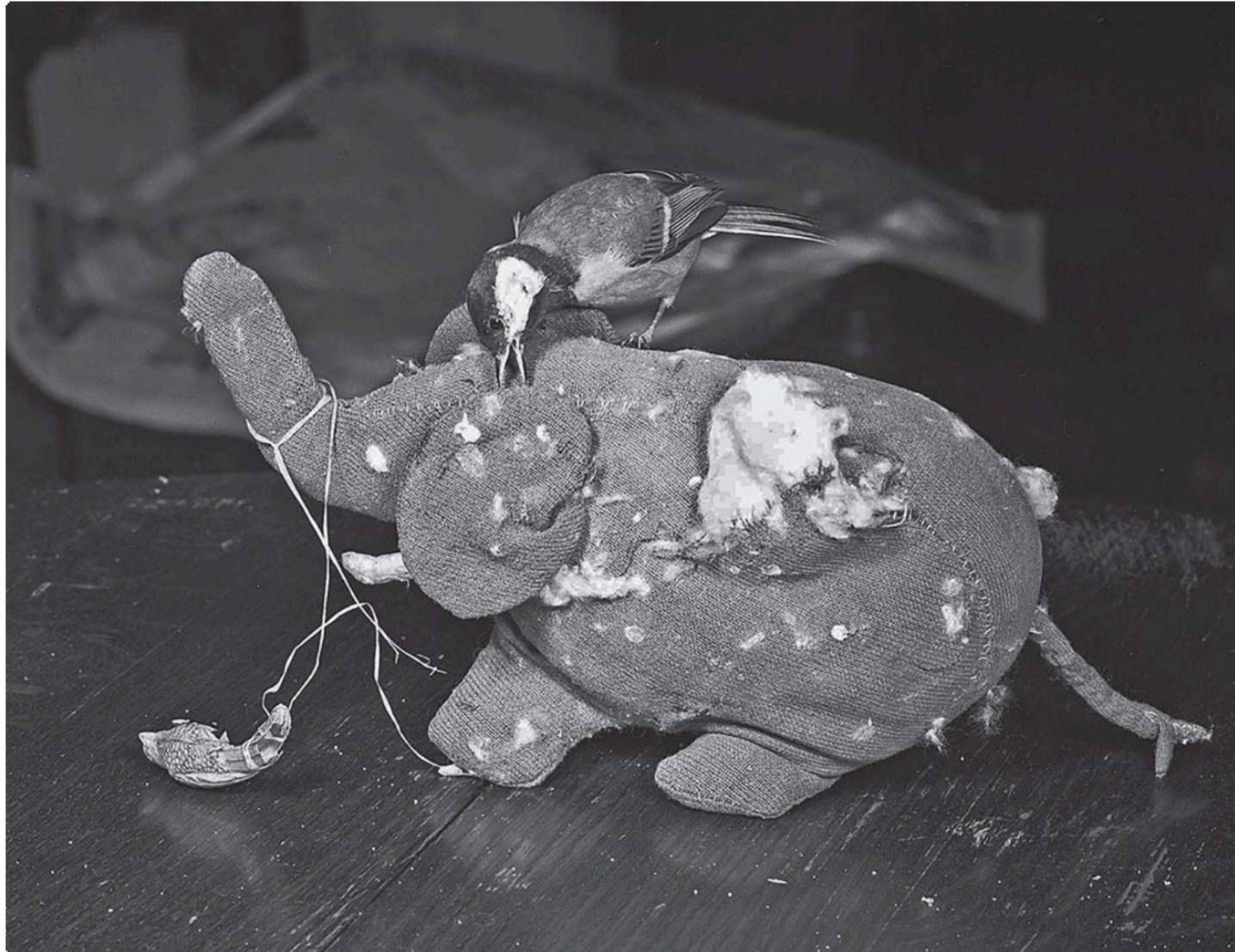


Living with birds

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture
HEAD – Genève
Diploma Project, 2026
Student: Jaemo Lee
Tutor: Fala Atelier(Ahmed Belkhodja, Ana Luisa Soares)
Assistant: Robin Delerce





A favourite toy of the Great Tits, which they attack vigorously then pull out the stuffing.
September 1950.

“On 7th August I wrote in my notes:
Sounds of hammering and tearing come from indoors;
probably some books left on the table are being torn
to shreds.

Something has just fallen to the floor with a subdued
rattle, – my fountain pen?

Next I see the toy Blue Tit being lugged to the door-
step and pommelled.

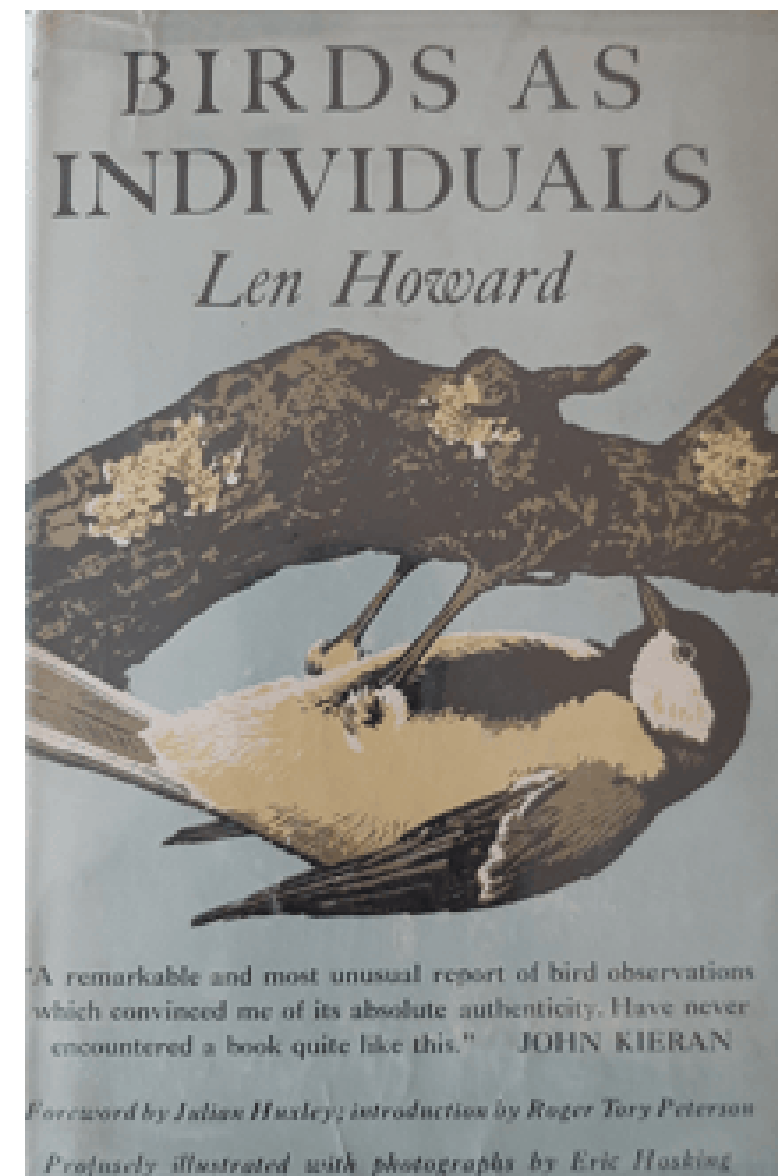
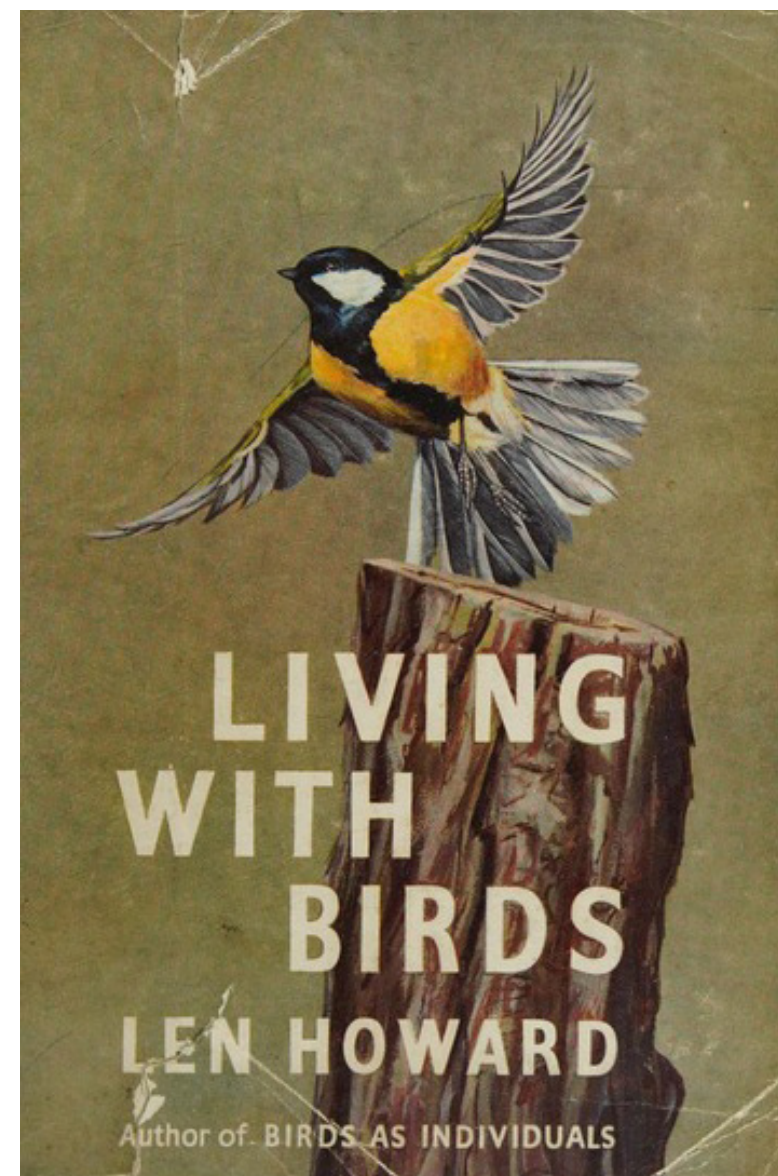
I go indoors to see what they are doing and find my
suppositions were right.

Some of them fly out as I enter, for they know I object
when they tear books or play with my fountain pen, –
too often they steal the caps of pens which I later find
on top of the window curtains or outdoors.”

Living with Birds, p. 70



Len Howard, 1894–1973

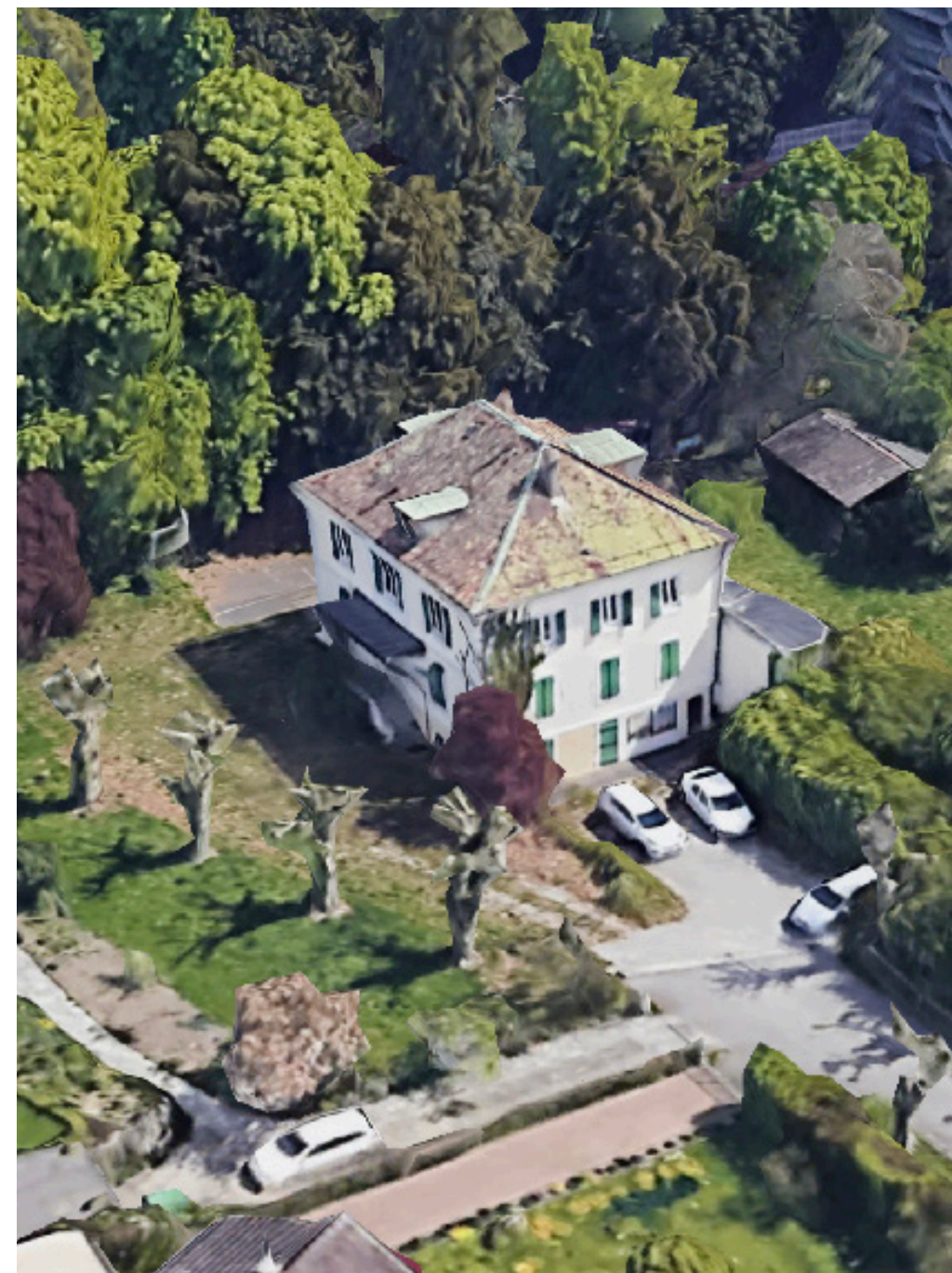


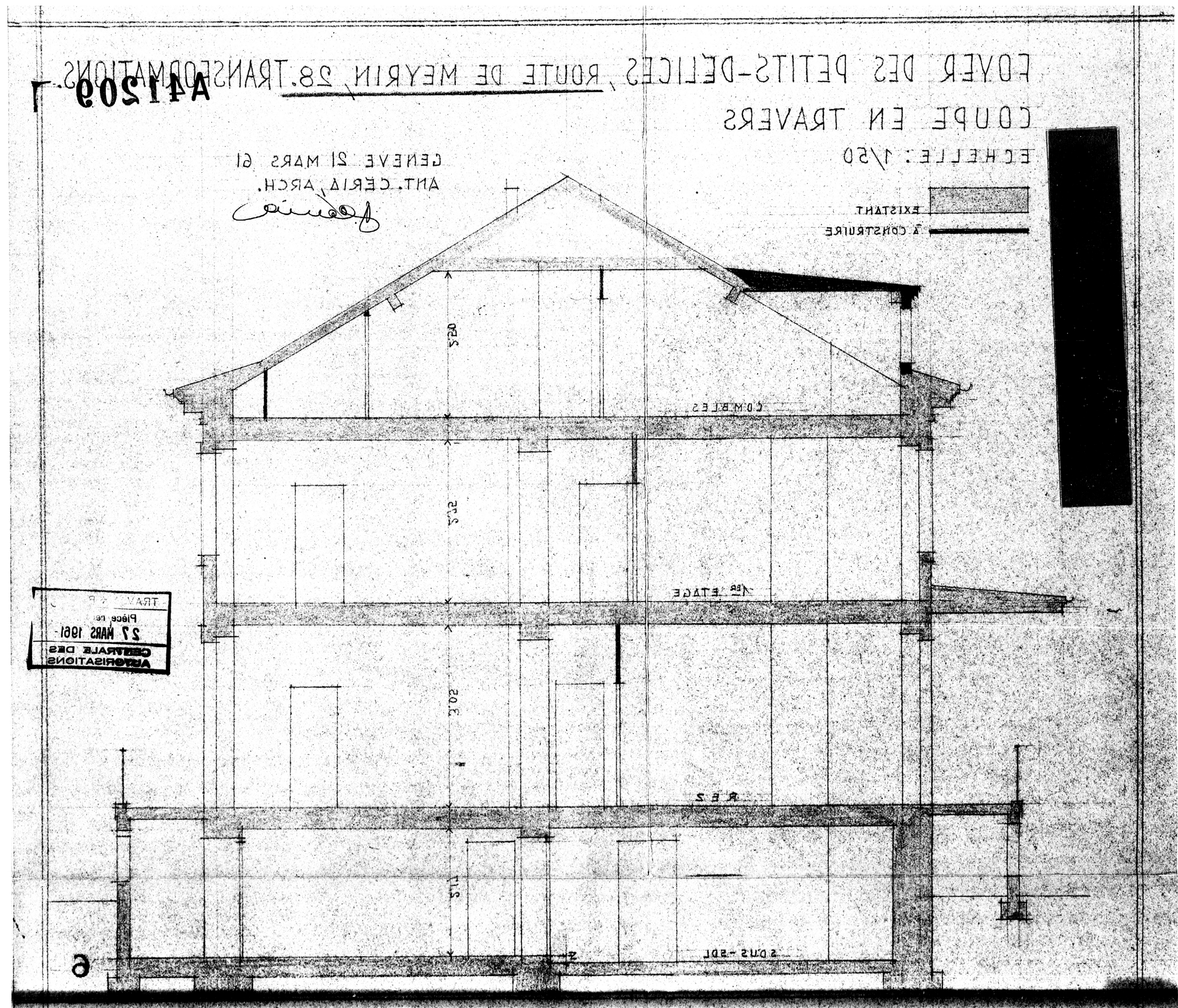


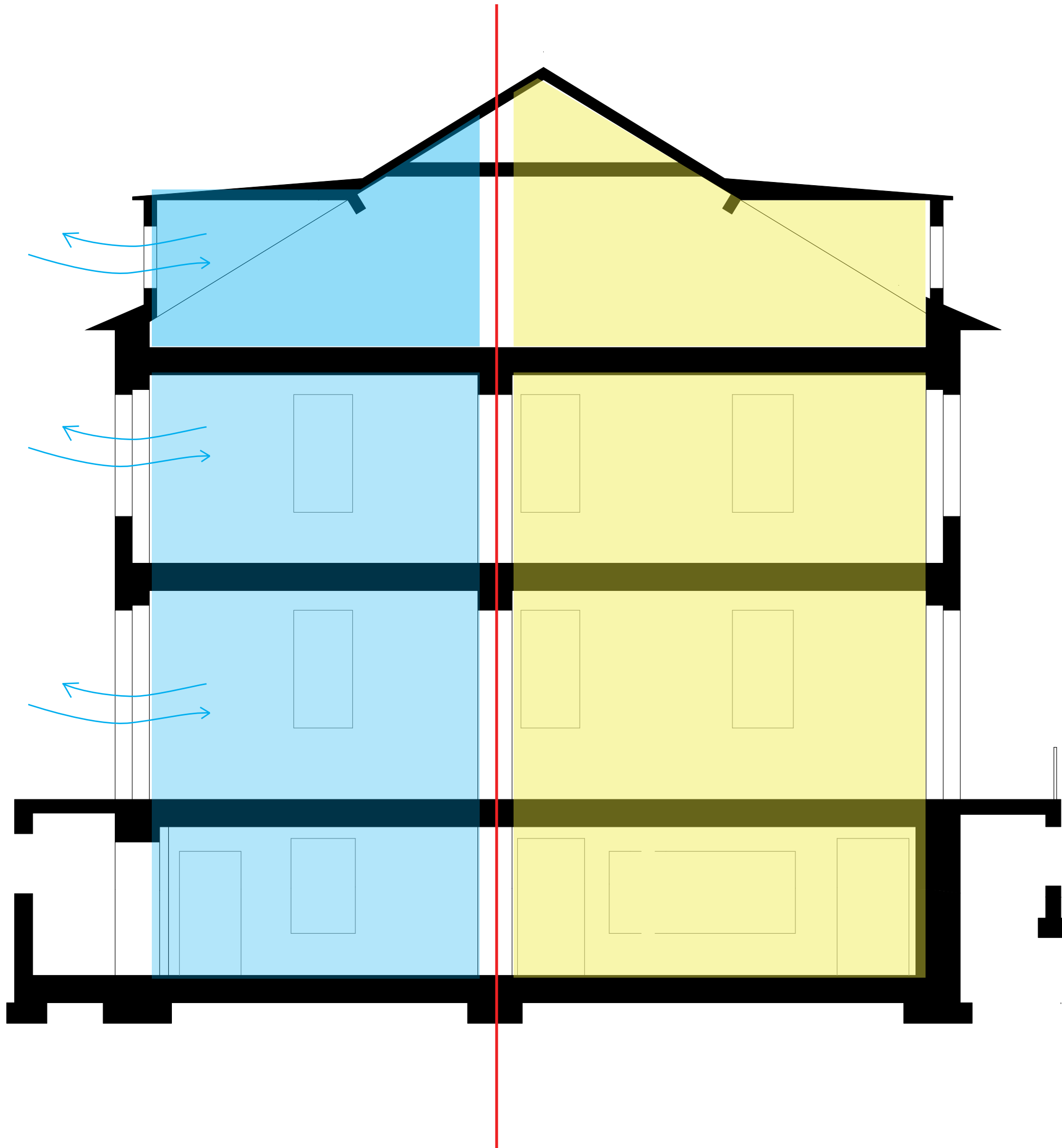


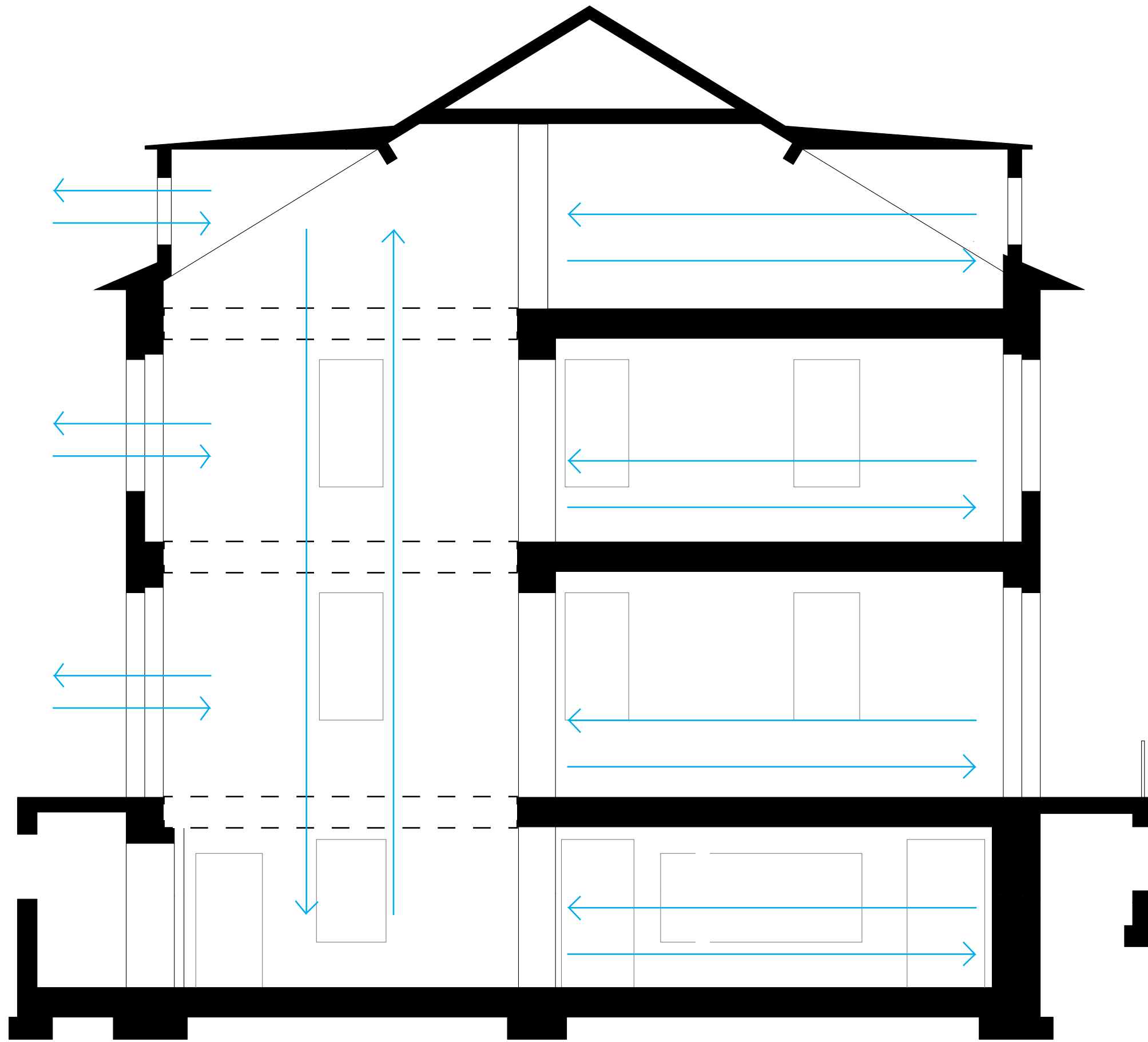


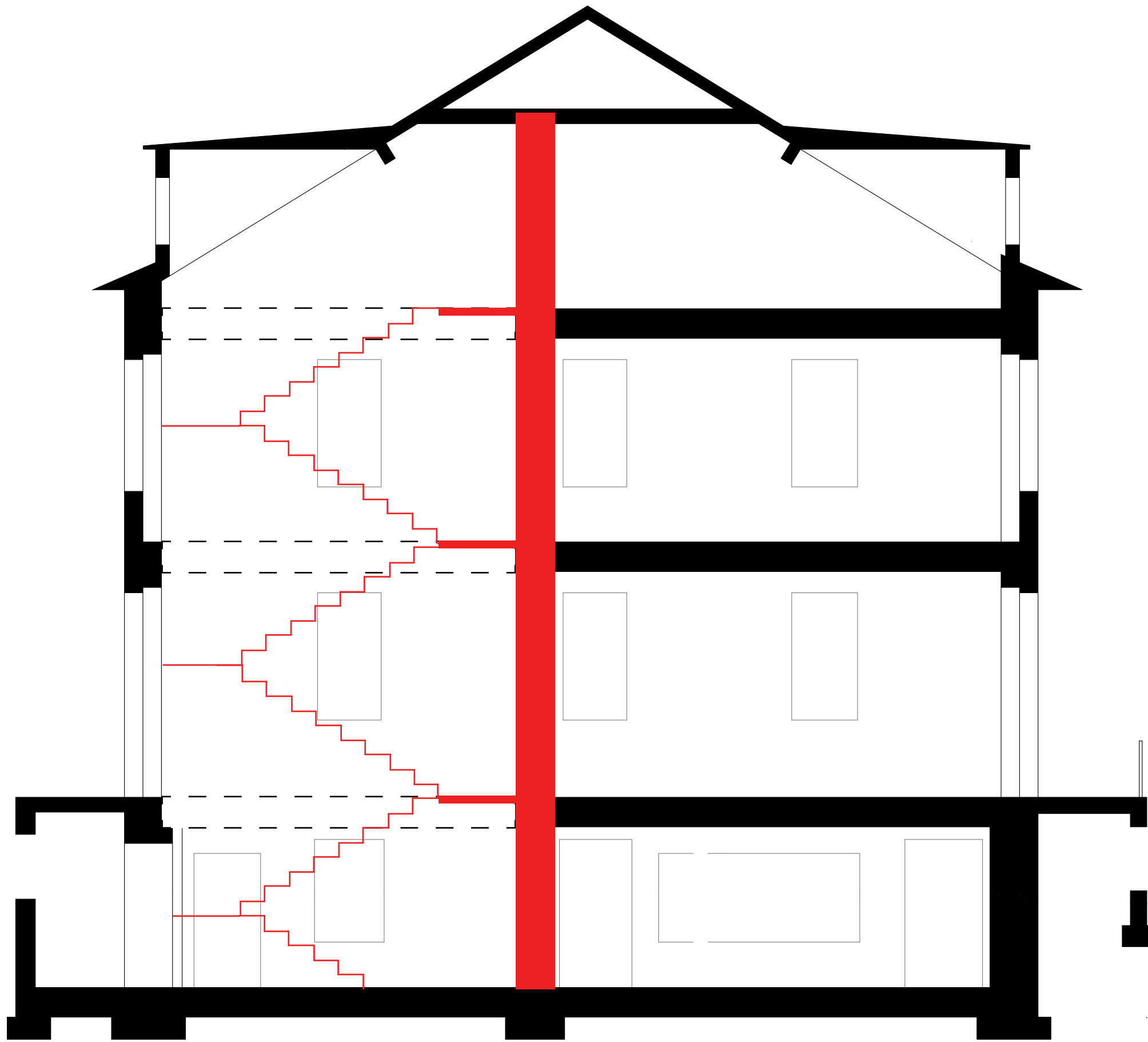


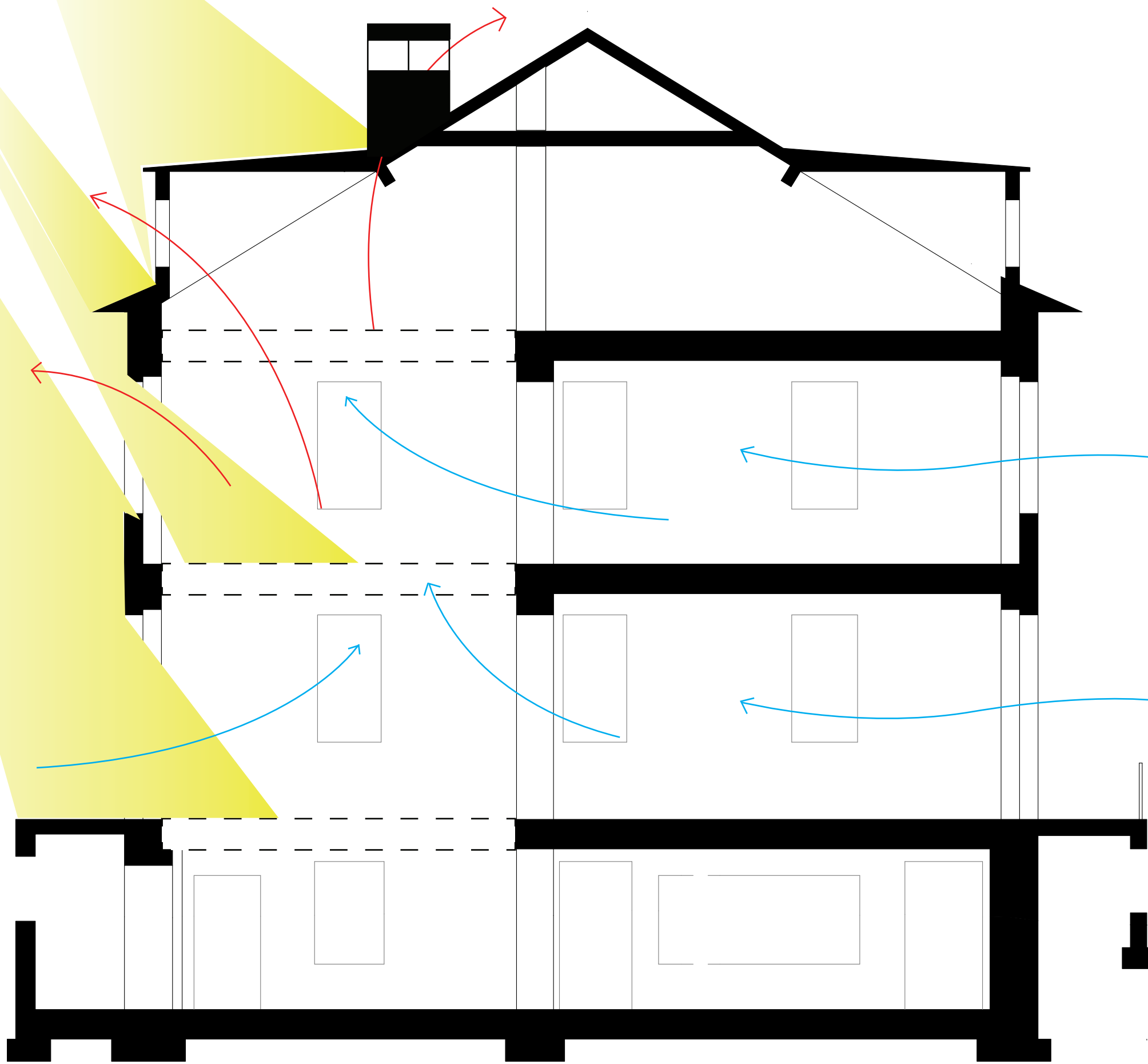














Coming through the fanlight. A Blue Tit and Great Tits, hesitant because a huge camera is focussed upon them. *September 1950.*

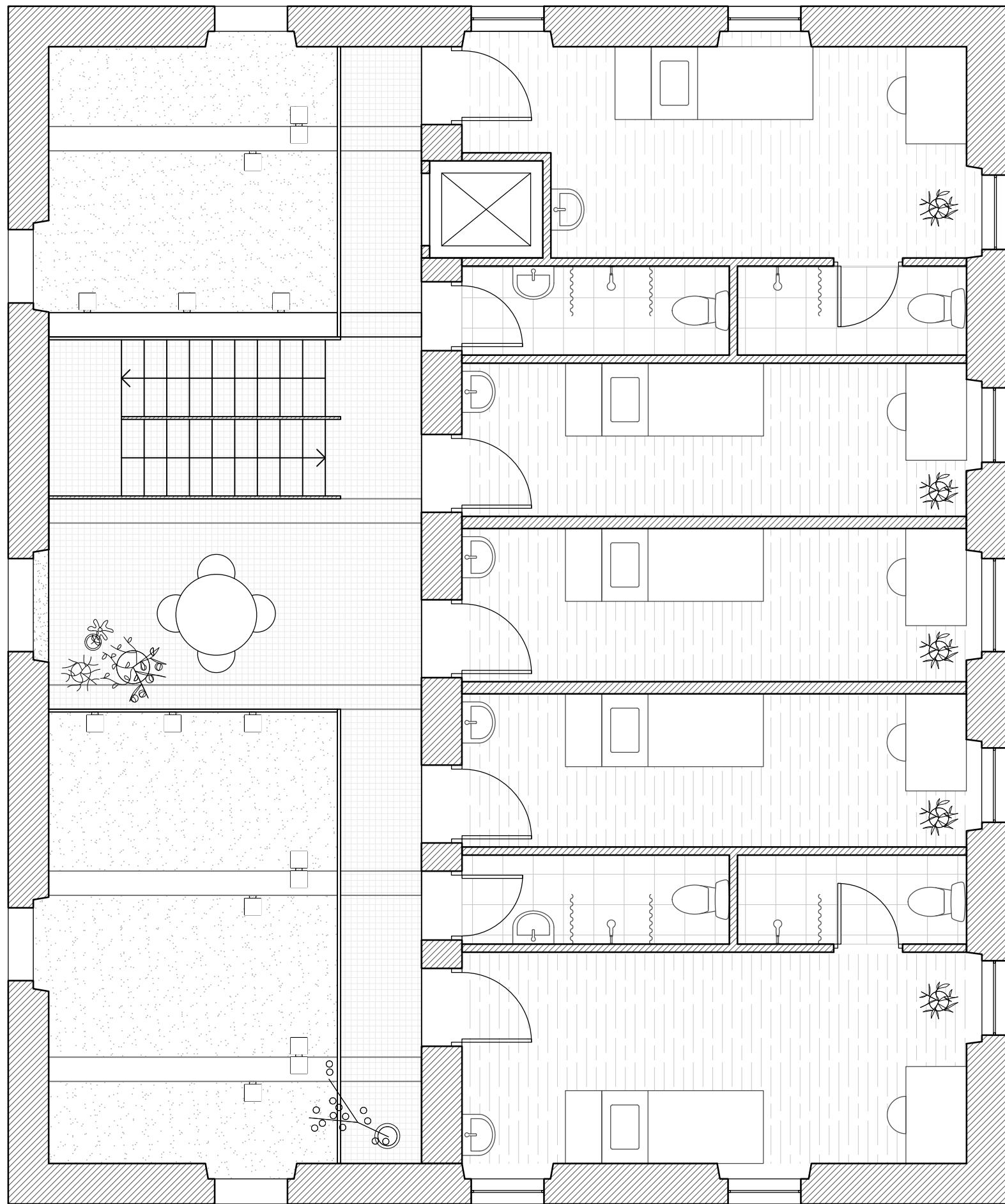
“One Blackbird sang a Bach phrase, which may have been copied from hearing me play Bach on the violin. There was a short trill on one note which he had some difficulty in singing neatly at first, but after much practice he got it slick and clear. Then he began experiments of embellishing Bach’s music by doubling the length of the trill and adding a similar trill to another note in the phrase.

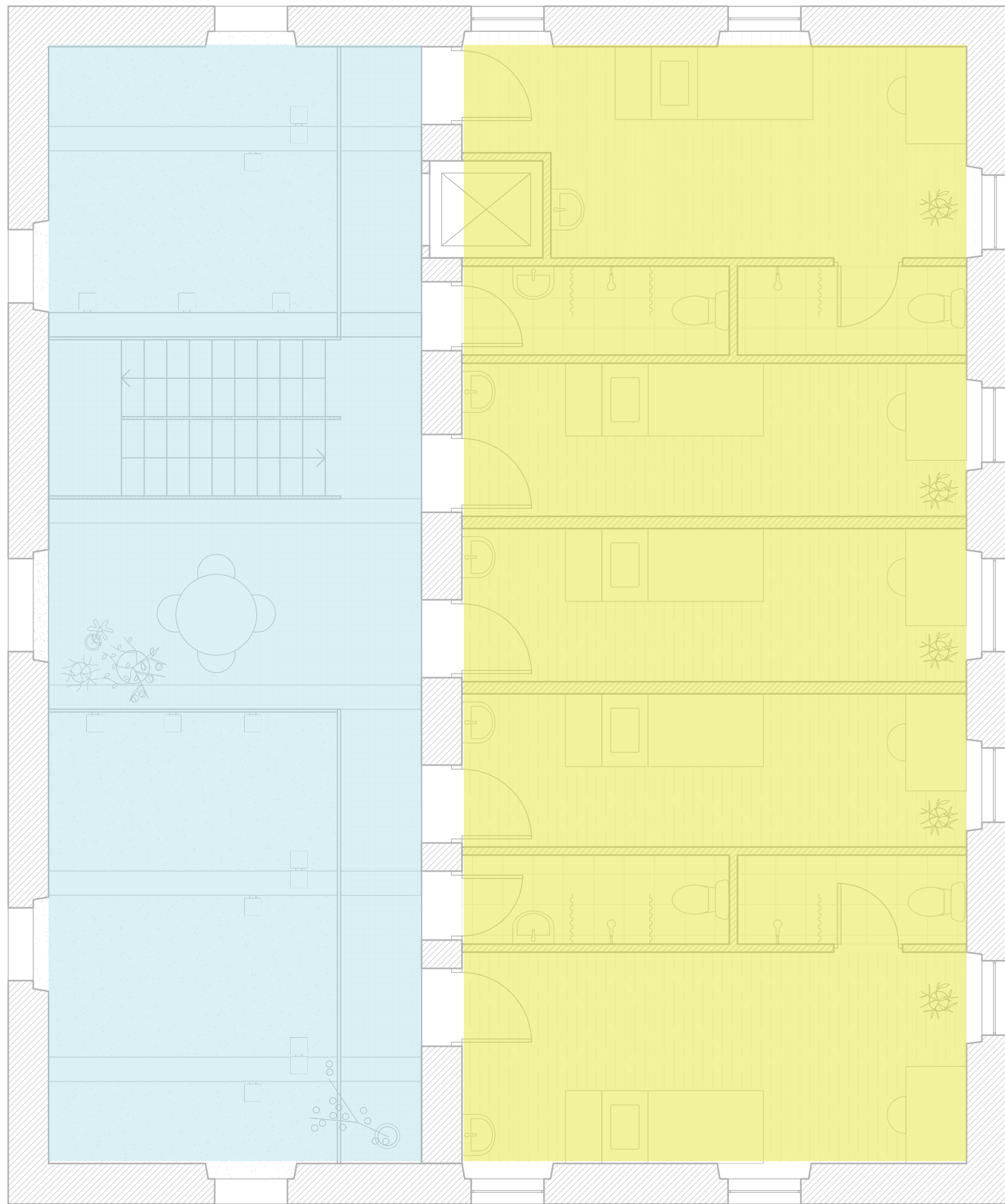
The Blackbird’s trick of ending some of his phrases with high squeaky notes reminds me of certain human composers who formed a habit of declaring the finality of a movement by some untoward flourish, often high harmonics in violin compositions. But the finest Blackbird singers usually end their melodies suitably (without use of artificial harmonics!).”

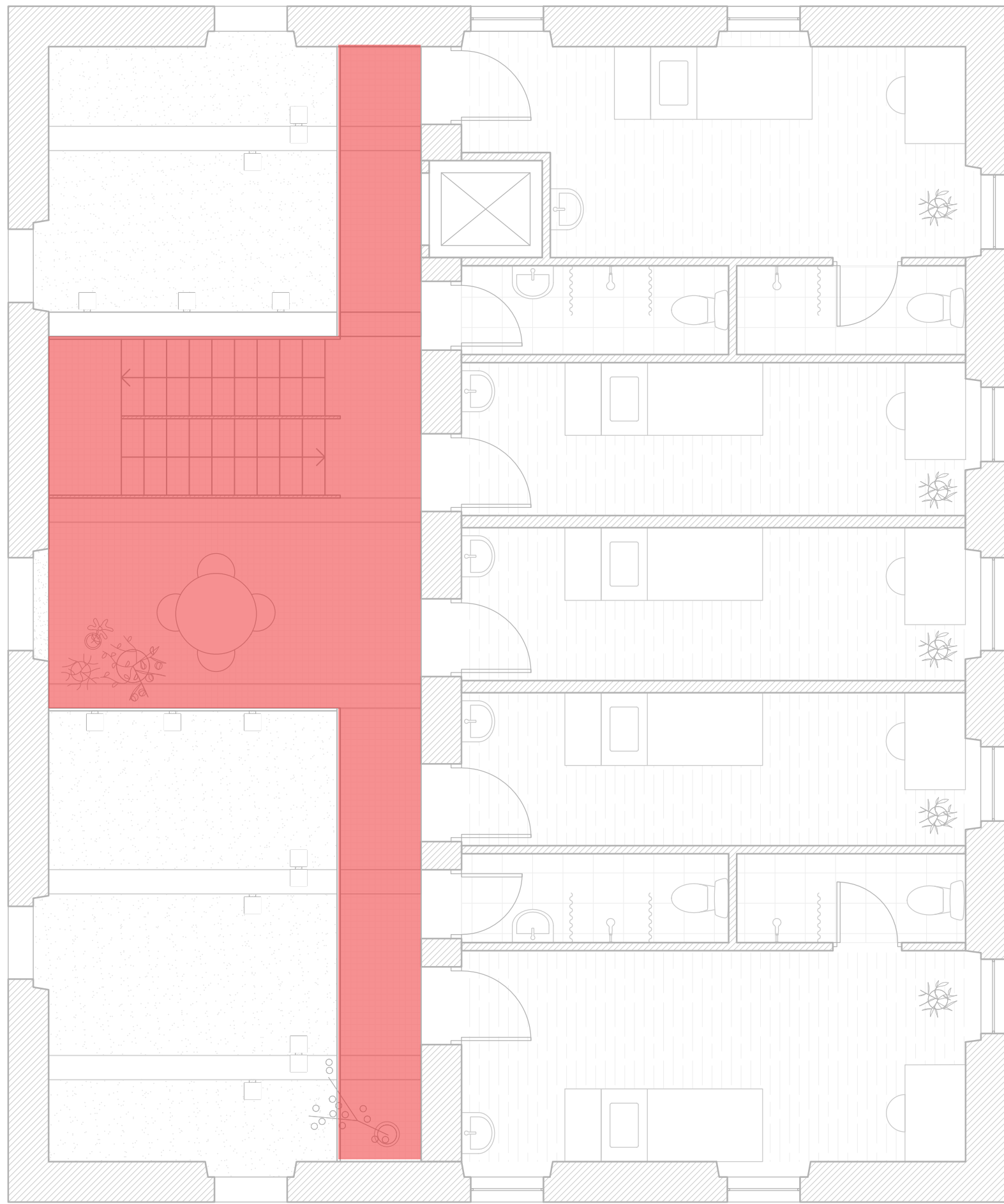
Living with Birds, p. 135

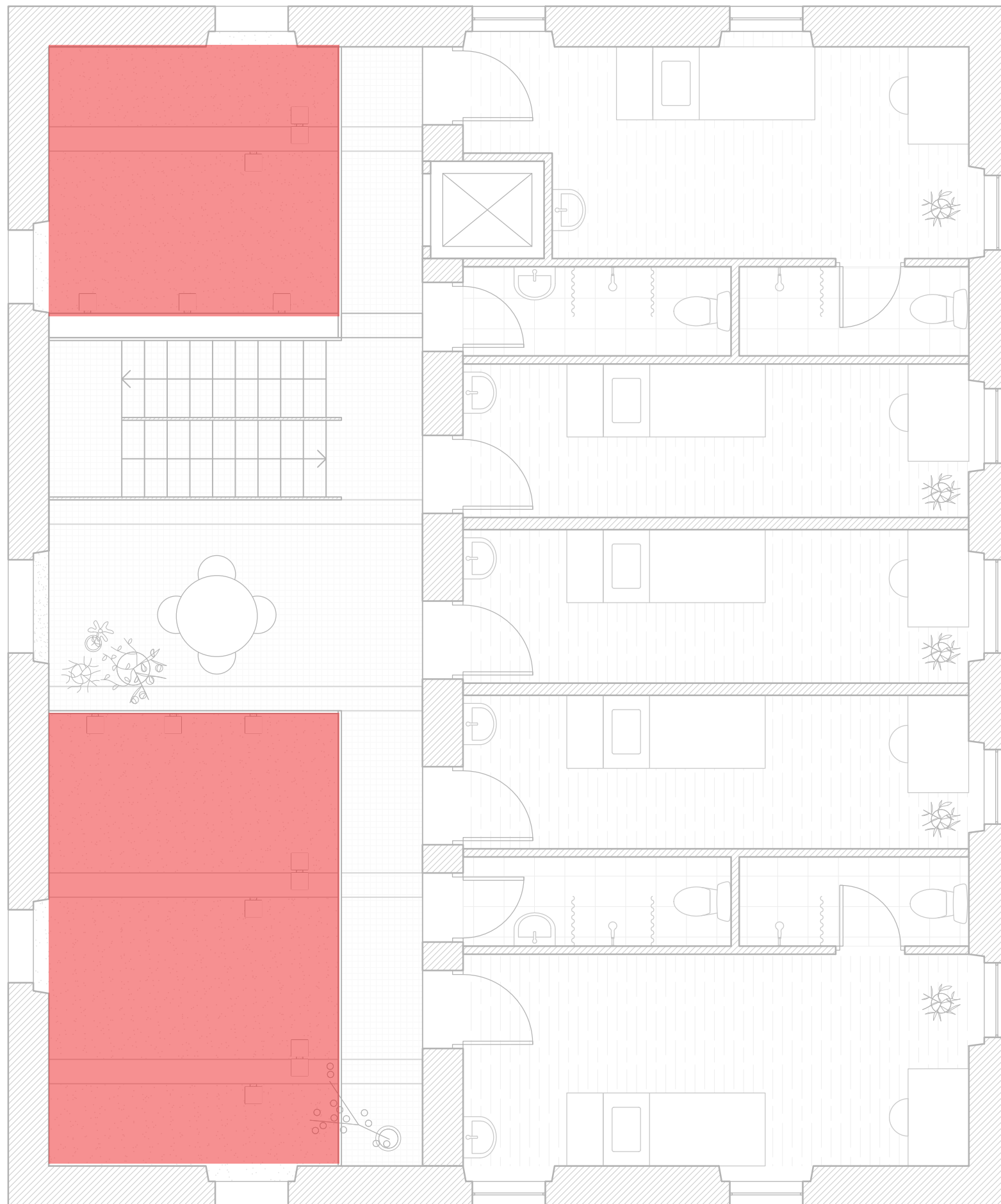


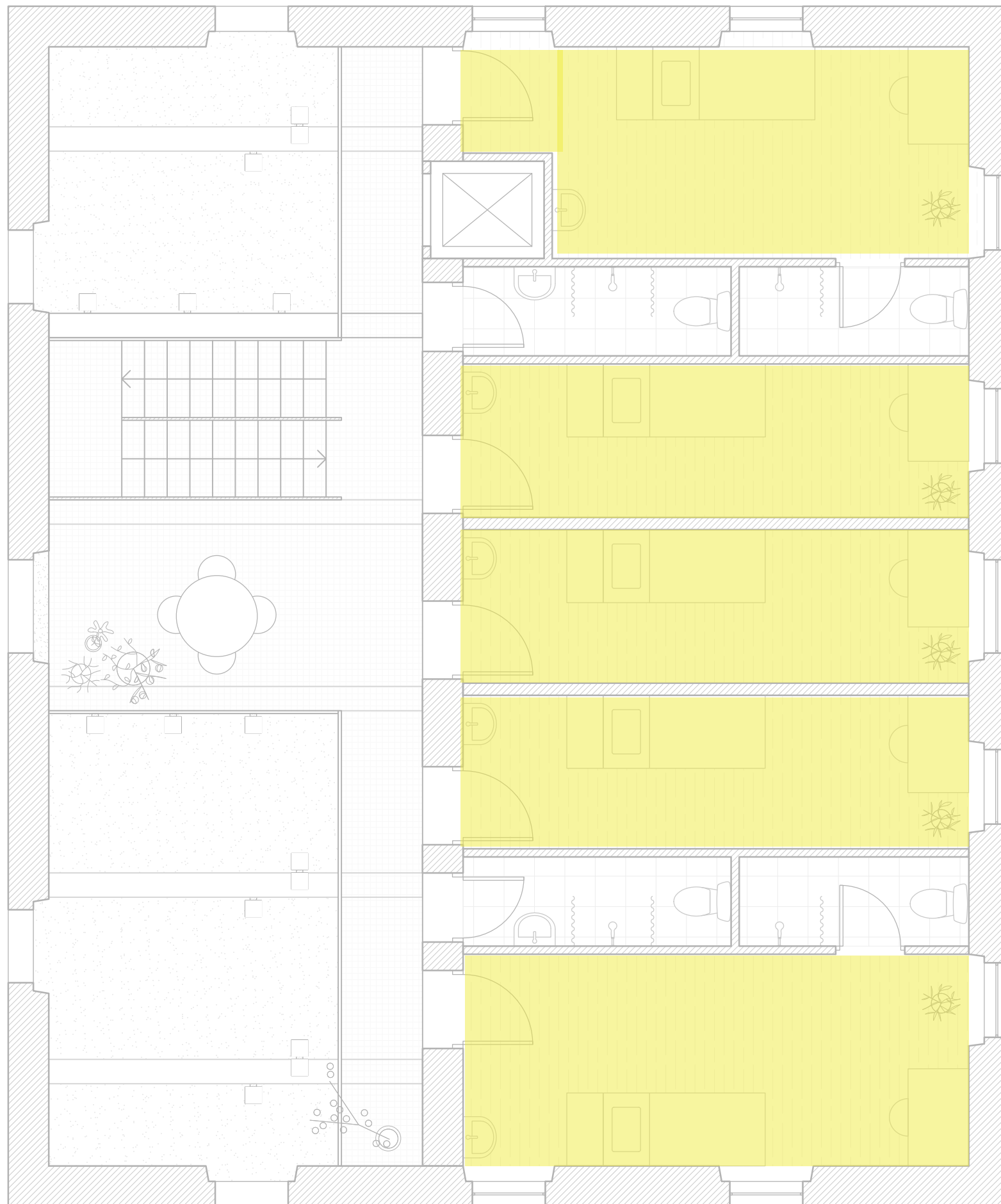
Home music-making in the 19th century, Jules-Alexandre Grün

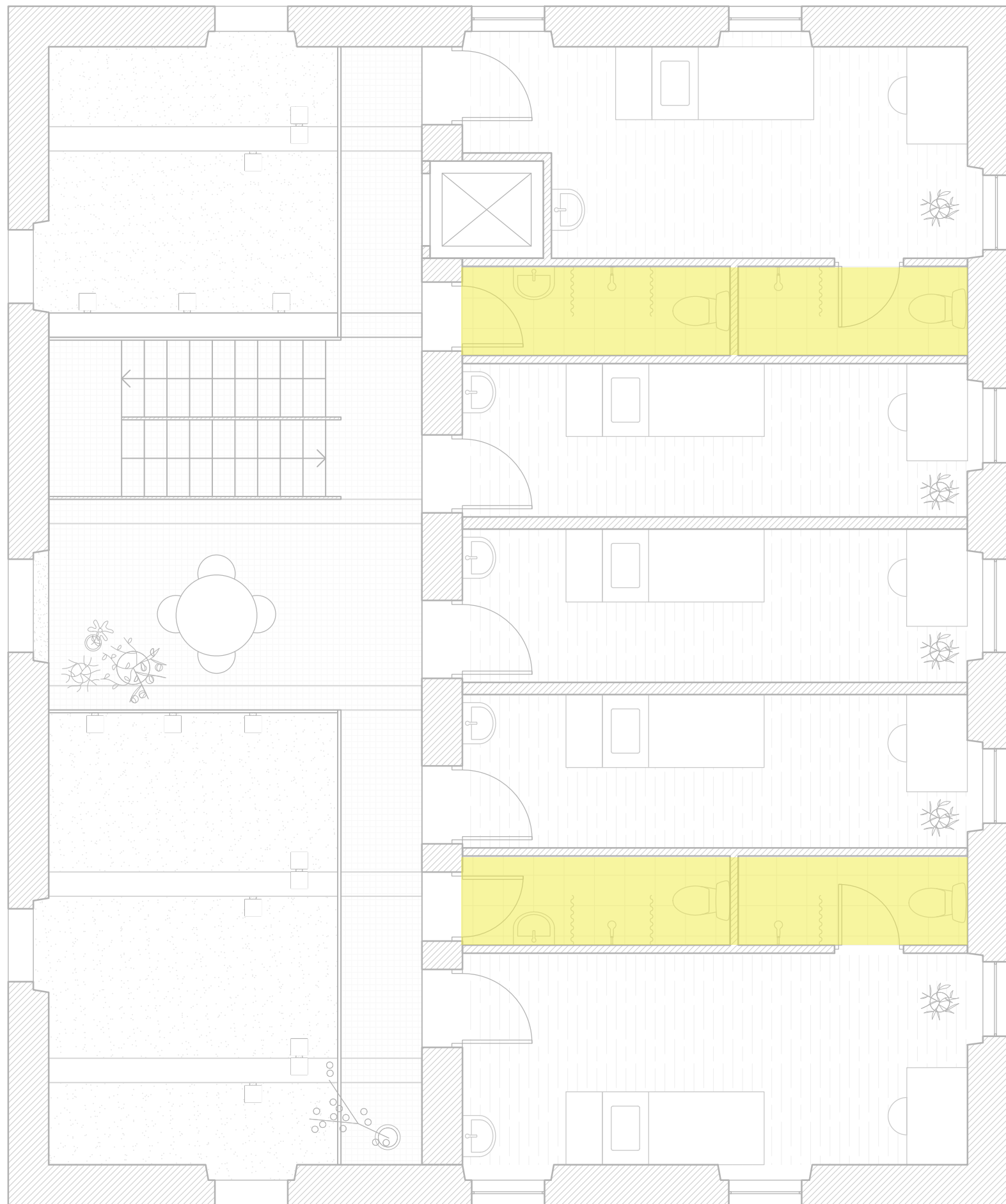


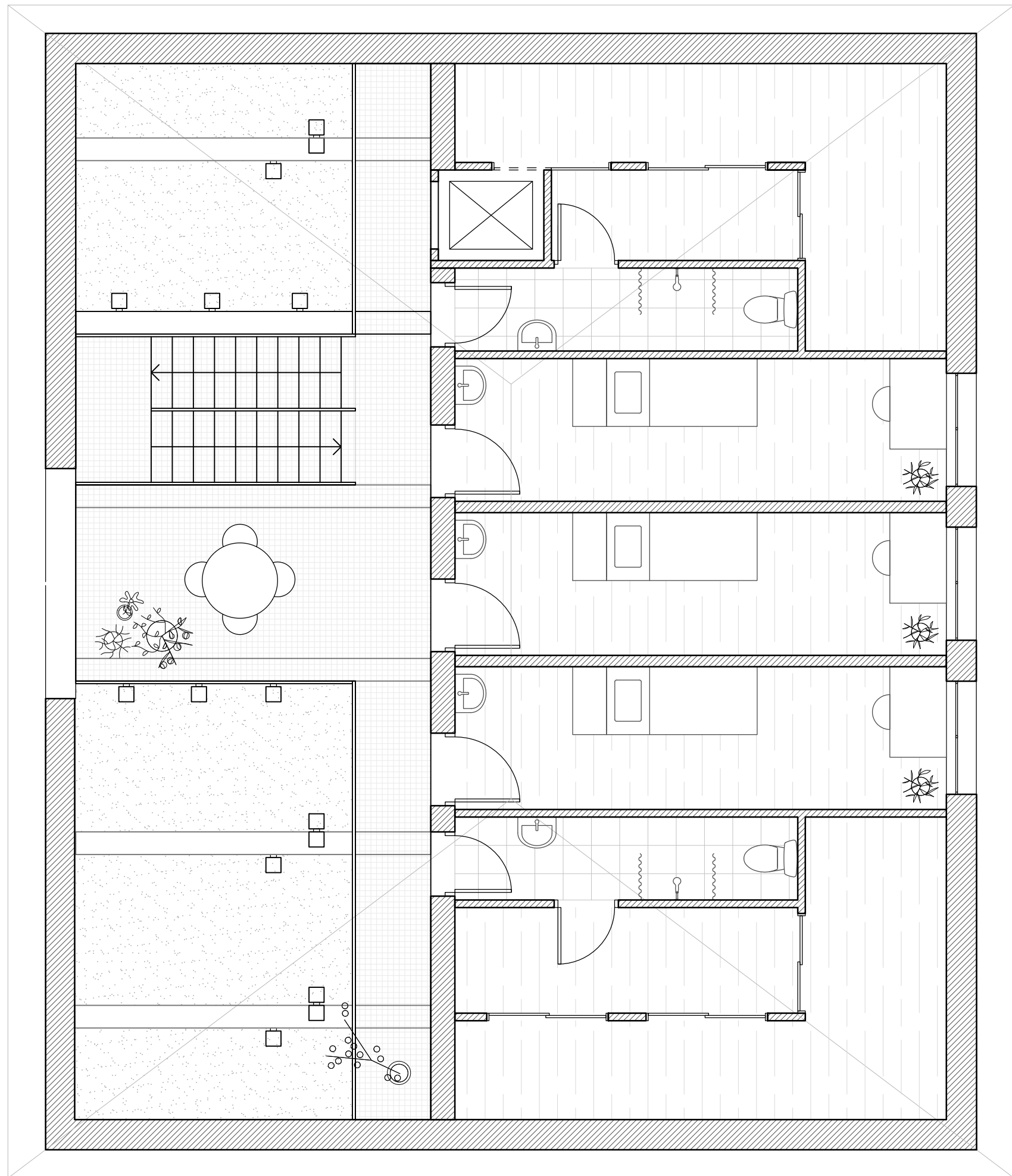


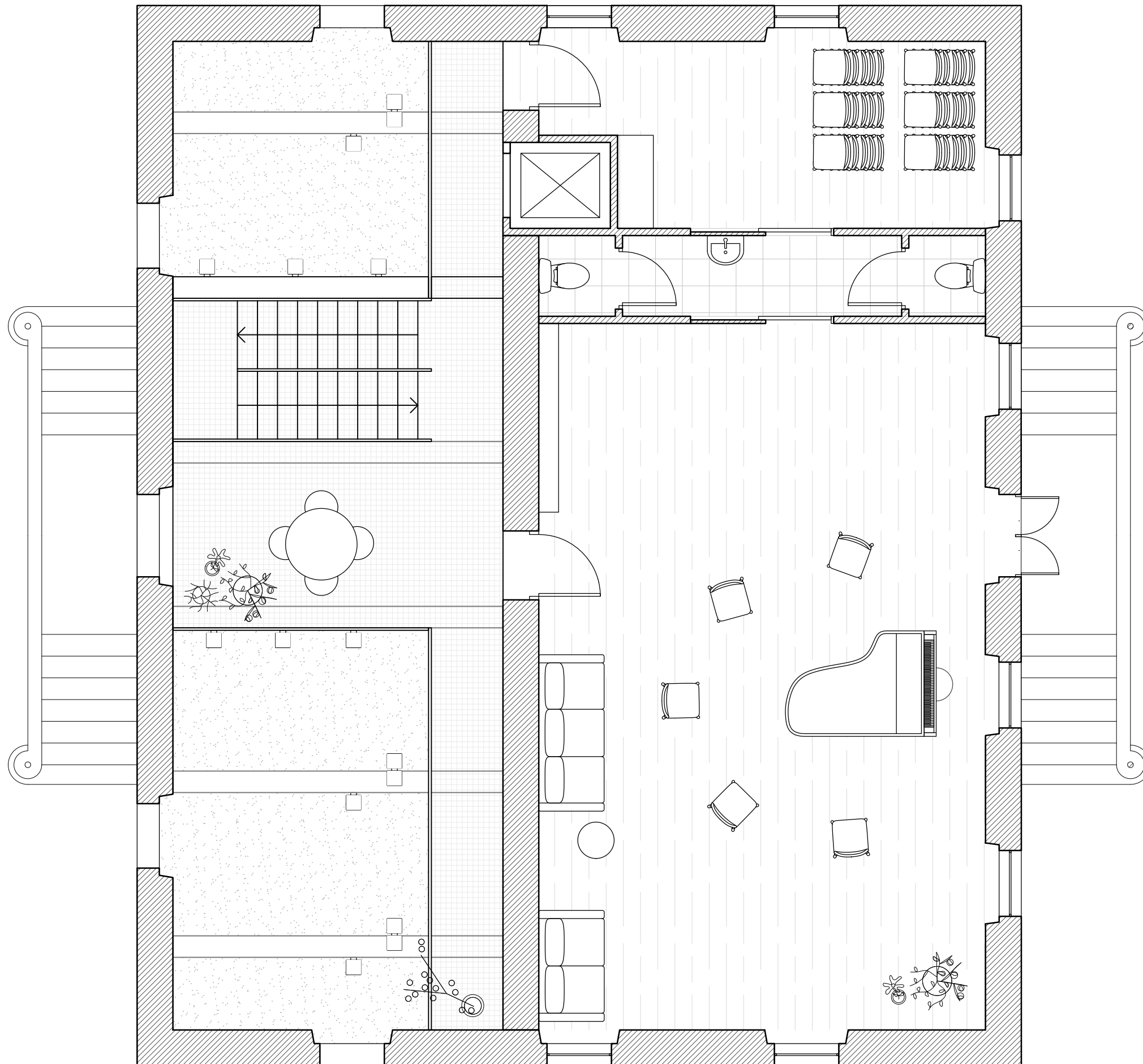


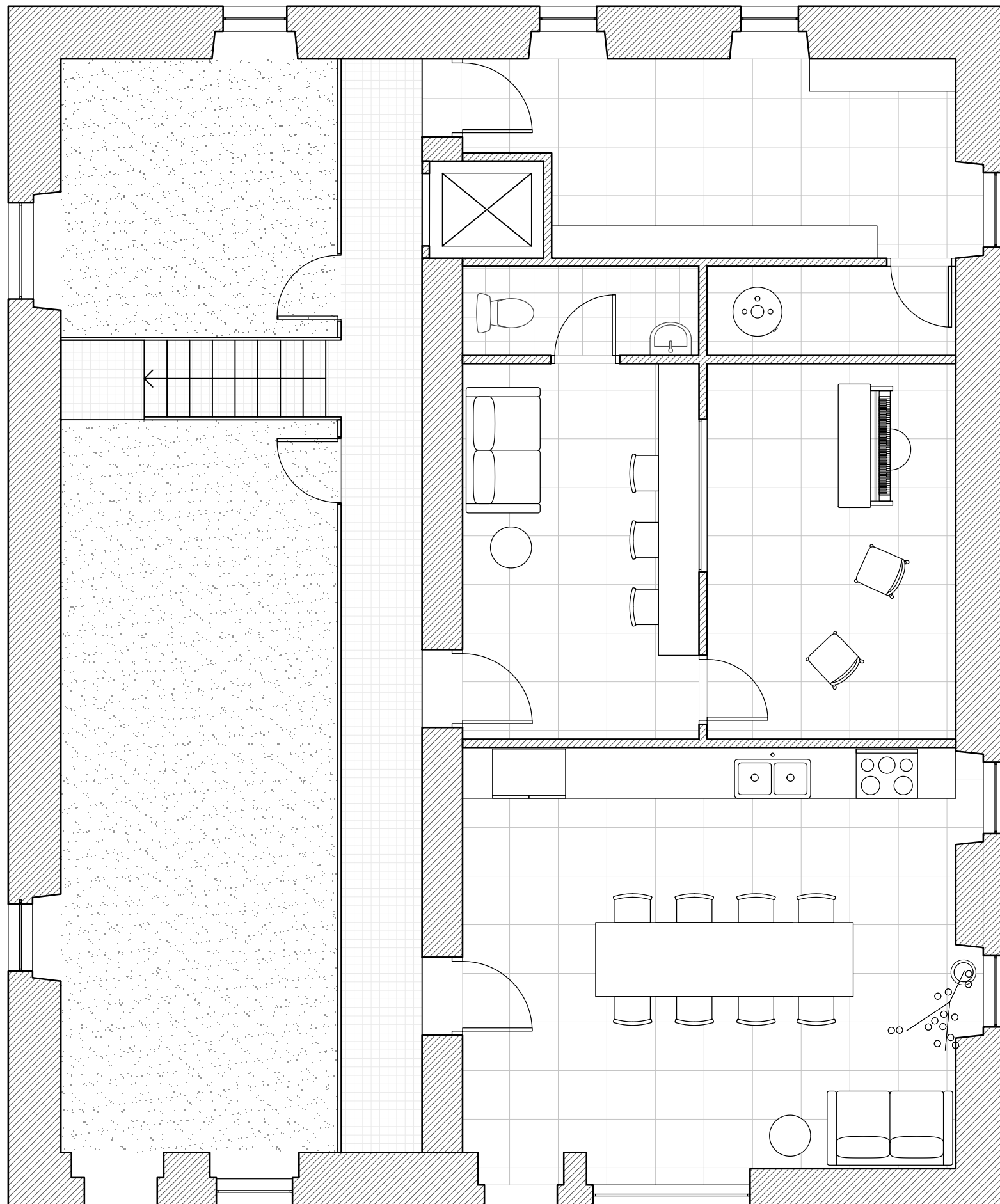


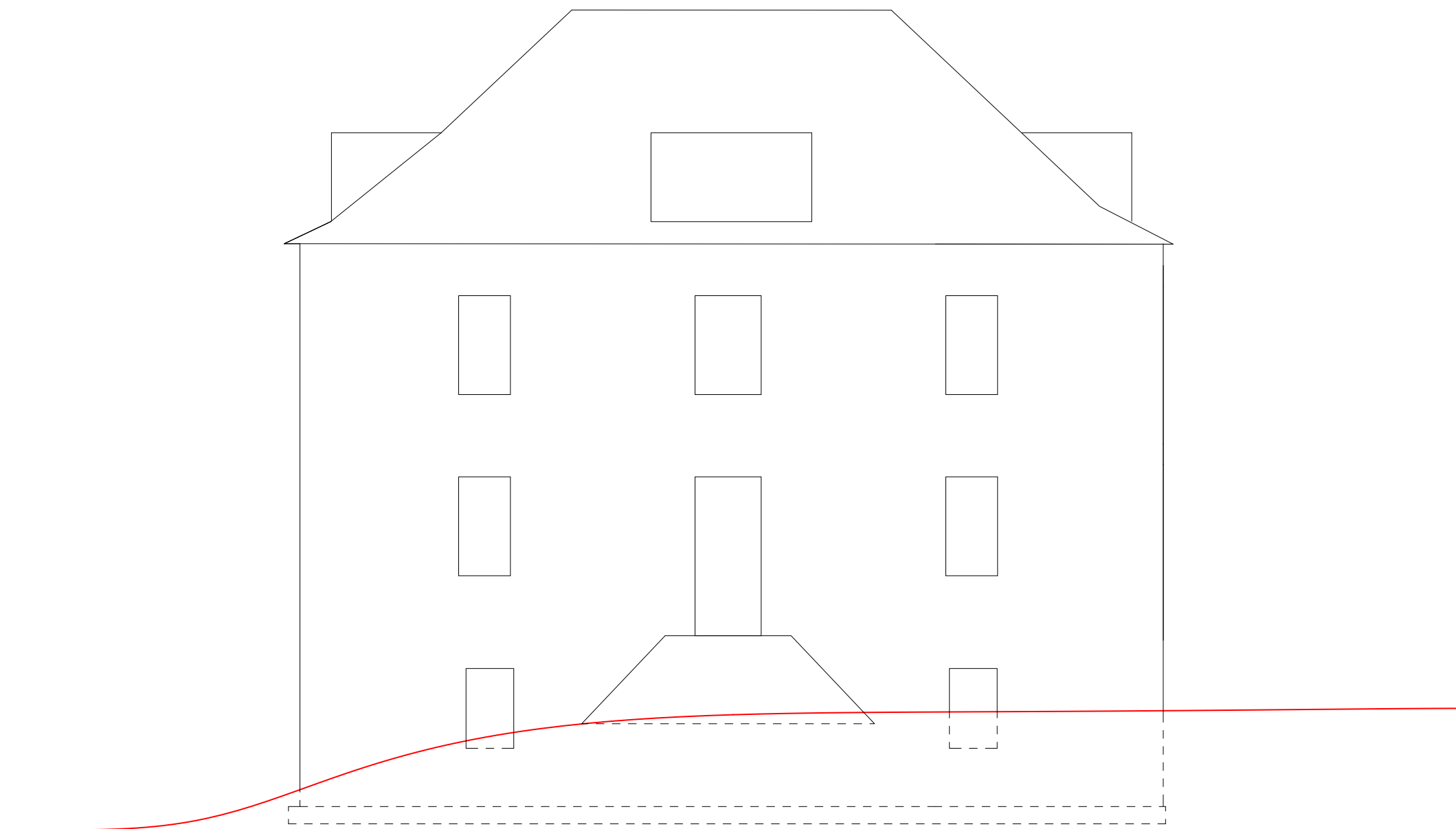










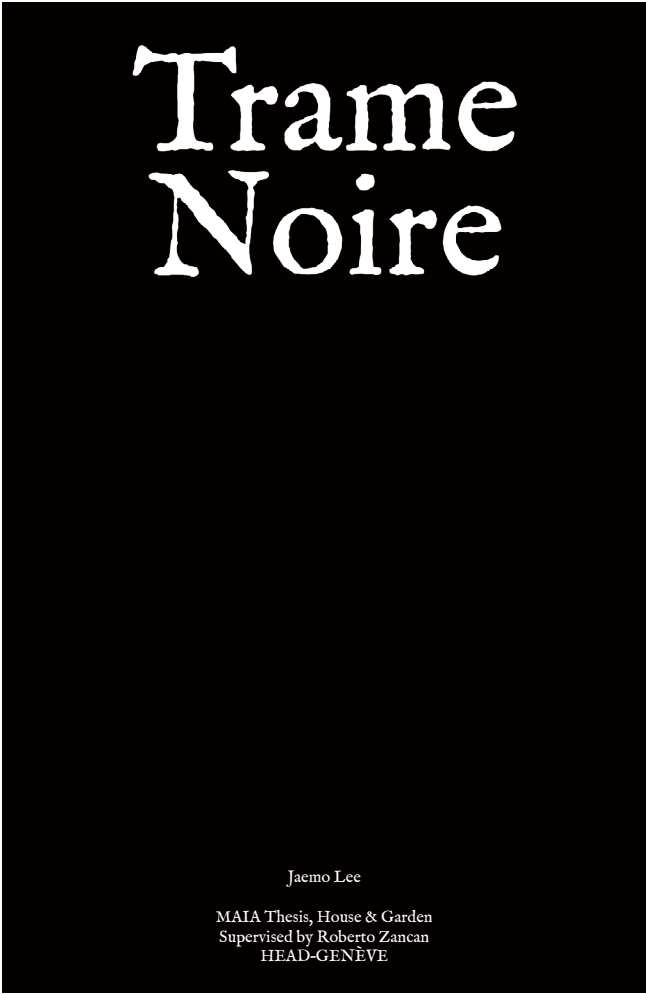




Great Tit tearing a telephone directory. *July 1950.*

“Living with so many birds involves a terrible task of cleaning, and I have learnt much about bird parasites. The wooden screen – Star’s tapping perch – was formerly covered with material. One day, when brushing it, I discovered that quantities of bird-parasites had collected between the material and the frame. This accounted for my having had occasional bites from these bird-pests which always left intense irritation for two days afterwards. I removed the material, and the frame makes an excellent bird perch.”

Living with Birds, p. 45



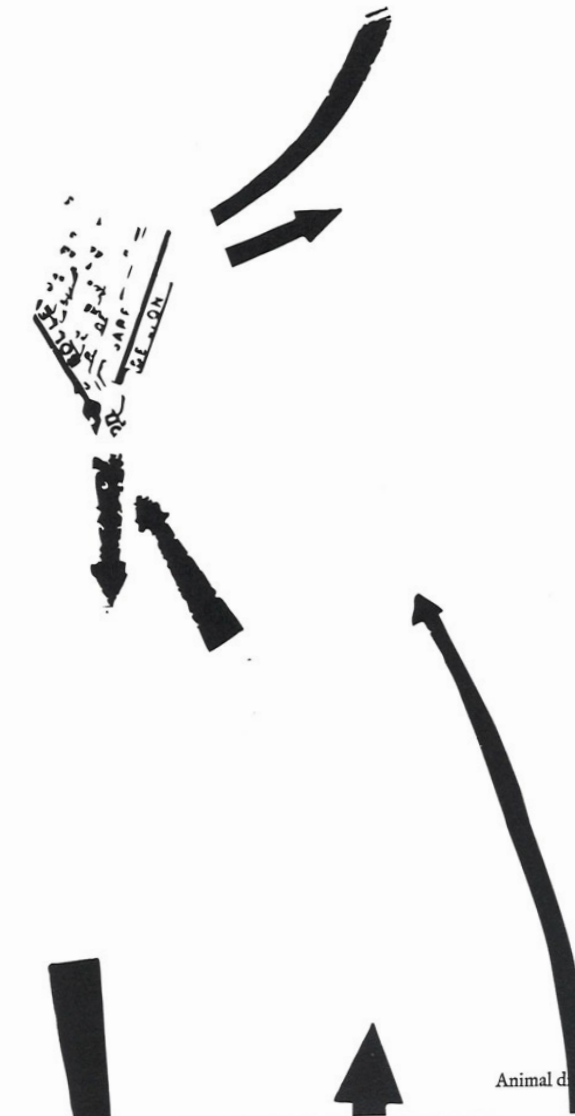
Animal drift

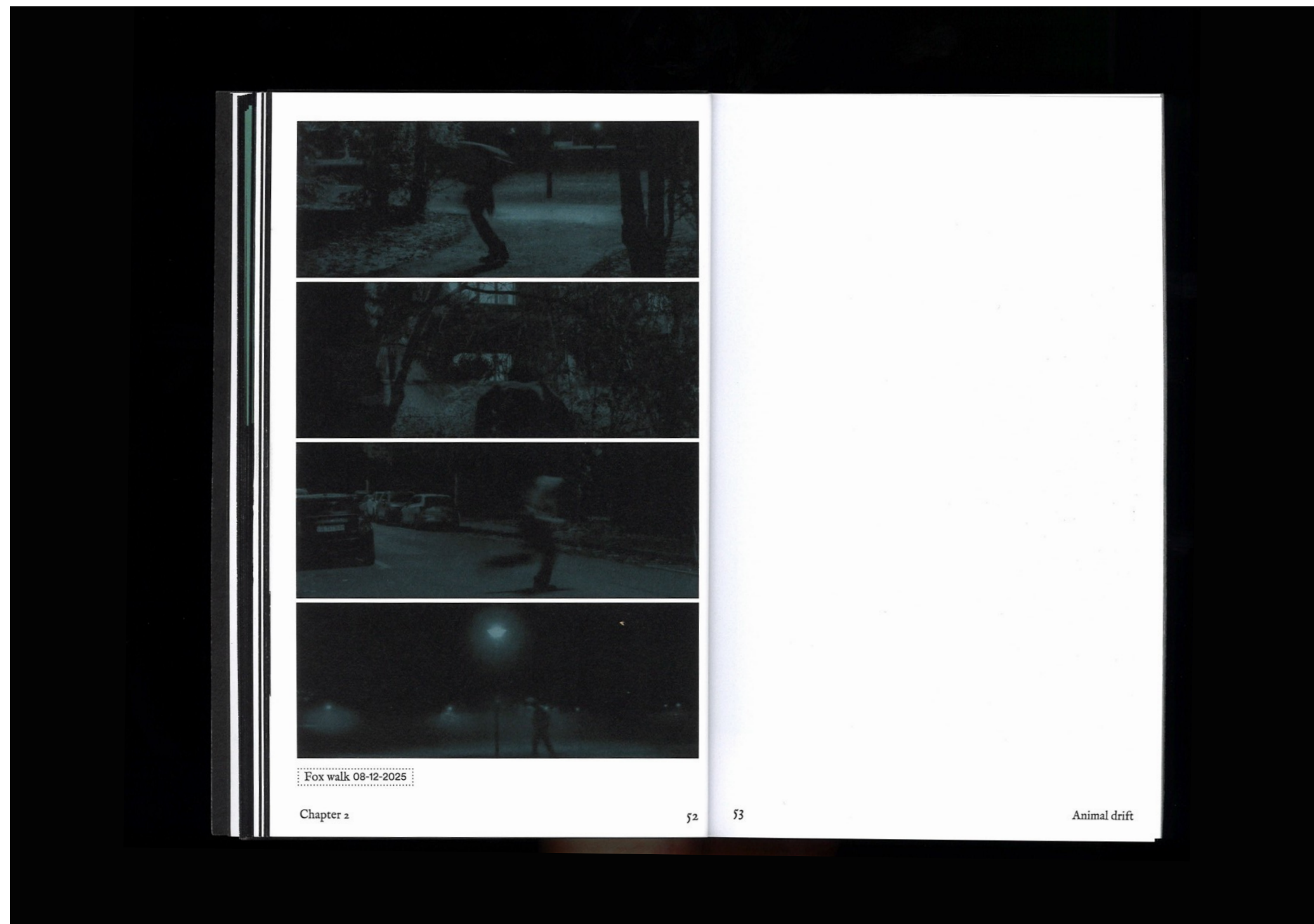
This chapter proposes Animal Drift as a speculative methodology for reinterpreting urban space from the perspective of nonhuman animals. From Dadaist anti-tours and Surrealist dream walks to Situationist *dérive* and Francesco Careri's Walkscapes, the genealogy of avant-garde walking practices has expanded walking from a mere mode of movement into a device of perception.²² Animal Drift inherits this lineage, while transposing the epistemology of walking beyond human phenomenology into multispecies sensory regimes.

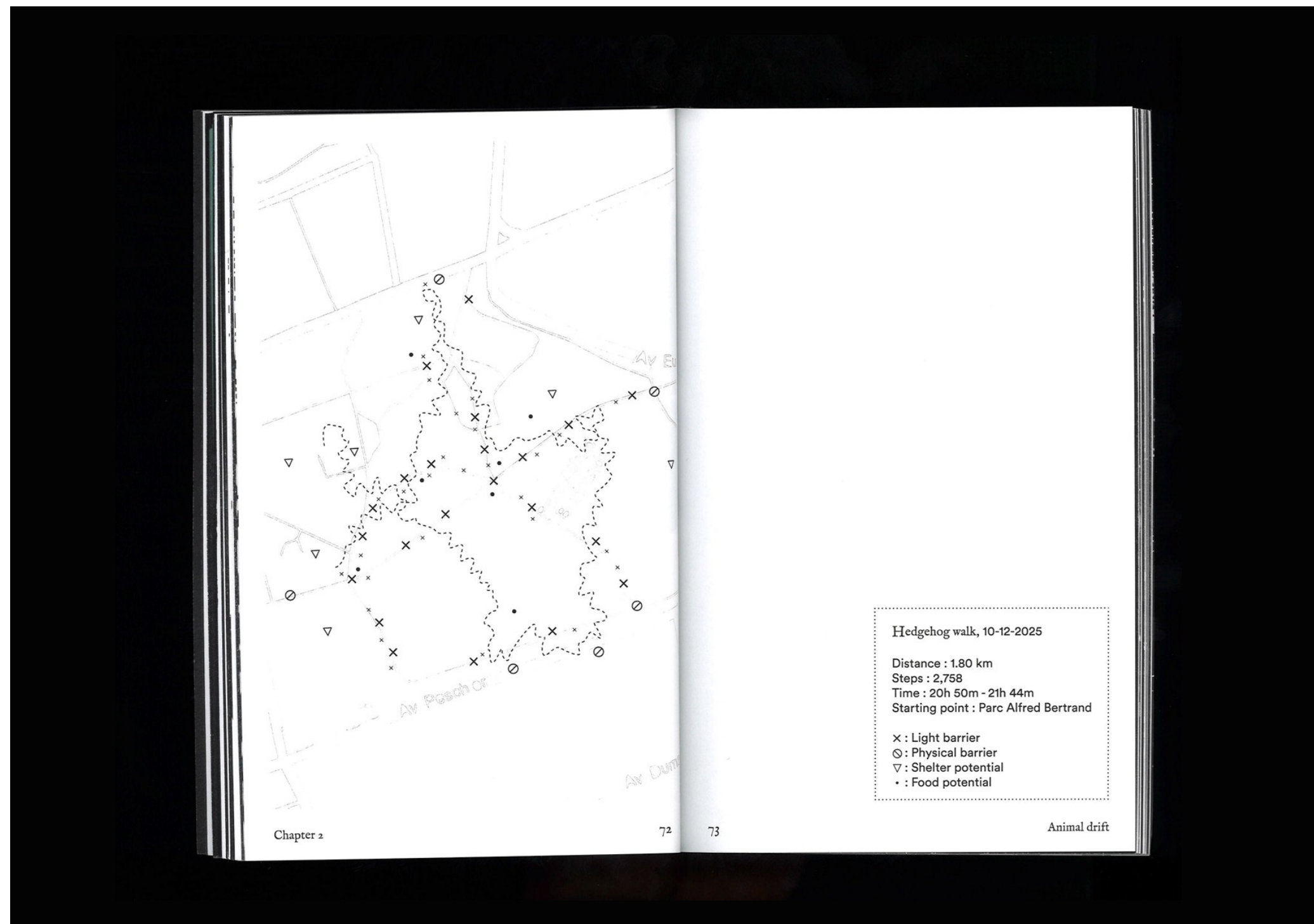
Historically, walking has functioned as a form of counter-mapping against dominant cartographic systems. Dadaists disrupted urban meaning through purposeless detours; Surrealists invoked unconscious geographies through wandering; Situationists formalized the *dérive* as a psychogeographic drift that unsettled the governing logics of rationalist urbanism. Careri further theorized walking as an architectural act, transforming pedestrian movement into a generative spatial practice. Animal Drift reconfigures this tradition within a contemporary condition in which human perception is no longer treated as the sole epistemic ground of spatial experience.

This methodology operates through the conjunction of two layers. On the one hand, Animal Drift establishes a behavioral framework grounded in ethological data on nocturnal animals—habitat connectivity, movement ranges, sensitivity to light intensity, and conditions of concealment. On the other hand, the researcher engages in speculative mimicry by attuning their own body to animal rhythms and scales. Moving along light-averse edges, navigating through fences and hedgerows, and

²² Careri, Walkscapes, 2002.











Common Kestrel



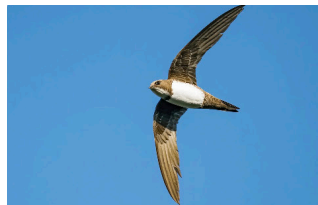
Feral Pigeon



Common Wood Pigeon



Eurasian Collared Dove



Alpine Swift



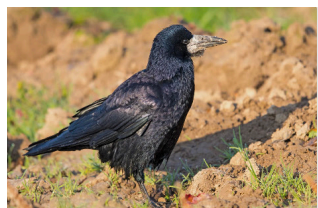
Common Swift



Western House Martin



Carrion Crow



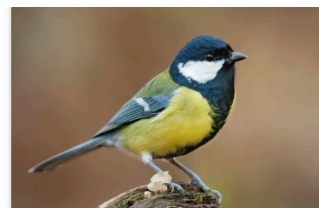
Rook



Western Jackdaw



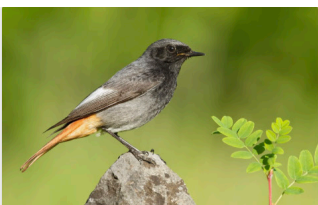
Eurasian Magpie



Great Tit



Eurasian Blue Tit



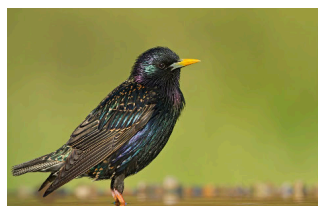
Black Redstart



Common Blackbird



White Wagtail



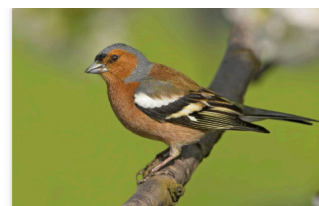
Common Starling



House Sparrow



European Greenfinch



Eurasian Chaffinch

Birds in urban areas, Swiss Ornithological Institute

Common Kestrel

Feral Pigeon

Common Wood Pigeon

Eurasian Collared Dove

Alpine Swift



Common Swift



Western House Martin

Carrion Crow



Rook

Western Jackdaw

Eurasian Magpie

Great Tit



Eurasian Blue Tit

Black Redstart

Common Blackbird

White Wagtail



w



House Sparrow

European Greenfinch

Eurasian Chaffinch

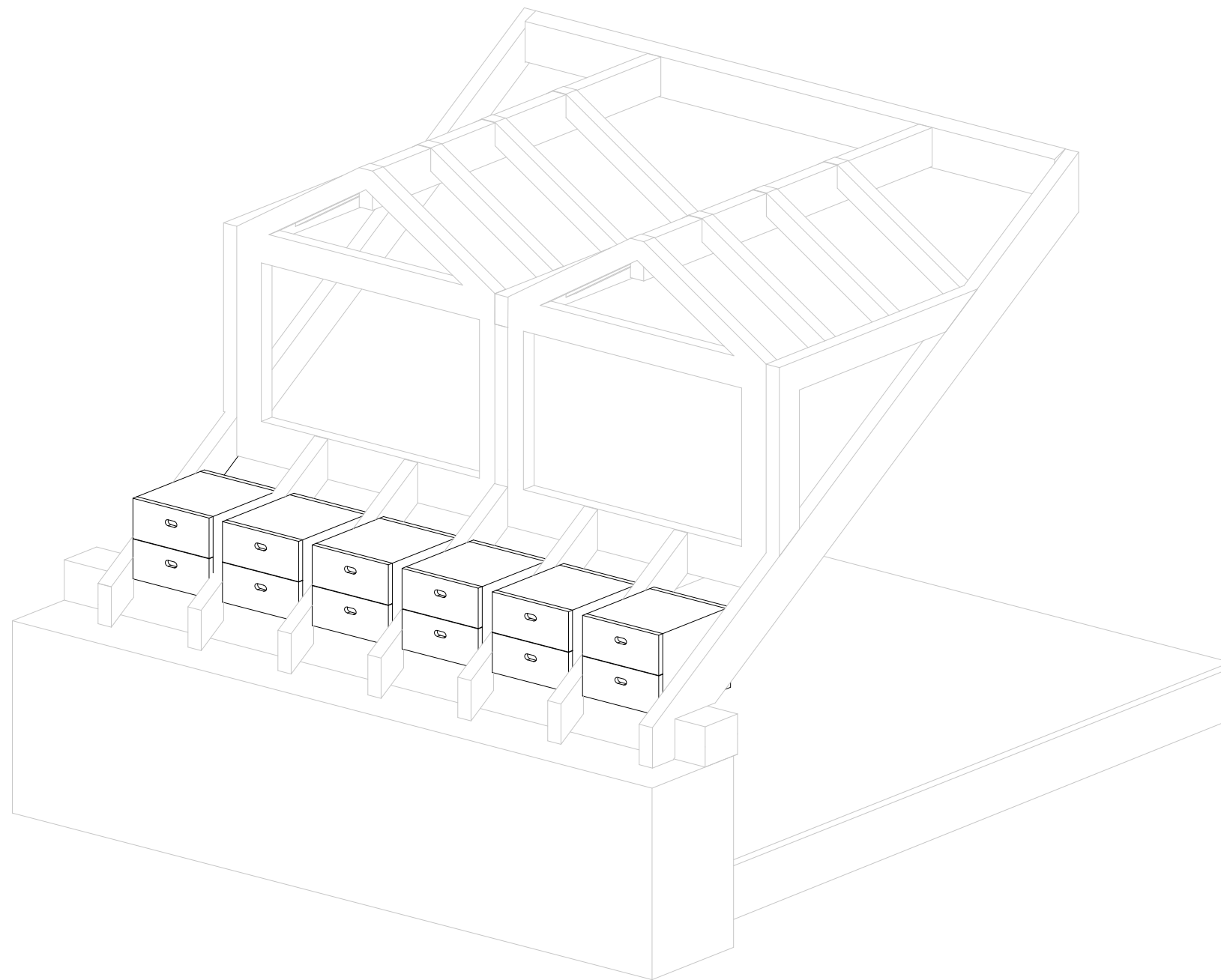
Birds in urban areas, Swiss Ornithological Institute

Does the species use buildings as a primary habitat?

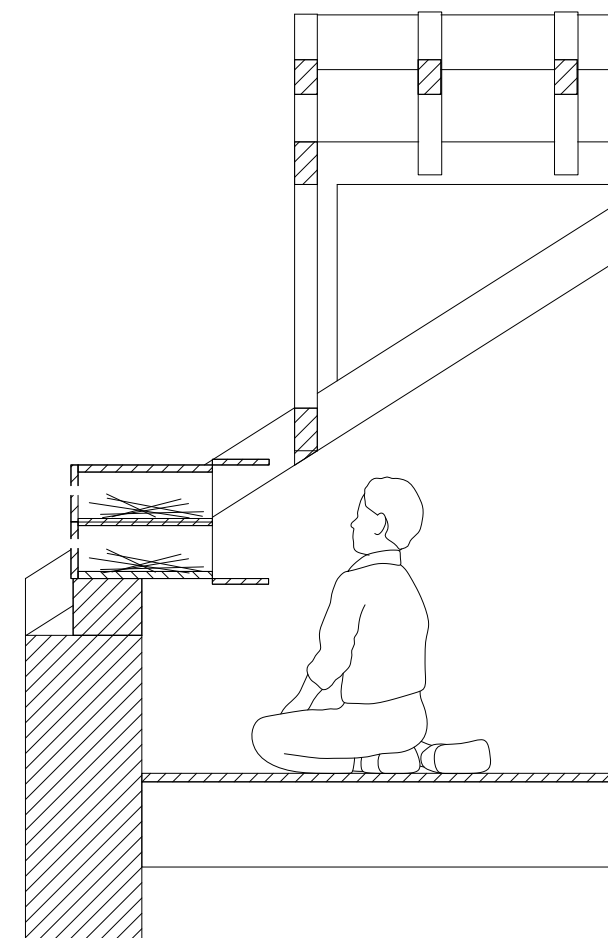
Does the species actively use architectural features such as niches, cavities, or attics?

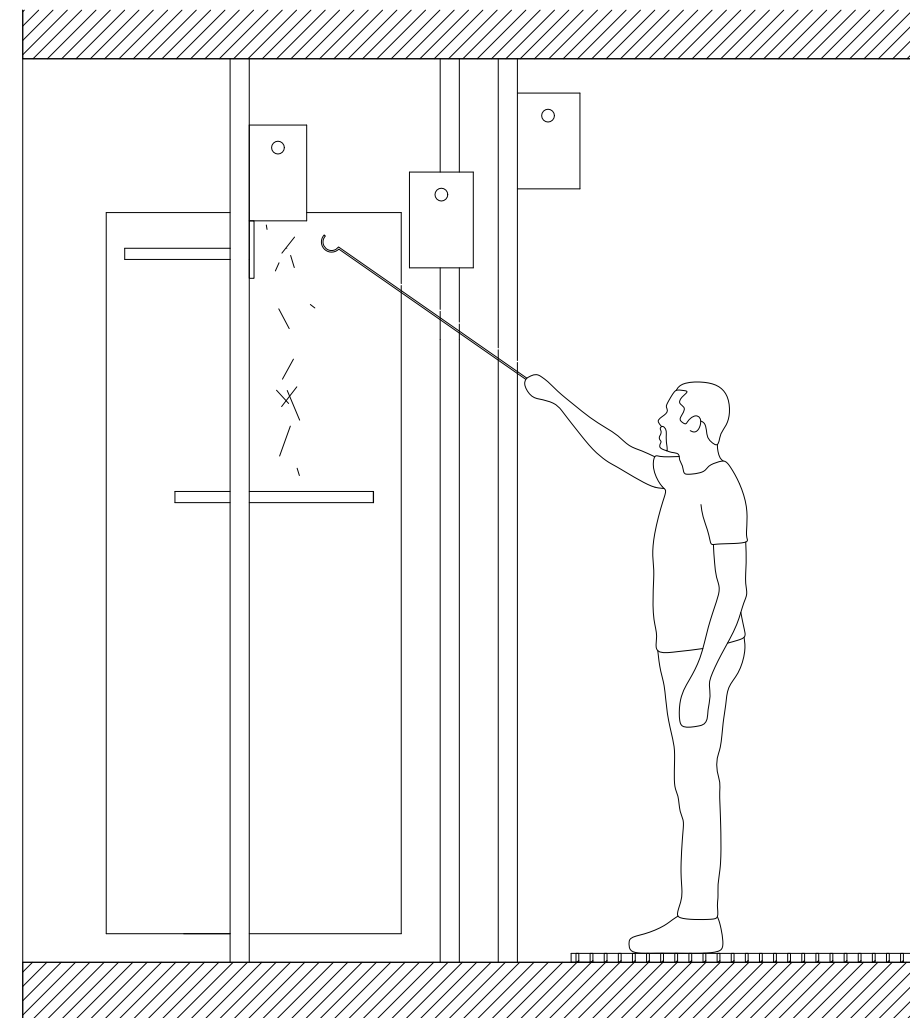
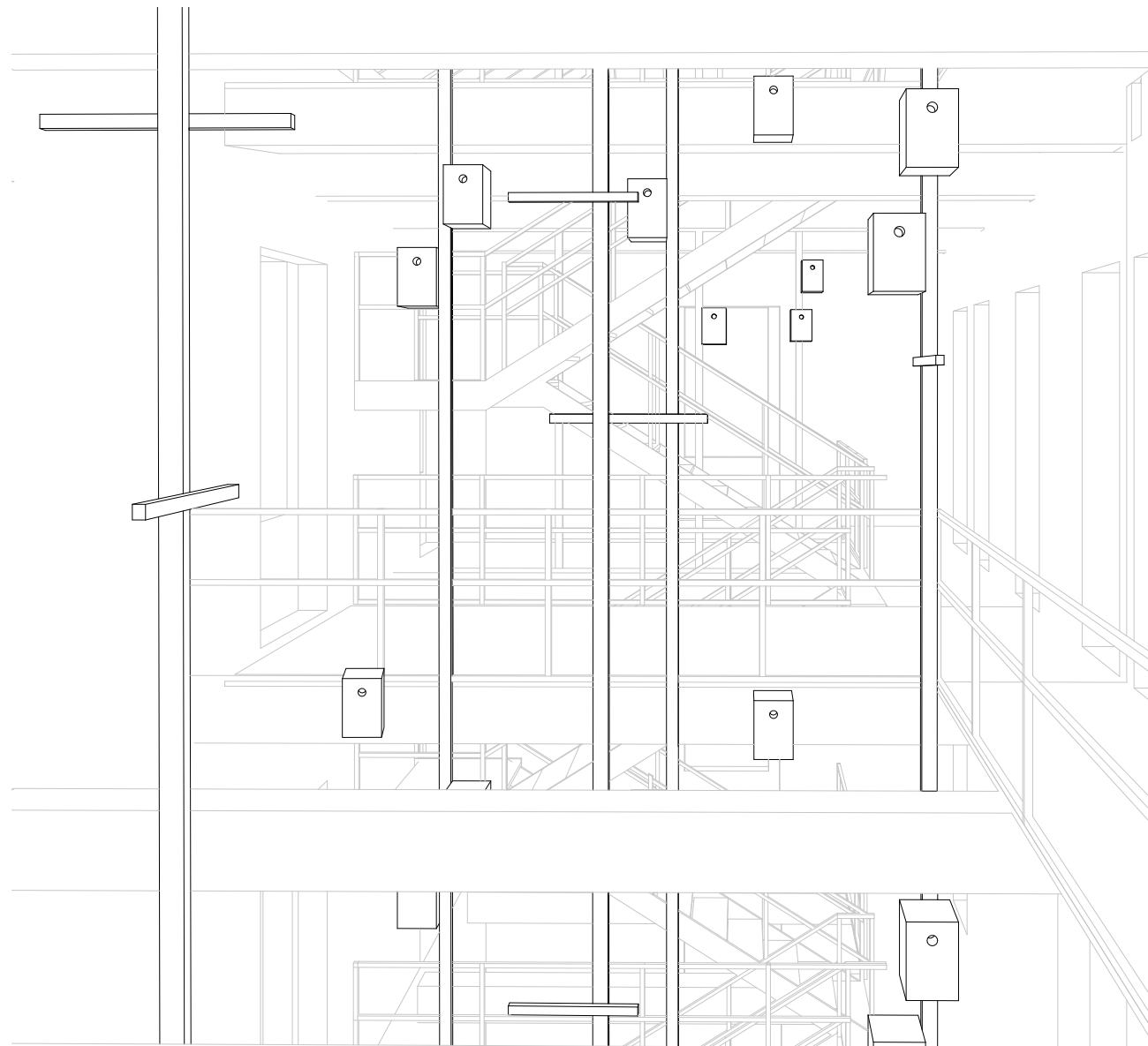
Is the species declining in urban areas or in need of protection?

Can design interventions produce a meaningful conservation impact?

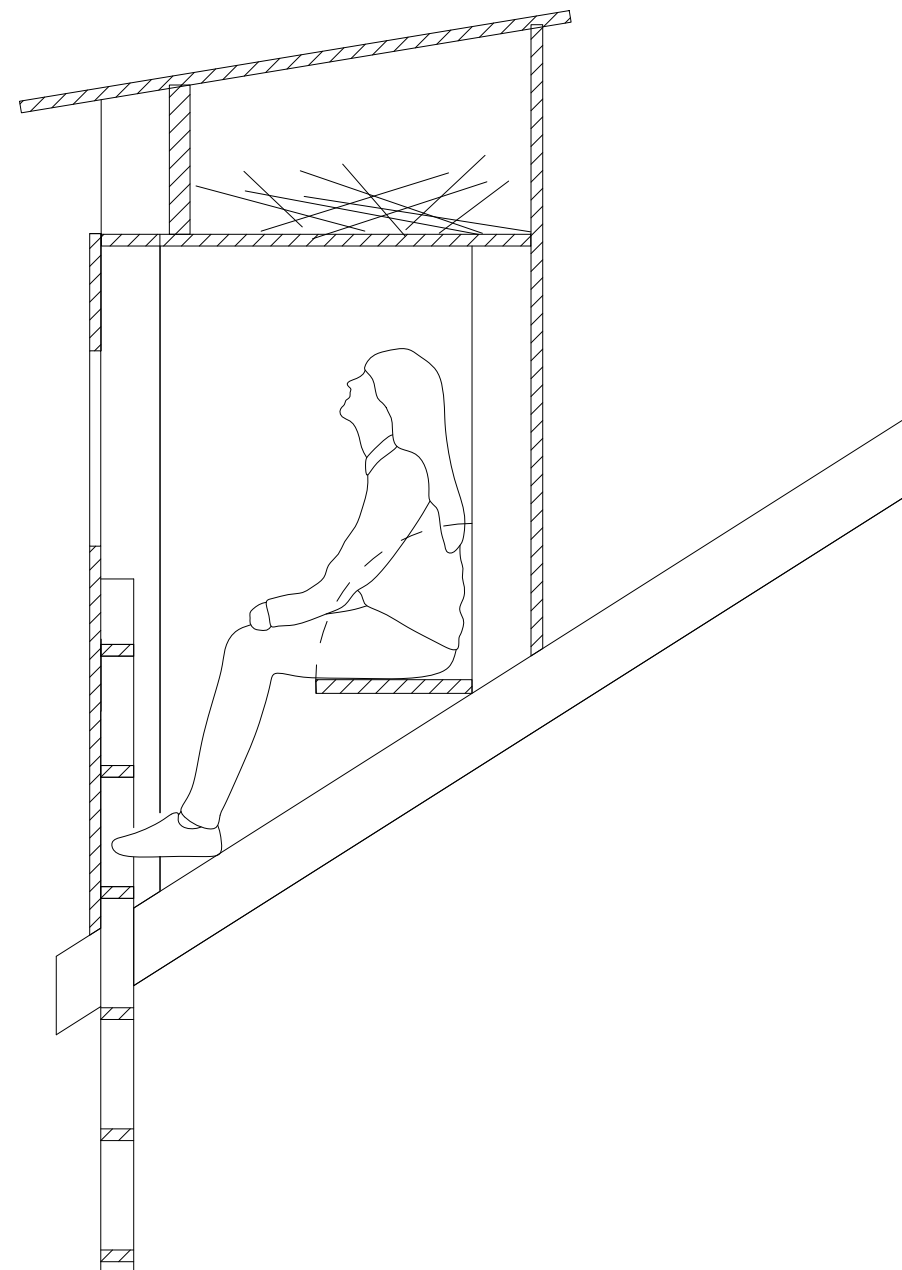
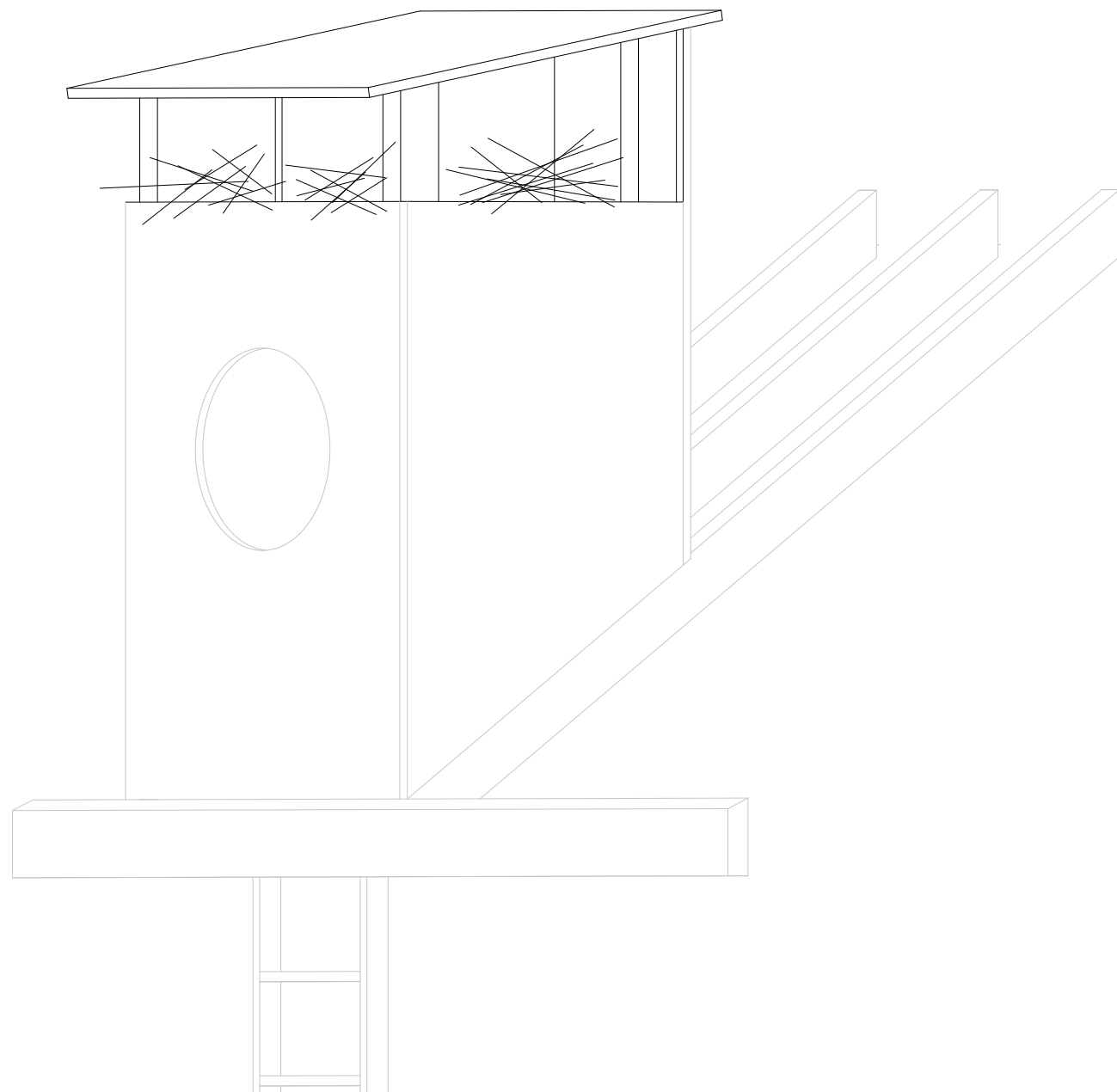


Common swift Area

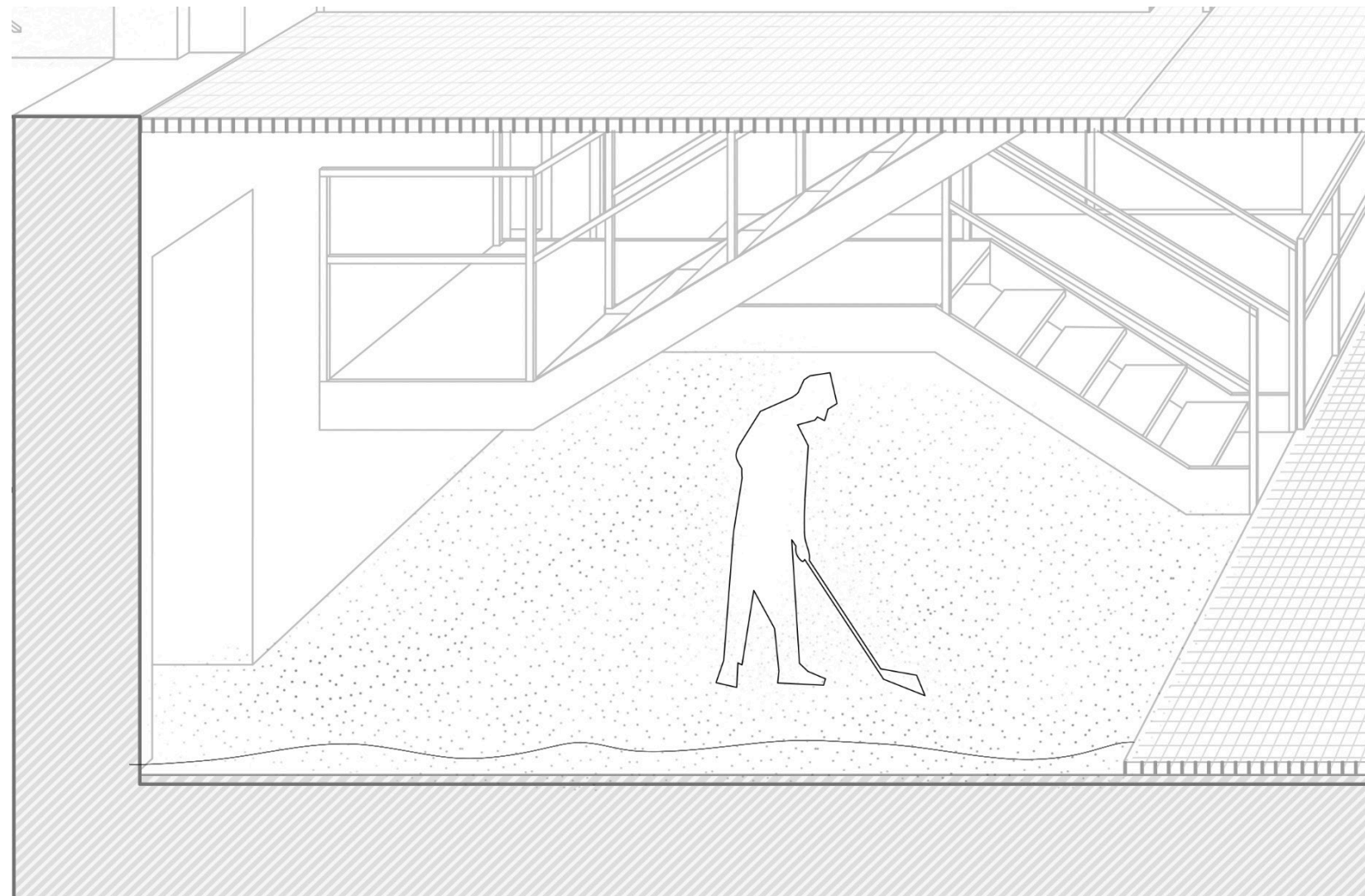


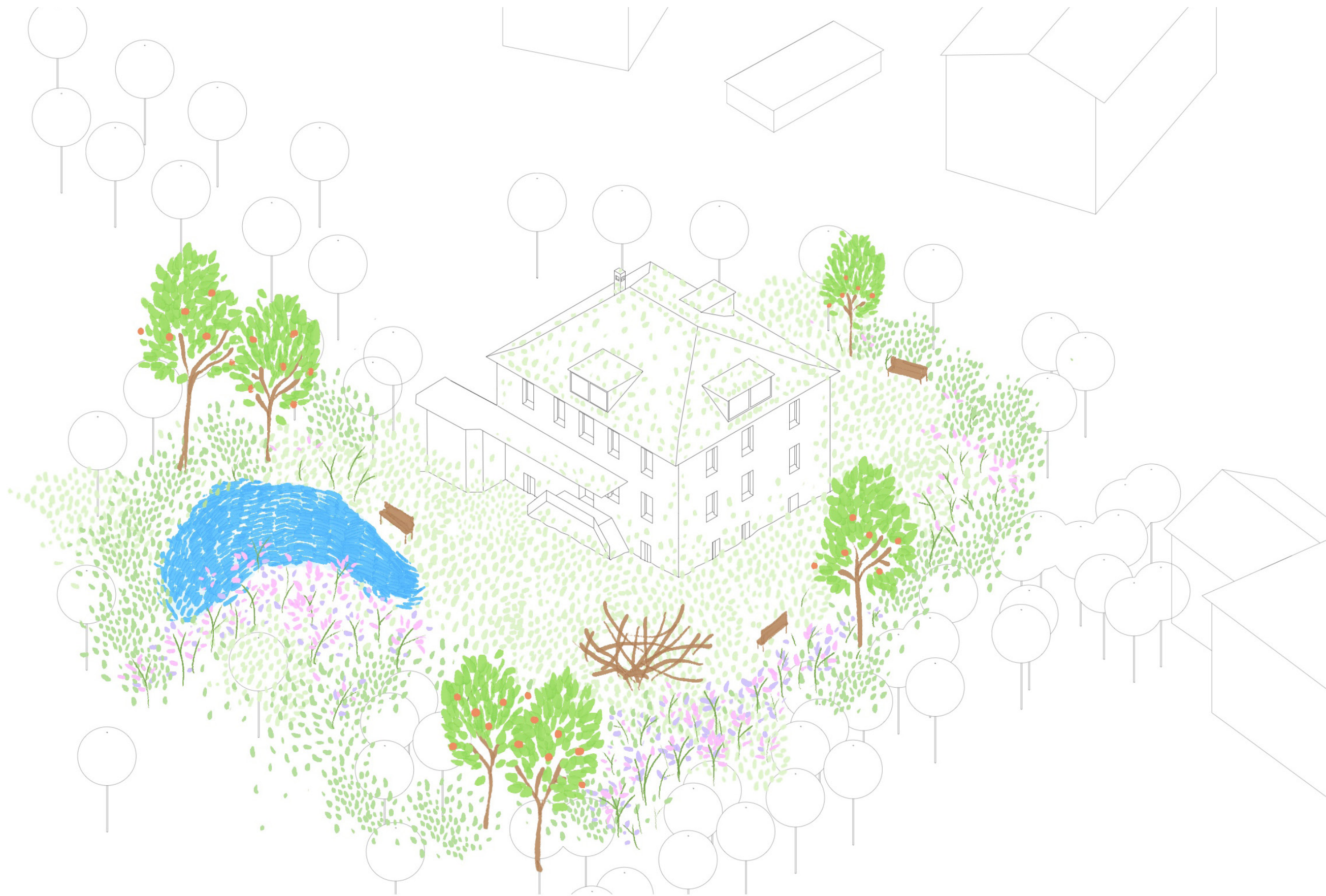


House sparrow/Common starling Area



Western jackdaw Area





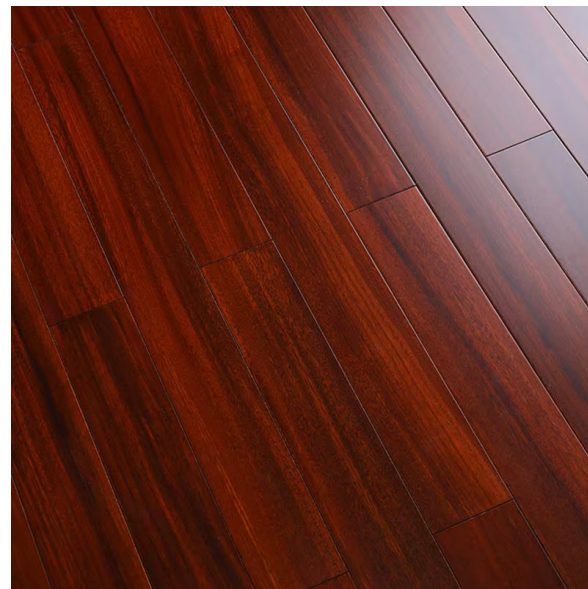




Acoustic fabric



Acoustic plaster wall



Sound-reflective timber flooring



Hemp-fibre acoustic ceiling panels



“Often strangers see me with them perched on my hand down the road and stop to ask how it is these birds have got so tame.

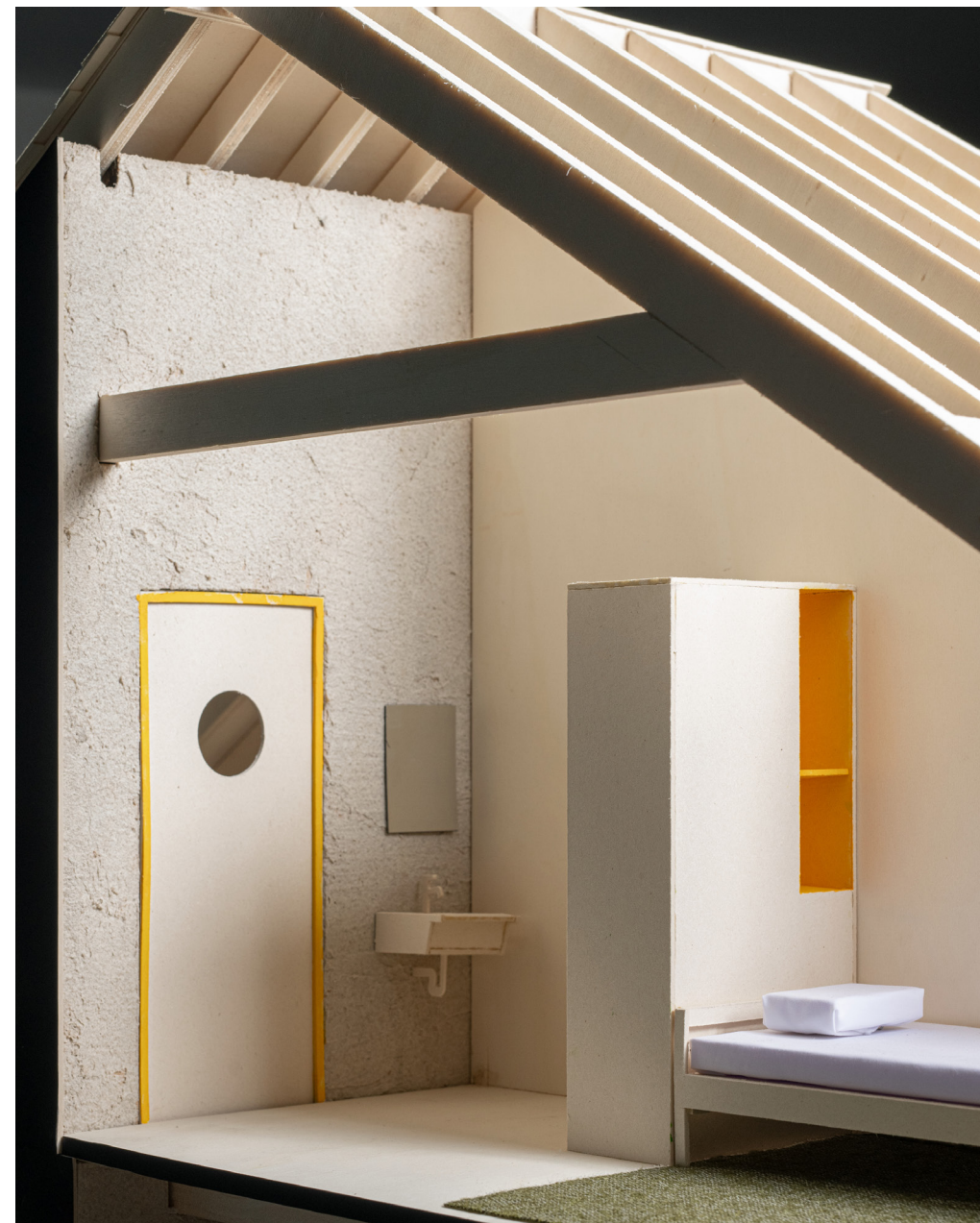
In this ‘better world’ now being planned for future generations will it still be so rare to see the beautiful wild birds perching fearlessly on human hands?

I always remember the words of an electrician who once called to attend to fittings in my Sussex cottage. He stopped in amazement before my doorway, watching countless birds flying down from the trees to perch on me.

He had looked an ordinary man with a work-a-day expression until he saw these birds, then his whole countenance seemed to alter, his face glowed, his eyes shone and he kept murmuring: ‘How wonderful!’

Then he said: ‘But why shouldn’t it be like that? It ought to be like that.’”

Living with Birds, p. 214



thank you