

# R h a p s o d y i n W e s t

*Best Building of Amsterdam 2020*

## awards

Best Building of Amsterdam 2020  
(Gouden A.A.P. audience award)

Five nominations: BNA Best Building, ArcAward Best Architecture 2019, Stib Award 2019, Zuiderkerk Award Amsterdam 2019, Building of the Year 2019

Included in Architecture Yearbook 2019/2020  
Nai | best 25 projects in the Netherlands

**location** Amsterdam, Bos en Lommer

**program** 239 rental apartments, 400 m<sup>2</sup> facilities, 196 parkingplaces (underground)

**architect** TANGRAM architecture and urban landscape

**owner** CBRE Global Investors Netherlands

**top down/bottom up development**

**completion** July 2019



## RHAPSODY IN WEST

### A JOINT DANCE

The Jan van Schaffelaarplantsoen is a noisy place along the A10 highway, on the edge of the Amsterdam Kolenkitbuurt. This undeveloped site had for a long time an important function for the neighborhood as green space and meeting place. It is precisely here that a substantial program of housing needed to be developed.

A difficult task that has been achieved through a unique collaboration between designers, builder, investor, municipality and local residents.

Tangram took the initiative for Rhapsody in West together with urban planners Urban Sync and artist collective Cascoland, represented the neighborhood.

### CITY OASIS

The project combines a high building density with plenty of room for green and water. Furthermore, it is a meeting place for the neighborhood.

The special round shapes of the blocks contribute to the compactness of the

plan. They also bend the sound of the highway so that no noise barriers are needed on the side of the A10. The courtyard garden feels like a city oasis.

By making use of the height difference (bridge over the A10), space is created for hiding parking, storage and water buffering. The open allotment on the neighborhood side creates 'air' between the building blocks, making the residential complex look inviting.

*"A wonderful example of openness and connection with the neighborhood in an architectural and social sense"*

– jury report Amsterdam Architecture Prize 2020

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Anchoring with the neighborhood was crucial. That is why the former meeting place has been continued in Rhapsody. In the courtyard is the Kolenkitkas (greenhouse), the new meeting location for residents and locals. Various events are organized here.

In addition, there are facilities such as a guest house for family living abroad and a 'living room' meeting place where the neighborhood can eat and drink something.

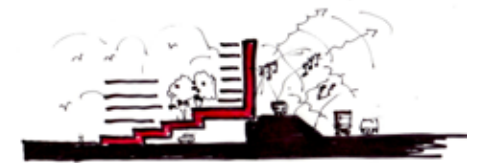
Owner CBRE also offers extra



amenities such as shared electric cars / bicycles and James service (run by "local heroes").

### CHALLENGES

The ensemble offers solutions for numerous challenges, from noise and nitrogen/CO2 problems to water and heat management (climate change), community building and social safety. To make this noisy place habitable, there is a high 'back' on the A10 and the Bos en Lommer road with houses oriented on one side. The residual noise that enters the inner area from the two traffic arteries is deflected by the rounded shapes of the blocks and partly ab-



sorbed by the facades and the abundance of greenery. Because there are no parallel facades between the 'towers', the sound cannot reverberate.

These design solutions set the plan apart from the usual defensive responses in noise-sensitive locations.

### SOCIAL SAFETY

Rhapsody is characterized by openness. Due to the layout of the blocks, there are always 'eyes on the street', from the houses there is a view of the public space everywhere.

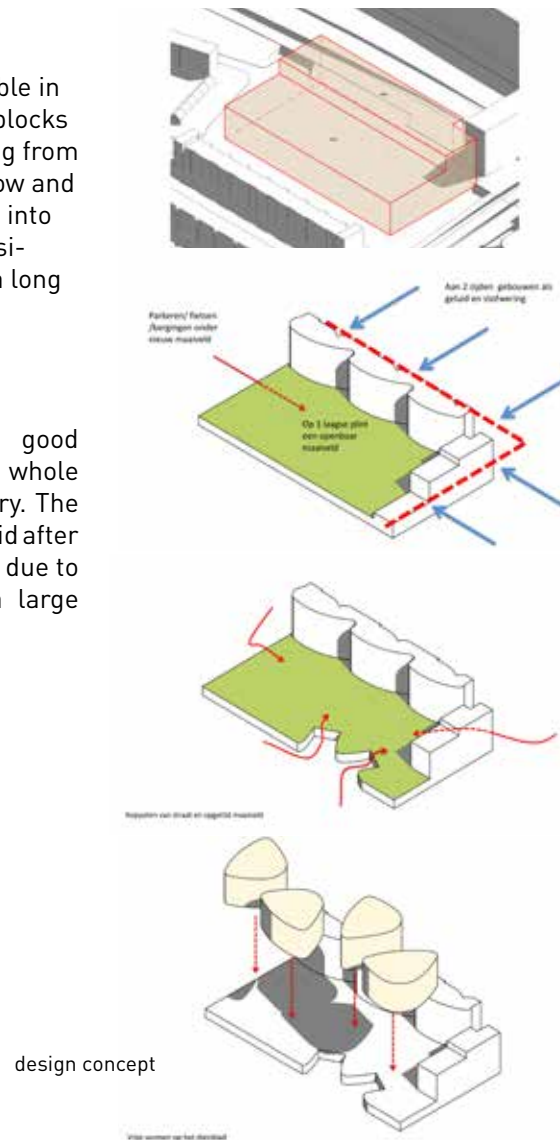
In addition, there are five local community managers (four living on site) with the aim of strengthening contact with residents and the neighborhood. They take care of the overall living quality and organize activities.

## FLEXIBLE

The housing project is very flexible in design. Different layouts of the blocks are possible, with homes ranging from 50 to 110 m<sup>2</sup> and even larger, now and in the future. In this way it takes into account the needs of (future) residents and remains of value for a long time.

## ENERGY FACTORY

Noteworthy is the extremely good energy performance. The whole complex is a large energy factory. The residents supply energy to the grid after deducting their own use. This is due to various measures, including a large number of solar cells.



King Willem-Alexander (left) visiting the building place, talking to local residents and a member of the artist collective Cascoland.



Top down - Bottom up approach: local residents are involved in a early stage.

## FUTURE FOCUS

Finding good solutions for a high density of urbanization is the topic for architects and urban planners, now and in the near future. Locations that were previously marked as unsuitable for housing are now included. Paradoxically, these locations are often interesting to live, as they are usually close to arterial roads, train stations, tram and metro lines.

Intelligent design solutions are therefore needed to turn these locations into high-quality living spaces.

At the same time, the built environment must meet many new requirements. The climate crisis is forcing technology towards circularity. Energy consumption must be converted into energy supply. Changes in population composition (in age and ethnicity) place new demands on the adaptability of the built environment.

Finally: in the densified city everything revolves around the interaction of buildings and (public) space. Public life takes place in this space. It must therefore be an integral part of the design, like the "MA" in Japanese culture: the meaningful empty space in music or theater, translated into urban design.





Ensemble Rhapsody in West, located between the ringroad A10, the busy access road and the old neighborhood





High 'back' at the A10 ringroad



The elevated ground level with community garden





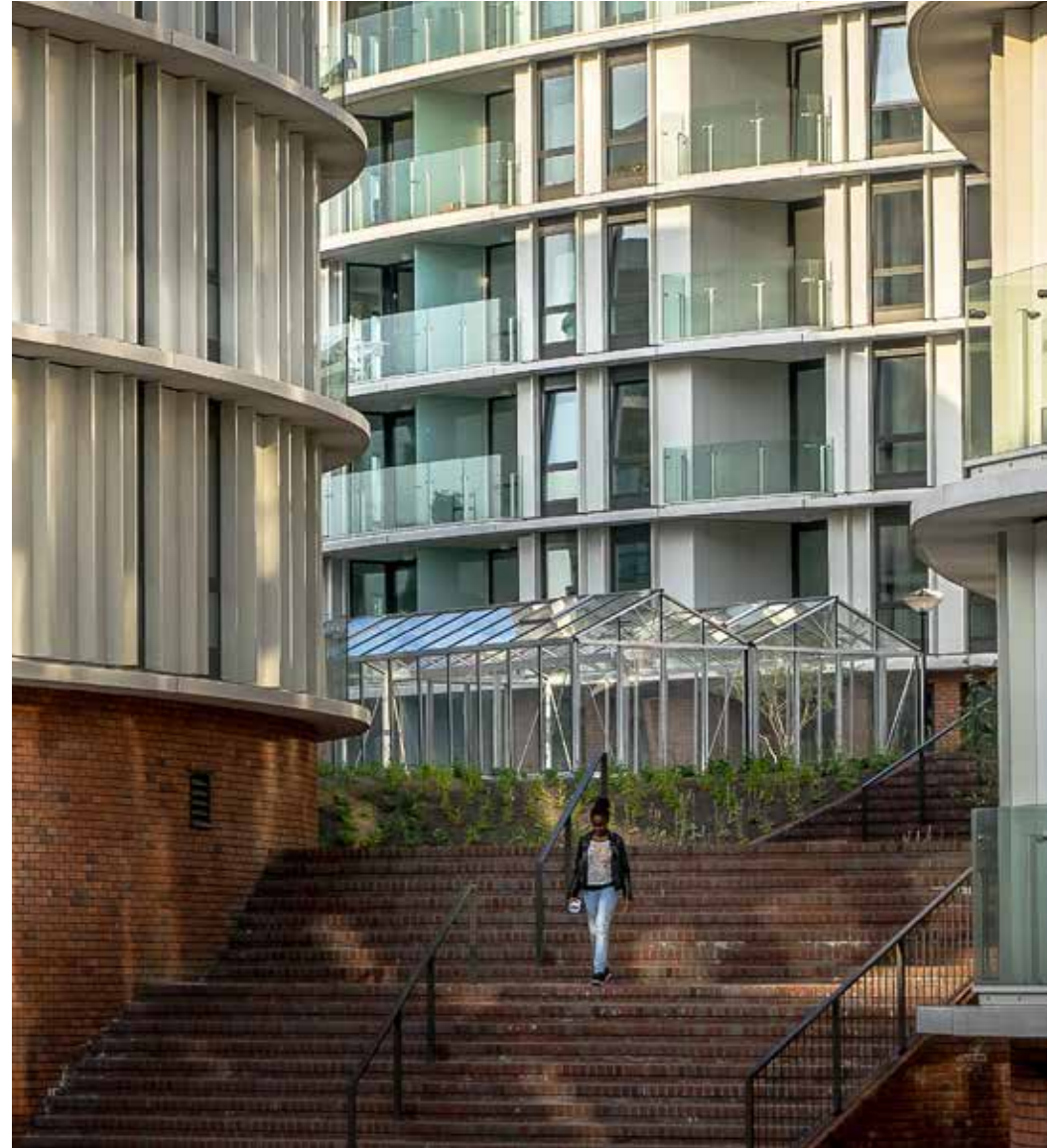
The courtyard garden and greenhouse ('meeting spot')





City Oasis





No parallel facades - the round shapes deflect the sound and make the place feel more spacious than it in reality is

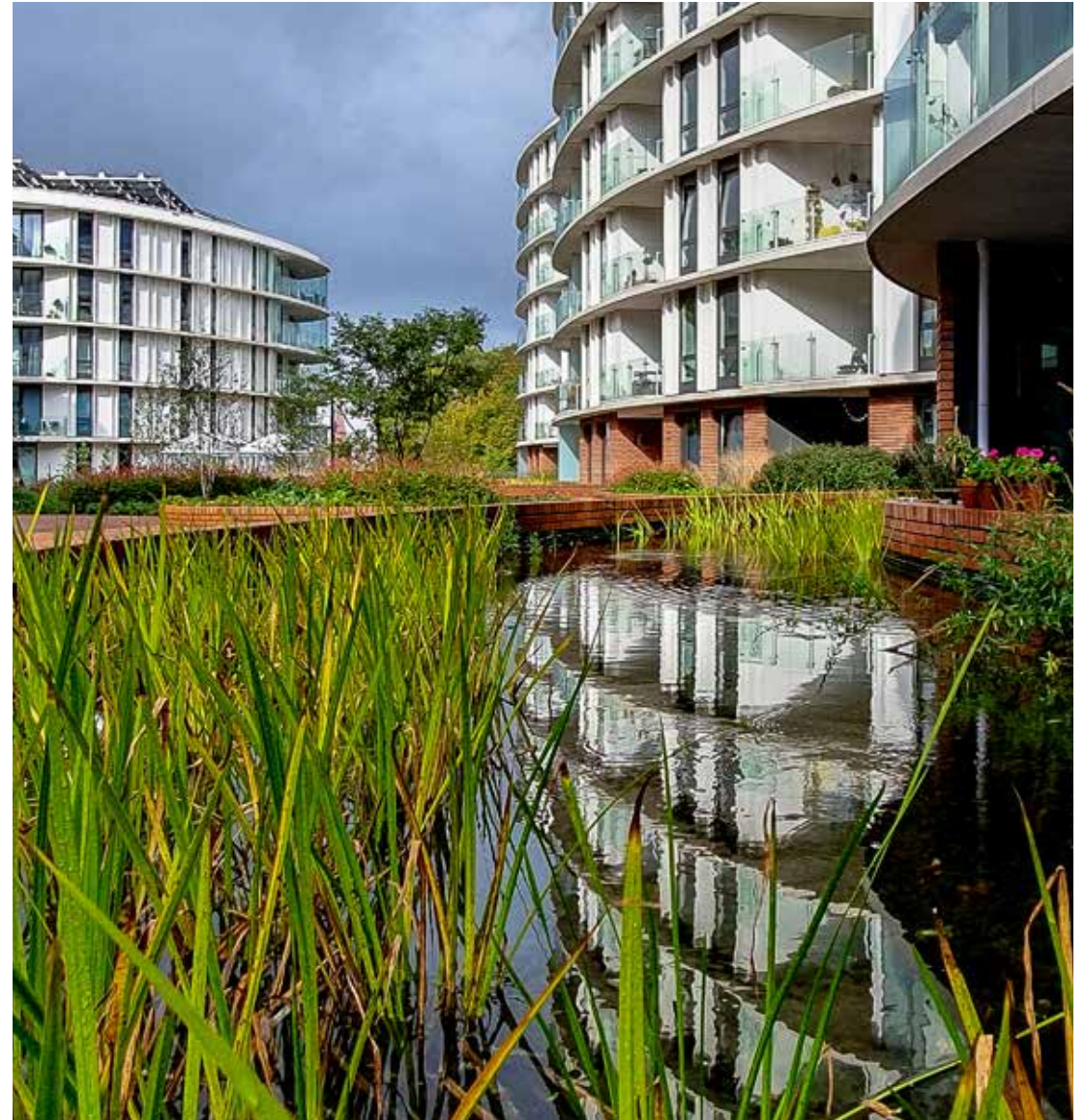












Pond - water retention - privacy buffer









High side building at the busy acces road















roel schoenmakers  
cascoland

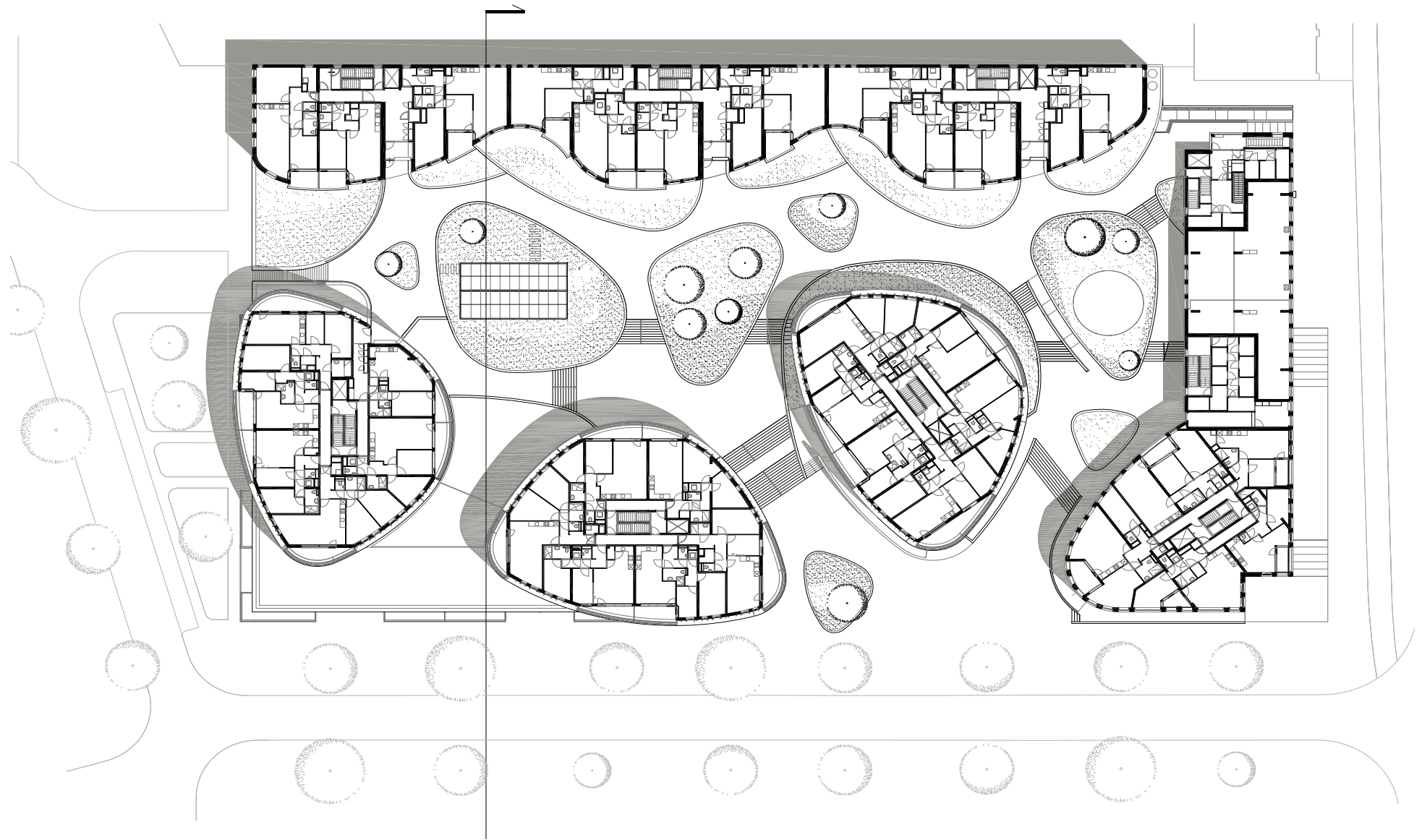
sanne botterweg  
urban sync

bart mispelblom beyer  
tangram architecten





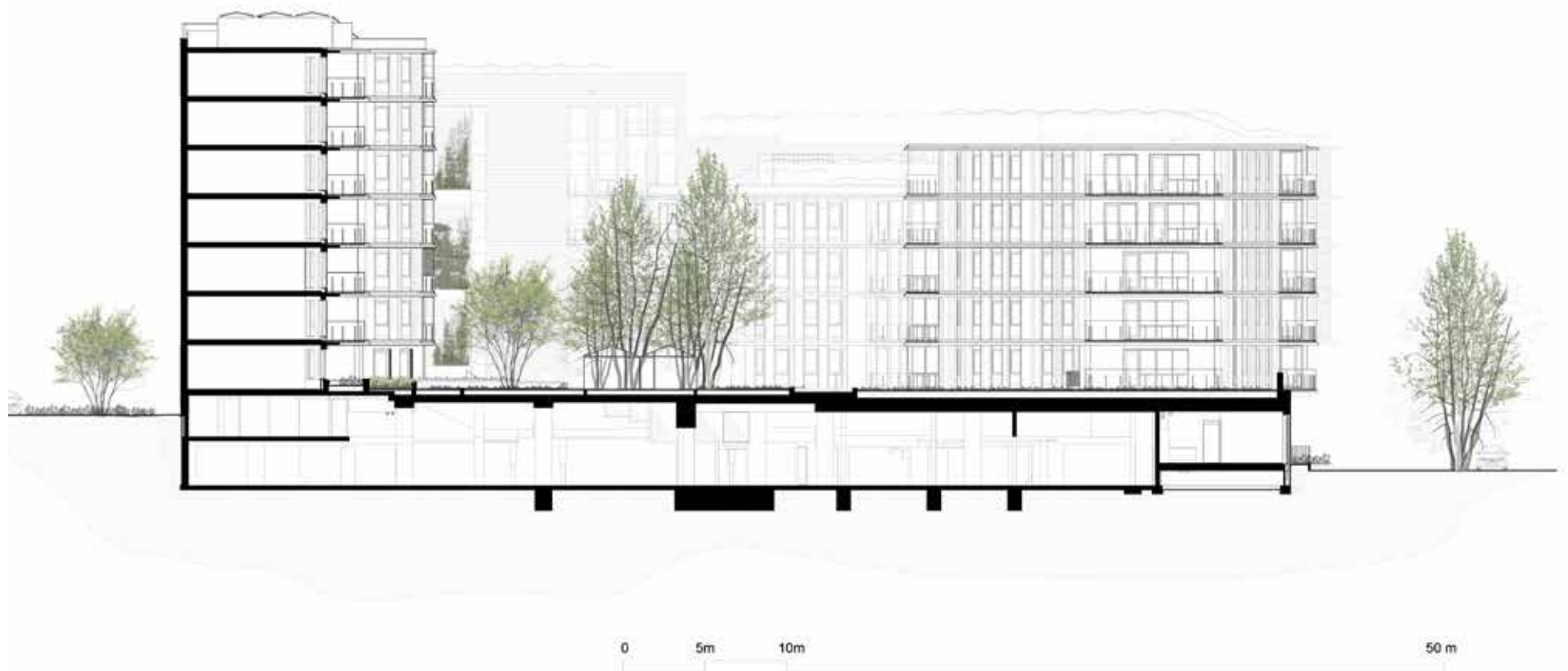




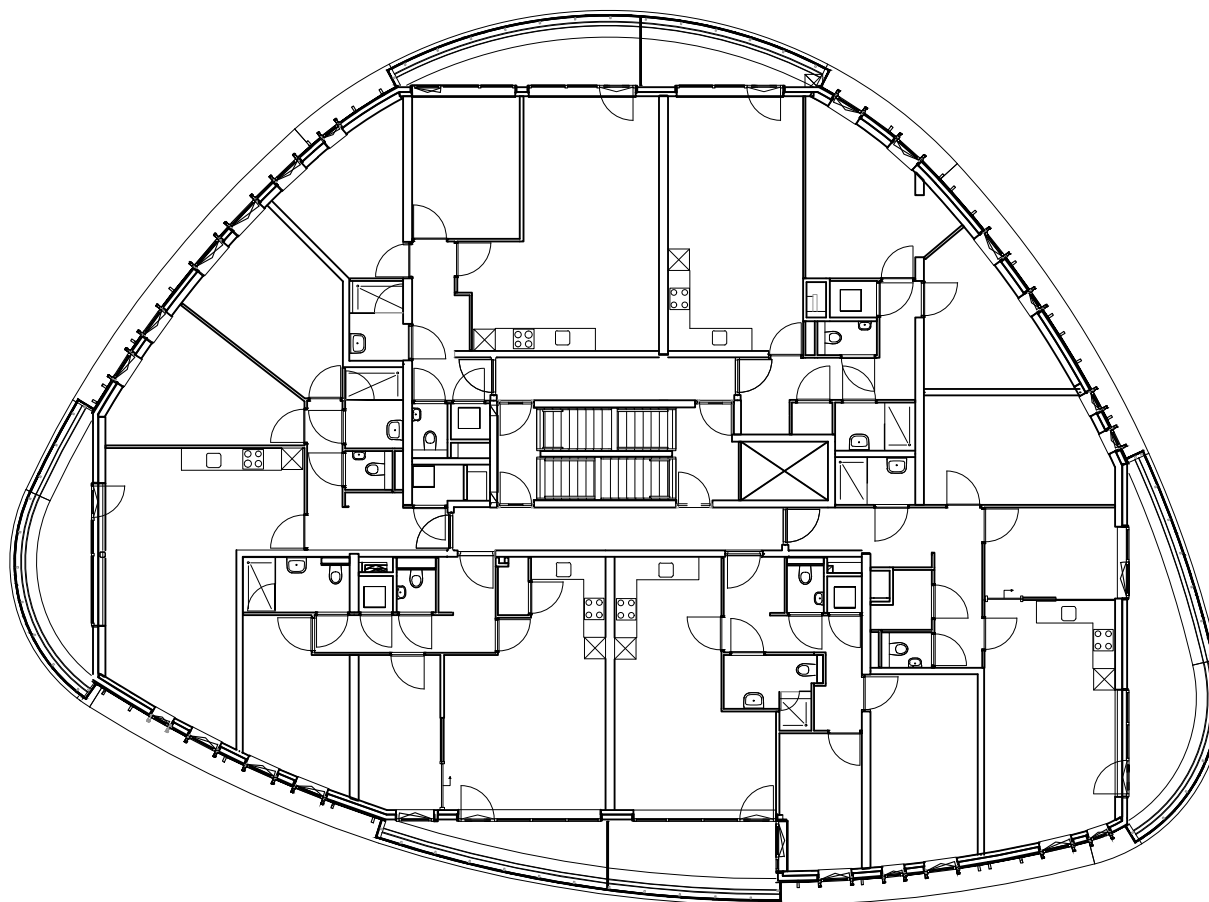










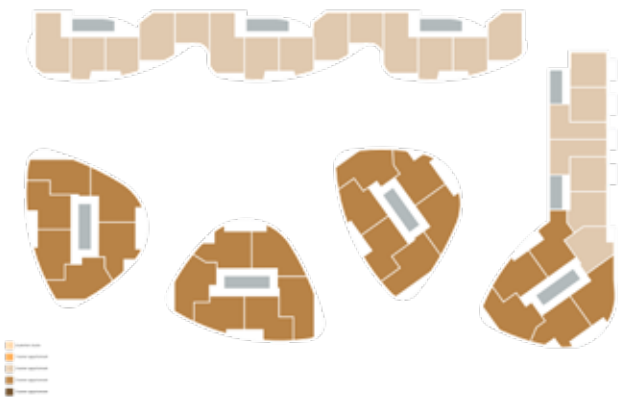


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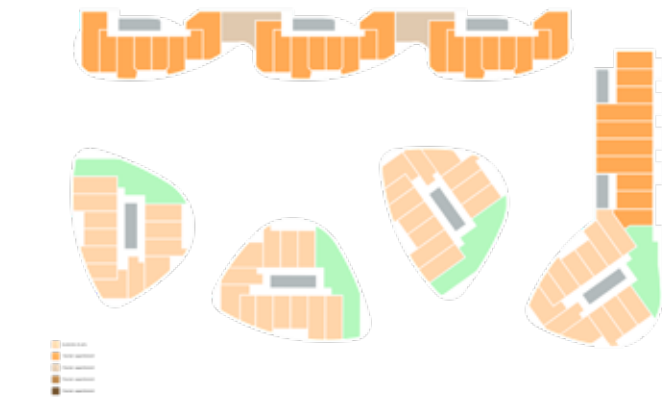




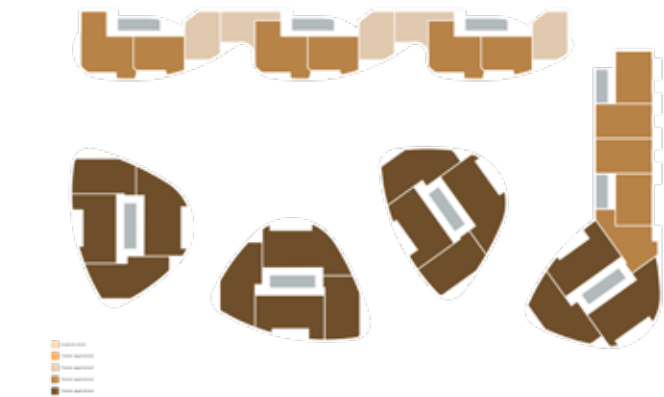
FLEXIBLE LAYOUTS



small



medium



large