A TOOL, A ROOM, A HOUSE, A VILLAGE

Urban Cottages for Domestic Crafting

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

When we craft objects, we become absorbed in work, intimately involved with the physical piece. These things populate our homes, carrying our imprint. Whether making or using our handiwork, our crafts bring us joy. However, most of us no longer make things. At all scales of our world, everything is a commodity, from clothing and tableware to furniture and homes. Although we know we cannot buy happiness, we do not present ourselves with any alternatives.

There are over 2400 lanes in Toronto, many of which have space for development. With the signing of Bill 826, where laneway suites can be built as of right, laneways offer a considerable opportunity for the establishment of small communities within the downtown.

Imagine cottages organized close to each other on a laneway, supporting a community focused on living more enriching lives. The typology of the cottage carries connotations of craft and self-sustainability. In urban Toronto, residents gain access to valuable resources — materials, artists, and patrons. In such a village, people can escape the cycle of consumption and create objects they enjoy. People form stronger relationships with themselves, their families, and their neighbours in crafting them. I have designed each of these cottages from the smallest scale of architecture to the largest.

The design grows from the craft outwards.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I Make Therefore I Am

I am drawn to crafted objects, whether making them myself or appreciating other artist's work. I have practiced pottery, furniture making, cooking, and gardening, but my most significant experience lies in the crafting of textiles. When I engage in these activities, I become absorbed in the craft. When making, I think only of what I am doing at that moment; all stress leaves me. When I finish a piece, I know it is something I was intimately involved with, and I am fulfilled. The object has a place in my life or my friends' lives. I use my handmade items for as long as I can, and when they get worn, I won't hesitate to mend them because they have become special to me. I find immense joy in making things.

Making is genetically ingrained. We have been makers far longer than architecture has existed. Crafting is an act of engagement with the physical world that allows us to learn as we make.[1] Learn about the world, learn about our history, and learn about ourselves. When we work with wood, we work with the body of a tree; when we work with wool, we work with the fleece of a sheep. Through these materials, we become engaged with the world, not possible in any other way.[2] Because of this engagement, the processes of making by hand is just as important as, if not more than, the object produced.

1 | Doug Childers, "Absence Seeks Contingency: Architecture after Ideology," in On Making: Vol 3, ed. Michelle Kerr (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1992), 2.

2 | Ed Levine, Absence Seeks Contingency, 13.

Craftspeople recognize this unique relationship between man and material. William Morris, writing in Britain in the late nineteenth century, supported handicraft. In the face of the industrial revolution, Morris devoted his life to the protection of skilled crafts and satisfying human occupation. He saw value in the craftsman. For him, engaging in crafts and providing for oneself were essential to our happiness and humanity. He writes:

> I think that to all living things there is a pleasure in the exercise of their energies and that even beasts rejoice in being lither and gift and strong. But a man at work, making something which he feels will exist because he is working at it and wills it, is exerting the energies of his mind and soul as well as of his body. Memory and imagination help him as he works. Not only his thoughts, but the thoughts of the men of past ages guide his hands; and, as a part of the human race, he creates. If we work thus we shall be men, and our days will be happy and eventful.[3]

Inspiring the Arts and Crafts movement, Morris influenced a generation of philosophers, designers, and architects in the 19th century, and after. Today, many craftspeople work for a creative life.

* * *

3 | William Morris, Useful Work versus Useless Toil (1889; repr., London: Penguin, 2008), 21.

Arounna is a local Toronto craftsperson who, with her husband John, created a business for handmade goods called Bookhou. For Arounna, there is no division between work and life. Her workshop is her home, and her home is her workshop. She works with a variety of materials and techniques but focuses on textile design and production. Many crafts she works in are new to her, but she celebrates the variety, and her ability to learn. "It is all about the process," she says. "The result might work or not, but the process is so important to experience." [4] She has traded a life of corporate comfort for one of hard but meaningful work. She could not imagine doing anything else. Making objects is a part of who she is.

I set out to explore what specifically interested me about craft and how it relates to architecture. I worked at a small scale, creating tapestries that wove together pieces of wool with artifacts that embodied different periods of my life. Before weaving the tapestries, I made a loom specialized for my work. *(fig. 4)* The loom and the heddle were sized to create one-foot by one-foot square tapestries. The tool became an extension of my body. I fell into a rhythm. Pass the shuttle from one hand to the other, compress the work with the beater, lift the heddle. Repeat. My mind moved from my head to my hands, and my thoughts became peaceful.

4 | Khounnoraj, Arounna. All About the Process. *Instagram*, February 27, 2019. https://www.instagram.com/p/BuZaG7nD1SB/.

5 | Khounnoraj, Arounna. Being a Maker. *Instagram*, November 26, 2018. https://www.instagram.com/p/BqqGo-_j07v/.

Over time, I was not only making tapestries. I was, more importantly, making the "thing" which is myself.[6] After days of weaving, it became clear to me that crafting is inherently domestic. I began by gathering flowers from my garden, and berries from my fridge to create dyes. I made the dyes in large pots on the kitchen stove and then poured them into mason jars.. I placed balls of yarn in each jar and let them soak up the dye by the window in my bedroom.*(fig. 5)* When I finished dyeing, I rinsed the yarn and hung the strands up to dry in my closet. *(fig. 6)* Finally, I took the dried yarn and began weaving my tapestries.*(fig. 7)* Though my house was not ideally suited for crafting, I could see a correlation between rooms and craft processes. Through this project, I saw a way to reintroduce craft into the domestic world.

6 | Henri Focillon, The Life Forms in Art, trans. George Kubler (1989; repr., New York: Zone Books, 1992), 166.

fig. 3 | Arounna Working with Her Daughter

fig. 4 | Constructing Loom in Workshop

fig. 5 | Dyeing Yarn in Sun

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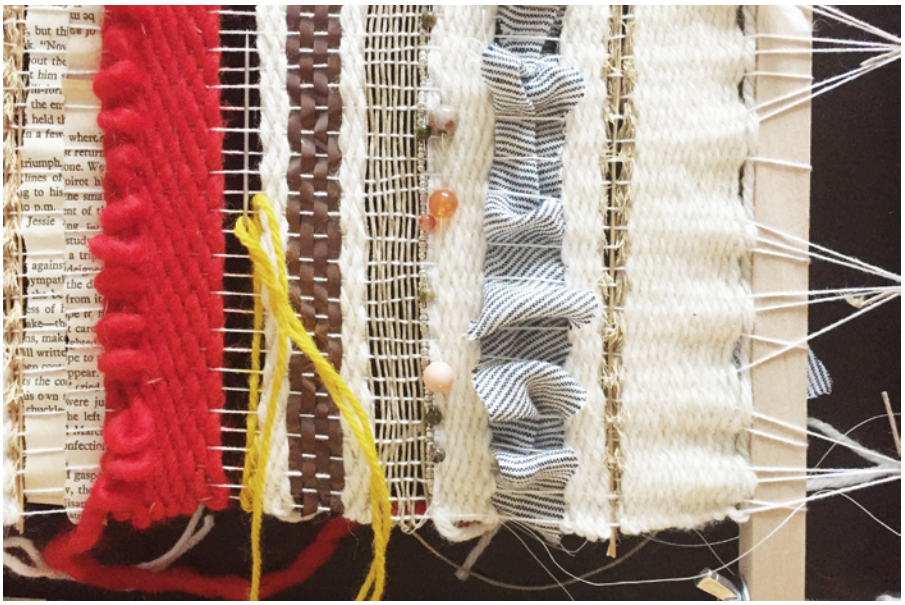

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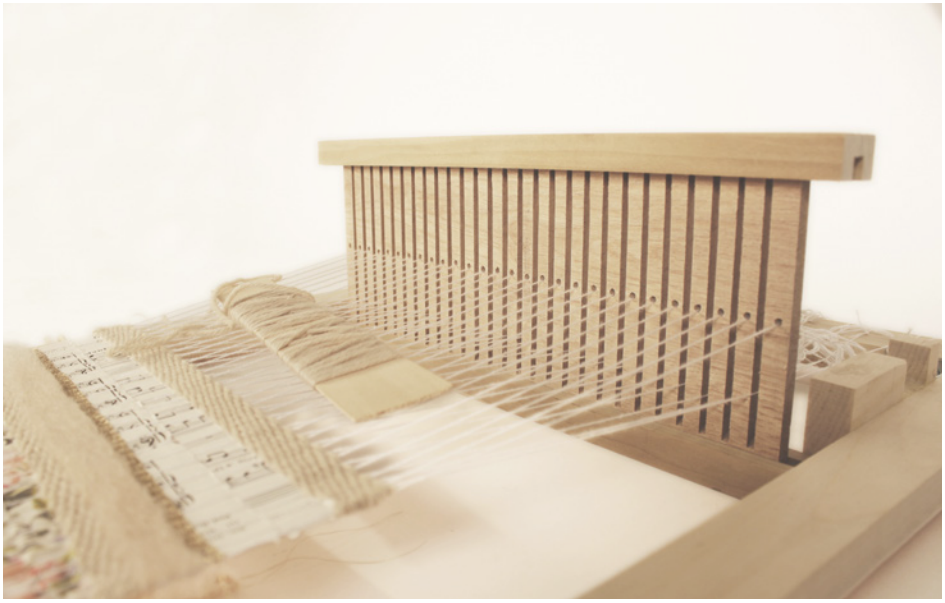


fig. 9 | Loom View 2

fig. 10 | Loom View 3

fig. 11 | Front of Urban Cottage

Houses for Craft

If we are going to bring craft back into our lives, we should integrate it into our houses. The house is the traditional place for crafting and the most intimate and primary form of architecture. I propose a village-like community of cottages in an urban context to support a community focused on living more enriching lives through domestic making. An urban cottage is a place for people to spend their time making instead of spending their money on commodities. Through making, they would be able to have more meaningful interactions with their family and their neighbours. These interactions happen when working together on a project, sharing a meal, or relaxing, telling stories and playing games. In addition to improved relationships with other people, they would also gain a better relationship with themselves. Looking around their homes, they will feel pride in the pieces they have made.

The typology of the cottage carries with it connotations of craft and self-sustainability. Bringing the cottage into the urban setting puts the typology under pressure. Valuable resources such as materials, other artists, and customers are accessible in the city. Most importantly, by placing the cottage in Toronto, it establishes the idea that self-sustainability and crafting can have a place in the city.

Space in Toronto is limited, and the cost of land is high. For these reasons, the cottage will need to be small, designed for efficiency. With the recent signing of Bill 826, where

secondary suites can be built as of right on laneways within the downtown, the laneway offers a considerable opportunity to use these pockets of land as a testing ground for urban cottages. The laneway allows makers to build their houses to form a community. On the lane, tucked away inside the block, they are connected to the city and at the same time removed from it. Lanes also offer opportunities for replicability because of their presence across Toronto and the similar size of building plots.

I will be focusing on O'Riordan Lane in the North of Cabbagetown. It is a long wide lane with numerous sizable parcels of land ideal for the growth of the community. Each cottage in the village is specialized in a unique craft. In the O'Riordan community lives the bookbinder, the potter, the leather-worker, and the tailor. The residents can make for themselves and trade among each other, creating an economy separate from commercialization. They can sell their goods to the surrounding neighbourhood through a building designed to facilitate and promote social and economic interactions between the crafters and the local community. Other than exchanging goods and money, the people of Toronto can learn from the makers or even work with them as apprentices. Eventually, others may develop similar projects across the city.

The cottages are all similar schematically, differing only in millwork and furniture. The design will focus on a tailor's house

fig. 12 | Workroom

since the art of textiles is the craft I know best. Sewing, weaving, spinning, dyeing, knitting, and embroidery are some of the crafts of the house. These crafts inspired the design of the house from the smallest scale of architecture to the largest. The starting point is the design of a tool for the craft. This tool is a sewing table, essential to the tailor. Around the table, I designed room, and then the house, and lastly the village. The final design speaks to the joy that crafting and providing for one's self can bring.

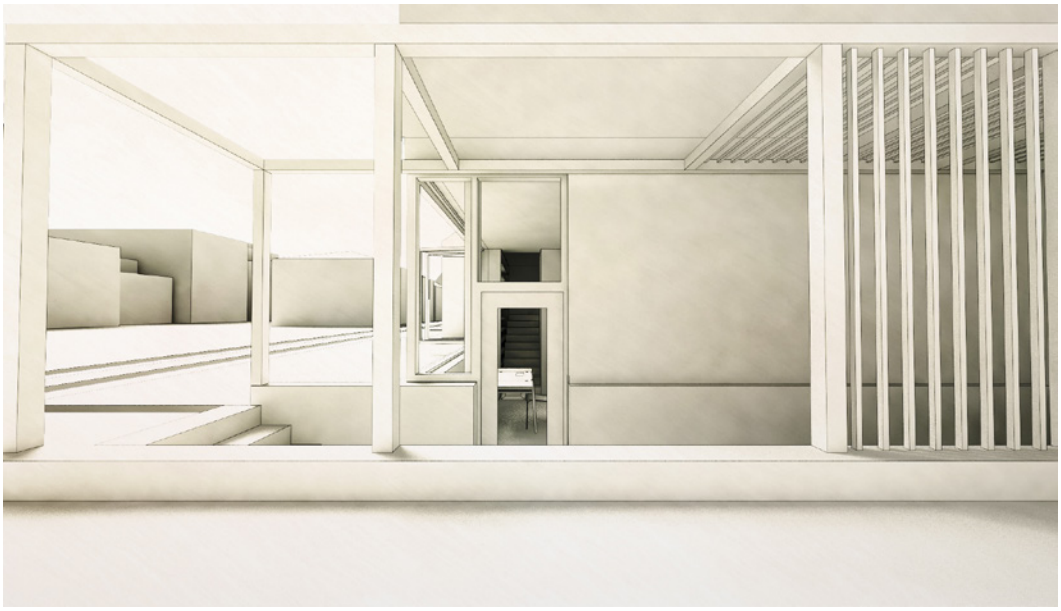


fig. 13 | Entrance

Method

Part 1: Domestic Making

The First Part of this thesis reflects on the history of craft and self-sustainability, examining how other people designed self-sufficient communities and crafting spaces. The people and spaces under consideration are the Shakers and local Craft Studios, as well as Toronto laneway houses. The Shakers and Craft Studios are considered at four scales of architecture: a tool, a room, a house, and a village. From these case studies, we will understand how craft has shaped domestic environments and what design strategies could be implemented in the Urban Cottage. Each section will consist of an essay, photographs, diagrams, and drawings.

Part 2: Toronto Laneways

The second section looks at the history of Toronto laneways and the potential they carry. I considered the development of laneways, existing laneway houses, and what Bill 826 means for densification.

Part 3: An Urban Cottage

I have designed the cottage from the smallest scale of architecture up to the largest. This process allows the design to grow from the craft outwards. The first scale is the tool designed for the specific craft of the house. The room was developed around the tool, based on the needs of the craft. The house was developed around the room with additional spaces for living, like bathrooms, bedrooms, and the kitchen. The family can fill these rooms with products from the workshop production.

The cottage finds its place on the laneway along with the other cottages. Together, they form a community that reaches out to the city. Each scale conveys the importance of craft within the home. All of the sections include various means to communicate the design: photographs, diagrams, measured architectural drawings, and vignettes.

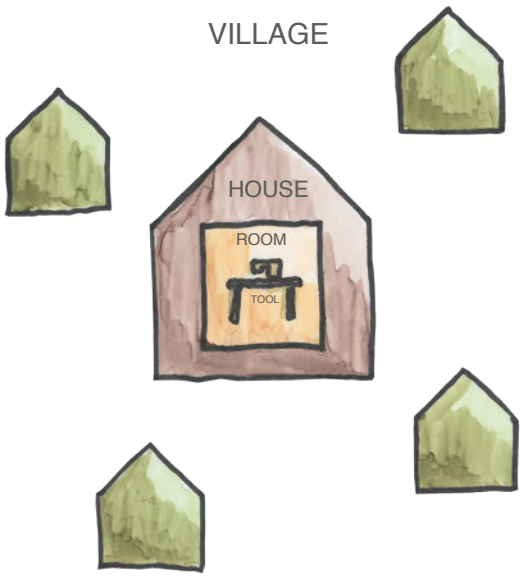


fig. 14 | Design at Scales Diagram

PART 1:
DOMESTIC MAKING

Domestic Making

Throughout history, people from all over North America have formed self-sufficient communities actively contesting the orthodox commodity-driven life. Crafting and community shaped their lives. The people who primarily influenced this thesis include the Shakers and Toronto craftspeople. Like the design of the urban cottage, these communities are considered at four scales: tool, room, house, and village. The inspiration and design of the urban cottage comes from a combination of strategies from communities centred on domestic crafting in both rural and urban settings.

fig. 15 | Hancock Shaker Village

fig. 16 | Basket-making at Hancock Shaker Village

The Shakers

The Shakers were a Utopian society who built communities across America in the 18th and 19th centuries.[7] I was introduced to the Shakers during my studies through Linda Butler's photo series, Inner Light. Her photos captured the serenity of Shaker domestic spaces. The buildings, rooms and tools photographed date back up to two hundred years, yet there is something about them that is still familiar and relevant to us. To experience the Shaker design and environment more personally, I visited Hancock Shaker Village in Massachusetts.

7 | Scott T. Swank, Shaker Life, Art, and Architecture : Hands to Work, Hearts to God, 1st Edition (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), 6.

fig. 17 | Laundry Room at Hancock by Linda Butler

fig. 18 | Washbasin at Hancock by Linda Butler

Finding Joy in Work

The rooms at Hancock were filled with tools which permitted the Shakers to be engaged physically with their surroundings. By embracing technologies, the Shakers allowed creative and tactile work to flourish.[8] These technologies could take the form of hand tools, but also furniture and even architectural elements. One detail I saw at Hancock was a mechanism to remove window panes. The window frames were wood with three small pegs on either side. The pegs could be taken out to remove the glass for cleaning or if it was broken. This simple detail made cleaning much more comfortable, especially on the upper levels.

These windows were plentiful in Hancock's main dormitory. They were large, almost one metre wide by one and a half metres tall. These windows made the perimeter rooms bright, perfect for detailed work. The upper rooms of the dormitory were used both as bedrooms and domestic crafting spaces. Of particular interest to me was a room which contained tools for sewing and knitting. There were sewing desks, a spinning wheel, a loom and smaller tools like a bonnet mold, and a yarn swift. The sewing desks, like all furniture at Hancock, were constructed by the Shakers themselves.[9] They took care to make these desks as functional as possible. The sewing desks had features such as drawers of varying sizes and an extendable work surface.

8 | Ibid, 161.

9 | Dolores Hayden, Seven American Utopias (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1979), 24.

fig. 19 | Sewing Desk in Craft Room at Hancock

The tables were also light enough so that they could be moved, allowing the Shakers to reorganize or repurpose the space with minimal effort.[10] Whether sewing or basket-making, the Shakers found joy in their work, which many of us struggle with today. This joy came from having the higher purpose of serving God, but also from the ability to slow down and put care into their work.

Economy of Motion

On the ground level of the dormitory was the kitchen. It measured the width of the building and was lined with large windows on the three exterior walls. This floor was sunken, so that eye level was just a foot above the ground. Each workstation had a window which provided an up-close tableau of the grass, insects and flowers outside. On the remaining walls were peg rails composed of wooden strips with pegs spaced a foot apart. These were used to hang cloaks, hats, and brooms. Chairs, clocks, shelves, and sconces were also all designed to be hung up on the pegs.[11] This system was successful due to its flexibility. The items could be moved anywhere along the wall and would work in other rooms. The storage units in the kitchen were built into the walls, which made the room orderly since no surfaces were

10 | Paul Rocheleau and June Sprigg, Shaker Built, ed. David Larkin, American First Edition (New York: Monacelli Press, 1994), 130.

11 | Hayden, American Utopias, 81.

fig. 20 | Kitchen Sink at Hancock

jutting into the room. The units were substantial, some taking up a whole wall. They contained a variety of drawer and cupboard sizes, providing space for every kitchen item.[12] At the back of the room were china-cabinet-like dumbwaiters that could lift food to the dining hall directly above with a pulley system. These cabinets exemplify the Shaker concern for economy of motion. The cooks could deliver dishes up to the dining room without having to go upstairs. The Shakers had a good understanding of what needed to be permanent and specialized and what needed to be flexible and generic.

An Antidote to Worldliness

From the kitchen, I could overlook the garden and workshops. These buildings were mostly composed of bright red brick, marble, and painted clapboard. The Shakers sourced the majority of these materials from their land and bought whatever they could not make. Hancock village had a quarry, gravel bed, woodlot, brickyard and iron mine.[13] By using local materials and building according to the climate, the Shakers were able to develop a local design identity. The clapboard buildings were also painted in bright hues as part of a colour-coding system to denote functions.[14] This system allowed the Shakers to identify

12 | John Kassay, The Book of Shaker Furniture (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 33.

13 | Rocheleau and Sprigg, Shaker Built, 14.

14 | Ibid, 59.

one building from another easily while offsetting Massachusetts' winter gloom. Meeting buildings were painted pure white; dwelling houses were bright yellow, agricultural buildings a deeper yellow, and industrial buildings were red.

A layout by hierarchy also helped organize the workshops, along with the rest of the buildings, into a self-sufficient village. More public and industrial buildings were near the main road and more private buildings were set back.[15] The village is set within a valley, surrounded by forested hills. The dense urban environment contrasts with the wilderness. To some extent, the Shakers created Utopian societies as an antidote to worldliness, and what we now know as the industrial revolution.[16] With factories came environmental afflictions: smog, disease, cramped living conditions, and poverty. Supported by a community of faith, working people could escape the city for a more idyllic country life. The Shakers actively opposed commercialization, separating themselves from the worldliness, physically and socially. They believed that the organization of cities was to blame for people's hardships and so set out to create radically alternative environments to help shape their lives for the better.[17]

15 | Swank, Shaker Life, 26.
16 | Hayden, American Utopias, 71.
17 | Ibid, 15.

fig. 21 | Hancock Gardens Facing Round Stone Barn

fig. 22 | Dormitory at Hancock

A Shaker Sewing Table

One of my favourite pieces of Shaker furniture is the sewing desk in figure 23. It is made up of a work surface on top of a box supported by splayed tapered legs. The box contains a single large drawer, an extendable work surface and a vertical drawer for thread and notions at the back. The drawer at the front is large enough to fit fabric, work-in-progress and a sewing box. The worker would have to move back to open the drawer; therefore, the drawer contains objects that are not frequently accessed. The drawer at the back holding thread and needles would be in constant use but could be left open due to its location. The cut out at the front allows the worker to get closer to their work, and the raised moulding prevents anything from falling off the table.[18] The table is simple yet efficient. Even in a small, sleek desk, the Shakers could still fit two types of storage and a large work surface. Everything the Shakers made was made to be first as useful as possible and then as beautiful as possible because the Shakers knew that beauty rests on utility.[19] Following this principle, their crafting lifestyle is visible in all their works, from their furniture to their buildings and communities.

18 | Robert F. W Meader, Illustrated Guide to Shaker Furniture (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1972), 56.

19 | Rocheleau and Sprigg, Shaker Built, 10.

fig. 23 | Shaker Sewing Table

fig. 24 | Bookhou Stool

Artist Studios

Bookhou

Bookhou is a crafting business founded by Arounna Khounnoraj and her husband John Booth in 2002.[20] Arounna works in various textile arts including sewing, punch needling, weaving, and fabric stamping. John works mostly in wood, creating furniture and mobile sculptures. He helps Arounna with her projects and they often collaborate on designs. An excellent example of their combined talents is their punch needle stool,*(fig. 24)* where Arounna designed and produced the cushion and John designed and constructed the stool. Arounna and John are both full-time crafters, the boundaries between their life and work have become blurred, and this is reflected in their home.

20 | Khounnoraj, Arounna, and John Booth. "About Us." Bookhou, 2017. https://www.bookhou.com/pages/about-us.

The Site

The couple works and lives with their two children in a house on Dundas Street West in Trinity Bellwoods, Toronto. *(fig. 25)* Along the street, there are a few other crafters, including a potter and a paper artist. The area has a strong sense of community while also having a good street presence for the store. When they bought the building in 2008, the area was not as family-friendly, but this meant they could afford to buy their studio. A few years ago, they paid off the mortgage, and now own their home, workshop, and store.

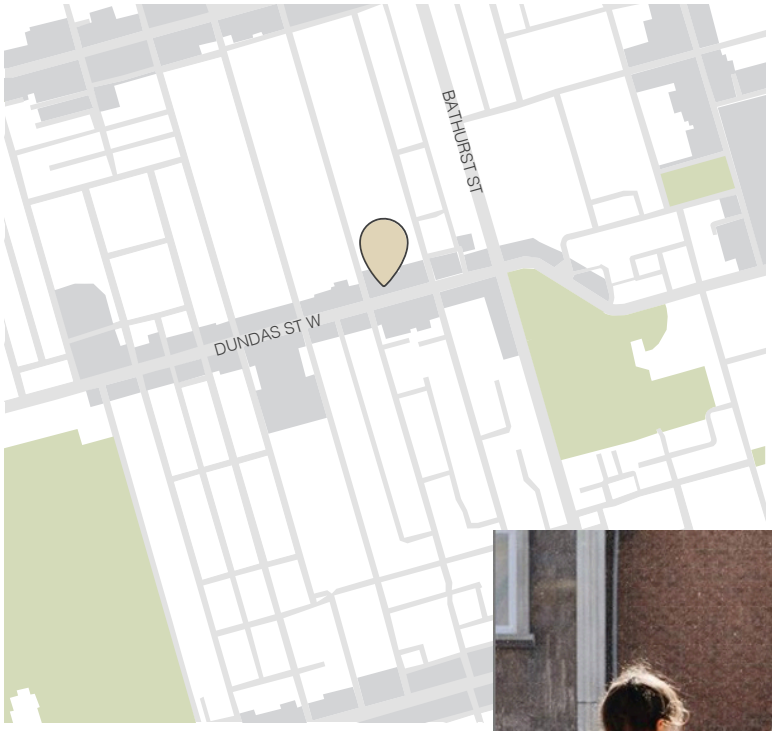


fig. 25 | Bookhou Location
fig. 26 | Bookhou Store Front

The Tool

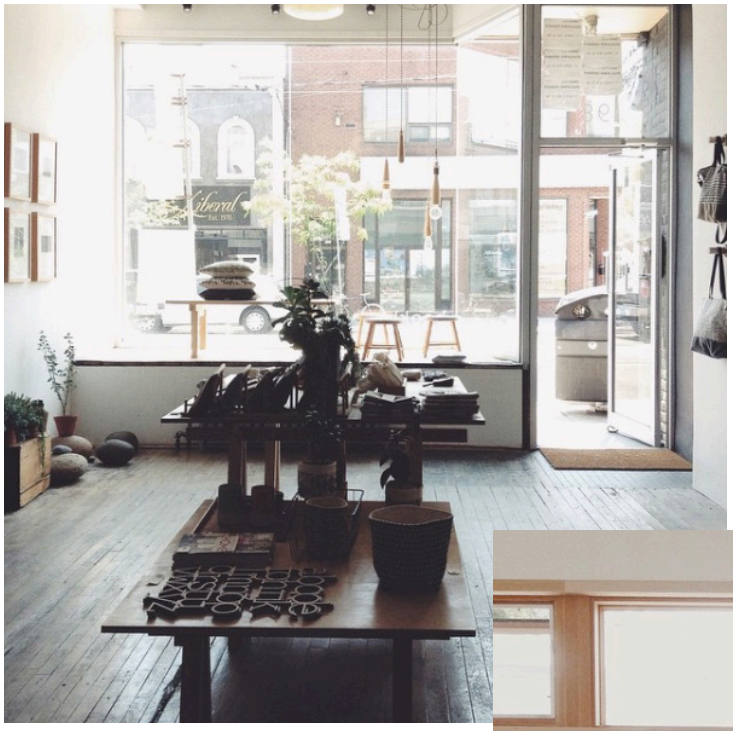
The Bookhou studio is filled with different tools, such as sergers, sewing machines, printing screens, computers, and looms, but the most crucial tool of all is the large table in the production studio. *(fig. 27)* This is where hand stitching and cutting happens. The tabletop has a seamless wood surface which prevents scissors or pencils from catching on grooves. The frame is steel and under the tabletop is open storage for rolls of fabric and other large materials. This shelf allows for easy access to supplies and a visual catalogue of what they have in stock. Having this separate cutting table along with the other work surfaces made a considerable difference to Arounna's work-flow. She says that not having to clean up after each task was a life changer. And she learned to keep tools out in the open. "Out of sight out of mind works both ways," she says. "If you do not see the project or the tools, you will not have the same motivation to work."[21] When inspiration strikes, it is much easier to get your ideas down when you do not have to dig to find your tools.

21 | Khounnoraj, Arounna (Toronto Craftsperson), interviewed by Hayley Sykes at Bookhou, Toronto, ON, May 1, 2019.

fig. 27 | Arounna Working with Daughter

The Room

The workroom, composed of a store and production studio on the ground level and an experiment studio half a level above is the focal point of the house. John, Arounna, and her mother all work together in this space during the day, and in the evenings the children use the experiment studio to work on their homework alongside their mother, while she dreams up new designs. Behind the storefront are the sewing machines and sergers where Arounna's mother is often working. Arounna notes that having her mother work at the median between the storefront and production studio allows her to stay productive while being able to answer any questions customers may have. Behind the sewing machines is the large cutting table where John is often found and to the side is the packing station, fabric printing station, and washing machine. Arounna will split her time between these different stations while also conducting workshops in the upstairs experiment studio. One of her favourite things about her studio is the light. When they renovated the building, they made sure to have as many windows as they could, which makes seeing more manageable and the workspace more enjoyable.



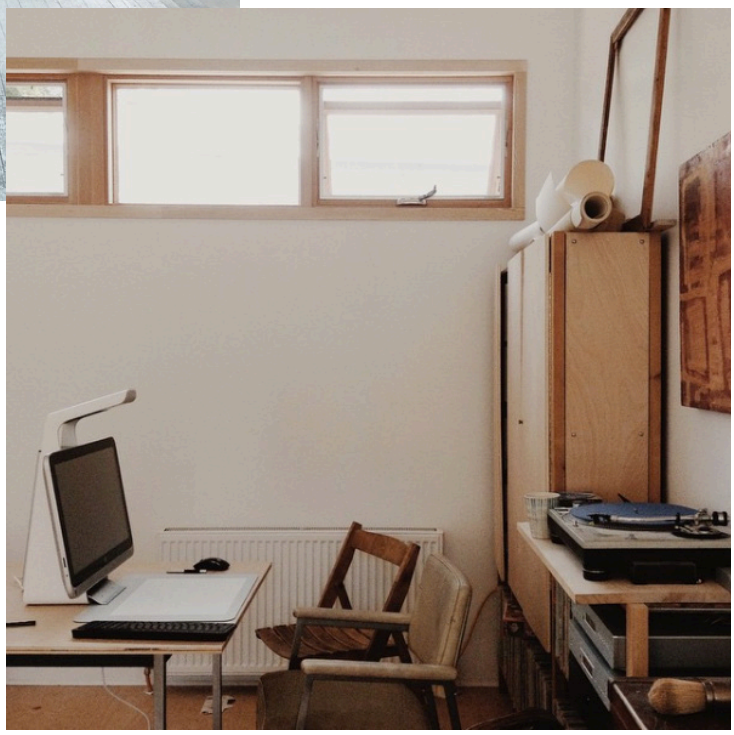


fig. 28 | Bookhou Store
fig. 29 | Bookhou Experiment Studio

The House

In addition to the workshop, the house contains a woodworking studio in the basement, and living and outdoor spaces on the second floor. *(fig. 30)* Between these programs, there are no hard boundaries or walls. Rather, there is a seamless transition from the public street, through the semi-public store and workshops, up to the private domestic realm. This transition allows for transparency of the crafting experience for customers and the family alike. Having the home, store, and workshop all in one building helps blend life and work. Arounna says crafting is a lifestyle, and it makes it much more convenient when life and work are all in one place.[22] She does not need to commute, she can stay at home with her kids on holidays, and she can work in the evenings when her kids go to sleep. Of course, not having boundaries between work and life is not ideal for some crafters who feel more comfortable going home knowing the workday is over. When they bought the house, it was only two stories and had a small backyard. They built the property as far back and as high up as they could to enlarge the living and work areas. Arounna and John transformed the backyard into the experiment studio and built the children's bedrooms and terrace over the living space.

22 | Ibid

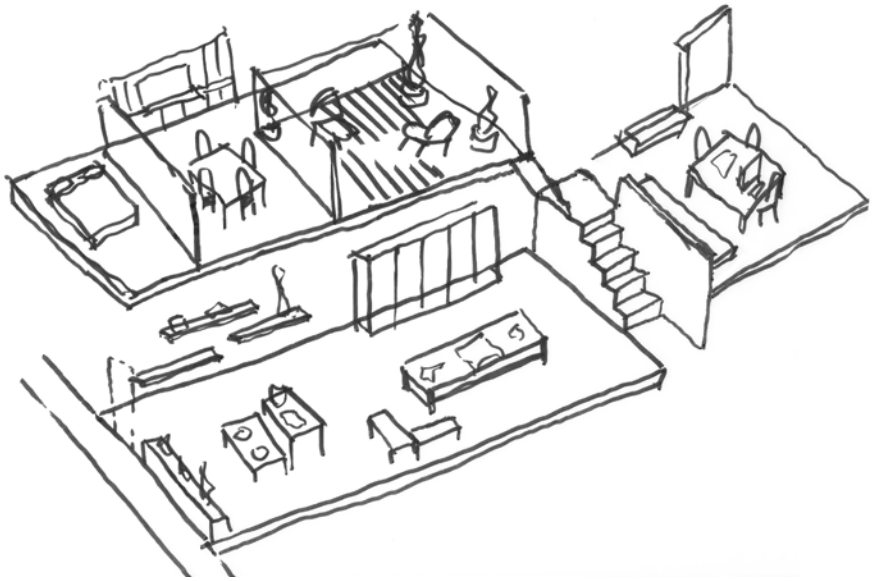


fig. 30 | Bookhou Building Axonometric

Effects of Crafting

Crafting has become John and Arounna's life, but it has also become a part of their children's lives. Her son, and especially her daughter, are continually crafting. They learn new skills from their parents and have access to a wide range of materials and tools. "When we bought the building I was eight months pregnant with Piper and Liam was a toddler, this shop and home is very much the foundation of who they are",[23] writes Arounna in one of her posts. She sees the power in living a creative life and is proud she can pass it down to her children.

23 | Khounnoraj, Arounna. Pipper Waving at Passers-by. *Instagram*, July 3, 2016. https://www.instagram.com/p/BHaSIysgWd9/.

fig. 31 | Arounna's Daughter Crafting Hedgehogs

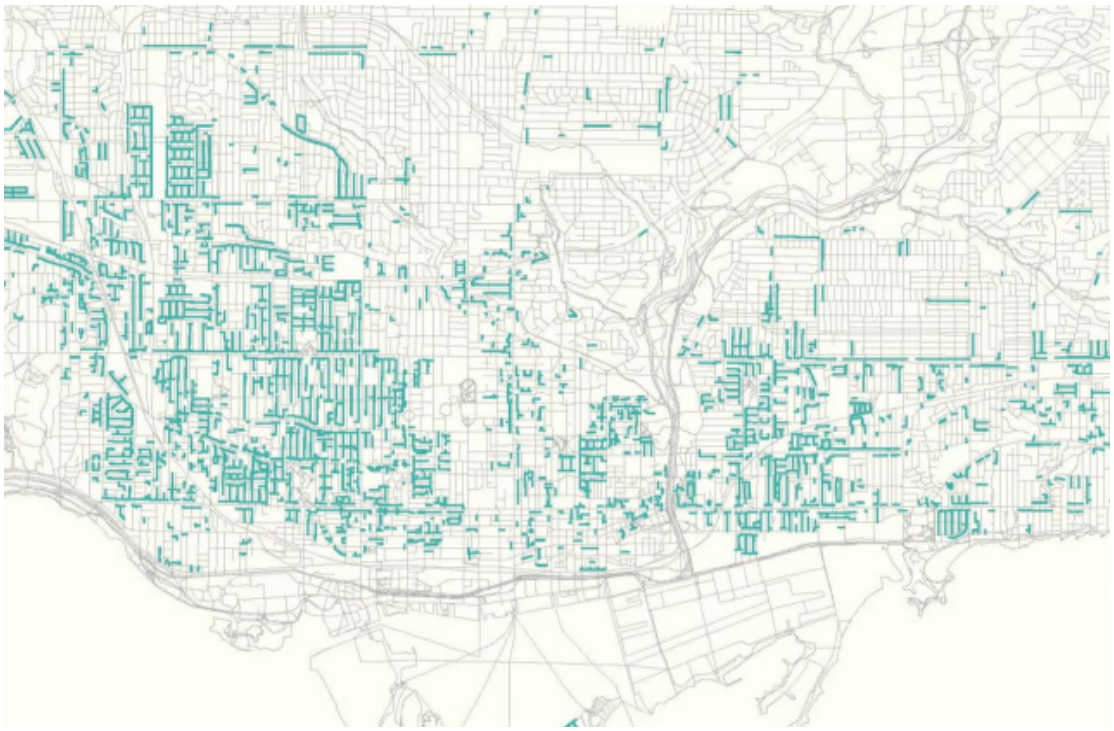


fig. 32 | Map of Toronto Laneways

Toronto Laneways

Though we seldom see them, laneways make up a large part of Toronto's urban fabric. Today there are over 2400 publicly owned laneways stretching 250 kilometres across Toronto.[24] Most of these lanes are lined with garages and act as short cuts for pedestrians and cyclists, but in specific areas, they are used for spillover from workshops, street art, and community parties.

History of the Toronto Laneway

The first laneways began as servicing arteries for larger estates owned by the military and the wealthy. By the mid-1800s, landowners began dividing and selling the land within these blocks.[25] Extensions to the servicing streets and additional laneways were planned to augment the urban block. With service located behind the houses, the street fronts were denser and more orderly. This organization resulted in distinct public and semi-public facades. In working-class neighbourhoods, the semi-public corridor was used by the residents for kitchen garbage and outhouse waste removal. In wealthier neighbourhoods, the laneways had coach houses for live-in staff, horses, and carriages. As sanitation facilities moved inside of houses and carriages were replaced by cars, the laneways were used primarily for storage

24 | The Laneway Project. "Technical Info." The Laneway Project, 2014. https://www.thelanewayproject.ca/technicalfacts.

25 | Brigitte Shim and Donald Chong, Site Unseen (Toronto: University Of Toronto Faculty Of Architecture, 2004), 13.

and were lined with garages and sheds.[26]

Today, we are continually moving away from individual car ownership, which means many garages have become underutilized.

Laneway Types

There are different types of laneway-block arrangements which depend on how blocks were divided in the past.

Short Laneway: oriented parallel to the short axis of the block, often on commercial ends of residential blocks, physical separation between commercial and residential

Long Laneway: parallel to the long axis of the block, one half of its length may front along a major street, the other along a minor street, provides access and parking for all lots

Alphabetical Laneway: most common, oriented to both short and long axis, C, I, J, L, T, or Z configurations, may be shared with residential and commercial

Miscellaneous Laneway: unique to an unusually shaped block [27]

26 | Ibid, 15.
27 | Ibid, 26.

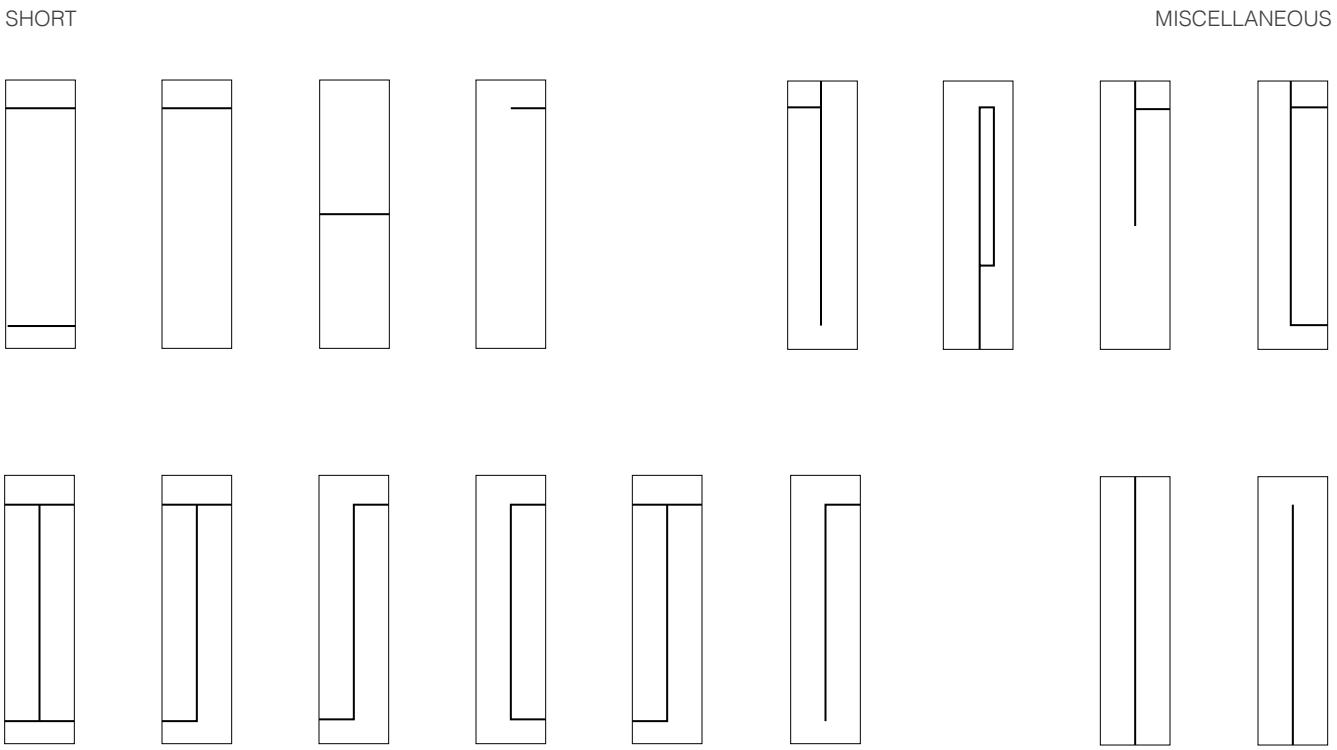


fig. 33 | Laneway Types

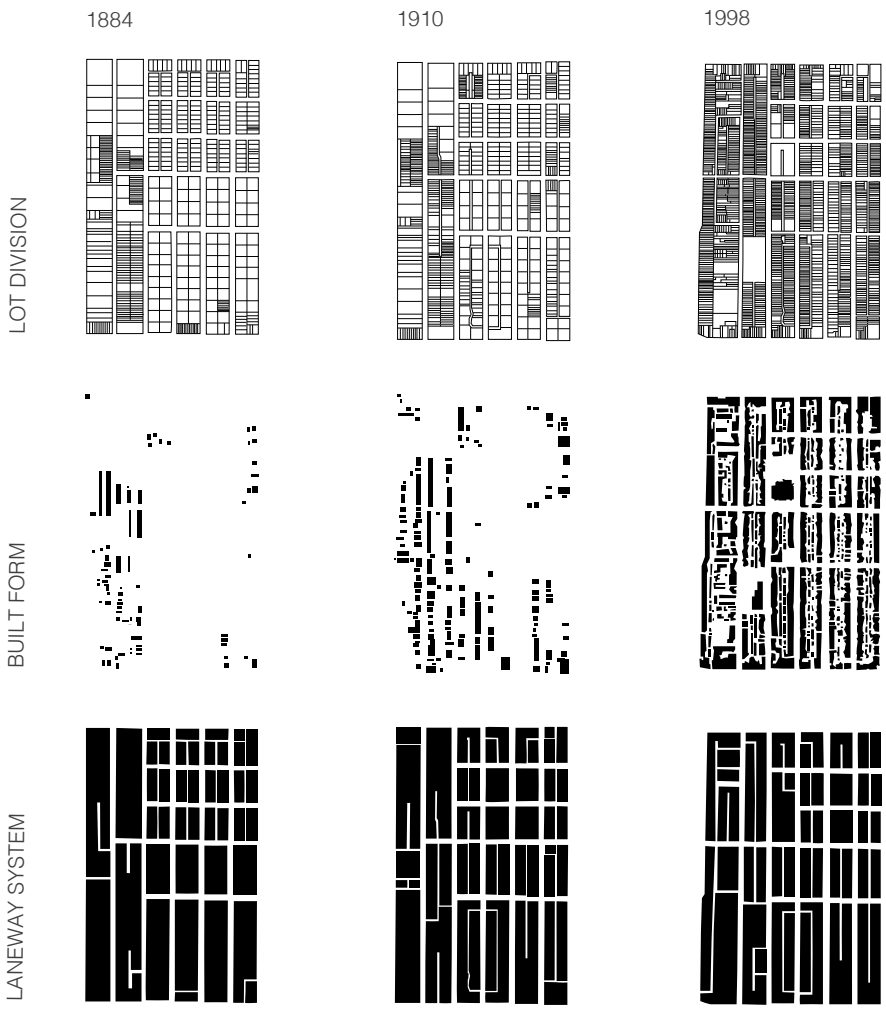


fig. 34 | Morphology of Toronto Laneways at Scale of Neighbourhood

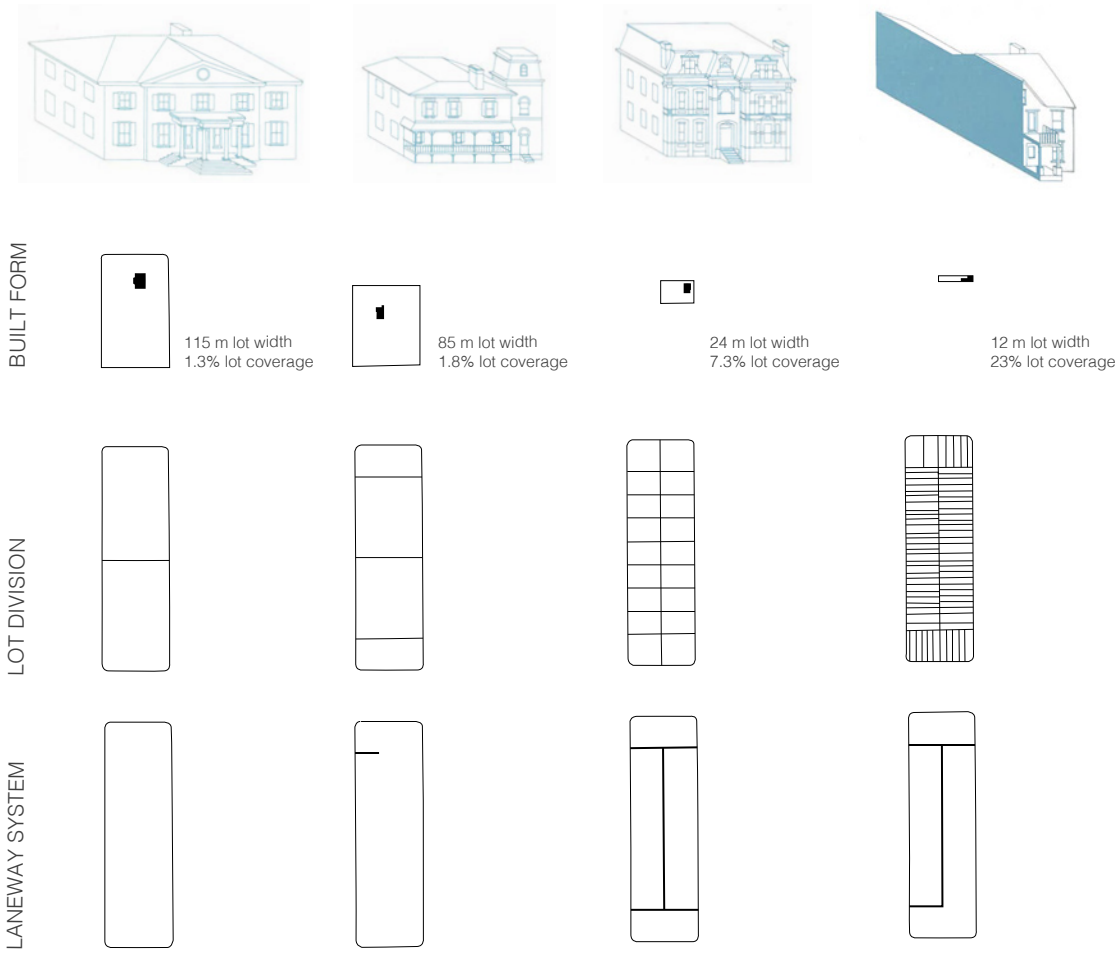


fig. 35 | Morphology of Toronto Laneways at Scale of Block

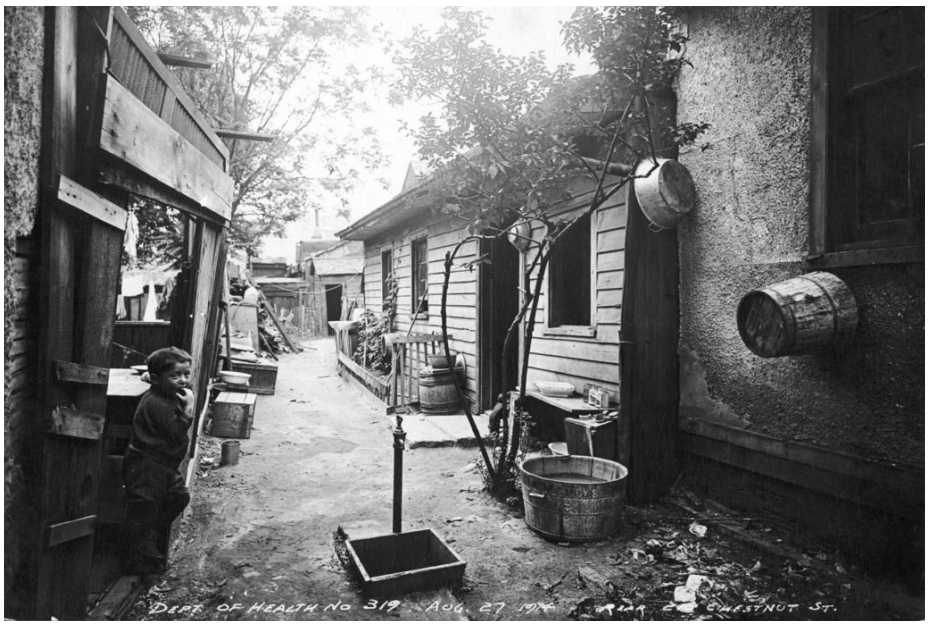


fig. 36 | Lane behind Chestnut Street, 1914
fig. 37 | Gilead Place, 1936

Existing Laneway Houses

I began by looking for contemporary architect-designed houses. Online articles written about the homes would not list an exact address, but they would at least mention the neighbourhood. Using Google Maps' aerial view, I could pan across the neighbourhoods, searching for what looked like a house on a laneway. They were easy enough to spot because of their large size. I studied three homes: a house by LGA Architectural Partners, a house by Superkul, and a house by Shim-Sutcliffe Architects. Though all are roughly the same size and all are located on laneways, each house and each location is unique.

College Laneway House by LGA

The College house is located in Harbord Village near the intersection of Bathurst Street and Ulster Street. It is a 135-square-metre rental unit, the renovation of a one-hundred-year-old laneway house. The original house was past the point of being inhabitable, requiring a complete remodel. Zeke Kaplan, the property owner, and Brock James of LGA worked within the existing envelope and kept 50 per cent of the structure to create a two-storey-plus-basement house.[28]

From the lane, the house is unassuming due to its size and its garage-like massing. The laneway face is clad in metal panels and features a single strip window. Contrary to my first assumption, access to the house is through the backyard of the main house. The laneway house is better connected to Bathurst street than it is to the lane which it abuts. The front of the house appears more inviting. It has douglas-fir barn board cladding recovered from the original structure. There is also a large accordion door leading to the living room, and two oversized dormers above.

In the interior of the house the architects fit a variety of spaces into a small footprint. Two moves were crucial to making the house feel as spacious as possible: the creation of split levels

28 | Jeremy Freed, "The Laneway House That Harbord Village Built," Designlines, 2019, https://www.designlinesmagazine.com/the-tiny-laneway-house-that-harbord-village-built/.

and oversized dormers. The split levels allow for more or less ceiling height, depending on the room, and provide separation between spaces without the use of walls. The oversized dormers allow for bedrooms in the gable roof. Front accordion doors help maximize the livable area. When open, the garden becomes an extension of the living room.

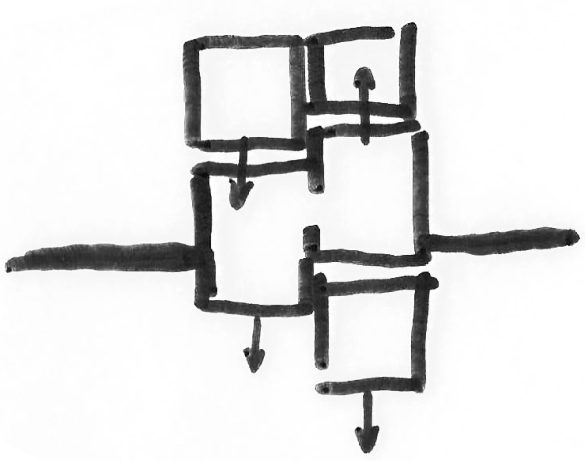


fig. 38 | College Laneway House Parti

fig. 39 | Front of College Laneway House

fig. 40 | College Laneway House Site Plan 1:1500

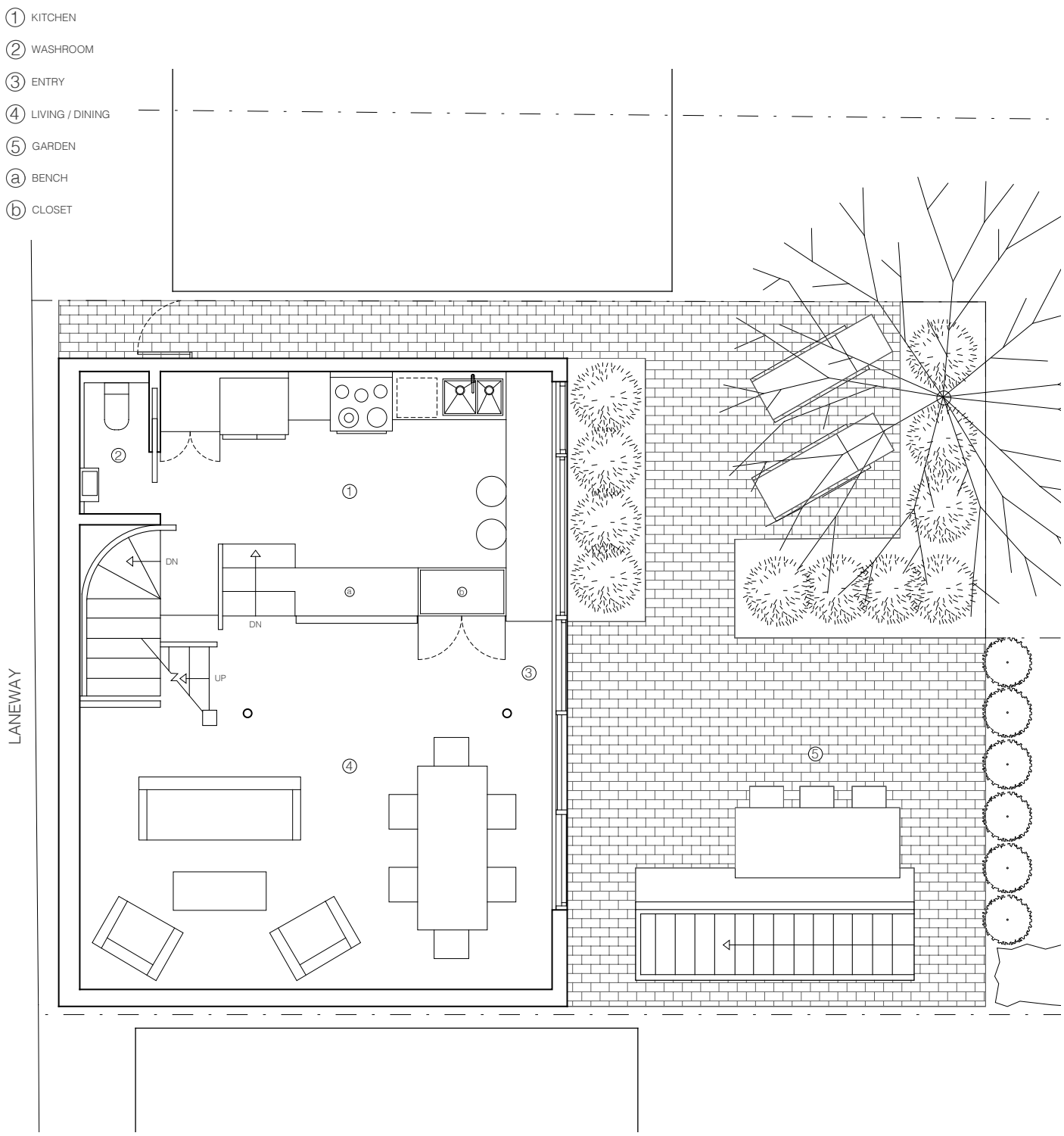


fig. 41 | College Laneway House Ground Floor Plan 1:75

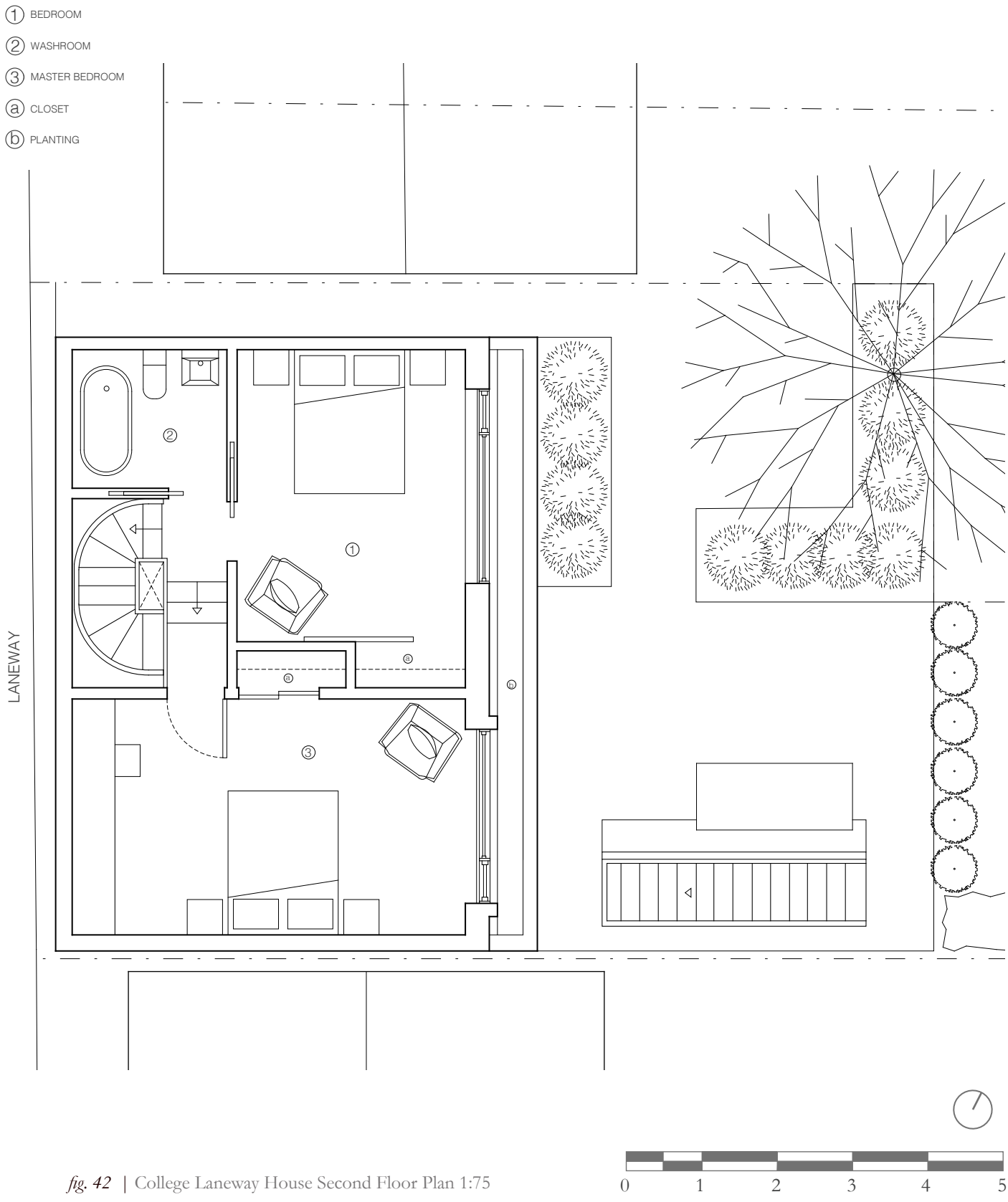


fig. 42 | College Laneway House Second Floor Plan 1:75

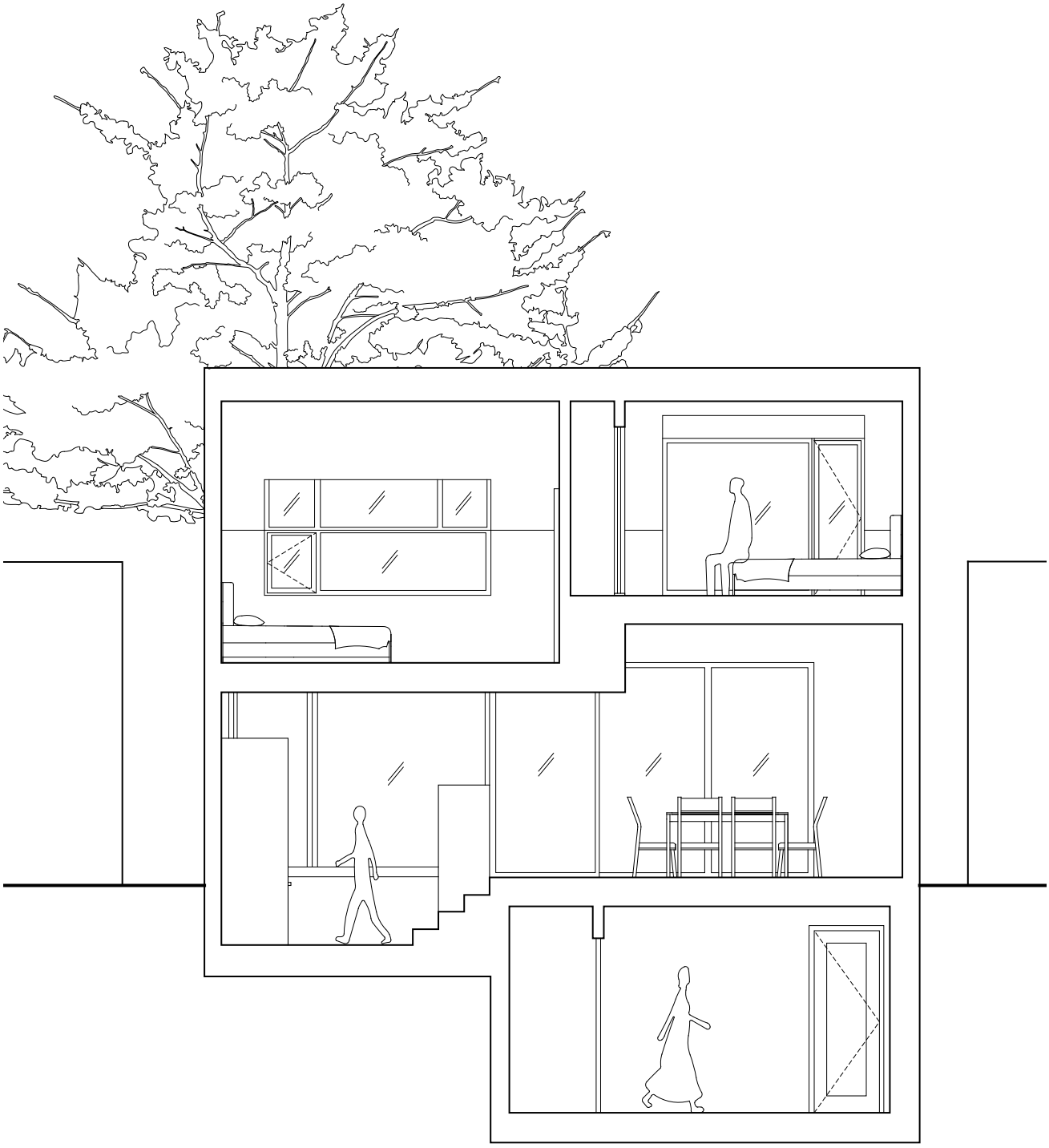


fig. 43 | College Laneway House North - South Section 1:75

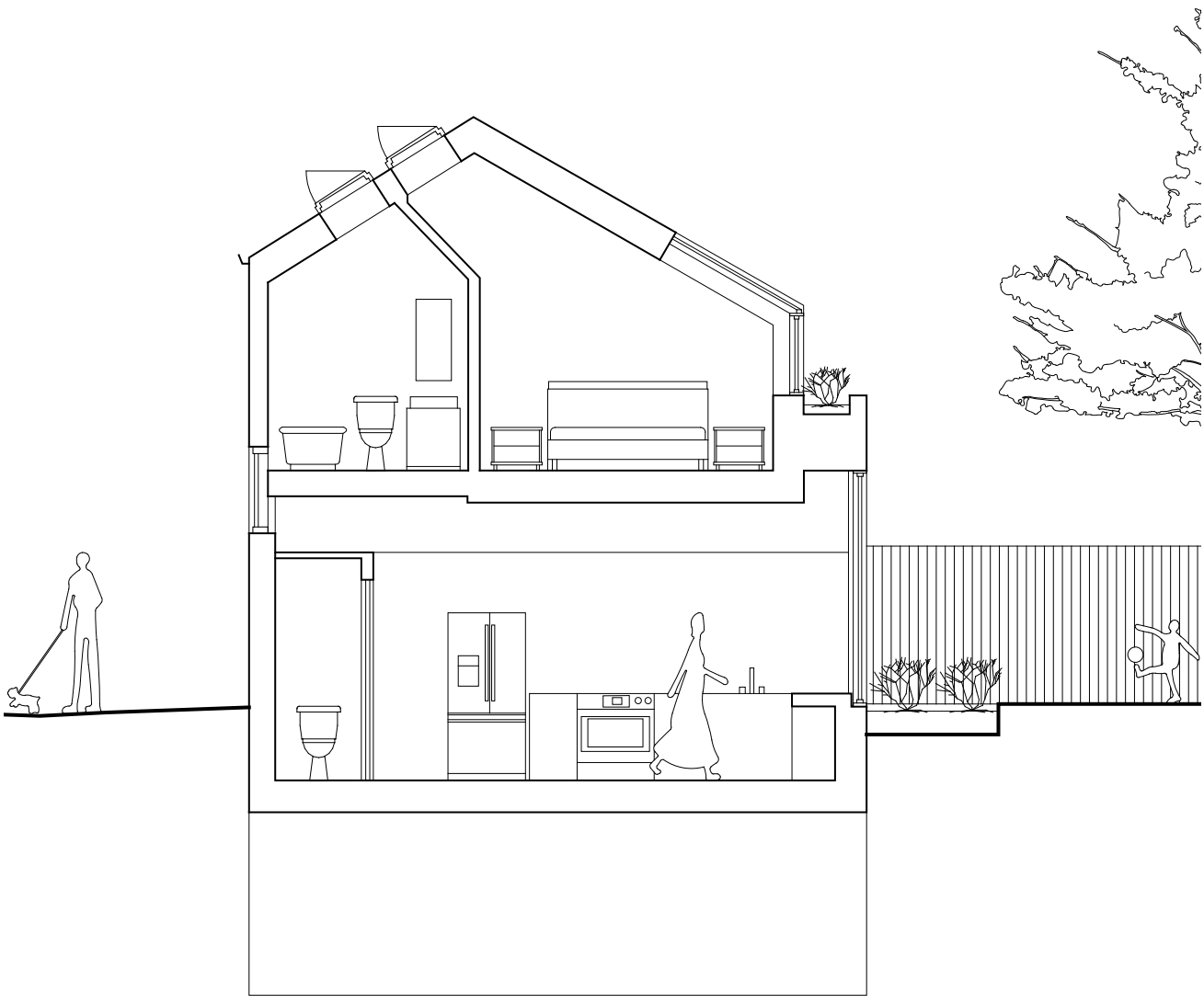


fig. 44 | College Laneway House East - West Section 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

fig. 45 | College Laneway House Kitchen
fig. 46 | College Laneway House Dinning Room

fig. 47 | College Laneway House Bedroom
fig. 48 | Back of College Laneway House

40_R House by superkül inc

40_R House is located in the Summerhill neighbourhood close to the intersection of Yonge Street and Shaftesbury Avenue. Like the Harbord house, 40_R is the renovation of a 120-year-old building. It served different functions over its lifespan including a blacksmith's shop, a horse shed, and an artist's studio. The house has no yard or driveway, with the 80-square-metre house taking up almost all of a 12-metre by 5.5-metre lot.[29]

The main obstacles faced with this project were the small lot and the inability to add new windows. The lot had no space to accommodate a garden or even a porch. The zoning regulations prevented new openings due to the building's proximity to property lines. There were few openings in the original building which would have left the interiors dark. Superkul added light and outdoor space to the project.

Running along the entire length of the building are light wells that open to the second and ground floors. Operable vents in the skylight introduce a stack effect that passively ventilates the house. In the middle of the second floor is a wood-line terrace which provides access to a second terrace and garden on the roof. The second-floor terrace is cozy, with a view of the sky, while the roof garden provides panoramic views of the surrounding neighbourhood.

29 | Superkul, "40R_Laneway House," Superkul, 2018, https://superkul.ca/projects/40r_laneway-house/.

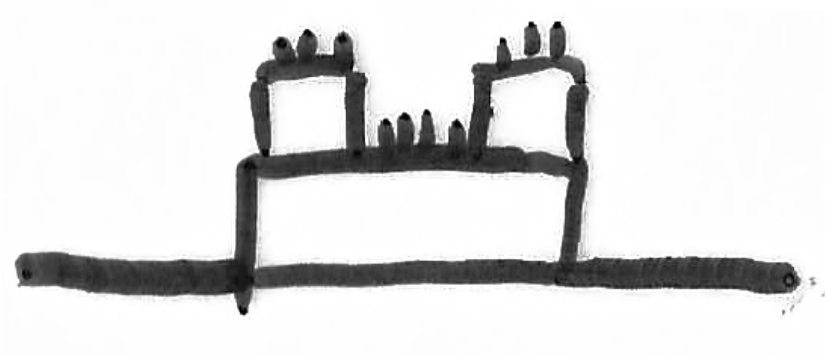


fig. 49 | 40_R House Parti

fig. 50 |Side of 40_R House

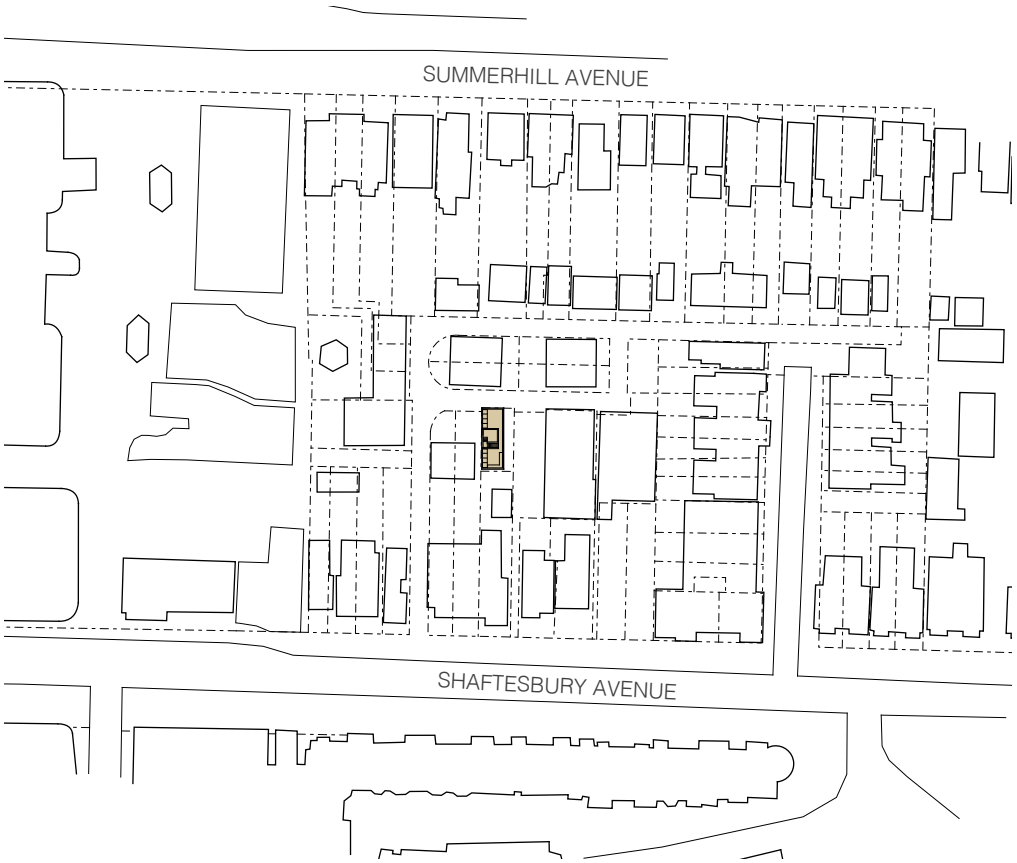


fig. 51 | 40_R House Site Plan 1:1500

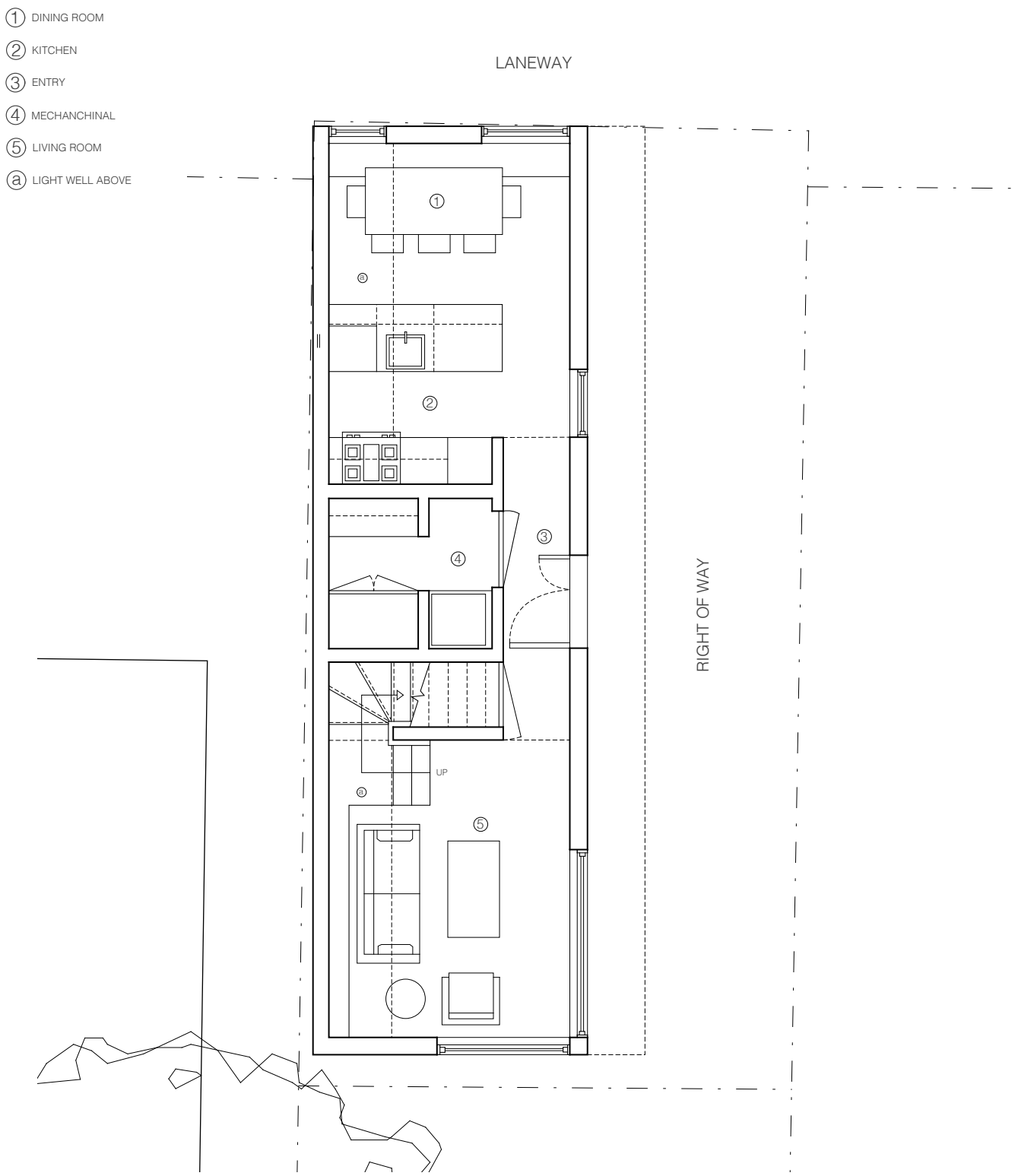


fig. 52 | 40_R House Ground Floor Plan 1:75

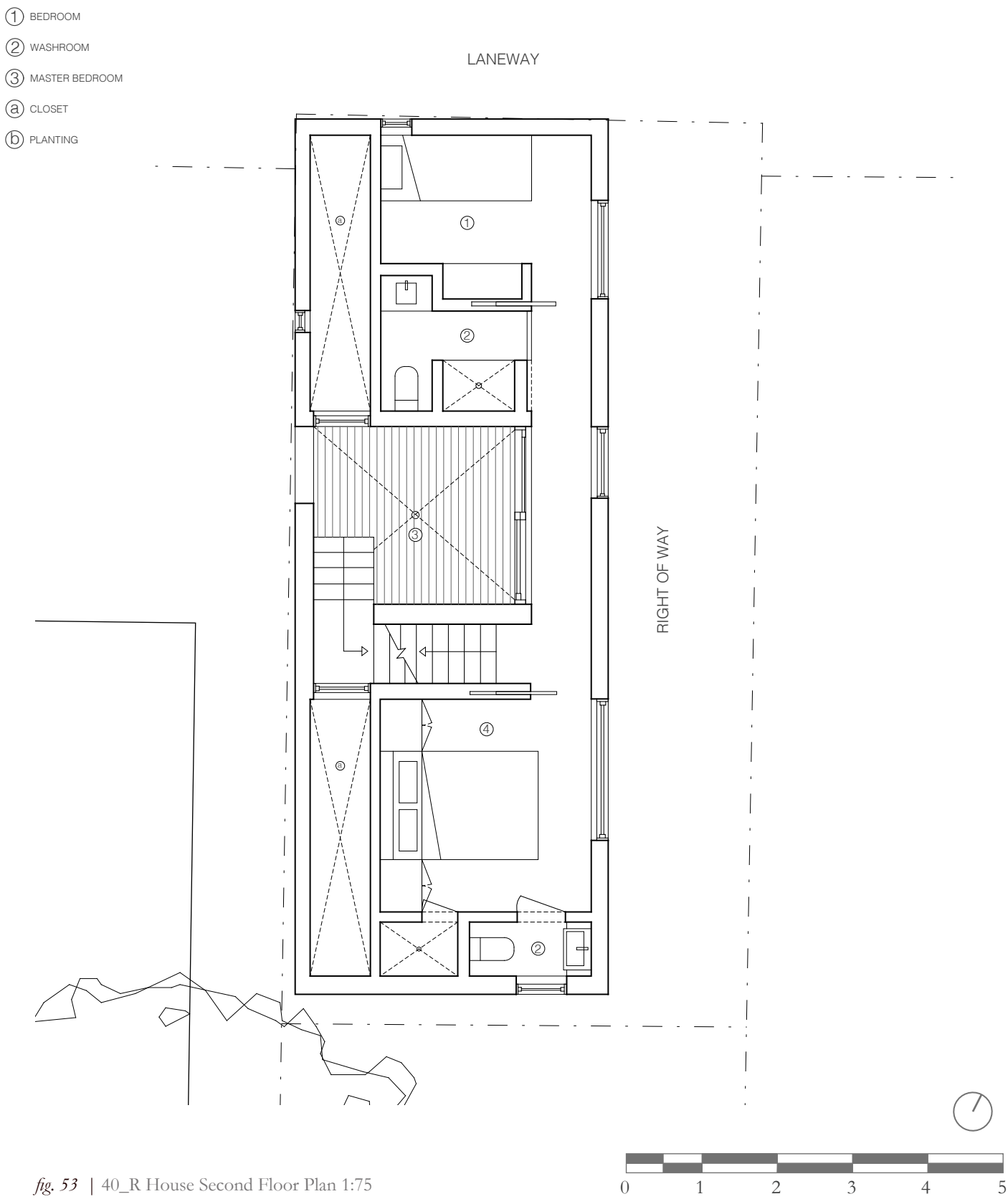


fig. 53 | 40_R House Second Floor Plan 1:75

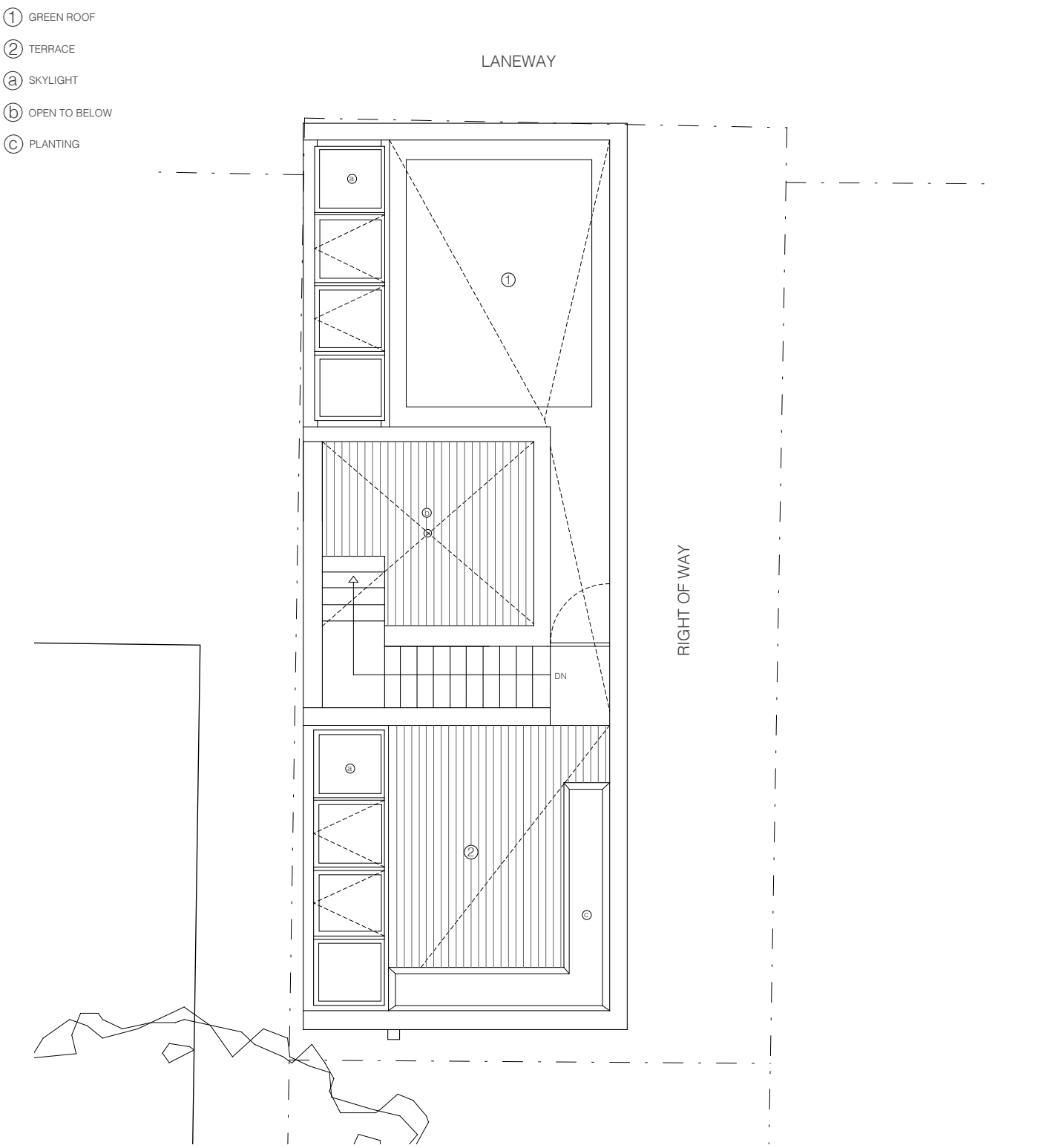


fig. 54 | 40_R House Roof Plan 1:75

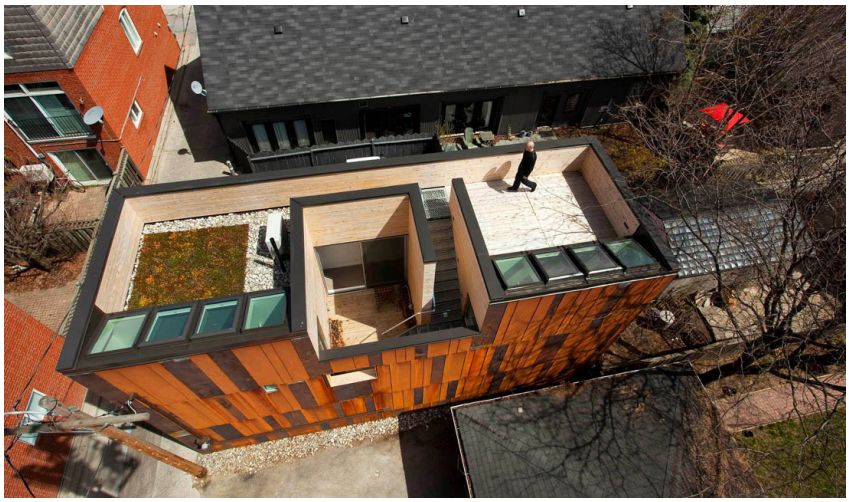


fig. 55 | Aerial View of 40_R House
fig. 56 | Front of 40_R House

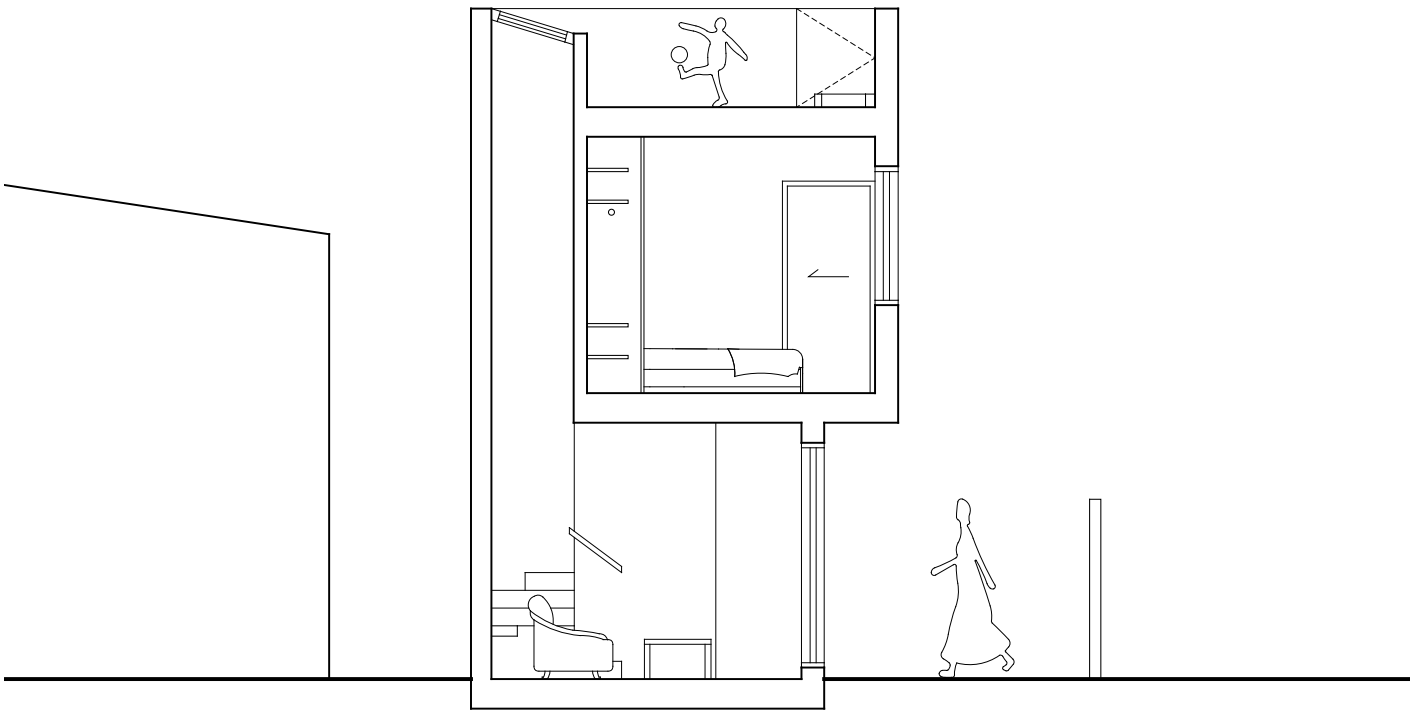


fig. 57 | 40_R House East - West Section 1:75

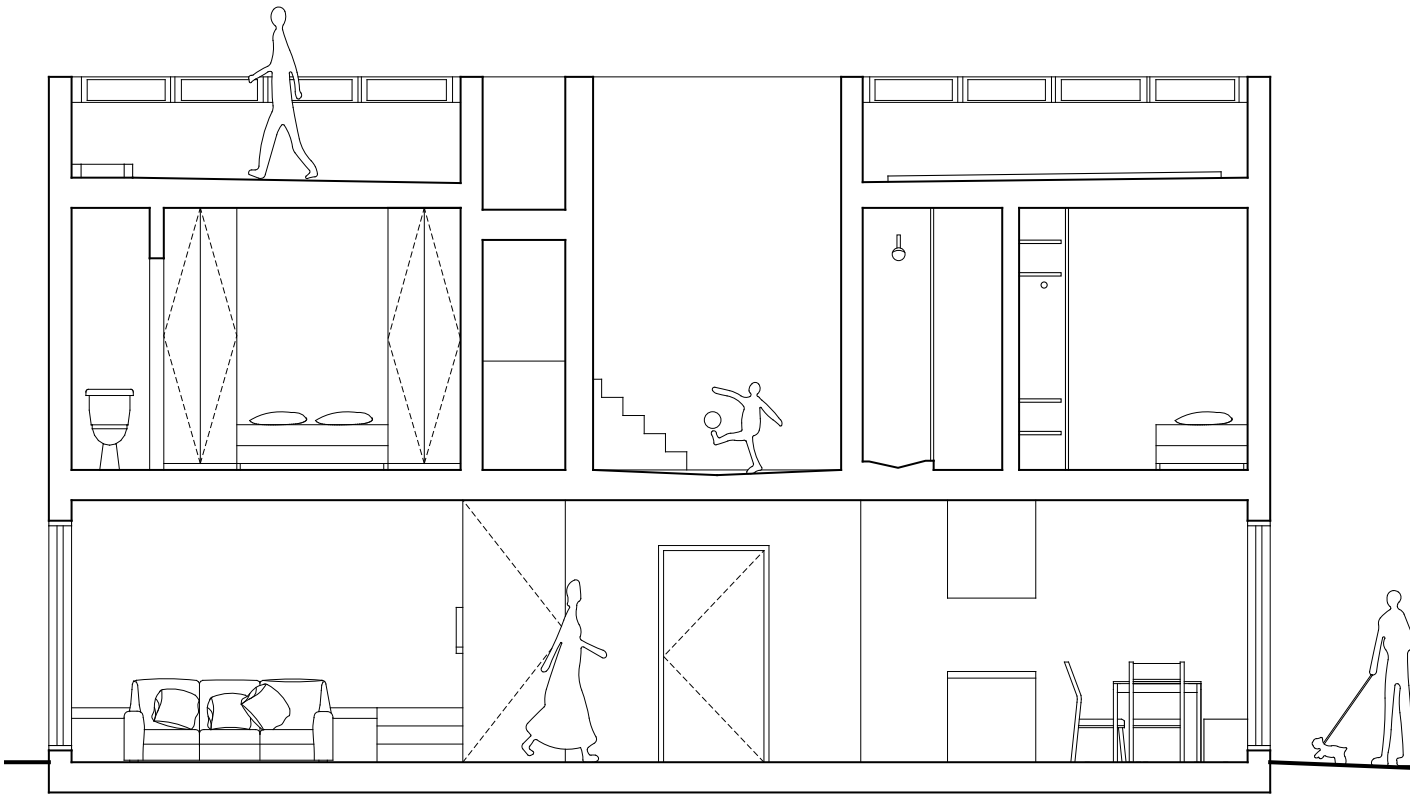


fig. 58 | 40_R House North - South Section 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

Laneway House by Shim-Sutcliffe

The personal laneway house, designed by Bridget Shim and Howard Sutcliffe in 1993, was one of the first contemporary laneway houses built in Toronto.[30] It is located in Leslieville near the intersection of Jones Avenue and Queen Street East. The house is tucked away on a small lot in the middle of a block which is reached by a winding lane. The architects originally bought a "junker" lot, five metres by fourteen and a half metres and filled with rusted out cars. They bought three adjacent lots to form one typical sized lot. The house itself is 125.5 square metres and is two storeys high.[31]

The lane is quiet, secluded and covered with foliage — ivy, bushes, and tall trees — especially around the laneway house. The house is so enveloped by plants that I could hardly see the house itself. When I got close, I could hear a fountain just behind the garden wall. The entrance faces the lane but is at the back of the property.

One of the main design challenges was increasing privacy while surrounded by so many neighbours. The three features used to solve this problem while making the house feel spacious and well lit are a sunken ground floor, a walled-in garden, and a

30 | Alex Bozikovic, "A Case Study in Effective Toronto Laneway Housing," The Globe and Mail, 2016, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/toronto/a-case-study-in-effective-toronto-laneway-housing/article33179454/.

31 | Ibid

central light well. The house's main floor is a metre below the ground, and the garden steps down another half metre. When the family is in the garden, they cannot see over the wall, which makes the space feel more private. The lightwell is in the centre of the house and wraps around a fireplace on the first floor. The lightwell is not walled in so that it does not interrupt spaces and allows light to diffuse throughout the house. The second-floor opening, surrounded by a railing, provides a connection to the floor below.

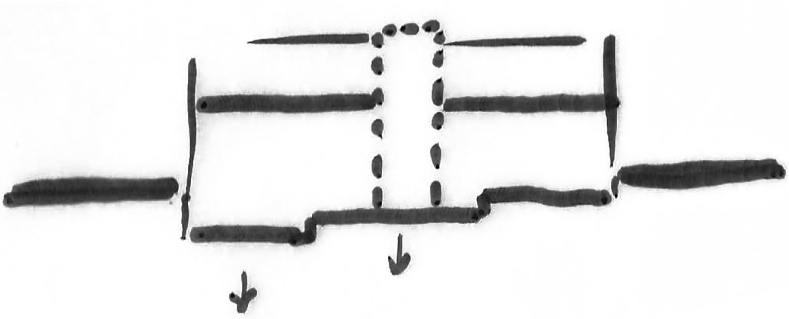


fig. 59 | Shim-Sutcliffe House Parti

fig. 60 | Shim-Sutcliffe House

fig. 61 | Shim-Sutcliffe House Site Plan 1:1500

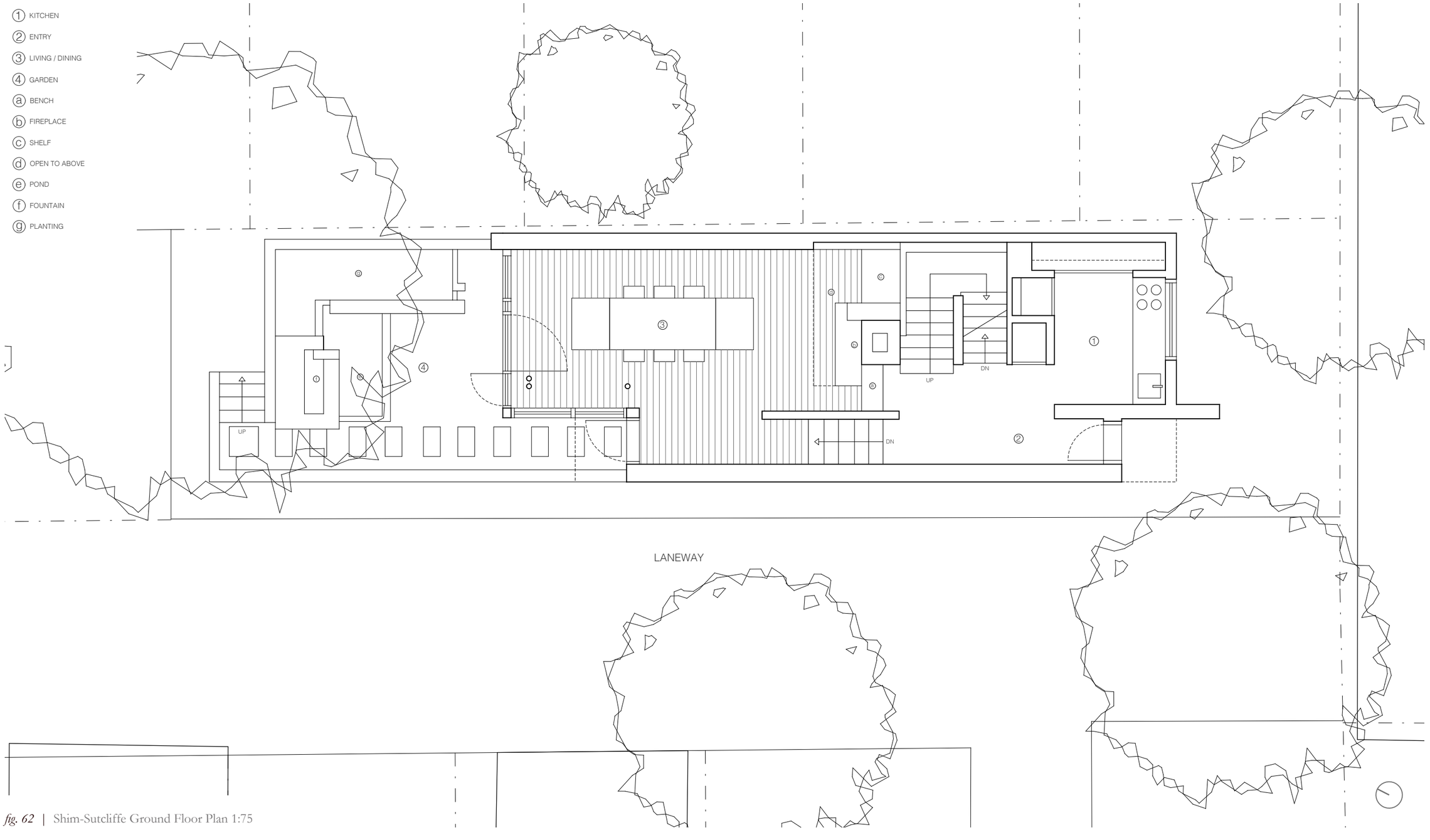


fig. 62 | Shim-Sutcliffe Ground Floor Plan 1:75

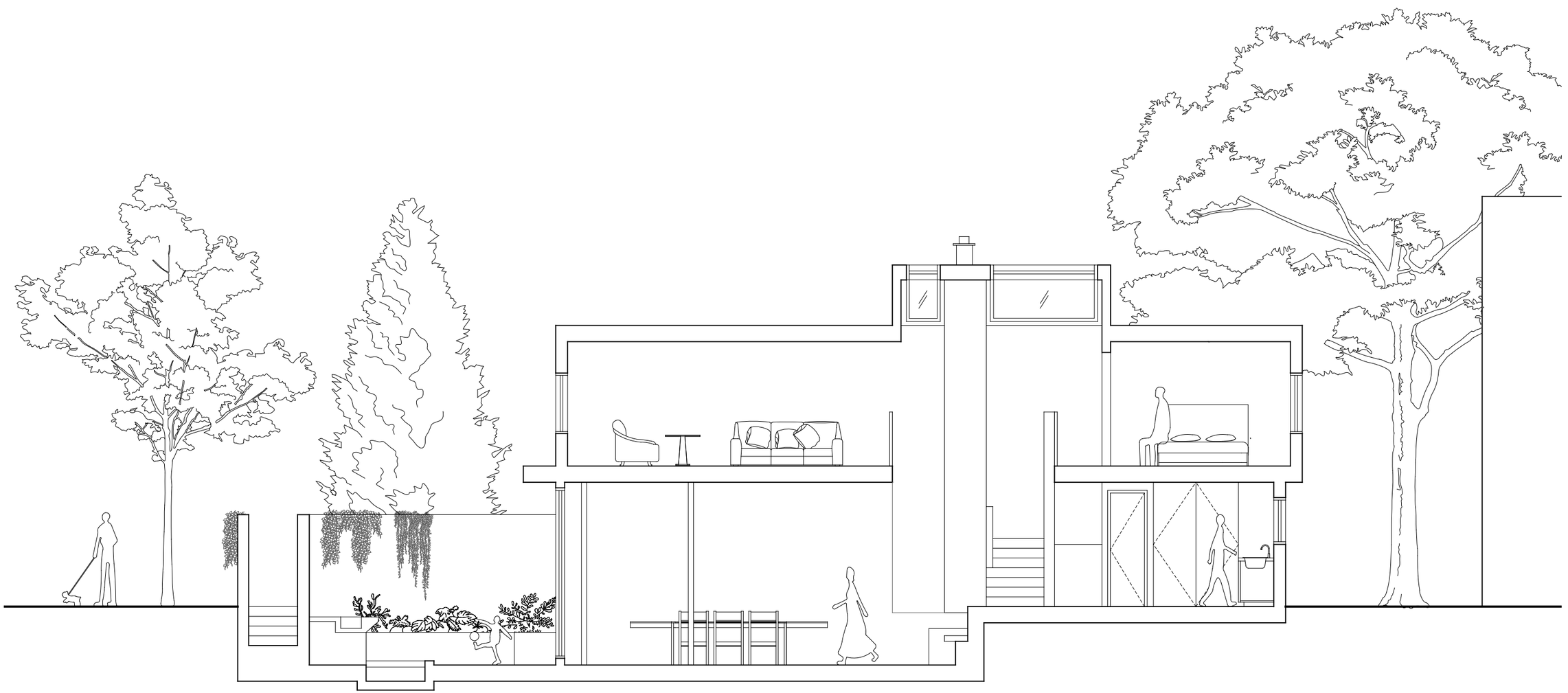


fig. 63 | Shim-Sutcliffe North - South Section 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

fig. 64 | Shim-Sutcliffe House Dining
fig. 65 | Shim-Sutcliffe House Garden

fig. 66 | Laneway in front of Shim-Sutcliffe House
fig. 67 | Front of Shim-Sutcliffe House

Laneway Interventions

The underutilization of laneways provides an opportunity for further development. Many Toronto citizens see the potential for laneways to become public spaces. Some lanes are already well used by the public like Graffiti Alley, a public art project where locals and tourists alike come to take photos of the street art.

A design advocacy group called The Laneway Project is devoted to drawing pedestrians to laneways with creative interventions like art, events, and lighting while providing vehicular access.[32] The Laneway Project wants to bring attention to underused lanes and demonstrate how we can start repurposing them. In 2016, working with the city and landscape architect Victoria Taylor, the Laneway Project designed and installed a permeable paving system on Fred Hamilton Park and Willowvale Lane.[33] It was designed to help water drain through the paving and also introduce hardy vegetation into the lanes. The Laneway Project is also very concerned with the safety of laneways. Most lanes in Toronto do not have night-time lighting, there is no street signage, and very few people are within the blocks, which makes

32 | Emily Mathieu, "Laneway Housing Begins to Take Shape Under Toronto's New Rules," The Star, March 18, 2019, https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2019/03/18/laneway-housing-begins-to-take-shape-under-torontos-new-rules.html.

33 | Ibid

34 | Ibid

them feel dangerous. The Laneway Project is working on another intervention called Light Up the Laneways which illuminates lanes with lighting insulations and uses greenery to make the laneways more inviting.[34]

fig. 68 | Permeable Paving

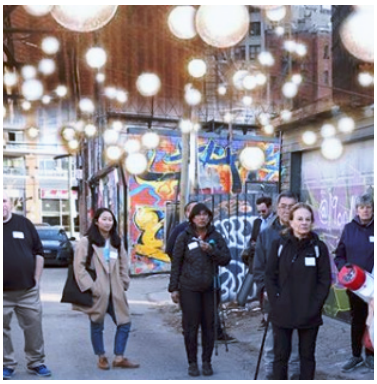


fig. 70 | Lighting Installation

fig. 69 | Paper Lanterns

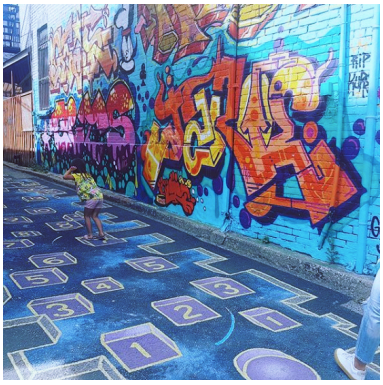


fig. 71 | Street Art

Bill 826

The history of coach houses makes laneways ideal sites for small houses. These sites have garnered interest because they reconcile the desire to live downtown and the desire to live in a modest detached house. According to a report by Evergreen, a non-for-profit focused on sustainability, "the majority of the 400 survey respondents noted that laneways are currently underused and expressed a positive interest in the idea of laneway suites".[35]

On June 28, 2018, Official Plan and By-law amendments were passed by the Toronto City Council, allowing people to build laneway suites as-of-right. Property owners can build a laneway suite without applying for variances to the Committee of Adjustment, saving them time and over $100,000 in fees. However, a laneway suite is not the same as a laneway house. The definition of a laneway suite is "a self-contained living accommodation for a person or persons living together as a separate single housekeeping unit, in which both food preparation and sanitary facilities are provided for the exclusive use of the occupants of the suite and is in an ancillary building abutting a lane."[36] In other words, a laneway suite can be occupied as a permanent residence, but cannot be a separate property from

35 | Stefan Novakovik, "Public Mostly Enthusiastic for Laneway Housing in Toronto," Urban Toronto, March 16, 2017, https://urbantoronto.ca/news/2017/03/public-mostly-enthusiastic-laneway-housing-toronto.

36 | Bill 826, *Changing Lanes*, Toronto City Council, June 28, 2018. https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bills/2018/bill0826.pdf, 1.

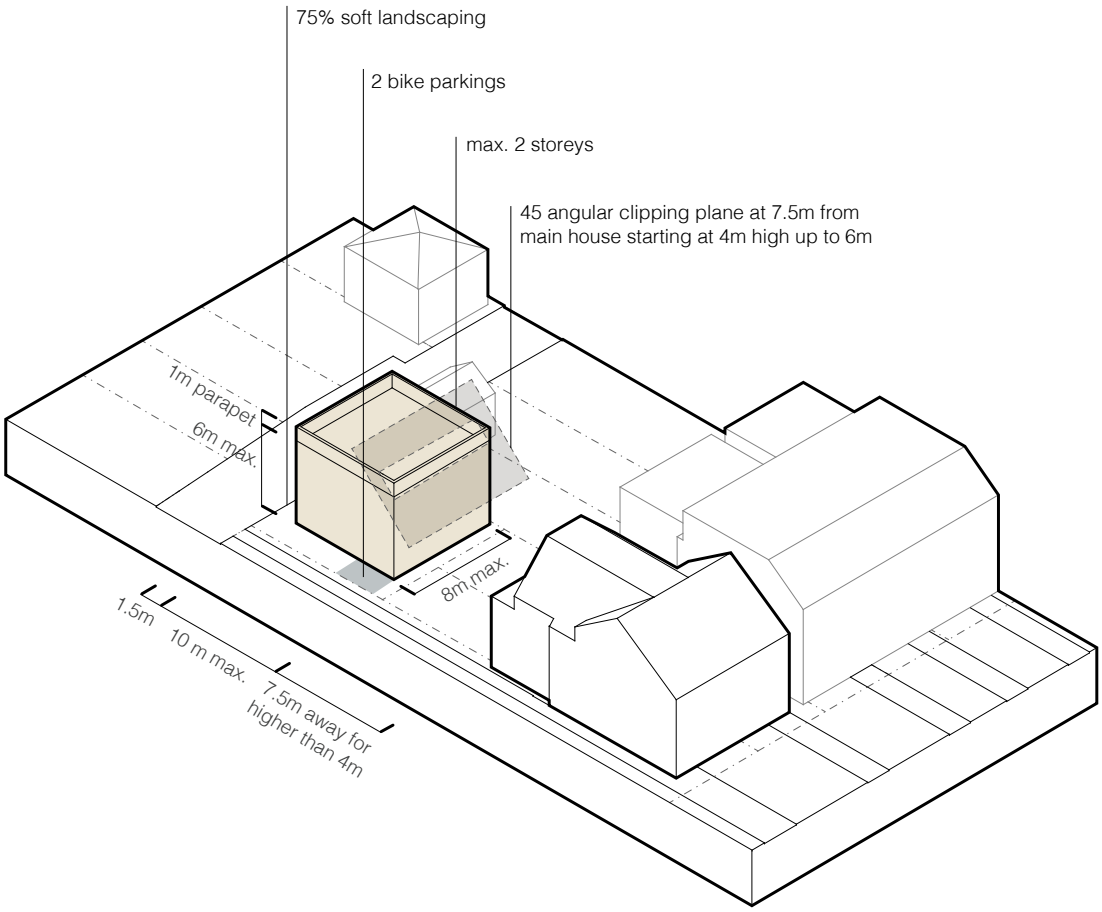


fig. 72 | Laneway House Envelope Diagram

the main house. The majority of the sections outlined by Bill 826 cover a few issues: size, landscaping, and privacy.

Building Envelope

The structures developed under Bill 826 will often be smaller than previous houses because of the strict by-law. On even the largest of laneway lots, the by-law limits the number of storeys of any laneway suite to two and only permits a maximum building height of six meters. The building footprint is dependent on the lot dimensions, but the maximum footprint is limited to eight meters wide along the lane and ten meters deep. Only the widest and deepest of Toronto laneway lots can permissibly accommodate a footprint of this size. The purpose behind minimizing the size is to integrate the laneway suites into the surrounding building fabric of garages and to maintain privacy for adjacent properties.

Section 150.8.60.30 is a significant determinant of the height of a laneway house. This section states "the main wall of a laneway building cannot penetrate a 45-degree angular plane projected towards the rear lot line beginning from a height of four metres at a distance of 7.5 meters from the rear main wall of the residential building".[37] This means that many laneway suites, if there is not enough space in the backyard, will be one or

37 | Ibid, 4.

one and a half stories. Dormers can be a way to create enough head height to occupy the upper level if they do not take up more than 30 per cent of the total width of the building. Other structures that may protrude past the absolute maximum height of six metres are chimneys, parapets, and stairwells. Parapets are allowed to extend one metre above the roof, which allows access to the roof without limiting the ceiling height below.

Landscape

Landscaping is an essential feature for the city because it helps with water runoff and creates more charming laneways. The area between the main house and the laneway house must be at least sixty to eighty per cent soft landscaping based on lot size. The space between the lane and the laneway house must be at least seventy-five per cent soft landscaping.

Privacy

Privacy can be a concern for those moving into a laneway house, and for the existing neighbours. To prevent residents from feeling too close to those across the lane and also to allow space for vehicles to navigate, all laneway houses must be built one and a half metres back from the lane. To keep a distance

between the main house and the laneway house, the laneway house cannot be any closer than five metres to the main wall, and at that distance, the suite must be no taller than four metres. Second-floor balconies are allowed on the front and back of the suite, but they must not be more than four metres off the ground. They also must be less than 10 per cent of the floor area, and fifty per cent of the sides must be open to the outside. When a balcony is adjacent to a side yard, it must be screened from the neighbouring property.

Parking

Two other sections relating to transportation are also crucial to the building's massing. With the anticipation of driverless cars and the current use of ride-sharing, it is not required to have a parking space for the laneway suite or the main house. This frees up ground-floor real estate and makes building a laneway house more viable. The other is that the laneway suite must have two bicycle parking spaces.[38] These can be within the laneway suite or outside. They do not take up much space and provide opportunities for green transportation.

38 | Ibid

Potential

Bill 826 is relatively new, since taking effect on June 28, 2018. We do not know the limitations or the full potential of the by-law, but we can predict what this means for laneways and Toronto in general. Over the first year of the by-law's existence, there have been 78 projects submitted for the permit process, fifteen had minor variance applications, and six permits have been issued.[39]

Obstacles

For laneway suites currently in the construction phase delivering materials can be a source of tension. Architect Vanessa Fong who is working on a house in Little Italy says, "Some of the lanes, you have to turn on really tight corners when a car can barely get through, and there is a limited amount of time when supplies can be dropped off."[40] Space and time limitations can create issues for contractors and resulting in delays for a project. Another issue is getting services like water and power lines from the main house or street to the laneway house. Laying lines will often take a considerable amount of time and money to complete.

39 | Mathieu, Laneway Houses Take Shape
40 | Ibid

Opportunities

However, the issues with construction tend to be overshadowed by the benefits of living in a laneway house. Brock James, an architect at LGA, says reflecting on his experience meeting neighbours behind his house, "The other thing I really like is that the lanes are a very different, social kind of space. It's like a whole new type of street, and a special kind of street."[41] I agree with Mr. James; laneways are magical space where personal interactions can take place. They feel like small villages or cottage country lanes though connected to a metropolis. Bridgett Shim, who designed a laneway house for her family with her husband Howard Sutcliffe says, "Laneways have the potential to create intimate community clusters which operate at a smaller scale within a large, thriving city."[42]

41 | Alex Bozikovic, "A Bright, Crisp Example of Toronto Laneway Living," The Globe and Mail, October 9, 2018, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/article-a-bright-crisp-example-of-toronto-laneway-living/.

42 | Tiffany Greene, "Brigitte Shim On How Toronto's Laneways Are The Future Of Sustainable Living," Better Dwelling, July 25, 2016, https://betterdwelling.com/city/toronto/brigitte-shim-torontos-laneways-future-sustainable-living/.

PART 2:
AN URBAN COTTAGE

An Urban Cottage

This thesis proposes a design for a village-like community of cottages for craftspeople in the city of Toronto. Taking what I have learned from the Shakers, local craftspeople, and laneway houses, I developed the typology of the urban crafting cottage. The cottage is the place for people to make objects, to make memories and to make connections with their family and neighbours. It is situated with other cottages along a laneway. On the laneway, the cottage dwellers connect to the surrounding city and at the same time stand apart from it. These cottage communities could be created throughout Toronto, wherever there are laneways. This thesis will focus on creating the community of O'Riordan Lane in the north of Cabbagetown.

fig. 73 | Cabbagetown Location in Toronto

Site

Site Selection

With over 2400 laneways in Toronto, there are many potential sites from which to choose.[43] However, not all of these sites are feasible for development and even less are appropriate for a crafting community. I began by researching neighbourhoods, seeing which areas had the most laneways and the largest lots. I narrowed my search to Cabbagetown because blocks were large with many weaving lanes. I conducted a virtual tour of the neighbourhood using Google Street View and zigzagged my way through the large blocks, taking screen-shots and jotting down charming streets as I went. Many laneways had not been photographed by the Google truck because they are not streets. The only way to experience these laneways was to visit them in person. I used the map with the marked streets as a starting point, but planned on seeing as much of the inner blocks as I could on foot. I discovered many interesting potential sites, as well as existing laneway houses. From the many that I saw, I used a list of criteria to narrow down a site.

43 | The Laneway Project, Technical Info.

The site must have:

1. Deep and wide lane-facing lots
2. Ample laneway access
3. Potential to build on many lots along the laneway
4. Access to transit
5. A quiet and safe neighbourhood
6. Access to supply stores

What seemed like a simple list of criteria limited many potential sites. Eventually, I decided on O'Riordan Lane in the north of Cabbagetown.

fig. 74 | Site Selection Map


ST. JAMES CEMETERY
WELLESLEY ST E
AMELLIA ST
TORONTO
NECROPOLIS
SUMACH ST
SACKVILLE ST
WINCHESTER ST
PARLIAMENT ST
CARLTON ST
GERRARD ST E
a
b
c
d
e
f
g

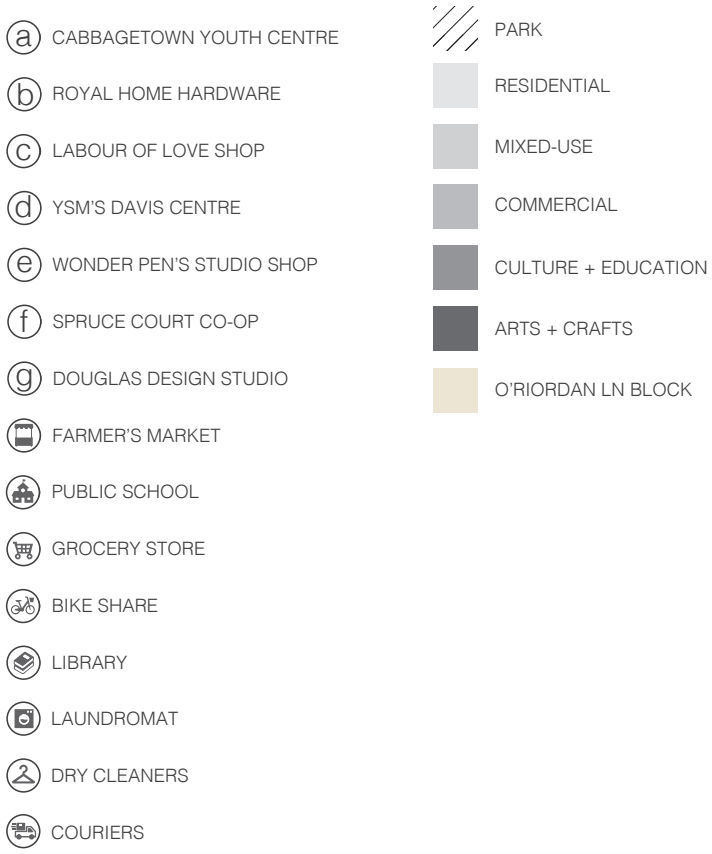


fig. 75 | O'Riordan Lane Context Map

fig. 76 | Existing Site Plan 1:700


ST E
RIORDAN LN
SUMACH ST
GOATSBEARD LN
ST
0
5
10
20
50

O'Riordan Lane

O'Riordan Lane is lined with large trees providing shade and a habitat for urban wildlife. It is 170 metres long, and the surrounding lots have deep backyards. Many yards measure 20 metres from the back face of the house to the edge of the lane.[44] Some of these yards have garages built on them, but there are also many unbuilt sites. Due to the number of egress lanes, there are thirteen possible building sites. This allows for the community to expand over time.

The Surrounding Neighbourhood

O'Riordan Lane is in a peaceful neighbourhood close to Parliament Street, the main street in Cabbagetown. Parliament has locally-owned bakeries, cafes, delis and restaurants, education centres, jewelery stores, and home building centres. The lane is a 38-minute walk to Nathan Phillips Square[45] and 23-minute subway ride to Union Station.[46] To the East and North of the lane is the Don River, surrounded by a network of parks including Wellesley Park and the Toronto Necropolis.

44 | Google Maps. "Dimensions of O'Riordan Lane." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://tinyurl.com/y4wnasbp.

45 | Google Maps. "Directions for Walking from O'Riordan Lane to Nathan Phillips Square." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://tinyurl.com/yxcyrmpe.

46 | Google Maps. "Directions for Subway from O'Riordan Lane to Union Station." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://tinyurl.com/yya9qegp.

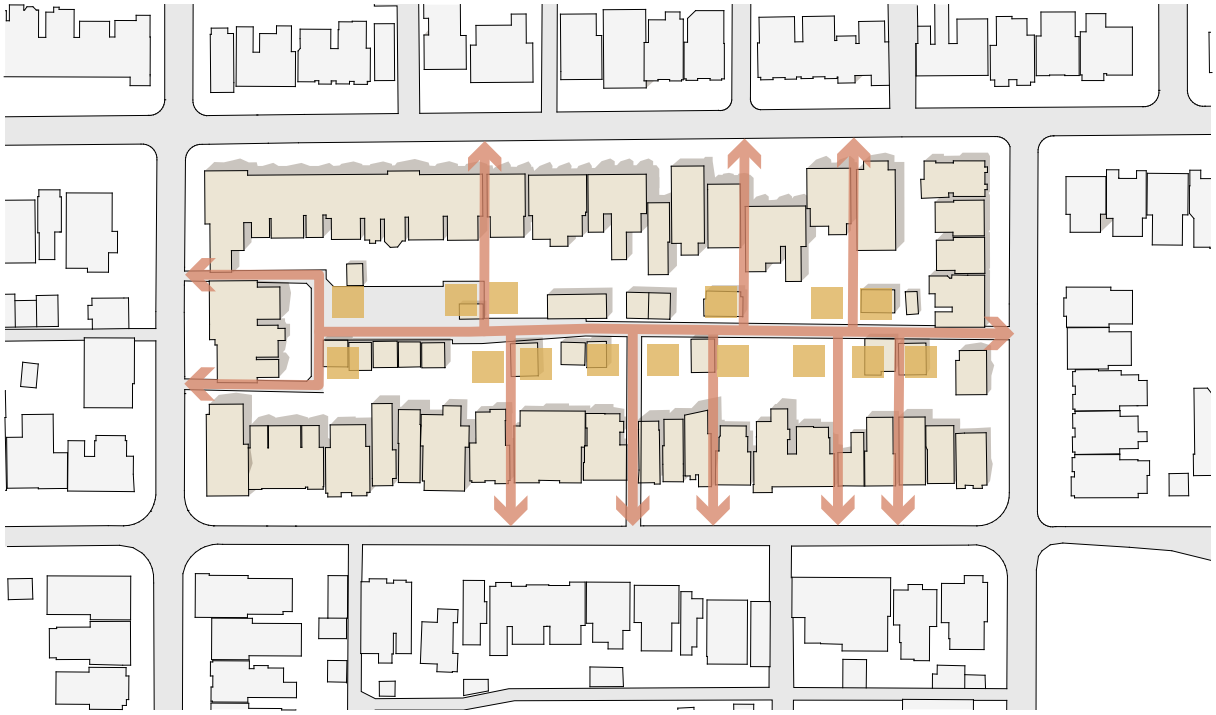


fig. 77 | Circulation and Building Potential Diagram

fig. 78 | Coltsfoot Lane Looking South towards O'Riordan Lane
fig. 79 | O'Riordan Lane Looking East

fig. 80 | O'Riordan Lane Looking West
fig. 81 | Goatsbeard Lane Looking North towards O'Riordan Lane

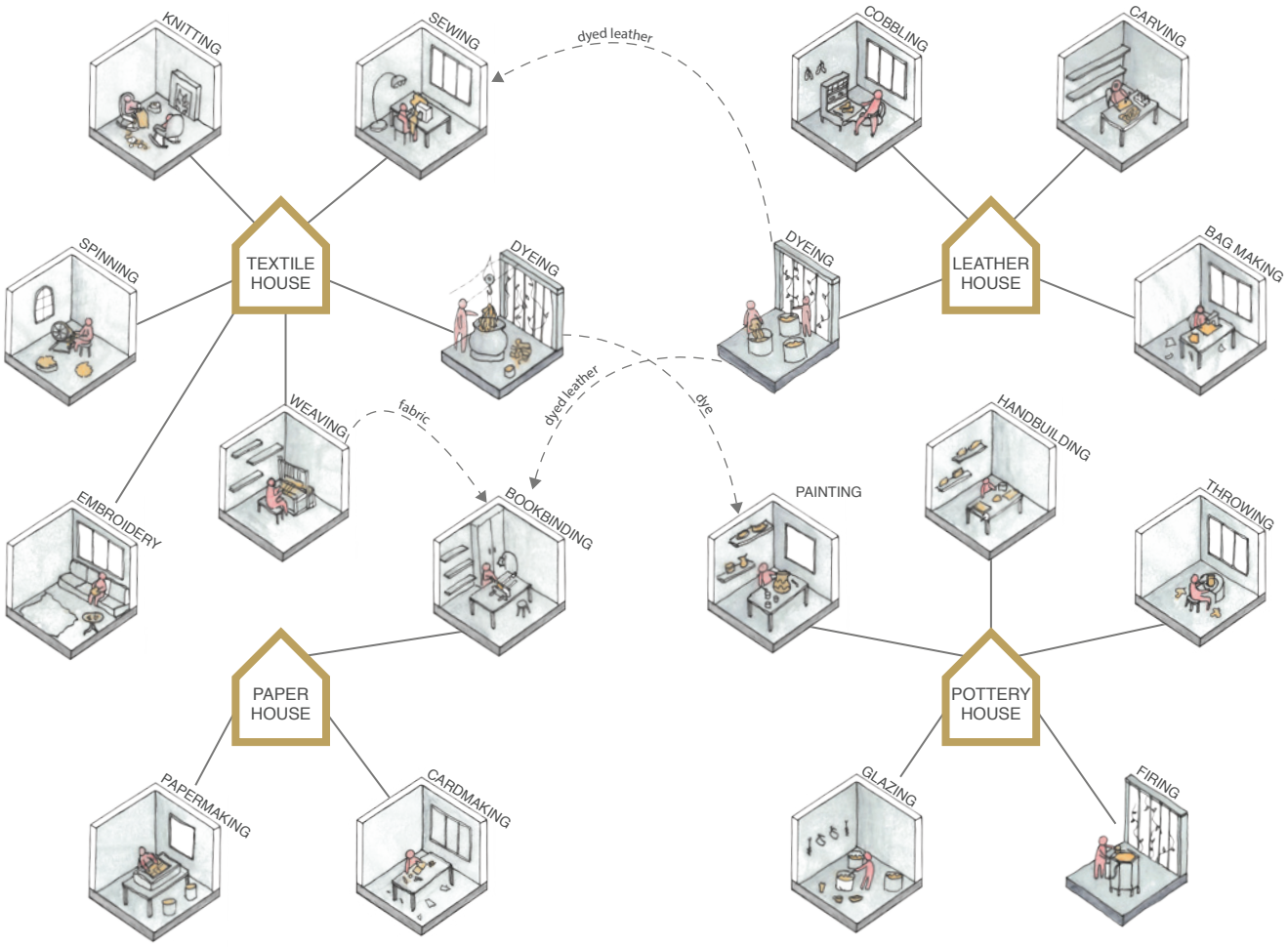


fig. 82 | Craft Network Diagram

Craft

Crafts of the Village

There are four cottages, built along O'Riordan Lane. The inhabitants of each of these cottages are specialized in a unique craft. In the community lives the bookbinder, the potter, the leather-worker, and the tailor. Some of these houses have only one or two people, while others have up to four. The residents might be family members, friends or even like-minded individuals. Together they can create items for their household and trade amongst their neighbours, creating an economy. At the end of the lane is a community building housing a photo studio, a packaging centre and a store for the residents to sell their goods. To further engage with the community, the cottage dwellers might choose to hire apprentices or run workshops from their homes.

Textiles Crafts

The design is focused on the tailor's house, though all of the houses have the same structure. Only millwork and furniture are different. The tailor specializes in crafts such as sewing, weaving, spinning, dyeing, knitting, and embroidery. The millwork and furniture are designed to support these specific crafts.

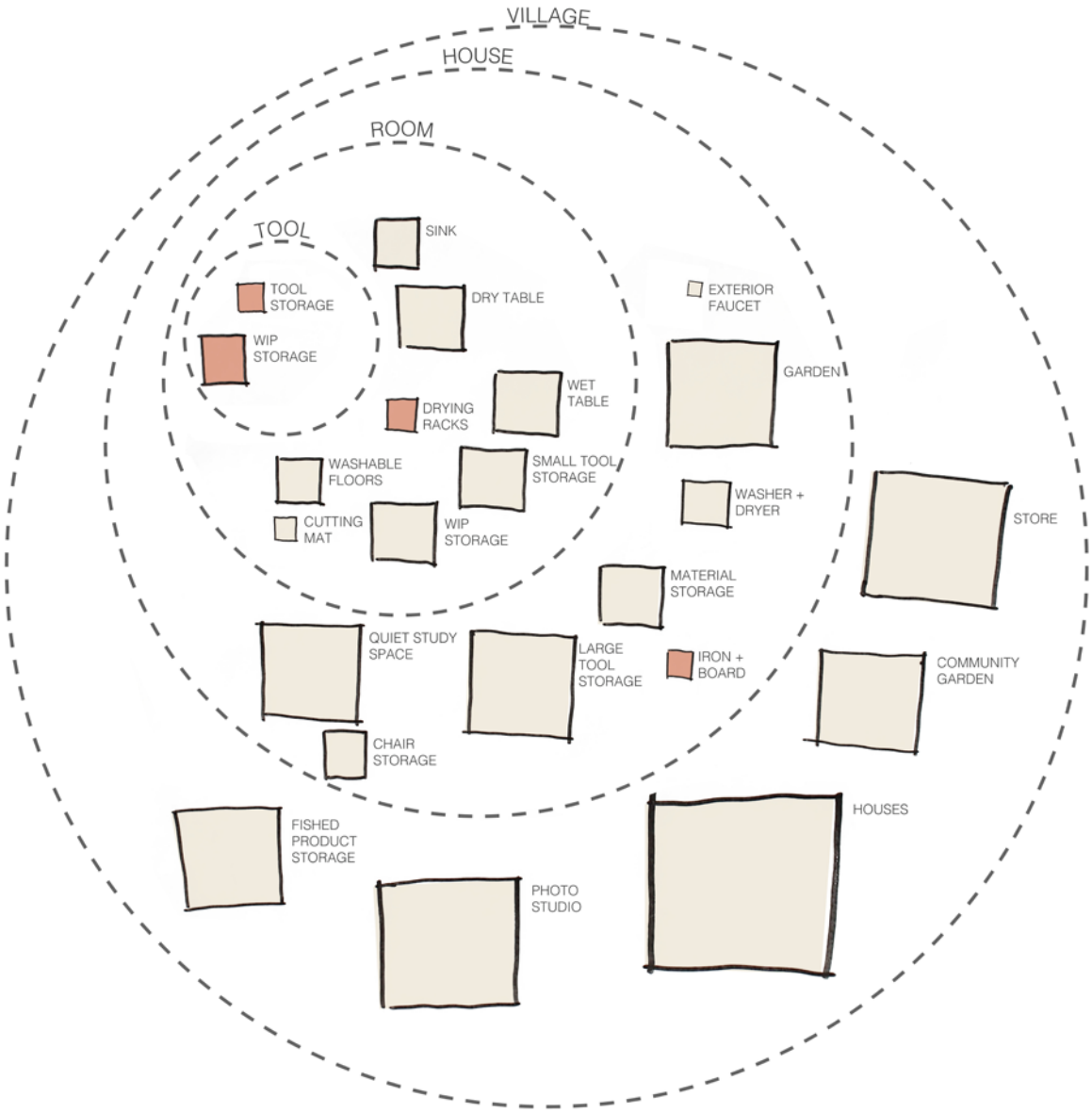


fig. 83 | Craft Requirements Diagram

Craft Requirements

Though I am designing the tailor's house, the designs for the other houses are as similar as possible, with room for customization. Each craft, whether sewing or bookbinding, requires common design elements. These elements occur at the scale of the room, up to the scale of the neighbourhood, including numerous work surfaces, tool storage, material storage, project storage, a sink, and a study space. The store, spray booth, and finished project storage are all crucial to the work of the craft people, but are too large to fit into each house. These elements would be located in a separate building and shared by the residents. Each house will also require elements that are specific to their craft. The tailor's house requires a sewing table, drying racks, an iron and ironing board, and dye cauldrons.

TEXTILE ELEMENTS

COMMON ELEMENTS

Rules for Building

I began the design by creating design guidelines. The following criteria I considered across all scales, from the table design to the village design. The design should have:

1. Connection to the laneway
2. An overlap between living and working spaces
3. Flexible spaces
4. Plenty of storage for tools, materials, and projects
5. The ability to customize
6. Ease of construction
7. A reasonable construction price
8. Potential for future expansion

fig. 84 | Sewing Table Axonometric

The Tool

The design for the urban crafting cottage begins at the scale of the crafter's tool. An essential tool for the tailor is a sewing table. A sewing table is a unique workstation customized to one of the fundamental crafts, sewing.

Elements are included in the sewing table design to enhance the tailor's work flow: expandable leaves for cutting fabric, drawers for tools and notions and a basket for work in progress. Most important however is the lowered shelf for the sewing machine that creates a work surface flush with the tabletop.

There are two modes for the sewing table. In one mode, the leaves are closed, where the tailor can use the table for hand sewing. In the other, the leaves are expanded, and the table can be used for machine sewing or cutting fabric.

fig. 85 | Sewing Table Front Elevation (Open)

fig. 86 | Sewing Table Front Elevation (Closed)

fig. 87 | Sewing Table Side Elevation

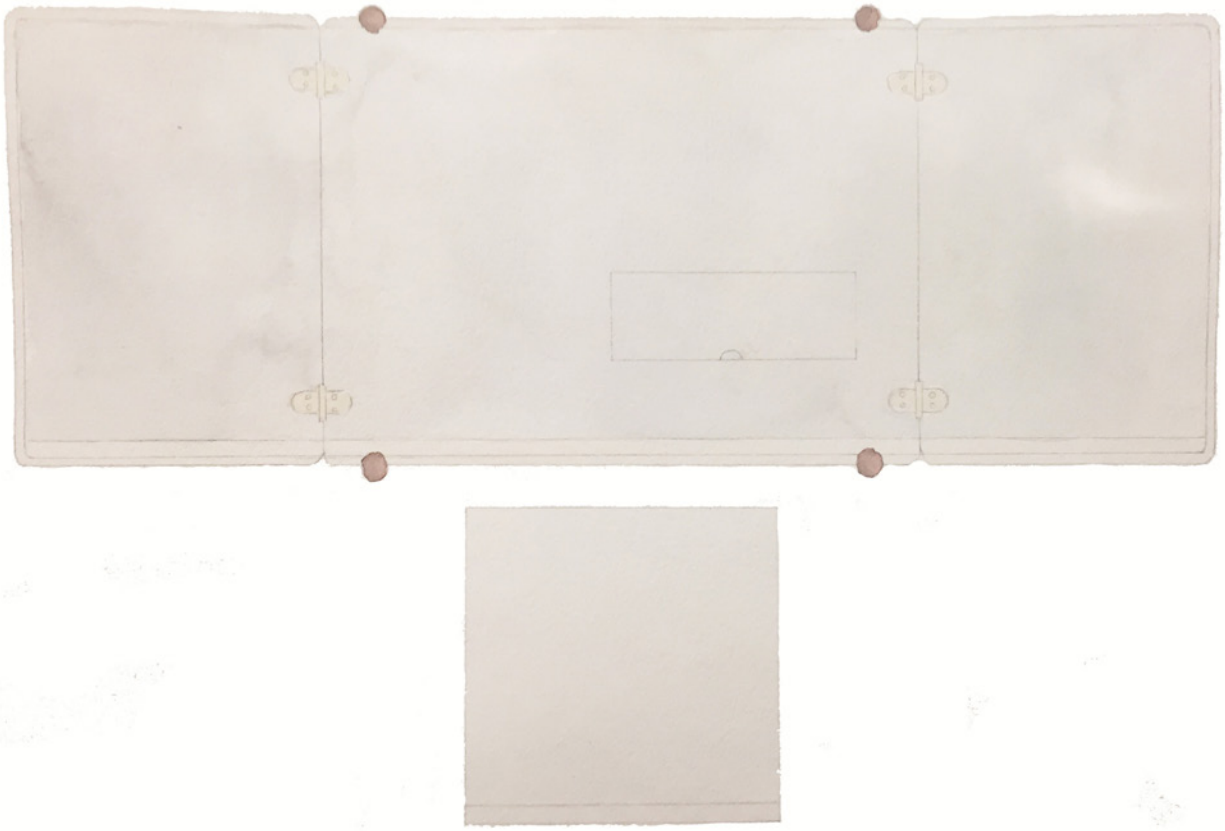


fig. 88 | Sewing Table Plan

fig. 89 | Sewing Table Storage Exploded Axonometric

Construction

The table is simple. It is a frame consisting of legs, tracks for a drawer and basket, and supports for a work surface and shelf. The shelf and the work surface rest on the frame while the drawer and basket are fitted into the frame. The frame is walnut, turned pieces for the legs and flat pieces for the other members. The components that fit into or rest on top of the frame are made of white oak. The lack of curving members or intricate woodwork makes the form clear and construction easier.

fig. 90 | Sewing Table Model Photo Detail

fig. 91 | Sewing Table Model Photo Top

fig. 92 | Sewing Table Model Photo Front

fig. 93 | Sewing Table Model Photo Side

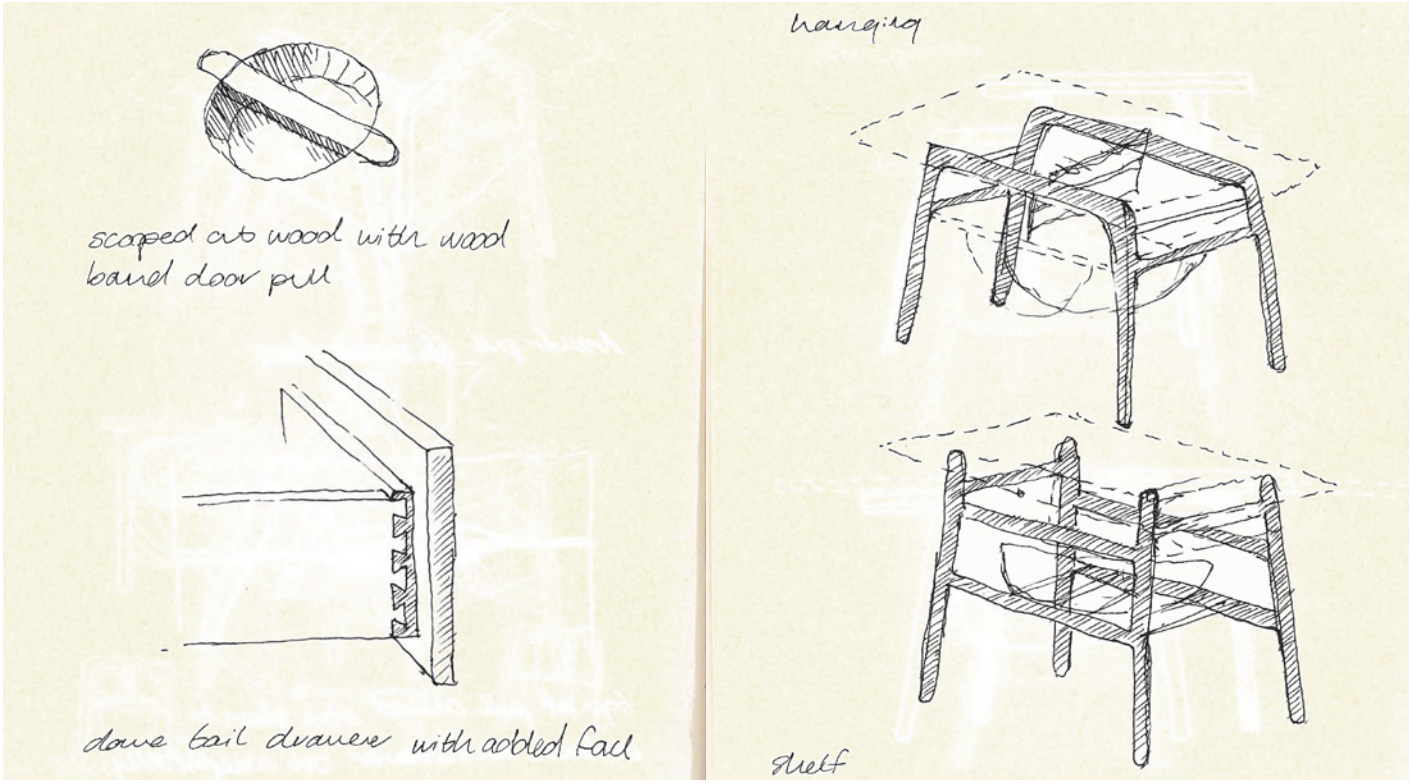


fig. 94 | Sewing Table Sketchbook Spread 1

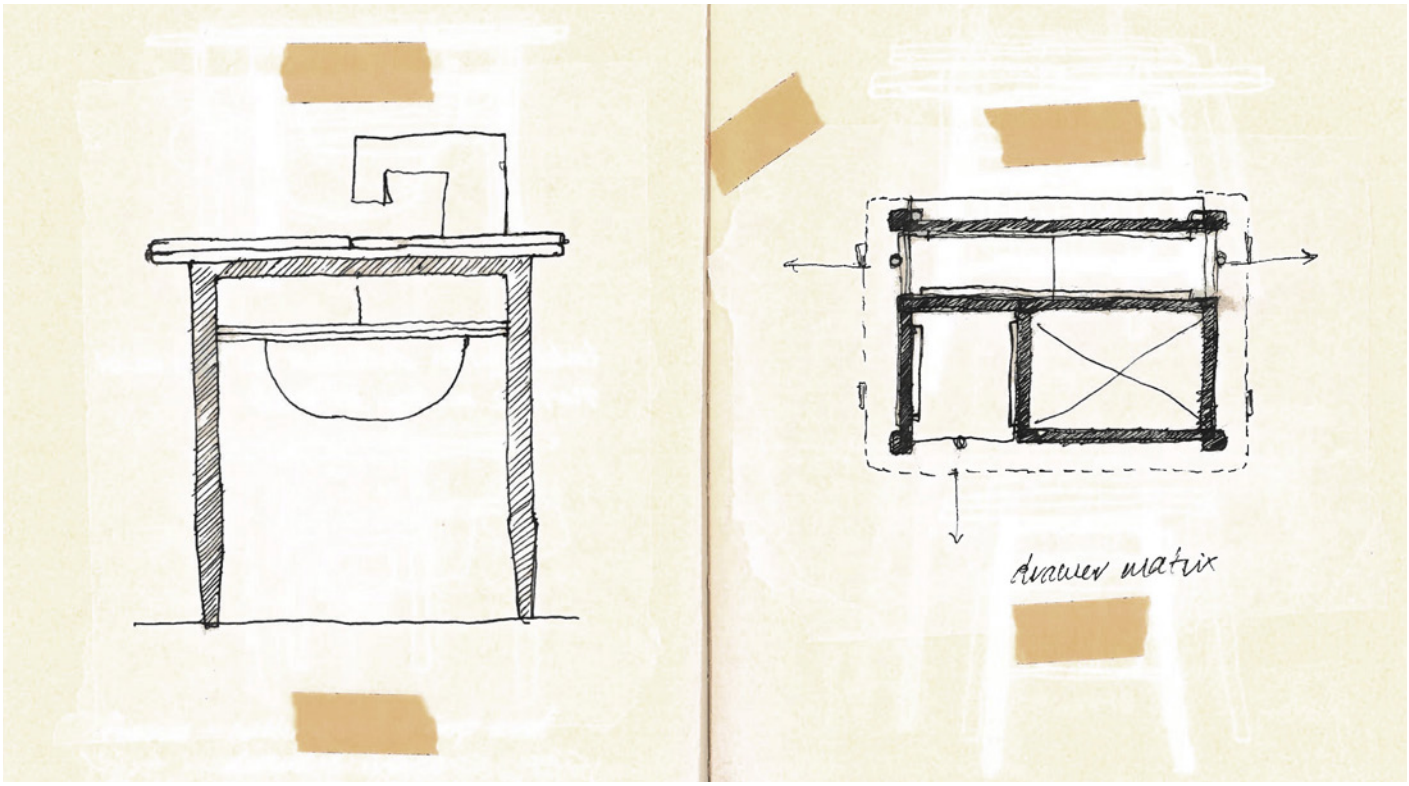


fig. 95 | Sewing Table Sketchbook Spread 2

fig. 96 | Day Dreaming

The Room

The scale of the workroom is the next level of design. The workroom is the central space of the house. Life in the house is spent here, working, dining, or hosting. The room is a simple open space measuring 7.7 metres by 4.6 metres. It is located on the first floor, one metre below ground. When sitting at a workstation, the view facing the lane would be slightly above eye level. This feature is directly inspired by the sunken kitchen that faces the garden in the dwelling building at Hancock Shaker Village. Sinking the first floor makes the room cozier, but also allows for a higher ceiling while keeping the building height within the allowed dimensions.

Furniture

At the front of the room is the sewing table which faces the lane. There are three other tables in the room, identical in form, each serving their own function. One table is for wet or messy work, one table is for dry work, and the last table is for dining. Though each has its primary role, the tables are flexible enough to be used for different purposes. They have one metre by one and a half metre work surfaces, shelves on the short sides built into the legs, and casters so they can be easily moved around by the family. Folding chairs furnish the space; they can be stored when not in use.

Millwork

The other functional elements are pushed to the edges of the room to keep the space as open as possible. On the left side are rooms which open directly onto the workroom. These include the kitchen, storage room, powder room, and utility room, as well as stairs to the upper level. On the right side is the built-in storage wall. There are wooden gables spaced 80 centimetres apart where components of the same dimensions can be placed. The textile wall from left to right has a buffet and china cabinet, pull-out ironing board and drying racks, drawers for small tool storage, hooks for frequently used tools, cabinets for material storage, and a coat closet. Underneath the drawers and hooks are crates that can be rolled out into the room and used as stools.

① PRODUCTION STUDIO

② DINING

ⓐ SEWING TABLE

ⓑ BENCH + SHOE STORAGE

ⓒ SCREEN + COAT HOOKS

ⓓ TOOL STORAGE

ⓔ FLOOR STORAGE

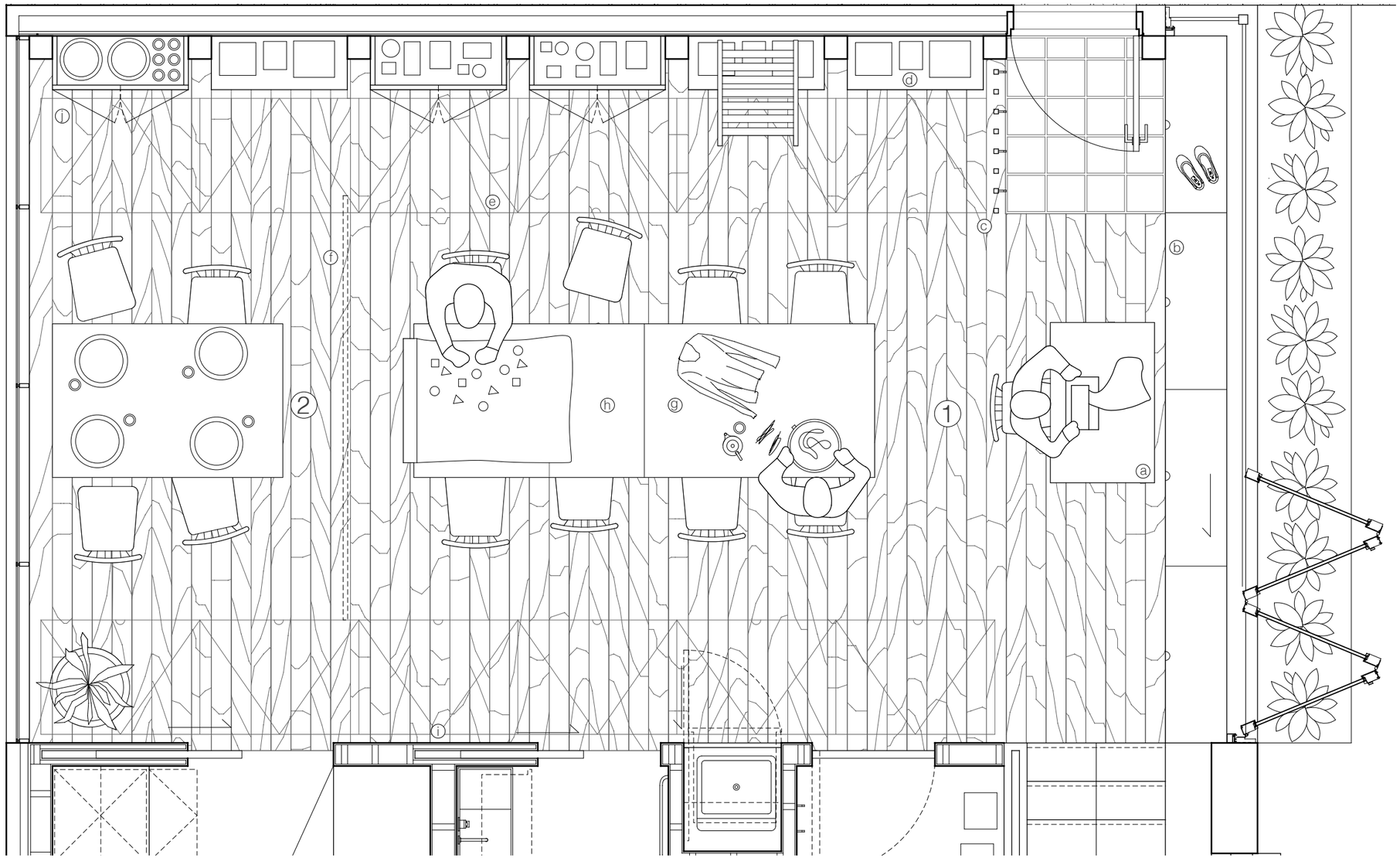
ⓕ PROJECTION SCREEN

ⓖ DRY TABLE

ⓗ WET TABLE

ⓘ PIN-UP BOARD

ⓙ CHINA CABINET + BUFFET



0 0.5 1 2 3

fig. 97 | Workroom Plan 1:30

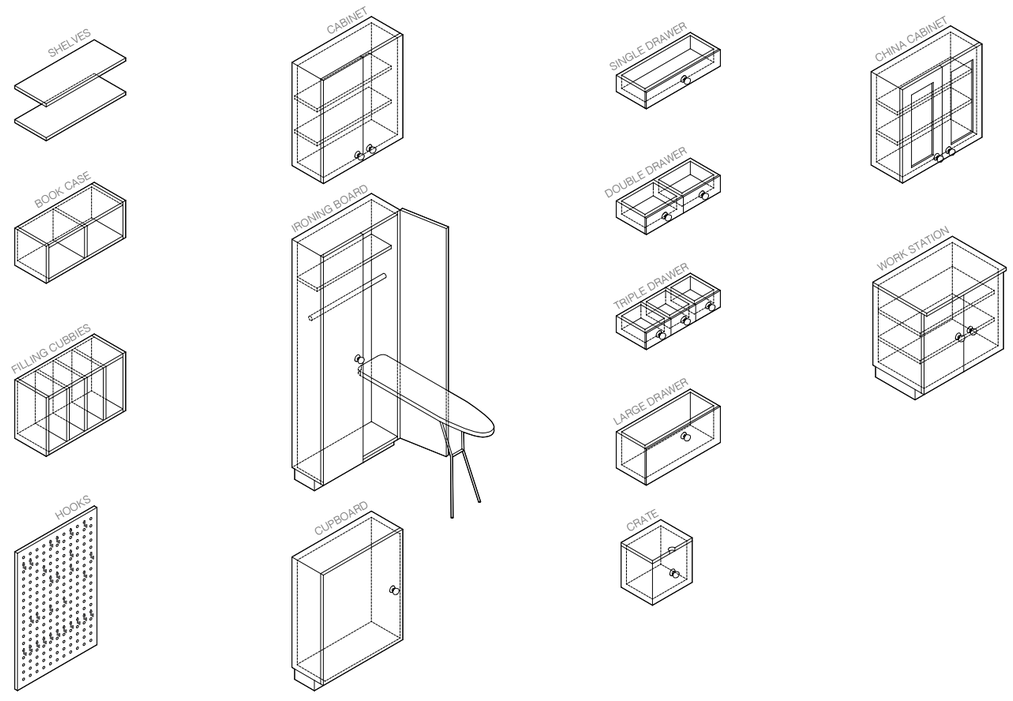


fig. 98 | Millwork Matrix

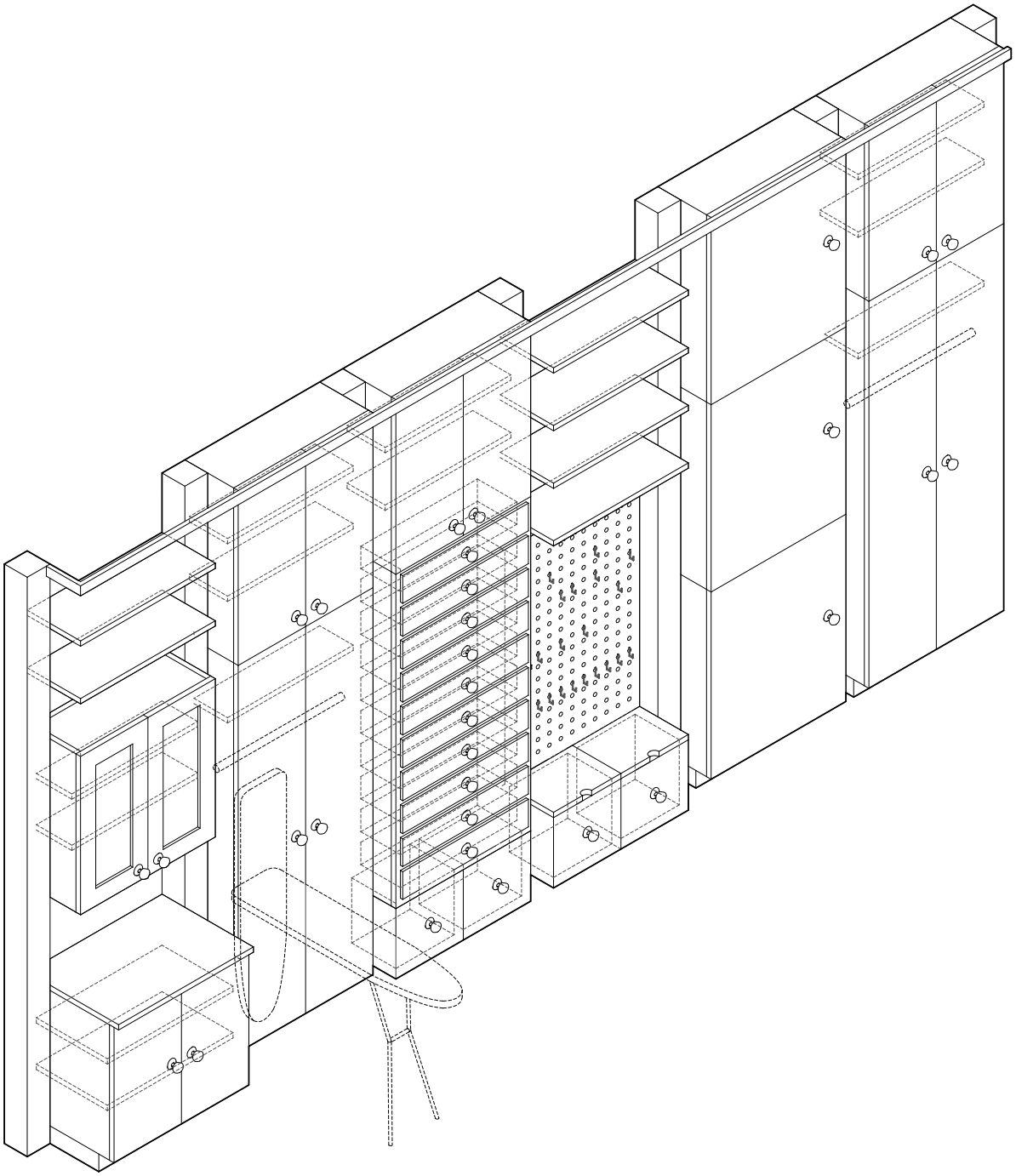
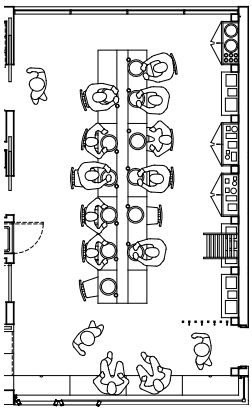
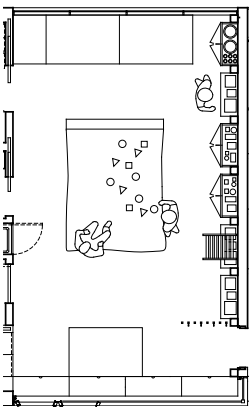


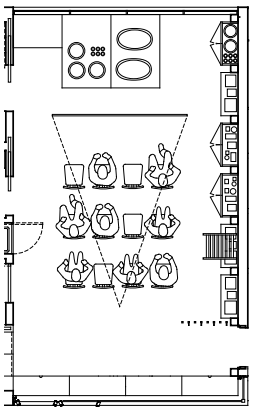
fig. 99 | Textile Millwork Wall Axonometric



Dinner Party



Floor Work



Presentations

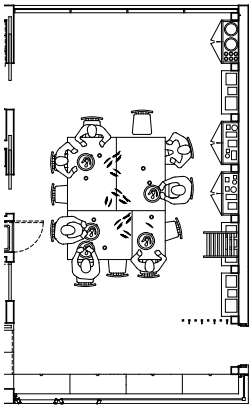
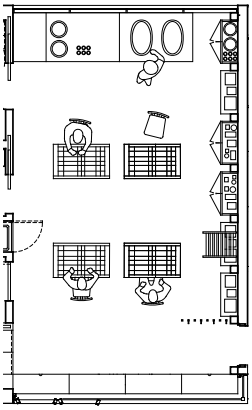
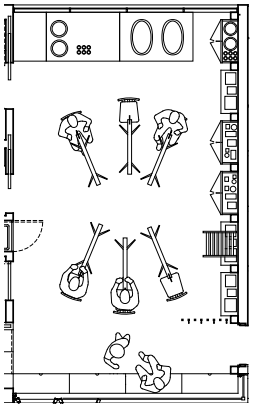


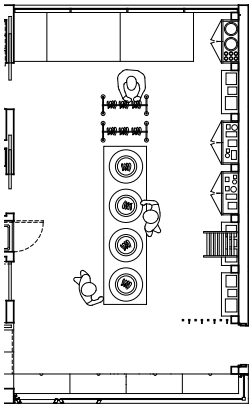
Table-based Workshop



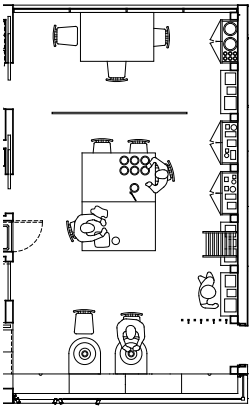
Weaving Workshop



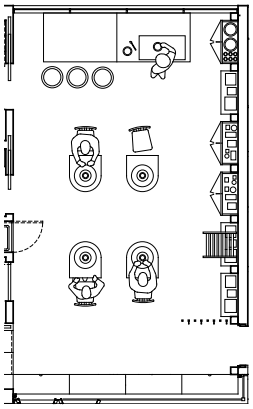
Spinning Workshop



Dying



Daily Pottery



Throwing Workshop

fig. 100 | Workroom Layouts

Throughout the workroom, other elements contribute to the efficiency and function of the space. In front of the window facing the laneway is a bench with storage underneath. The section of the bench close to the entrance can be used as a place to take off and store shoes. At the entrance is a wooden screen to separate the entrance without taking up much space. There are hooks on the slats for visitors to hang their coats. Between the dining table and the worktable is a projection screen. This screen can drop down to divide the space or be used to project presentations for workshops. The window facing the lane is an accordion wall. When opened, it provides a connection to the laneway. Along the 'room wall,' is a secondary sink which allows the family to have a sink dedicated to their work.

Flexibility

The workspace is designed to be flexible for all the crafting houses. Different activities can be accommodated here, including floor work, dinner parties, workshops, and presentations. Folding chairs can be put into or taken out of storage, and tables rearranged or pushed to the sides. Other tools, like looms or pottery wheels, can also be brought out of the adjacent storage room and put away when not needed.

fig. 101 | Workroom

fig. 102 | Laundry Day

The House

The fourth aspect of the design happens at the scale of the house. I designed the house around the workroom, which is the primary space of the home. It has a footprint of eight meters by eight meters and contains two storeys, plus a roof garden. Compositionally, the house is a shell infilled with open spaces connected to a bar of supporting rooms. The first floor is primarily for work while the second floor is primarily for leisure, though there are overlaps between the two. The house has a simple wood frame platform construction with brick veneer. This construction allows the houses to be built quickly, cheaply, and efficiently. The windows are framed by wooden fins which prevent sunlight from directly hitting the glass.

Entrance

The entry to the house is through a porte cochère, which allows for greater intimacy. The structure of the side porch becomes gradually more dense from the front to the rear of the house. The front of the porch consists of columns spaced two metres apart. Past the doorway, are ivy-covered slats, and at the back of the house is a screened-in room for bikes or outdoor storage. The entry leads directly to the workroom so people coming for workshops do not need to walk through the house to get to the workroom.

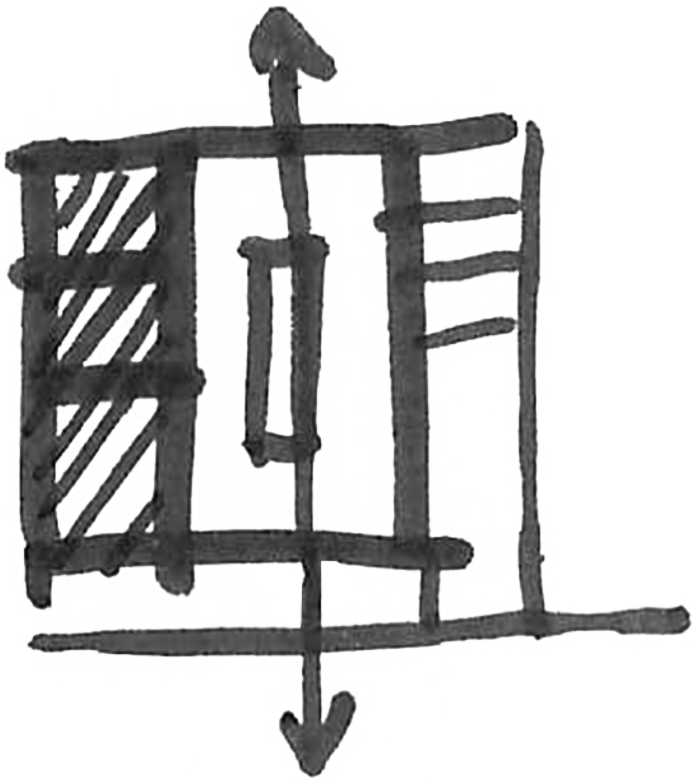


fig. 103 | Parti

① WORKROOM
② DINING
③ ENTRY PORCH
④ MATERIAL + LARGE TOOL STORAGE
⑤ POWDER ROOM
⑥ UTILITY ROOM
⑦ KITCHEN
⑧ BIKE + OUTDOOR STORAGE
ⓐ FRIDGE
ⓑ PANTRY
ⓒ PRODUCT DISPLAY
ⓓ CHAIR STORAGE
ⓔ WASHER + DRYER
ⓕ DYE CAULDRON
ⓖ CLOTHES HANGING TO DRY

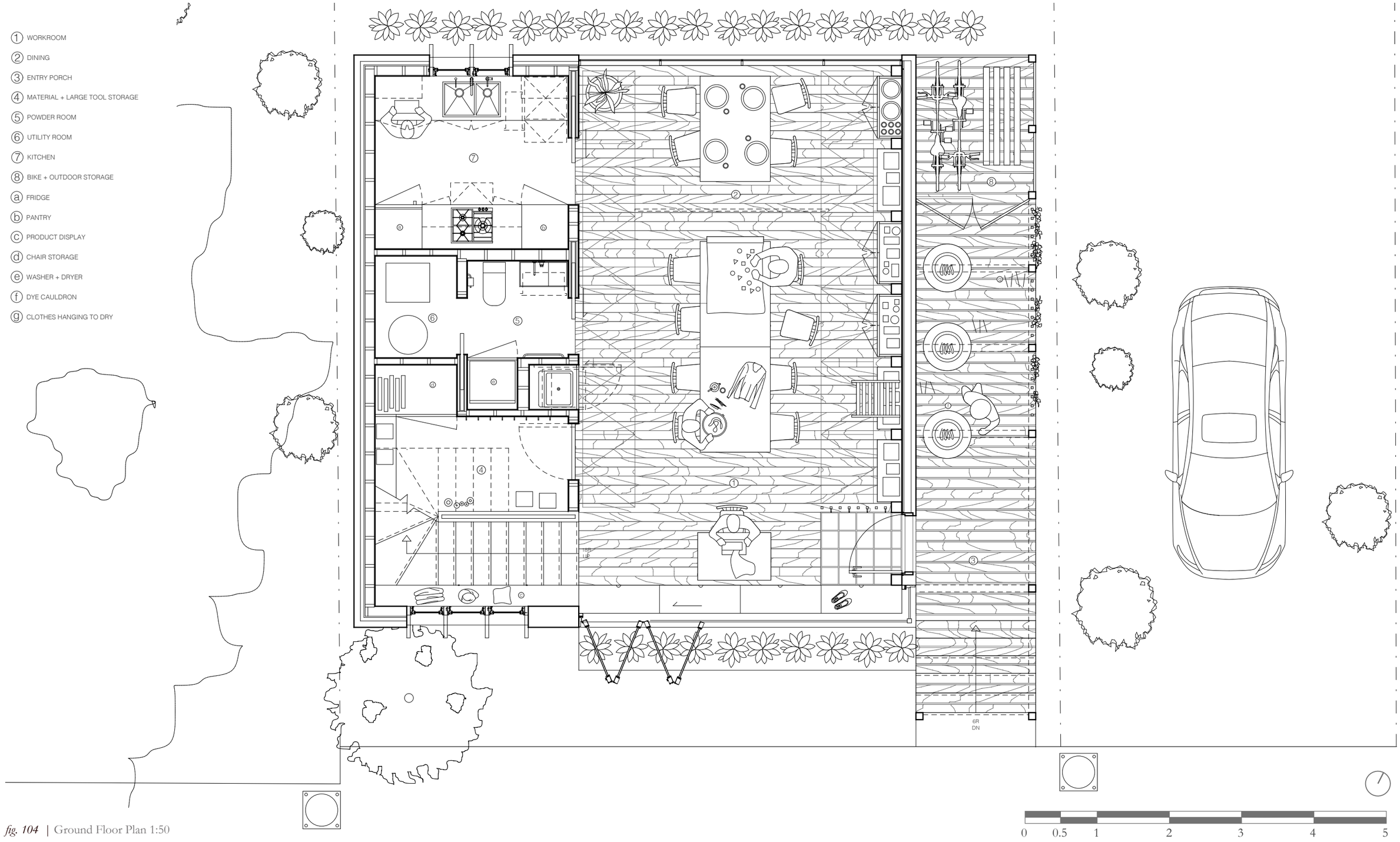


fig. 104 | Ground Floor Plan 1:50

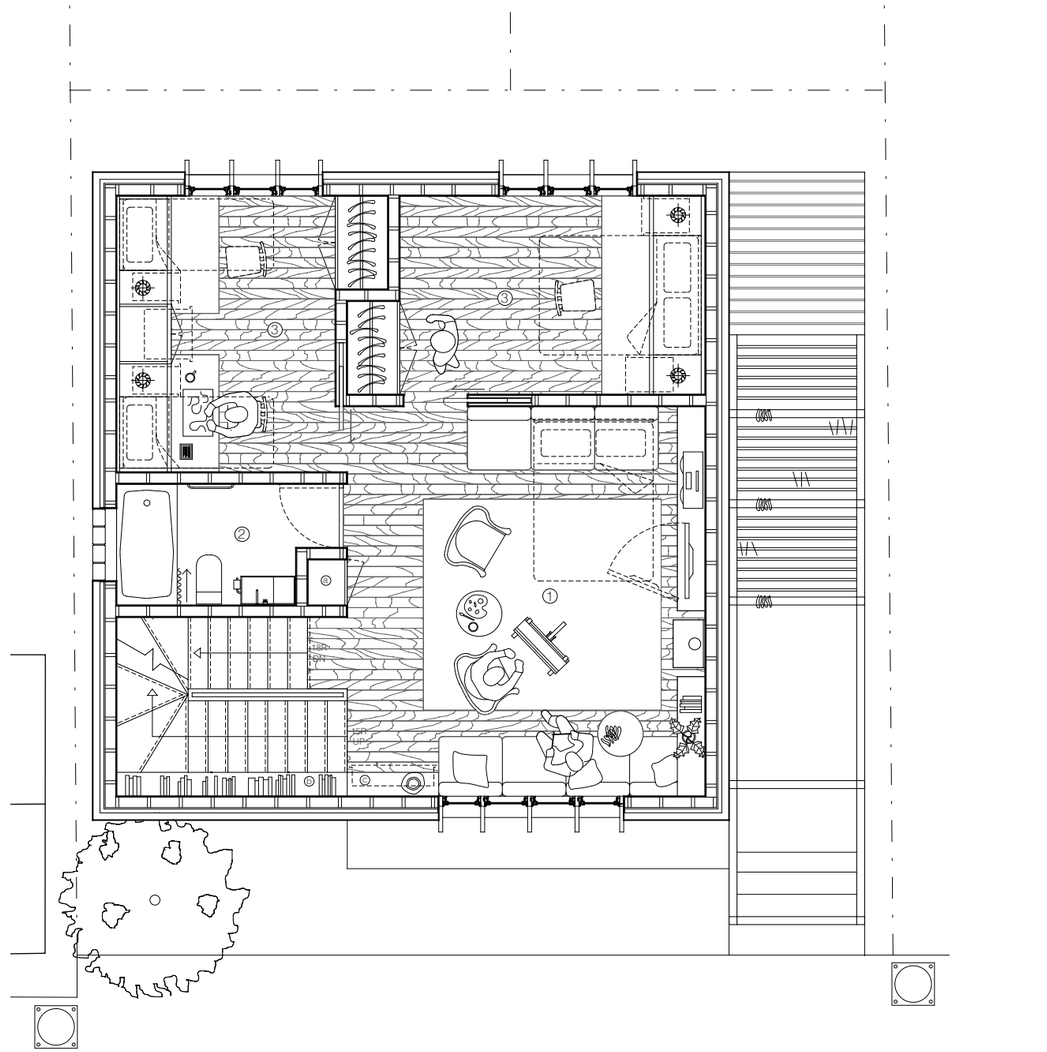


fig. 105 | Second Floor Plan 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

Second Floor

On the second floor are the living room, bathroom, and two bedrooms. During the day, the bedrooms transition into studies. When the murphy beds are put up, there is a desk on the other side for individual design work.

① FAMILY ROOM / DESIGN STUDIO

② BATHROOM

③ BEDROOM / STUDY

ⓐ LINEN CLOSET

ⓑ BOOK SHELF + DISPLAY

ⓒ TOOL + MATERIAL STORAGE

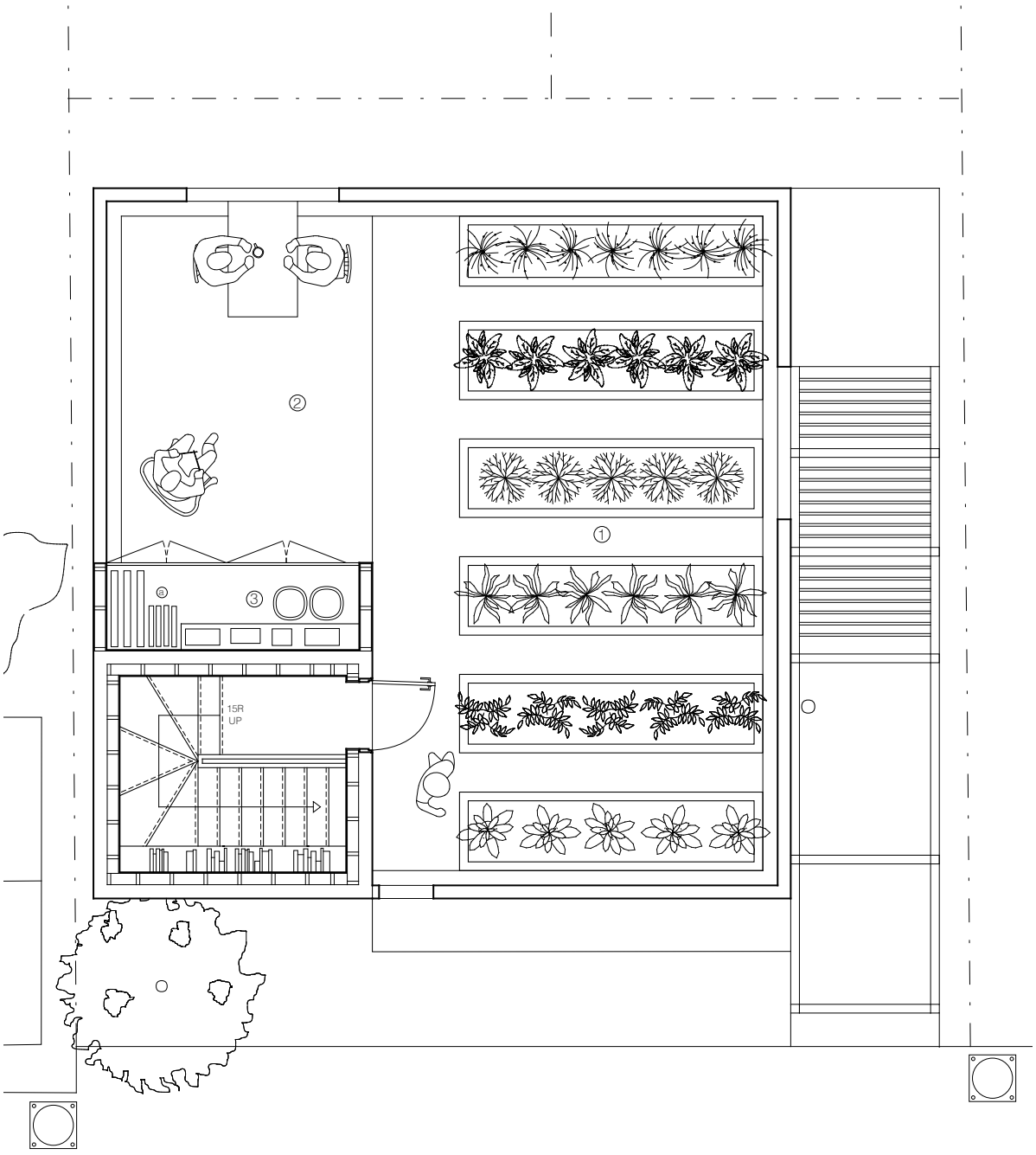


fig. 106 | Roof Plan 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

Roof

The roof features a garden of raised planting beds. These can be used to grow food or in the case of the tailor's house, grow dye plants for small batches of natural dye. On the left side are a terrace and storage room. The family can store gardening supplies, tables and chairs in the room. They can be taken out for dinner parties and stored when not needed. The parapet walls are 2.3 metres high, which makes the space a room open to the sky. Punctures in the walls frame views of the surrounding neighbourhood.

① DYE / VETABLE GARDEN
② TERRACE
③ GARDEN STORAGE
ⓐ TABKE + CHAIR STORAGE

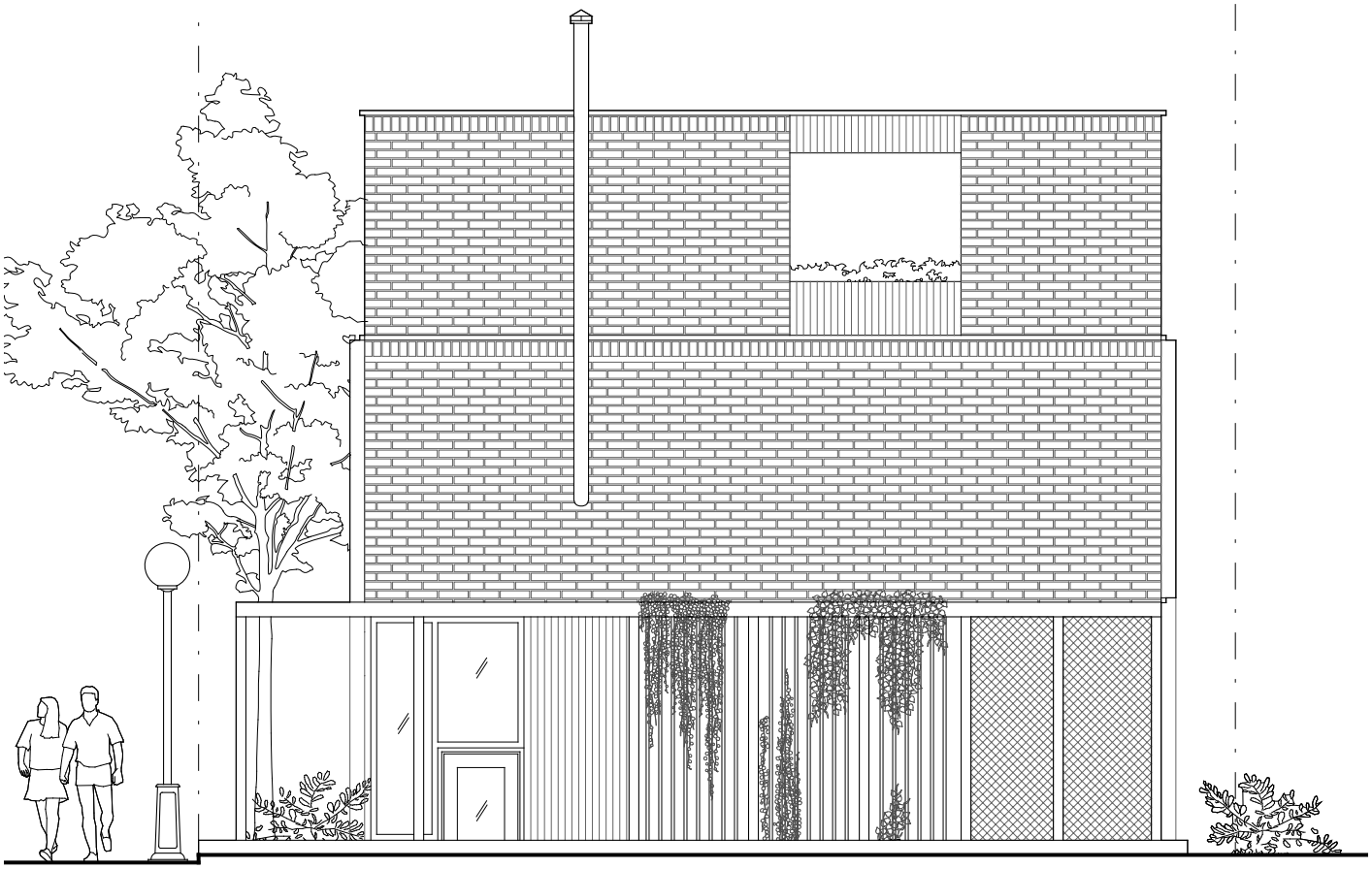


fig. 107 | Side Elevation (East) 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

fig. 108 | Front Elevation (South) 1:50

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5

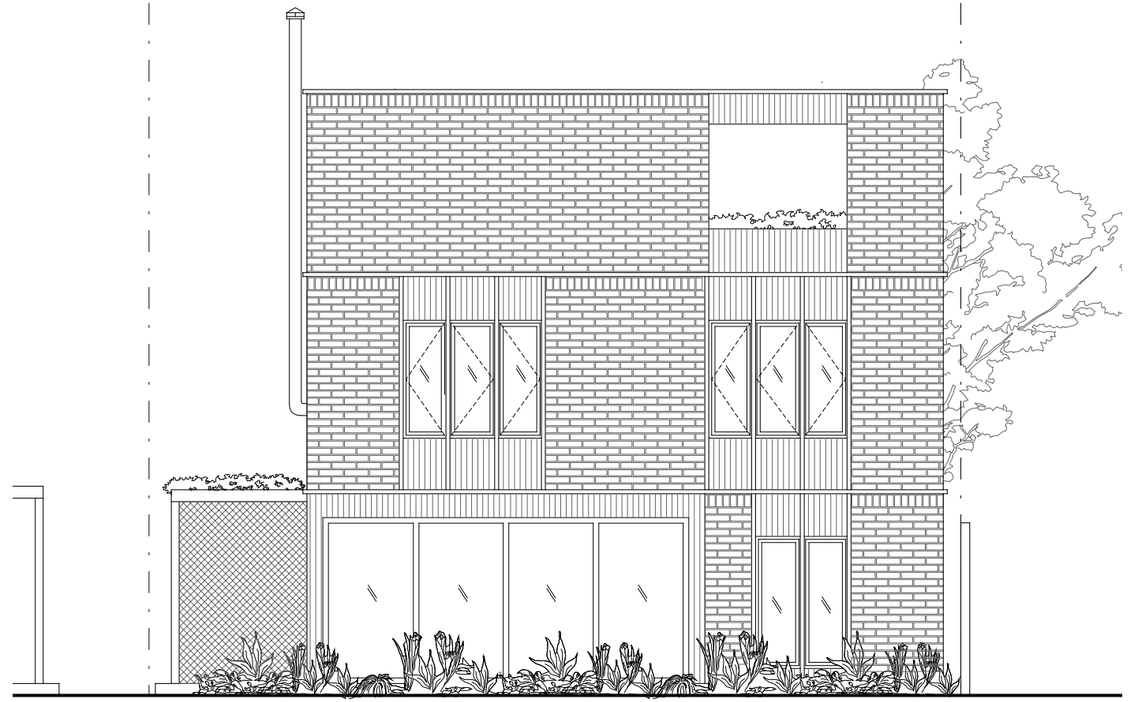


fig. 109 | Back Elevation (North) 1:75

0 1 2 3 4 5

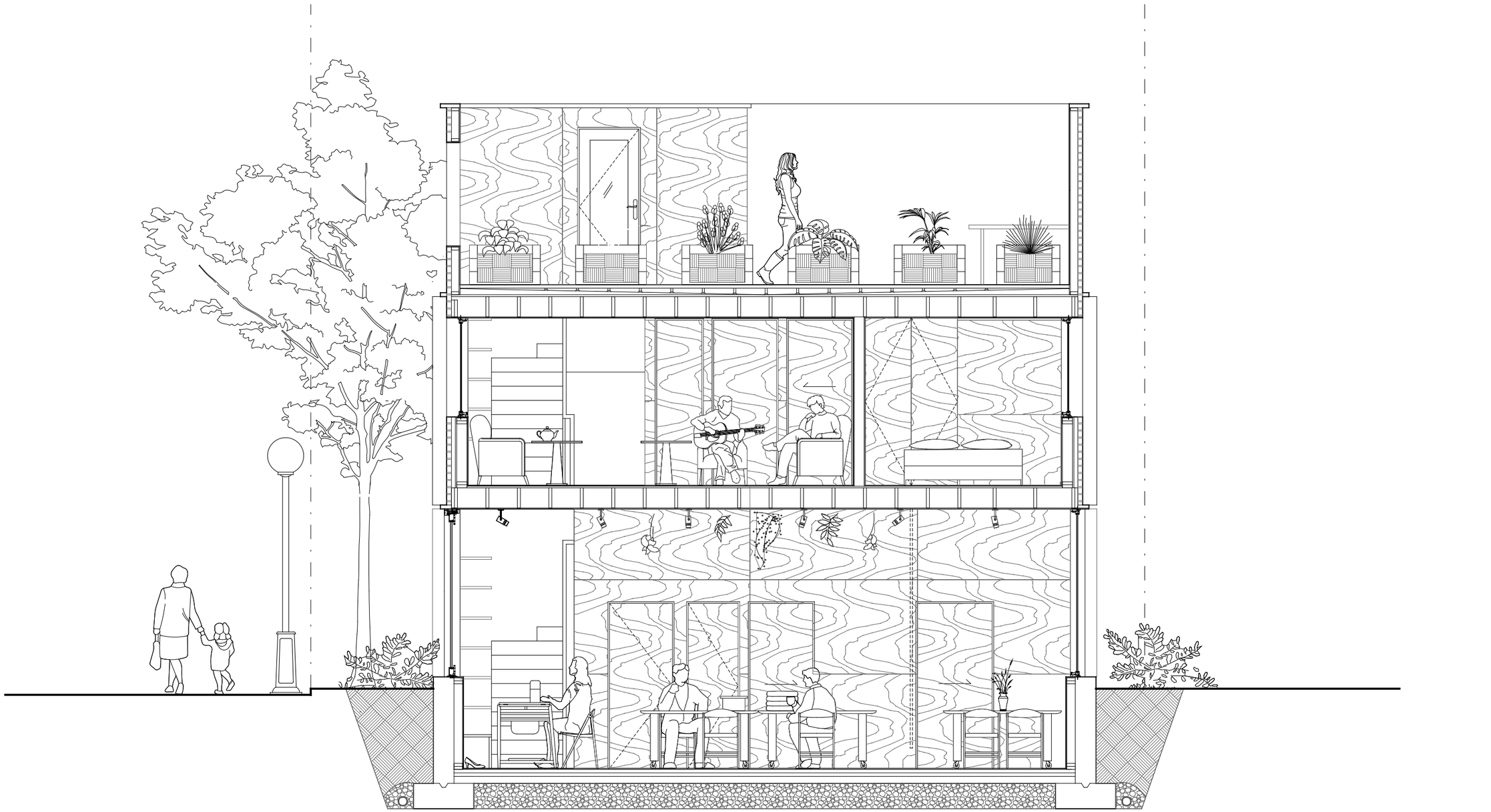


fig. 110 | North - South Section 1:50

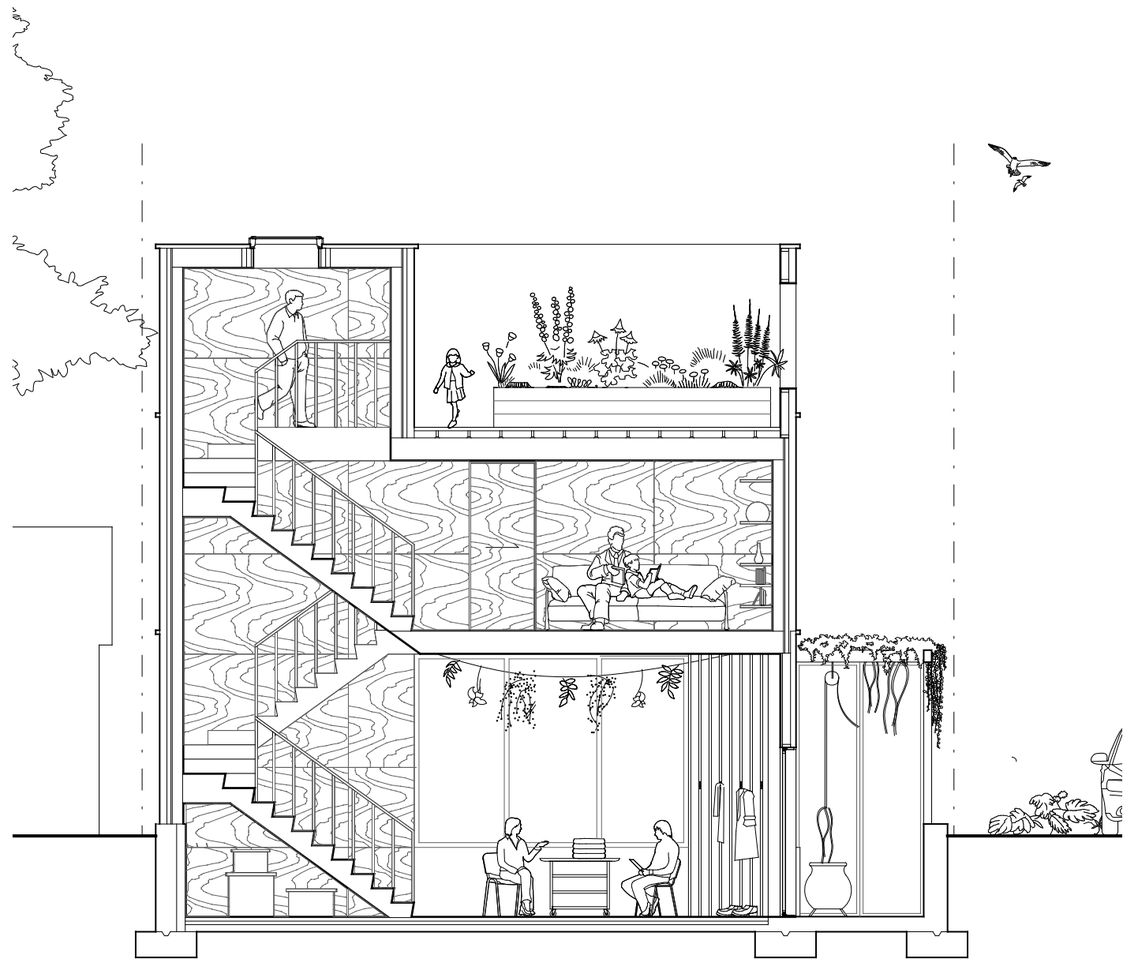


fig. 111 | East - West Section 1:75

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fig. 112 | East - West Porch Section 1:75

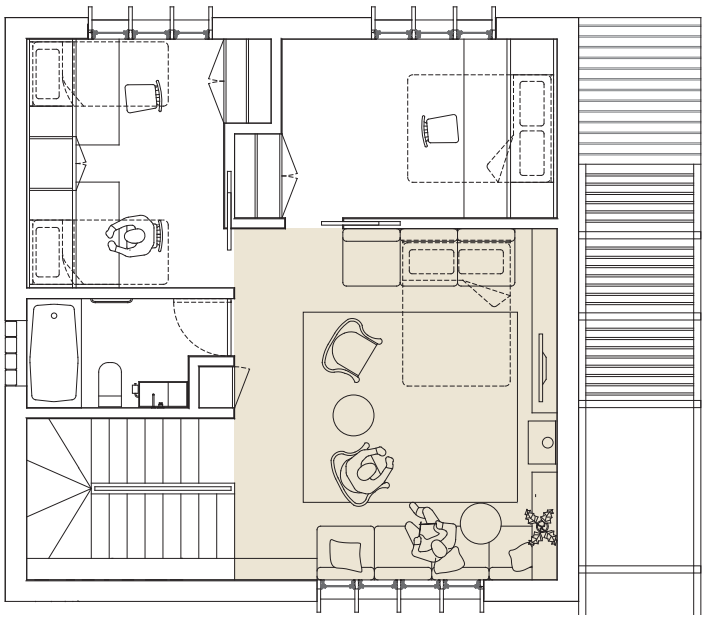

fig. 113 |Living Room Key Plan

fig. 114 | Living Room View

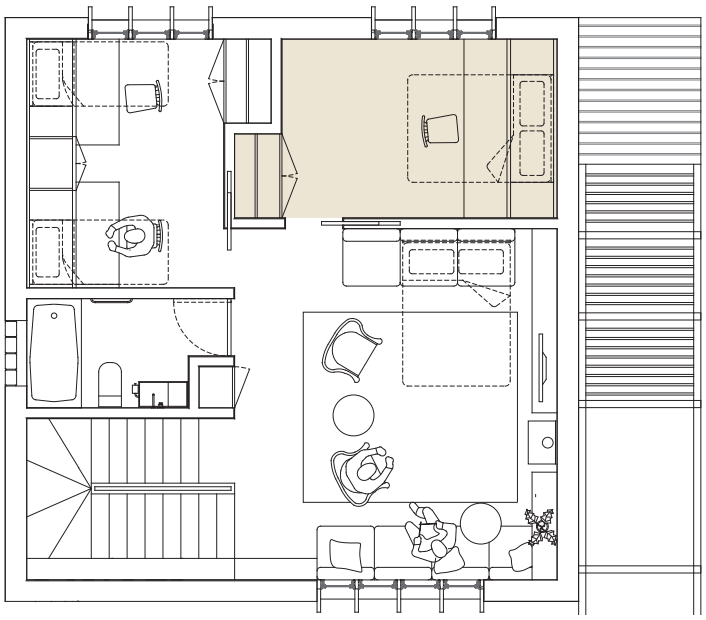

fig. 115 | Study Key Plan

fig. 116 | Study View

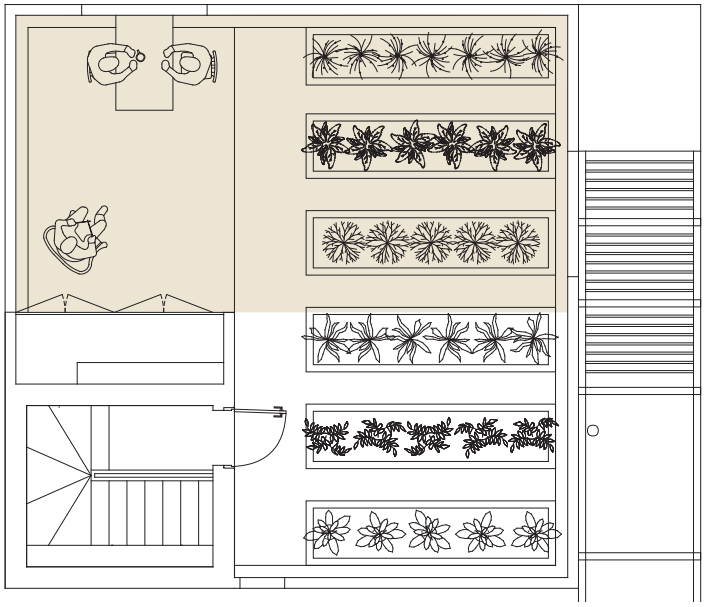

fig. 117 | Roof Terrace Key Plan

fig. 118 | Roof Terrace View

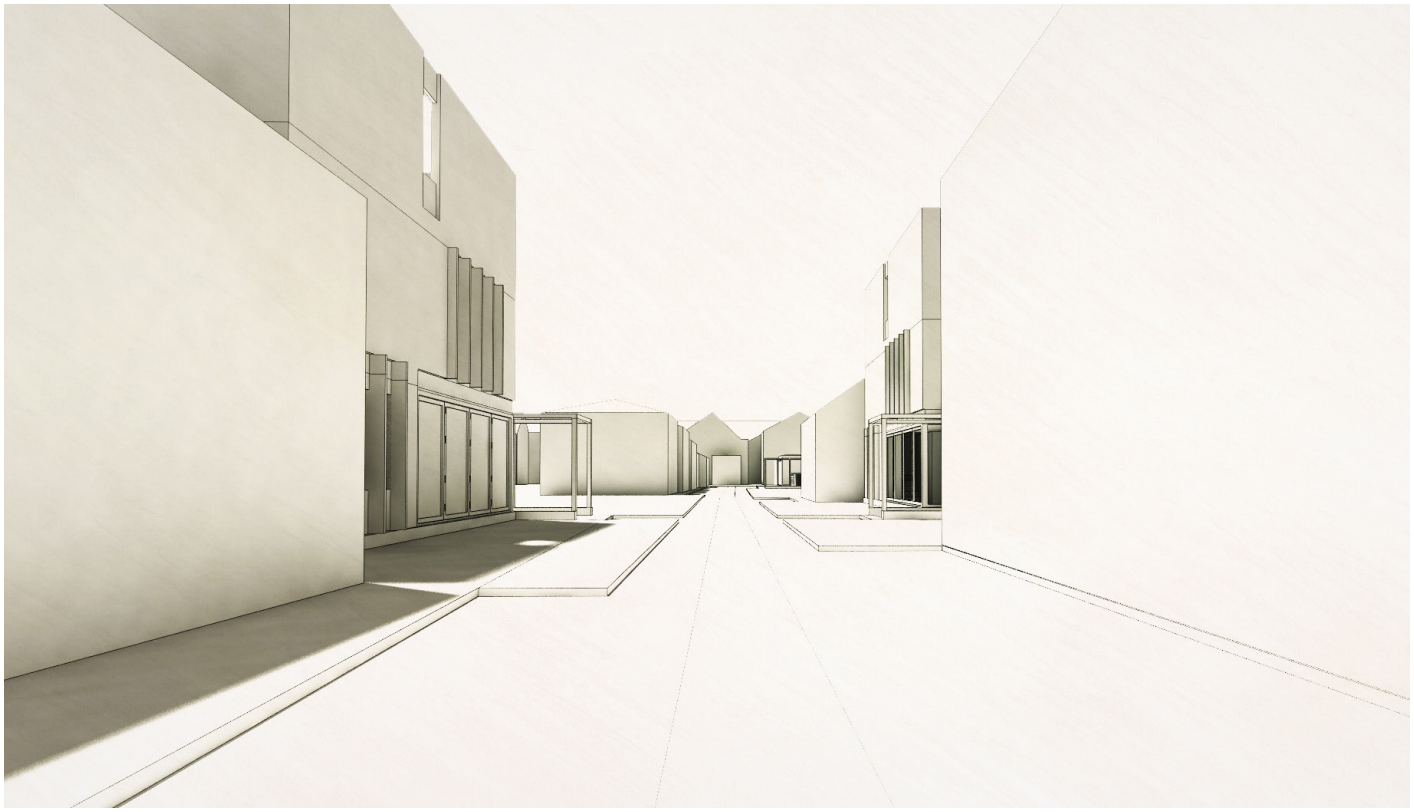

fig. 119 | The Village

The Village

The final part of the design happens at the scale of the village. The village is a combination of four cottages plus a community building. I placed the cottages where there were no trees or garages to reduce the impact on the built fabric. I redesigned the lane itself to have permeable paving with low foliage. This system reduces water runoff, as well as creates a garden-like environment. For safety, I added street lights as well as hanging lanterns allowing people to see at night. The laneway houses do not have backyards, but there is sufficient space between them and the main houses, often more than eight metres. The community building at the end of the lane is a one storey version of the cottage. It contains a storefront, spray booth, photo studio, finished product storage, and packaging room. The building allows the residents to sell their goods to the community and share infrequently used rooms with others, freeing up valuable space within the cottages. The lane also offers opportunities to interact with the public through block parties or community projects. With many remaining lots, O'Riordan Lane has the potential to expand and have up to six more buildings. This scheme could be developed in laneways across Toronto, creating a city-wide crafting network.

fig. 120 | Site Plan 1:700


0
5
10
20
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① STORE

② CASH

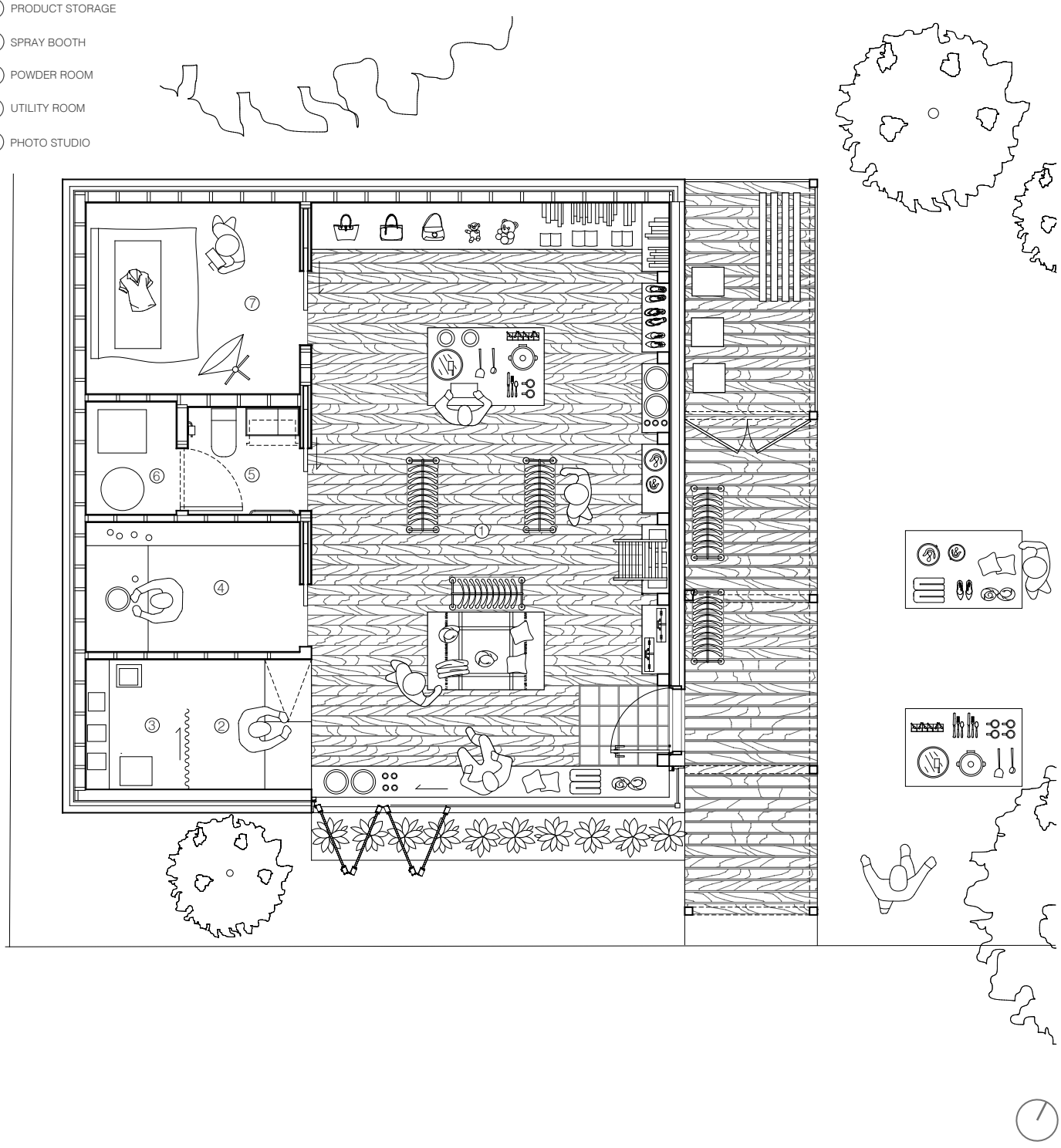
③ PRODUCT STORAGE

④ SPRAY BOOTH

⑤ POWDER ROOM

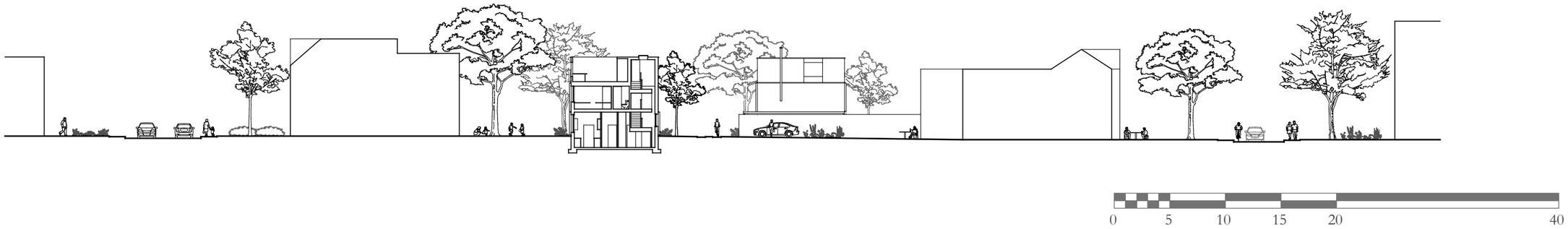
⑥ UTILITY ROOM

⑦ PHOTO STUDIO



0 1 2 3 4 5

fig. 121 | Store Plan 1:75



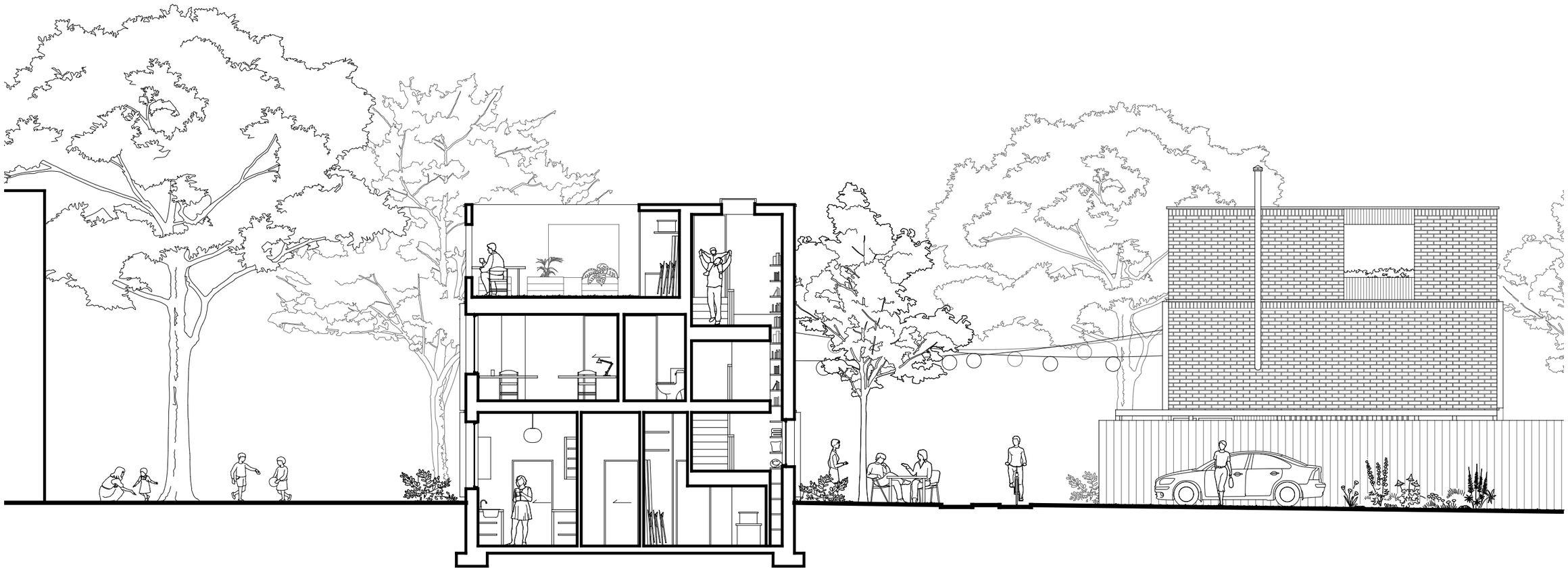


fig. 122 | Site Section 1:400
fig. 123 | Site Section 1:100

ⓐ THE STORE: 471R Sackville St.

ⓑ THE TAILOR: 397R Wellesley St. E

ⓒ THE POTTER:108R Amelia St.

ⓓ THE LEATHERWORKER: 126R Amelia St.

ⓔ THE BOOKBINDER: 427R Wellesley St. E

fig. 124 | Site Plan Addresses Diagram

fig. 125 | Site Plan 1:100

fig. 126 | Afternoon Tea

Conclusion

This thesis has proposed an alternate lifestyle centred on crafting set within untouched parts of the city of Toronto. The project started with the design of a tool for crafting, the sewing table. The design then grew outwards from the table to include a room, a house, and a village. The final design proposal is a series of urban cottages supporting a community focused on living more enriching lives. With the signing of Bill 826 in 2018, laneways provide a tremendous opportunity for the development of these communities. Inspiration was drawn from the Utopian Shakers, Toronto craftspeople, and existing laneway houses.

This thesis set out to create places where people could spend their time making with others instead of spending their money on commodities. It addresses our need for engagement with the physical world and our creative selves. Through cottages for crafting, we can learn about the world, ourselves, our family, and our neighbours. Most of us no longer make things, and many of our belongings are bought commodities. The urban cottages are an imagined proposal for how we might live and work. Ultimately, this thesis is about the joy that crafting can bring.

Beyond creating better lives for ourselves through making, this thesis has explored one of many potential configurations for communities within Toronto's laneways, each presenting their own unique challenges and opportunities. This thesis has

demonstrated how laneways might be developed to enrich the lives of the neighbourhood's residents while advancing and cultivating the local design identity.

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