

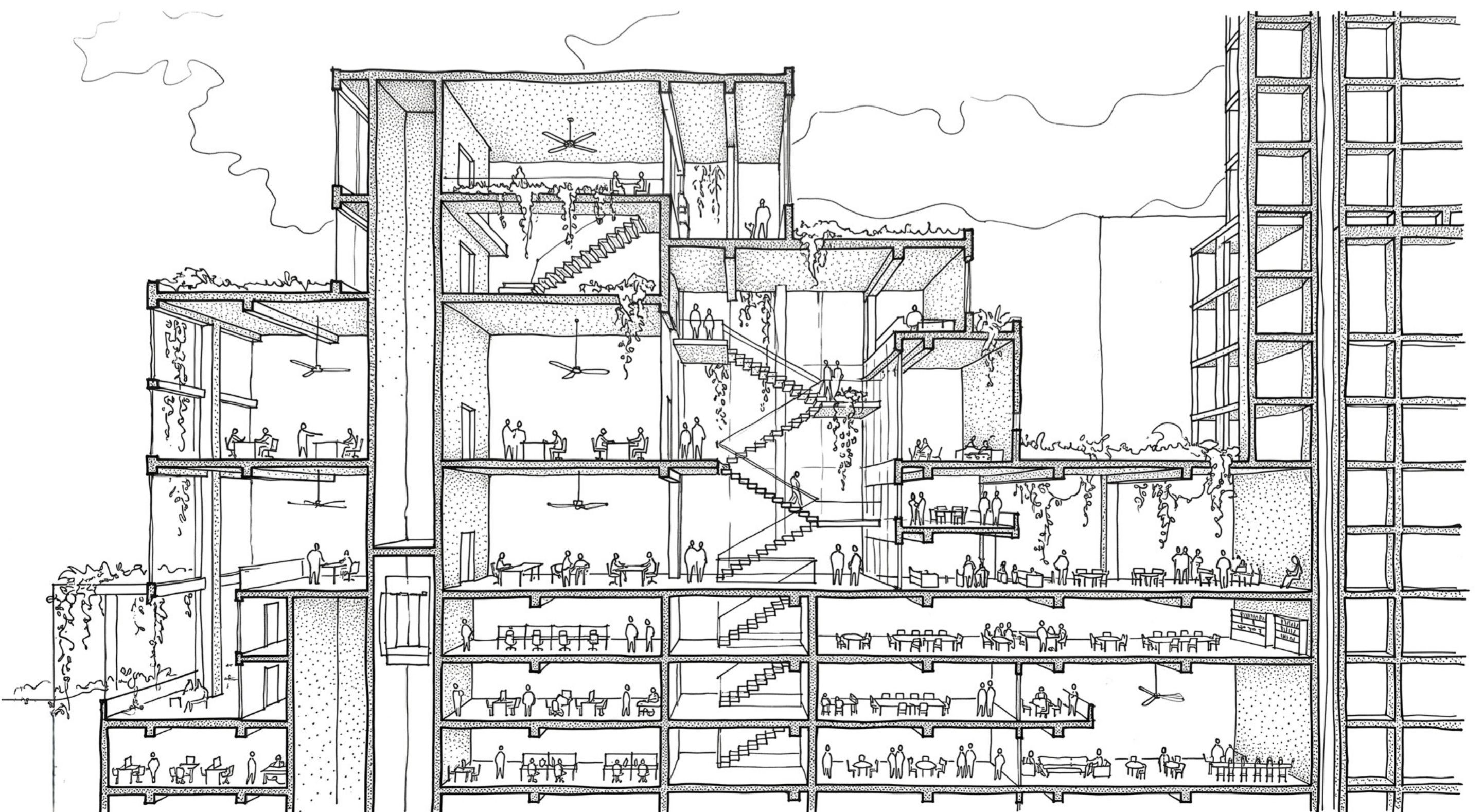


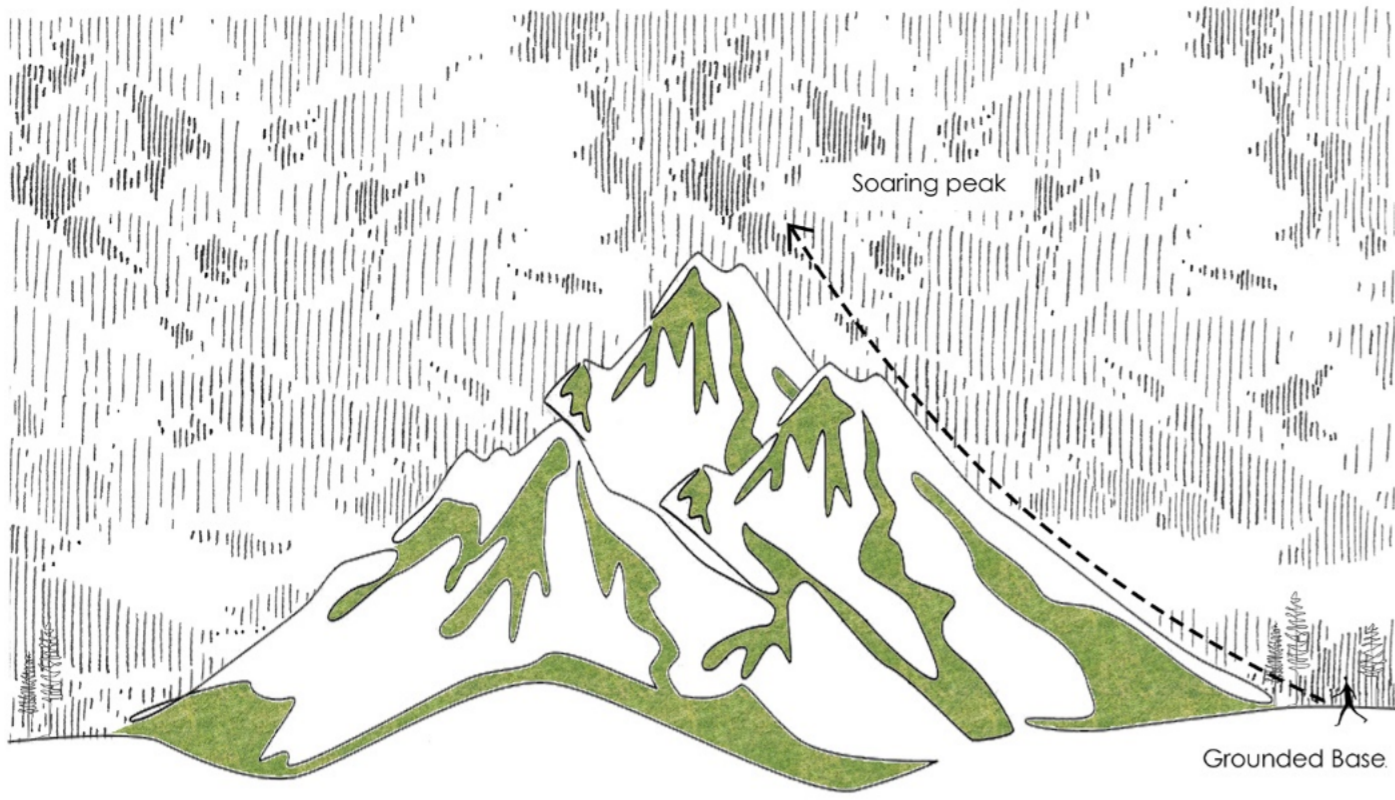
VIRAHAT A CULTURAL HIGH-RISE

Introduction

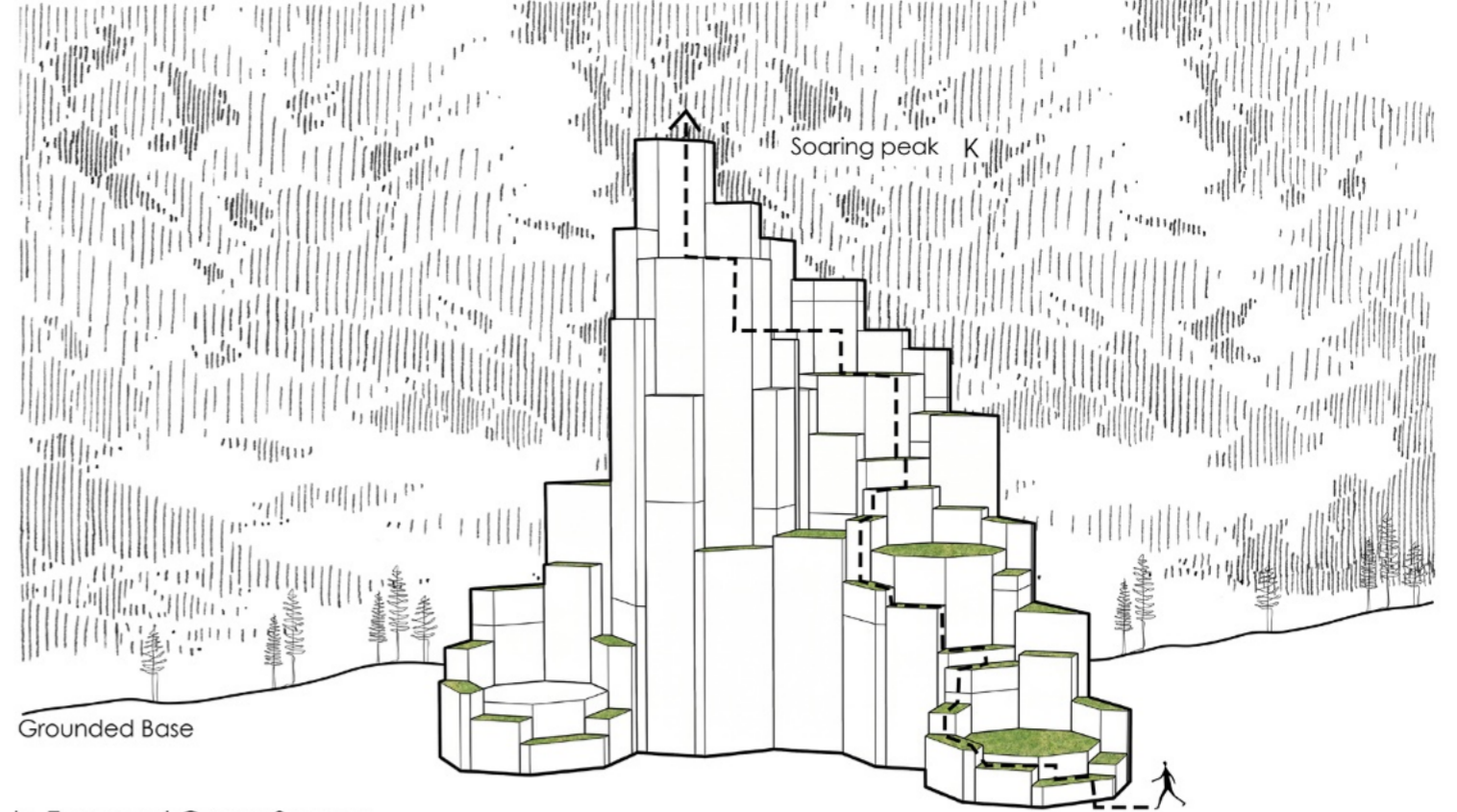
In the contemporary urban world, the high rise has become the defining image of progress and modernity. Across global cities, towers continue to rise with similar forms, materials, and architectural languages, creating skylines that often appear detached from their cultural and geographical context. While traditional architecture has historically reflected the identity, climate, craft, and collective memory of a place, many contemporary high rises have evolved into universal objects with little connection to the land they occupy. As cities increasingly grow vertically, the question of cultural belonging within tall architecture becomes more significant than ever.

Virahat emerges from this dialogue between vertical urbanization and cultural identity. The thesis explores the possibility of reinterpreting the high rise not merely as an engineered structure, but as an architectural expression rooted in place, experience, and human connection. Positioned within the rapidly transforming urban condition of the future city, the project investigates how contemporary vertical architecture can move beyond anonymity and evolve into a form that resonates with landscape, public life, and cultural continuity.

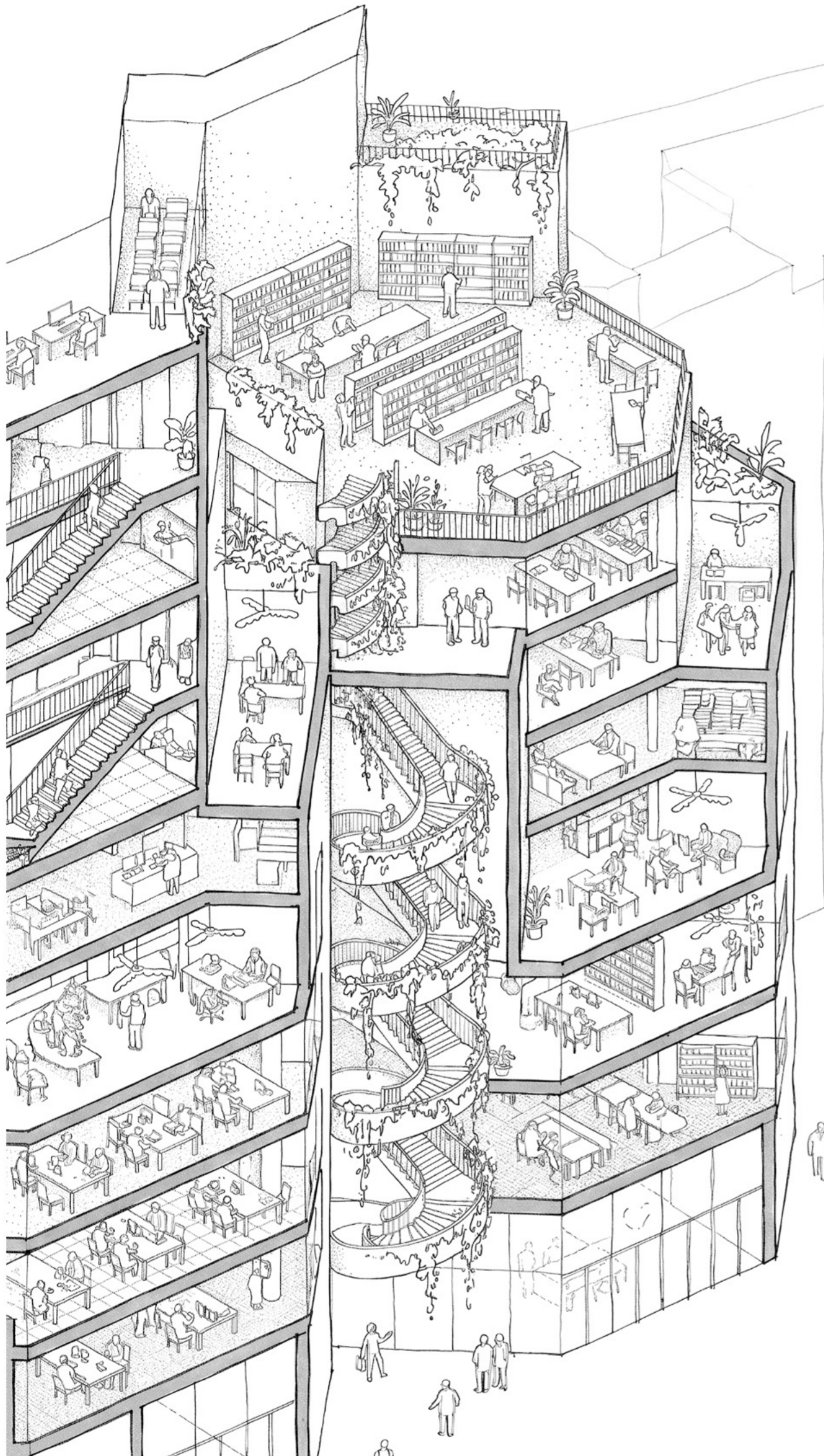




a. Green Landscape



b. Terraced Green Spaces



Isometric View - User Activity

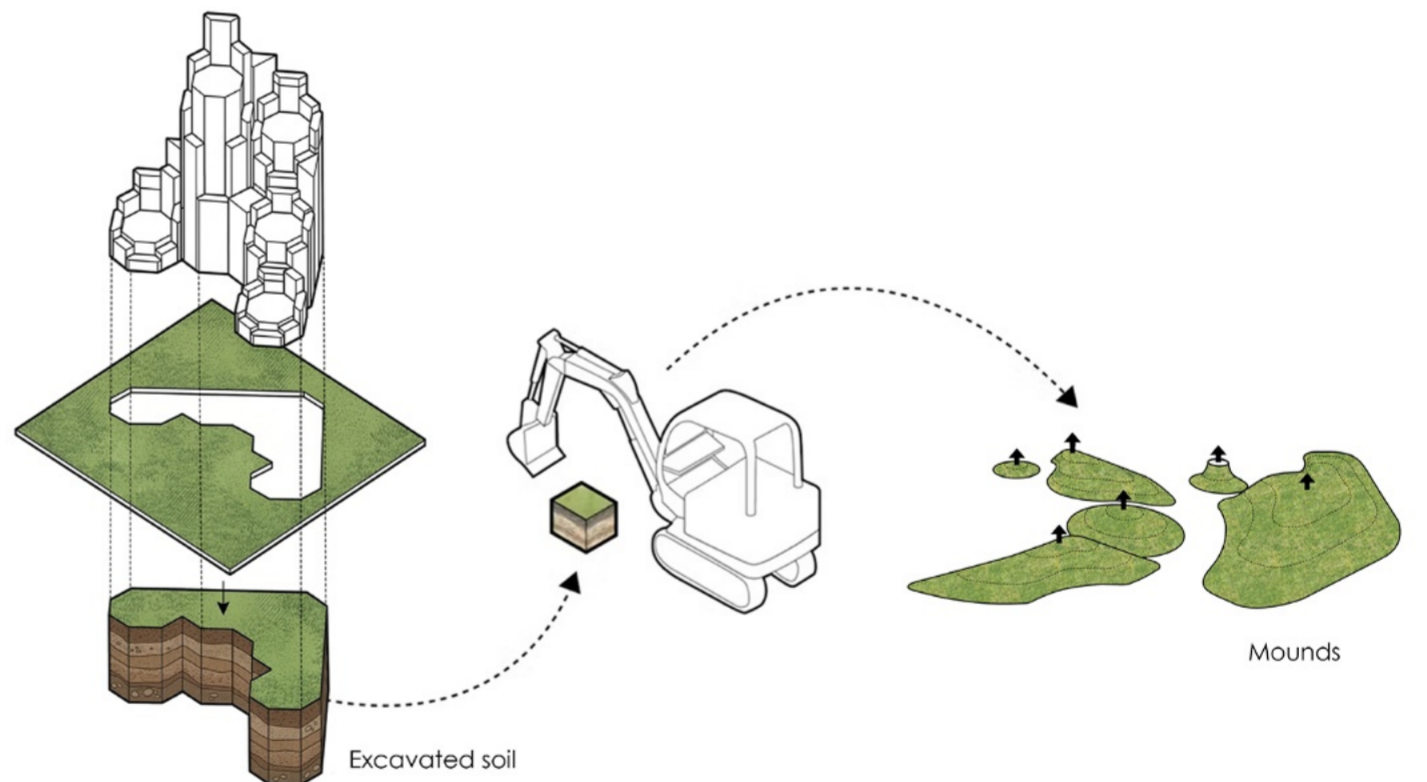
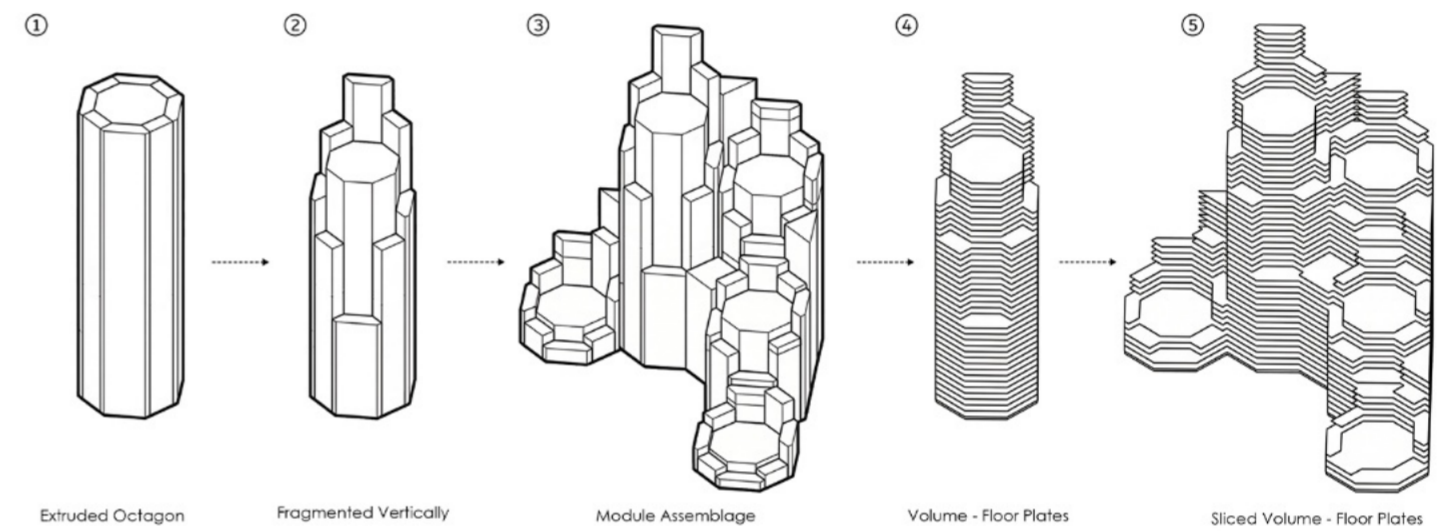
Land to Sky

The concept of "Land to Sky" explores the high rise as a seamless extension of the earth rather than an isolated vertical object. Inspired by the natural formation of hills that gradually emerge from the landscape and dissolve into the sky, the tower is envisioned as a transitional form connecting ground, people, and skyline. The architecture rises in layers, creating a relationship between nature and verticality, where the built form evolves as an inhabitable topography. This approach transforms the tower into more than a structure of height, establishing it as a spatial journey that links the human experience of the ground with the vastness of the sky.

Form Evolution

The form evolution of Virahat originates from the octagon, selected for its structural stability and multidirectional spatial quality in high-rise design. Multiple octagonal volumes of varying scales were combined, shifted, and fragmented to generate projections, terraces, and interconnected spaces. Through a series of iterative transformations, the rigid geometry gradually evolved into a softer and more organic massing. The resulting composition creates a hill-like silhouette that visually rises from the ground toward the sky. This process allowed the tower to embody both structural logic and the conceptual idea of landscape-driven verticality.

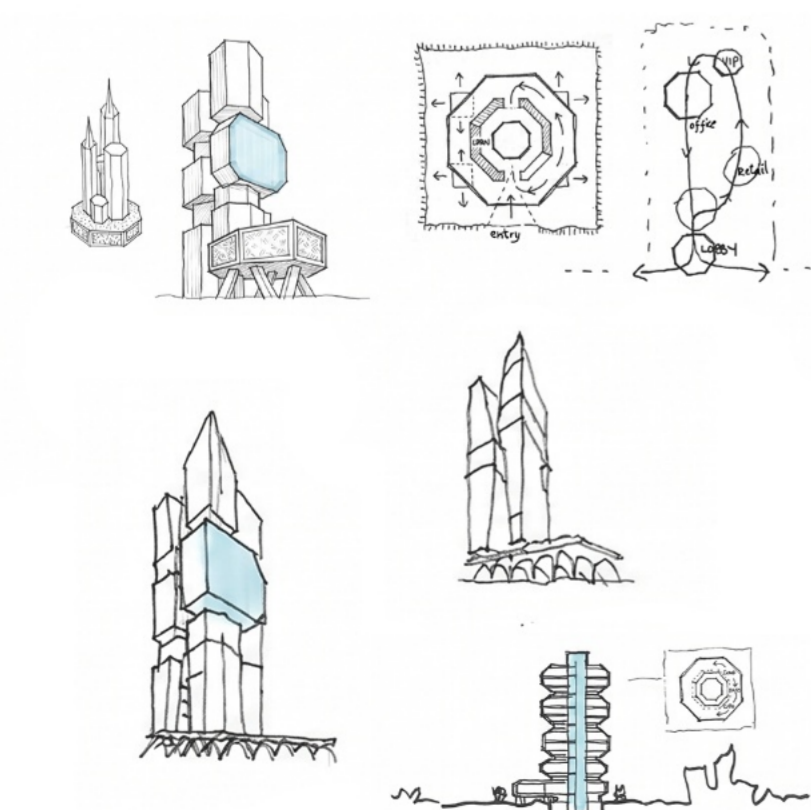
Form Evolution



Landscape Theme

The landscape is shaped using the soil extracted during the construction process, transforming excavated earth into inhabitable public mounds. This creates a seamless connection between the built form and the natural terrain, extending the architectural experience into the site landscape.

Landscape Designed for Public



Initial Iterations



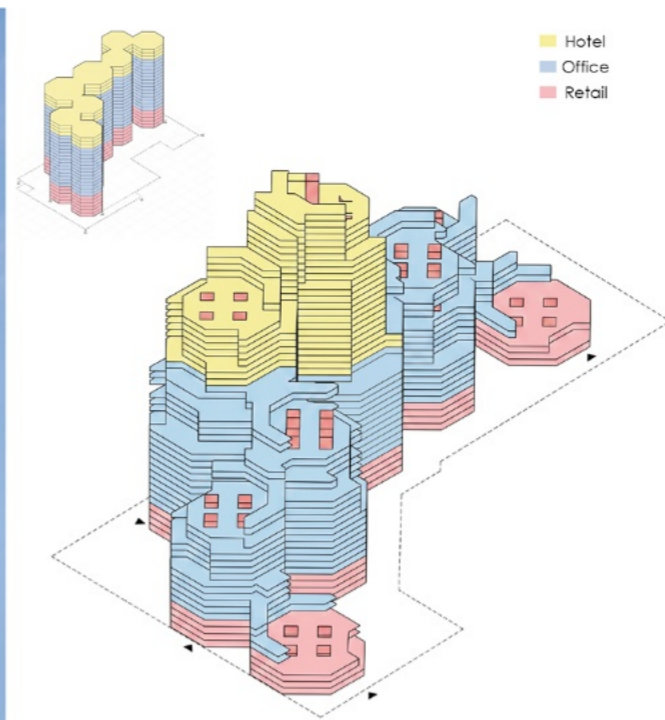
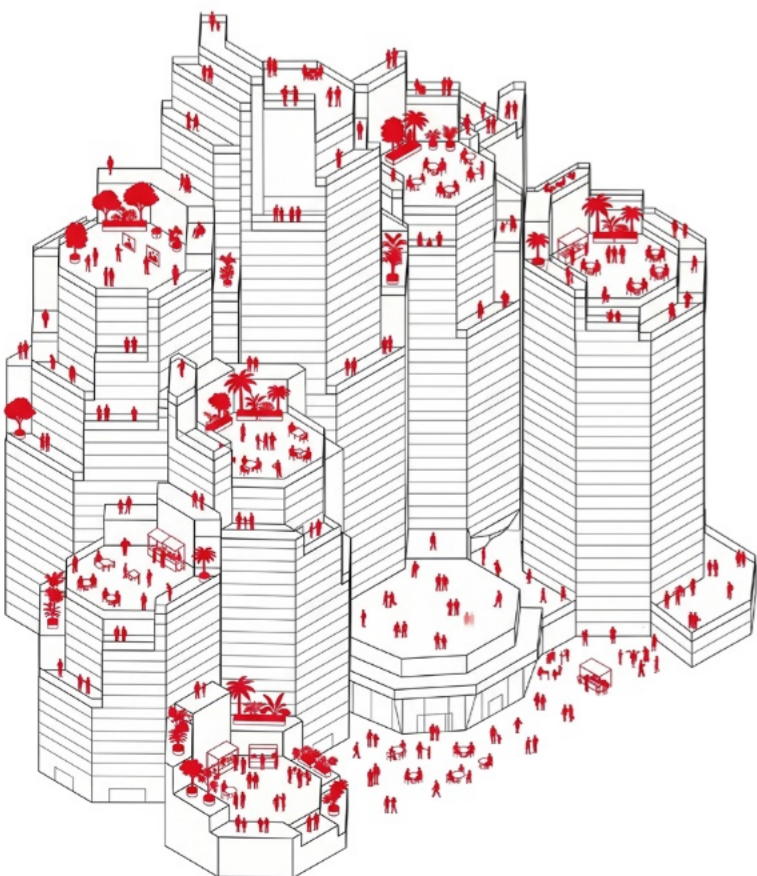
DROP-OFF



Exterior View

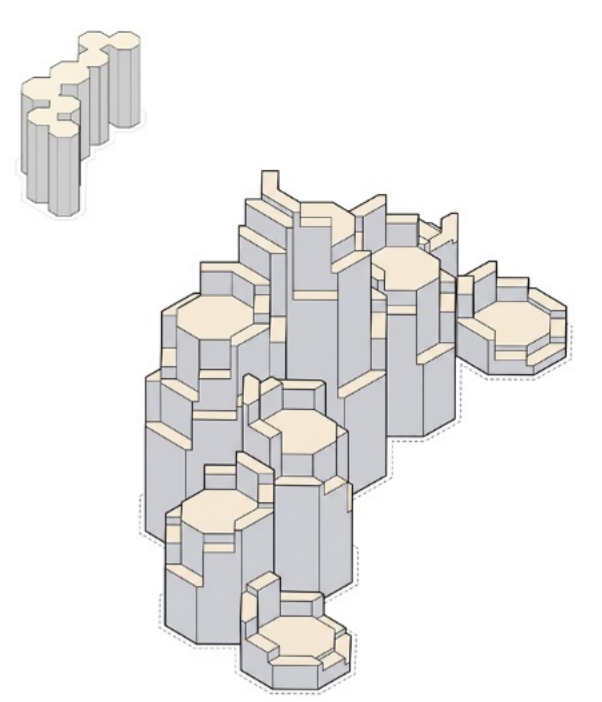


Top View with Site



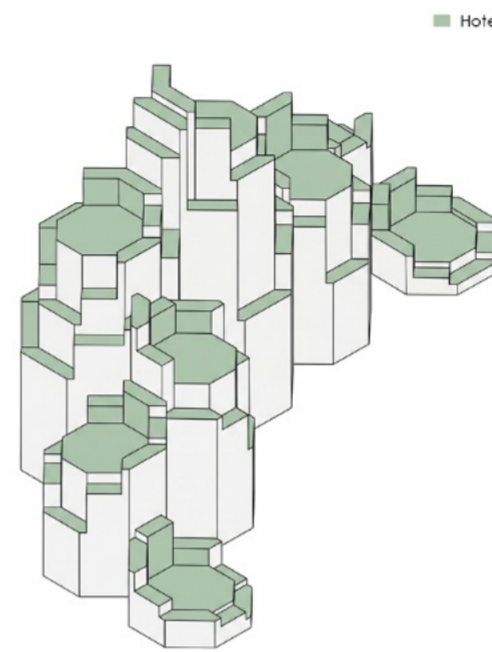
The Distributed Program

The program distribution is organized vertically to respond to varying levels of public interaction, privacy, and spatial experience within the tower. Retail activates the lower public realm, offices occupy the collaborative middle zones, while the hotel is positioned at the upper levels to maximize views and exclusivity.



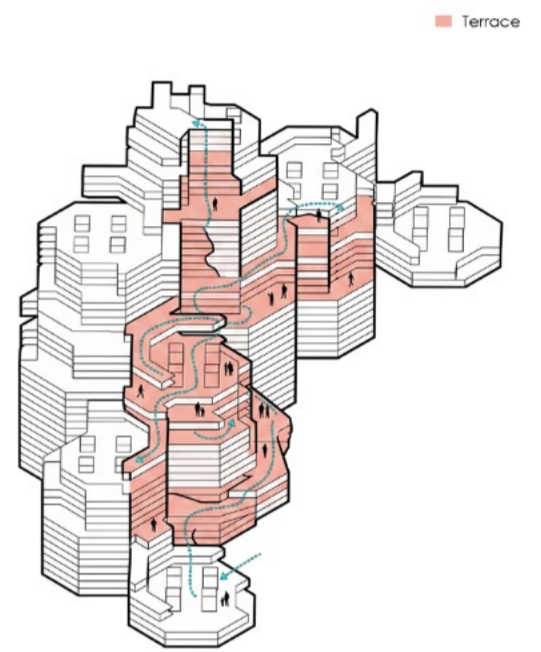
Carved out Views, Light and Accessibility

The extrusion and fragmentation of the octagonal form generates a series of stepped terraces across the tower, creating transitional outdoor spaces within the vertical structure. These terraces enhance spatial connectivity, natural interaction, and visual continuity throughout the building.



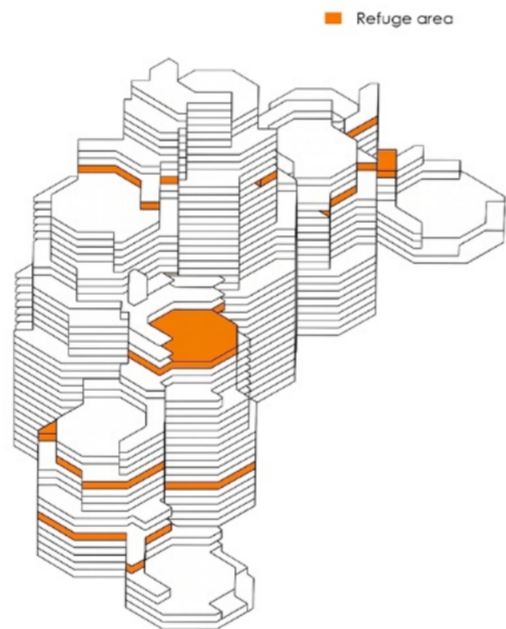
The Terraces

The interconnected terraces create a continuous spatial network that visually and physically links multiple zones within the tower. These elevated transitional spaces encourage interaction, movement, and collective experiences while maintaining distinct functional identities for each program.



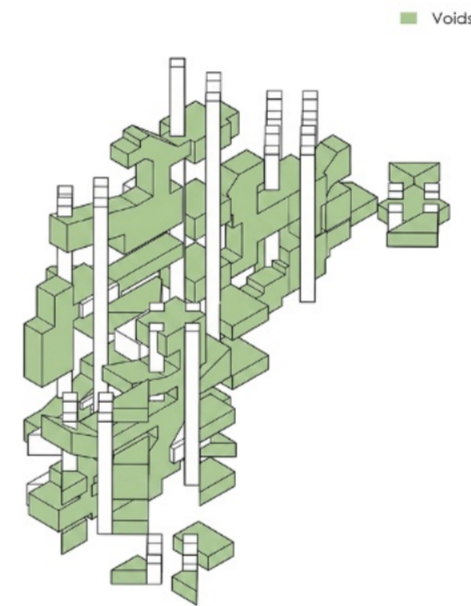
Public Valley

The terraces function as a public valley within the vertical landscape, creating accessible social spaces distributed across the tower. While retail, office, and hotel terraces are individually connected within their respective zones for privacy and security, visual continuity across levels maintains a collective sense of interaction and openness.



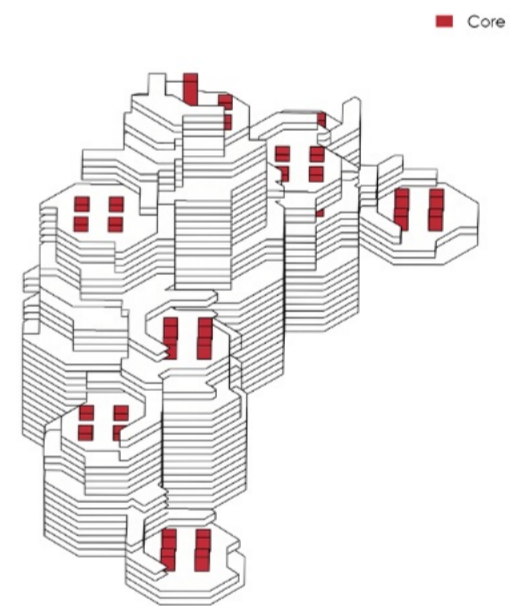
Refuge Floors

Refuge floors are integrated at designated intervals within the tower to provide safe evacuation and emergency assembly spaces during critical situations. These open and accessible levels enhance fire safety, occupant protection, and overall resilience within the high-rise environment.



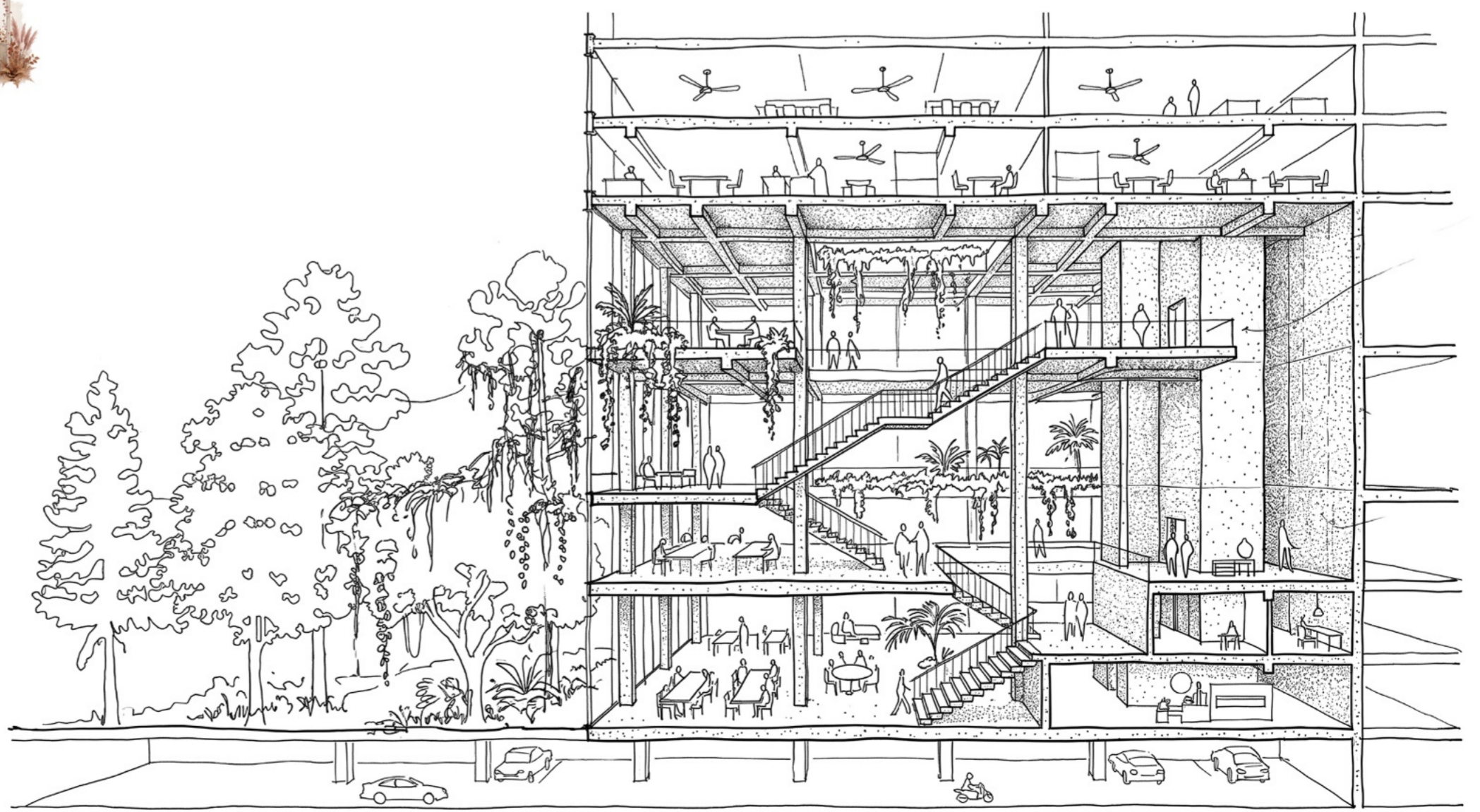
Voids

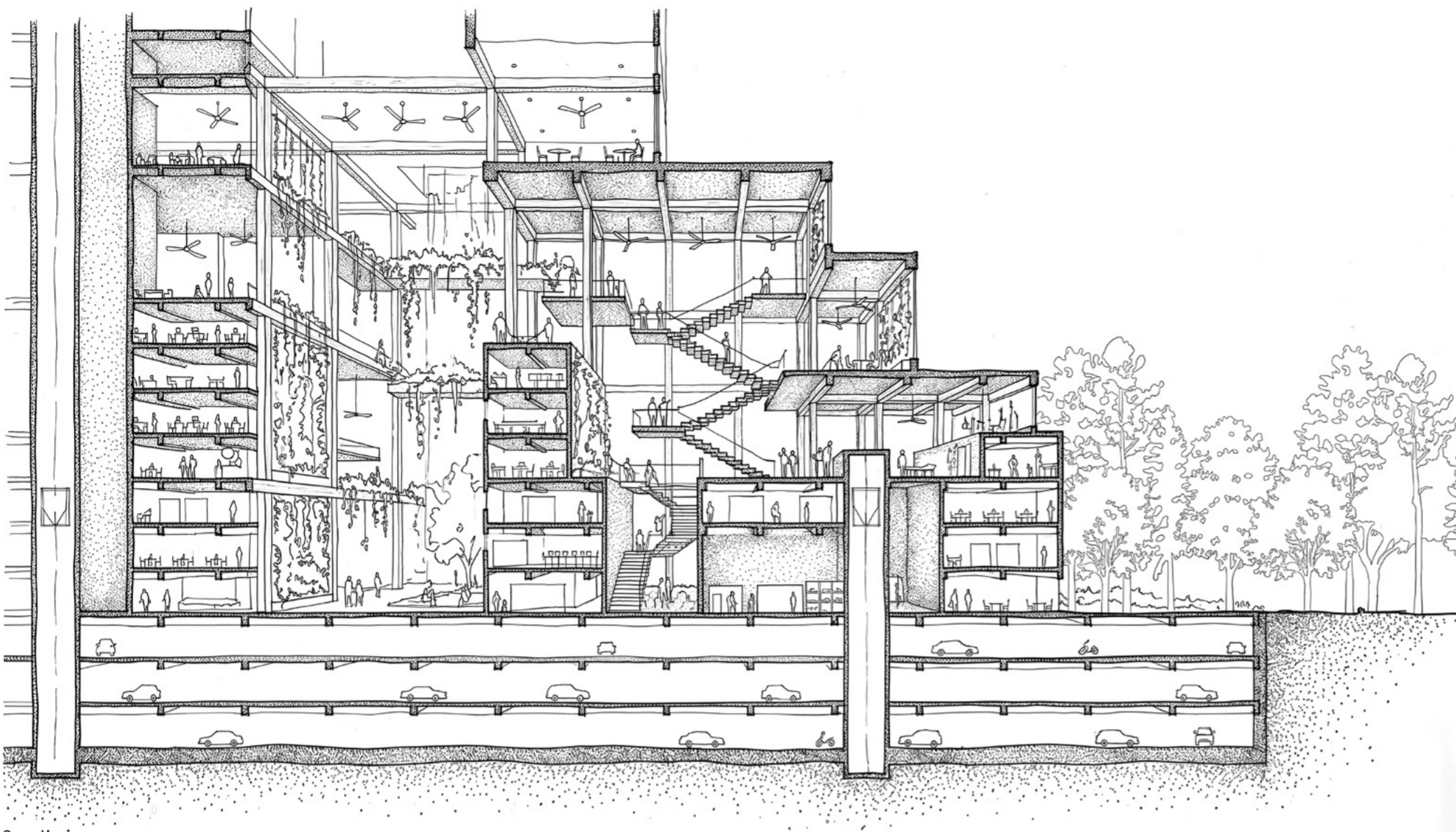
Multiple interconnected voids are introduced across different floor levels to enhance visual connectivity, spatial openness, and the flow of natural light within the tower. These voids create layered vertical experiences, allowing spaces to interact across levels while reinforcing the sense of a unified interior landscape.



Core

Multiple cores are strategically positioned throughout the tower to efficiently connect the various functional zones while maintaining smooth circulation across levels. Separate dedicated cores for retail, office, and hotel spaces ensure privacy, security, and controlled accessibility within each program.





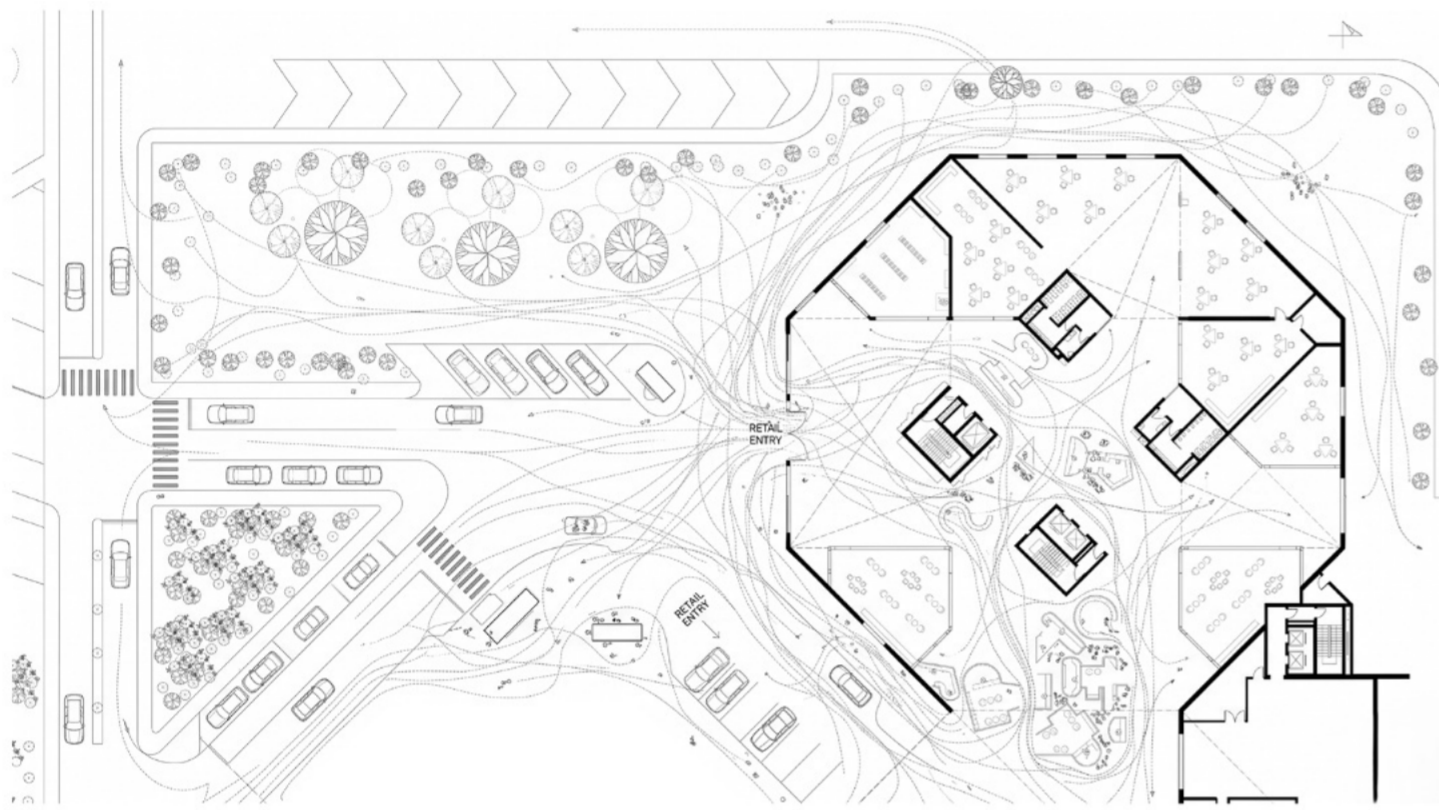
Section



Retail Corridor



Retail Corridor



Circulation

Interior Urbanism

The concept of Interior Urbanism was introduced to transform the lower retail levels into an active public environment rather than a conventional enclosed commercial space. Inspired by the character of traditional market streets and urban bazaars, the design encourages movement, exploration, visual interaction, and social engagement within the building. The retail spaces are organized as interconnected pedestrian-like pathways, terraces, and open gathering areas that recreate the experience of walking through a vibrant urban street network within a vertical environment.



Market street

The Spatial Experience

People experience the Interior Urbanism as a continuous public journey through interconnected retail streets, terraces, and social pockets within the tower. The spatial arrangement encourages exploration, interaction, and visual connectivity, similar to moving through traditional urban markets and pedestrian streets. This creates a lively and human-centered environment where commerce, movement, and collective experiences seamlessly merge together.



Exterior view - at Night



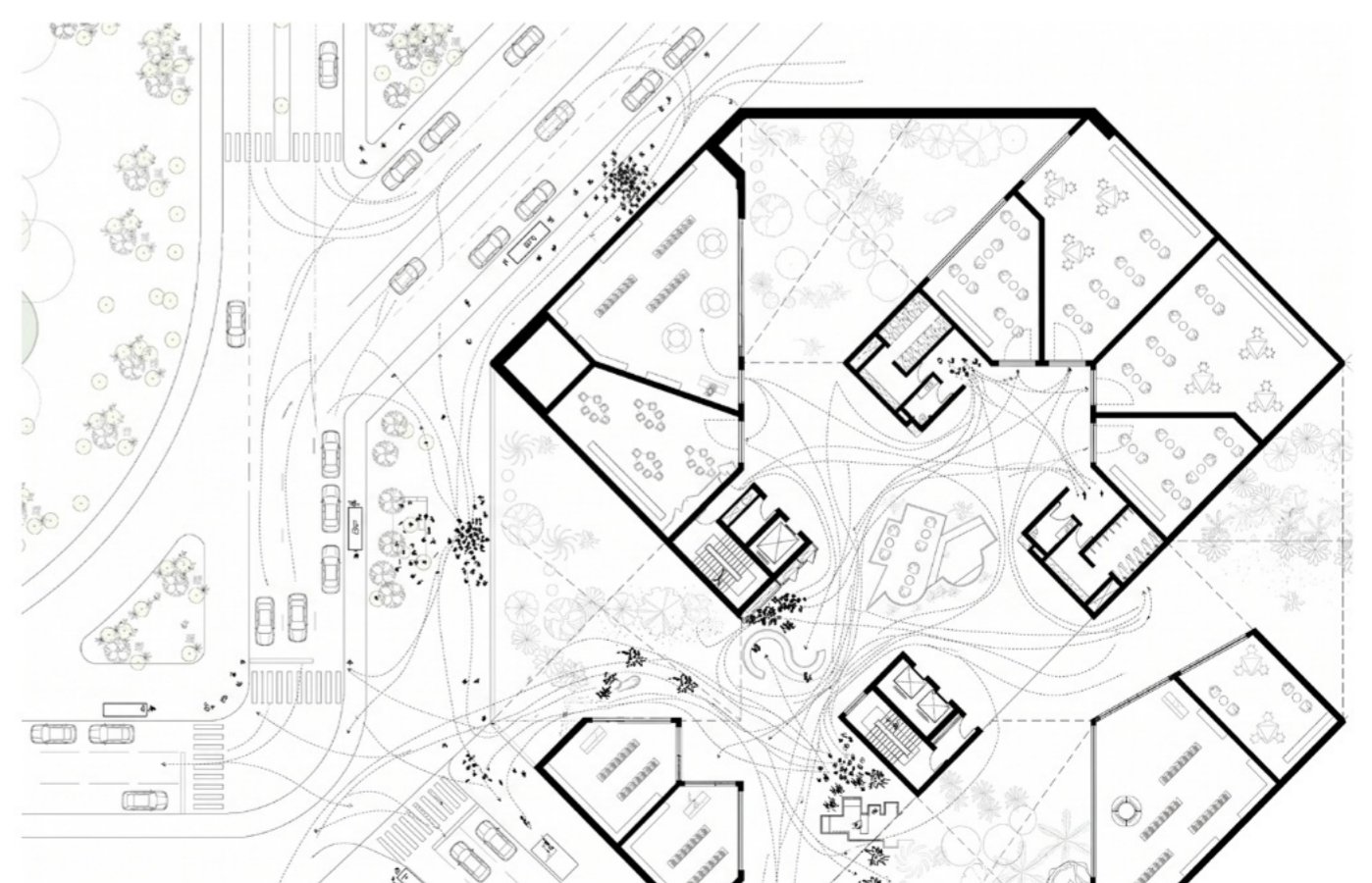
Public Space



This approach enhances public accessibility and creates a dynamic relationship between architecture and people by blurring the boundary between interior and exterior experiences. The spatial planning promotes walkability, social interaction, and continuous activity throughout the lower levels of the tower. Culturally, the idea draws inspiration from the collective nature of Indian streets and markets, where commerce, community, and public life coexist seamlessly. By translating these qualities into a high-rise environment, the project introduces familiarity, human scale, and cultural belonging into contemporary vertical architecture.

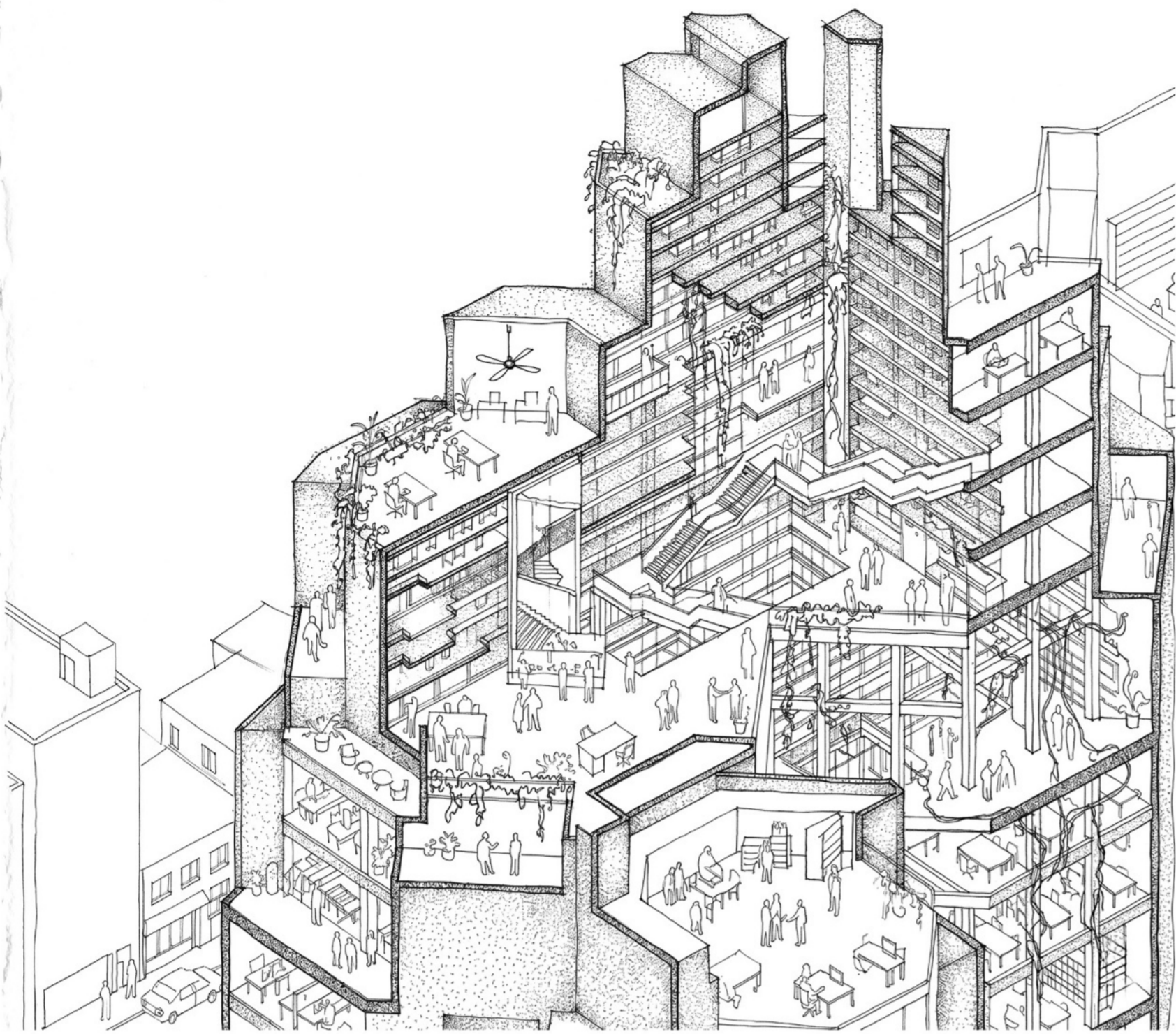


Interior retail shop



Circulation

Perspective Section



Model 1



Model 2



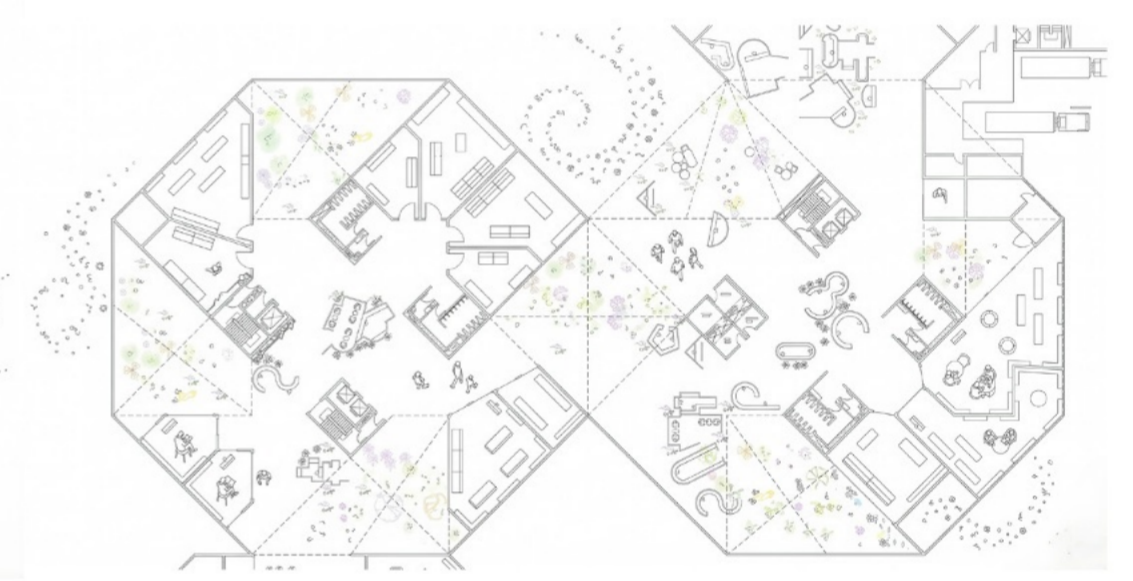
Hotel Lobby - Interior landscape



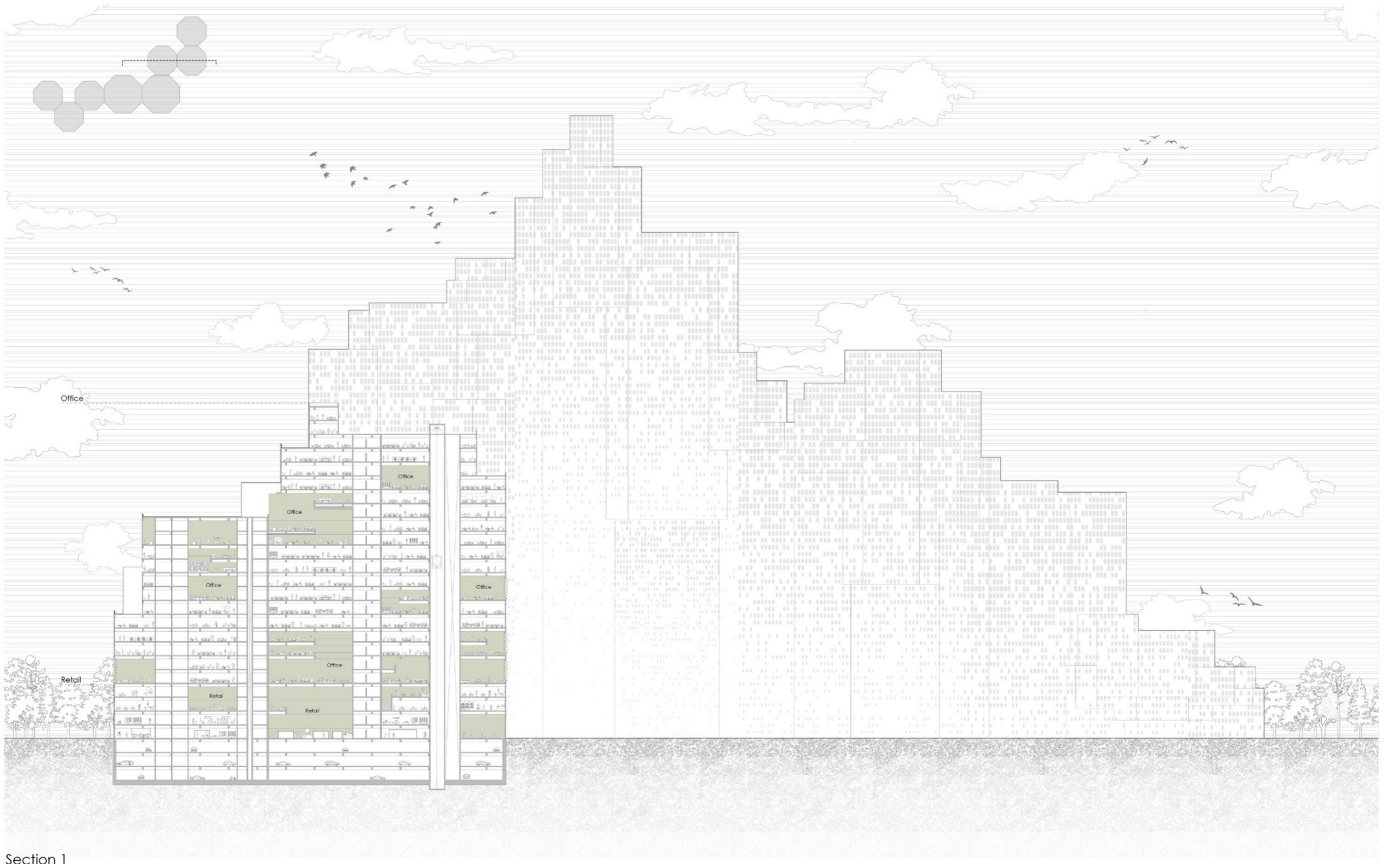
Office space - Work pods



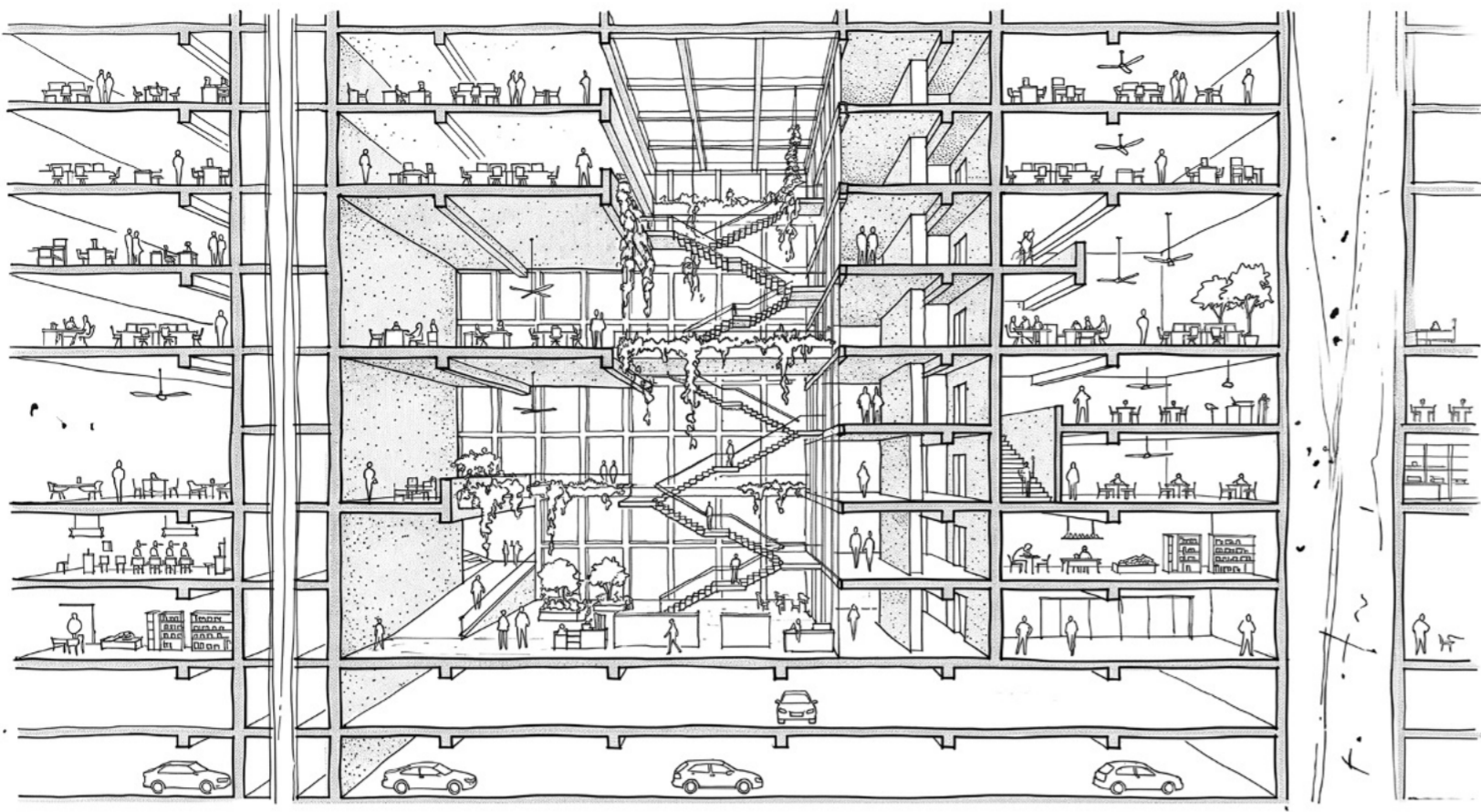
Office space - Work pods



Retail Space - Connectivity



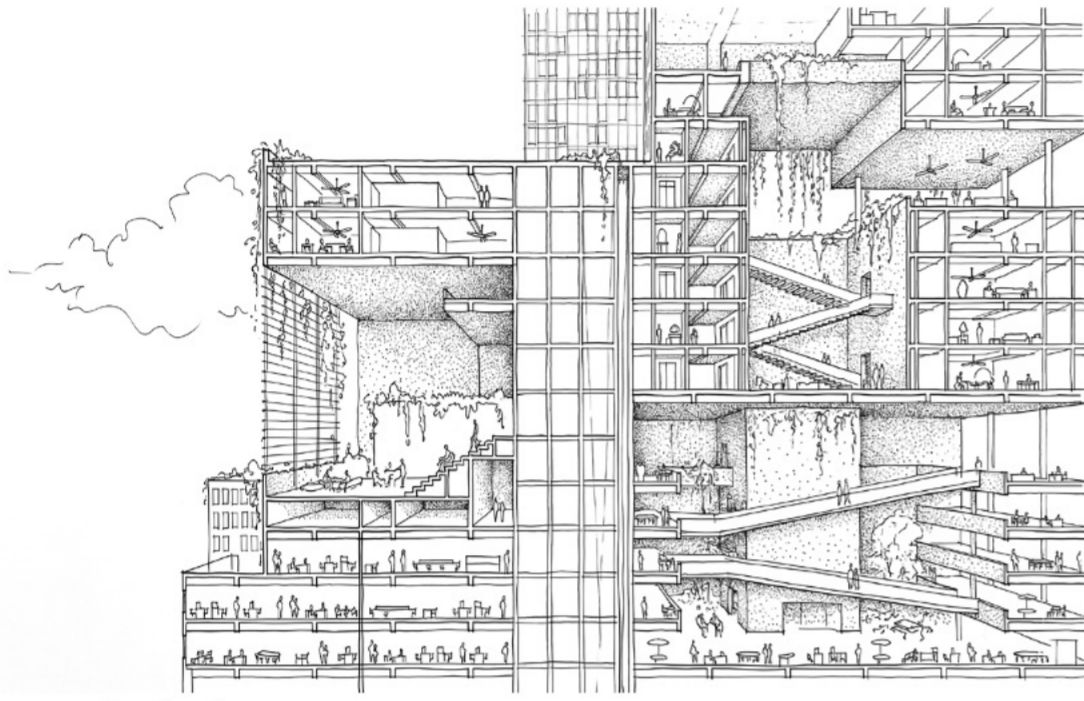
Section 1



Section 1



Model



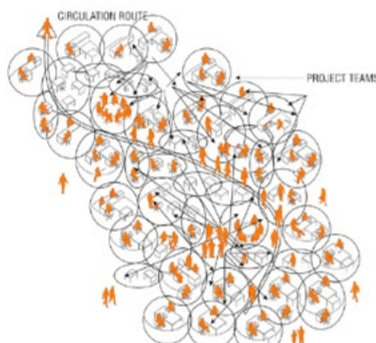
Section 2

Office Landscape

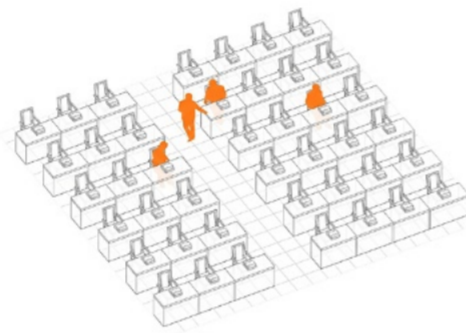
The office spaces are designed using the concept of Office Landscape (Bürolandschaft), which redefines the conventional rigid workplace into a flexible and collaborative working environment. Instead of isolated cubicles and repetitive office layouts, the spaces are organized as open interactive landscapes that encourage communication, creativity, and collective productivity. The planning integrates visual openness, informal discussion areas, breakout spaces, and natural interaction zones to create a more human-centered workspace experience.



Interior 1



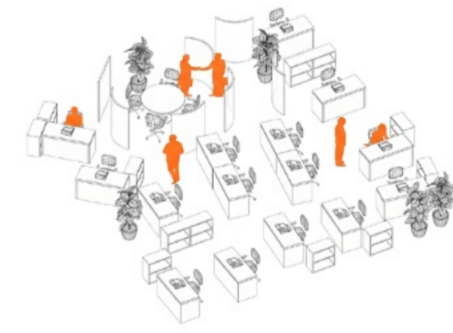
Layout



Cubicle office



Action office



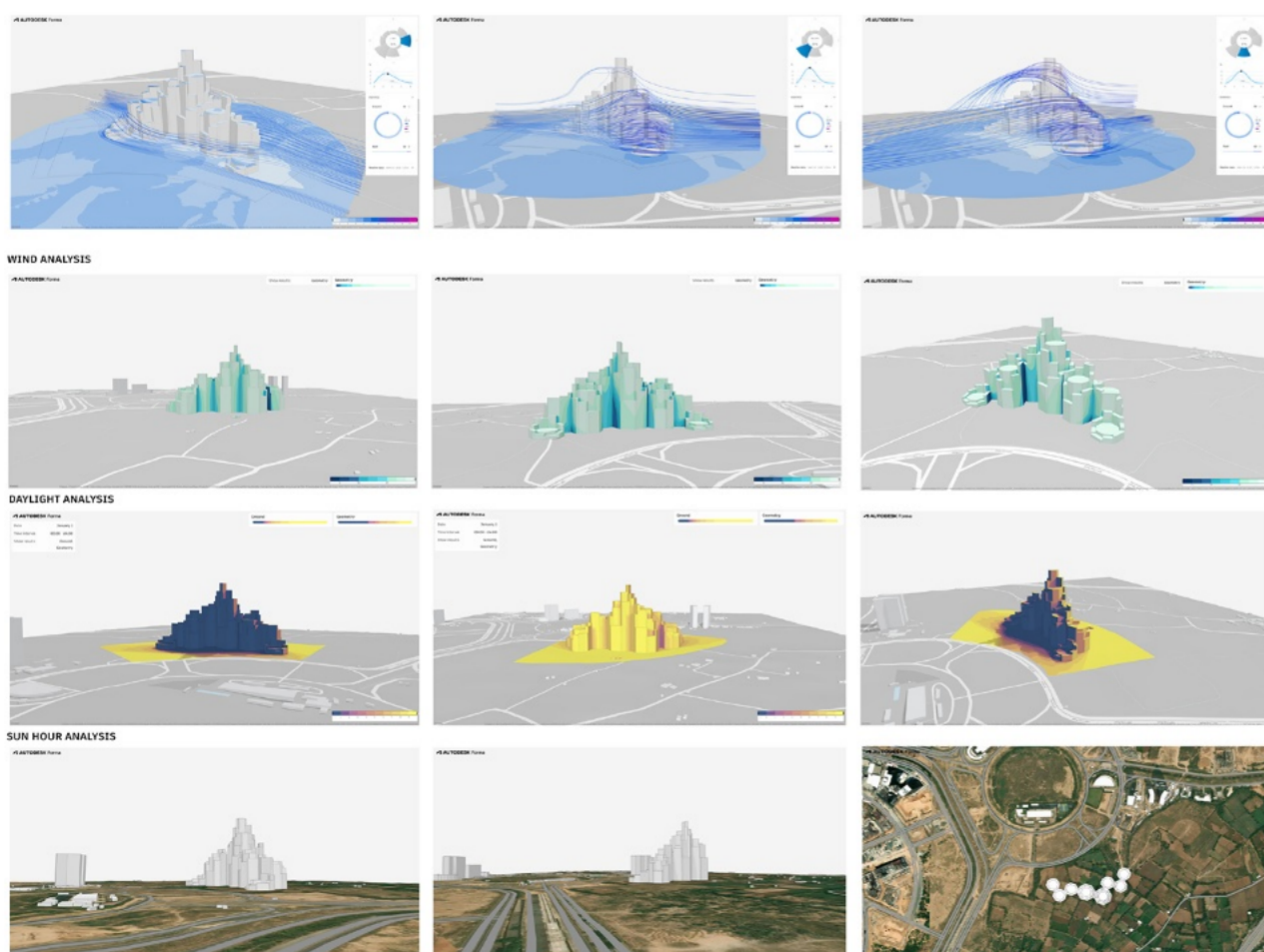
Action office



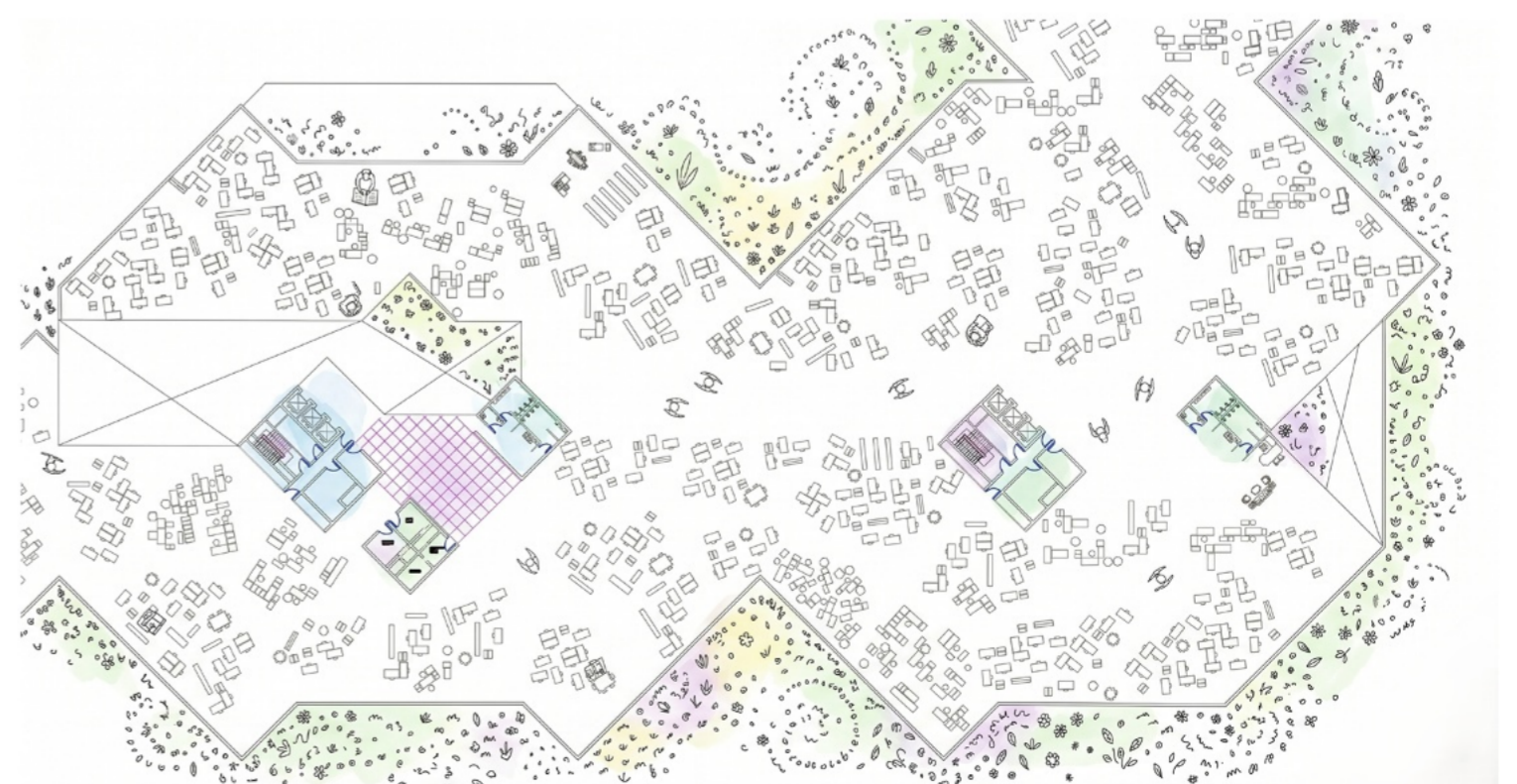
Interior 3



Interior 2



Form analysis



Office Planning



a. Office Interior - Over looking view



b. Office Interior - View from Workspace

Interior

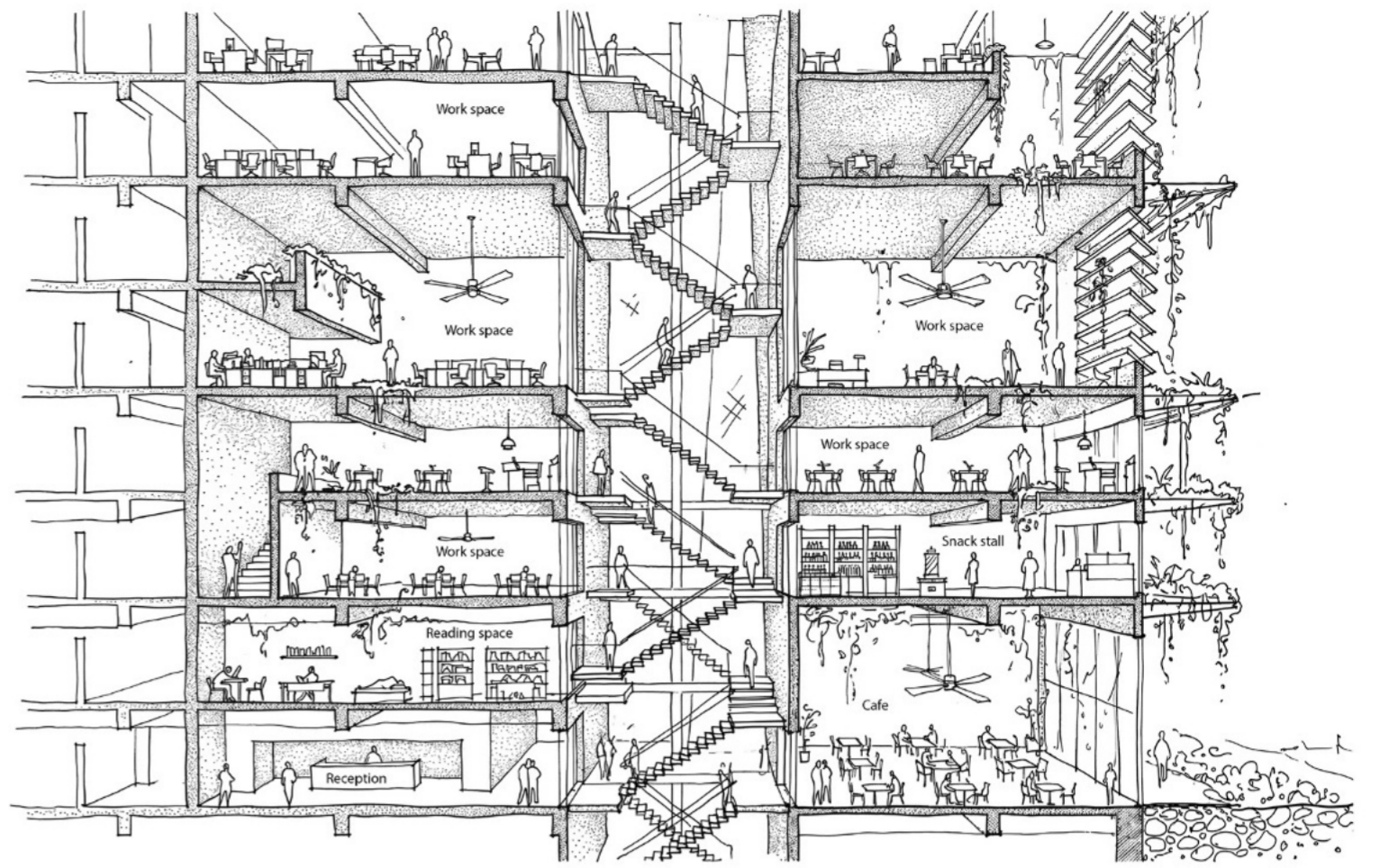
The interior experience of the office landscape is designed to feel open, dynamic, and collaborative rather than rigid and isolated. Employees move through interconnected work zones, breakout spaces, terraces, and informal interaction areas that encourage communication and creativity throughout the workspace. Natural light, visual openness, and spatial connectivity create a comfortable and human-centered environment where working feels more engaging, flexible, and socially interactive than a conventional office setting.



c. Office Interior - Workspace



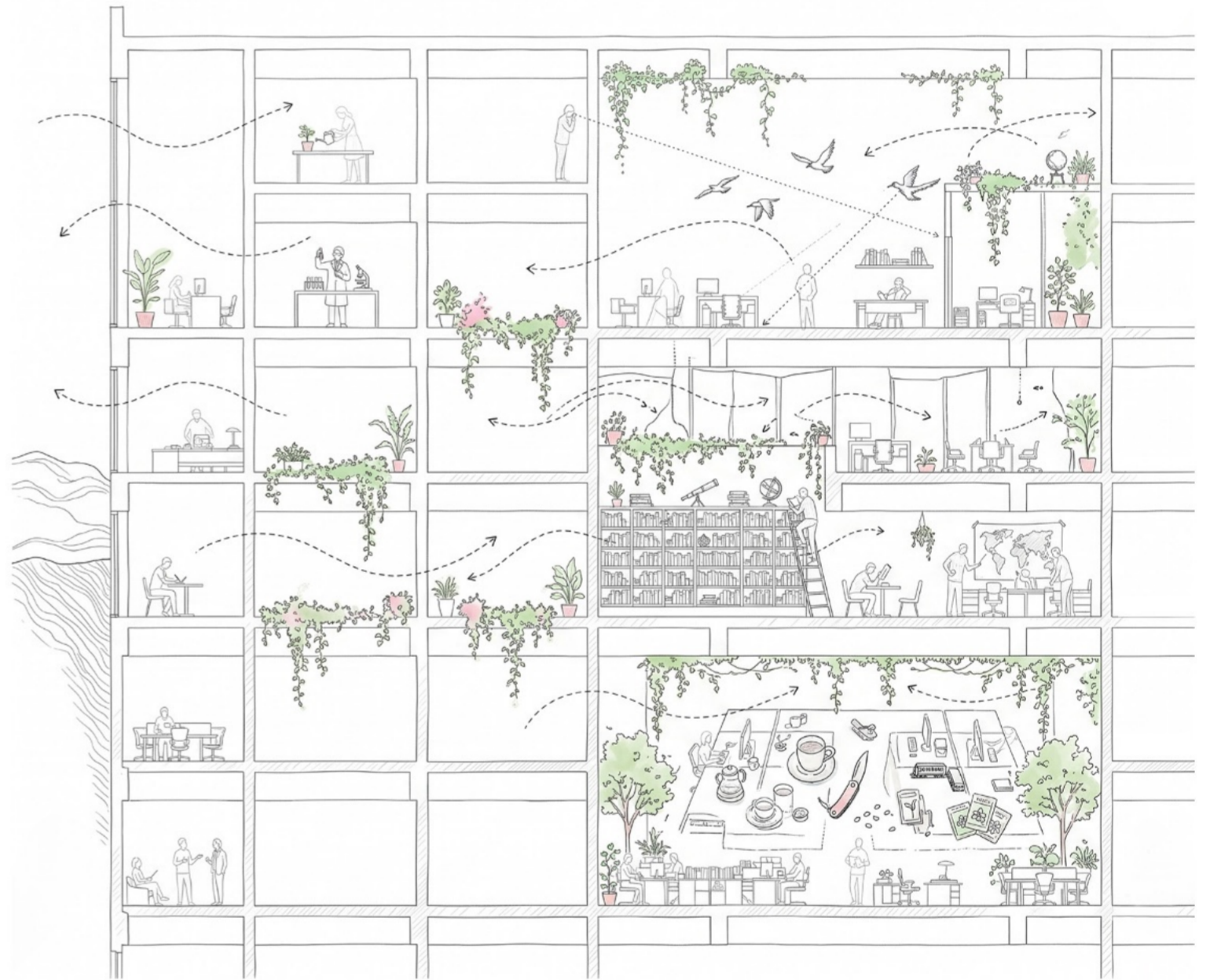
d. Office Interior - Workspace



Interconnected floors

a. People movement

The office environment is further enhanced through terraces, interconnected voids, and natural light, allowing workspaces to feel spatially open and connected to the larger vertical community within the tower. This approach creates a dynamic work culture where movement, collaboration, and well-being become an integral part of the everyday office experience, moving beyond the traditional image of closed corporate environments.



Multi-height Voids

The large multi-height void spaces are designed to create visual and spatial connectivity across multiple floors within the tower. These interconnected voids allow natural light, movement, and human interaction to flow vertically through the building, reducing the sense of isolation often experienced in high-rise environments. By linking different levels visually and experientially, the spaces create an open interior landscape that enhances orientation, collective interaction, and the overall feeling of spatial continuity within the tower.



b. People movement



Office Landscape - Plan

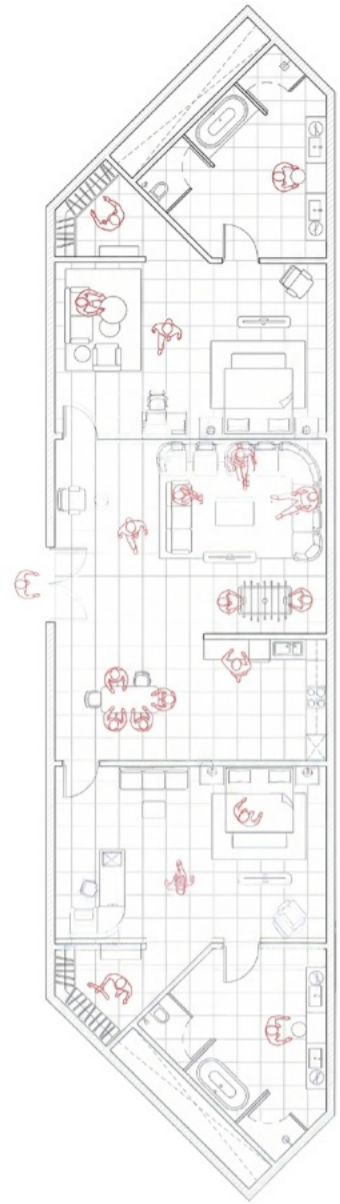


Module 1

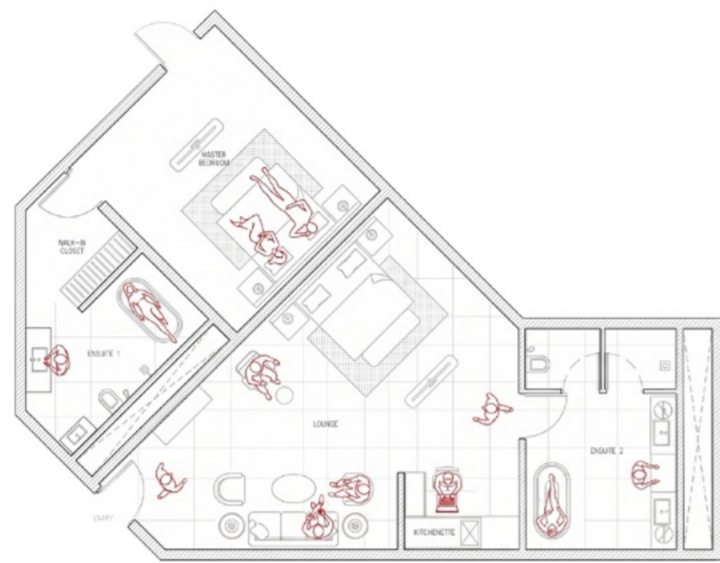
Module 2

Hotel

The hotel spaces are designed as elevated retreats within the vertical landscape, offering a calm and immersive experience above the active urban environment below. Positioned at the upper levels of the tower, the hotel benefits from panoramic views, natural light, and a sense of openness connected to the sky. The interiors are planned to create a balance between luxury, privacy, and spatial warmth through layered spaces, terraces, and serene transitional zones. Integrated with the office program, the hotel caters to professionals, visitors, and business travelers while maintaining a distinct and tranquil identity within the tower.



Module 3



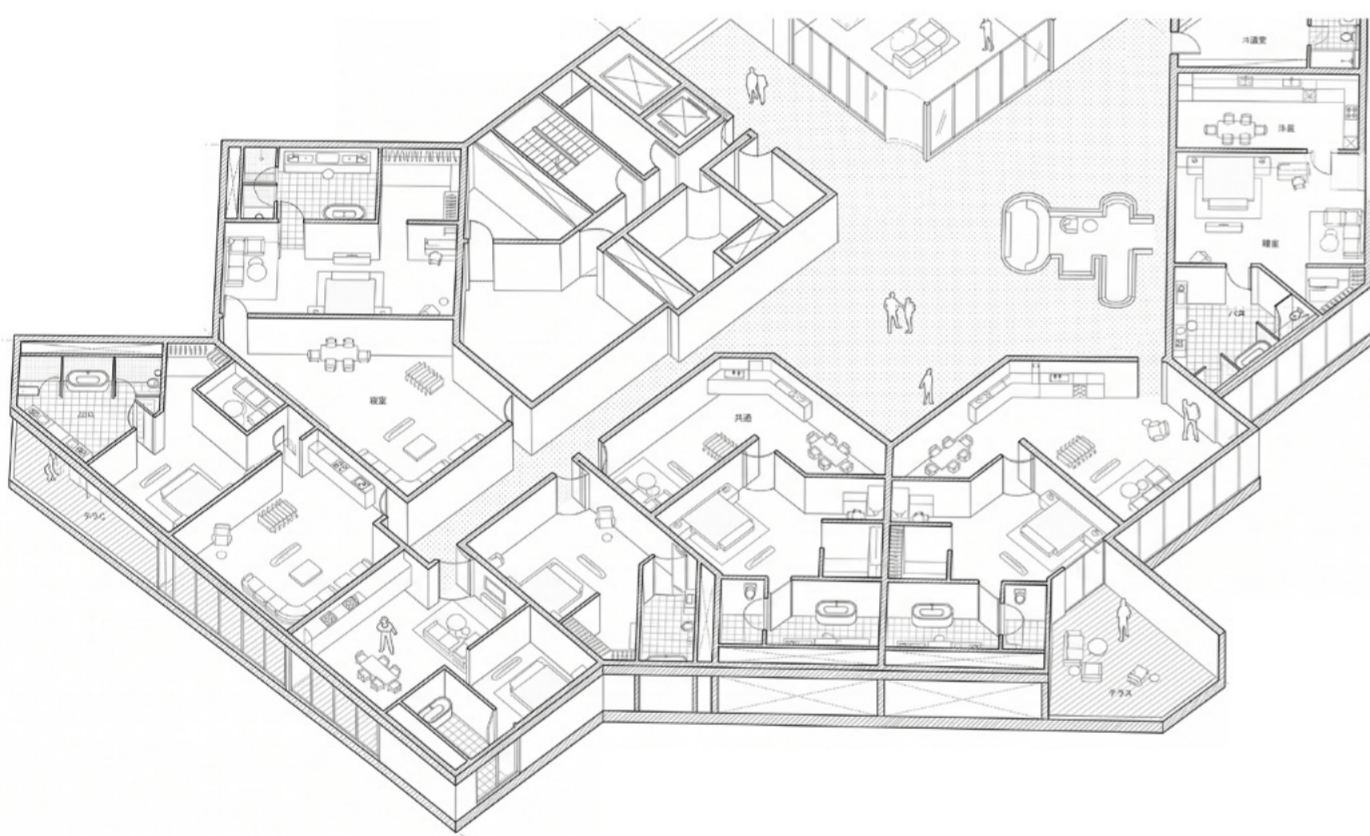
Module 4



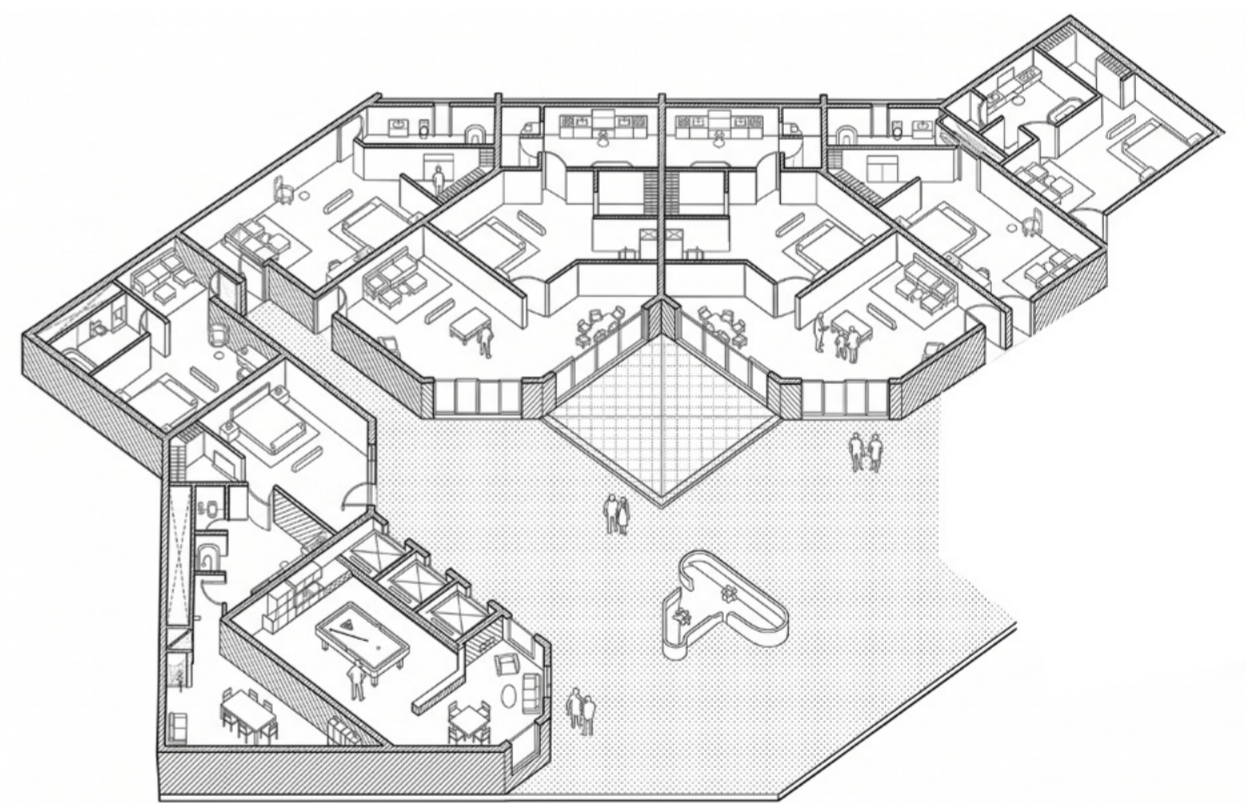
Model view from front



Multi-void Space



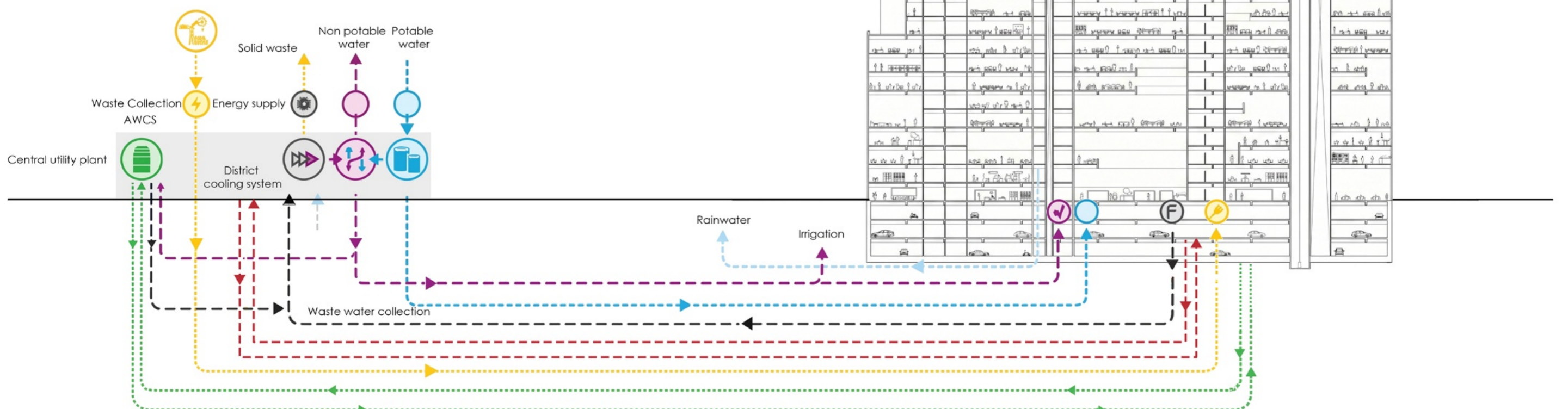
a. Isometric view of Hotel floor

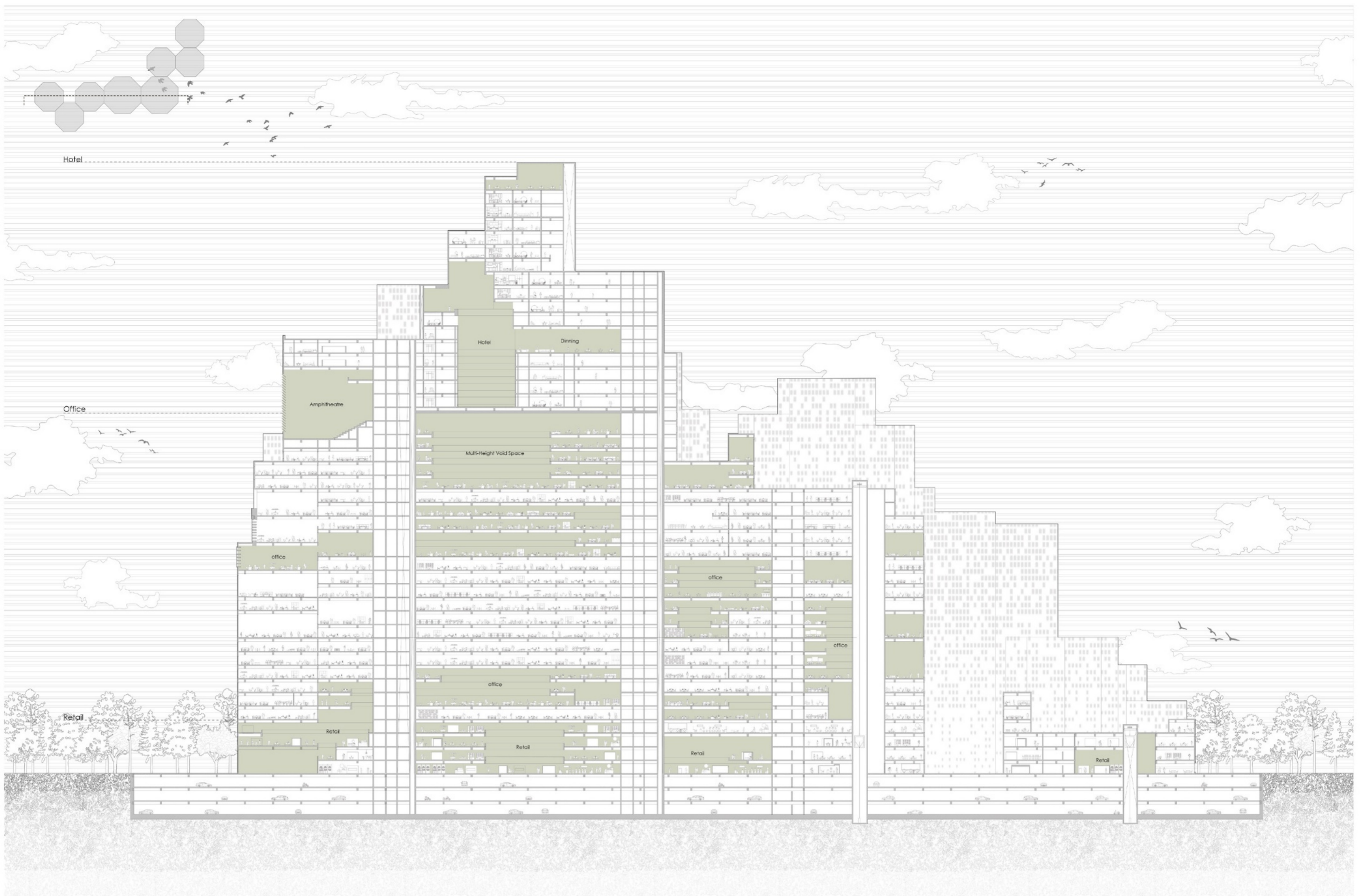


b. Isometric view of Hotel Floor

Utility Tunnel

The Gujarat Utility Tunnel (GUT) in GIFT City is an advanced underground infrastructure system designed to house essential urban services such as power, water supply, sewage, telecom, gas, and data networks within a single integrated corridor. This tunnel eliminates the need for repeated road excavations, ensuring efficient maintenance, improved safety, and uninterrupted city operations. By supporting smart monitoring, easy access for repairs, and long-term sustainability, the GUT plays a key role in making GIFT City a future-ready, resilient, and world-class smart city.





Section 2

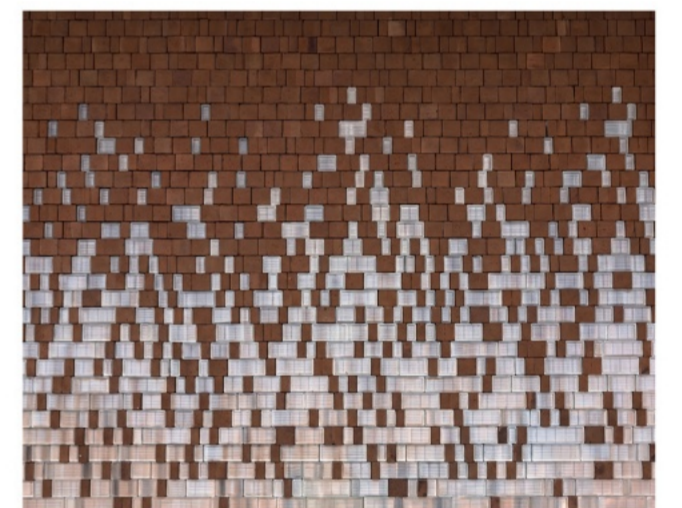


Terracotta

Terracotta has long been a naturally sourced and culturally significant material in Gujarat, deeply connected to the region's craft traditions and architectural heritage. Its earthy texture, warm tones, and climatic responsiveness make it a sustainable material that reflects the local identity and material character of the place.

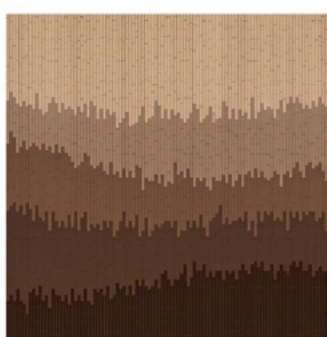


a. Glass brick with Terracotta panels



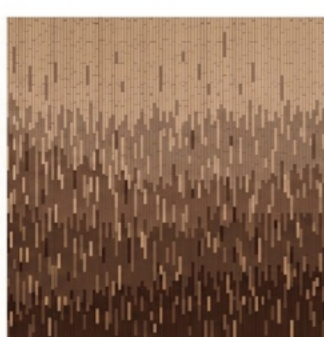
b. Glass brick with Terracotta panels

Facade Interpretation



Nuances

Five shades of Brown in stratified layers



Blurring

Each shade is used in both matte and glass



Blend

A more random distribution of shades



Light

At night, some of the panels are backlit



Facade View at night

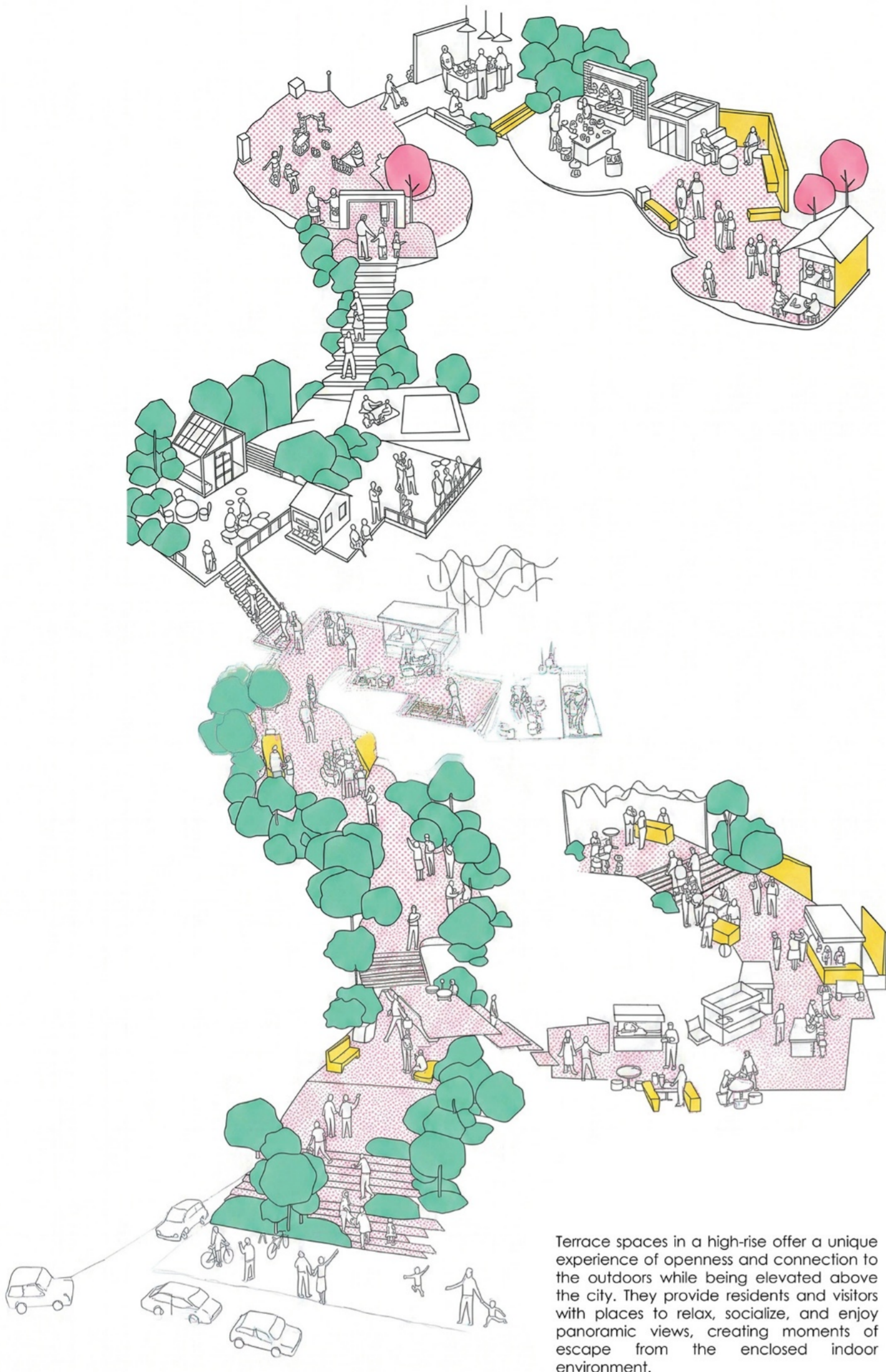
Material Palette

The material palette of the tower is designed as a gradual transition between openness and privacy through the use of glass brick and terracotta paneling. Transparent glass facades at the lower retail levels create visual openness and public interaction, while the upper levels progressively shift into warmer brown terracotta panels that provide shading, privacy and a more intimate spatial quality for offices and hospitality spaces. The fading material gradient reinforces the conceptual journey from the active urban ground to calmer elevated spaces above. This layered facade treatment also softens the visual perception of the high rise, giving the tower a more tactile and culturally grounded architectural expression.



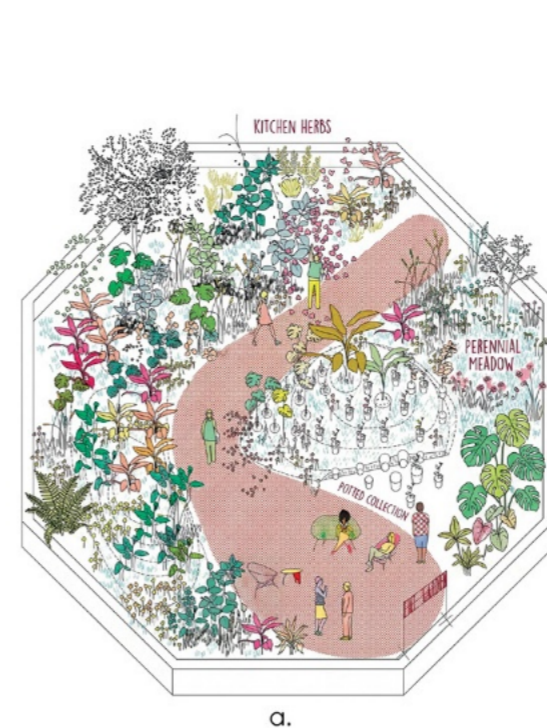
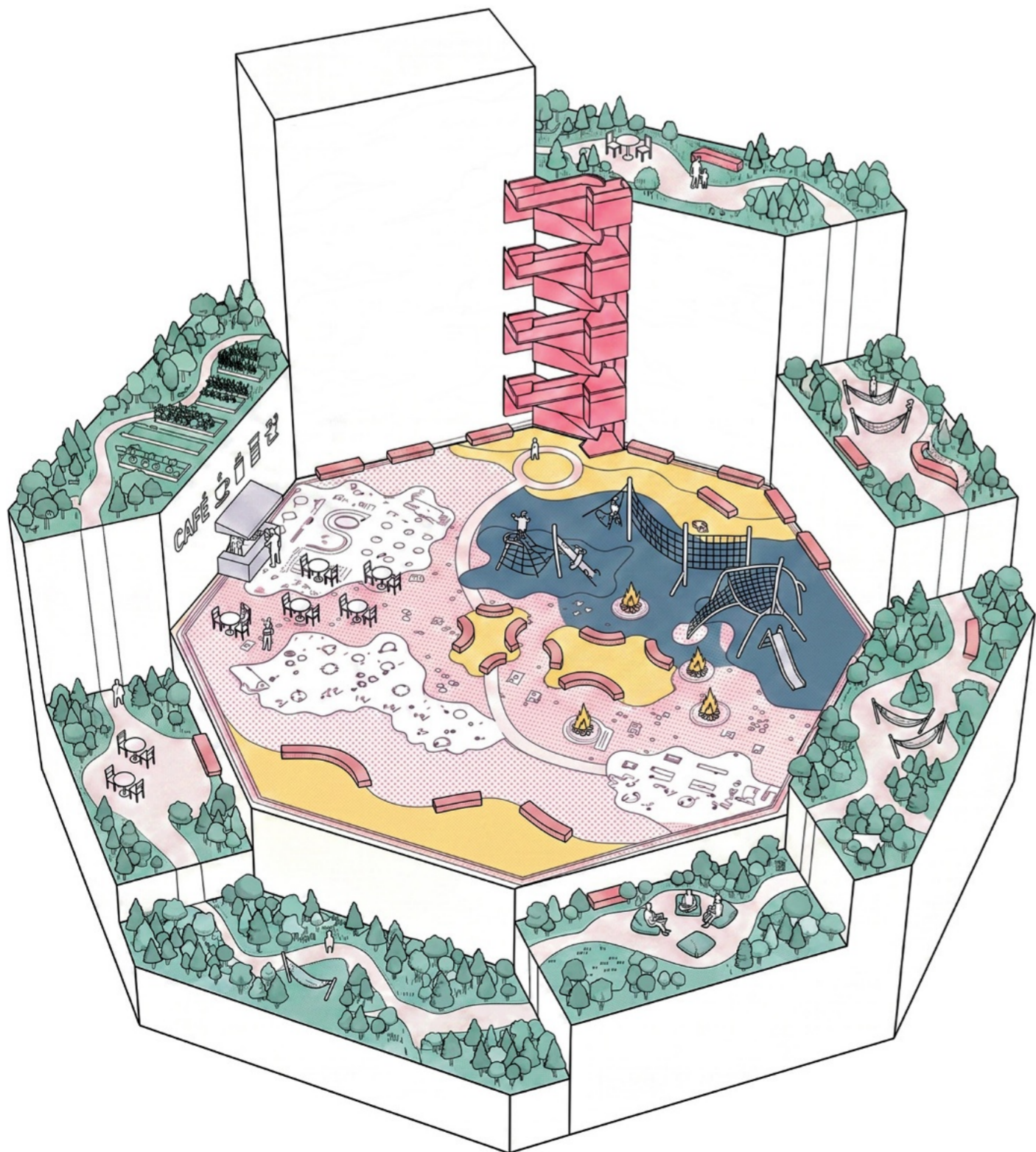
TERRACAE DESIGN

Interconnected Terrace System

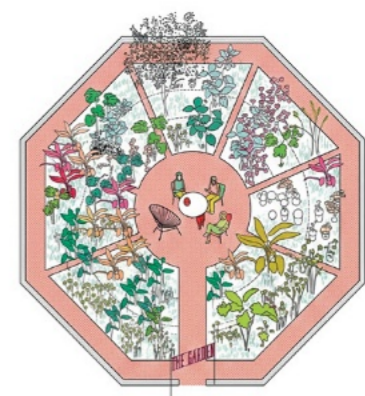


Terrace spaces in a high-rise offer a unique experience of openness and connection to the outdoors while being elevated above the city. They provide residents and visitors with places to relax, socialize, and enjoy panoramic views, creating moments of escape from the enclosed indoor environment.

Terrace space in Module



a.



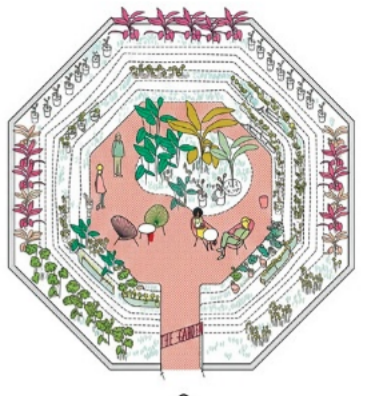
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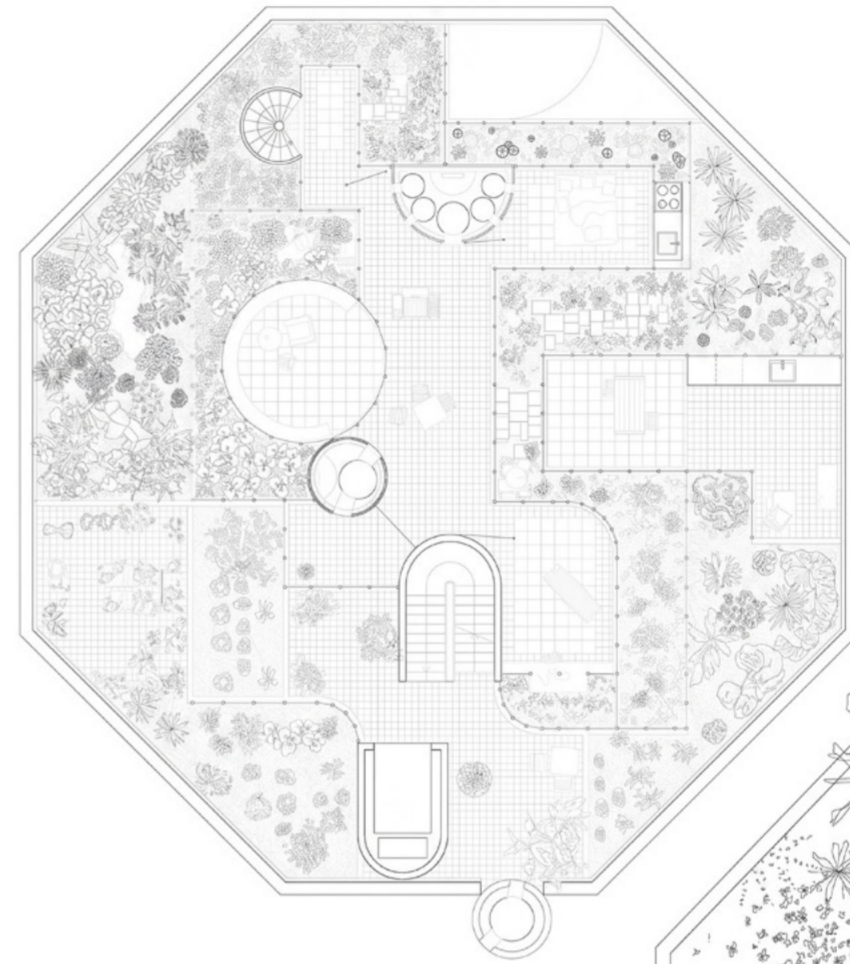
d.



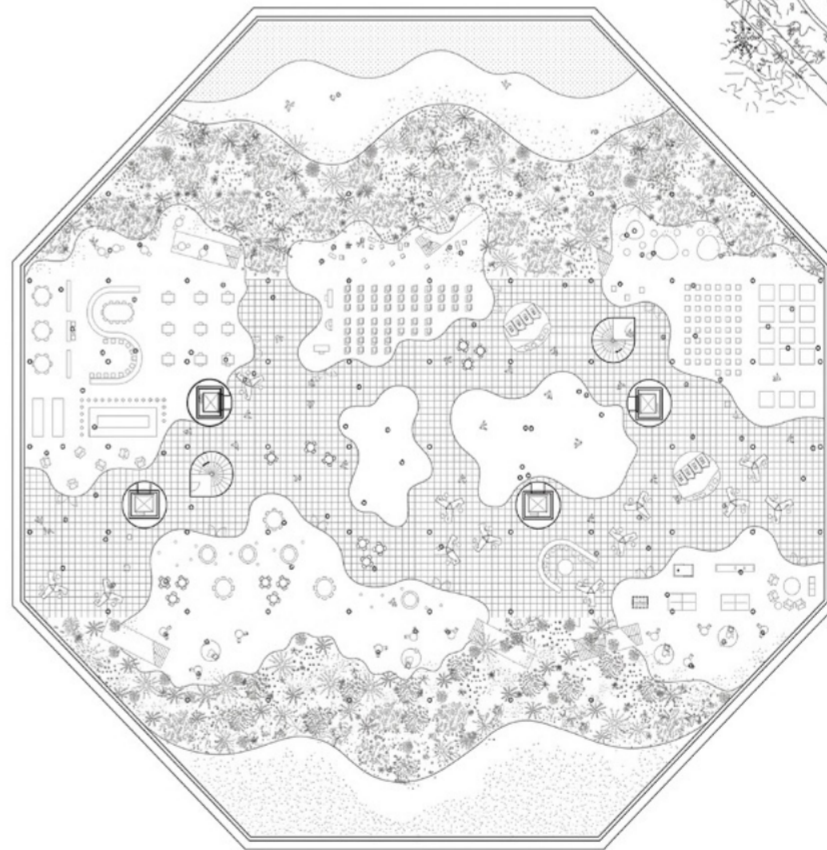
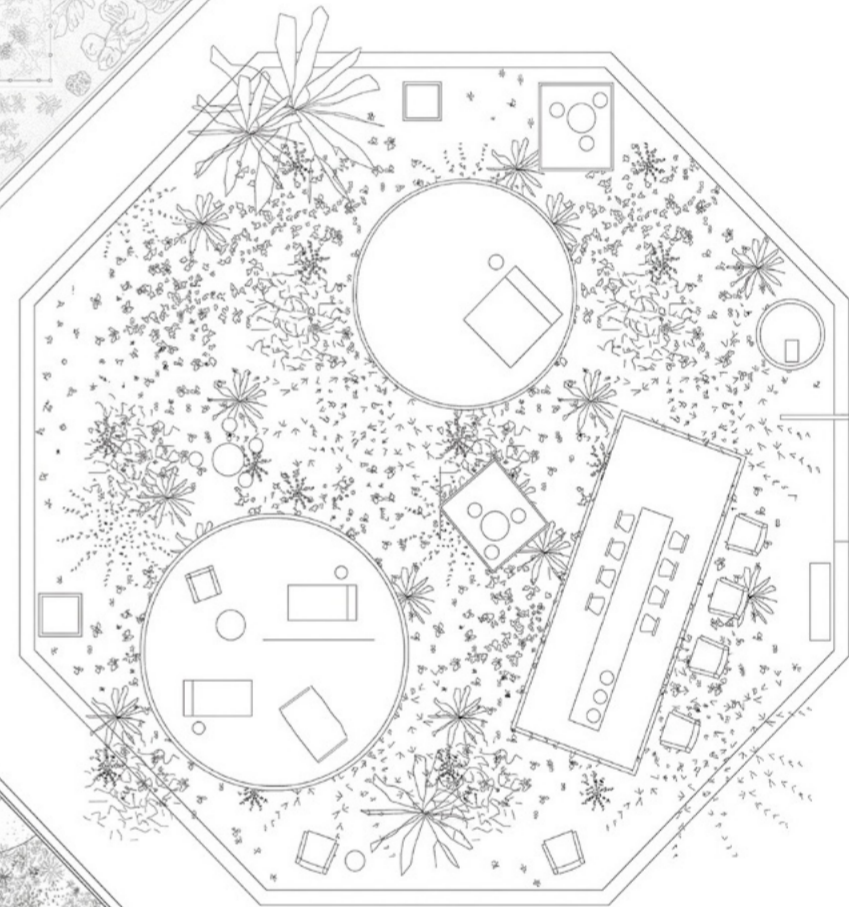
e.

Design plan iterations in octagon

Octagon Landscape Planning



The interconnected terrace system in a high-rise creates a continuous vertical landscape that enhances both functionality and user experience. By linking terraces across multiple levels, the design encourages movement, interaction, and visual connectivity throughout the building. These shared outdoor spaces provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and social engagement while introducing greenery into the vertical fabric of the tower. The connected terraces also improve environmental performance by promoting natural ventilation, reducing heat gain, and creating shaded transitional zones. Together, they transform the high-rise from a collection of isolated floors into a cohesive and dynamic living environment.



The terrace spaces act as elevated extensions of the ground plane, bringing the experience of open landscapes into the vertical structure of the high-rise. By incorporating greenery, gathering areas, and outdoor activities at different levels, these terraces create a continuous connection between the tower and the site. This approach reduces the sense of isolation often associated with tall buildings and strengthens the relationship between people, nature, and the ground below.

Landscape Design Elements

Minimalist architectural landscape sketch on pure white background. Delicate thin black fineliner contours. Selective flat pastel colors (mint, pink, yellow). Stippled pink halftone texture on pathways. Minimalist human scale figures. Airy, whimsical concept art style.

