

Chapel to borrow – Revitalization of the Chapel of Saint Andéol of Velorgues as Cultural Centre

Eszter Szabó

Consultants: Krisztina Fehér, László Daragó DLA

The defining element of the project is the Romanesque chapel of Saint Andéol of Velorgues from the 11th century; which can be found in the suburban area of l'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue. The parochial property was sold to a farmer at the end of the 18th century, and since then the building was used to fulfil storage purposes. Now the Municipality aims to represent its importance as an architectural and cultural heritage of the area and reattach to the everyday life of the village by using it as a cultural centre.

The chapel building itself served plenty of different purposes since its birth; liturgical and quotidian. For a few decades from now it will be used to hold conferences, exhibitions, concerts, social and cultural events, or wedding ceremonies. Later next generations might have different needs and they will form the site adequately.

The intent of the project is to revitalize the area and create a lively public place while keeping the medieval chapel in focus. In my project I focused on the surroundings; and tried to make the fewest possible irreversible changes on the parcel.

The chapel can be approached from the main portal, the side opening is used to enter the yard from the interior. The events held in the chapel can be extended, or even held outdoors, thus the south part of the site is stone-covered. All the remained surfaces are covered in lush green. This surrounding park serves as a public place all year, providing a scene for leisure and free time activities. The margins of the site were defined by the medieval wall of the town on the south and now a sitting-height stone wall emphasize the track of this wall.

To force the drivers to speed reduction, speed bumps are placed on the road and the asphalt is switched to stone-covered surface in front of the site.

Respecting the old chapel building, only smaller volumes appear on the site, therefore a kiosque serves for the catering and storage space, as well as for the restrooms. The steel-and-wood pavilion can be divided into three parts: the first part, the requires access to running water consists of the toilets and the kitchen; the second is a roofed outdoor space; and the third is a storage room.

During an event the sliding doors that hide the kitchen are open and it can work as a bar by placing two tables in front of it while guests can wait for their drink or snack in the 'buffer-zone'. In the emptied storage room artist can change their outfits.

When out of use, the pavilion can be closed except for the toilets; the kitchen remaining disused and the storage room full with the furniture that was used during the events. This way the emphasis is on the chapel, that serves truly as a monument for the visitors.

Design of a social housing on the eastern side of the area is part of this project as well. In the project I designed four buildings, which mean 8 apartments in total.

When establishing a social housing it is important to reduce the expenses of the habitants. In order economise the cost of maintenance of the apartments; we have to care for choosing the right materials, arranging the rooms, openings and shading elements wisely.

We must make sure that there is no communication between the apartments and the chapel venue by setting up visual and acoustic separation between the chapel and the social housing. Instead of thick wall I used distance and the ambiance of the green of the vegetation as dividing tool. This has been marked by the existing voluminous trees on the edge of the two sites. Thus the dwellings open up from a green, lush public space and they can be approached by the small pavement along the margin of the original building plots. In this way the remaining inner parts of the parcel are also approachable for further investments.

Nowadays responsible and caring architectural design cannot ignore the climatic conditions of the action area. Here the dominating factors are hot temperature and strong solar radiation, thus our task is to minimize the heating effect.

Fortunately the demand for protection against the sun and the noise coming from event site are orientated the same direction.

Lively, social rooms, such as the living room and the kitchen are facing the chapel. This is where the flats are exposed solar radiation and occasional noise. Bedrooms are in the north-east, getting morning sun and with afternoon shade a cool temperature is provided to sleep. By

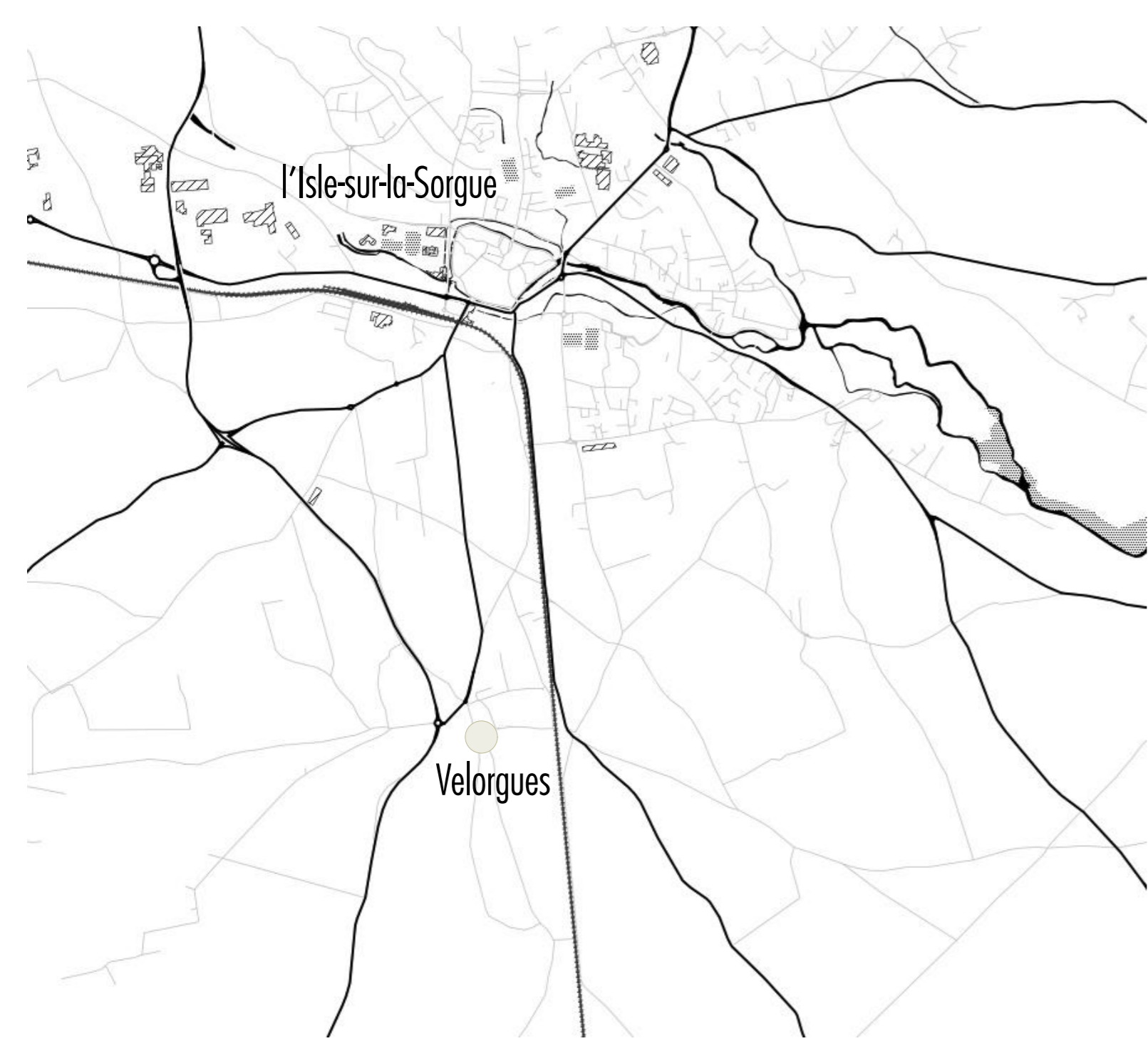
being on the opposite side of the building, when there is a loud celebration at the chapel, it does not interfere with the recreational needs of the habitants.

On the ground floor a family-compatible two-bedroom apartment can be found. All the rooms hug the intimate inner-courtyard, which makes the dwelling accessible from the street as well.

A stair goes to the upper level, surrounded by a kind of trellis-work for climbing plants, that mark a border between public and private property. This apartment is designed for two people with a significant terrace. To respect the privacy of the other flats the heights of the railings alter and plants are placed around the terrace.

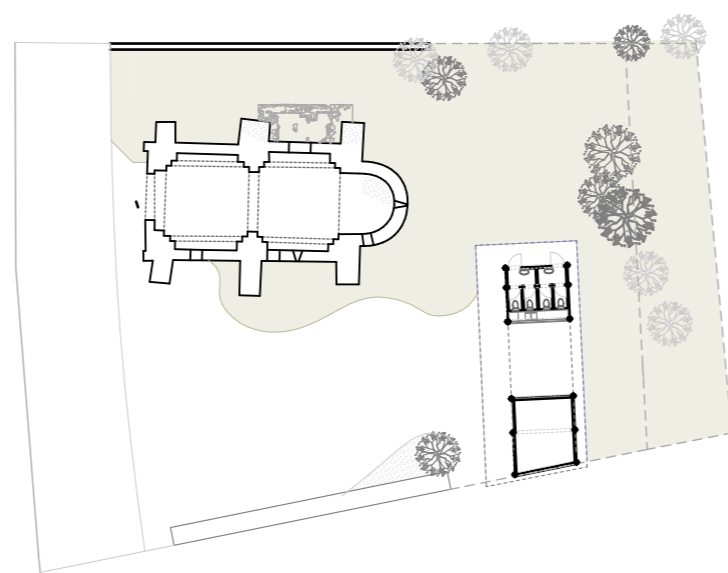
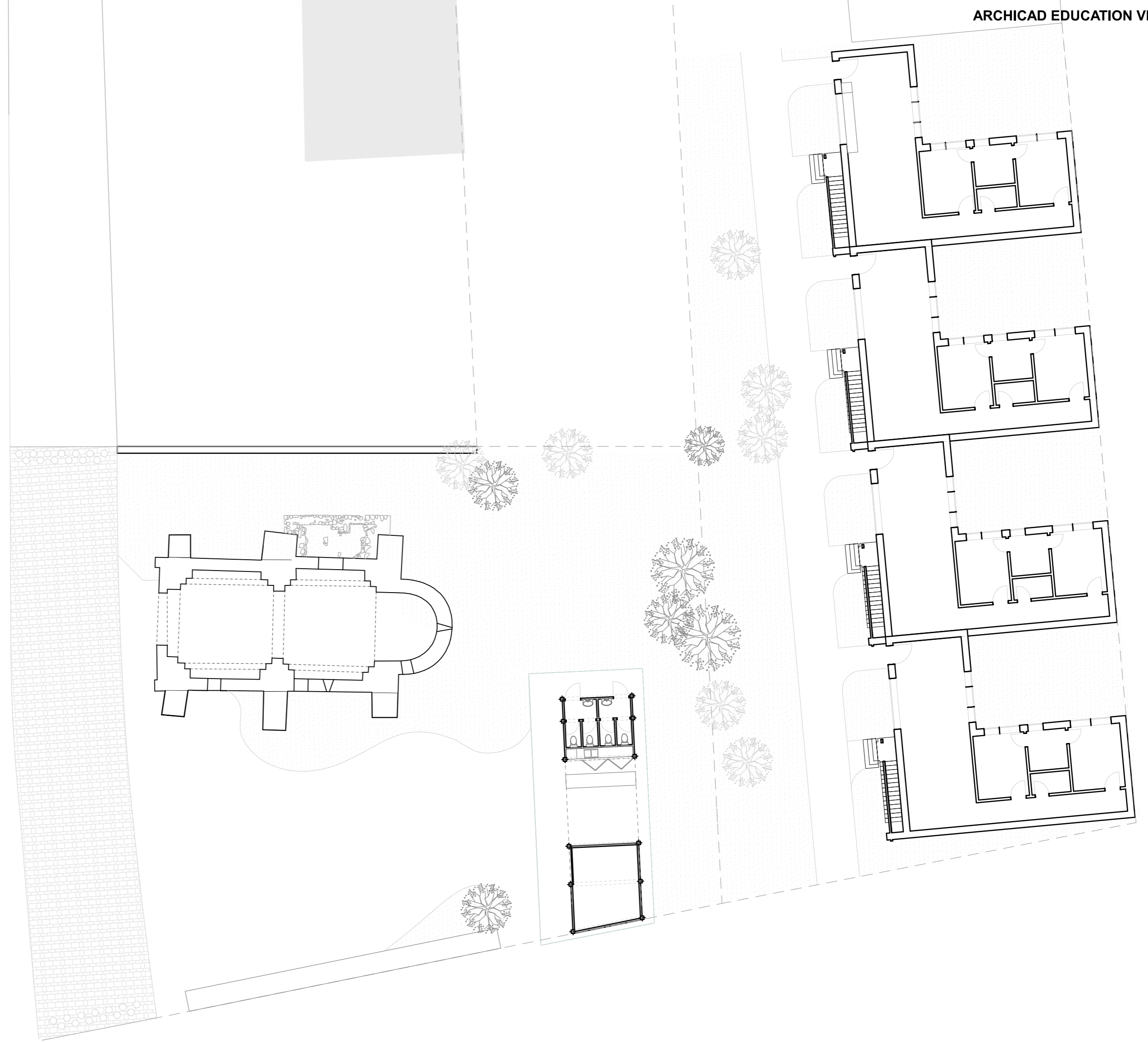
Photos applied:

Aerial photos by Francois Guyonnet

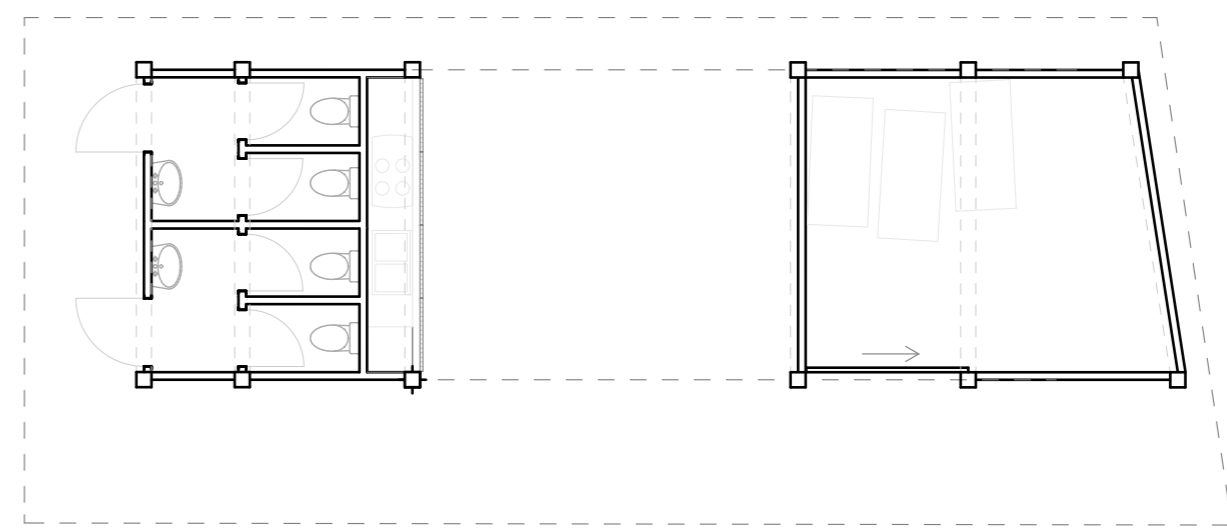


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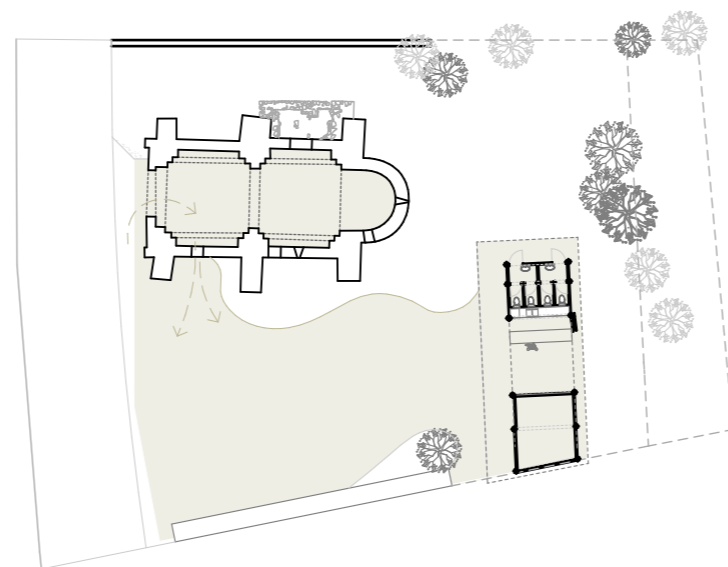


Site plan 1:500

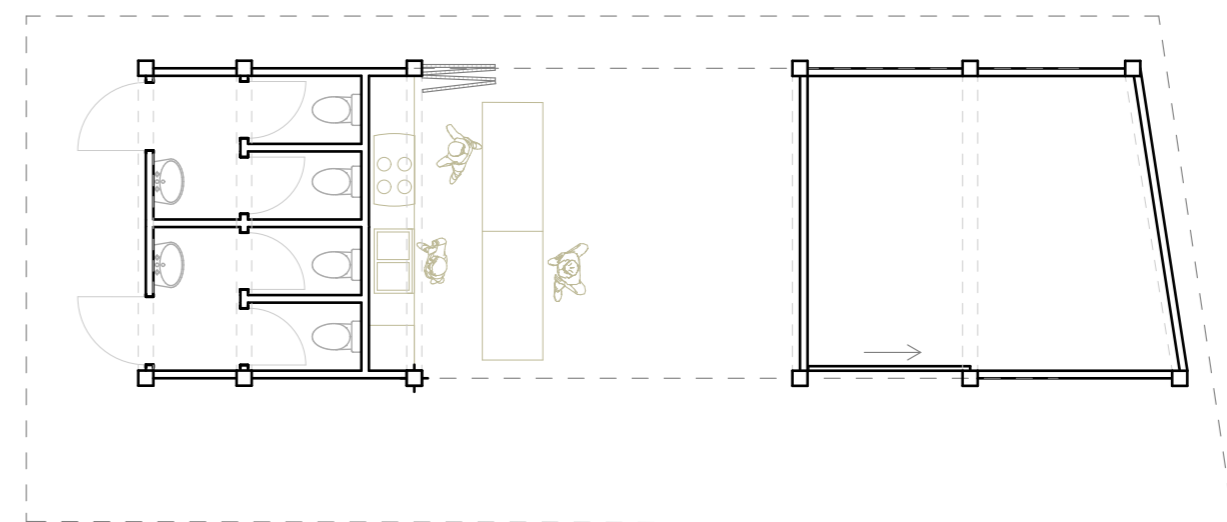


Pavilion floor plan 1:100

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Site plan 1:500



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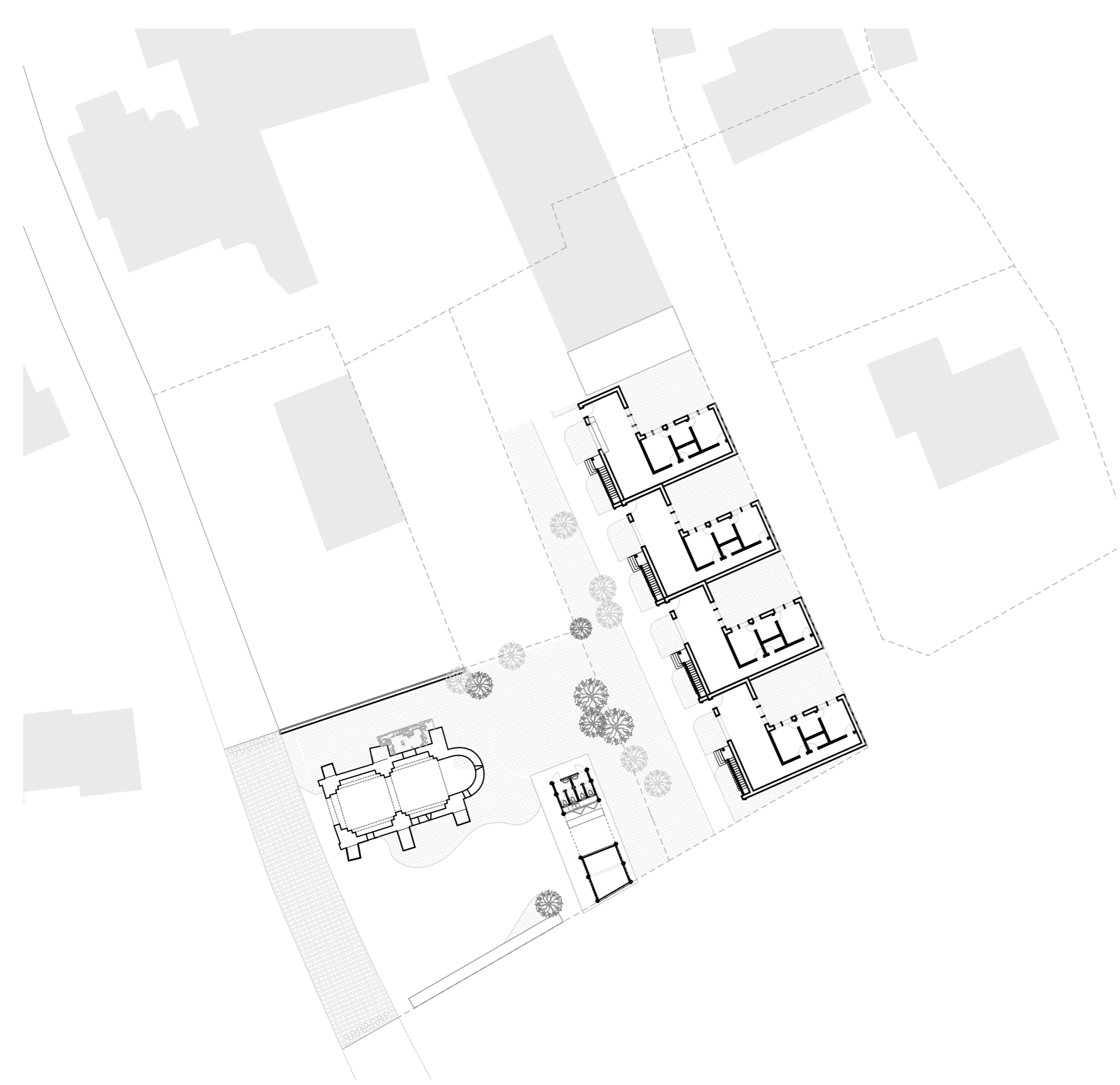
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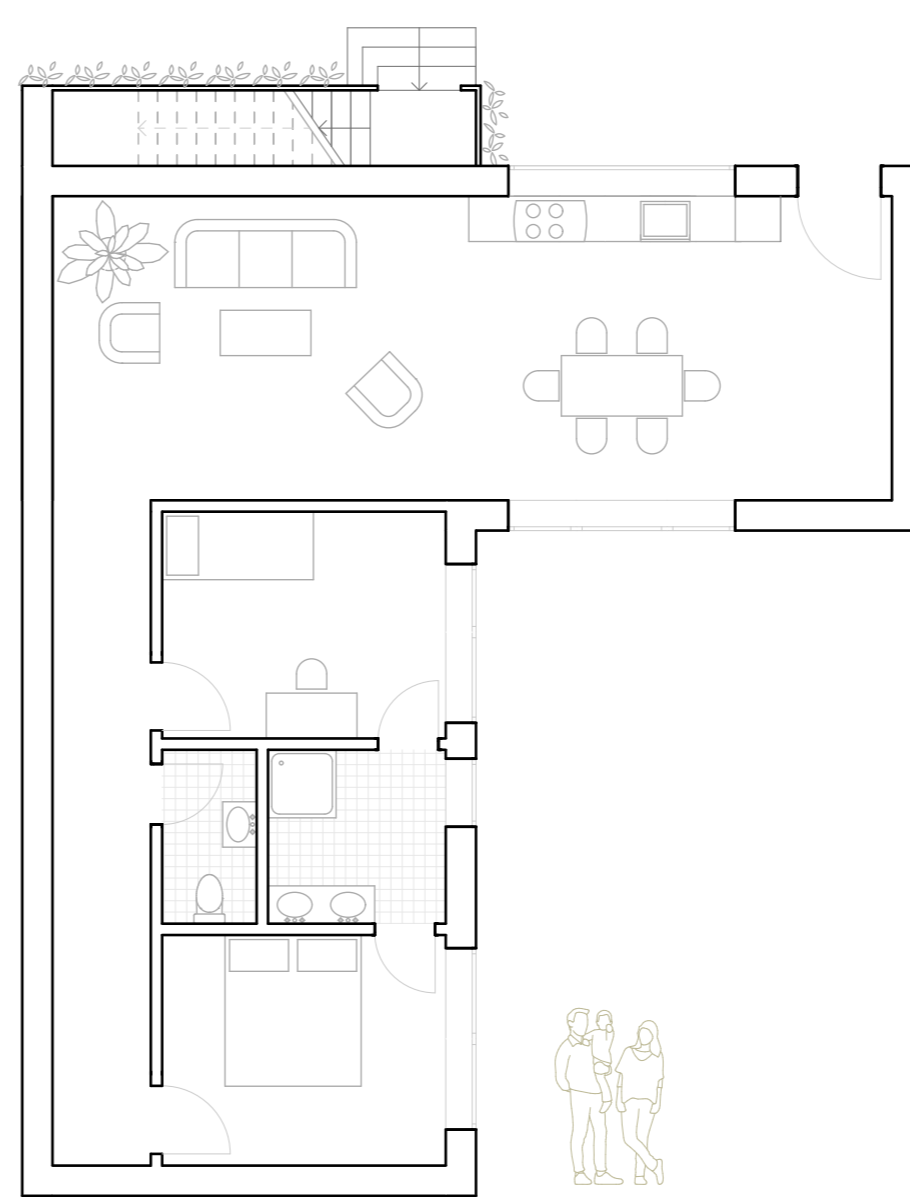


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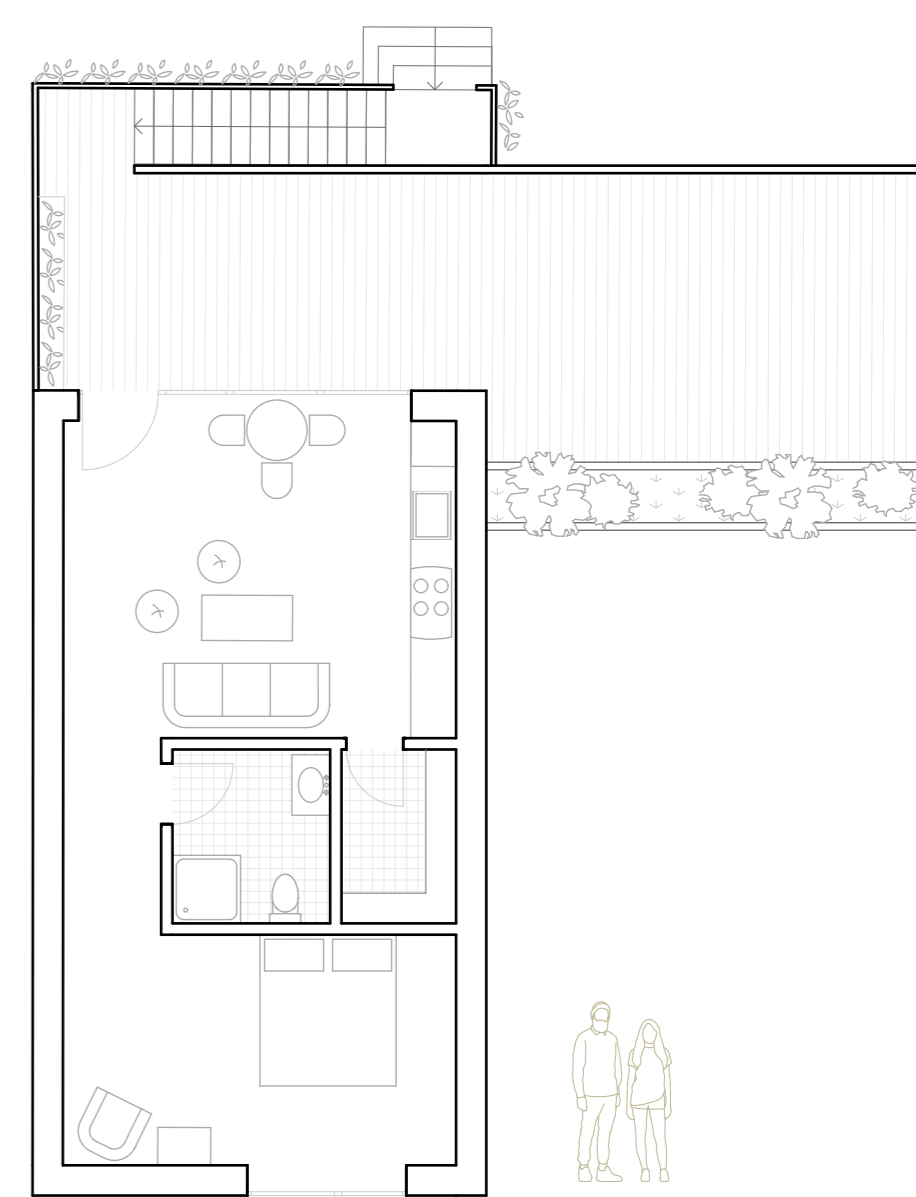
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Longitudinal section 1:100



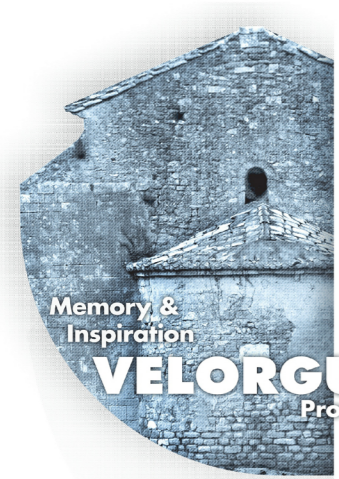
Ground floor plan 1:100



First floor plan 1:100



Site elevation - South-East 1:200



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