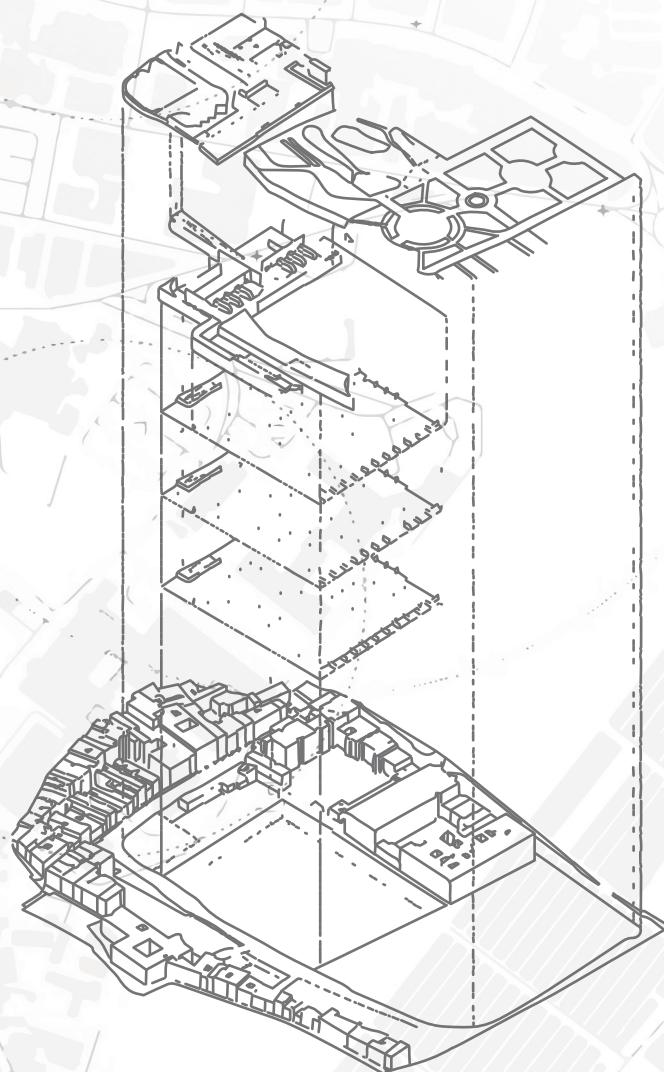




GOZO REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

# GRDA Vision for Victoria Urban Upgrading



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## LIST OF CONTENT:

1. Concept Scheme	p. 8
2. Landscape Urbanism	p. 16
3. Global Strategies	p. 22
4. Territorial and Urban Strategies	p.28
5. Landscape design strategies	p. 42
6. Urban Regeneration	p. 60





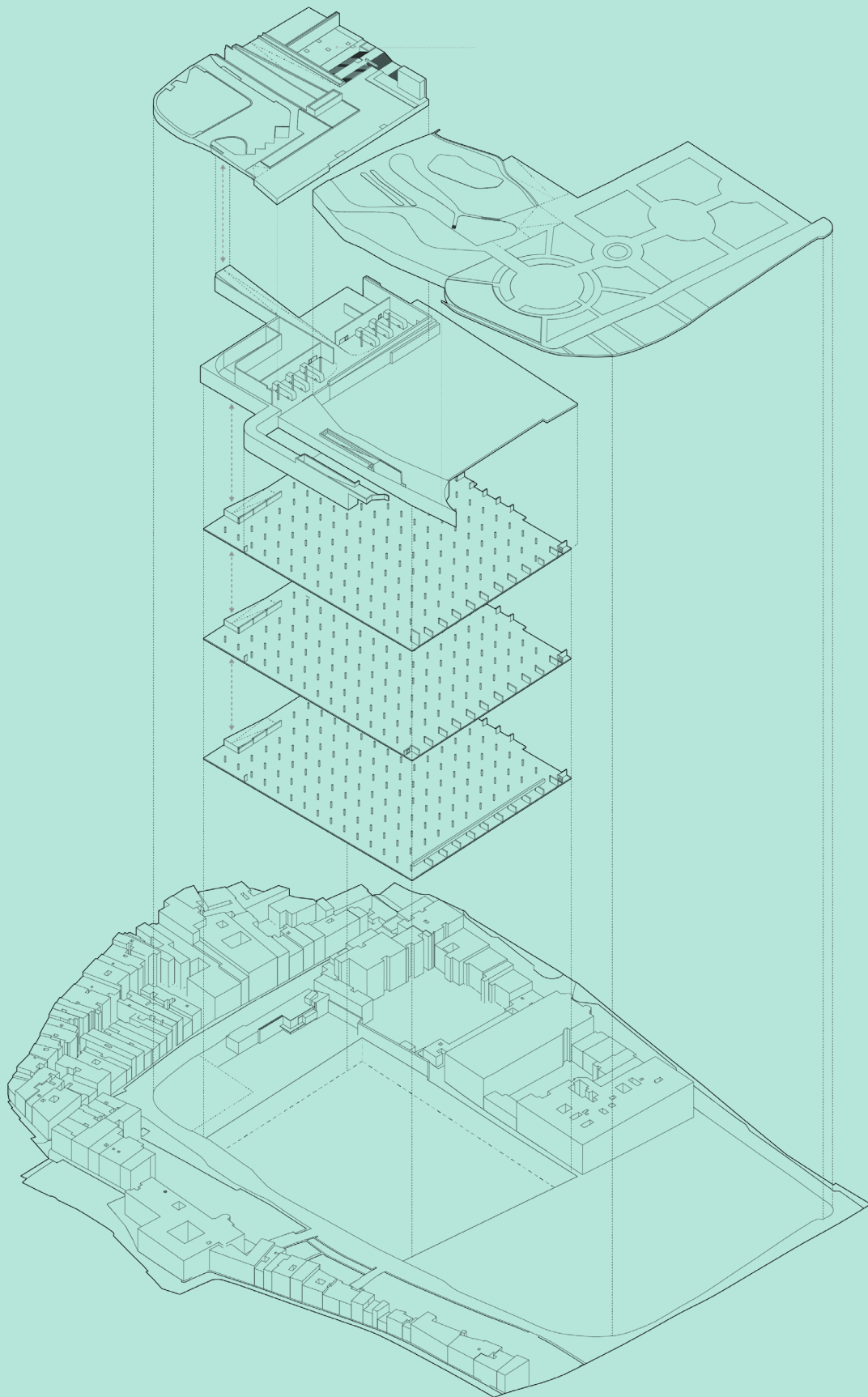












- 01. UPPER PIAZZA
- 02. LOWER PIAZZA
- 03. BUS STATION
- 04. ECOLOGICAL VISITORS CENTRE
- 05. FOUNTAIN/WATER SCULPTURE
- 06. PEDESTRIAN RAMP ACCESS

- 07. BOTANICAL GARDEN
- 08. VILLA RUNDLE
- 09. "S" PATH
- 10. MARKET AREA
- 11. LARGE VEHICLE STATION
- 12. PARKING ACCESS RAMP

- 13. PARKING EXIT RAMP
- 14. PARKING LEVEL
- 15. PARKING LEVEL RAMP
- 16. SPORTS CLUB
- 17. PROTECTED GREEN AREA
- 18. MAJOR EXCAVATION ZONE



# 1.

## CONCEPT SCHEME

V.Park aims to incorporate responsible and ethical urban design principles within a project which prioritizes an integration of nature into daily life. The approach proposed is to develop an open, dynamic, and inclusive project/concept that can accommodate the needs of the community and enhance the natural environment.

Methodologically, the proposal for Victoria Park is structured around several key components.

Firstly, the proposal outlines specific goals related to climate change, water conservation, urban temperature control, and biodiversity preservation. In addition, it incorporates territorial and urban strategies that address issues such as economic activation, mobility optimization, and the protection of existing landscapes.

The proposal also includes architectural and landscape design actions, such as the creation of various public spaces, new parks, and pedestrian paths. Additionally, molecular-level urban actions are proposed as a means of achieving the predetermined goals through effective actions at the local level.

In light of this, the proposal frames Victoria as a city that is ethically-run, agile, performative, resilient, and green, with a focus on sustainability and accessibility for all. By integrating the disciplines of botany, ecology, tourism, and economics, the project aims to activate transdisciplinary dynamics and develop new methodologies to address global and local issues while maintaining a commitment to biodiversity and respect for the natural world.

The proposed strategies and actions could serve as a prototype for similar urban projects in other locations, providing a model for sustainable and responsible urban development. By integrating multiple disciplines and engaging with local stakeholders, the proposal for Victoria Park represents an opportunity to develop new methodologies and transdisciplinary dynamics for addressing local challenges while maintaining a commitment to biodiversity and respect for the natural world.

One of the key aspects of the proposal is the transformation of the existing surface car park into a green park, with the parking being moved underground. This will free up space for the development of new, public, green open spaces and allow for the integration of green infrastructure throughout the site. The new underground car park will also improve traffic flow and reduce congestion in the area.

V.Park is an ambitious project that aims to create a vibrant and inclusive urban environment that is accessible to all. By addressing climate change, water conservation, biodiversity preservation, and other key issues, the proposed project aims to foster a city model which favours personal mobility and contributes in accelerating the modal shift towards the use of clean transport systems and re-balance the use of our streets in favour of the pedestrian and the community.





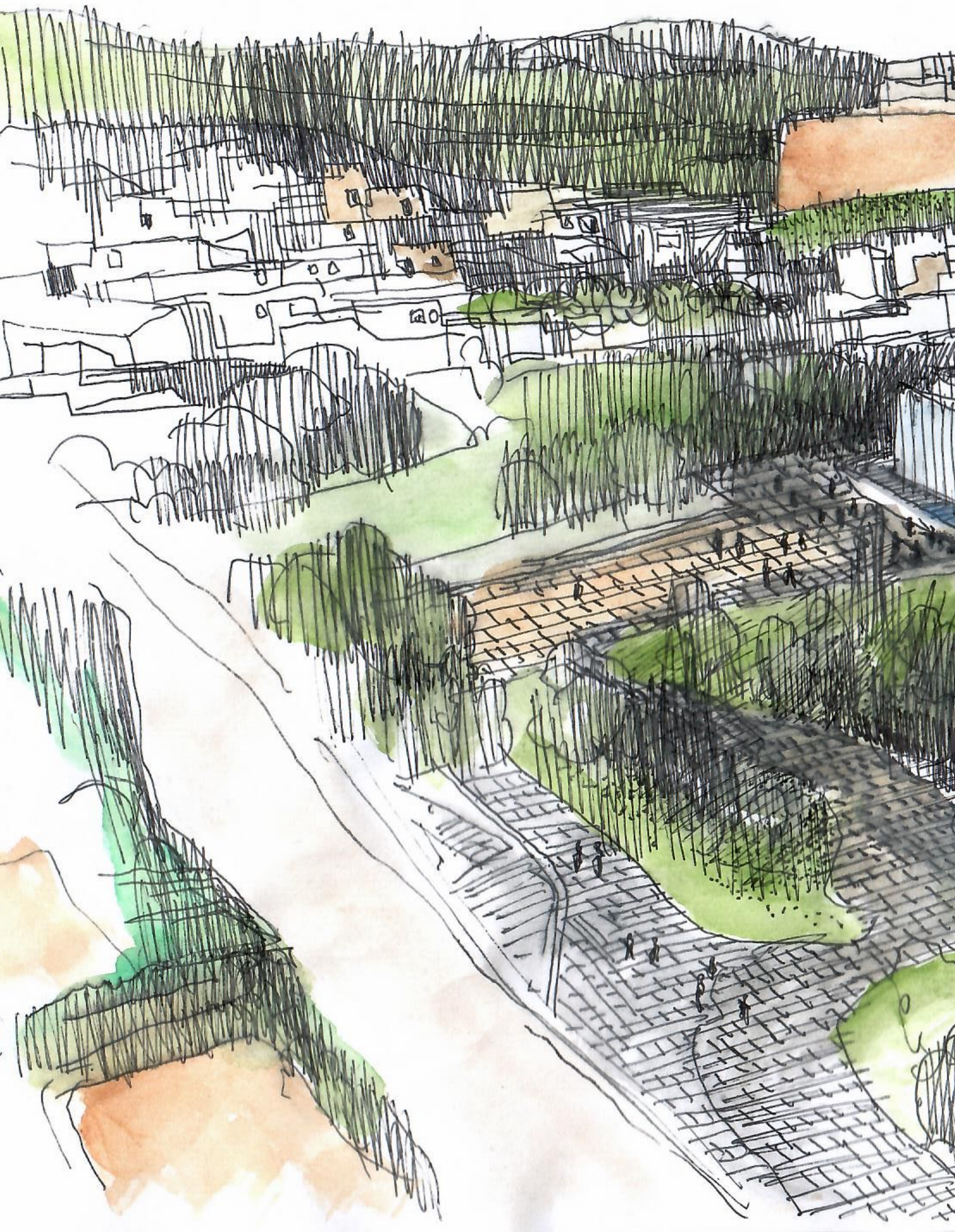


The project seeks to contribute towards the regeneration of the area, fostering a vibrant public life that meets our social, environmental, political, and cultural objectives.

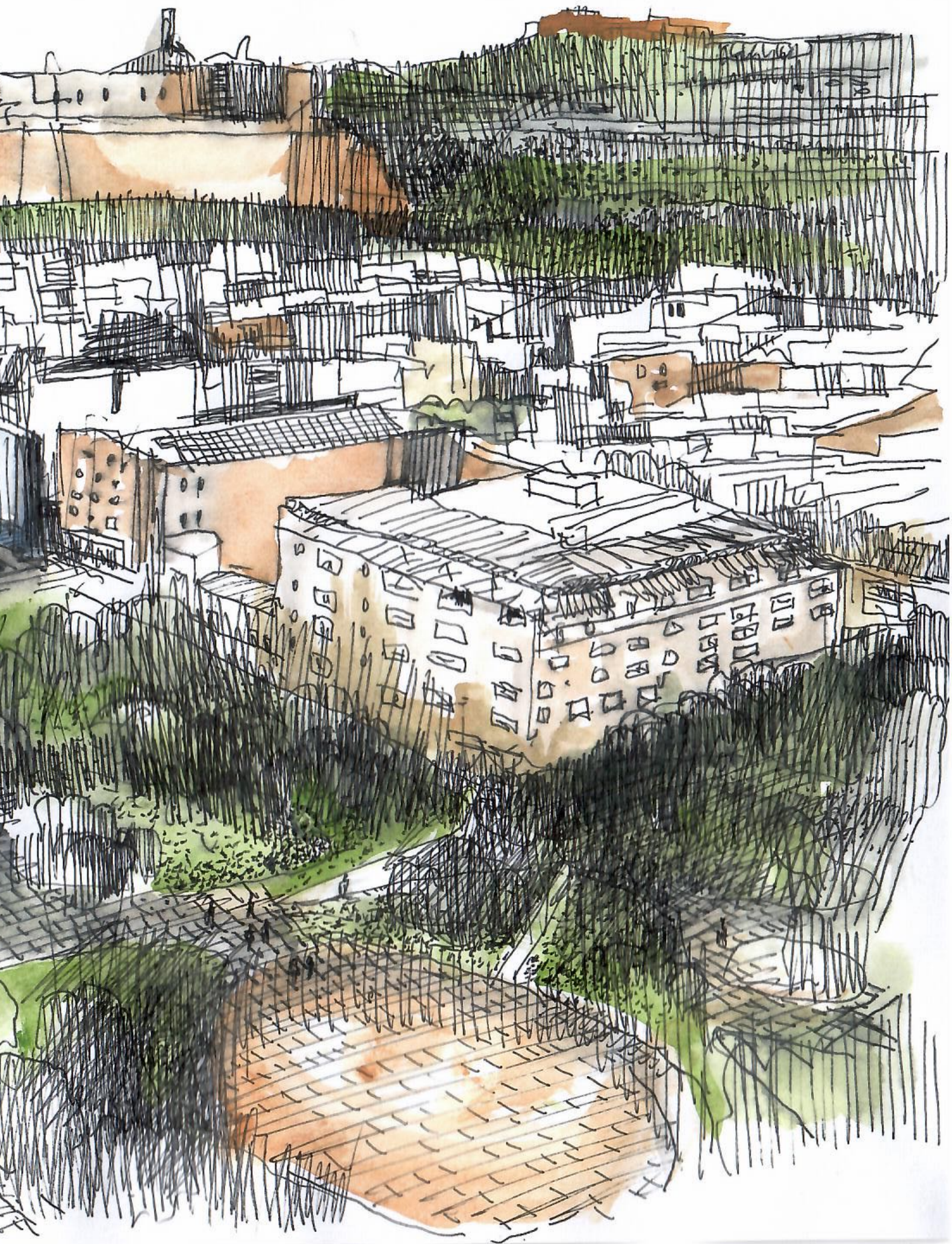
By incorporating nature into daily life and creating public spaces, V. Park aims to create a sense of community and enhance the overall livability of the city.

Additionally, the project will create new opportunities for local residents, further contributing to the area's regeneration which prioritises the well-being of both people and the environment, while fostering a dynamic and inclusive community.
















A photograph of a lush garden. In the foreground, a gravel path leads through a variety of plants, including pink coneflowers, purple asters, and tall grasses. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees, creating a sense of depth and a natural, urban environment.

# 2.

## **LANDSCAPE URBANISM**

*Theoretical and  
methodological framework*







## 2.

## LANDSCAPE AS URBANISM

*Theoretical and  
methodological framework*

The proposed concept for V. Park is grounded in a holistic vision of the urban project; one that sees the landscape as a dynamic and integral tool for generating habitable natural spaces for humans while safeguarding biodiversity. This approach aligns with the principles of Landscape Urbanism and Ecological Urbanism, which seek to define a new design approach that moves beyond the traditional boundaries of built structures.

Rather than seeing the void as a vague infill or an opposition to built structures, the concept positions it as a central place for contemporary design. The void is an exact and differentiated space that generates a new taxonomy for the project and is embodied in the metaphor of the ecotone, a transitional zone between different factors, such as landscape, the anthropic environment, and infrastructures.

This holistic vision transforms the actions of planning from solid forms to “empty” ones and to thresholds, which become the entire structure and can meet local needs. Landscapes are regarded as lenses for observing and interpreting places, as well as priority design guidelines that change design codes, perspectives, and rules.

The interest in ecology and landscape as a resource for common good that can affect and modify the political, ethical, and aesthetic vision of planning, frames the project in a new perspective and changes its taxonomies and practices.

In particular, the project is oriented and specified around three categories that define the potential of nature in the design:

1. Technology and performativity: nature is a resource and a common good that can be measured by calculating green benefits. The project seeks to specify new “norms” that can be defined not only by volumetric indices but also by indicators of well-being at different scales.
2. Symbiosis: nature is integrated and modified with culture and architecture. New design and spatial definitions will allow for the amplification of the idea of a green project, new spatial devices, and new typologies.
3. Resilience: nature provides ecological reserve basins and affects the time of the project. In this direction, performativity, symbiosis, and resilience become the new critical categories that can change the concept of planning from rigid and solid to empty and green, generating new ethical and aesthetic spatiality.

The vision for V. Park sees nature as an integral device capable of acting in the critical space and that carries with it new possibilities, patterns, and figures capable of prefiguring symbiotic spaces.













Chart 1 - The Sustainable Development Goals (Source: UN, 2015)



# 3.

## GLOBAL STRATEGIES



Chart 2 - The Sustainable Development Goals in relation to the Masterplan



# 3.

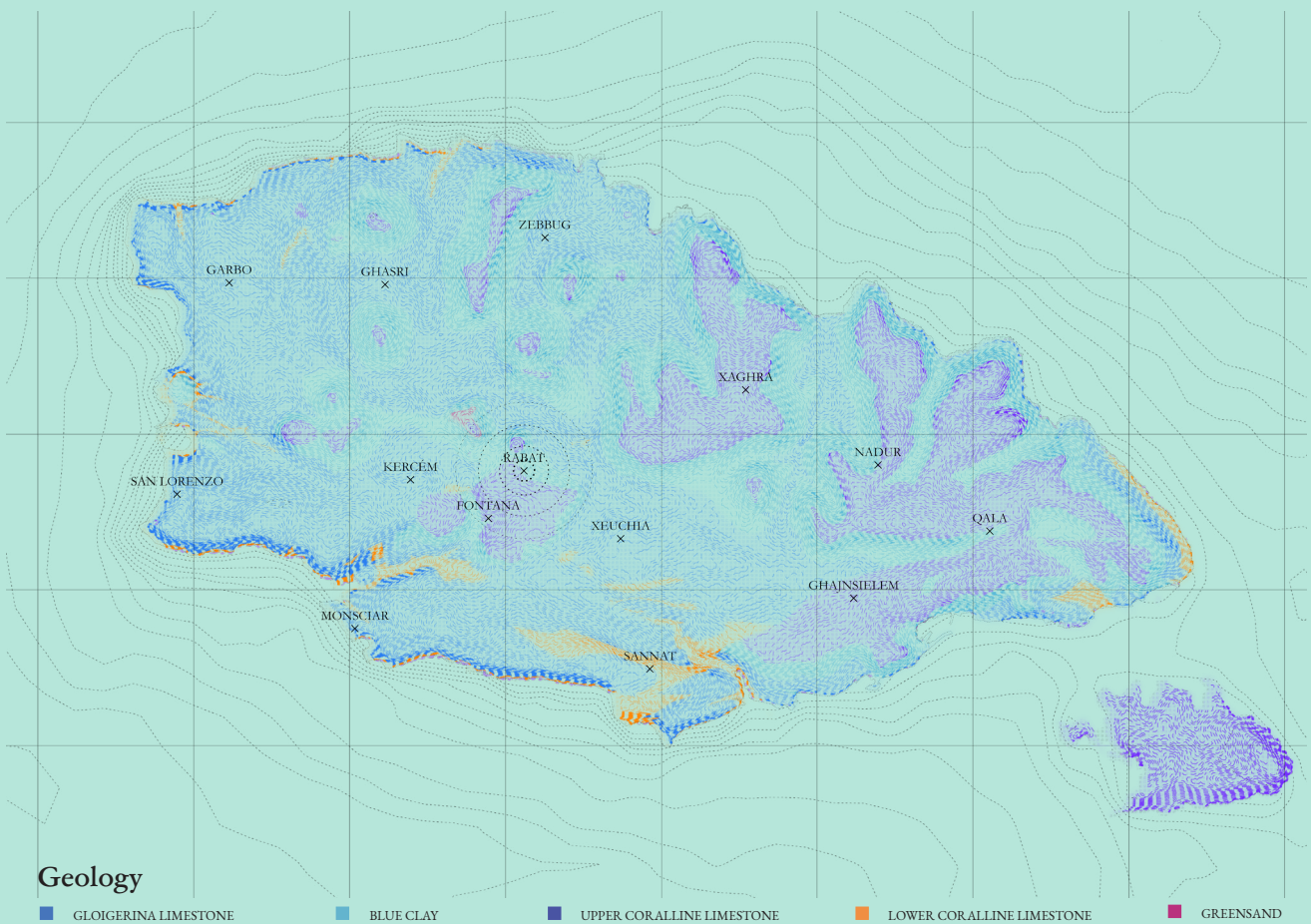
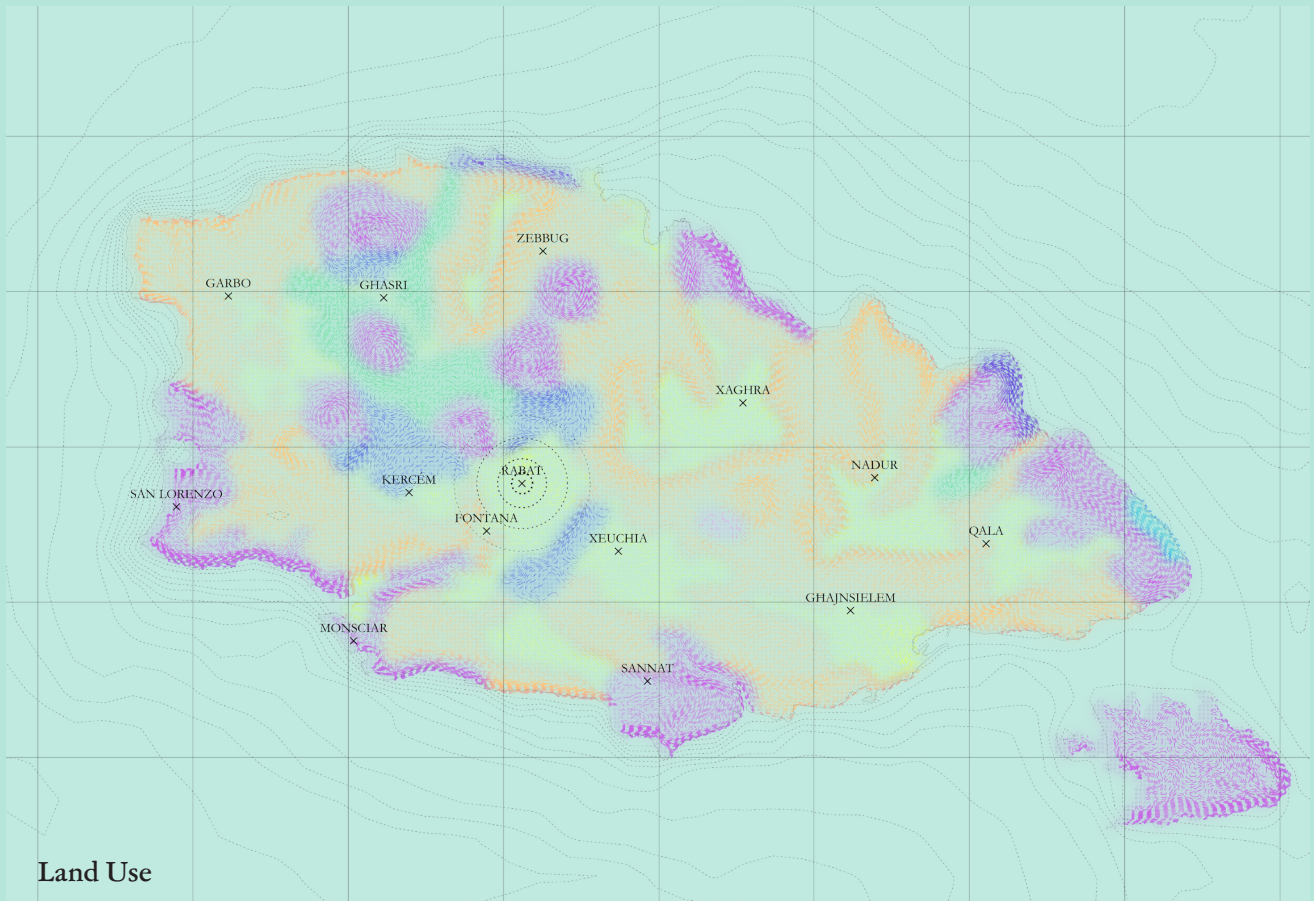
## GLOBAL STRATEGIES

This paradigm shift, which shifts urban issues towards the landscape, emphasizes the crucial role of global environmental issues in planning policies and scenarios. The design strategies for Victoria are framed within the contemporary vision of global responsibility and aligned with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Glasgow COP 26, Urban Agenda for the European Union, and 2016 Amsterdam Pact, which prioritize environmental sustainability standards such as sustainable land use, energy transition, climate adaptation, urban mobility, and air quality.

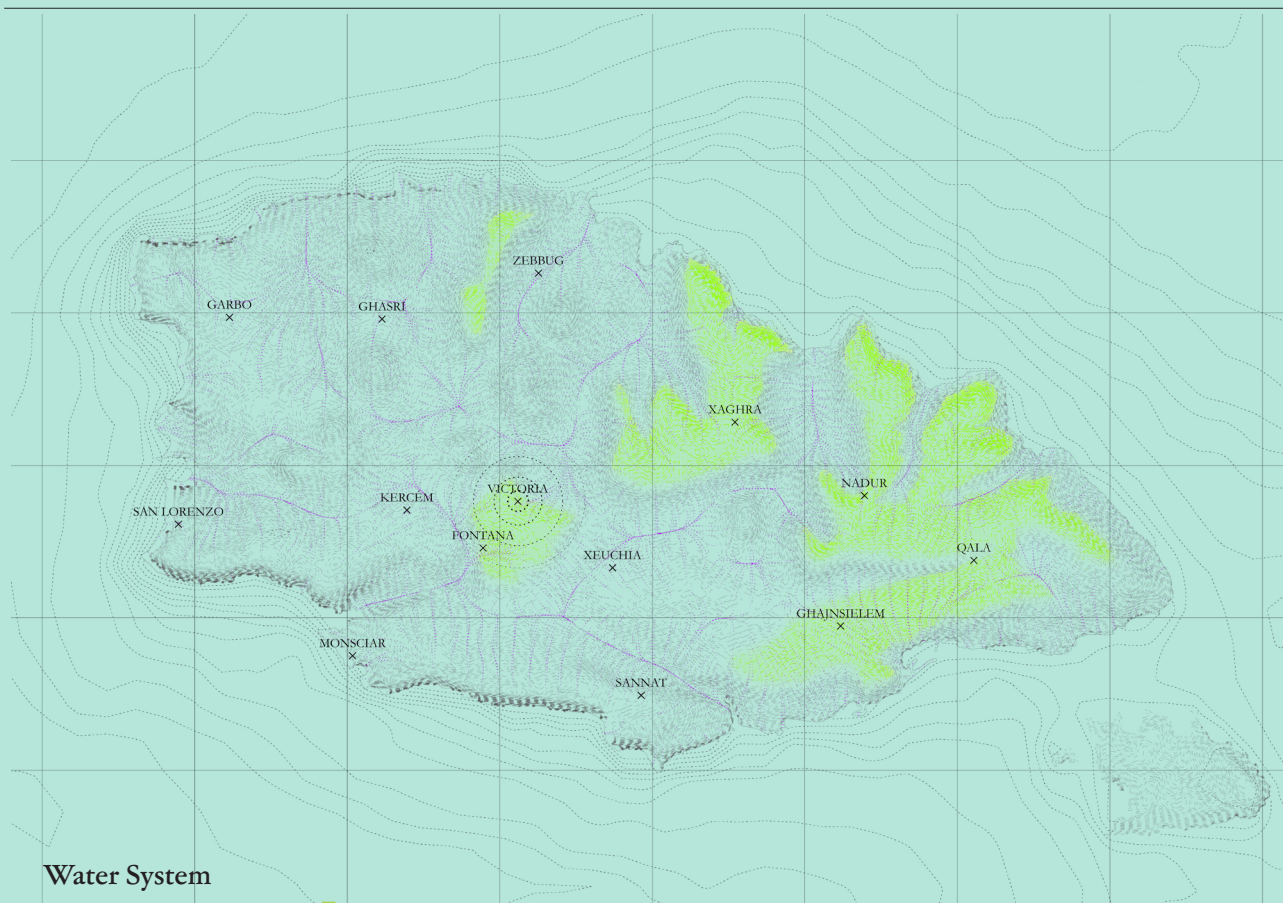
To reduce the temperature and tackle issues of water scarcity, the design strategies focus on the following goals as a result of feedback loops, rather than just cause-effect systems:

- Achieve a 1.5°C temperature reduction by 2030
- Become net-zero carbon by 2050, emphasizing the transition to a low-carbon digital economy
- Reduce methane emissions by 30% by 2030 through sustainable actions, new transport infrastructure, and circular economy systems
- Increase forestation and plant tall green areas in all design locations, following the principle of urban forestation
- Transition towards low-carbon energy sustainable buildings and urban development, protecting and enhancing natural capital
- Use cold construction materials that do not attract heat to the ground.

The design strategies aim to contribute towards the achievement of climate neutrality and decrease the temperature, transforming Victoria into a location of best practice for sustainability and urban design in Europe.

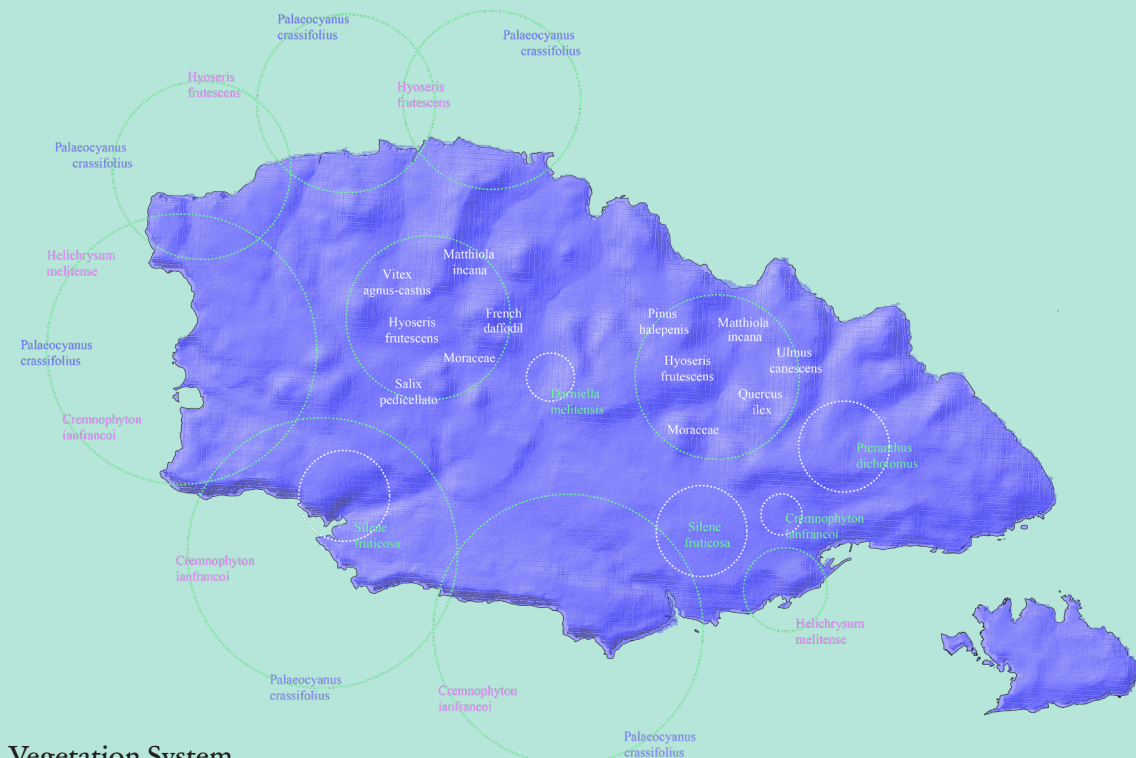






Water System

RAINOFF GROUND WATER BODIES



Vegetation System

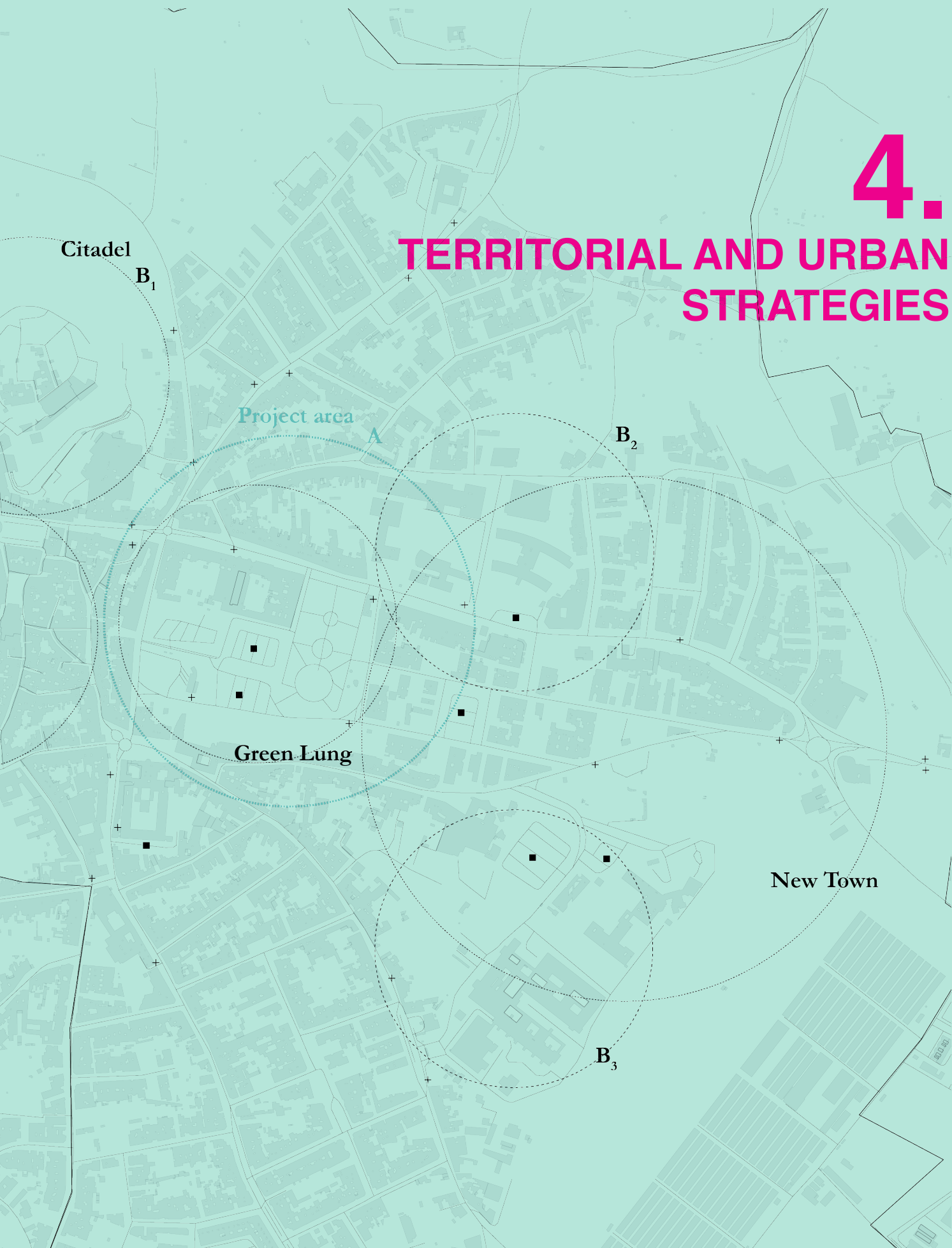




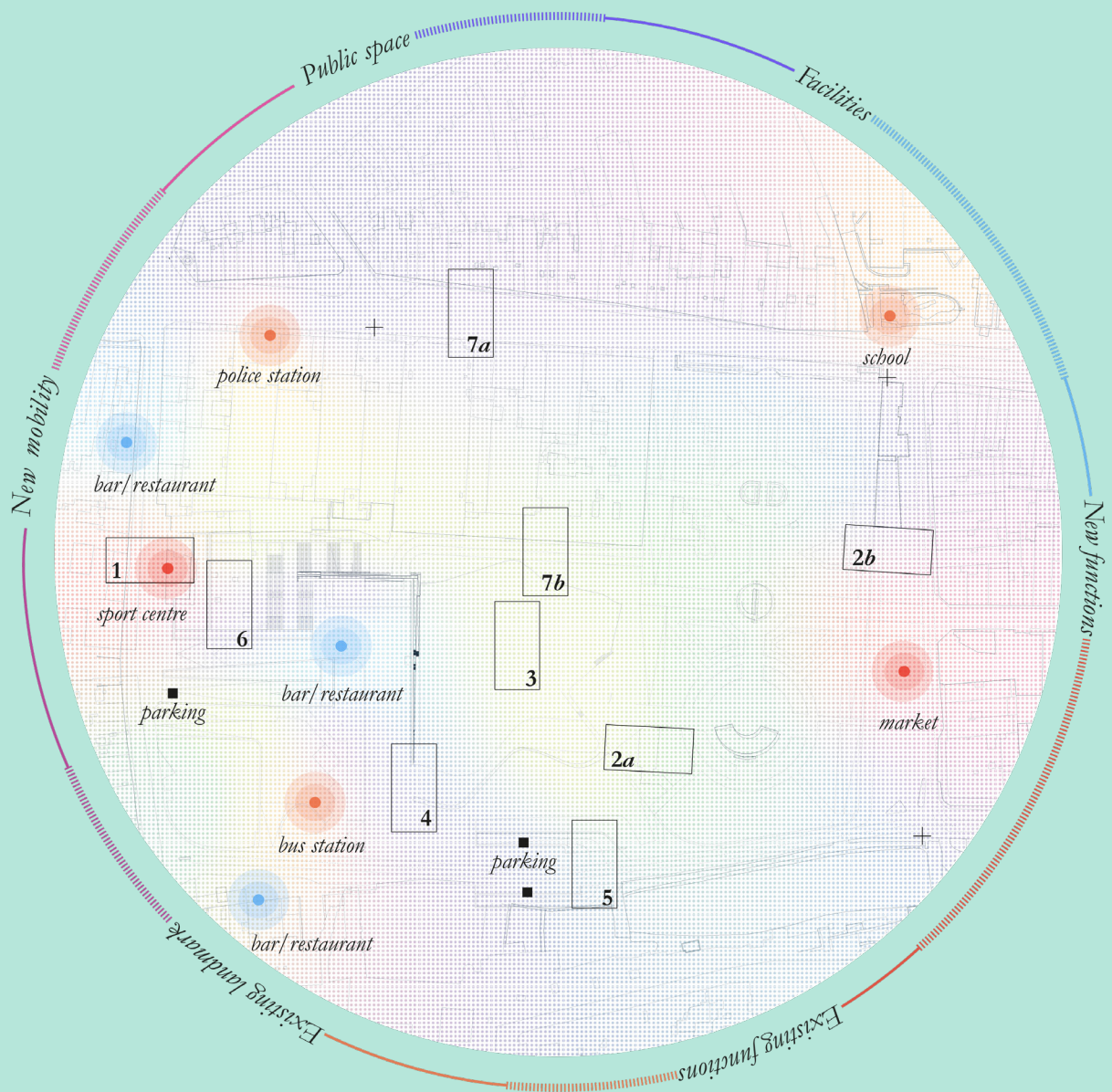


# 4.

## TERRITORIAL AND URBAN STRATEGIES







General view of the project area



## 4.

# TERRITORIAL AND URBAN STRATEGIES

The Victoria project involves a systemic and multidisciplinary approach, capable of defining territorial and urban strategies that can integrate different scales of intervention, from the urban to the regional and territorial level.

The project intends to act on the urban scale through a set of specific strategies, which aim to enhance the urban landscape and its forms, while respecting the pre-existing environmental and social balances.

## Territorial Strategies

### 1. Green Strategy

The green strategy will play a fundamental role in connecting the Victoria project to its surrounding area, by integrating green spaces and enhancing natural and ecological resources.

### 2. Connectivity and mobility

The Victoria project will integrate mobility, parking, and public spaces to achieve a transformation towards people centered streets. It will also improve connectivity and mobility through the integration of an efficient, integrated and sustainable public transport system, making use of new technologies such as shared and autonomous mobility, cycling and walking. This will reduce the dependence on private vehicles, resulting in a healthier environment, lower traffic congestion and reduced carbon emissions.

### 3. Territorial balance

The project will aim to achieve a territorial balance by preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the region, supporting local

economies and communities, and avoiding urban sprawl.

## Urban Strategies

### 1. Hybridization of uses

The project will encourage productive activities coexisting in the same urban space. This will promote a vibrant and active urban life, reducing the need for long-distance commuting, and enhancing the local economy.

### 2. Urban regeneration

The project will act on the urban fabric, regenerating pre-existing buildings and transforming disused areas into new and innovative spaces. This will preserve the memory and identity of the place, while renewing the urban quality of life.

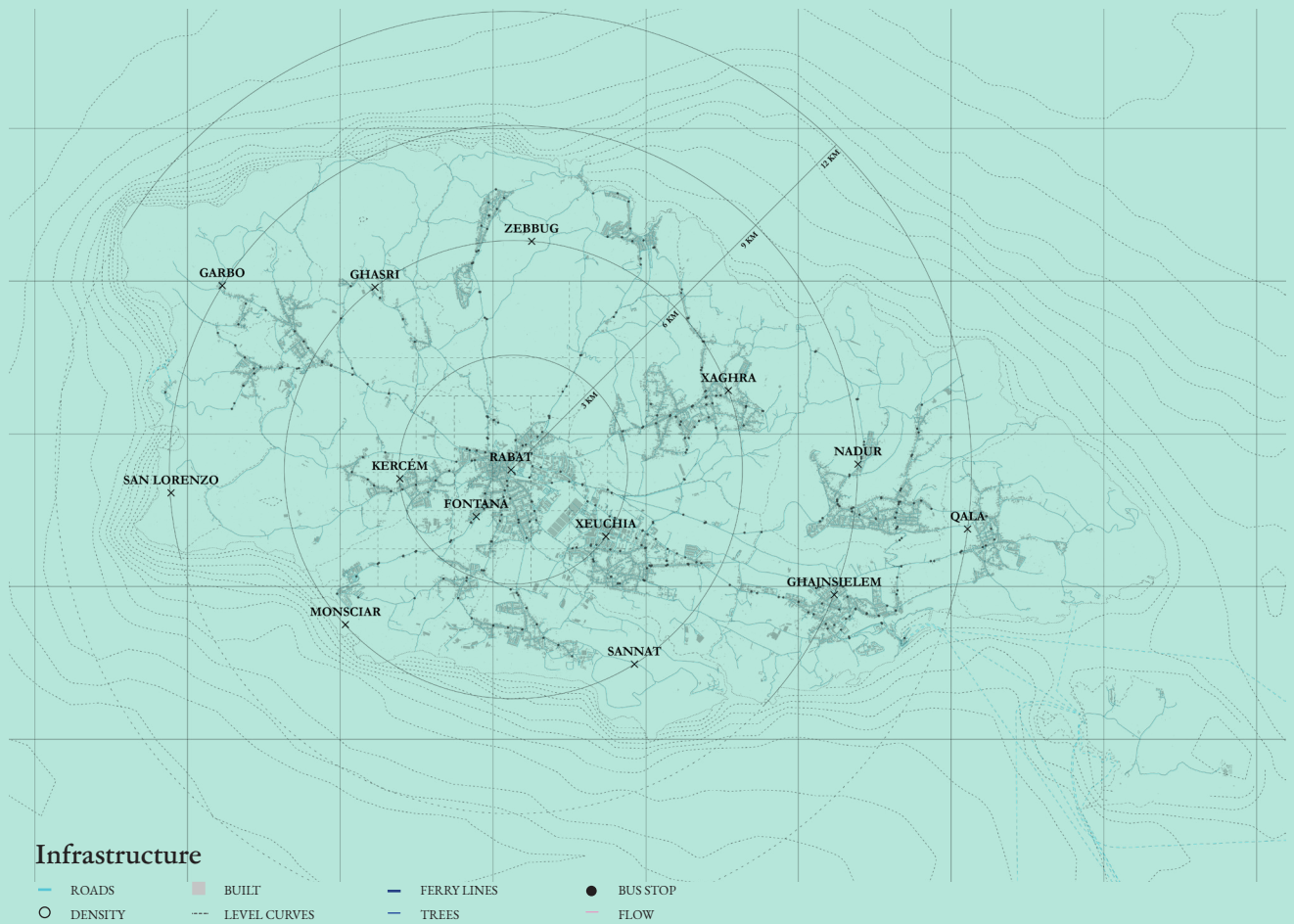
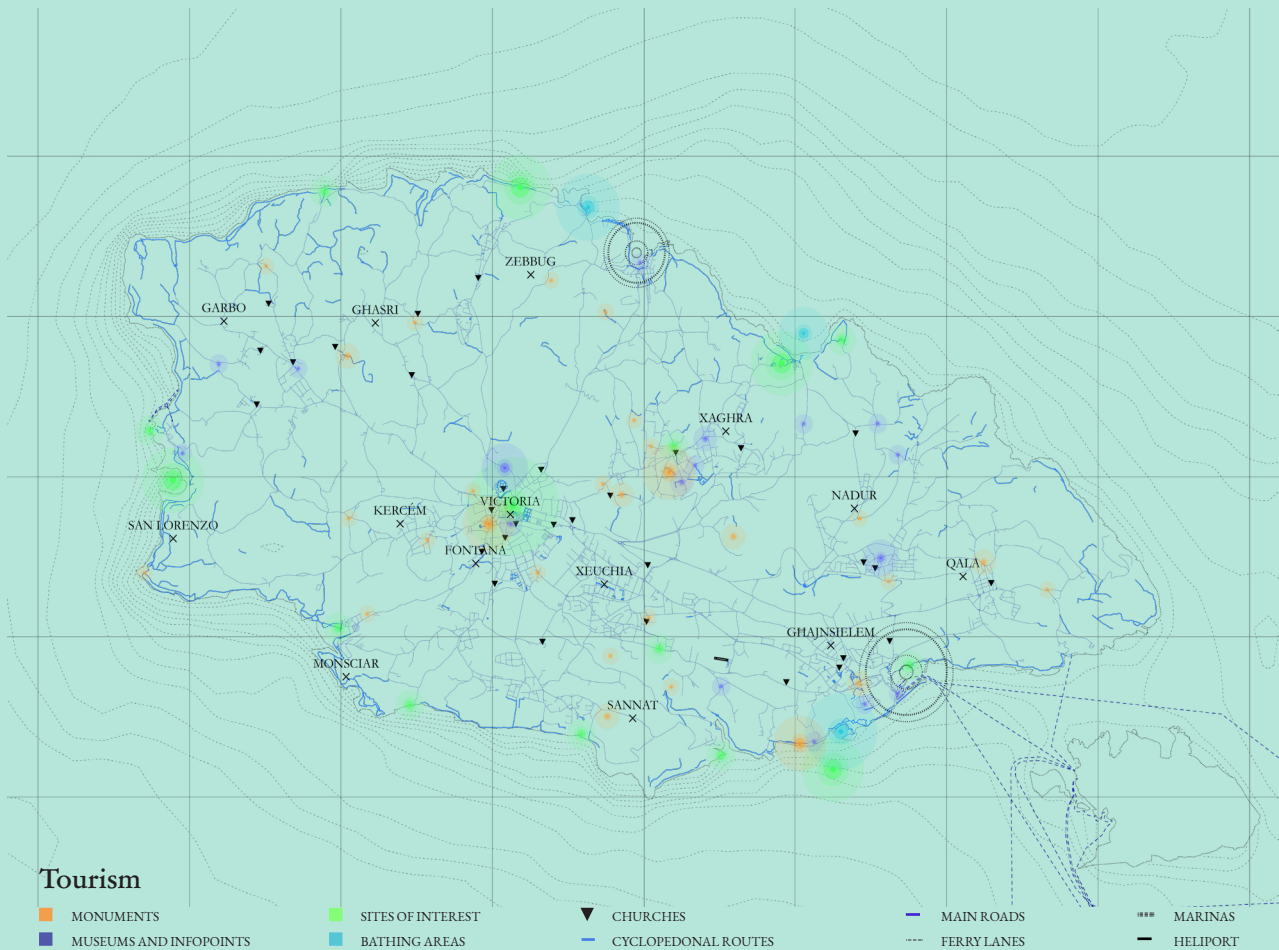
### 3. Nature-based solutions

The project will introduce nature-based solutions, enhancing green spaces and improving the ecological performance of the urban environment. This will improve the quality of life of the residents, enhancing air and water quality, reducing the urban heat island effect, and enhancing biodiversity.

The territorial and urban strategies of the Victoria project aim to promote a sustainable and integrated approach, capable of combining the needs of the environment, society, and the economy. They represent a systemic response to the challenges of the contemporary city, aiming to build a resilient and adaptive urban landscape.

V.Park aims to serve as an intersection point







between the regional and urban scales and as such, will adopt transversal strategies to cater to both local and territorial needs. As a strategic area and contemporary gateway to the city, the V.Park will be a technological and natural space capable of responding to local, urban and territorial complexities.

The following are some of the specific strategies proposed:

1. Facilitate and re-organize tourist attractions;
2. Optimize mobility;
3. Increase the typology of public spaces;
4. Amplify the natural gradients and the performativity of nature
5. Integrate with the Historical Villa Rundle Gardens

### **Tourism, Inhabitants, Sports, and Environment**

The V.Park project proposes a reactivation of the relationship between ecology and the economy under a new ethical dimension. This project aims to promote processes that respond to the themes of the green economy and the circular economy. The project is framed as a producer of competitive and ethical tourism economies, enhancing the relationship between space, economy, and society. The following are some expected outcomes:

- The definition of a new contemporary urban node for the city;
- The definition of a benchmark and a touristic gateway,
- The generation of a node of exchange between different mobilities;
- The enhancement of Victoria and the Citadel's historical heritage.

In terms of tourism infrastructure, the project proposes mobility and services that allow for the circulation throughout the city on bicycle and pedestrian paths reducing the dependence on private vehicles. The project includes the construction of parking to eliminate traffic on the new gateway of the city, the formation of bicycle rental points and exchange points with public or private transport, and the formation of rest points with tourist functions such as bars and restaurants. As a new contemporary gateway to the city, tourism is the bearer of local economies, increasing the quality of daily contemporary life and the networks of social relations.

### **Mobility Optimization**

The project acknowledges the significance of mobility in ensuring the usability of urban areas and presents measures to transform the functionality of the existing mobility network and spaces. Its objective is to establish a pathway network that serves both as an urban link between different districts and as a sustainable tourist route, promoting the complete utilization and accessibility of spaces. The project aims to challenge the prevailing car-centric hierarchy of cities by prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists, thereby making several city areas more accessible to them. To this end, the project proposes the removal of some parking spaces along the main streets, accomplished by reducing the road width and simultaneously widening the pedestrian areas to improve the quality and walkability of the streetscape, and enhance the public space experience.







## Generation of Public Spaces and New Functions

The V.Park project seeks to establish a transition zone between the urban and natural landscapes, while also bridging the historical fabric of the city with nature. It intends to achieve this by creating additional public spaces and introducing new functions, resulting in a modern, agile, flexible, open, and resilient public space.

The project aims to introduce the following:

- A pedestrian and cycle-pedestrian area that expands in some sections to form a sequence of squares that can have a variety of activities;
- A new urban square with underground parking;
- A new biodiverse park;
- A series of zones linked to the central square;
- A hub of exchange for mobility; and
- A designated market area.

The public space project evolves from a static and definitive condition into a design concept constantly changing to adapt to seasonal variations. Thus, the project gains resilience, and open spaces become accessible to all, serving as an adaptable meeting place which meets diverse temporary or permanent needs.

One of the main features of V.Park will be the People's Fountain, generated as a focal meeting place at the park's urban piazza. This People's fountain will be a node where people will exchange ideas, have access to potable water, and celebrate their common humanity. The People's Fountain will serve as a centerpiece for the park's

Urban design.

Situated at the end of the V.Park Urban Piazza, visitors will initially be struck by the serene setting surrounded by trees and Victoria's Citadel in the backdrop. The glass tower of the People's Fountain will create an ever-evolving dialogue and will be at the heart of the experience the park seeks to create. The emphasis will always be on communication, conversation, and interaction – the fundamental foci of a meeting place.

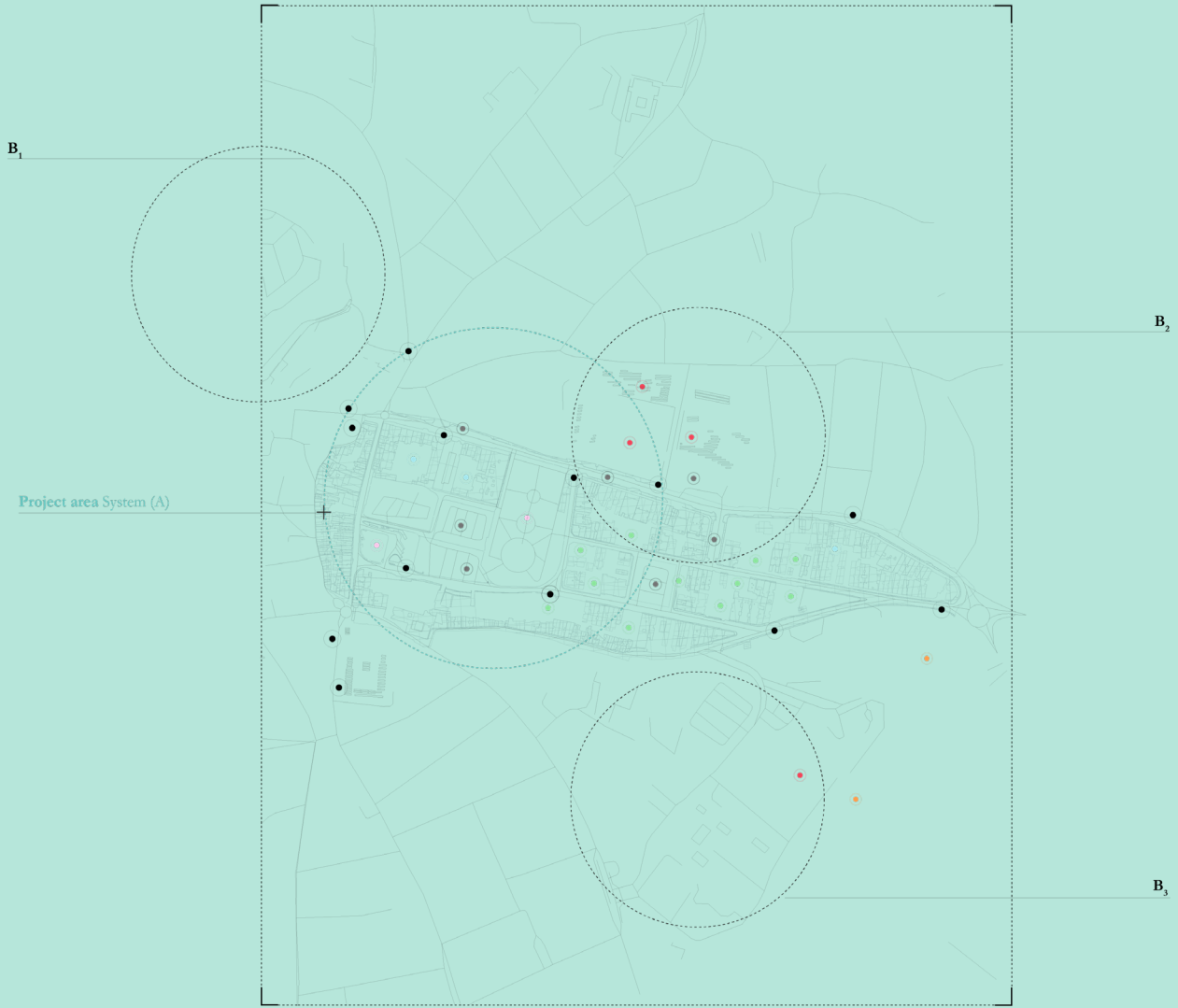
As visitors explore the V.Park Urban Piazza, they will find themselves immersed within the historic backdrop of Victoria's urban fabric and cultural landmarks, providing a seamless connection to the surrounding city. The piazza will act as a gateway to the historic center, inviting visitors to explore the rich heritage of the area. At the same time, it will serve as a connector to the V.Park Gardens, offering visitors a chance to relax within the beauty of nature.

The lower park piazzas will also be easily accessible from the V.Park Urban Piazza, making it a central location for visitors to gather and socialize.

Whether attending a cultural event, enjoying a coffee, or simply people-watching, the piazza will provide a vibrant and exciting atmosphere for all.

Fundamentally, the aim of the V.Park Urban Piazza is to serve as a crucial connector within the city, bringing together people, nature, and history in one central location. It will be a space that will encourage exploration, interaction, and community, and grow as a valuable asset to the city's cultural landscape.

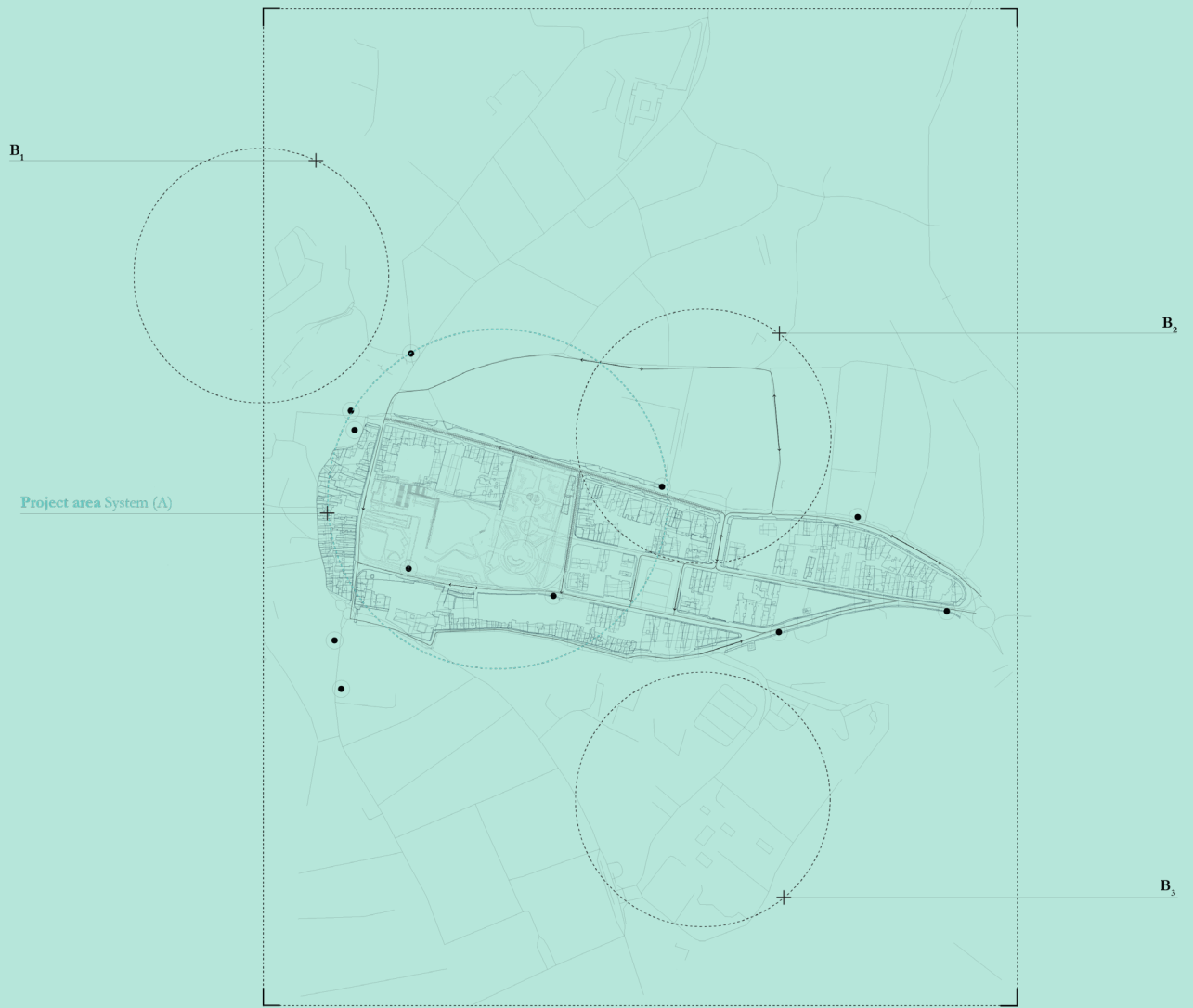




**EXISTING**

- |                    |                 |          |           |         |             |              |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------|---------|-------------|--------------|
|                    |                 |          |           |         |             |              |
| Absolute Landscape | Inner Landscape | Parkings | Bus stops | Gardens | Urban voids | Civic center |





**PROJECT**

●  
Bus stop

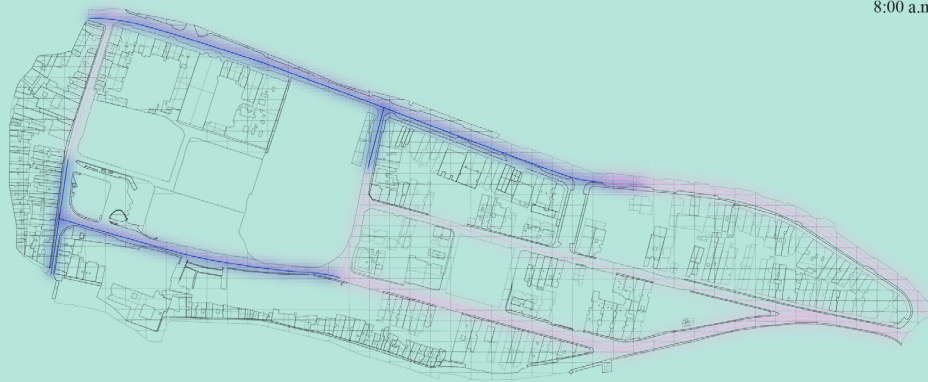
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New pedestrian path

—————  
New park design





Week days traffic  
8:00 a.m

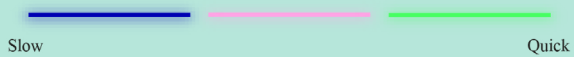


Weekend traffic  
12:00 a.m



Week days traffic  
7:00 p.m

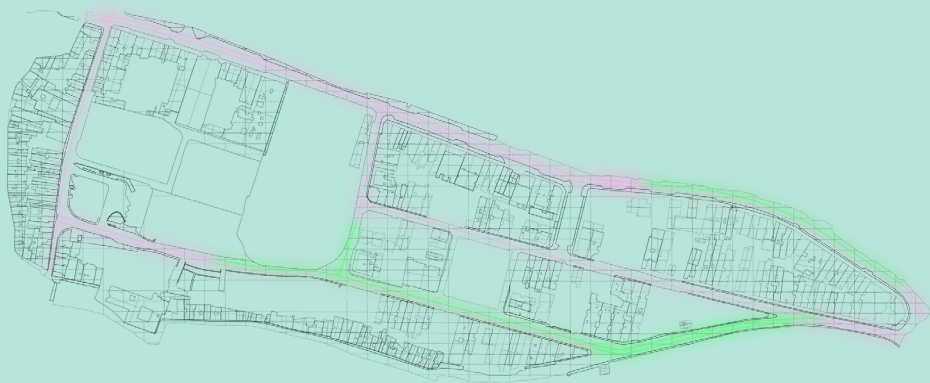
Traffic flow



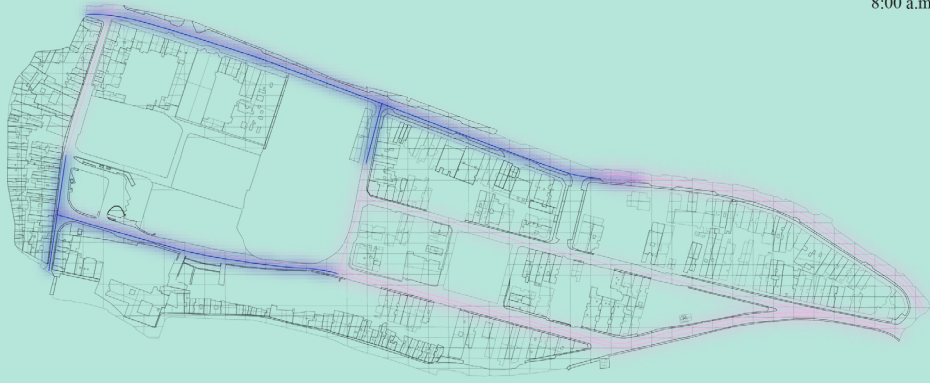
Slow

Quick





Week days traffic  
8:00 a.m



Weekend traffic  
12:00 a.m



Week days traffic  
7:00 p.m

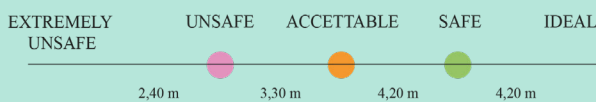




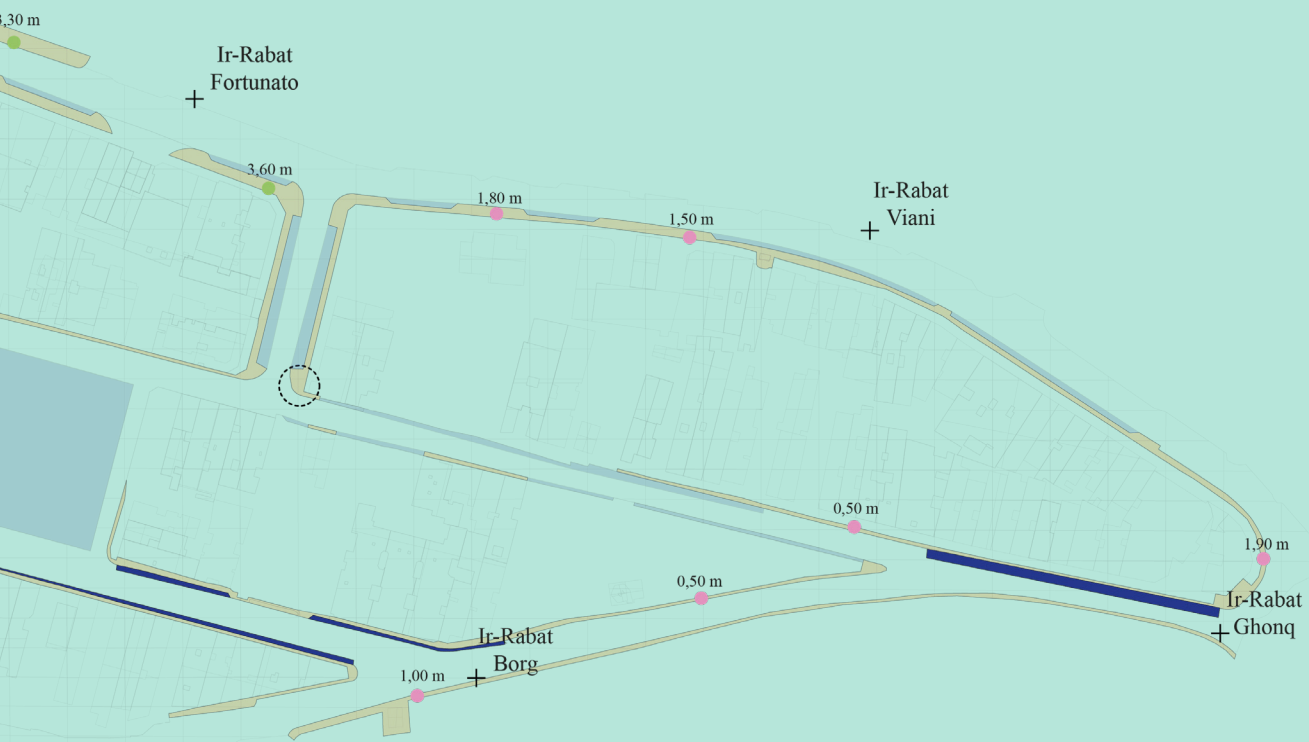
**TPL and slow mobility**

- + BUS STOP
- REGULAR PARKING SPACE
- ▨ PARKING SPACE WITH STRATEGIC FUNCTION
- PUBLIC SPACES
- PEDESTRIAN PATH
- UNREGULAR PARKING SPACE





Source: mobilita.org







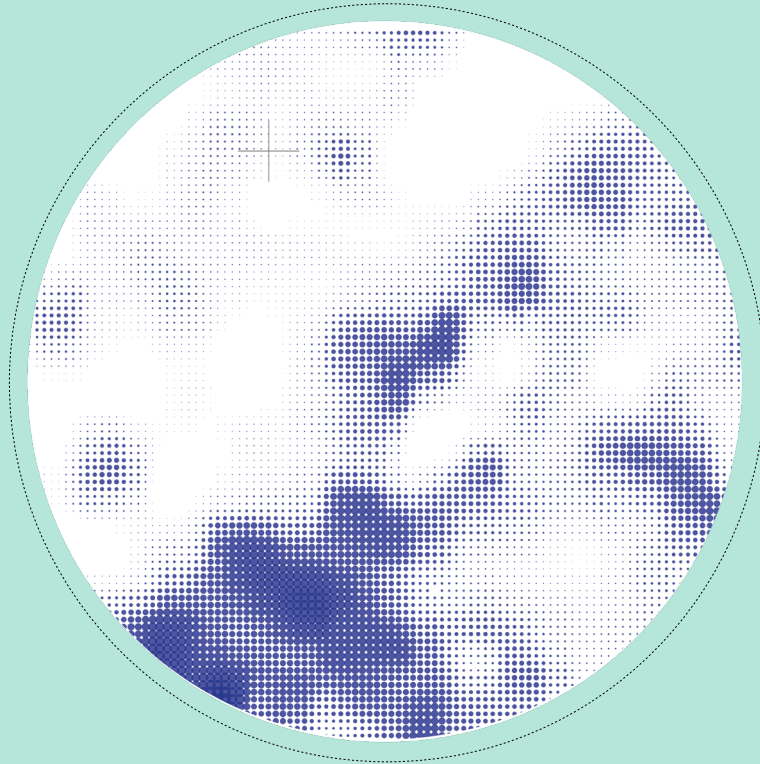


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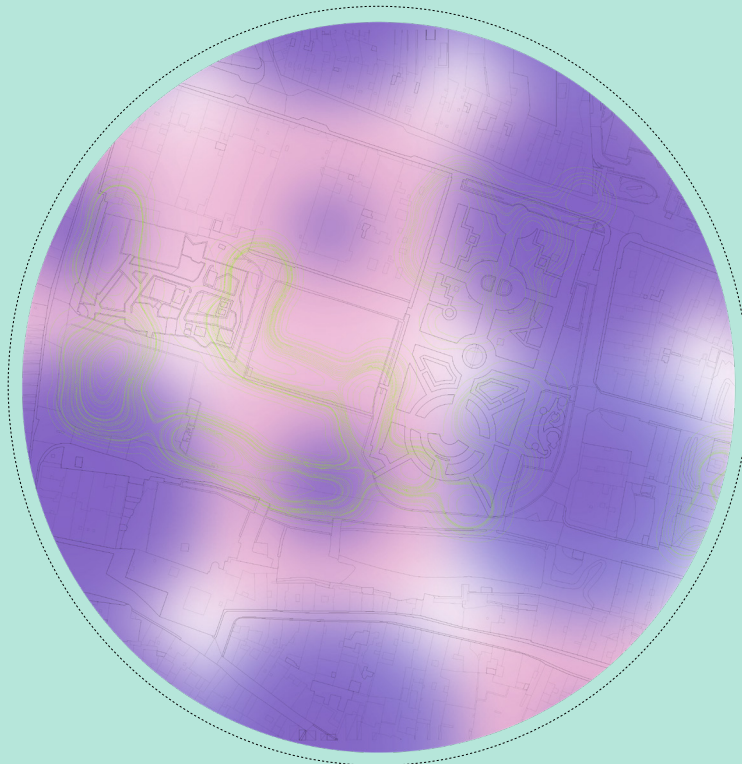
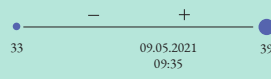
LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
STRATEGIES







### Temperature



### Humidity and trees

- STRESS MOISTURE
- MOISTURE
- TREES



## 5

LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
STRATEGIES

V.Park Garden is envisioned as a planetary garden, serving as an incubator for local biodiversity and its genetic repository. Its regeneration represents a new way of thinking about the relationship between humans and their settlements with the natural world. This will generate a new consciousness around the impact of human action.

The process is achieved over time and is self-propagating. It is managed by embedding a gradient of interconnected open spaces within the city's fabric, landscaping urban spaces for improved urban environments, and reducing the heat-sink effect. Additionally, it promotes biodiversity and ecology on land, serving as a place of maximum biodiversity and the genetic basin of Gozo's ecologies. V.Park is also considered a "garden in movement" where nature acts and regulates itself without being subjected to imposed artificial logic. It is effectively a museum of local botanical science in the open air.

In light of the previous considerations, the design project aims to be a place for implementing new forms and new design logics, reflecting both the ethical responsibilities of a new way of thinking about design and the aesthetics of nature.

As a place of discontinuity and renewal, V.Park demonstrates how nature, in its forms and logic, can become both a design infrastructure and a metaphor for a place that stands out for its rich landscape.

Gozo, through the rich presence of indigenous plants and their capacity to adapt, seems to recall a language that belongs to the world of nature, its forms, and modifications.

The Garden is composed of the following main points:

- Removal of existing built spaces to restore ecological and landscape continuity.
- A continuous pedestrian and cyclist-pedestrian public space along the entire stretch of the project, which expands to form a multiple public surface usable at different levels. The entire park, starting from the bike path to the edge, is paved with a 'solid', light-coloured, local material, allowing for unity and linguistic recognition of the project. In particular, the landscape is configured as continuous public seating at strategic points, transforming the surface into a place of continuous being, a diffused belvedere, and an area of rest at different levels.
- Through the opening of capillary paths, the park becomes a point of contact between the northern part of the urban piazza and the public space, increasing the physical and visual visibility between the different urban parts.
- The nucleus is configured as a civic place of the city and as a system of public spaces extended to crown and rediscover the identity of Victoria connected with its historical shape.





r OLIVIER

93.63 m

100.00 m

100.00 m

99.30 m

90.75 m

90.25 m

91.74 m

94.89 m

93.69 m

96.05 m

97.96 m

99.30 m

98.75 m

99.30 m

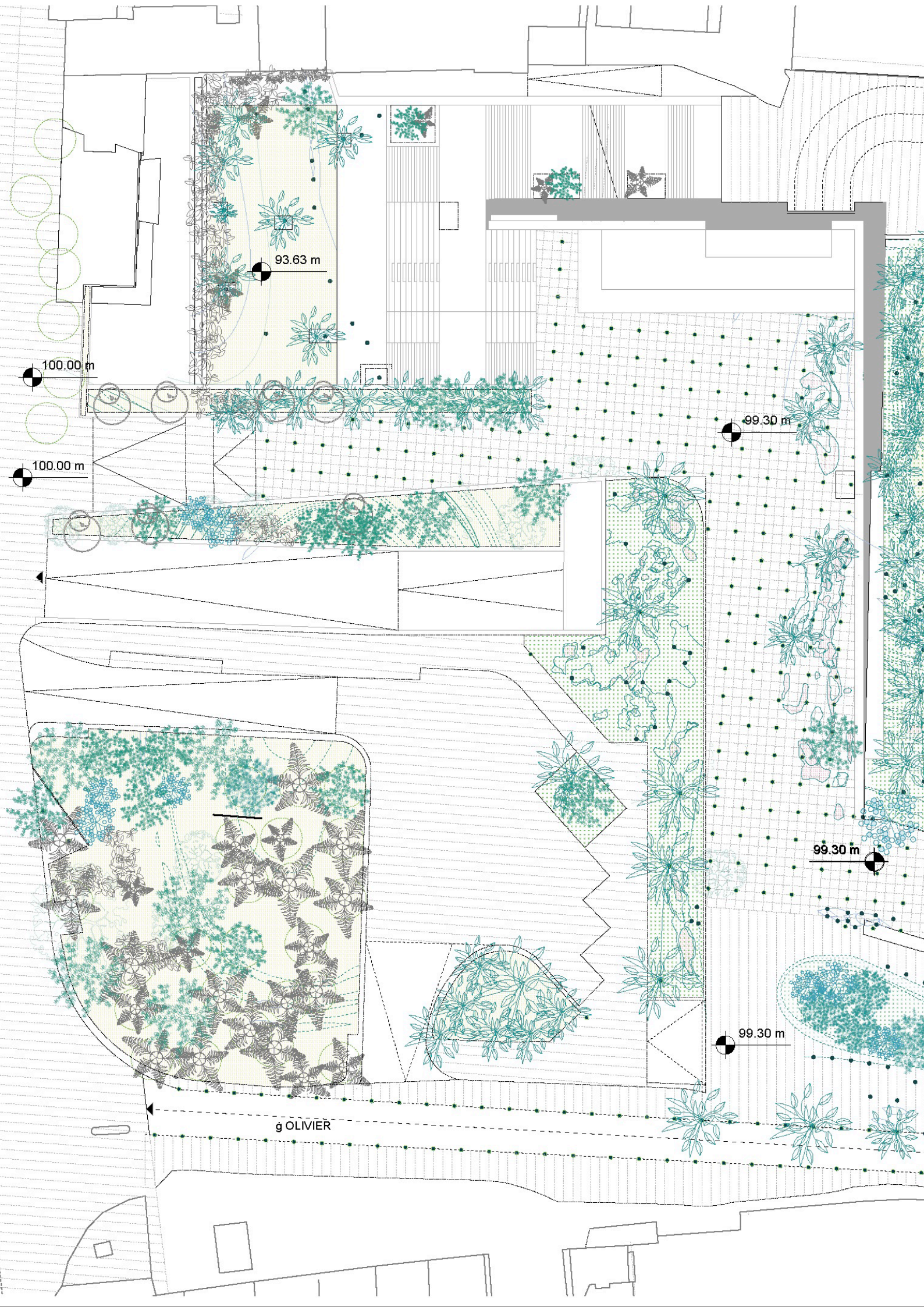
98.72 m

98.22 m

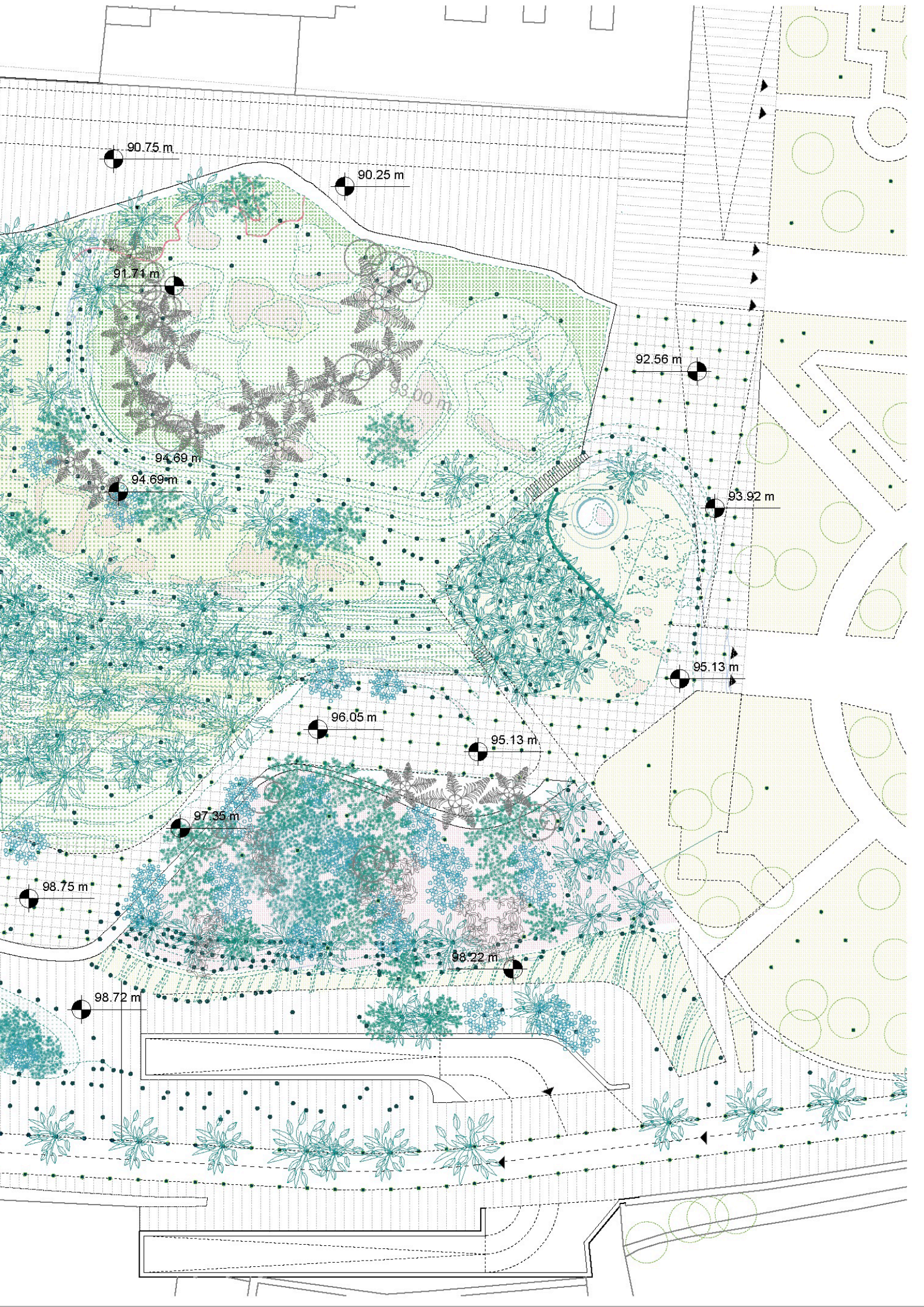


























































## 6.

## URBAN REGENERATION

*New functions, Landscape and Open Spaces*

The project will involve a process of urban regeneration and molecular actions on the area, based on the territorial strategies defined. As a result, the city is divided into typological strategies, and its border intercepts important transformation and cultural landmarks (such as the new Gozo Museum, the theatres, The Aquatic Centre, Gozo Education Hub, etc.).

The project envisages an abacus of actions defining the times and steps of the progressive capillary transformation of the place. It provides essential infrastructure for achieving the final outcomes, and is based on the following actions:

- Implementing slow mobility networks through better traffic organization and a reassessment of community needs;
- Decreasing vehicular traffic in favour of bicycles, pedestrians, and public transportation;
- Improving public proximity to a bus stop;
- Directing contact and accessibility to the new V.Park;
- Enhancing the visibility of urban viewpoints and their relationship with the surrounding landscape;
- Increasing public space with related leisure facilities;

- Including new strategic urban regeneration functions (such as markets, bar, etc.);
- Integrating with historical pedestrian routes;
- Gradual transformation of ground functions to define a new neighborhood or tourism functions.

The process is articulated to answer ecological needs, with implementation of the ecologic process for heat-sink mitigation and improvement of public wellbeing. Public ownership of the change process is empowered through greening initiatives by incentivizing individual and collective measures.

In the abacus of examples, focused areas will be illustrated and compared in their actual state with the respective design proposals. Each example will be classified according to content, with some showing new building construction, others focusing on planned functions and strategic areas, and others representing increased green space for creating new public spaces. Some diagrams will illustrate alternative parking solutions designed to avoid occupying spaces that could be designated for the community and its relationship with the natural and ecological dimension. Finally, some examples will show how existing mobility will change to generate new pedestrian and cycle solutions.



Each case will be accompanied by indices evaluating and, where possible, quantifying the implementation of slow mobility, the creation of new functions and public spaces, and the level of permeability of the area.

All actions aim to increase the sense of local identity and strengthen the relationship between habitants and the green spaces at their disposal. For tourists, they generate new attractiveness in the city.



# CONTENTS

**1 / Buildings**

**2 / New functions**

**3 / Permeability**

**4 / Strategic area**

**5 / Parking**

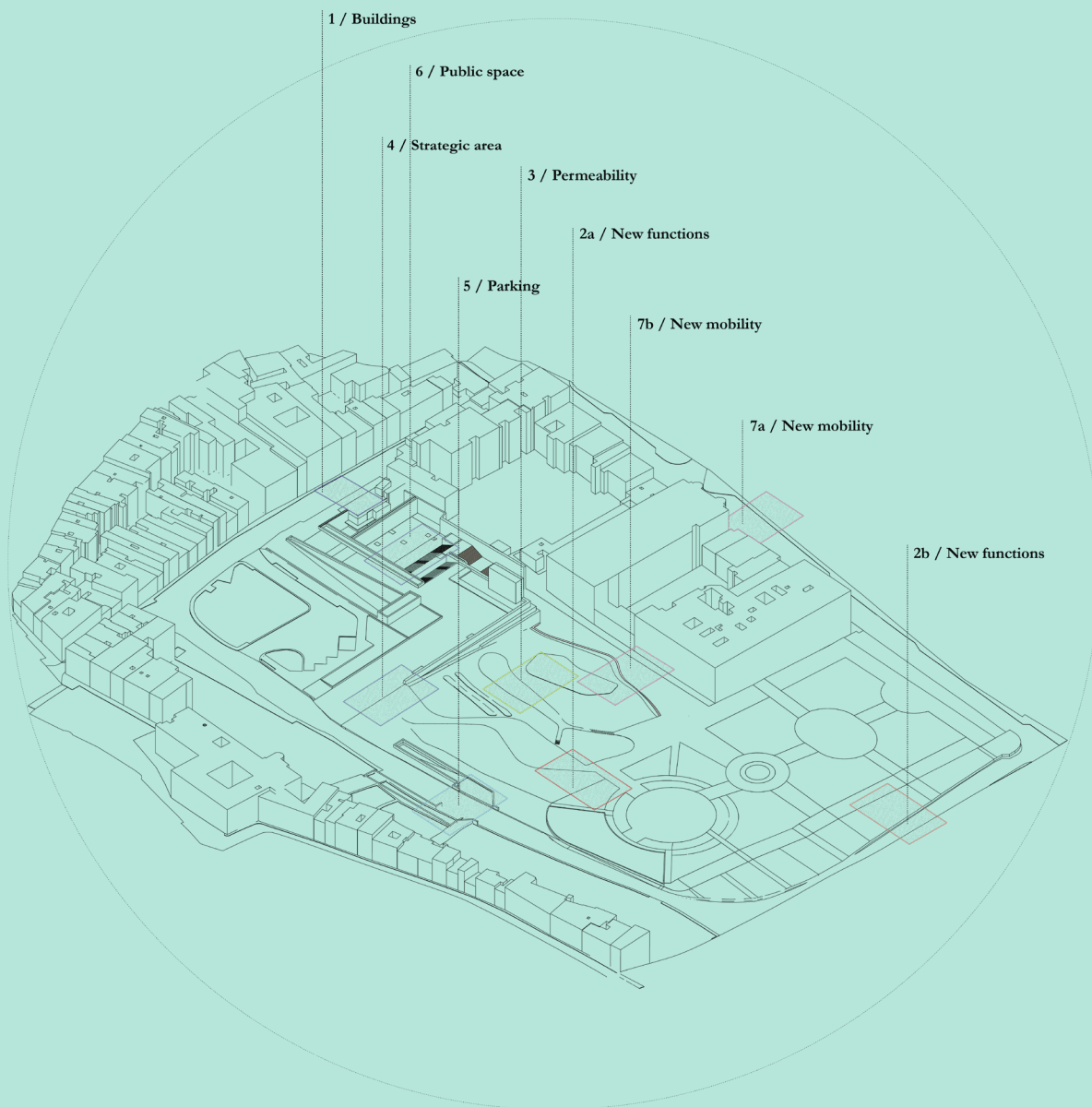
**6 / Public space**

**7 / New mobility**



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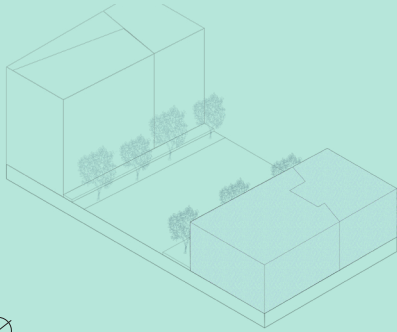
**VICTORIA**



General view of the area with different scenarios

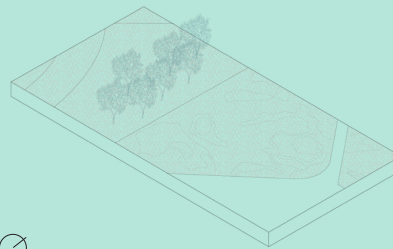


1 / Buildings



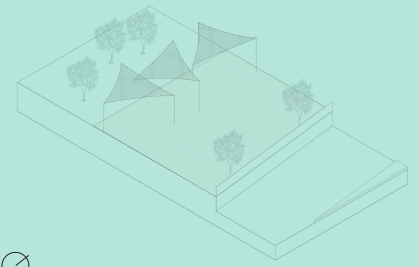
⌚  
 Slow mobility ●○○ New functions ●●●  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●○○

2a / New functions



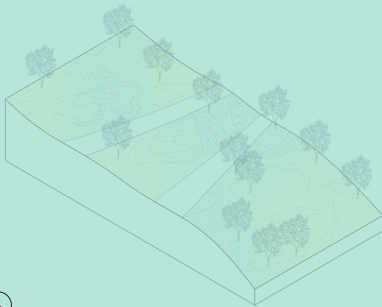
⌚  
 Slow mobility ○○○ New functions ●●●  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●○

2b / New functions



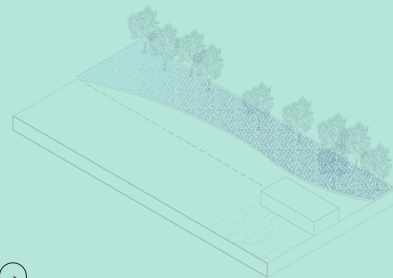
⌚  
 Slow mobility ●●○ New functions ●●●  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●○

3 / Permeability



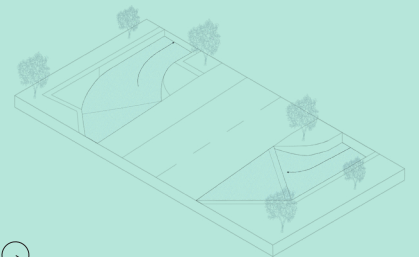
⌚  
 Slow mobility ○○○ New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●●

4 / Strategic area



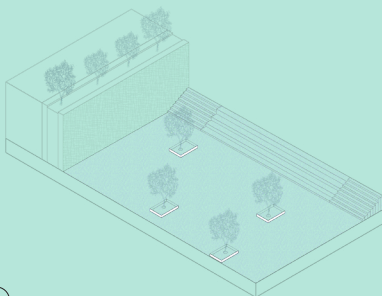
⌚  
 Slow mobility ○○○ New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●●

5 / Parking



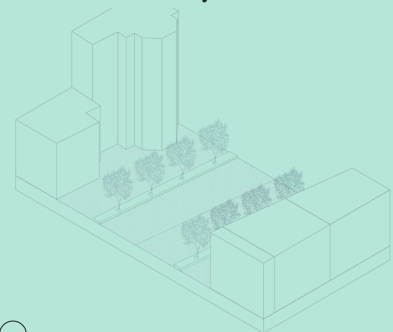
⌚  
 Slow mobility ○○○ New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●○○ Permeability ○○○

6 / Public space



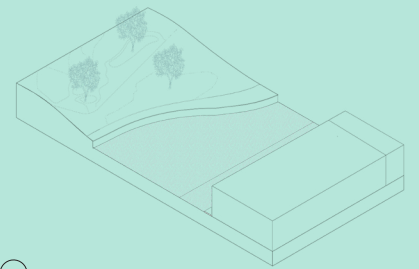
⌚  
 Slow mobility ●○○ New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●○

7a / New mobility



⌚  
 Slow mobility ●●● New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●○

7b / New mobility



⌚  
 Slow mobility ●●● New functions ●●○  
 Public space ●●● Permeability ●●○















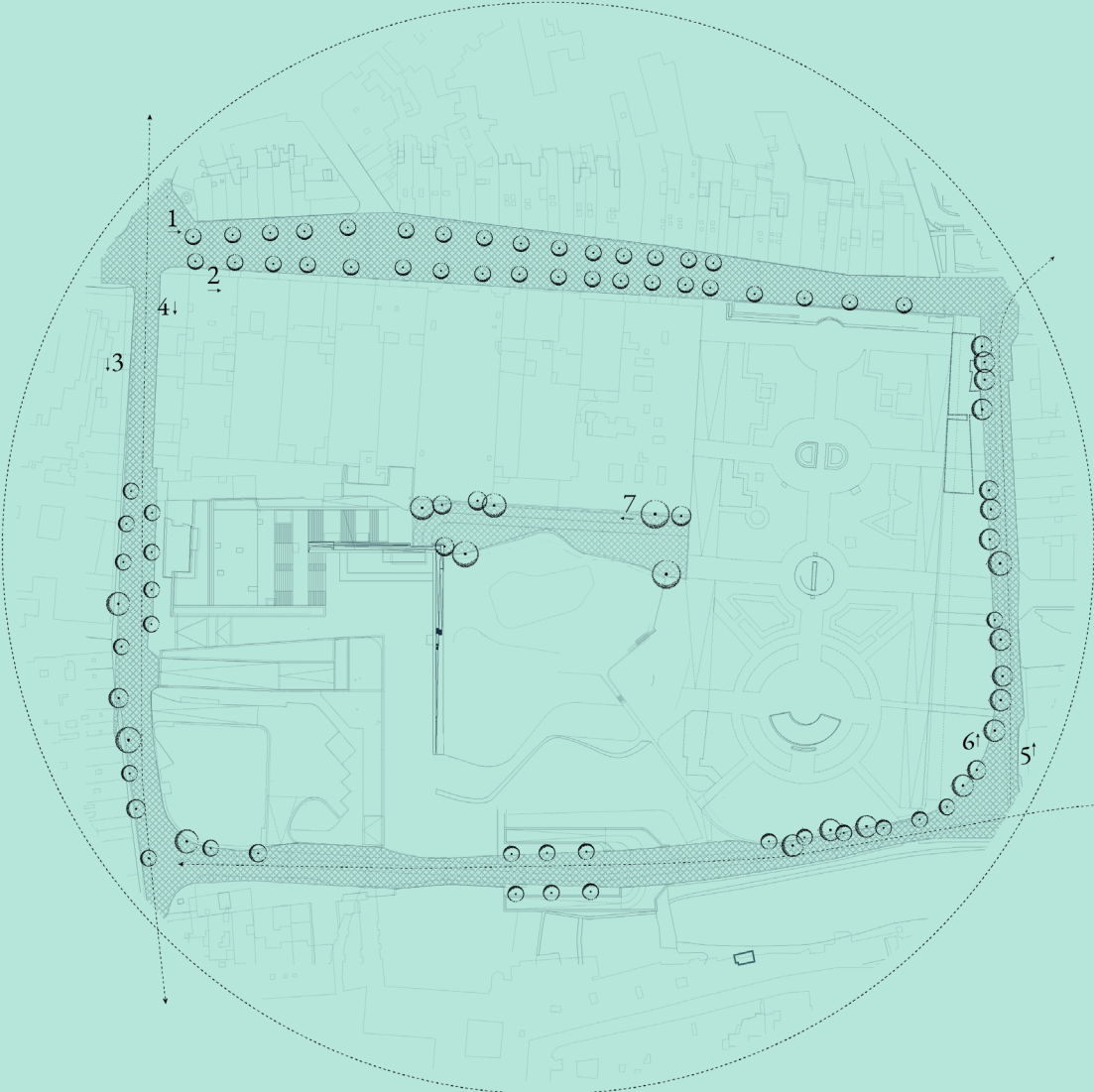






Urban elevation of the project area





General view of the project area and its new mobility





Proposed Mobility Vision

PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY CAR MOBILITY









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