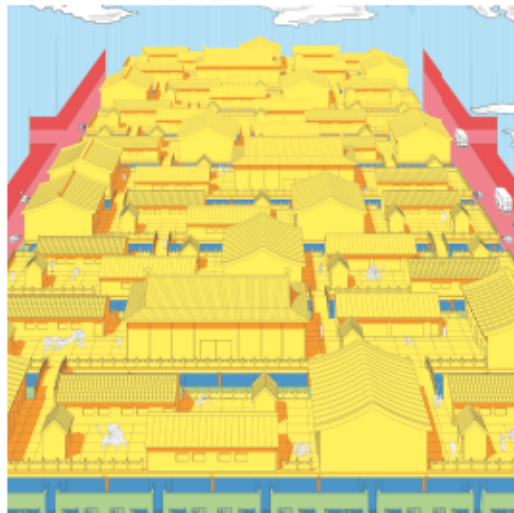




FOLKLORE TOWN
Renovation Typology For Old Urban District



FOLKLORE TOWN

Renovation Typology For Old Urban District

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ABSTRACT

"The future of architecture is culture." - Philip Johnson.

With the rise of globalization from the 20th century, the lacking of cultural identity in metropolis throughout the world has become an urgent issue, thus, it's resulting the loss of tradition and local cultures in the not distant future.

Hong Kong, former British colony, is one of the highly globalized metropolis with hundreds of homogeneous skyscraper in order to operate and maintain its status of an international financial center. Traditions, local culture and identity of this place are losing bit to bit, yet this result is turning itself to a "just another" globalized city in the world.

Every cities, no mater it is globalized, have their abandoned old urban district with full of local culture and tradition. However, most of them are suffered under disrepair or forgotten.

Responding to the uncertain future of tradition and culture of Hong Kong, this thesis takes a theoretical path in creating an alternative typology for renovation of metropolis' old urban district. The proposal introduces a compromise between the desire for renovation and the maintenance of its own local culture, thus to enhance its cultural identity in the global environment. While Hong Kong is taken as the targeted site.

Two major parts are contained in this thesis, which the first part focuses on the research related to the impact of globalization on cultural identities, and the condition of Hong Kong's old districts. The second part of the thesis proposes an alternative typology of renovating the old districts.

Folklore Town - Renovation Typology For Old Urban Districts

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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 20th century is marked by the increasing globalization and the establishment of a singular identity that is constantly in tension with traditional local identities. This trend on one hand has caused the spread of the modern movement, on the other hand has aggravated a result of the spread of globalization as a dominating world view from the end of that century.

Up to the present, globalization has shaped most of the metropolis into a homogeneous, boring and sadness place with a lot of culture-less high-rise buildings and iconic type of architectures that designed by celebrity architects or architecture firms, for instance Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind, Bjarke Ingels Group, etc. These "starchitects" have lead the architectural expression and design trend, each city has been generously gifted with a ridiculously expensive futuristic foreign object that without concerning the local culture or traditions. As a reaction to this sweeping trend, the phenomenon of expressing local culture in architecture is observed in many parts of the world.

Hong Kong, a metropolis with the cultural mix of Chinese roots and Western influence from its time as a British colony between 1841 and 1997^[1], is well developed as an international financial center and at the same time a homogeneous globalized city with losing its own local culture and traditions. Traditions and local culture of Hong Kong can easily be found in its old urban districts, yet most of this areas were redeveloped blindly to high-rise residential towers or shopping malls under the takeover of private developers and the abandonment by the government.

Reasons for the government abandonment of old residential districts related to the underestimation of districts' cultural value, settlement of the existing residence during the renovation, indifference of traditions, etc.

The design proposal, Folklore Town, responses to the crisis of old urban districts in Hong Kong. It brings the local culture, vibrancy and happiness back to the old districts with enhancing the quality of living for its residence.

1. Tsang, Steve (2004). *A Modern History of Hong Kong*. London: I.B. Tauris. p. 12.

1. GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

1.1 Reviewing globalization

The first use of the term "Globalization" as known was in a publication entitled "Towards New Education" in 1930. Some of the scholars claimed that the global activities can be traced long before the European Age of Discovery or even to the third millennium BC.^[1] Yet the rapid spread of the globalization is in early 20th century undeniably.

Globalization is mostly involved to the economical manifestation, the process of increasing the interdependence of nations and the financial structures. It has also accelerated as technological progress in transportation and communication, thus caused a number of new trends are developed, for instance greater international mobility of commodities, finance, people and an increase in information flow.^[2]

With definition a German sociologist and philosopher by Jürgen Habermas, "Globalization is meant the cumulative processes of a worldwide expansion of trade and production, commodity and financial markets, fashions, the media and computer programs, news and communication networks, transportation systems and flows of migration, the risks engendered by large-scale technology, environmental damage and epidemics, as well as organized crime and terrorism."^[3]

In the early 20th century, rapid developments of technologies, organizations, legal systems and infrastructure have provided and encouraged such mobility and communication networks, which in turn has motivated

greater international cultural exchange and diversity. As a consequence, a new global culture has arisen which changes the form of communities and the meaning of the nations sovereignty and provides a greater economic opportunity for all.

The rise of globalization has aroused two opposite views in the society, on one hand, the pro-globalization group praised that globalization brings about provided opportunities for everyone, and that increased competition makes agents of production more efficient. They promoted multi-culturalism and accommodating homogenization of a hybrid nature through the promotion of western values of modernity.

On the other hand, the anti-globalization group against globalization with one of the reasons that some people with resources-deprived are unable to function as globalization allows an unethical domination by powerful individuals, companies and institutions. And also argues the hybridity proposed by the pro-globalization group is somehow seen as an erosion of local cultures, national borders and sovereignty.

Globalization, however, is an on going process in the worldwide development and it will never been prevented, thus the discussion of globalization has moved to a discussion on the alternative forms of globalization rather than on accepting or rejecting it, and to ponder adapting the trend of globalization in the impact of new technologies both positively and negatively.^[4]

1. Barry Gills and William R. Thompson. (2006). Globalization and Global History. London: Routledge. p.127.

2. Albirow, Martin and Elizabeth King. (1990). Globalization, Knowledge and Society. London: Sage publications.

3. Jürgen Habermas. (2006). The Divided West. Cambridge: Polity Press. p175.

4. Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson. (1996, 1999, 2009). Globalization in Question: The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance. Cambridge: Polity Press.

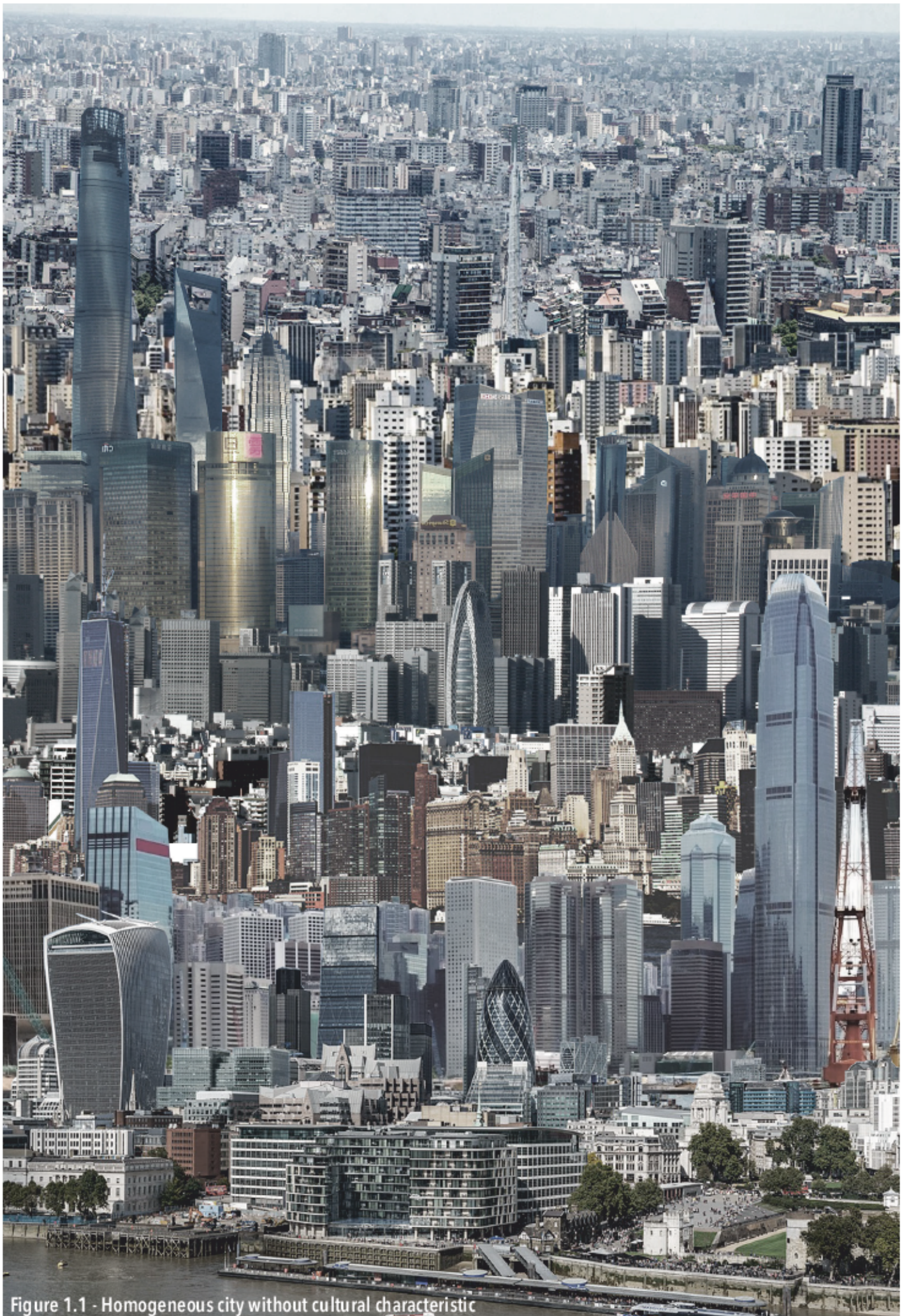


Figure 1.1 - Homogeneous city without cultural characteristic

1.2 Globalization and architecture

Globalization is interdependence with technology, which has played an important role in transforming architecture throughout its history. Architecture is always linked to the technological and industrial development of its particular generation, this phenomenon directly shapes the architecture form and it is, at the same time, one of the most major reasons for the abrupt transformation in architecture design after the spread out of globalization.

In the beginning of 20th century, response to the new industry, technologies, mobility, and social and political orders that promoted by the globalization, a brand new trend of architecture design, Modern Movement, became the dominant tendency in Western architecture, Europe and the United States, and very rapidly extend over the world.

Globalization development corresponded very closely to the ascendancy of Modern Movement as the revolutions in technology, engineering and building materials. In 1948, the foundations of globalization were finally laid, modernism had so repealed traditional architecture that it came to be described as simply "modern".^[1] Modernism was a north-Atlantic cultural phenomenon. It was based on the ideals of the same Western Enlightenment thinking that informed globalization: rationality, scientific innovation, progress and the end of tradition.^[2]

Other reasons to result the spreading of Modern Movement in the mentioned period of time included the rise of displeasure with architecture designs with incorporated a mixing decorative features from different generations that does not related to functions, needs for huge numbers of commercial and civic buildings to serve the rapidly industrializing society and the development of new construction techniques with the use of steel, reinforced

concrete, glass, etc.^[3](Figure 1.2)

Modern Movement, also as Modernism, encompasses different styles like International style, Futurism, Constructivism, De Stijl, Bauhaus, etc. Most of them reject the traditional and historical styles of architecture for committing the concept that architecture could provide a social utopia and a healthy built environment in which common life could prosper. These kind of modern styles proposed different design principals but generally share the same basic characters, for instance the asymmetrical form, the use of general cubic or cylindrical shapes, flat roofs, the use of modern material and the absence of ornament. (Figure 1.3)

From the latter half of the 20th century, architecture design was characterized by a new trend in relation to the globalization, which is the development of global design firms such as Gensler (1966), Kohn Pederson Fox (1976), Skidmore Owens & Merrill (1936), etc. They have network operations throughout North America, Europe and Asia. And this tendency is extended more aggressively to the 21th century.

In the last two decades, global architecture firms have been playing a significant role in city branding and in marketing real estate products, and this kind of competition between different countries is caused by the global culture of commerce that driven by changing consumer expectations, market opportunities, and business agendas. The developers raised great expectations toward the increase in the value of the buildings and places that celebrity architects or architecture firms have designed, for instance Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind, Bjarke Ingels Group, and toward positive urban and economic effects that could derive from the projects, such as the new and spectacular museum facilities and corporation headquarters. (Figure 1.4)

1. Henry Russell Hitchcock. (1948). Speaking at 'What is Happening to Modern Architecture?'. Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art XV.

2. Robert Adam. (2012). The Globalisation of Modern Architecture: The Impact of Politics, Economics and Social Change on Architecture and Urban Design Since 1990. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

3. Philip Johnson and Henry Russell Hitchcock. (1932). The International Style: Architecture since 1922. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Figure 1.2 - New construction techniques in the late 19th century



Reinforced concrete structure



Use of Glass

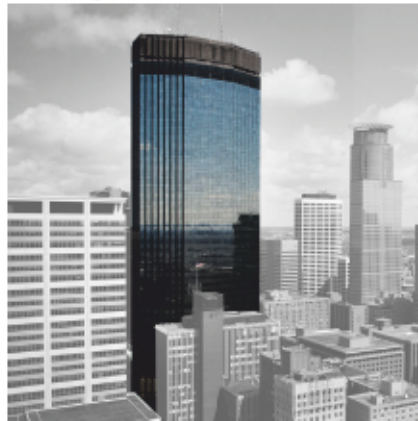


Steel structure

Figure 1.3 - Modern high-rise in late 20th century



Headquarters of the United Nations
Construction : 1948 - 1952
Architect: Le Corbusier



IDS Center
Construction : 1969 - 1972
Architect: Philip Johnson



IBM Plaza
Construction : 1969 - 1973
Architect: Mies van der Rohe

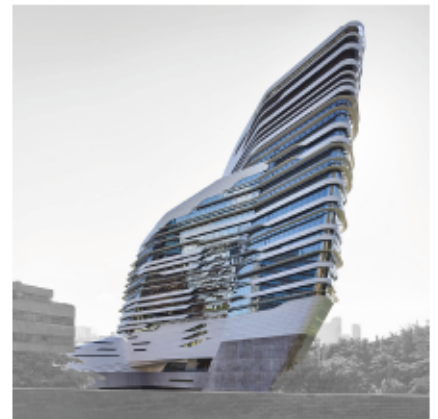
Figure 1.4 - Celebrity architects' work in the 21st century



Creative media centre
Construction : 2002 - 2011
Architect: Daniel Libeskind



OPUS Hong Kong
Construction : 2010 - 2012
Architect: Frank Gehry



Jockey Club Innovation Tower
Construction : 2007 - 2014
Architect: Zaha Hadid

1.3 Reviewing cultural identity

To define identity, the India's greatest architect Charles Correa mentioned "What is identity? Firstly, it is a process, and not a 'found' object. It may be likened to the trail left by civilization as it moves through history. The trail is the culture, or identity, of that civilization. Secondly, being a process, identity cannot be fabricated. We develop our identity by tackling what we perceive to be our real problems. Thirdly, identity is not a self-conscious thing."^[1] While the phrase "Cultural identity" conveys many different dimensions such as physical size, tangible versus symbolic, and known or experienced versus unknown or not experienced.

Cultural identity, in general, is the identity of belonging to a group and the part of a person's self-conception and self-perception, and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture.^[3] The reason of cultural differences is based on humans have existed in distinct places on earth,

living in distinct conditions, ideological and geographical like religion and climate. The mixture of these factors with the ongoing of time and major events that happened has blended to create an identity of people who inhabit that region.

Various cultures exist around the world and they are imprints on the people and are passed down from one generation to another.(Figure 1.5) The culture affects the lives of the people in many sophisticated ways, which include how they live their daily lives, how they deal with other people. This might be due to the ideological factors that created their culture. Therefore, identity makes who we are and shows how we are different to each others.

Figure 1.5 - Traditional Festival



Chinese new year in Hong Kong



Carnival of Venice in Italian



King's Day in Amsterdam

1. Charles Correa. (1983). Quest for identity. In Proceedings of the Seminar: Exploring Architecture in Islamic Cultures (Vol. 1).

2. Moha Ennaji. (2005). Multilingualism, Cultural Identity, and Education in Morocco, Springer Science & Business Media. USA: Springer US. p.19-23.

1.4 Cultural identity and architecture

"Greek temples, Roman basilicas and medieval cathedrals are significant to us as creations of a whole epoch rather than as works of individual architects. Who asks the names of these builders? Of what significance are the fortuitous personalities of their creators? Such buildings are impersonal by their very nature. They are pure expressions of their time." - Mies van der Rohe.

Architecture is one of the most important elements to express the history and it plays a significant role in determining the kind of changes throughout the years. (Figure 1.6) Buildings that have been built from 20th century are the record to study how the architecture design is changed with the concept that globalization has promoted and how the national identity be homogenized.

Globalization has become a catch phrase in architecture associated with a loss of national and cultural identity. Charles

Jencks, cultural theorist and architectural historian at 20th century, recalls the meeting of forty-eight intellectuals in the summer of 1989 to discuss the loss of cultural identity "exactly what period do we inhabit? More simply put, who are we? Is there still such a thing as national identity?" He continues to comment: "Our period might be seen in terms of more powerful forces that shape it politics, social movements, or economics."⁽¹⁾

There seems to be a general consensus that identity plays a significant role for the continuity of human culture. Place exists not only physically but also in peoples' minds as memories. The identity of a specific place becomes interesting when it brings about a certain experience, evoking associations or memories.

Figure 1.6 - Traditional Architecture



China



Denmark



India

1. Charles Jencks. (1996). What Is Post-Modernism?. London: Academy Editions. p. 11.

1.5 Architecture design under the impact of globalization

The tension on the forces of globalization has been debated widely, its impact can be found on local architecture and the efforts to ensure local identity and distinctiveness through architecture. Architects very often find themselves at the center of this two opposing forces as a result of past or present contrasting cultures and architectures, along with their attendant values and methods of expression. Globalization, therefore, provides opportunities to architecture design in both positive and negative ways.

With positive opportunities, globalization is the intensification of worldwide social relations that link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.^[1] As the result, it is considered a discourse of knowledge that elevates awareness of the links between various scales of life, and it accelerates the process of invention, dissemination of new forms, using new technologies and materials in response to the change of functional and sensibilities needs.

With negative impacts, globalization is seen as threaten of sovereignty of nations, individuals and local cultures. Rapid urbanization and technological advances have resulted in more and more standardization of built environments, depriving human habitats of cultural and regional identity, in which the trend of standardization is becoming an international malaise as the same building methods, materials, and styles are applied. Researcher of globalization Theodore Levitt mentioned that, "Everywhere everything gets more and more like everything else as the world's preference structure is relentlessly homogenized."^[2] Some force against globalization seeks to safeguard and promulgate established indigenous architectural traditions, forms, decorative motifs, and technologies.

British architect and theorist Neil Leach stated:

"Architecture is not the autonomous art it is often held out to be. Buildings are designed and constructed within a complex web of social and political concern."^[3] Architecture advocates historical continuity, cultural diversity, and preservation of identity, all symbolized by a particular architectural vocabulary, just as spoken languages and local dialects impart identity. Architecture by its nature cannot be absolutely autonomous. Architecture should able to build relationships with other fields such as culture, society and technology. Even those who assert architecture's autonomy will not deny, at the very least, its relation to its own history.^[4]

For instance, globalization has allowed the advanced nations like the western nations to pass their architectural heritage to Middle Eastern nations, which has caused a significant loss of identity for these less developed nations. The lack of development in third world nations in general has led to architects in these regions of the world to blindly copy and apply architectural designs that are dominant in other leading parts of the world.

For some, globalization entails the Westernization of the world, for some see globalization as generating increasing homogeneity, while others see it producing diversity and heterogeneity through increased hybridization. Global change represents new problems that challenge our ability to achieve sustainable development. Architecture design nowadays involves understanding the matrix of global and local forces, domination and resistance, as well as a conditions of rapid change and great transformation brought about by the global restructuring of capital and multidimensional effects of trends and new technologies.

The followings are cases from former Pritzker Prize winners that take advantages of globalization and at the same time considering the culture aspects. (Figure 1.7, 1.8)

1. Ayse Oncu and Petra Weyland. (1997). *Space, Culture and Power: New Identities in Globalizing Cities*. London: Zed Books.

2. Theodore Levitt. (1983). *Harvard Business Review - The Globalization of Markets*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/1983/05/the-globalization-of-markets>.

3. Neil Leach. (1997). *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*. London: Routledge.

4. Andrew Anker, Mark Kessler and W. Scott Clark. (1984). *Autonomous Architecture: The Harvard Architecture Review*, Volume 3, Winter 1984. US: The M.I.T. Press.

Figure 1.7 - New Academy Of Art (2012), Pritzker Prize 2012 laureate - Wang Shu (China)



The form is known as responding the traditional Chinese architecture, one of the main features is the shape of historical curved roofs. Some of facades were constituted by a large collection of over two millions pieces of tiles with different ages and sizes that salvaged from the demolished traditional houses in China.

Figure 1.8 - Oita Prefectural Art Museum (2015), Pritzker Prize 2014 laureate - Shigeru Ban (Japan)



The street-side facade is composed of operable bi-folding glass doors to allow visitors entering freely. This approach is borne from the traditional Japanese "Engawa". (a covered outdoor space bordering the perimeter of traditional Japanese houses) The wooden façade and grid shell roof structure spans represent the historic Japanese building structure with combining the modern technologies and the traditional techniques.

2. HONG KONG

2.1 Brief introduction - Finance, Living and Culture

Hong Kong, one of the post-colonial city in China, is a cosmopolitan metropolis with the fourth-most densely populated region in the world with over 7.3 million Hongkongers of various nationalities in a territory of 1,104 km², where the old tradition blends perfectly with Western culture. It was formerly a colony of the British Empire from 1841 to 1997 with occupation of Japanese military from 1941 to 1945.^[1] (Figure 2.1) And on 1 July 1997, sovereignty of Hong Kong was transferred back to the China with ending over one and a half centuries of British rule.

In the late 20th century with the rapid development of Hong Kong, it is, nowadays, one of the most significant global financial centers, holding the highest Financial Development Index score and consistently ranking as the most competitive and freest economic area in the world.^[2] The territory features the most skyscrapers in the world, surrounding Victoria Harbor, which lies in the center of the city's dense urban region. As a result of the lack of space and demand for construction, few older buildings remain, and the city is becoming a center for modern architecture and skyscrapers. Hong Kong has over 7,840 high-rise buildings, 1,303 of which are skyscrapers standing taller than 100m with 316 buildings over 150m.^[3] The skyline of Hong Kong Island is famed for its unique arrangement, with surrounding mountains and Victoria Harbor complementing the rows of skyscrapers along the shore. (Figure 2.2)

For the living environment, most of the Hong Kong

citizens are suffering from the housing shortage issue. Housing prices are already high in Hong Kong, further driving up prices as the inadequate supply of land fuels speculation. For instance, buying a private property, one must prepares to pay a hefty deposit, a standard 30 per cent down payment for a 500 sq ft flat in the urban area would be between HK\$2 million and HK\$3 million. Under this issue, an estimated 200,000 Hong Kong residents are living in inadequate housing.

Hong Kong is a city with cultural mix of the territory's Chinese roots with Western influence from its time as a British colony. Though the vast majority of the population is ethnically Chinese, with the long period of colonial administration, British-style education, a separate political system and sustained exposure to Western culture have resulted in a distinct cultural identity from that of mainland China. Religion in Hong Kong is varied, according to official statistics for the year 2010, about 50% of the utter population belongs to organized religions, specifically there are: 1.5 million Hong Kong Buddhists, 1 million Taoists, 480,000 Protestants, 353,000 Catholics, 220,000 Muslims, 40,000 Hindus, 10,000 Sikhs, and other smaller communities.^[4]

There are some distinctive holidays that are celebrated in Hong Kong as a part of eastern culture. The best-known traditional celebrations is Lunar New Year and Hongkongers go to flower fairs by tradition during the time. Unfortunately, some traditional celebrations are being neglected in the new generation. (Figure 2.3)

1. Wordie, Jason. (2002). Streets: Exploring Hong Kong Island. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

2. China Development Institute. The Global Financial Centres Index 22. (2017). Retrieved From http://www.longfinance.net/images/gfci/gfci_22.pdf.

3. CTBUH. (2015). City Lists. Retrieved from <http://www.skyscrapercenter.com/cities>.

4. Hong Kong Government. (2010). 2010 Yearbook - Religion. Retrieved from <https://www.yearbook.gov.hk/2010/en/pdf/E18.pdf>.

Figure 2.1 - Hong Kong in the early 20th century



Hong Kong post office



Waterfront



Hong Kong Supreme Court

Figure 2.2 - Victoria Harbour



View from the peak

Figure 2.3 - Traditional celebrations and culture



Flower market in Lunar New Year



Traditional temple



Traditional store

2.2 Built environment of Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a territory with 2,755 km² and consists of three parts, named as Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. As many of Hong Kong's terrain is hilly to mountainous with steep slopes, less than 25% of the territory's landmass is developed, while the majority is grassland, woodland, shrubland, and agricultural land.^[1] About 40% of the remaining land area is reserved as country parks and nature reserves.^[2] Most of the territory's urban development exists along the northern edge of Hong Kong Island, on Kowloon, and in scattered settlements throughout the New Territories.

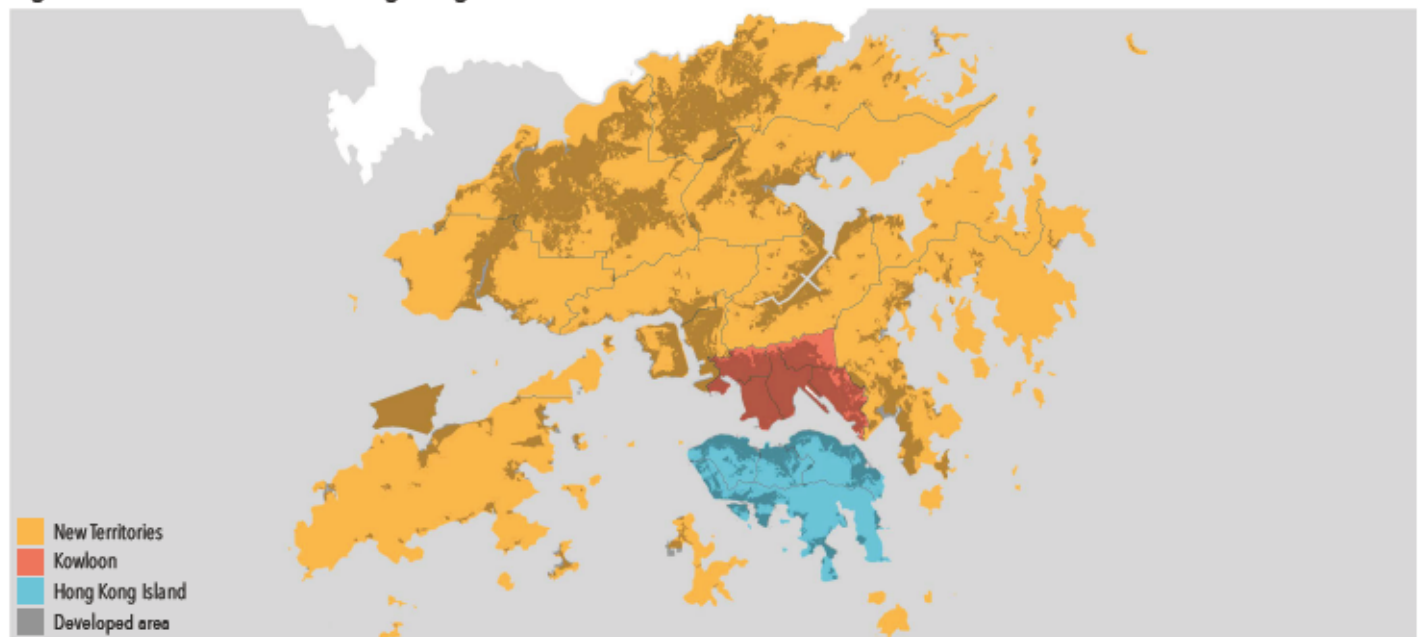
Hong Kong Island is an island in the southern part of Hong Kong. It is the central business district and the core urban area with many headquarters of multinational financial services corporations. This area is, at the same time, the historical, political and economic centre of Hong Kong as it was the first district that be colorized by the British Empire.

Instead of the high-rise office towers, some old style residential buildings have been built and bitty distributed in this district during the city development.

Kowloon is a flat land in the northern part of Hong Kong with surrounded by the mountain ranges. Different to the Hong Kong Island as the financial center, Kowloon is full of residential building that developed in the early 20th century and it is the most populous urban area in Hong Kong.

The New Territories makes up 86.2% of Hong Kong's territory, and contains around half of the population of Hong Kong. It comprised rural areas and over 200 outlying Islands.^[3] In the late 1970s with the rapid population growth, new town developments have been carried out in some of the New Territories area in order to accommodate the population.

Figure 2.4 - Distribution of Hong Kong^[4]



1. Planning Department. (2016). Land Utilization in Hong Kong 2016, Planning Data. Retrieved from https://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/info_serv/statistic/landu.html.

2. Morton Brian, Harper Elizabeth. (1995). An Introduction to the Cape d'Aguilar Marine Reserve, Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. p.9.

3. Encyclopædia Britannica. (2008). New Territories - region, Hong Kong, China. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/place/New-Territories>.

4. Hong Kong Planning Department. (2015). Land Utilization in Hong Kong 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.mypolyuweb.hk/lswong/homepage/vegetation/LULC.html>

2.3 Architecture in Hong Kong

With the background of global financial centre and a rich cultural communication to the west, Hong Kong contained contemporary architectures as well as traditional British architectures and Chinese architectures. Unfortunately, due to the lack of available land, only few historical buildings remain in the urban areas. Hence, Hong Kong becomes a centre of modern architecture as the result of clearing away older buildings in order to make space for newer, larger buildings.

Prior to the British settlement of Hong Kong in 1841, architecture in Hong Kong was predominantly in Chinese style, and most of them are walled villages, mansion and temple in the rural area.

During the colony of the British Empire, British architecture is introduced to Hong Kong deservedly. And at the same time Hong Kong was facing an issue that the local population increased substantially, and as a result a very

unique building style "Tong Lau" , tenement buildings built in late 19th century to the 1960s designed for both residential and commercial uses in Hong Kong⁽¹⁾, began to appear.

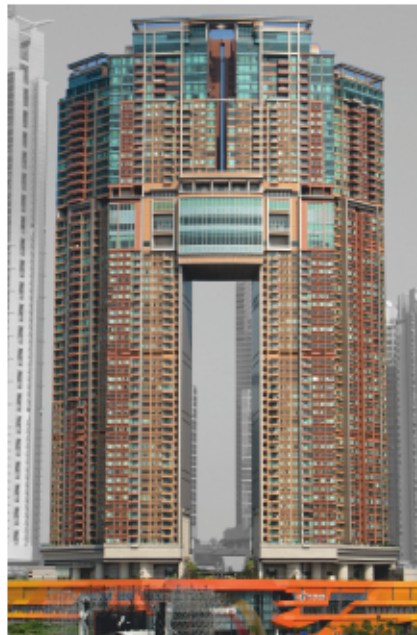
This kind of old style residential building is one of the representative for Hong Kong culture. However, most of them are under the risk of collapse and taking away by the private developer.

In the late 1990s, the primary demand for high-rise buildings was in and around the urban area. Many shopping mall, commercial tower and residential towers built in the past two decades are among the tallest in the world. Besides, the Hong Kong at the same time becomes a theme park of famous architecture, for instance I. M. Pei's Bank of China Tower, Frank Gehry's Victoria Peak, Zaha Hadid's Innovation Tower, Daniel Libeskind's Creative Media Centre, etc.

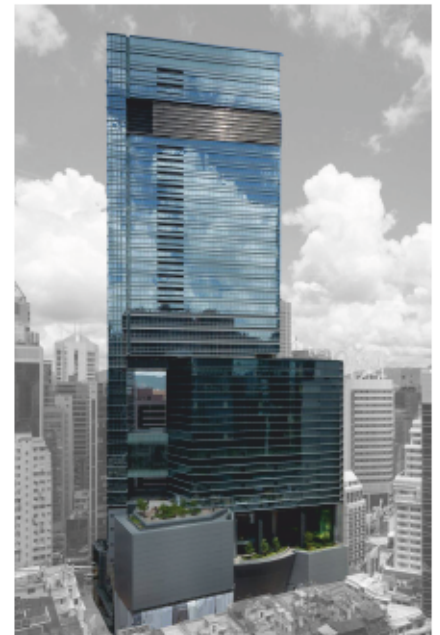
Figure 2.5 - Architecture in Hong Kong



"Tong Lau"



New residential development



Commercial complex

1. David Bellis. (2016). Tong Lau, the Hong Kong shophouse. Retrieved from <https://gwulo.com/node/34384>



Figure 2.6 - Homogeneous residential tower in Hong Kong

2.4 Old districts in Hong Kong

At present, there are about 4,000 private buildings that are 50 or more years old within the metro area of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and other old districts. This number will increase by 500 a year over the next decade.¹⁾ (Figure 2.6)

The conditions of old buildings is unsatisfactory as they are under the risk of collapse and posing threats to public safety. Residence are mostly the elderly and do not able to afford the repair hence to cause the poor living quality. (Figure 2.7)

Redevelopment projects by the government and private developers on the old districts typically involve the wholesale demolition of urban districts and the consolidation of numerous city blocks to accommodate large-scale commercial development. This approach is caused by underestimating the importance of the old urban districts cultural value, and frequently criticized for destroying cultural heritage, unique local character, and touchstones of collective memory. Some existing local stores cannot return to the area because most could not afford the increased rents, and the redeveloped area is finally become "just another" culture-less crest mixed-use complex.

Old store with operated for over fifty years like bakery, grocery store, craft factory, Cantonese cafe, tea house, pawnshop, tailors will be gone under the redevelopment of private developer. All of them are components to form our collective memory, which is the new built culture-less shopping mall can never offer the city. Hence, there is a need for a suitable old districts renovation typology to compromise between the desire for renovation and the maintenance of city own local culture.

Figure 2.7 - Old urban district



Figure 2.8 - Risk of collapse



1. Urban Renewal Authority. (2011). Urban Renewal Strategy. Retrieved from https://www.ura.org.hk/f/page/1869/4861/URS_eng_2011.pdf

2.5 Challenge on renovating old districts

Renovation of old urban districts is challenged by several aspects, which included settlement of existing residence, cultural continuity, enhancement of residence living quality, etc.

Urban renewal involves a large number of existing inhabitants, government normally evicts the residents and merchants to other developed district, and offers them an apartment or a store temporarily or permanently. The original community and economic networks are dismantled as the compensation that government offers to displaced residents and merchants is rarely sufficient to permit them to return to the affected district.

Therefore, the district after redevelopment will never maintain its own original local culture within the streetscape. (Figure 2.8) Meanwhile there is no more streets as they are often closed and combining smaller urban blocks into larger superblocks. (Figure 2.9)

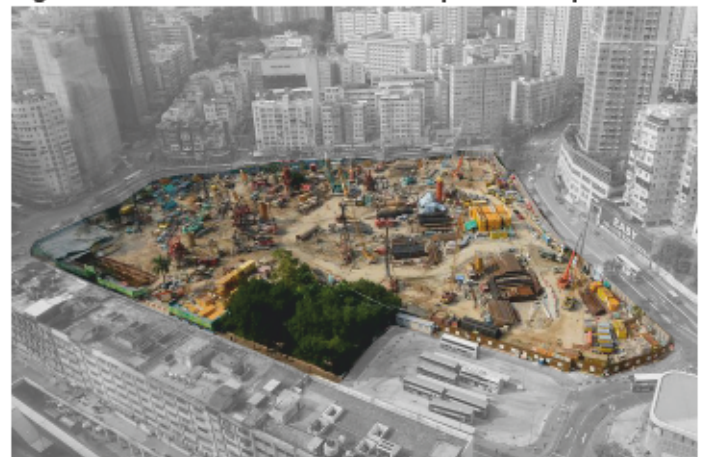
When renovating old urban districts, the aim is to revitalize the space with integrity and dignity, but not to override the old with new design features. Otherwise the heritage will vanish and in the future nobody will be aware that the old things ever existed.

Most of the Hongkonger see old districts as important relics of their past, the idea of redevelopment is strongly opposed. The fear is that doing so may forever erase part of Hong Kong's legacy. However, important though is to maintain a certain degree of respect for the past, as we can never doubt that Hong Kong is a modern city. Many of the old districts are no longer fit for people to live in.

Figure 2.9 - Streetscape of old district



Figure 2.10 - Old district is redeveloped to a superblock



3. FOLKLORE TOWN

3.1 Renovation typology for old urban district

Old urban districts comprise history, local culture and tradition, yet most of them are suffered under disrepair and forgotten. This kind of intangible cultural heritages will be lost completely in someday soon if old districts are blindly dismantled with redeveloping a culture-less high-rise residential building.

The design proposal, Folklore Town, responses to the crisis of old urban districts in Hong Kong. It takes a theoretical path in creating an alternative typology for renovation of old urban districts, and introduces a compromise between the desire for renovation and the maintenance of its own local culture, thus enhancing its cultural identity in the global environment.

"Folklore town" aimed to find a new solution for: 1) Enhancing the cultural identity of a globalized city; 2) Culture preservation and continuity; 3) Renovation of old districts with happiness; 4) Settlement of existing residence during the renovation.

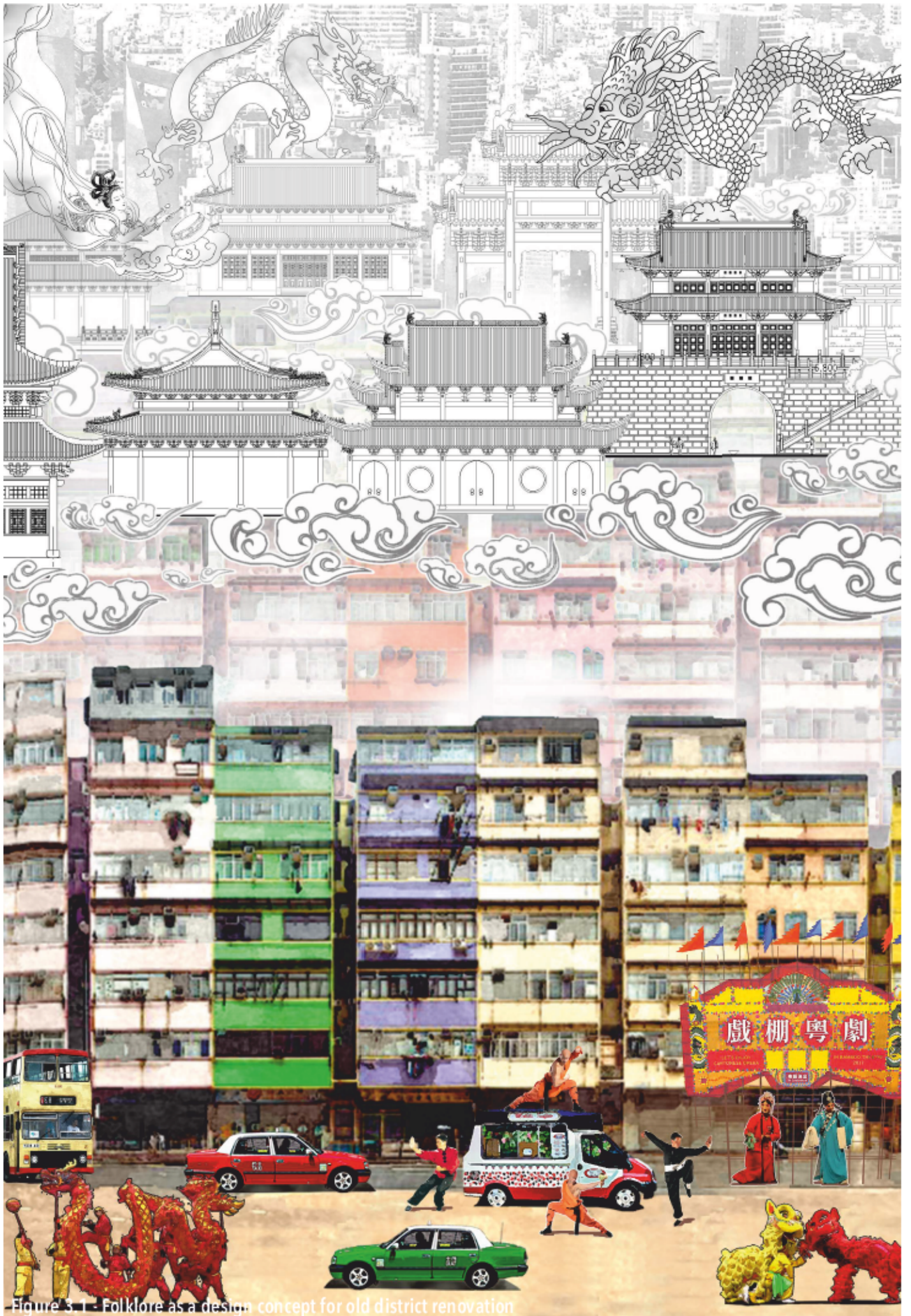


Figure 3.1 - Folklore as a design concept for old district renovation

3.2 Concept

The proposal, Folklore town, takes the traditional Hong Kong folklores as a concept. It aimed to create a town for storing and exhibiting folklores that could help bringing the lost touch of culture back to the modern city.

Hong Kong folklores is closely related to the intangible cultural heritage, according to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong,^[1] it can be cataloged generally in 1) Oral traditions and expressions; 2) Performing arts; 3) Social practices, rituals and festive events; 4) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and 5) Traditional craftsmanship.

Folklore town provides relevant facilities for all of these culture elements such as a craftsmanship workshop, performance stage, factory, store, etc.

Figure 3.2 - Folklore of Hong Kong

Festival events



Moon Festival



Dragon Boat Festival



Tomb Sweeping Day

1. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory of Hong Kong. (2014). Intangible Cultural Heritage Office of Hong Kong. Retrieved from http://www.lcd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/ICHO/en_US/web/icho/the_first_intangible_cultural_heritage_inventory_of_hong_kong.html

Craftsmanship



Bamboo structure and art



Paper art



Wood carving

Knowledge



Folk tale



Herbal tea



Kung Fu

Performing arts



Chinese Opera in the Ghost Festival



Fire dragon dance in the Moon Festival



Lion dance in Chinese New Year

Many of the folktale is related to the Chinese heaven, it is a huge palace above the sky and sit on clouds, and where the gods live with full of happiness. Folklore town seeks to simulate the image of the Chinese heaven and brings the happiness to the ground.

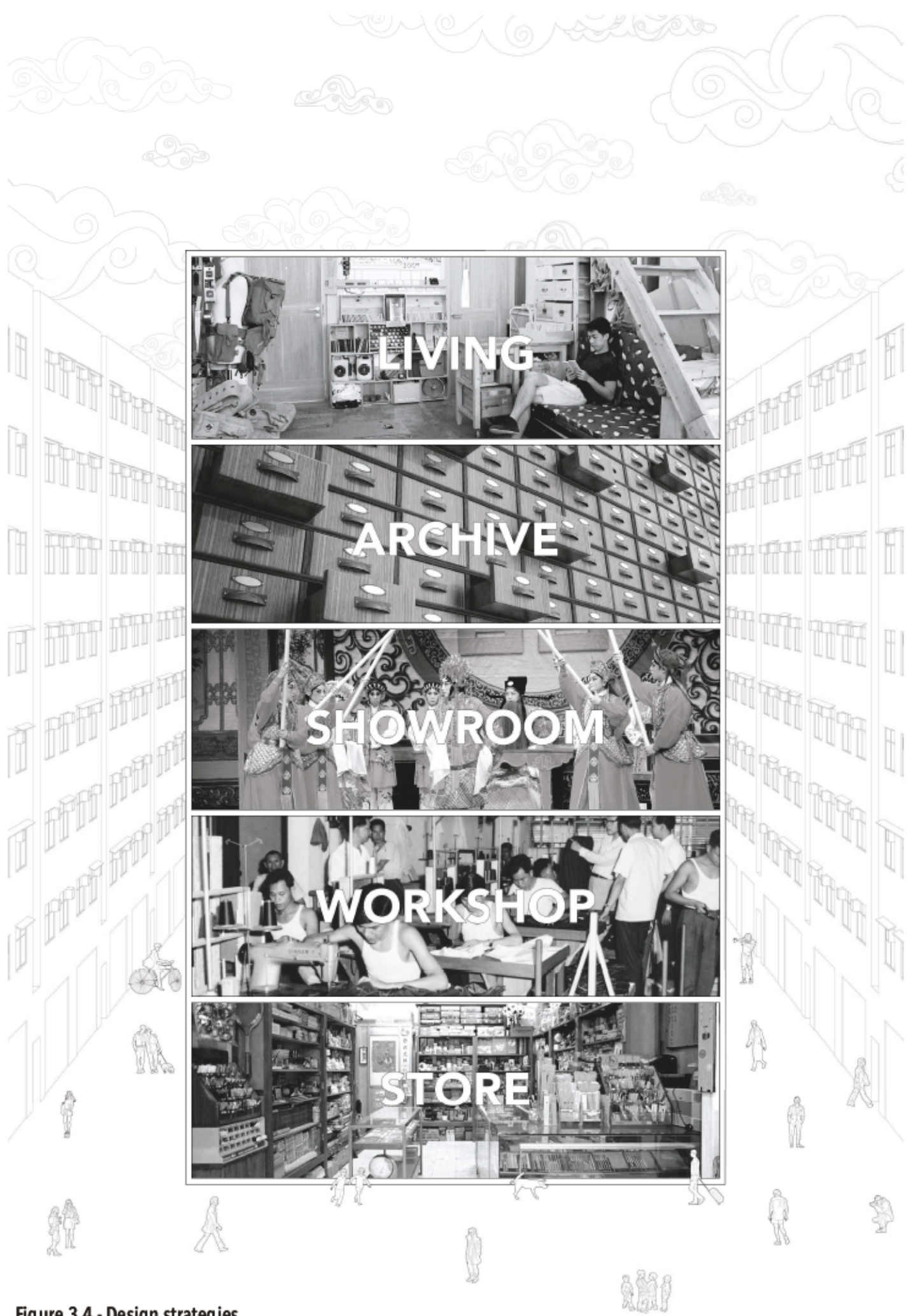
Urban development is an on-going process with the loop of demolishing old buildings for space to build the new one. Old buildings with local culture will be gone completely in the near future. Folklore Town aimed to maintain the old building and activate the surrounding area.



Figure 3.3 - The Folklore Town

3.3 Strategies

To continue, publicize and preserve the local culture and tradition, three kinds of function, workshop, showroom and archive, will be inserted to the old district instead of just maintaining the existing functions, residential and commercial use.



LIVING



ARCHIVE



SHOWROOM



WORKSHOP



STORE

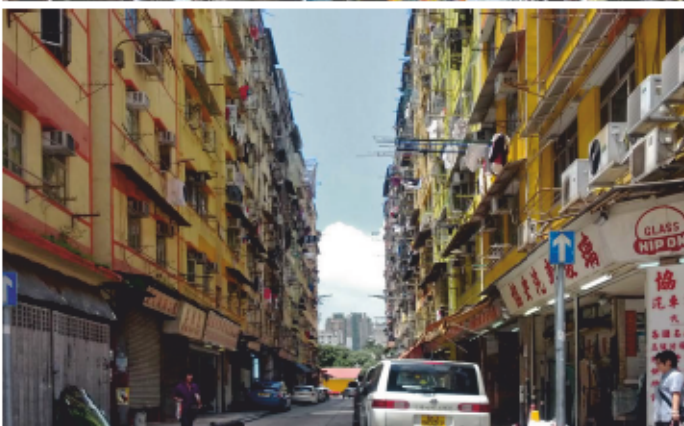
Figure 3.4 - Design strategies

3.4 Site

The site, "13 street", located in To Kwa Wan district of Kowloon City in Hong Kong, which comprises 83 buildings, 2,500 residential flats and 418 shops with built around 60 years ago.^[1] Nowadays, this area is in dilapidated condition due to the lack of maintenance throughout the years. (Figure 3.5)

Poor building standards and aging have been highlighted by crumbling facades which have hurt or killed people in the district. The demolition of older flats have given means for developers to acquire land to build newer and more profitable residential flats, and at the same time terminating a local culture.

Figure 3.5 - 13 street



1. CIH Asia Pacific Branch 40th International Housing Conference. (2006). A Helping Hand for Hong Kong's Old Private Buildings. P. 7,8. Retrieved from [http://www.cih.org.hk/publication_download/events2006112401/LC%20Wong%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.cih.org.hk/publication_download/events2006112401/LC%20Wong%20(2).pdf)

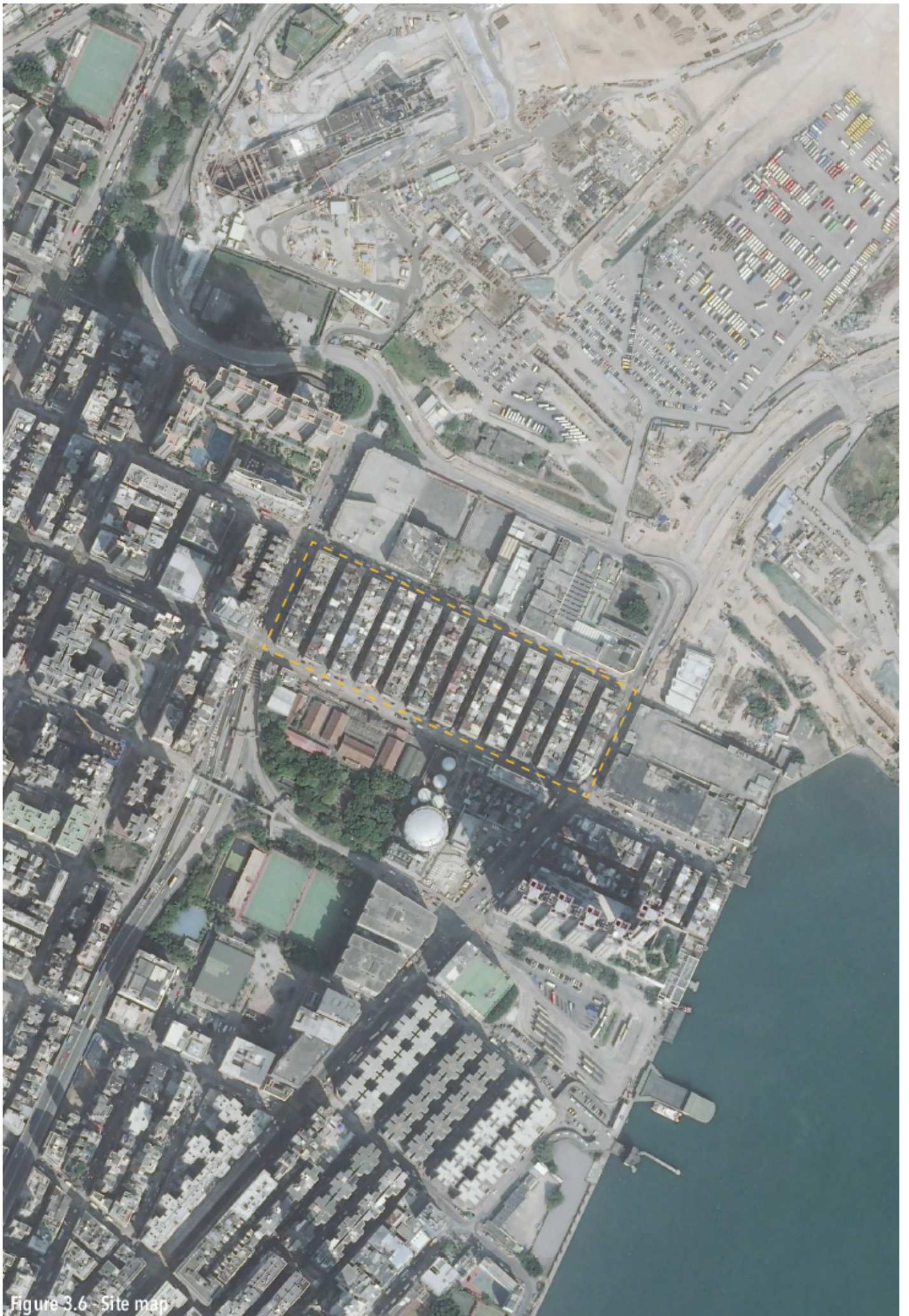


Figure 3.6 - Site map

In "13 street", twelve similar residential blocks and eleventh parallel streets with names related to traditional auspicious animals, namely dragon, phoenix, deer, unicorn, eagle, lark, egret, cicada, swallow, horse and crane.

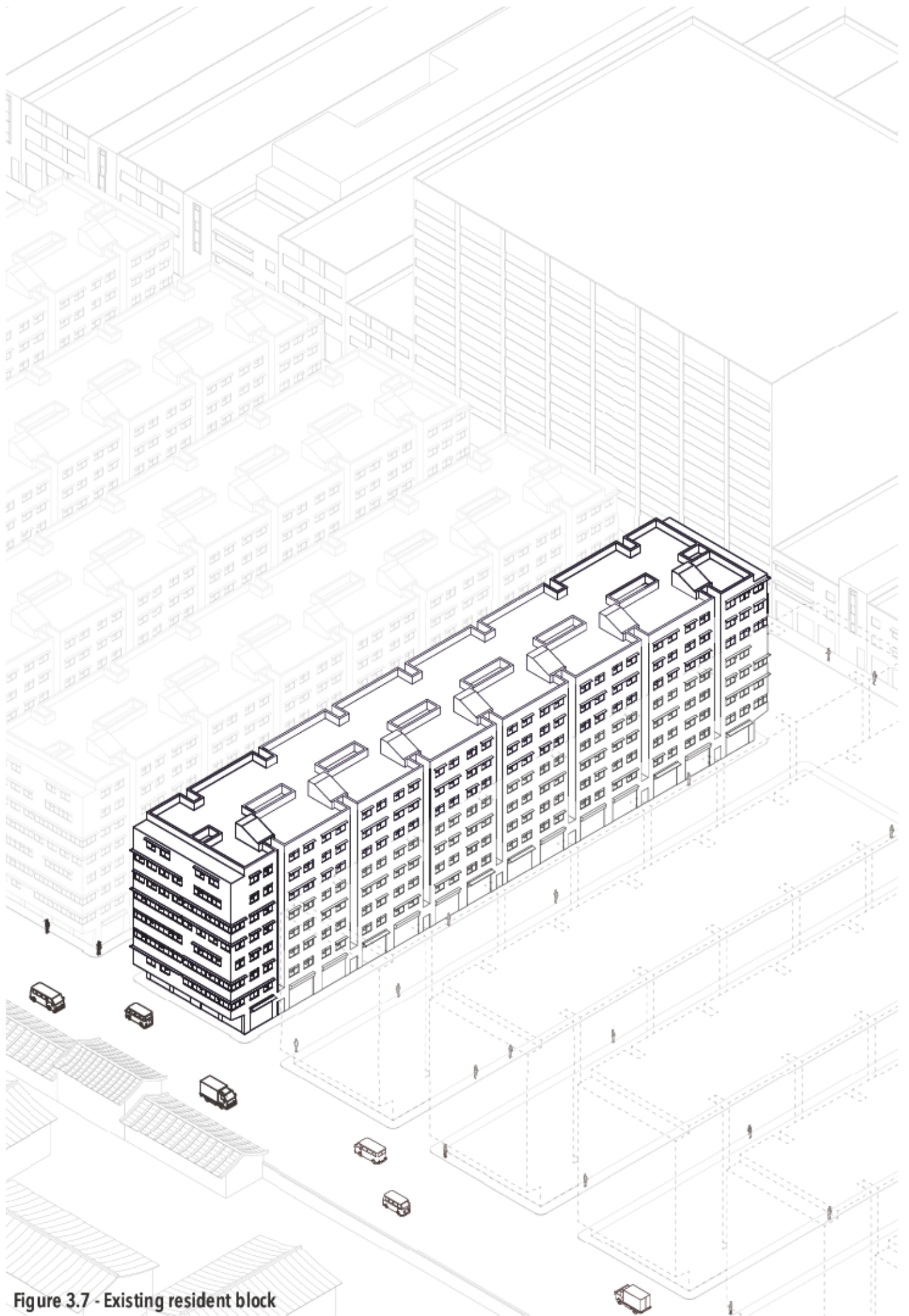


Figure 3.7 - Existing resident block

3.5 Resettlement of the existing residence

Folklore town proposes a typology for one of the challenges on old district renovation that about the resettlement of existing inhabitants.

Urban renewal involves a large number of existing inhabitants, including both the residents and merchants. Most of the existing inhabitants intend to stay in their original district as the social community and economic networks. Government normally evicts the residents and merchants to other developed district, and offers them an apartment or a store temporarily or permanently. However, they are rarely permitted to return to the affected district under the settlement of government renovation project.

During the renovation period of the "Folklore Town", a steel frame mega-structure is firstly erected for the new extensions over the roof of the existing buildings. The old residential building will then be renewed one by one with moving the residence to new extensions for temporary living, they can go back to their own apartment once the building have been renewed.

Mega-structure will be demolished after the renovation of the whole town, new extensions will be connected to the renewed building and supported by its structure. The new extensions on top can provide spaces for living and other functions related to the folklore .

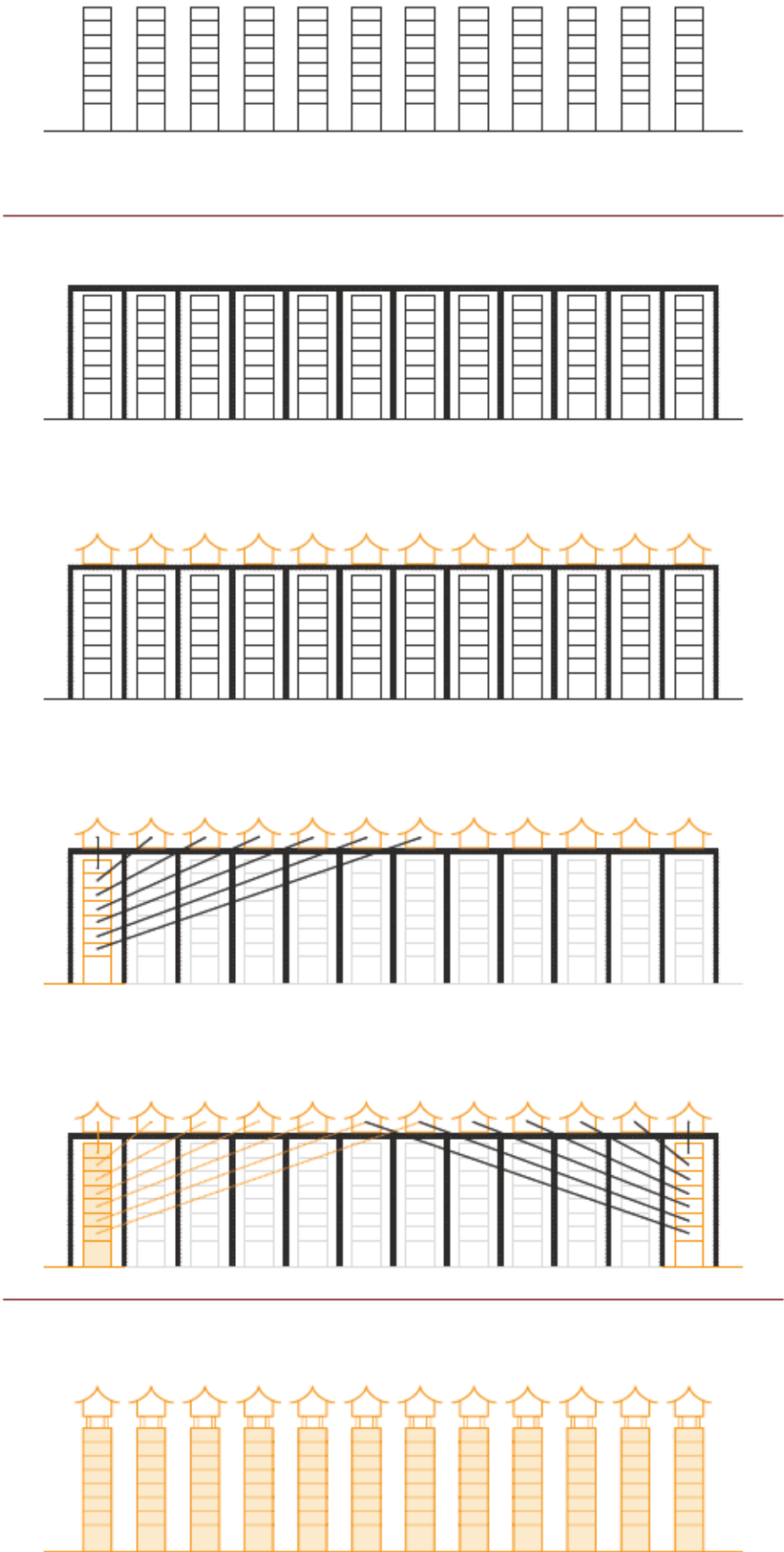


Figure 3.8 - Resettlement of the existing residence

3.6 Mega-structure

In the very first stage of the renovation, top extensions for 12 blocks are supported by a temporary steel frame mega-structure. It comprises 5 staircases and 5 elevators for each block to connect between the ground and the extension.

Mega-structure will be removed once the completion of renovation. Top extensions will then be connected and supported by the renewed residential blocks.

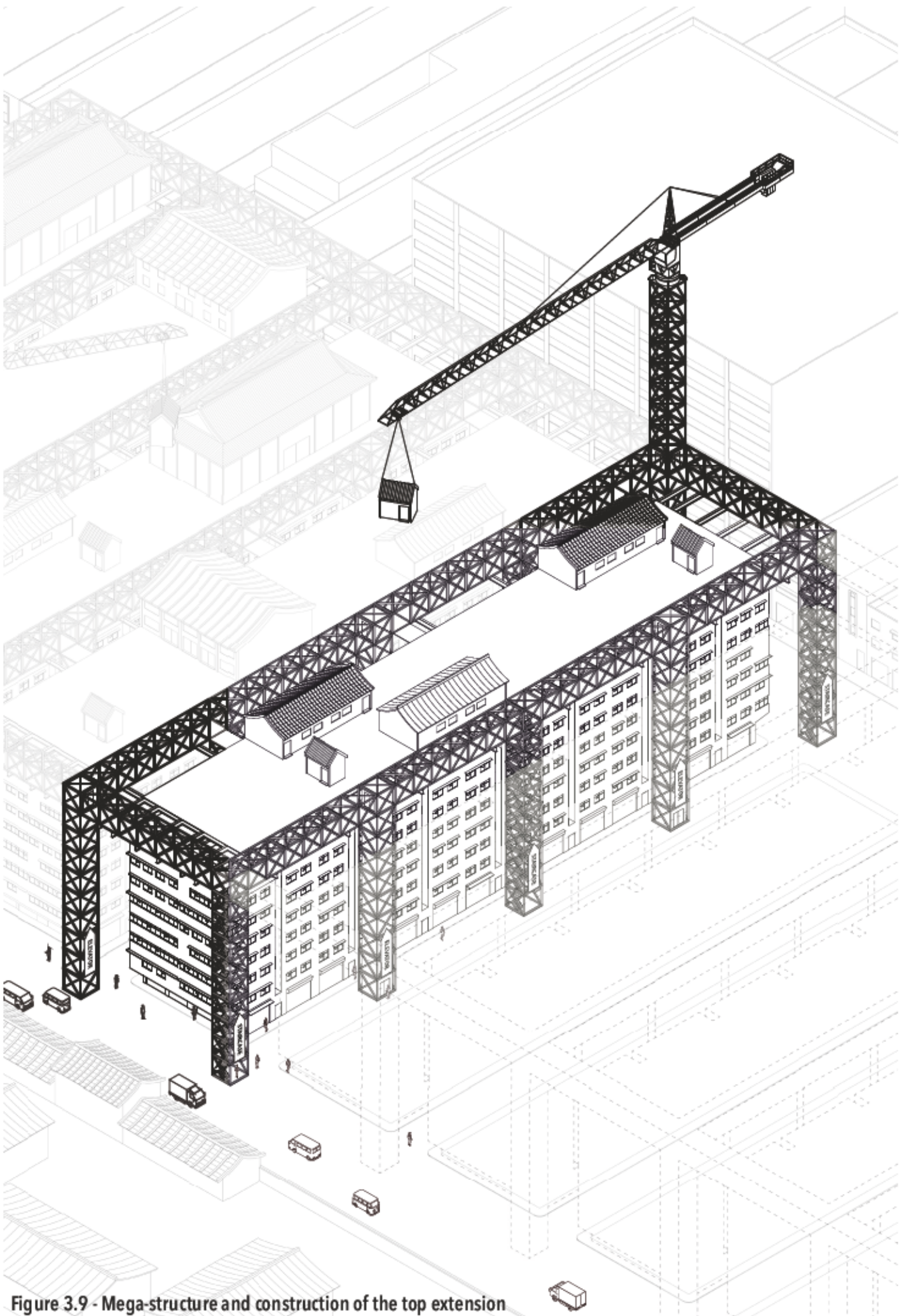


Figure 3.9 - Mega-structure and construction of the top extension



Figure 3.10 - Construction

3.7 The heaven

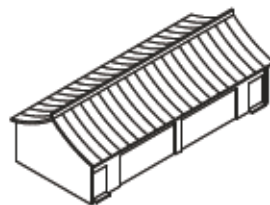
The new roof extension provides a temporary space for settlement of existing residents and merchants during the renovation. Hence, the original community and economic networks are maintained and completely transferred to the top.

All blocks are designed with following the style of traditional Chinese architecture. And the size of blocks is related to its functions, which include shared living apartment, lift lobby, performance stage, workshop, and store. And also some opened common area for residence social live.

Figure 3.11 - Functions in the heaven



Family apartment



Store



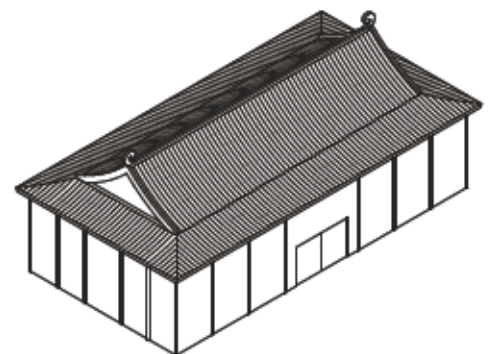
Lift lobby



Shared apartment



Workshop



Performance space

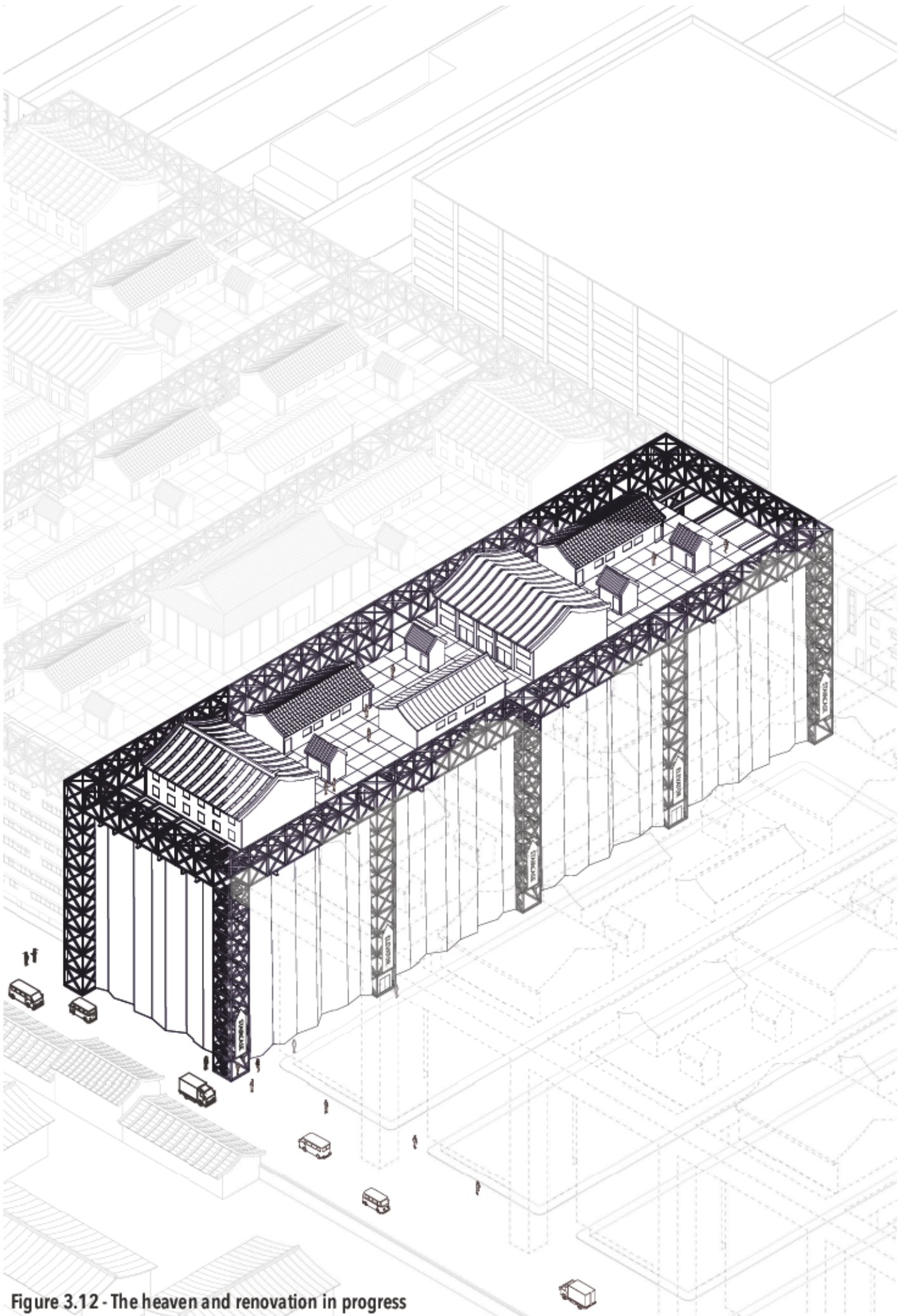


Figure 3.12 - The heaven and renovation in progress

3.8 Planning

To conserve and continuous the tradition and culture of Hong Kong, the planning is referenced to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong.^[1]

Intangible cultural heritage can be cataloged in 1) Oral traditions and expressions; 2) Performing arts; 3) Social practices, rituals and festive events; 4) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and 5) Traditional craftsmanship.

11 parallel streets are zoning with following the representative list and relevant functions are placed to each zone. 1 street for each of "Oral traditions and expressions" and "Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe". 3 streets for each of " Performing arts", " Social practices, rituals and festive events" and " Traditional craftsmanship".

For example, exhibition space for "Oral traditions and expressions", theater for "Performing arts", etc.

Corridors are created in the new planning to increase the connectivity between each parallel street.

1. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory of Hong Kong. (2014). Intangible Cultural Heritage Office of Hong Kong. Retrieved from http://www.lcd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/ICHO/en_US/web/icho/the_first_intangible_cultural_heritage_inventory_of_hong_kong.html



Figure 3.13- Planning

3.9 Renovation of existing buildings

To improve the existing high density living environment, some openings are applied to the existing block for some green space and common area. Openings at ground floor also as a connection between streets.

Culture related infrastructure will be stationed both the ground floor and the roof extension, like traditional store, craft workshop, restaurant, etc.



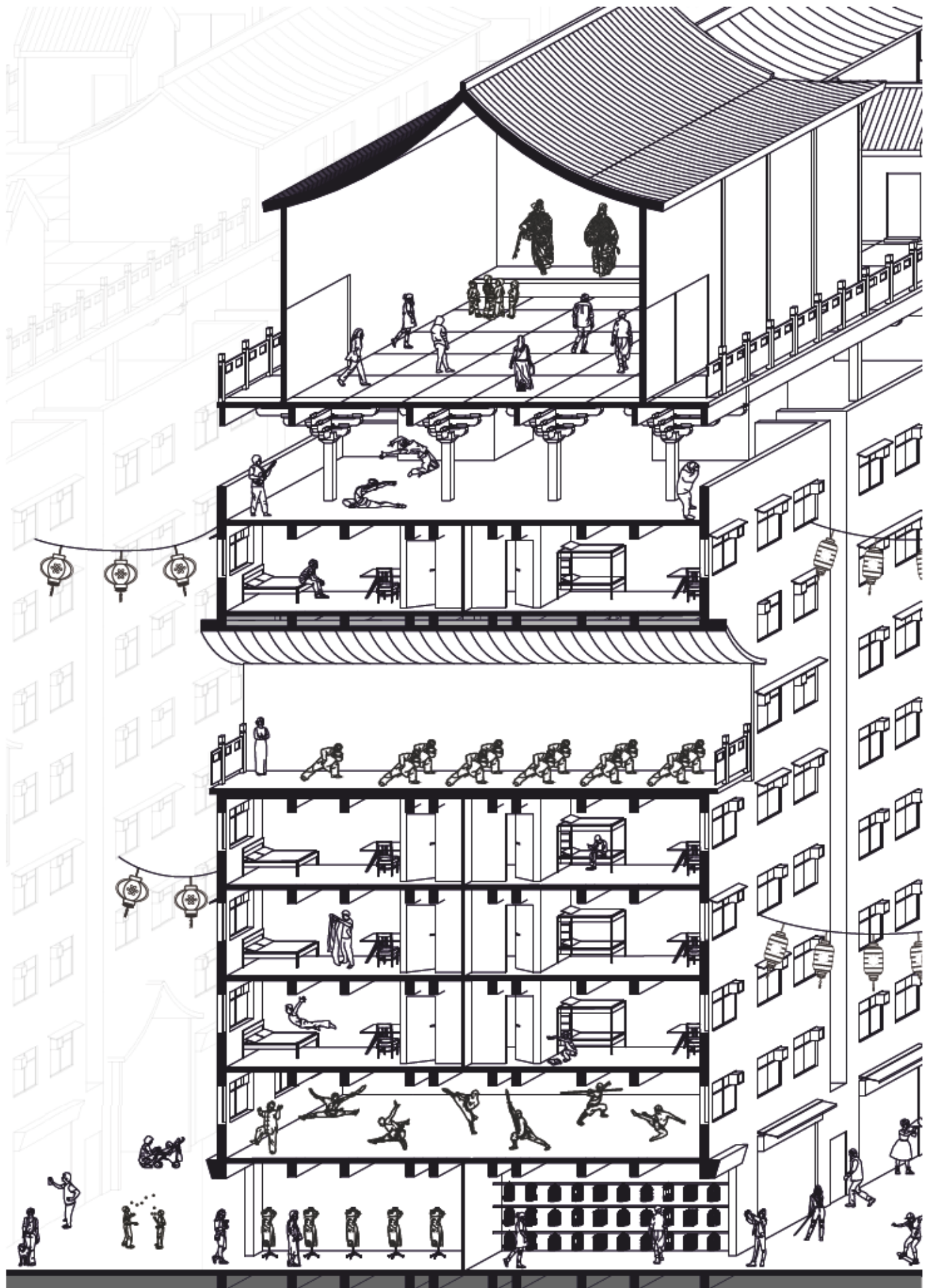


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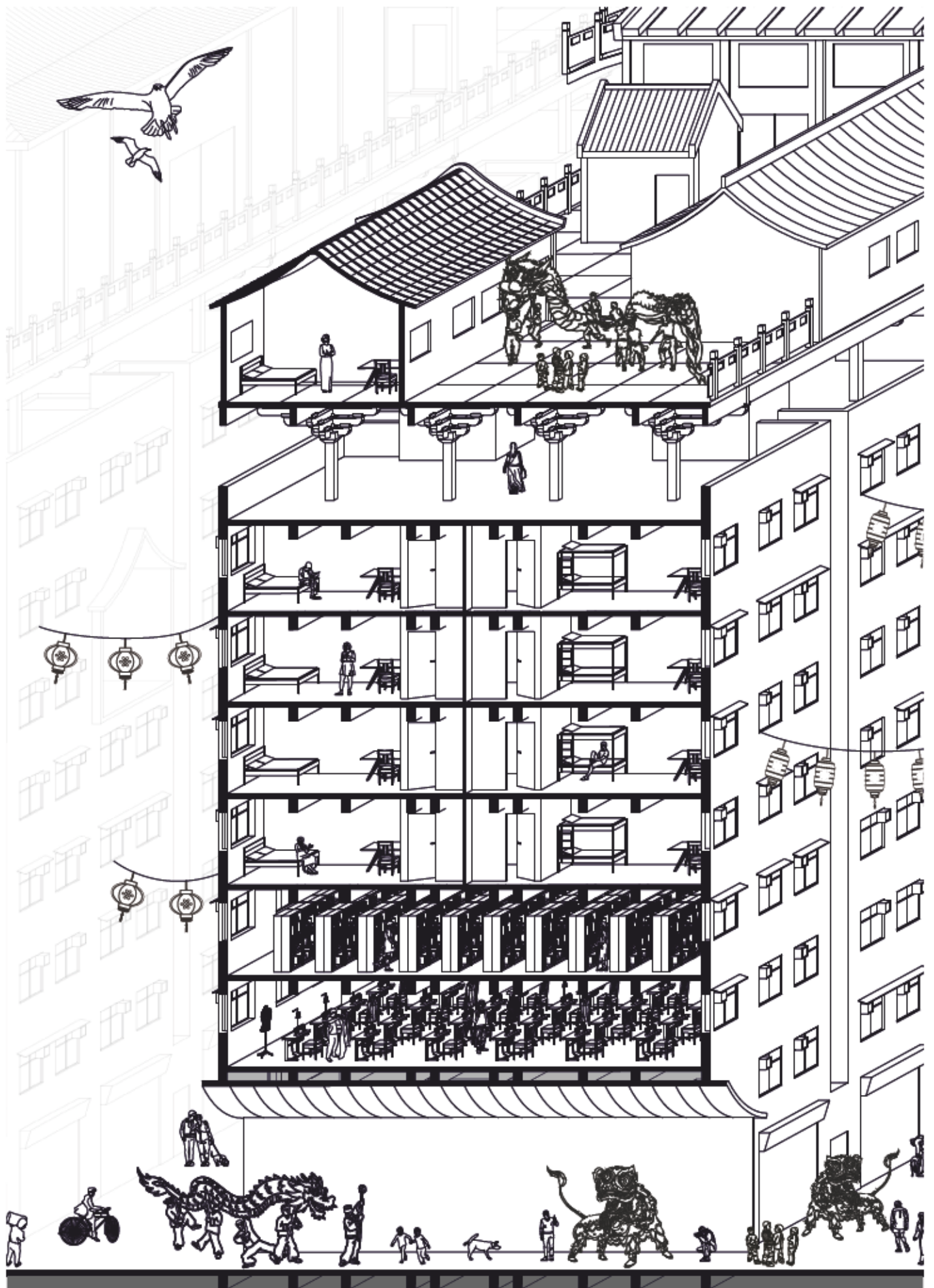


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Figure 3.17 - Roof extension



Figure 3.18 - Elevation





Figure 3.19 - Street

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to thank everyone who has been part of this work's realization. The thesis is impossible to be completed without the help and support of my supervisor, Matti Sanaksenaho, who has been very kind and patient with me during this process. I am very grateful for the freedom you have given, advices and the wisdom that you shared with me in making of this diploma.

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Last but not least, I would like to thank my fellow classmates being a part of my great experience at Oulu School of Architecture.

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