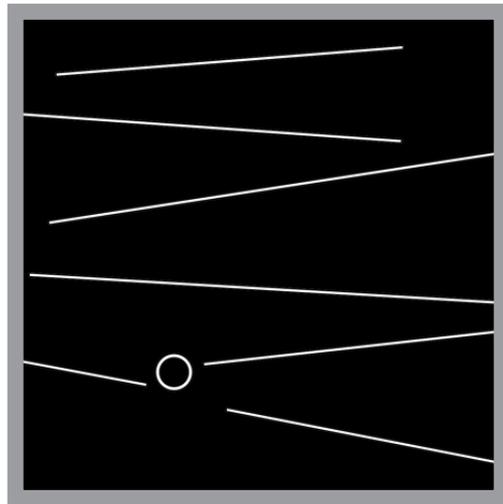


WATER IT!- square Varnsdorf

Varnsdorf town square revitalisation



Markéta Kupková

-

ATELIER REHWALDT

A INTRODUCTION & BASIC INFORMATIONS

B ANALYSIS

C CONCEPT

D PROJECT PROPOSAL

With time, the square was repeatedly transformed and the architectural value of the space was lost to such a degree that the current situation is not resembling a square any more. Many changes contributed to hiding the real richness of the historical identity. We can still see the historical layers but they are slowly disappearing.

The architectonic volume should create the imaginary “arms” to save the original character of the space. Unfortunately the current state of the structure is missing the barriers which would sustain the energy of this place. That is why we should keep the old structure as a good example.

VARNSDORF CITY

Varnsdorf town is located in the northern part of Czech Republic, in eastern part of Ústí region in south-east Šluknov hook. River Mandava runs through the town and it is surrounded by Germany from three sides.

The village was founded in 13. century and the first written reference is related to 1352. Town was founded by uniting with another five villages in 1849 and at this time it was the biggest town in in the Austrian Empire with 10 thousand inhabitants. In 1868 Varnsdorf was promoted to the city.

Today, approximately 15,000 inhabitants live here. the cadastre area of the city is 26.21 km².

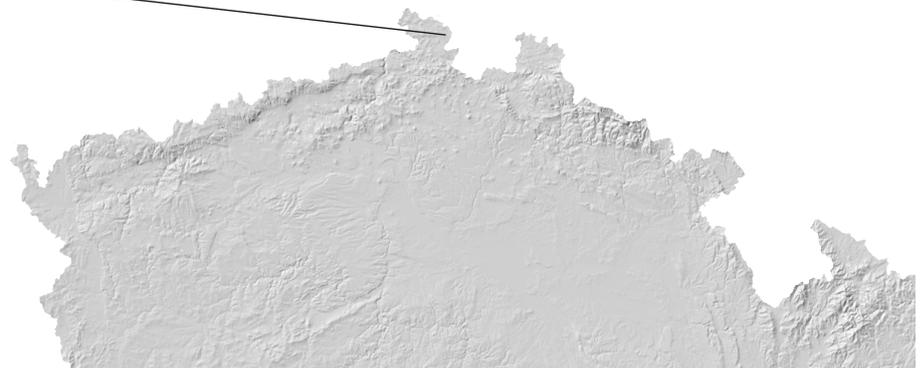
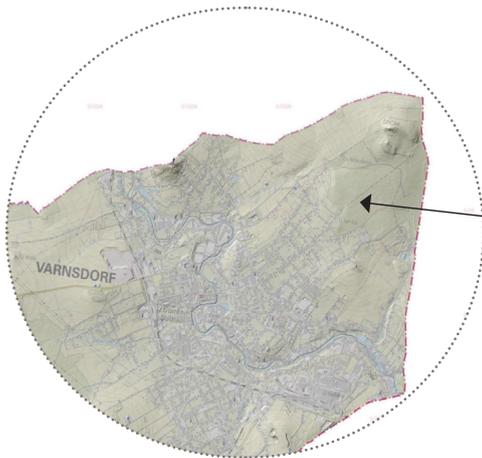
In the last two centuries, the city has mainly shaped the development of the textile industry today, it also includes engineering, food industry.

The city is known as a town of gardens but also for its industry.

In the past there used to be many factories for textil industry. The biggest production was of manger.

The character of the town is linked to a specific type of buildings. They are wooden houses with sandstone portals. Other historical houses are built in Art Nouveau or classicism style and are hidden in large gardens.

In the past, many factories for textile manufacture were situated here. The biggest production was the one of corduroy fabric.



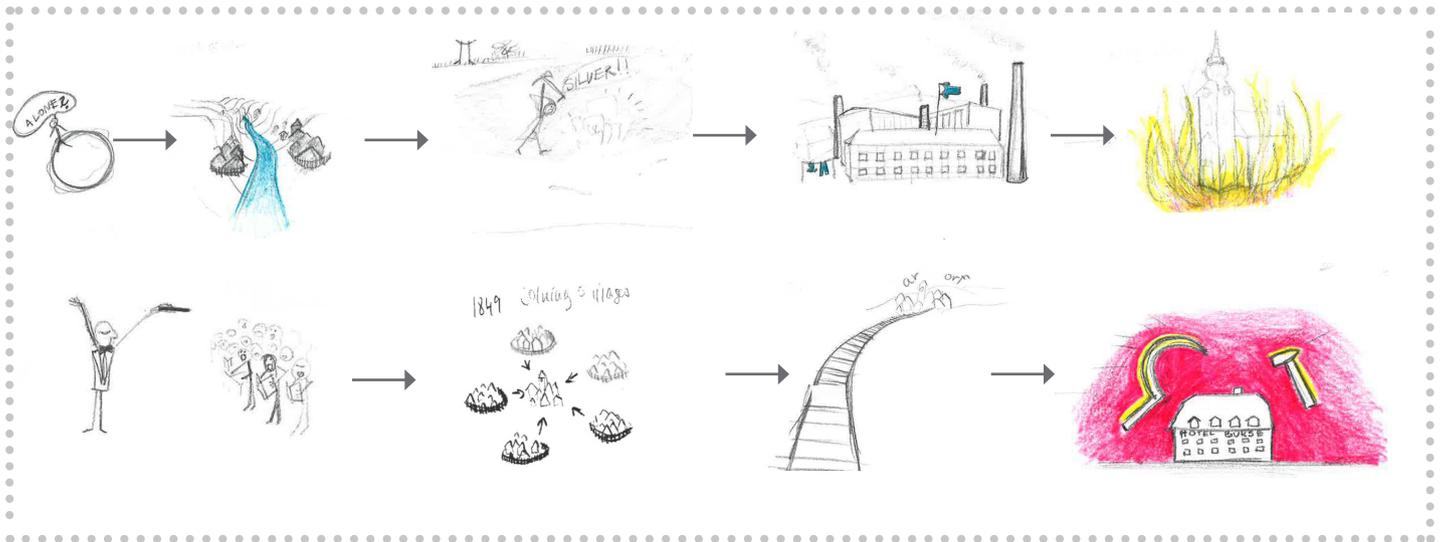
A

In the town surroundings nature and mountains can be found. The average altitude is around 330 meters above sea level. The highest point of the region is a peak Špičák (545 m).

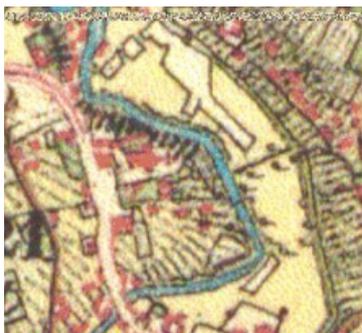


HISTORY

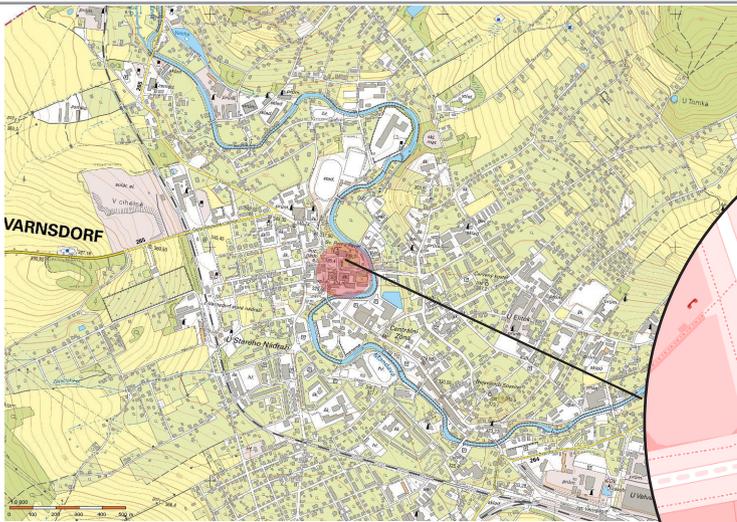
At the beginning this area was a deserted landscape. The Village was founded in 1200. The Germans were forced to search for new housing estates and some settled in the Mandava valley. The area of Varnsdorf has increased economically thanks to the silver mining in Jiřetín pod Jedlovou. At the beginning of the 18th century, textile production began to develop in Varnsdorf, first of which was a fabric factory, and in 1786 cotton began to be imported. On March 28, 1829, a large fire occurred in the city, 11 houses, two barns burned and the fire severely damaged the Varnsdorf Church of St. Peter and Paul. In 1830, in the Varnsdorf Church of Saints Peter and Paul, the entire Beethoven's Mass of Miss Solemnis was carried out for the first time in worship. In 1849, the six villages in the area of today's Varnsdorf merged into one community with 9,600 inhabitants. In the second half of the 19th century, a rapid industrialization took place. In 1869 a railway line from Děčín was built, which allowed for an easy supply of raw materials transported through the Elbe from overseas. During the communist regime was destroyed a Burza hotel on the square.



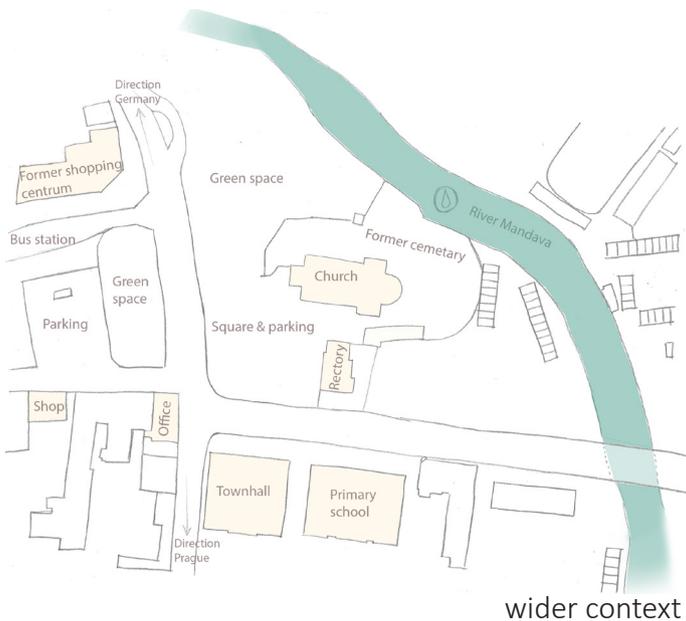
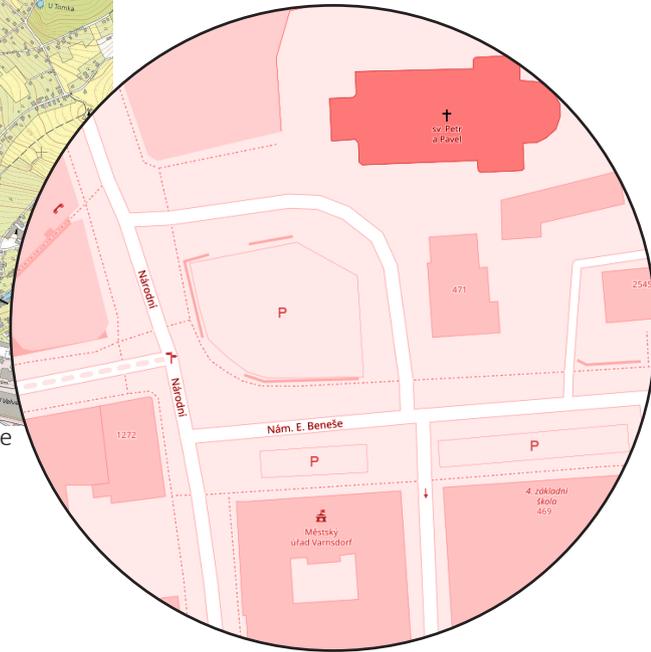
A



ANALYSIS



Location and situation of square



wider context

The square is boarded by the river Mandava, community buildings and residential houses. It lies on the edge of open greenfield and town. The square is quite busy because of the main road and the neighbouring bus station. The whole space works as a big parking lot. People usually leave their cars here for a short time with the purpose of doing their shopping or visiting the town hall or the employment office.

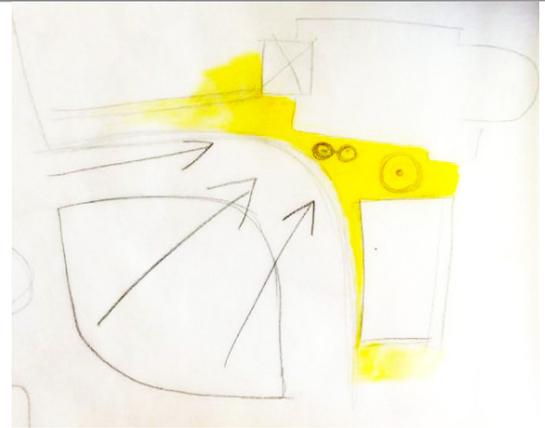
It is a very compact space with a wide variety of materials. We can find granite and basalt cobblestones in the middle of the square and the main road is covered with asphalt.

As for the greenery, there are several small old trees *Acer platanoides* planted in the square. We can also find number of places which are not accessible to the public like the church former cemetery.

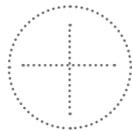
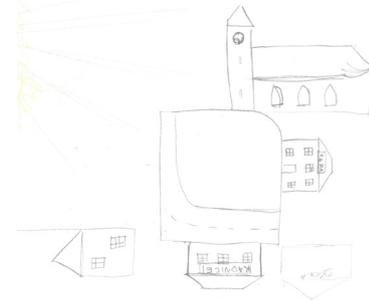
B



And what about the church and the rectory? Isn't it just a meaningless scenery? What is the connection between the space and its cultural background? The church is now closed to public, with no parson. It seems that nobody is using the church so that's why the city isn't interested in taking care of the image of the square



There is energy flowing from some points on the square. The most attractive magnet is the place of churchyard and rectory. It is because this part of the square is the farthest corner from the busy road.

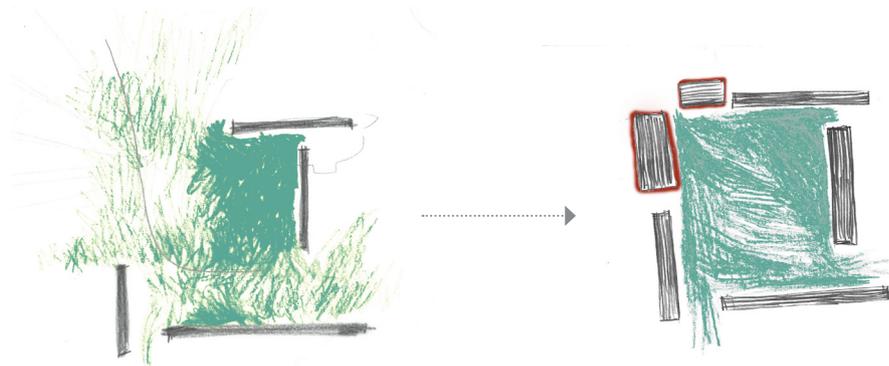


- Historic context
- close to the nature
- transportation infrastructure



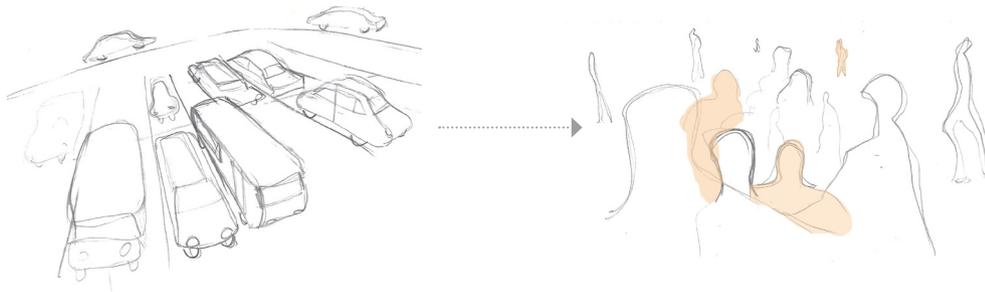
- priority for cars
- too much parking place
- no connection with river
- no feeling of center
- disorder of materials

CONCEPT



CLOSE THE GAP

The square has a long history. It is a place of many faces. The shape of the square was always rectangular but now we can see just remains of the structure. There is a huge gap which destroys the whole space. The green color in the diagram is showing the amount of energy of the place. The energy of the place is running away due to big gaps after demolitions done by the communist regime.



MAKE SPACE LIVABLE

Not even a close space with a good shape can guarantee a good quality. It depends on what fills the space. The main problem of this square is the one of parking. I would like to open this big square to people and remove the car parking by moving it to another place nearby.

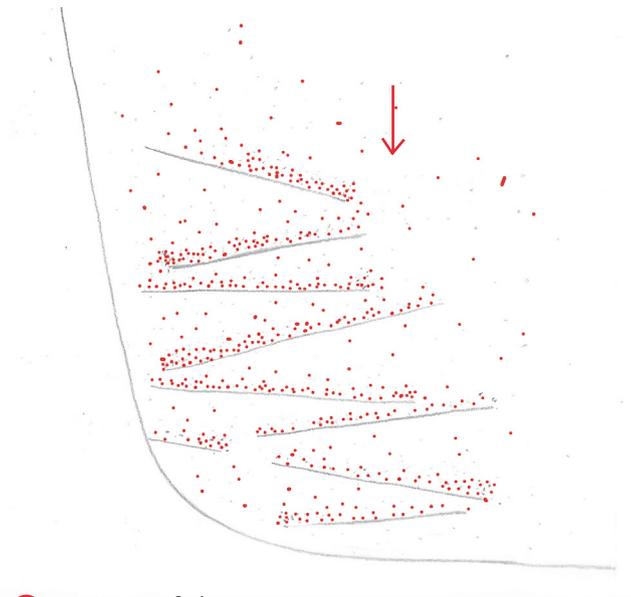
C



TO PLAY WITH WATER

I would like to use the square as a space for collecting rainwater and reusing the water for watering and also for water element.

The surface is a great opportunity to play with water gravity- the red dots in the diagram represent water flowing down and following the barriers down to the collectors.

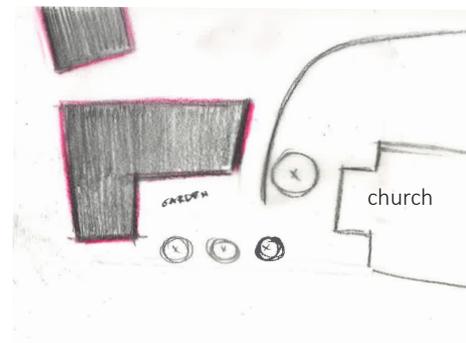
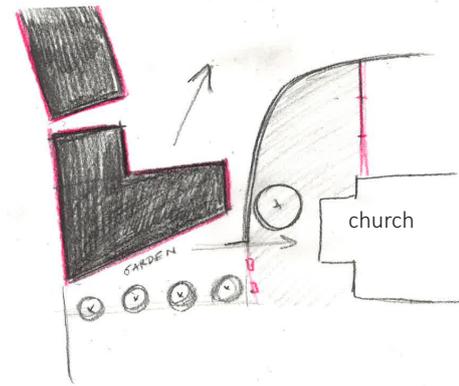
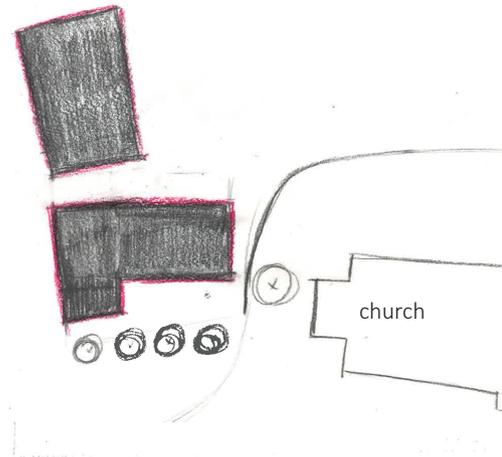


● stream of the water

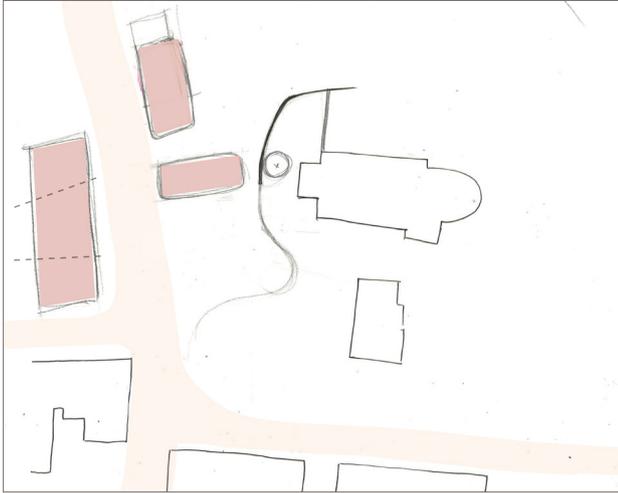
PROCESS OF DESIGNING



This is an old map from the 18th century. We can clearly see the shape of a rectangle. I want to keep this closed place as a good example.

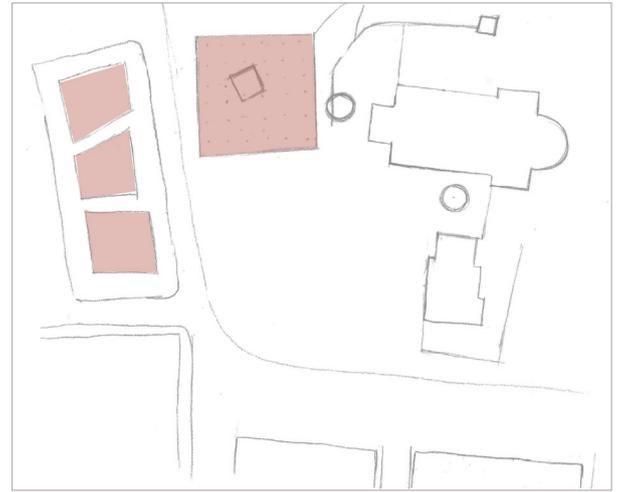


C



- road
- designed volume

At the beginning, I was playing with the idea of building a new house. I was trying to come up with a lot of versions. One of them was to create a cozy place or a little square with an intimate atmosphere.



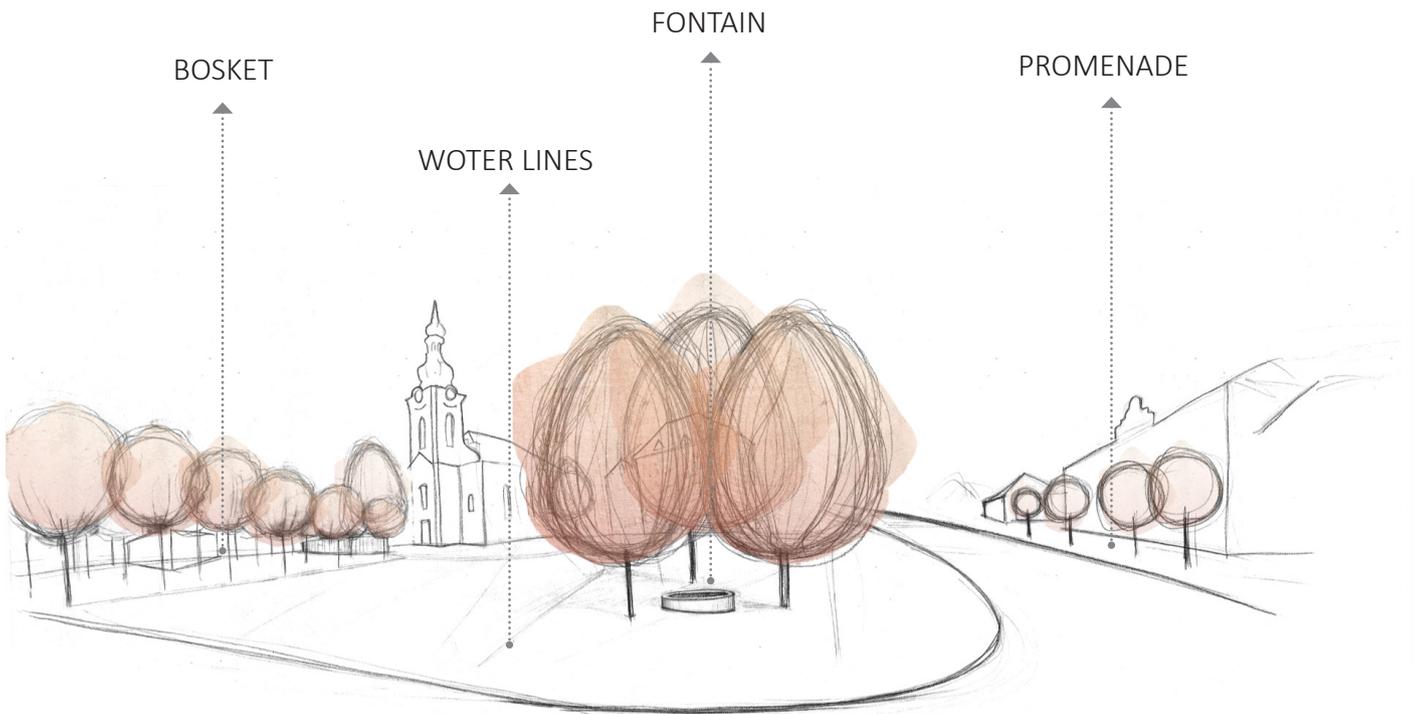
One of the other options is to close the square with a basket and proposed building. I want to solve the transition between the square and the green space in a better way than just by putting a massive volume.

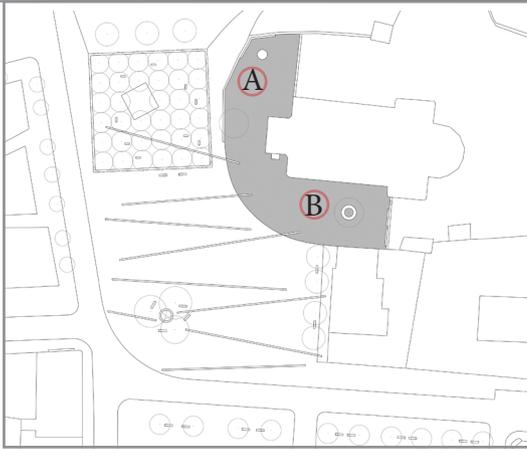


THE SITE OF PROPOSAL

D

The idea of my proposal is to save these historical values and local identity and give back the space to people by way of filling it with activities and all kinds of happenings. Open the inaccessible areas surrounding the square, close the square to protect its original shape and to incorporate a water element.

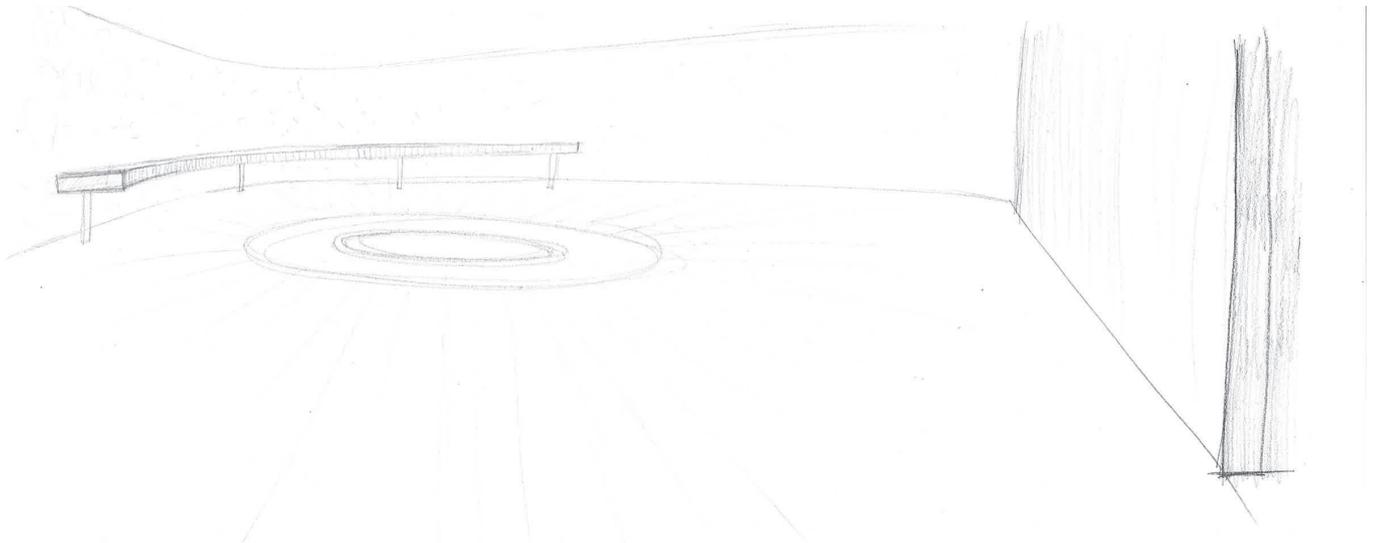
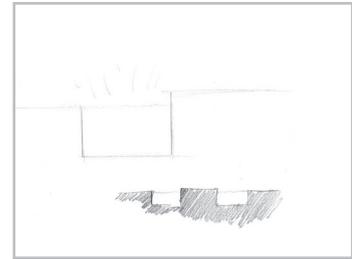
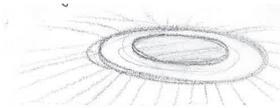




CHURCH FRONTYARD (A)

The church is a dominant piece of architecture in the square. That means the space in front of the building should be representative and treated accordingly. I want to preserve its intimate cosy atmosphere using an existing stone wall. I will reorganize the place into smaller zones with different atmospheres.

Inside the yard there will be a designed water element in a circular shape. It is a shallow form on the ground level with a smaller circle in the middle. The whole water element is made of black material. At night it is illuminated by lights under the water.



D

CHURCH FRONTYARD

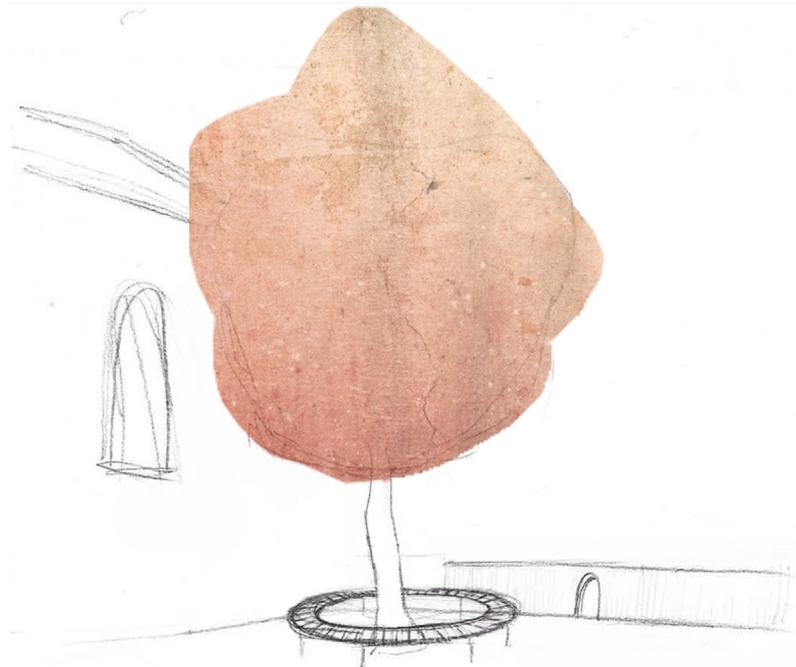
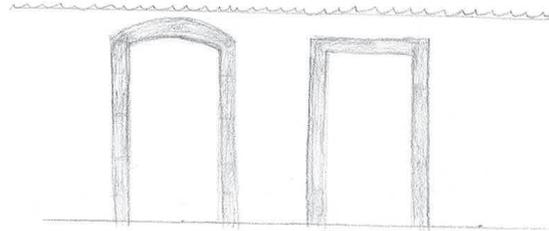
B

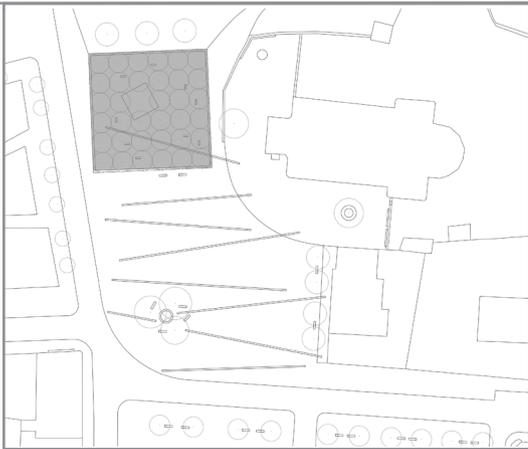
In the second part of the church frontyard which is situated between the church and the rectory there is also a hidden place. In the middle of the space stands a big tree (*Tilia cordata*). Around the trunk there is a circle bench.

Both yards are next to a former cemetery which will in future serve as a quiet sculptural park. This space is closed to the public at present. I would like to make stone walls with a portal for entering the park.



I will use the same basalt material of the surface which is in front of the rectory and the church. My plan is to enlarge the space around the church and pave it with the basalt material.

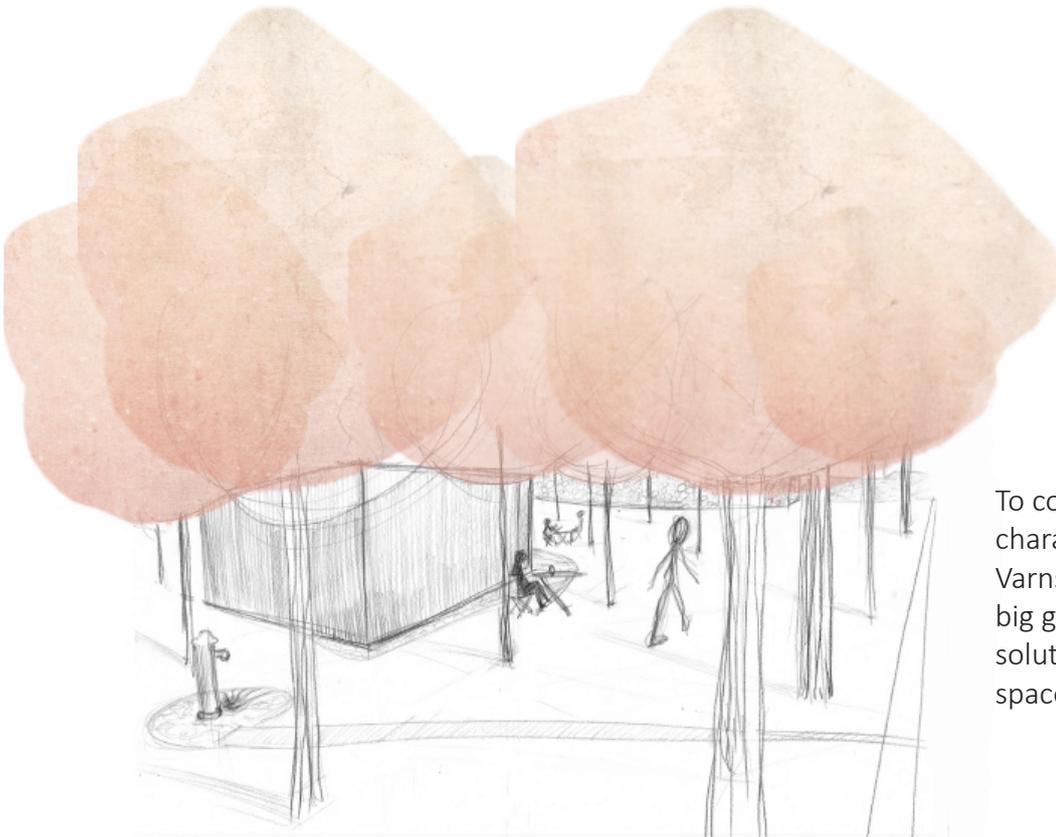




BOSKET

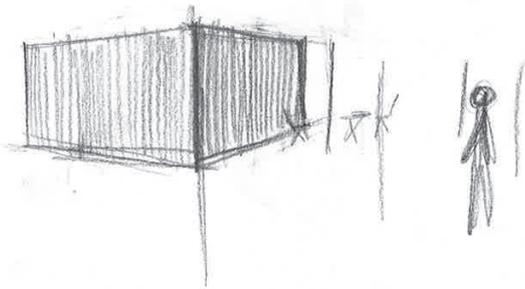
Bosket is a completely new component of this square. A hotel called Burza used to stay in this place but it was pulled down during the communist era. Bosket is intended to be used as a soft volume to close the square. Bosket divides the large grassy area from the built on part.

The bosket is defined with stone lines all around it into a shape of the square.



To continue the tradition of characteristic big gardens of Varnsdorf town, I selected a big group of trees as a great solution to separate these two spaces by a loose barrier.

D



In the middle of the bosket will be a café. It should be a place hidden in lush greenery- an inviting green space where people can cool down during hot summer days and have a nice drink. Through tree crowns one can have a view of the top of the church. There are several randomly placed benches for people to decide which way to look.

TREES



MALUS 'EVERESTE'
- This species is one of the most disease resistant, and also tolerates pollution.

D



MALUS BACCATA 'STREET PARADE'



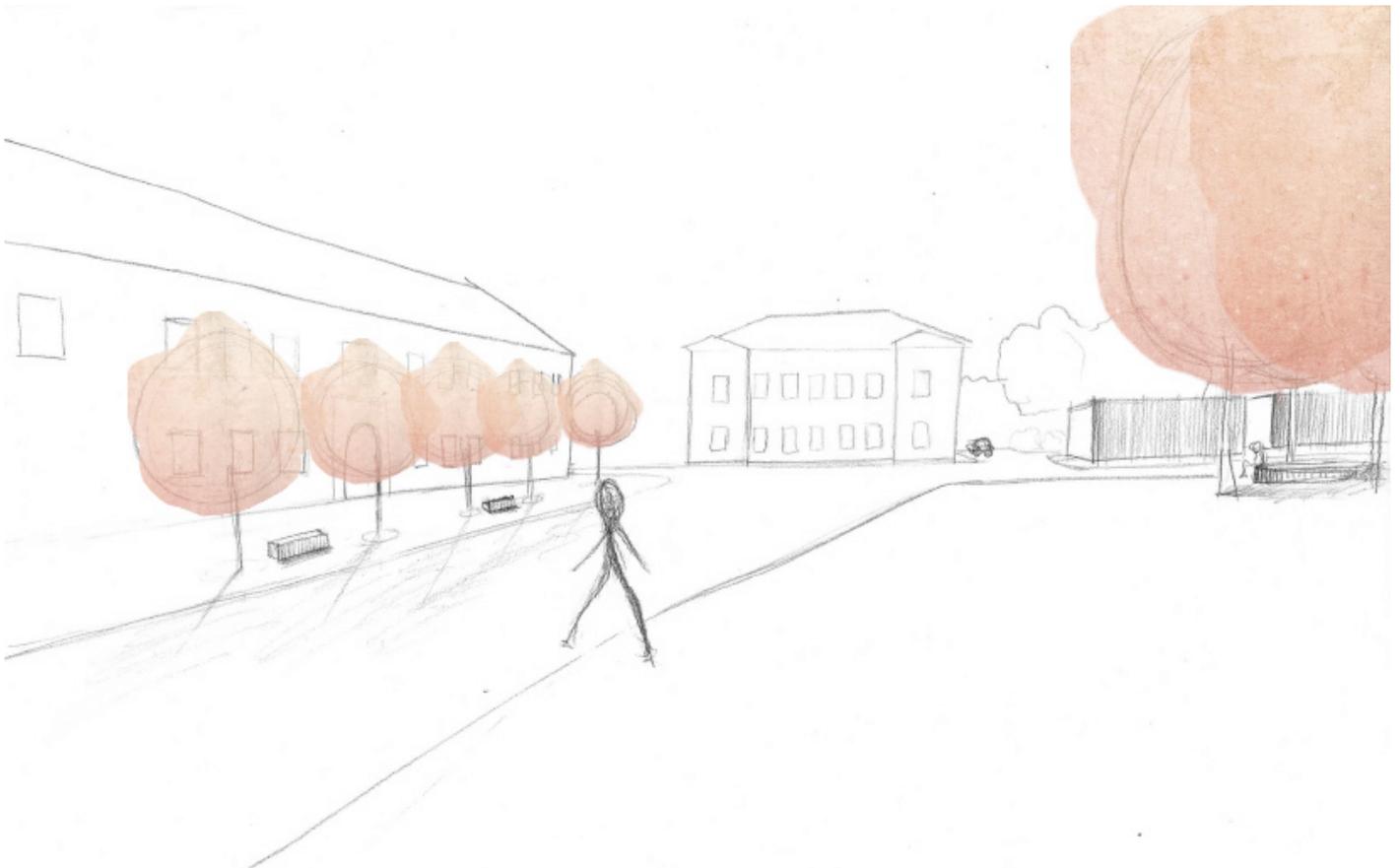
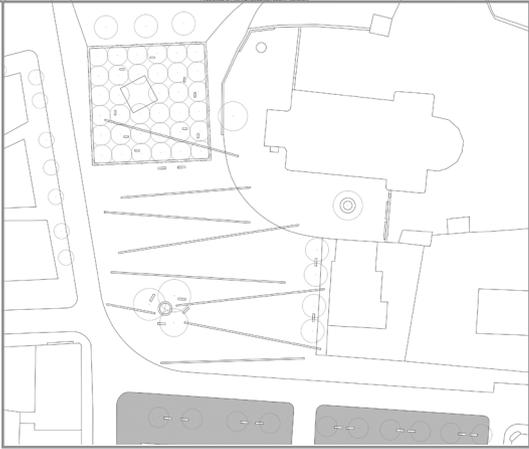
MALUS DOMESTICA



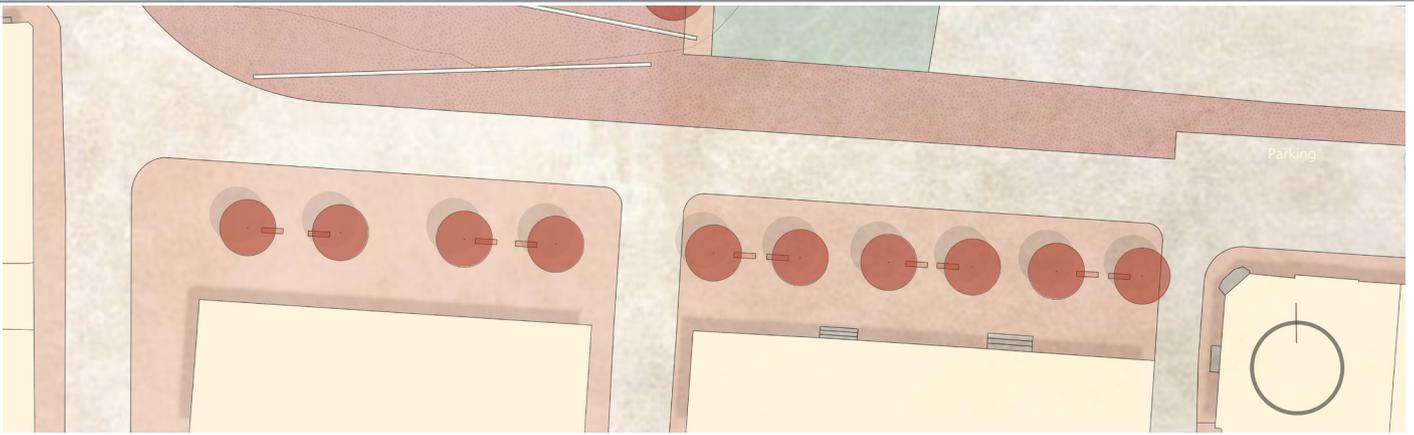
In the north, it is slowly passing the basket to the open space

TOWNHALL AND SCHOOL

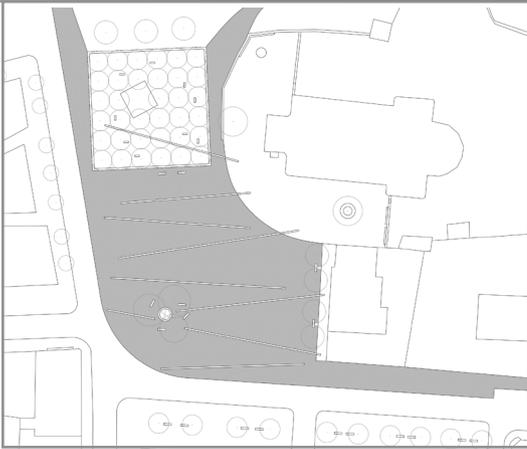
The townhall is one of the important institute for the city. I want to make wider pavement and create a line of trees (promenade) which ends behind the school. The pedestrian will accompany a long wooden benches.



D



ACER CAMPESTRE



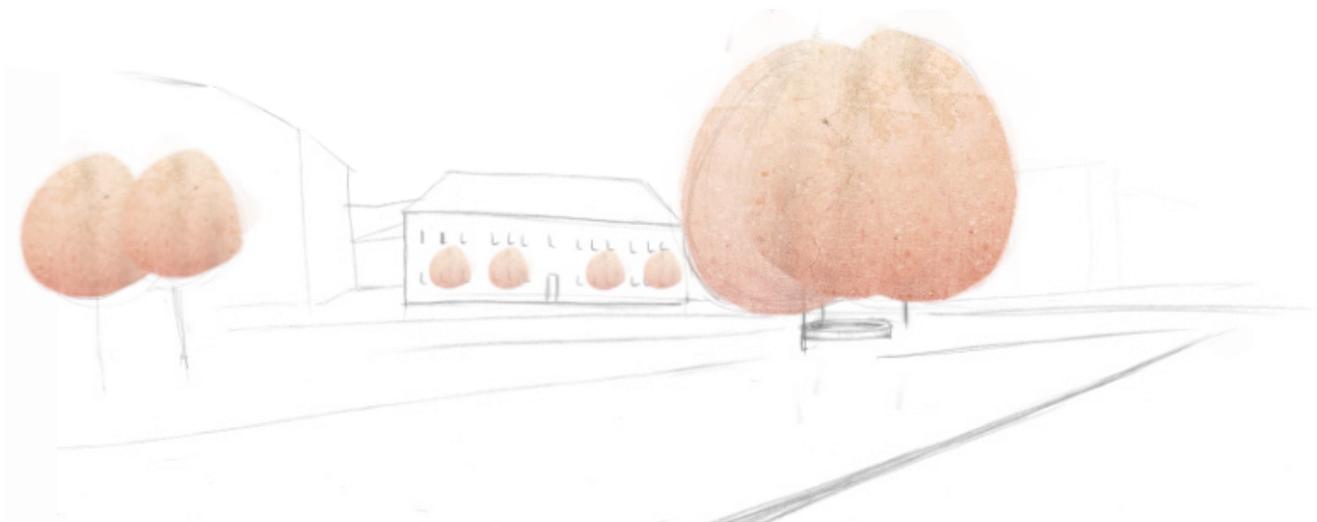
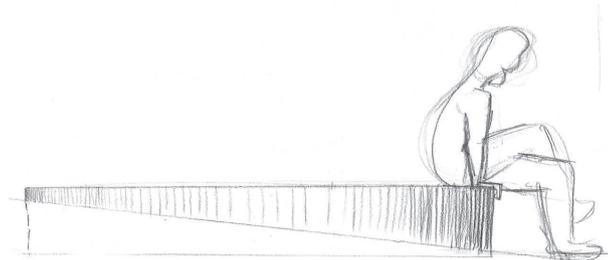
THE SQUARE

The main idea of this square will be that it is a place for people.

The whole space of the square will be paved with long blocks of uneven stones with small holes in it which collect rain and this is also used as a part of the water element. The stone structure will be constructed in such a way that the water follows it by gravity. It flows down to the drainage tank and after that is used for circulation, either as a reserve for watering or the water element.

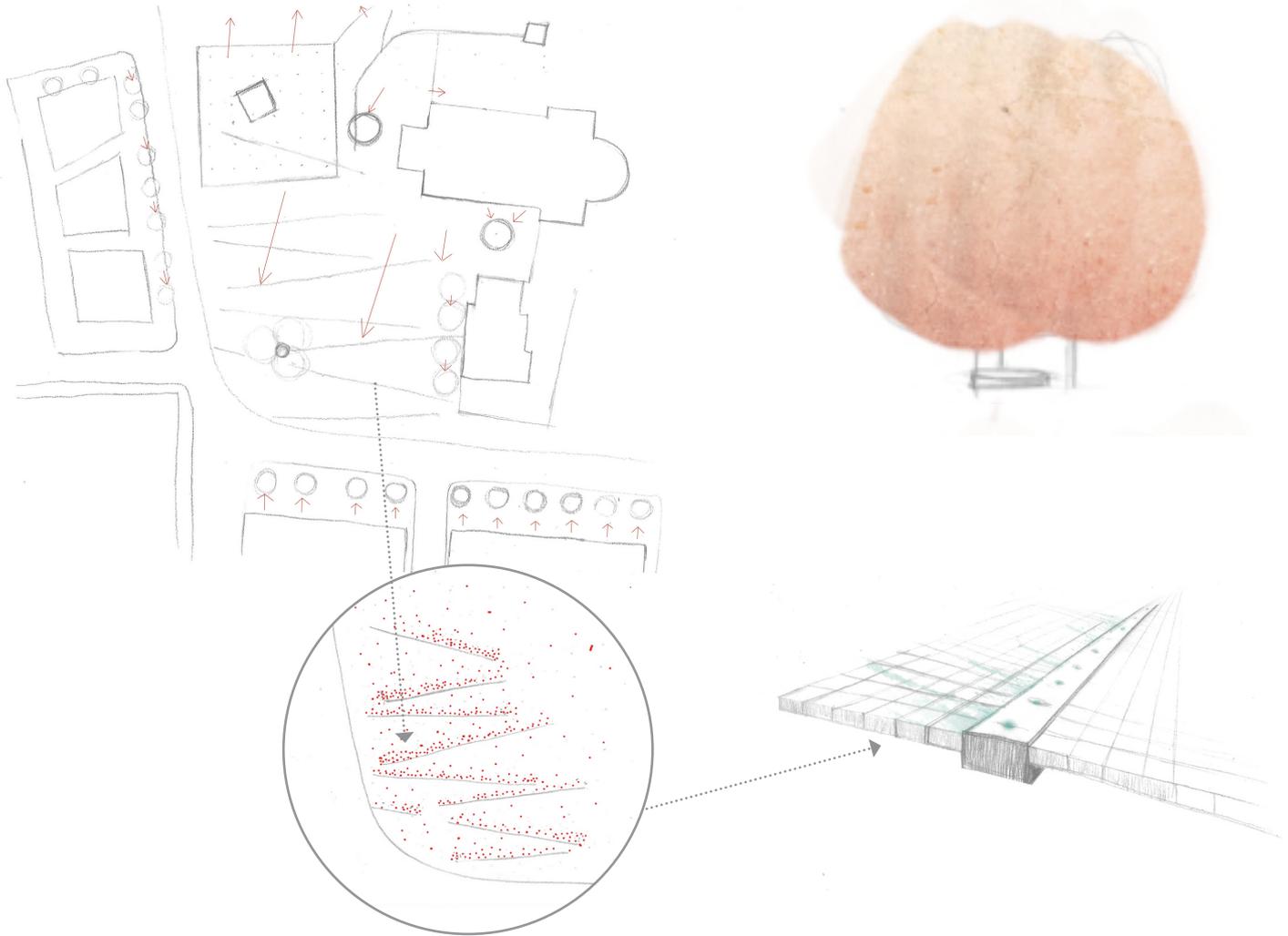
Water should be as easy to reach as possible. There are water points for drinking and a stone fountain in the middle of the square.

This project should serve as an ecological inspiration for future renovations in other places.



D

Rain water management



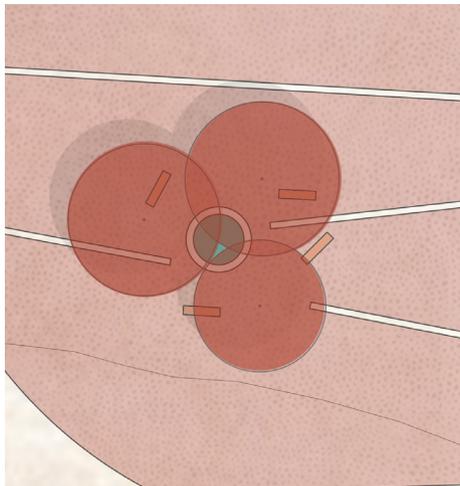
The rainwater or water from water points should follow the lines and create a small controlled stream. Rest of the water stays in the small holes and make small mirrors which reflect the church tower.

TREES



TILIA CORDATA

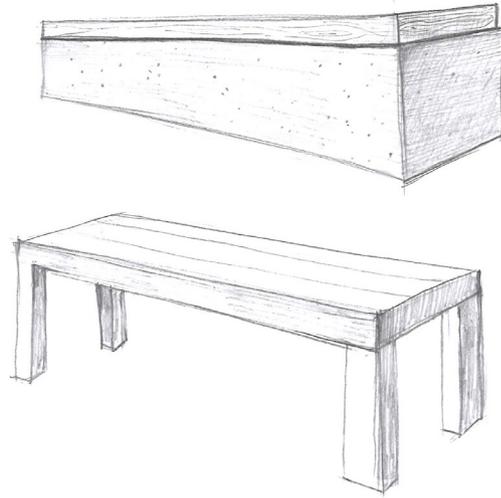
D



MATERIALS



Stone lines



mobiliar



Hoggin

Wood

Stone

D

