

MOULINS (FR) 1

WHEN THE ALLIER BECOMES CITY

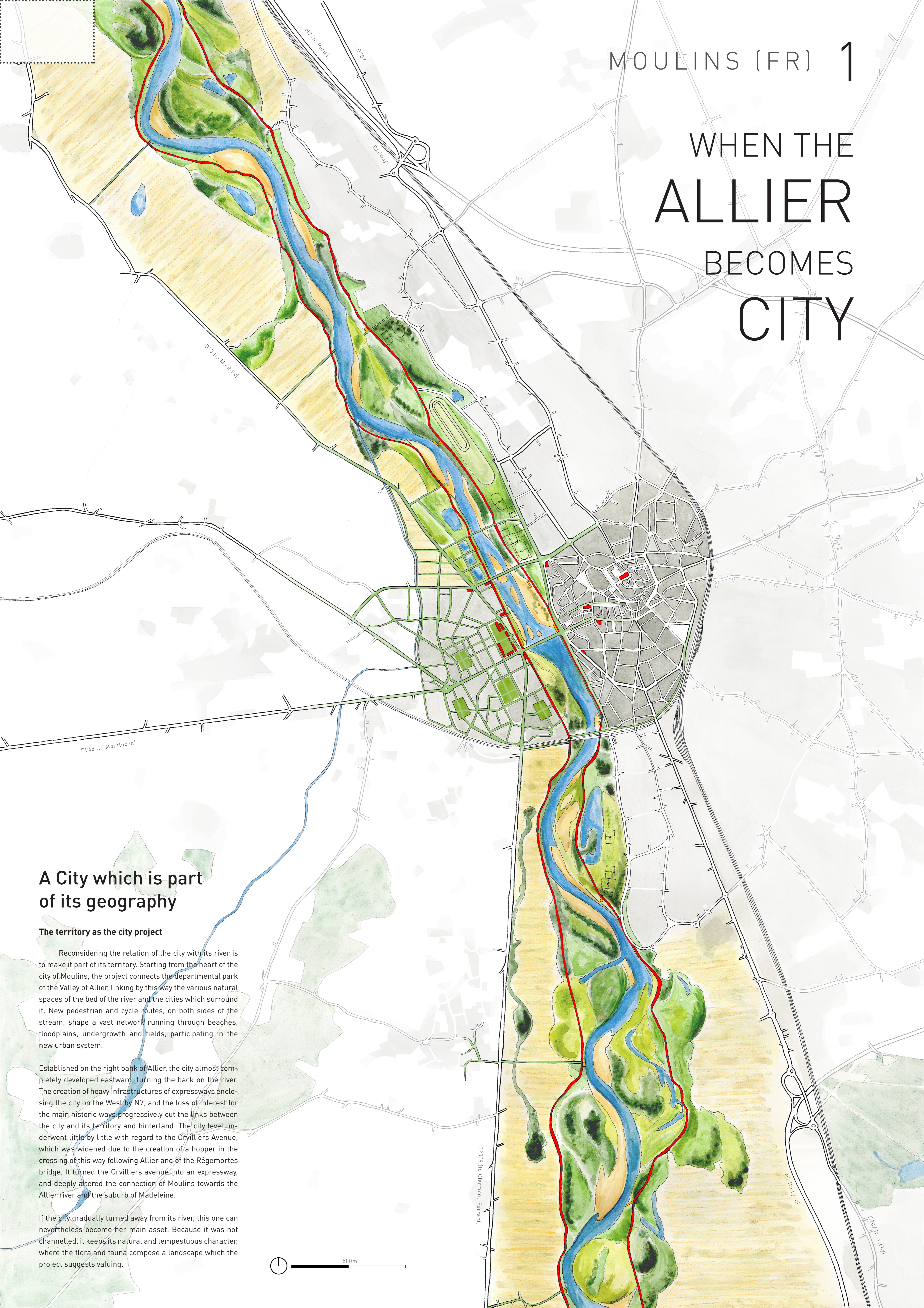
A City which is part of its geography

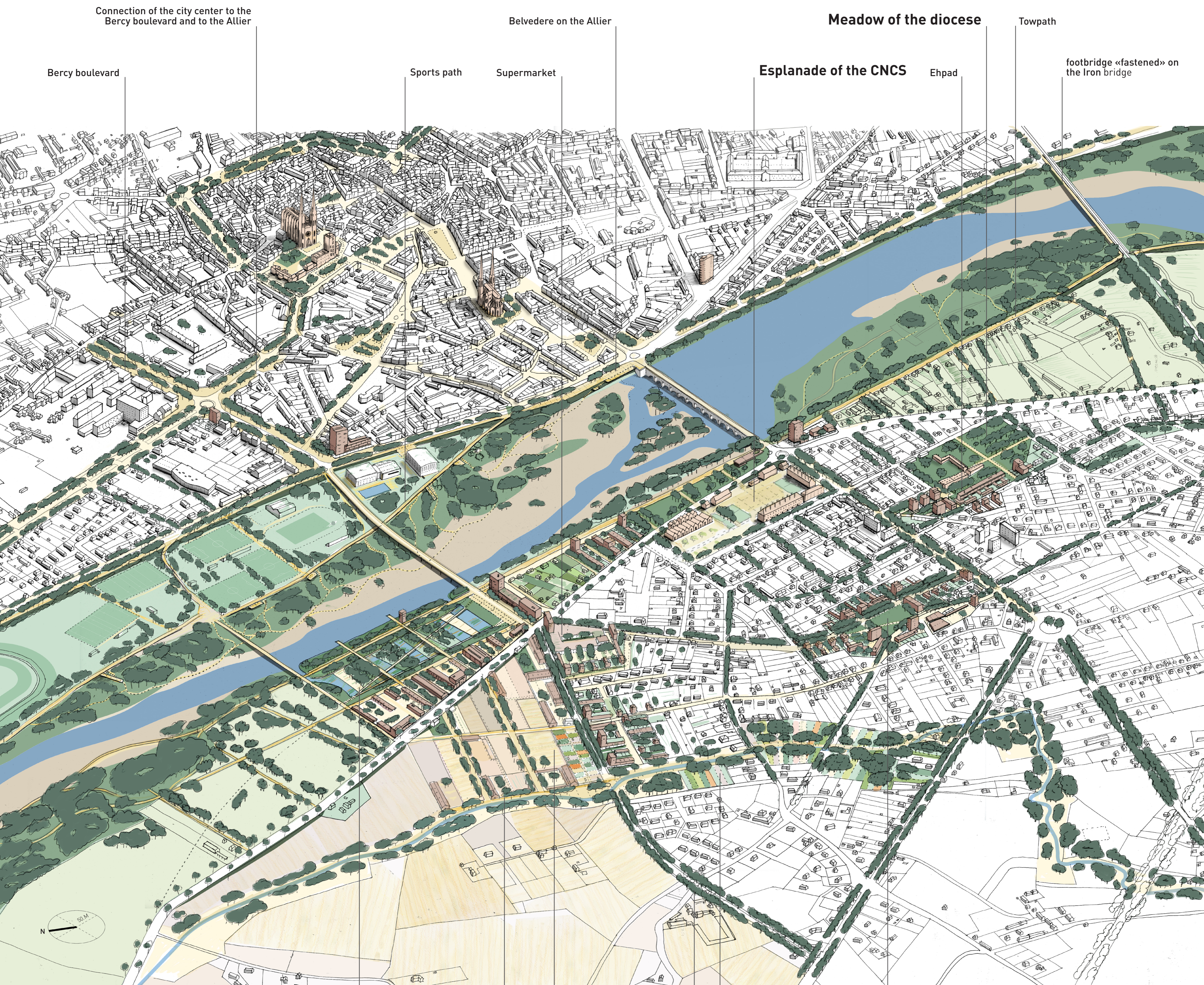
The territory as the city project

Reconsidering the relation of the city with its river is to make it part of its territory. Starting from the heart of the city of Moulins, the project connects the departmental park of the Valley of Allier, linking by this way the various natural spaces of the bed of the river and the cities which surround it. New pedestrian and cycle routes, on both sides of the stream, shape a vast network running through beaches, floodplains, undergrowth and fields, participating in the new urban system.

Established on the right bank of Allier, the city almost completely developed eastward, turning the back on the river. The creation of heavy infrastructures of expressways enclosing the city on the West by N7, and the loss of interest for the main historic ways progressively cut the links between the city and its territory and hinterland. The city level underwent little by little with regard to the Orvilliers Avenue, which was widened due to the creation of a hopper in the crossing of this way following Allier and of the Régemortes bridge. It turned the Orvilliers avenue into an expressway, and deeply altered the connection of Moulins towards the Allier river and the suburb of Madeleine.

If the city gradually turned away from its river, this one can nevertheless become her main asset. Because it was not channelled, it keeps its natural and tempestuous character, where the flora and fauna compose a landscape which the project suggests valuing.





(re)lead the stream of Allier in the city

When Allier is not any more a border : the city looks at herself through Allier

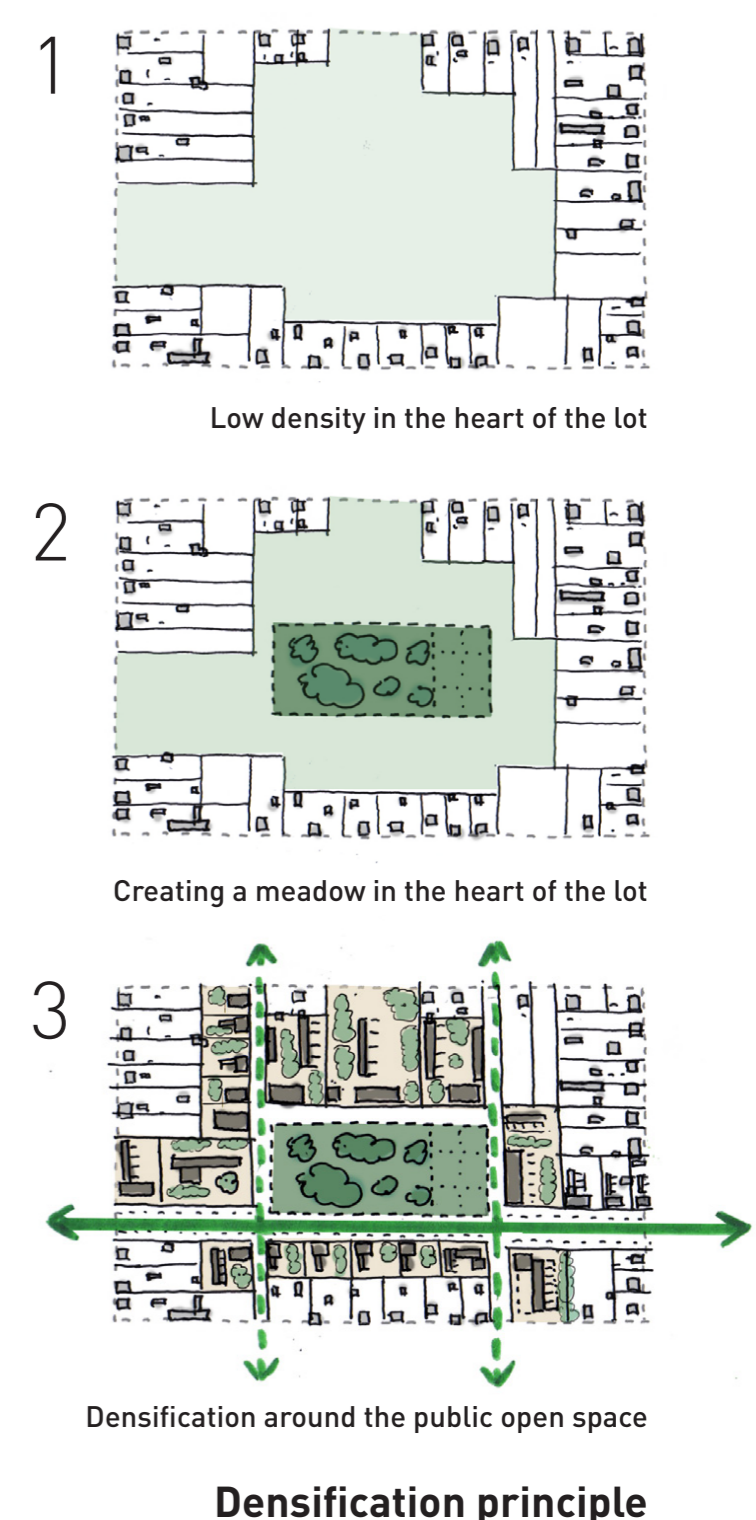
Where the dense fabric of the city center streets ends, the panorama opens out on the large territory. The Allier river becomes a contemplation space of the city. We suggest fitting out, on both sides of the river, a system of platforms and points of view : the Allier river becomes a place where two pieces of the city look to each other. Some emergences mark bridgeheads and echo the towers of the city center.

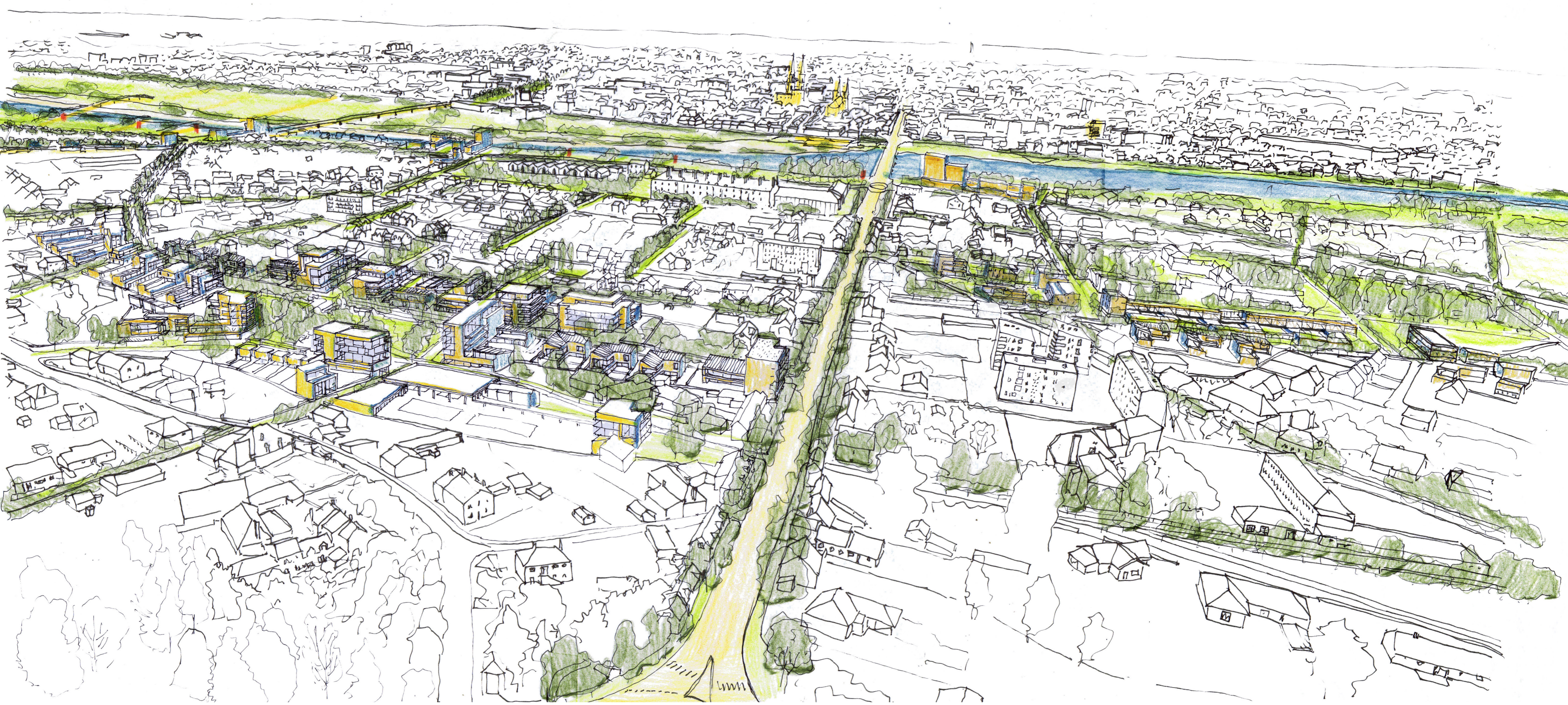
The Régemortes Bridge is to this day the only point of connection between the two banks of Allier river. A second crossing planned by the city will afford the opportunity to begin the left bank development. A new boulevard, leading to the Saint-Menoux Road, will be created in its continuation, and will establish a new limit for the Madeleine suburb. Others links are foreseen, strengthening the connection between both banks : a footbridge «fastened» on the Iron bridge to the South, leading to the railroad station, and also a third work of engineering connecting the new « boat station» park to the sport playground.

Plotted on the current dike, the Montilly road will overhang two parks and will clear a view on each side of a panorama staging the main territory at the entrance of the city : to the East the bed of the Allier river and the boat station park, to the West the agricultural park and the countryside far as the eye can see. This social and economic oriented group of parks will be the showcase of the hinterland of Moulin's.



Landscape structure of the project





Vegetation structure and landscaped enclosures

When the Allier river becomes urban fabric

The Allier as a landscape for the faubourg

Connecting the city and its river is to restore the geographical space within the urban fabric itself. The whole suburb of Madeleine is thought as an extension of the Allier Park. A weft of planted ways and walks connect the river to the new public places in heart of lots.

Our intervention is set up in a process of densification of the urban fabric and the creation of public space. Basing ourselves on the potential represented by the hearts of the lots, we propose a reinterpretation of the enclosures of the diocese and the CNCS open spaces and their progressive systematization. The reconquest of the hearts of the lots gives way to meadows all around of which are implanted the new typologies.

The interweaving of low buildings (individual and intermediate) and small collectives appearing over the suburban fabric and offering distant views on the main territory, allows to integrate the new morphology into the existing suburban fabric.

The hazards of the Allier river

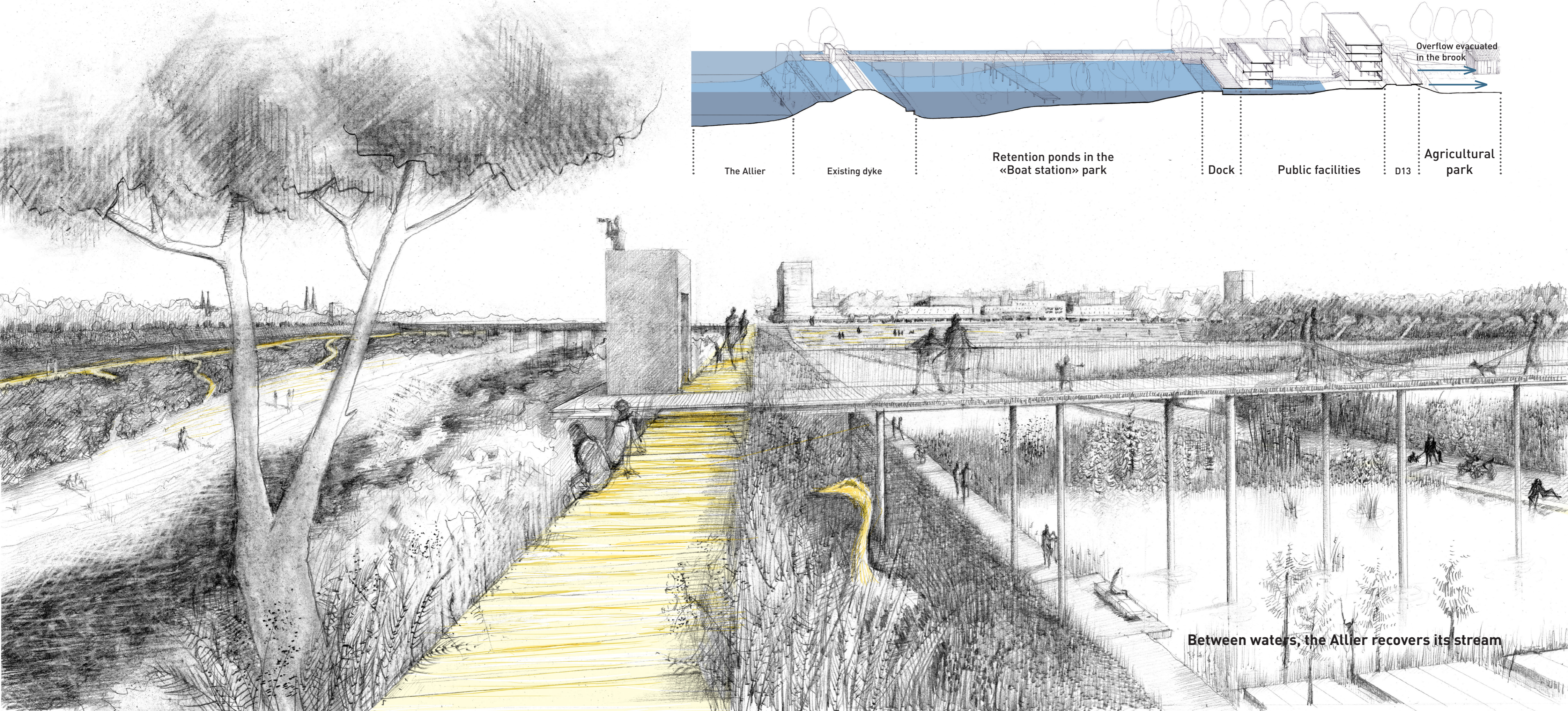
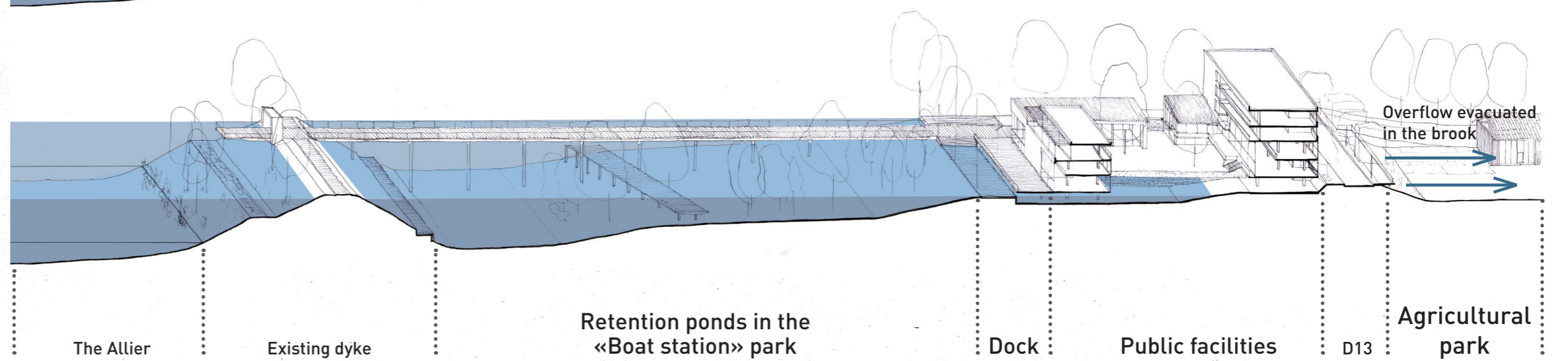
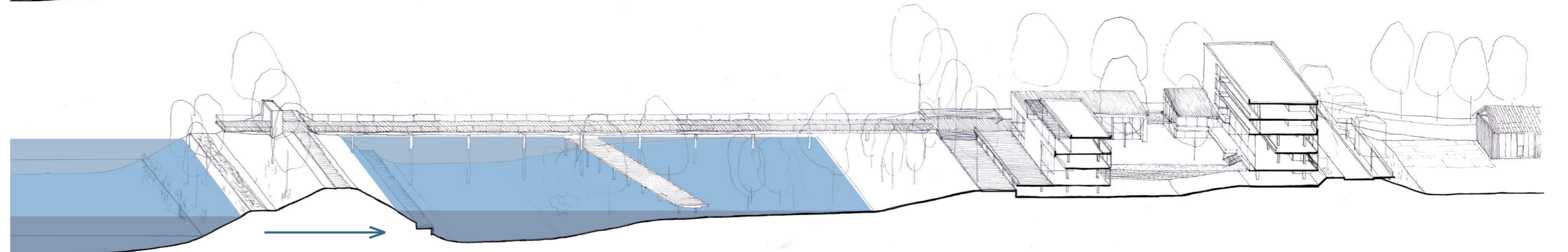
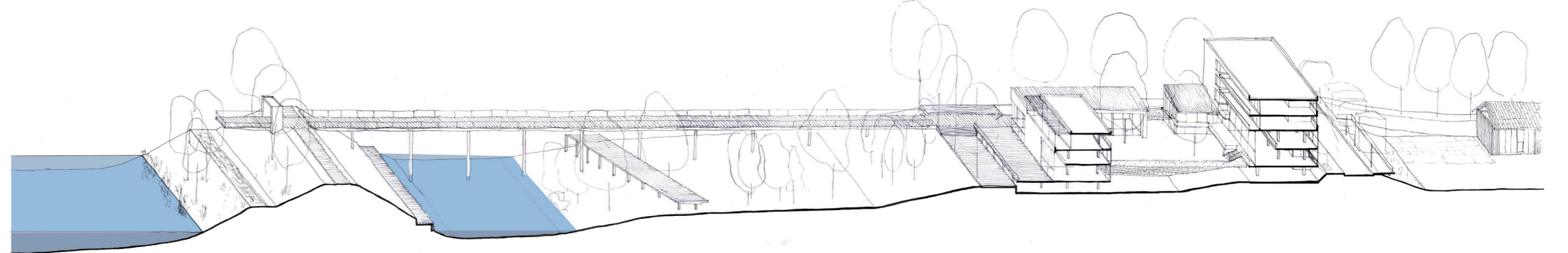
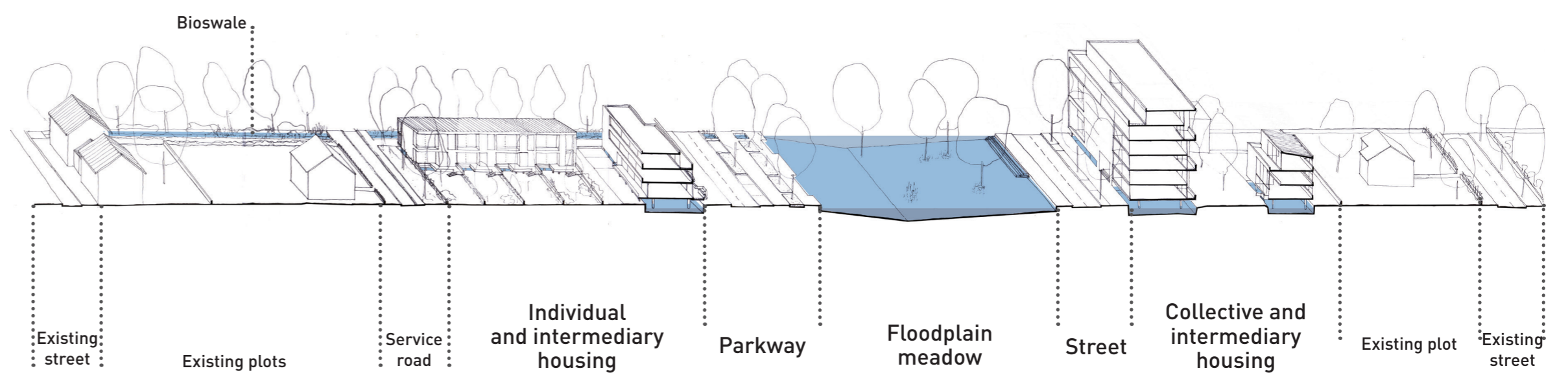
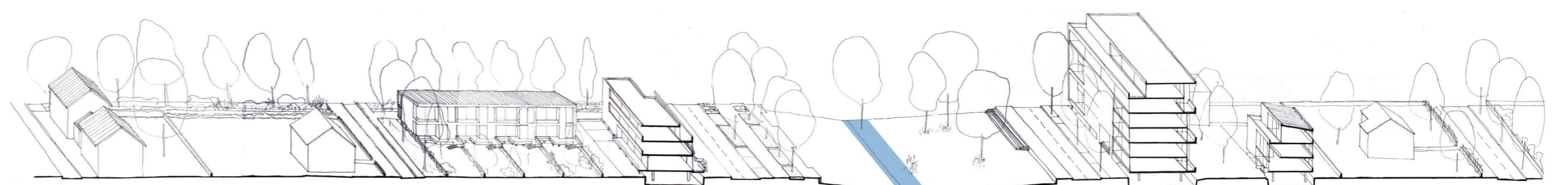
Floodplain meadows

Included in a new meshing of ways this new urban shape extends the park of Madeleine to the heart of the suburb. Integral part of the floods management system, the landscape of the suburb evolves according to the bad weather. Meadows, slightly under the level of new ways are transformed into ponds of retention, before freeing their waters in the direction of the river by a meshing of bioswales along landscaped axes. The extra height of ground floors over half-buried parking lots, integrates the same system of restraint of water and transformation of the landscape.

The park as hydraulic system

The whole boat station and agricultural park constitute a flood management system, allowing a progressive and checked submersion, in order to balance the level of the Allier river.

At first the water goes up the Boat station park various levels, transforming it into pond. Then the ground floors of the equipments constructed on piles are flooded, and the full excess is evacuated through bioswales in the fields of the agricultural park, towards the Goutte noire brook which pours downstream in Allier river.



Between waters, the Allier recovers its stream