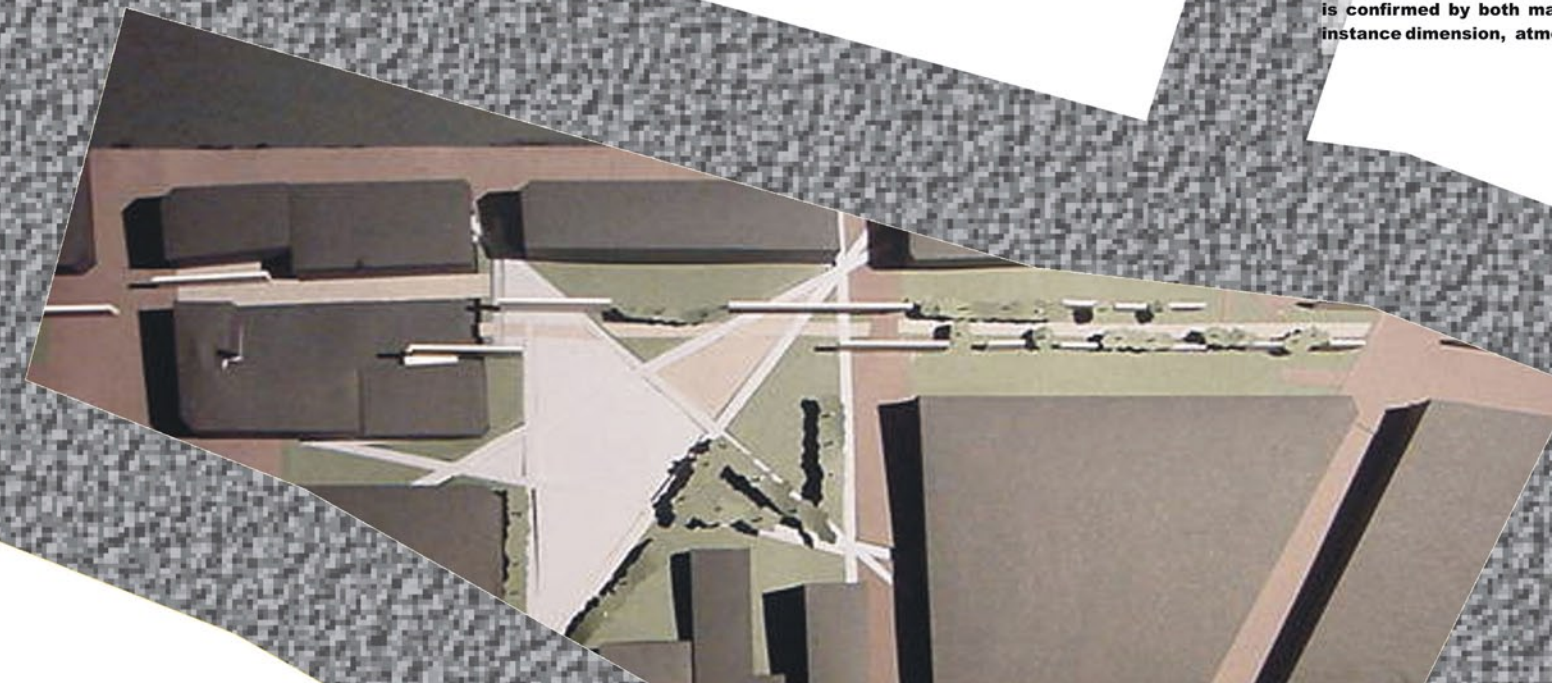


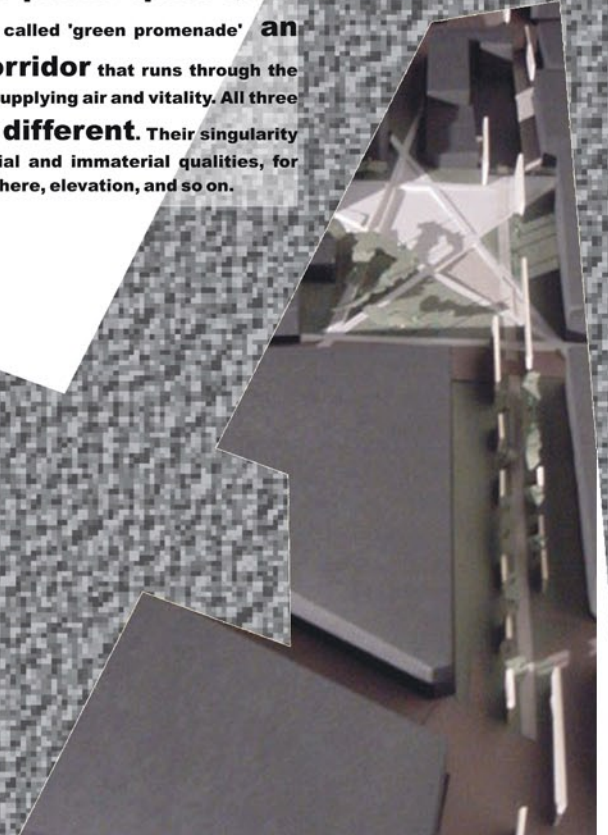
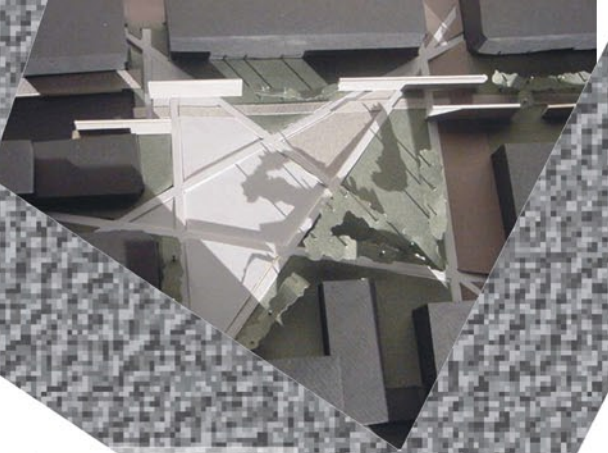
DESIGN INTENTIONS > First and foremost, the intention of this proposal is **to link** these at present independent elements of public space. Our intervention re-establishes the integrity and continuity of the promenade, and emphasizes the importance of this green vein on a larger scale. We think it is important to do so without denying distinct individuality. This objective, creating a clear and intense relation between different urban components, is accomplished by planting **oversized concrete structures** in those locations that are critical in terms of interspatial relationship. These monumental shapes act as giant staples, binding together the particular pieces of an urban pattern into a continuous flow of public space. Simultaneously they guide people onto the track of the ecological metropolitan corridor. The shape of these enormous structures is **derived from a city map**, blown up to huge proportions. This reference connects our project to the city fabric on a conceptual as well as a contextual level.

In addition to the aspect of connection, the issue of **preserving diversity** and promoting uniqueness also plays. Our design aims to answer the different characteristics of each component such as scale and social importance. Each spatial part of our intervention is intended to meet the different requirements, implied by social, urban and architectural grounds. From this point of view, one can make the following distinction in respective atmosphere. At first, there's a **large plaza** or square, **divided by walkways** into smaller, distinct isles. These walkways follow and articulate all main circulation movements in the area. According to location, elevation and relation to surrounding features, each of the isles is characterized by a different interpretation, functional as well as material. One is designed as a playground, another one as a public park, and yet another one as a resting place. Secondly, there is a **strip of public space** that could be described as a succession of more intimate areas, much like a community garden. Every part of this city garden interacts with the houses alongside, thus responding to the residents' need for open-air space. Finally, there are the key points, the hinges where the project **site coheres to the existing green city trail**. The first end attaches the site to a broad avenue that stretches far out into the vast urban fabric. At the other end, the site connects to an existing park. We haven't planned any intervention at all in this park, except the removal of the surrounding fence and gates, in order to **assure accessibility and continuity**.



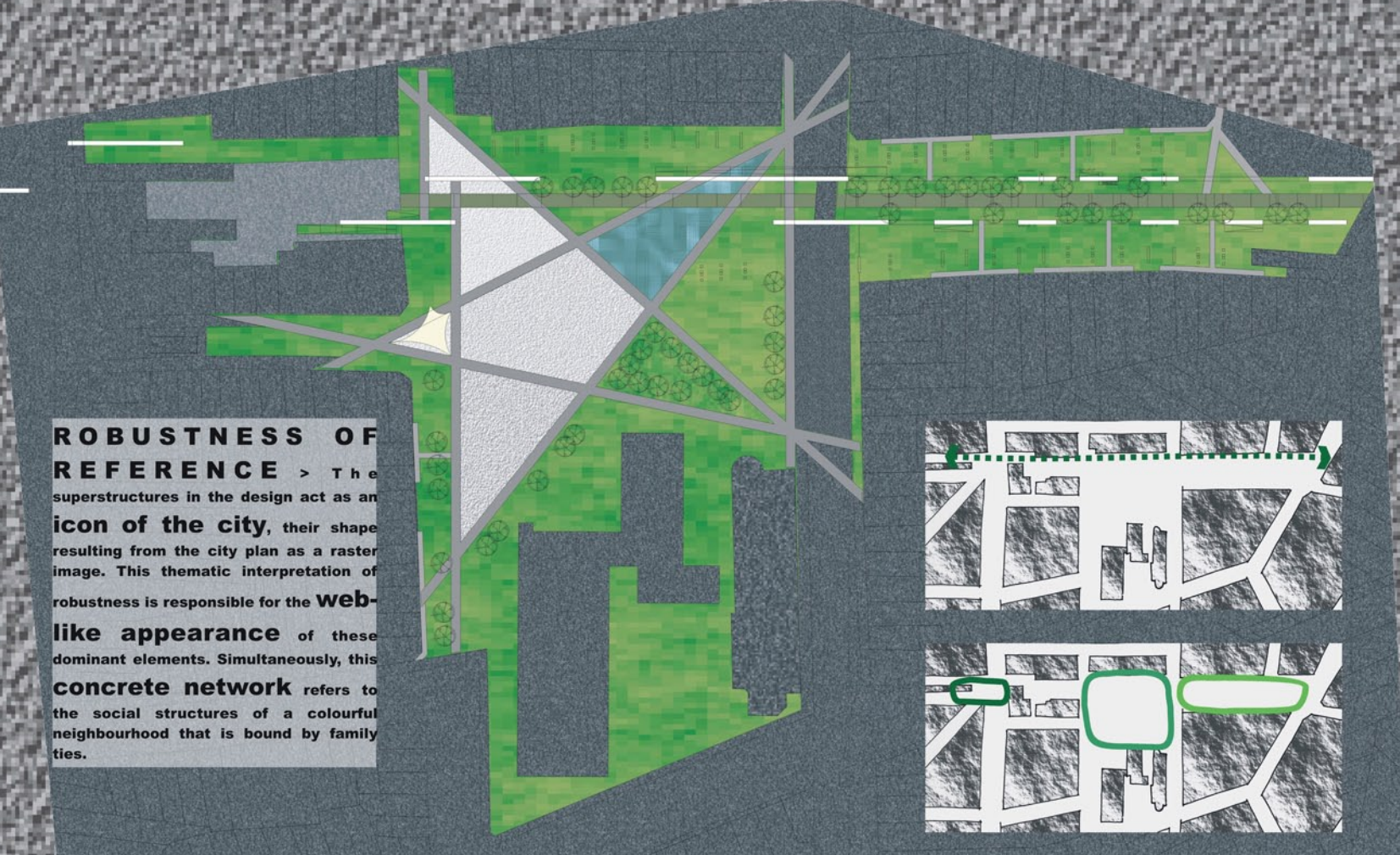
SITUATION > This urban regeneration project is situated in Sint-Joost-Ten-Node, one of Brussels' communities. As poor and heterogeneous as this neighbourhood may be, it is also known for its liveliness, its social activity and **collective coherence**. At the same time, this liveliness is contradicted by the visible remains of past urban intentions. These relics distort the area like a scar in the community's face.

The site consists of **three public spaces**, three separated fractions of a so called 'green promenade' **an environmental corridor** that runs through the entire city like a vein of life, supplying air and vitality. All three parts are **undeniably different**. Their singularity is confirmed by both material and immaterial qualities, for instance dimension, atmosphere, elevation, and so on.



ROBUSTNESS AND CONCRETE > Many angles to the theme of robustness and concrete are brought into play here. The points of view described next are all related to the **oversized structures** that operate as a catalyst for the social and urban **binding processes** that our proposal intends to instigate. The broad spectrum of these processes contributes to a **multilayered approach** in the design. Like driftwood acquires its typical characteristics from the **interaction between** its inherent qualities and the external forces and **influences endured**, this project benefits from the multitude of layers, perspectives, stimuli and other forms of input to which it responds.

ROBUSTNESS OF REFERENCE > The superstructures in the design act as an **icon of the city**, their shape resulting from the city plan as a raster image. This thematic interpretation of robustness is responsible for the **web-like appearance** of these dominant elements. Simultaneously, this **concrete network** refers to the social structures of a colourful neighbourhood that is bound by family ties.



ROBUSTNESS OF STRUCTURE > The giant **staples** in the city fabric structure the urban environment, in several ways. On one hand they **obey the rules of the urban game**, following and maintaining existing paths, on the other hand they **dictate their own conventions**, articulating new paths and walkways, dominating the public space. This process of organizing the surrounding space, works like a **pretension** procedure, as it simultaneously **initiates and absorbs** a degree of activity and tension. This tension is, besides urban and architectural, social, since it canalizes the strong collective engagement of the neighbourhood.



ROBUSTNESS OF MATERIAL > The oversized urban objects are to be made in **reinforced concrete**. This brings in some specific qualities that can be associated with the concept of **robustness**. Most of these characteristics, such as **strength and solidity**, texture and roughness, are easily connected to robustness in the conventional sense, as concrete is considered a robust material. Some of them, however, demand a **slightly different approach**. From this point of view, the **relative frailty of this material** can be regarded as an intrinsic robust quality. Since it results from the continuous and long-lasting adaptation and the guaranteed but **tardy response of concrete** to both external and internal forces, such as meteorological dynamics, self-weight and other loads, **pollution, ageing**, and so on, this frailty is undeniably an indication of flexibility and adaptability. As this project of urban regeneration demands a **conception of sustainability**, it calls upon all of these approaches to material robustness, manifest or vague.



ROBUSTNESS OF SOCIETY > More than just connecting places, the gigantic structures also refer to the **dense network within the community** they are positioned in. This multicultural neighbourhood consists of **large but poor families** with often even more relatives living next door. These elements connect the houses throughout the neighbourhood like the **blood-tie** that hooks up their inhabitants. Moreover, they bind residents together in their intimate response to the ambiguous sense of **provocation and protection** that these urban entities boldly incite.

ROBUSTNESS OF CONTINUITY > There is more to the limitations of concrete than just the physical consequences of forces and loads. According to the conception of this design, an important fraction of this material's **frailty emerges as a reaction to the enduring dynamics** of the neighbourhood's interaction with the superstructures. The **variety of activities along these concrete shapes**, determines a **different type of influence** on every square inch of the surface. Kid's play may result in **chalked faces**; rough games of football can **violently damage** the concrete skin; while traffic and pollution may have a **colouring effect**. This **process of ageing** moulds the structure **into uncontrolled directions**, affecting the continuity of both element and material.

