PASS THIS ON
Protocols and Fictions for Ruins of Coal Extraction in Germany

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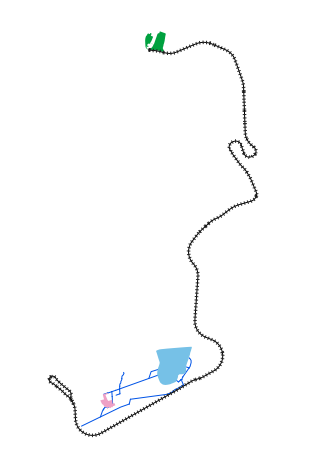


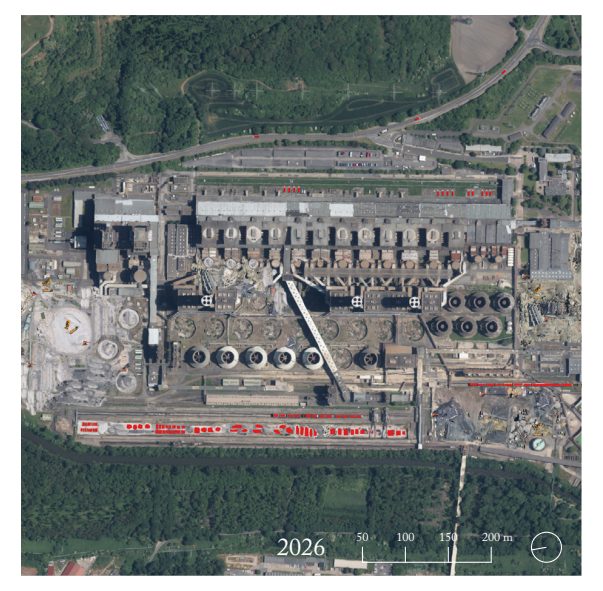
Three Case Studies
PASS THIS ON

- ◐ Existing
- ○ Reuse/Recycle
- ⊖ New
- ▥ Biobased
- ▥ Earthwork
- ✳ Demolished
- ⊕ Under Deconstruction

Legend
PASS THIS ON

Past: Floodplain
Frimmersdorf

Today: Obsolete Power Plant
Frimmersdorf



Intervention: Unbuilding
Frimmersdorf

Possible Future: Reuse & Recycle
Frimmersdorf

Past: Village
Bürgewald

Today: Abandoned Village
Bürgewald

Intervention: Reactivation
Bürgewald

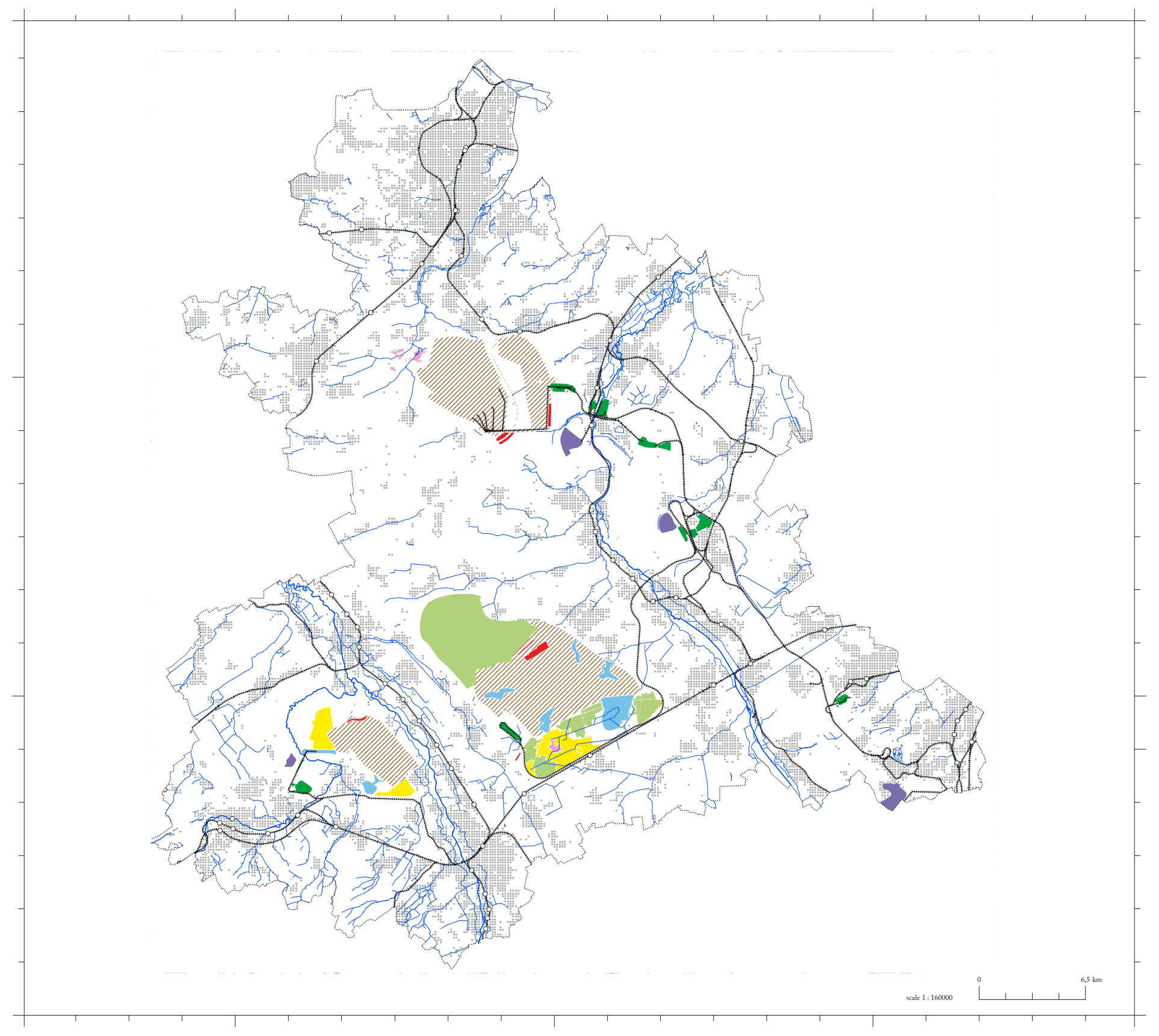
Possible Future: Common Grounds
Bürgewald

Past: Fields, Highway & Forests
Manheim

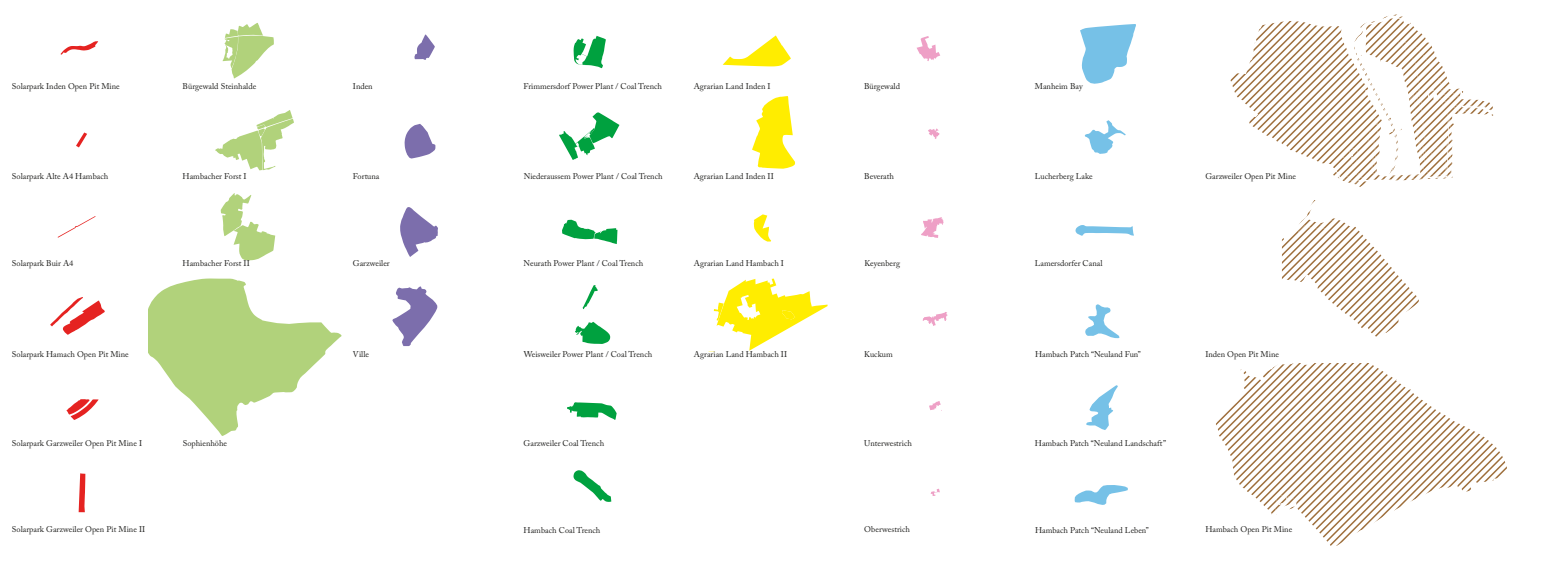
Today: Approaching Mine
Manheim

Intervention: Hijacking
Manheim

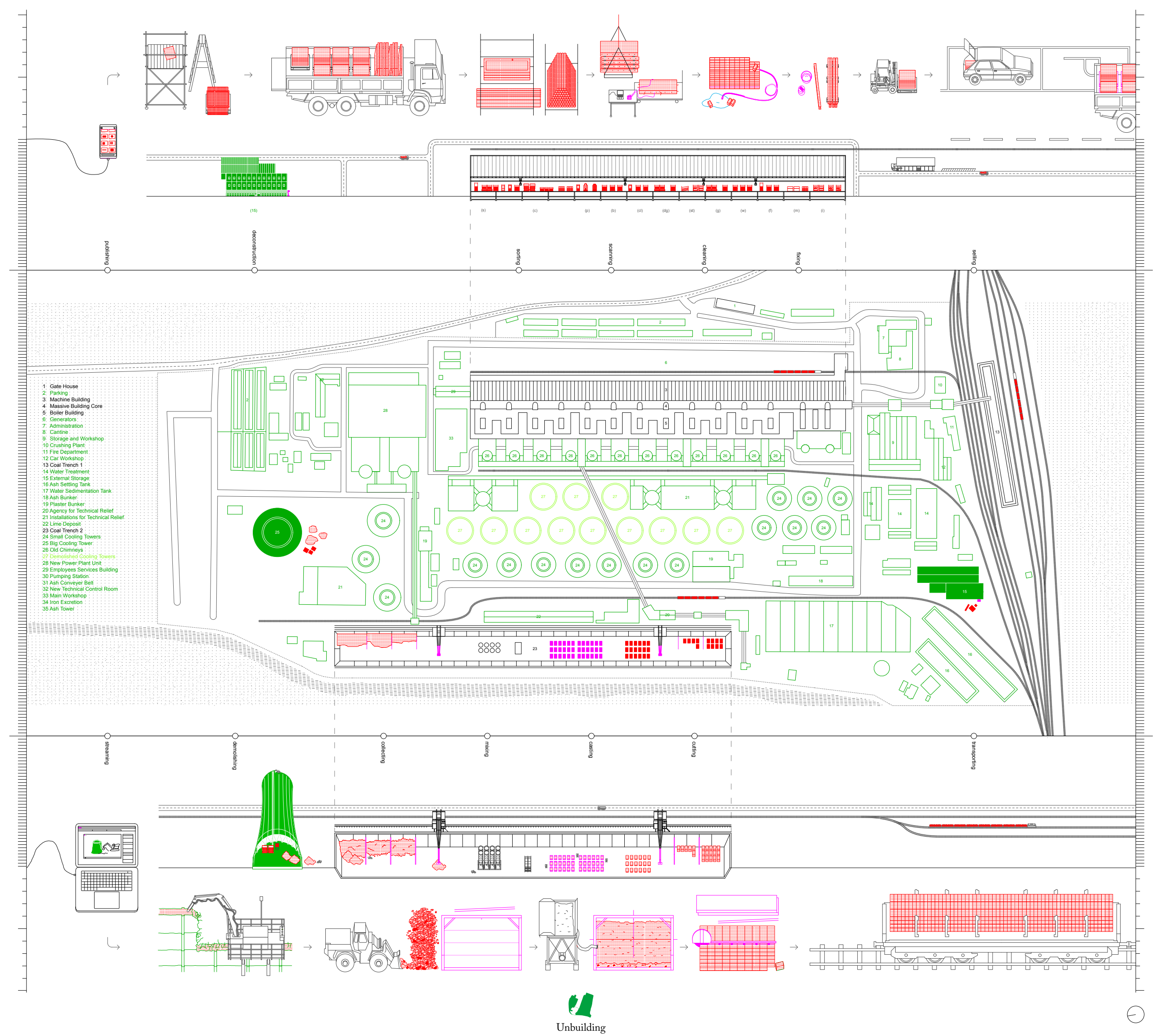
Possible Future: Shore Under Construction
Manheim



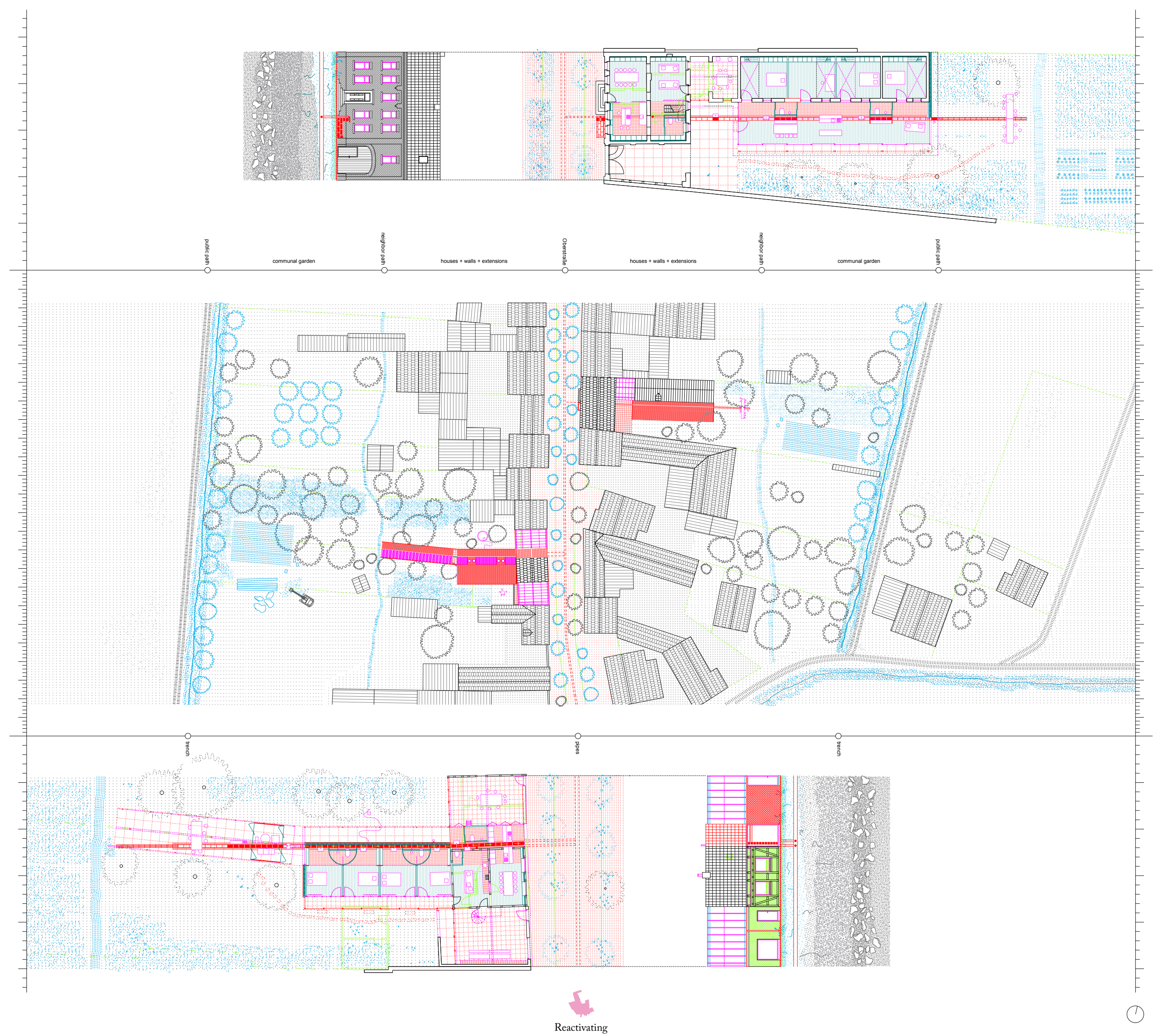
- 🟥 **expanding solar landscapes**
- 🟩 **scarred forests**
- 🟪 **decomissioned landfills**
- 🟩 **obsolete extraction infrastructures**
- 🟨 **expropriated agrarian land**
- 🟪 **abandoned villages**
- 🟦 **temporal shores**
- ▨ **promised lakes (mines today)**
- **waterways**
- **rivers**
- **outline rheinisches revier**
- **villages / towns**
- **cargo rails**
- **station public transport**



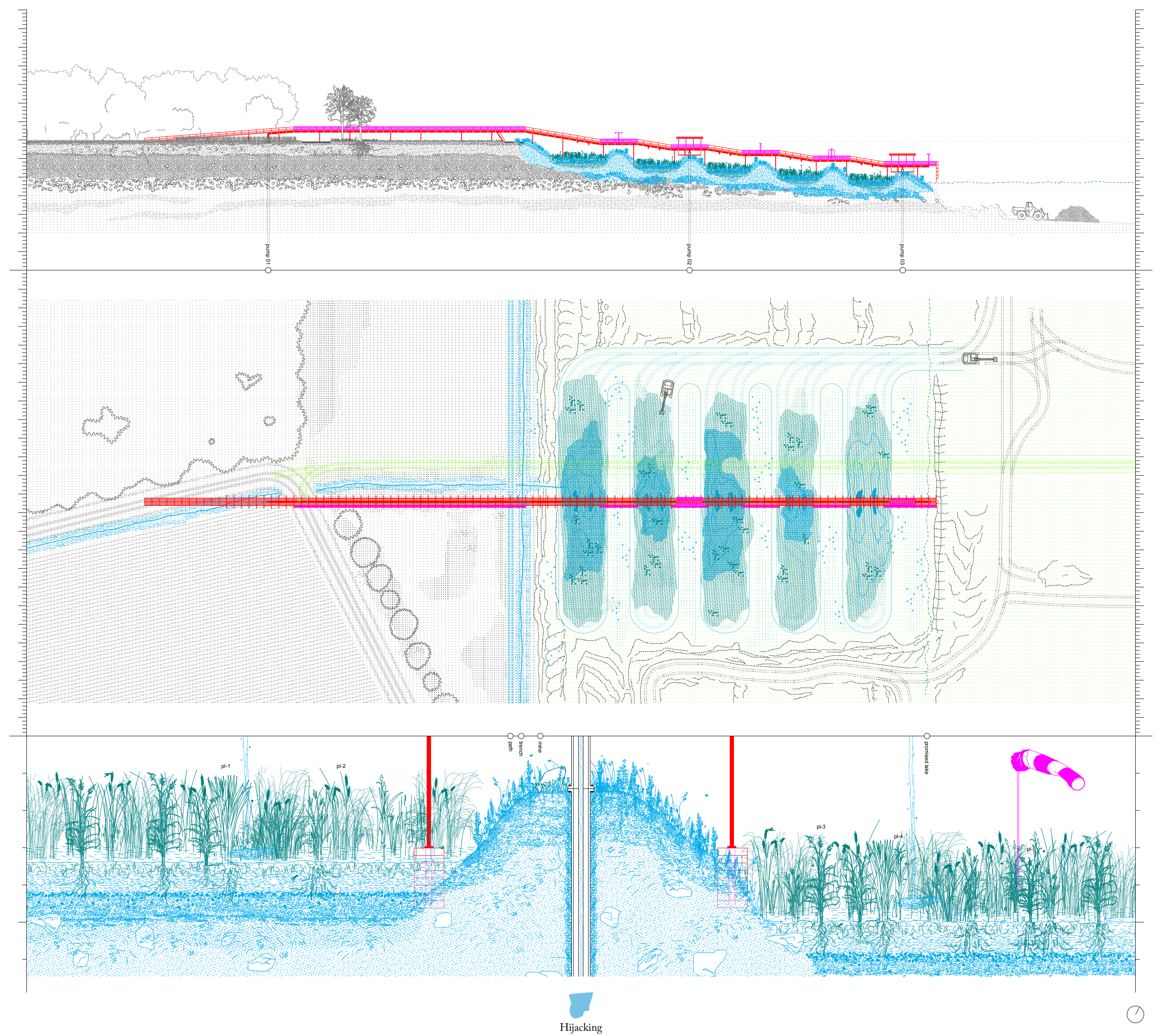
Ruins of Extraction
Rheinisches Revier, Germany



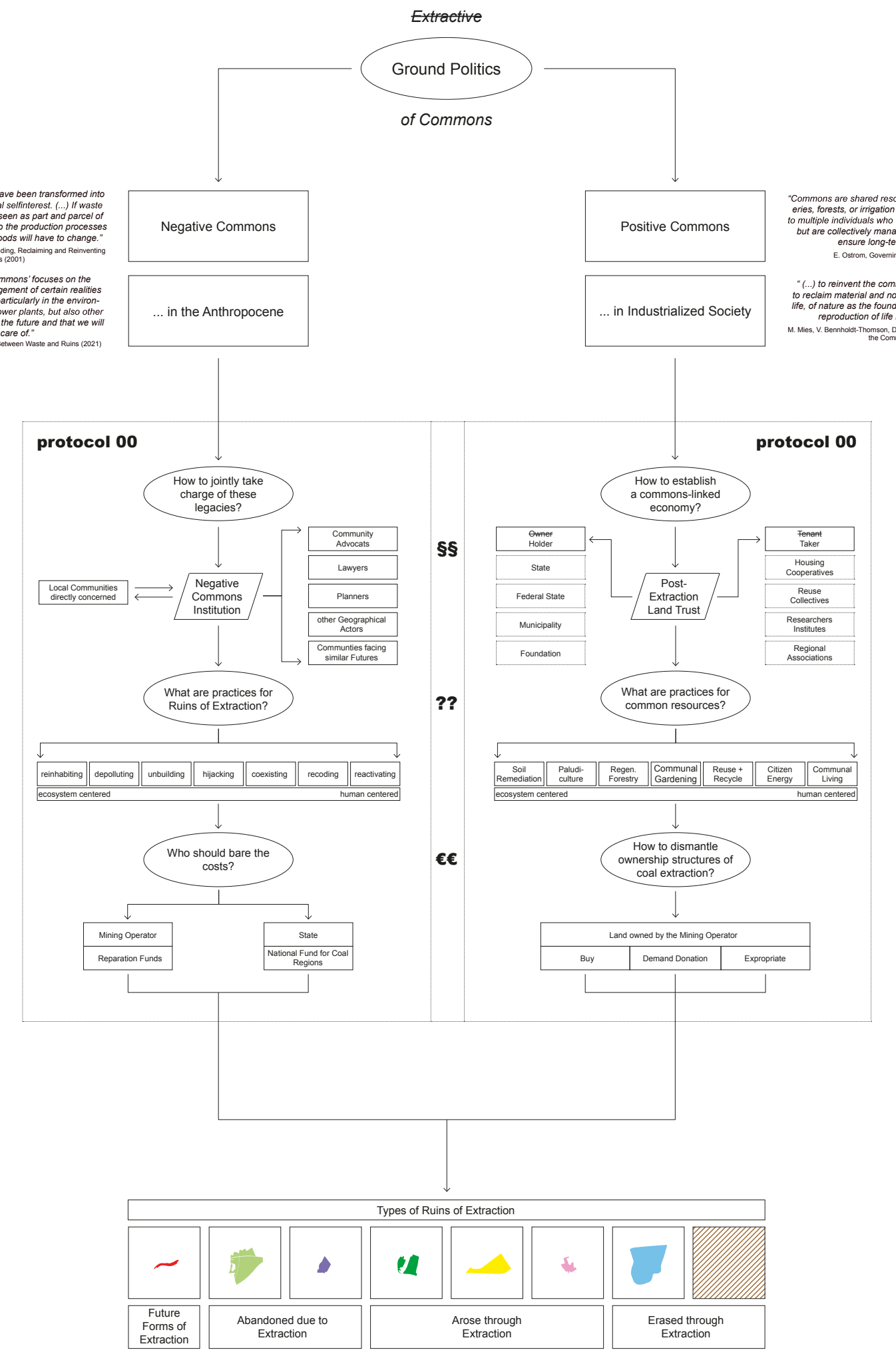
Unbuilding
Frimmersdorf



Reactivating
Bürgewald



Hijacking
Manheim



~~Extractive~~

Ground Politics

of Commons

> "Commons and users' rights have been transformed into private property, and individual selfinterest. (...) If waste [negative commons] is again seen as part and parcel of our life processes (...) then also the production processes as well as the circulation of goods will have to change."
> M. Mies, V. Bennholdt-Thomson, Defending, Reclaiming and Reinventing the Commons (2001)

> "The notion of 'negative commons' focuses on the problems raised by the management of certain realities whose effects are negative, particularly in the environmental field: waste, nuclear power plants, but also other elements that we will inherit in the future and that we will have to take care of."
> A. Monnin, The Negative Commons: Between Waste and Ruins (2021)

Negative Commons

... in the Anthropocene

Positive Commons

... in Industrialized Society

> "Commons are shared resources, such as pastures, fisheries, forests, or irrigation systems, that are accessible to multiple individuals who use them for individual benefit but are collectively managed to prevent overuse and ensure long-term sustainability."
> E. Ostrom, Governing the Commons (1990)

> " (...) to reinvent the commons (...) must mean rather to reclaim material and non-material areas of reality, of life, of nature as the foundations for the production and reproduction of life by local communities."
> M. Mies, V. Bennholdt-Thomson, Defending, Reclaiming and Reinventing the Commons (2001)

protocol 00

How to jointly take charge of these legacies?

Local Communities directly concerned

Negative Commons Institution

Community Advocats
Lawyers
Planners
other Geographical Actors
Communities facing similar Futures

What are practices for Ruins of Extraction?

reinhabiting | depolluting | unbuilding | hijacking | coexisting | recoding | reactivating
ecosystem centered — human centered

Who should bare the costs?

Mining Operator
Reparation Funds

State
National Fund for Coal Regions

§§

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€€

protocol 00

How to establish a commons-linked economy?

~~Owner~~ Holder
State
Federal State
Municipality
Foundation

Post-Extraction Land Trust

~~Tenant~~ Taker
Housing Cooperatives
Reuse Collectives
Researchers Institutes
Regional Associations

What are practices for common resources?

Soil Remediation | Paludi-culture | Regen. Forestry | Communal Gardening | Reuse + Recycle | Citizen Energy | Communal Living
ecosystem centered — human centered

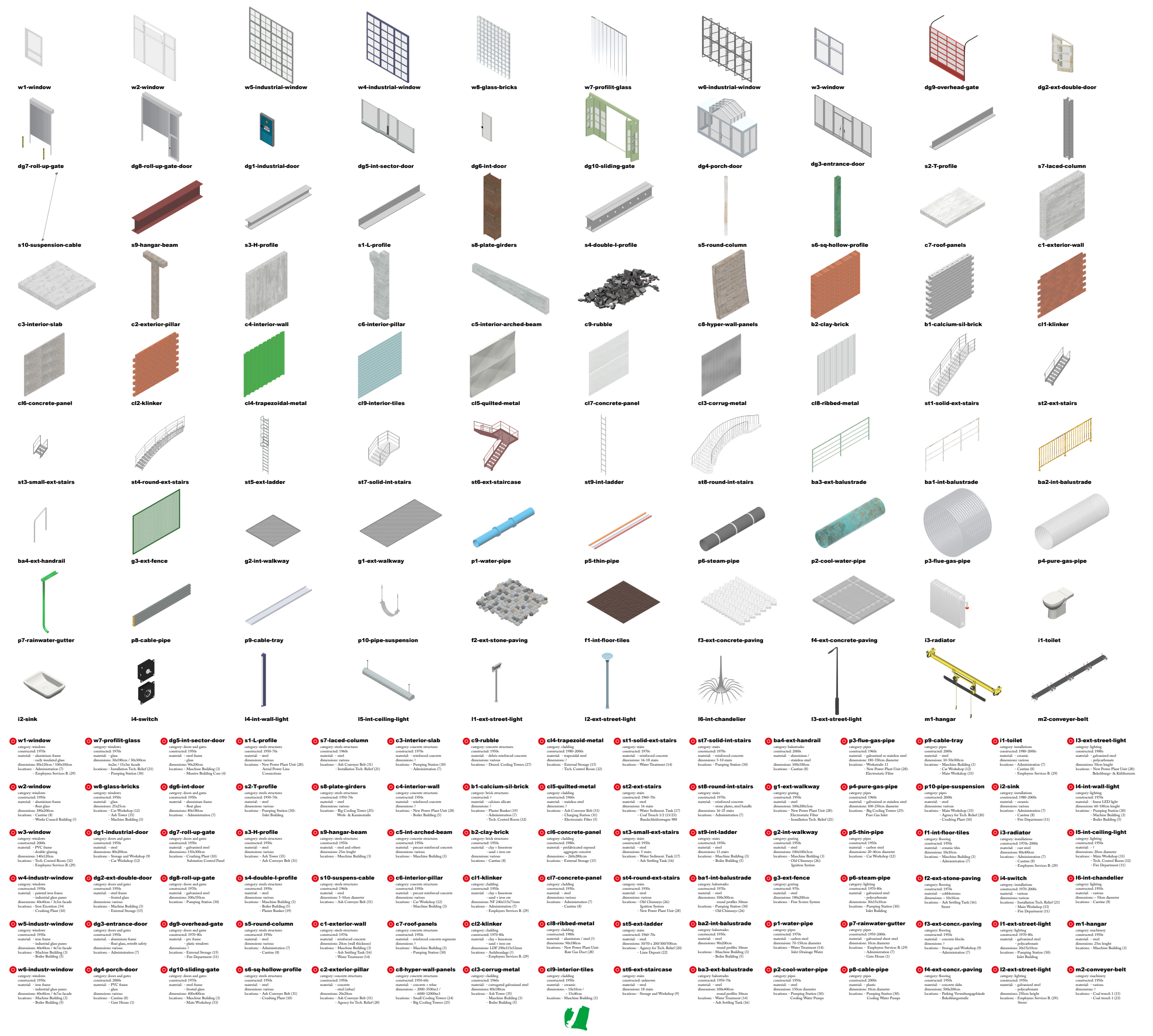
How to dismantle ownership structures of coal extraction?

Land owned by the Mining Operator
Buy | Demand Donation | Expropriate

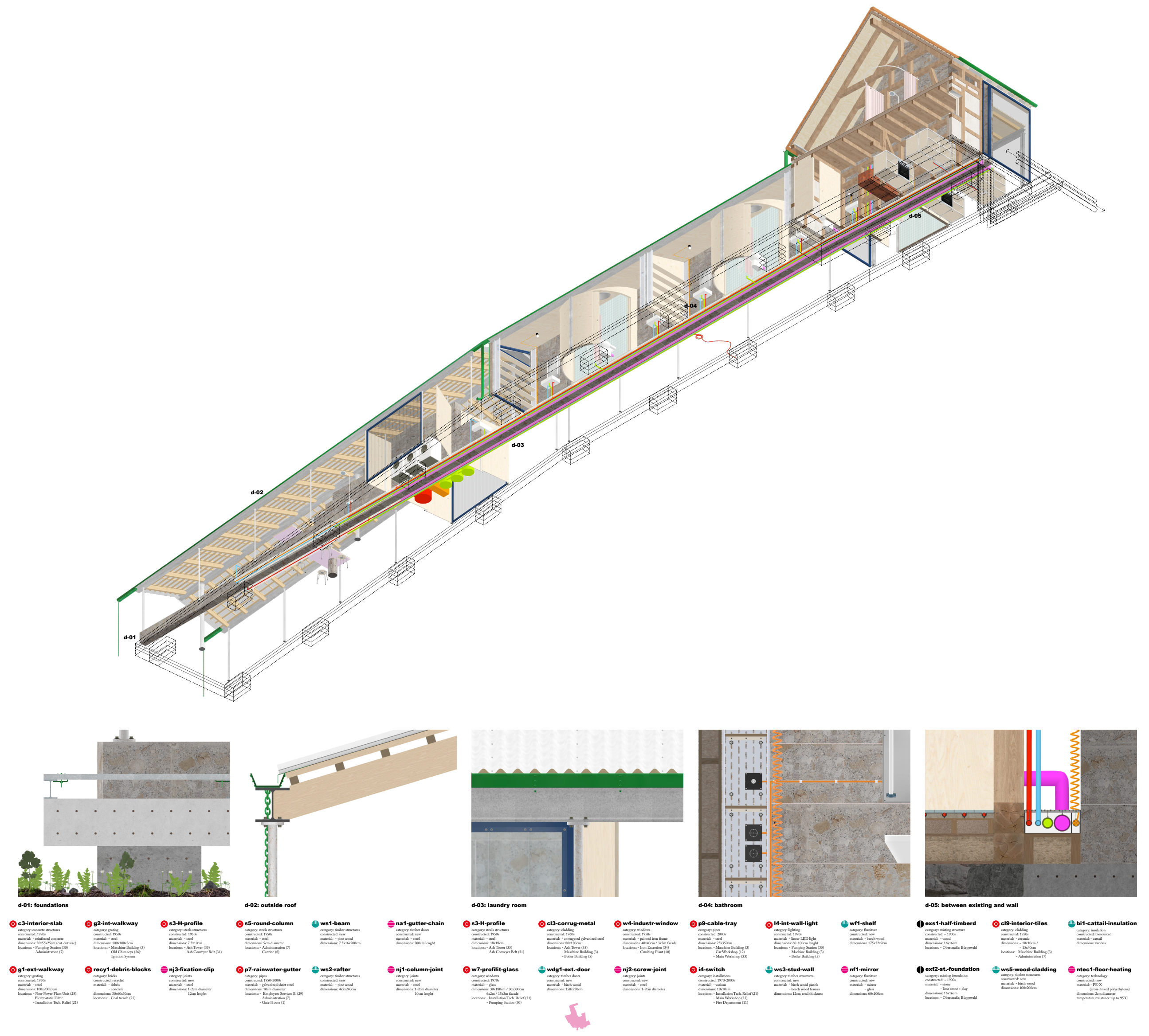
Types of Ruins of Extraction

Future Forms of Extraction | Abandoned due to Extraction | Arose through Extraction | Erased through Extraction

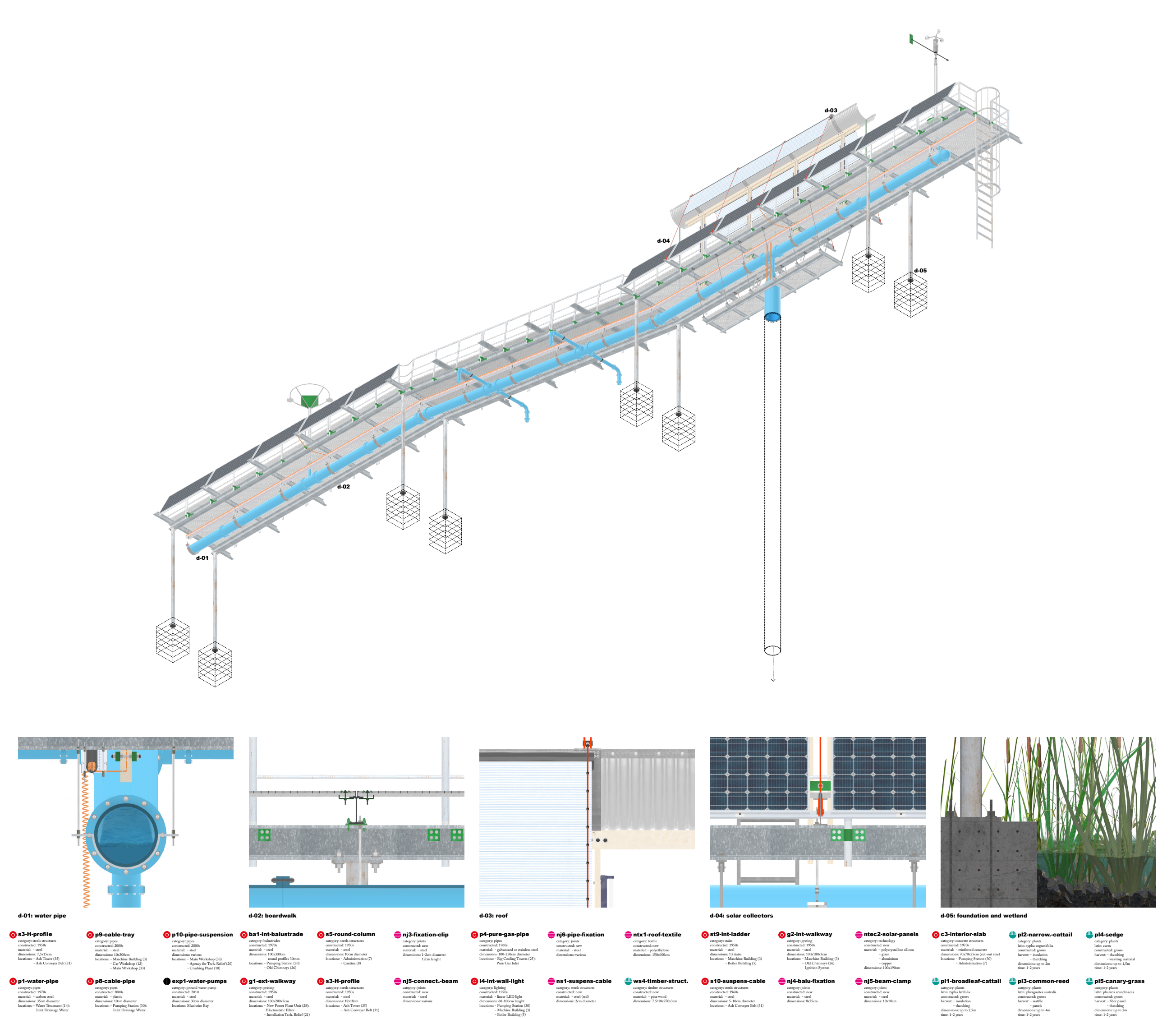
Ground Politics of Commons
Diagram



The Inventory
Frimmersdorf



The Wall
Bürgewald



The Jetty
Manheim

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protocol 01

Frimmersdorf
DE-41517 Grevenbroich
Obsolete since 2020
1 Power Plant (75 ha)
1 Machine Building under Heritage Protection (60'000 m2)
1 Gate House under Heritage Protection (900 m2)

§§ Ownership Structures

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Current owner RWE sells to LCC~~
~~2) LCC sells to private investors~~

Post-Extraction Land Trust
1) Current owner RWE donates to Federl State NRW
2) Federal State NRW leases to Reuse Cooperatives/Firms
3) Potential Lease Takers: Reuse Cooperatives / Firms
(e.g. Baukreisel e.V. / Rotor DC)

?? Action Plan **unbuilding**

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Demolition of most facilities exept heritage buildings~~
~~2) Data Center + Technology and Innovation Campus~~

Unbuilding as Counter Practice
1) Progressive Unbuilding of Facilities except Heritage Buildings
2) Streaming of the Unbuilding Process to make it Public
3) Cataloging the Disassembled Material for Reuse
4) Recoding the Machine Building for Sorting + Storing material
5) Recoding the Coal Trench for Recycling Debris

€€ Financial Plan

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Management: Frimmersdorf LCC~~
~~2) Investment: Private Actors~~

Donation of a Ruin of Extraction
1) Federal State NRW demands donation from RWE.
2) Funding: Reparation Funds of Mining Operator (amount unknown) / National Structural Transition Fund (65M€ for Frimmersdorf) / International Building & Technology Exhibition (2,7B€ total) / Bundesstiftung Baukultur

* https://www.grevenbroich.de/wirtschaft/rahmenplan-kraftwerk-frimmersdorf.

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protocol 02

Bürgewald
DE-52399 Merzenich
Abandoned since 2015
160 Properties, 493 Inhabitants (2014)
~ 2-3 Inhabitants per Property (2014)

§§ Ownership Structures

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
1) Current owner RWE sells to Municipality of Merzenich
~~2) Municipality leases properties as land trusts of 99 years~~

Post-Extraction Land Trust
1) Current owner RWE sells to Municipality of Merzenich
2) Municipality leases houses as land trusts of 999 years
3) Potential Lease Takers: housing cooperatives / groups of former inhabitants or other private persons

?? Action Plan **reactivating**

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) A Village for 2500 inhabitants~~
~~2) Density / Sprawl / Retrofit to be determined~~

Reactivating as Counter Practice
1) No Fences, No Plots
2) Renovation + Extension of 160 Houses
3) Reconfiguration of Houses and Living
4) Wall as Tool for Domestic + Neighbour Infrastructure
5) Assemblies of Reuse and Non-Extractive Materials

€€ Financial Plan

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
Funding: Municipality of Merzenich (Structural Transition, 90M €) / International Building & Technology Exhibition (2,7B € total)

Purchase of a Ruin of Extraction
1) Municipality of Merzenich buys from RWE
2) Same funding, different allocation: Subsidised Renovation / Communal Enegry + Water Infrastructure / Communal Garden

* Zukunftswerkstatt Merzenich. Bürgewald - Fachplanerisches Zukunftsbild. Vorsondierung zum Masterplan Bürgewald, 2024.

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protocol 03

Manheim
DE-50170 Kerpen
Under Extraction until 2025
Ground Water Pumping (since ~ 2015)
Forest Cutting + Expropriations (since ~ 2015)
Extraction of gravel (since 2024)

§§ Ownership Structures

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Current Ownership of RWE remains unchanged~~
~~2) Future Ownership to be determined~~

Post-Extraction Land Trust
1) Current owner RWE donates to state
2) State leases landscape + jetty as land trust of 999 years
3) Potential Lease Takers: Forschungsstelle Rekultivierung / LVR Landschaftsverband Rheinland (maintenance) / Institute for Post-Natural Studies (research)

?? Action Plan **hijacking**

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Interim uses e.g. solar park~~
~~2) Future uses e.g. trail, nature reserve harbour, beach~~

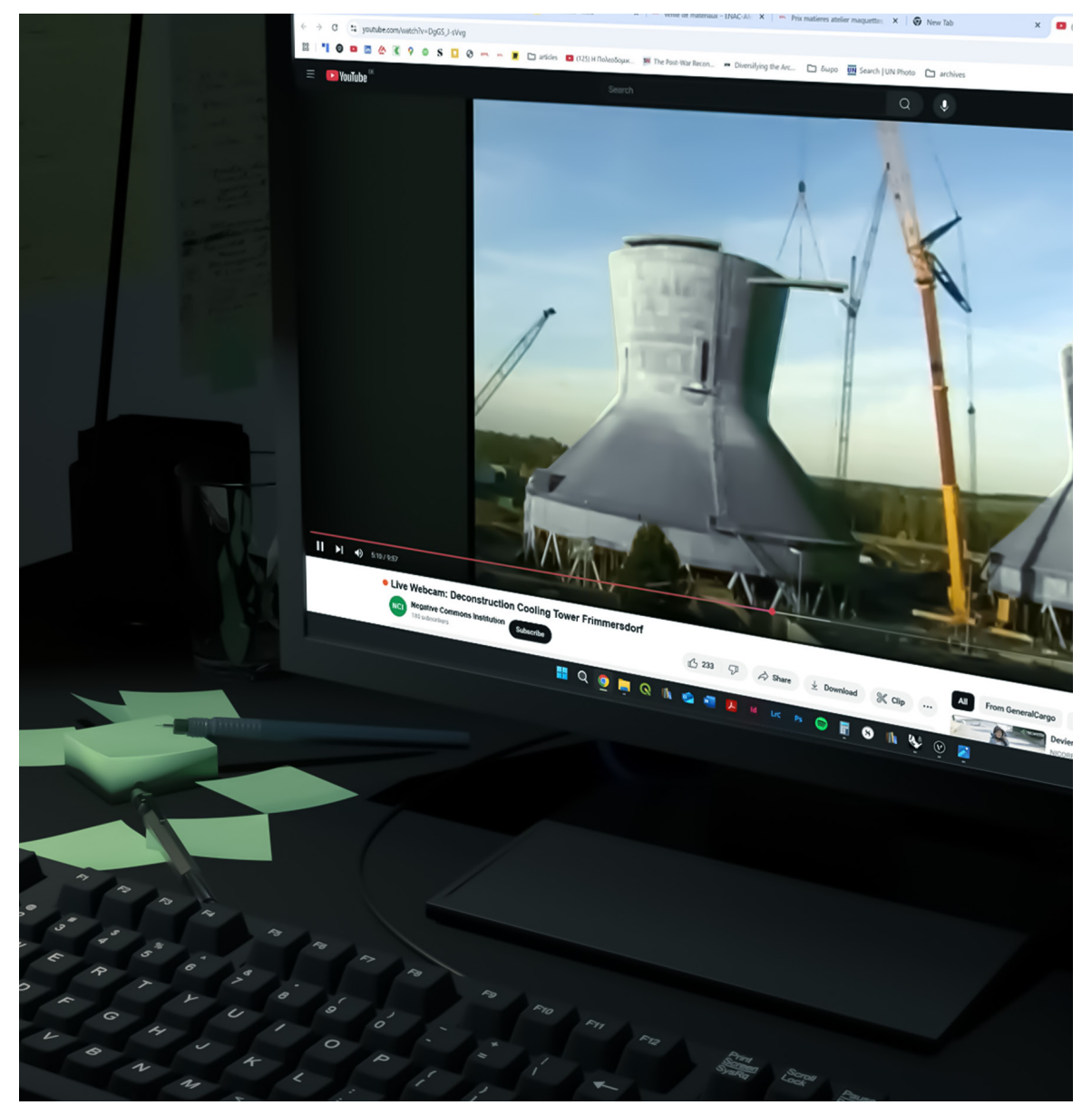
Hijacking as Counter Practice
1) Groundwater Pumps reimagined as Wetland Fountains
2) Earthwork by Extraction Machinery for a Post-Natural Landscape
3) Jetty Assembly with Reuse and Non-Extractive Materials
4) Paludiculture as Form of Careful Coexistence
5) Following Non-Human Timescales instead of Lake Promises

€€ Financial Plan

~~Masterplan 2024*~~
~~1) Funding: Reparation Funds of Mining Operator (amount unknown) / National Structural Transition Fund (amount unknown)~~
~~2) Investment: Private Actors~~

Expropriation of a Ruin of Extraction
1) State expropriates Mining Operator
2) Funding: Reparation Funds of Mining Operator (amount unknown) / International Building & Technology Exhibition (2,7B € total) / Bauhaus Earth (Fellowship) / EU SER Grant for Endangered Landscapes (5 Mio €)

* Neuland Hambach GmbH. Rahmenplan Hambach. 2024.

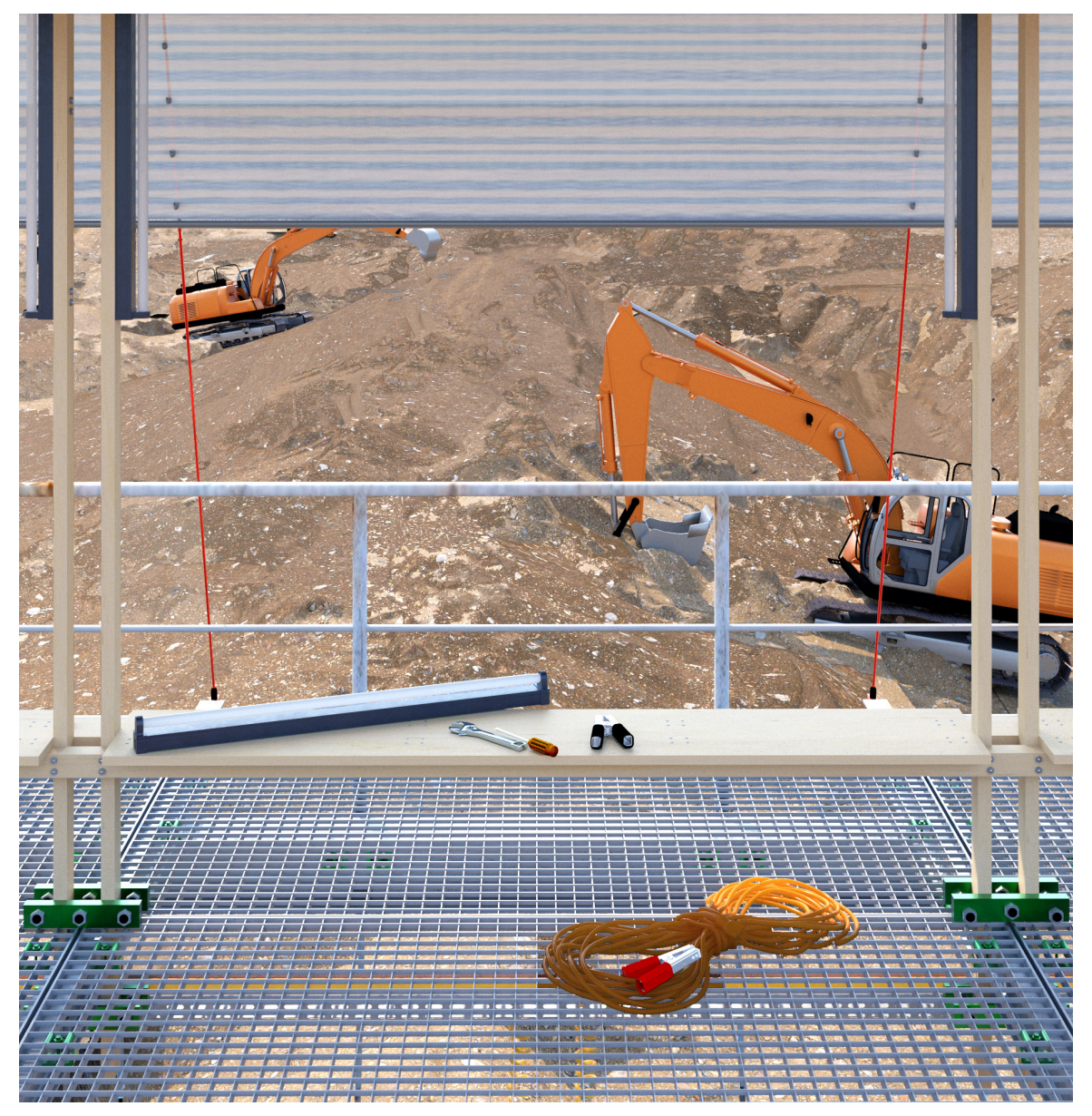


Live Webcam
From a User's Perspective

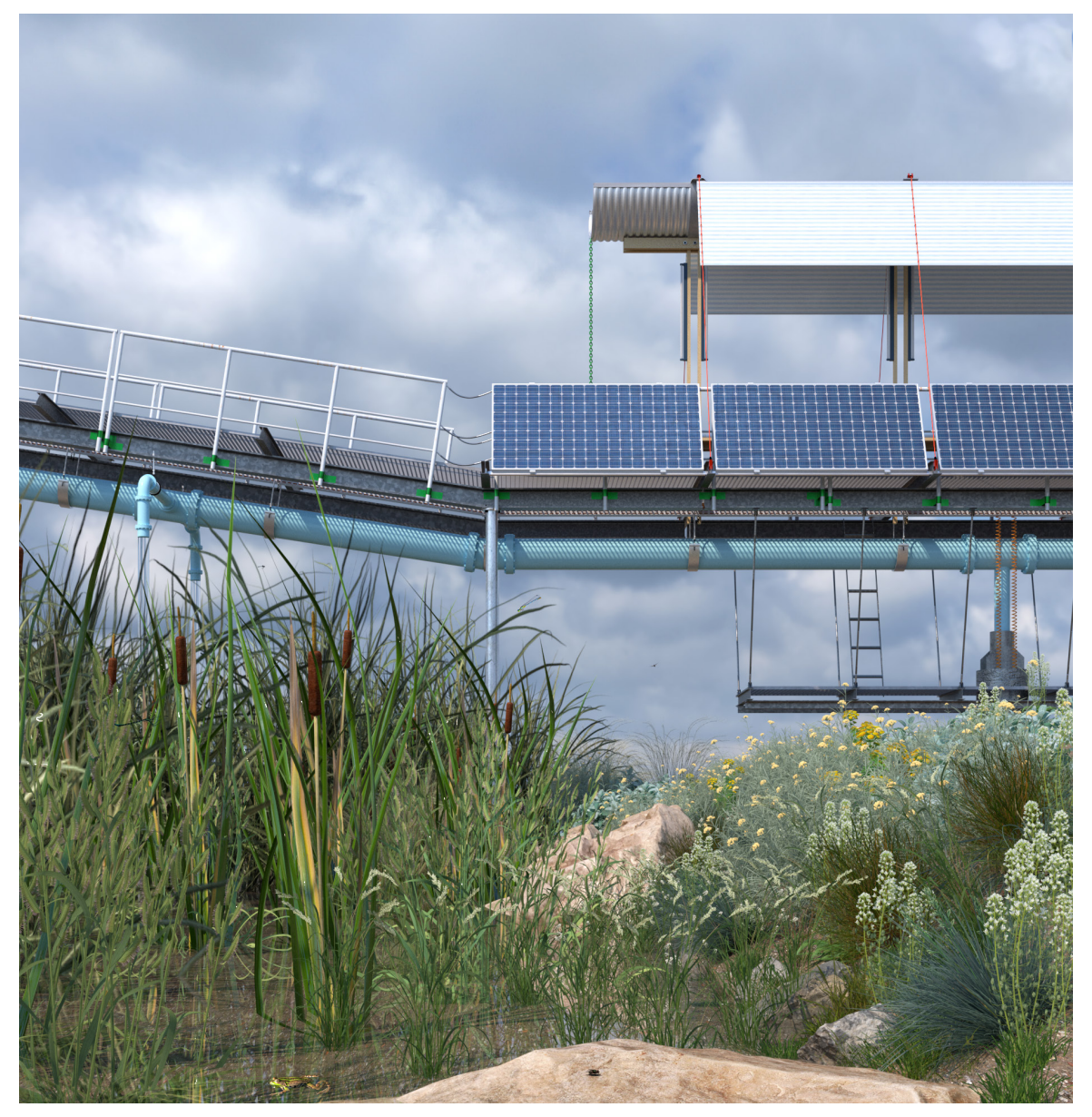
Afternoon Shift
From a Worker's Perspective

Warm Feet
From a Resident's Perspective

Weekly Get-Together
From a Neighbour's Perspective



Under Construction
From an Electricians's Perspective



Splash
From a Frog's Perspective