



Courtyard at Fourth Floor



Daycare Garden at First Floor

It's Cool to Get Old

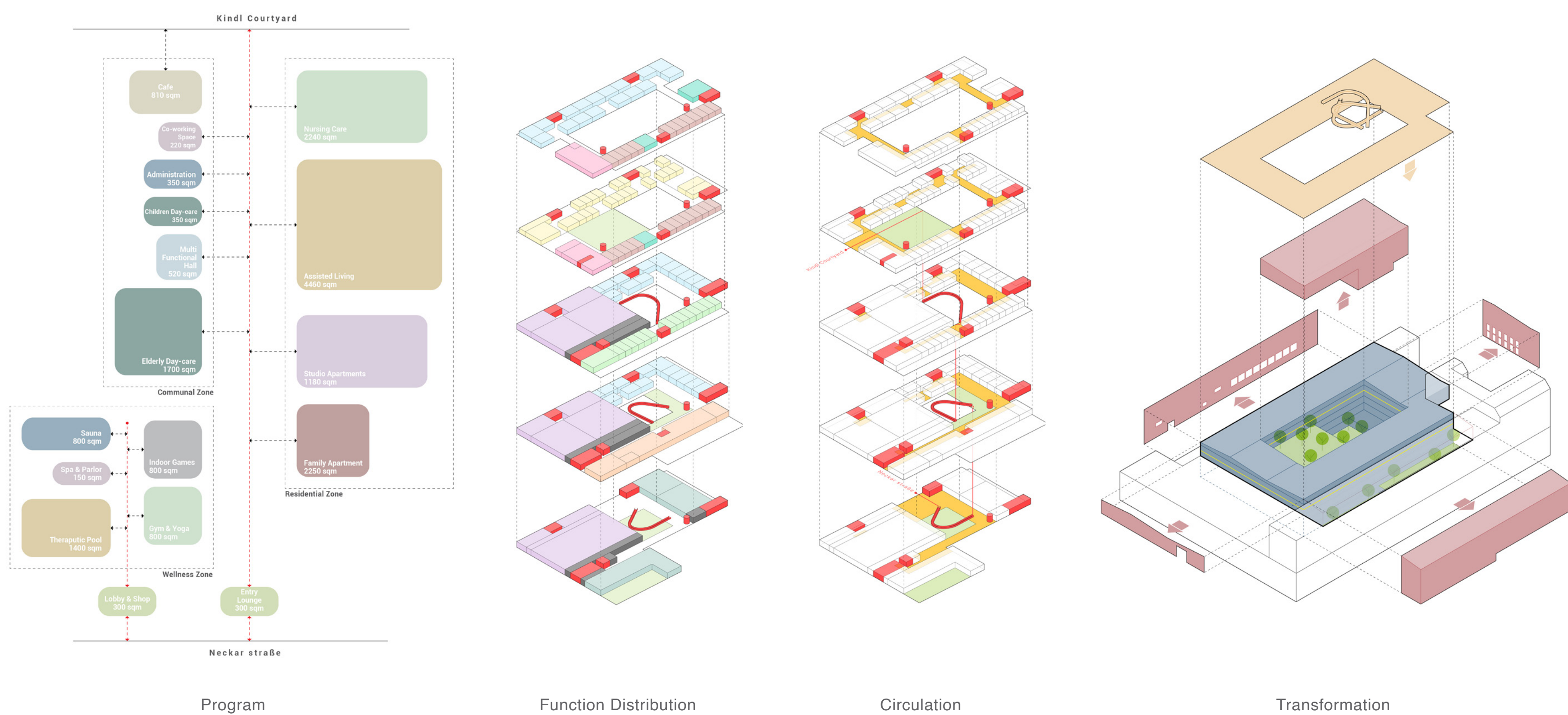
Rethinking Elderly Care Facility as a Community Infrastructure

Germany's rapidly aging population is reshaping the demands placed on care environments. While the number of older adults continues to rise, many conventional facilities remain socially and spatially disengaged, reinforcing isolation, dependence, and limited autonomy. Research across Germany's elder-care landscape reveals consistent problems: restricted opportunities for meaningful interaction, reduced independence, lack of home-like environments, reactive care models, and strong generational separation. A spatial survey of Berlin-Neukölln further highlights how these issues manifest physically. Although most facilities are technically well located, their immediate surroundings often lack welcoming public spaces, and their buildings tend to be introverted, gardens fenced off, façades closed, circulation fragmented. Architecture, in these cases, contributes to the mental and social withdrawal of older adults. This project responds by proposing a care model that prioritizes dignity, mobility, and participation.

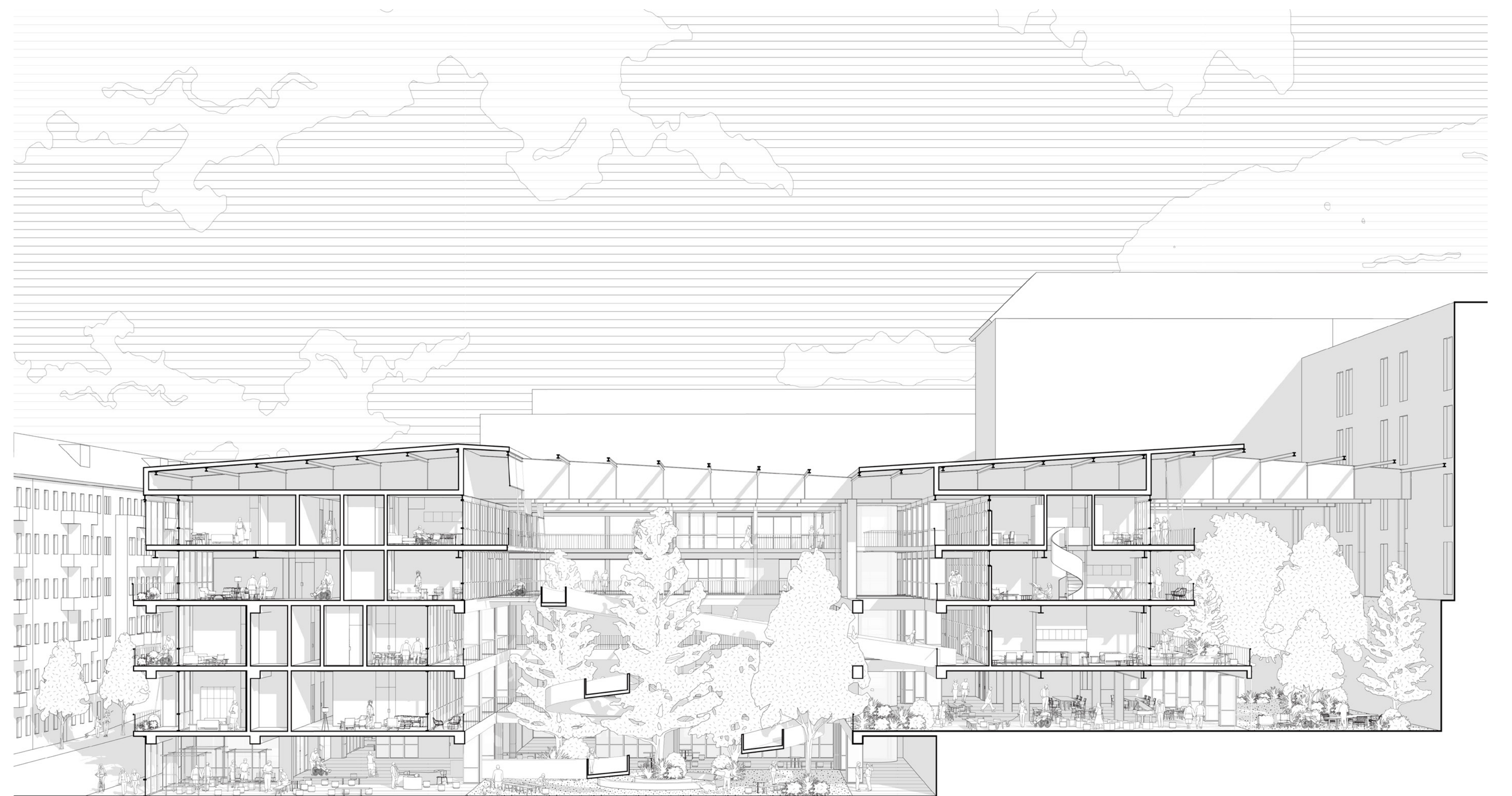
The intervention reuses a vacant warehouse in the former Kindl Brewery complex, Berlin-Neukölln, selected for its potential to support community-based aging. The design begins by opening the heavy industrial shell. A central courtyard is carved from the interior mass, allowing daylight to permeate all levels and forming a restorative communal garden. This courtyard serves as both a visual anchor and a social mediator, enabling residents, especially those with limited mobility, to remain connected to daily activity. Additional openings in the façades strengthen views outward, reduce the sense of enclosure, and improve residents' orientation and cognitive comfort.

The building's transformation continues with the introduction of a continuous ramp that connects the street to the upper floors. Rather than functioning solely as an accessibility device, this ramp becomes a spatial spine that encourages gentle movement, casual encounters, and comfortable circulation for people with varying physical abilities. Transparency between floors allows residents to see life happening throughout the building, supporting mental stimulation and reducing feelings of isolation common in institutional settings.

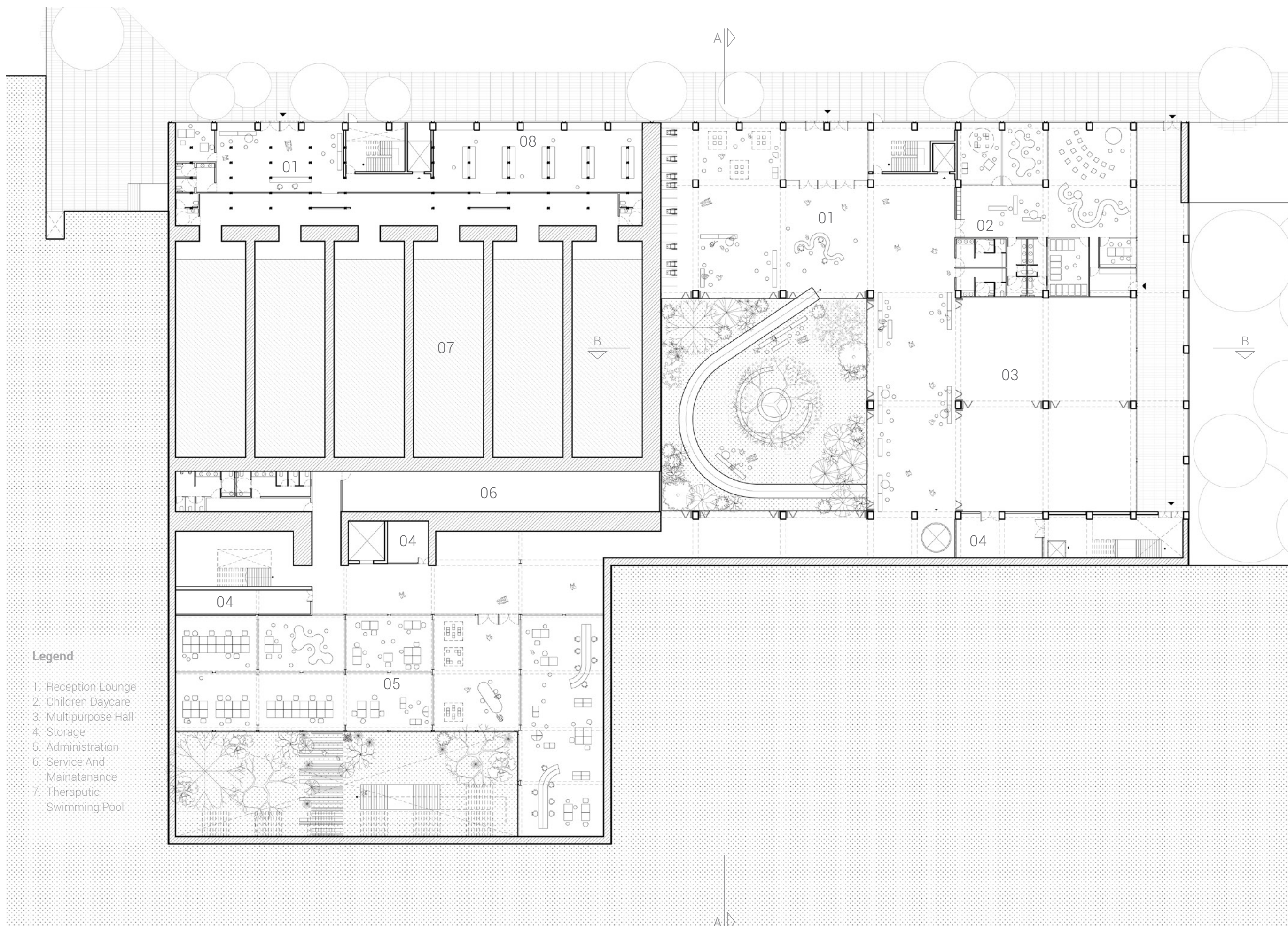
Programmatic distribution reinforces a flexible continuum of independence and care. The ground floor hosts shared amenities such as a café, multipurpose spaces, and gardens—areas where residents and neighbors can meet in informal ways. Mid-level floors accommodate assisted-living units and studio apartments organized around the courtyard, balancing privacy with proximity to support. Upper floors integrate nursing-care suites



Existing Situation (Berlin - Neukölln)

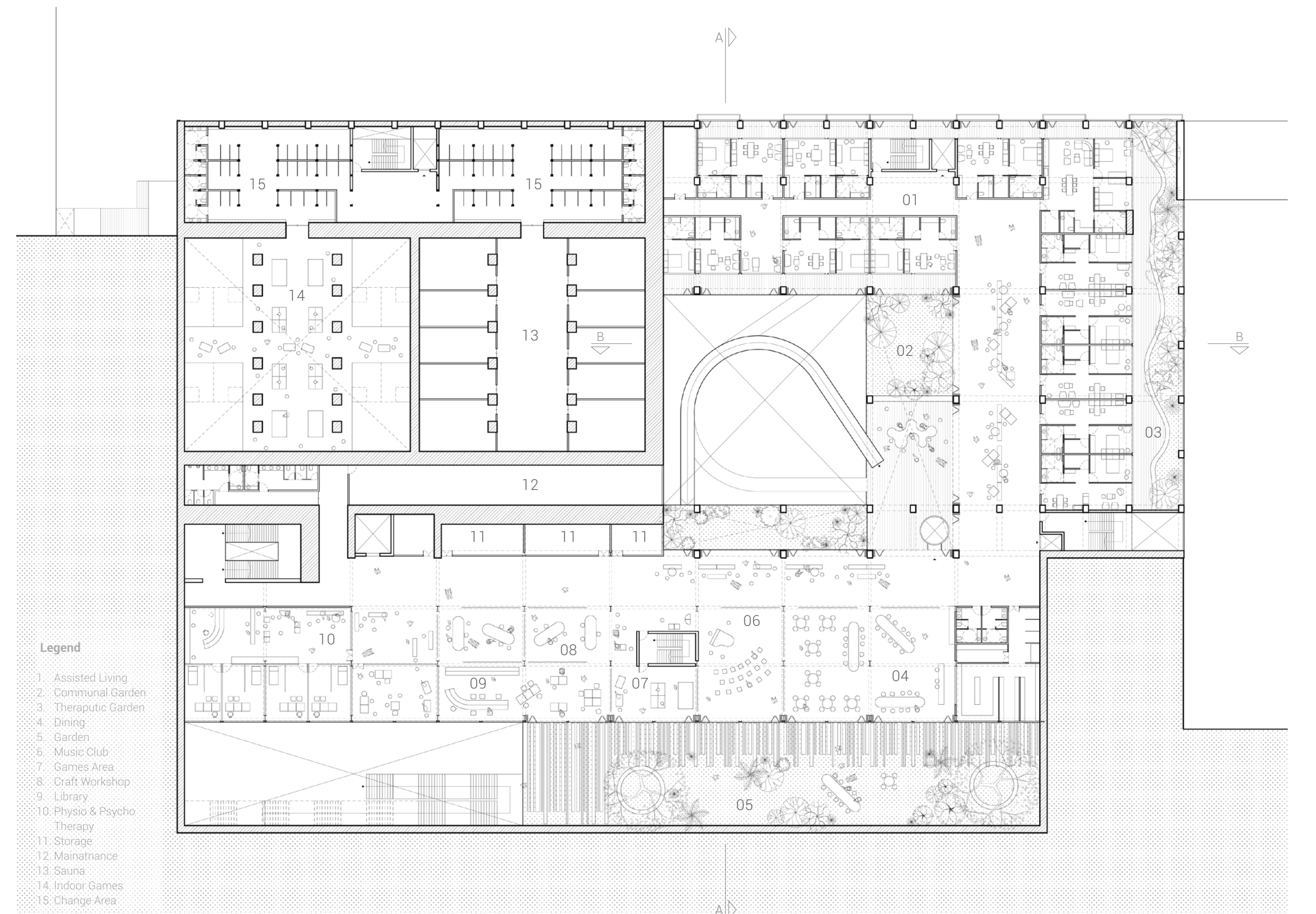


SECTION A - A



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

0m 10m 20m



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

0m 10m 20m