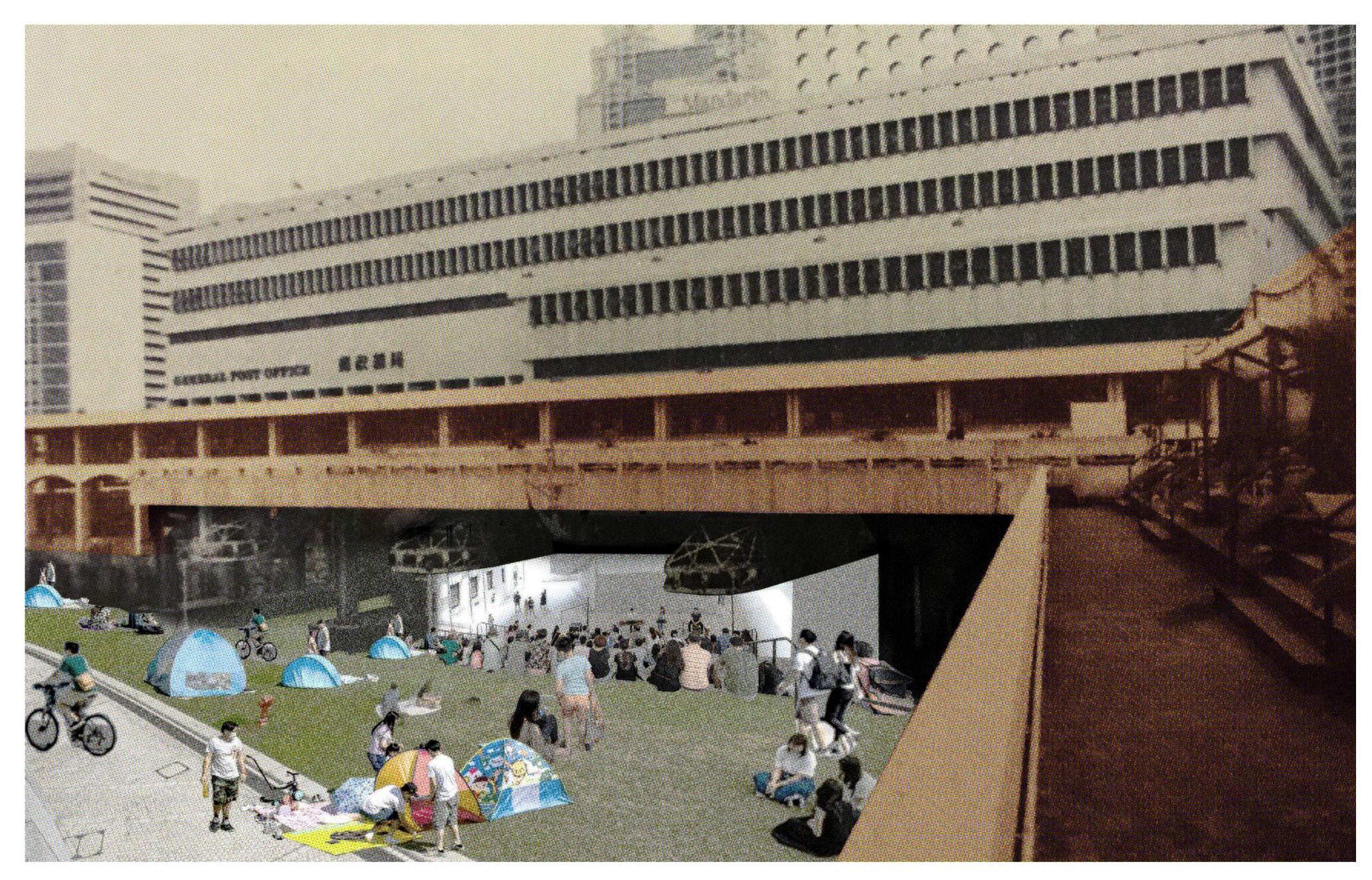
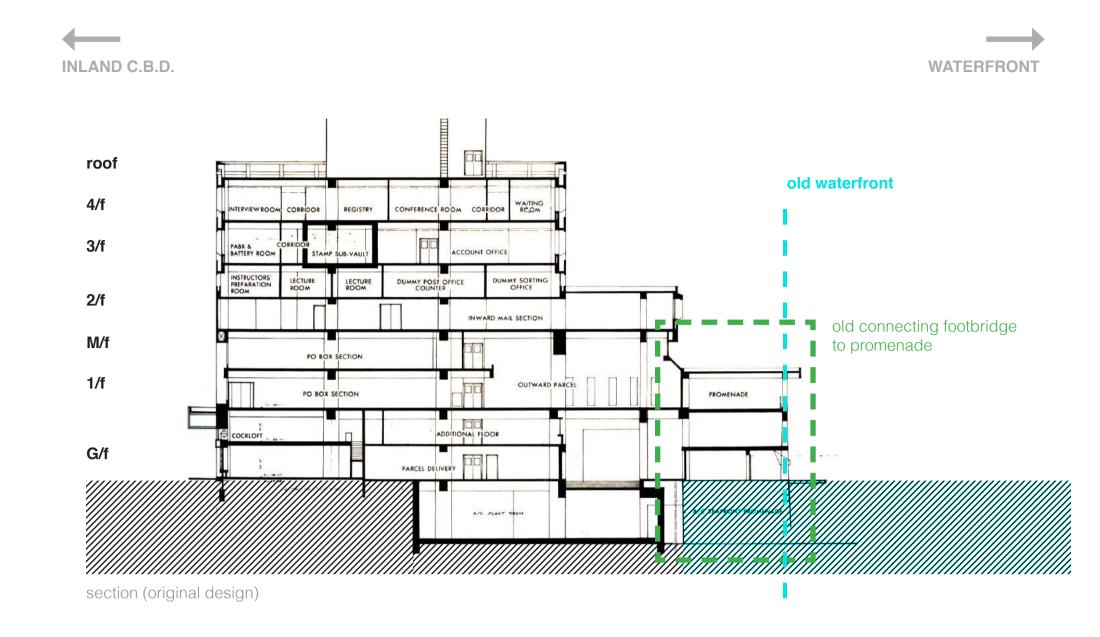
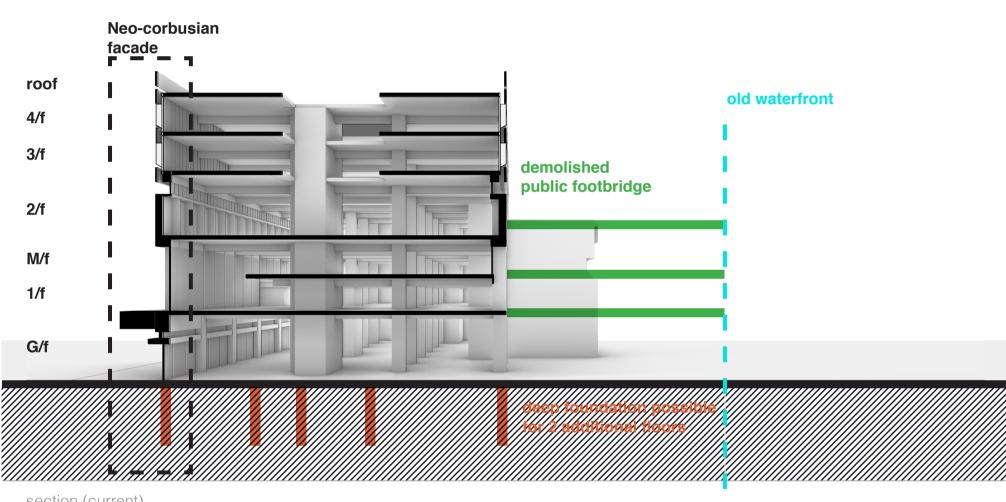
REFLECTING THE MARITIME PAST - a design proposal for the conservation of the Central General Post Office







section (current)

Conservation and development have long been mistaken as options that are mutually exclusive. This proposal attempts to challenge this taken-for-granted assumption by exploring a design strategy that would put the architecture of the GPO into new uses while fulfilling the projected floor area listed in the current development plan of Site 3.

Built between 1974-5 and inaugurated in 1976, the GPO can be seen as one of the most outstanding post-war modern architecture in Hong Kong. Designed like a 'Factory' for postage services, the building served as the headquarters for Hong Kong Post, as well as the mail sorting centre for the whole of Hong Kong. Since the movement of mail and parcels relied heavily on maritime transportation, the GPO was equipped with its own 'private' loading dock underneath the promenade in front of the building. After the reclamation in the 2000s, this connection with the harbour was lost and the structures along the promenade were demolished. Using these contexts as references, our proposal explores the potential of revealing the historical connection with the harbour while sensitively adding new architectural volumes based on the old promenade design. A sunken plaza was added in front of the GPO to reflect its former connection with the harbour. Moreover, it serves as a new public event space, while offering a new entrance approach and perspective to the building.

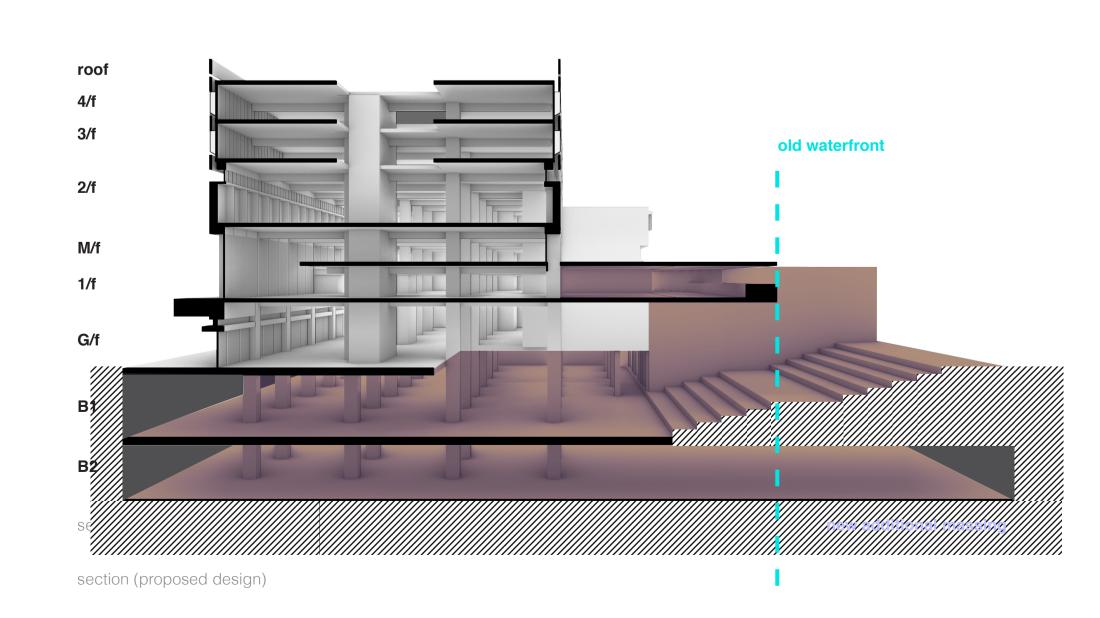




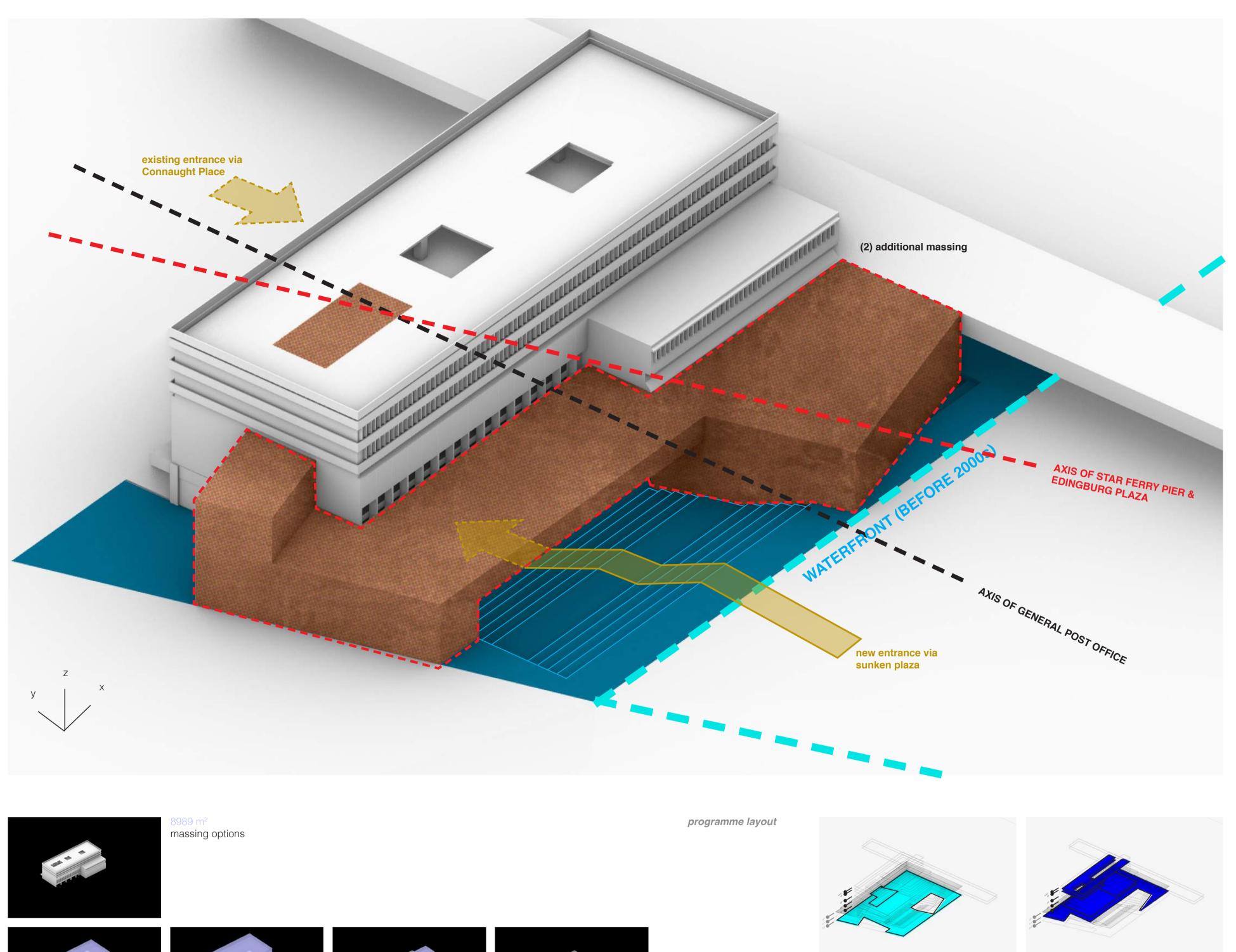
view of GPO before reclamation (~1983-88)

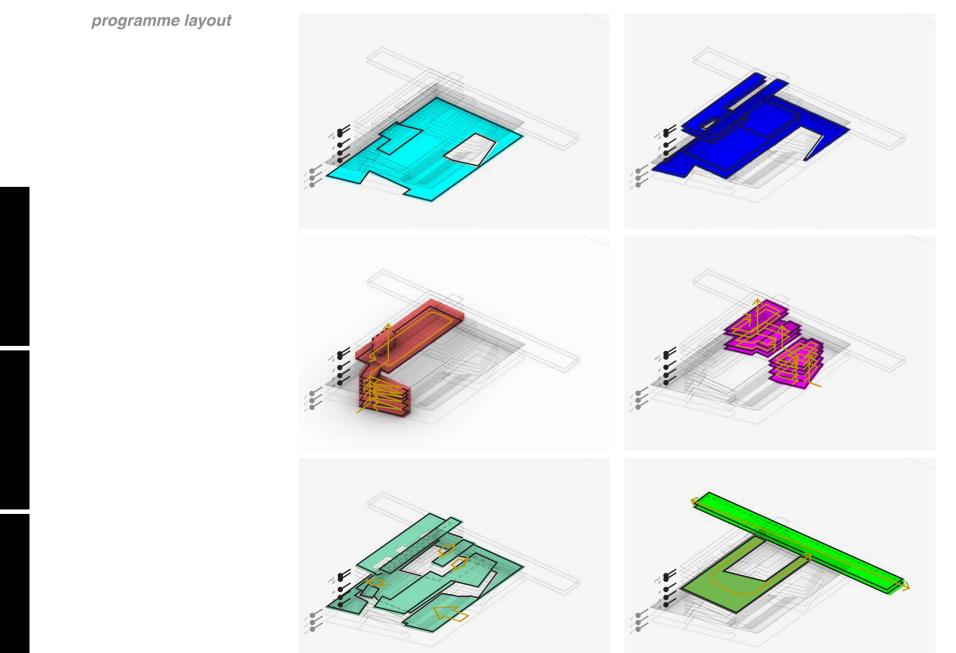


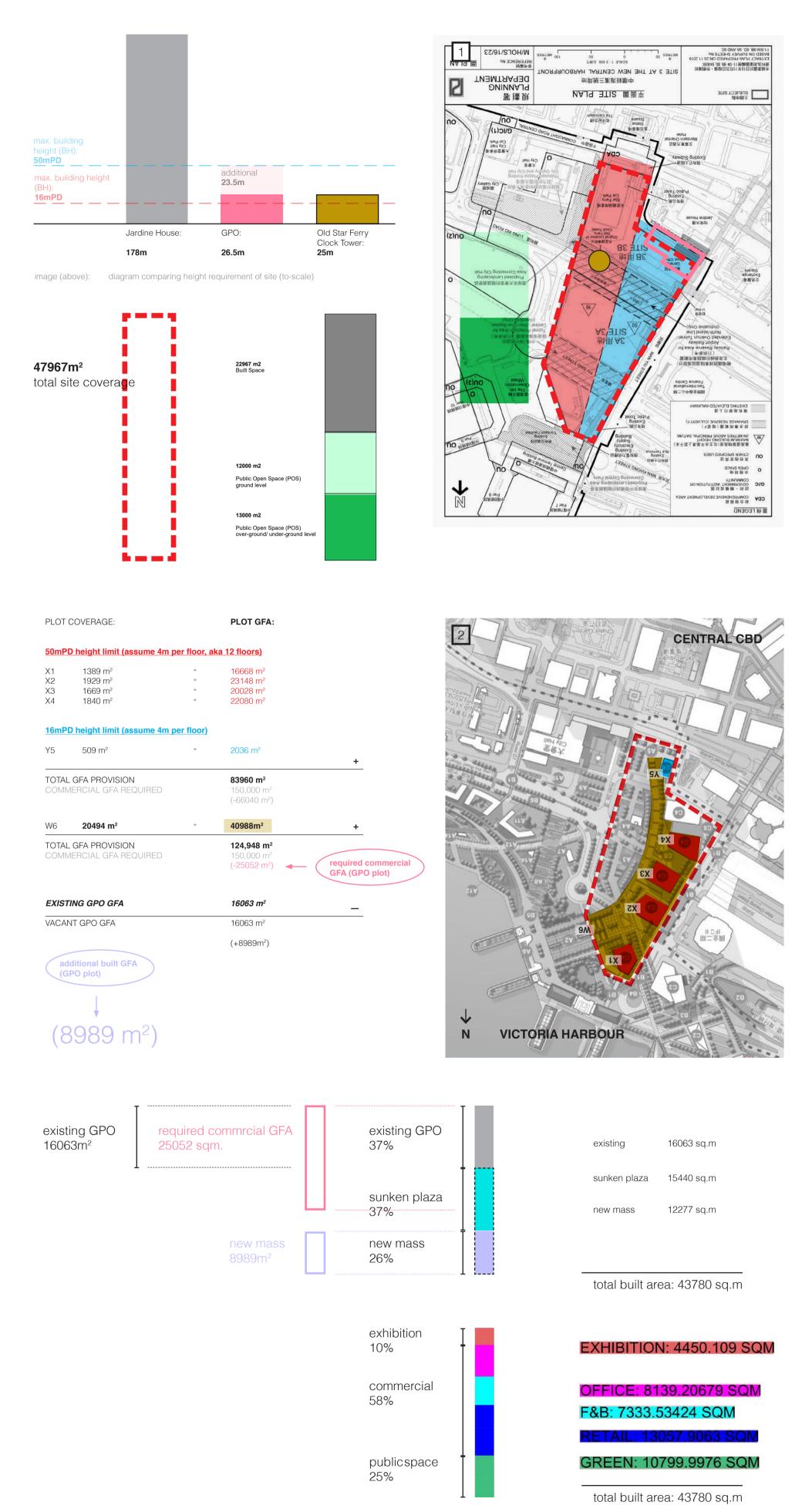
view of GPO after reclamation (2021)



massing strategy GFA & programme







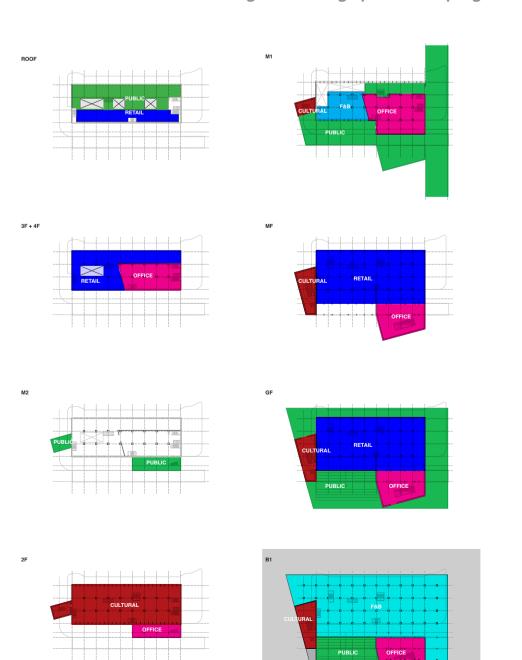
key images

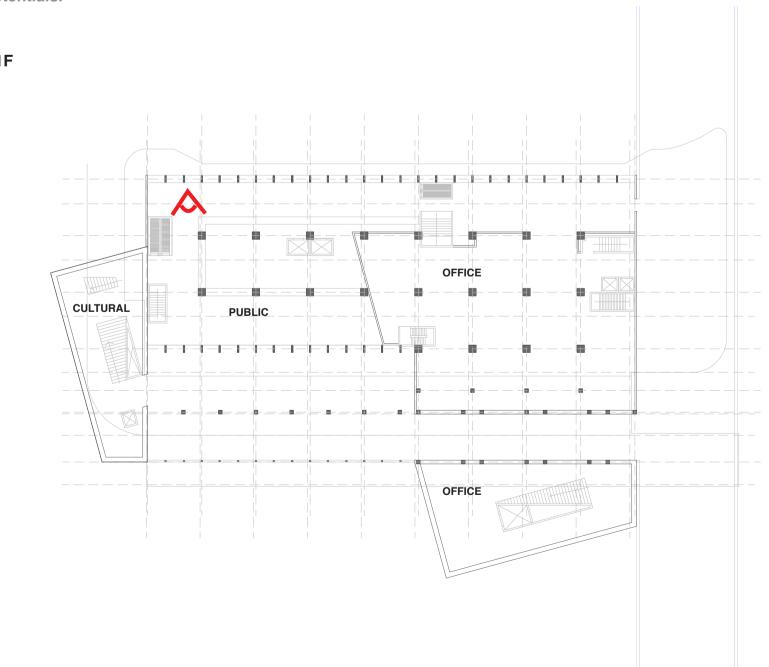


View of the postal lobby inside the GPO building. Connections with the new volume offering new vantage points and programmatic potentials.

Old Context, New Potentials

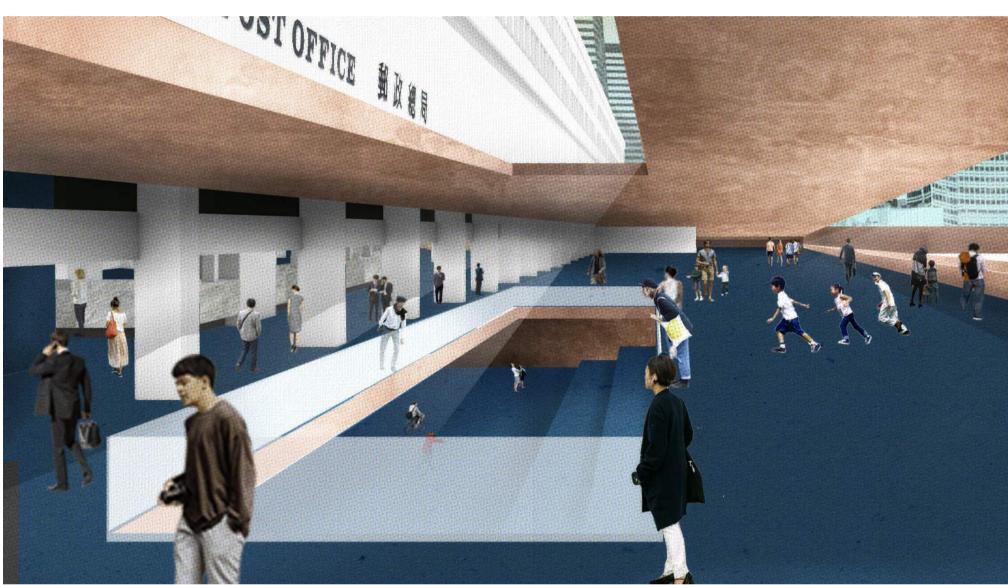
Since the GPO was designed to maximise the potentials of future expansions and developments, it offers a high level of flexibility in rearrangements of internal programs and layout. Our proposal assumed a program scenario with a mix of commercial (offices, retail), F&B, and a cultural/exhibition space to showcase the postal history of Hong Kong. A new volume was designed in reference to the old promenade structures in front of the building before the reclamation of the harbour. The programs designated for public uses, such as retail, F&B, and the exhibition spaces were distributed in both the new volume and the GPO building, so that members of the public could freely access and experience different parts of the GPO.







View of the sunken plaza entrance. The new volumes were designed in reference to the old promenade structures in front of the bauilding before the reclamation of the harbour.



View from the retail floors inside the new volume. The elevated deck offers new perspectives to view the GPO building.



The atrium on the top floors of the GPO building can be converted into part of the cultural/exhibition space and showcase the postal history of Hong Kong.



Reflecting the maritime past

Proposal by aona architects

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