

# New Gourna

Location: West Bank, Luxor, Egypt

Architect: Hassan Fathy

Year: 1945-1948



Farwa Mumtaz | Dongge Liu

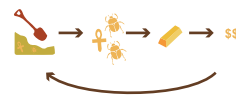
Hongtao Shen | Amr Alzahabi

## A TOMB ROBBERY BEGETS A PILOT HOUSING PROJECT





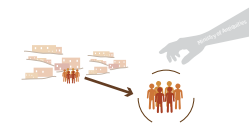
1. Informal settlements on the foothills of an ancient Necropolis since 1840s



2. Tomb robbing, excavating, and selling treasures at current price of gold for very little. A big loss to Egyptology



3. Scandal of a stolen rock carving called for the government to solve the “problem of Gourni”



4. Solution was to relocate 7000 Gournis far away from the necropolis and promote a new livelihood through the village design

## SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF GOURNA

### LAWS

**Royal Decree:** Gave the right to Gournis to continue using existing houses but prohibited additions or extensions

**Ministerial Decree:** Expropriate houses with the intention of clearing the whole antiquities zone of the squatters (Department of Antiquities)

#### Ownership:

- Old Gourna would be annexed into public government property
- Villagers could own a house in New Gourna as compensation (no rental required)
- Ownership of the land itself in New Gourna is unconfirmed

## FORMING A COMMITTEE

### PARTIES INVOLVED

**Client:** The Department of Antiquities. A major ministry within the Egyptian government

#### Committee:

- Osman Rustum (Department Head of Engineering and Excavation)
- Abbe Drioton (Department Director-General)
- Mayor of Gourna
- Sheikhs of the five hamlets
- Architect (Hassan Fathy)

**No reference to the State Building Department**

## BUDGET AND INTENT

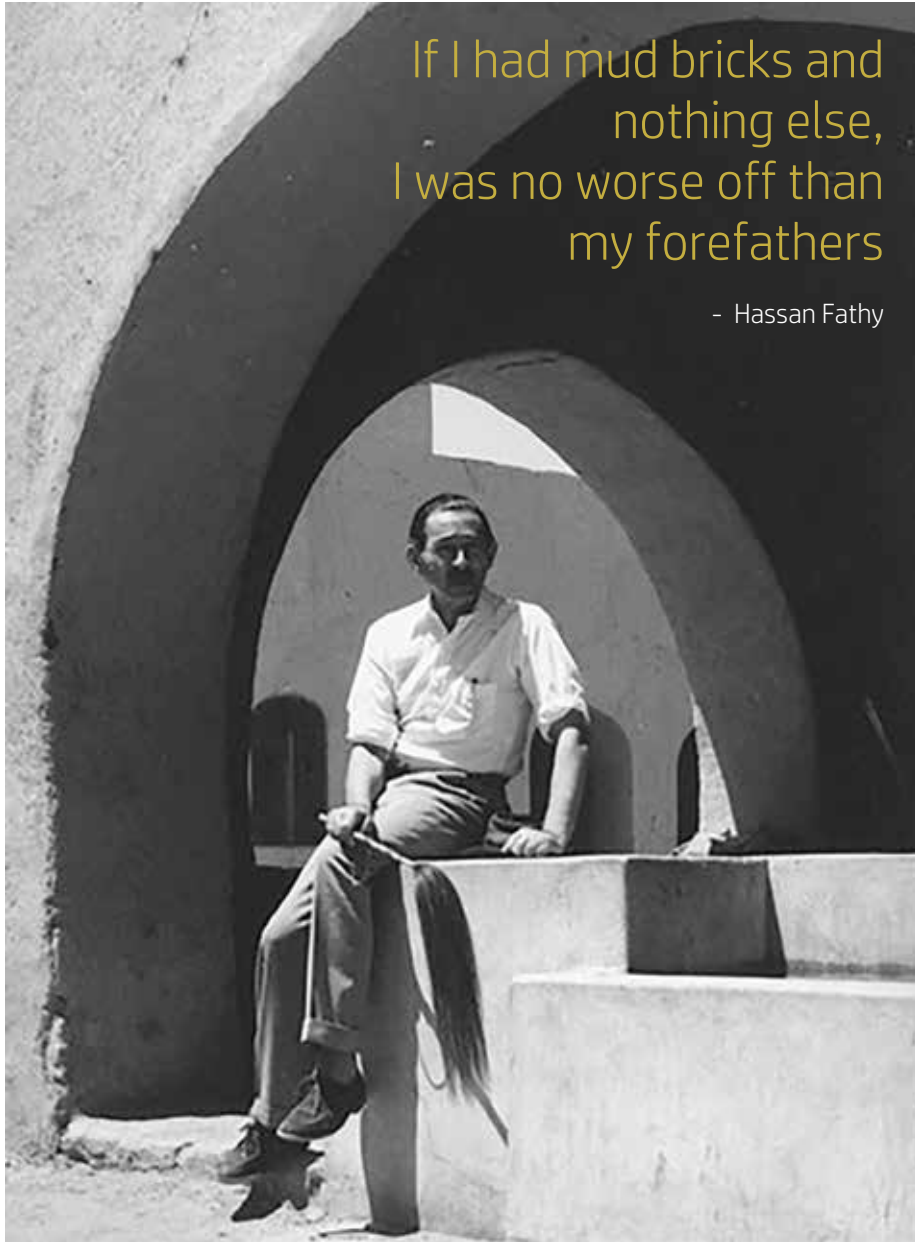
### REQUIREMENTS

**Low Budget:** Originally quoted 1 million pounds to build a new village

The government (Department of Antiquities) was unwilling to spend this much on New Gourna

**Self Sustainable:** The new village should encourage a new livelihood for the people so that they would not steal

**Needed to find an architect that could take this into consideration...**

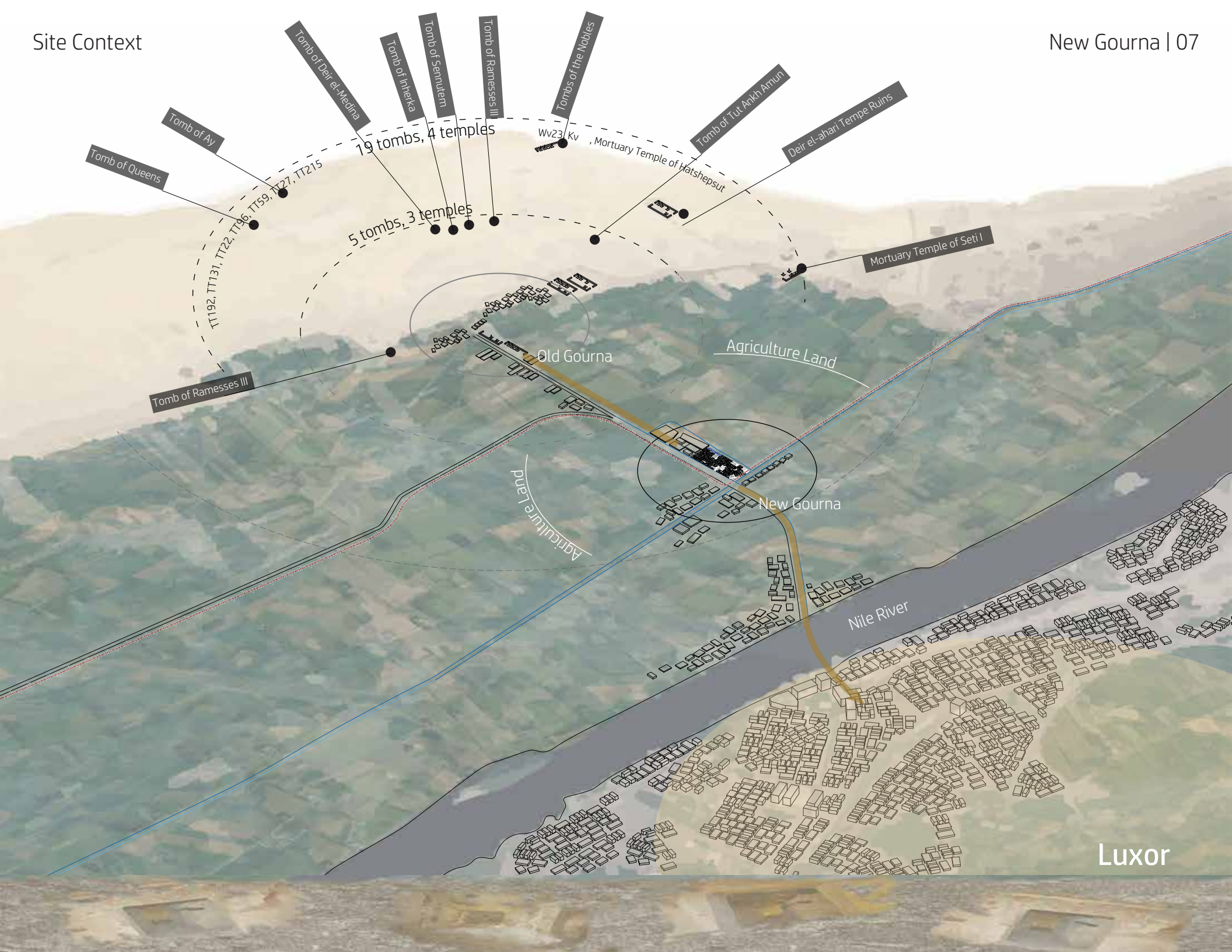


## Hassan Fathy 1990-1989

1. Pioneer in reintroducing adobe and mud construction (very cheap)
2. Groundbreaking ideas on social, economic, technological, and aesthetic aspects of rural housing and how to design a village from scratch
3. Beginning of green and sustainable architecture, notably location and climate context, traditional materials, passive cooling and ventilation systems that cost no additional money

ARCHITECTURE FOR THE POOR:  
AN EXPERIMENT IN RURAL EGYPT





Tomb of Queens  
Tomb of Ay

TT192, TT131, TT22, TT196, TT159, TT27, TT215

19 tombs, 4 temples

5 tombs, 3 temples

Tomb of Ramesses III

Tomb of Deir el-Medina

Tomb of Inhotep

Tomb of Sennutem

Tomb of Ramesses III

Tombs of the Nobles

W23, Kv, Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut

Tomb of Tut Ankh Amun

Deir el-ahari Temple Ruins

Mortuary Temple of Seti I

Old Gurna

Agriculture Land

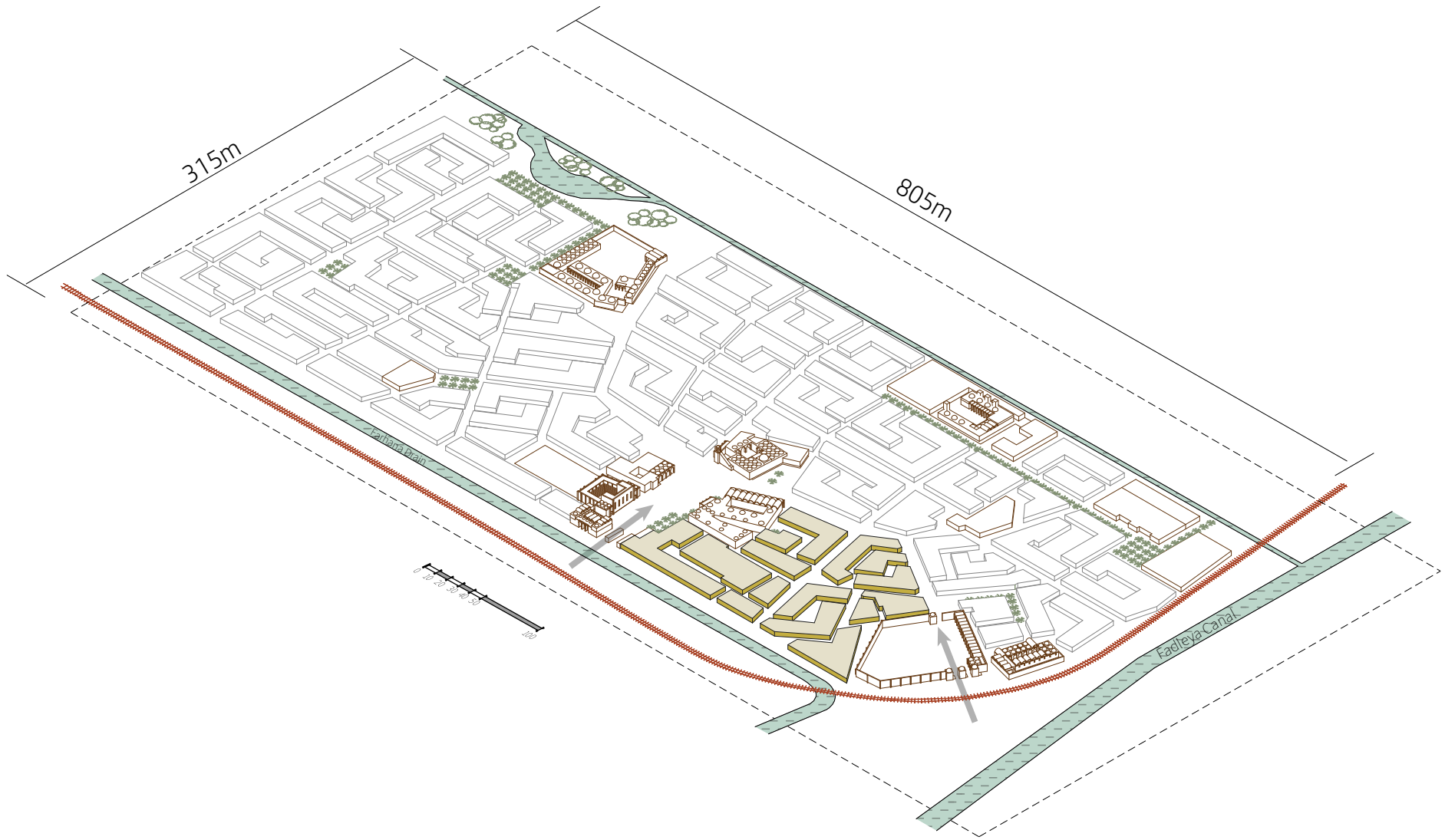
Agriculture Land

New Gurna

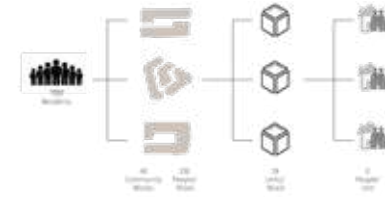
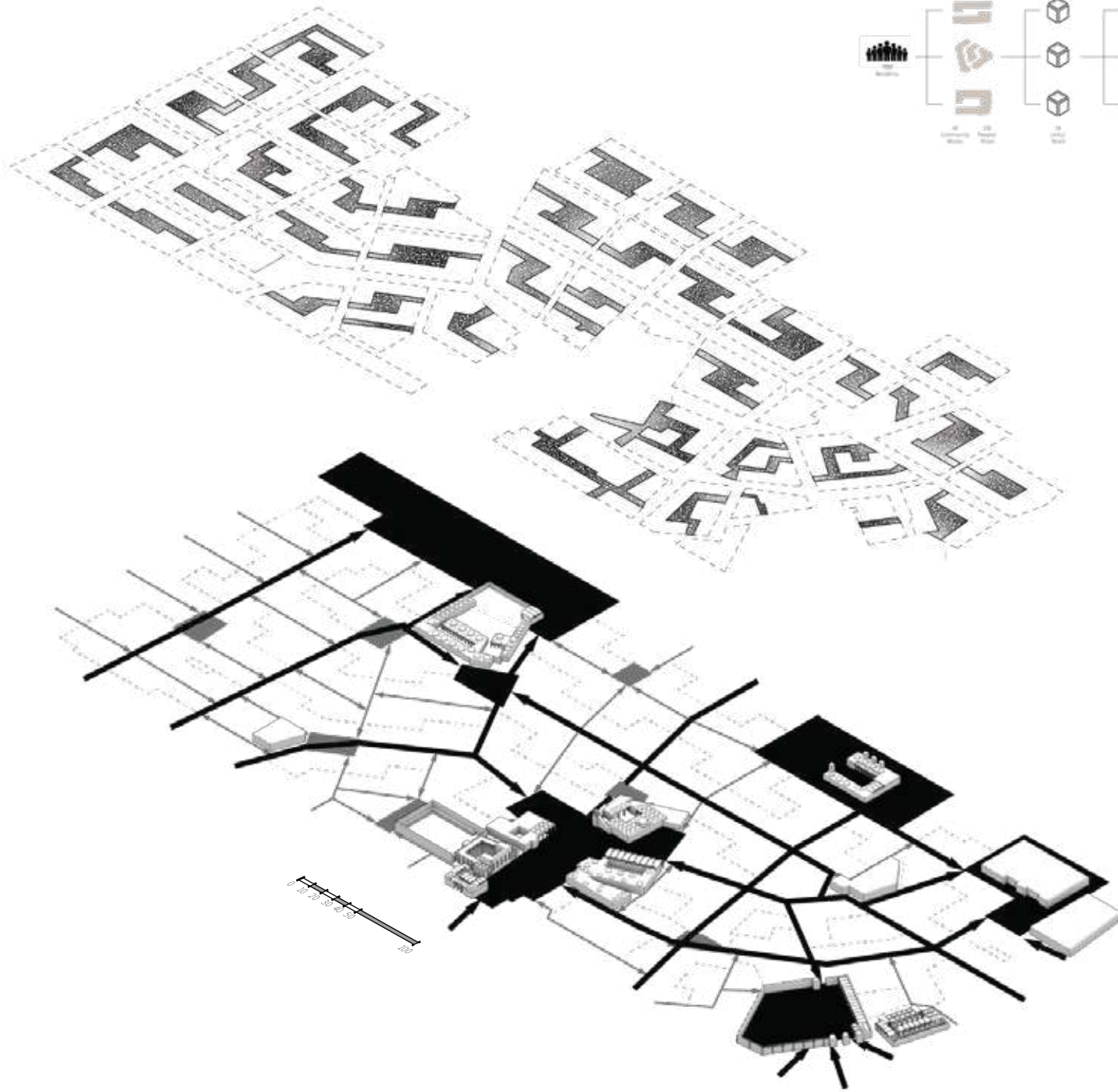
Nile River

Luxor

L

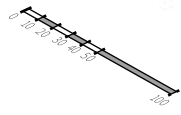


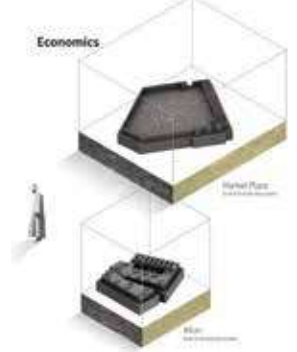
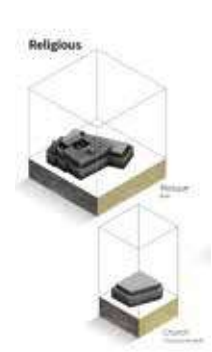
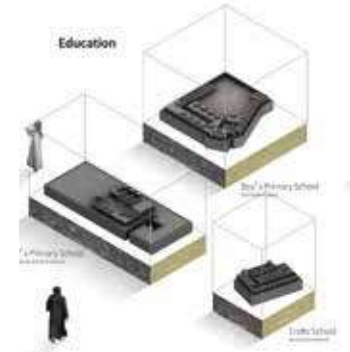
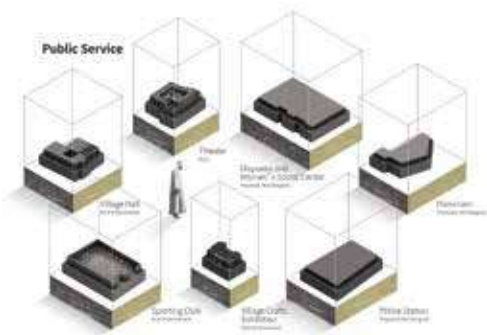
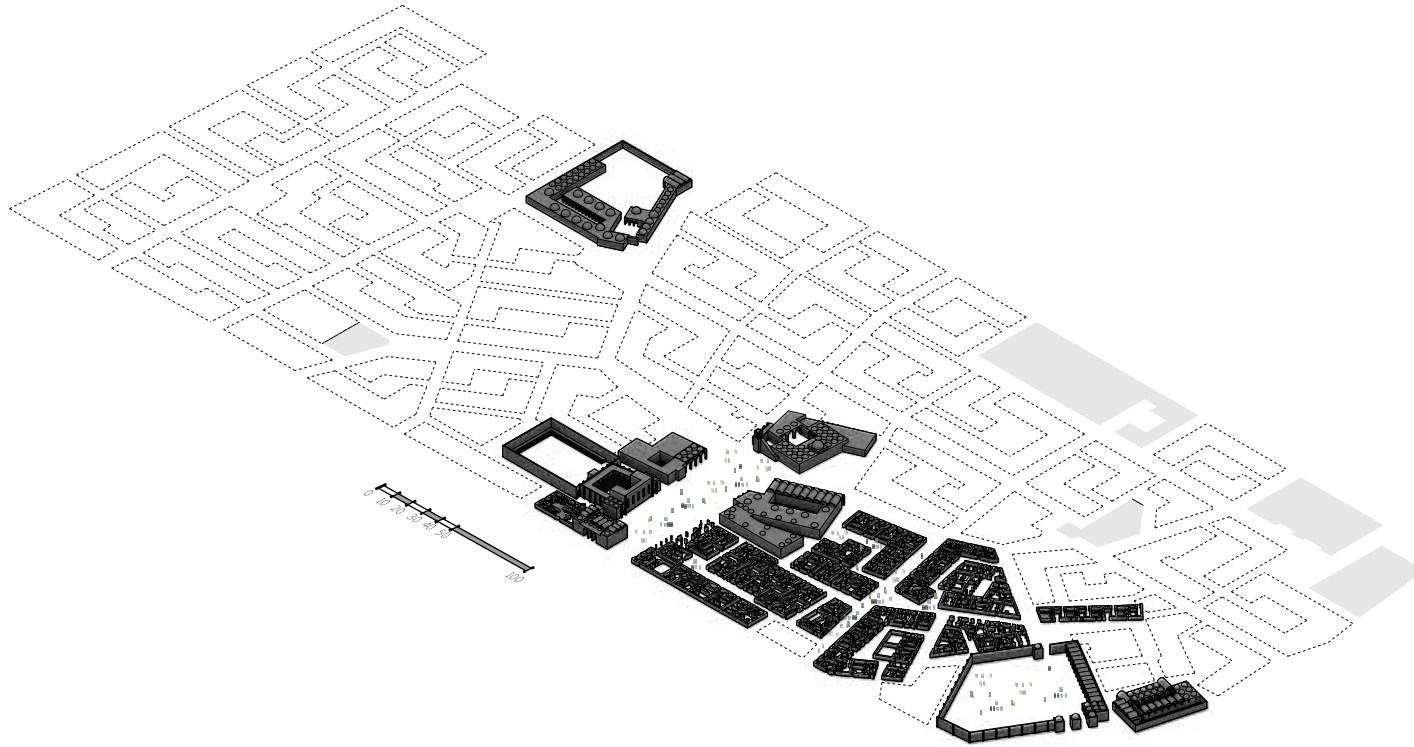




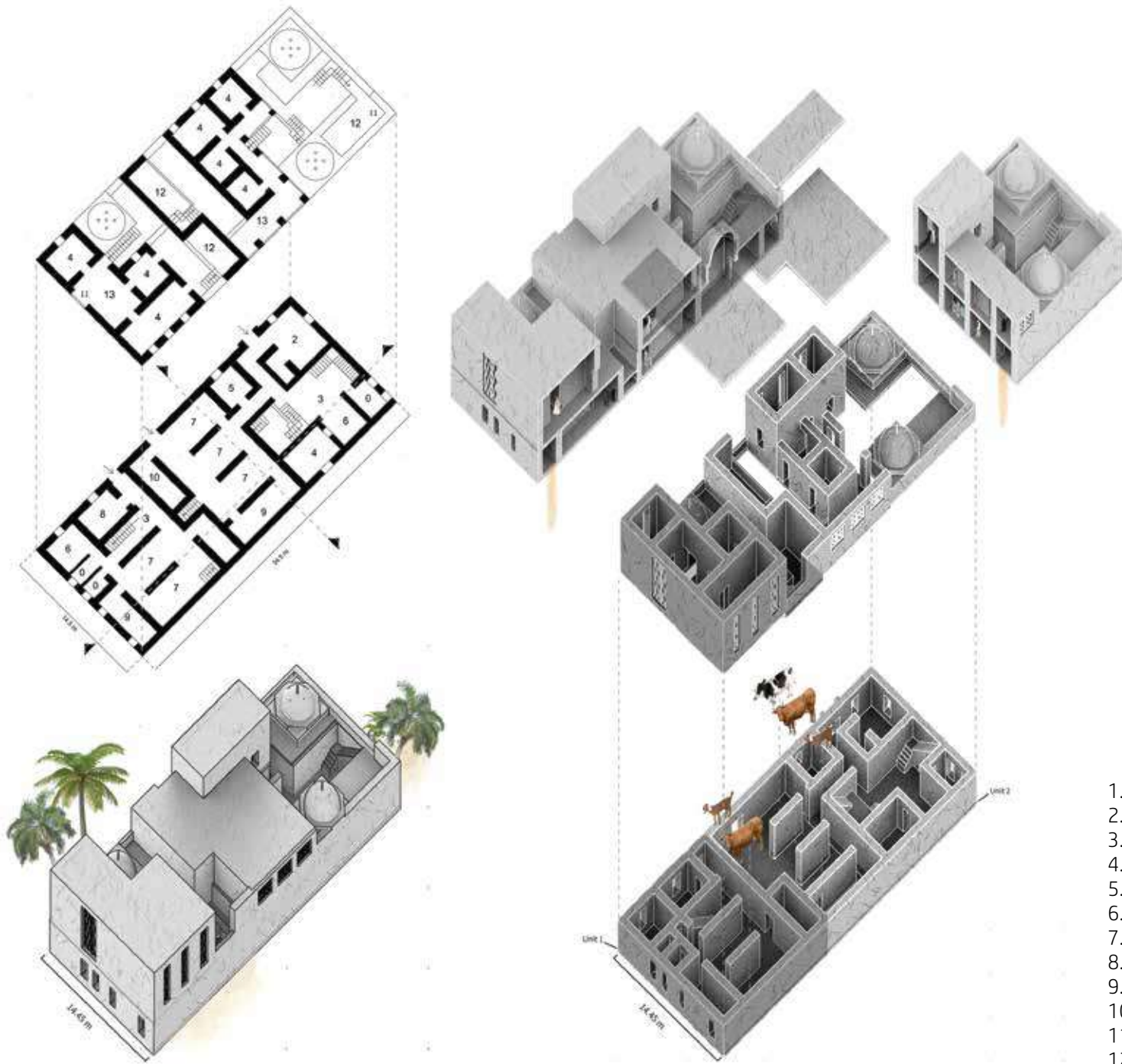
- Primary Circulation
- Primary Open Space
- Secondary Circulation
- Secondary Open Space
- Communal Inner Street

- New Gournia Village (Proposed)  
27,613.4 people / Km<sup>2</sup>
- Toronto - DAZ (Eglinton / Victoria park)  
4416.6 people / Km<sup>2</sup>
- Toronto Overall  
4344.4 people / Km<sup>2</sup>
- Luxor Overall  
1217.8 people / Km<sup>2</sup>









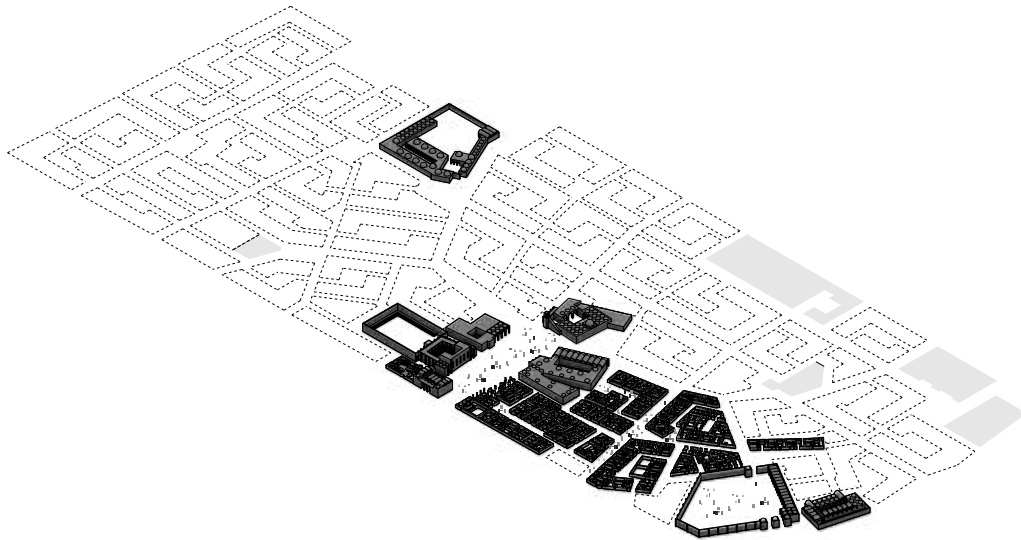
1. Entrance (1-2/unit)
2. Guest Room
3. Courtyard
4. Bedroom (3-5/unit)
5. Store
6. Kitchen
7. Cow Shed (2-3/unit)
8. Service Corridor
9. Fodder
10. Manure Pit
11. Maziara
12. Fuel Storage
13. Loggia



BUILD WITH HASSAN FATHY'S SPIRIT



## HIS VISION AND PASSION WAS THERE...BUT THE GOVERNMENT AND VILLAGERS WEREN'T



### Duration:

The project took Fathy 3 years to build alongside his team of local workers and master masons (1945-1948).

### Result:

Houses for only 130/900 families, the market, schools, village hall, khan, mosque, and theatre were built.

This was due to a lack of finance, political complications, and opposition to relocation from residents.

### Estimated Cost:

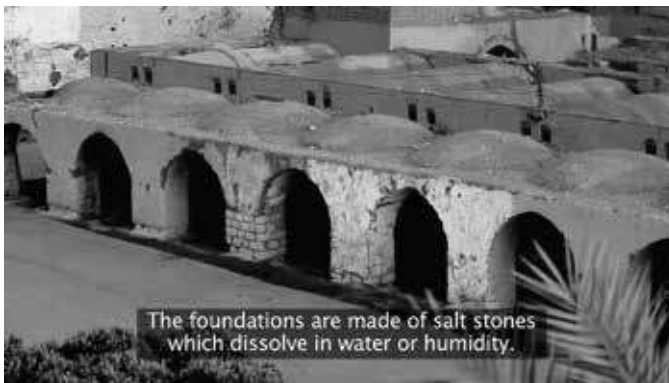
50 acres of land: L.E 150,000 (300/acre)

Construction funds: L.E 50,000

Architectural services: 15,000/year for 3 years

Total: ~L.E 245,000

Should have cost: L.E 1,000,000



*Oliver Wilkens: Hassan Fathey's New Gourna, 2010*

### What has worked:

The houses have good insulation and ventilation - they are cool during the hot summer and warm in the winter.

The mud brick was used to built almost everything and was a very low initial cost.

### What has not worked:

The foundation had salt that has dissolved over time, which is why all the buildings are in disrepair. For a life of over 70 years, this is normal for adobe construction which lasts typically 30 years.

They also would like better foundations made of fired bricks or sandstone so they do not have to repair the current foundation every 3-4 months. Repairing costs a fortune!

### Situation:

Despite the living conditions posed by the decaying architecture, the villagers would not want to live anywhere else because of deep connections between the community and the fact that they built this village themselves.

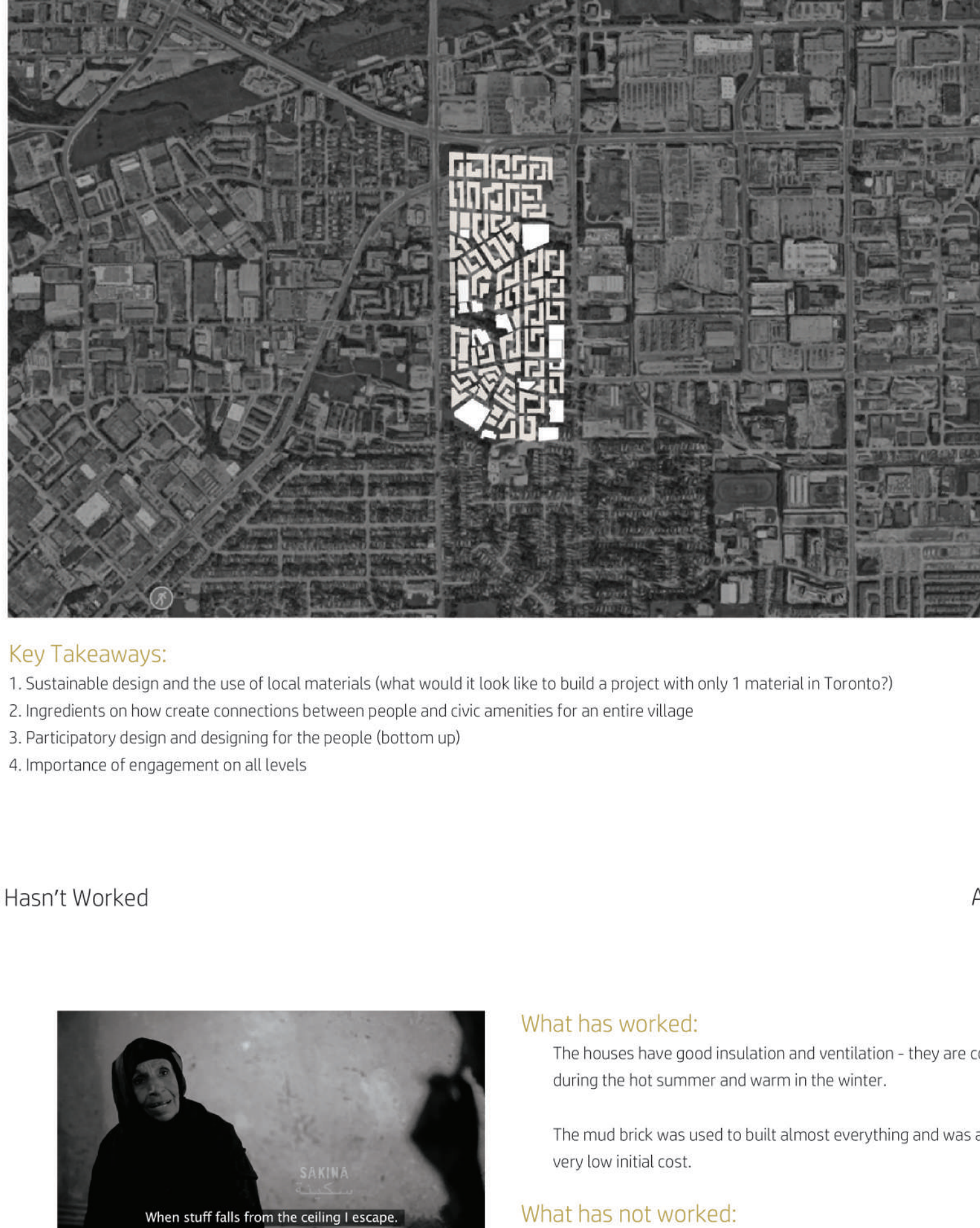
The mosque is in the best condition as it is maintained regularly by religious obligation.





### Key Takeaways:

1. Sustainable design and the use of local materials (what would it look like to build a project with only 1 material in Toronto?)
2. Ingredients on how create connections between people and civic amenities needed to create an entire village
3. Participatory design and designing for the people (bottom up)
4. Importance of engagement on all levels

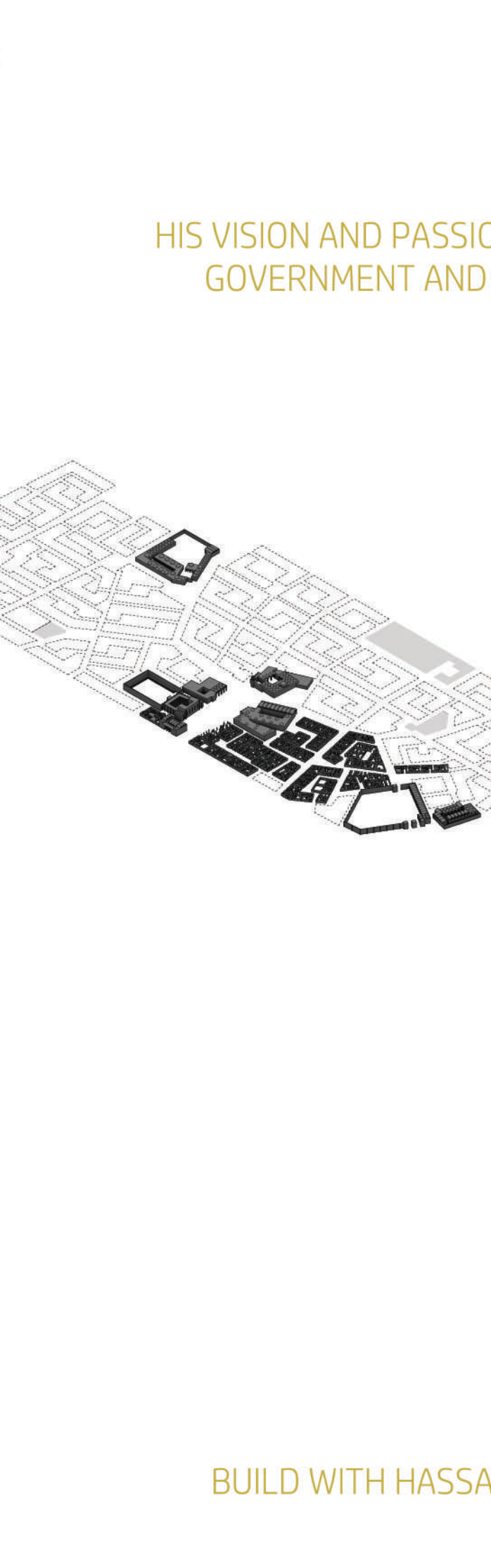


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What Has and Hasn't Worked

Assessment | 17



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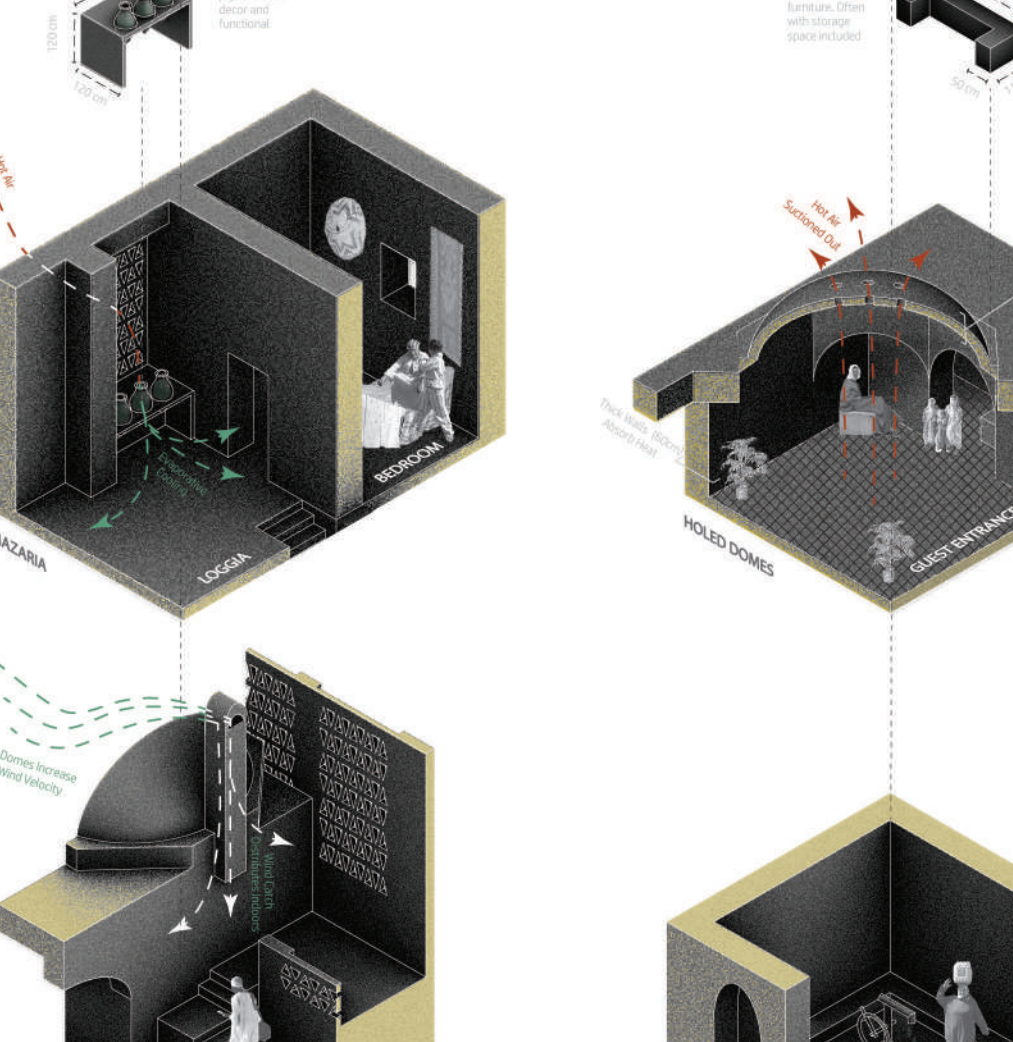
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A Vision Cut Short

Assessment | 15

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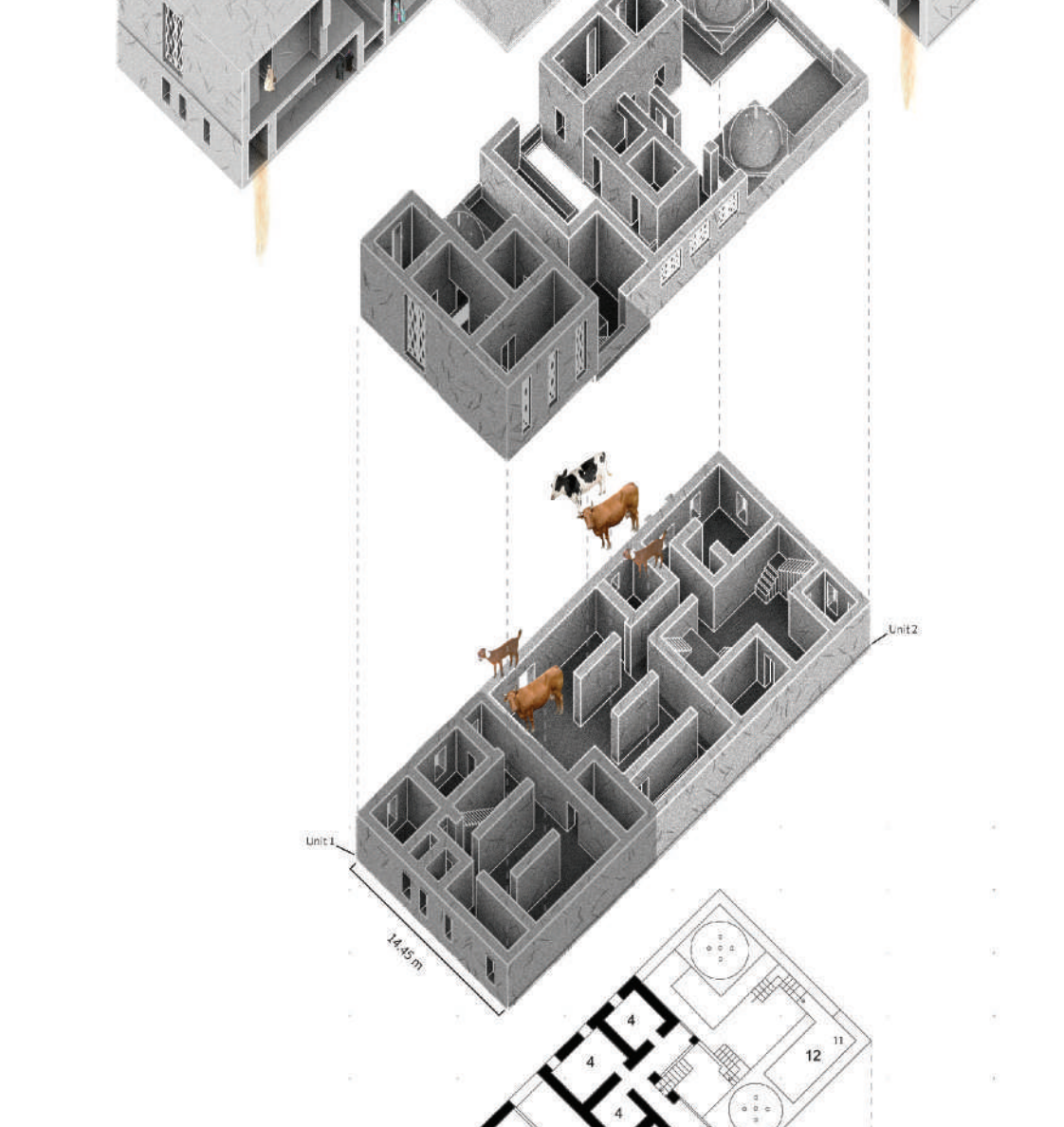
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- Should have cost: LE 1,000,000

ASSESSMENT

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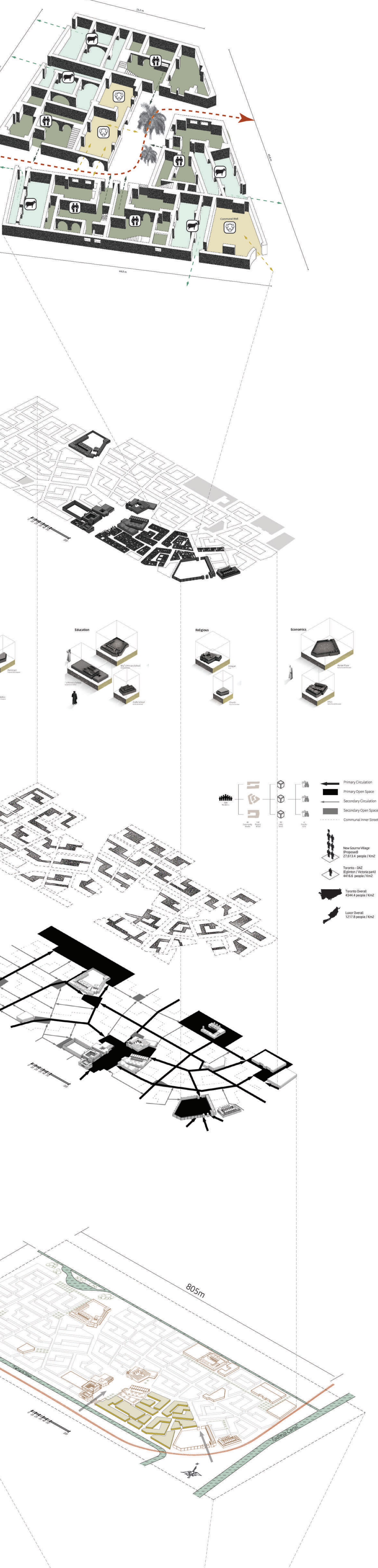


Housing Details



1/150

Typical Unit



1. Entrance (1-2/unit)
2. Guest Room
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Neighbourhood Configuration

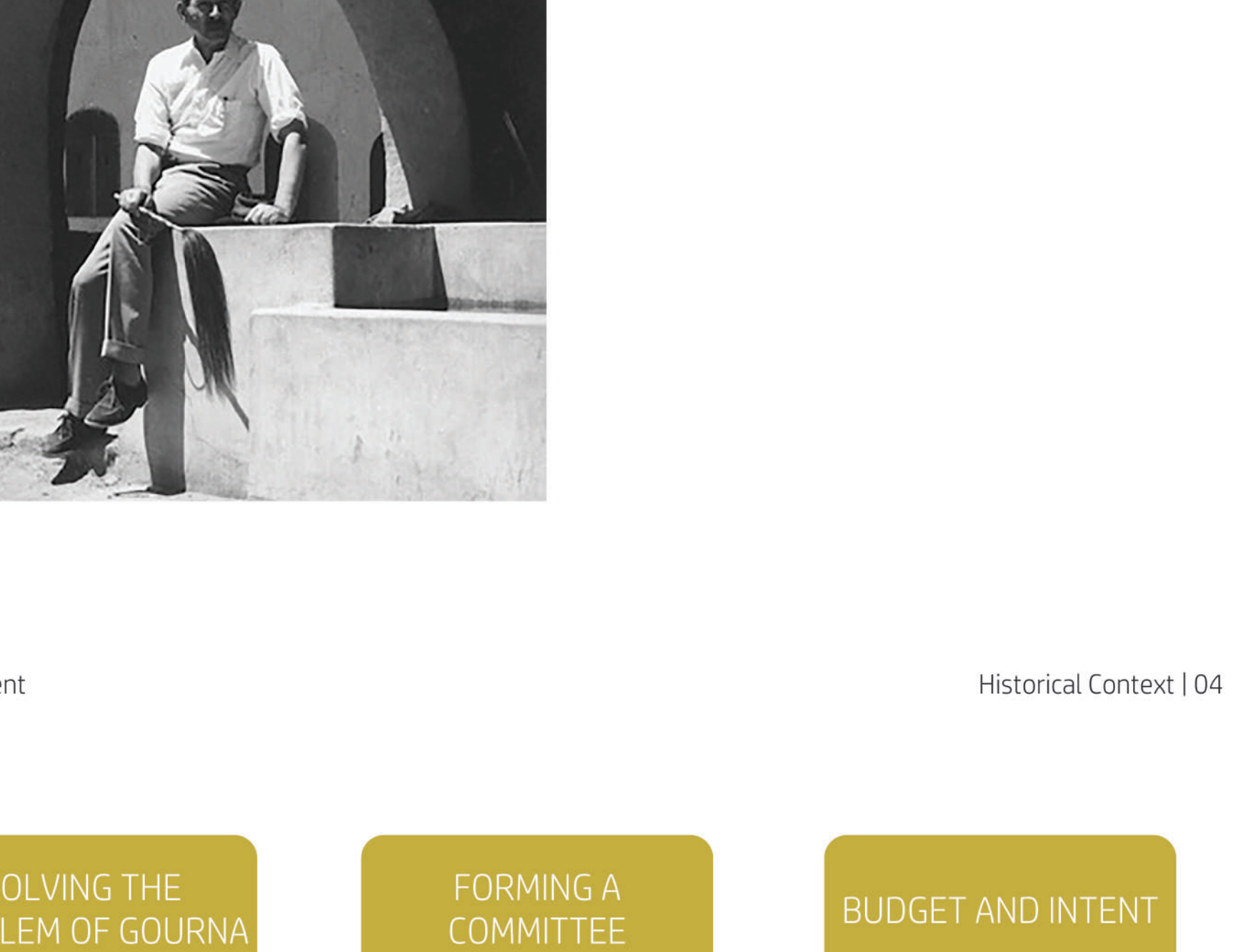


- Neighbourhood Street
- Unit Entrance
- Animal Entrance
- Common Space

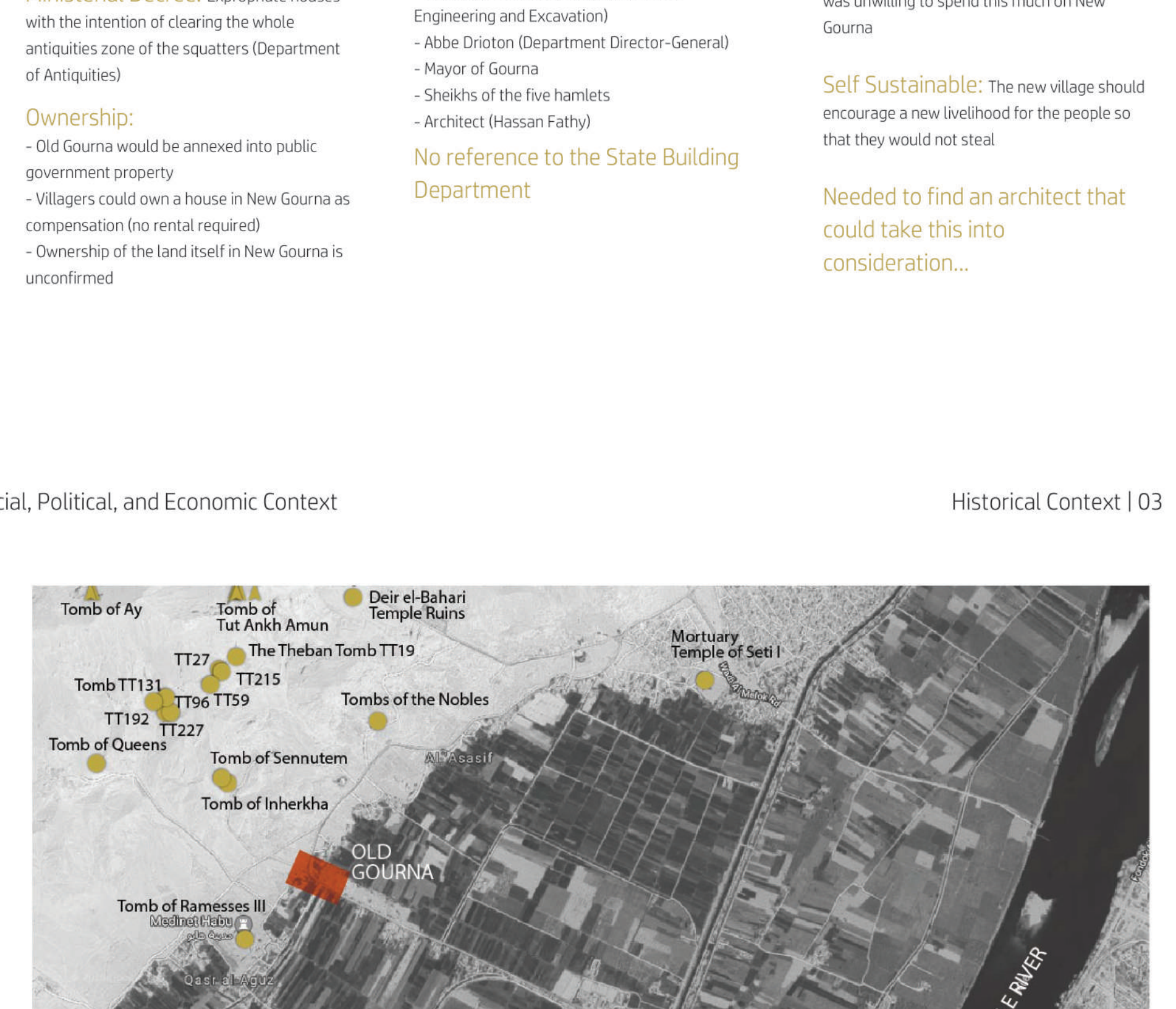
Proposed vs. Built



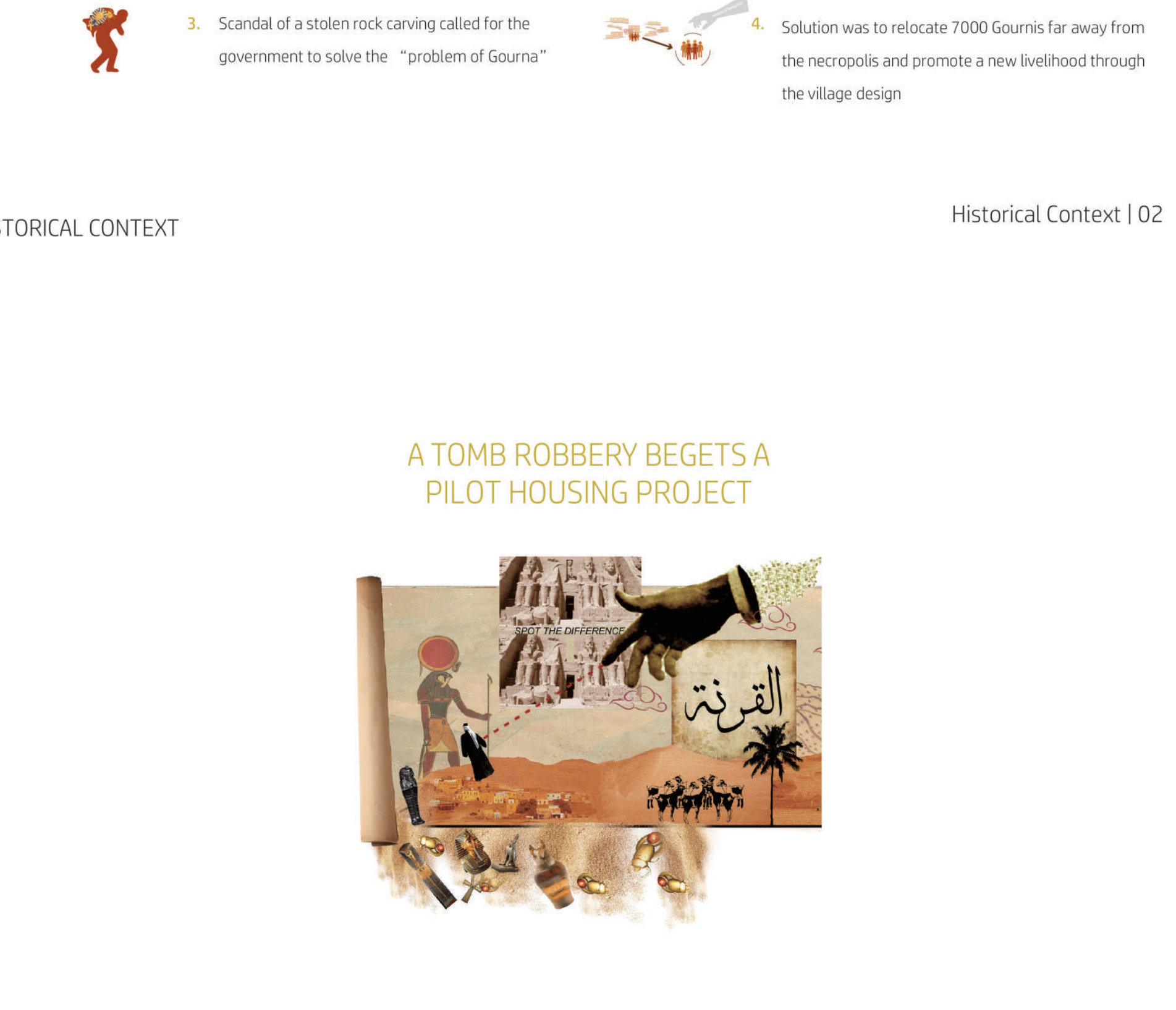
Circulation and Density



Masterplan



Site Context



NEW GOURNA

**ARCHITECTURE FOR THE POOR: AN EXPERIMENT IN RURAL EGYPT**



The Architect

Historical Context | 05



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Client and Intent

Historical Context | 04

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**BUDGET AND INTENT**

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Social, Political, and Economic Context

Historical Context | 03

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2. Tomb robbing, excavating, and selling treasures at current price of gold for very little. A big loss to Egyptology
3. Scandal of a stolen rock "called for the government to solve the "problem of Gournah"
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HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Historical Context | 02

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