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5.1 SEMI - URBAN ECO - SENSITIVITY

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The second stripe is part of the same logic that guides the master plan concept which aims to break the "triangle" and connect it through transversal corridors to the main infrastructural axes and to the natural system of reservoirs and hills on both north-east and south-west directions.

Existing potentials and opportunities

The particularity of stripe no.2 is that it represents a transversal corridor in a semi-urban area (Fig. 2) with interesting landscape characteristics and an important ex-industrial settlement.

Firstly, the agricultural landscape, mostly preserved, represents a potential for the future sustainable development of the area if it will be planned and transformed properly. Secondly, the particular system of internal roads, which are naturally designed as green tunnels, is seen as an attraction for naturalistic itineraries through the area. Furthermore, these green tunnel-roads, randomly lacking vegetation in segments, offers particular territorial windows open to the charming landscape. This green system along the roads, designed including different types of vegetation, like: poplar trees, fruit trees, acacia and canes, contributes in creating a naturalistic dimension of the area, which can become attractive for the city. Thirdly, although the green area along the river, is currently nearly inaccessible because of informal interventions (such as fences, buildings), the lack of connections between the river banks, close roads and the dense vegetation creating a barrier, it has good potentials to become a green corridor contributing to the new eco-dimension of the city. (Fig. 3/ 3.1)

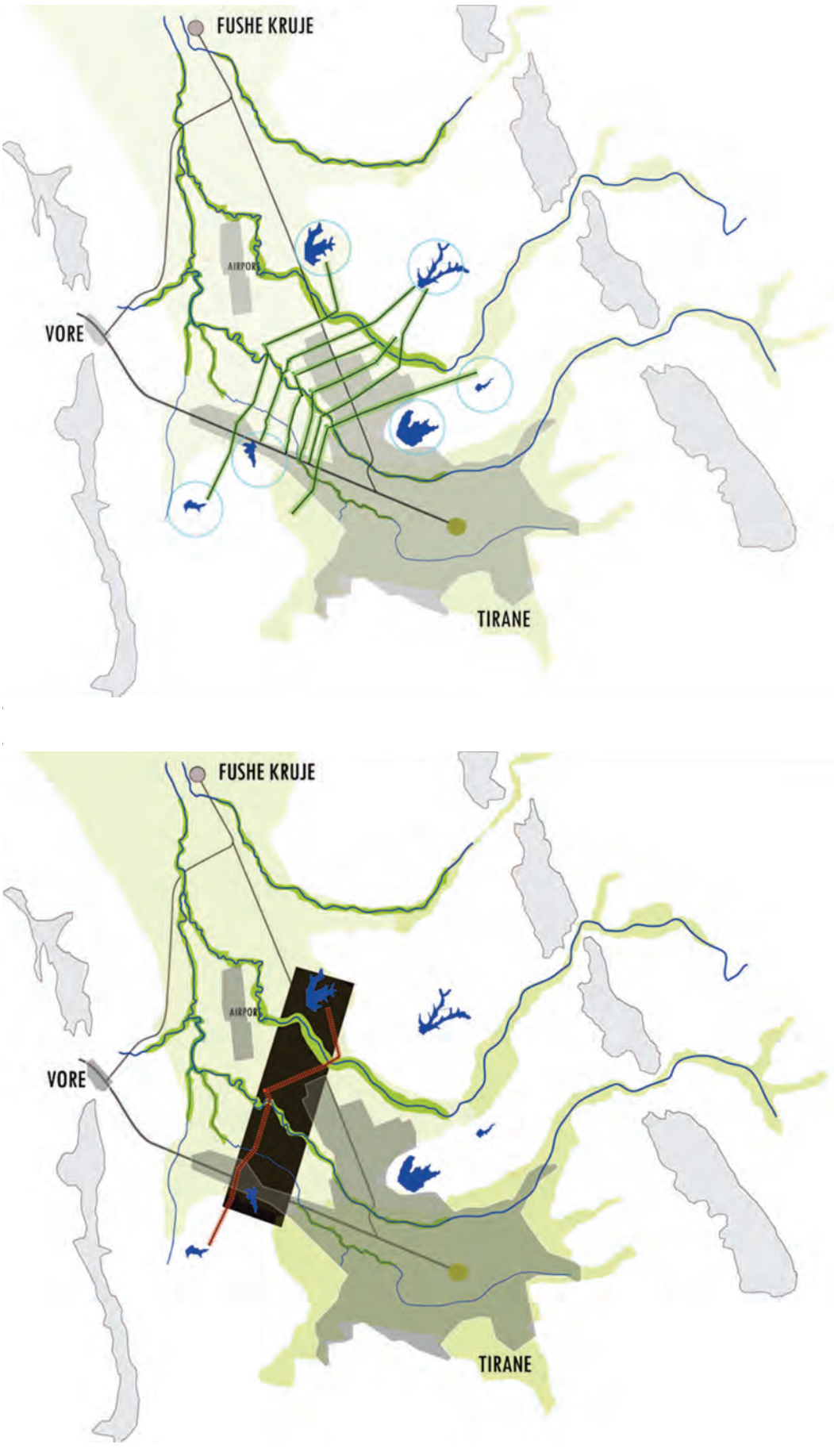


Fig. 1 *Stripe concept on territorial logic (transversal landscape connections)*

Fig. 3 *Analyses of Stripe 2: The water system*

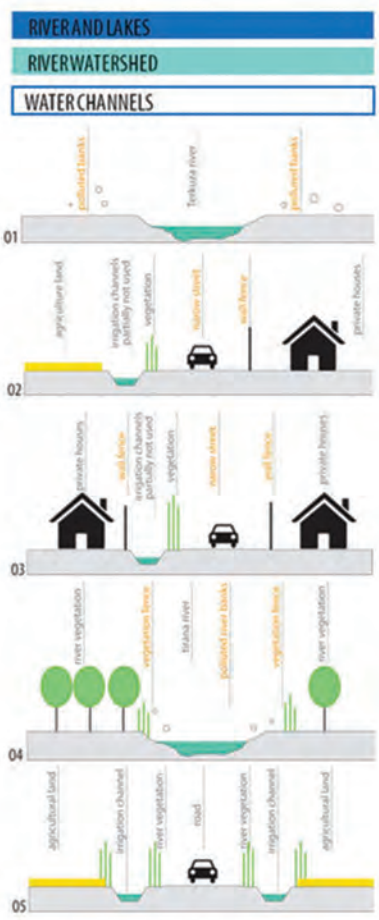
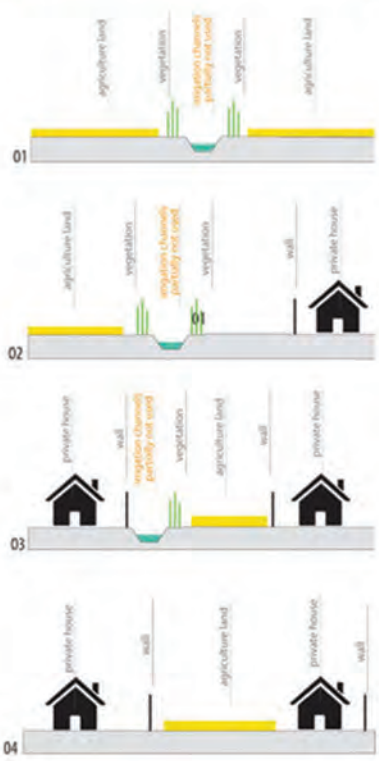


Fig. 3.1 *Analyses of Stripe 2: Typical sections of the water system and problematic.*

Fig. 4 *Analyses of Stripe 2: The green system*

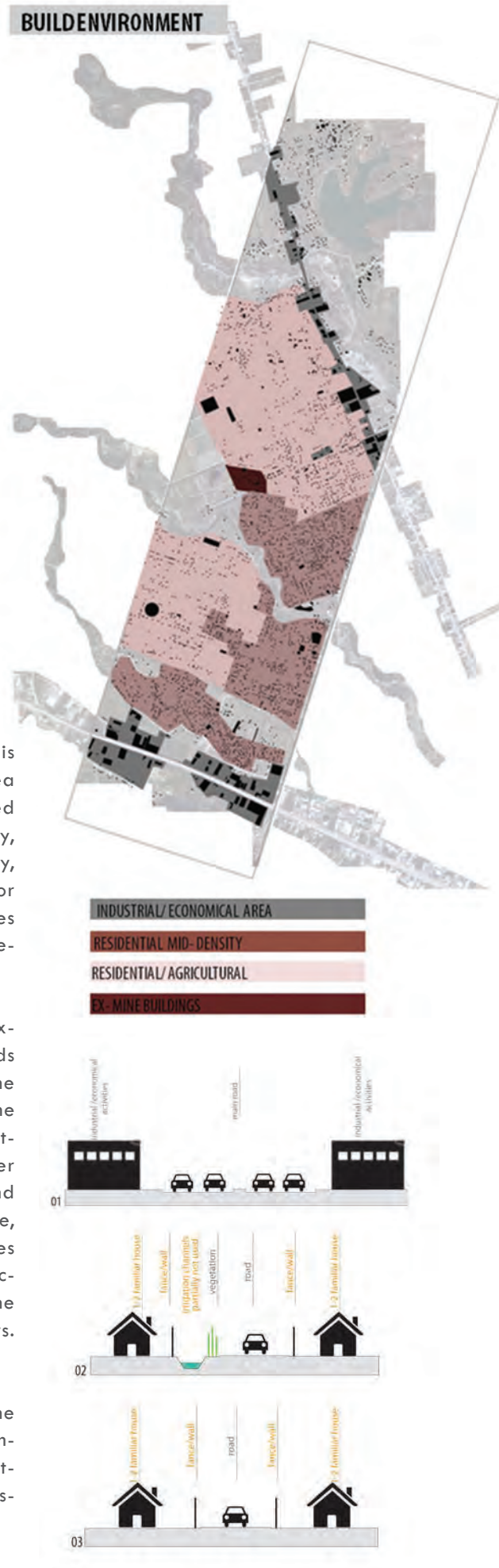


In tandem with the greening process, the water system (reservoirs and irrigation canals), although in bad conditions and almost out of use, creates an opportunity for the future infrastructure equipment of the area: the creation of a portable water and sewage infrastructure, the enlargement of roads and public space, the rain water collection and recycle, etc. (Fig. 4/4.1)

Fig. 4.1 *Analyses of Stripe 2: Typical sections of the green system and problematic.*

Fig. 5 *Analyses of Stripe 2: The build environment*

Fig. 5.1 *Analyses of Stripe 2: Typical sections of the build environment and problematic.*



Another important presence in this stripe is the Mine site of Valias in the central area near the river, which is actually abandoned and in dilapidated conditions. Historically, it has represented an important centrality, including the small residential village for mine workers close to it. Other centralities are represented by small historical settlements around the farms.

In the last 20 years, these settlements expanded principally along the main roads taking over agricultural land. Lacking the adequate infrastructure and missing the connections with the city these areas resulted quite isolated, which has caused further marginalization in physical, economic and social terms. (Fig. 5/5.1; 6.1). Furthermore, the lack of connection between both sides of the river, and the poor road infrastructure inside has reduced the interest for the environment potentials that this area offers. (Fig. 5/5.1; 6.1)

In this context, strongly influenced by the natural environment, we think that eco-sensitivity in design should be the main operating tool in implementing the area's transformation.

Fig. 6 *Analyses of Stripe 2: The road infrastructure*

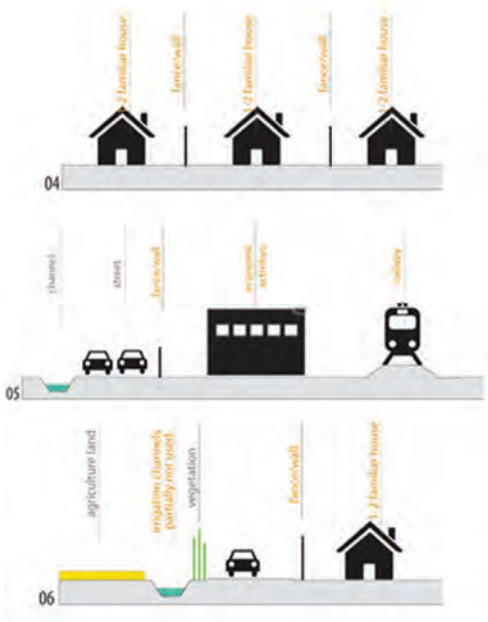


Fig. 6.1 *Analyses of Stripe 2: Typical sections of the road infrastructure and problematic.*

Vision and objectives

Actually, along stripe no.2, various different environments are found: small private green areas, agricultural land, economical and industrial development areas, potential public buildings and abandoned areas (es. the ex -Mine area) and depredated green space, mainly along the river. In the current state, there is good access and a strong network close to the economical and industrial area, which weakens towards the river and the agricultural land, thus leaving these areas totally isolated.

Our vision is to reinforce this network in the internal area through an eco-sensitive design strategy, in view of the sustainable image of the area and moreover of Tirana.
In this sense, starting from the overall master plan objectives to clean the river and create a river park that connects directly with the city, our vision is to activate communities and simulate their relation to the natural environment. This will encourage activities and arouse the interest for public space, which can then contribute to reinforcing the internal landscape network and open the area to the city as an interesting agricultural and ecological park (which has been traditionally known as an interesting agricultural environment because of the University of Agriculture (Fig. 7; 8; 8.1)

Due to this vision, we defined 6 sections of intervention along the stripe:

1.The Kamza –Fushë Krujë industrial axis
2.The ex-mine in Valias and the Valias residential area;
3.Tirana river;
4.Intersection village;
5.Highway and industrial influence area.

Fig. 7 *Existing conceptual scheme*

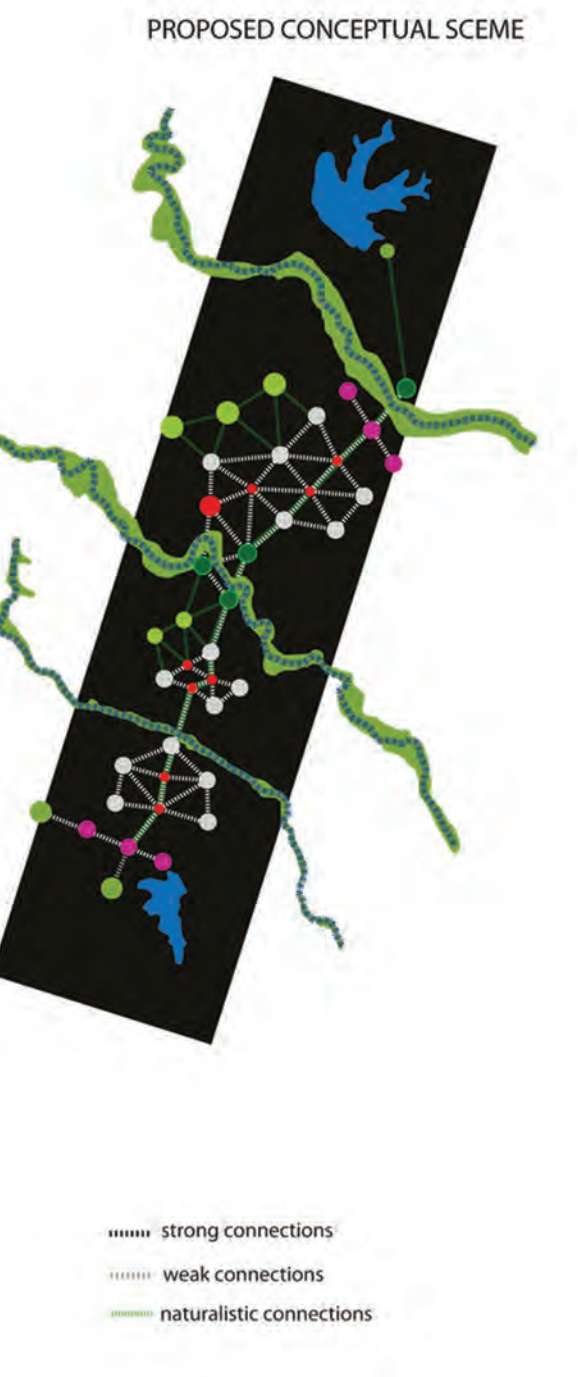


Fig. 8 *Proposed conceptual scheme*

Actions of the Master plan

Referring to the main vision of stimulating the eco-sensitivity design strategy in this semi-urban area our main actions are focused in the four central sections, inside the "Triangle".

In the Section no.2 of Valias' residential area, our strategy is to open and activate the community. This will gradually bring out the removal of the parietal walls and simulate the creation of public space and public gardens for the community. Additional public space will be available after the introduction of the sewerage system to the underground (using the irrigation canals track) for the rehabilitation of existing roads and creation of new roads, with sidewalks, bike paths and parking places, particularly along the main axes etc. The strategy also envisages the future densification of the area along the main axis in order to preserve the landscape and agricultural land. (Fig. 9.1/2/3/4/5)

Close to this settlement, the Valias ex Mine area will be transformed into a new focal point for the city. It is envisioned as an industrial archaeological park, part of the Tirana River Park, which also provides different cultural activities like: local group concerts, art exhibitions, art festivals etc. (Fig. 10.1/2/3/4)

The whole system is organized close to the river which is planned to be transformed in a green park and equipped with pedestrian and bike paths on its sides, preserving the natural flow and creating, where possible, river rooms with recreation areas for children, including activities like picnic, fishing, sunbathing etc. (Fig. 11.1/2/3/4/5/6)

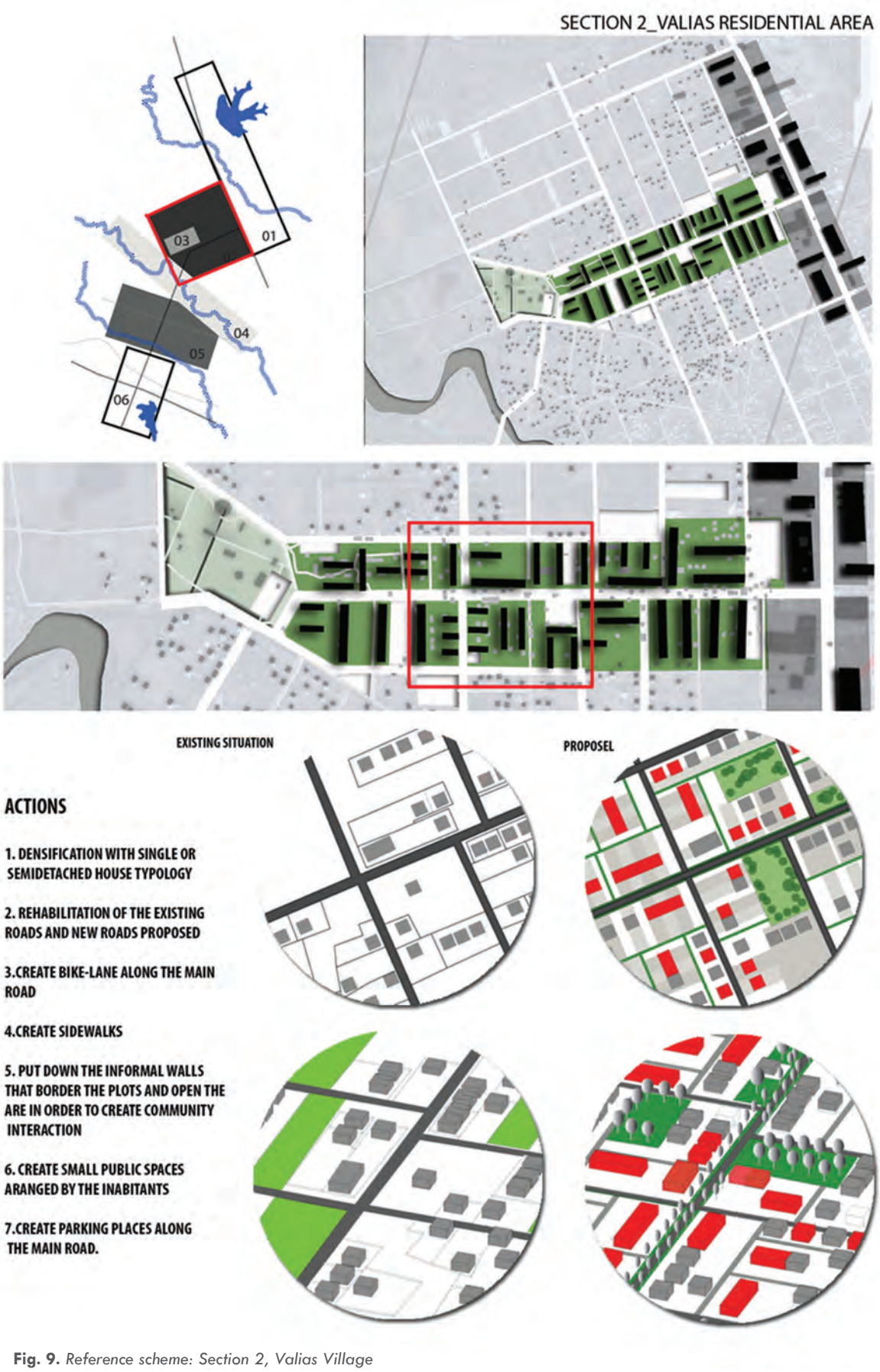


Fig. 9. *Reference scheme: Section 2, Valias Village*

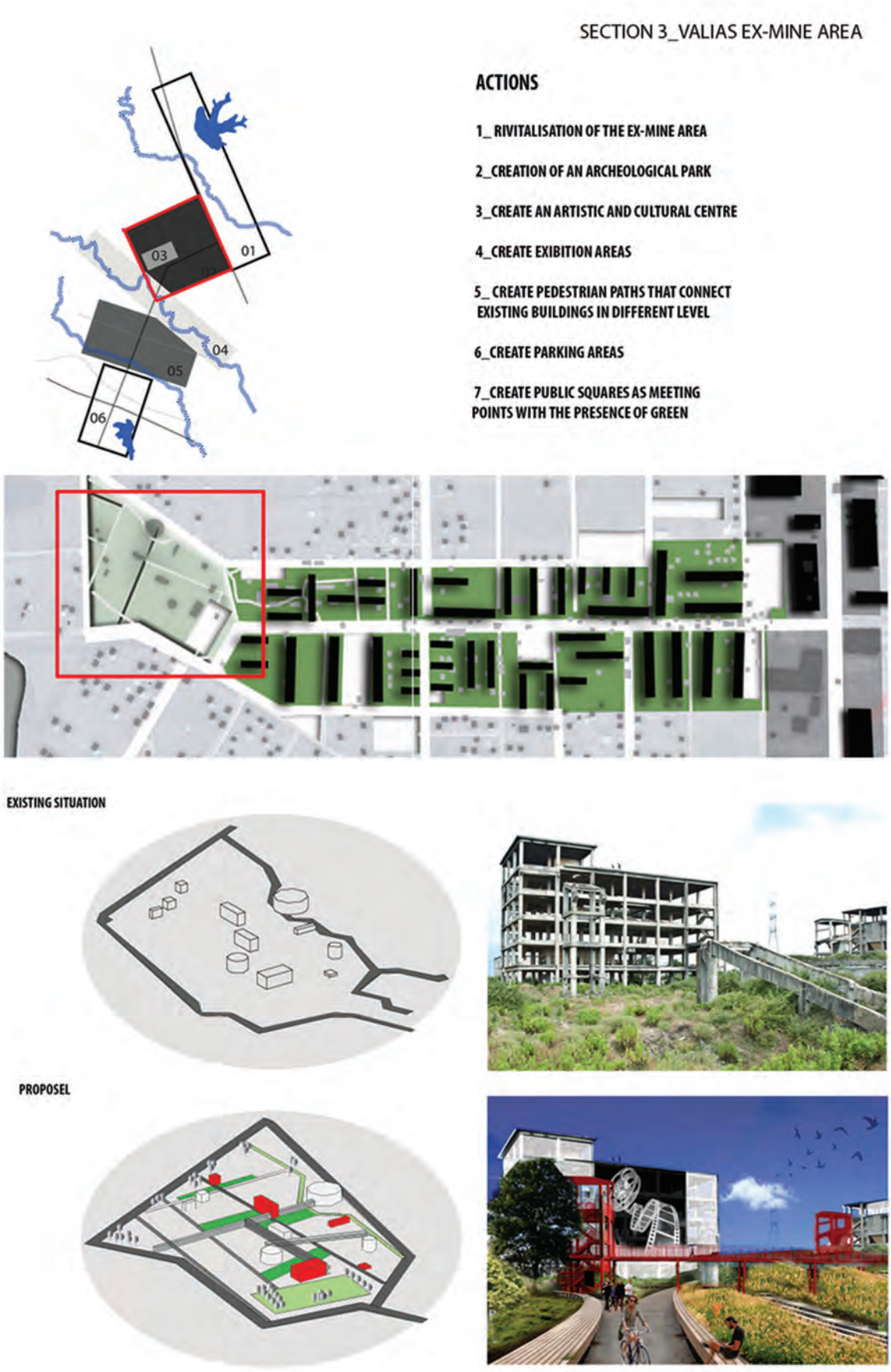
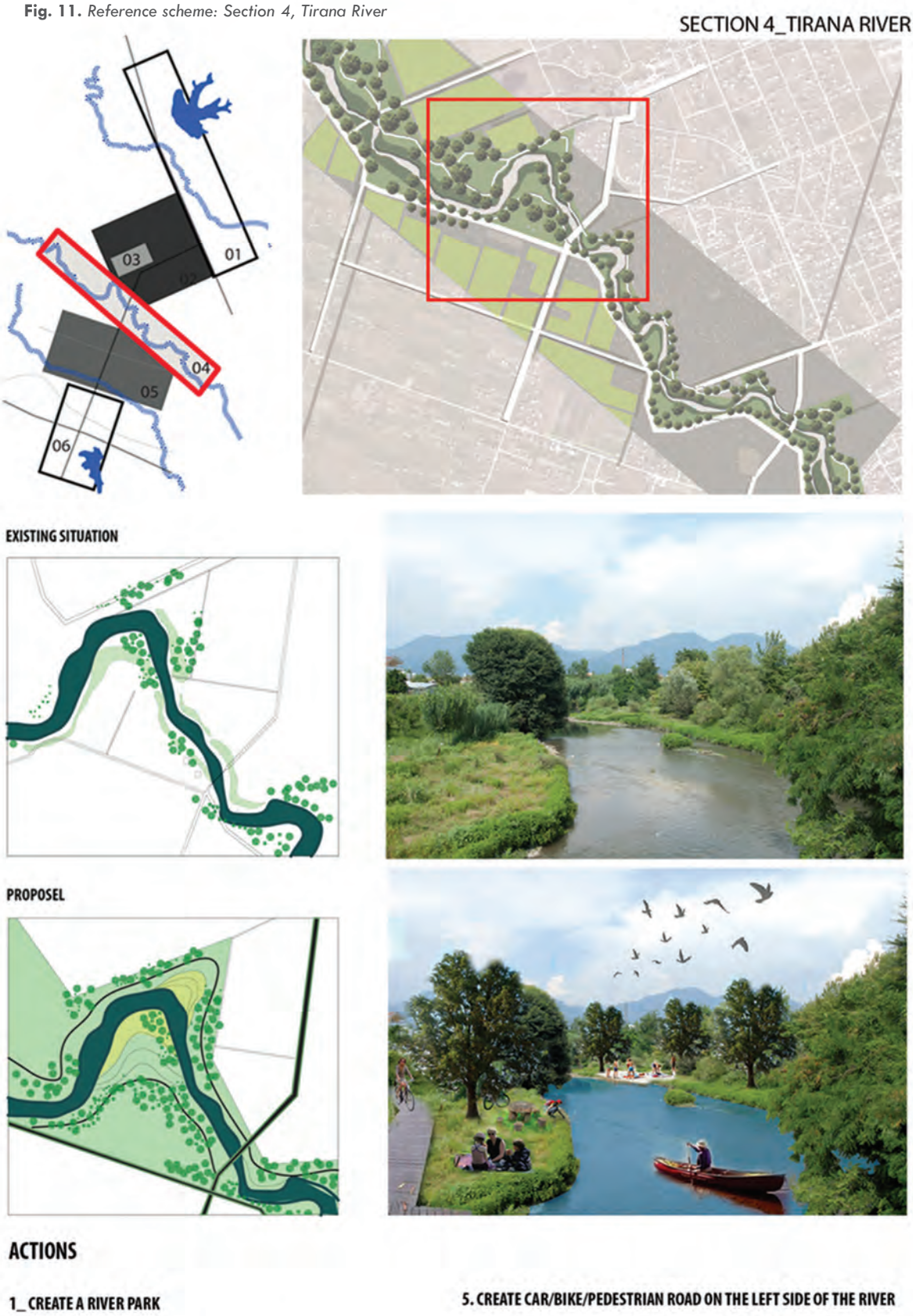


Fig. 9. *Reference scheme: Section 3, Valias ex-Mine area*

"The Intersection village" section is conceived as a small village in the main crossroads of the area which provides an agriculture market and restoration services. In the surrounding area, the main interventions are: improvement of road infrastructure with an eco-sensitive design, which aims to conserve the landscape characteristics, the creation and equipment of "station" spaces in correspondence to the panoramic win-

Fig. 11. *Reference scheme: Section 4, Tirana River*



dows to the territory, provide pedestrian and bike paths and maintain and improve the local vegetation. (Fig. 12.1/2/3/4/5)

In conclusion, given the particular location of this stripe, in an area between the city and the rural surroundings, we believe that its sustainable image depends on the eco-sensitivity of its transformations.

Fig. 12. *Reference scheme: Section 5, Intersection village and Roads of sensation*