



LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

INDEX

Of the graphic documentation

Table of contents

Chapter 3. Design Project

- 1. Location
 - 1.1. Kulturwege Zermatt
 - 1.2. 2019 Kulturwege Zermatt - Zmutt
 - 1.3. 2023 Kulturwege Aroleit
 - 1.4. 2025 Kulturwege Findeln and 2027 Kulturwege Zermatt Dorf
- 2. Intention
- 3. Design Project
 - 3.1. Analysis of the trail
 - 3.1.1. Morphology
 - 3.1.1.1. Linear
 - 3.1.1.2. Scattered
 - 3.1.2. The material
 - 3.1.2.1. Stone
 - 3.1.2.2. Wood
 - 3.2. Concept
 - 3.2.1. A bridge without a bridge
 - 3.2.2. Current places to pause
 - 3.2.3. Landscape reading
 - 3.2.4. Brainstorming
 - 3.2.5. Merging of ideas
 - 3.2.6. Visual concept
 - 3.3. Project
 - 3.3.1. Site locations
 - 3.3.2. Sequence
 - 3.3.3. Site analysis
 - 3.3.3.1. Site 1
 - 3.3.3.2. Site 2
 - 3.3.3.3. Site 3
 - 3.3.3.4. Site 4
 - 3.3.3.5. Site 5
 - 3.3.3.6. Site 6
 - 3.3.3.7. Site 7
 - 3.3.3.8. Site 8
 - 3.3.3.9. Site 9
 - 3.3.4. Proposal
 - 3.3.4.1. Site 3
 - 3.3.4.2. Site 4
 - 3.3.4.3. Site 5

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Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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March - June 2023

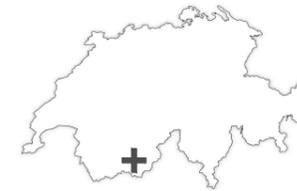
Nicolau Vilaró Palau

INDEX

INDEX



Fig. 1 Oldest Barn in Europe (1261), Herbrig, Nicolau Vilaró



1. LOCATION

A journey on an alpine valley

Zermatt, Valais canton, Switzerland.

The Swiss Alps are well known for their awe-inspiring landscapes, characterized by towering peaks, majestic glaciers, and immaculate alpine meadows. Zermatt, a picturesque town nestled in the heart of this mountainous paradise, serves as the gateway to some of the most iconic peaks in the Alps, including the renowned Matterhorn. With its busy streets and traditional Swiss architecture, Zermatt is a blend of alpine charm and modern infrastructure.

However, located in the neighbouring hills and mountains of Zermatt, the Kulturwege Zermatt, or cultural trails, offer a remarkable journey through the valley, combining history, culture, and nature in breathtaking landscapes. These trails were originally established as footpaths and mule tracks and served as vital connections between barns, hamlets, and towns, facilitating trade and travel across the alpine passes. The association behind the Kulturwege project, Verein Alts-Zermatt, seeks to preserve and showcase the historical treasures of the valley to visitors. Through the creation of the cultural trails, they aim to protect the rich heritage of the region, discover its hidden secrets, and make visible the significance of centuries-old wooden barns that once sustained the local agrarian way of life.

Having had the privilege of meeting Mr. René-Michael Biner, the president of the Verein Alts-Zermatt, I gained invaluable insights into the creation and origins of the Kulturwege project. Mr. Biner shared his abundance of knowledge regarding barn construction in the past and the ongoing efforts to preserve these architectural gems for future generations. Accompanied by him, I had the opportunity to personally explore this year's trail stations and gain a deeper understanding of their historical and cultural importance. His guidance and expertise have played a pivotal role in shaping this project.

To conclude, the following set of plans and drawings document and provide a visual representation of the existing cultural trail created in 2019 and the newest one which will be inaugurated this year on the 24th of June. The current trail spans from Zermatt to the remote hamlet of Zmutt and the yet-to-be-inaugurated from Zmutt back to Zermatt passing through a series of small hamlets together known as Aroleit.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

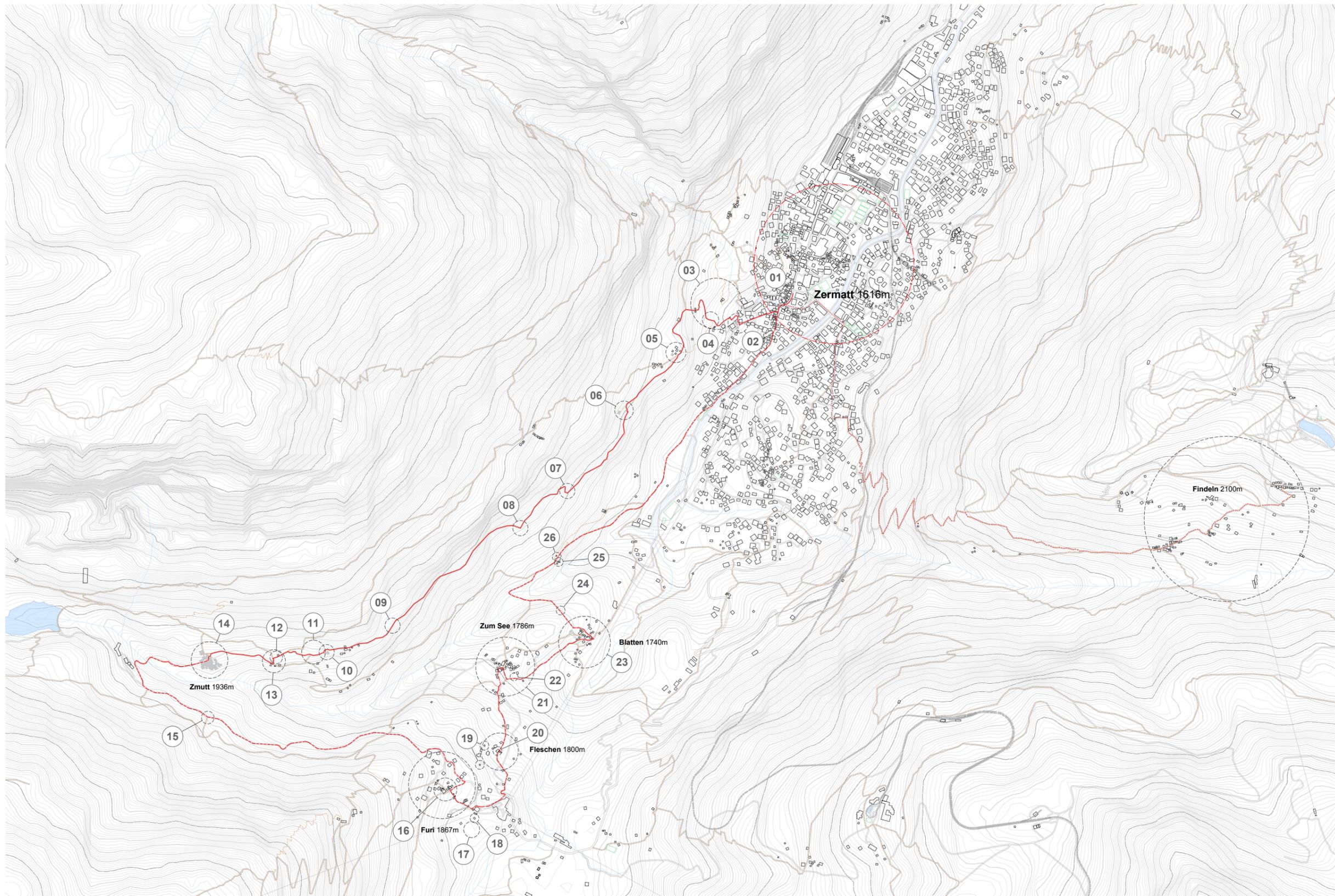
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1. LOCATION

1. LOCATION



— 2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt"

- 01 Metzggassa
The largest reservoir in Upper Valais (1853)
- 02 Unner Schälpmatta
Storehouses around 1880
- 03 Flüe
Meadows, fields, watering system
- 04 Ober Schälpmatta
Stone trail "Bikki"
- 05 Herbrig
Oldest barn in Europe (1261)
- 06 Leng Flüe
Recycling in the old days
- 07 Im Wengje
Climate change and apple tree at 1750m
- 08 Schatzgufur
Pen "Farich"
- 09 Luchsfalla
Lynx Trap
- 10 Wigguhüs
Barn built in 1335, stable barn built in 1422
- 11 Hee Müra
Stones everywhere...
- 12 Biinelti
Glacial grind and trail
- 13 Üsser Mutt
Inderbinen residency 1551
- 14 Zmutt (Inner Mutt)
The hamlet of Zmutt

- - - 2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit"

- 15 Äbi
Wood
- 16 Furi
The small hamlet
- 17 Furi
The processing of soapstone
- 18 Ze Chännle
A disappeared grain barn - glacier and climate
- 19 Orbu Flesche
Ceiling beams from 1606 and 1433
- 20 Flesche
The old Fleschen house
- 21 Zum See
Largest settlement in the Aroleit
- 22 Simonsbrunnen
'Healing spring'
- 23 Blatten
A traditional hamlet
- 24 Väsperbola
Religious procession - Vespers site
- 25 Ärdbrich
Stable barn with arched windows
- 26 Ärdbrich
Small teahouse

..... 2025 Kulturweg "Findeln"

- - - 2027 Kulturweg "Zermatt Dorf"

- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
- 10m Contour lines (20m interval)
- 100m Contour lines
- +++++ Railways
- Roads (outline)
- Trails
- Vegetation
- Water



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1.1. KULTURWEGE ZERMATT

1. LOCATION

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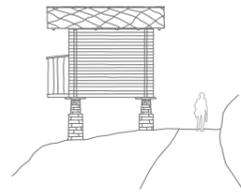


01 Metzggassa
The largest reservoir in Upper Valais (1853)

It is located in the center of Zermatt. The wooden part of the building was used to store food and other belongings.

This section is raised on 14 stilts with flat stone slabs to prevent mice from entering. This also provides ventilation and thus avoids moisture.

The lower brick part is divided into stables for small livestock.

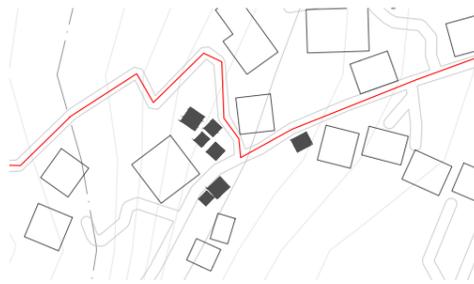


02 Unner Schälpmatta
Storehouses around 1880

A group of similar granaries were built near the residential buildings.

They all shared the same construction typology of wooden beams joined in the corners and raised on stilts to protect their food from mice and humidity.

Each owner has their own lockable door to their own compartment.



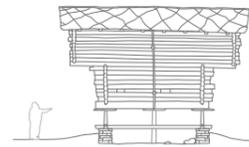
03 Flüe
Meadows, fields, watering system

These fields sit under the mountain and were delimited by dry stone walls.

Cereals and potatoes were planted here.

There used to be an extensive irrigation system using water channels (often used as boundaries).

The barns were located away from avalanche paths. When the feed in one pasture was gone, the animals were moved to the next barn.



04 Ober Schälpmatta
Stone trail "Bikki"

Continuing along the trail, we find many parts of it paved with natural stones.

Some of these are embedded in the ground to protect the path from erosion and avoid slipping during rainy days as cattle were walking.

In the local Zermatt dialect, these paths are called "en Bikki", and the path itself is called "gibikkinutta".



05 Herbrig
Oldest barn in Europe (1261)

Herbrig is home to barns from the 13th and 14th centuries.

Its main interest is a barn from 1261, (drawn here) the oldest one in Europe.

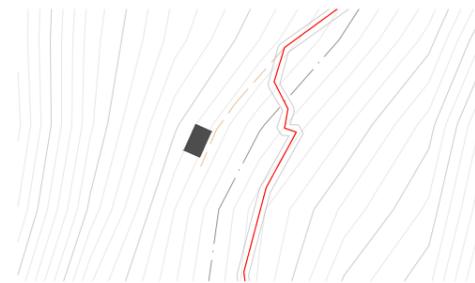
These are grain barns that were only used to store and dry grain sheaves that farmers collected from the arable terraces above the meadowland.



06 Leng Flüe
Recycling in the old days

This is a barn built with remains from a demolished house.

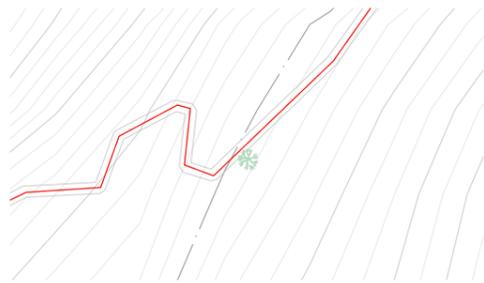
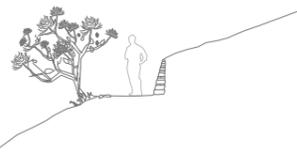
Reusing wooden beams to build the walls as lumber was reused and not just thrown away.



07 Im Wengje
Climate change and apple tree at 1750m

This area was used for former agriculture as seen from the remains of many stone walls.

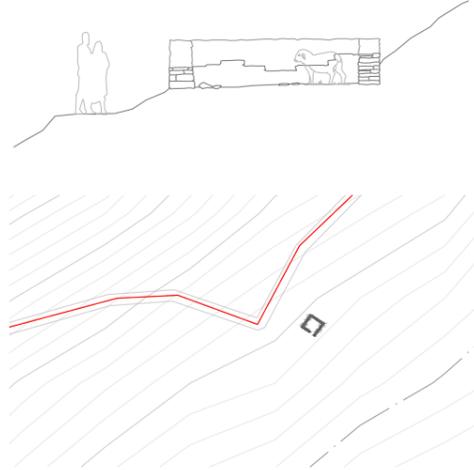
Nowadays, global warming during the last 60 years has allowed an apple tree to grow at an altitude of 1750m.



08 Schatzgufer
Pen "Farich"

Here, cattle were kept at night inside the remains of these stone walls.

These are not ruins from a previous house as there are no foundations.

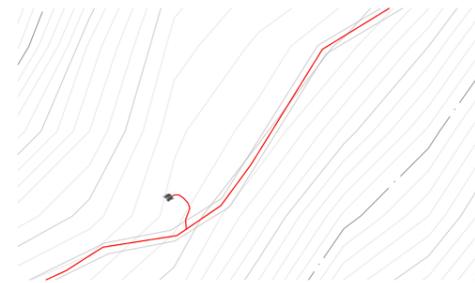


09 Luchsfalla
Lynx Trap

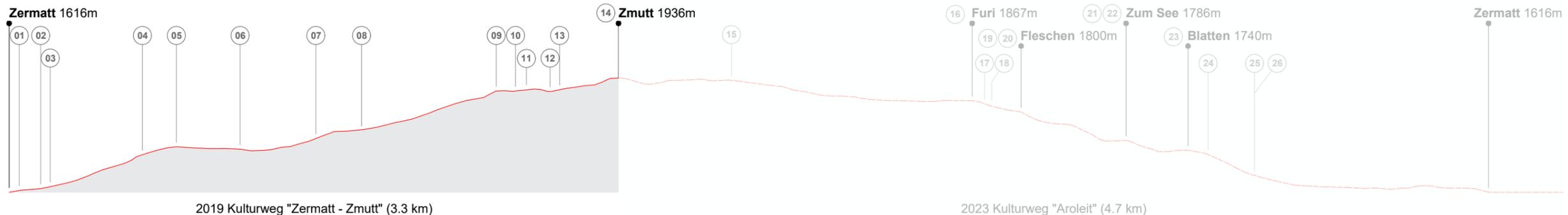
This is one of two remaining lynx traps in the Zermatt area.

In the past, everything that harmed livestock and agriculture was hunted.

Nowadays, there are very few left of them in the Valais canton.



- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
- 10m Contour lines (20m interval)
- 100m Contour lines
- +++++ Railways
- Roads (outline)
- Trails
- Vegetation
- Water



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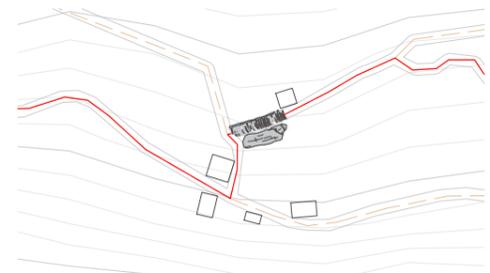
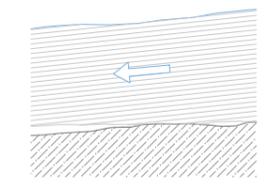
1.2. KULTURWEGE ZERMATT - ZMUTT (2019)
 1. LOCATION

12 Biinelti
 Glacial grind and trail

Zermatt used to be covered by a glacier during the ice age and even up to approximately 2.600m above sea level.

In this part of the trail, it is calculated to have been around 700 meters thick and it used to rest on this ridge.

This is shown by the longitudinal cuts on the rock that indicate the flow of the glacier.



11 Hee Müra
 Stones everywhere...

Continuing on the path, one can see piles of stones lying in the meadows.

Here they were deposited by farmers during spring time.

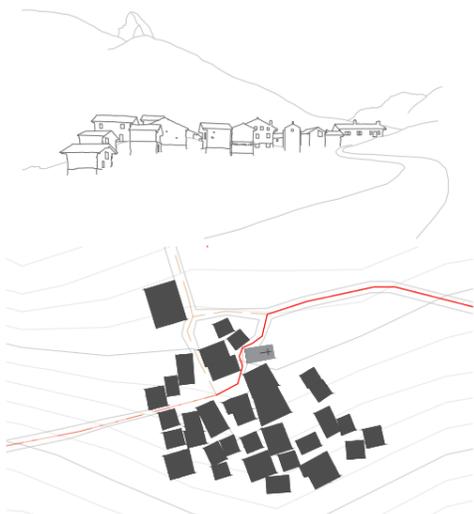
The path sides were walled with the largest stones, which served to demarcate the pastureland.



14 Weiler Zmutt
 The Hamlet of Zmutt

The 14th and last station of this first trail is the old hamlet of Zmutt. It is deeply rooted in its surroundings and filled with history.

This is why the association Verein Alts Zermatt decided to dedicate a specific cultural trail around the village's barns and stables.



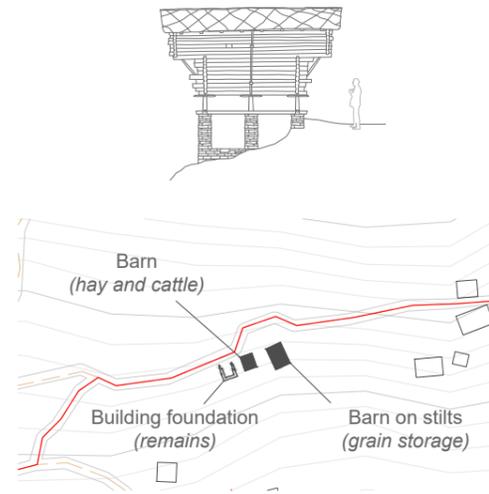
10 Wigguhüs
 Barn built in 1335, stable barn built in 1422

Standing on high stilts and stone slabs, this is one of the most beautiful barns in Zermatt, mainly to its location and views of the famous Matterhorn.

This one was used for grain storage.

Next to it there is a stable barn with hay storage on the upper floor and cattle below.

There are also remains of the foundation of a third building.

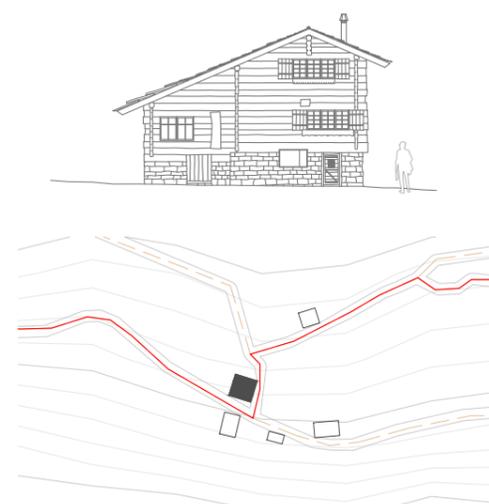


13 Üsser Mutt
 Inderbinen residency 1551

This house is an example of the past nomadic way of life of the mountain people.

The famous Ulrich Inderbinen (1900-2004) (mountain guide), an icon of Zermatt, used to live here during his childhood from early summer until after the New Year.

It still belongs to the Inderbinen family.



2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt" (3.3 km)

2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit" (4.7 km)



Fu Furi
1867m

Located at 1867 m above sea level, Furi has been connected to Zermatt by a cable car since the 1950s. From there, the cable car continues to Trockener Steg and two gondola lifts to Riffelberg and Schwarzsee. This makes it the most significant junction in the entire Zermatt ski area.

When the Aroleit Cultural Trail opens, the area around Furi will contain 4 stations. From the oldest buildings in this hamlet to soapstone processing sites and memories of advancing glaciers and disappearing barns.



ZS Zum See
1786m

The path that leads from Zermatt to the hamlet of Zum See used to be a mule track. In the past, it connected Switzerland with Italy through the Theodul Pass. According to the inventory of historical traffic routes in Switzerland (IVS) it is of national importance.

The earliest record is from 1540. Although the place is called "Zum See", there was never a lake here. In the local language, "Zem See" has two different meanings. On the one hand, it denotes standing water, but also in general a hamlet with shelter for people and cattle.

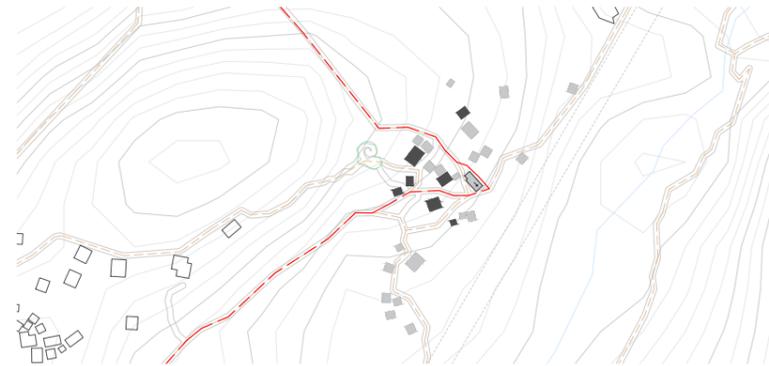


FI Fleschen
1800m

Flesche is the smallest gathering of barns in this part of the trail.

There will be 2 stations here. One will highlight an old house next to the trail, with a patchwork of windows that grew in size over the centuries. Traces can still be seen in the facade.

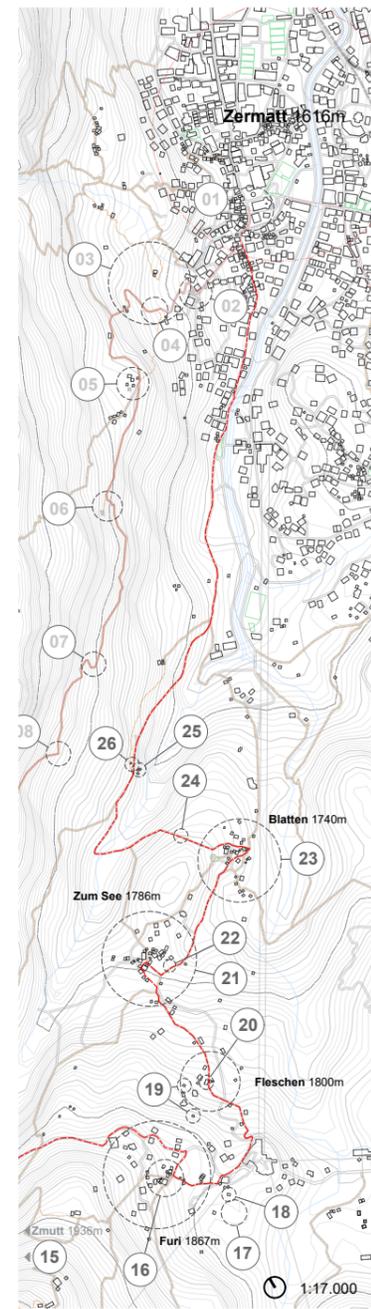
The second station is split into 2 separate buildings, both distant from the trail but nevertheless from the 15th and 17th centuries.



BI Blatten
1740m

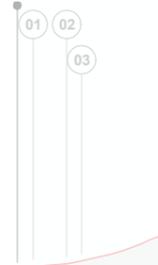
This hamlet used to be where cattle grazed during summer in its mountain pastures. The farmers used to live as temporary residents in the houses and work in the barns and storage barns. Cattle was brought here in early summer and milk was either made into cheese or carried down to the village every day.

On Sunday mass was attended in the chapel. Nowadays, Blatten is a popular excursion destination as its mountain restaurants are located directly on hiking trails and ski slopes. Stations will include a healing spring, buildings in the hamlet and other sights on the way down to Zermatt.



- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
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Zermatt 1616m

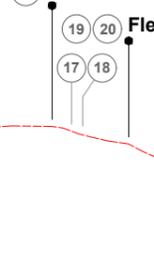


2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt" (3.3 km)

14 Zmutt 1936m

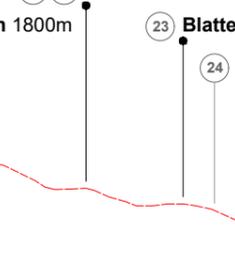


16 Furi 1867m

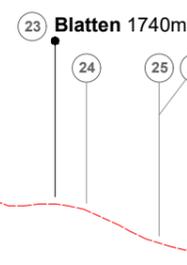


2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit" (4.7 km)

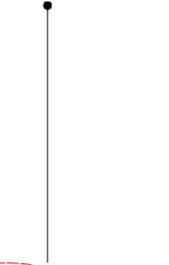
21 22 Zum See 1786m



23 Blatten 1740m



Zermatt 1616m



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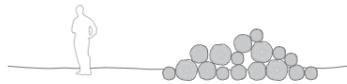
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KULTURWEGE AROLEIT (2023) - HAMLETS

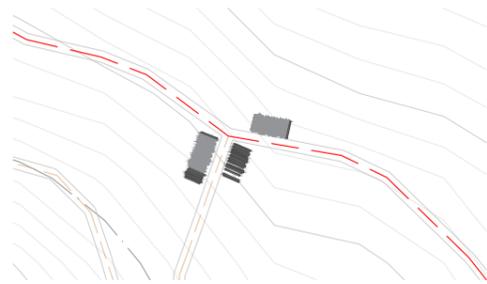
1. LOCATION

1:5000 A3

15 Äbi
Wood



Piles of wooden logs surround the trail in this area.



18 Ze Chännle
A disappeared grain barn - glacier and climate

This barn had disappeared due to the advancing glacier.

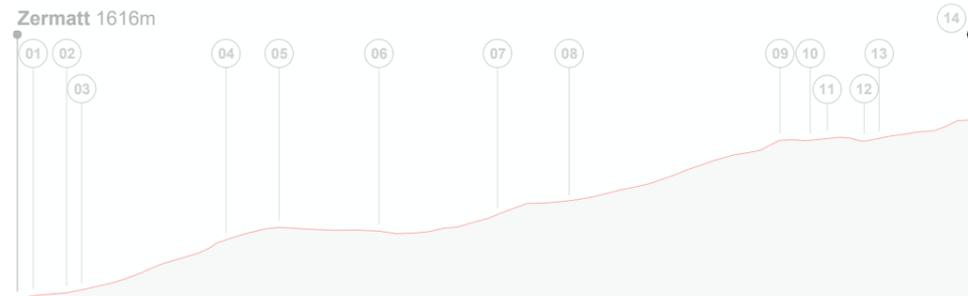
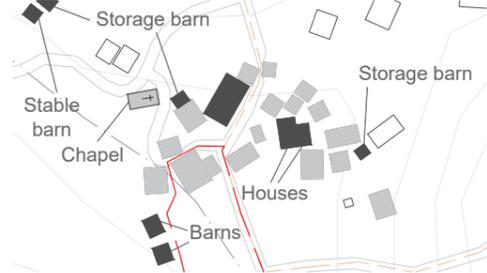
It has now been rebuilt.



21 Zum See
Largest settlement in the Aroleit

The descent of the trail opens up the views of the picturesque hamlet of Zum See.

This has multiple houses, barns, stables, storage barns and even a chapel.



2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt" (3.3 km)

16 Furi
The small hamlet

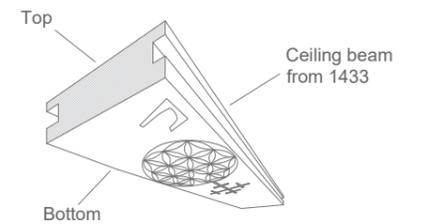
This hamlet is on the foot of the mountain and despite its small size, it even has a chapel.



19 Orbu Flesche
Ceiling beams from 1606 and 1433

These two separate barns contain very old ceiling beams in their interiors.

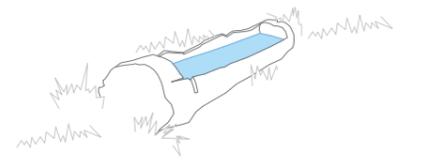
These, have patterns and symbols engraved in them.



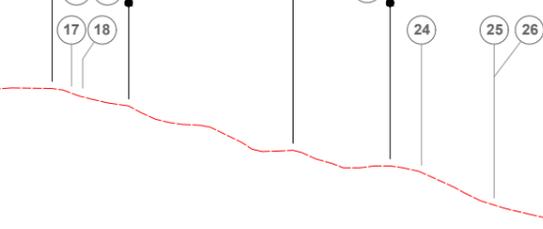
22 Simonsbrunnen
'Healing spring'

This small spring was said to have healing powers.

One would drink from it while being sick hoping to get better.



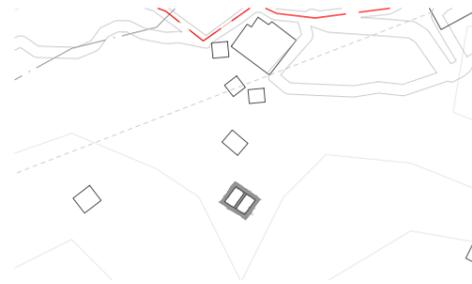
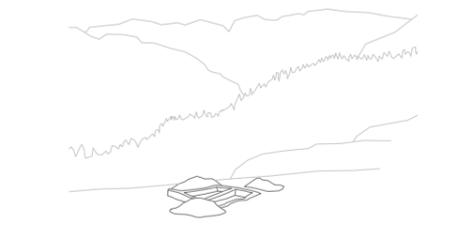
16 Furi 1867m **21 22 Zum See 1786m**
19 20 Fleschen 1800m **23 Blatten 1740m**



2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit" (4.7 km)

17 Furi
The processing of soapstone

Soapstone used to be processed in this site. It was used to produce cooking utensils like pots, amongst other things.



20 Flesche
The old Fleschen house

This house has a characteristic distribution of windows.

The ones on the lower level have changed in size and location on the facade over the centuries.

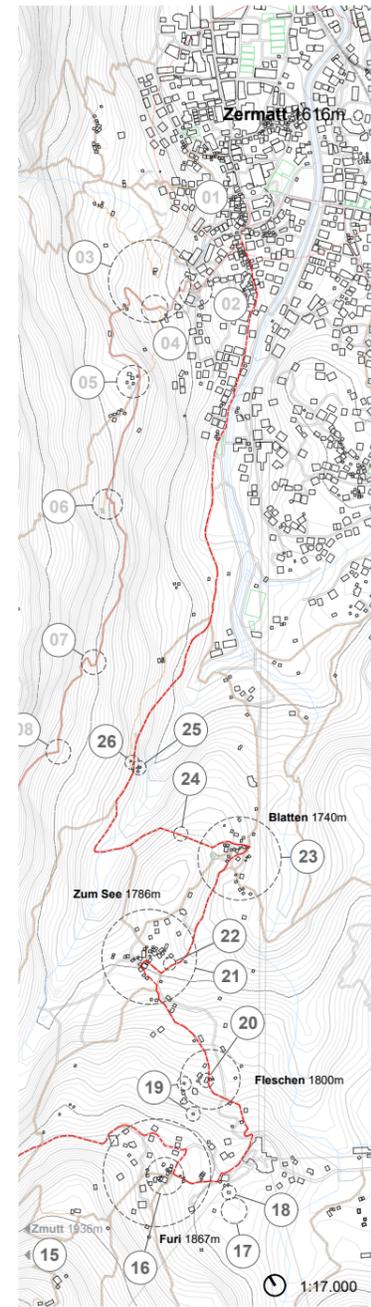
The traces of these changes can still be seen on the facade.



23 Blatten
A traditional hamlet

This is the last hamlet on the Aroleit Kulturwege.

It has several houses, barns, stables, storage barns and a chapel that overlooks the valley down below.



- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
- 10m Contour lines (20m interval)
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KULTURWEGE AROLEIT (2023)

1. LOCATION 1:2500 A3



24 **Väspertola**
Religious procession -
Vespers site

The trail enters the forest and overlooks a site with a religious past.

It is now an outdoor playground for children and adults.



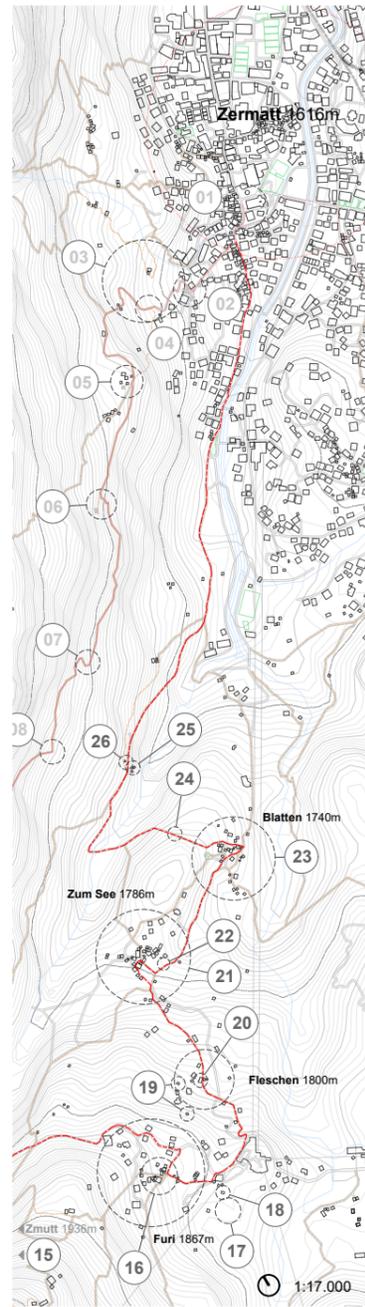
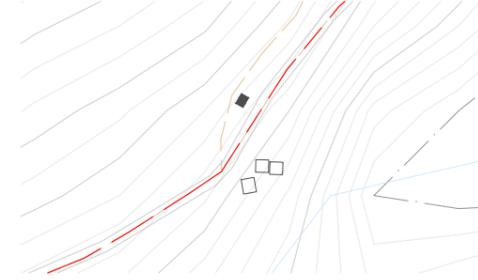
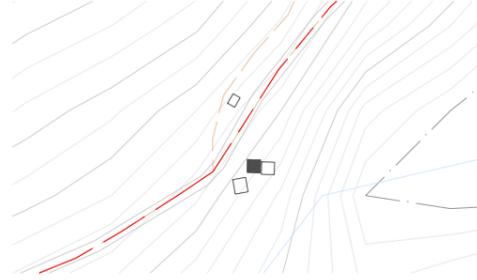
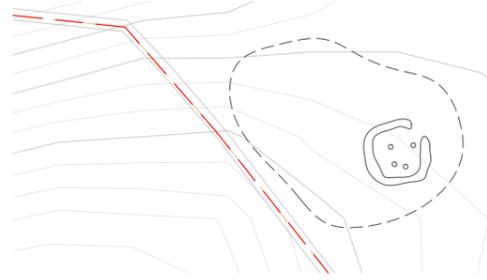
25 **Ärdbrich**
Stable barn with arched windows

This last barn of the trail features rounded arched windows, something very unusual for this type of building.



26 **Ärdbrich**
Small teahouse

The last station of the trail is a small teahouse set on the side of the trail.



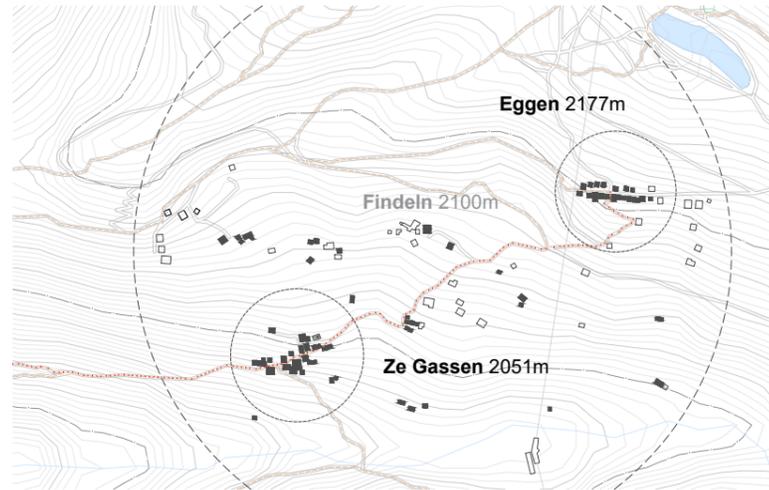
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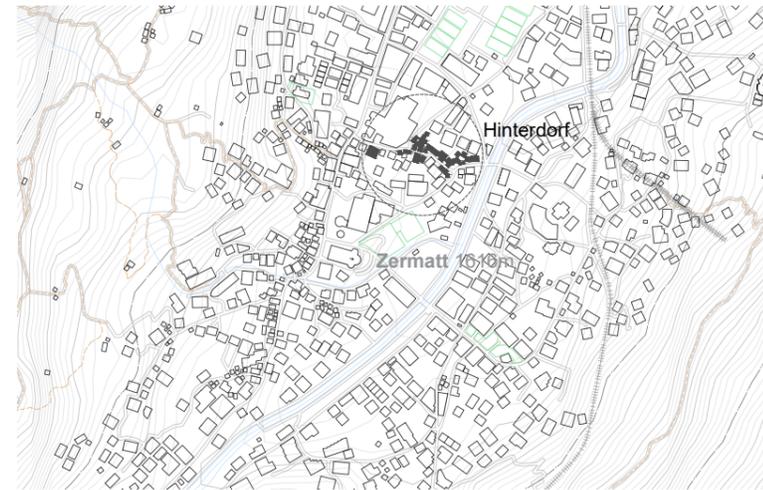
KULTURWEGE AROLEIT (2023)
1. LOCATION 1:2500 A3



Fi Findeln
2100m

Findeln is a group of hamlets located on south facing mountain slopes above the town of Zermatt. The two main ones are Eggen at an altitude of 2177m and Ze Gassen just above at 2,051m. Here, multiple families lived and worked in these widely scattered barns and houses.

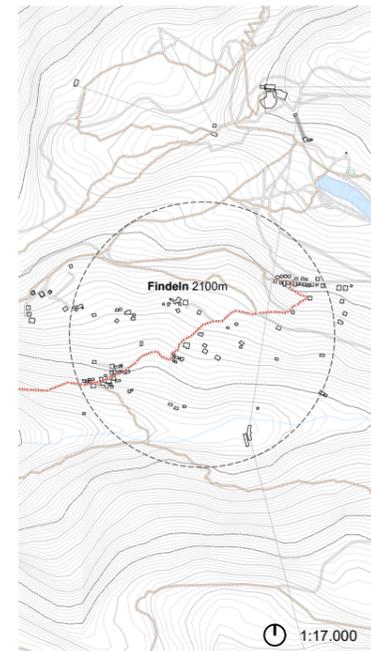
They grew grain and their cows grazed on the pastures. Rye was still grown here until the end of the Second World War. Nowadays, some barns are used as restaurants which are well known for its high quality mountain gastronomy, both in summer and winter. Others, are used as holiday apartments.



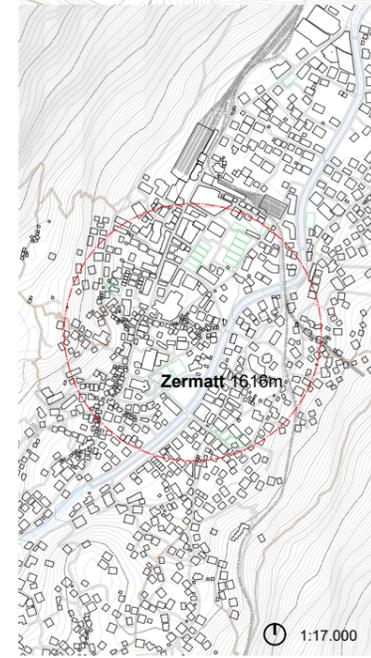
Zr Zermatt
1616m

The cultural trail in Zermatt will highlight houses, barns and storage buildings in the old part of town.

As they are projects set to open in 2025 and 2027 respectively, they are still in development.



1:17.000



1:17.000

- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
- 10m Contour lines (20m interval)
- 100m Contour lines
- +++++ Railways
- Roads (outline)
- Trails
- Vegetation
- Water

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

**KULTURWEGE FINDELN (2025)
KULTURWEGE ZERMATT DORF
(2027)**

1. LOCATION

1:10000 A3

Zermatt 1616m

Findeln 2100m

2025 Kulturweg "Findeln" (3.96 km)

2027 Kulturweg "Dorf Zermatt"



Fig. 2 View of Furi from the Zermatt to Zmutt Kulturwege. Nicolau Vilaró

2. INTENTION

The goals of the project

Landscape Perspectives.

Conceptually, the project aims to originate an intrigue about each specific place and its surroundings, igniting a thirst for visitors to pause along the trail and immerse themselves in the experience. It enables the contemplation of the landscape, not just in terms of its physical attributes but also its cultural and historical significance.

Architecturally, the project provides purposeful places to pause, rest, and contemplate, integrating with the landscape in a sensitive and appreciative manner. Drawing insights from Peter Zumthor's essay "Architecture and Landscape" from his book "Thinking Architecture", the design approach is based on developing a deep appreciation and connection to the surroundings. It aims to evoke a range of feelings associated with experiencing a landscape, such as the aesthetic experience of looking at the grandeur and vastness it offers, and the sense of being at home in nature with its sky, smells, light, colours, and shapes. The project acknowledges the historical and cultural significance of this particular landscape, recognizing our inherent connection to it and the need to preserve it.

To do justice to the landscape, the project emphasizes the importance of observing and studying the landscape, developing a feeling and care for what is seen. It seeks to find the right measure, quantity, size, shape, and material for the proposed interventions, aiming for attunement, harmony, and even tension. The choice of materials aligns with the historically grown substance of the landscape, ensuring integrity and authenticity. The project envisions the placement of interventions in a way that the landscape accepts and resonates with them, creating a fusion of architecture and landscape where they grow together and establish an intimate place.

By embracing these principles and values, the project aims to create purposeful interventions that integrate seamlessly with the landscape, celebrating its grandeur and offering a unique and contemplative experience for visitors. The interventions should be precise, clear-cut forms that harmonize with the surroundings without overshadowing the barns and other stations that are still the main focus of the cultural trail.

The project is deeply connected to its surroundings, recognizing the landscape as a prestigious heritage encompassing buildings, culture, and nature. It embraces the historical local building materials, technologies, and craftsmanship, ensuring a strong link to the local context. The interventions serve as a bridge between vision and reality, with their visibility playing a crucial role in connecting, interacting, and understanding the surroundings, allowing visitors to immediately connect with and appreciate the rich landscape.

As a landscape architecture project, it requires a set of qualities and characteristics that it should have in order to succeed. These will be informed by the reading of the landscape, which will be introduced later on, and the project outline. The later is defined according to previous readings and research on the topic with the goals of working with architecture, **landscape** and **reusing**:

To be a visual icon of poetic exploration **reusing the place (land, buildings, local wisdom...)**, **materials and techniques** which makes justice to its surroundings through its **fusion with the landscape***.

*Landscape: In this case, the word is used in a broader sense meaning: geography, people, history.

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Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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March - June 2023

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2. INTENTION

2. INTENTION



Fig. 3 *Nature intertwined.* Nicolau Vilaró

3. DESIGN PROJECT

A dialogue

Landscape Perspectives.

The following plans, drawings and photographs provide visual representations that summarise the careful analysis of the landscape along the Kulturwege Zermatt trail, the development of its concept, and the project itself.

Through them, you are invited to learn about the multiple layers of the project, where landscape features, culture, history and design dialogue as they merge to create an unforgettable experience along the trail.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3. DESIGN PROJECT

3. DESIGN PROJECT

March

April

May

June

A



Fig. 4, 5, 6, 7 Fields and the valley of Zermatt. Nicolau Vilaró

B



Fig. 8, 9, 10, 11 Hamlet of Herbrig. Nicolau Vilaró

C

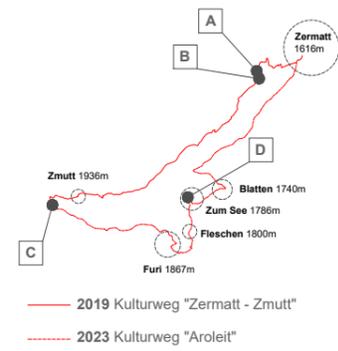


Fig. 12, 13, 14, 15 Hamlet of Zmutt. Nicolau Vilaró

D



Fig. 16, 17, 18, 19 Hamlet of Zum See. Nicolau Vilaró



INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL

Learning from the landscape.

The landscape over time.

Through a series of site visits spanning four months, from March to June, I embarked on an analysis of the landscape surrounding the cultural trails. With each visit, I documented the ever-changing nature, observing how the transition from winter to spring and the arrival of summer influenced its character and also my changes in its perception.

For example, the accessibility of the trails is truly seasonally compromised. In winter, alpine valleys and mountains are permanently covered with snow, sometimes a great deal of it. This results in most trails that are open in the summer, having their signs removed during winter as a sign of the path being inaccessible. Fortunately, this winter didn't bring much snow in the valley and even though it was a challenge in some sections, it allowed me to get my first experience of it.

In addition, the shifting perception of the landscape, and the evolving atmosphere became integral elements of this comprehensive analysis. It highlighted the change of light and shadow, the textures of the trail surface, the sounds of the awakening animals with the arrival of spring. It even shifted the smells that are hidden under a thick layer of snow during winter, and find their way out through the grass and trees as the season fades. They are especially noticeable when it is raining, even for a few minutes, which I can now say it happens very often in spring.

This sequential in-person experience allowed me to get a feeling of what the trail and landscape have to offer in a variety of seasons and weather conditions. The intricacies that shape the landscape, unveil its unique qualities and provide a profound understanding of its essence. By immersing myself in this prolonged study, I was able to understand the essence of the landscape and hopefully harness its beauty in the design process.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE

Linear infrastructure.

The Zermatt Valley is home to a remarkable feature that speaks to the deep connection between human labour and the landscape: the old dry stone walls and terraces. These structures are a testament to the centuries-old tradition of human engagement with the land, carefully constructed using locally abundant materials, in this case, stone. The implementation of these walls and terraces was an art form in itself, with farmers skillfully reading the shapes of the landscape and adapting their construction techniques accordingly to create fields, division walls and even trails to get to them.

These dry stone walls and terraces form a linear infrastructure, harmoniously blending with the natural contours of the valley. Their formalization follows the linear patterns dictated by the topography, creating a characteristic rhythm within the landscape. The walls served multiple purposes, providing structural support, defining boundaries, and aiding in agricultural practices such as farming and even vineyard cultivation. Each stone was meticulously placed, fitting cohesively against its neighbouring stones without the use of mortar, showcasing the skill and craftsmanship of the builders.

Nowadays, these ancient structures not only contribute to the landscape appeal of the Zermatt Valley but also tell a story of the symbiotic relationship between humans and their environment. They are a tangible reminder of the laborious efforts of past generations, reflecting their intimate understanding of the landscape and their ability to shape it in harmony with nature. The old dry stone walls and terraces stand as enduring testaments to the ingenuity and resilience of the people who once lived and worked in this remote region.



Fig. 20 Fields and remains of old dry stone terrace walls. Nicolau Vilaró

Linear infrastructure.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.1.1. MORPHOLOGY - LINEAR

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE

INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL

Learning from the past.

Scattered distribution.

Barns, stables, homes, and other structures related to farming are dispersed throughout Zermatt's landscape for a number of reasons. The topography, the fields they serve, and other useful factors are among them. These structures' dispersed morphology is a response to the particular requirements of farming and agriculture in this area.

The inclined topography of the land plays a crucial role in the distribution of these buildings. Given the expanse and challenging nature of farming on such terrain, multiple small-sized barns were constructed along the fields. This strategic placement allowed farmers to optimize their work by having storage and shelter facilities conveniently located throughout their land.

This morphology of the built environment demonstrates a harmonious relationship between the landscape and the practical requirements of agricultural activities. Such as the collection of manure closer to the fields (where it was needed) for fertilization or temporary shelter for livestock.

The dispersed nature of these buildings reflects the wisdom and ingenuity of the farmers who adapted their practices to the specific characteristics of the Zermatt landscape, creating a sustainable and resilient farming system that remains an integral part of the region's heritage.



Fig. 21 Barns, storage barns and houses scattered along the landscape. Nicolau Vilaró

Scattered distribution.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.1.1. MORPHOLOGY - SCATTERED

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE

Stone.

The resourcefulness of the farmers in Zermatt is evident in their use of locally sourced stones to create paths and walls throughout the landscape. Using mainly gneiss and granite, they employed various methods to construct these features, adapting to the characteristics of the stones and the specific site conditions. The farmers skillfully utilize the natural abundance of stones in the area, selecting and arranging them in different ways to achieve their intended goals. These vary depending on stone size, shape, and availability, as well as the purpose and setting of the path or wall. These man-made structures seamlessly integrate into the natural environment, showcasing the close relationship between human work and the landscape.

In addition to the paths and walls, stone pavements can be found not only along the trails but also in other outdoor areas, such as nearby benches or specific parts of the hamlets where people gather. They feature different compositions and arrangements, reflecting the size, abundance, purpose, and time of construction of the pavement. The embedded stones serve multiple functions, from protecting the paths against erosion and providing traction during rainy days when cattle were walking, to adding aesthetic value and maintenance practicality nowadays. The history of some of these stone pavements dates back to ancient times, with similar paths being used around the Alps even during the Roman era. The stones used for their construction were typically sourced from nearby quarries on the mountain sides, highlighting the local nature of their implementation.

The use of locally sourced stones in various aspects of the landscape not only demonstrates the practical ingenuity of our ancestors but also contributes to the cultural and historical richness of Zermatt. These stone features, whether walls, paths, or pavements, serve as enduring testaments to the resourcefulness, craftsmanship, and harmonious integration of human elements with the surrounding natural environment.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
 March - June 2023

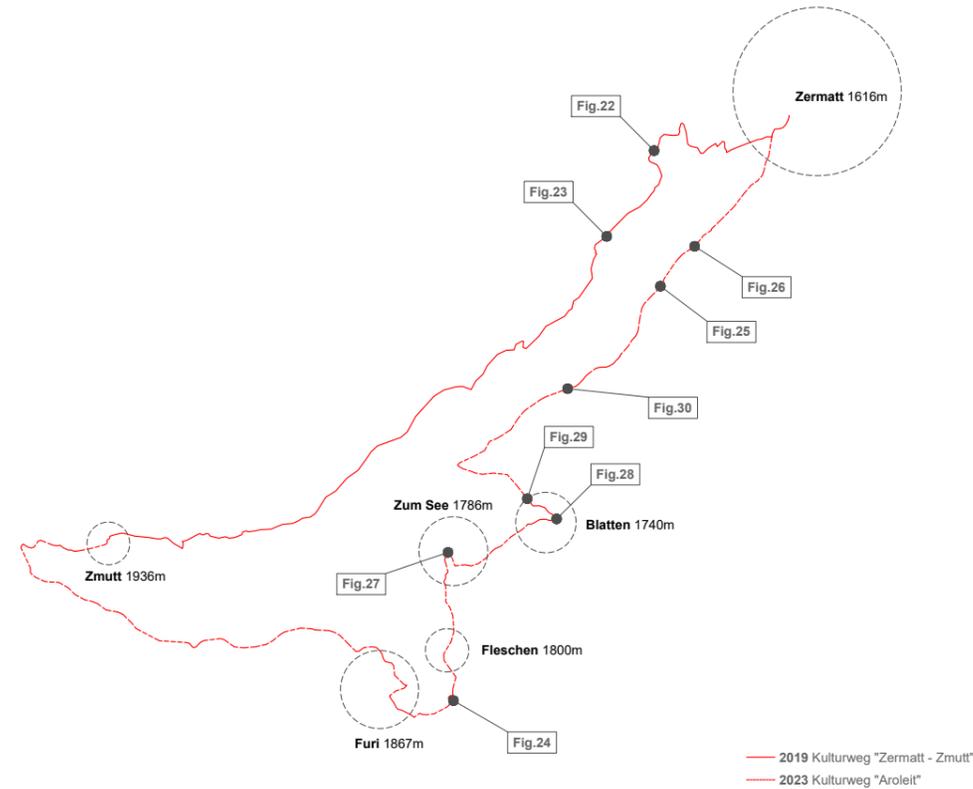
Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.1.2. MATERIAL - STONE

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE



Fig. 22 Path with stone walls and pavement. Nicolau Vilaró



Walls



Fig. 23 Stone wall 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 24 Stone wall 2. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 25 Stone wall 3. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 26 Stone wall 4. Nicolau Vilaró

Pavements



Fig. 27 Stone pavement 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 28 Stone pavement corner detail. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 29 Stone pavement 2. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 30 Stone pavement 3. Nicolau Vilaró

INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL
Learning from the past.

Wood.

Centuries ago, the inhabitants of the Zermatt Valley relied extensively on forests and their wood for their construction needs. The abundant tree species in the area, such as Swiss stone pine, larch, and fir, provided a readily available source of wood for their constructions.

Wood was utilized in different forms and for multiple purposes in the construction of buildings and sometimes infrastructure (bridges). However, most of what can be found in the Zermatt Valley in wood are buildings. The strong tree trunks were transformed into beams, stilts, and pillars, providing structural support for the walls and roofs. The walls themselves were often crafted from wooden logs, carefully split, fitted and joined together using traditional methods such as Strickbau (square section log corner joint) and in some cases mortise-and-tenon joints.

With the use of contemporary technology and machinery, restoration projects aim to preserve historic buildings using the same materials and methods used by their ancestors. Pioneering dendrochronology, along with modern construction techniques, preserves the authenticity and durability of these structures while preserving the area's rich cultural past. The restoration work not only helps to preserve these old buildings but also shows how valuable wood has always been as an adaptable and long-lasting building material.



Fig. 31 Wooden house (left) and wooden store house (right). Nicolau Vilaró

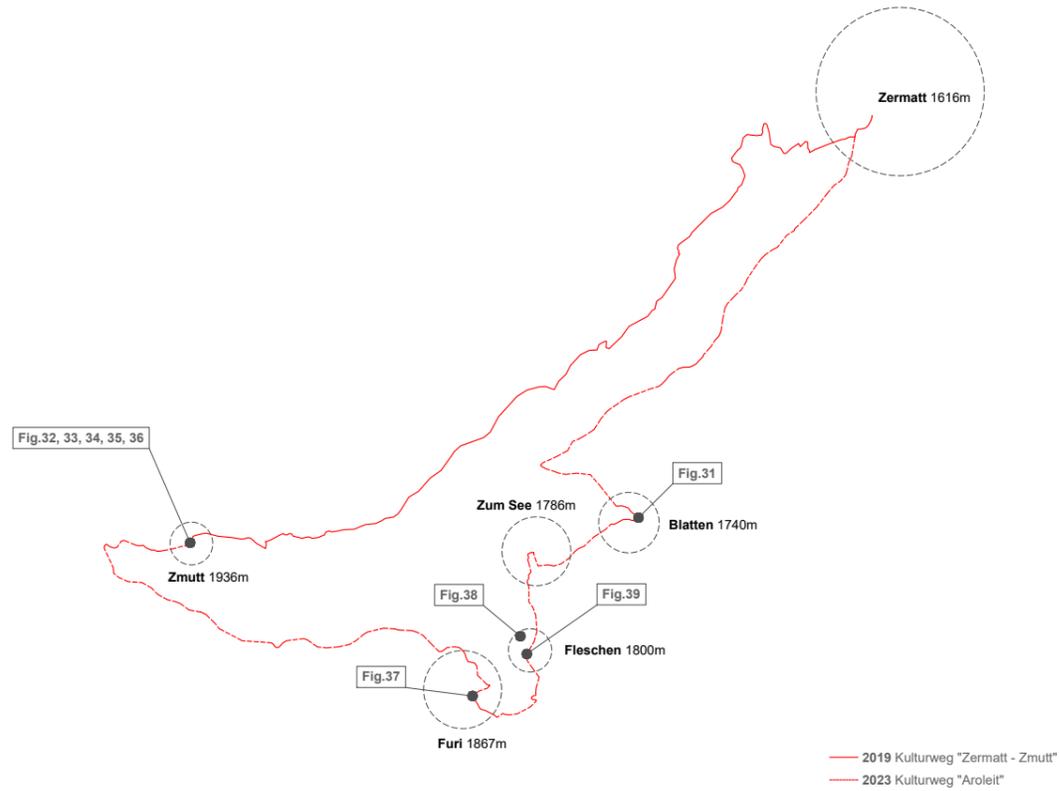


Fig. 32 Log walls from 1255, 1326, 1363 and 2020 in Zmutt. Nicolau Vilaró

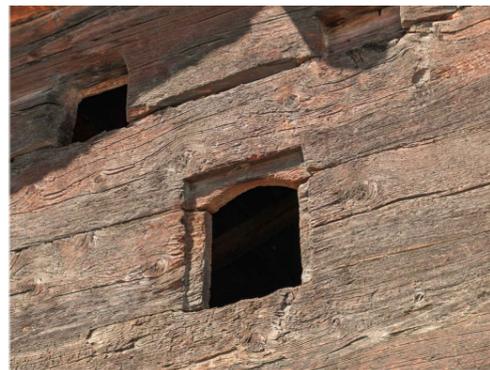


Fig. 33 Insert and arched window from 1444. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 34 Strickbau joints. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 35 Wall beam from 1413. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 36 Log wall structural tying and reinforcement. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 37 Wooden pillars and stilts. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 38 Medieval carved beam from 1433. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 39 Palimpsest of windows over the centuries. Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
 March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.1.2. MATERIAL - WOOD

3.1. ANALYSIS OF THE LANDSCAPE



Fig. 40 Stone path in between fields and around a tree. Nicolau Vilaró

INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL

Learning from the past.

Concept.

A stone path weaves its way between pristinely green fields, gently surrounding a solitary tree. This image captures the essence of a man-made intervention, gracefully interlinked with the flow of nature. A delicate dance.

The trail, though crafted by human hands, arises from the very materials provided by the earth, establishing the balance between human necessity and nature's grace. In this harmonious dialogue, we find a profound connection, a testament to our linked existence with the landscape.

It is a reminder that our passage through the mountainous terrain can be a journey with reverence, embracing the landscapes that feed us, as we navigate our way with care and appreciation.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2. CONCEPT

3.2. CONCEPT



INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL
Learning from the landscape.

Bridge vs Viewpoint.

The concept behind the project is to explore the role of architecture in shaping our perception of the surrounding landscape. This idea is best exemplified by these two pictures.

In the first image, a bridge spans over a river in the Zermatt Valley forest. Here, the bridge serves its functional purpose, acting as infrastructure to cross from one side of the river to the other. Therefore it's a piece of infrastructure that we pass through to get to our destination across challenging terrain.

However, in the second image the bridge has been removed, leaving behind only the stone support or pedestal. With the absence of the bridge, the purpose and meaning of this structure has changed dramatically. It becomes a destination in itself, a place to pause, and an invitation to contemplate one's surroundings. The new narrative of this piece of infrastructure emphasizes the importance of taking a moment to connect with nature rather than merely passing by.

This simple pedestal or platform next to the path presents an opportunity for us to imagine ourselves stopping, stepping onto it, and immersing ourselves in the breathtaking scenery. It highlights the role of architecture in altering our perception and awareness of our environment when hiking along a path. By carefully placing and shaping elements within the landscape, spaces can be created that encourage us to pause, rest and contemplate on our journey along the Kulturwege (Cultural Trails).

This project is a study on how architecture can influence our awareness and perception of our surrounding landscape. A tailored experience as a sequence of pauses along an alpine cultural trail.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
 March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.1. A BRIDGE WITHOUT A BRIDGE

3.2. CONCEPT



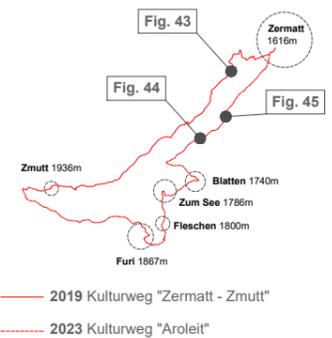
Fig. 41 Bridge over a river. Nicolau Vilaró

Infrastructure to pass through.



Fig. 42 Viewpoint over a river. Nicolau Vilaró

Infrastructure to be in.



INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL
Learning from the landscape.

Places to pause.

Along the trails of the Kulturwege Zermatt, there are existing places to pause and rest. These places can be categorised into three main types: places to stop with a view, places to stop without a view, and places to stop and interact. Despite all having benches as a common feature, each category has its own unique qualities.

Places to stop with a view feature breathtaking vistas of the surrounding landscape. These locations offer a moment of contemplation, where hikers can pause and immerse themselves in the scenery.

On the other hand, places to stop without a view are mostly found inside the dense forest, offering a more sheltered pause in our path.

Lastly, places to stop and interact encourage engagement with the provided facilities such as interactive stands or parks.

While the existing places to pause along the trails provide valuable resting spots, they adopt a different approach compared to the proposed project. The project aims to create a more subtle and immersive experience by carefully reading the landscape and integrating interventions that blend seamlessly with the surroundings. It emphasises a fusion with the local materials, history, and culture, and seeks to construct a narrative that makes hikers aware of their constantly changing environment.



Fig. 43 Bench with a view in Herbrig, Nicolau Vilaró

A place to **stop and enjoy the view.**



Fig. 44 Bench in the forest, Nicolau Vilaró

A place to **pause.**



Fig. 45 Bench, Ricola interactive stand and Teahouse, Nicolau Vilaró

A place to **stop and interact.**

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
 March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.2. CURRENT PLACES TO PAUSE

3.2. CONCEPT

The landscape reading along the cultural trails of the Kulturwege Zermatt highlights eight features and experiences from the visitor's perspective.

These include changes of surroundings, as the trail goes through diverse landscapes.

The shifting direction of the trail, influenced by the topography which introduces moments of pause and recalibration. The outstanding view of the Matterhorn, hidden by neighbouring mountains and trees, captivates our attention when revealed at specific locations along the path.

As we advance along the trail, new waypoints including stations and hamlets emerge, fueling our curiosity. Some of them have become landmarks of the region and even of the continent such as Europe's Oldest Barn in the hamlet of Herbrig.

The dramatic changes in elevation further segment the trail, each section offers its own unique qualities and sparks our attention during transitions.

Panoramic views greatly influence our perception of the landscape, expanding our field of view and allowing us to appreciate the grandeur of the surroundings.

Lastly, shade from trees, buildings or natural formations such as mountains can create comfortable places to stop.

Together, these eight features offer a multi-dimensional experience along the cultural trails, inviting us to pause and contemplate the awe-inspiring beauty of the Zermatt Valley.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

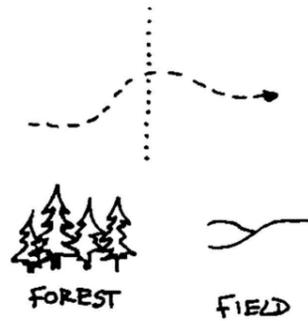
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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.3. LANDSCAPE READING

3.2. CONCEPT



01 A change in surroundings

The trail goes through multiple types of landscapes along its length. Starting from the crowded urban context of the town of Zermatt, to dense forests and wide open fields.

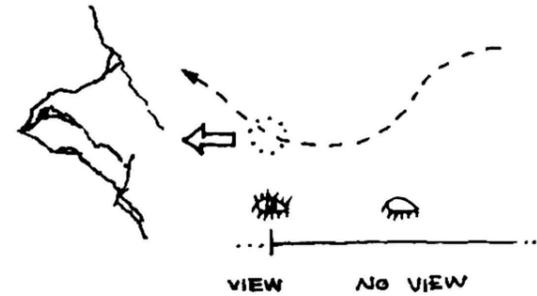
As we make our way along the trail, these changes in scenery are introduced to us as new scenes in a film. Each has its own environment and presents new information and characters, some of which will continue with us for longer or shorter periods of our journey.



02 A shift in direction

Changes in the direction of the trail are greatly influenced and dictated by the topography of the landscape. Whenever we encounter one of these variations it slows us down and forces us to recalibrate and reconsider the new section of trail up ahead.

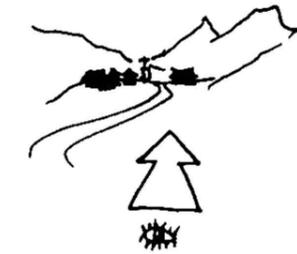
These places are also very frequent locations where hikers tend to stop and regroup as the first ones wait for the following ones to catch up. Hence, the view and spatial qualities of these points become even more relevant as people spend more time on them.



03 View of the Matterhorn

The Matterhorn is undoubtedly the main landmark and visitor attraction of Zermatt. When the weather allows it, its majestic stance and sheer height tower over the valley as a natural icon and make any visitor stop to contemplate it.

However, when walking along the cultural trails it is mostly hidden behind neighbouring mountains or forest trees. It is only visible in specific locations on the path that reveal its presence like carefully released droplets.



04 A new waypoint

In addition, other highlights are also systematically revealed along the trail. Once we catch a glimpse of them for the first time they become our newest waypoint. A sight to see and a place to go.

These points can be stations from the cultural trail, small hamlets or secluded barns.



05 Landmark

Several of these highlights and stations along the trail have been part of the landscape of the Zermatt Valley for centuries. Their landmark status is due to their outstanding cultural and historical relevance.

Although there are many on the Kulturwege Zermatt, the most renowned landmark is Europe's Oldest Barn from 1261, in the small hamlet of Herbrig.



06 Change in elevation

Just like shifts in the direction of the trail, their sudden change of elevation is also dictated by the topography. These pronounced shifts in altitude mark specific points on the trail that transform the unified linear concept of a trail and segment it into multiple sections.

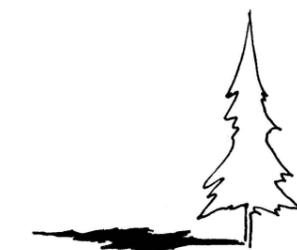
Each of these segments has its own qualities and characteristics. Nevertheless, our attention and perception of our surroundings are brought up when transitioning from one to another. The pronounced changes in the steepness of the trail thus become a feature of the landscape.



07 Panoramic views

Our perception of the features of the landscape is greatly influenced by our field of view.

Specific locations cause our field of view to be greatly expanded. This may be due to a change of scenery (1), a shift in direction (2) or a change in elevation (6). In addition, these places can include views of the Matterhorn (3) (or neighbouring mountains), new waypoints (4) and sometimes landmarks (5).



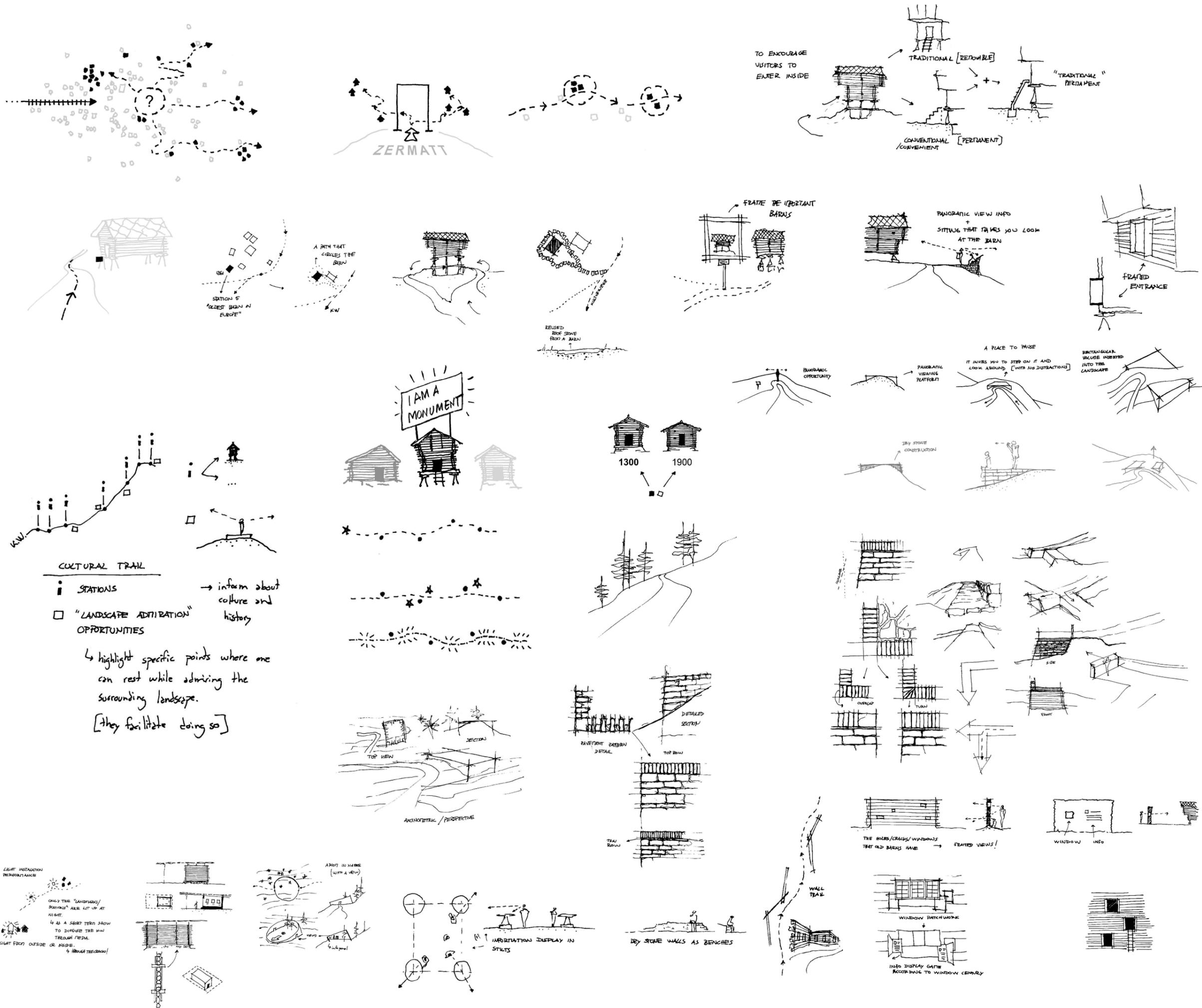
08 Shade

Shade, the final landscape feature to be highlighted, plays a crucial role when selecting a resting spot along a mountain trail. It provides protection from the sun and enhances the overall comfort for visitors.

Shade can be found in various forms, such as the canopy of trees in the forest, the shelter of barns or other structures, or even the natural formations of mountains, hills, and cliffs. These elements offer places to rest and contribute to the enjoyable experience of pausing and appreciating the surrounding landscape.

The following are an array of sketches, each an idea for the project and its multiple parts. It is an exploration of possibilities that emerged while envisioning the project's concept.

These sketches, diverse and distinct, offer a tapestry of intriguing possibilities, serving as seeds that may find their way to the final proposal, each bearing the potential to enrich the project's essence.



LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

20 Credit Semester Project

ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.4. BRAINSTORMING

Merging of ideas.

The project idea emerges from the fusion of six key concepts: linear infrastructure inspired by the old stone paths and terraces, a scattered distribution mirroring the barns and hamlets, landscape features derived from the landscape reading, a sequence of events similar to the cultural trail stations, places to pause as a newly introduced element derived from the goal of the project, and the use of local materials in alignment with the project's intentions.

These ideas are united to create a project that offers an immersive experience of awe and reverence for the surrounding landscape. It intertwines seamlessly with the cultural trail, its stations, and the overall experience of hiking along the trail, amplifying the connection between visitors and the captivating natural environment.



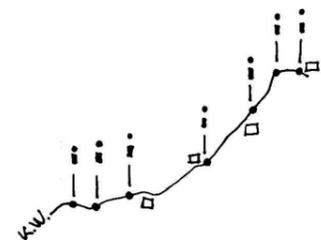
Linear infrastructure.



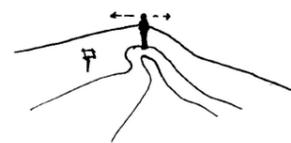
Scattered distribution.



Landscape features



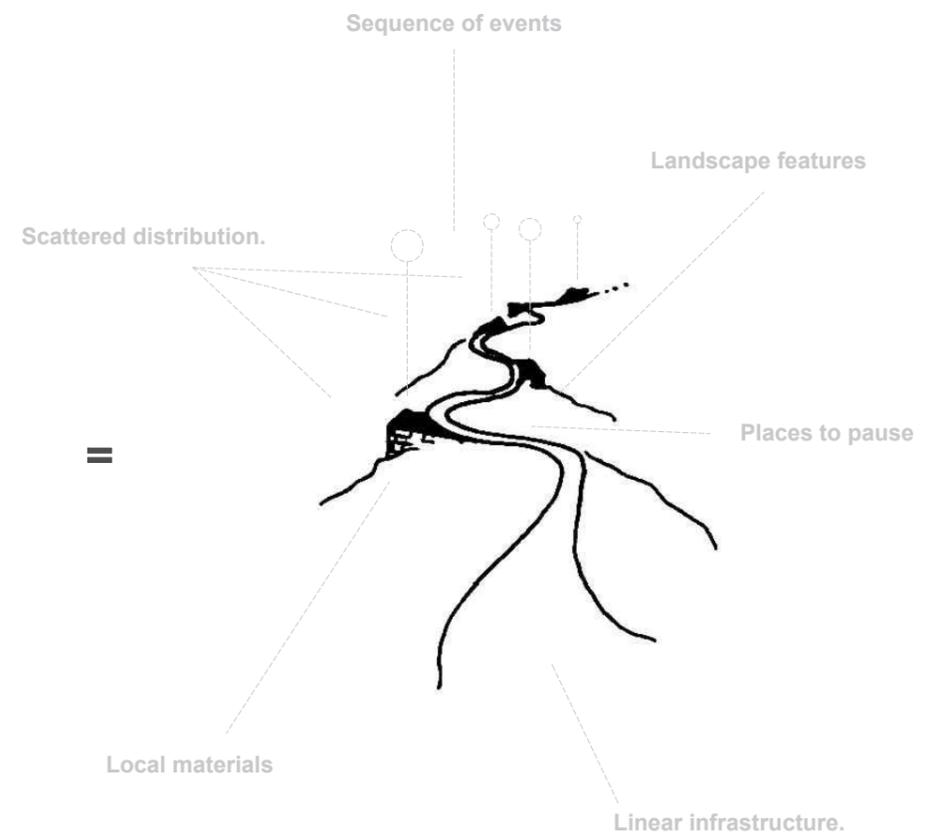
Sequence of events



Places to pause



Local materials



LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
 March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.5. MERGING OF IDEAS

3.2. CONCEPT

INSPIRATION ALONG THE TRAIL
Learning from the landscape.

Visual concept.

The visual concept of the project unfolds as a series of thoughtfully placed platforms within the landscape. These platforms serve as purposeful interventions along the trail that harmonize with the surroundings, drawing inspiration from the notion of a stone path evolving into spaces for rest dictated by the landscape.

They contain the intention of igniting intrigue and inviting contemplation, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the unique experience offered by the landscape in each specific place. By carefully considering the landscape's physical attributes, cultural significance, and historical context, the project aims to create a seamless fusion of architecture and landscape. It celebrates the grandeur of the surroundings while ensuring the integrity and authenticity of the local materials and craftsmanship.

The interventions serve as visual icons, symbolizing the poetic exploration and connection to the our surroundings, evoking a sense of awe and appreciation for the landscape.



Fig. 46 Visual concept of the design proposal. Nicolau Vilaró

A place to be.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.2.6. VISUAL CONCEPT

3.2. CONCEPT



Fig. 47 View of the hamlet of Zmutt. Nicolau Vilaró

3.3. PROJECT

Vision of an experience

Landscape Perspectives.

The following plans and drawings are the culmination of a thought process and analysis of the landscape and cultural trails in the valley of Zermatt.

This project aspires to be a visual icon of poetic exploration by repurposing the land, buildings, local wisdom, and employing materials and techniques unique to the region. Through a fusion with the landscape, the design seeks to do justice to its remarkable surroundings, offering an immersive experience for visitors who hike the Kulturwege trail.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

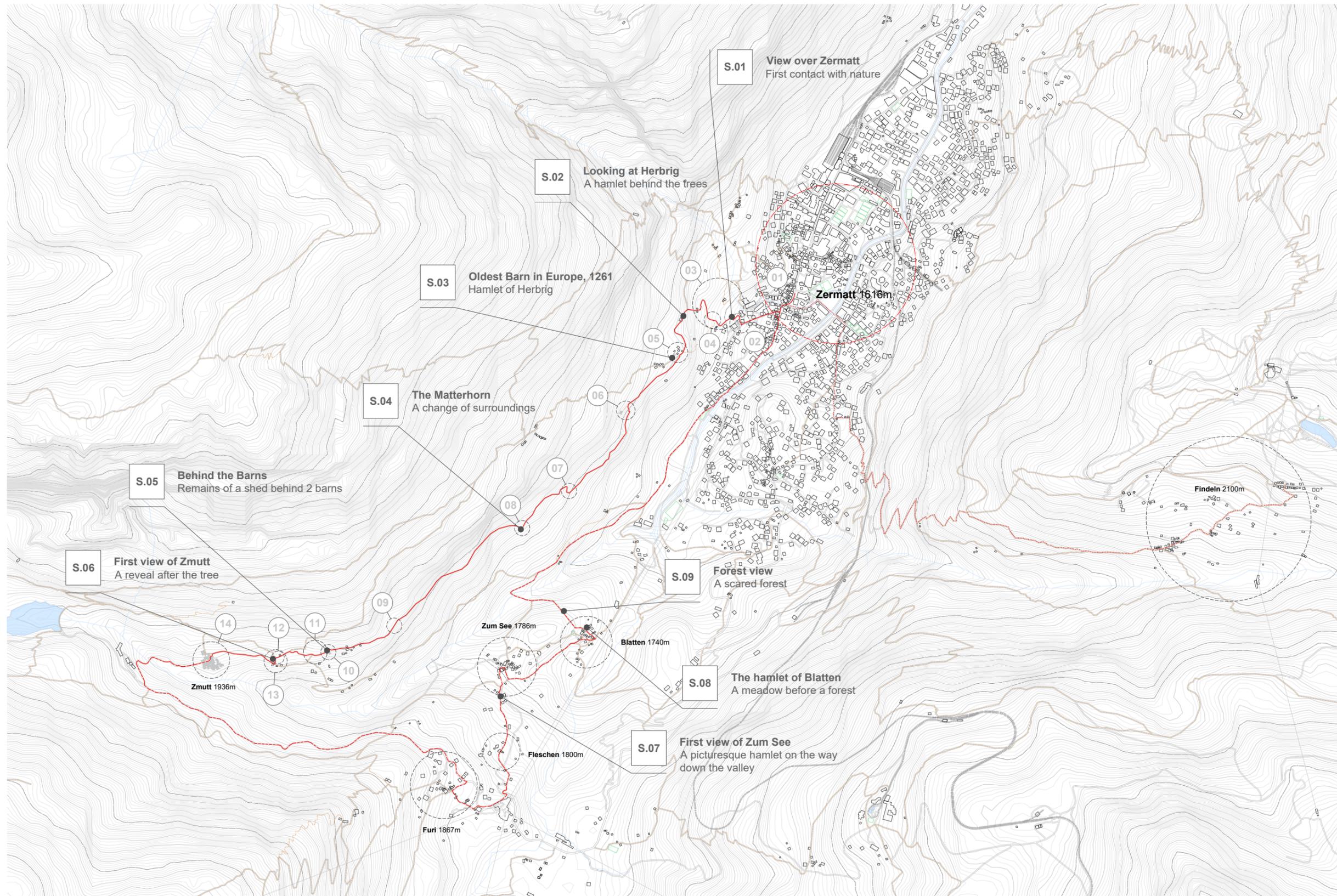
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3.3. PROJECT

3. DESIGN PROJECT



- 2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt"
- n° Station number
- - - 2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit"
- n° Station number
- ⋯ 2025 Kulturweg "Findeln"
- - - 2027 Kulturweg "Zermatt Dorf"

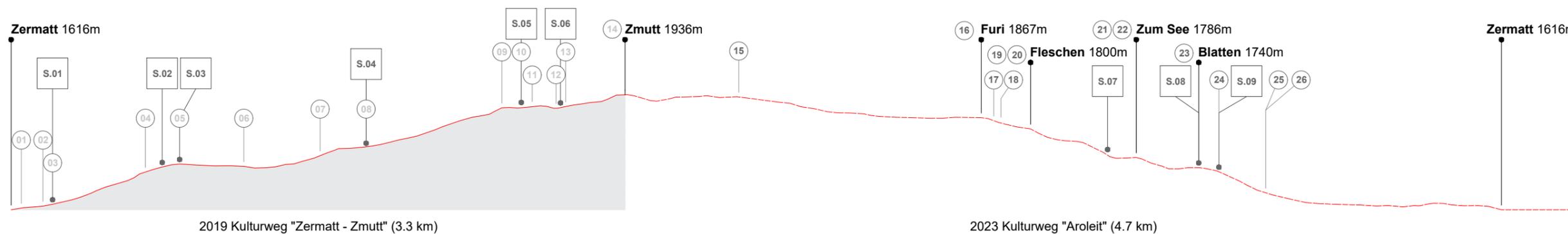
Each site along the trail has been thoughtfully selected for its unique reasons and characteristics, which offer a distinct set of challenges and opportunities. Hence, the diverse array of locations offers a varied tapestry of settings and landscapes. Their precise locations are informed by several factors previously mentioned in the landscape reading. These include changes of scenery, shifts in direction, views of the Matterhorn, new waypoints, landmarks, changes in elevation and also panoramic views.

By carefully considering these elements, the sites share conceptual and sometimes spatial qualities while still being different from one another. This opens up an array of distinct possibilities in every location while still being able to be related to one another as recognizable interventions of a cohesive narrative.

Some, require little intervention according to preexistences, while others offer opportunities for more extensive design intervention that highlights specific geographical features or landscape elements. The challenge lies in finding a balance between preserving the qualities of the sites and trail and creating spaces that invite pause and contemplation.

By understanding the unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of each site through landscape reading and inner appreciation of the place, the project aims to craft interventions that dialogue with the existing landscape. The following analyses examine the specifics of each selected location, highlighting the individual significance that makes them ideal for an intervention.

- Buildings
- Cable Cars
- Contour lines (4m)
- 10m Contour lines (20m interval)
- - - 100m Contour lines
- + + + + + Railways
- Roads (outline)
- Trails
- Vegetation
- Water



LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES
Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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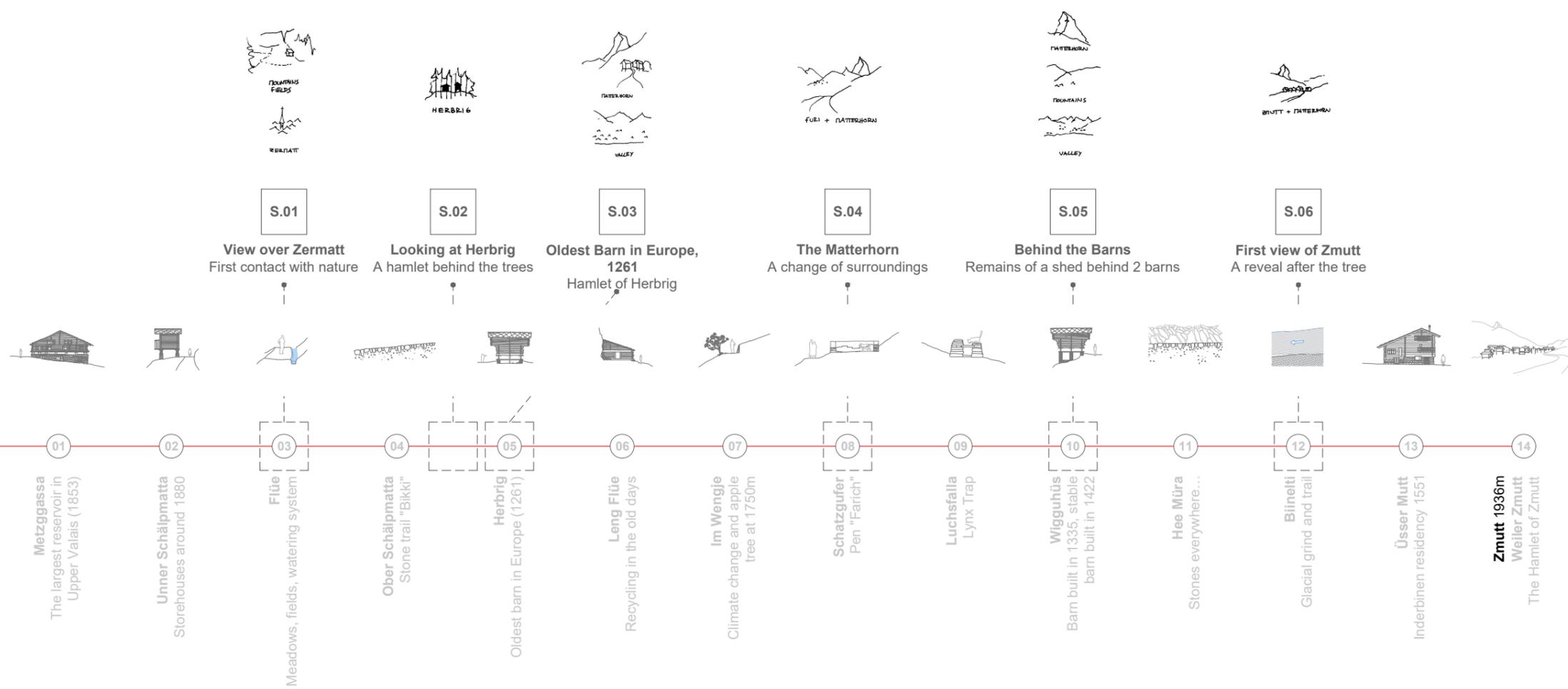
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3.3.1. SITE LOCATIONS

3.3. PROJECT 1:15000 A3

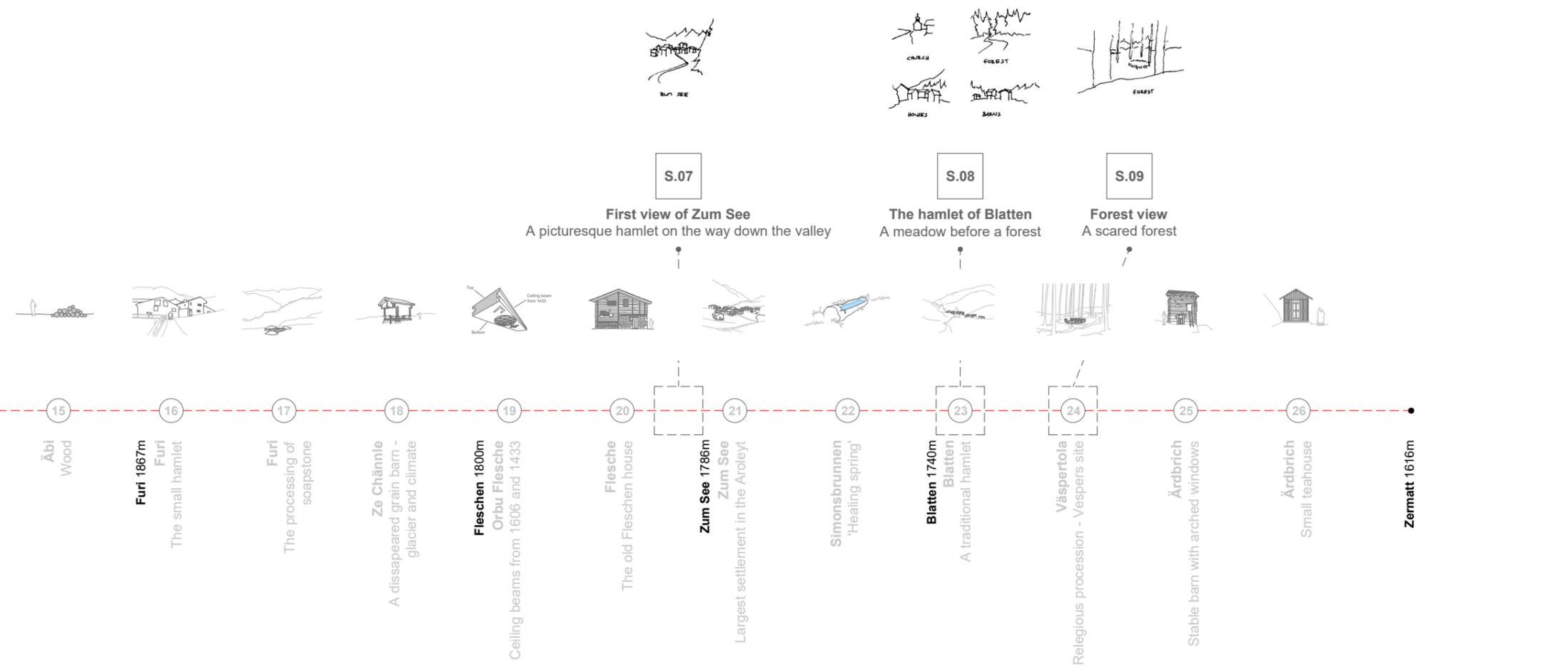
2019 Kulturweg "Zermatt - Zmutt" (3.3 km)

Zermatt 1616m



2023 Kulturweg "Aroleit" (4.7 km)

Zmutt 1936m



Sequence.

The sites along the trail, together with the cultural stations, are viewed as a sequential series of events that unfold as we journey along the path.

Some of these sites coincide with the cultural stations, forming a collaborative experience that accentuates the significance of each location and encourages visitors to stay longer than they would otherwise do. These combined sites and stations create focal points where the landscape's cultural and historical importance is showcased.

Additionally, there are sites situated between stations, strategically positioned to emphasise the distinctive characteristics of the landscape itself. These in-between sites give rise to moments of awe, wonder and admiration, inviting us to pause and immerse ourselves in the ever-changing beauty of our surroundings.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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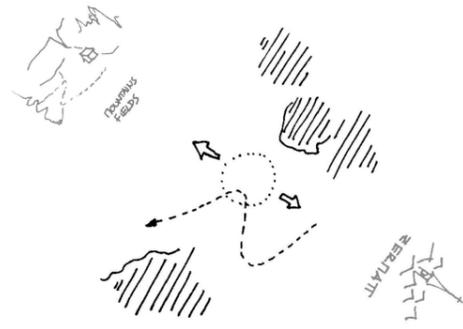
3.3.2. SEQUENCE

3.3. PROJECT

The site diagrams consist of a series of 9 concise visual representations, each dedicated to a specific site along the trail. These diagrams aim to capture the essence of each site by showcasing the trail's trajectory, the site's location, view directions, and the prominent surrounding features that shape the stage upon which the site is set.

These features may be dense clusters of trees signifying forests, imposing cliffs or steep inclines, and nearby buildings. By highlighting these elements, the diagrams emphasize their direct physical impact on our journey and perception of the site, guiding both our path and our view.

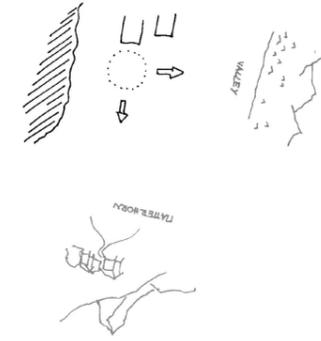
While these diagrams provide a simple overview, further details will be added for each site in the corresponding site analysis plan.



S.01 View over Zermatt
First contact with nature



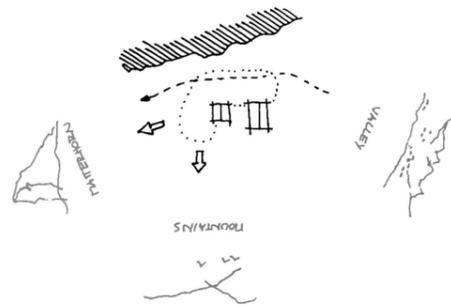
S.02 Looking at Herbrig
A hamlet behind the trees



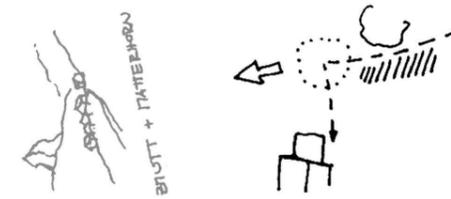
S.03 Oldest Barn in Europe, 1261
Hamlet of Herbrig



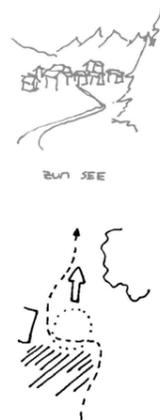
S.04 The Matterhorn
A change of surroundings



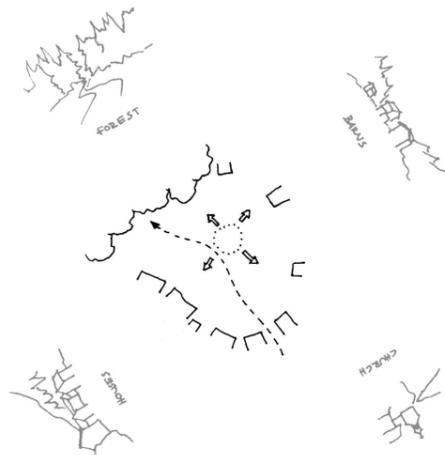
S.05 Behind the Barns
Remains of a shed behind 2 barns



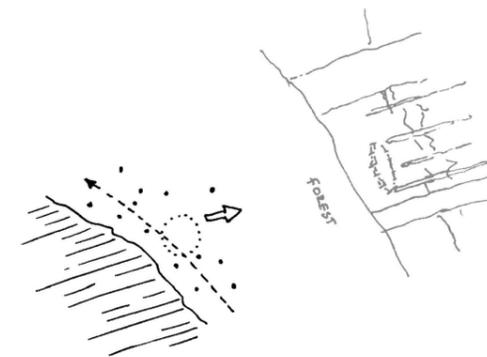
S.06 First view of Zmutt
A reveal after the tree



S.07 First view of Zum See
A picturesque hamlet on the way down the valley



S.08 The hamlet of Blatten
A meadow before a forest



S.09 Forest view
A scared forest

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

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SITE CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

LANDSCAPE MAPPING

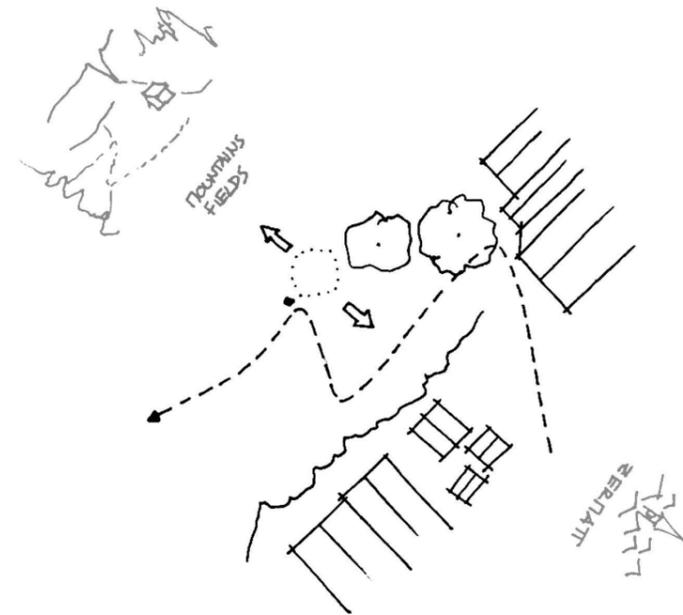


Fig. 48 Site 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Landscape reading features:

- 01 A change in surroundings
- 07 Panoramic views
- 02 A shift in direction
- 06 Change in elevation
-
-



SITE 1.
Our first encounter

Site 01 is a significant location along the trail and is situated at a bump in the topography after leaving Zermatt. The journey to reach this point involves a challenging ascent, providing a sense of accomplishment and marking our first direct contact with nature. As we arrive, we are rewarded with a breathtaking 360° panoramic view, offering a glimpse of the stunning landscapes that lie ahead. This site also coincides with the 3rd station of the Kulturwege, known as Flüe, which showcases the meadows, fields, and intricate watering systems characteristic of the area.

The selection of Site 01 takes into account various factors. Firstly, it serves as a much-needed resting point after the demanding climb, allowing visitors to catch their breath and absorb the natural surroundings. Additionally, the choice of this site aligns with the principles derived from the landscape reading. It signifies a change in surroundings, transitioning from an urban environment to the vastness of nature. The shift in direction is also evident, as the trail now goes deeper into the valley, unveiling new types of landscapes. Moreover, this site reflects a change in elevation, with the steepness of the initial ascent giving way to a more gradual incline. Lastly, it offers the first captivating glimpse of panoramic views in all directions, inviting contemplation and appreciation of the expansive beauty that surrounds us.

Station 3
(Kulturwege Zermatt)

Site 01

The trail continues uphill



Fig. 49 Arrival at Site 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 50 View of the trail leaving Zermatt and arriving at Site 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 51 Panoramic view towards the fields from Site 1. Nicolau Vilaró

Station 3
(Kulturwege Zermatt)



Fig. 52 Panoramic view towards the valley from Site 1. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 53 View of Site 1 from further up in the trail. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 1

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3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 1

3.3. PROJECT



Fig. 54 Site 2. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 02

Hamlet of Herbrig
(Station 5, Kulturwege)



Fig. 55 Arrival at Site 2. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 56 Panoramic view arriving at Site 2. Nicolau Vilaró

Zermatt

The trail continues
through the forest

Site 2

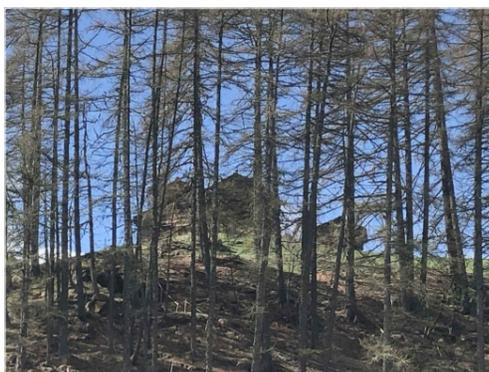


Fig. 57 Hamlet of Herbrig hiding behind the trees. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 58 Panoramic view from Site 2. Nicolau Vilaró

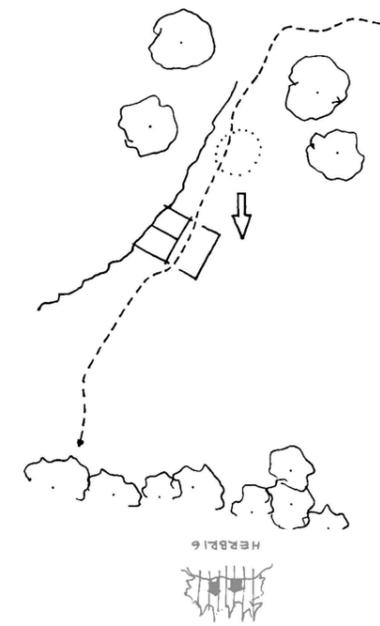


Fig. 59 View of Site 2 from further up in the trail. Nicolau Vilaró



Landscape reading features:

-
- 02 A shift in direction
- 04 A new waypoint
- 07 Panoramic views
-
- 08 Shade



SITE 2.
A clue of what lies ahead

Site 02 is positioned slightly further along the trail, after navigating a series of turns and passing by a few trees. As we progress, a captivating sight awaits us as we get a glimpse of the picturesque hamlet of Herbrig that emerges behind the trees on the upcoming hill. This marks our first encounter with a hamlet along the trail, shifting our attention towards the anticipation of what lies ahead.

While the panoramic views are still on our left-hand side, our focus at Site 02 is primarily directed towards the newly introduced waypoint, the hamlet of Herbrig. The selection of this site is driven by the distinctive landscape features it offers. It is strategically positioned after a change in direction of the trail, symbolizing a transition and the introduction of a new waypoint along our journey. Additionally, shade is provided by nearby trees and from this vantage point, we can still enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES
Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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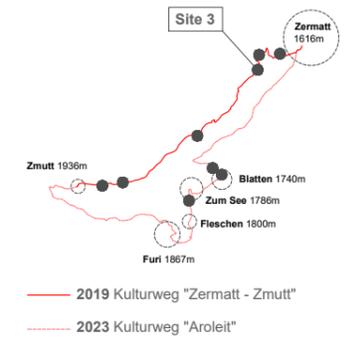
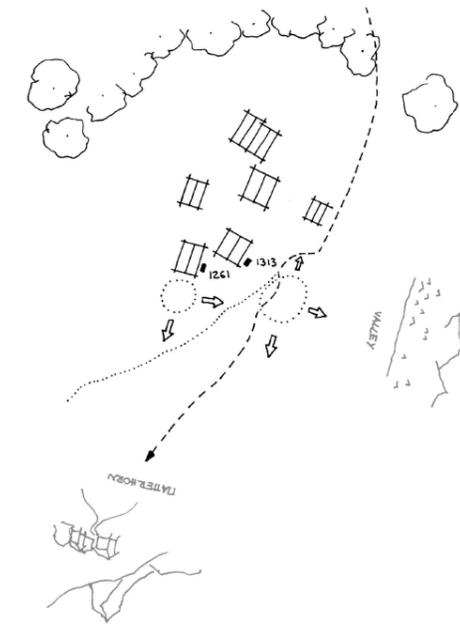
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3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 2

3.3. PROJECT



Fig. 60 Hamlet of Herbrig and Site 3. Nicolau Vilaró



SITE 3.
Breathtaking reveal

On the hill behind the curtain of trees, Site 3 reveals a captivating scene that englobes the essence of the trail. This open expanse, located in front of the small hamlet, presents an awe-inspiring vista overlooking the picturesque valley of Zermatt. It is undeniably one of the most captivating sites along the trail, inviting visitors to pause and immerse themselves in the breathtaking landscape.

Here, we are greeted by a mixture of the various landscape features that have defined our journey. The transition from the dense forest to the expansive open fields marks a change in surroundings, while the trail's gentle turn reveals a shift in direction. As we emerge from the forest, if weather conditions allows, an anticipated sight awaits us as the majestic Matterhorn is finally revealed, standing proudly against the sky.

This hilltop site contains a small hamlet, which is home to Europe's oldest documented barn dating back to 1261, a testament to its historical significance. The elevated position of the hamlet represents a change in elevation, requiring a climb to reach our journey. The site offers uninterrupted panoramic views that encompass the sweeping grandeur of the surrounding mountains and the idyllic valley below.

Once our stop is over, the trail proceeds downwards through the dense forest, guiding us to the next sites and stations along the valley.

Landscape reading features:

- 01 A change in surroundings
- 02 A shift in direction
- 03 View of the Matterhorn
- 04
- 05 Landmark
- 06 Change in elevation
- 07 Panoramic views
- 08

Site 3

First view of The Matterhorn
(hidden in the clouds)



Fig. 61 Arriving at Site 3. Nicolau Vilaró

Zermatt



Fig. 62 Panoramic view towards the valley from Site 3. Nicolau Vilaró

The Matterhorn
(hidden in the clouds)

The trail continues downhill towards the forest

The Matterhorn
(hidden in the clouds)

Europe's Oldest Barn, 1261
(Station 5, Kulturwege)

The trail comes from the forest

Site 3



Fig. 63 Panoramic view looking back at the hamlet of Herbrig. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 64 Leaving Site 3 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 3

3.3. PROJECT



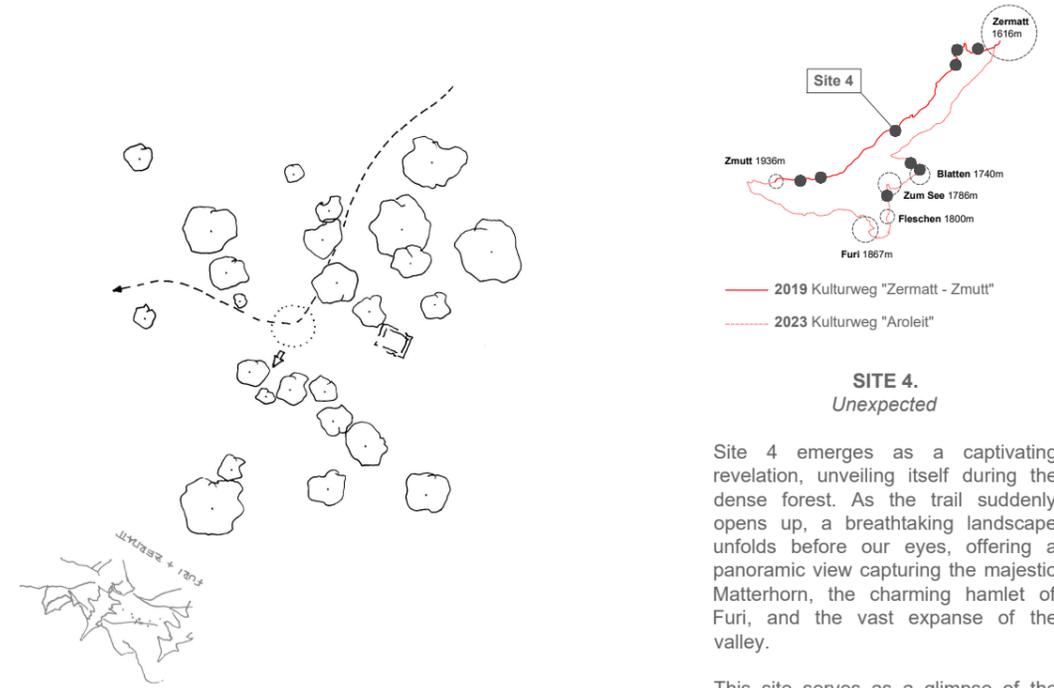
Fig. 65 Site 4. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 4



Landscape reading features:

- 01 A change in surroundings
- 07 Panoramic views
- 02 A shift in direction
- 08 Shade
- 03 View of the Matterhorn
- 06 Change in elevation



SITE 4. Unexpected

Site 4 emerges as a captivating revelation, unveiling itself during the dense forest. As the trail suddenly opens up, a breathtaking landscape unfolds before our eyes, offering a panoramic view capturing the majestic Matterhorn, the charming hamlet of Furi, and the vast expanse of the valley.

This site serves as a glimpse of the goal that lies ahead, and plants a seed of hope within us as we journey through the thick forest. It signifies a change in surroundings, as the forest gives way to the expansive vistas, accompanied by a shift in the trail's direction and a gentle descent in elevation. Although not present on the site itself, shade can be found in the nearby trees. The presence of the Matterhorn further enhances the magnificence of the panoramic views.

With each step forward, we understand more and more what the trail is about. It stands as a testament to the remarkable harmony between nature and the human spirit, inviting us to embrace the grandeur and limitless surprises that lie ahead.



Fig. 66 Trail arriving at Site 4 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 67 Panoramic view arriving at Site 4. Nicolau Vilaró

Zermatt is slowly disappearing

Smaller hamlets start to appear

The Matterhorn (hidden in the clouds)



Fig. 68 View of Zum See from Site 4. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 69 Panoramic view from Site 4. Nicolau Vilaró

After this clearing, the trail continues through the forest

Pen "Farich" (Station 8, Kulturwege)

Site 4



Fig. 70 Leaving Site 4 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

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3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 4

3.3. PROJECT

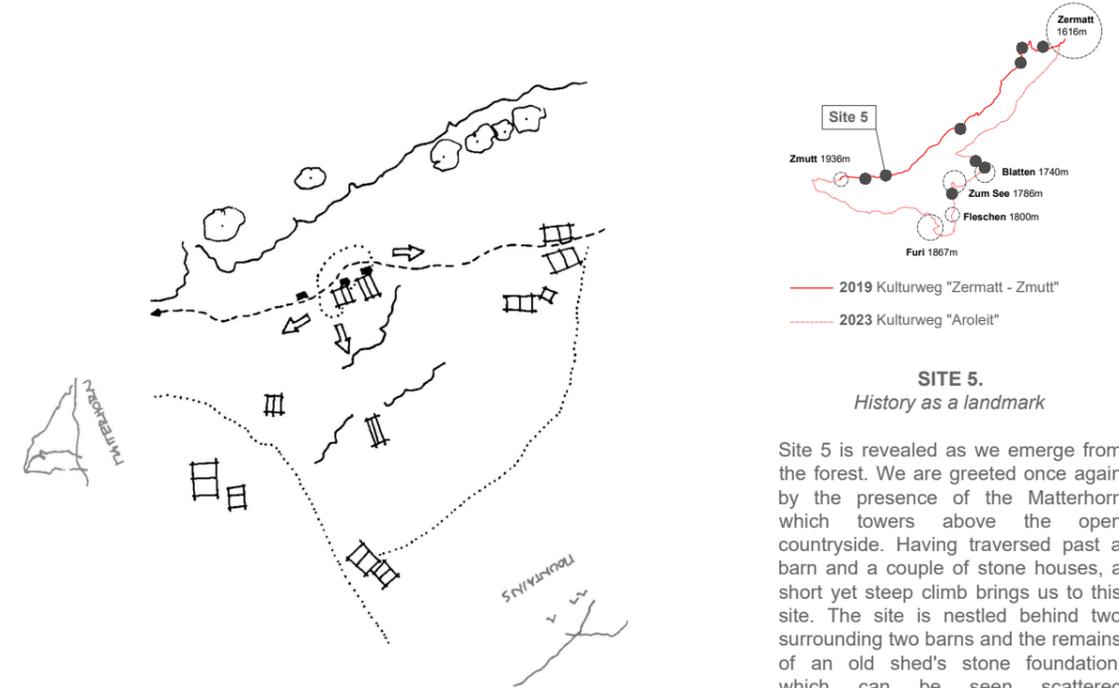


Fig. 71 Site 5 (stones). Nicolau Vilaró



Landscape reading features:

- 03 View of the Matterhorn
- 04 A new waypoint
- 05 Landmark
- 06 Change in elevation
- 07 Panoramic views
- 08 Shade



SITE 5.
History as a landmark

Site 5 is revealed as we emerge from the forest. We are greeted once again by the presence of the Matterhorn which towers above the open countryside. Having traversed past a barn and a couple of stone houses, a short yet steep climb brings us to this site. The site is nestled behind two surrounding two barns and the remains of an old shed's stone foundation, which can be seen scattered throughout the area. These overlook the valley and are the Kulturweg's 10th station.

This site contains several landscape features. It marks a new waypoint, offering a glimpse of the distant hamlet of Zmutt. The iconic barn, elevated on stone pillars, stands as a landmark and has become an emblematic symbol of the Alps, instantly recognizable to all who encounter it. The site's location also reflects a change in elevation, having ascended to reach this station, while the trail descends as it continues. And, of course, panoramic views all around the barns. These, on a sunny day, offer a great deal of shade behind them, which creates a pleasant place to stop.

In this convergence of elements, Site 5 offers us to pause, absorb, and appreciate the harmonious interplay between nature, cultural heritage, and the ever-unfolding journey that lies ahead.

Site 5

The Matterhorn Site 5



Fig. 72 Arriving at Site 5. Nicolau Vilaró

Barns and shed remains (Station 10, Kulturwege)



Fig. 73 Panoramic view from Site 5. Nicolau Vilaró

The trail passes next to the dry stone wall



Fig. 74 Collapsed shed stone base. Nicolau Vilaró

Where the trail comes from



Fig. 75 Stones as remains of a shed's base. Nicolau Vilaró

The trail passes behind the barns



Fig. 76 Site 5 and Station 10 of the Kulturwege. Nicolau Vilaró

Remains of a shed (Site 5)

First sight of the hamlet of Zmutt

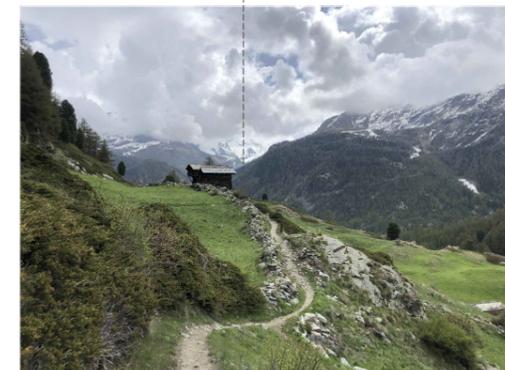


Fig. 77 Leaving Site 5 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 5

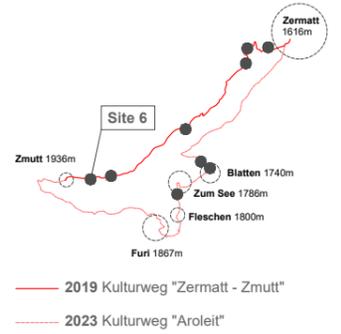
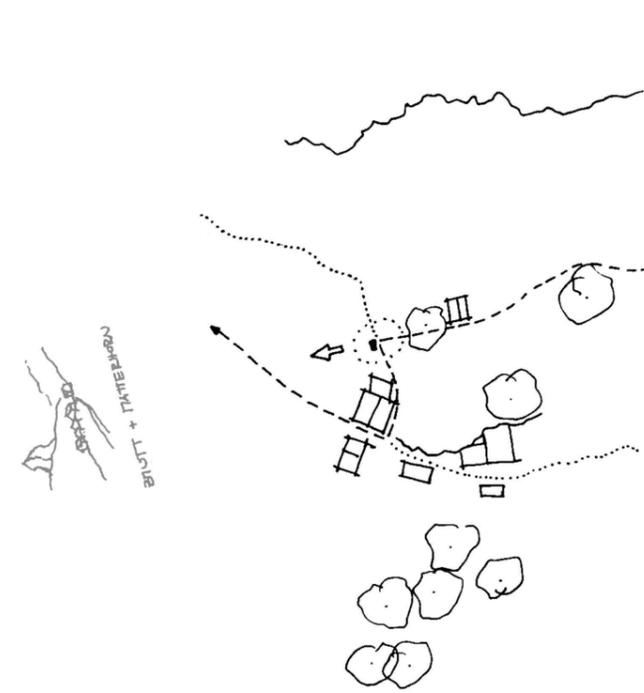


Fig. 78 Site 6. Nicolau Vilaró



Landscape reading features:

- 02 A shift in direction
- 03 View of the Matterhorn
- 04 A new waypoint
- 06 Change in elevation
- 07 Panoramic views
- 08 Shade



SITE 6.
A pause before reaching the end (of the first trail)

Site 6 emerges as we pass beneath the branches of a tree next to the trail. Here, the path descends and is paved with stones from the surrounding area, leading us past a massive exposed rock that reminds us of the presence of a former glacier, evidenced by the longitudinal marks carved on its surface. Station 12 of the Kulturwege marks the convergence of this paved trail and the stone, creating a distinct site.

Site 6 is set in a small area adjacent to the wooden fence, just beyond the tree and the trail marker, where panoramic views of the Matterhorn, Zmutt, and the fields captivate our gaze.

Landscape features of this site include a pronounced shift in direction as the trail turns left, the first proper view of Zmutt as our newest waypoint, a change in elevation as we pause before descending further, nearby shade under the tree, and, of course, breathtaking panoramic views with the presence of the Matterhorn.

As we continue on, the trail gently descends behind a couple of houses, one of which is Station 13.

The view is revealed after the tree
(Fields, Matterhorn and Zmutt)



Fig. 79 Arriving at Site 6. Nicolau Vilaró

Where we come from



Fig. 80 Panoramic view revealed after the tree. Nicolau Vilaró

After Station 12, the trail continues behind this house
(Station 13, Kulturwege)

The Matterhorn
(hidden in the clouds)

Stone and stone trail
(Station 12, Kulturwege)

Hamlet of Zmutt
(Station 14, Kulturwege)

Site 6

The site is conceived right after the fence



Fig. 81 View of Site 6. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 82 Panoramic view from Site 6. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 83 Leaving Site 6 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 6

3.3. PROJECT



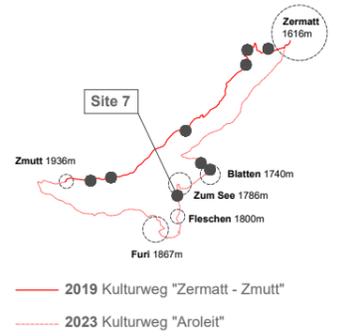
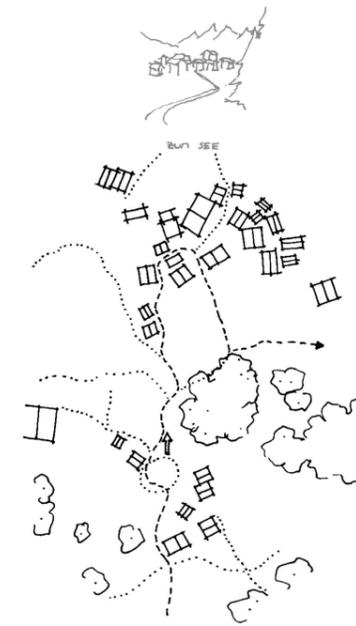
Fig. 84 Site 7. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 7



Landscape reading features:

- 02 A shift in direction
- 04 A new waypoint
- 06 Change in elevation
- 07 Panoramic views



SITE 7.
First pause in the descent

Situated on a sharp bend as the trail begins its descent toward the hamlet of Zum See, Site 7 is the first of 3 sites set on the yet-to-be-inaugurated section of the Kulturwege called Aroleit (24th June 2023).

This picturesque hamlet is the largest along this cultural trail. From this vantage point, we can take in the beautiful view of Zum See, as well as the steeply descending trail that lies before us, a pathway that demands attention with its presence of steps. It allows us to pause, absorb our surroundings, and prepare ourselves for the upcoming short but steep descent.

Notably, this portion of the trail remains accessible during winter, allowing visitors to hike between Zermatt and Furi. The selection of Site 7 is influenced by landscape features such as a sharp shift in direction, a change in elevation, the presence of a new waypoint, and panoramic views.

Hamlet of Zum See
(Station 21, Kulturwege 2023)



Fig. 85 Arriving at Site 7. Nicolau Vilaró

Old and new buildings are scattered on the landscape



Fig. 86 Panoramic overview of Site 7. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 7

Site 7 Where we come from



Fig. 87 Leaving Site 7 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

Site 7 The steepness of the trail is highlighted by the presence of steps



Fig. 88 Leaving Site 7 (looking back from further down). Nicolau Vilaró

This part of the trail (Furi - Zermatt) is kept open during winter



Fig. 89 Site 7 and Zum See in winter. Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 7

3.3. PROJECT

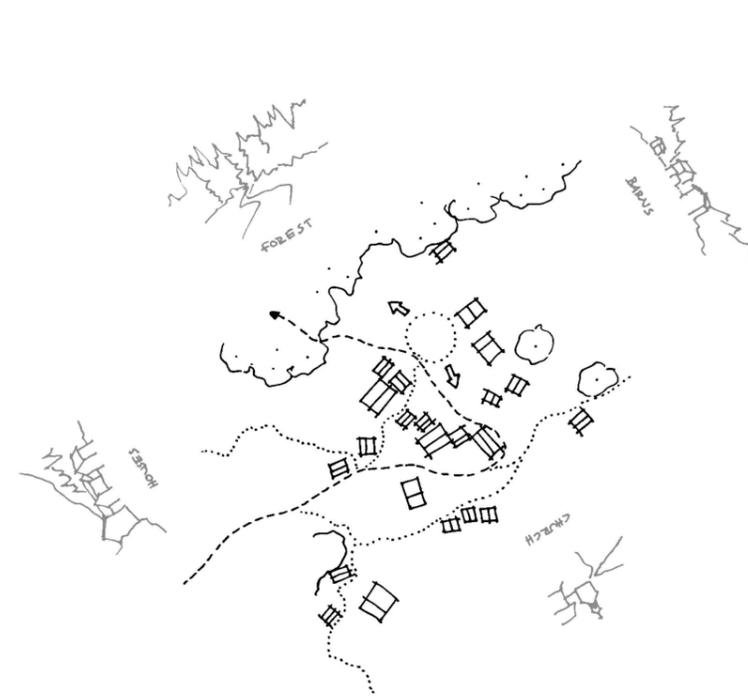


Fig. 90 Site 8. Nicolau Vilaró



Landscape reading features:

- 01 A change in surroundings
- 07 Panoramic views
- 03 View of the Matterhorn
- 05 Landmark



SITE 8.
The last meadow

Within the traditional hamlet of Blatten, the final village before our return to Zermatt, Site 8 finds its place on a quiet meadow. This picturesque expanse features a collection of barns, granaries, storehouses, and charming houses on one side, while the other side faces a dense forest that will guide us through the valley.

At the heart of this meadow, we encounter a noticeable bump, marked by a massive flat rock, marking the place of the site.

Here, the landscape unfolds with distinctive features: a coming shift in surroundings as we venture into the neighboring forest, a landmark including the region's traditional buildings amidst an unspoiled setting, and panoramic views that embrace the surrounding terrain, including our final glimpse of the majestic Matterhorn in the distance. We will not see it until we reach the journey in Zermatt. This site presents us with a precious opportunity to pause and appreciate the vast openness of our surroundings one last time, appreciating their imminent transformation.

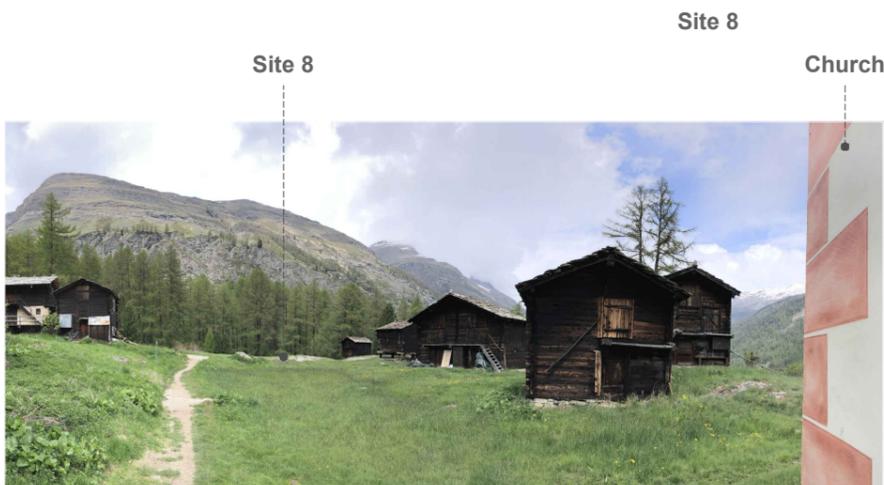


Fig. 91 Arriving at Site 8. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 92 View from Site 8 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

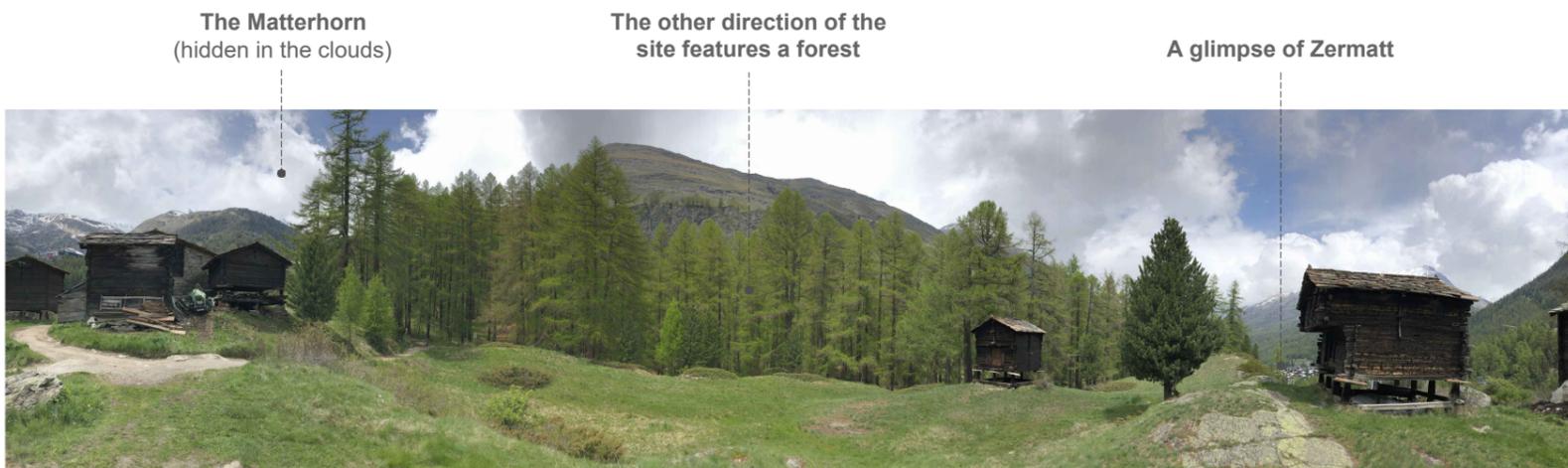


Fig. 93 View from Site 8 (looking forward). Nicolau Vilaró

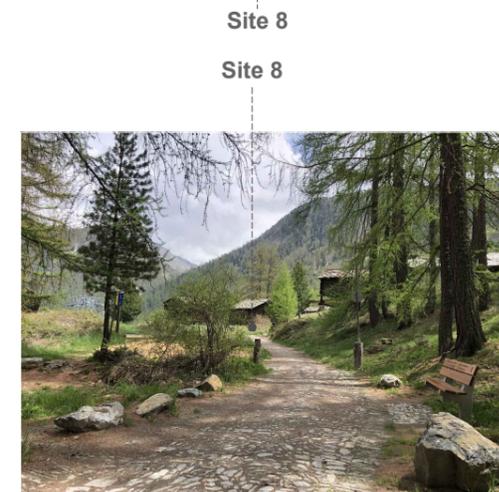


Fig. 94 Leaving Blatten and Site 8 as we enter the forest (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

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3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 8

3.3. PROJECT



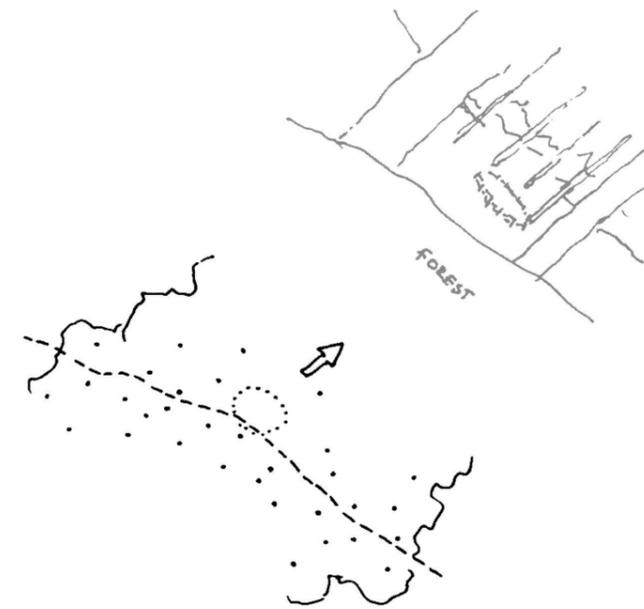
Fig. 95 Site 9. Nicolau Vilaró

Site 9



Landscape reading features:

- 01 A change in surroundings
- 07 Panoramic views
- 05 Landmark
- 08 Shade
- 06 Change in elevation



SITE 9.
The last viewpoint

Site 9, the final destination of our project, is set within the enchanting forest. The path grants us a captivating view of a space with historical and cultural significance, nowadays it's a park for both children and adults.

This change in scenery serves as a reminder to attune our senses and fully appreciate our new surroundings. Site 9 offers panoramic views that reveal the allure of this place. Set in a gentle change in elevation, we find ourselves descending gracefully through the shaded forest.

From here, the path descends through the forest, crossing a river via a bridge, and finally leading us to the wide-open fields of Zermatt, where our journey ends.

Park for children and adults



Fig. 96 Entering the forest. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 97 View from Site 9. Nicolau Vilaró

This is where we come from



Fig. 98 Leaving Site 8 (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 99 The trail continues through the forest. Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 100 Bridge over a river (looking back). Nicolau Vilaró



Fig. 101 Finally arriving in Zermatt. Nicolau Vilaró

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

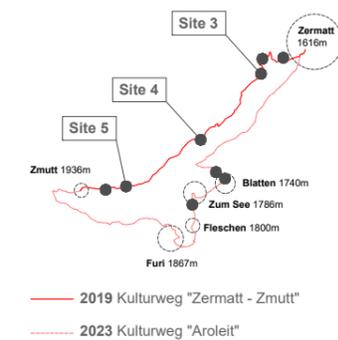
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3.3.3. SITE ANALYSIS - SITE 9

3.3. PROJECT

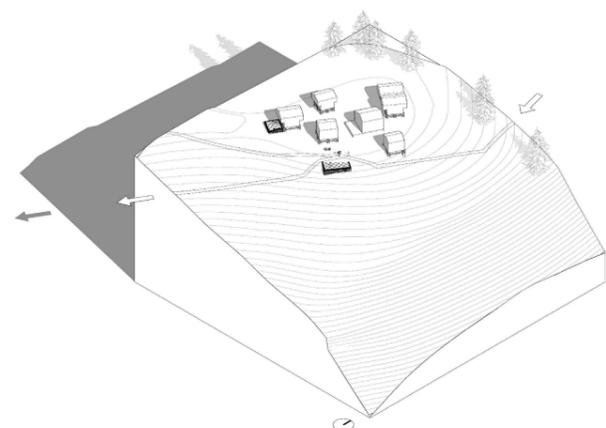


PROPOSAL.
The sequence

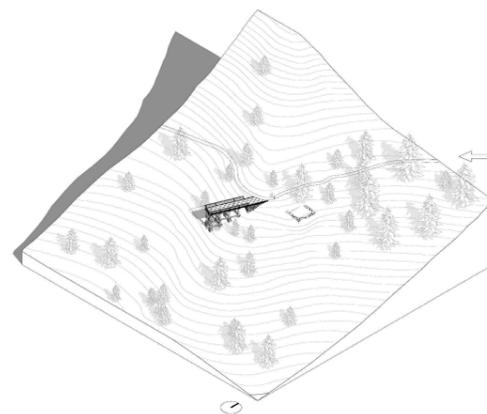
The design proposals presented here represent a fraction of the complete sequence of the 9 analyzed sites along the cultural trails.

Out of these 9 sites, 3 have been carefully selected for development due to their remarkable landscape features and their potential to work together as a cohesive sequence.

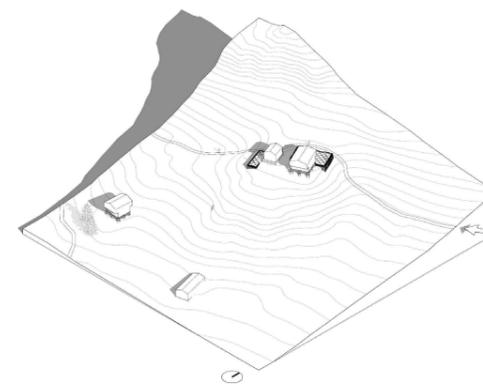
Each proposal is approached individually, while keeping in mind the overarching concept of being part of a larger sequence. This ensures a consistent visual language that can be followed and recognized by visitors along the trail, while still providing unique and distinct experiences at each site.



Site 3



Site 4



Site 5

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

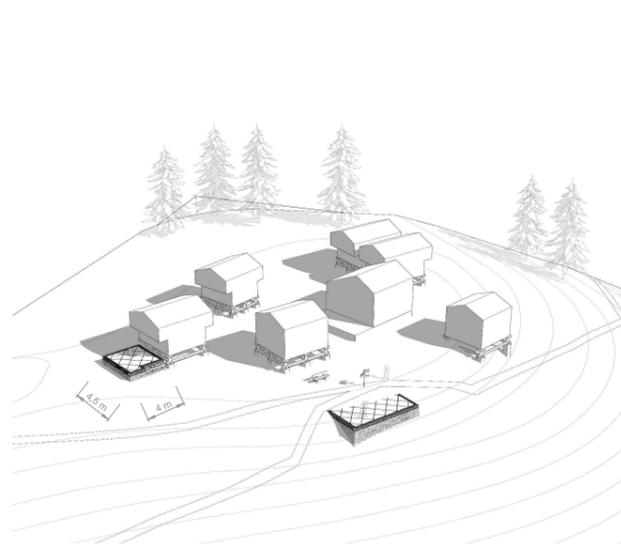
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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

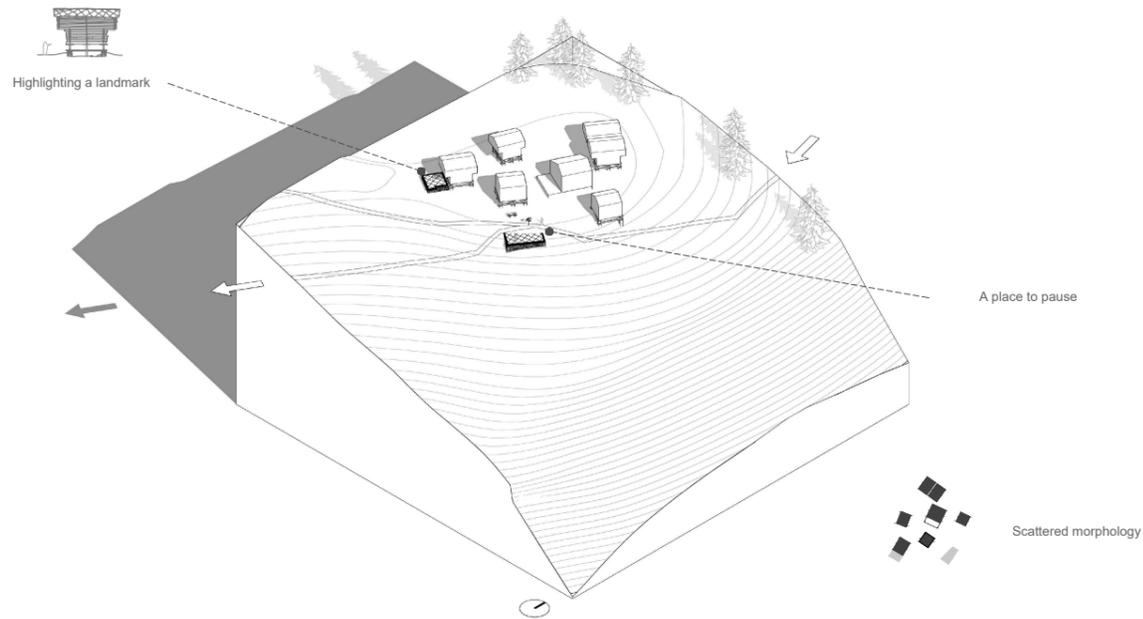
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3.3.4. PROPOSAL

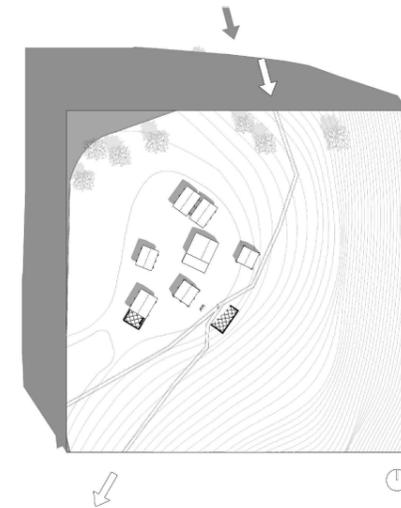
3.3. PROJECT



Aerial



Site



Top



SITE 3.
Hamlet of Herbrig

Site 3, situated in the hamlet of Herbrig, is a significant location within the project due to its multitude of landscape features, such as panoramic views, a landmark, a view of the Matterhorn, changes in elevation, and a shift in scenery. Moreover, it is home to Europe's oldest barn, dating back to 1261.

The architectural intervention in Site 3 consists of two distinct elements, both seamlessly integrated into the existing fabric of the hamlet and the landscape. The first intervention is a wide stone plinth strategically positioned in front of the hamlet, serving as a viewpoint that frames the picturesque valley below. This inviting structure encourages visitors to step onto it, preventing them from obstructing the trail while offering an elevated vantage point.

The second part of the intervention involves the reconstruction of a pile of stones located in front of the historic barn. Employing the same technique as the viewpoint, locally sourced stones are meticulously arranged, featuring a distinctive vertical top row inspired by nearby ancient stone pavements. Another design feature is the diagonal stone pavement which is inspired by the roofs of the neighbouring buildings. This reconstructed plinth serves as a marker of the barn's historical and cultural significance, inviting visitors to approach and explore it further through the addition of steps.

From here, the trail continues its descent into the forest, leading towards the project's next site, Site 4.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

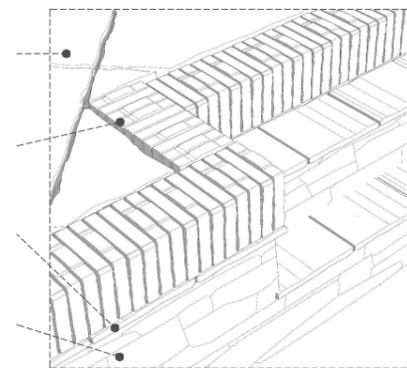
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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

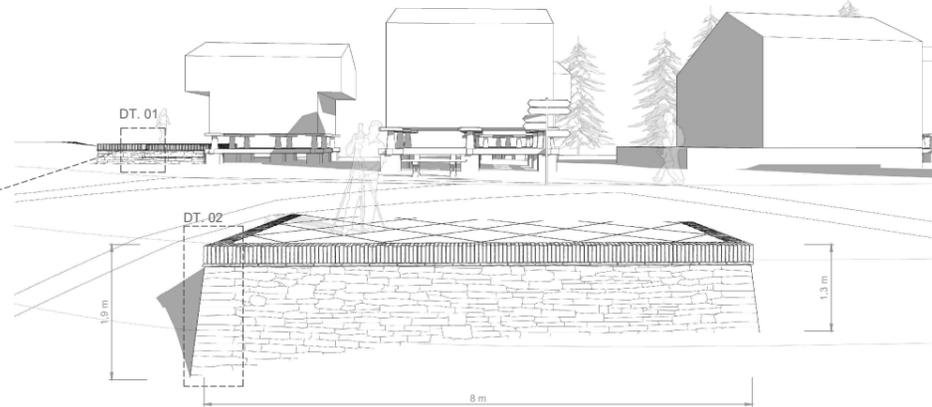
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3.3.4. PROPOSAL - SITE 3

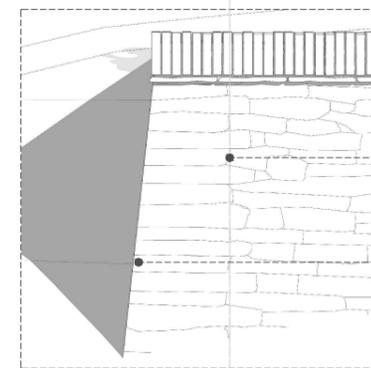
3.3. PROJECT



Detail 01

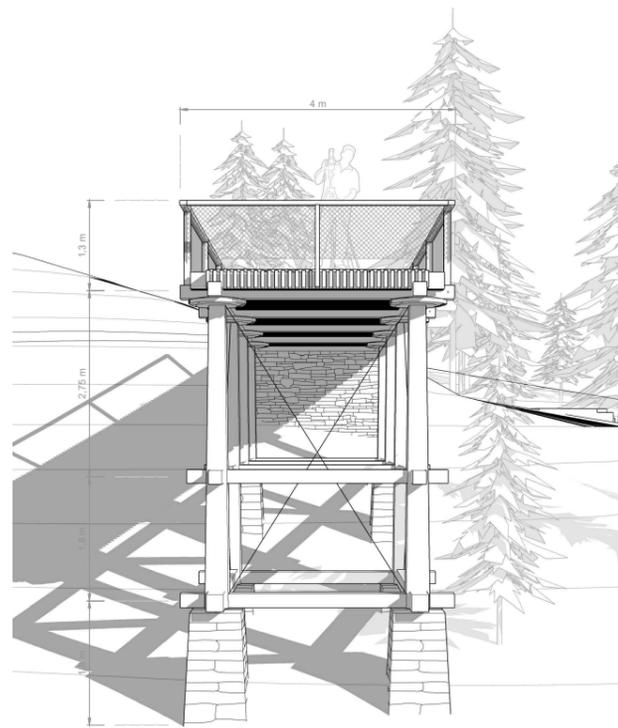


Front

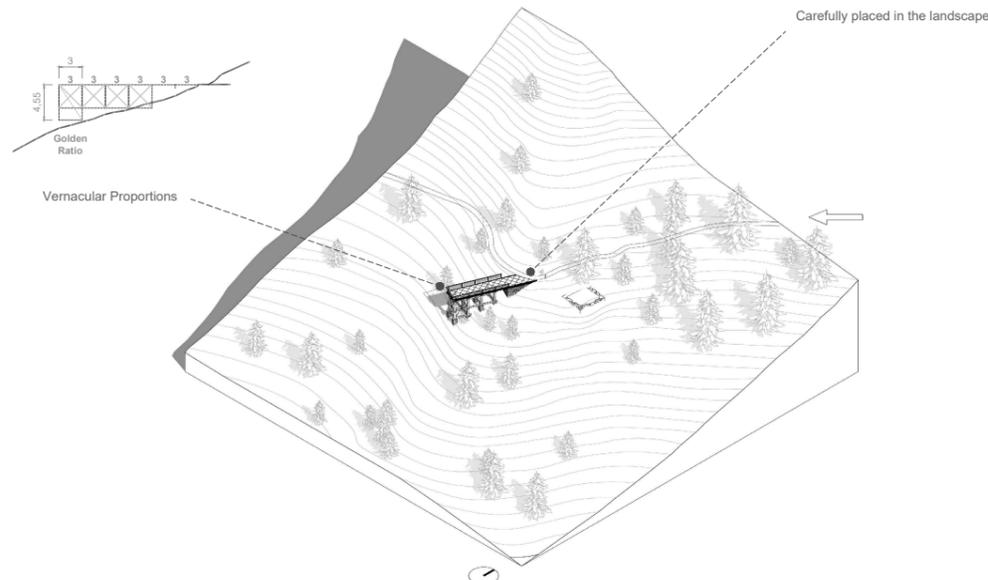


Detail 02

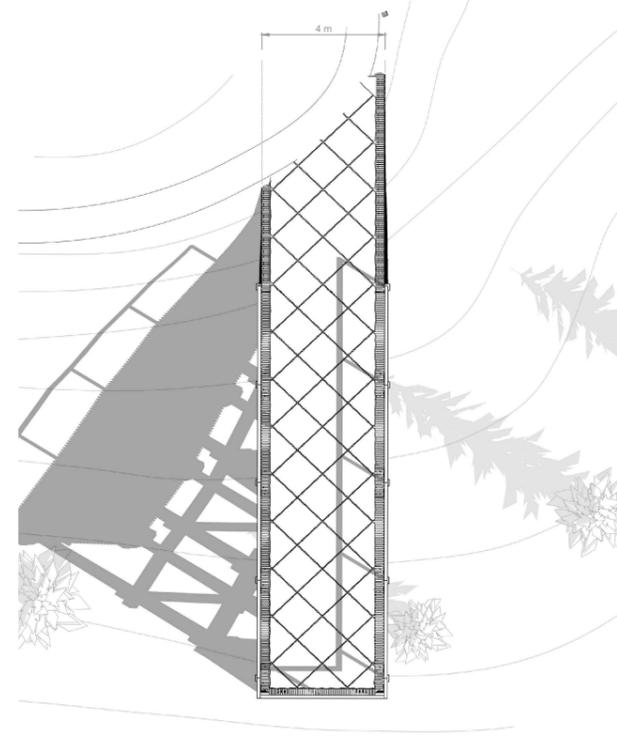




Front



Site



Top



SITE 4.

A change of surroundings

Site 4, located within a dense forest along the trail, offers a captivating panoramic view that becomes a precious moment within the otherwise secluded surroundings. As the trail sharply turns right, the vista unfolds before us, with the last buildings of Zermatt on the left, the hamlet of Zum See directly ahead, and, if the weather allows, the majestic Matterhorn to the right. The architectural intervention proposed for this site aims to provide an immersive experience, bridging the gap between the trail and the view.

Inspired by the traditional barns of the region, the design features a simple geometric volume that extends towards the breathtaking scenery. Constructed using local techniques, materials, and knowledge, the structure adopts the proportions and dimensions commonly found in barns (3 and 4 meters). Hence, the structure is 4 meters wide and square sections of 3 meters extend into the view. To adapt to the steep topography, the last section of the structure vertically incorporates the golden section ratio also starting from 3 meters.

As visitors approach, they encounter a stone plinth made from nearby stones, elegantly tied at the corners for stability while also preserving the alignment of the vertical lines of the end of the stones. The surface transitions seamlessly from large flat stone slabs reminiscent of barn roofs to a wooden structure resembling raised barn stilts. Vertical stones on the upper part of the plinth, inspired by nearby pavement details and stone steps, are transformed into transversal wooden beams that support the stone slab pavement and distribute its weight to the robust wooden structure.

By incorporating elements from traditional local buildings, this intervention creates a unique structure that is in harmony with the local building and construction heritage that invites visitors to be a part of the captivating landscape.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

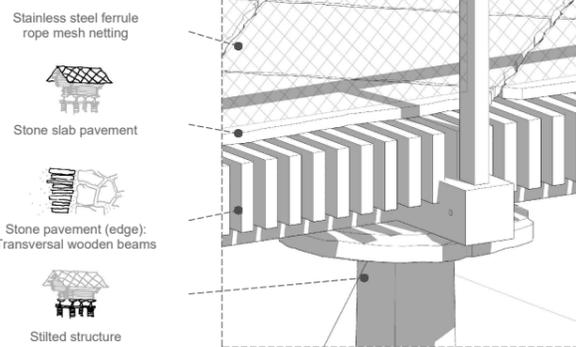
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ETH Zürich
March - June 2023

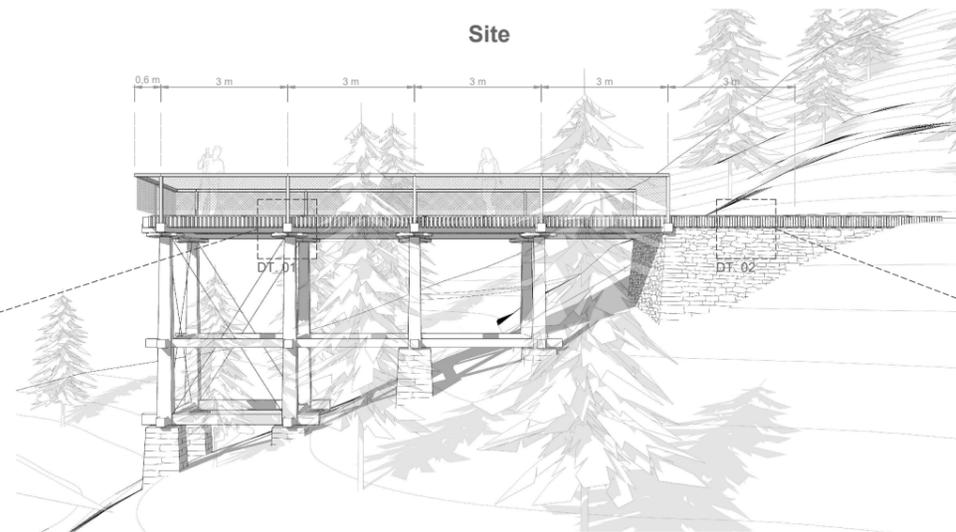
Nicolau Vilaró Palau

3.3.4. PROPOSAL - SITE 4

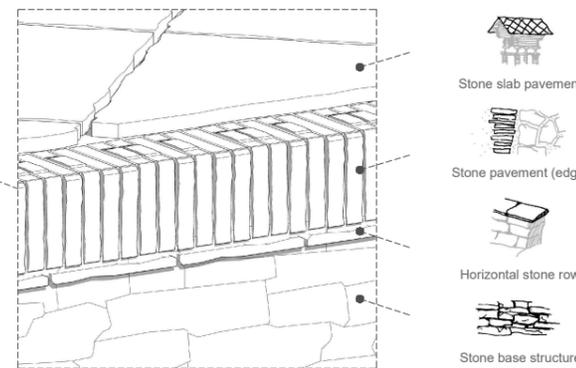
3.3. PROJECT



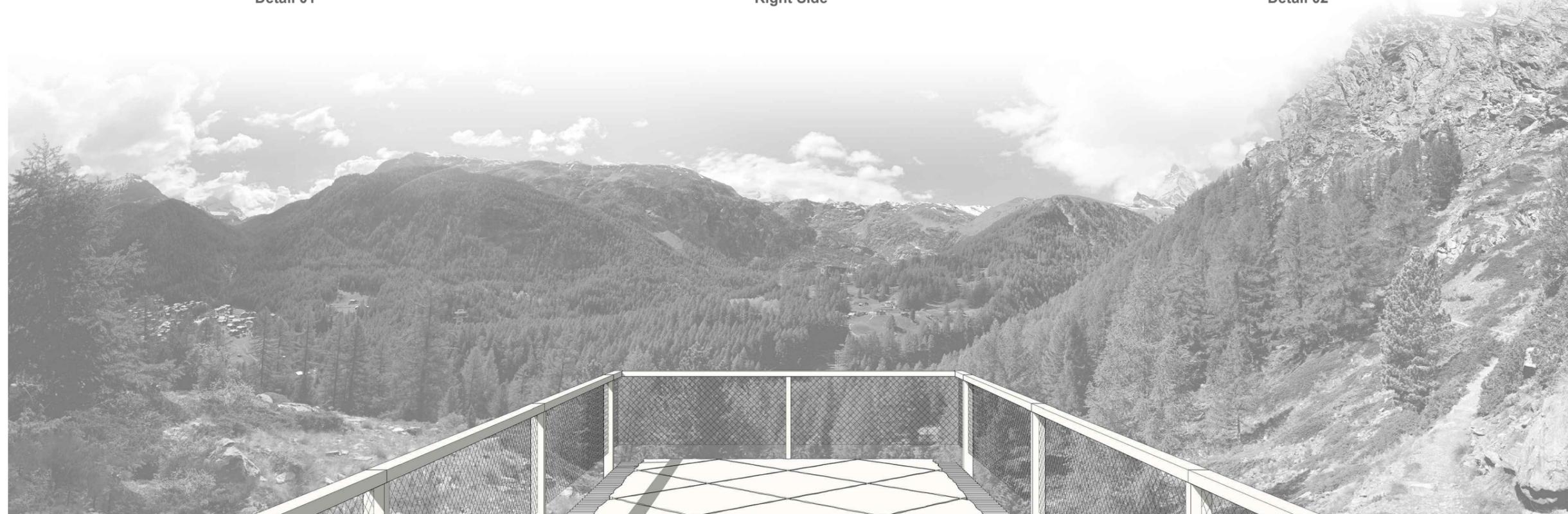
Detail 01

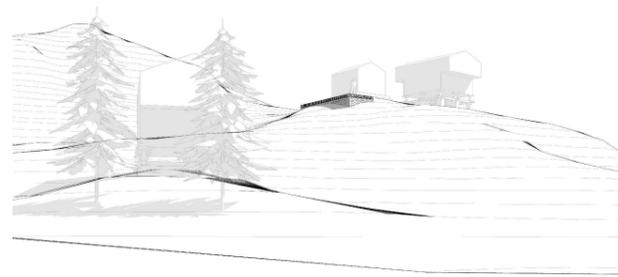


Right Side

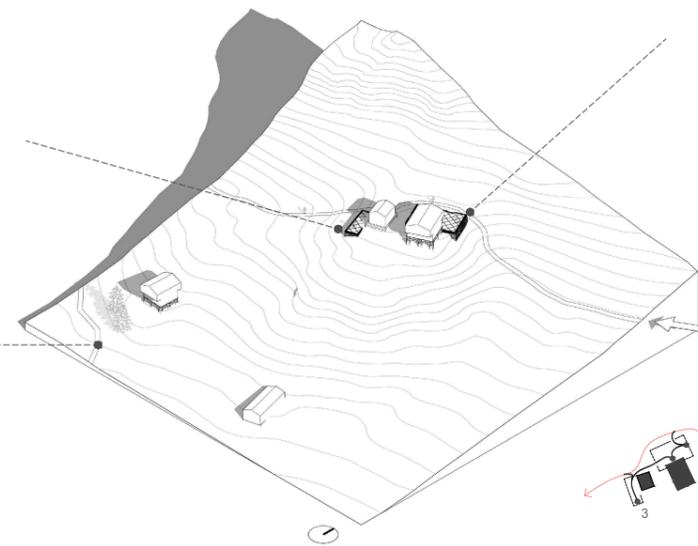


Detail 02





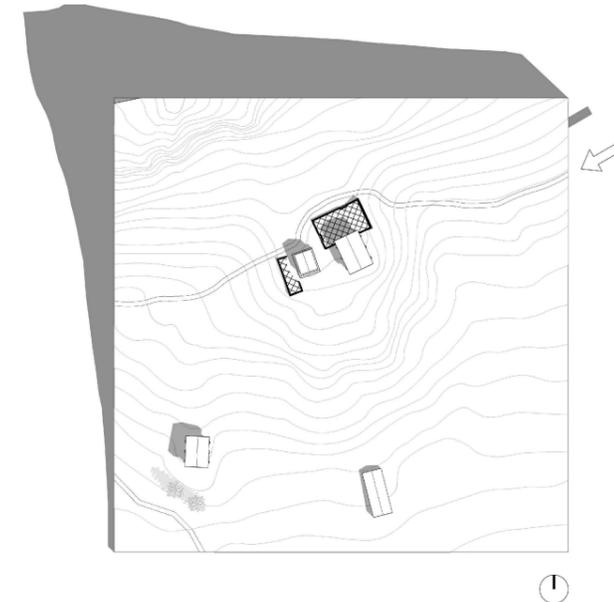
Although it is hidden at first, it reveals a magnificent view



Our waypoint becomes a place to look back

A tailored sequence of views

Site



SITE 5.
Behind the barns

In Site 5, The focus of the architectural intervention, is divided into two parts, both made up of reconstructions of existing piles of stones. These piles, remnants of old shed bases, are currently unstable and not suitable for stepping on. However, they are now envisioned as a series of pauses and curated viewpoints in this specific site of the trail.

Upon reaching the site after a short steep climb, a step invites visitors to step onto the first platform, the larger of the two. From here, a rare opportunity arises to look back and appreciate the path traveled. Turning around, the stilted barn comes into view, guiding visitors towards the next platform. Another step indicates the transition from the plinth, allowing for a seamless progression towards the next barn and platform.

This step is thoughtfully positioned to provide a glimpse of the beginning of the subsequent platform. Continuing the designed sequence, visitors ascend the second plinth, which extends beyond the barn, granting a magnificent panoramic view of the surrounding valley. The careful arrangement ensures that the view is only fully revealed at the end of the platform, emphasizing its significance.

After following this sequence of pauses and selected views, visitors can then resume their journey towards the hamlet of Zmutt, which becomes visible from the second platform.

LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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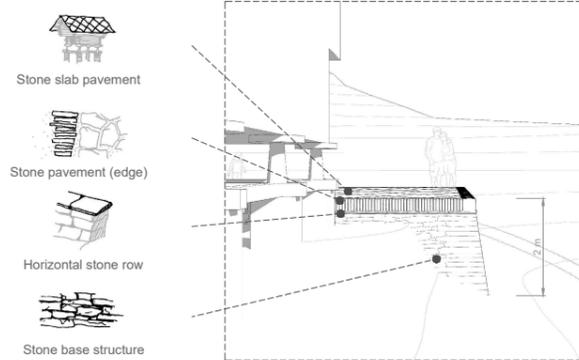
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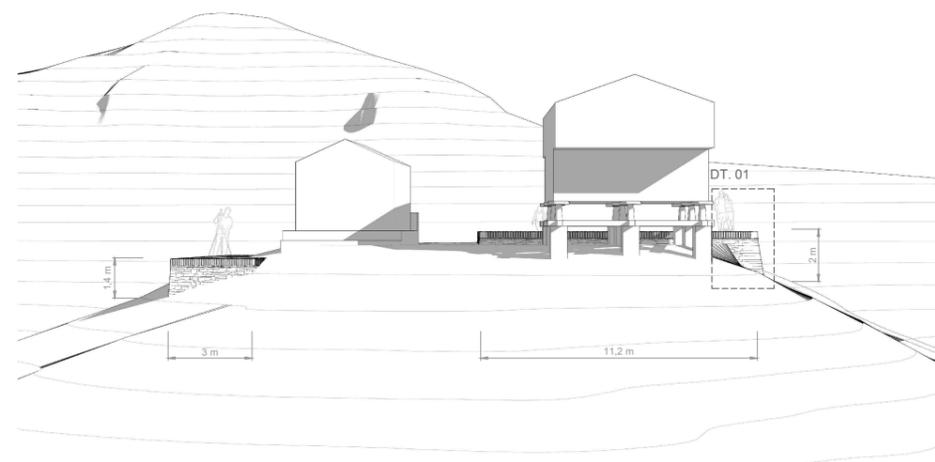
3.3.4. PROPOSAL - SITE 5

3.3. PROJECT

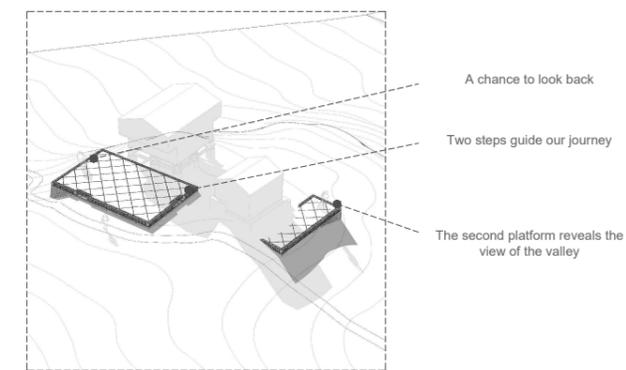
From the main path to Zmutt



Detail 01

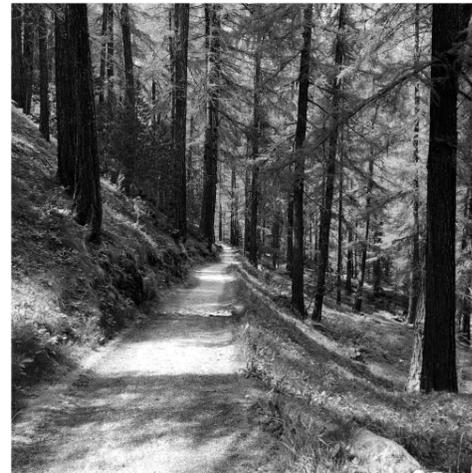


Front



From above the cliff





LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVES
Unveiling the grandeur of the landscape.

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