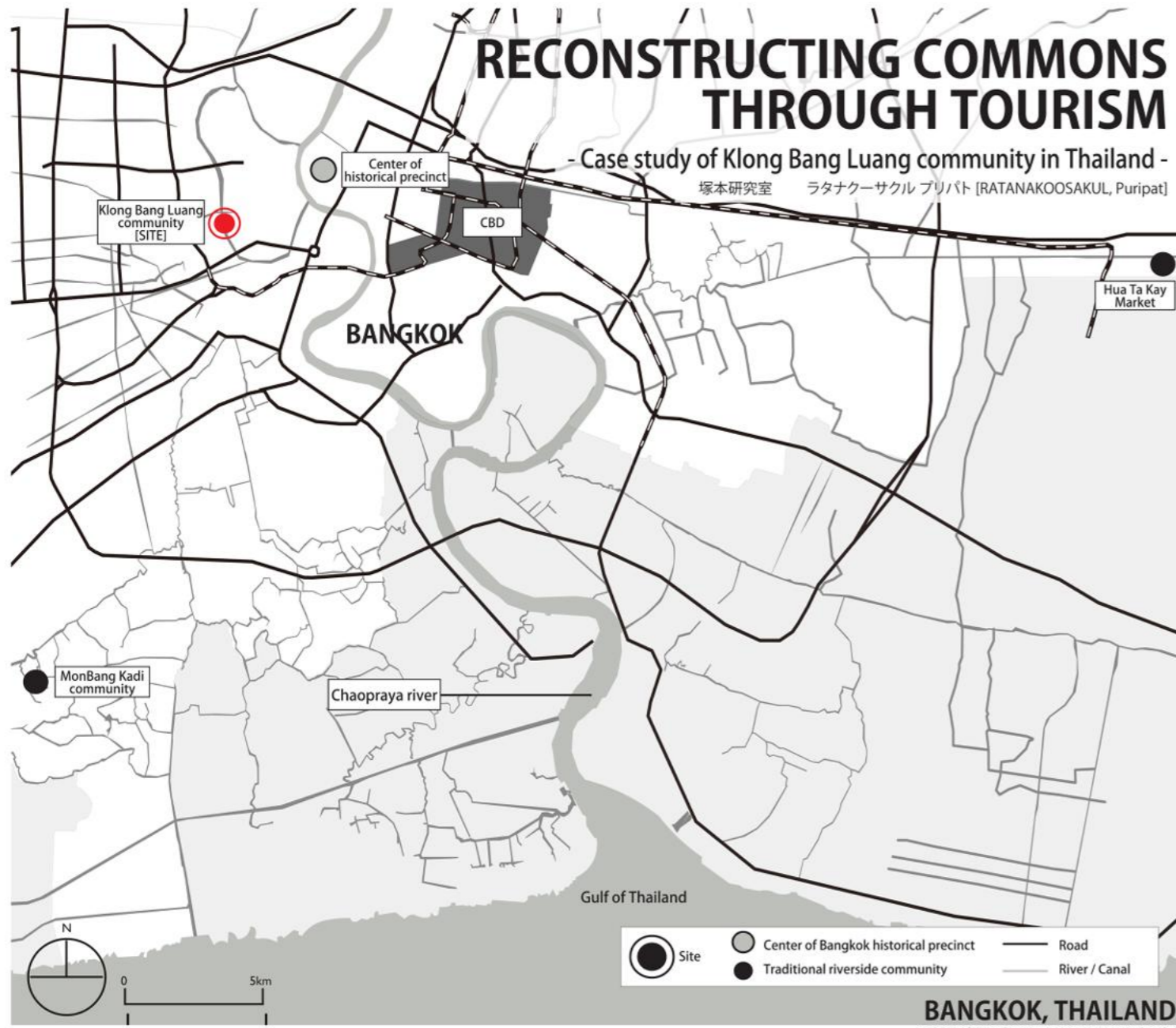


# RECONSTRUCTING COMMONS THROUGH TOURISM

- Case study of Klong Bang Luang community in Thailand -  
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**BANGKOK, THAILAND.**  
Location of Klong Bang Luang communities in Bangkok.

## INTRODUCTION

Rivers and canals are important natural resources of Thailand. Settlements along the riverside were practiced over time forming traditional riverside community, creating one of the most distinct features of Thailand. However, as the city modernized, land-motorization replaced water transportation. Some canals were replaced by roads and many canals were abandoned, resulting in the pollution of the water. Recently, as tourism has been promoted, many government policies were implemented in order to encourage development for tourism business. Due to the distinctive characteristics of the traditional riverside community, tourism reactivates many of these areas as tourist attractions. However, as tourism excessively transforms these fragile communities, it causes declination and deterioration of the livelihoods and the resources of the community.

Therefore, a traditional riverside community was selected to study in order to propose solutions to create a balance between the local livelihood and tourism with an intention to maintain the important resources that generated the distinctive characteristics of the area.



Ong Ang canal. Source:(Steve Van Beek (2000), Bangkok then and now, AB Publications.)



'Saphan Han' on Sampeng lane, Bangkok. Past(Left) and present(Right). The bridge used to be a place where small shop settled however, the shops were removed in 1950s and replaced by ordinary bridge with stall vendors. Source:(Steve Van Beek (2000), Bangkok then and now, AB Publications.)

### TRAGEDY OF COMMONS

'Saphan Han' on Sampeng lane, Bangkok. Past(Left) and present(Right). The bridge used to be a place where small shop settled however, the shops were removed in 1950s and replaced by ordinary bridge with stall vendors.



Klong Bang Luang community, April 2017.

## SITE

Klong Bang Luang community was carefully selected, from list of 16 traditional riverside communities', as a case study for the proposal due to its interesting and rich history. The community is located close to central Bangkok's historical precinct. A part of the community is in the area, which has recently implemented a policy to encourage revitalization as historical precinct. Bang Luang canal used to be part of the Chaopraya river until 1542 when the shortcut was made. The community used to be a market place where the royal governor settled in 1767. However, as Bangkok developed, the liveliness of the community was taken away and left the area deteriorated.

### TOURISM IN KLONG BANG LUANG

In 2009, tourism had rediscovered the community as tourist attraction. An increasing number of tourists encouraged new construction in the area. Railed pedestrian walkways were constructed to bring tourists from other areas to the main attraction, passing between many local houses and the canal. Dining rafts were also prepared. However, most of these rafts are rarely used and obstruct the utilization of the canal.



1 Main tourist attraction in Klong Bang Luang.



2a Railed pedestrian walkway A



2b Railed pedestrian walkway B



3a Tourist dining raft A



3b Tourist dining raft B

## MEMBERSHIP.

Important resources need to be maintained to sustain the community. Tourism can be seen as a chance to introduce tourists as new extended members and new contributors to the community through the study of situated learning: peripheral participation<sup>3</sup>, as a kind of sustainable membership. However, as tourists and locals are different types of members with different behaviors, the threshold is considered as an important element to manage and maintain this relationship as an encounter space.



## THRESHOLD.

Klong Bang Luang has retained much of the traditional riverside community townscape, communal behavior, and the distinct spatial characteristics of the area are still preserved. Resources of the community can be observed in 3 areas Chann(Terrace), Temple, and Accommodation(Alley). Within these areas, different types of thresholds can be observed and interpreted. Chann acts not only as a threshold between the canal and the houses but also between the locals and tourists. The temple square can be considered as a threshold between the locals and tourists. Accommodation provides a new type of threshold between the tourists and the locals, and also alley and canal.



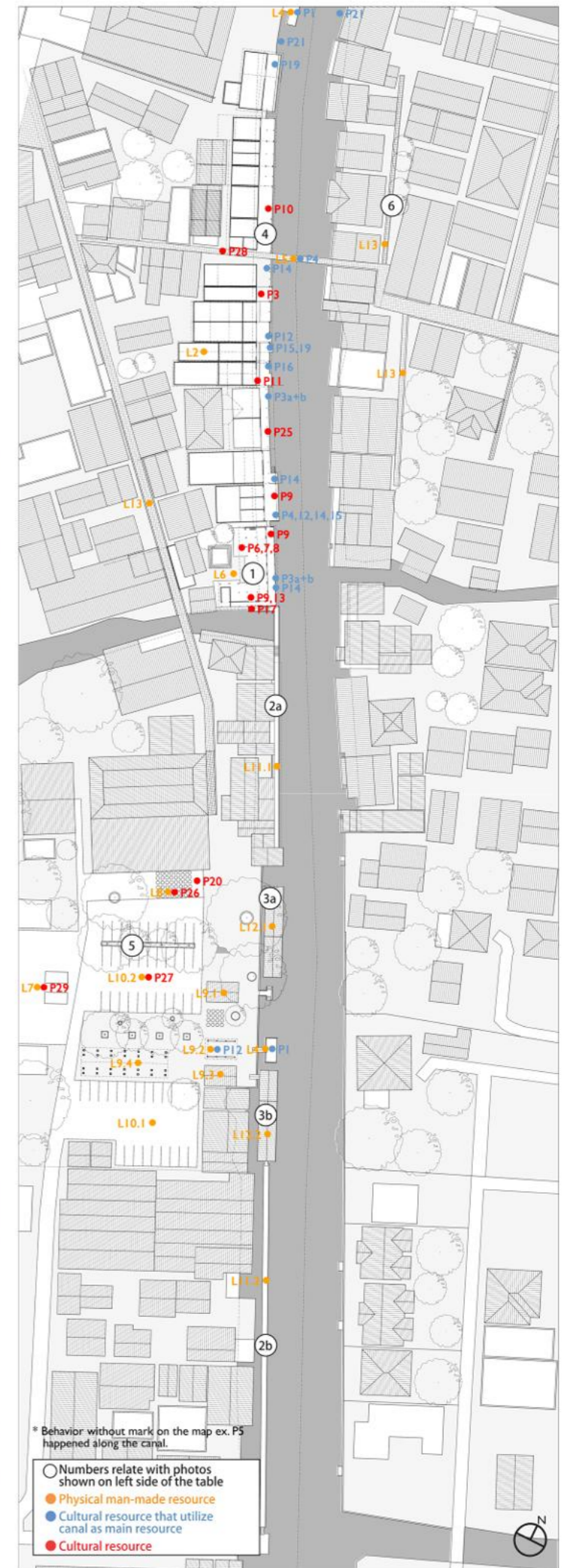
4 Chann(Terrace) area



5 Temple area



6 Accomodation area (Alley)



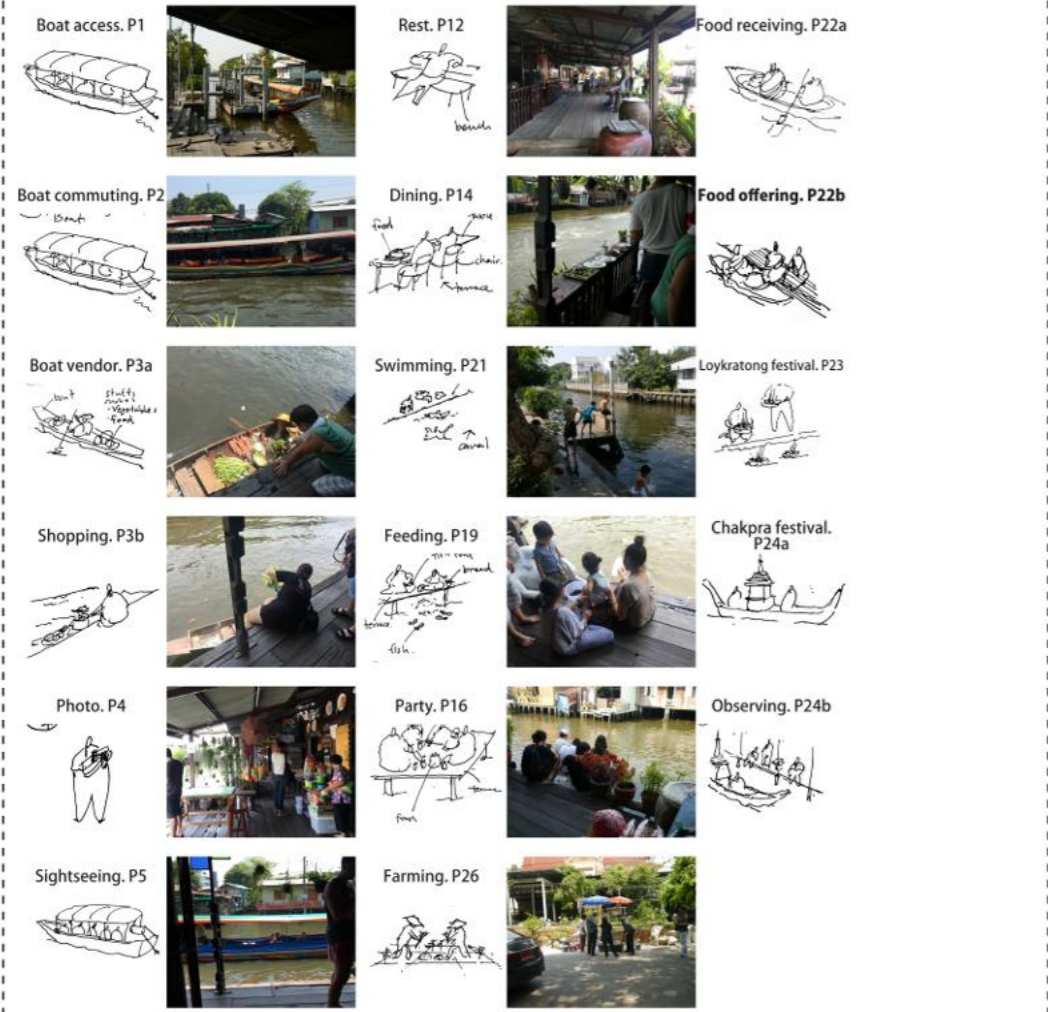


● Physical man-made resource

### RESOURCES

can be classified in 3 groups physical natural resources, physical man-made resources, and cultural resources. Klong Bang Luang community has canal as main natural resources that create distinct characteristic to the community, therefore with canal as natural resource, physical man-made resources and cultural resources that utilize canal were observed.

● Cultural resource that utilize canal as main resource  
 ● Cultural resource (No photo shown)  
 \* Location of each resource marked in the area map on left side.



Constructing Tokyo Commons, Theory of Architectural Space and Planning 2016 by Professor Tom Avermaete, Professor Yoshiharu Tsukamoto.

### COMMONS

Commons is an adjective means belonging to, shared by two or more people, groups, or things.

According to the workshop Constructing Tokyo commons, Theory of Architectural Space and Planning 2016 by Professor Tom Avermaete, Professor Yoshiharu Tsukamoto. Resources of commons were mentioned as

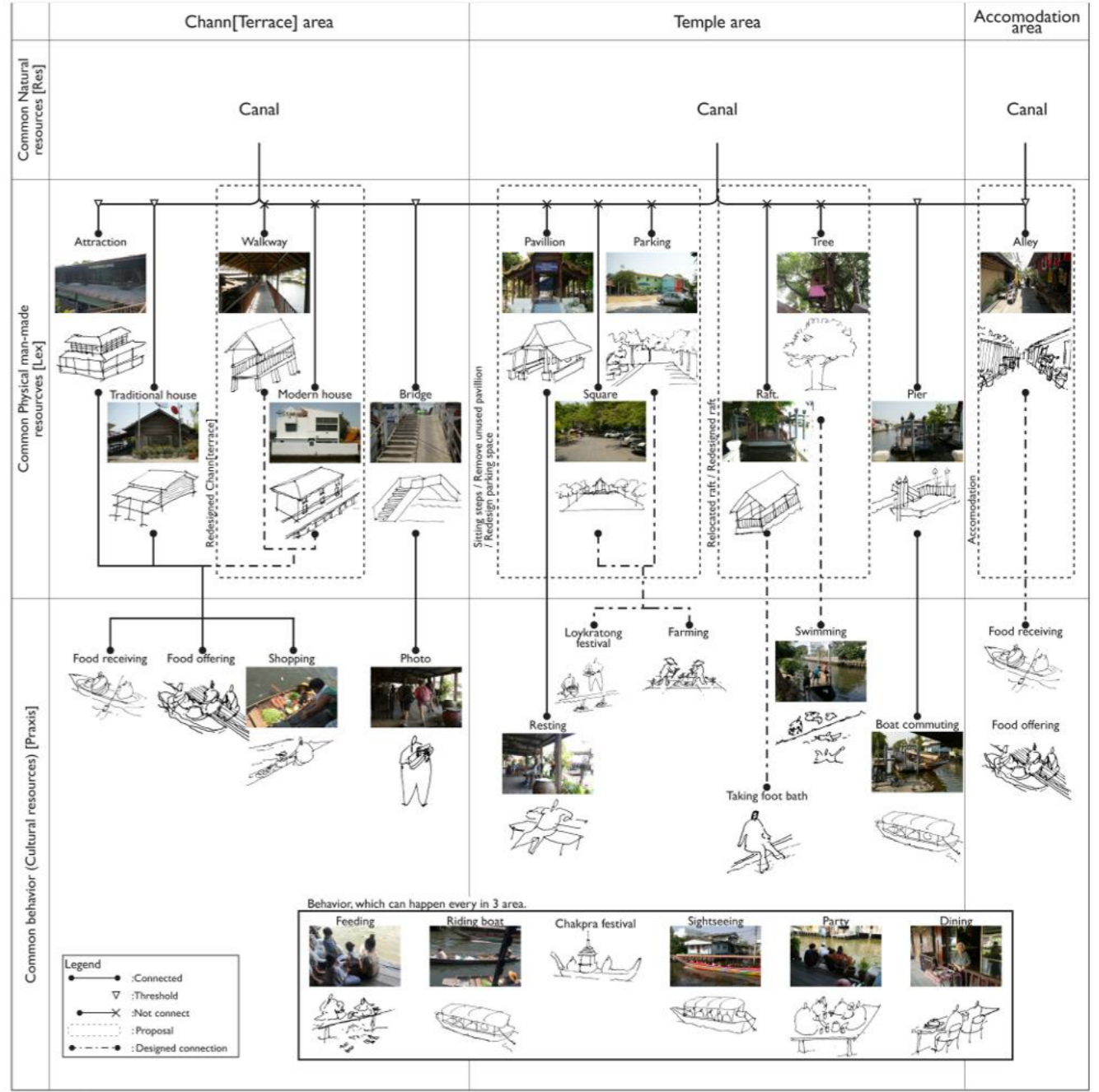
- Res-communis ( Physical Natural resources )
- Lex-communis ( Physical man-made resources )
- Praxis-communis ( Cultural resources )

Shared natural resource(s) were observed and are mentioned as Res-communis. The way to utilize these natural resources through physical settings [Man-made resource(s)] is discussed as Lex-communis. Behavior that are produced and shared among people through the interaction of the body with the resources is considered as Praxis-communis. These 3 resources are considered as means of reconstructing the Commons.

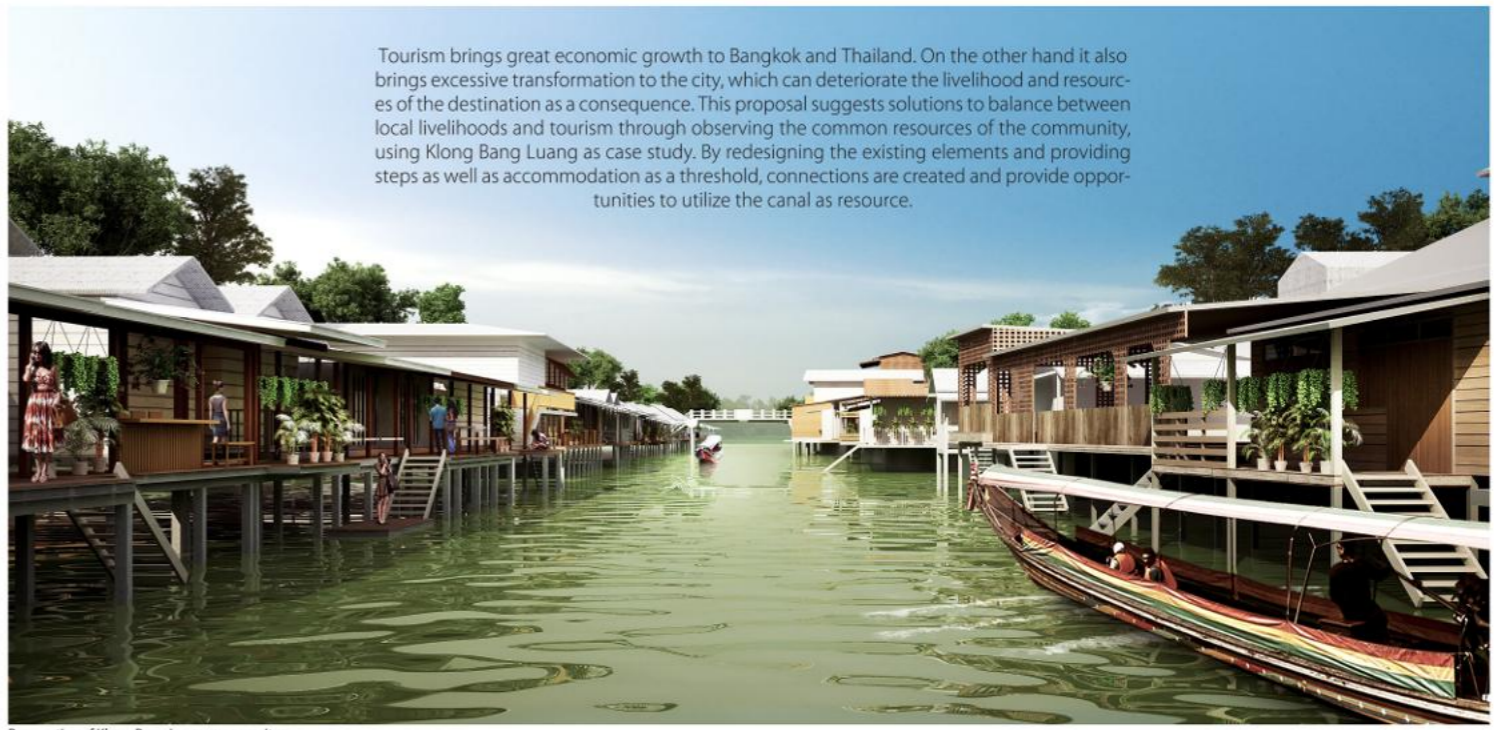
By observing the relationship between each of the common resources within the community, conditions and connections can be shown through connection of commons. For example, traditional houses connect well with the canal terraces and generate many behaviors. However, in a similar area, the walkway is disconnected from the canal by a fence and is only suitable for walking. Therefore, fewer behaviors happened on this walkway.



Physical model image of redesigned Klong Bang Luang community.

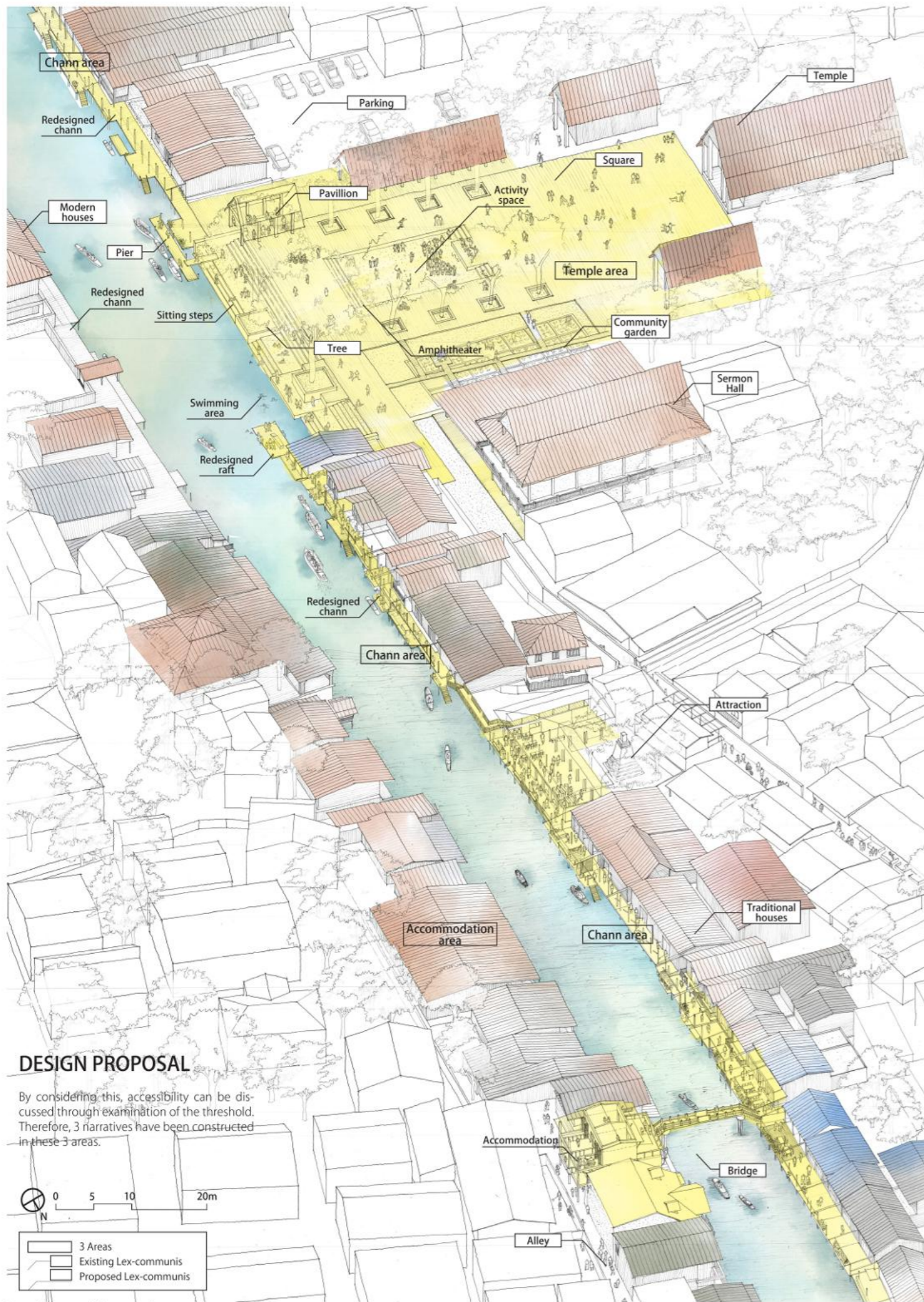


Connection of commons in Klong Bang Luang community.



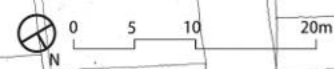
Perspective of Klong Bang Luang community.

Tourism brings great economic growth to Bangkok and Thailand. On the other hand it also brings excessive transformation to the city, which can deteriorate the livelihood and resources of the destination as a consequence. This proposal suggests solutions to balance between local livelihoods and tourism through observing the common resources of the community, using Klong Bang Luang as case study. By redesigning the existing elements and providing steps as well as accommodation as a threshold, connections are created and provide opportunities to utilize the canal as resource.



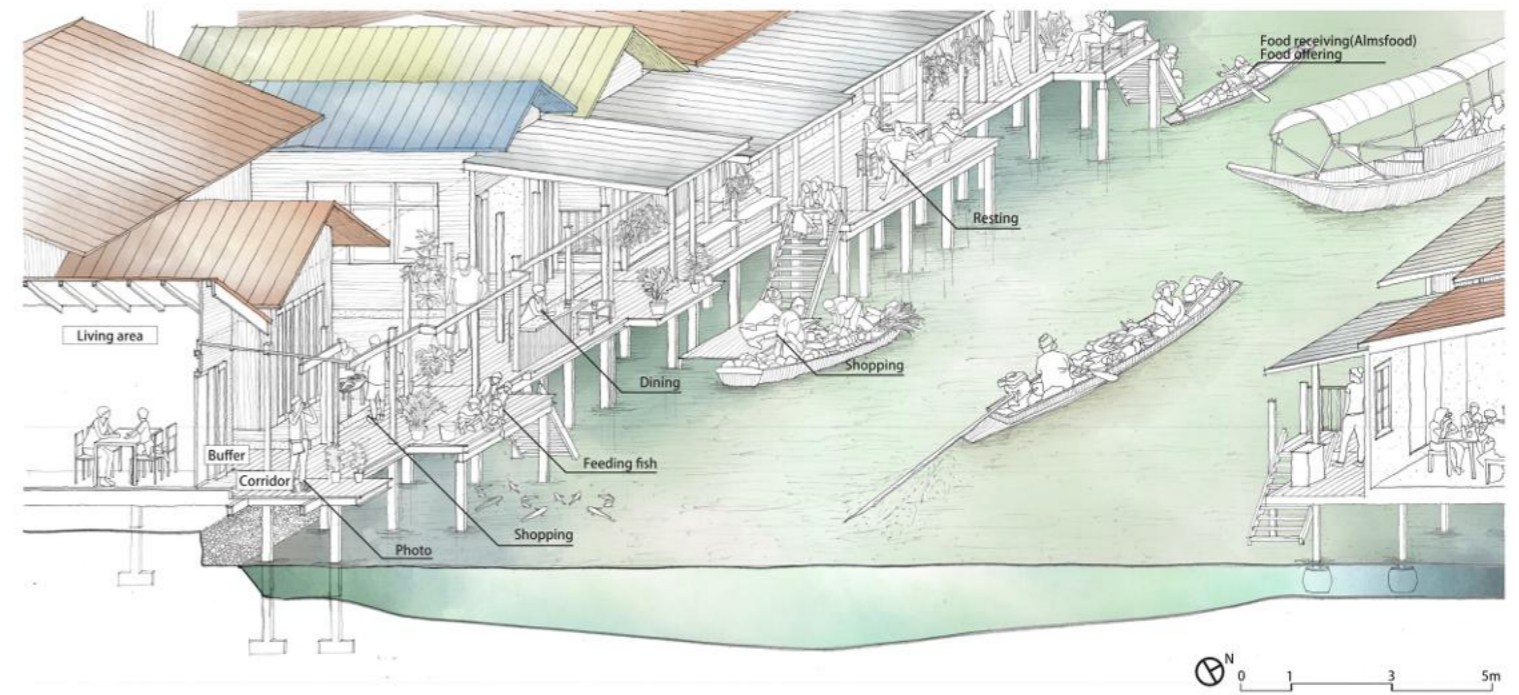
**DESIGN PROPOSAL**

By considering this, accessibility can be discussed through examination of the threshold. Therefore, 3 narratives have been constructed in these 3 areas.



- 3 Areas
- Existing Lex-communis
- Proposed Lex-communis

Isometric of context with Lex-communis.



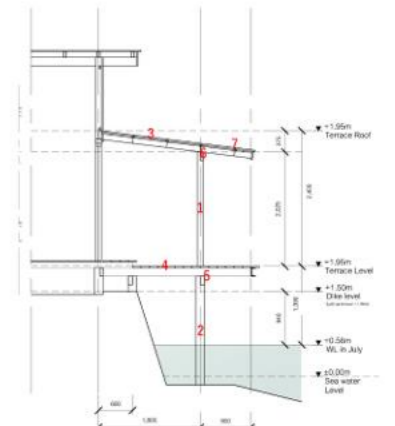
Drawing of redesign Chann(terrace) with propose Praxis communis.

**CHANN[TERRACE] AREA**



Drawing of existing Chan (Terrace) area with obstructing railed pedestrain walkway.

Houses in existing chann[Terrace] area cannot access to utilize canal as main resource due to an obstruction of constructed pedestrain walkway especially to serve demand of tourists.



- Floor legend:**
- 1 Klong Bang Luang (Canal)
  - 2 Chann(Terrace)
  - 3 Buffer space
  - 4 Bench
  - 5 Stair case
  - 6 Floating pier
- Proposed Lex - communis**
- 7 House
- Existing Lex - communis**
- 7 House
- Partial plan and detail section of redesigned terrace**
- Specification:**
- Column structure:** 1 Steel column 100mm x 100mm, 2 Concrete column 150mm x 150mm
  - Floor structure:** 3 Metal sheet roof, 4 Wooden floor 150mm x 25mm
  - Roof structure:** 5 Steel beam 150mm x 50mm, 6 Steel rafter 100mm x 25mm, 7 Steel purlin 25mm x 25mm



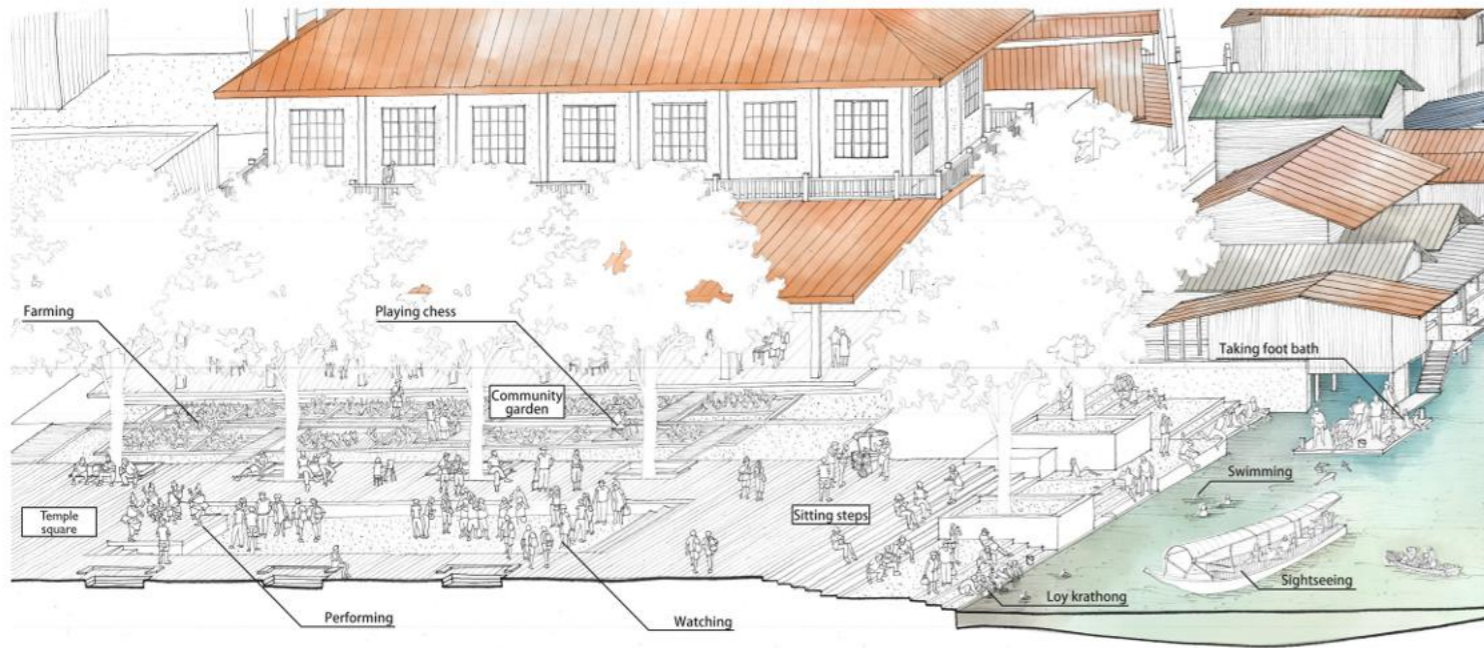
Perspective of redesign Chann(terrace).



Images of Chann area model

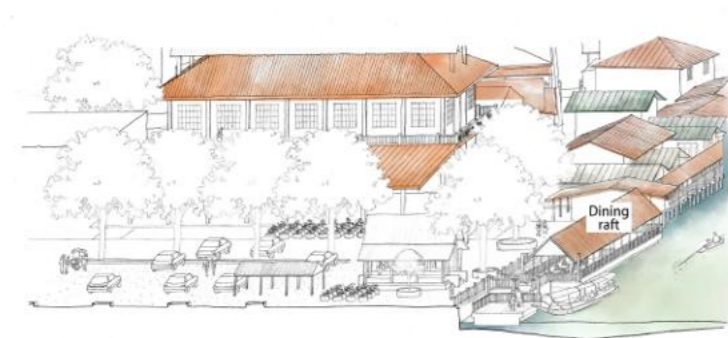
The Chann is proposed in different areas along the canal as a space for living. This chann is constructed by individual initiative, which is shown by articulation of the roofs. Activities such as, shopping from boat vendors, sightseeing along the canal-side, feeding fish, dining, swimming as well as access to the water or boats can be performed through this area.

In order to keep and control privacy for locals, the space in this Chann is divided into 3 layers: living area, corridor, and buffer space, which is provided between the corridor and each house. This buffer space can be indicated by a small step in front of each house. It is where the locals can manage their relationship with other members.



**TEMPLE AREA**

0 1 3 5 10m  
Drawing of redesign temple area with propose Praxis communis.



Drawing of existing temple area with obstructing tourist dining raft.

Eventhrough, large part temple area attached to the canal, construction of dining rafts to serve tourists, along canal front area, obstruct accessibility to utilize canal.



Plan of redesigned temple area

- Floor legend:**  
**Proposed Lex - communis**  
 1 Sitting step  
 2 Community garden  
 3 Outdoor table / Chess playing area  
 4 Sunken plaza  
 5 Stage  
 6 Bench  
 7 Sitting raft  
**Existing Lex - communis**  
 8 Pavillion  
 9 Sermon hall  
 10 Pier

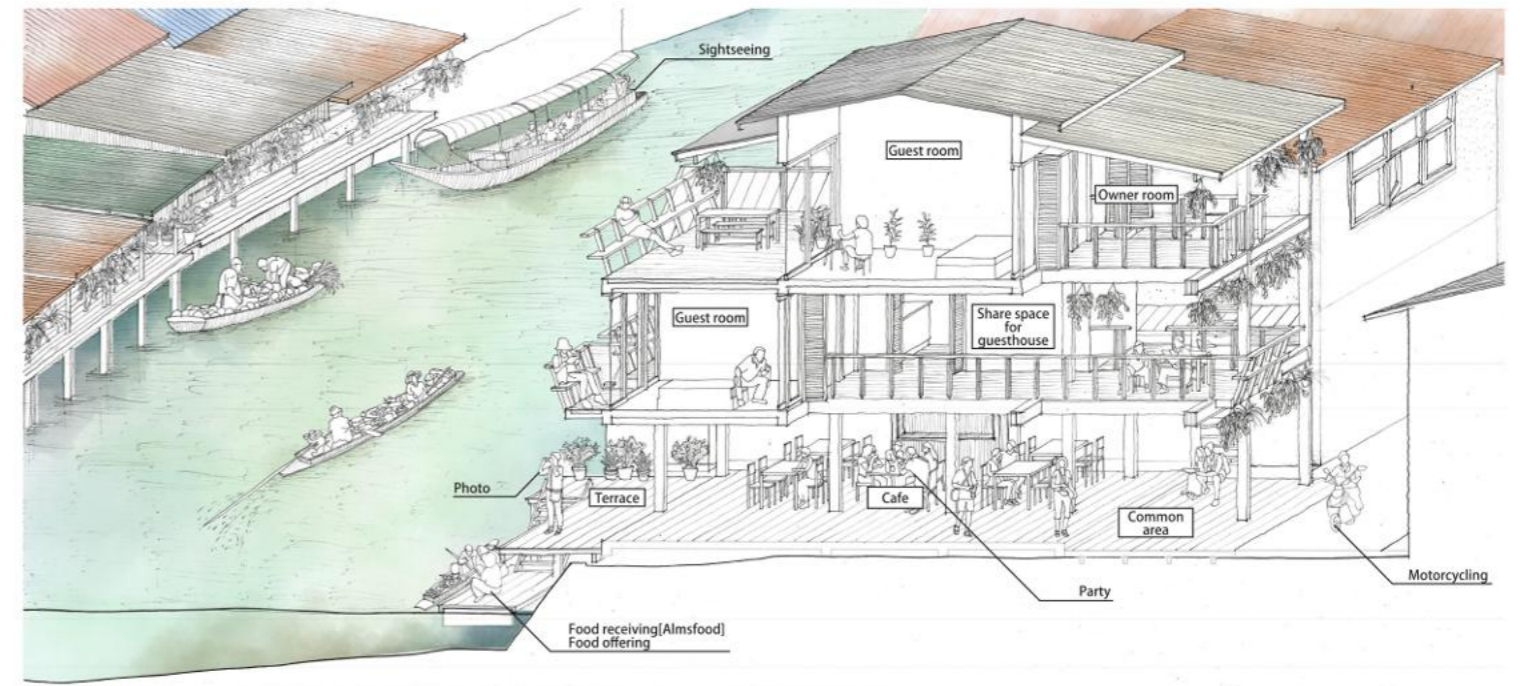


Perspective of redesign temple area.

The Temple square is the largest common area of the community and is attached to the canal. However, it was disconnected from the canal by fences and obstructed by rafts. Therefore, the square was redesigned by removing most of the obstructing rafts and relocating the remaining raft.

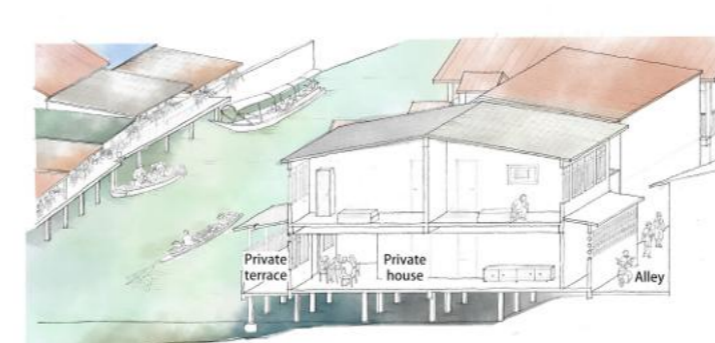
Sitting steps were provided as a threshold for larger accessibility to the waterfront area. Within the square, there are many trees which provide shade as resource. However, most of the area under these trees was designated as parking space.

This area is redesigned as an activity space by removing the unused structures, creating an easier access to the existing community garden and surrounding buildings. An amphitheater is also provided as a space for festival performances, which are held throughout the year, as well as a place for people to gather.

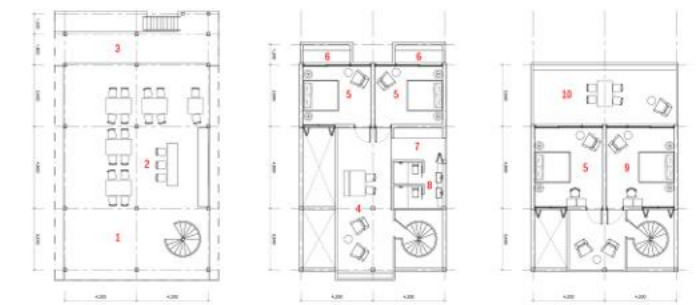


**ACCOMMODATION AREA**

0 1 3 5m



In opposite with the traditional house that has chann[Terrace] as common space, houses on opposite canal side occupied canal front as private space. This resulting in the inaccessible canal side and shortage utilization of canal.



- Floor legend:**  
**Proposed Lex - communis**  
 1 Common area  
 2 Cafe  
 3 Terrace [Chann]  
 4 Share space for guest house  
 5 Guest room  
 6 Private balcony  
 7 Share pantry  
 8 Share bathroom  
 9 Owner room  
 10 Roof terrace

Drawing of existing house in accommodation area.



Perspective of proposed accommodation.



Images of accommodation model

As this fragile community can be sustained through the repetition of common practices, accommodation provides a longer time for tourists to stay and contribute to the local activities, which will help sustain these common resources in turn.

As there is no common accessible waterfront area on the opposite canal-side, accommodation intervenes in the community by replacing newer concrete houses, which have the least canal utilization. Traditional house composition is applied in these accommodations by lifting the main floor up and letting the ground floor space open as common area (ex. Cafe), allowing the public access to utilize the canal.