



LAND OF REPOSE AND DIGNITY
WAR MEMORIAL CEMETERY

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ABSTRACT

This project aims to explore the existing and evolving Ukrainian identity within the context of the war memorial cemetery amidst the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. Rooted in the evolving narrative of a nation amidst turmoil, this endeavor seeks to explore the transformative potential of landscape design in shaping collective memory and identity.

Drawing inspiration from the rich tapestry of Ukrainian history and cultural symbolism, the project meticulously integrates elements within the landscape, transforming the land into an eternal memorial. In doing so, it proposes a shift from object-driven memorials to commemorating certain aspects of national history, such as ongoing war, from a landscape perspective. These symbols, steeped in tradition, serve as poignant reminders of sacrifice and resilience, anchoring the memorial within the collective consciousness of the Ukrainian people.

The project investigates how the landscape memorials might seamlessly integrate memorialization within the surrounding environment, emphasizing the natural landscape as an essential component of the commemorative experience. Rather than standalone structures, landscape memorials incorporate elements such as gardens, pathways, and scenic vistas to create a more immersive and contemplative atmosphere. By blending with the natural surroundings, these memorials seek to evoke emotions and provoke reflection, fostering a deeper connection between visitors and the memorialized.

Understanding the prolonged duration of the ongoing conflict and its impact on Ukraine's evolving identity until its resolution is crucial for preserving a coherent and meaningful collective memory for future Ukrainian generations.

EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CIVIL AND WAR CEMETERIES

Cemeteries serve as solemn resting places for the departed, but within this broad category, distinct types with unique purposes and characteristics exist. Among these are civil cemeteries and war cemeteries, each with its significance and role in commemorating the deceased.

Civil cemeteries (Figure 1) are the final resting places primarily designated for individuals from local communities or regions who have passed away. Unlike war cemeteries, which focus on military personnel, civil cemeteries surround a diverse array of people, including civilians, families, and occasionally religious figures. The gravestones within civil cemeteries often bear personalized inscriptions, providing details such as the name, birth and death dates, and sometimes heartfelt epitaphs or messages from loved ones. Reflecting the cultural and religious diversity of the community, burial practices in civil cemeteries vary widely.

In contrast, war cemeteries (Figure 2) are solemn grounds dedicated specifically to military personnel who perished during armed conflicts or wars. These hallowed sites often house the graves of soldiers from multiple nations involved in a particular conflict.

The graves within war cemeteries are typically marked by standardized memorials, such as uniform headstones or crosses, bearing the name, rank, and military insignia of the fallen, along with pertinent details. War cemeteries serve not only as burial grounds but also as poignant memorials honoring the sacrifice of those who gave their lives in service to their country. These sites may feature additional monuments, memorials, or landscaped gardens, fostering a respectful atmosphere for visitors to pay their respects.

While both civil and war cemeteries fulfill the vital function of providing a final resting place for the departed, they differ significantly in their focus, purpose, and composition. Civil cemeteries celebrate the diverse lives of local communities, while war cemeteries solemnly honor the sacrifice of military personnel who gave their lives in defense of their nations.



(Figure 1)
Photo of The Woodland Cemetery, Stockholm by kaisalmela



(Figure 2)
Photo of Marietta Cemetery, The United States by Ron Zanoni

War cemeteries can be categorized into various typologies based on factors such as design, layout, and historical context.

- **National Cemeteries** (Figure 3): These cemeteries are dedicated to soldiers of a specific nation who died in wars or military conflicts. They often feature organized rows of graves, with uniform headstones or markers bearing the names and military insignia of the fallen.
 - **Commonwealth War Graves** (Figure 4): Managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, these cemeteries commemorate soldiers from Commonwealth countries who died in both World Wars and other conflicts. They are characterized by uniformity in design and maintenance standards, with carefully tended lawns, uniform headstones, and memorial structures.
 - **Allied Cemeteries** (Figure 5): These cemeteries honor soldiers from multiple allied nations who fought together in specific conflicts. They may contain sections dedicated to soldiers of different nationalities, often marked by national flags or symbols.
 - **Military Memorials** (Figure 6): While not traditional cemeteries, military memorials serve as commemorative sites for soldiers who died in war. These may include monuments, statues, or plaques erected in public spaces to honor the fallen.
 - **Field Cemeteries** (Figure 7): These temporary cemeteries are established close to battlefields or military hospitals during wartime to bury soldiers quickly. They may later be consolidated into larger, permanent war cemeteries.
- Specialist Cemeteries: Some war cemeteries are dedicated to specific groups of soldiers, such as airmen, naval personnel, or prisoners of war. These cemeteries may have unique features or memorials tailored to the experiences of these groups.
- **Post-Conflict Cemeteries** (Figure 8): Established after the resolution of a conflict, these cemeteries may commemorate soldiers from both sides of the conflict, emphasizing themes of reconciliation and remembrance.



(Figure 3)
Photo of Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, The United States by Elizabeth Fraser



(Figure 4)
Photo of War Cemetery Arnhem Oosterbeek, Netherlands by Mdavids



(Figure 5)
Photo of Kohima War Cemetery, Nagaland, India by Betoka Swu



(Figure 6)
Photo of Vietnam Veterans Memorial by Maya Lin



(Figure 7)
Photo of Thiepval Anglo-French Cemetery, Somme, France by Amanda Slater



(Figure 8)
Photo of Normandy American Cemetery, France by Perry Heimer

MEMORIALS IN MILITARY CEMETERIES

In the quiet corners of military cemeteries, there are various memorials that pay tribute to the brave people who served their countries. From impressive monuments to simple markers, these memorials honor their courage and sacrifice in different ways.

Memorials that Stand Tall

Think of those grand statues or structures you see as soon as you enter the cemetery. They're like anchors, reminding us of specific battles, military units, or remarkable individuals who made a difference.

Markers and Plaques

As you wander through the cemetery, keep an eye out for smaller markers or plaques. They're scattered around, telling the stories of individual soldiers, special units, or important moments in history. Each one is a little reminder of someone's bravery and sacrifice.

Walls of Remembrance

These walls are special—they're covered in names. They're there for soldiers who couldn't be buried here or whose bodies were never found. It's a way of saying, "You may be gone, but you'll never be forgotten."

Obelisks

You can't miss these tall, elegant monuments—they're like beacons of remembrance. Standing proud, they honor the fallen and remind us of the lasting impact of their sacrifice.

Gardens of Peace

Sometimes you just need a quiet place to sit and think. That's what these gardens are for. They're designed to be peaceful and calming, giving you a moment to remember and reflect.

Chapels or Quiet Spaces: If you need a moment to gather your thoughts or say a prayer, head to one of these spots. They're like little sanctuaries within the cemetery, where you can find peace and comfort.

In the end, these memorials are more than just statues or walls—they're reminders of the incredible bravery and sacrifice of our military heroes. They ensure that their memory lives on, inspiring us to never forget their courage and dedication.



©2024 Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Brookwood Memorial (1939-1945) commemorates nearly 3,500 men and women of the land forces of the Commonwealth who died during the Second World War and have no known grave.

The 'Nordhorn Monument' was initially built to honor fallen soldiers from the wars of 1870/71 and 1914-18. However, it was later revealed that the story behind it, glorified under the Third Reich, was based on false information. Discussions about its controversial history and the square's name began in 1986, leading to Jenny Holzer's redesign in 1989. She created a new circular garden beside the original memorial, with inscriptions describing the horrors of war, making the benches there essentially unusable.

"I think that when people come into this garden, which is too dark and too black and too regular, and then read the texts on the benches - it will be impossible not to understand what it is about. That is what I hope, in any case." by Jenny Holzer



War memorials, while intended to honor the sacrifices of those who served in conflicts, can sometimes spark controversy.

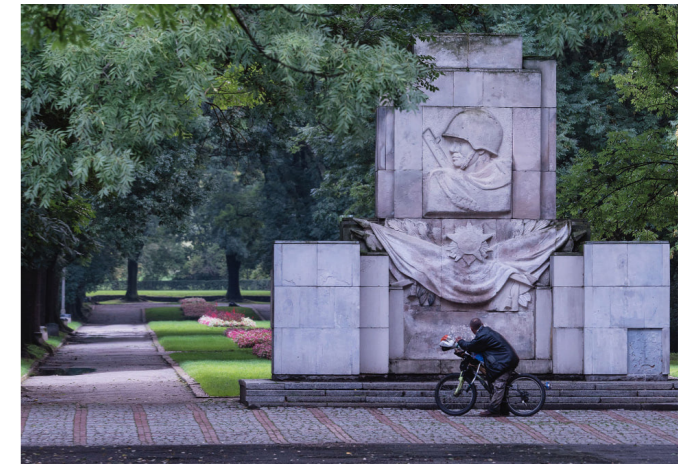
Some memorials may exclude certain groups or individuals, leading to criticism for lack of inclusivity. The symbols and imagery used in memorials can be interpreted differently, causing disagreements over their meaning. Memorials may present a particular interpretation of history, sparking debates over accuracy and appropriateness. Where memorials are placed can also be contentious, with public spaces seen as imposing narratives on communities. As attitudes towards war evolve, memorials may become controversial as societal values shift.

In essence, war memorials are complex symbols of remembrance, often entangled in debates over representation, symbolism, and historical accuracy.



"A Soviet victory column at a roundabout in Stargard, in northern Poland. Several months before this 2017 photo was taken, its crowning Soviet star was removed during the night."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty © 2020

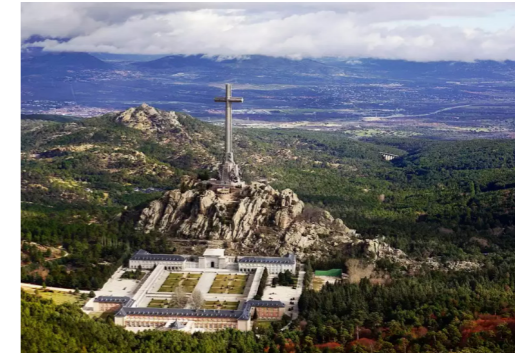


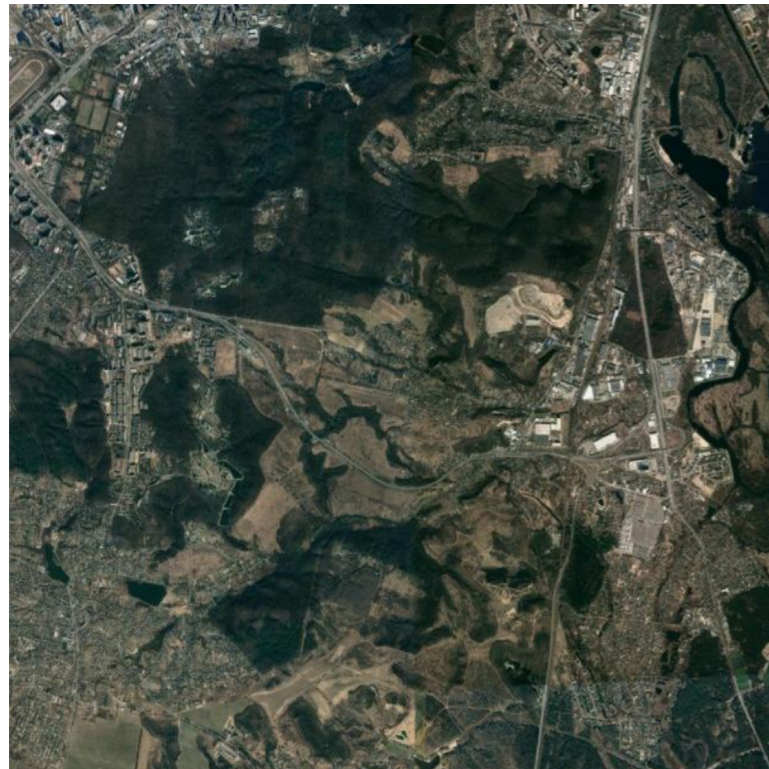
"The massive sandstone Monument of Gratitude to the Soldiers of the Soviet Army in Warsaw. The monument was built in 1946 over the graves of 26 Red Army soldiers who died fighting the Nazis during the battle for Warsaw. The fallen soldiers were exhumed and moved to a Soviet cemetery in 1968. In 2018, the frequently vandalized monument was broken into pieces and removed. Some panels were reportedly kept intact for a planned exhibit at a Cold War museum in northern Poland."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty © 2020

There are several problems surrounding the creation of military and memorial cemeteries. This is the difference between the tasks of the state and the local community because it has become clear in many world examples that the nation-state monopolizes the presentation of the history of the war, as well as the graves, and the memory of the soldiers themselves in the space of the cemetery. This can often differ from the wishes of families who would like to see a relative buried close to family members and not in national pantheons.

The Valley of the Fallen, known as "Valle de los Caídos" in Spanish, is a monumental memorial located in the Sierra de Guadarrama, near Madrid, Spain. It was constructed between 1940 and 1958 during the regime of General Francisco Franco, who ruled Spain after the Spanish Civil War. After the civil war, for the purpose of social reconciliation, they decided to create a huge national memorial "Valley of the Fallen". And in order to create this memorial, it was necessary to reburial the dead. "Valley of the Fallen" is very impressive, it creates a special emotional state. But for many people it was a crime, because their relatives were taken from the family burial place and moved to a place where they could not come to it individually. Such a decision was simply made at the state level, and it was a certain variant of violence.



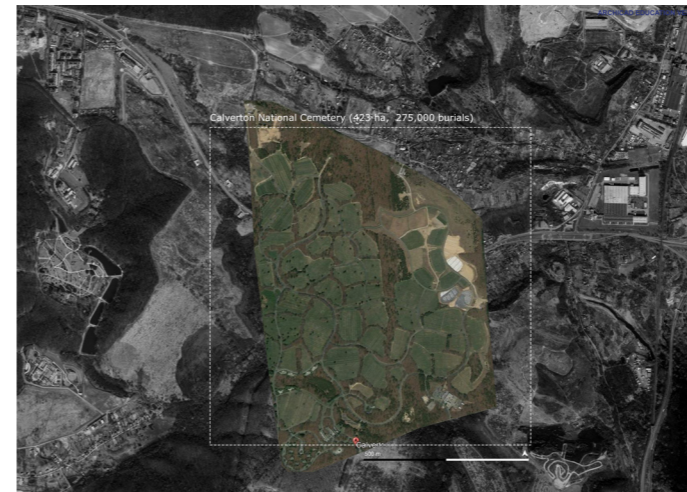


KYIV, UKRAINE

The location chosen for the project, the war memorial cemetery, is situated in Kyiv, Ukraine. Positioned on the city's outskirts, it lies adjacent to one of the main half-circular highways. Easily accessible via public transportation and enveloped by the National Nature Reserve, the site is interesting because of its naturally unique conditions.

Since the Russian-Ukrainian war is the largest in Europe since the Second World War, a comparative analysis with the largest war cemeteries investigated gives a sense of the size for the project of a war memorial cemetery in Kyiv.

Military cemeteries are special burials intended for the rest and memory of servicemen who gave their lives for the defense of the country. These cemeteries are usually managed by the state and are not only a place of burial, but also a symbol of memory, pride and gratitude to the military.









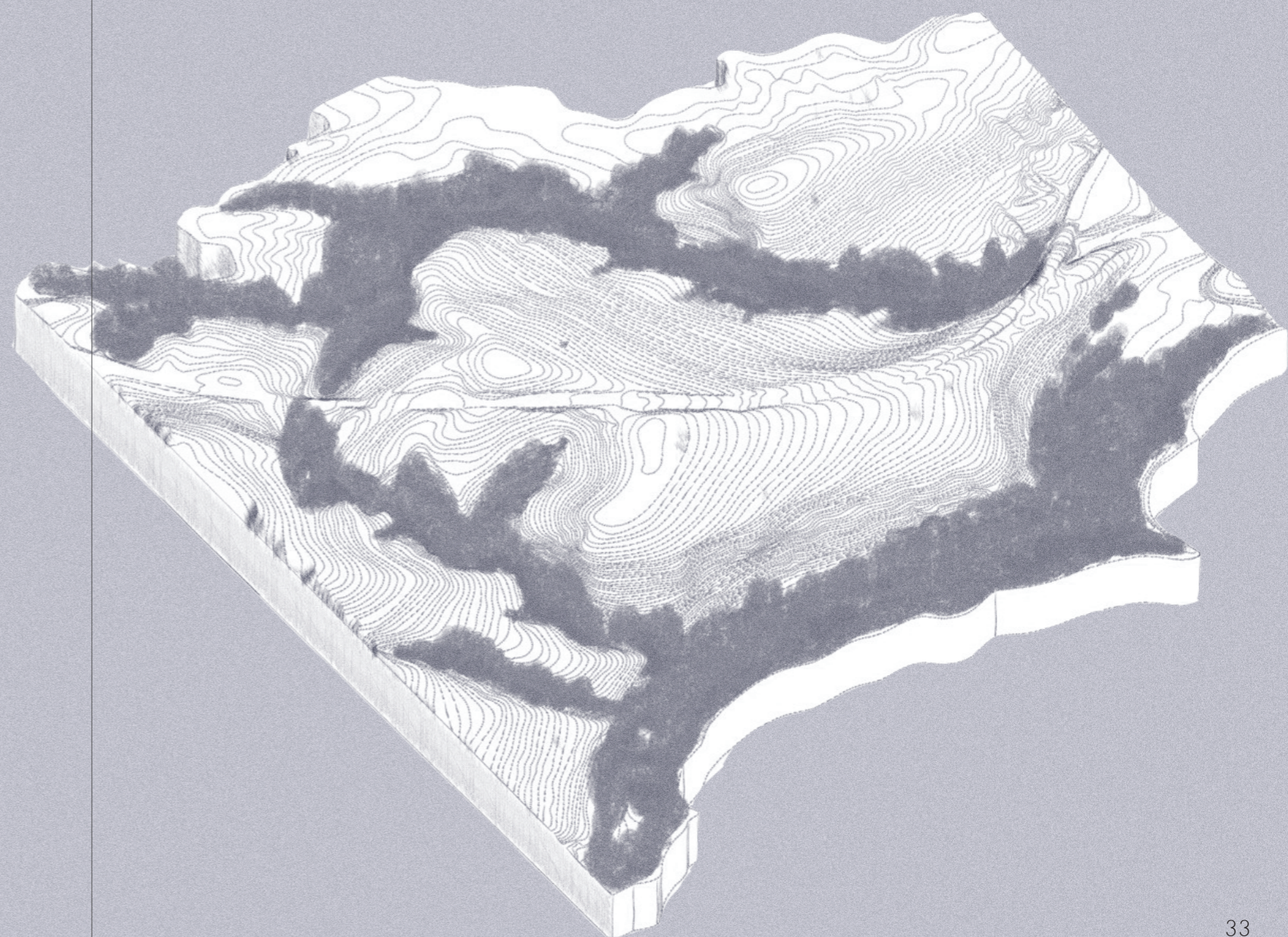
3 SECTION

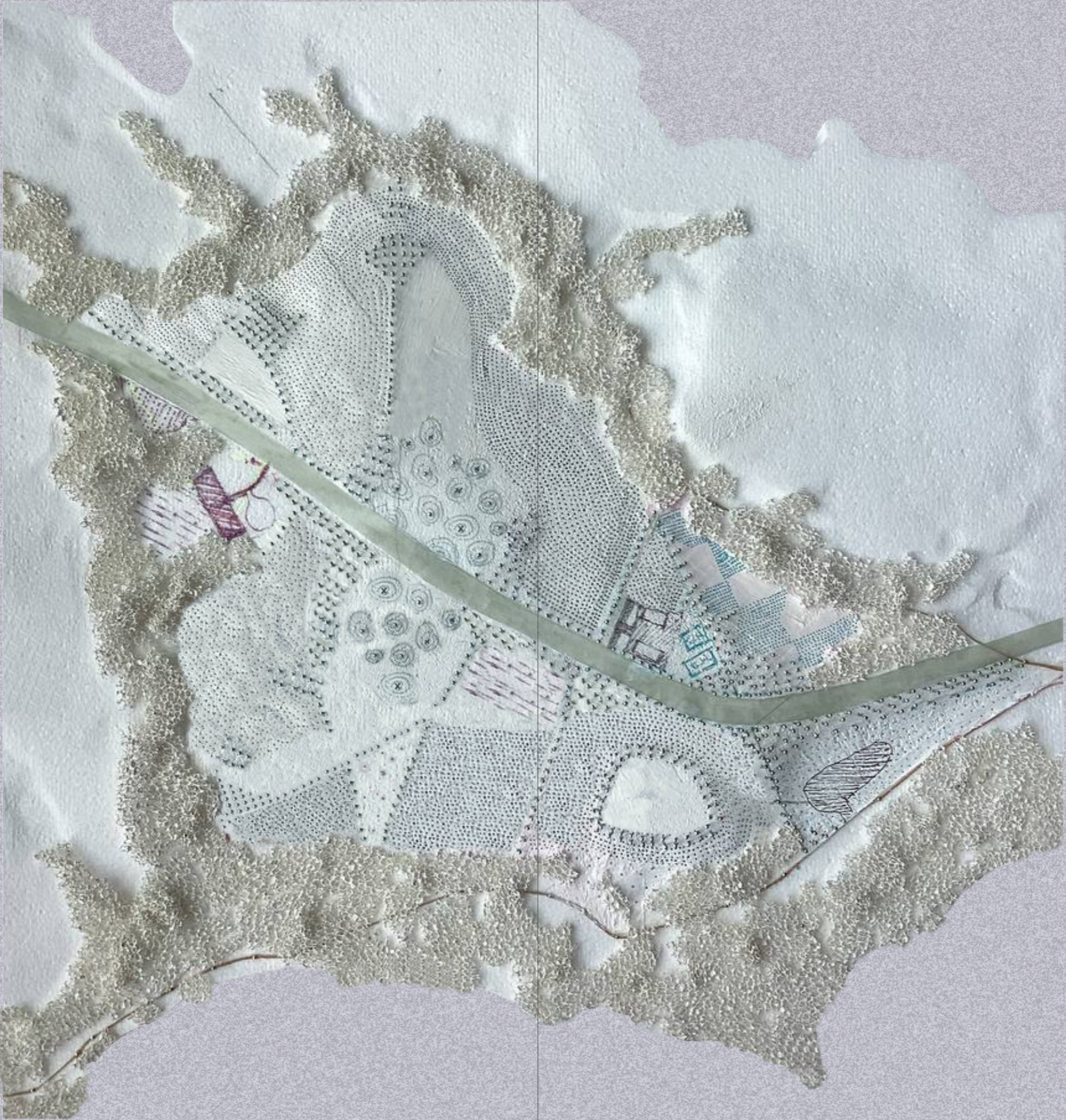
DESIGN APPROACH THROUGH THE MODEL EXPERIMENT

EXPLORATION OF THE VISUAL FIELD

DESIGN PROCESS

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

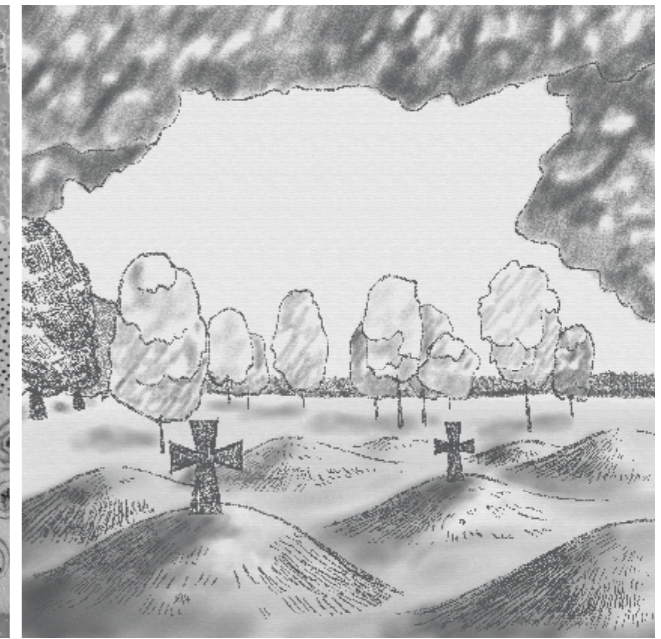
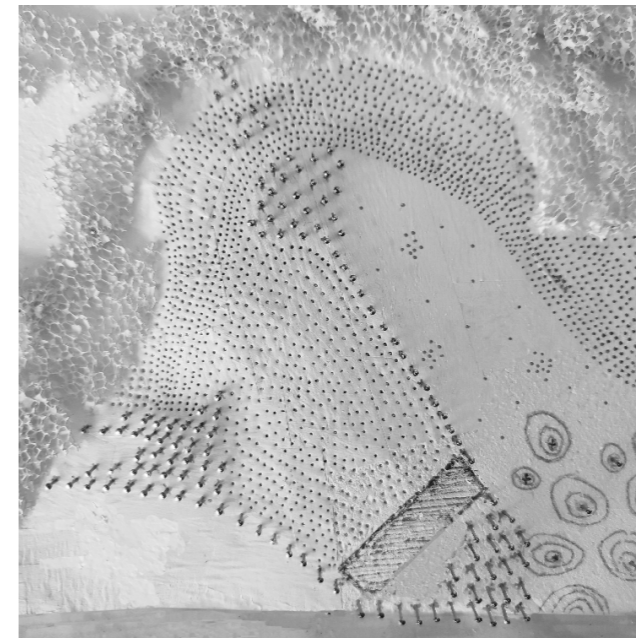




1-ST SPACIAL SEARCH THROUGH THE MODEL
SCALE 1:2500

The Mound Grove concept explores a potential spatial design for the main cemetery entrance. I was thinking to create a field of mounds (kurgans) as a transitional space preceding the graveyard fields, with a grove of individual trees scattered behind them. In Ukrainian ancient history, a 'kurgan' referred to a type of burial mound or tumulus, different in size and shape but typically consisting of earthen mounds covering graves or burial chambers.

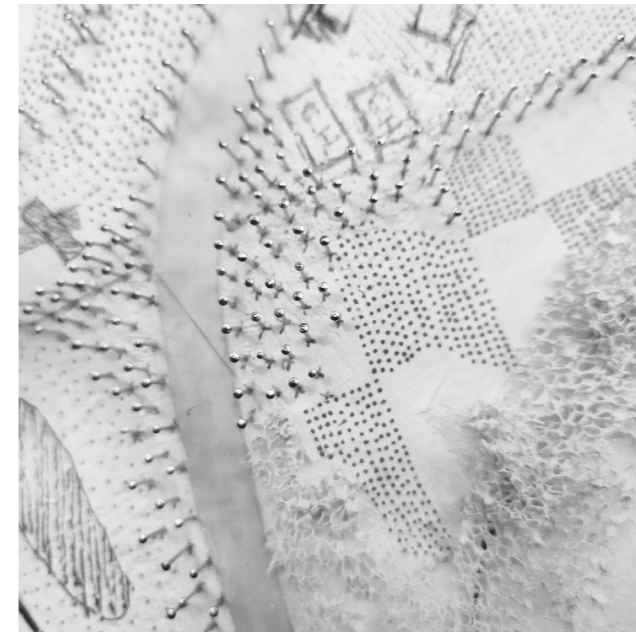
My intention was to use these mounds symbolically, preparing visitors for the potentially complex emotional experiences they may go through after. Additionally, this transitional enclosed space might help to "ground" visitors on their way to the graves, acting as a buffer between the vast graveyard and the main road.



MOUNDS GROVE CONCEPT

The concept of the Spatial Experience Experiment explores the sequence of spatial perception. This involves various elements, such as the paved meeting points along the complementary oak tree lines, the circular enclosure of blooming trees, the scattered graveyard between them, and the grove with individual trees that extends to the existing stream at the bottom of the ravine.

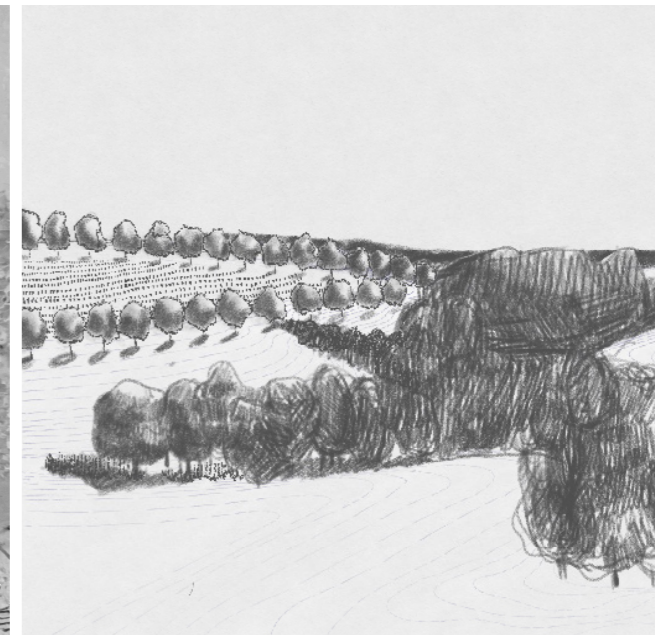
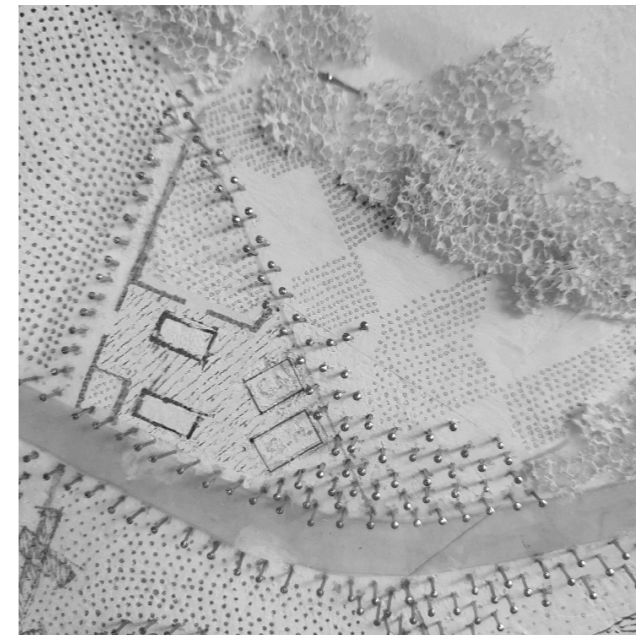
Some people may find themselves uncomfortable in large, expansive graveyards. They might instead choose to walk within the enclosure of blooming trees, which provides a sense of protection. This environment could potentially help them to feel calmer and facilitate safe reflection on challenging thoughts or during times of mourning.



CEMETERY NURSERY CONCEPT

The Nursery concept for a cemetery explores an area within the cemetery grounds dedicated to cultivating young plants, flowers, and trees. The nursery suppose to be situated in a location shielded from wind and direct sunlight, and easily accessible from the main road.

The intention is to leverage the proximity to the existing green belt, utilizing its space for plant beds and repurposing any available rooms within the green belt for potential nursery use. A design proposal creates a clear separation between the plant beds and the potential sites for greenhouses and support buildings.

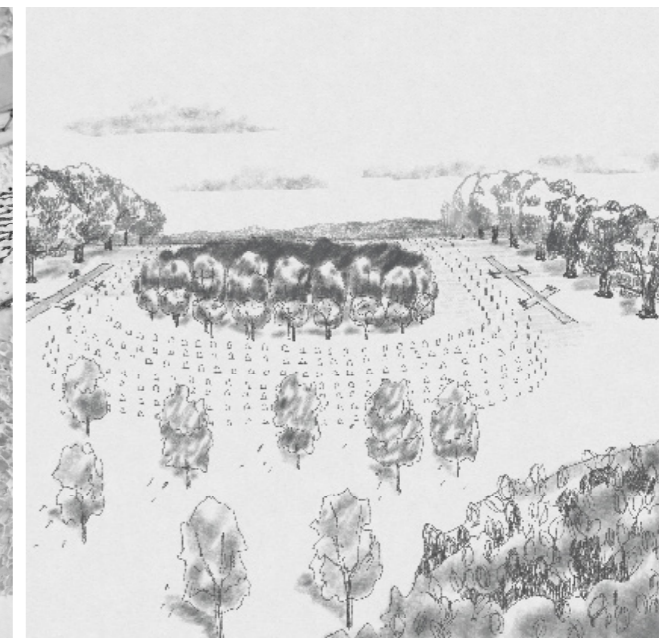


GRAVEYARD EDGE CONCEPT

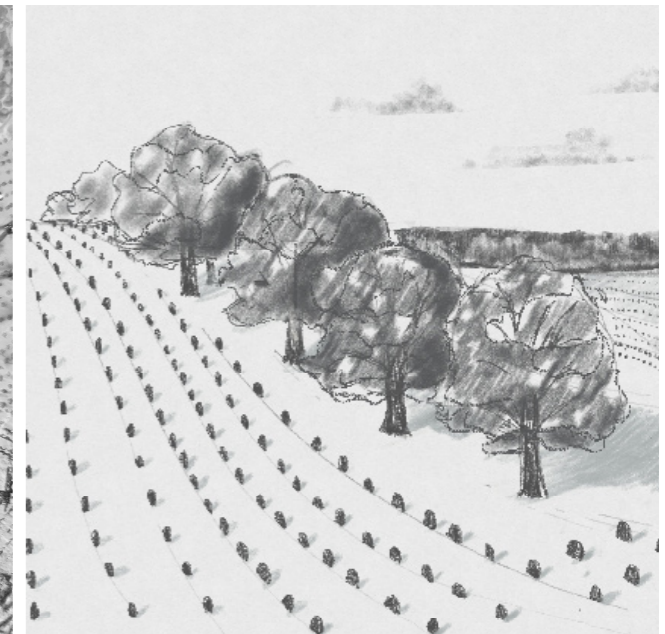
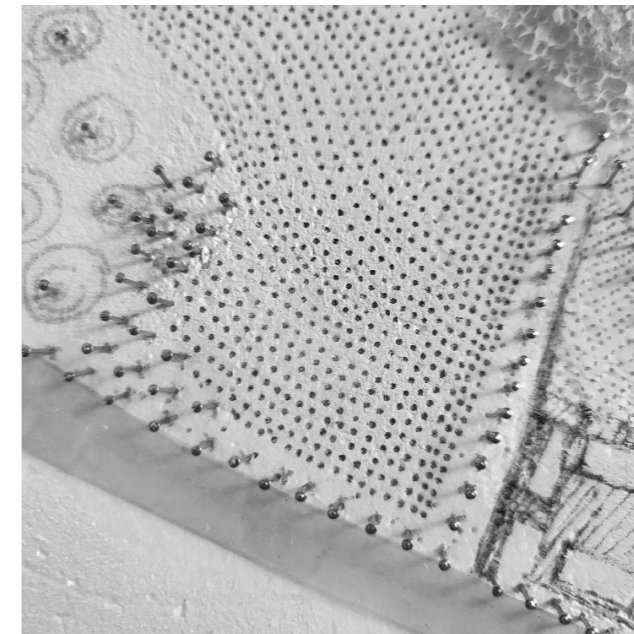
The Vast Graveyard concept explores the perception of expansive areas, where rows of gravestones intersect the terrain and vanish beyond the horizon. Oak tree lines serve as natural frames, guiding visitors' views and delineating distinct gravefields from one another. As the terrain gradually changes in slope, the existing green belt consistently emerges on the horizon, creating a backdrop to the scene.

The Graveyard edge concept explores the change of the perspective view that changes as a viewer is moving along the edge of the existing green belt. The contrast of the lush vegetation is highlighted with the rows of blooming trees.

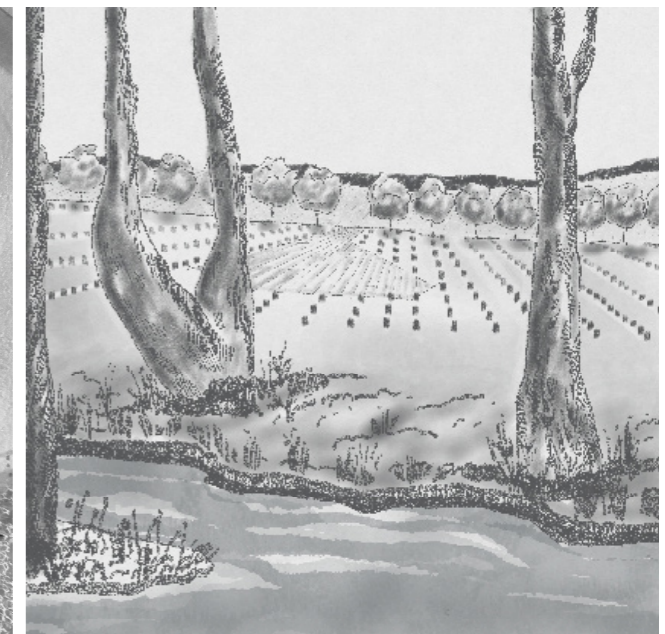
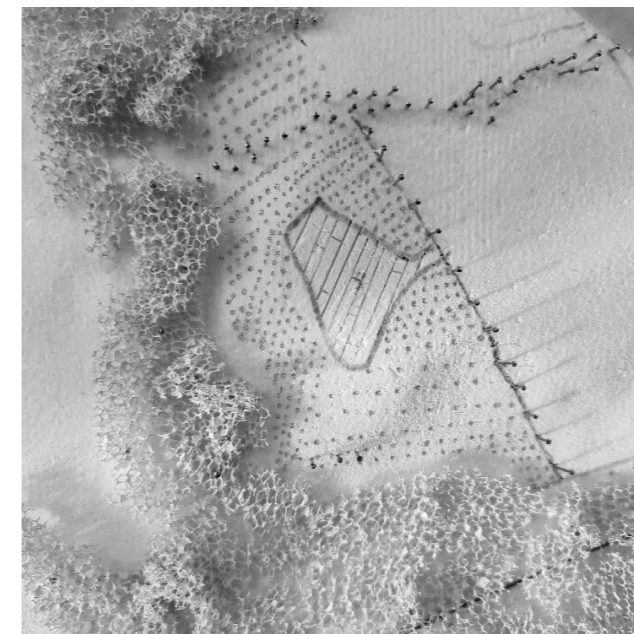
This concept explores the scenery visible from the stream path along the forest edge. The gravestones placed near the forest's edge, yet their rows remain visible from a distance, extending beyond the line of blooming trees. My intention was to examine the sequence of various planes in the background, observed by people strolling along the cemetery, without necessarily entering the vast graveyard itself. Here, the forest's edge looks wild and untamed, and creates in a way some contrast to the neatly lined-up blooming trees and paved spots for gatherings.



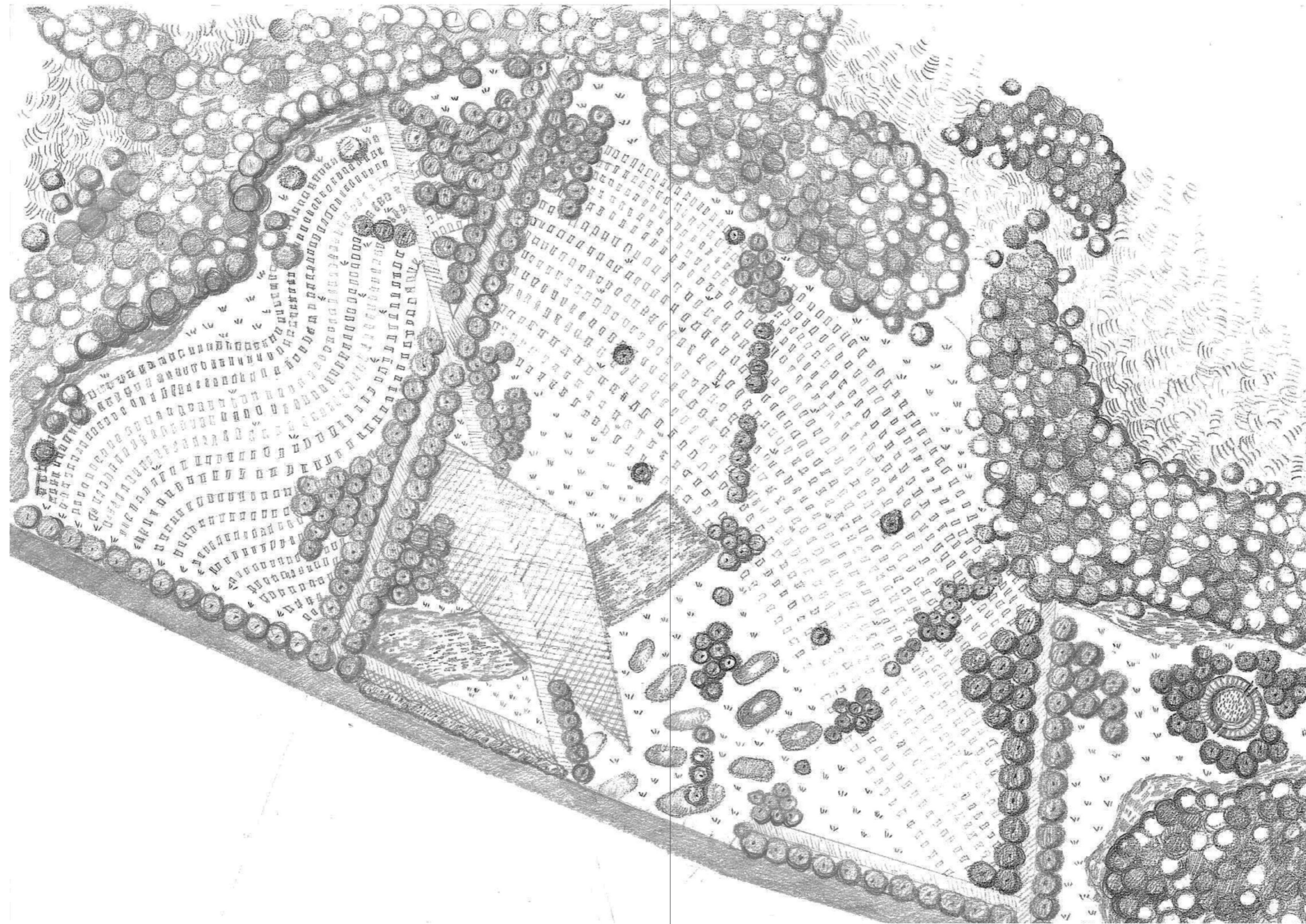
SPACIAL EXPERIENCE EXPERIMENT CONCEPT



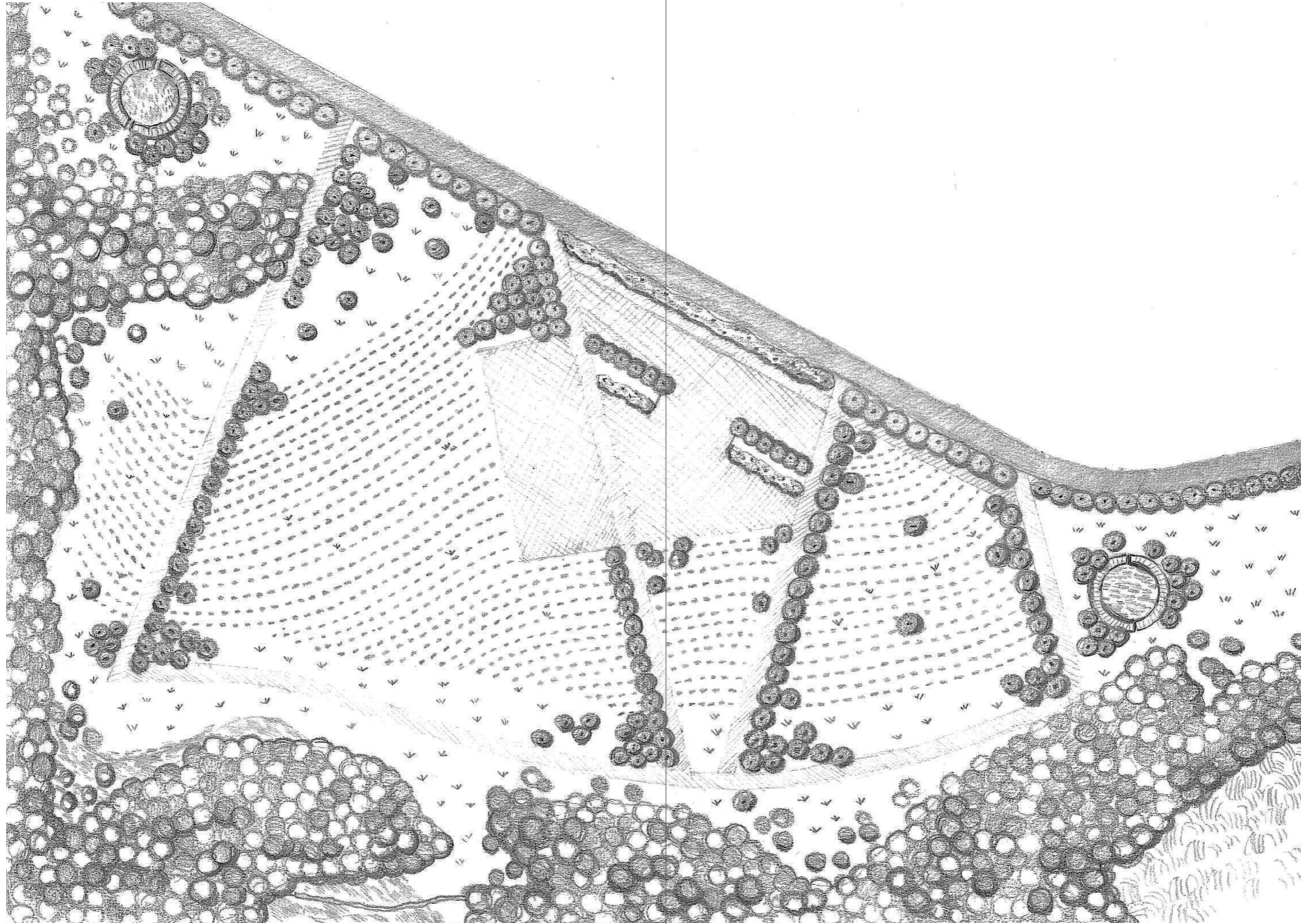
VAST GRAVEYARD CONCEPT



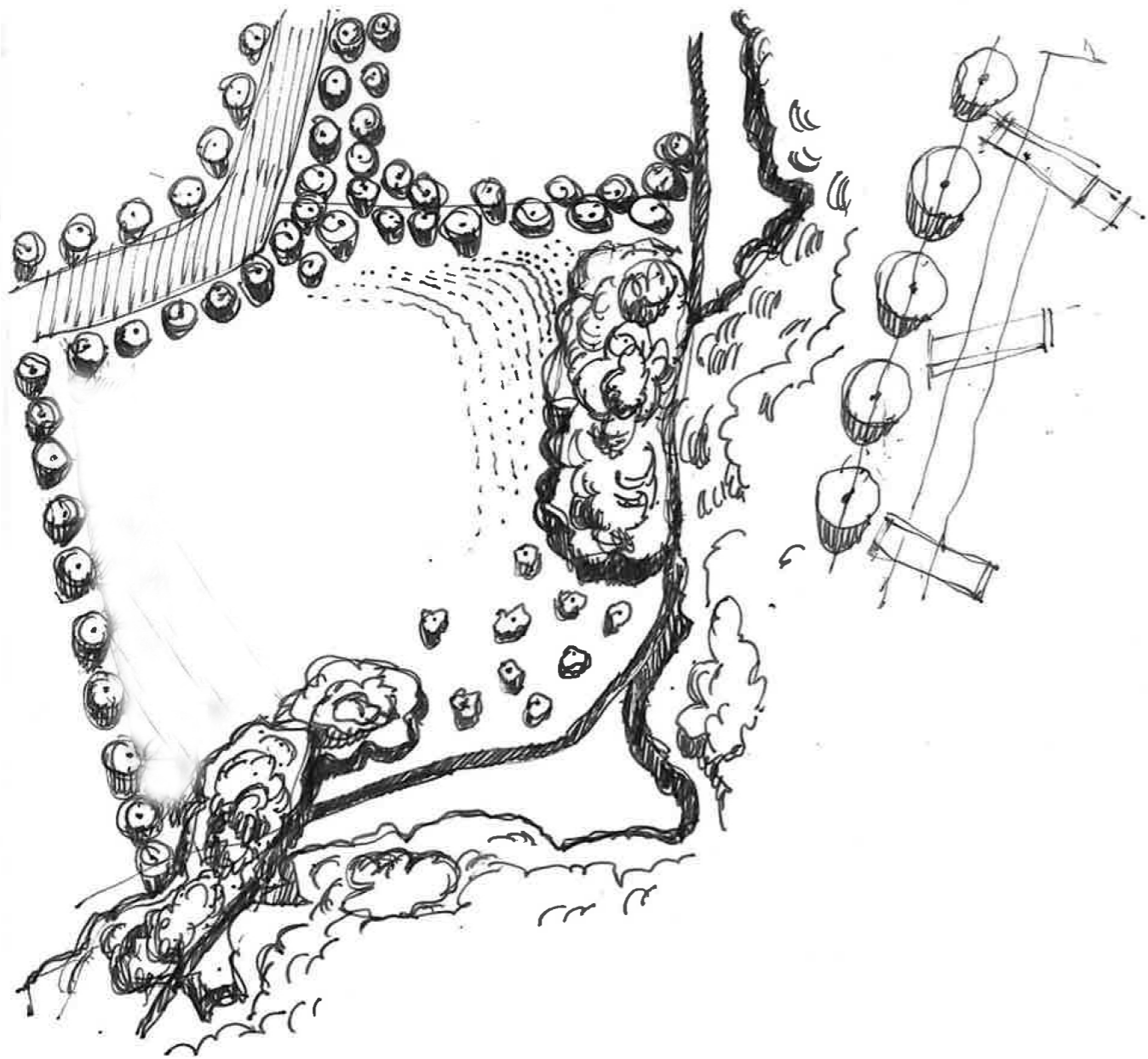
SCENE VIEWED FROM STREAM PATH ALONG FOREST EDGE CONCEPT



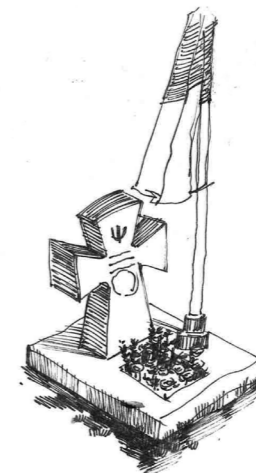
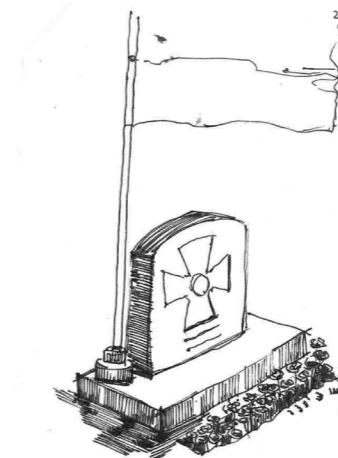
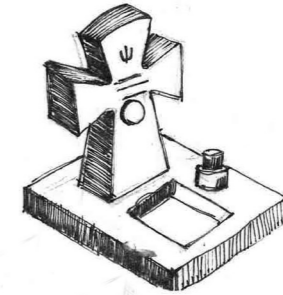
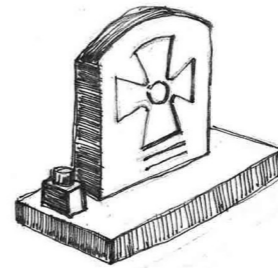
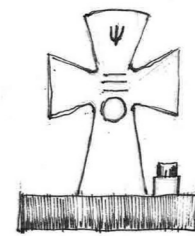
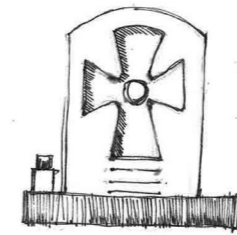
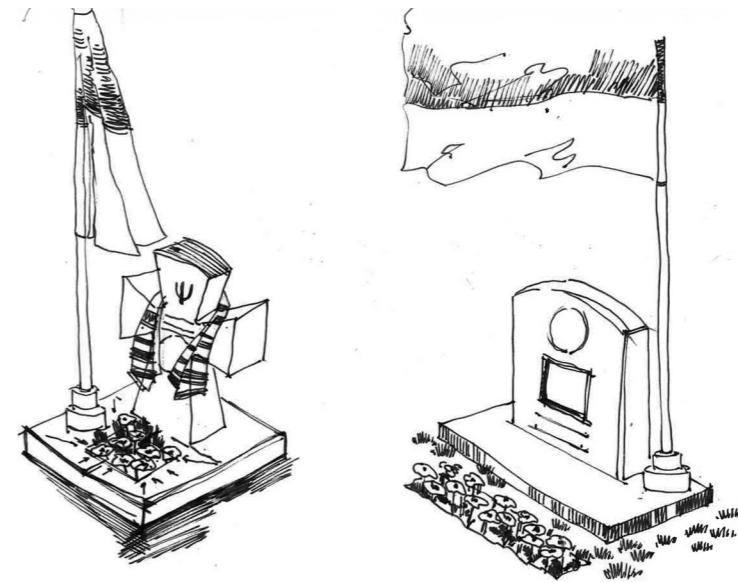
Development of the cemetery plan: north part of the cemetery with casket gravefields and a ceremonial plaza

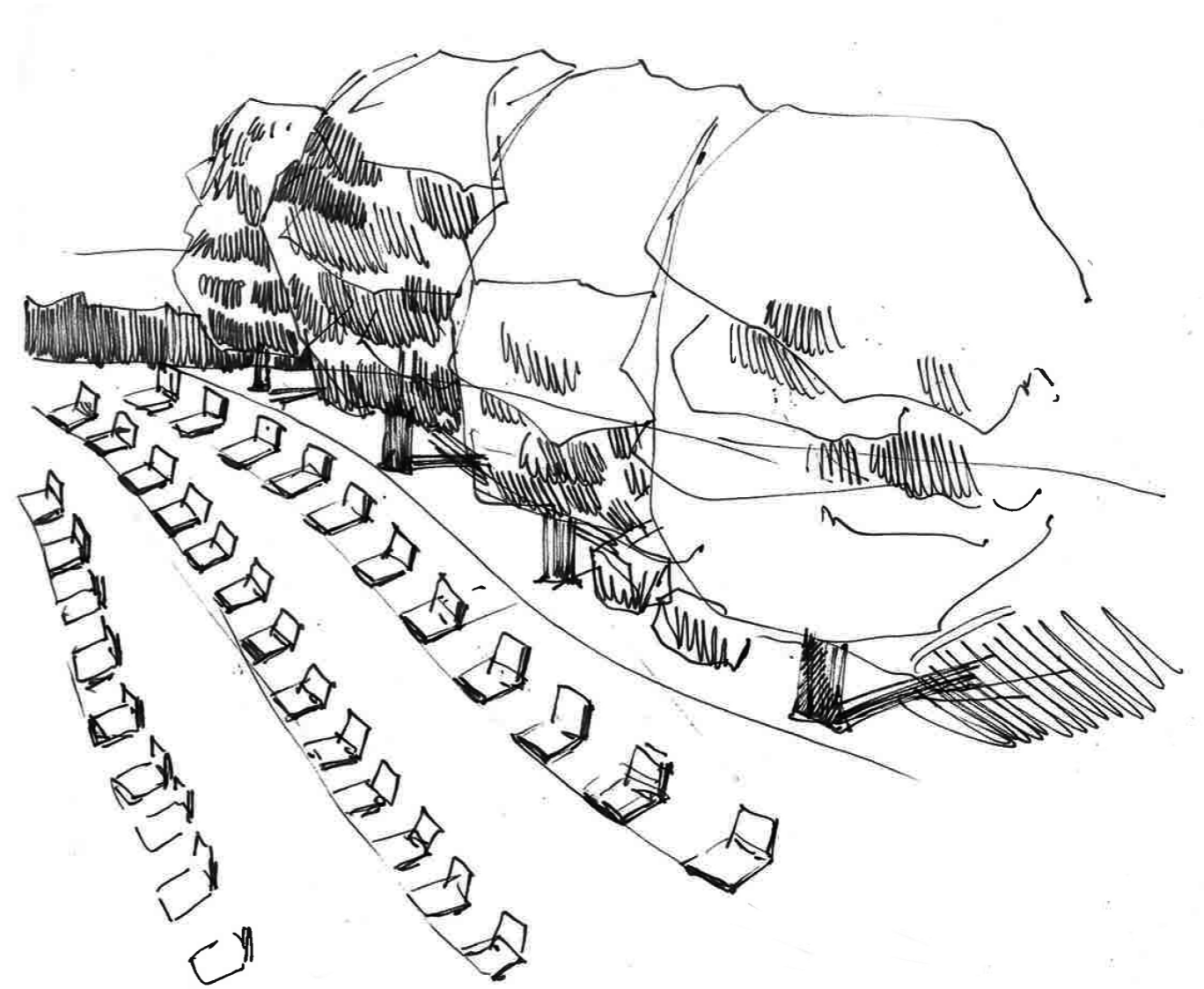
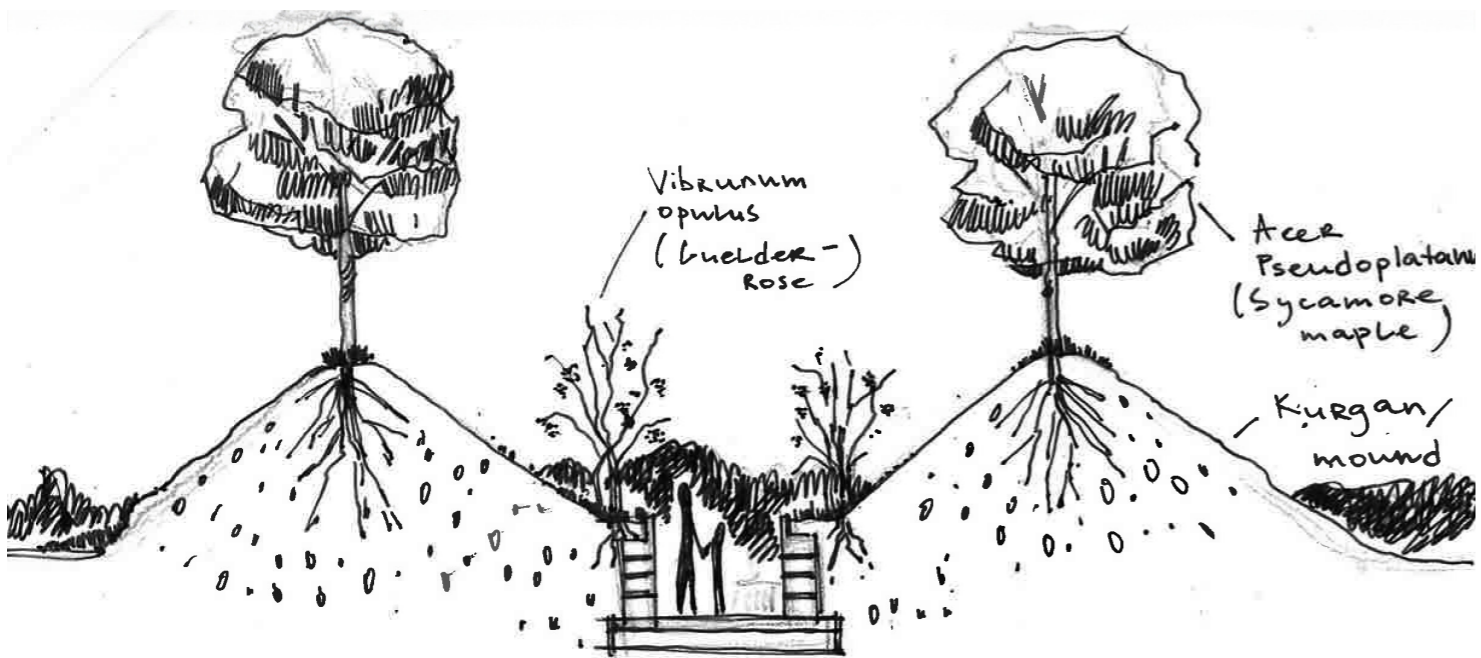


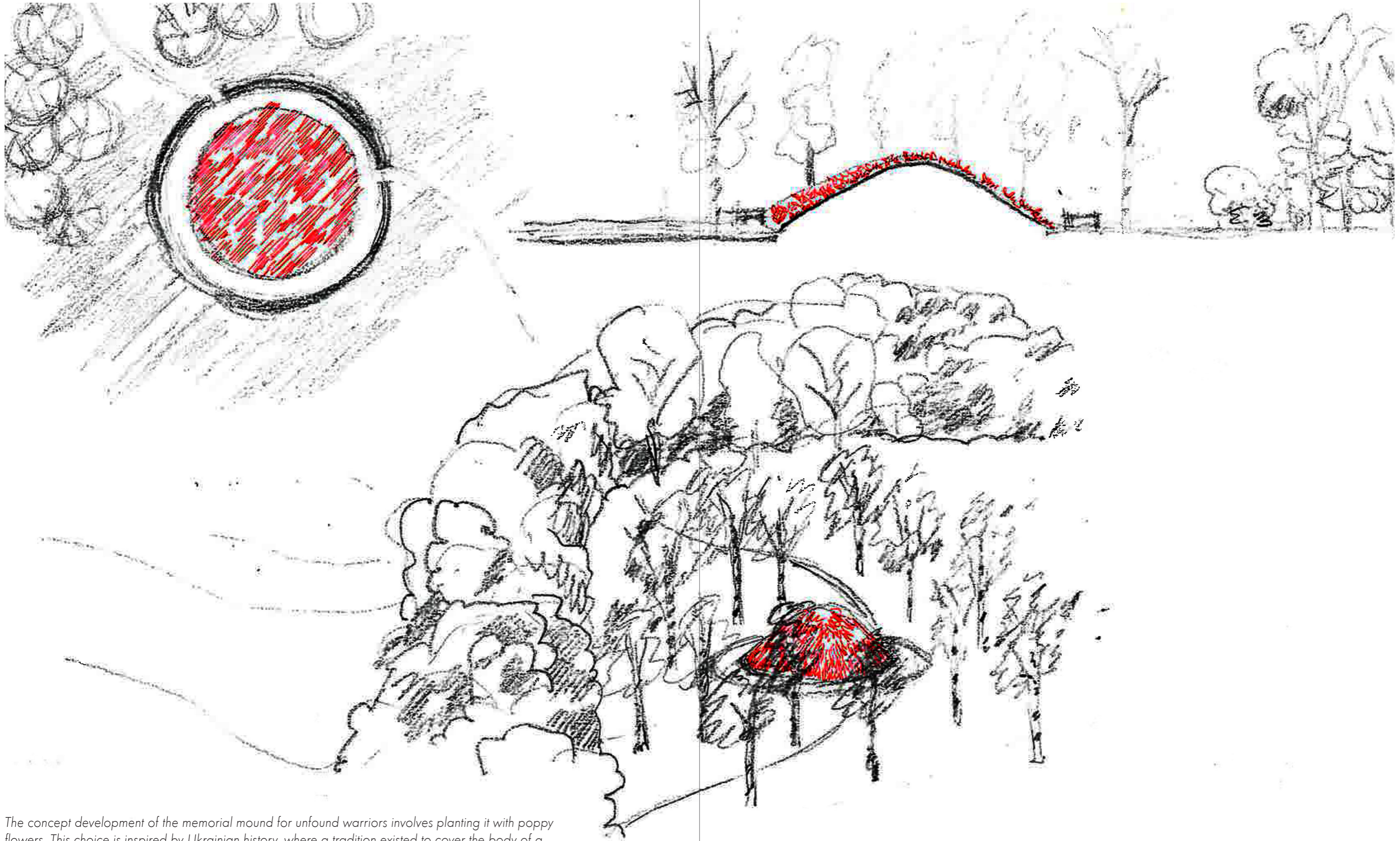
Development of the cemetery plan: south part of the cemetery with urn gravefields, higher density of the burial rows and a possible crematorium



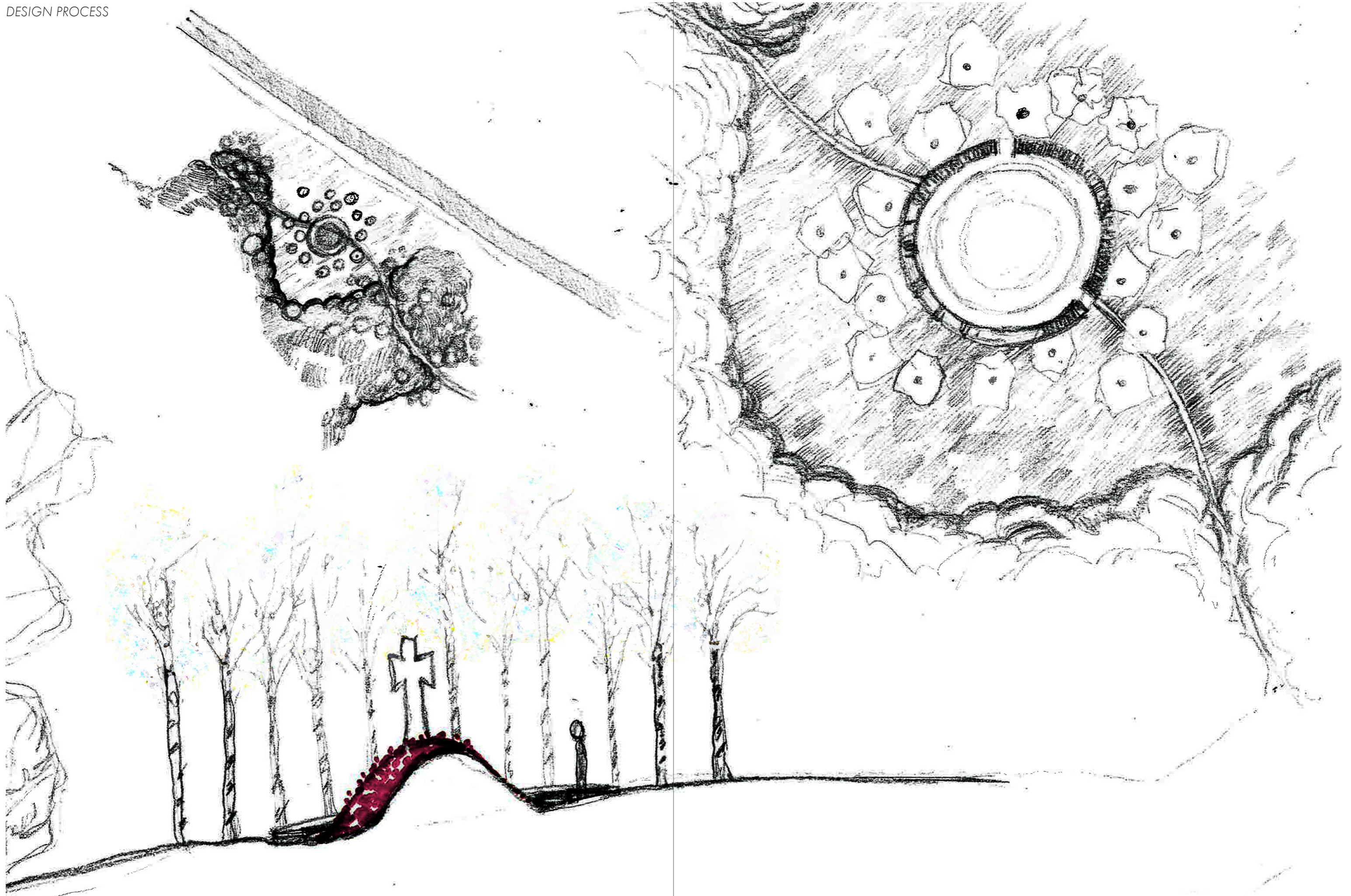
Design development of the green belt edge overlapping the graveyard plot

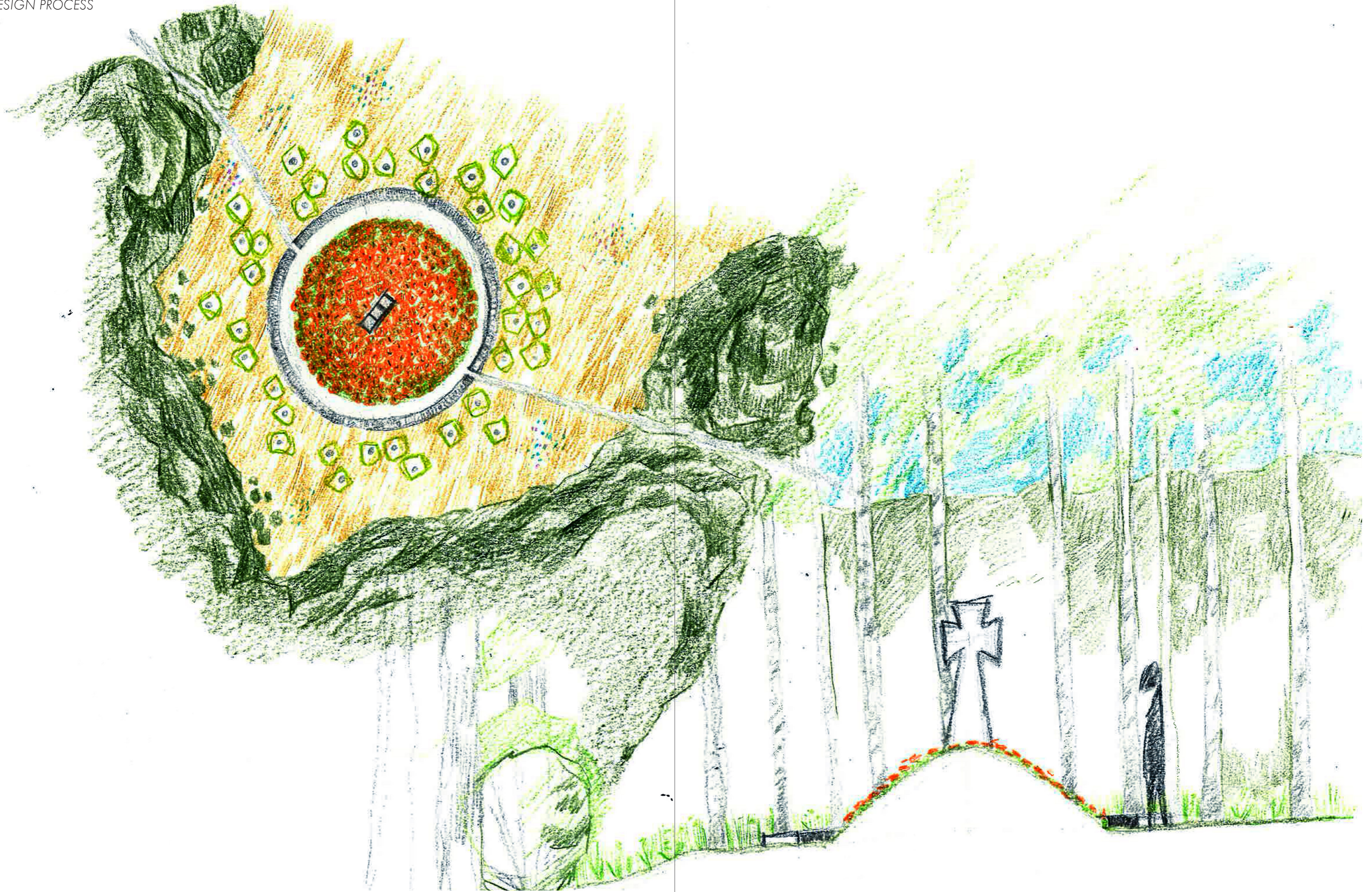


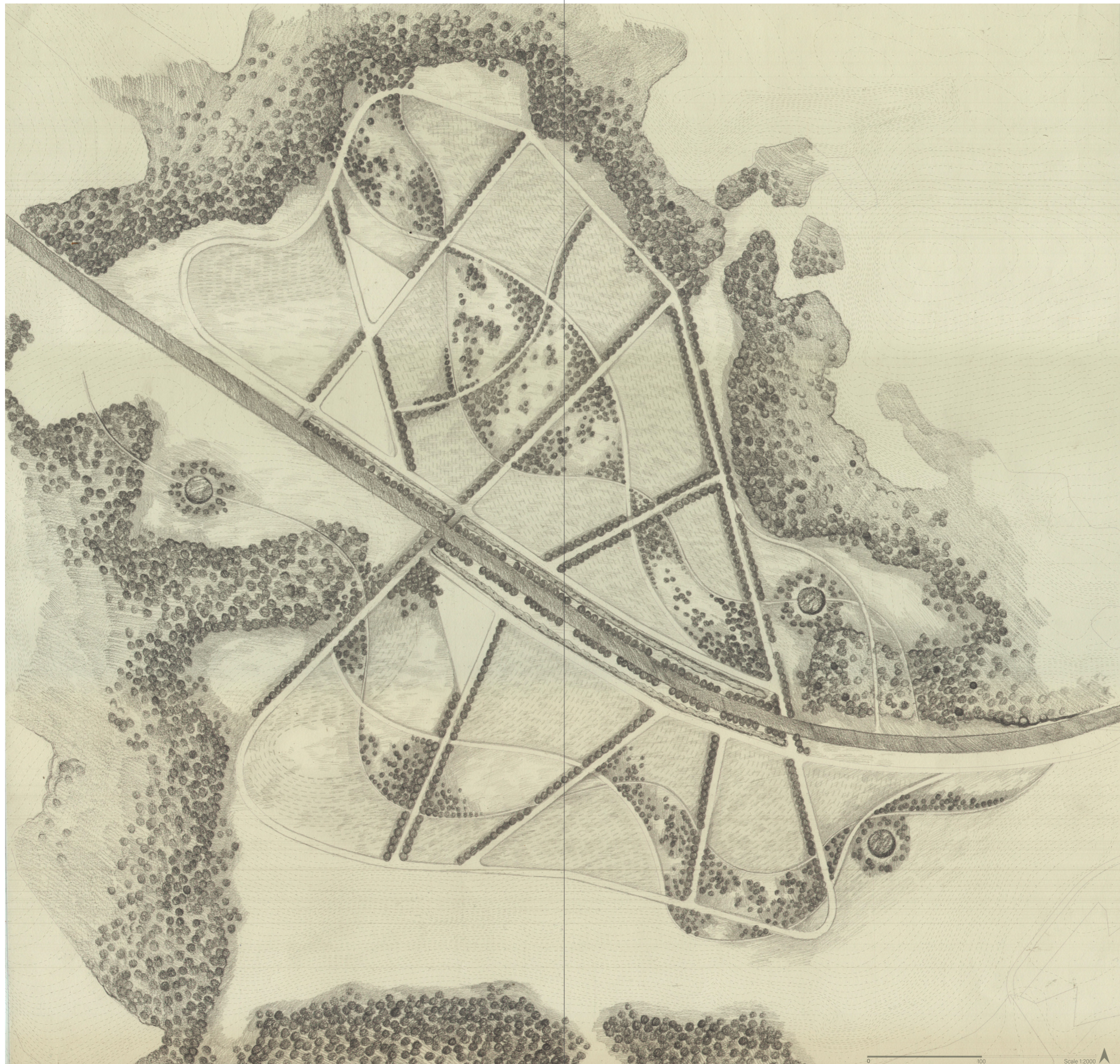




The concept development of the memorial mound for unfound warriors involves planting it with poppy flowers. This choice is inspired by Ukrainian history, where a tradition existed to cover the body of a fallen warrior with a red silk fabric. Surrounding the mound are birch trees, symbolizing the souls of comrades who stand vigil over the peaceful rest of the fallen defenders.



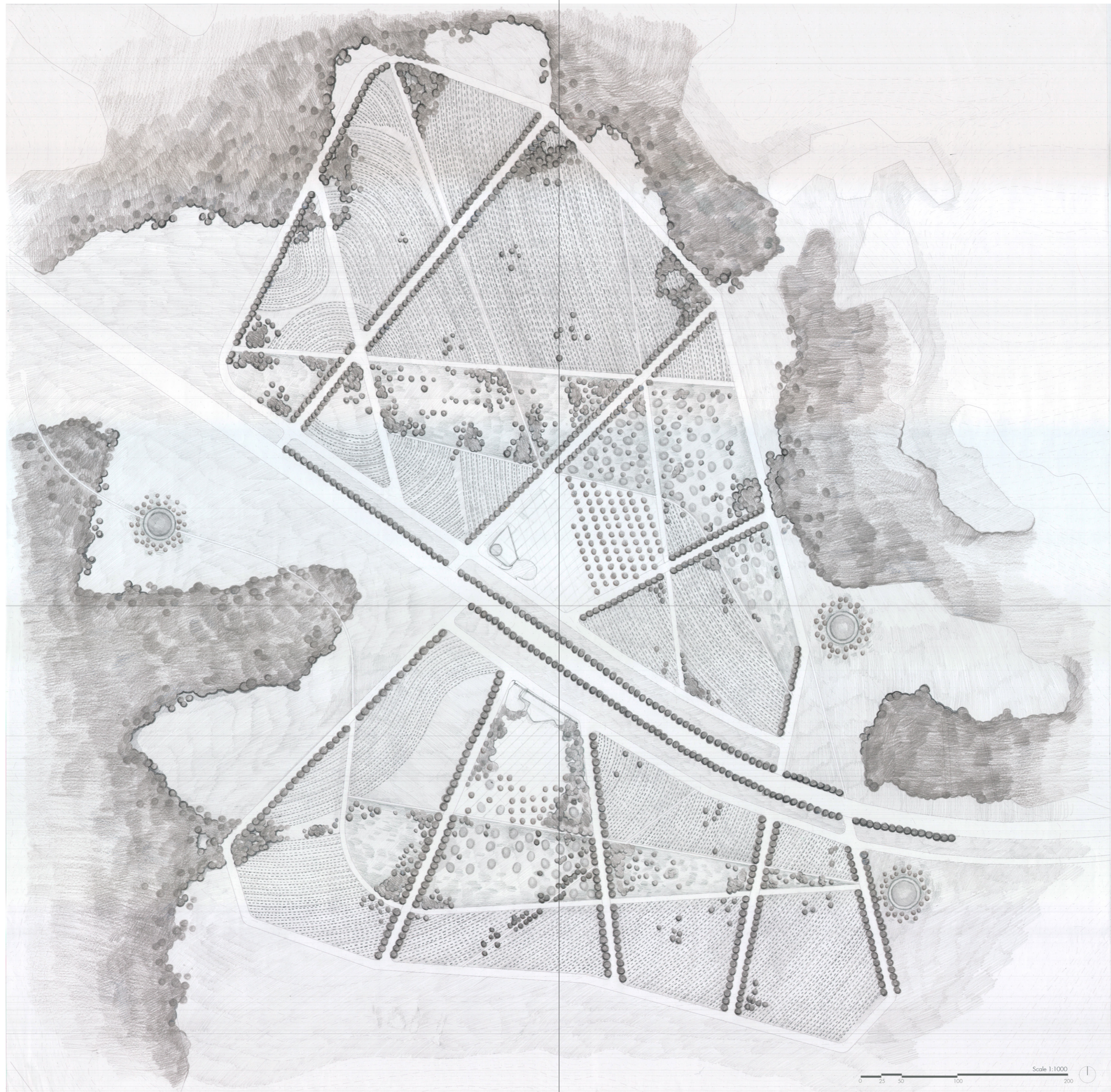




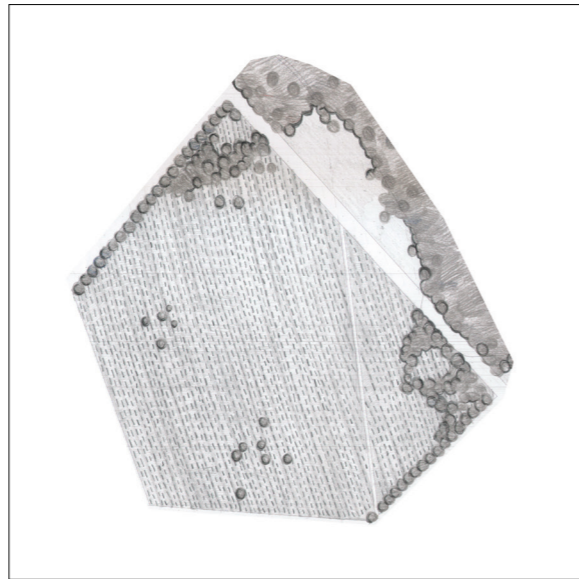
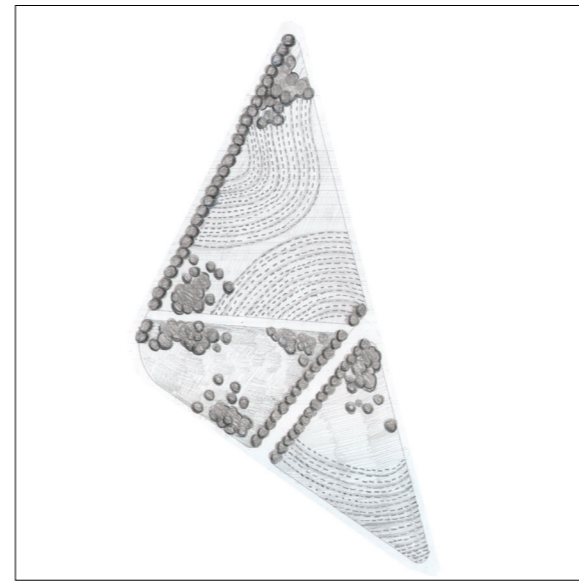
Development of the plan
A1 Scale 1:2000



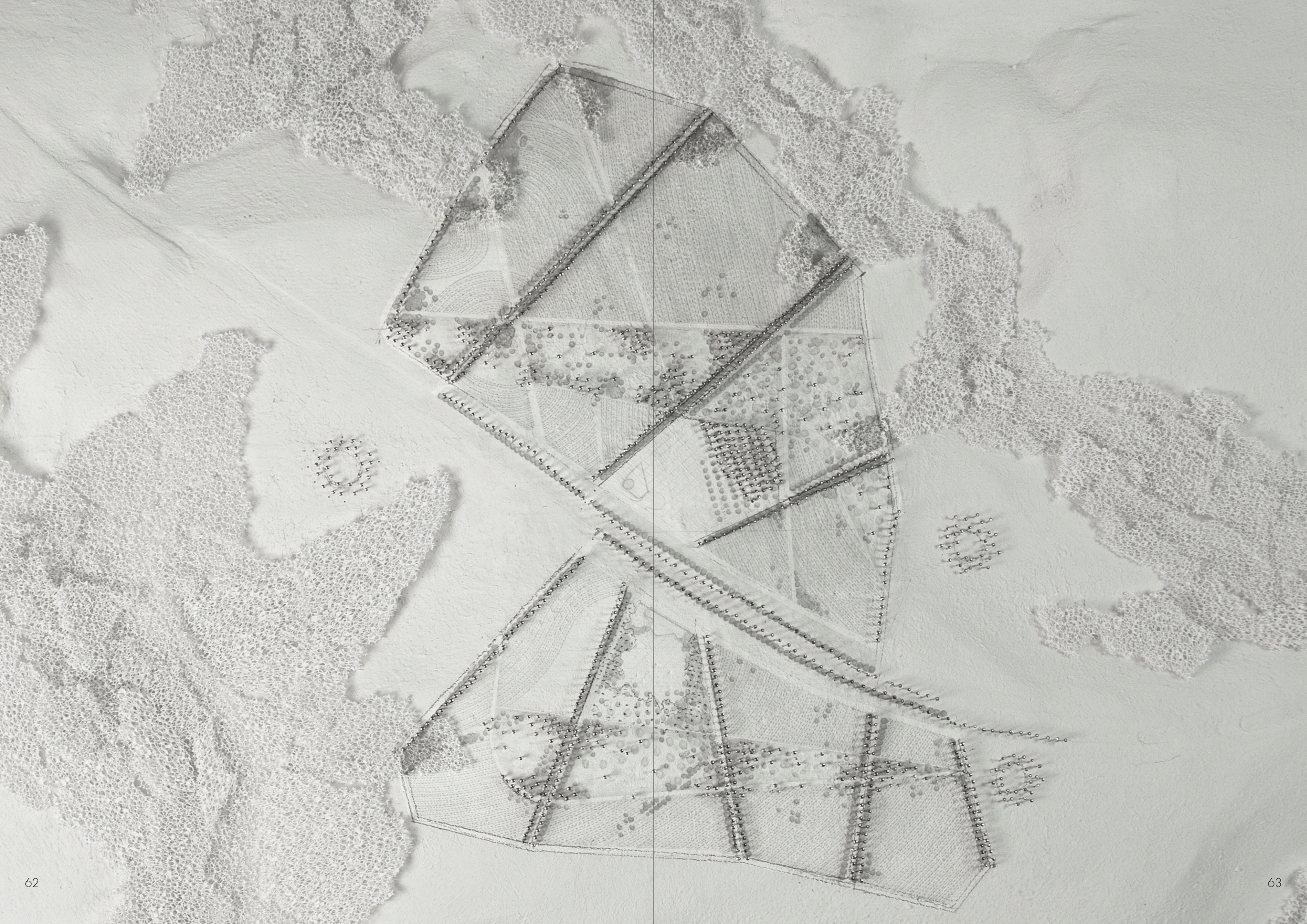
Development of the vegetation plan
A1 Scale 1:2000

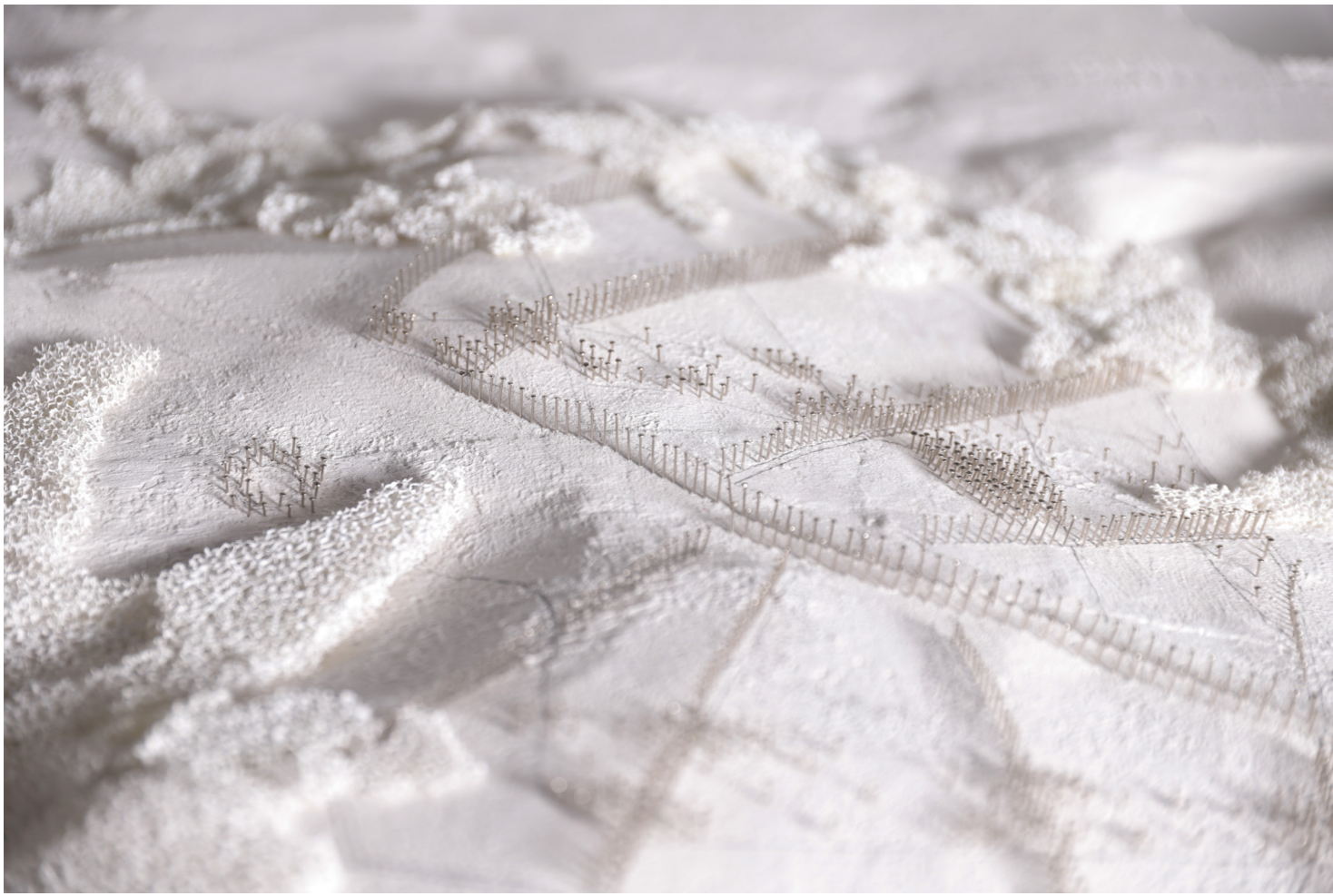


Plan of the war memorial cemetery
AO Scale 1:1000



Fragments of the plan describing different spaces
within the war memorial cemetery





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