BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

**Revitalizing forgotten spaces in the downtown areas of twin cities
Ramallah and Al-Bireh**

إعادة إحياء المناطق المنسية في مركز المدينتين التوأم رام الله و البيرة

Submitted by:
Lima Najjar

Supervised by:
Dr. Shadi Ghadban

Faculty of Engineering & Technology
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Palestine

2015

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Dr. Shadi Ghadban   ………………………
  (Chairman)

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  (Member)

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Date of defense:
4th of May 2015

Thank you Allah..

Thank you mom..

There are no words can explain how I am thankful to you

Acknowledgement:

LIMA NAJJAR

I

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Abstract

This study discusses the forgotten spaces in the downtown areas of twin cities Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Palestine in order to provide an improvement and development framework for them. In the twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh, which share the same cities centre, the phenomenon of forgotten spaces is clearly demonstrated. In the centre around Al-Manara square, for example, the forgotten spaces cover a large area in which no concrete action was taken for improvements. These forgotten spaces are currently used as waste or garbage areas that negatively affect the overall city's environment and visual appearance; however, these spaces have the potential to improve the quality of open spaces within the study area if exploited in a proper way.

This study clarifies the formation of the forgotten spaces through history, and the main factors that led for their formation, definition, current conditions, characteristics, and typologies in order to achieve an appropriate framework for their revitalization. To realize this, the research methodology is based on the following four main types data: field work, interviews/discussions, desktop study and theoretical analysis. The result of the research will be constructed as a framework, which includes suggested uses for the forgotten spaces within the study area, sample designs for some cases, and planning/design recommendations.

ملخص البحث

يناقش هذا البحث ظاهرة الفراغات المنسية بين الابنية في مركز المدينتين التوأم "رام الله والبيرة ". ويهدف هذا البحث الى تسليط الضوء على هذه الظاهرة ضمن منطقة الدراسة، ومحاولة الوصول الى إطار عمل تحسين وتطوير هذه الفراغات .

تتشارك المدينتان في نفس " مركز المدينة " حيث تبدو ظاهرة "الفراغات المنسية " واضحة في منطقة المركز الذي تتشارك فيه مدينتي رام الله والبيرة، وبالتحديد حول ميدان المنارة حيث تغطي هذه الفراغات مساحة مهمة لا يستهان بها. إلا أنه لم تتوفر حتى الان أي خطوات فعالة وعملية تطوير هذه الفراغات أو استخدامها لتحسين جودة البيئة في مركز المدينتين . والفراغات المنسية تلك التي تستخدم استخدامات غير مناسبة أو فعالة ، بل إن بعضها يستخدم مكب للنفايات ومكاره صحية ، مما يؤثر سلبياً على البيئة العامة والمشهد العام للمدينتين ، بالمقابل لو تم استغلال هذه الفراغات بطريقة مناسبة صحيا وجماليًا ، فسيكون لذلك الأثر الكبير في تحسين المحيط العام لمركز المدينتين .

وتقوم هذه الدراسة بتعريف مصطلح " الفراغات المنسية"، وتوضيح كيفية تكونها عبر الفترات الزمنية المختلفة، كما تتعرض هذه الدراسة للعوامل التي أدت إلى تكوين مثل تلك فراغات، ولخصائصها ولوضعها الحالي ولأنماطها . ومن اجل تحقيق ذلك تم استخدام منهجية بحث تعتمد على أربعة مصادر رئيسية للمعلومات هي : العمل الميداني والمقابلات والمناقشات، والدراسات المكتبية، والتحليل للمراجع النظرية .

وتخلص هذه الدراسة إلى اقتراح إطار عمل لتطوير وتحسين هذه الفراغات المنسية، ويتكون هذا الإطار من : مقترحات للاستخدامات المحتملة داخل هذه الفراغات، و اقتراح نماذج تصميمية لبعض منها، واقتراح توصيات تخطيطية وتصميمية قصيرة و بعيدة المدى للتعامل مع هذه الفراغات.

Chapter one - General overview

1.1 Introduction:

Space protection is one of the most important components to achieving sustainability in cities, especially in their public open spaces (Lalbakhsha 2012). Developed countries have started to exploit even neglected and leftover spaces, because they have great potential to improve the life quality of their cities. They take advantage of these spaces to protect the environment, improve social relations, and market cities for both domestic and international tourism (Muge 2004, Lalbakhsh 2012). However, this was not the case in many developing countries, where there is still no concrete action toward reforming these spaces. Moreover, their cities lack quality public spaces (Lalbakhsh 2012). The fast growth and urban development in the most recent two decades has extremely affected the quality of cities' open spaces in both developed and developing countries (Weiland 2005, Lalbakhsh 2012). As a result, a huge number of neglected spaces has emerged, mainly in the central cores of large cities (Lalbakhsh 2012). This problem is also evident in Palestine, especially in the twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh.

Multiple turning points have affected the urban fabric of the twin cities, causing both to share the same downtown area, which includes a large number of leftover and neglected spaces. This study area includes three types of such spaces: car parkings, rooftops, and spaces between buildings. The focus in this research will be in the spaces between buildings, the suitable description of which is "forgotten spaces". These spaces are hard to access, mostly invisible, ignored by their

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owners, and unknown to downtown daily users **(Fig 1-1).** Nowadays, these spaces are dirty and are poorly utilized, but they have potential and might provide added value to the downtown environment if they are used in the right way, while there is a need for quality spaces in the cities in general, and especially in the cities centre. Ramallah and Al-Bireh were chosen for this research because they present good examples to understand the issue of forgotten spaces, and to exemplify the purpose of defining a framework for improvement and development of the forgotten spaces within the downtown area of the twin cities.

1.2 Problem identification:

The twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh were affected by several historical turning points, particularly the cities' shared central area. As a result, many issues appeared in regard to spaces located between buildings, covering a wide area, which will be discussed in the research in term of forgotten spaces.

Forgotten spaces are clearly demonstrated in the twin cities; for example, the downtown area of Ramallah and Al-Bireh looks dense and over built, yet there is a large number of forgotten spaces, covering 18.6 dunoms within the study area, covering 502.4dunoms (1 dunom= 1000m^2). Forgotten spaces are mainly caused by building regulations and the ownership issues, after which they are left or ignored and no clear decisions are made about how to develop them, or they are considered "surpluses" (i.e. vacant spaces not suitable for rebuilding). According to building regulations, these spaces are private property, left as setbacks and not

suitable for construction. Neither municipality use them for public activities and are taking no action to impose these forgotten spaces on others. Due to the absence of clear policy, regulations, and general control of these spaces, they are not forcing the owners to maintain and clean them. The delays in decisions regarding these areas have caused them to be developed as invisible waste areas, distorting the general environmental condition and visual appearance of the area.

1.3 Forgotten spaces definition:

The term "forgotten spaces" in this research is defined according to the theoretical analysis and the historical development of the twin cities' downtown urban fabric, discussed here according to research purposes. Though they have existed sincethe1980s, people have been hardly aware of or use them due to few tangible changes that have occurred in these spaces. There is a lack of accessibility and visibility, as well as an attitude of carelessness toward them. They are in-between spaces that are leftover, ignored, and undervalued and have a negative effect on one or more of the following aspects: the environment, social relations, and image/identity of the downtown area. Forgotten spaces are unplanned and undeveloped spaces that have emerged within the urban fabric over time because of urban development. They exist in the lots' remains after the erection of buildings on these plots. The lack of integration between indoor and outdoor activities, the enclosure of buildings around vacant spaces, inaccessibility and people's attitudes (i.e. owners of the land or daily users of city spaces) have

assisted in the formation of these forgotten spaces. These spaces have no specific use, but they could be an important resource to increase the value of public spaces and quality of everyday life within the downtown area.

Figure 1-1: The current situation of one of the forgotten spaces in the twin cities.
 Source: Aerial photos from Ramallah municipality archive and the photos taken by author
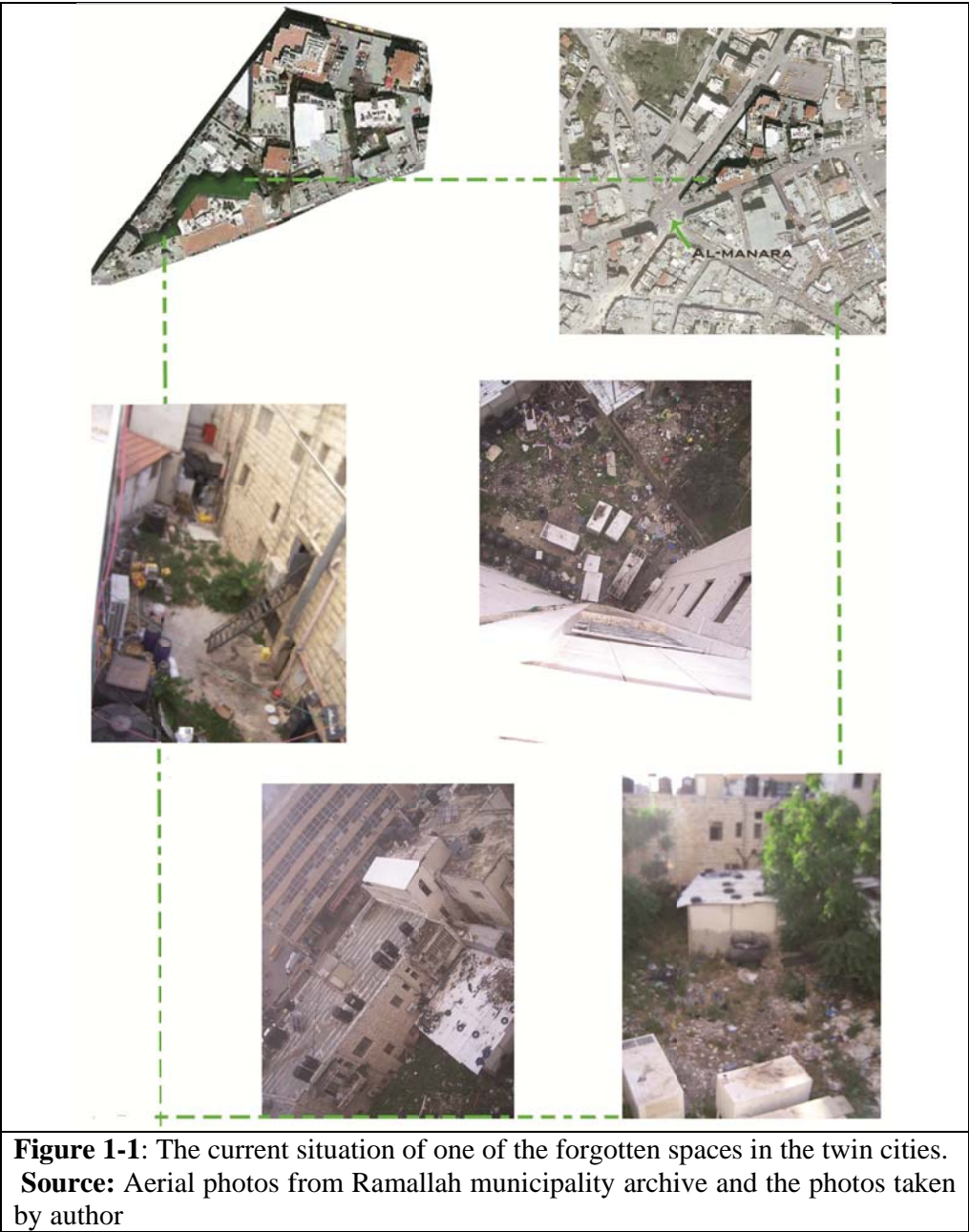
1.4 Research Aims:

This research aims to understand and analyse the phenomenon of forgotten spaces within the downtown area of twin cities Ramallah and Al-Bireh in order to develop an improvement framework for the condition of these spaces and make them viable with high-quality conditions. Overall, this framework aims to integrate the forgotten spaces into the twin cities' urban development and planning system and to avoid the emergence of such spaces in future. The framework includes suggested uses for the forgotten spaces, suggested sample designs for some of them, and planning-design recommendations that will assist in making the twin cities more vital and will provide an increase in high-quality public spaces.

1.5 Research questions:

According to the current situation of the forgotten spaces in the downtown area of the twin cities and according to the aims of this study, the main question this study will answer is as follows:

How will the forgotten spaces be re-integrated with the twin cities' urban fabric?

To answer this question, the following sub-questions should be discussed and answered:

1- What are the main characteristics and conditions of the forgotten spaces?

2- What are the reasons behind the formation of these forgotten spaces?

3- What is the impact of the forgotten spaces on the urban fabric of twin cities Ramallah and Al-Bireh?

4- What is the community's attitude toward these forgotten spaces and toward the revitalization process of these spaces?

1.6 Research significance:

There is an important need for open spaces in the twin cities downtown, most of the activities and events take place in Al-Manara square, which therefore causes the closure of the streets and leads to unnecessary congestion **(Fig 1-2).** At the same time, there are 18.6 donums of forgotten spaces, which afford a significant area to accommodate the need of the open public spaces within the downtown if they are revitalized. Accordingly, providing a framework to develop the forgotten spaces is a necessity.

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Figure 1-2: Images showing the need for more downtown public space where the streets are closed to accommodate different events and uses:(1) stalls parked in the middle of the street, (2) a public event contains a large number of people in the area of Al-Manara square typically used for vehicle movement.
Source:(1) Author,(2) http://www.arn.ps/archives/75670 accessed in December-2014

1.7 Research structure:

This research consists of seven chapters arranged to consecutively answer the research questions and, there by achieve the aims of the study:

Chapter one presents an overview of the main research issue, problems, aims, and questions. This chapter explains the issue of neglected and leftover spaces in developed and developing countries and explains this issue in the context of the study area, which is the downtown area of twin cities Ramallah and Al-Bireh. The forgotten spaces are defined according to theoretical analysis, historical urban development, and their condition within the twin cities.

Chapter two presents the research methodology, including its approach, main method used, research data types, and process of collecting, organising, and analysing them. It also discusses the limitations of the research.

Chapter three provides an overview of the importance of quality open spaces in cities, classifying the activities that could occur within spaces between buildings according to Ghel, and also the relation of neglected leftover spaces to these classifications. Then theories on the use of such spaces are discussed from the perspectives of the main pioneers who first discussed this issue. These theories were analysed under the term 'lost waste space' in addition to the more recent term, 'loose space'. In addition, the main idea of the spaces' revitalization is discussed and brown-field sites are given as an example of this process. At the end of this chapter, worldwide cases of revitalised spaces on different scales are

presented to show the potential of improving the quality of the cities' forgotten spaces.

Chapter four includes a historical review of the downtown area of the twin cities and the historical turning points that affected urban development and assisted in the formation of the forgotten spaces.

Chapter five illustrates and analyses the types of leftover neglected spaces according to the fieldwork, defining area each type covered before the focus becomes the forgotten spaces. This chapter includes a wide scope of information related to the forgotten spaces within the study area such as their characteristics, current situation, the main factors that assisted in their formation, and their typologies, and then summarizes all findings, including fieldwork results.

Chapter six includes a suggested framework that includes potential uses for the forgotten spaces according to their typologies. Some of the forgotten spaces chosen are analysed and sample designs are suggested for them, such as urban planning and urban design recommendations to aid in their improvement and development.

Chapter seven includes the conclusion of the research.

Chapter two- Research methodology

2.1 Research approach:

According to the primary aim of this research to provide forgotten spaces with an improvement framework an applied research approach is used to discover and suggest a solution for problems within a specific area or society. In this case, the problem is the 'forgotten spaces' in the twin cities' downtown area and the suggested solution will be an improvement framework. A case study approach is also used to understand the forgotten spaces phenomenon and to provide the requisite information about them specific to the study area in an effort to suggest a suitable framework for their improvement (Kothari 2004).

This method enables a deep understanding of the complex real-life activities in which multiple sources of evidence were used (Noor 2008).

2.2 Case study methodology:

Robert Yin (1994) defined the case study as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used'. Case study methodology is used to explore a phenomenon within a specific context, usually to answer the research questions of "how and why" by using various types of data from different resources, and then organizing and analysing them. Different layers of information are needed to discover and understand all aspects of the studied phenomenon (Baxter & Jack 2008, Noor 2008). This research can be classified as explanatory case study

research, as it discusses the issue of the forgotten spaces within the downtown area of the twin cities, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. This phenomenon appeared because of different geo-political and morphological developments (i.e. evidence) that occurred in Palestine. As such, this study will mention them in brief.

2.2.1 Research case study:

The research case focuses on the downtown area of twin cities Ramallah and Al-Bireh, which contains a number of forgotten spaces. Their locations are disparate within the downtown area, but are concentrated around Al-Manara square (the intersection point). Therefore, a circle with 400m radius is chosen around the intersection point between the two cities (Al-Manara square). This was the case, because the ideal walkable distance defined for such studies in the references is 400 m (Larsen et al 2010). This area includes spaces from both cities, where the issue of forgotten spaces is defined clearly **(Fig 2-1)** and most people's activities were and still are concentrated within this area of the downtown.
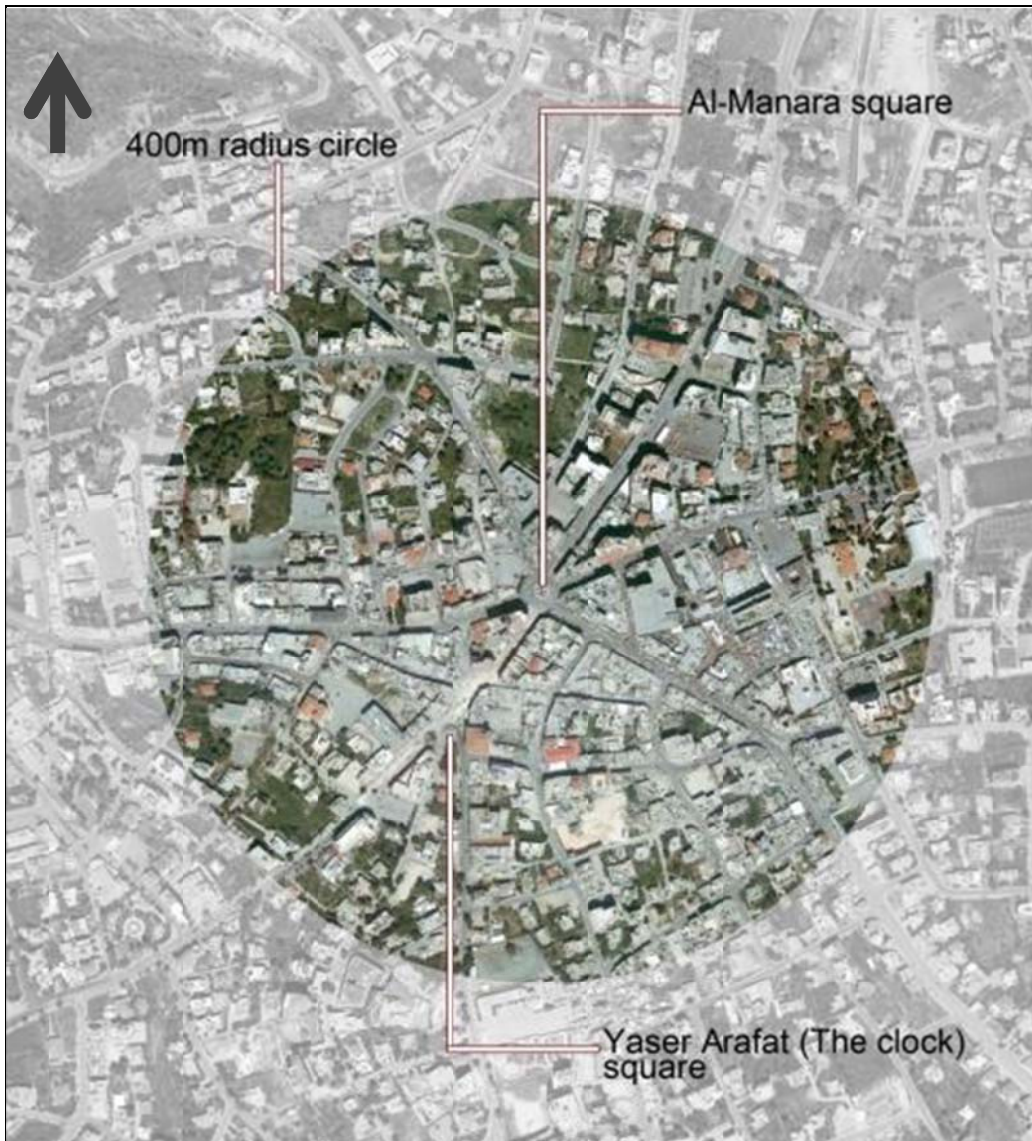
Figure 2-1: An aerial photo of the twin cities' downtown area, taken in 2011, showing the study area that is inscribed within a circle with a 400 m radius around Al-Manara square, which includes parts from both cities, Ramallah and Al-Bireh.

Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

2.3 Research data:

The research has several steps before arriving at the conclusions. The first step is data collection, then data organization, and finally data analysis. In this process, the following were explored: the study area, phenomenon of this research, reasons behind the formation of forgotten spaces, and the forgotten spaces' conditions and characteristics. **Figure 2-2** summarizes the research methodology steps and each step will be discussed in detail later on.

2.3.1 Data collection:

The main information used in this research was obtained from two types of sources: primary sources and secondary sources. Primary research includes any sources contacted by the researchers specifically to conduct the study, such as questionnaire interviews and field work, while secondary research includes any data-based sources or information found in other studies or sources, such as publications and municipality reports (Babikir et al 2009). Accordingly, data in this study were divided into five main folds: fieldwork, interviews, and discussions as primary sources; and desktop study and theoretical analysis as secondary sources. Each data type has its purpose in the case study exploration.

Primary sources of data are as follow:

- Fieldwork was conducted to specify the exact locations and number of the forgotten spaces, their types, and also to examine their conditions and current uses.

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Input data & information

1	Historical research	Aerial photos maps analysis	Archival research
	- Researches about the twin cities history from books and researches - Interviews with old peoples whose live in past periods	Study the urban development of the downtown for the available maps and arials photos for the years 1960, 1985, 1999, 2005 and 2011	Study the archive of both cities municipalities to cover the unavailable information in the aerial photos and historical study

2 Theoretical research

Trancik → Lost space

Lynch → Waste space

Franck and Quentin → Loose space

and other researchers

3 Fieldwork

- **Make a survey to:**

1- Locate forgotten spaces

2- observe their current conditions

4 Interview and discussion

An open discussion held with ramallah municipality to discuss the issue of forgotten spaces in the downtown

- **Make interviews with the daily users of the downtown to understand their attitude toward forgotten spaces**

Analysis

Data analysis results

- Understanding how the forgotten spaces emerged and formed within the twin cities downtown urban fabric

- Understanding the issue of ignored leftover spaces in different points of view internationally

-Define the characteristics and components of forgotten spaces in the study area.
- Knowing the main factors that assisted in the formation of forgotten spaces

-To find out the possibilities of revitalizing forgotten spaces and integrate them with the urban fabric of the city

- To avoid the causes that led to forgotten spaces in the twin cities

-To know How to deal with the spaces effectively

Research results →

Recommendations & suggestions to improve and integrate the forgotten spaces within the twin cities down town

Figure 2-2: A figure summarizing the methodology

- Interviews were conducted with elderly people who have had direct contact with these spaces in the past, as well as with current users of the forgotten spaces in order to clarify the following issues:

- The uses of building rooftops, backyards, and buildings' open spaces in past and in present.

- The current conditions and uses of spaces behind buildings.

- The attitude of landowners and daily users of the twin cities' centre toward the forgotten spaces.

-A meeting with the department of buildings and planning in Ramallah municipality was held in May2014 and a discussion with Al-bireh municipality as well. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the issue of the forgotten spaces and to find out if they were currently known to the municipalities, how they envisage them in future development, how they could adapt the results and recommendations of this research, and to examine their ability to give the proper support for the revitalization process. At the end of the meeting, there was a consensus about the necessity of providing a pilot project for samples of these forgotten spaces.

Secondary sources of the data:

- Desktop study on the case study area's urban development and internal forgotten spaces; data include:

- A study of the historical development of the twin cities' downtown

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urban fabric was conducted by referring to historical books and previous research, such as *The twin cities Ramallah, Al-bireh & villages* by Al-Dajani (1998), *Ramallah - history and architecture* by Aljoube & Bushara (2002), *Almanara square: monumental architecture and power* by Shibli (2006) and other resources.

- Aerial photos and maps showing the different periods of the area's development were obtained and were used to track the progress of developmentin1960, 1985, 1999, 2005, and 2011. These years were used specifically because there were no maps or clear aerial photos available prior to 1960 and there were no maps available for the period between1960 and1985 and 1985 through1999. The map of 2005 was chosen because it was prepared after the second Intifada, which is an important turning point that affected the downtown urban fabric. In addition, the map of 2011 is the latest available aerial photo and most closely reflects the current urban fabric in the downtown area.

- Archival research was conducted to both support and complete the information included in the maps and aerial photos. The archival research covered three regions of the study area, as shown in **Figure (2-3)** and a summary of the archival results for parts from Area 2 are given as an example in **Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4**. These three areas were chosen because they contain land from both cities, where Areas 1 and 2 are from

Ramallah city and Area 3 from Al-Bireh city. Another reason is because these areas have a direct connection with Al-Manara square.

Figure 2-3: Figure showing the three areas for which the archival analysis was done. Areas 1 & 2 are located within Ramallah city boundaries while Area 3 is from Al-Bireh.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by the author.
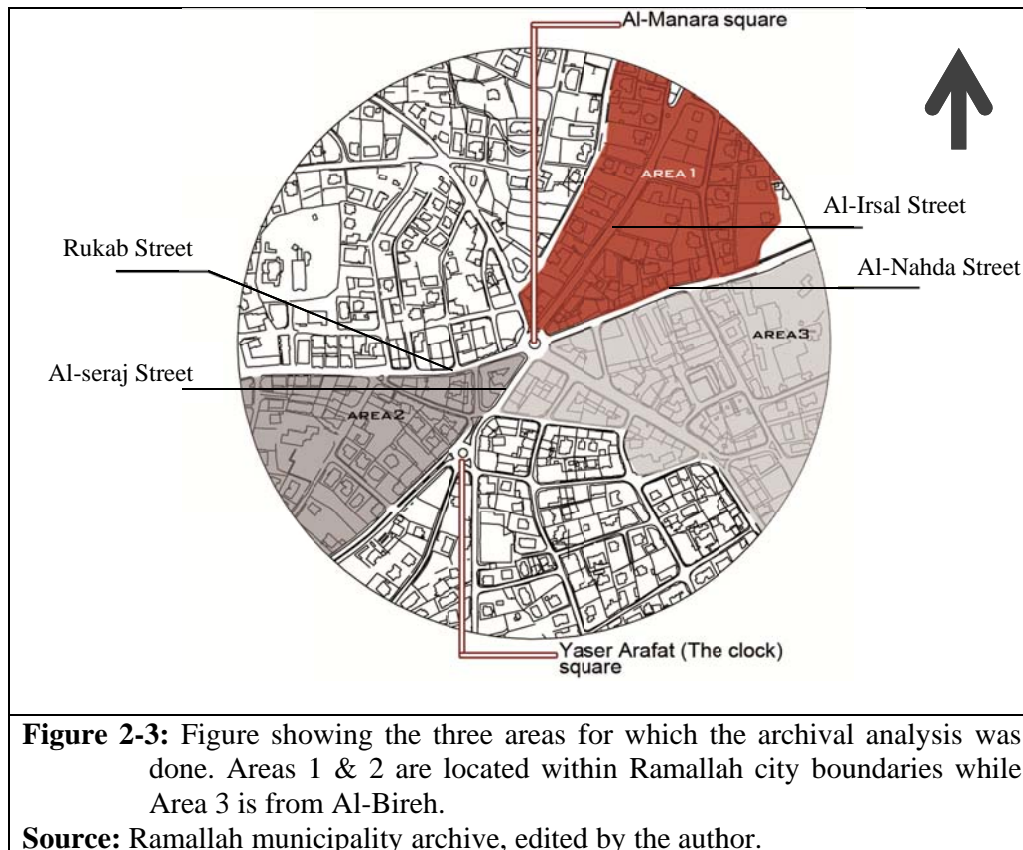
-Building-planning regulations documents of the twin cities were scanned and analysed to understand how they affect the formation of the forgotten spaces.

-Theoretical analysis was conducted, which included international and local scholars' work about ignored, leftover, and forgotten spaces.

-A brief analysis on several cases of revitalized spaces worldwide was conducted to understand how to deal with similar spaces in the target area.

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2.3.2 Data organization:

The data organization phase was based on the organizing and rearranging of primary data in order to obtain primary results that might lead to final results, (i.e. the framework and conclusions). Criteria for the primary results are:

- The urban development of the twin cities' downtown area, which was based on the following sources of data:

    • A historical review of the twin cities' urban development from books and articles.

    • An archival study from both municipalities' archives. The collected data from was organized and the main information listed in tables to streamline the analysis **(Appendix No.1, 2, 3 and 4)**.

    • Aerial photos and available maps of the twin cities' downtown area.

- The locations, conditions, and main characteristics of the forgotten spaces within the twin cities, which were derived from the following sources of data:

    • Fieldwork done by walking through the study area, locating the forgotten spaces, observing their characteristics, and monitoring how people use and deal with them.

    • Interviews with the daily users of the forgotten spaces and their surroundings.

- The main factors that led to the formation of the forgotten spaces and their

current condition, which were based on the following sources of data:

- Analysis of the building-planning regulation system documents.

- Analysis of all of the above previously used data.

2.3.3 Data analysis:

All gathered and organized data were analysed to obtain primary results, which were then analysed to obtain the final results and conclusions that would take the shape of a development and improvement framework that includes urban planning and urban design recommendations. The analysis was done by linking all organized and gathered data (Baxter & Jack 2008). The data analysis **Figure 2.2** was conducted, and a summary of its processes includes the following:

- A historical review, archival study, and analysis of aerial photos were conducted by comparing previous results to better understand the urban development of the twin cities' downtown area. This part of the process aided in recognizing how the forgotten spaces emerged and formed within the downtown urban fabric and what the main factors were that assisted in their formation.

- Theories of different scholars were compared to understand the issue of ignored and leftover spaces from internationally different points of view and to identify themes on which the scholars concurred, as well as intersection points between them to deal with the spaces effectively.

-A survey was conducted to locate forgotten spaces, observe their current conditions, and to understand people's attitudes toward them in an effort to identify the characteristics and components of forgotten spaces in the study area.

- Discussions were held with the municipalities of Ramallah & Al-Bireh to deliberate the issue of forgotten spaces in the downtown area to identify possibilities for revitalizing these spaces. These results were compared and linked to conduct the improvement and development framework.

2.4 Research Limits:

To achieve the aim of the research there are basic required data, such as how forgotten spaces are formed and what are the characteristics of these spaces. In the process of finding out these types of data, there were limitations for each type, which can be summarized as follows:

- The formation of forgotten spaces in the overall study area rather than for each space specifically, because the main source of this type of data in this research was analysis of the municipalities' archives; as such, the archive analysis was limited by these points:

  - Unavailable data for a large number of the buildings

  - Time limit for conducting research

- There is some information related to the characteristics and current situation of the forgotten spaces that is only approximate, such as each space's total area, primarily because of:

- A lack of resources that provide information about these spaces.

However, the provided data in this research was adequate to achieving the overall aim, but more specific data for each forgotten space could be achieved in future researches.

Chapter three - Theoretical research

The term 'forgotten spaces' was discussed in *Transitory Sites: Mapping Dubai's 'Forgotten' Urban Public Spaces* (2008) by Yasser Elsheshtawy, but in another point of view, he discussed them as marginalized spaces used by specific ethnic groups in the heart of Dubai city. In this research, the term 'forgotten spaces' is used to specify spaces that are neglected and leftover; in addition, this type of space is often classified in researches as 'in-between spaces'.

3.1 In-between spaces:

Consistent with Luz (2004), there are three types of in-between spaces:

1- Liminal places: These spaces are transitional, and are divisions between one space and another space. For example, they divide an indoor and an outdoor space, entrances and exits, etc. In other words, they straddle two opposite spheres.

2- Transit spaces: These are for transportation and communication, such as bus stations, airports, etc.

3- Spaces between buildings: These are derelict and leftover; they are between buildings, on top of buildings, and beside them, such as plazas, sidewalks, etc. This research will discuss in-between building spaces, as they afford variations of activities and uses within the urban fabric.

3.1.1 *Spaces between buildings activities:*

Jan Gehl, in his book *Life between buildings* published in 1971 and translated to English in 1987, discussed the relation between human activities in outdoor

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spaces and the physical conditions that affect them. Gehl divided the activities into three types: necessary, optional, and social. In the first type, each person needs to do these activities in everyday life, such as going to work, waiting for the bus, etc. whether the space is convenient or not. The second type includes optional activities like walking, sitting, reading, etc., and they depend a lot on the physical conditions of the space; for example, if it is a high-quality space, it is more likely to be used for optional activities. The third type, social activities, can also be considered the resultant activities that depend on people's presence to attract and encourage social events. According to Gehl, a successful and liveable public space has to provide a combination of both sedentary and dynamic activities. If the urban public space quality is bad, it is used only for necessary activities, because people must do them regardless of the quality of the space (Gehl 2011, Campos 2012). In this regard, the role of neglected and leftover spaces' revitalization could serve to provide quality spaces that accommodate all types of activities.

3.2 Debates about Neglected and leftover spaces:

Trancik (1986) and Lynch (1990) were the pioneers who discussed neglected and leftover spaces using different terms such as 'lost' and 'waste spaces'. Despite various modern references that discuss the issue of these spaces, the majority refer to Trancik and Lynch in their studies and mainly analyse and summarize their results. The focus of this study follows suit and uses Trancik and Lynch as references, taking into consideration new references as well, such as analyses of

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these scholars' researches, in addition to a book that discusses the issue of such spaces: *Loose space: possibility and diversity in urban life by Franck & Stevens(2007).* In this regard, three major aspects need to be discussed: the lost space, the waste space, and the loose space.

3.2.1 The lost space:

Trancik (1986), in his book *Finding lost space,* described poorly used land as 'lost spaces' or 'anti-spaces'. He defined them as any space that has no shape, no definition, is planned incorrectly, hardly measured, undefined, useless or used in a wrong way, lands with low human activity that renders them meaningless, lands that no one cares about, lands that are unfavourable spaces, or lands with no positive value for their surroundings. For example, disused waterfronts, unformed hidden lands, abandoned train yards, old military lands, and obsolete industrial sites are classified as lost spaces **(Fig 3-1).**

Figure 3-1: A picture showing a derelict space in Blandford St. Mary village, district of Dorset, England.
Source: http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/165192, accessed February2015.

According to Trancik (1986), the buildings that form cities seem to be isolated objects, as there is no relation between them and their surroundings and the spaces around and between them are wide but have bad formation. This is because of the current planning and architecture approaches, wherein the spaces between buildings are only occasionally designed. The spaces around buildings often become car parking areas and streets that only serve commercial districts and residential areas, affecting the social life in urban areas **(Fig 3-2).** According to Trancik, the approach toward verticality, the dependence on automobiles, new towns and suburbanization are all factors that have destroyed the quality of the social life in the urban fabric and contributed to the formation of last spaces. In some cases, lost spaces increase bad health conditions and can cause wasted time (Gutonov et al 1968). The dominance of private interests over public interests has exacerbated this problem and the open spaces have gradually become privatized. Without solving the conflict between private and public sectors, identification, representation, and naming of the spaces, a quality place with high social interaction does not exist in the cities' fabric and, therefore, it does not contribute any value (Trancik 1986, Gieryn 2000).

Figure 3-2: Aerial photo of Buffalo, New York, in 1968, showing how buildings appear as isolated objects and how car parking dominates the city fabric.
Source:http://wnyheritagepress.org/photosofweek/aerial_hsbc_pilot.htm, accessed February 2015.

In order to clarify the issue of lost spaces, Trancik (1986) discussed three approaches to urban design theories:

- Figure ground:

    In the figure-ground approach, the urban environment consists of solid masses (buildings), which serve as the figures, and open spaces (voids), which are the ground. According to Trancik's argument, planners, urban designers, and architects must give sufficient importance to the voids (ground) as much as to the solids (figure) within cities. Or, as he said, 'figural voids'. Thus, there must be integration between solids and voids within cities.

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- Linkage theory:

This approach deals with the connections between city elements and the circulation system in the city, which includes streets as well as bicycle and pedestrian ways. In short, as Trancik said, 'Linkage is simply the glue of the city'.

- Place theory:

Place theory aims to understand human reactions toward spaces; this approach tries to identify the relationship between human culture, needs, historical background, and space. For Trancik, the main point in place theory is to understand the physical space through the awareness of human characteristics, considering that humans shape spaces to accommodate their needs.

Trancik suggested the use of an integrated approach in urban design that can be achieved by combining the spatial definition of figure ground theory, connection qualities of linkage theory, and social responsiveness of place theory. The integration between these theories provides an opportunity for successful public spaces to emerge. Trancik also discussed the following physical design principles for creating an integrated urban space: linking sequential movement, lateral enclosure and edge continuity, integrated bridging, axis and perspective, and indoor-outdoor fusion. The urban designer's role is to use these principles to achieve an integrated urban space by following a proper design process. In the case of lost spaces, redevelopment of the design process consists of four steps:

- Study of place

- Spatial analysis

- Identification of lost space and restructuring opportunities

- Design intervention

After applying these design steps, a set of implementation strategies must be formulated, such as recycling, infill, and modifications for an urban plan that is, from the beginning, more solid in structure, as well as finding alternatives within the overall design concept, providing an outlet for collaboration with all community parts striking a balance between social, economic, and political factors. Highline Park in New York City (NYC) on Manhattan's West Side is an important example of large-scale leftover space revitalization, where almost all aspects discussed by Trancik were applied, such as physical design principles, design process, and implementation strategies **(Fig 3-3).**

Figure 3-3: Images showing different views from the Highline Park, NYC.
Source: www.solaripedia.com/13/396/5784/highline_park_between_buildings. html, accessed 15February2015

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Trancik concluded that all parties have to cooperate in order to reduce the number of lost spaces in the city's fabric. The government has to define a set of policies to control city development and to balance private and '[public interests. Architects and- urban designers and planners must understand how to identify a successful space within the city's fabric, and that public participation in shaping the city is important to form viable spaces. Outdoor spaces should be the director of the architectural production, not the opposite; in addition, there must be integration between buildings and open spaces. In order to refresh these lost spaces, their temporary use (i.e. functions with fixed time) is one of the most proper ways. On Perikleous street, Athens, Greece, an ignored and abandoned space was transformed into an inviting and flexible public space using simple materials and reformations **(Fig 3-8).** Thus, lost spaces are opportunities to improve the quality of cities' urban fabric.

3.2.2 *The waste space:*

In addition to Trancik (1986), Lynch (1990), in his book *Wasting Away*, also discussed the issue of neglected or undefined spaces. In discussing them as 'waste', Lynch defined this waste as dead, unused, neglected, empty, and dirty space. For him, these spaces were a waste of time, of land, of everything. According to Lynch, the waste of spaces became an urban phenomenon (Neuman 1992, Franck 2007). With all of these negative factors related to waste spaces, they may yet hold potential for reuse and relief (Southworth 2001). Lynch argued that the problem of waste spaces is the cause of fixed functions of spaces; the

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solution, therefore, is to increase the flexibility of spaces to accommodate the needs of people across different eras (Marini 2009). It is the responsibility of urban planners, designers, and architects to find these wastelands, reuse them, understand people's needs, and involve them in the design process to provide successful and meaningful public spaces (Southworth 2001, Banerjee 1990). Reusing and exploiting wastelands is an important chance to achieve sustainability in cities' future development plans (Southworth 2001, Banerjee 1990). Marini (2009), in her paper 'Returning to Wasting Away', dealt with in-between spaces under the name of 'white spaces', defining them as unclear, ignored, uncontrolled, and forgotten spaces. According to Marini, this problem of white spaces could be solved by temporarily occupying them. Paley Park, NYC, Manhattan **(Fig 3-4-a),** and Neals Yard, London **(Fig 3-4-b),** are two cases of revitalized spaces from different countries that show the potential for these spaces to improve the quality of open spaces within cities.

3.2.3 The loose space:

In their book *Loose space: possibility and diversity in urban life,* Franck and Stevens (2007) discussed and defined two types of loose space: (1) Spaces for specific uses and (2) Other spaces for unknown functions (i.e. leftover and undefined spaces). They also mentioned the following vocabularies, which may be used to describe loose spaces: left over, derelict, dead zones, abandoned, empty, tabula rasa, void terrain, vague, and no man's lands. Without treatment, these spaces will be a threat instead of an opportunity (Franck & Stevens 2007).

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Loose space is created by people's actions in an effort to reach their needs; however, the streets, land use variety, and ownership issues contribute to this loose space creation. There is a gap between humans and space that causes the death of space that has no specific function. Loose spaces usually are located next to spaces that have fixed functions, such as near the highways, railroads, and under bridges. These spaces are difficult to access, have odd shapes, and are often unnamed; however, they have special characteristics that provoke artists, architects, and urban designers to engage their creativity (Southworth 2001). An example of artistic work that uses leftover spaces was the installation for the Istanbul Biennial in 2003 **(Fig 3-11).**

However, the forgotten spaces in the downtown of the twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh have one or more of the lost, waste, and loose spaces characteristics.

3.3 Spaces revitalization and city regeneration:

Everyday spaces in cities are important for connecting people, their lives, and activities, which are often concentrated in public spaces (Chase et al 2008, Ryan et al 2004). These spaces have usually emerged to accommodate community needs and they are used to strengthen connectivity within the community. Creating open public spaces within the city's fabric is the responsibility of policy makers, urban planners, and designers. Nowadays, however, the problem is that public spaces have emerged without proper planning (i.e. urban vernacular) (Goheen 1998, Chase et al 2008). Political bodies, everyday practices and the

issue of public and private interests all affect the formation of the new urban fabric in the cities, including public spaces. Public spaces have become those in which to show off wealth (or sometimes fake wealth) rather than communicate and share experiences. These changes are mainly related to the condition of public spaces in the modern city and a lack of planning and design (Goheen 1998, Chase et al 2008).

Public spaces bring benefits to cities that can be social, environmental, or economical; for example, public spaces with better quality often mean better economy, environment, and social relations. High-quality public spaces are also an important marketing tool for cities, creating a sphere of successful social relationships (Giddings et al 2011). The global trend is toward achieving sustainable development in cities, and public spaces are one of the most powerful tools to do that (Moughtin et al 2003).

The wrong consumption of spaces does not only create lost spaces but also a loss of social quality. Sustainable development must be achieved by social, psychological, spatial reformation and improvement, and behaviour therapy (Krasner 1980, Wyly 1999). Because sustainability is the target of future urban planning, sustainable development is defined as development aimed at providing the needs of the present generation without affecting future generations to achieve its own needs; in general, it is about all generational equity with a better quality of life (Moughtin et al 2003, Gutonov et al 1968).

Accordingly, space revitalization is an important trend for urban sustainable development. The scarcity of land as well as the need for open public spaces and for good quality spaces urged planners, urban designers, architects, stakeholders, and practitioners to discover solutions and to exploit each space in the city. The issue is how to redevelop, reuse, and revitalize these leftover, ignored, and waste spaces. In this regard, revitalization of these spaces is an ideal solution to improve the quality of public spaces for present and future sustainable urban development (Lalbakhsh 2012, Shaw & Tim 1994, Luz 2004). Finding quality public spaces within a city's fabric is a priority, and exploiting leftover and ignored spaces through revitalization is an actionable opportunity (Gehl 2011, Campos 2012). Brownfields are an example of vacant spaces ripe for revitalization, as they are sites mainly comprised of industrial or commercial land that have bad conditions or were abandoned and moved from the city to the suburbs (Brownfield Action 2015)due to various issues such as low taxes and easier access (Trancik, 1986). Brownfield sites are an ideal solution for smart growth development and anti-sprawl as they exemplify sustainable urban development and environmental solutions (Wintle, 2010). Space revitalization means re-use, preserving and redeveloping an area by participation of all community parties and by understanding space context and applying proper urban design principles also taking into consideration social, economical and environmental issues (MPNH 2015).

Successful space revitalization processes require an appropriate analysis for both the space and its surroundings (Batista & Carvalho n.d.). In addition, it requires a prescribed set of uses and activities for the spaces to attract people. For example, Heath (2001) claims that using the city centre as a residential area will revitalize the area and its open spaces, while Stahle (2010) argues that the conversion of these spaces into a green area will revitalize and attract more people to the space. The activities prescribed to the space affect its livability, while creative activities with many alternatives attract more people to the space; accordingly, this requires an activities creator who is in direct contact with the community stakeholders (Luz 2004, Lavrinec 2011). All uses and activities must take into consideration the features of the target space (Heath 2001).

Therefore, space revitalization means place-making, and to accomplish this there are certain cognitive issues that should be considered the basic elements of place-making (Trancik 1986, PPS 2015):

- The daily users of the space have an important perspective toward the space and how it functions. They have a valuable point of view and ideas for how to develop the space according to their needs.

- Place creating is not only about design; it also includes activities creation, as well as awareness of economic and social benefits as well as environmental protection.

- There is a need for partnerships with innovative persons, as well as political and financial supporter bodies.

- Observation and analysis of the space are very important.

- Space affordability is important; for example, using simple and cheap materials can make a space initially appear better, but this could mean a poor quality space in the long term.

- Lack of money or funds is not an excuse to avoid revitalizing a space. The work must be smart, not expensive.

- Management is very important in order to provide a successful final place, as well as to manage relationships between community parties, create a realistic budget, and encourage flexibility of activities.

3.4 Examples of the international experience in spaces revitalization:

This section illustrates the potential of revitalized spaces and explores the common steps used in the revitalization process. A wide variety of examples was chosen, each with unique characteristics of the spaces in the research study area in order to give a wide overview about revitalization of spaces. The following five examples have been chosen to show different situations of revitalized spaces: Neals Yard in London, UK; Paley Park in New York City (NYC), USA; Perikleous Street in Athens, Greece; Highline Park in NYC, USA; and the installation of the Istanbul Biennial in Istanbul, Turkey.

Except for Highline Park in New York, the examples showcase revitalized spaces in-between exiting buildings, and the conditions of these types of spaces are closer to the conditions of most other spaces discussed in this research (i.e. forgotten spaces). However, this research will discuss the revitalization process from small-to medium-scale spaces according to the study area conditions, while in the study area the spaces' total area varies between 207 m^2 and 2,900 m^2, which is near in scale to the mentioned examples. The first two examples are characterized by their simplicity, flexibility, and innovative designs, which make them attractive places that people like to visit (PPS 2014, Blissroots 2013) **(Fig 3-4).**

Figure 3-4: In-between buildings revitalized spaces
Source: http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=69# accessed in February 2015
http://blissroots.com/7-secret-places-to-discover-in-london-2/ accessed in February 2015
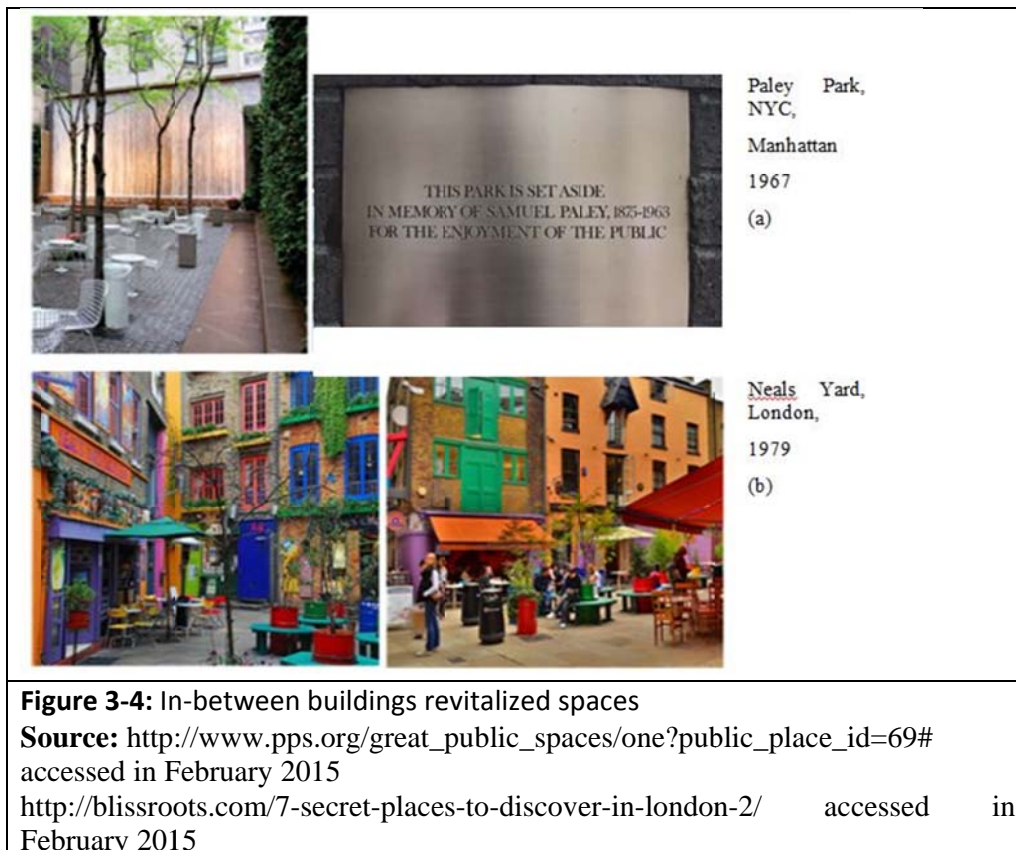
3.4.1   *Neals*   *Yard*

Neals Yard, London **(Fig 3-4-b),** was established in 1979.This project combines business and social interaction and is surrounded by shops, accessible by two entrances from the street. The atmosphere of this space is vital due to the variety of colours, simplicity of design, and the materials that are used in these designs, as they are from recycled materials **(Fig 3-5).** In addition, the circulation within the space seems to be comfortable and flexible, as shown in **Figure 3-6.** Here one may notice that there are two accesses from the street that lead to all parts of Neals Yard. The problem, however, is that these accesses from the street view, are not clear or noticeable **(Fig 3-5)** (Blissroots 2013).

Lessons learned:

- The circulation within this space is comfortable and provides smooth movement between the street side and back space; however, the accessibility from the street view is not as prominent.
- Design wise, this space is simply designed and the materials used are from recycled materials.

3.4.2 Paley Park

Paley Park, NYC, USA **(Fig 3-4-a),** with an area of area is 591m^2, was established in 1967 and was the first 'pocket park' in New York City. It is a relaxation place within a crowded, noisy area and is an example of a successful, privately owned public space (POPS). Though it is privately owned and managed, it is open for public use. It was established by the William S. Paley Foundation,

and the target of this space, as mentioned in **Figure 3-4-a**, is for the enjoyment of the public (Gerasimos 2011). It is easily accessible and visible from the street side. The design of this space is very simple, containing little pieces of the Berlin Wall as well as trees, movable tables and chairs, and a water feature. The few elements and simple design makes it a very attractive and comfortable space in the heart of NYC. The trees and waterfall dominate the space, while the shade trees and water sounds are the main attractive elements. It invites visitors to relax from the city centre noise through the waters' relaxing sound **(Fig 3-7)** (PPS 2014).

Lessons learned:

- This space is a privately owned public space (POPS), where the land is privately owned and managed but used by public.

- Design-wise, this is very simple, attractive, and comfortable.

Figure3-5: Photos showing the accesses and the inner space of the Neals yard.
Source: Google earth edited by Author
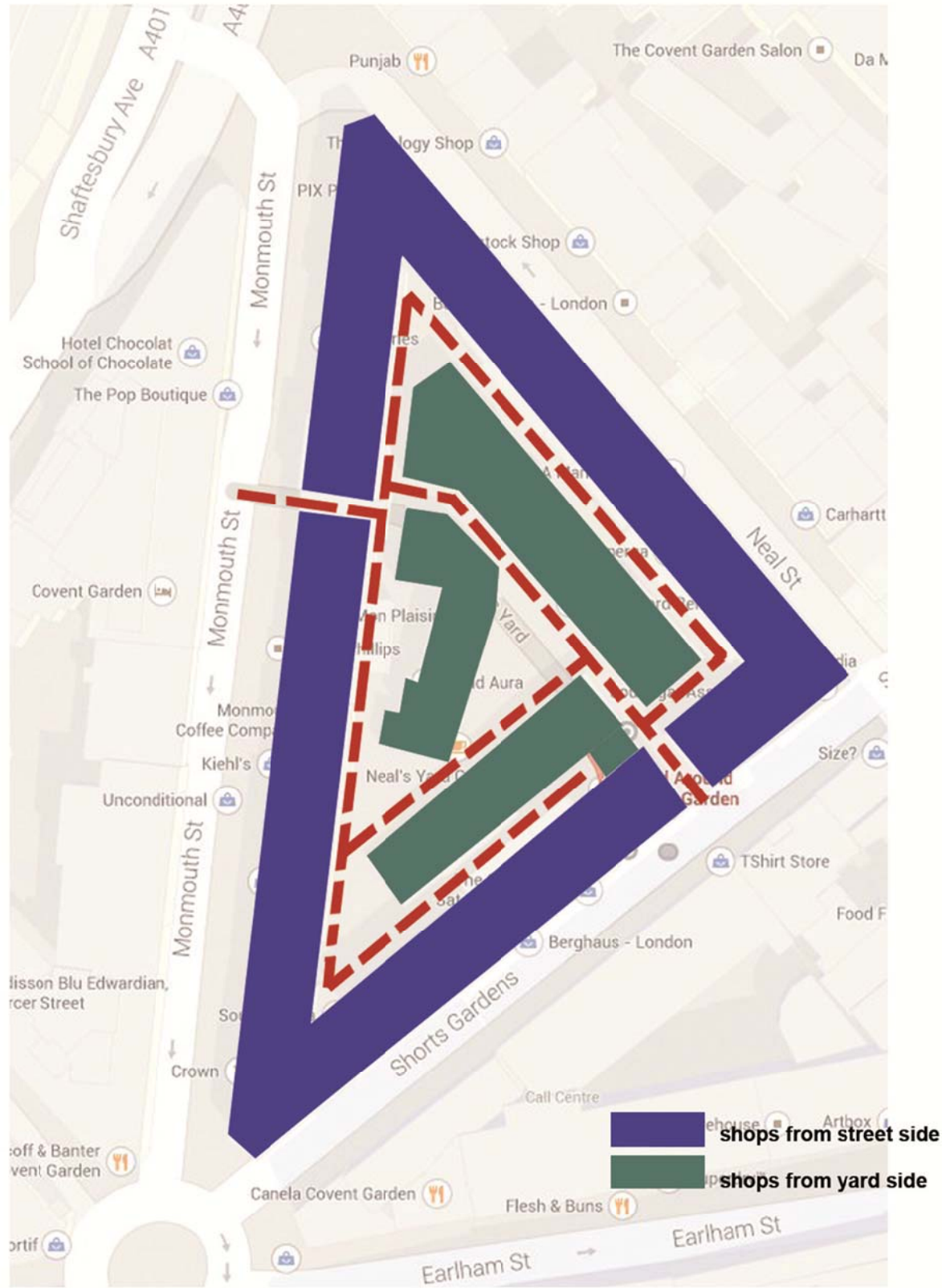
Figure 3-6: A figure showing the circulation inside Neals Yard, in addition to different shots of the yard.

Legend:
- shops from street side
- shops from yard side

Image source URLs:
- http://mvegsummertravels.wordpress.com
- http://exotic-place.com/neals-yard-london.html
- /http://www.whatsoninlondon.co.uk/attraction/seven-dials
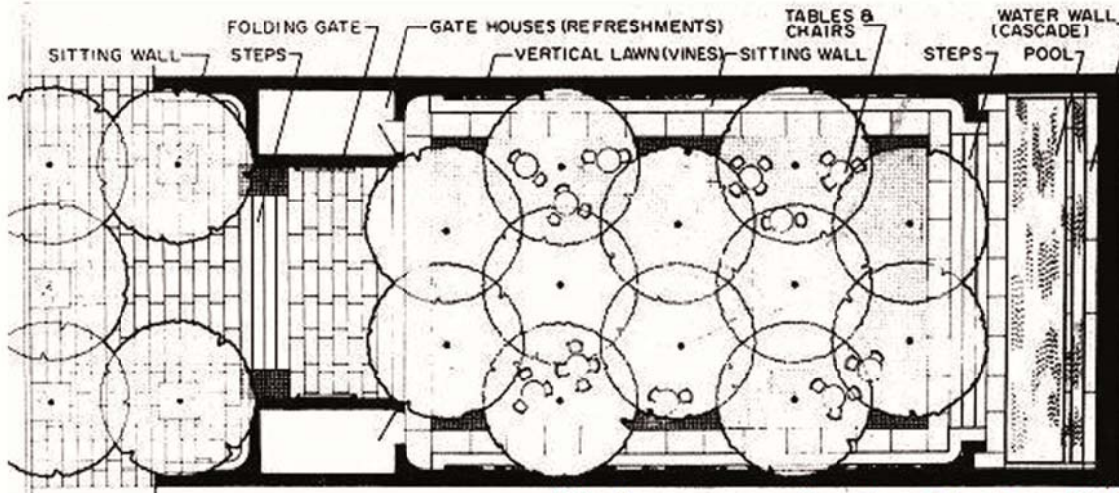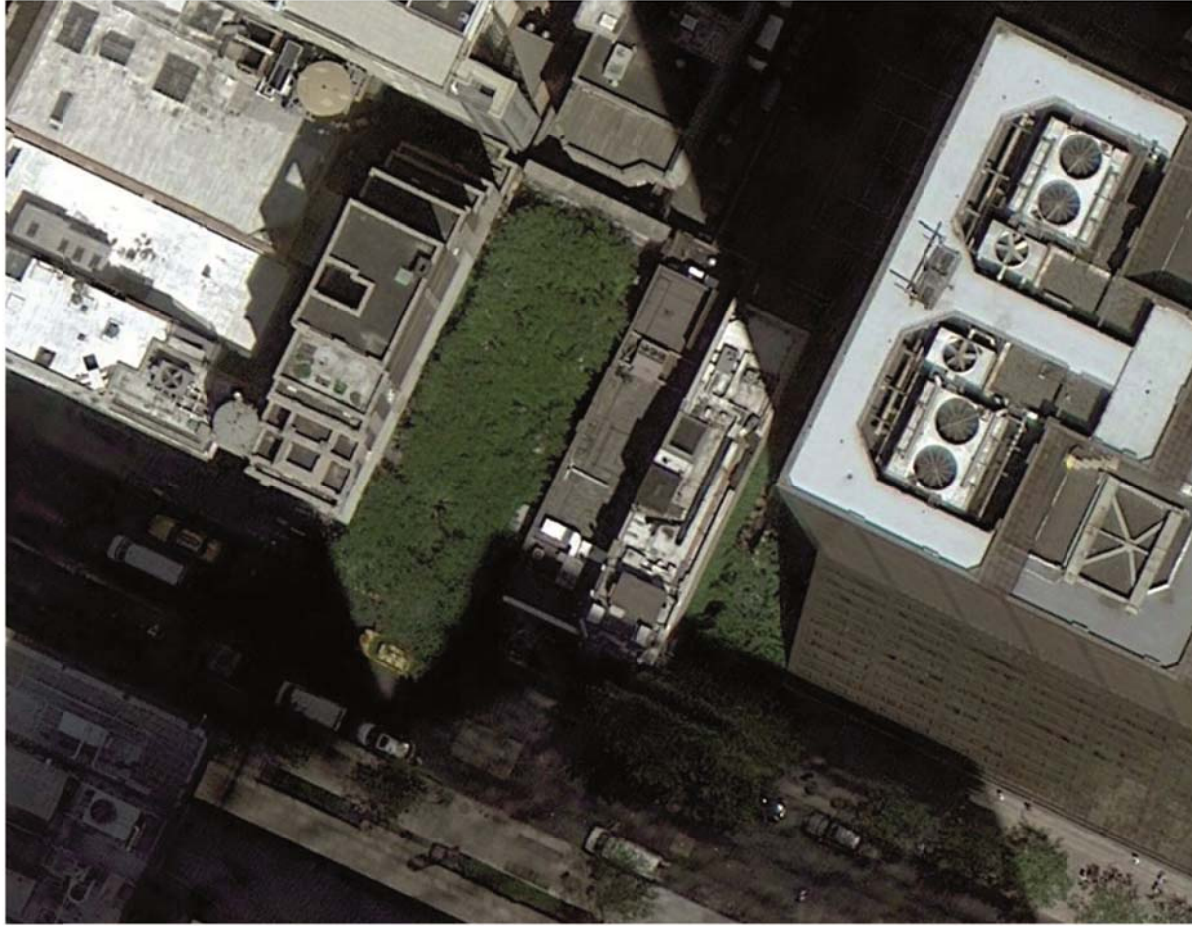
Figure 3-7: A figure showing the crowed in the street and the Paley park space.
Source: Google earth edited by Author

3.4.3 Perikleous street:

Perikleous Street is located near the Syntagma Square in Athens, Greece. The revitalization of this space, even if it is not immediately noticeable, will add to the quality of the city. On Perikleous Street, an ignored and abandoned space was transformed into a simple but rare experience for the public. Recycled and simple materials were used in the design of this space. The idea started with a group called Atenistas and the implementation was done in cooperation with volunteers, the municipality, residents, and shop workers **(Fig 3-8).**The cooperation between all of these parties made the surrounding shops in the space more pleasant and attractive; as such, they assisted the volunteers with successfully implementing the work. In addition, the support of the municipality and the needed official support afforded by all partners made the work easier (Tsiliopoulos 2014). Cooperation between all these parties allowed the project to meet their needs and improved the space and city conditions.

Lessons learned:

- The important point in this project was the cooperation between the volunteers, municipality, residents, and shop workers. This cooperation enabled the project to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

The spaces before revitalization

In progress

Space after revitalization

Figure 3-8: A figure showing the space in Athens' city centre and how it looked before and after the revitalization process.
Source: http://www.thetoc.gr/eng/new-trends/article/atenistas-reviving-the-town-center, accessed in February 2015

3.4.4 Highline Park in New York City:

Highline Park, on NYC's West Side and approximately 2.5 km long, is an important example of large-scale leftover spaces that have been revitalized **(Fig 3-3).** The highline was an abandoned trail since 1980, and through time was filled with grass and wild flowers. The project transformed an old elevated rail line into an urban pedestrian park. A non-profit group called Friends of the High Line (FHL) and the NYC official body (New York City Department of Parks & Recreation) cooperated to revitalize the trail, and studies conducted prior to its revitalization show that the project was feasible financially, environmentally, and socially (FHL 2015). Such a large-scale project in such a location is a risk, requiring a feasibility study to be conducted before starting the project in order to identify the maximum benefits and avoid unreasonable changes.

The Highline Trail is located in the centre of NYC, in the most crowded area in the city, close to the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, and between the high-rise buildings of Manhattan **(Fig 3-9).** Before the trail regeneration, the area was a derelict and ignored space, but afterward it became an attraction element, where people would come to relax and enjoy leisure time. New life was generated with this trail. It was redesigned to afford multi-functional space in order to accommodate the widest range of city centre users' needs; it also offers a special and different experience along the various parts of it **(Fig 3-10)** (FHL 2015**).** The

revitalization process was done in phases due to its large scale in addition to many revisions and modifications necessary during the revitalization process.

Lessons learned:

- This project is large when compared to the other spaces examined in this research.

- This project is characterised by the variation of functions and experiences.

3.4.5 *The installation of Istanbul biennial:*

The installation of the Istanbul Biennial (2003) by Doris Salcedo is located in Yemeniciler Caddesi No. 66, in Istanbul, Turkey. This is an example of an artistic work that uses ignored space to create a unique work **(Fig 3-11).** The surrounding space of the installation contains small shops that previously enabled the space to be ignored; however, the space is now used to showcase art works and other their potential mediums. The current installation was made from 1,600 wooden chairs placed in the ignored space between two buildings in a non-remarkable street. This installation reflects the positive effect of revitalized leftover spaces within the urban fabric, as the street is almost empty but this installation provides a kind of liveability to the space (UIU 2003, Mcgurdy 2008).

Finally, from the discussions above and the examples of the revitalized spaces, it can be concluded that there is a set of points that can help to create a successful and vital space through the revitalization process:

- The leftover space must be analysed well.

- The revitalization process must respond to community needs and align with their priorities. Ultimately, the design of the space must appropriately meet community needs and interests.

- Community participation is an important component to providing vital public open space, and cooperation between community groups, such as the government, people, and landowners (if it privately owned), is important.

- The space itself has to be safe, comfortable, and accessible and provide a unique experience. The designs in the revitalized spaces examples were both simple and dynamic, using a minimum number of elements that were available locally.
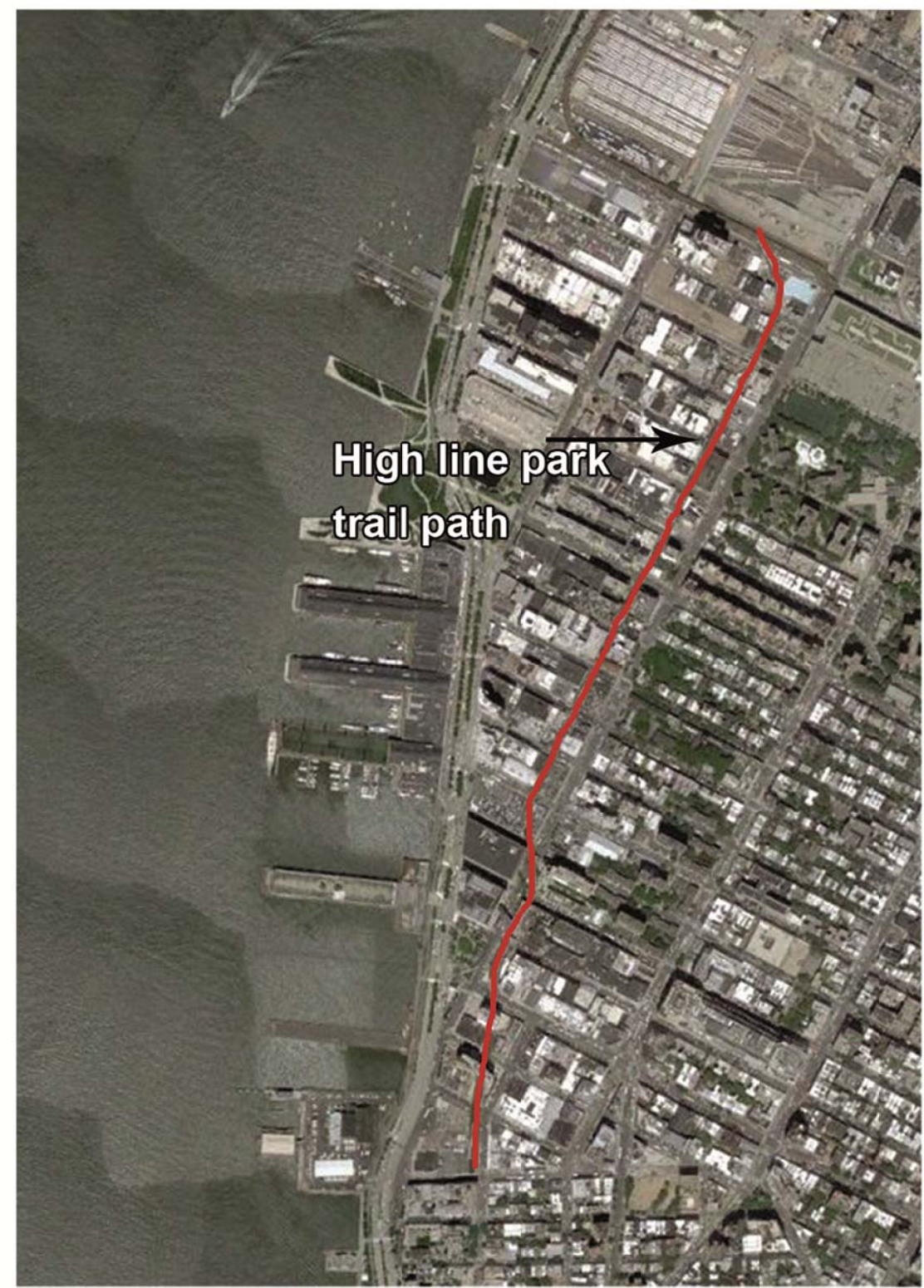
Figure 3-9: An aerial photos showing the location of the high line park in the center of NYC, the left side photo showing the shape of the highline park
Source: Google earth, edited by Author
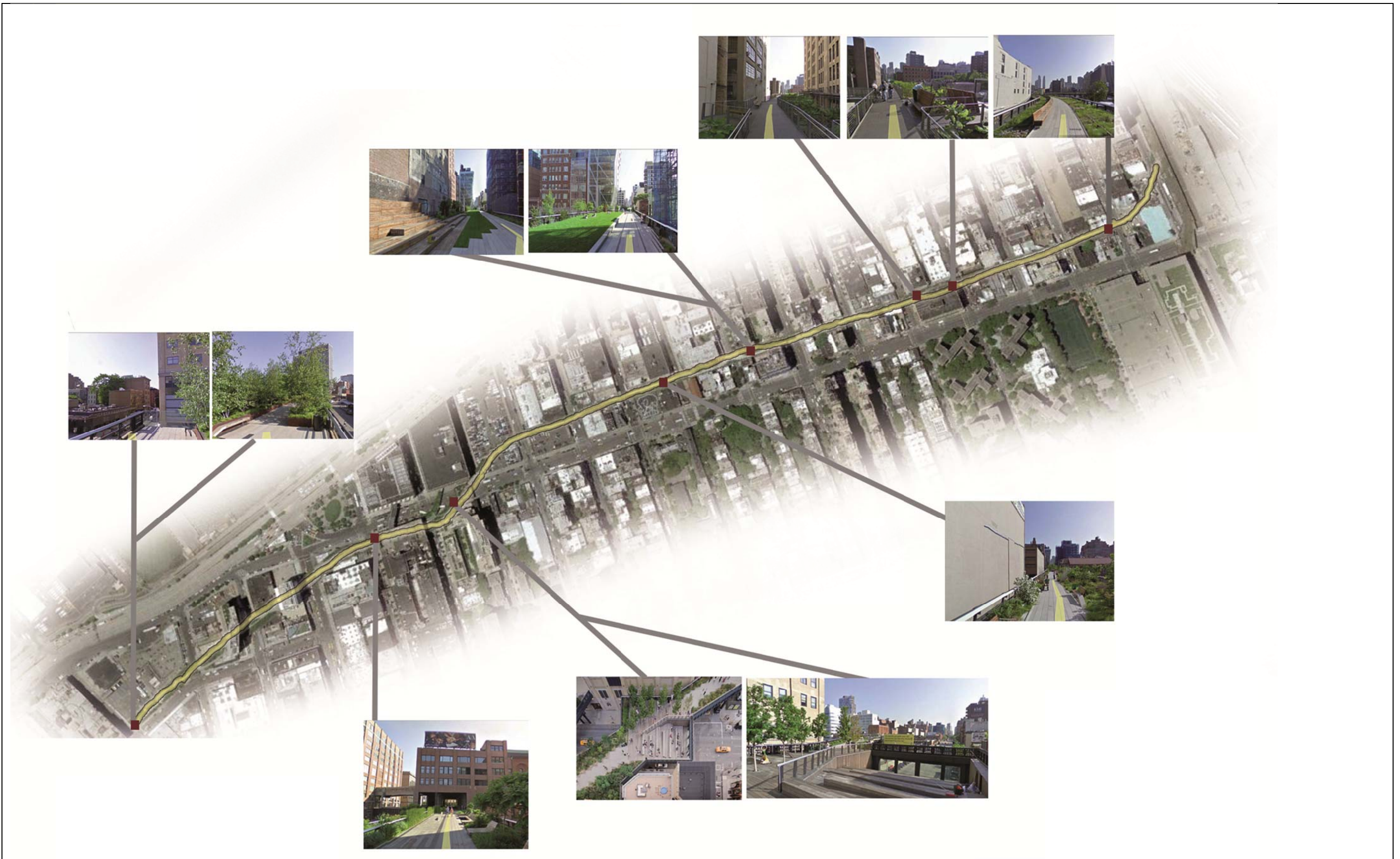
Figure 3-10: A figure showing the different experiences along the trail of the highline park
Source: Google earth edited by Author
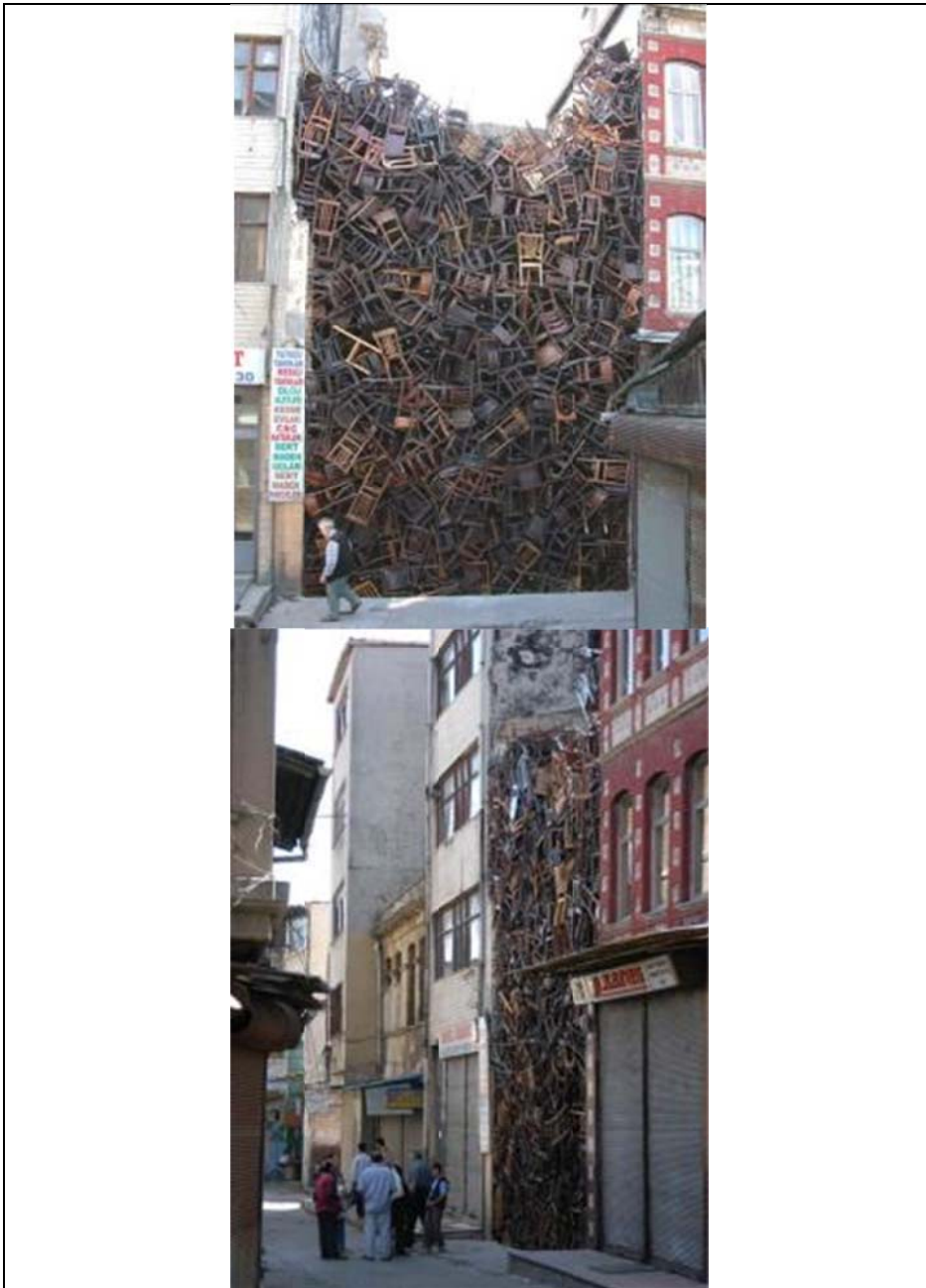
Figure 4-11: A figure shows an artistic installation made in 2003 for the Istanbul Biennial, exploiting forgotten space between two buildings in the city. **Source:** http://paulamcgurdy.com/Blog/2008_02_01_archive.html, accessed February 2015

Chapter four– The twin cities' historical review

The twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh are located in the centre of Palestine, between Jericho to the east, the Green Line to the west, Jerusalem from the south, and Nablus to the north (Yaser 2009).

Until the 16th century, Ramallah was only ruins (khirbet) to the west of Al-Bireh, but when Rashed Hadadine came to Ramallah from Jordan to live in it, he bought the khirbet of Ramallah from a family from Al-Bireh called Al-Ghazawneh. Since that time and until the 19th century, Ramallah was one of the middle villages of Palestine that did not have any special characteristics. Meanwhile, Al-Bireh was a city established around 3,500 B.C., populated by the Canaanites and the Romans; as such, it was an important city throughout history (Odat n.d., Al-Dajani 1998, Aljoube& Bushara2002).

4.1 Historical urban development of the downtown area:

Several turning points formed the current downtown area of the twin cities. They started from the permit of Ibrahim Pasha for the missionaries to stabilize in Palestine, then the Ottoman declaration of both cities as an administrative centre for the surrounding areas, the British mandate that resumed what the Ottomans started, and finally the 1948 war ended with the period after Oslo accords that still affect the twin cities.

In the middle of the 19th century, when Palestine was under Egyptian control (1831–1840), Ibrahim pasha allowed Christian missionaries to come from Europe and create their establishments in Palestine (Shoufani 1996). After this period, an

intensive development started in the city of Ramallah; many churches as well as educational and health care centres were established in the city to provide services to residents. The development of these buildings spread outside of what is now called the old city of Ramallah (or Ramallah Eltehta) and the old core of Al-Bireh. Christian missionaries chose Ramallah and Al-Bireh specifically for two reasons: (1) most residents in the city of Ramallah were Christians, and (2) the important history of Al-Bireh to the Christian faith. Their story tells us that the Virgin Mary, in her trip from Jerusalem to Nazareth, lost Christ in Al-Bireh when he was 12 years old; later, the Byzantines built a church called the Holy Family Church **(Fig 4-1)** (Palestine News & Info Agency 2011).

Figure 4-1: Images showing the Holy Family Church ruins in Al-Bireh city, near Al-Omari mosque. *Source:* Author.

Until the beginning of the 20th h century, the twin cities were connected only by an unpaved road used by herders **(Fig 4-2).** From the middle to the end of the 19th century, however, the development spread to the east toward Al-Bireh city. In the early 20th century, the connecting street between the two cities started to become

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much more important. In 1901, the Friends School was established beside this road in addition to the Ottomans' police station, which was next to the school. In 1905, the road connecting the twin cities and Nablus city with Jerusalem city were paved. As a result, the two cities started to expand toward each other and the in-between area started to be filled (Shibli 2006).

At 1917, the British mandate started to govern Palestine. In this period, the two cities grew more toward current urban centre. The roads from and to Ramallah and Al-Bireh facilitated the military vehicles mobility (Shibli 2006). The British mandate put an electrical pole in the middle of the road intersection that was called later Al-Manara (the lighthouse) to serve their military checkpoint. The electrical pole was placed in the cross point between the roads which connect Ramallah with Al-Bireh, and the regional road between Nablus and Jerusalem in 1935 (Qasem et al 2013). After a few years, Almoqata'a compound, including a prison was established to administrate the British authority as headquarter it was 800 meters away from Al-Manara to the north. The two cities started to grow towards the electrical pole gradually after its foundation and after the facilitation of the cities roads. A new city centre emerged between the two cities called "Al-Manara" and the buildings started to increase. At this period, structural plan and regulations started to be conducted by cooperation with Ramallah municipality. The structural plan finished in 1940, but the implementation of this plan was delayed until the Jordanian administration took place in the West Bank area .The

Jordanian administration made some adaption's in the structural plan and regulations system, which served as a basis for the urban development at a later stage (Yaser 2009, Shibli 2006).

Figure 4-2: An aerial photo showing the unpaved road that connected the twin cities in 1918.
Source: Al-bireh municipality archive, edited by the author.
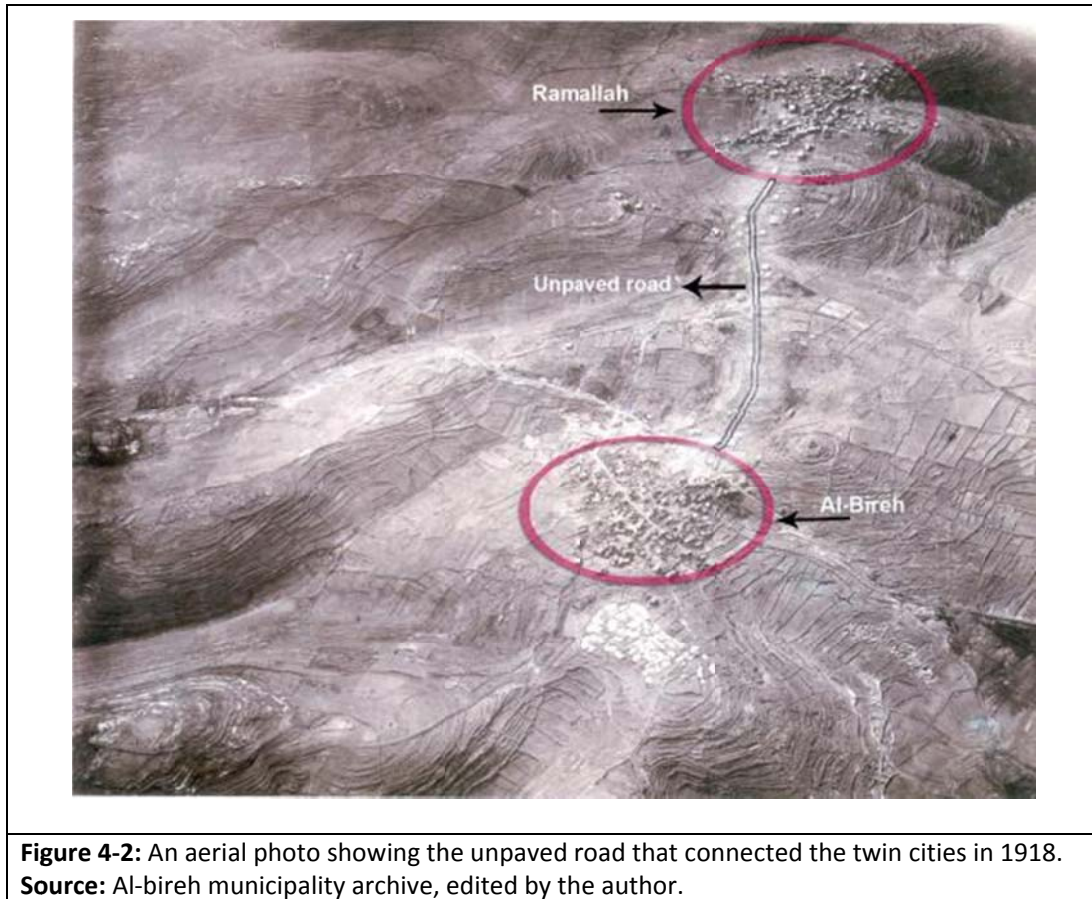
After the 1948 war, a huge number of people came to Ramallah and Al-Bireh after they were forced to leave their home cities by the Israeli occupation of Palestine. A new urban expansion occurred in the twin cities and in the city centre specifically. Most of the built up area of today's centre was formed between1951-1967, and they are almost the same till now with reformations and additions**.** This

quick urban development, which emerged to accommodate the immigrants residential needs and services affected the urban fabric of the cities and started to form invisible, enclosed spaces, which became later known as neglected spaces. The twin cities were completely attached to each other in 1961 **(Fig 4-3)** (Al-Dajani 1998)**.** At this period, the forgotten spaces started to appear in the twin cities centre. This will be discussed in details in chapter five.

After the Oslo Accords (1993), another rapid urban growth occurred in Ramallah and Al-Bireh in order to provide the needs of the new population that returned from the Diaspora, in addition to the needs for hosting the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) as well as non-governmental organization (NGOs). Since the early-1990s, the Palestinian authority recognizes the twin cities as a temporary capital of Palestine and has started to establish governmental institutions there. After 2000 (the second intifada), a new flow of people migrated to the twin cities, either because of their work or the complexity of movement between Palestinians cities at that time, the latter of which was due to the Israeli checkpoints between the cities.

Figure 4-3: Aerial photos showing rapid urban development in the twin cities and how they connected to each other over time in different periods: (1) photo from 1944 and (2) photo from 1967.
Source: Al-Bireh municipality archive.
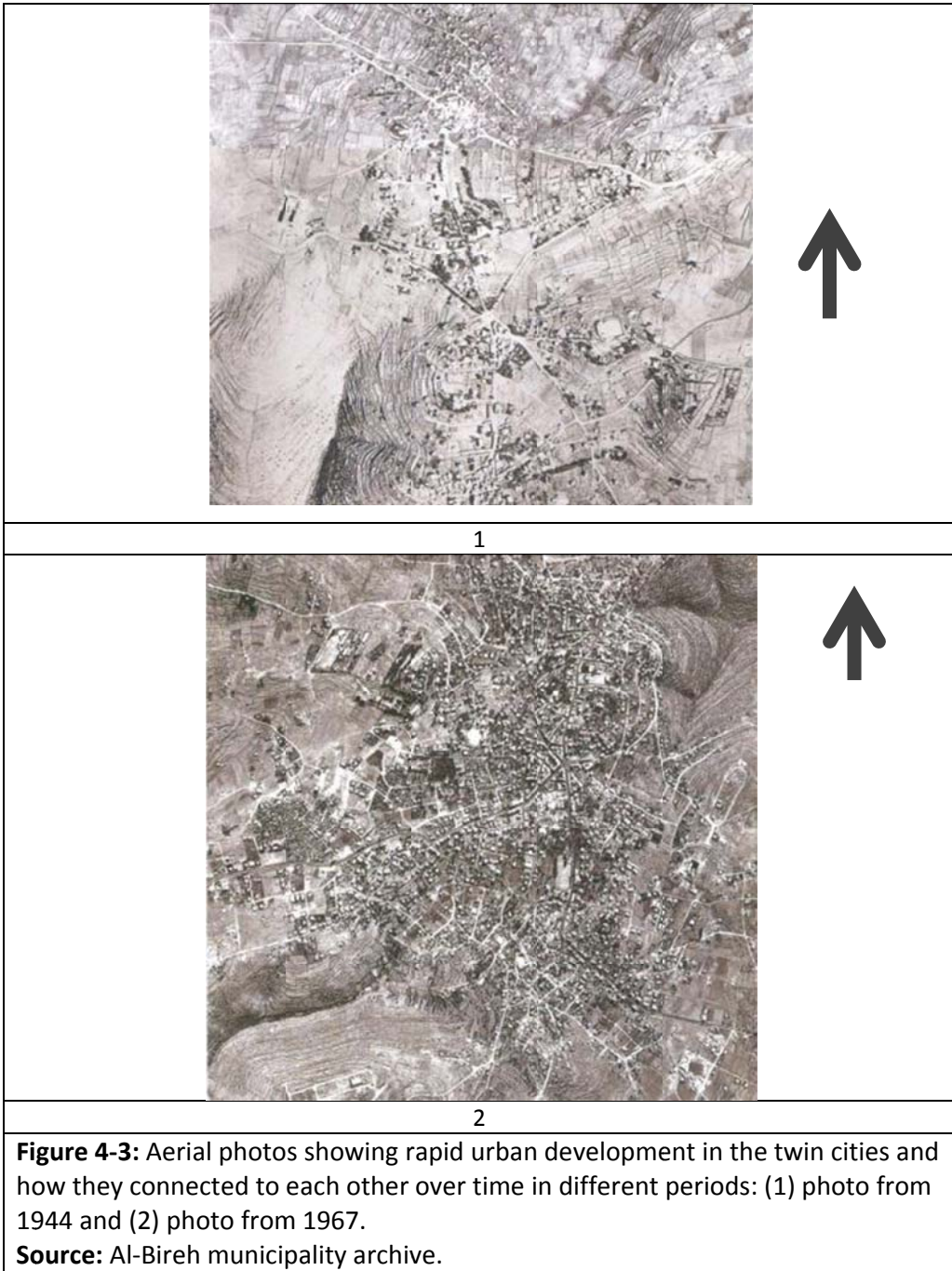
4.2 Urban formation of leftover and neglected spaces:

There are three types of leftover and neglected spaces: rooftops, parking spaces, and forgotten spaces. Each type emerged within a specific era because of geopolitical and socio-economic development factors. Five stages are visible in the process of this development and formation, as a result of examination of both municipalities' archive analysis:

1) In the 1940s, especially toward the beginning of the decade, the residents of the old cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh started to build and move toward Al-Manara square according to the services that emerged there, such as electricity and paved roads.

2) From the end of 1940s through the beginning of the 1950s, many new horizontal extensions in the existing more modern kitchens and bathrooms; however, between the mid-1950s the beginning of the 1960s, most of the extensions aimed to add garages or establish commercial stores. Most owners at the time claimed that they wanted to build a garage in order to get the municipality establishment's permission for construction, but then they were changing the use of these additions from garage to commercial stores.

3) After 1960, the built-up area was formed into two categories: (1) buildings with a large facade close to the street (this category was concentrated along the streets intersecting with Al-Manara Square, such as Rukab Street, Al-Irsal

Street, Al-Seraj Street, Al-Nahda Street and Palestine Street) and (2) small- to medium-scale buildings centred in the lots and located far from the available streets. The buildings farther from Al-Manara occupy lots of land containing small- to medium-sized residential buildings that are surrounded by open spaces. The random extensions in this period and without proper planning assisted in the formation of neglected and leftover spaces, mostly forgotten spaces **(Fig 4-6 a).** In addition to the horizontal extensions in the 1960s that were mostly for commercial purposes, vertical extensions took place, appearing from the mid-1950s; however, they were clearer and started to be more important in the 1960s. To accommodate the need of movement between different levels by default, a staircase was added to the buildings, which means both horizontal and vertical extension to the building **(Fig 4-4).** It is concluded that the extensions from the 1940s through the 1960s occurred between the first Palestinian migration and the second (i.e. 1948 and 1967). There was random urban development at that time in order to accommodate the fast population growth. In fact, it was an opportunity for buildings and land owners to benefit from this migration, which is why horizontal and vertical extensions were used: horizontal extensions for commercial stores and vertical extensions to provide residential apartments.
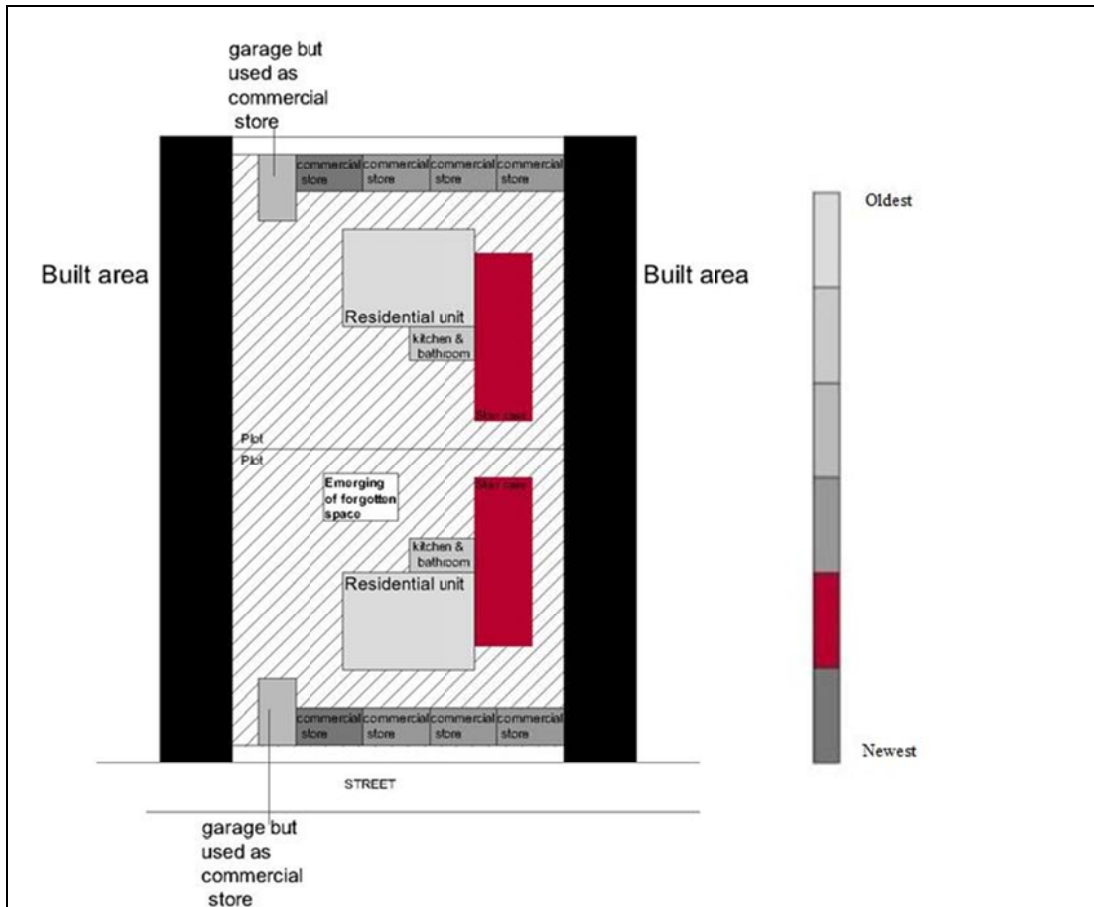
Figure 4-4: A diagram showing how the building extension assists in formation of forgotten space through time.
Source: Author

4) Important urban fabric development occurred within the study area since the beginning of the 1960s until 1985, and the facades along the streets increased; however, from archival research in both municipalities, it was noticed that in the early-1980s, urban development almost paused. The development shown in a 1985 map had mainly occurred between the 1960s and 1970s; however, from the 1970s until the beginning of the 1980s, a new age of urban development emerged in the downtown of the

60

twin cities. New commercial or mixed-use buildings with more than two or three levels emerged. New buildings were built in front of old buildings that had been established in previous decades (in the street side) like Al-Bakri building at Al-Nahda Street, or new levels added to the commercial stores that had existed before. During this period, there were indulgences in giving demolition permission to replace old buildings, especially those buildings that had a heritage value **(Fig 4-6 b).**

From the 1970s through the 1980s, forgotten spaces increased and rooftops and neglected spaces started to appear because the relation between building users and rooftops had decreased**.** Buildings constructed prior to the1970s were used only by their owners and they used the rooftops especially in summer, either for entertainment or for living while they rented their primary homes to tourists. However, after this period, rooftops were used by various people who may have rented an apartment or a store in the buildings; thus, the relation between building users and rooftops decreased and the use was limited to building services. In the other words they became neglected and leftover spaces.

5) After the Oslo accords period, the uses of buildings changed gradually in the twin cities, especially after they became the temporary capital for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). This affected the twin cities' urban centre and affecting the urban fabric of the study area. Old buildings were

demolished and new buildings established to accommodate the needs of the new population expansion. Large-scale new buildings in comparison with old buildings emerged in the downtown area. These buildings occupy the whole lot area and often create confusion in the downtown urban fabric **(Fig 4-6 c).** New uses for buildings emerged, such as technology product shops, supermarkets, and offices, among others. These changes provided access and possibility to the back spaces of the built-up area because the buildings' owners rented the staircase space that is required to access the backspace. These changes continued until the start of the second intifada, but another pause took place from 2000 until 2002.

6) Between 2002 and 2005, people exploited the chaos and lack of control to establish new buildings and demolish old ones without the municipalities' permission. In this period, as shown in **Figure 4-6 d** and noticed from the archive, many buildings were demolished and new, larger buildings (i.e. more than five levels) were built. The new buildings also were established without taking into consideration standard building regulations; as a result, a confused urban development appeared. Not only were huge buildings were established during this period but large areas for car parking also found, either by removing old buildings or by cutting down trees **(Fig 4-5).** During this period, all types of neglected and leftover spaces could be

found in the downtown area as car parking spaces, roof tops, and forgotten
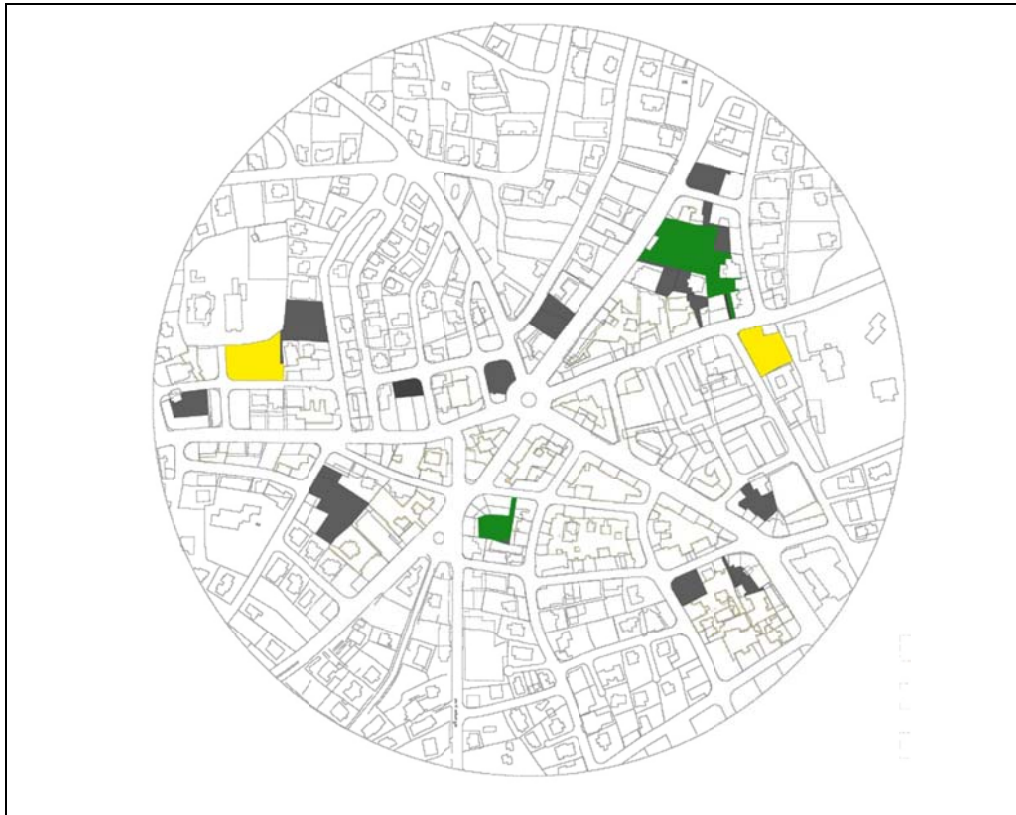
spaces **(Fig 4-6d).**

Figure 4-5: A map showing examples of car parking locations where an old building was demolished (in yellow) and green area removed (in green) in order to create spaces for car parking.
Source: Ramallah and Al-Bireh municipalities archive, edited by author.

7) From 2005 until 2011, large-scale buildings were established, mainly in Al-

Irsal Street **(Fig 4-6 e).** All of the above developments, which happened in

the twin cities' downtown area, have assisted in the formation of forgotten

spaces.

Figure 4-6 a: A map showing the urban fabric until 1960, it is noticeable the long facades closed to streets near to Al-manara, and the small building surrounded by open spaces far from Al-Manara.

Figure4-6 b: A map showing the urban development until 1985, it is noticeable that open spaces that enclosed between buildings increased.

Figure 4-6 c: A map showing the emerged buildings until 1999, it is showing also how the buildings occupy the whole lot area.

Figure 4-6 d: A map showing the emerged buildings and extensions from 1999 until 2005.

Figure 4-6 e: A map showing all periods of buildings development until nowadays.

Figure 4-6: Showing the urban development from 1960 to nowadays
Source: Ramallah and Al-Bireh municipalities' archives, edited by author.

Legend:
- Built up area (Figure)
- Emerged buildings in period (Figure)
- Empty areas (ground)
- Al-Manara square
- The clock square

Chapter five - forgotten spaces in Ramallah & Al-Bireh downtown

The study area is located around Al-Manara square, where there is a concentration of forgotten spaces. The conducted fieldwork covered 502.4dunoms (one dunom is equal to 1000m^2), while the total area without the streets is equal to 421 dunoms. The neglected and leftover spaces occupy 51.1 dunoms of the area. In this study area, the fieldwork found three types of them:

1)   Car parking lots: They are in-between building spaces, and defined as areas in which trees or old buildings were removed and then used as car parking areas. Their total area is 24.2 dunoms (47.4%) of the overall region of the available neglected and leftover spaces.

2) Rooftops: These are roofs of the existing low-rise buildings that are currently used as stores or garbage areas. These types of spaces have an area of 8.3 dunoms (16.2%) of the neglected and leftover spaces.

3) Forgotten spaces: This type of space covers 18.6 dunoms (36.4%) of the overall area of the available neglected and leftover spaces **(Fig 5-1).**The focus in this study will be on these spaces **(Fig 5-2).**
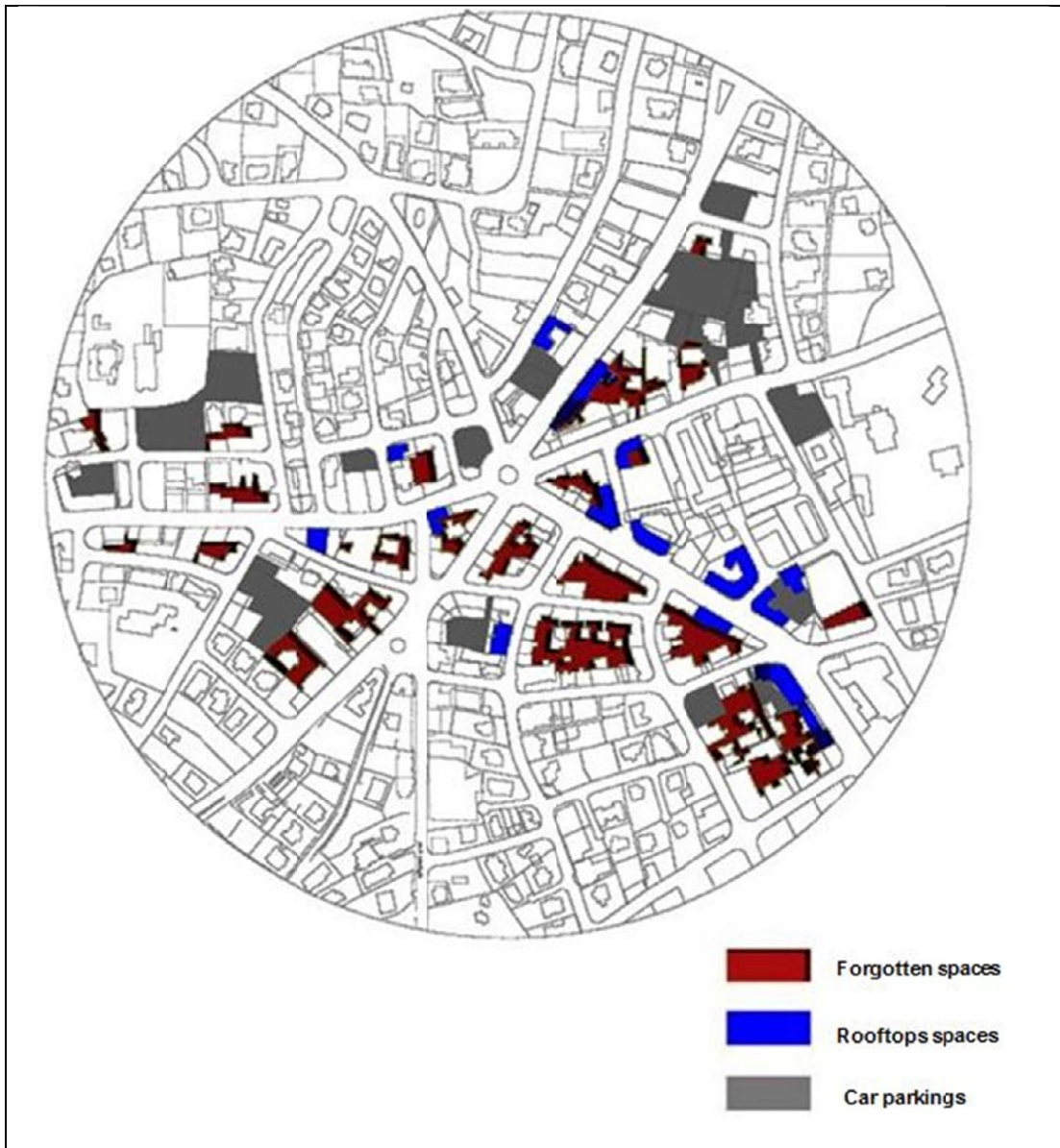
Figure 5-1: A figure showing the neglected and left over spaces types locations in the study area of the twin cities.
**Source:** Ramallah municipality, edited by author

Within the study area (400m distance around Al-Manara square) there are 19 spaces classified as forgotten spaces **(Fig5-2)**. The smallest area of these spaces is 207m^2 and the largest is 2,900 m^2 **(Table 5-1).** Most of these spaces exist in the centre of the study area along the streets divaricated from Al-Manara square. Five of the spaces are less than 100 m from Al-Manara, and the other five spaces are far from Al-Manara with a distance between 100m and 200m. In addition, another five spaces are 200-300mfrom Al-Manara and the rest are more than 300m from the square **(Table5-1).** Fieldwork findings show that all forgotten spaces are used primarily as garbage areas, storage areas, and shop extensions. They are surrounded by a set of components that affect their quality and conditions; mainly the buildings, their uses and people's activities inside and around them. These components affect one another as well the forgotten spaces. The buildings' design, complexity, and organization affect the uses of the buildings in addition to the attitude of people toward them and their surroundings. For example, a building's orientation in the downtown area is mainly toward the street side, which makes people's activities more concentrated in front of the building as well as inside it. This affects the inner uses of the building, which become overcrowded, while the outsides that are not close to the street become 'forgotten spaces'. **Figure 5-2** illustrates the forgotten spaces locations within the study area; each forgotten space has an identification number that will be used throughout this research work.

Figure 5-2: A figure showing the locations of forgotten spaces. Each space was given a specific number that will be used throughout the discussion. More details about spaces provided in tables 5-1, 5-2, and figures from 5-3 to 5-20.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

AL-MANARA
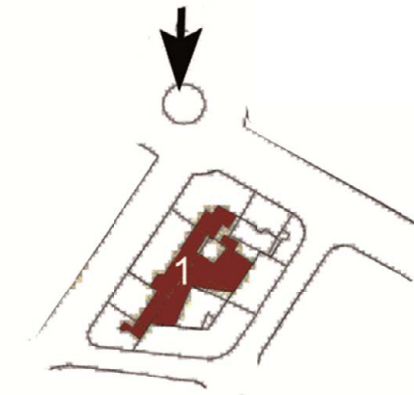
Area m2	860.7m2
accessibility	One access
Visibility	Invisible
use	Used for shops extensions, storages and garbage space

These view visible only from the surrounding buildings

Access from street side

- No access
- Visible from buildings
- Invisible from street side
- Access & visible from street

SPACE NO. 1 The building development around the space through history

1935   1951   1955   1956   1958   1961   After 1990
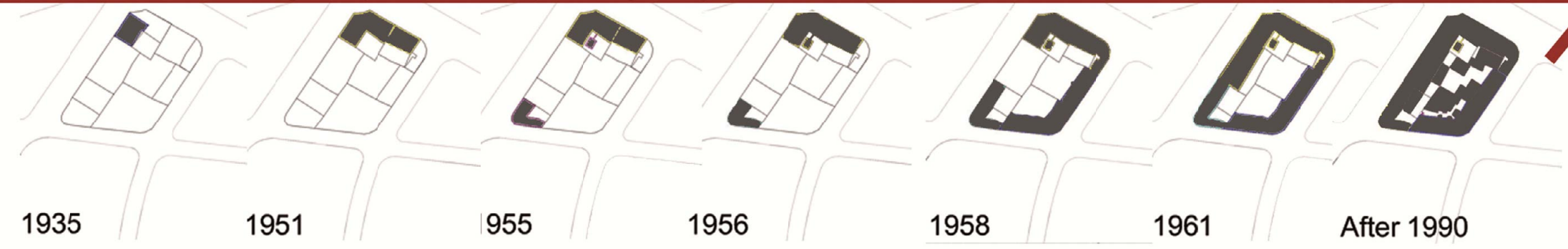
Figure 5-3: A figure showing space No. 1, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA
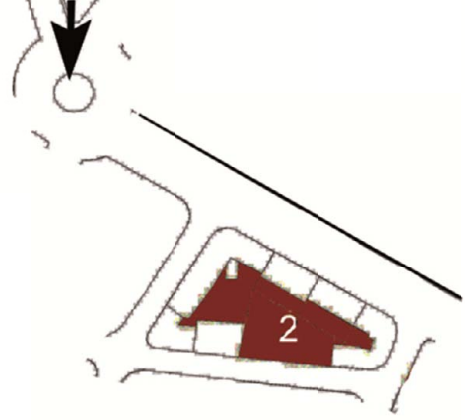
Area m2	1539.4 m2
accessibility	Accessible only from surrounding buildings (not all of them)
Visibility	visible
use	Used for buildings extensions and the remain space without definite use full with rubbish

Wall
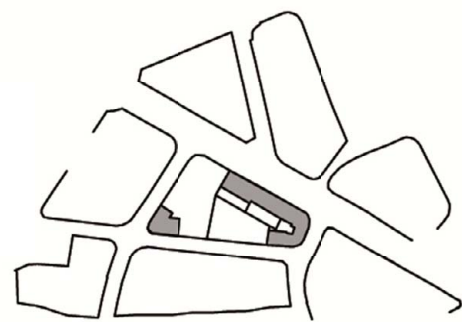
Accessible from the surrounding buildings only

الديـــعب

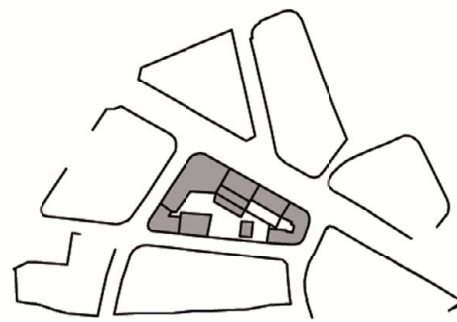The view of the space from the street side

The view inside the space showing the extensions and the waste in the space
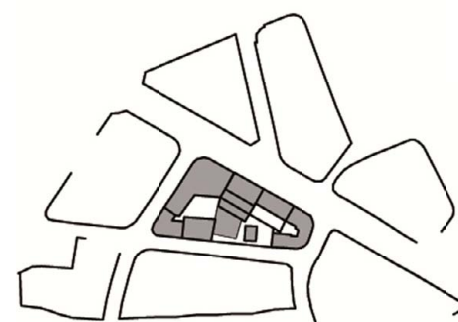
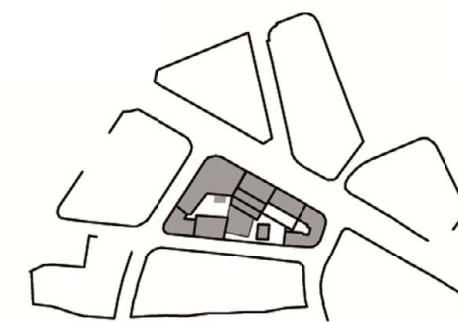SPACE No. 2 The building development around the space through history
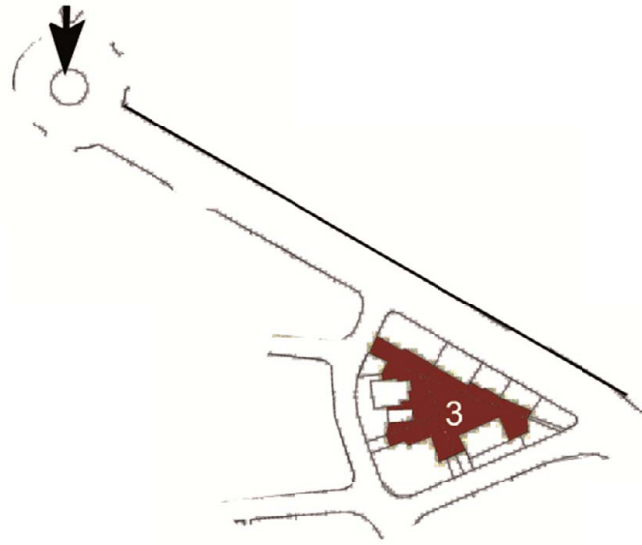
1960   1985   2005   2011 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-4: A figure showing space No. 2 development , such as development**,** details**,** and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

3

Area m2	1643 m2
accessibility	More than one access either from street or surrounding buildings
Visibility	visible
use	Without definite use court of abounded house

Visible from surrounding buildings

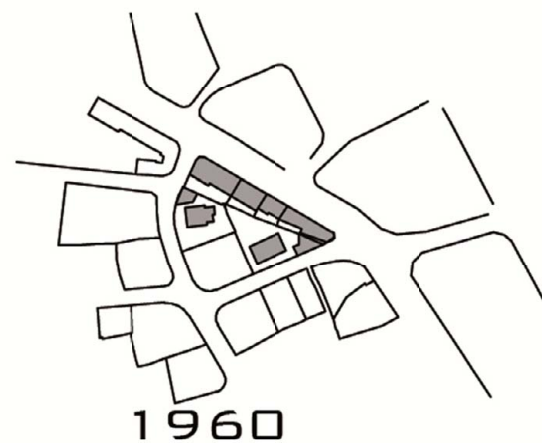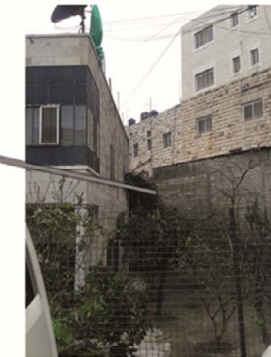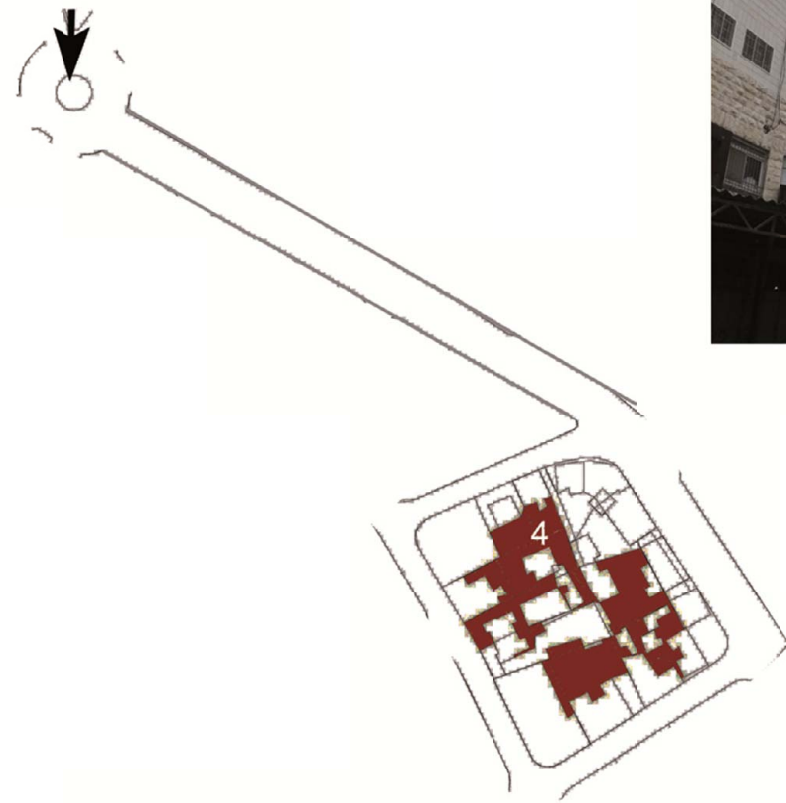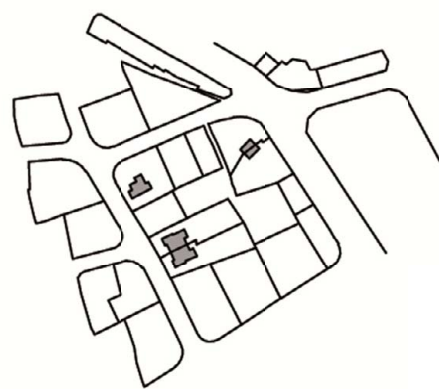SPACE No. 3 The building development around the space through history

1960   1985   1999 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-5: A figure showing space No. 3, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

Area m2	2905.7 m2
accessibility	One access from street and others from surrounding buildings
Visibility	Invisible
Use	Part of it is car parking, other is storage and part is without defined use

SPACE No. 4 The building development around the space through history

1960   1985   1999   2005 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-6: A figure showing space No. 4, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

Area m2	2761 m2
accessibility	Has access only from other building
Visibility	Invisible
Use	Without definite use

SPACE NO. 5 The building development around the space through history

1960   1985   1999 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-7: A figure showing space No. 5, such as development, details, and current conditions
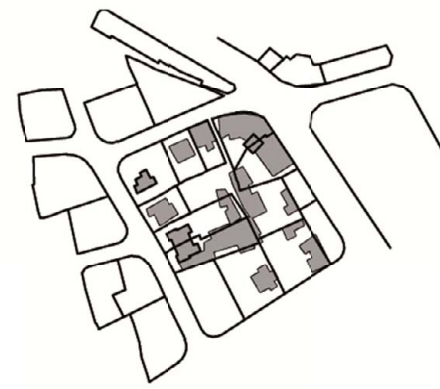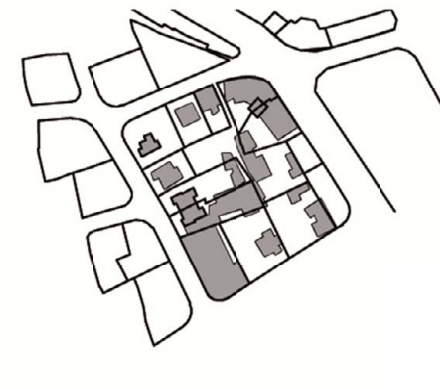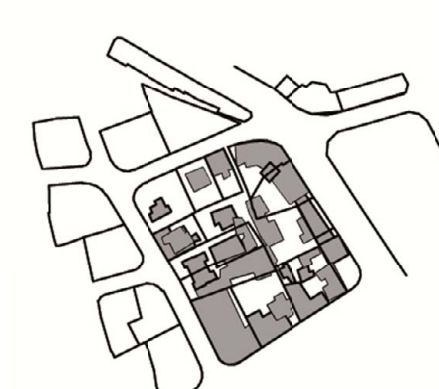**Source:** Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA
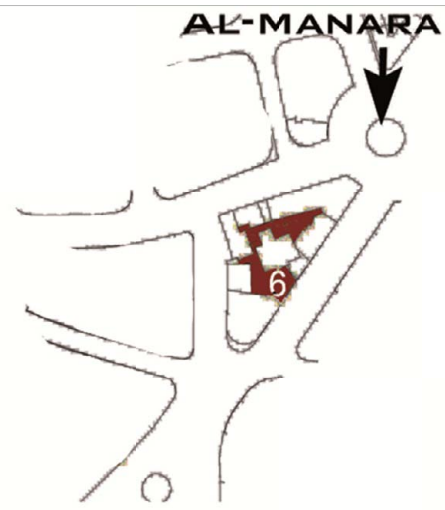
Area m2	471.5 m2
accessibility	Divided into two parts one is completely Accessible but the other part has two accesses closed by door.
Visibility	visible
Use	Without definite use and garbage area

- ·········· No access
- ▬▬▬ Closed access
- ↘ Visible from buildings
- ↶ Invisible from street side
- ·····⟶ Access & visible from street

SPACE No. 6 The building development around the space through history

1953   1960   1975   1986   1990
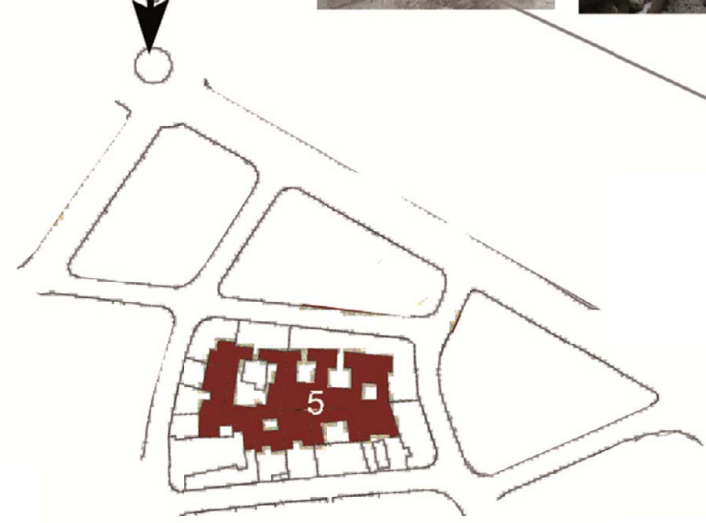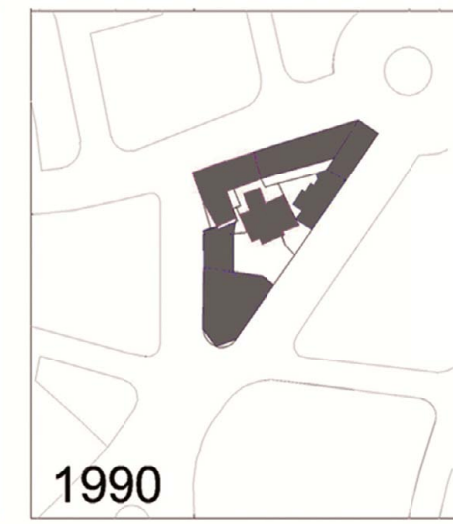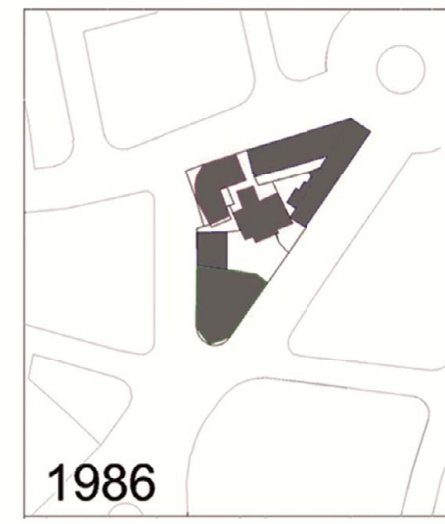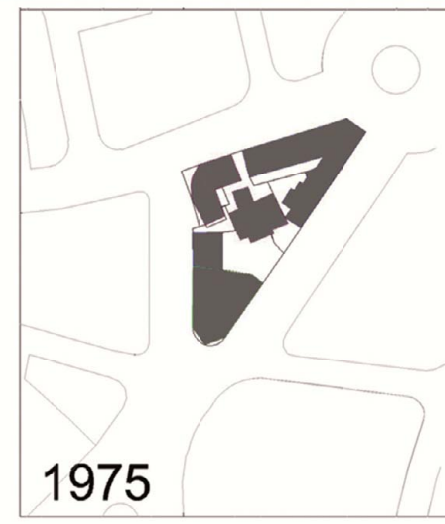
Figure 5-8: A figure showing space No. 6, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

75

AL-MANARA
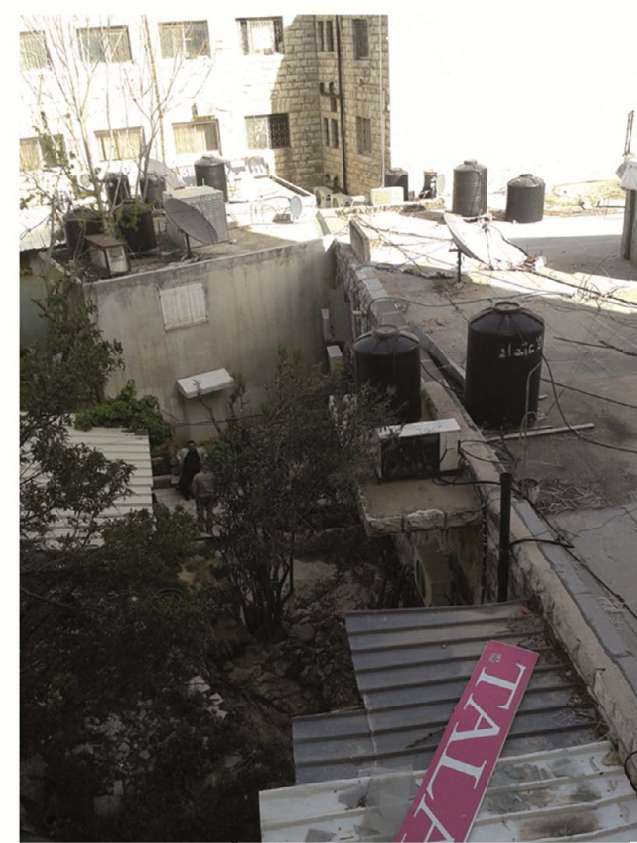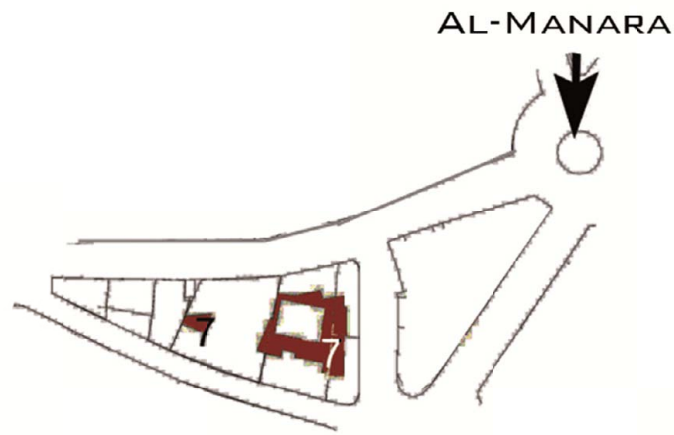
Area m2	550.4 m2
accessibility	Area (1) is accessible from shops only. Area (2) has inactivated access
Visibility	In visible
Use	Area (1) storage and sometimes sitting area used by shops workers Area (2) storage

SPACE No. 7 The building development around the space through history
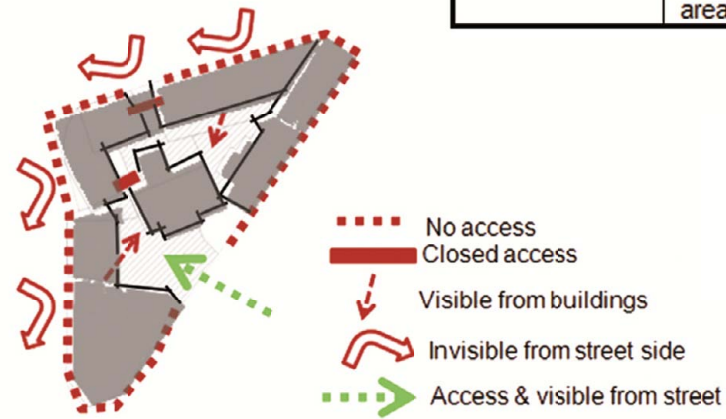
1960   1985   1999 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-9: A figure showing space No. 7, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

8

Area m2	2541 m2
accessibility	Accessible
Visibility	visible
Use	Car parking and large area without definite use

The building development around the space through history

1960

1985 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-10: A figure showing space No. 8, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

SPACE NO.9

Area m2	399.6 m2
accessibility	Two access
Visibility	In visible
Use	Storage for ice-cream factory and used as car parking temporarily

SPACE NO.10

Area m2	207.2 m2
accessibility	Accessible
Visibility	visible
Use	Not in use

SPACE NO. 9&10   The building development around the space through history

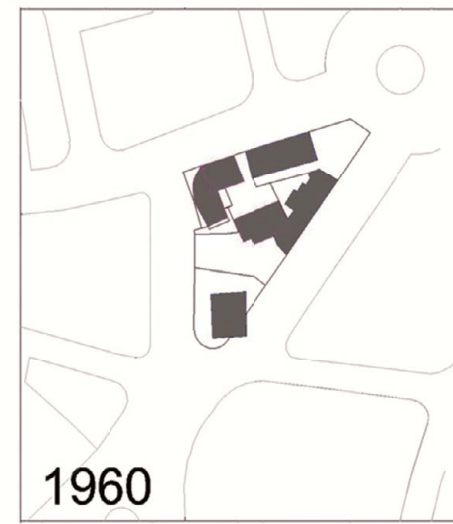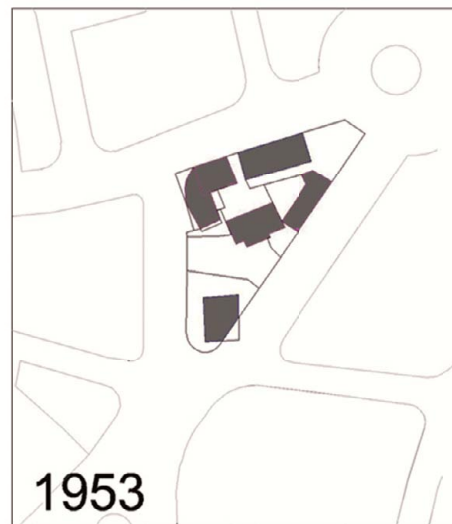1960   1985   1999   2005 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-11: A figure showing space No. 9&10, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

Area m2	657.4m2
accessibility	Accessible
Visibility	Invisible
Use	No definite use some of the shops use it as storage

Used space

SPACE No. 11 The building development around the space through history

1960   1985   1999   2005   2011 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-12: A figure showing space No.11, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

Area m2	369.9 m2
Accessibility	Accessible with one access
Visibility	visible
use	No definite use it was a workshop but now it is abandoned

AL-MANARA

SPACE No. 12   The building development around the space through history
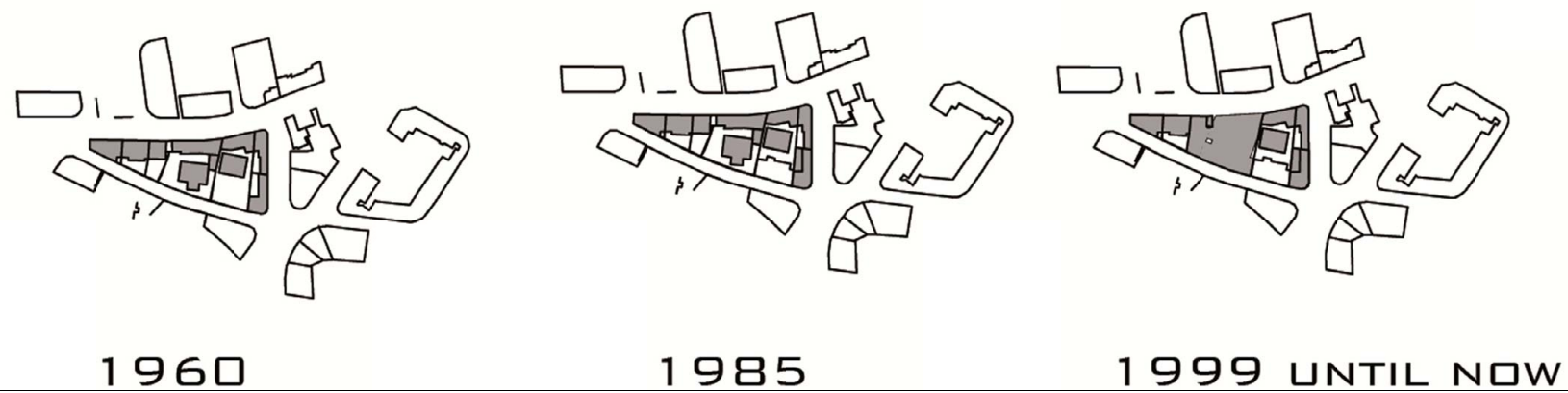
1999 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-13: A figure showing space No.1 2, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

Area m2	409.3 m2
Accessibility	There is an access but not easy to walk in (full of waste)
Visibility	Invisible
use	Storage and garbage area

SPACE NO. 13 The building development around the space through history

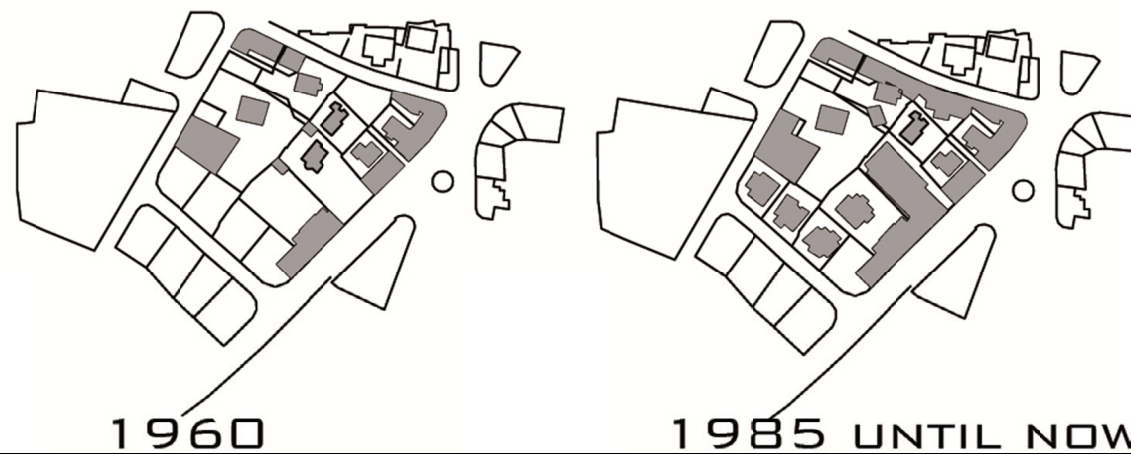1960   1985   2005 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-14: A figure showing space No. 13, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA
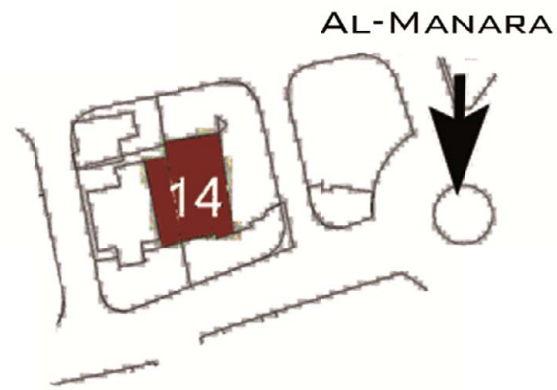
Area m2	545.7 m2
Accessibility	Accessible only from surrounding shop stores
Visibility	In visible
use	indefinite use

SPACE No. 14 The building development around the space through history
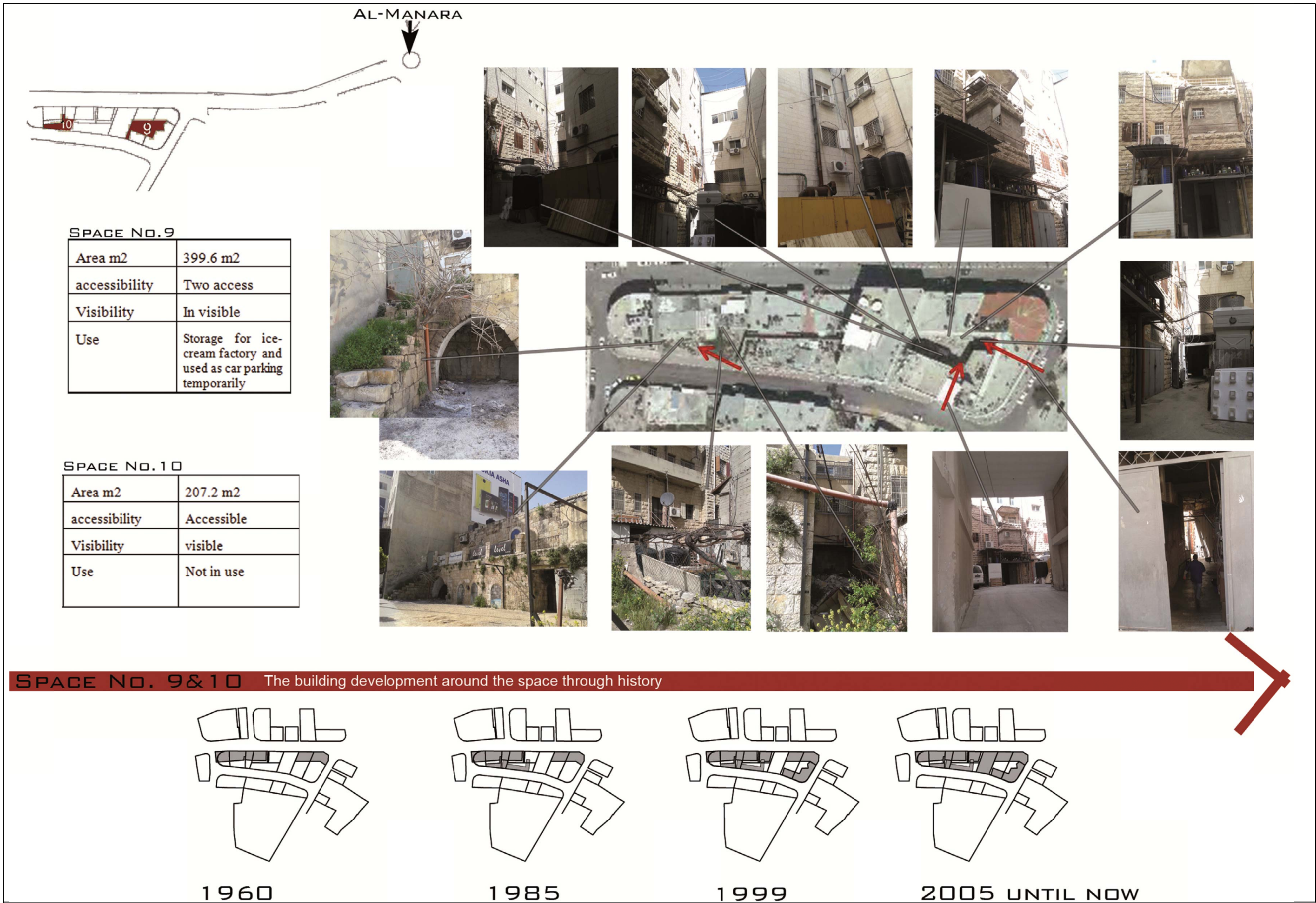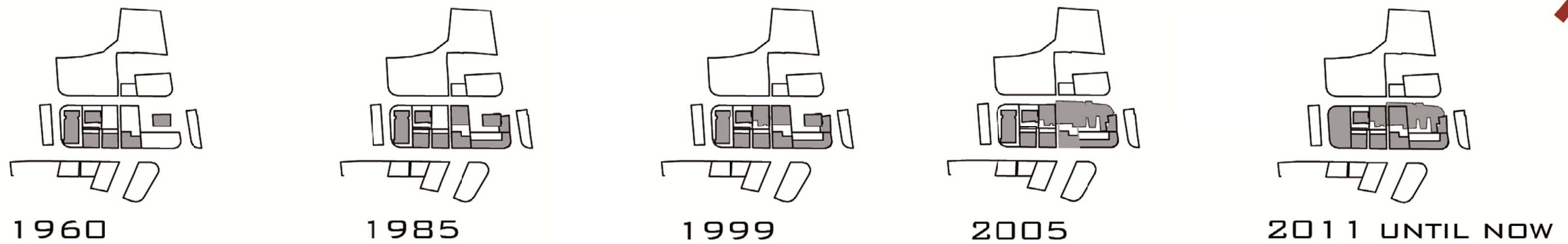
1960

1999

2005 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-15: A figure showing space No. 14, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

Al-Manara

Area m2	1070 m2
Accessibility	One access from street but closed by door and it is accessible from surrounding shops
Visibility	Invisible
use	Used for shops extensions, storage and other un definite uses

AL-IRSAL STREET

AL-NAHDA STREET

■ Closed access

↷ Visible from buildings

↷ Invisible from street side

Closed accesses by shops (illegal)

Closed door

SPACE NO. 15 The building development around the space through history

1946

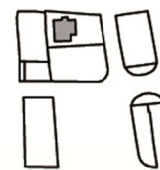1950-1960

1964

1978

Eighties

After 1990

Figure 5-16: A figure showing space No. 15, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA

Area m2	560 m2
Accessibility	Accessible
Visibility	Invisible
use	Used as storage and temporary parking

SPACE NO. 16 The building development around the space through history

1960   1985 UNTIL NOW

Figure 5-17: A figure showing space No. 16, such as development, details, and current conditions
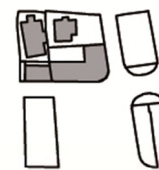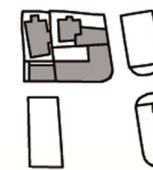**Source:** Ramallah municipality archive & author

Area m2	196.8 m2
Accessibility	Accessible but access is invisible
Visibility	visible
use	Garbage area

AL-MANARA

Access
Visible from buildings
Invisible from street side
visible from street

SPACE No. 17 The building development around the space through history

1950

1965

1977-

Figure 5-18: A figure showing space No. 17, such as development, details, and current conditions
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA
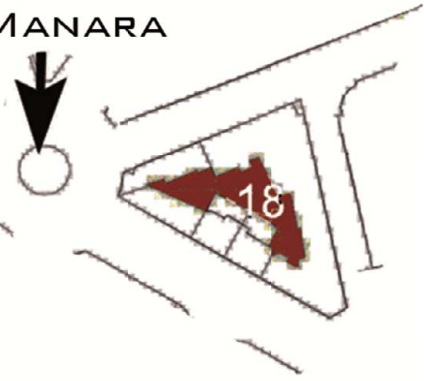
Area m2	572.3 m2
Accessibility	Inaccessible
Visibility	In visible
use	Garbage area & illegal extensions

No access

Visible from buildings

Invisible from street side

SPACE NO. 18   The building development around the space through history

1955

1960

After 1990
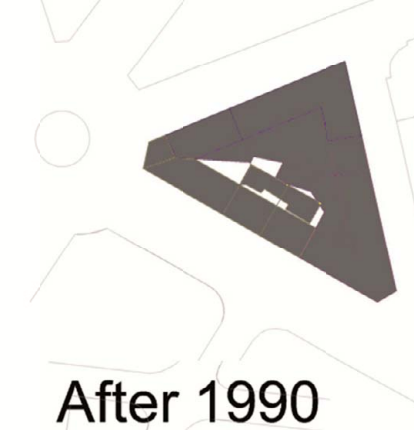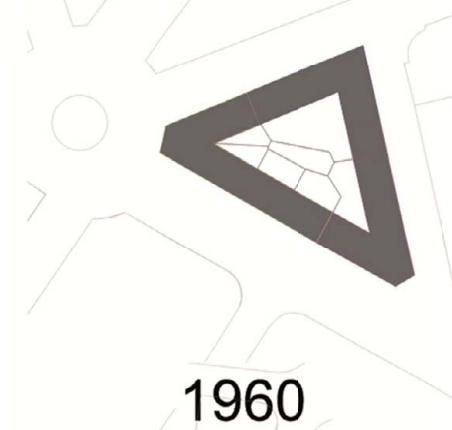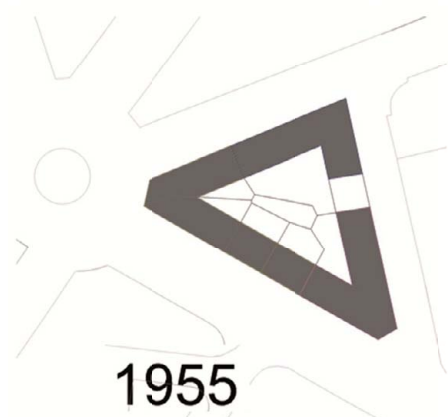
Figure 5-19: A figure showing space No. 18, such as development, details, and current conditions
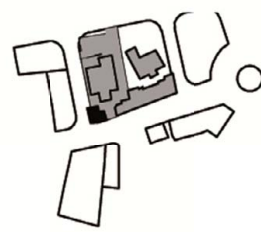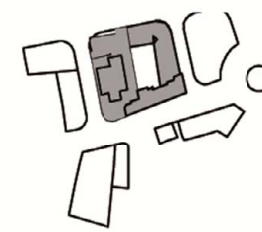**Source:** Ramallah municipality archive & author

AL-MANARA
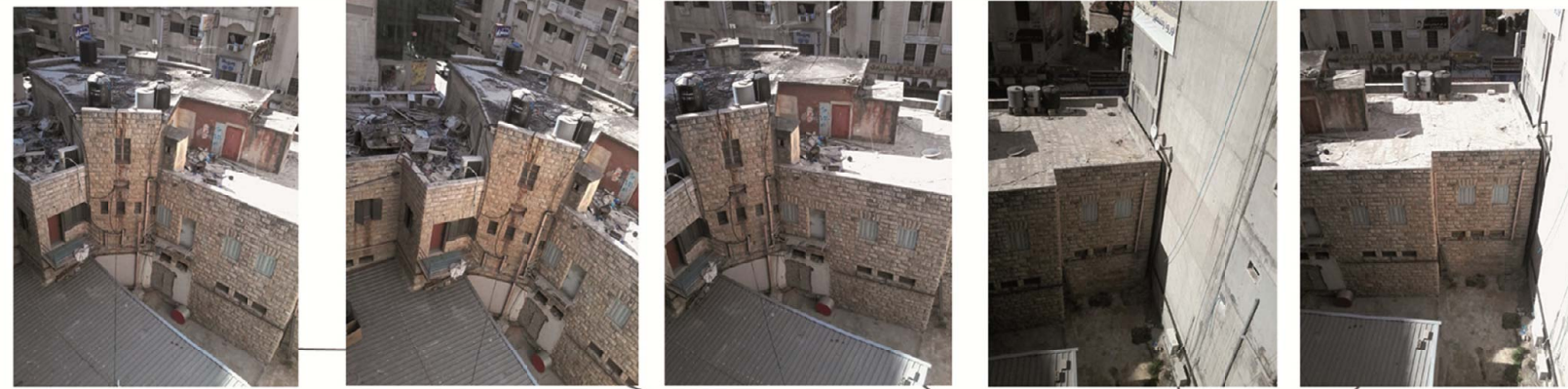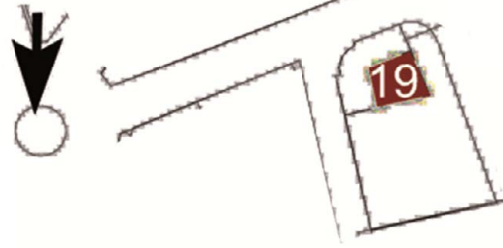
Area m2	232 m2
Accessibility	One access from street but closed by door and it is accessible from surrounding shops
Visibility	In visible
use	Indefinite use

•••• No access
▬▬ Closed access
Visible from buildings
Invisible from street side
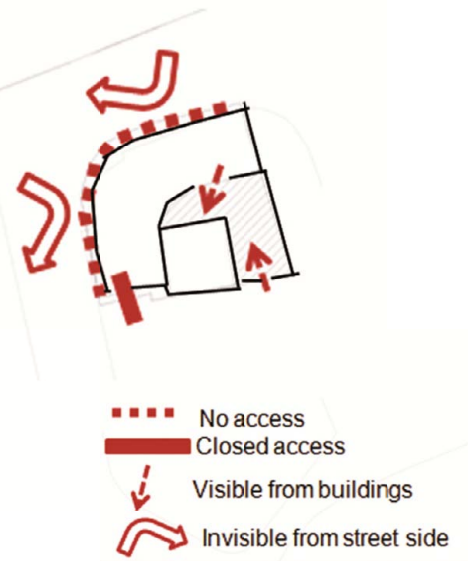
SPACE No. 19   The building development around the space through history
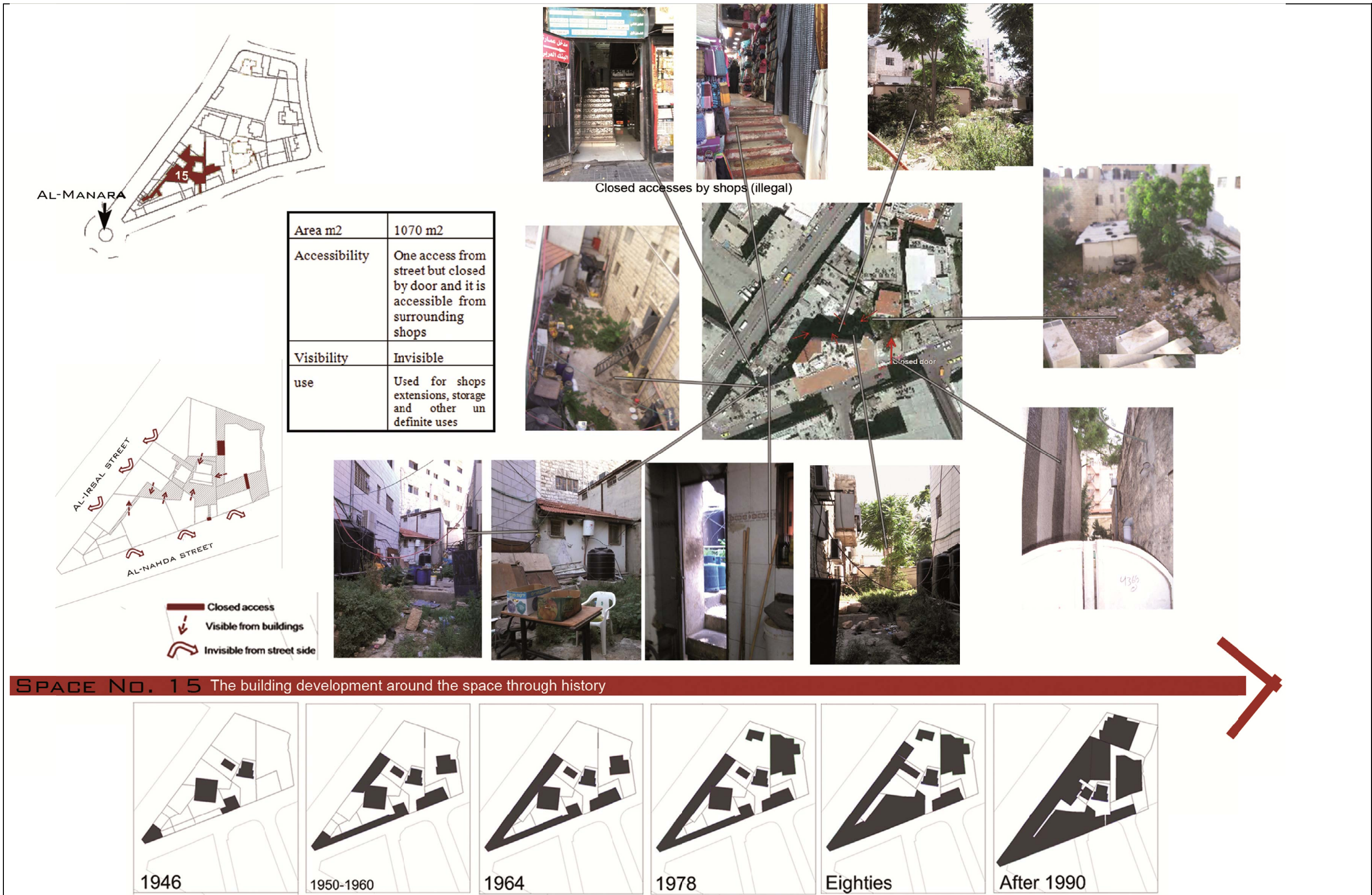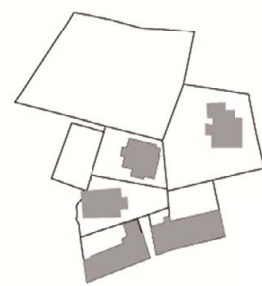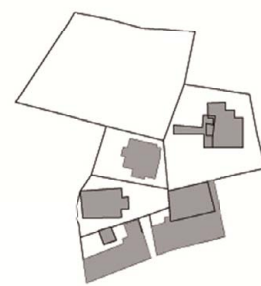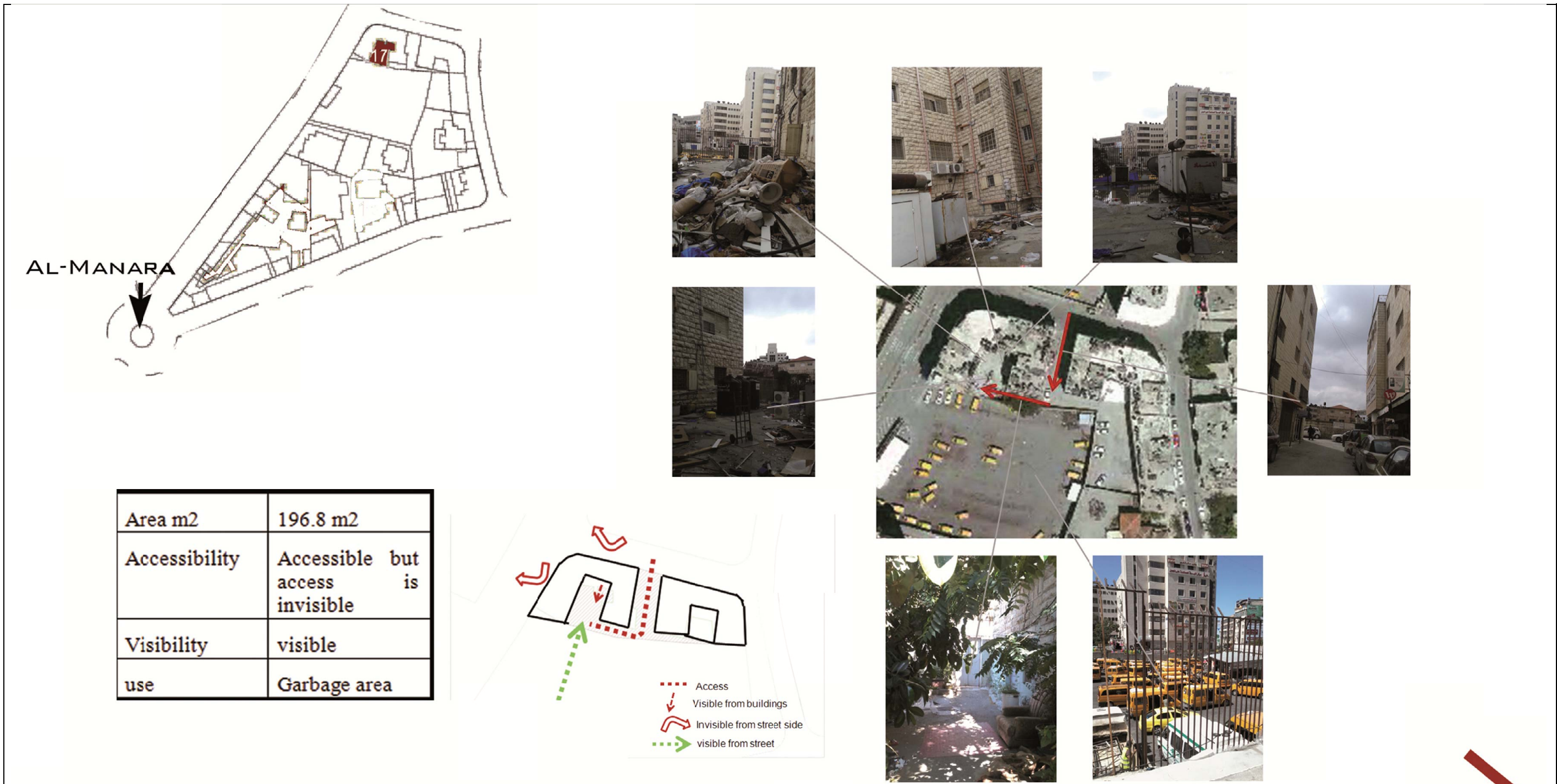
1957

Now
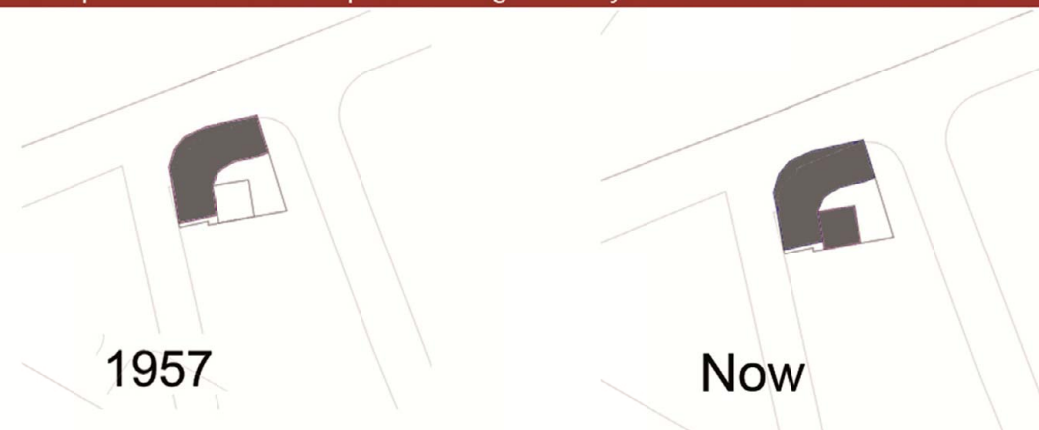
Figure 5-20: A figure showing space No. 19, such as development, details, and current conditions
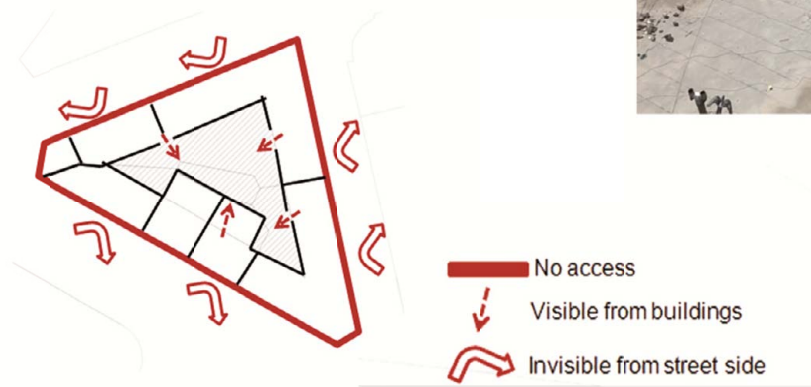**Source:** Ramallah municipality archive & author

Table 5-1: A table showing the total area of each forgotten space in addition to the distance of each space from Al-Manara Square.

Space No	Open space area m^2	Distance from Al-Manara square (m)
1	860.7	43
2	1539.4	93
3	1643	178
4	2905.7	283
5	2761	128
6	471.5	41
7	550.4	104.5
8	2541	150
9	399.6	285
10	207.2	338
11	657.	212.4
12	369.9	352
13	409.3	264
14	545.7	70
15	1070	79
16	560	170
17	196.8	260
18	572.3	33
19	232	107
Total area	18492.9	-

Source: Author [1]

5.1 Factors affecting the formation of forgotten spaces:

Any phenomenon that is defined in the urban fabric within a specific area happens

because of several factors. The conducted fieldwork concludes that the main

[1] **Note:** The areas and distances in table 5-1 are approximate numbers because they are measured by using a computer software based on the available maps of the area, rather than being measured on-site.

factors that affect the formation of forgotten spaces in the twin cities' downtown area are building-planning regulations and ownership issues. These two factors also affect the surrounding components of the forgotten spaces that are discussed in the previous section; by default, they affect these spaces. The building-planning regulations system contains a set of articles in order to control urban development; some of these articles have a direct impact on forgotten spaces' formation. Otherwise, ownership issues assisted in the formation of forgotten spaces.

5.1.1 Building - planning regulations:

The building-planning regulations system assisted in the formation of forgotten spaces mainly because there is either a delay in law enforcement or the fact that laws are not applied at all, resulting in an absence of important articles in the regulations system related to building design and complexity. In reference to the unsuitable articles in some cases, the problem of law enforcement is related to the lack of strict rules to control the urban fabric. There are some articles in the regulations system dating back to 2011 (e.g. articles No.58 and 59) that make building regulations infraction more easy, which normally causes urban development confusion and forgotten space formation.

In summary, the No. 58 and 59 rules provide solutions in the event that someone does not apply the laws or ignores some of them. In addition, in article No. 20, each plot must include a 10% minimum green area in residential areas and no one can use the building that is established in the plot until the vegetation works are

completed. However, almost no one applies this article, because, if applied, it would be noticeable within the landscape of the city.

In article No.66, the setbacks for the plots from each zone (e.g. residential, commercial, offices) is defined. The study area is mainly a commercial zone with little other uses, and most of the plots there are classified as longitudinally commercial. The setbacks for this type of zone plots are 0 m for the first 14m from the street, and then it should be 4 m from both sides **(Fig 5-21-a).** This means that the front side of the plot and for 14m deep, the buildings are attached to each other along with the street side (i.e. parallel to the street). This found an open space in the backside of the building that will later become derelict **(Fig 5-21-b).** In addition, in the building regulations system documents there are no comprehensive design regulations that take indoor and outdoor spaces' relation into consideration. All articles related to design are mainly about the building design (colour, height, ventilation system, number of parking spaces); however, these articles do not mention how to integrate the buildings and the spaces around them, either from the street side or at the backside (e.g. access to these spaces, how to design them, and what kind of greenery must be incorporated). These are the main reasons of how regulations assisted in the formation of forgotten spaces.
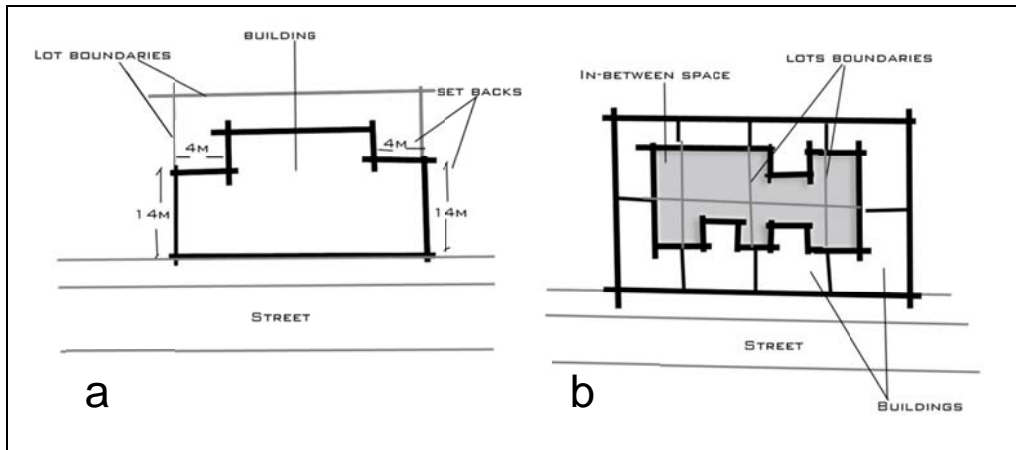
Figure 5-21: Diagrams showing how buildings are located in the land plot, according to the building regulations system. (a) A diagram shows the setbacks of the buildings that are 0 m for the first 14 m depth from the street, and then it should be 4 m from both sides. (b) A diagram shows how the space enclosed behind the buildings results in a 0 m setback from the street side.
Source: Author.

5.1.2 Ownership issue:

Ownership is an important issue that affects the urban fabric and the creation of forgotten spaces in Palestine overall as well as within the twin cities. In Palestine, land lots are commonly private property that are inherited; as such, these lots increase in number over time. This increase in the number of owners has caused the diversion of land lots to be divided into smaller pieces. This means more land lots, more buildings, and less open spaces. For example, in space No. 15, the number of owners has increased over time; in 1946, for example, this space was owned by six owners, but currently it is owned by 10 owners **(Fig 5-22).** According to this increase in the number of owners, the areas of each lot have decreased and their shape has changed, which affects the design of the buildings established on them. The building regulations are the same regardless of the size

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of the lot and this increases the problem of forgotten spaces. Thus, there is a relationship between the number of owners of forgotten spaces and their individual quality. More owners for one space means lower quality, because if the owner is only one person, the wastes and uses would be limited and easier to control, as the owner would be more positive toward any proposal, but in the case of multi-person ownership, the control of these lots becomes more complicated. For example, spaces No. 15 and 18 are each owned by more than one person, and their conditions are worse than spaces with fewer owners, like space No. 19 **(Fig 5-23).**

Figure 5-22: A figure showing the increase in number of owners of space No. 15 over time. The number of land lots increased also.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, & http://www.ramallah-gis.ps/flexviewers/Basemap/ edited by author.

| Space 15 | Space 18 | Space 19 |

Figure 5-23: A figure showing spaces No.15, 18, and 19. It is clear that spaces No. 15 and 18 had worse conditions than space No. 19 according to the ownership issue, while space No. 19 was owned by one person, while spaces No.15 and 18 were owned by two or more persons.
Source: Author.

5.2 The current condition of the forgotten spaces:

The shape, environment, and components of the forgotten spaces are being affected by and affecting their surroundings. Each forgotten space has its own condition that has resulted in unique responses to different variables. The buildings around the forgotten spaces within the study area are mainly commercial or mixed-use buildings. The buildings' heights vary between three to six levels, where the lower levels are commercial stores and the higher levels are used as offices and specialty stores. On the other hand, in mixed-use buildings, higher levels are used for residential purposes. The buildings are attached to each other and almost form a barrier between the front space (street side) and back

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space (forgotten space) of the building, either visually or physically. The attitude of owners or building users is to maximize the financial benefit, so the designs of these buildings are focused to maximize the indoor spaces regardless of the outdoor spaces. Improper use of the forgotten spaces has emerged because of unsuitable designs of surrounding buildings and the lack of integration between indoor and outdoor spaces. These design issues, which led to the creation of forgotten spaces, had emerged mainly because of building-planning regulations and ownership issues, which play an important role in negative use of the space. The surrounding built environment's complexity and design defines a set of components of the forgotten spaces. These components are:

5.2.1 Accessibility:

The forgotten spaces in the study area have various accessibility statuses. Of the 19 available spaces, 13 have at least one direct access from the street, 2 spaces have direct access from the street but are closed with a door like spaces (No. 15 and 19, shown in **Figure 5-24,** while the remaining 4 spaces have access from the surrounding buildings (No. 14, 7, 5 and 2, shown in **Figs 15, 9, 7, and4)**. Nevertheless, people (e.g. downtown visitors) are not aware of these spaces and rarely have access to them. **Table 5-2** shows which spaces are accessible and which are not. Usually, the ground floor of the buildings in the study area has an access point to the back space; most of time, however, this access is closed. The staircase is usually the main access from the building to the backside, but owners often rent this space (illegally) to get more financial benefit. The ground floor

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shops' doors that lead to the backspace are also closed in order to use the area in front of the door to display their goods.
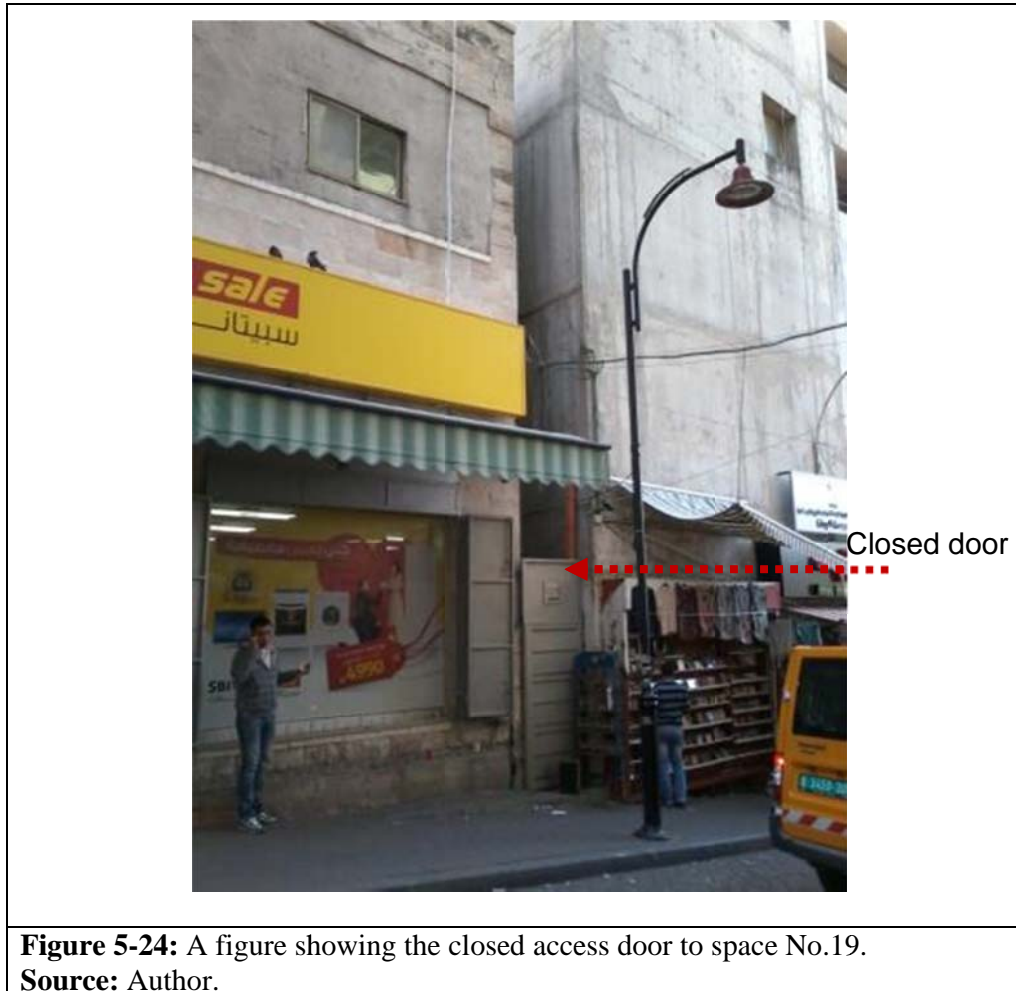
Figure 5-24: A figure showing the closed access door to space No.19.
Source: Author.

5.2.2 Visibility:

Almost all of the forgotten spaces are only visible from the windows and corridors of the surrounding buildings. Most, however, lack visibility from the street side, except for 8 of the 19 spaces, which are visible from the street: No.2,3,6,8,9,10,12, and 17 **(Table5-2).** In space No.15, open spaces have

decreased over time, as new buildings have been erected on the open spaces from more sides, ultimately leading to the space being fully enclosed by buildings (inaccessible and invisible from the street side) **(Fig 5-25).** The fieldwork found that some spaces are visible from the street but their access is invisible (refer to space No.17, shown in **Figure 18.** Space No.17 is visible and accessible, but it is also derelict. The reason for its derelict condition is the invisibility of the access.

Closed access

Visible from buildings

Invisible from street side

Figure 5-25: A diagram showing the current situation of space No. 15 in terms of accessibility and visibility.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

Table 5-2: Table showing the accessibility status, visibility of the access, and visibility of the space.

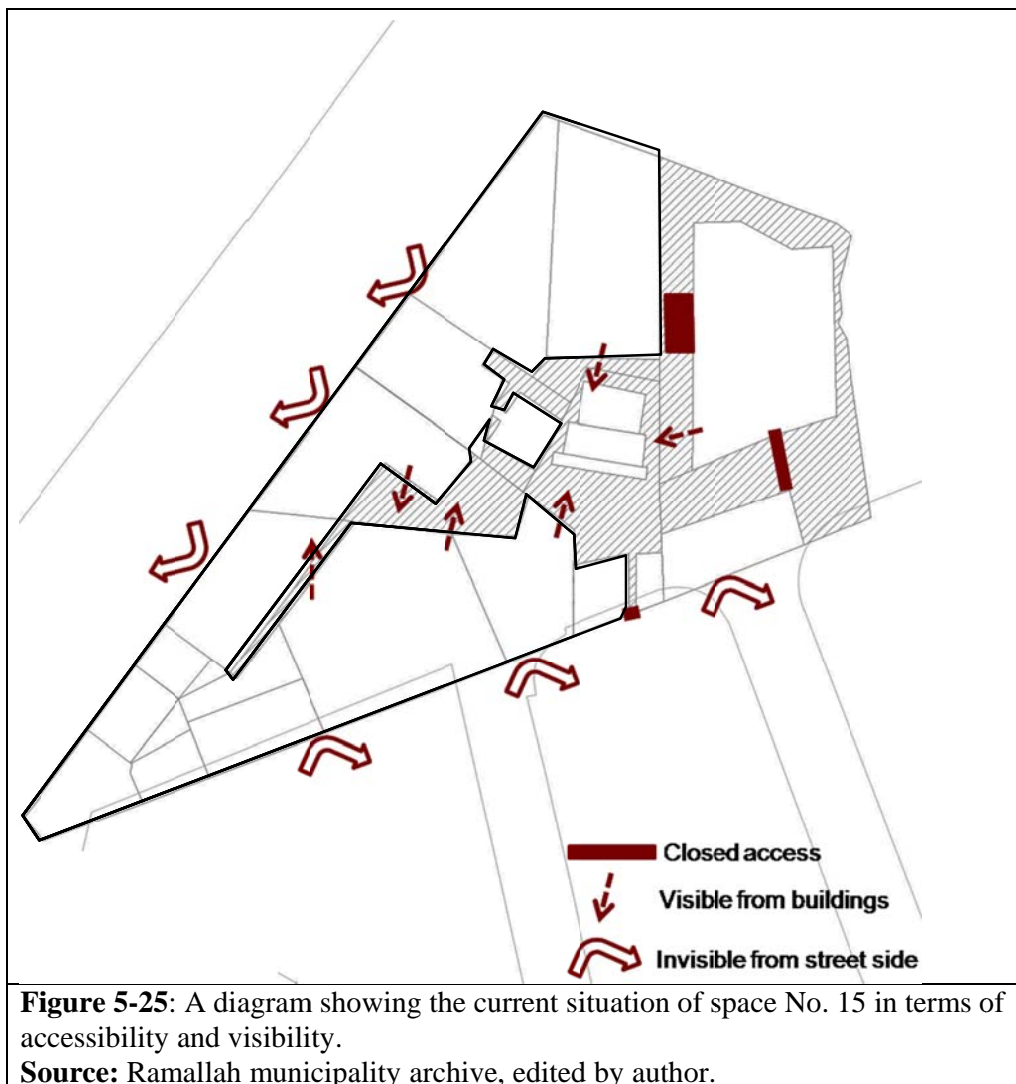| Space No	Accessibility status	Visibility of the access	Visibility of the space from street
1	Accessible	Visible	Invisible
2	Accessible only from some of the surrounding buildings (not all of them)	-	Visible
3	Accessible	Invisible	Visible
4	Accessible	Invisible	Invisible
5	Has access only from another building	Invisible	Invisible
6	Divided into two parts, where one is completely accessible but the other part has two accesses, both closed by doors.	Visible	Visible
7	Area (1) is accessible from shops only. Area (2) has access by surrounding buildings but it is not activated.	-	Invisible
14	Accessible only from surrounding shops	-	Invisible
15	One access from street but closed by door and it is accessible from surrounding shops	-	Invisible
16	Accessible	Invisible	Invisible
17	Accessible	Invisible	Visible
18	Inaccessible	-	Invisible
19	One access from street but closed by door and it is accessible from surrounding shops	-	Invisible

Source: The author, based on the field survey results.

5.2.3 Environmental conditions:

The fieldwork conducted shows that 11 forgotten spaces have a problem with their environmental conditions, either in ventilation, lighting, or cleanliness. The rest of the spaces still have issues, but their environmental situations are still better than the others. In addition to their poor environmental conditions, the building enclosures of spaces No.15 and 18 **(Fig 16 and 19)** enable both spaces to be used as stores by the surrounding buildings' users. The spaces are also used either for solid waste or for wastewater, which has a negative effect on the environmental conditions and on the image of the city. The accessibility plays an important role in the environmental condition of the space, and the inaccessible areas have worse environmental conditions than the accessible ones. In space No.1 (**Fig5-3)**, some areas are totally inaccessible and have worse environmental conditions than others, while accessible areas' conditions are better **(Fig 5-26).** The spaces in this area are almost all used as storage facilities for the surrounding shops. The spaces with bad environmental conditions, however, are filled with waste and have bad ventilation and bad lighting conditions.
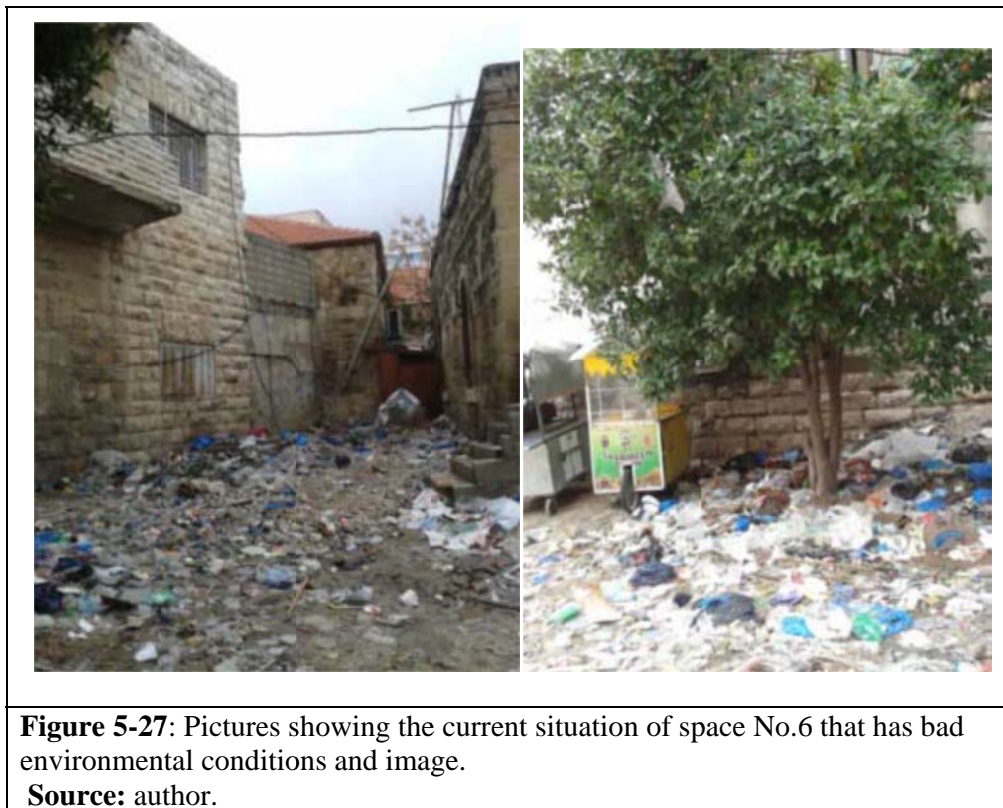
Figure 5-26 : Pictures showing the difference between the two parts of space No. 1: (a) the in accessible part with its bad environment and (b) the accessible part with better conditions.
 Source: Author.

5.2.4 Image & identity:

Most of the forgotten spaces look like storage or garbage areas, such as spaces No. 1 and 18 **(Fig 3 and 19),** or are left empty, like space No.19 **(Fig 20).** This leaves these spaces without a defined or specific identity. In addition, the improper uses and environmental conditions negatively affect the image of the spaces themselves as well as the city's image. This happened because of the development activities that took place in the forgotten spaces and in their surroundings, which have negatively affected the spaces' shape, environment, and components (accessibility, visibility). This development also enabled them to be used in an unsuitable way, such as using them as storage areas in which to throw garbage rather than keeping them tidy and using them as a clean, open space. This, of course, affects the image and identity of the downtown area. Space No.6 **(Fig 9)** is divided into two areas: one area is totally inaccessible and invisible,

while the other is accessible, although it has a negative effect on the image of the city. This second area, likely due to its shape, is used as a garbage dumping area, and most stall owners use this space as a storage facility or temporary parking area for their stalls because it is open and easy accessible. This space negatively affects the image of the downtown area in addition to its bad effect on the environment **(Fig 5-27).**

Figure 5-27: Pictures showing the current situation of space No.6 that has bad environmental conditions and image.
 Source: author.

Accessibility and visibility of the space are significantly affected by the complexity of its surroundings, which are formed by the designs of nearby buildings as a result of building regulations. Accessibility and visibility affect one another as well as other components; for example, the invisible space, even if it is

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accessible, has the same conditions of an inaccessible space. The invisibility and inaccessibility of the space indirectly affects the use of the space and it becomes derelict, because people (daily users of the downtown) are not aware of these spaces. Ultimately, these spaces become limited to users of the surrounding buildings and, because of that, they are only used as storage and garbage areas.

5.2.5 SWOT analysis of the forgotten spaces:

To properly analyse the factors that assist in the formation of the forgotten spaces and discussing the current situation of the spaces, it is important to know their overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in order to provide proper solutions and recommendations.

Table 5-3: SWOT analysis for all forgotten spaces' revitalization process

SWOT analysis			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
- The variation of the spaces' areas **(Table 5- 1),** this gives a flexibility in uses.	- The spaces are mainly full of waste and used as illegal building extensions.	- Will improve the overall conditions of the downtown.	- Permission to be given to owners in order to build in the forgotten spaces.
- The short distances between the spaces and Al-Manara square (i.e. the farthest distance from Al-Manara is only 352 m)	- The orientation of buildings is toward the streets rather than toward the backspaces	- increase the green areas in the downtown	- The support to revitalize forgotten spaces maybe not enough or it may take a long time.

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Cont. Table 5-4: SWOT analysis for all forgotten spaces' revitalization process

- The different shapes of these spaces provides a wide range of various design options	- Ownership issues, wherein owners may refuse revitalization process	- Increase the number of public open spaces	- The daily users of the city centre may not be aware of the importance of these spaces.
- Nearby activities.	- Disputes between owners	- Will provide quality public spaces	- The available forgotten spaces may disappear in the future according to the illegal extension usage
	-In appropriate access	- Enhance the social relations in the downtown.	- Demolishing of buildings with remarkable style.
	-Lack of flexibility in the spaces in the current situation.		- Financing and maintenance for contemporary buildings.

According to the above SWOT analysis, the priority is to exploit the spaces' characteristics in an effort to change them from forgotten spaces into quality, sustainable spaces in the downtown are by improving the overall components of each space. However, this can only be achieved by buildings-planning regulation system enhancement, ownership issues resolution, and design recommendations. To do so, a comprehensive framework is needed.

The current quality of the forgotten spaces depends on the conditions of the space components, which are accessibility, visibility, types of use, environmental conditions, and the space's impact on the image of the downtown area. These components differ from one space to another in importance. A specific component may be more important in one space than another, which depends on the situation of the forgotten space itself. The quality of each space in the urban fabric depends mainly on these components, and to specify the overall quality, these components should be discussed in a comprehensive way, but not separately.

The spaces' accessibility needs to be improved, and the visibility of the spaces and their access is important to be clarified. If these targets are achieved, by default, the environmental conditions and the image of the spaces will improve; then, people will be aware of and notice these spaces, which will in turn increase the opportunities for using them.

5.3 Spaces typologies:

There are three typologies to classify these areas based on their shapes and their openness to the street. These typologies are:
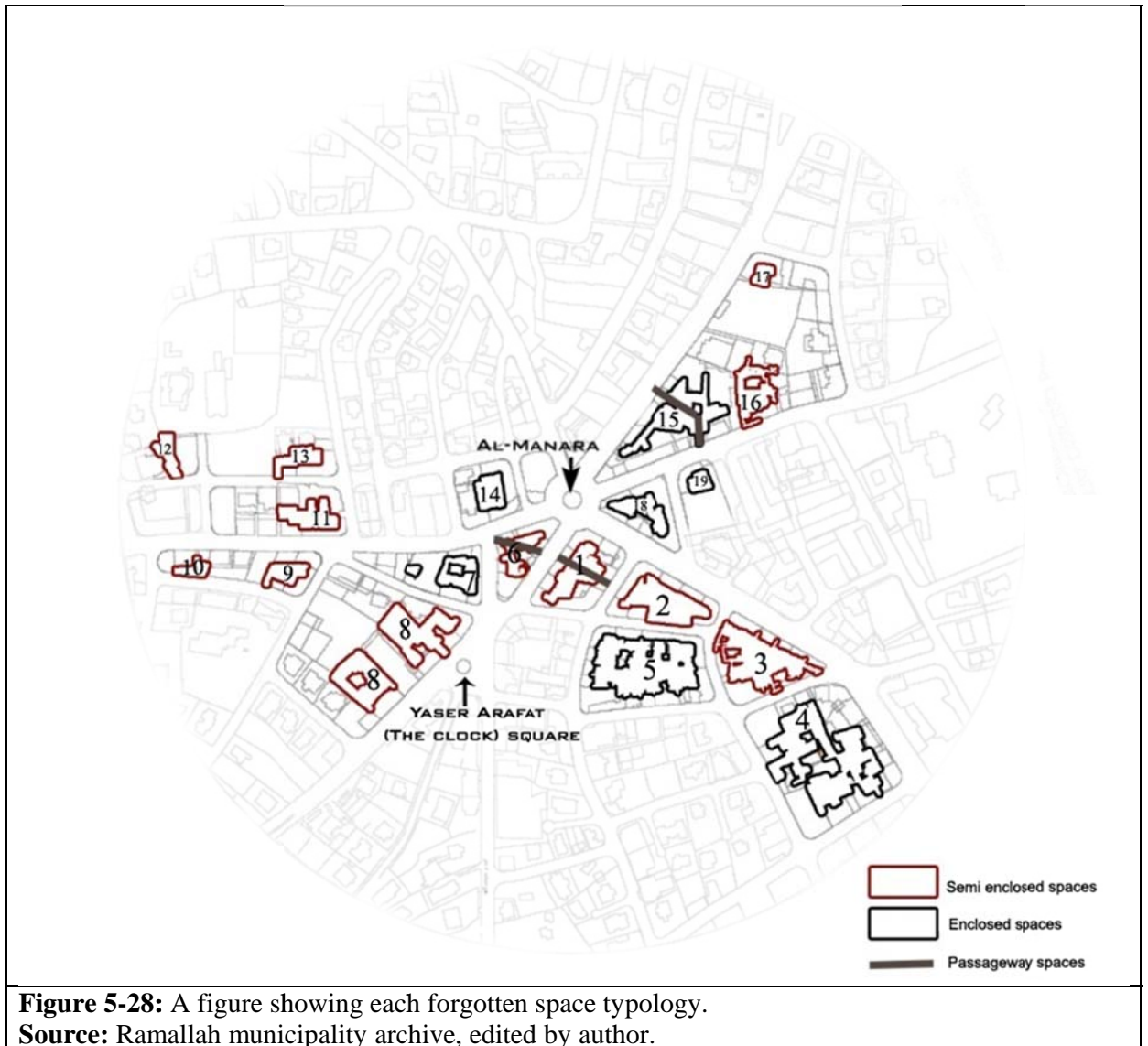
5.3.1 Enclosed spaces:

These spaces are totally enclosed and surrounded by buildings, so the only way to reach them is by the entrances surrounding buildings.

5.3.2 Semi enclosed spaces:

These spaces are open to the street at least from one of their sides.

5.3.3 Passageway spaces:

This typology could be enclosed or semi-enclosed but they must serve as a link

between two streets or two areas.

Figure 5-28: A figure showing each forgotten space typology.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

Chapter six - Forgotten spaces improvement and development framework

The proposed framework considers the needs of the downtown area, the forgotten spaces' typologies, and the forgotten spaces' characteristics, taking into consideration the theoretical analysis results and historical development of the study area. The framework for improvement and development of the forgotten spaces will include:

- Suggested uses for the forgotten spaces.
- Sample designs for some of them.
- Planning and urban design recommendations.

6.1 Suggested uses:

According to the study area needs and the forgotten spaces' typologies there are several suggested uses to solve some of the current problems in the downtown area in an effort to improve the overall condition of the area and to provide services that are currently unavailable. These uses are not the only ones that can be offered for the forgotten spaces, but they represent some of the most reliable uses, considering that the revitalized spaces offer a wide range of functional options. The suggested uses are:

6.1.1 Shortcut ways:

In the twin cities downtown there is a problem in mobility. Sidewalks are not enough and adequate to accommodate people's movement; this is why people use streets to walk, and their behaviour causes crowdedness and conflict between people and cars movement. If the forgotten spaces are used for people's mobility

this will shorten the walking distances and decrease the conflict between cars and people; for example, using spaces No. 15 & 6 as shortcuts for people's movement this will improve the quality of movement and space **(Fig 6-1).** This use is proper for passageway spaces typology **(Fig 5-11).**
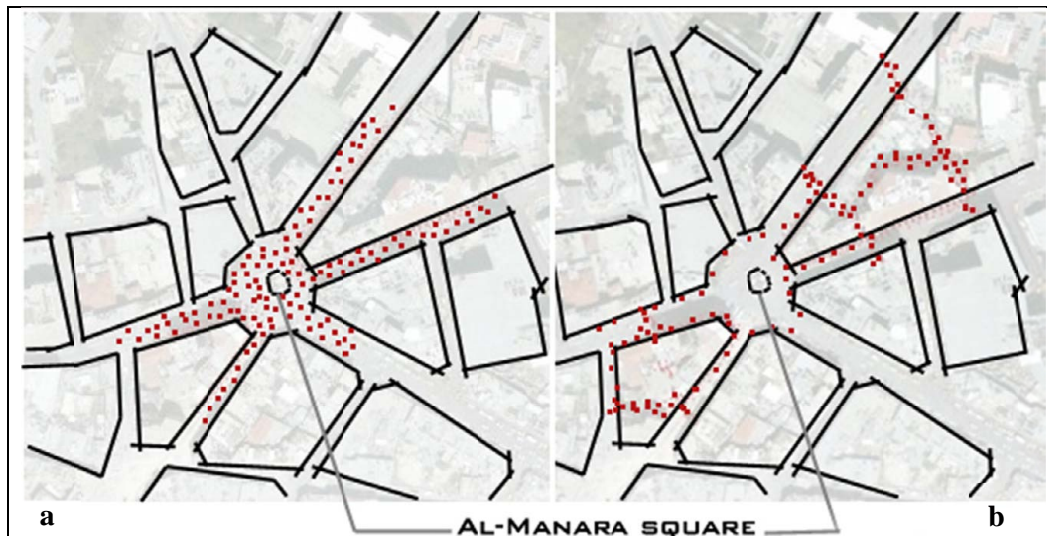

AL-MANARA SQUARE

a   b

Figure 6-1: Aerial photos showing**: a)** an indication of the current situation of pedestrians and how the current mobility patterns cause crowding in the streets. **b)** Showing how the situation could be developed if spaces No. 6 and 15 are opened as shortcut ways for pedestrians.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

6.1.2 Pocket gardens & public plazas:

The aerial photo of the twin cities' downtown area in **Figure 6-2** clearly shows that there are not enough green areas. Even though these areas are green in colour, they are really only empty lands not specified for public use. The green colour is provided by shrubs and sometimes trees but these are rarely planted. Otherwise, when moving through the downtown area of the twin cities the perception is that it is a complex of buildings with no green or social interaction areas, and people are

forced to move quickly and uncomfortably. If some of the forgotten spaces are revitalized and used as pocket gardens, this will improve the quality of the downtown spaces and will improve the social interaction within the downtown sphere. Plazas also are needed to improve social relations, and can be used for various activities that could accommodate and control the missed uses and needs of people in the downtown area. In this regard, enclosed and semi-enclosed spaces are suitable for such uses.

Figure 6-2: A figure showing the lack of green area especially at the centre of the study area.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

6.1.3 Service area (for public):

The fieldwork found that there is a lack of service areas in the city's downtown area such as public bathrooms, safe and comfortable areas for stalls, open restaurants and cafeterias, and many other needs. For example, if you need to use a bathroom while in the downtown area, you have to go into one of the restaurants or shops, and this is either not available at all times or not permitted by certain shop owners. The stalls in the current situation are not safe or comfortable because often it requires patrons to stop in the street to buy from one of the stalls, which is dangerous and causes crowding in the streets. The restaurants and cafeterias currently available in the downtown area are similar to private homes but include more people. They have no open spaces or special experience for diners, like if they are situated in an open space near passers-by. The forgotten spaces have great potential to accommodate these needs. Enclosed and semi-enclosed spaces are suitable for this use, though semi-enclosed spaces are preferable.

6.2 Sample designs for forgotten spaces (pilot projects):

Sample designs for some of the forgotten spaces are proposed in order to show the potential, abilities and possibilities of their revitalization and to use this experience to draft suitable adaptations and improvements in short-term, long-term planning recommendations and design recommendations that will be discussed later. The pilot projects are done considering the short-term planning process, their spaces were chosen carefully to make a noticeable positive effect

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within the downtown, to encourage all community parties to being aware of the importance of these spaces, and to convince them to take part in the revitalization process of the remaining forgotten spaces. The suggested spaces for the pilot projects are spaces No.6, 15 and 17 **(Fig 6-3).** The spaces selection is based on several criteria, they are: space location, accessibility, visibility and space typology. The selected spaces' locations are important; they are seen by large number of downtown visitors and daily users. In addition to that, the selected spaces have various conditions according to the selection criteria. While space NO. 6 is a semi-enclosed pathway space, accessible and visible, space NO. 15 is inaccessible, invisible and it is a closed pathway space and space NO. 17, is a semi enclosed space, accessible, visible but its access is invisible.

The sample designs for the pilot projects are very simple they are prepared using simple materials, considering the possibility of implementation by non-expert workers (volunteers) in order to make it applicable and accepted either by the municipality, or by sites owners, or by supporting institution that may help in the revitalization process.

Figure 6-3: A Figure showing the three proposed sites for the pilot projects.
Source: Ramallah municipality, edited by author.

6.2.1 Space No.6:

Space No.6 is divided into two areas: one that is visible and accessible and one that is invisible and inaccessible. The proposed area for revitalization is the accessible and visible area. The revitalization will allow for each person that walks through the street to become aware of the existence of this space **(Fig 6-4 and 6-5).** This space has a total area of 224 m^{2}at a distance of only 41m from Al-Manara square. Currently, this space is full of waste, which negatively affects the environment and the image of the space **(Fig 6-6).** These conditions make the space derelict, discourage use by more than just a few people, and cause it to be used by mobile sellers to park their stalls.

The conditions in this space are similar to Paley Park in NYC, as the space is located in a crowded street where there is a real need to open it up and make it more comfortable for use. It has the potential to be used as a public open space

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where people could take a break from the city crowdedness and rest. In addition, this space could be used for temporary events (musical, cultural, entertainment). To guarantee the usage of this space, it is proposed that it be used as a shortcut pedestrian way connecting two streets. This should decrease the crowdedness in the streets and help to reduce the conflict between cars and pedestrians in this area. The suggested space design for this is very simple and could be planted and furnished with simple furniture **(Fig 6-7).**

In the suggested design, the main idea is to provide a relaxation and vital space by improving its presence and accessibility. The existing wall will be removed (as shown in **Fig 6-6)** to better reveal its location in order to open the closed access and provide the shortcut between the two streets: Al- Siraj and Bint Jbeel **(Fig 6-7).** The unpaved area will be paved with two materials, concrete tiles and grass, where the grass will be used to absorb rainwater. Built-in seats will be provided in the site next to the existing trees to afford a comfortable, shady sitting area. The material of the seats will be concrete or stone blocks, depending on the material provided by the supporting institutions, which will implement the project. An empty space will be available for use by mobile stalls, for merchants to park and sell their products. This will add extra vitality to the space, incorporating one of the uses of the space before revitalization, but in a positive way.
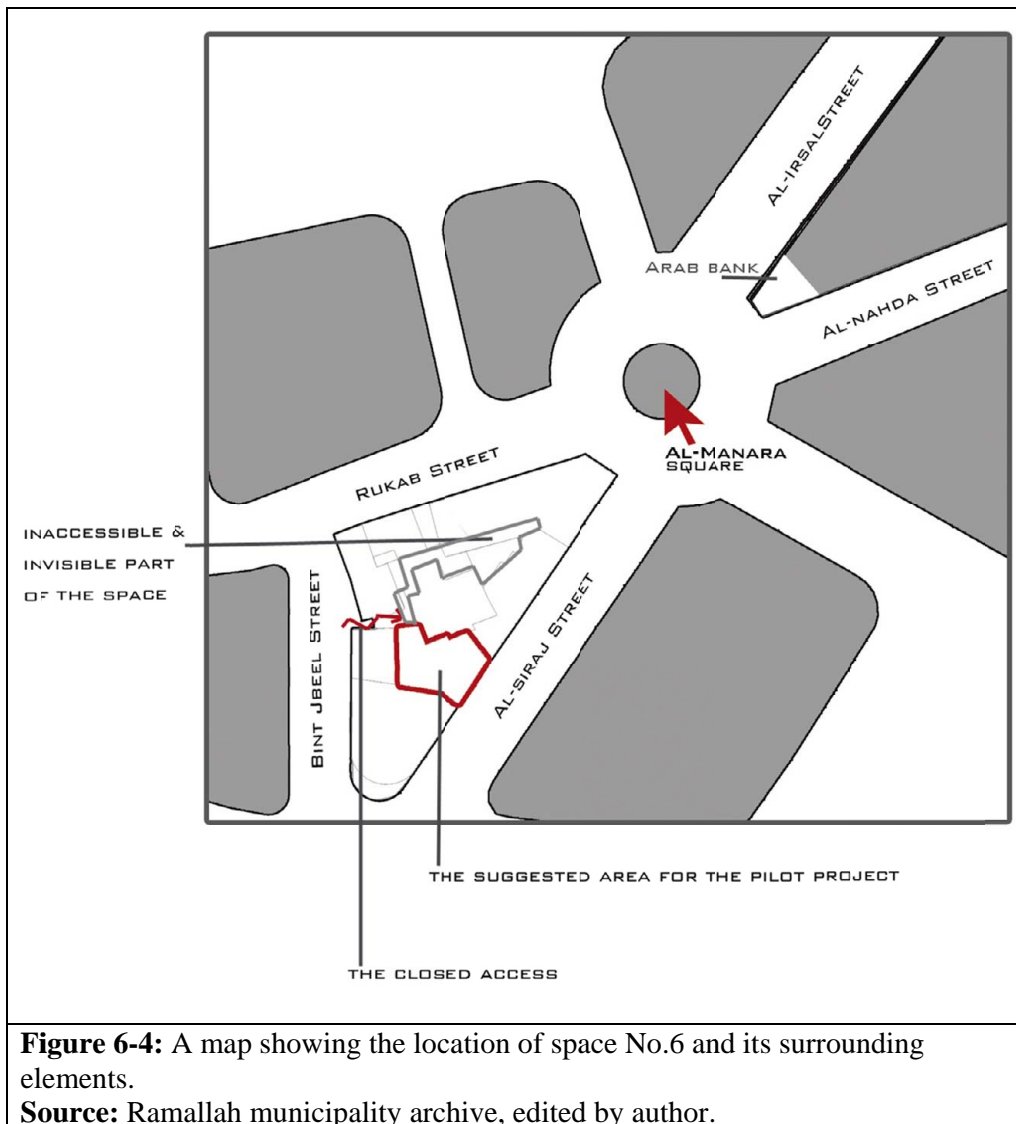
AL-IRSALSTREET

ARAB BANK

AL-NAHDA STREET

AL-MANARA
SQUARE

RUKAB STREET

INACCESSIBLE &
INVISIBLE PART
OF THE SPACE

BINT JBEEL STREET

AL-SIRAJ STREET

THE SUGGESTED AREA FOR THE PILOT PROJECT

THE CLOSED ACCESS

Figure 6-4: A map showing the location of space No.6 and its surrounding elements.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

1953   1960   1975   1986   1990
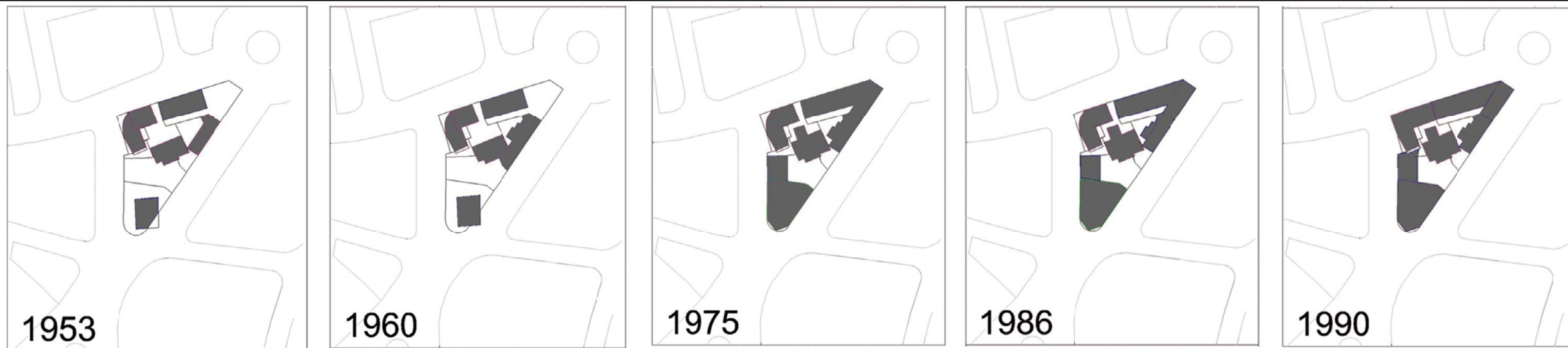
The building development around the space through history
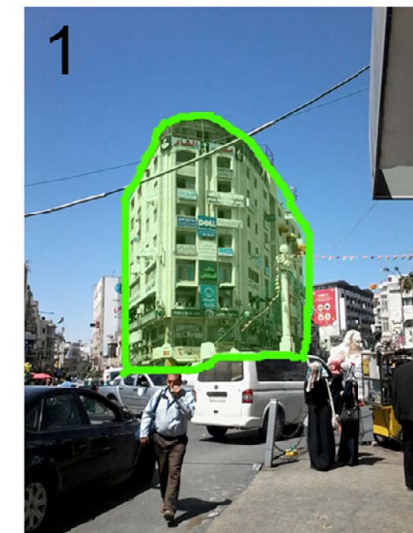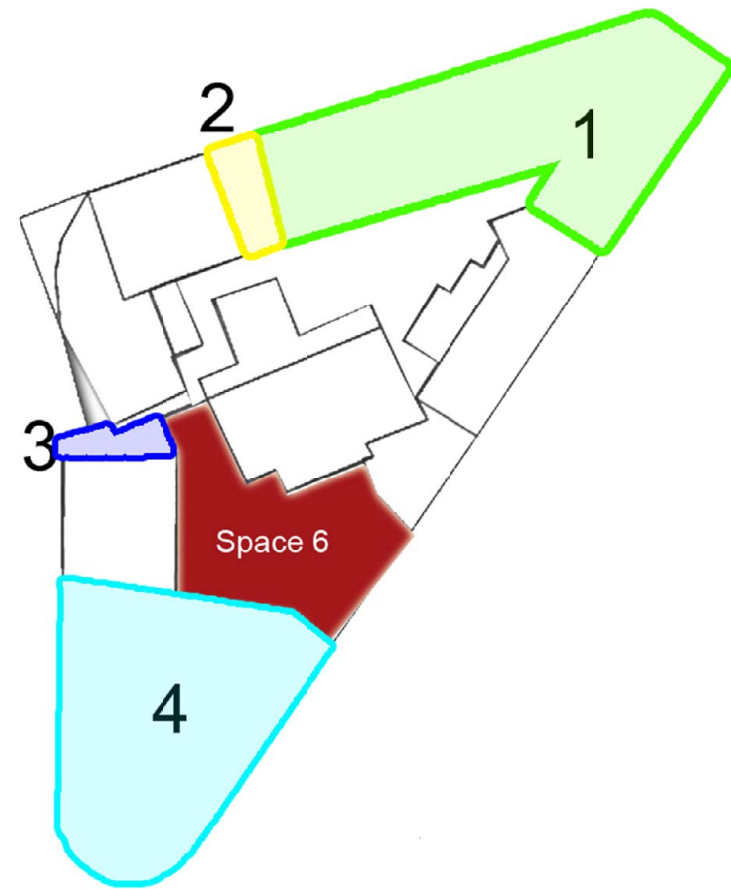
Figure 6-5: A figure showing the urban development around space No.6 and the building surrounding the space.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author.
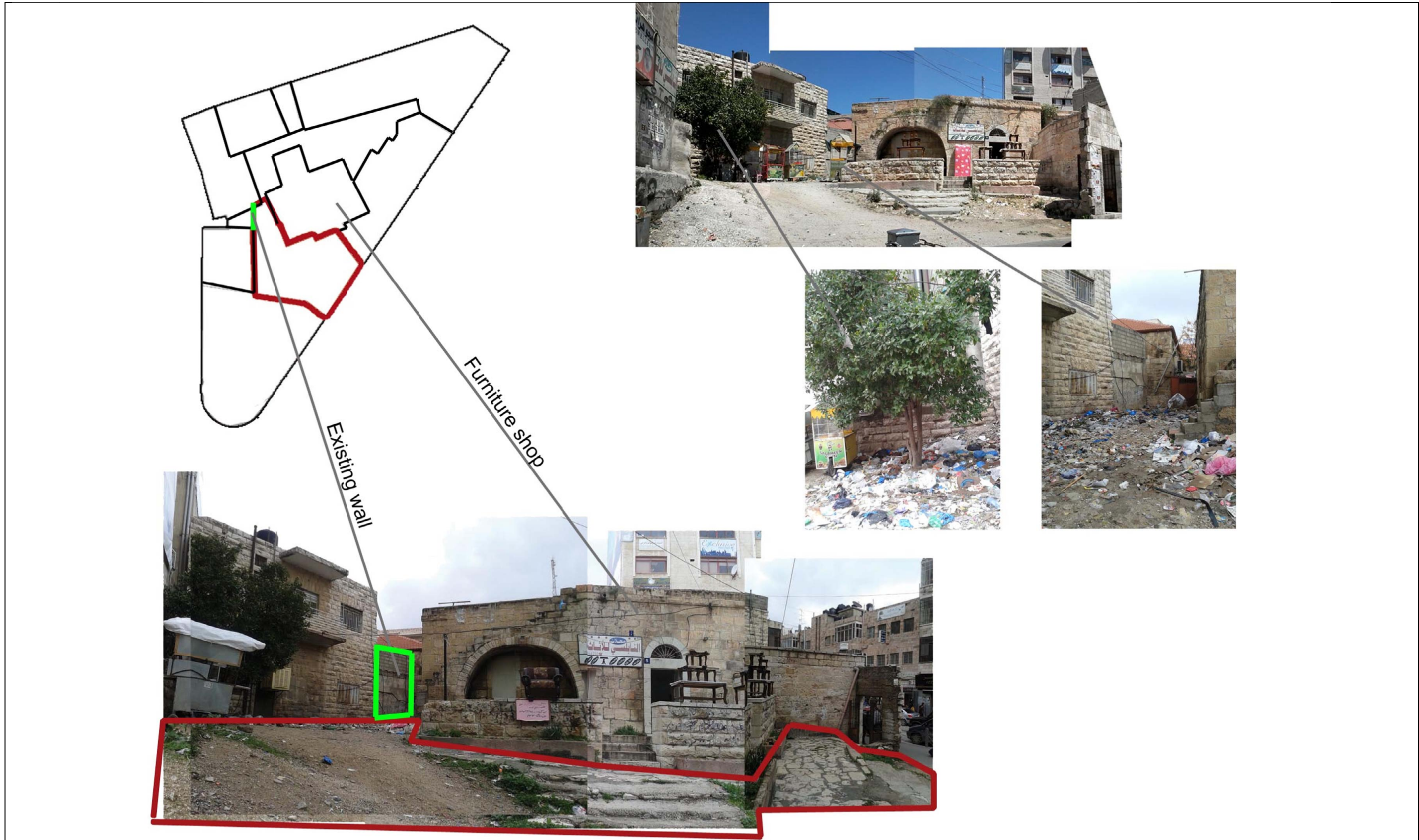
Figure 6-6: A figure showing the current situation of space No. 6
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author.

Existing wall

Furniture shop

Existing staircase

Shortcut Access
under the staircase

Street

Street

Plaza

Sitting area

Stalls area
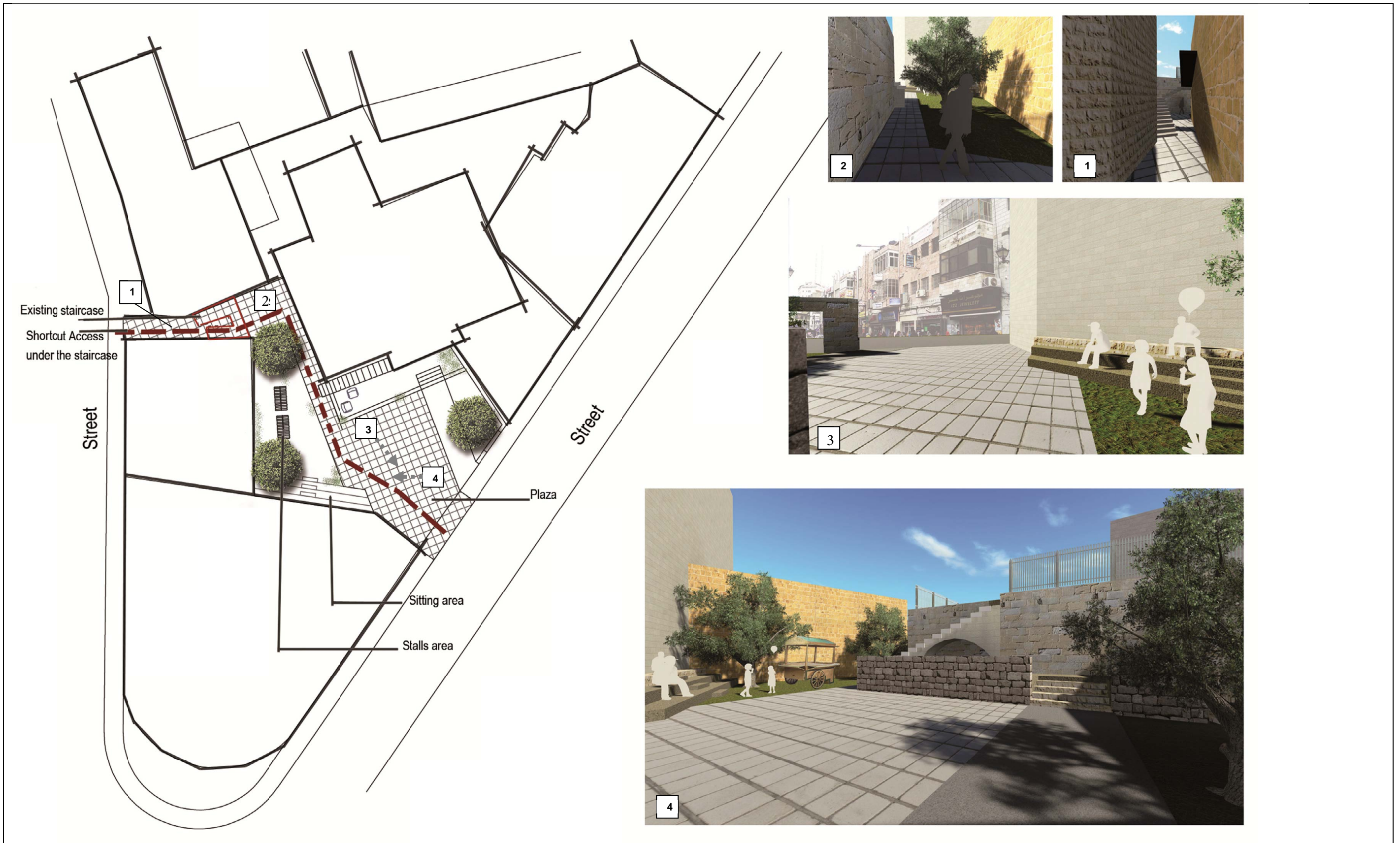
Figure 6-7: A figure showing the proposed design solutions for space No.6. The numbers in the plan were matched to the 3-D shots on the right side.
Source: Author.

6.2.2 Space No.15:

Space No.15 is only visible from the surrounding buildings and has only one access from the street side, though this access is currently closed with a door **(Fig 6-8).** The space area is 1070m^2. This space is full of waste, wastewater, and even several dead creatures. The location of this space is very important, as it is quite close to Al-Manara square **(Fig 6-9 and Fig 6-10).** According to its location, this space is recommended to be used as a shortcut way that will save time for people and decrease crowdedness in this area. In addition, this space is large enough to be used for more than one function; for example, it may be used as a sitting area to let people stop and interact with each other, and also for watching the different events that could take place within this space. The linear shape of the plan for the left side of the space will provide a rare experience if the space is used as a photo gallery to tell the story of the twin cities **(Fig 6-11).** As this place can provide a wide range of uses, the design of this space aims to provide different functions that fulfil a wide range of people's interests, either for daily users of the area or the owners of the space (there are more than two owners). The conditions of this space are similar to Neals Yard, London, in terms of its large area and the variation among the buildings that surround the space, though in Neals Yard the shops are oriented to the in-between space. In space No.15, all the shops in the surrounding buildings are oriented to the street rather than the forgotten space. Accordingly, the suggested design will propose that some of the shops around the

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space being oriented toward the forgotten space to have two accesses, one from the street and one from the forgotten space **(Fig 6-11).**
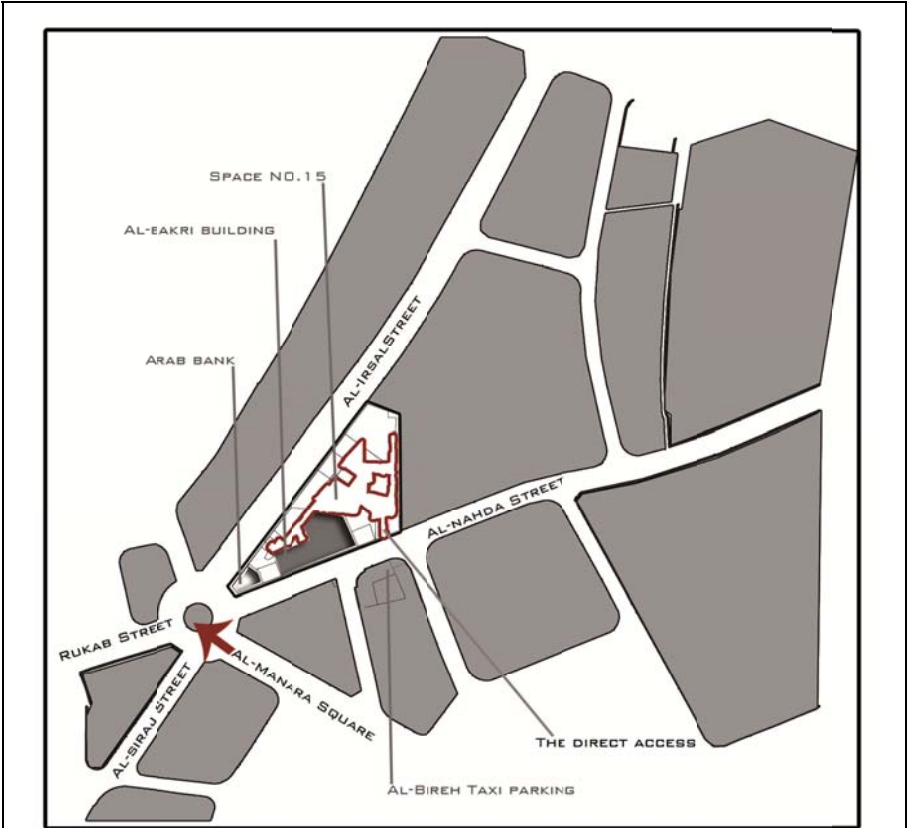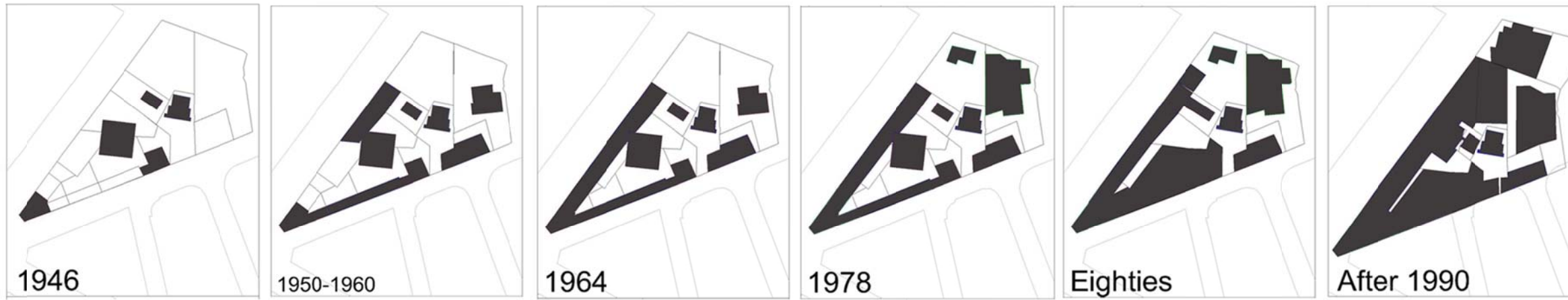

Figure 6-8: A map showing the location of space No.15 and its direct access location
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

1946   1950-1960   1964   1978   Eighties   After 1990

The building development around the space through history

Figure 6-9: A figure showing the urban development around space No.15and the buildings surrounding the space.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author.
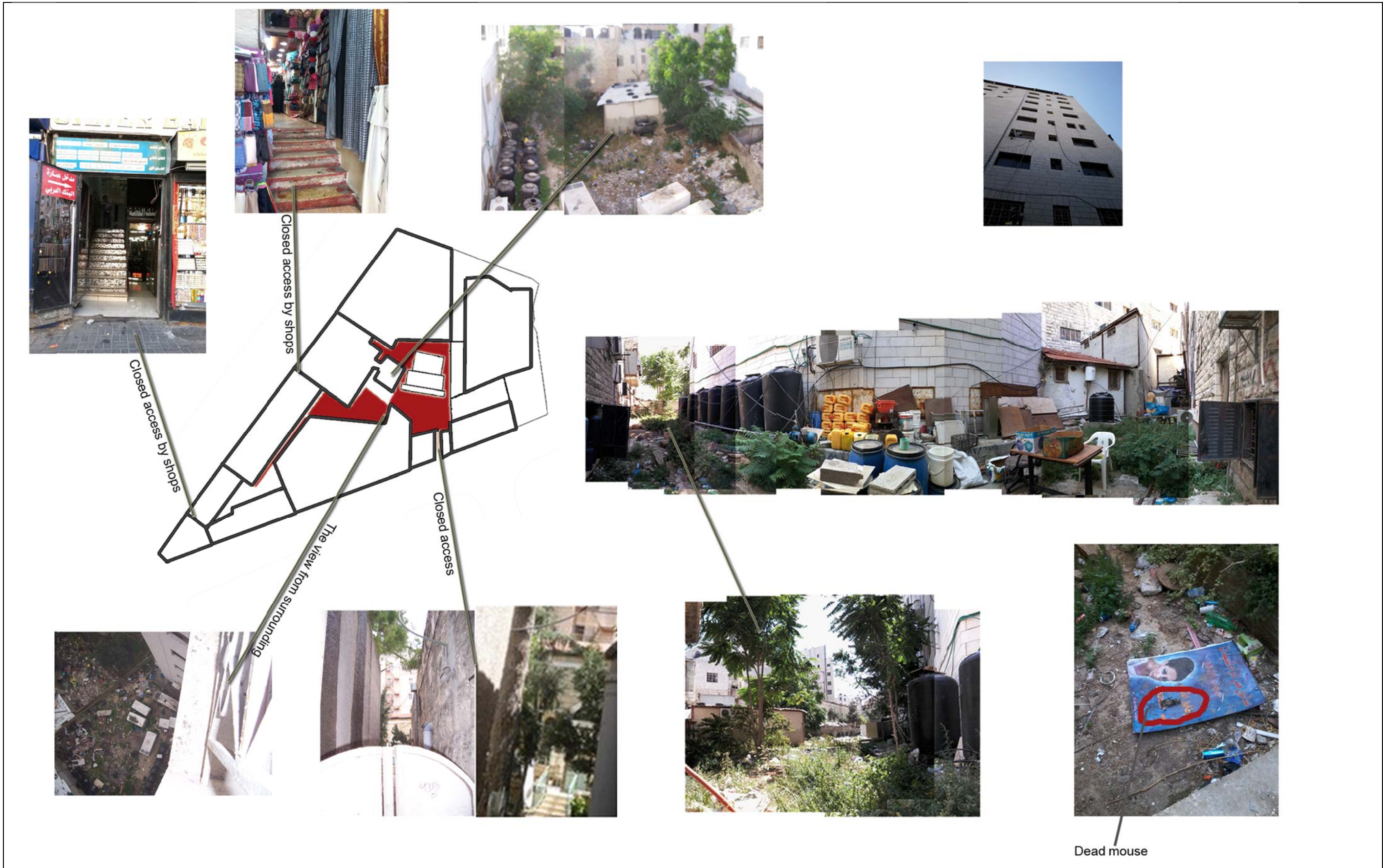
Figure 6-10: A figure showing the current situation of space No. 15
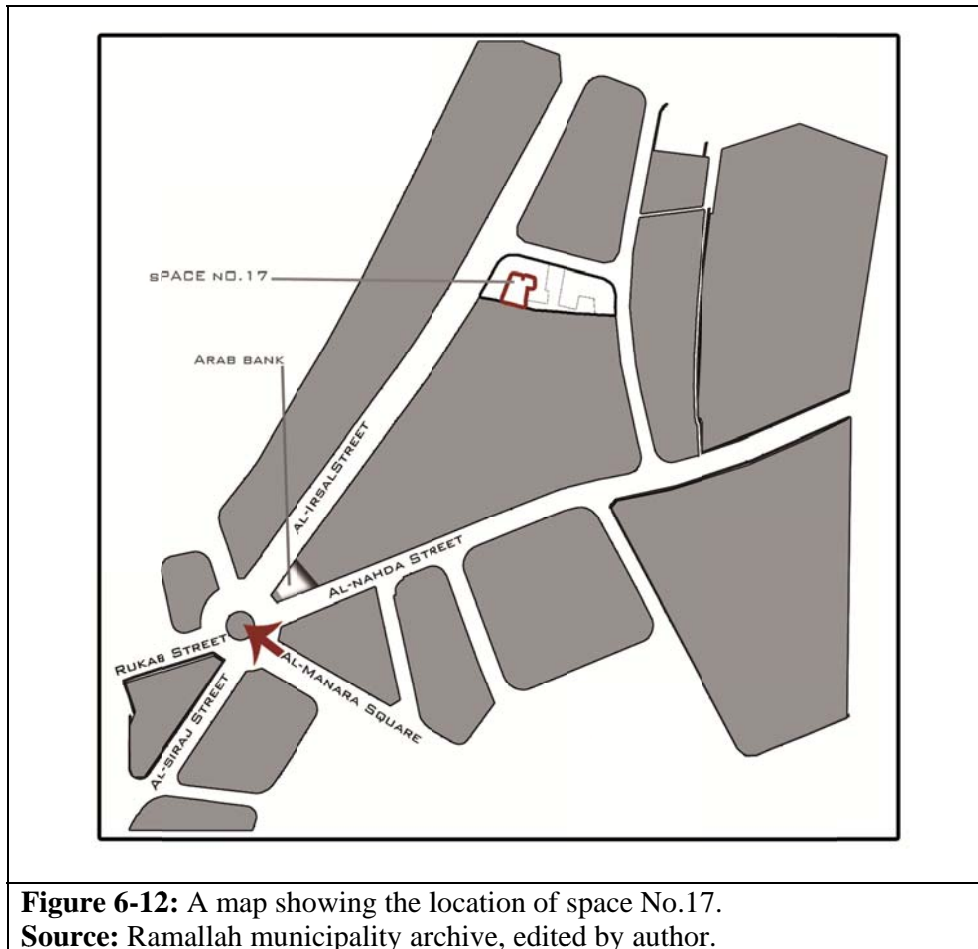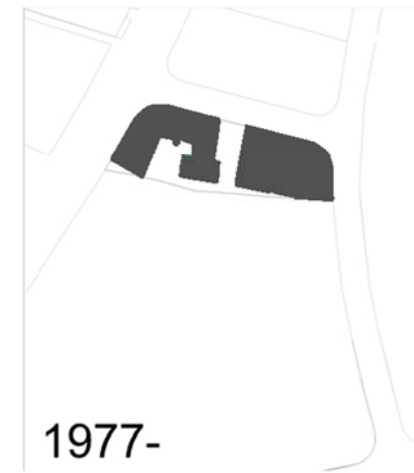**Source:** Ramallah municipality archive & author.

Sugested circulation

3

4

Street

2

1

5

Street

kiosks

The twin cities history photo gallery
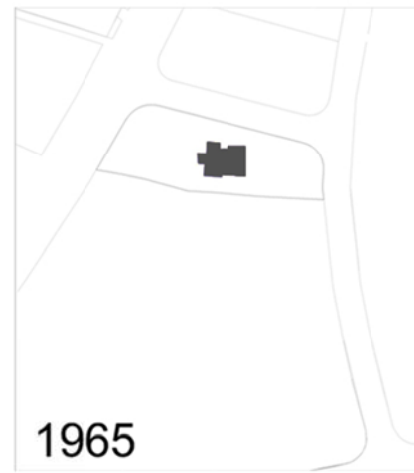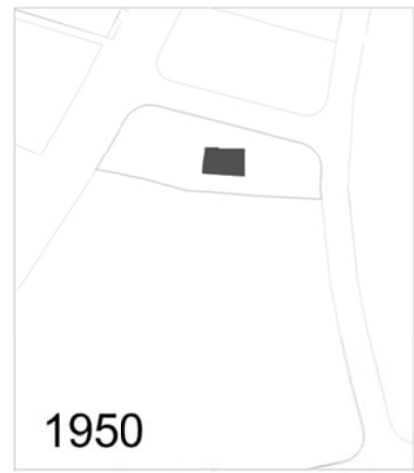
Store

Cafe (Local herbals and food)
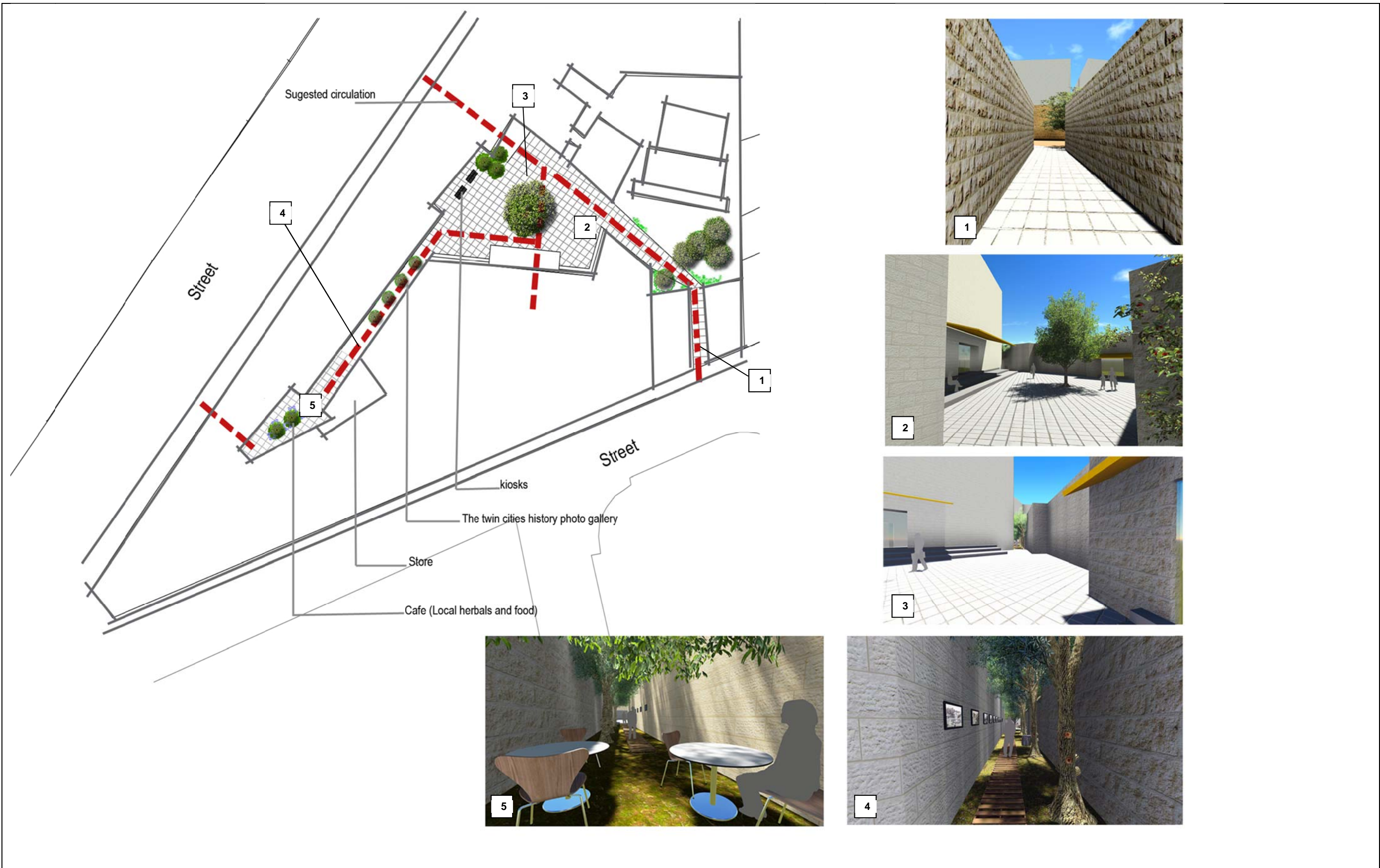
Figure 6-11: A figure showing the proposed design solutions for space No.15. The numbers in the plan were matched to the 3-D shots on the right side.
Source: Author.

6.2.3 Space No.17:

Space No.17 is visible and accessible, but its access is invisible. The space area is 197m^2 (**Fig 6-12 and Fig 6-13).** The revitalization of this space in a proper way will make it more noticeable and provoke awareness in all users of Al-Irsal street. The environmental conditions of this space are not as bad as others, but it is full of dry waste, which is the remains from the construction work on the surrounding buildings. This dry waste could be removed easily **(Fig 6-14).** Because of the orientations and conditions of this space, it is recommended to plant this area with greenery and let it be used as a space for different human activities, such as charity events. This space has flexibility that might be exploited for different kinds of uses through different seasons **(Fig 6-15).** Space No. 17 is derelict because its access is unclear; therefore, the suggested solution for this space is to make its main access clear by both planting and paving the space, and providing an access to connect the space with Al-Irsal street through Daraghme shop. In addition, a vertical circulation will be added to connect the parking in the lower level with the space **(Fig 6-15).**

Figure 6-12: A map showing the location of space No.17.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive, edited by author.

In the suggested pilot projects, the proposed modifications and designs are very simple, which should make the revitalization process applicable and affordable. Simple designs will be used in the primary steps of the revitalization process to promote stakeholder awareness about the potential of these forgotten spaces in the development of the twin cities. Each of the forgotten spaces has its own characteristics and situation, and each space must have special analysis and individually proposed modifications. The basic features of each design for these spaces must be flexible, simple, and environmentally friendly.

1950

1965

1977-

The building development around the space through history

Al-Manara

Figure 6-13: A figure showing the urban development around space No. 17 and the buildings surrounding the space.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author.

The access to the space

The main access for Pedestrian and cars

The access to the parking

Extension used as private car parking

AL-Ezaa street

Parking (lower level)

Parking

The view from the space

Space No.17 current conditions

Figure 6-14: A figure showing the current situation of space No.17.
Source: Ramallah municipality archive & author.
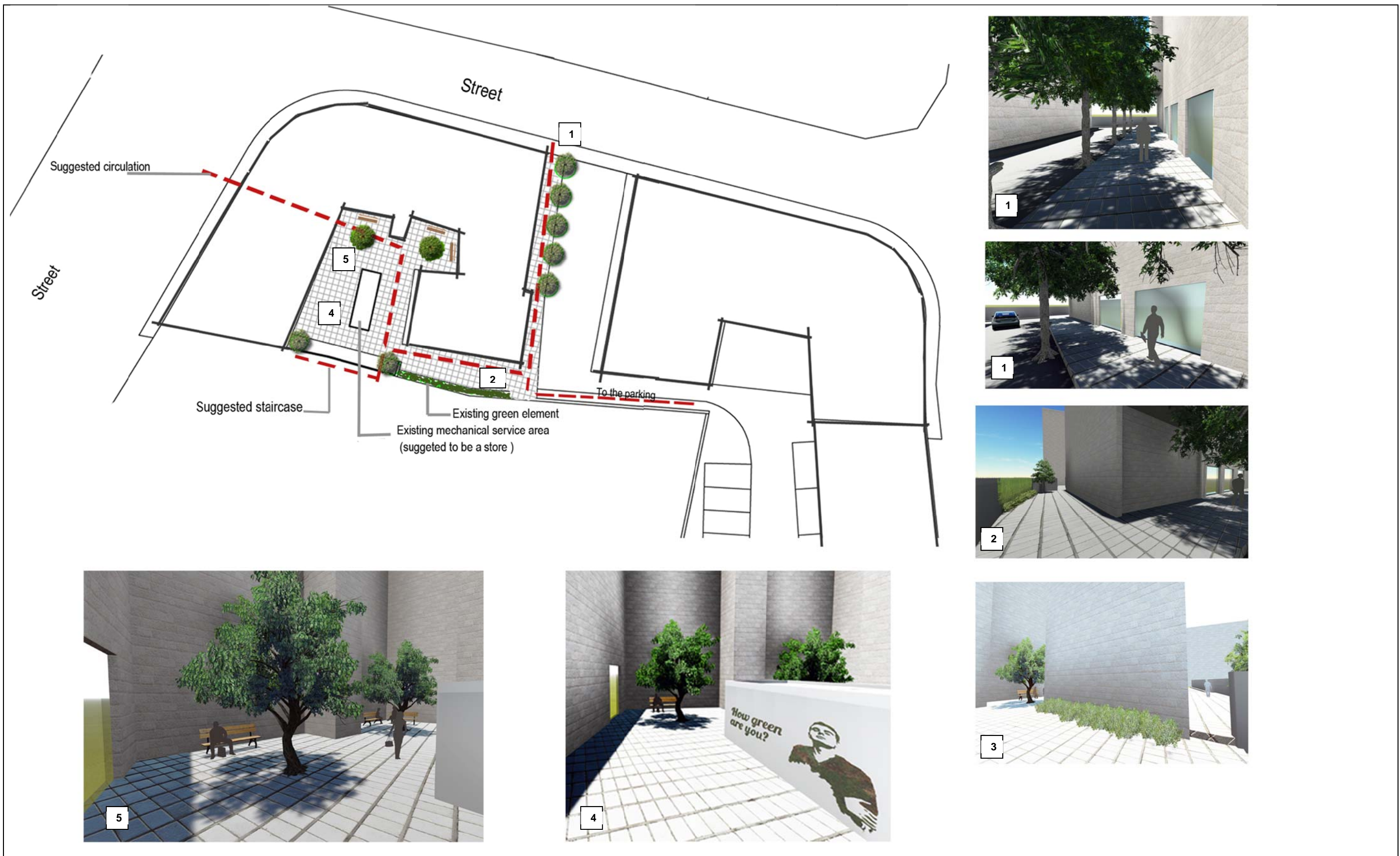
Figure 6-15: A figure showing the proposed design solutions for space No.17. The numbers in the plan were matched to the 3-D shots on the right side.
Source: Author.

6.3 Planning recommendations:

As a result of the SWOT analysis and the suggested pilot interventions, and in order to successfully implement revitalization of these forgotten spaces, there is a need for the development of a comprehensive strategy using planning and urban design recommendations, and involving all community stakeholders. This will upgrade the forgotten spaces to become well-designed, organized, and planned open spaces. The general target in this research is the enhancement of the twin cities' downtown area regarding environmental, social, and functional quality by revitalizing forgotten spaces and integrating them into the urban fabric of the twin cities. The provided planning and urban design recommendations aim to prevent the formation of forgotten spaces in the future and to improve the current conditions of the available forgotten spaces. These recommendations assisted in improving old building-planning regulations, implementing unapplied regulations, and providing new ones. In addition, planning and design recommendations can create ways to deal with available forgotten spaces. To accomplish this, all community stakeholders have to be involved, and planning recommendations should be established that consider short-term, long-term, and urban design recommendations as well as the major reasons for the emergence of these spaces and their current situation and community needs. However, to achieve the main target, a sequence of sub-objectives has to be achieved, they are: improve the overall physical and environmental conditions of the forgotten spaces, and guarantee the usage of these spaces after revitalization to avoid their return to

their former status as forgotten spaces. To do so, it is important to keep a steady flow of people in the spaces, which can be conducted by providing a series of attractive activities and uses. The realization of these sub-objectives requires serious effort from each participant (stakeholder) in the revitalization process. The stakeholders of the revitalization process in this research are: municipalities, institutions (NGOs, universities, local institutions, among others), land owners, daily users of the downtown area, and volunteers. In the planning and urban design recommendations, each participant has a role in the revitalization process. **Figure 6-16** summaries these roles.
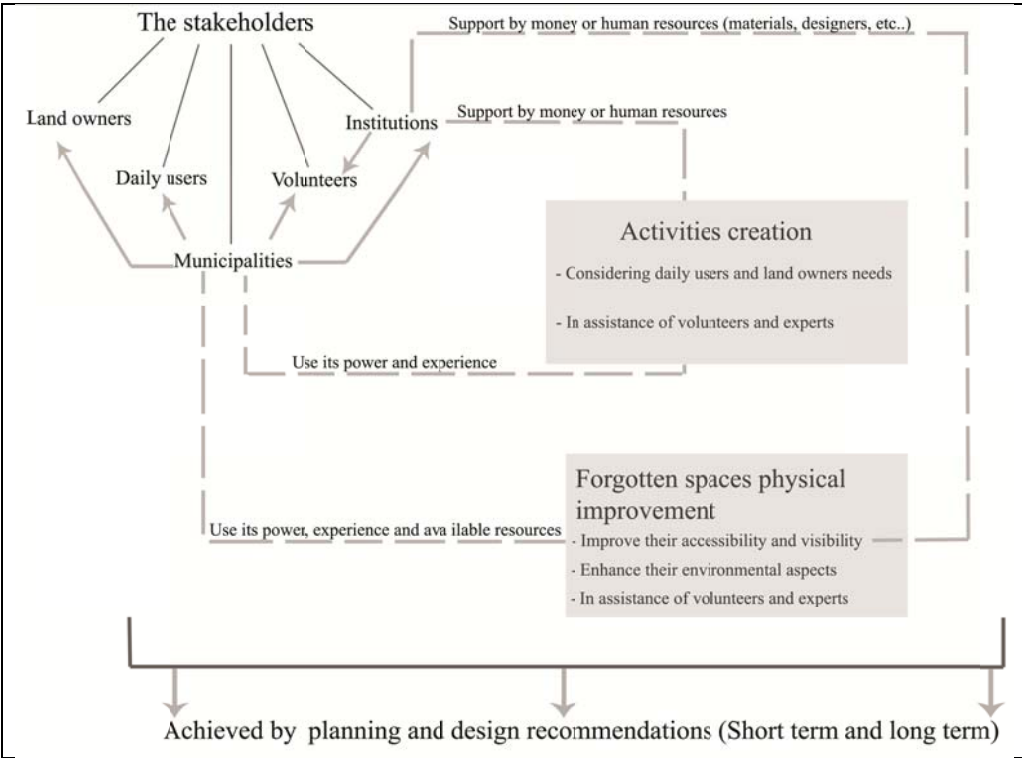
Figure 6-16: A figure illustrating a summary of each stakeholder role in the revitalization process.
Source: Author

People from the public sector, private sector, and volunteering organizations all have an important role in the forgotten spaces revitalization process. The cooperation between these parties will lead to a successful revitalization process of the forgotten spaces. While the public sector (municipalities) will be connecting all the parties to each other, enabling the emergence of new policies (if needed), and balancing the interests of all parties. The private sector assists in making decisions especially when they are related to financial and funding issues. The daily users and volunteers are the dynamic force of the revitalization process, as people will be the future users of these spaces and volunteers are the implementation and creative body of the revitalization process.

6.3.1 Short-term planning recommendations:

Short-term recommendations are aimed at getting a quick reaction toward forgotten spaces within the current available possibilities. These recommendations consider a short period of time in comparison with long-term recommendations. Some of the short-term recommendations, which are mentioned below, are already proposed and applied in this research:

1 - Setting priorities and defining which spaces must be revitalized first. In other words, the revitalization process will be done not from hard to easy or vice versa or randomly, but according to certain priorities. For example, the selection may be based on ownership issues, conditions of the spaces, the ability of implementation, etc.

2 - Defining ways to enhance each space's components, such as accessibility, visibility, and environmental conditions by defining a set of design recommendations. This step is directed by the municipalities in cooperation with supportive institutions and assisted by experts and volunteers or volunteered experts.

3 -Determining new regulations, adapting old ones, and finding ways to implement currently inactive regulations related to open spaces' enhancements. In this regard, the municipalities must use their executive power to remove all unsuitable elements and uses (e.g. illegal extensions).

5 - Defining design recommendations to let all involved parties know what to do and how to deal with these spaces. This requires cooperation between the municipalities, supportive institutions, experts, and volunteers.

6 - Allocating a team composed of representatives from municipalities, institutions, and volunteer organizations to work on activities creation, taking into consideration the downtown daily users and land owners' needs.

7 - Examining the revitalization process in some of the forgotten spaces, through making pilot projects and analysing the outcomes of this experience to make the necessary improvements in future revitalization processes. This step is conducted by experts and volunteers, directed by the municipality, and could be funded by supporting institutions.

6.3.2 Long-term planning recommendations:

Long-term recommendations require more time than short-term planning recommendations. They are for future improvement rather than immediate reactions and interventions, and they aimed at preventing forgotten spaces formation in the future. These long-term planning recommendations are:

1- Defining new building-planning regulations and improving old ones to avoid the creation of forgotten spaces in the newly developed areas away from the downtown area. This step is conducted by municipalities, because they must analyse the existing regulations system and investigate the possibilities of and eventually legislate new regulation related directly to the forgotten spaces.

2- Governmental bodies must find ways to encourage the landowners to accept the use of their lands for public uses, either by incentives or by obligation. This will vary depending on the conditions of the forgotten spaces in each municipality.

3- Finding regulations and guidelines for the twin cities' open spaces development in general.

4- Making a detailed study for other types of neglected leftover spaces within the downtown area, such as rooftops and parking lots. This is directed by the municipality in cooperation with other institutions.

5- Finding solutions for how to integrate all types of spaces with each other and within the urban fabric. It could be conducted by creating themes of related activities and providing various uses in the revitalized spaces.

6- Providing an overall plan for the twin cities by showing the locations of these spaces and defining the needed functions of each location.

7- Holding workshops and encouraging public participation in order to understand community needs to provide activities and uses to accommodate their needs in the revitalized spaces. This step is carried out by municipalities in cooperation with supportive institutions.

8- Defining ways to support flexibility within the revitalized spaces and create a special events scheme for them. This is done under the municipalities' administration and created by experts.

9- Providing a guidebook that includes all regulations and guidelines related to the forgotten spaces. This is the role of municipalities in cooperation with supportive institutions.

10- People's awareness should be raised toward these spaces. By using social media and various broadcasting agencies, holding workshops with daily users of the downtown area, or revitalizing forgotten spaces and creating attractive activities in them should be sufficient.

11- Providing design competitions from time to time to redesign the forgotten spaces. This is conducted by the municipalities.

12- Annual monitoring and evaluation of the forgotten spaces must be conducted to evaluate their performance and make any necessary maintenance and improvements. This is the role of the municipalities.

6.3.3 Design recommendations:

To identify suitable design recommendations, it is important to tackle the unique properties and characteristics of each space. These characteristics are safety, comfort, flexibility, experience, and equity. To achieve these characteristics, there should be a set of design recommendations, which are:

1- Each shop must provide access to the back space of the building (i.e. if a space has two doors, one is typically to the street side and the other to the back space) **(Fig 6-17).**
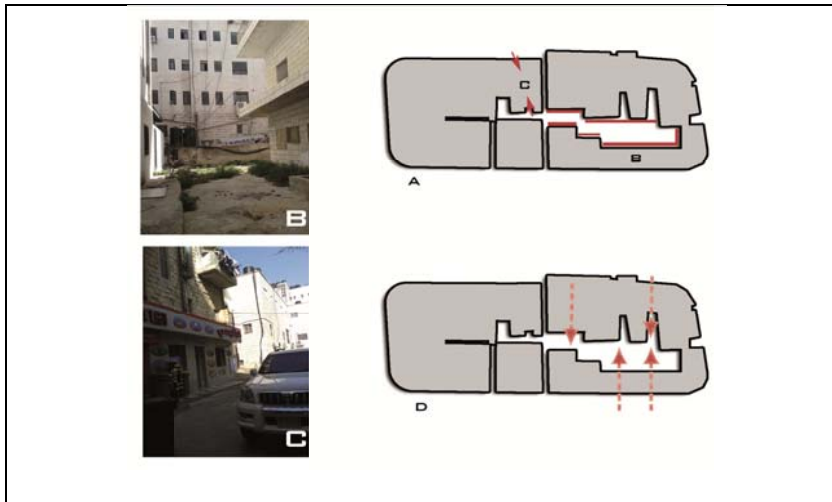
Figure 6-17: A figure showing space No.11: A- Showing the location of closed access of the stores as well as B and C locations. B- Showing the back space behind the closed door. C- Showing the shop in the same space with location C in figure (A) but with open access to the back space, revealing clear the better conditions of the back space. D- Suggestions of where to open access in stores.
Source: Author

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2 - If the space is invisible, an attraction element should be used to inform people

of its availability **(Fig 6-18).**
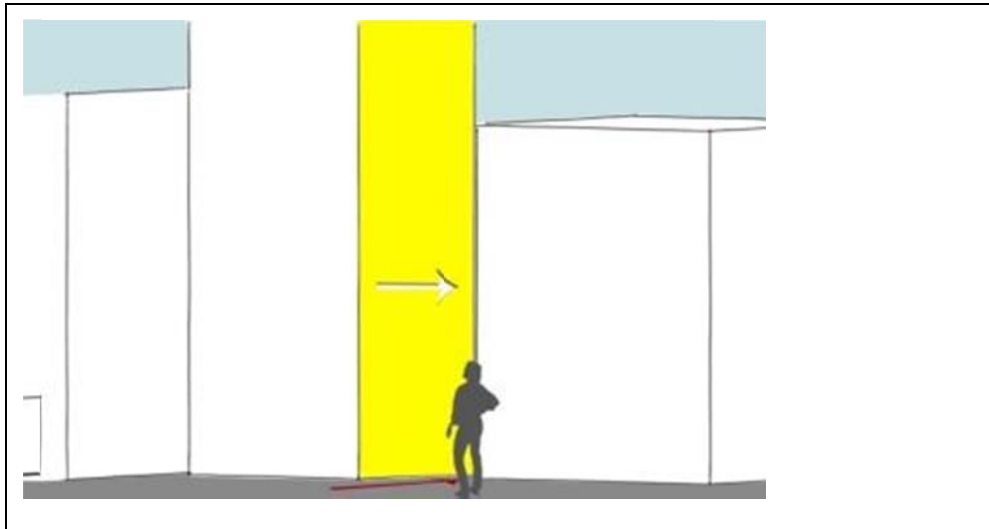
Figure 6-18: A figure showing a suggested way to attract people and make the invisible space readable and noticeable.
Source: Author.

3 – It is necessary for the closed access from the surrounding buildings of the

space to be opened **(Fig 6-19).**
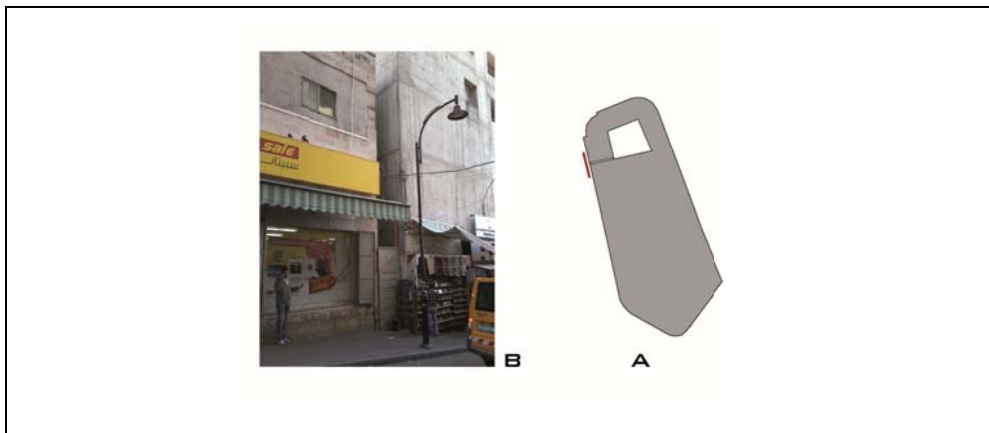
Figure 6-19: A figure showing the closed access of space No. 19
A- The plan of the space with the location of the closed access and
b- The view of the closed access.
Source: Author

4 - Using suitable design elements to achieve the target characteristics of the space, such as benches, lighting elements, colour themes, tiles, paints, and the use of high-quality materials.

5 - If there is a need to use the space as a storage facility, it may be acceptable, but only by using the limited ratio of the space with specific materials.

6 - The design elements and materials that will be used in the space must be durable and easy to maintain.

7 – A minimum amount of green elements should exist in each revitalized space, such as trees, shrubs, etc.

Chapter seven - conclusion

According to this study's results, the forgotten spaces in the twin cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh cover an important area of 18.6 dunoms of the downtown study area (i.e. a circle with a 400m radius around Al-Manara square), as both cities have an urgent need for additional open public spaces. The forgotten spaces have a potentially positive impact and their revitalization will improve the overall health and environmental conditions as well as the social relations in the entire downtown area. The conducted fieldwork shows that there is a lack of spaces for social interaction in the downtown area, and that most of the social interactions are taking place in the streets, which make mobility worse in the city for both cars and people. So the revitalization of the forgotten spaces will make the human experience in the downtown environment, attractive, memorable and exciting, and this fact will encourage creativity in action, by using the space for different events through providing adequate designs for these spaces. This will motivate designers and architects to create unique plans and experiences. If the overall downtown atmosphere is improved, this also will attract more people, which means an increase in the commercial benefit, as the downtown area is mainly used as a commercial district. The success of the revitalization process in the study area will make it possible to apply this process in other areas of the twin cities that also contain forgotten spaces, or in other cities or countries by taking into consideration each area's specific conditions and situation.

In the study area, there are factors that affect the built environment's complexity as well as the forgotten spaces themselves. These factors are the building-planning regulations system and ownership issues. Accordingly, the research concludes that there is a need for long-term planning recommendations to modify the existing versions of these two factors. In addition, short-term planning recommendations are important in order to undertake immediate action and implement urgent solutions in the forgotten spaces. To make the revitalization process possible, however, there is a need for practical urban design recommendations. The proposed designs for the pilot projects in the selected spaces intend to encourage stakeholders to raise awareness toward and support the revitalization process of these forgotten spaces. However, cooperation of municipalities, institutions, and community stakeholders is necessary in order to define clear decisions and reactions toward forgotten spaces.

This study covered the overall conditions and situation of the forgotten spaces in the target area, but some points that were discussed in this research still need additional research and discussion, such as:

1- Land ownership issues in general and in relation to the forgotten spaces specifically.

2- The characteristics of the forgotten space in greater detail.

3- Studying the other types of neglected and leftover spaces, such as rooftops and car parking areas.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: The tables below give an example of the collected data from municipality archive and the example for part of area 2 that is illustrated in **figure 2-3.**

Reference: Ramallah municipality data, edited by author.
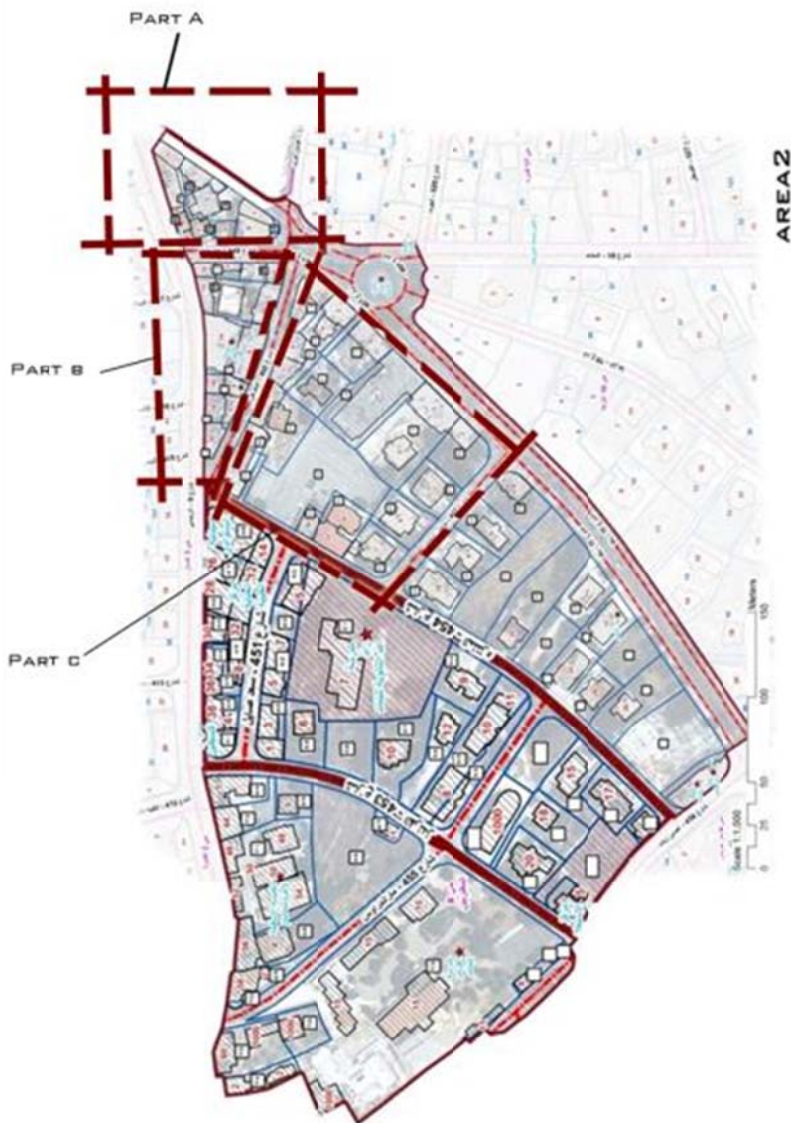
Appendix 2: Part A of area 2, the next table will based on it and summarizes the result of archival research for this part

Reference: Ramallah municipality data, modified by author.

APP 2 . CONT

Site development	Picture of current the situation	SLOT NO
- 1929 First building - From 1968 until 1977 a lot of additions done during this period but without municipality permission. - No information available in the archive for the last building.		1
-1953 the first building established it was for commercial and residential purposes. -1955 the building extended horizontally an extra shopping stores were added to the building.		2
-1928 shopping stores (new building). -1929 horizontal extension for shopping stores. -1960 vertical extension for residential purpose (one floor). -1986 Horizontal extension for commercial purposes.	NOT AVAILABLE	3
-1926 the first building established -1949 half of the old building demolished and switched by a new building extension. -1975 all the old building removed and a new building established . -1994 vertical extension (third and forth floor).		4
NA		5
-1949 Horizontal extension for old building (the date unknown) for residential purpose. - 1950 Horizontal extension to add shopping stores. -1957 balcony and extra room were added. -2008 vertical extension (one floor).		6

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Appendix 3: Part B of area 2, the next table will based on it and summarizes the result of archival research for this part

Reference: Ramallah municipality data, modified by author.

APP 3 . CONT

Site development	Picture of current the situation	SLOT NO
-**1974** a horizontal extension in the stair case are, used as commercial stores. -**1981** a bathroom added to the building to Serve the commercial stores that mentioned before.		8
NA		9
-**1949** built a new commercial stores. -**1950** added a kitchen and bathroom for an existing residental building. -**1959** horizontal extension (commercial stores). -**1986** old building demolished without municipality permission, and new commercial building established. -**1993** extra floors added to the building.		10
-**1965** new building existed -**1966** open door toward backyard (unaccepted by municipality)		11
-NA		13
-NA		14

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Appendix 4: Part C of area 2, the next table will based on it and summarizes the

result of archival research for this part

Reference: Ramallah municipality data, modified by author.

APP 4 . CONT

Site development	Picture of current the situation	SLOT No
-NA		15
-**1955** building established -**1961** garage added to the building (horizontal extension). -**1974** bath room added to the ground floor. -**1976** third floor added to the building (vertical extension) -**2008** take a municipality permission. -**2010** use the spaces as a public paid car parking.		16
-**1956** adding an extra building in the site in addition to an existing building. -**1959** kitchen and bathroom added to the building. -**1964** two floors added (vertical extension) and balconies added to the building also. -**1992** extra floor added to the building.		17
-**1957** a commercial store build. -**1958** garage added to the building (horizontal extension). -**1974** horizontal extension for commercial purposes and first floor added to the building. -**1984** second and third floor added as offices and residential apartments. -**1995** two floors added for residential purpose.		18
-**1957** residential building established. -**1963** building for commercial purposes established.		19
-1956 building of two floors established ground floor for commercial use and first floor for residential purpose.		20

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APP 4 . CONT

Site development	Picture of current the situation	SLOT NO
-**1964** built a building and garage but separately. -**1996** extra floor added to the building. -**1997** two floors added to the building in addition to elevator place.		21
-**1973** residential building established.		22
-NA	Not available	23
-NA		24
-**1966** commercial stores built (only one floor). -**1972** first floor added for residential use. -**1976** second and third floor added for offices use.		25
-NA	Not available	26

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APP 4 . CONT

Site development	Picture of current the situation	SLOT No
-1 955 commercial building. -1965 a floor added for residential use.		27
-1949 building for commercial use -1950 bathrooms and commercial store added (horizontal extension). -1955 horizontal extension for residential purpose added. -1959 horizontal extension for residential purpose added.		28
-1958 building in the street side built. -1965 two floors added to the building (vertical extension). -1965 extra residential building added in the plot (horizontal extension).		29
-1958 old building demolished and new building established. -1966 new floor added to the building (vertical extension). -1977 new room built beside the building (horizontal extension) without municipality permission.		30
-1958 new floor added for residential purpose (vertical extension). -1960 extra room and kitchen added to the building (horizontal extension). -2007 the building demolished.	Not available	31