

## The old line houses help Bawlana village generate the new history.

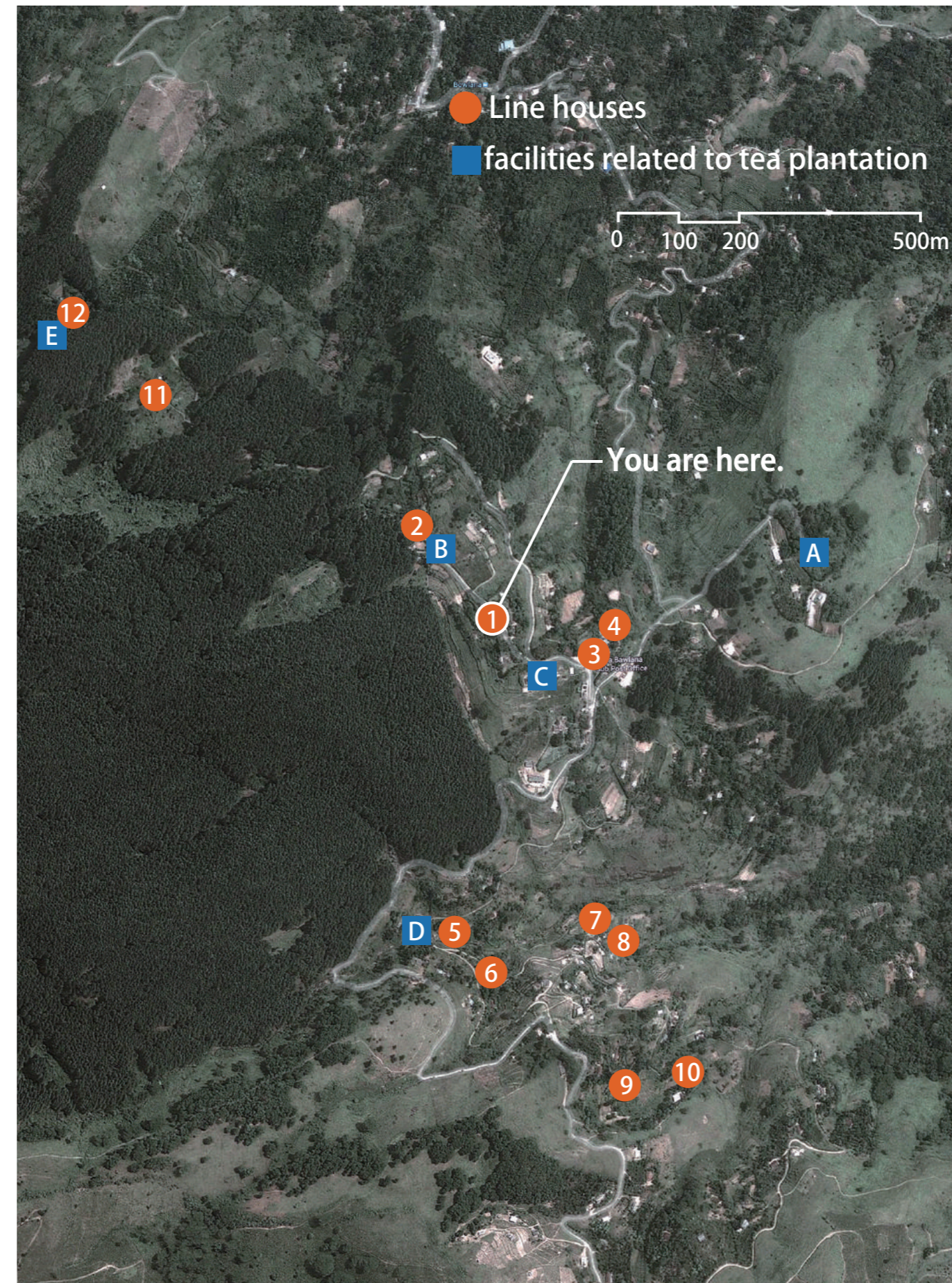
Sri Lanka is world-famous for Ceylon tea. The export amount of it used to be the first of the world. However, the people who have engaged in the tea industry as labors are generally not known well. They are Indian Tamil, immigrants from South India in the 19th century. They are neither British people who introduced the tea industry into the country nor Sri Lankan people (Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamil). Bawlana village is a former tea plantation area where Indian Tamil have been living for more than 130 years. This village people have been marginalized and poor because they have lost stable job opportunities since the tea plantation here got closed about 30 years ago. This project aims to revitalize this village through support from architecture.

Row houses in tea plantation areas of Sri Lanka are called "line house". The house that you are staying at now is also called line house. We have regenerated this line house to establish regional tourism of Bawlana. The 1/3 of this house had been lost before regeneration, but we regenerated it to a base of it. In the regional tourism, you can experience Bawlana's culture and interaction with Tamil people. It aims to show the various attractive points of the village such as history, culture and nature. It is also expected to create stable job opportunities for this village people and make this village people as well as tourist reconsider about the history and culture of tea plantation.

Line houses in tea plantation areas are often regarded as "negative heritage" of the colonial period in Sri Lanka due to their various social problems. This is a fact of the tea plantation and we never deny it. However, when we turn our eyes on the historical and cultural value of line houses, we find that they have large potential to make people draw positive future vision of the village. We have already started it with this village people through the regeneration of the line house and believe that this regenerated line house will solve social problems of the area and be a place where a new history of the village will be generated.

NGO APCAS (Japanese NGO)  
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Toshihiro Hiraishi(Akashi National College of Technology)

## Distribution of line houses and facilities related to tea plantation in Bawlana



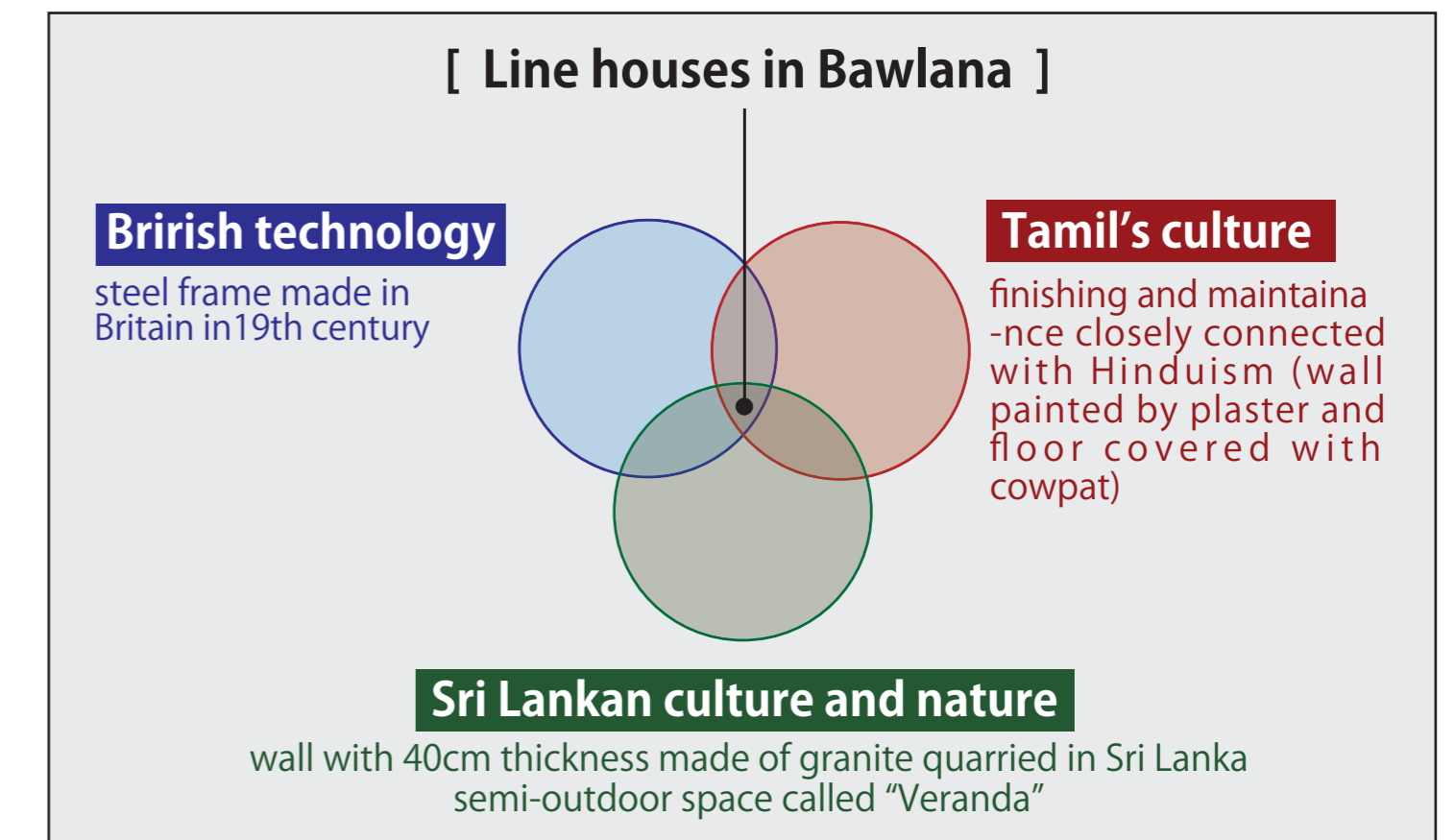
**Existing line house**  
There are 12 line houses where Tamil people have been living for more than 130 years since tea plantation was introduced here. They tell you that there used to be tea plantation in Bawlana.



**British manager's residence**  
There is a large and deluxe residence where British manager of tea plantation used to live at the place far from line houses. Now, it is a ruin and is surrounded by grass.

## Line houses made from combination of 3 cultures

Line houses are made from combination of 3 cultures that derive from 3 countries related to the history of tea plantation in Sri Lanka.



### [ 1 ] British technology



**Structure material : Steel frame**  
It is judged by a carved seal on surface of steel frames used as structure material that they were made in Britain at the end of 19th century and brought into Bawlana village, in the mountain area of Sri Lanka.

### [ 2 ] Tamil's culture ( from India )



**Finishing material : Plaster and cowpat**  
Tamil's life and culture is closely connected with Hinduism from India. They daily maintain walls painted by plaster and floors covered with cowpat as a kind of purifying in a ceremony of Hinduism.

### [ 3 ] Sri Lankan culture and nature



**Semi-outdoor space : Veranda**  
There are semi-outdoor space called "veranda", a vernacular architectural element in Sri Lanka, in line houses of Bawlana. (But, most of them are filled up by Tamil people now.)



**Walls : Granite quarried in Sri Lanka**  
Walls with 40cm thickness made of piling up granite quarried in Sri Lanka protect indoor space from strong sunlight. The structure of line houses is hybrid of these walls and steel frames.



## Concept for the regeneration

The regeneration of this line house was designed by restoring parts of the original line house and recomposing its characteristic elements so that the composition of it becomes more visibly understandable for visitors.

### 1. Veranda-1 : Restoring veranda space and facade

We restored veranda space which there was in the facade of this line house at the time of completion (about 130 years ago). Comparing it with the facade of existing line house makes traces of modifying by Tamil people more clearly. This space is also expected as a place with interaction between Tamil people and visitors.

### 2. Veranda-2 : View to the mountain which has been with Tamil people

Here is view to the mountain where there used to be tea plantation and are planted pines now. Planting pines, which was begun by the government after tea plantation was closed, is one of occupations of Tamil people. But, it causes the shortage of water because pines need a lot water.

### 3. The scale of rooms : Taking over the original scale

Walls follow the original layout as much as possible so that you can experience the characteristic scale of line houses.

### 4. Stone Corridor : Space unveiling the composition of line houses

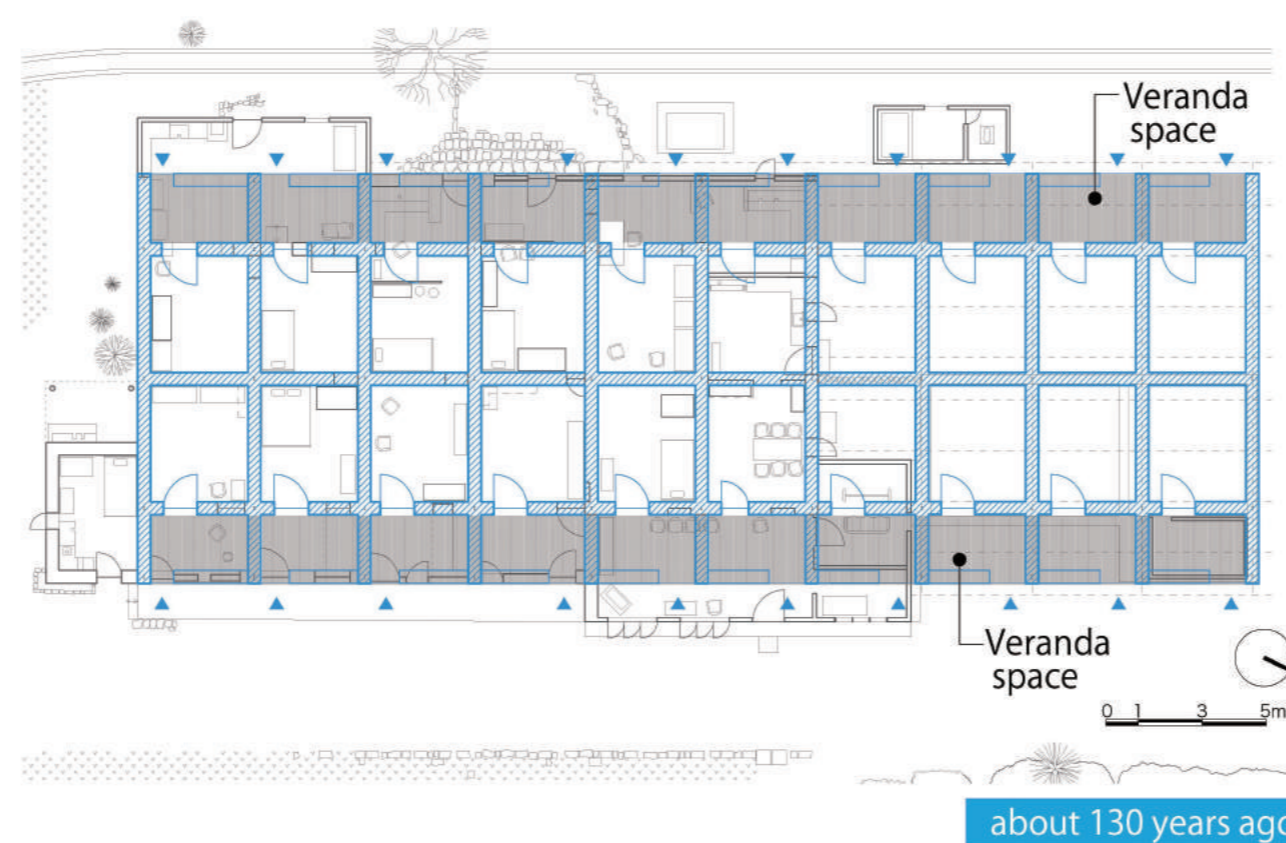
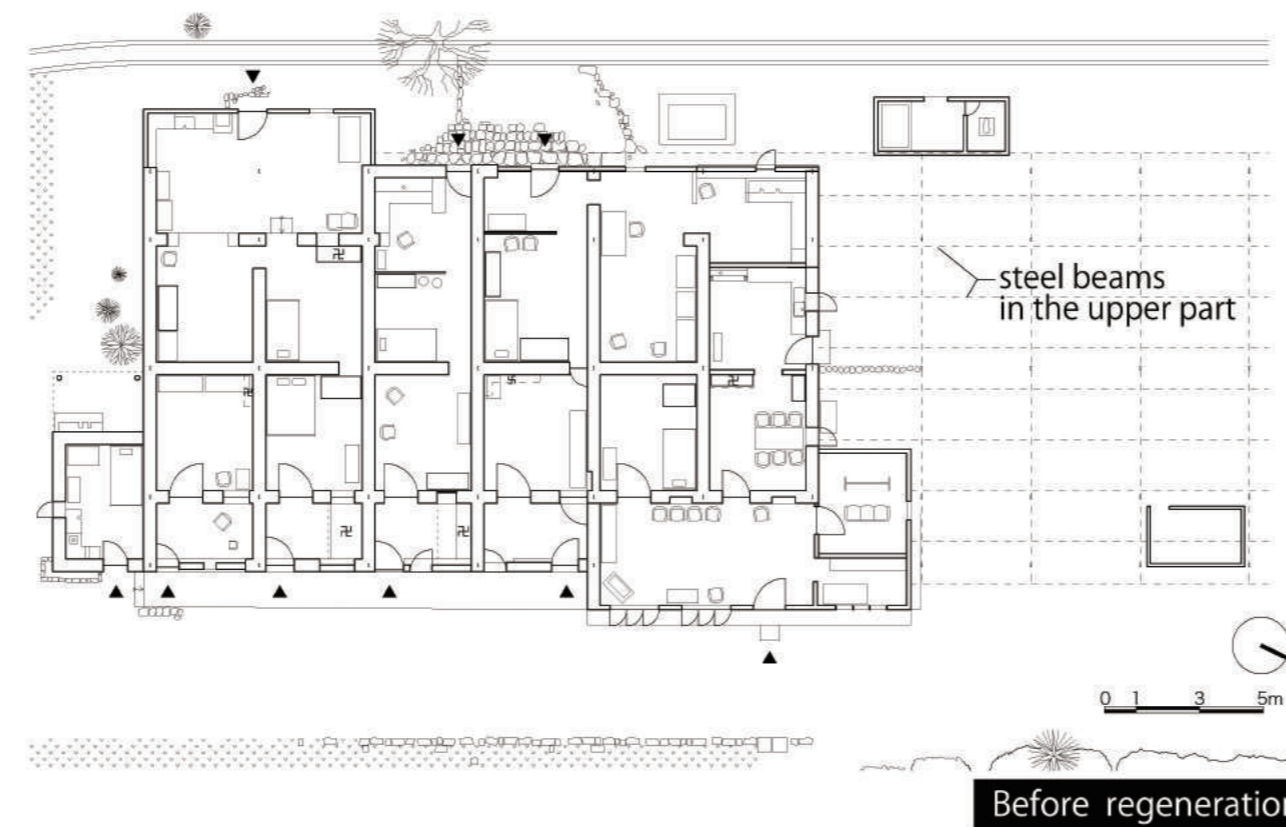
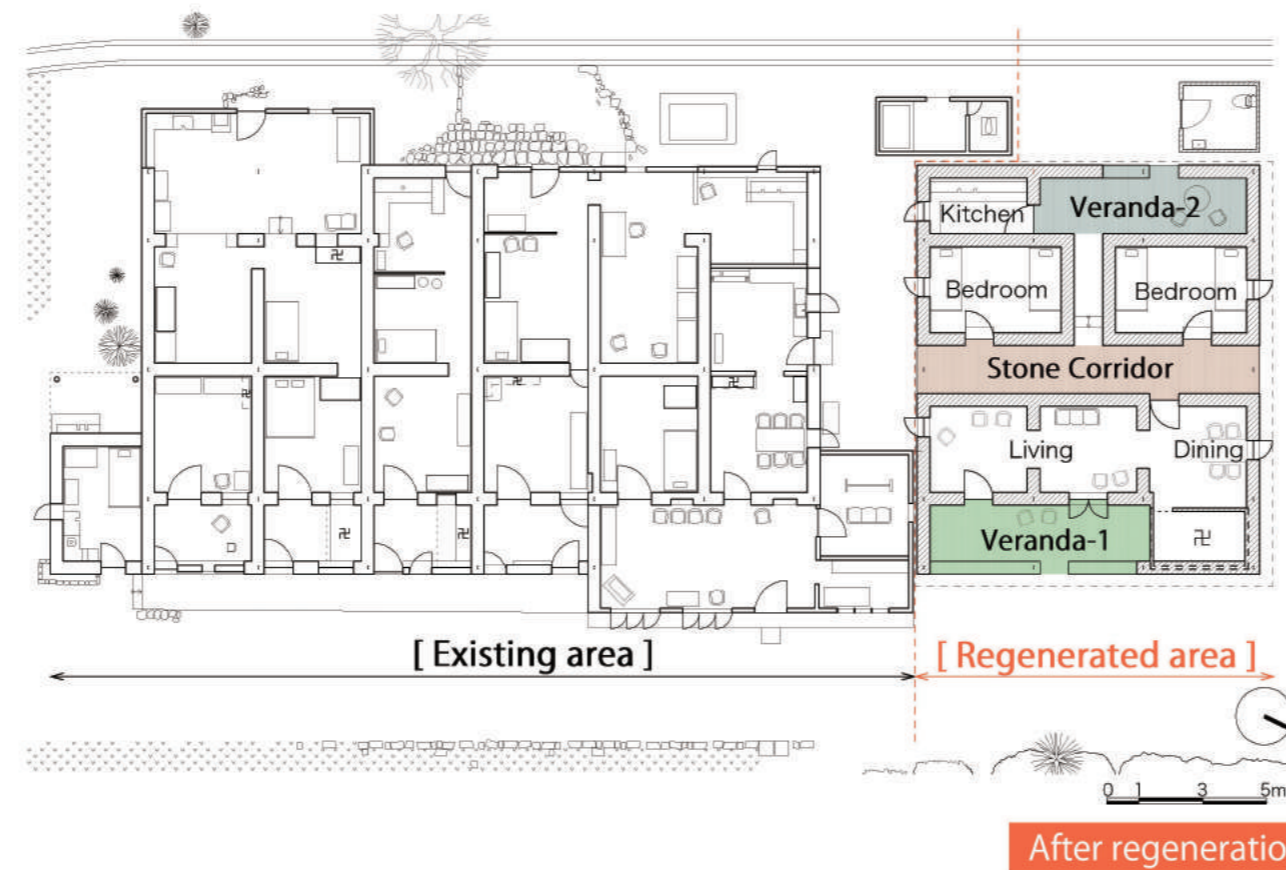
This new space is designed by recomposing the 3 characteristic elements, namely, steel frame made in Britain 130 years ago, walls with 40 cm thickness made of granite quarried in Sri Lanka, and floor covered with cowpat closely connected with a ceremony of Hinduism from India, so that the composition of it becomes more visibly understandable for you.



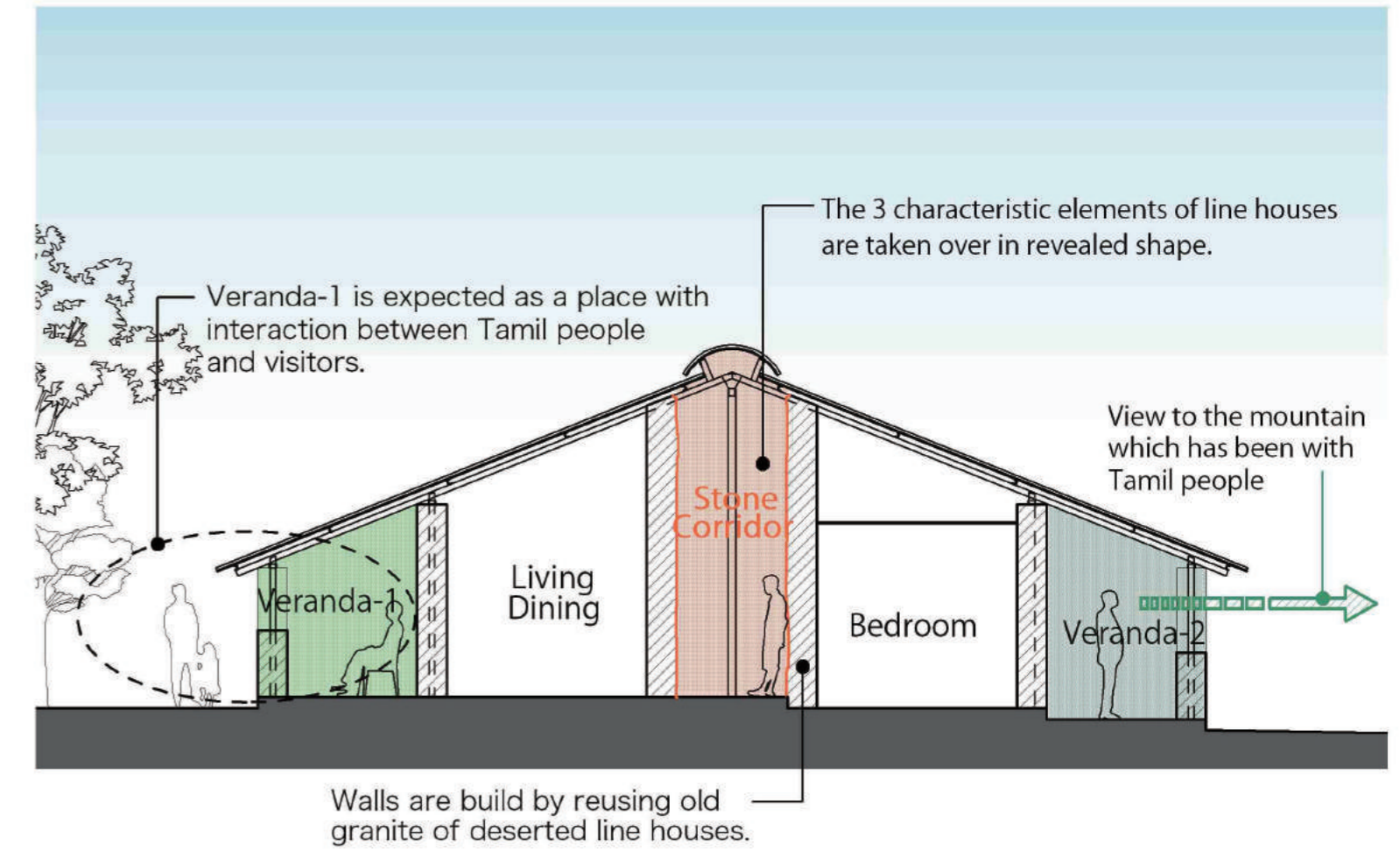
Before regeneration

The 1/3 of this house had been lost before regeneration.

## Transition of this line house



## Section



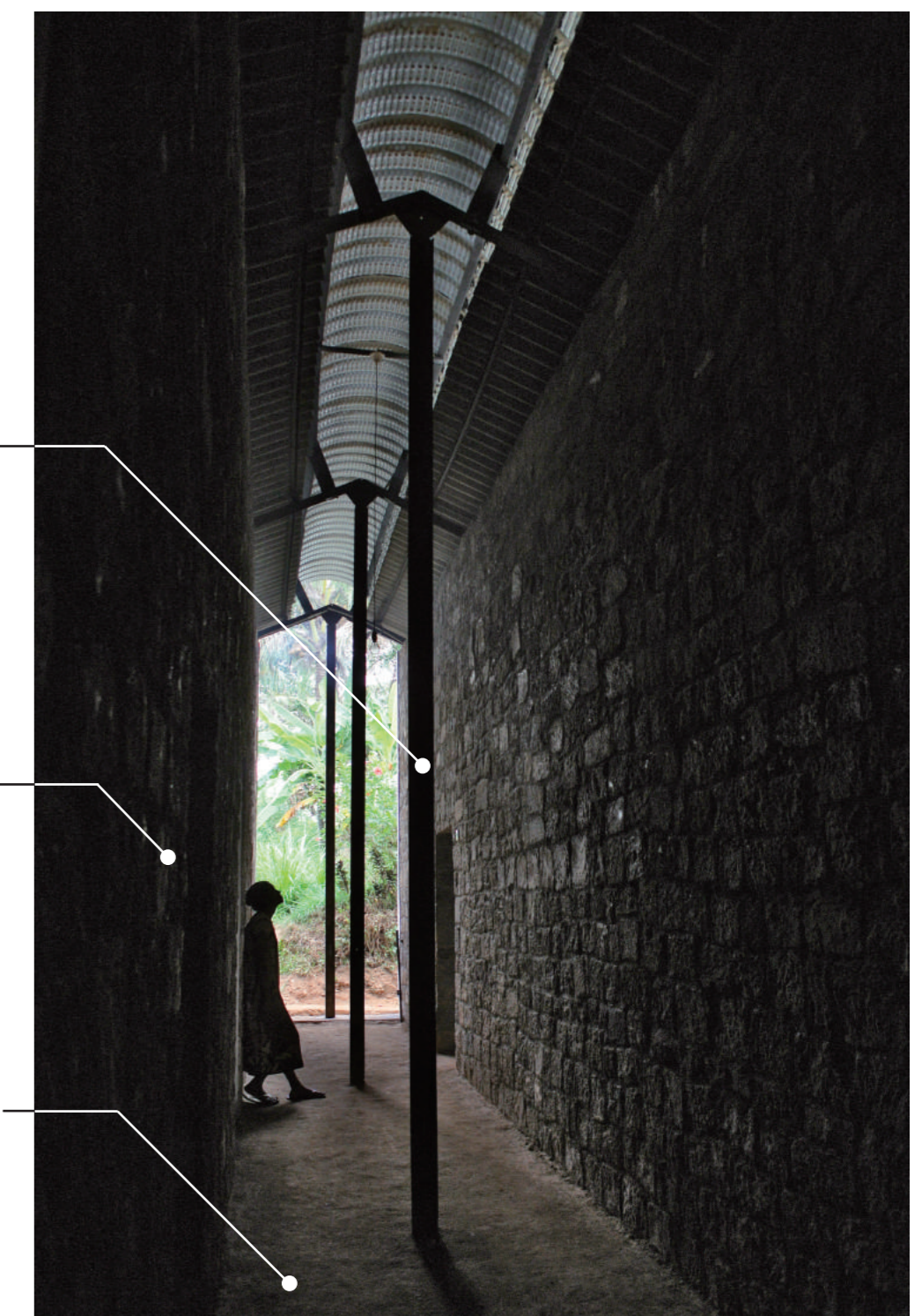
## Stone Corridor

This space is designed by recomposing the 3 characteristic elements that derive from 3 countries related to the history of tea plantation in Sri Lanka.

1. steel frame made in Britain 130 years ago

2. granite quarried in Sri Lanka

3. floor covered with cowpat closely connected with a ceremony of Hinduism from India







Regenerated line house  
in the former tea plantation area  
of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is world-famous for Ceylon tea, the export amount of which used to be the first of the world. However, the people who support the tea as labor are not well-known to the world. They are Tamil people, immigrants from South India, who are neither British people nor Sri Lankan people. The aim of this project is to revitalize a village, Bawlana village, where Tamil people have been living for 130 years, through support from architecture because they have been marginalized and poor after tea plantation here got closed about 30 years ago.

We have regenerated a row house called "line house" in Bawlana. Although 1/3 of it used to be lost before the construction, it becomes a base of local tourism the attractive points of which are the history, the culture and the nature of Bawlana. Line houses in Bawlana consist of characteristic elements which are derived from 3 countries related to tea plantation. They are steel frames made in Britain 130 years ago, local granite and veranda space often seen in houses of Sri Lanka, and floor covered with cowpat closely connected with a ceremony of Hinduism from India (Most of Sri Lankan people are Buddhist). The line houses represent the complex history of Tamil people and seem to be the basis of their identity.

We planned the regeneration by two methods, namely, restoring parts of the original house and recomposing the characteristic elements so that the composition of it becomes seen more clearly.

Line houses in the former tea plantation area are often regarded as "negative heritage" in Sri Lanka. However, if the history of Bawlana and Tamil' s life and culture are appraised by various viewpoints, it will be power of drawing the future of Bawlana. We believe that this regeneration will make a chance of it and this regenerated line house will be a place where a new history of Bawlana will be born.

#### [ DATA ]

Location : Bawlana Village, Kandy District, Central Province, Sri Lanka

Use : Community & Cultural Learning Center

Organizer : NGO APCAS (Japanese NGO)

Coodinator : Masahiro Maeda (Kyoto University)

Architect : Toru Oba (Toru Oba Architects)

Facility : Toshihiro Hiraishi  
Management (Akashi National College of Technology)



Whole view . Regenerated range is about 1/3 of this side.

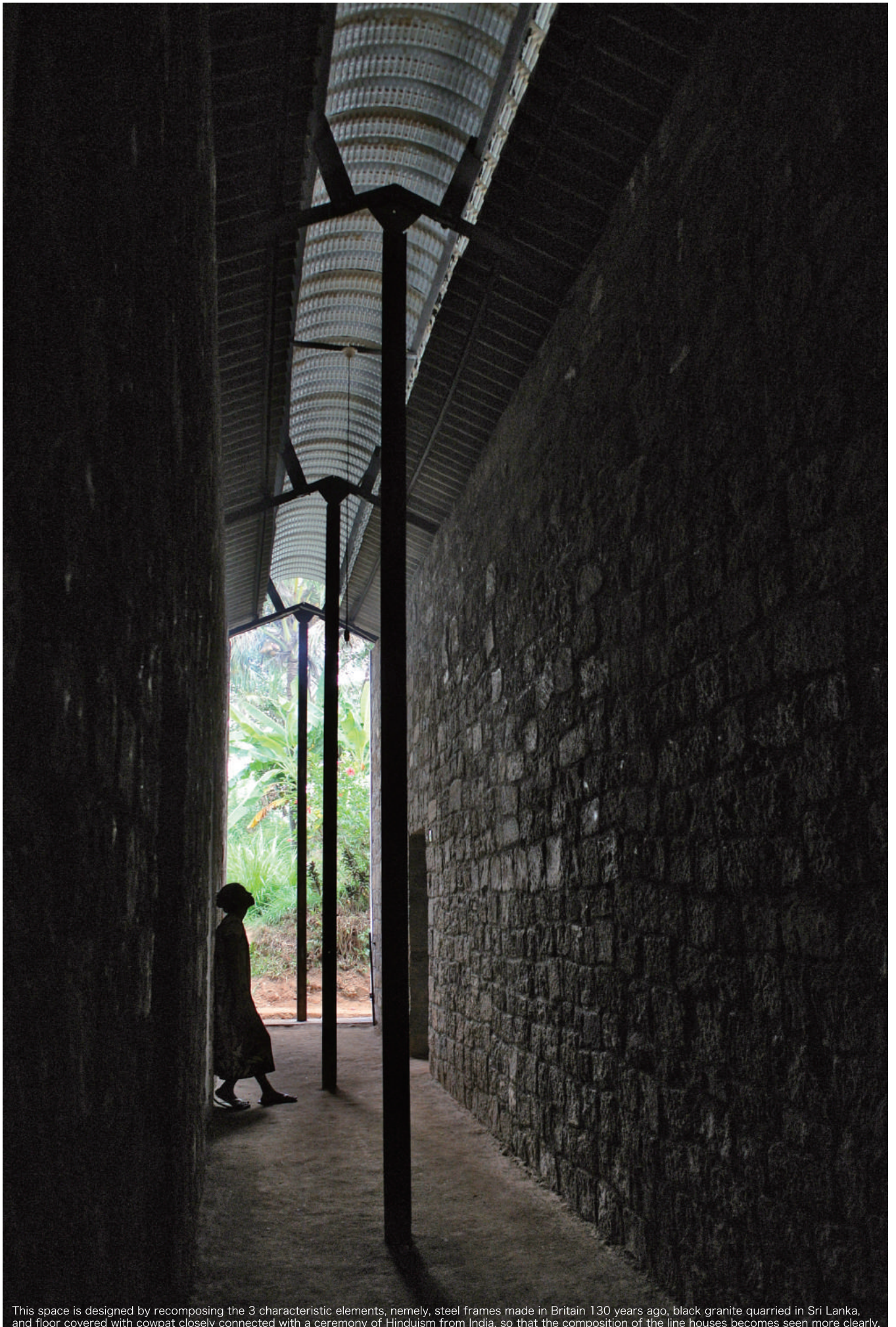


Restored veranda space which is often seen in houses of Sri Lanka and had been adopted in the original line house.



The walls are build by reusing old granite of deserted line houses.





This space is designed by recomposing the 3 characteristic elements, namely, steel frames made in Britain 130 years ago, black granite quarried in Sri Lanka, and floor covered with cowpat closely connected with a ceremony of Hinduism from India, so that the composition of the line houses becomes seen more clearly.





steel pillar which have supported the line house for 130 years and a boy, who is immigrant 5th



center of the regenerated line house



The walls follow the original layout as much as possible so that the characteristic scale of line houses is taken over.