

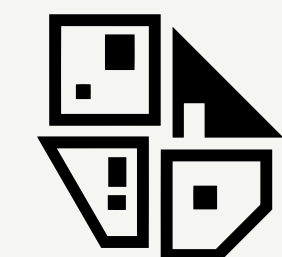
Reparative innovation for urban climate adaptation

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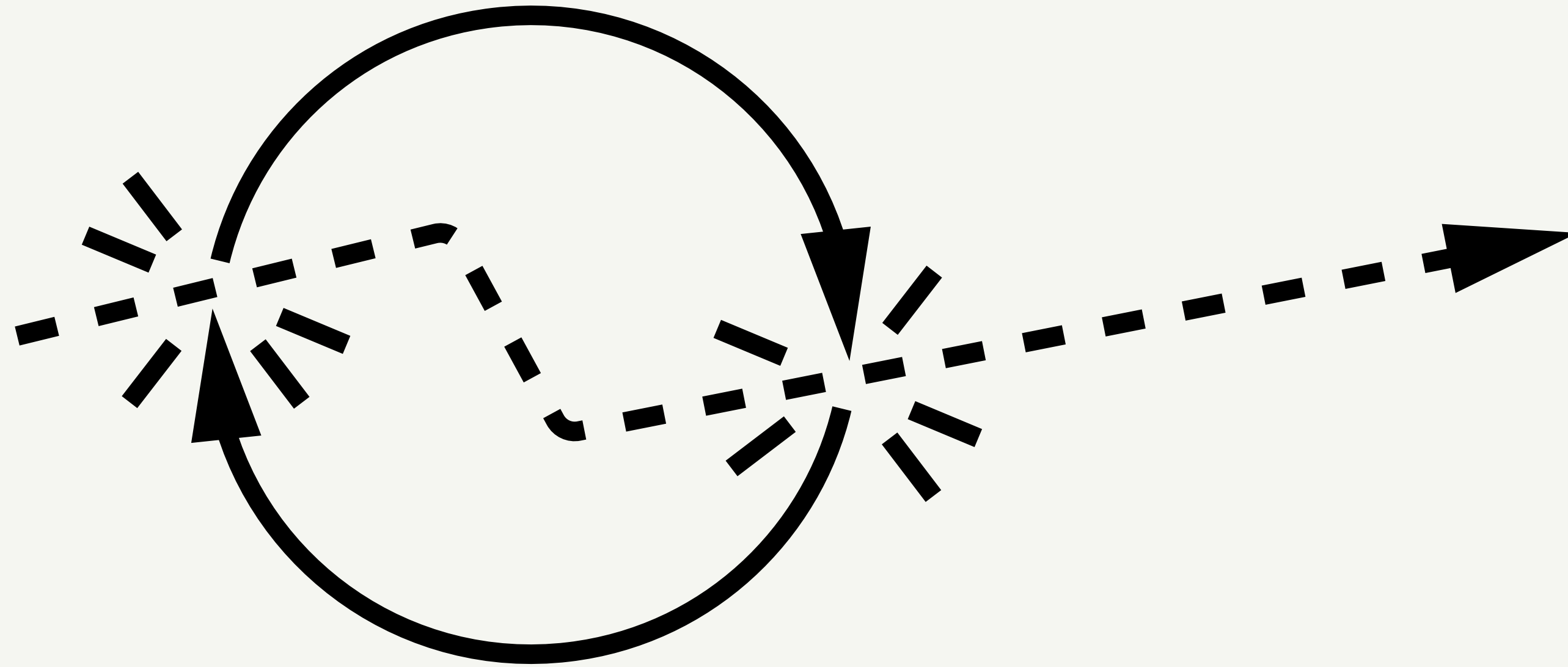


DOI 10.5871/jba/009s8.001

Journal of the British Academy

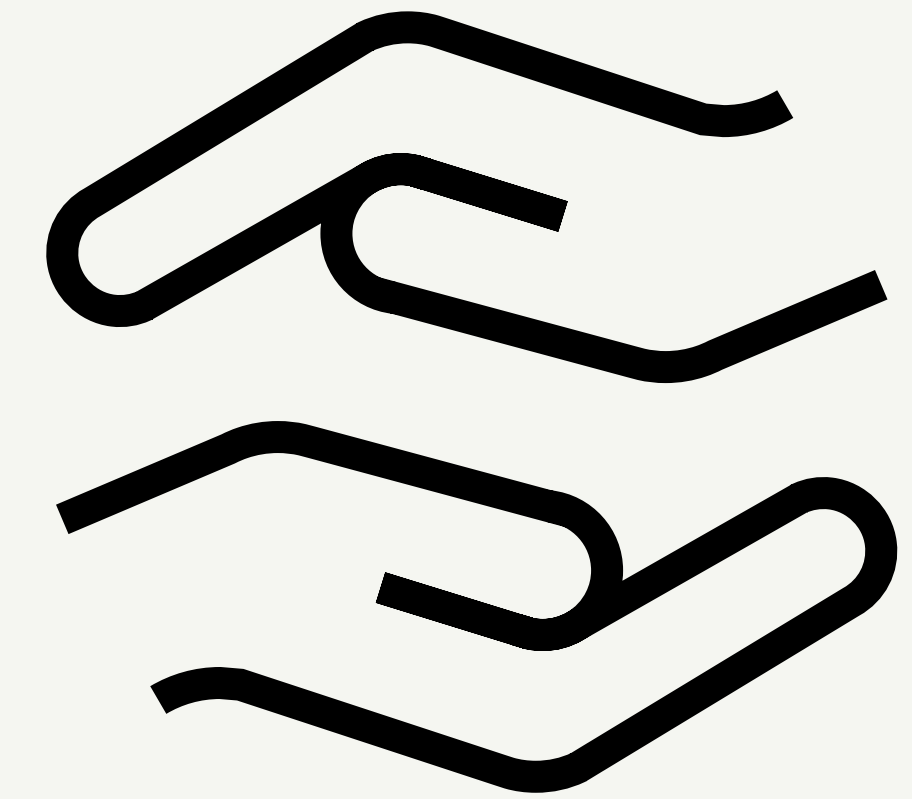
Design

Erika Conchis



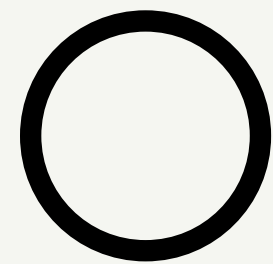
Disruptive innovations
seek to create new ways
to look at issues,
often with solutions
that contrast sharply
from the usual ways...

But emerging research
suggests that these
disruptive measures can
lead to inequalities,
especially to the most
vulnerable communities.



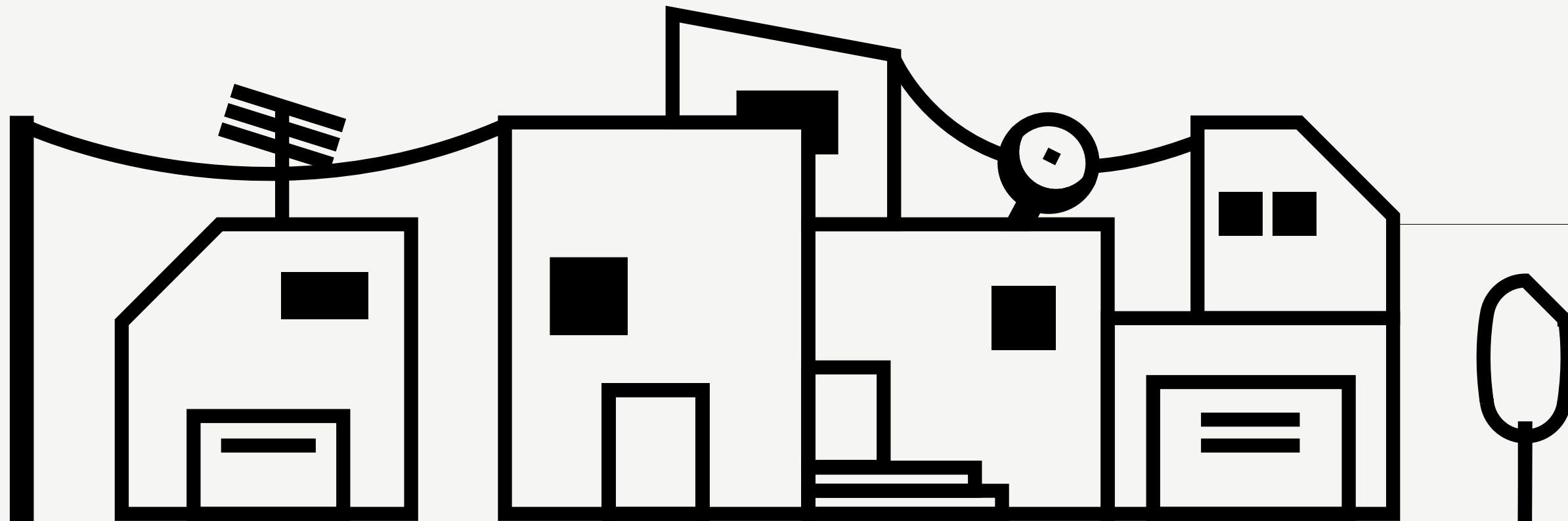
Here, we propose
to look for
reparative
innovation for
climate change
adaptation.

Adapting to climate change in cities is a challenge for actors with limited resources, especially for informal areas where there is a lack of services, and in rapidly growing peripheries where new infrastructure will soon be needed.



It's in those areas in particular that climate change adaptation solutions are linked with histories of dispossession and colonisation, which raises the question of justice...

We should therefore question
**what are the
impacts of climate
actions?**



in theory:

climate adaptation in
city planning could
address inequalities

but in practice:

the negative impacts of
climate action on
vulnerable populations
are apparent

For example, it can
create a process of
climate gentrification:

climate adaptation can
raise the financial
value of an
environment,
ultimately driving
marginalised groups
out of the area.



What are the potential alternatives?

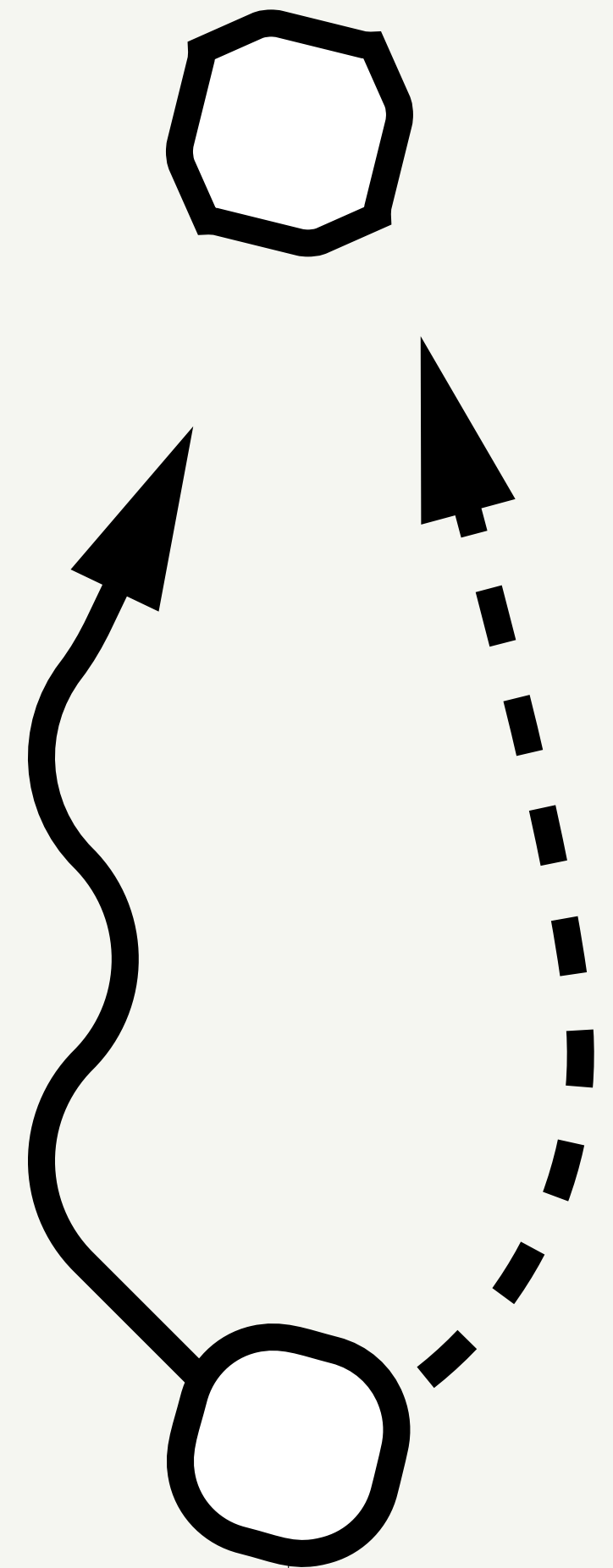
Recent research focuses more on local, DIY solutions that come from residents.

However, formal initiatives rarely include them.

→ Can we spot local climate actions, and integrate them into climate action?

Climate adaptation calls for **reparative innovations**:

innovations that factor in a city's history of inequalities whilst planning for its future livability.



Reparative innovations vs. restorative justice?

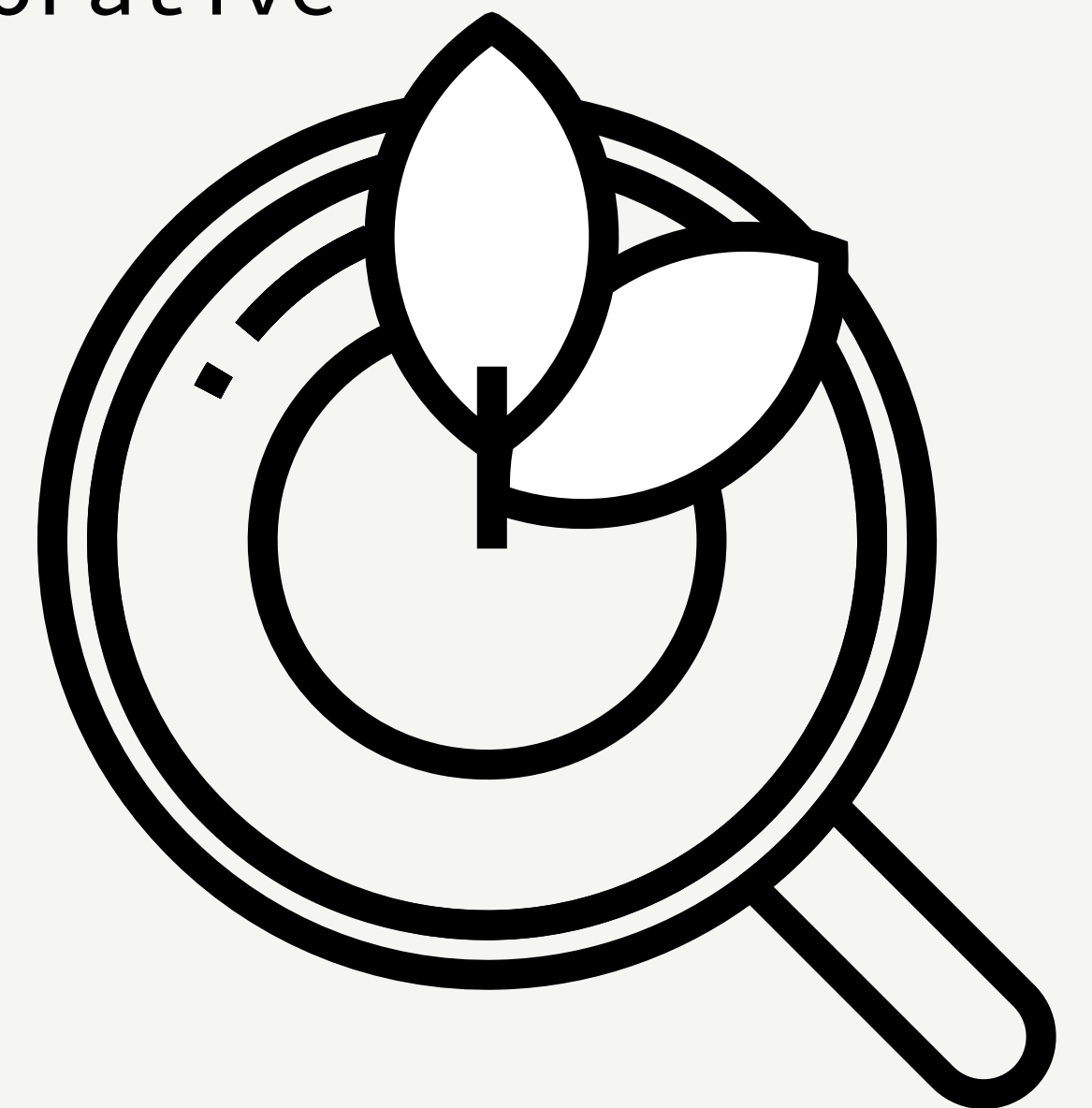
Reparative justice and **restorative justice** are frequently used interchangeably

→ **restorative justice** is based on the **intention to repair**

→ **reparative innovations** builds on the concept of **restorative justice**

Restorative justice aims to include the transforming alternatives coming from the indigenous affective experiences of colonisation and decolonisation.

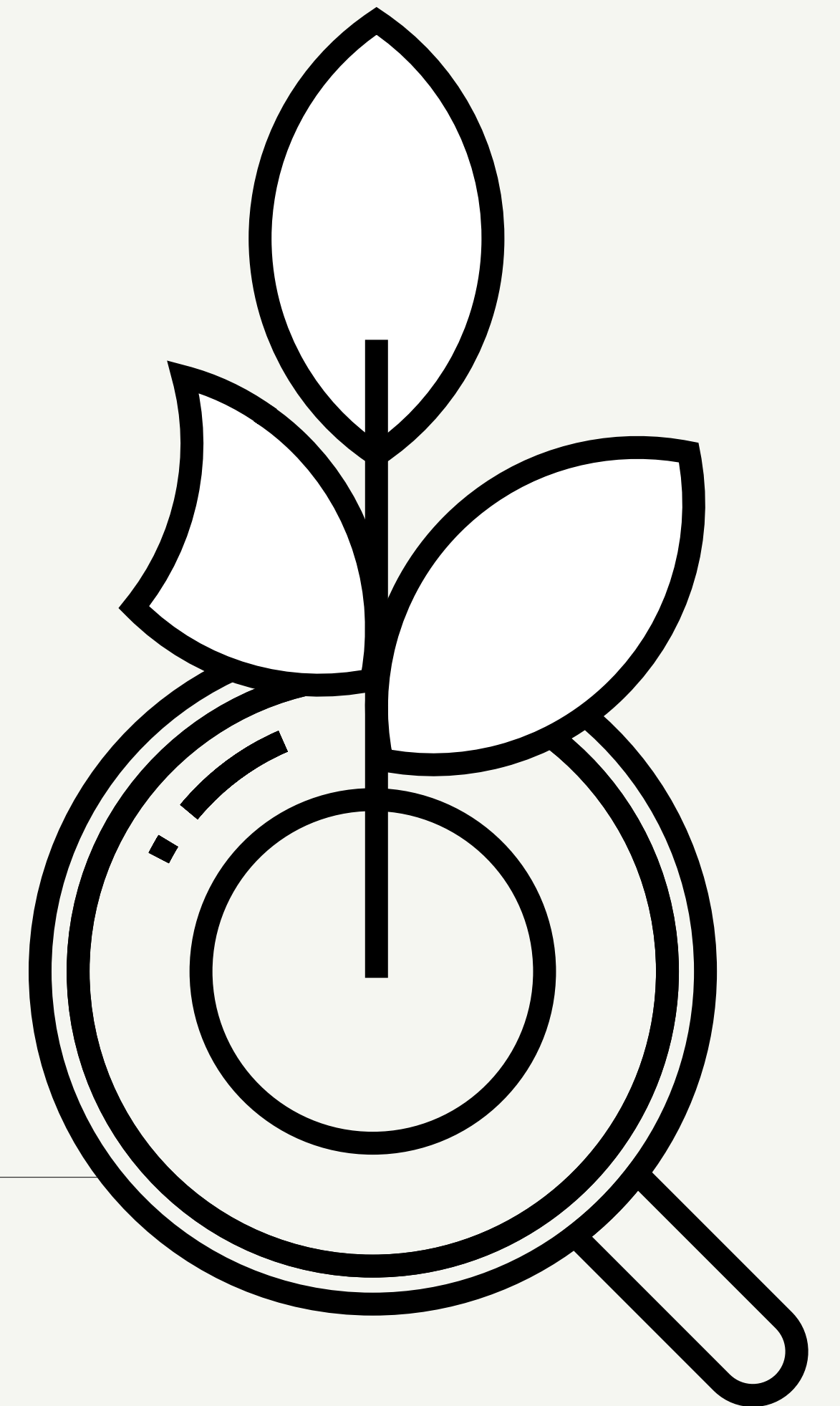
With a **restorative justice framework**, governments should have a responsibility to maintain a restorative process.

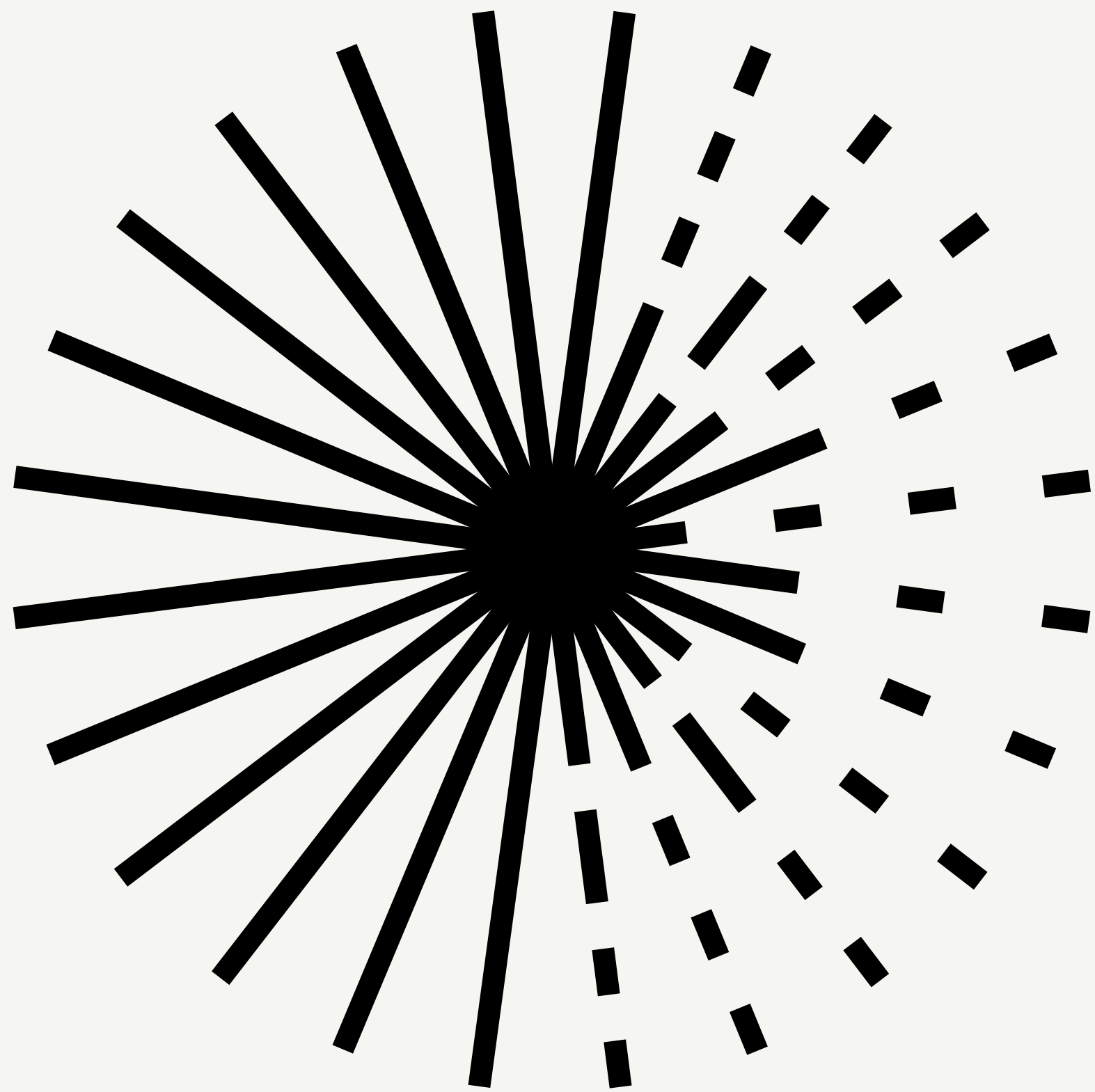


The promises of reparative innovations

Reparation and reparative justice move away from these formal processes of justice.

Reparative justice focuses on the active efforts to engage with people, their lived experiences, the materiality of everyday life and the fabric of cities.





Valuing the plurality of knowledge

Reparative innovations
value this plurality
of knowledge that can
inform climate
adaptation.

Reparation implies
actions to address
the wrongs of the
past.

But it isn't the
same as paying for
a deed;
a compensation for
harm and loss isn't
enough.

Reparative justice
calls for studying
the history of
climate change as
a problem,
a way to attribute
responsibilities
for reparation.

Reparation is not a straight
forward process...

it requires understanding
the practical experiences,

it requires conversation,
experimentation,

engaging with
different methods
to shape reparative
justice processes
where responsibility must be
widespread



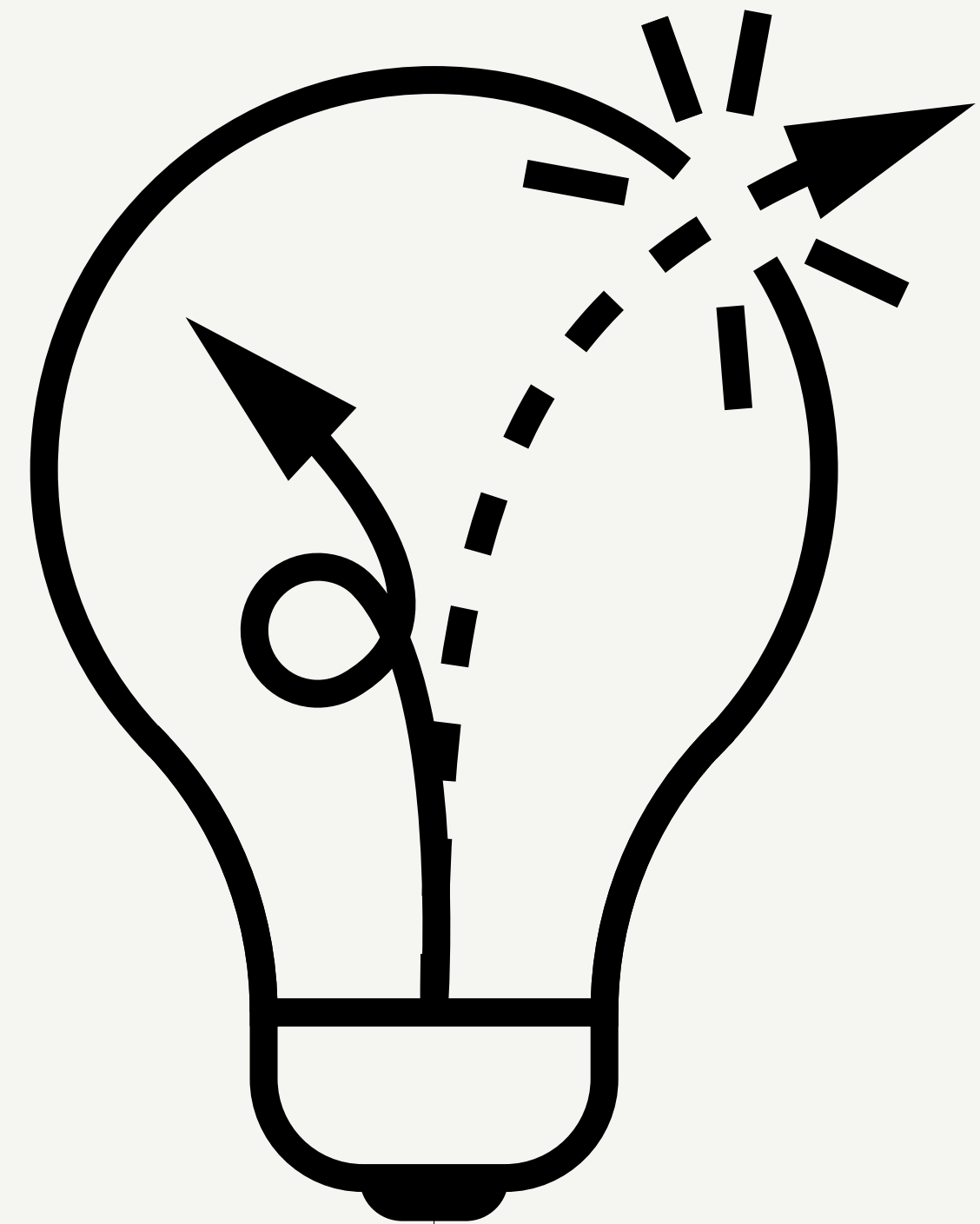
an alternative to 'disruptive innovation'

The concept of **reparative innovation** contrasts with the one of **disruptive innovation**.

Disruptive innovation seeks to radically alter a market and technological context.

Their diffusion and establishment can make entire industrial systems obsolete.

Transitions happen when disruptive innovations force a social and material realignment.



Following these theories, disruptive innovations have the potential to introduce sustainable solutions.

However, the concept of disruptive innovation is limited because it doesn't acknowledge the variety of means for innovation.

Whereas, **sustaining innovations** introduce change incrementally.

But while **disruptive innovations** may have a place in urban adaptation, they emerge from within dominant socio-technical systems and do not necessarily challenge them.

→ **Reparative innovation** provides an alternative way to look at innovations, more attuned to the specific adaptation needs of an area.

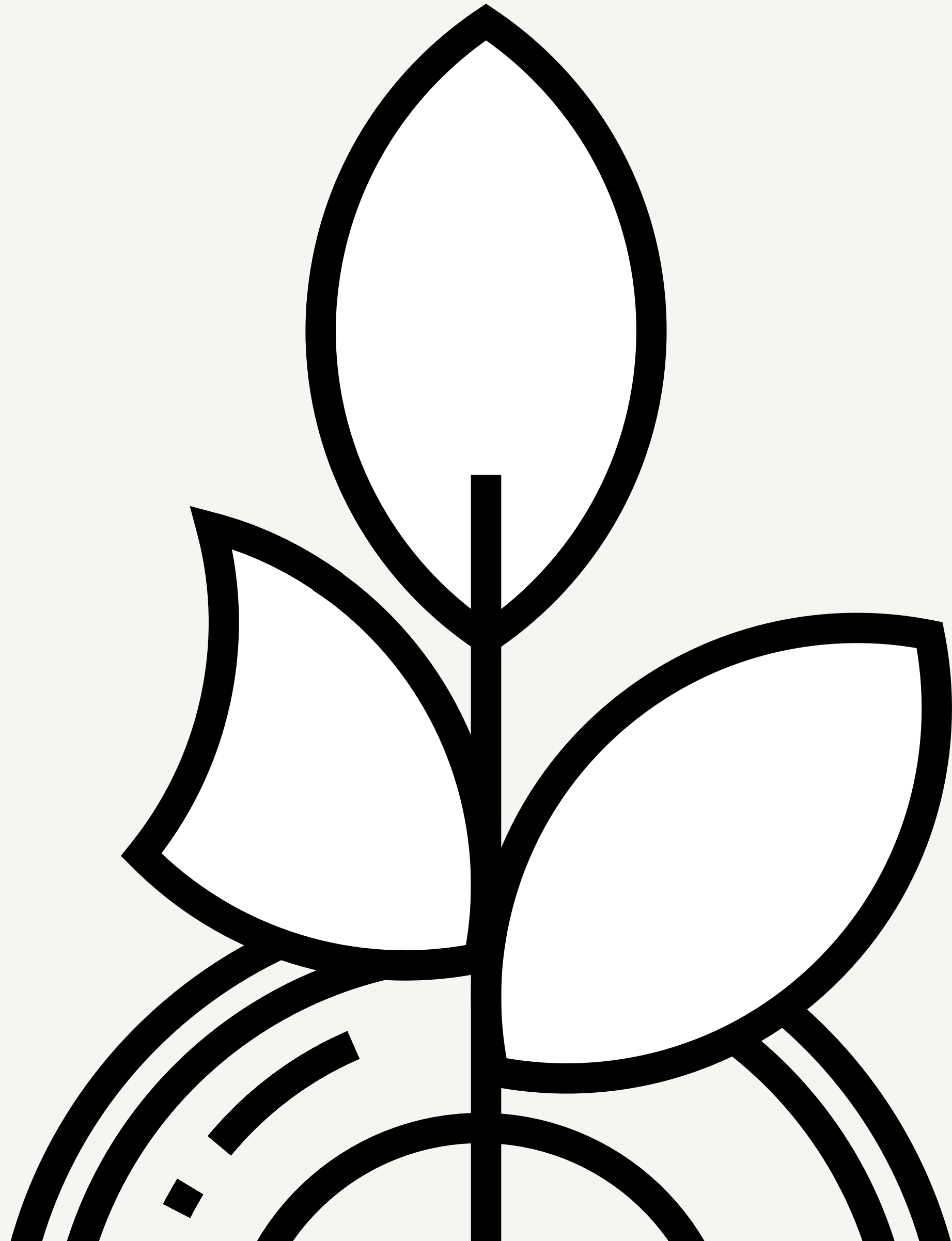
Finding hope in the reparative

Unlike narratives of disruptive innovation, **reparative innovations** emerge from a recognition of specific social and cultural histories that shape the context of adaptation action.

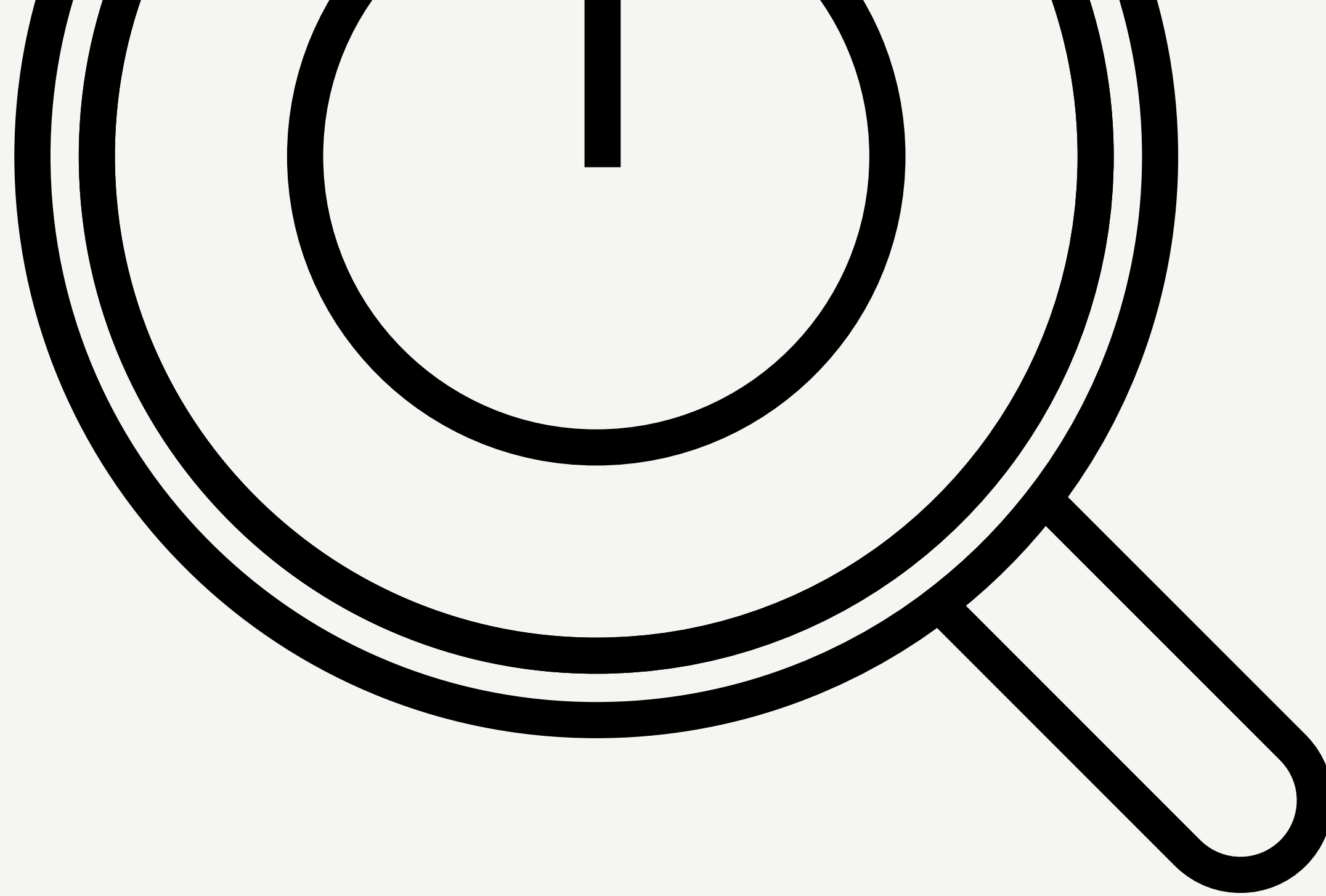
Reparative innovation seeks to engage with the existing conditions of a given place, using the resources at hand to create new possibilities for adaptation.



Conclusions



Reparative innovation
is a means to rethink
alternatives for urban
adaptation that, rather
than disrupting
existing infrastructure
systems, seek to engage
with the political
impacts of situated
knowledges and
ecologies



Read the full essay on
the **British Academy**
website (open access)

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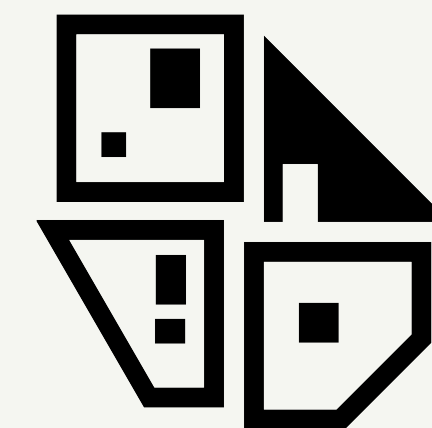
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European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

This project has received funding from the European
Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's
Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme

Grant Agreement No 804051 – LO-ACT – ERC-2018-STG



LO-ACT
Low Carbon Action
in Ordinary Cities