



# a quiet language

translating vernacular architecture for future needs

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2025

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Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering

Examiner: Daniel Norell  
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## A QUIET LANGUAGE

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## PREFACE

For me, heritage is more than only tangible things left behind for us to observe. It's closely connected to people and their personal stories. That is perhaps why I take such an interest in history and the vernacular. I enjoy reading and listening to stories. It allows me to sympathize and be more receptive as a person but also as a soon to be architect.

I will never forget my late grandmother who would always tell stories about the past, about local people and their life. It was fascinating. My grandmother Anita, who sadly passed away this february, is one of the reasons why my thesis topic and site was chosen. Sikkhall is the place where she grew up and later passed on. She was a storyteller through and through, and I hope my contribution, that is my master thesis, has the potential to continue the storytelling to every reader that comes along.

## thanks...

to my grandmother for always inspiring me and putting a smile on my face. It was never a dull moment when being around you.

to the memory of my grandmother Anita Friman

in addition, a thanks to...

Sara Olsson  
Daniel Norell

& my family and friends for their continued support



## ABSTRACT

With the continued development of universal tools and construction techniques, one could argue that architecture more and more tends to become a consumer product. Previously, towns had distinctive regional and cultural characteristics which was a result of peoples direct understanding of the place they inhabited, something that has tended to be lost the further one goes into modern society. Critical regionalism, with the architect Kenneth Frampton in the forefront, advocated for an alternative approach. As to instead negotiate architectural progress through the peculiarities of a specific place. Which highlights the architects need for sensitivity to the existing conditions of the place.

The thesis in turn adopts a design method that aims to explore the translation of vernacular architecture, in order to approach critical regionalism and explore its spectrum of embeddedness and contemporaneity, when dealing with new construction. Sikkhall, a rural area in Dalsland, acts as the test bed for these explorations. It has had a long history of both prosperity and hardship and has thus cemented itself as a significant place in the local region. The design method builds upon literary studies, site visits, drawings, collages, digital reconstructions and design explorations through translation. The digital reconstructions summarized the survey regarding the vernacular architecture which acted as the base for the analysis before the translations could take place.

The result is a proposal for a revitalized area with a new program building upon Sikkhalls historical context, as well as the addition of a new flexible communal building. Deriving from the translations of the local vernacular architecture. Containing a café and exhibition space.

The open ended method of translation presents many opportunities depending on the interpretations of the translator. And puts the relation between the copy and the original at the forefront, as a project could lean towards one side or the other depending on the context. The discussion whether there is an optimal position on the embeddedness and contemporaneity scale highlights the complexity of the method, as well as the needed sensitivity towards the context of every project. As it is in the translation that new compositions could be discovered.

*critical regionalism, vernacular architecture, translation*





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## INTRODUCTION

The thesis explores the role of architecture, and how the act of translation can be used in order to approach critical regionalism. Thus exploring how historical values and characteristics of a place can take shape in a contemporary setting. Sikkhall, a small rural area in Dalsland north of Vänerborg will be the test bed for the explorations. The thesis thus touches upon concepts such as rural development and revitalization, critical regionalism, local vernacular architecture, the act of passing on historical values and knowledge as well as the act of translatio.



## AIM

The thesis aims to put forward a proposal with the purpose to breathe new life into the area around the guest harbord in Sikkhall, drawing inspiration from its historical context around the time of the “oat rush”. The final proposal will mainly focus on the addition of a larger communal building, containing spaces for exhibitions, selling local goods, hosting events and buying food, as well as reimagining the land use around the guest harbour. Aiming to once again, turn Sikkhall into a local center and destination, for visitors and residents alike.

## DELIMITATIONS

- The time period, reflected upon and investigated, within the thesis stretches from the very late 18-century up until the shift between the 19th- and 20th-century. This is a time period which is well documented, as it manages to record crucial agricultural events in Sikkhall including the “oat rush”
- The investigated vernacular buildings must be found within the borders of Dalsland. They can't be drawn by a formally educated architect. They must have been built within the chosen time period stated in the paragraph above. Chosen buildings have to be included within the typical farm typology of the area, as it reflects the agricultural landscape at the time
- The final proposal will take the detail development plan proposal by the municipality of Vänersborg from 2017 into consideration. It will provide general guidelines and inspiration for the proposal but not be held as a law

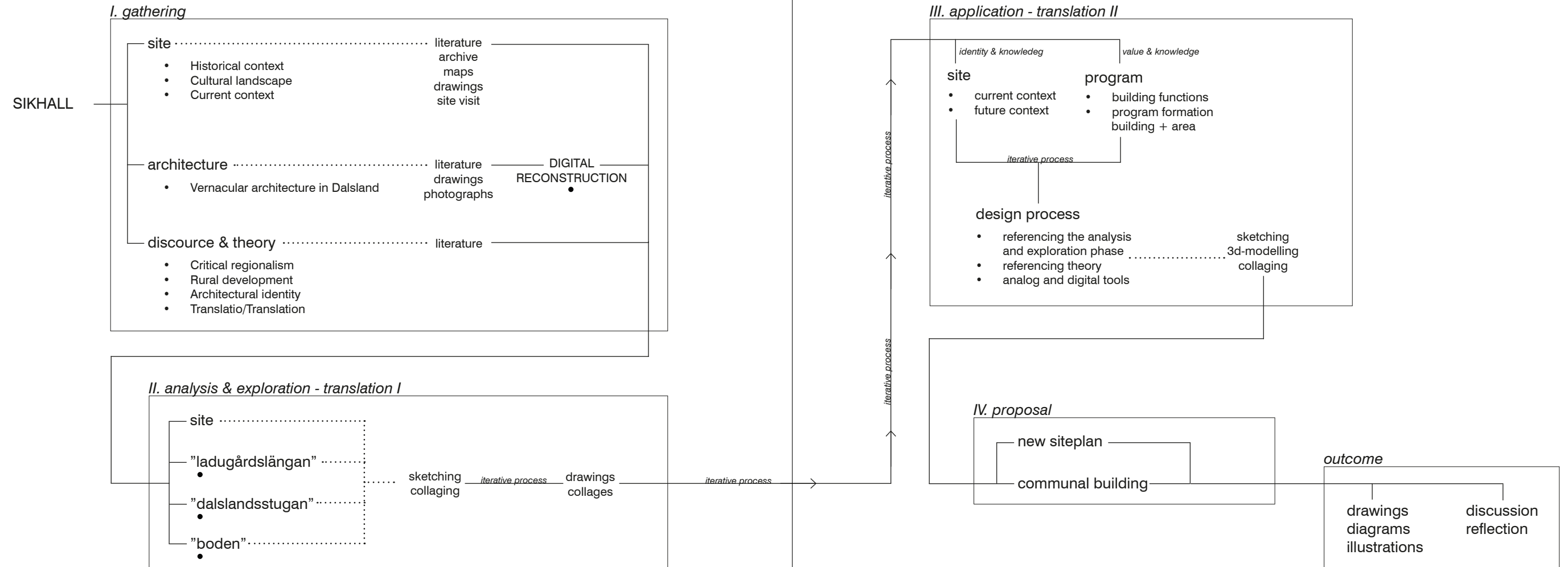
### main reserach question

*How can the vernacular architecture in Dalsland, and the values, knowledge and characteristics that it possesses, be translated in ways that make it relevant today?*

### second reserach question

*How can the historical context of Sikkhall help to guide its future revitalization?*





## METHOD

As the flowchart above suggests, the thesis process is split into a number of phases. The phases in turn contain different tasks which are paired with a suitable method. The process, generally speaking, has been iterative, where most of the phases overlap each other when new information is found or discovered.

### *I. gathering*

### *II. analysis & exploration*

### *III. application*

### *IV. proposal*

## I. gathering

The gathering phase is all about getting familiar with the project, the site and the tasks at hand. The general aim has been to outline the framework regarding theory and discourse. While also taking a closer look at the chosen site and choosing direction. Because of fragmented source material, the information gathered under architecture is in the end combined into three digital reconstructions: dalslandsstugan, ladugårdslången and boden, as a way to make it easier to analyze and reference later on.

## II. analysis & exploration

The analysis and exploration phase is where the thesis provides room to experiment with the information found in the gathering phase. This is when the first translation takes place. Which provides a foundation for future explorations. It also gives an opportunity to get even more familiar with the source material as one is able to test out compositions without the restrictions of the physical site.

## III. application

The application phase is where the second translation takes place. It's when the first design explorations are put into the physical site and further adapted to present and future needs and wishes. The proposal is now designed through an iterative process working hands on with the site and the new program.

## IV. proposal

The proposal includes a new siteplan and one new building type is presented through drawings, diagrams, and illustrations.



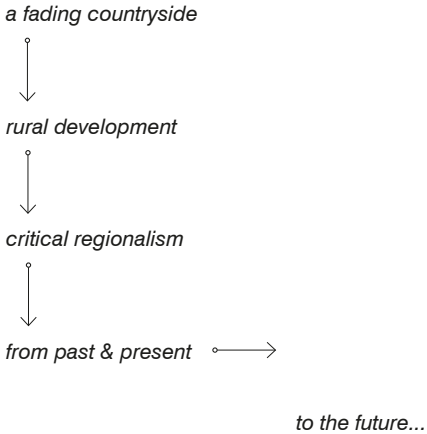
DISCOURSE

dalsland & sikhall:  
the current situation

The societal development in Dalsland continues to be problematic. It's a rural landscape in many instances. The diminishing population is a fact and a direct result of people moving away to more favourable and densely populated areas. Which ultimately leaves Dalsland with a decreased and aging population, fewer work opportunities and an increasing number of people in working age depending on government benefits. It's a negative trend that the region of Västra götaland desperately wants to reverse by increasing Dalslands´s visibility, attractiveness and people's knowledge about the region (Ekberg & Mårdsjö, 2020). One of the strategies therefore aims to encourage establishing new or expanding upon existing communities in lakeside areas. Building upon the Swedish tradition by building where people want to live.

In the detail development plan proposal from 2017 brought forward by the municipality of Vänersborg, Sikhall is pointed out as one such area. A so-called LIS-area (in swedish: landsbygdsutveckling i strandnära lägen) (Klang, 2017). Historically Sikhall has been, since the 1930s, an area mostly tinged by summer homes (Johansson, 1984). The year-around population is small following the general trend of Dalsland. Sikhalls phenomenal geographical location with a south facing coastline and its long shallow beaches however presents many unique opportunities for considerate rural development.

This becomes evidently clear in the detailed development plan proposal mentioned before. As it aims to establish new residential plots close to Vänern, develop the guest harbour and the two camping grounds, as well as to establish a new village structure containing various smaller businesses with a specific focus towards tourism.



rural development and past cultures

While looking towards the future of what can be, it's easy to forget what lies right in front, and even more so what lies behind. However it's important to approach these rapid movements of rural development in a sensitive way, but how?

Previously, towns had distinctive regional and cultural characteristics which was due to their separation from one another (Yilmaz, 2006). Distinctions between rural localities still exist, but they have been greatly reduced due to a number of causes. For example the progression of communication and global movements of ideas, technology and people. Many of the present communities have been threatened, damaged or lost as a direct consequence of individuals and families migrating to cities thus abandoning these rural areas. The knowledge and experiences of living in those environmental conditions have therefore decreased significantly. The balance between continuity and discontinuity is therefore crucial to a community and its culture's identity when it is put before new demands.



critical regionalism:  
the bridge between two sides

The balance between continuity and discontinuity could be interpreted as the balance between tradition and innovation. What can one sacrifice in order to adhere to a changing world, and what has to be kept in order to not lose one's identity? Or as Tzonis puts it "It's the unanswered question of choosing between international intervention or identity." (2003, pp.20). However the idea of critical regionalism tries to answer just that. The fundamental approach of critical regionalism, as Kenneth Frampton describes it, can be looked upon as a mediator negotiating the impact of universal civilization through the peculiarities of a specific place (Frampton, 1983). In relation to architecture, it can for example draw its inspiration from the typography, the range and quality of the local light or existing buildings in a given place. Critical regionalism as a cultural strategy can be viewed as the bearer of world culture and the agent of universal civilization.

In Framptons texts it is evident that he calls for an architecture that is sensitive to the existing conditions of a site, but the term critical regionalism was perhaps at first intended as a political tool to counter architecture becoming a global consumer product. Framptons writings however, in a present context, have helped to instead frame new architectural practices and perspectives regarding place and context (Szacka & Patteeuw, 2019). Today architects are faced with a reality with stricter requirements regarding ground occupation.

Pushing the idea of densification in order to preserve open spaces for nature and agriculture landscapes. Which in turn heightens the importance of a certain sensibility towards the quality of the ground in which the project is embedded. Making the connection to its larger context all the more pressing. Such an approach can thus help to rethink the concept of ground occupation especially in the modern day and age where the profession is confronted with an ecological transition and an economy of means. The call for local materials, building knowledge and craftsmanship in turn become more and more relevant if not necessary.

In other ways the text also provides a framework aiming to keep a certain cultural ethic alive. Which again highlights the need for sensitivity to the existing conditions of the site. Critical regionalism thus essentially aims to re-establish the link between embeddedness and contemporaneity exploring the building's close relationship with its construction and its meaning.

Critical regionalism thus presents an alternative approach for how rural development can take shape. It highlights the importance of the characteristics of a place while simultaneously viewing universal change as a positive driving force in order to generate considerate and resilient architecture.



THEORY

defining place

In order to achieve critical regionalism one firstly has to understand the notion of place. Christian Norberg-Schulz splits the totality of place into two parts: Natural place and man-made place. The first one, that is natural place, refers to the natural landscape. The characteristics of a natural place is therefore defined by the physical properties of earth and sky (1980). Natural occurring things such as rocks, water and vegetation is what creates these places.

The latter, man-made place, instead points towards environments in the form of settlements at different scales. For example stretching from whole cities and towns down to single houses and their interiors. Man-made places can at different levels relate to natural places. Farms and agricultural villages, for example, have a stronger connection towards their natural place in which they are located. Whilst towns and cities tend to have a weaker connection due to urbanization. In a way, a place can thus be characterized by its correlation between man-made and natural place.

And combined they create the totality of place. The physical things as a whole determine the environmental characteristics which give a place its essence. Place is however not static, as it's always up for interpretation. The meaning of place can thus be further underlined by the works of architecture which embodies both the past and the present. Architecture can essentially be seen as a manifestation of people's understanding of a particular place and the world.

why the vernacular

Building upon the assumption that architecture is a manifestation of people's understanding of place. Salman states that vernacular architecture, in particular, is a direct product of people, place and culture (2018). It can thus be recognised as the most obvious physical artifact of any culture as it draws from and responds to the current uniqueness of a particular place (Oliver, 2006). Vernacular buildings have the ability to meet the values and needs of the people that built them. They express distinct shapes and details deriving from the local community and are a product of their materials, technology, environment and culture. This type of architecture therefore becomes paramount in the search for hidden or forgotten knowledge from past times. Knowledge that can help guide future additions that can bridge the connection between embeddedness and contemporaneity.

shaping identity

People's manifestation in turn, that is through man-made place and vernacular architecture, expresses specific characteristics which differentiate them from others due to their natural place (Yilmaz, 2006). It's therefore not difficult to argue that the built environment acts as an important tool to reflect identity. Architecture and the built environment in general are key components in transmitting cultural identities from one generation to another. Turning it on its head, cultures in turn must therefore also express a specific architectural identity with defining characteristics that can be observed and studied.

These characteristics of architecture can thus be defined through the following points (Norberg-Schulz, 1980):

- *Type of construction* used and how its joined together
- *Its form* describing how a building stands and rises and the treatment of the base and the walls
- *The shape of its roof*
- The inside-outside relationships through *its openings*
- *The motifs* such as doors, windows and other elements which aim to visualize the local character
- The *color and material*
- The *building function*
- The *interior space* of the building

By defining tangible characteristics that can be observed opens up the possibility to investigate vernacular architecture in a well structured manner in order to learn and pass on cultural values and knowledge from a specific place.

”translatio”

After defining both place and character, as well as how it can be observed. It's time to circle back to the notion of critical regionalism, and how that can be achieved within the framework of this thesis. Dealing with how a place's past identity can in parts be brought back to life.

In order to do so and essentially bridge over between the preservation of identity and adapting to universal change, the act of “translatio” is utilized as a design approach. Translatio together with imitatio and aemulation represents three approaches towards adaptive reuse. However, the thesis is not dealing with adaptive reuse in the formal sense. The action of translatio has thus been borrowed and reinterpreted as a fitting method for the thesis. It is an approach that can be utilized without the need of an “original” in the physical sense, but can instead deal with how an original can be interpreted and translated into something new which can stand on its own. Translatio can thus be viewed as the first step of the relationship between the copy and the original, as it aims for similarity, and can thus be applied to a broader context (Plevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019). Translatio means translation. Having a critical but creative stance towards the original is therefore important for the translator. An intervention through translatio can thus be viewed as the act of translating a building from one time to another.

Within the thesis the act of translatio or translation will make up the method for approaching critical regionalism, and in turn create resilient, place-specific architecture that can continue to tell stories of the natural- and man-made place, local culture and its people. The elements that will be translated are based upon the findings from the analysis regarding the characteristics of each studied vernacular building.

some definitions

<i>critical regionalism</i>	the umbrella term used within the thesis to aim towards an architecture that links international intervention and identity of a place
<i>place</i>	describes the combination of man-made and natural place, including all its physical and embodied values
<i>architectural identity</i>	viewing architecture as a manifestation of identity, cultures must therefore in turn have an architectural identity
<i>translatio</i>	the act of translating and transforming a building from one time to another without losing its core values





from gathering to analysis

This upcoming part includes the extensive gathering and analysis of the site and choosen vernacular architecture. It contains a more in depth analysis of the site's current and historical context as well as the chosen vernacular architecture. The historical context is presented first as a way to set the scene. The current site has then been analyzed mainly through analog tools in order to build up useful knowledge which can be used when applying a program further on.

The gathering and analysis of the vernacular architecture have, however, been approached a bit differently. As a way to study the buildings more in depth, *digital reconstructions* have been created by referencing literature, drawings and photographs. All the fragmented information is essentially patched together in the digital reconstruction. Which in turn allows for a more in depth analysis. The studied building types are chosen based on their common nature in Sikhall during the 19th-century. *Dalslandsstugan*, *ladugårdslängan* and *boden* are all buildings typically found within the farm typology. The analysis is later carried out using the list of architectural characteristics presented by Christain Norberg Schultz (1980). Thus creating a point of departure. The analysis of both place and vernacular architecture will essentially be the foundation for the translation later on.

Much of the material referenced, in regard to the vernacular architecture, comes from the book *Dalslands Gårdar* by Gösta von Schulz (1951), which has been invaluable for the research. Other inventories and reports regarding building heritage in Dalsland have also been referenced when additional information was needed to fill in gaps.

The building analysis builds upon the following list of architectural characteristics:

- *Type of construction* used and how its joined together
- *Its form* describing how a building stands and rises and the treatment of the base and the walls
- *The shape of its roof*
- The inside-outside relationships through *its openings*
- *The motifs* such as doors, windows and other elements which aim to visualize the local character
- The *color and material*
- The *building function*
- The *interior space* of the building

GATHERING

historical context

digital reconstruction

*I. dalslandsstugan*

*II. ladugårdslängan*

*III. boden*

*I. place*

*II. placement*

*III. dalslandsstugan*

*IV. ladugårdslängan*

*V. boden*

ANALYSIS



figure 1. passanger boat approaching the docks in Sikhall in 1943

Comment: From *Halle och Hunneberg från Sikhall (Dalsland), Annandag Pingst 1943* [Photograph], by Landelius, 1943, Digitalt Museum (<https://digitaltmuseum.se/021015607067/halle-och-hunneberg-fran-sikhall-dalsland-annandag-pingst-1943>). PDM 1.0.



SIKHALL

whispers from the past

When visiting Sikhall today, it can be difficult to realize its historical significance as many of the traces lie hidden or have simply been lost to time. The granary in Sikhall from 1874, however, continues to speak its quiet language. As the last outpost, it stands proudly watching over both water and land.

Sikhall is located in the southeast of Dalsland, and its part of the municipality of Vänersborg as well as the parish of Gestad. Sikhall consists of a smaller coastline along Vänern's southwest side not far from the estuary of Göta älv. It's a landscape minted by fertile fields, mixed forest and cliffs. It's also considered a part of the larger agricultural landscape which is called Dalbosläätten (Vänersborgs kommun, 2008). The closeness to the water, through Värnen, and the connections it provides have a long lasting tradition. The parish of Gestad is old, and dates back to the middle ages. The important events in relation to the thesis are however recorded in the 19th-century which is why understanding the context in and around that specific time is the priority.

before oats

Gestad has since the middle ages been an agricultural landscape. The most common crop at that time was corn. Oats however, which will come into play later, only answered for about 5% of the total grain production at the time. Animal agriculture became dominant during the latter part of the middle ages as crops were grown according to the needs of the family (Vänersborgs kommun, 2008). The cultivation of crops again became dominant during the 18th-century. The region was during this time viewed as poor, underdeveloped and traditional (Harrison, 2018). This was specially visible by the way people lived, as the dwelling houses of the typical farmer tended to be very small and cramped.

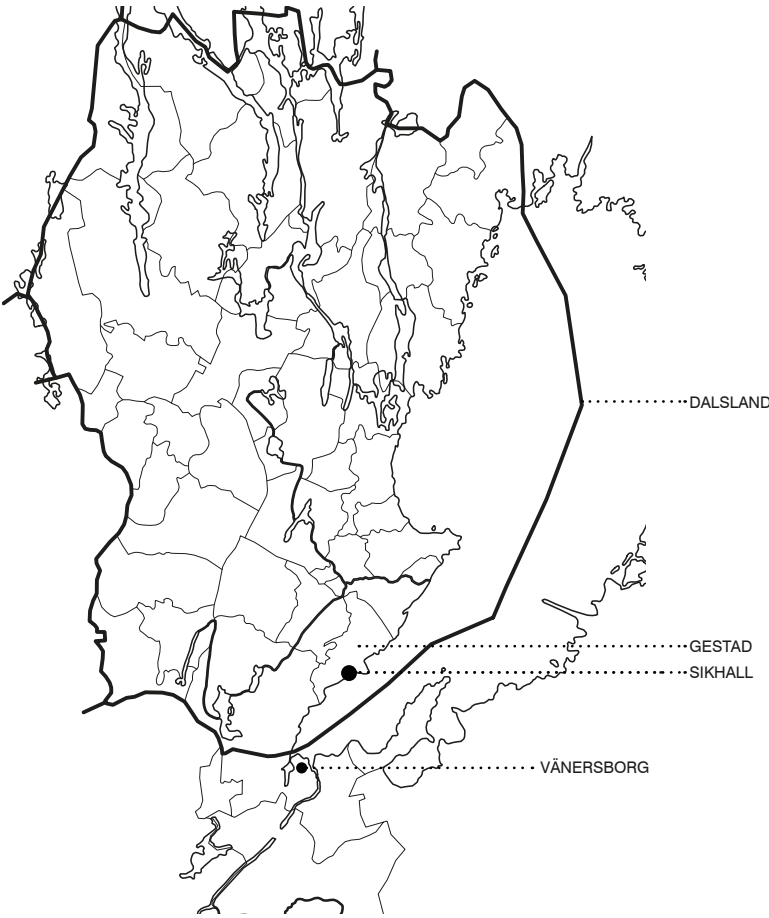


figure 2. a photograph of an eneklstuga in Gestad  
Comment: From *Gestad, Hembygdsgrden* [Photograph], by Claesson, 1956, Digitalt Museum (<https://digitaltmuseum.se/011015362088/gestad-hembygdsgrden>). PDM 1.0.



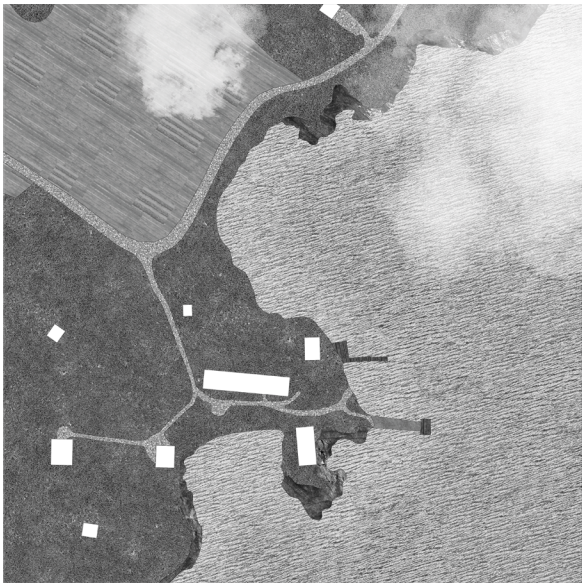




SIKHALL 1787



SIKHALL 1839



SIKHALL 1960

## the agricultural-expansion

Around 1750 a large agricultural expansion emerged as new successful farming techniques were introduced in combination with an updated division of land. Which led to the population growing exponentially, and almost doubling in Dalsland between 1805 and 1865 (Vänersborgs kommun, 2008). When the British crop taxes were withdrawn right after the 1840s, the export of otas thus became the farmers main source of income. As most of the oats cultivated in Dalsand were shipped to Great Britain and used for horse feed. This period later went down in history as the “oat rush”. This is also the time when Sikhall enters the story as it became the main port for export. With the increased movement of farmers selling their crops, Sikhall also became a local center. In addition to being an agricultural property itself, it was also home to some other functions, such as a brickyard, boat yard and a general store. The granary, which still stands today, was later constructed in 1874. Passenger boats from Vänersborg also docked at Sikhalls port at the time, adding to the general movement and liveliness of the area.

## the agricultural-decline

In the end of the 1860s the area was however struck with a few years of crop failure, which somewhat culminated the population growth. Despite only holding on for a brief period it showed to only be the beginning of the hard times to come. The population growth continued to drop at an alarming rate after the 1860s. Which was most likely caused by the extensive oat cultivation due to the high export rates. Thus making it difficult to maintain enough land for raising animals as most of the usable land was already occupied. This led to depleted farmland as the animals were unable to produce enough fertilizer. In the 1870s the conditions also changed regarding the oat export. Cheap American and Russian oats started dominating the market and thus out-competing the farmers from Dalsland. This was of course devastating for the region as a lot of people's livelihood now directly depended on the export of oats. The famine was widespread, and eventually got so bad that people had to go around begging for food. In 1887 oat prices reached record low levels (Harrison, 2018). Thus making it evident that the time had run out.

For many, emigration therefore became their only option. The agricultural crisis in Dalsland during the 1880s led to many people deciding to relocate to other parts of Sweden or emigrate, mainly to the US and Norway. The highest level of immigration however could be witnessed around Dasboslätten as the crisis seemed to have hit the area especially hard. Around 32% of the population of Dalsland lived there at the time, whereas 44% of all the emigrants from Dalsland came from Dalboslätten. Smaller homesteads and “backstugor” were the most common types of dwellings to be abandoned at the time.

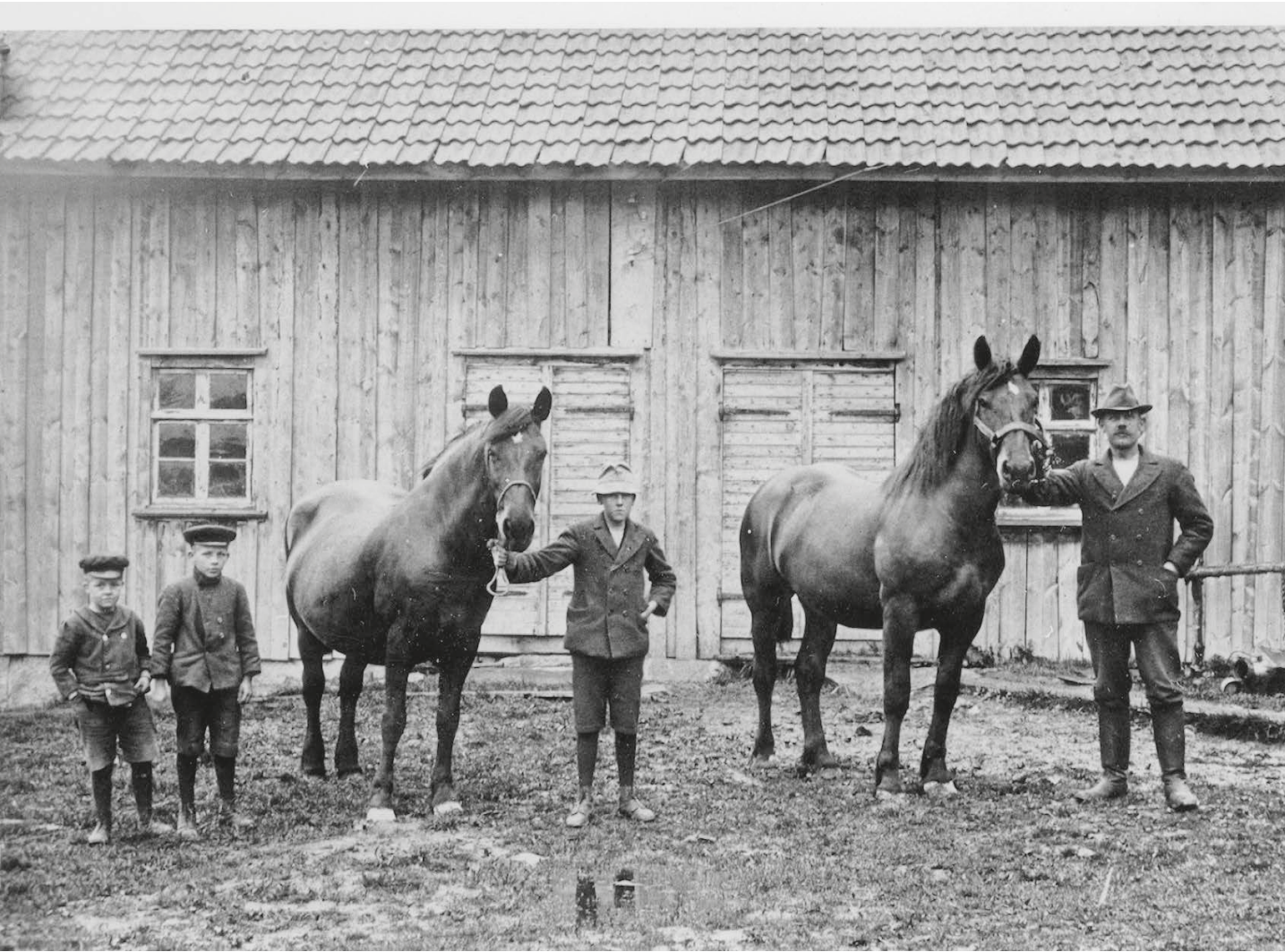


figure 3. farmer Karl Persson from Gestad with his three sons and two horses

Comment: From Gestad [Photograph], by Vänersborgs Museum, 1920, Digitaltalt Museum (<https://digitaltmuseum.se/011015361874/gestad>). PDM 1.0.

## the agricultural-recovery

Closing in on the 1890s the area eventually began to recover. The old practice of animal agriculture was picked up again, and a more rational approach towards crop cultivation was introduced in Dalsland (Vänersborgs kommun, 2008). Crop rotation thus became a standard practice. This meant, however, that a larger amount of farmland had to be used. Many of the smaller farmers were thus unable to make the necessary investments in order to switch over and were therefore eliminated. In the beginning of the 20th-century Sikhall had again become solely an agricultural property as the additional functions eventually dropped off due to a decreasing demand. Sikhall was eventually split into multiple plots with separate owners (Johansson, 1984). Sikhall 1:2 for example, has been since the 1930s in my family's possession. It was bought by my great grandfather, Gustav Karlsson who worked as a sailor and a barge skipper on Värnen for over 15 years. The 1930s in general saw an increase in summer vacation homes. A characteristic that still stands firmly today. And so, even if the agricultural landscape dominates the depiction of Sikhall, it's still mostly known as a refuge for people all around, seeking to enjoy its beautiful natural environments and leisure activities.

... now going back to 1870 again. A time when Gestad parish had around 2700 inhabitants, most of which were impoverished (Johansson, 1984). The families were usually large, but their homes were not.

The surrounding forests in Sikhall often reminds us of that time, as cherry trees, lilac bushes and scattered rocks from a ruined stonewall speak ist quiet language. Here children used to play, right beside their parents worry to provide food for the day.

This brief historical review provides a glimpse into Sikhalls past, and presents an explanation to why the area stands where it does today. The time of the middle to late 1800s tells us a story about prosperity and what Sikhall meant for the region, but also that circumstances can shift fast and be devastating if not prepared. Perhaps it's a cautionary tale and a warning to what can ultimately happen when a whole community is stricken by the need for more. And perhaps a parallel can be drawn here as to nurture resilience and sensitivity to a place in order to make it prosper long term. The revitalization of Sikhall which is proposed within the thesis, must therefore take this into consideration in order to make additions which can stand the test of time and continue to create value.





SAUNA

VSS CLUBHOUSE

GUEST HARBOUR

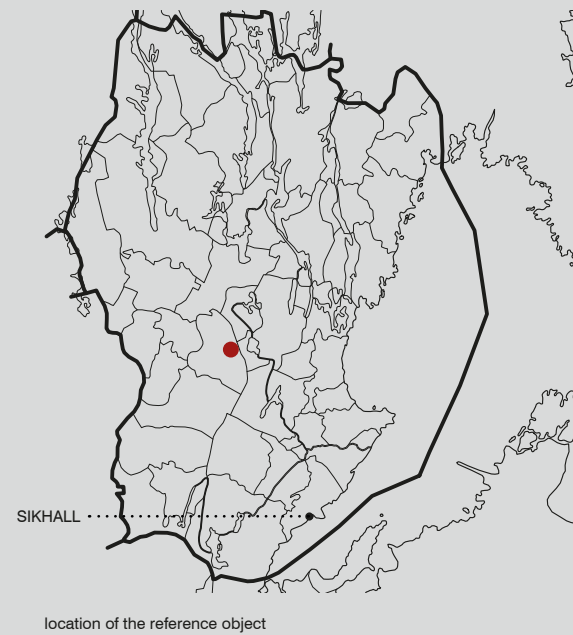
SIKHALLS GRANARY



site plan SIKHALL today

GATHERING & ANALYSIS

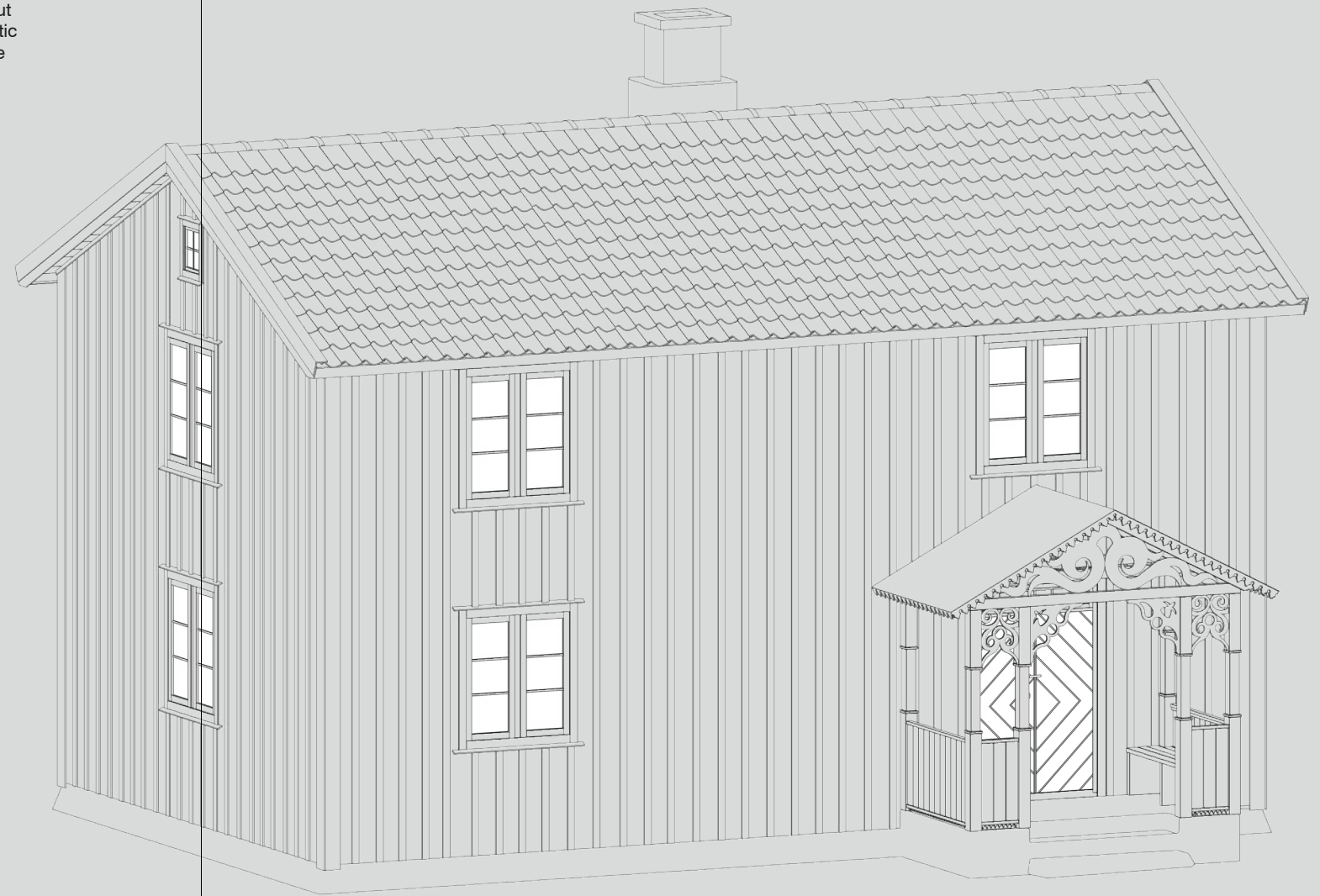




## DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION: I

### I. dalslandsstugan

The single cabin in two levels, the so-called *Dalslandsstugan*, was the dominating type of accommodation constructed before the 1870s in Dalsland (von Schoultz, 1951). Generally this type of building was mostly found within the layout of smaller, and middle sized farms, making it a staple for the common farmer. Dalslandsstugan appeared as a direct consequence of the economic boom that swept over Dalslands and Sikkhall alike in the 19th-century. This gave way for many changes regarding the dwelling houses. Such change could, for example, be witnessed in the addition of a second storey. A change rarely motivated by the need for more space, but rather a way of showing off the family wealth. Meaning that people with things to sell, now in return, had resources to put into home improvements, both technical and aesthetic ones. Making dalslandsstugan a direct consequence of that.





**BUILDING FUNCTION**  
a simple dwelling house  
for a typical family at the  
time

**COLOR AND MATERIAL**  
The exterior walls could  
be left untouched, or  
they could be clad  
with wood panels. Later  
on it was also common  
to paint the exterior,  
often in red and later on  
even the details in white.  
  
the roof were usually  
clad in brick tiles

**OPENINGS**  
openings were strictly  
placed in an orderly  
manner. Four larger  
windows on the larger  
facade and windows of  
solely one gable were  
common. Most windows  
were located along the  
walls of "stugan"



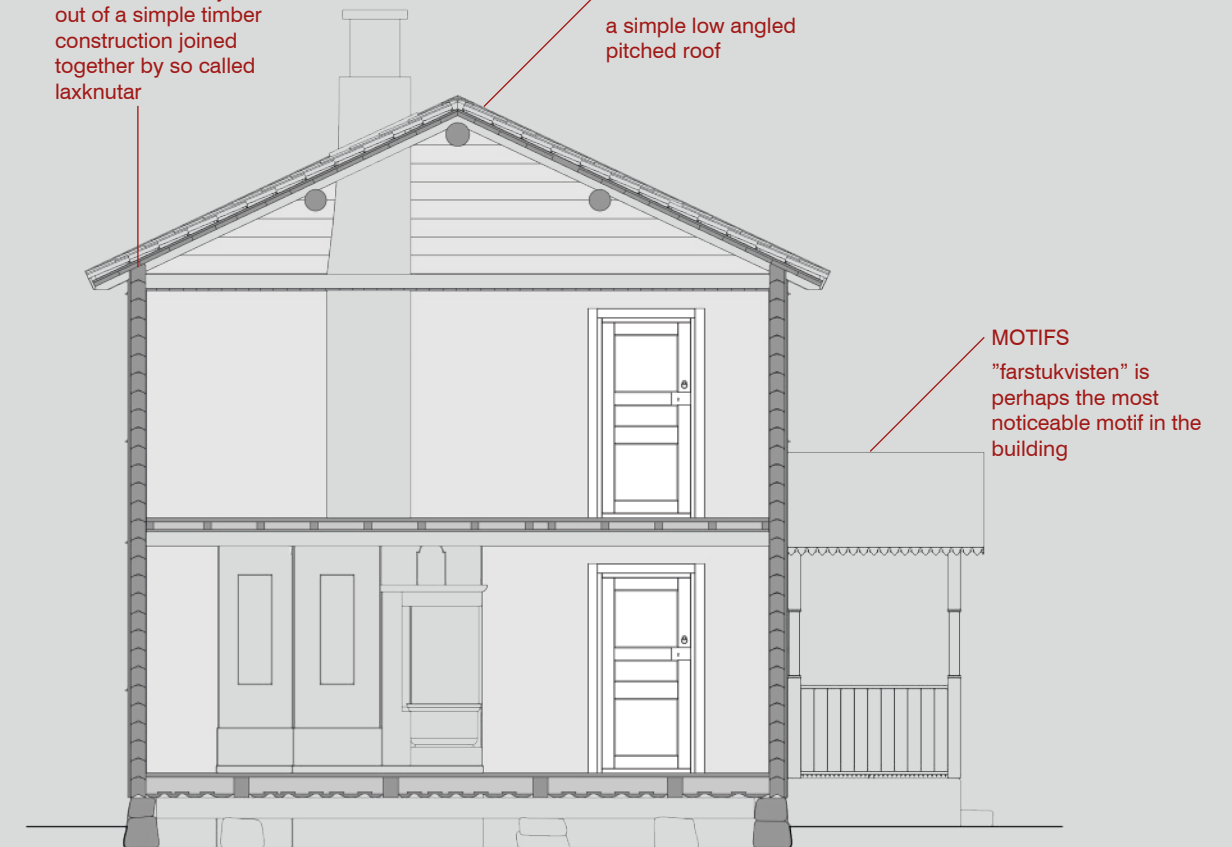
floor plan, first floor 1:70

#### INTERIOR SPACE

1. "stugan": this was considered as the main room of the house. This is the place where most of the daily chores were carried out
2. "kammaren": could be used as a separate bedroom or for storage
3. "förstugan": the general entrance hall providing access to all of the rooms

**TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION**  
walls were usually made  
out of a simple timber  
construction joined  
together by so called  
laxknutar

**ROOF**  
a simple low angled  
pitched roof



section 1:70

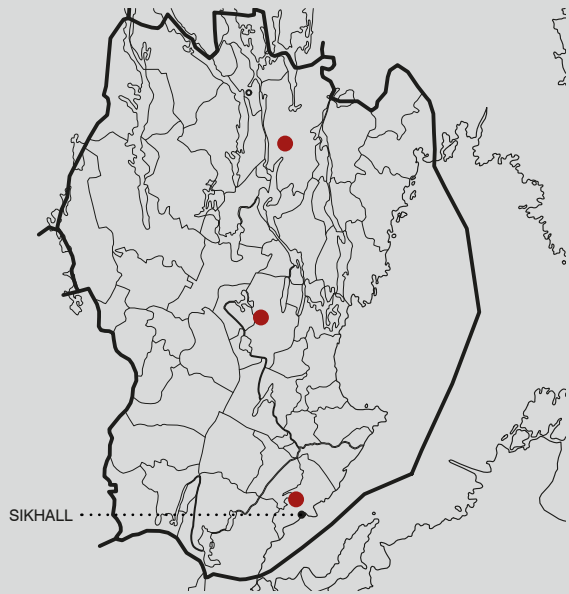
**MOTIFS**  
"farstukvisten" is  
perhaps the most  
noticeable motif in the  
building

#### REFLECTION

- Strict placement of openings, both doors and windows, in the vertical and horizontal direction. There is however a slight difference between the four facades
- The interior space is intricate with a lot of things to draw inspiration from, both in regard to material but also the furniture arrangement and room functions.
- The facade can have many variations, both regarding to color but also the paneling or lack thereof
- Pitched roofs are typical, but the roof overhangs are small. Both regarding the main house, but also the entrance hall
- The entrance is very intricately detailed, while the rest of the structure is rather modest in its expression
- The materials and construction is modest, creating simple components. Wood, stone and brick are the dominating materials

#### BASE AND WALLS

the base usually consisted of four stacked corner stones. The gap between them was also filled with additional rocks in order to create a cohesive base. The timber walls were placed directly on the rock foundation

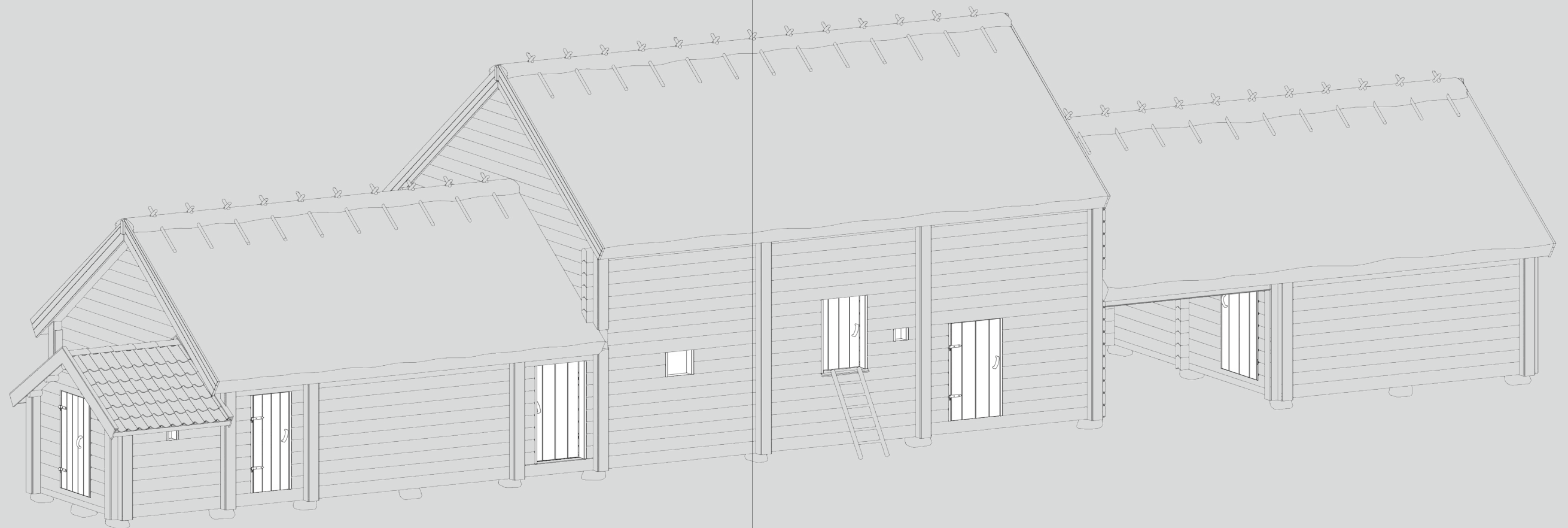


locations of the reference objects

## DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION: II

### II. ladugårdslängan

In contrast to the northern Swedish system with separate buildings for each agricultural function, the version dominating in Dalsland was instead the combined "ladugårdslängan" which has a long lasting tradition in the region. The buildings are mostly organized in a single row and usually under the same roof, creating a cohesive entity (von Schoultz, 1951). Ladugårdslängan uniquely combined multiple functions into a single unit. This often included the mow, barn or barns, stable, cattle sheds and sometimes even a firewood shed. The increased harvests during the 19th-century, in many cases often also lead to an expansion of ladugårdslängan. Mostly in the form of an additional barn that was added for storing the excess grain. The narrower and smaller cattle shed and stable were often placed at the gables of the central barn and mow. Timber was the dominating building material in the earlier versions.



## REFLECTION

- The room configuration is intricate as many various functions are put together in order to create a working unit
- There is however, definitely room for variation as the "rooms" are created with the internal function in mind. Which consequently produces exterior variations which could be explored further
- The motifs are fewer in this building, which is probably due to its modest nature
- The materials and construction techniques are again of a simpler nature
- The openings, doors and windows alike, does not follow the strict placement found i dalslandsstugan. Again, relating back to function, as openings were mainly placed exactly where they were needed. Often with no regard for exterior appearances
- Expansions could take shape both along the longer facade though so called "skökor" or by adding additional buildings to the gables. Skökorna were essentially merged with the existing structure by including it under the same roof. The gable additions were constructed according to its function

## COLOR AND MATERIAL

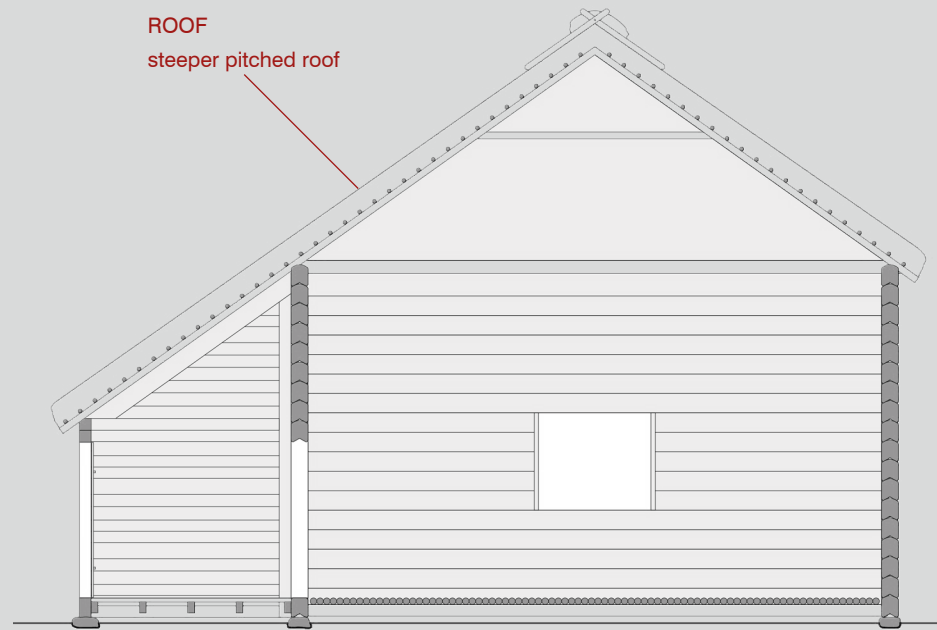
the timber walls were often left bare, only covered in wood paneling in certain places. They were usually never painted either.

significant for this building type is the thatched roof which became a staple in the are

## TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION

a simple timber construction with a "dubbelhaksknut". The truss was also introduced first in this type of building as a longer span between load bearing elements was preferable

ROOF  
steeper pitched roof



section 1:80

BASE AND WALLS  
the base utilized strategically placed cornerstones in order to elevate the timber wall from the ground

OPENINGS  
openings were usually few, small and positioned according to the indoor function



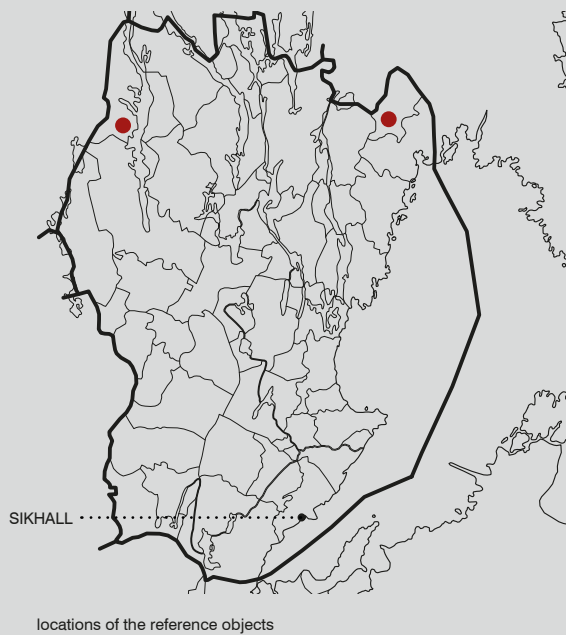
floor plan 1:80

MOTIFS  
due to the simple nature of the building not many motifs could be located. Perhaps the entrance ladder to "logen" is however one of the more significant elements

## INTERIOR SPACE

1. "vedbod": wood storage
2. "grishus": pigpen
3. "fåhus": cow pen
4. "mellan stallet": animal food storage
5. "lada": grain storage
6. "loge": space for processing grain
7. "sköka": common type of expansion
8. "stallkyrka": entrance area for the stables
9. "stall": the stable where the horse were kept
10. "gåle": the are were the fowls were kept

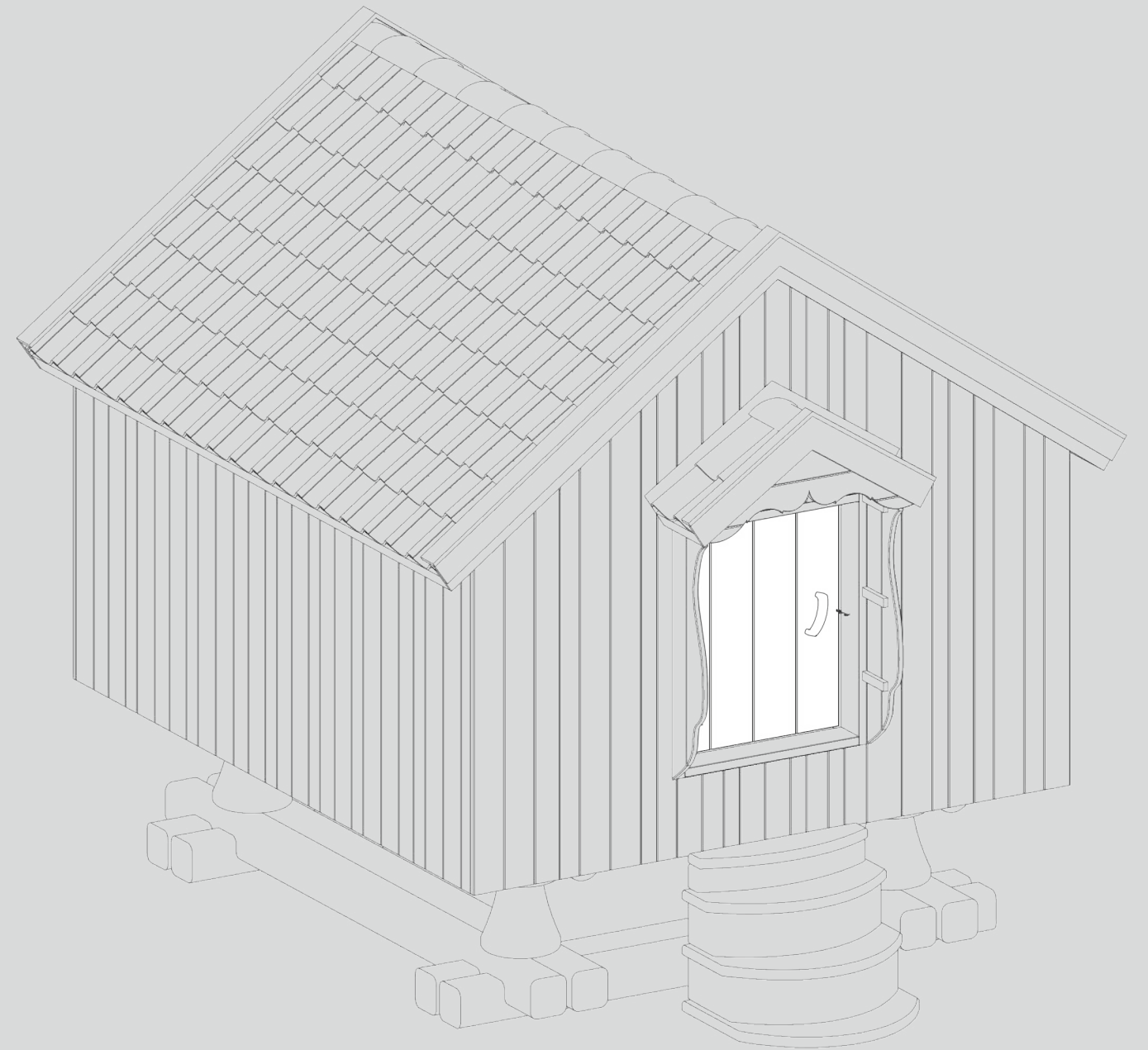
BUILDING FUNCTION  
"ladugårdlängan" was the place where the animals were contained as well as the place where the grain were processed and stored



### DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION: III

#### III. boden

The system of scattered shed like buildings for various storage purposes was also popular in Dalsland. In contrast to the dwelling house and barnyard, *boden* didn't follow a particular pattern when being placed. They were usually erected where they were needed. Mainly, they provided storage, often for grain. It wasn't however uncommon to allocate specific storage buildings for a specific food item (von Schoultz, 1951). For example grain and flour could be separated into two buildings. The most common type of *bod* is the simple, one storey single room type with a gable entrance. *Stolpboden*, which is reconstructed here, is a common variation of this simple building type. It is characterised by the tall poles lifting it from the ground. Boden was not an item included in the *ladugårdslänga* but instead had its own placement around the agriculture property.



#### TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION

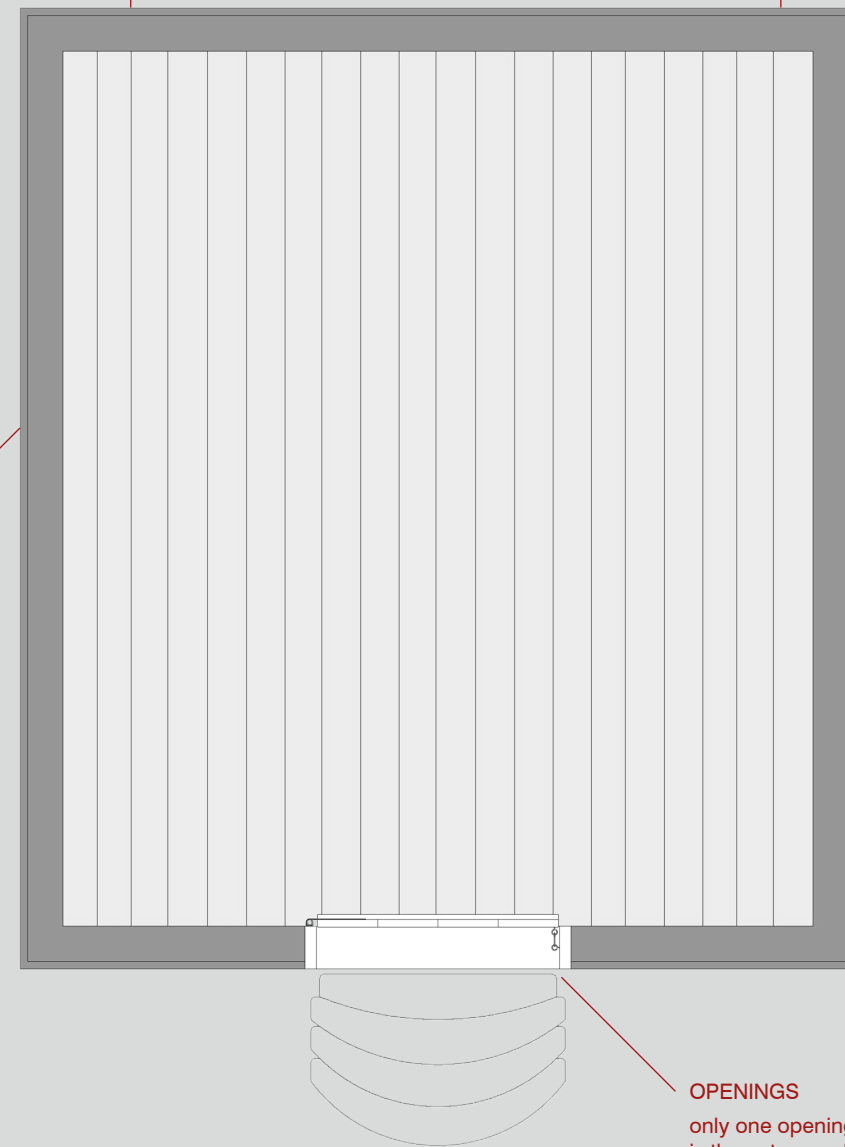
simple timber construction with varying types of joints. "laxknuten" is utilized in this case

#### COLOR AND MATERIAL

the timber walls were often left exposed or covered with wood paneling. The exterior were usually not painted

#### INTERIOR SPACE

"boden" is often made up of a single room with the sole purpose of storing goods. This could include grain or even flour



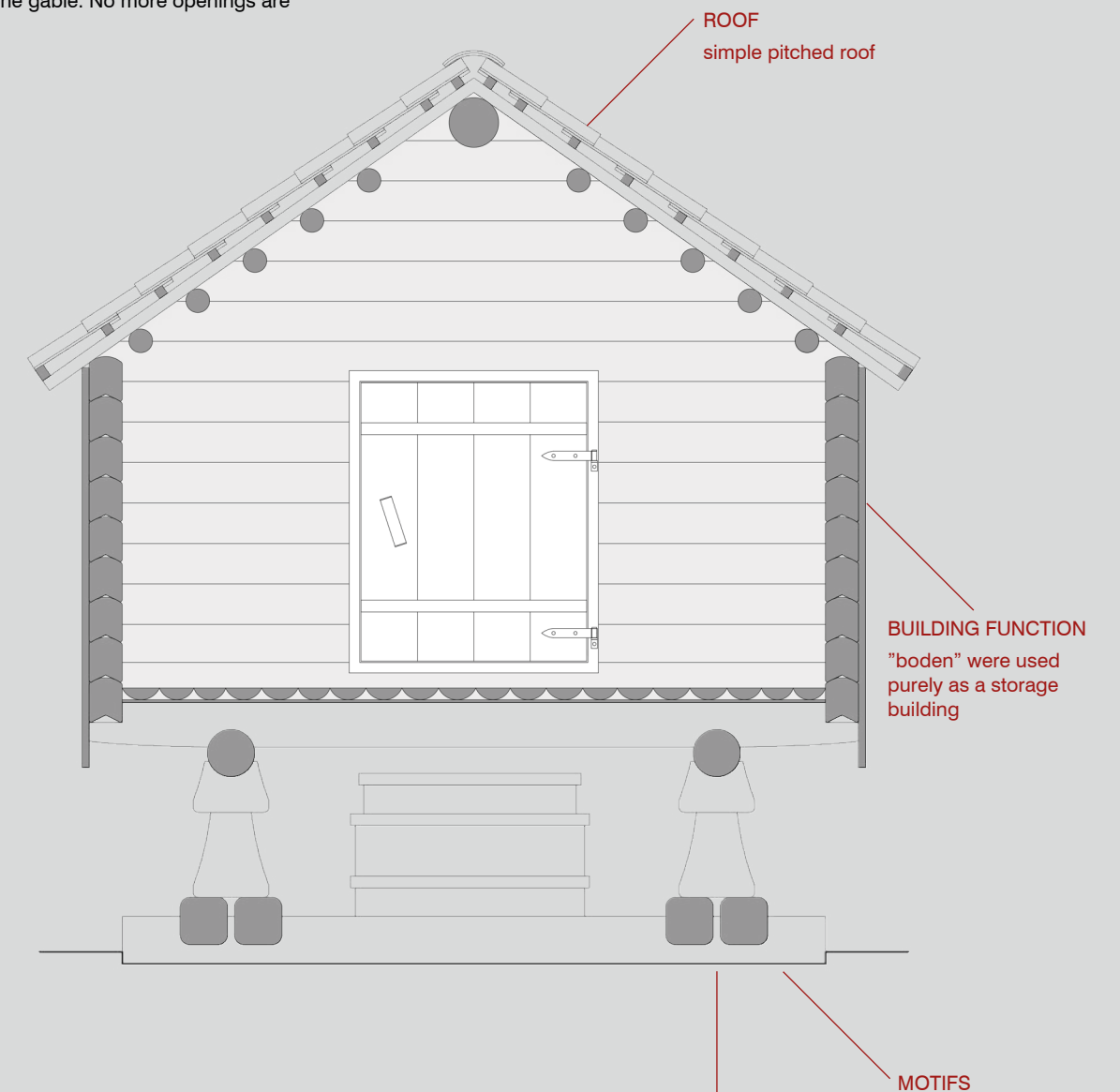
floor plan 1:30

#### OPENINGS

only one opening that is the entrance door is common for this type of building

#### REFLECTION

- It's a simple building with a modest interior and room configuration as it only consists of a single room
- For being such a simple and modest building it contains many motifs. Such as the foundation poles, entrance roof and stone staircase
- The exterior goes hand in hand with the interior as it is of a more modest appearance. Some variations can be seen, but they are commonly very simple. Often without any cladding at all
- The single opening, which is the entrance, is located on one gable. No more openings are present



#### ROOF

simple pitched roof

#### BUILDING FUNCTION

"boden" were used purely as a storage building

#### MOTIFS

the foundation pole presents as the most important motif for this building type

#### BASE AND WALLS

the walls are elevated from the ground through foundation poles. Here four poles are utilized in order to hold up the building

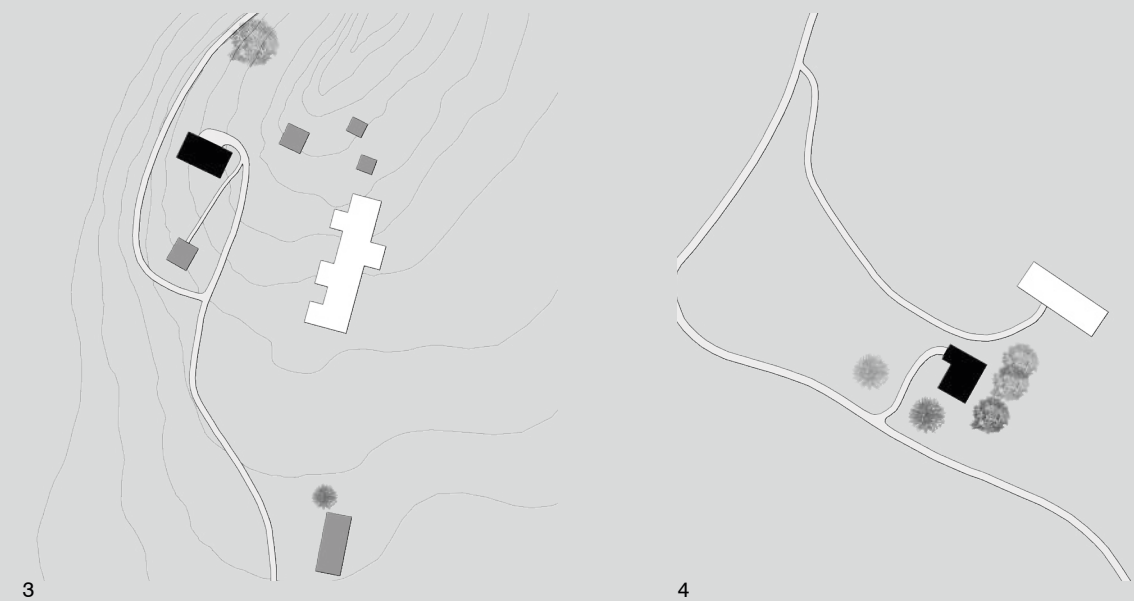
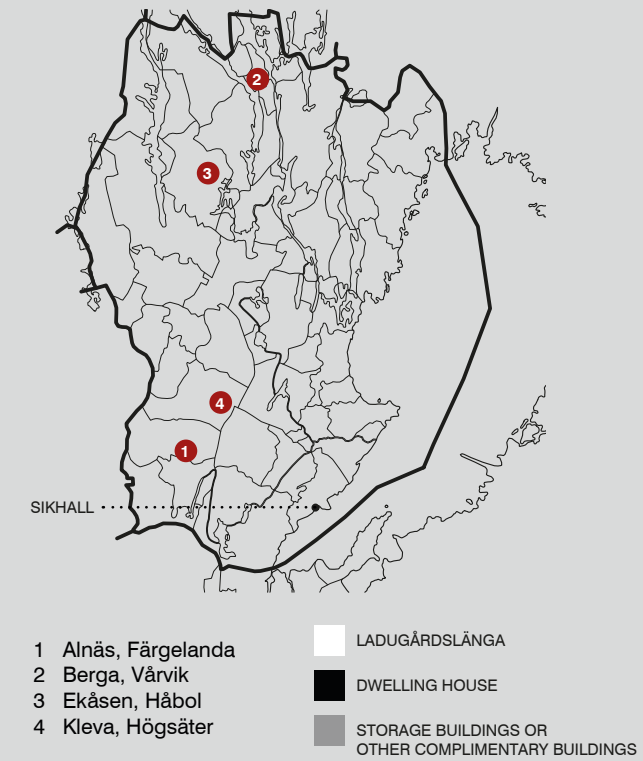
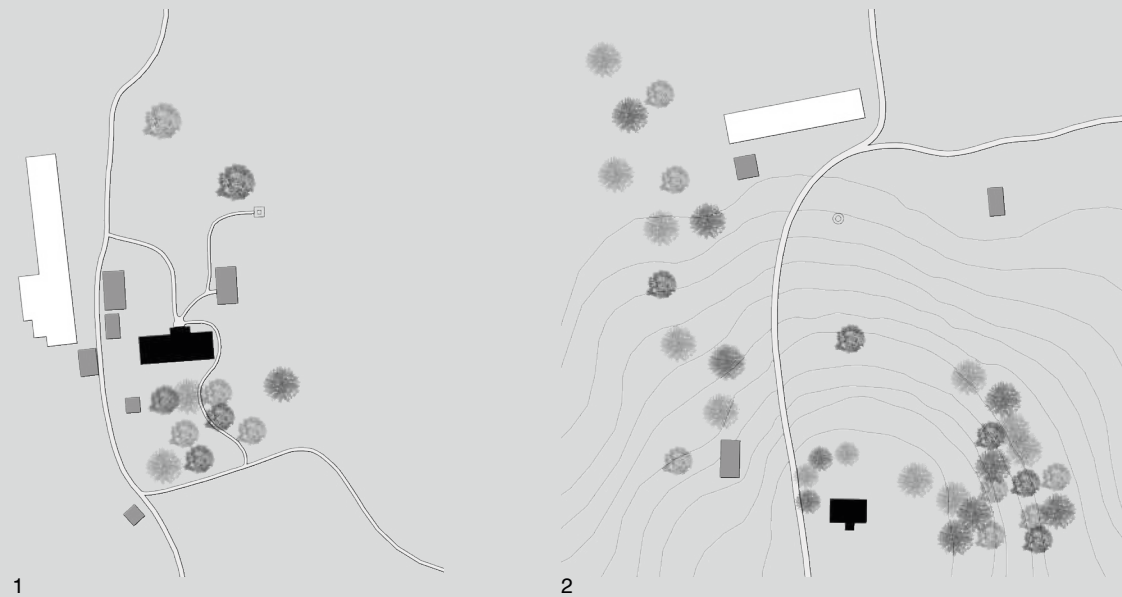


## placement

The analysis of placement relates to the farming typology as a whole, and how the farms back then were laid out and how the different buildings related to each other.

### REFLECTION

- The dwelling house and ladugårdslånga are the two main buildings within the farming typology which is evident through their placement
- Ladugårdslånga is either positioned perpendicular or parallel to the dwelling house. The facade with the entrances are always directed towards the main house
- The additional buildings are more free in their positioning, as they were most likely built where they were needed
- There is a clear separation between the dwelling house and ladugårdslånga. For example through distance, a passing road or height differences
- The entrance facade of the dwelling house does not need to be in the direction of ladugårdslånga.



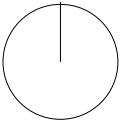




place

The analysis of the place, that is Sikkhall, has been conducted by reviewing documented material of the current layout and from site visits. The analysis for example points out important passages, both motorized and non-motorized, identifies important views, visualizes the current land use and suggests potential areas for future expansion.

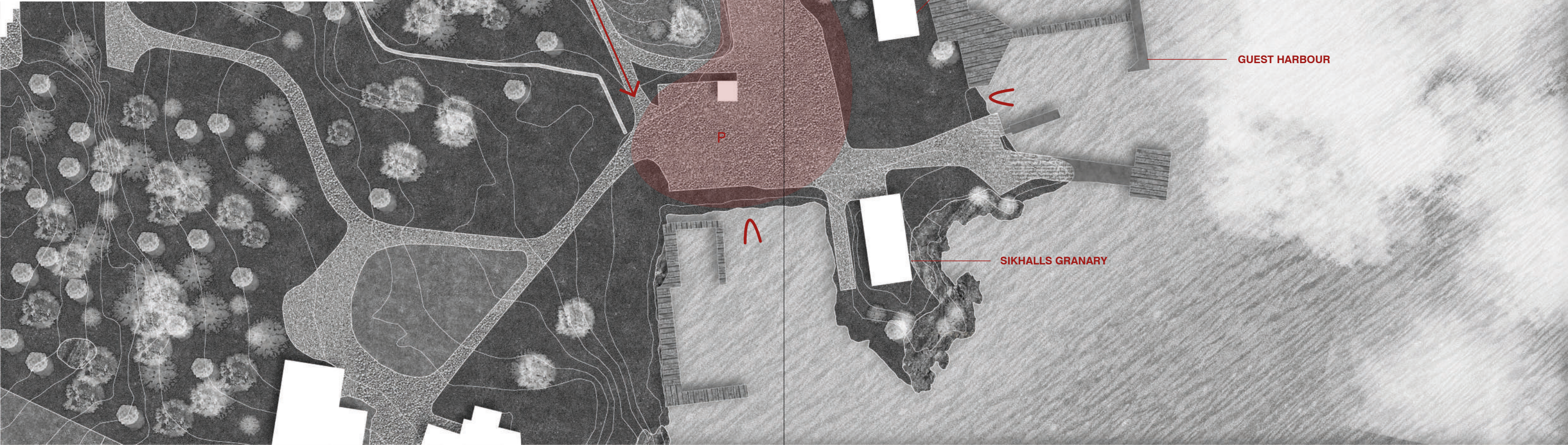
REFLECTION

- Sikkhall guest harbour has two potential areas that could be used for future expansion
- The parking lot most likely will have to be placed where it lies now, however it can definitely be reworked
- There are great possibilities to retain the beautiful views of the coastline by placing the new buildings at optimal locations
- There is a possibility to create a combined use between the granary and the new buildings, perhaps for larger events etc.
- Cars require access to the main dock to be able to dock and retrieve boats. This means that there will be a road separating the granary from the rest of the area
- The small vegetation-covered area at the main entrance from the road should be kept. It serves both a functional and aesthetic purpose. The already gravel clad ground should therefore be utilized in the first place

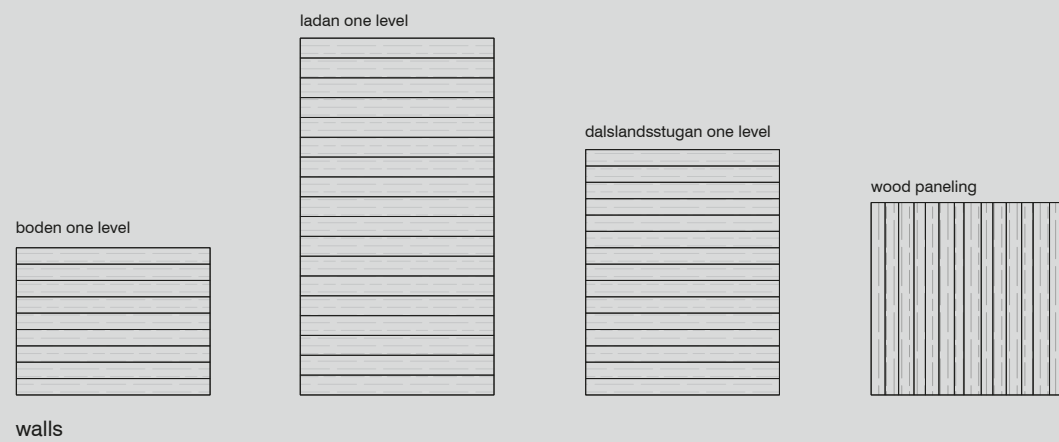
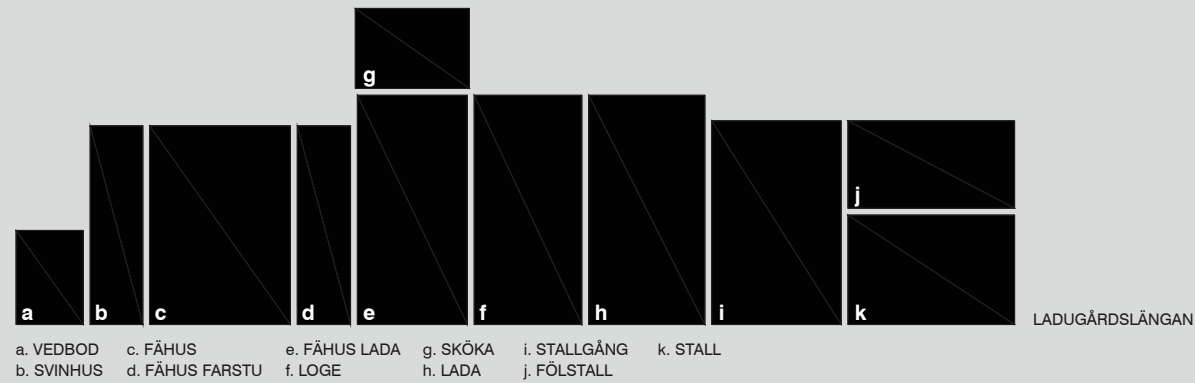


-  important views
-  buildable area
-  entrance points

GATHERING & ANALYSIS







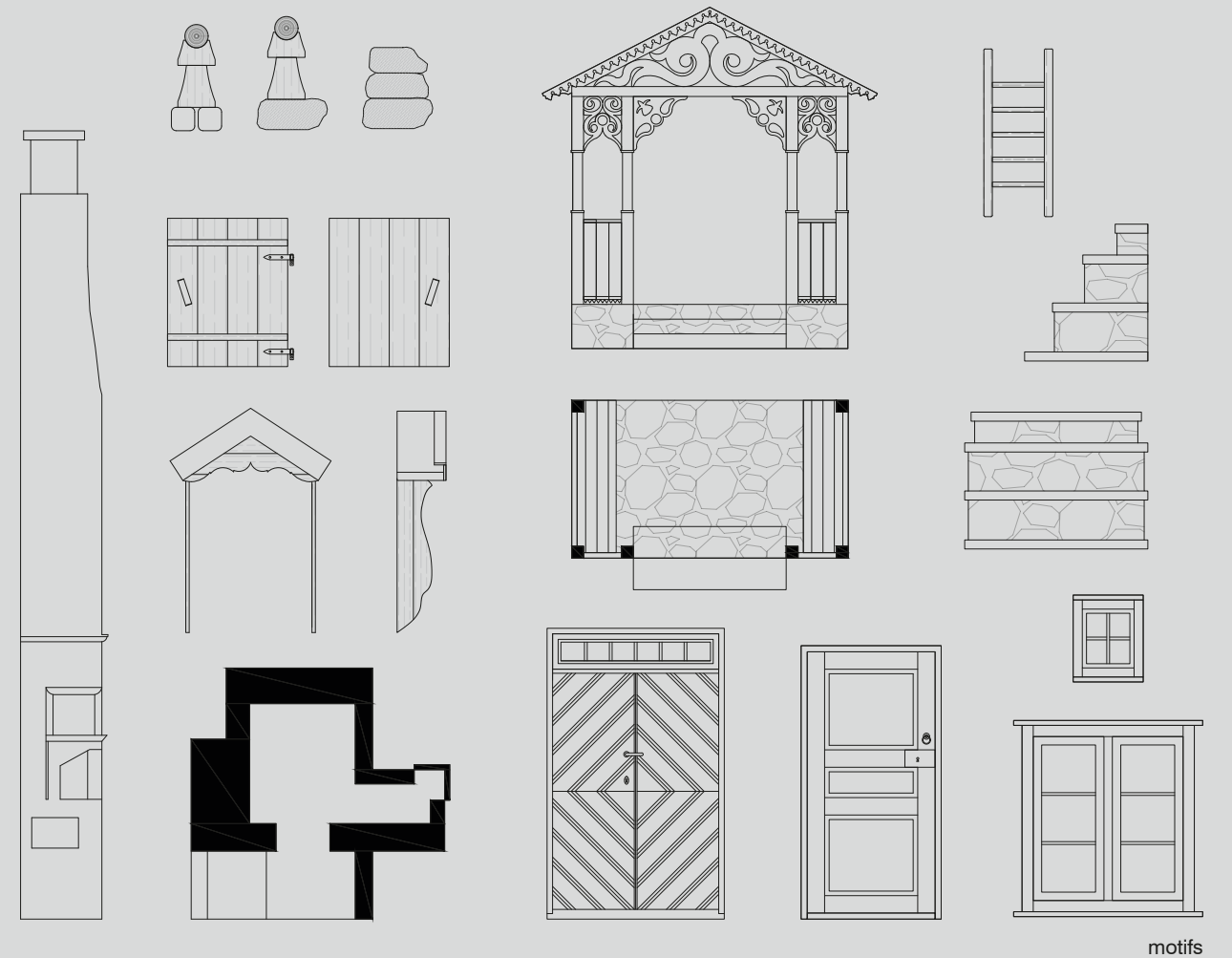
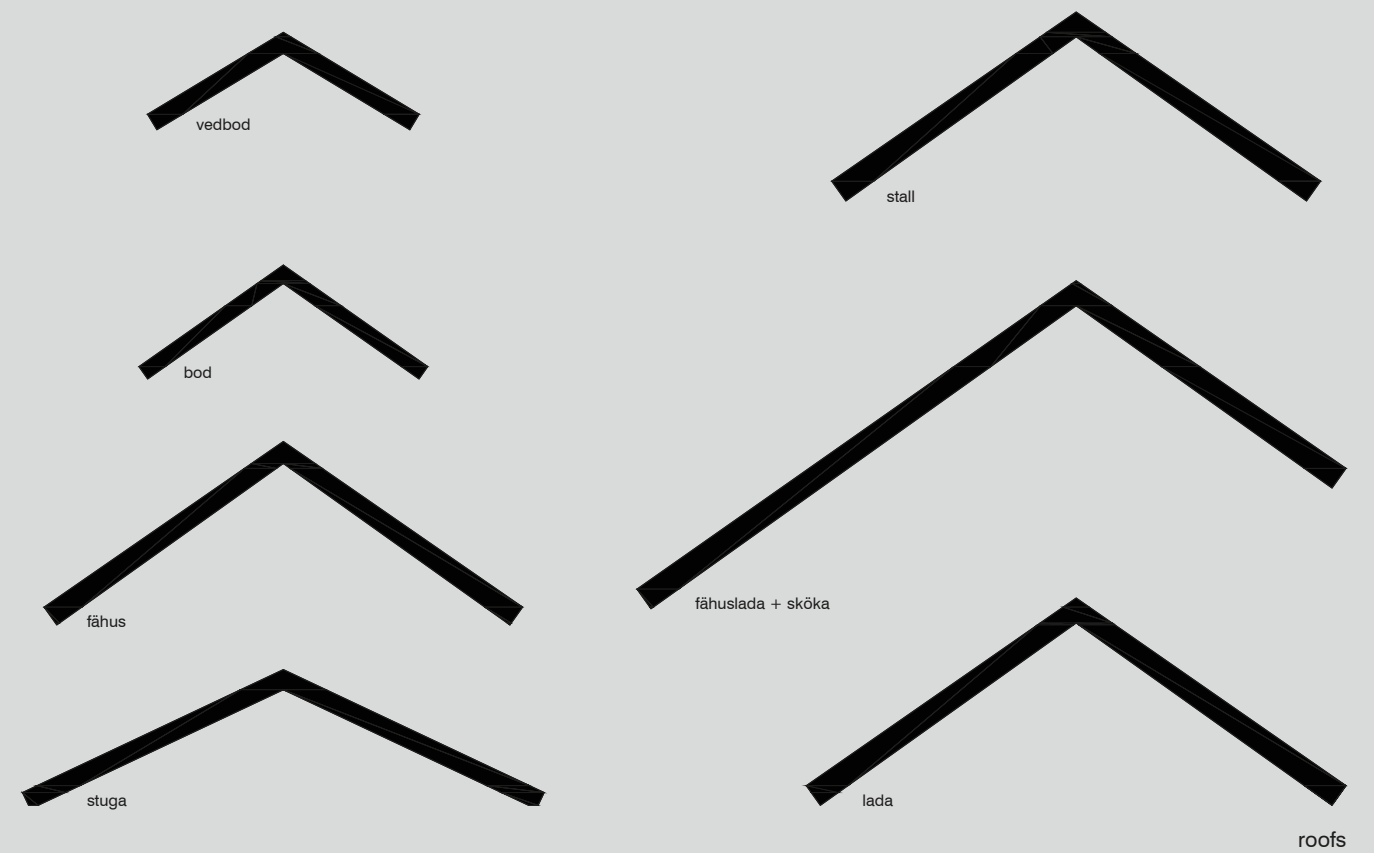
## EXPLORATION

### disassembling components

As a start of the exploration, containing the first translation, components from all three building types have been disassembled and organized into four categories: *floorplans*, *walls*, *roofs* and *motifs*. This, in combination with the conclusions from the analysis, will be the foundation for the first translation through collaging.

### collages

Collaging provides a simple way to test out the source material without the need to become too technical at the start. It's about finding interesting compositions between the components. As well as to provide a foundation when adapting the design to the site and program in the application phase.

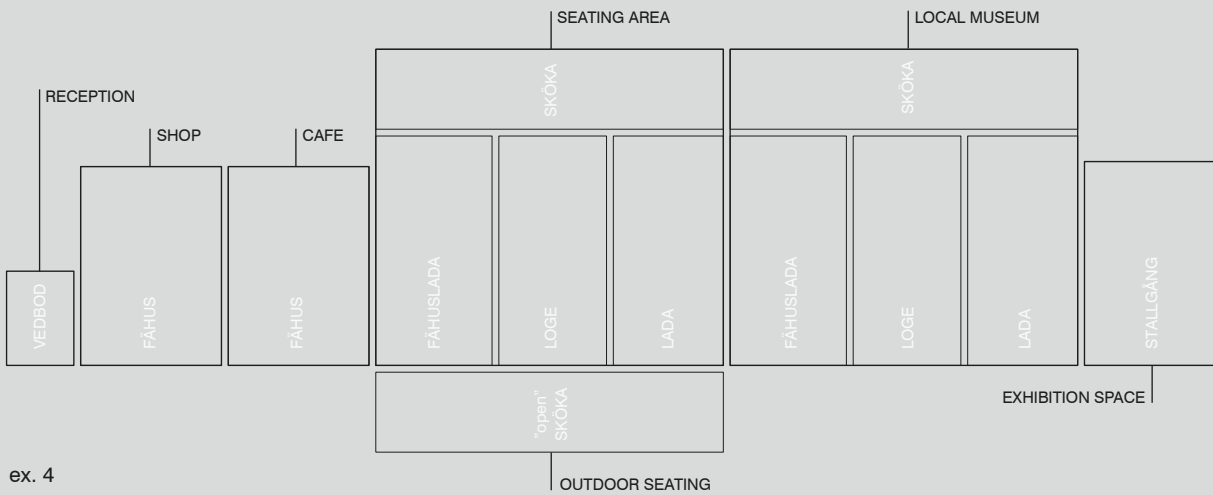
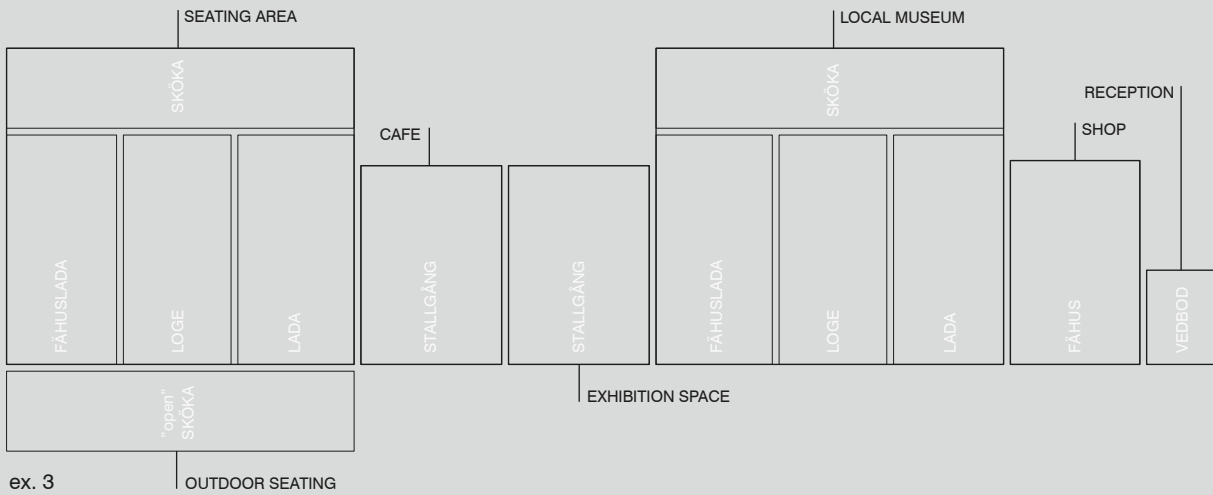
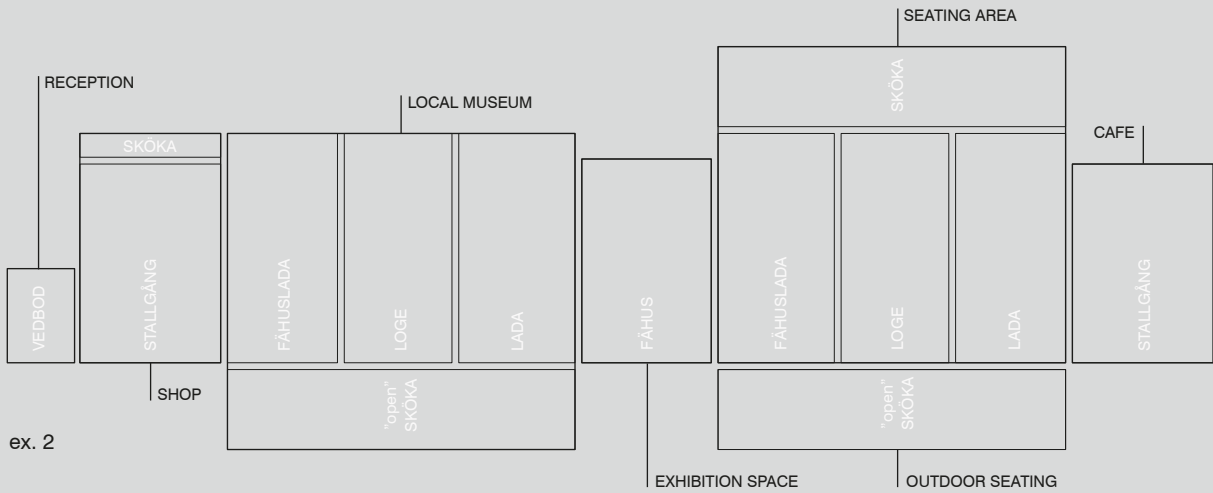
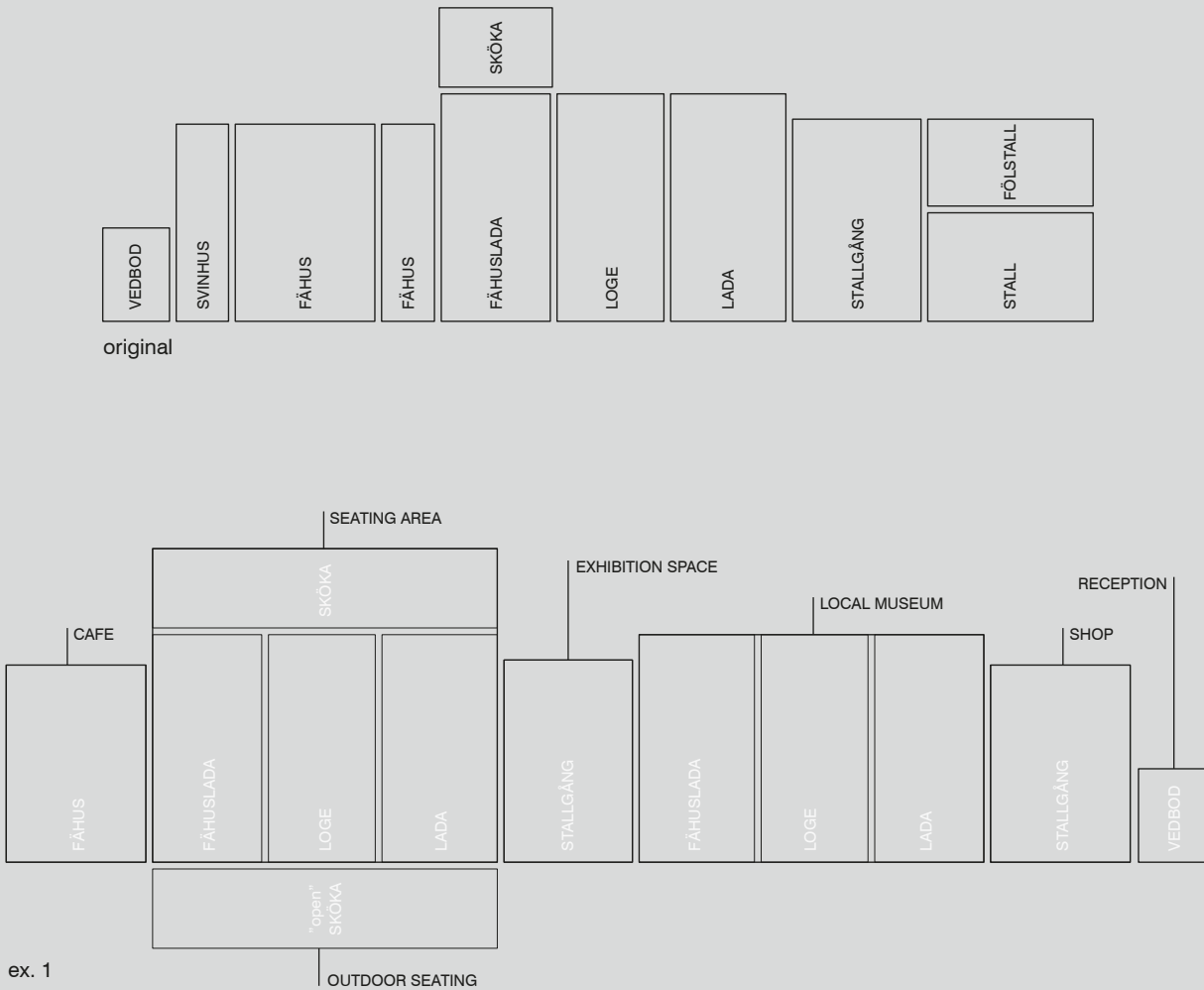


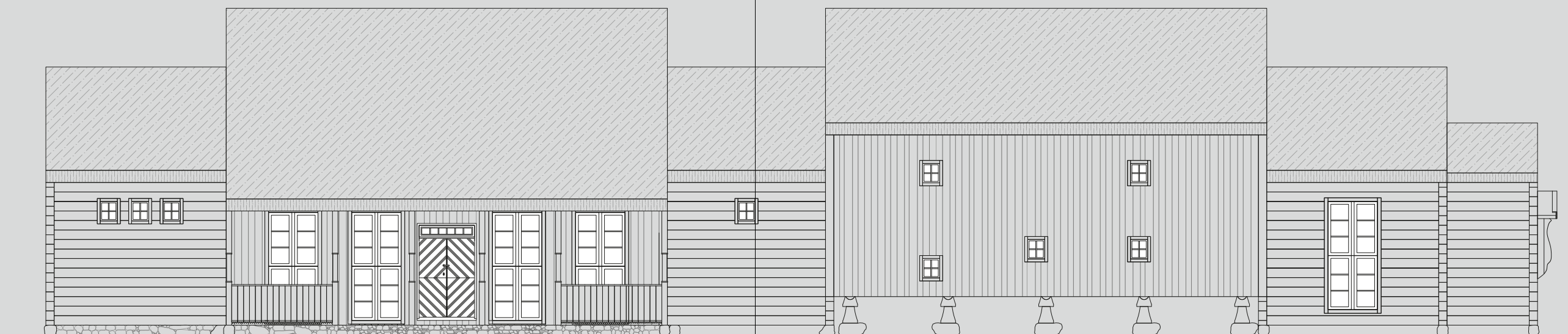
TRANSLATION I    ladugårdslängan

floor plans

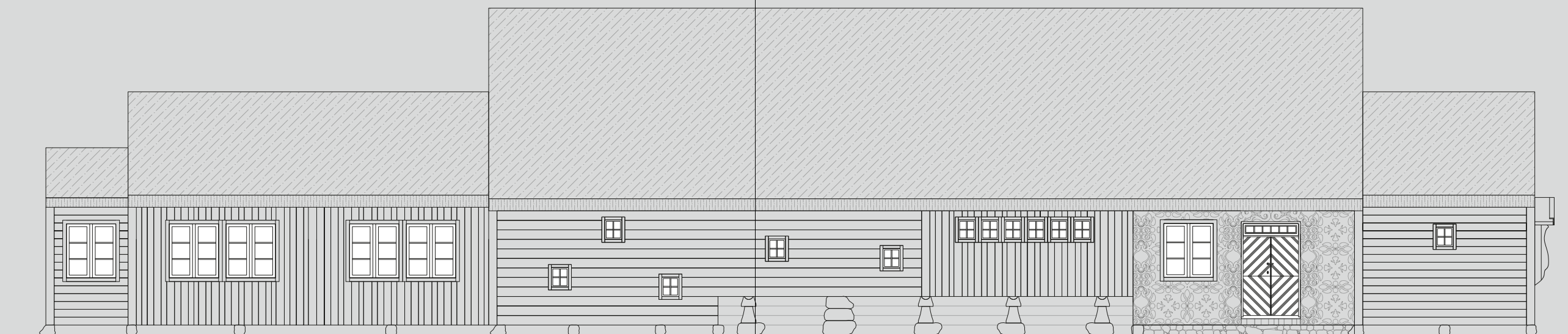
The floor plan is explored by investigating ladugårdslängan as the jumping of pont for the future additions. The exploration has been carried out by rearranging rooms, thus generating something new. The idea is to retain the general idea of the arrangement but adapting it for different functions and user constellations.

SEATING AREA	seating area for the cafe guests, also for events and workshops	LOCAL MUSEUM	open area with an exhibition telling the history of Dalboslätten
CAFE	cafe, where the food is made and served from	SHOP	place where local businesses and individuals can sell their goods
EXHIBITION SPACE	open area for people to exhibit various personal works	RECEPTION	small reception for the camping grounds and new cottages





ex. 1 back facade



ex. 2 front facade

## facades

The creation of facade collages has been the progression from plan to elevation, as a way to visualize and test out compositions. Here the motifs, wall heights, roof shapes, foundation methods and facade expression are explored together. In this case, there are no restrictions in what type of component that can be used. All of the building types are in some form integrated creating an interesting medley of modesty and detail.

TRANSLATION I dalslandsstugan / ladugårdslängan / boden



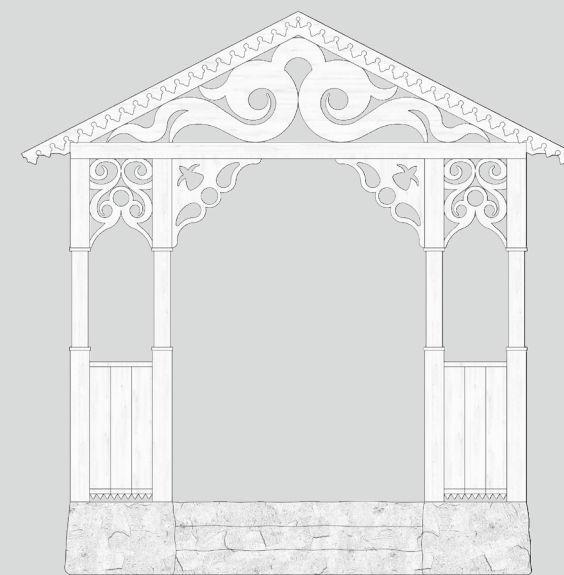
## elements

As a way of going further into details, some motif has been chosen to be studied further. This includes the foundation pole from stolpboden, förtsukvisten from dalslandsstugan and the wood paneling which are present in all of the studied buildings. Here the translation has been pushed even further as a way to explore new forms fit for a future context. It starts off by extracting key principles for each object, which then could be freely arranged in order to create something unique. Going from a past familiar form to a future resemblance.

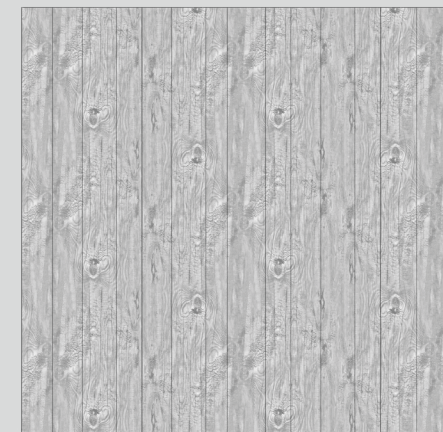
**TRANSLATION I** foundation pole / farstukvist / wood paneling



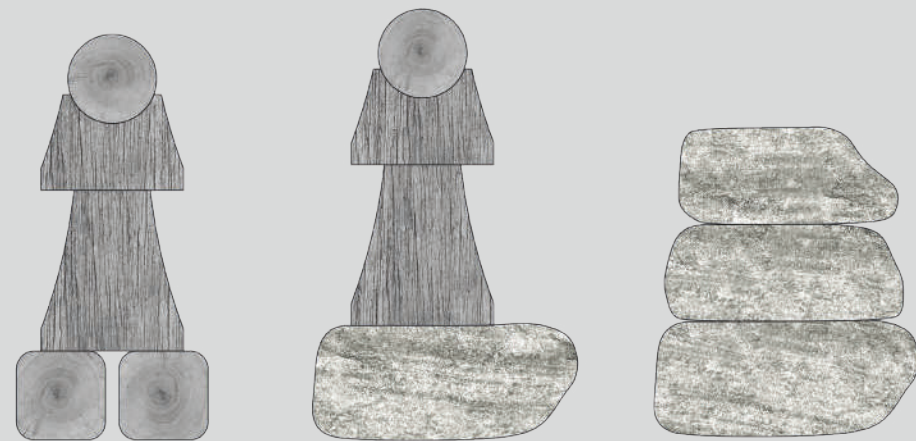
foundation pole



farstukvist



wood paneling

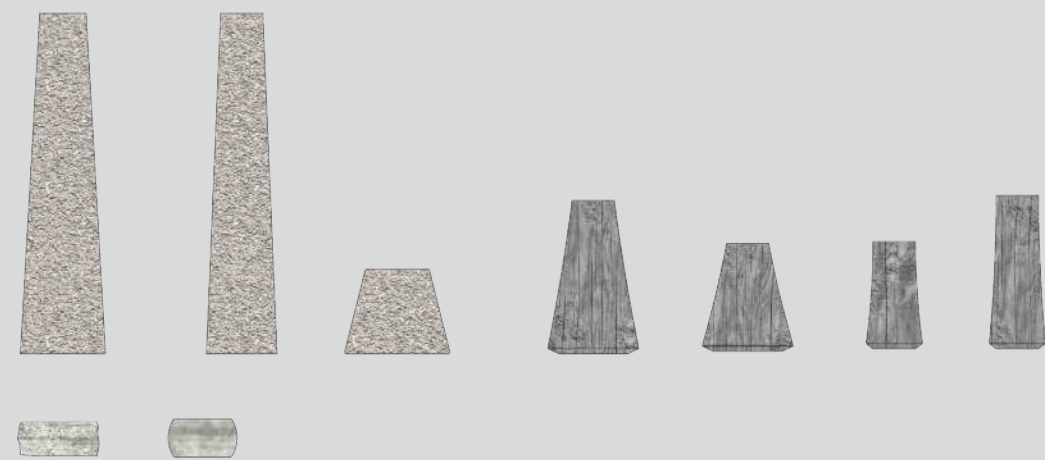


### *foundation pole* about the translation

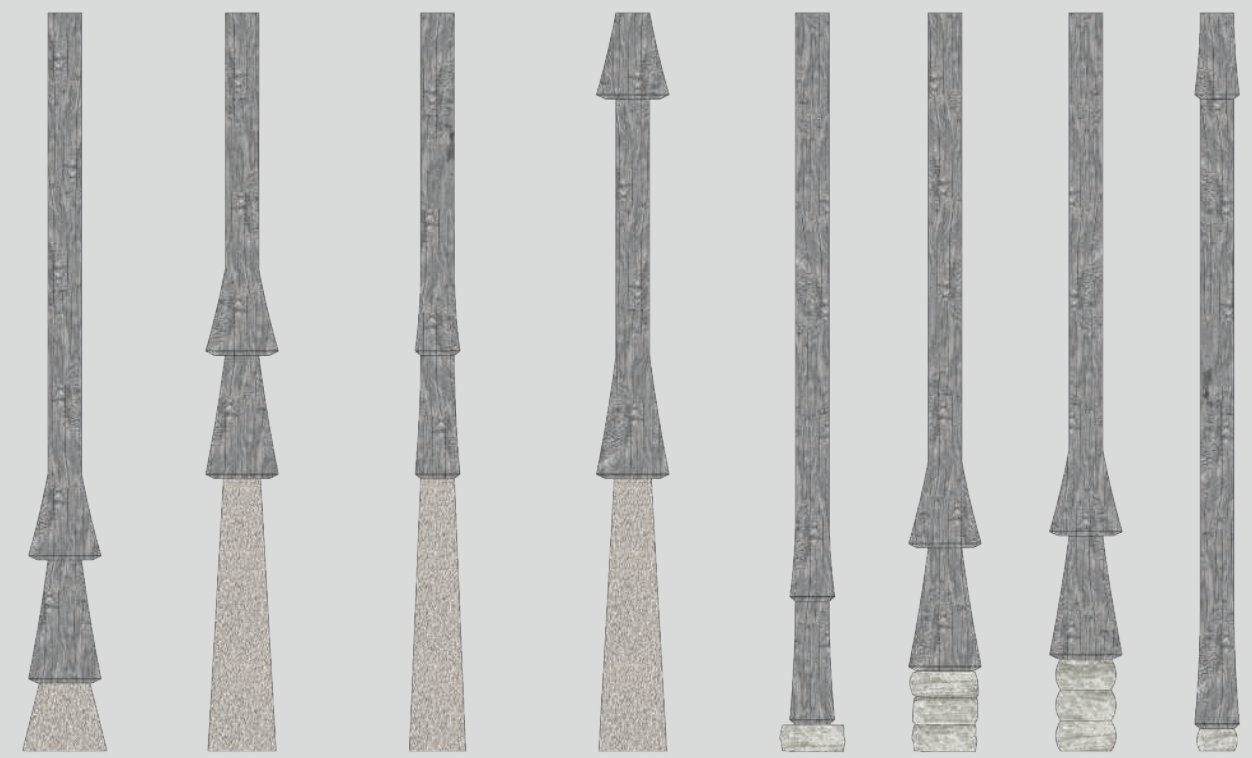
The translation of the foundation pole has relied on three extracted principles which are the following: parts, material and function. Parts relate to the three distinctive elements that give the foundation pole its distinctive look. It consists of the base, often a rock or log, the elongated middle part on the top usually made in solid wood. The material principle both maintains and introduces a new material into the context that is textured concrete, which could work as a substitute for the natural rock in order to explore new shapes and sizes. The last principle that is function relates to the original task of the foundation pole to lift things from the ground. This function is retained even within the translations.

## TRANSLATION I foundation pole



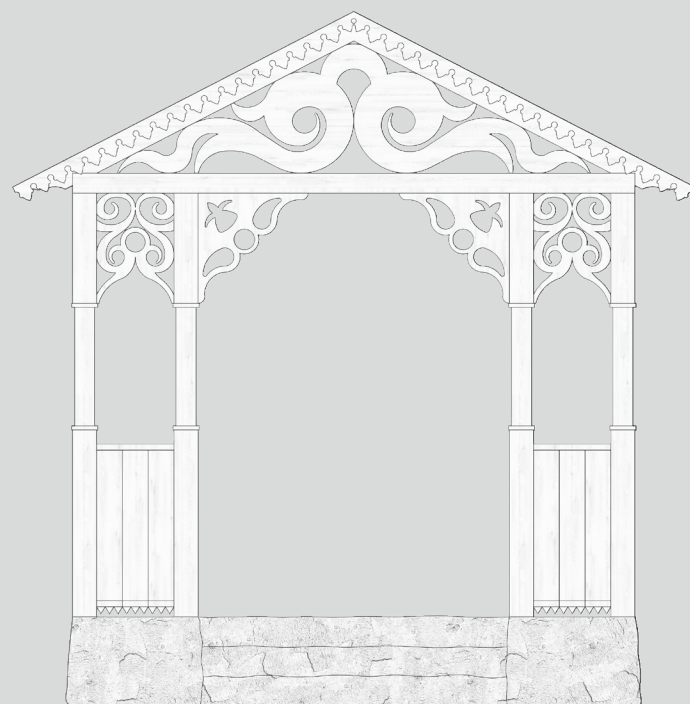


translated parts



pillar explorations

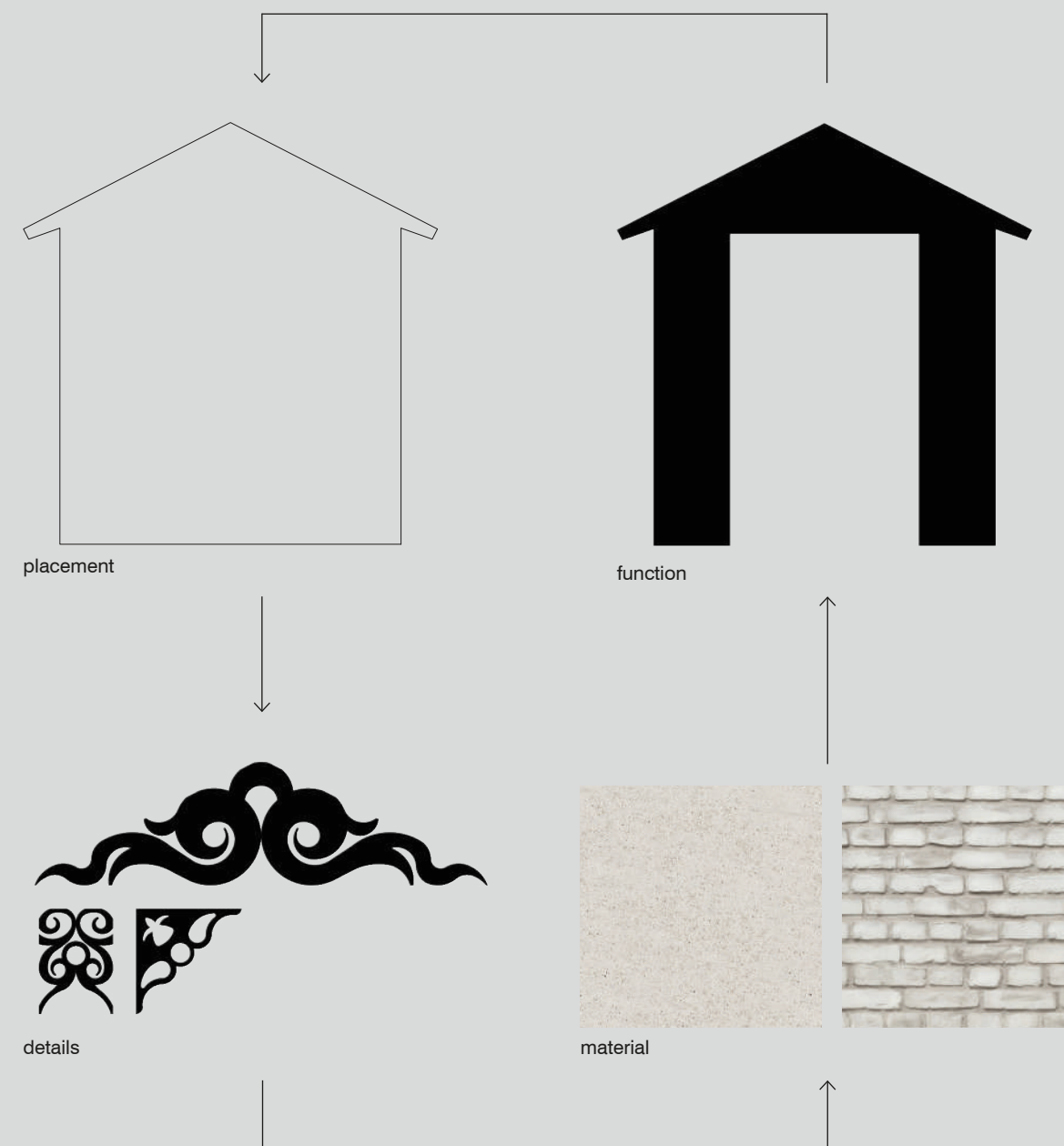
# TRANSLATION I foundation pole



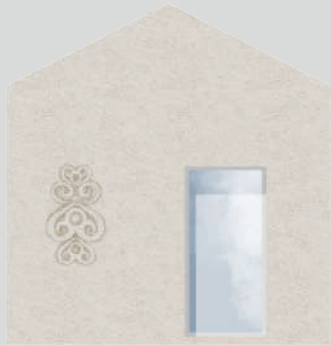
### *farstukvisten* about the translation

The translation for farstukvisten have relied on four extracted principles which are the following: *placement*, *function*, *details* and *material*. The placement guides, as the term suggests, where the addition should be placed. Function relates to farsykvistens overarching use as to highlight entrances or important openings. The details relate to the significant patterns found around and above farstukvisten which creates the significant look. The last principal, that is, material, gets applied to the overall structure. New materials are introduced, specifically brick and concrete. Brick who has a long standing tradition in the area, and concrete which provides unique ways to explore the details in an alternative way. The beige color of both the brick and concrete reflects the light and sandy characteristic of quartzite which make up the main bedrock in the Dalsland. The main parts of the harbour today, is for example covered in quartzite gravel which provides the area with a light and clean expression.

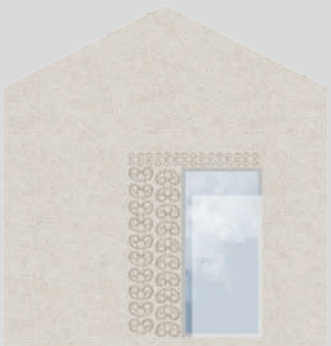
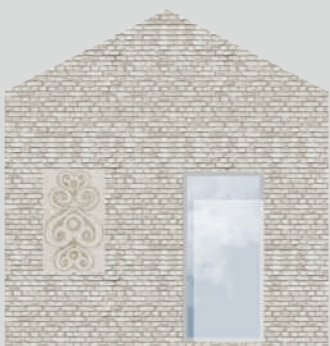
## TRANSLATION I farstukvisten



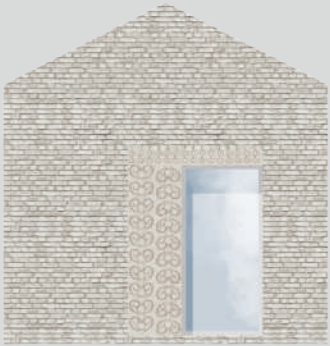




Large symbol beside openings



Small symbols above and around openings



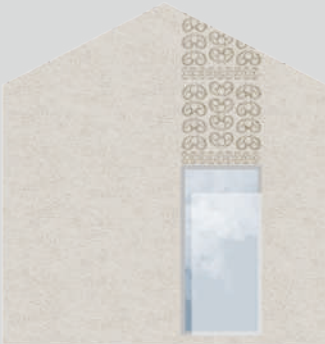
Large symbols around openings



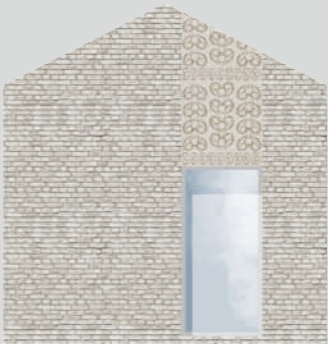
# TRANSLATION I farstukvisten



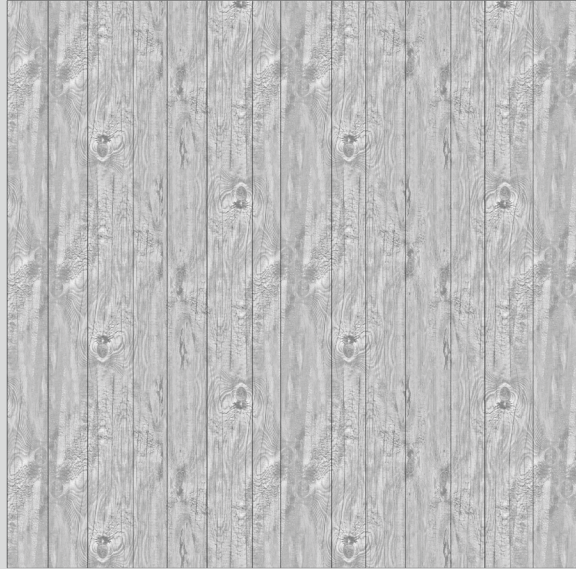
Small symbols all around openings



Small symbols above openings

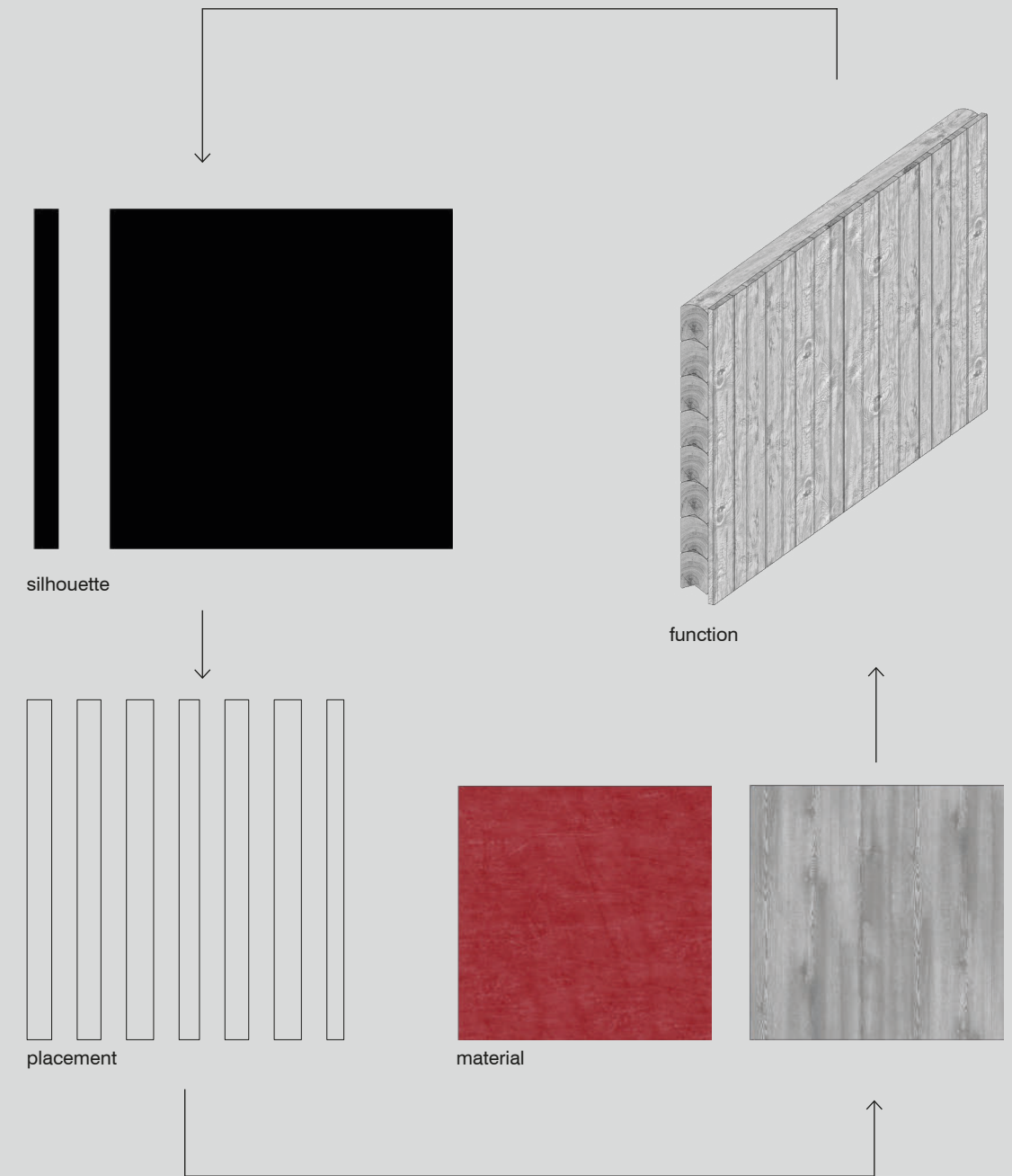


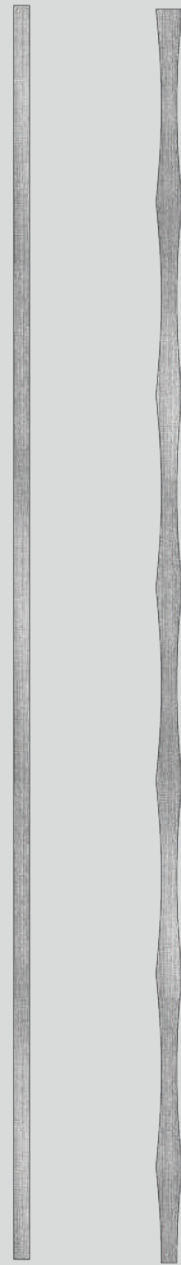




### wood paneling about the translation

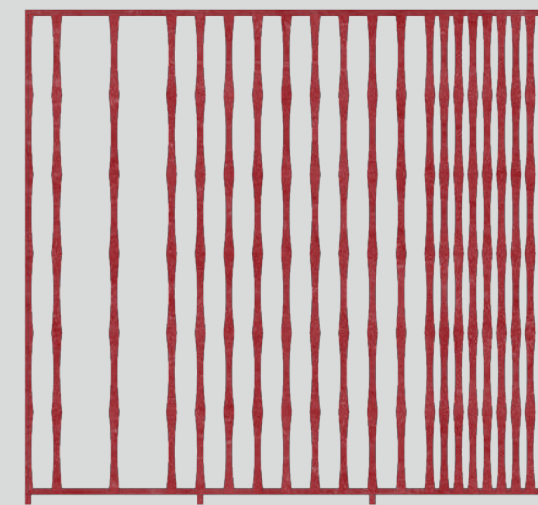
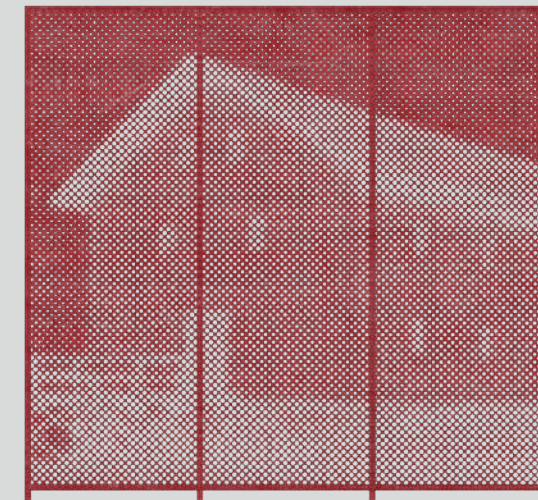
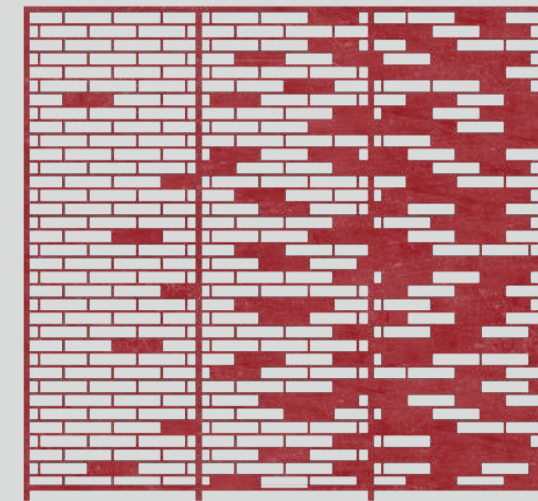
The translation of the wood panel has relied on four key principles which are the following: *silhouette*, *placement*, *material* and *function*. Silhouette relates to the shape of the original panel, both as a single part but also put together which create the larger rectangle. Placement relates to how parts are placed in relation to one another. Often within a unit they stay parallel. The material principle both maintain and introduces new material into the context. The wood is kept because of its versatility, and the red metal is introduced as a way to experiment with colors, textures and more intricate details. Function builds upon the original function that is to cover exterior walls in order to shelter them from the element. In this case it's instead looked upon as a way to shelter the facade, but also to create shade in front of larger windows.





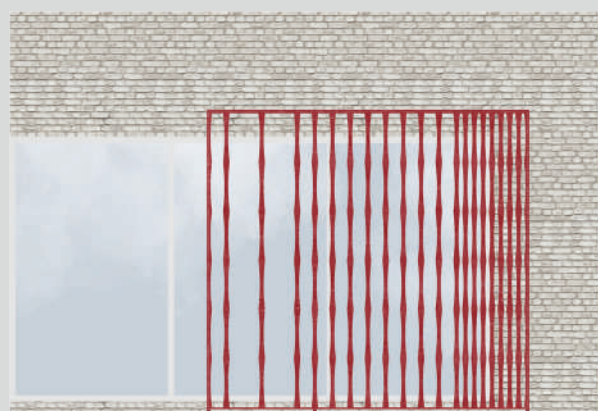
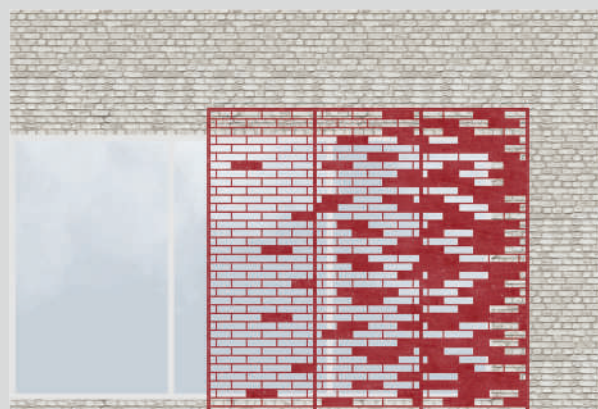
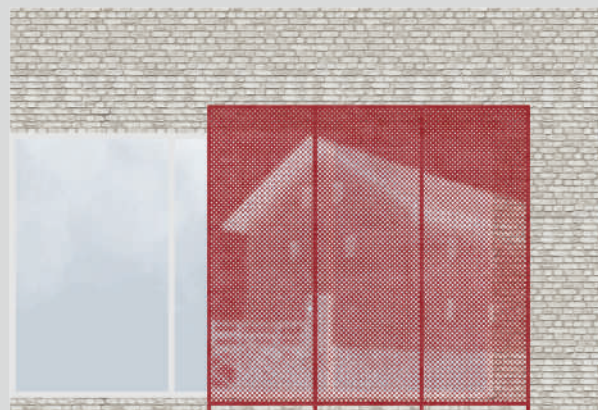
translated wood parts

TRANSLATION I wood paneling



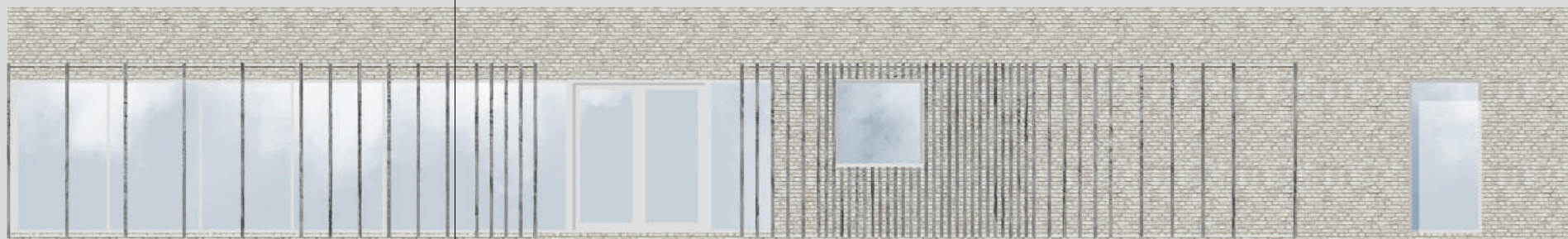
translated metal parts





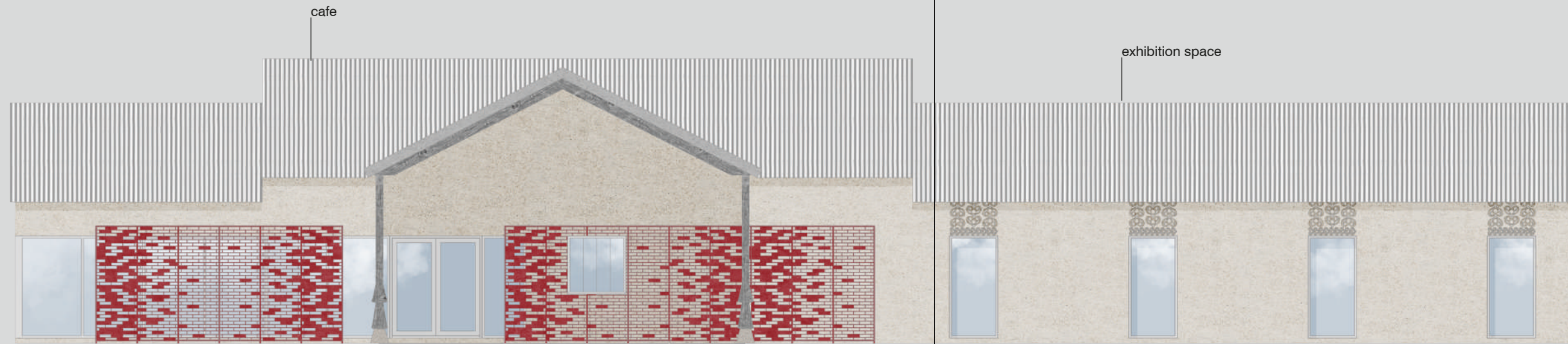
metal facade exploration

## TRANSLATION I wood paneling

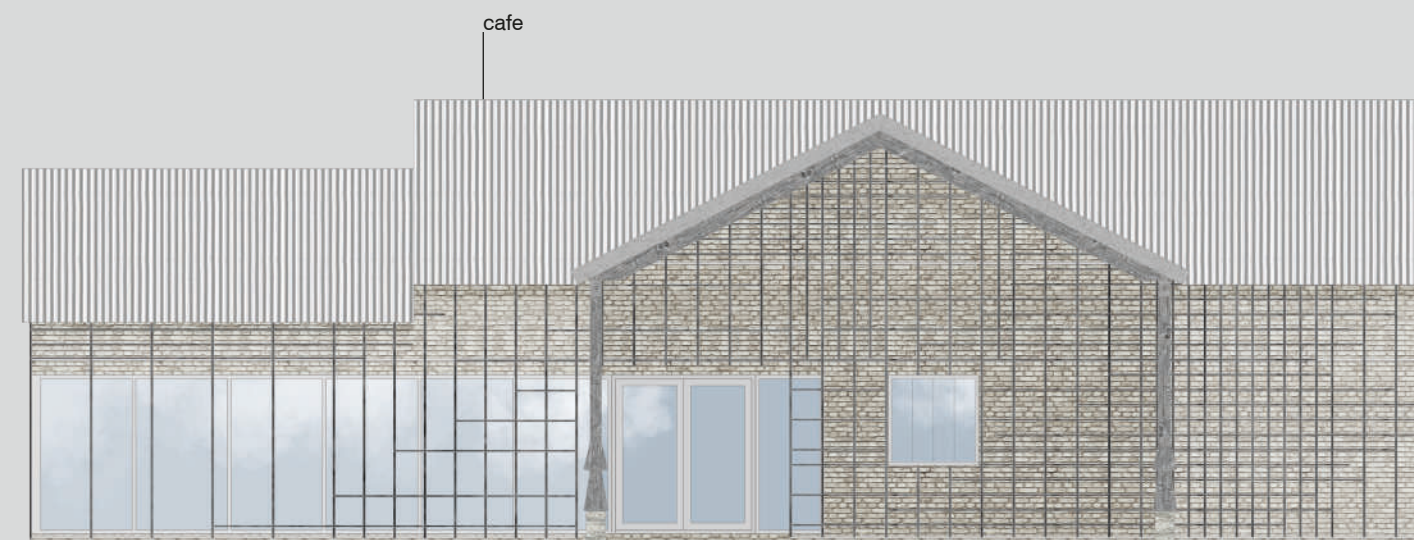
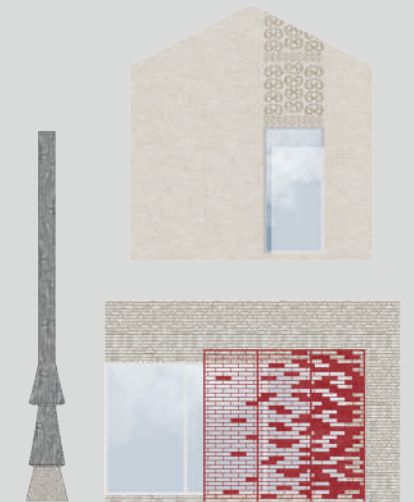


wood facade exploration

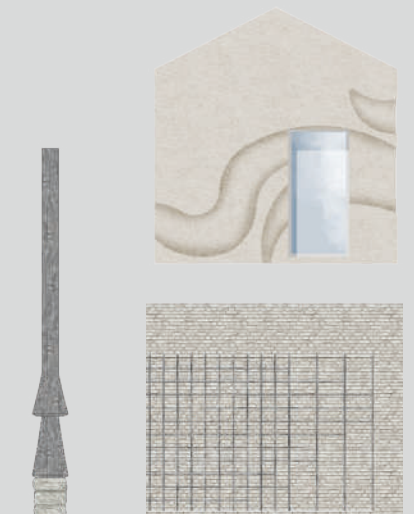




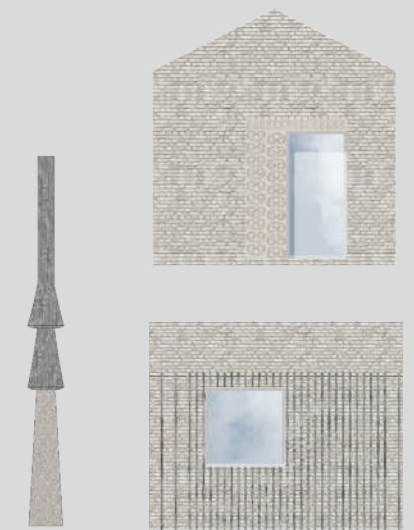
ex. 1 facade exploration



ex. 2 facade exploration



ex. 3 facade exploration



## TRANSLATION I combined facad explorations

The combined facade colleges become the last step of the first translation, as previously separated elements now come together to create a new totality. Every exploration above uses different elements from the earlier explorations which are displayed to the right.

This becomes the jumping off point for the last phase before the building gets tweaked further to fit the needs and wishes of the present and future.





## APPLICATION & PROPOSAL

### introduction

The last chapter of the thesis summarizes the second translation through the drawings, diagrams and illustrations of the final proposal. Starting off by giving a brief recap of the future visions of Sikhall, to after that introduce some important references that have guided the thesis throughout the process. The program both regarding the new building and the site is then presented, going over the overarching visions for the additions and changes done to the place. To lastly round off the chapter by displaying the final proposal through drawings, diagrams and illustrations

### sikhall: future discourse & vision

Today Sikhall operates mainly as a guest harbord with limited space for camping. Due to its geographical location, it is pointed out by the municipality as a good place to revitalize in order to make the whole coastline more attractive for visitors and residents alike. According to the detail development plan proposal from 2017 published by the municipality of Vänernsborg, they wish to expand the camping areas, provide an opportunity to create a village structure with minor businesses that can sever locals and visitors, expand the guest harbour, add additional housing plots as well as heightening the traffic safety along road 2154, by adding pedestrian- and bike lanes as well as bus stops along the way (Klang, 2017).

The detailed development plan in the context of the thesis provides some inspiration regarding what changes and additions could be possible. However, in the context of this thesis Sikhall presents a unique opportunity to add value in more ways. As once again turn Sikhall into a local center and node that people, local or otherwise, would want to visit. The aim has been to add something that can provide knowledge about the area, give a taste of what the local farms and businesses have to offer, especially through food, and in addition, design something where people in different ways can come together and enjoy all that Sikhall has to offer. This vision has been the foundation on which the proposal rests on, and what has guided the work throughout the process.



## REFERENCE PROJECTS

### Halmens Hus    BENGTSFORS

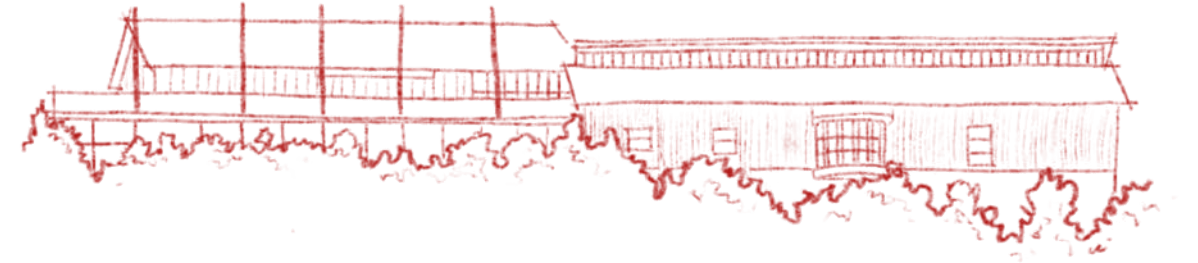
Halmens Hus is a local museum and workshop specializing in the straw craft. It is located at Majberget in Bengtsfors, Dalsland. The main exhibit, which is open all year round, tells the story of the importance of straw in Dalsland (Halmens Hus, n.d.). This is also accompanied by some temporary exhibitions and courses. The aim of Halmens Hus is essentially to store the knowledge and techniques of straw as a material while also finding new approaches to use it. Additionally, the exhibitions are also accompanied by a small cafe with stunning views, overlooking Bengtsfors. Halmens Hus thus provides a good reference in regards to function, size and location for the larger hub building. It provides some direction regarding what type of events that could be held, and also what kind of spaces they require.

### Marie Short / Glenn Murcutt House    AUSTRALIA

This house is located in a rural part of New South Wales, Australia. It was designed in the 1970s, and later purchased and altered by the Australian architect Glenn Murcutt (architecture foundation Australia, n.d.). The house is constructed of almost two identical pavilions, which are rotated and slipped. What makes this house relevant to the thesis is its relation to the local context that is the Australian countryside. The expressed post and beam structure draws inspiration from the typical Australian farm shed. It's an abstraction and an original representation of familiar forms. Such as the pitched roof and entrance porch. In addition, local materials and building techniques are also utilized as a way to pursue and elevate architecture for the future.

### Sergelpaviljongen    STOCKHOLM

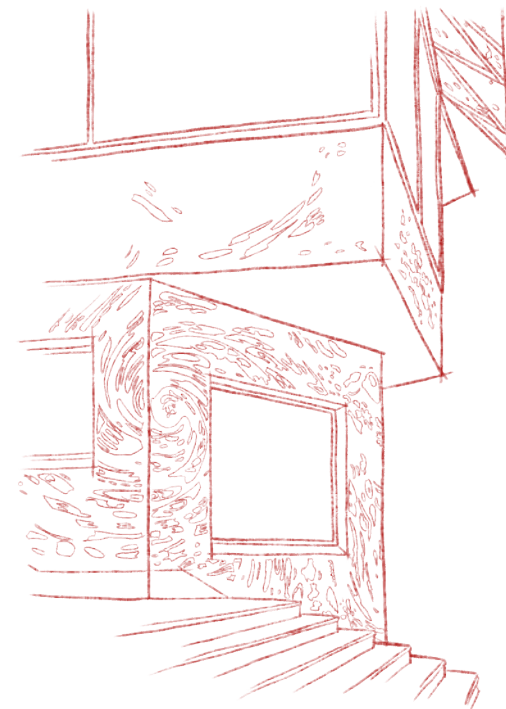
Sergelpaviljongen is located on Sergels torg in Stockholm and was designed by Marge Arkitekter. The building is a smaller pavilion containing a restaurant. It's a red concrete building with a built-in sun shielding in the same color. This gives the building a lighter expression which also creates a more sustainable indoor climate (Marge Arkitekter, n.d.). What makes this building especially relevant for the thesis is the facade design. In collaboration with an artist they managed to create intricate impressions in the casted concrete of the custom made pattern. This provides the thesis a new way to translate local patterns and try out new ideas.



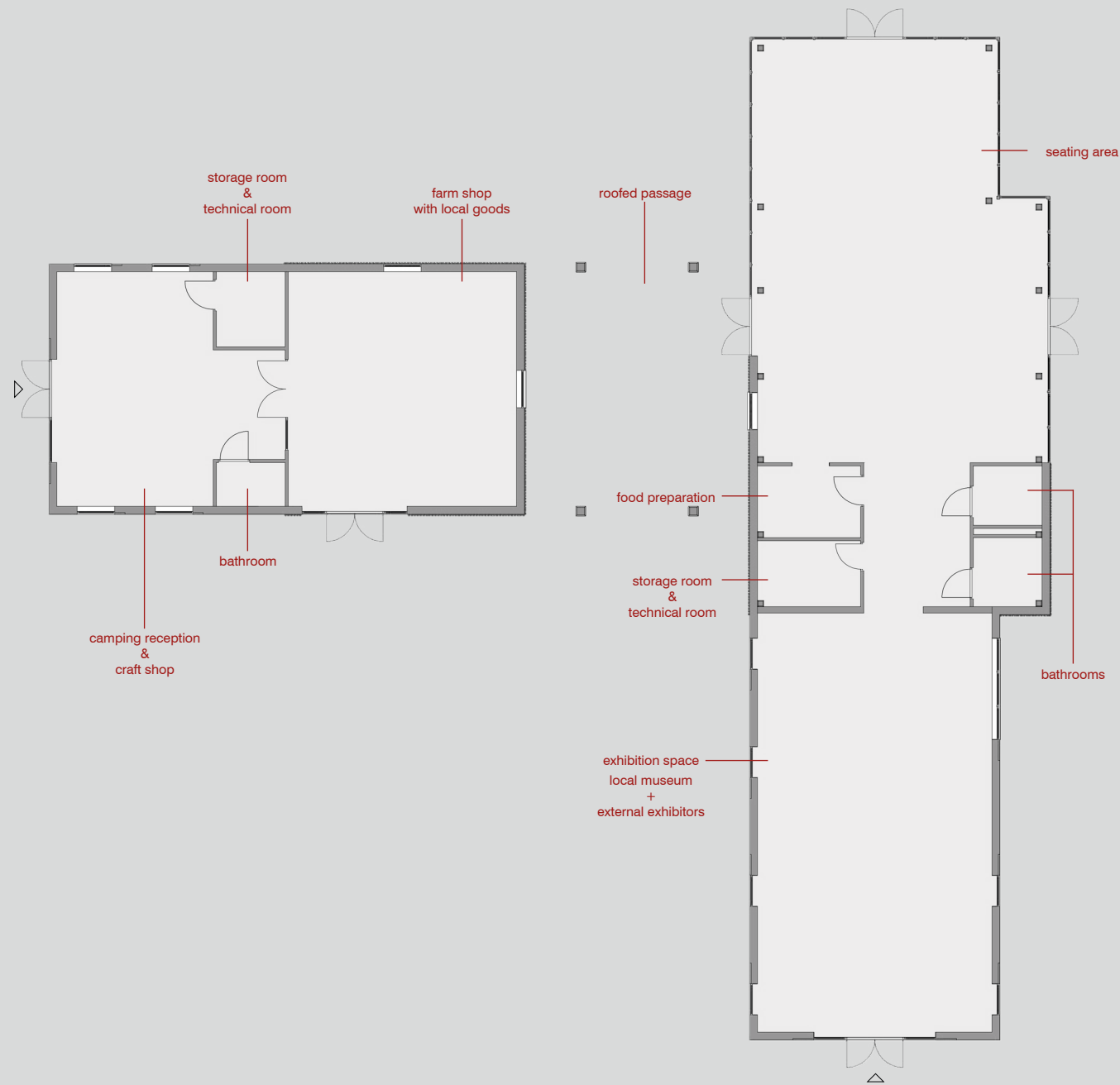
HALMENS HUS



MARIE SHORT / GLENN MARCUTT HOUSE



SERGEL PAVILJONGEN



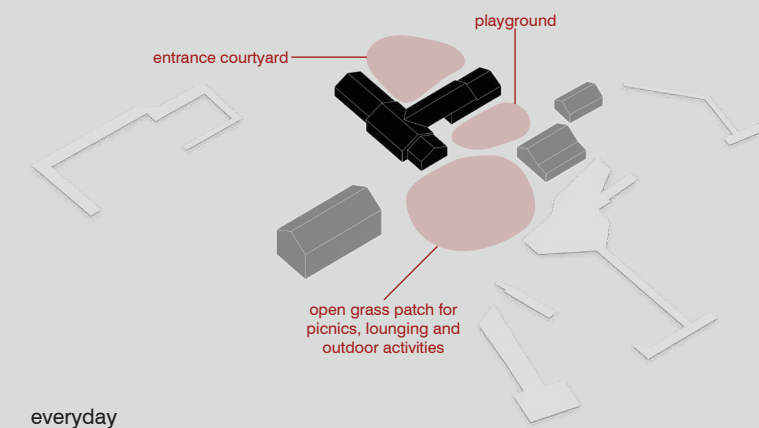
## PROGRAM

### communal building

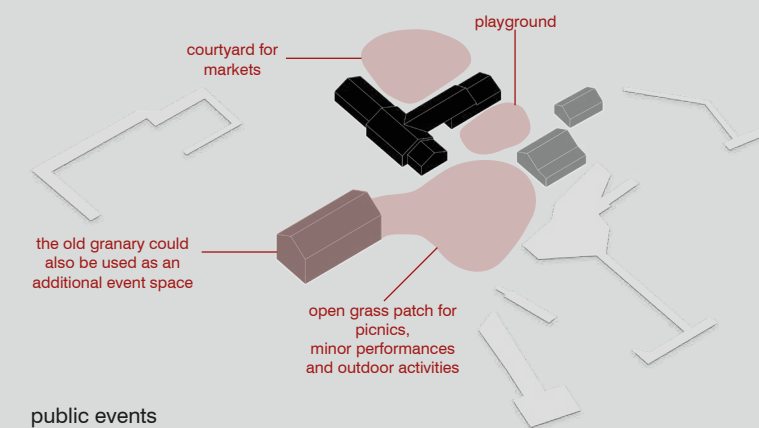
The plain floor plan above showcases the separate rooms and their function in combination with the the closely adjacent outdoor space. The building is separated into two main parts which lay perpendicular towards one another. This layout drives from the general farm layout studied in the analysis part of the thesis. In this case however, to add an additional function, they have been connected via a roof. Which creates a roofed passage for seating or taking shelter when needed. The smaller building on the left is directed towards the new camping grounds, while the larger one is angled to greet visitors coming from the main entry road.

### land use

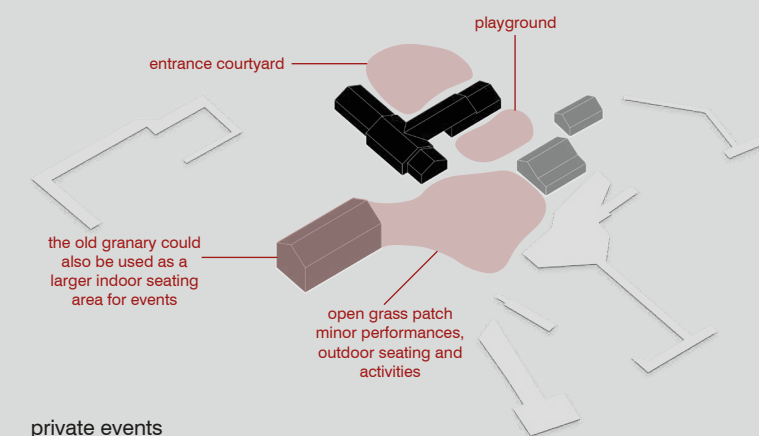
The diagram to the right gives a quick overview of the land use, and how the closest areas to the building could be programmed depending on the scenario. The scenarios that are presented are *the everyday use*, during *public events* and *private events*. The footprint of the communal building itself together with the existing buildings splits the ground into different sections which could be used depending on the event.



everyday

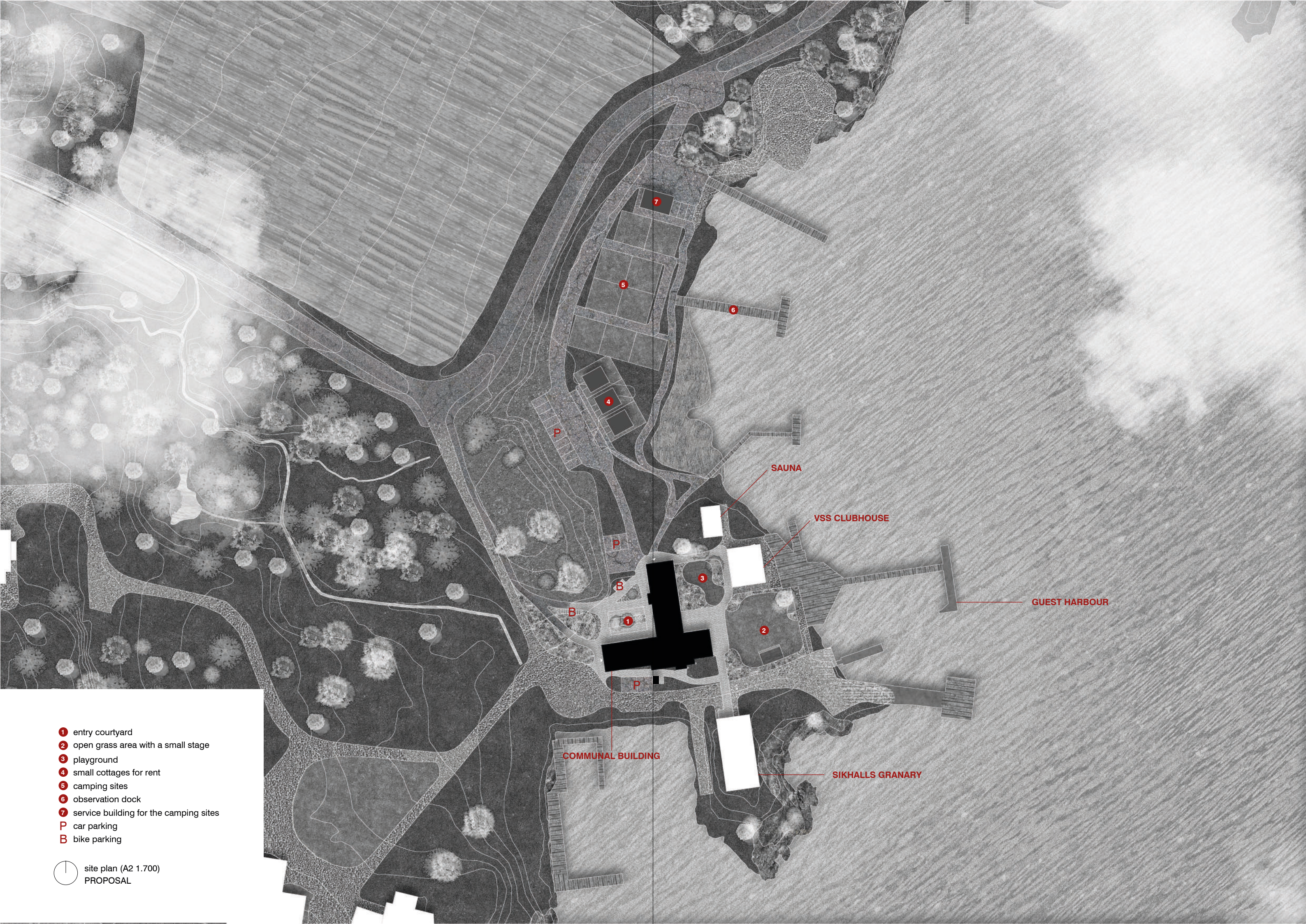


public events



private events





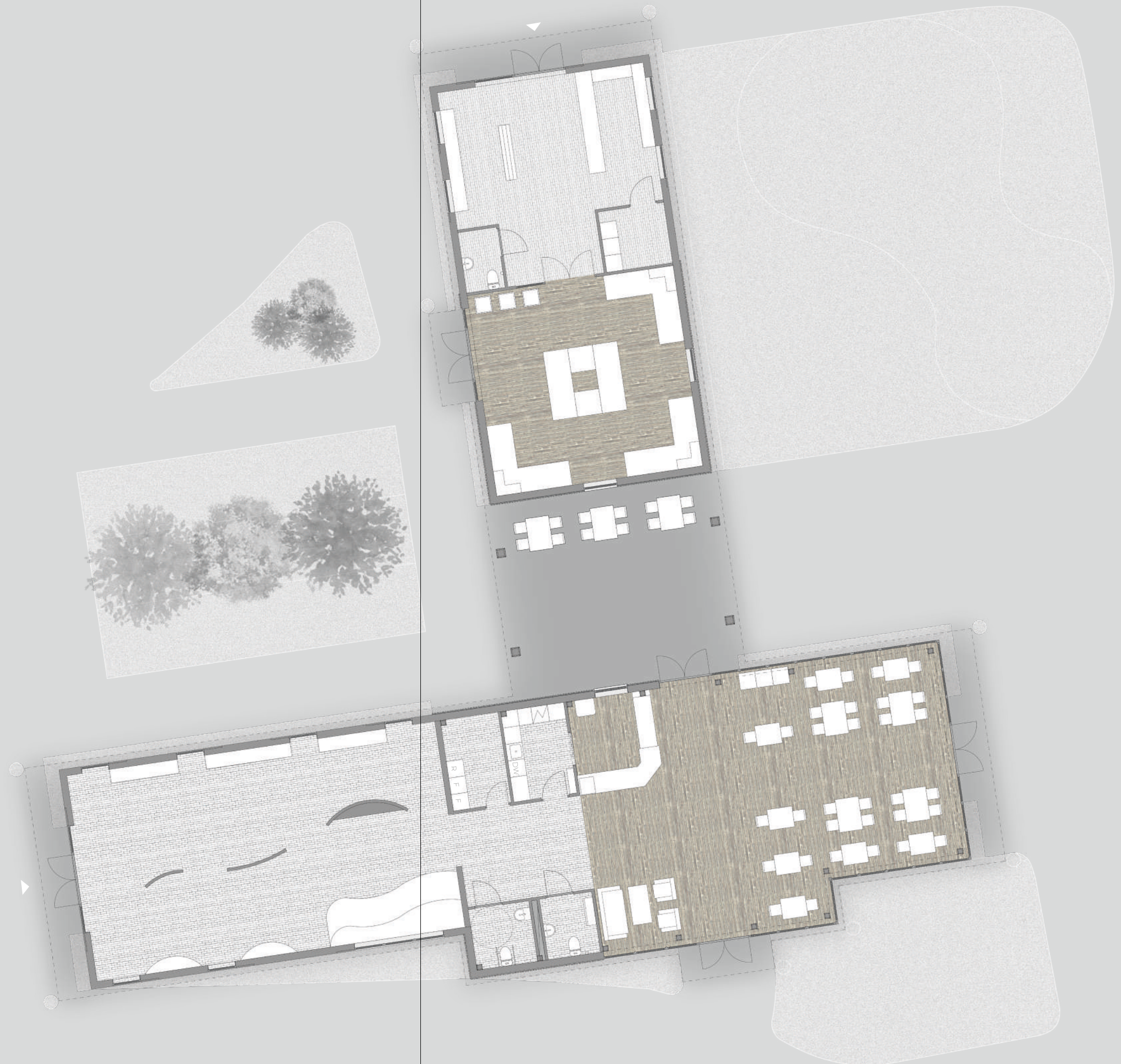
- 1 entry courtyard
- 2 open grass area with a small stage
- 3 playground
- 4 small cottages for rent
- 5 camping sites
- 6 observation dock
- 7 service building for the camping sites
- P car parking
- B bike parking

site plan (A2 1.700)  
PROPOSAL





floor plan  
1:50 (A2)



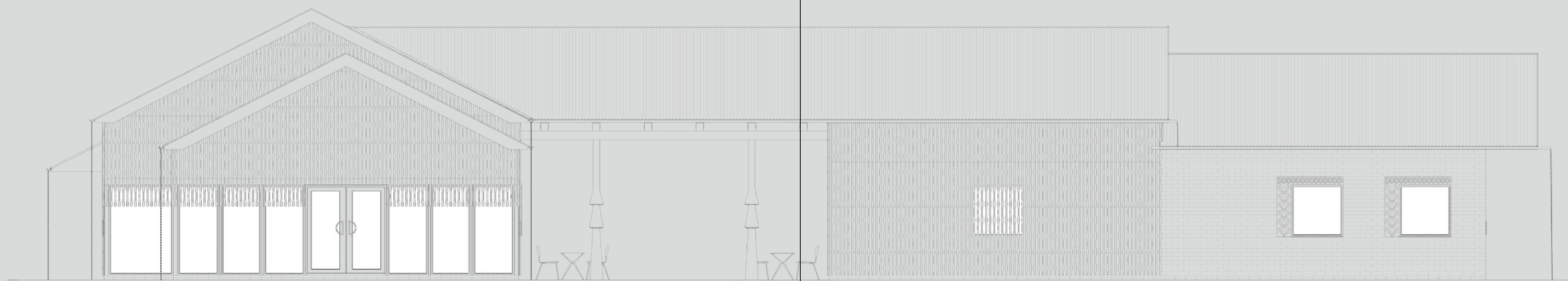




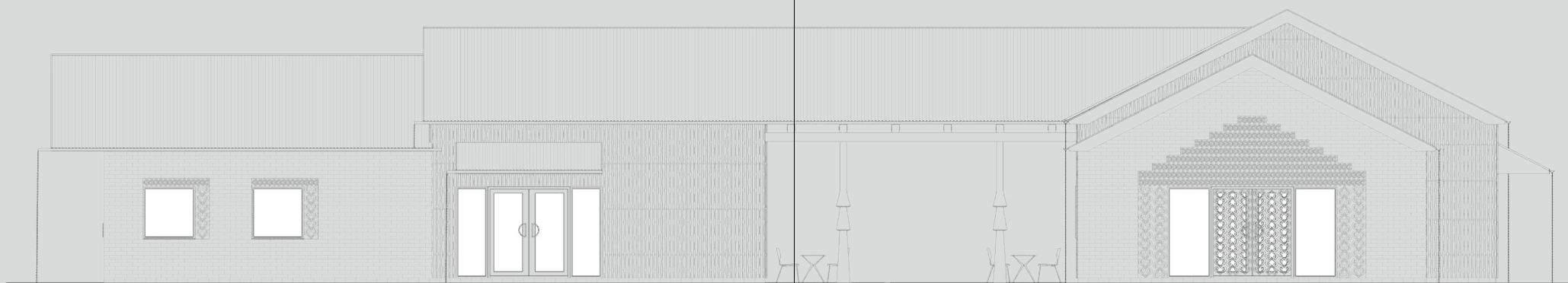
exterior perspective

depicting the new community building together with the granary  
PROPOSAL





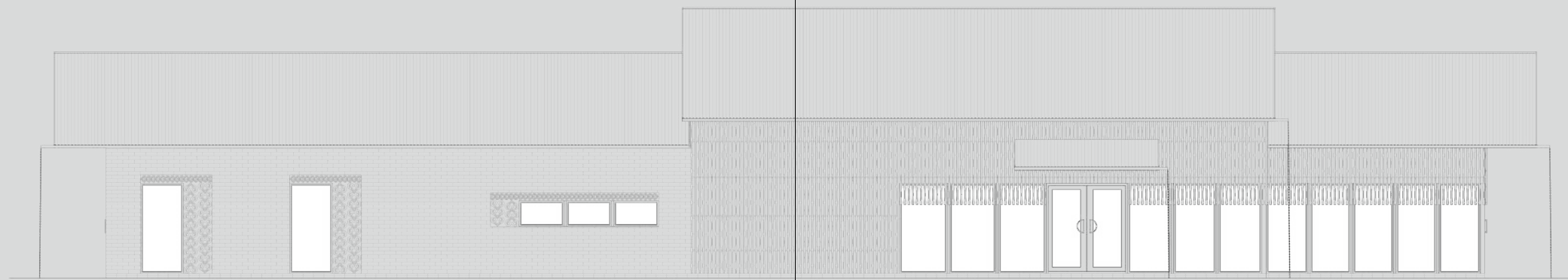
east facade



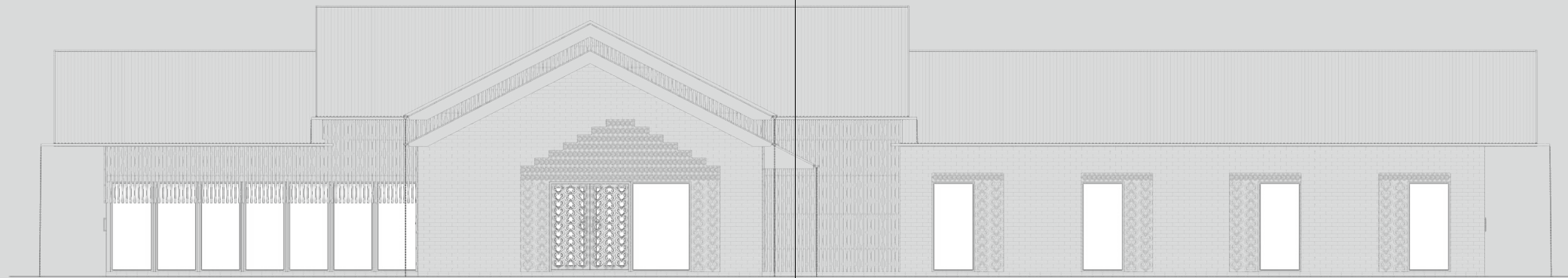
west facade

facades  
1:50 (A2)

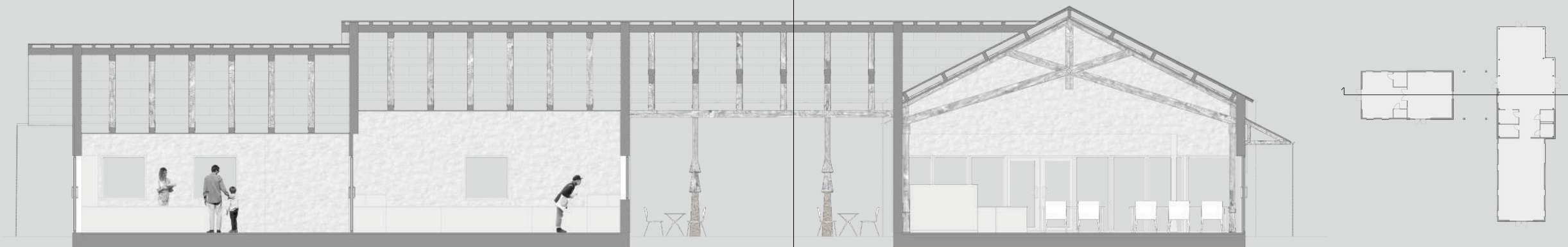




south facade



north facade



section a-a

## facades & section

1:50 (A2)

construction diagram

The diagram displays the buildings general concept of its construction. It combines load bearing brick walls with a pillar structure, which together holds up the light sheet metal roof. The pillar structure provides the opportunity to have larger windows towards the docks in order to take in the views of the water. The tallest part of the building has a greater ceiling height with a clear view of the roof trusses which provides dimension. The foundation is made of a concrete slab clad in brick in order to ensure accessibility for all visitors.

RECEPTION & SHOP

EXHIBITION & CAFE



interior perspective I

depicting the view from within towards the guest harbour



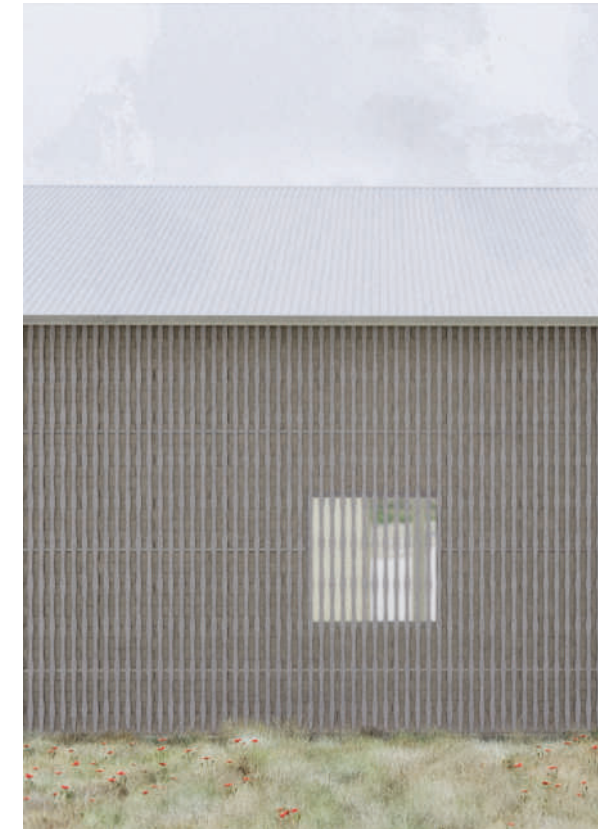
interior perspective II

depicting the view from the exhibition space towards the horizon





detail perspective      farstukvist  
 depicting part of the final form of the  
 translation of farstun



detail perspective      wood panel  
 depicting part of the final form of the  
 translation of the wood panel



detail perspective      foundation pole  
 depicting the final form of the translation  
 of the foundation pole





exterior perspective

depicting the new communal building from the docks

PROPOSAL



# DISCUSSION

The old granary in Sikhall has always intrigued me, as I have spent many summers and winters there visiting my grandparents. However, for a long time I didn't think much of it, until my curiosity eventually got the best of me and I decided to do my thesis project on the matter.

As the old granary dates back to 1874 I already knew from the beginning I wanted to explore a topic which involved vernacular architecture in some way. At the time of the thesis the granary remained K-marked, and was therefore off limits which meant that I had to rethink how to go about it. This landed me with the idea of investigating architectural translation in relation to critical regionalism by using local vernacular architecture as the point of departure. Exploring how and in what way its values, knowledge and characteristics could be translated for the future. While simultaneously also investigating Sikhalls historical context in order to get guidance regarding the revitalization of the area as a whole. Looking into how the place has been used earlier and what kind of activities that took place there.

One of the more time consuming tasks of the thesis was evidently the gathering phase, where all the background knowledge was collected. A feeling of uncertainty was definitely looming in the air during this time, as I felt unsure where my research might lead me. One of the more difficult things was to decide my delimitations, as I didn't want to end up with a too slim pool of material to draw from later. One of the elements that really helped me in the process of giving the project direction was the list of characteristics that Christian Norberg-Schulz presents in his 1980s book *Genius Loci: Towards a phenomenology of architecture*. This provided me with an investigation method that could be exercised on all the studied buildings. The first exploration and translation of floor plan and facades could thus be carried out with relative ease.

The translation of the elements however posed some different challenges. Relating back to critical regionalism, it was always a question on where on the spectrum of embeddedness and contemporaneity the translation should end up. This is of course subjective to every person, but it could also be argued that it depends on the context of the project and the aim of it. In some instances perhaps a more embedded object is what one is after, and in other instances not. If the aim, regarding architecture in a broader sense, is to push the industry forward, then what positioning on the scale is more likely to do so? Or does that again depend on the project and the conditions of the particular site it occupies.

The act of translation however provided me as a designer with an open ended method to examine and draw parallels between the original and the copy. This of course puts a lot of responsibility on the translator to be sensitive and have a creative stance towards the original. In the context of the thesis, the translation parts really pushed my boundaries regarding how and in what way an object could be reinterpreted. The references *Sergelpaviljongen* thus became an important reference to also explore alternative materials in my translations. This worked especially well in the translation of *fartsukvisten*, as they deal with similar detailing. In a broader sense, the method of translation again relates back to the relation between the original and the copy, and the decisions of the translator when the translation has gone "far enough". This also raises the question whether something can be too translated as to lose ties to the original, and in what place on the spectrum do we actually create something new?

To summarize it, it is evident that critical regionalism provides a broad entry to the world of place specific architecture. And I believe it's the sensibility towards a project, its site and the people that need to be highlighted. Ultimately, this thesis presents only one approach on how this can be tackled. There are many more aspects that could be explored within the same realm, by testing various positions on the embeddedness and contemporaneity spectrum. And lastly, architects thus need to continue to push for the importance of research and sensitivity in regard to place, as I believe it's in the translation of said place, that new things can be discovered in order to push the industry forward.





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FIGURES

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