Resurrecting Håby church

Communicating a millennium of alteration and rehabilitation through conservation and adaptive reuse

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Master's Thesis

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Cover Fig. 1
Top

Exterior photograph of Håby church in its late 1800s appearance. Photo: Johan Johansson, public domain

Cover Fig. 2
Middle

Exterior photograph of Håby church in its 1900s appearance. Photo: Oscar Färdig, public domain

Cover Fig. 3
Bottom

Exterior rendering of the design proposal for the transformation and addition.

Abstract

As winds shift and populations change, churches in Sweden have gone in and out of religious use during a millennium of history. Currently, the Church of Sweden is entering a period where numerous churches in rural areas will be deemed redundant due to increasing urbanization and declining membership numbers. Being an early example, Håby church outside of Munkedal in Swedish Bohuslän was closed indefinitely in 2023. Its history traces back to the 1100s and it has been subject to several alterations, rehabilitations and conservational approaches throughout its lifetime.

Since 1988, legislation protects churches built before 1940 through preservation. The thesis proposes a speculative future scenario of adaptive reuse outside of these legal restrictions. Working with both living and lost memory, the thesis grapples with the pedagogical value of heritage and explores if selected historical traces need to be removed to increase the communicative values of others when applying conservational approaches, as exemplified by Erik Lundberg's conservation of Götene church (1964).

A deep understanding of the church is sought by carefully mapping out, reconstructing and visualising its different historical manifestations and inventories, inspired by but expanding on Flores & Prats' process on "Sala Beckett" (2016). Thereafter, a design strategy is formulated, where restoration, preservation and adaptive reuse strategies are selectively applied in different parts of the church to strengthen their existing cultural-historical heritage values through a communicative approach. Thus providing added pedagogical value.

The church is then redesigned into a combined road church and restaurant, where an addition is built and the nave is divided into a chapel and dining hall. Letting the history of the church inform the design, historical traces are reintroduced and assets are relocated, disassembled and reassembled into new configurations.

This opens the church to the public once again, while retaining the religious inventories both with their original purposes and as bearers of cultural heritage. As this is but one of many redundant churches to come and churches being just one category of heritage buildings in general, the thesis emphasizes the importance of thorough investigations and evaluations to see adaptive reuse opportunities and communicate our cultural-historical heritage.

Keywords: Redundant churches, cultural-historical heritage, transformation

Contents

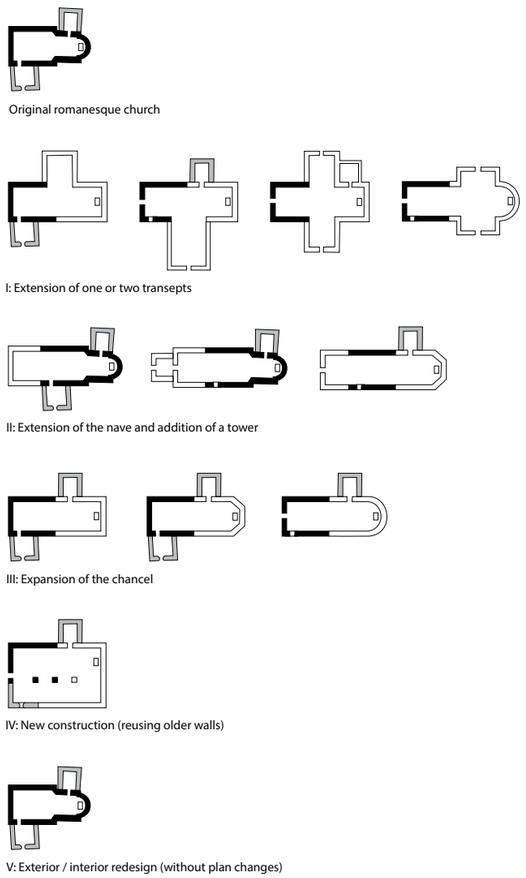
4 kap. 2 § "Kyrkobyggnader och kyrkotomter skall vårdas och underhållas så att deras kulturhistoriska värde inte minskas och deras utseende och karaktär inte förvanskas."

4 c. 2 § "Church buildings and church grounds shall be cared for and maintained so that their cultural and historical value is not diminished and their appearance and character are not distorted."

Historic Environment Act (SFS 1988:950)

Fig. 1

Typical historical alterations to a medieval church extracted from extensive studies from the whole of Sweden. Illustration from the article "Sockenkyrkornas förnyelse genom ombyggnad" (Dahlberg & Franzén, 2008, p.276), used with permission. Text translated from Swedish to English.



Introduction

Problem Description / Background

The first churches in Sweden were built during the Middle Ages and many of them still stand today. Over the years new churches have been built to accomodate need created by the increasing spread of Christianity, many of which are now threatened to be left empty or unused due to increasing secularism and urbanisation. The process of building churches has through all times been a process influenced by alteration and rehabilitation since churches often have been extended, renovated, rebuilt or torn down in order to use the materials in another building as seen in Figure 1. In many cases church buildings have been used for other purposes during long periods of time to later either resume the function of a church or take on another purpose entirely. These processes have historically largely been questions of practicality or economy. In the latest century, values such as the importance of preservation of churches as cultural-historical heritage and the increasing call for transformation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings for reasons of environmental sustainability are on the rise (Brattgård, 2025).

As a consequence of a decreasing number of members (Svenska kyrkan, 2025b), the Church of Sweden has started to suffer the economic burden of maintaining their churches. This obligation is both towards the cultural-historical heritage and possibilities for individuals to practice their faith. However, it is also a legal obligation to maintain the churches' appearance due to the protection of all the churches owned by the Church of Sweden built before 1940 according to the 4th chapter in the Historic Environment Act (SFS 1988:950). The Church of Sweden receives a church-antiquarian compensation from the state, however this is not nearly sufficient to cover the maintenance of all 3400 churches the Church of Sweden owns, 2951 of which are protected under the mentioned legislation (Svenska kyrkan, 2025b).

Although this affects the whole of the Church of Sweden, small parishes in the Swedish countryside with old churches to maintain will suffer the future consequences most clearly due to the effects of urbanisation. Because of the limits of the Swedish regulations regarding building alterations, adaptive reuse and secular reuse of churches built before 1940 in Sweden is as of now quite uncommon and limited in extent, since the legal protection follows the building to future owners (Brattgård, 2025). The 133 churches in Sweden that have been sold since the separation of the Church of Sweden and the state in 2000 (Mendelsson, 2023) have in many cases not been protected by this legislation. These examples often come from the substantial number of churches built in the post-war era, which are predominantly modernist in style and located relatively centrally in cities.

With a potentially great number of churches on the countryside becoming redundant in the coming decades, one could argue that the most historically aligned way to deal with them is a transformation to other uses. However with regulations limiting any stakeholder wishing to undertake such a transformation, the current situation leads to churches being closed with only the most critical maintenance caried out, as exemplified later with the case of the churches in Munkedal's parish.

Furthermore in terms of transformation, when looking at the tradition of conservation of churches in Sweden, there is a relatively recent movement that aims to preserve churches in the condition they are today. Only in the past 100 years has the movement for preservation of the cultural-historical heritage been so highly regarded. Before this it was common to alter and reuse churches for other purposes, or change the appearance of them significantly (Bedoire, 2013). Bedoire argues that there historically is a difference between what he refers to as living buildings, where substantial alterations can be made to them for added or changed functions, and dead buildings which have a right to exist as monuments whose function is to remind us of a time that has been lost.

When a church is sold to a private owner, it often requires division of the generous and carefully crafted architectural spaces into spaces with lower architectural qualities such as light, space, ambience et cetera (Brattgård, 2025). This is highlighted in the photography exhibition "Där ditt namn var helgat" *"Where your name was praised"* (Fig. 2) where the theologian, priest and artist Maria Blank portrays churches that have been left to fall into disrepair or that have been crudely converted into other private functions. She argues that there is a great loss of cultural identity when churches that have been open to the public for people to practice their faith now are closed (Svenska kyrkan, 2025a).

The dimension of faith that is tied to the physical space that is the church is also something that has changed during the history of the church in Sweden. In the middle ages Sweden was catholic and therefore the church was considered the House of God in a literal sense, as in that the building and space itself was holy. After the reformation, when Sweden became protestant, the theological view changed to one that considered the church just as any building. The church was only special in the sense that it was where the congregation gathered to spread the word of God and sacrament and the space should therefore be revered, but the building should be nothing special. In the current day however, the general opinion in Sweden both among Christians and non-religious people is that the church-building carries a weight beyond normal buildings. The spaces are considered holy or similarly respected because of its history, permanence, openness and seclusion. Thus the view of churches as architectural spaces have changed significantly throughout history (Artos & Norma, 2008).

Other countries in Europe have a similar built heritage and face similar problems, however due to less or differently worded legal protection, transformation of churches to secular purposes are more common and therefore the strategies for this are more developed, with England being on the forefront with initiatives such as the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) (Coomans, 2019). A contemporary example of a successful church transformation from Denmark is the is the previous Absalon church in Copenhagen. The church was transformed into a community center by *Arcgency* in 2015 and the space has efficiently been transformed by adding a second floor walkway (Fig. 3). The regulations in Sweden only apply to the churches owned by the Church of Sweden, and therefore churches from other religious communities are more susceptible to transformation. An example of this is the transformation of the previous S:t Paulskyrkan in Stockholm into a meeting place for the Stockholm City-Mission by *Spridd architects*. Here the building still serves as a church, but the building has been altered to include offices and shared spaces. In this case it has been performed with great care and respect to the style of the church (Fig. 4).

This current emphasis of the cultural-historical heritage of churches along with a public perception that churches are special types of buildings and spaces means transformation of churches need to be handled with great care when working within existing regulations. This could be due to a common perception of churches as monuments, but as times and demography change a different view could emerge in the future if the society and culture at large is open to it.

Fig. 2.

Selected picture from Maria Blank's exhibition showing the conversion of a church into a brewery. Photo: Maria Blank, used with permission.

Fig. 3

The transformed main hall of the Absalon church at lunchtime on a tuesday.

Fig. 4

The main hall of the transformed S:t Paulskyrkan by Spridd. Photo: Johan Dehlin, used with permission.

The parish of Munkedal

Considering the previously discussed problems and challenges, the thesis focuses on a specific case study: the parish of Munkedal in the county of Bohuslän in the southwest of Sweden. As an early example of many parishes to come, Munkedal has concluded that they cannot use or maintain all of their nine protected churches, whereby they sold Munkedal's chapel in 2011 (Nordström, 2014) and decided to close three other churches in 2023 (Fig. 14). The previously mentioned difficulties of working within the existing regulations is exemplified by Munkedal's chapel which was built in 1939 and was sold to family intending to turn it into a cultural center. The protection of the Historic Environment Act demands that they get permission from the County Administrative Board for all interior alterations, and no exterior alterations are allowed (Eklund, 2011). The three closed churches; Håby, Valbo-Ryr and Sanne are entirely closed to all activity but are still sacred spaces and are not yet sold to other organizations (Blomgren, 2024a). The reason for this action is commented by the parish of Munkedal in their 2021 facilities provision plan that the three churches are not being utilized to a degree that justifies their maintenance and operational costs. Furthermore the parish argues that out of all of the churches in their possession (Fig. 5-13), the cultural-historical heritage values are higher in their other churches which come from similar time-periods (Munkedals församling, 2021).

Håby church

Out of the three churches, the thesis focuses on Håby church. Compared to the other churches in the parish, it is of a similar typology and relatively similar in appearance. It was most likely built in the 1100s, has been added to, altered and rehabilitated several times during its history, and has a rich cultural-historical heritage (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.). However this not so clearly communicated in its current manifestation. The parish of Munkedal (Munkedals församling, 2021) states that the church and inventories are considered to be of high cultural-historical value but due to all of the historical alterations, these values are considered heavily diminished compared in relation to the other churches.

Fig. 5 Krokstad
Tony Martinsson. CC BY-SA 4.0

Fig. 6 Sanne
Tony Martinsson. CC BY-SA 4.0

Fig. 7 Svarteborg
Tubaist. CC BY-SA 3.0

Fig. 8 Hede
Public domain

Fig. 9 Bärfendal
Bjoertvedt. CC BY-SA 3.0

Fig. 10 Munkedal
Svjo. CC BY-SA 3.0

Fig. 11 Foss
Bjoertvedt. CC BY-SA 3.0

Fig. 12 Valbo-Ryr
E, Bergman. Public domain

Fig. 13 Håby

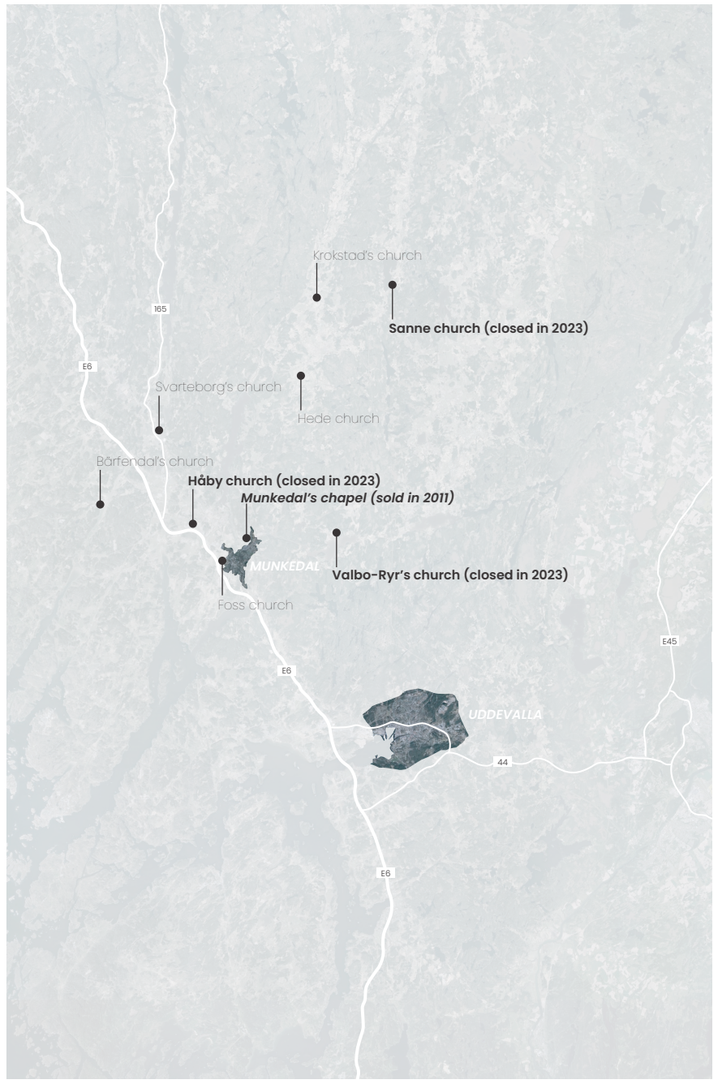


Fig. 5-13

All of the churches in Munkedal's parish. Full credits are listed in figure references.

Fig. 14

All of the churches in the parish of Munkedal including those which have been closed.

Scale: 1:500 000

Aim and Purpose

The thesis aims to explore a scenario where the regulations around protection of the cultural heritage allow for more significant transformation and adaptive reuse of churches that the Church of Sweden has deemed redundant and cannot care for or maintain themselves. In this scenario, the thesis explores methods of conservation and adaptive reuse to deal with the pedagogical value of heritage and explores if sometimes selected historical traces need to be removed to increase the communicative values of others. Thus showing that altering a building does not necessarily mean diminishing its cultural-historical heritage values.

Studying Håby church and its cultural-historical heritage values, the thesis aims to propose adaptive reuse of the building that can highlight the existing values and suggest a use that can reopen it to the public.

A further aim of the thesis is to explore whether churches, preserved in their current state, as Bedoire (2013) would call *dead* buildings, can still act as reminders of the past while being actively used, adapted and altered as *living* buildings.

The thesis studies churches but in a broader context also discusses tactics of transforming buildings in general that have rich cultural and/or historical values and how to keep using them with care taken to the traces of their history.

"...adaptation must be understood as an ongoing,
iterative process rather than a single act.
Current interventions should be strategic,
creating opportunities for future modifications"

Artem Kitaev - KOSMOS Architects (Kitaev, 2024, p.97)

"Springer man efter historien kommer man aldrig att nå den igen
– endast genom att manifestera nuet kan man få historien att tala."

"If you run after history, you will never catch up with it
– only by manifesting the present can you make history speak."

Quote attributed to Sverre Fehn

Research Questions

How can the pedagogical values of a building with cultural-historical heritage be kept and increased through adaptive reuse by selectively applying conservational techniques such as restoration, preservation and a communicative approach?

Subquestion:

How can the historical process of alteration and rehabilitation of the built heritage of churches in a Swedish context be continued, through adaptive reuse of a redundant church?

Delimitations

The thesis explores a Swedish setting, both culturally and historically and only limited comparisons or examples to an international context are made. Furthermore, the background for the thesis focuses on the Church of Sweden and no other religious communities.

The thesis and the proposed transformation of a medieval church will not be limited to the protective cultural heritage regulations that are in place today in Sweden (Historic Environment Act). However, other regulations for buildings such as accessibility, structural integrity, energy efficiency and so on are considered.

Sustainability in terms of environmental and cultural aspects is central to the thesis and is thoroughly considered through design and material choices. However analysis with quantitative assessment methods such as life cycle assessment is outside the scope of the thesis.

The thesis explores potential public or semi-public programs for the adaptive reuse of the church in question, in order to keep the historically public function churches have had in Sweden and to maintain the accessibility to the cultural-historical heritage.

Furthermore, the thesis touches upon the social and economic effects of a new function in adaptive reuse, however a full feasibility study in these regards is outside the scope of this thesis.

The theoretical basis for the thesis considers multiple approaches to conservation, however one aspect not considered by the thesis is reconstruction and its associated theories.

Theory

To discuss the different alterations Håby Church has gone through, the thesis draws from conservational theories that have been practiced historically. Laying the groundwork for a transformation of the church, adaptive reuse and its history is presented as well as a Swedish method for classifying cultural heritage values

Conservation

In the post-enlightenment period, a notion of caring for historical artefacts and architecture as well as the idea of cultural heritage started to emerge. The architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (Fig.15) formulated his ideas on the art of *restoration* in 1866 which he defines as to reinstate a pristine condition of an object that reflects the true nature of the object, which may never have existed at any point in time. (Muñoz Viñas, 2005). These ideas spread throughout Europe and were greatly influential in Sweden in the late 1800s which led to many stylistic church-restorations which altered the original appearance significantly in many cases (Brattgård, 2025).

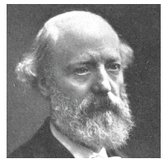


Fig. 15

Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1816-1879) Photo: Public domain

Another theorist from the same era was John Ruskin (Fig. 16) who came from the Arts and Crafts movement. Ruskin established the idea of *preservation* in 1849 and believed that the traces of history on an object were the most important and that one should not disturb original remnants in any way, therefore objects should be preserved in their current shape at all costs (Muñoz Viñas, 2005).

Fig. 16

John Ruskin (1819-1900) Photo: Public domain

In the late 1800s, Ruskin's ideas spread through Europe and by the early 1900s they took hold in Sweden, in large part thanks to the professor in architectural history and Director-General for The Swedish National Heritage Board Sigurd Curman (1879-1966). Sigurd Curman was deeply influenced by Ruskin, and followed a methodical, scientific approach to conservation where preservation was central. When additions and fill-ins where demanded they should be in the same style but clearly demarcated to separate the authentic from the reconstruction. Curman and carried out conservations of many churches in a preservationist style, some supported by architect and building conservationist Axel Forssén who lead the 1939 alterations to Håby Church (Bedoire, 2013).

Another assistant and colleague of Curman was Erik Lundberg (Fig. 17) who later became a building conservationist and professor in architectural history. Lundberg started as a follower of Curman but developed his own new direction when he carried out many several conservations around the 1950s and 60s, much to Curman's dissapointment. As a modernist, he believed that the new should have a clear separation from the old and thereby offer a contrast that he believed enhanced both the old and new (Bedoire, 2013).

Fig. 17

Erik Lundberg (1895-1969) Photo: public domain

Götene kyrka *(Erik Lundberg, 1964)*

Lundbergs views on conservation can be seen clearly in his work on Götene kyrka, where he is not hesitant in removing historical layers if it enhances clarity in others. In his book Att Restaurera *To Restore* (1964), Lundberg writes that the new and old serve well to be distinctly separated from one another. He reasons that one cannot, even with the most care taken to old techniques and materials, replicate the old in the case of restoration and therefore the most honest is not to. Instead, he suggests that additions should be made with the highest quality of materials and craftsmanship, thereby leaving a mark of the additions while not falsifying.

Lundberg further reasons that this quality of material and craftmanship in the existing should be valued, not merely its age or authenticity (Lundberg, 1964). By applying this reasoning, he thought it reasonable to rid Götene church of its 1700s and 1800s traces due to their inferior quality in this sense. The medieval traces however, were uncovered and preserved due to his high valuation of their quality. Lundberg then adds new modern benches (Fig. 18) signifying the present created with skilled craftmanship and high quality materials (Bedoire & Friberg, 2004).

Fig. 18

The chancel of Götene church with the blue-stained wood benches contrasting the medieval paintings and triumphal arch. Photo: Maria Jansson, used with permission.

The thesis also seeks to apply this combination of conservation, selective removal and contrast. Although the removal of so many historical traces would upset Ruskin deeply, one can argue that the preservation of the medieval traces are more effectively communicated once contrasted with the additions.

The communicative turn

A later theory on conservation is what Muñoz Viñas (2005) refers to as the communicative turn which was developed by, among others, the geographer Denis Cosgrove (1948-2008). Cosgrove argues that the value in a historical object lies not in the imagined ideal state, nor in the traces of history upon it, but in what it communicates to the observer. This takes the value from the object and puts it in the subject. Cosgrove argues that both acts of restoration and preservation are as arbitrary as any other technical treatment performed on an object. He argues that one can make any changes that one wishes to an object without diminishing its value, as long as it is reversible (Muñoz Viñas, 2005). A similar stance is taken by the organization CCT in England, who take over care of redundant churches and sometimes do extensive but reversible alterations to make them fit for new functions (Brattgård, 2025).

According to Muñoz Viñas (2005), communication in an object means it has some sort of symbolism which communicates with the observer. This is what Cosgrove argues defines an object as an object of conservation. Furthermore, Muñoz Viñas argues that conservation objects are not symbolic to to the same extent, some communicate powerfully and some less so. The difference comes down to legibility, which in turn can be affected by a chosen conservational strategy. Restoration can increase the legibility of the original intent and therefore clarify communication, however similarly preservation of patina on an object can increase communication of the use or life of an object which clarifies entirely different aspects of the object.

Adaptive reuse

According to Pleevoets & Van Cleempoel (2019), architecture and conservation shared disciplines until the beginning of the 1900s when modern architecture largely dismissed existing architecture. In the later half of the century however, architects once again started working with historic buildings, and thus the discipline of adaptive reuse was born.

Adaptive reuse is defined as changes to a building that entail both physical and functional aspects, and several approaches and methods to transformation which in-turn can include for example restoration or preservation. One way of approaching a transformation that is outlined is the *architectural approach* to transformation, which looks at a building subject and seeks to fit a suitable programme to the building at hand, which is appropriate when dealing with a specific typology such as churches. A contrasting approach is for example the *programmatic approach* where a program for a building exists and the building is chosen that fits to serve that function (Pleevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019).

Other definitions within adaptive reuse which are helpful to describe changes made to an existing building are *alteration* which "implies significant changes to the buildings use, aesthetics, and possibly its function" (Pleevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019, p.21), as well as *rehabilitation* defined as the "act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those proportions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values" (Pleevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019, p.23).

Sala Beckett *(Flores & Prats, 2016)*

The adaptive reuse of the abandoned and ruined Cooperativa Pau y Justicia in Barcelona, to a theatre and community centre called Sala Beckett by architects Flores & Prats is an example of a programmatic approach to adaptive reuse. The project is arguably communicative in nature, except in the sense that the interventions are not deliberately reversible. Otherwise, the applied method seeks to increase legibility and clarity in communication of the different temporal manifestations of the building, displayed all at once.

By mapping out all of the existing assets in the ruined building and painstakingly drawing each and every one of them to understand their history, geometry and constituent parts, Flores & Prats first understood the building deeply before intervening. Once a full picture literally had been painted, they started rearranging the pieces, sometimes as originally intended, sometimes in new contexts. By applying selective preservation and restoration techniques each asset communicates its own history. Furthermore, the parts added separate themselves with a new geometric language yet valued with the same weight as the old (Fig. 19), signifying a new chapter in the history of the building (Flores & Prats, 2016). "The building contains everything at once: the time of the Cooperative, the time of abandonment, and the time of the new Sala Beckett" (Flores & Prats, 2016, p.194).

The project effectively shows how understanding of context and history, along with application of the most appropriate conservational methods can create a cohesive whole despite contrasts between the constituent parts by applying a communicative approach.

Fig. 19
The entrance hall of Sala Beckett with both ruinated, reused and new additions visible in a collected whole. Photo: ARCH.architecture, CC BY-SA 4.0

Cultural-historical heritage values

Determining the cultural-historical heritage values in the built environment is a complex task due to the combination of many different values that make up the total cultural heritage of a building or of an asset. In supporting this process, the thesis bases its assessment on the framework laid out by Axel Unnerbäck (2002) in the report published by The Swedish National Heritage Board. Unnerbäck argues that there are two different types foundational motives giving value that we see in object; document values, which are historical properties, and perceptive values, which are values tied to aesthetics and social aspects. Since it is noted by Unnerbäck that not all values are applicable for a given assessment the most significant document values for the objects studied by the thesis are identified as:

- **Building-historic value**: Age and passage of time, not only in the original manifestation but in visible alterations having been made to an object
- **Building technique-historic value**: How the building was built, with which techniques or innovations, and how that is seen in the building.
- **Architectural-historic value**: If the building consequential or signifies a certain period or movement in architecture.
- **Patina**: Traces on an object conveying its history, age and authenticity.

As for the perceptive values, the most significant are:

- **Architectural value**: Can be aesthetics, proportionality and how preconditions have shaped the architecture.
- **Artistic value**: Often linked to architectural value, but can be exemplified by details, interiors, art installations et cetera.
- **Continuity value**: Ascribed to an object if it reflects a change by communicating how other factors have changed when the object has remained.
- **Patina**: Is classified as both a document- and perceptive value.

These aforementioned values can then in-turn be strengthened by the following overarching/reinforcing values according to Unnerbäck (2002):

- **Quality:** As in the quality of materials, craftmanship and attention in detailing.
- **Authenticity:** To how true of an extent the state of the object reflects a certain document- or perceptive value.
- **Pedagogical value/clarity:** How clearly the origin or story of the document- or perceptive value is conveyed through the objects current state.
- **Rarity:** An objects value is increased if it there are few other like it.
- **Representativity:** As an example nationally, regionally or locally.

However, not all document- or perceptive values are seen by Unnerbäck as being enforced by all overarching values. But the pedagogical value of an object is described to be able to reinforce almost all other values (Unnerbäck, 2002).

In essence, this makes Unnerbäcks framework a communicative approach to assessment of cultural-historical heritage as it ascribes much meaning to subjective qualities of objects and the perception of them to the observer. The fact that Unnerbäck emphasizes the power of the pedagogical value enforces this. It is at the same time a preservational approach due to the inclusion of patina and authenticity in its evaluation and through its definition of pedagogical value as something ascribed to the current state of an object. This pedagogical value would then be at risk of getting lost if not preserved. However, as a framework it is impartial to what methods are used on an object once the values are identified. Thus, the thesis intends to use the framework in the classification of the existing values in Håby church.

Communicative vs. pedagogical value

Communication and pedagogical value sound similar and are so to some extent, however they are evaluated on different scales. While communicative legibility according to Muñoz Viñas (2005) can be evaluated and manipulated on the individual object-level, the pedagogical value strengthening document- or perceptive values, according to Unnerbäck (2002), see the object in its broader context. Thus, different actions increasing communicative legibility on the object-level might not lead to an increase in overall pedagogical value.

An example between communicative approaches that lead to both increased and decreased pedagogical values can be seen in the comparison of Sala Beckett and Götene kyrka. While the communicative approach of Sala Beckett shows the cultural-historical values of the inventories and history of the building by selective restoration and preservation, the current manifestation is in no clear sense pedagogical. The building-historic, architectural and artistic values as well as patina and quality are clearly communicated and made legible through the adaptive reuse, however their origin and use are made unclear through their placements and juxtaposition with new elements. Thus pedagogical value can be seen as diminished going from the ruined state to the alteration. On the other hand, Götene kyrka increases the communicative legibility of the medieval arch and paintings by preservation, reinforcing its architectural-historic, artistic and continuity values. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the modern benches strengthens the pedagogical value and authenticity of the arch and paintings by creating contrasts and showing that alterations have been made to the church. Thus, a bit paradoxically, similar interventions can both increase and decrease pedagogical values while both increasing legibility in communication in similar ways. The question is what the goal is, and in the case of Sala Beckett it was to contain all historical manifestations of the building at once, to the detriment of pedagogical value. Therefore, the application of conservational methods need to be carefully chosen and simultaneously evaluated in its intended context if the goal is to increase the percieved pedagogical value.

Method

The methodology of the thesis is research by design, wherein an iterative process is used that bases the design on research and experiences formed in the creation of an *Atlas* as well as a basis in theory. After a design strategy has been established, it is tested through design, evaluated and reiterated through the same process.

Atlas

The atlas is the manifestation of the inventories, stories and shapes of Håby church that has existed throughout its history. The main representation of this is a timeline which informs both the research areas and the design. Due to the lack of an existing drawing-set, an accurate one of the current state of the church as well as relevant historic manifestations will be established.

Design strategy

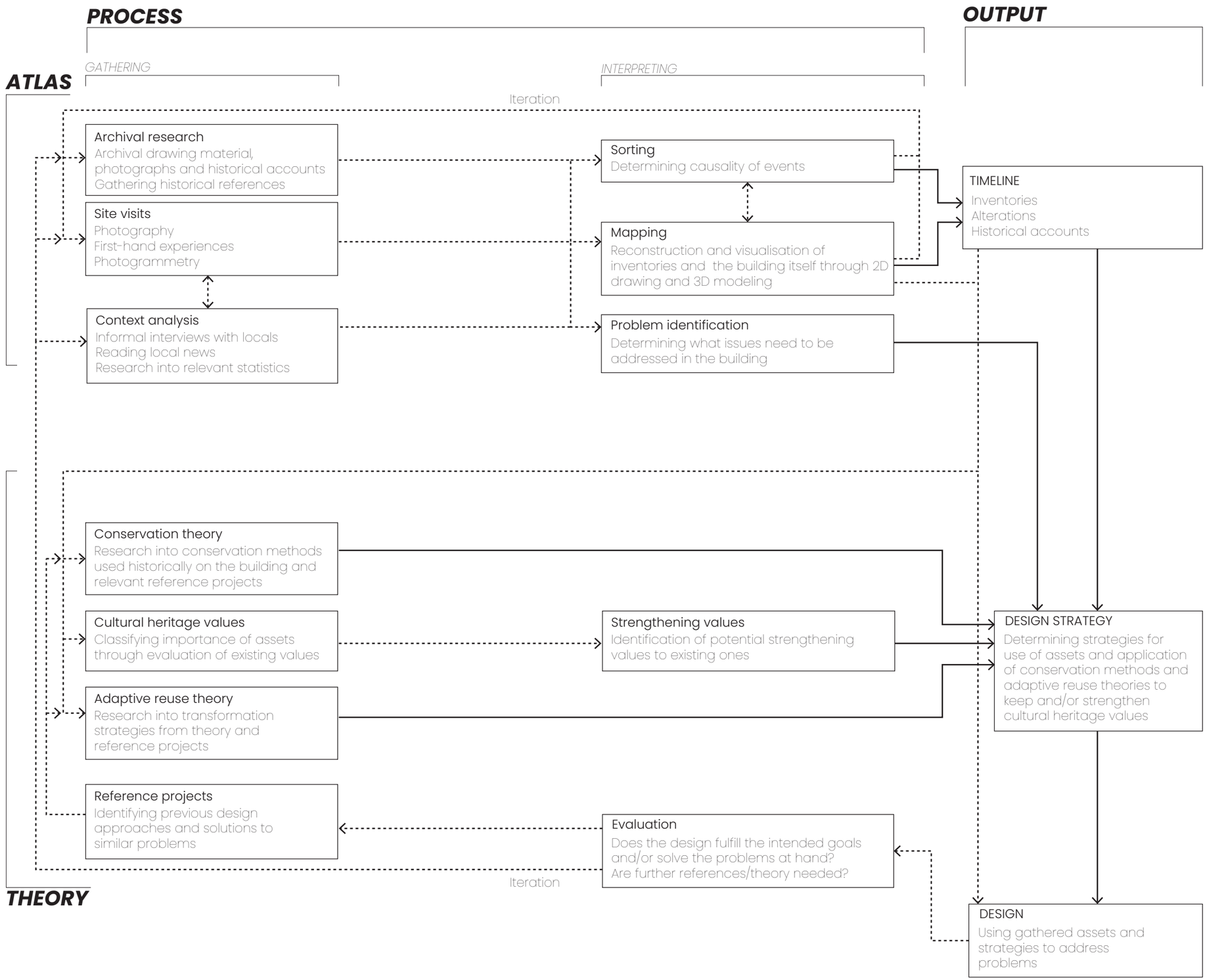
As a basis for the design, the design strategy formulates where to use which conservational strategy and how that informs the adaptive reuse. The overall goal is to increase pedagogical value through a communicative approach, but how is iterated through the process and informed by theory and reference projects.

Program

During the creation of the atlas and the associated context analysis, the program for the adaptive reuse of Håby church is developed. Thus the identified problems can be addressed and a tailored new program can be based thoroughly on the preconditions of the building.

Use of AI

The use of AI in the production of this thesis has been limited to the selection, masking and repair tools in Adobe Photoshop. An example of the type of prompts used is "Remove the glare from this photo". No AI has been used in the generation of text in any way.



Atlas *The Site*

The small village of Håby outside of Munkedal is centered around the church and nowadays consists of some residential houses, light industry, commercial functions such as restaurants and stores, as well as a motel. The surrounding consists of mainly farmland and forests, except for the E6 highway that cuts through the terrain (Fig.20) and connects the village with good communications by means of a highway intersection placed close to the village.

In the municipal detail plan for the area from 2007, the farmland immediately south of the church is planned to be replaced by a large shopping-complex and many parking lots (Fig. 21) (Munkedals kommun, 2025a). There was a revision to this detail plan in 2014 and since 2021 a new land-owner claims to want to realize the stalled plans, but these plans are also paused due to the current recession (Blomgren, 2023). Interesting to note is that the detail plan describes how it takes sightlines to the church into account, underlining the percieved value of the church in the landscape (Munkedals kommun, 2025b).

Fig. 20
Håby as it is mostly percieved: a place driven past by car.

Site visits to Håby as well as conversations with locals gave the impression that there is little belief in the future of the village due to population decline and industry being reluctant to establish there. This is reflected in the number of abandoned and vacant buildings in the village (Fig. 22-27).

Fig. 21

Siteplan over Håby

Scale: 1:10000

Buildings

Residential
Industrial
Commercial
Vacant

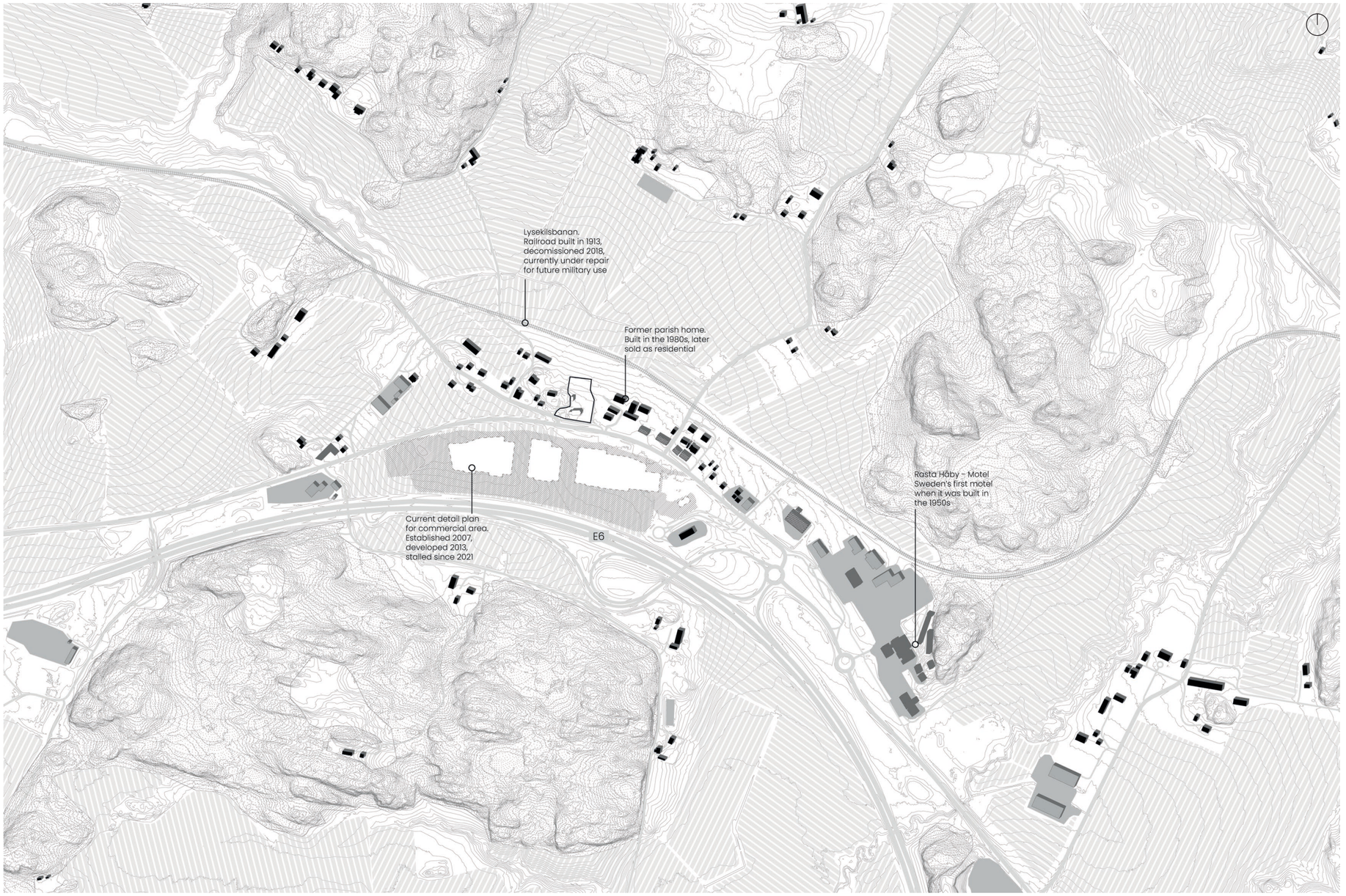


Fig. 22-27
Right

Snapshots of Håby. Vacant buildings, light industry and the motel

Fig. 28

Håby church
arriving by car

Fig. 29

Håby as seen
from behind the
sacristy

Fig. 30

Siteplan
surrounding the
cemetery

Scale: 1:1000

Surrounding the church there is a cemetery with a maintenance building, a small parking-lot and a bus stop (Fig. 30). This makes the church fairly well-connected to Munkedal, and the E6 facilitates even further connections. Being located on a hill surrounded by farmland, the church is clearly visible from the whole village (Fig. 28-29) and when passing by on the E6.

The Church

Håby Church (Fig.31) was built some time in the 12th or early 13th century and has undergone several alterations, rehabilitations and additions during its life. In the 1390s the bishop wanted the then derelict church to be demolished, but it was somehow saved. Once again in 1728 the bishop wanted the church demolished but a local initiative started a national collection to have it rehabilitated. In 1731 the rehabilitation was finished, with a widened chancel and a new roof. Later in 1868, a tower was added and in 1871 a sacristy was built to the east. This sacristy was later demolished in 1939 when a new sacristy was built to the north (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

Fig. 31

Exterior photograph of Håby church 2026.

Fig. 32

Interior photograph of Håby church
from the 1920s in its 1870s neogothic
style-restoration appearance.
Photo: Selma Sahlberg, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Fig. 33

Exterior photograph of Håby church
from the 1920s.
Photo: Johan Johansson, public domain

Fig. 34

Interior photograph of Håby church
from the 1940s in its 1700s restorational
appearance.
Photo: Runo Grolander, CC BY 4.0

Fig. 35

Exterior photograph of Håby church
from the 1940s
Photo: Oscar Färdig, public domain

Historical conservation approaches

In the 1870s the church was restored in a neogothic style (Fig. 32-33), as made popular by the influence the theories of Viollet Le-Duc at that time in Sweden. The following style-restoration in 1915 also carries the same spirit and was very fashionable at that time, since the same types of restorations were carried out on many churches during that period (Brattgård, 2025). With the rehabilitation in 1939 (Fig. 34-35) and afterwards, the approach to alterations to Håby church is much more of a preservational type (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.) along with the theory of Ruskin as made popular in Sweden by Curman. This is further enforced when the historic environment act is put in place in 1988, promoting preservation.

This makes Håby church essentially frozen in a state of reconstruction to a stylized pastiche of something that claims to be original but is in fact not (Fig. 38-40). The church was deemed redundant by Munkedal's parish and closed in 2023. It now stands cold, with only space heaters to control the moisture in the interiors, and in need of a new roof.

The timeline

To lay out events, alterations and rehabilitations which have taken place during the history of Håby church a timeline is constructed as seen in Figure 36. The timeline is a working-document that has changed and expanded throughout the whole process. Along with Håby's history, statistics concering the whole of Sweden are layed out in a parallell timeline, contextualizing the history of Håby church.

Sweden

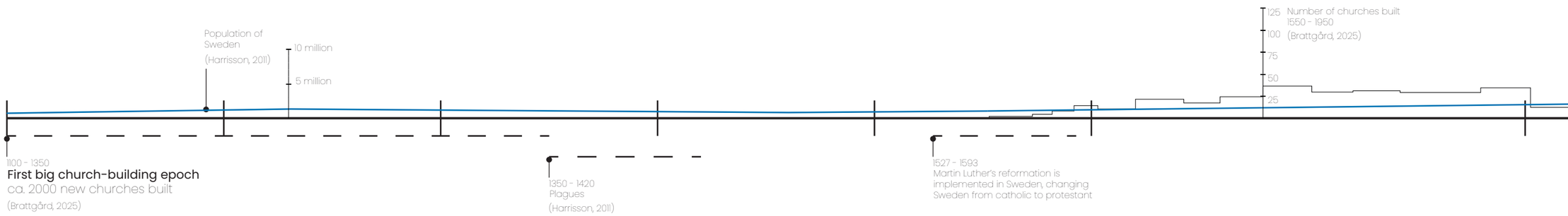
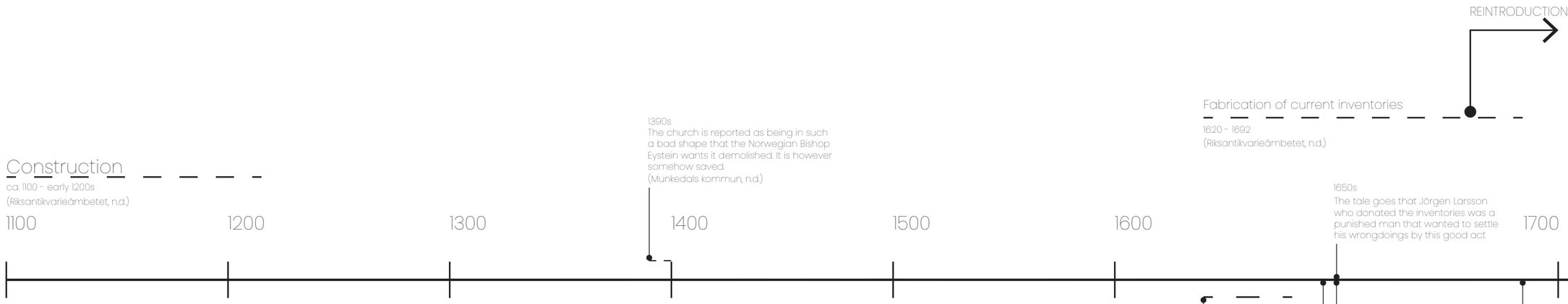
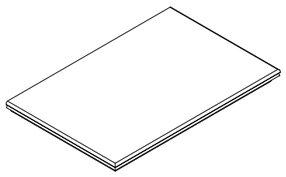


Fig. 36
Page 27-32

Timeline of events, alterations, rehabilitations and inventories from the history of Håby church. If otherwise not specified, drawings within timeline are based on currently existing assets.

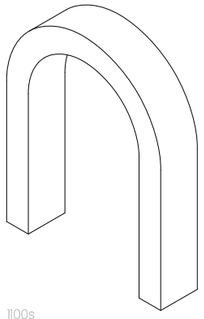
Håby Church





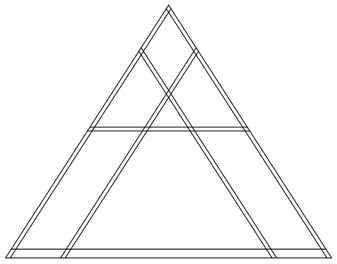
1100s
1:40 & 1:20

Altar with side profile.
Made from soapstone.
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)



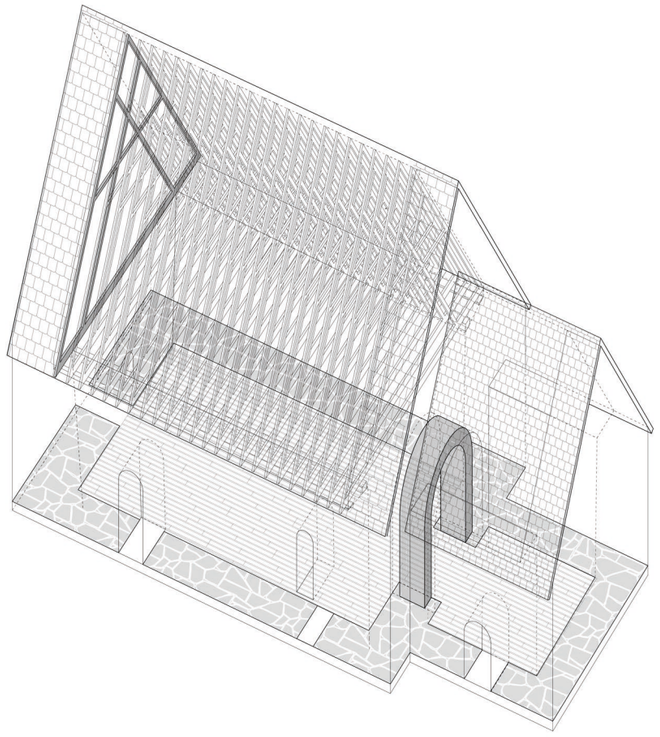
1100s
1:200

Triumphal arch in chancel.
Likely made from soapstone
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)



Late medieval
1:200

Roof truss in a south-norwegian style. Spaced ca 500mm cc
(Gullbrandsson, 2020)

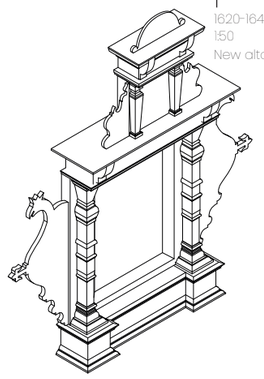


Late medieval appearance

Axonometry based on written sources and current appearance.

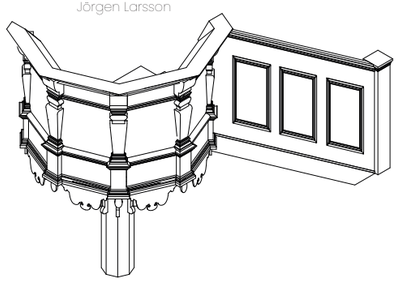
Roman plan with a south entrance, a chancel portal, and most likely a west-entrance (Brandt, 2008).
Straight-ended chancel with a triumphal arch (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.). Timber roof truss (Gullbrandsson, 2020).

1620-1640
1:50
New altarpiece

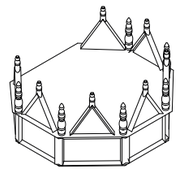


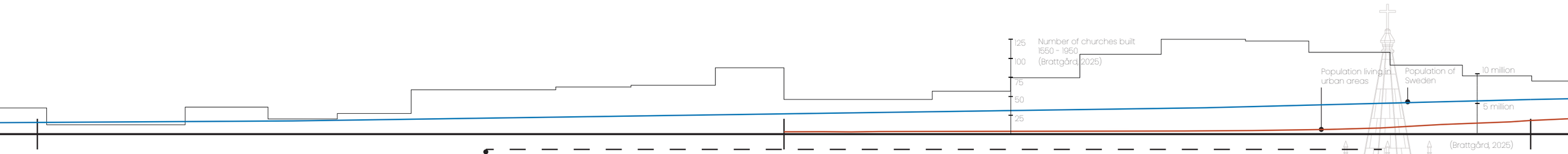
1647
1:50
New benches & baptismal font donated by Jörgen Larsson

1650
1:50
New pulpit donated by Jörgen Larsson



1692
1:50
New soundroof over the pulpit donated by Oluf Christenson





1760 - 1880
Second big church-building epoch
(ca. 700 new churches built + many rebuilt)
(Brattgård, 2025)

Restoration
Theory by Eugène Viollet-Le-Duc
(Bedoire, 2013)

REINTRODUCTION

1700

1728
A visit by the bishop who stated the church was so derelict that it should be torn down, but a local influential person; Captain Hans Ruda from Harska initiated a national collection which funded the repairs and extensions to the church
(Munkedals kommun, n.d.)

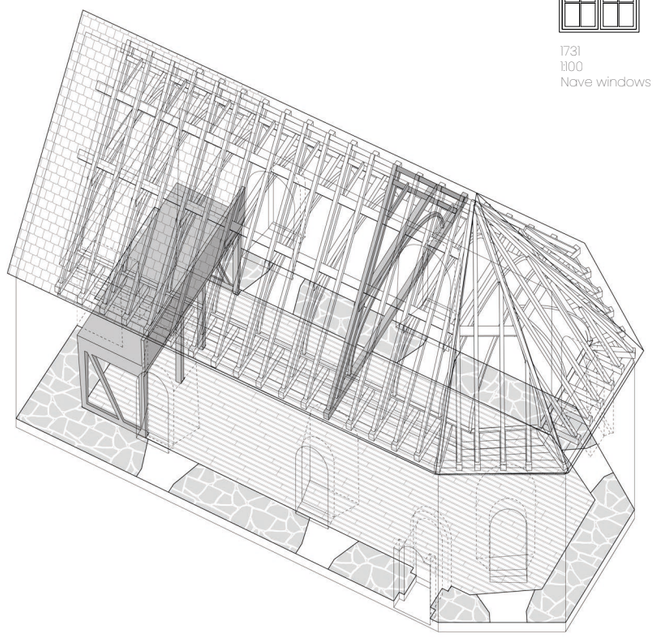
1731

1731
1:20
Embellishment below gallery

1731
1:100
Nave windows

1731
1:40
Moulding-profile between wall and vaulted ceiling

1731
1:40 & 1:20
Column detail supporting gallery



1731 appearance

Axonometry based on written sources and current appearance.

The chancel is widened to a three-sided shape and the windows are enlarged. The chancel portal is moved along with the southern chancel wall and widened, meaning the triumphal arch is demolished. A new roof construction prlaces the old one with a new vaulted inner roof. The gallery is built with its detailing (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.) The facade is painted uniformly with hinted joints (Brandt, 2008).

1800

1832
The perimeter wall and gate is stated as being in disrepair according to a member of the church; Tore Andersson in Leråker
(Riksarkivet, 1819-1835)

1853-1861
Roof tiles are stated are stated as missing for eight consequtive years. The last year on record it is said that the roof will be retiled the following year
(Riksarkivet, 1853-1862)

1870s entrance
1:200
Facade based on archival drawings from Håby kyrkoarkiv (Håby församling, n.d.)

1900

1800s
The chancel portal is filled in and the window frames are remade
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

1835
The facade is repainted
(Riksarkivet, 1819-1835)

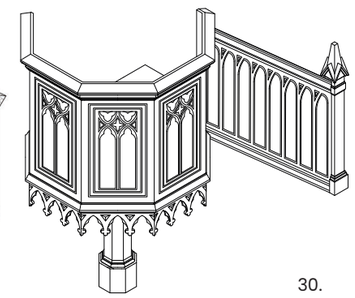
1868
A tower is built to the west
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

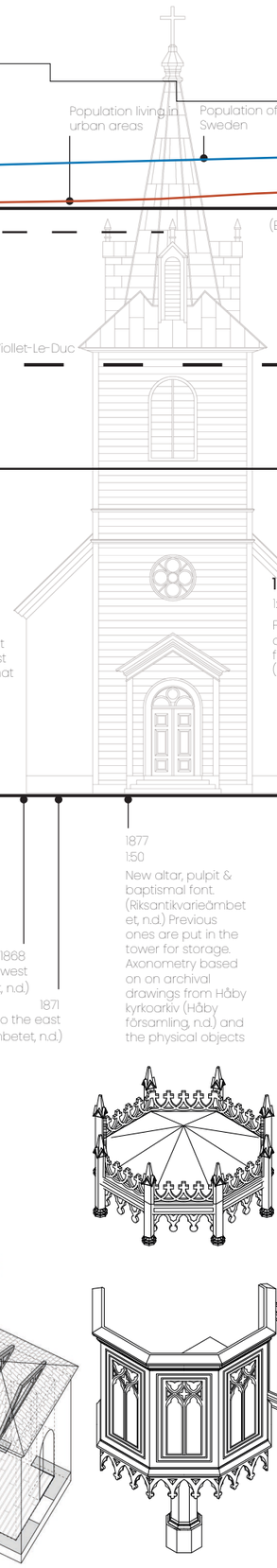
1871
A sacristy is built to the east
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

1877
1:50
New altar, pulpit & baptismal font. (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.) Previous ones are put in the tower for storage. Axonometry based on on archival drawings from Håby kyrkoarkiv (Håby församling, n.d.) and the physical objects

1896
Additional bracing is added to the tower

1898
1:200
An organ is installed
(Riksantikvarie-ämbetet, n.d.)





1870s appearance

Axonometry based on archival drawings from Håby kyrkoarkiv (Håby församling, n.d.) and written sources.

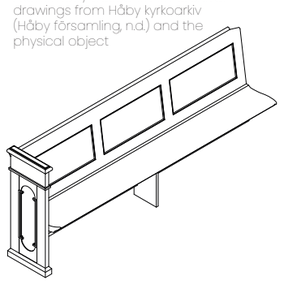
A tower is built along with a new entrance to the west and a sacristy is built to the east (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.). The highlighted bracing is added later than the rest of the structure, most likely added in 1896 since that is carved into the timber of some of the bracing members.

125
100
75
50
25
Number of churches built 1550 - 1950 (Brattgård, 2025)

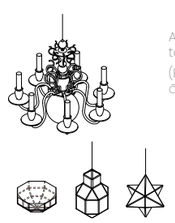
Population living in urban areas
Population of Sweden
Population that are members of the Church of Sweden
10 million
5 million
(Brattgård, 2025)

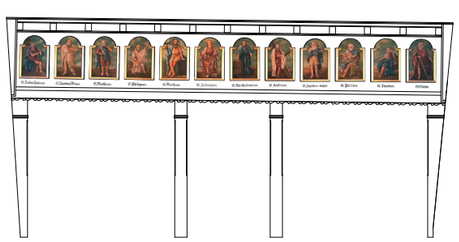
1900

1915
1:50 & 1:100
New benches, number tablets and gallery-paintings. 1600s inventories conserved and reintroduced (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.). 1877 inventories are moved to the tower.
Axonometry based on an archival drawings from Håby kyrkoarkiv (Håby församling, n.d.) and the physical object

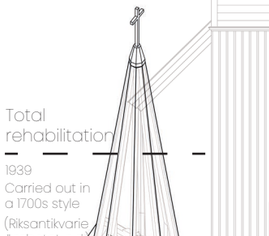


1934
1:50
Electrification. Four chandelliers are donated by the sewing-association of the church (Zakariasson, 1980). Three different lamps are custom-designed for the porch, gallery and sacristy by Axel Forssén (Överintendentsämbetet, n.d.)





1939
A sacristy is built to the north
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)



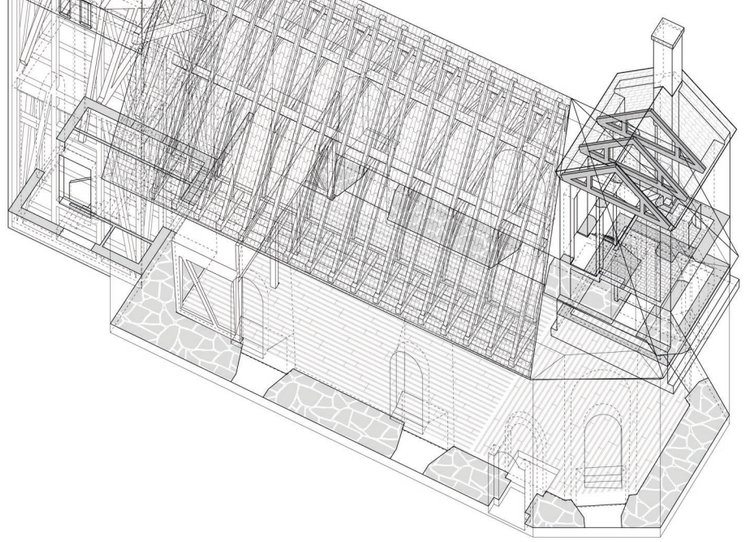
1957
An oil-heater is installed along with plumbing and water

1957
A morgue is built in the graveyard

1975
The graveyard is extended to the north and a new organ mechanism is installed

1981
The over 100-years old clay roofing tiles are replaced with lower quality cement tiles

Late 1900s
A toilet is built in the tower



1950 - 1980
Third big church-building epoch
(Brattgård, 2025)

1988
The Historic Environment Act protecting all churches built before 1940 is enacted

2000
Separation of the state and the Church of Sweden

Restoration

Preservation
Theory by John Ruskin, popularized in Sweden by Sigurd Curman
(Bedoire, 2013)

REINTRODUCTION

Early 1900s entrance
1:200
Facade based on archival photographs

Interior rehabilitation
1915
Carried out in a 1600s style and including reintroduction of 1600s inventories. New floor, new inner roof, new window sashes and widening of west entrance. Furnace is likely installed.
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

Total rehabilitation
1939
Carried out in a 1700s style
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

1939 entrance
1:200
Facade based on archival photographs

Maintenance
1968, 1981, 2001, 2007, 2013
Interior & exterior repainting, re-rendering & replacement
(Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

1983
A study-circle about the history of Håby church is held by the members of the church
(Zakariasson, 1980)

Communicative turn
Theory by Denis Cosgrove among others
(Muñoz Viñas, 2005)

2000

2019
The church is closed due to insufficient workplace safety due to unsafe infra-heating elements
(Munkedals församling, 2021)

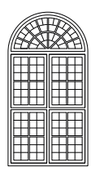
2023
The church is deemed redundant and is closed for all activity along with two other churches in Munkedal. For preservation a new heating and moisture regulation system is installed.

Current entrance
1:200
Facade based on own photographs

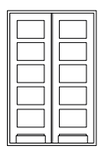
2016
A leak in the tower-roof is fixed, some paneling is replaced and the tower-cross i re-gilded
(Karlström, 2017)

Vägkyrka

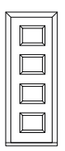
late 1900s
1:50
Road sign from when Håby was a road church



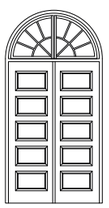
1939
1:100
Leaded inner windows in nave



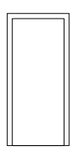
1939
1:100
Inner door between tower and nave



1939
1:100
Inner door in sacristy and porch



late 1900s
1:100
Current tower entrance inner door



late 1900s
1:100
Toilet door

1939 appearance

Axonometry based on archival drawings from Överintendentsämbetet (n.d) and written sources.

A rehabilitation is carried out by architect Axel Forssén. The facade of the tower is remade and the spire is changed. The sacristy is demolished and replaced with a new one to the north, the altar is moved back. During the restoration the filled-inn chancel portal is discovered and re-opened. New crucifx & altarpiece painting. Leaded inner windows are installed. Pulpit, baptismal font, altarpiece & gallery paintings are conserved. Central heating installed (Riksantikvarieämbetet, n.d.)

Current state

The current plan of the church (Fig. 37) shows a central nave with a three-sided chancel, a western tower and porch and a northern sacristy. The historical plans are overlaid in hatches and the density and line-thickness of the hatch corresponds to the number of years that plan existed. One can see the medieval church and the comparatively young addition of the tower and two sacristy's.

Current masonry

Historic masonry

Glossary

Chancel
Kor

The eastern part where the altar is located

Sacristy
Sakristia

A separate room, often connected to the chancel, where the priest does preparations for the service

Pulpit
Predikstol

A raised and enclosed platform from where sermon can be held

Baptismal font
Dopfunt

A vessel, often a raised bowl, which holds water for baptism

Nave
Långhus/skepp

The central hall of a roman church

Gallery
Läktare

A mezzanine for either the organ or for more people

Porch
Vapenhus

The room separating the entrance and the nave

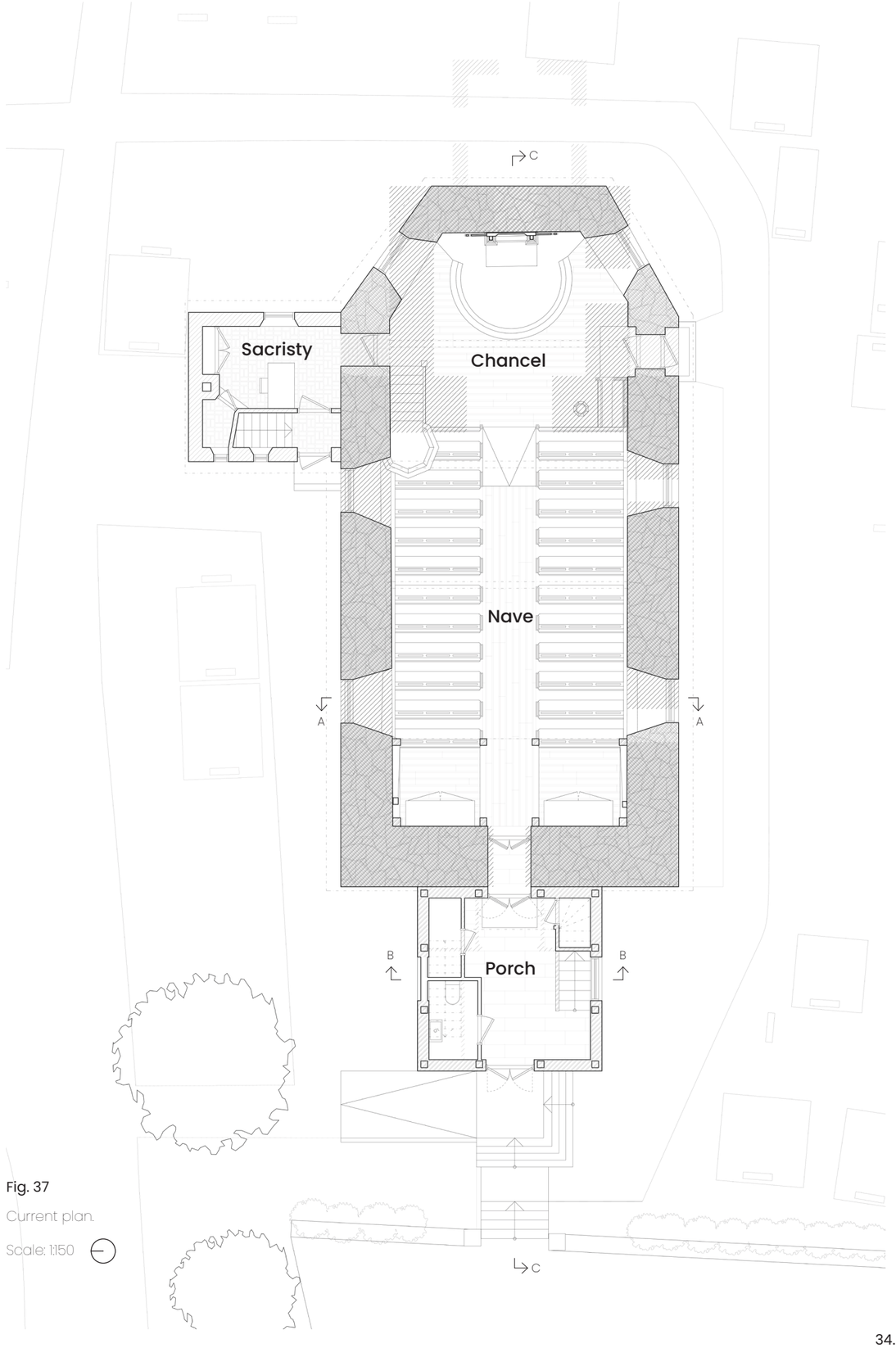


Fig. 37
Current plan.
Scale: 1:150

Fig. 38 Top

Nave interior towards gallery

Fig. 39 Left

Nave window beside gallery

Fig. 40

Nave interior towards chancel

Masonry mapping

On two documented occasions, the facade has been completely stripped of its render to be re-rendered. This occured in 1939 in the same time as the rehabilitation and in 2007 when maintenance work was carried out (Brandt, 2008).

To uncover the now hidden masonry walls, photographs were mapped and then traced, see Figures 41-52. Notable observations are the regularity of the masonry between the two central windows on both sides which according to Thomas Brandt of Bohusläns Museum (2008) shows that it is the original medieval masonry. Furthermore the medieval south entrance can be hinted beside the left window in the south facade. The stone used is mainly granite but with some soapstone interspersed on a few locations. Findings of soapstone blocks and hand-hewn blocks in the stone perimeter wall around the cemetery suggest that parts of the medieval masonry were used in the making of the wall (Brandt, 2008).

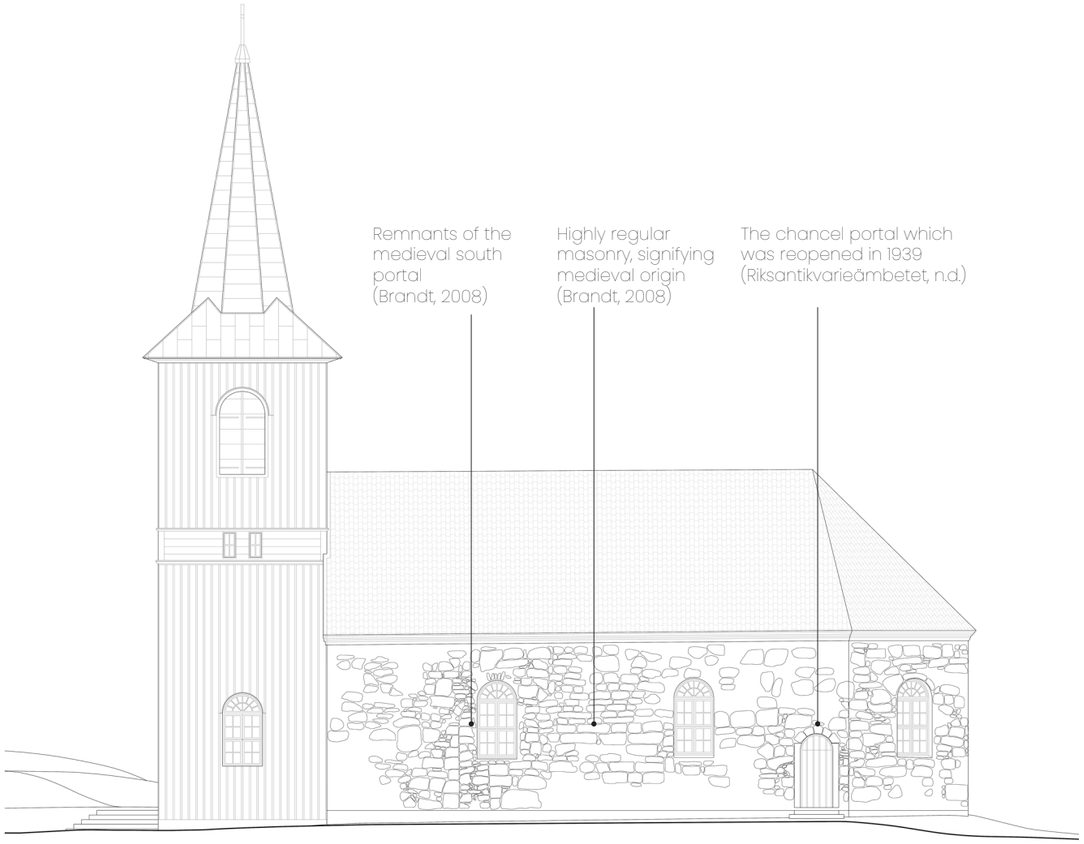


Fig. 41 Top

Southern facade with its uncovered masonry. Right beside the left window the medieval south portal is hinted in the masonry.

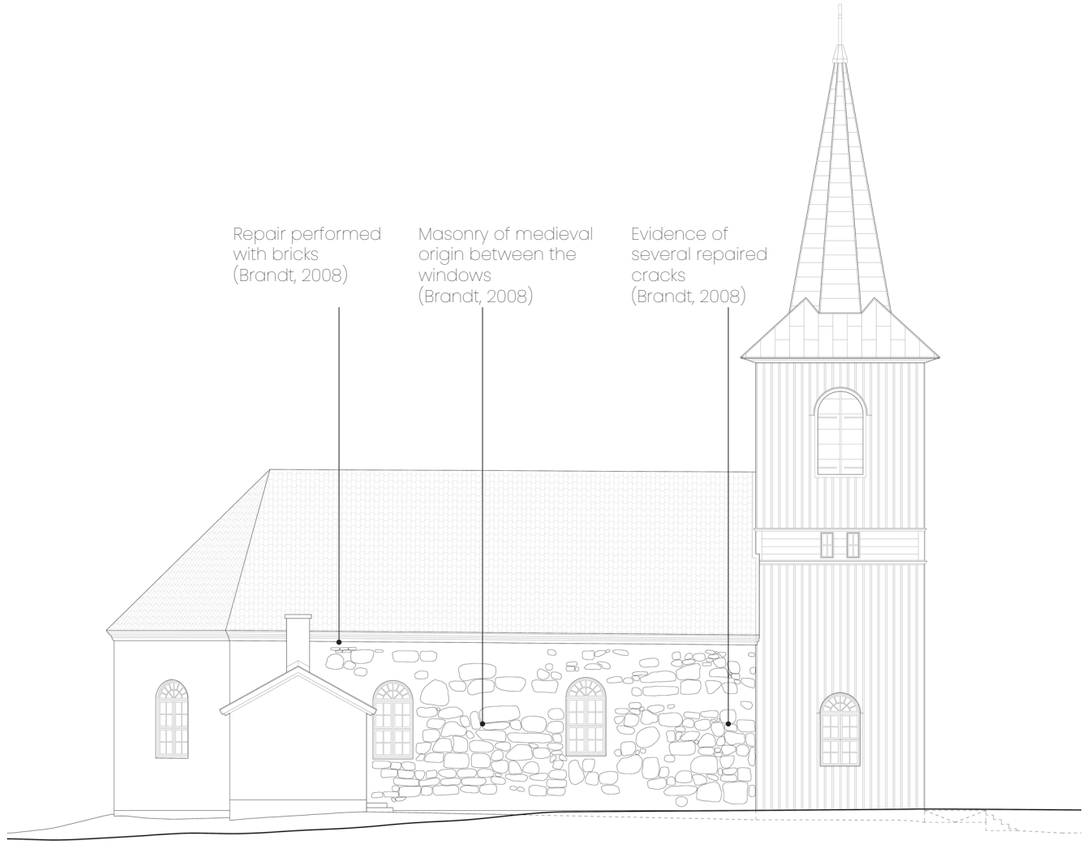
Scale: 1:200

Fig. 42 Middle

Mapped archive photographs on the facade.

Fig. 43-45 Bottom

Archive photographs from 1939.
Photos: Axel Forssén; Oscar Färdig; Axel Forssén, all public domain.



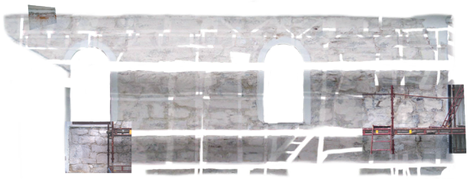


Fig. 46 Top

Northern facade with its uncovered masonry.

Fig. 47 Middle

Mapped archive photographs on the facade.

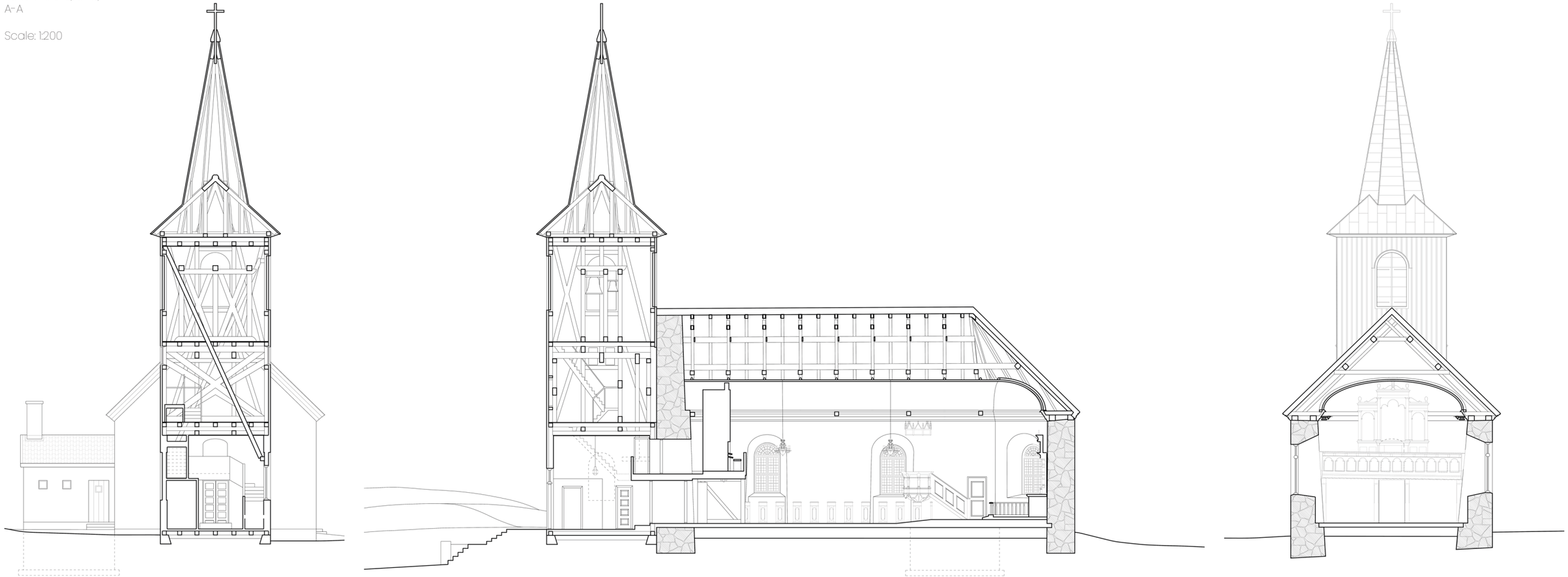
Fig. 48-52 Bottom

Archive photographs from 2007.
Photos: Thomas Brandt, used with permission

Fig. 53-55

Sections B-B, C-C, A-A

Scale: 1:200



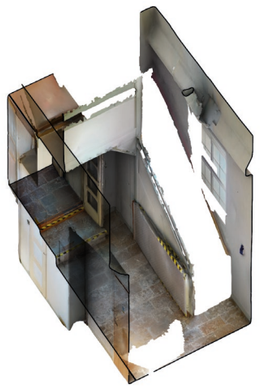


Fig. 56

Axonometry of a photogrammetry taken in 2023 showing the porch.
Photogrammetry: Carl-Johan Claesson, used with permission

Fig. 57

Section C-C of the photogrammetry of the nave and porch.
Photogrammetry: Carl-Johan Claesson, used with permission

Fig. 58

Section B-B of the photogrammetry showing the gallery.
Photogrammetry: Carl-Johan Claesson, used with permission

The tower

The tower is a timber structure with several layers of redundancy in the horizontal bracing to safely carry the loads of the swinging church bells (Fig. 61). The second floor of the tower (Fig. 59-60) is mainly used for storage of unused inventories but is quite obstructed by the bracing members. Clad with copper, the roof was repaired in 2016.

Fig. 59 Left

The pulpit and soundroof from 1877 which still is stored in the second floor of the tower.

Fig. 60
Bottom left

The second floor of the tower.

Fig. 61
Bottom right

The third floor of the tower where the church-bells are mounted.

The sacristy

Serving as a workspace and storage for the people working in the church, the sacristy (Fig. 62-63) is secluded from the rest of the church. In the basement, the oil-boiler is left from when it served as the source of heating for the church which explains the existence of the chimney. The sacristy walls are made out of brick, which also clads the floor. The roof is carried by a small timber truss (Fig. 64).

Fig. 62 Right

The sacristy as seen from the chancel.

Fig. 63 Left

The main window in the sacristy.

Fig. 64 Bottom

Roof eave detail of the sacristy

Scale 1:20

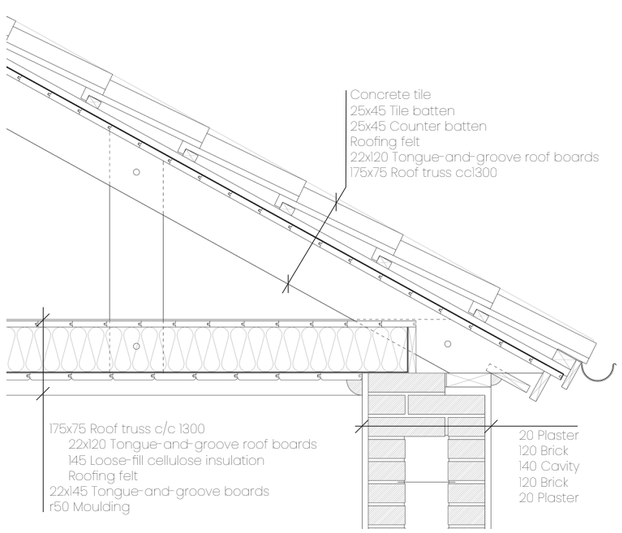


Fig. 65-66 Left

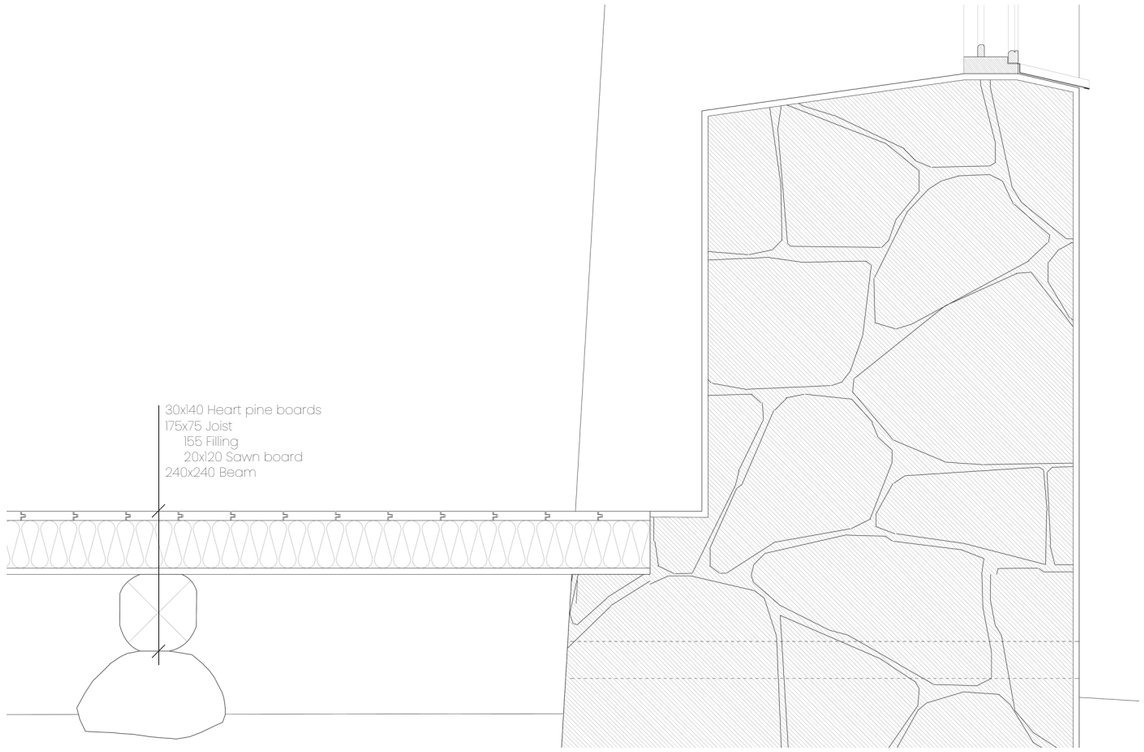
Photographs from the attic over the nave

Fig. 67 Bottom

Detail of the floor in the nave

Scale: 1:20

Through archival research of historical drawings and own photographs of the nave attic (Fig. 28-29) and crawlspace, the structure of the church is understood. The stone masonry walls are 1,6m at their thickest, tapering up toward the roof. Having evidently been altered, repaired and retrofitted multiple times, the current timber truss holds the roof over the nave leaving a thin timber shell only carrying itself as the visible vault (Fig. 68). Underneath the concrete roof tiles, there is probably an old timber-shingle roof covered by a layer of plywood according to Kristin Balksten (2024), as stated in her assessment of the roof where she argues it is in need of replacement. The floor of the nave is made of pine, put there in the 1940s, and below the floor is a ventilated crawlspace (Fig. 67).



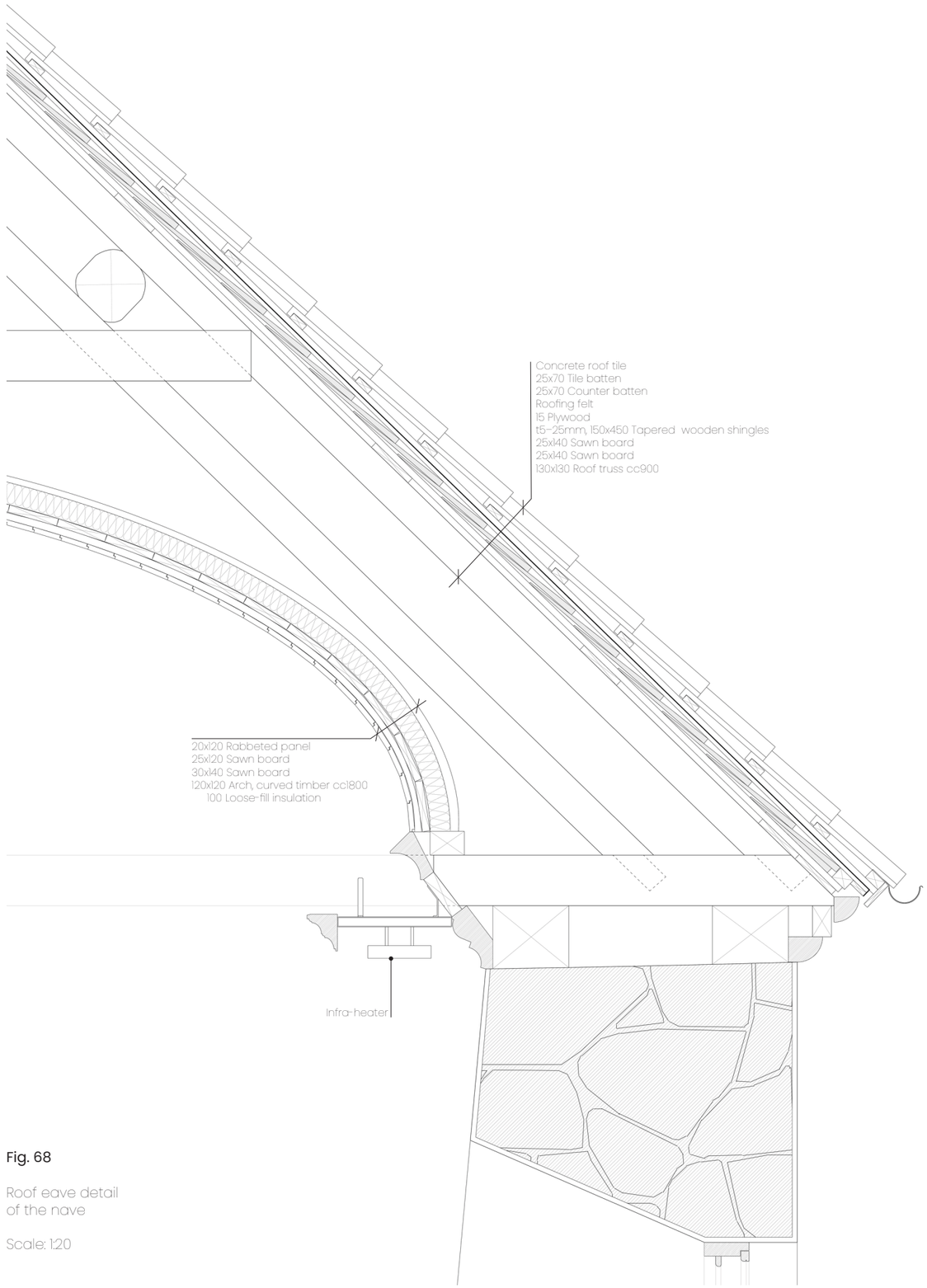


Fig. 68

Roof eave detail of the nave

Scale: 1:20

Heritage evaluation & Design strategy

The whole church is high in both building- and architectural-historic value. Due to conservations it retains little patina and the overall appearance is unified, by stylistic choice, to the detriment of pedagogical value. Comparing the church to the others in the parish, the church can be seen as low in rarity and representativity due to the other churches being of higher cultural-historical values in general. This fact supports the aim of adaptive reuse of Håby church since similar values will be preserved in other churches and therefore Håby doesn't necessarily need to be preserved as a monument as well. In contrast to the parish of Munkedals' view earlier discussed, that the cultural-historic values of the church are diminished since it has been altered several times, one could argue that these alterations provide significant cultural-historical values. Showcasing these alterations and different manifestations could therefore add pedagogical value.

Overarching strategy

The goal is to increase pedagogical value, as emphasized by Unnerbäck (2002) through a communicative approach to conservation as outlined by Cosgrove among others (Muñoz Viñas, 2005). This is done by analyzing the most important traces and values in a particular part of the building and clarifying them, sometimes by removal of less significant layers similarly to Lundberg (1964). This can either be done by preservation in the spirit of Ruskin in parts with already high authenticity and clarity, or by restoration according to Viollet-le-Duc in parts where layers have been lost or stripped of their clarity. The goal is to travel through time when walking through the building similarly to Sala Beckett (Flores & Prats, 2020) and perceiving each layer not simultaneously but in sequence. Since the object of transformation is already chosen, an architectural approach to the adaptive reuse of Håby church is applied (Pleevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019).

All new additions to the building should build upon the existing layers, either through referencing or contrasting, but be of a weight that is equal to the existing as both Lundberg and Flores & Prats would have done, further reinforcing the sequence being constructed.

Pedagogical conservation:

The evaluation of the parts of the building on the following page (Fig. 69) is structured according to the following flow-chart:

Time-period & location

↓

Evaluation

↓

Strategy

Reading instructions:

All following drawings of the design proposal follow the same color coding:

- Existing
- Additions
- Reused within the building *(incl. moved, disassembled & reassembled and repurposed)*

Fig. 69

Axonometry of the proposed alterations and additions to Håby church

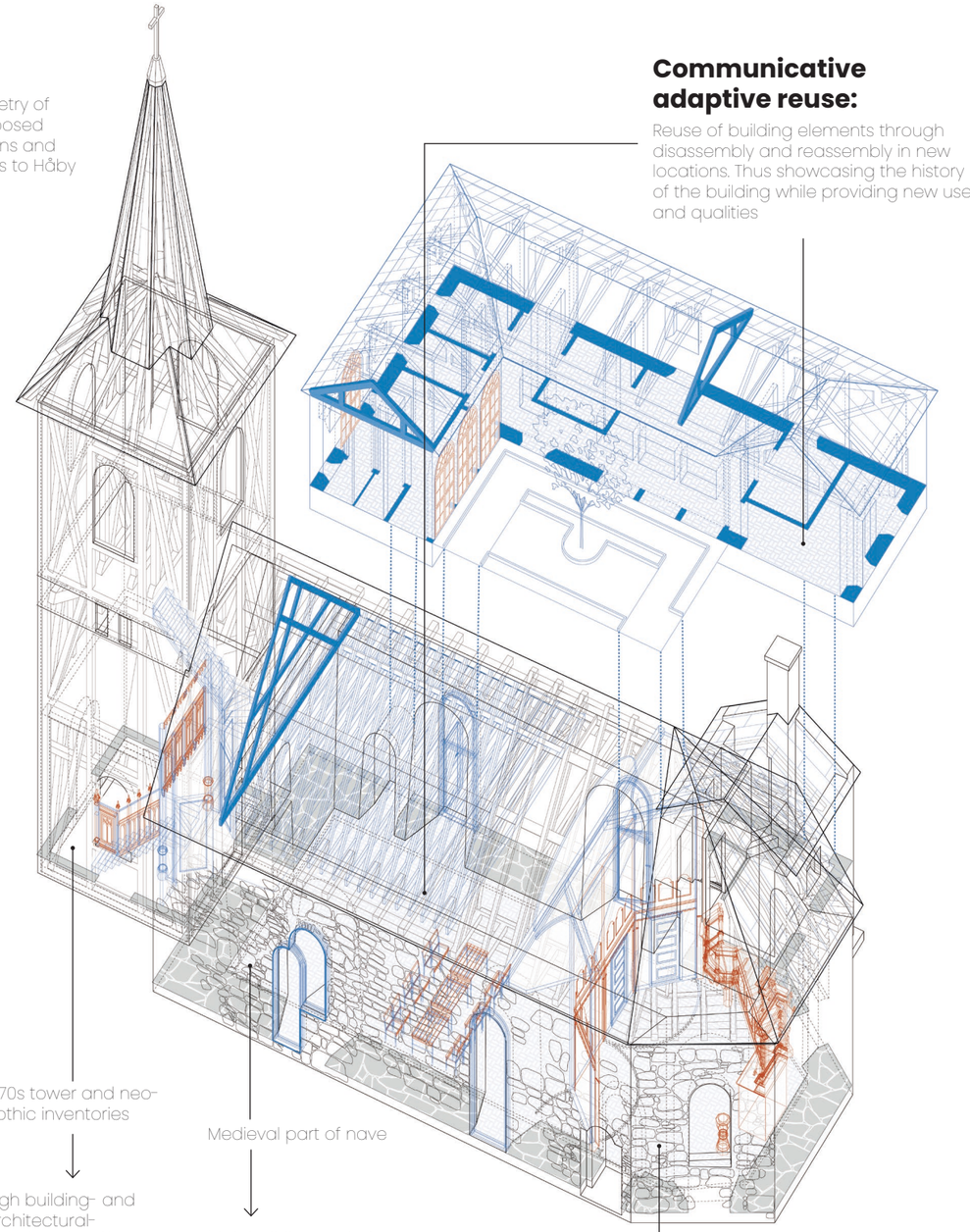


Fig. 70

The cellar of the sacristy where the road sign for when Håby was a road church is still stored.

Program

Due to the high cultural-historic values inherent in the church inventories, and so much of the identity of the church being tied to them, the total transformation to a secular use is ruled out. This decision is also made since the cemetery surrounding the church will continue to exist for the foreseeable future and people will continue coming to the church grounds to mourn their loved ones. Consequently, a program partially retaining the use of the church will facilitate keeping the inventories and being able to hold funerals in the vicinity of the cemetery.

A road church is in Sweden defined as a "resting-place for the soul" where a passer-by can stop to go to the restroom, get a smaller snack and stop to reflect. It's open during summers and should have daily small church-services, but other than that it is similar to any rest-stop along a motorway. Håby has under an unknown period in the 20th century been a road church and the road sign is still stored in the cellar of the sacristy (Fig. 70).

For the adaptive reuse of Håby church, the program of road church is very suitable due to its location along the E6, however the usual program will in this case be somewhat extended to include a full restaurant, making the church more of a destination than just a stop. The program will also be expanded to have a dining hall/event space that can serve as a rentable space when not used as a restaurant, providing the possibility of locals renting the space for larger events. This also creates a good venue for weddings. Håby road church is intended to be open the whole year round. The program thus allows for being a source of income for the church or any owner, and could therefore attract investors.

Current issues

When carrying out the transformation, some basic issues regarding the current function of the building need to be addressed:

- Accessibility provided by means of improvised solutions such as movable ramps.
- Roof needs to be replaced
- High current cost of heating
- Only linear flows through building

New program

Chapel	Can be housed in preserved 1731 chancel, to be openable toward rest of nave
Dining hall / event space	Benches removed and transformed into new chairs for more flexible use and furnishing
Kitchen	Addition built due to demand for space and new technical equipment and spaces for staff
Toilets	New accessible toilets located near to entrance

Future use and adaptation

If the current trend of decreased demand for churches continues, the church can further in the future be taken out of service and perhaps only the secular program of the new Håby church is preserved. However, if the trend changes and the demand for churches is increased, the proposed additions to Håby church can serve well as a parish home and the whole nave can once again be used as a church. This possibility for future adaptation is a goal for the adaptive reuse of Håby church.

A transformation should be one that considers itself a permanent addition to the building, while recognizing that it most likely will be changed in the future (as all previous alterations and rehabilitations to the building have been) and therefore allows for that flexibility in its design. This separates this intervention from the historical additions. The previous additions have seen themselves as the end result, permitting only that use unless significantly altered.

Volume studies

To house the added kitchen, toilets and staff areas, an addition is proposed (Fig. 73). For the addition to fit in but still be able to mark itself as something new, volume studies departed from the common ways that medieval churches have been expanded historically in Sweden as the research project Sockenkyrkorna (Dahlberg & Franzén, 2008) has visualized in Figure 71. The following properties were seen as preferable and where used to evaluate which volume was the most fitting:

- Keeping the sacristy
- Keeping the current exterior appearance of the church as seen from the road
- Minimal effect on cemetery
- Minimal effect on existing trees
- Possibility for additional flows through building
- Possibility for utilizing the multiple levels of the existing church
- Main entrance is the same as the accessible entrance
- No obstruction of sunlight into the nave

The amount of added floorspace coming from the addition was also seen as preferable to be around 100 square meters to fit the new program, but a good volume was prioritized above larger added area.

Alterations of type II, III and V (Fig. 71) already have been carried out on Håby. To preserve the chancel, the volume studies focus on alterations of type I, II, IV and a combination of approaches and intuition as indicated in Figure 72.

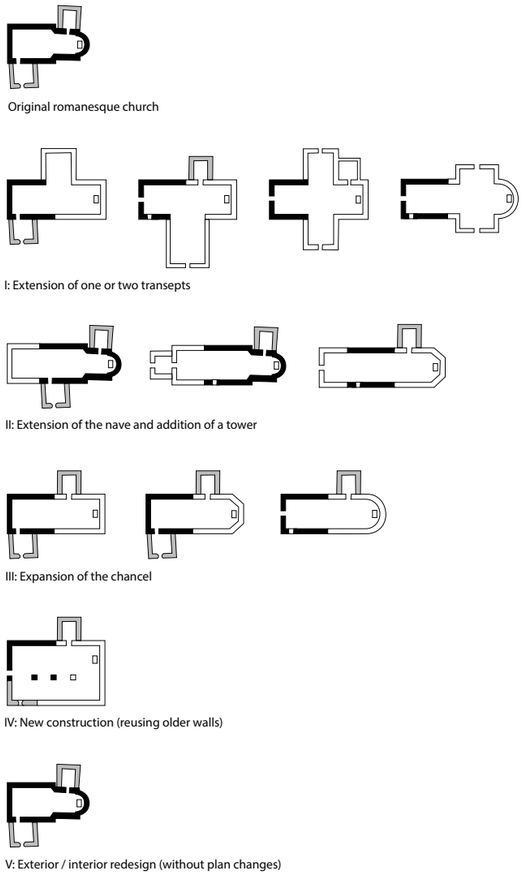


Fig. 71

Typical historical alterations to a medieval church. Illustration from "Sockenkyrkornas förnyelse genom ombyggnad" (Dahlberg & Franzén, 2008, p.276), used with permission. Text translated from Swedish to English.

Fig. 72

Photograph of the 3D-printed volume studies

Model scale: 1:1000

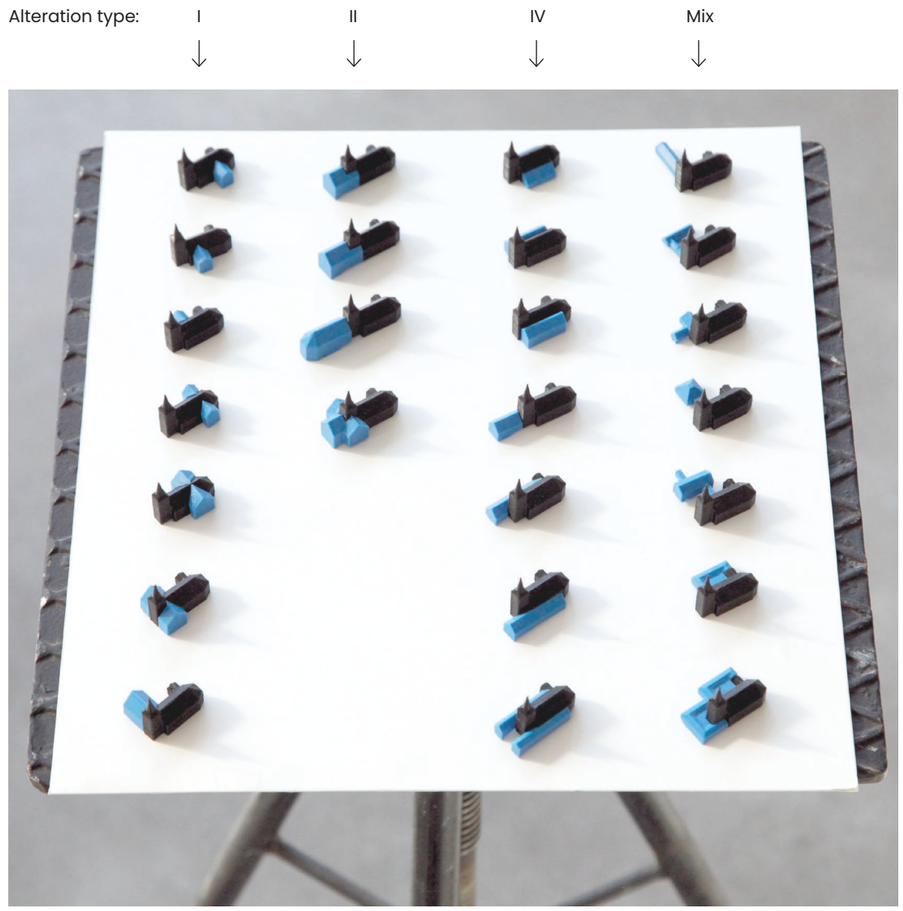


Fig. 73

The chosen volume for the addition, photographed from the 3D-printed model of it on the site.

Model scale: 1:1000

Design Proposal

Fig. 74

Exterior
perspective

Håby vägkyrka

Coming from the E6 or from the adjacent road, Håby church looks mostly as it has done the last 100 years, however on the north side of the church a low volume peeks out behind the tree next to the tower (Fig. 74). The parking lot in front of the church is preserved and an accessible parking is provided in the space between the maintenance building and the addition (Fig. 75). The whole ground floor (Fig. 75) is unified without steps, except for the sacristy which keeps its tiling and floor level.

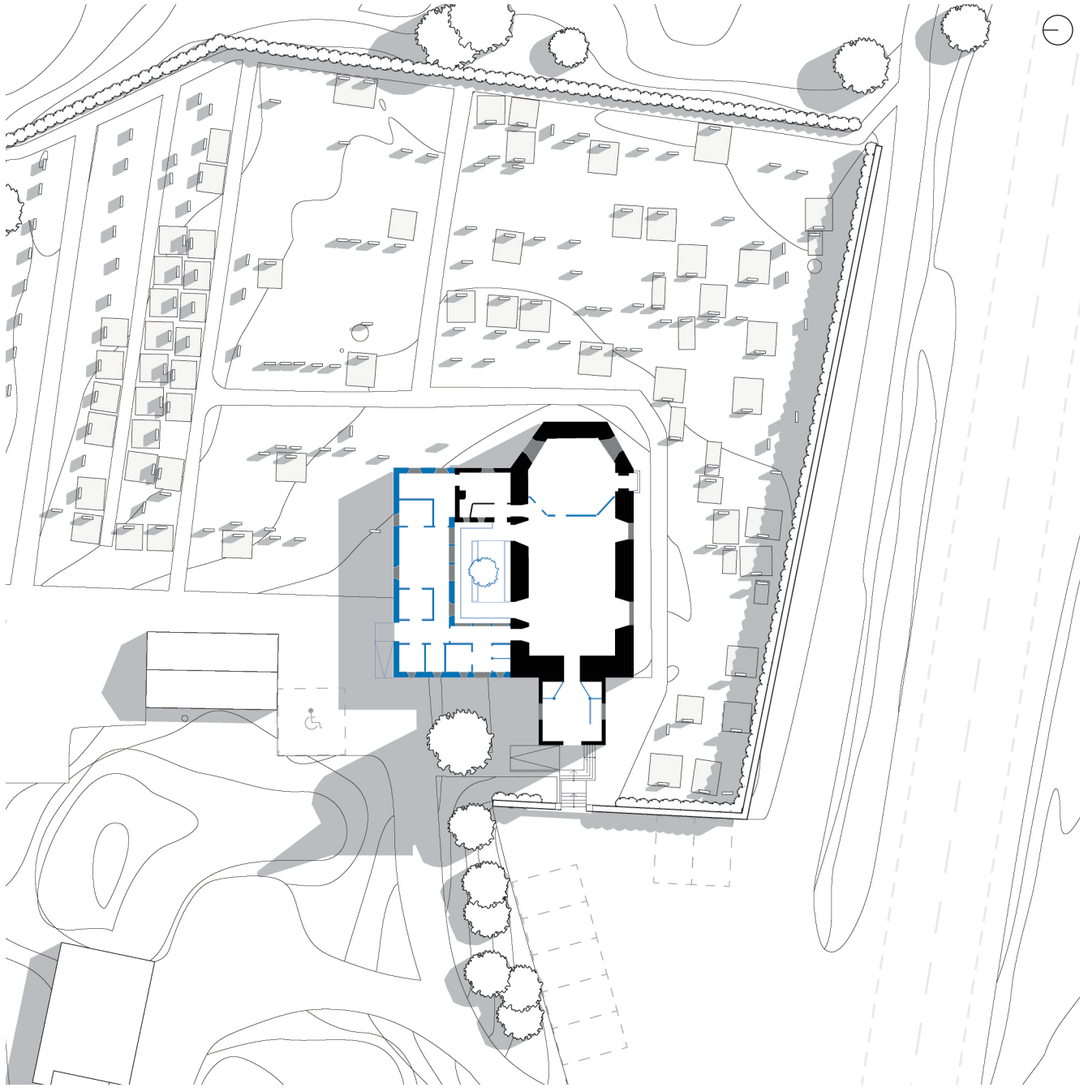


Fig. 75

Siteplan

Scale 1:500

Fig. 76

Plan of the design proposal

Scale: 1:150

Fig. 77-78 Model pictures of the site model

Scale: 1:300

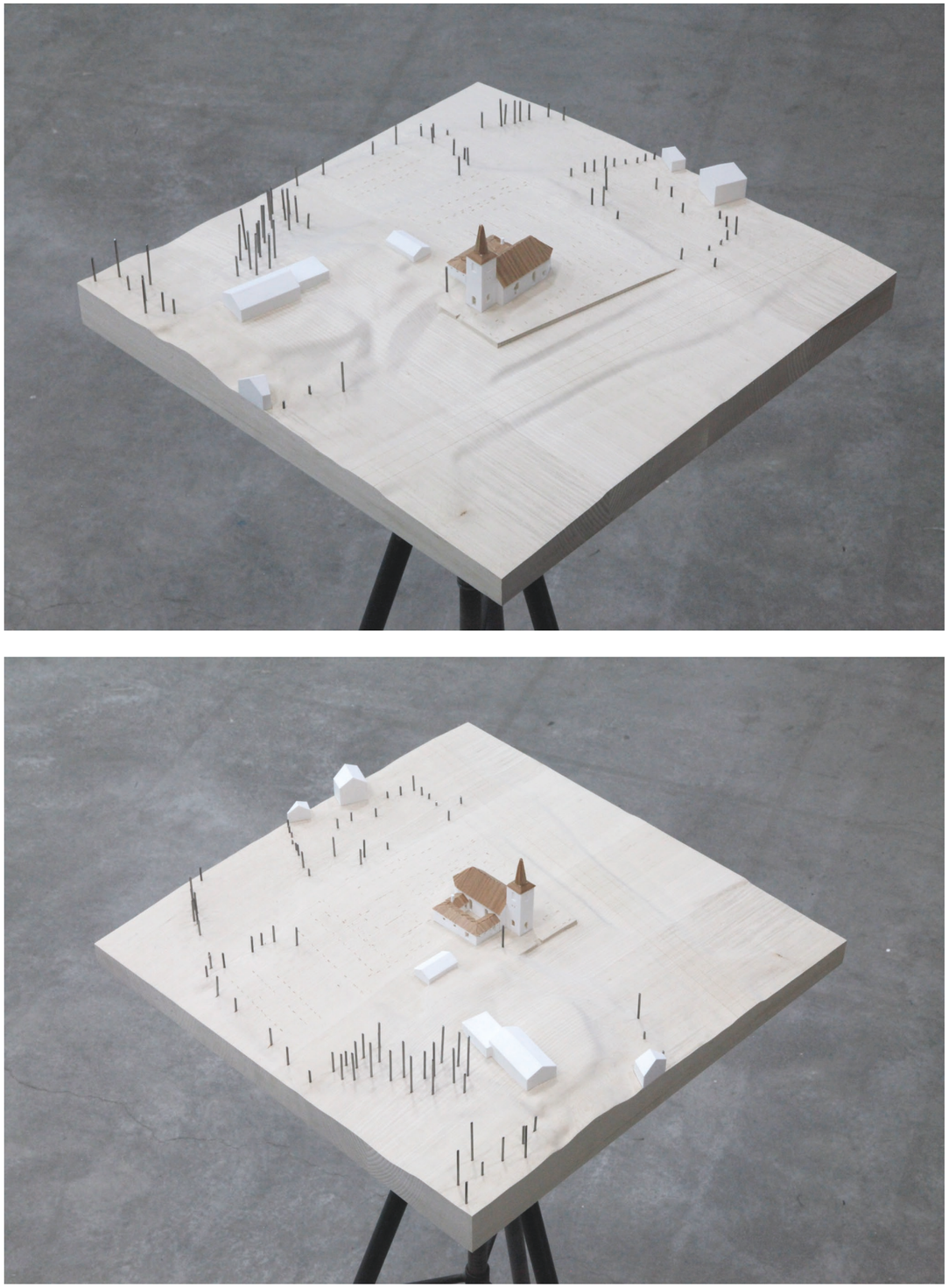
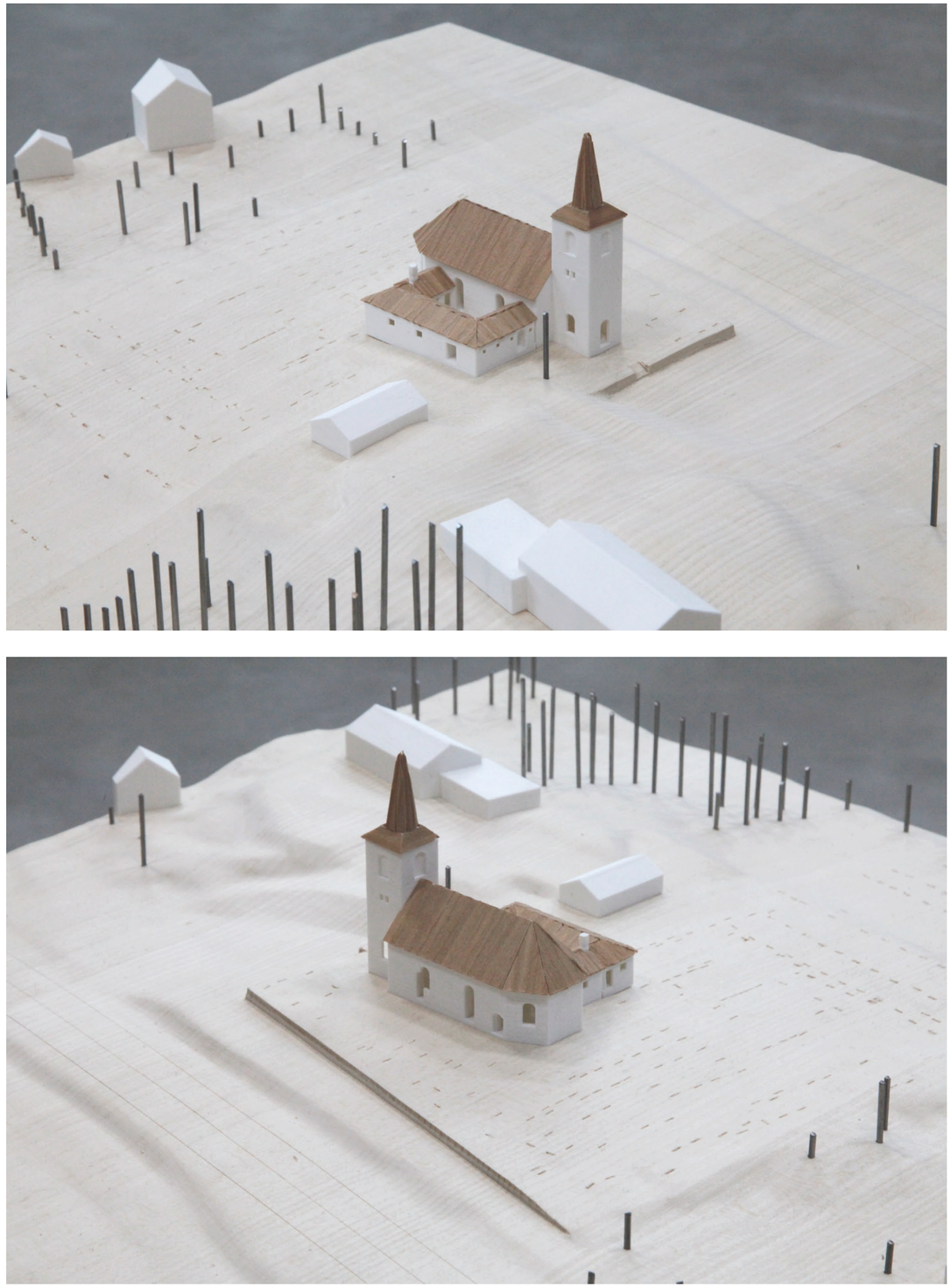
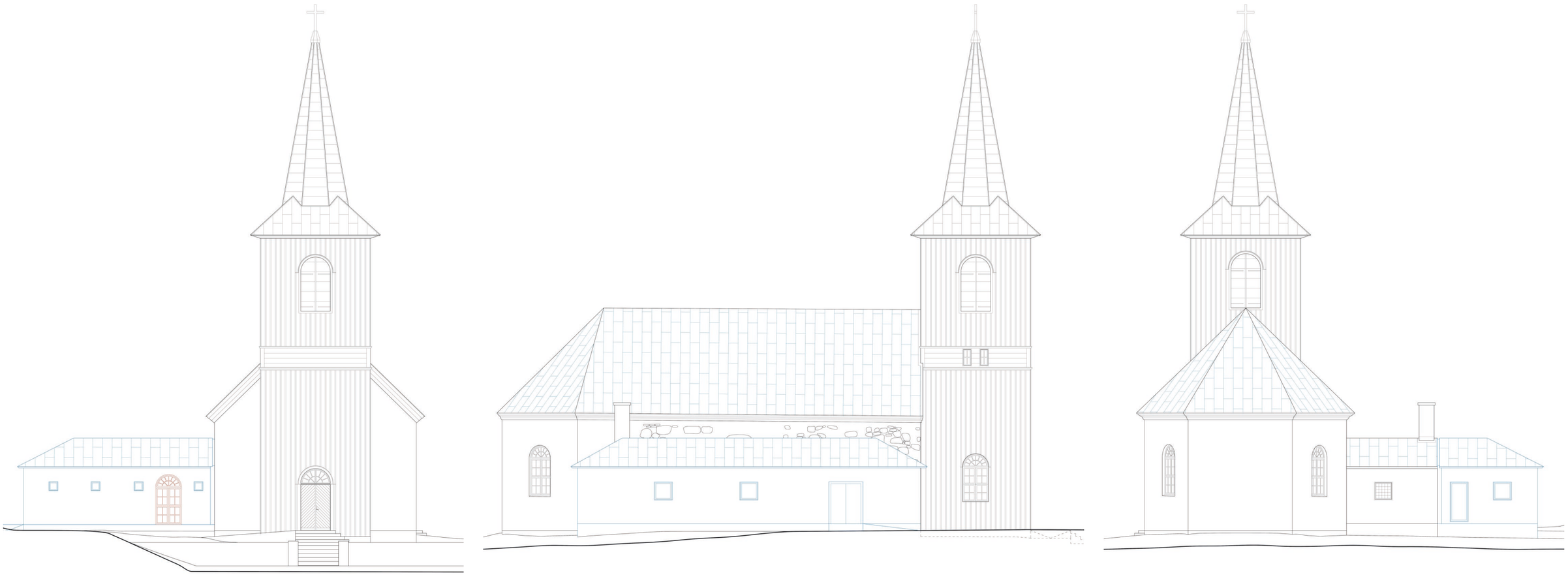


Fig. 79-80 Close-up model pictures of the site model

Scale: 1:300





Additional building volume

Materials as a pedagogical tool

To communicate the different phases of the existing while unifying them, firstly the roof in need of repair is exchanged from concrete tiles to copper cladding (Fig 81-83). This is to refer to the tower roof and unify the building volumes. To further communicate the different volumes, reclaimed copper is used for the roof over the nave and sacristy while new copper is used for the addition. Thus even when having weathered over time, the distinction between the volumes will be shown. This communicative approach influences the whole of the additional building volume.

Secondly, the addition will similarly to the nave and sacristy have a rendered exterior surface. Preserving the current roughcast render of the sacristy, re-rendering the nave to communicate the masonry through a thin limewash and applying a smooth and precise render to the addition lets the volumes communicate while contributing to a collected whole (Fig. 84).

Fig. 81-83 Top

West, north & east elevations.

Scale: 1:200

Fig. 84

Facade materials.

The courtyard

The addition extends the volume of the sacristy, wraps it around to the west and connects it back into the church. Attaching to the church on just two points minimizes the impression on the current facade. Instead the addition creates a courtyard, framing the facade and emphazising the now revealed masonry.

In the nave, the windows are enlarged down to the new floor level, creating tall arches so that one can percieve the true thickness of the masonry walls. The four existing windows are moved to the addition and replaced by new ones with doors toward the courtyard. Moving the windows to the addition and placing them next to each other in the corridor (Fig. 87) creates a space reminiscent of a *cloister*, a covered often arched walkway facing a courtyard, often present in monasteries. The rearranging of objects within the building as a communicative strategy is inspired by Sala Beckett and further exemplified by the reuse of the light fixtures from 1933 in new spots.

Facing the courtyard from the side of the kitchen, the windows continue the same gesture while balancing the needs for sunlight and a reasonable amount of transparency into the workspace (Fig. 86).

As seen in the transversal section of the nave (Fig. 85), the roof truss is replaced with one inspired by the medieval roof truss in the part of the nave where the masonry walls are known to be of medieval origin.

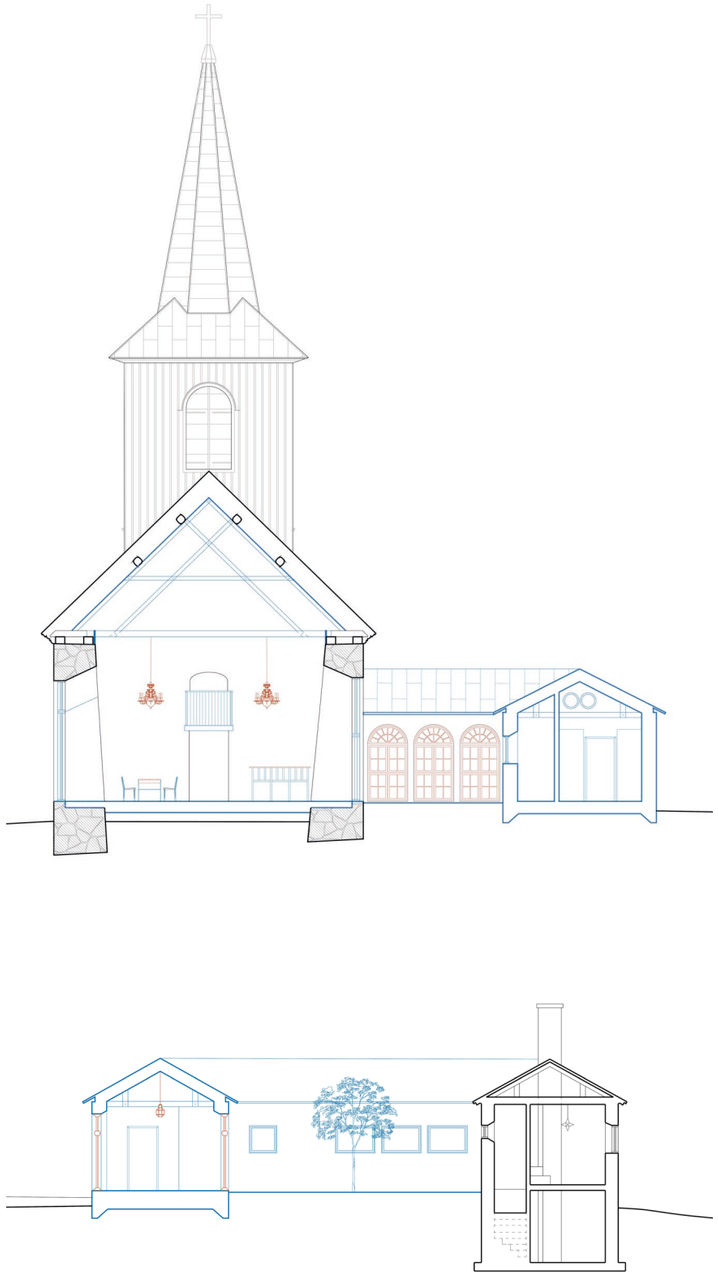


Fig. 85 Top

Section &
Elevation B-B

Scale: 1:200

Fig. 86 Bottom

Section &
Elevation D-D

Fig. 87

View from the addition into the nave with the reused nave windows lining the corridor to the left

New and old - masonry and eaves

As previously stated, the concrete tile roofs are replaced with copper cladding. This is done by simply adding a layer of plywood, bituminous membrane and the copper sheets on top of the existing structure (Fig. 89), replacing what is in a bad condition along the way. Over the nave where the roof truss is replaced, additional insulation is added on the inside of the roof (Fig. 91). Over the chancel, insulation is replaced and supplemented over the wooden vault (Fig. 90).

This additional insulation is put in place to solve the stated issues of high heating costs. Further aiding the matter, the floor is replaced with a much more well-insulated one while still retaining the crawlspace under the nave. The new floor incorporates waterborne in-floor heating with a clay tile surface finish (Fig. 92).

In the new addition, the roof eave is designed to reflect the contemporary with a thin, almost hovering, eave (Fig. 88). This contrasts the existing with with both moulding and fascia and aims to incorporate Lundberg's thoughts of clearly separating the new from the old while giving great care to the design of the new (Lundberg, 1964). The addition takes inspiration from the existing masonry with stone and brick by incorporating a non-structural but insulating form of masonry made up of hemplime. The structural system supporting the masonry is a timber frame inspired by the structure of the tower and with roof trusses inspired by the ones in the sacristy.

Next page:

Fig. 90
Top right

Roof detail over the chapel.

Scale: 1:20

Fig. 91
Middle

Roof eave detail of the nave

Fig. 92
Bottom Left

Floor detail in the nave

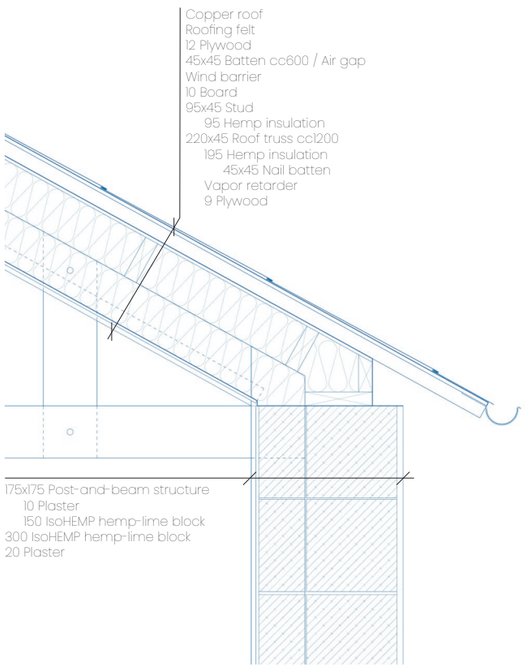
Fig. 88 Left

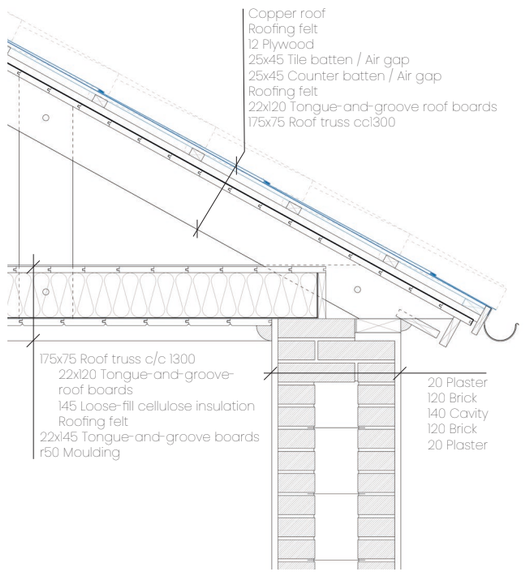
Roof eave detail of the addition

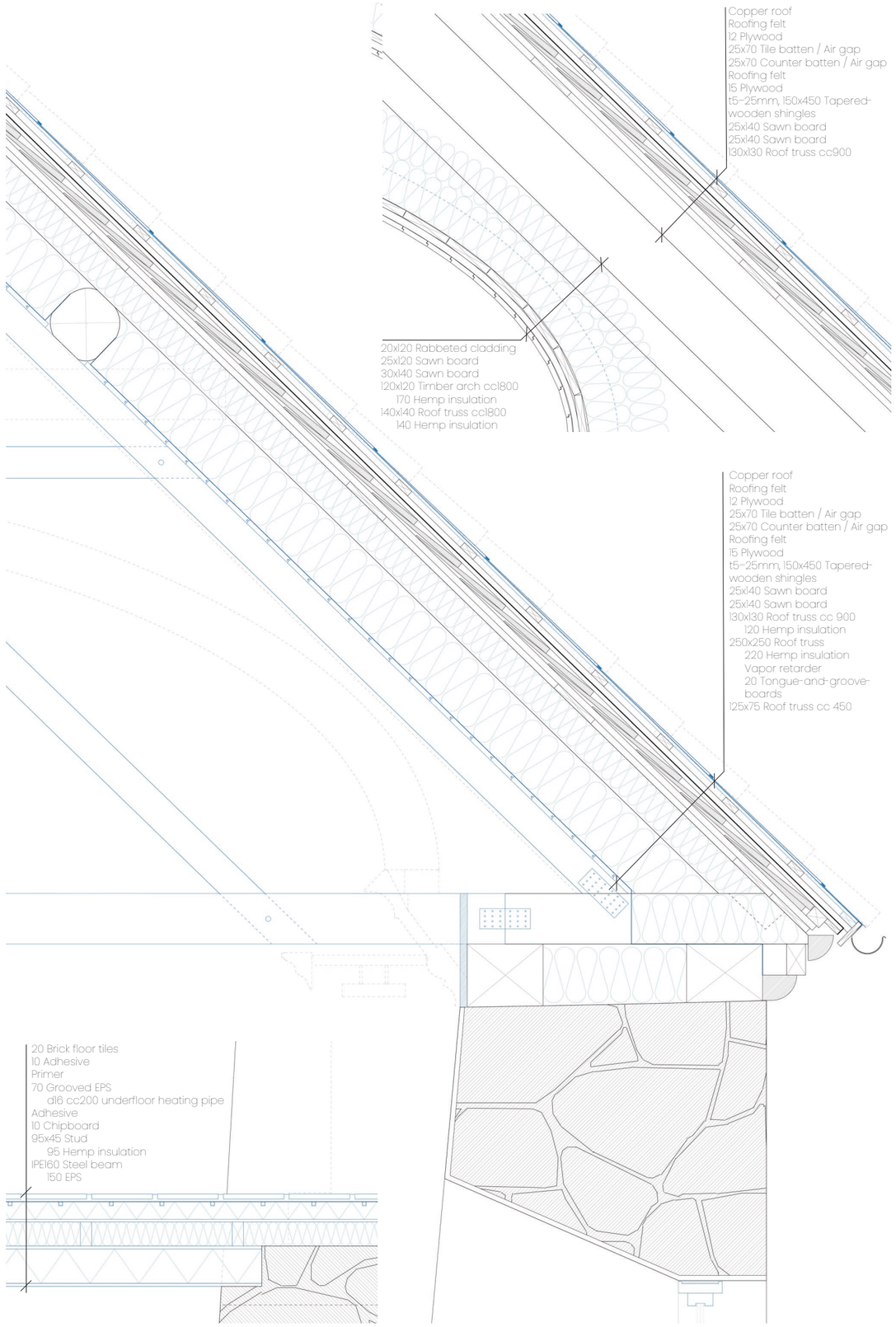
Fig. 89 Right

Roof eave detail of the sacristy

Scale 1:20







Medieval nave

Revealing and reactivating lost traces

As previously stated, the part of the nave with known medieval masonry walls incorporates reconstructed versions of the known medieval roof truss. This aims to be an approach strengthening the pedagogical values and readability of the structure, emphasizing the time-period differences between the parts of the nave. The tightly spaced rafters create a sort of suspended ceiling, but with a significant depth. The member dimensions, spacing of 450mm cc and overall typology is the same as the south-Norwegian style of roof truss as in the middle ages, but the height to width ratio has been adjusted to fit the current roof.

This intervention includes the removal of both the benches, the gallery, moulding, parts of the roof truss and interior coloration from this part of the nave (Fig. 93). Thus, many traces are lost but the aim is to clarify the overall pedagogical value of the church, similarly to Lundberg's approach in Götene church.

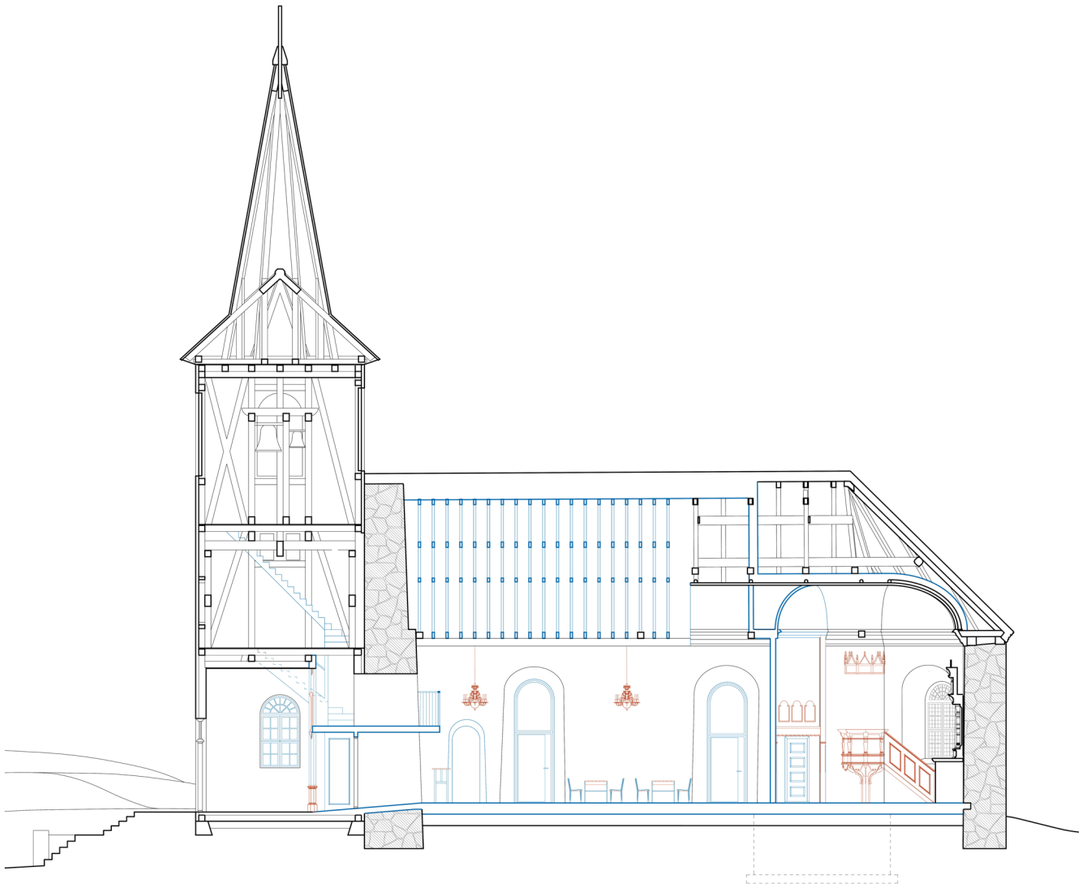


Fig. 93 Bottom

Section E-E

Scale 1:200

Fig. 94

View towards the chancel when the dividing walls are opened.

Fig. 95

View towards the dividing wall when it serves as a dining hall.

The south portal

When the south portal below the southwest window in the nave was discovered during the re-render in 1939, nothing was done to emphasize its existence. This time however, the portal is reopened while preserving the opening of the original window to show both manifestations simultaneously (Fig. 97). The creation of the arches in the nave by enlarging the existing window openings down to the floor (Fig. 93 & 96) is also informed by the history of the building. Several times these openings have been altered and enlarged and this is just one further iteration of the same pattern.

The approach to these openings aims to be communicative and in the case of the south portal, the geometry is readable as not only an extension of something existing. Together with the exposed masonry this aims both to be communicative and pedagogical. Additionally, the windows lack mullions and intend to communicate the present in yet another layer of history. Together, this creates and interplay between the medieval south portal, the 1700s window opening and the present adaptive reuse.

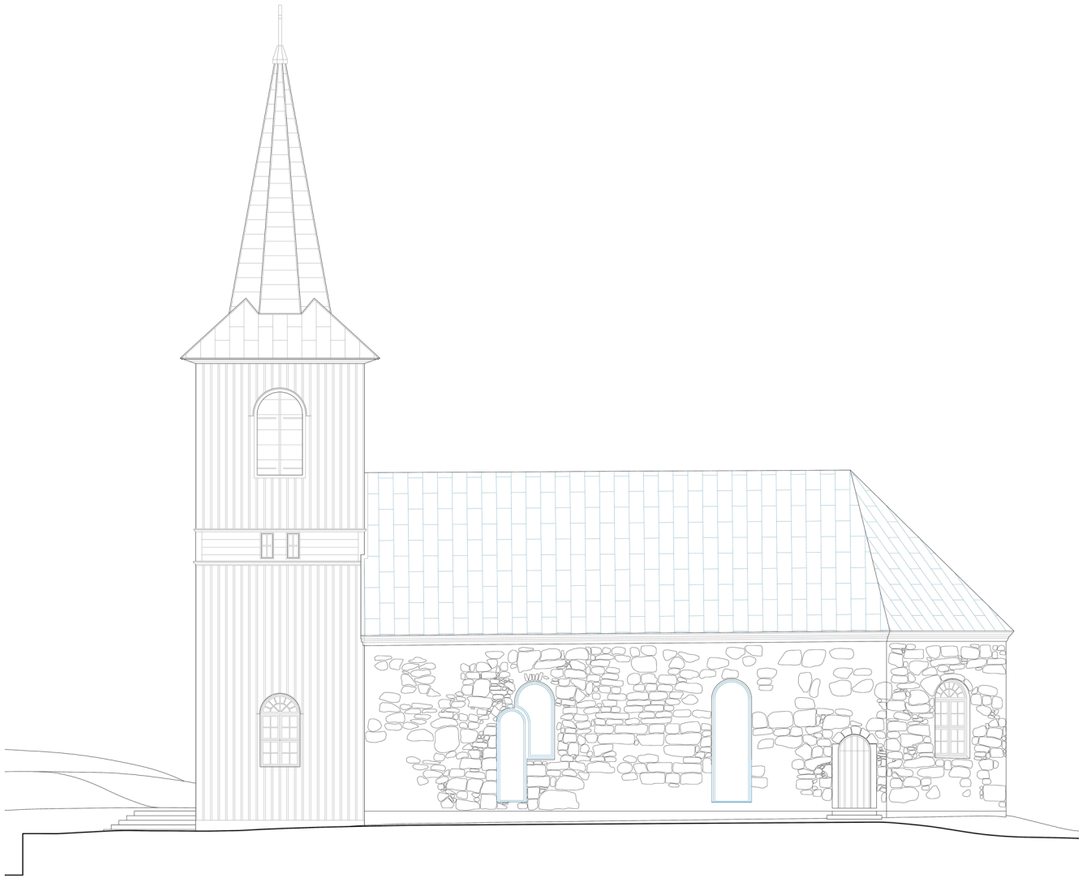


Fig. 96

South elevation

Scale 1:200

Fig. 97

View through the reopened south portal through the nave.

Dividing wall & Chapel

To partially preserve the function of the building as a church, the chancel is converted into a small chapel (Fig. 100). Due to the expansion of the chancel into its current three-sided shape occuring in 1731, and the current interior coloring being in a 1700s style and chosen to complement the late 1600s inventories, the conservational strategy applied here is preservation.

Toward the chancel, an openable dividing wall (Fig. 94) is put in place to facilitate separation between and different activities in the two spaces. The side facing the dining hall clearly separates itself from the surrounding walls, both through material and design (Fig. 95).

Seeking to preserve the existing appearance, the facade of the gallery and its paintings which were removed from the western part of the nave is incorporated and mimicked in the parts of the dividing wall facing the chapel (Fig. 98). This is not an act of classical preservation, however it aims for the preservation of appearance and cultural-historical heritage values.

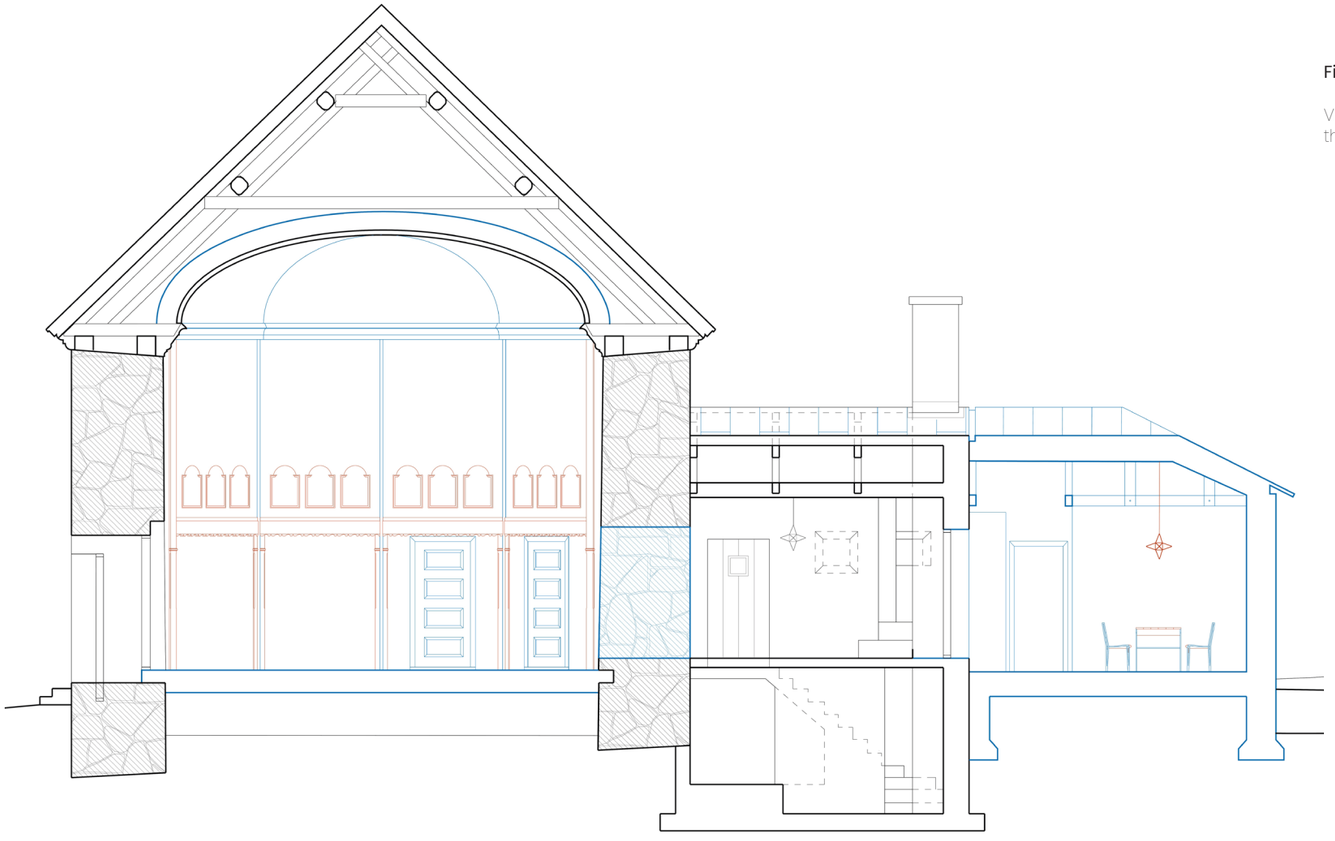


Fig. 98

Section A-A showing the dividing wall facing the chapel reusing the parts of the removed gallery.

Scale 1:100

Fig. 99

Isometric drawings showing the opening mechanism of the dividing wall.

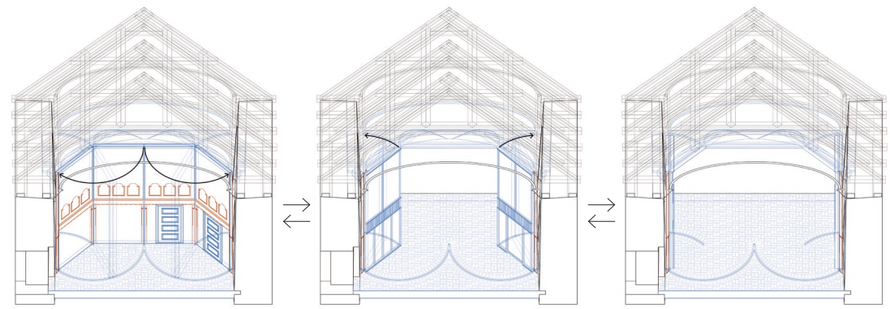


Fig. 100

View from inside the chapel.

Tables & Chairs

The existing benches are made from solid wood and although a bit worn, they can be reused. The new dining hall needs seating and the flexible space would benefit from a flexible seating solution, therefore a movable stackable chair made from the parts of the old benches is proposed (Fig. 107). Preserving the patina of the benches, the wood-imitation paint on the benches is kept as-is and lets the chairs speak about their past. Contrasting the reused parts, a new steel frame with legs is designed to hold the seat and backrest. The material choice aims for a clear communication and to further apply Lundberg's idea of manifesting the present.

When remaking the floor, the pine floorboards are replaced with brick, which lends the boards to be used elsewhere. With a similar steel frame to the chairs, the boards are assembled into tables (Fig. 107).

By disassembly and reassembly with a communicative approach, the chairs and tables are intended to embody the adaptive reuse on a further, more detailed scale. Working with interventions in such a way is inspired by the custom-built furniture and rearranging of assets in Sala Beckett.

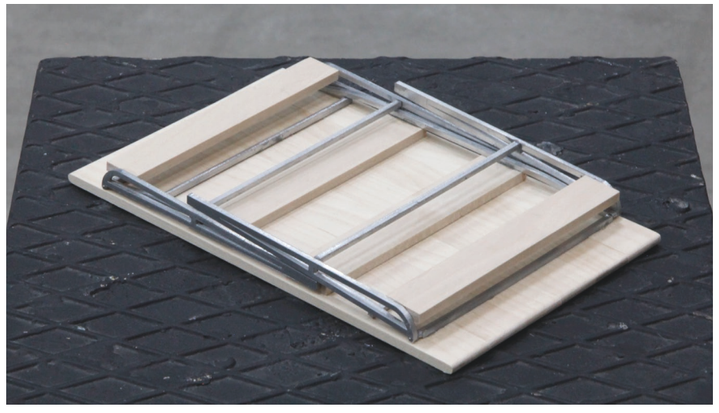


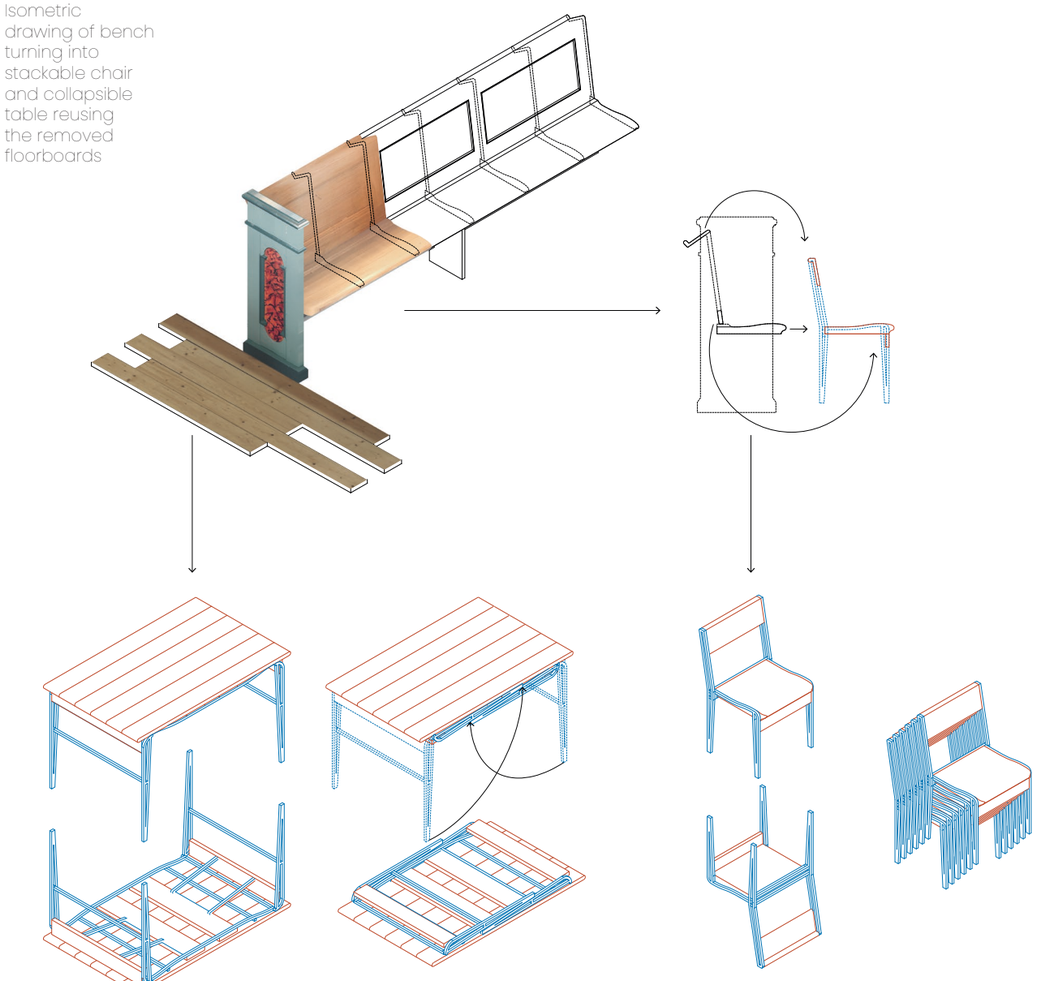
Fig. 101-106

Model pictures of chairs and table

Scale: 1:5

Fig. 107

Isometric drawing of bench turning into stackable chair and collapsible table reusing the removed floorboards



Tower staircase

The existing staircase has been changed in many stages and the access to the upper floors of the tower gives the impression of an improvised solution. Since the tower as well as the decommissioned pulpit stored in the tower are both from the 1870s, the design proposes a reversible disassembly of the pulpit (Fig. 109). The parts are then used in the making of the new staircase, restoring the style of the room to something closer to the 1870s appearance (Fig. 110). The currently blocked and false-window to the north is reopened (Fig. 108) which further restores the light and space in the room to its original qualities. The current limestone floors are reused in the making of the permanent accessible ramp into the nave.

Restoration in this way requires the removal of many traces. Although the traces are mostly quite recently added in this part of the church, they nonetheless speak of the history of the use, alteration and adaptation of the church. However, in this case the communication of the 1870s appearance of the church is deemed more important to support the pedagogical aspects of the transformation as a whole.

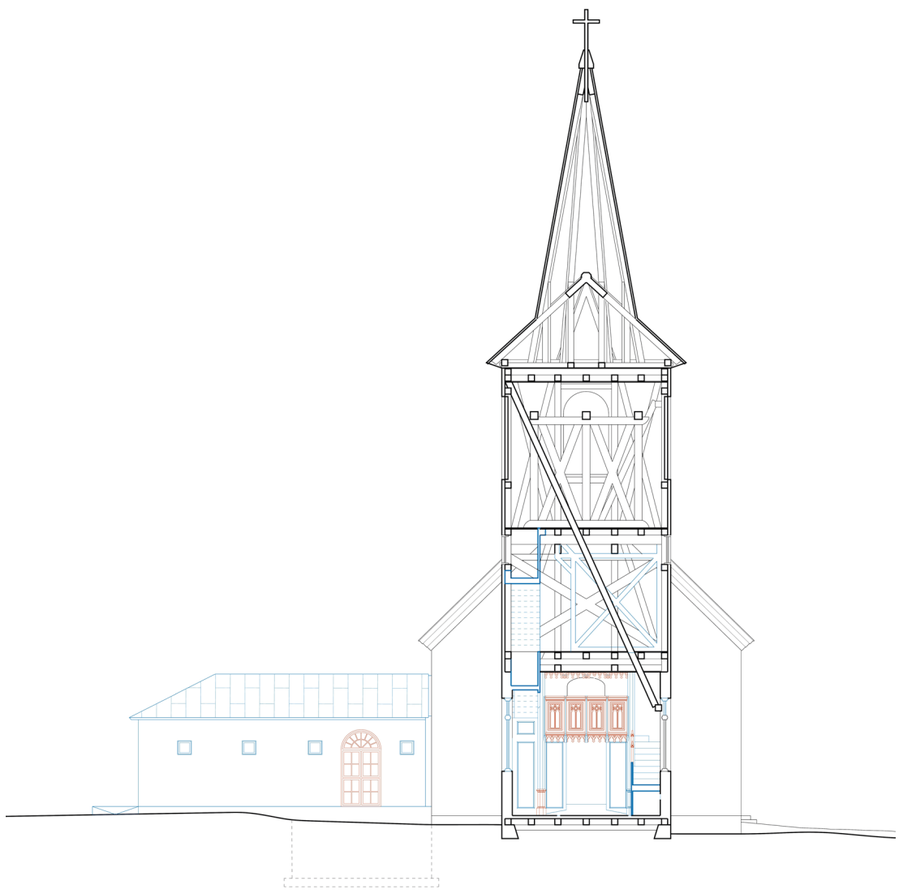


Fig. 108

Section &
Elevation C-C

Scale 1:200

Fig. 109

Isometric drawing showing the disassembly of the 1870s pulpit into pieces used in the new staircase

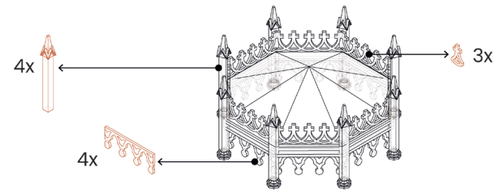
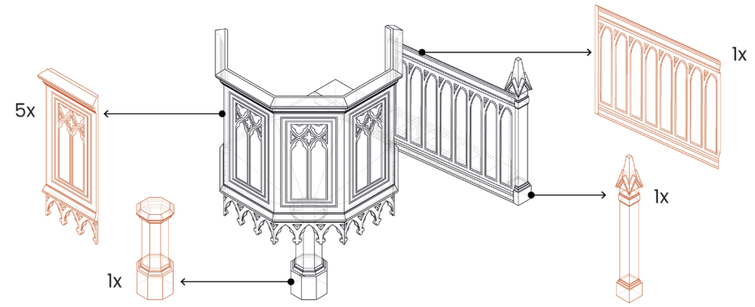
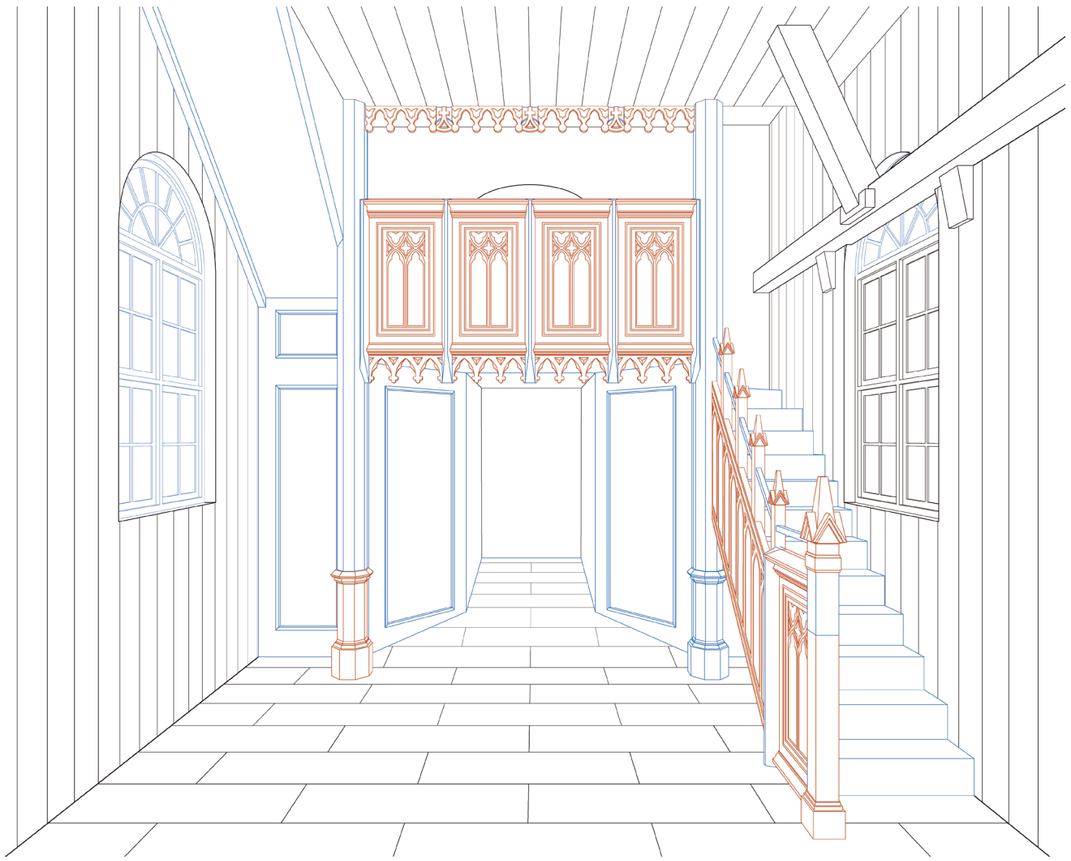


Fig. 110

Linedrawn perspective of the new staircase showing where the different elements of the pulpit have been reused





Discussion

The thesis centers around how to deal with buildings containing rich history and cultural-historical heritage. Working with both living and lost memories, the thesis explores a discussion around the importance of pedagogical value, as formulated by Unnerbäck (2002), as a strengthening value to existing cultural-historical heritage values.

After extensive archival research, site visits and attempts to understand the history of the church through documentation, reconstruction and visualization, a timeline of historical events, alterations and rehabilitations to the church was established. Along with research on how medieval churches in Sweden have historically been altered, a program reinstating Håby churchs historical use as a road church is proposed. The understanding of the history was key to realizing which historical processes of alteration and rehabilitation had preceded the current appearance of the church and thus to understand what interventions could be made that were a continuation of the history and what could be new interventions. Seeing the extent to which Håby church had been altered, the conclusion could be drawn that yet another addition to the church would be a natural continuation of its history, as would the manifestation of the current time with new additions.

When starting the thesis, one of the goals was finding a secular program for Håby church that wouldn't diminish the cultural-historical heritage values of the church. The mapping of the inventories was a way to understand the history of the church and to draw inspiration from in the adaptive reuse, however an unanticipated effect of this was the realization that so much of the history of the church lives in the inventories. Therefore, the continued use of Håby as a church, was in the beginning not a preferred solution but in the end seen as one that was needed. This need for continued use should not necessarily be seen as a fact for adaptive reuse of any church or heritage building, but it underlines the need for understanding the historical meaning of all assets in their context and what that means for a building as a whole.

The design strategy which developed out of the research employs different conservational approaches in different parts of the church in accordance to an evaluation of which cultural-historical heritage values exist there. The thesis thus restores a part of the church from the 1800s, preserves a part from the 1700s and reinterprets lost traces in a medieval part of the church, all with a communicative approach. The effect of this is a sort of concentration of heritage values into selected spots. Interspersed in and between these interventions, new elements are added which deliberately contrast the existing in an effort to communicate yet another layer of history in the building. To make these interventions visible and possible to construct at all, several historical traces were removed such as the interior of the main part of the nave, the gallery, the organ, and the staircase in the porch. However these removals made it possible to show other traces of the buildings history through communicative restoration and reinterpretation which arguably adds more value that what was lost through the removal. Furthermore, the preservation of the chancel and sacristy means that not much is entirely lost, just the presence of it is decreased in some places, and most importantly the cultural-historical values which were identified are kept. The thesis thus does not argue for removal of traces without a cause but argues that with thorough enough evaluation and consideration, removal of traces can aid in reinforcing communicative- and pedagogical values.

The aim of this design is to increase pedagogical value and therefore strengthening the existing values, which is successful in that the design proposal lets a visitor read the history of the church more clearly than in the current manifestation of the building. However one still has to have some knowledge of the history of the church to fully understand the interventions. Therefore the pedagogical values are not evident to an uninitiated observer. This is however also the case for many cultural-historical heritage values. To an uninitiated observer much "old" architecture is viewed as mostly looking the same but once you understand some of the nuances, a whole new world of history opens up and one can understand the history of a building far better. Thus, even though increased, the end result of the design is not pedagogical to the extent that it is self-evident. The timeline which was established as a part of the Atlas can however be seen as a tool to aid a potential visitor in the reading of the design proposal.

The current state of the church, being essentially frozen through preservation would most likely be considered by Bedoire as a *dead* building serving only as a monument. Contrasting this, the design proposal intends to show the church re-imagined as a *living* building through acknowledging that this manifestation is as temporary as any previous manifestation has been. By designing for several potential uses and increasing the possibilities for future changes in use while highlighting the building's history, the design is to be seen as a *living* monument.

The thesis mainly focuses on a communicative approach and conservation in terms of restoration and preservation, however one area of theory that would complement these is a discussion around reconstruction. With further studies into this area, the design interventions in both the restoration of the 1870s appearance in the tower and the medieval traces in the nave could be even further developed.

Within the current legal framework of the Historic Environment Act, the proposed interventions would most likely be considered of a nature that distorts the current appearance and character of the church and therefore be very hard, if not impossible to realize. Not considering this legal framework was a deliberate delimitation and an outset for the aim of the thesis. The law states however that its intention is to not diminish the cultural and historical values, which is the same intent as the interventions have. Thus even through placing itself outside of the legal restrictions, one could argue that the design proposal still fulfills one of the legislations' main goals. The fact that there is such a great number of churches in Sweden that have existed for many years, and that they are so thoroughly protected through legislation is a great thing for the collected cultural-historical heritage of the country. The thesis does not intend to be understood as a critique of this legislation as a whole, just that in the specific case of Håby church it currently leads to a loss of availability of our cultural-historical heritage.

In conclusion, there is not a singular approach to conservation of the built heritage and cultural-historical heritage values, and there shouldn't be. Each object demands a separate attention and it's own tailored method. As every act of conservation is a choice in what to communicate and which traces to remove, great care has to be taken at each step. But just as conservation is case-dependent, perhaps also the legislation should allow for more flexibility in specific cases.

Author

The author; Benjamin Björksell is raised in Småland and has a close relationship to the church through his father's occupation as pastor, through family, and his own involvement in youth groups within the Church of Sweden and voluntary work as a church-musician.

With a background within both architecture and structural engineering, the author is pursuing master's degrees in both fields. He seeks to combine the knowledge of both fields in creating grounded, believable designs with multiple depths.

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2024-2027	Structural Engineering and Building Technology - Chalmers M.Sc Civil Engineer

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Figures:

Figures not listed below are the authors own work.

Cover Fig. 1. See Fig. 33

Cover Fig. 2. See Fig. 35

Fig. 1. Eva Vikström. (2008). Typical historical alterations to a medieval church. From the article "Sockenkyrkornas förnyelse genom ombyggnad" (Dahlberg & Franzén, 2008, p.276). [Illustration]. Used with permission.

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Fig. 32. Selma Sahlberg. (n.d). "Håby church before he renovation". Bohusläns Museum. ID.nr: UMFA53666:1487 [Photograph]. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Retrieved from: https://digitaltmuseum.se/011014353184/enligt-medfoljande-noteringar-haby-kyrka-innan-renoveringen-aldsta-interioren

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Fig. 56-58. Carl-Johan Claesson. (2023). Photogrammetry of the nave and porch. [Photogrammetry]. Used with permission.

Fig. 71. See Fig. 1

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Master's Thesis 2026

Resurrecting Håby Church

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